

# A Chinese Pilgrimage to the Heart of Tibet

Martino Dibeltulo Concu

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## **A Chinese Pilgrimage to the Heart of Tibet**

Martino Dibeltulo Concu

### **Abstract**

Published in Chongqing in 1937, *Xiandai Xizang* 現代西藏 (Modern Tibet) is a key study of Tibet during the tumultuous period of Japan's invasion of China in World War II. Authored by Fazun 法尊 (1902-1980), an eminent monk, scholar, translator, and authority on the Tibetan language, this work illuminates the interplay of society, religion, politics, and empire that shaped China-Tibet relations in a transformative age. Despite Fazun's major contribution to Tibetan and Buddhist studies in China, his legacy has often been detached from the relationships he cultivated with his Tibetan teachers and reimagined in modernity within the ancient lineage of Chinese pilgrim-translators. Still, his influence remains profound to this day. This project presents the first English translation of Fazun's original work, striving to bridge a gap in academic scholarship and enhance understanding of this critical historical period. The translation is grounded in philological research and historical-religious analysis. It is based on the first edition of *Xiandai Xizang* from 1937, which the author consulted during his tenure at the University of Sichuan, Chengdu in 2006. The translated volume is structured to include the translator's introduction, the English translation, and the original Chinese text. The introduction not only outlines Fazun's life and the context of his work but also assesses how effectively he carried the legacy of the Chinese pilgrim-translator tradition into modernity. This project, by offering the first comprehensive study of Fazun's original thought and writings, aims to refine existing insights and foster a dynamic dialogue with contemporary scholarship in Tibetan and Buddhist studies.

**Keywords** Fazun. Modern Tibet. Pilgrim-translators. China-Tibet Relations. Buddhism and Modernity.



## **A Chinese Pilgrimage to the Heart of Tibet**

Martino Dibeltulo Concu

## **Acknowledgements**

*A Chinese Pilgrimage to the Heart of Tibet* is not the creation of a solitary author's body, mind, heart, and spirit. The body is here only as instrument: the hands that typed, the hours endured. The mind that conceived this work was forged over many years of instruction, inseparable from the guidance of my educators and advisors. The heart belongs to those who offered their love and support without condition. The spirit, however, belongs to the field itself: the vast body of scriptures, books, essays, and manuscripts, some available to the public, many buried in archives, that form the field's subconscious. If I have made any contribution, it is only to have illuminated one facet of that larger whole.

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**A Chinese Pilgrimage to the Heart of Tibet**

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## **A Chinese Pilgrimage to the Heart of Tibet**



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## Preface

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Tucked away in Bologna, Italy, there is a quiet place on a street that begins in the shadow of historic towers and passes through an ancient gate. This is via Castiglione, where at number 11/b, a humble, unassuming door opens into a world of wonder: the Ibis bookstore.

It was here, on a rainy spring afternoon in 2001, that I first met Fazun 法尊 (1902-1980), the protagonist of this book. Ibis was founded in 1983 by a group of friends versed in various currents of Eastern and Western esotericism. From the start, it was more than a bookstore. It was imagined as a sanctuary, a place where readers and scholars could explore different paths to wisdom. In the words of its founders, Ibis encouraged plurality while honoring the uniqueness of each tradition. Over time, it became a space where insights from East and West could meet, challenge, and enrich one another.<sup>1</sup>

The bookshelves at Ibis whispered tales of magic, science, and religion. The collection stretched from Giordano Bruno to the Dalai Lama, and from the *Yijing* 易經 to the *Yoga Sūtras*. It drew on timeless wisdom from India and China, and from Tibet to Japan. But why the name 'Ibis'? Why invoke this feathered creature from Egyptian religion? In ancient Egypt, the ibis was a sacred bird associated with Thoth, the god of writing, wisdom, and magic. The founders chose the name for that reason. For through Thoth, they could also evoke Hermes, the Greek name for Mercury, the deity who embodied these same qualities in the Greco-Roman tradition. Naming the bookstore Ibis was their way of honoring that lineage in the heart of Bologna.

As a beginner in Asian Studies, I often visited Ibis. Hours slipped away as I sifted through its collections, enchanted by the fragrance of old books. In my naïveté, I gave little thought to the meaning of the ibis. I did not know

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<sup>1</sup> Picozza 2012, 34.

what kind of god Thoth was. Nor did I know that in early-modern Europe, between the Baroque and the Enlightenment, missionaries, travelers, and traders to Asia often mistook the Buddha for Hermes or Mercury, that is, Thoth by another name.<sup>2</sup> It seemed natural to me back then that modern translations of Buddhist classics like the *Diamond Sūtra* or the *Lotus Sūtra* would sit alongside volumes from the Hermetic canon.

One afternoon in April 2001, a particular book caught my eye. It sat on a shelf at the center of the room. Its sage-green cover seemed to beckon, as if it had been waiting for me all along. That book introduced me to Fazun. And through that book, I find myself here today. Nearly a quarter of a century later, on the hundredth anniversary of Fazun's pilgrimage to Tibet, I have been invited to tell this story.

That afternoon at Ibis, I bought *The Iron Statue Monastery (Tiexiangsi): A Buddhist Nunnery of Tibetan Tradition in Contemporary China*. The book, wrapped in a sage-green cover, had been published in Florence just a month earlier, in March 2001. Its author, Ester Bianchi, described how, between the First and Second World Wars, Chinese Buddhist monks began making pilgrimages to Tibet. Many never reached Lhasa. But some did. A few studied with renowned lamas in Tibet's great monasteries. And when they returned to China, they translated scriptures and commentaries from Tibetan. During the Japanese occupation of China in the 1930s, they founded new institutions to train Chinese monks in Tibetan Buddhist teachings. One name stood out: Fazun. He translated major works of Tibetan Buddhism into Chinese. He compiled biographies of Tibetan masters. He wrote detailed histories of Tibet's religious and political institutions.

Like many in the late 1990s and early 2000s, before reading *The Iron Statue Monastery* I assumed that relations between China and Tibet had always been defined by conflict. Bianchi's research shattered that view. Back home from Ibis, I began reading about Fazun. I was astonished by the depth of his learning. He had mastered both spoken and literary Tibetan. He could translate Buddhist texts. He also served as an oral interpreter for Tibetan high lamas, including the Dalai Lama. The more I learned, the more I was drawn into his story. And the more questions I had.

In August of that same year, after completing a summer language program in Beijing, I boarded a train bound for the city of Siling, on the northwestern edge of the Tibetan plateau. At Kumbum Monastery, built at the birthplace of Tsongkhapa (1357-1419), the great scholar and founder of the Geluk tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, I came across a set of Fazun's translations of Tsongkhapa's major works. There, as I began reading the *Lamrim Chenmo* (Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path) in Fazun's Chinese, I made a decision. I would move to Venice and enroll at Ca' Foscari University, where Bianchi was teaching Buddhism at the time.

Four years later, my engagement with Fazun's translations was put to the test as I worked on my M.A. thesis. Under the guidance of Bianchi, I produced an annotated translation of Fazun's exposition of Yogacāra, or "Practice of Yoga", denoting one of the two major Mahāyāna schools of Buddhism in India. The aim of my study was to show how Fazun employed Chinese Buddhist terminology to render the *Madhyamakāvātāra* (Entrance

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2 Droit 2003, 30.

into the Middle Way) of Candrakīrti (ca. 600-ca. 650) from Tibetan into Chinese.

For more than a thousand years, Yogācāra thought had been known and studied in East Asia. Still, Candrakīrti's critique of Yogācāra from a Mādhyamaka perspective was entirely new to China's Buddhist tradition. Tsongkhapa's refutation of the Yogācāra school's tenets based on the view of reality of the Prasaṅgika, or "Consequence" branch of the Mādhyamaka, was unheard of by Chinese Buddhists as it had been understood in Tibet. That was Fazun's major contribution: conveying the thought of both Indian and Tibetan masters into Chinese where it had remained unknown until the early twentieth century. Without access to the original Sanskrit manuscripts, he rendered those Indian and Tibetan classics directly from Tibetan into Chinese.

From Bologna to Venice as an undergraduate, and later to Ann Arbor during my doctoral training with Donald S. Lopez, Jr., Fazun has remained a steady presence in my life: a teacher, a mentor, and a companion in the study of Buddhist culture, history, and literature between Tibet and China. His writings have guided me, both in and outside the academy. And so now, back to Italy where it all began, I find myself once again in conversation with my forebears, the scholars whose work on Fazun has made mine possible.

The work on this volume began in the summer of 2023. A phone conversation with Ester Bianchi brought an old project back to life. That project, based on a rare first edition of Fazun's pilgrimage account, titled *Xiandai Xizang* 現代西藏 (Modern Tibet), has now become *A Chinese Pilgrimage to the Heart of Tibet*.



## Introduction to the Translation

During that period, Tibet convened multiple meetings of the National Assembly to discuss the option of capitulating to either the Communists or the British. The final assessment indicated that both choices would result in the downfall of the nation. Nevertheless, surrendering to the British could enable Tibet to maintain its religion, an outcome that was much more desirable than facing an invasion from the Communist bandits, which would result in the loss of life and property, along with the certain devastation of its sacred institutions.<sup>1</sup>

Fazun, 1937

In Lhasa's Potala Palace, a small chapel houses a sandalwood statue known as Phakpa Lokeśvara,<sup>2</sup> meaning "Noble Lord of the World". This form of Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva of compassion, has long drawn pilgrims to Tibet. The standing figure is enshrined in a chapel that, according to Tibetan chronicles, dates back to the seventh century of the Common Era. The chapel lies on Marpori, or "Red Hill", one of three rocky hills that rise from the center of the Lhasa valley. Long before the construction of the Potala Palace by the fifth Dalai Lama, Ngawang Losang Gyatso (1617-1682), in the seventeenth century, Marpori already contained a cave sanctuary, and a small temple associated with this holy treasure.<sup>3</sup>

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**1** Fazun 1937b, 34. All translations from Chinese and Tibetan are by the author.

**2** C. Shengguan zizai pusa 聖觀自在菩薩; T. 'Phags pa 'jig rten dbang phyug. The statue is often referred to by the Tibetan-Sanskrit hybrid, Phakpa Lokeśvara, rather than the full Sanskrit name, Ārya Lokeśvara.

**3** On Phakpa Lokeśvara, cf. Alsop 1990; 2000; Debreczeny 2012, 302, fn. 537; Decler 2006; Erhard 2004; 2014; Sørensen 2007; 2019; Qvarnström, Sørensen 2015.



According to legend, the statue of Phakpa Lokeśvara originated in a sandalwood forest near the Buddha's birthplace, situated along the border of India and Nepal.<sup>4</sup> King Songtsen Gampo of Tibet (r. ca. 605-650), who revered Avalokiteśvara as his guardian deity, hoped the bodhisattva would guide his effort to convert Tibet to the teachings of the Buddha. Through prayer, the king sought a sign. In a vision, Avalokiteśvara revealed that one tree in the forest was filled with life. In response, the king performed an extraordinary feat. He emitted a beam of light from the tuft of hair placed right between his eyebrows. The light transformed into a monk named Akaramatiśīla.<sup>5</sup> "Search for the tree", Songtsen Gampo told him, "and bring me its heart".

Crossing the Himalayas, Akaramatiśīla reached the forest. Just as his axe touched the tree, a voice from within it told the monk, "Cut slowly". When the blade made contact with the bark, the tree continued, "I am going to be the tutelary deity of king Songtsen Gampo in the Snow-capped realm of Tibet!".<sup>6</sup> From the tree's core, the monk carved three statues. The one destined for Tibet came to life and declared, "I am Phakpa Lokeśvara". Akaramatiśīla brought the statue to Lhasa, placed it atop Marpori, and enshrined it there. Having fulfilled his mission, he turned back into light and reabsorbed into the king's brow.

Centuries later, during the life of the thirteenth Dalai Lama, Thupten Gyatso (1876-1933), pilgrims from Tibet, Bhutan, Sikkim, and Mongolia still came to Lhasa to pay homage to the statue of Phakpa Lokeśvara. In the early twentieth century, among those pilgrims was a young monk from China. His name would come to matter in the encounter between China and Tibet, yet his voice would soon be forgotten. In 1925, he left Beijing as part of an overland mission to Tibet, hoping to retrieve the teachings of Buddhist tantra which, many believed at the time, had long been lost in China. Four years later, the mission failed in the borderlands. Still, the young monk continued his journey. In 1930, he entered Lhasa with his main teacher, an incarnated lama renowned across traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. The pilgrim studied for four years at one of Tibet's major monasteries and later returned to China.

*A Chinese Pilgrimage to the Heart of Tibet* presents, for the first time in English, the full account of that journey. In writing its history, this introduction traces the route of Fazun's early life, from the modernist project of a Buddhist mission to revive tantra in Tibet, to the encounter with a form of Buddhism that proved entirely foreign to China. The pages ahead are meant to guide the reader through the pilgrim's account, charting his entry into the mission in Beijing, the rigor of Tibetan scholastic training, and the later recognition, attained through the work of translation, that absence, not loss, defined the object he had gone to seek. At the end of this introduction, Phakpa Lokeśvara once again stands before the reader. The bodhisattva, enshrined as the Potala's main icon to this day, bears witness to the Chinese pilgrim's search, a quest transformed not by what he found, but by what he did not.

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**4** For a full account of how Songtsen Gampo brought Phakpa Lokeśvara to Tibet, cf. Sørensen 1994, 187-95.

**5** T. A ka ra ma ti. Toni Huber characterizes Akaramatiśīla as a 'phantom monk traveler'. Cf. Huber 2008, 169-70.

**6** Sørensen 1994, 195.

In 1911, the Xinhai 辛亥 Revolution brought the Qing dynasty 清朝 (1644-1911) to an end. What followed were decades of fragmentation. The Republic of China,<sup>7</sup> formally established on January 1, 1912, faced massive challenges from the start. Yuan Shikai 袁世凱 (1859-1916), a Qing general and first President of the Republic, seized power and declared himself emperor in 1915. After his death the following year, military cliques known as warlords split the Chinese mainland into rival territories. By the 1920s, regional strongmen held control over most Chinese provinces. Beijing 北京 in the north and Nanjing 南京 in the south each claimed central authority. Still, governance remained fractured. New political ideals and religious visions began to take shape.

Two major political forces emerged at this time. The first was the Nationalist Party (KMT),<sup>8</sup> founded in 1919 and reorganized by Sun Yat-sen 孫中山 (1866-1925) – a former medical doctor and native of Guangzhou 廣州, known as the father of modern China – to promote national unification. The second was the Chinese Communist Party (CCP),<sup>9</sup> founded in 1921 in Shanghai 上海 and attended, among others, by the young leader Mao Zedong 毛澤東 (1893-1976). At the outset, the two parties joined forces under Soviet guidance through the First United Front (1923-1927).<sup>10</sup> In 1926, the Nationalist Party launched the military campaign known as *beifa* 北伐, a “northern expedition” to reunify China. By 1928, they had reclaimed much of the country and moved the national capital to Nanjing 南京. But cooperation soon turned into violence. In 1927, the Nationalist Party purged members of the Communist Party from its ranks. This divide would escalate into a Civil War (1927-1949) that shaped not only China’s politics, but also its religious institutions.

Amid revolution and war, Buddhism was imagined as a world religion.<sup>11</sup> Chinese reformers of the Republican era began to think of Buddhism both as an international movement and as a source of national unity. They imagined a shared Buddhist world capable of uniting Asian nations against European imperialism. This Buddhist transnational movement was not unified.<sup>12</sup> Yet, it informed local attempts to envision distinct Buddhist traditions not only as national forms of the religion, but also to articulate those same forms as stemming from one Pan-Asian tradition that extended from India to China and Japan, and from Tibet to Śrī Lāṅka.<sup>13</sup>

Tibet held a singular place in this imagination.<sup>14</sup> In 1913, after the fall of the Qing dynasty, the thirteenth Dalai Lama declared Tibet’s independence.<sup>15</sup> The Nationalist Party never recognized the Dalai Lama’s claim and, in

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**7** C. Zhonghua minguo 中華民國.

**8** C. Guomin dang 國民黨.

**9** C. Gongchan dang 共產黨.

**10** C. Diyici guogong hezuo 第一次國共合作.

**11** Xue 2013, 23-30. For the ways in which Buddhist reformers of the late Qing and early Republican period envisioned Buddhism, and especially, Tibetan Buddhism, as a “world religion”, cf. Wu 2024, 13-14, 23; for the European discourse of “world religions”, cf. Masuzawa 2005.

**12** Cf. Lopez 2002, xx-xxii.

**13** On Buddhism as a Pan-Asian religion between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, see Tuttle 2005, 68-102.

**14** Sperling 2004, 6-9.

**15** On the thirteenth Dalai Lama’s declaration of Tibetan independence, cf. Blondeau and Buffetrille 2008, 39-44.

official discourse, continued to include Tibet within the national borders of the Republic. During the 1910s and 1920s, several Chinese missions to Tibet were proposed or launched, seeking both political reconciliation and religious engagement.<sup>16</sup> Some aimed to assert sovereignty, others to restore contact with Buddhist teachers and leaders in Tibet. These endeavors reflected a broader desire to establish new ties between Tibetan Buddhism and the modern Chinese state.<sup>17</sup>

It was against this backdrop that the young Chinese monk, Fazun, came to offer alms in the Phakpa Lokeśvara chapel. His presence in Lhasa was part of a larger historical movement. Still, his was, most of all, a pilgrim's journey, shaped by sacrifice, devotion, insight, and the cultivation of significant relationships with his Tibetan teachers. He entered Tibet as a simple Buddhist monk. He returned to China with stories that no official mission could ever tell.

In May 1937, just months after returning to China, Fazun published a written account of his journey. The book, titled *Modern Tibet*, recorded what he saw and heard during nearly ten years he spent in Tibet. The author composed the book as an introduction to readers in the Republic of China. His account included details of the sandalwood statue at the Potala Palace, along with notes on the cultural and religious ties between Phakpa Lokeśvara, Songtsen Gampo, and the Dalai Lama. Many of those tales, unheard of in China, spanned centuries of Tibet's history, from the Tibetan Empire (618-842) to the independent polity of the early twentieth century (1912-1951).

A month later in June 1937, Fazun released a second volume, *Tibet, As I Once Passed Through*.<sup>18</sup> Where *Modern Tibet* offered a survey of various aspects of Tibet's religion, culture, and institutions, the second book turned to the national and international politics of Tibet between the administrations of the thirteenth and fourteenth Dalai Lamas. It explored British involvement in Tibetan affairs, the legacy of the Qing empire in modern Tibet, and the growing Communist threat along the Tibetan frontier during the Long March (1934-35), when the Chinese Red Army, together with the Chinese Communist Party, retreated from southwestern to northwestern China as Nationalist forces advanced. The pilgrim published both volumes in Chongqing 重慶, the city in Western China that would soon become the wartime capital of the Republic. In that moment, his voice remained untouched by the Nationalist Party's ideology. Yet, not for long.

In July 1937, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident prompted Japan's full-scale invasion of the Chinese mainland, drawing China into the Second World War. As fighting spread, the Nationalist government moved its headquarters to Sichuan, the province of western China characterized by its broad basin and plains, which serves as a natural divide between Chongqing and eastern Tibet. Chongqing became a sanctuary for many who fled the Japanese occupation. There, cultural production continued amid airstrikes, displacement, and national crisis. During this time, Fazun revised his earlier work. By 1943, two years before the war's end, he published a new edition of *Modern Tibet* in Sichuan's capital, Chengdu 成都. This edition combined

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**16** Tuttle 2005, 34-59.

**17** Wu 2024, 18-22, 48-72.

**18** Fazun 1937b.

*Modern Tibet and Tibet, As I Once Passed Through* into a single volume. The book shifted away from its earlier focus on pilgrimage to a formal study of Tibet's national institutions and international politics, seen now through the challenges of wartime China.

In 1949, after the Nationalists' defeat in the Civil War, the Republic of China retreated to Taiwan. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) advanced west into Sichuan. The pilgrim left Chongqing and returned to Beijing. In the capital, Fazun was invited to join the newly founded People's Republic of China (PRC) as a Tibetan language expert. As Chairman Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party prepared for the invasion of Tibet, the monk was assigned a specific task. He would translate Marxist, Leninist, Stalinist, and Maoist texts, including Chairman Mao's *The Little Red Book*, into Tibetan. These works were intended to instruct Tibet's future leaders in the logic of the Communist Revolution.

During the 1950s, in his role as an official translator from Tibetan, Fazun contributed to shaping Tibetan Studies in the People's Republic. By the early 1960s, as the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences gained traction in Beijing, scholars in Tibetan Studies were drawn into the effort to fit Tibet into the Party's colonial narrative of relations between China and Tibet. At the start of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the pilgrim, now an elderly man, was denounced by the Red Guards as a criminal. From 1966 to 1972, he was held in a labor camp, where an injury left him disabled for life. Decades earlier, while reporting on Tibetan debates over national security, he had written of his political enemies of the time as "Communist bandits". Now, those forces had turned against him.

*A Chinese Pilgrimage to the Heart of Tibet* offers an English translation of *Modern Tibet* from its original 1937 edition. In Republican China, public debate allowed critical reflection on religion, politics, and the nation. Fazun's book captured the hopes and tensions of its age. During the Japanese occupation, he revised it to reflect the shifting priorities of China. That new version remained a reliable source on Tibet into the 1950s. After the Communist victory and China's occupation of Tibet, his voice fell silent. What had belonged to an age of plurality, had no home in the new order of things.

Ten days after his death on December 14, 1980, Fazun was reborn. He reincarnated as a culture hero. On December 24, 1980, Zhao Puchu 趙樸初 (1907-2000),<sup>19</sup> serving as the secretary general of the Buddhist Association of China (BAC),<sup>20</sup> offered incense, flowers, and lamps at a funeral ceremony held in Beijing in honor of Fazun. In his eulogy, Zhao praised the pilgrim's sacrifice and placed him in a lineage that traced back to China's earliest encounters with Buddhism:

Tracing back to the envoys of Emperor Ming 明帝 of Han 漢 who journeyed West, and the white horse that came east, men of virtue such as Faxian 法顯, Xuanzang 玄奘, and Yijing 義淨 were all willing to risk their lives, forgetting their bodies in pursuit of the dharma. Their lofty spirit and exemplary conduct have been admired for generations. As for this dharma

**19** Active in charitable and political associations during the Republican era, Zhao Puchu was the most prominent Buddhist layman in the PRC.

**20** On Zhao Puchu as president of the Buddhist Association of China (C. Zhongguo fojiao xiehui 中國佛教協會), cf. Xue 2016; cf. also Fang and Krause 2020.

master, he may truly be said to follow in the footsteps of the sages and stand shoulder to shoulder with the worthies of old.<sup>21</sup>

Zhao placed Fazun in a mythical lineage, one that traced back to the legend of how Buddhism first came to China during the Eastern Han 東漢 dynasty (25-220 CE). In this tale, the Emperor Ming 明帝 (r. 58-75 CE) dreamed of a golden figure soaring above the palace courtyard. Interpreting the vision as an auspicious sign, he dispatched two envoys, Cai Yin 蔡愔 (d.u.) and Qin Jing 秦景 (d.u.), to search for its origins beyond the frontiers of China, in the Xiyu 西域 ‘Western Regions’, a term that often included India. They returned with two Buddhist monks, Kāśyapa Mātāṅga<sup>22</sup> and Dharmaratna,<sup>23</sup> along with a white horse laden with Buddhist scriptures. To honor their arrival, the emperor commissioned the construction of the Baima Si 白馬寺 ‘White Horse Temple’ just outside the western gate of the imperial capital, Luoyang 洛陽. There, the two monks were said to have translated the *Sishi'er zhang jing* 四十二章經 (Sūtra in Forty-Two Sections), long believed to be the first Buddhist scripture rendered into Chinese.<sup>24</sup>

By drawing on this origin story, Zhao placed Fazun among China’s earliest translators of Buddhism. He linked him to the Jin 東 dynasty (266-420 CE) and the Tang dynasty, to masters like Faxian (ca. 337-422 CE), Xuanzang (600-664 CE), and Yijing (635-713 CE). These Chinese pilgrims had crossed deserts, mountains, and oceans in search of Buddhist scriptures. Like them, continued Zhao, China’s modern pilgrim had “forgotten his body for the dharma”.<sup>25</sup> The sacrifice of his life rekindled a memory that began at the gate of Luoyang, where a white horse once carried sūtras across imperial frontiers into the Chinese heartland. In honoring Fazun as heir to this mythic lineage, Zhao did more than praise his sacrifice to bring Tibet’s dharma to China. He affirmed his place in a tradition defined less by personal biography, and more by the work of translation and transmission, a work that was traditionally mapped onto China’s Western Regions.

Still, something uncanny was happening in the speech of the BAC secretary general at Fazun’s funeral. In his discourse, a shift occurred regarding China’s geography of Buddhist pilgrimage. India, where Buddhism had vanished at least eight centuries earlier, was no longer the destination of pilgrimage. It no longer served as the holy land that once attracted Chinese pilgrims. In Zhao’s imagination, Tibet had silently taken its place. Unlike India, no European power colonized Tibet. Now, under Chinese occupation, it was envisioned as a sacred realm within the nation’s frontiers, a lofty and mystical place where modern pilgrims could still find the Buddha’s teachings

<sup>21</sup> Zhao 1981, 25.

<sup>22</sup> C. She Moteng 攝摩騰.

<sup>23</sup> C. Zhu Falan 竺法蘭.

<sup>24</sup> Modern scholarship questions nearly all elements of the tale. The *Sūtra in Forty-Two Sections* is now widely regarded as an apocryphal text, likely composed in China rather than translated from an Indian original. Its format, that is, a sequence of concise moral aphorisms attributed to the Buddha, resembles native Chinese wisdom literature more than Indian sūtras. Similarly, Kāśyapa Mātāṅga and Dharmaratna are best understood as legendary figures. Their names appear in later sources, and no contemporary evidence confirms their historical presence. Even the chronology is doubtful. Buddhism had likely begun to circulate in China decades before Emperor Ming’s dream. Cf. Nattier 2008.

<sup>25</sup> In Zhao’s words, *weifa wangshen* 为法忘身. Cf. Zhao 1981, 25.

alive. The journey to the Western Regions was no longer defined by the crossing of empires, a feature of the Tang dynasty, or by different emerging nations, as seen in the Republican era. Pilgrimage now implied traveling inside a vast, unified, multiethnic nation-state: the People's Republic of China. In this retelling, pilgrimage thus ceased to denote the crossing of frontiers. By contrast, pilgrimage to the Western Regions evolved into a story of national belonging. Indeed, during Fazun's journey, Tibet was still a remote, dangerous, and foreign country. Four decades later, in Zhao Puchu's eulogy, the realm of Tibetan religion was turned into a subregion within China's Buddhist landscape.

In Zhao's telling, Tibet had ceased to exist on the map. It was not so during the Republican period, when Fazun regarded Tibet as a thriving reservoir of wisdom, embodied in the teachers who trained him and passed down their texts to him. As we will discover, Fazun traveled across the Himalayas in 1936, bringing with him a complete copy of the Tibetan Buddhist canon, in addition to the collected works of Tsongkhapa and his closest disciples. Fazun's encounters with his Tibetan teachers became the basis for his future translations. Still, Zhao told a different story. He portrayed Fazun as a modern pilgrim in China's ancient lineage, a solitary translator who brought Tibet's dharma into China's keeping. By doing so, he obscured the relationships, the transmissions, and the earnest study of literary works that had laid the groundwork for Fazun's later achievements. In Fazun's *Modern Tibet*, Tibet is a place of learning and debate. It was in that place that translation emerged from encounter. Still, after Fazun's death, Tibet was no longer that place of encounter. In Zhao's mind, it became a new holy land of Buddhism, seamlessly integrated into China's sacred geography. Having emerged as Communist China's Western Regions, Tibet offered a mirror for the nation's historical subconscious.

In the span of forty years, Zhao Puchu's ideas about Fazun traveled beyond religious and political institutions. They quickly migrated into academic discourse and popular imagination. In 1990, Fazun's biographers Lü Tiegang 呂鐵鋼 and Hu Heping 胡和平 praised the monk with a singular epithet: *dangdai Xuanzang* 當代玄奘, the 'Xuanzang of the contemporary age'.<sup>26</sup> In 2000, historians of religion Chen Bing 陳兵 and Deng Zimei 鄧子美 remarked that "His contributions to bridging Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist studies were outstanding, earning him recognition as one of the great Buddhist translators since the Tang and Song dynasties".<sup>27</sup> In 2000, in a seminal essay where she cites Zhao, Lü and Hu, French Tibetologist Françoise Wang-Toutain introduced Fazun into the Western academy as *le Xuanzang des temps modernes*, 'the Xuanzang of modern times'.<sup>28</sup> Unlike Zhao, who invoked a broader tradition of pilgrim-translators from the Han to the Tang, Wang-Toutain drew inspiration from the writings of Lü and Hu. In coining their epithet, Fazun's Chinese biographers invoked the spirit of Xuanzang only.<sup>29</sup> By contrast, Wang-Toutain's naming in French drew power from the

<sup>26</sup> Lü, Hu 2002, 503.

<sup>27</sup> Chen, Deng 2000, 360.

<sup>28</sup> Wang-Toutain 2000, 707-27. Wang-Toutain incorrectly attributes Fazun's epithet *dangdai Xuanzang* 'the Xuanzang of the contemporary age' to Zhao Puchu.

<sup>29</sup> In citing Zhao, Cheng and Deng, as well as Wang-Toutain, Ester Bianchi claims, "Just as Faxian and Xuanzang had done more than 10 centuries earlier, they were ready to travel the most impervious roads to the roof of the world or to cross the sea with the goal of finding scriptures

mythic lineage that Zhao had created, beginning from the legend of the White Horse Temple. Indeed, Xuanzang had long been celebrated in Chinese Buddhist circles for the polish of his translations from Sanskrit. He was widely known in Chinese literature and popular culture for his legendary journey to the West.<sup>30</sup> By being called ‘Xuanzang’, the modern pilgrim began to be portrayed as the most accomplished translator of Tibetan Buddhist texts in Chinese history.<sup>31</sup> In a blend of old and new, Fazun emerges today as a solitary genius, celebrated as a lone translator in China’s long lineage of pilgrims.

The comparison of Fazun with China’s great premodern pilgrims arrived at a timely moment. At the turn of the present millennium, the image of a modern Xuanzang stirred nostalgic longings for an earlier age, when Chinese monks crossed imperial frontiers in search of the dharma.<sup>32</sup> In the Republican period, as in the Tang dynasty, no trains or planes linked China to Tibet. Fazun’s journey, made on foot and by mule, across frozen terrain and through regions plagued by bandits, reignited the imagination of readers who were already familiar with similar tropes from Xuanzang’s journey to India.<sup>33</sup> This time, however, Xuanzang’s Western Regions gave way to Xizang 西藏 ‘Western Treasury’, that is, China’s term for Tibet. In literature, music, and visual culture, Tibet once again appeared as a Western realm of endless discovery.

Still, both the popular and the scholarly imagination overlooked one fact. Fazun’s original mission to Tibet, unfolding during the Chinese Civil War, had ended in disappointment. Hence, what survived the Cultural Revolution was not an account of his life, but a compelling story to tell about the books he left behind. After his death, Fazun was no longer remembered as a pilgrim who traveled to Tibet to retrieve China’s lost tantra, in a mission of thirty monks that resulted in failure. By contrast, his sacrifice for the dharma was now envisioned as a solitary endeavor in service of the Chinese people. This tale, crafted months after his death, transformed his translations into objects to offer on the altar of the nation. Having forsaken his body for

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and receiving teachings”. Citing Wang-Toutain, Bianchi also incorrectly attributes the coining of the expression *dangdai Xuanzang* to Zhao Puchu. Cf. Bianchi 2004, 32 fn. 1.

**30** On the modern reception of Xuanzang, cf. Brose 2021 and 2023.

**31** In what is the most recent biography of Fazun, published in 2019 in *Brill’s Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, Ester Bianchi condenses four decades of reflection on the construction of Fazun’s lineage with the following train of thought: “Like his prominent predecessors and models Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing, he devoted himself to translating the Buddhist scriptures he gathered in his travels. He stands out as the most prolific Chinese translator of Tibetan texts in modern times and, probably, in the entire history of Chinese Buddhism” (2019, 662). Here, Bianchi writes that the primary sources on Fazun’s life are “Zhuzhe ru zang de jingguo” 著者入藏的經過 (The Author’s Experiences Entering Tibet), published in 1937, and his autobiography “Fazun fashi zishu” 法尊法師自述 from 1979 (2019, 662). The claim is only partly correct. The autobiographical essay “Zhuzhe ru zang de jingguo” was not issued under that title, nor in that form, in 1937. Instead, it appeared as an appendix of the 1943 edition of *Modern Tibet*. The original text, which differs in some details, had first been published as Chapter One of *Modern Tibet* in the 1937 edition translated in the present volume. Both “Zhuzhe ru zang de jingguo” and “Fazun fashi zishu” were reprinted in Lü Tiegang and Hu Heping’s *Fazun fashi lunwen ji* in 1990. Lü and Hu correctly note that Fazun’s “Zhuzhe ru zang de jingguo” comes from the appendix of *Modern Tibet*. This demonstrates that they, too, had no access to the 1937 edition of *Modern Tibet*, for they fail to say that “Zhuzhe ru zang de jingguo” exists only in the appendix of the 1943 edition. The first edition of *Modern Tibet* from 1937 contained no appendices.

**32** Cf. Brose 2021, especially Chapter 24, “Xuanzang’s Relics”.

**33** Lü and Hu, in their first collection of Fazun’s essays, are the earliest exemplars in this trend.

the dharma, he now seemed to provide a novel way of imagining Chinese Buddhism, one in which Tibetan Buddhism could be studied through his translations and understood through previously unknown materials.

Yet, something was lost in the making of those objects. In recasting Fazun's mission as a solitary, patriotic sacrifice, this tale neglects the relations that Fazun had with his teachers, friends, and informants in Tibet. Their guidance had made both his pilgrimage into the heart of Tibet and his translations possible. In the new telling, the agency of those teachers, friends, and informers has disappeared. What remains is the image of a lone Chinese pilgrim who carried their wisdom back across the frontier to the heart of the nation.

Fazun's translations from Tibetan, together with his original works, amount to nearly fifty titles. They range from monastic discipline to Buddhist logic, pass through Abhidharma, Yogācāra, and Madhyamaka treatises, and reach into the domain of Buddhist tantra. He wrote on the social and political history of Tibet, produced the first modern Chinese textbooks for studying the Tibetan language, and helped compile the first modern Tibetan-Chinese dictionary. Today, in both the PRC and Taiwan, his translations have become popular and valuable objects and remain in print and in use. Book series on Tibetan Buddhism bearing the names of both Tsongkhapa and Fazun line library shelves in major cities. Still, Fazun's original writings hide in the shadow. To this day, most accounts of his life turn to the second edition of *Modern Tibet*<sup>34</sup> or to his 1979 autobiography, composed a year before his death.<sup>35</sup> His reflections on empire, history, and the nation have yet to receive sustained attention. A full monograph would be required to do justice to the scope and depth of his thought. The present study can only offer a set of entry points into future research.

Who, then, was Fazun? Who was this Buddhist pilgrim whose voice was reshaped by war, shackled by ideology, and later remembered as the voice of a culture hero? A monk who failed in his initial mission, Fazun walked on Tibet's roads. He shared meals with its families and played with its children. He lived in Tibet's monasteries and learned directly from their masters. He sought to make sense of a country, Tibet, which he found trapped between the forces of empire, nationalism, and modernity. Fazun's writings do not answer many of the questions that shape, and still trouble, relations between China and Tibet.<sup>36</sup> Those questions persist, especially in the history of the religious encounter. But his writings preserve something rare. They offer traces of an encounter framed by an ethics of care. Those traces once lived in the libraries of Republican China, later fading in the shadow of the Cultural Revolution. Perhaps due to or in spite of his abilities as a translator, Fazun relied on a distinct, older way of knowing Tibet and its people. That particular way of knowing, modern by its own standards, still speaks through the pages of *Modern Tibet*, to whose genesis we now turn.

Between the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, Buddhists in China kept returning to one question. What had become of Mijiao 密教,

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**34** Cf. Sullivan 2014. In his excellent essay, "Blood and Teardrop", Sullivan translated a selection of five passages from Fazun's account of his time spent in Tibet.

**35** Cf. Wang-Toutain 2000; Bianchi 2004; Tuttle 2005; Wei 2024.

**36** For scholarly responses to key questions in China-Tibet relations, see the essays collected in Blondeau and Buffettrille 2008.

that is, tantra, since the fall of the Tang dynasty (618-907 CE)?<sup>37</sup> That question marked the birth of the study of Tibetan Buddhism in modern China. It also marked the rise of a discursive colonization of Tibet in the Chinese imagination that persists into the present. Through this process, Chinese Buddhists began to project their historical anxieties and existential aspirations onto Tibetan religion. At the time, many believed that tantra had vanished from China for more than a thousand years. Yet, in the early twentieth century it reappeared. From where? In short, through Japan and Tibet. How so? In response to the demands of modernity. Such famous figures as Taixu 太虛 (1890-1947), the leading Buddhist reformer of Republican China, greeted the *Mijiao chongxing* 密教重興 ‘revival of tantra’ with optimism.<sup>38</sup> At first, he believed that tantra, if properly understood, could renew Chinese Buddhism from within. That hope, however, did not stand the test of history. To understand how Chinese monks and scholars imagined Tibetan Buddhism before Fazun began his journey, we must turn to another voice from Taixu’s generation. Around the fall of the Qing dynasty, a young scholar of Buddhism helped shape the very language through which China’s lost tantra came to be tied with Tibet.

In the early years of the Republic, a former student of Yang Wenhui 楊文會 (1837-1911), regarded by many as the father of the revival of Buddhism in China, opened a new field of inquiry: the academic study of Tibetan Buddhism.<sup>39</sup> His name was Li Yizhuo 李翊灼 (1881-1952).<sup>40</sup> Born in Jiangxi 江西 and trained in the Confucian classics, Li turned to the study of Buddhism around 1900. Two of his fellow Jiangxi natives, Ouyang Jian 歐陽漸 (1871-1943) and Gui Bohua 桂柏華 (1861-1915), introduced him to Yang Wenhui’s vision to reinvent Chinese Buddhism for the modern age and to the broader revival it inspired.<sup>41</sup> In 1911, the year of Yang’s death, Li was invited to Beijing to catalog the manuscripts from the Dunhuang 敦煌 cave libraries that were housed at the Metropolitan Library of Beijing. The following year, he published a groundbreaking study, titled *Dunhuang shishi jingjuanzhong weiru zangjinglun zhushu mulu* 敦煌釋氏經卷中未入藏經論著述目錄 (Complete Catalogue of the Sūtras and Śāstras from the Dunhuang Cave Manuscripts Not Included in the Tripiṭaka). In it, Li identified 159 Buddhist texts among the Dunhuang manuscripts that were absent in the Chinese Buddhist canon. That discovery established Li as one of the first Chinese scholars

**37** Portions of this section are drawn from the author’s doctoral research at the University of Michigan. See Dibeltulo Concu 2015; 2021.

**38** The Republican Buddhist reformer Taixu analyzed the trends of the revival of Tantrism during his era, incorporating in his own work many of the findings on Tibetan Buddhism by the scholars of his time. He did so to better understand the history of tantra in India and the various ways in which tantra had taken root in China, Japan, and Tibet. On the revival of tantra in modern China, see in particular Welch 1968; Dongchu 東初 1974; Bianchi 2004; Tuttle 2005; the various contributions in Esposito 2008, especially Chen Bing’s article; and Dibeltulo Concu 2015.

**39** On Yang Wenhui’s engagements with Tibetan Buddhism, see Dibeltulo Concu 2021, 178-82. Yang first noticed that Tibetan Buddhism was the same as Japan’s tantra in a volume that Nanjō Bunyu 南條文雄 (1849-1927), Japan’s foremost scholar of Sanskrit, had sent him to China. The volume’s title was *Hasshū-kōyō* 八宗綱要 (The Essentials of the Eight Traditions) by the Japanese historian Gyōnen 凝然 (1240-1321). On Yang Wenhui, see Welch 1968, 2-10, 18-19, 23, 29; Yu Lingbo 于凌波 1995; Gabriele Goldfuss 2001; and Chin Keitō (Chen, Jidong) 陳繼東 2003. For the posthumous collection of his works, see Yang Wenhui 1973.

**40** For a biography of Li Yizhuo, see Yu Lingbo 1995a, 499-500; see also Chen, Deng 2000, 446. On Li Yizhuo’s work about Tibetan Buddhism, see also Dibeltulo Concu 2021, 191-200.

**41** On Gui Bohua and Ou Yangjian, see Xue 2013, 17-19.

of Buddhist philology and laid the groundwork for his later inquiries into Tibetan Buddhism. To be sure, when he began writing on the subject, Li had never set foot on Tibetan soil, nor had he studied the Tibetan language. His knowledge came instead through Japanese sources and earlier cataloging work. Even without access to Tibetan teachers or texts, Li regarded Tibet as a place where, through speculation and the tools of philology, traces of China's tantra might still be found.

Between 1912 and 1913, Li Yizhuo published a series of essays in *Foxue congbao* 佛學叢報 (Buddhist Miscellany), the short-lived periodical of the Buddhist Association of the Republic of China that was established in 1911 in Shanghai. The journal encouraged the study of Buddhism among the *wu da minzu* 五大民族, the "five great nations" that the Republican leaders had identified in the regions of the former Qing Empire: China, Manchuria, Mongolia, East Turkestan, and Tibet.<sup>42</sup> In his essays, titled *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi* 西藏佛教略史 (A Concise History of Tibetan Buddhism), Li offered the first study to cover *Xizang Fojiao* 西藏佛教, that is, Republican China's term for 'Tibetan Buddhism', as a distinct subject of historical and doctrinal inquiry. Li adapted his work from the *Ramakyō engaku* 喇嘛教沿革 (History of Lamaism).<sup>43</sup> Published in Tōkyō in 1877, the *Ramakyō engaku* was a work by Ogurusu Kōchō 小栗栖香頂 (1831-1905), the first Japanese Buddhist missionary in early modern China. In turn, Ogurusu had drawn on Qing and European sources to argue that *Lamajiao* 喇嘛教 'Lamaism', an obsolete term that had served as a referent for Tibetan Buddhism during the Qing dynasty, was essentially the same as Mikkyō 密教, Japan's term for tantra.<sup>44</sup> Li followed Ogurusu in many ways, but his own Chinese translation introduced significant changes. Unlike his Japanese source, Li did not employ the term *Lamajiao*. Instead, he chose 'Xizang Fojiao', rendering Ogurusu's Japanese expression 'Seizō bukkyō 西藏仏教' for the first time into Chinese. He did so to define his object of study in the language of modern philology. Indeed, Li regarded Tibetan Buddhism as Tibet's national form of Buddhism. Hence, in his work, he discarded the Qing dynasty's *Lamajiao*. Most important, at the heart of Li's argument was his belief that Tibetan Buddhism was much more than a form of Buddhism that had been disseminated to Tibet from India. In Li's opinion, Tibetan Buddhism was a modern relic of what tantra had also been in ancient China.

Li Yizhuo discussed his history of Tibetan Buddhism in three essays, each devoted to a distinct theme. The first explored the bond between Buddhism and the Tibetan nation, tracing the religion's role in shaping Tibet's governance and the structure of its doctrinal system. Li portrayed the Tibetan nation as noble and peaceful, their national character molded by centuries of Buddhist devotion.<sup>45</sup> He classified Tibetan Buddhism within the Mahāyāna 'Great Vehicle'. Specifically, he identified Tibetan

<sup>42</sup> For the ethnic rhetoric of the Republican leaders in relation to Buddhism, see Tuttle 2025, 128-55; cf. also Dikötter 1997, and especially 2015, 61-78.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Ogurusu 1877. For an annotated edition and photographic reproduction of the text, cf. Ogurusu 1982.

<sup>44</sup> For the term lama in Japan in the early nineteenth century, see Shinjō Kawasaki 川崎信定 1986. For the reception of 'Lamajiao' in contemporary Tibet, including a Tibetan perspective on the Chinese names for the Buddhist traditions of Tibet, see Tseten 1986, 43-4. On Ogurusu's Qing sources, see Dibeltulo Concu 2021, 186-91.

<sup>45</sup> Li 2006, 1: 447.

Buddhism with the *Mimi zong* 祕密宗 ‘Secret Mantra Sect’.<sup>46</sup> He argued that Tibet had received the teachings of tantra from India long before their transmission to China. Among these, he singled out the teachings of the *lianhua bu* 蓮華部 ‘Lotus Family’, one of the three *rulai bu* 如來部 ‘Tathāgata Families’ taught by Mahāvairocana, the Buddha’s tantric form, in the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi Sūtra* (Sūtra of the Enlightenment of Mahāvairocana),<sup>47</sup> a scripture that had been brought to China by the Indian monk Śubhākarasiṃha (637-735)<sup>48</sup> during the Tang dynasty. Li remarked that the heart of these teachings lay in the cultivation of *bodhicitta*, that is, the aspiration to attain awakening for the benefit of all beings. To prove that Tibetan Buddhism was essentially a form of Secret Mantra, Li also emphasized the recitation, in Tibet, of Avalokiteśvara’s six-syllable mantra: *oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*. In Li’s opinion, this mantra, together with the practices of the *lianhua bu*, formed the doctrinal core of Tibetan Buddhism.

In the second and third essays, Li traced the development of Tibetan Buddhism in two main historical periods. First, he focused on the *hongyi pai* 紅衣派 ‘Red-Robed Sect’, associated with Padmasambhava’s early transmission of tantra to Tibet.<sup>49</sup> Then, he described the *huangyi pai* 黃衣派 ‘Yellow-Robed Sect’, founded by Tsongkhapa in later ages. Drawing on Ogurusu’s work, Li proposed a lineage for the transmission of tantra to Tibet. This lineage began with Mahāvairocana. It then passed through the great Indian scholars Nāgārjuna and Nāgabodhi to Padmasambhava, and from Padmasambhava into Tibet.<sup>50</sup> According to Li, the Red-Robed Sect employed this transmission to shape both its pantheon of deities and its meditative practices. Tsongkhapa, in Li’s opinion, did not break from this earlier lineage of the Lotus Family.<sup>51</sup> Rather, Li continued, Tsongkhapa reformed it. He reinforced the transmission of tantra to Tibet by placing greater emphasis on moral discipline and by correcting earlier ritual excesses. For Li, these reforms had preserved the purity of tantra in Tibetan Buddhism. That purity, he argued, declined only later. And in discussing this decline, Li departed from both his Chinese and Japanese sources. He traced the decline of tantra in Tibet to Tsongkhapa’s sixth tulku,<sup>52</sup> the Tibetan term for ‘incarnation’, referred to in Mongolian as a *xubilgan*. Indeed, a tulku lineage exists for Tsongkhapa’s father: Akya *hothogthu*.<sup>53</sup> However, although Tsongkhapa had one tulku, he did not have a lineage himself. More precisely, Tsongkhapa’s

46 Li 2006, 1, 448-9.

47 The Sanskrit version from which the Chinese and Tibetan translations were made was lost, but the original title preserved in the Tibetan translation is: *Mahāvairocana abhisambodhi vikurvitādhiṣṭhāna vaipulya sūtrendrarāja nāma dharmaparyāya* (Dharma Discourse Called Mahāvairocana’s Enlightenment, Miracles, and Empowerment, King of the Best of the Extensive Scriptures). In Chinese, the full title is: *Da Piluzhena chengfo shenbian jiachi jing* 大毘盧遮那成佛神變加持經 (Scripture of the Enlightenment, Miracles, Supernatural Transformations, and Empowerment of Mahāvairocana).

48 C. Shanwuwei 善無畏.

49 Li 2006, 2: 65.

50 Li 2006, 2: 70.

51 Li 2006, 1: 449.

52 T. sprul sku.

53 T. A kyā ho thog thu.

tulku was Shantipa Lodrö Gyaltzen (1487-1567),<sup>54</sup> a Geluk<sup>55</sup> master from the kingdom of Guge in western Tibet.<sup>56</sup> The lineage never reached the sixth incarnation, but Li needed a twofold timeline to accommodate a second period of decline for Tibet's tantra. This error likely reflected Li's attempt to explain Tibetan religious history in terms that were familiar to late Qing and early Republican narratives of dynastic decline.

Despite its many errors, Li Yizhuo's account left a lasting mark on how Tibetan Buddhism was imagined in Republican China. In 1929, he republished the three essays as a single volume. In 1933, while Fazun studied in Lhasa's great monasteries, Li revised the work under a new title: *Xizang Fojiao shi* 西藏佛教史 (History of Tibetan Buddhism). His adaptation of Ogurusu's *Ramakyō engaku* was the most widely read book about Tibet's *Mijiao* during the Republican period. Li Yizhuo's simple and familiar language appealed to Taixu, who had followed the developments of what, in the early 1920s, came to be known as revival of tantra. This revival was first led by a group of Cantonese converts to Japan's Shingon who sought to revive China's lost tantra through the Japanese tradition, and they were soon followed by those who sought to revive it through the Tibetan Tradition. And so, in the late 1920s, when Fazun began to read sources in the Tibetan language, Li's account of the history of the Vajrayāna in Tibet, an account that incorrectly traced the entire history of Tibetan Buddhism to the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra*, still conveyed the sense of the new Chinese term *Xizang Fojiao*.

To be sure, Fazun's scholarship would eclipse Li's in scope, method, and fidelity to Tibetan sources. Still, Fazun retained much of Li's language in the early study of Tibetan Buddhism. Like Li, Fazun regarded Tibetan Buddhism as the form of Buddhism that had taken root in the *Xizang minzu* 西藏民族, Republican China's term for the 'Tibetan nation'. Fazun not only moved beyond the categories he had inherited, but also beyond earlier scholarly methods. Li wrote from afar, relying on Chinese and Japanese sources. Fazun made the pilgrimage to Tibet, read his sources in Tibetan, and lived inside the tradition he aimed to introduce to Chinese Buddhists. Through revolution, war, and persecution, he sustained the most ambitious effort of the twentieth century to render the Tibetan scholastic tradition into Chinese. In so doing, Fazun offered his own answer to the question that haunted many Chinese Buddhists of his time: What had become of *Mijiao*?

Fazun's answer to that question was not articulated by mystifying Chinese and Japanese secondary sources. Unlike Li's, it emerged from the careful work of translation. In the field, and among Tibetan texts, Fazun relinquished an earlier generation's nostalgic search for China's tantra. What he uncovered in Tibet was something else entirely. Before we turn to his discoveries, we must first look to the origins of the mission in the years leading to 1925, when Fazun left Beijing for Tibet.

In 1925, Taixu published a seminal essay on *Haichao yin* 海潮音 (Sound of the Sea Tide), one of China's leading Buddhist periodicals of the time. The essay, titled "Zhongguo xianshi Mizong fuxing zhi qushi

<sup>54</sup> T. Shanti pa blo gros rgyal mtshan.

<sup>55</sup> T. Dge lugs; C. Gelu 格鲁.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Vitali 2012, 159-64. This is an obscure tulku born sixty-eight years after the death of Tsongkhapa. In this light, Li may have possibly meant the sixth Dalai Lama. Still, this is unclear in his text.

中國現時密宗復興之趨勢” (Trends in the Contemporary Revival of Tantra in China),<sup>57</sup> reflected on a recent, unexpected phenomenon. The practice of tantra, long thought lost in China, seemed to have been emerging again in provinces like Guangdong 廣東, Hubei 湖北, Sichuan, Zhejiang 浙江, and Jiangsu 江蘇. Tantra seemed to have returned, observed Taixu, like a lost gem restored to its rightful owner. It was a treasure that stirred students of Buddhism across the country. Still, Taixu reflected on the nature of tantra. The tantra of his day, returning through Japan and Tibet, was surely not the same as the tradition that once flourished in China. Alongside his teacher Yang Wenhui, Taixu affirmed that tantra had held a prestigious place at the imperial court during the Tang dynasty. The story was drawn from the essays of Li Yizhuo, where the Chinese Buddhologist identified Tibetan Buddhism with both China’s and Japan’s tantra. In the early eighth century, observed Taixu, Indian and Central Asian masters like Subhākarasimha, Vajrabodhi (671-741), and Amoghavajra (705-774) had brought tantra to the Tang imperial court. Under their guidance, it had reached unparalleled heights. Still, that legacy did not last, for it vanished during the persecution of Buddhism under Emperor Wuzong 武宗 (r. 840-846).<sup>58</sup>

In his essay, Taixu lamented that after this rupture, tantra had left only traces in China. In the centuries that followed, he continued, only fragments of tantra had survived in China. For example, the *yankou* 焰口, a ritual performed for the release of hungry ghosts, persisted in Chinese monasteries. Still tantra must have disappeared in both doctrine and practice. Later, says Taixu, a Tibetan exponent of tantra, that is, Pakpa<sup>59</sup> (1235-1280), arrived in China under Mongol patronage. His teaching, however, also faded from the scene. Eventually, during the Ming dynasty, the Hongwu 洪武 Emperor (r. 1368-1398) banned all tantric rituals. In contrast, Taixu concluded in his essay, the lamas of Tibet had preserved those teachings. There, he observed, Tsongkhapa had “reformed” the monastic system by reconciling tantra with the practice of morality.<sup>60</sup> Based on the work of Li Yizhuo, Taixu came to believe that, without Tsongkhapa’s reforms, Tibet’s tantra would have met the same end as China’s.

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**57** Taixu 1970b, 2877.

**58** Notably, in his writings Taixu uses the sinograph Mizong 密宗 (J. Misshū) as a synonym of Mijiao (J. Mikkyō) 密教. During the Republican period, both terms designate tantra in Buddhist Chinese in the sense that Li Youyi intended. In translating *Mizong* or *Mijiao* as “tantra”, rather than “Esoteric Buddhism”, the present study situates its analysis within the discourse on tantra of the Republican period, when China, Japan, and Tibet were believed to have inherited the same Vajrayāna from India. Recent scholarship has examined how China’s *Mizong* or *Mijiao* was imagined in Japanese scholarship to have existed as a distinct “sect” or “school” of Chinese Buddhism. By contrast, recent studies of Chinese sources have shown a very different picture, one in which the scriptures, rituals, and practices later grouped under *Mijiao* or *Mizong* in East Asia were linked to the Indian tantras only in the modern period, largely through the lens of Japanese sectarian scholarship. See, for example, Orzech 2006 and 2012; McBride 2004; 2005; Sharf 2002; Shinohara 2014; Gimello 2006; and, with reference to the Republican period, Dibeltulo Concu 2021. For a different approach to the translation of *Mizong* or *Mijiao*, one that treats “Esoteric Buddhism” not as a construct of modern discourse but as a historical reality tracing to Tang China, cf. Shahar and Bentor 2017; Goble 2019; Wu 2024.

**59** T. 'Phags pa; C. Basiba 發思巴.

**60** It must be noticed here that ‘reform’ (C. chongxin 重新) reflects Taixu’s preoccupations with the reforms of the Buddhist monastic system in China during the Republican period, as Tsongkhapa’s reforms do not emerge in Tibetan sources.

Still, the return of tantra in modern China did not amount to a mere revival of lost elements. According to Taixu, the causes for the rise of tantra in his time had to be sought in Japan's imperial ambitions. In 1915, during the First World War, the Japanese government had issued the Twenty-One Demands to Yuan Shikai. The Twenty-One Demands included a clause that granted Japanese Buddhists the right to carry out missionary activities in China. According to Taixu, this clause amounted to cultural imperialism disguised as religious outreach. While teaching on Chinese soil, Japanese monks claimed they were merely returning the dharma that China had once given them. Their claim carried weight especially in the case of tantra, for Japanese missionaries maintained that tantra, after its decline in China, had flourished in Japan instead.

Ten years earlier, in 1915, Taixu had already addressed the revival of tantra in a famous essay titled “Zhengli sengqie zhidu lun 整理僧伽制度論” (On the Reorganization of the Saṃgha Institutions). In response to the spread of Japanese missionary activity in China, he had suggested to send Chinese monks to Japan to study and retrieve the lost traces of tantra from there.<sup>61</sup> Within five years, *Haichao yin* had become a platform to support this project. In 1920, the journal devoted a special issue to tantra. Among the contributions was *Manchaluō tongjie* 曼荼羅通解, a Chinese translation of *Mandara tsūkai* 曼荼羅通解 (An Explanation of the Maṇḍalas) by Gonda Raifu 權田雷斧 (1846-1934), a scholar in Japan's Shingon Sect 真言宗. The Chinese translator was Wang Hongyuan 王弘願 (1876-1937),<sup>62</sup> a Cantonese convert to Gonda Raifu's Shingon. His translation introduced Chinese readers to the *taizōkai* 胎藏界 and *kongōkai* 金剛界, a set of two maṇḍalas that are central to Japan's Shingon and Tendai 天台 sects. In it, Wang also described the *abhiṣekas*,<sup>63</sup> or empowerments, performed in ceremonies involving these maṇḍalas. In so doing, he offered Chinese Buddhists a rare and detailed view into tantric rituals from Japan.<sup>64</sup> Wang Hongyuan had earlier translated Gonda Raifu's *Mikkyō kōyō* 密宗綱要 (Essentials of Tantra), a work first published in Tokyo in 1916, into Chinese. In 1924, at Wang's invitation, Gonda Raifu had also traveled to Chaozhou 潮州, where he conferred a series of empowerments. Wang continued his studies in Japan, then returned to confer *abhiṣekas* in Guangzhou and Hong Kong. There, he also founded a center to promote tantra in China and publicized these efforts in his *Mijiao jiangxi lu* 密教講習錄 (Records of Conferences in the Study of Tantra), a Buddhist periodical devoted to Japan's esoteric traditions.

Despite his interest in tantra, Taixu remained cautious. In 1922, he had sent his disciple Dayong 大勇 (1893-1929) on a mission to Mount Kōya 高野山 in Japan to verify Wang's claims.<sup>65</sup> Dayong, a fully ordained monk, returned to China and began to confer *abhiṣekas* himself. This raised a question: could non-ordained Japanese teachers validly bestow empowerments on Chinese monks? Taixu became skeptical. He began to doubt that tantra, as practiced in Japan and shaped by its cultural norms, could be reconciled with the Buddhist code of monastic discipline. Around this time, having read

61 Cf. Bianchi 2004, 32-9.

62 On Wang Hongyuan, cf. Schicketanz 2014.

63 T. dbang; C. guanding 灌頂.

64 On the *taizōkai* and *kongōkai* cf. Orzech, Sørensen, Payne 2011.

65 On Dayong, cf. Bianchi 2004, 36.

Li Yizhuo's essays on the history of Tibetan Buddhism, he turned to Tibet. That which Taixu regarded as Tsongkhapa's synthesis of *sūtra* and *tantra*, rooted in the practice of morality, appeared to offer a more suitable model for Chinese Buddhists.

By 1925, Taixu was perplexed about Japan's *tantra*. That year, he commissioned Dayong to lead a new mission, this time not to Japan, but to Tibet. Within months, Dayong assembled a group of thirty young monks and departed from Beijing. Yet the mission, as Taixu envisioned it, never reached Lhasa. In 1929, Dayong died tragically in eastern Tibet. Twenty-seven years earlier, as Li Yizhuo first turned to Buddhism, one of those monks had already begun to climb his own inner mountain.<sup>66</sup> His journey started in rural northern China, passed through years of struggle, and led him to a Chinese mountain where Tibetan Buddhism had long taken root.

Fazun's secular name was Wen Miaogui 溫妙貴. He was born on December 14, 1902, in Shen County 深縣, Hebei Province 河北省. After three years of primary school, his formal education came to an abrupt end. In 1919, faced with family hardship, he took up a shoemaking apprenticeship in Baoding 保定, about 160 kilometers south of Beijing. The labor was grueling. Sores broke out on his hands and his future looked hopeless. So, he left the shoe factory, fearing that his parents would force him into marriage before allowing him to see the world. Wandering on foot, he traveled West. In Fuping County 阜平縣, Shanxi Province 山西省, a fateful encounter changed his path. "One evening at a small inn, an old man with white hair entered the door. He asked me, 'Young man, where are you going?' Before I could answer, he said, 'Mount Wutai in Shanxi is the *bodhimaṇḍa* of Mañjuśrī. There are many monasteries there, with monks in black robes and yellow robes. You could go there and become a monk'".<sup>67</sup> Taking these words to heart, Wen Miaogui set out in 1920 for Mount Wutai 五台山. Known as the "Five-Terraced Mountain", Mount Wutai, located in Shanxi Province, is one of East Asia's most revered sites of pilgrimage. Consecrated to Mañjuśrī,<sup>68</sup> the embodiment of the wisdom of all buddhas, it had long served as a meeting ground for Chinese and Tibetan Buddhists.<sup>69</sup> At Wutai's Yuhuang Temple 玉皇廟, he received novice ordination and the dharma name Fazun. There, in the sacred realm of Mañjuśrī, he met Dayong for the first time, in an encounter that would shape the course of his life.

In 1921, Fazun joined a weeklong retreat led by Dayong. It was his first sustained encounter with Buddhist doctrine. The retreat laid the foundation for his literacy in Buddhist *sūtras* and *śāstras*. Later that year, Dayong left Mount Wutai for Beijing in order to attend Taixu's lectures on the *Lotus Sūtra*.<sup>70</sup> Fazun followed him there. He hoped to continue his training and to receive full ordination as a Buddhist monk. In Beijing, Fazun met Taixu for the first time at Fayuan Temple 法源寺. The meeting left a lasting impression

66 Brenton Sullivan (2014, 298) writes: "Fazun rose to lofty heights from a rather typical or even disadvantaged position, and he did so at the price of much toil and suffering".

67 Cf. Hu Jiou 胡繼歐 (unpublished). Dr. Li Shenghai kindly provided me with this unpublished essay of Ms. Hu Jiou, one of Fazun's students at the Bodhi Studies Association in the early 1950s.

68 T. 'Jam dpal dbyangs; C. Wenshushili 文殊師利.

69 Cf. Tuttle 2006; 1-35; Charleux 2017.

70 S. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra*; C. *Fahua jing* 法華經; T. *Dam pa'i chos pad ma dkar po'i mdo*. On the *Lotus Sūtra*, see Lopež 2016.

on him. Taixu was preparing to open the World Buddhist Institute<sup>71</sup> in Wuchang 武昌. His aim was to modernize China's Buddhist monastic system and raise its standards of learning. That winter, Fazun took the *bhikṣu* vows of full ordination. Soon after, he traveled to the Longchang lüsi 隆昌律寺, a major Vinaya center on Mount Baohua 寶華山 in Jiangsu Province 江蘇省. There, he studied the codes of monastic discipline and the teachings of the Tiantai 天台 school of Chinese Buddhism, including the *Tiantai sijiaoyi* 天台四教儀 (The Meaning of the Fourfold Teachings of Tiantai) by the Goryeo monk Chegwan 諦觀 (d. 970) and the *Jiaoguan gangzong* 教觀綱宗 (Essentials of Scriptural and Contemplative Approaches) by Zhixu 智旭 (1599-1655), a leading thinker of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644).

In 1922, Fazun returned to Wuchang. News had spread that Taixu's World Buddhist Institute was finally opening its doors there. Fazun joined its first class. The first year, he studied Abhidharma, Buddhist logic, and the history of Buddhism. By 1923, he had trained in the texts of the Sanlun zong 三論宗 'Three Treatises Sect', forming the Chinese Mādhyamika school. He also received instruction on Mahāyāna scriptures and Yogācāra texts: the *Jie shenmi jing* 解深密經 (Sūtra Unraveling the Thought),<sup>72</sup> the *Wenshushili suoshuo boreboluomi jing* 文殊師利所說摩訶般若波羅蜜經 (Sūtra of the Perfection of Wisdom Spoken by Mañjuśrī),<sup>73</sup> and Xuanzang's *Cheng Weishi Lun* 成唯識論 (Demonstration of Consciousness Only).<sup>74</sup> These texts provided Fazun with a foundational understanding of Mahāyāna philosophy.

That same year, Fazun turned to Japan's tantra. He studied the *Mizong Gangyao* 密宗綱要 (Essentials of Tantra), that is, Gonda Raifu's manual on Shingon ritual that Wang Hongyuan had translated from Japanese. With this text, Fazun completed his basic training in both Hinayāna and Mahāyāna teachings, across the full spectrum of sūtra and tantra, as taught at the Wuchang Institute. Later that year, Dayong returned from Japan. In his hands were more ritual manuals, maṇḍala diagrams, and materials related to the *abhiṣeka* rites of Shingon. In Wuchang, Dayong began teaching the foundations of Japan's traditions of tantra. Under Dayong's guidance, Fazun encountered his first *sādhana*:<sup>75</sup> the practice of Yellow Mañjuśrī.

In 1924, Fazun completed his formal studies at the Wuchang Institute and moved to Beijing. There, at Ciyin Temple 慈因寺, Dayong had just launched a new initiative, the "Buddhist and Tibetan Language Institute".<sup>76</sup> Its aim was ambitious. Dayong hoped to train Chinese monks to read Buddhist texts in Tibetan and, eventually, to be able to receive teachings directly from Tibetan masters. The institute marked a turning point in the study of Tibetan Buddhism in modern China. For the first time, Tibetan language training was framed not just as textual recovery, but as a form of religious encounter.

<sup>71</sup> C. Wuchang Shijie foxue yuan 武昌世界佛學苑. On the World Buddhist Institute, cf. Pittman 2001, 99, 118-19, 121-3, 125-30. Cf. also Lai 2017.

<sup>72</sup> S. *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*; T. *Dgongs pa nges par 'grel pa'i mdo*.

<sup>73</sup> C. *Wenshushili suoshuo boreboluomi jing* 文殊師利所說摩訶般若波羅蜜經.

<sup>74</sup> S. \**Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi śāstra*.

<sup>75</sup> The Sanskrit term *sādhana* (C. xiufa 修法; T. grub thabs) refers to methods of attainment performed by a practitioner in relation to a specific meditation deity (C. benzun 本尊; S. iṣṭadevatā; T. yi dam).

<sup>76</sup> C. Fojiao zangwen xueyuan 佛教藏文學院.

But Dayong's vision was already evolving. That same year, he visited the Yonghe Gong 雍和宮, the imperial temple that had long served as the center of Tibetan Buddhism in Beijing. There, Dayong studied tantric ritual with Bai Puren 白普仁 (1870-1927),<sup>77</sup> a Mongolian lama of the Geluk order who had served at the Yonghe Gong since the final years of the Qing dynasty. Bai Puren had become renowned for a pilgrimage to Mount Wutai, where he was said to have received a direct vision of Mañjuśrī. Stories of miracles surrounded him. Yet, his reputation rested especially on his performance of *sāntika* rituals for national protection, often involving recitations of the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottama Sūtra* (Sublime Golden Light Sūtra).<sup>78</sup> Earlier in 1924, Bai Puren had met the ninth Panchen Lama, Thupten Chökyi Nyima (1883-1937), during the latter's visit to Beijing. The Panchen Lama bestowed on him the Tibetan honorific title of *khenpo* 'abbot'.<sup>79</sup> The encounter left a deep impression on Dayong. Under Bai Puren's guidance, he studied the *homa*, that is, the tantric "fire" ritual as practiced in the Geluk tradition.

By early 1925, on the advice of Taixu, Dayong renamed the institute as "Group for Learning the Dharma in Tibet".<sup>80</sup> The new name reflected a shift in direction. Language was no longer the endpoint. The institute had become a means towards pilgrimage. Dayong now planned lead his students westward, beyond the Tibetan borderlands, to learn directly from Tibetan masters. The language institute had become a religious mission.

The Group for Learning the Dharma in Tibet left Beijing on June 4, 1925. The route carried them through the heart of China. They moved from Wuhan 武漢 to Yichang 宜昌, and then onward to Chongqing. Eventually, they arrived in Jiading 嘉定, in eastern Sichuan. From there, the monks climbed to Mount Emei 峨眉山, the mountain consecrated to Samantabhadra, the bodhisattva of extensive practice. In its forested heights, they entered retreat. That autumn, while descending a steep slope, Fazun injured his leg. The fall left him immobilized for several weeks. But stillness offered an opportunity. During his recovery, he discovered volumes of the Chinese Buddhist Canon and devoted himself to the Vinaya, the scriptural division concerning monastic discipline. At Wulong Temple 烏龍寺 in Jiading, Fazun borrowed a copy of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*,<sup>81</sup> the monastic ordination lineage followed in Tibet. Alongside it, he borrowed two lexicons and copied the Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist terms from both of them by hand. One was a four-volume Chinese-Manchu-Mongolian-Tibetan lexicon of colloquial terms,<sup>82</sup> the other a four-volume Chinese-Manchu-Mongolian-Tibetan glossary of Buddhist terminology.<sup>83</sup> In so doing, Fazun created his own bilingual reference tools, preparing himself for the work of translation that lay ahead.

<sup>77</sup> On Bai Puren, cf. Bianchi 2004, 40; Tuttle 2005, 79-81; and especially Wu 2024, 48-62.

<sup>78</sup> C. *Jingguangming zuishengwang jing* 金光明最勝王經.

<sup>79</sup> C. kanbu 堪布; T. mkhan po; S. upādhyāya; P. upajjhāya. The *khenpo* is a senior monk authorized to confer both novice and full ordinations.

<sup>80</sup> C. Liu zang xuefa tuan 留藏學法團.

<sup>81</sup> C. *Genben shuoyiqieyou bu pinaiye* 根本說一切有部毘奈耶.

<sup>82</sup> C. *Siti hebi* 四體合璧.

<sup>83</sup> C. *Siti hebi fanyì mingyì* 四體合璧翻譯名義.

By the end of 1925, the group had crossed into Kham,<sup>84</sup> Tibet's eastern region. After reaching Dartsedo,<sup>85</sup> they settled at Nga Chö Monastery,<sup>86</sup> where they focused on improving their spoken Tibetan. At Nga Chö Monastery, Fazun reconnected with Chong Baolin 充寶林 (d.u.), his former teacher of Tibetan in Beijing who had returned home for the Tibetan New Year. Fazun soon learned that Mr. Chong was a disciple of Jangpa Mönlam Rinpoche (d.u.),<sup>87</sup> a lama renowned for both his scholarship and meditation practice, who lived and taught at Lhamotse Monastery,<sup>88</sup> on nearby Mount Paoma 跑馬山. In 1926, Fazun led Dayong and other members of the group on Mount Paoma to study under the Tibetan master. There, he studied some of the most important works of the Geluk scholastic tradition. To begin, he read Vasubandhu's *Trimśikākārikā* (Thirty Verses)<sup>89</sup> and improved his language skills with several Tibetan language primers, opening the door for Tibetan philosophical literature. Later, under Jangpa Mönlam's guidance, Fazun studied several of Tsongkhapa's works, such as the *Gelong gi Lapja Namtse Dengmar Drakpa* (A Commentary on the Rules for Fully Ordained Monks),<sup>90</sup> the *Jangchub Shunglam* (Main Path for Bodhisattvas),<sup>91</sup> and the *Lamrim Dūdön* (Concise Meaning of the Stages of the Path).<sup>92</sup> These texts shaped the course of Fazun's later studies in Lhasa.

By 1927, Dayong decided that he would lead several members of the group into Ü-Tsang,<sup>93</sup> Tibet's central provinces. The Republican government approved the plan and pledged financial support. Officials hoped that the mission might strengthen ties between China and Tibet at a time of mounting uncertainty. The route west, however, proved treacherous. In Kham, political unrest and constant threat of banditry made group travel dangerous. Fazun chose a different path. Rather than wait, he set off alone, joining a mule caravan of merchants and making his way through the mountains. Eventually, he reunited with Dayong in Karze,<sup>94</sup> just north of Dartsedo. But in Karze, the mission stalled. Tibetan authorities refused to let them continue. Chinese citizens, they explained, could not proceed into Ü-Tsang if traveling with

**84** T. Khams; C. Kang 康.

**85** T. Dar rtse mdo; C. Dajianlü 打箭鑪, also Kangding 康定.

**86** T. Lnga mchod; C. Anque si 安却寺.

**87** T. Byams pa smon lam; C. Ciyuan dashi 慈願大師.

**88** C. Lamo 拉摩; T. Lha mo rtse.

**89** T. *Sum cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa*; C. *Weishi sanshi lun* 唯識三十論.

**90** T. *Dge slong gi bslab bya gnam lce ldeng mar grags pa*; C. *Bichujie shi* 必芻戒釋. The *Bichujie shi*, also known in Chinese as *Bichuxue chu* 芻芻學處, is based on an oral commentary given by Lama Tsongkhapa in 1401 at Namche Deng Monastery. The text explains the vows of fully ordained *bhikṣus*. It is especially important to understand Tsongkhapa's sustained efforts to reform and renew the study and practice of monastic discipline (C. jie 戒; S. śīla; T. tshul khriims), which he saw as having declined in Tibet during his time.

**91** T. *Byang chub gzhung lam*; C. *Pusajiepin shi* 菩薩戒品釋. The "Main Path for Bodhisattvas" records the oral commentary given by Tsongkhapa in 1399 on the section dealing with bodhisattva discipline (S. bodhisattvaśīlaparivarta) in Asaṅga's "Stages of the Bodhisattva" chapter (C. Pusa di 菩薩地; S. Bodhisattva bhūmi; T. Byang chub sems dpa'i sa) of Asaṅga's *Yogācārabhūmīśāstra* (C. *Yuqieshidi lun* 瑜伽師地論).

**92** C. *Putidao cidī lüe lun* 菩提道次第略論; T. *Lam rim bsdus don*; "Concise Meaning of the Stages of the Path". The *Lam rim bsdus don* is also known as *Lam rim chung ngu*, "Brief Stages of the Path".

**93** T. Dbus-Gtsang; C. Wei-Zang 衛藏.

**94** T. Dkar mdzes; C. Ganzi 甘孜. Karze is an important city in eastern Tibet.

official escorts. With no option but to pause their journey, Fazun and Dayong took refuge at Drakar Monastery.<sup>95</sup> There, they came under the guidance of Drakar Tulku, Losang Tenzin Nyendrak (1866-1928),<sup>96</sup> the respected lineage holder who served as the monastery's abbot.

Drakar Rinpoché and his senior students welcomed Fazun into a rigorous course of study. The curriculum included two of Tsongkhapa's most influential works, the *Lamrim Chenmo* (Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path)<sup>97</sup> and the *Drangné Lekshe Nyingpo* (Essence of Eloquence on the Definitive and Provisional).<sup>98</sup> Fazun also studied the *Abhisamayālamkāra* (Ornament of Realization),<sup>99</sup> attributed to Maitreyañātha (ca. 350),<sup>100</sup> alongside classical Indian and Tibetan commentaries to the text, as well as core treatises in Buddhist logic known as *Dü Dra* (Collected Topics).<sup>101</sup> In addition to Buddhist doctrine, he also read widely from the collected biographies of Geluk masters. This period also marked a turning point in Fazun's work. He began translating from Tibetan into Chinese for the first time. This early effort included Tsongkhapa's brief poem *Tendrel Töpa* (In Praise of Dependent Origination),<sup>102</sup> which he rendered into Chinese with a short commentary. He also translated the lives of Tsongkhapa<sup>103</sup> and the Bengali master Atiśa Dipaṅkaraśrījñāna (982-1054),<sup>104</sup> whose work inspired Tsongkhapa to compose the *Lamrim Chenmo*. Both would be later published in *Haichao yin*.<sup>105</sup> During his stay in Karze, Fazun also took notes of Drakar Tulku's oral teachings, although most of these would later be lost.

In 1928, Drakar Tulku introduced Fazun to Jampel Rölpai Lodrö (1888-1936),<sup>106</sup> the lama he would revere as his lifelong teacher. Known as Amdo Géshé,<sup>107</sup> Jampel Rölpai Lodrö was born in Tsongkha, in the Amdo

95 T. Brag dkar dgon pa; Zhaga si 札噶寺.

96 T. Brag dkar sprul sku Blo bzang bstan 'dzin snyan grags; C. Zhaga zhugu 札噶諸古.

97 T. *Lam rim chen mo*; C. *Putidao cidi guanglun* 菩提道次第廣論.

98 T. *Drang nges legs bshad snying po*; C. *Bian liaoyi buliaoyi lun* 辨了義不了義論; completed by Tsongkhapa in Lhasa in 1408.

99 T. *Mngon par rtogs pa'i rgyan*; C. *Xianguan zhuangyan lun* 現觀莊嚴論.

100 Maitreya (T. Byams pa; C. Mile 彌勒) is the bodhisattva who will become the next buddha (hence also called the buddha of the future), following the disappearance of the teachings of Buddha Śākyamuni from the human world in the Age of Final Dharma. According to tradition, he is the author of several texts that clarify aspects of the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras*. Some of these works, transmitted to Aśaṅga in the fourth century, form the foundation of the thought of the Cittamātra school. Later identified as the future buddha, Maitreya is regarded modern scholarship as a historical figure named Maitreyañātha, Aśaṅga's predecessor and the actual founder of the school.

101 T. *Bsdus grwa*; C. *Yinming chuji rumen* 因明初機入門.

102 T. *Rten 'brel bstod pa*. The full Tibetan title is *Sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das la zab mo rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba gsung ba'i sgo nas bstod pa legs par bshad pa'i snying po*. Fazun usually refers to the text as *Yuanqi zan* 緣起贊, but his full translation of the extended Tibetan title is: *You shuo shenshen yuanqi men zhong chengzan wushang dashi shizun shuo xinrang, lue ming "Yuanqi Zan"* 由說甚深緣起門中稱讚無上大師世尊說心臟, 略名“緣起讚”. This text is known as the *Brief Essence of the Eloquence*.

103 C. *Zongkaba Dashi Zhuan* 宗喀巴大師傳.

104 T. A ti sha; C. Adixia 阿底峽.

105 C. *Adixia zunzhe zhuan* 阿底峽尊者傳.

106 T. 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros.

107 T. A mdo dge bshes; C. Andong enshi 安東恩師.

region of northeastern Tibet.<sup>108</sup> Orphaned at the age of six, he took novice vows early and began his training at Kumbum Monastery,<sup>109</sup> where he distinguished himself in the Geluk curriculum. He received full ordination and advanced tantric empowerments from several leading masters of his time. Among these were transmissions of Yoganiruttaratantra practices such as Guhyasamāja, Cakrasaṃvara, and Vajrabhairava. His education also included instruction from the fourth Amdo Zhamarpa, Gendün Tenzin Gyatso (1852-1912),<sup>110</sup> a teacher of the thirteenth Dalai Lama. Beyond training in the Geluk sect, Jampel Rölpai Lodrö received extensive teachings across all traditions. In the Nyingma sect, he studied under Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo (1820-1892)<sup>111</sup> and Tertön Sögyal (1856-1926).<sup>112</sup> From Khamnyön Darma Senggé (1865-1953),<sup>113</sup> a celebrated ‘mad yogin’ from Kham, he learned the Longchen Nyingtik (Heart Essence of the Vast Expanse)<sup>114</sup> cycle, rooted in the visionary writings of Jikmé Lingpa (1730-1798),<sup>115</sup> a central figure in Dzokchen (Great Perfection).<sup>116</sup> Recognized by several teachers as an incarnation of Patrül Rinpoché (1808-1887),<sup>117</sup> one of the most important Tibetan masters of the nineteenth century, Amdo Géshé taught widely in Golok,<sup>118</sup> Derge,<sup>119</sup> and Chamdo<sup>120</sup> throughout the 1910s and 1920s. In Chamdo, he would accept Fazun as a disciple and, together with Dayong, he would prepare them for study in Lhasa’s great monastic colleges.

In August 1929, Dayong died at Drakar Monastery. Years of travel and the harsh effects of the high altitude of the Tibetan plateau had worn him down. His death marked the end of the mission to Tibet as originally envisioned by Taixu. Fazun, its most accomplished survivor, inherited the intellectual and institutional aims that Dayong had carried to that moment. After Dayong’s funeral, he stayed in Karze through the winter. Then, in early 1930, he set out for central Tibet with three companions. Their first destination was Chamdo, the easternmost stronghold of the Ganden Phodrang<sup>121</sup> government (1655-1959), which ruled central and western Tibet and parts of the east. In Chamdo, Fazun entered a new phase of learning with Jampel Rölpai Lodrö. Under his guidance, Fazun received more than forty empowerments into

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**108** On Amdo Géshé, cf. Roger Jackson 2019, 309. For a biography of Amdo Géshé, cf. Pearcey 2012.

**109** T. Sku ‘bum; C. Taer si 塔兒寺. The Kumbum Monastery, meaning “Hundred Thousand Images”, is a Geluk institution in the Kokonor region of Amdo, southwest of Siling in modern-day Qinghai province. Officially known as Kumbum Jampaling (T. Sku ‘bum byams pa gling), it was founded in 1583 by the Third Dalai Lama, Sönam Gyatso at the site of Tsongkhapa’s birth.

**110** T. A mdo zhwa dmar pa dge ‘dun bstan ‘dzin rgya mtsho.

**111** T. ‘Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse’i dhang po.

**112** T. Gter ston bsod rgyal.

**113** T. Khams smyon d+har+ma seng ge.

**114** T. Klong chen snying thig.

**115** T. ‘Jigs med gling pa.

**116** T. Rdzogs chen.

**117** T. Dpal sprul rin po che.

**118** T. Mgo log.

**119** T. Sde dge.

**120** T. Chab mdo.

**121** T. Dga’ ldan pho brang.

the maṇḍalas of the Vajrayāna<sup>122</sup> and began to explore the central texts in the Geluk scholastic curriculum. That summer, he also attended lectures in Tibetan language. He then followed Amdo Géshé on a journey into Ü-Tsang.

Tibetan master and Chinese disciple arrived in Lhasa at the end of October 1930. Fazun enrolled at Drepung Monastery,<sup>123</sup> the largest of the three great Geluk monasteries near Lhasa. He remained there for the next four years. Under the supervision of Amdo Géshé, he read widely in the Indian and Tibetan commentarial traditions. He began with primers in logic and epistemology, essential for engaging the core commentaries, and continued with the *Lamrim Chenmo*. He then turned to others of Tsongkhapa's major works, including the *Lekshe Sertreng* (Golden Garland of Eloquence),<sup>124</sup> the *Ngakrim Chenmo* (Great Exposition of the Stages of Mantra),<sup>125</sup> and the *Rimnga Rabtu Salwé Drönmé* (Brilliant Illumination of the Lamp of the Five Stages).<sup>126</sup> Over time, Fazun received empowerments for more than three hundred deities. Among them were Yamāntaka<sup>127</sup> and Vajrayoginī.<sup>128</sup> Beyond Amdo Géshé, he also studied with other leading Geluk masters of his time. He trained in the Abhidharma<sup>129</sup> with the Ganden Tripa,<sup>130</sup> in the Vinaya with the Jangtsé Chōjé Jampa Chödrak (1876-1937),<sup>131</sup> and received the empowerment of Heruka<sup>132</sup> from Pabongka Rinpoché (1878-1941).<sup>133</sup> It was during these years at Drepung as a protégé of Amdo Géshé, that Fazun began his first major translation project: rendering Tsongkhapa's *Lamrim Chenmo* into Chinese. It was a project that he would pursue for years to come.

**122** T. Rdo rje theg pa; C. Jingang sheng 金剛乘; 'Diamond Vehicle' or 'Thunderbolt Vehicle'.

**123** T. 'Bras spungs dgon pa; C. Biebang si 別邦寺. The author was unable to trace in the literature the name of the college in which Fazun was enrolled at Drepung.

**124** T. *Legs bshad gser phreng*; C. *Xianguan zhuangyan lun jinman lun* 現觀莊嚴論金鬘論.

**125** T. *Sngags rim chen mo*; C. *Mizong dao cidi guanglun* 密宗道次第廣論.

**126** T. *Rim lnga rab tu gsal ba'i sgron me*; C. *Shengji mijiao wang wu cidi jiaoshou shanxiandeng lun* 勝集密教王五次第教授善顯燈論; in Fazun's Chinese, "Great Treatise on the Five Stages".

**127** T. Gshin rje gshed; C. Daweide 大威德; the "Destroyer of Death" tantra.

**128** T. Rdo rje rnal 'byor ma; C. Kongxing fomu 空行佛母.

**129** T. Chos mngon pa; C. Jushe 俱舍.

**130** T. Dga' ldan khri pa; C. Gedeng chiba 格登持巴; in Tibetan, the "Throneholder of Ganden Monastery". It remains unclear whether Fazun studied with the ninety-first or the ninety-second Ganden Tripa. The ninety-first Ganden Tripa was Losang Gyaltzen (T. Blo bzang rgyal mtshan, d. 1932), who held the position from 1927 to 1932. He was succeeded by Thupten Nyinje (T. Thub bstan nyin byed, d. 1933?), the ninety-second Ganden Tripa.

**131** T. Byang rtse chos rje; C. Jiangze fawang 絳則法王. By the title Jangtsé Chōjé 'Dharma King of Byang rtse', Fazun is referring to the ninetieth Ganden Tripa, Jampa Chödrak (T. Byams pa chos grags; 1876-1937). Jangtsé is one of the monastic colleges at Ganden.

**132** T. 'Khor lo bde mchog; C. Shengle jingang 勝樂金剛; the "Binding of the Wheel" tantra.

**133** T. Pha bong ka Byams pa bstan'dzin 'phrin las rgya mtsho; C. Pozhangka dashi 頗章喀大師. Referred to in Chinese by Fazun as Pozhangka dashi and also known as Pabongka renboqie 帕繡喀仁波伽, Pabongka Rinpoché was one of the most influential Tibetan lamas of the twentieth century. As the teacher of the tutors of Tenzin Gyatso (T. Bstan' dzin rgya mtsho; b. 1935), the fourteenth Dalai Lama, Pabongka Rinpoche was a renowned scholar with a remarkable ability to guide disciples. He was especially gifted in expounding the *Lamrim*, while in the realm of Buddhist tantra, he was widely regarded among Tibetans as a great *yogin* - so much so that many believed he was a living embodiment of the *yidam* Heruka Cakrasamvara (Tib. 'Khor lo bde mchog; C. Shengle Jingang 勝樂金剛). Fazun received the empowerment of this deity directly from Pabongka Rinpoche.

Meanwhile, back in Sichuan, Taixu's plans for Tibetan Buddhism were entering a new phase. In 1930, he accepted an invitation from lay followers to come teach the dharma in Sichuan province. He already knew well Liu Xiang 劉湘 (1890-1938), the most influential of Sichuan's warlords of the Republican period. The two met to discuss rising tensions between Tibetans and Chinese. Taixu believed the Buddha's teachings could serve as a bridge to ease those tensions. He urged Liu Xiang to establish an institution that would foster mutual understanding through study and dialogue. Two years later, in 1932, a Buddhist college was opened in Beibei 北碚, a town nestled in the hills above Chongqing. Conceived by Taixu and supported by Liu Xiang, the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine<sup>134</sup> was established at Jinyun Temple 縉雲寺. It was planned as a branch of the Wuchang Institute, where Taixu had previously set forth his vision of Buddhist reform. To be sure, eight years earlier, Taixu and Dayong had launched the Group for Learning the Dharma in Tibet, hoping to send Chinese monks into Lhasa. But after Dayong's untimely death, authorities in Sichuan advanced a different approach. Rather than sending monks into Tibet, the new mission was to train them at home. With a command of the Tibetan language, Chinese monks could study and translate the teachings of Tibetan Buddhism without the dangers of actually going into Tibet. The College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine quickly became the model of a new Republican-era endeavor. It aimed to incorporate the scriptural treasures of Tibetan Buddhism into a reformed Chinese Buddhism. Around this time, Taixu began writing regular letters to Fazun in Lhasa. He asked him to return to China and take a leadership role at the new College as a teacher and educational director. Fazun hesitated. Staying in Lhasa meant continuing his advanced studies with Amdo Géshé at Drepung. Returning meant becoming an institutional leader. Despite years of hardship to reach the Tibetan capital, he made the difficult choice. He would go back to China.

At the beginning of winter 1933, Fazun left Lhasa on muleback, beginning a long journey through Nepal and India. He visited the major pilgrimage sites of Śākyamuni Buddha, including Bodhgaya, Sarnath, and Kuśinagar, before reaching Rangoon, the capital of Myanmar, in the spring of 1934. He arrived at the port of Shanghai that summer. He then reunited with Taixu at Xuedou Temple 雪竇寺, a temple in the Chan Tradition 禪宗 near Ningbo 寧波 in Zhejiang province. The two had not seen each other since the early 1920s, when Dayong had founded the Tibetan and Buddhist Studies Institute in Beijing. Fazun shared a detailed account of his years in Tibet, from the grief over Dayong's death and the hardships of travel, to his mastery of the Tibetan language, and on to the teaching he had received from several eminent lamas of his time in Lhasa.

After his visit to Taixu in Ningbo, Fazun went to Nanjing. There, he was invited to serve as a translator for Losang Tenzin Jikmé Wangchuk (1884-1947),<sup>135</sup> known also as Ngakchen Rinpoché.<sup>136</sup> Losang Tenzin Jikmé

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**134** C. Hanzang jiaoli yuan 漢藏教理院. To date, the most detailed accounts of the Hanzang jiaoli yuan in European languages remain Gray Tuttle's monograph *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China* (2005) and Brenton Sullivan's essay "Venerable Fazun at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute (1932-50) and Tibetan Geluk Buddhism in China" (2008).

**135** T. Blo bzang bstan 'dzin 'jigs med dbang phyug.

**136** T. Sngags chen rin po che; C. Anqin dashi 安欽大師.

Wangchuk was a leading Geluk lama from Tashi Lhünpo Monastery<sup>137</sup> in Shigatsé,<sup>138</sup> Tibet's second largest city about 200 kilometers west of Lhasa. Ngakchen Rinpoché had come to China a decade earlier in the entourage of the ninth Panchen Lama, Thupten Chökyi Nyima.<sup>139</sup> In Nanjing, Fazun served as a translator during a Palden Lhamo<sup>140</sup> empowerment transmitted by Ngakchen Rinpoché. Shortly after, he traveled to Hebei for a brief reunion with his family, the first since he had left for Tibet. That summer, he remained in Beijing, where he joined a growing circle of scholars and monks drawn to the ninth Panchen Lama's religious and diplomatic mission in Republican China.<sup>141</sup> The collaboration with Ngakchen Rinpoché brought Fazun into the heart of a new institutional landscape that was taking shape in the capital. In October 1932, the Panchen Lama conferred a public *Kālacakra* tantra empowerment within the gates of the Forbidden City.<sup>142</sup> It reportedly attracted more than 100,000 attendees. The following year, in 1933, he founded the College for Tantric Scriptures,<sup>143</sup> dedicated to the transmission and study of Buddhist tantra. In 1934, the Panchen Lama also established the Bodhi Study Association,<sup>144</sup> focused on the translation and dissemination of Tibetan Buddhist texts and teachings, especially from the Geluk tradition. That same summer, Fazun served again as a translator for Ngakchen Rinpoché at the College for Tantric Scriptures.

In the autumn of 1934, Fazun arrived in Chongqing and stepped into his new role at the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine. Soon after his arrival, he was formally appointed director. His teaching drew from a decade of experience in Lhasa. Tibetan language, Buddhist philosophy, and direct experience all converged in his classroom. While teaching, he resumed translating the *Lamrim Chenmo*. Alongside, he began to work on two additional texts by Lama Tsongkhapa that he had studied years earlier in Kham: the *Gelong gi Lapja Namtse Dengmar Drakpa* and the *Jangchub Shunglam*. Again, Taixu hoped this model could include Tibetan Buddhism in the revival of Chinese Buddhism. Hence, in 1935, Taixu secured fresh funding for the College through Liu Xiang. With these resources, the College gained recognition as a branch of the Wuchang Institute. Fazun, endowed with extensive training and a growing personal library of Tibetan texts, was appointed head of translation and academic director. That year, he trained

**137** T. Bkra shis lhun po; C. Zhaxi lunbu si 扎什倫布寺。

**138** T. Gzhis ka rtse; C. Yijiaze 亦迦則。

**139** On the activities of the ninth Panchen Lama in Beijing, cf. Tuttle 2008, 303-27; Jagou 2011, 73-84.

**140** T. Dpal ldan lha mo; C. Jixiang Tiannü 吉祥天女; "Glorious Goddess".

**141** On the institutions established during this period in Beijing, cf. Tuttle 2009.

**142** Cf. Jagou 2011, 75-6.

**143** T. Gsang ngags chos mdzod gling; C. Mi Zang Yuan 密藏院 (active 1931-1951). Gray Tuttle renders the name of Beijing's Mi Zang Yuan as "Esoteric Treasury Institute". In this work, I avoid translating the dyad of sūtra-tantra dyad of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon as Esoteric and Essoteric, whether referring to traditions and institutions in China and Japan or Tibet, Nepal, and India. By the early twentieth century in East Asia, the Sinograph 密 was used to translate *Gsang ngags*, that is, Secret Mantra, as understood in Tibet, that is, as a synonym of the scriptural division of tantra (T. Rgyud) of the Tibetan Buddhist canon. Here, I translate Mi Zang Yuan as "College for Tantric Scriptures". Cf. Tuttle 2009, 255-9.

**144** C. Puti Xuehui 菩提學會 (active 1938-51). Here, I follow Gray Tuttle's translation of the association's name, "Bodhi Study Association". Cf. Tuttle 2009, 255, 267-9, 275 fn.

the first cohort of students and wove into the College's curriculum the oral instructions he had received at Drepung Monastery.

At this time, Fazun outlined a vision for the College's future. He wanted to bring his teacher, Amdo Géshé, to China. First, he hoped to receive the teachings he had missed before returning from Tibet. Second, he believed that Amdo Géshé could serve as a teacher of Buddhist philosophy at the College. But funds were tight. Fazun's plan stalled. An opportunity then arose with Ngawang Namgyal (1894-1968).<sup>145</sup> Known also as Khenpo Ngawang,<sup>146</sup> Ngawang Namgyal was a direct disciple of Pabongka Rinpoche. He was in Chengdu at the time in order to raise money for Sera Monastery,<sup>147</sup> one of the three great Geluk seats near Lhasa. He encouraged Fazun to accompany him and translate a series of teachings he planned to give there. The work, he said, would be paid. Around the same time, Fazun's lay supporter Hu Youzhang 胡有章 (d.u.) visited the College. He too urged Fazun to accept the offer, pointing out that the earnings could support his vision: the journey back to Tibet and his root teacher's arrival in China. Later that year, Fazun accepted Khenpo Ngawang's invitation and traveled to Chengdu. There, he translated two sets of teachings on a devotional prayer composed by Pabongka Rinpoche<sup>148</sup> and on Tsongkhapa's *Tendrel Töpa*. The funds he received were enough to make the long trip to Lhasa and return with Amdo Géshé.

In the autumn of 1935, Fazun departed once again for Tibet. This time, he planned to cross the Himalayas and enter Tibet from British India.

In February 1936, Fazun arrived in Lhasa. Tragic news met him in Tibet's capital. Just days before his return, Amdo Géshé had died. The loss devastated him. Years of planning unraveled in a single moment. Fazun traveled to Chamdo to serve as the principal officiant at his teacher's funeral rites. Then, he returned to Lhasa, where he remained for the next six months. He refused to let grief waste the journey, resuming his Vinaya studies with the Jangtsé Chöjé of Ganden Monastery,<sup>149</sup> the great Geluk monastery outside Lhasa. Together, they read several commentaries, including the *Vinayasūtra* (Aphorisms on the Vinaya)<sup>150</sup> by the Indian scholar Guṇaprabha (c. seventh century).<sup>151</sup> Distilling the essential points of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*, the *Vinayasūtra* too is one of the classics included in the Geluk curriculum. Alongside, Fazun returned to translation. Here, in Lhasa, he rendered Tsongkhapa's *Drangné Lekshe Nyingpo* into Chinese. He also paired it with a commentary, the *Drangné Namjeki Kandrel* (Commentary on the Difficult

**145** T. Ngag dbang rnam rgyal, C. Awang langji 阿旺朗吉.

**146** T. Mkhan po Ngag dbang; C. Awang kanbu 阿旺堪布.

**147** T. Se ra dgon pa. C. Sela si 色拉寺.

**148** T. *Khams gsum chos kyi rgyal po tsong kha pa chen po'i bstan pa dang mjal ba'i smon lam*; C. *Zhiyu sanjie fawang dazongkaba shengjiao yuanwen* 值遇三界法王大宗喀巴聖教愿文; "Prayer for Encountering the Teaching of the Great Tsongkhapa, King of the Dharma in the Three Realms".

**149** T. Dga' ldan dgon pa; C. Gedeng si 格登寺.

**150** T. 'Dul ba'i mdo; C. *Lüjing* 律經.

**151** T. Yon tan 'od; C. Deguang 德光.

Points of ‘Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive’<sup>152</sup> by the second Dalai Lama Gendün Gyatso (1476-1542).<sup>153</sup>

Still, during this time in Lhasa, Fazun observed the social and political atmosphere around him. More than four decades later, after the Cultural Revolution, he reflected on the impressions left by his second journey to Tibet:

That year [1936], in Tibet, I heard a great deal of reactionary propaganda. Although I had no understanding of Communist Party politics, it still aroused a sense of hostility in me. I explained all of this quite clearly in my book *Tibet, As I Once Passed Through*.<sup>154</sup>

While still mourning for Amdo Géshé, Fazun sought other lamas willing to travel to China and teach at the College in Chongqing. But none accepted. Even so, Fazun did not return to China with empty hands. In August 1936, Fazun left Lhasa and crossed the Himalayas back to British India with a complete copy of the Tibetan Buddhist canon, along with the collected works of Tsongkhapa and his closest disciples, Khedrup Jé (1385-1438)<sup>155</sup> and Gyaltsap Jé (1364-1432).<sup>156</sup> These works would form the basis of his translation work for the next four and a half decades.

By the time he returned to Chongqing, the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine was well underway. Fazun resumed his lectures on the *Lamrim Chenmo*. This time, his students could consult the complete Chinese text. While he was in Tibet earlier in 1936, his translation of Tsongkhapa’s masterpiece had been published in Wuchang. The *Lamrim Chenmo* appeared in print alongside Khedrup Jé’s *Gyüde Chiyi Nampar Zhakpa Gyapar Jyöpa* (Extensive Expression of the Presentation of the General Tantra Sets),<sup>157</sup> a concise exposition of the foundational principles of the Buddhist tantras. The translation of Khedrup Jé’s work on tantra stood out for two reasons.<sup>158</sup> First, it featured a preface by Taixu, who emphasized that tantra was not, as Chinese Buddhists believed, a tradition centered mainly on the repetition of mantras, but a complex and coherent system grounded in Mahāyāna doctrine. He praised the translation’s clarity and noted its value in correcting widespread misunderstandings that existed in China. Fazun’s work, he argued, revealed the true structure of tantra: a practical path toward Buddhahood rooted in profound insight. Second, it featured the translator’s notes. Fazun explained

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**152** T. *Rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa’i gsung ’bum las drang nges rnam ’byed kyi dka’ ’grel dgongs pa’i don rab tu gsal bar byed pa’i sgron me* (Commentary on the Difficult Points of “Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive” from the Collected Works of the Foremost Holy Omniscient [Tsongkhapa]: Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Meaning of His Thought). In Fazun’s Chinese, *Bian liaoyi buliaoyi lun shinan* 辨了義不了義論釋難.

**153** T. Dge ’dun rgya mtsho; C. Senghai 僧海.

**154** Lü, Hu 2002, 463.

**155** C. Kezhu jie 克主結; T. Mkhas grub rje. Khedrup Gelek Pal Sangpo (T. Mkhas grub rje Dge legs dpal bzang po), known as Khedrup Jé, was a close disciple of Tsongkhapa and an important early figure in the Geluk sect. A prolific scholar, Khedrup Jé excelled in Madhyamaka, tantra, and *pramāṇa*.

**156** T. Rgyal tshab rje Dar ma rin chen; C. Jiecao jie Dama renqin 嘉曹杰達瑪仁欽.

**157** C. *Mizong dao cidi lüe lun* 密宗道次第略論; T. *Rgyud sde spyi’i rnam par gzhang pa rgyas par brjod pa*. For an English translation, cf. Dge-legs, Wayman, Lessing 1968.

**158** Cf. Fazun 2000d, 329-32.

his strategies for rendering the terminology of the Buddhist tantras that did not exist in Chinese. When a suitable equivalent existed, he used it. Where no technical terms were available, he adapted the meaning of the Tibetan term to fit Chinese usage. For Sanskrit technical terms, he followed the established practices of phonetic transcription in Buddhist Chinese.

Between 1936 and 1937, Fazun completed a series of translations of Geluk commentaries on the Vinaya. These works established the foundation for the College's curriculum in Buddhist morality. While teaching, he also translated the *Abhisamayālamkāra* into Chinese and prepared a short commentary for his students. These efforts reflected his broader vision after returning from Tibet. It was to establish a solid foundation for the study of Tibetan Buddhism in China. Translation was central to this endeavor, but so was creating resources to train a new generation of monks. And so, in the first half of 1937, he turned to modern Chinese prose.

Two of his most widely read works during the Sino-Japanese War were pilgrimage accounts of Tibet. Both were written at the urging of Fafang 法舫 (1904-1951),<sup>159</sup> another close disciple of Taixu. Like Fazun, Fafang had entered the first cohort at the Wuchang Institute in 1922. After graduating in 1924, he had traveled to Beijing to study at the Tibetan Language Institute founded by Dayong. In 1925, he joined the Group for Learning the Dharma in Tibet. Of the thirty monks who set out on the mission to recover China's lost tantra, most never reached Lhasa, and Fafang was among them. He studied Tibetan and the *lamrim* with Dayong and Fazun in Dartsedo and later made his way to Karze. When Dayong died in 1929, Fafang returned to China. He became one of Taixu's assistants at the Wuchang Institute. Later, he learned Pāli, the sacred language of the Buddhist canon of Śrī Lāṅka, and specialized in the Theravāda tradition.<sup>160</sup>

In November 1936, during Fazun's second return from Tibet, he and Fafang traveled together on the Yangtze River from Wuhan to Chongqing. Along the way, Fafang urged him to record his experiences in Tibet. Within six months, Fazun produced the two books in *baihua* 白話, the vernacular language championed by the *Wusi yundong* 五四運動 (May Fourth Movement). Each was part of Fazun's broader educational mission at the College, shaped by the same spirit, the spirit of a citizen of Republican China, which guided his translations of Buddhist texts. The first of Fazun's accounts, *Modern Tibet*, appeared in Chongqing in May 1937. The second, *Tibet, As I Once Passed Through*, followed in June, evoking the memories of Fazun's final months in Lhasa.

In early July 1937, Fazun traveled to north China at the invitation of Ngakchen Rinpoché. The lama had asked him to serve as translator at the College of Tantric Scriptures in Beijing. On July 7, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident broke out near the capital, prompting Japan's full-scale invasion of China. Within weeks, as the country was pulled into the Second World War, Fazun urged Taixu to retreat to Chongqing and teach at the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine. The move brought Taixu into close and regular contact with the College's staff and students. It was here that Taixu began reading Fazun's translations of Tibetan works on Buddhist tantra.

<sup>159</sup> On Fafang, cf. Hammerstrom 2015, 69-70; Xue 2013, 68.

<sup>160</sup> C. Shangzuo bu 上座部.

During the Sino-Japanese War, Fazun's duties expanded beyond his lectures at the College. He undertook the translation of major works from the Geluk curriculum into Chinese. To support his students, he prepared a Tibetan language grammar<sup>161</sup> and a Tibetan language reader.<sup>162</sup> By the spring of 1938, the College welcomed a steady flow of eminent monks fleeing the areas occupied by the Japanese. The monk Weifang 法舫 (1908-1969), former head of the Wuchang Institute, moved to Chongqing after Wuhan became a military stronghold and a hub of national defense against the Japanese. Soon after, more of Taixu's close disciples arrived. Among them was Yinshun 印順 (1906-2005), an authority on the Chinese Mādhyamika. The monks Xuesong 雪松 (1909-2000) and Yanding 嚴定 (1902-1954) joined as well. Both had traveled to eastern Tibet with Dayong and Fazun one decade earlier, but neither had made it to Lhasa. Seeing the need for shared leadership, Taixu appointed Fazun and Weifang to head the College. The arrangement freed Fazun to focus on translation. That same year, seeking deeper understanding of the nature of tantra in Tibet, Taixu also asked Fazun to translate Tsongkhapa's *Ngakrim Chenmo* into Chinese.

Between 1939 and 1942, Fazun completed a body of translations that confirmed his reputation as China's leading authority on Tibetan Buddhism. In 1939, after finishing the *Ngakrim Chenmo*, he asked Yinshun to refine the Chinese draft for style. Soon after, the Bodhi Study Association in Beijing published the work. That same year, he also translated the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* (Compendium of Training)<sup>163</sup> by the Indian master Śāntideva (c. eighth century).<sup>164</sup> In preparing it, he drew extensively on Yijing's earlier Chinese rendering of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*. When no exact Chinese equivalents existed, Fazun created clear translations from the Tibetan and supplemented them with concise glosses.

Around this time, the foundations of the revival of tantra that had inspired Taixu and Dayong in their mission began to collapse, not by means of new knowledge of sūtra and tantra, but under the weight of historical knowledge.

In 1940, for his lectures on Tibetan history at the College, Fazun wrote his *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi* 西藏民族政教史 (Political and Religious History of the Tibetan Nation).<sup>165</sup> The book stands out as his most rigorous historical study of Tibetan sources. Unlike Li Yizhuo's *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi*, published a decade earlier, in his *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi* Fazun does not rely on Chinese or Japanese sources that identify Tibetan Buddhism with *Lamajiao* or with Japan's tantra. His innovation was to bring together Chinese and Tibetan sources. From the Chinese tradition, he used dynastic genealogies such as the *Tufan zhuan* 吐蕃傳 (Monograph of the Tufan), collected in the *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (New History of the Tang) from the Song dynasty 宋朝 (960-1127). For his Tibetan sources, he turned to Butön Rinchen Drup's (1290-1364)<sup>166</sup> *Chöjung* (History of Buddhism)<sup>167</sup> and the third Tukwan

**161** C. *Zangwen wenfa* 藏文文法.

**162** C. *Zangwen duben* 藏文讀本.

**163** T. *Bslab pa kun las btus pa*; C. *Dasheng ji pusa xue lun* 大乘集菩薩學論.

**164** T. *Zhi ba lha*; C. *Jingtian* 靜天.

**165** Cf. Fazun 1940.

**166** T. *Bu ston rin chen grub*.

**167** T. *Chos 'byung*.

Losang Chökyi Nyima's (1737-1802)<sup>168</sup> *Drubta Shelgi Melong* (Crystal Mirror of Doctrinal Systems).<sup>169</sup>

In the opening pages of his *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi*, Fazun introduced the Bön religion and offered a new periodization of the history of Buddhism in Tibet, one that remained foreign to Li Yizhuo's earlier work. He wrote:

Tibetan historical works frequently narrate the rise and fall of religion. They are tied to the biographies of those who founded or glorified it, and thus to the politics of their age. Such records cannot be separated from religion, for once separated they lose their value as history. Historical accounts, therefore, extend no further than the rise and fall of religion. There are two religions of Tibet: (1) the original religion of the way of the gods, called *bönpo*, which has been passed down to our day and still has its worshippers; and (2) Buddhism, first introduced from India during the Tang dynasty. In the early reign of Emperor Wuzong it was destroyed, but in the Song it flourished once again. Thus, Tibetan histories speak of "old Buddhism", or the "early dissemination", and "new Buddhism", or the "later dissemination". Before the Tang there was only the religion of the way of the gods, with no trace of Buddhism. In the later dissemination, Buddhism again fell into decline, until Tsongkhapa arose, who reorganized and revived it, shaping the religious and political order of the past six centuries. Therefore, Tibetan history can be divided into two periods: (1) Ancient history, from before the introduction of Buddhism through its spread up to the rise of the Yellow Religion; and (2) Modern history, from Tsongkhapa's founding of the Yellow Religion to the present.<sup>170</sup>

For the first time in a Chinese work on Tibet, Tibetan historians were given the authority to narrate their own country's past. Fazun showed that Tibet's institutions were both political and religious. The two aspects were inseparable. Citing records from the Tang, Fazun explained that Tibet had two religions. The first was *Shendao jiao* 神道教, 'religion of the way of the gods', identified as *Bengbo* 崩薄, 'Bön tradition';<sup>171</sup> and *Fojiao* 佛教, 'Buddhism'.

According to Fazun, Buddhism entered Tibet from India during the Tang dynasty and its history unfolded in two great stages. The first was *jiufojiao* 舊佛教, 'old Buddhism',<sup>172</sup> the early traditions that spread from the seventh to the ninth centuries during the *qian hong qi* 先弘期, 'period of early dissemination'.<sup>173</sup> The second was *xinfojiao* 新佛教, 'new Buddhism',<sup>174</sup> which spread from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries during the *hou hong qi* 後弘期, 'period of later dissemination'.<sup>175</sup> With this framework, Fazun added another innovation. He divided Tibetan history into *gudai shi* 古代史

168 T. Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma.

169 T. *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long*.

170 Fazun 1940, 1-2.

171 T. Bon po.

172 T. rnying ma.

173 T. bstan pa snga dar.

174 T. gsar ma.

175 T. bstan pa phyi dar.

‘ancient history’ and *jindai shi* 近代史 ‘recent history’, a distinction that also exalted the rise of his own Geluk sect. It marked the rise of Tsongkhapa as the watershed between the two great stages of Tibetan history.

Here, at Chongqing’s College, Fazun relayed a story of Tibet’s national religions that was radically different from Li Yizhuo’s 1930 *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi*. For Fazun, Tibet’s ancient Buddhism was not simply *Mijiao*, or tantra, as his teachers Taixu and Dayong believed during the revival of tantra two decades earlier. Nor was Tibet’s modern Buddhism *Lamajiao*, as the Japanese Buddhist missionary Ogurusu described it in his *Ramakyō engaku* in the late nineteenth century. Indeed, the word *Lamajiao* never appeared in Fazun’s text. Instead, he used the terms *Mijiao* and *Misheng* 密乘, ‘Secret Vehicle’, to convey the categories of the Tibetan Buddhist canon. *Mijiao* corresponded with *Gyüde*,<sup>176</sup> and *Misheng* corresponded to *Sang Ngak Thepa*.<sup>177</sup> In Sanskrit, the two terms conveyed the meanings of tantra and Guhyamantrayāna respectively. In so doing, Fazun refused to separate *Mijiao* from *Fojiao*. Tantra was, most importantly, a division of the Buddhist Canon. Thus, he highlighted the sūtra division<sup>178</sup> of the Tibetan Buddhist canon, with its scriptures of Mādhyamika, Yogācāra, and Abhidharma, and the tantra division,<sup>179</sup> featuring the corpus of Buddhist tantra.

Through this perspective, Fazun portrayed, for the first time in Chinese scholarship, the full spectrum of Tibetan religious orders, including major sects like Kadampa,<sup>180</sup> Sakyapa,<sup>181</sup> and Kagyüpa,<sup>182</sup> and minor ones like Shangpa Kagyüpa,<sup>183</sup> Shijepa,<sup>184</sup> Chöyülpa,<sup>185</sup> and Jonangpa,<sup>186</sup> as well as a detailed presentation of Dzokchen. He also wrote short biographies of great masters in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism: Śāntarakṣita, Padmasambhava, Kamalaśīla, Marpa, Milarepa, Atiśa, and Tsongkhapa. To these, he joined the thirteenth Dalai Lama and the ninth Panchen Lama, whom he had known in his own time.

Here, Fazun refrained from using Li Yizhuo’s term *Xizang Fojiao*, ‘Tibetan Buddhism’, a modern category that had sustained the revival of tantra in the early Republic. In its place, he used the simpler, older word *Fojiao*, ‘Buddhism’. In so doing, he refused to envision Tibetan Buddhism as a different branch of Buddhism. By contrast, he wrote about Tibet’s Buddhism as one current among many ancient streams of Buddhism, some of which, from the Buddha’s homeland in India, had also flowed to China. By giving Tibetan historians the agency to recount their own past, Fazun showed that Buddhist tantra was never a lost gem waiting to be recovered in China. Tantra was the fabric of Tibetan Buddhism itself, continuous with the stream

**176** T. Rgyud sde.

**177** T. Gsang sngags theg pa.

**178** T. Mdo sde; C. Jing bu 經部.

**179** T. Rgyud sde; C. Mi bu 密部.

**180** T. Bka’ gdams pa; C. Jiadang pai 迦當派.

**181** T. Sa skya pa; C. Sajia pai 薩迦派.

**182** T. Bka’ brgyud pa; C. Jiaju pai 迦舉派.

**183** T. Shangs pa Bka’ brgyud pa; C. Xiangba Jiaju pai 香巴迦舉派.

**184** T. Zhi byed pa; C. Xijie pai 息解派.

**185** T. Gcod yul pa; C. Jueyu pai 覺域派.

**186** T. Jo nang pa; C. Juenang pai 覺囊派.

of Buddhism that had come from India at the time of Songtsen Gampo. In that light, the premises of the revival of tantra collapsed entirely, as it was understood that tantra had never been transmitted to China from India in the way it had been transmitted to Tibet. Taixu's vision lost its foundation. By means of translation and history, Fazun could now describe Tibet in a language that moved beyond China's revival. As he wrote:

There are two religions of Tibet: (1) the original *Shendao jiao*, called *Bengbo*, which has been passed down to our day and still has its worshippers; and (2) *Fojiao*, first introduced from India during the Tang dynasty.<sup>187</sup>

In 1942, Fazun completed his translation of Tsongkhapa's *Gongpa Rabsal* (Illumination of the Intention),<sup>188</sup> a major commentary on Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvātāra*. This work is essential in the Geluk curriculum for understanding the view of reality of the Mādhyamika Prāsaṅgika and distinguishing the tenets of the Mahāyāna schools. Around the same time, he retranslated the final chapters from Tsongkhapa's *Lamrim Chungwa* (Short Treatise on the Stages of the Path).<sup>189</sup> The first chapters of this treatise had been translated years earlier by Dayong, while the Group for Learning the Dharma in Tibet was stationed in Kham. Dayong's sudden death in 1929 left the concluding section on *samatha*,<sup>190</sup> 'serenity', and *vipaśyanā*,<sup>191</sup> 'insight', unfinished. In 1939, Khenpo Ngawang used Dayong's manuscript to teach the *lamrim* to Chinese disciples in Dartsedo.<sup>192</sup> This led to a request for Fazun to prepare a summary translation of the missing portion. Three years later, in 1942, he returned to the task, retranslating the *Lamrim Chungwa* in full.

In this period, Fazun began a close collaboration with Yinshun, who encouraged him to translate works of Mahāyāna philosophy from Tibetan, which had never reached China from India. Fazun's first efforts included the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga* (Distinguishing between Dharma and Dharmatā),<sup>193</sup> attributed to Maitreya-nātha. He then produced Chinese translations of two works from Nāgārjuna's six-part logical corpus:<sup>194</sup>

**187** Fazun 1940, 1.

**188** T. *Dbu ma la 'jug pa'i rgya cher bshad pa dgongs pa rab gsal*; C. *Ruzhonglun shanxian miyi shu* 入中論善顯密意疏.

**189** T. *Lamrim chungba*; C. *Puti daocidi luelun* 菩提道次第略論; also called *Lam rim'bring ba* (Intermediate Treatise on the Stages of the Path), the *Lamrim chungwa* is the middle-length of Tsongkhapa's three major treatises on *lamrim*.

**190** *Shemota* 奢摩他 is the Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit term *samatha* (T. *zhi gnas*), otherwise rendered with the term *zhi* 止.

**191** *Vipaśyanā* is the Sanskrit term (T. *lhag mthong*), rendered in Chinese as *guan* 觀, and transliterated as *piboshena* 毘鉢舍那.

**192** Khenpo Ngawang's commentary was later published as *Putidao cidiluelun shi* 菩提道次第略論釋. Cf. Angwang Langji 1995.

**193** T. *Chos dang chos nyid rnam par 'byed pa*. In Fazun's Chinese, *Bian fa faxing lun* 辨法法性論.

**194** The six works in Nāgārjuna's logical corpus (S. *Yuktikāya*) are: 1) *Ratnāvalī* (T. *Rinchen phreng ba*; C. *Baoxingwangzheng lun* 寶行王正論); "Precious Garland". 2) *Vigrahavyāvartanī* (T. *Rtsod pa bzlog pa*; C. *Huizheng lun* 回諍論); "Refutation of Objections". 3) *Sūnyatāsaptatikārikā* (T. *Stong nyid bdun cu pa*; C. *Qishi kongxing lun* 七十空性論); "Seventy Verses on Emptiness". 4) *Yuktiśaṣṭikākārikā* (T. *Rigs pa drug cu pa*; C. *Liushi zhengli lun* 六十正理論, or *Liushisong ruli lun* 六十頌如理論); "Sixty Verses on Reasoning". 5) *Vaidalyasūtranāma* (T. *Zhib mo rnam par 'thag pa zhes bya ba'i mdo*; C. *Jingyan lun* 精研論); "Crushing the Dust". 6) *Mūlamadhyamakākārikā*

the *Vaidalyasūtranāma* (Aphorisms called ‘The Finely Woven’) and the *Sūnyatāsaptatikārikā* (Seventy Verses on Emptiness). He also translated Candrakīrti’s *Madhyamakāvātāra*<sup>195</sup> and its autocommentary, essential for understanding Madhyamaka across all Tibetan orders.

In 1946, Fazun began what was likely the most ambitious project of his career: rendering a major Buddhist work from Chinese into Tibetan. Such undertakings were rare in the history of Buddhism in China. Records point to only one certain precedent. That precedent was set by Go Chödrup (ca. 755-849).<sup>196</sup> Known in Chinese as Facheng 法成, Go Chödrup was a monk from the Tibetan region of Tsang<sup>197</sup> who served as chief translator of Buddhist texts under King Ralpacan (r. 815-38),<sup>198</sup> during the century of Tibetan rule in Dunhuang. There, Go Chödrup spent most of his life at Xiuduo Temple 修多寺, translating fluently in both directions: Tibetan into Chinese, and Chinese into Tibetan. Among his most important translations from Tibetan was the canonical *Heart Sūtra*.<sup>199</sup> But his most celebrated translation into Tibetan was the *Jieshenmijing shu* 解深密經疏 (Commentary on the *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*).<sup>200</sup> The commentary had been composed by the Korean expatriate monk Wönch’ük 圓測 (613-696),<sup>201</sup> one of Xuanzang’s two principal disciples in the Tang capital of Chang’an 長安. In Go Chödrup’s Tibetan, this work is known as *Gyanakgi Drelchen* (The Great Chinese Commentary).<sup>202</sup> In turn, his translation of Wönch’ük informed Tsongkhapa’s thought, most notably in his *Drangné Lekshe Nyingpo*.

Fazun’s endeavor recalled the scale and significance of Chödrup’s achievement more than a millennium earlier. In 1946, after the end of the Civil War, he accepted a request from Dongbön Géshé (d.u.),<sup>203</sup> a scholar from Drepung Monastery who had taught Tibetan language in Chongqing between 1937 and 1938. The task was formidable. Dongbön Géshé asked Fazun to translate the *\*Abhidharmamahāvibhāśāsāstra* (Great Exposition on Abhidharma)<sup>204</sup> from Chinese into Tibetan. This massive compendium puts forth the doctrinal positions of India’s early Buddhist schools and serves as the main reference for the Vaibhāśika branch of the Sarvāstivāda tradition. The original Sanskrit recension, now lost, is said to have comprised 100,000 stanzas. The text survived in Xuanzang’s 200-fascicle Chinese translation as the *Apidamo dapiposha lun* 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論, completed between 656

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(T. *Dbu ma rtsa ba shes rab*; C. Zhonglun 中論); “Verses on the Middle Way”.

**195** T. *Dbu ma la ’jug pa*; C. *Ruzhong lun* 入中論.

**196** T. ‘Gos Chos grub. On Go Chödrup, cf. Shōtarō 1975, 243-6.

**197** T. Gtsang.

**198** T. Ral pa can.

**199** S. *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya Sūtra*; T. *Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa’i snying po’i mdo*; C. *Bore boluomiduo xin jing* 般若波羅蜜多心經.

**200** T. *’Phags pa dgongs pa zab mo nges par ’grel pa’i mdo’i rgya cher ’grel pa*; “The Great Chinese Commentary on the *Ārya Samdhinirmocanasūtra*”.

**201** T. Rdzogs gsal; C. Yuance 圓測.

**202** T. Rgya nag gi ’grel chen.

**203** T. Stong dpon dge bshes; C. Dongben *geshi* 東本格什. Cf. Tuttle 2005, 196-7.

**204** C. *Apidamo dapiposha lun* 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論; Fazun’s Tibetan title is *Chos mngon pa bye brag tu bshad pa chen po bzhugs so*. The translation was published in Beijing in 2011. Cf. Kātyāyanīputra 2011.

and 659 CE in Chang'an, and occupying an entire volume of the Chinese Buddhist Canon. From 1946 to 1949, Fazun devoted most of his time to the project. By the summer of 1949, he had completed two manuscripts. One he consigned to Kelsang Yeshé (d.u.)<sup>205</sup> in Dartsedo, where it survived the Cultural Revolution; the other he presented to the young fourteenth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso (b. 1935),<sup>206</sup> during the latter's visit to meet Chairman Mao in Beijing in 1954.

After the Dalai Lama's exile in India in 1959, this second manuscript was lost.<sup>207</sup> Published four decades after Fazun's death, the Tibetan translation of the *Apidamo dapiposha lun* marks the end of an era.<sup>208</sup> It also served as a watershed between the Republican period and the shifting cultural and political demands of the People's Republic. In the years ahead, Fazun would be called upon to extend his bilingual skills from Buddhist doctrine to the legal statutes of the new state.

Taixu died on March 17, 1947, at Yufo Temple 玉佛寺 in Shanghai. In his final years, while teaching at the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine, he continued to reflect on the history of Buddhism in China and the place of tantra in that history. During the 1940s, he published in *Haichao yin* a series of essays inspired by Fazun's translations of Tsongkhapa's works. These translations opened a door to Mādhyamika and Yogācāra debates that had been unknown in China until the 1930s. Yet, even as they expanded his knowledge, Fazun's translations did not shake the very foundations through which he constructed his notions of Buddhist history. Taixu's vision continued to weave tantra into a tale of continuity. He did not face the fact, known at his time, that the vast majority of the Buddhist tantras preserved in Tibet had never reached China.

Again, from his earliest training in Nanjing, Taixu had measured the history of Buddhism through the shifting lens of tantra. In this first phase, inspired by his teacher Yang Wenhui, he understood tantra through traditional Chinese Buddhist historiography. He placed tantra, that is, *Mizong*, along with the other seven great sects of Chinese Mahāyāna: Tiantai, Huayan 華嚴, Sanlun, Weishi 唯識, Chan, Lü 律, and Jingtu 淨土. Each sect, he believed, aimed equally at Buddhahood, and none stood higher or lower.<sup>209</sup> Things changed in the early 1930s, when Taixu began to understand the history of Buddhism in India through Oriental philology's view of the formation of the Tripiṭaka. For his knowledge of the history of Indian Buddhism, he turned to the work of another student of Yang Wenhui, the Buddhistologist Lü Cheng 呂澂 (1896-1989),<sup>210</sup> in his *Yindu fojiao shilüe* 印度佛教史略 (A Concise History of Indian Buddhism).<sup>211</sup>

In 1940, Taixu put forth his final synthesis in the essay "Wo zenyang panshe yiqie fofa 我怎樣判攝一切佛法" (How I Classify the Buddhadharmas)

**205** T. Skal bzang ye shes; C. Gesang Yuexie 格桑悅協.

**206** T. Bstan' dzin rgya mtsho.

**207** Personal communication, Dr. Li Shenghai.

**208** The work was published in 2011. Cf. Kātyāyaniputra 2011.

**209** Cf. Taixu 1970a, 511.

**210** On Lü Cheng, cf. Dibeltulo Concu 2021.

**211** Cf. Lü Cheng 1925.

in its Entirety).<sup>212</sup> He argued that the Buddha had taught a single dharma, yet the course of Buddhist history transformed that teaching through the compilation of the Tripiṭaka. To explain this transformation, he divided Buddhist history into three great periods. The first was the age of the Hīnayāna, when the earliest teachings of the Buddha were collected in the Tripiṭaka. The second was the age of the Mahāyāna, when new scriptures appeared and came to prominence. Then third was the age when tantra emerged as the guiding force of the dharma. In this age, Taixu believed, the teachings of tantra led the way, while the Sūtra teachings followed behind.

To describe the first period, Taixu considered the compilation of the Tripiṭaka during the first Buddhist council, led by Kāśyapa, Ānanda, and Upāli.<sup>213</sup> Two centuries after the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*, discord fractured the monastic community into twenty schools. Together, they shaped what was later known as the Hīnayāna, with its varied interpretations of the dharma. For Taixu, this early Buddhism, transmitted to Śrī Laṅka and preserved in the Pāli canon, marked the height of the Hīnayāna, even though Mahāyāna teachings were already present within the Buddhadharmā. The second period began about six centuries after the Buddha's passing, when the Mahāyāna flourished through thinkers like Aśvaghōṣa, Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Asaṅga, and Vasubandhu. During this time, Hīnayāna scriptures and practices still existed, but they had become marginal. Taixu described this as an age of coexistence, when the Mahāyāna became more prominent while the Hīnayāna receded. The third period unfolded twelve centuries after the *parinirvāṇa*, when new debates emerged within the Mahāyāna. In the Mādhyamika school, continues Taixu, Bhāvaviveka advanced new interpretations of emptiness,<sup>214</sup> while in Yogācāra, Dharmapāla refined arguments on existence.<sup>215</sup> These philosophical disputes, rooted in earlier Mahāyāna discourse, coincided with the rise of tantra. Figures such as Nāgabodhi spread practices that blended Indian popular customs with Mahāyāna ritual, giving birth to the flourishing of Secret Mantra. For Taixu, this signaled the age when tantra led and Sūtra followed. By the seventh century, when Xuanzang traveled to India, tantra had not yet become dominant. Yet, remarks Taixu, a few decades later, Yijing found a very different scene in India. He reported that his fellow students were learning mantras, which was evidence of the widespread nature of tantra. Taixu pointed to the transformation of Nālanda Monastery, once a stronghold of the Mahāyāna Sūtras, into a monastery devoted to tantra. Drawing further on Lü Cheng's history, he added that Vikramaśīla Monastery, in the final stages of Buddhism in India, had been entirely devoted to tantra.<sup>216</sup>

In this linear progression, according to Taixu, the threefold evolution of the religion in ancient India could also be mapped on the countries of modern Asia. "The three periods I have explained above form the entire transmission of Indian Buddhism since the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*, that is, the Buddhism that has propagated in India in the three periods has also become the three great systems of Buddhism disseminated in the modern

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212 Cf. Taixu 1970a.

213 Cf. Taixu 1970a, 516.

214 C. kongxing 空性; S. śūnyatā; T. stong pa nyid.

215 C. you 有; S. bhava; T. srid pa.

216 Cf. Taixu 1970a, 517.

world”.<sup>217</sup> The Hīnayāna survived in the Pāli Buddhism of Southeast Asia. The Mahāyāna found its home in the Chinese Buddhism of East Asia. And tantra was present, he claimed, in *Zhongguo de Xizang* 中國的西藏, that is, “China’s Tibet”. As he concluded his essay, Taixu then sketched his world map of Buddhist systems. The early Hīnayāna took Śrī Laṅka as its center and spread to Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Malay archipelago. He name this system *Bali wenxi fojiao* 巴利文系佛教 ‘Buddhism of the Pāli language system’, or the *Xilan xi fojiao* 錫蘭系佛教 ‘Śrī Laṅka’s system of Buddhism’. The Mahāyāna of the second period made China its center and spread to Korea, Japan, and Vietnam. This was *Han wenxi fojiao* 漢文系佛教 ‘Buddhism of the Chinese language system’ or *Zhongguo xi fojiao* 中國系佛教 ‘China’s system of Buddhism’. The tantra of the third period, remarked Taixu, took Tibet as its center, spreading from there to eastern and northeastern Tibet, as well as Mongolia and Nepal. This was, for Taixu, *Zangwen fojiao* 藏文佛教 ‘Buddhism of the Tibetan language’, or *Xizang xi fojiao* 西藏系佛教 ‘Tibet’s system of Buddhism’.

Hence, in Taixu’s view, when the historical Buddha was alive, the dharma was of one flavor. The Buddha himself stood as the root and refuge of the teaching. Only after his *parinirvāṇa* did the dharma divide into three ages, from which the three great linguistic systems of Pāli, Chinese, and Tibetan Buddhism had emerged.<sup>218</sup> Still, in the elegance of Taixu’s theory, something was amiss. Taixu’s global vision of Buddhism left no room for Sanskrit, the language in which the Buddhist tantras had been preserved in Nepal and which had been objects of study in Europe.<sup>219</sup> Instead, he folded Nepal into the Tibetan language system, for he identified Nepal’s Buddhism with the third period of tantra. In the end, Taixu continued to imagine the complex history of Buddhism in one simple line: from Hīnayāna to Mahāyāna, and from Mahāyāna to tantra. That line could be mapped onto three countries of the modern world, Śrī Laṅka, China, and Tibet, where the Buddhist Tripiṭaka had been preserved in the Pāli, Chinese, and Tibetan languages.

By the time of his death, the very premises of the revival of tantra had collapsed in Taixu’s thought. His linear progression left no room for the idea of a Chinese tantra preserved in Tibet. In his own account, Tibet’ system of Buddhism had reached Nepal, but had never reached China.

Fazun attended the funeral of Taixu at Yufo Temple in Shanghai. Soon after, back in Chongqing, he resumed his translation projects. At the same time, he wrote fresh teaching materials for the College. At the request of the Ministry of Education, he drafted two textbooks, a manual on Tibetan language in eight fascicles<sup>220</sup> and a compendium on general knowledge in six,<sup>221</sup> neither of which appeared in print. By the summer of 1949, months before the end of the Civil War, the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine had trained nearly one hundred students. Now, on the eve of the summer recess, Fazun handed over the College’s leadership to Zhengguo 正果

217 Cf. Taixu 1970a, 517.

218 Cf. Taixu 1970a, 519.

219 Cf. Buffetrille and Lopez 2010; Lopez 2008.

220 C. *Zangwen keben* 藏文課本 (Tibetan Language Notebooks).

221 C. *Changshi keben* 常識課本 (General Knowledge Notebooks).

(1913-1987)<sup>222</sup> another disciple of Taixu. Born in Sichuan, Zhengguo had studied at the College in Chongqing for six years under Taixu and Fazun and then joined its faculty. Fazun spent that summer in Chengdu, where he completed the Tibetan translation of the *\*Abhidharmamahāvibhāśāsāstra*. In the late summer, after bringing the Tibetan manuscript of the treatise to Dartsedo, Fazun began to step back from his duties at the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine.

That winter, after the Nationalist Party's defeat in the Civil War, the Republic of China retreated to Taiwan. The People's Liberation Army advanced west into Sichuan. Fazun, who had heard nothing from his family for years, feared the worst. Hebei, his home province, had been under Japanese occupation. He worried that no one had survived the war. And so, in early January 1950, Fazun left Chengdu. He traveled north along the Yangtze River and one month later he reached home. To his surprise, his mother was still alive and so were the rest of his family. He stayed home for a month and visited childhood friends he had not seen for decades.

In the spring of 1950, Fazun entered a new phase of his life. He began to work on several translation projects at the Bodhi Study Association in Beijing. That same year, Zhengguo urgently traveled to Beijing to consult with Fazun on a matter of great importance. The Office of Culture and Education of the Southwest Military District of the PLA<sup>223</sup> had requested to take over the property of the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine in Beibei. Zhengguo, uncertain how to respond, sought Fazun's advice. Fazun agreed that there was no alternative but to comply with the PLA's request. During the Republican period, policies toward the monastic community had already been strict. But under the Communist regime the Chinese monastic community was compelled to cooperate fully or risk being accused of rightism, counter-revolution, or espionage.<sup>224</sup> Following the new land reform policy,<sup>225</sup> which targeted all landowners rather than monasteries specifically, the government confiscated the College's premises. Many of its teachers and students were forced to work for the PLA.<sup>226</sup> Thus ended the twenty-year history of the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine in Chongqing.

Now based in Beijing, Fazun joined the Bodhi Study Association, one of the few state-sanctioned institutions with expertise in the Tibetan language. This third phase of his life was marked not only by the translation of Buddhist texts but also by work on political writings. In 1950, the Chinese Central Committee for Minority Affairs<sup>227</sup> sought individuals capable of rendering Marxist and Maoist works from Chinese into Tibetan. Some officials learned that the Bodhi Study Association was the only center in Beijing where Tibetan was taught. Its translators, however, struggled with the task, since their training relied heavily on Buddhist terminology and lacked a

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**222** On Zhengguo, cf. Tuttle 2005, 223; La Liberté, Fisher, and Ji 2020, 175.

**223** C. Jiefangjun xinangjunqu wenjiaochu 解放軍西南軍區文教處.

**224** Welch 1967, 100-1.

**225** Welch 1967, 234-5.

**226** Lü and Hu 2002, 464.

**227** C. Zhongyang minzu shiwu weiyuanhui 中央民族事務委員會.

vocabulary for modern political discourse.<sup>228</sup> For the next four years, Fazun trained a new generation of translators and produced Tibetan versions of key texts in the education of Communist cadres, such as Mao Zedong's *Xinminzhu zhuyi lun* 新民主主義論 (On the New Democracy), *Shehui fazhan shi* 社會發展史 (A History of the Development of Society), *Lun renmin minzhu zhuanzheng* 論人民民主專政 (On the People's Democratic Rule), and *Mao zhuxi yulu* 毛主席語錄 (Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong; commonly known in English as *Mao's Little Red Book*). These works were intended to instruct Tibet's future leaders in the logic of the Communist Revolution.<sup>229</sup>

Yet, even in this period, Fazun never abandoned translation of Buddhist texts. In 1952, he completed Tsongkhapa's *Rim Nga Rabtu Salwai Drönme* (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp of the Five Stages),<sup>230</sup> his major commentary on the *Guhyasamāja* tantra. Fazun also put to good use the teachings he had received from Amdo Géshé in Chamdo, translating Longchen Rapjam's (1308-1363)<sup>231</sup> *Dzöchen Dün* (Seven Great Treasures)<sup>232</sup> of the Nyingma sect. Around the same time, he translated the opening eight chapters of Āryadeva's *Catuḥśatakaśāstra* (Four Hundred Verses), thus completing the work that Xuanzang had partially rendered into Chinese during the Tang dynasty under the title *Guangbai lun* 廣百論 (Great Treatise of One Hundred Verses). In addition, Fazun translated two commentaries<sup>233</sup> of the first Dalai Lama Gendün Drup (1391-1474).<sup>234</sup> Finally, he rendered into Chinese the Tibetan language dictionary<sup>235</sup> of the Buryat Mongol scholar Géshé Chödrag (1898-1972),<sup>236</sup> originally compiled in Lhasa in 1946. The blockprint edition of the dictionary had been completed in 1949, and before its publication in Beijing Fazun translated all entries into Chinese.<sup>237</sup>

In 1953, Fazun was invited to participate in the founding of the Buddhist Association of China (BAC).<sup>238</sup> The Association drew on earlier, contested efforts to organize Buddhism at the national level during the Republican era. Already in 1912 and again in 1929, Chinese Buddhists had attempted to form centralized associations, but disagreements between reformers such as Taixu and conservatives such as Yuanying 圓瑛 (1878-1953), as well as resistance from the state, doomed them to failure. After 1949, the PRC government sponsored the creation of a single, unified body. Established at Guangji Temple 廣濟寺 in Beijing, the Association gathered leading figures such as Yuanying, Zhao Puchu, and Lü Cheng, and soon became the

**228** Hu (unpublished).

**229** Wang-Toutain 2000, 720 fn.

**230** T. *Rim lnga rab tu gsal ba'i sgron me*; C. *Mizong daocidi lun* 密宗道次第論.

**231** T. *Klong chen rab 'byams*; C. Langqin Naojiang 郎勤繞絳.

**232** T. *Mdzod chen bdun*; C. *Qibao Lun* 七寶論.

**233** Fazun's Chinese titles are *Jushe song lüejie* 俱舍頌略解 (T. *Dam pa'i chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi rnam par bshad pa thar lam sal byed*) and *Ruzhong lun lüejie* 入中論略解 (T. *Dbu ma la 'jug pa'i bstan bcos kyi dgongs pa rab tu gsal ba'i me long*).

**234** T. *Dge 'dun grub*; C. Gendun zhuba 根敦主巴.

**235** T. *Dge bshes Chos kyi grags pas btsams pa'i brda dag ming tshig gsal ba*; C. *Gexi Quzha Zangwen Cidian* 格西曲札藏文辭典.

**236** T. *Dge bshes Chos grags*; C. Quezha geshi 卻扎格什.

**237** Tuttle 2025, 292 fn 48.

**238** C. Zhongguo fojiao xiehui 中國佛教協會.

sole authority for overseeing Buddhist affairs in the People's Republic. In 1955, Fazun was invited to contribute articles to a new project, the *Fojiao baike quanshu* 佛教百科全書 (Buddhist Encyclopedia). During this period, he also lectured regularly to students at the Bodhi Study Association, offering courses on the *Lamrim Chenmo*, the *Abhisamayālamkāra*, and the *Madhyamakāvātāra*.<sup>239</sup> In 1956, he was elected vice president of the newly founded Zhongguo foxueyuan 中國佛學院 'Chinese College of Buddhist Studies' in Beijing, where he also began to teach.

In 1957, Fazun's earlier work from the mid-1930s attracted criticism when a passage from *Tibet, As I Once Passed Through* was cited by Party officials. In the book, while reporting on Tibetan debates over national security, Fazun had claimed that "surrendering to the British could enable Tibet to maintain its religion, an outcome that was much more desirable than facing an invasion from the Communist bandits, which would result in the loss of lives and assets, along with the certain devastation of its sacred institutions".<sup>240</sup> The offending reference, conveyed by the term *gongfei* 共匪, 'Communist bandits', was interpreted as an insult to the State.<sup>241</sup> Where the term *gongfei* appeared in Fazun's book, he reflected on the relations between Tibet, China, and the British. He attributed the worsening of relations between China and Tibet less to Tibet itself than to the arrogance and misconduct of Chinese and British representatives in Lhasa. In particular, he wrote of the British presence in Tibet as aggressive, hegemonic, and intent on fomenting discord. Fazun was reprimanded but spared serious consequences, thanks to his reputation and the support of colleagues who respected his scholarship. Some members of the review committee explicitly pressed that the accusations should not be allowed to escalate. The following year, he was required to participate in an official session of self-criticism, but the matter was dropped. His standing in the Buddhist and academic communities shielded him from harsher punishment.<sup>242</sup>

Even so, Fazun's pilgrimage accounts continued to draw scrutiny. In 1958, during the *Jiaoxin yundong* 交心運動 'Surrender Your Heart Movement', Fazun publicly acknowledged his past mistakes.<sup>243</sup> Launched at the height of the *Dayuejin* 大躍進 (Great Leap Forward; 1958-1962), the campaign was promoted by Chairman Mao Zedong as a new, intensified method of thought reform. Its name referred to the call to surrender one's heart to the Party.<sup>244</sup> Participants were urged to confess their deepest and most reactionary thoughts. In secular and industrial settings, intellectuals and capitalists were often compelled to draft personal reform pledges, vowing to reeducate themselves in two short years, sometimes by working seven days a week

**239** Hu (unpublished).

**240** Fazun 1937b, 34.

**241** Cf. Fazun 1937b, 32, 35, 42.

**242** Cf. Mei 1999, 45. Mei had the opportunity to converse with both Ms. Hu Jiou and Master Jinghui 淨慧法師, who, together with Zhengguo, had taken care of Fazun after the Cultural Revolution in his last period at Guangji Temple. Master Jinghui, reports Mei, stated that in 1958 Zhengguo and others of Fazun's students from Chongqing's College were subjected to sessions of self-criticism, and that in those years the only way for them to protect themselves was to cooperate and submit to the Party's directives. The causes of Fazun's period of detention during the Cultural Revolution were linked to these earlier episodes.

**243** Cf. Mei 1999, 46.

**244** Cf. He 2016, 197, 529.

and twelve hours a day. In Buddhist circles, however, the campaign took a milder form. Students, cadres, and Party members attended Fazun's review sessions. They still held Fazun in high esteem, and the meetings did not escalate. Party officials had instructed in advance that his dignity should not be harmed.<sup>245</sup> And so, despite mounting political pressures, Fazun continued to publish historical and doctrinal essays in leading Buddhist journals. His essays appeared in *Xiandai foxue* 現代佛學 (Modern Buddhist Studies) and *Zhongguo fojiao* 中國佛教 (Chinese Buddhism). These writings defended the Geluk tradition against misconceptions, argued for the intellectual rigor of Tibetan scholasticism, and placed Tibetan Buddhism firmly within the scope of Mahāyāna orthodoxy.<sup>246</sup>

In 1966, the Cultural Revolution reached the Chinese College of Buddhist Studies. The institute closed its doors, and the Red Guards targeted Fazun. They branded him a *heibang fenzi* 黑幫分子, that is, a 'black gang member', a term used for those accused of criminal or reactionary activities. Soon after, he was imprisoned and sent to a forced labor camp. During this period, he fell and broke his leg so badly that it never healed. The injury left him disabled for life. The pilgrim who had once walked thousands of miles across Asia, crossing the Himalayas twice on foot, now struggled to move a single step without help. Fazun refused to remove his monastic robes despite Party directives. He never made a public stand and kept his vows in private, avoiding direct confrontation with the authorities.

In 1972, all accusations against Fazun were cleared, and he was released from the labor camp. By the following year, afflicted with heart disease, he settled at Guangji Temple in Beijing. While living privately, despite fragile health, he started translating again. Between 1977 and 1980 he centered his attention on major works of Indian Buddhism that had not yet been rendered into Chinese. With the demise of the *Siren bang* 四人幫, the 'Gang of Four' that was later blamed for the abuses of the Cultural Revolution, Zhao Puchu had appealed to senior Buddhist educators to endorse the reform policies of PRC President Deng Xiaoping 鄧小平 (1898-1972). A broken man, the old pilgrim turned to Buddhist logic, an ancient discipline of reasoning that closely resembled modern philosophical thought – a science that had long been neglected in China. His translations included Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, Dharmakīrti's (600-660) *Pramāṇavārttikakārikā* (Commentary on the

**245** Cf. Dibeltulo 2005, 53.

**246** Unlike the essays and articles composed in Chongqing, those of the second reflect a greater mastery of historical and philosophical subjects. It was also in this period that Fazun wrote most prolifically. Among his historical studies are a detailed history of the first and second periods of dissemination of Buddhism in Tibet, an account of the history and doctrinal features of the Nyingma, Kadam, Kagyü, Shangpa Kagyüpa, and Sakya sects, and a history of Tibetan Buddhism in relation to the Yuan and Ming dynasties in China. Among his doctrinal writings, two extensive presentations of Tsongkhapa's *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Awakening* (C. *Puti daocidi guanglun* 菩提道次第廣論; T. *Lam rim chen mo*) appeared in the journal *Xiandai foxue*. The first installment, titled *Puti daocidi guanglun de zaozuo, fanyi, neirong he tijie* 《菩提道次第廣論》的造作、翻譯、內容和題解 (The Composition, Translation, Content, and Title of the *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path*), was published in 1954. The second, *Zongkaba dashi de Puti daocidi lun* 宗喀巴大師的《菩提道次第廣論》 (Master Tsongkhapa's *Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Awakening*), appeared in 1957. Other doctrinal studies from this period include two comparative essays on the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras* and the *Abhisamayālamkāra*, a description of Guṇaprabha's *Vinaya Sūtra*, a study of concentration techniques based on the *Abhidharmakośa* and the *Yogācārabhūmi Śāstra*, and a short analysis of the six logical works of Nāgārjuna, *Longshu pusa de liubu lun* 龍樹菩薩的六部論 (Nāgārjuna's Six Treatises on Logic): those essays are republished in Lü and Hu 2002.

Compendium of Valid Cognition), and Atiśa's *Jangchuplamgi Dröma* (Lamp on the Path to Enlightenment).<sup>247</sup> The effort demanded all the strength he had left. Nearly eighty, and half-blind, Fazun worked with a magnifying glass in one hand and a pen in the other.<sup>248</sup> While translating Dharmakīrti's treatise, he suffered two heart attacks and was hospitalized twice. Yet, each time, he returned to his desk. Alongside these translations, he composed short commentaries on both treatises, the *Jiliang lun lüejie* 集量論略解 (Concise Explanation of the Compendium of Valid Cognition) and the *Shiliang lun lüejie* 釋量論略解 (Concise Explanation of the Commentary on the Compendium of Valid Cognition).<sup>249</sup>

In 1980, the Chinese College of Buddhist Studies, which had reopened after its shutdown during the Cultural Revolution, appointed Fazun as its director. Fazun was invited to preside at the ordination ceremony next year, which would mark the College's reopening, coinciding with the fourth conference of the Buddhist Association of China. He did not live to see the event. On December 14, 1980, the day of his 79th birthday, Fazun suffered of a third and ultimately fatal heart attack, leading to his death. Nine months later, in September 1981, a stūpa enshrining Fazun's relics was consecrated at Guangzong Temple 廣宗寺 on Mount Wutai. Here, a stele located on the front side of the reliquary monument bears an inscription penned by Zhao Puchu, saying:

“翻經沙門法尊法師靈骨塔”<sup>250</sup>

“Stūpa of the relics of dharma master Fazun,  
*śramaṇa* translator of the Scriptures”.

**247** T. *Byang chub lam gyi sgron ma*; C. *Putidao deng lun* 菩提道燈論.

**248** On Fazun's last days, cf. Hu (unpublished).

**249** In 1979, Fazun also composed his biography, *Fazun fashi zishu* 法尊法師自述 (Master Fazun's Autobiography). It was published posthumously in 1985 in *Fayin*. Cf. Lü, Hu 2002, 459-64.

**250** Pinyin: *Fanjing shamen Fazun fashi lingguta*.

We had hoped he would go on translating essential scriptures, restoring lost works, expanding Śākyamuni's teachings, and adding luster to the "Four Modernizations". Yet his karmic task had run its course, and he departed suddenly. How piercing the truth of impermanence! Our great craftsman of the dharma is gone. Heaven and earth have lost their color; the grasses and trees are mourning.<sup>251</sup>

Zhao Puchu, 1981

On December 24, 1980, at the ceremony held for Fazun's funeral in Beijing, Zhao Puchu offered a compelling portrait of the pilgrim's life. In Zhao's tribute, Fazun exceeded the roles of scholar and translator. He was a hero who had dedicated himself to the revival of Buddhism in early-twentieth century China, successfully integrating Tibetan Buddhism into the nation. Zhao counted him among China's great Buddhist pilgrims, including Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing. Nevertheless, Zhao also placed Fazun in another lineage, that of the advocates of *sihua* 四化 'Four Modernizations'. Originally laid out in the 1960s by Zhou Enlai 周恩來 (1898-1976), a senior leader in the CCP and the PRC's premier, this program advocated for reforms in the domains of agriculture, industry, defense, and science and technology. After Chairman Mao died in 1976 and the Gang of Four were arrested, the program was resurrected, which laid the groundwork for Deng Xiaoping's reform initiatives during the early 1980s.

In his speech, Zhao established a link between Fazun's last efforts as a translator and state reform. "Even in his final years, at an advanced age, he answered the Buddhist Association's call to contribute to China's Four Modernizations".<sup>252</sup> Zhao further stated that in those last two years of his life, Fazun had rendered more than 200,000 words from Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* into Chinese. "Once those were complete, he kept translating and writing. On the very morning of his passing, he still held the pen in his hand".<sup>253</sup> This was, according to Zhao, Fazun's final act of selflessness. He had been a true craftsman of the dharma,<sup>254</sup> an artisan, in Zhao's portrait, whose life had been devoted entirely to fulfill his mission. His very last project, the translation of Dharmakīrti's treatise on Buddhist logic, contributed to the renovation of the nation after the Cultural Revolution in the field of scientific thought.

Not long after Fazun's death, Zhao crafted a curated recollection of his legacy. By placing Fazun in a lineage of Chinese Buddhist cultural heroes, Zhao's retelling obscured the relationships that had enabled his translations in the first place. Indeed, Fazun's translations had not been solitary feats. Years of diligent study in Tibet alongside his teachers – including Drakar Rinpoché, Amdo Géshé, Pabongka Rinpoché, the Ganden Tripa, and the Jangtsé Chöjé – were the foundation for his translations, in a period marked by physical hardship but also profound intellectual fulfillment. These encounters, portrayed with great clarity in *Modern Tibet*, were eventually overlooked

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**251** Zhao 1981, 25.

**252** Zhao 1981, 25.

**253** Zhao 1981, 25.

**254** C. fajiang 法匠. In *Buddhist Chinese*, *fajiang* refers to a teacher skilled in shaping and guiding their students, akin to a master craftsman molding raw material.

once his translations became objects of national pride, yet also items to be offered for sale in bookstores across China, detached from the very space of transmission – modern Tibet – that had allowed their existence. In Zhao's eulogy, Amdo Géshé Jampel Rölpai Lodrö, Fazun's main teacher from Chamdo, remains unmentioned.

Ultimately, the revival of tantra of the first half of the twentieth century had failed to retrieve a distinct tantra for China. But the discursive colonization of Tibet in the imagination of Republican Chinese survived the Cultural Revolution, entering new levels of sophistication. Beginning in the 1980s, Buddhists in the People's Republic continued to project their historical anxieties and existential aspirations onto Tibetan religion. Yet, by choosing not to constrain his Tibetan sources within Chinese categories, Fazun had already transformed that project of retrieval into a practice of encounter. Fazun's translations, then, should be regarded more than just relics of the revival of tantra. They are records of living relationships, embedded at the point of contact between teacher and disciple. That space of contact, transcending language and cultural barriers remains visible in *Modern Tibet*, before nationalism transformed the work of Fazun into a tool of cultural hegemony. Certainly, Fazun's legacy is not found in the return of a tradition. Rather, it abides in the discipline of portraying the tradition of another with care, in ways that recognize the importance of relational subjectivity. If the statue of Phakpa Lokeśvara holds a presence in this tale, then, it is not as a relic of lost origins, but as an embodiment of compassion achieved through clarity – a reminder of what is essential to truly see in the encounter.

After Fazun's death, Zhao Puchu sought to redefine Fazun's legacy. By depicting Fazun as a lone translator who conveyed Tibet's dharma into Chinese possession, he elevated translations born of human relations into objects of national pride. The pilgrim's life and journeys showed no trace of the trials of the voyage through Kham, the periods of destitution in Lhasa, the joyful learning in Tibetan monasteries, and the meditations on death and impermanence for the loss of many of his teachers and friends, all clearly recounted in *Modern Tibet*. The space of translation was gone. The objects of translation remained. Understanding this point does not undermine Fazun's achievements. Rather, it aims to resist their perception as cultural objects created to serve the nation, an idea originally conceived during the revival of tantra, a movement that sought to bring Tibet into a history of China where it was ultimately foreign. The task before us is to move beyond regarding Fazun's translations as gifts from a lost origin. Perhaps, when reading *Modern Tibet*, the task is then to remember Fazun not as a solitary pilgrim, the broken, suffering man of his old age, but as a vivid presence in a modern encounter, a moment when Buddhists in China and Tibet forged genuine relations that bridged divides in language, thought, and tradition.

## A Note to the Reader

I first came across Fazun's *Modern Tibet* in Chengdu, while conducting research at the Sichuan University Center for Tibetan Studies between 2005 and 2006. The library contained a 1937 edition of the book, published by the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine (Hanzang jiaoliyuan 汉藏教理院) in Chongqing, and I scanned its text for later review. I digitized that book in 2023 for the purpose of this publication, and it has consistently been my primary resource.

The 1937 Chongqing edition of *Modern Tibet*, published by the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine, is a 147-page book printed with vertical movable type on paper. The cover is unadorned, displaying just the title, Fazun's name, and the phrase *Liuxiang shanjian* 劉湘善檢, 'Examined and approved by Liu Xiang', accompanied by Liu Xiang's seal. The publication adheres to the norms of classic Chinese printing, with text presented in vertical columns, read from top to bottom, and the columns organized from right to left on the page. It opens with Taixu's preface and a carefully arranged table of contents, then proceeds directly into the main text. The book features distinct chapter breaks, but an index, a glossary, or a map is missing.

What makes the publication unique is a collection of twenty-four photographs embedded directly in the text. Each carries a brief caption. The plates display images of contemporary Tibetan masters, like Amdo Géshé, the thirteenth Dalai Lama, the ninth Panchen Lama, and Radreng Rinpoché. Additionally, they display a statue of Tsongkhapa, vistas of the Potala Palace, depictions of daily life, including a man traveling on a yak-hide coracle boat, and an array of natural and monastic environments. Even though these visuals are sometimes small and black-and-white, they offer actual



landmarks related to the people and settings that Fazun describes. Two photographs, one portraying Fazun, the other portraying Amdo Géshé, were reproduced in this publication. In its physical form, the book is austere. The limited resources of the press at Chongqing's College are reflected in its simple design. Still, by incorporating Taixu's introduction, an organized contents list, and an assortment of pictures, the College clearly sought to portray *Modern Tibet* as both a pilgrimage account and a photographic record of Fazun's journey.

*Modern Tibet* opens as a memoir. The first part of the book narrates Fazun's travels and the people he met in China and Tibet between the early 1920s and the mid-1930s. Subsequent parts of the book consider Tibetan geography, history, economy, administration, religion, education, culture, art, architecture, and foreign affairs, before concluding with a statement of principles on how the government of Republican China should deal with Tibet. The table of contents illustrates this combined design. Stylistically, the first chapter resembles a travelogue, whereas subsequent chapters condense extensive details into brief sections. Fazun's prose is modern Chinese, intended for readers from the Republican period. Fazun writes in *baihua*, the vernacular language championed by the *Wusi yundong* 'May Fourth Movement' of 1919. His aim was to make Tibet intelligible to his readers in the very language in which the leading authors of early-twentieth century China wrote their essays and novels.

Translating *Modern Tibet* was a project I first undertook in 2006. To begin, I surveyed every Chinese term, highlighting the Tibetan terms that needed reconstruction from the Chinese for their phonetic presentation in English. From 2008 to 2023, no additional progress was made on the translation, except for the translation of excerpts that I used in my Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Michigan in 2014. My earnest translation endeavors began in summer 2023, when I developed a first draft containing Tibetan terms transcribed into the Pinyin phonetic system from Chinese. I subsequently composed a second draft, incorporating Tibetan words rendered into Wylie transliteration. In the third draft, Tibetan terms were incorporated using Wisdom Publications' Style Guide for books on Indian and Tibetan Buddhism (2015). For Buddhist technical terms, I followed the English usage established in the *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* (2014). At the same time, footnotes were added to specify Fazun's original Chinese term along with its Wylie reconstruction. The footnotes also include a small glossary of frequently used Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan Buddhist terms.

As for Buddhist technical terms, I preserve Fazun's choices. For the Buddhist concepts he renders into Chinese, I supply English equivalents. Where he utilizes a Chinese phonetic rendering of the Sanskrit, I provide the original Sanskrit terms. This method applies not only to Buddhist doctrinal terms but also to his descriptions of religions more broadly. Fazun often uses the modern term *zongjiao* 宗教 'religion', which reflects a twentieth-century assimilation of a Western category based on Japanese sources. This contrasts with the older term *jiao* 教, which in classical Buddhist usage meant 'teaching' or 'doctrine'. Whereas *jiao* referred to specific doctrinal systems such as *Fojiao* 佛教 'Buddha Teaching' or *Daojiao* 道教 'Dao Teaching', the modern term *zongjiao* conveys the sense of Buddhism, Christianity, and other traditions together as 'world religions'.

Fazun commonly associates *jiao* with expressions that draw their origins from Buddhist terminology, for instance, *xiejiao sixiang* 邪教思想 'wrong

religious ideals'. The crucial component in this is the term *xie* 邪 (S. mithyā; T. log pa), which functions as a Buddhist qualifier meaning 'wrong', 'erroneous', or 'misguided'. Combined with *jian* 見 (S. dṛṣṭi; T. lta), it forms *xiejian* 邪見 (S. mithyādṛṣṭi; T. log lta), literally 'wrong views'. *Mithyādṛṣṭi*, in Buddhist morality, represents a significant transgression rather than a casual mistake. It stands as the tenth among the ten unwholesome courses of action (C. yedao 業道; S. karmapatha; T. las kyi lam), conveying a lack of belief in karma and reincarnation—the idea that one's conduct lacks consequences. Such a perspective is regarded as very destructive, as it fundamentally weakens the principle of moral accountability. When Fazun refers to Western religions as *xiejiao* or *xiejian*, he is both pointing out the doctrinal errors of Christian theology and connecting it to one of the most serious moral transgressions in Buddhist practice. His choice of terms illustrates how he interprets foreign religious ideas through Buddhist categories, measuring them against standards of the Buddha's dharma. Within this framework, he characterizes Christianity as *xiejiao sixiang*, 'wrong religious ideals'. Elsewhere, he illustrates the integration of Buddhist or Tibetan concepts and ideas with common Chinese expressions, for instance, by referring to the Potala Palace by its colloquial Chinese name, *Dalai Shan* 達賴山, 'Dalai's Mountain'. It is also worth noting Fazun's phrase *lama si* 喇嘛寺. This expression, which translates to 'lama temple' in English, was common during the Republican era and continues to be used in the People's Republic to identify Tibetan monasteries (T. dgon pa). During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the term 'lamasery', derived from the Chinese *lama si* and now considered archaic, was commonly encountered in European and American publications concerning Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism.

Dates required careful handling. Fazun wrote during the Republican period, when China observed both the Gregorian solar calendar and the traditional lunar calendar. He occasionally mentioned Chinese or Tibetan lunar months or celebration days, which I have kept with concise explanations in the notes. All Gregorian years are presented in CE or BCE notation. Fazun's chronology is generally reliable, yet it is not always perfectly accurate. Where his timelines differ from accepted historical records, I mention the inconsistency in the footnotes but refrain from correcting his narrative. In order to maintain his original phrasing, I display dates according to the Republican-era method, providing Gregorian years within brackets. For instance, he chronicles occurrences as "the first month of the twenty-third year of the Republic [January 1934]". This dual system highlights Fazun's movement across two distinct time frameworks. He contextualized Tibet's ancient past within classical dynastic periods and its contemporary history based on modern Republican calculations.

In the context of premodern Tibetan history, Fazun reconstructed the timelines of significant events by referring to Chinese dynastic records. For instance, he mentions that Tibetan King Trisong Détsen came into power during the fourteenth year of Emperor Xuanzong's 玄宗 *Tianbao* 天寶 era, determining this by taking 742 CE as the beginning and adding 13 years to reach 755 CE. He likely would have confirmed this date by comparing it with key historical incidents, notably the eruption of the An Lushan 安祿山 Rebellion in that very year. In order to verify its precision, Fazun compared this with Xuanzong's reign, starting in 712 CE, confirming that 755 CE coincided with the 43rd year of the emperor's rule and the penultimate

year of the *Tianbao* period. His methodology enabled him to deduce that Trisong Détsen's rise to power occurred in 755 CE, corresponding to the fourteenth year of *Tianbao*.

Likewise, Fazun computed the length of King Trisong Détsen's time on the throne by linking the king's efforts to promote Buddhism in Tibet to the reigns of Tang emperors Suzong 肅宗 (756-762 CE) and Daizong 代宗 (762-779 CE). It was Fazun's deduction that Trisong Détsen's reign occurred concurrently with this era, and his efforts to promote Buddhism endured during the reign of these Tang emperors. Even though his calculation method was accurate, Fazun neglected to state that Trisong Détsen's rule extended into the period of Tang Emperor Dezong 德宗 (779-805 CE). It seems Fazun also incorrectly calculated the year Atiśa arrived in Tibet. Contrary to Fazun's statement, Atiśa visited Tibet when Emperor Renzong 仁宗 was in power in Song-dynasty China, not in the seventh year of Emperor Taizong's 太宗 rule. Historical records show Emperor Renzong governed from 1022 to 1063 CE, and Atiśa is recorded as having arrived in Tibet in 1042 CE, which corresponds to the twenty-first year of Emperor Renzong's rule.

Fazun also employed the revised measuring standards from the Republican era, which I have transformed into contemporary metric and imperial measurements in the footnotes, although the original designations are kept in the primary body. These include, among others, *chi* 尺 (about one-third of a meter), *zhang* 丈 (about 3.3 meters), and *qing* 頃 (about 6.7 hectares). These units were common in the early twentieth century and would have been familiar to Fazun's readers.

Fazun uses a rich array of terms when describing the Tibetan terrain. He consistently refers to Tibet, which he considers a nation, as Xizang. He observes that Chinese sources designate Tibet as Kang-Zang 康藏, distinguishing between Qianzang 前藏 'Anterior Tibet', and Houzang 後藏 'Posterior Tibet' based on Qing materials. Conversely, he writes, Tibetans typically employ a threefold classification when discussing Ü (C. Wu 烏; T. Dbus), Tsang (C. Zang 藏; T. Gtsang), and Kham (C. Kang 康; T. Khams). Fazun points out that the concepts of 'Southern Tibet' and 'Northern Tibet' are nonexistent among Tibetans. He defines Ü as Anterior Tibet; Tsang corresponds to Posterior Tibet, and Kham denotes the highland areas located between Dartsedo and the upper Yangtze River valleys. He also remarks on the lack of definition in this arrangement, noting that Nakchu (T. Nag chu) and Golok (T. Mgo log) are conventionally perceived as separate from Ü. Still, he does not mention the region of Amdo (T. A mdo) in either Chinese or Tibetan usage. Thus, he puts forth a fivefold classification of the Tibetan regions. He integrates Ngari (C. Ali 阿里; T. Mnga' ris) along Tibet's western boundary. Furthermore, he recognizes Bhutan (C. Butan 不丹; T. 'Brug yul) and Sikkim (C. Zhemengxiong 哲孟雄; T. 'Bras mo ljongs) as southern proximity countries, for they share historical and cultural ties with Tibet, despite their distinct political autonomy in the modern era.

In contrast to Tibet, he uses numerous distinct designations for China, contingent on the specific circumstances. He sometimes employs the term *Neidi* 內地, which I render in English as 'Inner Lands'. From the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, this term was referred to in English as 'China Proper'. This idea originated under the Qing dynasty, which maintained the Ming's administrative structure for China's heartland while excluding its various other territories, such as Manchuria, Mongolia, East Turkestan, and Tibet, from this system. The fifteen administrative divisions of the

Ming were restructured into the *Neidi shiba sheng* 内地十八省, known as the 'Inner Lands' Eighteen Provinces'. Conversely, areas beyond this central core, such as Manchuria, Mongolia, East Turkestan, and Tibet, were designated *Waifan* 外藩 'outer feudatories'. By the 1920s, when Fazun set out for Tibet, the term *Handi* 漢地 'Han Lands' also began to be used in the Republic of China, to denote the Ming's former 'Inner Lands'. He also utilizes the term *Hua* 華, an ancient ethnonym for 'China'. Fazun uses place names current in the Republican period, such as Beiping 北平 for Beijing and Pingjin 平津 for Tianjin 天津. When these names differ from present-day usage in the PRC, I retain the original form in the text and supply the modern equivalent in a note. In general, his chosen words illustrate both the political tensions and the historical complexities regarding how China and Tibet were perceived during this period of nation building in Asia.

Fazun gathered information for Chinese Buddhism from various editions of the Chinese Buddhist Canon, supplemented by recent Chinese and Japanese books covering history and doctrine, and various dictionaries. I could not confirm which printed versions of the Chinese Tripiṭaka he utilized. For the sections on Tibetan Buddhist history, he consulted the Tibetan *Depter Ngönpo* (T. *Deb ther sngon po*, 'The Blue Annals'). *The Blue Annals*, written by Gö Lotsāwa Shönu Pal (T. 'Gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal, 1392-1481) between 1476 and 1478, provides one of the most detailed accounts of the history of Buddhism in Tibet, especially the introduction of texts and practices from India. Nevertheless, Fazun usually omits citing his sources within the text. When he describes the Phakpa Lokeśvara chapel within the Potala Palace, for example, he does not state how he obtained his information on the legend. Beyond his published writings, it is clear that his information came from a great many Tibetan individuals, both from the monasteries where he studied and from other places. It is probable that the discussions he had with those informants were recorded in his journals and subsequently revised for the ethnographic segments of *Modern Tibet*, particularly those concerning the various peoples of the Tibetan nation, as well as the structure of government, finance, economy, commerce, and the major Geluk monasteries.

Finally, while Fazun refrains from directly citing Western authors or their books, his description indicates an awareness of European and American publications concerning Tibet, even the most recent. He probably accessed these materials at Taixu's Institute in Wuchang, in Beijing while studying the Tibetan language with Dayong, or even later at Chongqing's College during the time of writing. For example, it appears he is referencing William Montgomery McGovern (1897-1964), the American explorer who went into Lhasa in 1924 and released *To Lhasa in Disguise* that same year. In *Modern Tibet's* first chapter, Fazun observes, "I once came across a Westerner's account in which he claimed to have reached Lhasa, the very heart of Tibet". Comments like these suggest that Fazun consulted accounts in European languages as he wrote his account.

As noted in the preceding *Introduction*, Fazun published more on Tibet in 1937 than just the first edition of *Modern Tibet*. In June 1937, he published *Tibet, As I Once Passed Through*, a work that more explicitly addressed current political affairs between the administrations of the thirteenth and fourteenth Dalai Lamas. Six years afterward, during the Sino-Japanese War, Fazun then combined the two into a single updated volume, which appeared in Chengdu in 1943. The combined edition sharpened his institutional and

international analysis but condensed some narrative details. The present translation employs the 1937 *Modern Tibet* as its foundational document. Footnotes provide documentation for major variations found in Chapter 1 and Chapter 10 of the 1943 revision.

For simpler cross-referencing, I included the original page numbers, bolded and in square brackets, in both the Chinese and English versions, which enables readers to easily transition between my English translation and Fazun's original Chinese.

I completed the translation and the introduction to *Modern Tibet* in Sardinia, Italy, in August 2025, in a writing retreat that was graciously provided for me in the town of Gonnoscodina (see the Acknowledgements).

# Preface to *Modern Tibet* [1937] by Taixu

*Géshé*<sup>1</sup> Fazun has sent me his freshly penned book, *Modern Tibet*, for my assessment. Upon finishing the reading, I found myself with a couple of reflections. To begin with, the Tibetan people's acceptance of the Buddhadharmā is not just extensive but also filled with deep sincerity and earnestness. Still, it appears that numerous women act without shame or restraint (potentially as a result of the practice of sexual yoga<sup>2</sup> in Highest Yoga Tantra).<sup>3</sup> In the same vein, both officials and traders often display corruption and a deficiency in moral standards. Within the nomadic territories of Golok,<sup>4</sup> many people resort to acts of robbery and murder for their livelihood. Acts of murder, theft, infidelity, and deceit have alarmingly turned into widespread customs. What is the reason for this situation? In addition, the Tibetan saṅgha

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**1** Here, Taixu employs the sinograph *geshi* 格什, corresponding to *géshe* (T. dge bshes) in Tibetan, to praise Fazun for his accomplishments in Tibetan Buddhist scholarship. As Fazun himself explains in Chapter 1, however, he never earned the title of *géshe*. For the *géshe* degree, cf. Chapter 7.

**2** The expression *shuangshen fa* 雙身法, 'method of dual embodiment', indicates the practice of sexual yoga in a Highest Yoga Tantra setting.

**3** By *wushang mizong* 無上密宗, literally 'Unsurpassed Secret Mantra Tradition', 'Supreme Secret Mantra Tradition', Taixu designates the Yoganiruttara division of the tantra class of scriptures (T. Rgyud sde) as intended in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. Notably, Taixu uses the sinograph Mizong 密宗 (J. Misshū) as a synonym of Mijiao (J. Mikkyō) 密教. During the Republican period, both sinographs designate 'tantra' in Buddhist Chinese in the sense that Li Youyi intended the term (see also the Introduction).

**4** C. Guoluo 廓落, T. Mgo log.



represents the heart of the Tibetan nation.<sup>5</sup> They hold significant authority in both religious matters and societal respect, while also playing a crucial role in the realms of education and governance. Why? Unlike the general population, which lacks a reliable economic structure and an organized political governance, the saṅgha enjoys both stability and structure. It becomes clear that a society characterized by virtue cannot be established through mild methods of conversion alone. It requires effective political management alongside a thriving economic system. Still, practitioners of Buddhism worldwide depend exclusively on moral evolution to uphold the Buddha's dispensation through righteous monastic communities. They disregard the monastic organization and the management of temple assets. It is not apparent to many that only a limited group of wise and righteous individuals can achieve purity and goodness through conversion alone. The majority of individuals need ongoing engagement in meaningful activities and compliance with regulations in order to receive guidance and motivation towards positive behavior. If Tsongkhapa<sup>6</sup> had not reformed the saṅgha in Tibet by enforcing strict rules and managing the collective assets of the leading monasteries, the community would likely have fallen into a state of disorder and decline, much like what happened in Nepal. Should the political and religious leaders in Tibet enhance their guidance, create initiatives for advancement, and maintain a robust and principled administration, the commendable actions described in the four core precepts<sup>7</sup> would effortlessly emerge as a prominent feature of a nation that has been transformed by the Buddha's teachings.<sup>8</sup> The principles that humans hold dear and the teachings of the Buddha, which emphasize practices that lead to higher rebirths and ultimate enlightenment, should align with the requirements of the human realm in order to evolve progressively. The essential factor is to establish a rational economic system that ensures the survival of all individuals. This should be succeeded by respectable administration grounded in morality to promote peace for all. Individuals can only immerse themselves in the supreme teachings when they find themselves in a secure and stable environment. Without these essential elements, no matter how much one admires and trusts the teachings, it would be impossible to rectify irresponsible and deviant conduct, leaving individuals with a deepening

**5** The phrase *Xizang minzu de zhongxin* 西藏民族的重心 can be rendered as 'the heart of the Tibetan nation', 'the core of the Tibetan nation', with *zhongxin* also meaning core, focus, median point, center of gravity. On the term *Xizang minzu* and the ways in which scholars of Tibetan Buddhism from the Republican period, including Li Yizhuo and Fazun, associated Buddhism with the Tibetan nation, see the *Introduction to the translation*.

**6** C. Zong ke ba 宗克巴, T. Tsong kha pa (1357-1419). This is Fazun's sinographic transcription. Today, Tsongkhapa's name is also rendered into Chinese as Zong ka ba 宗喀巴. On Fazun's account of Tzongkhapa, see Chapter 3.

**7** C. si genben jie 四根本戒. By this term, Taixu refers to the ethical guidelines that form the core of the Vinaya. The four core precepts restrict: (1) any forms of sexual relations, whether with people or animals, (2) the act of theft, which encompasses taking anything that is not given, (3) the killing of another individual or being, and (4) deceit, especially in falsely claiming to have reached a state of enlightenment or to have special powers. This set of rules is connected to the *pārājika* (C. boluoyi 波羅夷; T. phas pham pa) offenses, the most severe infractions of the monastic code. The word *pārājika*, derived from Sanskrit and Pāli, translates to 'defeat'. It denotes actions influenced by impurities that lead to an automatic and permanent removal from the saṅgha for both monks and nuns.

**8** The phrase *Fohua minzu* 佛化民族 indicates the process of converting or transforming (C. hua 化) a nation (C. minzu 民族) into one that embraces the Buddha's (C. Fo 佛) teaching.

sense of regret! Therefore, in my address to the Tibetan nation, which has already achieved a remarkable level of moral advancement, I wish to share a helpful suggestion with its leaders. With this purpose in mind, I have briefly captured these thoughts in written form.

April 8, 1937, in the Abbot's Quarters at Xueshan 雪山,<sup>9</sup> Taixu

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**9** The term *xueshan*, 'Snow Mountain', refers to Xuedou shan 雪竇山, 'Snow Burrow Mountain'. In the first half of 1937, Taixu spent several months in retreat near Xuedou si 雪竇寺, 'Snow Burrow Temple', a Chan temple in old Mingzhou 明州 prefecture, located near modern-day Ningbo 寧波, Zhejiang 浙江 province. He wrote the preface to Fazun's book at Xuedou Temple's *zhangshi* 丈室, the 'abbot's quarters'. See Yinshun 1995, 228.



Portrait of Jampel Rölpai Lodrö ('Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros, 1888-1936), known as Amdo Géshé,  
from the 1937 edition of *Modern Tibet*

***Modern Tibet***  
**written by Fazun**



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# 1 Introduction

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**Summary** 1.1 Objectives of the Journey to Tibet. – 1.2 Nine Years of Study in Kham and Ü-Tsang. – 1.3 First Return. – 1.4 A Second Journey to Tibet. – 1.5 Homecoming and Aspiration.

Tibet is the most mysterious place. In the modern world, no country or nation – except for Tibet’s own authorities – has achieved a complete understanding of its internal organization. It remains a country both secluded and ancient. The Han people used to move freely in and out in the past, but explorers from the East and the West, out of curiosity, poured immense efforts and resources into probing Tibet’s secrets. Some even sacrificed their lives. Yet, even after such efforts, they found nothing but scattered details about frontier provinces such as Xikang 西康 and Qinghai 青海.<sup>1</sup> The secrets of Tibet’s heartland remained unrevealed to them. I once came across a Westerner’s account in which he claimed to have reached

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**1** On the terms employed by Fazun to denote the various regions of Tibet, see Chapter 2. See also *A Note to the Reader* by the translator.



Lhasa, the very heart of Tibet.<sup>2</sup> Among all those who sought to explore Tibet, he could be considered the most prominent. Yet, when one examines the actual achievements of his time in Lhasa, what were they? He merely secluded himself in the home of a Tibetan family for several [2] days, not even daring to set foot on the streets. How, then, could he possibly speak about the internal structure and workings of the Tibetan Government? When the Han troops were driven out at the beginning of the Republican period, the influence of the British started to creep inside. Later, when the British were staying in Lhasa, Tibetan officials designated escorts to be with them. Therefore, at times, British writings on the internal affairs of Tibet bore some traces of authenticity.

Still, their insight into the religious institutions of Tibet and the mindset of its leaders was, at best, rather obscure. Hosts who acted out of fear and caution were probably not going to unveil Tibet's innermost secrets. What many previous explorers and travelers could not uncover about the mysteries of Tibet, I was fortunate enough to glimpse during my eight or nine years of stay in Kham and Ü-Tsang.<sup>3</sup> From a reflective and objective standpoint, I was able to formulate a comprehensive idea. Now that I am back in the Inner Lands, I am sharing this insight with my fellow citizens who have spent centuries trying to unveil the secrets of Tibet.

The breadth of subjects related to Tibet appears remarkably extensive. Its vastness encompasses both its geography and its history, which has unfolded over more than a thousand years. A full examination of its politics, scholarship, customs, and ethos throughout this lengthy timeframe demands

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**2** In this passage, Fazun is referring to William Montgomery McGovern (1897-1964), the American scholar and adventurer renowned for both academic achievements and remarkable explorations. Educated at the Sorbonne, Oxford, and the University of Berlin, McGovern graduated in Asian studies and held teaching positions at London's School of Oriental Studies and later at Northwestern University. His journey to Lhasa in 1922-23 involved disguising himself as a Tibetan caravan porter to enter Tibet unnoticed. In Tibet, he faced severe hardships, such as resting in barns filled with lice, living on uncooked dried meat, and battling through thick snowdrifts. His initial secrecy collapsed when illness forced him to reveal himself to authorities in Lhasa. In Tibet's capital, a violent mob reaction to his presence nearly ended in tragedy. Eventually, McGovern managed a narrow escape into hiding with a Tibetan family. Later, he received protection by Tibetan authorities under house arrest, during which he recovered from dysentery and pneumonia. After an audience with the thirteenth Dalai Lama (1876-1933), having obtained the Dalai Lama's official pardon, he left Tibet with an armed escort towards India. In 1924, with the publication of his *To Lhasa in Disguise*, McGovern's compelling account of his journey gained international attention. Fazun may have read a copy of the first edition of *To Lhasa in Disguise* between late 1924 and early 1925 while he was in Beijing. Here, Dayong's mission to Tibet involved gathering knowledge about Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism before their departure in the spring of 1925. If not before his departure from Beijing, Fazun would have come across McGovern's account at the College in Chongqing after his first return to China in 1934, or just as he wrote *Modern Tibet* in early 1937. As Fazun points out, McGovern's brief period of concealment in Lhasa restricted his firsthand insights into Tibetan governance and culture. McGovern's publications in Asian studies included works such as *Introduction to Mahayana Buddhism* (1922), *Manual of Buddhist Philosophy* (1923), and extensive studies on East Asian politics and culture. In addition to his Tibetan expedition, McGovern's adventures led him to Japan, where he disguised himself as a Buddhist monk, as well as to the Amazon region, where he found traces of the Inca civilization. My gratitude goes to Donald Lopez for identifying the reference to McGovern in Fazun's text. For a short, informative account of McGovern's travels in Tibet, including a comparison of his adventure with the similar journey undertaken by the French author Alexandra David-Néel, see the classic work by Hopkirk 1982, 227-8.

**3** Fazun consistently employs the sinograph Kangzang 康藏 to refer to the regions of Tibet where he lived and studied and which he also describes in most detail. Conversely, he employs the sinograph Xizang 西藏 as the name of Tibet as a country. I render the sinograph Kangzang as Kham (C. Kang 康; T. Khams) and Ü-Tsang (C. Zang 藏; T. Dbus-Gtsang).

a detailed scrutiny of old writings, which amounts to tracing the shape of a gourd with a ladle. This particular approach does not work well for me. Other than engaging in the translation of scriptures, I lack any desire to mimic the sparse and questionable reports from others. Because I have a profound dislike for emulating others, I remain largely indifferent to the descriptions of Tibet's past.

[3] Tibet, although situated within China's territory, has been estranged from us for many years.<sup>4</sup> Its future trajectory – whether it will belong to another nation, or whether it will continue as it has – will depend on the strength of our nation, the competence of our leadership, and the quality of our relations. I lack prophetic abilities, therefore I choose to refrain from making predictions regarding these matters. I characterize Tibet as 'modern', yet my use of 'modern' does not imply a connotation of fashionable or progressive. I simply designate it as associated with the present. Is the meaning of 'modern' unchanging? I argue that this is not the case. Every generation characterizes the time of their lives as the 'modern age', viewing all events and conditions within that timeframe as modern phenomena. Over time, spanning decades or centuries, subsequent generations might regard our language as outdated and our actions as no longer relevant. They will interpret the concept of 'modernity' based on the characteristics of their own times, viewing their particular present time as the quintessential modern

4 In Fazun's Chinese, "Xizang suiran shi Zhongguo de bantu, danshi ta yu women gehe le duonian. Ta de jianglai, jiuqing shi ruhe, huoshi guishu qita de guojia, huoshi lao zheyang de jixu xiaqu, zhe xuyao kan women guojia de shili ruhe he banshiren de shouduan ruhe ji lianluo de ganqing ruhe er ding. 西藏雖然是中國的版圖，但是他與我們隔閡了多年，他的將來，究竟是如何，或是歸屬其他的國家，或是老這樣的繼續下去，這需要看我們國家的實力如何和辦事人的手段如何及聯絡的感情如何而定" (1937a, 3). In the 1943 edition of *Xiandai Xizang*, the same statement appears in a revised form: "Xizang suiran shi Zhongguo de bantu, danshi women gehe le duonian, ta de jianglai, jieguo ruhe, hai yao kan women de shili ruhe, dangshirende shouwan ruhe, yiji ganqing de lianluo ruhe er ding. 西藏雖然是中國的版圖，但是我們隔閡了多年，他的將來，結果如何，還要看我們的實力如何，當事人的手腕如何，以及感情的聯絡如何而定" (1943a, 2-3); in English, "Although Tibet is part of China's territory, we have been estranged for many years. Its future trajectory – what that outcome will be – will depend on our strength, the competence of our leadership, and the quality of our relations". The 1937 edition depicts Tibet's future in terms of a binary: *huoshi guishu qita de guojia*, *huoshi lao zheyang de jixu xiaqu* 或是歸屬其他的國家，或是老這樣的繼續下去 'either it will belong to another country, or it will continue as it has'. The phrase *guishu qita de guojia* 歸屬其他的國家 'belong to another country' evokes the real possibility of British Raj control – a concern grounded in the geopolitical anxieties of the Republican era, when Tibet's position relative to British India was the subject of both diplomatic and popular debate. The inclusion of *jiuqing* 究竟 'ultimately' intensifies this sense of uncertainty, framing Tibet's trajectory as unresolved and potentially irreversible. The 1943 edition removes this binary structure. The expression *ta de jianglai*, *jiuqing shi ruhe* 他的將來，究竟是如何 'what that outcome will be' eliminates any explicit reference to foreign powers. Instead of an external threat, the revised sentence offers a conditional formula rooted in China's internal capacity. In both sentences, Tibet's future is said to depend on three domestic factors: *shili* 實力, 'strength', *shouwan* 手腕 'competence', and *ganqing de lianluo* 感情的聯絡, 'the quality of relations'. Still, in the 1943 edition, the tone shifts from existential risk to administrative reasoning. What was once imagined as a territorial crisis becomes a question of effective governance. Equally telling is the shift in rhetorical voice. The 1937 version attributes the responsibility of governing Tibet to *women guojia* 我們國家, 'our country', directly invoking the State. In the 1943 revision, this is replaced with *women* 我們, 'we', a pronoun that disperses the accountability of the State. Whether this shift reflects rhetorical restraint, editorial caution, or evolving political sensitivities is difficult to determine. Still, the result is a softer, more introspective discourse of sovereignty – less about defending borders, and more about managing relationships. This revision, made in the context of wartime Chongqing and under the joint leadership of Fazun and Taixu at the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine, reflects a broader transition in Fazun's political language. The dramatization of Tibet as a site of imperial fragility appears to give way to the bureaucratic language of planning and reform. Where the 1937 text presents the stakes, the 1943 version renders them manageable. See Chapter 10 for Fazun's more concerted discussion regarding China's sovereignty over Tibet.

age. However, following the same reasoning, their ‘modern’ mindset will eventually be consigned to the annals of history. Indeed, the concept of an everlasting present, or a sustained ‘modernity’, proves to be fundamentally inconceivable. When every lived moment is framed as ‘modern’, it logically implies that all earlier moments can also be interpreted as ‘modern’ from the perspective of the experiences that characterize those periods.

As a citizen of the Republic of China, I propose that the essence of ‘modern’ is rooted in the observations and experiences I have gathered since I became aware of the world. When I discuss modern Tibet, I refer specifically to the time I have lived there. My firsthand observations establish the essential framework for my [4] discussion of modern Tibet, which I have supplemented with perspectives from others. In this work, I will, from time to time, bring up notable incidents from history. By incorporating such references, I aim to provide my compatriots with a wider view of the subject matter. Even though these [incidents] are not the principal subject, they are nonetheless critical for supplying important context, however brief it might be. And so, why did I go to Tibet? How long did I stay? Did I return? What prompted my return? And what am I going to do now? A dear friend, who knows me inside out, demanded that I should write this.<sup>5</sup> He implored me with such intensity that, although I feel a sense of shame – particularly when I realize I must tell my own story, which makes me turn red – I could not hold out against his demands for very long. And so, I have written a little, in hope that it will amuse you.

## 1.1 Objectives of the Journey to Tibet<sup>6</sup>

In the summer of the ninth year of the Republic [1920], I encountered Master Dayong<sup>7</sup> for the first time as he explained the *Ba daren jue jing* 八大人覺經.<sup>8</sup> It was at that point that I understood my need, having left secular life,<sup>9</sup> to engage in a purpose that was truly meaningful as a monk. Casually participating in ceremonies and daily routines would lead me away from my original aim. Nevertheless, what were exactly the duties that a monk ought to perform? I frequently heard seniors say, “To liberate oneself from saṃsāra, the ocean of suffering, is the duty of a monk”. But I was left

5 Fazun’s friend who invited him to write *Modern Tibet* is Fafang. See the Introduction.

6 A selection of passages from Chapter 1 were translated by Brenton Sullivan (2007; 2014) based on the content of *Zhuzhe ru zang de jingguo* 著者入藏的經過 (The Author’s Experiences “Entering Tibet”), published as an appendix of the 1943 edition of *Modern Tibet*.

7 Throughout *Modern Tibet*, Fazun refers to Dayong and Taixu as Yongshi 勇師 and Xushi 虛師. The term *shi* 師 in this context is an abbreviation of *fashi* 法師, ‘dharma master’, when referred to Dayong, and *dashi* 大師, ‘great master’, when indicating Taixu. For clarity in English, I render these compounds simply as Dayong and Taixu, or Master Dayong and Master Taixu throughout the translation.

8 The *Ba daren jue jing* 八大人覺經, or “Sūtra of the Awakening of the Eight Great Beings”, was translated into Chinese by the Parthian monk An Shigao 安世高. According to tradition, An Shigao was among the earliest translators of Buddhist texts into Chinese. He resided in China for approximately twenty years during the Later Han dynasty (Hou Han 後漢, second century CE), dedicating himself to the translation of a considerable number of sūtras.

9 The Sanskrit term *pravrajita* (C. *chujia* 出家, T. *rab tu byung ba*), commonly translated in the present book as ‘monastic’, denotes ‘one who has left home’, hence the secular life, to embrace the Buddhist order.

pondering the meaning behind “saṃsāra, the ocean of suffering”. How could one ever escape it? Back then, I was so naïve that I did not even think to challenge those basic concepts. Others remarked, “To chant the name of the Buddha in order to be reborn in Sukhāvātī is the duty of a monk”.<sup>10</sup> [5] I took these statements to heart without question. But in moments of stillness and reflection, I listened to Master Dayong as he recounted the life stories of eminent monks from earlier times. I recognized that the duties of a monk go beyond just chanting to attain rebirth in Sukhāvātī or trying to escape the cycle of saṃsāra. Even in this cycle of birth and death, there is a great deal to accomplish – translating the scriptures, upholding the Saddharma,<sup>11</sup> and fulfilling other duties.

In the seasons of spring, summer, and autumn of the tenth year of the Republic [1922], I gained extensive instruction from Master Dayong. That winter, I received my full ordination from Master Daojie 道階<sup>12</sup> at Fayuan Temple 法源寺 in Beijing.<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, Master Dayong went to Japan to train in the Secret Mantra Tradition.<sup>14</sup> Around the middle of the twelfth lunar month, with the compassionate assistance of my preceptor<sup>15</sup> and eight respected teachers from Mount Baohua 寶華山,<sup>16</sup> the three of us, candidates from the north, traveled to Mount Baohua to study the monastic code. The following summer [of 1923], I was given the opportunity to attend lectures by the senior ordination instructor<sup>17</sup> and the fifth-ordination instructor<sup>18</sup>

**10** The term that Fazun uses here, *jile* 極樂, refers to the Pure Land of Sukhāvātī (C. Jilēshijie 極樂世界; T. Bde ba can), depicted, alongside the practices necessary to take rebirth there after death, in the *Sukhāvativyūhasūtra* (C. *Wuliangshou jing* 無量壽經, T. *Bde ba can gyi bkod pa'i mdo*). According to the *Sukhāvativyūha*, this Pure Land is presided by the Amitābha ‘Infinite Light’ or Amitāyus ‘Infinite Life’ Buddha, who teaches the practice of *buddhānsmṛti* (C. *nianfo guan* 念佛觀), involving the contemplation of the characteristics, marks, and virtues of the Buddha to the fortunate ones reborn there.

**11** Fazun often employs the term *zhengfa* 正法, corresponding to the Sanskrit term *saddharma*, the ‘Good Teaching’, as an alternative to *fojiao* 佛教, corresponding to *buddhaśāsana*, the ‘Buddha’s Teaching’, or *fofa* 佛法, *buddhadharma*, the ‘Buddha’s Dharma’.

**12** Daojie *fashi* 道階法師 (1870-1934), a master from Hunan 湖南, served as a witness at Taixu’s monastic ordination ceremony in 1904 and became the abbot of Fayuan Temple 法源寺 in Beijing from 1911. From 1912, he also served as the president of the Beijing branch of the Chinese Buddhist Society (C. Zhongguo Fojiao Zonghui 中國佛教總會). On Daojie, see Welch 1967, 397.

**13** The Fayuan Temple 法源寺 is a monastery in Beijing dating from the Tang dynasty. In 1734, during the reign of the Qing Emperor Yongzheng, the temple was dedicated to the Lüzong 律宗 ‘Vinaya Sect’. In modern times, the temple remains an important center for the training of young monks, housing the Chinese Institute of Buddhist Studies (C. Zhongguo foxue yuan 中國佛學院) and the Museum-Library of Chinese Buddhism (C. Zhongguo fojiao tushu wenwu guan 中國佛教圖書文物館).

**14** C. Mizong; corresponding in Japanese to the term *Misshū*.

**15** The term *jie heshang* 戒和尚, translated here as ‘preceptor teacher’, refers to a member of the monastic community from whom (1) laypeople receive the five precepts, (2) novices receive the ten precepts, and future (3) monks and (4) nuns receive full ordination. These four categories of individuals begin their training with the preceptor teacher by studying the rules of monastic discipline (S. *vinaya*; C. *jielü* 戒律; T. ‘dul ba).

**16** Mount Baohua 寶華山, located near Nanjing, is the main center of activity of the Lü zong.

**17** C. *kaitang shifu* 開堂師父; ‘senior ordination instructor’. Typically, when a monk refers to a teacher as *shifu* 師父, it signifies that this individual is his ‘tonsure master’ (C. *tidu enshi* 剃度恩師), but he might also be his ‘Dharma master’ (C. *fashi* 法師), or his ‘ordination master’ (C. *jieshi* 戒師). See Welch 1967, fn. 112; Sullivan 2007, 29.

**18** C. *wu shifu* 五師父; ‘fifth ordination instructor’. Sullivan 2007, 29.

focused on the *Tiantai sijiao yi* 天台四教儀.<sup>19</sup> This experience reignited my long-held appreciation for scripture, which I found to be much more meaningful than just learning the rituals of chanting and conducting the ceremonies of Water and Land<sup>20</sup> and of the Burning Mouths.<sup>21</sup> During that time, the renowned Master Taixu had founded the Buddhist Academy in Wuchang.<sup>22</sup> A fellow student from the academy reached out to share details about their daily routine: they attended six hours of lectures on the scriptures and spent two to three hours on personal study. Upon reading the letter, I felt like a young kid excited for the arrival of the New Year, filled with joy beyond what I could express. I decided that I would go. Still, what options were available to me for gaining access without any introductions or a person to endorse my entry?

It was during that time, purely by coincidence, that something surprising happened.<sup>23</sup> The time had come for the disciples of Mount Baohua, who had taken their vows the previous year, to register for ceremonial roles. As a rule, the three of us from Beiping were seen as outsiders who were not eligible to conduct the ceremonial events in the ritual hall at Mount Baohua. But our credentials happened to be unique: the great abbot of Mount Baohua served as our [6] teacher, while their teacher was our own abbot, and the leaders of the eastern and western chambers acted as our ceremonial leaders. As a result, we entered the ceremonial space six months ahead of the local disciples. Indeed, the local disciples were displeased, as they had hoped to outshine us in obtaining the ceremonial roles. They were utterly taken aback when I emerged as the first in line. This sparked a fierce jealousy, as though their resentment had set the heavens on fire. I could not contain my amusement, laughing both silently and vocally at the very sight of what they were doing. “While my name may be at the top of the list”, I

**19** The *Tiantai sijiao yi* is a text composed by Chegwan 諦觀 (d. 970), a monk of the Goryeo period. Here, Chegwan offers further elaborations on the systematization of teachings carried out by Zhiyi 智顛 (538-579), the founder of the Tiantai Sect 天台宗. For an English translation of the *Tiantai sijiao yi*, see Chappell 1983.

**20** The term *shuilu* 水陸 refers to a ritual for the spirits and the dead. Welch (1967, 190) describes this ritual in the following manner: “The *tour de force* among rites for the dead was the ‘plenary mass’ (*shui-lu fa-hui*), common in central China, rare in Peking. It was very large, very long, and very expensive. Lasting seven days and nights, it included different kinds of services at seven different altars, often going on simultaneously: recitation of buddha’s name, chanting of various sūtras, offering of penances, and the release of burning mouths. Each had to be performed by the number of monks prescribed in the missal, while all the monks in the monastery turned out to march in the serpentine processions reciting buddha’s name (*p’u-fo*). The purpose of the plenary mass was to save all the souls of the dead on land and sea (hence the term *shui-lu*), but as usual the merit arising therefrom was credited to the account of the deceased relatives of the family that was paying for it”.

**21** The term *yankou* 焰口, which I translated here as ‘burning mouths’, refers not only to a particular kind of hungry ghosts (S. *preta*, C. *egui* 餓鬼), but also to the ritual designed to feed and liberate these beings by reciting a specific *dhāraṇī sūtra* (C. *Yankou egui tuoluoni jing* 焰口餓鬼陀羅尼經). The main recipients of the ritual are both hungry ghosts and the deceased, who are to be freed from their unfortunate rebirths through food offerings. This type of *dhāraṇī sūtra* was first introduced into China during the Tang dynasty through Sanskrit translations by Śikṣānanda and Amoghavajra. This particular ritual was among the few that survived the Tang dynasty to the present day. See Strickmann 1996, 392 ff.

**22** C. Wuchang Foxue Yuan 武昌佛學院. The Wuchang Institute of Buddhist Studies was founded in 1922 by Taixu with the aim of reorganizing the Chinese monastic system and providing it with a standard. See the *Introduction*.

**23** The anecdote recounted in this paragraph was removed in the 1943 edition of *Modern Tibet*.

thought, “I will not remain in this place for long. Why humiliate yourselves over something so trivial?”

Shortly after, in less than ten days, I received a letter from Master Dayong in Japan. He showed great kindness and compassion towards me, and he consented to support me by writing a letter of recommendation. After bidding a temporary farewell to my teachers at Mount Baohua, I proceeded west to Wuchang to meet the distinguished Master Taixu and to join the Buddhist Academy. During that winter, Master Dayong made his way back to Wuchang to share the teachings of the *Shiba dao* 十八道.<sup>24</sup> At the time, there was a notable trend among both laypeople and monastics to elevate tantra<sup>25</sup> above all else. I had the honor of spending several days with Dayong, during which he instructed me in both the *Shiba dao* and the *Yizun gongyang* 一尊供養.<sup>26</sup> Even though I missed the two major empowerment rites that he had brought back from Japan, I still experienced the profound intensity of tantra. However, I realized that only individuals with a strong grounding in the doctrinal teachings could truly comprehend its essential principles. Without a fundamental grasp of the core doctrinal principles, one’s practice is likely to result in distorted perceptions and false appearances. Some individuals attain temporary visions of meditative trance<sup>27</sup> or feel the favors of a chosen deity<sup>28</sup> and, misjudging these experiences, take them as signs of having achieved the supreme realization in the present body.<sup>29</sup> Hardly anyone is willing to criticize them. Others may lapse into a state of stupor or [7] delusion, combining hallucinations of demonic or ghostly powers with religious practice, and later claim to have attained enlightenment.

My own foundations were weak. I failed to enter a meditative state or obtain any blessings from a deity. I likewise did not experience any supernatural feats related to demons or ghosts. My own connection to tantric practice<sup>30</sup> remained distant. In my view, learning required total

**24** C. *shiba dao* 十八道; J. *jūhachi dō*; “The Eighteen Paths” are preliminary practices leading to the Fire Offering (S. *homa*; C. *humo* 護摩; T. *sbyin sregs*; J. *goma*). In the Shingon tradition, four principal fire rituals are distinguished: (1) *sāntika* (pacification), (2) *pauṣṭika* (augmentation), (3) *ābhicāruka* (subjugation), and (4) *vaśīkaraṇa* (attracting or subordinating others). Each is subdivided into a sequence that includes the Eighteen Paths, the Diamond Realm (*Vajradhātu*), the Womb Realm (*Garbhadhātu*), and the actual Fire Offering. The Eighteen Paths serve as an initiation in foundational mudrās and visualizations, forming the basis for deity yoga. As Michael Saso (1991, 66) explains, “Four rituals form the central practice of the Shido Kegyo training. These four are the Juhachi Do, the Kongo Kai, the Taizo Kai, and the Goma. The first two of these, the Juhachi Do and the Kongo Kai, relate the practitioner to the Thunderbolt Realm, while the third relates to the Matrix Realm. In the first two rituals the practitioner is said to go to the Buddha, while in the third the Buddha comes to the practitioner. [...] The title Juhachi Do refers to the eighteen different mudras which are employed in the course of the ritual. It is the simplest of the four rituals and its connection with the Thunderbolt Realm is shown by the mantras recited at the close of the ritual”. See also Strickmann 1996, 337-68; Saso 1990, 88-94; Saso 1991, 49-56; Chandra and Rani 1978, 57-61.

**25** In the phrase *you wei mi shi shang de fengqi* 有唯密是尚的風氣, by the term *Mi* 密, Fazun refers to Japan’s Mikkyō. An expanded translation is, “there was a prevailing trend of exalting Mikkyō [tantra] above all else”.

**26** C. *yizun gongyang* 一尊供養; “Single Yidam Offering”.

**27** C. *sanmodi* 三摩地; S. *samādhi*; T. *ting nge ’dzin*.

**28** C. *benzun* 本尊; S. *iṣṭadevatā*; T. *yi dam*.

**29** C. *jishen chengfo* 即身成佛; this expression conveys a core doctrine of the *Vajrayāna*: the possibility of “attaining buddhahood in this very body”, within a single human lifetime.

**30** C. *Mifa* 密法.

commitment, while practice demanded consistent effort. I made a choice to not take shortcuts, skip necessary steps, or entertain grand delusions that could mislead myself or others. Causing harm to others was never my desire. And I undertook every action with heartfelt intention: I immersed myself in my studies, practiced with perseverance, taught as best as I could, and promoted the Dharma with sincerity. I expressed myself clearly and truthfully, without the desire for praise or the fear of criticism. I felt no obligation to protect my friends' emotions, nor was I concerned about provoking their anger. Those who were satisfied with my message engaged, while those who did not were free to walk away. Still, some people began to blame me for showing indifference towards Secret Mantra. I could not help but offer them a frosty grin.

In the spring of the thirteenth year of the Republic [1924], Master Dayong and the honorable Bai Puren 白普仁<sup>31</sup> entered a period of retreat at Shan Yuan Temple 善緣庵 in Beiping to perform a fire offering ritual.<sup>32</sup> During this retreat, Master Dayong became aware that the range of Tibetan tantric practices was far greater than that of Eastern tantra,<sup>33</sup> which intensified his wish to seek the Dharma in Tibet. At first, Master Dayong aimed to make this pilgrimage alone or with one or two attendants. Yet, under the urging of Bai Puren and other prominent Dharma protectors, he began to create the Tibetan Buddhist Language Institute.<sup>34</sup> As summer approached, the Wuchang Buddhist Academy conducted graduation ceremonies, while Dayong was bestowing the *Shiba dao* in Beiping. He wrote me a letter, imploring that I come and see him for the journey to Tibet. From the day I met Dayong at Mount Wutai,<sup>35</sup> he had taken me under his wing as if I were his own tonsure disciple, always prepared to provide advice and care in every circumstance, great or small. After his return from Japan, he intended to retreat on Mount Lu 廬山 to accomplish the attainment [8] methods.<sup>36</sup> I was his primary choice to accompany him in the role of an attendant. Dayong's decision in Beiping took a different turn, which, of

**31** C. Bai Puren 白普仁 (1870-1927). Venerable Bai Puren was a lama from Mongolia active at the Yonghegong between the late Qing dynasty and the early years of the Republic of China. It is said that during a pilgrimage to Mount Wutai, he had a vision of Mañjuśrī, after which he worked for the benefit of his disciples. His reputation soon spread widely throughout Mongolia. Stories of miracles and marvels circulated not only among his disciples but also among laypeople, due to his reputed expertise in *śāntika* rituals for the protection of the state (C. huguo xizai 護國息災). These rituals - often involving the recitation of the *Suvarṇaprabhāṣottama Sūtra* (C. *Jingguangming zuishengwang jing* 金光明最勝王經) [T. 665] - were often said to be successful. In 1924, upon the arrival of the ninth Panchen Lama in Beijing, the two met, and the Panchen Lama bestowed upon Bai Puren the title of *khenpo*. That same year, Dayong, who had just returned from Japan, visited the Yonghe Gong to study Tibetan tantric rituals with Bai Puren, particularly the *homa* ritual. On Bai Puren, see the *Introduction* to the translation. On the ninth Panchen Lama, see Jagou 2011.

**32** C. humo 護摩; S. homa; T. sbyin sregs; J. goma; from the Sanskrit *homa*, 'fire offering'.

**33** C. Dongmin 東密; the expression 'Eastern tantra' here refers to Japan's tantra.

**34** The Tibetan Buddhist Language Institute (C. Fojiao zangwen xueyuan 佛教藏文學院) was founded in 1924 by Dayong at the Ciyin Temple 慈因寺 in Beijing. Dayong's primary aim was to train a group of his students in the Tibetan language so that, once they reached Tibet, they would be better equipped to read Buddhist texts. In 1925, Taixu and Dayong changed the name of the institute to "Group for Learning the Dharma in Tibet" (C. Liu zang xuefa tuan 留藏學法團).

**35** C. Wutai shan 五台山; T. Ri bo rtse lnga. Cf. Tuttle 2006a, 2, 6-8.

**36** C. chengjiu fa 成就法; in tantric materials, *chengjiu* is one of the Chinese translations of *siddhi* (T. dngos grub), conveying the meaning of 'attainment' or 'success'. The Chinese phonetic transcription of *siddhi* is *xidi* 悉地.

course, called for a reevaluation of the plans he had for me. He wrote me a letter, requesting my presence in Beijing for a personal discussion. At that time, I was staying in Wuchang, engrossed in the study of the commentaries on *Sanlun* 三論<sup>37</sup> and *Weishi* 唯識.<sup>38</sup> I greatly admired and longed to emulate the achievements of such luminaries as Kumārajīva, Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing.<sup>39</sup> When I received an invitation letter from Dayong to join the Tibet expedition, I was ecstatic and jumped for joy, worried that I might miss this valuable chance.

I had not seen my parents in six long years. With each passing year, I received a growing stack of letters from them urging me to come home. My replies, always postponing my return – this year to the next, and then the next to the year after – matched the quantity of letters they had sent. Upon my arrival in Beijing that year, I planned to take a brief diversion back home to ease my parents' concerns. But Dayong was in such haste to go to Hangzhou to deliver his lectures that I had to forego this plan.

When I reached Beijing, I had a meeting with Dayong, and we confirmed our travel details for the expedition to Tibet to study the Dharma. During Dayong's southern journey, I, along with Masters Dagang 大剛, Master Miyan 密嚴, and the layman Shanzhe 善哲, stayed in Beijing to make preparations for the upcoming expedition. When Dayong returned to Beijing in the eighth month to begin the new academic term, he was with Master Langchan 朗禪, Master Hengyan 恆演, and a number of lay practitioners. The Tibetan Language Institute<sup>40</sup> was opened and Mr. Chong 充<sup>41</sup> began his formal instruction. Gradually, our Tibetan alphabet<sup>42</sup> moved steadily onto the right track. After the inauguration, masters like Zhaoyi 超一, Guankong 觀空, and Fafang 法舫, joined us as well. As late spring approached in the next year [1925], our group had everything in place to set off. While on the road, we took turns imparting Dharma teachings, bestowing ritual empowerments, and granting precepts, which resulted in a vibrant experience. We always traveled on private trains, and when coming by ship, we would always arrange for the entire cabin to be reserved.

When we arrived in Hankou 漢口, we were joined by several masters, including Yanding 嚴定 and Huizhong 會中. A few old classmates tried to dissuade us. They pointed out the likelihood of the monastery facing a lack

**37** C. Sanlun 三論. The term Sanlun 三論 'Three Treatises' refers to the three *sāstras* that were elevated to canonical status by the Chinese Sanlun Sect 三論宗. These texts, all translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva (C. Jiumoluoshi 鳩摩羅什), are: the *Madhyamakaśāstra* (C. *Zhong lun* 中論) and the *Dvādaśanikāya śāstra* (C. *Shiermen lun* 十二門論) by Nāgārjuna, and the *Sataśāstra* (C. *Bai lun* 百論) by his main disciple, Āryadeva.

**38** C. Weishi 唯識; "Consciousness Only".

**39** C. Shi Xuan Zang Jing 什顯奘淨; Fazun employs this compound of four sinographs to name the four great Chinese Buddhist translators: "Shi 什" for Kumārajīva (C. Jiumoluoshi 鳩摩羅什, (344-413 CE), "Xian 顯" for Faxian 法顯 (ca. 337-422 CE), "Zang 奘" for Xuanzang 玄奘 (600-664 CE), and "Jing 淨" for Yijing 義淨 (635-713 CE).

**40** C. Zangwen xueyuan 藏文學院.

**41** Fazun refers to his first Tibetan language teacher in Beijing as Chong xiansheng 充先生 (d.u.).

**42** C. jia ke 迦喀; T. ka kha. The Tibetan alphabet has been named *ka kha*, after its first two letters, *ka* and *kha*. It thus follows other traditions: for example, the Greek *alpha* and *beta*, or the Latin-derived Italian *alfabeto*. Fazun, in transliterating Tibetan into Chinese, replaces, respectively, *ka* and *kha* with the Chinese phonetic transliterations *jia* and *ke*, as these sinographs phonetically come very close to the pronunciation of the Tibetan letters.

of personnel and the difficulties involved in traveling to Tibet. I could not help but smile quietly at their ignorance and inflexibility, for they could not understand my [9] long-standing resolve to sacrifice myself to the Dharma. The hardships of Tibet were much less intimidating than Xuanzang's dangerous journey to the Kingdom of Khotan,<sup>43</sup> or Faxian's crossings through treacherous mountain passes. Even though the mother monastery faced a shortage of personnel, Master Taixu was in charge, and other classmates carried on with their studies. Tibet had a flawless Buddhadharmā - ripe for study, translation, and dissemination. So they should have been there to support and encourage us. What prompted them to seek to dissuade and alarm us instead? As they were dear friends following their personal ambitions, I expressed myself in a calm and polite way, avoiding any direct disagreement. They have been gone for many years and will never know my persistent dedication.

During that summer, I found refuge from the sweltering heat at Mount Emei 峨嵋山, where I also engaged in a five-week *sāntika* ritual to pacify adversities.<sup>44</sup> In the fall, I took residence at Wulong Temple 烏龍寺 in Jiading 嘉定, immersing myself in Master Yijing's 義淨<sup>45</sup> *Nanhai jigui zhuan* 南海寄歸傳. This experience deepened my heartfelt appreciation for Trepitaka Yijing.<sup>46</sup> I realized that the Chinese Buddhist sūtras and śāstras we have today were passed down to us through the immeasurable sacrifices made by our forebears. They gave up their lives, fortunes, sweat, and blood, enduring immeasurable pain, distress, sorrow, and tears of despair to ensure the passing down of these invaluable gifts. Every single character and brushstroke in these scriptures is tinged with blood and tears. The scriptures were acquired and translated through the boundless compassion, fearless resolution, and unshakeable vows of those individuals who were willing to sacrifice everything. When we take up these teachings as their heirs, we must pause and contemplate the vast expectations, monumental efforts, and unselfish sacrifices of those who have laid the groundwork for us. It is hard to fathom that we could, in arrogance or ingratitude, speak negatively or defame their contributions. Even though we may not contribute to the merit and wisdom established by the relentless labors of

43 C. Gaochang 高昌.

44 C. wuqi zizai fahui 五七息災法會; 'wuqi', in English, 'five times seven'.

45 Yijing (635-713) was a Chinese Buddhist pilgrim and translator who traveled to India and Southeast Asia between 671 and 695 CE. He embarked on this journey to collect Buddhist scriptures and to study monastic practices firsthand. Yijing is credited with translating numerous Buddhist texts into Chinese. He wrote two major works: the *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan* 南海寄歸內法傳 (T. 2125) (Record of the Inner Dharma Dispatched from the Southern Sea) and the *Datang qiufa gaoseng zhuan* 大唐求法高僧傳 (T. 2066) (Biographies of Eminent Monks Who Went in Search of the Dharma during the Great Tang). Several translations exist of Yijing's works in European languages. For the *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan* (Taishō 2125), see: Takakusu 1896; and Li 2000. For Yijing's *Datang qiufa gaoseng zhuan* (Taishō 2066), see: Chavannes 1894; and Lahiri 1986.

46 C. sanzang 三藏. The Sanskrit term Trepitaka (C. Sanzang 三藏/Sanzang fashi 法師; T. Sde snod gsum pa) is a honorific title for Buddhist scholars celebrated for their mastery of the Tripitaka, or 'Three Baskets'. These refer to the Buddhist canon's three divisions: the Vinayapitaka (Basket of Monastic Regulations), the Sūtrapitaka (Basket of Discourses), and the Abhidharmapitaka (Basket of Treatises). The title conveys expertise in Buddhist literature and is especially linked to translator-monks who played crucial roles in bringing Buddhist texts from India and Central Asia to East Asia. Among its most renowned bearers are Kumārajīva, Paramārtha, Xuanzang, and Yijing.

our forebears, we should refrain from undermining their achievements and kindness through any careless or impulsive behavior.

In his poem *Gaoseng qiufa shi* 高僧求法詩,<sup>47</sup> Master Yijing laments, “[10] Hundreds leave, yet less than ten return; how can those who come after grasp the trials of those who went before?” Each time I read these lines, my eyes turn red and fill with tears as large as grapes. Elsewhere he cautions, stating, “If later generations fail to grasp this meaning, they will often read the scriptures too casually!” It appears to me that he was foreseeing our current tendencies with these remarks. His advice resonated deeply within me, serving as both a source of inspiration and a lesson in humility. I was careful not to undermine the achievements of our forebears or to regard their efforts as insignificant. Their great compassion and fearlessness filled me with admiration. I yearned to imitate their path, even if it called for sacrificing everything to learn from their example. With a firm intention, I set out to study and translate the Buddhist classics of Tibet, which were not present in our Inner Lands, to help close the gaps in knowledge. In particular, I wished to supplement the *Vinayapīṭaka* translated by Master Yijing. The tantric methods of Tibet were, of course, included in this aim. I was also determined to expand my knowledge into worldly domains like geography, history, crafts, medicine, politics, and the arts. However, a person’s energy and lifespan are limited. It was hard to foretell whether I would be able to accomplish my goals.

## 1.2 Nine Years of Study in Kham and Ü-Tsang

In the late fall of the fourteenth year of the Republic [1925], our cohort of students embarked on a journey from Jiading to Ya’an 雅安. The trip involved navigating through several regions infested by bandits.<sup>48</sup> Our group split into two separate routes, both utilizing waterways. West of Hongya 洪雅, there were no military forces available to ensure our safety. At that moment, Dayong [11] along with others considered going back to Jiading until the bandit situation improved. The students, however, excited to get to Tibet, were so restless that they longed to arrive in just one stride. Having no firsthand experience with the dangers of banditry, we were united in our determination to head on. Having observed our determination, Dayong conceded with some hesitation. He sought help from the local government and communicated with Commander Sun 孫 in Ya’an via telegraph, asking for assistance. Fortunately, the bandits in the region, hoping to be granted an amnesty, saw their opportunity to escort us as a way to gain merit and earn favor. Acting as brokers of our safety between the bandits and us, they smoothly and safely escorted all thirty-plus members of our group to Ya’an. Thanks to heaven and earth, we managed to break free from the bandits’ stronghold – a place as dangerous a dragon’s lair or a tiger’s den. We spent approximately a week in Ya’an before moving onward to the west.

<sup>47</sup> C. *Gaoseng qiufa shi* 高僧求法詩; “Verses on Eminent Monks in Search of the Dharma”. Here, Fazun refers to Yijing’s verses in the *Datang qiufa gaoseng zhuan* as *Gaoseng qiufa shi*.

<sup>48</sup> C. *tufei* 土匪. On the term *tufei*, ‘bandit’, and its usage during the Republican period, see Graefe 2009, 12-15.

The route connecting Ya'an to Dartsédo<sup>49</sup> was still filled with bandit-infested areas. One [12] particular morning when we were leaving Rongjing 榮經,<sup>50</sup> we stumbled upon a military unit returning from a hunt for bandits, and they had with them some decapitated heads - it was an incredibly startling sight, those horrific remains. Only later did we learn that all these efforts had been made specially to clear the way for us. The next morning, during our passage across the Daxiang Ridge 大相嶺,<sup>51</sup> we faced another attack from bandits. They let us move through without harm while they robbed a number of textile traders who were behind us. Finally, we realized that the officials had negotiated with the bandits to keep us safe, allowing us to move about without any risk.

After more than ten days of travel, we finally made it to Dartsédo, which looked quite like Rddhinagara.<sup>52</sup> We settled in at the Ngachö Temple.<sup>53</sup> As the chill of winter faded, we recruited a local Tibetan language tutor who was of mixed Tibetan and Han descent. To be frank, his spoken Tibetan was a little more advanced than ours, but in terms of literacy in Tibetan, he was actually not as skilled as some of us. With the transition into the New Year and the arrival of spring, the students' boredom began to grow more evident. Together with Master Langchan, I felt a powerful urge building within me, and in a moment of carelessness that bordered on recklessness, I made a firm decision, without seeking advice from my fellow students, to climb up Mount Paoma 跑馬山<sup>54</sup> to study the scriptures, even if it meant breaking all

**49** C. Dajianlu 打箭鑪; T. Dar rtse mdo. For Dartsédo, Fazun employs both the phonetic transliteration from Tibetan, Dajianlu, and its Republican-era Chinese name, Kangding 康定, which indicated the capital of Xikang.

**50** C. Rongjing 榮經. Rongjing County 榮經縣, the name of a county on the western border of Republican-era Xikang, corresponds to present-day Yingjing 榮經, Sichuan Province.

**51** C. Daxiang Ling 大相嶺. Located south of Ya'an, the Daxiang Ling is the mountain range that marks the geographic boundary between northern and southern Sichuan. With peaks over 3,500 meters, its terrain contrasts lush, rainy northern slopes with dry southern slopes.

**52** C. Huacheng 化城. The reference is to the "City of Illusions" (S. Rddhinagara) described in the parable of Chapter VII of the *Lotus Sūtra* (C. *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經; S. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka sūtra*; T. *Dam chos pad dkar'i mdo*). In this parable, the Buddha explains the doctrine of the three vehicles and the one vehicle (S. ekayāna). He states that the vehicle of hearers (S. śrāvaka) is merely a skillful means (C. fangbian; S. upāya; T. thabs) - a temporary path to guide beings into the vehicle of the bodhisattvas and, ultimately, to attain complete and perfect buddhahood (S. anuttarasamyaksambodhi). In the parable, the Buddha tells of a group of travelers making their way on a long, wild, and dangerous road - saṃsāra - in search of a place where priceless treasures - buddhahood - are kept. Their guide, who knows the terrain intimately and is fully prepared for hardship, is the Buddha himself. He alone can lead them to that final destination. Halfway through the journey, the group grows weary and discouraged. Some wish to turn back. Seeing this, the guide, skillful and compassionate, fears they may abandon the path and lose the treasure. To give them hope, he conjures an illusory city - a place of rest and safety, which he presents as their temporary destination: the nirvāṇa of the śrāvaka. He tells them they may stay there, or, if they choose, they may continue on to the treasure. The travelers reach the city and rest, believing they have arrived. Once they regain their strength, the guide dissolves the illusion. He reveals that the city was never real. Ultimately, it was a mere device to give them comfort and courage. With the treasure of buddhahood now close at hand, he urges them to continue the journey. Fazun likely compared Dartsédo to this "City of Illusions" because, although he and his companions had not yet reached Lhasa, they had overcome the danger and hardship of entering Tibet through Kham. In Dartsédo, they could finally rest and feel safe.

**53** C. Anque si 安却寺; T. Lnga mchod.

**54** C. Paoma shan 跑馬山. In Chapter 4, Fazun offers the name of the monastery on Paoma Shan as Lamo 拉摩 (T. Lha mo rtse). See the translator's *Introduction*.

bonds with our group. When this matter was brought up in a formal setting, both Dayong and Dagang, as well as most of our classmates, did not raise any objections. Some of them had concerns, but given that Dayong supported my stance rather than opposing it, there was no foundation for their objections, so they allowed me to proceed as planned.

On Mount Paoma, I took refuge under the guidance of Master Jampa Mönlam<sup>55</sup> and lived there for a year. During this period, I studied Tibetan grammar and engaged with the works of Tsongkhapa, such as the *Gelong gi Lapja Namtse Dengmar Drakpa*,<sup>56</sup> the *Jangchub Shunglam*,<sup>57</sup> and the *Lamrim Dödön*.<sup>58</sup> This year of study filled me with a profound sense of contentment. I made considerable progress in my proficiency in the Tibetan language and cultivated a unique faith in the Buddhadharma of Tibet. The complexity and conceptual depth of the *Gelong gi Lapja Namtse Dengmar Drakpa* and the *Jangchub Shunglam* were unlike anything I had previously come across in our Inner Lands. The layout and framework of the *Lamrim Chenmo*<sup>59</sup> [13] were an extraordinary gem that I could never have envisioned, even in my wildest dreams. I felt that my journey in search for the Dharma had finally yielded a slight reward. If I were to meet my fate in Xikang, I would not feel any sorrow or regret. Over the course of that year, I became familiar with the lifeways of Tibet. My meals were exclusively made of tsampa,<sup>60</sup> the classic barley staple, as I removed rice and noodles entirely from my diet. This change was relatively successful.

Our planned timeline for leaving commenced in the spring of the sixteenth year of the Republic [1927]. I teamed up with Master Langchan to join the mule caravans operated by the Lawa 拉瓦 family, setting off from Karze<sup>61</sup> under the guise of ordinary monks. The journey was tough and spartan. Upon arriving in Karze, we secured lodging with the families of local traders. In contrast, Dayong undertook his journey with an official mandate and was escorted by troops. His expedition was majestic and imposing and radiated a sense of authority. Local officials actively sought religious initiation, learned sacred mantras, and competed to host grand

55 C. Ciyuan dashi 慈願大師; T. Byams pa smon lam (d.u.).

56 C. *Bichujie shi* 必芻戒釋. The *Bichujie shi* 必芻戒釋, also known in Chinese as *Bichuxue chu* 必芻學處 (T. *Dge slong gi bslab bya gnam lce ldeng mar grags pa*), is based on an oral commentary given by Lama Tsongkhapa in 1401 at Namche Deng Monastery. The text explains the vows of fully ordained *bhikṣus*. It is especially important to understand Tsongkhapa's sustained efforts to reform and renew the study and practice of monastic discipline (C. jie 戒; S. śīla; T. tshul khriims), which he saw as having declined in Tibet during his time.

57 C. *Pusajie shi* 菩薩戒釋; T. *Byang chub gzhung lam*; 'Highway for Bodhisattvas'. This text records the oral commentary given by Lama Tsongkhapa in 1399 on the section dealing with bodhisattva discipline (Skt. Bodhisattvaśīlaparivarta) in the "Stages of the Bodhisattva" chapter (C. Pusa di 菩薩地; S. Bodhisattva bhūmi; T. Byang chub sems dpa'i sa) of Asaṅga's *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* (C. *Yuqieshidi lun* 瑜伽師地論). Tsongkhapa titled his own work *Byang chub gzhung lam*, meaning "Highway for Bodhisattvas".

58 C. *Putidao cidi lüe lun* 菩提道次第略論; T. *Lam rim bsdus don*; "Concise Meaning of the Stages of the Path". The *Lam rim bsdus don* is also known as *Lam rim chung ngu*, "Brief Stages of the Path".

59 C. *Putidao cidi guanglun* 菩提道次第廣論; T. *Lam rim chen mo*; "Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path".

60 C. zangba 糌粑; T. rtsam pa; 'barley'.

61 C. Ganzi 甘孜; T. Dkar mdzes.

welcoming and farewell celebrations. The savages of the Sichuan frontier,<sup>62</sup> unfamiliar with such spectacles, all gazed in wonder. The striking demeanor of Dayong led the Tibetans to mistake him for a prominent delegate of the Chinese Government. As a consequence, the Tibetan Government announced a formal suspension of his expedition. Traders in Karze were given two official warnings, which prohibited them from supporting Han individuals in their attempts to reach Tibet. In light of this difficulty, we had to take a moment to regroup.

In the months of April and May, Master Langchan went back to the village of Minyak<sup>63</sup> to pursue the study of religious scriptures. Together with Dayong, I made my way across the river from Karze to Drakar Gönpa<sup>64</sup> to learn from the honored Drakar Lama,<sup>65</sup> who was elderly at the time and showed symptoms of illness. Although we were designated his disciples, our main teachers were his senior students. I turned to Master Erangba 俄讓巴<sup>66</sup> for guidance and immersed myself in the *Lamrim Chenmo*, particularly the section that discusses *vipaśyanā*.<sup>67</sup> Later, with the assistance of Getrül Tulku,<sup>68</sup> I studied an overview of *Dü Dra*,<sup>69</sup> the *Abhisamayālamkāra*,<sup>70</sup> and the *Drangné Lekshe Nyingpo*.<sup>71</sup> This master [14], who was only a year my elder,

62 This phrase reads, “Chuanbian de manzimen 川邊的蠻子們”, “The tribespeople at the borders of Sichuan”.

63 C. Muniang 木孃; T. Mi nyag.

64 C. Zhajia si 札迦寺; T. Brag dkar dgon pa.

65 C. Zhajia dashi 札加大師; T. Brag dkar bla ma.

66 C. Erang ba 俄讓巴.

67 C. piboshena 毗鉢舍那; P. vipassanā; T. lhag mthong; in English, “insight”. While *piboshena* is a phonetic rendering of the Indic term, the Chinese translation of *vipaśyanā* is *guan* 觀, which is often found in the compound *zhiguan* 止觀 (S. *samathavipaśyanā*; P. *samathavipassanā*; T. *zhi gas lhag mthong*), meaning “serenity and insight”. In this passage, Fazun references the final section of the *Lamrim Chenmo*, which is sometimes considered an independent text. This section explores *samatha* and *vipaśyanā* in detail. Tsongkhapa’s treatment of insight here represents one of his most significant expositions of the doctrine of *sūnyatā* (C. *kongxing* 空性; T. *stong pa nyid*), ‘emptiness’.

68 C. Getuo Zhugu 格陀諸古; T. Dge sprul sprul sku (d.u.).

69 C. *Yinming chuji rumen* 因明初機入門; T. Bsdus grwa; in English, “Collected Topics”. It is uncertain whether *Yinming chuji rumen*, “Primer on Logic”, refers to a specific text or the broader genre of *Dü Dra* (C. *zongyi* 總義; T. *bsdus grwa*). The introductory stages of the *Dü Dra* curriculum in the Geluk tradition establish the foundation of Buddhist philosophy, focusing on ontology, epistemology, and logic. The course begins with a phase called *kha dog dkar dmar*, “white and red colors”. This stage teaches fundamental distinctions, such as pervasion and entailment (T. *khyab pa*), illustrated by examples like, “whatever is red must be a color”. Students learn general propositions (T. *chos yul*), specific topics (T. *chos can*), and frameworks for analyzing objects and their attributes. The curriculum relies on Dharmakīrti’s epistemology. The second phase, called *gzhi grub*, “established bases”, introduces ontological models drawn from the Indian Sautrāntika system. Here, students examine conceptual inclusions and differentiations. The third phase advances to abstract reasoning, covering logical relationships like cause and effect (T. *rgyu dang ’bras bu*), general and specific (T. *spyi dang bye brag*), and definitions (T. *mtshan nyid*). This stage culminates in argumentation training, including *reductio ad absurdum* (T. *thal ’gyur*) and the study of negations. Together, these stages provide a theoretical foundation and sharpen debate skills, both of which are essential steps for progression in the Geluk curriculum. For further discussion, see Onoda 1996.

70 C. *Xianguan zhuangyan lun* 現觀莊嚴論; T. *Mngon par rtogs pa’i rgyan*; “Ornament for Realization”, attributed to Maitreyanātha (ca. 350CE).

71 C. *Bian liaoyi buliaoyi lun* 辨了義不了義論; T. *Drang nges legs bshad snying po*; “Essence of Eloquence on the Definitive and Provisional”, completed by Tsongkhapa in Lhasa in 1408.

embodied erudition, practice, morality, and compassion. The more respect he garnered, the higher he appeared to rise; the deeper one probed into his teachings, the more they unfolded as profound and limitless. For four years,<sup>72</sup> I learned alongside him, reaping immense benefits. The teachings he shared on bodhicitta<sup>73</sup> were a pure gift of compassion. It was his kindness that led me to discover an entryway into the deeper meanings of Secret Mantra.<sup>74</sup> I hold unrivaled respect and trust in him. The calming expression on his face and the comforting tone of his voice have created such a lasting memory that it will be difficult to erase in my mind, even over many lifetimes. In the autumn of the seventeenth year of the Republic [1928], I had the privilege of meeting the illustrious Venerable Amdo,<sup>75</sup> someone I had admired for many years. He embarked on a journey from Golok to Karze to honor Drakar Rinpoché and to discuss the creation of a *bodhimanda*<sup>76</sup> in Chamdo.<sup>77</sup> Getrül Tulku facilitated my introduction to the Venerable Amdo, which allowed me to raise questions that had been perplexing me for years. His vast knowledge and sharp insight allowed him to effortlessly clarify even the most difficult points. After receiving his teachings, I prostrated in reverence. This was my first meeting with the Venerable Amdo, and it motivated me to seek his guidance for an extended period.

On the fourth day of the eighth month in the eighteenth year of the Republic [1929], Drakar Rinpoché left this life; it was as if the sight of humans and gods had been snuffed out. On the morning of the tenth day, Dayong also took his last breath. Since Dagang was still in Chengdu, only Hengzhao, Miyan, Mihui, and I were still there. We found ourselves facing this tragic loss, and we lacked the knowledge to cope with it effectively. What could we do? Panic set in, but we could not just sit idly by and do nothing. Feeling lost, I reached out for support in all directions and invited the noble Getrül Tulku, who had earlier overseen the aftermath of the Venerable Drakar's demise. Having turned to him for Dayong's memorial [15], we witnessed firsthand the true magnitude of his cultivation. Calm and deliberate, he illuminated a clear path forward. With his advice guiding us at every step, we were able to perform the cremation rites for Dayong with great efficiency and ease. Later on, my companion Mihui went back to Tonggu,<sup>78</sup> Miyan proceeded to Kangding,<sup>79</sup> and Hengzhao joined him in his journey. Thus, I was left to take care of the affairs in Karze all by myself. In the springtime, Dagang along with Miyan set out from Dartsédo to obtain the holy relics of Dayong for the purpose of building a stūpa in Kangding. I went along with them and spent a month in the company of Master Jangpa

72 C. *sige niantou* 四個年頭, "a period of four years", indicates from 1927 to 1931.

73 C. *putixin* 菩提心; T. *byang chub kyi sems*; in English, 'aspiration for enlightenment', 'mind of enlightenment'.

74 C. *Mizong*; In English, "Secret Mantra". Like earlier in the translation, where Fazun recounts Dayong's encounter with Misshū, Japan's "Secret Mantra Tradition", I translate *Mizong* here as "Secret Mantra". In this passage, Fazun uses the term specifically to discuss tantra within the Indian and Tibetan context.

75 C. *Andong enshi* 安東恩師; T. *A mdo dge bshes 'jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros* (1888-1936).

76 C. *daochang* 道場.

77 C. *Changdu* 昌都; T. *Chab mdo*.

78 C. *Donggu* 東古; T. *Stong dgu*.

79 Kangding is the Chinese name of Dartsédo.

Mönlam. During this time, our honored elder Zhisan 智三 took rebirth in the West.<sup>80</sup> After his cremation, I made my way back to Karze, where I took shelter with Getrül Tulku and received the full transmission of all of Master Drakar's works.

In the spring of the twentieth year of the Republic [1931], the four of us - Langchan, Changguang, Huishen, and I - traveled to Chamdo. After spending several days there, Langchan and Changguang [16] moved on to Lhasa. With the aim of studying closely under our honored teacher, Amdo, Huishen and I remained in Chamdo. During that year, we received more than forty great initiations<sup>81</sup> and gained insights into the outlines of various treatises within the sūtra teachings.<sup>82</sup> During the eighth month, as we traveled with our teacher to Tibet, we passed by Nakchu<sup>83</sup> and sought instruction from Master Dakpo.<sup>84</sup> He imparted to us several uncommon practices, including the body maṇḍala of Green Tārā.<sup>85</sup>

By the end of the tenth month, we had successfully reached Lhasa. After following my teacher's advice, I was enrolled at Drépung Monastery<sup>86</sup> and became the *chödze*<sup>87</sup> of the *dratsang*<sup>88</sup> during the winter season. However, despite my official enrollment at the monastery, I stayed in Lhasa and continued my studies with my teacher. In the twenty-first year of the

80 C. guile xi 歸了西; the phrase "returned to the West", indicating rebirth in the Western Pure Land of Sukhāvati, is an idiomatic expression in Buddhist Chinese for dying, especially when referred to a member of the saṅgha.

81 C. da guanding 大灌頂.

82 C. xianjiao 顯教. Fazun employs the term *xianjiao*, 'manifest teachings', as a hermeneutical tool for his Chinese audience, creating a binary with *mijiao*, 'secret teachings'. In Republican China, as I have shown elsewhere, *mijiao* was understood through the lens of *mikkyō* in Japanese exegesis. This binary, rooted in the Chinese Buddhist Canon - particularly the Mahāyāna exegesis of Tiantai and Huayan thought - creates the impression that all Tibetan Buddhist teachings fit neatly into these two categories. Yet, this reflects a Chinese classification method rather than the doctrinal categories that define Buddhist thought in India or Tibet, or the divisions of the Tibetan Canon itself. Tibetan scholarship classifies Mahāyāna teachings into two main modes: Pāramitānaya 'Mode of the Perfections', which follows the path of perfections outlined in the Mahāyāna sūtras, and Mantranaya 'Mode of the Mantras', which pertains to scriptures bearing both the title of sūtra and tantra. Exegetes of the tantras often equate these with Sūtrayāna 'Vehicle of the Sūtras' and Tantrayāna 'Vehicle of the Tantras' respectively. By using *xianjiao*, Fazun suggests that the texts he studied in Kham belong solely to the Sūtrayāna, as understood in Mahāyāna polemics in China and tantric exegesis in Tibet. However, as he himself notes, these texts also address topics such as logic and dialectics, subjects which a Mahāyānist would associate with Hīnayāna sources. In translation, I have preserved the original Chinese term Fazun used to address his readers in Republican China. For more on Xianjiao and Mijiao in this period, cf. Dibeltulo Concu 2021, 172-4, fn. 5.

83 C. Naxu 拏墟; T. Nag chu.

84 C. Dapu 達樸; T. Dwags po (d.u.); Dakpo is a region in southwestern Tibet.

85 C. lü dumu shen mantuoluo 綠度母身曼陀羅.

86 C. Biebang si 別邦寺; T. 'Bras spungs dgon pa.

87 C. junze 郡則; T. chos mdzad; 'monk-sponsor'.

88 C. zhacang 札倉; T. grwa tshang; 'monastic college'.

Republic [1932], I studied the general treatises on *Tséma, Dū Dra*,<sup>89</sup> and the *Lamrim Chenmo*. The following year [1933], I immersed myself in the *Lekshe Sertreng*,<sup>90</sup> the *Ngakrim Chenmo*,<sup>91</sup> and the *Rimnga Rabtu Salwé Drönmé*.<sup>92</sup> I was bestowed the general initiation of more than three hundred deities, received teachings on the *Two Stages*<sup>93</sup> of Yamāntaka,<sup>94</sup> along with the *Great Commentary on the Fire Offering*,<sup>95</sup> and instructions on the *sādhana* of Vajrayoginī.<sup>96</sup> Additionally, I studied the Abhidharma<sup>97</sup> with the Ganden Tripa,<sup>98</sup> the Vinaya with the Jangtsé Chöjé,<sup>99</sup> and obtained the Great Initiation of Heruka<sup>100</sup> from Pabongka Rinpoché,<sup>101</sup> among other teachings. Looking back on my time spent studying in Kham and Ü-Tsang, I view those years as the most intellectually stimulating and personally rewarding chapter of my life.

What were the circumstances of my life during those years? Allow me to offer a brief account. During my first year in Karze, I had the privilege of dining with Dayong, and those meals were truly satisfying. The following year, after we parted ways, I used a large earthen pot. I carefully filled it with cold water and placed it on a basin full of yak<sup>102</sup> dung, leaving it overnight. I wrapped it in worn, frayed felt cloths to provide insulation. The

**89** C. *Yinming zongyi lun* 因明總義論. Here, Fazun is referring to a monastic textbook in the *Dū Dra* genre, which introduce beginners to the foundations of *pramāṇa* (C. yinming 因明; T. tshad ma). This is likely the *Ratō Dū Dra* (T. *Rwa stod bsdus grwa*), a renowned introductory manual to logic and epistemology used at Ratō Monastery (T. Rwa stod), situated just outside Lhasa. A foundational text in Tibetan scholasticism, it serves as the precursor to many later treatises on Buddhist logic. The text outlines twenty basic philosophical topics that are nonetheless essential for engaging with the major Indian and Tibetan commentarial traditions. For more details on the *Dū Dra* curriculum, see Chapter 7 of Fazun's *Modern Tibet*.

**90** C. *Xianguan zhuangyan lun jinman lun* 現觀莊嚴論金鬘論; T. *Legs bshad gser phreng*; 'Golden Garland of Eloquence'.

**91** C. *Mizong dao cidī guanglun* 密宗道次第廣論; T. *Sngags rim chen mo*; 'Great Exposition of the Stages of Mantra'.

**92** C. *Wu cidī guanglun* 五次第廣論; T. *Rim lnga rab tu gsal ba'i sgron me*; 'Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp of the Five Stages', in English translation from Fazun's Chinese, 'Great Treatise on the Five Stages'.

**93** C. *Erzhong cidī* 二種次第.

**94** C. Daweide 大威德; T. Gshin rje gshed; the 'Destroyer of Death' tantra. For an English annotated translation, see Siklós 1996.

**95** C. *Humo dashu* 護摩大疏.

**96** C. Kongxing fomu 空行佛母; T. Rdo rje rnal 'byor ma.

**97** C. Jushe 俱舍; T. Chos mngon pa.

**98** C. Gedeng chiba 格登持巴; T. Dga' ldan khri pa. It remains unclear whether Fazun studied with the ninety-first or the ninety-second Ganden Tripa. The ninety-first Ganden Tripa was Losang Gyaltzen (T. Blo bzang rgyal mtshan, d. 1932), who held the position from 1927 to 1932. He was succeeded by Thupten Nyinje (T. Thub bstan nyin byed, d. 1933?), the ninety-second Ganden Tripa.

**99** C. Jiangze fawang 絳則法王; T. Byang rtse chos rje. By the title Jangtsé Chöjé 'Dharma King of Byang rtse', Fazun is referring to the ninetieth Ganden Tripa, Jampa Chödrak (T. Byams pa chos grags; 1876-1937). Jangtsé is one of the monastic colleges at Ganden Monastery.

**100** C. Shengle jingang 勝樂金剛; T. 'Khor lo bde mchog; the 'Binding of the Wheel' tantra.

**101** C. Pozhangka dashi 頗章喀大師; T. Pha bong ka Byams pa bstan'dzin 'phrin las gyia mtsho (1878-1941), also known as Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo (T. Pha bong kha bde chen snying po).

**102** C. niu 牛; T. g.yag. Whereas here Fazun uses *niu* to denote bovines in general, he later distinguishes between male and female gender, introducing specific words in Chinese.

pot would slowly heat up as the burning dung increased in temperature, which eventually caused the water to reach a boiling point. At first light, I would use warm water [17] to refresh my face. I then mixed in some coarse tea and a dash of Tibetan salt<sup>103</sup> to make what is known as savage tea.<sup>104</sup> After saying my morning prayers while still in bed, I poured the tea into a wooden bowl, then added some tsampa, yak butter, and a few slices of radish for my breakfast. After that, I would go to my teacher's place for tutoring sessions. At noon, I would sip some leftover tea and mix a bowl of tsampa to eat before I returned to my classes later in the day. In the evening, I had whatever was accessible to me. In this manner, a day would end, and the following day would unfold just like the one before it. This routine continued consistently throughout the entire year. Even though the material conditions were harsh, my enthusiasm remained high. There were moments when I was so absorbed in reading and writing that I lost track of time and neglected to sleep - an experience that still baffles me! The conditions I lived in while in Lhasa were very much alike to those in Kham. My daily routine revolved around studying and chanting, often stretching from the first light of day [18] to the last rays of evening, which made having meals quite difficult. During these eight or nine years, I gained a foundational understanding of Tibetan doctrinal principles of sūtra and tantra.<sup>105</sup> Perhaps, these insights arose from my minimal reliance on clothing, food, and shelter.

### 1.3 First Return

In the 22nd year of the Republic [1933], Master Taixu sent me several letters, urging me to come back quickly to take charge of the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine.<sup>106</sup> I, however, believed that my learning was not yet complete, and I had much more to explore. After surviving endless trials to reach Tibet, how could I so casually leave this place of treasures and go back? Despite my reluctance, three compelling reasons forced me to do so. First and foremost, Master Taixu was an unmatched teacher for me in the Inner Lands. Any knowledge I had of Buddhist studies in Chinese stemmed entirely from his teachings. This esteemed man, a true bodhisattva, devoted his days to organizing the saṅgha, nurturing talents, reviving Buddhism, and preserving the Dharma. For more than two decades, he faced countless hardships and worked tirelessly to promote the Saddharma and create institutions. Now, I was given the mission to establish the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine, and part of that mission included teaching the Tibetan language. If I chose not to comply with his request, would that not inflict a major blow on Taixu? Could I, in good conscience, live with the idea of failing to repay my debt of gratitude? Secondly, upon my first arrival in Chamdo, my plan was to ask Amdo Géshé to take charge of the Tibetan Department at the World Buddhist Academy. Still, at that time, he was carrying out

103 C. manyan 蠻鹽.

104 C. mancha 蠻茶.

105 C. Xian Mi jiaoli 顯密教理.

106 C. Han Zang jiaoli yuan 漢藏教理院.

the directives of the [thirteenth] Dalai Lama,<sup>107</sup> which made it temporarily unfeasible for him to exit Tibet. When I respectfully delivered Master Taixu's letters to him, the Venerable Amdo [19] advised me to return first in order to lay the necessary groundwork, promising that he would join me later. With such a directive from my teacher, how could I disobey? Thirdly, in order to extend an invitation to the Venerable Amdo to come to China, I submitted a formal petition to the Dalai Lama. In his response, the Dalai Lama indicated that the moment was not right for Amdo Géshé to exit the country and suggested that I should take the lead first. This response reinforced my firm choice to make my own return a priority above all else.

I began my first return journey on the twenty-seventh day of the tenth month of that year. Six days ahead of my departure, I commemorated the anniversary of my cherished friend, Langchan, who died due to a feverish ailment. During the ninth month, he fell sick twice, but the remarkable capabilities of the Dalai Lama's chief physician helped him recover on both occasions. In the midst of his third relapse, he fell ill while at the monastery, which was too far away from Lhasa to get any medical assistance. As a result, he tragically lost his life. I had great expectations for his future. In my efforts to return to the Inner Lands for the necessary preparations, I had hoped he would often advocate for me with our kind teacher. His unexpected death meant that I was left without any support during my absence. I was deeply saddened by the departure of Langchan. Still, even while I was mourning, I forced myself to handle his funeral rites before departing. At that moment, I realized that lives are too impermanent, too fragile. Just a small adversity can define the threshold between this existence and what lies beyond. As I bid farewell to Tibet, this Pure Land,<sup>108</sup> I found myself questioning if I would ever make my way back.

Passing through India, the land where Śākyamuni Buddha was born, attained enlightenment, taught the Dharma, and entered nirvāṇa,<sup>109</sup> I reflected that, if I did not adequately venerate these holy sites, there is no certainty that I would ever have another opportunity to return. Fueled by a heightened sense of impermanence, I traveled straight from Kalimpong<sup>110</sup> to the Diamond Seat,<sup>111</sup> where I spent a week performing *pūjās*.<sup>112</sup> After that [20], I visited Deer Park,<sup>113</sup> dedicating a day and a night to honoring the stūpa that marks the Buddha's first turning of the Wheel of Dharma.<sup>114</sup> My travels then led me to the grove of śāla trees in Kuśinagarī,<sup>115</sup> where I paid my respects to the site of the Buddha's nirvāṇa. Finally, I made my way to Nepal to honor the holy site where, in a past lifetime, the Buddha offered his body in sacrifice to a starving tigress. I was on the road for

107 C. Dalai lama 達賴喇嘛; T. Ta la'i bla ma. Here, Fazun is referring to the thirteenth Dalai Lama, Thupten Gyatso (T. Thub bstan rgya mtsho; 1876-1933).

108 C. Jingtū 淨土, 'Pure Land'.

109 C. niepan 涅槃; P. nibbāna; T. mya ngan las 'das pa; 'extinction'.

110 C. Galunbao 戈倫堡; T. Ka lon sbug.

111 C. jingang chang 金剛場; S. vajrāsana; 'Diamond Seat'.

112 C. gongyang 供養, 'offering'.

113 C. Luye yuan 鹿野苑; S. Mṛgadāva; 'Deer Park'. The modern Sārnāth near Benares.

114 C. Zhuan falun ta 轉法輪塔, 'Stūpa of the Turning of the Wheel of Dharma'.

115 C. Jushina shuanglin 拘尸那雙林.

more than a month, and I eventually arrived in Kolkata<sup>116</sup> in the first lunar month of the twenty-third year [1934]. I made a diversion to reconnect with an old acquaintance at the International University, where I spent three days. Upon leaving, I bought a boat ticket traveling east to Yangon, where I honored the impressive stūpa of Shwe Dagon.<sup>117</sup> In Yangon, I stumbled upon the Chinese Buddhist Association,<sup>118</sup> established by Venerable Cihang 慈航.<sup>119</sup> The members were fervent and dedicated to the cause of spreading the Dharma and benefiting others. I was a guest at Fushan Temple 福山寺,<sup>120</sup> where I enjoyed a retreat in isolation until the end of March. Following that, I delighted in attending various open lectures at the Buddhist Association.

On the fourth day of the fourth month, I bought a ticket for a steamship to head back home, and I reached in Shanghai 上海 early in the fifth month. I then traveled to Fenghua 奉化 to have a formal audience with Taixu. Once I completed a week at Xuedou Temple, I returned to Shanghai and then traveled onward to Nanjing 南京. There, I held discussions with a few old friends, including Deputy Minister Xie 謝, Director Zhou 周, Deng Mengxian 鄧夢先, Chen Jibo 陳濟博, and others from our circle. In answer to a letter of invitation from Miyan, I journeyed once more to Mount Baohua. By that time, Kaitang 開堂 had become a monk, and Micheng had received his Dharma scroll.<sup>121</sup>

**116** C. Jiaerjiada 加爾加大。

**117** C. Da jinta 大金塔。

**118** C. Yangguang Zhongguo foxuehui 仰光中國佛學會。

**119** C. Cihang 慈航 (1895-1954). Cihang was a renowned Chinese Buddhist monk and a leading disciple of Taixu during Republican period. Before fully committing to Taixu's modernist ideas in 1927, he first engaged with the teachings of Chan, Tiantai, and Pure Land. Focused on the education and training of Buddhist ministers, he rose to prominence as a major champion of Renjian fojiao 人間佛教 'Buddhism for the Human Realm', a movement that rejected superstition and aimed at restoring the integrity of Buddhism in its original form. As a missionary, he journeyed throughout Southeast Asia, visiting countries such as the Philippines, Singapore, Burma, and Malaysia, where he advocated for what would later be termed "socially engaged Buddhism". He established the Buddhist publication *Renjian*, meaning "Human Realm", and held the position of abbot in multiple monasteries. In Taiwan, he created the Mile Neiyuan 彌勒內院 'Maitreya Inner Institute', a Buddhist school dedicated to the training of young religious leaders from mainland China. Cihang was the pioneer among Buddhist monks in Taiwan who sought and successfully managed to keep his body intact after he died. Today, his gilded relic-body is enshrined and venerated in Xizhi, Taipei County, where he is revered as one of the *roushen pusa* 肉身菩薩 'flesh-body bodhisattva' in the history of Chinese Buddhism. His mummified remains continue to inspire both devotion and controversy. On Cihang, cf. Travagnin 2006; see also Welch 1967, 343-4.

**120** C. Fushan si 福山寺。

**121** C. fajuan 法卷; literally, 'dharma scroll'. In China, the term *fajuan* refers to a religious lineage record that traces the direct transmission of Śākyamuni's teachings from master to disciple. For a detailed study, see Welch 1963.

Afterward, I went to Beiping to escape the sweltering summer and spent the season engaged in voluntary translation work for Ngakchen Hotoktu.<sup>122</sup>

I later returned to my hometown to visit my parents, which was my second trip back since I left. I returned for the first time in the fourth month of the fourteenth year [1925], just before I was about to leave for Tibet. My parents were both still alive then. My mother, heartbroken by the lasting divide created when I chose to become a monk, cried day and night until she lost sight in her right eye. I understood the deep-rooted affection of my parents and the considerable weight of their caring nature. Yet, the idea of being stuck at home, restricted like a prisoner to cater to my parents, was something I could never bring myself to accept. If I were to abandon monastic life, neglecting the proper obligations toward the Tathāgata and wasting precious time, I would not only let down the Buddha and my mentors, but I would also struggle [21] to face my beloved mother. This was a seemingly trivial yet crucial factor that solidified my resolute intention to study the Dharma. During my second return to my hometown, I learned that my dear father had been gone for five years, and I realized I had not met yet many of the younger members of my extended family. I spent a total of ten days during this trip.

By the end of the seventh month, I found myself in Wuchang 武昌, and in the eighth month, I proceeded to the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine to begin the new term. The daunting task of representing Taixu felt like a heavy burden that was carefully placed on my shoulders. I spent three hours every day giving lectures and carefully worked on the translation, editing, and revision of works such as the *Lamrim Chenmo*, the *Gyüde Chiyi Nampar Zhakpa Gyapar Jöpa*,<sup>123</sup> and the *Jangchub Shunglam*. After two terms of arduous work, the opportunity for my second trip to Tibet had finally ripened.

#### 1.4 A Second Journey to Tibet

Upon my return, I sought to prepare for the arrival of my teacher, the Venerable Amdo, as stated earlier. I wanted to welcome my teacher because I was convinced that committing one's entire life to studying does not necessarily lead to mastering the material or achieving excellence. This is notably true for anyone who endeavors to provide translations of the scriptures. It is

**122** C. Anqin dashi 安欽大師; T. Sngags chen rin po che (1884-1947). Losang Tenzin Jikmé Wangchuk (T. Blo bzang bstan 'dzin 'jigs med dbang phyug), known as Ngakchen Rinpoché, was a lama of the Geluk school and a prominent figure at Tashilhünpo Monastery (T. Bkra shis lhun po). Identified in childhood as an incarnate lama (T. sprul sku), he was granted the title Darba Hothokthu (T. Bdar pa ho thog thu). He was renowned for his vast learning. In 1923, Ngakchen Rinpoché fled to China with the ninth Panchen Lama (1883-1937). He returned to Tibet in 1931 to negotiate the Panchen Lama's return. In 1933, the Panchen Lama sent him again to Lhasa for further negotiations. By 1936, he had left Tibet for China, where he stayed in Beijing, Nanjing, and Shanghai. Despite his dedication to resolving disputes between the Panchen Lama and the Tibetan government, he faced opposition from within the Panchen Lama's entourage and was relieved of his duties in 1937. During World War II, he lived in Japanese-occupied China. In 1939, Ngakchen Rinpoché returned to Tibet and settled in Shigatsé, where he lived until his passing in 1947. On Ngakchen Rinpoché, cf. Miao Zhou 妙舟 1993, 214-18; cf. also Tuttle 2009; on Ngakchen Rinpoché's role as a mediator between the ninth Panchen Lama and the government of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, cf. Jagou 2011; see also Chen, Deng 2000, 357; Bianchi 2004, 41 fn. 25.

**123** C. *Mizong dao cidi lue lun* 密宗道次第略論; T. *Rgyud sde spyi'i rnam par gzhang pa rgyas par brjod pa*; "Extensive Expression of the Presentation of the General Tantra Sets", by Khedrup Jé, a close disciple of Tsongkhapa and First Panchen Lama.

essential to build a strong base in Chinese literary works as well as in the study of Buddhism before proceeding further. Formal translation efforts can begin only after one has achieved proficiency in Tibetan Buddhist studies. Even if one attains the prestigious title of *géshe lharampa*<sup>124</sup> in Tibetan Buddhist scholarship, without further accomplishments, they would still remain simply a *géshe* in the study of Tibetan Buddhism. Faced with the challenge of authentic translation, a person would likely find themselves at a loss for words. How does the act of translating holy scriptures compare in benefits to the translation of worldly books? If I committed my life to studying Tibetan Buddhist scholarship, I am certain I could achieve the highest level of *géshe lharampa*. But would I have enough time? Would Taixu permit it? Would [22] my revered teacher approve? No, no. They would not allow me to walk down that path.

The former Ganden Tripa, now a retired senior, offered me some advice. He said, “You could undergo the lengthy process of becoming a *géshe lharampa* at the three great monasteries, and in time, earn the title of Ganden Tripa, carrying a yellow parasol like the one I have. But this would be a hollow and superficial title, one that would bring little benefit to the Buddhadharmā. Your first step should be to head back to your homeland and undertake the translation of Master Tsongkhapa’s *Lamrim Chenmo*. Establish a banner of the Saddharma in your Han lands. This is how you can bring genuine and meaningful benefit to the Buddha’s teachings and benefit all living beings. Should you find a means to invite Jampel Rölpai Lodrö Rinpoché – Amdo Géshe –,<sup>125</sup> and establish Tsongkhapa’s teachings of sūtra and tantra, the merit from this deed alone would far surpass the honor of being a *géshe* or Ganden Tripa”.

His words were meant to provide me with a skillful means to ease my distress about not finishing my education. Nevertheless, they also inflicted a serious wound on my vanity. This ultimately resulted in my second journey into Tibet. I was committed to pursuing a path in translation, regardless of my unfinished education. It dawned on me that my work in translation would be flawed without the continuous assistance of a remarkable *kalyāṇamitra*,<sup>126</sup> a teacher skilled in both sūtra and tantra, as well as in knowledge and virtue. My second journey into Tibet, then, aimed to call upon my revered teacher, Amdo Géshe, who was celebrated across Kham and Ü-Tsang and held the status of a royal preceptor, to come forth and spread the Dharma.

During the summer of the twenty-fourth year of the Republic [1935], I was honored with an official invitation from Khenpo Ngawang<sup>127</sup> and other

**124** C. diyi ming gexi 第一名格什; T. dge bshes lha ram pa. For Fazun’s discussion of the four types of *géshe* degree within the Geluk curriculum, see Chapter 7 of the translation.

**125** C. Jiangre renboqie 絳熱仁波脚; T. ‘Jam dpal rol ba’i blo gros rin po che.

**126** C. shanzhishi 善知識; T. dge ba’i bshes gnyen.

**127** C. Awang kanbu 阿旺堪布; T. Mkhan po Ngag dbang (1894-1968). Ngawang Namgyal (T. Ngag dbang rnam rgyal), a disciple of Pabongkha Rinpoché, was a *khenpo* from Sera Monastery in Lhasa.

Buddhist scholars in Rong 蓉<sup>128</sup> to present a lecture in Chengdu 成都.<sup>129</sup> With the generous backing of respected patrons, I managed to secure enough funds to bring my teacher to China. By the end of the eighth month, I went back to the College and completely delegated all administrative duties to Weifang 葦舫,<sup>130</sup> [23] who served as the Dean of Academic Affairs. On the first day of the ninth month, I left the mountains and journeyed towards the east. I made a pilgrimage to Mount Wutai in Shanxi 山西 and visited the Yungang Grottoes 雲崗 in Datong 大同. While traveling through Pingjin 平津,<sup>131</sup> I reestablished connections with old friends and sought their assistance in the printing of the *Lamrim Chenmo*. Their generosity was vital in ensuring the text was published successfully. On the sixth day of the tenth month, I made my way to Nanjing to secure my passport. By the thirteenth, I had arrived in Shanghai to stay with Taixu. I participated in the founding event of the Bodhi Society<sup>132</sup> on the fourteenth day, which left an indelible mark on my memory.

On the nineteenth day, I purchased passage on a ship and sailed south. I arrived in Hong Kong on the twenty-fourth, and I stayed at the Buddhist Society. I bought a ticket on another ship on the twenty-eighth, which was traveling south and arrived in Singapore on the third day of the twelfth month. From there, the ship sailed north to Yangon, arriving on the tenth day. I stayed for half a month in the garden residence of the elder layman, Ceng Wenyin 曾文銀, where I enjoyed some rest and took care of a few practical matters. On the twenty-sixth, I secured a ticket for a vessel bound for India, reaching Kolkata by the twenty-ninth. I lodged in Chinatown at the Tianyi Building 天益樓, courtesy of the trader De Maoyong 德茂永 and his business. That evening, Khenpo Ngawang and others also arrived in India. My luggage was held by customs agents due to the excessive amount of silk items I was transporting, and they requested payment of duties. This incident opened up my eyes about the complications that arise from having too many bags while on the road. I looked for help in every corner. Eventually, the Tibetan government issued a telegram to affirm the status of my belongings. The goods were immediately released by the British officials, who also waived any applicable taxes. The conciliatory attitude of the British toward Tibet is profoundly disturbing.

I reached Kalimpong on the eleventh day of the twelfth lunar month to gather the essential supplies for my journey into Tibet. On the eighteenth, Mr. Ye Zenglong 葉增隆 and I arranged mule teams to begin our expedition. To evade British interference, we had to stay hidden in rooms at each checkpoint. We traveled only under the cover of darkness. After a year

**128** The toponym Rong 蓉 designates the city of Chengdu 成都.

**129** Fazun translated the oral teachings of Khenpo Ngawang and commented on the text by Pabongka Rinpoche, "Prayer for Encountering the Teaching of the Great Tsongkhapa, King of the Dharma in the Three Realms" (T. *Khams gsum chos kyi rgyal po tsong kha pa chen po'i bstan pa dang mjal ba'i smon lam*; C. *Zhiyu sanjie fawang dazongkaba shengjiao yuanwen* 值遇三界法王大宗喀巴聖教願文).

**130** C. Weifang fashi 葦舫法師 (1908-1969).

**131** C. Pingjin 平津; the sinograph Pingjin refers to the historical pairing of Beiping 北平 (modern-day Beijing) and Tianjin 天津 in Republican China.

**132** C. Puti xuehui 菩提學會. The Bodhi Society of Shanghai must not be confused with the Bodhi Study Association established with the same name in Beijing by the ninth Panchen Lama. See the Introduction.

of minimal walking and the discomfort of my new leather boots being too tight, I realized on the afternoon of the nineteenth that my heels had been rubbed sore, with patches of skin coming off. Three toenails were pulled off completely. Each step brought unbearable agony, which forced me to clench my teeth tightly to cope with the discomfort. On that particular evening, we paused at Rongli Chu,<sup>133</sup> and I was unable [24] to move any further. This was, without a doubt, the most intense pain I had endured in my entire life. I knew that the wise ones who had preceded us and sacrificed themselves for the Dharma has also endured similar hardships. In my previous lives, compelled by greed, anger, and ignorance, I must have suffered considerably more distress in the chase for the five sensory pleasures. As a monk now, I felt that putting this minor inconvenience to aid my teacher in spreading the Dharma was entirely reasonable. In the Three Realms, countless beings endured suffering that rivaled or surpassed my own, and their plight inspired a deep sense of compassion in me. I resolved to dedicate my struggles into a gift for their benefit. I aspired to take upon myself all the suffering of sentient beings, so that none would have to ever suffer again. For a moment, these thoughts helped me to set aside the hurt in my feet and throughout my body. Gradually, I was enveloped by sleep, and I entered into a soft slumber that continued until the break of day. The next morning, I motivated myself to walk a few steps. Each day, I continued to move ahead, enduring both discomfort and sickness.

I arrived in Phakri<sup>134</sup> on the twenty-fourth and stayed at the Hengsheng Gong 恆盛公 facility. I was able to rest and heal for a number of days, thanks to the thoughtful hospitality of Mr. Ma Yicai 馬義才. On the twenty-eighth, Zenglong and I hired a pair of mules from Bai Yucang 白宇倉 and began our journey to Ü-Tsang. We celebrated Lunar New Year's Day amidst the biting cold of the Kharu pass.<sup>135</sup> Zenglong, who had been my caretaker throughout my extended sickness, cooked a simple bowl of gruel for me. I was deeply moved by his kindness, and the connection we shared as fellow countrymen seemed more powerful than that of siblings. He remarked, "When you celebrate more joyful New Years in the years to come, remember this day!"

After facing ten more difficult days, we reached Lhasa on the morning of the ninth day of the first lunar month in the twenty-fifth year of the Republic [1936]. We received a warm reception from our fellow countrymen in Tibet. In this foreign land, our connection with them felt deeper than any familial relationship. On the tenth day, I had a meeting with the attendant of my revered teacher, Amdo Rinpoché, who presented me with two letters from him. In the correspondence, the master explained that he [25] had deviated from his original plans and would not be visiting Lhasa. Instead, he directed me to gather the necessary books in Lhasa, pack them onto several mules, and head straight to Phakri to meet him there. Reading through these letters

**133** 'Rongli Chu' is my tentative reconstruction of Fazun's phonetic transcription from Tibetan. See § 5.3.

**134** C. Pakeli 帕克里; T. Phag ri.

**135** C. Kalu 卡鑪; T. Kha ru. Rising to an altitude of 5,050 meters (16,600 feet), the Kharu Pass (T. Kha ru la) is the highest point on the trade route linking Tibet, Sikkim, and Bhutan, situated between Sharsingma (T. Shar gsing ma) and Lhasa. The trade route takes its name from the village of Dromo (T. Gro mo) and is known by different names among Newar traders, British officials, and the Chinese. British officials referred to the region as the Chumbi Valley, while Nepalese Newar traders called it Sharsingma. In the People's Republic of China, Dromo is now officially known as Yadong 亞東. Cf. Shakya 1999, 118-19.

brought me a peaceful sense of joy. My mood improved, and it appeared that a large part of my ailment had eased.

Yet, on the morning of the fourteenth day, the attendant came rushing towards me. His face was marked by a look of fear. I quickly asked what had happened. He conveyed to me that a special messenger had arrived from Nakchu with devastating news. Our teacher had passed away on the second day of the month. Oh heavens! Alas! Woe is me! In that moment, I sensed a torrent of hot blood surging to my brain. I felt so overwhelmed that I was on the verge of blacking out, but I managed to pull myself together just in time to stay conscious. Taking a quick moment to sigh, I hurried to various shrines to light candles in his honor and sent an extensive telegram to inform the donors<sup>136</sup> in the Inner Lands.

I set out for Nakchu on the sixteenth day with the attendant. While we were at the fringes of Drigung,<sup>137</sup> we faced a heavy snowfall, more than a *chi* 尺 deep.<sup>138</sup> The path ahead was grueling. We had to find shelter and food in the wilderness, and my old leg cramps came back. To make matters worse, I contracted dysentery. On the thirtieth day of my journey, I reached the Rongbo Monastery,<sup>139</sup> the place where my respected teacher had died. After a period of rest lasting several days, I joined a group that was performing rites in his memory. The cremation was scheduled for the thirteenth day of the second lunar month. All of my fellow participants agreed to appoint me as the leader of the ceremony, and I conducted the *Yamāntaka Fire Offering Ritual*<sup>140</sup> for the purpose of the cremation. On the nineteenth day, while we were sifting through the ashes, we found several beads of *śārīra*.<sup>141</sup> After the completion of the forty-nine-day ceremony, we spent several additional days performing ritual offerings dedicated to the Dharma protectors.<sup>142</sup>

Accompanied by three friends, I started my journey back to Lhasa on the third day of the third lunar month. While traveling, we faced substantial snowfall and endured a higher number of nights exposed to the elements than we had experienced on our way there. On the journey out, we utilized government horses and sometimes took breaks in pastures situated along the route. During our journey back, we depended entirely on our horses, which required us to let them feed in the fields, collect firewood, and prepare our own food. By the time we arrived in Lhasa on the evening of the eighteenth day, we were utterly exhausted. Both the people and the horses had been pushed to their limits.

I took a five-month break in Lhasa to heal from my illness. During this phase, I advanced my learning while studying with the Jangtsé [26] Chöje. I attended his teaching sessions on several treatises like the *Lamrim Chungwa*,

**136** C. tanyue 檀越; phonetic transcription from the Sanskrit *dānapati*, 'donor', 'benefactor'.

**137** C. Zhigong 止公; T. 'Bri gung.

**138** The equivalent of 1 Republican-period *chi* is 33,3 cm, or 13,12 inches.

**139** C. Rong bo 絨波; T. Rong bo.

**140** C. Daweide humo fa 大威德護摩法. For the *Yamāntaka Fire Offering Ritual*, see Perrot, Sharpa Tulku 1987, 55-73.

**141** C. shelizi 舍利子; phonetic transcription from the Sanskrit *śārīra*, 'body'. The term also conveys the sense of 'the remains after cremation'. Fazun employs the expression *shelizi shu li* 舍利子數粒, where *shu li* 數粒, meaning 'several beads' or 'several grains', describes the pearl-like objects often found among the ashes of Buddhist masters.

**142** C. hufashen 護法神; S. dharmapāla; T. chos skyong.

the *Gelong gi Lapja Namtse Dengmar Drakpa*, and the *Abhidharmakośa*. Every day, I dedicated time to translating small excerpts, often a full page or a half-page, from the *Lekshe Nyingpo*, ensuring that I made the most of each day. This marks the end of my second journey to Tibet.

### 1.5 Homecoming and Aspiration

The attempt to welcome my teacher came to nothing. During the summer, I made efforts to engage with several individuals, yet some were reluctant to travel to China, while others faced limitations due to their obligations. In the end, I found myself alone without anyone to join me. In the eighth lunar month, I received messages via telegram from Taixu and the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine, pressing me to come back without delay. I packed the collected scriptures for moving, but it was still early in the season, and the river had not yet receded. This situation indicated that no traders were traveling between India and Phakri. Eager to go back to my homeland, I entrusted Mr. Xie Yousan with the task of organizing the transportation of the scriptures to India using a mule caravan. Despite this, the high volume of texts meant that the process required more time than was initially foreseen. On the fifth day of the tenth lunar month, I reached Kalimpong, where I lodged at the Huiwen 惠文 Leather Factory and entrusted the scriptures to a shipping company for onward delivery. By the tenth day, I reached Kolkata and stayed at the Xingji 興記 facility. I signed my return passport on the eleventh, and by the eighteenth, I had made arrangements for a ship for my eastward trip. Sadly, the scriptures still had not reached me by the time I left. I could only count on friends to send them out later after they had arrived. I reached Hong Kong on the fifth day of the eleventh month of the lunar calendar. Later that evening, I boarded a train to Guangzhou 廣州. After switching to the Yue-Han 粵漢 railway,<sup>143</sup> I arrived in Wuchang by 2:30 a.m. on the eighth day and took up residence at the Buddhist Institute. During my half-month stay in Wuchang, I gave lectures on the *Vimsatikāvijñaptimātratāsiddhikārikā*,<sup>144</sup> the “*Sādhana of the Gradual Path to Enlightenment*”,<sup>145</sup> and the opening section of the *samatha* chapter from the *Lamrim Chenmo*.

On the twenty-fifth day, I set sail on the Wulin 武林 ship alongside Masters Fafang, Xuesong 雪松, and Qixing 契惺, journeying towards the west. On the twenty-ninth, we arrived in Yichang 宜昌. The following day, we obtained tickets for the Min’an 民安 vessel, which began [27] its voyage on the first day of the twelfth lunar month. On the third day, the vessel collided with a reef at Xinglong Shoals 興隆灘, almost leading to a catastrophe. Traveling during the dry season made navigating the river particularly dangerous. In a rush, the crew applied cement to repair the damage, which barely allowed us to move forward and reach Pantuo 盤沱, where we stayed overnight. On the fourth day, we arrived in Wanxian 萬縣 and moved onto the Minsu 民蘇

**143** The term Yuehan 粵漢 indicates the *yuehan tielu* 粵漢鐵路, or ‘Guangzhou-Hankou railway’, connecting the Guangdong (Yue) and Hubei (Han) provinces. See Lee 1977.

**144** *C. Ershi weishi lun* 二十唯識論; *T. Nyi shu pa’i tshig le’ur byas pa*; the “Twenty Stanzas Proving Representation-Only”, a work of the fourth or fifth-century Indian master Vasubandhu.

**145** *C. Puti dao cidid xiufa* 菩提道次第修法.

ship. We arrived in Chongqing 重慶 by the evening of the seventh day, and on the tenth day, I made my way safely to Mount Jinyun 縉雲山.<sup>146</sup>

After my return to the College, I looked forward to a few days of rest and healing. However, after committing to sacrifice myself for the Dharma, I realized that the administrative matters of the College required my urgent focus. During the year I was away, Weifang took on the extensive responsibilities of management, enduring significant hardships on my account. In the area of administrative affairs, there were various changes in staff, but I was lucky to have my companion Miyan take the helm and keep things steady, despite the considerable burden it put on him. My heartfelt thanks go to Yanding for managing the specialized courses, a responsibility he executed with exceptional dedication. I am grateful to every faculty member. They all consistently performed their duties with dedication. There was not a single individual whose efforts did not inspire my heartfelt gratitude. My journey turned out to be fruitless, which left me with over a year of wasted time - a failing for which I feel deeply ashamed. Given that the attempt to invite a teacher did not succeed, it was clear that I had to bear full responsibility. My resolve had to strengthen and my determination had to straighten. Every day, besides teaching both general and specialized courses, I also provided instruction on monastic discipline and tantric practices to monks. In the limited free moments I managed to find, I engaged in the translation projects I had always wanted to see through to completion. My responsibilities included translating texts, teaching classes, and mentoring future generations, all of which I embraced wholeheartedly as long as they truly served the Dharma.

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**146** Mount Jinyun (where *jinyun* 縉雲 means 'crimson cloud') is a sacred mountain located on the outskirts of Chongqing. It is home to Jinyun Temple 縉雲寺, which during the Republican era served as the headquarters of the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine Institute.



## 2 An Overview of Tibetan Geography

[28] In the last section, I described the routes that I traveled in the eastern, southern, and northern regions - destinations I visited myself. For other areas, the details I share here are based on reports by others. People from the West, who usually arrive in Tibet<sup>1</sup> from India, often classify Tibetan geography along a vertical axis from north to south. Therefore, they talk about southern and northern Tibet. They refer to the area surrounding the tributaries of the Tsangpo River,<sup>2</sup> extending to the Himalayas,<sup>3</sup> as Southern Tibet.<sup>4</sup> The territories located northward of Penpo,<sup>5</sup> which stretch to the Xinjiang 新疆 frontier, are regarded as Northern Tibet.<sup>6</sup> Xikang, situated in the eastern region, does not fit perfectly with this classification, which is why it is commonly known as Eastern Tibet.<sup>7</sup> There is no specific designation provided in Western sources for the territories located west of Sakya Monastery<sup>8</sup> up to the Nepal border. By contrast, Han people, who typically

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1 Fazun employs the sinograph “Xizang 西藏” to denote Tibet as a country. This usage aligns with conventions rooted in the geographical knowledge developed during the Qing dynasty and the Republican Period. Cf. Dibeltulo Concu 2021.

2 C. Zangbu jiang 藏布江. The Yarlung Tsangpo is the longest river in Tibet. Downstream in India, it is known as the Brahmaputra.

3 C. Ximalaya shan 喜馬拉亞山.

4 C. Nanzang 南藏.

5 C. Panbo 盆薄; T. 'Phan po. Penpo is the nearest forested valley north of Lhasa.

6 C. Beizang 北藏.

7 C. Dongzang 東藏.

8 C. Sajia si 薩迦寺; T. Sa skya dgon pa.



travel to Tibet through Xikang, view the landscape of Tibet as being oriented in an east-west direction. They frequently refer to Tibet as ‘Kang-Zang 康藏’ and make a distinction between Anterior Tibet<sup>9</sup> and Posterior Tibet.<sup>10</sup> This classification aligns with Tibetan views, which most of the times employ the three names ‘Kham’, ‘Tsang’, and ‘Ü’.<sup>11</sup> Still, the terms Southern Tibet and Northern Tibet are never heard among the Tibetans. The term Kham is used to describe the region situated to the west of Dartsédo,<sup>12</sup> extending to the Dangla Mountains<sup>13</sup> near Lhasa. When considering latitude, it reaches from the southern border of Yunnan 雲南 to the northern frontier of Golok. The term ‘Ü’, which translates to ‘Center’, refers to the region that is commonly known as Anterior Tibet. The passage from the Dangla Mountains in the east to the Gampala Mountains<sup>14</sup> in the west is estimated to take approximately ten to twenty days. The area that runs latitudinally from Lhokha<sup>15</sup> – south of Lhasa – to Penpo is designated as ‘Tsang’. This region is commonly known as Posterior Tibet.<sup>16</sup> In addition, the segment located from the west of Gampala to the Nepal border is referred to by Tibetans as Posterior Tibet.

Breaking Tibet down into these three broad regions does not fully capture its vastness. For instance, Tibetans frequently label places such as Nakchu as *jepa*,<sup>17</sup> which translates to ‘stranger’. This suggests that individuals from these regions are viewed as living outside of Ü. The separation is even more pronounced for those [29] residing north of Nakchu. Moreover, while the areas located north of Phakri fall under the jurisdiction of Posterior Tibet, the southern regions from Phakri, like Sikkim and Bhutan, are generally not considered part of Ü-Tsang. As a consequence, the conventional threefold division of Tibet into Kham, Tsang, and Ü does not fully account for all the Tibetan area. To offer a more inclusive framework, I suggest dividing Tibet into five regions [including a slightly larger area]. I will discuss the life of the nationals and the resources of these five areas in the following sections. A brief overview of Xikang’s terrain reveals that it is primarily mountainous, with few plains. The few plains that are present are situated at high altitudes and experience cold temperatures, which makes them more ideal for nomadic herding than for cultivating crops. Nevertheless, counties

9 C. Qianzang 前藏.

10 C. Houzang 後藏.

11 C. Kang 康, Zang 藏, and Wei 衛; T. Khams, Gtsang, and Dbus.

12 C. Dajianlu 打箭鏞.

13 C. Tandala shan 坦達拉山. This is most likely Fazun’s transcription of the Tibetan ‘Dangla’ (T. Gdang la) into sinographic writing. In modern Chinese, the Dangla Range is known as Tanggula shanmai 唐古拉山脈.

14 C. Gangbala shan 崗巴拉山; T. Gam pa la. The mountain pass that separates Tsang and Ü.

15 C. Shannan. 山南; T. Lho kha.

16 Here, the pronoun *wo* 我, literally ‘I’, should be intended as an inclusive ‘we’. The term should be intended here as ‘we [in China]’.

17 C. heba 賀巴; T. byes pa.

such as Litang,<sup>18</sup> Batang,<sup>19</sup> Dawu,<sup>20</sup> Drango,<sup>21</sup> and Karze are considered some of the milder and lower-altitude locations in Xikang. The region allows for the growth of not only barley and peas but also other crops like wheat, millet, and vegetables including radishes.

Lush pine and fir forests line the roads that join Litang, Batang, and Chatreng.<sup>22</sup> Abundant pine forests can also be found in Dawu and the [30] elevated parts of the rivers flowing through Karze. Still, the inadequate state of transportation systems results in lumber transportation expenses that surpass its market value – occasionally by multiple times. In turn, the forests remain untouched, and the open landscapes remain undeveloped. The rugged terrain in areas like Dergé<sup>23</sup> and Chamdo features steep, barren mountains that are even more striking than those in Karze.

These regions are predominantly inhabited by nomadic tribes. In the northern half of Xikang, most of the land is part of Golok, where the elevation is significant, yet the mountains are comparatively modest in height. The landscape here is predominantly made up of open pastures, devoid of any villages. The territories situated north of Lhasa, like Nakchu, possess traits that are comparable to Golok. The mountains within the boundaries of Anterior Tibet are not particularly tall, and the area is characterized by a greater presence of plains. This area's mild climate is highly favorable for agricultural activities. By providing irrigation, the tributaries of the Yarlung Tsangpo River ensure dependable harvests, regardless of whether conditions are dry or flooded. Consequently, this area stands out as the most prosperous and flourishing part in all of Tibet.

The climatic conditions in Posterior Tibet, particularly in Gyantsé<sup>24</sup> and Shigatsé,<sup>25</sup> are similar to those in Anterior Tibet, making agriculture feasible in these locations. Conversely, the land located to the north and west of Shigatsé primarily features pastures. Valleys dominate the terrain found in the southern regions of Tibet, particularly in Sikkim<sup>26</sup> and Bhutan. The mountains flanking the rivers here are covered [31] with green forests. These areas, which have a more humid climate and lower heights, are warmer than Kham, Tsang, and Ü, and yield a larger quantity of grain crops. Rice cultivation is possible in the area of Bhutan. And indeed, Bhutan is the primary supplier of rice sold in the markets of Lhasa. Even though the quality is somewhat lower than that of rice grown in regions south of the Himalayas, it is more affordable. Bhutan is now an independent country and is no longer under Tibetan jurisdiction. Still, owing to its linguistic similarities and cultural connections with Tibet, I have placed it within the geographical context of Tibet for this discussion.

18 C. Litang 襄塘; T. Li thang.

19 C. Batang 巴塘; T. 'Ba' thang.

20 C. Daofu 道孚; T. Rta'u.

21 C. Luhuo 爐霍. T. Brag 'go. Here, the Chinese manuscript reads *lulei* 廬縹, however this is a print error. The correct Chinese toponym for Drango is *luhuo*. See Fazun 1937a, 29.

22 C. Xiangcheng 鄉城; T. Cha phreng.

23 C. Dege 德格; T. Sde dge.

24 C. Jiangzi 江孜; T. Rgyal rtse.

25 C. Yijiase 亦迦則; T. Gzhis ka rtse.

26 C. Zhemengxiong 哲孟雄; T. 'Bras mo ljongs.



## 3 An Overview of Tibetan History

**Summary** 3.1 Primary Historical Sketch. – 3.2 A Brief Account of the Early Sects of Tibetan Buddhism. – 3.3 A Short History of Tibetan Buddhism and its Relationship with the Kadam Sect. – 3.4 A Short History of Tibetan Buddhism and its Relationship with the Sakya Sect. – 3.5 A Short History of Tibetan Buddhism and its Relationship with the Kagyü Sect. – 3.6 A Short History of the Later Revival of Tibetan Buddhism and the New Kadam Sect. – 3.7 An Addendum on the Causes of the Rise and Fall of Tibetan Buddhism. – 3.8 A Brief History of China-Tibet Relations.

### 3.1 Primary Historical Sketch

The history of Tibet prior to the Tang Dynasty 唐朝 is largely unverifiable. The reason for this is that Tibet did not possess a written script back then. Numerous myths and legends from that era still exist, but their ambiguous and imaginative nature complicates historical validation. Evidence suggests that Tibetans had organized approaches for clothing and food, as well as weapons like armor, bows, arrows, knives, and spears, well before the Tang period. Historians are best left to determine whether these were invented locally or introduced from other nations. According to the records in Tibet's *Depter Ngönpo*,<sup>1</sup> before the reign of King Songtsen Gampo,<sup>2</sup> there

**1** C. *Qingshi* 青史; T. *Deb ther sngon po*. The 'Blue Annals' is a historical text that chronicles the history of Buddhism in Tibet. Authored by Gö Lotsāwa Shönu Pal (T. 'Gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal, 1392-1481) between 1476 and 1478, the work is divided into sections that outline different historical periods and the transmission of Buddhist teachings. It is renowned for its detailed account of how specific texts and practices were introduced from India to Tibet. For a translation of the *Blue Annals*, cf. Roerich 1949. For a general presentation of the early history of the Tibetan Empire, cf. Dotson 2009.

**2** C. Songzan gangbo 松贊崗薄 (d. 650); T. Srong btsan sgam po.



existed a total of thirty-one kings who ruled before him. Nyatri Tsenpo Ati,<sup>3</sup> recognized as the first king, is said to have hailed from India. When he came down from the mountains, the people of Tibet viewed him as a god and made him their leader. The genealogical records of these early rulers are not reliably documented. The thirty-second generation marks the point where historical clarity begins to take shape, particularly with the figure of Songtsen [32] Gampo. He dispatched Thönmi Sambhota<sup>4</sup> to India for the purpose of researching and creating a writing system. He also developed extensive relations with the Inner Lands<sup>5</sup> and is regarded as the founder of Tibetan Buddhism.<sup>6</sup> After his time in power, historical events become partially verifiable. Following this period, five kings took the throne one after another before the rise of King Trisong Détsen,<sup>7</sup> who was a significant advocate for Buddhism. According to legend, his power exceeded that of Songtsen Gampo. He rose to power in the fourteenth year of Emperor Xuanzong's 玄宗 Tianbao 天寶 era during the Tang Dynasty [755 CE].<sup>8</sup> His attempts to advance Buddhism unfolded during the rule of Emperors Suzong 肅宗 and Daizong 代宗.<sup>9</sup> Following Trisong Détsen, three kings, that is, Muné Tsenpo,<sup>10</sup> Tridé Songtsen,<sup>11</sup> and Tri Ralpacan,<sup>12</sup> persisted in shaping the

3 C. Niangchi zanbo adei 娘墾讚薄阿得; T. Gnya' khri btsan po ati.

4 C. Tunmi sanbuzha 屯彌三補札; T. Thon mi sam+b+ho Ta.

5 C. Neidi 內地. In Fazun's *Modern Tibet*, the term "Inner Lands" refers to what, between the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, was known in English as 'China Proper'. This concept emerged under the Manchu-led Qing dynasty, which succeeded the Ming. The Qing retained the Ming's administrative structure for China's heartland while excluding its other territories - Manchuria, Mongolia, Xinjiang, Taiwan, and Tibet - from this system. The fifteen administrative divisions of the Ming were reorganized into the *neidi shiba sheng* 內地十八省, 'Eighteen Inner Provinces', or simply Neidi. In contrast, regions outside this core - such as Manchuria, Outer Mongolia, Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet - were designated as *waifan* 外藩, 'outer feudatories'. This distinction shaped Euro-American understandings of 'China Proper' into the mid-twentieth century. By the 1920s, when Fazun embarked on his mission to Tibet, the term Handi 漢地, 'Han Lands', also began to be used in the Republic of China to refer to the Qing's 'Inner Lands'. For a critical assessment on the relationship between the terms Neidi, Handi, Han, and Hua 華, cf. Elliot 2012, 173-90.

6 C. Xizang fojiao 西藏佛教. This passage contains the first occurrence of the term 'Tibetan Buddhism' in Fazun's book. Unlike Chinese scholars of his time, Fazun attributes the establishment of Tibetan Buddhism to Songtsen Gampo.

7 C. Chisong dezan 赤松得讚; T. Khri srong lde btsan (r. 755/56-97).

8 Fazun likely calculated the fourteenth year of Emperor Xuanzong's Tianbao era by noting its start in 742 CE and adding 13 years, arriving at 755 CE. He would have verified this date against major historical events, particularly the outbreak of the An Lushan 安祿山 Rebellion that same year. To confirm accuracy, Fazun would have correlated this with Xuanzong's reign, which began in 712 CE. He would have ensured that 755 CE aligned with the emperor's 43rd regnal year and the penultimate year of the Tianbao era. This approach illustrates Fazun's technique for determining precise dates in Tibetan history using Chinese imperial calendars.

9 Like above, to calculate the duration of Trisong Détsen's reign, Fazun matched the king's efforts to establish Buddhism in Tibet with the reigns of the Suzong (756-762 CE) and Daizong (762-779 CE) emperors. Fazun concluded that Trisong Détsen's reign overlapped with this period and that his promotion of Buddhism continued during these Tang emperors. Although his method of calculation is correct, Fazun failed to mention that Trisong Détsen's reign continued into the reign of Tang Emperor Dezong 德宗 (779-805 CE).

10 C. Mouni zangpo 牟尼讚薄; T. Mu ne btsan po (r. 797-804).

11 C. Chide songzan 赤得松讚; T. Khri lde srong btsan (r. 804-15).

12 C. Chi ruoba qin 墀惹巴瑾; T. Khri Ral pa can (r. 815-38).

realm with their devotion to Buddhism. All made meaningful contributions to the advancement of the Buddha's teachings.

Subsequently, Langdarma<sup>13</sup> took the life of his brother and claimed the crown for himself. In the first year of Emperor Wuzong's 武宗 reign,<sup>14</sup> he initiated a large-scale suppression of the Buddhadharmas. His rule was short, lasting just three years until he was assassinated.<sup>15</sup> Following his assassination, his son Namdé Ösung<sup>16</sup> took over the throne, but was later succeeded by Pelkhor Tsen.<sup>17</sup> However, Pelkhor Tsen met a similar fate, as he was killed during a rebellion instigated by his own subjects, which caused the downfall of the royal dynasty. Pelkhor Tsen had two sons: the firstborn, Tri Tashi Tsépa Pel,<sup>18</sup> fled to Posterior Tibet where he became the ruler, while the younger son, Kyidé Nyimagön,<sup>19</sup> escaped to Ngari.<sup>20</sup> Eventually, their descendants split into various factions, which led to a fragmented governance that persisted for seventy-eight years. This phase marked the beginning of a renewed movement to restore the Buddhadharmas in Anterior Tibet and Lhasa. Sixty-five years later, in the seventh year of Emperor Taizong's 太宗 reign during the Song 宋 Dynasty,<sup>21</sup> the noble Atiśa<sup>22</sup> made his journey to Tibet. He worked extensively to restore the Saddharma, correcting the errors that had emerged in the approximately one hundred and forty years after its suppression in Tibet. He put in every possible effort to identify the practices that needed to be abandoned and those that should be revived. Atiśa occupies the highest and most crucial position in the revival of the Buddhadharmas in Tibet. Around the same time, other Buddhist sects also began to arise. By the early Ming 明 Dynasty, Tsongkhapa the Great implemented a wide-ranging reform of these. The histories of these sects will now be discussed in further detail.

**13** C. Langdama 朗達瑪; T. Glang dar ma (r. 836).

**14** Fazun correctly calculated this date by noting that Emperor Wuzong of the Tang dynasty began his reign on February 20, 840 CE, with his first year ending on February 3, 841 CE. Around the same time, after assassinating his brother, King Ralpacan, Langdarma became the ruler of Tibet in 836 CE. Fazun aligned these timelines to identify 840-841 CE as the "first year of Emperor Wuzong's reign" and matched it with Tibetan accounts of Langdarma's suppression of Buddhism.

**15** Langdarma's reign ended when he was assassinated by the Buddhist monk Lhalung Palgyi Dorje (T. Lha lung Dpal gyi rdo rje), a deed that is memorialized in the famous Black Hat Dance. According to traditional accounts, Langdarma's death marked the fall of the Tibetan Empire and the beginning of a period of civil and cultural chaos, after which Tibet is said to have entered its 'Dark Ages'. See Dalton 2011.

**16** C. Nangde yingguang 囊得飲光; T. Gnam lde 'od srungs.

**17** C. Bakuangzan 拔匡讚; T. Dpal 'khor btsan.

**18** C. Jixiangji 吉祥積; T. Khri bkra shis rtsegs pa dpal.

**19** C. Rihu 日怙; T. Skyid lde nyi ma mgon.

**20** C. Ori 哦日; T. Mnga' ris.

**21** Fazun appears to have miscalculated Atiśa's year of arrival in Tibet. Atiśa traveled to Tibet during the reign of Emperor Renzong 仁宗 of the Song dynasty, not in the seventh year of Emperor Taizong's reign as stated. Emperor Renzong reigned from 1022 to 1063 CE, and historical records place Atiśa's arrival in Tibet in 1042 CE, which corresponds to the twenty-first year of Emperor Renzong's reign.

**22** C. Adixia 阿底峽; T. A ti sha (982-1054). Atiśa's ordination name is Dipamkaraśrījñāna (T. Mar me mdzad dpal ye shes).

### 3.2 A Brief Account of the Early Sects of Tibetan Buddhism

[33] According to tradition, Tibet had a divine teaching<sup>23</sup> known as ‘Bönpo’,<sup>24</sup> which was transmitted from the Shangshung kingdom<sup>25</sup> prior to the advent of Buddhism. Its teachings and doctrines mainly concentrated on spells, rituals, and invocations to various spirits and deities, with little in the way of profound principles. Eventually, under the sway of Buddhism, adherents of Bön started to mimic and integrate Buddhist doctrines, resulting in the creation of many original writings modeled on Buddhist texts. This phenomenon is similar to the way the Daoists in China appropriated Buddhist concepts, particularly those from the *Nirvāṇa sūtra*,<sup>26</sup> to develop their own texts like the *Lingbao Jing* 靈寶經.<sup>27</sup> During the Tang dynasty under Emperor Taizong 太宗,<sup>28</sup> Princess Wencheng 文成<sup>29</sup> and Princes Bhṛkūṭi<sup>30</sup> were wed to the Tibetan king, Songtsen Gampo. The fervor they showed for the Buddhadharmā inspired the Tibetan king, his ministers, and the local community to seek out the teachings of the Dharma. The creation of the Tibetan script is said to have been created during this time, during which there were also a handful of isolated efforts to translate Buddhist scriptures. Yet, the earlier proponents of the divine teaching had a substantial influence, which impeded the widespread establishment of the Saddharma.

Later on, during the reign of Emperor Ruizong 睿宗,<sup>31</sup> a Tang princess named Jincheng 金城<sup>32</sup> – whose precise name remains unconfirmed – entered into matrimony with a member of the Tibetan royal family. She gave birth to Prince Trisong Détsen,<sup>33</sup> a child endowed with deep karmic connections

23 C. Shenjiao 神教; literally, ‘divine teaching’, ‘spiritual teaching’.

24 C. Bengbo 崩薄; T. Bon po.

25 C. Yangrong guo 漾絨國; T. Zhang zhung.

26 C. Niepan 涅槃; read *Da banniepan jing* 大般涅槃經 (S. *Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra*); ‘Discourse on the Great Decease’.

27 *Lingbao Jing* 靈寶經. The *Lingbao Jing* (Scripture of the Numinous Treasure) is a Daoist scripture central to the Lingbao 靈寶 (Numinous Treasure) tradition, which emerged in China between the fourth and fifth centuries CE, integrating elements of Daoist cosmology, Buddhist doctrine, and ritual practice.

28 Tang Emperor Taizong, born Li Shimin 李世民, ruled from 626 to 649 CE. As the second emperor of the Tang dynasty, he is renowned for his skillful governance and the cultural achievements of his reign. His era, known as Zhenguan 貞觀, is remembered as a time of stability and prosperity.

29 C. Wencheng gongzhu 文成公主; T. Rgya bza’ kong jo (623?-680).

30 C. Niboer gongzhu 尼帕爾公主; T. Bal bza’ khri btsun.

31 C. Ruizong 睿宗. Tang Emperor Ruizong, born Li Dan 李旦, ruled twice during the Tang dynasty. His first reign, from 684 to 690, was overshadowed by the dominance of his mother, Empress Wu Zetian 武則天. In 690, Wu, formally titled “Tiance Jinlun Shengshen Huangdi” 天冊金輪聖神皇帝 (Heavenly Mandate Golden Wheel Holy, Divine Emperor), declared herself emperor and established the Zhou dynasty 周朝, deposing Ruizong in the process. She reigned as the sole female emperor in Chinese history until her abdication in 705. Ruizong reclaimed the throne in 710 following the brief reign of his son, Emperor Shang 唐高宗, but abdicated in 712 in favor of his younger brother, Emperor Xuanzong 唐玄宗. Although his political authority was limited, Ruizong’s reigns marked key transitional periods in Tang history. Here, Fazun correctly reconstructed the second reign of Ruizong as the date of Princess Jincheng’s arrival in Tibet.

32 Jincheng 金城. Princess Jincheng was a Tang dynasty royal who, in 710, married the Tibetan Emperor Tri Detsuktzen (T. Thri Lde gtsug btsan, 704-755), who was only six or seven at the time. This marriage was part of a strategic alliance between the Tang dynasty and the Tibetan Empire.

33 C. Chisong dezan 赤松得讚; T. Khri srong lde btsan.

and high ambitions. Since his days as a royal heir, he cultivated a deep faith in the Saddharma and aimed to spread its teachings far and wide. Still, during his formative years, powerful ministers at the palace endorsed heterodox views and curtailed orthodoxy. Despite his lofty aspirations, he refrained from voicing them openly. After he took the crown and secured full authority, he cleverly implemented strategies to sideline the disloyal faction. He dispatched repeated missions to India to recruit more than one hundred distinguished craftsmen of the Dharma,<sup>34</sup> including Bodhisattva Śāntarakṣita<sup>35</sup> and Guru Padmasambhava.<sup>36</sup> United in their mission, they founded Samye Monastery,<sup>37</sup> where they engaged in teaching and translation work. The entire Tripiṭaka was completely established within a few short years. This illustrates the crucial influence that imperial power can have in disseminating the teachings of the Dharma. Nevertheless, the presence of scriptures and images alone cannot sustain the Saddharma if the saṅgha is absent; even if the Dharma is flourishing today, it will inevitably decline in the coming generations. Temples are still found in present-day Nepal, but the Saddharma has waned as there is no saṅgha present.

With this understanding, the Tibetan king invited Bodhisattva Śāntarakṣita, [34] who subsequently ordained seven individuals endowed with merit and wisdom. This event initiated the participation of Tibetans in the saṅgha. Later, king Tri Ralpacan took the initiative to sort the translated scriptures from the reigns of his predecessors, classifying them into categories and compiling their titles and sections. He valued the ordained saṅgha highly, and so he gave it the temples as estates and provided it with commoners for support. This made it possible for them to practice on the path without disturbance, serving as models for both humans and gods. This era marked the peak of the earlier dissemination of the Buddha's teachings<sup>38</sup> in Tibet. However, the king's reverence led to discontent among his officials and subjects. A group of conspirators came together and assassinated him, placing his younger brother, Langdarma, on the throne. Langdarma, notorious for his savage behavior and lack of piety, launched a campaign against the Saddharma, destroying temples, setting scriptures on fire, and targeting the saṅgha. This event took place during the first year of the Huichang 會昌 era<sup>39</sup> of Tang Emperor Wuzong,

**34** C. fajiang 法匠. This term refers to a teacher skilled in shaping and guiding their students, akin to a master craftsman molding raw material.

**35** C. Jingming pusa 靜命菩薩; T. Zhi ba'tsho (725-788).

**36** C. Lianhuasheng dashi 蓮華生大師; T. Padma 'byung gnas (fl. eighth century).

**37** C. Sanye si 桑耶寺; T. Bsam yas.

**38** C. xianqi de fojiao 先期的佛教; T. Bstan pa'i snga dar.

**39** The Huichang Persecution of the Dharma (C. Huichang fanan 會昌法難) was one of the most severe persecutions in the history of Buddhism in China. It occurred during the Huichang era (843-844) under the reign of Tang Emperor Wuzong (r. 840-846). The persecution arose from political factionalism, economic pressures, and opposition from Confucian officials and Daoist priests. The government also sought to curb the illicit trade of ordination certificates, which had become a means of tax evasion. Wuzong's reforms targeted the Buddhist monastic community with sweeping measures. Over 260,000 monks and nuns were defrocked and returned to lay life, hundreds of monasteries were destroyed, and temple assets were confiscated. Thousands of Buddhist statues were melted down and recast as coinage. New ordinands were restricted to individuals over the age of forty. Despite these devastating losses, Chinese Buddhists demonstrated remarkable resilience, recovering and flourishing after Wuzong's death in 846.

a time when the Buddhist saṅgha in the Inner Lands suffered analogous hardships – an interesting alignment of fates.

The rule of Langdarma did not last long, as he was soon taken out by an assassin. The kingdom collapsed into turmoil, the Dharma was forgotten, and the people faced immense suffering. In the wake of sustained upheaval, a wish for the restoration of order surfaced. Those who had encountered the Saddharma in the past noticed a chance arising from the population's eagerness for the teachings. This resulted in the forgery of scriptures and treatises. Later on, based on such circumstances, advocates of the newer schools denounced the texts of the older tradition as unreliable. The older tradition, commonly known as the Red Teaching stands in contrast to the more recent schools like the Sakyapa,<sup>40</sup> the Kagyüpa,<sup>41</sup> the Kadampa,<sup>42</sup> and the Gandenpa.<sup>43</sup> Before Langdarma's suppression of the Dharma, the Buddhist teachings in Tibet were originally referred to as the "Followers of the Ancient",<sup>44</sup> and were often referred to by Han people as the Red Teaching.<sup>45</sup> By contrast, the form of Buddhism restored after the suppression was originally called the "Followers of the New"<sup>46</sup> in Tibet and were commonly referred to as the Yellow Teaching<sup>47</sup> by the Han, a term that fails to encompass its true meaning. Certain individuals identify Tsongkhapa's sect as the Yellow Teaching, while they classify all the remaining sects as either Red or White Teachings.<sup>48</sup> This method of naming traditions, based only on the color of robes, is comparable to a blind person trying to feel an elephant.

### 3.3 A Short History of Tibetan Buddhism and its Relationship with the Kadam Sect

[35] Following Langdarma's devastation of Tibetan Buddhism, there were no remnants of the saṅgha left in either Anterior or Posterior Tibet. In the aftermath of his assassination, the quest for power intensified among various political factions. His young sons fled to To<sup>49</sup> in Ngari, located in Posterior Tibet, where they established their rule. While subsequent generations upheld their faith in the Saddharma, the prolonged disappearance of the Dharma, together with the widespread proliferation of false teachings,

40 C. Sajia pai 薩迦派; T. Sa skya pa.

41 C. Jiaju pai 迦舉派; T. Bka' brgyud pa.

42 C. Jiadang pai 迦當派; T. Bka' gdams pa.

43 C. Gedeng pai 格登派; T. Dga' ldan pa.

44 C. Jiu pai 舊派; T. Rnying ma pa; literally, Nyingma (T. rnying ma) means 'ancient'. The term refers to the schools of Tibetan Buddhism that continued to rely on the earlier translations of the scriptures undertaken during the period of early dissemination of Buddhism in Tibet, completed before the return of Rinchen Sangpo (T. Rin chen bzang po) from India. With Rinchen Sangpo and others came a new wave of translations. Those who adopted the new translations came to be identified as the followers of Sarmapa (T. Gsar ma pa), or followers of the New Translations.

45 C. Hong jiao 紅教.

46 C. Xin pai 新派; T. Gsar ma pa. See the term *Jiu pai*, or Nyingma above.

47 C. Huang jiao 黃教.

48 C. Bai jiao 白教.

49 C. Duo 朵; T. Tho.

hindered progress. In spite of several efforts to invite Indian craftsmen of the Dharma to Tibet to for the purpose of disseminating the teachings, these efforts achieved little success. By the Zhao Song 趙宋 Dynasty,<sup>50</sup> a king named Yeshe Ö<sup>51</sup> became aware of Atiśa's esteemed character and fame. He understood that the revival of the Buddhadharmā in Tibet would be unattainable without Atiśa's arrival to restore order. He dedicated every possible effort and financial resource to arrange for a delegation to invite the revered master. Atiśa was ultimately brought to Tibet only after King Jangchup Ö<sup>52</sup> ascended the throne. At the king's request, Atiśa wrote the *Bodhipathapradīpa*,<sup>53</sup> a treatise that ascertained the essential tenets of both sūtra and tantra and established clear distinctions between proper and improper practices. This marked a significant revival of the Buddha's teaching in Tibet.

The central thesis of Atiśa's teachings emphasized that the scope of the Dharma, regardless of whether it pertains to the Mahāyāna or Hīnayāna, is determined by the capacities of each individual. For example, when someone with a Hīnayāna motivation engages in an act of generosity like giving, the act remains within the scope of the Hīnayāna. This principle pertains equally to morality, patience, effort, concentration, wisdom, and even the cultivation of the four immeasurables.<sup>54</sup> In contrast, for a person motivated by Mahāyāna ideals, even the simple act of offering a morsel of food to an ant or a pigeon is transformed into an act of Mahāyāna generosity, which serves as a provision for attaining buddhahood.<sup>55</sup> Likewise, other virtues like morality and patience similarly reflect the practitioner's motivation. In turn, a person's capacities, whether great or small, are nurtured by means of practice. But these qualities are not fixed, natural traits that have been carried over since beginningless time. This cultivation, Atiśa clarifies, must adhere to a systematic and sequential progression that cannot be bypassed. Failing to follow the proper stages and aiming for advanced goals too quickly can prevent one from attaining higher virtues. The reason? This is due to the fact that the practices do not align with a person's present abilities. Moreover, when foundational practices are neglected, the advantages of these lower stages are also lost. Why? Because a person may be unwilling to

**50** In his statement, "By the time of the Zhao Song", referring to the Song dynasty (960-1279), Fazun anchors Tibetan historical events to Chinese timelines. Among these is the reign of Yeshe Ö (947-1024), the king of the western Tibetan kingdom of Gugé (T. Gu ge), who is credited with reviving Buddhism and initiating its latter dissemination (T. phyi dar) in Tibet. Fazun connects these events to the Song dynasty. In so doing, he makes Atiśa's arrival in Tibet comprehensible within a shared historical context.

**51** C. Zhi guang 智光; T. Ye shes 'od.

**52** C. Puti guang 菩提光; T. Byang chub 'od (late tenth century). Jangchup Ö, the grandnephew of Yeshe Ö, was instrumental in facilitating the arrival of Atiśa Dipamkaraśrījñāna to Tibet.

**53** C. *Putidao ju lun* 菩提道炬論; T. *Byang chub lam gyi sgron ma*; Atiśa wrote his "Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment" at the Toling Tsuklakang (T. Tho ling gtsug lag khang) soon after he arrived in Tibet in 1040.

**54** S. caturapramāṇa; C. si wuliang 四無量; T. tshad med bzhi. The four immeasurables or boundless states, also known as the four divine abidings (S. brahmavihāra; C. fanzhu 梵住; T. tshang pa'i gnas) are used as tools in the cultivation of serenity meditation (S. śamatha): 1) loving-kindness (S. maitrī; C. ci 慈; T. byams pa); 2) compassion (S. karuṇā; C. bei 悲; T. snying rje); 3) empathetic joy (S. muditā; C. xi 喜; T. dga' ba); 4) equanimity (S. upekṣā; C. she 捨; T. btang snyoms).

**55** Fazun's expression *chengfo zhi ziliang* 成佛之資糧 can be otherwise rendered as "an accumulation for becoming a buddha".

commit to the required practices of cultivation. Thus, the treatise starts by elucidating the traits of the practices and the sequential stages associated with three distinct types of persons.<sup>56</sup>

Moreover, the text also asserts: Without fostering a sincere discontent with the current state of existence, individuals will lack the motivation to seek the future rewards of the Dharma. Those who concentrate entirely on seeking worldly gains – such as food, clothing, [36] shelter, fame, and respect – are not even regarded as true followers of the Buddha's teachings. In what manner can they claim to pursue a path that extends beyond the limits of our world? If a person does not cultivate a real aversion to the Three Realms, they will struggle to make the choice and give them up. Without a heartfelt determination to let go, one tends to be absorbed in the pursuit of future security within the Three Realms. A person like this cannot be considered someone who is willing to transcend the world – how much less can they be regarded as a bodhisattva?

Additionally, if a person is unwilling to sacrifice all personal comforts and put in the effort to benefit all sentient beings, they will inevitably fail to generate *mahābodhicitta*.<sup>57</sup> Without the ability to generate *mahābodhicitta*, they certainly cannot be a bodhisattva. And if someone is not a bodhisattva, any virtuous practices in which they engage will not contribute to their provisions for attaining buddhahood, nor will these actions reflect the proper conduct of a bodhisattva. For this reason, this treatise thoroughly elucidates and ascertains the techniques for generating bodhicitta as outlined in the path of a person of great capacity.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, even with the generation of bodhicitta, if one does not commit to the proper conduct of a bodhisattva – or indulges in mistaken practices – they will certainly fail to accumulate the provisions required for attaining full awakening, rendering the direct realization of the truth of *bodhi* unobtainable.

This is because the right conduct for accumulating these provisions focuses on benefiting sentient beings. Persons of great capacity who wish to benefit sentient beings must first understand the innate tendencies of those they aim to support. In the absence of such penetrating insight,<sup>59</sup> even if one were to burn one's own body and mind to ashes for the sake of others, that alone may not guarantee that such sacrifices are ultimately beneficial or harmful. This is comparable to releasing arrows into the darkness, where there is no certainty of hitting the target. Therefore, once the text has expounded the generation of bodhicitta, it proceeds to thoroughly discuss the correct path of practice, focusing on the essential techniques of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*. Moreover, while the sūtra teachings<sup>60</sup> may lead to buddhahood, they fall short of the quick results offered by tantric techniques.<sup>61</sup>

Despite the variety of tantric techniques that exist, they are certainly not meant for ordinary individuals, and some are deemed inappropriate

<sup>56</sup> C. san shi 三士; T. skyes bu gsum; in English, 'three types of persons', 'three types of individuals'.

<sup>57</sup> C. da putixin 大菩提心; T. byang chub kyi sems chen po; the 'aspiration for the great enlightenment'.

<sup>58</sup> C. shangshi 上士.

<sup>59</sup> C. tongli 通力.

<sup>60</sup> C. Xianjiao 顯教.

<sup>61</sup> C. Mifa 密法.

even for ordained *bhikṣus*<sup>62</sup> as well. Engaging in these methods without the right mindset is akin to a rabbit trying to imitate a lion's leap – an act that only invites one's own demise. It is crucial to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages for individuals who are new to tantric methods. The most remarkable feature of this treatise, then, is its careful evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages for newcomers who train in tantric methods, combined with the eradication of their mentality focused on seeking easy gains or opportunistic shortcuts. Furthermore, all teachings of the Tathāgata are spoken for the benefit sentient beings.

Due to [37] the diverse capacities and dispositions of each person, the Tathāgata's teachings also vary in depth and scope. In summary, every teaching is meant to progressively guide beings, even those with the lowest faculties, towards the great path to buddhahood. Therefore, all words spoken by the Buddha are teachings that can and must be practiced. Thus, there is no teaching that should be disregarded or thought of as superfluous. This tradition is called Kadam,<sup>63</sup> wherein *ka* translates to “the Buddha's Word” and *dam* denotes “instructions”.<sup>64</sup> Thus, Kadam means “Instructions on the Buddha's Word”. This sect was considered the most flourishing tradition during the revival of the Buddhadharmā in Tibet in the Song and Yuan 元 dynasties.<sup>65</sup>

### 3.4 A Short History of Tibetan Buddhism and its Relationship with the Sakya Sect

The founder of this sect is said to be Dharmapāla,<sup>66</sup> a scholar from Nālandā Monastery<sup>67</sup> in India. Externally, he propagated Consciousness Only,<sup>68</sup> while internally he cultivated the two stages of Hevajra.<sup>69</sup> Upon achieving alignment with the practices described in the tantra sets,<sup>70</sup> he faced criticism for consuming alcohol. Yearning for solitude, he abandoned the monastery and retreated to the mountains, where he devoted himself to practice. He ultimately attained supreme buddhahood in this very body. He conveyed these teachings to the Pamthingpa brothers<sup>71</sup> in Nepal. In turn,

62 C. *biqiu* 比丘; P. *bhikṣu*; T. *dge slong*; In Sanskrit, *bhikṣu* means ‘beggar’; The term refers to a male ‘religious mendicant’. It is commonly translated in English as ‘monk’.

63 C. *Jiadang* 迦當; T. *Bka' gdams*.

64 Fazun transliterates the Tibetan *bka'* with *jia* 迦, and *gdams* with *dang* 當.

65 Fazun aligns Tibetan and Chinese timelines by situating the revival of the Buddhadharmā in Tibet within the period spanning the Song (960-1279) and Yuan (1271-1368) dynasties.

66 C. *Hufa pusa* 護法菩薩; T. *Chos skyong* (530-561). One of the ten great Yogācāra philosophers in Buddhist India.

67 C. *Nalantuo si* 那爛陀寺; T. *Na len dra*.

68 C. *weishi* 唯識; S. *vijñaptimātratā*; T. *rnam par rig pa tsam nyid*; translated as “consciousness only”, “mere-representation”, or “mere-designation”. Consciousness Only is the central tenet is the central tenet of the Yogācāra system of Indian Buddhism. It posits that all objects of experience are merely projections of consciousness (S. *vijñāna*).

69 C. *Huanxi jingang* 歡喜金剛; T. *Kye rdo rje*.

70 C. *mibu* 密部; T. *rgyud sde*; ‘tantra’, ‘tantra division’ of the Buddhist canon.

71 C. *Pangting* 龐亭; T. *Pham thing pa*.

they passed the teachings on to Drokmi,<sup>72</sup> a distinguished translator from Tibet. While Drokmi the translator played a significant role in disseminating the teachings throughout Posterior Tibet, the essential instructions were eventually entrusted to Kōnchok Gyalpo,<sup>73</sup> who is regarded as the founding patriarch of the Sakya tradition. This prominent master, who was born during the Song Dynasty, came to Tibet not long after the noble Atiśa. After three generations, the distinguished master Kūnga Gyaltsen,<sup>74</sup> who was the fourth patriarch of the Sakya lineage, received an invitation from Qubilai Khan,<sup>75</sup> the founder of the Yuan Dynasty, to propagate the Dharma in Hua.<sup>76</sup> He spent several years there before he passed away. The Yuan emperor later recognized him by designating his nephew, the esteemed master Lodrö Gyaltsen,<sup>77</sup> as the National Preceptor,<sup>78</sup> thereby confirming him as the fifth patriarch of the Sakya lineage. – In Chinese historical records, he is frequently called Great Master Pakpa.<sup>79</sup>

The teachings of this sect are extensive and encompass both sūtra and tantra. Still, while it incorporates all tantric techniques, the Hevajra rituals occupy a uniquely central position within this sect. In addition, this sect has developed the sūtra teachings by refining Abhidharma, Vinaya, [38] Hetuvidyā, Vijñaptimātra, and Madhyamaka to a remarkable degree of thoroughness. Master Kūnga Gyaltsen, the fourth patriarch, made significant contributions with his extensive treatises. His powerful arguments against the inaccuracies and shortcomings of older sects, as well as the erroneous practices of his era, were instrumental in preserving the Tathāgata's Saddharma. This sect was the central pillar of Tibetan Buddhism until the rise of the great master Tsongkhapa. In this sect, the stages of practice begin with sūtra and then progress to tantra, with a particular emphasis on the distinct precepts for personal liberation as its foundation. This sequence mirrors the structure found in the *Jangchup lamkyi rimpa*.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, in subsequent generations, certain scholars, driven by a desire for easier paths, neglected sūtra teachings and relied exclusively on tantric teachings. By doing so, they diminished the importance of the rules of monastic discipline. This decline led to issues that reflected the pitfalls of older sects.

72 C. Zhuomo 綽摩; T. 'Brog mi Lo tsā ba Shā kya Ye shes.

73 C. Xiqing zang 喜慶藏; T. Dkon mchog rgyal po (1034-1102).

74 C. Xiqing tong 慶喜幢; T. Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1182-1251).

75 C. Yuan Shizu 元世祖, (1215-1294).

76 *Hua* is an ancient ethnonym for 'China'. On *Hua*, see Elliot 2012, 179-85.

77 C. Hui tong 慧幢; T. Blo gros rgyal mtshan (ca. 1235-80).

78 C. *guoshi* 國師.

79 C. Basiba 發思巴; T. 'Phags pa.

80 C. *puti dao cidī* 菩提道次第; T. *byang chub lam gyi rim pa*; S. \**bodhipathakrama*.

### 3.5 A Short History of Tibetan Buddhism and its Relationship with the Kagyü Sect

This sect emerged in the Song Dynasty and is linked to the renowned translator Marpa.<sup>81</sup> From an early age, he demonstrated a strong personality and noble aspirations. At first, Marpa aimed to gain a concise grasp of the essential teachings from Drokmi the translator, with whom he studied Sanskrit. However, he concluded that studying in Tibet lacked the depth of fulfillment that came from directly visiting the holy lands of India and engaging with its enlightened masters. Thus, he gathered one or two companions who shared his interests and embarked on the journey alongside them. Their first stop was a short stay in Nepal, where Marpa adjusted to the tropical climate and learned about the ways of life prevalent in that region. Later on, they made their way to India, where Marpa actively sought the guidance of respected sages. He received instructions from Nāropa,<sup>82</sup> the abbot of Vikramaśīla Monastery,<sup>83</sup> where he absorbed the essential teachings from a range of scriptures and became proficient in the Yoganiruttaratantra practices of Hevajra. Under the mentorship of his teacher Nāropa, Marpa studied the profound *Guhyasamājatantra*<sup>84</sup> methods associated with the Yoganiruttara father class, guided by the great paṇḍita Jñānagarbha.<sup>85</sup> He further studied the *Mahāmāyātantra*<sup>86</sup> from the mother class through Kukkuripa.<sup>87</sup> In addition, he turned to Nāro<sup>88</sup> and Maitrīpa<sup>89</sup> for help in deepening his insight into the stages of meditation practice. Upon his return to Tibet, Marpa extensively propagated the tantric techniques, yet he did not actively promote the sūtra teachings. After a brief period of teaching, he traveled to India again. This was the time when the noble Atiśa [39] was heading towards Tibet, and, according to tradition, they met during their travels.

Among the four main disciples of this master, each of whom distinguished themselves in their own right, Milarepa<sup>90</sup> is clearly the one who most fully and perfectly embodied the essence of his teacher's instructions. He is celebrated as the most famous master in Tibet to have attained buddhahood within a single lifetime. Mila, who came from the region of Ngari in Posterior Tibet, suffered the death of his father when he was still a young boy. His uncle and aunt took control of the family inheritance, forcing him to endure a life marked by isolation and unspeakable suffering. Acting on his mother's urging, he ventured into Anterior Tibet, where he learned methods to summon hail and unleash storms as a means of revenge. In

81 C. Maba 嘛巴; T. Mar pa lo tsā ba chos kyi blo gros (1012-97).

82 C. Naluoba 拏囉巴; T. Nā ro pa (1016-1100).

83 C. Zhijiamoluoxiluo 止迦摩羅希羅; T. Rnam gnon ngang tshul. A monastery located in present-day Bihar.

84 C. *Miji* 集密; T. *Gsang ba 'dus pa'i rgyud*; the 'Secret Assembly Tantra'.

85 C. Zhizu 智足; T. Ye shes snying po (eleventh century).

86 C. Dahuangang fa 大幻網法; T. Sgyu 'phrul chen mo'i rgyud; the 'Great Illusion Tantra'.

87 C. Guguriba 姑姑日巴; T. Ku kku ri pa (eleventh century).

88 C. Naluo 拏囉; T. Nā ro. Short for Nāropa.

89 C. Mile 彌勒; T. Mai tri pa (1012-85).

90 C. Milariba 彌拉日巴; T. Mi la ras pa (1028/40-1111/23). On Milarepa, see Quintman 2014.

one instance, he brought about the deaths of more than twenty people and summoned hailstorms that obliterated the autumn crops, leaving the fields barren. Later, overwhelmed by remorse and fearing karmic retribution, he reflected on life's impermanence. Eager to escape *samsāra* and quickly attain perfect buddhahood, Milarepa sought refuge under the guidance of the great master Marpa. Having recognized Milarepa's vast potential, Marpa enforced a series of nine grueling trials aimed at purifying his past wrongdoings. Only at that point did Marpa grant him the complete instructions of Hevajra, Guhyasamāja, and Cakrasaṃvara,<sup>91</sup> advising him to retreat into the mountains for deep practice. After more than ten years of living in seclusion, Milarepa achieved the supreme attainment.<sup>92</sup> Milarepa often relied on lyrical compositions to convey the meaning of the Dharma to his audience. Upon listening to his teachings, they would immediately practice what they had learned. The number of disciples he transformed is beyond measure. Even during this age of Final Dharma,<sup>93</sup> Tibetan Buddhism maintains a strong emphasis on the necessity of relying on a master and committing to genuine practice. This strong emphasis is largely a result of the influence exerted by this particular sect. Still, intense focus on the teacher's instructions led to a tendency to undervalue the significance of scriptural teachings. In addition, the narrow focus on tantric practices often resulted in a lack of appreciation for and a neglect of monastic precepts. Later critiques from the four patriarchs of the Sakya sect and Tsongkhapa the Great mainly focused on the later deviations of this sect, along with the shortcomings of older traditions.

### 3.6 A Short History of the Later Revival of Tibetan Buddhism and the New Kadam Sect

Over the centuries, from the Tang to the Yuan Dynasty, Tibetan Buddhism experienced numerous cycles of rise and decline, with its fortunes shifting more than once. Many commentators lacked genuine [40] practice, and practitioners frequently lacked the wisdom that comes from hearing. Those who pursued the *sūtra* teachings dedicated themselves exclusively to the unrestrained practices of the Mahāyāna, while those who were drawn to tantric rituals, such as those involving wax offerings, treated pure vows and monastic precepts as trivial, and so they discarded them like chaff. Knowledge of and adherence to the procedural norms<sup>94</sup> of the *saṅgha* were entirely absent. In this period, Tsongkhapa the Great emerged. Renowned for both his vast erudition and authentic practice, he placed great emphasis on monastic discipline. Drawing on the instructions of the noble Atiśa, he established a systematic approach to practice, encompassing both *sūtra* and

91 C. Shengle jingang 勝樂金剛; T. 'Khor lo bde mchog; the 'Binding of the Wheel Tantra'.

92 C. da xidi 大悉地 (a synonym of: zuishang daxidi 最上大悉地; S. uttamāsiddhi; T. mchog gi dngos grub); in a tantric context, the 'supreme attainment' refers to Buddhahood, as opposed to the 'common attainments' (C. gongtong xidi 共同悉地; S. sādharmaśiddhi; T. thun mong gi dngos grub), the worldly *siddhis* that can be obtained through mantra recitation and deity yoga.

93 C. mofa 末法; S. saddharmavipralopa; J. mappō; T. dam pa'i chos rab tu rnam par 'jig pa.

94 C. jiemo 羯摩; S. karman; T. las; from the Sanskrit, all procedural norms such as full ordination of monks and nuns, confession ceremonies, the closing of the rain's retreat, and the administration of moral transgressions.

tantra, while discouraging the opportunistic tendencies of scholars seeking shortcuts. As a result, Tibetan Buddhism experienced another resurgence. In turn, this gave rise to the renowned and prestigious “Yellow Hat” sect that continues to this day.

In establishing the practices of the sūtra teachings,<sup>95</sup> all scriptures and treatises strive to fulfill two main goals: first, to help sentient beings to discard faults; and second, to cause sentient beings to achieve virtues. Faults can be classified into three types: (1) nonvirtuous actions that lead one to fall into the lower realms; (2) meritorious actions that are contaminated and are not conducive to attaining nirvāṇa; and (3) self-centered tendencies that hinder the expansive mind of a bodhisattva. Avoiding these three faults enables a person to steer clear of the lower realms, remain unbound by the cycle of transmigration, and prevent stagnation in the Hinayāna approach respectively. The virtues to be developed fall into two main types: (A) the mundane virtues, known as *dharmas* that lead to exalted rebirths, and (B) the supramundane virtues, called *dharmas* that ensure the unsurpassed<sup>96</sup> attainment. This latter category is subdivided into two aspects: (a) achieving personal liberation from the cycle of saṃsāra; and (b) helping all sentient beings to reach *mahābodhi*.<sup>97</sup> Guiding sentient beings to avoid lower realms and attain favorable rebirths through practices such as the ten virtues and the five precepts only fulfills the aims of the vehicles of humans and gods. However, this is not the Buddha’s ultimate intent. His ultimate goal is to guide sentient beings towards a permanent exit from saṃsāra and the realization of buddhahood. In order to achieve this goal, three essential practices are outlined: developing renunciation, cultivating bodhicitta, and gaining insight into emptiness.

Without renunciation, a person remains bound to the perpetual cycle of birth and death, as they lack a sincere longing to escape it. Without bodhicitta, buddhahood is unattainable, as it shows that a person has not yet entered the ranks of the bodhisattvas. Without insight into emptiness, it is impossible to overcome the two obstructions and realize the two types of emptiness, since one would lack a true antidote for ignorance concerning ultimate truth.<sup>98</sup> In addition, generating *mahābodhicitta* cannot be achieved without [41] engaging in renunciation. Why? Without a genuine aversion for the cycle of rebirth within the Three Realms, it is impossible to develop the aspiration to liberate others. Moreover, if a person fails to grasp the nature of suffering, authentic renunciation cannot take place either. Without an understanding of suffering, there can be no aversion to the afflictions. And without aversion towards the afflictions, there will be no commitment to release them.

In order to grasp the subtle forms of suffering present in the Three Realms, it is essential to first recognize the coarse and heavy suffering associated with the three lower destinies. In order to develop a fear of the suffering associated with the three lower destinies, it is essential to recognize that upon death, human beings can indeed fall into those realms. And to develop fear of such a downfall, it is essential to understand the

95 C. xianjiao.

96 C. sheng 勝; S. anuttara; T. bla na med pa.

97 C. da puti 大菩提; T. byang chub chen po; ‘Great Enlightenment’.

98 C. zhenshiyiyu 真實義愚; S. tattvārthasāmmoha; T. de kho na’i don la rmongs pa.

impermanence of human life and the uncertainty of the moment of death. This insight leads a person to cherish each fleeting moment. Meanwhile, to cultivate fear of death, it is essential to grasp the immense value and rarity of human existence. To effectively practice the Saddharma and attain its beneficial results, a person must first acknowledge that any minor alleviation of faults and the generation of little merits is entirely contingent upon the guidance provided by a *kalyāṇamitra*. Even basic worldly tasks cannot be accomplished without the knowledge shared by earlier sages. How much more relevant is this for supramundane teachings that go beyond ordinary understanding? Therefore, the foundation of all meritorious endeavors begins with reliance on a *kalyāṇamitra*.

By reflecting on the value, rarity, and impermanence of the human body, as well as the suffering experienced in the three lower destinies, one develops an initial fear of suffering. This fear inherently leads to a desire for methods to achieve liberation and protection. Still, these methods are beyond the power of both humans and gods to provide. For, in order to attain liberation, one must rely on one's own efforts to avoid nonvirtue and cultivate virtue. However, who is qualified to teach these methods? And who has the ability to guide others in following them? It is only the Tathāgata who has fully realized and taught these methods, and only the Buddha's followers, by relying on the Buddha's teachings, can effectively put them into practice. Hence, the Three Jewels<sup>99</sup> are the true refuge that is capable of offering protection to sentient beings.

Next, one contemplates the Three Realms as a burning house, where afflictions and actions are the root causes of suffering. These two forces lead sentient beings to perpetually wander in the great wheel of suffering without any relief. The only way out is through the cessation of the origin of suffering, which ultimately brings peace and comfort. Achieving cessation involves the practice of the three trainings.<sup>100</sup> By committing to the practice of the three trainings, one can escape from the cycle of birth and death and permanently eradicate the seeds of suffering. Furthermore, one contemplates that all sentient beings, from time without beginning, have been caught in an unbroken stream of thoughts driven [42] by ignorance and karma, causing them to endlessly wander through the Three Realms. In their countless births – be it from a womb or an egg – all beings have unquestionably relied on the compassion and care of their parents to survive and thrive. Thus, all sentient being have been our parents in countless past lives, and their kindness is remarkable.

In order to honor this immense debt of gratitude we owe to our mothers and fathers, it is essential that we strive to alleviate their suffering and enhance their happiness. There is no alternative to attaining buddhahood in order to fulfill such a vast vow and duty. By establishing compassion as our foundation, we generate *mahābodhicitta*, the grand altruistic aspiration to benefit all sentient beings. With this aspiration in mind, then, we consistently nurture all virtuous practices, completing the two accumulations of merit

<sup>99</sup> C. sanbao 三寶; S. ratnatraya; T. dkon mchog gsum; The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṅgha.

<sup>100</sup> C. sanxue 三學; T. bslab pa gsum. In Sanskrit, the *trīśikṣā*, that is, the 'three trainings' of the bodhisattva, comprising higher morality (S. adhiśīlaśikṣā), higher concentration (S. adhisamādhiśikṣā), and higher wisdom (S. adhiprajñāśikṣā), are said to include all of the elements of the *āryaṣṭāṅgamārga*, 'eightfold noble path'.

and wisdom. By means of these two accumulations, we ultimately attain *samyaksambodhi*.<sup>101</sup>

Hence, this sequence thoroughly summarizes all the meanings elucidated in the scriptures and treatises of both the Mahāyāna and the Hīnayāna, ensuring that every aspect is explained. For instance, the Vinaya discusses in detail the circumstances in which *bhikṣus* can observe or transgress the precepts, offering methods to break free from the Three Realms. The Abhidharma provides comprehensive explanations of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*,<sup>102</sup> including both general and specific aspects of cause and effect, which collectively outline the key features of the path of the person of intermediate capacity. Texts like the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*,<sup>103</sup> the *Mūlamadhyamakārikā*,<sup>104</sup> and the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*<sup>105</sup> illuminate the practices of the bodhisattva and the correct view of emptiness. Additional scriptures and treatises that elaborate on the virtues and deeds of buddhas and bodhisattvas provide insights into the circumstances for taking refuge in the Three Jewels and generating bodhicitta. Therefore, all scriptures of the Tripiṭaka, whether they belong to the Mahāyāna or Hīnayāna, are entirely integrated into this great progression of the path to *bodhi*. This indicates that all teachings and treatises are authentic pathways for attaining buddhahood. This sequence prevents uninformed or superficial learners from bypassing stages, randomly choosing or discarding teachings, clinging to one while dismissing others.

In delineating the sequential stages of tantric practice, it is vital to understand that anyone who wishes to train in tantra must first cultivate the merits described earlier – these preliminary practices are essential for the generation of bodhicitta. There is no foundation for engaging in tantra without these merits. The next step requires relying on a fully qualified and virtuous *ācārya*<sup>106</sup> to receive a complete empowerment. Engaging in the meditative practices of tantra or even hearing [43] the teachings is impossible without prior empowerment. During the ceremony of empowerment, individuals take on the *samaya*<sup>107</sup> vows and the vows of individual liberation, both of which must be honored with utmost care. How can someone expect to obtain a fortunate rebirth as a human or a god, let alone attaining buddhahood, if they are unable to keep these vows? For individuals who are capable of strictly observing these pledges, it becomes vital to thoroughly investigating the true meaning of tantra. Failing this, the *vidhi*<sup>108</sup> becomes an empty performance, and the direct realization of absolute reality remains ultimately out of reach. After the true meaning is understood, one must continue with courage and perseverance, practicing with diligence the techniques of the stage

101 C. *zhengdengjue* 正等覺; T. yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub. 'Complete enlightenment', 'full enlightenment'.

102 C. *shengsi huanmie* 生死還滅.

103 C. *Dabore jing* 大般若經.

104 C. *Zhongguan lun* 中觀論.

105 C. *Xianguan zhuangyan lun* 現觀莊嚴論.

106 C. *asheli* 大阿闍黎; T. slob dpon; 'teacher', 'master'. By the term *ācārya*, Fazun refers specifically to a master qualified in the tantric ritual.

107 C. *sanmeiye* 三昧耶; T. dam tshig; 'vows', in this context, 'tantric vows'.

108 C. *yigui* 儀軌; S. *vidhi*; T. cho ga; 'rite', in this context, 'tantric practice' in its various aspects.

of generation.<sup>109</sup> Without attaining the superior *samādhi* that corresponds with the meditational deity,<sup>110</sup> engaging in meditative absorptions related to channels and energies,<sup>111</sup> drops,<sup>112</sup> and clear light<sup>113</sup> will ultimately fail to produce proper generation. Following the skillful completion of the stage of generation, the next step is to engage in the stage of completion.<sup>114</sup> It is crucial to attain meditative stabilization on the illusory body<sup>115</sup> and clear light. Without this, the two resultant bodies of Buddhahood – the form body and the truth body – cannot be realized, even if one enters the *samādhi* of becoming the deity. Within the tantra sets, the scriptures, commentaries, and ritual manuals focus exclusively on this principle, adhering strictly to it without any exceptions. Therefore, all tantric techniques need to follow definite principles and progress through established stages. Teachings that stray from the correct order or do not have clear guidelines are not pure tantric methods. This much is certain. Tsongkhapa arranged the teachings of both sūtra and tantra into systematic and coherent stages. Nonetheless, the enduring clarity and vitality of the Buddhadharma are primarily a result of his emphasis on the strict observance of moral discipline and the integration of learning with practice.

### 3.7 An Addendum on the Causes of the Rise and Fall of Tibetan Buddhism

A summary of the brief history outlined above indicates that, aside from the efforts taken by kings and others to either promote or suppress [Buddhism], its rise and fall can generally be attributed to three primary factors: (1) whether the precepts are upheld or neglected; (2) whether the teachings are earnestly and joyfully put into practice; and (3) whether the practice is approached methodically by means of stages. Every sect must establish a solid foundation built on strict compliance [44] with the monastic code. Next, students are required to adhere to their teacher's instructions and strive to achieve a direct realization through genuine effort. To end, it is essential to ensure that no stages are bypassed in pursuit of quick results. Meaningful benefits can be attained only through consistent, step-by-step practice that adheres to the appropriate sequence. When such benefits become tangible, the teachings of the Buddhadharma can be propagated, established, and preserved for the long term. The decline of any religious sect can generally be ascribed to a variety of factors: treating the precepts with a careless attitude and dismissing them as simply part of the Hīnayāna; engaging in teaching or discussions without actual practice; or engaging in methods

**109** C. shengqi cidi 生起次第; S. utpattikrama; T. bskyed rim.

**110** C. benzun 本尊; S. iṣṭadevatā; T. yi dam; also, 'tutelary deity', 'chosen deity'.

**111** C. ximai 息脈; T. rtsa rlung. Specifically, the sinograph xi 息, meaning 'wind', 'breath', translates the Sanskrit *prāṇā*, 'energy'. On the other hand, *mai* 脈 renders the Sanskrit *nāḍī*, 'channel', hence my translation "channels and their energies", reflecting the Tibetan *rtsa* (S. *nāḍī*) *rlung* (S. *prāṇā*).

**112** C. kongdian 空點; S. bindu; T. thig le.

**113** C. guangming 光明; S. prabhāsvara; T. 'od gsal.

**114** C. yuanman cidi 圓滿次第; S. niṣpannakrama; T. rdzogs rim.

**115** C. huanshen 幻身; S. māyākāyayoga; T. sgyu lus.

that aim for quick fixes, straying from the correct path. Over time, these tendencies lead to a lack of completeness in the teachings. As a result, the path loses its perfection. Whether it is omitting the beginning, cutting off the end, focusing on a single mantra, or clinging to a single name, such fragmented practices become mere substitutes for the Great Teaching. In this way, the holy books of the Tripiṭaka are reduced to nothing but waste paper, and the two trainings in meditation and wisdom are turned into hollow words. Consequently, the banner of the Dharma collapses, and the lamp of wisdom is extinguished. Could such a decline be caused by flaws in the original setup? Or might it stem from later generations neglecting to uphold the teachings? Those of us dedicated to establishing, preserving, and defending the Buddha's teachings need to ponder these questions with care. When it comes to matters like the size of temples, the count of individuals who have taken the vows, the red or yellow color of their robes, or even their economic status, I believe these factors are less important compared to the rise and fall of the Buddha's teachings. Likewise, I believe that the integration of religion and governance is even less important.

### 3.8 A Brief History of China-Tibet Relations

Historical records indicate that Tibet's King Songtsen Gampo launched multiple invasions into the border regions of China, while the emperors of the Sui 隋 and Tang 唐 dynasties were unable to bring him under control. Later, during the fifteenth year of Tang Emperor Taizong's reign, in the year known as Xin Chou 辛丑,<sup>116</sup> a diplomatic resolution was reached, leading to Princess Wencheng's marriage into Tufan 吐蕃.<sup>117</sup> The exact age of Songtsen Gampo during this time is still a matter of inquiry. Eventually, King Tri Detsuktsen<sup>118</sup> likewise continued the pattern of aggression, launching forays into neighboring territories. During the third year of Tang Emperor Ruizong's 睿宗 reign, in the Ding Hai 丁亥 period,<sup>119</sup> [45] Princess Jincheng was married to him, which led to a conciliatory outcome. Shortly thereafter, Tibet fell into significant internal turmoil. Since they struggled to maintain their own stability, how could they possibly threaten our frontier regions? Consequently, after the Tang dynasty, the chronicles no longer recorded the fierce conflicts between the Han and the Tibetans.<sup>120</sup> It was not until Kublai Khan assumed control of the Central Plains [of China] that Künga Gyaltsen, the fourth patriarch of the Sakya lineage, received an invitation to Hua to disseminate the Dharma. Later on, Kublai Khan recognized the fifth Sakya patriarch as the National Preceptor, obtaining numerous tantric initiations and instructions. In exchange, he progressively surrendered portions of

**116** Fazun places what he calls a 'diplomatic solution' between Tibetan King Songtsen Gampo and Tang Emperor Taizong in the fifteenth year of Taizong's reign, corresponding to 641. This year aligns with the Xin Chou 辛丑 designation in the Chinese 60-year cyclical calendar.

**117** T. Bod chen po, the Tibetan Empire, 618-842. For a study on the term "Tufan" (often still mistakenly rendered as "Tubo" in phonetic transcription), see the study by Pelliot 1915.

**118** C. Chide zhudun 赤得諸頓; T. Thri Lde gtsug btsan (704-755).

**119** The third year of Tang Emperor Ruizong's reign corresponds to 684, during his first tenure as emperor (684-690). This year is also marked as the Ding Hai (丁亥) year in the Chinese 60-year cyclical calendar.

**120** Literally, *hanzang zhanzheng* 漢藏戰爭, 'Han-Zang wars'.

Tibetan territory as a token of gratitude to the fifth Sakya patriarch. In this manner, the Sakya sect took charge of both the religious and political spheres in Tibet while the Yuan were in power. But their rule did not last long before it was seized by the descendants of the Kagyü sect. Under the Yuan, the Kagyü patriarchs also acted as National Preceptors. As the Ming 明 dynasty took hold, the Kagyü descendants had already lost their political dominance, and the leadership of Tibet transitioned to the third Dalai Lama.<sup>121</sup> The Dalai Lama retained full authority over Tibet spanning from the Ming dynasty, through the Qing 清 dynasty, and into the early phase of the Republic of China. In the Ming and Qing eras, China-Tibet relations strengthened significantly compared to the connections established during the Yuan dynasty. Especially after the reign of Qianlong 乾隆, the Chinese emperor was regarded as the emperor of Tibet as well. This relationship endured until the early days of the Republic, when Tibetan troops ousted Chinese forces, thus ending the China-Tibet alliance. Nevertheless, a detailed account of these events exceeds the scope of this summary.

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**121** C. Disan dai Dalai 第三代達賴; literally, 'Third-Generation Dalai'.

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## 4 The Tibetan Nation

**Summary** 4.1 National Characteristics. – 4.2 Family. – 4.3 Daily Life. – 4.4 Faith. – 4.5 The Saṅgha.

### 4.1 National Characteristics

[46] The Tibetan nation consists of distinct groups, ranging from city dwellers and rural villagers to traders and nomads. It is difficult to determine if these different types had a common or unique character from the beginning. Yet, according to my recent observations, their dispositions vary because of the influences of the environment. For example, urban dwellers tend to be far more cunning than rural villagers. Traders, in turn, demonstrate a level of cunning that is several hundred times greater than that of nomads. Villagers may sometimes be more deceitful than nomads, but traders almost always succeed in outwitting both urban and rural populations. Among all, the most cunning and deceitful are the politicians in power. By contrast, the simplest and most honest of all are the nomadic herders of the untamed lands. The national character is originally the same. These distorted and peculiar traits arise only from differing environmental factors.

Let me illustrate this point with an anecdote. When I first visited Xikang, I befriended a member of a nomadic clan in Golok. His character was exceptionally honest and steadfast, distinguished by bravery and integrity. He accepted every task that was entrusted to him, regardless of its scale or importance, with earnest dedication. He never hesitated nor ever delayed in acting. He consistently behaved with sincerity. There were no hidden intentions influencing his thoughts or actions. Was he not the very definition of a noble and loyal friend? However, after arriving in Lhasa, he had to rely on earning a profit to make ends meet. When his fellow countrymen arrived in Lhasa for the first time, they were, naturally, even more taken



aback than a country mother stepping into a vibrant city for the first time. The complexity of silver pricing in Lhasa, combined with the sheer variety of goods for sale, created a confusing world for them. The items showcased on the streets and within the stores left them bewildered. They were unable to distinguish between the various objects, much less figure out their uses. With some change in their pockets, they were easily drawn to buy whatever items caught their eye. [47] Consequently, whenever they decided to explore the shops in Lhasa on their own, the women at the street stalls would inevitably overcharge them. They only recognized the deception after facing repeated instances of exploitation – each with varying degrees of severity – which drove them to look for ways to address the situation. They had no choice but to bring along a familiar fellow countryman for their next shopping trip. Yet their inherently distrustful nature led them to always hold back full trust in their companions, no matter how familiar they were with them. Therefore, even as they sought for aid, they remained on guard and filled with apprehension. In the end, they could only solicit your assistance, but they were never able to fully entrust the buying process to another person. If you took the lead in making purchases for them, they might question whether you had paid too much or even start to feel resentful. Hence, I found their behavior to be fairly amusing.

On occasions, they turned to my friend for help. At first, he offered his support out of loyalty, expecting nothing in return. However, as the number of requests increased over time, the burden became overwhelming and at times even disrupted his ability to make a living. Pressed by these circumstances, he underwent a shift in his mindset: he began to earn money by guiding their buying process. His approach involved entering a shop alongside his fellow countrymen, where he would first negotiate an agreement with the shop owner in fluent Lhasa dialect, ensuring he received a commission for acting as the intermediary. The shop owners naturally had no reason to protest – after all, *the wool is shorn from the sheep's back*:<sup>1</sup> any extra expenses were transferred to the buyer, and a profitable sale was always appreciated.

Over time, he got to know almost all the shops in Lhasa. They acknowledged him as a sales agent – effectively an unpaid promoter for their businesses – and valued him greatly, placing trust in him. In the end, he [48] progressed to a new level by devising a different strategy. Initially, he would acquire goods from various shops, settle on a fixed price, retain any excess from transactions, and bring back items that did not sell. In this manner, he quietly took on the role of a broker for many shops. He conveyed to his fellow countrymen that he had purchased the items for his own use, extolling their superior quality and exquisite craftsmanship. Even though the price was high, he maintained that the items were a bargain. His countrymen, always believing that others were securing better deals, began to covet these goods upon hearing his praises. Wealthy buyers sought to acquire the items at the rate he proposed. At first, he acted as if he was reluctant. But he knew the temperament of the people from Golok all too well. The harder he fought against selling, the stronger their urge to buy became. Only after many of his countrymen stepped in did he begin to agree, ultimately securing both profit and prestige.

<sup>1</sup> Here, Fazun uses the idiomatic sentence, *yangmao zongshi chuzai yangshen shang* 羊毛總是出在羊身上.

He was exceptionally skilled at handling his own people. His ability of reading the temperaments of his countrymen were so remarkable that I often found myself standing by, marveling at his shrewdness. I admit I found his ability quite impressive. Still, I was also taken aback by how quickly he had transformed. He used to be such a simple and loyal nomad, yet in a span of fewer than three years in Lhasa, he had turned into a cunning and shrewd character. Is this not undeniable evidence of the significant impact that a person's environment can have on them?

In summary, Tibetan nationals are distinguished by a resolute, brave, and decisive character. They view strangers with a degree of suspicion and caution, yet once they become familiar, they show themselves to be dependable and trustworthy. The innate loyalty and purity found especially among the nomadic tribes are most endearing. Individuals in positions of authority, despite sharing comparable traits and profound religious devotion, are influenced by their surroundings to employ various cunning tactics in both mindset and method. Their inherent nature and religious convictions drive them to be earnest and zealous [49] in overseeing monastic affairs. However, in legal conflicts, decisions are made only after officials have received sufficient bribes. Consequently, legal cases in Tibet frequently extend for years without reaching a resolution. As a result, both the plaintiffs and the defendants find themselves unable to cope with the pressure and ultimately regret their involvement. This strange occurrence is indeed unique to Tibet. Yet, for a nation as fierce as the Tibetans, such practices serve to avert countless disputes.

By and large, the Tibetan nation retains its primal character: they venerate rulers, obey superiors, endure oppression, exploit the vulnerable, prioritize petty gains over broader principles, possess rudimentary knowledge, are easily manipulated, and also covet wealth, incline toward plunder, withstand ice and snow, persevere through hardships, cherish communal bonds, charge forward without hesitation, and have a fearless attitude toward death! Such is the exceptional spirit of the Tibetan nation.

## 4.2 Family

Influenced by their geographical location and productive factors, the Tibetan nation is divided into two primary segments: farmers and nomads. Due to their inability to achieve self-sufficiency and their relentless quest for surplus, merchants are active throughout the year and trade across their borders. The administration of their government and religious institutions, along with the requirement for maintaining public safety, leads to a central authority managing Tibet as a whole in conjunction with local officials scattered across various regions. Certain officials report directly to the Tibetan government, whereas others operate autonomously as local chieftains. In order to defend its territory, the Tibetan government recruits tens of thousands of civilians to serve in the military. Let me take a moment to summarize the social strata found within these groups: -

The farming communities reside primarily in regions characterized by valleys. Their financial status varies considerably, but the majority are living in poverty [50]. Typically, these impoverished households consist of two parents raising a number of children. They take on temporary labor whenever work opportunities arise. When things are quieter, they tend to

small plots of land, gather firewood and dung, or serve as household workers for prosperous traders. Those who possess a bit more wealth engage in small trading ventures to maintain their daily needs. Such households are a bitter prison. The wives establish a set of soft chains, linking one another in a way that reinforces their unity. In around eight or nine out of ten prosperous families, polyandry is prevalent. Usually, large household will have a number of smaller units attached to them, either as tenant farmers or servants. The majority of these wealthy families are engaged in trade. Some brothers do not always remain at home to keep an eye on things. Some of them spend years away from home engaged in trade, but there are others who leave permanently. Only the women are left in the households to handle and manage affairs.

The nomadic nationals have no stable residence. They generally migrate to the highlands in the summer and autumn, then descent to lower grounds during the winter and spring months. Their households do not have permanent structures. They create fabric by weaving yak hair into thick, coarse black threads similar to rush wicks, measuring around a *chi* 尺 in width<sup>2</sup> and more than a *zhang* 丈 in length.<sup>3</sup> These fabric segments are then connected to build semi-woolen tents. As night falls, everyone in the household, regardless of how many there are, sleep together in the same space. Larger households might contain dozens of individuals, while smaller ones usually consist of four or five. Still, the majority adhere to a system of polyandry where a single wife has several husbands. In households with multiple spouses, the distribution is determined according to custom. It is not uncommon for women to take in husbands to continue their family line. This practice extends beyond just nomadic nationals; it is also prevalent among farmers, traders, soldiers, administrators, and among prominent families of the Tibetan government as well.

There are two categories of traders. The first category encompasses those who conduct business from a stable location, where their households might participate in farming, herding, or be entirely devoted to commercial endeavors. Such households often feature wives who are legally married or private concubines, all of whom give birth to several children. Those who travel for trade are often financially better off and support their original families back home, yet they tend to establish secondary family units where they conduct business for extended periods [51]. These traders must also support employees and maintain a residence. The two families function as a cohesive whole, as long as there are no disagreements with the original family. Yet, in cases where disputes occur, the common resolution is to establish two separate households. Additionally, women in Tibet are not constrained by conventional notions of modesty. Not only can they have several husbands, but they might also pursue several romantic partners or have affairs with servants, which is fairly common. It is also common for unwed women to deliver their babies at home without incurring any shame or punishment from their relatives. It has been brought to my attention that such customs also exist in Japan, although I am unable to authenticate this claim.

2 The equivalent of 1 Republican-period *chi* is 33.3 cm, or 13.12 inches.

3 1 Republican-period *zhang* equals to 3.2 meters, or 3.5 yards.

Although military conscription exists in Tibet, wealthy families commonly recruit substitutes to fulfill their service obligations. As a result, a significant number of soldiers originate from poor backgrounds. My knowledge of their original families is limited, yet they frequently establish makeshift families at their stations, where they cohabit with a woman of comparable standing and settle into a modest earthen dwelling. This is what constitutes a soldier's household.

The household of a chieftain is comparable to a miniature imperial household, where all affairs are concentrated under their control. Chieftains can be found among both men and women. The commoners subjected to them are like lambs in their households. Throughout the busy farming seasons, they require the commoners to plow the fields, sow the seeds, mow the grass, and harvest the crops. Failing to respond to the chieftain's invitation even once can bring about harsh penalties for the commoners. The people who serve in their household are also drawn from the general populace, and they take turns fulfilling their duties. Those who reside in their household, including men, women, and people of all ages, hardly ever concern themselves with these matters. The management of property and the settlement of civil disputes are often placed in the hands of a few distinguished families among the commoners who are regarded as fit for these roles. In cases of great significance, the chieftain takes direct action. As a result, the chieftain's stewards often hold considerable power, relegating the chieftain to a mere [52] figurehead. Such practices are standard among the chieftains of the Xikang region. While most chieftains delegate tasks, there are also a handful of competent chieftains who oversee everything on their own, but they are the exception.

Scattered officials can be classified into two distinct groups. The first group comprises monastics, whose domestic setup can hardly be referred to as a household. They employ a handful of servants to take care of minor public duties, which allows them to devote the rest of their time to religious pursuits, including chanting, meditating, hiking in the mountains, or sitting by the streams in contemplation. With a small number of dependents in their household and minimal living expenses, they are always accommodated with extra vacant rooms wherever they take on an official role. When their period of service is over, they are once again left with nothing. Some of them are able to gather wealth, purchase homes, or engage others to run a small business. Yet, such entanglements often create self-inflicted complications, a phenomenon I have repeatedly witnessed in Tibet. The second kind of scattered officials consists of laypeople. These home-dwelling scattered officials originate from substantial backgrounds. Candidates for these roles either descend from ancestors who held prestigious positions or have themselves amassed considerable wealth – both of which are prerequisites for securing such appointments. The way they manage their household resembles that of a senior official of a similar status. Upon taking office, however, they generally come with only one wife and manage a few servants, without any additional entourage.

The households of Tibet's eminent authorities stand out with an imposing aura. Under the Tibetan system, high-ranking officials receive large official residences, several dozen *qing* 頃<sup>4</sup> of land, and control over the local

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4 One *qing* equals to roughly 6.67 hectares, or 16.47 acres.

populace. Within these official mansions, they maintain wives, young lords, unmarried daughters, and daughters-in-law, all of whom necessitate a large number of servants. Various wealth stewards are in charge of finances, while land managers handle farming estates. While the lord is away fulfilling his official duties, the wealth stewards and land managers take on the most prominent roles of authority. It is common for these positions to be filled by siblings or trusted relatives. In Tibet, women hold great power, while men frequently find themselves under their influence. Men who become sons-in-law, particularly when they marry into their wife's family, frequently experience being sidelined and replaced [53] by new husbands. The situation is even more evident in Xikang. Moreover, members of the Tibetan nation have a strong sense of class distinction. When a son from an upper-class family has an affair with a woman from a lower-class family, his clan and relatives regard it as a stain on the family's honor, as if it had compromised the sanctity of their home. Conversely, when a woman from an upper-class family has a romantic connection with a man of lower status, the disdain is often less severe. In cases where wealthy households engage in illicit relations, they may merge into a single household or takeover another family's home. Such events are relatively common among Tibet's elites. Indeed, a number of these occurrences have come to our attention lately!

Allow me to briefly outline their approach to dividing families. I have not directly observed the manner in which high-ranking officials in the administration separate their families. However, it has come to my attention that, by means of intermediaries among relatives and friends, a portion of the principal estate or wealth is distributed as a living allowance for individuals who are being separated. When farmers divide their households, they need to split their farms, homes, and land. Traders typically divide their goods and accounts. Only in the case of nomads, the division is quite comprehensive, including cattle, horses, sheep, dogs, and even tents, cooking pots, and buckets. Even the collected fuel, which is usually desiccated animal dung, is also distributed uniformly. If parents are alive when their children establish separate households, the parents assign a tent and a few heads of livestock according to their preference, with little to no competition involved. For nomadic households, when a family member reaches adulthood and subsequently dies, it is common for the relatives to use the deceased's legitimate share of belongings to perform meritorious deeds that help them release from suffering. This practice is especially prevalent in the Golok region. However, among the people of Lhasa, when someone dies, they just die. While their family might make monetary offerings to accumulate merit, they do so only to a limited extent. There is never a situation where their rightful portion is used entirely for this purpose. This reflects the difference in mindset between urban dwellers and nomads. Another factor that contributes to the separation of households is monogamy. Nevertheless, given the widespread nature of polyandry, [54] cases of family separation are exceedingly rare!

### 4.3 Daily Life

In discussing daily life - the everyday activities and sustenance of Tibetan nationals - this, too, requires a perspective that incorporates their family systems. Let me offer a portrait of a large Tibetan farming household. The family consists of an elderly mother, two brothers, a daughter-in-law, three sisters, three children, around seven or eight servants, and also two lamas who are regularly engaged in chanting the scriptures. The family not only engages in farming but also raises several dairy cattle for milk and butter production. The structure in which they live resembles a fortress, complete with encircling outer walls and a large gate on one side. The buildings, which have two stories, surround a central courtyard, with all windows facing inward. A series of houses is positioned in both horizontal and vertical orientations within the courtyard, forming the shape of the Chinese character *tian* 田, thereby partitioning the space into four distinct smaller courtyards. The flat roof serves as a threshing floor in autumn.

The firstborn son manages the domestic affairs, the second son engages in trade, and the daughter-in-law oversees the storeroom. The sisters likewise hold a great deal of influence. The elderly mother, in her later years, enjoys a life of abundance, either reciting the *om mani padme hūm* mantra or delighting in the company of her grandchildren. The eldest sister supervises the servants. Her temperament is notably harsh, and she regularly appears to be chastising her underlings with a whip. The second sister, who is both loyal and conscientious, assists the maids in organizing kitchen tasks. The youngest sister tends to retreat to the shrine room during her spare time to chant the scriptures.

Over the course of my months living with the family, I observed the patterns of their daily life. Each day before sunrise, the maids would brew tea, pour it into assorted pots, distribute them around the household, position each pot on a brazier, and shield them with old cloths to preserve the warmth of the tea. Soon after, the eldest sister could be heard in the courtyard calling for the servants to get up and have some tea. At that moment, the distinct noise of milking resonated from the ground floor, specifically in the part where the cows were fastened. I am a monk, and so I too would rise, wash my face, rinse my mouth, and then take my seat, sipping tea slowly while I chanted the scriptures. The [55] lamas in the nearby protector deity shrine also began reciting their prayers at a similar pace. The young servants, having sipped several bowls of tea and enjoyed a bowl of *tsampa* - barley flour that has been roasted - would go downstairs to let the cows roam and graze. The older servants savored their tea and attended to several small tasks in the courtyard, while the maids molded flat cakes from cow dung and attached them to the wall to dry for use as fuel later. Afterward, the siblings would gather in a room to have tea and engage in conversation, each with their own distinct teapot, while they all enjoyed *tsampa* from a shared container.

Among Tibetan nationals, there is a clear disparity in the way they are treated. Even in one household, the tea they drink is separated into different tiers of quality. The butter that is employed for churning the tea can also differ in both its freshness and the amount used, depending on the person. The type of *tsampa* they eat differs significantly as well. The head of the household eats the finest white barley, which is washed, roasted, and ground. This quality is also used to entertain esteemed guests. Next, the

lower-quality black barley is processed without washing or sorting – it often contains numerous small stones and grains of sand – before it is subjected to roasting and grinding. The ordinary members of this household consumed this kind, and it was also offered to regular visitors. For the servants, there is then the tsampa made from a mixture of barley and peas. Finally, the tsampa of the lowest quality, which is made purely from peas, is the primary staple eaten by the servants and given to beggars. In that household, the allocation of food followed a structured hierarchy. Every morning at sunrise, the servants would collect containers of tsampa from each area and placed them at the entrance of the storehouse. The daughter-in-law apportioned a day's supply of tsampa based on the rank of each person.

Butter was handed out in a similar fashion. The servants later brought the containers back to where they originally belonged. Throughout the quiet winter months, the servants took on small tasks like twisting wool into rope, while the maids spun yarn from wool to weave fabric for the servants' clothing. Remarkably, men employed as servants often demonstrated superior skills in stitching clothes than women did. They consumed tea all day long; this was a regular routine for them. As midday drew near, they consumed another serving of tsampa, although this meal was not the same as what they had for breakfast. In Xikang, many would start their day by either licking dry [56] tsampa or mixing it with water to form a thin porridge, just to satisfy their hunger. The midday meal was accompanied by side dishes – fresh or cured meats, yogurt pastries, and an assortment of vegetables. Some also chose to have steamed buns in place of tsampa during lunch, which added a new twist to their routine.

The afternoons, when not occupied with chores, were usually spent enjoying friendly talks or visiting neighbors. As dusk approached, the herders then guided the livestock, including cattle and sheep, homeward. The maids once more would take care of the milking process. When a sufficient quantity of milk was stored in a large wooden barrel, they then employed a long wooden stick to churn it, resulting in the formation of butter. The process involved pouring the milk into leacher bags or ceramic butter-making vessels, which were then rolled on the ground to facilitate butter separation. The leftover curds were either made into cheese, dried into curd cakes, or fed to the calves, without a specific procedure in place. They generally went to sleep at around nine or ten in the evening – such was their daily routine.

Once the ground began to thaw in the second and third months, the pace of activity slowly picked up. When the sun began to rise, a servant would make their way to the rooftop and call out to the scattered tenant farmers, gathering them to ensure they fulfilled their duties of tilling the landlord's fields. The landlord supplied meals for the tenants, but there were restrictions on their consumption – the tenants were advised not to overindulge. Following their morning tea, everyone headed out to the fields to begin plowing. When every plot of land had been tilled, the time for sowing arrived. The task of sowing seeds was primarily carried out by women, particularly the family leader – in this household the eldest sister, with the third sister. The method involved an ox-drawn plow carving a deep furrow ahead, followed by the sower who deposited the seeds. During the plow's return pass, the old furrow was covered, a new one was created, and new seeds were sown. After all the seeds were distributed in the soil, they

enjoyed a period of rest. This represented an ideal time to assemble food supplies and grind tsampa.

By the fifth or the sixth month, when the sprouts had reached roughly a foot in height and weeds were beginning to proliferate, the labor of weeding started – again, this task was mainly carried out by the women. Every morning, a servant would ascend to the rooftop to summon the tenant [57] women, urging them to fulfill their weeding duties for the landlord. When the area of land was large and the number of laborers was small, weeding took place once a year; however, if the land was smaller and there were more workers, it happened twice a year. During this phase, every woman in the household was fully occupied, either contributing to the labor or overseeing the tasks. After the weeding was done, another period of rest began.

Affluent households usually took advantage of this period to host their tenant farmers on green pastures, where they offered exquisite food and beverage while entertaining friends and family for leisure. At the same time, they evaluated the physical condition of the tenants and their readiness for military action. The length of these celebrations was variable – lasting anywhere from three to five days and even extending beyond that at times. Certain gatherings extended for more than a month and featured horse races and theatrical performances. Indeed, they regarded these gatherings as their most joyous and serene celebrations.

As autumn arrived and the wheat was fully grown, tenant farmers found themselves again needing to harvest the fields of their landlords ahead of their own. They got up before dawn to take advantage of the moisture from the night, which helped minimize the loss of grain. Work paused at midday and resumed in the afternoon. Both men and women joined the reaping of crops, rushing to finish the harvest ahead of impending hailstorms that could damage their yield. Hailstorms are common in Tibet during autumn. Their severity increases notably when the wheat takes on a golden color. The people of Tibet attribute these hailstorms to powerful spirits that destroy the crops to draw out their vital energy. After being harvested, the wheat was laid out on rooftops to allow it to dry. Once it was dried, the grains were threshed by hand, cleaned by the breeze, and then placed in storage. This was a time when tenant farmers received several days of feasting to celebrate the bountiful yield for the year. As described above, larger farming households follow this cycle. Farmers with smaller plots, who work on land by others, are required to put in the effort for their landlords before they can attend to their own fields. When a household consists of many members, tasks can be shared among them. Although their meals, beverage, and daily routines are simpler than those of wealthier families, their lives are marked by a distinct, often chaotic rhythm.

To depict the life of nomadic nationals, I will now turn to a prominent household in Xikang. This family consisted of an elderly couple, three brothers – one of whom was an ordained monk, and the other two handled the family’s affairs –, a daughter-in-law who was shared among the brothers, two sisters – one of whom was married –, four children, and more than ten servants. The family had an extensive collection of livestock, including over a hundred yaks,<sup>5</sup> more than [58] six hundred dri,<sup>6</sup> fifteen thousand sheep,

5 C. muniu 牦牛; T. g.yag. Here, Fazun specifies the male gender of the Tibetan bovine; male yak.

6 C. pinniu 牝牛; T. 'bri; the 'dri' is the female bovine; female yak.

a dozen horses, and five Tibetan mastiffs.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, they owned a set of three tents made from the hair of yaks. The largest tent measured around two *zhang* in height<sup>8</sup> and three *zhang* in width.<sup>9</sup> Inside, two wooden poles at both ends supported a thick rope made of yak hair, which extended well past the tent and was anchored securely into the ground. This rope constituted the tent's most crucial structural element. At the upper edge of the tent, extra yak-hair ropes were pulled tight, each supported by a wooden pole and anchored into the ground at a distance of two to three *zhang*.<sup>10</sup> The roof of the tent had a single skylight. Its dimensions matched the tent's width, and it had a width of about one *chi*.<sup>11</sup> This opening functioned to expel smoke and to allow light to filter in. It was the tent's only source of light, and when it was closed, the interior was cast into total darkness. A curtain fashioned from yak hair covered the skylight, attached at one end with stitches and anchored on the other with thin ropes. With the first light of day, the ropes were loosened, and a stick was used to open the curtain. In the evening, it was drawn close by hand. The skylight remained closed during storms. The entrance of the tent featured an unsewn gap at one end, complemented by extra fabric panels that allowed for a secure overlapping closure. The lower edges of the tent were anchored to the ground using wooden wedges, iron nails, or horns from cattle and goats. Encircling the inner perimeter of the tent was a low wall constructed from stones and dirt, with numerous layers of animal hide bags heaped above it. The gaps were sealed with a combination of cow dung and mud to keep out both wind and dust. The animal hide bags were filled with stored provisions - including barley, peas, and dried dairy products - reaching a total of more than two hundred units. Positioned above them were saddles, bridles, and dried meats.

A large stove, measuring about one *zhang* in length and three *chi* in width,<sup>12</sup> was built in the center of the tent. The stove was topped with three large cooking pots. Tiny gaps between them contained teapots and clay jars. Positioned to the right of the stove - on the left side as one entered - was the seat of the master, where the daughter-in-law and the maidservants carried out their tasks. This area housed a collection of tea barrels [59], buckets for water, churns for butter, containers for milk, and a variety of cooking tools. Positioned to the left of the stove - on the right side as one entered - was the area designated for guests. Arranged along the tent's rear and lateral walls, cushions were arranged in front of low tables that designated the space reserved for guests. At the far end of the tent, there was a buddha shrine that reached the height of an average person. Numerous buddha statues

**7** C. mangou 蠻狗; T. 'brog khyi. Fazun employs the sinograph *man* 蠻, meaning 'barbarous' or 'savage', a Chinese ethnonym that refers to Tibet. Fazun uses it here to render 'brog khyi from Tibetan, literally 'herdman's dog', i.e., the Tibetan mastiff. In later passages, Fazun also uses *man* as a qualifier for Tibetan products such as salt and tea.

**8** The equivalent of 2 Republican-era *zhang* is 6,4 meters, or 7 yards.

**9** 3 *zhang* measure nearly 10 meters, or just over 10 yards.

**10** The length of the rope would be the equivalent to approximately 6.5 to 10 meters, or 7 to 10 yards.

**11** 33.3 cm, or 13.12 inches.

**12** In the measurement system of the Republican period, one *zhang* is defined as 3.2 meters, or 3.5 yards, and one *chi* is equivalent to 33.33 centimeters, or 13.12 inches. Hence, the dimensions indicated by Fazun for the stove are close to 3.2 meters (10.5 feet) in length and 1.33 meters (4.4 feet) in width.

were enshrined upon it. Water bowls and butter lamps were also arranged before them as offerings. The altar was adorned with bells and drums that were specifically used for chanting.

In terms of their external structure, the two smaller tents were similar to the main one. Their furnishings inside were largely the same, but they were missing the large stove. Their low walls along the perimeter were stacked with sundry items. One tent accommodated the servants, whereas the other, maintained immaculately clean, welcomed more than a dozen lamas who had been invited to recite the scriptures. Situated at the rear of the tent was a separate buddha altar. Inside the niche of the shrine, there were numerous old bronze buddha statues, accompanied by more than a dozen recently gilded ones. In front of the niche, a row of roasted flour offerings was set up, adorned with multicolored butter sculptures. Several rows of cups, each containing one of the eight offerings, were arranged in front of the other offerings. Before these, there were also several rows of vessels with saffron-infused water, along with three large butter lamps.

The lamas took their place on the cushions on both sides of the shrine. On one occasion, I was among them. They were aware that, as a Han monk, I rarely performed scripture recitations for others. This time, however, it was out of a sense of social obligation, since they offered me exceptional courtesy. We made it there at about seven or eight in the morning, and their whole family came out from a distance to welcome us. It was summer. The grass beneath our feet felt like a dense, vibrant green felt carpet. It was dotted with bright wildflowers. The blades of grass were still wet with morning dew, and as the first rays of sunlight rose over the mountains, they cast a radiant glow across the landscape, resembling a wide blue floral rug scattered with [60] pearls and jade – a truly delightful sight. Spotting visitors from far away, their burly mastiffs erupted into furious barking. With all their might, their bodies fought against the thick yak-hair ropes in a fierce struggle.

The older member of the family wore a fur coat that lacked an external lining, featuring a blue fabric strip along its edge. When fully opened, the coat could wrap three or four people and measured four to five *chi* in length.<sup>13</sup> In order to wear their long coats, they begin by placing the collar over their head, inserting both arms into the broad sleeves, and then pulling the lower half upward until the hem reaches the knees or a *chi* lower.<sup>14</sup> A horizontal belt is securely fastened around the waist. The top half is then pulled down to form a large pouch that envelopes the torso, capable of storing everyday necessities – remarkably, even two lambs can fit inside without any noticeable bulging. Their custom involves keeping the right arm bare for ease of work. Still, upon meeting a person worthy of respect, they pull the right sleeve from the back and let it rest over the right shoulder, hanging across the chest to cover the right arm. They then bow slightly, stick out their tongue, and used the right hand to tug at the hair around their temples – this constitutes their gesture of profound respect.<sup>15</sup>

**13** In the Republican-era system of measurement, a length of four to five *chi* corresponds to approximately 1.33 to 1.67 meters, or 4.4 to 5.5 feet.

**14** See above. One *chi* is 33.33 centimeters, or 13.12 inches.

**15** Here, Fazun describes but does not explain the Tibetan custom of sticking out one's tongue as a form of greeting. According to tradition, this custom traces back to the time of King Langdarma. A well-known tale describes Langdarma as having sinister, otherworldly features:

As soon as we arrived, the elderly mother went to hush the barking mastiffs. Her two sons followed their father in greeting us. The daughters-in-law and their younger sisters pulled back the tent flap to let us come in. A group of four lively and innocent little ones scampered around us. The second child, who seemed to be roughly seven or eight years old, had a particularly spirited and endearing personality. Two or three servants hurriedly went to brew tea, prepare tsampa, and deep-fry some pastries for our meal. I [61] engaged in light conversation, asking them how many cows and sheep they owned. Soon after, I began reciting the scriptures. And before long, they served a meal. We all relished a sumptuous meal and drank heartily for a while, then resumed our recitations after the meal concluded. Although the lunch was opulent, it did not include any vegetables. And so, since I abstain from meat, I enjoyed some pastries prepared with a blend of butter, brown sugar, and dried curds, accompanied by tsampa.

Following our meal, we enjoyed some playtime on the grassy area outside the tent. I invited the children to come over for a little chat. I inquired whether they were interested in giving up the household life. The eldest did not want to, but the younger ones were all enthusiastic about the idea. However, when they were asked about their reasons for wanting to become monks, they found themselves without an answer. The adults standing nearby prompted them, explaining that being ordained allows individuals to study the scriptures, cultivate practice, propagate the Dharma for the benefit of living beings, attain buddhahood, and escape the cycle of birth and death. Yet the children, who were inexperienced and unfamiliar with me, felt too shy to rehearse what the adults had said. So, they simply offered a smile. Once we finished our playtime, we resumed our recitations, and they returned to their respective tasks.

As dusk settled in, the herders were the first ones to come back. They drove the yaks to a designated area and tethered them, while the dris were tied in the open space before the tent. They also allowed some calves to roam free from the servants' tent. They let the calves suckle briefly before they tethered them again. The herders then began collecting the milk from the dris. After milking - during which a portion of milk was reserved for the calves -, they set the calves free to graze. They then brought forth more calves, and the milking was conducted in the same manner. Once they had finished extracting milk from each of the dris, they bound them all together. When the sheep returned, they gathered the ewes in one place. The lambs were allowed to nurse before the sheep were milked. These herders assert that sheep's milk is more delicious than dri's milk, but I have not had the opportunity to taste it. Nevertheless, the cheese produced from sheep's milk was indeed more flavorful compared to that made from dri's milk. They

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animal horns sprouting from his head and a black tongue, both seen as marks of his demonic nature. To conceal these traits and avoid suspicion, he was said to have grown his hair long and braided it tightly, wrapping the braids around the spots where his horns emerged. This act of disguise became a widespread practice in his court. Langdarma's ministers, fearful of their king and eager to conform, adopted the braided hairstyle. Over time, this tradition became institutionalized, requiring lay officials to wear their hair in braids, a custom rooted in this legend. The story also inspired a distinct Tibetan custom. When greeting someone of higher rank, Tibetans bow deeply, stick out their tongues, and rub the tops of their heads with one hand. This gesture declares they neither have a black tongue nor horns like Langdarma. It is both an expression of courtesy and, as Fazun leaves unexplained, a symbolic rejection of Langdarma's legacy. Cf. Shakabpa 2010, 163-4.

spent roughly two hours to complete the whole milking process. And during the nighttime hours, they churned butter in the same location.

After we had our dinner, we recited the scriptures [62] again, a session that went on until about eight or nine o'clock. Their attentiveness towards guests was remarkable. During breaks in the recitation, they would inquire about how we felt about the tea and whether it suited our taste, all the while engaging in light conversation. In the late hours, the father, his three sons, and the four children would meet with us for a chat. They invited me to share stories from the Inner Lands or offer updates on current events to keep them entertained. Once I started talking, it proved hard to stop. We often stayed up talking until eleven or twelve before we finally went to bed. Everyone listened with great interest. I did not realize at the beginning that even the women outside the tent would pay attention to our conversations. On a particular night, I told a joke that sent them into such fits of laughter that they ended up rolling on the ground. The chuckles heard from outside were just as uncontrollable. It was at that moment that I realized that they had all been eavesdropping all along.

Each morning before dawn, they would call upon the herders' servants to have tea. The maidservants and daughters-in-law all got up early to milk the cattle. There was always someone who prepared butter tea for us. By daylight, the milking was done, and the cattle along with the sheep were herded up the mountain for grazing, while the calves and lambs were kept close on leashes. We got up, cleaned ourselves up, completed our scripture recitations, and enjoyed our tea. The daughters-in-law along with the maidservants then collected the cow dung that was set aside from the night before. The mixture was shaped into patties and spread on the ground to dry, so that it could be used as a fuel source. The droppings of the sheep were also gathered together and dried out in one designated spot. Their activities kept them busy for about one or two hours before they wrapped up their chores.

Around nine or ten o'clock, the dris, swollen with milk to the point of discomfort, came back. They bellowed on the grass beside the tents. It was time to collect the milk from them once again. The soil in that area is rich in minerals, which allows the cattle to produce milk effortlessly while grazing. They claimed that this was due to the soil's rich fertility. In the summer and fall, when the soil is fertile, they milk three times a day. In the winter and spring, when there is no lush grass, they milk twice daily. And even so, the livestock never grow thin. In other regions, herders tend to milk their cattle only twice a day in summer and fall, while in the winter and spring, they do it only once a day. They also said that their one-year-old calves grew as large in one year as two-year-old calves elsewhere. They claimed that their sheep were also bigger [63] and fatter, which suggested that their land was of a superior quality. Once the milking was done, it was time to have lunch. Two servants were charged with the task of gathering wild vegetables from the water's edge, which they then stir-fried in yak butter for me. The taste was rather enjoyable. I was truly grateful for their thoughtfulness. Knowing how much I enjoyed being around children, they brought the four little ones to play with me.

On a particular night, a heavy rain poured down. A light spray of water filtered through the tent, but as the material soaked up the moisture, it became completely impermeable. The rain continued through the night, which complicated the tasks of the milking maids in the morning. They

dressed in woolen garments to keep dry from the rain and stood in the muddy ground while milking the animals. The weather in that location was cold, especially during days with rain or snow. On that particular morning, the cold was intense enough to make even the cows and sheep shake from the chill. Yet, they still needed to put in two hours of effort before completing their task. A group of cattle herders, each wearing a felt hat and draping a white woolen coat over their shoulders, carried a small pouch filled with dried milk powder, mixed with two handfuls of tsempha, a piece of butter, and a wooden bowl. They strolled barefoot while carrying a whip designed for hurling stones at livestock. Each herdsman led a bunch of cattle up the slopes of the mountain. The shepherds continued their daily tasks as they usually do. Meanwhile, the daughters-in-law, along with several maidservants, found themselves battling the cow dung in the rain-soaked fields. The dung had already absorbed moisture, and after the rainfall, it turned so runny that it was unmanageable. I caught sight of them trying to scoop it up with their hands, but it quickly slipped back to the ground, which left their hands and feet entirely covered in dung. I found the sight both amusing and tragic. They did not finish their work until around eight or nine that night. As we enjoyed a cup of tea and tossed some firewood into the flames, the dris on the mountain began to bellow from afar.

Once the rain stopped, the sky cleared up, and the sun illuminated the grasslands, showcasing their true splendor. Some butterflies and wild bees made an appearance, gathering and feeding on nectar, while small field mice [64] raced over the sunlit fields. Curiously, there were no sounds of frogs croaking, and there were no snakes in sight either. This was likely due to the high elevation. The Tibetan mastiffs were now used to having me around. As long as I did not walk too close, they no longer jumped around wildly. The children had likewise grown used to being around me. On their own accord, they collected wildflowers for me to offer to the Buddha. I made them laugh with my jokes, which they relished, and it was clear that they were very fond of my company. As the seven-day prayer ritual wrapped up and we got ready to leave, their reluctance to part ways was evident – especially in the four innocent and lively children, who were truly endearing.

As for the men from the household, I seldom caught sight of them while they were at their jobs. From time to time, they sat with spindles and hefty piles of yak fur, crafting yarn from the dark hair of yaks. They explained to me that every year, fresh pieces of felt were sewn into the middle of the tent, while the older pieces were shifted to the edges, taken down, and given new purpose. Alternatively, rather than taking them away, they would slowly increase the size of the tent. I also learned that they took on official duties from time to time. Still, due to the remoteness of the location, this happened only a handful of times each year. During the fall season, they loaded the yaks with butter, dried curds, animal pelts, and hides, then traveled to the lowlands to trade them for barley, peas, tea, and various other goods. During those periods, they would also trade their cattle and sheep.

In the winter months, they moved the livestock to pastures at lower altitudes; in summer, they were taken to higher ground. Since their household was too large to relocate entirely, they remained in an area that was situated between the elevated and the lower terrains. This household was considered the most prominent in the region. Nomadic nationals living in smaller family units had fewer members, utilized smaller tents, and owned less livestock. Yet, the inner layout of their tents, the division of spaces for

hosts and their guests, along with their daily activities, remained largely the same. The Golok nomads were the only group known to rely on raiding for their subsistence. I heard that every household had to provide men for these raids. Each man was equipped with two horses, one designated for riding and one the other for leading, along with a rifle in hand. When venturing to places such as Nakchu, they hid by day and traveled by night [65]. The intricacies of these raids differed somewhat and are too elaborate to explain in detail here.

Traders can be categorized into two distinct groups. One group runs a stationary business that is very similar to the functions of shopkeepers in the Inner Lands. In an average-sized shop, a household with multiple members gets up at dawn. Each morning, the men engage in chanting the scriptures – all Tibetans are devout Buddhists. While the children are still asleep, the women light the hearth to make tea. When present, servants carry out their assigned tasks. The mistress may either visit the temple, carrying a butter lamp to honor the buddhas, or she might attend to the home shrine by refreshing the water offerings. The women of Tibet enjoy enhancing their looks with adornments. They commonly embellish their hairstyles with coral and turquoise, and when they leave the house, they take great care in perfecting their clothing – might this simply reflect a quality of women? Just before dawn breaks, the family comes together to sip on butter tea leisurely and start their daily tasks. It is usual for children to have their tea while they are lying down in bed. They place a pinch of tsampa at the bottom of their bowls, and after they finish their tea, they lick the softened tsampa, which serves as their first meal of the day.

A close friend of mine is fervently devoted to Buddhism. Every morning, as he rises, he performs a number of prostrations in his shrine room. As soon as the tea is boiling in the kitchen, his wife or his daughter delivers a cup to him. Once he finishes his tea, he resumes his prostrations, and shortly after, he is served another cup. This morning ritual involves drinking five or six cups of tea. This illustrates the daily routine of someone who is a lay Buddhist householder.

Later, the men depart from their homes to manage other business, while the women take charge of the shops. They spin fibers into wool, knit warm socks, and take part in assorted crafts, ensuring they have a jug of butter tea close by to quench their thirst throughout the day. Women in Tibet are notably prone to drinking alcohol, often to excess. While inebriated, they might erupt into exuberant outbursts – including both tears and song – . Men often strive to curb this type of behavior, but they rarely succeed. In Tibetan society, the consumption of alcohol is simply too commonplace. Served around ten o'clock, the trader's breakfast is a simple affair, comprising stir-fried vegetables and meat, a bowl of tsampa, and a few cups of butter tea.

[66] Tibetan trade is rife with deception. Generally, prices are established at two to three times their real value, unless it involves close connections. Traders never disclose the real price. They maintain that they are incurring losses, even when they are making a profit. Thus, falsehood is always on their lips – this is the distinctive creed of their trade. As nightfall draws near, they begin to dismantle their stalls. Lunch and dinner are combined into one meal, usually consisting of rice or noodles, accompanied by one or two side dishes. Evenings are spent in relaxed conversation, discussing trivial matters, telling stories, or sharing jokes. There are some who participate

in dice games, but this is rare. Most people usually turn in for the night by eleven. There are others who recite the scriptures during the nighttime hours, although this practice is uncommon in Lhasa.

The second group consists of traders who travel from place to place. For instance, traders from Xikang who journey to Sichuan to buy tea keep connections with the same landlords, some of whom have been associated with their families for multiple generations. Mules and horses are restrained close to their living spaces or in the courtyards, tended by servants. Alternatively, the animals are left to graze on nearby hills, under the watch of their caretakers. Morning tea is prepared by the servants as the traders slowly rise and perform their daily recitations – a practice that is seldom neglected, even when traveling on business. The tea and tsampa they have for breakfast is identical to what they have at home. Once they finish their morning meal, they go to tea establishments to engage in business negotiations, mostly avoiding cash payments. In addition, they visit retail outlets to buy miscellaneous goods.

Once the tea has been bought, it requires repackaging. Take, for example, the Golden Jade tea from Xikang.<sup>16</sup> This tea is packed in large bundles of twelve bricks, with each brick weighing around fifty to sixty *jin*.<sup>17</sup> Leather workers wrap these bundles in untreated cowhide. Two bundles come together to form a single load. The process of packing requires careful supervision. For indeed, leather workers often steal the tea. Whenever the owner is absent, they often take out one or two bricks from every bundle. They then swap out a large portion for lower-quality tea leaves or other types of waste. When the packs are properly dried, they are transported by a relay system involving mule, horses, or cattle. Every year, traders purchase approximately 1,000 to 2,000 bundles. As for how they compensate the landlords, I have not inquired about it.

At around six or seven o' clock in the evening, traders routinely recite the scriptures after dinner, [67] just before they turn in for the night. In the early hours of the morning, while on the road, some boil tea over a fire while others saddle the mules for the journey. After completing their preparations, they come together to enjoy tea and have a little bit of tsampa, or occasionally some meat, before moving on. Following this, they load the goods and move forward on their route. At around one or two in the afternoon, they pause to rest. They will remain at a station if one is available; if not, they will set up camp in the open. There, the mules and horses are allowed to roam and graze, while the group gathers once more for tea and a simple meal of tsampa. After the meal, the servants look after the saddles and other equipment that falls under their supervision. The traders either rest, chant the scriptures, or explore the area around them. When night begins to settle, the livestock are called back – they return immediately, excited for their feed – and are restrained to the ground. Like this, if they are at a station, they can receive additional fodder; however, in the wilderness, there is no grass available for sustenance. The members of the group then have a meal that consistently includes extra vegetables or meat. They never eat tsampa alone. After eating their meal, they take a

16 C. Jinyu cha 金玉茶.

17 C. wuliushi jin 五六十觔, literally, 'fifty to sixty *jin*'. One *jin* weighs about half a kilogram, so fifty to sixty *jin* equal to twenty-five to thirty kilograms.

short break before coming together to recite the scriptures. To safeguard against theft, especially of horses, guards are always scheduled in rotation before they retire for the night. Occasionally, if a station is still far, traders may pause en route to brew tea, although such instances are rare. If there is no station in sight, they create their campsite earlier to ensure the horses have sufficient sustenance.

In the winter months, traders purchase tea from the Sichuan borderlands and head back home at the beginning of spring to allow their horses to rest and recuperate. They only set out for Ü-Tsang at the end of the summer. They usually opt for the northern route, but the cold conditions mean that the quality of pasture for the horses is accessible only in early fall. They do not reach Ü-Tsang until the winter season begins. There is always a level of uncertainty regarding whether the tea that is sent onward for transport will reach Ü-Tsang by the end of the year. In Tibet, leading traders create their own trading establishments. During the spring season, they reside in Lhasa, return home at the end of summer, and travel to the Sichuan borderlands in the winter months. On average, it takes them about two years to complete an entire round trip. Such is their way of life.

A few prominent Tibetan traders are also involved in trading wool. They set up their establishments in Kalimpong, Phakri, and Lhasa. During the summer months, they deploy teams to Posterior Tibet [68] and Nakchu for the purpose of buying wool. They contract porters to deliver the goods to Lhasa - wool collected from the northern region is predominantly sent to Lhasa - in contrast to wool from Posterior Tibet, which is moved to Gyantsé. From these sites, the wool is carried to Phakri by either mules or donkeys. It is common for porters to steal wool while on the road. When the wool gets to Phakri, it is repackaged, and each bundle ends up weighing sixty *jin*.<sup>18</sup> After that, the repackaged wool is transported by mule to India for selling. In the last few years, there has been a sharp rise in wool prices, which has led to considerable gains for traders. Nevertheless, with the increasing number of wool traders, I am concerned that a significant drop could be unavoidable down the line.

Another variety is 'brick tea', which originates from Yunnan. During the final years of the Qing dynasty and the onset of the Republican era, this tea was transported and distributed along the route to Lhasa, passing through Xikang. The way of life of traders along this route resembled that of tea traders in the Sichuan borderlands. Later on, a Yunnan-based trader pioneered a new route from Yunnan to Myanmar, which passed through India before entering Tibet. The costs associated with traveling this route are very similar to those of the route from Xikang into Tibet. Yet, in terms of convenience, it offers greater advantages. This resulted in the formation of a tea route that traverses Yunnan, Myanmar, India, and Tibet. In terms of business size, Yunnan tea traders matched their counterparts in Xikang. Lately, there has been a growing preference for Yunnan tea among local Tibetans, particularly those in the lower and middle classes. Members of the upper classes also enjoy Yunnan tea, but they often blend it with tea from Sichuan. Sichuan tea has a stronger flavor but a lighter color. And so, when blended with Yunnan tea, both color and taste are enhanced.

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18 Approximately 30 kilograms.

It is possible to gain insight into the daily lives of Tibetan soldiers and their families. Here, I will recount briefly what I have observed firsthand. Soldiers conscripted by the Tibetan government mainly inhabit a military encampment about a *li* north of Lhasa,<sup>19</sup> in a place referred to as Drazhi.<sup>20</sup> Every morning and evening, their platoon leaders escort them to the adjacent grasslands for essential drills, including marching and rifle training, finishing these activities by breakfast time. Besides fulfilling their duties in the armed forces, these soldiers also engage in manual labor, especially in construction and maintenance tasks. When the large mansions in Lhasa are in need of refurbishment, their residents and local authorities often reach out to these troops for support. The owners of the mansions supply their meals, yet it remains uncertain if they are compensated for their labor. In their leisure hours [69], numerous soldiers craft shoe soles as a secondary occupation. It is not uncommon to spot them wandering the streets, with a bundle of wool tucked under one arm, a woolen sole held in the left hand, and a thick needle, threaded with wool, in their right. Even while talking, they remain focused on sewing.

Once, on my return trip to Ü-Tsang from Nakchu via the northern route, I encountered a group of soldiers on their way to Xikang. Their baggage and equipment were transported by yaks provided by the government. The caravan included about a dozen yaks, five or six soldiers, and a handful of women, likely their wives. The women mounted the yaks, whereas the men proceeded on foot, stitching shoe soles as they traveled. As they moved along, they sang folk songs, and judging from their demeanor, they appeared to have no sadness about leaving their home. The people of Tibet naturally exhibit a joyful spirit, and even in the face of poverty, they maintain a positive outlook and show little concerns. Is this perhaps a special quality unique to them? Certain people say, “the poorer one is, the happier one becomes”. Yet, I fear this might not hold true in every situation.

In summary, these soldiers seldom receive structured military training, as their days are primarily spent working, either for their own needs or under the directions of their commanders. I once witnessed the restoration

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**19** The equivalent of 1 *li* in the Republican period system of measurement is 500 meters, or 546.8 yards.

**20** C. Zhaxi 札溪; T. Grwa bzhi; in Tibetan, ‘Four Corners’. Located between Lhasa and Sera Monastery, the area known as Drazhi (also Drapchi) has served various military and carceral functions over time. Following the 1728 Manchu intervention in Tibet, the Qing court stationed an imperial garrison in Lhasa, initially numbering 2,000 troops. In 1733, this was reduced to a 500-man contingent, relocated to a purpose-built barracks on the nearby plain of Drazhi (T. Grwa bzhi) to ease tensions with the local population. During the late Qing and into the Republican period, the site became the base of the *khadang* (T. kha dang), the Second Regiment of the Tibetan army. After the 1959 uprising, it was converted into a temporary detention center for monks and laypersons arrested at Sera and Dréprung Monasteries. In 1965, it was officially designated as Zhaqi Jianyu 扎奇监狱 (Drapchi Prison), formally called *Xizang Zizhiqu Diyi Jianyu* 西藏自治区第一监狱 (Tibet Autonomous Region Prison No. 1), and later expanded into a ‘Reform Through Labor’ facility. Detainees from across Tibet were assigned to various labor brigades. While inmate statistics remain undisclosed, it is widely believed that many are political prisoners, including monks, nuns, and former Tibetan officials. For the history of the military garrison, see Travers and Fitzherbert 2020, 15-18. On Drapchi Prison, cf. Barnett 1996; Christianson 2004, 176-82; Tubten Khétsun 2008, especially 90-118.

of General Yutok's<sup>21</sup> manor house,<sup>22</sup> which was being repaired by laborers drawn from the personal guard of the Dalai Lama. Likewise, when senior *kalöns*<sup>23</sup> constructed their residences, a significant number of soldiers took part in the labor. Thus, it is clear that the everyday lives of these soldiers are quite similar to those of tenant farmers or laborers.

Serving as an itinerant official offers a remarkably comfortable position. When disputes arise among citizens, or when traders pass through their area, issues are brought directly to their doorstep. These officials wield significant authority over the common people under their jurisdiction. At the slightest hint of annoyance, they commonly resort to using horsewhips, and imprisonment in cangues is a frequent occurrence as well. Still, the law does not mandate capital punishment, for taking a life carries considerable consequences. During periods of inactivity, they take pleasure in their leisurely pursuits. There are even individuals whose have been in official positions for years [70] yet have never carried out their assigned duties. Instead, they designate stewards to handle the operations. If an issue cannot be resolved, they release an official request for guidance. In the event that the issue stays unsolved, it will be passed on to a higher level of authority. Provided that the steward fulfills their duties effectively and adheres to the requirements set by the authorities, the place where the official resides is irrelevant, and senior officials do not view their absence a violation.

There exists a kind of itinerant officials who are committed to religious practice. Rising at dawn, they chant scriptures while the kitchen staff, waking later, prepare tea – in Tibet, cold water is commonly used for washing. After completing their recitations and enjoying a cup of tea, they tackle official affairs. If there are no pressing duties, they walk outside to inspect their horses and survey the barley fields. A typical lunch includes meat alongside either rice or steamed buns. Dinner consists of an assortment of dishes that accompany their main meals. Morning meals, on the other hand, might consist of meat and noodles served with *tsampa*, and during the summer months, tiny radishes are incorporated – there is no set pattern to their dining habits. Before they turn in for the night, they recite more scriptures. The itinerant officials I came across generally adhered to this routine each day.

I resided for seven months in the household of Kalön Trimon.<sup>24</sup> Each day, the father, who held the title of *kalön*,<sup>25</sup> would leave the house between

**21** C. Yutuo daiben 宇陀代本; T. G.yu thog mda' dpon; Fazun is referring to Yutok Tashi Döndup (T. G.yu thog bkra shis don grub; 1906-1983). From 1935 to 1938, he was nominated Commander of the Bodyguard Unit of the Dalai Lama, with the title of *dapön* (T. mda' pon), 'General'. For a biography of General Yutok, cf. Dickie 2016; cf. also Travers 2021; Petech 1973.

**22** C. gongguan 公館; T. G.yu thog gzims shag. The Yutok family's manor house was located near the Jokhang (T. Jo khang) temple in Lhasa.

**23** C. gelun 戈倫; 'Cabinet Minister'.

**24** C. Chimen gelun 墀門戈倫; T. Bka' blon khri smon nor bu dbang rgyal (1874-1945).

**25** C. galun 戈倫; T. bka' blon; The term *kalön* refers to one of the four ministers in the Kashag (T. Bka' shag), the governing Cabinet of Tibet. The Kashag was established in 1721 as part of the Tibetan government's reorganization under Emperor Kangxi 康熙 of the Qing dynasty. In 1751, it became the primary advisory body to the Dalai Lama following the Thirteen-Point Ordinance issued by Emperor Qianlong, which formalized the Dalai Lama's role as the head of the Tibetan government. The *kalöns* ranked third (T. rim gsum) in the Tibetan hierarchy and were addressed as *shapé* (T. zhabs pad). Of the four *kalöns*, three were lay officials, while the fourth was traditionally a monk. The head of the *kalöns*, known as the Kalön Tripa (T. Bka' blon

eight and nine in the morning to attend to his duties at the administrative bureau, and returned home only around four in the afternoon. In spite of his senior years, he maintained a high level of efficiency and a deep devotion to the Buddha. Each morning, he would get up early to recite scriptures while sitting on his bed. He was knowledgeable about the food offering rituals and consistently performed them. After six in the evening, he received visitors who arrived to see him in his private chambers. Once he got home from the office, he invited a high lama to explain the scriptures in his house. In the evening, he also performed offerings to the Dharma Protectors. Beyond the Kalön himself, the household included his wife, four or five sons, a daughter-in-law, two or three grandchildren, a chief steward, two or three cooks, and a large retinue of servants. The family maintained five or six horses – still, how many more they kept in the countryside was anyone's guess.

[71] The [Kalön's] eldest son held an official rank. Several of the younger sons had taken monastic vows, while others were still advancing their studies. They, too, rose early to recite the scriptures. The daughter-in-law oversaw kitchen duties, while servants swept and cleaned across the household. During our scripture recitations, the servants would offer us tea. After completing our prayers, we had breakfast, which included a bowl of noodles, a small side dish, a serving of tsampa, and extra meat options for the senior lamas. After the morning meal, we either studied the scriptures or focused on grammar. The sons of other noble families also often joined us. Whenever he was free from obligations, the Kalön attended as well. After the Kalön left, junior officials would also leave for their posts, and the monks requested more teachings regarding other texts. Around ten o' clock, another noodle meal was served, after which we reviewed our lessons. The midday meal was served at about two in the afternoon, comprising meat, rice, and an assortment of other dishes. In the early evening, they attended supplementary classes on the scriptures. When the Kalön came back, teachings on scriptures and treatises were given for his benefit. We ended our day and went to bed at eleven in the evening. The stewards were responsible for the preparation of food and basic necessities. From the estate, they provided manure for fuel, feed for the horses, and ground barley for making tsampa. In the outer courtyard, the well was the source of water that was collected by the older women and maidservants. Two or three seamstresses, assigned specifically to the family, produced all the clothing needed for the household. Besides dressing up and seeking entertainment outside, they had minimal activities to engage in at home. I found them to be rather disengaged. The older generation took pleasure in chanting religious texts, whereas a lot of the youth found joy in lounging around. It is reasonable to conclude that they enjoyed a well-settled and comfortable lifestyle.

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khri pa), served as the equivalent of a Prime Minister, managing the Kashag's operations and overseeing its role in Tibetan governance.

#### 4.4 Faith

Tibet stands out as a religious country, specifically, a Buddhist country. Every household, regardless of its economic status, rank, or occupation, whether it belongs to an official, farmer, artisan, or trader, is devoted to the Buddha. – In border regions, those who adhere to Christianity may still show devotion towards the Buddha or embrace both Christianity and Buddhism – . In rural areas, as long as they have a shelter, even the poorest of families will have a small shrine. Even if [72] they live in a single room, they will still maintain a table or an altar for the buddhas. Made from either bronze or clay, these artifacts always depict various figures like Avalokiteśvara or Tārā. When leaving their homes, they bring along a tiny buddha-box strapped to their backs. While the specific figure inside may change, it always includes the image of a buddha or fragments from religious texts given by a high lama. Everyone agrees that these offer a form of protection. They believe that all fortunes and misfortunes arise from the law of cause and effect. They all recognize the value of inviting others to recite scriptures or to accumulate merits. During the first and fifteenth days of the lunar month, as well as during major Buddhist celebrations, they buy butter to use for lighting lamps as a gesture of reverence to the Buddha. Having a son who chooses to renounce the world to cultivate the path is considered entirely appropriate. Those who are unable to do so themselves recognize that this inability arises from an absence of good fortune. They hold significant reverence towards ordained monastics, particularly for high lamas distinguished by their learning and virtues. In Tibet, they say the household is a prison, the spouse a shackle, wealth a dream, and status an illusion, like a bubble; all of these are, in essence, impermanent, marked by suffering, emptiness, selflessness, and bound by the afflictions. In this life, they say, death is not the end, as future lives exist. They claim that, after death, a person may fall into a lower destiny, rather than simply cease to exist altogether. They also universally accept that, after death, certain individuals may become humans again.

By the time they reach the age of three, children already know how to chant *om maṇi padme hūṃ*. Most of them can also recite the *Twenty-One Praises to Tārā*<sup>26</sup> and common aspiration prayers. Some individuals can even recite elaborate ritual texts and understand profound scriptures and commentaries. In the Xikang region, nearly all the sons of prominent households receive some form of religious education. The reason for this is that, outside the Buddhadharma, there is no other type of formal education in Tibet. Ordinary schools can only teach writing, pronunciation, basic correspondence, and arithmetic. For their routine recitations, such as the *Praise to Sarasvatī*<sup>27</sup> and the *Praise to Mañjuśrī*,<sup>28</sup> they must seek explanations from a member of the saṅgha to understand the texts. As for the study of grammar and phonetics, they must rely on highly learned and virtuous teachers. It is quite common and ordinary for Tibetan officials to make spelling or writing mistakes.

Within the homes of Tibetan aristocrats or senior officials, it is common to find four or five altars, and many of them own [73] the Tripiṭaka. In the

26 C. *Dumu nianyi lizan* 度母廿一禮讚.

27 C. *Miaoyin tiannü zan* 妙音天女讚.

28 C. *Wenshu pusa zan* 文殊菩薩讚.

households belonging to the middle class, one can find solemn shrines and protector chapels. Owning the Tripiṭaka, the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*, or the writings of the patriarchs is not rare either. Buddhist shrines and scriptures can also be found in the households belonging to the lower class. Among the nomadic nationals, their faith feels purer and stronger, even without the presence of dedicated shrines. Notably, several Han traders who operate in Tibet are Buddhists, as are some of the Hui people. Within his home, a trader from Yunnan 雲南 maintains a large shrine and boasts a remarkably extensive library of scriptures. Not only is he the owner of the complete Tripiṭaka, but he also possesses the writings from various Buddhist schools and patriarchs – a comprehensive collection that is truly rare. A friend of mine, a trader from Beijing, has a buddha niche in every room of his home. The offerings displayed in these niches are lavishly arranged and reflect a standard superior to that found in any other home. His children have all renounced the household life to cultivate the path, and he too is making arrangements to step away from secular life.

Tibetans regard this as the most appropriate course of action. However, for people from the Inner Lands or foreign countries, this is truly astonishing. Thus, both Han officials and Western commentators claim that monasticism is a calamity that will bring about the extinction of the Tibetan race. Nevertheless, Tibetans reject this assertion. They think that, aside from the possibility of being wiped out by natural catastrophes or human-made tragedies, having several family members enter the monastic order would not necessarily threaten the family line. Moreover, they argue that if monasticism were to lead to their extinction, it would be entirely appropriate, for true liberation from the cycle of birth and death is far preferable than the suffering endured in the endless cycle of wandering. The level of steadfastness and accuracy in their belief system is rarely found in other countries and among other nations.

#### 4.5 The Saṅgha

The religious fervor of the Tibetan nation, as discussed before, prompts them to regard monasticism an entirely justifiable and reasonable pursuit. This vocation is highly esteemed and eagerly sought after by the masses, which accounts for the notable amount of saṅgha members in Tibet. For example, the tiny area of Dartsédo, located on the border of Sichuan [74], is home to eight lama monasteries.<sup>29</sup> While not all of them are thriving, the three that are most prosperous – Ngachö, Lhamotse,<sup>30</sup> and Dorjé Drak<sup>31</sup> – collectively accommodate more than a thousand people. Still, the vast majority of them are either of Tibetan descent or have a blend of Tibetan and Han ancestry, whereas those who are purely Han rarely pursue a life in the monastery.

**29** C. lama si 喇嘛寺. The expression *lama si*, translating to ‘lama temple’ in English, was prevalent in the Republican era and remains in use today to denote Tibetan monasteries (T. dgon pa) in the People’s Republic. In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, the word ‘lamasery’, originating from the Chinese term *lama si* and now regarded as outdated, often appeared in European and American works on Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism.

**30** C. Lamo 拉摩; T. Lha mo rtse.

**31** C. Liangye zha 梁業札; T. Rdo rje brag.

To the west of Mount Gyü,<sup>32</sup> there are only a few inhabitants, consisting of both farmers and herders, who reside in tiny settlements. In comparison, their monasteries are large and numerous, and temples and monks are prevalent everywhere. Notably, the counties of Dawu, Drango, Drewo,<sup>33</sup> and Karze, are home to imposing monasteries that have the capacity to shelter one to two thousand lamas.<sup>34</sup> Karze County alone is home to two or three major monasteries, each with a population of two to three thousand individuals, in addition to several smaller monasteries located throughout the region.

I have heard that areas in the south, such as Nyachuka,<sup>35</sup> Litang, Batang, and Chatreng, are likewise teeming with monastic institutions. Numerous large monasteries are also present in Rongdrak,<sup>36</sup> Zungchu,<sup>37</sup> Tsenlha,<sup>38</sup> and Li.<sup>39</sup> In Qinghai Province, some monasteries can host congregations that reach into the tens of thousands. I have personally observed many large monastic complexes in Dergé, Chamdo, and along the route through Kongpo.<sup>40</sup> Along the northern route – Drigung, Nyachuka, and Phenpo;<sup>41</sup> the western route – Gyantsé, Shigatsé, and Sakya; the southern route – Samye, Tsetang,<sup>42</sup> and Ölkha;<sup>43</sup> and the southwestern route Nakartse,<sup>44</sup> Phakri, and Dremojong;<sup>45</sup> temples and saṅgha flourish everywhere.

Near Lhasa, the three great [Geluk] monasteries, the two Gyüpa<sup>46</sup> Colleges, the Four Regency Seats – Tsechok,<sup>47</sup> Meru,<sup>48</sup> Tsemönling,<sup>49</sup> and Kündéling,<sup>50</sup> and the Namgyal Monastery<sup>51</sup> on the slopes of the Dalai's

32 C. Zheduo 折多; T. Rgyu.

33 C. Zhuwu 諸陽; T. Sgre bo.

34 C. lama 喇嘛; T. bla ma; 'Tibetan monks'. In this passage by the term *lama* Fazun refers not to a Tibetan lama (T. bla ma) intended as a master (S. guru), but to all Tibetan monks and novices. See the note above on the term *lama si*.

35 C. Hekou 河口; T. Nyag chu kha.

36 C. Danba 丹巴; T. Rong brag.

37 C. Songpan 松潘; T. Zung chu.

38 C. Maogong 懋功; T. Btsan lha. Fazun uses the Republican-era name Maogong to refer to Tsenlha County, now part of Sichuan Province. During the Qing dynasty, the region, then known as Jinchuan 金川, became the site of a garrison bureau following two military campaigns during the Qianlong era. In 1914, after the establishment of the Republic of China, it was reorganized as Maogong and placed under Sichuan's jurisdiction. In 1953, following the Communist occupation, Maogong was renamed Xiaojin 小金.

39 C. Lifan 理番; T. Lis; present-day Li Dzong (T. Lis Rdzong; C. Li Xian 理縣).

40 C. Gongbo 公薄; T. Kong po.

41 C. Panbo 盆薄; T. 'Phan po.

42 C. Zitang 孜塘; T. Rtses thang.

43 C. Aka 阿喀; T. 'Ol kha.

44 C. Nangeze 曩格則; T. Sna dkar rtse.

45 C. Zhemengxiong 哲孟雄; T. 'Bras mo ljongs; Sikkim.

46 C. Juba 舉巴; T. Rgyud pa; 'Tantric College'.

47 C. Xide 喜得; T. Tshe mchog gling.

48 C. Muru 木如; T. Rme ru.

49 C. Zemuling 則木凌; T. Tshe smon gling.

50 C. Gundeling 滾得凌; T. Kun bde gling.

51 C. Zunsheng si 尊勝寺; Rnam rgyal dgon pa.

Mountain,<sup>52</sup> collectively represent the most resplendent and imposing centers of practice. Beyond these, there are countless smaller shrines nestled amidst the nearby mountain valleys and villages, making them impossible to tally.

Although Tibetan monks are many, they all differ from those in the Inner Lands in one key aspect: they do not fully sever ties with their secular families. The majority of monks residing in monasteries located in Kham and Ü-Tsang originate from nearby communities. Whenever responsibilities within the monastery come up, they go back to the monastery to carry out their obligations, chant scriptures, attend teachings, or pursue doctrinal studies. When they are free from obligations, many of them go home to help with household tasks. Their families hold them in high regard due to their status as monastics [75] devoted to practice. They receive inquiries about minor household matters, and managing prayer activities falls well within their area of expertise. As a result, they become an indispensable refuge for their home, a presence that no family can manage to be without, even for a day. During their time at the monastery, their relatives pay frequent visits, usually once every three to five days, and they bring along meals and beverages. When a monk rises to a position of stature in the monastic hierarchy, their family view this achievement as the highest form of honor. Certain monks, who have less strong ties to their families and a greater inclination to engage in practice, might choose to retreat to the mountains or travel elsewhere for their studies. Even so, their families maintain contact, seeking updates about their well-being through messages whenever possible.

In Tibet, I observed that monks rarely sever ties with their families entirely. For instance, scholars in the three great monasteries often depend on their families to help them make up for their inadequate yearly allowances. Indeed, monastery revenues cover only half a year's expenses. Scholars coming from distant regions like Xikang, Posterior Tibet, Qinghai, and Mongolia, who are engaged in long-term or working towards the *géshé* degree, largely depend on financial backing from their families. Without such backing, they have to either perform religious services or engage in small-scale trade to survive.

Still, there are those who withstand difficulties and deprivation in their quest for learning. Consider the current Jangtsé Chöje as a case in point. He is from a poor family in Posterior Tibet, which could not offer him the necessary support. While studying at Sera Monastery,<sup>53</sup> he often found himself without *tsampa* for three to five days at a time – a situation that was quite common. Even in the face of hunger or cold, he remained determined, and ultimately earned the title of *géshé lharampa*. He currently occupies the position of *chöje*<sup>54</sup> and is expected to ascend to the position of Ganden

**52** C. Dalai shan 達賴山. Fazun refers to the Potala Palace as the Dalai Mountain, or Dalai's Mountain.

**53** C. Sela 色拉; T. Se ra.

**54** C. fawang 法王; T. chos rje; in English, 'Dharma King'. To become the Ganden Tripa (T. Dga' ldan khri pa), a monk followed a traditional path of advancement within the Geluk sect. First, he completed the required course of study at one of the three major Geluk monasteries near Lhasa and earned the highest academic degree, *géshé lharampa* (T. dge bshes lha ram pa). He then joined one of the two tantric colleges in Lhasa, Gyütö (T. Rgyud stod) or Gyümé (T. Rgyud smad) to earn the title *géshé ngakrampa* (T. dge bshes sngags ram pa). Only monks with this qualification could serve as disciplinarians (T. dge skos) in a tantric college. Each year, Gyütö and Gyümé appointed three disciplinarians. The chant leader (T. bla ma dbu mdzad) was selected from among the former

Tripa in the coming years. Likewise, the celebrated Phurbu Chok Jampa Gyatso Rinpoché,<sup>55</sup> according to the biography of his first incarnation, was once a destitute and homeless monk from Chamdo, for whom hunger was of little concern. Eventually [76], he emerged as one of the most respected figures in Tibet. His main teacher, Master Drubkang Gelek Gyatso,<sup>56</sup> during his early training in the *Lamrim* teachings, had no shelter, merely a hole dug into the ground, no blankets but a pile of barley straw, and made use of a carefully cleaned wooden bowl for tsampa as a replacement for a ritual offering cup. Gelek Gyatso would later serve as the National Preceptor under the Tibetan Regent. Master Yongzin Yeshé Gyaltzen,<sup>57</sup> who was the most prominent disciple<sup>58</sup> of Jampa Rinpoché, was not born into poverty. Under the guidance of Jampa Rinpoché, he was advised to enter a period of retreat lasting several months, during which he consumed only a small quantity of leftover offerings each day. After parting ways with his teacher, he sought refuge in the icy heights of Posterior Tibet. He survived here on just one small bag of tsampa, which his disciples brought him each year from the base of the mountain. When heavy snowfall made it difficult to travel during winter, he refused to let anyone come to visit him. Later on, Yeshé Gyaltzen would serve as a teacher to the Dalai Lama.<sup>59</sup> The thirteenth Dalai Lama, while seeking a tutor, turned to the reclusive master Tsültrim Gyalwa.<sup>60</sup> While at Dréprung Monastery, Tsültrim Gyalwa was so engrossed in his scriptures that he often failed to kindle a fire, and it was not unusual for him to skip food and sleep. In a similar fashion, while studying in Tibet, the revered Drakar Rinpoché from Karze and his disciples often found themselves without food and resorted to the tsampa that had been offered to the buddhas. These venerable figures remained unaffected by their circumstances.

This concise summary offers only a general overview of life within Tibetan monasteries. The monastic system, the daily lives of monks in the three great monasteries, and the education of the monastic community will be discussed in Chapter 7.

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disciplinarians to become vice-abbot and serve for three years. After this, the chant leader became the abbot (T. mkhan po) of the college for another three years. The most senior former abbots, known as Jangtsé Chöje (T. Byang rtse chos rje), if he came from Gyümé, or Shartsé Chöje (T. Shar rtse chos rje), if he came from Gyütö, alternated in serving as the Ganden Tripa.

**55** C. Pubujue jiangba renboqie 蒲補覺絳巴仁波卿; T. Phur bu lcog byams pa rgya mtsho rin po che (1825-1901); a tutor to the thirteenth Dalai Lama. In this passage, Fazun quotes from the biography of the first Phurbu Chok Rinpoché, Ngawang Jampa (T. Phur lcog ngag dbang byams pa, 1682-1762).

**56** C. Shanhai 善海; T. Sgrub khang dge legs rgya mtsho (1641-1713).

**57** C. 智幢; T. Tshe mchog gling pa Yongs 'dzin ye shes rgyal mtshan (1713-1793).

**58** C. gaozu 高足.

**59** Yongzin Yeshé Gyaltzen was a tutor to the eighth Dalai Lama Jampal Gyatso (T. 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho, 1758-1804).

**60** C. Jiesheng 戒勝; T. Tshul khriims rgyal ba (d.u.). I was unable to identify this individual.



## 5 Production, Commerce, and Transportation

**Summary** 5.1 Production. –5.2 Commerce. – 5.3 Transportation.

### 5.1 Production

[77] Tibet, situated on an elevated plateau, is characterized by a very cold climate. The range of natural crops is limited, offering just one harvest each year. As per British measurements, the elevation of Lhasa is approximately 11,800 *chi* 尺 above sea level.<sup>1</sup> Yet, the presence of high mountains surrounding the city leads to a dry climate, with winters that are notably warm. Barley is the primary crop grown around Lhasa, followed by peas as the second most common crop. Other varieties of crops include wheat, mustard, and potatoes. The area is home to a selection of vegetables like leafy greens, cabbage, radishes, cucumbers, lettuce, bulrush, celery, and carrots. Chives and fennel can be found from time to time as well. Vegetable farming is largely undertaken by people from Sichuan, given that Tibetans show minimal interest in vegetables and possess fewer skills in their production. Surrounding Lhasa, the predominant trees are willows and poplars, along with a few walnut trees and other species whose names escape me, which are absent in the Inner Lands. Conifers species, including pines and cypresses, are largely associated with mountainous environments and are not commonly found in plain regions. Fruit trees like peach, apricot, and

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<sup>1</sup> 11,800 *chi* (as standardized during the Republican era), translates to approximately 3,929 meters above sea level. Based on current measurements, Lhasa stands at an altitude of 3,650 meters (11,975 feet).



apple are often grown in the gardens of the nobility. On Bhaişajyarāja Hill,<sup>2</sup> located in the private estate of the Dalai Lama's court physician, numerous peach trees are laden with such an abundant harvest that their branches bend down from the weight. I was invited to visit in the eighth month and had the opportunity to taste some of those peaches, which remained tasty and sweet. Yet, the apples were not as impressive.

The Kham region has similar conditions to those found in Lhasa, although it has a more limited selection of vegetables. A friend of mine who resides in Karze made an effort to raise eggplants and chili peppers, yet the plants withered before bearing any fruit. However, chili peppers are found growing in the Chamdo region, while eggplants are farmed in Lhasa. The Drakyap<sup>3</sup> region also cultivates vegetables, although the output is relatively small. The Kongpo region, which is at a slightly lower elevation than Lhasa, grows apricots that are somewhat sweeter. In the region of Ngari Tō,<sup>4</sup> situated in Posterior Tibet, a specific type of apricot known for its exceptionally high sugar content is considered a premium offering. This fruit is quite expensive and is often served to guests in Lhasa. Generally, these products are meant for local consumption and are unlikely to be exported.

In Tibet, the number of nomadic families surpasses that of farming families by a considerable margin, sometimes by as much as ten times. Their main products include butter, cheese curd, sheep, cattle, hides, and wool, with wool being the foremost export. More than a million *jin* 斤 of wool are transported to India each year.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, products like hides and butter are only available for sale [78] within Tibet. Yak tails stand out as another notable export. Tibet is a source of medicinal goods like musk, deer antler, anemarrhena, fritillaria, goldthread, and cordyceps, and it also offers animal pelts, including those from foxes, sand foxes, cats, lynxes, otters, and the skins of tigers and leopards, which are largely distributed by Han traders.

Within the industry sector, various products, such as woven carpets, brocade paintings, wooden items, tormas,<sup>6</sup> and Tibetan incense, are

2 C. Yaowang shan 藥王山; T. Lcags po ri; Chakpori, literally 'Iron Mountain', is a hill in Lhasa near the Potala Palace sacred to Vajrapāṇi and features over 5,000 rock carvings. A Kadampa monastery established there in the twelfth century later became Sakya in the thirteenth. In 1695, Desi Sanggye Gyatso (1653-1705), regent to the fifth Dalai Lama, and Nyingto Yonten Gonpo founded the Chakpori Medical College. The college was destroyed in 1959 during the Chinese invasion of Lhasa but was reestablished in 1992 in Darjeeling under the fourteenth Dalai Lama. Fazun refers to Chakpori in Chinese as 'Medicine Buddha Mountain'.

3 C. Zhaliào 乍了; T. Brag g.yab.

4 C. Ori duo 哦日朵; T. Mnga' ris stod; 'Upper Ngari'.

5 During the Republican era the *jin* 斤, a unit of mass, was standardized to five hundred grams. So, over one million *jin* would amount to over five hundred tons.

6 C. tuima 退瑪; T. gtor ma. A torma (S. bali) is a sculpted dough offering central to tantric Buddhist rituals. These conical figures, often adorned with intricate decorations, are offered to a range of deities – from protective spirits to buddhas – to obtain blessings or avert obstacles. Ritual texts (S. balividhi) describe their construction and use, with variations in shape and materials depending on the recipient. In Tibet, tormas became a medium for elaborate butter sculptures, some so large that ladders were required to complete their intricate designs. A prominent ritual, tordok (T. gtor bzlog), performed at the end of the year, symbolically channels accumulated negativities into the torma, which is then burned in a dramatic ceremony of sound and light. During the New Year (T. Lo gsar), Lhasa held competitions showcasing the artistry of torma-making. See Chapter Eight for Fazun's account of the butter sculpture competitions held during the Tibetan New Year festivals.

distributed to regions in Qinghai and Mongolia. The mineral resources found in Tibet remain largely underutilized and have not been systematically surveyed. According to local lore, the territories lying to the west of Sakya Monastery in Posterior Tibet are filled with riches in gold and silver. North of Lhasa, riverbeds are said to contain gold deposits – some of which have already been extracted. Gold ore has been discovered near Dakpo,<sup>7</sup> situated east of Lhasa. Still, these findings remain unreported to the proper authorities and have not been put to use. In the areas of Xikang under Han administration, including places like Drewo and Nyakrong,<sup>8</sup> mining activities are mostly under way. However, the output has been minimal due to the use of antiquated methods.

On the border regions between Qinghai and Golok, there is a mountain called Machen Gangri.<sup>9</sup> It is said to be a large gold mine. The local people regard it as a holy and auspicious site, and as such they prohibit any mining. Still, Han people residing in Qinghai tend to secretly mine the area while pretending to harvest medicinal rhubarb. When discovered by locals, significant conflicts can arise, sometimes resulting in casualties. I heard that one year in Golok, amidst one of such conflicts, more than twenty Han people and over ten Tibetans – potentially including Hui nationals – lost their lives, which led to the cessation of clandestine mining operations.

There are also many salt lakes in Tibet. Those in the area north of Nakchu are especially renowned. In Lhasa and neighboring areas, the salt that is consumed is mostly transported from the north. Golok features its own salt reserves, which supply regions like Karze. Around Chamdo, a type of red salt is produced, although it is milder in flavor and not as high in quality as the salt used in Lhasa. Saline wells and lakes, such those found along the Min River 岷江, are also common.<sup>10</sup> Yet, these resources can only cater to local consumption and are insufficient to meet external demand.

The variety of plant species is so extensive that it cannot be fully elaborated upon.

7 C. Dapu 達模; T. Dwags po.

8 C. Zhanhua 瞻化; T. Nyag rong. During the Republican period, under the Xikang administration, the Chinese name of Nyakrong was Zhanhua. After 1950, it changed to Xinlong 新龙.

9 C. Maqin bangri 瑪勤邦日; T. Rma chen gangs ri. Also known as Anyé Machen (T. A myes rma chen), Machen Gangri is a sacred peak in the Golok region of Amdo and among Tibet's most revered mountains. Rising to an elevation of 6,282 meters, the mountain is regarded as a three-dimensional Cakrasamvara maṇḍala and is included in the Tibetan list of twenty-four holy sites (S. piṭha). It also holds geographical importance as the source of the Yellow River (C. Huanghe 黄河). The highest peak of Anyé Machen is regarded as the abode of Machen Pomra (T. Rma chen spom ra), the presiding deity of Anyé Machen and the region's chief earth lord (T. sa bdag). Like other pre-Buddhist deities, he was incorporated into the Buddhist pantheon after being converted by Padmasambhava. In the fifteenth century, Tsongkhapa, himself a native of Amdo, appointed Machen Pomra as the chief protector deity (S. dharmapāla) of Ganden Monastery. Machen Pomra is traditionally depicted as golden, clad in a cuirass and helmet, holding a lance with a flag, and carrying a mongoose-skin sack while riding a white horse.

10 The Min River flows through Sichuan Province. Its source is in the Min Mountains 岷山, at the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau. It descends southward, cutting through the Sichuan Basin, before merging with the Yangtze River near Yibin 宜宾. The river holds historical and agricultural importance, particularly as the site of Dujiangyan 都江堰, a water management system built in 256 BCE that continues to sustain the fertile Chengdu Plain.

## 5.2 Commerce

[79] Commerce is the backbone of the economy. A brief overview of the different kinds of traders in Tibet and their livelihoods was provided earlier. The main export goods were also mentioned in the previous section. I will now proceed to offer further insights about imports. The main imports from India consist of cotton fabrics, predominantly sourced from the eastern regions, along with woolen items from both eastern and western areas. The primary source of silk textiles is the Inner Lands, although silks from Russia are also available. Precious stones, pearls, and corals are imported from India and the East. Several color pigments are derived from the West. Still, the madder that is used to dye wool in Tibet comes from India and Bhutan. Most of the hardware and sundry goods, along with crystal and white sugars, are mostly produced in India. The primary imports from the Sichuan border consist mainly of tea, with textiles coming in second, while silk products and fabrics are relatively rare. From Xining 西宁,<sup>11</sup> Tibet's main imports include raw silver, silk fabrics, mules, and horses, while gold is not a major import. The various goods brought in by traders from Nepal consist primarily of products from India, along with significant amounts of fabric. There exist also a range of businesses that deal in tea produced in Yunnan.

Several high-ranking Tibetan officials take part in commercial activities to supplement their income and have established branches in India, Shanghai, and Beijing – rarely do people in the Inner Lands become aware of these operations. Notably, the Pomdatsang<sup>12</sup> family firm, which serves as a representative for Tibetan authorities in the business sector, operates various outlets across the Inner Lands. It exports furs and medicinal materials to the Inner Lands and imports primarily silk textiles into Tibet. In Tibet, the firm frequently engages in monopolistic behavior by acquiring complete inventories of specific products and preventing others from making purchases. Those who secretly buy these goods risk having their household confiscated if they are discovered. This is an expression of autocratic power. I am not aware of the occurrence of such practices in other regions.

Tibetans have a pronounced sense of independence, and women from middle- and lower-class families frequently engage in trade or craft production to provide for their own livelihood. In places like Lhasa, Gyantsé [80], and Shigatsé, numerous women earn a living by setting up stalls on the streets. By eight or nine o' clock in the morning, they place their goods along the streets or on boards outside their houses. They remain seated by their items, watching over them while also working on their crafts. When there are no customers around, they come together in groups, sharing laughs and discussions, filling the streets with their chatter. When buyers reach the location, they start negotiating the prices. Their products are usually secured on credit from larger establishments, with payment pushed back for a month or two. They draw on the earnings from this period to cover

11 T. Si ling.

12 C. Bangdacang 邦達倉; T. Spom mda' tshang. The Pomdatsang family, originally traders from Markham (T. Smar khams), relocated to Lhasa and rose to prominence as one of Tibet's most influential family enterprises in the twentieth century. Their success extended beyond commerce, for members of the family attained positions in government service and entered the aristocracy. The family is also referred to as the Pangdatsang. On the Pomdatsang family, cf., in particular, the research of Carole McGranahan 2002; 2003; 2005; 2010; 2015.

their living expenses, and when it is time to repay older debts, they take on fresh ones, always patching one financial obligation with another to make ends meet. Generally, larger businesses tend to avoid participating in retail activities. They delegate the smaller deals to these women. Even the silk offered by Beijing traders is sold in large quantities to significant traders in Nepal and among Muslims. Certain traders even operate without personal capital, acting instead as intermediaries for larger firms and taking a cut of the profits to support their income. As mentioned earlier, herders conduct most of their trading activities in the autumn and winter, bartering items such as wool, butter, and hides for staples like barley and beans.

Additionally, herders who move on the northern route often trade in salt. Throughout the summer, they take their cattle to the saline lakes and pitch their tents in the nearby area. I heard that during the daytime, the lake looks like clear water, but when night falls and the chilly winds blow, it creates salt crystals that harden along the edges and on the surface of the lake. At dawn, they swiftly collect the salt and pack it into leather pouches, since the daytime warmth causes it to dissolve back into water. The same procedure needs to be carried out again the following day. In still, windless conditions, some linger for multiple days, anticipating the formation of salt crystals. Certain others show up one day, load their haul the following day, and depart swiftly. Tibetans believe that the ease or difficulty of collecting salt is determined by one's collection of merits. Once the salt is collected, it is taken back to the pastures, and by the autumn harvest, it is conveyed to regions that cultivate barley to trade the salt for barley. The standard approach is to barter one unit of barley for one unit of salt, while beans and additional products are sold based on prevailing market prices. I heard that this guideline has been in place for many years, and my observations from last year confirmed that one unit was still traded for one unit.

In Tibet, a large part of the main commercial activities [81] operates on barter systems. For instance, when one party has tea and another has fabric, they initially determine the value of both the tea and the cloth before swapping their goods. Conversely, smaller financial transactions call for the use of silver coins. Major monasteries frequently accumulate their wealth through business endeavors. For example, a donor could contribute five thousand taels of Tibetan silver to a monastery - roughly equivalent to one thousand Han taels - specifying that a portion of the silver be allocated to each member of the saṅgha every year. The funds in these deposits need to be invested towards business ventures or loaned out with interest, since the original sum cannot be touched. As a result, certain individuals are designated to manage and preserve the funds. Should the number of the saṅgha be large and the available interest insufficient, it falls upon the custodian to compensate for the shortfall. Conversely, when the number [of the saṅgha] is small but the interest is high, the custodian is allowed to keep the surplus. In recent years, the number of monks in large monasteries has been decreasing steadily - since the rebellion in Outer Mongolia [of 1911-12] - but the interest income has risen, which guarantees that there is no shortage of funds. Thus, the administrators of the monasteries have gained significant wealth in less than a year, and many of them are using their financial success to secure these positions.

There is another type of commercial practice among farmers: every year at the end of autumn, once they bring the barley harvest home, farmers take advantage of their leisure time to purchase wool or sheepskin from nomadic

herders. After that, they shred the wool and twist it into yarn, which is then crafted into coarse fabric. Besides using it for their own needs, they can also profit by selling any extra they have. A friend of mine knows a muleteer whose wife is exceptionally skilled in this trade. She does not own any land and avoids using any of her husband's money. Yet, while ensuring her own needs are met, she also finds the time to sew two complete outfits for her husband each year and still manages to save a little money. They started as two people without a single coin to their name, but they have now successfully saved more than two thousand taels of Tibetan silver. The couple is also thinking about starting a tea business in the village of Kang 康, in the vicinity of Drépung Monastery. They talked about this with my friend, who, being kind-hearted, offered them encouragement. I truly admire the two of them and have expressed my appreciation a number of times.

Observing the people on the streets of Lhasa, it feels like everyone is well-versed in the art of commerce. Everyone depends on trade for their livelihood, everyone possesses knowledge of how to earn money, and it seems that most are enjoying financial success. I honestly wonder [82] if there exist people who fail to turn a profit. If they do exist, they are likely a minority. Thus, I believe that the economy of the Tibetan people relies heavily on trade.

### 5.3 Transportation

Several routes exist from Ü-Tsang to various regions, which I have mentioned in a concise manner in the introduction and the geography chapter. Here, I will consolidate and discuss the ideas outlined. Two primary roads connect Xikang to Chamdo: one travels south through Nyachuka, Litang, and Batang, while the other heads north through Dawu, Drango, Karze, Dzokchen,<sup>13</sup> and Dergé. There is an overland route from Yunnan to Tibet that includes a passage through Litang and Batang. There is another route that heads west directly from Batang to Chamdo. There are two main routes from Chamdo to Lhasa: the southern route that leads through Kongpo and other areas, and the northern route that goes through Riwochen<sup>14</sup> and nearby places. A major road stretches from Dawu, Drango, and Karze, moving northwest toward Jyekundo.<sup>15</sup> From Jyeku,<sup>16</sup> one can directly access Nakchukha, and from Nakchu, the route turns southward to Lhasa. Due to its flat terrain and abundant water and grass [83], this route is favored by all traders. And so, traders from places along the southern route, including Litang, often journey through Drakyap to reach Jyekundo, then proceed westward to Nakchu and ultimately to Lhasa. The stretch from Jyeku to Nakchu is primarily desolate wilderness. Given that it is entirely uninhabited, travelers must ensure they have all necessary provisions ready in advance. Traders must band together to form large groups along this route because of its closeness to Golok, where concerns about bandit raids persist. Jyekundo connects Sichuan in the east, Yunnan to the south, Nakchu in the west, and Qinghai to the north.

13 C. Zuoqin 佐勤; T. Rdzogs chen.

14 C. Riwoqin 日窩勤; T. Ri bo chen.

15 C. Jieguduo 結谷垛; T. Skye rgu mdo.

16 C. Jiegu 結谷; T. Skye rgu.

Traders from all directions converge at this location, establishing it as the most important hub in the Xikang transportation network. The primary road connecting Nakchu and Lhasa passes through Shamong,<sup>17</sup> Radreng,<sup>18</sup> and Penpo. Some travelers also take a route that veers slightly more to the east on the route to Drigung. Salt traders traveling on the northern route often choose this route because of the lower amount of people that use it and the greater availability of grass compared to the main road. A direct route also exists connecting Nakchu to Posterior Tibet, although I have not traveled along it and lack specific details about it.

I heard that two paths run from Nepal to Posterior Tibet, and there are three more that link Posterior Tibet to Anterior Tibet. I have not traveled any of these. Again, to travel from Phakri from India, one can take two different routes: the first route passes through Kalimpong, crossing Pedong,<sup>19</sup> Zongtangba 宗塘巴,<sup>20</sup> Rongli Chukha,<sup>21</sup> Lingtam,<sup>22</sup> Phadamchen,<sup>23</sup> Dzuluk,<sup>24</sup> and Nathang,<sup>25</sup> before crossing the Himalayas to reach the Dremojong border. The second route leads through Gangtok<sup>26</sup> and crosses the mountains to Dremojong. From Dremojong, it follows the valley straight up to Phakri. From Phakri, it is then possible to travel eastward to Bhutan or northward to Tsetang without needing to go through Phakri to access Lhasa. Traveling north of Phakri will take you to Gyantsé, while heading northeastward will lead you straight to Lhasa. Phakri serves as the most important hub along the southern routes of Tibet. Both Gyantsé and Shigatsé are important urban centers located in Posterior Tibet. As for the smaller trails, they are as numerous as the hairs found on a cow. Since I have not been able to travel those paths, I will not elaborate further.

[84] In Tibet, the primary modes of transport, apart from walking, include riding mules and horses. In contrast, yaks and donkeys are utilized for moving goods. Indeed, Tibetans seldom ride yaks or donkeys for extended journeys, although nomadic communities sometimes do ride yaks. Yet, on their pilgrimages to Lhasa, women and children from Qinghai are seen riding yaks. When Mongolians enter Tibet through the northern route, they sometimes ride camels for part of the journey. Still, upon reaching Nakchu, they switch to horses or oxen due to the arid and warm climate of Lhasa, as they fear that camels might become ill and perish. In Posterior Tibet,

17 C. Sangyong 桑庸; T. Sha mong. Present-day Xiangmao 香茂.

18 C. Rezhen 惹真; T. Rwa sreng.

19 C. Baidong 白東; Pedong is the last town along the Kalimpong-Lhasa route in present-day West Bengal before the Sikkim (Dremojong) border.

20 I was unable to reconstruct the Tibetan name of this town from Fazun's transliteration 'zong tangba 宗塘巴'. The sinograph *zong* 宗 likely corresponds to the Tibetan term *rdzong*, meaning 'fort' or 'district' in English.

21 C. Sangling quka 桑零曲喀. The name *Sangling quka* may refer to another location along the route between Pedong and Lingtam. The sinograph *sangling* 桑零 might represent Rongli, a town situated on the banks of the Rangpo Chu River. The sinograph *quka* 曲喀 appears to be a phonetic rendering of the Tibetan phrase *chu kha*, meaning 'riverbed' or 'waterbed'.

22 C. Lingdang 零當.

23 C. Badangjin 巴當僅.

24 C. Zelu 則鑪; also known as Zuluk.

25 C. Natang 拏塘; Snar thang.

26 C. Gangtuo 崗陀; T. Sgang thog.

goats and sheep are also utilized for moving goods, but they handle lighter burdens and progress somewhat slowly. Traveling from Meldro Gongkar<sup>27</sup> to Lhasa generally requires three to four days, but using a yak hide coracle boat<sup>28</sup> can shorten the trip to just two days. When making the trip from Lhasa to Jampa Ling<sup>29</sup> in Lhokha, many prefer to use boats, as they are twice as fast as horses, despite the restriction of boats only being able to move downstream. The route linking Phakri to Gyantsé is capable of supporting motor traffic, but this has not been implemented so far. Furthermore, it is feasible to fly from India [85] directly to Lhasa in just one day. Two years ago, following the death of a British man in Tibet, there was an attempt to arrange for a plane to retrieve his body, but the Tibetan authorities did not grant approval.<sup>30</sup> Once the Han-Tibetan air route is opened, it is likely that the British will fly on their own. By then, the Tibetan authorities will lack the power to prevent it, and I worry that even our central government might be powerless to intervene. Should a motor road be constructed connecting Qinghai and Nakchu, it is probable that the British will establish a comparable motor road from India to Tibet. In essence, the British in Tibet are keeping a vigilant eye on the actions of the Han, as they are concerned that a Han-Tibetan alliance could jeopardize their own interests. As a result, they are entirely dedicated to inciting tensions between the Han and the Tibetans while seeking to establish an Anglo-Tibetan alliance.

27 C. Meizhuo gangge 梅卓崗格; T. Mal dro gong mkhar.

28 C. pichuan 皮船.

29 C. Jiangba ling 絳巴凌; T. Byams pa gling. The chapel known as Jampa Ling, devoted to the Maitreya Bodhisattva, is located at the western side of Samye (T. Bsam yas) monastery. Tradition holds that the Jampa Ling was the venue for the Samye debate, an important event in the early dissemination of Buddhism in Tibet (T. snga dar) during the rule of Trisong Detsen in the late eighth century.

30 Fazun likely refers to Maurice Wilson (1898-1934), a British pilot, adventurer, and Christian visionary whose ill-fated attempt to climb Mount Everest all by himself remains a remarkable chapter in the history of mountaineering. Born in Yorkshire, Wilson served with distinction in World War I, earning the Military Cross for bravery. Wounded and struggling with postwar trauma, he turned to religious practices such as fasting and prayer, convinced of their transformative power. Determined to prove their efficacy, he set out to combine aviation and mountaineering to ascend Everest solo, despite lacking climbing experience. In May 1932, Wilson flew his Gypsy Moth airplane, *Ever Wrest*, to India via Cairo and Bahrain. When Nepalese authorities denied him permission to fly over their territory, his plane was impounded. Undeterred, he spent the winter in Darjeeling, where he hired three sherpas and devised a new plan. Disguised as a Buddhist monk to avoid arrest, Wilson and his team traveled to Tibet. From the Dza Rongphu (T. Rdza rong phu), a Nyingma monastery on Everest's northern slopes, he launched his daring solo assault. Armed with minimal gear and scant expertise, he climbed to over 6,700 meters (22,000 feet) but succumbed to exhaustion during his final push in May 1934. A year later, as Fazun prepared for his second journey into Tibet through Sikkim, Eric Shipton (1907-1977), the celebrated British explorer and mountaineer, discovered Wilson's frozen body in a crevasse, together with his diary. For a biography of Maurice Wilson, see Roberts 2013; see also the chapter dedicated to Wilson, titled 'The Riddle of the Snows', in Hopkirk 1982, 206-20.

## 6 Administration, Military, and Finance

**Summary** 6.1 Organization. – 6.2 Administration. – 6.3 Regional Administration. – 6.4 Military Equipment. – 6.5 Finances.

### 6.1 Organization

[86] Gaining insight into Tibet's administrative, military, and financial systems requires an initial understanding of the structure of its diverse governmental institutions. The political organization of Tibet is quite simple, and I will provide a concise overview of it here. In Tibet, authority over politics and religion is centralized in the hands of the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama is responsible for making all major decisions across different spheres. Thus, the authority of the Dalai Lama in Tibet is comparable to that of an emperor during the time of absolute monarchy in our country.<sup>1</sup> During the reign of the third Dalai Lama, although he was the ultimate authority in both political and religious matters in Tibet, he delegated all matters to the Regent of Tibet and did not have much power on his own. After the passing of the fifth Dalai Lama, the Regent of Tibet, Sangyé Gyatso,<sup>2</sup> maintained the secrecy of his death for over ten years. This resulted in disputes throughout Tibet and with the rulers of Mongolia. In the end, the Regent was assassinated, which led the sixth Dalai Lama to escape into exile. It was only with the rise of the seventh Dalai Lama that the tensions

<sup>1</sup> C. woguo 我國.

<sup>2</sup> C. Sanjie jiacuo 桑傑絳錯; T. Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653-1705). The third and final Regent, or Desi (T. Sde srid) of the fifth Dalai Lama, Ngawang Losang Gyatso (T. Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, 1617-1682), who served as the regent of Tibet from 1679 until his death.



began to ebb and flow like surging waves. During that period, the Dalai Lama sought refuge in Xikang, while the Qianlong Emperor sent troops to Tibet to restore order amidst the turmoil. Following this, the Qianlong Emperor conferred singular authority upon the Dalai Lama regarding Tibet.

To address political concerns, the Dalai Lama also selected four members of the nobility as his assistants, while the Qing court appointed a resident Amban<sup>3</sup> in Tibet to supervise and facilitate all operations. While the Dalai Lama held the official position governing both religious and political matters, the actual authority was exercised by the Amban. Every action taken by the Dalai Lama required prior notification and approval from the Qing court through the Amban before it could be executed. A remarkable case in point is the death of the twelfth Dalai Lama. The cold and leg pain he endured from the high altitude at the Dalai's Mountain prompted him to seek a move to the Norbulingka,<sup>4</sup> yet the Qing court denied his request, which ultimately resulted in his death. The Dalai Lama [87] gained actual control over the administration only after the expulsion of the Han officials and the division between the Han and the Tibetans in the early years of the Republic of China [1912]. When a Dalai Lama passes away, and until the next incarnation formally assumes power – a Dalai Lama must first pass the *gëshé* exams before taking charge of political matters – the interim administration of both religious and political issues is held by the Regents from five different establishments: 1) Tengyeling,<sup>5</sup> 2) Radreng, 3) Tsemonling,<sup>6</sup> 4) Kundeling,<sup>7</sup> and 5) Dédruk.<sup>8</sup> An incident caused the abolition of Tengyeling, which has left only four still in place.

When the Dalai Lama is in power, these four figures, even with their honorable titles, do not wield any true authority. At present, Radreng is designated as the representative of the Dalai Lama. A Tibetan Regent, who may be a monk or a layperson, operates under the leadership of the Dalai

**3** C. Dayuan 大員; T. am ban; M. amban. The Manchu term Amban refers to the commissioners, mainly of Manchu origin, appointed by the imperial court in Beijing to represent the Qing emperors in Lhasa. From 1727 to 1912, when Chinese officials were expelled, ambans were typically assigned in pairs and claimed extensive authority in Tibet. However, their influence declined significantly after the mid-nineteenth century.

**4** C. Moni yuan 摩尼園; T. Nor bu gling kha. The Norbulingka, or 'Jewel Park', was the summer residence of the Dalai Lamas and a seasonal administrative center for the Tibetan government. Situated about two miles west of Lhasa's traditional city center, the site was established in 1755 by the seventh Dalai Lama, Kelsang Gyatso (1708-1757), around a medicinal spring. The main palace was completed in 1783 under the eighth Dalai Lama. Over time, the Norbulingka expanded to include residences, administrative offices, gardens, pools, and an arboretum. From the eighth Dalai Lama onward, it served as the Dalai Lama's summer retreat, with the government moving there annually on the eighteenth day of the third lunar month. The grounds also hosted the Shotön (T. Zho ston) festival, famous for its Tibetan drama performances.

**5** C. Dunjie ling 敦吉凌; T. Bstan rgyas gling.

**6** C. Zemu ling 則木凌; T. Tshe smon gling.

**7** C. Gunde ling 滾得凌; T. Kun bde gling.

**8** C. Dezhu 得諸; T. Sde drug.

Lama. The present Regent is a nephew of the former Dalai Lama.<sup>9</sup> While the Regent holds both religious and political power, his main focus tends to be on religious matters, while the political responsibilities are handled by the Kashag.<sup>10</sup> The Kashag is the office where the Four Kalöns<sup>11</sup> convene to discuss and oversee administrative matters. The executive body consists of one monk and three lay officials. One member is stationed in Chamdo to handle all political matters related to Xikang. This position, referred to in Tibetan as 'Dome Chikhyap',<sup>12</sup> means 'Governor General of Xikang'. The other three members reside permanently in Lhasa.

Following the Dalai Lama's passing and the reinstatement of legitimate rule to Tibet, a single representative along with a small group of administrative staff has been assigned to Chamdo, whereas all four *kalöns* continue to operate from Lhasa. Beneath the *kalöns*, there are various secretaries who help handle political inquiries, along with a number of clerks. This office functions under a strict code of discretion. No information is disclosed to external parties until a formal statement is issued. Those clerks who are aware of the issues are too afraid to disclose any information. Directly opposite the Kashag, located on the Dalai's Mountain, one can find a religious institution. The Tibetan Regent oversees this institution, which is staffed with a number of secretaries and clerks. The Kashag administers a range of entities, including military, financial, and local political institutions. Still, each institution operates independently and has little direct connection with the Kashag. Two financial agencies exist: one located at the base of the Dalai's Mountain and the other situated atop the Jokhang Temple.<sup>13</sup> Their distinct functions will be elaborated on later.

Numerous types of local administrative offices exist as well. The largest of these is the main administrative center located in Chamdo, which is responsible for supervising Xikang [88]. Following closely in importance are the offices in Dergé and the agency located in Khyungpo Tengchen,<sup>14</sup> where officials appointed as chief administrators are required to possess at least the rank of fourth class. Below are county officials, whose ranks range from the fifth to the seventh class and are not rigidly specified. A fourth-rank position is necessary for both senior military leaders and battalion commanders. The ranks of platoon leaders can vary, however, as they typically fall from the fifth to the seventh class. In addition, the telegraph bureau in Tibet is managed by a director, who is designated as

**9** Here, Fazun is referring to Langdün Künga Wangchuk (T: Glang mdun kun dga' dbang phyug, 1907-1985), a nephew of the thirteenth Dalai Lama, Tupten Gyatso. Born into the influential Yapzhi Langdün (T. Yab gzhis glang mdun) family, Künga Wangchuk began serving in the Tibetan government at the young age of fourteen. By 1926, he had become Prime Minister of the Tibetan government, a position he held until 1940. After the death of the thirteenth Dalai Lama in 1933, Künga Wangchuk worked closely with Regent Radreng Rinpoché, guiding Tibet through a period of political uncertainty. In 1939, amid internal conflicts, he stepped down from his position as Prime Minister but retained an official role in the government. Cf. Harris and Shakya 2003, 40-2.

**10** C. Gaxia 戛霞; T. Bka' shag.

**11** C. Si galun 四戛倫; T. Bka' blon bzhi. *Kalön shi* is a collective name for the four Cabinet Ministers of the Tibetan administration.

**12** C. Duomei jiqiao 垛梅吉喬; T. Mdo smad spyi khyab; 'Commissioner of Amdo', where Dome (T. Mdo smad) is another term for Amdo (T. A mdo), hence 'Governor General of Northeastern Tibet'.

**13** C. Dazhao si 大招寺; T. Jo khang.

**14** C. Qiongbo dengqin 窮薄登勤; T. Khyung po steng chen.

holding a fifth-rank position. There is then a medical institute, led by a director who holds a fourth-rank level position and is responsible for both astronomical computations and calendar compilation. When it comes to reserve talents, whether they are monks or laypersons, they are far too many to enumerate. A later chapter will address religious matters and the positions of high-ranking lamas in various monasteries. Within the Tibetan aristocracy, those with the titles of *gong* 公 and *taiyi* 台己 merely have noble designations, yet they do not wield real power, despite their considerable wealth. Moreover, the attendants of great *tulkus*<sup>15</sup> are often ranked with the fourth class. Usually, they have neither political influence nor a salary, but they are accountable for the administration of wealth and people within the sphere of their *tulku's* reach.

## 6.2 Administration

As stated earlier, the administration of Tibet is entirely under the control of the Dalai Lama. Consequently, the Dalai Lama's decisions dictate all matters related to administration. During the lifetime of the former Dalai Lama, I learned that when major situations occurred in Tibet, local administrative offices would first relay them to their direct superiors. These cases would in turn be forwarded by these offices to the Kashag, and the Kashag would then submit them to the Dalai Lama. The directives from the Dalai Lama outlined which office was responsible for handling the issue, as well as whether a meeting needed to be arranged for deliberation. The designated office needed to submit the suggested protocols to the Dalai Lama for his consent prior to putting them into action. If a meeting was sanctioned, it was led by the Tibetan Regent along with the Four Kalöns [89], followed by the Chikhyap Khenpo<sup>16</sup> - who managed all religious matters and ranked above all four social classes - and only then by the senior secretaries. Officials holding positions of the fourth rank or lower were required to wait outside until given instructions and were not allowed to join the assembly. Following thorough deliberations among the Tibetan Regent and the *kalöns*, the opinions of officials ranked below the fourth class were then solicited. Those who had opinions were permitted to share their thoughts as well. If an agreement was reached, the suggested resolution would be formally written up and presented to the Dalai Lama for his endorsement. Still, it was required to provide at least three different proposals for the Dalai Lama's consideration, as it was strictly against the rules to submit only one or two options. In the event that the Dalai Lama was dissatisfied with all the options offered, they would be sent back for reassessment. This prompted the need for new alternatives that did not rely on the previous options. After receiving approval, the resolution was put into action.

**15** C. huofu 活佛; T. sprul sku; Fazun resorts to the term *huofu*, literally 'living buddha', to refer to *tulkus* (T. sprul sku), incarnate lamas. The term *tulku* is the Tibetan translation from the Sanskrit *nirmāṇakāya*, 'emanation body', and refers to the first of the three bodies of a buddha.

**16** C. Jiqiao kanbu 機喬堪布; T. Spyi khyab mkhan po. The Chikhyap Khenpo, 'Chief Abbot', was the leader of the monastic division of the Tibetan government in Lhasa. This role included overseeing monastic officials, managing the Dalai Lama's household, and supervising the Dalai Lama's private storeroom.

After the Dalai Lama's passing, Radreng acted as the intermediary. In significant matters – like the suppression of the Communists the year before – when suggestions were put forward, it was often mandated that a National Assembly<sup>17</sup> be convened for deliberation. The entity referred to as National Assembly comprised the Tibetan Regent, officials from various institutions, the *khenpos*<sup>18</sup> of the three great monasteries, along with other prominent figures. All members were required to convene, engage in mutual discussions, and offer their individual insights. The outcomes achieved [90] were later presented to Radreng, who would provide the necessary approvals for advancing the proceedings. If the convocation of a National Convention<sup>19</sup> was not approved and only a meeting for deliberations was authorized, the procedure would continue as it was during the lifetime of the Dalai Lama. When faced with critical situations that local administrative offices could not resolve – such as murder or theft – it was necessary to resort to the Kashag. In situations involving murder, when the perpetrator was not a figure of authority in the local administration, the Kashag would specify the protocol that needed to be followed. With the exception of the Dalai Lama or his representative, the Kashag had supreme authority.

The Kashag managed all legal disputes involving both officials and civilians, which encompassed matters such as promotions, demotions, requests for extended or temporary leave for officials, and extending even to the granting of horse passes for official journeys. In the Tibetan administration, when officials of aristocratic rank were appointed to specific sites for particular duties, they would never dare to directly refuse the Kashag's directives, even if they faced hardships or other challenges. In the event that they tried to convey their refusal through their superiors, or made a small procedural mistake, they would likely face serious repercussions – usually a financial penalty – or even dismissal from their position. The proper course of action was to call upon the residences of the Kashag members and softly appeal for reconsideration. Still, unless money was involved, the chances of success were minimal. This constituted the singular avenue for the Kashag, among others, to build their fortune.

Last year, while the eldest son of a noble family was unwell in India, his younger sibling was assigned to Dergé. The younger brother wished to visit his ailing sibling in India but dared not directly resign from his appointment with the Kashag. Instead, he covertly lobbied Radreng. Radreng agreed and instructed the Kashag to give him a new assignment. Enraged by the interference, the Kashag brought in the younger sibling, chastised him sharply, and turned a blind eye to his plea. Thus, they prohibited him from traveling to both India and Kham. Concerned about the consequences, the family called upon the residences of the Kashag members, offering bribes and pleading for leniency. While these members were willing to lend a hand in private discussions, none took the initiative to advocate for them when it involved the entire Kashag. Thus, the family grew increasingly anxious.

17 C. Guomin dahui 國民大會; T. Tshogs 'du rgyas 'dzoms. The Tsondu Gyéndzom is the largest assembly of the Tibetan administration prior to the Chinese occupation. For the composition of the National Assembly, cf. Goldstein 1989, 19-20.

18 C. kanbu 堪布; T. mkhan po; S. upādhyāya; P. upajjhāya. The *khenpo* is a senior monk authorized to confer both novice and full ordinations. To serve in this role, a monk must have held higher ordination for at least ten years.

19 C. Guomin huiyi 國民會議.

Eventually, with a more significant amount of bribery involved, the *kalöns* became more forgiving. They reprimanded and imposed penalties on the family, yet still they allowed the younger brother to proceed to Kham. While he wished to travel to India to assess his brother's condition, [91] he ultimately had to forsake his sick brother under the pressure of those in power.

There was then the attendant of a certain *khenpo*, who sought an official appointment within the Tibetan government. He traveled to the Inner Lands to advocate for his cause and also appealed to Radreng, who consented and instructed the Kashag to assign him a position. The members of the Kashag were infuriated by this infringement of their protocol. Still, the *kalöns* had covertly received numerous bribes. Even though the Kashag found this violation of protocol unacceptable, they had no choice but to grant the attendant the position. They postponed the issue for some time, but in the end, it was settled. There was then someone with a low-raking, sinecure position under the seventh rank who falsely claimed to be at the fourth or fifth rank. When told, this incident is indeed somewhat comical.

Ultimately, the Kashag's power in Tibet can sometimes overshadow that of the Tibetan Regent. In times of conflict, the Kashag makes all critical decisions concerning where to deploy troops, who will command them, and how to confront or protect against enemy attacks. The Kashag even holds the power to designate individuals responsible for collecting grain or taxes in specific areas. Thus, even though the Kashag is formally responsible for political governance, it actually possesses considerable control over military issues.

### 6.3 Regional Administration

In Tibet, the various regions are governed by county commissioners, yet not every region necessarily corresponds to a large county; some may only include a handful of villages. In regions where nomadic lifestyles prevail, the territories are vast, yet the inhabitants are few and far between. Even so, these commissioners perform functions comparable to those of a county administration, which is why they are referred to as county offices in name only. In the Tibetan language, this position is referred to as *dzongpön*.<sup>20</sup> The residence of the commissioner, a tower-like structure, is called *dzong*,<sup>21</sup> while the commissioner living there is referred to as *pön*.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the combined term *dzongpön* translates to 'commissioner of the tower fortress'. Their main responsibilities involve resolving civil disputes, which also represent the majority of their earnings. Their responsibilities also extend to the collection of grain and the assignment of corvée labor. Commissioners in charge of the main routes are also responsible for tax collection. This specific type of *dzongpön*, responsible for managing these three duties, holds one of the most lucrative appointments. Still, if a designated tax commissioner [92] is also appointed, a portion of the profits generated by the *dzongpön* is allocated to this special commissioner. Tax collection offices, for

20 C. songben 聳奔; T. rdzong dpon.

21 C. song 聳; T. rdzong.

22 C. ben 奔; T. dpon.

example, include Khyungpo Tengchen located in Xikang, Nakchu along the western route, and Phakri situated on the southern route. Reports suggest that both Nakchu and Phakri are managed by two commissioners each, yet it remains unclear if their tax responsibilities are distinctly or collectively handled. Khyungpo Tengchen has only one commissioner, which makes this position the most financially lucrative.

Usually, this post is held by someone of the fourth or fifth rank - a seventh-rank commissioner can only dream of being in such a post. In other regions, the main responsibilities of *dzongpöns* include settling disputes and collecting grain. In remote villages, where visits from commissioners are uncommon, their responsibilities are minimal, which results in restricted opportunities for making a profit. Local commissioners govern the masses with the ferocity of a tiger amidst a flock of sheep. Even though they are unable to carry out the death penalty, they bind, beat, detain, and discipline as they please. It has been noted earlier that women in Tibet possess a minimal sense of shame. Still, local commissioners behave as they wish while chasing after romantic or sexual opportunities. A young woman, be she a virgin or otherwise, may find herself marked with a whip if she catches their eye. As night falls, she has no choice but to comply. This is yet another peculiar custom found in the regions of Tibet.

#### 6.4 Military Equipment

The phrase 'military equipment' appears to be best employed to designate a military organization that is properly equipped. Yet, Tibet's military consists of merely a few tens of thousands of undisciplined troops, barely trained in basic drills, along with a loosely assembled mob of local recruits - truly a mockery of what one would consider "military equipment". To call "soldiers" individuals who can only manage to fire a gun, feign a charge, or accept rations while wearing a makeshift uniform, regardless of their aptitude, numbers, or training; to call whatever rudimentary firearms, meager ammunition, or locally scavenged supplies that support these troops "provisions and armaments"; or to classify items such as Tibetan daggers, bamboo arrows, primitive firelocks, and even wooden guns [93] as military equipment - to do so is to redefine these terms beyond all reason. Under such a standard, Tibet can only barely claim to possess a military force. I have already discussed the home life and living standards of these soldiers in Chapter 4.

The Tibetan military was founded in the early years of the Republic of China, after the Han army's defeat and subsequent retreat from Tibet, as well as the Dalai Lama's return from India, which prompted the swift gathering of a small, temporary military force. It is recounted that at that time, their total strength was no greater than twenty thousand men, and their arsenal consisted in part of some firearms bought, on occasion, from India, along with antiquated ammunitions left by the Han army. In the eighth or ninth year of the Republic [1919-20], during the conflict in Xikang, they continued to employ the old strategy, that is, they hastily assembled men

from the three locations of Shotalhosum<sup>23</sup> to confront the Han forces. In the end, the Han army suffered defeat, while the Tibetans claimed victory. The Han army's defeat is said to have resulted from discord between the frontline units and the rear guard. As the frontline faced a siege, the forces in the back refused to send reinforcements. This resulted in their downfall. The discord arose between the frontline forces and the rear units due to the actions of a deputy officer, who was the brother-in-law of a prominent figure at the forefront. While seeking supplies in Xikang, this deputy officer, emboldened by the influence of his brother-in-law, behaved with unchecked arrogance. His remarks, laced with scornful sarcasm and contempt, offended key figures from the rear units. This led to the creation of an unspoken rift between the two sides. Therefore, when the besieged front lines appealed for help from the rear, the rear retaliated by employing public relations to settle their private grudges. In doing so, they dismissed the frontlines' cries for help with derisive mockery. As a consequence, the front lines broke down, which in turn led to the fall of Chamdo, the surrender of arms, and the detention of troops. That military leaders often disregard the welfare of their country and nation, acting out of sheer impulse and using their official positions for private vengeance, a behavior that can lead to the loss of territory and even threaten the collapse of the nation, this issue, I fear, has been a pervasive affliction that has plagued the world's countries throughout history.

In the eighteenth or nineteenth year of the Republic [1929-30], during the battle at Dargyé<sup>24</sup> monastery in Xikang, the Tibetan authorities adopted an approach with three distinct components. Firstly, they employed their customary method of assembling troops at sites like Shotalhosum to confront the enemy. Secondly, they [94] conscripted and trained additional troops near Lhasa in order to gear up for battle. Thirdly, they dispatched agents to India to secure firearms and ammunition supplies. Moreover, the British proffered further resources. This combined effort formed the current force of some thirty to forty thousand men. Among these troops, some were garrisoned along the border between Chamdo and Dergé in Xikang, while others were recovering in places such as Chamdo. A contingent remained in Lhasa, and others enjoyed temporary leave at their homes. There was a significant lack of defensive deployments along the routes connecting Posterior Tibet to India. This suggests that the Tibetan authorities prioritized their defense against the Han over any threats posed by the British. This difference illustrates the degree of trust that Tibetans had in the Han as opposed to the British. Today, the esteemed individuals that have been positioned in Tibet appear to be in a deep slumber, showing a complete lack of vigilance. So, I find myself caught in a dilemma. Expressing admiration for the Tibetans could potentially irritate some folks. Still, failing to speak up my opinion would undermine my conscience. Therefore, I will avoid discussing the virtues or faults of the Tibetans at this moment and will instead acknowledge the effectiveness of the British, possibly!

**23** C. Xia da luo 霞達羅; T. Sho star lho gsum; the toponym Shotalhosum refers to a region in the Chamdo Prefecture, which comprises three main districts (T. rdzong): Shopando (T. Sho pa mdo), Pembar (T. Dpal 'bar), and Lhodzong (T. Lho rdzong). Known for its strategic and administrative importance, the region served as the recruitment base for a local militia during the 1917-20 Tibetan-Chinese conflict in the Kham province. See Kobayashi 2018, 139-71.

**24** C. Daji si 大吉寺; T. Dar rgyas dgon; on the Dargyé incident, see Kobayashi, 157-60.

Funding for Tibetan troops is largely sourced from taxes - I could not figure out the specific annual total. The funding for soldiers deployed to various regions is primarily raised on a temporary and local basis by administrative bodies, most notably in the Dergé district. This approach to raising funds enabled individuals in higher roles to claim the majority of the earnings, which left ordinary soldiers with negligible benefits. Such practices will almost always result in a catastrophic outcome for any army lacking discipline, correct? In Lhasa, the management of military funds is primarily managed by the Kashag, while the financial office situated under the Dalai's Mountain is responsible for direct accounting and disbursements. The financial governing body is known as Phogkhang,<sup>25</sup> where *phog*<sup>26</sup> refers to 'salaries' or 'rations', and *khang*<sup>27</sup> denotes a 'building' or an 'office'. This institution is responsible for allocating stipends for notable figures and provisions for military personnel. A branch of the Phogkhang is also located in Chamdo, as the bulk of military forces are stationed in Xikang.

[95] To protect themselves from the common threat of bandits in Tibet, soldiers will have generally learned to handle firearms well ahead of their military service. Each household is allowed to possess firearms, and it is customary to carry them in public spaces. Thus, they gain expertise in shooting from a young age. The training they receive as soldiers, however, consists mostly of forming lines, calling roll, arranging ranks, and marching routines. I have not come across any instruction or practice regarding shooting techniques from either a kneeling or prone position. When it comes to assessing terrain, arranging ranks, digging trenches, or building defensive structures, such notions remain entirely out of reach, and exist only in their wildest dreams, much less in any structured instruction or training. For this reason, I contend that their approach to military practices is unworthy of being called "military equipped". My fellow countrymen who have visited Tibet would likely concur, would they not?

## 6.5 Finances

In Tibet, there are two financial institutions. Nestled at the base of the Dalai's Mountain, the first is the Phogkhang. This institution receives funds from grain taxes and disburses them as salaries and rations. The detailed annual revenue and expenditure figures are unclear to me, since I made a point to avoid discussions about political or sensitive issues during my studies in Lhasa. Indeed, Tibetans are highly suspicious. Fostering a sense of mistrust in them would disrupt even the most serene study of holy scriptures, let alone any other pursuits. It took a great deal of effort and hardship for me to gain entry into Tibet, which led me to resolve to avoid any actions that might draw attention, especially before I had fully mastered my own studies. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, Master Dayong was denied entry to Tibet because his imposing demeanor provoked alarm. He spent his last days [96] in Xikang, where he eventually died. How, could I, a junior scholar,

25 C. Pokang 坡康; T. Phogs khang; 'Payroll Office', with *phog* (T. phogs) meaning salary, annuity, emolument.

26 C. po 坡; T. phogs.

27 C. kang 康; T. khang.

be so bold as to repeat this misstep? Therefore, in relation to the military and financial matters of Tibet, I have recorded only what I received from reliable informants, avoiding any conjecture or unverified details.

The second financial institution is situated on top of the Jokhang Temple. This institution administers funds generated from alms given by donors<sup>28</sup> during the Great Prayer Festival in the first month and the Lesser Prayer Festival in the second month. Moreover, it also manages silver coins offered from various regions to the image of Śākyamuni Buddha located at the Jokhang. Reportedly, the Dalai Lama has financial deposits there as well. This financial institution is the wealthiest, and its sole enterprise revolves around lending money at interest. The funds that are left over after the collection of interests and the distribution of alms money are retained by those responsible for managing the institution. Currently, as the number of borrowers decreases and interest rates increase, the leftover funds have grown significantly, which enables anyone who is affiliated with that institution to accumulate fortunes in less than a year. Therefore, every prominent figure in Tibet is making efforts to secure a position there. When a vacancy arises [97], it is reported that fierce lobbying and substantial bribery ensue in a frenzied competition for selection. Ultimately, however, the process of selection tends to favor only those who have the closest ties to the Tibetan Regent. Others who rely on bribery alone still inevitably fail.

I was told that two years ago, in the latest round of official appointments, a *tsédzung*<sup>29</sup> from a hereditary family – a monastic official of the seventh rank or lower – was summoned by His Holiness Radreng owing to his familial connections. His Holiness directed him to write a formal letter of request for the position, which Radreng would subsequently endorse on his behalf. Yet, this *tsédzung* was of simple and few desires, and also possessed an understanding of the law of cause and effect. Thus, he refused to make profits from the funds of the greater saṅgha. His foster father, a man of modest desires, was renowned for his generosity and honesty and enjoyed a strong reputation in Tibet for his integrity and loyalty. The *tsédzung* sought advice from his foster father concerning the position. His foster father strongly advised against it, reasoning, “You are still quite young, your family business is already large, and you have few dependents. What compels someone to chase after that position?”. Heeding the advice of his foster father, the *tsédzung* opted against submitting a request, prompting Radreng to appoint someone else instead. This episode exemplifies the old adage, “Having connections at court makes securing an official post easy”, a principle that has consistently held true in Tibetan history.

The institution’s lending regulations allow for loans only when backed by equivalent assets in the form of goods or property, or by endorsements from two affluent officials. If these criteria are not met, applicants will not be eligible to receive a loan. Should the borrower miss the deadline for interest repayment, they will face additional penalties on the interest owed. If the borrower cannot fulfill the repayment, the institution will confiscate the collateral or insist that the guarantors pay off the debt. Hence, the institution is never faced with financial losses. It grows wealthier and

28 C. shizhu 施主; S. dānapati; T. sbyin bdag. From the Sanskrit *dāna*, ‘giving’, and *pati*, ‘master’, hence, ‘master of giving’, ‘donor’, ‘patron’, ‘benefactor’.

29 C. zizhong 咨仲; T. rtse drung; ‘monastic official’.

expands by the day. I have not verified whether the funds can be allocated for military expenditures. It appears unlikely that such allocations would take place unless [98] they are deemed absolutely essential! This institution employs numerous staff, including accountants, secretaries, and others who report to the director, yet I lack information regarding the exact number of employees and the total amount of funds under their management.



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## 7 Religion, Education, and Culture

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**Summary** 7.1 Religious Institutions. – 7.2 Culture. – 7.3 Center of Gravity.

All Tibetans have a religious consciousness, and they regard Buddhism as their state religion. The majority are unaware that Buddhism also exists in our Inner Lands, as well as in Japan, Southeast Asia, and various other foreign lands – except for a small minority who know about it. They assert that after the demise of Buddhism in India, it was only Tibet that preserved it. They hold the view that Buddhism is the highest and unsurpassed teaching, and that its tenets are profound and incomparable. Even those who know about the existence of Buddhism in places like the Inner Lands or Japan tend to view its study there as lacking in completeness, and assert that Tibet is the only place that has thoroughly investigated its depths. For those on the



outside, this may smack of provincial arrogance.<sup>1</sup> And yet, when investigated further, it becomes clear that contemporary Buddhist scholarship elsewhere does not match their level of thoroughness. Yet still, after all, this is just like a blind cat unexpectedly coming across a dead rat – they just stumbled upon it.<sup>2</sup> If you have a conversation about Buddhist learning with a certain Tibetan *gëshés*, it appears that no question, however intricate, lies beyond their capacity to elucidate. Moreover, they possess the ability to rapidly present examples and counterexamples, which leaves no room for rebuttal. This is a phenomenon I have never encountered in our Inner Lands before. Likewise, I observed several Buddhist speakers from Japan who visited the Inner Lands to give talks. Still, their scholarship did not impress me [99] as being especially noteworthy.

When Tibetan *gëshés* engage in debate, if they discuss the Abhidharma they must adhere to the Abhidharma, and so all discourse on the nature and scope of phenomena must be predicated upon the Abhidharma. Should someone take part in an Abhidharma debate and respond by digressing to the tenets of the Cittamātra or Madhyamaka, it is regarded as a defeat. Similarly, debates on Sautrāntika<sup>3</sup> tenets must be consistent with Sautrāntika positions on the nature and characteristics of phenomena. And so, when discussing the Cittamātra and the Madhyamaka, one must likewise remain consistent with the tenets of the Cittamātra and the Madhyamaka.

**1** Here Fazun uses the *chengyu* 成語 or idiom *Yelang zida* 夜郎自大, “Yelang thinks highly of itself”. The idiom originates from the *Han Shu* 漢書 (Book of Han), which documents the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). The idiom refers to the historical anecdote of Yelang, a small, isolated kingdom in present-day southwestern China. Its ruler, unaware of the Han Empire’s vastness, infamously asked a Han envoy whether Yelang or Han was larger. This episode became emblematic of provincial hubris – the delusion of grandeur caused by ignorance of the wider world. Figuratively, the idiom critiques individuals or groups who inflate their significance due to limited views, mistaking insularity for superiority. Here, Fazun invokes this idiom to characterize the perceived cultural chauvinism of some Tibetans who regard their Buddhist traditions as uniquely profound and exclusive, particularly in contrast to Buddhist traditions in China, Japan, and beyond. While Fazun acknowledges that such attitudes may appear to outsiders as self-aggrandizing – similar to Yelang’s arrogance – he simultaneously concedes a paradoxical truth: Tibetan Buddhist scholarship is unusually rigorous in many respects. Still, he attributes this distinction less to intentional superiority than to historical accident. In the following paragraph, Fazun likens this irony to a “blind cat stumbling on a dead rat”. He suggests that the thoroughness of Tibetan Buddhism was a fortunate accident rather than a product of intentional merit. By deploying *Yelang zida*, Fazun critiques provincial arrogance while tempering his censure with an admission of Tibet’s accidental scholarly eminence. In so doing, he weaves a soft critique of Tibet’s cultural exceptionalism.

**2** *C. Xia mao zhuang zhe si lao shu* 瞎貓撞着死老鼠; translating to “A blind cat stumbles upon a dead rat”. This Chinese proverb mocks success that is achieved by chance or without merit. This phrase illustrates a picture of a blind cat – unable to hunt – encountering a lifeless rat by sheer chance. This encounter represents success that comes from luck rather than from skill or effort. The proverb examines results that are not rooted in merit, mostly in scenarios where success is attributed to random factors. In contrast to the English saying “even a blind squirrel finds a nut”, which has a more humorous connotation, the Chinese proverb typically suggests ridicule towards the unskilled individual who benefits. Here, Fazun points out the contradiction in Tibet’s thorough doctrines, proposing that their notable qualities stem more from auspicious historical developments than from conscious mastery of the fate of Buddhism after its demise in India.

**3** *C. Jingbu* 經部; *T. Mdo sde pa*; ‘Followers of the sūtras’. The Sautrāntika is one of the schools of the mainstream Buddhist tradition in India. This school is distinguished from the Ābhidharmikas, referred to as ‘Followers of the Abhidharma’, who derive their teachings from Abhidharma texts like the *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā*. The Sautrāntikas, often viewed as a breakaway from the Sarvāstivāda tradition, opposed the Abhidharma, asserting that it did not reflect the words of the Buddha (*S. buddhavacana*). Instead, they aligned themselves with the doctrine of momentariness (*S. kṣāṇikavāda*), which contends that only actions taking place in the present moment are truly existent. This viewpoint further separated them from the Sarvāstivādins.

When one strays from the topic or provides answers that avoid addressing the question, all such instances amount to a defeat. Additionally, during debates in Tibet, all statements must follow the reasoning modes of the science of dialectics,<sup>4</sup> which involves both refutation<sup>5</sup> and establishment.<sup>6</sup> Hence, random statements are not permitted. Respondents are expected to conform to the logical framework outlined in major treatises on dialectics,<sup>7</sup> constrained to one of four responses:<sup>8</sup> unestablished,<sup>9</sup> uncertain,<sup>10</sup> contradictory,<sup>11</sup> or accepted.<sup>12</sup> Any other response outside of these four alternatives<sup>13</sup> is inadmissible.

Not only is this rigorous style of debate missing in the Inner Lands, but it seems to be lacking even in Japan, which boasts of being the place where Buddhism thrives the most! The situation is even less noteworthy in the Southeast Asian island regions, where Hīnayāna Buddhism is the norm. Therefore, I believe that the way in which they organize their studies within the Buddhadharmā, the themes they investigate, and the conclusions they reach – right knowledge and right view – are unrivaled when set against

4 C. Yinming 因明; T. Gtan tshigs kyi rig pa; from the Sanskrit Hetuvidyā, the ‘science of reasoning’.

5 C. nengpo 能破; S. pratiṣedha; T. dgag pa. In English, ‘negation’, ‘refutation’. In Buddhist logic, *pratiṣedha* represents the negation or refutation of a position put forth by an opponent.

6 C. nengli 能立; S. sādhanā; T. sgrub pa; ‘proof’. In syllogistic reasoning, the term *sādhanā* conveys the sense of a proof statement, namely that which establishes the syllogism.

7 Unlike the earlier sentence in the manuscript, where the term *Yinming* 因明 is not underlined, and, therefore, must be intended in a general sense, in this sentence Fazun underlines the term, which, in this case, identifies a genre of works on Buddhist Dialectics: “Yinming lunli de geshi 因明論理的格式”, which I translate here as the “logical framework outlined in major treatises on dialectics”.

8 In this passage, Fazun explains that debates in Tibet must follow established dialectical methods, particularly refutation (S. *dūṣaṇa*) and proof (S. *sādhanā*). Random or imprecise responses are not permitted. Instead, respondents are bound by a particular theoretical framework, which allows for only four types of replies to a *prasaṅga*, the Sanskrit term for ‘consequence’ (T. thal ‘gyur): 1) Unestablished (T. ma grub pa; S. *asiddha*): When the reason fails to prove the proposed property; 2) Uncertain (T. ma nges pa; S. *anaikāntika*): When the reason neither proves nor refutes the property; 3) Contradictory (T. ‘gal ba; S. *virodha*): When the reason directly implies the opposite of the intended property; 4) Accepted (T. ‘dod pa; S. *abhyupeta*): When the respondent agrees with the conclusion; Fazun notes that this systematic approach to debate, which Tibet has inherited from India, is entirely absent in China and seemingly nonexistent in Japan, despite its long Buddhist history. Tibetan debate draws heavily on Indian Hetuvidyā, particularly its classification of faulty reasoning (S. *hetvābhāsa*). By formalizing these four types of responses, Tibetan scholastics transformed debate into a clear and rigorous exercise, ensuring that arguments remained logical and theoretically sound. This strict adherence to dialectical norms illustrates the importance of debate within the Tibetan scholastic tradition and, Fazun argues, sets it apart from other Buddhist cultures. On the four types of responses to a *prasaṅga* cf., in particular, Onoda 1988, 36-41.

9 In Fazun’s Chinese, *da bucheng* 答不成, ‘the response is unestablished’ (S. *asiddha*; T. ma grub pa).

10 Fazun employs the phrase *da buding* 答不定, “the response is uncertain” (S. *anaikāntika*; T. ma nges pa).

11 For the third response, Fazun offers *da xiangwei* 答相違, “the response is contradictory” (S. *virodha*; T. ‘gal ba).

12 The fourth response is finally rendered as *da shi xu* 答是許, “the response is accepted” (S. *abhyupeta*; T. ‘dod pa); the phrase *shi xu* 是許, with *shi* 是 adding emphasis and conveying certainty, translates the Sanskrit *abhyupeta*, meaning agreed upon, authorized, permitted, allowed.

13 C. siju 四句; ‘four items’.

the studies of Buddhism in the Inner Lands and various other countries. Presently, the propagation of the Buddhadharmā in the Inner Lands and Japan is characterized by bringing together people who hold a Buddhist faith in various venues, offering them superficial discussions about essential knowledge, and then promoting this as a global movement. Among the examples in India are the Buddhist Studies Academy<sup>14</sup> in Sārnāth and the Maha Bodhi Society<sup>15</sup> situated in Kolkata. Those who live in remote locations may have the impression, after reading their announcements in the press, that there are thriving centers of Buddhist practice, apparently engaged in daily lectures and in the propagation of the Buddha's teachings. Yet, if someone were to actually visit and look into the matter, they would discover that these statements [100] are simply intended to encourage and inspire people.

By contrast, the propagation of the Buddhadharmā in Tibet follows an entirely different course. It must involve the establishment of large centers of practice dedicated to debate and study – monasteries or designated sites – where the essential meanings of treatises like the *Abhisamayālamkāra* are routinely ascertained. To effectively propagate the Dharma, it is crucial to undergo intensive training that focuses on cultivating a group of talented people who have a genuine understanding of the Buddhadharmā. Building temples in different areas, maintaining monasteries with large monastic populations, gathering considerable material resources for these institutions, or arranging for a lama to give teachings and bestow initiations, none of these actions qualify as propagating the Buddhadharmā. Even if millions of mules and horses were presented as offerings, they would still be called just offerings, and not a method to propagate the Buddhadharmā. Therefore, even when it is referred to as the propagation of the Buddhadharmā, it would still be nothing but an empty designation.

Throughout Tibet, aside from Buddhism, they have no other form of education or culture. Thus, their system of education, except for elementary school that provide basic teaching in Tibetan writing and phonetics, has no schools that offer instruction in grammar. To receive instruction on subjects like composition, poetry, and the Sanskrit language it is necessary to rely on the ordained saṅgha for teaching. As for the profound and vast aspects of doctrine, the monastic community alone is capable of understanding them. My teacher<sup>16</sup> in Tibet was a great scholar, deeply versed in the science of sounds.<sup>17</sup> Every day, a large group of Tibetan officials would arrive to learn grammar from him. Moreover, a select group of high-ranking officials gathered to listen to his teachings on the *Lamrim Chenmo*, doing so twice daily, during the morning and evening hours. In this manner, they developed

14 C. Foxue yuan 佛學院.

15 C. Da puti hui 大菩提會.

16 Here, Fazun is referring to Amdo Géshé Jampel Rölpai Lodrö.

17 C. shengming 聲明; S. śabdavidyā; T. sgra rig pa. From the Sanskrit *śabdavidyā*, the "Science of Sounds" is one of the five sciences (S. pañcavidyā) in ancient Indian and Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. Beyond Sanskrit grammar, it includes related fields such as poetics (S. alamkāraśāstra), prosody (S. chandas), lexicography (S. kośa), and performing arts (S. nāṭyaśāstra). Along with *śabdavidyā*, there are four other fields of classical learning: (1) *śilpavidyā* (T. bzo rig pa), the science of arts and craftsmanship; (2) *cikitsāvidyā* (T. gso ba rig pa), the science of medicine; (3) *hetuvidyā* (T. gtan tshig rig pa), the science of reasoning; and (4) *adhyātmavidyā* (T. nang rig pa), the science of inner awareness. An individual who achieves expertise across all five sciences is bestowed the title of *mahāpaṇḍita* (T. pan chen), which may be rendered as "great learned master".

a sincere and pristine faith towards the Buddhadharma. Afterward, they demonstrated their faith through their conduct and in their roles as leaders of the people. The present Regent of Tibet is my teacher's unparalleled disciple. Out of the four *kalöns*, three took refuge under him. Other figures [101], including the Chikhyap Khenpo,<sup>18</sup> had turned to him for instruction for a long time and used to belong to his habitual circle that listened to the Buddhadharma.

Therefore, I propose that education in modern Tibet is intrinsically linked to the Buddhadharma. Beyond the Buddhadharma, they simply have no alternative system of education. If this holds true for education, how might their culture be otherwise? All cultural artifacts in Tibet are inextricably linked with Buddhism. Consider the material forms of their culture – handcrafted items, artistic creations, and architectural styles. Their expertise is defined by their mastery of sacred art, including the creation of Buddha images, skillful carvings, metal castings, and paintings of deities, along with the majestic and grand Buddha halls they have built. From this perspective, Tibet can indeed be seen as an exemplary realm governed by Buddhist principles. With that in mind, I will now outline the religious institutions and their related aspects in short sections.

### 7.1 Religious Institutions

We will now shift to Tibet's religious institutions, which are primarily centered in the Buddhadharma. When the Dharma has a flawless structure, the monastic community can rely on it and engage in proper practice. Our forebears often said, "A person can enlarge the Way, but the Way cannot enlarge a person".<sup>19</sup> The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* also states, "There are those persons who uphold, expound, and cultivate it. Thus, it remains present in the

<sup>18</sup> C. Jiqiao kanbu 笈喬堪布; Fazun employs different sinographs here for his phonetic rendering of Chikhyap Khenpo.

<sup>19</sup> This is a quotation from *The Analects of Confucius* (15.29). For this stanza, cf. Watson 2007, 109.

world”.<sup>20</sup> These statements imply that although the Buddhadharmā exceeds perfection,<sup>21</sup> if there are no individuals who study it, comprehension will not arise; without comprehension, teaching cannot take place; without teaching, practice is impossible; and without practice, the reward of enlightenment remains elusive. By consequence, an impeccably organized doctrine is not enough by itself. To implement this perfect teaching, it is essential to have individuals who can uphold the Saddharma; it is only under such conditions that it will be effective.

Those [102] capable of upholding the Saddharma can be categorized in two distinct groups: one that relies on true faith and another that depends on right understanding and right practice. In epochs of imperial rule, the Tathāgata entrusted the preservation of the Dharma to kings, ministers, revered elders, and lay practitioners who embodied true faith. In our modern age, where nations are built by the people, this responsibility has been taken on by prominent figures and lay practitioners from various backgrounds who embody true faith. Those who uphold the Dharma through right understanding and right practice are the monastics who bear the emblem

**20** In this paragraph, Fazun discusses how the survival of the Dharma in Tibet depends on individuals who actively sustain it. To illustrate this, he cites two lines from Xuanzang’s Chinese translation of Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (C. *Apidamo jushe lun* 阿毘達磨俱舍論). Drawn from the *Samāpattinirdeśa*, the eighth chapter of the *Bhāṣya* on the “Exposition of Attainments” (8:39), the stanza states:

<p><i>Fo zhengfa you er</i> 佛正法有二，  <i>wei jiao zheng wei ti</i> 謂教證為體，  <i>you chi shuo xing zhe</i> 有持說行者，  <i>ci bian zhu shijian</i> 此便住世間。</p>	<p>The Buddha’s True Teaching is twofold.          It consists of scripture and realization as its essence.          There are those who uphold, expound, and cultivate it.          Thus, it remains present in the world.</p>
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Here, the *Kośa* explains the relationship between textual preservation and lived practice in maintaining the Dharma through the ages. Fazun reflects on the religious institutions of Tibet, exploring the twofold essence of the True Teaching (S. Saddharma, C. Zhengfa 正法), which consists of scripture (S. āgama) and realization (S. adhigama). He does so by asserting that theory and practice are inseparable, for neither can sustain the Dharma alone. In particular, *āgama* refers to texts that preserve the Buddha’s teachings and provide guidance on the path. However, Fazun warns, “Without study, there can be no understanding; without understanding, no teaching; without teaching, no practice; and without practice, no one to achieve the reward of enlightenment. A perfectly organized doctrine, by itself, is insufficient. It must be upheld and applied by individuals who can sustain the Saddharma”. The survival of *āgama* depends on individuals who are dedicated to studying, teaching, and transmitting these texts across generations. *Adhigama*, on the other hand, refers to the realization of the Dharma through meditation and the cultivation of the constituents of enlightenment (S. bodhipākṣikadharmā). Fazun discusses the fragility of *adhigama*, noting that realization thrives only within a lineage of practitioners committed to disciplined cultivation. Without such individuals, the Buddha’s Dharma risks stagnation. To sustain the Saddharma, then, Fazun identifies three essential activities: (1) preserving the teachings through memorization and recitation, (2) making them accessible through explanation, and (3) embodying them through the cultivation of morality, meditation, and wisdom. Based on these activities, he divides practitioners into two categories: (a) those who support it with true faith and (b) those who abide in it through correct understanding and practice. In his analysis, Fazun also reflects on the historical shifts in the material structures supporting the Dharma. In earlier periods, Buddhism relied on imperial patronage. In the modern world of nation-states, however, its survival depends on collaboration between monastic and lay practitioners. Fazun concludes by warning of the precarious state of *adhigama*. While scriptures may endure for centuries, realization is far more vulnerable as it requires an unbroken lineage of practitioners. On this passage of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, cf. de la Vallée Poussin 1925, 219-20; Pruden 1991, 1281; and Gelong Lodrö Sangpo 2012, 2436.

**21** Here, Fazun employs a hyperbole: *Fofa sui shi yibai ershier fen de wanmei* 佛法雖是一百二十分的完美。 This rhetorical overstatement translates to “although the Buddhadharmā is one hundred and twenty per cent perfect”.

of the Tathāgata, for they have relinquished their worldly ties and have freed themselves from family bonds.

I will not discuss the topic of lay practitioners here. Monastics, however, can be divided into two separate categories. The first category features those who dwell in solitude or in tiny, widely spread groups. These monastics, having been associated with a *kalyāṇamitra* for a long time, have heard the teachings extensively, and have minimal distractions. They reside in forest retreats or marginal dwellings and cultivate cessation and realization. They are genuinely regarded as the supreme adornments of the Buddha's teachings. This is precisely what is stated in the Vinaya: those who find the greatest joy are the ones who are endowed with extensive learning and who calmly abide in the forest. It is this category of monastics that primarily upholds and realizes the Saddharma, a topic I do not intend to explore here. The second category includes monastics who reside in large, well-supported communities. A saying goes, "Where many people [103] gather, minds are not together". In places where numerous people live together, it is essential to establish a strong organizational structure and shared regulations. Without these components, there would be ceaseless disorder, aimless comings and goings, squandered time, and no meaningful achievement. It is not a strange thing for monasteries in Tibet to house communities of several thousands of monks. Certainly, the monasteries in Tibet cannot be compared with the ones present in our Inner Lands. Thus, their approaches to organization are also somewhat different from those employed in monasteries in the Inner Lands. These aspects will be outlined in the sections below:

### 7.1.1 The Organization of the Saṅgha in Tibetan Monasteries

At the time when Buddhist monasteries and the saṅgha were first being established in Tibet, their earliest structure was somewhat unlike the forms that are preserved in various regions today. For example, Tibetans claim that contemporary monasteries in Lhasa, such as the Great and Small Jokhang Temples and Samye Monastery, have preserved their original form. Still, historical records indicate that these sites were either rebuilt following destruction by fire or renovated after they had fallen into disrepair for a long time, which naturally resulted in changes to their original designs. I do not possess enough information to discuss the structure of the early saṅgha. Therefore, when describing the structure of the saṅgha within Tibetan monasteries, I will only focus on what is commonly observed in the present day.

#### 7.1.1.1 The Structure of Tibetan Monasteries

In terms of their architectural layout, monasteries do not adhere to a definitive model. Based on what is stated in the Vinaya, the central structure should be the main hall, and the main gate should be placed directly opposite to it. Extending from both sides of the gate, the saṅgha's quarters should be arranged in a symmetrical manner to either side of the main hall. At the center of the courtyard, there is a large square platform paved in crimson

red,<sup>22</sup> which resembles the design of Longchang Temple located on Mount Baohua in the Inner Lands. However, Longchang Temple features a large altar, and not a gate, which deviates from the prescriptions found in the Vinayapīṭaka. Most medium-sized monasteries in Tibet and Xikang feature this architectural style – with the exception of certain ones like Dréprung. The largest monasteries, such as Dréprung and Sera [104], employ markedly different designs. A central assembly hall is usually erected in a strategic location to host the entire saṅgha for morning prayers and scripture recitation. There is a kitchen for brewing tea, but aside from it, the hall is generally isolated from other kinds of residences for the saṅgha.

Still, large monasteries are necessarily divided into several central units termed *dratsang*. Each *dratsang* is further subdivided into numerous smaller units called *khangtsen*.<sup>23</sup> Each *dratsang* possesses its own main hall, which serves as the site for its members to chant the scriptures at noon. Similarly, each *khangtsen* has a main hall, which is usually encircled by the saṅgha's quarters and centered around a square platform, in line with the layout that is described in the Vinaya. In addition, each *dratsang* within these large monasteries features a designated space allocated for doctrinal teaching and debate sessions. For example, there are four *dratsang* in Dréprung Monastery, three in Sera Monastery, and two in Ganden Monastery. The variety in the number of *khangtsen* is extensive and cannot be fully documented here.

In terms of organization, every monastery in Kham and Ü-Tsang, regardless of sect, is under the oversight of a larger monastery. To meet the necessary monastic qualifications, the saṅgha from minor monasteries must spend time residing and training at a major monastery before going back to their home monastery. This system is akin to the system of central and branch temples that exists in Japan. Moreover, the smaller residential units inside the large monasteries are primarily divided according to the monks' native regions. For example, in order to avoid any conflicts, monks from the Chuchen<sup>24</sup> district who join one of Tibet's three great monasteries must reside in the Gyelrong Khangtsen<sup>25</sup> – a specific residential unit – . Monks who come from regions to the west of Dartsédo extending to Minyak are required to live in the Minyak Khangtsen.<sup>26</sup> And again, monks from the Dawu, Drango, Karze, and Nyakrong regions are to be allocated to the Zhungpa Khangtsen.<sup>27</sup>

The details regarding the management of these monastic communities will be outlined in the following sections:

**22** C. danchi 丹墀; literally, 'crimson stairs'. In China, *danchi* originally described the stone terrace in front of imperial palaces, characterized by its red lacquer finish that inspired the term. As time passed, the definition expanded to encompass the entrances of government structures and shrines or temples.

**23** C. kangcun 康村; T. khang tshan.

**24** C. Jinchuan 金川; T. Chu chen.

**25** C. Jiarong kangcun 甲絨康村; T. Rgyal rong khang tshan.

**26** C. Muniang kangcun 木孃康村; T. Mi nyag khang tshan.

**27** C. Zhuwo kangcun 諸窩康村; T. Gzhung pa khang tshan.

### 7.1.1.2 The Structure of the Monastic Community

[105] In Tibet, the structure of the monastic community can be classified into two main categories: the (A) organization of administrative roles inside the monasteries, and the (B) organization of high-ranking lamas outside the monasteries.

#### 7.1.1.2.1. The Organization of Administrative Positions Inside the Monasteries

There are two key positions in managing the monasteries. The first position, which involves managing the assets of the entire complex, is referred to as *chiso*,<sup>28</sup> meaning ‘administrator’. These individuals serve as the general managers of the saṅgha’s entire property and resources. This role is held by a chief manager and a deputy manager, supported by numerous assistants. Their main responsibility is managing the assets; they refrain from getting involved in matters concerning the discipline and behavior of the saṅgha. The second position is called *shelngo*,<sup>29</sup> meaning ‘steward’. It refers to the individuals responsible for overseeing the decorum of the entire complex. They are tasked with inspecting and correcting the conduct and manners of the saṅgha. While they have some degree of authority over the assets of the entire complex, they rarely get involved in such dealings. This position holds the highest level of authority throughout the entire monastery. Whether it is the *khenpos* at the top or the assemblies of monks<sup>30</sup> at the bottom, everyone avoids them upon sight, as there is absolutely no instance in which one would walk alongside them or hinder their path. This role has a principal and a deputy, supported by multiple assistants. The entire management of the monastic complex is handled exclusively by these two positions. The *umdze*<sup>31</sup> in charge of the main hall is only responsible with leading the assemblies in their chanting activities.

Each *dratsang* is managed by three main positions:

- 1) *khenpo*;
- 2) steward;<sup>32</sup>
- 3) disciplinarian.<sup>33</sup>

The *khenpo*, meaning ‘abbot’,<sup>34</sup> is responsible for the education and management of the monastic community situated in a specific *dratsang*. They are also accountable for managing discipline and handling property matters. In practice, the *khenpo* is entrusted with the task of guiding the saṅgha’s education in the entire monastery, for the *khenpo* leads the

28 C. jixu 機緒; T. spyi bso.

29 C. yi’e 義鄂. Fazun’s phonetic rendering, *yi’e*, does not seem to correspond to any of the official positions. Here I will tentatively use *shelngo* (T. zhal ngo). I would like to thank Brenton Sullivan for suggesting this possibility.

30 C. qingzhong 清衆.

31 C. weinuo 維那; T. dbu mdzad; in English, ‘leader of the chant’, i.e. vice-abbot.

32 C. dangjia 當家; this is most likely Fazun’s translation of the role of *shelngo* (T. zhal ngo). See the footnote on *yi’e* above.

33 C. geguo 格果; T. dge skos, ‘gekö’.

34 C. zhuchi 住持.

saṅgha in debate sessions. He has the authority to monitor and inspect the assemblies of the saṅgha occurring in the monastery. He instructs and corrects the saṅgha, ensuring that their knowledge and discipline are both correct. Additionally, the *khenpo* also serves as the primary liaison with the government on institutional matters. This position demands authentic scholarly expertise. Indeed, this position cannot be held by anyone who lacks the required qualifications. In Tibet's major monasteries, *khenpos* are appointed from among the *gëshés*, except in special cases. Every [106] *dratsang* is led by one *khenpo*, while the count of their assistants can vary.

The second position, that of the steward, serves as a representative of the monastic assembly within a specific *dratsang*. The steward manages all properties, handles their revenue streams, and distributes the expenses accordingly. This position is not part of the saṅgha's scholarly curriculum. When they come across each other, the steward and the saṅgha simply show mutual respect and make way for one another. There are several stewards in each *dratsang*, and they are assisted by a host of others.

The third position is that of the disciplinarian, known in Tibetan as *gekö*, meaning 'upholder of virtue'. The disciplinarian is responsible for ensuring that the saṅgha maintains proper conduct and remains disciplined. They supervise the conduct of the saṅgha in the main hall and on debate grounds, yet they do not possess any authority over educational or financial issues. For this reason, neither the stewards nor the disciplinarians, regardless of whether they oversee the entire monastery or just one *dratsang*, are required to be *gëshés* or scholars. Even ordinary members of the saṅgha can hold these positions. Besides the various positions found in each *dratsang*, including the rector,<sup>35</sup> there exist additional roles. However, these roles do not carry significant weight and do not require further discussion here.

The management of each regional unit within a monastery is divided into two main categories: 1) those who are responsible for property; 2) those who are responsible for the conduct of the monastic community. Those who belong in the first category are also called stewards, and manage the assets of a specific regional unit. It is important to clarify that the property of a large monastery can be classified into three broad categories:

- a. assets that are collectively owned by the saṅgha as a whole, managed by the general supervisor;
- b. assets that are jointly held by the saṅgha of a specific *dratsang*, managed by its respective stewards;
- c. assets that are shared by the saṅgha of a particular regional unit, managed by the stewards within that subunit.

The second position, responsible for overseeing monastic discipline, is known as *khangtsen gegen*.<sup>36</sup> The *khangtsen gegen* serves a mentor for newly arrived monks in a regional unit during the current year. Generally, the length of a monk's residency at the monastery determines the appointments of these two positions, although certain *khangtsens* might implement distinct selection methods. Monks that have fulfilled their positions as *khangtsen gegen* become part of the upper echelon of the student body. Upon joining

<sup>35</sup> See note above on *weino* 維那 (T. dbu mdzad).

<sup>36</sup> C. kangcun gegeng 康村格梗; T. khang tshan dge rgan; a *khangtsen gegen* is the head teacher of a regional unit.

this group, individuals gain the privilege to engage in deliberations, share suggestions, and offer critiques on issues related to their regional unit. Newly arrived monks, however [107], are not permitted to express their views or engage in deliberations, nor do they possess the qualifications to be involved in these conversations. The remaining lesser administrative positions are too fragmented and numerous to outline in full detail.

#### 7.1.1.2.2. The Organization of High-Ranking Lamas Outside the Monasteries

The phrase ‘outside the monasteries’ here does not imply that these individuals reside outside monastic grounds. Rather, it means that they do not hold formal administrative positions within a specific monastery. Nevertheless, they retain protective or instructional authority over the saṅgha, either in part or as a whole.

These individuals may be classified into two broad categories: (1) those who are appointed through perpetual incarnation lines, and (2) those who are appointed through formal examinations.

1. Those selected through incarnation lines are represented by the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. These masters are identified when they are children. They are chosen either based on recollections of their past lives, by being selected by others, or by means of signs revealed by a deity. After an elaborate enthronement ceremony, a lama distinguished by exceptional learning and virtue is appointed as their preceptor, with the support of several other erudite tutors. Their daily activities, like studying and reciting the scriptures, are very much like those of ordinary monks. However, their living conditions are slightly more comfortable. They have companions who help them every day in matters of study, discussion, and debate, which fosters a more favorable environment compared to the rest of the community. By the time they turn twenty, their education has reached a considerable level, at which point they receive the *bhikṣu* precepts and sit for the *gэшэ* examination. Upon successfully passing the *gэшэ* exam, they formally assume the duties and privileges associated with their previous incarnation. For instance, the Dalai Lama holds authority over all religious and political issues in Tibet, which allows him the power to investigate, adjudicate, regulate, and initiate new policies. The Panchen Lama exercises comparable authority over a designated portion of Posterior Tibet. Other incarnate lamas, such as *nomin hans*<sup>37</sup> and *hothokthus*,<sup>38</sup> have comparable levels of authority in their respective territories, yet this never extends to the whole of Tibet. Thus, among the entire population of Tibet, the Dalai Lama alone occupies the supreme position in both religious and political spheres.
2. The category of those appointed through formal examinations is most notably represented by the Ganden Tripa, the most prestigious

**37** C. nuomenhan 諾門汗; T. no mon han; The Mongolian equivalent of the Tibetan *chos kyi rgyal po* and the Sanskrit *dharmarāja*.

**38** C. hudutu 呼都圖; T. ho thog thu; The Mongolian title *hothokthu* (T. ho thog thu, or hu thug thu) designates high-ranking incarnate lamas who received formal recognition and were officially registered by the Manchu court.

title that denotes the holder of Tsongkhapa's seat [108] at Ganden Monastery. This master rises from the ranks of ordinary saṅgha members. The progression follows this sequence. First and foremost, after gaining a thorough understanding of the sūtra teachings, one will sit for the *gëshé* examination. One then enters the Gyüpa<sup>39</sup> for intensive study of the tantric techniques. Following a tenure in multiple positions, such as *gekö* in the Gyüpa, one ascends to become the Gyüpa's *khenpo* – which is regarded as the most prestigious rank among all *khenpos*. After achieving the status of *khenpo*, one can advance to become one of the two *chöjes*, and ultimately, from the position of *chöje*, one may rise to the rank of Ganden Tripa. The Tripa holds authority to govern and regulate the teachings of the Buddha throughout Tibet. While he may deliberate on political matters, he has no real power in that sphere. The *chöjes* below him fulfill honorary positions, as they are not significantly involved in either religious or political governance. Lower in the hierarchy, the *khenpo* of the Gyüpa retains practical authority over all financial and doctrinal matters pertaining to the Gyüpa. Positions that report to the *khenpo*, such as the *gekö* of the Gyüpa, carry duties comparable to those of the *gekös* in large monasteries.

Let me provide a brief outline of the Gyüpa system here. The college's architectural style resembles that of a medium monastery, providing space for around five to six hundred individuals. The monastic body is divided into two categories: (1) those who enter the Gyüpa directly without first passing the *gëshé* examination at any of the three great monasteries, and (2) those who join after successfully passing the *gëshé* qualification. In order to gain admission into the Gyüpa, candidates must initially rely upon a mentor to learn and memorize the *Śrī Guhyasamājahātantarāja*<sup>40</sup> and its *sādhana*,<sup>41</sup> with the requirement that they can recite it from memory. Entry is granted only when openings become available – each Gyüpa has a cap of five hundred monks, with a total of one thousand when combining both the upper and lower Gyüpa. Upon admission, monks spend their first five years as *śrāmaṇeras*.<sup>42</sup> Throughout this period, they assist fully ordained *bhikṣus* by handling various responsibilities, including preparing meals and gathering water. In the sixth year, they receive the *bhikṣu* vows and are then assisted by the newer *śrāmaṇeras*. The main emphasis of this group is on perfecting the *sādhanas* associated with the tantra class,<sup>43</sup> while there

39 C. Juba 舉巴; T. Rgyud pa; The two Gyüpas, or 'Tantric Colleges', are central institutions of the Geluk tradition in Lhasa, established to preserve and teach advanced Secret Mantra practices. The Gyümé Dratsang (T. Rgyud smad grwa tshang), the Lower Tantra College, is located in southern Lhasa, while the Gyütö Dratsang (T. Rgyud stod grwa tshang), the Upper Tantra College, is located in the north of the city. Admission traditionally depended on the student's region of origin.

40 C. *Jimi jingang dajiaowang jing* 集密金剛大教王經與儀軌; T. *Dpal gsang ba 'dus pa rgyud kyi rgyal po*; in English, 'The Glorious Hidden Assembly Great King of Tantras'.

41 C. *yigui* 儀軌; by *yigui*, corresponding to *sādhana*, Fazun likely refers to the *Śrīguhyasamājalokeśvarasādhana* (T. *Dpal gsang ba 'dus pa 'jig rten dbang phyug gi sgrub pa'i thabs*), compiled by Atiśa Dīpaṅkaraśrījñāna and translated by Rinchen Sangpo (T. Rin chen bzang po, 958-1055).

42 C. *shami* 沙彌; T. *dge tshul*; in English, a male 'novice'.

43 C. *Mibu* 密部; Rgyud sde.

is minimal engagement in doctrinal study. Those who enter after passing the *gëshé* examination, follow a conduct similar to that of the first-year *śrāmaṇeras*, attending all classes in the hall without exception, although they are exempted from performing service for the *bhikṣus* as the *śrāmaṇeras* are. From their second year onward, they become like a *sthavira*<sup>44</sup> and are afforded [109] accommodations in every regard. Those who display exceptional scholarship and virtuous behavior may become eligible for higher positions, such as *khenpo*. Other positions, such as the rector,<sup>45</sup> follow the same structure as those found in other large monasteries. The remaining monastics who hold official and influential positions are as numerous as the hairs on a yak. I will outline them briefly in the following sections.

### 7.1.2 Lifestyles of the Saṅgha in Tibet

The term 'lifestyle' necessarily involves the three principles of clothing, food, and shelter. In the context of worldly fame and profit, these three belong to the category of material resources. Yet, based on the Vinaya, one should subsist entirely on alms and refrain from accumulating possessions, in compliance with the Buddhadharmā's system of discipline. Thus, monastic communities in places like India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Burma, still retain many traits of the original Buddhist monastic system. However, in regions characterized by vast lands, sparse populations, and snow-covered, icy terrains, this system often cannot be implemented in full. For this reason, in the Vinaya-piṭaka, the Buddha granted certain concessions for *bhikṣus* in frontier regions - for example, allowing the use of animal hides for bedding and clothing in cold climates. Ultimately, the rules spoken by the Buddha are meant to serve practical purposes. Where they cannot be followed, the Buddha set no obligation to enforce them in a strict manner. Tibet, situated among the highest elevations in today's world, endures a bitterly cold, wind-swept climate, much like that of the polar regions. Here, the selection of clothing and shelter is dictated by the need for warmth, and the food options are determined by what is available locally. The lifestyles of laypeople have already been explored in depth. We will now discuss the everyday lives of monastics, dividing them for the sake of simplicity into two categories: the ordinary and the distinguished.

Within the confines of the monastery, ordinary monks primarily sustain themselves on highland barley, also known as pearl barley, which they prepare by roasting and grinding the barley into flour. This staple, called *tsampa* in Tibetan, is their main source of nutrition [110]. Every day, at around four or five in the morning, all saṅgha members come together in the main hall for chanting. During the chanting session, three bowls of tea are served. Each monk brings their own bowl and their supply of *tsampa*. The first bowl of tea is used for mixing the flour that will be used for breakfast.

<sup>44</sup> C. *shangzuo* 上座; P. *thera*; T. *gnas brten*; from the Sanskrit, 'elder'. The term *sthavira* identifies a senior monk, generally one who has maintained full ordination (S. *upasampadā*) for a period of at least ten years. Ordination duration, rather than age, is what establishes a person's seniority. The Chinese term *shangzuo* specifically denotes the monk who holds the top position in the assembly, and it is equivalent to the term *shouzuō* (C. *shouzuō* 首座). Accordingly, the term refers to a 'senior monk' (C. *zhanglao* 長老), or, in certain situations, it can mean 'head monk', or 'abbot'.

<sup>45</sup> See note above on *weينو* 維那 (T. *dbu mdzad*).

Bringing butter, meat, and vegetables into the hall is strictly prohibited. After the monks have eaten their tsampa, they drink two more bowls of plain tea. Between nine and ten in the morning, monks from each college gather in their respective halls to engage in the recitation of the scriptures. During this session, they are served three or four more bowls of tea. Once again, they come with their own bowls and supply of tsampa, without any other food. In the early afternoon, around three or four, monks from each regional unit come together in their residence halls for tea and chanting, with the choice to eat tsampa or abstain from eating altogether. Beyond the three daily gatherings, particularly during debate sessions or study activities, there is no serving of food or tea. Monks who have accumulated some savings could, after several days, opt to buy a small amount of butter. After the noon session wraps up, they make their way back to their room, boil a pot of butter tea,<sup>46</sup> and drink it heartily – in this way, they attain a level of bliss beyond words. Those who can buy rice or flour for their food are regarded by others as thriving, and their reputation for wealth is circulated throughout the monastery.

For clothing, a robe of pure wool is worn on the outside, a woolen lower garment underneath, and a wool vest as the base layer. The combined cost of these three items is no more than about ten *yuan* 元. For hall ceremonies or teachings, they add a woolen cape, with items of mid-quality priced around five to six *yuan*. The more affluent individuals could also own a long inner robe and a woolen underskirt, but the wearing of trousers is categorically banned. During nighttime, they wrap themselves in their clothes as if they were blankets and sleep on one or two layers of worn felts. On the exterior, their dwelling residences bear resemblance to Western-style buildings. Yet, their interiors are devoid of any natural light and consist of narrow earthen cells. Overall, the daily life of ordinary monks dwelling in Tibetan monasteries is remarkably simple. They store their tsampa, food stocks, and heating fuel within their own rooms. Elderly monks or those who have spent a longer time in the monastery [111] often have two rooms, an outer room and an inner room. The outer room functions as a kitchen. The inner room serves at the same time as a living space, a studio, and a storeroom, and it may additionally house several holy images and scriptural texts.

Beyond managing this simple lifestyle, they devote their time to studying the scriptures and debating the treatises. The schedule for study periods is irregular and depends on the teacher's availability, while debates take place after the three daily assemblies. There are also specific intervals for debate, called Dharma Assemblies,<sup>47</sup> which span about six months of the year. During the remaining six months, in the absence of such assemblies, the *saṅgha* from across all colleges gets together to gather firewood and collect alms.

They obtain their livelihood from three primary sources:

1. distributions from donations received in the monastery and earnings from the communal property of the *saṅgha*, which is sufficient for about half a year;
2. family provisions sourced from their home regions;

46 C. *sucha* 酥茶.

47 C. *fahui* 法會.

3. for those who do not have family support, financial gaps can be bridged through Buddhist rituals and services offered during times when Dharma Assemblies are paused.

In addition, there are also individuals who engage in trade activities. Their main priority is making money, which leads them to squander precious time that could otherwise be dedicated to studying the Dharma. Although they are formally affiliated with the monastery, they spend their time outside its walls.

Distinguished monks within the monastery, like those who serve tea to the assembly or those associated with incarnate *hothokthus*, have access to better quality clothing, meals, and living conditions than their ordinary counterparts. Notably, they might choose to skip hall recitations if no alms are offered, opting instead to relax and brew butter tea in their own rooms. Still, they study the scriptures in the same way as ordinary monks. Members of the saṅgha who hold official roles are granted additional privileges: they do not participate in hall gatherings or teach classes, as their attention is directed exclusively towards their designated responsibilities. Their living allowances are only slightly elevated compared to those of ordinary monks, which prevents them from indulging in a diet that consists purely of meat, as their main sources of nutrition remain tsampa and butter tea.

## 7.2 Educational System

[112] In Tibet, the system of education can be divided into two primary categories. The first pertains to children living at home, who initially spend several years attending elementary school. To illustrate the curriculum of such schools, I will outline one particular example. The eldest son of someone I know attends the school associated with the Tibet Telegraph Bureau.<sup>48</sup>

Each morning, as they arrive in the classroom, the students begin by reciting praises to Mañjuśrī bodhisattva<sup>49</sup> and the goddess Sarasvatī,<sup>50</sup> followed by readings for repentance and prayers for aspiration. The instructor begins teaching Tibetan cursive script only after the sun has risen. The initial phase of training focuses on extended, linear strokes to enhance wrist strength. After students demonstrate consistent strokes with no bending, uneven thickness, or inconsistent pressure, they move on to practicing slightly shorter strokes. Eventually, they reach the stage of writing in full Tibetan cursive script. In this manner, their strokes slowly condense into standard Tibetan cursive script.

Students are then instructed in extremely fine cursive writing, which resembles the Chinese *dacao* 大草 style. This stage is regarded as the pinnacle of mastery in calligraphy. As they practice on a range of scripts, students utilize a wooden board that is layered with ash powder. They snap a string across the board to mark horizontal lines and write the

48 C. Xizang dianbao ju 西藏電報局.

49 C. Wenshu pusa 文殊菩薩; T. 'Jam dpal; in Sanskrit, 'Gentle Glory'. One of the most important figures in the Mahāyāna tradition, Mañjuśrī is the bodhisattva that embodies wisdom.

50 C. Miaoyin tiannü 妙音天女; T. Dbyangs can ma. Sarasvatī is traditionally regarded as the goddess of music, poetry, and learning.

letters within these guidelines. Once they have written down the verses assigned by the teacher – often praises of eminent sages – they submit their completed assignments for evaluation. The teacher checks and corrects any inaccuracies before he instructs them to erase the board, reapply the ash, and rewrite the text. This cycle of writing and erasing continues throughout the day.

By the end of the school day in the evening, the teacher appraises their performance, arranging them in a sequence from first to second, and last. Following the ranking order, the first-ranked student strikes the second-ranked student's face with a bamboo sliver. The second then strikes the third, the third the fourth, and so forth down the line. Upon reaching the lowest ranked student, they vent their frustration by striking the bamboo sliver against the ground, which causes their classmates to burst into laughter [113], and afterward, the school day wraps up, and everyone goes back home. After students have achieved proficiency in writing on the wooden board, they are directed to hone their skills on paper. Once they have mastered writing on paper, they are taught to compose standard letters, including correct ways to address recipients, along with fundamental math skills like multiplication and division.

At this point, the curriculum for primary school is considered complete. Those who aspire to government positions or financial success are required to advance to the accounting department situated beneath the Dalai's Mountain, where they learn the mathematical skills necessary for public service. Having completed the full course of instruction there, they are deemed eligible for official seventh-grade appointments. When it comes to advanced studies in Tibetan grammar and related fields, students need to identify knowledgeable teachers for sustained education. Since this has been briefly addressed earlier, further discussion is unnecessary here.

Secondly, the educational system for the ordained saṅgha, while briefly referenced earlier, deserves deeper elaboration. In Tibetan Buddhism, the monastic system is extensively recognized, and the devotion shown by families has deep roots. Outside the Buddhadharmā, there are no other forms of education available; thus, sending a child to a monastery is equivalent to providing them with an education. The laity universally regards monastic life as both a noble and commendable path. There is no fixed age for taking the monastic vows. Certain children are placed in monasteries as soon as they are no longer dependent on breastfeeding and can manage on their own, while their families continue to provide for their basic needs.

The process differs slightly for adults who seek to enter one of the three major monasteries. Upon enrolling in a specific regional division within the monastery, a novice must first secure a senior monk to act as their guarantor. Only with this guarantor's endorsement can they officially reside and register at the monastery. If the novice lacks an acquaintance within the monastery, the *khangtsen gegen* for that year will appoint a guarantor on their behalf. This guarantor manages the novice's income and expenses, guides them in adhering to monastic discipline and conduct, and holds significant responsibility for their personal integrity. Once the [114] designated number of novices is accepted into the monastery, they must study and debate the scriptures and treatises under the guidance of a teacher. If the guarantor is knowledgeable, they will teach the novices themselves. If the guarantor lacks sufficient learning or is otherwise occupied, another qualified teacher can be appointed to instruct them. The

current educational curriculum focuses on the five great treatises, which will be explained in detail in the following sections.

When one reaches the age of twenty, they are eligible to take the *bhikṣu* vows from the Dalai Lama or other qualified preceptors. The proper timing for taking the *śrāmaṇera* precepts is not uniform. Some take their vows before they enter the three great monasteries, while others opt to first join a monastery, find a teacher to study the scriptures, and only later receive the *śrāmaṇera* precepts from the Dalai Lama or another master. In most cases, those who join a monastery have not all taken vows. Certain individuals wear monastic robes and join in communal chanting in the main hall, all without ever undergoing the formal ordination ritual. Is this an outcome of the considerable size of the Tibetan monastic community? Or could it be a skillful means permitted within the Buddhadharmā? Such questions are best left for the wise to discern.

Ordination in Tibet follows a process that differs in many ways with that of the Inner Lands. For those who are preparing to take the monastic vows, the teacher first leads the candidate through a ceremony for accepting the Three Refuges and the Five Precepts, after which he examines any impediments and performs the hair-cutting ritual. The candidate is required to take on three commitments - (1) to refrain from wearing lay attire, (2) to refrain from abandoning the outer signs of monastic life, and (3) to refrain from forsaking the guidance of a monastic teacher. This allows for temporary monastic status even without taking the *śrāmaṇera* precepts - This appears to differ slightly from the rules of morality as they are observed in the Inner Lands - . If one proceeds to take the *śrāmaṇera* precepts, a virtuous *bhikṣu* is requested to serve as the *ācārya*. The vows are received after formally requesting the preceptor three times and taking refuge in the Three Jewels. The preceptor then explains the characteristics of the Ten Precepts that the candidate is expected to uphold. Before leading them into the monastic assembly, the screening *ācārya* checks for any impediments that the candidates who are taking the *bhikṣu* vows may have. As prescribed in the Vinaya, the *karmācārya*<sup>51</sup> bestows the vows by performing the *jñāpticaturthakarman*.<sup>52</sup>

In Tibet, individuals do not receive the bodhisattva precepts<sup>53</sup> together with either the *śrāmaṇera* or the *bhikṣu* vows. Instead, the bodhisattva

**51** C. jiemo asheliye 羯摩阿闍梨耶; T. las kyi slob dpon; in English, 'ceremony master'. The *karmācārya* is one of the three preceptors, or three teachers (C. sanshi 三師; S. triācāryā; T. slob dpon gsum) required for ordination. The three teachers are: 1) The preceptor monk (C. jie heshang 戒和尚), who grants the precepts; 2) The master of the act (C. jiemo shi 羯磨師, or jiemo asheli 羯磨阿闍梨), who recites the announcement and the text of the precepts; 3) The instructor (C. jiaoshou shi 教授師, or jiaoshou asheli 教授阿闍梨), who teaches the ritual to the recipient of the precepts.

**52** C. baisi jiemo 白四羯磨; P. ñatticatutthakamman; T. gsol ba dang bzhi'i las). In Sanskrit, *jñāpticaturthakarman* refers to a formal act within the saṅgha. Also known in Chinese as *bai si fa* 白四法, the 'white four', or *yibai san jiemo* 一白三羯磨, 'one motion and three acts', it derives from the Sanskrit terms *jñāpti* (C. gaobai 告白), meaning 'motion' or 'declaration', and *karman* (C. jiemo 羯磨), meaning 'act' or 'formal procedure'. The process begins with an initial declaration, the 'white motion', followed by three proclamations to secure agreement. This procedure, described in the Vinaya, is central to the saṅgha's most solemn and significant decisions, such as ordaining a monk, conducting major confessions, excommunications, or reconciling disputes. The deliberate repetition reflects the careful, consensus-driven nature of monastic decision-making. In Vinaya commentaries, such as the *Karmavibhanga*, the *jñāpticaturthakarman* is recognized as the most meticulous and formal procedural standard in Buddhist monastic law.

**53** C. pusa jie 菩薩戒; S. bodhisattvasaṃvara; T. byang chub sems dpa'i sdom pa.

precepts are most often given at the end of a teaching or transmission during a Dharma Assembly that is led by a highly [115] respected lama. The ordination ceremony for these vows generally adheres to one of two transmissions: the lineage of Nāgārjuna<sup>54</sup> and Śāntideva,<sup>55</sup> or the ritual described in Asaṅga's<sup>56</sup> *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*.<sup>57</sup> These procedures are intricate and detailed, so I will refrain from going into further explanation here. At present, the transmission of vows according to Nāgārjuna's system is more prevalent.

Additionally, within the great monasteries, many activities of the saṅgha, including *upoṣadha*,<sup>58</sup> *varṣā*,<sup>59</sup> and *pravāraṇā*,<sup>60</sup> are conducted according to the Vinaya. These practices align precisely with the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya<sup>61</sup> texts as translated by Master Yijing. Hence, a detailed explanation is unnecessary here.

54 C. Longmeng 龍猛; T. Klu sgrub.

55 C. Jingtian 靜天; T. Zhi ba lha.

56 C. Wuzhao 無著; T. Thogs med.

57 C. *Yujia shidi lun* 瑜伽師地論; T. *Rnal'byor spyod pa'i sa'i bstan bcos*; in English, 'Treatise on the Stages of Yogic Practice'.

58 C. busa 布薩; P. uposatha; T. bso sbyong; 'fortnightly confession'. The term *upoṣadha*, often rendered in English as 'dwelling near', refers to a Buddhist ceremony held on the new moon and full moon days. The *upoṣadha* is a day of purification, confession, and renewal of moral commitment in the saṅgha. During the *upoṣadha*, monks and nuns gather within a designated boundary to confess their faults and recite the Prātimokṣa, the monastic code of discipline contained in the Suttavibhaṅga of the Vinaya-piṭaka. Fully ordained monks recite the *bhikṣuprātimokṣa*, while fully ordained nuns recite the *bhikṣuni-prātimokṣa*. Novices and laypeople do not participate in this recitation. However, on these days, laypeople often observe the eight precepts (S. aṣṭāṅgaśīla), abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual activity, lying, intoxicants, eating after noon, bodily adornment, and sleeping on high beds, which allows them to effectively live like monks or nuns for a day. The term *upoṣadha* originally referred to fasting or abstinence, with roots in Vedic rituals performed on the day before a soma sacrifice. Several types of *upoṣadha* exist, the most important being the saṅgha-*upoṣadha*, held when at least four monks are present to recite the Prātimokṣa. If fewer than four monks are present, the ceremony is still observed, but the Prātimokṣa is not recited. According to the Pāli Vinaya, the *upoṣadha* cannot be conducted in the presence of certain individuals, including novices, laypeople, and persons guilty of grave offenses (S. pārājika).

59 C. anju 安居; P. vassa; T. dbyar gnas; 'rain retreat'. The term *varṣā*, which means 'rain' in Sanskrit, denotes a three-month period during which monks reside in a monastic setting, referred to as the rains retreat. The retreat usually starts the day following the full moon in the eighth month of the lunar calendar (generally in July) and concludes with the full moon in the eleventh lunar month (usually in October). Monks must remain stationary during this period and avoid any form of travel. According to tradition, this practice was created to ensure that monks do not inadvertently harm plants and insects in the monsoon season, and to offer a dedicated time for deeper study, reflection, and shared discipline.

60 C. Jiezhi 解制; P. pavāraṇā; T. dgag phyé; 'invitation' or 'presentation'. In Sanskrit, *pravāraṇā* denotes the ceremony that is held at the conclusion of the rain retreat (S. varṣā).

61 C. *Yiqieyou bu lü* 一切有部律. By using the Chinese phonetic transcription for the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya, Fazun is referring to the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* (C. Genben Shuoyiqieyou bu pinaiye 根本說一切有部毘奈耶; T. Gzhi thams cad yod par smra ba'i 'dul ba), translated into English as the 'Original Monastic Code of the Sarvāstivāda School'. This text is one of the six extant recensions of the Vinaya that was adopted in Tibet.

Moreover, monastic communities in Tibet hold several major Dharma gatherings each year. The Mönlam Chenmo<sup>62</sup> festival, which is the most solemn and grandiose of all the events, is held in the first month of the lunar year. The ceremonies generally begin on the third or fourth day of the month – despite variations in the exact date, they start no later than the fifth day. During this time, all members of the saṅgha from the three great monasteries are required to gather in the streets of Lhasa. With all temples shut down, there are just a few lay guardians left to manage them. On a designated afternoon, the monks belonging to the three great monasteries meet in the courtyard and the upper corridors of the Jokhang Temple. Each group of monks is assigned a particular position to prevent disruption. At around four o'clock the following morning, the assembly comes together for scriptural recitations, during which two servings of tea and a bowl of thin porridge are offered to the participants. Once the chanting sessions are finished, the monks go on to recite the precepts and carry out a provisional *upoṣadha* ceremony aimed at generating good fortune. The setting then shifts to an outdoor debate courtyard, where the *gëshés* preparing to graduate that year engage in debates on the *Pramānavārttika*.<sup>63</sup> Every day, a *gëshé lharampa* is designated as the main defender of a thesis. At around seven o'clock, the Ganden Tripa takes his seat on the throne to deliver a discourse to the saṅgha gathering. The discourse may cover a range of topics, from the *Lamrim Dūdön* to other texts, and does not adhere to a fixed schedule. Following the discourse, all participants gather at the Jokhang Temple to engage in chanting, enjoy tea, and partake in porridge. After a short break [116], the *gëshés* convene beneath the temple's porch to establish the doctrinal positions of the *Abhisamayālamkāra* and the *Madhyamakāvātāra*, engaging in debates with those who are currently studying these texts at the three great monasteries. At around three in the afternoon, the assembly meets again for chanting and tea, but no meal is served in the afternoon. Later on, the *gëshés* establish their doctrinal positions on the Vinaya and Abhidharma, taking part in debates with *gëshés* from both the upper and lower Gyüpas, in addition to senior *gëshés* from the three great monasteries. These debates continue until midnight. A platform for teaching is set up in a central street location, situated to the right of the Jokhang Temple. Here, a learned lama shares insights on foundational aspects of the Buddhadharma with the general public, attracting a large audience. Numerous others can be seen throughout the area, actively engaging in teaching and discussion. During this period, devout men and women<sup>64</sup> circumambulate the Jokhang Temple, reaching their peak numbers. This assembly is also a festive occasion for traders. Activities take place each day until around the twentieth of the first month, at which point the gathering disperses.

**62** C. Dazhao 大招; T. Smon lam chen mo. Here, Fazun offers a portrait of the Mönlam Chenmo, 'Great Prayer', during the early 1930s. The Mönlam Chenmo is a grand prayer festival traditionally held in Lhasa to mark the Tibetan lunar New Year. Established in 1409 by Tsongkhapa, the festival commemorates the Buddha's victory over heretical teachers at Srāvastī. While rooted in religious practice, the festival has also been a powerful symbol of Tibetan cultural and political identity, especially during periods of unrest. The Mönlam Chenmo was suspended following the Tibetan uprising in 1959. It was briefly revived in 1986 during a period of reform after Chairman Mao Zedong's death, only to be banned again in 1990 amid renewed restrictions.

**63** C. *Yinming lun* 因明論; T. *Tshad ma rnam'grel*; Dharmakīrti's 'Commentary on Valid Knowledge'.

**64** C. *shannan xinnü* 善男信女; literally, 'virtuous men and faithful women'.

The next Dharma Assembly is the Tsongchö<sup>65</sup> gathering, which is scheduled in the second month and maintains the same number of participants and rituals as the previous one. Still, at this assembly, key personalities who wish to skip attendance can submit a request for leave, while the *gëshés* assessed are of the second rank. Another notable event occurs on the twenty-fifth day of the tenth month, which marks the anniversary of Tsongkhapa's passing. Although this event does not feature a gathering of all three great monasteries in Lhasa, the ceremonies that take place at each one are still quite impressive. On this particular night, individuals from all walks of life, whether laypeople or monastics, set up lamps in and around their homes, casting light into the surroundings until the clock strikes midnight. This sight brings to mind the bright lights of a bustling commercial district. On the fifteenth day of the first month in the lunar calendar, every monastery is required to craft butter sculptures or ornamental displays as offerings to the Buddha. The craftsmanship displayed in these butter sculptures resembles that of dough figurines made in the Inner Lands, yet their dimensions, which can vary from a few *chi* to several *zhang* 丈, greatly exceeds those found elsewhere. This is a unique art form of the Tibetan people. Other Dharma Assemblies focused on teaching and chanting come in different lengths, with some lasting ten days, others for half a month, twenty days, or even a full month. The rituals adhere to the everyday routines specified in the guidelines for the sangha. Regarding other [117] commemorative days, no Dharma Assemblies of any sort are observed.

As noted earlier, there are currently no other forms of education in the Tibetan regions other than the Buddhadharma. Thus, the educational system in Tibet can be broadly described as one that is centered around monastic institutions. When it comes to selecting talent from the monastic community, the process can be said to operate entirely as an examination system, apart from the reincarnation lines like the *hothokthus*. Highly learned *gëshés* attain their esteemed status through examinations, and notable figures like the *khenpos* are primarily selected through this procedure. Even secular officials must successfully pass examinations before they can be entrusted with any authority. The structure of education in a monastic setting can be divided into three categories: (1) education prior to the examinations, (2) the examination system itself, and (3) the appointments that follow the examination process.

### 7.2.1 Learning Before the Examinations

Monks who have not taken their examinations and are pursuing their studies in the monastery need to spend an initial two years under the supervision of a teacher, honing their skills in beginner-level *pramāṇa* and debate. During this period, they are expected to build a foundational understanding of the key concepts and technical language of the *Pramāṇavārttika*.<sup>66</sup>

65 C. Xiaozhao 小招; T. Tshogs mchod; from Tibetan, *tsongchö* can be translated as 'feast offering'.

66 C. *Yinming lun* 因明論; T. *Tshad ma rnam'grel*; Dharmakīrti's "Commentary on Valid Knowledge".

Over the next five to six years, they will engage in extensive study of the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, a treatise that, from a conventional<sup>67</sup> perspective, explains the progressive stages of the Three Vehicles<sup>68</sup> in the context of practice as outlined in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtras*. By mastering this treatise, they are capable of attaining a clear and accurate conceptual understanding of the stages of the three vehicles, especially regarding the Mahāyāna path. Therefore, this treatise is of primary importance for those who study the Mahāyāna.

For the next two to three years, the focus shifts to an intensive study of the *Madhyamakāvātāra*,<sup>69</sup> a treatise divided into ten chapters that elaborate on the ten grounds and ten practices. Specifically, the sixth chapter offers a thorough refutation of the four modes of birth and elucidates the doctrine of dependent origination, demonstrating that all phenomena are by nature empty and illusory. The correct view of emptiness can only be attained through an understanding of the Middle Way. This training in the view of emptiness allows individuals to eradicate the afflictions and transcend saṃsāra. Thus, students of Buddhism are encouraged to engage thoughtfully with this treatise in order to cultivate the correct view.

In the next two to three [118] years, as they near their twentieth birthday, they focus on a rigorous study of the Vinaya<sup>70</sup> in preparation for receiving the full set of precepts. A poor understanding of how to uphold the precepts – or avoid violating them – renders the act of taking the vows meaningless. This, in turn, increases the risk of transgression, thereby creating the causes for suffering. Morality is the root, the foundation, and the guide in all forms of practice. Maintaining discipline is the foundation for developing all other virtues, for without it, one cannot escape the lower realms, nor can one hope to attain liberation or buddhahood.

Finally, in preparation for the *gēshé* examination, they must extensively study the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, which provides a thorough analysis of topics such as saṃsāra, nirvāṇa, and causality, in both general and specific ways. The rationale behind this is that the Abhidharma provides the primary framework for making sense of the Dharma. Moreover, every year during the winter, a full month is reserved for the study of the *Pramāṇavārttika*. Without the ability to employ valid reasoning in debate and discernment, then regardless of their field of study, practice, or instruction, their efforts will be as ineffective as a nail driven into mud – utterly unstable and lacking firmness. Therefore, in the three great monasteries, these five

**67** C. shisu 世俗; P. sammuti; T. kun rdzob). In Buddhist thought, *saṃvṛti* denotes the conventional or relative aspect of reality, which includes the perceptions, ideas, and beliefs held by an ordinary person (S. prthagjana). It represents the worldly, conceptual framework through which ordinary beings understand the world. This notion is set against *paramārtha*, the ultimate or absolute truth, which transcends conceptualization and is realized by the enlightened.

**68** C. sansheng 三乘; S. triyāna; T. theg pa gsum. In Sanskrit, *triyāna* denotes the ‘three vehicles’, that is, the three individual paths presented in the Mahāyāna that guide practitioners toward achieving liberation. The standard classification recognizes the paths of the *śrāvaka*, ‘hearer’, *pratyekabuddha*, ‘solitary buddha’, and *bodhisattva*. The first two paths culminate in the achievement of arhatship, whereas only the path of the bodhisattva leads to full buddhahood. Several Mahāyāna treatises introduce unique categorizations for these paths. In this case, Fazun remarks how the sequential stages of these paths is described in the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, with a notable emphasis on the bodhisattva path as presented in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā sūtras*.

**69** C. *Ruzhong lun* 入中論; T. *Dbu ma la 'jug pa*; Candrakīrti’s “Entrance to the Middle Way”, also known in English as “Supplement to the Middle Way”.

**70** Fazun here is referring to Guṇaprabha’s *Vinaya sūtra*.

major treatises – selected for their diverse approaches and their focus on both theoretical understanding and practical application – are considered essential classics for the education of the saṅgha.

### 7.2.1.1 The Examination System

The examination system begins as [members of] the saṅgha within the monastery advance to the study of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. At this stage, the *khenpo* from each college evaluates their level of knowledge in order to determine the appropriate *gэшэ* category for them. In the summer preceding their *gэшэ* exam, candidates aiming for the *gэшэ lharampa* must complete an extra requirement. Before anything else, these candidates are required to visit the Norbulingka,<sup>71</sup> the Dalai Lama's residence. There, a total of sixteen candidates – drawn from the three great monasteries and representing the sixteen Arhats – engage in structured debates as part of the *gэшэ* examinations, which will be held in the first month of the following year. On day one, for example, the first *gэшэ* candidate, labeled 'A', establishes a thesis, which is later challenged by the next three *gэшэ* candidates 'B', 'C', and 'D', based on arguments from the *Pramāṇavārttika*. Another group, 'E', 'F', and 'G', engages in debate on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*. On day two, *gэшэ* candidate 'B' establishes a thesis, which is then challenged by candidates 'C', 'D', and 'E' drawing on topics in the area of *pramāṇa*. This systematic process continues with all candidates rotating in groups of three. In the course of these debates, the *khenpos* who assist the Dalai Lama serve as observers, while the Dalai Lama often watches from behind a curtain. The rankings for the *lharampa* and *tsokrampa*<sup>72</sup> *gэшэ*s are [119] finalized during this phase – although they are not publicly announced, the results are broadly recognized.

In the winter Dharma Assembly, the *gэшэ* candidates preparing for their exams that year establish their theses within their respective colleges and engage in debates with the entire monastic community. The *khenpos*, along with other appointed senior monks, act as observers for these debates. On the first day of the first month, the two leading candidates convene at the Dalai Lama's official residence, where they engage in a debate centered on doctrinal interpretation.<sup>73</sup> This debate is attended by the Dalai Lama, *khenpos* from the three great monasteries, and representatives from the government and other prominent figures. Later, at the Mönlam Chenmo, the candidates formally establish their theses and take part in debates before the full congregation of the three great monasteries. When the festival ends, the rankings are made public, and the candidates are formally conferred the title of *gэшэ*.

This particular *gэшэ [lharampa]* degree is regarded as the most rigorous of all. In contrast, the *gэшэ tsokrampa* establish their theses at their respective colleges during the winter, and then again in front of a larger assembly in the second month of the following year. In the summer, they

71 C. Moni yuan 摩尼園; T. Nor bu gling kha.

72 C. dier deng geshi 第二等格什; T. dge bshes tshogs rams pa; Fazun's wording is, *geshi zhi diyier deng mingci* 格什之第一二等名次, 'the hierarchies of the *gэшэ*s of first and second rank'.

73 C. fayi 法義; S. dharmārtha; T. chos kyi don; 'the meaning of Dharma'.

also visit the Dalai Lama's Norbulingka to present their theses, even though this process lacks the rigor found among the top-ranked *gëshés*. The *gëshé dorampas*<sup>74</sup> establish their theses within two or three colleges at their monastery only, rather than debating them in front of the full assembly of the three great monasteries. Lastly, the *gëshé lingsés*<sup>75</sup> establish their theses only for a short time in front of the main hall of their monastery, or they might delegate someone else to defend on their behalf. Stated another way, several of these individuals have just reached the necessary age to hold the title of *gëshé*, without having any real scholarly achievements. Others may have studied a single treatise but may have not yet reached the appropriate age. These individuals simply hold the designation of *gëshé* and can be regarded as 'expedient' *gëshés*.<sup>76</sup>

### 7.2.1.2 Appointments Following the Examinations

The successful completion of the *gëshé* examination marks a key transition in their study of the *sūtra* teachings. From this point, candidates generally follow one of two paths: the first is to retreat to the mountains to engage in ascetic practices, while the second is to enter the Gyüpa for advanced training in tantra. The main trajectory for those who join the Gyüpa is to ultimately rise to the position of Ganden Tripa. Other individuals, having spent several years in the Gyüpa, could be assigned to branch monasteries to serve as *khenpos* or in equivalent positions. Individuals who opt to retreat into the mountains for their practice may occasionally be required by the government to take on official positions. This bars them from remaining in seclusion, [120] and they are assigned as *khenpos* instead. This phenomenon primarily affects individuals who belong to the highest two ranks of *gëshés*. In comparison, *gëshés* belonging to the third and fourth ranks generally stay in seclusion, engaged in their pure practices, and are less likely to be selected for official positions by the government.

I would also like to address the involvement of the Tibetan saṅgha in political affairs. In Tibet, Buddhism is synonymous with culture itself; therefore, many of those who hold key positions in cultural life are often both learned and virtuous Saṅgha Jewels.<sup>77</sup> Consequently, the saṅgha must engage in both religious and political affairs. The Dalai Lama serves as the chief figure in the monastic leadership for both the religious and political spheres, followed by the Regent of Tibet, a role that can be assumed by either a monastic or a layperson. In terms of title, the Panchen Lama may seem to rival the Dalai Lama. In reality, however, his actual power at times fell short even of that held by the Regent. The Ganden Tripa, despite his prestigious position, largely refrains from engaging in political issues. Under the Regent's authority, the administration is led by four chief ministers, one of whom is always a monk who oversees political affairs directly. Under

74 C. disan deng geshi 第三等格什; T. dge bshes rdo rams pa.

75 C. disi deng geshi 第四等格什; T. dge bshes gling bsre.

76 C. fangbian geshi 方便格什.

77 C. sengbao 僧寶; S. saṅgharatna; T. dge 'dun dkon mchog. In this passage, Fazun refers to key figures in Tibetan culture by the technical term *sengbao*, that is, the third of the *triratna* (C. sanbao 三寶; T. dkon mchog gsum): the Buddha Jewel, the Dharma Jewel, and the Saṅgha Jewel.

their authority are secretaries, who are likewise monastics, endowed with a notable capacity to intervene in political issues. Lower in the hierarchy are high-ranking lamas and senior *khenpos* who hold titles associated with the top four ranks, in addition to regular fourth-rank *khenpos*. In the absence of an official capacity, these positions lack real power, yet when filled, their power rivals that of a prefect. Reserve secretaries rank next and serve as county magistrates if they receive an appointment; if not, they have no authority.

In summary, monastics only take part in politics in civil roles, while military positions are only filled by laypeople, which ensures that the monastic community remains uninvolved in military matters. Still, monastics assume a leading role in the realms of governance and education, as there are relatively few lay officials and educators. This is only a general summary. A detailed analysis would far exceed the scope of the present discussion.

### 7.3 Culture

[121] Buddhist culture pervades all aspects of Tibetan culture. Its literary dimensions can be fully understood only through serious engagement with the Buddhist canon. A complete exposition here would prove cumbersome. Therefore, I shall restrict my discussion to short insights into the realm of literary arts. Tibetan societal customs, in addition to the distinctive national traits mentioned earlier, are characterized by a singular cultural ethos: reverence for Buddhism. This ethos is rooted in their belief in karmic causality, as well as in tantric methods. Certain aspects of this topic have been discussed earlier, whereas additional others do not need further elaboration. For this reason, I will address three important aspects that represent the universal threads of artistic and literary expression.

#### 7.3.1 Literature

Whether expressed through poetry, songs, prose, essays, or through extensive scholarly works that distill the entire Buddhist canon, all Tibetan artistic and literary endeavors are integrated with Buddhist principles. The Buddhadharma functions as the most essential element, even in writings related to subjects like mathematics, medicine, history, and geography. Most rhymed poetry is modeled on the prosodic patterns of Indian verse. Within a single poem, all lines or even individual syllable adhere to a specific rhyme pattern, such as the ‘yi 嘸’ or ‘wu 烏’ rhymes. Another method connects the final word of one line with the initial word of the next by using the same word. In certain poems, multiple layers of repeated words are positioned in the middle of each line. In certain others, the first line is read forward order, but the second line is presented in reverse order. There are poems that feature a pattern where the reading direction alternates between forward and reverse order across the first and last two lines, or between entire stanzas. There are others that have one half of a line written in reverse, while the other half remains as it is. Certain poems can even be read in all directions – horizontally, vertically, or cyclically – while still maintaining coherence. [122] These intricate poetic forms attain exceptional beauty and

remarkable depth, showcasing endless variations and an astonishing array of structures.

The practice of singing is even more widespread and embedded into the fabric of daily life. In villages and rural areas, almost everyone – men and women, elderly and young – can sing. Their repertoire extends beyond just one or two melodies and encompasses a variety of songs, most of which are closely associated with the Buddha's teachings. During a year I spent in Xikang, I stayed with a patron's family. After dinner, both the hosts and their guests were at leisure, and the servants, including the maids and the elderly attendants, would gather to sing for their own amusement. The exact lyrics escape my mind now, but the essence of one song was, "In the eastern realm, there is a world – I no longer recall its name – where a buddha named Vajrasattva<sup>78</sup> dwells. His body is white, seated in full lotus position, his head adorned with a jeweled crown, his body draped in precious stones. He radiates white light throughout the realm of reality, dispelling calamities, bestowing longevity, and banishing demons". Another tune celebrated the "Buddha Ratnasambhava<sup>79</sup> of the southern realm, whose body is yellow, etc.", and continued with, "bestows upon us the accumulation of fortune, wisdom, and merit". Another one honored "Amitāyus<sup>80</sup> of the western realm, whose body is red, etc.", and continued saying "bestows upon us the ability to summon beings from all directions, subdue and transform them, bringing happiness and peace to them". And yet another song recounted of the "buddhas of the north and the center, with their virtues and deeds in conjunction with the four activities<sup>81</sup> – pacification,<sup>82</sup> increase,<sup>83</sup> attraction,<sup>84</sup> and destruction".<sup>85</sup> And further, there were verses about "A towering mountain, majestic like a lion king, before which lay a vast, boundless monastery. Within it dwelled countless sages and saints, tirelessly teaching the Dharma for the sake of living beings, ensuring perpetual prosperity and good fortune", and so on. To be candid, it appears that the themes in their song lyrics are mostly

**78** C. Jingang saduo 金剛薩埵; T. Rdo rje sems dpa'. In Secret Mantra traditions, 'Diamond Being'. Together with Vajradhāra, 'Diamond Holder' (C. Jingangchi 金剛持; T. Rdo rje 'chang), Vajrasattva is an important figure, often regarded as a primordial buddha (S. ādibuddha). Vajrasattva is closely associated with purification practices.

**79** C. Baosheng 寶生; T. Rin chen 'byung gnas; "Born of a Jewel", one of the *pañcathāgata* (C. wuzhi rulai 五智如來; T. de bzhin gshegs pa lnga), is the buddha associated with the southern direction.

**80** C. Wuliangshou 無量壽; T. Tshes dpag med; "Limitless Life", one of the *pañcathāgata* that is interchangeable with Amitābha (C. Amitufo 阿彌陀佛; T. 'Od dpag med), is the buddha associated with the western direction.

**81** C. sizhong jiemo 四種羯磨; S. caturkarman; T. las bzhi; the four activities are a classification of ritual practices found in the Buddhist tantras. These activities divide rituals based on their goals or methods. They encompass functions of tantric ritual aimed at: (1) pacifying hindrances or healing illnesses (S. śānticāra), (2) increasing wealth and lifespan (S. pauṣṭika), (3) attracting persons and situations to bring them under control (S. vaśīkaraṇa), and (4) destroying, that is, rituals aimed at exerting subjugation or harm (S. abhicāra); *abhicāra* presents a sixfold division into killing (S. māraṇa), enchanting (S. mohana), paralyzing (S. stambhana), causing harm through animosity (S. vidveṣaṇa), removing or driving away (S. uccāṭana), and subduing (S. vaśīkaraṇa).

**82** C. xiaozai 消災; S. śānticāra, or śāntika; T. zhi ba'i las.

**83** C. zengzhang 增長; S. pauṣṭika; T. rgyas pa'i las.

**84** C. aijin 愛敬; S. vaśīkaraṇa; T. dbang po'i las.

**85** C. xiangfu 降伏; S. abhicāra; T. drag po mngon spyod.

based on Buddhist teachings. Even the performers themselves find these compositions to be dull, and the crowds display minimal excitement towards them. This reflects how pervasive Buddhist teachings are in Tibet.

As for Tibetan works of prose fiction,<sup>86</sup> they are exceptionally rare. Beyond the celebrated epic tales of King Gesar,<sup>87</sup> there seems to be no fully developed secular prose fiction. For, even these war tales mainly illustrate [123] the king's determination to propagate the Buddhadharmā, as he subdued local chieftains and petty rulers in Tibet who opposed the Buddha's teachings. Gesar's ties with the institution of the Buddhadharmā run deep, to the extent that Tibetans universally regard him as an emanation of Avalokiteśvara. Indeed, the people's devotion toward him is profound. Thus, this epic tale – encompassing dozens of tomes – remains the most cherished and widely circulated epic narrative among the Tibetan people.

There is another genre of fiction that resembles the operas performed in the Inner Lands. Yet again, the source material for these stories is drawn entirely from Buddhist scriptures. They recount episodes from the past lives of Śākyamuni Buddha in his role as a bodhisattva, depicting the bodhisattva's deeds of extreme selflessness – feeding his own body to a starving tigress and giving away his possessions, cities, lands, and even relinquishing his kingdom, wife, children, and parts of his own body, including his head, eyes, brain, and marrow. These performances are both visually engaging and emotionally moving. They effectively portray the sublime virtues of the buddhas and bodhisattvas and play a crucial role in shaping the religious devotion of everyday people.

Another genre of prose fiction incorporates allegorical fables to convey the idea that the things of the world are impermanent and that fame and fortune have a fleeting nature. These parables serve as cautionary tales for the wealthy and powerful, who are caught up in the pursuit of the five sensual pleasures, while also motivating those members of the saṅgha who have grown lazy or indifferent. Notable examples include the tale of the rabbit and the *śrāmaṇera* narrated by Longchen Rapjam,<sup>88</sup> the story about

**86** C. xiaoshuo 小說. In this section, Fazun borrows the analytic category of *xiaoshuo* from Chinese literature to illustrate the pervasiveness of religious themes in Tibetan prose fiction.

**87** C. Gesa wang 格薩王; T. Ge sar rgyal po; King Ge sar of Ling (T. Gling) is the central figure of the Tibetan epic cycle regarded as the world's longest poem. Celebrated in Tibetan, Mongolian, and Central Asian cultures, Gesar is revered as both a historical and mythical hero. The epic, especially prominent in Eastern Tibet, is traditionally performed by professional epic bards (T. sgrung mkhan). It recounts Gesar's birth, his adventures, and his role as a champion of justice against the forces of evil. Some traditions link Gesar to a historical figure from Eastern Tibet in the tenth or eleventh century, but the epic is widely regarded as a composite work, drawing on Zoroastrian influences and Central Asian narratives. Among Kham Tibetans, Gesar is honored as an ancestor and hero and embodies their martial and heroic spirit. Wealthy Kham families often preserve manuscripts of the epic, and in the nineteenth century, episodes were printed in woodblock editions under monastic patronage. The Buddhist cult surrounding Gesar confers religious meaning to his legend, portraying him as an enlightened being and a manifestation of Padmasambhava. On King Gesar, see the volume by Kapstein and Ramble 2022.

**88** C. Langqin Naojiang 郎勤繞絳; T. Klong chen rab 'byams (1308-1363); Longchen Rapjam, also known as Longchenpa, was a revered teacher and scholar in the Nyingma tradition. Renowned for his role in systematizing the Dzokchen teachings, his major works include the *Dzō Dūn* (T. Mdzod bdun) or "Seven Treasuries". His life integrated rigorous scholarship, meditative mastery, and administrative responsibilities, including his tenure as abbot of Samyé, interspersed with extended retreats. Fazun renders Longchen Rapjam's name phonetically as Langqin Naojiang 郎勤繞絳. However, the sinograph *nao* 繞 (p. 123) in the manuscript should be read as *rao*, consistent with the forms *rao* 桃 and *rao* 繞.

the bees of gold and jade told by Patrül Rinpoché,<sup>89</sup> the parable of the yellow sparrow from Drakar Rinpoché of Karze, and the legend of the royal minister. This selection of stories features the finest examples of this genre of fiction. The assortment of aspirational writings and the extensive key treatises are fully concentrated on Buddhist teachings, a theme that is far too vast to be fully explored in this discussion.

### 7.3.2 Art

Tibetan fine arts encompass a wide variety of artistic forms. For the time being, I turn my attention to the facets of sculpture, casting, and painting, and offer a brief reflection on their sculptural [124] creations. Impressive sculptures, including sandalwood buddha statues measuring around one *zhang* in height,<sup>90</sup> are crafted with exact proportions and delicate intricacies in the folds of their robes, complemented by serene and well-defined facial features that are greatly admired. These types of statues are commonly located in the major monasteries across Kham and Ü-Tsang. Some of the tiniest and most exquisite carvings are those engraved on single grains of wheat, illustrating the Three Sages of the Western Pure Land.<sup>91</sup> This art form is similar to that of artisans in our Inner Lands, who etch ancient inscriptions onto rings. The proportions of these artworks, whether it be Avalokiteśvara carved in ivory or Mañjuśrī carved in stone, are consistently well-balanced in every detail, regardless of their size.

At Ganden Monastery, which is the primary center of practice of the Yellow Hat sect, I came across many carvings. The most remarkable item was a *Guhyasamāvajra* maṇḍala<sup>92</sup> carved by Khedrup Jé,<sup>93</sup> the foremost

**89** C. Bazhu dashi 巴主; T. Dpal sprul rin po che (1808-1887). Here, Fazun is referring to a story in Patrül Rinpoché's *Pema Tselgyi Dokar* (T. *Padma tshal gyi zlos gar*). Patrül Rinpoché was one of the greatest Tibetan Buddhist teachers of the nineteenth century and a prominent figure in the Nyingma tradition. Born in the Dzachuka Valley of Eastern Tibet, he is remembered for his humility, ascetic lifestyle, and profound influence on Tibetan Buddhism. Patrül Rinpoche lived as a wandering hermit, traveling between mountain retreats and monasteries, embodying the ideal of a renunciate teacher. He played an important role in the nonsectarian Rimé (T. Ris med) movement, which was instrumental in preserving endangered lineages, renewing meditation and practice, and promoting new trends in Tibetan thought. An exceptional teacher of both Dzokchen (T. Rdzogs chen) and Mahāyāna teachings, he famously taught Śāntideva's *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra* over a hundred times. His seminal text, *The Words of My Perfect Teacher* (T. *Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung*), remains important for Tibetan Buddhist study across all sects. Patrül Rinpoché composed his *Pema Tselgyi Dokar* (Drama in a Lotus Garden) as a response to the grief of an aristocrat in Dergé mourning the death of his wife. This work, a blend of folk storytelling and Buddhist teachings, takes the form of a dialogue in which a gold bee, stricken by the loss of its mate, a jade bee, receives dharma instructions. By weaving spiritual lessons into an accessible narrative, Patrül Rinpoché exemplified his innovative approach, combining entertainment with edification to reach a wider audience.

**90** In the Republican period system of measurement, one *zhang* is equivalent to 3.2 meters, or 3.5 yards.

**91** C. Xifang sansheng 西方三聖.

**92** C. *Miji jingang mantuoluo* 集密金剛曼陀羅.

**93** C. Kezhu jie 克主結; T. Mkhas grub rje (1385-1438). Khedrup Gelek Pal Sangpo (T. Mkhas grub rje dge legs dpal bzang po), known as Khedrup Jé, was a close disciple of Tsongkhapa and a key early figure in the Geluk sect. A prolific scholar, Khedrup Jé excelled in Madhyamaka, tantra, and *pramāṇa*.

disciple of Tsongkhapa. With a diameter of more than five *chi*,<sup>94</sup> this maṇḍala encompasses a palace structure that is over two *chi* wide.<sup>95</sup> Inside, the palace is adorned with more than thirty buddha statues. The height and thickness of the palace's walls were carved strictly according to the measurements outlined in Buddhist texts. Outside the four gates, there are four pavilions, each featuring eleven steps. At the highest point, finely carved tiny deer face one another, with a Wheel of the Dharma placed in the middle. On either side of the pavilions, there are two treasure vases, and from them, a wish-fulfilling tree springs forth. Every tree branches into seven limbs, each bearing one of the seven treasures that a Cakravartin<sup>96</sup> uses to rule the world. The main hall features walls decorated with strings of jewels, each about the size of a grain of rice, from which dangle exquisitely small carvings of bells and other ornamental items. The walls that enclose the palace are decorated with motifs of lotus petals. Encircling the walls, there are sixteen vases, each filled with a set of eight banners and eight auspicious victory pennants. In the middle of the palace's rooftop lies a scripture pavilion that enshrines the root texts of Guhyasamāja. The summit of the pavilion is crowned with a lotus, a vase, and a jewel.

Based on my estimation, the intricate work on this carving suggests that it would take at least a hundred days to complete, and even then, achieving the necessary precision and stylistic harmony would be a challenge. And yet, the biography [125] of Khedrup Jé suggests that when Tsongkhapa displayed signs of illness, it was believed that the act of carving and consecrating the Guhyasamāja maṇḍala within a single day could have healing effects. Khedrup Jé accomplished the carving in one day, which resulted in an improvement in Tsongkhapa's illness. This exceptional incident parallels the legendary events that took place at the Tripiṭaka Hall<sup>97</sup> of Bishan Temple 碧山寺 on Mount Wutai, where a similar miracle involving the storing of holy texts is recounted. Situated on the cliffs near Ganden Monastery, there is also a Four-Armed Avalokiteśvara,<sup>98</sup> skillfully carved by Khedrup Jé within a single day, and it remains an active site of pilgrimage even to this day. Likewise, Sera Monastery and Drépung Monastery house many other sculptures, but it is not feasible to describe each one in detail here.

Tibet's craftsmanship in the art of casting is equally outstanding. The casting techniques you encounter at any of the temples will leave you with a favorable impression. For instance, in their main halls, one consistently finds a multitude of bronze buddha statues, together with several elegant and historically valuable cast pieces. Each of the monasteries preserves one or two bronze stūpas that trace their history to the Tang and Song dynasties. The upper floor of the main hall at Drépung Monastery contains a collection of no fewer than two to three hundred statues. The quantity

**94** Based on the lengths unit effective in Republican China in 1930, the equivalent of 5 *chi* are equivalent to 167 cm, or about 66 inches.

**95** 2 *chi* equal to about 67 cm, or 26 inches.

**96** C. zhuanlun shengwang 轉輪聖王; T. 'khor lo sgyur ba'i rgyal po; 'wheel-turning king', 'universal emperor'.

**97** C. Cangjing lou 藏經樓.

**98** C. Sibi Guanyin 四臂觀音; S. Caturbhūja Avalokiteśvara; T. Sphyan ras gzigs phyag bzhi pa.

of statues in the monastery of His Holiness Radreng<sup>99</sup> is even higher by several fold. Naturally, ancient monasteries dating back to the Tang and Song periods, such as Samye, Sakya, Riwoche,<sup>100</sup> and Drigung, house an even more extensive collection of ancient bronze castings. Today, places like Beijing and Mount Wutai have dedicated shops that sell Tibetan-style buddha statues, which could strike us as rather refined in their casting. Yet, they cannot compare with the buddha statues that come from Tibet. The comparison reveals a notable disparity due to the errors in proportions and the coarseness of craftsmanship.

During my stay in Chamdo, I acquired a small, unpolished bronze statue of Mañjuśrī, measuring no more than five *cun*.<sup>101</sup> Even in its unfinished state, [126] the quality of the craftsmanship surpassed that of polished bronze statues from Beijing, Mount Wutai, and other places. If it underwent further polishing, this statue would belong to an entirely different league. Similarly, even though *ghaṅṭās* and *vajras*<sup>102</sup> in the Tibetan style are also made and sold in Beijing, they pale in comparison to those produced in Tibet. The difference is found not only in the material used, but also in every aspect of the casting, polishing, and the detailed engraving of complex patterns. The quality of this craftsmanship exceeds the skills of coppersmiths from the Inner Lands. The most talented silversmiths in the jewelry workshops are unable to produce work of this level of elegance and refinement.

In Tibet, there is a tradition of casting bronze seals that are utilized to stamp clay images of the buddhas. The sizes of the seals differ, but those depicting Tārā, Tsongkhapa, and Atiśa, which are commonly used by the Dalai Lama, usually measure no more than three *fen*.<sup>103</sup> In contrast, the iconographies of Yamāntaka, Maitreya, and Avalokiteśvara, whether stamped, cast, or carved, generally reach a height of no more than five *fen*.<sup>104</sup> Each detail is precise – the folds of the garments worn by each bodhisattva, the shapes of their hands and feet, and even the contours of their facial features like eyebrows, eyes, mouths, and noses are clearly rendered. The depiction of Yamāntaka Vajrabhairava is particularly complex, as it features nine distinct faces, thirty-four arms, and a total of sixteen legs. Every leg tramples a different animal<sup>105</sup> or one of the eight *mahādevas*,<sup>106</sup> while each

99 C. Rezheng fo 惹真佛; ‘Radreng Buddha’, where *fo* 佛, literally ‘buddha’, becomes an honorific form of address.

100 C. Riwoqie 日俄伽; Ri bo che.

101 5 *cun* are nearly 16.7 cm, or 6.6 inches.

102 C. lingchu 鈴杵; literally, ‘bells and clubs’.

103 The equivalent of 3 Republican-period *fen* is 10 mm, nearly 0.4 inches.

104 5 *fen* equal to 16.7 mm, nearly 0.66 inches.

105 Under Vajrabhairava’s feet, various animals are trampled. In the section titled “Visualization”, the *Vajrabhairava Tantra* reads: “With the first of his right legs he tramples a human, with the second a buffalo, with the third an ox, with the fourth an ass, with the fifth a camel, with the sixth a dog, with the seventh a ram and with the eighth a jackal. With the first of his left legs he tramples a vulture, with the second an owl, with the third a crow, with the fourth a parrot, with the fifth a hawk, with the sixth an eagle, with the seventh a myna and with the eighth a crane;” cf. Siklós 1996, 109.

106 C. bada tianshen 八大天神. Here, *mahādeva* refers to the Hindu gods that, together with the sixteen animals, Vajrabhairava tramples under his feet. Under the right foot, Vajrabhairava stomps on the following gods: Brahmā, Indra, Viṣṇu, Śiva. Under the deity’s left foot: Kārtikeya, Sūrya, Candra, Gaṇeśa. Cf. Siklós 1996, 109.

hand holds a specific implement,<sup>107</sup> like a *khaṭvāṅga*,<sup>108</sup> a blade, or similar items. The nine faces, each possessing three eyes, displays a range of expressions from wrathful to calm or joyful. The intricacy of this casting and carving exceeds what artisans in the Inner Lands can envision.

The craftsmanship of Tibetan paintings is showcased in monasteries across various regions. Many of these paintings, ranging from several *zhang* to just a few *chi* in height, depict figures whose clothing, colors, and shapes must be rendered according to established ritual manuals. The sophistication and elegance of these pieces can be likened to the *gongbi* 工筆 painting technique in the Inner Lands. Unlike *gongbi* painting, which allows greater freedom in composition and artistic choices, Tibetan paintings adhere to rigid standards regarding color usage and proportions. While painting techniques in places like Beijing are nearly equivalent with those of Tibet, [127] the pigments used differ significantly. Within a year or two, paintings from the Inner Lands inevitably fade and darken. On the other hand, the paintings crafted in Tibet not only hold on to their colors over the same period, but also remain strikingly vibrant, even as the underlying fabric begins to show signs of wear. In addition, in Tibet, the colors and proportions of large maṇḍalas are in full compliance with the required standards. In contrast, paintings produced in Beijing often contain several flaws unless they are crafted under strict supervision. Even a small lapse in attention could lead the painting to deviate from the correct method, making it unfit for use. While I was in Beijing, I often interacted with painters and observed that their level of craftsmanship was noticeably less polished compared to those of artists from Tibet.

In Tibet, there exists another unique craft that is similar to the dough figurine artistry of the Inner Lands. However, rather than working with dough, they mold their creations with butter. They shape butter into various forms, including landscapes, people, flowers, and entire dramatic scenes. They execute these works with effortless skill, achieving a realism that feels truly lifelike. The technique involves taking a wooden board as a base, onto which they affix thin strips or sheets of multicolored butter, carefully shaped by hand. Through this process of layering, they bring together all kinds of complex scenes. Larger creations can rise to three to four *zhang* in height,<sup>109</sup> producing complex butter murals,<sup>110</sup> while their smaller counterparts

**107** The *Vajrabhairava Tantra* continues: “In the first of his right hands there is a curved knife (1), in the second a single-pointed spear (2), in the third a pestle (3), in the fourth a small knife (4), in the fifth a single-pointed vajra (5), in the sixth an axe (6), in the seventh a lance (7), in the eighth an arrow (8), in the ninth an iron hook (9), in the tenth a staff (10), in the eleventh a *khaṭvāṅga* (11), in the twelfth a wheel (12), in the thirteenth a vajra (13), in the fourteenth a *vajra* hammer (14), in the fifteenth a sword (15), in the sixteenth a skull-drum (16). In the first of his left hands there is a skull (17), in the second a head (18), in the third a shield (19), in the fourth a leg (20), in the fifth a noose (21), in the sixth a bow (22), in the seventh intestines (23), in the eighth a bell (24), in the ninth an arm (25), in the tenth a cemetery cloth (26), in the eleventh a man impaled on a stake (27), in the twelfth a hearth (28), in the thirteenth a skull-cup with hair (29), with the fourteenth he makes the threatening gesture (30), in the fifteenth a three-pointed pendant (31) and in the sixteenth a cemetery cloth billowing in the wind (32). With two of his arms he holds a fresh elephant skin (33-4);” cf. Siklós 1996, 109-10.

**108** C. *qiang* 槍; ‘spear’.

**109** Approximately 10-13 meters; around 11-14 yards.

**110** C. *huabi* 花壁; literally ‘flower wall’. In this context, *hua* does not mean ‘flower’, but denotes an ‘ornament’, or a ‘decoration’ made of butter, hence *huabi* may be rendered as ‘ornamental wall’, ‘ornamental relief’, decorated with multicolored butter strips.

showcase figures on bamboo slivers that are merely the size of a fingernail. The colors in these butter sculptures stay clear and separate, almost giving the impression that they have been applied with paint. Yet, the human figures made of butter, molded in relief with expressive facial traits and hands that resemble actual human skin, appear to be several times more vibrant than paintings. A festive contest dedicated to this artistic form takes place on the fifteenth day of the first month in the Tibetan calendar, filling the streets surrounding the Jokhang Temple with celebration. The Dalai Lama personally inspects each piece, bestowing rewards for exceptional craftsmanship and imposing penalties for poor efforts. For this reason, this distinguished art has been steadily climbing to unprecedented heights of sophistication.

During my stay in Karze, I met a lama who was skilled in this intricate craft - a common [128] talent that many locals possess, although the degree of expertise differs. His work was exceptionally delicate and charming. During the celebrations for the New Year, he dedicated six to seven days to create a small piece for me. This tiny masterpiece, crafted on a wooden board measuring just about a square *cun* 寸,<sup>111</sup> featured a holy image of Sarasvatī. Behind the goddess rose a mountain, before which stood a wish-fulfilling tree laden with blossoms and fruits. On both sides of the goddess, he used butter to create a clear stream and a grassy meadow. In the stream, four tiny yellow goslings paddled along: one turned its head backward, another stretched its neck forward, a third drifted with its tail exposed, and the fourth climbed the bank, poised to cry out. On the meadow, he depicted two deer; a doe rested on the ground, twisting her neck to flick her ear with her back leg, while a stag stood by the stream, bending down to take a drink. Before the goddess, the artist rendered the five offerings of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. Sarasvatī was seated in full lotus posture. Her legs were wrapped in a multicolored skirt fastened with red and green sashes. Her upper body was draped in a multicolored heavenly garment with a mix of pink, green, red, blue, and yellow. She cradled a *pipa* 琵琶 against her chest, allowing its round soundboard to rest on her right thigh. With her right hand, she plucked the strings, while her left hand adjusted the tuning at the *pipa*'s tail, which was positioned toward her left shoulder. Her head was slightly tilted to the right. She wore an array of jewels, including a crown, earrings, a necklace, armlets, bracelets, anklets, and a jeweled garland. Executing such a refined butter sculpture on such a small wood surface was a remarkable feat. To say nothing of dough artists, even the most talented painters would find it challenging to match its precision. I am convinced that this level of craftsmanship truly represents a unique and specialized tradition of Tibet. This offers a glimpse into the greatness of Tibetan art.

### 7.3.3 Architecture

The architecture of Tibet is reflected in its monasteries rather than in the secular realm. Although Tibet does not have monumental constructions like our Great Wall or the Iron Bridge<sup>112</sup> on the Yellow River, [129] it is home to

<sup>111</sup> About 10 square centimeters; nearly 1.6 square inches.

<sup>112</sup> C. Huanghe Tieqiao 黄河鐵橋; The Yellow River Iron Bridge, also known as Zhongshan Bridge 中山橋, is located in Lanzhou 蘭州, Gansu Province 甘肅. Completed in August 1909, this steel truss bridge was Lanzhou's first permanent bridge across the Yellow River.

its own architectural wonders. The Palace of the Dalai Lama, looming like a mountain; the Great Buddha Hall at Drépfung Monastery, as vast as three grand halls put together; and the Maitreya Hall<sup>113</sup> in Posterior Tibet, taller than the Tower of the Qianmen Gatehouse 前門, all stand as magnificent and impressive examples of architectural brilliance.

To begin, the Palace of the Dalai Lama is constructed on the sunlit southern slope of the Dalai Lama's Mountain. Its lowest stone foundation rises several *zhang* in height. Higher up, the mountainside features a series of stacked halls that are divided into layered sections. The palace envelops the entire mountain, shielding it from the elements of wind and rain. You will find it almost impossible to measure or assess the actual mountain's full height and width. Unlike monasteries in the Inner Lands, which are spread out with separate buildings and courtyards, this palace forms a single, cohesive structure that extends across and around the mountain. Upon entering via the main eastern gate, you have the option to climb a staircase on either the left side or the right side. The structure, with its countless halls and rooms, ascends through a network of connected levels, both at front and rear, as well as above and below. Some spaces are allocated to administrative functions, others are used for chanting sessions, while dozens of Buddha Halls remain open for religious worship.

My mind is rather simple, and my memory somewhat weak. Even though I visited the palace several times to pay homage to the Buddha, I always felt lost as soon as I stepped through the eastern gate. Past the gate, there are straight roads and broad staircases, each winding in multiple bends. At times, I would walk alongside other devotees, moving straight ahead before turning left and right to climb the staircase. Other times, as soon as I passed the gate, I ascended one or two flights of stairs, winding east and west to offer incense at various shrines. Occasionally, I climbed straight to the summit, turned a few corners to enter inside, and veered right to arrive at the Sandalwood Avalokiteśvara Chapel.<sup>114</sup> From that point, I wandered through various halls [130], moving up and down, going in and coming out, while paying my respects to buddha statues and golden stūpas. Gradually making my way down to the lower levels, I would leave through the main gate and rush toward the west gate, or sometimes leave through the rear gate.

During another visit, after paying homage to the halls in the palace, I slipped into a long, winding, and utterly dark alley. After making a right turn, followed by another right, and then ascending in a spiral several times, I arrived at the lower front tier of Namgyal Monastery. Once I paid homage to the Buddha there, I took an alternate, dark path leading back to the eastern gate. Even though I visited many times, I never followed the same path twice. Each time I stepped into the main gate, I would simply lose my way. The palace contains several hundred rooms along with more than a hundred chapels. We never managed to see all of them, since we usually stopped at several renowned sites before heading back to Lhasa for our lunch. I reckon that a proper visit would easily take more than a single day.

One of the most celebrated chapels is the Sandalwood Avalokiteśvara Chapel, where a statue of Avalokiteśvara made of sandalwood is enshrined.

**113** C. Mile dian 彌勒殿.

**114** C. Zhantan guanyin pusa dian 梅檀觀音菩薩殿; T. 'Phags pa lha khang. In Tibetan, the "Chapel of the Noble [Lokeśvara]", located in the Potala Palace, where the sandalwood statue of Phakpa Lokeśvara is enshrined. See the *Introduction* to the translation.

This statue is famous for [131] several reasons. To begin, it is said to have developed naturally, without any intervention from humans in the carving process. According to historical records, during the Tang Dynasty, King Songtsen Gampo, the husband of Princess Wencheng, received a prophecy from the bodhisattva [Avalokiteśvara] and dispatched a man to a sandalwood grove located on a mountain in India. In that place, he cut down a tree and discovered three naturally formed statues of Avalokiteśvara within it. This statue is one of those three. The statue stands no more than three *chi* in height<sup>115</sup> and depicts a figure in a kneeling position.<sup>116</sup> I once had the chance to honor this holy image when it was briefly taken down for gold leafing. Stripped of its ceremonial garments and crown, it took on a pristine, natural appearance, with no visible signs of human carving. Second, whenever the Dalai Lama experiences swelling in his feet, the feet of the statue also display signs of swelling, and clear water begins to seep through the gold plating. When the Dalai Lama's swelling subsides, the feet of the statue likewise return to normal. For this reason, people from all regions of Tibet recognize the miraculous qualities of this statue and unanimously acknowledge the Dalai Lama as the transformation body<sup>117</sup> of Avalokiteśvara. Third, when government officials at any level face reprimands or fall out of favor with the Dalai Lama, they often fear harsher consequences. Their first response is to make a pilgrimage to this statue, offering prayers of repentance and pledges to make amends, in the hope that the Dalai Lama will spare them from punishment. If their devotion is heartfelt, their prayers are met with immediate resonance. For this reason, in Tibet, government officials of all ranks, regardless of whether they are being promoted or demoted, pay a visit to this statue to make offerings and declare their vows, either in gratitude or in penitence. The devotion shown by the general population for this statue far exceeds that of the authorities. Therefore, the statue is perpetually surrounded by a multitude of worshippers, much like how the sick gather near a famous healer or how the poor cluster around a benefactor. The chapel's doors are inundated with throngs of devotees every day, making the place as crowded as a bustling avenue.

The second significant structure [in the Potala Palace] is the splendid golden stūpa of the fifth Dalai Lama, reaching the height of a five-story building and fully clad in gold plates as thick as the hide of an elephant. Its surface is encrusted with a collection of gemstones, including diamonds, coral, amber, cat's eyes, Indian sapphires, and various other rare and invaluable gems from across the world. The stūpa is home to various treasures, including the physical remains of the fifth Dalai Lama as well as sacred texts. [132] Tradition holds that this stūpa also enshrines a relic of a previous buddha, said to be comparable in size to a horse's head, along with countless others that may number in the hundreds or even thousands, although the exact quantity remains unknown. The Tibetan Regent of the time, Sangyé Gyatso, upon learning that certain temples held ancient buddha statues and other valuable treasures, exercised his authority to collect these relics, pretending that it was for the sake of

115 3 *chi* are equivalent to 1 meter, or almost 40 inches.

116 C. ku 跏; the term *ku* indicates a squatting position. In this context, it indicates the posture of the statue with one leg slightly bent.

117 C. huashen 化身; S. *nirmāṇakāya*; T. *sprul sku*.

ceremonial veneration. Still, under the guise of honoring them, he never returned them and instead enshrined them all in this impressive golden stūpa. Therefore, Tibetans maintain that paying homage to this stūpa not only equals but also surpasses the merits generated by visiting all the sacred shrines and stūpas in Jambudvīpa, the southern continent.

A stūpa that commemorates the thirteenth [Dalai Lama] has recently been erected. It is slightly taller than the fifth [Dalai Lama]’s, as it surpasses it by about one *chi*.<sup>118</sup> I do not know if the treasures contained within it can rival those enshrined in the fifth [Dalai Lama]’s. Yet, when considering the external decorations and the sheer quantity of the embedded gems, it may well surpass the Fifth’s worth by multiple times. This stūpa is encircled by a band of pearls, each larger than a soybean, along with two or three layers of nine-eyed cat’s eye gemstones. The corals and other precious materials are no less splendid those adorning the stupa of the fifth [Dalai Lama]. The architectural magnificence of this edifice approaches the monumental scale of an emperor’s mausoleum. In addition to these, the [Potala] Palace contains the golden stūpas dedicated to earlier Dalai Lamas, all kinds of gold-encrusted large maṇḍalas, and holy images from different epochs, all of which are too numerous and extraordinary to detail here in full.

The second notable structure [in Tibet] is the Great Buddha Hall of Drépung Monastery, which is supported by more than one hundred pillars. Set up with conventional cushions for seating, it can accommodate between six and seven thousand people. Still, even if it were packed to full capacity, I am afraid, it might still not be filled with ten thousand people in it. Surrounding the hall, the walls have a thickness of more than one *zhang*<sup>119</sup> and stand between seven and eight *zhang*<sup>120</sup> tall. Rising above these, there are two additional stories that house offices for administration, while the upper levels that are visible from the front are part of the Buddha Hall itself. Upon entering the main hall, a transverse row of pillars can be seen holding [133] a flat ceiling. Beyond this, there are two more rows of pillars that reach all the way to upper level of the hall. The front sections, both upper and lower, are entirely made up of skylights that let natural light flood the vast interior. As a result, even with its immense size, the entire hall – except for one or two rows along the edges – remains brightly illuminated. A wide, flat square terrace with crimson paving stretches out before the hall, providing enough seating for around three to four thousand people. A vertical wall, reaching a height of ten *zhang*,<sup>121</sup> is positioned before the terrace with crimson paving. It is built entirely in stone to align with the height of the hall’s front foundation. This arrangement forms a vast terrace, more than twenty *zhang*<sup>122</sup> in length and about a dozen *zhang*<sup>123</sup> in width. A horizontal row of buddha statues and several large stūpas are arranged along the rear wall of the Great Hall. Behind this wall lies a series of annexed chambers, organized in an horizontal alignment. These chambers serve as additional

**118** 33.3 cm, or 13.10 inches.

**119** 3.2 meters, or 3.5 yards.

**120** Just over 25 meters, or 28 yards.

**121** 32 meters, or 35 yards.

**122** 64 meters, or 70 yards.

**123** 38.5 meters, or 42 yards.

buddha halls and house many precious statues. These are the “pure and fragrant chambers” where the Buddha resides like described in the Vinaya.

Drépong Monastery is home to four other main halls, which are somewhat smaller than the Great Hall. At the center of each structure, there are between eighty to ninety pillars – not counting the outer walls and passageways. The larger halls can accommodate three to four thousand individuals for chanting, and when they reach full capacity, they can contain five to six thousand people. Beyond these, each regional unit features its own assembly hall, which results in a total of around seventy to eighty buildings of different dimensions. The largest of these can seat more than one thousand people. Besides the main halls, the saṅgha’s living quarters are mainly comprised of three-story buildings – two-story structures are relatively rare. While I have not conducted an exact survey, it seems that the total number of rooms is probably greater than ten thousand. When considering the scale of the architecture, even the Yonghe Temple 雍和宮<sup>124</sup> in Beijing seems to pale in comparison. Finding something similar elsewhere would prove to be a tough task, if not, dare I say, entirely out of the question.

[134] The third notable site, that is, the Tashilhünpo Monastery<sup>125</sup> located in Posterior Tibet, is regarded as the most magnificent monastery in Tibet. It is said that there are more than ten buildings adorned with gilded rooftops. When considering its splendor and grandeur, they claim it is several times more magnificent than the three great monasteries of Lhasa. The current Panchen Lama pledged to build a nine-story Grand Maitreya Hall at the monastery. Even though the building has only nine stories, each is at least one *zhang* and five *cun* high,<sup>126</sup> which leads to a cumulative height of more than ten *zhang*.<sup>127</sup> I have not seen the site myself and know of it only through hearsay. The Maitreya inside the hall is standing figure. Observing from the lower level, one can only catch a glimpse of the statue’s lower half, and so one misses the sight of Maitreya’s compassionate face. It is said that the eyes alone are as tall as a person, which gives a sense of the statue’s immense scale. Besides its Great Hall, Tashilhünpo Monastery also houses several other buddha halls that match the grandeur and majesty of the Great Hall at Drépong Monastery. The stūpa halls that enshrine the remains of past Panchen Lamas [135] are particularly noteworthy. While they cannot be compared with the stūpa halls of the fifth and thirteenth Dalai Lamas, they

**124** The Yonghe Gong 雍和宮, or ‘Palace of Eternal Harmony’, known in English as the Lama Temple, is one of the most important Tibetan Buddhist temples in China. Located in northeastern Beijing, it was originally an imperial residence and served as the home of the Yongzheng Emperor (1678-1735) before his ascension to the throne in 1723. In 1744, the Qianlong Emperor converted the residence into a temple, establishing it as a monastic center and a symbol of China-Tibet relations. The name ‘Yonghe’, meaning ‘Eternal Harmony’, reflects its imperial origins. Spanning approximately 66,000 square meters, the temple is renowned for its architecture, which integrates Tibetan, Chinese, and Manchu elements. During the Qing dynasty, the Yonghe Temple functioned as a hub for Tibetan Buddhism, hosting monks from Tibet and Mongolia. After the fall of the Qing in 1912, its status as an imperial institution declined. Under the anti-superstition policies of the Republican government, the temple fell into neglect. Restoration efforts began in the 1920s, when the Panchen Lama briefly resided nearby. By the early 1930s, when Fazun resided in Lhasa, the temple was repurposed as a museum. For further study, see the classic work by Lessing 1942; for the Panchen Lama’s visit to the Yonghe Gong in 1925, see the contribution of Tuttle 2013, 567-9.

**125** C. Zhaxi lunbu si 扎什倫布寺; T. Bkra shis lhun po.

**126** Nearly 3.4 meters, or 134 inches.

**127** 32 meters, or 35 yards.

are nonetheless far more splendid than other chapels and stūpa temples. Other notable sites, such as Samyé Monastery, Sakya Monastery, Riwoche Monastery, and both the Great and Small Jokhang temples located in Lhasa, are architectural relics that trace back to the Tang or Song dynasties. A detailed account of each would prove to be a highly demanding endeavor.

#### 7.4 Center of Gravity

So far, I have offered a short account of the geographical and historical facts that I observed and heard during my two voyages to Tibet. I have also provided a more comprehensive account of the temperament, everyday life, and religious devotion of the Tibetan nation, along with insights into their military and financial institutions, religion, and culture. Yet, where, precisely, is their true center of gravity? While I have covered these matters thoroughly here, I have a feeling that many of my compatriots might still be confused about them! In the section where I addressed the Buddhist faith, did I not provide a detailed exposition of their devotion? And in the section about the saṅgha, did I fail to mention the significant population of Tibetans who embrace monastic life? In the section on political organization, then, did I not clarify that the Dalai Lama is their only authority? And in the section on religious institutions, did I not specify that Tibet operates under a model where the saṅgha is involved in the administration, which integrates both religious and political governance? Especially in the section centered on the educational system, did I not establish that all knowledge stems from the saṅgha?

This demonstrates that the saṅgha is the center of gravity in Tibet. As a consequence, the monastic community becomes their only object of trust and refuge. All their actions are directed toward preserving the Buddha's teachings and supporting the saṅgha. The saṅgha decides on all matters [136], great and small. Simply put, the saṅgha is the very center of gravity for their personal sensibilities, family ties, and religious devotion. Likewise, it also forms the heart of their society and is woven into the political, military, financial, religious, educational, and cultural systems of the country. In other words, the saṅgha is their lifeblood. Perhaps, the saṅgha is even more important and vital to them than life itself.

Again, I assert that the saṅgha is the center of gravity in Tibet – and all things considered, this can hardly be regarded as an exaggeration, right?

## 8 The Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama

**Summary** 8.1.Their Relationship. – 8.2.Status.

### 8.1 Their Relationship

Tibetan Buddhism reached its most flourishing period during the Yuan and Ming dynasties, under the influence of the Kagyü and other sects. However, they neglected monastic discipline, aimed for unattainable goals, and allowed the practice of *śamatha*<sup>1</sup> to fade into obscurity. During this period, Tsongkhapa arose in response to the times. He thoroughly investigated the true principles of the Buddhadharma and rectified the mistakes of the various sects. Based on the teachings of the noble Atiśa, he adopted the distinctive strengths of all sects and systematically organized them into an innovative system. Through teaching and practice, as well as through broad propagation and unrelenting effort, he gradually revived the full scope of the Buddha's teachings. Learned masters endowed with correct insight from across the various sects gathered around him. They gave rise to the New Kadampa sect, distinguished by its revolutionary character.

Many of Tsongkhapa's disciples attained levels of understanding from foundational to advanced.<sup>2</sup> Khedrup Jé, the foremost among them, was

**1** C. zhifa 止法; in English, the 'practice of serenity'.

**2** The idiom *sheng tang ru shi* 昇堂入室, "ascend the hall, enter the inner room", is a citation from *the Analects of Confucius* (11.15). In describing Zilu's 子路 level of attainment, Confucius remarks that Zilu is "qualified to ascend the hall, though he has not yet entered the inner room". Here, *sheng tang* 'ascend the hall' denotes mastery of the foundational teachings, while *ru shi* 'inner room' implies deeper realization. Fazun employs this idiom to extol many of Tsongkhapa's disciples who achieved doctrinal comprehension and experiential embodiment of his teachings.



originally a distinguished figure [137] in the Sakya sect. After Tsongkhapa's death, he became the second successor to his Dharma seat. Once Master Khedrup passed away, he reincarnated as Ensapa,<sup>3</sup> who subsequently reincarnated as the first Panchen Lama, Losang Chökyi Gyaltzen,<sup>4</sup> who in turn served as a preceptor to the fifth Dalai Lama. Panchen Losang Yeshé,<sup>5</sup> the next incarnation of Chökyi Gyaltzen, became a disciple of the fifth Dalai Lama and later taught both the sixth and the seventh Dalai Lama. Subsequently, he incarnated as Panchen Palden Yeshé,<sup>6</sup> a disciple of the seventh Dalai Lama. Together with His Holiness the second Changkya [Rölpai Dorjé],<sup>7</sup> Palden Yeshé also held the position of Imperial Preceptor under the Qianlong Emperor and died at the Huang Temple 黃寺<sup>8</sup> in Beijing.

Thereafter, the Panchen Lamas and Dalai Lamas maintained a relationship where one served as the mentor to the other. Even though there were constant disputes and disagreements among the followers on both sides, the bond between teacher and disciple remained untouched by any real discord. Gendün Drupa,<sup>9</sup> the first Dalai Lama, was one of the youngest disciples of Tsongkhapa and had strong ties with Khedrup Jé and others. However, his main teacher was Master Sherap Sengé,<sup>10</sup> who had received the transmission of Tsongkhapa's instructions on the *Guhyasamājantra*. Having been entrusted with the Guhyasamāja teachings from Tsongkhapa, Sherap Sengé traveled [138] to Posterior Tibet with his disciples and widely propagated the teachings there. Among his disciples, Gendün Drupa was the one who emerged as the most gifted. After the death of Sherap Sengé, Gendün Drupa led his disciples in the construction of Tashilhünpo Monastery - notably, this monastery of Posterior Tibet was originally established by the Dalai Lama -, where he continued to propagate the Saddharma. The incarnation of Gendün Drupa, known as Gendün Gyatso,<sup>11</sup> was welcomed at Tashilhünpo Monastery, where he became its leader. He was later invited to fulfill the duties of abbot at major monasteries in

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For this passage, see Burton Watson's translation in *The Analects of Confucius* (2007, 74): "The Master said, You's zither playing hardly fits the style of my school. The other disciples began to treat Zilu with disrespect. The Master said, You is qualified to ascend the hall, though he has not yet entered the inner room". Cf. also Tiziana Lippiello's Italian translation in Lippiello 2003, 124-5: "Il Maestro domandò: "Perché mai la cetra di Zilu è entrata nella mia dimora?". I discepoli di Zilu allora cessarono di rispettare Zilu. Il Maestro disse: "Zilu è salito fino alla sala, ma non è ancora entrato nelle sale interne". In her commentary, Lippiello notes that while Confucius disapproves of the sound of Zilu's *se* 瑟 - a stringed instrument similar to the zither (It. cetra) - he simultaneously illustrates three phases of the learning process: (1) crossing the threshold, (2) ascending the hall, and (3) entering the inner chambers.

**3** C. Wensaba 溫薩巴; T. Dben sa pa (1505-66); Ensapa Losang Döndrup (T. Dben sa pa blo bzang don grub) was recognized posthumously as the third Panchen Lama.

**4** C. Shanhui fachuang 善慧法幢; T. Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1567-1662).

**5** C. Shanhui zhi 善慧智; T. Blo bzang ye shes (1663-1737).

**6** C. Jixiang zhi 吉祥智; T. Dpal ldan ye shes (1738-80).

**7** C. Zhangjia 章嘉; T. Lcang skya rol pa'i rdo rje (1717-86).

**8** C. Huangsi 黃寺; The Huang Temple, built during the early Qing dynasty, comprised two sections: the East Huang Temple, now lost, and the West Huang Temple, which remains intact. The West Temple hosted the fifth Dalai Lama on his visit to Beijing in 1652-53 and the sixth Panchen Lama in 1780. Cf. Tuttle 2006b, 65-87.

**9** C. Gendun zhuba 根敦主巴; T. Dge 'dun grub pa (1391-1475).

**10** C. Huishi 慧獅; T. Shes rab seng ge (1383-1445).

**11** C. Senghai 僧海; T. Dge 'dun rgya mtsho (1475-1542).

Anterior Tibet. The third incarnation, Master Sönam Gyatso,<sup>12</sup> took on the role of Tibetan Regent in Anterior Tibet and later journeyed to Mongolia and other regions to disseminate the Dharma. Sönam Gyatso founded the Kumbum Monastery<sup>13</sup> at the place where Tsongkhapa was born in Qinghai 青海. In so doing, he established a branch institution dedicated to scriptural teaching that attained near equivalence to the three great monasteries in Lhasa. Sönam Gyatso also passed away in Qinghai. The fourth incarnation, Master Yönten Gyatso,<sup>14</sup> continued to reside in Anterior Tibet. By the time of the fifth incarnation, the Dalai Lama's authority had extended into all areas of both Anterior and Posterior Tibet. The thirteenth Dalai Lama, who passed away two years ago, acted as the master who conferred the precepts<sup>15</sup> to the current Panchen Lama.

Thus, the bond between them is one of close kinship, forged through countless lifetimes of mutual relationships as teacher and disciple.

## 8.2 Status

Both the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama hold the title of Dynastic Preceptor to the Imperial family and enjoy the highest status within the entire saṅgha across Tibet and Mongolia. The Dalai Lama, in particular, was appointed by the Emperor as the ruler of both religious and political affairs in Tibet. All Tibetan Buddhist monasteries, regardless of their location in Ü-Tsang, Kham, Qinghai, Gansu, Mongolia, or the Inner Lands, fall under the Dalai Lama's jurisdiction. They all consider the Dalai Lama to be their supreme authority. Each monastery has its own local administrator, but the Dalai Lama retains the prerogative to remove the offender if monastic precepts are violated. For instance, in the late Guangxu 光緒 era [1898-1908],<sup>16</sup> when the [thirteenth] Dalai Lama traveled to Qinghai, Akya Hothokthu,<sup>17</sup> who was the administrator of Kumbum Monastery at the time, was removed from his positions due to transgressions involving alcohol consumption and hunting activities. Although Akya Hothokthu had been a fellow disciple of both the Tongzhi 同治 and [139] Guangxu Emperors, the Dalai Lama still expelled him from the monastery, reorganized its regulations, and forbade the continuation of unlawful activities. A different instance pertains to

**12** C. Fuhai 福海; T. Bsod nams rgya mtsho (1543-1588).

**13** C. Taer si 塔兒寺; T. Sku 'bum; The Kumbum Monastery, meaning "Hundred Thousand Images", is a Geluk institution in the Kokonor region of Amdo, southwest of Siling in modern-day Qinghai province. Officially known as Kumbum Jampaling (T. Sku 'bum byams pa gling), it was founded in 1583 by the third Dalai Lama, Sönam Gyatso.

**14** C. Dehai 德海; T. Yon tan rgya mtsho (1589-1617).

**15** C. jieshi 戒師; S. śīlācārya; T. tshul khriims kyi slob dpon; 'master of discipline', 'master of morality'.

**16** The Guangxu era, that is, the reign of the Guangxu Emperor, spanned 1875 to 1908. Here, Fazun's expression *Guangxu monian* 光緒末年, "late Guangxu era", likely refers to the final decade of his reign, roughly 1898-1908.

**17** C. Ajia hutuketu 阿迦胡土克圖; T. A kyā ho thog thu. Here, Fazun's reference is to Losang Tenpai Wangchuk Sönam Gyatso (T. Blo bzang bstan pa'i dbang phyug bsod nams rgya mtsho, 1870-1909), the fifth Akya Hothokthu.

Master Pakpa Lha,<sup>18</sup> the abbot of Chamdo Monastery, who held the title of National Preceptor during the Manchu-Qing era and was one of the eight great *hothokthus*. As a result of breaching the rules of monastic conduct, the Dalai Lama released a written edict that stripped him of his position and banished him from the monastery, which effectively lowered his status to that of a commoner. In matters of religious leadership, the Panchen Lama holds the position just below that of the Dalai Lama. Figures like the Changkya,<sup>19</sup> the Jetsün Dampa,<sup>20</sup> and the Tsenpo Nomin Han<sup>21</sup> all hold a lower status than him. Although the Panchen Lama has a more limited jurisdictional authority over monasteries compared to the Dalai Lama, he is nonetheless universally respected wherever he goes.

In the realm of politics, the Dalai Lama is the sole ruler, exercising unquestioned authority over all of Tibet. When examined closely, even the activities at Tashilhünpo Monastery in Posterior Tibet are subjected to his jurisdiction. In Tibet, there is no sector of governance, be it political, military, financial, or educational, that is not managed by the Dalai Lama. Hence, it is no exaggeration when I assert that he is the ruler of Tibet. Things are quite different when it comes to the Panchen Lama. Except for Master Palden Yeshé, who briefly oversaw political matters after the passing of the Seventh Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama has consistently refrained from becoming involved in Tibetan politics. Certainly, he is regarded as the highest and most revered tulku<sup>22</sup> in Posterior Tibet. However, aside from a small number of matters directly under his administration, the governance of Posterior Tibet as a whole remains under the authority of the Dalai Lama. Therefore, the political status of the Panchen Lama is comparable only to that of figures like Radreng – interim or provisional stewards who assume political responsibilities for a few years, without any lasting authority. The territories that are officially under the administration of the Panchen Lama remain subject to the sovereignty of the Dalai Lama [140] and are limited in size. This restricted autonomy has resulted in discontent among

**18** C. Shengtian 聖天; S. Āryadeva; T. 'Phags pha lha. The Pakpa Lha incarnation line dates back to the fifteenth century, when Dechen Dorje (T. Bde chen rdo rje, 1439-1487), at the age of eight, declared himself to be the reincarnation of the great Indian master Āryadeva. He was posthumously recognized as the First Pakpa Lha. The seat of this lineage is Chamdo Jampa Ling (T. Chab mdo Byams pa gling), a major Geluk monastery established in Kham by Jangsem Sherap Sangpo (T. Byang sems shes rab bzang po), a disciple of Tsongkhapa. In this context, Fazun refers to the Tenth Pakpa Lha, Losang Thupten (T. Blo bzang thub bstan, 1901-1939). In 1920, the Tenth Pakpa Lha married openly, which led the Thirteenth Dalai Lama to strip him of his honorific titles and ranks, remove him from the abbot's throne, and exile him to a remote hermitage. In 1934, after an appeal from the Chamdo community, he was re-ordained and re-enthroned as the abbot of Ganden Jampa Ling Monastery.

**19** C. Zhangjia 章嘉; T. Lcang skya.

**20** C. Jiezun danba 結尊蕩巴; T. Rje btsun dam pa. The title Jetsün Dampa refers to the leader of the Geluk lineage in Mongolia. This lineage, established by the Fifth Dalai Lama, traces its origins to Zanabazar (1635-1723), the first Jetsün Dampa and an incarnation of the Tibetan historian Tāranātha. Renowned for his artistic skills, Zanabazar was also a respected scholar. In his capacity of both a religious and political leader, he unified the Khalkha Mongols and earned recognition from the Qing Emperor Kangxi as a key figure in Mongolia.

**21** C. Zhenbo nuomenhan 眞薄諾門罕; T. Btsan po no mon han. The title Tsenpo Nomon Han designates a Geluk reincarnation line. This lineage, also known as Mindröl Nomon Han (T. Smin grol no mon han) or Mindröl Hothokthu (T. Smin grol ho thog thu), is closely associated with Tsenpo Monastery (T. Btsan po dgon pa) in Amdo, an institution founded in 1650 by Tsenpowa Döndrup Gyatso (T. Btsan po ba don grub rgya mtsho, 1613-65).

**22** C. huofu 活佛; T. sprul sku. From the Chinese, "living buddha".

the Panchen's subordinates. They persistently strive to claim a share of governing power, which in turn has resulted in conflict between the two factions. These very tensions could be the root cause for the emergence of the Panchen Lama!

Our people in the Inner Lands lack awareness of the stark differences between the roles of the Dalai and the Panchen in the context of Tibet's religious and political affairs. It is often believed that the mutual relationship of the Dalai and the Panchen as teacher and disciple implies that their statuses are roughly equivalent. Moreover, the former resides in Anterior Tibet, the latter resides in Posterior Tibet. This geographical distance has led many to assume that both parties share the same level of authority in political matters. Therefore, they incorrectly assume that the Dalai rules Anterior Tibet while the Panchen governs Posterior Tibet. And so, they are led to view the two as equals in authority. This misconception - that they are co-equals - has been amplified by the advocates of the Panchen Lama, who propagate the notion that the return of the Panchen Lama to Tibet would grant him unparalleled authority over the entire country.

I have come across countless such misguided statements - similar to those of blind men trying to feel their way around an elephant - in various periodicals. Since I already explained this matter,<sup>23</sup> I urge our Central Government to take into account the substantive distinctions between the two factions of the Dalai and Panchen when resolving their disputes, and to avoid any further exploitation by their subordinates. - The subordinates of both the Dalai and Panchen often take advantage of our limited understanding of their roles and often inflate their own stature. I, too, was misled in Beijing by figures like Khenpo Losang<sup>24</sup> and others, only to discover, through rigorous investigations in Tibet, that they are purveyors of deceit.

I further implore my fellow journalists in the magazine industry to conduct thorough research before publishing any consequential commentary. It is crucial to avoid replacing direct observation with hearsay.

**23** Here, Fazun is referring to *Wo quguo de Xizang*. Cf. Fazun 1937b.

**24** C. Luosang kanbu 羅桑堪布; T. Blo bzang mkhan po (d.u.). I was unable to identify this figure.



## 9 Foreign Affairs and Politics

**Summary** 9.1 Attitude Toward Britain. – 9.2 Attitude Toward the Chinese Government.

### 9.1 Attitude Toward Britain

[141] Prior to the 30th year of the Guangxu era [1904],<sup>1</sup> Tibet considered the British to be irredeemable enemies. The British were barred from entering Tibet, as the borders were locked down and no interactions were allowed. The Qing imperial court was the only entity to which they turned for support. In that year, as British forces invaded Tibet and reached Lhasa, the Dalai Lama and his retinue fled to the Inner Lands, where they sought refuge with the imperial court. Later, upon the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet, the court, influenced by false accusations, stripped him of his authority. As the Han troops then moved towards Lhasa, the Dalai Lama fled south to India. In the midst of this crisis, the Dalai Lama sought shelter within the land of his enemy. Still, the British did not treat him as an enemy. Rather, they looked upon him with a favorable attitude. From this point, Tibet and Britain began to establish a closer relationship, and the idea of driving out the Han gained traction between them.

In the aftermath of the [1911] Revolution, unrest in Tibet was incited by the Han troops, which were disarmed and expelled, resulting in a more solidified and intensified relationship between Britain and Tibet. However, the Dalai Lama himself showed a relative lack of interest in Britain, unlike his dealings with the Central Government. With the Dalai Lama's passing,

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**1** Here, Fazun identifies 1904, the year of the British Expedition to Lhasa, as “the thirtieth year of the Guangxu era”. The British expedition to Tibet, also known as the Younghusband Expedition, was led by Colonel Francis Younghusband (1863-1942). It began in December 1903 and concluded in September 1904.



his nephew, Radreng Hothokthu, now acts as regent and holds authority as both King of Dharma<sup>2</sup> and King of Tibet.<sup>3</sup> The earlier anti-British ideology of Tibetans has now shifted entirely to anti-Han sentiment, a point I touched upon earlier in the section on military equipment. While Tibetans remain uninclined to relinquish all sovereignty to Britain, their trust in Britain far exceeds that in the Central Government. While they still harbor [142] a certain apprehension toward the British, they adopt conciliatory measures in all engagements. Still, whether this approach can be maintained for the long term remains difficult to ascertain. Fortunately, their national sentiment and monastic ideals still lean toward the Central Government. This makes them unwilling to submit to Britain's wrong religious ideals.<sup>4</sup>

Beyond this, I am afraid all else seems to have long fallen under British control. The Tibetan authorities harbor fear, suspicion, and vigilance toward Britain. Yet, at the same time, they maintain profound goodwill, trust, and deference. In their diplomatic dealings, on the one hand, they assert authority by constraining arbitrary actions by the British. For example, a British official stationed in India entered Tibet last year under the pretext of a tea expedition to investigate local conditions, only to meet an ill-fated end Lhasa.<sup>5</sup> The British sought to retrieve the corpse by aircraft, but Tibetan authorities denied them access by aircraft, and so they were forced to repatriate the remains via mule litter. Conversely, they allow for long-term British residency in Tibet, adopt British proposals, [143] and comply with their instigations. To illustrate, the Tibetan authorities permitted the British to install a wireless telegraph station in Lhasa without opposing any resistance, allowing it to serve as a counterweight to the station operated by the Central Government. The Tibetan authorities' attitude toward Britain is made evident when examined through the dual lens of their mindset and method.

2 C. fawang 法王.

3 C. zangwang 藏王.

4 In this passage, it is evident that Fazun is alluding to the Christian faith. Fazun's analysis, articulated through the concept of *xiejiao sixiang* 邪教思想, meaning 'wrong religious ideals', centers around the term *xiejiao*, with *jiao* meaning "teaching" but referring to the modern term *zongjiao* 宗教, 'religion'. Conversely, the term *xie* (S. *mithyā*; T. *log pa*) is a distinctly Buddhist term that serves as a qualifier, conveying the notions of 'wrong', 'erroneous', 'fallacious', or 'misguided'. The sinograph *xie* combines with *jian* 見 (S. *dr̥ṣṭi*; T. *lta*) to create the compound *xiejian* 邪見 (S. *mithyādr̥ṣṭi*; T. *log lta*), which translates to 'wrong view', 'erroneous view', or 'perverted view'. This passage highlights Fazun's assessment of the religious beliefs in Britain, using the term *mithyādr̥ṣṭi* to describe a perverted understanding, especially the mistaken notion of a divine creator. *Mithyādr̥ṣṭi* generally pertains to misunderstandings, but it can also refer to specific philosophical mistakes, including eternalism (S. *śāśvatadr̥ṣṭi*) and nihilism (S. *ucchedadr̥ṣṭi*). In the context of Buddhist moral teachings, *mithyādr̥ṣṭi* is recognized as the tenth and last of the ten harmful courses of action (C. *yedao* 業道; S. *karmapatha*; P. *kammapatha*; T. *las kyi lam*), which denotes a disbelief in the law of cause and effect and the process of reincarnation. This erroneous view is considered immoral and particularly damaging because it promotes a lack of accountability by indicating that actions have no consequences.

5 In this passage, Fazun is likely alluding to the British diplomatic mission to Lhasa led by Sir Basil John Gould (1883-1956), who served as the British Political Officer in Sikkim, Bhutan, and Tibet from 1935 until 1945. The mission took place between 1936 and 1937 and included figures such as Frederick Spencer Chapman (1907-1971), who acted as Gould's personal secretary and photographer, and Hugh Richardson (1905-2000), who would later become the British envoy in Lhasa. I was unable to verify Fazun's specific claims that the mission was undertaken under the pretext of a tea expedition, or that a British officer died in Lhasa.

## 9.2 Attitude Toward the Chinese Government

In recent years, the Tibetan authorities perceived that our Central Government was incapable of unification, lacked the strength to resist foreign aggression, possessed no capacity to extend its reach to Tibet, held no intention to become involved in Tibetan affairs, and could not mediate the issue of the Panchen Lama's return. Above all, they believed that since the [1911] Revolution, our Chinese nation had become entirely Westernized and Christianized, and devoid of any trace of the Buddhadharmā. – This perception was particularly entrenched in Xikang, where people deemed an emperor indispensable. How could overthrowing and even discarding the emperor not amount to a Western mistaken view?<sup>6</sup> Their misconceptions remain deeply ingrained. No matter how much one tries to instruct them, they persist in clinging to these views – although there has been notable improvement in recent times.

Tibetans have come to understand that the Chinese Government is neither entirely Westernized nor composed only of Christians. They now recognize that many officials in the Inner Lands still adhere to Buddhism. They acknowledge that the Chinese Government has the capacity for national unification and the ability to cultivate strength. Ultimately, they understand that once the government in the Inner Lands is properly structured, all necessary reforms and initiatives will progress effortlessly. As a result, they now observe the Chinese Government with a distant, watchful gaze, while holding on to the hope for the unification of the Inner Lands. Some now acknowledge that, even after the unification of the Inner Lands, offering allegiance to the Chinese Government would greatly outweigh the act of submitting [144] to the British.

First, the notion of a “single family” has been around for quite some time; it does not require any fresh cultivation or creation. Second, regardless of any changes, the Inner Lands continue to be, in essence, a Buddhist country. There will never be a scenario where the Buddhadharmā and its adherents are entirely nonexistent. Third, the Han and the Tibetans, both part of the yellow race,<sup>7</sup> share extensive linguistic borrowings – unlike English, which remains distinctly foreign and dissonant. Fourth, the Buddhadharmā embraced by the Mongolian and Manchu nations is purely Tibetan in origin. Even the scriptures they chant are entirely compiled in Tibetan script, unchanged in the slightest. Fifth, the Buddhist architecture and culture

<sup>6</sup> C. xiejian 邪見. In this passage, Fazun more explicitly invokes a Buddhist philosophical position to frame the rejection of imperial authority as doctrinal fallacy. Fazun illustrates how the political developments following the 1911 Revolution were perceived by Tibetan officials and Xikang residents, who interpreted these changes through a Buddhist doctrinal perspective. He illustrates their stance that the dethronement of the Qing emperor – a central figure in the dynasty's Buddhist-oriented administration – constituted *xiejian*, ‘mistaken views’, a phrase that implies a disregard for values aligned with the Dharma. In their opinion, the lack of an emperor illustrated both a political schism and the collapse of a sacred order. Fazun points out their blending of anti-monarchist Republican sentiments with “Western mistaken views”, using a rhetorical technique that suggests that secular modernity cannot coexist with Buddhist cosmology. He examines how these communities strategically used Buddhist concepts to critique the Republican government in China, drawing a parallel between loyalty to the Qing's Buddhist imperial order and fidelity to the Dharma. In Fazun's analysis, he illustrates how Tibetan and Xikang groups actively resisted Republican reforms that they considered hostile to Buddhism and rooted in Western Christian ideals.

<sup>7</sup> C. huangse de minzu 黃色的民族; literally, ‘yellow nation’, but also ‘yellow race’. Hence, the phrase *yizhong huangse de minzu* 一種黃色的民族 also translates to ‘one kind of yellow race’.

of Mongolia, Manchuria, Qinghai, and Gansu are largely shaped by the architecture and culture of Tibet's Buddhism. Sixth, within the monastic community, both influential leaders and highly learned monks often trace their roots back to regions like Mongolia and Qinghai, and hold the notion that the Inner Lands are their homeland.

Therefore, Tibet's current stance toward the Chinese Government can be described as one that is neither too close nor too far, neither aligned nor estranged. Sometimes, orders are accepted, while at other times they are rejected. There is neither fear nor loyalty, only a quiet, detached observation. In earlier times, Tibet displayed outright disdain, a topic I discussed at length in my unpolished work, *Tibet, As I Once Passed Through*, so I will not go over it again here.

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## 10 Views on the Governance of Tibet

**Summary** 10.1 Past Governance of Tibet. – 10.2 Modern Governance of Tibet.

### 10.1 Past Governance of Tibet

[145] In *Tibet, As I Once Passed Through*, I provided a detailed account of how Tibet was governed in earlier times. I have also addressed this topic in the historical section of the present book. After the Qianlong era, the emperor's authority in Tibet became de facto solidified through the deployment of imperial commissioners to Tibet. These commissioners, acting as the emperor's envoys, held supreme authority and earned the admiration and trust of Tibet as a whole. Had they genuinely governed on the emperor's behalf, their administration would almost certainly have succeeded. Instead, they drew salaries while oppressing others, displayed arrogance, treated everyone with contempt, neglected their duties, squandered resources, and even manufactured conflicts where none existed. How could such a conduct not incite rebellion? Broadly speaking, this was the state of affairs in the past.

### 10.2 Modern Governance of Tibet

Ever since Han forces were expelled from Tibet, Tibet has severed its ties with the Inner Lands. There have been instances where it has even responded with military force. What bases do we have, then, to confidently state that we govern Tibet? I am genuinely puzzled by how the phrase "modern governance of Tibet" is being used today. If Tibetans were to read this, I suspect they would scoff at it, and I fear that even foreigners might laugh at me. And yet, I know that Tibet has always been part of our country's



territory.<sup>1</sup> For a number of years, due to domestic crises and foreign threats, the State was simply unable to allocate time for its government. Still, to designate this period of unavoidable neglect as “poor governance” – is that truly deserving of ridicule? Consider the northwestern provinces. Since the

**1** In Fazun’s Chinese: “Danshi wo zhidao Xizang zongshi woguo de bantu 但是我知道西藏總是我國的版圖”. This statement appears at a turning point in Fazun’s critique of Qing and Republican rule in Tibet. In the preceding passage, Fazun observes that, after the expulsion of Chinese troops (C. Han bing 漢兵), Tibet severed all ties with China and sometimes even responded to Chinese advances with military force. Here, Fazun questions what it means to “govern Tibet” (C. zhi Xizang 治西藏). He expresses confusion over the phrase “modern governance of Tibet” (C. xiandai de zhi Xizang 現代的治理西藏), which was in vogue in Republican China, and anticipates mockery from Tibetans and foreign observers for merely using it. At this point, when Chinese leadership appears most hollow, Fazun asserts, “And yet, I know that Tibet has always been part of our country’s territory”. The phrasing – *danshi wo zhidao* (但是我知道) – is telling. The conjunction *danshi* ‘but’, ‘and yet’ marks a break from the historical logic of the earlier passage and introduces an assertion grounded not in fact, but in the need to reassert sovereignty. The pronoun *wo* 我, although denoting the first person, often marks a collective voice in Fazun’s writing – evoking not just the voice of the author, but Chinese civilization as a whole. The phrase thus functions less as an empirical claim than as a performative act: a reaffirmation of sovereignty through mere repetition, precisely when its meaning is most in doubt. This sudden turn interrupts Fazun’s train of thought, affirming exactly what that reasoning had called into question. This statement disrupts his logic at least in three ways. First, it may reflect national pride aligned with Republican ideology. Second, it may serve as a response to the uncomfortable truths he had just exposed. A third, and perhaps more unsettling, possibility is that Fazun does not seek to resolve the contradiction between political claim and political absence; instead, he builds it into the very structure of his argument. He acknowledges that the Republican government, weakened by internal unrest and external threats (C. neiyou waihuan 內憂外患), lacked both the capacity and the will to govern Tibet. Yet this admission does not lead him to question the legitimacy of China’s territorial claim. On the contrary, he reaffirms it without qualification. The result is a deepened tension: the less China governs Tibet, the more emphatic the assertion of sovereignty becomes. This rhetorical strategy reveals a conception of sovereignty that is not grounded in administrative control but in historical continuity and symbolic repetition. Fazun’s analogy to the neglected northwestern provinces (C. Xibei zhuseng 西北諸省) reinforces this point: these territories too suffered prolonged administrative failure, yet their status within the nation was never doubted. The case of the thirteenth Dalai Lama’s death illustrates the same logic. Fazun describes Special Envoy Huang 黃 as symbolically present, while actual governance is reduced to the transmission of telegrams. What remains is not state power in action, but the persistence of a claim that must be repeated precisely because it cannot be enacted. In this, Fazun articulates a paradoxical form of sovereignty – defined not by effective rule, but by its rhetorical endurance in the face of political absence. To trace Fazun’s response to this tension over time, we must turn to the 1943 edition of *Xiandai Xizang*, where a major revision occurs. Again, Fazun published *Tibet, As I Once Passed Through* and *Modern Tibet* as separate volumes in Chongqing in 1937. In 1943, *Modern Tibet* was reprinted in Chengdu with *Tibet, As I Once Passed Through* added as an appendix. In this revised edition, the sentence “And yet, I know that Tibet has always been part of our country’s territory” is erased entirely. In Chapter 10, the paragraph that featured the statement is replaced instead with a detailed account of Qing envoys in late imperial Tibet. This omission shifted the meaning of the original edition. In 1937, Fazun placed his strong territorial claim at the end of a reflection on China’s inability to govern Tibet. He implied that sovereignty could persist without governance, even when sovereignty was sustained by repetition alone. And so, in 1943, by merely removing the statement, Fazun appeared to resolve this tension. Still, its omission only gave his statement greater momentum. For it raised the question of whether the original statement was perceived as too weak, or whether it revealed too much. Notably, Fazun’s erasure occurred between 1937 and 1943, when the College of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrine in Chongqing was at its peak, under the leadership of both Fazun and Taixu. These years also marked the height of the Japanese occupation of China. During this time, Fazun’s reasoning may have been shaped by the wider pressures and uncertainties of the war, but also by new developments in Tibet after the passing of the thirteenth Dalai Lama. The absence of the statement in the 1943 edition – published three years after the enthronement of Tenzin Gyatso (T. Bstan’ dzin rgya mtsho; b. 1935) as the fourteenth Dalai Lama in 1940, and while the fifth Radreng Rinpoché served as the Regent of Tibet (1934-1947) – carries as much weight as its presence had in 1937, before the inception of the Sino-Japanese War (1937-45). For the revised Chapter 10, see Fazun 1943a, 116-17. See also Fazun’s Chapter 1 in the present book.

founding of the Republic, when has there been an opportunity to handle their [146] administration? Still, because they are an integral part of our territory, we can assert our authority over them, even when they are neglected or poorly governed. This is entirely without fault.

In the wake of the [thirteenth] Dalai Lama's passing on the thirtieth day of the tenth lunar month in the twenty-second year of the Republic [December 17, 1933],<sup>2</sup> the Chinese Government dispatched Special Envoy Huang 黃<sup>3</sup> to Tibet to participate in the memorial service. His foremost responsibility was certainly to convey condolences, but I suspect he may have had other mandates as well, perhaps to strengthen diplomatic relations and managing other responsibilities. After he returned, several counselors remained in Tibet to take care of ongoing affairs. Yet, what precisely are they doing? Besides relaying telegrams from the Chinese Government and conveying its directives to the Tibetan administration, I am afraid they seem to be largely inactive, with few responsibilities to keep them busy. Were this not the case, then why has there been no further engagement between the Tibetan authorities and the Chinese Government so far? Consequently, the current approach to governance appears confined to relaying messages and conveying directives. Is there any point in discussing other matters?

To govern Tibet well in the future, greater care must be taken in selecting the officials to be stationed there. At the end of my book, *Tibet, As I Once Passed Through*, specifically in Chapter 9 and [147] Chapter 10,<sup>4</sup> I appended several personal insights on this matter. Are such measures truly necessary for effective administration? That is a question that requires careful consideration by the authorities. My contribution here, offering what I personally know,<sup>5</sup> has been simply to fulfill the sacred duty of a citizen,<sup>6</sup>

**2** The Thirteenth Dalai Lama passed away at the age of fifty-seven, on the thirtieth day of the tenth month in the Tibetan calendar, during the Water-Bird Year. Fazun correctly reports this date according to the Republican period calendar as *minguo ershier nian shiyue sanshi ri* 民國二十二年十月三十日. In the Gregorian calendar, it corresponds to December 17, 1933.

**3** C. Huang zhuanshi 黃專使. Here, Fazun refers to the special emissary Huang Musong 黃慕松 (1885-1957), a Chinese general sent to Lhasa in 1934 on a diplomatic mission. His task was to persuade the Tibetan government to accept Chinese sovereignty. He delivered his proposal under the pretext of offering condolences for the death of the thirteenth Dalai Lama. The Tibetan National Assembly rejected it, declaring Tibet an independent state under the rule of the Dalai Lamas. After the mission failed, Huang was appointed head of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission in 1935. For Envoy Huang, cf. Goldstein 1989; Powers and Templeman 2012, 302-3; cf. also Richardson 1961, 141-3; Zhu 2016, 170; Tuttle 2005, 152, 177, 185, 191, 206.

**4** The two chapters are part of *Wo quguo de Xizang*; for Chapter 9 and 10, see Fazun 1937b, 59, 68.

**5** The phrase *wo geren suo zhidao* 我個人所知道, meaning "that which I personally know", expands upon the earlier *danshi wo zhidao*, "and yet, I know", which appears at the beginning of the chapter. Together, these expressions characterize Fazun's statement not as an official claim but as a moral position. His later invocation of *guomin tianzhi*, "the sacred duty of a citizen", clarifies the subject behind the *wo* - not an isolated self or an imperial subject, but a citizen of the modern Republic. Fazun speaks out of a sense of obligation, for his tone reflects loyalty to the nation while also revealing his doubts against State policies.

**6** Here, Fazun employs the compound *guomin tianzhi* 國民天職, which can be understood as "the holy obligation of a citizen" or "the sacred duty of a citizen". This phrase illustrates the changing understanding of the notion of citizenship in China during the early twentieth century. In Nationalist Republican discourse, the phrase highlighted a commitment to civic duties, associating individual responsibilities with the broader aspirations of the nation. The May Fourth Movement advocated the importance of people's rights (C. *minquan* 民權) and public opinion (C. *minyì* 民意). During this time, both workers and citizens began to view their contributions as a collective national obligation, framing their involvement in labor and social movements as a natural, sacred duty (C. *tianzhi* 天職) to promote the nation's welfare. This development marked

and to present these thoughts for the reference of my fellow countrymen. That was my intention in writing this book. As for the many errors and omissions in the text, they are certainly many. Because of time constraints, I was unable to offer a more detailed account. I hope readers will kindly forgive these shortcomings!

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a change from a conventional, hierarchical interpretation of civic duty towards a contemporary, participatory approach to civic engagement. On *guomin tianzhi* and related terminology from the Republican era cf. Smith 2002, 106-7.

## REFERENCES



## 法尊法師著 現代西藏

現代西藏序 太虛

法尊格什，以新著的現代西藏，寄我校閱，我涉覽一遍，發生兩層感想：其一，西藏民眾信受佛法之教化，不難普及而亦有相當的醇正深入；然一般婦女性少羞恥，曾不稍戢淫亂，（此與無上密宗皆雙身法或亦有關）一般官商則皆為巧詐，失於誠實，且廓落一帶游牧人，多有以劫殺為生活著，殺盜淫妄，竟分別蔚成風尚，此何故耶？其二，西藏僧眾實為西藏民族的重心，不惟掌教化崇拜，而一般的教育及政治權利亦出於是，此又何故耶？則因前者無安穩的經濟基礎，且無系統組織的政制治理，而後者則有之也。由此可知淑羣之道，非但柔善的教化能奏全功，必扶以剛強的政治，尤必基以資養的經濟，而世之佛徒，欲期住持佛教有優良僧眾，乃惟冀以德化達之，輕拒僧制與寺產之整理，蓋未知純由教化而臻淨善，實惟少數賢哲，而大多數人，則皆須恆以生產，齊以律制，而後能導勉於善也。故西藏的僧眾，使無宗克巴改制率各大寺嚴遵僧律，並管理其傳續之集團財產，則將渙散頹墮而類尼泊爾。然使西藏掌教政之當局，更能督率民眾，研求富庶之技術，軌納於公正嚴明之政刑，則四根本戒之善行，不難表現為佛化民族之特性。故人之所貴，佛之所教，雖在導進於增上生與決定勝之行果，然適人間所宜而漸化，端在先以合理經濟使咸足存活，加以公嚴政治俾各獲平安，而後有暇滿之環境，可受行於至教，否則雖羨慕且信仰之，卒無以改正其苟偷放僻，亦令徒有漸悔心耳！茲則余對已經有勝善教化之西藏民族，欲為其當局進獻一籌者也，因即書於簡端。

民國二十六年四月八日在雪山丈室太虛

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## 【一】現代西藏

釋法尊者

## 第一章 導言

西藏是個最神秘的地方，在現代的世界各國和各民族，沒有一個人能徹底明了它那內容的組織。——除他當局外——而且牠又是個封閉着的原始國家，以前除了漢族人民可以隨意出入外，東西洋的好奇探險隊，都想去徹底地看看西藏，不知道犧牲過多少心思和財力，甚至有把性命都送掉的。但是他們所得的結果，不過是略說說西康和青海等處地情形概況，對於西藏中心的秘密，是沒有一個人能夠揭破的。曾在某一個西洋人的紀錄之中，見他說他到過西藏中心的拉薩。在一切想進西藏探險的人群之中，他總算個首屈一指的傑出者。但是一考察他到拉薩的成績如何？他不過隱閉在一個西藏的人家裏，藏了幾【二】天，他連外面的街上都不敢出去耍，他對於西藏當局的內容組織，那裏還能夠談呢？自從民初漢兵的推出以後，英人的勢力就漸漸地往裏頭移動，他們在拉薩住的時候，又有西藏辦的招待員陪他們耍，所以他們以後寫的西藏內部的事情，纔稍為有了一些蛛絲馬跡可尋。但是他們對西藏宗教建設，以及西藏當局的心理觀念，仍未能透澈的認識。因為人家是怕他而招待他，那裏能把那內心的秘密去告訴他們呢？前人費盡了千辛萬苦都沒有探查到的西藏密奧，我在康藏住了八九年，用很冷靜旁觀者的態度，纔比較地見到了個大概。現在我已返回內地，就把他拿來奉獻給我們久欲了知西藏秘密的同胞們呢！

若直言西藏，我覺着他的範圍過於廣泛，空間上的範圍固不待說，就是時間上也要包括著千餘年的歷史，在那個歷史中間的政治，學術，乃至風土人情等，都要完全的去描寫他，那就必須要重翻過去人的舊書篋，依着葫蘆畫瓢也似的抄寫一遍。我的稟性根本就與抄寫匠站了個對方，除了翻譯經書而外，都是不喜歡抄襲人家那些靠不住的官面文章的。我既不愛抄襲，所以對於過去的西藏，就不想多說了。

【三】西藏雖然是中國的版圖，但是他與我們隔閡了多年，他的將來，究竟是如何，或是歸屬其他的國家，或是老這樣的繼續下去，這需要看我們國家的實力如何和辦事人的手段如何及聯絡的感情如何而定。我非是預言家，所以對於這些未來的話，也不喜歡多說。如今我給西藏帶上了個現代的帽子，這「現代」兩個字並不作摩登解，不過是說他的時間上的現在罷了。這現代兩個字，有不有個固定的界限呢？我覺着他也沒有，各人就各人所生存的時候，假立一個現代，在這時候所見聞的一切一切，就假立他為現代的事實和狀況。但是在這一期謝滅的幾十年或幾百年之後，他們又要說我們的話不宜時，我們的事情都是陳跡。他們另就他們生存的時期，假立一個現代，他們那時候的一切，才算作現代的一切事實。可是若照這樣的一推逐他們的心理，仍然是要變成過去的，那個永久的現代，絕對是不會實現的一件事。假若唯就各箇人的當時設立一個現代，那麼過去的一切時間，皆可以說是他們的現代了。我是中華民國的人，我的現代，也就是從我記事以來所見聞的事情了。今天我是要說現代西藏，也就須依着我進藏的年限，去假定他，我親眼看到的固然是我【四】所說的現代西藏，我耳根所問到的，也要算是我所說的現代西藏了。這篇文中，有時或也談到一點過去的歷史，那都是些附屬品的配脚，不過為給同胞們一些整個的概念，不得不略略地說一說而已。我究竟是為什麼進藏的？我在西藏的地方住了多久呢？我回來過沒有呢？為什麼又進藏呢？現在回來了想作些什麼呢？這都是一位很知己的朋友，他再三不讓我過身，非逼着我寫出來不可，我實在覺着慚愧，尤其是叫我自己敘述自己的傳記，更是慚愧的萬分。但是我終久扭他不過，只好略略地寫一點出來給大家見笑吧。

## 一 入藏目的

在民國九年的夏天，初次聽到大勇法師講八大人覺經的時候，我便覺着出了場子家，應當做點出家人的事情，若是一天兩堂殿的混下去，實在是對不住我出家的本心！但是做什麼才是出家所應作的事呢？那時候便聽見老修行們說：出離生死苦海，

是出家的事。什麼叫做生死苦海？怎麼着才能出離呢？那時候我的心理太老實了，不但不知道那兩件事，就連那兩個很簡單的問題也不曾懷過疑。又聽見一般老修行們說：念佛往生極樂，是出家人的事。【五】這些話我也直當地承認，但是在閒暇的時候，嘗聽到勇法師講些過去高僧的故事，我便知道出家人，不但是念佛往生和出離生死，就在生死之中，也還有翻譯經論，住持正法等，應當做的事情很多。在民國十年的春夏秋三季，又受了勇法師的指導不少。冬季便在北平法源寺道階法師前受具，勇法師亦在冬天便往日本去學密宗，就在臘月中旬，承我的戒和尚和寶華山的八位師父的慈悲，成就我們三個北方戒子，到寶華山去學戒。在那次年的夏天，聽開堂師父和五師父講天台四教儀，這便引發了我聽講經的宿習，我便覺着聽經比學喊一齊向上排班和水陸焰口的味道來得濃厚。那時偏趕上太虛大師在武昌創辦佛學院，有一位戒兄，寫信告訴我，說那裏一天有六點鐘講經，還有兩三點鐘的自習，我見了那封信，就像小孩子要到新年的樣子，歡喜得不知道怎樣才好。當時就抱定了一個必去的宗旨，可是沒有人介紹，又沒有人做保證，怎樣才能夠去呢？就在這個當兒裏，偏有無巧不巧的事件發生，正是寶華山去年的新戒弟子掛引禮號的時候。我們三人是北平的戒，按寶華山的老規矩，是難以入板堂當引禮師的，可是我們的門坎來得硬些，寶華山的大和尚便是我們的【六】教授，寶華山的教授便是我們的開堂，東西兩板堂的前幾位，就是我們的引禮師，我入板堂要比本山戒子早半年，他們就落了我們的後。本山的戒子當然很不滿意，滿像在掛引禮號的時候爭個上風，誰知道事情偏不順他們的心，引禮號仍以我在第一，這便看見他們那萬丈的嫉火，燒上了天空。我却在明處和闇中不住的冷笑，我名號雖在你們的前頭，但我是不久住的，你們又何必這樣去醜呢？過了不到十天之後，便接到了勇法師由日本的回信，他很慈悲的允許給我作介紹和保證人，我便與寶華山的師父們作了個暫別禮，順風向西的到了武昌，拜見了太虛大師，加入佛學院的團體了。在那里的第二年冬天大勇法師回到武昌傳十八道，各處的佛教徒無論在家出家，都有唯密是尚的風氣，我也給勇法師當過幾天侍者，我也學過十八道和一尊供養，雖未受過日本帶回的兩部大灌頂，但覺密宗的味道，也只有那麼濃厚。在已經學過教理的人去研究他，才能了解他那裏頭的真實道理。若是那一般全無教理根底的人去學他，只能夠學到一些假像觀。上焉者，得到一點三摩地影像，和本尊的加被，那就要認為是即身成佛的上上成就，誰也不敢否認他。下焉者，得到一點昏沉和【七】掉舉，夾雜着一點魔業或鬼狐神通，那也要算是即身成佛了。我的根基很弱，既沒有得到三摩地影像和本尊加持，却也沒有得到魔弄鬼的大神通，所以我對於密法是很淡薄的。學是要學到究竟，行是要行的穩當，我既不想討巧偷乖，又不想超次躐等，更不想說大妄語自欺欺他和自害他，我是學歸學，行歸行，講說歸講說，弘揚歸弘揚，樣樣皆以老實心自居，老實話告人，我既不想騙人，我又不想他人的利養恭敬，所以我對一般朋友們，總是毫不客氣地老實話老實說，犯不着護惜他，也不怕得罪他，愛聽就聽，不愛聽就散，有幾個朋友說我對於密宗害了冷血病，我也就報他冷笑一聲罷了。民國十三年春天，勇法師在北平與白普仁尊者，一同閉關於善緣庵，修護摩法，法師便覺着西藏的密法，比東密來得完善，他便發了進藏求法的決心。在勇法師的初衷本想一人獨往，或帶一兩個同志，次經白尊者及諸位大護法的勸請，才發起佛教藏文學院的組織。那個初夏也就是武昌佛學院的畢業期，勇法師在北平傳十八道，函我到平相見，面商進藏的事。蓋自從入五台親近勇法師之後，勇法師視我，就如象他的剃度弟子一般，時時事事沒有不照顧我的。他由日本歸來，本想在廬山閉關修成【八】就法，他挑中的侍者，我便是第一個。他在北平把方針一變，其對我私人的計劃，當然也要變更，所以就來函召我到北平面商。我在武昌聽講三論唯識的時候，便深慕什顯奘淨諸先覺的後塵，繼聞勇法師入藏的函召，當然是雀躍三丈唯恐不得其門而入了。那時，我離父母已經六個年頭了，父母勸促一返的信函，也不記得有幾十封了。我那今年推明年，明年退後年的復書，當然也不會欠文字債的。這年回平，原定的便道回家一望，略慰父母慈懷。可是因為勇法師急于赴杭傳法，便把我回家的妄念打銷。到了北平，見了勇法師，商定了進藏學法的計劃。勇法師南下，大剛法師密嚴法師善哲居士及我，便作了箇留平籌備員，八月間勇法師到平開學時，便帶了朗禪法師恆演法師及幾位居士同來。藏文學院開學了，充先生正式上課了，我們的迦喀也漸漸地上了軌道，在這開學之後，又來了超一法師，觀空法師，法舫法師等。到了第二年的春末，組織了出發的團體，一路上又是傳法灌頂，又是說皈受戒，熱鬧極了。火車便是專車，輪船也是包艙。在漢口的時候，又加入了嚴定法師，會中法師等。也有幾位老同學，來攔住我們，

說些什麼母院無人，西藏難去等理由，我只笑他的愚昧固執，他並不知我【九】早有爲法犧牲的決心。西藏再難也難不過樊公所行的高昌，和顯師所經的關隘。母院再無人，也有虛大師在主持，諸同學在研究。西藏既有很完善的佛法可學可譯和可弘傳，他們理應贊助我們，鼓勵我們才對，爲什麼反來阻止我們，恐駭我們呢？因爲都是好同學，只有各行各的志願，我就哼着哈着地應酬他，我並沒有發言反對他。他已經死了好幾年了，他是永遠不會知道我的心志的！那年的夏天，在峨嵋避暑，順便做了個五七息災法會，秋天在嘉定烏龍寺閱律藏及南海寄歸傳，我對於義淨三藏，起了一點真實信敬心，我覺着我們中國的這些佛典經論，皆是我先覺犧牲了無量生命財產和心血身汗，更受過無量的痛苦憂急悲哀熱淚，才換來這些代價品。換句話說：我覺着這些經書上一字一畫，便是一滴血和一滴淚的混合品，那是我們先覺發大悲心和大無畏心立大誓願和不顧一切的犧牲，所請來的和譯出來的，我們作後學的拿起來的時候，至少也該想一想先覺的大心願大事業和大犧牲大恩德，不應該自作聰明，忘恩負義地批評和誹謗。我們縱不能對於先覺的辛苦事業上培福增慧，然也決不應該對於先覺的功勞恩義上折福損慧纔好。淨法師的高僧求法詩云：「【一〇】去人成百歸無十，後者安知前者難！」我讀那兩句詩的時候，眼睛一定是個紅的，因爲淚珠的大小與葡萄差不多。他又說：「后賢如未諳斯旨，往往將經容易看！」他算給我們受了個預記。我受了他老人家說話的刺激，同時也受了他老人家的感化，我對於前賢實在不敢起半點輕視心，我對於先覺的事業實在不敢起半點容易心。但是先覺的這種大慈大悲和大無畏精神，我羨慕極了，我也想像犧牲一切地去學學先覺。我對於西藏的佛教典籍，凡是內地所沒有的，我都發願學習翻譯出來補充所缺。尤其對於義淨法師所翻譯的律藏，我很想給他補充圓滿。西藏的密法，當然也不是例外的事。就是世間上的地理，歷史，和工巧，醫方、政治、文藝等，我也有學習的志願。可是一個人的精力和壽量，是很有限的，能不能夠達到我的目的，那就很難得預言的了。

## 二 九年康藏留學

民國十四年的秋末，留學團由嘉定出發雅安了。可是這條路上是要經過好幾處土匪的區域。我們全體分成了水路兩道進行。自洪雅以西，就沒有官兵敢做保障的。這時勇法【一一】師等。很有暫返嘉定待匪勢稍息后，再繼續進行的意思。但在一般處出門的同學們，是恨不能一步走到西藏的。對於土匪的危險，是毫無一點經驗的，所以都很齊心的主張要走。勇法師也只好俯允我們，一方面請當地政府保護，一方面電請雅安孫總司令設法。時機很湊巧，中段的土匪也有受招安的企望，假借護送我們立一點功，所以用土匪做保商，把我們三十幾個人安穩地護送到了雅安。謝天謝地，纔脫了龍潭虎穴的土匪窩巢。當時在雅安休息了六七天，就繼續着西進，由雅安到打箭爐，土匪的區域也不少，我記得由榮經出發的那【一二】一早上，遇着剿匪的軍隊回來，挑着幾個人頭很可怕的。後來纔曉得，是特爲我們去除掉的障礙。第二日過大相嶺的早上，又遇見土匪，可是放過我們去，搶了後面隨行的幾家布商。後來纔知道，也是官家說通了的，所以才能不搶我們。像這樣的走了十幾天，才到了化城式的打箭爐，住在安却寺，就在這個冬季尾上，請了一位半蠻不漢的土著藏文教師，老實說一句：他的藏語雖比我們好，他的藏文實在還不如我們知道的多，過年了，開春了，同學們覺着無味了。我與朗禪法師發生了欲動的念頭，不顧一切的，不問同學們願意不願意，我便毅然決然地要上跑馬山去學經，那怕與團體脫離關係都可以。在正式開會討論的時候，勇法師剛法師及諸同學都沒有什麼不願意。就有一兩位不願意的，見勇法師不但阻攔而且幫助，他也就沒法反對，只有隨我的自由罷了。我在跑馬山依止慈願大師住了一年，學了幾種藏文法和宗喀巴大師的必芻戒釋，菩薩戒釋，菩提道次第略論。這一年所求的學非常滿意，對於藏文方面也大有進境，對於西藏的佛法，生了一種特別不共的信仰。因爲見到必芻戒釋，菩薩戒釋的組織和理論，是在內地所見不到的事。尤其那部菩提道次第論的組織和【一三】建立，更是我從未夢見過的一個奇寶。我覺着發心求法的志願，總算得到了一點小結果，那怕就死在西康，我也是不會生悔恨心和遺憾的了。在這一年之中，藏人的生活過慣了，專門吃糌粑不吃米麵，也試驗的有幾分成功了。民國十六年的開春，便是我們正式出發期，我和朗禪法師是搭的甘孜拉瓦家的騾幫，裝作普通僧人進藏，那個生活是很苦的。到了甘孜，就住在商人家里。勇法師是支官差用官兵護送着進發，一路上轟轟烈烈大有不可一世之概，尤其那沿途的

縣長官員等，皆是爭前恐後的受皈依，學密咒，郊迎郊送。川邊的蠻子們，那里見過這樣尊重優禮的盛舉呢？也就是因為勇法師的氣派太大，藏人誤為國家特派的大員，西藏政府來了一紙公函擋駕，並有兩張通知甘孜的商人，不準帶漢人進藏。障礙發生，只好暫時住下了。在四五月間，朗禪法師回到木娘鄉學經。我隨勇法師，移住甘孜對河，札迦寺，親近札加大師學經去了，爾時札公年德高邁，示現殘疾，名義上雖是親近札公，實際上學經的師父，都是他老座下的上首弟子，我依止俄讓巴師父，聽了菩提道次第廣論的毗鉢舍那。後又依止格陀諸古，學了因明初機入門，現觀莊嚴論，辨了義不了義論等多種。這位師父【一四】的年齡只比我大一歲，但是他的學問，修行，道德，慈悲，那都是仰之彌高，鑽之彌堅，不可測度的。我依止他老人家共住了四個年頭，所得的利益最多。那修菩提心的教授，純是他老人家慈悲恩予的，對於密宗深義，也由他老人家的慈悲，摸著了一點門路。我對於他的信敬心，是不可用言語來形容的事。他那種慈藹的面容及那和悅的音聲，令我生生世世也難得忘掉的。民國十七年的秋天，我久仰盛名的安東恩師，由廓羅來甘孜，朝禮札公，問往昌都建立道場的事宜。這是天子我的良好機會，由格陀諸古介紹，拜見了安東恩師，盤問了我積久欲問的許多難題。他老人家那種淵博學海，鋒利劍芒，任你何等的困難死結，莫不迎刃而解。我受了教訓之後，就五體投地地信仰。這是我初次所見的安東恩師。自此以後，就想長時依止安東恩師了。到民國十八年的八月初四日，札公大師示寂，正如火天眼滅。至初十日的早上，勇法師也逝世了，這時候剛法師在成都未回，身前只有我和恆照，密炎，密慧諸兄，這種不幸的喪事臨頭，我們是沒有辦過的。怎麼辦呢？慌了慌了，束手坐待是不可以的呀！于是我便東一頭西一頭的請格陀諸古來指導，札公的善後也是他老人家主辦的，勇法師的喪事又找到【一五】他，這才見得到他老人家的真實修養，不慌不忙的，指出了一條通衢。我們幾個人便依著所指示的一步一步的做下去，輕輕鬆鬆的就把勇法師的茶毗事做好了。密慧兄回東古，密嚴兄回康定，恆照師也走了，就留我一個人在甘住守。春天剛法師和密嚴兄，由打箭鑪來迎接勇法師的靈骨回康定修塔，我也親身送下去，重新親近慈願大師一個月，就在這個當兒裏，智三學兄也歸了西。等到他的茶毗事辦了，我才回到甘孜，依止格陀諸古，聽受札公大師全部著述的傳授。民二十年的春天，我同朗禪法師常光師慧深師等四人，又進一步地到昌都去。朗禪常光二師稍住數【一六】日即進拉薩。我與慧深師以親近安東恩師為目的，便住在昌都求學。是年的春夏秋季，受了四十余部的大灌頂，對於顯教諸論亦略聞綱要。八月間又隨恩師進藏，路過拿墟達樸大師處，依止達樸大師受綠度母身曼陀羅之不共修法。十月底到拉薩，奉恩師之命，冬月間入別那寺放札倉郡則，名義填在寺中，實際仍住拉薩依止恩師求學。民國二十一年，學習因明總義論及菩提道次第廣論。民國二十二年，學習現觀莊嚴論金鬘論，及密宗道次第廣論，五次第廣論，三百余尊結緣灌頂，大威德二種次第及護摩大疏，并空行佛母修法教授等。此外尚依止格登持巴聽俱舍，絳則法王聽戒律，頗章喀大師受勝樂金剛之大灌頂等。總之在康藏留學的這幾年中間，要算我這一生中，最饒興趣，最為滿意的一幅圖畫了。

這幾年的生活狀況如何呢？我再為簡略的敘述一下：當我在甘孜的第一年，是隨勇法師搭伙食，吃的當然不錯。第二年分開之後，我使用一個大瓦壺，滿注上一壺冷水，在夜晚臨睡的時候，把牠安坐在一個牛糞充滿的瓦缸子上，再給牠蒙上一些御寒的破爛毡布之類，由那瓦缸內的牛糞烟子，把牠漸漸地燻熱，乃至騰沸。到了第二天早上，起來先倒出一點洗【一七】洗臉，餘者之中，放上一把粗茶半把蠻鹽，這就叫做蠻茶，我在床上將早課誦畢，把他搬到床前，拿出一個木碗，半小口袋糌粍，一塊酥油，幾片生蘿蔔來用早餐。飯後便往師處候課聽講。中午回來，再喝幾盞剩茶，揉上一碗糌粍吃，下午又上課去了。晚上隨隨便便地吃些東西，就算去了一天的時光。第二天還是原方抓藥，一年三百六十天也是這一着棋。生活雖然窘迫，精神非常快樂，甚至有時候看書寫書，快樂得忘了睡覺，這都是莫名其妙的事呀！在拉薩住的那幾年，生活方面，差不多與前相同。學書誦經都忙得起早【一八】睡晚，連吃東西都要特別抽開來吃。我在這八九年的光陰中間，對於西藏的顯密教理，皆能略略地得到一點頭緒，大概就是對於衣食住三項淡薄的原故吧！

### 三 初次歸來

在民國二十二年，連接的接到虛大師的幾封信，催促速歸辦理漢藏教理院的事情。在我個人的觀念上，實在覺着所學的不夠用，而且想學的還很多。吃盡千辛萬苦，好不容易到了西藏。放着寶所不住，那肯輕易就回來呢？但是這里面有三種原因，我雖不願意回來，也得回來：一、虛大師是我內地唯一無二的恩師，我對於漢文佛學，能得一知半解，皆是依止他老人家的教授得來的。他老人家是真實菩薩，終日爲着整理僧伽，培植人才，復興佛教，主持正法而忙，他在二十餘年中，爲扶持正法，創辦學院等，不知道吃了多少苦，耐了多少勞。現在辦個漢藏教理院，命我去教一點藏文，我若是違命不去，豈不是給他老人家一個絕大的打擊嗎？我于報恩的心理上能忍耐得過去嗎？二、我初到昌都時，原是想請安東恩師來主持世界佛學苑藏文系的，因爲他奉達賴喇嘛之命進藏，一時難得出來，我將虛大師之函件呈白，他【一九】老人家也主張叫我先出來籌備一下，他再出來，師命如是，我又那裏敢違呢？三、我請安東恩師來華的意思，寫了一道呈文，啟白于達賴座前。達賴喇嘛的答文上，說安東恩師出來的時機尚未到，頂好是我先出來。這個答復，更造成了我先歸的鐵案。就在那年十月二十七日，作了我初次歸來的行期。在行期的前六天，便是我好友朗禪法師圓寂忌日，他是害熱病死的，在九月間他害了兩次，幸喜達賴太醫的手段高明，皆給救住。第三次病返在寺中，離拉薩太遠，沒法延醫救治，所以他就嗚呼哀哉了！我對於他的企望心很重，我回內地籌備之時，還望他能時時代我勸駕恩師的。誰知他這一死，便弄得我後方接應無人。所以我對於朗法師之死，傷心極了。就在傷心之中，也勉強代他辦理了喪事才動身，我那時覺着人生太無常了，太萎脆了，稍微遇着一點違緣，便要分出此世與後世的界限。西藏這塊淨土，今天一別，實不知還能不能重來！所經過的印度，即是我釋迦牟尼如來誕生成佛說法示寂之國土，這些聖跡若不飽飽的朝禮個夠，下次能不能再來聖地，那更是不可預料的事了。因爲這個無常觀念，時時逼在我眼前，我便會狂了似的，由叻偷堡，直往金剛場，住了七天，修了點供養。又【二〇】往鹿野苑朝禮轉法輪塔，住了一天一夜。又往拘尸那雙林佛涅槃處朝禮一遍。次往尼泊爾，朝禮佛往昔施身喂虎等聖跡。這樣轉了一個多月，直到民國二十三年正月裏纔到加爾加大。又往國際大學看望一位故友，住了三天，回來便買舟東渡，往仰光朝禮大金塔去了。那里有慈航法師首創的仰光中國佛學會，會上全人，對於做宏法利生的事業很有精神。我在福山寺裏掛單閉關，住到三月底出關之後，在佛學會隨喜了幾次普通演講。到四月初四的那天，我便買輪歸國，五月初到上海，特往奉化朝謁虛大師。在雪竇寺住了七天，便回上海往南京，會晤了謝次長、周局長、鄧夢先、陳濟博等一班故友，承密師父的函召，重游寶華山。開堂師父已做了和尚，密澄師父也接了法卷。後往北平避暑，給安欽大師任了一夏天義務翻譯。回家省親一次，這是我離家以後第二次回家了。先是十四年四月里臨赴藏的時候，回去過一次，那時我的雙親俱在，惟慈母大人，因爲我出家永別的關係，晝夜恸哭，哭的右目失了明，我覺着父母對於兒女的心太切了，恩太重了。但若教我守在牢獄似的家裏事親，那是絕對做不到的事。假若出了家不務如來的正業浪費時光，非但對不住佛及師長，就連我的慈母也【二一】沒法見面，這也是我學法志堅的一段小因緣。二次回家的時候，我的慈父已經去世了五年，後起的姪輩大多數沒有會過。連探親里一共住了十天，七月底到的武昌，八月間趕到漢藏教理院開學。代理虛大師的那柄千鈞重擔，輕輕地就負在我的肩上，每天講三點鐘的課，還要翻譯校改菩提道次第廣論，密宗道次第略論和菩薩戒品釋論等的文字。這樣埋頭苦干了兩學期，二次進藏的機會就成熟了。

### 四 再度入藏

我這次歸來的計劃，是想籌備一下迎安東恩師的，如上段已略略地說過。我想迎師的原因，便是我覺着一個人用盡一生的精神去求學，也難得學好和學完善。尤其想翻譯經論的同志們，對於漢文和佛學必須先有相當的根底，學好藏文佛學之後，才能夠正式翻譯。不然，就是將藏文佛學，學到第一等第一名格什的程度，仍然是個藏文佛學的格什，遇見真正翻譯的時候，仍不免默然向隅。那與翻譯經論和世間書籍，何益之有耶？我若用盡一生精神，去專學藏文佛學，也不愁做不到第一等的格什，可是時間上許可我嗎？虛大師允許我嗎？恩【二二】師上人準許我嗎？不，不，他們都不許

我那樣做。尤其是退位的老格登持巴大師，曾經教授我說：「你在三大寺，就熬到第一名格什，漸次昇到格登持巴，像我這樣的頭上打着一把黃傘，這也是個乾枯假名，對於佛法並無多大的益處，你如今先回去把宗喀巴大師的菩提道次第論翻譯出來，在你們漢地建立起座正法幢來，那纔是對於佛法和眾生作了真實的饒益。你若能設法將絳熱仁波卿——安東恩師之名——迎接出去，把宗喀巴大師的顯密教法，建立起來，那比考格什昇格登持巴的功德，大得多哩。」他老人家的這幾句話，固然是安慰我學業未成中途而返痛苦心的方便談。但是也給了我虛榮心的一個大頂門針。由此便造成了我第二次的進藏。我是志在翻譯的，我的學業是未造成成功的，若無一位顯密圓通學德兼優的大善知識隨時指導，我想翻譯的事業是不會圓滿的。我第二次進藏的目的，就是想迎我那位名滿康藏位居王師的安東恩師出來弘法的了。

民國二十四年夏天，承阿旺堪布及蓉方學佛同人的函召，到成都去講了一次經。蒙諸大施主的捐助，湊夠了迎師來華的路費。八月底回院，將院務全權拜托教務主任葦舫法師【二三】代理，於古歷九月初一日，便下山東渡，繞道山西朝禮五台及大同雲岡。道經平津，晤諸舊友，請其捐助印行菩提道次第廣論。此論印行成功，全賴平津諸友樂施的功德。十月初六往南京取護照，十三日到上海，依虛大師住。十四日觀光菩提學會成立典禮，留下了永不可忘的一點印象。十九日買輪南下，二十四日抵香港，住佛學會。二十八日又買輪南行，古歷冬月初三日抵新加坡。船再北行，初十到仰光，住於曾文銀老居士之花園中，休息半月，應酬了些世法。二十六日買輪赴印度，二十九日便到加爾加大，住唐人街天益樓商德茂永寶號。這晚阿旺堪布等亦到印度。因為攜帶的絲織品太多，海關上給扣留要稅，這次見到行李太多的麻煩了。我也幫着到處托人設法。後由西藏政府來了個電報證明，英國人立即放行免稅。英人對西藏的懷柔，真是令人不寒而慄。古歷臘月十一日赴叻倫堡，預備進藏所需的一切行裝。十八日與葉增隆先生一同雇騾幫進藏。為避英人的阻礙起見，凡至關隘，必須隱居密室，半夜步行逃過。一因年餘來少于步行，二因新做的皮靴太緊，在十九日的下午，便將兩足後跟磨壞了兩塊，擠落了三個指甲，痛得我萬分難忍，一步一咬牙，晚上住在桑零曲喀，一步也走【二四】不動了。在這一生之中，我算第一次受這種罪，我知道為法犧牲的諸先覺，也是吃過這種痛苦的。我在往昔生中，被貪嗔痴等所使，為追求五欲所吃的痛苦，必大於這種痛苦的百倍。我今生出了家，為迎師宏法起見，吃這一點小苦，實在是應當值得吃。在這三界之中，吃這種痛苦和更大痛苦的眾生多得很，他們實在是可憐，我應在此痛苦之上，代替一切有情受盡一切痛苦，惟願沒有一個有情再受痛苦。我這樣地推想了一陣，於是把腳上和身上的痛苦忘掉，瞌睡來了，我就朦朧睡到天亮，次日又勉強能走幾步了。這樣一天一天的連痛帶病的熬到二十四日纔到了帕克里，住在恆盛公大寶號，承馬義才先生的優待，修養了幾天。二十八日雇了白字倉兩匹騾子，我與增隆一同赴藏，古歷正月初一日，在途中最高寒的卡鏞過年，除夕增隆煮了一些稀飯給我吃——我病已久，一路全仗增隆照顧，同鄉之情，深覺可感——還說了兩句笑話，便是說：「以後過快樂年的時候，別忘了我們的今天呀！」這樣熬了十天，民國二十五年古歷正月初九上午到了拉薩。在藏的同鄉們皆出郊來接，同鄉們在異域相遇，比親兄弟還覺着親熱。出十見到安東恩師的管家，交來恩師手諭兩件，是說他老人【二五】家繞道動錫，不來拉薩，叫我在拉薩請所需的書籍數駄，直回帕克里會齊東來。拜讀之後，歡喜得嘴都合不起來，精神為之一振，身上的病痛也就消失了一半。在十四日的早上，忽見管家匆匆而來面帶驚慌之色，我急問何事，他便說拿墟來了專差，恩師上人于初二圓寂了。哎喲！天呀！嗚呼！苦哉！好象有一口熱血，直往上涌，幸喜截止的快，未曾昏倒。稍為歎息了一會，便急匆匆地往各處佛殿供燈，并發一長電告知內地諸檀越，十六日隨管家等往拿墟。在止公地界遇天降大雪尺餘，以後沿途盡是冰天雪地，更加是露地食宿，遂犯了腿部轉筋的舊症，并新添了痲疾。三十日始到絨波寺，這是恩師圓寂的處所。在寺修養了幾天，纔加入代恩師修法的團體。古二月十三日，為恩師茶毗日期，眾人一致推我主法，乃以大威德護摩法焚化。十九日收檢骨灰，于中檢得舍利子數粒。四十九日法會圓滿後，又修護法神供養法數日，於古三月初三日，結伴三人，先返拉薩。途中復遇大雪，露地生活，較前次更多。因來時支有官馬，沿途牧場尚可借宿。歸程全系自馬，唯可放牧野原覓柴自炊耳。直至十八日晚上，纔到拉薩，住在同鄉處，人困馬乏至此為極。此後在拉薩養病，凡閱五月。即在此期中，亦依止終則法【二六】王，聽講菩提道次第略論，必芻戒廣釋和俱舍論等。自於每日略譯辦了不了義論一頁半頁不定，總以不空過為限耳。第二次進藏的情形大概如是。

## 五 重歸和志願

迎師是撲了空，在夏季之中，雖亦另訪了幾位，有的是不願來華，有的是爲事所阻，結果沒有一位能同來。在八月連奉虛大師及漢藏院電信，促我速歸。遂將所請之經書，包扎成馱。惟因時期尚早，河水未退，無有商人往返印帕間，我因回國心急，解友三先生，特派驛幫送印，祇因經書太多，延時過久，古歷十月初五，始到叻倫堡，住惠文皮工廠。將經書交轉運公司轉運。初十日即赴加爾加大，住興記寶號。十一日簽回頭護照，十八日買輪東歸。惟在我動身之前，經書尚未運到，實屬憾事！只好拜托友人，到時再爲轉運了。冬月初五日抵香港，是晚即乘車赴廣州，轉粵漢車，初八晚兩點半至武昌，住佛學院。在武昌住了半個月，講了一部二十唯識論和菩提道次第修法并菩提道次第廣論中奢摩他的前半段。二十五日偕法航法師雪松法師契涅法師乘武林船西行。二十九日到宜昌，三十日買民安輪票，古歷十二月初一日開【二七】駛，初三日船在興隆灘觸礁，幾乎葬身魚腹。枯水行船，實在是令人膽裂！水手門七忙八亂地塗了些洋灰，勉強走到盤沱住宿。初四開到萬縣，趕忙換民蘇。初七晚纔到重慶，初十日始平安回到縉雲山。

回院後，很想休息調養幾日。不過我是爲佛法而發願犧牲的，院務忙得很。並且離院一年多，全權是請葦舫法師代理的，把他辛苦了。事務方面換了幾個人，幸得密嚴兄任擇維持，把他辛苦了。專修班的課程，多蒙嚴定兄擔任教授，我更是感謝到了萬分。其餘的各位教職員，都各負其責的作事，沒有一位不令我感激的。我自己空跑了一趟，耽誤了一年多的光陰，實在慚愧無地。迎師既未成功，事情乃當自做，肩頭要硬些，腰板要直些，每日除在普通專修兩科中教課外，尚須爲法師們講點戒律和密法。再有空閒，便是做我私人所願做的翻譯工作了。只要能與佛法有真實利益，譯書，教課，栽培後學，這當然都是我分內的事了。

## 第二章 西藏地理概志

【二八】前章敘述我經過的路程，是東南北三方面。別處我不曾走過，說來也是傳聞。

西藏地理的劃分法，西洋人多由印度進藏，他們觀念上，覺着西藏是南北形的，所以他們都說是南藏北藏，以藏布江支流區域，乃至喜瑪拉亞山爲南藏，於益薄以北，乃至新疆交界，皆爲北藏。因爲西康偏東，不易收爲南北西藏所攝，故又說名東藏。但對於薩迦寺以西直到尼帕爾交界，則未見命名也。漢人多由西康進藏，所以觀念上覺着西藏是東西形的，多說康藏。在藏字上又多說前藏後藏。這種劃分，與西藏人的觀念正相符合，因爲西藏人，他們自己也多用康藏衛三名，從未聽見說過南藏北藏的名稱。不過他們所說的康，普通是指打箭鏞以西，直到拉薩附近之但達拉山爲界。南北着，則由雲南的邊界起，直到廓羅的北界爲止。衛意譯爲中，即是普通所說的前藏。東西着，自但達拉山，到崗巴拉山，大約不過一二十日的路程。南北着，則由山南——拉薩以南的地名——直到益薄，所說的藏，即普通所說的後藏，由崗巴拉以西，直到尼帕爾交界，藏人通名之曰後藏。分這樣三大段，亦不能完全包括西藏地界，因爲拏墟等處，藏人普通呼之爲賀巴，義即胡人，含有非衛人之意。拏墟以北的人，更不【二九】待說了。又帕克里以北，雖可說是後藏所管，帕克里以南，哲孟雄和布丹等地方，亦非普通所說的衛藏區域。故康藏衛三段，在普通的觀念上，也包不盡西藏的地方，我今把他劃成五塊來說，或者包括得稍爲周廣一點。這五處的民族生活與物產，至下再述。今略說說他的地形：西康的地方多屬山嶺，少有平原，間或有之，亦甚高寒，宜於遊牧，不宜耕種。然裏塘，巴塘，道孚，廬鑄，甘孜諸縣，在西康要算最爲低暖的地方，除大麥菀荳而外，尚可種小麥，玉蜀黍，和蘿蔔等蔬菜。裏塘，巴塘，鄉城的路上，有很多松杉森林。道孚的松林口和甘孜河流的上游，也多係【三〇】森林的區域。唯交通太不便利，運費比木價高出幾倍，或幾十倍，故森林仍是森林，光地仍是光地。德格，昌都等處，盡是遊牧民族，荒山峻嶺比甘孜等處爲尤甚。西康北半邊，多是廓羅地界，那裏地高山矮，純系牧場，更無村居。拉薩以北的拏墟等處，亦與廓羅相似。前藏地界以內，山不很高，多屬平原，氣候較暖宜於耕種。兼有藏布江支流，可以引水灌溉，旱潦均易收穫，故是全藏中最富饒最繁盛的區域。後藏江孜，亦迥則等處，溫度與前藏相似，故亦可耕種，然亦迥則西面和北面，則又多屬牧場了。西藏南部哲孟雄和布丹，多

係溪谷，河兩岸的山上，盡是【三一】蔭綠的森林。這些地勢來的低濕，天氣也比康藏衛和暖，故他的穀產，也比較別處豐富，布丹地方且能生稻。拉薩市上的米，多屬布丹的土產，比喜瑪拉亞山以南的米，質要差些，但價也便宜。然布丹地方已是獨立，不屬西藏管轄，因為他的民族語文與西藏同，故我把牠劃入了西藏的版圖。

### 第三章 西藏歷史略談

#### 一 本史略

西藏的歷史，在唐朝以前的，多不可考。因為西藏以前沒有文字，雖有許多的神話傳說，終屬渺茫荒誕，不可稽考。不過在唐以前，就有了衣食制度，和打仗用的盔甲弓箭刀槍等物。但是什麼時候發明的，或由何種民族傳來的，那可留給歷史家去考查。但西藏的青史上，說松贊崗薄王以前，還有三十一個國王。第一位名叫孃墀讚薄阿得，是從印度來的。西藏土人，見他從山而下，認為是天神，故奉以為王。這些王的年歷，是不可考的。到了三十二代的松贊【三二】崗薄，他纔令屯彌三補札往印度留學造字，并與內地發生很多關係，又是西藏佛教的創始者。故從他以後的歷史，略可稽考。以後又繼續的經過了五個國王，才到了大興佛教的赤松得讚王。傳說他的勢力，比松贊崗薄強大，他是唐玄宗天寶十四年登位，故他建立佛教的事情，當在肅宗和代宗的時代了。赤松以後，為牟尼讚薄，亦得松贊，墀惹巴瑾，此三王皆以佛法化世，對於佛教俱各有建樹。其後為朗達瑪，刺殺其兄，自篡王位，在武宗元年，大滅佛法。在位三年即被刺。其子囊得欽光即位，再傳拔匡讚，亦為民叛所殺，遂失王統。讚王有二子：一名吉祥積，遷往後藏稱王。二名日怙，避亂於俄日。此後子弟分強，遂成散王，相延七十八年，前藏拉薩，才有復興佛法的新運動。再過六十五年，當宋太宗七年那時，阿底峽尊者到藏，中興正法，他對於西藏滅法後一百四十餘年中的訛傳，大加整理。關於應廢應興之點，無不盡力提持。故阿底峽尊者，在西藏佛法復興中，佔有最高尚最重要的地位。與阿底峽尊者同時亦有其餘各派的興起，殆至明初，復有宗喀巴大師來整理一切。這幾派的歷史，現在再為敘述一下。

#### 二 西藏佛教舊派史略

【三三】若就傳說而言，謂佛教未流入西藏之前，是已有漾緬國傳進的一種神教名曰「崩薄。」教法多係咒詛鬼神之術，並無若何的深理。其後受了佛教影響的關係，他們採仿佛經之教義，也就新編了不少的經論，宛同中國的道士一樣，竊取佛經《涅槃》而造《靈寶經》等是很多很多的。次至唐太宗的時候，文成公主及尼帕爾公主，下嫁西藏松贊崗薄王以後，由二位公主信仰佛法的因緣，西藏的王臣庶民，也觸發了尋求佛法的動機。傳說西藏的文字也就創造於這個時候，並且略有翻譯佛經的事實。但因信仰先有之神教派者的勢力強大，故未能大興正法。次於唐睿宗的時候，又有金城公主下嫁——公主之名未能詳考——誕一太子名赤松得讚，夙植善根，特乘大願而來。自太子時，便深信正法，志欲宏揚。惟因當朝有勢臣佐，信邪闢正的關係，雖懷大志，未敢暢言。既得王位，主宰全權，乃巧設方便，剪除奸黨，數數遣人至印度，迎請靜命菩薩與蓮華生大師等百餘法匠，建桑耶寺翻譯講述。未經數年，三藏俱備，此可見帝王勢力弘法之一班也。若有經像，而無僧伽，正法縱盛弘於當時，亦必遷滅於後世。——現在尼帕爾即因無僧的原故，徒有寺廟而無正法——國王有鑑於此，故請靜命菩薩，【三四】度有福智之七人受具。這是西藏人出家為僧伽之開始，次有藏王名墀惹巴瑾者，復將前王所譯之經論，編整其部數頁數標題列目，大加整理。對於出家之僧伽，信仰尤重，與寺廟以產業，施庶人以給事，令其安樂行道，師範人天。西藏早期的佛教，當以此為最盛時期。惟其王信敬軒隆，臣庶必起反感之心，奸賊相聚，謀殺其主，扶王弟名朗達瑪者就位。兇暴不仁，大滅正法，拆廟焚經，殺逐僧伽，時當唐武宗會昌元年，與內地佛教僧眾同遭厄運，可謂奇遇。其王未久，遂亦被刺，國亂法亡，庶民淪苦。久經苦亂之後，又起思治之心，故先曾略遇正法之人士，今值庶民樂法之要求，遂有偽造經論之事發生。後來新派的人批評舊派的經書不可信仰者，就是這個因緣。——舊派即俗說之紅教，新派即薩迦派，迦舉派，迦當派，格登派等——在郎達

瑪王滅法以前所宏之佛教，西藏原名舊派，漢人多稱紅教。在滅法以後重恢之佛教，西藏原名新派，漢人多稱黃教，似稍失真義。更有以宗喀巴大師派為黃教，餘派盡為紅教白教者，以服色而立名，更屬盲人摸象之談矣。

### 三 西藏佛教中興迦當派史略

【三五】西藏佛教經朗達瑪的摧殘，前後二藏遂無僧人之足跡。迄王被刺，政治又大起爭奪之變化，其幼子避亂於後藏探俄日地方，遂據之為王。連傳數代，皆信正法，惟因前法久滅，兼之邪說橫流，雖歡迎印度諸法匠來藏弘法，然終無偕大之成效。至趙宋時代，有王名智光者，聞阿底峽尊者之德望，便知非彼來藏加以整理，佛法難以中興。因此遂不惜身命資財，殷勤派人迎請。及至其姪菩提光居王位時，方將尊者迎接到藏。因受王請，遂造菩提道炬論，決擇顯密之宗要，辨別邪正之界牆。自是西藏之佛教大為一振。其論之大義：謂法乘之大小，是由各人之機宜而成，譬如小乘志願之人行施，其施仍是小乘法之施。其戒、忍、進、定、慧、及四無量等，莫不皆然。若有大乘志願之人，雖將一握食而施蟻給鴿，皆是大乘之施，此施即為成佛之資糧。其戒忍等更不待說。然人之根機大小，是由修習而成，非是無始傳來，便有固定不可改之種性而致。又說此種修習，是有次第的，不可超越的。假若躐等妄求，必不能生高上的功德。甚麼道理呢？機法不宜故。亦復失去低下之功德，甚麼緣故呢？自己未肯修習故。所以彼論的開端，使明三士之行相及次第。又說：若未厭離現法，定不希求後法利益。若專追求現世的衣食【三六】住和名利恭敬，尚不能入學佛人之數例，還談求出世法嗎？若不能真實厭患三有，定不能發生出離三有的決心。若無真實出離的決心，則專務於三界中來生的安樂，這種人尚不能名為趨向出世的人，怎能說他是菩薩呢？又若不能真實犧牲自己的一切安樂，而勤饒益一切有情者，這種人定不能發大菩提心。若不能發大菩提心，定非菩薩。若非菩薩，任修何種善法，皆不是成佛的資糧，也不是菩薩的正行。故對上士發心之法門，廣為開示決擇。又發心以後，若不隨學菩提正行，或僅學習他種邪行者，定不能成滿菩提資糧，定無現證菩提之理。因為積集資糧的正行，是以利衆生為要務的。欲想利生的大士，必須先知衆生的根行。若無通力，觀機說法，縱灰身焚心而利他，究屬為利為害？俱無決定之判斷。等於闇裏射箭，難期中的。故於開示發心之後，次則詳明修行之正軌，并修正觀之法要。又明顯教雖可成佛，然終未若密法之速利。雖有多種密法，決非常人之所能行，亦有非出家比丘之所宜學者。倘非其機，而修其法，猶如兔隨獅躍，徒自取其死耳。審細決擇初機學習密法之利弊，打死初機人偷便宜和取巧居奇之心理，是為此論最勝之特點。又明如來之一切言教，皆為饒益有情而說，由有情【三七】之機宜差殊不同，故如來之言教，淺深有異。然總結而論，皆是從最低之有情，漸次引導而入成佛之大道。故一切語佛，皆是可修及必須修之教授，並無一法是我應捨，及非應修。故此派之名，謂之迦當「迦」譯佛語「當」譯教授，迦當即佛語教授也。在宋元兩朝之間，西藏中興之佛法，要以此派為最盛的教派了。

#### 四 西藏佛教中興薩迦派史略

這一派的初祖，傳為印度那爛陀寺護法菩薩，謂此菩薩外宏唯識，內修歡喜金剛之二種次第，得密部所說相應相的時候，使借飲酒之譏，離寺隱山，專一修造，即身而現證無上菩提。次將彼部之教授，傳與尼帕爾龐亭兄弟，由彼傳授西藏綽摩大譯師。譯師在後藏雖廣傳數位高足，但教授之結晶，咸授於薩迦派初祖喜慶藏。此師亦生於宋時，較阿底峽尊者到藏稍晚。此下三傳而至慶喜幢大師，即元世祖奉請來華弘法之薩迦四祖。此師在華數載，即示滅度。元帝便拜其姪慧幢大師為國師，是為薩迦之第五祖也。——中國書中多名發思巴大師——這派所宏者，顯密皆俱，密法雖總宏一切，而以歡喜金剛法為特傳。顯教則俱舍，戒律，【三八】因明，唯識，中觀皆極完備。尤以第四祖慶喜幢大師廣造衆論，破斥舊派之偽弊，及當時之盲修邪說等最為有力，如來正法賴彼住持。乃至宗喀巴大師未出世以前，要以此派為西藏佛教之中流砥柱。此派修行之次第，重在先顯後密，尤以別解脫戒律而為基礎。大致與菩提道次第所說者相仿。惟因後代學者，多起偷巧心理，棄捨祖教，邁顯專密，呵戒為小，其流弊現象，又與舊派相去不遠了。

#### 五 西藏佛教中興迦舉派史略

此派亦起自宋朝，有名嘛巴譯師者，幼性剛強，懿志超拔，先從綽摩譯師略問法要，練習梵文，自覺在藏學習，終不若親臨聖地，參訪明師為快，故約一二同志，結伴前往。先在尼帕爾暫住，略習熱帶地方之氣候生活，再進天竺，徧參耆德。特從止迦摩羅希羅寺之上座，拏嚩巴大師總學諸部法要，別習無上密部歡喜金剛之法。再由師長介紹，依智足大師學習無上瑜伽父部集密大法。又從姑姑日巴大師，學習母部，大幻網法。更依拏嚩及彌勒二師，深練修習之經驗次第。次回藏地，廣弘密法，唯對於顯教，未為闡揚。稍宏之後，又往印度，正當阿底峽尊【三九】者來藏，傳說他們相遇於途中。此師所傳雖有四大弟子，各擅專長，然其最圓滿領受師長之法味者，要算西藏最有名即身成就之彌拉日巴大師。彌拉大師俗為後藏俄日生人，幼時喪父，產業盡被他堂叔及堂姑侵奪去了。漂零孤苦，實難言喻。由母教其往前藏學習誅暴及降雹之方法，一次曾誅二十餘人，雹打秋穀，令籽粒無獲。後自悔而深畏業果，憶念無常，乃投依嘛巴大師之門下，志求了脫生死，速成正覺之佛法。師觀弟子，原屬大機，令受九番大苦，淨治罪業。次乃盡傳歡喜金剛，集密金剛，及勝樂金剛等教授，令其入山深修，隱十餘年，證大悉地。其教授弟子，多以歌唱而演法義，聞法之後，即重實行，所化弟子，難以量計。西藏佛教，乃至末法，猶能注重依師及實行者，即多因此派影響之力。唯因注重師訓，其輕視經教之弊，亦緣之而生。又因專修密法之故，亦蔑視戒律而不守持。後時薩迦四祖及宗喀巴大師之所破斥者，亦多指此派的末流和舊派而立言。

#### 六 復興西藏佛教新迦當派史略

西藏佛教自唐至元，凡數百年，其興廢變遷之潮汐，起沒非一。諸講論者，多無切實之行【四〇】持。其修行者，又多盲無聞慧。學顯教者，則專務大乘無霸之行。樂密法者，尤以蠟等為能事淨戒律儀，棄如糠粃，僧伽羯摩，全無見聞。爾時有宗喀巴大師者應運而出，多聞實行，慎重戒律，依據阿底峽尊者之教授，若顯若密皆建立修行一定之程序，堵絕學者圖便宜之偷心。西藏佛教由是又為之一振，遂形成今日威聲赫赫之黃教派了。

其建立顯教之行者，謂總一切經論，其所為獲得之目的，要之不出二事：一令眾生離過，一令眾生生德。其過可分三類：一諸非福業，能令墮諸惡趣；二有漏衆善皆不順涅槃；三自私之心理，能障菩薩大心。離彼三過，便能不墮惡趣，不受流轉，不滯小乘。令所生之德，可分二類：一未出世者，即增上生法；二出世間者，即決定勝法。後又分二：一唯自一人解脫生死；二令一切有情證大菩提。令衆生離惡趣生善趣者，即修十善五戒等人天乘善法而足，故非佛說法之真實目的，其目的在令有情永出生死及成佛耳。為成辦此故，略有三種法要：謂出離心，菩提心，真空見。若無出離心者，定不能出生死輪轉，自不願出故。若無菩提心者，定不能成佛，未入菩薩數故。若無真空見者，

決定不能斷除二障現證二空，以無真實義愚之真對治故。又若【四一】無出離心者，定不能發大菩提心，以自未厭三界流轉，決定不想度脫他故。又若不知苦者，定不能發真出離心，以未知苦，定不厭患，不厭患者，定不捨離故。又能知三界之微細行苦者，定須先知三惡趣之粗重苦苦。能畏三惡趣之苦者，定須先知人死亦可墮落其中。能畏墮落者，必須先知人壽無常及死期無定，能愛時光。恐死沒者，必須能知人身利益及難得也。能修正法證得樂果者，應先知我輩，下至減一過失，生一功德，皆賴善知識誨導之力。即就世間庸常工作，若無前賢之教導，尚難成辦，況從未見聞之出世法乎？故一切功德之根本，最初即應依善知識，其他進修人身利大難得，壽量無常，及三惡趣苦等，由此能令發生粗分畏苦之心。由畏苦故，便思能解脫能救護之方便，然此方便絕非神權或人等之可能，要須自己之防惡修善，方能脫離。然此防惡修善之法，由誰能說之，及誰能行之耶？厭恆如來自證自說，及唯佛徒乃依佛行，故此三寶，乃真能救護眾生之歸依處。次觀三界同一火宅，其苦之源，為煩惱及業，即由斯二事，便令眾生常迴轉於大苦輪中永無休期。唯有滅除苦集，乃為安樂，其能滅除者，唯有三學，依此實行，便能解脫生死，永斷苦種。再進觀一切有情，其心念相續，從無實際，惑業【四二】所漂，遊遍三界。其所經之胎卵二生，定蒙父母之慈悲惠育，乃得生全。故一切有情，皆是自己之多生父母，而且恩德深厚。為欲酬報父母恩故，必須為其除苦與樂。欲想成辦如此偉大之誓願責任故，除成佛而外莫之能達。故依慈悲之根本，便能發生為利有情之大菩提心，依此心故廣修諸行，圓滿福智二種資糧，由此乃能現證正等覺也。

即以此次第故，總括大小乘一切經論之所詮，罄無所餘。譬如戒律，廣明苾芻之開遮持犯等相，即是出離三界之方便所攝。俱舍之廣明生死還滅，總別因果等，即是中士道之總相所攝。大般若經中觀論及現觀莊嚴論等，即是廣明菩薩之總行及真空正見。其餘之宣說諸佛菩薩功德事業等之經論，即是明歸依三寶及發菩提心之境。故總三藏之一切大小乘經典，悉皆歸入此大菩提道次第之中，亦即明一切經論，皆是成佛之真正教授，更不容無知淺學之後學超次躐等妄行取捨執一而誇百也。

其建立密法之次第者，謂凡學密法者，必先完成菩提心以前如上所說之功德，若無此德，則無入密法之基礎。次須依止具足德相之大阿闍黎，受圓滿灌頂，未得大灌頂尚不得聞【四三】密法之教義，況云起修次於灌頂時所受之三昧耶及別解脫律儀，須嚴謹守護，若不持戒尚不能得人天善趣，況云成佛，已能嚴謹持淨戒者，次須精研密法之真實義，不爾則徒修假相之儀軌，終無現證真實之希望。通達實義之後，猶須勇猛恆常，勤修生起次第之法，以未成本尊相應之勝三摩地，縱然妄修息脈空點及光明等定，終久是不得生起。如已善修生起次第者，次當進修圓滿次第。若無幻身及光明定等，以證佛果之色法二身，唯修本尊行相之三摩地，仍無所成故。其密部之經論儀軌，唯詮此義而無餘。故一切密法，皆有決定之法則及次第，凡無定則，及超越等次之傳述，皆非清淨之密法，亦可知矣。宗喀巴大師雖對於顯密二教，俱與以有次第有條理之整頓，然佛法能久住至今而不晦者，尤以其重視戒律，及學行相應為最有力。

## 七 附談西藏佛教興衰原因

總觀上述之略史，可見除國王等人力宏揚或摧殘之外，其興衰之變化，略具有三種原因：一重不重戒律，二樂不樂如教實行，三能不能依次而行。凡某一派之興也，其初必以嚴持【四四】戒律而為基礎，其次須依師教授，身體力行而求實證，再次更不可躐等而求速成，惟當恆常一步一步的依次實行，乃能發生實益。由得實益故，乃能將佛法開示，建立，住持久遠也。又任何某一教派之衰也，皆因輕戒律為小乘，或因徒有講說而不事修行，或因修持不循正軌而偷巧取近，漸令法無全法，道無完道，或摘頭，或切尾，傳一咒，持一名，用此殘字而替襲大法，以致三藏靈文，全同廢紙，或定慧二學，都成虛言，由是而令法幢摧，慧炬滅。如是摧滅，是在先建之不美乎？抑後學不能奉行之所致歟？我輩欲建立佛教，欲住持佛教，欲弘護佛教者，願審思而慎擇焉！餘如寺廟規模，僧數多寡，服裝紅黃，經費窘裕，對於佛教之興衰，吾覺猶在其次，其政教合一與否，余覺其更為次之。

## 八 中國與西藏關係史略

依傳記上傳說，藏王松讚崗薄，曾擾亂過中國的邊境多次，隋唐諸帝，把他沒法收拾，後來為取和好起見，唐太宗十五年歲次辛丑，就把文成公主下嫁吐蕃。這時候松讚崗薄，究竟有多大年歲尚須待攷。次有赤得諸頓王者，也專以侵擾邊土為能事，唐睿宗三年歲次丁亥；【四五】又把金城公主嫁他，才算得調和的結果。其後不久，西藏鬧了內亂，他們自己尚且不能安靜，那裏還能夠來擾亂我們的邊疆？故唐代以後，在歷史上，便見不到漢藏戰爭的血史了。直到元世祖侵佔了中原的時候，才迎請薩迦派四祖慶喜幢來華宏法。他後來拜薩迦五祖國師，受了許多密法的灌頂和教授，就用西藏的版圖，一點一點地割奉給薩迦五祖，作為酬謝品。故在元朝的時候，薩迦派就正式作了西藏的國王，雙管教政了。但是他們傳了不久，就被迦舉派的后裔奪了去，迦舉派的祖師們也作了元朝的國師。到明朝的時候，迦舉派的后裔也失了王權，就由第三代達賴代任，此後由明而清而中華民國，西藏的全權，皆是達賴管理。明清兩代，漢藏的關係比元朝還密切，尤其是乾隆以後，中國的帝王，便成了西藏的帝王，直到民國初年，藏人逐漢兵出境，乃失了漢藏的和好。中間的一切細故，現在也不及詳述了。

## 第四章 西藏民族

## 一 民族性

【四六】西藏民族，有城市，鄉村，經商，游牧等不同。這些民族，最初的秉性為同為異，皆難稽考。唯就現代我所見的而談，他們因為環境不同的關係，性情也隨之差異了。比如在城市居住的，較在鄉村散住的，性情要狡猾幾十倍。經商的比游牧的，更要狡猾到幾百倍了。村居的亦比游牧的奸詐，經商的亦必奸詐於普通城市及鄉居的。其最好詐狡猾，莫過於當局的政客。其最純樸質直的，莫過於荒原的牧族。民族性，原是本來平等，只因為接觸環境不同的關係，造成了這種畸形怪狀。我只拿一件事來作譬喻，便可證明一切了。我初到西康的時候，認識了一位朋友，他是廓羅的游牧氏族，秉性非常忠厚，富有膽量，剛毅誠信，無論大小事拜託他，他都是很熱心的代你作，絕無怯弱，亦絕無遲誤，而且還很真誠，並無於中取利的心理和行為。這不是一位天性純樸的唯一好友嗎？可是到了拉薩之後，他的生活就要靠着謀利而維持了。他的同鄉們，初到拉薩的時候，當然比鄉裏的媽媽進城，還要慌亂的多。他們對於拉薩市上的銀價和物價，一概是個混沌莫分的世界，見着街上或店裏所擺的那些東西，更是看的五花迷離，認不清楚甚麼是甚麼？更不知道那些作什麼用。手中有幾個錢，只是見物就要買。【四七】所以他們自己去買東西，定要捱拉薩街上擺攤婦女的竹槓子。多捱了幾次，或捱的輕重的不同，他們纔知道捱了竹槓子，這才想起設法來救治。其救治唯一的妙法，就是找個同鄉熟人，陪着他上街買東西。但是他們的秉性，素常多疑，無論多熟的人，他總難以完全相信。一方面他要托你求你，一方面又疑你怕你，所以只能請人相陪，不能全托你買。假設你代他作主買了，他還興疑你也買貴了，甚至還興抱怨你。故覺着他們這種人實在好笑。他們有時候求着我的那位朋友，他最初也還很忠誠的去幫着他們買東西，不賺他們的錢。後來久而久之的找他的多了，事情也覺着太繁，而且還有時候障礙他自己的生計。他被這種環境一逼，便逼的他心理上起了一種變化作用。他就在這幫人買東西的上頭，作了一種於中取利的生活。其方法，就是他帶着一般同鄉，無論走進那一家店裏，他使用很流利的拉薩語，先與店主定下一種條約，在幾分中抽幾為中人利。店主當然沒有什麼，羊毛總是出在羊身上，只要買賣成功，那是很歡迎的。他這樣過了些時，與拉薩全市上的舖店，差不多全有了認識，都知道他是一位代賣人，也就是各商店不花錢的跑街伙計，人家都很敬重他和信任他，他又【四八】得尺進丈的出了新鮮花樣，先往商店裏把東西拿來，談好定價，賣多了是他的，賣不了便將原物退還，無形中又成了各商店的代銷處。他對同鄉們，說是他已經買妥自己用的，質料是如何好，工藝是如何精，價錢雖高，也算是很廉的。他那同鄉們的心理，總是覺着自己買的貴，別人買的便宜。如今他這一稱美，凡有錢想買這類東西的人，都生羨慕和愛著的心，就要設法照他說的原價把這件東西買到手裏。他最初還假裝不肯，廓羅人的皮氣，是你越不賣，他越要買，後來經多數同鄉從中說人情，他才慢慢地答應讓出去，又有面子又賺錢。他真算是本地人會收拾本地人，他把同鄉的秉性摸的那樣清

楚，我常在旁邊咋舌稱奇！我實在佩服他能幹，我也實在覺着他變化的太快。他先是那樣純樸忠誠的一個游牧民族，到拉薩還不滿三年，就學得這樣奸詐狡猾，這豈不猶這豈不是環境造成的明證嗎？

總括一句來說，西藏民族，性情剛復，勇敢果斷，對生人疑惑觀望，熟識後則信任可托。天性忠誠，純潔可愛的，尤以游牧民族為勝。當局諸人，雖亦秉賦相同，多具宗教信仰，然因環境的驅使，心理與手段，皆盡其奸詐之能事。因其秉賦和宗教信仰的關係，對於處理寺院等事，【四九】尚屬誠實熱心。惟對於民間訟事，必飽吃賂賄，而後判斷。故西藏之訟事，往往延至數年而不決，原告被告，皆至不可支持而自悔。這種奇怪現象，固然是西藏所特有。不過像西藏那種強暴民族，正要如此，才能免却許多的爭訟。況且西藏民族，多保持其原始狀態，崇拜帝王，服從上司，忍耐壓迫，欺侮弱小，貪圖小利，不顧大體，知識簡陋，易受愚弄，見財與喜，性好劫掠，抵抗冰雪，堅忍艱苦，愛羣集衆，衝鋒敢前，大有視死如歸的氣概！這都是西藏民族的特殊精神。

## 二 家庭

西藏民族，因為地理和出產的關係，便分了務農與游牧的兩種。因他們出產不足自給和多益求多的關係，又有常年在外的商人。因為他們的政教，也是人管理，他們的治安，也是人保護的關係，故有統理全藏的當局，和各處的散官。散官之中，又有直屬西藏當局的和不屬西藏當局的管理，自霸一方的土司們。西藏當局為保衛領土的關係，也在直屬的民間，徵集幾萬人為軍，這些人的生活階級，我現在略略的分述他一下：——

務農的民族，多係居於谿谷之中，他們的貧富，也不一樣，多數是很窮的那些貧窮的家【五〇】庭，多是一雙父母守着幾個孩子，忙的時候，去聽差工作，閒的時候，種幾畝田，拾點柴糞，或是給大商家作傭人。稍為有點錢的，做些買賣，維持生活。他們那種家庭，便是很苦的一個牢獄，他那妻子們，便是互相繫縛的一付軟鎖。那些富饒的家庭，十有八九是多夫制度，凡一大戶，必附屬着許多小家為他的佃戶或傭人。大戶多是商人，兄弟之中，必不全在家中死守，總有幾個常年在外交商或全出外。家中只留一般婦女看守管理。

游牧的民族，居處是無定的，夏秋季多是遷在高原，冬春必是降在低處。他那種家庭，連房子都沒有，就是用牛毛，撚成燈草粗細的黑線，織成一種尺許寬丈餘長的帳幔原料，綴攏來做成半毛帳幕。一家無論人口多少，晚間都混雜着住在一處。大戶有數十人的，小戶有四五人的。然亦多是多夫一妻制，多妻者必分家，制度如下說。女子很多招婿入贅以繼承家業。非但游牧民族如是，即農商軍政，乃至西藏當局的偉人家庭，也多有這樣的。

商人有兩類：一坐地為商者，其家庭或農，或牧，或專以經商為業。家中當然也是蓄妻或私姘，生幾個孩子了。出外經商的，多層富人，本鄉固有他原來的家庭，但在外既久，也不免另【五一】找個妻室，他手下也要養活一般用人，住一所房子。在未與本來的家庭發生糾紛之前，兩個家庭仍是一個家庭，在發生糾紛之後，大多數化成兩種家庭，才能解決。又西藏婦女。性寡羞恥，一妻固可嫁多夫，就再找上幾個情人，或勾搭幾個下人，那也是很平常的事。尤其是處女在家生養私兒，家庭中全無半點責罪和懲誡。我聽說日本也有這種風氣，未知確否。

西藏軍人，雖屬徵集，但是富戶人家，多是用錢僱人替代。故軍人多是窮民，他原來的家庭如何，我難以了知，但臨時的家庭，多是在駐紮的地方，勾搭一個同類的婦女，覓一間很鄙陋的土屋居住，這就是軍人的家庭。

土司的家庭，便是一種小規模皇帝的家庭，一切事情，皆由他自專。土司男女都有，在他屬下的百姓，就如像他家裏的羔羊。他忙的時候，田地是叫百姓去耕耘，去播種，去刈草，去收穫。如其百命有一次未到，也要受很重大的處罰。他家庭的用人，也是百姓輪流當差。他自己家中的男女老幼，多不問事。管理財產和判斷民訟，也多是在百姓中選幾家作頭腦的來辦。實在大的事情發生，土司乃來自辦。故他手下的管家，往往掌握大權，土司反成個有名無實【五二】的傀儡。西康一帶的土司，多是如是。也有幾家能幹的，自專一切，但這是例外的。

散官有兩種：一是出家人任的，他那個家庭，就談不上家庭，用上幾個用人，辦理一點公事，下餘的時間，或是誦經，念佛，或是登高，臨溪，人既不多，用費也小，無論到

那裏爲官，總有幾間空房子給他住，將任一卸，依然空人一個，也有找到錢的，買幾間房子住，或更請人作一點生意的，那都是做繭自縛的事情，我在西藏見的很多。二是在家人任的，這種在家散官，其家必有相當的根底，或是老輩做過大官，或是家中財產很富，方可得到這種委任。他的家庭便是大官或大官相等的家庭，他任上的家庭，也不過帶上一位妻子，多養幾個下人罷了。

至於西藏當局偉人的家庭，那種氣派就很大。因爲西藏的制度，凡是做大官的，政府必須給他一處大公館，和幾十頃田地，帶着一方的百姓。他的公館裏頭，必養着太太，少爺，少奶，和小姐們，他們還須使用許多下人。管財物的另須用幾個管家，管產業的亦須一般莊頭。老爺若是出外任事，家中就以管家和莊主爲最有權，故這兩種職位，多是用兄弟行或知己的親眷任的。西藏的女權很高，男子往往受女人的限制。若是招贅之婿，常有被女人驅逐而另【五三】找丈夫的。在西康爲尤甚。又西藏民族，階級觀念甚強，若是上等家庭的子弟，與下等民戶的婦女苟合，其族里親眷皆認爲很醜，好似玷污了門庭一樣。但是上等家庭的婦女，與下等民族的男子苟合，那鄙視的心理，就沒有那樣重大。若是大戶與大戶私通，甚至合爲一個家庭，或侵佔某一個家庭。也是西藏當局中人常有的事，最近還見得到好幾家呢！

順便說說他們分家的制度：當局大官如何分家，我未見過，聽說也是經親友們作中人，把正房的產業或財物，撥出一份給被分出者爲生活費罷了。農人分家，是把莊宅地土，都要分開的。商人分家，多是分貨物和賬目。唯有游牧分家，牛馬羊犬，以及帳幕鍋桶，皆見分析。甚至平時所積的燃料牛糞，也要平均分給的。若是父母在世，後輩分房的，那就多由父母隨便給他一個帳幕，幾頭牛羊便足，少有競爭的。至於游牧子弟中，或有已經成人而死，其家人多有把他所應得的財產，拿來作超度功德。這在廓羅一帶尤盛。但在拉薩的人民，則死一個少一個，就用錢代他修福，那也是有限的事，絕無把他所應得的，完全用去之理，這也是城市人與游牧人心理的差別。又分家的原因，由一人娶一妻所致，他們的共妻制度既然很普遍，【五四】故分家的事情也是絕無僅有的了！

### 三 生活

談到生活，便是說西藏民族，日常作事和享用，這也須按着家庭來說：我先記述下一個西藏務農的大戶，他家裏有老母一，兄弟二，媳婦一，姊妹三，小孩三，僕役七八，常時誦經的喇嘛二人。他家不但務農，也養着幾頭牦牛，搆乳取酥。他的住宅，好像一座碉堡，外牆四周相連，在一方開大門，屋係兩層樓，周圍皆屋，窗戶內向，院中有橫豎房各一排，院形成一田字。凡四小院。屋上爲平頂，即秋季打麥的場所。長子持家務，次子營商，掌持庫藏的即其新婦。姊妹亦頗有權。老母則飽食終日，或誦瑪尼，或弄孫自娛晚景罷了。管束僕役即由其大姊，他的性情非常粗暴，恆見鞭撻下人。二姊忠實，助婢婦整理厨中事，幼姊閑逸無事時，多在佛堂誦經。我在他家寄居數月，見他們每日早晨天尚未亮，婢婦即將茶煮沸，分灌各壺，分送各處，下面安一火缸，上覆以舊布類，保持茶的熱度。次便聞其大姊在庭中，喚諸僕役令起飲茶。同時亦聽見樓下拴牛處，有人在搆乳。我是出家人，亦即起床洗面漱口，次坐本位，慢慢地飲茶誦經。隔壁【五五】護法殿中的喇嘛，亦慢慢作聲了。年幼的僕人，飲茶數碗食糌粍——大麥炒粉——一碗，即下樓將牛趕出放牧。年長的僕人，飲茶清理院中一切瑣事，女婢即將牛糞等，揉爲餅形貼諸牆上，乾時取作燃料。再次便見兄弟姊妹等聚在一屋飲茶談心，但茶壺各飲各的不同，糌粍則同取於一盒。蓋西藏民族，待遇極不平等，一家人所飲的蟹茶，要分數等，即打茶的酥油，亦分鮮陳和多寡。所食的糌粍，更有最大的區別，主人所食，係白大麥，淨洗後炒磨，亦爲招待上等客人的用品。其次即黑大麥，不加洗擇——麥中多雜石砂——炒磨。家中普通人所食用，亦爲招待通常客人的用品。再次即菴荳與大麥混合的糌粍，這是婢婦的食用。還有純菴荳鈞糌粍，亦僕婢食糧，兼施乞丐。他們家庭中，係分食制度，每至天亮，僕人便將各處的糌粍器，收集於庫房門前，由其媳婦，按照各人的品位，裝足一日所食的糌粍，酥油亦如此分給。再由僕人分送原處。在冬閑的時候，僕人隨便作些零碎事，或撚點毛繩，婢婦則撚毛線織毛布，以作僕役的衣料。男僕亦多能縫衣，女婢反不如。他們的茶是一天在喝，這是他們的一種習慣性。到將午的時候，又吃一頓糌粍，這與早上不同。西康的規矩，早上多是舐些乾糌粍，或拌些【五六】稀糌粍，吃點了事。午餐則須擺些佐

食品，或鮮肉，乾肉，乳餅，及他種菜蔬不等。有午餐不吃糌粑，而改吃包子的，這也是他們的新鮮花樣。沒有事午後還是談天或竄門而已。到夕陽西下的時候，牧童把牛羊趕回，婢婦們又忙着去搗乳，乳集多了就注在個大木桶內，用一柄長木亂搗而凝酥，或注於皮袋，或注於瓦製的取酥器中，令其在地下亂滾而凝酥。酥取出後的奶渣或造酪，或造乾奶渣子，或飲諸小牛，皆無一定。到晚上九點或十點睡覺，這是他們的通常的生活。到二三月間開凍的時候。他們便漸漸地忙起來，早上纔起身，便有一僕人，高昇在屋頂上，遙呼散居的佃戶，按次序派人來給地主盡義務的耕田，這個戶的飲食，就由地主供給，但是也有限制，不能吃的太多。早茶後便齊往地中耕耘，各地耕遍後，也就到了播種的時期，他們播種，多由婦人，尤多屬家主，在這家便是他大姊及三妹的事情。播種的方式，仍由牛拉犁在前耕一大溝，播種人即在後面播種，耕回時便將前溝埋沒，另成新溝，種亦隨後另播，將種播完以後，這又是他們休息的期間了。多選擇這個當兒，預備食料及磨糌粑等。到了五六月間，苗長尺許，野草雜生，他們又要忙着拔草，但這種工作，多屬婦人，每早又登屋呼召各佃【五七】戶的婦女，來代地主盡義務做拔草的工作。若是地多人少，每年僅拔一次，若人多地少，則每年多拔兩次。這時候全家的婦人，皆忙着參加或監督。拔草時期過後，他們又該休息了。有錢的大戶，多在此期中，請佃戶要青草坪，吃好的，喝好的，並接親友來耍。順便檢查各佃戶的壯健和武備，時間或三日五日，則無定規，亦有跑馬唱戲延至月餘的，這要是算他們最快樂最恬逸的歡會了。秋季麥熟，佃戶又須先代地主收割，侵晨即起，取其夜間的潮潤，麥不易落粒。日至午時，亦多休息，午後又繼續工作。割麥的工作男女皆參加，期速收穫，以免雹害。因藏地秋季多雹災，麥黃時際尤甚。故藏人說降雹，係大力鬼神所為，降雹摧殘麥豆，即收取其精氣。麥割好後，搬置屋頂，待晒乾後，再用人工捶打，風颳既淨，然後儲藏。這時必須賞賜佃戶，共飲食數日，以慶豐年。大戶農家，既如上述，小戶農民，多係耕種他人的土地，凡事皆須先代主勞，以後方能自己工作。若家有多人，則可分任工作，飲食生活，雖無大家煩瑣，然亦紛穢異常。

游牧民族的生活，我再記述西康的一個大戶，計有老夫婦二人，兄弟三人，一人出家，二人守家。一個媳婦，兄弟相共。姊妹二人，一已出嫁。孩童四個，僕婢十餘人。牝牛有百餘頭，牝牛【五八】六百餘頭，羊一萬五千餘隻，馬有十餘匹，蠻狗五條。牛毛帳幕三座，帳幕大的，豎約兩丈，橫約三丈，其內兩頭豎着兩根木桿撐持，上有一條很粗的牛毛繩牽扯，拖在帳幕外邊很遠的地上釘住，帳外更用木杆支其繩。這根繩要算這座帳幕上最主要的分子了。在帳幕的四周上緣，還用許多的牛毛繩牽扯，每繩皆用一根木杆撐持，繩端釘於兩三丈以外的地上。帳幕頂上開一天窗，長齊帳頂之量，寬約尺許。此窗作出烟用，亦作透光用，全帳唯此一窗，閉則暗不辨物。其上另用一條毛織帳料為窗簾，縫住一邊，另一邊拴上幾條細毛繩，早起鬆其繩用杖推開，晚間用手牽繩關閉，有大風雨時，亦多閉之帳，幕的一頭留，一隙不縫為門，但門之兩邊必多加幾幅，以便交錯關閉。帳幕的下緣，亦用木楔釘於地下，或用鐵釘及牛羊角。幕內周圍，用石土砌為矮牆，其上堆積皮袋數層，空隙皆用牛糞泥塗閉以避風塵，袋內即所蓄之存糧，為大麥豌豆和乾乳之類，共約二百餘袋。袋上又堆積鞍韉等用具，及乾肉等。帳幕的當中，砌一長丈許寬四尺許之大灶，一排安三口大鍋。還有幾個小洞夾雜其間，可坐茶壺及瓦缸等。灶之右邊——進門向左——係主人的地位，媳婦及婢女等皆在那裏作事情，所用的茶桶【五九】水桶，取酥器，裝乳器，和些碗罐零碎用品也都放在那裏。灶的左邊——進門向右——是為客位。盡頭處挨着後牆，橫擺着一排坐墊，挨着左牆也擺着一排坐墊，墊前擺着一排矮桌，這便是客位了。盡頭處設着個佛桌，高與人齊，上面供着幾尊佛像，佛前供列着水盃和酥油燈，念經所用的鈴鼓也都陳擺在上面。另兩個帳幕，形式略小，外面的撐持法與前一樣，內中的陳設大致相同，惟沒有那個大灶，四周的矮牆上，也堆着許多東西。一座是用人們住的，一座裏面很清潔，請了十幾位喇嘛在那裏誦經。當中的盡頭處設了個佛桌，上面的佛龕中，供奉着幾尊古銅佛像，和新造的十幾尊鍍金佛像。龕前桌上，陳列着一排炒麵作的供品，上面貼着許多五顏六色的酥油花。供品的前面，橫着幾排八供盃，八供前還供着幾行紅花淨水和三大盞酥油燈，佛龕兩邊的墊子上坐着那些喇嘛，一次我也在內。他們知道我是漢僧輕易不替人誦經的，這次是人情所致，所以他們對我是格外的很客氣。我們是早七八點的時候去的，他們全家都遠遠的出來迎接。這是夏天，地上的小草，長的和—領大青栽絨毯一樣，上面還開着許多燦爛的野花，早上還有點露水沾在草葉上，被初上山的陽光一照，宛如一個【六〇】大青花毯上散了一大遍珍珠翡翠，看了非常

的可愛。他家那幾條大蠻狗，遠遠地看見人來，便汪汪的狂吠，身子也用盡平生之力，與那根粗毛繩在拚死拚活的扯。他家的老父穿着一件沒掛面子的皮襖，可是縫了一圈藍布邊，那皮襖若放開，可以包裹住三四個人，長量也有四五尺。他們穿長衣的方法，先把皮襖的領子頂在頭上，將兩手從寬大的袖中伸出，再把皮襖的下半身用力提起，令下緣齊膝或齊膝下寸許，橫把腰帶繫緊，再將上半身皮襖攤下，周圍便堆成了一個大口袋，可以裝蓄平常所用的一切東西，甚至裝進兩隻羔羊，也不見其脹大。他們的習慣，是露出右臂來做事。但是看見可恭敬的人的時候，就把右袖從背後右肩上披過，搭下胸前，遮住右臂，躬腰吐舌，并用右手牽扯其髮辮，這就是很恭敬的禮貌了。初到的時候，老母就去喝止那幾隻蠻狗，兩個兒子也跟着父親迎接，媳婦和妹子，把帳幕的門子撩開，讓我們進內，大大小小，四個天真爛漫的孩子，也在我們周圍轉，尤其那個第二的孩子，大約七八歲光景，非常活潑，討人喜歡。有兩三個僕婢，忙着給我們做茶，預備糌粑和油餛子。我【六一】家常話，問了問牛羊的數，跟着就去誦經。不多一會，他們預備了食品來大家飽餐痛飲了一陣，又繼續着誦經。午餐辦的很豐富，就是沒有蔬菜，我也不吃肉，便吃了些酥油黃糖奶渣混合的糕點和糌粑。飯後到帳外草坪上遊戲了一會，我就把那幾個孩子叫來談天，我問他們出不出家。他們說大的不出家，小的皆願意出家。問他為什麼要出家，他們便無話可答了。大人從旁邊教着說，出家好學經，好修行，好宏法利生，出生死成佛等等。但他們年紀幼，與我又很生，不好意思學大人說的話來答覆，只是微笑。這樣耍了一會又去誦經，他們也去各忙各的事。到天晚的時候，牧牛的先回來了，牦牛趕向一處去拴起，牦牛令拴在帳門前的空地上，先把用人住的帳幕中的小牛犢子放出幾個來，令他先吃幾口乳，後仍把他拴起，就搆起乳來。將這幾頭搆完了後——也留些給犢子吃——放開犢子去吃。又從帳幕中放出幾個，搆乳的方式如前。待將有乳的牦牛都搆完後，纔一起拴好。羊回來了，也是把母羊牽在一處，先令羔羊吃點乳，再搆取羊乳。依他們說羊乳比牛乳還好吃，我沒吃過。羊乳造的酪，確是比牛乳酪好吃些。他們搆乳，約須兩點鐘方能完。夜間便在那裏搖起酥來。我們在晚飯後還要誦【六二】一回經，約在八九點鐘纔完。他們待客很周到，在誦經休息的時候，就要來問茶的好醜，可不可以喝，陪着談些閒話，晚上他們父子三個，和那四個孩子都來陪談，叫我講些內地的故事，或現事給他們聽。我的話筭一開就關不住，常談到十一二點鐘纔睡，大家都聽得有趣，他們婦女們也都在帳外偷聽，我最初不知道，有一晚上我講了個笑話，把他們笑的在地上打滾，外面也笑個死去活來，我纔知道他們都在那裏偷聽了。每日的早上，天還未亮，他們便把牧牛羊的用人喊起來吃茶。婢女及媳婦，皆起來搆牛乳，也有人在給我們預備酥茶。到天亮的時候，乳搆完了，牛羊上山去吃草，犢子羔羊也拴在附近放牧。我們起來盥漱完了誦經吃茶，媳婦和婢女們，就把一夜間的牛糞，揉成一餅一餅的擺在地上，以備曬乾作燃料。羊糞也須清理到一處去晒。這樣忙一兩點鐘，纔能完事。到了九十點鐘的時候，牛被乳脹的痛，都回來了。站在帳幕附近的草地上叫，這時又要搆乳一次。他們那裏地質多鹽，牛吃了很易長乳，他們說是土質，肥夏秋間每日搆三次乳，冬春無肥草時每日搆兩次，牛也並不瘦。別處夏秋只搆兩次，冬春只搆一次。他們又說：他們一年的犢子，好像別處兩年的犢子，羊也比別處大些【六三】肥些，可見是他們的地方好了。這次乳搆完了，又該我們吃午飯，他們特派了兩個用人，到水邊上剝了些野菜，用酥油炒了給我吃，弄的口味還不錯，我很感謝他們用心。他們知道我歡喜小孩子，便令四個小孩陪我要。有一天晚上降了大雨，帳幕微微地濺進些水星，濕透了反不漏水。到了早上雨也未停，這就苦了搆乳的婢婦了。他們披着一件遮雨的毛織衣，赤着雙足在那水地上搆乳，那地方的天氣很涼，尤其是雪雨的天氣。這早上冷得很，牛羊都在發抖。他們還是要作兩點鐘纔能完事。牧牛的幾個僕人，各人帶上一頂毡帽，披上一件白毛衣，携一小袋乾乳粉，糝上二把糌粑，一片酥油，帶上個木碗，赤着一雙足，拿着一條擲石的驅牛鞭子，各人趕着一羣牛上山去了。牧羊的也是照樣的開發。媳婦帶着幾個婢女，又在兩天水地中，弄那些牛糞團。牛糞原來就不乾，又被雨一沖，稀的不可着手，我看見他們在那裏用手捧起來又流下地，鬧的滿手滿足都是牛糞，連衣裳都弄髒了好幾塊，實在是可笑又可憐，直弄到八九點鐘纔完事。剛吃了一盃茶，燒了幾把火，山上的牛遠遠的又叫起來了。雨住了，天晴了，晴光下的青草原，實在是可愛，也有幾個蝴蝶和野蜂，在那裏採蜜吃，草地上小耗子也在【六四】陽光中亂跑。就是沒有聽見青蛙叫，也沒有蛇，這是地高的原故吧。那幾隻獒犬也認識了我，不走過他跟前去，他也不亂跳了。幾個孩子也熟了，他們自動的採些野花來給我供佛，我儘說些笑話鬥着他們笑，他們

非常的喜歡我。七天經圓滿，我們走的時候，他們有點不忍分離的樣子，尤其是四個天真爛漫的小孩子太可愛了。但他家男子做的什麼事沒有看到，就見他們有時拿着一根紡棍，一大團牛毛，在紡那黑毛線，聽說那帳幕是年年要在中間添幾幅新的，舊的便擠在兩邊折下，另作別用。或不折下，慢慢的把帳幕擴大。聽說他們有時也去應差，因為路途偏鄙，一年沒有幾次。到了秋季就用牦牛負載着酥油，奶渣，皮毛之類，往各低處做買賣，換大麥菀豆茶葉等等。牛羊也一並賣之。冬季牛羊遷往低處，夏季移向高處。他的家太大，不能移動，所以他居在高低之間，要算一方的首戶了。小戶遊牧民族，帳幕小些，人口少些，牛羊之屬也是很少的。但帳幕內的佈置，主客分位，日常生活，大致相同。惟塵羅牧族，多有以劫掠為生者，聽說是按戶派人，一人必帶二馬，騎一牽一，負槍一支，晝伏夜行，奔往努墟等【六五】小異，難盡詳述。

商人生活有兩種：一是坐地為商的，這與內地舖店的商人，大同小異。在中等的舖商，一家數口，早起男子即誦經——西藏人皆信佛教——小孩仍睡臥，婦人即生火熬茶，有婢媪者為婢媪之事，主婦則持酥燈往各佛殿朝佛，或在家中清理佛堂供水等。西藏婦人性愛修飾，頭上多懸珊瑚珠翠，尤其出門時，必更要細加裝飾，這或是女人的特性吧？日將出的時候，全家纔慢慢的飲酥茶，一方面也作點事。兒童多有臥着飲茶的。盃底置糌粑少許，飲茶後舐濕糌粑，這便是早點了。我有一位友人，他非常好佛，每早起必在佛堂禮佛若干拜，廚中茶沸後，即由其妻女，送茶一盃至佛堂，伊飲畢又拜，少頃又送茶，一早大約飲五六盃，這是居家學佛的生活。以後男子便多到街上作別種生意，婦女則照應舖店。一方面紡毛線，織毛襪等，作諸手工，其旁必備酥茶一壺，以供終日之飲。西藏婦人多嗜酒，飲量亦大，惟好飲醉，醉必狂鬧，或哭或唱，男子們多設法禁止，然終不能絕，這因為西藏人飲酒太普通了。商人的早餐，約在十點鐘左右，炒些隨食的蔬菜和肉類，每人一碗糌粑和數盃酥茶了事。

【六六】西藏的商業多奸詐，貨價多要一倍或兩倍，對熟人則不然。總之商人絕不以實價告人，賺錢也必說虧本，所以妄語的符號掛在嘴上，這是他們做生意唯一的信條了。天將晚的時候，纔把舖攤收好。午飯與晚飯同是一頓，並且多是食飯或麵食，也有弄一兩樣菜佐食的。到晚間閒着的時候談東說西，或擺些故事，講些笑話。也有鬥骰子的，却是佔少數。但是普通的人在十一點鐘左右便就寢了。晚上也有誦經的，不過拉薩還不多見。

二出外營商的，例如西康的商人，來川邊買茶，他們是有一定房東的，甚至傳數代的都有。騾馬拴在樓下或院中，由僕役照料，或放牧在附近山上，派人去守護。早晨由下人熬茶，商慢慢起來誦經。出外經營，少有不誦經的，飲茶舐糌粑與鄉居無異，早飯後便往茶莊講生意，多不交現款，更往各種商店購買零用物品。茶買好後，須改裝，如西康之金玉茶，每十二磚為一大包，約五六十觔，外由皮工包生牛皮一層，每兩包作一馱。包時必須專人照料，皮工偷茶太過，主人不在時，每包往往偷去一二磚，塞上許多爛茶葉或其他廢物。包好晒乾後，即用騾馬運走，或發牛脚轉運。每年買一兩千包者有之。至於對房東作何酬謝，尚未問過。商人晚【六七】飯畢亦必誦經而後寢。在途行走時，每早天未亮，即將茶燒沸，餘人皆為騾馬上鞍，事畢共圍聚飲茶，舐糌粑少許或食肉少許即罷。次將貨物馱起即起程，至午後一二點鐘，有站即住站，無站即住野。將騾馬放散牧草，人乃團聚飲茶正式吃糌粑，此餐亦屬草草。食畢傭人等便修理各人所管理的鞍韉等。主人有休息誦經的，或往近處遊覽的。天晚便把牲口召回——一叫即回，以回給食料之故——繫於地上，先給以料。如是站居則更飼以草料，倘係野居則無草可喂了。然後大眾供食一餐，此餐必加有他種食品或肉等，決無單吃糌粑的。食畢稍息，即共誦經就寢，就寢前必輪流派人守夜，以防盜賊竊馬等。若是站口太遠，亦有在途中熬茶一次者，但很少。如無站口，則住必稍早，恐馬不能食飽。如是冬季在川邊購茶後，春初還鄉放馬休養，必至夏末纔正式進藏。其路多走北路，因北路天寒，須至秋初方有豐草供給牧馬，冬初纔能到藏。其所購之茶，若發轉運，年底能否到藏尚屬問題。大商人在西藏必亦設有專號。在拉薩過春季，夏末還鄉，冬季又往川邊。往返一次多經兩年，他們的生活，大概如是。西藏大商，又有販羊毛的，他們在印度叻倫堡，及帕克里，拉薩等處，多立專號。每年夏季，便分人往後藏【六八】和拏墟等處，收買羊毛。僱脚運至拉薩——北路貨多運拉薩——或江孜——後藏貨多運江孜——再僱騾脚或驢脚，運往帕克里。脚夫偷毛甚是常事。故至帕克里時，另須改包，每包以六十斤為度。再發騾脚運印度出售。近年毛價甚昂，販毛商人賺錢不少。因販毛商人日見增加，恐將來亦必有猛跌之一日。又有一種團茶，出自雲南，清末

民初間運茶銷拉薩者，亦走西康之路，途中生活，與在川邊買茶的無異。後有一雲南商人，由滇赴緬甸，再轉印度而入藏。計算彼路之運費，與康運藏相差無幾，便利則過之。故打通滇緬印藏運茶之路。此亦屬一種大商，比西康茶商不相上下。近來西藏本地人，多飲滇茶，下中階級者尤甚。上等階級，亦多以滇茶，川茶合用，蓋川茶味濃而色淡，參以滇茶，則色味俱美了。

軍人生活，他們的家庭已可推知概狀，今再略述我目睹者，西藏當局所徵之軍士，多住在拉薩北一里許之兵營中，其地名曰札翼。每日早晚，由其排連長，領至營前草原上，略為操練，步法及槍，至早飯時即止。兵士兼作建築房屋等工人，拉薩各大公館，欲翻修時，多召自己之佃戶，并請當局派遣一支閒兵代修。飲食由房主供給，未聞有無工資。他們平常無事的時【六九】候，多以做鞋底為職業。每見兵士在街閒遊時，腋下挾着一團羊毛，左手拿着一隻純毛鞋底，右手執一個鑿針，帶一條長毛綫，隨走隨納，與人談話等亦不停其工作。我有一次自北路拏墟還藏，路上遇見開發西康去的軍人，他們的行李用具，係官家派犛牛送往，每隊有十幾頭牛，五六個兵和幾個婦人，大概就是他們的妻子。婦人也騎的牛，男人徒步，手中仍拿着鞋底工作。並且隨走隨唱蠻歌，看他那樣子，好像無離鄉之感。但西藏的人，性好偷樂，無論窮到那步田地，他那享樂的心理，始終不改，也不發愁。這是他們的特性吧？有人說越窮越快活，恐怕這到未必。總之他們那些兵士，平常的軍事訓練很少，自己工作或代上司工作的事情很多，我見宇陀代本修理公館，所用的工人，就是他所統領達賴喇嘛的御林軍。正統叻倫蓋房子，也有許多兵士在內。故知他們的生活，大半等於佃戶或苦力的生活而已。

作散官是很寫意的事，有民訟或商人經過，大概就是買賣上門。他們對於所管的平民，威權很大，稍有不如意的時候，打馬鞭子當然平常，禁起枷起，也是常見的事。但是法律上沒有死罪，弄出人命來就很難辦了。沒有事的時候，他就任意逍遙。甚至有做了幾年官，自己並【七〇】不曾蒞任者，命一個管家去代理問事，有了不能解決事，便差人捧一道公事來請示，自己若仍不能決者，便可轉遞上司請其解決。只要管家能把任上的事情做好，或把對於當局的義務盡到，隨便你住在那裏，當局也不會見罪的。有一種講修行的散官，他一早起來就誦經，廚房反在後起來預備茶水——西藏多用冷水盥漱——他把經念完，茶吃好，然後問點公事，無有事就出外轉轉，看看所養的馬匹和田中的大麥。午上吃肉飯或包子，晚上也要弄幾樣菜下飯。又有早飯吃糌粑，弄點肉和粉絲，夏季加上幾個小蘿蔔的，這沒有一定的軌式。晚上還要誦些經纔就寢。我認識的幾個散官，大致皆是如是。

壩門叻倫家中，我住過七個月。他們父親是叻倫，每天上午八九時許往衙中問事，午後四時許纔回來。他年紀雖老，人很精勤，非常的好佛，每日早起便坐在床上誦經，並且會施食法，還要施食，至六點後，會會到私第拜晤的客。由衙內辦公回來，便請一位大喇嘛在家講經聽。晚上還修護法神供養法。除他本人而外，家裏有太太，有四五個兒子，一房媳婦，兩三個孫子，一位總管家，兩三個廚夫，一大羣僕婢。家中還養着五六匹馬——鄉間有多少不得而知。

【七一】大兒是有功名的，小的有幾個出了家，有的還在讀書。他們早起也誦經，媳婦却管諸廚事，僕婢們洒掃各處。我們誦經時，僕人便送茶水，經畢用早餐，一碗粉絲，一樣小菜，一碗糌粑，對大喇嘛則多加幾樣肉食。飯畢即講經書或文法，並有許多貴家子弟來聽。叻倫無事也在坐。叻倫走後，聽的小官們也各往衙門辦事，出家衆又請講別的經。大約至十時許，他們又預備一頓麵食，我們食後便溫習功課。二時許午餐，有肉有飯，并有幾樣菜。下午也聽經，叻倫回來，便為他講經論。晚上十一時許就寢。他們吃的用的都由管家去預備，燒的牛糞，喂馬的草，大麥磨的糌粑，是由莊子上送來，水是婢媪去背，井即在外院，一家大小的衣服，專有兩三個裁縫在做。他們除了妝飾着上街玩耍外，在家也沒事做，我覺着他們很清閒，所以老人好誦經，小的多好閒遊，他們的生活可以算是很舒適的了。

#### 四 信仰

西藏是個宗教國，且是佛教國，無論貧富貴賤，士農工商，無有一家不信佛的。——邊域信耶教者，或不信佛，或耶佛俱信——鄉下很窮的人家，祇要有房住，他便有個小佛堂，那怕【七二】只有一間房，他也有個佛桌或佛台，無論銅的泥的，觀音度母，總供幾尊。出門的人，背帶佛盒，內中供的佛像雖無一定，但不外佛像和大喇

嘛給的細條。他們都承認那是能護身的。他們有了吉凶禍福，都相信是因果法，都知道請人誦經或修福初，一十五和大節會，都買酥油燃燈供佛，有兒子出家修行，都說是很對的，不能出家修行也自承認是沒福。他們對於出家人很是恭敬，尤其對於有學德的大喇嘛。在西藏說家庭是牢獄，說妻子是枷鎖，說財產是夢境，說名位是幻泡，並是無常苦空無我，憂惱繫縛。今生死了還有來生，人死了可以墮落惡趣，並非死了就斷滅，或人死了還變人，這也是他們一致信受的。小孩不到三歲，便知道念瑪尼，大多會誦度母廿一禮讚，及普通的發願文，甚至有能誦大儀軌，了解甚深的經論。西康一帶，大家庭的子弟，差不多都受過一點僧教育。因為西藏離開佛法外，無有教育，普通的學校，只能教寫字拼音，及普通的書信算術，他們每早所誦的妙音天女讚和文殊菩薩讚，都要請僧人講後纔能懂，至於學文法和聲明，那更須依止很有學識的大德學過而後可。所以西藏官員寫白字，是很平常而很普通的事。西藏貴族或大官家裏，有四五個佛堂和有大藏經的很【七三】多。即在中戶人家，也有很莊嚴的佛堂和護法殿。有大藏經或大般若經或諸祖著述者不需希罕。下等人戶家裏也有佛堂和佛經。遊牧民族，信心更覺純厚，佛堂則無專設。漢人在藏經商的亦多信佛，回族也有信佛的。有一漢商，他家裏佛堂很大，經書很完全，大藏經固不待說，即各宗各祖的著述，應有盡有，誠屬難得。我的朋友——平商——家裏每屋皆有佛龕，並且很華麗，佛前供品，比誰家都不在以下。他的兒女都出家修行，他也預備着離俗。這在西藏人看起來，是很對，而在內地人或外國人看起來，就很驚訝了。故漢官和西洋人，都說出家是西藏滅種的禍事。但在西藏人却不承認，他們以為除了天災人禍死絕而外，一家有幾個人出家，是決不會就絕種的。假若因為出家而絕種，那也是對的，真能解脫生死，比流轉生死受苦強的多。他們這種堅穩正確的信仰，在別的國土和民族是不易多得的。

## 五 僧侶

西藏民族的信仰，既如上說，故他們認為出家是很正大很合理的事。民衆也都很羨慕出家，歡喜出家，因此西藏的僧侶便很多了。就拿川邊的打箭鑪來說，那麼一點點小地方，也【七四】有八家喇嘛寺，雖說八家不都興旺，但那三家——安却，拉摩，塚傑札——興旺的合攏來，就有千餘人。可是多係藏族和半漢族，真純漢人子弟出家的，却沒有幾個。由折多山以西，所見的居民，無論是農是牧，都很少很小，所見的寺院則很多很大，並且到處都有寺廟有僧侶。尤其道孚，鑪霍，諸陽，甘孜各縣都有規模宏偉能居住一兩千人的喇嘛寺。甘孜一縣之內，兩三千人的大寺就有兩三個，小一點的寺院到處都有。聽說南部河口，裏塘，巴塘，鄉城各處，也都是寺院遍布。丹巴，松潘，懋功，理番一帶也有大寺不少。青海省的寺院一兩萬人的都有。德格，昌都，公薄一路上我也見過很多的大寺。止公，拏墟客，盆薄等北路；江孜，亦格則，薩迦等西路；桑耶，孜塘，阿喀等南路；囊格則，帕克里，哲孟雄等西南路，到處都有寺廟和僧侶。拉薩附近的三大寺，二舉巴，喜得，木如，則木凌，滾得凌，四家王寺，和達賴山的尊勝寺，皆是最富麗最雄偉的道場。其餘各山環和村際的小寺，更是指不勝屈。西藏的僧侶雖多，有一樣與內地不同，就是出家人與俗家未能完全脫離關係。康藏寺院中的僧人，多是附近的人民出家，寺中有事時，即到寺中作事或誦經聽精研究學問。於無事時，則多回家，助理家務。因為他出家講修行【七五】的關係，家人都很敬重他，甚至家中的大事小事，都要請問他，若有誦經的事情，那更是他分內的事，他便是家中不可一日或無的唯一歸依處。他在寺中住的時候，家人也是三日一來五日一看，送吃送喝。他若在寺中有個相當的地位，家中更是引為最榮幸的事了。有些家庭觀念薄弱，專愛修行的僧人，或在山野閉關，或往他處求學。近些家人也是照常去看，遠了也必見人就帶信問長問短。我在西藏見的太多了，覺着他們實在是未能與家庭脫離。就拿三大寺中專門造學問的人來說，他們每年不足的經費，也多由家庭中供給——寺的進款僅夠半年用——尤其西康，後藏，青海，蒙古，遠處來的人，能夠久住深造，乃至放格什所需的用款等，多屬家中寄來應用。如沒有家庭供給，須要奔走經懺，或略做生意方能自給。但也頗有能忍苦耐勞不顧飢餓而求學的，即如現在的絳則法王，他的家庭很窮，沒法供給，並且在後藏。他在色拉寺學經時，往往三五日沒糌粑吃，那是很平常的事。然不因飢寒而退志，終考到第一名格什，現在昇到法王的地位，再有兩三年就是格登舉巴。現在大名鼎鼎的蒲補覺絳巴仁波卿，第一世的傳上說：原是昌都最貧無家的一個僧人，無吃挨餓當然不算回事。後來【七六】成為全藏的應供者，他的上師善

海大師，最初修菩提道次第的時候，無房屋，把地挖個洞住，無衣被，把洞中塞上許多大麥稈，無供盃，就用他吃糌粑的木碗洗淨而代。後來也是藏王的國師。絳巴仁波卿的高足，智幢大師，最初還不是個窮人，絳巴令他閉關數月，每日就吃一點餘供。離師後往後藏大雪山上閉關，每年僅受山下弟子的一小袋糌粑，冬日大雪封山後，無人能上下，他也不許人上去。後來拜為達賴的師父。第十三代達賴欲拜師而遷隱的戒勝大師，他在別蚌寺學經的時候，看經看的連火都沒空燒，不吃不睡也是很平常的事。甘孜札公上師在藏留學的時候，師徒們沒有吃的，也是把供佛的糌粑拿來充餓。他們皆是不被環境所轉的古德，這裏不過略說西藏僧侶的大概情形，至於寺院的制度，和三大寺僧人的生活，僧衆的教育等，第七章談宗教建立的時候再說。

## 第五章 物產經濟及其交通

### 一 物產

【七七】西藏地屬高原天氣甚寒，物產種類殊少且每年只收一次據。英人測量拉薩高出海面一萬一千八百尺有奇，但拉薩四周皆有高山圍繞，氣候乾燥，冬季也很和暖。拉薩附近所產，以大麥為大宗，菀豆次之。也有小麥與芥子洋芋之類。關於蔬菜，則有青菜，白菜，蘿蔔，蔓青，萵苣，茼蒿，芹菜，胡蘿蔔等。韭菜，茴香亦間有之。種菜的多係川人，蓋藏人不嗜蔬菜，故不善栽種。拉薩附近的樹木，多係楊柳，亦有胡桃，更有不知其名，亦非內地所有者。松柏之類，多產於山上，平原中不多見。桃杏蘋果等，貴族花園中亦多有種植，藥王山上，達賴太醫的別墅院內，栽着幾株桃樹，結實纍纍壓枝，八月間請我往遊，吃了數枚，味尚甘美。蘋果則不甚佳。西康一帶，大致與拉薩相同，唯菜蔬類較少。我有一友人住在甘孜，曾試栽茄子和秦椒，未及結實而枯。昌都附近則生秦椒，拉薩亦生茄子。乍了一帶亦出菜蔬，惟皆不多。公薄一帶，較拉薩稍低，其地產杏，較拉薩的稍甜。後藏哦日塚，出一種杏糖質甚重，堪稱佳品，惟價甚昂，拉薩多用之待客。這些僅能供給西藏自用，無運出的希望。西藏游牧人家，多過農民數倍或數十倍，其出產品，為酥酪，奶渣，羊，牛，皮，毛等，又以毛為大宗。每年運出印度，約在百萬斤以外。皮酥之類，則僅【七八】銷於西藏境內。牛尾亦多出口。西藏又出麝香，鹿茸，知母，貝母，黃連，虫草等藥品；及大狐皮，沙狐皮，瑪瑙皮，猞猁皮，水獺皮，虎豹皮等皮類，多屬漢商推銷。工業方面的出品，有栽絨毯子，繒綉，木子，退瑪等，更有藏香之類，也能推銷青每蒙古各處。西藏的鑛產，尚未開發，亦無切實調查，惟據傳說，後藏薩迦寺以西，多屬金銀鑛山，拉薩以北之河流中，亦多藏金沙——亦有採取的——拉薩以東達樸附近，亦發現過金鏡，皆未報官也未採取。西康諸隴及瞻化等處，屬漢人管轄，多在開發，唯因工程太守舊，故所獲無多。青海與廓羅交界處，有山曰瑪勤邦日，據說係一廣大金鑛，土人認為是寶山福地，不許任何人掘取。青海漢人，往往以採大黃等藥稔為名，潛伏偷掘，若被土人發覺，必起很大衝突，甚至殺傷人命。聞廓羅人說有一年發生衝突時，殺死二十餘漢人十幾個藏人，——或屬回族——至此偷掘的人纔絕跡。西藏又多有鹽湖，拏墟以北之鹽湖最負勝名，拉薩等處所吃的鹽，多屬北路運來。廓羅地方亦出鹽，甘孜等處所用皆屬之。昌都附近也出一種紅鹽，較拉薩所用的味淡質劣。岷江等處鹽井鹽湖尚多。此等亦惟足自用，不能供給外人，其餘花木種類，難以盡述。

## 【七九】二 商業

經營商業即其經濟之來源，西藏各種商人生活，前已略說。其出口貨物，上段亦已道及。其入口貨今補叙之。由印度運入者，以棉織品為大宗，多係東洋貨，毛貨東西洋皆有，絲織品係內地出品，俄國者亦有之。寶石，真珠，珊瑚等，有印度貨與東洋貨。各種顏料為西洋出品。然西藏染毛織品所用的茜草，則為印度與布丹所生物。其五金雜貨，冰糖白糖，多是印度土產。由川邊輸入者，以茶為大宗，哈帶次之，他種絲織品及布類更次之。由西寧運藏者，為生銀，綢緞，騾馬較多，金佔少數。厄帕爾人所運入者，大多數是印度雜貨，布亦甚多。販雲南茶者亦有數家。西藏各大官家亦多兼營商業以增收。并有在印度上海，北平等處，設立分號，內地的人鮮有知者。尤其邦達倉家，代表西藏當局做生意，內地各處皆設有分號，其推銷內地的，為毛皮藥材等類，運入西藏的，以絲織品為大宗。他在西藏常行捆商法，即是包買全藏的某一種貨物，不許別家買，有竊買者，如被查出必抄其家。這是專制勢力之表現，不知其他地方亦有這種事實否？西藏人富有自立性，中下家庭的婦女，亦多以營商或手工自謀衣食，拉薩江【八〇】夜，亦格則等處的婦女，多以擺攤做生意為生活，每日八九時許，將貨物擺在街衢的中央，或房門前的板上，自己即坐其旁看守並做手工，無主顧時，也有羣聚談笑啞啞滿街者，有買客到來即去說價。他們的貨物，多是從大商店賒來，待一月兩月後再付價，彼即以此期所賺之錢為生活費，在還前債之時，又賒新債，總是摘東補西過日。諸大商家多不零賣，特把小生意讓給他們去做。平商的綢緞，甚至批發給厄帕爾大商人和回回等。還有一種無本商人，但代大商家張羅生意於中抽利，以自生活者。牧人作生意多在秋冬兩季，以毛酥皮等，換易大麥菽豆之類如上已說。又北路牧族，多運鹽販賣，他們每於夏季，驅牛往出鹽的湖邊住宿，聞說白天見是一湖清水，至夜分被冷風鼓激，便結成鹽粒，凝於湖畔和湖面，早起便急急收取，裝入皮袋中，日暖時，鹽仍溶為水，須待次日再收。亦有居住多日無風結鹽者，亦有今日到，明日即滿載而歸者。西藏人認為這是各人的時運和有福無福所致。將鹽收取之後，運回牧場，待至秋收之際，再運往產麥各區域售鹽買麥。其貿易法，以一升麥換一升鹽為定價，菽豈等另照市價計算，聽說多年便是這個規矩，我去年在藏所見，仍是一升換一升，又西藏大宗商業，【八一】多以貨換貨，例如甲有茶，乙有布，先將茶價和布價講妥，然後互相交貨。做小生意，則須銀錢了。又各大寺院的財產，亦多以營商而生利，例如施主在寺存藏銀五千兩——約漢銀千兩——令每年每一僧人散襯銀若干，此種存款，則必須做生意或放利，因其母金不可動，故必須有專責保存和經營的人。若寺僧數多，利不敷襯，則該保管人代墊。若人少利多，亦屬保管人得。近年各大寺人數漸減——自外蒙叛後，利息又日見增高，絕無利不敷襯之理。故各寺管欸的人不出一年便成富翁，用金錢運動此職者，大有人在。農民間亦有一種營商經濟法，每至秋末收麥到家以後，閒着無事，即在游牧手中購買羊毛或羊皮，自己撕碎捻線織縲[糸+魯]，除自用之外還可售出賺錢。余友家有一驢夫，其婦即善此業，他無一厘地，不用其夫一文錢，除自己之吃用，每年還能為丈夫作兩件衣，並能餘些存款。他們原是兩個窮無一文的人，現在竟存有藏銀二千餘兩。夫婦還想在別蚌寺某康村中放茶散襯，前與余友商量，余友好善亦慫恿之。我覺着他們二人實在是難得，也曾讚美過幾句。我看拉薩街面上的人，好像個個都會做生意，個個的經濟都從生意中來，個個都會找錢，並且個個都找的有錢，我實不明白【八二】有找不到錢虧本的沒有，縱或有之實是少數。故我覺着西藏人的經濟，就靠做買賣。

## 三 交通

西藏往各處的路綫很多，在導言和地理概志兩章中略略說過。今再把他合在一處說說。由西康往昌都有兩條大路：一是南路，走河口，裏塘，巴塘的。一是走道孚，蘆霍，甘孜，佐勤，德格的。由雲南走陸地到西藏，也有走裏塘，巴塘的。還有超巴塘之西直奔昌都的路綫。由昌都去拉薩，也有兩條路：一是南路走公薄等處。一是北路走日窩勤等處。還有由道孚，蘆霍，甘孜向西北奔結谷塚的一條大路。再由結谷直往拏墟喀，由拏墟轉南赴拉薩。這路極平坦，饒水【八三】草故商人皆走之。裏塘等處的南路商人，亦多由本地穿乍了往結谷塚，再西往拏墟進拉薩者。結谷到拏墟，多屬荒原，漫無

人居，故一路所須食料，皆須預先備好。又走彼路必須多數商人結隊而行，因與廓羅太近，恐遭匪劫掠。結谷塚東通四川，南通雲南，西通拏墟，北通青海。四方八面的商人，皆在那裏結合，故他在西康的路綫中，要算是最重要的樞紐。由拏墟往拉薩，多走桑庸，惹真，益蒲那條大路。亦有稍為偏東奔止公的。販鹽的北路商人，多走其路，因東路人少，草較大路豐美。又有由拏墟直往後藏的大路，我未走過不知其詳。由尼帕爾到後藏，聽說也有兩條路，由後藏到前藏有三條路，我皆未走過。由印度到帕克里有兩路：一由吠倫堡，走白東，宗塘巴，桑零曲喀，零當，巴當僅，則鑪，拏塘，翻喜瑪拉亞山，到哲孟雄地界。另一路是走崗陀翻山至哲孟雄者。由哲孟雄沿谷直上即到帕克里。帕克里往東有路直通布丹。布丹直向北奔孜塘，而往拉薩無須走帕克里。帕克里往北可到江孜，東北直往拉薩。在西藏的南路上，帕克里是為最重要之樞紐。後藏江孜與亦格則皆屬重鎮。其餘的小路雖多如牛毛，既無工夫去走，也就無須多寫。

【八四】西藏交通的工具，除了步行多騎驢馬，牦牛和驢亦供運貨之用。西藏人走長路騎牛驢者很少。惟游牧民族走路亦有騎牛的時候，青海往拉薩進香的婦女兒童亦有乘牛的。蒙古人走北路進藏，或騎駱駝的，惟行至拏墟即改換馬匹或牛幫。因拉薩乾熱，恐駱駝害病而死去。後藏轉運貨物，亦用山羊和綿羊。惟質量較輕，行路稍慢。由梅卓崗格到拉薩約三四日程，如乘皮船二日即到。由拉薩往山南絳巴凌經商，亦多乘船去。比馬行可快速一倍。惟只走下水不能逆行。由帕克里到江孜，可通汽車，現下尚未實行。由印【八五】度可直飛拉薩一日能到。前年英人死在西藏，欲用飛機接屍，因西藏當局不許故未用。漢藏打通飛機航線，英人亦必自動飛行，到了那時西藏當局不能禁止，恐怕我們中央亦沒有辦法。由青海到拏墟若實行開闢汽車路，想英人亦必開闢印藏汽車路。總之英人在西藏專門看漢人舉動，誠恐漢藏聯和於他不利，故用盡全付精神煽惑漢藏衝突，而謀英藏之聯和。

## 第六章 政治軍事及其財政

### 【八六】一 組織

欲明瞭西藏的行政軍事財政等等，必須先知道西藏行政各機關的組織。西藏政治等機關殊簡略，今亦簡略言之。西藏的政教兩面，都歸達賴喇嘛所統制。凡有各方面的大事，亦皆由達賴喇嘛解決。故達賴在西藏之權威，與我國專制時皇帝之權威相等。在第三代達賴喇嘛之時，西藏的一切政教權衡，雖已歸達賴所有，然達賴對於一切，皆讓與藏王管理；自己並不握持大權。自第五世達賴喇嘛圓寂後，藏王桑傑絳錯，十餘年間秘而未報，惹起全藏與蒙古王之糾紛。後來藏王被害，第六世達賴遷逃，直到第七世達賴登位之後，其糾紛仍一起一落，如海浪之奔騰。當時達賴避亂於西康，乾隆派兵進藏平亂。後乃把西藏的全權令達賴一人管理。又在貴族中由達賴選定四位助理政治，清庭亦派駐藏大員監督和助理一切。那時政教雖名義上是達賴自管，而實際上是為駐藏大臣的管理，甚至達賴喇嘛一舉一動，皆須由駐藏大員奏准清庭而後乃行。第十二世達賴因達賴山高寒腿痛，欲遷摩尼園，清庭未准，以致圓寂，即是實例。自民國初年漢官被逐回，漢藏分離之後，管理權才實際歸於達賴喇嘛【八七】喇嘛所有。達賴圓寂以後，乃至二世未正式握權之時——達賴須待考格什後，纔管政治——堪代理其政者，有五家藏王：一敦古凌，二惹真，三則木凌，四滾得凌，五得諸。這五家中，敦古凌因事被革職。現僅四家。達賴在位，這四家雖有高貴之名位，毫無實權。現在代表達賴者為惹真。達賴手下有藏王一人，出家在家皆可任之，現下藏王係前代達賴的堂姪。藏王地位亦政教兼管，其實際多管教務，政治則由吠霞辦理了。吠霞即四吠倫聚議辦公之所，四吠倫中有一僧三俗，其中選一位駐昌都，辦理西康一切政治。藏名為坡梅吉喬，義為西康總督。常住拉薩者有三位——自達賴圓寂正統回藏後，僅派一代表及辦事人員住昌都，四位吠倫皆在拉薩——吠倫之下有秘書數人，助理問政，尚有書記等多人。此衙門正式辦公，極守秘密，未到發表之時，不准外人了解。即手下書記等知之，亦不敢傳說。與吠霞對峙，有一教務機關，設在達賴山，主要人為藏王，其下亦有秘書書記等若干人。吠霞支配之下有軍事機關，和財政機關，地方政治機關等。但各機關之事各自辦理，與吠霞並無甚大關係。財政機關有兩處：一在達賴山下，一在大招寺頂，兩個性質不同，至下再說。地方機關亦有多種，如昌都之西康【

八八】總機關，在地方機關中算最大者。其次為德格機關及窮薄登勤之機關，其中主幹人，要有四品方能任之。再次即有縣官，七品六品五品皆無一定。軍事機關之總管人才，至小也要四品，任營長之職者，亦皆四品，連排長五六七品皆有。西藏更有一電報局長，位亦五品，又有一醫院兼掌算曆書等，院長為四品職。其餘之候補人才，出在家，均不計數。教務方面各寺院大喇嘛之職位，後章再說。西藏貴族中，有稱公與台已者，皆徒有高貴名位，而無實權，但產業則甚富。又諸大活佛之管家，亦多屬四品，平時並無參政之權及薪水，惟管彼活佛勢力以內之財產和民衆。

## 二 行政

西藏的政權既如上說全歸達賴統轄，則行政事項亦皆以達賴喇嘛決斷為標準。前達賴在世時，我在藏曾聽人說，西藏遇有重大案件發生時，先由地方行政機關轉呈各上司稍大之機關。再由彼機關轉呈叻霞，由叻霞再呈達賴，由達賴批下，歸何機關辦理，或開會討論。彼機關須將所欲辦之手續，詳呈達賴批准，乃可施行。如批入開會討論者，則由藏王與四叻【八九】倫為主，機喬堪布——即統管一切教務者，位在四民品上——和諸大秘書次之。餘四品以下之官員，皆在外聽命，不許入內。由藏王叻倫等詳細商議後，再問其餘諸四品下之意見，有意見者亦可發表。如得同意，即將此辦法抄正進呈達賴審擇。但其辦法至少須列三條，由達賴選擇，絕不准只出一二辦法而請示。如所列辦法皆不如達賴之意，則批回重議，須另商辦法，不許依賴舊。若蒙批准即照施行。達賴去世後由惹真代理，凡遇大事——如去歲剿共等事——進呈時，則多批為開國民大會討論。所謂國民大會者，自藏王起乃至各機關之官員，並三大寺之堪布等有權之人，皆須共集互相討論，各出意見。亦將【九〇】所得的結果，呈白惹真，由惹真批准再為進行。如未批國民會議，僅批開會商議者，則與達賴在世無別。若非重大之事，亦非地方行政機關所敢決者，——如殺人，劫盜等——則須轉呈叻霞——其殺人者，若非當局要人——由叻霞批示依之辦理。除達賴或代表達賴者外，叻霞權最大，對於官民一切訟事，及各官員昇職解職請長暫假，下至發給官員來往各處之馬牌，皆由叻霞主管。如西藏當局各貴族官員，被當局派往某處，辦理某事。若自畏艱辛或因他種困難不願去者，決不敢直往叻霞處辭謝。若運動上司轉達叻霞，或手續稍錯一厘，必受重大治罪——多係罰錢——或因此革職等。其辦法須往各叻霞之公館，私地運動，乃可望一線之轉機，用錢未足亦難生效。此即叻霞等唯一無二進財之道。去歲有某宦族的長子，病在印度，其弟又被派往德格，彼欲往印度視兄，又不敢往叻霞辭職，遂暗中運動惹真，惹真許之，令叻霞改派。叻霞大怒，喚來痛斥一頓，置之不理，既不許赴印，亦不許去康。某宦族懼甚，遂往各叻霞公館送賂請罪，私下皆允代設法，但至叻霞，則又皆不出首轉情。某宦族異常焦急。後又大賂特賂，叻倫等乃現慈顏，斥罰後仍令去康。彼雖欲赴印以探詢兄病，然為權威所迫，也【九一】只有置病兄於不問而已。又有某堪布之管家，欲想在西藏當局得一官半職，來內地活動，也是運動惹真，惹真許後令叻霞給其填職。叻霞諸人亦大發雷霆，所幸叻倫輩私下受賂甚多，叻霞等雖不滿其越階舉動，然不能不允給其官，只時間遷延，久之事即解決。有位為七品下之閒職，而彼妄以四五品炫耀人前的事，說來真有些令人捧腹。總之西藏叻霞之權，有時超過於藏王之上。凡各處有戰事或須防守，為派何人，帶何處軍隊，到達何處迎戰防禦等事，亦皆由叻霞派遣。派某人往某處收糧或收稅，亦屬叻霞之事。故叻霞名義上似只管政治，實際上對於軍事亦有相當的權力。

## 三 地方行政

西藏各地有縣官，而區域未必皆有縣大，或僅數村而已，游牧處的區域雖大，而人戶又少，惟所管事與縣政府相似，即假立縣府之名耳。藏名為之聳奔，官住的碉樓曰聳，住碉的官員稱奔，合言聳奔即是碉堡官。他正管民間訟事，入款亦以此為大宗，收糧支差也是他分內的事。如當大路者，也兼管稅務，這種管三事的聳奔，則為最肥的差事。但管理稅務亦有股稅【九二】務專員的，這聳奔的油水，就要被專員指去一分了。如西康窮薄敦勤，北路拏墟喀，南路帕克里，皆是收稅之機關。聽說拏墟喀和帕克里，皆有二人管理，未知稅務為分為合。窮薄敦勤，官惟一人，油水最厚。惟彼處多以四五品人任之，決非七品小官所能夢想得到。餘處聳奔，多惟管訟糧二事。若在偏僻之

鄉，年無一過往之官客，差事殊少，故進款亦不多。地方官對於平民，也如虎臨羊羣，除去死罪而外，若枷若打，若繫獄，若治罪，仍是隨心所欲。西藏婦女性少羞恥，已如前說，地方官對於尋香訪艷之事，更是任意而為，無論乎處女少婦，只要中他的意便可置鞭記之，夜分則不敢不至，此亦為藏地之特殊風俗。

#### 四 軍備

軍備二字，似要有很完備的軍事組織才配稱的起。西藏僅有幾萬初學開步走的濫兵，和臨時徵集些烏合土衆，實在有辱軍備的名義。若不管他好醜多寡有無訓練，只要他能開槍衝鋒，或僅能吃飽做個兵士的樣子，就叫他個軍人；不管他槍械好壞餉彈多少，只要他能維持軍人的伙食，或就地括來充飢，就叫作餉械。甚至連鑿刀竹箭，火槍，木槍等，這樣都算作【九三】軍備者，則西藏也可勉強說有軍備了。他們軍人的家庭和生活，如前第四章已說。西藏軍人最初設備的時期，是民國初年漢軍失敗出藏，達賴喇嘛由印度回藏之後，纔臨時徵集的。聽說那時候也不過一兩萬人，槍械就時在印度購買了一點，也有漢軍留下的舊軍火。到民國八九年西康打仗的時候，他們還是用那老法子，臨時在震達羅三處糾合了些人抗戰，結果還是漢兵失利，他們佔勝。漢軍失利的原因，聽說是前線與後方不和，前方被圍後方不救援才失敗的。前後兩方不和的原因，又是前方某偉人的舅子任副官，他回到西康採辦各物的時候，仗恃着姊夫的威風，心高氣傲目空一切，談話不知進退，冷刺熱諷地輕蔑藐視了後方諸位偉人。因此兩方就生了些無形的隔膜，到了前方受困跑到後方來求援的時候。後方又把私仇用公報，冷刺熱諷了一頓置之不理。因此前方就失陷了昌都，繳械被縛了。軍界偉人之不顧國家民族利害，惟以意氣事從，官報私仇，失陷地方，甚至牽連到整個國家和民族的滅亡，這恐怕是古今萬代世界各國的通病吧！民國十八九年，西康大吉寺戰事發生起來的時候，西藏當局一方面仍用老法子在震達羅等處糾衆迎敵，一方面在拉薩附近區域徵【九四】兵訓練備戰，一方面往印度購槍械子彈。英人又奉送了些，就構成現下所有的三四萬人了。他這些軍人，有的在西康昌都與德格交界駐防，有的在昌都等處休養，拉薩也留存一點，還有些暫假回家。後藏與印度路線上是沒有的，由這一點，也可看到西藏當局是防漢不防英。藏人對於漢人與英人之信任，誰重誰輕於茲可見。現下長夜酣夢的駐藏偉人們，好像沒有一點警覺。我要說藏人好又不是——得罪人——不說又不是——對不住良心——現在我只好不說藏人好壞祇說英人能幹吧！

西藏軍人的餉費，多出於煩稅，——每年若干我未統計——開往各地的軍隊，大半即由本地行政機關，臨時在當地欸籌，——在德格一帶尤甚——這種籌款辦法，上司的油水最厚，小兵們並享用不着幾個。凡是無紀律的軍隊籌款，大概皆走這個死路吧！拉薩管理軍費等機關，總以伐霞為主，其直接計算撥發的，則為達賴山下的會計機關了。至於管理財政的機關，名稱坡康，坡義即薪餉，康義為房即衙門，各偉人的薪俸，及軍人的煩餉，皆由這個衙門發給。昌都亦有分設，因為軍隊大多都在西康之故。

【九五】西藏軍人放槍，是他未當軍人前就會的，因為西藏到處都有土匪，人民皆須自衛家家皆許買槍，出門也許隨身攜帶，所以他把放槍一事早就學好了。當兵時所訓練的，大概都是排班，報數，分行，開步走。對於跪臥射數等事，我都沒有看見過他們教授和練習。至於觀勢設陣，掘壕築壘等等，那都是夢也沒有夢見過，那裏談的上教導和訓練呢？所以我說他們的軍事不配軍備兩個字，到過西藏的同胞們，總該同意吧？

#### 五 財政

西藏的財政機關有兩處：一在達賴山下，即上文所述之坡康。他那裏的款項，是由糧稅而收入的。支出去的是薪俸和糧餉。一年有幾多進出，那就非我所知，因為我在拉薩求學的時候，極力避免調查政治等色彩嫌疑，所以對於這些事情，輕易不好攀談。西藏人的疑心很大，若被他們起了疑心，那就連經書都學不安逸，何況其他的事呢？我是費盡心思和受盡艱難才進西藏的，在自己經書未學好以前，對於那些容易發生嫌疑的事件，一定是要避免的。又如第一章所說的我們大勇法師，就是因為氣派太大，引起了人家的疑慮，纔阻止進藏，留【九六】在西康而死在西康的。我這後輩的學子，還敢再踏那個覆轍嗎？故關於這些軍事財政等等，只有聽確實的人談說，順便記住一點。那沒有聽到的，只好暫且不談。另外有一所財政機關在大招寺頂上，那裏

所管的，多是各處施主在正月傳大招和二月傳小招時所散放襯錢的基本金。又有各處供養大招寺釋迦佛的銀錢。聽說也有達賴喇嘛的存款。他那個財政機關最富，專以放利為營業，收利放襯所餘的長款，就該當事的人得。現下僧數日減，利息漸高，放襯所剩的必然很多，所以任那個機關的人們不到一年都會發洋財。故西藏的一切偉人都想在那裏邊作事，每【九七】到換人的時候，聽說也是大賂特賂的忙着就選運動。但結果總是那與藏王等關係最深的人能夠獲選。別個送賂運動的人，仍然是要落第。聞說前年正是換人的時期，有一個世襲家的咨仲——出家官名，七品或以下皆有——他家與惹真佛爺有些瓜葛，惹真佛爺把他找去叫他上個請書，惹真便批給他做。但是他很淡泊寡欲，又知道一點因果，不想發這個賺大眾僧伽錢的財。而且他有一個義父，也是個少欲知足樂善好施不希求橫財的人，在西藏也有很大正直忠厚的名譽。那個咨仲便與他義父商議，他義父更是一味的阻止，說他年輕，家業有這樣大，人又不多，何必去任那個職位呢？他聽了義父的訓言，他就沒有請求，惹真纔放了別人。俗語常說：朝裏有人好做官，這更是西藏萬古不移的定例了。那個機關放利的法規，或有相當的物品產業抵押，或有二家富官予你作保，纔能借給。否則便無借款的資格。假若你的借款，到期不能交息，他便利上加利罰你。假如你實在沒錢還他，他便沒收你抵押的物品或產業，或令二家保人賠償。故他那裏絕對不會虧本，只有一天比一天富足而擴大。他那裏面的款項，能不能提出充軍費等用，我尚未能查悉。大概未到萬不得已時，是決不會提出【九八】款來吧！那個機關裏的人也很多，在主管之下，還設有好多會計員和秘書等，但我也不知道他確實的定數，至於金額之數，那更是不敢問津了。

## 第七章 宗教教育及其文化

西藏人是個個都有宗教觀念的，他們認佛教為國教。他們有些不知道我們內地和日本，南洋，以及外國地方也有佛教——除少數知者外——他說佛教在印度隱沒之後，就是西藏才有，都認為佛教是最高無上，佛教的教理是淵深無比。縱有些知道內地和日本也有佛教的，但他們也認為不徹底，惟有西藏才研究得徹底。這話在別人聽起來，總覺着他們有些夜郎自大。但實際上考查一下，現在各國所研究的佛教，確實是不如他們徹底，這總算是瞎貓撞着死老鼠，被他們碰上了。要是你與西藏的格什談佛學，無論遇着個什麼問題，他們好像是沒有不能解釋的，並且他還能立刻就舉例反難，令你沒有口可開，這是我在內地所未遇見過的事。日本佛教徒我也見過幾個來內地演說的，我覺着也並沒有什麼特殊的研【九九】究。並且西藏格什們辯論的時候，說俱舍便是俱舍，所談的諸法性相及其範圍等，皆須依據俱舍。若見他答人汎引唯識中觀等義而答，那就算輸了。若是辯論經部義，其談的諸法性相等，皆須符合經部之說。若談唯識或中論，亦須符合唯識和中論的教義。若問東答西，或借事避讓，皆是墮負。又西藏辯論時，所說的語句，皆須用能破和能立的因明格式問答，不准隨口亂說，答辯的人尤須按照因明論理的格式，或答不成，或答不定，或答相違，或答是許，除此四句是不許亂答。這種嚴格的辯論，非但內地沒有，就是自命為佛教最興盛的日本，也是無有吧！南洋羣島小乘佛教宏揚的區域內，那更是談不上了。故我覺着他們研究佛法的規式和所研究的佛法問題，並研究後所得的結果——正知正見。實皆非內地和其他國家研究佛教者所能比對。現在內地和日本所謂宏揚佛法的，即是在某處能新集合一些信仰佛法的人們，略談些皮毛知識，就要闖動了全世界。例如印度鹿野苑的佛學院，和加爾加打的大菩提會。住在很遠的地方上，看見報上載着他們的宣言，覺着他們一定是很盛的佛教道場或團體，好像是每天都在上課講經，宣揚佛化。但若到那裏切實的去一調查，則知道他那篇宣【一〇〇】言，都是以鼓勵人心為宗旨而已。然而西藏宏揚佛法，却大不然，必是在某寺或某處，建立下辯論研究的大道場，按期決擇現觀莊嚴等諸論之要義，培養一般真實了解佛法的人才，纔叫宏法。至於某處蓋座廟，或某寺僧人多，或某寺利養厚，或某處請個喇嘛在講經和灌頂。那皆配不上宏揚佛法之名。就是收斂了成千萬的驛馬供養，也只好說是供養，並不能宏揚佛法。即使名為宏揚佛法，也只是空名罷了。

西藏全境內，離開佛法之外，他們並沒有其他的教育或文化，故他們的教育，除了小學中教授藏文的寫法及拼音法等而外，就對於文法一事，也沒有能教授的學校。作文詠詩，梵文聲明，皆須依止出家的僧侶纔能受學。至於那甚深淵博的教理，更是要出家眾纔能領解的了。當我在西藏所依止的師長，就是一位深通聲明的大德，他老人家門

下，每日皆有一大羣西藏的官員來學文法，更有一般高級長官，早晚二次，從他老人家聽受佛法中的菩提道次第論。故他們對於佛法，俱能得到真純清淨的正信，以後就依着他的正信去做事，和教化民眾了。現在西藏的藏王，也是我師長的唯一信徒。四位噶倫中也有三位是皈依他的，其餘【一〇一】笈喬堪布等多是久依他老人家聽聞佛法的常隨眾。故我斷言，現代西藏的教育，就是佛法。離了佛法，也就沒有他們的教育了。教育既然如此，文化又豈能例外。故西藏關於文化的各種表現品，沒有一樣不是與佛教有關係的。例如代表外形文化的工藝，美術和建築之類，皆以他們能造佛像等的工巧藝術，和他們造成的精巧玲瓏彫刻，印鑄，繪畫等佛像，並他們建築的壯麗堂皇的佛殿等，纔能見得到。照這樣看起來，西藏真可稱得起是個以佛教而治世的模範區域，故我再把他的宗教建設等，分為數小段來略敘述。

### 一 宗教建設

談到西藏的宗教建設，以佛法為主，若法有完美的組織，僧眾纔能依之而起正行。先覺常說：「人能宏道，非道宏人。」俱舍論亦說：「有持說行者，此便住世間。」照這幾句話看來，佛法雖是一百二十分的完美，假若沒有人去研究，必沒有人能了解；無人能了解，必沒有人能講說；無人能解能說，亦必沒有人能修行；無人能修行，必定更沒有人能證果。故單是有組織完美的教法，還是不行，必須有能住持正法的人來運用這完美的教法才行呢。這種能住【一〇二】持正法的人，可分兩類：一是正信護持的，二是正解正行住持的。其護持者，在有帝王勢力的時代，如來原是託付給具有正信的國王宰官長者居士等。當今民眾建國家之時，即是各界具有正信偉人與居士。其正解正行的住持者，也就是身披如來幢相捨離家的出家人。在家者我且不談，出家人又可分二類：一，一己或少數散住者，此種出家人，若是久親知識，多聞教誨，少事少業，閑住林藪或邊際臥具而修習斷證，實為佛教之最勝莊嚴。亦即戒律所說具足多聞安住林藪為最樂者。此種出家人多是住持證的正法，非此處之所欲廣說者。二，多蒙供住之出家人，俗語常說「人【一〇三】多心不齊，」若有多數人共住，則須有一共同遵守之完美組織與規約。否則必囂囂終日，你來我去，虛棄光陰，毫無成就。西藏之寺院，住數千人的不算奇，絕非我內地寺院之所能比。故其組織方法，亦與內地寺院之組織稍異。茲當分數條敘述於下：

### 一 西藏寺僧的組織

西藏佛教原始初興之寺院及僧伽的組織，與現在各地所保存者相比，略有不同。如現在拉薩之大小二招寺，及桑耶寺等，在藏人雖說是原來之形式，但在傳記上也說彼等諸處或曾遭回祿而重建，或年久頹廢而整葺，其對於原來之式樣，自然有所變遷。至於原始之僧眾組織，則非我之所知。今談西藏寺僧的組織，唯就現在所共見者，概而言之。

1. 西藏寺院的組織寺院建築方面，實無決定的軌式，若依律中所述，似應正房，為大殿與殿相對者為大門，從門之兩旁，乃至大殿的兩旁，環以相稱的僧房，其院中心點為一方正的大丹墀，猶如內地寶華山隆昌寺的建築法，唯彼寺大殿之對面為大壇而非大門，與律藏所載的不合，西藏西康之中等寺院——除別蚌等——多是如此。其最大之寺院如別蚌色拉【一〇四】寺等，建築又迥然不同。多係就適中之處，建築一總殿，為全寺僧眾早課誦經之所。此殿之旁除熬茶的廚房等外，多無他種僧房環繞。然此大寺必分為若干中部份，名曰「札倉。」每一中部份又必分為許多小部份，名曰「康村。」每一中部份，必另有一座大殿，為彼部份眾中午誦經之所。每一小部份，亦必另有一座大殿，此殿則多以僧房環繞，中間砌成一方正丹墀，如律中所述的形式。又彼大寺的每一中部份，必有一講經辯論場所。如別蚌寺中，分為四個中部份，色拉寺中分三個中部份，格登寺分二個中部份。其小部份則各有多少不一。也不暇作詳細記載。其寺院系統之組織者，則康藏各地各派各寺院皆必統屬於大寺之下，各寺之出家人，皆必須往大寺中住過而回寺，乃為合乎僧格。與日本中本寺支寺之度制相似。又彼大寺中之小部份，多係由其家鄉地界而分，例如金川一帶之出家人到西藏三大寺時，必須住於甲絨康村——一小部份之名——方保無糾紛。其打箭鑪以西乃至木蓮地方之出家

人，則必須住木孃康村。道孚鑑霍甘孜瞻化一帶之出家人，則又必須於諸窩康村。其能管理此等僧眾之職事人員等如下科詳明。

【一〇五】2. 西藏僧眾的組織此可分二類：(甲)寺內職事等的組織；(乙)寺外大喇嘛的組織。

(甲)寺內職事等的組織，又有二類：一，管理全體之財產者，名曰機緒，義為總管，即代全體僧伽營謀生計者。此有正副二人，并多數助理員，除保管財產而外，對於僧眾之威儀等事，全不聞問。二，管理全體之威儀者，名曰義鄂，義為首領，即視查糾正僧眾之行動威儀，而對於全體之產業雖亦有干涉之權，然亦多不過問。在全寺之中要算此職權位最大。上自堪布下至清眾，人人見而迴避，絕無與彼并行對衝之理。此有正副二人，輔助多人。管理寺全院體之事者，唯此二類。其大殿舉經之維那，唯領眾誦經而已。管轄中部份者，可分三類：一堪布，二當家，三糾察。堪布，義即住持，對於一中部份僧眾的學識，負責專教授及管理權，對於威儀及財產，亦有過問之責任。若依實而論，全寺之僧教育實操於堪布之手，因為僧眾之辯論場中，是以堪布為主，而堪布對於彼寺內之僧眾亦負有監督察視之權。其僧眾之學識及威儀等，有正不正時，皆由堪布教授教誡之，即與政府接洽寺內的一切事宜，亦以堪布為主體，故此職位，非有真實之學識者莫能任。西藏大寺之堪布，除有特殊之因緣者外，皆以格什任之。每中【一〇六】部份堪布一人，其助理人數無定。第二當家者，即代中部份之僧眾，管理所有之財產而經營其生源及支配其用途者。此職對於僧眾之學識等皆不過問，途中相遇亦僅互相敬重迴避而已。每一中部份中，當家有數人，輔理有多人。三，糾察，藏名曰格果，義為策善，即整理僧家威儀皆令其調伏敦善者。此於殿內及辯論場中，監視僧眾之威儀，對於學識與財產，則無若何之責任及權位。故全寺及中部份之當家與糾察，非必須格什有學問者，即普通僧人亦能任之。在中部份中，其餘尚有維那等職事，然彼無重大之職權，今亦不必贅述。管轄每小部份者，亦分二類：一管財產者，二管僧眾之威儀者，初亦名當家，即管理一小部份之財物。今有當補明者，其一大寺院之財產，大約可分三類：一屬全寺僧眾所共有者，即歸總管而管理之；二屬一中部份僧眾所共有者，則歸當家等而管理之；其小部份僧眾所共有之財產，則歸小部份內當家管理。第二管威儀者，名曰康村格梗，義為本部份內本年新來者之指導師。此二種職事，多係由來寺之年限而任，然有數康村亦另有他種之選任法。又此康村內之出家人，於任過康村格梗之後，方入老學眾，對於本部份大小事宜會議時，乃有參加建議批評之權，初來【一〇七】者非但不能評議，且無參入之資格。其餘散碎職事難以縷數。

(乙)寺外大喇嘛的組織，此寺外二字，非說其身居寺外者，是說非某寺內正式之職事，而對於全體僧眾或某一部份僧眾有保護或教導之權者。略可分二：一，轉生續任類，二考試正任類。轉生續任者，當首推達賴喇嘛及班禪大師為代表。此師幼年，或由前生之記莖，或由他人之選覓，或由神靈之籤記而舉出。既以隆重之典禮登座之後，則選定一位學德兼優之大喇嘛為師長，更選數位有才學者輔之。其每日學經讀書等事，實與通常之僧眾無異。唯生活之享受稍為富裕，每日有人陪同研究講辯，較餘眾之順緣為滿足耳。至年廿歲時，學識定成可觀，其受比丘戒與考格什，皆在此時。既考格什後，對於自己前生之地位和利權，乃正式接受辦理。如達賴喇嘛，則對於全藏之教政，皆有徵問裁判整勸建興之權限。班禪大師，則對於後藏地界之一部份有如彼之實權。諸餘之諾門汗呼都圖等，則對於各各之封疆內乃有如上之實權，非能遍一切藏地。故西藏全體之人眾中，對於教政兩方面，唯有達賴為最無上也。考試正任類者，當以格登墀巴為最尊貴之名位，即接受格登寺內，宗喀巴大師之法座【一〇八】者。此師是從普通僧眾昇成。其次第，謂先考格什而深閑顯教，再入舉巴而精研密法。對於舉巴之糾察等職事皆任後而昇為舉巴之堪布——此堪布在堪布中最貴重——由堪布再昇為法王——法王僅有兩位——由法王乃可昇為格登墀巴。墀巴對於全藏之佛教有管理整頓之權，對於政治雖亦可兼議，而非有實權。其下之法王，則是閒位，於教於政皆不多問。再下之舉巴堪布，則對於舉巴之財法一切，皆有管理之實權。堪布以下之舉巴糾察等職事，則與大寺之糾察權位相似。此當略說舉巴之制度，寺院建築與五六百人之中等寺相似，其中之僧眾，概為二類：一、未在三大寺考格什而直入舉巴者；二、考格什後而入者。初者之資格，於未入舉巴之前，先當依止一師學習熟讀集密金剛大教王經與儀軌，皆能背誦為量。再候舉巴之人數有缺——每舉巴五百人為量，上下二舉巴共一千人——而考取也。既入之後，初五年中作沙彌行，承事諸苾芻，為作受食行水等事。第六年中受苾芻戒而受他沙彌之供事。此類以學習密部之儀軌事相等

為主，對於教理則少研究。先考格什而入者，初一年中威儀如沙彌，殿堂功課不容或缺，唯不須承事於苾芻作沙彌之行。第二年後則同上座，諸事皆【一〇九】有方便，如學德超勝則可考昇堪布等也。所餘維那等職事，皆與餘大寺之組織相同。其餘為官有權之出家人，尚多如牛毛，下亦當略述之。

## 二 西藏僧眾的生活

言到生活二字，必是衣食住三法之所攝，在名利二字之中，則為財利者也。若依戒律言之，唯有乞食存活，不事積蓄，方符佛法律儀制度。故在印度錫蘭以及暹緬等處之僧眾，猶存很沉重原始佛教制度之色彩。然此種制度在地大民稀雪天冰地之境內，多有不能全盤實行者。故佛於律藏中，對於邊地之苾芻，亦多有開許之處——如寒地墊皮穿皮等——總之佛之所制，皆是吾人所能實行之事，其不能實行者，佛亦絕無勉強之理。西藏之地位，可居現在世界之高處，寒風凜冽之氣候，與寒帶相比伍。其衣與住，以求其煖熱為度，食之一種則隨地之所產生者為宜。在家人之生活，前已廣述，此談出家人之日常生活，略分普通與名貴二等。

1. 寺內普通的僧眾，皆以青稞——即米大麥——炒熟所磨之麵粉為食料，藏名曰糌【一一〇】粑。每日早四五點鐘，全寺僧眾皆集於大殿而誦經，在誦經的中間，有三碗茶以供飲——一碗與糌粑皆由自備——於初碗茶時，即可拌糌粑而作早餐。絕不准攜帶酥油及肉菜等上殿，故食糌粑後，續飲兩盃清茶而已。至九十點鐘時，各中部份之僧眾，各集於中部份之大殿內誦經，有茶三碗或四碗者，亦自備碗與糌粑，并無菜等。午後三四點鐘時，每小部份之僧眾，各集於小部份之殿中誦經飲茶，食不食糌粑皆隨自便。除此三殿之外，多係在辯論場研究學問之時，非但無飯，且亦無茶。其略有餘存之人，數日之後或買酥油少許，於午殿散時，自於房內熬一壺酥茶而痛飲，則樂上非非矣。若更能買米或麵而食者，則富裕之盛名，將傳遍全寺矣。衣者，上披以純毛僧腳袴，下束一毛織裙，內穿毛織背心，此三件價不過十餘元。上殿及講經之時，其外更披一毛織斗篷，中等者價亦五六元。有多錢者或更作內衣長衫，及束以毛織內裙，然決不許穿褲。夜間寢時，即衣為被，稍墊一二層故氈即足矣。所住之房舍，若在外面觀之，宛如西式洋樓，然內中之鋪設，則極無光線，乃最極狹小之土屋。換言之：西藏寺內之普通僧眾，生活極為簡單，其自食之糌粑及飲料燃料等，亦多堆積於房內。年齡稍高，入寺稍久【一一一】者，則多住內外二間，外者作廚房，內即住室亦即書房及庫房，或有少供幾尊聖像，置幾部經者。在經營此簡單生活之餘，即是學經與辯論之時，學經時間無定，多取師長之時暇為宜，辯論則於早午晚三次殿後。惟此有辯論之期，名曰法會，一年中約佔半數，尚有半數寺內無辯論之法會，即各部份之僧眾積柴募化之時間。此等生活費之來源，大約多出於三方面：一、寺內之齋襯及僧眾共同財產之分息，此只夠半年用，二、由家鄉所供給，三、其無家給助者，則於無法會時，應酬經懺佛事，而補其不足。其餘更有貿易之人，此類則多以謀財，棄擲學法之寶貴光陰，雖名在寺，身實在外。

2. 寺內名貴的僧眾，謂於寺內放茶供眾者，或轉生之呼都圖等，衣食住三皆較普通僧人豐裕，尤其對於殿堂誦經，若無襯時則可不去，自在房內熬茶而飲。至於學經等，則與普通者無異。其有職權之僧人，則更有例外之規矩，全不上殿，亦不講經，惟各負其自職而為耳。其生活費亦僅較普通者稍為奢逸，然終不能超出糌粑酥茶而純肉食也。

## 二 教育制度

【一一二】西藏教育的制度，可分二種：一，在家子弟的教育制度，是先住幾年初級的小學堂，學堂中的課程，我今略舉一處為代表。我有一位朋友，他的大兒就在西藏電報局的學堂讀書，每日早起就去上學，但到了學堂之中，係先背誦文殊菩薩和妙音天女的讚頌，再念些懺悔文和發願文，到了日出之後，先生纔教着他們寫藏文草字。起初學的筆畫很長而且筆直，令其練習腕力，待練的腕力充實，筆畫無彎曲粗細輕重等過之後，再令學寫稍為縮短筆畫的草字藏文。如是漸漸的縮成普通藏文草字之後，再教以極小之草書，如像漢文之大草。寫字法至此便算登峯造極了。在練習

各種字形的時候，皆是用一塊木板，塗上一層灰粉，再用彈綫彈成幾段橫格，就依格而寫字。把先生所教的那幾句頌文——多教先賢之頌文——寫完，就拏給先生去看，先生檢其寫得不像的改正一下，便教洗了塗粉另寫，照這樣塗了又寫，寫了又塗的練習一天，到晚上放學的時候，先生便把一日之中的成績，批上個第一第二的次序。學生們就按着次序，第一名用一條竹片，把第二名的臉彈一下。再由第二彈第三，第三彈第四，……一直到了末尾一名，使用竹片彈地一下來出氣，引得衆同學鬨然一笑，便放學【一一三】回家了。待他們在木板上練得純熟之後，再令在紙上練習。若能在紙上亦練好了，便教寫普通的信件稱呼，及教以九九乘除等算術。初級小學的課程，到此便算圓滿了。要想昇官發財的子弟們，須再進達賴山下之會計機關，練習官家所須的各種數學，若在此處學滿之後，便是七品官員的候補者。至於藏文文法等事，更須另求明師久久的學習，此於前文已略言之，不再詳說了。

二，出家僧衆的教育制度，此事前文雖已略說，然此處亦有當補述者：一，出家的制度，西藏佛教很普及，民間之信仰亦很純粹，簡直離却佛法無有他種教育，送子弟出家，即令子弟受習教育。民衆皆認出家爲正事及美事，故出家之年齡實無定限，亦有初能離母哺獨居之時，便送寺中交師訓養而習讀者，唯其衣食仍由家庭供給之。若大人而入三大寺住者，其制度又稍異，謂初入寺中任隨那一小部份之時，先須覓一熟識的上座爲保證，乃可住寺入籍。若無熟人者，則由彼年之康村格梗代覓而往。此保證人對於自己的出入款項，皆可代爲支配，對於自己的一切威儀規則，皆當教導告誡，對於自己的人格方面，所負的責任尤重。既有【一一四】保證安入寺僧之數已，則更須依師學習經論之講辯。若保證師自有學識者，則歸彼自教，若彼無學或不暇者，則可另請餘有學有暇者代教之。所學之要論，現在皆以五部大論爲主——此五論之大義，如下述。——待年滿二十歲後，再依達賴喇嘛等而受苾芻律儀。其受沙彌戒之期限無定，有先出家受戒而後入三大寺者，亦有先入寺而覓師出家學經，再依達賴等受沙彌戒者。總之出家者非個個皆已受戒。甚至有入寺披出家人衣隨衆上殿誦經等并而未經過出家之儀式者，斯亦西藏寺大僧多之濫耶？抑佛法中許如此之方便耶？諸有智者當更決擇焉。其出家受戒之儀式，與內地多有不同。出家者，其師先爲受三皈五戒，次問遮難而祝髮，令受三事——一不著在家服，二不捨出家相，三不捨出家師——爲出家之戒，即暫不受沙彌戒亦許可。——此與內地之戒律似稍有不同——若更受沙彌戒者，則請一清淨苾芻爲阿闍黎耶，以三返請親教師及歸依三寶而受戒，後爲說十戒相令其守持。受苾芻戒者，則由屏教阿闍黎耶問遮難後帶入僧中，由羯摩阿闍黎耶如律作白四羯摩而受戒。其菩薩戒，則非與彼二戒作一串而受，多係於諸德高望重之大喇嘛講經或傳法之法會圓滿時而【一一五】受菩薩戒。其受戒之儀式，總分二類：一依龍猛靜天等所傳儀式而受，二依無著菩薩所傳瑜伽師地論中儀式而受。其儀甚繁，且止不述。今之傳戒依龍猛派者爲多。

又諸大寺中，多能如律作布薩安居解制等僧事，其作法與義淨法師所譯之一切有部律文相合，故今亦不繁述。

又西藏之寺僧，每年皆作數大法會，其最隆重偉大者，當推正月傳大招之法會爲首屈一指此，會議式，於正月初三四等一日——雖無定期然遲不過初五——三大寺之全體僧衆，皆須集會於拉薩街市——寺皆閉戶不留人居，惟派少數在家人做監寺看守而已——次定期於一日下午，三大寺僧皆集合於大招寺之院中及樓上簷下等處，各寺之人皆有一定的位置，不准紊雜。再次早四時許即集衆誦經，有茶兩碗，稀粥一碗，誦經散後，即續誦戒作臨時之吉祥布薩。次往寺外講經場上，與本年所應放之格什辯論因明論。——頭等格什在此法會中立宗，一日一人。——至七時許則由格登擇巴，登座爲僧衆講經。——或講菩提道次第略論，或講餘論，皆無定規。——講經畢，又集合於大招寺誦經飲茶吃稀粥。次出而少【一一六】息，其格什又在大殿之廊下立現觀莊嚴論與入中論之宗，任三大寺正在研彼二論者與之共辯。直至午後三時許，大眾又集而誦經飲茶，此係午後故無食也。次彼格什又立戒律與俱舍之宗，則任上下二舉巴之格什，及三大寺上座格什等與之共辯，夜半乃散。其大招寺右側街衢要處，亦設有法座，延一有學德之喇嘛爲普通之民衆宣演佛法淺義，其聽衆則頗擁擠。其餘之講經說法者亦在在皆是。街上旋繞大招寺之善男信女，亦以此時爲最多。貿易之生活人亦以此會爲佳節。日日如是，至正月二十許方散。其次之法會，即二月傳小招之集合，人數儀式皆與上同，唯此會勘，諸名貴之衆若不欲來集，准許請假，其所考之格什即爲第二等。再次者即是十月二十五日，此爲宗喀巴大師圓寂日，雖非三大寺總會拉薩而

誦經，然各各寺中之法會亦頗可觀。是夜無論在家出家，室內房外，皆與燃燈供養，明徹半夜，與大商埠商楊之電燈相似。又正月十五日，各寺皆須以酥油作華或戲而供佛，其工藝藝術，頗與內地之作麵人相同，惟其華之偉大數尺數丈者皆不等，迥非他處之所有，可算藏人之唯一藝術。其餘之講經法會，或十日或半月，或念日，或一月不等。儀式則如普通僧伽之生活科中所明。別【一一七】種紀念日等，并無若何之法會。

又如上說，西藏地方離佛法外，現在實無他種任何教育。故凡藏人之教育，皆可概云為僧教育，若收斂其出家眾取材而言，除轉生之呼都圖等外，直可云為考試制度，因為學識高尚之格什，皆是由考試而得，其堪布等重要人物亦多由考試而任。即在俗之官長亦須先考試而後給與權位也。今說此僧教育當更分三科：一、未考前之僧教育，二、考試之制度，三、考試後選任。

1. 未考前之僧眾，在寺習學者，謂初二年中先當依師，善習初機因明辯論之方式，對於因明論之粗淺名相，當略得一常識。次五六年中，廣學現觀莊嚴論，此論係解釋大般若經修行之世俗三乘道次第者，若於此論能精研善巧，則對於三乘道次第，尤其對於大乘道的次第，能得一堅固不謬之定解概念。故學大乘者首以此論為要旨。次二三年，精研入中論，此論分為十品講十地十行，特於第六品中廣破四生而明諸緣起法，悉皆性空如幻。要達中觀方能獲得真空之正見，修之而能斷煩惱出生死，故學佛者亦應深玩此論以求正見。再次二三【一一八】年中精研戒律，因年將二十，須受大戒，若於持犯昧而不知，則受戒犯戒，徒造苦因耳。在一切行持中，戒為根本為基礎為前導，要有戒故餘德乃生，無戒之人惡趣且難逃，遑云解脫與成佛乎？最後乃至未考格什，則須多學俱舍，以對於生死涅槃，若總若別，因緣果等詳細抉擇之論，要以對法為主要故。又因明論，年年冬季兼學一月，以若不能用正理而辯論抉擇，無論學何法，修何法，講何法，皆如泥上之釘，全不能安穩堅固。故三大寺中，選此五部要論有大有小有解有行，為教育僧伽之根本典籍。

2. 考試之制度，僧伽在寺學至俱舍論時，由本中部份之堪布，量其學識，許以何等格什，至自考格什之前一年夏季，——此唯說頭等格什——須先至達賴喇嘛所居之摩尼園，其考格什之十六人——正月之格什，三大寺共十六人以配十六尊者之數——互相辯論。如第一日，甲格什立宗者，乙丙丁三格什，依因明論而興難辯論，戊己庚格什則辯現觀莊嚴論等，至二日乙格什立宗時，則以丙丁戊三格什辯因明等，三人一班，輪流辯難。當此辯論之時，達賴喇嘛之侍讀堪布等為證者，達賴喇嘛亦常垂簾而聽，格什之第一二等名次，即在此時【一一九】而考定。——雖未揭表然亦有大譜——次冬季法會時，又各中部份本年將考之格什，即在本部份辯論場中立宗，與自部份一切僧伽而辯論，有堪布及另選舉出之大德為證法者。再次第一二名格什於正月初一日，在達賴官內，對辦法義，有達賴與三大寺堪布，并政府一切偉人在座參觀而為作證。最後即在傳大招時立宗與三大寺全體辯論，待此法會閉幕日乃揭佈其次數，而得格什之名位也。故一切格什中唯此為難。第二等格什，冬季於自己之中部份立宗，與次年二月於大眾中立宗。夏間亦往達賴喇嘛摩尼園內立宗，不過不像頭等格什之嚴格耳。第三等格什，則唯於本寺之二三中部份內，互相立宗，不須與三大寺之一切眾辯論也。第四等格什，則唯於本寺之大殿前立宗少許或更請人而代之。換言之：即唯有格什之年齡而無學問，或略學一論而年齡未至，徒取格什之名者，此亦可名方便格什耳。

3. 考後之選任，既經如是之考取，則對於顯教之學識，也可算告了一個小結束。此後略有兩條路走：一退隱山林而清修者，二轉入舉巴而學密者。在舉巴者，正途為昇至格登擢巴，餘者也有住數年後，派往他處支寺作堪布等者。退山修者，有時亦因政府之須人，不容安養，【一二〇】派出為堪布者。然此是上二等格什乃然，若夫第三四等格什，則唯隱居淨修為業，多不能被政府之所選任。

我再附說一下西藏僧眾之參政，西藏之佛教，即是其文化，故掌其文化之要人，亦多係有學德之僧實。故對於政教二事，皆須僧人參預其事。其政教兩管之出家人，當然以達賴為首，其次則為藏王，僧俗皆可任之。班禪大師，在名稱方面似乎能與達賴抗衡，然實際論之，有時尚不如藏王權大。格登擢巴位分雖高，然於政治不多過問。藏王之下，以四大臣為上，其中即有一出家者，此乃正管政治之人。再下有秘書者，亦為出家人任之，干涉政治力亦甚大。再下即有上四品之大喇嘛與大堪布名位及正四品之堪布名位。此不出任，則無實權，若出任時，則與知府相仿。再次者則有預備秘書者，出任為知縣，不出則無權。總之出家人之參政皆係文職，其武官之任，則純用

在家衆而無僧伽。對於管教方面者，則又多屬出家人而少俗士。此上皆約粗相而談，若詳細分析，則誠非萬言所能盡也。

### 三 文化

【一二一】西藏的文化，全是佛教的文化，關於文學一方面的事情，非是深入經藏的人不能徹底了知。如果要把牠盡量地寫來，實在有些麻煩，只好在文藝的一段內略說一點。西藏的風化，除了上文所述民族性的風俗而外，唯一的風化，就是崇敬佛教，信仰佛教的因果與密法。這些有的在在前面說過，有的又無須多說。所以在這裏所要敘述的，也只有能代表普遍的文藝等三項。

#### 1. 文藝

西藏的文藝作品，無論賦詩，唱歌，小說，散文，乃至把全部大藏的奧蘊，撮攏來所創作的長篇大論，沒有不是以佛教的教理做他作品中的中心要素。就是關於數學，醫學，歷史，地理等的著述，也沒有一樣不是用佛法作為最重要的原素。如賦有韻的詩詞，大多數是仿着印度詩詞的組織，在一首詩中，或是每句每字，皆用「呬」韻，或皆用「駟」韻等。或把上句的末字，與下句之首字，用同字相接。或在每句的中間用幾層重字，或上句是順讀，下句即是逆讀，或前兩句和後兩句順逆，或初頌與次頌順逆，或一句中半逆半順，或周圍輪轉橫豎隨讀，【一二二】皆成極美妙極深奧的有韻詩詞。那真是千變萬化，形形色色，不一而足。唱歌一事更為普遍流行，鄉間和牧場，男男女女大大小小，幾乎無人不會。其所會唱的不止一兩種，並且皆與佛教教理有很深的關係。我有一年在西康，住在一個施王家裏，晚飯之後主客無事，便令僕役婢媪等齊集唱歌消遣，歌辭我記不清楚，大意是說：「我們的東方有個世界，——名稱忘失——其中有佛名叫金剛薩埵，其身白色，結跏趺坐，頭戴寶冠，遍身瓔珞，身放白光遍法界，能給我們消災延壽遣除諸魔。」又唱「南方世界的寶生佛，身黃色等，乃至能給我們增福增慧增長功德。」又唱「西方世界的無量壽佛，身紅色等，乃至能給我們鈎召十方一切眾生調伏攝化悉得安樂。」又唱「北方及中央的佛並其功德事業等，配和消災，增長，愛敬，降伏等四種羯摩。」又唱「某山雄勢，狀如獅王，其前有寺，廣大無量，內有聖賢，百千萬計，說法利生，永保福昌」等等。老實說，他們的歌詞，除了佛法，好像是沒有材料，唱出來自己也覺着沒味。也沒有人愛聽。由此可見西藏佛法之普遍了。至於西藏的小說，更是好笑，除了大名鼎鼎的格薩王的戰鬥野史外，是沒有看見過一部成篇的世俗小說。就是那部戰鬥史，也是描寫該【一二三】王為興佛法而立志，掃蕩西藏各處不信佛法之散王土司。他與建立佛法的關係更深，西藏人皆說他是觀音菩薩的示現，民間對於他的信仰也非常的深刻，所以他那部——有幾十部之多——野史小說，就是西藏民間最愛讀而且最愛聽的了。還有一種小說，就如像內地唱的戲曲，但是他們所採取的材料，純粹是佛經中，釋迦佛往昔行菩薩道時，捨身喂虎和布施一切財物城邑國土，乃至王位妻子以及自身頭目腦髓等的事跡。他們扮演出來又好看又動人，對於諸佛菩薩的微妙功德也最能表現，其感化民間的信仰力也要以此為最偉大，還有一種小說，就是用譬喻的預言來證顯人事無常名利如幻等的意義，藉此警惕沈溺五欲的顯貴富族，策勵懶惰懈怠的出家僧衆。如郎勤撓絳大師的兔與沙彌喻，和巴主大師的金蜂玉蜂喻，甘孜札公大師的黃雀喻，王臣喻等，皆是此類小說結晶品的代表。至于散說的願文，和廣大的要論，純以佛法為主體，那絕非此處所能具述。

#### 2. 美術

西藏的美術品，種類很多，今且就着雕刻，印鑄，繪畫的方面，略說一點他們雕刻的美術【一二四】品，大的如像丈許高的旃檀佛像，尺碼合法，衣紋細緻，相貌圓滿衆所樂見，這在康藏各處大寺院裏是常時可見到的。其最小的玲瓏雕刻，如在一顆麥粒的上面，刻上個西方三聖，與內地的雕刻匠，在一個戒指上面，刻一段古文的藝術，完全相同。牙刻的觀音和石刻的文殊，無論尺碼大小，全體各部皆很相稱。我在黃教根本道場的格登寺的裏頭，見到的雕刻品很多，尤以宗喀巴大師的上首弟子克主結所刻的集密金剛曼陀羅為最希有了。那座曼陀羅的直徑有五尺多長，上面的宮殿有二尺多寬，宮內有佛像三十餘尊，宮牆的高度和厚量，皆依佛經中所說的尺碼而刻。四門的外面有四座牌樓，樓各有十一級，上頭還有很靈巧的雕刻小鹿，兩鹿中間有一法輪。牌

樓的兩旁有兩個寶瓶，瓶中生一株如意樹，一一樹皆分七枝，上有轉輪聖王御世的七寶。官殿牆上懸掛着米寶瓔珞，瓔珞下端，皆垂着鈴拂等極小巧的雕刻品。牆上週圍有堵堞，一一皆作蓮瓣的形狀。堞內周圍共有十六瓶，瓶中插豎八幡及八尊勝幢。宮殿頂上中間有一經閣，內供集密根本教典，閣上以蓮瓶珠為頂。他那全部的雕刻工程依我的計算，至少也須百日，還未必能夠雕刻得那樣細巧合式。但依據克主結大師的傳【一二五】記上所說，是因為宗喀巴大師示疾，須於一日中能夠刻一座集密曼陀羅，還要即日開光纔能見效。克主結即於一日全能做完，宗喀巴大師的疾病也就示瘥了。這種不可思議的事跡，正與五台山碧山寺藏經樓上所寶藏的經塔事跡相似。格登寺側面的山崖上，亦有克主結一日所刻的四臂觀音，至今香火猶盛。如是在色拉寺和別蚌寺中，亦皆有很多的雕刻品不能一一詳述。印鑄的工藝，西藏也有特長，你要調查他們的印鑄工巧，無論你走到那座寺廟裏，皆能夠給你個很圓滿的印象。例如他們的大殿裏頭，決定有很多的銅佛，並且還有許多很古雅，很有歷史價值的印鑄品。如像唐宋時代的銅塔，各寺皆要保存一兩座的。尤其在別蚌寺的大殿樓上，藏着不下二三百尊又多。惹真佛的寺中更要多上幾倍。桑耶寺，薩迦寺，日俄伽寺，止公寺等皆是唐宋時代的老寺，他那裏頭古銅印鑄品，當然更比別處多了。現在北平五台等處，皆有藏像專店，他們所印鑄出來的佛像，在我們看起來也覺着很好。可是不能與西藏的佛像相比，假若一比，那種尺碼的錯誤和工藝的精粗，實在相差得太遠了。我在昌都的時候，也請了一尊文殊菩薩未加磨擦的銅像，高不過五寸。就在這未加磨擦模型期間，【一二六】其工藝之精美，早已超過北平五台等處已加磨擦的銅像工藝，若再瑩磨之後，那就更不可同日而語了。又如西藏鈴杵，北平等處雖亦造實，但是不能與西藏所請來的相比，非但質料不同，就是那一般的印鑄和瑩磨，及其上所鑄刻的花紋，皆非內地銅匠之所能造，即手飾樓上的銀匠，亦未見能有那樣的精巧細緻。西藏鑄刻一種印泥佛像的銅印，其尺碼雖大小皆有，但如像達賴喇嘛通常所用的度母印，宗喀巴印，阿底峽印，其量皆不出三分。又大威德印，彌勒菩薩印，觀音菩薩印，其量皆不出五分，各各菩薩的衣紋手足，固不待言，就是一一菩薩的眉目口鼻，皆是清晰可見。尤其是大威德像，有九面，三十四臂，十六足，一一足下，各踏一不同樣的生物，并八大天神。一一手中皆持着不同樣的標幟，如槍劍等等。一一面上皆有三目，九面且有忿怒和寂默含笑之別。像這種極細微的印鑄雕刻，更是內地工匠所未夢見過的事實了。西藏繪畫的工藝，這在各處的寺院中即可概見，如幾丈高，或數尺高之繪像，各種衣服的彩色和形狀等，皆須依照儀軌所說而填繪。其工藝之細麗正如內地的工筆畫，不過填彩與尺碼有規定，不同工筆畫的雜亂和任意。北平等處的繪像工巧幾與藏繪相等，唯顏【一二七】料不同，過一二年後，內地所繪的必色變晦暗，藏中所繪的，不但一二年中顏色不變不舊，就是像底的布料腐朽，而顏色的鮮美與新的還是無異。又西藏所繪的各種大曼陀羅，填色尺碼皆能如法。北平所繪的若非自己照料，必是錯誤百出，就是你稍為大意一下，也必繪的不如法不適用。我在北平的時候，常與畫師來往，覺得他們的工藝，實在不如西藏繪師的純熟。西藏更有一種工巧，頗類內地捏麵人的手藝，不過他們不是用麵，是用酥油而捏。他捏酥油的山水人物，各種花卉，及全部的戲劇狀態等，皆能得心應手，畢象畢真。捏法用一片木版為所依靠把配成各種雜色的酥油用手捏成細條或薄片粘貼其上，以此粘貼集合，便構成各種的景物。大的能做三四丈高的花壁，小的能在指甲大小的竹片上做成一種人物，各色的酥油，皆不雜亂，宛如繪成的一樣。惟用酥油做的人物，係鼓起的，臉部手部，皆鼓的與肉體相似，那就比畫的還要好看上幾十倍。西藏正月十五，便是比賽這種美術的歡樂會，圍着大招寺的四邊路上，均皆布滿。達賴看着那一家做的好，也給賞賜，如做的不好，也受處罰，故這種極細緻的工藝，便日漸提高了。我在甘孜的時候，有一位喇嘛，善長這類工巧——大多數皆【一二八】會，唯精粗有別——並且細緻的可愛，有一次新年節，他用了六七天的工夫，代我做了一個小玩藝，就是在寸許見方的一塊木版上，做了一位妙音天女的聖像，天女的靠背是一座山，山前有一株如意樹，花果累累壓枝，天女的兩旁，做上酥油的清溪和草原，溪中有四個小黃雁游泳，一個在前回顧，一個引頸直進，一個洒水露尾，一個登岸長鳴。草原上做了一對小鹿，牝鹿臥地回頭，用後足彈耳，牡鹿立溪邊低頭飲水。天女之前，做成色聲香味觸的五供。天女結蓮花跏趺坐，兩腿纏五色裙，紅綠兩色的腰帶，上身披粉綠紅藍黃的五色天衣，當胸抱着一把琵琶，琵琶的圓鼓放在右腿上用右手彈絃，琵琶的尾斜朝左肩用左手調音，頭部略向右偏。頂冠，耳環，項圈，臂釧，腕鐲，足鐲，瓔珞衆寶，應有盡有。在那塊小木片上，做那種細緻的酥油玩藝，漫說是

捏麵人的不能做，就是第一等的畫師也難畫到那樣精巧。我覺着他那種工藝，真算是西藏的專門獨傳，由此也可想見西藏美術的偉大了。

### 3. 建築

西藏的建築，也不在俗間而在寺廟，西藏雖沒有像我們的萬里長城和黃河鐵橋那樣【一二九】大的建築物。但是像山也似的達賴宮，像三大殿也似的別蚌寺的大佛殿，比前門樓子還高的後藏彌勒殿，也算是很偉大，很壯麗，很可觀的建築品。第一達賴宮，是靠着達賴山陽面的斜坡而建築的，最下的石基，亦有好幾丈的高，再上便是一層一層的重疊上去的宮殿，一直蓋到達賴山頂。簡直把達賴山遍覆了個風雨不透，就連山的度數究竟有多麼高和多麼寬，也令你無法去測量和調查。他那宮殿並非同內地的寺院一樣，到處散蓋些院落和房屋，他是遍山周圍及上下蓋成一個整的，由東面的大門進去，不是左轉登樓便是右側昇梯，前前後後上上下下，不知道有多少殿宇和房間，進了一層又是一層，也有許多處所在辦公，也有許多處所在誦經，更有幾十處佛殿任人朝禮。我的腦筋太簡單，記性太不好，也曾去過好幾次朝佛，可是一進了東大門便要轉向。因為大門的裏頭，也有直徑的大路，又有很寬闊的大樓梯，梯又曲曲折折地有好幾個。我有時隨着同來朝佛的人直進，然後再左拐右繞的上樓。有時又進門便昇梯一二層，又東灣西曲的往各處進香。又有時一直上頂，再轉上幾轉走進去，向右手一拐灣便到了栴檀觀音菩薩殿，然後再時上時下進去又出來的轉着往各殿【一三〇】裏朝禮佛像及金塔，慢慢地到了下層再退出大門，或奔往西門，有時還退出後門。又有一回朝完宮中各殿之後，便竄入一條很長遠很曲折，毫無一點光線的狹巷，向右轉了仍向右轉，盤旋上好幾次才到了宮殿前面下層的尊勝寺，在那裏朝佛之後，又改換一條黑路便走回東門。我去的遍數雖不少，但是沒有走過一回同樣的路。我一進他的大門便要迷失了他的去路。他那宮殿之中大約有幾百間房和百十個佛殿，我們從來沒有走盡過，只是檢着幾處有名的朝一朝，轉回拉薩來吃午飯，若是朝盡恐怕要轉一天多吧。其最有名的佛殿，一便是栴檀觀音殿，中間龕子裏供奉着栴檀觀音，這尊最出名的理【一三一】由很多：第一就是自然生成，非假人工雕刻所造。依着傳記上所說，謂唐代文成公主之夫松贊崗薄王，得某菩薩授記，派人往印度某山栴檀林中，伐斫一樹，樹中共有三尊自然生成的觀音聖像，此即其一也。像高不過三尺，係跏趺像，我在貼金時請下來朝禮過一次；脫却衣冠莊嚴之後，純然一塊天然聖像，實不見有雕刻狀態也。第二就是達賴喇嘛足腫時，此像之足亦腫，從塗金內，浸流清水。達賴之足消腫時，此足亦消腫如常。故西藏各界皆知此像之靈異，共許達賴即觀音菩薩之化身。第三各級官長，如有譴責之事，不得達賴所喜，深恐更出大事，必先往朝禮此像，發願懺悔，改過自新，惟願達賴不降責罰。若能出於真誠信心，沒有不是感應立驗。所以西藏的各級官員，無論高昇下降，必先往朝禮此像供養發願，或叩謝，或懺悔。平民之信仰更勝官家數倍或幾十倍。故此像前之香客，宛如病人之圍醫王，貧民之繞施主，沒有一日不是香客盈門行人如堵。二便是第五代達賴喇嘛之大金塔，高貫五層樓，純以金皮包塔，聞說金皮厚度與象皮相等。其上面所嵌鑲的珠寶，鑽石，珊瑚，琥珀，及那些九睛貓眼，印度松兒石等，皆是世間最希罕最無價的難得寶物。塔中所裝的藏，除達賴之肉身和經書而外，【一三二】傳上說有過去某佛之舍利子一粒，大如馬頭，其餘的舍利子不知道幾千百計。當時的藏王名佛海者，凡聞知某處某寺有歷代之珍藏佛像和他種最貴重之寶物，皆用勢力招來瞻禮，即以瞻禮為名留而不還，盡裝入此大金塔中。故西藏人說，若能朝禮此塔，比朝禮南瞻部洲一切聖跡塔廟的功德，則有過之而無不及。但現在又新建有第十三代的金塔一座，量度比第五代的還要高出尺許，內中裝的藏，能不能與第五代的相比，雖非我所能知。若就外面的裝飾和嵌鑲的珠寶等而論價，那還要勝出第五代的數倍或數十倍也未可知。這座塔的周圍，有真珠一圈，每粒皆比黃豆還大，又有兩三圈九睛貓眼。其餘的珊瑚之類亦皆不在第五代的之下，這種塔廟的建築，幾乎要與皇帝之陵寢相比了。此外還有歷代達賴喇嘛的金塔和各種鑲金的大曼陀羅，並歷代來的一切聖像，皆是指不勝屈，難以盡述。

第二別蚌寺的大佛殿，內中有一百多根柱頭，依着通常的墊子而坐，也能坐六七千人，若擠滿着坐，那就恐怕一萬人也塞不滿。他那四周的牆壁，有一丈多厚，高有七八丈高，上面還有二層樓房，住諸執事，正面的樓房皆是佛殿。進了大殿的門有一橫排柱子上，面蓋覆着【一三三】平頂，再進的兩排柱子，直通出殿頂上層，上層與下層的前面，純係天窗，殿內即由此處射入光線，故殿堂雖大，除四周盡邊上的一兩排外，滿

殿的光線也很充足。殿前有一很寬大很平坦的石板丹墀，上面能坐三四千人。丹墀的前面，乃是十丈高的立壁，純用石頭砌起，令與殿前石基的高矮相等。由是殿前便成了個二十多丈長，十幾丈寬的一個大丹墀了。大殿的後壁前，橫列着一排佛像和許多的大塔。其後壁之後還有一進套間，也是一大排橫的，這些套間皆係佛殿，凡有寶貴的佛像多供在此套間之中。按律部上說，那就是佛住的淨香室了。比這個大殿稍為規模小一點的，別蚌寺中還有四個大殿，每殿中間也有八九十根柱頭——不算外面的走廊和牆壁——大的也能容三四千人誦經，擠滿了也能裝五六千人在內。除此等大殿之外，每一小部分業的院落中，又各各有一座大殿，約有七八十個。大大小小不一致。大的也能容一千多人。除此等大殿以外的僧房，亦多是三層樓——兩層的都很少——我雖沒有切實的調查和統計過，大約總在一萬間以上。像這樣的廣大建築品，就是北平的雍和宮也比不上，別處更屬難找，簡直可以說是沒有吧。

【一三四】第三後藏扎什倫布寺，是西藏最華麗的大寺，聽說他裏頭光說鍍金的殿頂就有十幾處。苦但看寺院的華美富麗，那就比拉薩的三大寺，不知道要壯觀幾倍。現代的班禪大師，特發願在寺內建築成一座慈尊大殿，高有九層，層雖僅九，但每層總在一丈五尺之上，故總計下來大約該有十幾丈高——我沒有去過，只有傳聞——殿內的慈尊是立像，若在下層朝禮僅能看到下半身，不能瞻禮慈尊的慈顏。聽說慈尊的眼目，也有一人長，其像的高大，就可推想而知了。扎什倫布寺除此大殿之外，其餘的佛殿尚多，偉大雄壯絕對不遜於別蚌寺之大殿。尤其是歷代班禪大師的【一三五】塔殿，雖難比第五代與十三代達賴之塔殿，但較之其他的佛殿塔廟，則又勝出多多了。其餘的桑耶寺，薩迦寺，日俄伽寺，拉薩的大昭寺小昭寺，皆是唐朝或宋朝的建築品，若一一的描寫他們，那又未免太麻煩了。

#### 四 重心所在

上來我就兩次進藏所見的和所聞的事實，略略地說了些地理與歷史。稍為詳細地敘述了一點西藏民族的性情，生活，信仰。並及他的軍政，財政，宗教，文化等。但是他們的重心又何在呢？這個問題，雖說是已經敘述的很詳細，早就答覆完了。可是在一般的同胞們看了，恐怕還是識不透吧！我在他們信仰的那一條上，不是詳盡地說了些佛教信仰嗎？我在僧侶的那一段，上不是說了西藏人出家之多嗎？又在政治組織的那一段上，不是說達賴為唯一的主體嗎？又在宗教建立的那一段裏，不是說西藏是教政合一的僧眾參政嗎？尤其是在教育制度那一段裏，不是說了他們的學問都要從僧侶學嗎？這就是說他們的重心是僧眾，僧眾便是他們唯一的信託歸依的人。他們凡事皆以保存佛教維護僧眾為宗旨，他們的大事小【一三六】事皆取決於僧眾。簡直僧眾就是他們各人的性情，家庭，信仰的重心，他們社會和國家的政治，軍事，財政，宗教，教育，文化的重心。換句話說，僧眾就是他們的生命，甚至僧眾比他們的自己的生命還吃緊，還重要。我說僧眾是西藏的重心，這總該不為過分吧？

### 第八章 達賴與班禪

#### 一 關係

當元明兩朝的時代，西藏的佛教算是迦舉等派最盛的時期。但是他們不重戒律，好高騖遠，璣將止法完全隱沒，那時幸有宗喀巴大師應運而出，檢討佛法的正理，糾合各派的錯誤。依據阿底峽尊者的教授為根本，並採取各派所有的優點，總合組織，成一新體系，講說修行，普為弘傳，奔走呼號，不遺餘力，纔將整個的佛教慢慢地復興起來。當時各派中博學多聞知見正確的大德們，也都風起雲湧的來歸從。遂形成富於革命色彩的新迦當派了。

宗喀巴大師的弟子，昇堂入室的很多，內中有一上首弟子名克主結，原係薩迦派中的【一三七】傑出人才，也即是宗喀巴大師圓寂後，繼續法位的第二名。克師示寂後轉生名溫薩巴，再轉生即是第一代班禪善慧法幢大師，為第五代達賴的師長。法幢再世名善慧智大師，即第五代達賴的弟子，而又為六七兩代達賴的師長。再後為班禪吉祥智大師，為七代達賴的弟子，與第二代章嘉佛同時為乾隆皇帝的國師，圓寂在北平黃寺。此後班禪與達賴皆是互為師弟了。雖兩方的手下人生過多次意見和糾紛，然他

們師徒之間實未有異見，達賴的第一代名根敦主巴，在宗大師之弟子中要算是最幼的弟子，彼亦多親近克主結等。然彼常時所依止的師長，即宗大師傳授集密教授的慧獅大師。慧獅依止宗大師受囑付集密後，即携諸弟【一三八】子往後藏宏講，根敦主巴，即弟子之傑出者。慧獅圓寂後，根敦主巴領導學衆途建札什倫布寺，——後藏寺原是達賴建設——廣弘正法。根敦主巴轉世名僧海大師，札什倫布寺衆接來奉養，仍爲寺主。後延往前藏各大寺任住持。第三代福海大師在前藏接任藏王的責任，又往蒙古等處宏法。在青海宗大師誕生之處建塔兒寺，分院講經，幾與拉薩之三大寺相等。大師亦即圓寂在青海。第四代德海大師仍住前藏。第五代則威權普遍前後藏矣。前年去世的第十三代達賴，仍是現在班禪大師之戒師。故他們二人的關係，即是多生多世互爲師生的親誼。

## 二 地位

達賴班禪俱是皇家國師，在全體蒙藏僧侶中，俱佔有最高上的地位。尤其是達賴，皇帝封爲西藏教政之主。凡是西藏佛教之寺院，無論在藏，在康，在青，在甘，在蒙古，在內地，皆由達賴所管轄，皆以達賴爲主人。暫時各寺雖各有主人，但是違犯了教規，達賴皆有驅逐的權衡。如光緒末年達賴到青海時，塔兒寺的主人阿迦胡土克圖，飲酒打獵違犯教規，他雖是同治【一三九】光緒兩個大皇帝的同學，仍被達賴擯逐寺外，另整寺規，不許作非法的事。又如昌都寺的寺主聖天大師，也是滿清時代的國師，八大胡土克圖之一，也因其戒行失檢違犯教規，被達賴一紙訓令，便削職出寺，等於平民了。班禪大師在教務方面的地位，除開達賴一人以外唯他最高，章嘉與結尊蔣巴，真薄諸門罕等皆在他之下。但是他對於各寺院之主權，則沒有達賴那樣大，不過他走到那裏皆被一切人頂戴罷了。

若談到政治，達賴是統領全藏的唯一統治者。就是後藏札什倫布的一切事情，若切實的說起來也是達賴所管。其他的一切政治，軍事，財政，教育，沒有那一處，那一事不該達賴所管理。故我說他是西藏的統治者，這也該不算過分。班禪大師則不是這樣了。唯有吉祥智大師在第七代達賴圓寂之後，曾代理過幾年政治而外，他從來不是過問西藏政治的人，他雖在後藏算是唯一無二的活佛，但是對於後藏的事情，除了一小部份直屬他所管理的以外，其餘的一切後藏地方的政治，仍屬達賴所管。故談到班禪在政治上的地位，那就僅與惹真等的地位相似——臨時或代理幾年政治，並非永歸己有，自己所有的地土，仍是達賴爲主【一四〇】並沒有好大，因此他的下人們不甘心，總想分一些主權管管，所以鬧的兩家不合，這也是班禪出來的根本原因吧！我們內地的人，不明了達賴與班禪在管理西藏的政教上，有這樣大的區別。皆以爲達賴與班禪既然互爲師徒，其地位大概是相等。一個在前藏，一個在後藏，大概管理政治等的主權也是相等。故皆誤爲達賴是前藏之主，班禪是後藏之主，他們二個是並立的。再加上班禪手下人一煽惑，便以爲班禪回藏即可總握全藏的大權。像這樣生盲摸象的論調，我在各種雜誌上不知道看見過多少。我前來已詳細的說破。惟願我們中央當局的人們，以後辦理他們兩家的官司時，須要了知達賴與班禪實際的差別，莫再受他們下人的愚弄了。——他們下人也欺我們不明了達賴班禪之故，往往也自己把自己說得太高，我從前在北平也受過羅桑堪布等的欺騙，到我進藏之後，切實地一調查，才知道他們是個欺騙人的妄語者。——更願我們各雜誌界的同胞們，凡發表一種有價值的言論，須要切實地調查好了再說，不要以耳代目的信口開河。

## 【一四一】

## 第九章 外交政治

## 一 對英國的態度

在光緒三十年以前，西藏對於英人，全認為是不可一日共住的仇敵，英人進藏必被阻礙，封守疆土，不與交通，惟以清皇室為唯一之依托處。即在那年英兵侵藏衝至拉薩，達賴喇嘛及其隨員出亡內地，仍以皇室為所依之處。後達賴回藏，朝廷信納讒言，革除達賴職權，漢兵又衝至拉薩，達賴乃南走印度。達賴臨危而奔仇地，英人不以仇目相睹，反用青眼相顧。由是英藏便有聯絡逐出漢人的思想。革命以後漢兵在藏鬧事繳械被逐，英藏的關係，更是根深蒂固的一天強勝一天了。然達賴本人對於英國，較諸對中央當局似甚淡然。但現今達賴已死，其代理達賴行施法王兼藏王之權者，為其侄熱真呼圖克圖。而藏人以前拒英的思想似皆改換為拒漢的思想。我在前面軍備段中亦曾提及。他們現在，雖也不想把所有的權衡完全歸降付予英國，但他們對於英國的信任，似比對於中央之信任要多得多。他們雖也懷【一四二】着幾分畏懼英人的心理，故用很柔和的手段來應付一切。但這樣地能不能夠維持着久遠下去，那實在是一件很難以判斷的事情。所幸他們的民族思想和僧侶思想，尚傾向於中央政府，不願意歸降邪教思想的英國。除此以外恐怕一切的一切，皆已久屬英人的了。他們對於英國，雖也懷着畏懼心，疑慮心，觀望心。但另一方面也有很深厚的親善心，信任心，師投心。他們對於英國交際的手段，一方面也在自己作主，禁止英人之任意行動。例如前年駐印的英人，進藏放茶藉以調查實在情形，而天人不佑，死在拉薩。英人欲用飛機來接取尸首，西藏當局不許飛機進藏，則仍用騾轎昇回。然另一方面也許英人在藏久住，納彼意見【一四三】聽受撥弄。例如英人亦在拉薩裝設無線電報，西藏當局也不反對，聽其自然以與中央的無線電台抗衡。由這種心理與手段的兩方面觀之，則西藏當局對英國的態度，顯然可見了。

## 二 對中央的態度

西藏當局在前幾年，他覺着我們中央是不會統一的，是沒有實力能敵禦外侮的，是沒有力量能達到西藏的，是沒有心思過問西藏的事的，是不能調解班禪回藏的事的，尤其是他覺着我們中華民族自從反政以來悉皆變成了西洋化，耶教徒，更沒有一點佛法存在。——西康的人這種知見尤甚，他們覺着皇帝是必不可少的，我們連皇帝都打倒不要豈不是西洋的邪見嗎？他們這種錯誤知見很深，任憑你如何開導，他們總是固執不捨——但是近來好多了，他們也知道中央並非都是西洋化耶教徒，信佛的人也很多，中央也能夠統一，也能養成實力等。總之他們也知道內地的政治上軌道，其餘的一切應革應興的事情。都是很容易辦到的。故他們對於中央，現在變成了一種遠遠觀望的眼光，他們也懷着一種內地能夠統一的企望，他們現在有些人也知道內地統一之後仍歸服了中央，比歸服英人要好【一四四】的多。第一就是一家觀念，早就有的，用不着再去從新練習和構造。第二內地無論如何改變，終是一個信佛教的國家，絕不會鬧到全無佛法和全無信佛的人。第三漢藏同是一種黃色的民族，語言方面也有許多互相借用，不像英語那樣生格格格。第四蒙滿民族的佛法，純是西藏的佛法，下至所誦的經文，皆是整個的西藏字，並未改動分毫。第五蒙滿青甘諸省的佛教建築及文化等，多是西藏的佛教建築及其文化。第六西藏三大寺的當權僧眾和有大學問的僧眾，蒙青等處的人很多，他皆有內地為家鄉的觀念。故西藏現在對於中央的態度，是個不親不疏不離不棄，來了命令也有接受也有不接受，不怕又不喜，只是冷冷靜靜地觀望而已。先前更有輕視等的態度，這在我所寫的我去過的西藏拙著中已說的很多，故不再說了。

## 第十章 治理西藏的意見

## 一 過去的治理西藏

【一四五】我在我去過的西藏上，關於過去時治理西藏的事情述說的很詳盡，此書的歷史一段中也說了些。總起在乾隆以後派欽差駐西藏，西藏的實權便歸了皇帝所有。那個駐藏的欽差大人，當然是代表皇帝的，比誰的權都大，又得到西藏全體的頂戴敬信，他們若能夠真實的代皇帝辦事，料想那是不會有失敗的。可是他們拿了俸祿欺壓人，自高自大，藐視一切，不辦事白吃飯還不算數，尙要無事生非的找事做，那豈有不逼人反叛之理呢？過去的大概就是如此吧。

## 二 現在的治理西藏

自從漢兵被逐出西藏以後，西藏便與內地斷絕了關係，甚至有時候還反用軍隊來周旋，那裏還談得上受我們治理呢？我實在很驚異，今天標題用現代的治理西藏，不但被西藏人看見了譏笑，就是外國人看見了恐怕也要笑我的，但是我知道西藏總是我國的版圖。就是中間有幾年，因為國家內憂外患的事故太多，忙不及去整理。但在這未暇整理的期間，就說是治理的不好，這也不見得有什麼可笑？譬如西北諸省，民國以來何嘗有空去整理過他【一四六】們？但是因為他們是我們的版圖，就未暇治理或治理的不好，也可以說治理，而沒有一毫的過錯。民國二十二年十月三十日達賴去世之後，中央便派了黃專使進藏致祭，專使的正責固然是致祭的，想必也兼代着有聯絡感情和其他的責任吧？專使回來之後，在藏也留下了幾位參議常駐那裏辦事。但是他們所辦的事，除了轉轉中央的電報和向西藏當局申述中央的意旨外，恐怕是很清閒沒有事做的，不然西藏當局怎麼到現在還沒有與中央有進一步的聯絡呢？這樣看起來現在的治理方法，除了轉電傳述意旨之外，其餘的還談不上吧？

以後要想把西藏治理好的話，還請對於駐藏的人選要認真一點。我在我去過的西藏那篇文裏第九十兩【一四七】段的尾上附說了許多我個人的意見。究竟是不是要那樣纔辦的好。還須請當局的人們，自己去詳細的籌量，我不過本着「國民天職」盡我個人所知道說出來，貢獻給國人參考。這也就是我寫這篇文章的動機。至於本文中的所有的錯誤和遺漏的地方，那當然是很多，因為我的時間太忙了，所以不能詳細的敘述，希望讀者原諒吧！



## Glossary of Terms

### Appendix: Sanskrit

Sanskrit	Chinese (Pinyin)	Sinographs	Tibetan (Wylie)	English Translation
Abhicāra	<i>xiangfu</i>	降伏	drag po mngon spyod	Subjugation; destructive activity
Abhidharma	<i>Jushe</i>	俱舍	Chos mngon pa	Higher Doctrine; Scholastic Treatises
Amitāyus	<i>Wuliangshou</i>	無量壽	Tshe dpag med	Infinite Life
Avalokiteśvara	<i>Guanzizai Pusa</i>	觀自在菩薩	Spyan ras gzigs	Avalokiteśvara, bodhisattva
Bhikṣu	<i>biqiu</i>	比丘	dge slong	Fully ordained monk
Bindu	<i>kongdian</i>	空點	thig le	Drops
Bodhi	<i>puti</i>	菩提	byang chub	Awakening, Enlightenment
Bodhicitta	<i>putixin</i>	菩提心	byang chub kyi sems	Aspiration for enlightenment
Bodhisattva	<i>pusa</i>	菩薩	byang chub sems dpa'	Enlightenment being; bodhisattva
Brahmavihāra	<i>siwuliang</i>	四無量	tshad med bzhi	Four Immeasurables (meditative states)
Cakrasaṃvara	<i>Shengle Jingang</i>	勝樂金剛	'Khor lo bde mchog	Wheel of Bliss (deity, tantra)
Dāna	<i>bushi</i>	布施	sbyin pa	Giving; generosity
Dharma	<i>Fa</i>	法	chos	Teaching; reality; truth
Dharmapāla	<i>hufashen</i>	護法神	chos skyong	Dharma Protector (deity)
Hetuvidyā	<i>Yinming</i>	因明	gtan tshigs kyi rig pa	Science of Reasoning; Logic
Hīnayāna	<i>Xiaosheng</i>	小乘	Theg chung	Mainstream Vehicle
Homa	<i>humo</i>	護摩	sbyin sregs	Fire offering
Iṣṭadevatā	<i>benzun</i>	本尊	yi dam	Chosen Deity; meditation deity
Jñāpticaturthakarman	<i>baisijiemo</i>	白四羯磨	gsol ba dang bzhi'i las	One Proposal and Three Acts
Karman	<i>jiemo</i>	羯磨	las	Act; procedural norm (Vinaya)
Karuṇā	<i>bei</i>	悲	snying rje	Compassion

Sanskrit	Chinese (Pinyin)	Sinographs	Tibetan (Wylie)	English Translation
Madhyamaka	<i>Zhongguan</i>	中觀	Dbu ma	Middle Way
Mahāyāna	<i>Dasheng</i>	大乘	Theg chen	Great Vehicle
Maitrī	<i>ci</i>	慈	byams pa	Loving-kindness
Mañjuśrī	<i>Wenshushili</i>	文殊師利	'Jam dpal dbyangs	Mañjuśrī, bodhisattva
Māyākāyayoga	<i>huanshen</i>	幻身	sgyu lus	Illusory body
Muditā	<i>xi</i>	喜	dga' ba	Empathetic joy
Nāḍī	<i>mai</i>	脈	rtsa	Channel
Nirmāṇakāya	<i>huashen, hufo</i>	化身, 活佛	sprul sku	Emanation body; Incarnate Lama; Living Buddha
Nirvāṇa	<i>niepan</i>	涅槃	mya ngan las 'das pa	Extinction; cessation
Niṣpannakrama	<i>yuanman cidi</i>	圓滿次第	rdzogs rim	Completion stage
pārājika	<i>boluoyi</i>	波羅夷	phas pham pa	Defeat, infraction
Pauṣṭika	<i>zengzhang</i>	增長	rgyas pa'i las	Augmentation; ritual for prosperity
Prabhāsvara	<i>guangming</i>	光明	'od gsal	Clear light
Prajñāpāramitā	<i>Boreboluomi</i>	般若波羅蜜	Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa	Perfection of Wisdom
Prāṇā	<i>xi</i>	息	rlung	Energy; wind; breath
Pravrajita	<i>chujia</i>	出家	rab tu byung ba	Monastic; one who has left home
Saddharma	<i>Zhengfa</i>	正法	dam pa'i chos	Good Teaching; True Dharma
Śabdavidyā	<i>shengming</i>	聲明	sgra rig pa	Science of Sounds; Sanskrit grammar
Śānticāra	<i>xiaozai</i>	消災	zhi ba'i las	Pacification
Śārīra	<i>shelizi</i>	舍利子	ring bsrel	Relics (after cremation)
Śīla	<i>jie</i>	戒	tshul khirms	Moral discipline; precepts
Śūnyatā	<i>kongxing</i>	空性	stong pa nyid	Emptiness
Siddhi	<i>chengjiu</i>	成就	dngos grub	Attainment; accomplishment
Tārā	<i>dumu</i>	度母	Sgrol ma	Tārā, bodhisattva
Tripitaka	<i>Sanzang</i>	三藏	sde snod gsum	Three Baskets (Buddhist Canon)
Triśikṣā	<i>sanxue</i>	三學	bslab pa gsum	Three Trainings (morality, concentration, wisdom)
Upādhyāya	<i>kanbu</i>	堪布	mkhan po	Senior monk; abbot
Upekṣā	<i>she</i>	捨	btang snyoms	Equanimity
Upoṣadha	<i>busa</i>	布薩	bso sbyong	Fortnightly confession
Utpattikrama	<i>shengqi cidi</i>	生起次第	bskyed rim	Generation Stage
Vajrayāna	<i>Jingangsheng</i>	金剛乘	Rdo rje theg pa	Diamond Vehicle; Thunderbolt Vehicle
Vajrayoginī	<i>Kongxing fomu</i>	空行佛母	Rdo rje rnal 'byor ma	Vajrayoginī
Vaśīkaraṇa	<i>ajing</i>	愛敬	dbang po'i las	Attracting; bringing under control
Vidhi	<i>yigui</i>	儀軌	cho ga	Rite; tantric practice
Vinaya	<i>Lü</i>	律	'Dul ba	Monastic Discipline
Vipaśyanā	<i>guan</i>	觀	lhag mthong	Insight
Yamāntaka	<i>Daweide</i>	大威德	Gshin rje gshed	Yamāntaka; Destroyer of Death
Yogācāra	<i>Weishi</i>	唯識	rnam par rig pa tsam nyid	Consciousness Only

## Appendix: Chinese

Chinese (Pinyin)	Sinographs	Sanskrit	Tibetan (Wylie)	English Translation
Aijing	愛敬	vaśīkaraṇa	dbang po'i las	Attracting; bringing under control
Baisijie	白四羯磨	Jñāpticatorthakarman	gsol ba dang bzhi'i las	One Proposal and Three Acts
Bei	悲	karuṇā	snying rje	Compassion
Benzun	本尊	iṣṭadevatā	yi dam	Chosen Deity; meditation deity
Biqiu	比丘	bhikṣu	dge slong	Fully ordained monk
Boreboluomi	般若波羅蜜	Prajñāpāramitā	Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa	Perfection of Wisdom
Busa	布薩	upośadha	bso sbyong	Fortnightly confession
Bushi	布施	dāna	sbyin pa	Giving; generosity
Chengjiu	成就	siddhi	dngos grub	Attainment; accomplishment
Chujia	出家	pravrajita	rab tu byung ba	Monastic; one who has left home
Ci	慈	maitrī	byams pa	Loving-kindness
Daweide	大威德	Yamāntaka	Gshin rje gshed	Yamāntaka; Destroyer of Death
Dasheng	大乘	Mahāyāna	Theg chen	Great Vehicle
Dumu	度母	Tārā	Sgrol ma	Tārā, bodhisattva
Fa	法	Dharma	chos	Teaching; reality; truth
Guan	觀	vipaśyanā	lhag mthong	Insight
Guangming	光明	prabhāsvara	'od gsal	Clear light
Guanzizai Pusa	觀自在菩薩	Avalokiteśvara	Spyan ras gzigs	Avalokiteśvara, bodhisattva
Huanshen	幻身	māyākāyayoga	sgyu lus	Illusory body
Huashen, hufo	化身, 活佛	nirmāṇakāya	sprul sku	Emanation body; Incarnate Lama; Living Buddha
Humo	護摩	homa	sbyin sregs	Fire offering
Hufashen	護法神	dharmapāla	chos skyong	Dharma Protector (deity)
Jiemo	羯磨	karman	las	Act; procedural norm (Vinaya)
Jie	戒	śīla	tshul khirms	Moral discipline; precepts
Jingangsheng	金剛乘	Vajrayāna	Rdo rje theg pa	Diamond Vehicle; Thunderbolt Vehicle
Jushe	俱舍	Abhidharma	Chos mngon pa	Higher Doctrine; Scholastic Treatises
Kanbu	堪布	upādhyāya	mkhan po	Senior monk; abbot
Kongdian	空點	bindu	thig le	Drops
Kongxing	空性	śūnyatā	stong pa nyid	Emptiness
Kongxing fomu	空行佛母	Vajrayoginī	Rdo rje rnal 'byor ma	Vajrayoginī
Lü	律	Vinaya	'Dul ba	Monastic Discipline
Mai	脈	nāḍī	rtsa	Channel
Niepan	涅槃	nirvāṇa	mya ngan las 'das pa	Extinction; cessation of suffering
Pusa	菩薩	bodhisattva	byang chub sems dpa'	Enlightenment being; Bodhisattva
Puti	菩提	bodhi	byang chub	Enlightenment
Putixin	菩提心	bodhicitta	byang chub kyi sems	Aspiration for enlightenment
Sanzang	三藏	Tripiṭaka	sde snod gsum	Three Baskets (Buddhist Canon)
Sanxue	三學	triśikṣā	bslab pa gsum	Three Trainings (morality, concentration, wisdom)
Shengming	聲明	śabdavidyā	sgra rig pa	Science of Sounds; Sanskrit grammar
Shengqi cidi	生起次第	utpattikrama	bskyed rim	Generation Stage (tantric practice)

## Glossary of Terms

Chinese (Pinyin)	Sinographs	Sanskrit	Tibetan (Wylie)	English Translation
Shengle Jingang	勝樂金剛	Cakrasaṃvara	'Khor lo bde mchog	Wheel of Bliss
Shelizi	舍利子	śārīra	ring bsrel	Relics (after cremation)
She	捨	upekṣā	btang snyoms	Equanimity
Siwuliang	四無量	brahmavihāra	tshad med bzhi	Four Immeasurables
Weishi	唯識	Yogācāra	rnam par rig pa tsam nyid	Consciousness Only
Wenshushili	文殊師利	Mañjuśrī	'Jam dpal dbyangs	Mañjuśrī, bodhisattva
Wuliangshou	無量壽	Amitāyus	Tshe dpag med	Infinite Life
Xi	喜	muditā	dga' ba	Empathetic joy
Xi	息	prāṇā	rlung	Energy; wind; breath
Xiangfu	降伏	abhicāra	drag po mngon spyod	Subjugation; destructive activity
Xiaosheng	小乘	Hīnayāna	Theg chung	Mainstream Vehicle
Xiaozai	消災	śānticāra	zhi ba'i las	Pacification
Yinming	因明	Hetuvidyā	gtan tshigs kyi rig pa	Science of Reasoning; Logic
Yigui	儀軌	vidhi	cho ga	Rite; tantric practice
Yuanman cidi	圓滿次第	niṣpannakrama	rdzogs rim	Completion stage
Zengzhang	增長	pauṣṭika	rgyas pa'i las	Augmentation; ritual for prosperity
Zhengfa	正法	Saddharma	dam pa'i chos	Good Teaching; True Dharma
Zhongguan	中觀	Madhyamaka	Dbu ma	Middle Way

## Appendix: Glossary of Terms (Tibetan)

Tibetan (Wylie)	Sanskrit	Chinese (Pinyin)	Sinographs	English Translation
Bskyed rim	utpattikrama	shengqi cidì	生起次第	Generation Stage (tantric practice)
Bslab pa gsum	triśikṣā	sanxue	三學	Three Trainings (morality, concentration, wisdom)
Bso sbyong	upoṣadha	busa	布薩	Fortnightly confession
Btang snyoms	upekṣā	she	捨	Equanimity
Byang chub	bodhi	puti	菩提	Enlightenment
Byang chub kyi sems	bodhicitta	putixin	菩提心	Aspiration for enlightenment
Byang chub sems Dpa'	bodhisattva	pusa	菩薩	Enlightenment being; Bodhisattva
Cho ga	vidhi	yigui	儀軌	Rite; tantric practice
Chos	Dharma	Fa	法	Teaching; reality; truth
Chos mngon pa	Abhidharma	Jushe	俱舍	Higher Doctrine; Scholastic Treatises
Chos skyong	dharmapāla	hufashen	護法神	Dharma Protector (deity)
Dga' ba	muditā	xi	喜	Empathetic joy
Dam pa'i chos	Saddharma	Zhengfa	正法	Good Teaching; True Dharma
Dbang po'i las	vaśīkaraṇa	aijing	愛敬	Attracting; bringing under control
Dge slong	bhikṣu	bi qiu	比丘	Fully ordained monk
Dbu ma	Madhyamaka	Zhongguan	中觀	Middle Way
Dngos grub	siddhi	chengjiu	成就	Attainment; accomplishment
Drag po mngon spyod	abhicāra	xiangfu	降伏	Subjugation; destructive activity
Gshin rje gshed	Yamāntaka	Daweide	大威德	Yamāntaka; Destroyer of Death
Gtan tshigs kyi rig pa	Hetuvidyā	Yinming	因明	Science of Reasoning; Logic
Gsol ba dang bzhi'i las	Jñaptacaturthakarman	baisijiemo	白四羯磨	One Proposal and Three Acts
'Jam dpal dbyangs	Mañjuśrī	Wenshushili	文殊師利	Mañjuśrī, bodhisattva
Las	karman	jiemo	羯磨	Act; procedural norm (Vinaya)
Lhag mthong	vipaśyanā	guan	觀	Insight
Mkhan po	upādhyāya	kanbu	堪布	Senior monk; abbot; authorized to ordain
Mya ngan las 'das pa	nirvāṇa	niepan	涅槃	Extinction; cessation of suffering
Nirmāṇakāya	nirmāṇakāya	huashen, huofu	化身, 活佛	Emanation body; Incarnate Lama; Living Buddha
'Od gsal	prabhāsvara	guangming	光明	Clear light
Phas pham pa	pārājika	boluoyi	波羅夷	Defeat, infraction
Rlung	prāṇā	xi	息	Energy; wind; breath

## Glossary of Terms

Tibetan (Wylie)	Sanskrit	Chinese (Pinyin)	Sinographs	English Translation
Rab tu byung ba	pravrajita	chujia	出家	Monastic; one who has left home
Rgyas pa'i las	pauṣṭika	zengzhang	增長	Augmentation; ritual for prosperity
Rdo rje rnal 'byor ma	Vajrayoginī	Kongxing fomu	空行佛母	Vajrayoginī
Rdo rje theg pa	Vajrayāna	Jingangsheng	金剛乘	Diamond Vehicle; Thunderbolt Vehicle
Ring bsrel	śārīra	shelizi	舍利子	Relics (after cremation)
Rnam par rig pa tsam nyid	Yogācāra	Weishi	唯識	Consciousness Only
Rtsa	nāḍī	mai	脈	Channel
Rdzogs rim	niṣpannakrama	yuanman cidi	圓滿次第	Completion stage
Sde snod gsum	Tripiṭaka	Sanzang	三藏	Three Baskets (Buddhist Canon)
Sgrol ma	Tārā	dumu	度母	Tārā, bodhisattva
Sgyu lus	māyākāyayoga	huanshen	幻身	Illusory body
Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa	Prajñāpāramitā	Boreboluomi	般若波羅蜜	Perfection of Wisdom
Sgra rig pa	śabdavidyā	shengming	聲明	Science of Sounds; Sanskrit grammar
Sbyin pa	dāna	bushi	布施	Giving; generosity
Sbyin sregs	homa	humo	護摩	Fire offering
Snying rje	karuṇā	bei	悲	Compassion
Spyan ras gzigs	Avalokiteśvara	Guanzizai Pusa / Guanyin Pusa	觀自在菩薩 / 觀音菩薩	Avalokiteśvara, bodhisattva
Sprul sku	nirmāṇakāya	huashen, huofu	化身, 活佛	Emanation body; Incarnate Lama; Living Buddha
Stong pa nyid	śūnyatā	kongxing	空性	Emptiness
Tshe dpag med	Amitāyus	Wuliangshou	無量壽	Infinite Life
Tshad med bzhi	brahmavihāra	siwuliang	四無量	Four Immeasurables (meditative states)
Theg chen	Mahāyāna	Dasheng	大乘	Great Vehicle
Theg chung	Hīnayāna	Xiaosheng	小乘	Mainstream Vehicle
Thig le	bindu	kongdian	空點	Drops
Tshul khriims	śīla	jie	戒	Moral discipline; precepts
'Khor lo bde mchog	Cakrasaṃvara	Shengle Jingang	勝樂金剛	Wheel of Bliss (deity, tantra)
'Dul ba	Vinaya	Lü	律	Monastic Discipline
Yi dam	iṣṭadevatā	benzun	本尊	Chosen Deity; meditation deity
Zhi ba'i las	śānticāra	xiaozai	消災	Pacification

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## Maestri, testi e fonti d'Oriente

### Masters, Texts and Sources of the East

1. Vesco, Silvia (2020). *Spontanea maestria Il "Ryakuga haya oshie" 略画早指南 di Katsushika Hokusai.*
2. Rigopoulos, Antonio (2020). *Oral Testimonies on Sai Baba As Gathered During a Field Research in Shirdi and Other Locales in October-November 1985.*
3. De Gruttola, Raissa (2023). *I francescani cinesi e la traduzione della Bibbia. Con traduzione di "Huainian Liu Xutang shenfu" e testo cinese a fronte.*
4. Zilio-Grandi, Ida (2025). *The Virtues of the Good Muslim.*
5. Shankar, Jishnu (2025). अघोराचार्य कीनाराम और उनका विवेकसार | *Aghor Master Kinaram and His Viveksār.*



In 1925, a young Chinese monk named Fazun set out from Beijing for Tibet. He traveled on foot and by mule, across frozen mountains and through regions plagued by bandits. He would not return for a decade. Published in Chongqing in 1937, *Xiandai Xizang* (Modern Tibet) is the first eyewitness account of Tibet's religious and political institutions written by a Chinese monk who had lived among its masters. This volume presents its first English translation. Dr. Dibeltulo Concu's introduction traces the posthumous remaking of Fazun's image in the People's Republic into a symbol of national Buddhist unity, a retelling in which his Tibetan teachers quietly vanish. By restoring their voices, this study recasts Fazun not as a solitary genius, but as a man shaped by relationships forged at the living heart of modern Tibet.

**Martino Dibeltulo Concu**, Ph.D., is a cultural and intellectual historian of Buddhism. His main area of expertise is the history and historiography of Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist relations. His current projects include the translation of the work of Chinese Buddhist monk Fazun (1902-1980) and the study of the modern incorporation of China into the global flow of European ideas about the Buddha. He lives in Sardinia, Italy, where he teaches Chinese Language and Culture at the Lyceum and runs his own meditation studio.



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