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目 录

敦煌藏文文书 P.t.1077《都督为女奴事诉状》研究	陆离 / 1
英、法所藏敦煌古藏文中观文献分类及其特点研究	仁青吉 / 17
吐蕃时期《维摩诘所说经》汉藏译本对比	杨本加 / 32
拉萨小昭寺源流考	刘凤强 / 44
从夏扎·旺秋杰布的《桑耶寺志》探析桑耶寺修缮的历史	龙珠多杰 崔宇 / 55
十力吉祥友及其《有为无为抉择》的时代简注(英文).....	范德康 / 67
拶也阿难捺和贡却僧格生平考补(英文)	聂鸿音 / 74
雍增·益希坚赞所造《一世班禅大师克主杰传记》译考	夏吾李加 还格吉 / 86
有关班禅世系研究的概述	李若虹 / 126
宝相楼一楼明间唐卡研究	文明 / 148
西藏牦牛博物馆馆藏铁柄牦牛纹铜镜及相关问题考	薛江 / 173
新发现的清代噶伦索康·斯觉次旦传记写本考述	永中久美 / 190

《卫藏图识》作者、材料来源及文献价值考述	杨学东 / 205
19 世纪中叶法国巴黎外方会早期进藏活动史考	刘瑞云 孙蕊 / 216
对几种外文藏文教材的评介——兼论古典藏文教学	马洲洋 / 243

译文

吐蕃王室世系、王位继承以及政治联姻研究

..... [美] 杜晓峰 著、张旭 武显云 译、杨铭 校 / 271

吐蕃禅宗：一个遗失传统的发现

..... [英] 沙木·冯·谢克 著、牛宏 寇金花 译、张长虹 校 / 288

斯比提岩画概述

..... [美] 约翰·文森特·贝勒扎 著、永保藏 译 / 307

嵌史入石——拉达克早期佛教石刻艺术

..... [德] 平措多杰 著、张中亚 译 / 332

摘 要

/ 355

Table of Contents

A Study of Dunhuang Manuscript P.t. 1077: A Statement of the Claim Concerning To tog's Female Slave <i>LU Li</i>	1
A Discussion of the Classification in the Dunhuang Tibetan Documents of <i>Madhyamaka</i> and its Features Based on the Tibetan Collections of the French National Library and the British Library <i>Renqing Ji</i>	17
A Comparison of the Chinese and Tibetan Versions of the <i>Vimalakīrti sūtra</i> during the Tubo Period <i>Yangben Jia</i>	32
A Study of the Origin of the Ra mo che in Lhasa <i>LIU Fengqiang</i>	44
A Study of the History of the Restoration of Bsam yas Monastery Based on Bshad sgra Dbang phyug rgyal po's <i>Bsam yas Annals</i> <i>Lhun grub rdo rje and CUI Yu</i>	55
A Brief Note on the Date of Daśabalaśrīmitra and his <i>Samṣkṛtāsamṣkṛtaviniścaya</i> <i>Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp</i>	67
Complementary Notes on the Biography of Jayānanda and Dkon mchog seng ge <i>NIE Hongyin</i>	74

An Annotated Translation of the Biography of the first Paṅ chen Lama Mkhas grub Dge legs dpal bzang po (1385-1438) <i>Sha bo klu rgyal and Dpa' mkhar skyid</i>	86
Overview of Research and Publications on the Paṅ chen Lamas <i>LI Ruohong</i>	126
A Study of the Thangkas in the Main Hall of the First Floor of the Baoxianglou <i>WEN Ming</i>	148
A Yak-Pattern Bronze Mirror with an Iron Handle Housed in the Yak Museum of Tibet and Related Issues <i>XUE Jiang</i>	173
A Newly Discovered Manuscript of the Biography of Bka' blon Zur khang Sri gcod tshe brtan (1766-1820) <i>Gyung drung 'gyur med</i>	190
A Study of the Author, Sources and Value of the Book <i>Weizang tuzhi</i> <i>YANG Xuedong</i>	205
A Historical Investigation of the Paris Foreign Missions Society's Early Activities of Trying to Enter Tibet in the Middle 19th Century <i>LIU Ruiyun and SUN Rui</i>	216
A Review of Several Tibetan Textbooks—and the Approaches to the Teaching of Classical Tibetan <i>MA Zhouyang</i>	243
Succession and Marriage and the Tibetan Royal Line <i>Brandon Dotson, Chinese translation by ZHANG Xu and WU Xianyun, Proofread by YANG Ming</i>	271
Tibetan Zen: Discovering a Lost Tradition <i>Sam van Schaik, Chinese translation by NIU Hong and KOU Jinhua, Proofread by ZHANG Changhong</i>	288
The Rock Art of Spiti — A General Introduction <i>John Vincent Bellezza, Chinese translation by Yongbao Zang</i>	307
Embedded in Stone — Early Buddhist Rock Art of Ladakh <i>Phun tshogs rdo rje, Chinese translation by ZHANG Zhongya</i>	332
ABSTRACTS	355

A Brief Note on the Date of Daśabalaśrīmitra and his *Śaṃskṛtāśaṃskṛtaviniścaya*

Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp

ABSTRACT: Daśabalaśrīmitra is fairly well known for his long treatise titled *Śaṃskṛtāśaṃskṛtaviniścaya*, but his approximate dates have remained somewhat elusive. Very brief passages in works relating to the life of the Kashmirian scholar Śākyaśrībhadrā (1127-1225) now somewhat illuminate the *floruit* of this scholar.

Although the lion's share of published research done on various aspects of the Tibetan version of the *Śaṃskṛtāśaṃskṛtaviniścaya* by the little known Daśabalaśrīmitra surely belongs to Peter Skilling,¹ the recent study of several Sanskrit fragments of this work by Péter-Dániel Szántó is yet another important contribution to our understanding of this work.² Skilling dated him to "the late 12th and/or the early 13th c." Happily, fairly recently made available Tibetan sources now appear to allow us a greater measure of precision about the date of this author and his work. Interestingly, an important reference to a "Da sha bala," which I take to be a short form via *metri causa* of "Daśabalaśrīmitra," has been right under our noses ever since Guiseppe Tucci published his translation of Khro phu Lo tsā ba Byams pa dpal's (1173-1236) versified

1 See most recently Skilling 1987 and 2016: 9, 11, 18, 21-23, 33-34. The Tibetan translation is anonymous; Daśabalaśrīmitra appears to have signed himself as a [*mahā*] *paṇḍita-mahāsthavira*.

2 Szántó 2019.

petition-cum-praise poem to Śākyaśrībhadrā (1127-1225).³ As we will see below, the thirteenth verse of this eulogy most probably sheds the necessary light on him.

Now many years ago, I used Grags pa rdo rje dpal bzang po's (b. 1444) study of the various transmissions Buddhist canon law (*vinaya*, 'dul ba) in Tibet for some notes I made concerning the life of the great Kashmirian scholar Śākyaśrībhadrā and, more recently, Jörg Heimbrel made full use of this little but highly important work for his exhaustive analysis of these transmissions that issued from this Kashmirian scholar.⁴ In his introductory remarks, Grags pa rdo rje dpal bzang po sought inter alia to gain clarity about some issues concerning Śākyaśrībhadrā's life and about problematic passages in a number of pertinent sources that he had consulted for his account. In connection with the full ordination of Śākyaśrībhadrā as a monk and the identities of those officiating at the ceremony, he included a brief aside on none other than Daśabalaśrīmitra and his *Samskṛtāsamskṛtaviniścaya*.⁵ He first identified the ceremony's chief officiant, the "abbot" (*mkhan po*, *upadhyāya*), as Śāntākara Gupta,⁶ who is also noted in, for example, Pa/Spa tshab Lo tsā ba Tshul khriṃs 'byung gnas' lengthy colophon that he appended to his translation of the enormous *Āryasaddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*. He must have completed his translation sometime in the first three decades of the twelfth century, since, in his colophon, he refers to the Pāla king Ramapāla (ca. 1072-ca. 1126) and [one of] his son[s] Ne[?] bai pāla.⁷ And Grags pa rdo rje dpal bzang po also adds that the Tibetan translation of his *Samskṛtāsamskṛtaviniścaya* was *not* included in the Tanjur manuscripts [with which he was familiar]. Most probably it is a question of time before we learn the identity of the intrepid translator of this large work.

Indeed, the latter statement has undeniable substance, for the [so far] anonymous Tibetan translation of the *Samskṛtāsamskṛtaviniścaya* is not listed in any of the extant catalogs of canonical works in Tibetan translation that date from the late thirteenth to the middle of the fifteenth centuries. Thus, it is not mentioned in the undated catalog by Dar ma/Chos kyī rgyal mtshan (1237-1305), alias Bcom ldan {rig[s] pa'i} ral gri,⁸ nor is it listed in the following catalogs:

1. Dbus pa Blo gsal Rtsod pa'i seng ge's (late 13th-14th c.) catalog of the Snar thang Tanjur manuscript.⁹

3 Tucci 1949: 337 and an edition of the text is found in Jackson 1990: 31 [3].

4 van der Kuijp 1994a and Heimbrel 2013.

5 Grags pa rdo rje dpal bzang po. No date: fols. 8a-b.

6 For him, see Deszö 2014.

7 van der Kuijp 2009: 13.

8 Dar ma/Chos kyī rgyal mtshan 2009.

9 Dbus pa Blo gsal Rtsod pa'i seng ge. No date.

2. catalog of the Tshal pa Tanjur manuscript.¹⁰
- 3a. Bu ston Rin chen grub's (1290-1364) catalog appended to his famous chronicle of 1323-1326.¹¹
- 3b. Bu ston's 1335 catalog of the Zhwa lu Tanjur manuscript.
- 4a. Karma pa III Rang byung rdo rje's (1284-1339)¹² undated catalog of a Tanjur manuscript.
- 4b. Ibid. Undated catalog of a Tanjur manuscript.
5. The 1362 catalog of the ?Sne gdong Tanjur manuscript by Byang chub rgyal mtshan et al.¹³
6. Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal's (1306-1386) undated catalog of the Ngam ring Tanjur manuscript.¹⁴
7. Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po's (1382-1456) 1447 catalog of the Tanjur manuscript in the monastery of Dpal brag dkar theg chen gling that is located in Glo bo Smon thang [Nepal's Mustang].¹⁵

I am not sure when it begins to make its appearance in the post-Ngor chen catalogs. It is of course entirely possible that the translation was given notice in Stag tshang Lo tsā ba shes rab rin chen's (1405-1477) *Bstan 'gyur gyi dkar chag 'dres 'khrug rnam 'byed*, which he registers in his autobiography of 1470.¹⁶ Suffice it for now to say that Daśabalaśrīmitra's *Saṃskṛtāsaṃskṛtaviniścaya* is listed in the seventeenth and eighteenth century catalogs of the xylograph editions of the Tanjur.¹⁷

Now verse thirteen of Khro phu Lo tsā ba's eulogy to Śākyaśrībhadrā reads¹⁸:

gang 'khrungs ni lo sum cu mnyam pa la //
mkhan slob shāntā ka ra gupta dang //
da sha ba [8] dānaka rar bcas //
bco brgyad dge 'dun bsnyen rdzogs phyag 'tshal lo //

10 Byams pa bsam gtan 2016. Dge 'dun rin chen compiled this Tanjur manuscript from 1317 to 1323 with the financial support of the Tshal pa myriarch Smon lam rdo rje (1284-1347).

11 Bu ston Rin chen grub 1971a and 1971b.

12 Karma pa III Rang byung rdo rje 2006a and 2006b; for these catalogs, see Martin No date, who rightly suggests that these Tanjur mss. probably date from 1333-1336..

13 Byang chub rgyal mtshan et al. 1971; for this catalog, see van der Kuijp 1994b.

14 Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal 2010.

15 Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po 2010.

16 Stag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen 2007: 38. To my knowledge, this work has not [yet] been sighted.

17 Za hor gyi ban rkan [read: rgan] Gdong drug bsnyems pa'i lang tsho 1688: 277.

18 Bkra shis...phags 2008: 7-8 [= ms. fol. 4a-b].

I pay homage to the one equal to thirty years from his birth,¹⁹
 Who took/received full ordination with the abbot Śāntākara Gupta and
 the ācārya-s Daśabala and Dānākara,
 Among the eighteen ordained members of the Buddhist community.²⁰

The otherwise rewarding commentaries on Khro phu Lo tsā ba's verse text by Bsod nams dpal bzang po (ca. 1300) and Bkra shis...'phags (after the 1420s) are, to put it as mildly as possible, rather thin-with their explanation of this verse, for they respectively write the following:

Bsod nams dpal bzang po

*de nas dgung lo sum cu thams[read: tham] pa la mkhan po shan ta ka ra gupta dang /
 las kyi slob dpon dā[read: da] sha ba la dang / gsang ston dānā ka ra dang / dad pa'i
 dge 'dun bco brgyad dang bcas pa'i dbus su bsnyen par rdzogs pa dge slong gi sdom
 pa rnam par dag pa thob par mdzad do //*

Bkra shis...'phags

*dgung lo sum cu bzhes pa la mkhan po shāntā ka ra gupta dang / las kyi slob dpon da
 sha ba la dang / gsang ston dānā ka ra dang / dad pa'i dge 'dun bco brgyad 'tshogs
 pa'i dbus su bsnyen par rdzogs pa dge slong gi sdom pa rnam par dag pa thob par
 mdzad...*

Thus, given that Śākyaśrībhadrā is said to have received his ordination at the age of thirty [= twenty-nine], that is, somewhere in 1156-1157, we can assume that Śāntākara Gupta was already a quite senior monk in light of his much earlier affiliation with Pa/Spa tshab Lo tsā ba. Grags pa rdo rje dpal bzang po identifies the next officiant as Daśabalaśrīmitra, who fulfilled the role of "ritual master" (*las kyi slob dpon, karmakāraka*), and Dānākara, who officiated as the "confessor" (*gsang te ston pa'i slob dpon, raho'nuśāsaka*) during the ordination. It is likely that "Daśabala" of Khro phu Lo tsā ba's verse text and his commentators is simply a short form for "Daśabalaśrīmitra." And if this were so, then it is likely that he and Dānākara were also

19 My translation of *gang 'khrungs ni lo sum cu mnyam pa la //...phyag 'tshal lo //* is tentative, but I believe it reflects the spirit.

20 Tucci 1949: 337 has here: "Honour to him who, having reached the age of 30, was consecrated as a monk (by a ceremony in which took part) San ta ka ra gup ta as first officiant, Da sabha le (as master of the liturgy) and Dhana ka ra (as master of the formulas)."

senior monks at this time. And this means that we can with some flexibility tentatively date the *Saṃskṛtāsaṃskṛtaviniścaya* to around 1140-1150 and its author Daśabalaśrīmitra to ca. 1100-ca. 1170. Further, it would appear from his name that Daśabalaśrīmitra was most likely a native of what is now Bihar State.

In the articles cited above, Skilling pointed out that the *Saṃskṛtāsaṃskṛtaviniścaya* is an invaluable resource for the attention it pays to Sāṃmitīya doctrines and its large number of references to hitherto unknown works belonging to this school. We do not know when the *vinaya* tradition of this school came to an end, but a *terminus a quo* is given in the narrative about a certain Lokottara who had come to Central Tibet in 1465.²¹ In a letter that Jo nang Kun dga' grol mchog (1507-1566) himself had been able to inspect in Stag lung monastery, Lokottara had mentioned *inter alia* that he was ordained a monk in the Sāṃmitīya *vinaya*.

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21 For the visit in question, see Caumanns 2015: 159-162, 298.

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ABSTRACTS

A Study of Dunhuang Manuscript P.t. 1077: A Statement of the Claim Concerning To tog's Female Slave

LU Li

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In Dunhuang manuscript P.t. 1077: A statement of the claim concerning To Tog's female slave, the To Tog was Du Dudu 杜都督, the governor when the Tibetans ruled Dunhuang and his name was Do stag skyes. The manuscript can be dated to A.D. 790-820. The manuscript involves a reply statement about the ownership of a female slave between Du Dudu and Rlang khri bu, a Tibetan. The judge was the Zha che pa of the Guazhou jiedushi office. The case was first heard in Shazhou, and Du Dudu won the case, then Rlang khri bu appealed to the Guazhou jiedushi for retrial. The document reflects the way in which the Tibetans drew lessons from the Tang dynasty's legal code and sheds light on the relationship between the Han and Tibetan people when the Tibetans governed Dunhuang.

A Discussion of the Classification in the Dunhuang Tibetan Documents of *Madhyamaka* and its Features Based on the Tibetan Collections of the French National Library and the British Library

Renqing Ji

(Northwest Minzu University)

This paper introduces about forty Tibetan documents that are relevant to the subject of Madhyamaka in the collections of the Dunhuang Tibetan documents in the French National Library and the British Library. Through the examination of these manuscripts, this paper finds that there are many problems: wrong pages, missing pages, mixed pages, contents that do not correspond to previous pages etc. Nevertheless, this paper systematically classifies the collections of these documents into seven categories based on a comparison with the Tanjur. Most of materials can be found in the Tanjur except the seventh type, “explanation of Madhyamaka texts” (*Dbu ma'i gzhung bshad*). Few materials bear different translations from that in the Tanjur such as the *Yi ge brgya pa zhes bya ba'i rab du byed pa tshig le'ur byas pa*, *Yi ge brgya pa'i rab du byed pa rnam par bshad pa*, and the *Dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa ga las 'jigs med*.

A Comparison of the Chinese and Tibetan Versions of the *Vimalakīrti sūtra* during the Tubo Period

Yangben Jia

(Northwest Minzu University)

When the Tibetans governed the Silk Road, the *Vimalakīrti sūtra* was widely copied in Tibetan and Chinese. The *sūtra* contained in the Kanjur corresponds to the Tibetan manuscripts found in Dunhuang and corresponds to the three Chinese translations by Zhiqian, Kumārajīva and Xuanzang in terms of chapters and content.

A Study of the Origin of the Ra mo che in Lhasa

LIU Fengqiang

(Xizang Minzu University)

According to Tibetan legends, the Ra mo che temple was built by Princess Wencheng. This statement had far-reaching influences, but it was based on a misunderstanding. According to the evidence of historical records in Chinese and Tibetan, the Ra mo che was originally a palace built by Srong btsan sgam po for Princess Wencheng. Wencheng expanded it later to dedicate the statue of Śākyamuni. After the death of Wencheng, the Han Chinese monks lived there for a long time, and it gradually evolved into a temple. In the Ming Dynasty, Altan Khan had statues of the Buddha built that imitated the twelve-year-old Śākyamuni image in the Ra mo che and built a temple for the worship of the statue. The Mongol term for temple is *jo* and is derived from *jo bo* and reflects the name of the eight-year-old Śākyamuni-Jo bo statue. The character *zhao* in the name of the Xiaozhao temple in Chinese is derived from Mongol via Manchu in the early Qing Dynasty. Thus the name of the Xiaozhao Temple and its origins reflect the close historical exchange among Tibetan, Mongolian, Chinese, and Manchu cultures.

A Study of the History of the Restoration of Bsam yas Monastery Based on Bshad sgra Dbang phyug rgyal po's *Bsam yas Annals*

Lhun grub rdo rje and CUI Yu

(Yunnan Minzu University)

Bsam yas was the first Buddhist monastery built in Tibet under the patronage of King Khri srong lde btsan. The monastery was modeled on the design of the Odantapuri monastery of ancient India. It occupies an important position in the history of Tibetan architecture. In the nineteenth century, a severe fire in 1816 and an earthquake in 1847 destroyed most parts of the monastery. Two ministers (*bka' blon*) from the Bshad sgra family presided over the restoration work. Bshad sgra Dbang phyug rgyal po (1795-1864) wrote a work titled *Lugs gsum mi 'gyur lhun gyis grub pa'i gtsug lag khang rten dang brten par bcas pa legs gso'i sri zhu ji ltar bsgrubs pa'i tshul gyi khyad par brjod pa'i dkar chag skal bzang dad pa'i sgo 'byed* (abbreviation: *Bsam yas Annals*), which records the detailed process of the restoration of Bsam yas monastery. The Bshad sgra family received a great reputation for their important contribution to the protection and restoration of Bsam yas and other ancient places.

对十力吉祥友及其《有为无为抉择》时代的简注

范德康

(哈佛大学)

十力吉祥友 (Daśabalaśrīmitra) 以其长篇论著《有为无为抉择》(*Samskṛtāsamskṛtaviniścaya*) 而颇为闻名, 但他的大致年代却一直不太明确。如今发现他著作中的一些的简短段落涉及到克什米尔学者释迦室利贤 (Śākyaśrībhadra, 1127-1225 年) 的生平, 在某种程度上揭示了这位学者的活跃时期。

拶也阿难捺和贡却僧格生平考补

聂鸿音

(四川师范大学)

拶也阿难捺是克什米尔人, 贡却僧格是一名藏族喇嘛, 他们于 12 世纪下半叶进入西夏。藏文史书简要记载了其生平, 但没有记载他们在西夏的具体传教活动。本文旨在考察他们所传的教法, 以便窥见藏传密法在党项王廷的地位, 其间首次尝试把贡却僧格勘同西夏文献里的经师宝狮子。考察证明党项王廷对显教经书的兴趣远大于密教修行法。

An Annotated Translation of the Biography of the first Paṅ chen Lama Mkhas grub Dge legs dpal bzang po (1385-1438)

Sha bo klu rgyal and Dpa' mkhar skyid

(Southwest Minzu University)

Mkhas grub was one of the disciples of the Tsong kha pa and is considered the first Paṅ chen Lama. There is a voluminous literature about his life, including more than ten biographies. Among them, the biographies written by Se ra Rje btsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469-1544) and Yongs 'dzin Ye shes rgyal

mtshan (1713-1793) exercised a profound influence on later generations. Therefore, in this paper, the latter is given an annotated Chinese translation. It also includes a description of the main features of this biography and corrects some mistranslations in presently existing Chinese translations.

Overview of Research and Publications on the Paṅ chen Lamas

LI Ruohong

(Harvard-Yenching Institute)

In this introductory summary and analysis of publications on the Paṅ chen Lamas in China and elsewhere, the author makes an effort to combine and annotate papers and monographs published in the past few decades on the topic to illustrate the landscape of the narrowly focused and widely scattered studies of the Paṅ chen Lamas. With a comparatively detailed narrative on the readily available publications, this paper is an attempt to provide a reference and point of departure for future research undertakings on the Paṅ chen Lamas from broader and more diverse academic perspectives with the support of the further opening and availability of first-hand historical documents and archival materials in Tibetan and other languages.

A Study of the Thangkas in the Main Hall of the First Floor of the Baoxianglou

WEN Ming

(The Palace Museum)

The Baoxianglou 宝相楼, Building for Images of Buddhas, that is located in the garden of the Cininggong 慈宁宫, was built in the Jiajing period of the Ming Dynasty. It was originally the east side hall of the Xianruoguan 咸若馆 and it was changed to the current construction in the 30th year of Qianlong (1765) to become one of the eight "Buddha buildings in six-sections" 六品佛楼 in the Qianlong period. It was officially named *baoxianglou* in the 37th year of Qianlong (1772). A set of thirteen thangkas was hung in the main hall of the first floor of Baoxianglou. According to the *Archives of Handicraft Works*, these thangkas were painted in the 31st year of Qianlong (1766). Although the original placement of the thangkas has been lost, according to three precious photographs that were taken in 1957, combined with the inscriptions on the back of the thangkas, this paper attempts to restore their original hanging order. Furthermore, this paper explores the rules and reasons of the sequence and layout of Arhats in the Qianlong period and compares the similarities and differences of thangkas in the eight "Buddha building

in six-sections".

A Yak-Pattern Bronze Mirror with an Iron Handle Housed in the Yak Museum of Tibet and Related Issues

XUE Jiang

(Ph.D of Central Academy of Fine Arts, the Yak Museum of Tibet)

Focusing on the yak pattern bronze mirror with an iron handle that is housed in the Yak Museum of Tibet, this paper presents a comparative study of similar mirrors that were previously found in Tibet and her peripheral regions, as well as earlier domestic and foreign collections of this kind in terms of pattern design, shape, material and manufacturing techniques. It is speculated that the age of this Tibetan bronze mirror with a handle roughly dates from the late Neolithic Age to the end of the Western Han Dynasty. Its shape is influenced by the bronze mirror with a handle of the Eurasian grassland, and the decorative pattern has more local cultural characteristics. It is an important example of the occurrence and development of early Bronze Culture in Tibet under the integration of multi-cultural influences.

A Newly Discovered Manuscript of the Biography of Bka' blon Zur khang Sri gcod tshe brtan (1766-1820)

Gyung drung 'gyur med

(Management Committee of Liuwu New District, Lhasa)

This article is an analysis of a recently discovered manuscript in Guide County, Qinghai Province. It records the biography of the famous nobleman and Bka' blon Zur khang Sri gcod tshe brtan (1766-1820). The biography contains two sections. The first is an autobiography, and the second is a posthumous extension of the biographical narrative by his family's descendants. The biography covers the entire life of Zur khang Sri gcod tshe brtan, including his entering government service at the end of the 18th century, his promotion to the position of Bka' blon, his being stationed at the border, his resignation from his position, becoming a monk, and his passing. Besides his political career, the text narrates his personal religious life and social experiences. This article focuses on the history of the Zur khang family and Sri gcod tshe brtan's life while examining the historical context of Tibet during the Qing dynasty.

A Study of the Author, Sources and Value of the Book *Weizang tuzhi*

YANG Xuedong

(Xizang Minzu University)

According to the foreword by Zhou Qi 周琦, the authors of the book *Weizang tuzhi* 卫藏图识 were Ma Yang 马扬 and Sheng Shengzu 盛绳祖. Its authorship by Ma Jie 马揭 and Sheng Shengzu is wrong. In term of the content, the part of *Fanmin zhonglei tu* 番民种类图 of the *Weizang tuzhi* was compiled from the *Huang Qing Zhigongtu* 皇清职贡图 and the source of the *Chengzhantu* is unidentified. The two volumes of the *Shilue* 识略 mainly compiled from the *Xizang zhi* 西藏志. The book mainly copied the *Xizang zhi* and inserted some characters from other books with slight additions and adaptations. The proper selection of materials and reasonable layout made the *Weizang tuzhi* famous and was frequently quoted in later works of Tibetan studies in Qing dynasty. It has also been translated into Russian, French, and English languages.

A Historical Investigation of the Paris Foreign Missions Society's Early Activities of Trying to Enter Tibet in the Middle 19th Century

LIU Ruiyun and SUN Rui

(School of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Sichuan University)

From 1849 to 1852, the Paris Foreign Missions Society actively prepared and twice tried to enter Tibet via Bhutan to preach Christianity in Tibet from South Asia. At that time, the strong expansion of British Indian colonial forces to the north of the Indian subcontinent and the ensuing wars affected the economic development and people's livelihood in the areas near Tibet and led to their stagnation. As a result, the hostility and resistance of the local officials and people towards the western world came to be deeply rooted in their minds. Thus, the early activities of the Paris Foreign Missions Society of trying to enter Tibet through Bhutan encountered unprecedented resistance and ended in failure.

A Review of Several Tibetan Textbooks — and the Approaches to the Teaching of Classical Tibetan

MA Zhouyang

(Ph.D Candidate, Harvard University)

A fine and efficient educational framework of Classical Tibetan can provide the circle of Tibetan Studies with many more proficient prospective scholars. Ideal textbooks and equitable educational approaches are essential components of this framework. This article reviews seven common textbooks of Classical Tibetan and compares their advantages and disadvantages for Tibetan language learning. Of course, no single textbook can cover the entire course of Tibetan language learning. The teacher is supposed to choose between different textbooks during teaching and single out the most appropriate pieces from them to pair with various learning phases. In terms of course design, there are three important points. First, teaching grammar should be done independent of the reading of texts. Second, from a linguistic perspective, the teacher should follow the order in which the Tibeto-Burman perspective proceeds after the Indo-Tibetan one. Third, the teacher should hold the teaching of syntax as primary.

Succession and Marriage and the Tibetan Royal Line

Brandon Dotson¹, Chinese translation by ZHANG Xu² and WU Xianyun³,

Proofread by YANG Ming⁴

(1. Georgetown University; 2. Hebei University; 3.4. Southwest Minzu University)

Based on the *Old Tibetan Annals* and other Old Tibetan sources, it is evident that the succession from one emperor to another was not as simple and clear as what one finds in the transmitted lists of Tibetan emperors. The Tibetan emperor was at the center of a vast network of brothers, half-brothers, maternal relatives known as *zhang*, and royal grandmothers, mothers, aunts, sisters, and daughters who acted as important agents in Tibet's relations with vassal kingdoms such as the Tuyuhun and also with foreign kingdoms such as the Türgiś. These ties of kinship between the emperor and his patrilineal and matrilineal relatives involved both partnership and conflict, and the Tibetan empire developed processes to reduce the danger posed by rival brothers and half-brothers on the one side, and to reduce the threat that an emperor might face, especially in his youth, from his mother's clan on the other side. Inversely, an important strategy for absorbing a foreign kingdom into the Tibetan Empire was not only to send a Tibetan princess to a vassal ruler in dynastic marriage, but to ensure that she gave birth to the heir to that vassal kingdom's throne. By the same token, no foreign princess was ever allowed to serve as the chief

queen of Tibet or to give birth to a Tibetan crown prince.

Tibetan Zen: Discovering a Lost Tradition

*Sam van Schaik*¹, Chinese translation by *NIU Hong*² and *KOU Jinhua*³,

Proofread by *ZHANG Changhong*⁴

(1. The British Library; 2. 3. Shanghai Normal University; 4. Sichuan University)

As the introduction to Sam van Schaik's book *Tibetan Zen*, the chapter examined a lost Buddhist tradition—Tibetan Chan, which was censured in Tibet and forgotten in Central China. To approach the Tibetan Chan manuscripts, our reading of texts should happen without discarding the physical manuscript, which means seeing all texts as practices. The Tibetan and Chinese Chan manuscripts from Dunhuang present an inclusive and evolving situation during the ninth and tenth centuries, bringing together most of what had gone before. It is likely that Chan teachers played a role in the Tibetan assimilation of Buddhism during the period when Buddhism was adopted as the imperial religion from the second half of the eighth century to the first half of the ninth. Moheyan, the Chan master who remained well known in Tibet was the representative of “instantaneous” approach; However the discovery of Dunhuang manuscripts allows us to reconsider the result and the way of the so-called “Bsam yas debate”. The accounts of the Tibetan historical sources, such as the *Testimony of Ba* might have limited documentary value. It seems that Chan texts and practices were being transmitted as late as the thirteenth century. Both the Chan in Tibet and Dunhuang, just as those Chan traditions in other places of China, were part of a local tradition.

The Rock Art of Spiti — A General Introduction

*John Vincent Bellezza*¹, Chinese translation by *Yongbao Zang*²

(1. University of Virginia; 2. Qinghai Minzu University)

The rock art of Spiti is of great significance for the study of the cultural history of the western part of the Tibetan plateau. Based on a comprehensive survey conducted in 2015, the author documented most of the ancient rock carvings and paintings in Spiti. This article reviews the locational characteristics, contents, frequencies of occurrence, and chronology of this rock art. The work also makes some cultural and historical observations and raises conservation issues concerning rock art sites in Spiti.

Embedded in Stone — Early Buddhist Rock Art of Ladakh

Phun tshogs rdo rje¹, Chinese translation by ZHANG Zhongya²

(1. Independent Scholar; 2. Tibetan Culture Museum at China Tibetology Research Center)

Limited information is available on the history of Buddhist art in Ladakh, the early rock sculptures and inscriptions can throw some light on early art-historical aspects of the region. This article presented the rock carvings which are grouped into several geographical areas of Kargil, Leh and Nubra. These were surveyed and documented by the author during the years 2001-2008. Based on these materials, the author made a detailed comparison with Kashmiri metal sculptures of the ninth to twelfth centuries that are important for the understanding of the cultural history of Ladakh and her neighboring regions.

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