DEB THER DMAR PO

The Red Annals

INTRODUCTION

The author, Tsalpa Kunga Dorjé (Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje, 1309–1364), was a member of the Tsalpa (Tshal pa) family, who were powerful in Central Tibet before the rise of the Lang (rLangs) family. The Lang leader, Ta'i Situ Jangchub Gyaltsen ('Byang chub rgyal mtshan) (1302–1364) was effectively ruler of central Tibet after 1354. Kunga Dorjé spent a considerable amount of time in the Mongols' Yuan dynasty court, going there first at a young age, in 1324. His father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had all served in the Yuan court. In his final years Kunga Dorjé entered monastic life in Tibet. He began writing *The Red Annals* in 1346 and completed it in 1363.

The work itself has been described as 'the earliest extant Tibetan example of an attempt at writing a global history' (van der Kuijp 1996: 44) and as 'an important source on Buddhism under the Mongol Yuan dynasty as viewed by a learned Tibetan monk' (Franke 1990: 37).

Sources

The edition generally used by current scholars was published in Beijing in 1981, with extensive notes in Tibetan by Dungkar Lozang Trinlé (Dung dkar blo bzang phrin las). In the introduction he states that nine examples of the text were known at the time of publication. Although written in Tibetan, the title of the work was originally *Hu lan deb ther*, a transcription of the Mongolian title.

It has been suggested that some parts of the text are later additions (Petech 1990: 2; Gamble 2014, Appendix 2).

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OUTLINE

In the 1981 edition the text is arranged into 26 chapters (over 150 pages). The first nine chapters concern the origins of the world, the life and teachings of the Buddha, continuing with accounts of royal lineages (*rgyal rabs*) of India, China, Xi-Xia (Tangut), Mongolia, and Tibet. The middle section deals with the history of the diffusion of Buddhism in Tibet. Later chapters are dedicated to individual sects of Tibetan Buddhism: Sakya (Sa skya), Kadampa (bKa' gdams pa), and Kagyu (bKa' brguyd). The final chapter concerns an edict issued by Temür Qan (1295–1307).

EXTRACTS

The page numbers below refer to the 1981 Beijing edition and use the chapter headings in that edition.

The author, Tsalpa Kunga Dorjé, begins with his own background.

[pp. 1-2]

 $\begin{array}{l} & \forall e_{1}, e_{2}, e_{3}, e_{4}, e_{5}, e_{5$

At the age of 17, in the wood ox year [1324], I came before the emperor of the Yuan royal lineage, Ye sun the'i mur. [There I] received large quantities of silver, a silver seal, golden ornaments, and many sorts of silk clothing, together with an edict ('ja' sa), which specified all the powerful men of the Tshal pa family.

Chapter Five: Translations of Tang Chinese sources on Tibet

One story concerns a queen named Wu san.

[p. 20]

त्वर-बु-र-ट्र-वाकूट-तपु-क्रिन-क्रुट्-तया क्रुपु-प्रस्ता व्याप्ता विकास विकास स्वाप्ता विकास स्वाप्ता स्वापता स्वाप्ता स्वापता स्व

Subsequently, when she was older, the Tang dynasty ceased. She was appointed under the name Wu san. At a gathering of many people, it was briefly asked whether it was right to have appointed Wu san. When they said it was not right, an edict was issued for the execution of the queen.

Chapter Nine: The Tibetan royal lineage

This section concerning Songtsen Gampo (Srong brtsan sgam po) recounts the way in which he founded temples in Tibet. It lists ministers and religious teachers from India and elsewhere and describes the translation of religious texts.

[p. 35–36]

Thon mi [sam bho ta] created the Tibetan letters, using the Indian letters as an example. [The king] made laws based on the ten virtues (*dge bcu'i khrims bcas*) and introduced the practices (*srol*) of the sixteen pure human customs (*mi chos gtsang ma*) for the Tibetan people. Tibet was divided into four *stong sde* (thousand communities).

Chapter Twenty-Three: The history of the Karma Kagyu

After passages on the First and Second Karmapas, the chapter continues with an account of the activities of the Third Karmapa (1284–1339).

[p. 101]

'' वित्यान्त्र प्राप्तान्त्र मेन्यान्त्र क्ष्यां स्थान्त्र क्ष्यां स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र क्ष्यां स्थान्त्र स्यान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्य स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्यान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्य स्यान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्थान्त्र स्य

In accordance with the prediction, on the invitation of the eastern king Thog thi mu,¹ he was offered a *mgon po tshal ching* edict (*'ja' sa*). Having received the golden seal of Karma Pakshi, and taking it with him, he went to dBus in the seventh month of the sheep year.²

[p. 102]

 $^{^{1}}$ Dung-dkar (1981: 418, n. 483) states that this king was the tenth in the Yuan lineage and ruled from 1328 to 1331.

² This would be 1331.

क्र्याच्यायाः वर्षाः व

An edict (*dam kha*) was issue by Gushri in the name of the Karmapa, known as the one who has realized the emptiness of all phenomena, with a crystal seal and a travelling pass.³

Later, the Third Karmapa is concerned with religious practices and fallacies (*skyon*), which need to be put right. He issues an edict in this regard:

[p. 105]

कु.क्ष.८४.वोष.जा.पर्ट्य.पहरा.बा.ब्रीवोबा.घषबा.कट.२.टा.चश्चेवोबा

Wherever it was read out, an edict ('ja' sa) was proclaimed in all directions.

The chapter continues (from p. 108) with the activities of the Fourth Karmapa (1340–1386). It describes how, as a child and teenager, he completes his education in Central Tibet, and at nineteen years old is invited to the Yuan court by the last emperor of the dynasty, Toghun Temür (r. 1333–1368). The emperor is delighted to renew his relationship with a reincarnation of his former teacher.

[p. 111]

हुच .ताग्रुम. हो.ताञ्चा प्रस्था हो.ताश्चमा गूजासम्प्रती .व्याचियासमा गूस्या होता. ह्या. स्था. हुच. पश्चा होता. ह्या. ह्य

All the philosophers asked him to stay.⁴ The emperor (*gong ma*) put his hands together and shed tears. He gave [the Fourth Karmapa] a poetically written letter ('*ja' sa*) of invitation to stay, in Tibetan script, along with three gifts: a *bre* of gold, three *bre* of silver, and nine rolls of silk cloth.

The chapter describes how the Fourth Karmapa travels around and is invited to many places, being offered gold, silver, and silk cloth.

[p. 118]

हुतु. दीट. टी.सीला पटियो वाटिया पट्ट्या तापुरी वायो पटिर ग्रीया परिय में साथ या या पटिया पटिया यो पटिया या पटिया पटिया प्रस्था पटिया पटिया

At Shing kun, bLa ma 'jam dbyangs said that he would not welcome the officials (*gser yig pa*) if the army was likely to cause harm to sentient beings. Nevertheless, he said that if a 'ja' sa arrived in a peaceful manner, he would accept the difficulties of the invitation. A 'ja' sa of invitation issued by Kar ma lha sding, brought by the 'ja' protectors themselves, was offered to the dharma

³ This may be what was known as a *paiza*, after the Chinese term.

⁴ The meaning of *gtam kin* is obscure.

lord [the Fourth Karmapa].

[p. 119]

क्रिया अक्षयं त्योयन्ता चित्रस्य स्वास्त्रेत्रस्य स्वास्त्रस्य स्वास्त

The dharma lord himself [the Fourth Karmapa] was given the crystal seal of Thu lu shri skya'o ta'o gu shri. He requested a crystal edict (*shel 'ja' sa*) for the release of prisoners and the commanders were given banners with auspicious symbols on them, in order to make [the edict] known in Tibet.⁵

Chapter Twenty-Four: concerning the Pagmodru (Phag mo gru) and Drigung Kagyu ('Bri gung bka' brgyud).

This chapter describes the activities of the Phagmodru leader, Ta'i Situ Jangchub Gyaltsen. There are references to 'ja' sa (edicts) confirming official appointments, such as that of *khri dpon* (head of one of the major Tibetan districts). It continues with a synopsis of Drigung Kagyu history, ending with a brief description of the life of Lha Rinchen Gyalpo (Lha rin chen rgyal po) in the fourteenth century.

[p. 126] ড্রাম্বি'ল্বির'মম্প্রার্নের্ন্বামান্যমান্ত্রামান্তর্কালীস্কান্তরকনান্তরি'ন্মলা'শ্বরি'লার্ক্রন্নান্ত্রামান্তরমান্তরকালীসকলে ক্রিন্তর্বা

When he [Lha Rinchen Gyalpo] was staying at his uncle's place at lHa nang, he was harmed by the vanguard of the army, which disregarded the royal law (*rgyal khrims*), so he went to sKyi smad.

Chapter Twenty-Five: concerning the Tsalpa Kagyu.

The chapter describes the activities of Zhang Rinpoche (1123–1193), founder of the Tsalpa Kagyu. He establishes monasteries at Tsalpa in 1173 and at Gungtang (Gung thang) in 1187. He also commissions the large IHa chen dpal 'bar statue of Śākyamuni at Tsal Gungtang. The author extols Lama Zhang's spiritual achievements and qualities, with no mention of his violence.

[p. 128] অনুব-দুন-ট্রেমম-মর্ল্

He [bLa ma Zhang] established the yoke (gnya') and the royal law (rgyal khrims).

⁵ Czaja (2013: 171, n. 193) interprets this as referring to a general amnesty that Rol pa'i rdo rje requested from the Chinese emperor in 1361, which was then publicly proclaimed in Tibet.

Chapter Twenty-Six: An edict ('ja' sa) from the time of the emperor Öljeitü (Ol ja thu) of the Yuan royal lineage concerning an increase in the clerical authority bestowed on the monks of Tibet.

This chapter describes an edict made in 1297 by the Yuan emperor, Öljeitü (Ol ja thu), also known as Temür (r. 1294–1307).

[pp. 149]

ट्यतो.शु.स्थयात्तो क्यं.ताक्यं.ताषु भयं.तास्थयत्ता शु.हो.थट.तालायू.ट्यत्यो.चं.ट्यत्यो.वीट.तालायू.स्थ्यात्ता क्यं.तास्यात्त्राची क्षेत्रत्यास्यात्त्राची क्षेत्रत्यात्त्राची क्षेत्रत्यात्र्यात्त्राची क्षेत्रत्यात्र्यात्त्राची क्षेत्रत्यात्र्यात्त्राची क्षेत्रत्यात्र्यात्त्राची क्षेत्रत्यात्र्यात्त्राची क्षेत्रत्यात्राची क्षेत्रत्यात्र्यात्त्राची क्षेत्रत्यात्राची कष्यात्रत्यात्रत्यात्राची कष्यात्रत्य

During their reign of King Ol ja thu, under the inherent authority of everlasting heaven and from an abundance of great merit, our king's edict [was pronounced as follows]:

To the chief administrator of the Central Secretariat (*hrung shu zhing*); the officials of the Board of Military Affairs (*chu mi dben*); the officers of the Censorate (*g.yu shri tha*); the officers of the Branch Secretariats (*hying dzu shri*) and the Branch Censorates (*hying g.yu'i shri tha*); the officers of the Surveillance Bureau (*gle hwong si*); the city governors and the regional protectors; the army commanders and the army personnel; the elders of the various communities: this edict is to be made known to many people.⁶

[p.150]

ष्ट्रन्यकाराषुः ट्र्यं कार्ट्र-क्रिकार्ट्या विकार्यको विकार्यत्वा विकार्यको स्ट्रियं क्षात्रात्वा स्ट्रियं क्षात्रात्वा विकार्यको विकार्

The King Jing gis (Chinggis Qan) and the King O go ta (Ögodei Qan) are said to have directed that tax, military conscription, and labour obligations are not to be imposed on any monks who follow the doctrinal tradition of $\hat{Sakyamuni}$, so that [they] may make religious offerings and say prayers.

As King Se chen (Qubilai Qan) was devoted to the Three Jewels, he also caused the doctrine of the Buddha Śākyamuni to spread throughout the world. Although he told people to pray and

⁶ The bureaucratic terms in this passage are transcriptions of Chinese terms, with tentative translations based on Bira (1964) and Schuh (1977).

perform rituals for him, because people appointed elsewhere as city officials (*mkhar mig*) and community leaders did not understand, they flouted the inherent authority of the temples and monasteries and they will flout the inherent authority of the monks. In the circumstances, the leaders responsible for the people, and the mass of people should follow the doctrinal tradition of Śākyamuni. The inherent authority of the monks should not be flouted, the inherent authority of the temples and monasteries should not be flouted, and they should be honoured.

[p. 150–51]

ट्टे.क्य.जिर.सूर्योह्.क्षेर.क्टेटे.ट्टे.ग्रीक.क्र्.तय्यक्टेट.तालुयी ट्टे.ग्री.तहर्य.क्ष.पट्टेटे.ब्र.स्टेट्टे.ब्र.स्टक्टट्य.ग्री.क्षेट.क्य.क्षेट.क्य.क्षेट.क्य.क्षेट.क्य.क्षेट.क्य.क्षेट.क्य.क्षेट.क्षेट्ट.व्य.क्षेट.क्य.क्षेट

In order to ensure that the monks were honoured, during the reign of King Se chen (Qubilai Qan), when a certain wicked city-dweller assaulted an ordained Buddhist monk, he was prosecuted for the fault. From now on, if a lay person so much as touches a Tibetan monk, his hand is to be cut off; if he touches him verbally, his tongue is to be torn out. Once this edict ('ja' sa) has been proclaimed, people who do not respect the monks and flout the inherent authority of the temples and monasteries, wherever they may be, should be seized by appointed officials or senior monks, and they must be brought before me. This is to be understood.

This is my edict, made on the twenty-eighth day of the last month of spring in the bird year [1297], at Shang to.