

THE LDE'U CHRONICLES: JO SRAS

Source

Chos 'byung chen mo bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan. 1987. Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang.
TBRC: W20831

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EXTRACTS

The royal genealogies

In the account of the historic kings is a description of the activities of Nyatri Tsenpo (gNya' khri btsan po).

[p. 102]

དེ་ནས་ཕྱིར་བ་སྟག་ཅེས་བྱོན་ཏེ་དར་དཀར་གྱི་ཡོལ་བ་དགུ་རིམ་བཞུགས་ནས། ལྷའི་སྐུ་ཡ་རབས་རྩམས་ཀྱིས་བསྐོར་ནས། གཙུག་ལག་གི་ཐང་བྱིས་མ་འཛིན་ལུགས་སྦྱང་དང་ལྷེན་ཅོང་མེ་བྱང་། དགོངས་པ་འདུལ་གྱི་རས་ཆགས་པས། གསང་གོས་རྩམ་གསུམ་གྱིས་ཕྱི་ནང་གི་དམིགས་ལྷོ་མི་ལ་ཆད་རྩམ་གཉིས་དང་བཞིན་རྩམ་ལྲས་བོད་གྱི་བྱིས་མ་བཙས་ཡིག་ཚང་ལྷེ་དགུ་དང་དཔའ་མཚན་རྩམ་བརྒྱད་བཀའ་རིམ་པར་གནང་ཏེ། ཇོ་མ་བྱུ་སྤོང་ན་མཐའ་བཞིའ་རྒྱལ་པོ་བཞི་ཡང་དཔུ་འབུལ་ལོ།

Then he (Nyatri Tsenpo) went to Tiger Peak in Phying ba and acquired nine layers of white silk drapes. The nobility wrapped them around the noble (king's) body (*bla'i sku*).¹ In the law (*thang khrims*) of ancient tradition (*gtsug lag*) the deity legends (*lha'i lugs sgrung*) and riddles (*lde'u*) were manifest. When [his] thoughts turned towards the magical cloth (*'phrul gyi ras chags*), three secret pieces of advice opened [his] eyes to inner and outer [affairs]. Through two

¹ This phrase is very obscure. It is possible that *bla* refers to officials (cf. Dotson), in which case the officials would be wrapping the drapes around their excellent bodies. The *sku bla* is also a deity associated with the emperor in Old Tibetan sources (Hill 2015).

decisions and five proclamations, given in a series of oral edicts, he gave to the people the nine insignia of rank (*yig tshang*)² of the newly-established laws of Tibet and the eight characteristics of heroes (*dpa' mtshan*).³ In the wider world, he offered taxation [powers] to the four kings of the four borders.

The activities of Songtsen Gampo

After describing his birth and ascent to the throne, the Khotanese monks are briefly mentioned: they received a prophecy from Songtsen Gampo, as the emanation of Avalokiteśvara (*sPyan ras gzigs*) (p. 108).

The king's ministers are listed, along with the fact that he took queens from China, Nepal, and Zhang Zhung (pp. 108–09).

There is then an outline of the administrative measures introduced by Songtsen Gampo. These include:

[p. 109]

ཁྱེད་ཀྱི་དགེ་བ་བྱུང་པར་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ལམ་བཟང་ལོ་ལྔ་ལྟར་བཞུགས་པའོ།

The five types of law that bound Tibet.

And:

[p. 110]

མི་ཚོས་བརྟུག་གིས་སྤྱོད་ལམ་གྱི་གཞི་བཟང་། ལྔ་ཚོས་དགེ་བ་བརྟུག་ལ་དོན་གྱི་དབེ་བླངས། ལྷན་གྱི་དགེ་བ་བྱུང་པར་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ལམ་བཟང་ལོ་ལྔ་ལྟར་བཞུགས་པའོ།

Ways of behaving according to the sixteen human customs (*mi chos bcu drug*) were established.

The ten virtues of the divine customs (*lha chos dge ba bcu*) were used as a model. Through encouragement of the practice of the bodily virtues, a path to the higher realms and to liberation was demonstrated.

The text continues with further detail on the four horns, the watch posts, the subjects and ministers, the *che* (ministers), the heroes, the clans and territories, workers, rulers, herdsmen, and traders (pp. 110–13).

It describes five kinds of laws:

[p. 113]

ཁྱེད་ཀྱི་དགེ་བ་བྱུང་པར་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ལམ་བཟང་ལོ་ལྔ་ལྟར་བཞུགས་པའོ། མི་ཚོས་བརྟུག་གིས་སྤྱོད་ལམ་གྱི་གཞི་བཟང་། ལྔ་ཚོས་དགེ་བ་བརྟུག་ལ་དོན་གྱི་དབེ་བླངས། ལྷན་གྱི་དགེ་བ་བྱུང་པར་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ལམ་བཟང་ལོ་ལྔ་ལྟར་བཞུགས་པའོ།

² This phrase appears in *lDe'u* (p. 263/ p. 166).

³ This phrase appears in *KhG* (p. 191), where there are six, while in *lDe'u* (1987, p. 271) there are six *dpa' rtags*.

Concerning the five kinds of laws: on the orders of the lord, there was a general law to create divisions of power; by attending to the conduct of the four appointed kings, a law was modelled on the kingdom; on the basis of the *Bod kyi thang yig chen po*, the legal code of 'Bum gser thang sha ba can was created; on the basis of the poverty that is hard to overcome the law for controlling wild people was created; on the basis of the *'Dzangs pa 'phrul lcags*, a decision was made at the request of the mDo blon,⁴ making five.

The text then describes five kinds of statutes (zhal mchu) (concerning strongholds, livelihoods, wealth, men, and ritual specialists and monks). It lists five kinds of soldiers and six types of armour.

Then:

[p. 113–14]

ཁོ་མོ་མཉམ་སྐྱེས་བུ་རྒྱལ་ལ་རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཁོ་མོ་མཉམ་སྐྱེས་ལ་བསྐྱོད་པ་ལ་གསུམ། ལྷན་པ་གསུམ། མཛད་པ་གསུམ། མི་མཛད་པ་གསུམ་ལ་སྐོན་པོའི་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་ནི། ཡ་
རབས་དང་འདུ་ལོན་གྱི་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་དང་ཡིག་ཚང་བསྐྱོན། མ་རབས་གཡུ་པོའི་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་དྲི་བོ་བོན་ཟེར་དང་ཐགས་བསྐྱོན། འཛངས་པོའི་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་ཡིག་ཚང་དན་པོའི་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་རྒྱ།
དཔའ་བོའི་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་གུང་རྒྱལ་ལྷན་ལྷན་མཉམ་སྐྱེས་རྒྱུ་རྒྱ་དོན་བསྐྱོན་སོ།

Within the thirty-six legal codes there were twelve royal laws, consisting of three praises, three shames, three deeds, three non-deeds, and so on. As regards the six superior *rkyen* (qualities): religion (*chos*) and insignia were established as the indications (*rkyen*)⁵ of nobility and the ministerial aristocracy; the saying of oaths⁶ and *thags* were established as the indications of the lower classes; texts were established as the indications of the wise; the tiger seal was established as the indication of the *dan pa*; the leopard [and] tiger were established as the indications of the brave; the fox and the bear⁷ were established as the indications of the cowardly.

The text continues with the four kinds of pleasure and the seven and a half wise men (pp. 114–15). It concludes:

[p. 115]

དེ་ནས་རྒྱལ་པོས་ཚོ་སྣང་ལ་ཚོས་གྱི་རྒྱལ་པོའི་ས་བབ་ནས་ཚོས་ཁོ་མོ་མཉམ་སྐྱེས་ལ་བསྐྱོད་དེ།

Then, in the latter part of his life, the king achieved the status of *dharmarāja* and promoted the traditions of the religious law.

⁴ The equivalent passage in *IDe'u* is *mDo lon zhu gcod kyi zhal lce*, suggesting a summary of what is offered and received, that is, the evidence (see the *IDe'u* extracts, at p. 8).

⁵ This is to read *ryen* as a metonymy, referring both to the quality, itself, and to the markers of those who possess that quality.

⁶ *bro bor* for *bro bon*.

⁷ *wa dom* for *lba dom*.

