

THE REVIVAL OF TANTRISM:  
TIBETAN BUDDHISM AND MODERN CHINA

by

Martino Dibeltulo

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
(Asian Languages and Cultures)  
in The University of Michigan  
2015

Doctoral Committee:

Professor Donald S. Lopez, Jr., Chair  
Assistant Professor Micah Auerback  
Assistant Professor Benjamin Brose  
Professor Tomoko Masuzawa  
Associate Professor Elliot Sperling, Indiana University  
Associate Professor Gray Tuttle, Columbia University

© Martino Dibeltulo

2015

---

All rights reserved

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation owes its completion to the labors of many people and to the contribution of many institutions. First of all, I would like to thank the members of my committee, who have inspired me and supported me in many ways during my graduate career. My advisor, Professor Donald Lopez, has always offered the best advice, providing me with the intellectual space that has seen this project grow into the present form. The clear, insightful, and timely comments he has made on each of my many drafts have illuminated my writing, inspiring my commitment to scholarship in Buddhist Studies. Both in the research and writing stages, Professor Micah Auerback has generously offered his insight into the study of Buddhism in modern and contemporary Japan, unselfishly helping me to read and translate texts from the Japanese language. Since my early graduate years, Professor Benjamin Brose has been a mentor and a friend, providing me with essential advice on the study of Buddhism in China. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to Professor Tomoko Masuzawa, who has welcomed me in several of her graduate seminars, where this dissertation was conceived as a genealogy. Not only has she guided me in the study of religion, she has also patiently accompanied me in my journey through the realm of academic writing. Professor Gray Tuttle has kindly offered precious feedback on the history of China-Tibet relations, giving me invaluable directions for my archival research. Finally, I would like to thank Professor Elliot Sperling, for having generously joined the committee in the final stages of writing.

In Taiwan, during my tenure at the National Taiwan Library in summer 2011, two scholars in particular have enriched my research. This dissertation has greatly benefited from their expertise in the field of Tibetology in Taiwan, Japan, and China. In Taipei, I owe many thanks to Professor Xu Mingyin, with whom I have conversed at length on the history of Tibetan Buddhism, and who has served as the discussant of my talk at the National Taiwan Library. Professor Lin Chong'an has welcomed me in Taoyuan; he has discussed with me the history of Tibetan Buddhism in Republican China and in Taiwan, pointing me to avenues of research that have seen light in this dissertation. In Tibet, Sichuan, Yunnan, Chongqing, Beijing, Shanghai, and Wutai Shan, many more unnamed friends have contributed to the making of this dissertation. In Europe, Professor Ester Bianchi, my long time mentor in Buddhist Studies, has helped me understand the shifts in the study of Tibetan Buddhism in China after the Cultural Revolution. Professor Stefania Travagnin has shared with me her expertise in the study of Buddhism in Taiwan, helping me to form academic connections in Taipei. Marion Dalvai has kindly helped me with translations from German. Finally, the community of graduate students at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor has greatly supported my journey: Joseph Leach, Anna Fodde-Reguer, Ignacio Villagran, Harjeet Grewal, Anna Johnson, Becky Bloom, and Eric Haynie. Thank you all.

Many institutions have provided financial support at different stages of research and writing. I would like to thank the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Michigan for the awards that funded my preliminary research in China in 2010, and in Taiwan in 2011. The Center of Chinese Studies (CCS) at the University of Michigan has also supported my archive research in Chongqing with an award in 2010. I am also grateful to the Center for Chinese Studies (CCS) at the National Central Library in the Republic of China, Taiwan, for

their generous summer 2011 award. During the two months I stayed in Taipei, the staff of the CCS has created for me the perfect research environment, providing me also with academic liaisons that have inspired me to pursue the argument of this dissertation. Again, I say a word of thanks to both the faculty and staff of the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, for their award of a Hide Shohara Fellowship in 2013-2014. I would also like to thank the Rackham School of Graduate Studies for the fall 2014 Dissertation Writing Fellowship.

Finally, I offer many thanks to my family, whose dedication and generosity have inspired me through many years of travel, study, and writing. My mother Cenza Concu, together with my sisters Silvia and Lidia Dibeltulo: to them goes my warmest thank you. Many thanks also to: my grandmother Ica, Immacolata Concu, and Filippo Manconi; Paola and Anna Dibeltulo, with Vincenzo Gambuzza; Franciscu Sedda, Ornella Demuru, and Soliana; Riccardo Mura, Renzo Maciocco, and Giulio Cherchi. The enthusiasm with which Marino Lenassi has always nourished my passion for research deserves much of the credit for the completion of this dissertation.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>LIST OF SINOGRAPHS.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1.....</b>	<b>10</b>
TALE OF A PROLOGUE.....	10
<b>CHAPTER 2.....</b>	<b>66</b>
THE ORIGINS OF THE REVIVAL.....	66
<b>CHAPTER 3.....</b>	<b>100</b>
CHINESE BUDDHISM.....	100
<b>CHAPTER 4.....</b>	<b>149</b>
TIBETAN BUDDHISM.....	149
<b>CHAPTER 5.....</b>	<b>199</b>
TANTRISM.....	199
<b>CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>239</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>246</b>

## LIST OF SINOGRAPHS

### CHINESE

Benjiao 笨教 / 本教

Chan Beizong 禪北宗

Chiming sheng 持明乘

Dasheng 大乘

Daichuan Fojiao 傣傳佛教

Tuoluoni 陀羅尼

Fojiao 佛教

Guo sheng 果乘

Hanchuan Fojiao 漢傳佛教

Handi Fojiao 漢地佛教

Hanzu 漢族

Hongjiao 紅教

Huangjiao 黃教

Jingang sheng 金剛乘

Jingzang 經藏

Lama 喇嘛

Lamajiao 喇嘛教  
Lianhua bufa 蓮華部法  
Lüzang 律藏  
Lunzang 論藏  
Mijiao 密教  
Misheng 密乘  
Mizhou 密咒  
Mizong 密宗  
Tanggute 唐古特  
Tanteluo 坦特羅  
Tanteluo sheng 坦特羅乘  
Tufan 吐蕃  
Xianzong 顯宗  
Xiaosheng 小乘  
Xizang 西藏  
Xizang Fojiao 西藏佛教  
Xizang zizhiqu 西藏自治區  
Zangchuan Fojiao 藏傳佛教  
Zangzu 藏族  
Zhenyan sheng 真言乘  
Zhongguo Fojiao 中國佛教  
Zhou 咒



JAPANESE

Seizō Bukkyō 西藏佛教

Shina Bukkyō 支那佛教

## INTRODUCTION

This dissertation traces the many ways in which Tantrism (*C. Mijiao*) and Tibetan Buddhism (*C. Xizang Fojiao*) have been understood in China over three generations of Buddhist innovators between the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century<sup>1</sup>: (1) the Qing historian Wei Yuan (1794-1856), together with the publisher and educator Yang Wenhui (1837-1911); (2) the Republican-era scholars of Buddhism, Li Yizhuo (1881-1952) and Lü Cheng (1896-1989); (3) the renowned reformer Taixu (1890-1947), and his student, the monk and translator Fazun (1902-1980).

Tantrism, a ritual tradition long vanished in India and China but preserved in modern Japan and Tibet, became a component of the revival of Chinese Buddhism (*C. Zhongguo Fojiao fuxing*) at the turn of the twentieth century, but in a more prominent way between the World Wars. Promising the attainment of enlightenment in a single lifetime, Tantrism became appealing to revivalists who, in China's time of internal war and foreign invasion, sought to recover this lost tradition, writing about its rituals, initiations, and teachings in a nostalgic mode.

I argue that the work of these early innovators reveals fissures between the late Imperial and the Republican-era (1912-1949) discourse of Tantrism with that of the contemporary People's Republic of China (PRC). One such fissure is found in the narratives about the role of Tantrism and Tibetan Buddhism in the history of Buddhism in China. Through a study of

---

<sup>1</sup> For a list of the key sinographs that recur throughout the dissertation see the appended "List of Sinographs." In Chinese Romanization I have used the Pinyin system; in the phonetic transcription of Tibetan terms I have employed the Wylie system.

Tantrism in China from the late Imperial to early Republican-era, this dissertation contributes to scholarship on the incorporation of modern China into the global flow of European ideas about Buddhism that characterized the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries.

One of the goals of this dissertation is to restore to Tibetan Buddhism some of its forgotten history in modern and contemporary China by reconstructing the global context of its study. At the same time, the dissertation offers an opportunity for understanding China's modern encounter with Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism. The controversial role that the category of Tantra, together with its Chinese translations *Mizong* and *Mijiao*, had in this encounter, will serve as the portal into the world of Buddhism in modern China, Tibet, and Japan. Since 1991, in the People's Republic the old Chinese word Tibetan Buddhism, that is, *Xizang Fojiao*, has gradually ceased to be used by scholars of religion, but also by the average person. In common speech, as in academic discourse, the sense of the term *Xizang Fojiao* is lost. Yet its traces live on in the Chinese archive.

The history of *Xizang Fojiao* as a term reveals the parallel history of *Zangchuan Fojiao*, a new term that has begun to be used in academic publications since the early 1990s and that has begun to replace the earlier term *Xizang Fojiao*. This dissertation, however, is not a history of the term *Zangchuan Fojiao* in the realm of modern Tibet, but a history of the concept of Tibetan Buddhism in modern China, focusing especially on the first half of the twentieth century. The dissertation also explores the relation of the category of Tibetan Buddhism to the category of Chinese Buddhism, and its transformation in the wake of the Cultural Revolution. This history covers ninety years of Buddhist studies in China. It begins in 1866 in Nanjing, with the publication of a book by the first modern scholar of Buddhism. It ends in Beijing in 1965, with the story of a book on Tibetan Buddhism barred from publication for twenty-five years.

To this day, few studies have explored the movement known in Republican China as the “revival of Tantrism” (C. *Mijiao chongxing*). In recent decades, the study of Tibetan Buddhism in modern China has become an object of study in the United States, in Europe, in Japan, in Taiwan, and in China. Book-length studies, however are still relatively few. Holmes Welch’s *The Buddhist Revival in China* (1968) and Dongchu’s *Zhongguo fojiao jindai shi* (“History of Modern Chinese Buddhism,” 1974) remain today two classics about the history of “the revival of Chinese Buddhism,” providing preliminary insight into the parallel “revival of Tantrism.”

This dissertation engages Holmes Welch’s central question, “Was it a revival?” Welch suggests that during the 1920s, what came to be known in Chinese Buddhist circles as the “revival” (C. *fixing*) was the name of a series of new developments of Buddhism in China, such as the opening of Buddhist publishing houses, schools, and associations, of contact with Buddhists abroad in Japan, Tibet, Sri Lanka, and Europe, as well as renewed interest in the doctrines of Yogācāra (C. *Yujiashi*) and Tantrism. In his analysis of the meaning of the term “revival,” Welch maintains that, “it is questionable whether Chinese Buddhism was in a state of decay when the revival began.”<sup>2</sup>

Chinese Buddhists employed the term “revival” to counter the narratives of the Protestant missionaries, who, since the mid-nineteenth century, claimed that Buddhism in China was in a state of decline. Welch discusses the meaning of the term revival, yet he employs terms such as “Chinese Buddhism,” “Tibetan Buddhism,” “Indian Buddhism,” without questioning the discourse that generated and naturalized these words. Hence, he does not question the term that was the perceived object of the revival: “Chinese Buddhism.” What Welch neglects to say is that Protestant missionaries claimed that Buddhism in China was in fact “Chinese” (hence, the name

---

<sup>2</sup> See Holmes Welch, *The Revival of Buddhism in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 1.

“Chinese Buddhism”) because this Buddhism of China had lost the splendor of the Buddhism of ancient India (or the way in which European scholars and Protestant missionaries imagined this Indian Buddhism).

For European and American missionaries, Chinese Buddhism was the product of Indian Buddhism’s amalgamation with China’s forms of “idolatry.” China’s forms of idolatry, including Buddhism, Daoism, and to some extent Confucianism, were the objects that had become the target of Protestant missionaries in their endeavor to convert China to Christianity. China’s forms of idolatry were also the practices, institutions, and material and ritual culture that were destroyed in southern China during the Taiping Rebellion, and that Chinese Buddhists sought to revive. Hence, the narratives (1) of the decline of Buddhism as a form of idolatry, and (2) of the decay brought about by the rebellions of late imperial China, shaped the notion of a revival of Buddhism in China.

Whereas Welch discusses the revival of Chinese Buddhism as a whole, in this dissertation I engage in dialogue with his work in order to show how Tantrism, intended as a part of this larger whole, contributed to the shaping of this very object that Buddhists of the Republican era sought to revive. This object is “Zhongguo Fojiao” (Chinese Buddhism), a concept of European origin whose equivalent in sinographic writing began to circulate in East Asia around the turn of the twentieth century. Carrying the implications of Welch’s analysis further, I explore the meaning of the revival in relation to the formation of the very idea of Chinese Buddhism. This is an idea whose origins, both in Europe and in China, have much to do not only with European notions of Buddhist history and canon formation, but also, and more intimately, with the notion of Tantra and its European understanding as Buddhist idolatry.

Drawing on Welch's study, in the past two decades other scholars have published innovative studies about the role that Tibetan Buddhists have played in the revival of Chinese Buddhism in modern China. In his *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China* (2005) Gray Tuttle shows the larger institutional context and the political implications of the study of Tibetan Buddhism in Republican China. Tuttle demonstrates how, during the revival, Buddhism was the central factor in forming and maintaining relations between China and Tibet. The work of Ester Bianchi (2001, 2003, 2004) and Monica Esposito (2008) has centered on particular figures of the revival of Tantrism, showing how Tibetan doctrines or lineages were adopted and adapted in modern and contemporary China. As for *Mijiao* in premodern China, in his *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism* (2002) Robert Sharf has demonstrated that Chinese Buddhist exegetes understood Tantra in a very different way than modern Japanese and Chinese scholars; he has offered a theoretical ground for the comparative study of Tantra in India, China, and Japan, opening new avenues of research in the debate about the nature of the traditions of Tantrism in East Asia.<sup>3</sup>

In conversation with these studies, the study that I propose here is a genealogy of Tibetan Buddhism during the revival of Tantrism in China during the early decades of the twentieth century. In writing a history of the concept of Tibetan Buddhism, the dissertation explores the context of its discovery, its many names, its many meanings, its life in relation to the modern discovery of *Mijiao*, its role in the revival of Tantrism, and its development as an object of academic interest. This genealogy also demonstrates how current debates about Tantrism often reiterate what European founders of Buddhist studies said during the nineteenth century.

---

<sup>3</sup> In response to Sharf, see, for instance, the article by Charles Orzech, "The 'Great Teaching of Yoga,' the Chinese Appropriation of the Tantras, and the Question of Esoteric Buddhism," in *Journal of Chinese Religions*, 34 (2006): 29-78.

Throughout the dissertation, I employ “Tantrism” in the twofold sense given to the term by the Belgian scholar Louis de La Vallée Poussin in the early twentieth century, as Buddhism’s many forms of worship, and as the vehicle of the Vajrayāna. I explain how the assumptions of his definition persist in the contemporary study of Buddhism. In so doing, I bring previous studies into a new conversation, demonstrating the political implications of modern China’s nostalgic quest for Tibet’s *Mijiao*. Due to length considerations, the self-imposed boundary of this dissertation, centering on Chinese and Japanese materials, limits a full consideration of the parallel and yet intertwined genealogy of the notions of Tantrism, Tibetan Buddhism, and Chinese Buddhism in European languages. Therefore, this dissertation can offer only a partial historical analysis of its own discourse. It shows how this discourse took root in China after the discourse about the plurality of forms of Buddhism had become established in Europe over the course of the nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup>

The dissertation begins with the “Tale of a Prologue,” a chapter about the anthropological study of Tantrism in the PRC before and after the Cultural Revolution. I seek to show how a particular image of Lamaism—the blending of Indian Tantrism and Siberian Shamanism—was germane to the coining of the new term *Zangchuan Fojiao* in the Chinese language during the 1980s. Most of the materials I analyze here were written after the Republican era. Although much of the chapter’s time period comes after the main focus of the rest of the dissertation, this chapter functions as a preamble, signaling the contemporary relevance of earlier debates about Tibetan Buddhism and Tantrism in China. In many ways, the narratives of the Republican period, in which the nostalgia for China’s long-vanished Tantrism had become embedded in the quest for Tibetan Buddhism, are rehearsed in contemporary scholarship.

---

<sup>4</sup> For an analysis of the European discourse of the plurality of forms of Buddhism, and for a genealogy of the key words of this discourse, including the term “Tantrism” in French and in English, refer to Martino Dibeltulo, *Traces of Tantra: Buddhism and the World of Nations* (unpublished manuscript, 2014.)

The second chapter describes the “Origins of the Revival” during the nineteenth century, in the events that precede the discovery of the long-lost tradition of *Mizong* in China. Rooted in the destruction of Buddhist images, scriptures, and temples during the Taiping Rebellion, the revival of Buddhism in the late Qing dynasty emphasized Pure Land practice; during the revival, the understanding of Buddhist history was based on works compiled in China during the Tang and Ming dynasties. Until the late 1870s, when the renowned Qing scholar Yang Wenhui encountered the science of philology in Europe, his knowledge of *Mizong* in China was largely limited to mantras and dhāraṇīs. At this time, before his encounter with philology in Europe, his understanding of the dyad of terms *Xian* and *Mi* (in Sanskrit, sūtra and tantra) was limited to a little known work compiled during the Liao dynasty. Yang would come to associate Tibetan lamas with *Mizong* only after his return from Europe.

The third chapter, entitled “Chinese Buddhism,” considers Yang Wenhui’s encounter with the science of philology through the Japanese scholar Nanjō Bunyū, with whom he would correspond until the late years of the Qing dynasty. The chapter explores how the language of the revival changed in Yang Wenhui’s work after his return from Europe. The first part of the chapter discusses the European study of the formation of the Buddhist canon during Yang’s stay in London and Paris. The chapter then considers the early study of the Chinese Tripiṭaka in England and its first modern publication in Japan. It goes on to discuss Yang Wenhui’s understanding of Chinese Buddhism and Tantrism after his adoption of Japanese historiography of Buddhism in India, China, and Japan. During this period, Yang would “discover” that China’s long-lost *Mijiao* was known to the lamas of Tibet.

Following the discovery of *Mijiao* between the late Qing and early Republican period, the fourth chapter, “Tibetan Buddhism,” traces the origins of the term *Xizang Fojiao* between



Japan and China. Ogurusu Kōchō, the first Japanese missionary in modern China, who used Qing works as his main source about Tibetan Buddhism, would claim that Tibet's Lamaism was the same as Japan's *Mikkyō*. The chapter then examines the first works on Tibetan Buddhism that appeared in China during the Republican Period. In 1912, Li Yizuo, one of Yang Wenhui's early students in Nanjing, offered an interpretation of Tibet's *Mijiao* based on his familiarity with the language of the Chinese Tripitaka. In 1933, Lü Cheng, another scholar in Yang Wenhui's lineage published a study grounded in the methods of Oriental philology. It would be in his work that Tantrism, as the science of Oriental philology understood the term, was first studied as an object of scholarly interest in China.

Finally, the fifth chapter, entitled "Tantrism," discusses Taixu's perspective on the origins of the "revival of Tantrism." Lacking knowledge of its earlier origins during the late Qing, Taixu identifies the beginning of the revival with Japan's demands for Chinese territory during World War I. The chapter explores Taixu's imagination of the golden age of Tantrism in Tang China, and how, motivated by a nostalgia for this golden age, the actors of the revival traveled to Japan and Tibet to revivify its interrupted lineages. The mission to retrieve China's lost *Mijiao* occurred between the late 1920s and the early 1930s. Although the quest for Tantrism did not proceed beyond eastern Tibet, few revivalists would reach Lhasa. The chapter then considers the life and work of the most famous figure who reached Tibet's capital, the monk Fazun (1902-1980), who would become the greatest translator of Tibetan Buddhist scriptures in modern China. In his works on Tibetan history, Fazun offered to the Chinese public a new perspective on the Tibetan nation in early twentieth century Asia. One of Fazun's books would become the source text for an influential work on Tibetan Buddhism written before the Cultural Revolution, yet only published in the 1980s. The chapter ends with an examination of an

important essay written by Taixu, reflecting on how his view of Buddhist history became the cornerstone of the way in which contemporary PRC scholars describe Buddhism in China.

CHAPTER 1  
TALE OF A PROLOGUE

LHASA. On March 8, 1989, the People's Republic of China imposed martial law in Tibet. Violent clashes had erupted in the streets of Lhasa, the Himalayan nation's capital, over the previous days. 'Phrin las lhun grub chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1938-1989), the Tenth Panchen Lama, had already died, with no signs of illness, on January 28 in Gzhis ka rtse, Tibet's second largest city. Five weeks later, on March 5, Tibetans had begun to walk the streets of Lhasa, the largest anti-Chinese demonstration in thirty years of occupation. The date of March 10, 1959 marked the anniversary of the flight of Bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho (b. 1936), the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, and of the Tibetan government, to India. As the Chinese police fought to regain control of Lhasa, an unknown number of Tibetans died.

NEW YORK. On May 1, 1990, the *New York Times* reported: "China today announced the end of the martial law in Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, 13 months after military rule was imposed there to suppress anti-Government protests." In 1990, as in the previous year, Tibetans had spent the anniversary of March 10 under martial law. The article continued: "China suggested that the end of martial law, effective on Tuesday, signifies that Tibet has returned to normal. But the announcement seemed intended to improve the international image of the Beijing authorities, and it is not clear how much practical difference the decision will make."<sup>5</sup> Although it went unnoticed for two decades, a new language began to emerge in Beijing, not in

---

<sup>5</sup> Nicholas D. Kristof, "Martial Law Ends in Tibet's Capital," *New York Times*, May 1, 1990, p. 13.

the fraught realm of politics but in the apparently benign world of Buddhist studies—or, as the field had been called by its European founders in the nineteenth century, the Science of Buddhism.<sup>6</sup> In Lhasa, the law that had controlled the city was lifted and things seemed to return to normal. But a change had occurred. It concerned the way in which the Buddhist religion of Tibet was talked about in China. The notion of “Tibetan Buddhism” began to be expressed with a new term. This chapter explains how this change unfolded. It provides a background to the study of Tibetan Buddhism in China before and after the Cultural Revolution (1966-76). To do so, it begins with another prologue, the prologue to a book on Tibetan Buddhism published in Beijing at the time of the martial law.

In December 1989, nine months after the suppression of the demonstrations in Lhasa, a book entitled *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong* (“Tibetan Buddhism - Tantrism”) was published in Beijing. The only photograph in the entire book appeared on the cover. On a dark blue background, the image revealed a gilded bronze artifact. It was the image of a Buddhist wrathful deity. Naked, with eight faces each endowed with three bloodshot eyes, a fanged mouth, and an overhanging tongue, the deity stood on eight legs, crushing, underneath his feet, the four Māras: the demon of the corporeal aggregates, the demon of mental defilements, the demon known as the son of the gods, and the demon of death. The deity’s sixteen arms held sixteen human skull cups, each containing an animal in the left hands, a worldly god in the right hands. The Buddhist deity was portrayed in sexual embrace with his consort. The naked goddess, wearing a necklace of fifty human skulls, held a skull cup in her left, and a curved knife in her right hand. The author of *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong* did not reveal the deity’s name. Removed from its local context of production, detached from its history in Tibet, in Beijing the deity’s union of sex and violence

---

<sup>6</sup> For the discourse of Buddhism and Science, see Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *Buddhism and Science* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), pp. 1-37; see also Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *The Scientific Buddha: His Short and Happy Life* (New York: Yale University Press, 2012).

revealed its power as the symbol of the remote Xizang—China’s term for Tibet. To the untrained eye, it was as if a nameless artifact had been concealed in a dark age by unknown hands, to be unearthed as China had finally consolidated control over Tibet and its religion. That religion appeared to be entirely foreign: Indian Tantrism embracing Siberian Shamanism.

The book’s author, Li Jicheng (1934-1997), had been a leading scholar in the study of Tibetan Buddhism and Tantrism since the foundation of the People’s Republic. His lifelong study of Tibetan Buddhism began in 1956, when he enrolled in the Minzu College of China, an institution devoted to the study of the *minzu*, or “nationalities,” of the People’s Republic. The College had been established by the Chinese Communist Party during the years of the Japanese occupation (1937-1945), and had survived the Civil War (1946-1950) with the Chinese Nationalist Party, which, after its defeat, had fled to Taiwan. The Minzu College was formally established in Beijing in 1951, soon after the proclamation of the People’s Republic. It specialized in the sciences of sociology, ethnology, and linguistics. Until the early 1980s, when it was renamed Minzu University of China, the college was the primary institution for training anthropologists who, in their expeditions to remote areas of the newly founded republic, would catalogue, classify, and differentiate the disparate local communities who lived within the borders of the newly founded PRC as ethnic or national “minorities.” And they were minorities, compared to the dominant Han population (commonly referred to in English as the Chinese ethnic group). The college also trained those who would serve as officials governing the inhabitants of these remote communities.

After joining two expeditions to Tibet in 1958 and 1960, in 1961 Li graduated from the Minzu College. In 1965, specializing on Tibetan history, he began working in Beijing, where he was appointed as an assistant researcher within the Institute of World Religions of the Chinese

Academy of Social Sciences. Here, he would develop a passion for the study of Tibetan Buddhism. With the support of the Institute of World Religions, over the 1980s he conducted fieldwork in Tibet on three occasions, collecting a wealth of research materials for his books. In 1992, five years before his death, he obtained full habilitation as a researcher. *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong* was the culmination of his years of study. Throughout his career, his colleagues regarded him as a pioneer of the study of Tantrism from the historical perspective of Marxism. Indeed, Tibetan Buddhism had a long history in Imperial China, and its academic study had begun in the early years of the Republic of China. In the People's Republic, however, Chinese scholars had been able to publish books on Tibetan Buddhism only after the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). The 1980s had been the turning point. Scholars of Buddhism and Tibet could now, once again since the times of the Republic of China and the early years of the People's Republic, openly publish their studies.

In the author's preface, Li provides a brief introductory essay on Tantrism (*C. Mizong*). He observes that prior to 1989 the study of religion in China had not paid much attention to this subject. Buddhism had disappeared in India, he notes, yet it still existed in China. And Tantrism, a form of Buddhism that originated in ancient India, was still extant in the Tibetan regions of the People's Republic. Therefore, he explains, his *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong* is intended to introduce the Chinese public to this form of Buddhism, one that still existed in Tibet. He notes that through the critical examination of texts, Chinese and foreign scholars had reached consensus about the chronology of Buddhism in ancient India. The sixth century of the Common Era, that is, one thousand years after the Buddha's death, but also the final phase of the Mahāyāna, or "Great Vehicle," had been, according to this consensus, the time when Indian Buddhism had begun its decline. Tantrism, he observes, had embraced, since the beginning, all of the popular aspects of

Indian religion. Yet Buddhism, in its early stages, had always been at odds with such elements of Indian religion, rejecting the magical, the mythical, and the superhuman. Li writes, “With regard to religious rites, such as the polytheist worship of Brahmanism, or the magical spells and coded formulas from Vedic thought, it rejected them, denounced them, opposed them without any exception.”<sup>7</sup>

However, the original character of Buddhism had changed with the rise of the Mahāyāna. At this time, Li explains, Buddhism had begun to absorb spells and formulas and the profane notions they engendered until, gradually, Buddhism had completely assimilated magic formulas, transforming them into distinctive Buddhist elements. In due course, Buddhism would absorb all religious elements that belonged to Brahmanism, including invocations for averting calamities, devotional practices, and polytheistic worship. But Tantrism was not only a sophisticated form of ritual combined with sorcery. It was founded on the philosophy of the schools of the Mahāyāna, the phase of Buddhism which had preceded, and which had incorporated, Tantrism. Hence, Li discusses how the philosophical tenets of the Madhyamaka (Middle Way) and the Yogācāra (Practice of Yoga) schools of Indian Buddhism had combined with Tantrism. From this union, the Chinese scholar concluded, Tantrism had developed into its own system, called *Mizong*—a sinograph meaning in Chinese the “Tradition of Secrets.”

Earlier the same year, Li had defined the term *Mizong* in another publication about Tantrism entitled *Fojiao mizong baiwen* (“One Hundred Questions on Buddhist Tantrism”). The first question is how *Mizong* differs from the Chinese term *Xianzong*, that is, the “School of the Manifest”: “1. What is *Mizong*, and how does it differ from *Xianzong*?” Li provides a number of synonyms for *Mizong*, including terms widely employed in Buddhist studies, but also the

---

<sup>7</sup> See Li Jicheng, *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong* (Beijing: Jinri zhongguo chubanshe, 1989), p. III. My translation. Hereafter all translations from Chinese are my own.

traditional Chinese renderings of the original Indian terms: “The so-called *Mizong*, also referred to as *Mijiao* (Esoteric Buddhism), is commonly known on an international level as *Tanteluo* (Tantra) Buddhism, whereas others call it *Zhenyan sheng* (Mantra-yana), *Chiming sheng* (Vidya-dhara-yana), *Misheng* (Esoteric-yana), *Guo sheng* (Phala-yana), *Jingang sheng* (Vajra-yana).”<sup>8</sup> The Chinese word *Mizong*, and its synonym *Mijiao*, or “Secret Teaching,” corresponded with various Indian terms. In the academic study of Buddhism, *Mizong* and *Mijiao* rendered the term *Tantra*, in Sanskrit “book,” or “manual.” *Mizong* and *Mijiao* also conveyed the sense of *Tanteluo Fojiao*, the notion commonly expressed in English by the terms “Tantric Buddhism,” or “Tantrism.” But *Mizong* and *Mijiao* also conveyed the meaning of the Sanskrit word *yāna*, the “vehicle” of practice taught in the tantras. Buddhist exegetes referred to this vehicle by the Chinese translations of various Sanskrit terms: Mantrayāna, the “Vehicle of Mantras,” Vidyādhara-yāna, the “Vehicle of the Keepers of Knowledge,” Guhyayāna, “Vehicle of the Secret,” Phalayāna, “Resultant Vehicle,” and Vajrayāna, or “Vehicle of the Thunderbolt.”

As for the difference between *Xianzong* and *Mizong*, Li explained their senses in a traditional context. He observed that *Xianzong* corresponded to the scriptures spoken by Śākyamuni, the Buddha in his transformation body, the body visible to humans. In contrast, *Mizong* was said to include the secret methods taught by Vairocana, the Buddha manifested in his truth body, a body visible only in Akaniṣṭa, the “highest” heaven of the world of Buddhism. The teachings of both schools were thus said to trace back, though in different ways, to the Buddha. The one advocated the study and practice of the Buddha’s teaching in public; the other promoted its practice in secret. The one focused on the Buddha’s discourses, on the commentaries, and on the observance of vows; the other school added invocations, prayers, offerings, the utterance of magical spells, and the practice of *yoga*. Having explained the relation

---

<sup>8</sup> See Li Jicheng, *Fojiao Mizong baiwen* (Beijing: Zhongguo jianshe chubanshe, 1989), p. 1.



between these two forms of Buddhism from a traditional point of view, Li then moves on to the perspective of the historian of religion.

In his *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong* Li advances a sociological explanation for the rise of Tantrism and its relation to Buddhism. Tantrism was the mature manifestation of the religious mentality of the Indian nation. “In its original form,” the Chinese scholar observes, “Buddhism had been rational, philosophical, and ethical. It vividly expressed the profound wisdom of mankind.”<sup>9</sup> But in its late period, Buddhism had been unable to overcome the religious mentality of the Indian nation. This transformation of Buddhism, perhaps, had occurred due to specific needs of this nation, as well as the tendency toward mystery, inherent to the religious mentality of ancient mankind. In turn, having borrowed elements from Buddhist doctrine, Brahmanism and its rituals gave birth to a new development in Indian religion. Thus, Hinduism appeased the two basic psychological needs of mankind, that is, rationality and mystery. “Yet from the perspective of orthodox Buddhist doctrine,” Li concludes, “as Brahmanism permeated into Buddhism, it inflicted on Indian Buddhism a deadly wound, causing the latter’s true colors to fade, losing its distinctive outlook, until it gradually ceased to exist as a necessity for India.”<sup>10</sup>

Li explains that although Buddhism had disappeared from India, in the modern world it still existed in China, in its Tibetan regions. In East Asia, Buddhism had spread from China to Korea and Japan, where it had become a formidable religious force. Hence the Chinese scholar emphasized the importance of the study of the origin, development, and transmission of Buddhism beyond India’s borders. For Li, one topic, however, was particularly meaningful in this study. It was Tantrism, which, after its transmission to Tibet, had given birth to a distinctive Tibetan form of Buddhism. “Among the other traditions of Chinese Buddhism,” observed Li,

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. III.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. IV.

including Tibetan Buddhism within the forms of Buddhism existing in the People's Republic, "this fact is unprecedented."<sup>11</sup> In his view, without understanding Tantrism and its development in ancient India from the seventh to the twelfth century, no scholar of religion would be able to understand its transmission to China—in both the territories of the Han, and in the regions of the Tibetans—and the strong influence that Tantrism had had on Japan.

Having defined Tantrism, in the prologue of his *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong*, Li would define *Xizang Fojiao*, the Chinese term for Tibetan Buddhism. He writes:

Tibetan Buddhism [Xizang Fojiao] is a division of Chinese Buddhism [Zhongguo Fojiao], it is a local form of Buddhism in Tibet. As for this designation, academics hold different opinions. Some call it "Lamaism"; others call it "Tibetan Buddhism" or "Zangchuan fojiao." Yet Tibetans do not call it "Lamaism" or "Zangchuan fojiao" but "Sangjie que" (sangs rgyas chos lugs), "que" (chos) or "dengba" (bstan pa) meaning Buddhism, Buddhadharma.

Tibetan Buddhism has had a long history, and over the course of its development it has acquired a distinctive character; moreover, it has been disseminated across a rather vast region. Among the Chinese nationalities, those who accept Tibetan Buddhism are the Tibetans, the Inner Mongolians, the Monguor, the Qiang, the Yugur, etc., but there is also a minority of adherents among the Han. In regional terms, it has been propagated in the provinces of Tibet, Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, Yunnan, as well as in Inner Mongolia. Abroad, Tibetan Buddhism has already spread to India, Bhutan, Nepal, Sikkim, the People's Republic of Mongolia, and within the Soviet Union in the autonomous Republic of Buryatia, whereas in the last thirty years it has also spread and developed in Western societies.<sup>12</sup>

In Li's exposition, Tibetan Buddhism (C. Xizang Fojiao) was an integral part of Chinese Buddhism (C. Zhongguo Fojiao). Li understood Tibetan Buddhism as a local form of Chinese Buddhism—itsself a local form of the global Buddhism. Yet Tibetan Buddhism was itself also a local form of Buddhism. Thus, Tibetan Buddhism was both a local form of Buddhism (the global religion), and a local form of Chinese Buddhism (a local form of the global religion). Hence, Li made a distinction between the terms used by scholars and the terms used by Tibetans. Scholars employed three terms: (1) *Lamajiao* (Lama Teaching), commonly translated in and

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. IV.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

from English as “Lamaism;” (2) *Xizang Fojiao*, the equivalent of “Tibetan Buddhism;” (3) finally, *Zangchuan Fojiao*, a neologism dating back to the early 1980s.

In point of fact, as a term denoting the Buddhism of Tibet, the word *Zangchuan Fojiao* seems to have appeared, among its earliest occurrences in scientific publications, in Li’s *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong*. And so clearly, from the outset, Li classified this neologism as a term used by Chinese scholars only. Unlike scholars of religion, Tibetans did not call Tibetan Buddhism *Lamajiao* or “Zangchuan Fojiao.” Scholars of religion and the subjects of their study, therefore, spoke different languages. Tibetans did not employ these two terms; *Lamajiao* and *Zangchuan Fojiao* did not exist in their language. *Lamajiao* derived the term for Tibetan Buddhism from the Tibetan word “lama.” By contrast, *Zangchuan Fojiao* was derived from the ethnolinguistic name of the Tibetan people (C. Zang zu) of the People’s Republic. It was the form of Buddhism said to have been transmitted (C. *chuan*) from ancient India to this ethnic group.

*Zangchuan Fojiao* was a recent creation: it had no equivalent in foreign languages. At this point of its history, it circulated only within the People’s Republic and only existed in the Chinese language. By the mid 1980s, it may also have had a Tibetan equivalent. Still, as late as 1989, scientific publications in Chinese still called Tibetan Buddhism *Xizang Fojiao*.

And so, as Li observed, in their own language Tibetans did not refer to Tibetan Buddhism as “Lamaism” or as “Zangchuan Fojiao.” In the Tibetan language, Buddhism was not qualified by the name of the teachers (S. *guru*, T. *lama*), nor was it marked by the Chinese ethnolinguistic referent for the Tibetan people (C. Zang zu). Tibetans, as Li explains, providing the Chinese sound of the Tibetan words, call Buddhism the “Buddhadharma” (T. *Sangs rgyas chos lugs*), “Dharma” (T. *chos*), or, simply, the “Teaching” (T. *bstan pa*). “Lamaism” and “Zangchuan Fojiao” were designations employed by Chinese scholars of Buddhism to talk about Tibetan

Buddhism. Although in 1989 Li envisioned Tibetan Buddhism as division of Chinese Buddhism, throughout the first edition of his book he consistently employed the term “Tibetan Buddhism.” His *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong* thus contains traces of earlier Chinese studies on Tibetan Buddhism. For, in the first half of the twentieth century, during the early years of the Republic of China, monks and scholars recognized Tibetan Buddhism as the form of Buddhism belonging to the Tibetan nation.

Li’s vision of Tibetan Buddhism may be illustrated by his discussion of the regions of China, and of the nations of the world, where Tibetan Buddhism had spread over the course of its history. Beginning within China, Tibetan Buddhism was accepted by the Tibetan people (C. Zang zu). And the Tibetan people were one of the fifty-five ethnic or national minorities of the People’s Republic along with the majority Han group (C. Han zu). Li’s list went on, including the Mongol peoples (C. Menggu zu) of the Chinese provinces of Qinghai and Inner Mongolia, as well as the Qiang people (C. Qiang zu) in Sichuan, and the Yugur people (C. Yugu zu) in Gansu. From a regional standpoint, therefore, Tibetan Buddhism extended over several Chinese provinces. Some of these, such as Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan, bordered with Tibet; Inner Mongolia was the only major center of Tibetan Buddhism away from Tibet. And here, in Li’s language, the word Tibet referred to the Tibetan Autonomous Region (C. Xizang zizhiqu).

The Tibetan Autonomous Region was created as an administrative division of the People’s Republic in 1965. Following the Chinese occupation in 1951, the territory of formerly independent Tibet was dismembered and remapped onto a new territory. By 1965, Tibet retained its Chinese name as Xizang, but the name now referred to central Tibet only (T. U-tsang), while large portions of Tibetan territory to the east and north were annexed by existing Chinese provinces. In Li’s mapping of Tibetan Buddhism onto this new territory, however, Tibetan

Buddhism existed not only in Tibet, that is, the Tibetan Autonomous Region but also in those regions of the former territory of Tibet prior to the Chinese occupation. Because Tibetan Buddhism existed outside of Tibet, now defined as the Tibetan Autonomous Region, it could be said by Li to have been accepted in China by a number of other peoples and across vast regions in other provinces. Tibetan Buddhism was thus even accepted among the Han people. Lastly, Tibetan Buddhism—a division of Chinese Buddhism—had spread to other nations of Asia such as India and to the Himalayan nations. It had also spread to the republics of Buryatia and Kalmykia in the Soviet Union, and, more recently, to the societies of Europe and America.

In September 1987, Wang Furen (1930-1995), another leading scholar of Tibet, wrote in the foreword to his colleague's book, "Tibetan Buddhism, also commonly called 'Lamaism,' is an important current of Buddhism; it was handed down to our day, having had a history of one thousand years; in China, and across the entire world, it has a unique status."<sup>13</sup> Prior to Li's *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong*, between the end of the Cultural Revolution and the enforcement of martial law in Tibet in 1989, two monographs had already dealt with the topic of Tibetan Buddhism. In the first of the two books, published in 1982, Wang Furen discussed the history of Tibetan Buddhism in relation to Tantrism. As in Li's book, on a single occasion he reported the expression *Zangchuan Fojiao*.

Unlike Wang Furen's volume, however, in a book published five years later in 1987, the scholar Wang Sen (1912-1991) dealt very little with Tantrism. *Zangchuan Fojiao*, was also completely absent in his book. And so, before we return to the fate of Li's prologue after the thirteen months of military rule in Tibet, we will explore the ways in which the two scholars Wang Furen and Wang Sen envisioned Tibetan Buddhism after the Cultural Revolution. Their

---

<sup>13</sup> See Wang Furen, "Preface," in Li Jicheng, *Xizang Fojiao Mizong* (Beijing: Jinri zhongguo chubanshe, 1989), p. I.

studies, along with a European book, had been, though in very different ways, Li Jicheng's sources for his *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong*.



The first of the two books was Wang Furen's *Xizang Fojiao shilüe* ("A Brief History of Tibetan Buddhism"), published in Xining in 1982. By 1989, when he wrote the preface for Li's book, Wang was regarded, together with his colleague, as one of the founding figures of the study of Tibetan religion in China. In 1952 Wang obtained a degree in Ethnology from the department of Sociology at Beijing's Yanjing University. In the early 1950s, after conducting fieldwork in Tibet and in the adjacent provinces, his interests shifted from Ethnology to History. In 1956, having joined the Minzu College of China, he began teaching History. In 1976 he obtained tenure in the department of Ethnology at the same institution. During the 1980s Wang served as the dean of the Minzu College.

In the prologue of his *Xizang Fojiao Shilüe*, he explains that the book was a product of the lectures on the "History of Tibetan Buddhism," delivered at Minzu College in the academic year 1979-1980. "The domains that Tibetan Buddhism touches upon," observed Wang, describing his scholarly perspective, "are indeed vast, and this book is only an attempt from the historical viewpoint, for it sketches an outline of the development of Tibetan Buddhism in a clear and simple writing style."<sup>14</sup> Wang explained Tantrism as the product of India's social history. Tantrism had dawned in the sixth century, corresponding to the formation of the Indian feudal system. After Buddhism and Brahmanism had combined they shaped Hinduism, which had then become popular in the Indian society of the time.

---

<sup>14</sup> See Wang Furen, *Xizang Fojiao Shilüe* (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1982), p. I.

Because Buddhist Tantrism contained elements similar to Hinduism, it had increased in popularity. “Yet in general, from the sixth century, the influence of Buddhism in India was in decline.”<sup>15</sup> For Wang, in order to survive, Buddhism had to seek new ways in foreign lands: it had to develop beyond India’s borders. “In the seventh century, Buddhism thus entered Tibet, and this is one of the aspects of its outward development.”<sup>16</sup> In his view, no longer welcome in its land of origin, Buddhism had to find shelter abroad. “In the tenth century, Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism had completely declined, but Tantrism still endured for two hundred years.”<sup>17</sup> Thus, having altered the original elements of Buddhism from within, Tantrism had become Buddhism, that is, Buddhism in its last phase, as the Muslims must have encountered it in the twelfth century. “By the thirteenth century,” Wang remarked, “as Islam came to rule India, here Buddhism had lost its function.”<sup>18</sup>

Hence, the Chinese scholar regarded Tibetan Buddhism as a foreign phase of Tantrism, Buddhism’s last phase in India, as it began its new life beyond the Himalayas. This new development could be illuminated through the lenses of Marxist historiography. But first, Wang discussed the religious aspect of Tibetan Buddhism as the combination of Buddhism and Bon, the non-Buddhist religion of Tibet. And so, in his chapter entitled “Xizang Fojiao de xingcheng” (“Formation of Tibetan Buddhism”), Wang set forth his definition. “The average person commonly refers to Tibetan Buddhism as Lamaism,” he writes, “whereas others refer to it as *Zangchuan Fojiao*; it has aspects similar to and different from what is commonly called Buddhism.”<sup>19</sup> Unlike the general public, who used the classic term Lamaism, scholars availed themselves of the term Tibetan Buddhism, and some even called it *Zangchuan Fojiao*. Yet for

---

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 66.

Wang and other scholars, Tibetan Buddhism denoted only a distinct period of the history of Buddhism in Tibet—and of its territorial extension during the Tibetan Empire. In the *Tufan* period, as Wang refers in Chinese to the Tibetan Empire, at the time of its transmission from India, the Buddhism known in Tibet could not be called “Tibetan Buddhism”; the *Tufan* period should not be included in the history of Tibetan Buddhism. Wang provides a simple reason. Only after Buddhism had struggled with and then been merged with Bon—*Xizang yuanshi zongjiao*, “Tibet’s primitive religion”—could the scholar talk about Tibetan Buddhism.

Therefore, Tibetan Buddhism differed consistently from the form of Buddhism that was introduced in Tibet during the Imperial period from India, for Buddhism had not yet developed into a form that was local to Tibet. “Its manifestation,” contends Wang, “is the ultimate sign of Buddhism and Bon having struggled and having merged, therefore it is also the sign of completion of a process in which Buddhism became Tibetan.”<sup>20</sup> Because Bon and Tibetan Buddhism were the result of a fusion of elements, Tibetan Buddhism was no longer Buddhism. In effect, as Wang reminds his readers in 1982, Tibetan Buddhism could also be called Lamaism—or *Zangchuan Fojiao*.



Indeed, Wang’s illustration of Tibetan Buddhism depended on his understanding of Indian Buddhism, but also of a third term. This third term in the analogy between Indian Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism was Bon. Yet as late as 1982, the only authoritative source about Bon in China was the translation of a foreign volume. Published in Munich in 1956, when the Fourteenth Dalai Lama still governed in Lhasa in the early years of the Chinese occupation, the

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 66.



volume was entitled *Die Religionen Tibets: Bon und Lamaismus in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (*The Religions of Tibet: Bon and Lamaism in their Historical Development*). Its author was Helmut Hoffmann (1912-1992), one of the leading experts on Buddhism and Tibet in World War II-era Germany. Hoffmann's book was the abridged version of his 1950 habilitation thesis, entitled *Quellen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Bon-Religion* ("Sources for the History of the Bon-Religion"). It was published in English in London and New York as *The Religions of Tibet* in 1961.<sup>21</sup>

Born in Flensburg in northern Germany, Hoffmann attended the gymnasium, where he studied Latin and Greek, as well as modern languages such as English, French, Hebrew, and Italian. He first encountered the world of Oriental philology in his hometown, where in 1931 he began the study of Classical Civilizations and Sanskrit at the University of Flensburg. To obtain rigorous training as an Orientalist, in 1932 he transferred to the University of Berlin, where he enrolled in the *Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen*. Here, he studied several Asian languages, including Tibetan and Mongolian under the guidance of Ferdinand Lessing (1882-1961), a renowned scholar of China and Tibet who in 1935 moved to the United States to join the department of Oriental Languages at the University of California, Berkeley. In Berlin, Hoffmann enrolled in a doctoral program that included the study of Indian and Central Asian languages, graduating in 1938. His doctoral thesis, entitled *Bruchstücken des Āṭānāṭikasūtra aus dem zentralasiatischen Sanskritkanon der Buddhisten* ("Fragments of the Āṭānāṭikasūtra from the Central Asian Sanskrit Canon of the Buddhists"), was the study of a Buddhist manuscript collected by a German expedition to Central Asia two decades earlier.

---

<sup>21</sup> For a biography of Hoffmann, see Herbert Franke, "Helmut Hoffmann 24.8.1912–8.10.1992," in *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Jahrbuch* 1992. (München: 1993), pp. 247-253. See also Michael Walter, *Helmut Hoffmann. Bibliography*, (Bloomington: Eurolingua, 1982).

During his graduate studies, Hoffmann's interest had shifted from Buddhism to Bon and Tantrism. As he collected sources on Bon for his doctoral dissertation, Hoffmann had begun to read the Buddhist tantras. In particular, he was entranced by the *Kālacakra* tantra, whose teachings, in his opinion, contained elements of the monotheistic religions of the Middle East, such as Manichaeism, Christianity, and Gnosticism. During World War II, however, Hoffmann's opposition to the Third Reich harmed his academic career. As a junior scholar, Hoffmann had no way to seek his fortune overseas. Jobless, the Orientalist made a living as an interpreter for Indian prisoners detained in Nazi Germany. As the war ended, Hoffmann obtained his first teaching positions in Marburg, and then in Hamburg, as a private language instructor. In 1948, Hoffmann moved to Munich. Here, he accepted an appointment as a full professor of Indology in the department of Indian and Iranian studies at the Ludwig Maximilian University, a position he would hold for twenty years. During the 1950s and 1960s, he led various expeditions to Nepal and Sikkim for the Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities. In 1969 he moved to the United States, where he obtained a position as full professor of Ural-Altaic and Tibetan Studies at the University of Indiana, Bloomington. His monumental study on Bon, that is, the habilitation thesis he defended in Munich in 1950, still remains untranslated into any other language. Yet *The Religions of Tibet*, the English translation of its abridged version, circulated widely across the globe in the second half of the twentieth century. As we will see, it was translated into Chinese in 1965.

In the prologue of his *Quellen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Bon-Religion*, Hoffmann recounts that the manuscript of his thesis had been ready for defense since 1944. Between 1939 and 1944, however because of World War II, he had been unable to access his Tibetan sources on Bon in archives and libraries across Germany. It was as if his sources had been buried in the

Oriental archive of war-torn Europe, concealed and unreachable. Thanks to Walther Schubring (1881-1969), a friend who was employed at the Berlin State Library, in these years Hoffmann obtained some sources on Bon, but mostly on Buddhism. In spite of his difficulties in finding original sources, he continued to work on his project through 1944. At the end of the war, he went to Italy, when he met the foremost European scholar of Buddhism and Tibet of his time. Giuseppe Tucci (1894-1984), the founder of Tibetan studies in Italy, invited Hoffmann to Rome as his personal guest. Here, the German scholar consulted manuscripts and block prints in Tucci's private collection, transported from the Himalayas to the shores of the Mediterranean over two decades of expeditions funded by the Fascist government of Imperial Italy. In two visits to Rome, as Tucci worked on his *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, published in 1949, Hoffmann retrieved a wealth of Bon scriptures. Back in Berlin, he would formulate an original interpretation.

Among Hoffmann's Tibetan sources on Bon, there was an early nineteenth century history of the religious systems of India, Tibet, Mongolia, and China, the *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long* ("Crystal Mirror of Doctrinal Systems"). Completed in 1802, shortly before its author's death, the *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long* was the crowning work of Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma's (1737-1802) lifelong study of Buddhism and its history. Born in eastern Tibet, Thu'u bkwan had been recognized as the incarnation (T. *sprul sku*) of a renowned master in the Thu'u bkwan lineage, Ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho (1680-1736). Upon his death, divinations were performed in China and Tibet to identify his next incarnation. In Beijing, divinations had been made by Lcang skya rol pa'i rdo rje (1717-1786), the tutor of the Qianlong Emperor (1711-1799) of the Qing dynasty (1664-1911). In Lhasa, the various divinations performed in Tibet were confirmed by the Seventh Dalai Lama Bskal bzang rgya mtsho (1708-1757). As Thu'u bkwan turned thirteen, Lcang skya rol pa'i rdo rje was confirmed as the boy's tutor. On a

visit to eastern Tibet from Beijing, Lcang skya ordained the boy as a novice. At the age of sixteen, the Qianlong Emperor granted him permission to travel from eastern to central Tibet. In Lhasa, he settled in 'Bras spungs, one of the three great Dge lugs monasteries nearby Tibet's capital. Here, he received teachings from the Dalai Lama and from Blo bzang dpal ldan ye shes (1738-1780), the sixth Panchen Lama. Upon the Qianlong Emperor's invitation, Thu'u bkwan toured China and Mongolia three times in 1763, 1771, and 1783. In 1789, at the age of fifty-three, he was enthroned as the abbot of the Sku 'bum monastery in his native eastern Tibet, where he would remain until his death. His erudite religious history, the *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long*, would be known for its unsympathetic portrayal of the Bon religion.<sup>22</sup>

In Berlin, Hoffman included in the plan of his habilitation thesis the translation of one chapter from the *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long*. It was the eighth chapter, on the history of Bon. This time, however, the source of his Tibetan text was not Tucci's collection in Rome, but a late nineteenth century study by the Indian scholar of Tibet Sarat Chandra Das (1849-1917). A former student of Presidency College at the University of Calcutta, Das had become interested in Tibet after relocating to Darjeeling. In 1879 and 1881 he journeyed to Tibet on two expeditions, including intelligence work for the British Raj. On his first expedition to southern Tibet, he stayed in Gzhis ka rtse for six months. Here, aside from collecting a wealth of Buddhist and Bon scriptures, he had an audience with the Eighth Panchen Lama Blo bzang chos kyi grags pa (1855-1882). Hoffmann retrieved his history of Bon from one of the books Das had brought to India back from Tibet. Das's work, published in 1881 in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of*

---

<sup>22</sup> For an English translation of Thu'u bkwan's work, see Thukten Losang Chökyi Nyima, *The Crystal Mirror of Philosophical Systems, A Tibetan Study of Asian Religious Thought* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009).

*Bengal*, included a Tibetan text and his own English translation. The Tibetan text was drawn from Thu'u bkwan's "8th Book of Dub-thaḥ Šelkyi Meloḥ."<sup>23</sup>

Portraying the Bon priests as forgers of Buddhist scriptures, Thu'u bkwan divides the history of Bon into three stages of development. What began as a simple religion developed into an opponent of Buddhism in which the earlier, simple form, was no longer recognizable. According to Thu'u bkwan, Bon could thus be classified into three main forms: "diffuse Bon" (T. *'jol bon*), "deviant Bon" (T. *lkhyar bon*), and "transformed Bon" (T. *bsgyur bon*). Hoffmann translates these Tibetan terms respectively as "urtümliches Bon," "irrendes Bon," and "gewandeltes Bon." In the first phase, Bon's activities were threefold. It tamed different classes of demons in the underworld. It performed offerings to the gods in the heavens. On earth, Bon performed rituals of subjugation in the households. In contrast, in its second stage of development, Bon priests had begun to perform funerals, divinations, and interrogations of oracles. In this second phase, the Tibetan scholar claimed, there was no sense of Bon as a religious system, but this changed with the transformations that occurred over the third phase.

It was said that an Indian *paṇḍit* had written a text, modifying Buddhist doctrines. He buried it underground and later unearthed it, claiming that he had discovered a new revelation, a Bon hidden treasure (T. *gter ma*). During the reign of the Tibetan Emperor Khri srong lde btsan (r. 755-797), a renowned patron of Buddhism, the adherents of Bon had no choice but to embrace Buddhism. One Bon priest refused to do so and, angered by the Emperor's admonishment, he began transforming Buddhist scriptures into Bon scriptures. When the emperor disapproved, the Bon priests concealed their new scriptures underground. Only later would they claim that these scriptures were revealed Bon treasures. The final transformation of

---

<sup>23</sup> See Sarat Chandra Das, "Contributions on the Religion, History, &c. of Tibet," in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 50, (1881, part 1): 187ff.

Bon had occurred at the time of Glang dar ma (r. c. 838-842), the last ruler of the Tibetan Empire. In traditional accounts, Glang dar ma was portrayed as a tyrant, allied with Bon while persecuting Buddhism. At this time, according to Thu'u bkwan more Buddhist scriptures had been forged, hidden underground, and revealed again as Bon scriptures. In Hoffman's hands, however, long buried in the archives of the Berlin State Library, as World War II unfolded across Europe, Thu'u bkwan's account of Bon would reveal more.

In his *Quellen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Bon-Religion*, Hoffmann formulated a new interpretation of the history of Bon—what he called Tibet's national religion. In his comparison of Buddhist and Bon scriptures, Hoffman sought to reveal something that previous European scholars only imagined: the original, national religion of Tibet, prior to the introduction of Buddhism from India. As he writes in his *The Religions of Tibet*, "Today we are in a position to say with some certainty that the original Bon religion was the national Tibetan form of that old animist-shamanist religion which one time was widespread not only in Siberia but through the whole of Inner Asia, East and West Turkestan, Mongolia, Manchuria, the Tibetan plateaux and even China."<sup>24</sup> In light of the anthropological studies of his time, Hoffmann thus introduced Bon to the world of Oriental philology as Tibet's primitive religion, endowed with elements of Siberian Shamanism similar to those of the religions of Inner Asia.

Among his sources on Shamanism, Hoffmann made reference mainly to two works. The first, entitled *Legendy i rasskazy o shamanakh u yakutov, buryat i tungusov* ("Legends and Tales about Shamans among the Yakut, Buryat and Tungus"), was published in Moscow in 1928 by the Siberian ethnologist Gavriil Vasilyevich Ksenofontof (1888-1938). Born in Yakutia, in the northeastern region of the Russian Empire, Ksenofontof had graduated in law from the University of Tomsk in 1912. Here he studied the work of Grigory Nikolayevich Potanin

---

<sup>24</sup> See Helmut Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), pp. 14-5.

(1835-1920), the Siberian ethnologist renowned for his several expeditions through the Russian empire. In search of the origins of Shamanism, Potanin had claimed that the image of the shaman of Inner Asia had been central to the formation of the early Christian legends, and to the very image of Christ. Through the 1920s, Ksenofontof journeyed through Soviet Russia on three major expeditions in search of the origins of his people, the Yakuts, and of the Siberian shaman. Over this decade, he collected tales and legends among the Yakut, Buryat, and Tungus, communities where Tibetan Buddhism had also been transmitted in previous centuries through Mongolia.<sup>25</sup> In 1929, the wealth of ethnographic material he collected resulted in the publication of two volumes: his *Legendy i rasskazy o shamanakh u yakutov, buryat i tungusov*; and *Hrestes. Šamanizim i Hristianstvo* (“Christ. Shamanism and Christianity”). In the latter work, Ksenofontof revised Potanin’s earlier theory, setting forth a similar yet more nuanced claim about Shamanism. In his portrait, Christ was a shaman. Yet unlike Potanin, Ksenofontof did not claim the Shamanic origins of Christianity. Rather, his study sought to show that the role of the shaman in Siberia could be compared to the role of Christ in early Christianity. Therefore, Shamanism was not a primitive religion, as most western European scholars of the time claimed, but a religion in its own right.<sup>26</sup>

Hoffmann’s other main source on Shamanism was the volume entitled *Studien zum problem des schamanismus* (“Studies on the Problem of Shamanism”), published in Lund in 1939 by the Swedish scholar of religion Åke Ohlmarks (1911-1984). Unlike Ksenofontof, who regarded Shamanism as a religion, Ohlmarks described Shamanism as a psychiatric disorder. For the Scandinavian scholar, Shamanism was a form of hysteria. “Shamanism has of old been put in

---

<sup>25</sup> For a study of Buddhism in Buryatia see Anya Bernstein, *Religious Bodies Politic: Rituals of Sovereignty in Buryat Buddhism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

<sup>26</sup> For a discussion of the works of Ksenofontov and Potanin in the study of Shamanism see Andrei A. Znamenski, *The Beauty of the Primitive: Shamanism and Western Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

connection with the so-called ‘arctic hysteria,’ an arctic flora of severe, often epidemic psychoses and abnormal forms of psychic reaction not to be found to such an extent and such a serious anywhere else in the world.”<sup>27</sup> On the world map, Ohlmarks identifies two forms of Shamanism, in turn related with two types of environments, the arctic and the sub-arctic forms.

For Ohlmarks, the arctic form of Shamanism was a severe form of hysterical reaction due to the unkind environmental conditions in which, in northern Europe and Russia, the Laplanders, the Yakuts, the Tungus, and even the Polar Eskimos, were subjected to these forms of psychosis. A clear distinction, however, emerged between these peoples and the Europeans and Russians who lived in the sub-arctic regions. The arctic peoples had become accustomed to these inhospitable regions, with their paucity of food, and to the setting of the polar night. Therefore, they had become as if immune from the most severe hysterical attacks. By contrast, the more recent European and Russian settlers in Lapponia and Siberia were not immune. Thus, they could still be seized by deep psychoses. Hence, such hysterical attacks were due to the reactions of the arctic environment and climate on the human body. Ohlmarks writes:

Most shamanologists have characterized shamanism as formed and developed by abnormal psychotic individuals, and regarded in its entirety shamanism presents distinct features of psychic dissociation of reactive as well as other nature: most traits, such as the environmental dependency, the traumatic exogeneity, anesthesia, masochism, ventriloquism, the infliction of pain of a poor gain, theatrical moments, and the construction of certain classic *séances*, indicate a hysteroid background. When the arctic peoples were forced from the south up into the uninhabited polar regions the dreadful environment and climate exercised a psychic pressure on them, which is still reflected in the severe arctic psychoses; in their extremity they then resorted to the *ultimum refugium* of the hysterical reaction, and out of this they created the arctic shamanism, which became the psychic rescue of the human existence of these peoples. The basis and origin of arctic Shamanism is partly the great hysterical attack which ends with cataleptic collapse, partly the arctic delirium of persecution and spirit-hallucinations. The dualism of the unconscious state between the dead body and the marvelous psychical sensations of flight gave birth to the idea that the soul of the shaman passed out of the body and flew into the realms of the spirits, downwards and upwards.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> See Åke Ohlmarks, *Studien zu problem de schamanismus* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1939), p. 351.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 351-352.



The “great hysterical attack,” leaving the Shaman in a condition marked by trance, with the mind unconscious and the body rigid, was only attained by few. For Ohlmarks, there was a distinction between the Shamans of the arctic and those of the subarctic regions. The “great” few were the Shamans of the arctic peoples. And these great few were the only ones to be held in regard in the definition of Shamanism. In contrast, the “little” Shamans of the subarctic regions were nothing but ordinary magicians. These simple sorcerers were common to all primitive peoples, and they were incapable of reaching the heights of the great arctic Shamans with their deep trances and their flights of the soul. Hence, the most authentic form of Shamanism had to be sought among the peoples of the arctic regions. Here, where the environmental and climatic conditions had been adverse to human life, human beings had exalted the darkness of hysteria, transforming it into religion. Unlike the “great-shamanism” of the arctic regions of Europe and Russia, concludes Ohlmarks, the “little-shamanism” of the subarctic regions of Europe and Central Asia was common “among the inhabitants of Eastern Tibet (perhaps also in the Delphic oracle) and will probably constitute an imitation of the shaman’s elevation in space during the journey of the soul.”<sup>29</sup> After all, Tibetan Shamanism was only an imitation of the great hysterical attack of the arctic regions of Eurasia.<sup>30</sup>

---

---

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp. 355-6.

<sup>30</sup> For a classic study of the European imaginary of Shamanism in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, see Gloria Flaherty, *Shamanism and the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

Invoking Alexander Csoma de Kőrös (1784-1842), the celebrated Transylvanian founder of Tibetan studies, in the first chapter of *The Religions of Tibet* on “The Old Bon Religion”

Hoffmann writes:

The cultural and religious face of Tibet today has been shaped by two main forces: the Indian missionary religion of Buddhism on the one hand, which has dominated the scene outwardly and determined the fate of the Land of Snows for over a thousand years, and the autochthonous Tibetan outlook and way of life, which, though outwardly defeated, has nevertheless filled all the spiritual and psychological channels of the country's national life. Thus the internal situation of Tibet may be said to turn on a polar reaction between a luminous, dynamic, fructifying and historical element on the one hand, and a sombre, static and fundamentally unhistorical element—the ancient Tibetan religion—on the other. The origin of the word ‘Bon’ to describe it is lost in the past, and it is not readily definable, but in all probability once referred to the conjuring of the gods by magic formulas. As we shall see, it is not only numerous followers in the north and east of Tibet, who still nominally adhere to this religion, which has been greatly affected in the course of many hundreds of years by Buddhism, who partake in the old original religious force, but also and to no less a degree, its Buddhist opponents. The religious shape of Lamaism, so called on account of its chief upholders, the Lamas, or ‘the superior ones’, the higher monks, developed from the teaching of the Buddha penetrating into the country from India and mixing with original Tibetan religious elements.<sup>31</sup>

Hoffmann thus analyzed the Bon religion as the original, timeless essence of the Tibetan nation. But to facilitate that analysis, Hoffmann had to draw an analogy between the primitive elements of Bon and those of the “animist-shamanist” religion reported by European and Russian ethnologists from across Asia. For Hoffmann, the shaman's “flight of the soul,” his “costumes,” but most important, his access to the realm of spirits by means of his “small drums,” were all elements possessed by the Bon priests. “The old Tibetan Shamans seem to have been in many respects similar to their colleagues of north and central Asia. Like them, they used fantastic head-dress whilst carrying out their religious observances, wearing a blue robe, or a blue fur garment as a Shaman robe, and, in particular, making use of small drums, which were essential to their rituals.”<sup>32</sup> These elements of Shamanism, however, were also elements of Lamaism.

---

<sup>31</sup> See Helmut Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 14.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Based on Thu'u bkwan's account of Bon and on European and Russian theories of Shamanism, Hoffmann's study had one important consequence on Lamaism. To be the national form of Buddhism in Tibet, Lamaism had to have been the product of an alteration. It was an alteration in which Buddhism took on specific national characteristics. Lamaism had to have been altered by Bon during the struggles between the two religions during the early transmission of Buddhism from India.

As reported by Thu'u bkwan, the struggles between Buddhism and Bon had taken place in this period of early transmission. This period was for him the third and last phase of Bon, which unfolded at the time of the last kings of the Tibetan Empire (the mid-ninth century). This last phase of Bon, that is, what he called transformed Bon—when Bon priests, he claimed, had begun to forge Buddhist scriptures to fashion them as hidden treasures—followed two previous phases. The first phase, which Thu'u bkwan called the “diffuse Bon,” was Bon in its simplest form; the second phase, “deviant Bon,” already showed signs of corruption, signs that had led Bon priests to forge more Buddhist scriptures. It was the first phase of Thu'u bkwan's “diffuse Bon,” then, which Hoffmann imagined as the origin of the national religion of Tibet. This early kernel of Tibet's national religion, then, had developed into a complex system. For Hoffmann, this primitive religious system reached maturity as the Tibetan form of Shamanism, whose elements were inseparable from Tibet's national customs and ways of life.

Hence, Hoffmann accomplished a further transformation of Thu'u bkwan's image of Bon. For the Tibetan scholar, Bon had been a deviant form of religion, a system of devious treasure revealers. Unlike Buddhism, which had received its scriptures from India, Bon was a corrupt system of forgers. Hoffmann extracted his theory of development from the Tibetan scholar's history of the origin of Bon. The German scholar thus envisioned Bon as if, using

Thu'u bkwan's crystal mirror, he could discern the reflection of the historical origin of his long-sought primitive religion of Tibet. The Qianlong Emperor, Thu'u bkwan's patron in Beijing, had employed *Lamajiao* to refer to Tibetan Buddhism in edicts and treatises. Yet in his detailed history of the religions of Tibet, Thu'u bkwan did not use the term *Lamajiao* or any Tibetan equivalent of Hoffmann's German term "Lamaismus."

In 1950, Hoffmann appended the transcription of the original Tibetan text of Thu'u bkwan's chapter on Bon to his habilitation thesis, his *Quellen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Bon-Religion*, offering a German translation. Here, he reports the Tibetan terminology on Bon quite literally. In fact, he does not translate the term Bon at all. He renders the Tibetan term *Bon* into German very simply as "Bon." Unable to define the term in German, the scholar thus left its original, unknown sense, buried in the Tibetan archive. The untranslated word *Bon*, distant in time and space from the context in which Thu'u bkwan had employed it, could thus be infused with an original meaning in Hoffmann's German. Bon, an empty word in German, could mean Shamanism in Tibetan. Yet Hoffmann did not leave Thu'u bkwan's *Chos* untranslated. He rendered it as "Buddhismus," Buddhism.<sup>33</sup>

There was no reason for Hoffmann to leave the term *Chos*, meaning *Dharma* in Sanskrit, untranslated, for, unlike the term *Bon*, Hoffmann had a clear idea of what the term *Dharma* had meant in Sanskrit in ancient India: the teaching of the Buddha. "Buddhismus," he comments in his abridged *The Religions of Tibet*, was "the foreign religion which penetrated into the narrowly limited sphere of the old Shamanist-animist beliefs, and by its amalgamation with native religious elements it produced that special religion which we know today as Lamaism."<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> See Helmut Hoffmann, "Quellen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Bon-Religion," in *Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse*, vol. 4 (Wiesbaden: Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur in Mainz, 1950), p. 331.

<sup>34</sup> See Helmut Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 28.

Having unearthed the origin of Bon, or having thought he had, having described it as the Tibetan form of Shamanism, Hoffmann put forth the thesis that Bon had altered Buddhism. The product of this alteration was Lamaism. In Hoffmann’s opinion, then, prior to this alteration by Bon, Lamaism was simply Buddhism. Thus, the German scholar translated Thu’u bkwan’s *Chos* as Buddhism, leaving *Bon* untranslated. In Hoffmann’s view, before the third phase of Bon, the phase Thu’u bkwan called “transformed Bon,” Buddhism had not yet been altered. For Thu’u bkwan, however, though *Bon* may have altered *Chos*, *Chos* never transformed into Lamaism—or into the Qianlong Emperor’s *Lamajiao*.<sup>35</sup>

Because Buddhism had been foreign to Tibet, it did not originally partake of the Shamanistic elements of Tibet’s national religion—the untranslated word Bon. Hoffmann contended that historical Buddhism acted upon the immutable and unhistorical relics of Tibet’s persisting primitive religion. Therefore Hoffmann’s Bon could transfer onto Lamaism the archaic, primitive, timeless traces of Shamanism found in Tibet’s national character and religion. Thanks to his recognition of these elements of Shamanism, buried in the present state of Lamaism, Hoffmann could thus unearth Bon in its pristine state. Based on his sources (themselves buried in the Berlin State Library) Hoffmann thus revealed Bon as the primitive, national religion of Tibet prior to the introduction of Buddhism from India.<sup>36</sup> Along with Bon,

---

<sup>35</sup> For a discussion of Thu’u bkwan’s idea of the mixing of *Bon* and *Chos*, see the “Concluding verses” of his eight chapter on *Bon* in Thuken Losang Chökyi Nyima, *The Crystal Mirror of Philosophical Systems, A Tibetan Study of Asian Religious Thought* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009), pp. 329-30. The stanza reads:

Dharma and Bön are considered contradictory, but  
 Dharma has Bön mixed in, and Bön has Dharma mixed in,  
 So one such as I, lacking the dustless eye of Dharma,  
 Is wary of trying to make distinctions between Dharma and Bön.

This closing stanza, together with the following three, however, is missing in the edition of the text appended to Hoffmann’s “Quellen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Bon-Religion,” so he did not incorporate it in his translation, nor did he elaborate on it.

<sup>36</sup> For a discussion of the term Lamaism see Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1996), pp. 15-45.

Hoffmann's theory of the development of the religions of Tibet would also be known in China—in the colonial realm of Tibetan Buddhism. In China, Hoffmann's Lamaism would become the *Lamajiao*, and the Tibetan Buddhism of the People's Republic—Buddhist Tantrism altered by Shamanism—the primitive religion of the Tibetan ethnic minority.



In the early 1960s, in the aftermath of Mao Zedong's Great Leap Forward (1958-1961), the social anthropologist Li Youyi (b. 1912) undertook a new project for the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences: the translation of current European and American scholarship on Buddhism and Tibet, especially the works of scholars who had expressed support for Tibet's right to self-determination as a nation—including, among others, Helmut Hoffmann. Li began his career in Beijing in 1932, when he enrolled in the department of Communication of Yanjing University, an institution founded in 1919 by the merger of three Christian colleges. In 1933, Li transferred to the department of Sociology. Before he received his degree in 1936, Li studied under the British anthropologist Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown (1881-1955), who served as a visiting scholar at Yanjing in the year of Li's graduation. In 1937, following the Japanese occupation, Yanjing University fled to Kunming in southern China. Li also moved to Yunnan, where he immersed himself in fieldwork, studying the economy of the Yi community of Yunnan's "Stone Forest." Soon after he published his research, his career reached a turning point.

In 1944, at the request of the Office of Tibetan and Mongolian Affairs of the Republic of China, Li settled in Lhasa, where he stayed until 1947. In Tibet's capital, Li conducted three years of extensive fieldwork on the religious education of the Tibetan monastic system. In the

'Bras spungs monastery near Lhasa, where Thu'u bkwan had received his training two centuries earlier, Li spent time with a group of Chinese monks who had gone to Central Tibet in the early 1930s.<sup>37</sup> It was the "Group for the Study of the Dharma Abroad in Tibet," organized and funded in the late 1920s by the scholar and monk Taixu (1890-1947), renowned in the Republic of China for his attempted reforms of Chinese Buddhism. Led by the monk Dayong (1893-1929) into eastern Tibet on a long journey that began in Beijing in 1925, the group had reached Lhasa in 1931, accompanied by the monk Fazun (1902-1980), who would later become an esteemed translator into Chinese of Tibetan Buddhist scriptures. After Fazun's return to Chongqing in 1934, the group remained in Lhasa until the end of the war. Returning to Beijing in 1947, Li was given a teaching position at Qinghua University, where, after the foundation of the People's Republic, he published several volumes on such anthropological topics as Tibetan kinship, but, more importantly, on Tibet's feudal system, and on the circumstances of what he called the "Tibet Question." From 1956 to 1961, as he conducted long periods of fieldwork in Tibet, his career had another turning point.

Thanks to his knowledge of English and to his familiarity with foreign scientific literature, in the early 1960s Li began to translate European and American studies of Buddhism and Tibet into Chinese. Among Li's early translations, in 1967, the same year it was published in English by Yale, we find *Tibet, a Political History*, by Dbang phyug bde ldan Zwa sgab pa (1907-1989), the renowned Tibetan historian and former Cabinet Minister for the Dalai Lama's government in Lhasa from 1939 to 1951. After the Cultural Revolution, Li was appointed director of the Department of Ethnology in the Chinese Academy of Social sciences. Around 1980, on his visit to America, at the University of California in Los Angeles, and in England, at the University of Oxford, Li continued his translations. In 1979, he translated into Chinese *A*

---

<sup>37</sup> For the activities of this group of monks, see Chapter 4 of the present dissertation.

*Short History of Tibet*, which had been published in English in London and New York in 1962 by the British diplomat and historian of Tibet Hugh Edward Richardson (1905-2000). The same year, Li translated into Chinese *Tents Against the Sky*, a novel set on the Tibetan highlands, which had also previously been published in English in New York in 1955 by Robert Brainerd Ekvall (1898-1978), an American Protestant missionary himself born in Tibet. In 1980, Li co-translated the first volume of Giuseppe Tucci's monumental *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* into Chinese. Finally, in 1987, he co-translated *Ancient Folk-Literature from North-East Tibet*, a work by Frederick William Thomas (1867-1956), a British scholar of Tibet and Boden Professor of Sanskrit in Oxford, which had been published in Berlin in 1957.

But it was Li's first major translation that left the most indelible mark on future generations of Chinese scholars in the understanding of Tibetan Buddhism and Tantrism. This was his rendering of Hoffmann's *The Religions of Tibet*. Thanks to Li, Hoffmann's expertise in the methods of Oriental philology, not to mention his knowledge of the history of Buddhism and Tantrism in ancient India, as well as his new theory of Bon sketched from the point of view of the ethnology of Shamanism, provided the scientific foundation for the Chinese anthropology of Tibetan religion. Yet, Li's translation, entitled *Xizang de zongjiao* ("The Religions of Tibet"), was not simply a Chinese rendering of Hoffmann's study. For, if Hoffmann's translation of Thu'u bkwan's history of Bon rested upon the canons of Oriental philology, Li's translation of Hoffmann's book was based on a different science. Completed in 1965, the same year in which the Tibetan Autonomous Region was formally instituted, Hoffmann's *The Religions of Tibet* was transported into China as the scientific underpinning of a new history of religion.

Li's science began to surface on the first pages of Hoffmann's book. In the author's preface, written in April 1956 in Munich, Hoffmann had remarked on the current situation of



Orientalist scholarship. Thanks to the changes that had taken place in the West since World War II, especially in the “political and ideological situation,” the study of the civilizations of the East had a growing appeal. Therefore, a book on the development of the religions of an Asian people, the Tibetans, a people who had been isolated from the rest of the globe until only a few years earlier, required no apology. “My book,” he wrote, “is primarily intended for those interested in religious investigation, ethnologists, and the growing number of those who are taking a lively interest in the civilizations of the East.” Unlike his 1950 habilitation thesis, *The Religions of Tibet* was thus aimed at a global public. “However, I also hope that it may prove useful for experts in Tibet too, because quite frequently I have been in a position to make use of previously unavailable sources.”<sup>38</sup> Therefore, professional scholars may also benefit from some of the insights of his research in World War II Germany and in postwar Italy. Those experts would include the small group of Chinese scholars of Tibet. As we have seen Hoffmann had provided a creation myth for Lamaism, portraying it as the offspring of Indian Buddhism and Siberian Shamanism. This depiction proved to be a gift to Chinese scholars, transforming their understanding of Tibetan Buddhism. With the help of Li’s translation, that gift paid an unexpected dividend: the Tibetan nation disappeared in the process.

In the first chapter on “The Old Bon Religion” (C. Gulao de Benjiao), Li translates Hoffmann’s English quite faithfully. His Chinese readers learned about the history of the “Indian missionary religion of Buddhism” and its domination in Tibet for over one thousand years. Yet Li’s Chinese rendering would not include Hoffmann’s recognition of Tibet as a country with its own national customs and ways of life. “The autochthonous Tibetan outlook and way of life,” Hoffmann wrote, “which, though outwardly defeated, has nevertheless filled all the spiritual and

---

<sup>38</sup> See Helmut Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 9.

psychological channels of the country's national life."<sup>39</sup> In Li's hands, Hoffmann's portrait of Tibet as a country, and his identification of Bon as the expression of Tibetan national customs and ways of life, were both erased. "The Tibetan autochthonous way of life, which, though outwardly defeated, has nevertheless filled all the spiritual and psychological aspects of the country people's national life in this region."<sup>40</sup> Li translated Hoffmann's "country" not as *guojia*, but as a "region," or "regions" (C. *diqu*), of the People's Republic where Tibetans happened to live. Tibet's "national life" (C. *minzu shenghuo*) had been erased from Hoffmann's English. In its place, there appeared in Li's Chinese the Tibetan "people's life" (C. *renmin shenghuo*).

Furthermore, Hoffmann's Bon was no longer the "national Tibetan form" of Inner Asian Shamanism. Clearly, *Bon* was a Tibetan word. It had no equivalent in European languages or in Chinese. Hence like Hoffmann, who translated Thu'u bkwan's history into German, Li also had no choice but to leave the "Bon" of his English original untranslated. Thus, through the medium of Hoffmann's "Bon," Li engaged in his own ritual of translation, infusing the roughly homophonic sinograph "Ben"—meaning "origin" in Chinese—with the spirit of the Tibetan Shaman. Yet Li's "Ben" differed from Hoffmann's "Bon" in one important respect. "Ben" was

---

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, p. 15.

<sup>40</sup> See Helmut Hoffmann, "Xizang de zongjiao," trans. Li Youyi, in Ge Lei, Zhang Jianghua, ed., *Li Youyi yu zangxue yanjiu* (Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, 2003), p. 457-8. My translation. Retranslated from the Chinese version, the entire passage from Hoffmann's 1961 English edition of *The Religions of Tibet* reads:

The cultural and religious face of Tibet today has been mainly shaped by two forces: one is the transmission of Indian Buddhism, which has controlled the scene outwardly and determined Tibet's fate for a thousand years. The other is the face of Tibet's local way of life, which, though outwardly defeated, has nevertheless filled all the spiritual and psychological aspects of the people's life in this region. Thus the internal situation of Tibet may be said to turn a sort of polar reaction, on the one hand it is a luminous, dynamic, concrete historical element; on the other hand it is a dark, static and fundamentally unhistorical element—that is, Tibet's ancient religion. As for the sinograph "Ben" (Bon) its origin is lost, and at once it is not easily defined, but in all probability it originated from the conjuring of spirits and gods by magical formulas. As we do see, it not only has numerous adherents in the north and east of Tibet, for they are nominally still adherents of Bon, but in the long development of Buddhism it has already been affected to differing degrees; similarly, Buddhism has been affected by Bon. The religious face of Lamaism, then, is Buddhism having penetrated from India and having then mixed with elements of Tibet's primitive religions.

no longer the primitive religion of the Tibetan nation. “Until quite recently,” Li translated, “we knew very little indeed about this Ben religion. Today we can say with some certainty that the original Ben religion was the ~~national~~ Tibetan form of that old animist-shamanist religion which at one time was widespread in Siberia and through the whole of Inner Asia, East and West Turkestan, Mongolia, Manchuria, the Tibetan plateau and even the Chinese inland.<sup>41</sup> Thus in Li’s “Ben,” there remained not only no trace of the Tibetan nation—a timely erasure in 1965—but the “Chinese inland” (C. Zhongguo neidi) appeared instead in place of Hoffmann’s China (C. Zhongguo).

Lastly, we should consider a passage in which Hoffmann describes a specific relation among the plurality of forms of Buddhism in ancient India, China, and Tibet. Li’s translation transformed the geography of Hoffmann’s book. This passage appears in the chapter of *The Religions of Tibet* entitled “Padmasambhava and Padmaism,” as Hoffmann moved on from his discussion of Bon and Indian Buddhism. He wrote:

It is advisable that we should now interrupt our examination of the religious historical development of Tibet at the time of the universal monarchy, when the basis for all later epochs was laid, and pause to take a closer look at the personality of Padmasambhava and the school inaugurated by him in Indian, and, above all, Tibetan Buddhism. There can be no doubt about the historical importance of this strange Indian master, though those investigators who call him ‘the father of Lamaism’ and leave it at that are probably going rather too far, because, as we have seen, at the time in question, other schools of Indian (Shāntirakshita) and of Chinese Buddhism were also active in the formation of Tibetan religious life.<sup>42</sup>

In Tibet, traditional historical accounts described the transmission of Buddhism from India in two periods. The first period, known as the “early dissemination” (T. *bstan pa snga dar*), ascribed the mid-eight century transmission of Buddhism in the Tibetan Empire (C. Tufan) to two Indian figures, a paṇḍit and a tāntrika: Śāntarākṣita and Padmasambhava. It was said that

---

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 458.

<sup>42</sup> See Helmut Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 50.

around 779, during the rule of Khri srong lde btsan, that they founded Bsam yas, the first Buddhist monastery of Tibet, resting on the north bank of the Gtsang po River in Central Tibet.

It was also said that soon after Śāntarakṣita died in 788, a debate took place between two Buddhist factions, with Khri srong lde btsan serving as the judge. The first faction was led by the Chinese monk Moheyan, who held the tenets of the Northern Chan school (C. Bei zong), whereas the second was led by Kamalaśīla, a disciple of Śāntarakṣita who had been summoned from India to defend his Madhyamaka school. According to tradition, the debate, focusing on the question of the gradual or sudden nature of awakening, had been won by Kamalaśīla, who died shortly after, perhaps assassinated by the Chinese faction. After this crucial event in the earlier dissemination, it was said that no Chinese Buddhist school would play a major role in Tibet. From that point, Tibetans would seek Buddhism only in India. The second period of transmission, called the “later dissemination” (T. *bstan pa phyi dar*), would begin in the late tenth century.

After he described the Bsam yas debate, Hoffmann dwelled on the figure of Padmasambhava to make his point about the historical origin of Lamaism. Padmasambhava could not be regarded, as “other scholars” had, as “the father of Lamaism.” Hoffmann’s disagreement was in fact directed against a single scholar, who provided his main source on Lamaism. *The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism, With Its Mystic Cults, Symbolism and Mythology and in Its Relation to Indian Buddhism*, published in London in 1895 by Colonel Lawrence Augustine Waddell (1854-1938), a British army medical officer and explorer of the Himalayas, had been the most influential publication on Lamaism since the end of the nineteenth century. “It will be seen that I consider the founder of Lāmaism,” wrote Waddell in the prologue of his book, “to be Padma-sambhava—a person to whom previous writers are wont to refer in too incidental a

manner. Indeed, some careful writers omit all mention of his name, although he is considered by the Lāmas of all sects to be the founder of their order, and by the majority of them to be greater and more deserving of worship than Buddha himself.”<sup>43</sup> Hoffmann conceded that Padmasambhava had been a figure of crucial importance in the history of Tibetan Buddhism. Yet at Padmasambhava’s time, “other schools of Indian ... and Chinese Buddhism,” that is, Śāntarakṣita’s Indian Madhyamaka and Moheyan’s Northern Chan, had been present at the royal court and had begun shaping the Tibetan ways of life.

As he claimed in the next chapter, entitled “Religious Struggles of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries,” during the early dissemination, Padmasambhava’s form of Tantrism had not yet merged with Bon. Hence for Hoffmann, Lamaism in its mature form belonged only to the later dissemination. Unlike Waddell, for whom Tibetan Buddhism had been Lamaism since the first Indian masters set foot in Tibet, for the German scholar Buddhism had become Lamaism only at a later time, after Buddhism’s struggles with Bon.

As Hoffmann’s German “Bon” had become Li’s Chinese “Ben,” Hoffmann’s Lamaism became Li’s *Lamajiao*, a word that had been used in China since the Ming Dynasty, but which now took on new meaning. Yet as it returned to China from Europe, embodied in Li’s *Lamajiao*, Lamaism no longer belonged to Tibet, nor did Chinese Buddhism belong to China. Lamaism belonged to the territory of the Tibetan Autonomous Region. “Chinese Buddhism” encompassed full extension of the People’s Republic, including the Tibetan Autonomous Region.

Hence, as Li moved on to the chapter on “Padmasambhava and Padmaism” (C. Lianhuasheng he Lianhuajiao) Hoffmann’s “Tibetan Buddhism” turned into “Tibet’s Lamaism” (C. Xizang de Lamajiao), meaning the Lamaism of the Tibetan Autonomous Region; his “Indian

---

<sup>43</sup> See Lawrence Austine Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism, With Its Mystic Cults, Symbolism and Mythology and in Its Relation to Indian Buddhism* (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1896), p. X.

Buddhism” (C. Yindu Fojiao), became “Śāntarakṣita’s Hīnayāna teaching,” (C. Jingming Xiaosheng jiao); and, finally, the German scholar’s “Chinese Buddhism” was rendered by Li with a neologism. In Li’s text, “Chinese Buddhism” was “Handi Fojiao” (Han Territory-Buddha Teaching): the Buddhism existing in the lands (C. di, or diqu) of the majority of Han people.

Prior to this use in the People’s Republic, the term “Handi” had not been associated with Buddhism. In Chinese historical records, an early usage of the term Handi referred to the geographical extent of the Han dynasty (202 BCE-220 CE), meaning the “Han Territories.” During the Qing dynasty the term Handi had been often used to refer to the territories inhabited by the Han and the Manchu in the central and eastern regions of the Empire. Hence during the Republic of China, the term was mostly employed in the travel accounts of Chinese voyagers and monks, who, from their remote position in Tibet, called the Chinese inland Handi in contrast to Xizang, China’s name for Tibet. Over the first half of the twentieth century, scholars and monks had called Chinese Buddhism “Zhongguo Fojiao” (Middle Kingdom-Buddha Teaching). The Buddhism of their nation was Chinese Buddhism.

And so, although in 1965 the English term “Chinese Buddhism” had an equivalent in the Chinese term “Zhongguo Fojiao,” Li translated both Chinese Buddhism and Zhongguo Fojiao with a new expression. There is no attested English translation for *Handi Fojiao*; a possible paraphrase would be the “Buddhism of the Han Territories.”<sup>44</sup> This first erasure of Chinese Buddhism would be repeated, over the 1980s, by the next generation of scholars. In their histories of Tibetan Buddhism, Li Jicheng and Wang Furen, in fact, resorted to both Chinese

---

<sup>44</sup> See Helmut Hoffmann, “Xizang de zongjiao,” trans. Li Youyi, in Ge Lei, Zhang Jianghua, ed., *Li Youyi yu zangxue yanjiu* (Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, 2003), p. 482. My translation. Back-translated from Li’s Chinese version, the passage in Hoffmann reads:

There can be no doubt about the historical importance of Padmasambhava, though some people who call him ‘the father of Tibet’s Lamaism’ perhaps go too far, because, when he inaugurated the religion, Śāntarakṣita’s Hīnayāna teaching and the Buddhism from the land of the Han also exerted an influence on the Tibetan religious life.

Buddhism and Handi Fojiao. The former was the Buddhism of the People's Republic in its entire territorial extension. The latter was the Buddhism received by the Han dominant group in its central and eastern lands within the People's Republic. *Handi Fojiao* displaced Chinese Buddhism, for now Chinese Buddhism was the new name of the Buddhist religion of the territory of the People's Republic.

Not only did Li alter the content of Hoffmann's English, he also omitted the final page of *The Religions of Tibet*, wherein the German author revealed his attitude toward the unfolding events of China's occupation of Tibet. Hoffmann's last words, written in Munich in April 1956, three years before the Dalai Lama left Lhasa in March 1959, made their way to the People's Republic in English, but were erased from Li's readers in Chinese.

It is no task of ours to deal any further with the fate of the Tibetan Priest-State under Chinese domination, since the changing events are of no significance for the history of religion, and belong rather in the history of Chinese colonialism under the Manchu dynasty. None of the Dalai Lamas of the ninth to the twelfth reincarnations ever came of age, a circumstance which was in the interests both of the Tibetan regents and of the two Chinese notables who were stationed in Lhasa to represent their government. The thirteenth reincarnation, the Dalai Lama Thub-ldan rgya-mtsho (1874-1933) managed to avoid a premature end, and it was under him that the Priest-State first slid into the whirlpool of world politics and became a bone of contention between the British, Russian and Chinese powers. In 1904 the Dalai Lama had fled to Mongolia before the British military expedition under Sir Francis Younghusband; and in 1910 he had to flee to India to escape the hands of the Chinese. He did not recover his throne until the Chinese Revolution broke out in 1912. After this came a period in which Tibet enjoyed a certain limited independence, and this lasted until the Kuo-min-tang regime in China was overthrown by the Chinese Communists.

The fourteenth reincarnation, the Dalai Lama bsTan-'dzin rgya-mtsho, who was born in 1935 and enthroned in 1950 has no further secular power. It is too early to analyse the effect of the incorporation of this last stronghold of medieval religious culture into the sphere of the atheistic-communist Chinese State, but there is already no room for doubt that when the Dalai Lama submitted to the Chinese claim to overlordship in 1951 a Buddhist epoch which had lasted 1,300 years came to an end at last. It is not yet possible to determine the exact features of a highly problematical future.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> See Helmut Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 182.

Far from bearing no significance on the history of religion, Hoffmann's transformation of Bon—placing Bon's traces of Shamanism on Lamaism—would lay the foundation for an unprecedented history, a colonial history of Tibetan religion, originating in Berlin during World War II and transmitted to Beijing in the aftermath of the Great Leap Forward (1958-1961).



Li Youyi's translation of Hoffmann's *The Religions of Tibet* had created a new world with its own contours of meaning. It was a realm which rearranged the plurality of forms of Buddhism existing within the territory of the People's Republic in unprecedented ways. True, until 1965, the terms Lamaism and Tibetan Buddhism had been synonyms. Yet now, with the institution of the Tibetan Autonomous Region, the meaning of the word Tibet had changed; it was no longer a nation, but the occupied region of an emerging Asian colonial state. Li's own transformed Bon—a Bon which, according to Hoffmann, had filled “all the spiritual and psychological channels of the country's national life”—therefore transferred its new regional status in China onto Lamaism. Li's translation of Hoffmann's *The Religions of Tibet* had thus become a classic for the study of Tibetan Buddhism in the People's Republic. After the Cultural Revolution, leading scholars of Tibetan Buddhism such as Li Jicheng and Wang Furen would rest on Hoffmann's book to set forth their own insights.

Hence, in Wang Furen's 1982 *Xizang Fojiao Shilüe*, Li's transformed Lamaism and Tibetan Buddhism filled the territory of the Tibetan Autonomous Region. Wang's contribution to Li's redefinition of these two terms was a new arrangement of Tibetan Buddhism in the history of Tibet. Lamaism and Tibetan Buddhism would come to occupy, in the Chinese scholar's



scientific imagination, a novel position in both time and space. “Some comrades believe,” observes Wang, “that Tibetan Buddhism is the Buddhism propagated in the Tibetan Empire at the time of Śāntarakṣita and Padmasambhava, yet we believe that this formulation is unpersuasive.”<sup>46</sup> For a persuasive formulation, Wang turned to Hoffmann’s 1961 reading of Thu’u bkwan’s 1802 history of Bon.

The Tibetan scholar had described the phases of Bon according to the traditional division of the periods of Tibetan history. He had thus placed the final phase of transformed Bon at the time of the early dissemination of Buddhism in Tibet. During the reign of Emperor Khri srong lde btsan, in the latter half of the eighth century, Wang observes, Bon priests were said to have begun transforming Buddhist scriptures into Bon scriptures. But this transformation, the Chinese scholar continues, had reached its peak in the mid ninth century, during the reign of Glang dar ma, who was said to have favored Bon and suppressed Buddhism.

As Hoffmann observed in “The Re-Birth of Buddhism,” the sixth chapter of his *Religions of Tibet*, after Glang dar ma’s death, “violent struggles” between Bon and Buddhism had thrown Tibet in a period of stagnation. “Everything now seemed to suggest that without the support of powerful kings, Buddhism would degenerate completely, and be absorbed by the old Bon religion.”<sup>47</sup> Yet the end of royal protection, continued Hoffmann, citing the famous Tibetan polymath Bu ston rin chen grub (1290-1364), had not meant the end of Buddhism in Tibet. “The epoch of the kings, the epoch of ‘the earlier dissemination of the gospel’ (snga-dar), was chiefly marked by its receptive character, whilst the period of ‘the later dissemination’ (phyi-dar) was characterized by the exceptional vigor and independence of spiritual life.”<sup>48</sup> Relying on traditional accounts, Hoffmann thus described this period as the “rebirth” of Buddhism. Its

---

<sup>46</sup> See Wang Furen, *Xizang Fojiao Shilüe* (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1982), p. 66.

<sup>47</sup> See Helmut Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 111.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111-2.

heroes were Ye shes 'od (947-1024), king of Gu ge, a remote region in western Tibet, who denounced the state of decline of Buddhist practice; Atiśa Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna (982-1054), the Indian scholar and monk invited to Tibet by Ye shes 'od to revive Buddhism; the renowned translator Rin chen bzang po (958-1055), who made new translations of Buddhist scriptures from Sanskrit.

Echoing Hoffmann's criticism of Waddell, for whom Lamaism had come into existence with Śāntarakṣita and Padmasambhava, Wang set forth his own objection to the general definition of Tibetan Buddhism in China. Unlike "other scholars," for whom Tibetan Buddhism embraced both the early and the later dissemination, Tibetan Buddhism should properly refer only to the later dissemination. "This is because, first of all, to call Tibetan Buddhism the Buddhism that had just been transmitted, overlooks the process in which Buddhism and Bon, in their struggles, had undergone a series of transformations. Furthermore, it does not clarify the difference between Tibetan Buddhism and Buddhism."<sup>49</sup> Thus, like Hoffmann, Wang saw both Lamaism and Tibetan Buddhism as different from Buddhism. Lamaism and Tibetan Buddhism were the products of an alteration. The altering agent was Bon's unhistorical essence; the altered object was the historical character of Indian Buddhism. "Second, we must also investigate the relationship between the formation of Tibetan Buddhism and the transformations that had occurred in the social and economic substructure of Tibetan society, for this is a crucial problem."<sup>50</sup> And, for this problem, the Chinese scholar would turn, again, to a European source, in the works of Karl Marx (1818-1883).

According to Marx's historical materialism, Wang observed, religion was a social ideology. Its transformations followed the transformations of society depending on the rules of

---

<sup>49</sup> See Wang Furen, *Xizang Fojiao Shilüe* (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1982), p. 66.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

the economic foundations that produced it. For this reason, the actual formation of Tibetan Buddhism could be placed in the latter half of the tenth century. “This periodization,” remarks Wang, “is based on the historical development of the Tibetan people.”<sup>51</sup> In his opinion, this was the period when Tibetan society had just become a feudal society, that is, after the introduction of serfdom into the feudal system had provoked changes in the Tibetan social structure. Tibetan Buddhism, therefore, the scholar reasoned, must have been the union of Buddhism and Bon at the time of Tibet’s emerging feudalism.

Hence, for the Chinese scholar of religion, Tibetan Buddhism had begun during the later dissemination, for it was at this time that it had acquired a twofold character, one religious and one economic. “As for the religious form, Tibetan Buddhism took shape only after Buddhism had become tinged with the many colorings of Bon, so this is Buddhism’s *sine qua non* strategy of ‘masquerading’ in order to be adopted by the society of the Tibetan Empire.”<sup>52</sup> In regard to the economic character, Tibetan Buddhism formed a relationship with the economic basis it controlled, and this relationship could be regarded as a dual system, that is, a system that combined religion and economy. For, in general, Wang observed, the religion of a class society could not exist, from the point of view of its economy, without the capital of the ruling class.

Still, the dual system of Tibetan Buddhism had little to do with capital. For Wang, the basis of the economy of Tibetan Buddhism was the *sprul sku* system of incarnated lamas. Its institutions of the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lamas, according to Wang, were the highest expression of the ruling class of serf owners. “This dual system that we call the relationship between Tibetan Buddhism and economy, was absolutely absent in the Buddhism of the Tibetan Empire, that is, in the so-called ‘earlier dissemination,’ or, put another way, there was a simple

---

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

sprout, and this is a historical fact.”<sup>53</sup> This system had been established, Wang clarifies, long after the beginning of the later dissemination, only in the thirteenth century. Only after Tibetan Buddhism had reached a stage in which its economy was controlled by the *sprul sku* system, thus, did it acquire its twofold character.

It was at this time that the religious form of Tibetan Buddhism, originating in the earlier struggles between Buddhism and Bon, had been complemented with an economic form. “In sum, Tibetan Buddhism is the local form of Buddhism in Tibet. It takes Buddhist doctrine as its basis, therefore in essence it is Buddhism, yet it also possesses its own character.”<sup>54</sup> This Tibetan Buddhism drew its twofold character (1) from its struggle with Bon during the late tenth century, and, since the thirteenth century, (2) from the economic innovation of the dual system of incarnated lamas.

Therefore, the form of Buddhism that had arisen in Tibet during the early dissemination could not be called, from Wang’s perspective, Tibetan Buddhism. Wang’s definition of Tibetan Buddhism derived from his Marxist reading of Hoffmann’s study of Thu’u bkwan’s polemic chapter on Bon. In Wang’s *Xizang Fojiao Shilüe*, Buddhism had acquired its Tibetan form long after its transmission from India, for, only at a later time, had it incorporated alien elements from Bon and developed its own economic system. Wang’s Tibetan Buddhism was Hoffmann’s Lamaism in a Marxist garb.



---

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

Moving to the recent history of Tibetan Buddhism, Wang declared that prior to the Democratic Reforms of 1959 Tibetan Buddhism had been marked by two different types of conflicting views. The Democratic Reforms had been enforced in Tibet soon after the Dalai Lama's flight to India. Between 1959 and 1966, in the seven years that preceded the Cultural Revolution, the Communist Party had launched in the Himalayan nation a formidable ideological campaign, in an attempt to involve Tibetans at all levels of society in the Party's activities. As Wang discusses in the last chapter of his *Xizang Fojiao Shilüe*, the main contradiction within Tibetan Buddhism had been the question of the religious belief of the masses. For the Chinese scholar, the question of religious belief was a question of knowledge, for it belonged to the realm of the individual's inner contradictions. But there was also another contradiction, to be viewed in relation to society. The problem was the reactionary and conservative nature of the Tibetan social system, "covered under the semblance of religion."<sup>55</sup> The problem in Tibet prior to the Democratic Reforms, therefore, was precisely what Wang had identified as the distinctive nature of Tibetan Buddhism: Tibet's dual system, the combination of religious elements with the economic foundation that sustained them.

Despite his recognition of the reality of Tibetan Buddhism prior to the Democratic Reforms of the 1960s, Wang wrote his *Xizang Fojiao Shilüe* at a time of new reforms. After Mao Zedong's death in September 1976, and the removal of the Gang of Four the following month, Deng Xiaoping's (1904-1997) rise to power in Beijing signified the enactment of economic reforms and the opening up to new policies, nationwide and overseas. Within five years from the end of the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese Communist Party implemented new policies on religious freedom. On December 4, 1982, the Fifth Session of the Fifth National People's congress ratified the fourth constitution of the People's Republic. In the second chapter on the

---

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 264.

fundamental rights of citizens, Article 36 developed, for the first time in an extensive form, the theme of the “freedom of religious belief.” The article claimed that no public organization or individual could force other citizens to adhere or to abandon any religion. At the same time, no one could discriminate against citizens of the People’s Republic who followed any religion existing in its territory. Moreover, religion could not be used to disrupt public order, or interfere with the affairs of the state.

In his *Xizang Fojiao Shilüe*, published that same year, Wang observed that according to the new policies of the Communist Party there could be no confusion about the inner contradictions of the Tibetan masses. In terms of religion, the difference between the vision of the party and the vision of the masses was then a question of visions of the world. “The political party of the working class, does not conceal its own vision, therefore it holds a particularly negative attitude toward religion, including Tibetan Buddhism, which, in class societies, has narcotized and poisoned the spirit of the working masses for hundreds and thousands of years.”<sup>56</sup> The party’s vision of Tibetan Buddhism was founded on a vision of the world in which religion was the manifestation of the suppression exercised by the ruling class on the working masses. In Wang’s vision of the world, the world of Tibetan Buddhism was therefore a world of social classes whose adherents, in order to be exploited as a labor force, had been poisoned by the ruling class of incarnate lamas, acting as serf owners, with the opiate of their religion.

Hence Wang invoked the terms of Marx’s famous critique of the philosophy of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). Atheism, that is, the vision of the world set forth in Marx’s historical materialism, was incompatible with theism, the vision of the world as illustrated by Hegel’s idealism. For the Chinese scholar, these two visions of the world had no common ground of reconciliation. The Party’s vision of the world, based on atheism, was thus

---

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 264.

clear. Still, Wang persisted, religion was primarily a question of knowledge, for it was based on the inner life of the individual. As such, individuals were free to adhere to any religion. Plans to eradicate religion, Wang observed, setting forth the Party's criticism of the Cultural Revolution, were not only unrealistic, but might bring unwanted consequences.

This had been true in Tibet between the 1959 Democratic Reforms and the onset of the Cultural Revolution in 1966. "Later, in the ten years of calamity, Lin Biao and the 'Gang of Four' affected the country's political life, and its endeavor of building a socialist society, with their devastation and destruction, so the party's and the country's policies on the freedom of religious belief were also crushed, and all this has created serious hindrance to our work."<sup>57</sup> But Lin Biao (1908-1971), the army leader in the early years of the Cultural Revolution, had died, and the Gang of Four had been overthrown in October 1976 soon after Mao's death. Therefore, China could finally enjoy a new age of religious freedom. In 1982, for this reason, the Party had adopted the new policies as important milestones of its future agenda. From then on, Wang concluded, Tibet's situation could only improve.

Wang Furen's history makes clear one thing about the study of Tibetan Buddhism in 1982. As attested in *Xizang Fojiao Shilue*, by 1982 the term "Zangchuan Fojiao" had already been coined, though it was still only a secondary synonym of Lamaism and Tibetan Buddhism. The three terms maintained the sense deriving from Li's translation of Hoffmann's work. Hoffmann's *The Religions of Tibet* had laid the scientific foundation for the Chinese study of Tibetan Buddhism, but also of Lamaism and *Zangchuan Fojiao*, as the combination of Buddhism with elements of his transformed Bon. Yet thanks to Li's translation, Bon was no longer the primitive religion of the Tibetan nation, but the primitive religion of the Tibetan people—a people scattered across the provinces of the People's Republic. Through the 1980s, although

---

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 267.

Tibetan Buddhism was a synonym of both Lamaism and *Zangchuan Fojiao*, this term retained traces of its sense as Tibet's national form of Buddhism. Before 1965, therefore, unlike Lamaism and *Zangchuan Fojiao*, Tibetan Buddhism still contained the name of Tibet. It contained the name of the nation that, after fifteen years of occupation, had been transformed into Li's "region."

In spite of its nebulous contours, between 1982 and 1989 Tibetan Buddhism was the term that seemed to satisfy the academic standards of the Chinese scholarly world. The term retained the traces of its recent history during the Republic of China and during the early years of the People's Republic. It was a recent past when, in the Chinese language, Tibet had been a nation, and Tibetan Buddhism was one of its religions.



In 1987, the book entitled *Xizang Fojiao Fazhan Shilüe* ("A Brief History of the Development of Tibetan Buddhism") was published in Beijing by Wang Sen (1912-1991), a scholar of Buddhism and Tibet. After Wang Furen's book, this work was the second monograph on Tibetan Buddhism published in the 1980s prior to Li Jicheng's study. Born one year after the fall of the Qing Dynasty (1664-1911), by the early 1980s Wang Sen was one of few living scholars who had received formal education in the early years of the Republic of China. In 1931 Wang Sen had joined the Department of Philosophy at Beijing University. Here, he studied Indian and Buddhist philosophy, receiving a philological training in Sanskrit and Tibetan. In 1935, after graduation, he remained in Beijing, where he became a protégé of the acclaimed historian Tang Yongtong



(1893-1964), an expert on Buddhism in Imperial China who, in the early 1920s, had specialized in Sanskrit and Pāli at Harvard.

In 1936, one year before the Japanese occupation, Wang Sen obtained a teaching position in the Philosophy Department at Beijing's Qinghua University. During the occupation he remained in the capital. Here, he engaged in the comparison of Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist scriptures at the Bodhi Society (C. Puti Xuehui), an institution established by the Ninth Panchen Lama in the previous years to promote cultural and religious exchange between China and Tibet. Having remained in Beijing after the proclamation of the People's Republic, in 1952 Wang Seng transferred to Beijing's Minzu University. In 1958 he became member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, where, within the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, he would dedicate the rest of his life to the teaching and study of Tibetan Buddhism.

In comparison with Wang Furen's *Xizang Fojiao Shilüe*, published five years earlier, Wang Sen's *Xizang Fojiao Fazhan Shilüe* told a different story. Unlike Wang Furen, who wrote and published his book after the Cultural Revolution, Hoffmann had very little impact, if any at all, on the formation of Wang Sen's manuscript. In 1965, by the time Li Youyi translated *The Religions of Tibet*, Wang Sen's book had already been submitted for publication. As Wang Sen says in his prologue (dated July 13, 1983), the original project, entitled *Guanyu Xizang Fojiaoshi de shibian ziliao* ("Sources on the History of Tibetan Buddhism in Ten Chapters") had been commissioned by the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology in the early 1960s. Between October 1963 and May 1964, as he searched his archive, Wang Seng copied and organized the sources. In the course of one academic year, each week he discussed what emerged from the Tibetan documents with two colleagues, who slowly helped him compile the first draft of the manuscript. Over the next year academic year of 1964-65, as the Institute approved the final

form of the manuscript, Wang Sen had already made three revisions of the first draft. At last, his *Guanyu Xizang Fojiaoshi de shibian ziliao* was ready.

In April 1965, the Institute granted Wang Sen permission to print. Yet only three hundred copies were issued, and those for the private use of the institution. In 1974, during the Cultural Revolution, members of the Institute filed charges concerning not only the book's structure, but also its author. Finally, in the spring of 1983 the Institute agreed to publish Wang Sen's book for the Chinese public at large. Yet it required a further revision. "That Summer," Wang wrote at the end of his prologue, "despite my illness, with a pencil, I revised and supplemented the empty margins of the original book."<sup>58</sup> The title also had to change. So, his ten chapters of "sources for the history of Tibetan Buddhism" would become a "brief history of the development of Tibetan Buddhism." Under the directives of the Institute, the theme of historical development had by now acquired a privileged position, compared to the original request of the early 1960s to research the Tibetan sources about Tibetan Buddhism. Still, despite Wang Sen's further revisions, the Institute would not print the first edition of his *Xizang Fojiao Fazhan Shilüe* until 1987, only a few years before he died. In this way, his book was prevented from being openly published for twenty-five years.

The first chapter of Wang Seng's *Xizang Fojiao Fazhan Shilüe*, entitled "Tibetan Buddhism at the Time of the Tibetan Empire" ("Tufan shiqi de Xizang Fojiao") set the tone for the entire book. Indeed, for the Chinese scholar, Tibetan Buddhism had been Tibetan since the introduction of Buddhism from India at the time of the Tibetan Empire, for this is what, in his reading, emerged from Tibetan sources. He wrote:

Tibetan Buddhism is the religion that began to develop in Tibet following the transmission of Buddhism (to Tibet). Before Buddhism was transmitted to Tibet, the place had its native religion, called the "Ben religion (bon)." The Ben religion is similar

---

<sup>58</sup> See Wang Sen, *Xizang Fojiao Fazhan Shilüe* (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1987), p. I-II.

to the ancient “Shamanism” of our inland, whose main activities concern the divination of the auspicious and of the inauspicious, consecrations, and funeral rites, but also the healing of the sick, the mourning of the dead, the taming of the demons, and the propitiation of the gods (I will not discuss here in detail the circumstances of the Ben religion, for the reader may refer to the relevant chapters in Thu’u bkwan’s *Sources and Explanations of All Doctrinal Systems* and in Hoffmann’s *The Religions of Tibet*).<sup>59</sup>

Wang Sen’s 1987 reference to Hoffmann and Thu’u bkwan belonged to his original 1965 volume, his *Guanyu Xizang Fojiaoshi de shibian ziliao*. Li Youyi’s translation of *The Religions of Tibet* had been completed and made available to scholars before 1965, one year after the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology approved the printing of Wang Sen’s book. Wang Sen’s single reference to Shamanism in the opening passage of his book thus reveals one important detail: Hoffmann’s theory was never part of the further revisions that the Institute had required in 1983 as a precondition for publication (four years later); the book had been written in 1964 and printed in 1965. Hoffmann’s theory of Bon and Lamaism was incorporated in the study of Tibetan religion only after the Cultural Revolution.

Wang Sen’s opening formula stated clearly marked the divergence of his book from Hoffmann’s anthropological and from Wang Furen’s Marxist elaborations on Shamanism. For Wang Sen, Tibetan Buddhism was the religion that took root in Tibet at the time of the Tibetan Empire, as soon as Buddhism had come from India. Wang Seng’s book, a book in which the word Lamajiao appears sporadically, but from which the term *Zangchuan Fojiao* is absent, thus relates the story of his Tibetan sources and also of his Chinese ones, all published before 1965. In Wang Sen’s history, the cornerstone of Tibetan Buddhism was the foundation of Bsam yas, the first Tibetan Buddhist monastery, during the lifetime of the Emperor Khri srong lde btsan. For, at his time, as in the later dissemination, the Bon priest had not yet become a Shaman,

---

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

transferring its double to the body of the Buddhist lama. In fact, to become Shamans, both the Bon priest and the Buddhist lama would have to wait twelve centuries.

In 1987, for Wang Seng, Bsam yas was thus the surviving trace of the birth of Tibetan Buddhism. “Around the year 779,” he writes, “the temple of Bsam yas, renowned in the history of Tibetan Buddhism, was erected. It was the first Tibetan monastery (the few temples built prior to it were only small temples with Buddhist images but with no monastic organization), located in the present day region of Bsam yas.”<sup>60</sup> Thus the Chinese scholar tells the story, according to Tibetan sources, of how Bsam yas had been built. First, the site had been chosen by Padmasambhava in the surroundings of Brag dmar, Khri srong lde btsan’s winter palace and birthplace. The Tibetan Emperor presided over the rituals that accompanied the laying of the foundation stone. The architectural layout of the temple had been sketched by Śāntarakṣita, inspired in its design by the blueprint of Odantapurī, one of the oldest monasteries in India, founded in the seventh century in the ancient state of Magadha by king Gopāla (660-705) of the Pāla dynasty. “In truth,” Wang Sen writes of Śāntarakṣita, “he employed the so-called world of Buddhist imagination as the basic architectural concept.”<sup>61</sup> Bsam yas, the origin of Tibetan Buddhism, was shaped like the world of Buddhism.



In December 1991, eighteen months after martial law ended in Tibet, the first book entitled *Zangchuan Fojiao* was published in Beijing. It was the second edition of Li Jicheng’s 1989 *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong*. The two editions differed in one main respect: the second edition had a

---

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

new title. Tibetan Buddhism and Tantrism the main topics of the book, no longer featured on the cover page. In the 1989 edition the term *Zangchuan Fojiao* occurred in Li's prologue, although only on one occasion. It was listed as a secondary synonym of Tibetan Buddhism and Lamaism. In the 1991 edition, by contrast, *Zangchuan fojiao* was emblazoned on the cover, replacing *Xizang Fojiao*. In Li's act of erasure, *Zangchuan fojiao* had thus become the dominant term in his study of Tibetan Buddhism. The term *Xizang Fojiao*, however, was retained throughout the book, signaling that the new term was limited to the cover, outside of the content of the book.

The 1991 edition also removed Wang Furen's preface and Li's essay on Tantrism. But Li's revised prologue revealed more than the missing title and essay on Tantrism:

*Zangchuan Fojiao* is the generic term for the Buddhism accepted by ethnic groups such as the Tibetans, the Inner Mongolians, the Monguor, and the Yugurs. It is a division of Chinese Buddhism, for it is a form of Buddhism local to Tibet. The region to which it is propagated extends over the provinces of Tibet, Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, Yunnan, as well as Inner Mongolia. Abroad, *Zangchuan Fojiao* has already spread to India, Bhutan, Nepal, Sikkim, Mongolia, and to some regions of the Soviet Union; moreover, in the past thirty years it has also propagated to the societies of the West.

As for its designation, academics hold different opinions. Some call it "Lamaism," others call it "Tibetan Buddhism" or "*Zangchuan Fojiao*." Yet Tibetans do not call it "Lamaism" or "*Zangchuan Fojiao*," but "Sangjie quelu" (sangs rgyas chos lugs), "que" (chos) or "dengba" (bstan pa) meaning Buddhism, Buddhadharma.<sup>62</sup>

Through Li's act of erasure, Tibet no longer had its national form of Buddhism. Thanks to this act, future scholars of religion in the People's Republic could avail themselves of *Zangchuan Fojiao* as a new scientific term. To be sure, the classical term Lamaism remained in place in academic discourse. It also lingered in the language of the average person. The two terms, however, performed a similar function in the Chinese language. In both terms Lamaism and *Zangchuan Fojiao*, the name of Tibet was absent, as was the Tibetan nation. Hoffmann's transformed Bon and Lamaism, coined in a war-torn Europe that never colonized Tibet, were now fully absorbed in the language of the People's Republic.

---

<sup>62</sup> See Li Jicheng, *Zangchuan Fojiao* (Beijing: Jinri zhongguo chubanshe, 1991), p. 1.

Through this act of erasure, Li thus unearthed *Zangchuan Fojiao* from his 1989 prologue as a powerful hidden treasure. *Zangchuan Fojiao* was now the scientific *Lamajiao* of the People's Republic of China. The European and American archive had become, in Li's endeavor, the Xizang of the Chinese scholar of religion, from which he could draw ideas to shape a new image of Tibet. Li's *Zangchuan Fojiao*, the single name of a fractured Tibetan religion, was the name of the transformed Lamaism. By controlling the name, the Chinese scholar established dominion over occupied Tibet. Tibet had been turned into *Zangchuan Fojiao*'s land of origin. *Zangchuan Fojiao* thus kept Tibetans united by the invisible traces of a primitive religion, the timeless and unhistorical religious essence of the Tibetan ethnic group of the People's Republic.

Yet, *Zangchuan Fojiao* also divided Tibetans. *Zangchuan Fojiao* kept the Tibetan ethnic groups dispersed across the provinces of the People's Republic. The Chinese scholar could thus say that *Zangchuan Fojiao* had been propagated in Tibet, Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, and Yunnan, and Inner Mongolia. Accordingly, *Zangchuan Fojiao* kept Tibetans united in their common destiny as a colonized nation, but divided in their diaspora across the globe. *Zangchuan Fojiao* had spread abroad in Asia, to India, Bhutan, Nepal, Sikkim, and Mongolia, in Russia, to Buryatia, in Kalmykia, in Europe and in America.

Li's *Zangchuan Fojiao* united Tibetans in one more fact about Tibetan Buddhism. "Tibetans," the Chinese scholar observes in both his 1989 and 1991 prologues, "do not call it 'Lamaism' or 'Zangchuan Fojiao.'" Tibetans called Tibetan Buddhism simply the "Buddhadharma" (T. *Sangs rgyas chos lugs*), the "Dharma" (T. *Chos*), or the "Teaching" (T. *Bstan pa*). In Li's Chinese, Tibetans thus simply called their religion "Fojiao," that is, "Buddhism," or "Fofa," "Buddhadharma." Unlike them, the scholar of religion believed that Tibetan Buddhism was not Buddhism. For him, Tibetan Buddhism was no longer what the

Buddhists of the nations of Asia recognized as the teaching of the Buddha, a teaching that had become global since the beginning of its spread from ancient India. For the Chinese scholar of religion, then, as for his German colleague, Tibetan Buddhism was not Buddhism. Tibetan Buddhism was no longer even Tantrism, that is, early Buddhism transformed by the magic spells and coded formulas of Brahmanism. Tibetan Buddhism was simply Hoffmann's Lamaism. It was Li Youyi's Lamaism, Tibet's regional religion transformed by Bon's elements of Shamanism. It was Li Jicheng's *Zangchuan Fojiao*.

Yet despite its erasure in Li's 1991 prologue, Tibetan Buddhism remained in place. Having become dominant after the martial law ended in Tibet, the term *Zangchuan Fojiao* had become the subject of Li's original prologue. Therefore, the Chinese scholar could say that Tibetans did not call "it" *Zangchuan Fojiao*. But as Li transported *Zangchuan Fojiao* as the new "it" (C. *ta*) of the old prologue, the neologism, just unearthed, revealed a fissure. Inserted in the old prologue, originally written with Tibetan Buddhism in mind, *Zangchuan Fojiao* made a different sense. The scholar of religion revealed that the subjects of his study, that is, Tibetans, rejected the language of his science. "Tibetans," so Li's new passage would reveal, "do not call *Zangchuan Fojiao* 'Lamaism' or '*Zangchuan Fojiao*.'" In fact, as the traces of the old prologue persisted in the new edition, as the situation returned to normal after the martial law, Tibetans kept calling Tibetan Buddhism "Buddhadharma," "Dharma," or the "Teaching." On the same page of Li's original erasure, therefore, the erasure had been erased. If even for a brief moment, the echo of Hoffmann's small drum had turned silent. And in this moment of suspension, the spirit of the Bon Shaman had left the body of the Tibetan lama, for the author of the erasure, the Chinese scholar of religion, had unmade his own act.



Before the institution of the Tibetan Autonomous Region in 1965, China's *Lamajiao* had not heard the echo of Hoffmann's Shaman's drum. Yet after the Cultural Revolution, Hoffmann's small drum kept a steady rhythm in the Chinese study of Tibetan religion.

In the first chapter of *Zangchuan Fojiao*, entitled "The Tibetan Bon Religion Prior to the Introduction of Buddhism" ("Fojiao chuanru qian Xizang de Benjiao"), Li discusses, from the point of view of the scholar of religion, the nature of the "Ben religion." Hence, to do so, he avails himself of Hoffmann's *The Religions of Tibet*. "The Ben religion (bon) is a variety of sorcery which took root in the time of Tibet's primitive communities."<sup>63</sup> In Li's science, Bon was a primitive religious belief in the divinity of the elements of nature. It included the worship of heaven, earth, the sun, the moon, the constellations, stones, grass, and animals. "The scientific term for this type of religion," Li observes, echoing his German source, "is *lingqi samanjiao* (animist shamanism), therefore we may say that Ben is the local form of *lingqi samanjiao* in Tibet."<sup>64</sup>

Li identified five characteristics that assimilated Bon to all primitive religions: (1) the belief in spirits; (2) animal sacrifice; (3) funeral ceremonies; (4) simple altars; and (5) ritual implements. "There is one valuable point that should be made, that is, within the Ben religion, among the implements of the Shaman's practice, the 'drum' is of extreme importance."<sup>65</sup> Together with the shaman's "flight of the soul" and his "costumes," the "small drum" was in fact an essential element of Shamanism which, in his 1950 habilitation thesis, Hoffmann had described and adopted to shape his analogy with Bon. It was the small drum that had made, in Hoffmann's study of early nineteenth century European and Russian theories of Shamanism, the "old Tibetan Shaman" similar to his Siberian and Inner Asian colleague.

---

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, p. 6.



Thus, in his 1991 *Zangchuan Fojiao*, Li extended his argument about Bon to Tibetan Buddhism. Hoffmann's "small drum" (C. *xiao gu*), along with a new exotic implement, the "drum made with human skin" (C. *renpi gu*), provided Li with justification for his analogy. All Shamans utilized the small drum as a ritual implement. This was a fact. Therefore, the scholar of religion could safely assert, for the scientific evidence was before the eyes of the entire world, that the "Ben religion" was the form of Shamanism that had taken root locally in Tibet. "The Ben religion, with its use of the drum as an implement, later exerted its influence on Tibetan Buddhism, so drums made with human skin are important implements of Tibetan Buddhism. Yet in *Handi Fojiao* neither small drums nor drums made with human skin are employed."<sup>66</sup> Thus Li believed that Tibetan Buddhism, unlike Chinese Buddhism, which he called *Handi Fojiao*, shared with Bon the essential traits of Shamanism. Still, this Tibetan Buddhism was now only a second synonym of the dominant *Zangchuan Fojiao*. The name had changed. The substance remained the same.

In the course of the 1990s, Li Jicheng's Tibetan Buddhism would gradually become a slip of the tongue. After 1991, unlike Tibet, China retained its national form of Buddhism. But Chinese Buddhism was also transformed. In the language of the scholar of religion, Chinese Buddhism, that is, *Zhongguo Fojiao*, had become the name for Buddhism throughout the People's Republic. Soon after Li popularized the term *Zangchuan fojiao*, scholars of religion would talk about two main divisions of *Zhongguo Fojiao*: *Handi Fojiao*, also written as *Hanchuan Fojiao* (Han Transmission – Buddha Teaching) and *Zangchuan Fojiao*. In the same years, a third division would join these two. It was the neologism *Daichuan fojiao* (Dai Transmission - Buddha Teaching), indicating the form of Buddhism that the Dai people of Yunnan had inherited in Southern China from its Theravāda neighbors in Cambodia. Scholars of

---

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p. 6.

religion thus began to regard *Daichuan fojiao* as the division of Chinese Buddhism that used Pāli as its sacred language.

In this manner, at the turn of the twenty-first century, Chinese scholars of religion could claim that Chinese Buddhism (C. *Zhongguo fojiao*) embraced three major forms of Buddhism, preserved in the People's Republic in three sacred languages of Buddhism: Chinese, Tibetan, and Pāli. The three forms were: (1) *Hanchuan*, or *Handi Fojiao*, (2) *Zangchuan Fojiao*, and finally, (3) *Daichuan Fojiao*—a term that today, like *Zangchuan Fojiao* in 1989, still has no translation. The discourse about these three forms of Chinese Buddhism emerged in the early decades of the twentieth century during the so-called “revival of Tantrism” of Republican China. The next chapters will trace the intertwined trajectories of the concepts of Tibetan Buddhism and Tantrism, and the role that these concepts have played in the formation of the academic discourse of Chinese Buddhism prior to the Cultural Revolution.

CHAPTER 2  
THE ORIGINS OF THE REVIVAL

In August 1836, a 23-year-old Confucian scholar on his way to take the imperial examinations in Canton, the present-day Guangzhou, received a prophecy from a stranger. The stranger was dressed in an old fashioned coat with wide sleeves. His hair was tied in a knot, according to the custom of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). Since he did not speak Chinese, an interpreter assisted him. Intrigued by his odd looks, a crowd of people gathered around the stranger. Even without being asked a specific question, he would talk to the audience predicting their future. The young scholar approached the man, hoping he may be able to foresee his future among the literati. But the stranger silenced him before he could utter a single word. “You will attain the highest rank, but do not be grieved, for grief will make you sick.”<sup>67</sup>

The next day, the young scholar encountered two more strangers. One held a package with nine small volumes. It was a set entitled *Quan shi liang yan* (“Good Words for Exhorting the World”), which he offered to the young man as a gift. Upon his return home, distraught from having failed the examinations, the young man peeked into the table of contents. But he immediately put them away, disregarding them as nothing of interest. It was not until several years later that the collection of nine volumes, a Chinese commentary on the Bible, would inspire the young prophet Hong Xiuquan (1814-1864) to challenge the Manchu-ruled Qing

---

<sup>67</sup> See Rev. Theodore Hamberg, *The Visions of Hung-siu-tshuen, and Origin of the Kwang-si Insurrection* (Hong Kong: China Mail Office, 1854), p. 8.

dynasty (1644-1911), to condemn idolatry in China, and to found a new, Christian, empire, the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (1851-1864).

This chapter describes the events that preceded the discovery of the tradition called *Mizong* in China during the last decades of the nineteenth century. This discovery was rooted in the aftermath of the destruction of Buddhist images, scriptures, and temples that occurred in southeast China at the time of the Opium Wars. The first part of the chapter discusses the presence of the Protestant missionaries in the Canton area, together with their endeavor in the translation, printing, and diffusion of the New Testament in the Chinese language. Inspired by the Christian teachings, Hong Xiuquan then established a new Christian dynasty in China. And when he was enthroned in Nanjing in the early 1850s, Buddhist images, scriptures, and temples had burnt in the flames of his army. The chapter then moves to the early 1860s, when the Qing forces entered Nanjing, overthrowing Hong Xiuqian and his Heavenly Kingdom. At this time, a former soldier of the Qing militia who had fought against the Taiping rebels discovered among the ashes of a Buddhist temple a collection of Buddhist texts. This collection of Pure Land scriptures was compiled during the Taiping rebellion by Wei Yuan, one of the foremost intellectuals of the Qing dynasty. Inspired by this collection, the former soldier became interested in Buddhism, to the extent that he began to reprint the entire Buddhist canon, destroyed in China during the war. The chapter thus shows how, for an entire decade, the main interest of this modern pioneer in the study of Buddhism lay in the Pure Land. Furthermore, it demonstrates how his understanding of Buddhist history was based on works compiled in China during the Tang and Ming dynasties. Until the late 1870s, when he encountered the science of philology in Europe, his knowledge of *Mizong* in China was limited to the discussion of mantras

and dhāraṇīs, and of their ubiquity in Buddhist scriptures, in a little known work from the Liao dynasty.

Europeans began to frequent Canton in the early sixteenth century. In 1517, the Portuguese established the first European center for trade with the Ming empire there. In 1557 they were expelled from the Pearl River delta, and granted permission to settle only on the isle of Macau, in the South China Sea. In 1576, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Macau was founded there. However, the Ming maintained formal control of the island even after the Battle of Macau in 1622, when the Dutch attempted an invasion. When the Qing gained control over Taiwan in 1663, the attitude of the empire toward foreign trade had become more open. In 1725, the Yongzheng Emperor (1678-1735) confined all Christian missionary activity to Canton, but implemented a relatively loose policy for European traders in other Chinese ports.

This attitude toward foreign trade changed three decades later, in 1757, with the expansion of the British beyond India toward the Chinese coast. Yongzheng's successor, the Qianlong Emperor, created the Canton System (known as the Thirteen Factories), prescribing that Canton would be the only port of the empire open to foreign trade. The British East India Company, which had the monopoly on the port system, was restricted in its trade for goods such as silk, porcelain, and tea, whose demand had increased in Europe. At this time Macau and Canton were the two only places where Europeans and Americans were allowed to carry out missionary activity.

In 1795, soon after the formal establishment of the London Missionary Society, a Chinese manuscript, a translation of the New Testament made in Canton in 1737, was found in

the core collection of the British Museum.<sup>68</sup> The attention of the churches of England was drawn toward China. Robert Morrison (1782-1834), a Scottish evangelist who had studied the Chinese language in London, arrived in Canton on September 7, 1807, on an East India Company ship. His primary objective, as stated by the London Missionary Society, was to translate the Christian scriptures into Chinese. But in order to spread the Gospel he needed someone to print the translations. In 1813, Morrison was thus joined by William Milne (1785-1822), another Scottish evangelist, who arrived in Canton after spending a few years preaching in the Chinese communities of the Indonesian archipelago. The same year, Morrison completed the translation of the New Testament, and in 1815 he published a Chinese-English dictionary in three volumes. In 1819 their cooperation resulted in the translation of the entire Bible, while the first Chinese dictionary of Christianity was completed in 1821. In the early years of the mission, various other centers were opened in Malacca (in present-day Malaysia), Java, Penang, and Singapore. One year before his death, Milne founded the Anglo-Chinese College in Malacca. The first printing press distributing Christian pamphlets in Chinese was thus established.

Morrison died in Macao in 1834. During his lifetime he baptized only ten converts within the Canton mission. Among the ten, Liang Fa (1789-1855) became the first Chinese pastor in a Protestant church. Born in the province of Guangdong, Liang moved to Canton in 1804 to learn block printing. In 1810, while employed in a printing house near the Thirteen Factories, Liang was introduced to Morrison and Milne. The circulation of the Bible in print, and the conversion of imperial citizens to Christianity, was forbidden by the Qing authorities. Still, Liang began to work with the two missionaries in Canton and Macau. Milne baptized Liang in 1816. The two spent a few years in Malacca, printing Christian pamphlets. In 1823, after Milne's death, Liang

---

<sup>68</sup> See Donald McGillivray, *A Century of Protestant Missions in China (1807-1907)* (New York, Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1907); Eric Reinders, *Borrowed Gods and Foreign Bodies. Christian Missionaries Imagine Chinese Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

returned to Canton in order to help Morrison print the first complete edition of the Chinese Bible. The same year, in Macau, Liang was ordained as the first Chinese Protestant evangelical under the London Missionary Society. Liang died in 1855 in Canton. He was renowned for his deep knowledge of the scriptures and for having converted a large number of locals to Christianity. But Liang is best known for his commentary on Morrison's translation of the Bible entitled *Quan shi liang yan* ("Good Words for Exhorting the World"), a copy of which, in 1836, a foreign missionary offered to the young Hong Xiuquan in the streets of Canton.

In the Spring of 1837, after failing the imperial examinations a second time, Hong was struck by a severe illness. He entered into a trance that lasted forty days. Unconscious of what was happening around him, his cold body had been placed on a bed. Outwardly, to his family members, he appeared to be dead. But his inner being was pervaded by an unusual force. Various extraordinary visions appeared to him during this time, which he would remember clearly. After being ritually washed, he was taken to a heavenly palace where the sages of the past cut his body open and replaced his inner organs with new ones of a red color. His senses refreshed, Hong's attention was then drawn to a great hall that lay before him. The hall was adorned with precious materials. There, in this celestial palace, staring at him, was an old man with a golden beard. He was dressed in a black robe and sat in a distinguished manner. When the old man saw Hong, he began to shed tears. Human beings, the old man said, who were created and sustained by him, no longer remembered or paid homage to him. They worshipped demons instead. He thus gave Hong a sword, commanding him to exterminate all demons and evil beings. On several occasions, as the visions continued, Hong also encountered a middle-aged man, whom he began to call his elder brother. The man instructed Hong on the ways to track and slay such demons and

evil spirits. Soon after, Hong recovered from his illness. The memory of his visions remained dormant, however, until six years later.

In 1843, after failing the imperial examinations a third time, Hong rediscovered in his room the collection of nine volumes, Liang Fa's commentary on the Bible. To his surprise, the books contained the code that explained his visions. In his *Visions of Hung-siu-tshuen*, published in Hong Kong in 1854, following interviews with Hong's cousin and fellow rebel Hong Rengan (1822-1864), Reverend Theodore Hamberg (1819-1854), a Swedish missionary of the Basel Evangelical Society, describes the young man's discovery as follows:

He was greatly astonished to find in these books the key to his own visions, which he had had during his sickness six years before; he found their contents to correspond in a remarkable manner with what he had seen and heard at that time. He now understood the venerable old one who sat upon the highest place and whom all men ought to worship, to be God the heavenly Father; and the man of middle age, who had instructed him and assisted him in exterminating the demons, to be Jesus the Saviour of the World. The demons were the idols, his brothers and sisters were the men in the world.<sup>69</sup>

Hong destroyed all the idols in his household. That was his mission, for he was now God's Chinese son and Jesus's younger brother. The demons and evil beings which God had commanded him to destroy, and which Jesus, in his visions, helped him slay, were any image, statue, scripture, text, or custom associated with idolatry, according to his new faith. Among these forms of idolatry were what the Protestant missionaries identified as the three religions of China: Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Hong's brothers and sisters, the Chinese people, one of the nations among those governed by the Manchu-ruled Qing empire, would be his allies in seizing this new mandate of heaven, and in overturning the world as they had known it. "If God will help me to recover our estate, I ought to teach all nations to hold everyone in its own possessions, without injuring or robbing one another"; Hong then continues, "We will have intercourse in communicating true principles and wisdom to each other, and receive each other

---

<sup>69</sup> See Hamberg, *The Visions of Hung-siu-tshuen*, p. 19.



with propriety and politeness; we will serve together one common heavenly father, and honour together the doctrines of one common heavenly brother, the Saviour of the world; this has been the wish of my heart since the time when my soul was taken up to heaven.”<sup>70</sup> Among myriad difficulties, the fearless men from the West had traveled for thousands of miles to Canton in order to spread the holy message of God to China, and to translate their sacred scriptures, so to finally deliver the Chinese people from the errors of idolatry. Like the empires of Europe, China might have become a new Christian empire. However, like previous European attempts to convert China to Christianity, such as those of the Roman Catholic missionaries in earlier centuries, Hong’s project failed.

From 1843, when he set out as a young prophet in Canton, to January 1853, when he conquered Nanjing, the old capital of the Ming dynasty, Hong and his followers made the language of the European and American missionaries their own. The Treaty of Nanjing, signed in August 1842 between the Qing and the British at the end of the First Opium War (1839-1842), ratified the cession of the island of Hong Kong as a British colony. Moreover, the treaty abolished the Canton System, forcing the Qing government to revise its foreign trade policy with the opening of the five ports: Shanghai, Canton, Ningbo, Fuzhou, and Xiamen. Soon after, as British residents (followed by the French and the Americans) gained the right to move freely in other coastal areas and inland, more foreign missionaries were called to convert China to Christianity. Thus, the project of uprooting idolatry from China was a renewed task from within and without. The Protestant missionaries and the Taiping rebels engaged in a fight against the religions that they saw as forms of idolatry.

For Hong Xiuquan and for the Protestant missionaries who resided in the Canton area over the first half of the nineteenth century, these forms of idolatry were not as yet linked to

---

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

Buddhism as we understand the term today. At least since the eleventh and through the eighteenth century, European Christendom conceived of the world as divided into four types of nations or peoples. The list included Christianity, Judaism, Mohammedanism (Islam), and the rest, which was further divided into several types of Idolatry (otherwise known as Heathenism, Paganism, or Polytheism). In this system of classification, the four groups were not properly understood as “religions.” The only true religion was Christianity, while the remaining three types differed in degrees of deviation from it. Judaism and Mohammedanism diverged from Christianity as to the correct way of worshipping the only true God. Idolatry, in its most diverse forms, included those who were simply ignorant of the true God, and worshipped idols instead, as surrogate.<sup>71</sup>

In this period, in their accounts of the Asian nations, European merchants, voyagers, and Roman Catholic missionaries, reported stories about the local customs of the peoples they regarded as pagans or idolaters. The inevitable comparison between the “images,” the “priests,” and the “modes of worship” of the latter, led these European pioneers to discover several similarities with the types of Idolatry or Paganism they were accustomed to seeing in Europe, in the suburbs of the major cities and in the countryside. Away from home, when describing idolatry in the rest of the world, they in turn used a language similar to that which the Roman Catholics used in describing their own faith. Such famous figures as the Venetian trader Marco Polo (1254-1324), the Franciscan friars Giovanni da Pian del Carpine (1182-1252), and William of Rubruck (1220-1293), or the Jesuits St. Francis Xavier (1506-1552) and Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), depicted the gods and the religious customs of Asian nations such as China, Mongolia, Tibet, India, Ceylon, Burma, and Japan according to the fourfold classification of

---

<sup>71</sup> See Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005).

nations: they fell into the class of idolatry. Idolatry was mapped on the globe, and each nation had its local forms.



Following the treaty of Nanjing, Reverend Issachar Jacox Roberts (1802-1871), a Southern Baptist missionary from Tennessee who arrived in Macau in 1837, was among the most active antagonists of the Chinese idolatry. Having served as the first permanent resident pastor in Hong Kong from 1842, Roberts was the earliest Protestant missionary to move outside of the Canton area to spread the Gospel. But it was in Canton that his evangelical synthesis and condemnation of idolatry left an indelible mark. Between March and May 1847, he taught the catechism to the young Hong Xiuquan, though, at that time, Roberts refused him baptism. Later, between 1860 and 1862, when Nanjing had been the New Jerusalem of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom for a decade, Roberts served for fifteen months as the advisor of the Taiping court's ministry of foreign affairs.

On December 31, 1861, during his appointment, Roberts wrote a report on the conditions of the Christian faith in Nanjing. There were two sides to the religious and political circumstances of the city. The one was bright and promising. The other was dark and unfavorable. The one was something that Roberts had anticipated with fervor. The other was something he greeted with dismay. "The bright side consists chiefly in negatives, such as, no idolatry, no prostitution, no gambling, nor any kind of public immorality, allowed in the city."<sup>72</sup> Laws had been enforced in Nanjing to forbid the worship of images in Confucian, Daoist, and

---

<sup>72</sup> See Issachar Jacox Roberts, "Report on conditions in Nanking, 1861," in Harley Farnsworth MacNair, *Modern Chinese History, Selected Readings* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1923), p. 150.

Buddhist altars and temples. Engaging in local forms of religion had become unlawful. Idolatry was in decline. “But when we come to the religious aspects of this revolution,” writes Roberts, “together with other evils both political and civil, we have a very dark side, which has grieved my heart exceedingly, and often inclines me to leave them.”<sup>73</sup> The Heavenly King disseminated his religious opinions with zeal. But for Roberts, such opinions had become distant from the Protestant teachings.

To the Protestant missionaries, the form of Christianity that Hong elaborated in his writings, and which he disseminated in his kingdom, was no longer Christianity. The Taiping’s Christianity in China could be compared with Mormonism in America. Roberts writes:

He wanted me to come here, but it was not to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and convert men and women to God, but to take office, and preach his dogmas, and convert foreigners to himself. I would as lief convert them to Mormonism, or any other *ism* which I believe unscriptural, and, so far, from the devil. I believe that in their heart they feel a real opposition to the Gospel, but for policy’s sake they grant it toleration; yet I believe that they intend to prevent its realization, at least in the city of Nanking.<sup>74</sup>

Upon his arrival in Nanjing, Roberts’s duty was to obtain for the Taiping the support of foreign nations. But he soon decided to leave the city. His prospects of convincing Hong that his religion deviated from the Gospel were slim. For, Roberts thought, Hong used the Gospels as a mere tool to implement the Kingdom’s land and trade reforms; he had no intention to put the Gospels into practice among his subjects. Moreover, Roberts’s numerous calls for other Protestant missionaries to join him in Nanjing in the work of conversion had remained unanswered. Hong showed hostility toward the Protestant teachings, which no longer lay at the core of his new form of Christianity. “In fact, I believe he is crazy, especially in religious matters, nor do I believe him soundly rational about anything. He calls his son the young saviour

---

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 151.

of the world, and himself the real brother of Jesus Christ.”<sup>75</sup> For Roberts, many of Hong’s claims were heresy. “As to the Holy Spirit, he seems to have left him out of his system of the Trinity, and to understand very little of his work in the conversion of men.”<sup>76</sup> To the missionary who had persuaded the Chinese visionary to abandon idolatry and embrace the truth of the Gospel, the Taiping’s Christianity had changed beyond recognition.

Still, Roberts remained in Nanjing for some time. He hoped to rectify the Taiping’s Christianity. For, he thought, the dark side of Hong’s Heavenly Kingdom lay beyond religion. It was not the deviation from the Gospels that had become disquieting to the American minister, but the despotic nature of the political system. “The whole affair seems to consist of martial law, and that, too, runs very much in the line of killing men, from the highest to the lowest, by all in authority.”<sup>77</sup> The Heavenly Kingdom was no longer the promised land Roberts had envisioned in the early days of the revolution. It was no longer what, after the failure of his own mission in Canton, and two trips back to America, had persuaded him to return to China to collaborate with his disciple.

Something had gone wrong in Hong’s realization of God’s kingdom in China, for all Roberts saw in Nanjing was chaos and murder. “I became perfectly disgusted by the sights of slaughter.” For, he noted, slaughter had become the destiny of too many in the Taiping capital. It was the fate of those who simply wore their hair in the Manchu style, as opposed to the long locks of the Taiping, reminiscent of the Ming. Roberts reported that at court, if an official compiling documents for the Heavenly King made a calligraphy mistake, the scribes would be beheaded. “This proves to my mind that he is crazy; nor can I believe that any good will arise out of the rule of such a wicked despot.” Before long, Roberts thus fled Nanjing, repairing in

---

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

Shanghai. In 1866, when he returned to America, Roberts retired in Illinois, where he died five years later from a form of leprosy he had contracted during the early years in Macau.

Hong died in his palace, by suicide or illness, in June 1864. When Zeng Guofan (1811-1872), the eminent Confucian official and general of the Qing army, led the imperial forces into Nanjing, he found that Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist images, together with statues, scriptures, pagodas and temples, had been burned or razed. State officials were no longer able to study the Confucian classics, take the imperial examinations, and undertake civil service for the Qing state.

In the Taiping's war against any rival form of religion or ideal, the human bonds that had been cultivated in China over the course of several millennia had been severed. As the Christian rebels ravaged the prefectures of south China, they destroyed the scriptures and temples not only of the Confucians, but also of the Buddhists and the Daoists. They damaged the icons, disfigured their faces, and destroyed their chapels. When the Qing army entered Nanjing, what remained of the images of Buddhist and Daoist gods, images that Roberts regarded as idols, and that Hong Xiuquan slayed as demons, were nothing but reminders of the past.

Later in 1864, a former member of Zeng Guofan's army came to Nanjing. As he helped rebuild the city, he began to search for Buddhist scriptures. He resolved to revive Buddhism in the devastated regions, and to reprint the scriptures that had been lost. Later generations of scholars would regard him as the father of the "revival of Chinese Buddhism" (C. Zhongguo Fojiao fuxing). His name was Yang Wenhui (1837-1911).<sup>78</sup>

---

<sup>78</sup> See Yang Wenhui, "Yang Renshan jushi shilüe," in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Nanjing: Jingling kejing chu, 1919); Holmes Welch, *The Buddhist Revival in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968); Yu Lingbo, *Yang Renshan jushi pingzhuan* (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1995); Gabriele Goldfuss, *Vers un bouddhisme du XXe siècle, Yang Wenhui (1837-1911), Réformateur laïque et imprimeur* (Paris: De Boccard, 2001); Chin, Keitō (Chen, Jidong). *Shinmatsu Bukkyō no kenkyū: Yō Bunkai o chūshin to shite* (Tōkyō: Sankibō Busshorin, 2003). For the posthumous collection of his works, see Yang Wenhui, *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Nanjing: Jingling kejing chu, 1919).

Yang Wenhui was born in 1837 in Shidai, in the Anhui province of East China, during the reign of the Daoguang Emperor (1782-1850). His courtesy name was Renshan. In 1838, his father Yang Pu'an (1800-1863) passed the imperial examinations for civil service. The entire family then followed Yang Pu'an to Beijing, where he took a position in the Board of Punishments, a division of the Department of State Affairs. In 1845, having served in the capital for seven years, Yang Pu'an's filial duties called for his return to Anhui. He then resigned from his post in Beijing, moving the entire family back to Shidai. In the next five years, Yang Wenhui received his education in classical Chinese poetry from the Tang (618-907) and Song (960-1270) dynasties. In 1851, as Yang continued his studies, the Taiping rebellion broke out in Guangxi province with the Jintian uprising. In 1852, at the age of fifteen, Yang married a girl to whom he had been engaged since the age of three. During this period, with Hong Xiuquan's first victory over the Qing forces, and the proclamation of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, the rebellion swept toward East China. It would soon reach Anhui province.

Anqing, the capital city of Anhui, located about three hundred miles West of Shanghai, fell to the Taiping army in 1853, the same year Hong Xiuquan was enthroned as Heavenly King in Nanjing. Knowing that the Taiping army would reach Shidai, over the next decade Yang Pu'an's family fled several times to the provinces of Anhui, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, and Zhejiang. Having resigned from his official position in Shidao, Yang Pu'an joined Zeng Guofan's Qing army, coordinating the local militia against the rebels. The 17-year-old Yang Wenhui accompanied his father on several military operations. He served on the battlefield during the day and continued his studies at night, carrying his favorite books on miracles in a bamboo case. He read works on phonetics and astrology, but also studied the classics of Daoism, such as the

*Laozi*, the *Zhuangzi*, and the *Liezi*. Thanks to the connections established by his father, he came under the protection of Zeng Guofan, whom he joined in the resistance against the Taiping.

In 1861, as the Qing forces surrounded the city of Nanjing, preparing the final assault on Hong Xiuquan, Zeng Guofan marched on Anqing, liberating Anhui province. Together with his family, Yang moved back to Anqing. Here, thanks to Zeng, Yang found an appointment in the local department of agriculture. In 1862, his father left his position at Zeng's side. He passed away the following winter. In early 1863, with his father's death, and Nanjing still occupied by the Taiping, Yang Wenhui and his family sought to make a living. After his father's funeral, he accompanied his father's remains to the old town of Shidai for burial. But as he returned to Anqing, Yang became severely ill for several months. It was then, at age twenty-six, that he first encountered Buddhist scriptures.

During Yang's long convalescence, an elderly Buddhist nun offered him the *Vajracchedikā sūtra* (C. *Jingang jing*, "Diamond Sūtra"). As he read the scripture, he felt invigorated; he had never read anything more profound. Soon after, as he regained strength, he discovered a copy of the *Qixin lun* in an old bookshop; it is one of the most influential Buddhist treatises in China, a Chinese apocryphon ascribed to the Indian scholar and poet Aśvaghōṣa, and held in high regard by the Huayan tradition of Chinese Buddhism. As he returned home, Yang read the treatise five times. From then on, he showed no interest in other books, seeking only Buddhist scriptures. Months later, in another bookstore, he found a copy of the *Śūraṅgama sūtra* (C. *Lengyan jing*) Thereafter, when family members or friends traveled to other provinces, Yang asked them to find Buddhist books for him. When he saw a Buddhist monk or nun walk in the streets, he inquired into what books they studied, and where he could procure copies of them.



In 1864, after Zeng Guofan and the Qing army entered Nanjing, Yang and his family moved to the former Taiping capital. The previous year, while still in Anqing, he had considered becoming a monk. However, because his father had just died, he felt the responsibility of providing for his mother and other family members. Thanks to Zeng, who had settled in Nanjing as a government administrator, Yang obtained a position as a civil engineer, supervising projects for the reconstruction of the city. During his first year in Nanjing, he became acquainted with a group of friends who shared his passion for Buddhist scriptures. The group would often discuss the origin of the doctrines (C. *zong*) and teachings (C. *jiao*) of Buddhism according to the celebrated scholar and monk Fazang (643-712), a descendant of migrants from the kingdom of Sogdiana who was active in Chang'an, the Tang dynasty's capital, between the seventh and the eighth century, at the court of Empress Wu Zetian (624-705).

In Nanjing, setting Fazang's doctrines and teachings aside, Yang Wenhui expanded his interests with the teachings of another Chinese tradition. It was the Jingtū (Pure Land) tradition, based on the *Sukhāvāṭīvyūha sūtra* (C. *Wuliangshou jing*). The *Sukhāvāṭīvyūha*, believed to have been compiled in India in the third century of the Common Era, centered around Amitābha (C. Amituofo), the buddha of "Infinite Light," known also as Amitāyus (C. Wuliangshou), "Infinite Life." Amitābha dwelled in the buddha field of Sukhāvāṭī, located in the Western direction. According to the Chinese Jingtū tradition, beginning with his entry into *parinirvāṇa*, the Buddha's teachings began a progressive decline. This decline reflected three periods. The three periods were the period of "true dharma" (C. *zhengfa*), the period of "semblance dharma" (C. *xiangfa*), and the period of "final dharma" (C. *mofa*). When the age of final dharma elapsed, the Buddha's teaching would cease to exist. But as this time approached, beings would gradually lose the intellectual faculties necessary to comprehend the teachings. For the Jingtū tradition,

then, beings should seek rebirth in Amitābha's buddha field of Sukhāvātī. In the age of final dharma, by invoking the name of Amitābha (C. *nianfo*), beings would develop faith in the Buddha's miraculous powers. As a result, at the moment of death, they would be transported to Sukhāvātī. There, they would be able to complete the path to awakening.

Yang Wenhui had recognized that the events of his age of war and destruction occurred during the final age of the Buddha's teaching. However, unlike other Buddhist thinkers before and after him, he believed that the process of decline could be reversed through the dissemination of Buddhist scriptures. Yet, as he soon realized, there was a paucity of Buddhist scriptures in China. The *Longzang* edition of the Buddhist canon, printed during the Qing dynasty, was available only in the north and was inaccessible to Yang. In content, the *Longzang* was a duplicate of the *Yongle Beizang*, the canon printed under the patronage of the Yongle Emperor (1360-1424) of the Ming dynasty. In turn, the compilers of the *Yongle Beizang* used the catalogue of the *Hongwu Nanzang*, an edition printed in Nanjing between 1372 and 1398 by order of the founder of the Ming dynasty, the Hongwu Emperor (1328-1398). When the woodblocks of the *Hongwu Nanzang* were destroyed by fire in 1410, before printing the *Yongle Beizang*, the Yongle Emperor ordered the reprinting of the *Hongwu Nanzang*, later known as the *Yongle Nanzang*. The woodblocks of the *Yongle Beizang* began to be carved in Beijing in 1421. The entire canon, including 636 cases, 1621 works, and 6361 fascicles, was completed in 1440. It was reprinted, with a number of additions, in 1584, during the reign of the Wanli Emperor (1563-1620). In turn, the woodblocks for the *Longzang* edition began to be carved in Beijing in 1735, under the Yongzheng Emperor. The entire canon, containing 724 cases, 1669 works, and 7168 fascicles, was completed in 1738, in the third year of Qianlong's reign.

In South China, there existed another edition of the Buddhist canon. It was the *Jiaxingzang*, also known as *Jingshanzang*. Unlike the *Yongle Beizang*, which served as its model, the *Jiaxingzang* was a private initiative by Zibo Zhenke (1543-1603), one of the great Chan masters of the late Ming dynasty. Zibo began carving the woodblocks in 1579 on Mount Wutai, in the Shanxi province. In 1592, he then moved the project to the Zhejiang province on Mount Jing, near Hangzhou. After he died, the carving work came to a halt, to be revived in the early years of the Qing. The woodblocks were completed in 1676, during the reign of the Kangxi Emperor (1654-1722). The *Jiaxingzang* was printed in the city of Jiaxing, fifty miles west of Shanghai, and preserved in the monasteries surrounding Hangzhou. By 1864, the print editions of the *Jiaxingzang* were destroyed in the flames of the Taiping rebellion. In this age of decline Yang set out to reprint the entire Buddhist canon in Nanjing.

Between 1865 and 1866, using his personal savings, Yang began to acquire woodblocks. He first stored them in his residence but later found a new location in the center of Nanjing where he established a printing press. He then gathered the old friends with whom he shared the passion for Buddhism, and assigned each of them a different task. He named the printing press after “Jinling,” an old title of Nanjing (C. Jinling kejing chu). Of particular importance in the early years of the Jinling press was Zheng Xuechuan (1826-1880), a follower of the Jingtū tradition and a native of Yangzhou, a prefecture bordering the provincial capital of Nanjing. Since the beginning of the Taiping rebellion, Zheng had been printing Buddhist scriptures at Yangzhou’s Fazang temple. In 1866, having become a monk in Nanjing with the ordination name of Miaokong, he joined Yang Wenhui’s project at the Jinling press. Here, Miaokong’s technical and financial contributions proved vital to Yang’s nascent endeavor. Miaokong oversaw the carving woodblocks for reprinting the massive *Mahāprajñāpāramitā sūtra* (C.

*Dabanruobolomiduo jing*). Yet Miaokong also showed an ability to raise funds for reprinting the Chinese canon from the Buddhist communities of southeast China.

Over the next three decades, Yang supervised the engineering projects for the reconstruction of Nanjing during the day. At night, with Miaokong's assistance, he devoted his entire time to the Jinling press. In 1866, it printed its first volume, the *Jingtu sijing* ("Four Pure Land Scriptures"), a concise liturgy in the Jingtu tradition, divided in four sections. It included (1) the *Wuliangshou jing*, the longer version of the *Sukhāvātīvyūha sūtra*; two short texts inspired by the teachings of the Chan master Zibo Zhenke, that is, (2) a commentary on the shorter *Amituo jing*, and (3) a commentary on the *Guan Wuliangshou jing* (also known as *Shiliuguan jing*) promoting the visualization of Amitābha in sixteen contemplations and containing instructions for the recitation of Amitābha's name; the last section included (4) the *Puxian xingyuan pin* (*S. Bhadracarīprañidhāna*) a prayer from the *Gaṇḍavyūha*.

In the postscript to the *Jingtu sijing*, entitled "Chongkan Jingtu sijing ba" ("Afterword to the Reprint of the *Jingtu sijing*"), Yang explains the reasons for choosing this volume as his first editorial project. He recalls that in the years prior to moving to Nanjing, he had only heard about Buddhism. Although he thought it was a noble teaching, his first reading of Buddhist scriptures, aroused no interest in him. This changed when he came into possession of the *Yunqi fahui* ("Anthology of the Teachings of Yunqi"), a collection of teachings by Yunqi Zhuhong (1535-1615), a famous Chan master from Hangzhou. In the late Ming dynasty, Zhuhong had opposed the views of the Roman Catholic missionaries, engaging in a debate with the Jesuit Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) on the nature of transmigration and on the retribution of deeds for killing animals. Setting the Chan tradition aside, Zhuhong also promoted the recitation of the name of Amitābha in the Jingtu tradition. Only after reading Zhuhong's work was Yang able to

appreciate the deeper significance of Buddhism. He thus began to study the Jingtū scriptures, where he learned about the three ages of the Buddha's teaching. "As I walked down the steps of a street," he recalls in the postscript, "I did not expect to discover, in the rubble of the soldiers' flames, the shorter *Amituo jing*. But the longer versions, the *Wuliangshou jing* and the *Shiliuguan jing*, were then impossible to find."<sup>79</sup>

When he moved to Nanjing the following year, Yang found the *Wuliangshou jing*, the translation of the longer version of the *Sukhāvativyūha* in a thin volume printed eight years earlier in Hangzhou. Hidden in the household of one of his future assistants at the Jinling press, the book had survived the Taiping's rage against idolatry. It was a copy of the first edition of the *Jingtū sijing*, composed by the well-known historian and author Wei Yuan (1794-1856).<sup>80</sup>



Born in 1794 in Shaoyang, in Hunan province of South China, Wei Yuan had become interested in the Confucian classics at an early age. In 1822, after passing the provincial-level examinations, he developed an interest in statecraft. In 1826, the administrator of the Jiangsu province He Changling (1785-1848), invited him to edit the *Huangchao jingshi wenbian* ("Compilation of Essays on Statecraft for the Dynasty"), a collection of exemplary writings on finance, public works, and defense, by a generation of distinguished officials who took the imperial examinations in the second half of the eighteenth century, during the reign of the Qianlong Emperor. Later, as Wei Yuan himself prepared for the imperial examinations he settled in Beijing. Here, he became acquainted with eminent scholars such as Lin Zexu (1785-1850), the

---

<sup>79</sup> See Yang Wenhui, "Chongkan Jingtū sijing ba," in *Wei Yuan quanji*, 12 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011), p. 150.

<sup>80</sup> On Wei Yuan, see Jane Kate Leonard, *Wei Yuan and China's Rediscovery of the Maritime World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984); Huang Liyong, *Weiyuan nianpu* (Changsha: Jiangnan renmin chubanshe, 1985).

official who would play a leading role in Canton during the First Opium War. In August 1842, as the Treaty of Nanjing was being signed, Wei Yuan published the *Shengwu ji* (“Military Records of the Glorious Dynasty”), his first major historical work.

The *Shengwu ji* celebrated the territorial conquests of the Qianlong Emperor during the latter half of the eighteenth century. The treatise included detailed accounts of Asian states and kingdoms that had become tributaries of the Qing thanks to Qianlong’s military campaigns, such as Tibet, Nepal, Vietnam, and Burma. Since the outbreak of the Opium War, Wei Yuan had begun to reflect on the conflicts that had flared up on the frontiers of the Qing Empire, both inland and on the coasts. Wei Yuan thus promoted ideas concerning the self-strengthening (C. *zhiqiang*) of the Qing state against foreign powers, in a tradition that traced back to the *Yijing*. For the Chinese scholar, the Qing had to acquire the technology of the European colonial powers, especially in military affairs. By improving foreign trade, the imperial administration would thus be able to invest in weapons and technology. Only in this way would the Qing state be able to defend its territory and imperial frontiers from foreign aggression.

In 1843, Wei Yuan published the first edition of the *Haiguo tuzhi* (“Illustrated Treatise on Sea Kingdoms”). It was his second major work, a monumental collection on world geography and naval technology. Wei Yuan wrote the *Haiguo tuzhi* based on two main sources, both compiled in Chinese around the time of the Opium War. The first source was the unpublished manuscript of the *Sizhou zhi* (“Treatise on the Four Continents”), a work on world geography edited by Lin Zexu at the time of the Opium War. The *Sizhou zhi* was a revised and expanded Chinese edition of the *Encyclopædia of Geography: comprising a Complete Description of the Earth, Physical, Statistical, Civil, and Political; exhibiting its Relation to the Heavenly Bodies, its Physical Structure, the Natural History of Each Country, and the Industry, Commerce*

*Political Institutions, and Civil and Social State of All Nations*, published in London in 1834 by the Scottish geographer Hugh Murray (1779-1846).

Wei Yuan worked on the *Haiguo tuzhi* until his death, publishing two subsequent editions: the 1847 edition in 60 fascicles and the 1853 edition in 100 fascicles. The *Haiguo tuzhi* began to circulate in Japan with the second edition in 1847. In the last edition of the work, most of Wei Yuan's additions came from his second major source, the *Xinshi dili beikao* ("New Compendium of Geography"), by José Martinho Marques (1810-1867), a Macanese scholar who worked as the Chinese translator for the Portuguese administration in Macao. The *Xinshi dili beikao* ("New Compendium of Geography") was in turn a Chinese edition of a treatise on world geography published in Venice in 1817 by Adriano Balbi (1782-1848), who served as imperial counselor on geography at the Habsburg court in Vienna. Balbi's well known treatise was the *Compendio di Geografia Universale*, originally written in Italian and republished in Paris in 1832 as the *Abrégé de Géographie*, in the edition that reached Marques in Macao.

In 1844, after passing the imperial examinations in Beijing, Wei Yuan became eligible for civil service. He occupied several positions in the Jiangsu province. In 1845, he obtained a position as magistrate in Yangzhou, a position he was soon forced to leave, due to his mother's illness and death. Beginning in 1846, he followed the customary three-year period of mourning, during which he worked to expand the first editions of the *Shengwu ji* and of the *Haiguo tuzhi*. After resuming official life in 1849, in 1853 Wei Yuan obtained a position as a magistrate in Gaoyou, a prefecture located to the north of Nanjing. He was in charge of organizing the local defense to prevent the Taiping army from advancing into Jiangsu. In 1853 Wei Yuan indicted for delaying government communication. Months later, when he was rehabilitated, he received an offer to coordinate the resistance against the Taiping in the Anhui and Jiangsu provinces. Still

disheartened, Wei Yuan refused the post, retiring from public life. As Hong Xiuquan was enthroned in Nanjing and the Taiping army occupied the provinces of Southeast China, Wei Yuan moved to Hangzhou, where he took up residence in a Buddhist monastery. For the next three years, he devoted his time to writing, study, and practice. He revised the *Haiguo tuzhi*, meditated in the Chan tradition, and recited Amitābha’s name in the Jingtu tradition.

In 1854, Wei Yuan began to write the *Jingtu sijing*, which would be his last work. By 1856, despite his advanced age and ill health, Wei Yuan had completed the first draft. It included the long version of the *Wuliangshou jing*, originating from the collation of three famous translations of the *Sukhāvātīvyūha*. The draft also included short commentaries on the *Guan Wuliangshou jing* and *Amituo jing* (S. *Amitābha sūtra*) based on the teachings of Yunqi Zhuhong. Unable to print the volume, Wei Yuan sent the draft to the Confucian official and poet Zhou Yipu (d.u.), a superintendent of the salt department in Canton who, after the Opium War, had become a follower of the Jingtu tradition.<sup>81</sup> In the letter that accompanied the draft, Wei Yuan wrote to Zhou, “My old friend, at this difficult time, all that looks promising must not be trusted, except from this method for passing beyond the three realms, and for moving to a higher place, accomplished through the power of the Buddha’s aspiration. By engaging the method with one’s whole heart, one achieves the nine grades of rebirth in Sukhāvātī.”<sup>82</sup> “Also,” Wei Yuan concludes in his letter to Zhou, exalting the Jingtu’s method as a fast way to obtain awakening,

---

<sup>81</sup> See Li Fang, *Huang Qing shushi*, vol. 21 (Taibei: Mingwen shuju, 1985). Zhou Puyi’s dates of birth and death are unknown. Chinese sources record his birth during the reign of the Qing Jiaqing Emperor (1796-1820) and his death under the Tongzhi Emperor (1861-1875).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150. In the *Guan Wuliangshou jing*, Amitābha teaches the nine grades (C. *jiupin*) within the last three of the sixteen contemplations. The nine grades correspond to a ninefold division of places of rebirth in Sukhāvātī. Each division includes different types of beings who have resolved to be reborn in the western buddha land. By developing differing degrees of faith in the teachings of the Mahāyāna, by performing various kinds of meritorious deeds, by abstaining from the violation of rules of conduct, or by simply being mindful of the Buddha’s name, beings who have succeeded in taking birth in Amitābha’s presence thus dwell in nine different stages. Birth in these stages determines the amount of time such beings will require to become themselves buddhas. See “The Contemplation Sutra,” in *The Three Pure Land Sutras* (Berkeley: Numata, 2003), pp. 63-87.



“this method of reciting Amitābha’s name grants the destruction of the three unwholesome roots. It does not discriminate between wise and unwise, male and female, and so everyone can engage it. If you could print it, and circulate it, it will be of great benefit.”<sup>83</sup>

In March 1857, soon after Zhou began to revise the draft, Wei Yuan died in Hangzhou. In 1858, having worked on Wei Yuan’s manuscript for two winters, Zhou published the first edition of the *Jingtu sijing*. In the preface, Wei Yuan writes:

The path of sovereigns runs through the world, but the path of the buddhas reaches beyond it. Those who possess the marks of obstruction see the two as different, but those who possess the correct motivation view them as one. As for the path reaching beyond the world, there exist differences among doctrines, teachings, monastic discipline, and the Pure Land. Among these, to turn inward and to place value on one’s luminosity, concentrating on the practice of sudden illumination, is the path of doctrines and teachings. Further, to reach outward to the noble ones, using the power of one’s mind to receive the power of the buddhas, is the path of the Pure Land. But to reach out to the noble ones and, at the same time, to concentrate on one’s inner luminosity. This is the combined practice of doctrines, teachings, and Pure Land, whereby one progresses on the path with great speed. As for monastic discipline, it is the foundation of the paths of doctrines, teachings, and Pure Land, yet it is not their final goal. With doctrines, teachings, and discipline, one moves across many cosmic ages, reaching from the first to the tenth stage, up to the profound state of awakening. That is, one does not receive the Buddha’s power, so one becomes a buddha by one’s own power. What kind of rare gift this is! Yet, since this is not something one can accomplish in a single lifetime, then, there is also the teaching of taking rebirth in the Pure Land of our buddha Amitāyus. There is a great difference in terms of ease and speed, between those who go beyond the three realms by moving sideways, and those who exit the world by moving to a higher place.<sup>84</sup>

In the postscript to the Jinling edition of the *Jingtu sijing*, Yang Wenhui explains how Wei Yuan’s expertise in matters of statecraft was known to all. “But what was not known was his heart’s original aspiration, it was his perfect accomplishment in Pure Land practice.”<sup>85</sup> In his last years, according to the teachings of Yunqi Zhuhong, Wei Yuan had come to believe that the gradual approach to the path of awakening set forth in doctrines and teachings was not

---

<sup>83</sup> See Zhou Yipu, “Yuanke Jingtu sijing shu,” in *Wei Yuan quanji*, 12 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011), p. 150.

<sup>84</sup> See Wei Yuan, “Jingtu sijing zongshu,” in *Wei Yuan quanji*, 12 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011), p. 125.

<sup>85</sup> See Yang Wenhui, “Chongkan Jingtu sijing ba,” in *Wei Yuan quanji*, 12 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011), p. 150.

sufficiently fast. Like many others, Wei Yuan believed that the recitation of the Buddha's name in the Jingtū tradition was the swiftest of all available methods. The doctrines and teachings of the Faxiang, Sanlun, Tiantai, and Huayan traditions of China held that the path of the bodhisattva, moving through ten stages (*C. pusa di*), required several cosmic ages to bring to completion. Thus, taking monastic discipline (*C. lü*) as the foundation for the cultivation of the six perfections (*C. liu boluomi*), one took countless rebirths as a bodhisattva through the world's three realms (*C. sanjie*), the desire realm (*C. yu jie*), the form realm (*C. sejie*), and the formless realm (*C. wuse jie*). Therefore, at the end of the path of the bodhisattva, one would become a buddha through one's own efforts. Crossing the path would take an incalculable amount of time. Even in the Chan tradition, as one sought to recognize one's own inner luminosity in this very lifetime, one relied only upon one's own power. It was not so in the Jingtū tradition.

For Wei Yuan, to complete the bodhisattva path, that is, to become a buddha through doctrines and teachings, was something reserved to only a few gifted ones. The Jingtū tradition offered a faster method to achieve the same end. Among the available methods, taking rebirth in Amitābha's buddha land provided faster access to buddhahood after the present lifetime. Hence, he compiled the *Jingtū sijing* as a simple liturgy that condensed this method. "As his life in this world came to an end," observed Yang, "he was eager to benefit living beings, and so having taken the *Wuliangshou jing*, having combined a few translations into one and having simplified it by cutting out the superfluous, he assembled his best edition. He then appended the *Guan Wuliangshou jing*, the *Amituo jing*, and the *Puxian xingyuan pin*, put the anthology together, and gave it the name *Jingtū sijing*."<sup>86</sup> Through this method, one turned to the miraculous powers of Amitābha, and to the compassion and wisdom of other noble ones (*C. sheng*), the great bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta. Mindful of the bodhisattva's aspiration for

---

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 151.

awakening (*C. putixin*), and of the importance of this aspiration to progress on the path of the great bodhisattvas, Wei Yuan appended to his manuscript the *Puxian xingyuan pin*, a renowned prayer spoken by the bodhisattva Samantabhadra in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*.

For Wei Yuan, the earnest recitation of these four scriptures was the best method to attain awakening in a short time. It produced confidence in one's inner luminosity. It helped one develop faith in one's potential, and in one's power to become a buddha, essential for practice toward the end of one's life. At this time, followed by a retinue of bodhisattvas, Amitābha would appear to the dying and enfold them in his radiant light. Transported out of this world in the western direction, one would take rebirth in Sukhāvātī.



Within two years from the publication of the *Jingtu sijing*, the Jinling press began to print other scriptures. In 1869, Yang published a second Buddhist classic. It was the *Lengyan jing*, a Chinese apocryphon. Together with the *Jingang jing* (the famous “Diamond Sūtra”) and the *Qixin lun* (the famous “Awakening of Faith”), the *Lengyan jing* was one of the first scriptures Yang had collected during the recovery from his illness in Anqing. In 1870, he published the *Vimalakīrti sūtra*, and in early 1871 the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā sūtra*. To reprint the entire Buddhist canon, Yang resorted to the most current catalogue of the Chinese Tripiṭaka printed during the ruling dynasty. In November 1870, as he retrieved the catalogue of the *Longzang* edition of the Tripiṭaka, the Jinling press issued the *Daqing chongke Longzang huiji* (“Reprint of the Longzang Catalogue of the Great Qing”). The *Longzang* catalogue, reflecting the classification of scriptures adopted by the compilers of the *Yongle Beizang*, divided its 1,669

Buddhist scriptures into seventeen classes. In turn, the arrangement of the seventeen classes of both the *Yongle Beizang* and the *Longzang* canons were derived from the organizing principles that the Tang dynasty monk Zhisheng (658-740) used in his *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* (“Catalogue of the Kaiyuan Era concerning Śākyamuni’s Teaching”), compiled in 730.

In the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*, which would serve as a model for all subsequent catalogues in China, Korea, and Japan, Zhisheng presented Chinese translations of Buddhist scriptures in two main sections. He organized the first section chronologically, listing scriptures under the name of the translator as well as the age in which they were translated since the Han dynasty (206 BC-220 CE). In the second section of his catalogue, Zhisheng organized translations in two divisions according to content. First, there was the twofold division in *sheng* (S. *yāna*), or “vehicles,” reflecting the basic categories of “Dasheng” (S. Mahāyāna) and “Xiaosheng” (S. Hīnayāna). Second, within each *sheng* category, Zhisheng listed scriptures in three further divisions. The three divisions corresponded to the threefold *zang* (S. *piṭaka*), or “basket,” in which scriptures had been classified in India: the *Jingzang* (S. *Sūtrapiṭaka*), the *Lüzang* (S. *Vinayapiṭaka*), and the *Lunzang* (S. *Abhidharmapiṭaka*). According to this order, Zhisheng listed Buddhist scriptures that had been translated into Chinese and included in the *Tripitaka* by 730. Yet, Zhisheng, as it would reflect on later catalogs, left out of the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* several Indian scriptures that had been translated into Chinese during the Tang dynasty. Because in Zhisheng’s catalogue there was no specific class for the scriptures of the *Mizong*, the scriptures that would become the classics of this tradition in Japan were classified according to the period of their translation. Some of them, however, were left out of the catalogue.

Accordingly, as reflected in Yang Wenhui’s 1870 *Daqing chongke Longzang huiji*, the Qing compilers of the Buddhist canon listed scriptures in a way that reflected Zhisheng’s original

arrangement. Yet, the *Longzang* catalogue contained a modification. It included not only the order of scriptures according to chronology and content inherited from the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*, but also recent developments in scriptural and canonical classification. The Qing compilers of the *Longzang* drew inspiration from the Ming compilers of the *Yongle Beizang*. They placed the translations listed in the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* in the major scriptural divisions. Yet they did so not only according to content, but also according to chronology, not of their preaching within the lifetime of the Buddha, but of their translation into Chinese. The *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* listed each of the three *zang* divisions of Jingzang, Lüszang, and Lunzang within the two *sheng* categories of Dasheng and Xiaosheng. The *Longzang* catalogue, however, reversed the order between the *sheng*, that is, the containing divisions, and the *zang*, the contained categories. It listed the two *sheng* categories within the three *zang* divisions. Within each major *zang* division, the Qing compilers then added to the Dasheng and Xiaosheng categories a new class, in which they listed Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna scriptures that had been translated during and after the Tang dynasty, but which had not been included in the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*. This new class of recent additions included translations completed between the eighth and the thirteenth centuries, which were admitted into the Tripiṭaka only after the compilation of the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* (among which, as we will see below, one of the foundational scriptures of *Mizong*).

The *Jingzang* was the first and largest division of the *Longzang* canon. It comprised three categories. These three categories were the result of a cataloging enterprise that had occupied Chinese Buddhist compilers for an entire millennium, from the Tang to the Qing dynasties. The first category, called *Dasheng*, collected Mahāyāna sūtras. The second, called *Xiaosheng*, collected Hīnayāna sūtras. The third category, named *Song Yuan ruzang zhu daxiaosheng jing*, collected both Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna sūtras introduced into the Chinese Tripiṭaka during the

Song (960-1280) and Yuan (1280-1368) dynasties. The *Dasheng* category included seven classes of Mahāyāna scriptures, the first seven of the canon: the 1) *Banruo bu* (*Prajñāpāramitā* class); the 2) *Baoji bu* (*Ratnakūṭa* class); the 3) *Daji bu* (*Mahāsaṃnipāta* class); the 4) *Huayan bu* (*Avataṃsaka* class); the 5) *Niepan bu* (*Nirvāṇa* class); the 6) *Wudabuwai chongyi jing* (Sūtras of Duplicate translation, Excluded from the Preceding Five Classes); and the 7) *Wudabuwai danyi jing* (Sūtras of Single Translation, Excluded from the Preceding Five Classes). The first five classes listed early translations of Mahāyāna sūtras, grouping several shorter scriptures around a central and longer scripture: the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā sūtra*, in the translation by the Chinese monk Xuanzang (602-664); the *Mahāratnakūṭa sūtra*, translated by the Indian monk Bodhiruci (d. 727); the *Mahāsaṃnipāta sūtra*, in the version by the Indian monk Dharmakṣema (385-433); the *Avataṃsaka sūtra*, first translated by the Indian monks Buddhahadra (359-429) and later by Śikṣānanda (653-710); and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra*, in Dharmakṣema's rendering.

In addition, among the seven classes of the *Dasheng* category, the sixth and seventh classes featured scriptures that the Ming compilers of the *Hongwu Nanzang* and, later, of the *Yongle Beizang*, did not group together with the Mahāyāna sūtras of the five preceding classes. The sixth class of *Wudabuwai chongyi jing* included scriptures that existed in two or more translations. Notably, it included the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā sūtra*, famously translated by Kumārajīva (344-409), the monk from the Central Asian kingdom of Kucha regarded as the founder of the Sanlun tradition, and also translated by the Chinese monk Zhiyan (602-668), the second patriarch of the Huayan tradition. Other important scriptures in this class were the *Samdhinirmocana sūtra*, translated by Bodhiruci and Xuanzang, the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa sūtra* (*C. Jinguangming zuiheng jing*), in the two versions by Dharmakṣema and by Yijing (635-713), and the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa sūtra*, rendered into Chinese by the Indo-Scythian translator Zhiqian

(220-252) and also later translated by Kumārajīva.

The sixth class of duplicate translations included the three versions of the longer *Sukhāvatyūha sūtra*, in Zhiqian's, Kumārajīva's, and Xuanzang's translation. These were the translations that Wei Yuan collated for his edition of the *Wuliangshou Jing* contained in the *Jingtu sijing*. Furthermore, this class comprised collections of mantras and dhāraṇīs, such as the popular *Zhunti tuoluoni jing* (S. *Cundīdhārāṇīsūtra*), in three translations by the Indian ācāryas Divākara (C. Rizhao, 613-687), Amoghavajra (C. Bukong, 705-774) and Vajrabodhi (C. Jingangzhi, 671-687).<sup>87</sup> Finally, the seventh class of the *Dasheng* category, called *Wudabuwai danyi jing*, included scriptures that had been translated one time only, such as the *Lengyan jing*, in Pāramiti's (d.u.) rendering, the *Śūraṅgamasamādhi sūtra*, by Kumārajīva, as well as the *Mahāvairocanābhisambodhi vikurvitādhiṣṭhāna vaipulya sūtra* (C. *Da Piluzhena chengfo shenbian jiachi jing*) and the *Susiddhikara sūtra* (C. *Suxidijieluo jing*), both translated into Chinese by the Indian Śubhākarasiṃha (C. Shanwuwei, 637-735) and Yixing during the Tang dynasty.<sup>88</sup> The *Xiaosheng* category, that is, the second category of the *Jingzang* division, included the eighth and the ninth classes of the *Longzang*: the (1) *Ahan bu* (*Āgama* class); and the (2) *Danyi jing* (Sūtras of Single Translation).

The third and final category of the *Jingzang*, the *Song Yuan ruzang zhu daxiaosheng jing*, collecting both Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna sūtras, was a class in itself, the tenth class. It collected scriptures that had been translated into Chinese from the tenth to the fourteenth century, during the Song and Yuan dynasties. Four important scriptures stood out in this class: the *Sarvatathāgata tattvasaṃgraha mahāyānābhisamaya mahākālparāja* (C. *Jingangding yiqie rulai zhenshi she dasheng xianzheng dajiaowang jing*), translated by Amoghavajra during the Tang

---

<sup>87</sup> See Yang Wenhui, ed., *Daqing chongke Longzang huiji* (Nanjing: Jingling kejingchu, 1870), p. 23.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

dynasty, the *Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra* (C. *Dasheng zhuangyan baowang jing*) and the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (C. *Dafangguang pusazang wenshushili genben yigui jing*), both translated by the Kashmiri monk Tianxizai (d. 1000), and the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* (C. *Sheng miaojiexiang zhenshi ming jing*), translated from Tibetan by the monk Shizhi (T. Shakya ye shes, d.u.) during the Yuan dynasty. By the year 730, the scriptures of the *Song Yuan ruzang zhu daxiaosheng jing* had not been introduced in Zhisheng's *Kaiyuan Shijiao lu*. Thus, it was clear how the later compilers of the Buddhist canon listed the three scriptures of what would be known as *Mizong*, that is, the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra*, the *Susiddhikara sūtra*, and the *Sarvatathāgata tattvasaṃgraha*, among the Mahāyāna sūtras: the former two scriptures were listed in the seventh class of scriptures of single translation, while the latter in the tenth class of scriptures that had been introduced into the canon during the Song and Yuan dynasties.

Finally, the Jinling edition of the *Longzang* catalogue then reported two further divisions of the Chinese Tripiṭaka, the Lüzang and the Lunzang. The Lüzang included two classes: the eleventh class of *Dasheng lü* (Mahāyāna vinaya), and the twelfth class of *Xiaosheng lü* (Hīnayāna vinaya). The Lunzang, or third division of the canon, included three classes: the thirteenth class (1) *Dasheng lun* (Mahāyāna abhidharma), the fourteenth class (2) *Xiaosheng lun* (Hīnayāna abhidharma), and the fifteenth class, (3) *Song Yuan xuruzang zhulun* (“Abhidharma treatises introduced into the *Tripiṭaka* during the Song and Yuan Dynasties”). The last two classes of the Chinese Tripiṭaka were the sixteenth class of *Xitu shengxian zhuanji* (“Collected Works by Western Sages”) and the seventeenth class of *Citu zhushu* (“All Works of This Land”). The *Xitu shengxian zhuanji* listed the works of Indian exegetes. It collected works such as the *Dhammapāda* (C. *Faju jing*), translated by the Indian monk Vighna (C. Weizhina, d.u.) in the third century, and biographies of eminent Indian masters such as Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga,



Vasubandhu and Āśvaghōṣa, translated by Kumārajīva and Paramārtha. It also collected Amoghavajra's translation of dozens of sādhanas (C. *yigui*), including the ritual manuals dedicated to deities and maṇḍalas in the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra*, *Susiddhikara sūtra*, and *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*.

The seventeenth and last class then listed the commentaries compiled by exegetes belonging to the Chinese traditions of Buddhism. To mention a few, it included Fazang's *Huayan yisheng jiaoyi fenqi zhang* for the Huayan tradition, Zhiyi's (538-597) *Miaofa lianhuajing xuanyi* ("The Profound Meaning of the Saddharmapuṇḍarikā sūtra") and *Mohe zhiguan* ("Great Śamatha Vipāśyanā") for the Tiantai tradition, and Huineng's (638-713) *Liuzu dashi fabao tan jing* ("Platform Scripture of the Sixth Patriarch, the Precious Dharma Master") for the Chan tradition. It also included anthologies of biographies of eminent Chinese monks and nuns: Huijiao's (497-554) *Gaoseng zhuan* ("Lives of Eminent Monks") Daoxuan's (596-667) *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* ("Supplement to Lives of Eminent Monks") Zanning's (919-1001) *Song Gaoseng zhuan* ("Lives of Song Dynasty Eminent Monks"), and Baochang's (466-516) *Biqiuni zhuan* ("Lives of Eminent Nuns"). In addition, it collected the travel accounts by the most renowned Chinese pilgrims: Faxian's (337-422) *Foguo ji* ("Records of Buddhist Kingdoms"), Yijing's *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan* ("Account of the Dharma Sent Back from the Southern Seas"), and Xuanzang's celebrated *Datang xiyu ji* ("Great Tang Records of the Western Regions"). Lastly, the seventeenth class included lexicons of Buddhist terminology, such as Yiru's (1352-1425) *Daming sanzang fashu* ("Dharma Lists from the Great Ming Tripiṭaka"), together with Zhisheng's *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* and other catalogues. Accordingly, like in the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*, in the *Longzang* catalogue there was no trace of *Mizong* as Yang Wenhui would soon

come to understand the term. Still, Yang was acquainted with *Mizong*, together with *Xianzong*, through a little known work compiled during the Liao dynasty.

During the 1870s, with the *Longzang* catalogue of the Tripiṭaka at hand, Yang Wenhui and the Jinling press made an increasing number of scriptures and commentaries available in China. In 1872, the Jinling press published the *Xianmi yuantong cheng foxin yaoji* (“Essential Collection for Becoming a Buddha through the Perfect Penetration of the Manifest and Secret”) by Daoshen (b. 1056), a Liao dynasty exegete based on Mount Wutai (C. Wutai shan) in the Shanxi province of north China. Daoshen’s work provided one of the earliest explanations of the dyad *Mizong* and *Xianzong* in China.<sup>89</sup> Having appeared in the world, writes Daoshen in his preface, the Buddha had explained the “great teaching” (C. *dajiao*) to all. Yet, because of the different dispositions of his listeners, the Buddha had opened all sorts of gateways (C. *men*) into his teaching. Regardless of the divisions of his teachings, the Buddha’s skill in means (C. *fangbian*) granted a way to perfection to everyone. All doctrines (C. *zhi*) thus led to the same goal, that is, the “one vehicle” (C. *yi sheng*). “Therefore, *Xianjiao* and *Mizong* are certainly mutually inclusive. The topics of *Xian* divides into the Five Teachings, their general name being sūtrā. The *Mi bu* embraces the entire Tripiṭaka, by the single name of dhāraṇī. By the mere cultivation emptiness, existence, meditative absorption, and monastic vows, the practitioner of the *Xianjiao* does not exhaust the consummate principle. By taking maṇḍalas, mudrās, and the recitation of syllables as his only method, the practitioner of the *Mi bu* will not know the mystery

---

<sup>89</sup> For a discussion of Daoshen’s *Xianmi yuantong cheng foxin yaoji*, see Robert Sharf, “On Esoteric Buddhism in China,” in *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2002), pp. 274-6. In this essay, Sharf has demonstrated that Zanning (919-1001) and Daoshen may be regarded as the earliest exegetes to discuss the dyad *xian* (sūtra) and *mi* (dhāraṇī), attempting to integrate these categories into previous classification systems such as Fazang’s Five Teachings (C. *wu jiao*). According to Sharf, Zanning and Daoshen did not regard *Mizong* as an exalted tradition of Buddhism whose Indian founders Śubhākarasiṃha, Vajrabodhi, and Amoghavajra had come to China during the Tang dynasty, such as it would be understood in Japan in later centuries. This later understanding of the term in Japan does not reflect the exegetical categories used in China in Daoshen’s period.

of the divine doctrine.”<sup>90</sup> Although both sūtras and dhāraṇīs belonged to the Buddha’s teaching, *Xian* and *Mi* differed in many ways. Yet, ultimately, the two types of teachings were complementary. Hence, by explaining these differences in terms of four “essentials” (C. *xinyao*), (1) the “essential of *Xianjiao*,” (2) the “essential of *Mijiao*,” (3) the “opposition of *Xian* and *Mi*,” and (4) their “harmonious meeting,” Daoshen demonstrates that mantras and dhāraṇīs belonged to the Buddha’s teaching in its entirety. That is, mantras and dhāraṇīs belonged to the Five Periods (C. *wushi*) of the Buddha’s teachings as explained in Fazang’s Huayan tradition: the (1) teaching of the Hīnayāna, the (2) elementary teaching of the Mahāyāna, in China’s Sanlun tradition, the (3) final and most profound teaching of the Mahāyāna, adopted by the Tiantai tradition with the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka sūtra*, the (4) sudden teaching of Chan tradition, and the (5) perfect teaching that the Huayan tradition ascribed to the *Avatamsaka sūtra*. But most of all, Daoshen promoted the compatibility of *Xian* and *Mi*, and the presence of the latter in the former, to justify the recitation of the *Cundīdhārāṇīsūtra*, which, translated into Chinese by Divākara, Amoghavajra, and Vajrabodhi during the Tang dynasty, was popular in China at his time.

Notably, until the early 1870s, Daoshen’s discussion of the *Cundīdhārāṇīsūtra* in his *Xianmi yuantong cheng foxin yaoji* was the only source through which Yang Wenhui would understand the distinction of *Xian* and *Mi*. His understanding of these terms changed over this period, as did his understanding of the history of Buddhism, including the history of *Mizong* in India, China, Japan, and Tibet. In 1878, the Zongli Yamen, the Qing Ministry of Foreign Affairs, appointed Zeng Jize (1839-1890), Zeng Guofan’s eldest son, as ambassador to England and France, where he would serve from 1878 and 1885. Zeng appointed Yang to serve as his personal assistant at the London and Paris embassies. From 1878 to 1883, Yang would survey the current state of the European scientific knowledge, collecting studies on subjects such as

---

<sup>90</sup> See Daoshen, *Xianmi yuantong cheng foxin yaoji* (Nanjing: Jiling kejing chu, 1872), p. 2.

astronomy, geography, and naval technology for the Qing government. And, at the same time, he would encounter another European science. It was what European scholars of the time called the Science of Buddhism. The science of Oriental Philology, the prime repository of the Science of Buddhism, would transform Yang Wenhui's understanding of Buddhism as he had known it from the Chinese Tripiṭaka. The long forgotten tradition of *Mizong*, together with the term *Zhina Fojiao* ("Chinese Buddhism"), remained foreign to Yang Wenhui's revival until his encounter, in Europe, with Oriental philology and with the evolving knowledge of the Chinese Tripiṭaka.

CHAPTER 3  
CHINESE BUDDHISM

On April 26, 1880, while in London, Yang Wenhui began a correspondence in the Chinese language with two students of Friedrich Max Müller (1823-1900), who had been the professor of Comparative Philology in Oxford since 1868. Nanjō Bunyū (1849-1927) and Kasahara Kenju (1852-1883) had been in Oxford since 1876. They were members of the Higashi Honganji, the Eastern branch of the Jōdo Shinshū, one of the Pure Land traditions of Buddhism in Japan. They had come to England to learn Sanskrit. In his first letter, Yang writes:

While in Shanghai, I talked to Mr. Matsumoto and learned that senior members of the Shin tradition have traveled West, and have taken service in England. As soon as I arrived in London, I encountered Mr. Suematsu. He told me that you two have left home to study, and that you are eagerly learning Sanskrit. But you live somewhat far from the capital. Here, I have no role model, someone whose expertise I trust, and whom I admire. What a pity, that we are so far apart! For more than ten years, I have cherished the thought of disseminating Śākyamuni's ancient teaching, and to propagate it through the nations of Europe. But I am not fluent in their languages, so I have been in no position to spark interest. You have long been in England, and have certainly conversed with the people of this nation. Are there any among them who believe with a confident mind? And the Sanskrit texts that they read, are they the Tripiṭaka scriptures? How does the modern script differ from the old script? And of the Mahāyāna sūtras and śāstras that circulated in India, how many are still extant? Since you have a grasp of the sources, I would be grateful if you could share the details with me. Perhaps, in the time you spare from your studies, you could note down the Indian alphabet on paper, accompanying it with the pronunciation in English and with grammatical notes in Chinese, so that I, too, may gain knowledge of the essentials. I would be extremely thankful. I will remain in London for ten days. Then, I will go to Paris. I do not have a set route, so I'm quite flexible. One never knows, we might bump into each other some time.<sup>91</sup>

---

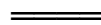
<sup>91</sup> See Yang Wenhui, "Yu Riben Liyuan Jiushou yi Nantiao Wenxiong shu," in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Taipei: Heluo tushu chubanshe, [1919] 1973), p. 981.

In September 1871, the Qing government of China and the Meiji government of Japan signed the Treaty of Friendship and Trade. The treaty, ratified in 1873, would regulate trade tariffs and maritime travel between the two countries until the First China-Japan war of 1895. The same year, the Meiji government lifted the prohibition on foreign missionaries for the propagation of Christianity. The ban on the propagation of Christianity had been in effect in Japan since the early decades of the seventeenth century. In June 1873, the first Japanese Buddhist missionary sailed to China. His name was Ogurusu Kōchō (1831-1905). A monk and scholar of the Higashi Honganji, Ogurusu set foot in Shanghai one month later in July 1873. On his first visit to Shanghai and Beijing, his objective was to learn Chinese and to assess the state of Buddhism in China. In 1876, Ogurusu returned to China on a second mission. This time, it was to build in Shanghai a Jōdo Shinshū temple, what would be the first Japanese temple in modern China. Ogurusu returned to Japan in 1877. The same year Yang Wenhui became acquainted with Matsumoto Hakka (1838-1926), a missionary monk who had helped Ogurusu establish the nascent branch of the Higashi Honganji in Shanghai. As he prepared to embark on a ship sailing from Shanghai to London, Yang learned from Matsumoto that two Japanese students of the Higashi Honganji, Nanjō Bunyū and Kasahara Kenju, had traveled to Europe. They were the first to be trained in the study of Buddhism according to the methods of the science of Oriental philology.

In 1877, as he arrived in London, Yang met Suematsu Kenchō (1855-1920) at the Chinese Embassy. Suematsu was a renowned author and diplomat who resided in England from 1878 to 1886 as a secretary to the Japanese delegation and as a student at the University of Cambridge. Suematsu informed Yang that Nanjō and Kasahara were in Oxford to receive training in the Sanskrit language. For two years since his arrival in Europe, Yang had become

aware of the great number of scientific publications on Buddhism. His project to reprint the entire Buddhist canon gained new impetus when, on a visit to the British Museum, he came upon a casket displaying a Chinese Buddhist manuscript. For an entire decade, he had sought scriptures like these in China, but he had been unable to retrieve many of them for publication at the Jinling press. He wondered whether his endeavor at the Jinling press might be of interest not only to European scholars of Buddhism, but also to the Japanese scholars who studied with them.

This chapter tells of Yang Wenhui's encounter with the science of philology, an encounter whose mediator was Nanjō Bunyū, who would become his lifelong friend and correspondent during the late decades of the Qing empire. Oriental philology's perspective on Buddhism and its history would reach China during the Republican Period with the formal institution of Chinese Buddhology. While the European understanding of Buddhism would play a fundamental role in the revival of Tantrism, this chapter explores how the language of the revival found a place in Yang Wenhui's work. During this period, Yang began to employ the sinographic compound *Zhina Fojiào* (Chinese Buddhism), and, with it, to claim that the long vanished Chinese *Mijiao* was known to Tibetans. The first part of the chapter centers on some developments in the European study of Buddhism around the time of Yang's stay between London and Paris. The chapter then considers the early study of the Chinese Tripiṭaka in England and its first modern publication in Japan. Finally, it explores Yang Wenhui's understanding of Chinese Buddhism and Tantrism in a textbook he wrote for his students in Nanjing. They would become the leaders of the next generation of scholars of Buddhism in Republican China.



In May 1880, in his response to Yang Wenhui, Nanjō Bunyū writes:<sup>92</sup>

I was glad to have your letter of last month, and to hear that you met Matsumoto Hakka in Shanghai. I was recently in London, and happened to meet Suematsu Kenchō, who told me all about your activities. He then gave this to me. How fortunate! These days in the countries of Europe, where science is advanced, one can read the scriptures of the Sanskrit Tripiṭaka. And those who take part in their translation are certainly not few. These folks do not have faith in the scriptures, so that is not what we wish to learn from them. The manner in which the Tripiṭaka scriptures are read today differs in no respect from that of Kumārajīva and Xuanzang. These scriptures have preserved a particular Buddhist Sanskrit that often substitutes the classical language with a vernacular. Hence, even Indian scholars find them difficult to read. A considerable number of Mahāyāna sūtras and śāstras are still extant to the Northeast of India, in Nepal. Recently, Indian and European scholars acquired their manuscripts. They have already printed and circulated several copies of them throughout the world. From among these, we have obtained the Sanskrit of the *Lalitavistara*, translated during the Tang Dynasty by Divākara. Today, the Tripiṭaka scriptures of the Hīnayāna are still extant in the island of Sri Lanka. These scriptures are in the so-called Pāli language. But they are not of the same sort as the scriptures of the Mahāyāna.<sup>93</sup>

The *Lalitavistara sūtra* is an account of the Buddha's life dating from the third or fourth century. It narrates the Buddha's life in twelve acts, beginning with his residence in the Tuṣita heaven, his descent in the world during his last lifetime as a human being, and finally his first teaching after attaining enlightenment. The *Lalitavistara* was translated into Chinese two times. A first Chinese version of the *Lalitavistara sūtra* in eight fascicles, entitled *Puyao jing*, was translated by Dharmarakṣa in the early fourth century; a second version in twenty fascicles, entitled *Fangguang dazhuangyan jing*, was translated by Divākara in the seventh century. Important in China and East Asia as a hagiographical and pictorial source on the Buddha's life, the *Lalitavistara* was venerated in Nepal among the *navadharmā*, the nine scriptures that the Newar Buddhists regard as the highest of the Buddha's teachings.<sup>94</sup> The Sanskrit manuscript of

---

<sup>92</sup> For an account of Nanjō's life and work see M. Zumoto, "Nanjio Bunyu: His Life and Work," in *Pacific World III*, 6 (2004): 128-132.

<sup>93</sup> See Nanjō Bunyū, "Yu Riben Nantiao Wenxiong shu yi - Fulai shu," in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Taipei: Heluo tushu chubanshe, [1919] 1973), p. 982-3.

<sup>94</sup> The remaining eight scriptures of the *navadharmā* of Nepal are: the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra*, the *Gaṇḍavyūha sūtra*, the *Daśabhūmika sūtra*, the *Samādhirāja sūtra*, the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka sūtra*, the *Guhyasamāja tantra*, and the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa sūtra*.



the *Lalitavistara*, whose copy Nanjō acquired in Oxford, had been in England since 1836.<sup>95</sup> It was a copy of a manuscript that Brian Houghton Hodgson (1800-1894), a British official of the East India Company and collector of Buddhist scriptures, obtained during his stay at the Court of Nepal from 1824 to 1844, where he had become the resident in 1833.

Since 1825, having learned that the scriptures of the Newar Buddhists were written in Sanskrit, Hodgson began to collect and copy the manuscripts of such scriptures. Amṛtānanda (d. 1835), the leading scholar of the Newar Buddhists of the time, helped him in his endeavor, becoming his informant and friend. Remembering the history of what came to be known in Europe as the Sanskrit collection of Nepal, Hodgson writes in one of his essays, “This old man assured me that Nepaul contained many large works relating to Buddhism; and of some of these he gave me a list. When we became better acquainted, he volunteered to procure me copies of them. His list gradually enlarged as his confidence increased; and at length, chiefly through his kindness, and his influence with his brethren in the *Bauddha* faith, I was enabled to procure and transmit to Calcutta a large collection of *Bauddha* scriptures.”<sup>96</sup> At the same time, Hodgson and Amṛtānanda engaged in a dialogue about the history of Buddhism in ancient India. Hodgson formulated twenty questions for Amṛtānanda. He then arranged Amṛtānanda’s answers in two of the most widely read essays about Buddhism of the nineteenth century. Hodgson’s “Notices of the Languages, Literature, and Religion of Nepal and Tibet,” and “Sketch of Buddhism, derived from the *Bauddha* writings of Nepál,” were both published in Calcutta in 1828. But Hodgson’s basic training in Sanskrit was not sufficient for reading or translating Buddhist books himself.

---

<sup>95</sup> See William Wilson Hunter, *Life of Brian Houghton Hodgson* (London: John Murray, 1896), p. 349.

<sup>96</sup> See Brian Houghton Hodgson, “Sketch of Buddhism, derived from the *Bauddha* writings of Nepál,” in *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society* II (1828), p. 35. Henceforth cited from Brian Houghton Hodgson, *Essays on the Languages, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet* (Varanasi: Bharat-Bharati, 1971).

The scriptures had to be sent to Europe, to be studied by the scientific methods of Oriental philology.

Between 1827 and 1845, Hodgson dispatched from Nepal a total of 144 volumes containing 423 manuscripts of Sanskrit Buddhist works. Of these, 66 were originally given to the library of Fort William in Calcutta, and then moved to the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Furthermore, 94 volumes, among which copies made for the occasion, were directly shipped to the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Between 1835 and 1836, 79 were sent to the Royal Asiatic Society of London, 30 to the library of London's India Office, and 7 to Oxford's Bodleian Library. Moreover, in 1836, 24 volumes of original manuscripts, along with other 64 titles, were sent to the Société Asiatique of Paris, where they were received the following year by the French scholar Eugène Burnouf (1801-1852), who had occupied the Chair of Sanskrit at the Collège de France since 1832, when Antoine Léonard de Chézy (1773-1832), the first European Chair of Sanskrit, died in Paris's cholera outbreak. Finally, upon Burnouf's private request, Hodgson dispatched 59 additional titles to him personally. The works deposited in Calcutta, London and Oxford were neglected by scholars for decades, while the first 88, and the remaining 59 which reached Paris, met with a different destiny in Burnouf's hands.<sup>97</sup> It would be the publication in 1844 of the founding work of Buddhist studies, Burnouf's *Introduction à l'histoire du buddhisme indien* ("Introduction to the History of Indian Buddhism"), together with his *Le lotus de la bonne loi* ("The Lotus of the Good Law"), a translation of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarika sūtra* from Sanskrit published posthumously in Paris in 1853.

---

<sup>97</sup> For the complete list of the manuscripts collected by Hodgson compiled by F. M. Müller, see "Appendix A" in William Wilson Hunter, *Life of Brian Houghton Hodgson: British Resident at the Court of Nepal* (London: Murray, 1896), p. 337.

The first translation of the *Lalitavistara* into a European language, from Tibetan to French, was accomplished by Philippe Édouard Foucaux (1811-1894), a Sanskrit student of Burnouf's who taught himself Tibetan and who, since 1852, was his successor as the third Chair of Sanskrit at the Collège de France. By 1842, Foucaux had already become the first European teacher of the Tibetan language at the École des Langues Orientales in Paris. The materials he used to study the Tibetan language were the works that the founder of Tibetan studies, the Transylvanian scholar Alexander Csoma de Kőrös (1784-1842), had written in Ladakh and India. Over the 1820s, while in Ladakh, Csoma studied the Snar thang edition of the Tibetan Buddhist canon. Printed between 1730 and 1732 in Snar tang, a monastery near Gzhis ka rtse in central Tibet, the Snar thang edition was the earliest print edition of the Tibetan canon. This edition derived from an earlier manuscript edition, copied between 1312 and 1320, which had been organized by the Tibetan historian Bu ston rin chen grub (1290-1364). Csoma's study of the Tibetan canon, including the translation of the Snar thang catalog and publication of its summary in English between 1836 and 1839, was among his most influential contributions to the study of Buddhism. In 1831, after moving to Calcutta, Csoma wrote several articles, together with a *Tibetan-English Dictionary*, a *Tibetan Grammar*, and a *Sanskrit-Tibetan-English Vocabulary*. Published soon after Csoma's death, these materials would be used by Foucaux to learn Tibetan in Paris.

In 1839, two years before his death, Csoma had published an essay on the Buddha's life. "Notices on the Life of Shakya, Extracted from the Tibetan Authorities," was a synthetic account of the Buddha's life. Prior to Csoma, the German Orientalist Julius von Klaproth (1783-1835) wrote a life of the Buddha, his *Leben des Buddha, Nach mongolischen Nachrichten* ("Life of the Buddha, from Mongolian Sources"), published in Paris in 1823. Csoma's "Notices on the Life of

Shakya” was based on the Tibetan translation of two scriptures: the *Lalitavistara* (T. *Rgya cher rol pa*) and the *Abhiniṣkramaṇa* (T. *Mngon par ’byung ba*), both contained in the *Mdo* (S. *Sūtra*) division of the Snar thang canon. The essay was a summary in twelve sections describing the twelve acts of the Buddha. As Csoma writes, the twelve acts of the Buddha were: “I.—He descended from among the Gods. II.—He entered into the womb. III.—He was born. IV.—He displayed all sorts of arts. V.—He was married, or enjoyed the pleasures of the conjugal state. VI.—He left his house and took the religious character. VII.—He performed penances. VIII.—He overcame the devil, or god of pleasures (*Kāma Déva.*) IX.—He arrived at the supreme perfection, or became *Buddha*. X.—He turned the wheel of the law or published his doctrine. XI.—He was delivered from pain, or died. XII.—His relics were deposited.”<sup>98</sup> In this study, Csoma’s attempt to reconstruct the historical footsteps of Śākyamuni, the human Buddha, laid the foundation for Foucaux’s work on the *Lalitavistara*, and for his comparison between the Sanskrit and Tibetan editions of the text.

Foucaux’s *Histoire du Bouddha Sakya Mouni* (“Story of Sakya Muni Buddha”) was published in Paris in 1860. His introduction to the French version of the *Lalitavistara* exemplifies the methods of the scientific study of Buddhism during the second half of the nineteenth century. Among the concerns of Oriental philology in the examination of Buddhist scriptures was the distinction between history and legend. Like all early books of Buddhism, observes Foucaux, the *Lalitavistara* claimed to have been committed to writing by one of the main disciples of the Buddha. Furthermore, the scripture claimed that it had been written immediately after the Buddha’s *parinirvāṇa*, and after the narration that the Buddha himself made of the events of his own life. “It is probable, in fact, that one of the first needs of the new

---

<sup>98</sup> See Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, “Notices on the Life of Shakya, Extracted from the Tibetan Authorities,” in *Asiatic Researches*, 20 (1839, part 2): 285-6.

converts to Buddhism was of knowing what the life of the founder of their religion had been, both to invoke the master's perfection, and to imitate his virtues."<sup>99</sup> Hence, Foucaux inferred, because it retained the events of the Buddha's life, the first redaction of the *Lalitavistara* must have been compiled not long after the Buddha's passage into *parinirvāṇa*. The date of the Buddha's death, according to Burnouf's comparison of Sanskrit and Pāli sources in his *Introduction*, was the sixth century BC. Therefore, the first redaction of the *Lalitavistara* must have occurred on the occasion of the first of the three Buddhist councils (S. *saṃgīti*) mentioned in Tibetan sources.

By the time Foucaux published his *Histoire du Bouddha Sakya Mouni*, the two European scholars who had discussed the events and chronology of the three councils were Csoma, in the final section of his "Notices on the Life of Shakya, Extracted from the Tibetan Authorities," and Burnouf, in the final section of the *Introduction* about the "History of the Collection of Nepal." In Csoma's account, soon after the Buddha's passage into *parinirvāṇa*, Mahākāśyapa, the Buddha's leading disciple who excelled in magical powers and meditative absorption, ensured that the Buddha's discourses and the rules of discipline were collected and organized before they could be altered. At the first council, Mahākāśyapa summoned five hundred arhats in Rājagṛha, the capital of the central Indian kingdom of Magadha, where for the first time the Buddha's teachings and rules would be collected in the form of the Tripiṭaka. During the council, Mahākāśyapa urged Ānanda, the Buddha's cousin and personal attendant, to recite all the discourses the Buddha had spoken. Thanks to his powerful mnemonic skills, Ānanda had committed the Buddha's word (S. *buddhavacana*) to memory. Mahākāśyapa then asked the monk Upāli, who among the Buddha's disciples was the most knowledgeable in the monastic code, to recite the rules of conduct for bhikṣus and bhikṣunīs. Mahākāśyapa then himself recited

---

<sup>99</sup> See Philippe Édouard Foucaux, *Histoire du Bouddha Sakya Mouni* (Paris: Benjamin Duprat, 1860), *Ibid.*, p. XI.

the teachings of the *Abhidharma*. In Csoma's report, his *Abhidharma* teachings were the *Prajñāpāramitā*'s "metaphysical" teachings. The three recitations were thus called the *Sūtrapiṭaka*, the *Vinayapiṭaka*, and the *Abhidharmapiṭaka*. The first council would thus serve as the foundation for the successive recitations of the Tripiṭaka during later councils.<sup>100</sup>

The second council would then be held in Pāṭaliputra at the time of king Aśoka (d. 232 BC), the Indian Emperor of the Mauryan dynasty (322-185 BC). Yet as Csoma noticed in 1836 in his "Analysis of the Dulva," according to the account of the Buddhist councils contained in the eleventh volume of the vinaya section of the Snar thang canon, discord about the teachings had already arisen among the early followers of the Buddha in the city of Vaiśālī (T. Yangs pa chan) about one hundred years after the Buddha's death. "One hundred and ten years after the death of SHĀKYA the priests at *Yangs-pa-chan* violate in many respects his precepts.—Many disputes about trifles.—At last, seven hundred accomplished priests (Sans. *Arhan*, Tib. *Dgra-bchom-pa*) make a new compilation of the Buddha works, to which was given, (something similar to our *Septuagint*,) the name of *Bdun-Brgyas-yang-dag-par-Brjod-pa*, 'that has been very clearly expressed by the seven hundred' (accomplished priests)."<sup>101</sup> Finally, Csoma continued, a third council would be held about four hundred years after the Buddha's death at the time of Kaṇiṣka (c. 127–151 CE), the ruler of the Northern Indian Kingdom of Kuṣāṇa, when the followers of the Buddha had already divided into eighteen schools. The latter council, presided by the renowned scholar Vasumitra (d.u.) and attended by Aśvagoṣa, would yield a new version of the monastic code, and the compilation of the *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā*.<sup>102</sup> Burnouf's discussion of the three

---

<sup>100</sup> See Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, "Notices on the Life of Shakyā, Extracted from the Tibetan Authorities," in *Asiatic Researches*, 20 (1839, part 2): 297.

<sup>101</sup> See Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, "Analysis of the Dulva," in *Asiatic Researches*, 20 (1839, part 1): 92.

<sup>102</sup> Csoma's account is incorrect in reporting that the number of the early Buddhist councils was three. Buddhist traditions recognize four early councils. Csoma mentioned what Buddhist traditions regard as the second council of Vaiśālī, said to have been held by seven hundred monks to resolve a dispute over ten points of possibly illicit behaviors in the ordained community, such as accepting silver and gold, only in his 1836 "Analysis of the Dulva."

councils in his *Introduction* would then combine Csoma's study of the Tibetan canon with his own analysis of the Sanskrit collection of Nepal.<sup>103</sup>

In the introduction of his *Histoire du Bouddha Sakya Mouni*, Foucaux claims that the first version (in his words, the "primitive redaction") of the *Lalitavistara* must have been part of the *Sūtrapīṭaka* that was recited at the first council. Like Burnouf, Foucaux thought that the earliest of the Buddha's teachings had been committed to writing by the Buddha's early disciples Kāśyapa, Ānanda, and Upāli during the first council. Yet, for Foucaux, the text of the *Lalitavistara* that had come down to European Orientalists was certainly not this "primitive redaction." It could not be the version of the events of the Buddha's life that may have been compiled soon after the Buddha's death. "I have said the primitive redaction, because the

---

However, he does not mention the council held at Vaiśālī in the "Notices on the Life of Shakya." Csoma's account, omitting the council of Vaiśālī and presenting the council of Pāṭaliputra as the second council, misled Burnouf about the number of councils. In his *Introduction*, Burnouf combines both of Csoma's accounts, recognizing that there may have been another council. Yet lacking other sources about the council at Vaiśālī, Burnouf accepts Csoma's longer account. Over the twentieth century, scholars have debated whether the early Buddhist councils were historical events. Buddhist traditions accept that the first council at Rājagṛha was actually held after the Buddha's death. Yet the consensus among scholars is that the first council as Buddhist traditions describe it is probably a fiction. Scholars agree that the second council was actually held about one hundred years after the Buddha's death at Vaiśālī, when a schism began to occur and the early schools of Indian Buddhism began to form. For scholarly discussions of the Buddhist councils see Louis de la Vallée Poussin, *The Buddhist Councils* (Calcutta: Bagchi, 1976); André Bareau, *Les premiers conciles bouddhiques* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1955); André Bareau, trans. Sara Boin-Webb, Andrew Skilton, *The Buddhist Schools of the Small Vehicle* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013); Étienne Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism* (Louvain: Université Catholique de Louvain, 1988).

<sup>103</sup> See Eugène Burnouf, *Introduction à l'histoire du bouddhisme indien* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1844), p. 527-528. Hereafter, all English translations of this work are from Eugène Burnouf, *Introduction to the History of Indian Buddhism*, trans. Katia Buffetrille and Donald S. Lopez Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010). I report below Burnouf's passage on the councils:

The first redaction took place immediately after the death of Śākyamuni, not far from Rājagṛha, through the efforts of five hundred monks who had Kāśyapa as their chief. The task of gathering the word of the Master was divided among three of his principal disciples, whose names always figure in the legends. It was Kāśyapa who wrote the Abhidharma, or metaphysics, Ānanda compiled the Sūtras, and Upāli, the Vinaya. The second redaction of the sacred books took place one hundred and ten years after the death of Śākyamuni, at the time of Aśoka, who reigned at Pāṭaliputra. Discord was introduced among the monks of Vaiśālī, and seven hundred arhats felt it necessary to gather in order to write down the canonical scriptures anew. Finally, a little more than four hundred years after Śākyamuni, at the time of Kaniṣka, who is said to have been the king in the north of India, the Buddhists were separated into eighteen sects who grouped themselves into four principal divisions, the names of which Csoma has preserved for us. These discords gave rise to a new compilation of the scriptures, which was the third and last of those of which the Tibetans speak.

*Lalitavistara*, as it has reached us, presents evident traces of a work that is later than the first composition.”<sup>104</sup> The Sanskrit version of the *Lalitavistara* combined prose and verse. The former was written in Classical Sanskrit whereas the latter was written in what Foucaux regarded as a vernacular, or a corrupted form of Sanskrit. The two types of language showed that the sections in verse must have belonged to an earlier stage of compilation. Hence, in its present form, the Sanskrit text of the *Lalitavistara* that Hodgson obtained in Nepal could not have been written during the first council. Rather, it must have belonged to the second or to the third council. It must have been compiled at the time of Aśoka or at the time of Kaniṣka. In order to clarify the question of the chronology of the *Lalitavistara*, then, to provide a “scientific and enlightened critique,”<sup>105</sup> Foucaux resorted to the authoritative passages in Burnouf’s *Introduction* concerning the three councils. Yet, to explain the reasons for the textual complexity of the *Lalitavistara*, Foucaux also accepted, and brought to an extreme the consequences of Burnouf’s hypothesis about the nature of the modification of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka, and in particular of the *Sūtrapiṭaka*, over each council.

Burnouf discusses the three Buddhist councils after his analysis of the tantras of the Nepalese collection, in the final section of the *Introduction* entitled “History of the Collection of Nepal.” In his analysis of the tantras, Burnouf had come to the conclusion that throughout its history in India, Buddhism could be said to have developed into three, or four distinct forms, whose last phase was the tantras. These forms may have corresponded with the stages of development of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka over the first three councils. The first form of Buddhism belonged to what Burnouf termed the simple sūtras. The simple sūtras were scriptural fragments contained in the *Divyavadāna* (“Divine Legends”), in which Śākyamuni taught the foundational

---

<sup>104</sup> See Philippe Édouard Foucaux, *Histoire du Bouddha Sakya Mouni* (Paris: Benjamin Duprat, 1860), p. XII.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, XIII.



doctrines of Buddhism such as the four truths (*S. catvāri āryasatyāni*), and where he conversed with a human audience and with the few gods of the Indian pantheon, such as Brahmā and Indra. The second form of Buddhism belonged to what Burnouf termed the developed sūtras, such as the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā* and other Mahāyāna sūtras, like the *Sukhāvātīvyūha sūtra*. Unlike the simple sūtras, in these sūtras the Buddha preached the Mahāyāna, conversing with other buddhas such as Amitābha and with bodhisattvas such as Avalokiteśvara. In the third form of Buddhism, the first two forms had been altered by the Śaiva form of Brahmanism. Here, mantras and dhāraṇīs (mostly lacking in the simple sūtras but already present in the developed sūtras), had developed into the system of the books called tantras. It was a system where the cult of idols of Śaivism had crept into the early teachings of Buddhism. Finally, Burnouf assumed the existence of a fourth form of Buddhism related with the tantras. Here, the compilers of the tantras had taken the theistic elements of Amitābha and Avalokiteśvara, and had turned them, by mixing these elements with the recitation of mantras and dhāraṇīs, into the adoration of a supreme being. This supreme buddha was Ādi Buddha. Being the latest phase of Buddhism, the worship of this supreme buddha had developed in India in the *Kālacakra tantra* during tenth century. Finally, after Buddhism had disappeared in India, the cult of Ādi Buddha would be adopted in Nepal, where it had been codified during the fifteenth century in texts such as the *Svāyambhu Purāṇa*.

To determine the chronology of these “three Buddhisms,” Burnouf assumed that each form may have reflected the modifications that had occurred in the Tripiṭaka over the three Buddhist councils. The French scholar offered two possible chronologies: (1) the early compilation of the simple and developed sūtras during the first two councils and (2) the early compilation of the simple sūtras during the first council, together with a later compilation of the Mahāyāna sūtras and of the tantras during the second and third councils. That is, the Sanskrit

books that Hodgson discovered in Nepal must have included the Tripiṭaka scriptures that emanated from the first and from the second council. These early books must have been partially revised during the third council according to the ideas of the time. Yet these modifications would not have changed the basic form and content of the original books entirely, for these books retained the basic form and content they acquired during their first compilation. At the same time, the Sanskrit Tripiṭaka of Nepal included new scriptures that must have been foreign to the first (the developed and Mahāyāna sūtras) and to the second council (the tantras) and that must have been accepted in the original Tripiṭaka during or after the third council.<sup>106</sup>

Burnouf expressed caution about aligning the three councils with what he called the “three Buddhisms” of Northern India (the Buddhism of the simple sūtras, of the developed sūtras, and of the tantras). Yet there must have been a connection between the councils and the three forms of Buddhism. “What I only wish to say is that the core of the different parts that compose the canon of Buddhist scriptures attests to a series of changes that coincide, if not with each of the councils in particular, at least with the fact of the existence of the councils; for if there had been councils, the doctrine was modified, and the doctrine indeed shows itself to be modified in the three fundamental sections of the Buddhist scriptures, the sūtras, the Mahāyāna sūtras, and the tantras.”<sup>107</sup> Thus, the simple sūtras, where Śākyamuni appeared in a setting mostly composed of humans, must have belonged to the first council, for the early legends about the Buddha that recounted his last life his previous lifetimes must have been collected as early as the first council.

Hence, for Burnouf the early legends must have been codified in a more elaborate form during the second council, at the time of king Aśoka, when the works of the Mahāyāna first

---

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 527.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 527.

began to appear and to be compiled. “Assuming this to be the case, if the primitive sūtras are the work of the first council, successively reshaped by the two following councils, and if the examination of their content excludes the idea that they could have been redacted at the same time as the Mahāyāna, there remain for us only the second and third councils, to which we have to attribute the compilation of the most developed sūtras.”<sup>108</sup> The date of the second council, however, was too close to the date of the *parinirvāṇa*. The developed sūtras of the Mahāyāna could have only been codified in the form contained in the Nepalese collection only by the third council. This hypothesis was also confirmed by the critical analysis of the forms of Sanskrit retained in the developed sūtras. The corrupted form of Sanskrit retained in the sections written in verse must have traced back to the work of the third council under king Kanīṣka. As for the third form of Buddhism, Burnouf writes, “One cannot say anything more precise touching the tantras.”<sup>109</sup> Most likely, the tantras were not the product of the first or the second council. Still, even if they had been accepted through India after the blending of Buddhism with elements of Śivaism, for Burnouf there was ground to doubt that the tantras had been compiled and accepted into the Buddhist Tripiṭaka during the third council.

In his *Histoire du Bouddha Sakya Mouni*, Foucaux extended Burnouf’s analysis of the Sanskrit collection on the Tibetan manuscript of the *Lalitavistara*. Upon textual comparison, he found, the Tibetan *Rgya cher rol pa* was an accurate translation of the Nepalese *Lalitavistara*. Furthermore, both texts presented the characteristics of what Burnouf called the “developed sūtras” of the Mahāyāna. Therefore, the Tibetan and Sanskrit versions of the *Lalitavistara* that European scholars possessed certainly traced back to the third council, about four hundred years after the Buddha’s passage into *parinirvāṇa*. “The date of the Tibetan version, which does not

---

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., pp. 530-1.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 531.

trace back beyond the sixth century of our era, does not here assist us to prove what I have attempted to establish.”<sup>110</sup> Therefore, the Tibetan version was of no avail to determine the chronology of the “primitive redaction.” Yet there also existed Chinese translations of the *Lalitavistara*. These Chinese translations may have helped the scholar determine with more certainty the chronology of the Indian original, and to confirm the date of compilation of the *Lalitavistara* at the second or third council. The Chinese versions had been identified by the French scholar Stanislas Julien (1797-1873), holder of the second Chair of Chinese at the Collège de France since 1832 and student of the celebrated Sinologist and scholar of Buddhism Jean-Pierre Abel-Rémusat (1788-1832).

In a personal note to Foucaux, Julien reported the existence of four different Chinese versions of the *Lalitavistara* (the first and fourth of which Julien misidentified with other scriptures about the Buddha’s life). “The second translation is entitled *Pou-yao king*, in eight books.”<sup>111</sup> According to the colophon of the text, it had been translated by Dharmarakṣa upon his return from India in 308 in the city of Luoyang. “The third translation is entitled *Fangguang dazhuangyan jing*, in twelve books. It was redacted by an Indian Buddhist, called in Chinese *Rizhao*, and in Sanskrit *Ti-po-he-luo* (*Divākara*), who flourished under the Gaozong Emperor of the Tang, and who, in the third year of the Yonghui (625 CE), translated several Buddhist works into Chinese.”<sup>112</sup> Unlike the Tibetan translation of the *Lalitavistara*, the dates of the Chinese translations showed that the scripture had existed in Sanskrit at least since the fourth century. Yet, when Foucaux published his study, European scholars had not yet gained access to a Chinese translation of the *Lalitavistara*. The Nepalese and Tibetan manuscripts had to suffice for the scholar’s comparative task. “Assisted by my translation,” Foucaux concluded, “which, I

---

<sup>110</sup> See Philippe Édouard Foucaux, *Histoire du Bouddha Sakya Mouni* (Paris: Benjamin Duprat, 1860), p. XVI.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. XVIII.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. XVIII.

hope, will even out the first difficulties; assisted also by the progress that science cannot fail to make, if another came and improved it, I shall applaud myself for having opened his path.”<sup>113</sup>

The Chinese translations of the *Lalitavistara* would reach Europe in 1875 with the first complete Chinese Tripiṭaka, a Japanese manuscript edition of the *Yongle Beizang*. But in the meantime, between the publication of Foucaux’s translation in 1860 and Yang Wenhui’s introduction to the science of Buddhism in 1880, the *Lalitavistara* would be the focus of a further advancement in this science.



In 1875, the *Lalitavistara* served as the main source for the first extensive study of the life of the Buddha since Burnouf’s *Introduction*. It was the *Essai sur la légende du Buddha: son caractère et ses origines* (“Essay on the Legend of the Buddha: his Character and his Origins”) by the French scholar Émile Senart (1847-1928), who received his training in Sanskrit at the university of Göttingen and later dedicated his entire career to the Société Asiatique in Paris. In his *Essai*, published in the *Journal Asiatique* between August 1873 and September 1875, Senart challenged the ideas about the life of the Buddha that had prevailed in Europe since Burnouf’s *Introduction*. He claimed that the legendary elements of the Mahāyāna scriptures in Sanskrit must have been codified long before the time of the third Buddhist council. For Senart, the very idea of the Buddha had originated prior to the historical Buddha attained enlightenment. Therefore, it predated all compilations. Although Senart did not deny the historical existence of the Buddha as a human being, he claimed that the Buddha could be traced to the myth of the Sun God of the

---

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. XX.

Vedas. The myth would have then been attributed to Śākyamuni the man, once he was recognized as the human manifestation of the god.

In 1881 the German scholar Hermann Oldenberg (1854-1920), a professor of Indology at the universities of Kiel and Göttingen published a trenchant critique of Senart's *Essai*, entitled *Buddha: Sein Leben, seine Lehre, seine Gemeinde* and translated in 1882 into English as *Buddha: His Life, his Doctrine, his Order*.<sup>114</sup> Oldenberg's *Buddha* rejected Senart's idea of the Buddha as a "mythical type." In contrast, for Oldenberg, Śākyamuni had been a historical figure who had been endowed with the mythical traits of the Vedic Sun God only after his death. As a result, the legends of the Buddha could not reveal an early stratification of mythical elements that were later encompassed around the events of Śākyamuni's historical life.

For the German scholar, the study of the life of the Buddha had to be approached as a question of method. Yet Oldenberg's method was not only based on the philological analysis of texts, but also on the methods of the comparative study of religion, popularized over the second half of the nineteenth century by a generation of scholars who continued Burnouf's work by focusing on the scriptures of the Pāli canon of Sri Lanka. It was the method that Max Müller employed in Oxford as the editor of the encyclopedic *Sacred Books of the East*, a 50-volume collection of Asian scriptures translated into English and published between 1879 and 1910. The *Sacred Books of the East* was a project that Oldenberg had joined as one of Müller's main collaborators. The argument of Oldenberg's *Buddha* suggests that by the early 1880s Burnouf's views on the origin of Buddhism had shaped the standard method to approach texts in the study of Buddhism in important ways.

---

<sup>114</sup> For the Senart and Oldenberg debate see Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *From Stone to Flesh, A Short History of the Buddha* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), pp. 220-224.

According to Oldenberg and other scholars of Pāli—notably, the founder of the Pāli Text Society and former colonial officer of the British East India Company, Thomas Rhys Davids (1843-1922)—the earliest sources that portrayed the original teaching of the Buddha had to be sought among the Pāli scriptures of Sri Lanka. “The most ancient traditions of Buddhism,” observes Oldenberg, “are those preserved in Ceylon and studied by the monks of that island up to the present day.”<sup>115</sup> Based on Burnouf’s account of the Buddhist councils, Pāli scholars wrongly assumed that the Pāli scriptures recorded the teachings of the Buddha collected during the second council. In the scriptures of these early traditions, the few mythical and legendary elements could be regarded as later additions. Senart, concludes Oldenberg, based “his criticism instead on that romance of wonders into which the grotesque tastes of later ages have transformed this primitive story.”<sup>116</sup> For the German scholar, to engage the ornate accounts of the *Lalitavistara* in order to retrieve the life of the historical Buddha was akin to studying the life of Christ based on apocryphal texts.

Unlike Senart’s forgotten *Essai*, Oldenberg’s study was translated into several languages and was regularly reprinted since its first publication in 1881. Like no other European work, Oldenberg’s *Buddha* marked the way in which the Buddha and his teaching would be understood in the first half of the twentieth century, when Yang Wenhui’s students established the methods of the European study of Buddhism in China.

In April 1880, as Oldenberg wrote his *Buddha* and Yang Wenhui corresponded with Nanjō Bunyū, Max Müller published an article entitled “On Sanskrit Texts Discovered in Japan” in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society*. Over two decades had elapsed since the search for Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts had begun in the Qing Empire. It was known since the early decades of the

---

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>116</sup> See Hermann Oldenberg, *Buddha: His Life, his Doctrine, his Order* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1882), p. 86.

nineteenth century that the Sanskrit language, termed *Fan* in Chinese, had been the foreign language that was imported from India to China by the followers of the Buddha. In order to learn the history of Buddhism in India, European scholars had thus turned to the travel accounts of two celebrated Chinese pilgrims: Faxian and Xuanzang. Yet after Hodgson’s discovery of the Sanskrit collection in Nepal, scholars began to view Faxian’s and Xuanzang’s accounts under a new light. If the Sanskrit books of Buddhism had survived in Nepal, they may have also been preserved, in the original manuscripts written on palm leaves or in copies made of them, in the monasteries and libraries of China.

“Being myself convinced of the existence of old Indian manuscripts in China,” writes Müller, “I lost no opportunity, during the last five-and-twenty-years, of asking any friends of mine who went to China to look out for these treasures, but—with no result!”<sup>117</sup> The search turned a different result when Nanjō Bunyū arrived in Oxford. He informed Müller that copies of Sanskrit manuscripts were extant in Japan and procured a copy for the Orientalist’s use. Nanjō would later inform Yang Wehwei that Müller had acquired from Japan and that he had made an English translation of the Sanskrit manuscript of the short *Sukhāvāṭīvyūha sūtra*. The Chinese *Amituo jing* was translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva in the early fourth century, as Faxian traveled across what in the *Foguo ji* he calls the “Zhongguo” (Middle Kingdom) of Buddhism, the central regions of India (S. Madhyadeśa).<sup>118</sup>

---

<sup>117</sup> See Max Müller, “On Sanskrit Texts Discovered in Japan,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 12:2 (1880): 160.

<sup>118</sup> The first European scholar to notice Faxian’s use of the term “Zhongguo” in order to denote India was Abel-Rémusat. In his *Foë Kouë Ki* (see below) he provided a concise historical explanation of Faxian’s use. “The *Middle Kingdom*, in the text, *Zhongguo*. Since it is precisely the expression we commonly utilize to designate China, it is necessary to pay attention, in Buddhist accounts, to not misinterpret the passages that relate with China with those that relate to the regions of *Mathura*, of *Magadha*, and other kingdoms situated in central India. This confusion could not occur in Faxian’s book, who, in speaking of his native country, always designated it by the names of the dynasties of Han, Qin, etc.” See Jean-Pierre Abel-Rémusat, *Foë Kouë Ki ou Relation des royaumes bouddhiques: Voyage dans la Tartarie, dans l’Afghanistan et dans l’Inde, exécuté à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle, par Chy Fā Hian* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1936), p. 60. My translation.



Faxian's *Foguo ji* ("Records of Buddhist Kingdoms") was the first of the accounts of Chinese pilgrims to appear in a European language. Over the 1750s, the *Foguo ji* had been noticed in the Chinese collections of the Bibliothèque Royale in Paris by the French Sinologist Joseph De Guignes (1720-1800). In three studies published in Paris between 1753 and 1780,<sup>119</sup> De Guignes was the first Orientalist to popularize the term "Religion of Fo," an old name used in Europe to refer to Buddhism. He also offered the earliest translation of a Buddhist scripture in a European language, the *Sishier zhang jing* ("Sūtra in Forty-Four Chapters").<sup>120</sup> De Guignes's main source about Buddhism in the Chinese language was the *Wenxian Tongkao*, a historical record of China from antiquity up to the Song dynasty, completed in 1307 by the Yuan dynasty encyclopedist Ma Duanlin (1254-1323). As De Guignes began to read Faxian's *Foguo ji*, however, the text proved too difficult to understand. De Guignes soon abandoned the project, for he was unable to render into Latin letters the characters Faxian had employed for Indian names in Chinese.

It was only thanks to the assistance of Chézy that in the late 1820s Abel-Rémusat began to translate the *Foguoji*. The translation was short yet it contained extensive notes describing Faxian's pilgrimage routes in Central Asia and India as well as the place names and personal names (including many from the life of the Buddha) described in Faxian's account. After Abel-Rémusat's untimely death in 1832, the draft of the *Foguo ji* would be revised and

---

<sup>119</sup> De Guignes read his first memoir entitled "Recherches sur les philosophes appelés Samanéens" ("Research on the Philosophers called Samaneans") at the Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres in Paris in 1753. The essay was published in Paris in 1759. In 1756, De Guignes expanded the insights of his 1753 lecture in what became his most renowned work, entitled *Histoire Générale des Huns, des Turcs, des Mogols, et des autres Tartares Occidentaux, avant & depuis J. C. jusqu'au présent* (General History of the Huns, of the Turks, of the Mongols, and of the other Western Tartars, before and after J. C. up to the present). De Guignes's final study of the Religion of Fo took shape in 1780 in his *Recherches historiques sur la Religion indienne, et sur les Livres fondamentaux de cette Religion; qui ont été traduits de l'indien en chinois* (Historical Research on Indian Religion, and on the Fundamental Books of this Religion; which were translated from Indian to China).

<sup>120</sup> For a detailed discussion of De Guignes's translation of the *Sishi'er zhang jing*, see Urs App, *The Birth of Orientalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010). See in particular the fourth chapter on De Guignes's "Chinese Vedas."

completed by the German Mongolist Julius Heinrich von Klaproth (1783-1835) and the French scholar Ernest Augustin Xavier Clerc de Landresse (1800-1862), with some assistance from Burnouf, who had inherited Chézy's Sanskrit chair. The volume, entitled *Foë Kouë Ki ou Relation des royaumes bouddhiques: Voyage dans la Tartarie, dans l'Afghanistan et dans l'Inde, exécuté à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle, par Chy Fă Hian* ("Foguo Ji, or Account of the Buddhist Kingdoms: Voyage in Tartary, in Afghanistan and in India, made at the end of the fourth century, by Shi Faxian"), was published posthumously in 1836.

Xuanzang's *Datang xiyu ji* ("Great Tang Records of the Western Regions") was the second account by a Chinese pilgrim that European scholars utilized to understand the history of Buddhism in India. Yet unlike Faxian's *Foguo ji*, whose manuscript was held in Paris since the mid-eighteenth century, Xuanzang's account came to the attention of scholars only with the publication of Abel-Rémusat's *magnum opus*. In the appendix of the *Foë Kouë Ki*, entitled "Itinéraire de Hiuan Thsang" ("Itinerary of Xuanzang"), Landresse writes, "Xuanzang visited the same places as Faxian, but he extended his pilgrimage much farther than him. He traveled across Turkestan, Afghanistan, the Sind, and almost all parts of Hindustan; and his account, entitled *Xiyu ji*, or *Description of the Western Countries*, offers us a complete illustration of the state of India in the first half of the seventh century of our era."<sup>121</sup> This brief account of Xuanzang's undertaking sparked the interest of European scholars in his *Xiyu ji*. The details about Xuanzang that Abel-Rémusat retrieved during his translation of the *Foë Kouë Ki* derived from two works compiled during the reign of the Qianlong Emperor collected at the Bibliothèque Royale in Paris, the 1706 *Bianyi dian* ("Collected Works on Borders and Frontiers") and the

---

<sup>121</sup> See Jean-Pierre Abel-Rémusat, *Foë Kouë Ki ou Relation des royaumes bouddhiques: Voyage dans la Tartarie, dans l'Afghanistan et dans l'Inde, exécuté à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle, par Chy Fă Hian* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1936), p. 375. My translation.

1781 *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* (“Annotated Catalog of the Complete Works of the Four Treasuries”).<sup>122</sup> Yet no European library possessed the manuscript of the *Xiyu ji*.

The *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* began to be compiled in 1773 in Beijing. An edict of the Qianlong Emperor assigned to the chief editors Ji Yun (1724-1805) and Lu Xixiong (1734-1792) the task to lead a team of three hundred Qing scholars to survey the massive Imperial collection of Chinese books in four divisions: Jing (Classics), Shi (History), Zi (Philosophers) and Ji (Literature). The team would review over ten thousand works, including those collected in the Yushu Chu, the Imperial Library located within the Forbidden City. Here, they would produce a new selection based mostly on the main encyclopedic work compiled during the Ming dynasty, the *Yongle Dadian* (“Great Collection of the Yongle Era”), assembled in Nanjing between 1403 and 1408 by order of an edict of the Yongle Emperor. The work of Ji and Lu resulted in the selection of nearly 3,500 works that were thus reprinted and collected in the *Siku quanshu* (“Complete Collection of Books in Four Divisions”).

The *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, including summaries of each work and a concise critique, quickly became the fundamental reference book across Imperial libraries for scholars and officials. Yet by 1781, the year the *Siku quanshu* was completed, its annotated catalog also served as a tool for censorship in the Qing Empire, eventually resulting in the destruction of more than two thousand Chinese works, and the rectification of nearly five hundred more. Ji Yun and Lu Xixiong wrote with regard to Faxian’s use of place names for India and China, “This book calls India the Middle Kingdom and calls China a borderland. This is due to the Buddhist promotion of their own religion, so there is no value in rectifying this mistake.”<sup>123</sup> Indeed,

---

<sup>122</sup> See Chen Menglei, *Gujin tushu jicheng. Fangyu hubian. Bianyi dian*. (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1934); *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* (Taibei: Dadong shuju, 1970); see also Cynthia J. Brokaw, Kai-Wing Chow, *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

<sup>123</sup> See *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* (Taibei: Dadong shuju, 1970), f. 71. My translation.

Faxian renders the Sanskrit term Madhyadeśa as Zhongguo in Chinese. The Qing editors, instead, used the term Tianzhu, a Buddhist transliteration of the term Sindhu, to refer to India. They reserved the term Zhongguo to refer to China, which, in Buddhist documents, was called Zhina or Zhendan, a Chinese transcription of the Indian term Cīnasthāna. Through his *Xiyuji*, Xuanzang refers to China as Zhina, using the Chinese transcription of the Indian name for China. This term was also used by Yang Wenhui through his work, together with Zhendan and Zhongguo, to refer to China.

As he began to translate the Faxian's *Foguo ji*, Abel-Rémusat wrote to Robert Morrison to request a copy of Xuanzang's work. Yet the *Xiyu ji*, Morrison replied, was then impossible to retrieve in the area of Canton, where missionary activity was then confined. In 1832, when Julien obtained the Chair of Chinese at the Collège de France, he resumed Abel-Rémusat's correspondence with the Catholic and Protestant missionaries who resided in China. The search bore no results however until 1842, when, with the Treaty of Nanjing, missionaries acquired the right to move inland. In 1843, the same year Hong Xiuquan retrieved Liang Fa's *Quanshi liangyan*, a copy of Xuanzang's work reached Paris. Upon Julien's request, the English translator and diplomat Robert Thom (1807-1846), who worked as a Chinese interpreter during the First Opium War and who, since 1842, served as the British Consul at the recently opened port city of Ningbo, acquired over two hundred volumes to be shipped Paris. At the Imperial library of Nanjing, Thom commissioned copies to be made of works that contained all extant accounts of India that had been compiled by Chinese scholars and pilgrims between the fifth and the eighteenth centuries.<sup>124</sup>

---

<sup>124</sup> See Stanislas Julien, "Reinseignements bibliographiques sur les relations de voyages dans l'Inde et les descriptions de *Si-yu*, qui ont été composées en chinois entre le Ve et le XVIIIe siècle de notre ère," in *Journal Asiatique*, X (1847): 265-295.

In Paris, among these twenty travel accounts, Julien received the manuscript copy of the *Xiyuji*. The annotated translation of the twelve books of Xuanzang's work became a multivolume project that would take the French scholars over twenty years to complete. The first French translation appeared in 1853 with the *Histoire de la vie de Hiouen-Tshang et de ses voyages dans l'Inde* ("History of the life of Xuanzang, and of his Voyages in India"); this first volume was the translation of the *Daci'en si sanzang fashi zhuan* ("Biography of the Trepitaka Master of the Daci'en Temple"), the biography of Xuanzang compiled by his disciple Huili (615-674). The project then continued with the translation of the *Xiyu ji* proper as the *Mémoires sur les contrées occidentales, traduit du sanscrit en chinois, en l'an 648, par Hiouen-Tshang* ("Records of the Western Countries, Translated from Sanskrit into Chinese, in the year 648, by Xuanzang") published in two volumes between 1857 and 1858. Xuanzang's mastery of Sanskrit immediately attracted the attention of the British Orientalist Horace Hayman Wilson (1786-1860), who had served as the first Boden Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Oxford since 1832.

In 1856, in his essay entitled "On Buddha and Buddhism," as he describes the results of Burnouf's initial comparison of the Sanskrit and Pāli Buddhist sources, Wilson discusses the meaning of the Chinese term *Fan*, which in his early studies Abel-Rémusat had determined as the original language (perhaps a form of Sanskrit) from which the Buddhist books of China had been translated. As Faxian tells in his *Foguo ji*, the books he had carried from India and Sri Lanka to China were written in the *Fan* language. Yet until Julien's study of Xuanzang's *Xiyu ji*, it was unclear to European scholars whether by the term *Fan* Faxian had meant Sanskrit or Pāli. Thanks to Julien's *Histoire de la vie de Hiouen-Tshang*, Wilson declared that the mystery had been solved. In the third book of Xuanzang's biography, Huili recorded details about the great translator's study of Sanskrit grammar during his stay at Nālanda monastery in Northern India,

and in particular about verbal conjugations and nominal declensions.<sup>125</sup> Xuanzang wrote how both the nouns and verbs of the *Fan* language had a singular, dual, and plural number. “All this is Sanscrit;” Wilson observed, “and what is more to the point, it is not Mágadhi, the proper designation of the dialect termed in the south Páli.”<sup>126</sup> Unlike Sanskrit, Páli has no dual number. Julien’s *Histoire de la vie de Hiouen-Tshang* helped Wilson formulate a new project. It was to seek Faxian’s and Xuanzang’s Sanskrit originals in China.

In his “Notes of a Correspondence with Sir John Bowring on Buddhist Literature in China,” published a few months later in 1856 in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Wilson reports the correspondence he kept over the previous years with the British politician, diplomatist, and author Sir John Bowring (1792-1872). After his railroad construction business fell into bankruptcy, in 1848 Bowring, a student of Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), accepted a position in China as the consul of Canton. In 1853, during a year of leave in London, he was appointed as the British superintendent of trade in the Far East and governor, commander-in-chief, and vice-admiral of Hong Kong. He played a major role in the second Opium War (1856-1860), during which his entire family suffered arsenic poisoning, leaving China by 1860. But seven years before, on the eve of Bowring’s return to China in 1853, Wilson asked him to determine on behalf of the Royal Asiatic Society whether the Sanskrit scriptures which had been carried from India by Buddhist pilgrims could still be found in China. In February 1854, based on Julien’s *Histoire de la vie de Hiouen-Tshang*, Wilson compiled a list of 58 works that Xuanzang translated from Sanskrit, including treatises such as the *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā*, the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*, and the *Mahāyānasamgraha*. “The

---

<sup>125</sup> For Stanislas’s French translation see Stanislas Julien, *Histoire del la vie de Hiouen-Tshang, et de ses voyages dans l’Inde* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1853), p. 166-171. For the Chinese text, see *Datang daci’en si sanzang fashi zhuan*, T. vol. 50, no. 2053.

<sup>126</sup> See Horace Hayman Wilson, “On Buddha and Buddhism,” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 16 (1856): 237.

question is,” Wilson wrote to Bowring, “whether all or any of these works, whether in the original Sanskrit or the Chinese translations, are still procurable. The originals would be of very great interest to the Sanskrit scholar.”<sup>127</sup>

Six months later in 1854, Wilson received in Oxford the first package of books from Joseph Edkins (1823-1905), a British missionary who worked for the London Missionary Society in Hong Kong since 1847, where he had become acquainted with the leaders of the Taiping Rebellion. During the 1850s, Edkins resided between Shanghai and Ningbo spreading the Gospel in the local languages. In 1861, having received Hong Rengan’s invitation to visit Nanjing, Edkins spent a few weeks in the Taiping capital, but refused to join Hong Xiuquan’s government. The books that Edkins shipped to Oxford on behalf of Bowring were not Sanskrit originals of Buddhism but Chinese translations. “They are translations of an interesting character”; writes Wilson, “but in their choice of a hero, Amitábha, are evidently not amongst the most ancient of the Buddhist authorities.”<sup>128</sup> The collective name of the packet of four books was *Jingtu sanjing* (“Three Pure Land Sūtras”); it contained the three Chinese versions of the *Sukhāvatīvyūha* (the *Wuliangshou jing*, the *Guan Wuliangshou jing*, and the *Amituo jing*), the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā*, and two daily liturgies.

Bowring’s search proceeded with the assistance of the Protestant missionaries. It did not bear, however, the results that Wilson hoped for. The same month, Bowring wrote to Wilson, “I again forward you a few Buddhist books, translated from the Sanskrit into Chinese. I am now getting catalogues from the Buddhist libraries, and from the critics where we may expect to find Buddhist compositions. I am the more anxious to collect what I can, as the Taeping people

---

<sup>127</sup> See Horace Hayman Wilson, “Notes of a Correspondence with Sir John Bowring on Buddhist Literature in China,” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 16 (1856): 318.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 319.

destroy all libraries but their own books.”<sup>129</sup> Still, in the last package of ten volumes which Edkins shipped to England, there was no trace of Sanskrit manuscripts. The package included the Chinese apocryphal *Lengyan jing* together with more than twenty Mahāyāna sūtras, thirty Chinese works, and a catalog of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka, Zhisheng’s *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*.

If British scholars and diplomats, assisted by Protestant missionaries, failed in the project of retrieving Sanskrit manuscripts in China, Wilson’s endeavor had one major fruit for the European study of Buddhism. The term “Chinese Buddhism” gained currency in English in the course of this endeavor. During his collaboration with Bowring in southern China, Edkins became familiar with Chinese Buddhist scriptures, a familiarity that resulted in two volumes in which Edkins popularized the term. In *The Religious Condition of the Chinese, with Observations on the Prospects of Christian Conversion amongst that People*, published in London in 1859, Edkins describes the iconoclasm of the Taiping rebels. “They do not put the priests to death, as has often been incorrectly stated, but they show no mercy to the image of the gods.”<sup>130</sup> The Taiping’s hostility toward idols was harmful for the Protestant evangelical mission. “We could have excused their iconoclastic tendencies, if they had not also undertaken to accomplish a political revolution.”<sup>131</sup> Edkins praises the Chan tradition for being a form of Buddhism that rejects the popular idolatry of the Chinese, and for turning the soul inward rather than to the worship of idols, he calls this religion “Chinese Buddhism.” “This was the principle of Tamo or Bodhidharma, and his followers, the founder of the esoteric sects of Chinese Buddhism.”<sup>132</sup> In his second volume, entitled *Chinese Buddhism, a Volume of Sketches, Historical, Descriptive, and Critical*, published in London in 1880, Edkins discusses Chinese

---

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., p. 320.

<sup>130</sup> See Joseph Edkins, *The Religious Condition of the Chinese, with Observations on the Prospect of Christian Conversion amongst that People* (London: Routledge, 1859), p. 282.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p. 282.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 261.



Buddhism not only in order to mark its idolatry, but also to show how this idolatry of China was different from the idolatry of Tibet. For Edkins, the worship of Śivaite idols that the Buddhists of Tibet had adopted from India, and that the Mongol and Manchu emperors of China had brought to the imperial court, was entirely foreign to Chinese Buddhism. “At present, although some authors have asserted the contrary, there appear to be no traces of any such practice in Chinese Buddhism, but they are found in the lama temples in Peking.”<sup>133</sup> Thus Edkins noticed that the idols of Indian Tantrism were restricted in China to a few Tibetan temples, notably to Beijing’s Yonghegong.

The same year Edkins published his *Chinese Buddhism*, in his “On Sanskrit Texts Discovered in Japan,” Müller acknowledged the apparent failure of Wilson’s project with regard to China. The Sanskrit manuscripts were perhaps no longer extant in China, yet they may have still existed in Japan. Müller writes:

Some years ago, however, Dr. Edkins, who had taken an active part in the search instituted by Prof. Wilson and Sir J. Bowring, showed me a book which he had brought from Japan, and which contained a Chinese vocabulary with Sanskrit equivalents and a transliteration in Japanese. The Sanskrit is written in that peculiar alphabet which we find in the old manuscripts of Nepal, and which in China has been further modified, so as to give it an almost Chinese appearance. That manuscript revived my hopes. If such a book was published in Japan, I concluded that there must have been a time when such a book was useful there, that is to say, when the Buddhists in Japan studied Sanskrit. Dr. Edkins kindly left the book with me, and though the Sanskrit portion was full of blunders, yet it enabled me to become accustomed to that peculiar alphabet in which the Sanskrit words are written.<sup>134</sup>

Müller received Edkins’s gift around the time Nanjō Bunyū and Kesahara Kenjū reached Oxford. Among the first questions that Müller asked Nanjō during the Sanskrit lectures was whether any Sanskrit manuscripts were extant in Japan. “I showed him the

---

<sup>133</sup> See Joseph Edkins, *Chinese Buddhism, a Volume of Sketches, Historical, Descriptive, and Critical* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1880), p. 150.

<sup>134</sup> See Max Müller, “On Sanskrit Texts Discovered in Japan,” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 12 (1880, New Series): 160-1.

Chinese-Sanskrit-Japanese vocabulary which Dr. Edkins had left with me, and he soon admitted that Sanskrit texts in the same alphabet might be found in Japan, or, at all events, in China.”<sup>135</sup> Thereupon Nanjō addressed his friend and fellow student Ishikawa Shundai (1842-1931), a member of the Higashi Honganji who began his training in Sanskrit on a scientific mission to Paris during the early 1870s, requesting him to dispatch a specimen of a Sanskrit Buddhist scripture to Oxford.<sup>136</sup> Upon receiving the manuscript copy in December 1879, Müller recognized in the scripture the opening formula *evam mayā śrutam*, in Sanskrit “Thus have I heard” (literally, “Thus it was heard by me”), spoken by Ānanda at the beginning of the sūtras. “Here then was what I had so long been looking forward to—a Sanskrit text carried from India to China, from China to Japan, written in the peculiar Nepalese alphabet, with a Chinese translation, and a transliteration in Japanese.”<sup>137</sup> The scripture was the short *Sukhāvatīvyūha sūtra*. While Burnouf had provided an analysis of the long *Sukhāvatīvyūha* in his *Introduction*, the text sent by Ishikawa had been unknown to European scholars, for it was not included in Hodgson’s Nepalese collection. Müller then appended the English translation of the short *Sukhāvatīvyūha sūtra* to his study, introducing Oriental philology to the results of his research: there was historical evidence for three versions of the *Sukhāvatīvyūha sūtra*. The long and the short versions existed in Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese. The third version, that is, the *Guan wuliangshou jing*, a text now regarded as a Chinese or Central Asian apocryphon, was extant only in Chinese.

---

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>136</sup> On Ishikawa Shundai and his activity as the earliest member of the Higashi Honganji to study of Sanskrit according to the standards of Oriental philology, see Mick Deneckere, “Shin Buddhist Contributions to the Japanese Enlightenment Movement of the Early 1870s,” in Hayashi Makoto, Ōtani Eiichi, and Paul L. Swanson, eds., *Modern Buddhism in Japan* (Nagoya: Nanzan, 2014), pp. 17-51.

<sup>137</sup> See Max Müller, “On Sanskrit Texts Discovered in Japan,” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 12 (1880, New Series): 161.

Together with the *Fangguang dazhuangyan jing*, that is, the Chinese translation of the *Lalitavistara* by Divākara, a copy of the *Guan wuliangshou jing* had reached England five years earlier. It had been dispatched from Japan, with the first complete edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka to reach Europe. The initiative was undertaken by the British Orientalist Samuel Beal (1825-1889). After graduating at the Trinity College in Cambridge in 1847, in 1851 Beal received ordination as an Anglican priest. The following year he took the position as naval chaplain. In 1853, on board of the HMS *Sybille*, Beal reached Canton, where he became proficient in Chinese. After working as an interpreter during the Second Opium War, in 1859 he returned to England, where he was appointed as the chaplain of the maritime artillery. At the same time, he began to publish a series of translations, including the 1869 *Travels of Fah-hian and Sung-yun, Buddhist Pilgrims from China to India*, and where he retranslated the Foguoji from Chinese into English based on Abel-Rémusat's *Foë Kouë Ki*. In the early 1880s, Beal began to work as professor of Chinese at the University College in London and became a contributor of the *Sacred Books of the East*. In 1874, he requested a copy of the Chinese Tripiṭaka from the Zongli Yamen. The Qing Ministry of Foreign Relations, however, did not respond. The same year, Beal addressed a letter with the same request to Iwakura Tomomi (1825-1883), one of the leaders of the Meiji Reformation in 1868 and ambassador of the Japanese mission to Europe in 1871-73. "We were fortunately able to look elsewhere; and in 1875 the entire Tripiṭaka was received at the India Office, in fulfilment of the promise made by the Japanese ambassador."<sup>138</sup> Received at the India Office in London, Iwakura's gift was a copy of the *Yongle Beizang*, in the edition reprinted during the reign of the Ming Wanli Emperor in the late sixteenth and copied in Japan in the late seventeenth century.

---

<sup>138</sup> See Samuel Beal, *Abstract of Four Lectures on Buddhist Literature in China, Delivered at University College, London* (London: Trübner & Co., 1882), p. vii.

In July 1876, based on the *Da Ming sanzang shengjiao mulu* (“Great Ming Catalog of the Tripiṭaka of the Holy Teaching”) that came in the 103 cases of the *Yongle Beizang*, Beal published *The Buddhist Tripiṭaka, as it is known in China and Japan, A Catalogue and Compendious Report*. For the first time in a European language, Beal described the complete content of the Chinese Tripiṭaka. In the “Compendious Report” appended to the catalogue, Beal writes:

It is evident from an examination of the books named in the previous pages, that the Buddhist Canon, as it is accepted in China and Japan, is not a trustworthy guide to what was the ancient “Rule” of that Faith. The canon in fact consists of a *congeries* of different works, admitted, in an arbitrary way, by the successive Emperors who patronized the faith, into the number of Sacred Books. Hence we are prepared to find treatises of different kinds and widely-varying dates, ranking together as parts of a continuous System. In fact, whatever books were brought to China from the date of the introduction of the Buddhist Religion into that country, down to the time of the Emperor *Wan-leih*, who caused copies of translations of these works to be included in the canon we are considering—such compose the body of this vast and so-called Sacred Literature. In other words, the Canon includes books brought and translated in China during a period extending from A.D. 70 to A.D. 1600.<sup>139</sup>

In Beal’s view, the Chinese Tripiṭaka offered a complete view of Buddhism through all of its phases of development. The Chinese canon provides knowledge of the early books that contained the word of the Buddha. Yet it also included books of various kinds that reflected the ways in which Buddhism had changed through its phases of development in India. In Beal’s view, in order to study the development of Buddhism across the nations of Asia it did not suffice to study what he referred to as “Primitive Buddhism.” “In fact, it is evident that whilst Buddhism retains in all its aspects the same basis of moral truth, and is generally marked by the same thread of philosophical speculation, yet it has been able to accommodate itself, by its facile and unresisting spirit, to the genius of people differing in all the outward phases of civilization, and in every stage of development. Hence its wonderful advance and outspread; and hence the

---

<sup>139</sup> See Samuel Beal, *The Buddhist Tripiṭaka, as it is known in China and Japan. A Catalogue and Compendious Report* (London: Clarke & Son, 1876), p. 110.

differing forms in which it presents itself to us in Thibet, Mongolia, China and Ceylon.”<sup>140</sup> Yet if Buddhism had many forms through these nations, Beal resisted the temptation of saying that the Buddhist scriptures translated in Tibetan, Mongolian, Chinese, and Pāli, implied forms of Buddhism that diverged from the content of the Tripiṭakas in these languages.

During the academic year 1879-80, Beal delivered four lectures based on his study of the Chinese Tripiṭaka at University College in London. In 1882, the four lectures were published in the volume entitled *Abstract of Four Lectures on Buddhist Literature in China*. In the opening of the first lecture, Beal writes:

The phrase “Chinese Buddhism,” as it is sometimes used, is misleading. We might as well speak of “Chinese Christianity.” Buddhism and Buddhist books are the same as they were in India; and, with respect to the latter at least, the same as they are now in Ceylon. For I can have no doubt that the books belonging to the Buddhist Canon, as it is known in that country, will be found, with few exceptions, to exist in China; and to this I shall call your attention hereafter. The mere circumstance of these books being translated into Chinese cannot alter their character, any more than the translation of our own Sacred Books from the Greek or Hebrew can alter *theirs*.<sup>141</sup>

For Edkins, Chinese Buddhism was “Chinese” because, setting the Chan tradition aside, Buddhism in China had been altered by the popular customs of the local forms of idolatry. Chinese Buddhism was then a popular tradition. It reflected the alterations of Buddhism, and the incorporation of local forms of idolatry, during its transmission and development from India to China. On the other hand, Beal understood the Buddhism of China to draw its origins from the Chinese Tripiṭaka. He rejected the term Chinese Buddhism, for Buddhism was an Indian scriptural tradition. When Buddhist scriptures had been translated through the nations of Asia, they had not altered their Indian character. Similarly, in their dissemination through the nations of Europe, the Christian scriptures had not altered the meaning of their Greek or Hebrew originals. Because Christian scriptures had also been translated in Chinese, Christianity in China

---

<sup>140</sup> Ibid, p. 110.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid, p. 1.

would also have to be called “Chinese Christianity.” Thus unlike Edkins, Beal did not adopt the term Chinese Buddhism. Still, despite Beal, after the publication of Edkins’s *Chinese Buddhism*, a new generation of scholars in the study of Buddhism would begin to use the new term in scientific publications in order to designate the Buddhism of China, but also of Tibet and Japan.

As early as 1870, Ernst Johann Eitel (1838-1908), a German Protestant missionary who worked for the London Missionary Society in Hong Kong, employed the term in his *Hand-Book for the Student of Chinese Buddhism*, published in London. As he observes in the preface, the dictionary was inspired by the works of Burnouf and Julien. Eitel writes, “it is to the works of these two ‘Savants’ that every student of Chinese Buddhism will constantly refer. Their works are works which cannot be dispensed with and will not easily be superseded.”<sup>142</sup> In 1888, Eitel’s *Sanskrit-Chinese Dictionary* was republished in Hong Kong as the *Hand-Book of Chinese Buddhism, being a Sanskrit-Chinese Dictionary, with Vocabularies of Buddhist Terms in Pali, Singhalese, Siamese, Burmese, Tibetan, Mongolian and Japanese*. Eighteen years later, the preface to the second edition features not only the term Chinese Buddhism, but also Tibetan Buddhism and Japanese Buddhism. “The literature, the biography, and the philosophy of Chinese and Tibetan Buddhism,” writes Eitel, “have been specially laid under contribution to extend the usefulness of this Handbook, whilst the substitution of a Japanese Vocabulary in place of the former Chinese Index now makes the book a guide to the understanding of Japanese as well as Chinese Buddhism.”<sup>143</sup>



---

<sup>142</sup> See Ernst John Eitel, *Hand-Book of Chinese Buddhism* (Hong Kong: Lane, Crawford & Co., 1870), p. III.

<sup>143</sup> See Ernst John Eitel, *Hand-Book of Chinese Buddhism, being a Sanskrit-Chinese Dictionary, with Vocabularies of Buddhist Terms in Pali, Singhalese, Siamese, Burmese, Tibetan, Mongolian and Japanese* (Hong Kong: Lane, Crawford & Co., 1888), p. I.

In the conclusion of his “On Sanskrit Texts Discovered in Japan,” Müller expresses the wish that Nanjō and Kasahara, after their return to Japan, would continue their study of Sanskrit and Pāli and undertake the search for old Indian manuscripts. Müller also expresses the wish that other scholars in Japan, Korea, and China would help in the search of such manuscripts. He writes:

With the help of such manuscripts we shall be able to show to those devoted students who from the extreme East who have come to the extreme West in order to learn to read their sacred writings in the original Sanskrit or Pāli, what difference there is between the simple teaching of the Buddha and the later developments and corruptions of Buddhism. Buddha himself, I feel convinced, never knew the names of Amitābha, Avalokiteśvara, or Sukhavatī [*sic*]. Then how can a nation call itself Buddhist whose religion consists chiefly in the belief in a divine Amitābha and his son Avalokiteśvara, and in a hope of eternal life in the paradise of Sukhavatī [*sic*]?<sup>144</sup>

European scholars, Nanjō wrote in his letter to Yang the same month in 1880, did not believe in the content of Buddhist scriptures; he and Kasahara were not in Oxford to learn Sanskrit and Pāli in order to dispute the authorship of the *Sukhāvātīvyūha sūtra*, the foundational scripture of the Jōdo Shinshū. In all events, Chinese and Japanese Buddhists had known Sanskrit before European scholars. As Nanjō closed his letter, he thus provided Yang with basic elements of Sanskrit grammar, including a description of different scripts. “In the *Xitan ji* composed by the Tang monk Zhiguang, the Sanskrit script is none other than the Nepalese script.”<sup>145</sup> The great Chinese translators such as Kumārajīva, Faxian, Xuanzang, Yijing, and Amoghavajra, had included brief discussions of the script called Siddham (C. Xitan) in their works, for they employed it to render mantras and dhāraṇīs in a phonetic system rather than in Chinese characters. The Siddham script had then become the standard system for rendering Sanskrit syllables in Chinese scriptures since the Tang dynasty, when the monk and translator Zhiguang

---

<sup>144</sup> See Max Müller, “On Sanskrit Texts Discovered in Japan,” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 12 (1880, New Series): 175-6.

<sup>145</sup> See Nanjō Bunyū, “Yu Riben Nantiao Wenxiong shu yi - Fulai shu,” in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Taipei: Heluo tushu chubanshe, [1919] 1973), p. 983.

(d. 806) condensed previous studies in a guide to Siddham entitled *Xitanzi ji* (“Memoir on Siddham Letters”), compiled around 808.<sup>146</sup> This script was similar to the script that appeared in the headings of Nanjō’s Sanskrit copy of the *Lalitavistara*. Yet this particular script, the Japanese scholar observes, also appeared in Tibetan Buddhist scriptures. Nanjō writes at the end of his letter, “It is related with the script that Tibetan lamas also often use.”<sup>147</sup>

Yang and Nanjō met for the first time in London in May 1880. In England, Yang offered Nanjō a copy of his 1870 *Daqing chongke Longzang huiji*, informing him of his project of reprinting the entire *Longzang* canon in Nanjing. On his part, Nanjō offered Yang a copy of the Sanskrit original of the short *Sukhāvātīvyūha*, together with Müller’s English translation. Until Yang’s departure in 1881, he would meet Nanjō again in London and Paris. It would be in their correspondence from 1880 to 1910 that Nanjō introduced Yang to the science of Oriental philology, with an initial focus on the textual criticism of the *Qixin lun* (the “Awakening of Faith”) and of the corpus of the *Sukhāvātīvyūha*. As Nanjō writes in Chinese in his second letter to Yang, “The origins of Buddhism (Wo Fotuojiao zhi qi ye)” traced back to the time of the Buddha’s *parinirvāṇa*, when the first council was held. That was the time when the first Tripiṭaka, with Kāśyapa, Ānanda, and Upāli’s recitations of the Abhidharma, Sūtras, and Vinaya, was collected. “But these ancient books no longer exist today.”<sup>148</sup> Nanjō explains that earliest documents of Buddhism were the inscriptions on the king Aśoka’s pillars. Therefore, it was difficult for scholars to know what was the content of the early Tripiṭakas. As for the *Qixin lun*, no Sanskrit manuscript existed. Perhaps, Nanjō observed, its circulation in China was interrupted after the Tang dynasty.

---

<sup>146</sup> For a study of Siddham in China and Japan, see Saroj Kumar Chaudhuri, “Siddham in China and Japan,” in *Sino-Platonic Papers*, 88 (1998).

<sup>147</sup> See Nanjō Bunyū, “Yu Riben Nantiao Wenxiong shu er - Fulai shu,” in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Taipei: Heluo tushu chubanshe, [1919] 1973), p. 985.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 988.



The discovery of the Sanskrit manuscript of the short *Sukhāvāṭīvyūha* revealed the importance of the Sanskrit originals more generally for Chinese and Japanese scholars. For Nanjō, it was important for Asian scholars to be able to demonstrate the early and Indian existence of the entire *Sukhāvāṭīvyūha* corpus to scholars like Müller, who doubted its authority. Still, no Sanskrit version had been found of the *Guan wuliangshou jing*, in Nepal, China, or Japan.

When Yang returned to Nanjing in 1882 and Nanjō to Japan in 1886, they continued to correspond about Sanskrit, the *Qixin lun*, and the conversion of Europe and America to the Pure Land tradition.<sup>149</sup> Yang's plans to reprint the entire Buddhist canon, however, lost momentum. With Miaokong's death in 1880 the Jinling press suffered the loss of its main source of funding. Upon Yang's return to China from a second diplomatic mission in Europe from 1886 to 1888, the Jinling press embarked on a new project. Yang began to collaborate with Nanjō on the compilation of the *Dainihon zokuzōkyō*, that is, the supplement to the *Dainihon kōtei shukusatsu daizōkyō* ("Japanese Collated Edition of the Great Tripiṭaka in Reduced Size"). The *Dainihon kōtei shukusatsu daizōkyō*, edited by Shimada Bankon (1827-1907) and published in Tōkyō in 1885 by the Kōkyō Shoin, was the first modern Japanese edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka. It would be in the course of his collaboration with Nanjō and with the Zōkyō Shoin in Kyōtō that Yang Wenhui adopted the classification of the Chinese Tripiṭaka of the *Dainihon zokuzōkyō*. During this collaboration, he would begin to discuss *Mizong* as one of the Buddhist traditions of China.



---

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., p. 995.

In 1883, Nanjō published in Oxford *A Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka, the Sacred Canon of the Buddhists of China and Japan*. Nanjō had arrived in England in 1876, six months after Beal published his *The Buddhist Tripiṭaka, as it is known in China and Japan, A Catalogue and Compendious Report*. While in London to study English, Nanjō had read Beal's catalog, but he had had no access to the collection, stored at the library of the India Office, until April 1880, a few weeks before he received Yang Wenhui's first letter. It was only in the September of the same year that Nanjō was granted special permission to examine the Chinese Tripiṭaka. Nanjō explains that the present collection was a copy of the Chinese Tripiṭaka published in Japan by the Zen master Tetsugen Dōkō between 1678-1681. Its catalog was also the catalog of the *Yongle Nanzang*, of the *Yongle Beizang*, and of the *Longzang* canons (whose catalog Yang had given him in London). "It is curious that, about two centuries after the time of Tetsu-gen, a copy of his Edition (produced A.D. 1681) was sent over to England from Japan (1875), by the Japanese ambassador, now one of the three highest ministers of the Mikado, for the use of scholars in Europe."<sup>150</sup>

In Nanjō's view, it was perhaps curious that the Iwakura, while on a scientific mission to Europe, would send Beal a copy of the *Yongle Beizang*. A new edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka was then being compiled in Japan. Nanjō writes:

The new edition of the Japanese society, Kō-kiō-sho-in, now being published in Tokyo, is a reproduction of the Korean Edition with various readings of and some additions from three different Chinese Editions, produced under the Suñ, Yuen, and Miñ dynasties, A.D. 960-1644. The arrangement of the works in this Edition is more scientific, being the same as the one adopted by the Chinese priest K'-sü, in his 'Guide for the Examination of the Canon.' This edition is in modern movable types, and in small-sized books, royal octavo. The preparation for the press is made by competent scholars.<sup>151</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup> See Nanjio Bunyiu, *A Catalogue of the Buddhist Tripitaka, the Sacred Canon of the Buddhists of China and Japan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1883), p. xxvi.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxvi.

Nanjō does not explain how the arrangement of scriptures in the Kōkyō Shoin's *Dainihon kōtei shukusatsu daizōkyō* was “more scientific” compared to the classification of the *Yongle Beizang*. This “more scientific” arrangement of the Chinese Tripiṭaka reflected the classification of scriptures described in the *Yuezang Zhijin* (“Guide for the Examination of the Canon”), published in 1654, ten years after the foundation of the Qing dynasty, by the monk and exegete of the Tiantai tradition Zhixu (1599-1655). For the first time, Zhixu had altered the classification of scriptures in the Chinese Tripiṭaka, whose tradition had begun with Zhisheng's *Kaiyuan shijiao*. Zhixu examined over 1,700 works included in the *Yongle Nanzang* and *Yongle Beizang*, providing for each work the main topic, the age of the translation or compilation, the name of the translator or compiler, and a brief summary of contents. Zhixu arranged the scriptures of the Chinese Tripiṭaka in four main divisions: *Jingzang* (Sūtrapiṭaka), *Lüzang* (Vinayapiṭaka), *Lunzang* (Abhidharmapiṭaka), and *Zazang* (Miscellaneous). He then divided the *Jingzang* into *Dasheng jing* (Mahāyāna sūtras) and *Xiaosheng jing* (Hīnayāna sūtras), arranging the scriptures of the former in five classes: *Huayan bu* (*Avatamsaka* class), *Fangdeng bu* (*Vaipulya* class), *Banruo bu* (*Prajñāpāramitā* class), *Fahua bu* (*Saddharmapuṇḍarikā* class), and *Niepan bu* (*Nirvāṇa* class). He then divided the *Lüzang* into *Dasheng Lü* and *Xiaosheng Lü*, and the *Lunzang* into *Dasheng Lun* and *Xiaosheng Lun*, separating Indian and Chinese treatises into the two classes of *Xitu zhuan shu* (Writings of the Western Lands) and *Citu zhuan shu* (Writings of this Land). Finally, in the fourth class of *Zazang* he included fifteen sections of Chinese works of miscellaneous nature, such as biographies, catalogs, chant scores, poetical compositions, and doctrinal exegesis.

In the *Yuezang Zhijin*, Zhixu's innovations concerned the arrangement of the classes of the *Jingzang*. The new arrangement in five classes of Mahāyāna sūtras and one class of Hīnayāna

sūtras reflected the order that Zhiyi (538-597), regarded as the founder of the Tiantai tradition, explained in his *Tiantai sijaoyi* (“Outline of the Tiantai Fourfold Teachings”) to classify the chronology of the Buddha’s teachings through his preaching career in ancient India. For Zhiyi, the Buddha delivered his discourses in four modes of teaching through five periods. Hence, the sudden teaching (C. *dunjiao*) belonged to the (1) period of the *Avataṃsaka sūtra*, when the Buddha, having manifested in the form of Vairocana, delivered the perfect teaching that was understood immediately by a large number of beings. The second mode of gradual teaching (C. *jianjiao*) coincided with the (2) period of the Tripiṭaka teachings, delivered by the Buddha in his emanation body (C. *huashen*) to his early disciples. The gradual teaching also included the (3) period of the *Vaipulya sūtras*, such as the *Vimalakirtinirdeśa*, where the Buddha contrasted the earlier Tripiṭaka teachings in order to guide disciples of higher faculties. The last gradual teaching of this period was the teaching of the *Prajñāpāramitā*, which the Buddha taught after the *Vaipulya sūtras* to move beyond the *Tripiṭaka* teachings. The next (4) period coincided with the secret teaching (C. *mimi jiao*), when the Buddha explained to some disciples the sudden teaching and to others the gradual teaching. Thus Zhiyi called the fourth period the secret teaching because in this period the intention of the Buddha’s words was hidden. Finally, the indefinite mode of teaching (C. *buding*), coincided with the (5) period of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā* and of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra*, in which the Buddha disclosed the teachings of the final vehicle before passing into *parinirvāṇa*.<sup>152</sup>

Having adopted Zhiyi’s chronological order of Buddhist scriptures, Zhixu disposed of the historical order that the compilers of the *Yongle Nanzang* had provided to the *Jingzang*. The separation of the scriptures translated up to the Tang dynasty from those translated during the Song and Yuan dynasties was no longer in place. This innovation included the elimination of

---

<sup>152</sup> See Zhiyi, *Tiantai sijaoyi*, T. vol. 46, no. 1931.

four classes of the *Yongle Nanzang* catalogue: the *Baoji bu* (*Ratnakūṭa* class), the *Daji bu* (*Mahāsaṃnipāta* class), the *Wudabuwai chongyi jing* (Sūtras of Duplicate translation, Excluded from the Preceding Five Classes), and the *Wudabuwai danyi jing* (Sūtras of Single Translation, Excluded from the Preceding Five Classes). In place of these four classes, Zhixu created two new classes: the *Fangdeng bu* and the *Fahua bu*. Hence, the five Mahāyāna classes (*Huayan bu*, *Fangdeng bu*, *Banruo bu*, *Fahua bu* and *Niepan bu*) of the *Yuezang Zhijin* reflected the new chronological order of the entire Chinese Tripiṭaka. Yet Zhixu also introduced into the Chinese Tripiṭaka another innovation; it was a class whose scriptures had not been translated by the time Zhiyi compiled his *Tiantai sijiao yi*. Zhixu divided the *Fangdeng bu* into two subclasses, the *Xianshuo* (Manifest Discourses) and *Mizhou* (Secret Mantra). Furthermore, he separated the scriptures of the *Mizhou* in the two sections of sūtras (C. *jing*) and sādhanas (C. *yigui*). Zhixu thus grouped the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra*, the *Susiddhikara sūtra*, and the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, together with other scriptures and sādhanas, in the *Mizhou* class. Their order in the *Yuezang Zhijin* now reflected a different history of Buddhism. These scriptures now inhabited the period that Zhiyi called the fourth period of the Buddha's teaching. It was the period that the Chinese exegete called *Mimi jiao*.

Whereas Zhiyi's *Mimi jiao* denotes the secrecy of the Buddha's intention, an intention that is inaccessible to his audience, in Zhixu the term *Mi* conveys not only Zhixu's fourth period of *Mijiao*, but more simply the term dhāraṇī. In his *Yuezang Zhijin*, in the eleventh fascicle on the *Mibu*, Zhixu writes, "Mi class. Explained in Sanskrit as: dhāraṇī, meaning to retain, or to protect. Originally belonging to both Manifest and Secret doctrines and also comprehensive of the five periods. Only the secret maṇḍalas and sādhanas require the transmission by a master. To arrange these independently or to weave the mudrās and recite the vidyās became unlawful

methods, therefore one incurred in a great transgression. Today, this path is long vanished. Only the scriptures are extant. How could I overstep authority and discuss them? I will simply list the scripture's title and the names of the chapters ...”<sup>153</sup>

It should be noticed that Zhixu's *Yuezang Zhijin* is not a catalog of the Chinese Tripiṭaka. Yet for the first time since the Tang dynasty, its “more scientific” arrangement explained the entire range of Buddhist scriptures based on Zhiyi's exegetical tradition that regarded the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā* as the highest of the Buddha's teaching. And this “more scientific” arrangement disposed of the logic, based on the age of a scripture's translation, that characterized the *Yongle Nanzang* and the *Yongle Beizang*, that is, the editions of the Chinese Tripiṭaka which he used as his sources. In the *Dainihon zokuzōkyō mokuroku*, the 1885 catalog of the Tōkyō edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka, the *Mimi bu* (“Esoteric class”) includes the scriptures that Zhixu's *Yuezang Zhijin* lists in the *Mizhou* subclass. Yet the Japanese edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka places the *Mahāvairocanābhisambodhi sūtra*, the *Susiddhikara sūtra*, and the *Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha* outside of the *Fangdeng bu* and thus outside of the classes of Mahāyāna sūtras.<sup>154</sup> What in Zhixu's work was a subclass of the *Fangdeng bu*, and therefore a part of the *Jingzang*, in the *Dainihon zokuzōkyō mokuroku* became a division of the Chinese Tripiṭaka in its own right. It became the division that contained the foundational scriptures of the Japanese tradition of Tantrism, the renowned *Mikkyō* (C. *Mijiao*).



<sup>153</sup> See Zhixu, *Yuezang zhijin* (Nanjing: Jinling kejingchu, 1892), vol. 4, p. 1.

<sup>154</sup> See Shimada Bankon, ed., et al., *Dai Nihon kōtei Daizōkyō mokuroku* (Tōkyō: Kōkyō Shoin, Meiji 18 [1885]), p. 49-74.

During the 1890s, after Yang returned to Nanjing from a second diplomatic mission to Europe, he began to work on a new project with Nanjō, who after his return to Japan collaborated with Kyōtō's Zōkyō Shoin on the compilation of the *Dainihon zokuzōkyō* ("Supplement to the Japanese Tripiṭaka"). During this endeavor, Yang published in Nanjing many of the Chinese and Japanese works that Nanjō had sent to Nanjing from Japan. Amounting to over three hundred works, Nanjō's dispatches included Buddhist scriptures, commentaries, dictionaries, language materials, and Buddhist catalogues, including his *Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka, the Sacred Canon of the Buddhists of China and Japan*. In April 1892, Zhixu's *Yuezang Zhijin* was the first of these works to be published.<sup>155</sup> Through Nanjō, Yang thus rediscovered Zhixu's Chinese *Mizhou*. But he also brought the "more scientific" arrangement of the *Dainihon zokuzōkyō*, and, together with it, Japan's *Mikkyō*, to modern China.

In 1896, Yang began a tradition that a second generation of scholars of Buddhism would adopt over the twentieth century. It was the custom of writing the history of Buddhism in China based on Japanese historiography. Still, at this time, Yang called the object of study simply *Fojiao*, that is, Buddhism, and not some equivalent of the term "Chinese Buddhism." And so, in the dawning field of the study of Buddhism, the Chinese histories collected in the Chinese Tripiṭaka, such as the *Fozu tongji* ("Complete Records of the Buddha and Patriarchs"), compiled in 1269 by the Song dynasty historian Zhipan (1220-1275), were no longer consulted as sources. The first endeavor of this kind was Yang's republication of another volume he had received from Japan. It was the *Shizong lüeshuo* ("A Concise Explanation of the Ten Traditions") based on the *Hasshū-kōyō* ("The Essentials of the Eight Traditions") by the Japanese historian Gyōnen

---

<sup>155</sup> See Zhixu, *Yuezang zhijin* (Nanjing: Jinling kejing chu, 1892).

(1240-1321).<sup>156</sup> In the preface of the *Hasshū-kōyō*, Gyōnen writes that the Buddhist teachings that came from India to China, and then from China to Japan (omitting Korea), are preserved in eight traditions, (1) the Kusha (C. Jushi), (2) the Jōjitsu (C. Chengshi), (3) the Ritsu (C. Lü), (4) the Hossō (C. Faxiang), (5) the Sanron (C. Sanlun), the (6) the Tendai (C. Tiantai), (7) the Kegon (C. Huayan), and the (8) Shingon (C. Zhenyan) traditions, of which the former three belong to the Hīnayāna and the latter five to the Mahāyāna. Gyōnen does not include the Zen (C. Chan) and Jōdo (C. Jingtū) traditions among the eight, but appends their short description in a final section.

In the preface of his *Shizong lüeshuo*, Yang describes his decision to rewrite Gyōnen's work in a simpler language, and to change the number of the Buddhist traditions from eight to ten. In his commentary, Yang thus expands Gyōnen's Zen and Jōdō traditions, which became the eighth and tenth traditions of Chinese Chan and Jingtū. Gyōnen's eighth tradition of Shingon then becomes Yang's ninth tradition of *Mizong*. He writes:

*Mizong*—also named Tradition of the True Word [*Zhenyan zong*]. Seven hundred years had elapsed since the Tathāgata's *parinirvāṇa*, when the bodhisattva Nāgārjuna opened an iron stupa in southern India. There he saw Vajrasattva who conferred on him the mind *abhiṣeka*. The Secret Doctrine [*Mimi famen*] then greatly spread in the world. Vajrasattva then manifested the Mahāvairocana Tathāgata, that is Buddha Vairocana. Nāgārjuna then transmitted it to Nāgabodhi. In the early Tang dynasty, the Trepitaka Śubhākarasimha came to the East. This is the reason why he is regarded as the first patriarch. Then came Vajrabodhi and Amoghavajra, along with Yixing and Huiguo. They were all vajrācāryas who greatly clarified the *Mijiao*. This tradition takes the *Mahāvairocanābhisambodhi sūtra*, the *Susiddhikara sūtra* etc., as its basis ... If this method is not conferred by a vajrācārya, one cannot enter the maṇḍala and move on the path. This is the reason why it has long vanished. Huiguo's teaching was taken to Japan, where it has continued to exist until our day. The lamas of Tibet also adhere to this Secret Vehicle [*Misheng*]. Contemporary practitioners only retain and recite mantras such as the Caṇḍī and Mahākaruṇa mantras. By applying one's mind in earnest, one obtains the secret reward.<sup>157</sup>

<sup>156</sup> For an English translation, see Gyōnen, transl. Leo M. Pruden, *The Essentials of the Eight Traditions* (Berkeley: Numata, 1994).

<sup>157</sup> See Yang Wenhui, ed. "Shizong lüeshuo," in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Taipei: Heluo tushu chubanshe, [1919] 1973), p. 342.



Yang quite accurately condensed the historical details that Gyōnen provided about the origin of *Mizong* in India and its transmission to China. Because he wished to explain the ten traditions in a simple language (or perhaps because the ritual elements of *Mizong* no longer played a role in the Buddhism of his day), he omitted Gyōnen's discussion of the maṇḍalas of the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi* and *Susiddhikara sūtra*. Yang also excluded Gyōnen's explanation of the distinction between Śākyamuni and Mahāvairocana, and of the nature of the manifest teachings (C. *xianjiao*) spoken by the Buddha's transformation body (*nirmāṇakāya*), and of the secret teachings (C. *mijiao*) spoken by the Buddha's truth body (*dharmakāya*). Moreover, Yang simplified Gyōnen's long discussion of the transmission of this tradition to Japan, that is, the account of how Kūkai (779-835), the founder of the Shingon tradition, was said to have received the *abhiṣekas* from Huiguo (746-805), Amoghavajra's Chinese disciple. Having excluded the account of Kūkai's transmission of *Mijiao* to Japan, Yang thus delivered to his public a compelling sketch of a Chinese tradition that had been transmitted from India. Yet in his view, this tradition was also known in Tibet.

Hence, an important detail that Yang added in his *Shizong lüeshuo* was a detail that was lacking in his original Japanese text. In his *Hasshū-kōyō*, Gyōnen makes no mention of Tibet or Tibetan lamas. Therefore, unlike Yang, Gyōnen does not ascribe to Tibetan lamas any adherence to *Mijiao* (or to its other synonyms of *Misheng* and *Zhenyan*). Hence, with his statement, "The lamas of Tibet also adhere to this Secret Vehicle," Yang may be regarded as the first Chinese scholar to hold the idea that Japanese and Tibetan Tantrism, both originating in ancient India and flourishing in the modern world, shared a history, texts, and doctrines similar to the

long-vanished Chinese Tantrism.<sup>158</sup> In the final remarks of his description of *Mizong*, Yang directs the reader who wishes to understand the subtleties of this tradition to the *Darijing shu*, the great commentary on the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi* delivered by Śubhākarasiṃha to the Tang Xuanzong Emperor (685-763) and recorded by Yixing. Yet Yang also suggests that the reader turn to Daoshen’s *Xianmi yuantong cheng foxin yaoji*, published at the Jinling press fifteen years earlier.

Thus, Yang encourages his public to understand the long-vanished *Mizong*, that is, the flourishing *Mikkyō*, through the study of two works written in China during the Tang and Liao dynasties, when no Chinese scholar was aware of the distinct tradition of *Mizong*. Daoshen’s distinction between *Xianjiao* and *Mijiao*, in fact, differs from Gyōnen’s understanding of the manifest and secret teachings. While in the former’s view *Mijiao* is the perfect teaching of mantras and dhāraṇīs that all of the Buddha’s teachings possess, for the latter *Mijiao* is the teaching of a distinct Indian tradition transmitted by Kūkai from China to Japan. Daoshen was thus reluctant to understand *Xianzong* and *Mizong* as fundamentally distinct. In Yang’s *Mizong*, Daoshen’s Chinese *Mijiao* becomes Gyōnen’s Japanese *Mikkyō*. Hence in 1896 Yang Wenhui could claim that the only surviving element of the “long vanished” Tantrism of China was the chanting of mantras and dhāraṇīs, such as the mantra of Caṇḍī Avalokiteśvara contained in Vajrabodhi’s translation of the *Caṇḍīdhārāṇīsūtra*.



---

<sup>158</sup> See Chapter 3. A similar idea was expressed in 1876 by Ogurusu in his *Ramakyō engaku* (“History of Lamaism”).

By the turn of the twentieth century, as printing presses in Changsha, Hangzhou, and Yangzhou had joined Yang's efforts, the Jingling press released its own catalog of Buddhist books including one hundred and thirteen titles. It was at this time that Yang rejected the classification of scriptures of the *Longzang* in favor of the classification of the *Dainihon zokuzōkyō*. Published in Shanghai in 1902, the *Foxueshu mubiao* ("Catalog of Buddhist Books") classifies the Jinling volumes in twelve classes: (1) the *Huayan bu*, (2) the *Fangdeng bu*, including the two subclasses of *Jingtu bu* and *Faxiang bu*, (3) the *Banruo bu*, (4) the *Fahua bu*, (5) the *Niepan bu*, (6) the *Mimi bu*, (7) the *Ahan bu* (Āgama class), (8) the *Dasheng lü*, (9) the *Dasheng lun*, (10) the *Zhuanji* (Biographies), (11) the *Zaji* (Miscellaneous), and the (12) *Daojia* (Daoist authors). The *Mimi bu* featured the apocryphal *Lengyan jing*, the *Cundīdhārāṇīsūtra*, and Daoshen's *Xianmi yuantong cheng foxin yaoji*.<sup>159</sup>

In 1906, the Jinling press published Yang's *Fojiao chuxue keben* ("A Introductory Manual to Buddhism"), based on the *Shi jiao san zi jing* ("Classic in Three Characters on Śākyamuni's Teaching"), originally compiled in 1621 by the Ming dynasty monk Guangzhen (1582-1639).<sup>160</sup> Yang's *Fojiao chuxue keben* was intended as a primer for the students he had begun to gather around 1900, among whom were initially Gui Bohua (1861-1915), and later Ouyang Jingwu (1871-1943) and Taixu (1890-1947).<sup>161</sup> The commentary provided Yang's students with a foundation in topics such as the life of the Buddha, the three councils, the formation of the Tripiṭaka, the history of the transmission of Buddhism to China, the history of

---

<sup>159</sup> See Yang Wenhui, ed. "Foxue shu mubiao," in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Taipei: Heluo tushu chubanshe, [1919] 1973), p. 723-4.

<sup>160</sup> See Yang Wenhui, ed. "Fojiao chuxue keben," in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Taipei: Heluo tushu chubanshe, [1919] 1973).

<sup>161</sup> For a study of Yang Wenhui's role in the education of Gui Bohua, Ouyang Jingwu, and Taixu, see the essays in John Makeham, ed., *Transforming Consciousness: Yogācāra Thought in Modern China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). For Taixu, see Holmes Welch, *The Buddhist Revival in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 51-71; Don Pittman, *Toward a Modern Chinese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001); see also Justin Ritzinger, *Taixu: To Renew Buddhism and Save the Modern World* (doctoral dissertation, Lawrence University, 1999).

the ten Chinese traditions, the bodies of a buddha, the four truths, the six perfections, nirvāṇa, and the structure and duration of the Buddhist world. It was a history of Buddhism in China that now included the long vanished tradition of *Mijiao*.

In the section of his *Shi jiao san zi jing* concerning the great translators of the Tang dynasty, Guangzhen writes, “Śubhākarasiṃha arrived in Chang’an. Yixing of the Tang received the true transmission, and composed commentaries and explanations. The *Mahāvairocana sūtra*, and the teaching of Mantra, began to obtain the light. Then came Vajrabodhi and Amoghavajra, who greatly disseminated the method of the *abhiṣekas*, not to be transmitted to unsuitable vessels. It might bring calamity, and an order of prohibition was established. Since the beginning of the Ming, the Secret doctrine [*Mimi zong*] has ceased by order of the Emperor.”<sup>162</sup> In his 1906 commentary, Yang describes the translation of the *Mahāvairocanābhisambodhi* and the transmission of the *abhiṣekas* in terms of *Mizong* and *Mijiao*. He writes, “*Mi zong*, also named *Zhenyan zong*, belonging to the Indian category of *abhiṣeka*.”<sup>163</sup> *Mizong*, Yang observes, had been transmitted by Śubhākarasiṃha, Vajrabodhi, and Amoghavajra from India. It flourished during the Tang dynasty, yet it completely vanished at the time of the early Ming dynasty. “During the Ming an edict of prohibition was issued. *Mijiao* was no longer allowed to be transmitted, out of fear that its entrance may harm the gate of Dharma. If not transmitted by a vajrācārya it was unlawful, therefore maṇḍalas were no longer built to advance on the path.”<sup>164</sup> Beginning with Gui Bohua in the last years of the Qing dynasty, and continuing for two decades into the Republic of China, a number of Chinese monks and scholars would turn to Japan and Tibet to recover the lost *Mijiao* to China.

---

<sup>162</sup> See Yang Wenhui, ed. “Fojiao chuxue keben,” in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Taipei: Heluo tushu chubanshe, 1919 [1973]), p. 228-9.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid*, p. 289.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid*, p. 290.

At the end of 1908, at the age of seventy-two, Yang established the first institution dedicated to the study of Buddhism in modern China. It was the Qihuan Jingshe (S. Jetavana vihāra), situated within the buildings of the Jinling press in the center of Nanjing. Two years later in 1910, one year before his death, he founded the Foxue yanjiu hui (Buddhist Studies Association), the first organization for scholars of Buddhism whose structure inspired the various Buddhist associations of Republican China. At the same time, Yang continued to collaborate with Nanjō on the *Dainihon zokuzōkyō*, which would be published in 1912. It was in these last years before his death that Yang, in order to refer to Buddhism, began to use in his work a new term. In an essay entitled *Zhina fojiao zhenxing ce* (“A Plan for the Revival of Chinese Buddhism”), he calls the Buddhism of China *Fojiao*<sup>165</sup> and *Fofa*<sup>166</sup>. Yet in the same essay he also refers to this Buddhism with the new term *Zhina Fojiao*, a term that began to circulate in China and in Japan around the turn of the twentieth century, appearing in academic publications in Japan.<sup>167</sup> In China, only after Yang’s death in 1911 did a second generation of scholars inherit his “science” of Buddhism. In Republican China, they would come to describe the Buddhism of China, which now included eight (or ten) traditions as *Zhongguo Fojiao*.

---

<sup>165</sup> See Yang Wenhui, ed. “Fojiao chuxue keben,” in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Taipei: Heluo tushu chubanshe, 1919 [1973]), pp. 213-346.

<sup>166</sup> See Yang Wenhui, ed. “Fofa dazhi,” in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Taipei: Heluo tushu chubanshe, 1919 [1973]), p. 665ff.

<sup>167</sup> This essay consists of two sections. Yang’s collected works does not provide a date. Gabriele Goldfuss dates this essay between 1905 and 1910. See Yang Wenhui, ed. “Zhina fojiao zhenxing ce yi,” in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* (Taipei: Heluo tushu chubanshe, 1919 [1973]), pp. 679-681; and “Zhina fojiao zhenxing ce er,” in *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu*, pp. 681-2.

CHAPTER 4  
TIBETAN BUDDHISM

On his first mission to China, Ogurusu Kōchō set foot in the port city of Shanghai on July 19, 1873. One month later, after a difficult journey to Beijing, Ogurusu reached the Longquan Si, a Buddhist temple in the northern suburbs of the Qing capital. Here, he asked the old abbot Benran (d.u.) to be accepted as a student of Mandarin.<sup>168</sup> As he relates in his *Beijing jishi* (“Record of Events in Beijing”), it was during his year of study in the city that he learned the Tibetan word “lama.” Benran taught him that, like Chinese monks, Tibetan lamas also venerated the Buddha. In China, monks called themselves “Green-Robed monks” (C. *qingyi seng*), while they called Tibetan lamas “Yellow-Robed monks” (C. *huangyi seng*). Moreover, lamas originally came from Tibet, and one could meet them in several places. One of such places was the Yonghegong, one of the teaching centers of Mongolian and Tibetan Buddhists in Beijing.

Later the same year, on a visit to the Yonghegong, Orugusu met a Tibetan lama, Thub bstan ’jigs med rgya mtsho (1828-1883), the nineteenth Dung dkar sprul sku.<sup>169</sup> Born in A mdo, Thub bstan ’jigs med rgya mtsho had lived in Beijing since the age of four. In 1851, he was appointed by the Qing government to lead the chanting of scriptures to pacify the Taiping rebellion in south China. Having received the Mongolian title of *jasagh dalama* (great lama

---

<sup>168</sup> For a study of the journals that Ogurusu wrote in Beijing between 1873 and 1874, see Ogurusu Kōchō, ed. Chen Jidong, Chen Liwei, *Beijing jishi, Beijing youlü* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008).

<sup>169</sup> For Thub bstan ’jigs med rgya mtsho, see Shi Miao Zhou, *Mengzang fojiao shi* (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1984 [1934]), f. 5, p. 141. For Ogurusu’s discussion of the elements of Tibetan language that he learned in Beijing, see the preface of his *Ramakyō engaku* (1876, pp. 5-10). Ogurusu provides details about Thub bstan ’jigs med rgya mtsho, and on their relationship, in the first chapter of the *Ramakyō engaku*.

authority), a title that Tibetan officials conferred on Tibetan or Mongolian lamas, he had become the tutor of the imperial family. During the 1870s he then worked as the director of the Yonghegong's printing bureau. On his next visits to the Tibetan temple, Ogurusu would learn from Thub bstan 'jigs med rgya mtsho the basics of the Buddhism of Tibet and Mongolia, as well as elements of the Tibetan language. It was not until 1876, upon his second mission to China to establish the Shanghai branch of the Jōdo Shinshū temple, that Ogurusu's interest in the Buddhism of Tibet would take the form of a book.<sup>170</sup>

In 1877, the same year Yang Wenhui embarked on his ship to Europe, Ogurusu returned to Tōkyō, where he published his *Ramakyō engaku* ("History of Lamaism"). In the preface, he writes:

The flourishing of *Seizō Bukkyō* is described in detail in the *Yochi shiryaku*. My present draft was written to record what I have personally heard from Tibetan and Mongolian lamas in Beijing, and to demonstrate that *Ramakyō* is the ancient *Mikkyō*.<sup>171</sup>

A decade before Yang Wenhui wrote his *Shizong shilüe* based on Gyōnen's *Hasshū-kōyō*, Ogurusu had identified the Buddhism of Tibet with the *Mikkyō* of Japan. Like Yang, who in 1896 would explain that the lamas of Tibet also adhered to *Misheng*, Ogurusu claimed that the lamas of Tibet followed the same tradition. Tibet's flourishing *Lamajiao*, that is, *Ramakyō* in Japanese, was the same tradition of *Mikkyō* that also thrived in Japan. Hence, Lamaism, the Tibetan tradition of Tantrism, was the same as *Mikkyō*, the Japanese tradition of

---

<sup>170</sup> Unlike Yang Wenhui, whose concern was to revive Buddhism in China after the destruction of the Taiping Rebellion, Ogurusu's interest in *Ramakyō* was germane to his larger plan to bring the Buddhism of Japan back not only to China, but also to India. As he explains in his 1903 *Pekin gohōron* ("Treatise for Protecting the Dharma in Beijing"), the teaching of the Buddha had reached Japan when this religion was still flourishing in India and in China. But it had long disappeared in India, and it was also on the verge of decline in China. Buddhism had been under attack from within and without since the first Protestant missionaries had set foot in Asia. Ogurusu thus believed that in order to revive Buddhism in India, the three nations should join forces, forming a league of Buddhist nations. Japan, where Buddhism was flourishing, would lead China and India in this task. But it was first necessary to persuade Buddhists in China; hence, his survey of the religions of the Qing empire.

<sup>171</sup> See Kōchō Ogurusu, *Ramakyō engaku* (Kyōto: Ishikawa Shundai, 1877), p. 5. I would like to thank Micah Auerback for his precious help with translations from Japanese. For a contemporary annotated edition and photographic reproduction of the text, see Kōchō Ogurusu, *Ramakyō engaku: shinchū* (Tōkyō: Gunsho: 1982). Hereafter, I will refer to the pages of this edition.

Tantrism. Still, unlike Yang, who in his work did not employ the terms *Lamajiao* and *Xizang fojiao*, Ogurusu employed both terms. Not only is Ogurusu's *Ramakyō engaku* the first book in Japan to bear the sinograph *Lamajiao* in its title, but the *Ramakyō engaku* is also the first monograph in East Asia entirely devoted to Tibetan Buddhism. The *Ramakyō engaku* describes the object of study that later Japanese and Chinese authors would call "Tibetan Buddhism." Ogurusu's *Seizō Bukkyō* is the term that, during the twentieth century, Japanese and Chinese scholars would employ to refer to the Buddhism of Tibet.<sup>172</sup>

This chapter is a genealogy of the term *Xizang fojiao*, converging on two points in the development of the field of Buddhist Studies in China: (1) the changing names of Tibetan Buddhism, with the adoption of the sinograph *Xizang fojiao*, and (2), the changing meaning of *Mijiao* in its identification with Tibetan Buddhism. First, with Ogurusu's discovery of *Mikkyō* in Beijing's Yonghegong, the chapter explores Ogurusu's Japanese, European, and Chinese sources on Tibetan Buddhism. It will consider in particular, how Wei Yuan's work at the time of the First Opium War was germane to Ogurusu's understanding of the sinograph *Seizō*. The chapter then provides a close reading of the first works on Tibetan Buddhism that appeared in China during the Republican Period. In 1912, lacking knowledge of the Tibetan language, one of Yang Wenhui's early students in Nanjing offered an interpretation of Tibetan Buddhism as a form of *Mijiao* based on his familiarity with the teachings of Japan's *Mikkyō*. This publication would become the most widely read book on Tibetan Buddhism in the early years of Republican China, when the so-called "revival of Tantrism" (*C. Mijiao chongxing*) unfolded among Chinese Buddhists. The chapter then describes the way in which the meaning of *Mijiao* has changed in

---

<sup>172</sup> For the understanding of the term "lama" in Japan during the early nineteenth century, see Shinjo Kawasaki, "A Study of the Lama' by Seisai Morishige Kondō Jūzō (1771-1829)," in Zuihō Yamaguchi, ed., *Chibetto no Bukkyō to shakai* (Tokyo: Shunjū-sha, 1986), pp. 696-683. For the reception of the term "Lamajiao" in contemporary Tibet, including a Tibetan perspective on the Chinese names for the Buddhist traditions of Tibet, see Tseten Zhabdrung, "Research on the Nomenclature of the Buddhist Schools in Tibet," in *Tibet Journal* 11, 3 (1986): 43-44.



the wake of China-Japan war, which began in 1937. In 1933, another scholar in Yang Wenhui's lineage published a study grounded in the methods of Oriental philology. Not only would *Mijiao* be understood as the last and degenerate phase of development of Indian Buddhism, but also as the origin of Tibetan Buddhism. With this study, Republican Chinese scholars and monks began to understand China's *Mijiao*, Japan's *Mikkyō*, and Tibet's *Rgyud*, as the same tradition that spread across Asia after the rise of Tantrism in India. The authors of these early works on Tibetan Buddhism never went to Tibet. As we will see in Chapter 5, this would change in the 1930s. For the most part, before this time, Chinese and Japanese scholars would learn about Tibet's *Mijiao* from Chinese or European works, or from lamas at Beijing's Yonghegong.

In the preface of his *Ramakyō engaku*, Ogurusu sketches for the first time in East Asia the history of Lamaism and Tibetan Buddhism drawing on Chinese and Japanese materials. Like his Chinese sources, all written during the ruling Qing dynasty, Ogurusu determines the chronology of Tibetan rulers and masters according to the dates of the Chinese empires. "The Buddhism of Tibet emerged in the Tang dynasty under Srong btsan sgam po. At the time of the Yuan it produced 'Phags pa, who was adopted as a leader during its first generation, and who greatly promoted the Red Teaching. In the Ming, Tsong kha pa reformed this and renamed it the Yellow Teaching. In the era of the Great Qing, its adherents were utilized to pacify Tibet and Mongolia. While there are differences between the old and new teachings, they are all *Mikkyō*."<sup>173</sup> Ogurusu's source for this history was a book by a famous Qing scholar. It was Wei Yuan's *Shengwu ji*, in the third revised edition that reached Japan in 1847.<sup>174</sup> In contrast,

---

<sup>173</sup> See Kōchō Ogurusu, *Ramakyō engaku* (Kyōto: Ishikawa Shundai, 1877), p. 6. My translation.

<sup>174</sup> For the influence of Wei Yuan's *Shengwu ji* and *Haiguo tuzhi* in Japan between the two Opium Wars, see Wataru Masuda, trans. Joshua Fogel, *Japan and China: Mutual Representations in the Modern Era* (Richmond: Curzon, 2000).

Ogurusu's Japanese source for his *Ramakyō engaku* was the *Yochi shiryaku* ("Records of World Geography"), a work based on the recent translation of a Dutch book.

The *Allgemeine Geographie aller vier Welt-Theile* ("Universal Geography of the Four Quarters of the World), was compiled in German in the 1720s by the Prussian historian and geographer Johann Hübner (1688-1731), professor of theology in Leipzig and Hamburg. The book was then published in Dresden in three volumes around 1730 by his son Johann Hübner (1703-1758). The *Allgemeine Geographie aller vier Welt-Theile* was then translated in French in 1757 as *La Géographie Universelle* ("Universal Geography"). In 1769, it was translated into Dutch as *Algemeene Geographie*, by the cartographer Willem Albert Bachiene (1712-1783). In the various European editions, the Buddhism of Tibet was described in terms of the idolatry of the Tartar nations, where Tibet was included as one of the kingdoms of Great Tartary. Within the threefold division of Tartary (Russian Tartary, Chinese Tartary, and Independent Tartary) known to Europeans during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the kingdom of Tibet belonged to the independent kingdoms of central Asia. Together with Turkestan and Kalmikya, at the time Tibet was not under the rule of the Russian or Chinese empires. This mountain kingdom of Tibet, says Hübner, was ruled by the Dalai Lama, "the pope of Tartars." He received tributes from all the Mongol princes, who in turn worshipped him like a living god.<sup>175</sup> In Japan, an abridged

---

<sup>175</sup> See Hübner, Johann. *Allgemeine Geographie aller vier Welt-Theile* (Dresden und Leipzig: Walther, 1762). I would like to thank Marion Dulvai for her help with the translation from German. Hübner describes the religions of Tibet in the second volume of his *Allgemeine Geographie*. Largely based on the accounts of European merchants and voyagers, as well as on the reports of Roman Catholic missionaries, the work presented to the European public the nations of the world and their distribution on the four continents. Hübner includes the countries of Europe in the first volume, and a detailed account of the German Kingdoms in the third. The three remaining continents of Asia, Africa, and America, and the Unknown Lands, that is, the islands and territories of the Austral hemisphere, are described in the second volume. Hübner describes the known countries according to the physical characteristics of their territory. Their position was presented visually on the world map, but it was also described in relation to the geographic coordinates of the respective continents, with brief accounts of the customs of the societies that inhabited these lands and of the religions that each nation professed. In the section on the religions of Asia, Hübner describes the religion existing on the territory of the Asian continent: "We count four among the different Religions that are established in Asia, namely: I. The Mahometans; 2. The Pagans; 3. The Jews; and 4. The Christians" (p. 565). The Mahometans lived in Persia and in the East Indies. The Pagans lived in the inland parts of Asia, in Tartary, in China,

translation of the *Algemeene Geographie* entitled *Yochi shiryaku* was first made by Aochi Rinsō (1775-1853), a scholar who wrote works on modern science and translated a series of treatises from Dutch. While Aochi's edition covered much of the nations of western Europe, Russia, and China, it did not include Hübner's section on the regions of Great Tartary, with the account of Tibet and its national customs. In 1873, an expanded edition of the *Yochi shiryaku* in eight volumes appeared in Tōkyō. This time, Uchida Masao (1838-1876) and Nishimura Shigeki (1828-1902), two renowned Japanese scholars and educators who edited the volume, included a chapter on Tibet, describing its religion, economy, and institutions.

---

in Japan, and other islands. The Jews, scattered through the world, had built sparse synagogues through the continent. And the Christians, whose first churches had been in Asia, now lived under oppressive conditions, suffering from the most cruel prosecutions. The four types of nations, Hübner continues, were naturally distributed on the seven parts of the Asian continent:

1. Turkey in Asia, in Lat. *Turcia Asiatica*, which is situated between the two banks of the Euphrates; II. Arabia, in Lat. Arabia, between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Persia. 3. The Kingdom of Persia, in Lat. *Regnum Persicum*, situated between the Euphrates and the Indus rivers. 4. The East Indies, in Lat. *India Orientalis*, situated between the Indus and the Ganges rivers. 5. Great Tartary, in Lat. *Tartaria Magna*, near the Arctic Sea. 6. The Kingdom of China, in Lat. *Imperium Sinicum*, near the Pacific Sea. 7. The Islands of Asia, in Lat. *Insulæ Asiaticæ*, situated in the Indian Sea" (p. 567).

Tibet was among the countries of Great Tartary. This was the great region that included the steppe of northern and central Asia inhabited by the citizens of the former Mongol Empire. In its northern part, Great Tartary bordered with the Arctic Ocean; on the east with the Japanese Sea; on the South with India and China; and on the east with the Caspian Sea, Persia and with European Russia. Hübner further divided Great Tartary in three great regions, all inhabited by Tartar nations: *Tartaria Russica* (Russian Tartary), *Tartaria Sinica* (Chinese Tartary), and *Tartaria Independens* (Independent Tartary). Russian Tartary included the countries of Siberia, Ochota, Yenissey and Buriatia. Chinese Tartary comprised Manchuria, Mongolia, the Gobi Desert, and Korea. Finally, Independent Tartary included the countries and kingdoms that, by the early eighteenth century, were not under the direct rule of the Russian or Chinese Empires. These were Turkestan, Uzbekistan, Minor and Greater Bocharia, Kalmykia, and Tibet. Hübner describes Tibet, its geographical surroundings, its political situation and its religion in two short pages. The great kingdom of "Tibet or Thibet, Tangut and Bout-Tan," rested between the frontiers of East India and China. It was a protectorate of the Kalmyk Khan, and "the patrimony of the Dalai Lama, the Pope of Kalmykians and Mongolians" (p. 755). The German geographer dedicates a large section entitled "On the Religion of the Tartars," to the institution of the Dalai Lama. He presents the religion of the Tartar nations consistently with his general introduction on the religions of Asia. The Tartars belong to the fourth type of nations of the world, the pagan nations of the idolaters:

They are Pagans and have a High Priest or Patriarch, whom they call Dalai Lama, which means Father. The Mountain, on which we find his seat and temple, is called Patola or Putala, and is located in the Kingdom of Thibet, in a great castle built at the extremity of the city of Lasa or Barantola. The apartment he occupies is marvelously furnished and gold shines on all sides. The Tartars make frequent pilgrimages to Brantole to visit the Lama, but his answers are so obscure that the pilgrims are obliged to purchase very expensive explanations from the Priests who have the honor to serve him. Ignorance and credulity are inexhaustible mines for all Priests, and the Lama of Tartary has pushed things so far that none of the Kings of these countries dares to sit on the throne without having presented at the Patola a considerable gift (p. 755-6).

Within the *Yochi shiryaku*, the primary source for Ogurusu's *Ramakyō engaku* is the second fascicle on the Asian nations of Shina (China), Kōrai (Korea), Manshū (Manchuria), Mōko (Mongolia), and Seizō (Tibet). In the three folios that compose the Seizō section, Uchida and Nishimura provide a brief description of Tibet's territory. "Seizō is separated to the north from Chinese Tartary by the Kunlun mountains, while it is separated in the southwest from India by the Himalayas. On the east it borders the main part of Shina. It is divided into Anterior and Posterior Seizō and two other parts. The lay of the land is in the south of the central Asian plains, and on the southern part it ranks among the highest places of the Earth."<sup>176</sup> Next comes the discussion of Tibet's relation with the Qing, what Ogurusu would refer to as the "flourishing of *Seizō Bukkyō*." "Among the countries of Asia, this is where Bukkyō is most prestigious, with most Buddhist monks; the Mongols regard this country as a sacred and luminous land."<sup>177</sup> Half of the population of the country was monastic, and the head of the monks was the Dalai Lama.

In Uchida and Nishimura's Japanese, the European and Qing knowledge of the Dalai Lama took shape in a compelling account of the "pope of the Tartars." The Dalai Lama was the *hōō* (S. *dharmarāja*, C. *fawang*) of Tibet, being the head of the government affairs. The Dalai Lama was also a *katsubutsu* (C. *huofo*), for he was regarded as a living incarnation of Amitābha. In Tibet, there were also other monks of high rank, and a great number of nuns. The Dalai Lama's government had changed in the previous century, when representatives of the Qing government (M. *amban*, C. *dachen*) had taken office in Lhasa. "A hundred and forty years ago," the Japanese scholars continue, "this country came under the jurisdiction of Shina, and the Chinese placed military garrisons, stationed soldiers, and they policed the country. The administration that takes place within the towns is the result of a consultation of the ministers

---

<sup>176</sup> See Uchida Masao and Nishimura Shigeki, *Yochi shiryaku* (Tokyo: Uchida Masayoshi, 1873), f. 2, p. 29. I would like to thank Micah Auerback for his help with the translation of the *Yochi shiryaku*'s Tibet chapter.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

with the Dalai Lama. Every year they have to send tributes to Shina's court."<sup>178</sup> The residents of Tibet's major cities were refined and polite, worked on literature, history, and astronomy, and many of them studied Śākyamuni's teaching. On the other hand, the residents of the interior regions, who moved on the highlands, were barbarians and savages. Because of the high altitude and the cold climate, Tibetans dressed in goat hide, although some of those who dwelled in the cities also utilized woolen fabric. Tibetans produced artifacts with gold and silver, many of which were Buddhist images and statues. The capital city of Rasa (C. Lasa), the largest city of Anterior Tibet, had a population of fifty thousand. "It has the Dalai Lama's Palace and the headquarters of Shina's garrisons."<sup>179</sup> The buildings were made of stone, and the streets flourished with the trade of Muslim, Indian, and Chinese merchants. Rasa had magnificent temples and halls dedicated to Amitābha. These halls were filled with countless Buddhist images and statues, while the Dalai Lama's palace was adorned with stupas and chapels shining and sparkling with different precious materials. "In no other country do we see so many people in temples so rich, praying to the monks for the welfare in the next world."<sup>180</sup>

Together with the *Yochi shiryaku*, Ogurusu's primary source for his *Ramakyō engaku* was the fifth fascicle of Wei Yuan's *Shengwu ji*. In Beijing's Yonghegong, the Dung dkar sprul sku taught the Japanese monk some Tibetan language. Yet upon his return to Japan, Ogurusu had not acquired the skills to read Tibetan sources. His frustration with his Tibetan classes could not compare with the fact he had been unable to visit Tibet. "I was unable to ask for a history of *Ramakyō* in that language. I was meeting lamas directly, yet it was as though I was a thousand leagues afar, and it was highly regrettable."<sup>181</sup> Hence, Ogurusu turned to Qing works on world

---

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>181</sup> See Kōchō Ogurusu, *Ramakyō engaku* (Kyōto: Ishikawa Shundai, 1877), pp. 6-7. My translation.

geography. Wei Yuan's *Shengwu ji* was the most detailed account of Tibet to have appeared in print in the recent decades. "There are three sections of the fifth fascicle of the *Shengwu ji* to record the matters of Tibet. The first two are known as *Guochao fusui Xizang ji*, while the final is known as their sequel. This enables one to learn the history of the Tibetan territories, so in the present work I have mainly used this, while I referred to other books on the side."<sup>182</sup> Wei Yuan's sources about Tibet in turn were of three kinds. First, he consulted the *Menggu yuanliu* ("Origins of the Mongols"), originally compiled in Mongolian in the seventeenth century and translated into Chinese under the Qianlong Emperor. Second, he read the *Fozu lidai tongzai* ("Complete Records of the Buddha and Generations of Patriarchs"). This work was a Ming dynasty history of Buddhism that contained a detailed biography of 'Phags pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1235-1280), an eminent Tibetan scholar known for his political ties with Qubilai Khan (1260-1294), the Mongol Emperor of China. Third, Wei Yuan employed the accounts by Manchu *ambans* and the Confucian officials of their voyages through Tibet and the neighboring Chinese provinces.

Among these works, Wei Yuan resorted to the *Kang you ji xing* ("Records of Voyages in Khams by Carriage"), an anthology of travel accounts published in Beijing in 1845. Its author Yao Ying (1785-1853) was an official who, around the time of the Opium War, had become the Qing Commander of Taiwan. In the early 1840s, Yao Ying filed a false report to the imperial government in China, claiming that his naval forces had successfully sunk a British ship off Taipei's harbor. As a result, he was tried and removed from office. He was dispatched to the frontiers of the empire, in the bordering regions of Tibet. Here, between Khams and Sichuan, his task was to survey the access roads through which the British and the Russians may have entered China from Tibet and India. Yao Ying died shortly after the publication of his *Kang you ji xing*,

---

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

when, upon his return to central China, he fought with the Qing forces against the Taiping. The *Kang you ji xing* would be Wei Yuan's main source for the genealogies of the Dalai and Panchen Lamas and for the history of the Dge lugs tradition, what Wei Yuan called Tsong kha pa's "Yellow Religion." Indeed, through Yao Ying's work, Wei Yuan would provide to a large audience of Qing officials notions of Tibetan geography, economy, religion, and history.



Wei Yuan's account of Tibet is composed of three essays: (1) *Guochao fusui Xizang ji shang* ("Records of the Great Dynasty's Pacification of Tibet - Part One"), (2) *Guochao fusui Xizang ji xia* ("Records of the Great Dynasty's Pacification of Tibet - Part Two"), and (3) *Xizang houji* ("Sequel on Tibet"). In the opening paragraph of the first essay, Wei Yuan defines "Xizang," China's term for Tibet that was adopted through East Asia. He writes:

Xizang, the Tufan of ancient times; Wusizang during the Yuan and Ming. Its people call it Tanggute, or Tubote. Its territory divides into three regions: Kang, the territory of Batang and Chamuduo that lays beyond Dajianlü in Sichuan, is Anterior Tibet. (Also called Kamu.) Wei, namely the place of Tufan's original establishment and of the Budala and Dazhao Temple, and currently the residence of the Dalai, is called Central Tibet. (In Chinese Budala means Potaraka's vehicle.) Zang, namely Zhaxi lunbu, formerly ruled by Lazang, and currently the residence of the Banchan, is posterior Tibet. (In Chinese, Zhaxi lunbu means Auspicious Mountain; it was given the name of this mountain.) Further west is Ali, thus said to be the fourth region. The northern border is the source of the Yellow River (the source of the River emerges in the Hui region, then again in Xining, both of these connecting the northern border of Tibet's territory.) The southern border is the Great Jinsha River (The Yaluzangbu River extends across the southern part of the three Tibetan regions, that is, it flows up into the Great Jinsha River, and down through Burma into the Southern Sea; its breadth doubles several times that of the Small Jinsha River that flows up through the Min River. It is said that its waters are black ...) To the west it reaches the Xueling. (Xueling is Mount Gangdisi, in Ali, namely the Southern range of the Pamir.) From east to west it measures about 6,000 *li*, from south to north about 5,000 *li*, and about 14,000 *li* of distance from Beijing. There are three roads to enter Tibet from Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Yunnan. They all first reach Anterior Tibet, then continue west to Central Tibet, then further west to Ali. It is situated to the east of India, but it is not the

ancient country of Buddhism. Still, it is rather close to India (about 2,000 li south of Ali is the border of Enedkeg, that is, Central India). Therefore they have many scriptures and teachings, especially those holding the dhāraṇīs. There are many monks, they hold no military posts, and the monks who live in the buildings are all ordained, while the non-ordained live outside of the buildings. Tibet began to be known in China from the Tang, when Taizong gave Princess Gongcheng in marriage to the Zanju of the Tufan, who was inclined toward Buddhism and built many monasteries. During the Yuan, Shizu conferred upon the Tibetan eminent monk Basiba the title of *dishi dabao fawang*, and in order to lead his land, his descendants inherited his title, and thus Tibet began to be governed by Buddhist traditions.<sup>183</sup>

Wei Yuan's definition of Tibet would provide the meaning of the term for the entire Republican Period through 1965, when the Tibetan Autonomous Region was instituted in the People's Republic. Xizang was China's name for Tibet in use since the beginning of the Qing dynasty. Wei Yuan explains the different names of Tibet in China during the Tang, Yuan, and Ming dynasties. In Tang China, at the time of the Tibetan Empire, Tibet was known by the name of Tufan. During the Yuan and Ming dynasties, Xizang's name was a Chinese transliteration of the name that Tibetans gave to their country (or to one of its regions): the term Wusizang stood for Dbus gtsang. According to Wei Yuan, Tibetans referred to their country also as "Tubote," a synonym of Tufan, denoting the territories of the Tibetan Empire, or "Tanggute," being the Mongolian name of the Tangut Empire (1038-1227), referred to in Chinese sources as the Xixia (Western Xia). The Qing scholar then identified the four great regions of Xizang: (1) Anterior Tibet (C. Qianzang) corresponded with the Tibetan eastern region of Khams (C. Kang, Kamu), beyond city of Dar rtse mdo (C. Dajianlü, Kangding) that marked the border of Tibet with the western Chinese province of Sichuan; (2) Central Tibet (C. Zhongzang) included the region of Dbus (C. Wei), the land where the Tibetan Empire was originally established in the seventh

---

<sup>183</sup> See "Guochao fusui Xizang ji shang," in *Wei Yuan quanji*, 3 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011), pp. 202-3. My translation. In this quote I have inserted Wei Yuan's interlinear notes between parentheses. For a study on the term "Tufan" (often still mistakenly rendered as "Tubo" in phonetic transcription), see the study by Paul Pelliot, "Quelques transcriptions chinoises de noms tibétains," in *T'oung Pao* 16, 1 (1916), pp. 18-20. I would like to thank Elliot Sperling for this reference.



century. Central Tibet was also the region where the Jo khang (C. Dazhao si), Lhasa's main temple, and the Potala Palace had been built; (3) Posterior Tibet (C. Houzang), according to Wei Yuan, was also the region formerly governed by the Mongolian warlord Lha bzang Khan (d. 1717). In 1705, he had marched on Lhasa, declaring himself the king of Tibet, having usurped the throne of the sixth Dalai Lama Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho (1683-1706). Yet Posterior Tibet was also the region of the Bkra shis lhun po (C. Zhaxi lunbu) monastery near Gzhis ka rtse, where the Panchen Lama had his seat; (4) finally, Wei Yuan mentions the additional region of Mnga' ris (C. Ali), the region of Tibet to the farther west.

In addition, Wei Yuan delineates the four borders of Tibet. On the north, Tibet's territory was marked by the source of the Huanghe. The Qing historian identifies the source of the Yellow River in the south of the Hui Region (C. Huibu), the name of East Turkestan. Having emerged in the Hui Region, the Yellow River resurfaced near Zhi ling (C. Xining), which marked the northeastern extremity of Tibet's territory. Tibet's southeastern border was marked by the upper section of the Yangtze River, the Jinsha River. And to the west, the borders of Tibet were in Mnga' ris, extending into the Pamir range (C. Congling, Pamier) of the western Himalayas. From east to west, Xizang's territory measured about six thousand Chinese leagues, while from south to north about five thousand leagues. From Beijing, the distance to the western border measured about fourteen thousand leagues. Furthermore, in order to enter Tibet, three main roads passed through the provinces of Sichuan (C. chuan), Shaanxi (C. Shan), and Yunnan (C. Dian), crossing the three Tibetan regions of Wei, Zang, and Ali. As for its position among the countries of Asia, Tibet lay to the east of India (C. Tianzhu).

Despite neighboring India, however, Wei Yuan remarked that Tibet was not the ancient kingdom of the Buddha. Central India (M. Enekeg) lay about two thousand Chinese leagues

south of the Mnga' ris border. Therefore, Wei Yuan observed, in Tibet were preserved different kinds of Buddhist scriptures and teachings, especially the teachings that included the recitation of dhāraṇīs (C. *tuoluoni*). The Qing scholar then provides a date for the introduction of Buddhism in Tibet, describing the story of the marriage of the Tang Princess Wencheng with the Tibetan Emperor Srong btsan sgam po. It was at this time, when the Tibetan Emperor began to support Buddhism and to build Buddhist temples, that Tibet (C. Xizang) began to be renowned in China (C. Zhongguo). Only at a later time, during the Yuan Dynasty, Qubilai Khan conferred upon 'Phags pa the title of "Imperial Preceptor, Great Precious Dharma King." It was around this time, Wei Yuan observes, that 'Phags pa's heirs inherited what would be the classical model of subsequent relations between Tibetan religious leaders and the leaders of the Chinese Empire.

Moving to his description of the Buddhism of Tibet, Wei Yuan would popularize many terms that later scholars would use to talk about this religion. Wei Yuan thus discusses how the early Ming emperors inherited the Mongol tradition of conferring titles upon eminent lamas. He then offers several details about the nature of Buddhism in Tibet, including an explanation of the term "lama." Hence, like the Mongol emperors, early Ming emperors such as Hongwu and Yongle had also bestowed titles on Tibetan lamas, inviting them at their court in Nanjing. To begin, these lamas, Wei Yuan clarifies, "were all of the Red Religion, not of the Yellow Religion."<sup>184</sup> The dominance of 'Phags pa's Red Religion (C. Hong jiao) changed with the founder of the Yellow Religion (C. Huang jiao). Tsong kha pa (C. Zongkaba, 1357-1419), Wei Yuan writes, "was born near Xining in Yongle's fifteenth year, obtained enlightenment in Tibet's Gandan si, and died in the fourteenth year of Chenghua's reign."<sup>185</sup> During the early Ming dynasty, the Tibetan lamas who were given the title of *fawang* (T. *chos rgyal*, J. *hōō*)

---

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., p. 203.

dressed in red robes, according to an ancient style inherited from India. Still later, the Red Religion centered especially on the secret mantras (C. *Mizhou*), together with practices such as eating knives and swallowing fire that had become widespread. Wei Yuan writes, “they were no different from sorcerers, so they finally lost the instructions about monastic precepts, meditation, and wisdom.”<sup>186</sup> Wei Yuan’s account of the reform of Tibetan religion would also be rehearsed by later scholarship. Despite his initial adherence to the Red Religion, Tsong kha pa absorbed in long periods of deep contemplation. He then reformed this religion, gathered a large order, adopted yellow robes and hats. He then instructed two great disciples to disseminate the teaching of the Mahāyāna. “The two disciples: one is the Dalai Lama, the other is the Panchen Lama.” In Chinese, Wei Yuan explains, “lama” meant “unsurpassed” (C. *wushang*).<sup>187</sup>

In the *Guochao fusui Xizang ji shang*, the Qing historian then explains the genealogies of the Dalai and Panchen Lamas and their significance in Tibet’s religious and political history. The two lamas die, but do not lose their knowledge. They possess knowledge of future lives, and their disciples seek their incarnations, oftentimes within saṃsāra. Because of their unobstructed knowledge, the Dalai and Panchen Lamas mutually recognized each other as master and disciple in future lifetimes. Their religion emphasized the contemplation of the nature of things and the welfare of beings, while it denounced the Hīnayāna of the śrāvakas, together with the lower methods of sorcery. By the middle of the Ming dynasty, Wei Yuan writes, their religion “had not yet come to China, and in China no one knew about it.”<sup>188</sup> It would only be after the first Dalai Lama Dge ’dun grub (C. Gendun zhuba, 1391-1474), with the second and third Dalai Lamas Dge ’dun rgya mtsho (C. Gendun jiamucuo, 1475-1542) and Bsod nams rgya mtsho (C. Suonan jiamucuo, 1543-1588), that China began to know about Tibetan incarnated masters (C. *huofo*).

---

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., p. 204.

“During the reign of Zhengde of the Ming, China learned about the huofu.”<sup>189</sup> After Zhengde (1491-1521), like all of the Yellow Religion including Tsong kha pa, the fourth Dalai Lama Yong tan rgya mtsho (C. Yundan jiamucuo, 1589-1617) would turn down invitations of the Ming emperors to visit China. This changed, Wei Yuan continues, with the fifth Dalai Lama Blo bzang rgya mtsho (C. Luobuzang jiamucuo, 1617-1682). In 1643, the seventh year of the Chongde Emperor (1592-1643), one year before the Ming dynasty was overthrown by the Manchu and the Shunzhi Emperor (1638-1661) was enthroned in Beijing, the Fifth Dalai lama traveled to the court of Mukden (C. Shenjing) accompanied by the Fourth Panchen Lama Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1570-1662). “The following year, the Dalai and Panchen were greeted with the title of Great Vajra Masters, and this is the beginning of our Dynasty’s knowledge of Tibet [Xizang].”<sup>190</sup> Wei Yuan concludes his first essay with the events that led Lha bzang Khan to usurp the sixth Dalai Lama’s throne and to become Tibet’s king during the early eighteenth century. In deed, his genealogy of Tibetan dharma proved to be quite accurate in many details.

In the second essay entitled *Guochao fusui Xizang ji xia*, Wei Yuan summarizes the accounts of Tibet by the Manchu *ambans* who resided in Lhasa. He describes the relations of the Dalai and Panchen Lamas with subsequent Qing emperors, but also the geography and customs of Tibet, including the routes through which Buddhism had come from India to China, and from India to Tibet. These same routes may have exposed the Qing empire to invasions by the Russians and the British. Here, Wei Yuan raises a question about Tibet that was widespread among Qing officials and scholars of his time. It was whether Tibet had been part of India in ancient times, and therefore whether Tibet was the ancient country where Buddhism had begun. In the tenth fascicle of his *Kang you ji xing*, Yao Ying employs Xuanzang’s *Xiyu ji* and Faxian’s

---

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., p. 204.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., p. 205.

*Foguo ji* to clarify the borders of the regions known in Chinese as Zhongguo (China), Xizang (Tibet), Xiyu (East Turkestan), and Tianzhu (India). “Now, from Dar rtse mdo to Anterior and Posterior Tibet, they all have a writing system. They use fine wood as pens. The lines of ink are horizontal.”<sup>191</sup> In Tibetan books, the paper sheets were very fine, and, unlike the Chinese writing system, the order of writing moved from left to right. “The alphabet is called the Tanggute alphabet. In sum, they are like the books of the barbarians of the West. I do not know when and by whom it was created. I reckon during the Song or Yuan. But the Sanskrit books had already entered China during the Han. Śākyamuni spoke the dharma and Ānanda collected the sūtras. Since the old times of the king Kuang of the Zhou dynasty, India already had an alphabet.”<sup>192</sup> Based on his knowledge that India had had a writing system since the sixth century BCE, Yao Ying thus proves that Tibet was not the Buddha’s ancient kingdom, for, during the Tang, the Tibetan Empire still lacked a writing system.

Wei Yuan agrees with his source. But he carries his argument further, to include the nature of the kinship between the ancient Buddhism of India and Tibet. Even before the Tang, translators such as Kumārajīva, and later Xuanzang, had come from the West through the Yangguan pass near Dunhuang. Moreover, Bodhidharma and other eminent Indian monks had come to China from the Southern Sea, without crossing the Tibetan lands. “Therefore, Tibet is truly not the ancient kingdom of the Buddha, for only since the Yuan and Ming has Buddhism [Fojiao] flourished in Weizang.”<sup>193</sup> At the beginning, the lamas of the Red Religion accepted Chinese imperial titles. But with the rise of the Tsong kha pa’s Yellow Religion they no longer accepted such titles, dismissing all the great lamas who were previously given the title of

---

<sup>191</sup> See Yao Ying, *Kang you ji xing* (Taipei: Guangwen shuju, 1968), pp. 267. My translation.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 267-8.

<sup>193</sup> See “Guochao fusui Xizang ji xia,” in *Wei Yuan quanji*, 3 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011), p. 223. My translation.

*fawang*. At the same time, through their knowledge of future lives, the lamas of the Yellow Religion began to perform the miracle (C. *shenqi*) of sprul sku incarnation (C. *huashen zhuanshi*). Subsequently, all of the northwestern kingdoms favored or opposed this practice, including China. “As for Mahāvīra’s nirvāṇa,” Wei Yuan claims, calling the Buddha the “Great Hero,” an epithet used through the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā*, “no one has heard of further incarnations, therefore Tsong kha pa had instructed the Dalai and Panchen to interrupt their manifestation at the sixth or seventh generation, and then pass into nirvāṇa. Today’s Yellow Religion is not the original Yellow Religion, therefore it is not the ancient teaching of Śākyamuni.”<sup>194</sup> For Wei Yuan, although Tibetans had the *Mi zhou*, that is, the secret mantras, there was no *Mijiao*, or *Mizong*, in Tibet. The Buddhism of India and the Buddhism of Tibet had been the same *Fojiao*. Yet, because the practice of recognizing sprul skus was unheard of in ancient India, the ancient Buddhism of India and the Buddhism of Tibet had been the same only since the time of Tsong kha pa and the early generations of the Dalai and Panchen Lamas.<sup>195</sup>

In the *Shengwu ji*’s last essay entitled *Xizang houji*, Wei Yuan offers additional details about Tibetan cities and famous places such as Lhasa, the Potala Palace, the Jo khang temple, the three great monasteries of Dga’ ldan (C. Gandan), Se ra (C. Sela), and ’Bras spungs (C. Baibang), as well as a brief description of the Tibetan Tripiṭaka, the Bka’ ’gyur (C. Ganzhuer) and Bstan ’gyur (C. Danzhuer), which were stored in Tibet’s great monasteries. In sum, the Qing historian adds, “Tibet is not the Buddha’s kingdom. Still, it cannot be said that it is not an extraordinary realm. As a whole, Tibet administers sixty-eight cities: thirty in the Wei region;

---

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., p. 225.

<sup>195</sup> At the time of writing, I have not been able to trace Wei Yuan’s source for the story about Tsong kha pa having instructed his early disciples to interrupt the recognition of sprul skus in the Dge lugs tradition.

eighteen in the Zang region; nine in Kamu; and twelve in Ali.”<sup>196</sup> Later in the nineteenth century, Wei Yuan’s Xizang would be the Seizō of Ogurusu’s *Seizō Bukkyō*.



Upon his return to Japan in 1877, Ogurusu introduced his readers to the history of *Ramakyō*, the new object of study he discovered in Beijing. He also presented the general results of his survey of the religions of the Chinese Empire. In the preface of his *Ramakyō engaku*, Ogurusu writes:

The vast breadth of China is well known to the persons of the world, but not many people know which religions are practiced in which regions. I have inquired into this with the two traditions of the Green-Robed and of the Yellow-Robed, and their answers are largely the same. They hold that, within the eighteen provinces of China, the sect of the Green-Robed is ascendant. Although the yellow-robed reside together with them in the provinces of Yunnan, Sichuan, Gansu, Shaanxi, Shanxi, and Zhili, they are unable to rival the sect of the Green-Robed. The regions outside of China are divided into three great areas. Shengjing, Jilin, and Heilong are deemed the three eastern provinces; Monan, Mobei, Moxi, and Qinghai are the four of Mongolia; while Anterior Tibet, Central Tibet, Posterior Tibet, and Ali are known collectively as Tibet. In eighty percent of these three regions, we may know, the sect of the Yellow-Robed is in the ascendancy. This is my outline of the religions in the regions of China.<sup>197</sup>

In Beijing, Benran informed Ogurusu that in China and in the neighboring regions of the Qing Empire there existed two main traditions of Buddhist monks and nuns. These two traditions were distinguished by the color of their robes. The “Green-Robed” were the Buddhists that belonged to the Chinese traditions of Buddhism. The “Yellow-Robed” belonged to the Tibetan traditions, including Tibetan and Mongolian Buddhists. As for the distribution of Chinese and Tibetan Buddhists over the regions of the Qing Empire, the Green-Robed composed the majority of the Buddhists in the “eighteen provinces” (*C. shiba sheng*) of China. Since the late eighteenth century, during the reign of the Qianlong Emperor, the expression *shiba sheng* had denoted the

---

<sup>196</sup> See “Xizang houji,” in *Wei Yuan quanji* (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011), vol. 3, p. 230. My translation.

<sup>197</sup> See Kōchō Ogurusu, *Ramakyō engaku* (Kyōto: Ishikawa Shundai, 1877), pp. 5-6. My translation.

administrative regions of China. The eighteen provinces of the Qing, extending over the territory of the fifteen provinces (C. *shiwu sheng*) of the Ming Empire, included Zhili, Jiangsu, Anwei, Shanxi, Shandong, Henan, Shaanxi, Gansu, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Hubei, Hunan, Sichuan, Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Yunnan, and Guizhou. Chinese and Tibetan Buddhists, Ogurusu observes, resided together in six of China's eighteen provinces, including Zhili (Beijing's province), Shanxi, Shaanxi, Gansu, Yunnan, and Sichuan. But, unlike the three great regions outside of China (Tibet, Mongolia, and Manchuria), in these Chinese provinces the influence of Tibetan Buddhists was limited. In the three eastern provinces (C. *dong sansheng*) of Manchuria, in the four regions of Mongolia, and in the four regions of Anterior Tibet, Central Tibet, Posterior Tibet, and Ali, Tibetan Buddhists were unchallenged by Chinese Buddhists.

In sum, for Ogurusu, in the regions of the Qing Empire *Ramakyō* was the same religion as the ancient *Mikkyō* of Japan. In China, those who adhered to *Ramakyō* were mostly the Yellow-Robed who lived in Beijing, on Mount Wutai (C. Wutai Shan), and in the regions of China that bordered with Tibet, Mongolia, and Manchuria. In contrast, *Ramakyō* flourished in the regions of Manchuria, Mongolia, and Tibet. Not only was this Tibet the *Seizō* of Ogurusu's *Seizō Bukkyō*, but also the Xizang of Wei Yuan's *Shengwu ji*. During the twentieth century, Wei Yuan's Xizang would become the Xizang of China's *Xizang Fojiao*.



In China, two decades had not elapsed since Yang Wenhui's death when the first books with *Zhongguo Fojiao* and *Xizang Fojiao* in their title were published. Over the 1910s and 1920s, many among the leading scholars of Buddhism in the newly born Republic of China (1912-1949)



would be Yang Wenhui's students. Like Yang Wenhui in the last decades of the Qing dynasty, this second generation of scholars would also write books about the history of Buddhism in China and Tibet based on Japanese studies as their source texts. In 1912, the *Sanguo Fojiao lüeshi* ("Concise History of Buddhism in the Three Countries") was the first book to discuss the history of Buddhism in India, China, and Japan.<sup>198</sup> It was published in Shanghai in the *Foxue congbao* ("Journal of Buddhist Studies"), the short-lived journal of the Buddhist Association of the Republic of China (C. Zhonghua fojiao zonghui), established in 1911 by a group of Yang Wenhui's students, including Ouyang Jian. Since its first issues, the *Foxue congbao* encouraged the study of Buddhism among the five great nations (C. *minzu*) of the former Qing empire: China, Manchuria, Mongolia, East Turkestan, and Tibet. In promoting the study of Buddhism in the Republic of China, the journal also published articles on the life and work of Yang Wenhui, including his 1896 *Shizong lüeshuo* based on Gyōnen's *Hasshū-kōyō*.

The *Sanguo Fojiao lüeshi* was based in turn on another Japanese work, the *Sangoku Bukkyō ryakushi*, published in Tōkyō in 1890 by Shimaji Mokurai (1838-1911), a renowned scholar of the Nishi Honganji of the Jodō Shinshū, and by Oda Tokunō (1860-1911), the chief editor of the massive *Bukkyō daijiten* ("Great Dictionary of Buddhism"), which appeared posthumously in 1917. The *Sangoku Bukkyō ryakushi* discussed the transmission of Buddhism from India to Japan in three main sections, respectively on India, China, and Japan. Its translation as the *Sanguo Fojiao lüeshi* appeared on the *Foxue congbao* in five installments from September 1912 to May 1913. It was first translated into Chinese by the monks Tingyun (d.u.) and Haiqiu (d.u.), and then edited for publication by one of Yang Wenhui's early students in

---

<sup>198</sup> For the notion of "Buddhism in the Three Countries," see Haruko Wakabayashi, "Sangoku Shisō and Japan's Identity in the Buddhist Cosmology as Depicted in the Konjaku monogatari," in Jeffrey E. Hanes, Hidetoshi Yamaji, eds., *Image and Identity, Rethinking Japanese Cultural History* (Kobe: Kishimoto Printing, 2004), pp. 15-28.

Nanjing. As he edited the *Sanguo Fojiào lüeshi*, the scholar Li Yizhuo (1881-1952) would also publish an influential work on the history of Tibetan Buddhism. It was the first Chinese work to engage Tibetan Buddhism, that is, *Xizang Fojiào*, as an object of academic study.

Li Yizhuo was born in 1881 in the Linchuan county of the Jiangxi province of southeast China, where he received an education in the Confucian classics. Around 1900, his fellow Jiangxi natives Ouyang Jian and Gui Bohua introduced him to their teacher Yang Wenhui in Nanjing. Instructed by Yang, Li became interested in the study of *Mizong*. In 1911, the same year his teacher died, the recently established Metropolitan Library (C. Jingshi tushuguan) summoned Li to Beijing, where he would catalogue the Dunhuang manuscripts that had been stored in that institution since 1910. During his research in Beijing, Li identified one hundred and fifty-nine works that were not included in the known editions of the Chinese Tripiṭaka. Published in 1912, his *Dunhuang shishi jingjuanzhong weiru zangjinglun zhushu mulu* (“Complete Catalogue of the Sūtras and Śāstras from the Dunhuang Cave Manuscripts not included in the Tripiṭaka”) established him as one of the first scholars of Dunhuang worldwide, and as one of the leading scholars of Buddhism in China. During the 1920s, Li taught Buddhism in several institutions, including Shenyang’s Dongbei University, Qinghua University in Beijing, and, during the early 1930s, in Nanjing’s Zhongyang University. After the Civil War (1946-1950), he retired in his native Jiangxi, where he died in 1952.



Four decades earlier, as he worked on the Dunhuang manuscripts, Li Yizhuo compiled the first work in China on the topic of Tibetan Buddhism. Published in the *Foxue congbao* in three

installments from December 1912 to March 1913, Li's *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi* ("A Brief History of Tibetan Buddhism") was an adaptation of Ogurusu's *Ramakyō engaku*. The *Ramakyō engaku* provided him with a historical source, yet in his *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi* Li would put forth a previously unknown theory of the origin of Tibetan Buddhism. This compelling theory would establish Tibetan Buddhism as one of the central topics of study during the revival of Tantrism of 1915-1935.

The first of Li's essays, published in December 1912, is a general introduction to different topics in the study of Tibetan Buddhism: (1) the relationship of Buddhism with the Tibetan nation; (2) the relationship of Buddhism with the Tibetan government; (3) the outlook of Tibetan Buddhism; and (4) the view of the world of Tibetan Buddhism. The second essay of February 1913 discusses the topics of: (1) the religion of Tibet prior to the introduction of Buddhism; (2) the circumstances of the introduction of Buddhism in Tibet; and (3) the age of the great sect of the "Red-Robed" (C. *hongyi pai*), including its periods of establishment, thriving, and decline. Finally, in the last essay of March 1913, Li covers the subjects of: (1) the great sect of the "Yellow-Robed" (C. *huangyi pai*) with the three ages of its establishment, its thriving with the Dalai and Panchen Lamas, and its decline; (2) the current circumstances of Tibetan Buddhism; and a description of (3) the "ornaments" of Tibetan Buddhism such as images, statues, monasteries, scriptures, and ritual implements.

Although *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi* retained the general structure of Ogurusu's work, it introduced several innovations. The first innovation was the name of Li's object of study: Ogurusu's *Ramakyō* disappeared from Li's *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi*. The Chinese scholar removed the sinograph *Lamajiao* from the title and from the text of his source book. Yet he did not remove Ogurusu's new term *Seizō Bukkyō*. Instead, he promoted *Seizō Bukkyō* to the main

subject of his study. In place of China's old *Lamajiao*, Li's object of study becomes *Xizang Fojiao*. Hence Japan's *Ramakyō*, that is, Tibet's *Mikkyō*, was now China's *Xizang Fojiao*. In the process, as we will see, the Buddhism of the Tibetan nation would become the same form of Buddhism that China had inherited from India in her long-vanished *Mizong*.

In the first essay of his *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi*, in the section entitled "Xizang Fojiao yu Xizang minzu zhi guanxi" ("Tibetan Buddhism and its Relationship with the Tibetan Nation"), Li writes, "The Tibetan nation has the kindest and noblest character, it is the most inconceivable nation in the world. Its nature is gentle, its words and actions are sincere, its thinking is high and vast, its body is strong and brave, and such is also its power."<sup>199</sup> Having been under the influence of Buddhism for a long time, observes Li, the Tibetan nation (C. *Xizang minzu*) had developed a kind and compassionate nature. It had removed its violent and perverse instincts, replacing them with a noble character, a resolute and honest conduct, and a lofty way of thinking. Hence, the Tibetan nation had brought its wisdom to perfection, and had completely embraced Buddhism, creating a majestic and unexcelled religious community. "Since it has obtained its happiness, it disregards competition in the world."<sup>200</sup> Furthermore, the cold climate of the Tibetan lands had shaped the Tibetan people's skills of clarity and resistance. "If not Buddhism, who could have made it peaceful, and unwilling to harm the world?"<sup>201</sup> Therefore, Li concluded, the relationship that the Tibetan nation had developed with Buddhism was so profound that, to use a Buddhist term, it was inconceivable (C. *bukesiyi*). Tibetan Buddhism, however, was a particular form of Buddhism. Its nature was the nature of China's *Mijiao*.

---

<sup>199</sup> See Li Yizhuo, "Xizang fojiao shilüe," in *Minguo fojiao qikan wenxian jicheng*, 1 (Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zhongxin) p. 447.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 447.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 447.

Swept by what would soon turn into a *Mijiao*-mania, in the next section entitled “Xizang Fojiao zhi jiujiingguan” (“The Outlook of Tibetan Buddhism”), Li writes, “The Buddhism of Tibet is the so-called Mahāyāna Buddhism of the *Mimi zong*.”<sup>202</sup> In their lofty nature and conduct, Tibetans far surpassed any other nation in the world, therefore they were not satisfied with the “selfish” traditions of the Hīnayāna. Tibetans had not been happy with the mere assimilation of the general teachings of the Mahāyāna. Thus, based on Ogurusu’s *Ramakyō engaku*, Li provides a historical timeline for the Tibetans’ uncommon interest in the *Mimi zong*. Indeed, the *Mimi zong* was so suitable to the Tibetan nation that Tibetans had received it long before China. And so, Li claims that the teachings of the Buddha had begun to be introduced from India to Tibet since the time of the King Nan of Zhou (d. 256 BC).<sup>203</sup> These teachings were Mahāyāna teachings. And these teachings already included the methods of the *Mimi* scriptures (C. *Mimi jingfa*). It was only later, when Padmasambhava came to Tibet, that he officially introduced the *Mimi zong*. But this *Mimi zong* that Padmasambhava introduced in Tibet was a *Mimi zong* of a particular kind. Indeed, Li had come to believe that, through his knowledge of the inclinations of the Tibetan nation rooted in the old customs of the Bon religion, Padmasambhava had established in Tibet the methods of a distinct teaching *Mimi zong*. They were the methods of the *Mimi zong*’s lotus family (C. *lianhua bufa*).

---

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., p. 448-9.

<sup>203</sup> See Kōchō Ogurusu, *Ramakyō engaku* (Kyōto: Ishikawa Shundai, 1877), p. 34. At the end of the third chapter (“Explanation of the Origins of Tibet’s Lamaism”), Ogurusu provides a chronological chart of the salient events of Tibetan history. The chart is organized in two sections. In the upper section, Ogurusu lists the events of Tibetan history near the Tibetan chronology. The Tibetan chronology consists of the measurement of years since the Buddha’s *parinirvāṇa*. Thus, according to the Tibetan chronology that he utilized, he dates the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet to the year 1821 after the *parinirvāṇa*. In the lower section of the chart, Ogurusu also provides the chronology of the same events on the timeline of the Chinese dynasties, as well as on the Biblical timeline. Hence, in the lower section, he assigns the early introduction of Buddhism to Tibet in the second year of the king Nan of the Zhou dynasty (1046-256). He then notes the same year expressed in Biblical chronology: 303 BC. Wei Yuan does not discuss this chronology, and Li Yizhuo only mentions the dates of the king Nan of Zhou. In chapter three of the *Ramakyō engaku* Ogurusu identifies this date for the introduction of Buddhism in Tibet prior to Padmasambhava in the *Menggu yuanliu* and in the *Fozu lidai tongzai*, in his discussion of the early kings of Tibet prior to Srong btsan sgam po.

In his new theory about the nature of Tibet's *Mijiao*, Li identifies the source of Tibetan Buddhism in one of the three foundational scriptures of Japan's *Mikkyō*. And so, Li imagines that, when he came to Tibet, Padmasambhava disseminated the methods of the lotus family, one of the three *tathāgata* families (C. *rulai bu*) taught in the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra*, together with the buddha family (C. *fobu*) and the vajra family (C. *jingang bu*). According to Li, these methods of the *Mimi zong* had become the basis of the entire religion of the Tibetan people. Li correctly inferred that the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra* was one of the scriptures of *Mijiao* that had been translated into Tibetan. But at this time, Li had no idea of the content of the Tibetan canon. Thanks to Padmasambhava, he thought, the methods of the lotus family featured several practices: the contemplation of one's own nature by taking bodhicitta (C. *putixin*) as a basis; the generation of great compassionate conduct in order to save living beings; and the recitation of the *ṣaḍakṣarī vidyā*, Avalokiteśvara's great mantra in six letters (C. *liuzi daming zhenyan*). As a result, Tibetans adopted the images of all the deities of the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi*'s lotus family, which, Li thought, then became the entire pantheon of *Mimi zong* deities in Tibet. For Li, during this early period, Tibetans had thus completely discarded their old habits to worship the local gods. Instead, Tibetans wholeheartedly dedicated their religious practice to the teachings of the *Mizong*'s lotus family. In this first Chinese imagining on Tibetan Buddhism, Li declares that Tibet's *Mijiao* is a particular kind of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Hence, in Li's new theory, during its introduction from India the *Mimi zong* has completely displaced the old Bon religion of Tibet.

But Li's theory of Tibet's *Mijiao* also accounted for the later developments of Tibetan Buddhism. Based on the teachings of the sect of the Red-Robed, Tsong kha pa later established the sect of the Yellow-Robed. And, in his claim that Tsong kha pa's innovation was not simply

to have changed the color and style of the monastic robes and hats, Li was correct, for Tsong kha pa had also reformed the code of discipline. Still, Li came to believe that Tsong kha pa had restored the correct understanding of Padmasambhava's teachings, an understanding that had been lost long after the departure of the Indian sage from Tibet. "Yet in truth, he never altered the fundamental methods of the lotus family. It was only after Tsong kha pa's sixth *xubilgan* that Tibetan Buddhism began its gradual decline."<sup>204</sup> Li's allusion to Tsong kha pa's sixth *sprul sku* incarnation (M. *xubilgan*, C. *hubilehan*) thus signals his frequent departures from both his Chinese and Japanese sources. For, Tsong kha pa has no *sprul sku*. One Mongol lama claimed to be his incarnation, yet the Qing and the Fifth Dalai Lama joined forces to feign him in 1653. Li needed a timeline to accommodate in his theory of Tibetan *Mijiao* a second period of decline. And so, having retained and revived Padmasambhava's *Mimi zong*, Tsong kha pa's Yellow Religion had begun its course of decline only after his sixth *xubilgan*.

Something clearly went wrong in Li's adaptation from Ogururu's Japanese.<sup>205</sup>

Something was lost in Wei Yuan's discussion of the source of the decline of the Yellow Religion. In the *Shengwu ji*, this decline was expressed in the claim that the Dalai and Panchen Lamas had disregarded Tsong kha pa's original advice to not incarnate again after the sixth or seventh incarnation. Instead, for Wei Yuan the two great lamas had continued to recognize each other's *xubilgans*. Thus, Li explains the degeneration of what he understood as the original *Mimi zong* of Tibetan Buddhism in terms of China's *Mijiao*. The degeneration of Tibetan Buddhism was the degeneration of Padmasambhava's teachings of the lotus family, but only after Tsong kha pa's sixth incarnation. On the other hand, Wei Yuan discusses the decline of the Yellow

---

<sup>204</sup> See Li Yizhuo, "Xizang fojiao shilüe," in *Minguo fojiao qikan wenxian jicheng*, 1 (Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zhongxin), p. 449.

<sup>205</sup> See Ogurusu Kōchō, *Ramakyō engaku* (Kyōto: Ishikawa Shundai, 1877), pp. 128-9. Ogurusu develops Wei Yuan's account in the fifth chapter, where he discusses Tsong kha pa, the phenomenon of the *xubilgan*, and the establishment of the Yellow Religion in terms of *Mikkyō*.

Religion in terms of the miracle of sprul sku incarnation. For the Qing scholar, this miracle was the miracle that the Dalai and Panchen Lamas had begun to display in order to rule and obtain protection for Tibet from foreign powers. Hence, unlike Li, Wei Yuan had claimed that the degeneration of the Yellow Religion had not begun with Tsong kha pa's miracle of sprul sku incarnation, but with the miracles performed by the Dalai and Panchen Lamas' sixth generation of *xubilgans*.

In the second essay published in February 1913, Li moves on to discuss the place of the Bon religion in the origins of Tibetan Buddhism. In the first section entitled *Fojiao shuru shidai* ("The Age of the Introduction of Buddhism"), Li describes the religion of Tibet prior to the introduction of Buddhism. As Helmut Hoffmann would claim three decades later, Li declared the impossibility of knowing the history of the Bon religion. "The ancient religion of Tibet is called 'Bomu.' It is no longer possible to know the period of its establishment and the course of its dissemination."<sup>206</sup> According to the old ways (*C. jiusu*) of the Bon religion, Tibetans took the heavens, the earth, the sun, the moon, the constellations, lightning, snow, rivers, valleys, stones, grass, animals, including all beings, as objects of worship. In order to control nature, and to protect themselves from various kinds of calamities, they resorted to magic, spells, and invocations (*C. moshu, Zhouzu, qiudao*). Tibetans, continues Li, genuinely observed these old ways, yet they did not do so according to a system, or to a corpus of scriptures. Therefore, when Buddhism entered Tibet, it immediately recognized the errors of these old customs. As for the acceptance of Buddhism in Tibet, its reasons amounted to two. "First, everyone can equally possess bodhicitta. The Tibetan people, too, can equally possess bodhicitta. Buddhism is founded on bodhicitta, therefore it was introduced because it is compatible with the Tibetan people.

---

<sup>206</sup> See Li Yizhuo, "Xizang fojiao shilue," in *Minguo fojiao qikan wenxian jicheng*, 2 (Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zhongxin) pp. 65.



Second, Tibetans adore the gods, delve into mystery, and possess a lofty mind, therefore they are compatible with *yoga* and the *Mimi* methods. The Buddhism of the lotus family could thus be introduced.”<sup>207</sup> Li then moves on to describe what he understands as the main method of the lotus family: the recitation of Avalokiteśvara’s six-letter mantra. He thus offers his public a comparative chart of *oṃ maṇi padme hūm* in the Sanskrit, Tibetan, and English script, and in Chinese characters.

In the next section entitled *Fojiao shaolong shidai* (“Buddhism’s Age of Thriving”), Li describes the rise of the sect of the Red-Robed, together with its lineage. He writes:

At the very beginning, Tibetan Buddhism was established and flourished with the sect of the Red-Robed. The first patriarch of this sect was the great master Padmasambhava. By means of the secret instructions of a local *dharmakāya* of Śākyamuni buddha, that is, the Mahāvairocana *tathāgata*, he instituted all dharmas, with the Amitābha *tathāgata* as the family lord, the holy Avalokiteśvara as the *devatā*, with Pāṇḍaravāsini as the family mother, Tārā as its *vidyārajñī*, and Amoghapāśa as the family protector. If one inquires into their origins, these all came from Vajrasattva Padmapāni, who received them from Mahāvairocana and then transmitted them to Nāgārjuna, then Nāgārjuna transmitted them to Nāgabodhi, who then passed them on to Padmasambhava, who in turn introduced them to Tibet.<sup>208</sup>

For the Chinese scholar, this original lineage of Tantrism was a lineage that the Tibetan *Mijiao* had in common with the Chinese *Mijiao*. Thus, for Li, not only did Tibetan Buddhism originate in the *Mijiao* of India’s *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra*, Tibetan Buddhism had also arisen at the same time of *Mijiao*’s introduction to China. “That the Tibetan *Mijiao* was established simultaneously with the birth of the Chinese *Mijiao* has the inscrutability of a predestined meeting.”<sup>209</sup> Indeed, the meeting may have been predestined, but it was not inscrutable, for the meeting had occurred in 1876 in Beijing’s Yonghegong. Based on the details that Ogurusu provides in his *Ramakyō engaku*, Li then discusses how Khri srong lde btsan (C.

---

<sup>207</sup> Ibid., pp. 65-66.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

Chisulong tezan), whom he calls the Tibetan Khan (C. *Zang han*), dispatched a messenger to India in order to study Buddhist scriptures in Sanskrit. He then summoned the central Indian monk Śāntarakṣita (C. Suodanluokexida) to enter Tibet in order to spread the teachings. Together with other Indian and Chinese masters, Śāntarakṣita then began to translate Buddhist scriptures. “Then, several hail storms begun to harm living beings. The Khan then realized the impossibility of pacifying them without resorting to a massive dissemination of the *Mijiao*. Thus he earnestly dispatched another messenger to northern India, who requested Padmasambhava to enter Tibet, reveal the *Mijiao*, dispel the calamities, and benefit living beings. Hence, the Khan provided the conditions for the durable establishment of Tibetan *Mimi fojiao*.<sup>210</sup> Tibetan Buddhism was then established as the national religion (C. *guojiao*). Yet after Khri srong lde btsan died, the king Glang dar ma (C. Langge damo), conducted a great persecution of Buddhism. After Glang dar ma’s assassination, however, there began a revival. Later, another Tibetan Khan who had retreated to the borders with India invited Atiśa to restore Padmasambhava’s *Mimi* methods. Having committed to revive Buddhism, Atiśa dispelled the harm made by Glang dar ma. “Yet, he thought, Tibetans were ignorant of the meaning of the *Mimi zong* previously spread by Padmasambhava.”<sup>211</sup> Atiśa then began the translation of new scriptures and urged his Tibetan disciples to keep a pure morality (C. *jing lü*) in order to gain realization. Therefrom, Tibetan Buddhism flourished anew. Atiśa’s celebrated Tibetan heir would also become a great practitioner of Tibet’s *Mijiao*.

In the third essay of his *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi*, published in March 1913, Li discusses the nature of *Mijiao* in the sect of the Yellow-Robed. In recent centuries, the sect of the Yellow-Robed had become the leading force of Tibetan Buddhism. During the Ming dynasty, its

---

<sup>210</sup> Ibid., pp. 72-3.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., p. 76.

patriarch Tsong kha pa had inherited all the teachings from the sect of the Red-Robed. “He took the methods of Amitābha *tathāgata*’s lotus family that were transmitted by Nāgārjuna, including the same lord, the *iṣṭadevatā*, the family mother, the *vidyārajñī*, and the family protector, all identical with those of the Red-Robed, but only rectified their practices, in order to build his own sect based on the importance that Atiśa placed on the monastic code.”<sup>212</sup> Born on the northeastern border of Tibet (C. Xizang dongbei jing) in the fifteenth year of the Ming Yongle Emperor (1357), Tsong kha pa began to study at the Sa skya monastery (C. Sajia si) of Bkra shis lhun po, where he first learned the methods of the lotus family. He then studied with the masters of the Bka’ gdams pa (C. Gandan pai), after which he expressed the wish to reform the sects of the Red-Robed. Atiśa, Li goes on, had inherited the teachings on bodhicitta from Padmasambhava’s methods. Unlike Padmasambhava’s later disciples of the Red Religion, however, Atiśa promoted the correct observance of the “two hundred and fifty vows” of the Mūlasarvāstivāda vinaya (C. *yiqie youbu jie*). “To lead the practitioner in the generation of *samādhi* through *śīla*, and of *prajñā* through *samādhi*, to establish him in the realization of the bodhicitta of the true aspect ... and with time, to obtain the power of *Mimi*, was Padmasambhava’s undertaking.”<sup>213</sup> Based on Padmasambhava’s and Atiśa’s instructions, the Tibetan sage realized that the Red Religion no longer observed them.

Inspired by his wish to reform the teaching of the Red Religion, Tsong kha pa then founded his own sect, changing the color of the robes, gathering several disciples, and building the Dga’ ldan monastery near Lhasa. His disciple Byams chen chos rje shakya ye shes (C. Jiamuqin quji shakejia yixi, 1355-1435) then built Se ra monastery, and ’Jam dbyangs chos rje bkra shis dpal ldan (C. Zhamuyang quji zhaxi baerdan, 1397-1449) built ’Bras spungs.

---

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., p. 287.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p. 289.

Afterwards, his main disciples would incarnate as *xubilgans*, thanks to whom the sect of the Yellow-Robed began to flourish. “Tsong kha pa thus succeeded in his original intent. In the fourth year of the Ming Chenghua Emperor, he passed into nirvāṇa, returning to the radiant light of Ghanavyūha.”<sup>214</sup> For Li, Tsong kha pa’s nirvāṇa was his return to the finely adorned buddha land of Ghanavyūha (C. Miyan jingtu). Ghanavyūha was the buddha land located in Akaniṣṭha, the highest heaven of the Buddhist world, and presided by Mahāvairocana, the central Buddha of China’s *Mijiao*.

Having described the Dalai and Panchen *xubilgans* according to Ogurusu’s *Ramakyō engaku*, Li finally provides his interpretation of the age of degeneration (C. shuaibai) of the Yellow Religion. At the time of the Tenth Dalai Lama, Tibet still had all the *xubilgans* who helped spread the teachings. Yet with the Eleventh Dalai Lama, the *xubilgans* began to decrease in number. “Therefore, the authentic practitioners among the Tibetan people gradually began to disappear. So, did the lotus teachings of the *Mimi* finally fall into decay? Will there be another hero who will inherit the struggles of Padmasambava and Tsong kha pa, in order to revive it?”<sup>215</sup> Lacking knowledge of Tibetan sources, in his *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi* Li Yizhuo thus bases his account of Tibetan Buddhism on the discovery that Ogurusu had made in Beijing’s Yonghegong. Li Yizhuo created a compelling image of Tibetan Buddhism as the Buddhism of the Tibetan nation. Still, Li’s *Xizang Fojiao* was a religion based entirely on the teachings of the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra*. Until the scientific methods of the study of Buddhism came to China, Tibetan Buddhism would be understood mainly through his work.

The field of Buddhist Studies was established in China during the fifteen years between the foundation of the Republic in 1912 and the onset of the Sino-Japanese war of 1937-45.

---

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., p. 290.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., p. 297.

Before this time, Qing scholars had understood the history of Buddhism in China and Tibet using sources written in the languages of China and Japan. In the Republican age, as a second generation of scholars of Buddhism laid the foundations for the study of this religion through the methods of European Oriental philology, only one scholar would offer a study of Tibetan Buddhism based on sources in the Tibetan language. At the same time, during the 1920s, a group of Chinese monks would study Tibetan at the Yonghegong and then set out on a journey to Lhasa through the monasteries of Khams and Dbus-Gtsang. The few who returned alive would then present Tibetan Buddhism to China entirely through Tibetan traditional sources.

Nevertheless, Li Yizhuo's *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi* remained the most influential book about Tibetan Buddhism. In 1929, Li collected the three essays and published them into a single volume entitled *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi* ("A Concise History of Tibetan Buddhism"). In 1933, the book was republished as *Xizang Fojiao shi* ("History of Tibetan Buddhism"). His new interpretation of Ogurusu's *Ramakyō engaku* would be the book about Tibetan Tantrism most widely read during the Republican era. Li Yizhuo's simple and familiar language would appeal to the Chinese Buddhists who followed the developments of what, during the 1920s, came to be known as *Mijiao chongxing* ("Revival of Tantrism"), led by a group of Cantonese converts to the Japanese *Mikkyō* who sought to revive the lost *Mizong* through the Japanese Shingon tradition. During the Japanese occupation of China, when Chinese scholars and monks began to read sources in the Tibetan language, Li's account of the origins of Tibetan Tantrism, an account that traced the entire history of Tibetan Buddhism to the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra*, would thus convey the sense of the new Chinese term *Xizang Fojiao*. The same tradition would continue a decade later with the publication of the first book on Chinese Buddhism bearing the title of *Zhongguo fojiao*.



Thus far, the chapter has discussed the understanding of *Mizong* and *Mijiao* in works tracing back from the late Qing to the early Republican period. Wei Yuan's famous description of Tibet's Buddhism, compiled at the time of the First Opium War, became the main source of Ogurusu's history of Lamaism. Ogurusu's identification of Tibet's *Ramakyō* with Japan's *Mikkyō*, in turn provided Li Yizhuo with a source for building his remarkable theory of Tibet's "lotus family" *Mijiao*. In the process of translation, Ogurusu's *Ramakyō* has changed name, becoming China's *Xizang Fojiao*. Our focus in this chapter now shifts from the meaning of *Mijiao* in early Republican China to the academic study of Tibetan Buddhism. In the late 1920s, when Yang Wenhui's students established in China the academic study of Buddhism, scholars now began to read sources in other Buddhist languages, but also to interpret these sources through the methods of Oriental philology. Tibetan Buddhist sources would show that Li's theory of *Mijiao* was groundless. Although Tibet's *Mijiao* remained the same tradition originating in India, *Mijiao* would be now understood, for the most part, as based on Indian scriptures that never reached China and Japan. The meaning of *Mijiao* would change again, and so would China's understanding of Tibetan Buddhism.

The first work in China or Japan where the compound of sinographs *Zhina Fojiao* appears in the title is *Shina Bukkyō shikō* ("Essential History of Chinese Buddhism"), published in Tōkyō in 1907 by the renowned historian of Buddhism Sakaino Kōyō (1871-1933). In China, the first history of Chinese Buddhism (expressed through the concept of "Chinese Buddhism") was a translation of Sakaino's *Shina Bukkyō shikō*. Entitled *Zhongguo fojiao shi* ("History of Chinese Buddhism"), the book was published in 1929 in Shanghai by the educator and scholar of

Buddhism Jiang Weiqiao (1873-1958). After passing the first level of imperial exams in 1892 in his native Jiangsu, Jiang began to study foreign works on modern science and technology in Shanghai's Imperial Arsenal. In 1903, he became acquainted with the leading educator Cai Yuanpei (1868-1940) in Nanjing. In 1912, with the foundation of the Republic, Cai was appointed as the head of the Ministry of Education in Beijing. Jiang served as the Secretary to the Ministry of Education until 1913, when he returned to Shanghai to work in the field of publishing. The following year, as he returned to Beijing to work for the Ministry of Education, he became part of a group of educators who traveled to Japan and to the Philippines to survey the educational systems of the countries of East and South Asia.

In 1917, Jiang Weiqiao became interested in Buddhism in Beijing's Guangji Si, the temple where he began to attend the lectures on Weishi (Consciousness Only) by Zhang Kecheng (1865-1922), a scholar of Russian and Mongolian who then resided in the capital. In 1918, thanks to Cai Yuanpei's recommendation, he began to lecture about Buddhism in the Philosophy Department of Beijing University. Jiang's lectures on Weishi established him as the first scholar to teach Buddhism in a Chinese university. In 1918, Jiang attended the lectures on the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā* delivered at the Guangji si by the monk Taixu (1890-1947), the leading Buddhist reformer of the Republican era. In 1925, he moved to Nanjing, where he taught introductory courses on Buddhism at the Dongnan University. In 1929, he accepted a position at Guanghua University in Shanghai, where he would teach Buddhism in the Philosophy Department for the following twenty years, and where he would publish his most influential works, including the 1935 *Foxue gangyao* ("Essentials of Buddhist Studies).<sup>216</sup> In the translator's preface of his *Zhongguo fojiao shi*, Jiang writes, "even when one investigates

---

<sup>216</sup> For Jiang Weiqiao, see Yu Lingbo, *Zhongguo jinxiandai fojiaorenwu zhi* (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 1995), pp. 413-19.

doctrine, if one does so taking history as a foundation, then the results which one obtains are even more accurate. Therefore, the study of history is truly the complement of doctrine, how can one ignore this?”<sup>217</sup>

Sakaino’s *Shina Bukkyō shikō* describes the history Chinese Buddhism in fifteen chapters, discussing (1) the transmission of Buddhism to the east, (2) the translations of the early period, (3) the four great translations of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā sūtra*, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā sūtra*, the *Avataṃsaka sūtra*, and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra*, (4) the centers of Buddhism in southern China, (5) the dissemination of Buddhism and its relation with Daoism, (6, 7) the two great systems of Tiantai and Huayan prior to the Tang dynasty, (8) the origins of the Chan tradition, (9) the belief in the rebirth in Sukhāvātī and in Tuṣita, (10) the establishment of the Tiantai tradition, (11) the Sanlun tradition, (12) Buddhism before the Huichang persecution, (13) the traditions of the Tang dynasty, including the Jingtu, Faxiang, Lü, Chan, and Mizong, (14) the revival of Tiantai and Huayan and the persecutions of Buddhism during the Wuzhou period (690-705) of the Tang, and (15) Buddhism after the Song dynasty, including the developments of the Tiantai and Lü traditions, and of the Chan tradition.

In addition, in his fifteenth chapter Sakaino adds a section entitled “Gen igo no Ramakyō” (“Lamaism after the Yuan”), where he introduces his sources on *Lamajiao* during the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties. Setting aside Wei Yuan’s and Ogurusu’s Chinese sources (the *Menggu yuanliu* and the *Fozu lidai tongzai*), Sakaino invokes what at the time were the two most influential European publications on Lamaism. *Buddhism in Tibet, illustrated by Literary Documents and Objects of Religious Worship, with an Account of the Buddhist Systems Preceding it in India*, published in 1863 by the Bavarian Orientalist Emil Schlagintweit (1835-1904), and *The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism, With Its Mystic Cults, Symbolism and*

---

<sup>217</sup> See Jiang Weiqiao, *Zhongguo fajiao shi* (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, [1929] 2009), p. 1.



*Mythology and in Its Relation to Indian Buddhism*, published in London in 1895 by Colonel Lawrence Augustine Waddell (1854-1938). These two books were the first to popularize the subject of Tibetan Buddhism in Europe. Sakaino renders the titles of both books as *Seizō Bukkyō* in Japanese. Jiang Weiqiao's Chinese translation of Sakaino's work includes a corresponding section entitled "Yuan yihou zhi Lamajiao" ("Lamaism after the Yuan"). In it, he writes, "The Lamaism of Tibet [Xizang], entered in China [Zhongguo] at the time of the Yuan: here I quote as evidence Schlagintweit's *Xizang Fojiao* and Waddell's *Xizang Fojiao*."<sup>218</sup>

Unlike Li Yizhuo's *Xizang Fojiao lüeshi*, also published in 1929 in Shanghai, and yet written in the early years of the Republic, Jiang Weiqiao's *Zhongguo fojiao shi* marked an advance in the Chinese study of Tibetan Buddhism. Jiang changes the sinographs of Sakaino's book from *Shina Bukkyō* to *Zhongguo Fojiao* (both meaning Chinese Buddhism). Yet in his translation of the final section on Lamaism in China after the Yuan, the Chinese Buddhologist also removes Sakaino's citation of the original English titles of his sources: Schlagintweit's "*Seizō Bukkyō* (Buddhism in Tibet)" and Waddell's "*Seizō Bukkyō* (Buddhism of Tibet)."<sup>219</sup> In relating Padmasambhava's introduction of *Mikkyō* to Tibet, Jiang thus translates Waddell's Lamaism as Tibet's *Mijiao*. Jiang translates from Japanese, "he promoted *Mimi Fojiao*, since Buddhism and the original animist religion of Tibet are mutually compatible. Therefore, Tibetan Buddhism takes shape from the combination of Mahāyāna *Mimi Fojiao* with animism ..."<sup>220</sup> Whereas Li Yizhuo describes the Bon religion as the "old customs" of the Tibetans, such as the worship of all beings and the use of magic to dispel calamities, Jiang now brings to China Waddell's theory of Lamaism, intended as the blending of Buddhism with animism (C. *shenjiao*). Li Yizhuo, however, does not say that in Tibet *Mijiao* blended with the Bon religion;

<sup>218</sup> Ibid, p. 227.

<sup>219</sup> See Sakaino Kōyō, *Shina Bukkyō shikō* (Tōkyō: Mori'e shuten, 1907), p. 360.

<sup>220</sup> See Jiang Weiqiao, *Zhongguo fojiao shi* (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2009 [1929]), p. 229.

when it came to Tibet, Buddhism simply recognized the ancient customs of Tibet as false, therefore the new religion began to flourish by distancing itself from Tibet's old ways. But more important, for Li, in Tibet, Buddhism, that is, *Fojiao*, was *Mijiao*. In contrast, for Jiang, the Buddhism of Tibet was not simply *Mijiao*: following Waddell, Tibetan Buddhism, or Lamaism, was thus the blending of Buddhism with elements of the animistic religion of Tibet. This idea would return to the fore in the 1960s, with Li Youyi's translation of Hoffmann's further elaboration of Waddell's theory. What should be noticed at this point is that by 1929 the Japanese "Seizō Bukkyō," the English "Tibetan Buddhism," and the Chinese "Xizang Fojiao," had become in China the academic referents for the Buddhism of Tibet.



The first book in China to discuss Tibetan Buddhism from the perspective of European Oriental philology was published in 1933. Its author was Lü Cheng (1896-1989), perhaps the foremost scholar of Buddhism in twentieth-century China. Lü Cheng was born in 1896 Danyang, about fifty miles west of Nanjing. In the early years of the Republic, he enrolled in the Minguo University in Changzhou to study Economics but soon dropped out. In 1914, he began to study Buddhism with Ouyang Jian. The same year, Lü moved to Nanjing to work at the Jinling press. In 1918, after spending two years in Japan, he returned to Nanjing. Here, he helped Ouyang Jian to establish the printing press a new institution, the Zhina Neixue Yuan (China Institute of Inner Studies).

The Zhina Neixue Yuan held its first class in 1922, but in the meantime Lü had begun to study of Buddhism. In 1923, he attended the first classes at the institute, while he continued his

work at the Jinling press. During his education in Nanjing, he studied several languages, including Japanese, English, German, Tibetan, and Pāli. Among his teachers in these early years was Tang Yongtong (1893-1964), who, together with Lü, would become the most renowned scholar of Buddhism in China. In 1922, after receiving training in Sanskrit and Pāli at Harvard, Tang had joined the department of Philosophy in Nanjing's Dongnan University, while teaching Sanskrit and Pāli at the Zhina Neixue Yuan.

In 1937, with the beginning of the China-Japan war, Lü Cheng moved to Jiangjin in Sichuan, where, together with Ouyang Jian (who would die in 1943), he opened a branch of the Zhina Neixue Yuan. In 1949, with the foundation of the People's Republic, Lü returned to Nanjing, where he changed the name of the institute to Zhongguo Neixue Yuan (China Institute of Inner Studies). The institute, however, was shut down in 1953. The same year, Lü moved to Beijing, where he was appointed as the executive director of the recently established Zhongguo fojiao xiehui (Chinese Buddhist Association). In 1954, Lü settled in the Fayuan si, where he established the Zhongguo foxue yuan (Chinese Institute of Buddhist Studies). He then began to work at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, where he would be appointed as researcher in Philosophy in the Institute Philosophy and Sociology. In 1961, Lü obtained habilitation in the same institution, where for five years until the onset of the Cultural Revolution he taught classes on Buddhism in Nanjing. He died in 1989 in Beijing.<sup>221</sup>

In 1925, during his training at the Zhina Neixue Yuan, Lü published his first book, entitled *Yindu Fojiao shilüe* ("A Concise History of Indian Buddhism"). In 1926, he published his second book entitled *Fojiao yanjiu fa* ("Method in Buddhist Studies"). Beginning with Hodgson's discovery of the Sanskrit collection of Nepal, then Burnouf's *Introduction à l'histoire*

---

<sup>221</sup> For a biography of Lü Cheng, see Yu Lingbo, *Zhongguo jinxiandai fojiaorenwu zhi* (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 1995), pp. 589-600.

*du buddhisme indien* and his *Le lotus de la bonne loi*, as well as the work of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, including his work on the *Lalitavistara* in his “Notices on the Life of Shakya,” Lü Cheng introduced Chinese scholars to the intricacies of the philological study of Buddhist scriptures, from its origins in Europe in the early decades of the nineteenth century to its recent developments in Japan. With his “method in Buddhist studies,” Lü Cheng offered a new interpretation of *Mizong* and *Mijiao*. But he also introduced in China the debates about Tantrism that, since the publication of Burnouf’s *Introduction*, had again absorbed European scholars of Sanskrit and Pāli around the turn of the twentieth century. Through Lü Cheng’s understanding of *Mizong* and *Mijiao*, after the Cultural Revolution Chinese scholars would rehearse in many ways things that the founders of Buddhist studies said about Tantrism in nineteenth century Europe.

In four chapters, Lü discusses (1) the origins of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka in India, its transmission to China, and the formation of the modern canons in China and Japan, (2) the life of the Buddha, (3) the history of Buddhism in India and its three or four periods of development, and the (4) criticism of the sources. Yet, because Lü lacked a training in Tibetan, his discussion centers on the history of Buddhism in the “three countries” of India, China, and Japan. In the late 1920s, as he learned the Tibetan language at Nanjing’s Zhina Neixue Yuan, he compiled a similar study on the history of Buddhism in Tibet. In this new study, *Mijiao* would become in Chinese what a century earlier, in his analysis of the Snar thang edition of the Tibetan canon, Csoma had called in English the “‘Rgyud-sdé,’ or simply ‘Rgyud. Sans. ‘Tāntra,’ or the *Tantra* class, in twenty-one volumes.”<sup>222</sup> China’s lost *Mizong*, or *Misheng*, with its ancient teachings called *Mijiao*, would take on the meaning of “tantra.” Since the early nineteenth century,

---

<sup>222</sup> See Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, “Analysis of the Sher-chin—P’hal-chen—Dkon-séks—Do-de—Nyáng-das—and Gyut; being the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th divisions of the Tibetan Work, entitled the *Kah-gyur*,” in *Asiatic Researches, or Transactions of the Society Instituted in Bengal*, 20 (1836, part 2), p. 487.

European scholars had used this Sanskrit term to denote (1) the elements of magic, myth, and the superhuman in Buddhism, (2) the idolatry of Buddhism, as well as (3) the final decline of this religion in India. Yet, as we will see, *Mijiao* would also become “Tantrism,” a new term that European and American scholars had begun to employ since around 1900.<sup>223</sup>

Lü Cheng’s *Xizang foxue yuanlun* (“Principles of Tibetan Buddhism”) was published in Shanghai in February 1933.<sup>224</sup> Unlike Li Yizhuo and Jiang Weiqiao, who in the same years wrote about Tibetan Buddhism based only on Chinese and Japanese sources, Lü’s sources included Tibetan and European publications that had been collected at the Jinling press over the previous decades. Among the sources in Tibetan, he acquired copies of texts of the Snar thang and Beijing editions of the Tibetan canon, including a copy of the *Snar thang bka’ ’gyur gyi dkar chag* (“Catalog of the Snar thang Bka’ ’gyur”). As for the doctrines of Tibetan Buddhism, Lü Cheng’s selection of works included Atiśa’s *Byang chub lam gyi sgron ma* (“Lamp on the Path to Awakening”) and Tsong kha pa’s *Lam rim chen mo* (“Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path”). Hence, his presentation of Tibetan Buddhism was confined to the Dge lugs tradition, for his main interest was to understand how Atiśa and Tsong kha pa harmonized *Xian* and *Mi*. For his presentation of the history of Tibetan Buddhism, however, Lü Cheng used two works that in the next decade Helmut Hoffmann would also use in his research in Berlin: Bu ston’s *Chos’ byung* (“History of Buddhism”), and Thu’u bkwan’s *Grub mtha’ shel gyi me long* (“Crystal Mirror of Doctrinal Systems”).

---

<sup>223</sup> For a genealogy of this term, see Martino Dibeltulo, *Traces of Tantra: Buddhism and the World of Nations* (unpublished manuscript, 2014).

<sup>224</sup> Throughout his work, Lü Cheng uses a specific terminology to talk about Buddhism. While he uses the term “Fojiao” (Buddha Teaching), in many of his works he also uses the term “Foxue” (Buddha Study, or Buddha Learning). By this distinction, he marks the European concepts of Buddhism and Buddhology. Yet on many occasions, he uses the two Chinese terms interchangeably to denote the traditional use of the Chinese term Fojiao. The implication is that Buddhist cultures already had a sense of history within their traditions, therefore Buddhism already contains the sense of Buddhology, that is, the study of itself. I will not delve here into this issue. In this dissertation, I translate his “Xizang Foxue” as “Tibetan Buddhism” in English. For Lü Cheng, the issue is not in fact the definition of the term Xizang, but the understanding of the term Fojiao.

Among his sources published in Europe, Lü's main source was *Tāranātha's Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien, aus dem tibetischen Uebersetzt* ("History of Buddhism in India, Translated from the Tibetan") published in 1869 by the Estonian Orientalist Franz Anton Schiefner (1817-1879), a folklorist and scholar of Tibetan and Mongolian who taught Classics at St. Petersburg; the work was a German translation of the Tibetan historian Tāranātha's (1575-1634) *Rgya gar chos 'byung* ("History of Buddhism in India"), which Schiefner had retrieved among Tibetan texts that Vasily Pavlovich Vasil'ev (1818-1900), the foremost Russian scholar of Buddhism of his time, acquired in Beijing during his sojourn at the Russian Orthodox Mission over the 1840s, and which he had brought back to St. Petersburg in 1850. Other works included the *Madhyamakāvātāra par Candrakīrti* ("The Madhyamakāvātāra by Candrakīrti"), published in St. Petersburg in 1912 by the eminent Belgian scholar of Buddhism Louis de la Vallée Poussin (1869-1938), and the *Catalogue du Fonds Tibétain de la Bibliothèque Nationale: Index du bsTan-ḥgyur* ("Catalog of the Tibetan Collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale: Index of the *Bstan 'gyur*"), published in Paris in two volumes between 1909 and 1915 by the French Indologist Palmyr Uldéric Alexis Cordier (1871-1914). Cordier's *Catalogue* was a translation of the catalogue of the *Bstan 'gyur* that had reached Paris in the late 1830s, together with the complete edition of the Snar thang edition of the Tibetan canon that Hodgson acquired in Nepal in 1838, and which the Asiatic Society of Bengal had shipped as a gift to the Société Asiatique.

In his *Xizang foxue yuanlun*, Lü traces the origins of Tibetan Buddhism in the later developments of Indian Buddhism. "In Tibet, the dissemination of Buddhism occurred at a late time, therefore it bears a profound connection with the doctrines of the late period of this teaching in India."<sup>225</sup> This "late period" (C. *wanqi*), Lü clarifies, was Buddhism's period of decay, a period that had begun after the time of Vasubandhu. Vasubandhu's dates had been

---

<sup>225</sup> See Lü Cheng, *Xizang Foxue yuanlun* (Taipei: Laogu chubanshe, 1979 [1933]), p. 1.

assigned around the fifth century. Therefore, the period in which Buddhism had begun its decline in India ranged from the fifth century until its disappearance in the late twelfth century. Indian Buddhism was thus in decline for about eight hundred years. These eight hundred years, continues Lü, could be further divided in two periods: (1) the period of division (*C. fenhua*), lasting over two hundred years, marked the divisions of the Mahāyāna in several competing traditions, but also a division in *Xiansheng* and *Misheng*; (2) the period of decline (*C. shuaitui*), which lasted over five hundred years, was when the number of Buddhist masters began to decrease, and when they became scattered; at this time, Buddhism lost the splendor of the old days, falling into stagnation.

Lü goes on to describe the period of division of Indian Buddhism into the Mādhyamika and the Yogācāra scholastic traditions. He discusses the debates of these two traditions, and the role played in these debates by eminent masters such as Sthiramati (C. Anhui), Dignāga (C. Chenna), Dharmakīrti (C. Facheng), Guṇaprabha (C. Deguang), Sangharakṣita (C. Senghu), and then Vimuktisena (C. Jietuojun), Bhāvaviveka (C. Qingbian), Buddhapālita (C. Fohu), Candrakīrti (C. Yuecheng), Jayadeva (C. Shengtian), and Śāntideva (C. Jitian). “At the beginning, the Indian Buddhism of the Mahāyāna presented the division into Yogācāra and Mādhyamika. But later it also presented old and new, left and right, distinctions, which, day after day, diverged one from the other, to finally become irreconcilable.”<sup>226</sup> These later distinctions were distinctions that had never reached China in the works of Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, for the great translators Kumārajīva and Xuanzang had only brought to the East the works of the Mādhyamika and Yogācāra traditions that had begun to circulate prior to the seventh century.

---

<sup>226</sup> Ibid, p. 11.

After the fifth century, these innovations of Indian Buddhism thus concerned the further development of the doctrines of the Mādhyamika and Yogācāra, and their competing interpretations of Nāgārjuna’s thought in terms of lack of *svabhāva* (C. *zixing*) or *vijñaptimātra* (C. *weishi*).<sup>227</sup> Yet another innovation had appeared at this time in the distinction that Buddhist traditions made of *Xiansheng* and *Misheng*. It was a distinction whose elements had been there, from the beginning, in the Mahāyāna scriptures. Lü Cheng writes:

In this regard, the doctrine of the two vehicles of *Xian* and *Mi* also gradually showed different inclinations, creating a further division. Since about the time of Nāgārjuna, and long after him, even though the scriptures of the Mahāyāna that were then in circulation had become admixed with elements of *Misheng*, these alone composed the so-called *Tanteluo sheng*. Scholars of later ages wished to promote the origins of the *Misheng*, believing that it had come along with the Mahāyāna, therefore, if the Mahāyāna had developed with Nāgārjuna, then *Misheng* had also expanded with Nāgārjuna. Further, if the Mahāyāna sūtras had already come into circulation before Nāgārjuna, then *Misheng* scriptures could also be said to have existed in the past. And even further, when the Mahāyāna that was traced to Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva was passed down from Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Dignāga, and Dharmakīrti, there was no ācārya who did not belong to *Misheng*; but the legends are chaotic, and nothing can be dated. If one discusses this with some degree of accuracy, it was then only after Vasubandhu that *Misheng* began to become organized, to separate from the *Xiansheng*, and to exalt its lineage; thus we begin to have evidence since the time of Sangharakṣita.<sup>228</sup>

Based on Schiefner’s German translation of Tāranātha’s *Rgya gar chos ’byung*, Lü Cheng identifies Sangharakṣita (T. Dge ’dun bsrung ba), who had been the teacher of Bhāvaviveka and Buddhapālita in southern India between the late fifth and the early sixth century, as the historical figure during whose life the new distinction of *Xian* and *Mi* had begun to rise.<sup>229</sup> For Lü, the methods of the *Mimi zhenyan* (Schiefner’s “Mantra-Tantra”) had existed in India even before the time of Sangharakṣita, notably with the vidyādharas (C. *chiming wei*) of the northeastern region of Oḍḍiyāna. Yet these “elements of *Misheng*” had existed even prior to

<sup>227</sup> Ibid, p. 11.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid, pp. 11-12.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid, pp. 11-12. See also the same section in Tāranātha, trans. Anton Schiefner, *Tāranātha’s Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien, aus dem tibetischen Uebersetzt* (St. Petersburg: Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1869), pp. 105-107.



the vidyadhāras, at the time of Nāgārjuna, having become admixed with the Mahāyāna sūtras. In fact, Lū observes, even prior to the rise of *Misheng*, the Mahāyāna sūtras alone contained elements of “Tantrism,” the “so-called *Tanteluo sheng*” (C. *suwei tanteluo sheng zhe*). This changed when the new *Misheng* scriptures began to be committed to writing. “At the time of Sangharakṣita, the works of two types of *Tanteluo sheng* were clearly in circulation. But these two types of Yoga and Mahānuttarayoga were still practiced with secrecy, until later with the Pāla dynasty they began to circulate openly.”<sup>230</sup>

By the new Chinese term *Tanteluo sheng* (a Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit term “Tantra,” where the suffix *sheng* conveys the sense of the English *ism*), Lü Cheng thus refers to the concept of Tantrism as the foremost European scholar of Tantrism since Burnouf had defined it in several studies published during the early 1900s.

In 1922, Louis de la Vallée Poussin had discussed the term Tantrism in his entry for “Tāntrism (Buddhist),” published in the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* edited by the Scottish Presbyterian minister and biblical scholar James Hastings (1852-1922). In his entry, the Belgian scholar writes, “Tantrism, properly so called, bears a twofold character; on the one hand, it is a systematization of the vulgar magical rites and it has existed under this form for many centuries in India and in Buddhism itself, together with its formulas and its pantheon; on the other hand, it is a ‘theurgy,’ a highly developed mysticism styled Vajrayāna; under this form Tantrism is an innovation in Buddhism.”<sup>231</sup> Drawing on this distinction, Lü Cheng’s *Tanteluo sheng* conveyed the sense of a twofold form of *Misheng*. In the earlier form, *Misheng* had existed in Buddhism at least since the Mahāyāna sūtras had been compiled, for the use of mantras and dhāraṇīs, as well as different forms of worship, was attested in the early history of the religion in

---

<sup>230</sup> Ibid, p. 13-14.

<sup>231</sup> See Louis de La Vallée Poussin, “Tantrism (Buddhist),” in James Hastings, ed., *The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, 12 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1922), p. 195.

India. In contrast, the later form of *Misheng* had arisen with the *Zhenyan sheng* after the time of Sangharakṣita, when the scriptures of the Vajrayāna had begun to be committed to writing. Hence, Lü could claim that the earlier form of *Misheng* of Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva was transmitted to Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Dignāga, and Dharmakīrti, at a time when all Indian ācāryas engaged *Misheng*; that is, when these masters engaged the later form of *Tanteluo sheng*, the Vajrayāna.

With the foundation of the Pāla Empire in the eighth century, the first king Gopāla (660-705) and his successors had given support to old institutions such as the Nālānda monastery (C. Nalantuo si), and had established new ones like Odantapurī (C. Oudanfuduoli si) and Vikramaśīla (C. Pijiuluomoshiluo si). Lü writes, “then the teachings and methods transformed, with *Misheng* as the primary development, and *Xianzong* as the supplementary.”<sup>232</sup> At the beginning, observes Lü, the rise of *Misheng* in Buddhism was a means of engaging the recent developments of Hinduism, therefore, it sought to return to a worldly belief (C. *shisu xinyang*). But later, *Misheng* developed independently, becoming complex and chaotic. At first, only two types of tantra (C. *tanteluo*) existed—hence the distinction included Yoga tantra (C. *yujia tanteluo*) and Anuttarayoga tantra (C. *wushang yoga tanteluo*). Later, the Anuttarayoga tantra divided into different classes, which multiplied into countless forms. “Ultimately, by devoting all efforts to Yoga and Anuttarayoga tantra, practice and meditation gradually became weak and died out. Therefore the *Zhenyan sheng* ācāryas became the accomplished siddhas who appeared during seven generations of the Pāla period.”<sup>233</sup> Some among the eighty-four Mahāsiddhas (C. Da xidizhe) focused on the Anuttarayoga form, which they kept secret from the common folk,

---

<sup>232</sup> Ibid, p. 17.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid, p. 17.

but in whose different subclasses they excelled. “For example there is Saraha with the *Buddhakapāla*, Luipa with the *Yoginī*, and Virūpa with the *Hevajra*.”<sup>234</sup>

Lü Cheng thus calls the attention of his Chinese readers to the most important point of his discussion: During this period the *Misheng* was closely associated with the traditions of the Mādhyamika. Hence, the legend about Nāgārjuna’s and Āryadeva’s root tantras (C. *tanteluo benlun*) became widespread, followed by similar claims about Candrakīrti’s commentary on the *Guhyasamāja* (C. *Miji*). “From then on, several commentaries began to appear by Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, and Candrakīrti, etc., and the relation between *Misheng* and Mādhyamika became impossible to unravel.”<sup>235</sup> Hence, while the *Misheng* flourished, the masters of the *Xianjiao*, along with the study of the vinaya and the Yogācāra, migrated to the northwest. At the same time, the *Misheng* flourished in the northeast. During the twelfth century, in the very last days of Buddhism in India, writes Lü, with the *Kālacakra tantra* (C. *Shilun tanteluo*), “*Misheng* had become complete.”<sup>236</sup> Buddhism was introduced from India to Tibet in this later period development. Hence, the origins of Tibetan Buddhism had to be sought in this time of division and decline.

Setting aside his discussion of *Misheng* and *Tanteluo sheng*, in his *Xizang foxue yuanlun* Lü Cheng makes an important contribution to the study of China’s long-vanished *Mijiao*. After providing a short chapter on the history of Tibetan Buddhism, explaining how India’s *Misheng* was first established by Śāntarakṣita and Padmasambhava, and how it was later revived by Atiśa and Tsong kha pa, Lü brings the language of China’s *Mijiao* into the Tibetan Tripiṭaka. In the third chapter entitled “Xizang Foxue zhi wenxian” (“The Literature of Tibetan Buddhism”), Lü offers an analysis of *Snar thang bka’ ’gyur gyi dkar chag*, the catalogue of the Snar thang (C.

---

<sup>234</sup> Ibid, p. 18.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid, p. 19.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid, p. 22.

Naitang) edition of the Tibetan Bka' 'gyur. In so doing, he resorts to two divisions of scriptures that Bu ston discusses in his *Chos 'byung: Mdo* (S. Sūtra) and *Rgyud* (S. Tantra). He writes, "In Bu ston's catalogue, he separates the Tripiṭaka in the two great divisions of the 'Translation of the Discourses' and 'Translation of the Treatises,' which, taking their phonetic transcription are the so-called Ganzhu and Danzhu ('Gan' means 'Discourse,' 'Dan' means 'Treatise,' and 'Zhu' means 'Translation'). In regard to Doctrine, he further divides the Tripiṭaka in two vehicles of *Jing* and *Zhou* (*Jing* is the *Xiansheng*, and *Zhou* is the *Misheng*)."<sup>237</sup> Bu ston's two vehicles of Sūtrayāna and Mantrayāna thus turn into Lü Cheng's *Jing*, or *Xiansheng*, and *Zhou*, or *Misheng*.

Thus, in his description of the "Xizang dazangjing" ("The Tibetan Tripiṭaka") Lü Cheng explains the divisions of the Snar thang Bka' 'gyur and its classes of scriptures. "The Bka' 'gyur has the two great divisions of *Sūtra* and *Mantra*, which contain the seven classes of *Vinaya*, etc. The Bka' 'gyur has one hundred volumes, comprising about eight hundred works."<sup>238</sup> Having learned the categories of *Mdo* and *Rgyud* from Bu ston's work, and having translated them in Chinese as *Xiansheng* and *Misheng*, Lü then provides a chart of the seven divisions of the Snar thang Bka' 'gyur, originally arranged as: (1) 'Dul ba (S. *Vinaya*), (2) *Sher phyin* (S. *Prajñāpāramitā*), (3) *Phal chen* (S. *Avatamsaka*), (4) *Dkon brtsegs* (S. *Ratnakūṭa*), (5) *Mdo* (S. *Sūtra*), (6) *Myang 'das* (S. *Nirvāṇa*), and (7) *Rgyud* (S. *Tantra*). In the language of the Chinese Tripiṭaka, Lü Cheng thus renders (1) 'Dul ba as *Jielü*, (2) *Sher phyin* as *Banruo*, (3) *Phal chen* as *Huayan*, (4) *Dkon brtsegs* as *Baoji*, (5) *Mdo* as *Jingji*, (6) *Myang 'das* as *Niepan*, and (7) *Rgyud* as *Misheng*. Yet, in addition to the divisions of the Tibetan canon, Lü Cheng includes the first six divisions under a larger category that does not appear in the Snar thang canon. It was the category of *Jing*. But he also places the *Rgyud*, or *Mizong* division, under the heading of *Zhou*,

---

<sup>237</sup> Ibid, p. 48.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid, p. 55.

thus excluding it from his *Jing* category. Through Bu ston's exegesis of the two vehicles of Sūtrayāna and Mantrayāna, Lü Cheng's equivalence of the Chinese term (1) *jing* with the Sanskrit term *Sūtra* and the Tibetan *Mdo*, together with his equivalence of (2) *zhou* with the Sanskrit *Tantra* and the Tibetan *Rgyud*, would provide later scholars with justification for understanding the divisions of the Tibetan canon through the Chinese categories of *Xian* and *Mi*. Still, neither the Sanskrit, nor the Tibetan or Chinese dyads of terms, reflected the names of the divisions of the Tibetan canon, for the *Mdo* and the *Rgyud* were only two of the seven great canonical divisions. Not only were the tantras listed outside of the *Rgyud*, but also, the sūtras were included in the five other classes of 'Dul ba, Sher phyin, Phal chen, Dkon brtsegs, and Myang 'das.

Like the modern editions of the Chinese Tripiṭaka published in Japan, the Tibeta Bka' 'gyur thus accommodated, in the first Chinese translation of its structure, a class of scriptures that seemed compatible with the scriptures of Japan's *Mikkyō*—and of China's lost *Mijiao*. Still, Lü Cheng warned his readers about one important fact. "As for the *Mi bu*, there is almost no trace of it in Chinese translation."<sup>239</sup> Certainly, in the Tibetan canon the *Susiddhikara* and the *Mahāvairocanābhisambodhi* were listed in the *Mi bu*, that is, the *Rgyud* division. Yet, these two scriptures were listed as tantras (C. *tanteluo*) of the lower classes. Moreover, the *Susiddhikara* was in the *kriyā* (C. *zuo bu*), while the *Mahāvairocanābhisambodhi* was in the *caryā* subclass (C. *xiu bu*). Hence, the great majority of the tantras listed in the *Rgyud* division were lacking in the Chinese Tripiṭaka, especially the tantras of the Yoga and Anuttarayoga classes. Father tantras (C. *fubu*) such as the *Yamari* (C. *Chihei yemo*) and *Vajrabhairava* (C. *Jingang buwei*), and mother tantras (C. *mubu*) such as *Cakrasaṃvara* (C. *Shengle*) and *Kālacakra*, had never reached China. Only the *Guhyasamāja* (C. *Miji*) and the *Hevajra* (C. *Xi jingang*) had been translated into

---

<sup>239</sup> Ibid, p. 65.

Chinese by Dharmapāla during the Song dynasty. “In total, only one out of three were translated into Chinese.”<sup>240</sup> Therefore, although the Tibetan and Chinese editions of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka seemed to have the *Mi bu*, that is, the *Rgyud sde*, or “Tantra division” in common, these two divisions differed not only in content but also in the number of translations from Sanskrit. Lacking knowledge of canon formation, the names of the containers could create the illusion that what they contained were the scriptures of the same sort of *Mijiao* of ancient India.

When Atiśa completed his *Byang chub lam gyi sgron ma* (*C. Puti dao deng lun*), concludes Lü, Buddhism in India was already in decline, and in less than two hundred years it died out there. About two hundred years later, Tsong kha pa inherited Atiśa’s task to synthesize *Xiansheng* and *Misheng*, integrating the practices of these two vehicles with the correct observance of the monastic precepts. With Tsong kha pa’s *Lam rim chen mo*, the final development of Indian Buddhism would flourish only in Tibet. Thus, unlike the Tripiṭaka of any other Buddhist country in Asia, the Tibetan Bka’ ’gyur was the repository of all phases of the development of Buddhism in India. Even so, in his influential analysis of Tibetan Buddhism and of the Tibetan Canon, Lü Cheng overlooked one fact about the history of *Mizong* in Asia, for he, like Yang Wenhui, was bound by the spell of the tantra discourse.

In 1926, in the section of his *Fojiao yanjiu fa* entitled *Zangjing mulu* (“Catalogs of the Tripiṭaka”) where he analyzes Zhixu’s study of the *Yongle* canons, Lü Cheng writes, “In recent years, the *Yuezang zhijin* has often been used by Japanese scholars in Buddhist Studies, and among the studies of scholars trained in Europe and in America, many place value in Nanjō’s catalogue. This work, written in English by Nanjō Bunyū, is entitled *Zhongguo fojiao sanzang mulu*, *A Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka*, and was compiled in 1883 in England, in Oxford, as the English translation of the reprint catalogue of the Tripiṭaka of

---

<sup>240</sup> Ibid, p. 66.

the Great Ming.”<sup>241</sup> Like Li Yizhuo and other scholars in Yang Wenhui’s lineage in Republican China, Lü Cheng was under the spell of Gyōnen’s traditional history of Buddhism in India, China, and Japan, but also of Nanjō Bunyū’s “more scientific” classification of Buddhist scriptures.

This is not to say that when Śubhākarasiṃha, Vajrabodhi, and Amoghavajra traveled to China during the seventh century, they did not translate the Buddhist scriptures, confer the *abhiṣekas*, and perform the rituals for state protection, which later, in Japan, would be exalted in Kūkai’s lineage as the scriptures of *Mizong*. These scriptures, however, were Mahayāna sūtras, and as such Śubhākarasiṃha, Vajrabodhi, and Amoghavajra translated their titles into Chinese: “jing.” The majority of the new scriptures of the Vajrayāna, the vehicle (*C. sheng*) of the tantras that reached Tibet from the eighth to the twelfth century, had little or no influence among Japanese and Chinese Buddhists. But Lü Cheng explained the term *Misheng* as the same vehicle that, tracing to its origins in India, became the Tibetan and the Japanese *Mijiao* as well as China’s lost *Mizong*. His explanation of Tibetan *Mijiao* would become influential in China not only during the Republican Period, but also, after the Cultural Revolution, in the People’s Republic.

---

<sup>241</sup> See Lü Cheng, *Fojiao yanjiu fa* (Taipei: Taiwan yinjing chu, [1926] 1955), p. 19.

## CHAPTER 5

### TANTRISM

In the fall of 1925, Taixu discussed the revival of Tantrism in an essay published in *Haichao yin* entitled “Zhongguo xianshi Mizong fuxing zhi qushi” (“Trends in the Contemporary Revival of Tantrism in China”). Taixu explains how, in recent times, the eight Mahāyāna traditions of Buddhism had once again begun to flourish in China. “*Mizong* has also risen in a timely way, with no signs of warning.”<sup>242</sup> He notes that in the provinces of Guangzhou, Hubei, Sichuan, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu, there was hardly anyone who had not been swept up by the trend of *Mizong*; even though, in China, *Mizong* had vanished one thousand years earlier. For Taixu, as *Mizong* returned to life in the present, it seemed like a lost treasure. *Mizong* looked like a precious gem that had been suddenly rediscovered—a gem that had finally been returned to its original owner. It was, he exulted, a treasure capable of making all eager students of Buddhism throughout China rise in unison and seek to obtain it.

Perplexed by these recent trends, however, Taixu provides his readers with some facts about the revival of Tantrism. Like his teacher Yang Wenhui, Taixu also believed in the existence of a glorious tradition called *Mizong* in Tang China. Yet, Tantrism, writes Taixu, which was then being revived in Republican China, in both its Japanese and Tibetan forms, differed in many ways from the Tantrism of the Tang dynasty.

---

<sup>242</sup> See Taixu, “Zhongguo xianshi Mizong fuxing zhi qushi,” in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, 7 (Taipei: Taixu dashi quanshu yingyin weiyuanhui, 1970), p. 2877.



To illustrate these differences, Taixu explains the various stages through which *Mizong* had become popular in early Republican China. The story was similar to the story that Li Yizhuo told ten years earlier in his essays, where he identified Tibetan Buddhism with China's *Mijiao* and with Japan's *Mikkyō*. After their arrival in China, the three great Indian masters Śubhākarasiṃha, Vajrabodhi, and Amoghavajra, had been respected like kings and revered like buddhas. Their power in the establishment of the *Mizong* was formidable. During the early Tang, this tradition shone in its splendor and strength, illuminating everything with its light. Then, with the Wuzong Emperor's (840-846) persecution of Buddhism, the glory of the three patriarchs had vanished completely. There was no longer any *Xian* or *Mi*, for, Taixu observed, Buddhism as a whole, and the *Mizong* in particular, had turned to ashes. Later, this tradition seemed to have left no trace in China.

Yet it survived in activities carried out in Chinese monasteries, such as the ritual of *yankou*, the famous release of hungry ghosts (*C. egui*) through the recitation of the dhāraṇī sūtra entitled *Yankou egui tuoluoni jing*.<sup>243</sup> In later ages, the *Mijiao* of 'Phags pa's Red Religion, though different from the old Tantrism of the Kaiyuan era, had come to China under the protection of the Mongols. Centuries later, during the early Ming dynasty, the Hongwu Emperor issued an edict that prohibited the transmission of *Mijiao*'s rituals in China. But in Tibet, at that same time, Tsong kha pa had reformed the Red Religion, establishing the Yellow Religion, and placing the practice of *Mijiao* on the basis of the monastic code. Absent Tsong Kha pa's emphasis on the vinaya, concludes Taixu, the *Mijiao* of Tibet, like the *Mijiao* of China, would have long vanished.

---

<sup>243</sup> For this ritual, see for example Charles Orzech, "Saving the Burning-Mouth Hungry Ghost," in *Religions of China in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 278-283.

This chapter discusses the origins of the revival of Tantrism in Republican China. It does so by offering Taixu's perspective on the revival. The way in which Taixu imagines the golden age of Tantrism in China then leads to the description of Dayong's mission to Tibet between the late 1920s and the early 1930s. Although the pursuit of Tantrism would not proceed beyond eastern Tibet, a few students in Dayong's mission would reach Lhasa. One of these students, Fazun (1902-1980), would become the greatest translator into Chinese of Tibetan Buddhist scriptures in modern China. Not only did Fazun translate the texts of the Dge lugs tradition of Buddhism in Tibet, he also composed his own works on the history of the Tibetan nation (C. *Xizang minzu*), offering to the Chinese public a perspective on Tibet's geopolitical position in early twentieth century Asia, focusing on the recent relations between the government of independent Tibet and of Republican China. After discussing Fazun's work on Tibetan history, this chapter identifies one of his books as the source text for an important work on Tibetan Buddhism published before the Cultural Revolution. This chapter then returns to an influential essay written by Taixu the same year in which Fazun's book was published. It concludes with a reflection on how Taixu's view of Buddhist history—a history told from the perspective of Oriental philology—influenced the way in which PRC scholars talk about Buddhism in contemporary China, where the three forms of Chinese Buddhism are called *Hanchuan Fojiao*, *Zangchuan Fojiao*, and *Daichuan Fojiao*.

In Taixu's opinion, the motives behind the revival of Tantrism were rooted in the history of the early years of the Republic of China; the revival of *Mijiao* in modern China had begun in 1915. As World War I swept through Europe, the governments of Japan and China had signed the Twenty-One Demands (C. Ershiyi tiao). After the Xinhai Revolution of 1911, the question of sovereignty in China had centered on the relations with the sea powers of Japan and Great

Britain. Between 1913 and 1915, in his suppression of the opposition led by the Nationalist Party (C. Guomin dang), and in his attempt to establish a new dynasty and to ascend to the throne as a new emperor, the first president of the Republic Yuan Shikai (1859-1916) had sought and obtained Japan's support. During this period, Yuan Shikai had first made trade concessions to the Japanese government. Later, in January 1915, the Japanese government had submitted a draft of the Twenty-One Demands to Yuan Shikai's government

The question centered on the conflict that had flared between Germany and Japan regarding sovereignty in China's coastal region of Shandong. The twenty-one demands were divided in five groups of articles. The first four groups centered on Japanese management of railroads and on the expansion of industrial projects in inner Mongolia and Manchuria. The fifth group undercut the sovereignty of the Chinese government in China's institutions. The Chinese government had to accommodate Japanese administrators at all levels—accepting, for example, the presence of Japanese, together with Chinese, police forces, in the areas inhabited by Japanese subjects in China. In addition, the fifth group of articles demanded the right of Japanese to conduct missionary activity. The document requested Yuan Shikai's government to grant Japanese missionaries the freedom to preach Buddhism in China. Negotiations continued until early May 1915, when the Japanese government issued an ultimatum. On May 24, the negotiations were concluded with Yuan Shikai's signature.

The revival of Tantrism, continues Taixu in his 1925 essay, had to do with to Japan's ambitions in China. During the late Qing dynasty, several Chinese scholars who traveled abroad had reported the flourishing state of *Mikkyō* in Japan. Yet, the *Mikkyō* of modern Japan must have differed greatly from the original *Mijiao* of Tang China. In Japan, Taixu thought, *Mijiao* must have become mixed with the national ways of life. Unlike in Tang China, in Japan *Mijiao*

had developed distinct views, which in turn had made it different from the original *Mijiao* of the Kaiyuan era. And so, if Japan's *Mikkyō* was no longer the same as China's old *Mijiao*, how could the former revive the latter in modern China? Taixu writes:

For anything to flourish, the necessary causes and conditions must be present. From the Tang to our day, Tantrism has been extinct in China for one thousand years, and so by all means, how is it possible, during its revival, for it to emerge in the same manner as it was back then? Now, to say a word about its motives: In Japan, where Buddhism has *Mikkyō* at its core, its doctrines are different from the old ones of the Kaiyuan era, since they have become mixed with national customs and with individual views; this has often been described by the Chinese scholars who have studied in Japan during the Qing era. Then, Li Yizhuo bragged about *Mijiao* in his translation of the *History of Tibetan Buddhism* from Japanese, and Gui Bohua even conducted studies of it in Japan. Then, in 1915, during the fierce war in Europe, when all western nations were too busy to look east, the Japanese seized the chance to quickly implement their ambitions to plot against our country, and with the Twenty-One Demands they coerced our government, requesting, in the fifth article, that the Japanese be given the right to freely conduct missionary activity in China; the pretext of nominally conducting missionary activity, yet the implementation of its imperial reality, contained a political color, and everyone knew this ... Truly, if they wish to take Chinese territory through the Japanese Buddhadharma, why bring it [Buddhism] back? Is it not different from a child nursing his mother? Is it reasonable? The Japanese missionaries then respond with the following pretext: "Even though Japan's Buddhadharma was transmitted from China, *Mikkyō* flourishes in today's Japan, whereas in China its practice interrupted a long time ago."<sup>244</sup>

Between the late Qing and 1915, the topic of *Mijiao* had become known in China through the efforts of two of Yang Wenhui's students. In his translation of Ogurusu's *Ramakyō engaku*, Li Yizhuo had created an interest in China's lost *Mijiao* through his account of Japanese *Mikkyō* and Tibetan *Mijiao*. Gui Bohua even went to Japan in the pursuit of *Mikkyō*, yet he had died there in poverty in 1915, failing to bring its methods back to China. Since 1915, however, the interest in Tantrism developed in the late decades of the Qing dynasty had taken on new meaning. It seemed clear to Taixu that 1915 marked the origins of the revival of Tantrism in modern China. What he could not fathom, however, was the power of the words of Japanese missionaries: "Even though Japan's Buddhadharma was transmitted from China, *Mikkyō*

---

<sup>244</sup> See Taixu, "Zhongguo xianshi Mizong fuxing zhi qushi," in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, 7 (Taipei: Taixu dashi quanshu yingyin weiyuanhui, 1970), pp. 2878-9.

flourishes in today's Japan, whereas in China its practice was interrupted a long time ago."<sup>245</sup>

Taixu states that these words were the expression of a policy of cultural aggression. Yet, even to Taixu, there was something true about them. *Mijiao* had truly vanished in China. And this was a fact which no one could change. As early as 1915, the question of *Mijiao* had become so pressing that Taixu addressed it in his work entitled “Zhengli sengjia zhidu lun” (“Treatise on the Reorganization of the Saṃgha Institutions”). To counter the Japanese monks who, he then thought, would be free to carry out missionary activity in China (although the so-called “right to proselityze” would never be extended to Japanese clergy), Taixu suggested dispatching Chinese monks to Japan. The revival of *Mizong* in China thus came to be a component of the general reforms of the Chinese monastic system. But in his “Zhengli sengjia zhidu lun,” not only did Taixu intend to send monks to Japan. The reforms of Chinese Buddhism required the elements of Tibet's *Mizong*.

In September 1920, five years after Japan's imposition of the Twenty-One Demands, Japanese Tantrism was discussed in *Haichao yin* (“Sound of the Tide”), Taixu's influential periodical published in Shanghai. *Haichao yin* devoted an entire issue entitled “Mizong yanjiu” (“The Study of Tantrism”) to the study of Japanese *Mikkyō*. Taixu offered Wang Hongyuan (1876-1937), a Cantonese convert to the Japanese Shingon tradition, the opportunity to publish the translation of a modern Japanese work in an essay entitled “Manchaluō tongjie” (“Complete Explanation of the Maṇḍalas”). Wang had become known in China since 1918 for his *Mizong gangyao* (“Essentials of Mizong”), the translation of a Japanese work entitled *Mikkyō kōyō*, published in 1916 in Tōkyō by Gonda Raifu (1846-1934), a renowned master and scholar of the

---

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., p. 2879.

Shingon tradition.<sup>246</sup> In May 1924, upon Wang’s invitation, Gonda traveled to Chaozhou, in Guangdong province, where he conferred the *abhiṣekas*. In 1926, Wang would travel to Tōkyō to complete his training under Gonda. In 1928, upon his return to China, he would confer the *abhiṣekas* in great cities such as Canton and Hong Kong. In Chaozhou, he would then establish the Zhendan Mijiao Chonxing Hui (Society for the Revival of Tantrism in China), whose views and activities he promoted through the society’s journal, *Mijiao jiangxi lu* (“Records of Conferences in the Study of *Mijiao*”).

In 1920, for the first time since the foundation of the Republic of China, Wang Hongyuan’s “Manchaluō tongjie” introduced Chinese readers to the *kongōkai* (*C. jingang jie*) and to the *taizōkai* (*C. taizang jie*), the principal maṇḍalas of *Mikkyō*, and to the *abhiṣeka* rituals that granted access to these maṇḍalas. The issues discussed in Wang’s essay were new in China. Thus, Taixu advised his readers to first become acquainted with Japanese *Mikkyō* through Wang’s earlier translation of Gonda Raifu’s work. Later in the 1920s, Taixu and Wang began a dialogue concerning the Japanese *Mikkyō* and its compatibility with Chinese Buddhism. The issue centered on the transmission of the long-lost *abhiṣekas*. Could a non-ordained master of *Mikkyō* confer the *abhiṣekas* to monks and nuns? This was an issue that Taixu, in his plans to reorganize Buddhism in the newly born Republic, could not overlook.

In 1922, even before Gonda traveled to Guangdong to confer the *abhiṣekas*, Taixu had dispatched Dayong (1893-1929), his tonsure disciple, to Mount Kōya; he would verify Wang Hongyuan’s claims about *Mikkyō*. Upon his return to China, Dayong then informed Taixu that, even in Japan, it was not common for a non-ordained master to confer the *abhiṣekas*. And so in

---

<sup>246</sup> For Wang and Gonda see Ester Bianchi, *L’insegnamento tantrico del ‘lama cinese’ Nenghai (1886-1967). Inquadramento storico e analisi testuale del corpus di Yamāntaka-Vajrabhairava* (Paris-Venice, Università Ca’Foscari di Venezia – École Pratique des Hautes Etudes, 2003), Doctoral Thesis; see also Ester Bianchi, “The Movement of ‘Tantric Rebirth’ in Modern China, Esoteric Buddhism Re-vivified by the Japanese and Tibetan Traditions”, in *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungarica*, 57 (2004), pp. 31-54.

1924, Dayong, who was a fully ordained monk, began to confer in China the *abhiṣekas* he had received from his Shingon masters on Mount Kōya. The issue centered on the compatibility of Tantrism with the monastic code. Over the same period, Taixu had come to believe that Atiśa must have faced a similar situation upon his arrival in Tibet. Perhaps, Tsong kha pa's synthesis, inspired by Atiśa's emphasis on monastic vows, made the *Mijiao* of Tibet more compatible with Chinese Buddhism than the *Mikkyō* of Japan. Taixu observes in his 1925 essay, Wang Hongyuan's zeal in reviving *Mijiao* was such, that, "Before long, the sound of *Mijiao* was all over China!"<sup>247</sup> The study and practice of *Mijiao* was no longer a strategy to counter the Japanese presence in China. The revival of *Mijiao* had turned into a series of questions. For instance, Japanese monks and Tibetan lamas preached a different kind of *Mijiao* in China. Furthermore, the paucity of Chinese monks who pursued the long-lost *Mijiao* made the revival of Tantrism in Republican China very different from the glorious birth of Tantrism during the Tang dynasty. Clearly, the few Chinese monks, including Dayong, who began to confer the *abhiṣekas* in China could not compare to Śubhākarasiṃha, Vajrabodhi, and Amoghavajra.

For Taixu, the origins of the revival of Tantrism could thus be traced to 1915. The revival had a legal aspect, for it was linked to Yuan Shikai's negotiations with the Japanese government's ambitions in China. Yet, in his history of the revival, the dates Taixu offered to his readers were incorrect. The revival was not a mere consequence of Japan's imposition of the Twenty-One Demands; Taixu did not understand that the origins of the revival of Tantrism could be traced back to the nineteenth century, to the events that brought Yang Wenhui to London in 1880, and that inspired his correspondence with Nanjō Bunyū. Upon his return to Nanjing, Yang Wenhui's science of Buddhism entailed the rejection of Chinese historiography. Yang's science included the translation and commentary of Gyōnen's *Hasshū-kōyō*, with his adoption of the

---

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., p. 2879.

“more scientific” classification of the Chinese Tripiṭaka published in 1885 in the *Dainihon zokuzōkyō*. During the Republican Period, Gyōnen’s compelling account of *Mizong* inspired in Yang Wenhui’s students the quest for this tradition. Nanjō Bunyū’s “science,” adopting Zhixu’s history of Buddhism to comply with the canons of European Oriental philology, engendered in Yang’s students a nostalgia for an object which, lost in India, and yet preserved in modern Japan and Tibet, appeared to have died out in China at the very moment of its birth. The modern creation of the Chinese Tripiṭaka was thus the creation of that very object that was never lost, for *Mizong* never had a golden age in China. Like Gui Bohua, who died in poverty in Japan, others would die for *Mizong*.

In June 1925, a few months before Taixu published his essay on the revival, having gathered about thirty young monks in Beijing, Dayong had just left the capital, leading his “Liu zang xuefa tuan” (Team for the Study of the Dharma Abroad in Tibet) on his journey to the west to retrieve the lost *Mizong*. Little did Taixu know that Dayong, in whom he placed his best hopes for the revival, would die on his way to Lhasa. Still, a decade later in 1935, Taixu would obtain his lost treasure: Tibetan Buddhist texts in Chinese translation. By then, the revival had lost momentum (Wang Hongyuan died in 1937), but in his mission Dayong had found an heir. His disciple, the monk Fazun (1902-1980), would become the greatest translator of Buddhist scriptures from Tibetan into Chinese. During the Japanese occupation, Fazun’s translations of Tsong kha pa’s work, together with Lü Cheng’s work on the history of Buddhism in India and Tibet, would persuade Taixu that, regardless of its Japanese or Tibetan form, *Mijiao* was not the treasure he once thought China had lost. *Mijiao* would become incompatible with Taixu’s plans to reform Buddhism in China. Based on these new studies of the history of *Mijiao*, in his later essays Taixu would come to exalt Chinese Buddhism for *Mijiao*’s very absence. For, when the



Mādhyamika and Yogācāra had come to China, their doctrines had not yet been altered by the popular elements of India's *Mijiao*.<sup>248</sup> Moreover, Yunqi Zhuhong and Zhixu's notions of Buddhist history, written according to the classification of the Tiantai and Huayan doctrines, would be replaced by Lü Cheng's history of Buddhism. Unlike Fazun, who lived and studied in Tibet for nine years, Taixu would write a new history of Chinese Buddhism that would accord with the European Orientalist understanding of the Sanskrit term Tantra.

Before we discuss the way in which Taixu's view of Buddhism and Tantrism changed during the 1940s, we turn to Fazun's life and work. Fazun's endeavor, first in independent Tibet, and later in occupied China, attests to the changing meanings of *Mijiao*, but also the shifting notions of the history of Tibetan Buddhism between the Civil War and the Cultural Revolution.<sup>249</sup> During the early 1960s, as Li Youyi translated Helmut Hoffmann's *The Religions of Tibet* into Chinese, Fazun's expertise in the Tibetan language would become the main source of Wang Sen's history of Tibetan Buddhism—a history that little had to do with European theories of Tantrism or Shamanism and with Taixu's understanding of *Mijiao*.

---

<sup>248</sup> See for example Taixu's 1937 essay entitled "Hanzang jiaoli ronghui tan" ("On the Integration of Chinese and Tibetan Doctrines") where he explains the "Kong you wenti" ("The Question of Emptiness and Existence") in relation to the Bhāvaviveka and Dharmapāla debate, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, 1 (Taibei: Taixu dashi quanshu yingyin weiyuanhui, 1970), p. 413ff. For a presentation of the changes in Taixu's attitude toward *Mijiao* see also Luo Tongbing's *Taixu dashi dui zhongguo fojiao xiandaihua daolu de jueze* (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 2003), p. 159ff; an abridged translation of Luo's analysis is available in English in Monica Esposito, ed., *Images of Tibet in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, 1 (Paris: École française d'extrême orient, 2008), pp. 433-471.

<sup>249</sup> On Fazun, see Françoise Wang-Toutain, "Quand les maîtres chinois s'éveillent au bouddhisme tibétain. Fazun: le Xuanzang des temps modernes," in *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient*, 2, 87 (2000): 707-727; see also Ester Bianchi, *L'insegnamento tantrico del 'lama cinese' Nenghai (1886-1967). Inquadramento storico e analisi testuale del corpus di Yamāntaka-Vajrabhairava* (Doctoral thesis, Paris-Venice, Università Ca'Foscari di Venezia – École Pratique des Hautes Etudes, 2003), Chapter 1.2; Martino Dibeltulo, "I testi della scuola dGe lugs pa nella parole di Fazun fashi: Traduzione annotata e studio della sezione 'Biepo weishizong' nel *Ru zhonglun shanxian miyi shu* di Lama Tsonkhapa" (Master's thesis, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, 2005); Gray Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), pp. 97-102, 193-204; for a biography, see Yu Lingbo, *Minguo gaoseng zhuan chubian* (Taibei: Banruo wenku, 1998), p. 375-392.

Fazun was born in 1902 in the district of Shen, in the Hebei province of northern China, during the reign of the Guangxu Emperor (1871-1908). His courtesy name was Wen. In 1919, he went to the city of Baoding, about a hundred miles south of Beijing, in order to learn shoemaking. He did not complete the apprenticeship because of a prolonged illness. In the spring of 1920, after recovering, he set out on a journey to Mount Wutai (C. Wutai shan) in the Shanxi province. He would become a Buddhist monk, receiving ordination as a novice at the Yuhuang Si, where he worked within the temple and learned the prayers. In the fall of 1920, he met Dayong there.

In early 1921, having received the first Buddhist teachings from Dayong, Fazun entered into retreat at the Guangji hermitage, a seven-day retreat centered on the recitation of Amitābha's name. The following summer, Fazun received from Dayong instructions on the *Sukhāvativyūha*, and, from the monk Yuancang (1873-1966), instructions on the *Brahmajāla Sūtra*. In the fall of the same year, Dayong and Fazun attended the lectures on the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā* that Taixu delivered at the Fayuan Si, an ancient temple in Beijing. Here, before leaving for Japan to study *Mikkyō* on Mount Kōya, Dayong introduced Fazun to Taixu, who was about to inaugurate the Wuchang Foxue Yuan (Institute of Buddhist Studies in Wuchang) in Hubei. Later the same year, having sought advice from Dayong, Fazun decided to enroll in Taixu's new institution. Fazun received the full monastic ordination in the winter of 1921. He then spent some time on Mount Baohua near Nanjing, at the Longchang Lüsi, in order to study the rules of monastic discipline. The next summer, he received training in Tiantai texts such as the *Tiantai sijiao yi* ("Outline of the Fourfold Teachings of the Tiantai") by the Korean monk Chegwan (d. 971), and in the *Jiaoguan ganzong* ("Essential Doctrines on Teaching and Meditation") by Zhixu.

In the fall of 1923, Fazun joined the first class of Taixu's Institute for Buddhist Studies in Wuchang, where, in his first year, he studied texts on the *Abhidharma*, Buddhist logic, and the

history of Buddhism. In 1923, he studied the doctrines of the Mahāyāna, including the three treatises of the Sanlun tradition, the *Madhyamakaśāstra* and *Dvādaśanikāyaśāstra* (C. *Shiermen lun*, “Treatise on the Twelve Gateways”) by Nāgārjuna, together with the *Śatasāstra* (Cin. *Bai lun*, “Treatise in One Hundred Stanzas”) by Āryadeva, as well as Dharmapāla’s *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi*, and the *Samḍhinirmocana sūtra*. By the end of 1923, Fazun had completed his basic training in the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna doctrines. He had also attended classes on *Mijiao*. In fact, Taixu had included Wang Hongyuan’s *Mizong Gangyao*, the only introductory study available on *Mijiao*, in the teaching curriculum of the Wuchang Foxue Yuan. In October of the same year, having returned from Japan, Dayong then went to Wuchang, where he taught Taixu’s students the methods of *Mikkyō*. In particular, Dayong trained Fazun and other students in the *jūhachi dō* (C. *shiba dao*), the eighteen preliminary practices, including basic visualizations and *mudrā*, to be performed before engaging the *homa* (C. *humo*, J. *goma*) fire offering. The same winter, Fazun received from Dayong his first *abhiṣeka*, the *abhiṣeka* of Yellow Mañjuśrī (C. Huang Wenshu), along with training in this deity’s (C. *benzun*) *sādhana* (C. *xiufa*).

In the spring of 1924, after graduating in Wuchang, Fazun joined Dayong in Beijing. Dayong then resided at the Yonghegong, where he studied the *homa* offering with Bai Puren (1870-1927). Bai Puren was a Mongolian lama whose expertise in the *śāntika* (C. *xizai*) rituals for the protection of the state had gained him renown in Beijing between the late Qing dynasty and the early decades of the Republican period. The same year, when the Ninth Panchen Lama Thub bstan chos kyi nyi ma (1883-1937) reached China, he conferred on Bai

Puren the title of Yonghegong's *mkhan po* (C. *kanbu*).<sup>250</sup> It was during a retreat with Bai Puren at the Yonghegong, that Dayong, while comparing the *homa* rituals of Japan and Tibet, developed an interest in the latter's form of *Mijiao*. Tibet's *Mijiao*, Dayong thought, had been preserved to his day in a more complete form than Japan's *Mikkyō*. Hence, he began to learn the Tibetan language and to plan a journey to Tibet in search of China's lost *Mijiao*.

Dayong initially hoped to set out on his journey with only one or two disciples. After consulting the great dharma protectors (C. *da hufa shen*) of the Yonghegong, Bai Puren discouraged him from going alone. In order to train a group of Taixu's students to read Buddhist texts in Tibetan, Dayong organized the Fojiao Zangwen Xueyuan (Institute for the Study of Buddhism in the Tibetan Language) in Beijing's Ciyin Si. Inspired by the sacrifice that the great translators of Buddhist scriptures Kumārajīva, Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing, had made to disseminate Buddhism in China, Fazun decided to follow Dayong to Tibet. Together with Fafang (1904-1951), a close disciple of Taixu, and others of Dayong's students, Fazun studied Tibetan in Beijing from August 1924 to April 1925. Again, as the departure approached, Bai Puren consulted the great dharma protectors, but he unintentionally also invoked the Fox Goddess (C. Huxian), a local protector of Beijing's Guangji Si. The Fox Goddess discouraged Dayong from going to Tibet at all, offering her protection only if he remained in Beijing. If he left for Tibet, the goddess would create obstacles on his way. Bai Puren obtained from the Fox Goddess protection for Dayong only after several attempts to persuade her. Dayong thus changed the name of the institute into Liu Zang Xuefa Tuan (Team for the Study of the Dharma Abroad in Tibet). He and his students would soon cross China on their way to Tibet.

---

<sup>250</sup> On the activities of the Ninth Panchen Lama in Beijing, see Gray Tuttle, "Tibet as the Source of Messianic Teachings to Save Republican China," in Monica Esposito, ed., *Images of Tibet in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, 1 (Paris: École française d'extrême orient, 2008), pp. 303-327.

On June 24, 1925, the twenty or so members of Dayong's team left Beijing by train for Wuhan. Once in Hankou, they proceeded upstream on the Yang-Tze River through Yichang and Chongqing, reaching Leshan in the Sichuan province. On nearby Mount Emei (C. Emei Shan), they entered into a retreat, performing a five-week *sāntika* ritual for pacifying the obstacles that might arise on the road to Lhasa. In spite of their precautions, at the beginning of the fall, Fazun injured his leg and was unable to walk for several weeks. During his recovery in the Wulong Si, a temple near Leshan, Fazun began to read the travel accounts of Chinese pilgrims and the biographies of translators of former times. As he came across Yijing's *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan* ("Account of the Dharma Sent Back from the Southern Seas"), the Chinese pilgrim's account of his voyage to India reinforced Fazun's determination to enter Tibet. In Tibet, there was a complete form of Buddhism whose scriptures could be translated and disseminated in China. Like Yijing, who had sacrificed his entire life for Buddhism, Fazun too wished to retrieve in Tibet those Indian scriptures that had never reached China. In so doing, he hoped to fill the gaps of the Chinese Tripiṭaka, especially the various recensions of the Vinayapiṭaka; he did not exclude from his endeavor Tibet's *Mizong*. During his recovery in Sichuan, Fazun compiled a list of Tibetan and Chinese Buddhist terms that would serve him during his future years of study in Khams and Dbus-Gtsang.

In the early winter of 1925, the team reached Ya'an, on China's border with the Tibetan highland, proceeding on foot to Dar tse mdo, the first major center on the way to Central Tibet. Due to the difficulty of the journey, Fazun compared Dar tse mdo to Rḍdhnagara, the "Magical City" described in a parable of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā*, where the Buddha uses his magical powers to display a city in order to lead the śrāvakas to nirvāṇa when, in truth, this city is an illusion; the true destination is buddhahood. In February 1926, having studied spoken Tibetan

during the winter, Fazun and Dayong began their formal training in Tibetan Buddhism. Byangs pa smon lam (d.u.), a lama who resided near Dar tse mdo on Mount Paoma (C. Paoma shan), accepted the Chinese monks as disciples. Here, they continued to study the Tibetan language, but were also introduced to Tsong kha pa's work, including the *Dge slong gyi bslab bya* (C. *Bichujie shi*, "Commentary on Bhikṣu Śīla"), the *Byang chub gzhung lam* (Cin. *Pusa jiepin shi*, "Elementary Path to Awakening"), and the *Lam rim chung ngu* (C. *Puti daocidi lüelun*, "Short Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Awakening").

In the spring of 1927, on the way west to Chab mdo, the Chinese team reached Dkar mdzes. Despite Dayong's connections with the local government, Tibetan authorities refused them permission to proceed further. In Dkar mdzes, Dayong and Fazun thus became students of Dpal ldan bstan 'dzin snyan grags (1866-1929), the sprul sku of the Brag dkar monastery. Under the guidance of the Brag dkar sprul sku and of his disciples, Dayong and Fazun then studied Vasubandhu's *Triṃśikākārikā* (C. *Weishi sanshi lun*, "Treatise in Thirty Stanzas"), Maitreya's *Abhisamayālamkāra* (C. *Xianguan zhuangyan lun*, "Ornament of Realization") Tsong kha pa's *Drang nges legs bshad snying po* (C. *Bian liaoyi buliaoyi lun*, "Essence of Good Explanations on the Definitive and on the Interpretable"); they also received a commentary on the section on *vipaśyanā* of Tsong kha pa's *Byang chub lam rim chen mo* (C. *Puti daocidi guanglun*, "Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Awakening") and of 'Jam dbyangs phyogs lha 'od zer's *Rwa stod bstus grwa* (C. *Yinming chuji rumen*, "Collected Topics of Rwa stod"). The two monks also studied the biographies of several Tibetan masters, receiving detailed oral instructions from the Brag dkar sprul sku himself. It was under his guidance that the two monks, with the help of the lists of Chinese and Tibetan terms that Fazun had compiled in the previous years, inaugurated their work of translation of Tibetan works into Chinese: Dayong began to translate Tsong kha

pa's *Lam rim chung ngu* while Fazun translated Tsong kha pa's *Rten 'brel bstod pa* (C. Yuanqi zan, "Praise of Dependent Origination"). In addition, based on Tibetan sources, Fazun compiled the biographies of Tsong kha pa and Atiśa, entitled respectively *Zongkaba dashi zhuan* and *Adixia zunzhe zhuan*, which would be published in *Haichao yin* in 1935.

On August 4, 1929, Dpal ldan bstan 'dzin snyan grags died. One week later, after a long illness, Dayong also died at the Brag dkar monastery. Together with four of the Chinese monks who had remained in Tibet, Fazun performed the funeral rituals for their teacher. Without Dayong, Fazun's endeavor in Tibet would take on a different meaning. He was determined to reach Lhasa, and, once there, obtain the *dge bshes* degree, the title that Tibetan monastic universities conferred on the students who completed the curriculum. He thus returned to Dar tse mdo and then again in Dkar mdzes, to receive further training from his old teachers. In the spring of 1931, the group of four monks was then able to reach Chab mdo. In Chab mdo, Fazun began to study with 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros (C. Andong gexi, 1888-1936), a renowned Tibetan *dge bshes* from the A mdo region, whom he had known during his stay in Dkar mdzes thanks to the Brag dkar sprul sku's introduction. With 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros, Fazun not only continued to study Tsong kha pa's commentaries, he also received the transmission of more than forty *abhiṣekas* of deities of the Yogatantra and Anuttarayogatantra class. In August, Fazun followed 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros into Dbus-Gtsang, reaching Lhasa in October 1932. Thanks to his teacher's recommendation, the following month Fazun was admitted in 'Bras spungs monastery. Although he was formally a student of the monastery, he continued his training in logic, debate, and in Tsong kha pa's *Lam rim chen mo* with 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros and other renowned Tibetan masters who resided in Lhasa.

During 1933, Fazun received a commentary on several of Tsong kha pa's works, such as the *Legs bshad gser phreng* (C. *Jingman lun*, "Golden Garland of Eloquence"), the *Ngags rim chen mo* (C. *Mizong daocidi guanglun*, "Great Treatise on the Stages of Mantra"), and the *Rim lnga gsal sgron* (C. *Wucidi denglun*, "A Lamp to Illuminate the Five Stages"). In Lhasa, Fazun also received the transmission of the methods of more than three hundred deities, including instructions on the *homa* rituals of Yamāntaka Vajrabhairava (T. Rdo rje 'jigs byed, C. Jingang Buwei) and Vajrayoginī (T. Rdo rje rnal 'byor ma, C. Yujia kongxing mu). The same year, Fazun studied the *Abidharma* with Blo bzang rgyal mtshan (d. 1932), the ninety-first Dga' ldan khri pa. He also received from Pha bong kha pa bde chen snying po (1878-1941), one of the greatest Dge lugs masters of his time, the *abhiṣekas* of several deities of the Anuttarayoga class such as the initiation into the maṇḍala of Heruka Cakrasaṃvara. It was in these two years of intense study and practice with Dge lugs masters that Fazun began to translate Tsong kha pa's *Lam rim chen mo* into Chinese.

In the meantime, on a visit to Sichuan in 1930, Taixu had met Liu Xiang (1888-1938), the most powerful warlord of the region, who controlled the economy around Chongqing, and who, since 1926, had aligned himself with General Jiang Jieshi's (1888-1975) central government in Beijing. Taixu convinced Liu Xiang of the necessity to create an institution that promoted mutual understanding between Chinese and Tibetans through the study of Buddhism. Thanks to Liu Xiang and other sponsors, the Hanzang Jiaoli Yuan (Institute for Chinese and Tibetan Teachings) was thus established in 1931 in the Jiyun Si, a temple situated in the town of Beibei, a few miles north of Chongqing.<sup>251</sup> The same year, Taixu addressed numerous letters to

---

<sup>251</sup> For the Hanzang Jiaoli Yuan, see Gray Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), pp. 193-204; see also Chapter 1.2 in Ester Bianchi, *L'insegnamento tantrico del 'lama cinese' Nenghai (1886-1967). Inquadramento storico e analisi testuale del corpus di*



Fazun, urging him to return to China. Fazun would take on the position of principal at the Hanzang Jiaoli Yuan. Yet, because Dayong had sacrificed his life to bring the team to Tibet, Fazun could not simply go back. Moreover, he did not feel qualified to teach Tibetan Buddhism. He should stay at 'Bras spungs to pursue a *dge bshes* degree, and only then return. Or, Fazun thought, he could bring his teacher 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros to Chongqing. He could complete his training, and, in the meantime, translate his teachings. Taixu disapproved, suggesting that it would be better to return without him. Fazun should first organize the classes and give structure to the institution. Later, he could return to Tibet, bringing 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros back to Chongqing. Fazun disagreed, writing a letter to the Thirteen Dalai Lama Thub bstan rgya mtsho (1976-1933) with the same request. The Dalai Lama replied that the time for 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros to travel to China was not right. Like Taixu, the Dalai Lama advised Fazun that the best thing to do was to return to Sichuan in order to make all the necessary arrangements, and only then invite his teacher.

On October 27, 1933, Fazun left Lhasa, making his way south to Kalimpong on a mule. He then traveled through Nepal, and then India, on a pilgrimage to the holy sites of Buddhism, including Bodh Gaya, Varanasi, and Kuśinagar. In January 1934, Fazun reached Calcutta, where he embarked on a ship to Rangoon. Here, he stayed for two months with Cihang (1895-1954), another famous student of Taixu who in 1933 had established the Zhongguo Foxue Hui (Association of Chinese Buddhist Studies) in Burma's capital. On April 4, Fazun sailed to Singapore, and then to Hong Kong, reaching Shanghai in the month of May. Here, Fazun was received by Taixu, whom he had not seen since 1925. Fazun reported to Taixu everything about the journey, including the texts he studied, the *abhiṣekas* he received, and the events that led to

---

*Yamāntaka-Vajrabhairava* (Doctoral thesis, Paris-Venice, Università Ca'Foscari di Venezia – École Pratique des Hautes Etudes, 2003).

Dayong's death. During the summer, Fazun served as interpreter for 'Jigs med dbang phyug (1878-1949), a Dge lugs sprul sku who had come to China with the Ninth Panchen Lama in 1924. In Nanjing, Fazun translated for Sngags chen rin po che the *abhiṣeka* of Dpal ldan lha mo (C. Jixiang tiannü), and while in Beijing he served as his interpreter at the Mizang Yuan (Tantra Institute), founded in 1933 by the Panchen Lama.

In August 1934, having reached Chongqing, Fazun was appointed as the acting principal of the Hanzang Jiaoli Yuan, where he began to teach the Tibetan language and Tibetan Buddhism. For two years, he continued to translate the *Lam rim chen mo* and gave lectures on the text to his students, yet he also began to translate the *Sngags rim chung ngu* (C. *Mizong daocidi lüelun*, "Short Treatise on the Stages of Mantra") by Mkhas grub dge legs dpal bzang (1385-1438). Unable to obtain the title of *dge bshes* in 'Bras spungs, Fazun was now determined to become a translator. The moment had come to return to Lhasa, however, in order to bring 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros to China. To raise funds, Fazun thus served as an interpreter for Ngag dbang mkhan po (1899-1969), an abbot of Se ra who, since 1929, had resided in Sichuan to raise funds for his monastery. In the summer of 1935, he stayed in Chengdu to translate Ngag dbang mkhan po's teachings on Pha bong kha rin po che's *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*, "Prayer to Meet the Noble Teaching of the King of Dharma, the Great Tsong kha pa"), and on Tsong kha pa's *Rten 'brel bstod pa*. In the fall of 1935, having raised sufficient funds for his second journey to Tibet, he went on a pilgrimage to Mount Wutai, and then back to Beijing and Tianjin, in order to raise funds to print his translation of the *Lam rim chen mo*. Sailing from Shanghai to Singapore, and then from Rangoon to Calcutta, Fazun joined Ngag dbang mkhan po, who, on his way to Lhasa, was in

Calcutta. Having received a telegraph message from the Tibetan government, the group was granted permission by the British authorities to move north to Kalimpong.

In early February 1936, after a difficult journey through the Himalayas, Fazun and his travel companion Ye Zenglong (d.u.) reached Phag ri, Gro mo, and finally Lhasa. Here, 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros's attendant delivered the *dge bshes*'s handwritten note to Fazun. He asked Fazun to join him in Reb kong at the Rong bo dgon chen, one of the largest monasteries in A mdo. The next day, however, as he prepared for the long journey east, Fazun received another letter that a courier had just brought to Lhasa from Nag chu. 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros had died a few days earlier in Reb kong, before Fazun arrived in Lhasa. Fazun was deeply shaken by his teacher's death. He thus rushed to offer butter lamps at the Jo khang and in all of Lhasa's temples. The next day, together with a delegation of the Tibetan government, he set out on the long journey to A mdo, to attend 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros's funerals. On the day of his master's cremation ritual, Fazun was chosen to conduct the Yamāntaka Vajrabhairava's *homa* ritual (C. *Daweide humo fa*) performed at the Rong bo dgon chen. A week later, upon inspection of the ashes, numerous relics shaped like pearls were found in the funeral pyre.

In early March, having completed the rituals of offering to the *dharmapālas* (C. *hufa shen*), the Tibetan delegation returned to Lhasa. Fazun settled at Dga 'ldan monastery for six months. He continued his training with the Byang rtse chos rje (C. Jiangze fawang), the abbot of Dga 'ldan's Byang rtse college, in the classics of the Dge lugs curriculum, including Guṇaprabha's *Vinayasūtra* (T. 'Dul ba'i mdo, C. *Lüjing*, "Discourse on the Vinaya") and Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakoṣa*. At Dga 'ldan, Fazun translated into Chinese Tsong kha pa's *Drang nges legs bshad snying po*, together with a famous commentary by the Second Dalai Lama Dge 'dun rgya mtsho (1475-1542) entitled *Drang nges rnam 'byed kyi dka' 'grel* (C. *Bian*

*liaoyi buliaoyi lun shinan*, “Commentary on the Difficult Points of the Treatise Distinguishing the Definitive and the Interpretable”).

Fazun left Tibet in August 1936, as his Chinese translations of Tsong kha pa’s *Lam rim chen mo* and Mkhas grub rye’s *Sngags rim chu ngu* were being published in Wuchang. Across the Himalayas, having hired a mule caravan on his journey back to Calcutta, Fazun carried with him a complete edition of the Bka’ ’gyur and Bstan ’gyur, together with the rJe yab sras gsung ’bum (“Collected Works of rJe Tsong kha pa, Father and Sons”), the complete writings of the founders of the Dge lugs tradition. He would not see Tibet again.



In December 1936, Fazun reached Chongqing. In early 1937, as he resumed his teaching and administration duties at the Hanzang Jiaoli Yuan, he continued to train his students in the Tibetan language and in the Dge lugs curriculum. The same year, Fazun completed the translation of the *Abhisamayālamkāra*. To teach the classes on Tibetan culture, history, and geography, he also published two books in which he relates in detail his experiences in Tibet. For the first time in China, in his *Xiandai Xizang* (“Modern Tibet”), published in April 1937, and in *Wo quguo de Xizang* (“The Tibet that I Visited”), published two months later in June 1937, Fazun not only provides a history of Tibetan Buddhism using Tibetan sources, but also introduces his readers to the events, figures, and politics, of modern Tibet. In the opening paragraph of his *Xiandai Xizang*, Fazun defines the topic of his book:

Although Tibet is in China’s territory, it separated from us many years ago. Therefore, if in the future it will ultimately belong to other countries, or if it will continue in this manner, one will have to see what influence our country will have, and how it will be determined by the actions of our leaders and the relations they establish. I am not a

fortune teller, so I have very little to say concerning these future matters. Today, I have given Tibet this modern hat, yet this term “modern” does not at all mean something fashionable, it only conveys the present time. Does this term “modern” have a fixed boundary? I do not think so, for anyone, during one’s own lifetime, will conceive as modern everything that, in that very moment, one sees and hears, thus falsely establishing it as a modern reality or condition. Hence, a few decades from now, or even in a few hundred years, people will once again say that our words do not suit their times, and that our events are relics of a former age. Then, during their lifetimes, they will also falsely conceive the modern, and only what belongs to that moment will count as a modern reality. However, even if they follow such wishful thinking, everything must still become the past, and then, that permanent modernity is something that will never be real. Supposing that everyone conceives the modern in their present time, then everyone may claim one’s own modernity for all past events. I belong to the Republic of China, therefore my modernity regards the events that I know at the time that I write. Today I wish to speak about modern Tibet, and I must do so according to the age in which I went to Tibet, so this modern Tibet I speak of is certainly what I have seen with my own eyes and what I have heard with my ears.<sup>252</sup>

Although Tibet had been part of China at the time of the Qing empire, in the past decades modern Tibet had become a separate nation. Modern Tibet was no longer a remote imperial borderland, such as Chinese officials imagined it during the Qing dynasty. Tibet was no longer the Pure Land that would provide the long-lost *abhiṣekas* to the revival of Tantrism in Republican China. Nor was Tibet the repository of the final and declining phase of Buddhism in India, as the science of Oriental philology portrayed it. During the same years that Helmut Hoffmann studied in the Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen at the University of Berlin, in China the national religion of Tibet had not yet become Lamaism, that is, what for Hoffmann would be the admixture of Padmasambhava’s Tantrism with Bon’s Shamanism. In the wake of World War II, Fazun portrayed Tibet as a small nation that possessed a sophisticated religious culture and that, thanks to its genius, had lived for a millennium in an immense and inhospitable territory. Caught in the net of international politics, Tibet was a small nation that struggled between the imperial past of Republican China and the colonial ambitions of the British and Russian empires.

---

<sup>252</sup> See Fazun, *Xiandai Xizang* (Chongqing: Wuhan yinshuguan, 1937), pp. 3-4. My translation.

Unlike any previous book published in China, Fazun's *Xiandai Xizang* portrays the Tibetan nation, with its culture, religion, and institutions, as a growing nation on the threshold of modernity. Fazun discusses modern Tibet in ten chapters: in the (1) "Prologue," he relates in detail the experiences of his nine years in Tibet, from his first meeting with Dayong on Mount Wutai, to his time in Khams and Dbus-Gtsang, until his second return to China in 1936; in (2) "Elements of Tibetan Geography," he reflects on geographical notions through which Chinese and foreign authors have classified the Tibetan regions, noticing that Tibetans do not recognize the north-south, east-west division of the Westerners, but also that the Chinese division of Anterior Tibet, Central Tibet, Posterior Tibet, and Ali is incorrect, for Tibetans talk about Dbus, Gtsang, and Khams; in (3) "Short Discussion of Tibet's History," Fazun briefly discusses the history of the Tibetan Empire according to the *Deb ther sngon po* (C. *Qingshi*, "Blue Annals"), including, for the first time, a discussion of religious orders such as the Bka' gdams pa (C. Jiadang pai), the Sa skya pa (C. Sajia pai), the Bka' brgyud pa (C. Jiaju pai), and the Bka' gdams gsar pa (C. Xin Jiadang pai); in addition, in this chapter Fazun also discusses the "reasons for the prosperity and decline of Tibetan Buddhism" (C. *Xizang Fojiao xingshuai yuanyin*), providing a concise paragraph about the history of the relations between China and Tibet (C. *Zhongguo yu Xizang guanxi shilue*); in (4) "The Tibetan Nation," Fazun then describes the national character of the Tibetan people in terms of a common history, environment, language, kinship system, way of life, religion, and monastic system

In the second part of the book, Fazun then describes the political, religious, and cultural institutions of the Tibetan state: in the (5) section entitled "Property, Economy, and Transport" he explains how Tibetans deal with property and conduct business in the country and abroad; in (6) "Politics, Military Affairs, and Finance," he relates the functioning of the Tibetan institutions,

including the central and local government, as well as the functioning of the army and the department of treasury; in (7) “Religion, Education, and Culture,” Fazun then writes about the monastic system, noting its differences with the monastic systems of other Asian nations such as China and Japan; in this section, he also provides an account of monastic life and Buddhist culture, art, and architecture; in (8) “Dalai and Panchen Lamas” he provides a brief history of the two great lamas and their role in Tibetan politics and religion, in the past and in the modern day; (9) in “International Politics,” Fazun describes the relations of Tibet with Great Britain and with China since the early 1900s; and finally, in (10) “Opinions on Governing Tibet,” he offers his personal views on the issue of Tibet’s sovereignty since the time of Qianlong, as well as on the kind of relations that China should establish with Tibet in the future. For Fazun, the Chinese and Tibetan administrations had to find a way to develop a form of government that suited the interests of both nations. Since the Thirteenth Dalai Lama had died four years earlier, the question of Tibet’s government and its relation with China had become of even greater concern.

Two months after he published *Xiandai Xizang*, Fazun related what he had seen and heard in Tibet from 1925 to 1934 in another book. Published in Chongqing in June 1937, *Wo quguo de Xizang* was inspired by a request that Fafang, another close disciple of Taixu, had made to Fazun as he accompanied him on the journey back from Wuhan to Chongqing. Like Fazun, Fafang had joined Dayong in 1925 on his mission to retrieve China’s lost *Mijiao* in Tibet. Having studied in Dar tse mdo with Dayong and Fazun, Fafang had then also reached Dkar mdzes. Yet, in 1929, after Dayong’s death, Fafang had returned to China, where he had become one of Taixu’s assistants at the Wuchang Foxue Yuan. He specialized in the study of the Theravāda tradition (C. Shangzuo bu), yet unlike Fazun he never went beyond Khams. “Now

that you have some free time, why don't you write down a general outline of what you have seen in Tibet for me to read?"<sup>253</sup> Fazun could not decline his friend's request.

In comparison with *Xiandai Xizang*, *Wo quguo de Xizang* relates Fazun's views of Tibet's position as a nation that had not been colonized by any Asian or European power. Although he puts forth a trenchant critique of the British, he also discusses the failure of Republican China to build relations with the Tibetan government. In the ten chapters of his *Wo quguo de Xizang*, Fazun writes a compelling account of current Tibetan politics, analyzing the role of the Tibetan, Chinese, and British governments in shaping the Tibet he visited: in the first sections entitled (1) "Analysis of its Territory," (2) "Analysis of its People," and (3) "Past Conditions" Fazun briefly discusses Tibetan geography and the character of the people, followed by the events of the early twentieth century that led the Thirteenth Dalai Lama to first flee to India and then to Mongolia; in (4) "How the British Deal with Tibet" Fazun analyzes the reasons why the British failed to colonize Tibet; in (5) "The Dalai Lama and the People's Attitude toward Chairman Jiang and the Central Government," Fazun relates how the Tibetan attitude toward China's government had changed between the 1920s and the 1930s, focusing on the failure of Jiang Jieshi to take concrete steps in the China-Tibet relations after the passing of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama in 1933; in (6) "The Attitude of Tibetan Authorities toward the Central Government," he discusses the way in which China-Tibet relations had worsened in the early 1930s, when, as it fought Mao Zedong's Red Army (C. Hongjun) in Sichuan, Jiang Jieshi's government escorted the Ninth Panchen Lama to Tibet; in (7) "The Tibetan Authorities on the Panchen Lama's Coming to Tibet" Fazun then reports the opinions of Sngags chen rin po che about the journey of the Panchen Lama (who died a few months later) back to Tibet; and in the final sections entitled (8) "What I have Seen and Heard in Tibet," (9) "Gatherings in Tibet," and

---

<sup>253</sup> See Fazun, *Wo quguo de Xizang* (Chongqing: Hanzang jiaoliyuan kanxing), p. 1. My translation.



(10) “Brief Conclusions on the Future,” Fazun relates several anecdotes about his meetings with Tibetan lamas, the propaganda of the “red brigands” (*C. hong fei*), that is, the Chinese Communist Party, which he has heard in Lhasa in 1936, but also his general view of British colonialism in India, China, and Tibet. Despite their “wild ambitions” (*C. yexin*), it seemed unlikely that the British would ever occupy Tibet. Yet, Fazun writes, “Would China also treat Tibet the same way that Italy treats Abyssinia?”<sup>254</sup> On the last page of his book, he declares that if only the Republican government had adopted a more efficient foreign policy in Tibet, Tibetans may have found a better partner in China. The decision to be colonized by India, or by China, however, seemed to be in Tibetan hands.

In late June 1937, as soon as he published the two books, Fazun set out to Beijing in order to interpret for Sngags chen rin po che at the Mizong Yuan. Yet he never reached Beijing. On July 7, the Lugou Qiao Incident (*C. Qiqi shibian*) marked the beginning of the Second China-Japan War (1937-1945). Later in the month of July, Fazun invited Taixu and other students of the Wuchang Foxue Yuan to join him in Chongqing at the Hanzang Jiaoli Yuan; Wuhan would become a center of national defense during the occupation. In 1938, Fafang and other students of Taixu such as Yinshun (1906-2005), also reached Chongqing. Taixu appointed Fafang as the co-director of the Hanzang Jiaoli Yuan, so that Fazun could devote more time to translation. In 1939, upon Taixu’s request, Fazun translated Tsong kha pa’s *Sngags rim chen mo* (*C. Mizong daocidi lun*). Yinshun helped Fazun edit the final version of the text, which was published the same year in Beijing at the Puti Xuehui (Bodhi Society), another institution created by the Ninth Panchen Lama in the early 1930s.

During the Japanese occupation, Fazun devoted much time to translating Tibetan works into Chinese, but also Chinese works into Tibetan. In 1942, he translated into Chinese Tsong

---

<sup>254</sup> Ibid., p. 71.

Kha pa's *Dbu ma la 'jug pa'i rgya cher bshad pa dgongs pa rab gsal* (C. *Ru zhonglun shanxian miyi shu*, "Illumination of the Thought, Extensive Explanation of the *Entrance into the Middle Way*"). The same year, he completed Dayong's translation of the *Lam rim chu ngu*. Because of Dayong's untimely death in Dkar mdzes, the Chinese version of the *Lam rim chung ngu* was lacking Tsong kha pa's final chapters on the cultivation of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*. In 1939, Ngag dbang mkhan po, who was then in Chengdu teaching the gradual path to his Chinese disciples, had already asked Fazun to produce a summary of the text to append to Dayong's translation. In 1942, Fazun produced a full translation of the two sections. He then also compiled for his language classes the earliest Tibetan grammar entitled *Zangwen wenfa*, and the first Tibetan primer entitled *Zangwen duben*.

In 1946, after the end of the war, Fazun accepted a request from Stong dpon dge bshes (C. Dongben geshi, d.u.), a scholar from 'Bras 'spungs who had taught at the Hanzang Jiaoli Yuan in 1937-38, to translate into Tibetan the *Mahāvibhāṣāśāstra* (C. *Dapiposha lun*, T. *Bye brag bshad mdzod chen mo*), a massive work in two hundred fascicles that Xuanzang had originally translated from Sanskrit into Chinese in the seventh century. In the summer of 1949, within three years of uninterrupted work, Fazun completed the translation of the *Mahāvibhāṣāśāstra*. He then consigned the manuscript to Bskal bzang ye shes (C. Gesang yuexie, d.u.) in Dar tse mdo, where the Tibetan *Mahāvibhāṣāśāstra* would survive the Cultural Revolution.<sup>255</sup>



<sup>255</sup> Fazun's translation was published in Beijing in 2011. See Kātyāyanīputra, trans., Blo bzang chos 'phags (Fazun), *Chos mngon pa bye brag tu bshad pa chen po bzhugs so* (Beijing: Krung go'i Bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2011).

Between the foundation of the People's Republic in 1949 and the onset of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, one of Fazun's books would become the source of another book about the history of Tibetan Buddhism. In the early 1960s, Fazun's *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi* ("Political and Religious History of the Tibetan Nation"), published in 1940 in Chongqing, served as the source text for Wang Sen's *Guanyu Xizang Fojiaoshi de shibian ziliao* ("Sources on the History of Tibetan Buddhism in Ten Chapters"). Published in 1987 as *Xizang Fojiao Fazhan Shilüe*, Wang Sen's work, like Fazun's book, told the history of Buddhism in Tibet from a Tibetan perspective. After the Cultural Revolution, (1) Li Yizhuo's *Xizang Fojiao shi*, (2) Lü Cheng's *Xizang Foxue yuanliu*, (3) Fazun's *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi*, (3) Wang Sen's *Guanyu Xizang Fojiao shi de shibian ziliao*, together with Li Youyi's translation of (4) Helmut Hofmann's *The Religions of Tibet*, provided a new generation of Chinese scholars with the basic materials upon which they would narrate a new history of *Lamajiao*—and of the contemporary PRC's *Zangchuan Fojiao*.

Unlike Li Yizhuo's and Lü Cheng's studies, both published about a decade earlier, in his *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi* Fazun does not rely on Japanese sources that identify Tibetan Buddhism with *Mikkyō*. Similarly, he does not employ European histories that portray Tantrism as the final and degenerate age of Buddhism in India. Instead, Fazun's innovation in the study of Tibetan Buddhism in China is to present to his readers the history of the Tibetan nation according to both Chinese and Tibetan sources. His Chinese sources included the dynastic genealogies of the Chinese empires, such as the essay called "Tufan zhuan" ("Monograph of the Tufan") of the Song dynasty work entitled *Xin Tangshu* ("New History of the Tang"). Fazun's Tibetan sources include Bu ston's *Chos 'byung* and Thu'u bkwan's *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long*. Indeed, these two histories of Tibetan religion were also Hoffmann's main sources for his

*Quellen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Bon-Religion*, the habilitation thesis on which he worked during World War II. Whereas Fazun read both works in the Tibetan, Hoffmann read them in English, in the 1932 translation by the Russian Tibetologist Eugene Evgenyevich Obermiller (1901-1935), and in Chandra Das's 1881 translation of Thu'u bkwan's discussion of Bon. In the hands of the Chinese monk and the German Orientalist, similar sources in the Tibetan language would tell a very different history of the religions of Tibet.

In his *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi*, Fazun discusses the Bon religion to introduce a first innovation: a periodization of the history of Buddhism in Tibet that remained foreign to Li Yizhuo's and to Lü Cheng's books. In the opening paragraph of the book, Fazun writes:

The historical works composed by Tibetans discuss at great length the rise and fall of religion, touching upon the political institutions of a given time by providing the biography of the individuals who initiated it and made it glorious. Such cannot be separated from religion, for if one separates it from religion, then it has no value as a historical record. Therefore, historical records do not reach beyond the rise and fall of religion. There are two religions of Tibet: (1) the original religion of the way of the gods, called *beng pu* (*bon po*), which had been passed down to our day, and which still has its worshippers; and (2) Buddhism, which has begun to be introduced from India during the Tang dynasty. In the early years of Emperor Wuzong it disappeared entirely, but during the Song it became glorious once again. Therefore, in Tibetan history, all Buddhism prior to Wuzong of the Tang is called "old Buddhism," or "early dissemination." The Buddhism that then rose again is called "new Buddhism," or "later dissemination." In this manner, before the Tang there was only the religion of the way of the gods and no trace of Buddhism. In the later dissemination, the newly risen Buddhism once again fell into decay, until Tsong kha pa appeared, and, with his reforms, revived it, giving thus shape to the religious and political institutions of the past six centuries. Therefore, Tibetan history divides into two chapters: (1) Ancient History, that is, from the time Buddhism had not been introduced, through the introduction and dissemination of Buddhism, up to the time when the Yellow Religion had not risen; and (2) Modern History, that is, from Tsong kha pa's creation of the Yellow Religion to the present time.<sup>256</sup>

For the first time in a Chinese work, Fazun presents the history of Tibet by granting the voice of this history to Tibetan historians. In this history, Tibetan institutions had a twofold

---

<sup>256</sup> See Fazun, *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi*, 1 (Beijing: Xinhua shudian, [1940] 1991), p. 1. I would like to thank Brenton Sullivan for sharing with me his insights regarding the present book.

character: a political and a religious aspect that could not be separated. According to historical records dating to the Tang dynasty, Fazun explains, Tibet had two religions. The first of the two religions, the “religion of the way of the gods” (C. *shendao jiao*) was the Bon religion (C. *Bengpu*, whose spelling Fazun also provides in brackets in the Tibetan script, T. *Bon po*). The second religion of Tibet was Buddhism (C. *Fojiao*). After its introduction from India during the Tang dynasty, the history of Buddhism unfolded into two periods. The first period was the period of the “old Buddhism.” It was the period of the old traditions (T. *rnying ma*) that developed from the seventh to the ninth centuries, during the period of the “early dissemination” (T. *bstan pa snga dar*, C. *qian hong qi*). The second period was the period of the new traditions (T. *gsar ma*) that thrived from the tenth through the thirteenth century, during the “later dissemination” (T. *bstan pa phyi dar*, C. *hou hong qi*) of Buddhism. And here, with a gesture through which he exalts his own Dge lugs tradition, Fazun introduces a further innovation. He divides Tibetan history into ancient history (C. *gudai shi*) and modern history (C. *jindai shi*).

In spite of this deliberate division, in his *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi* Fazun conveyed a story of the national religion of Tibet that differs in one important respect from the story that Hoffmann told in Berlin during the same years of World War II. For Fazun, the ancient Buddhism of Tibet was not a form of *Mijiao*, in the sense that his teacher Dayong intended the term during the revival of Tantrism. Nor was the modern Buddhism of Tibet *Lamajiao*, the union of Indian Tantrism and with Bon’s Shamanism, as Hoffmann understood these terms in his sources. In fact, the term *Lamajiao* is entirely absent in Fazun’s work. Further, in Fazun’s Chinese, the terms *Mijiao* and *Misheng* convey what the terms *Rgyud sde* (S. *Tantra*) and *Gsang sngags theg pa* (S. *Guhyamantrayāna*) convey in Tibetan. Hence, there is no sense of decline embedded in Fazun’s *Mijiao*, nor does he imply that *Mijiao* is in any way different from *Fojiao*.

Accordingly, Fazun portrays for the first time in a Chinese work the major and minor Tibetan religious orders of the Bka' gdams pa (C. Jiadang pai), Sa skya pa (C. Sajia pai), Bka' brgyud pa (C. Jiaju pai), Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa (C. Xiangba Jiaju pai), Zhi byed pa (C. Xijie pai), Gcod yul pa (C. Jueyu pai), Jo nang pa (C. Juenang pai). At the same time, he provides short biographies of the great figures of Tibetan religious history, including Śāntarakṣita, Padmasambhava, and Kamalaśīla, but also Mar pa and Mi la ras pa, Atiśa and Tsong kha pa, together with the great masters he had known in his own lifetime, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and the Ninth Panchen Lama. Indeed, Fazun portrays the religion of these great figures not in terms of *Mijiao*, but as different kinds of Buddhist teachings, such as those of the *Mdo* class, including the scriptures of the Mādhyamika, Yogācāra, and the *Abhidharma*, together with those of the “*Mibu*,” that is, the scriptures contained in the *Rgyud* class of the Tibetan canon. Still, the most important feature of Fazun's *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi* is not the absence of the term *Lamajiao* or the new sense he gives to *Mijiao* in the Chinese language.

In 1940, only three years since the publication of his *Xiandai Xizang* and *Wo quguo de Xizang*, Fazun published a work that contains his most rigorous historical research of Tibetan sources. He called it *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi*. Here, Fazun abandons the term *Xizang Fojiao*, a term that had marked the events of the revival of Tantrism during the early years of the Republic, in favor of another term. *Xizang Fojiao*, “Tibetan Buddhism,” becomes simply *Fojiao*, “Buddhism.” In the Tibetan nation that Fazun visited, Buddhism was then just China's *Fojiao*. Two decades later, when Wang Sen completed his ten chapters on the sources about Tibetan Buddhism, and when Li Youyi erased the Tibetan nation from Hoffmann's Lamaism, the Tibetan nation, with its political and religious history, already existed in Chinese in a language that lay beyond any definition of *Lamajiao*, or *Xizang Fojiao*. Fazun, “the Xuanzang of modern times,”

writes in his book, “There are two religions of Tibet: (1) the original religion of the way of the gods, called *beng pu (bon po)*, which has been passed down to our day, and which still has its worshippers; and (2) Buddhism [Fojiao], which has begun to be introduced from India during the Tang dynasty.”<sup>257</sup>

In October 1964, in the prologue of the first edition of his *Guanyu Xizang Fojiao shi de shibian ziliao*, published in three hundred copies for government use, Wang Sen relates to the Chinese Academy of Sciences his difficulties in retrieving sources in Tibetan for his history. Furthermore, he admits that his training in Marxist theory was below average. Hence, he describes the limitations of his work in terms of methodology: (1) he had no previous knowledge of the history of Tibetan Buddhism; (2) he had not conducted any fieldwork on the current state of Tibetan Buddhism; (3) his knowledge of Tibetan economy and society was barely adequate; (4) he had difficulties in reading Tibetan; (5) his sources in Chinese were extremely scant; and he (6) he lacked works of other scholars to use as reference. Fortunately, Wang Sen had read the works of some Tibetan lamas who had visited China in the previous decades, and who had taught Tibetan Buddhism there. Still, his insight into the sources did not produce the results he hoped for. “Therefore, these materials of ours must contain very many mistakes and shortcomings.”<sup>258</sup>

In 1987, when his book was finally published in Beijing as *Xizang Fojiao fazhan shilüe* (“Concise History of the Development of Tibetan Buddhism”), the book had not changed much. It retained the structure of Fazun’s *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi*, listing Fazun’s Chinese and Tibetan sources, including Thu’u bkwan’s *Grub mtha’ shel gyi me long*, yet not Bu ston’s *Chos*

---

<sup>257</sup> Fazun is often defined as “the Xuanzang of modern times” since Françoise Wang-Toutain, in the first study about Fazun to appear in a European language, defined the Chinese translator as “le Xuanzang des temps modernes:” see Françoise Wang-Toutain, “Quand les maîtres chinois s’éveillent au bouddhisme tibétain. Fazun: le Xuanzang des temps modernes,” in *Bulletin de l’École Française d’Extrême Orient*, 2, 87 (2000): 707-727.

<sup>258</sup> See Wang Sen, *Guanyu Xizang Fojiao shi de shibian ziliao* (Beijing: Zhongguo kexueyuan minzu yanjiusuo, 1964).

'byung. Wang Sen also kept the European sources of his 1964 book, Tucci's *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* and Hoffmann's *The Religions of Tibet*. Unlike Wang Furen's *Xizang Fojiao shilüe* ("A Brief History of Tibetan Buddhism"), published in 1982, and Li Jicheng's *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong* ("Tibetan Buddhism - Tantrism") published in 1989 at the time of the martial law in Tibet, Wang Sen's *Xizang Fojiao fazhan shilüe* reflected the history of Tibetan Buddhism as it emerged from Chinese and Tibetan sources. Drawing from Fazun's *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi*, Wang Sen did not talk about Tantrism, nor did he elaborate Hoffmann's theory of Bon and Shamanism. Fazun and Wang Sen wrote their books before the Cultural Revolution, before the science of *Zangchuan fojiao* emerged during the 1980s.



During the 1940s, while at the Hanzang Jiaoli Yuan, Taixu published in *Haichao yin* a series of essays inspired by Fazun's recent translations of Tsong kha pa's works. Fazun's translations helped Taixu gain a deeper understanding of the Mādhyamika and Yogācāra doctrines and the debates that had been unknown in China until the 1930s. And yet, nearing the end of his life, Fazun's work did little to change what Taixu already knew of the history of Buddhism and Tantrism in India. Indeed, the essays that Taixu wrote in his last years would provide later generations of Chinese scholars with influential notions of Buddhist history. After 1949, later generations of Chinese scholars would classify the forms of Buddhism that existed on the territory of the newly established People's Republic with notions that Taixu popularized during World War II.



In 1940, in the essay entitled “Wo zenyang panshe yiqie fofa” (“How I Classify the Buddhadharma in its Entirety”), Taixu explains that his understanding of the history the Buddhism has evolved over three periods. In the first period, from 1908, when he became Yang Wenhui’s student, to 1914, Taixu understood the history of Buddhism according to traditional Chinese historiography. He believed that Buddhism in its entirety could be divided into doctrines (C. *zong*) and teachings (C. *jiao*). Thus, according to the most renowned scholars of the Ming dynasty, such as Yunqi Zhuhong and Zhixu, doctrines and teachings included five gateways into the Buddhadharma: (1) meditation (C. *chan*), (2) exegesis (C. *jiang*), (3) discipline (C. *lü*), (4) pure land (C. *jing*), and (5) teachings (C. *jiao*). Meditation, that is, the transmission outside of the scriptures in the (1) Chan tradition, belonged to the doctrines. Exegesis comprised the teachings of the three traditions (2) of Tiantai, Huayan, and Sanlun. Discipline belonged to the (3) Lü tradition, and the pure land to the (4) Jingtuo tradition. Finally, Taixu observes, the last category of teachings was the (5) *Mijiao*, in the form that had become popular during the Ming dynasty, such as the chanting of the mantras of the *Lengyan jing* in the morning, or the recitation of the *yankou* ritual during the evening. Thus, in the first period Taixu believed that Buddhism in its entirety comprised *zong*, or doctrines, that is, the meditation that transcends language, along with *jiao*, or teachings, that is, all activities of explanation and recitation that involved the use of language.

In 1915, Taixu began to define the Buddhadharma in an entirely new way. During a retreat on Mount Putuo, one of China’s Buddhist mountains situated near Shanghai, as he wrote his “Zhengli sengjia zhidu lun” (“Treatise on the Reorganization of the Saṃgha Institutions”), Taixu began to conceive Buddhist history in terms of the divisions of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. The Hīnayāna, Taixu observes, was the initial step into the Mahāyāna; it was the Mahāyāna’s

*upāya* (C. *fangbian*). Therefore, the Hīnayāna could be regarded as the supplement (C. *fushu*) of the Mahāyāna. “Hence, I believed that the fundamental doctrines of Buddhism were only in the Mahāyāna, as the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā* says, ‘There is only one vehicle, not two or three,’ in order to illustrate these doctrines.”<sup>259</sup> What this meant was that among the Buddha’s disciples, those of the Hīnayāna, because of their lower capacities, were satisfied with a lesser result, believing that their nirvāṇa was the final goal. However, the true goal was the buddhahood of the Mahāyāna. Hence, Taixu rehearsed the history he had learned during his training in Nanjing with his teacher Yang Wenhui. In China, there existed only three Hīnayāna traditions, the Pitan, Jushe, and Chengshi traditions, whereas the Mahāyāna traditions ultimately amounted to eight: (1) Tiantai, (2) Huayan (Xianshou), (3) Sanlun, (4) Weishi, (5) Chan, (6) Lü, (7) Jingtū, and (8) Mizong. In this period, Taixu believed that all eight traditions were equal (C. *pingdeng*) in terms of their fruit (C. *guo*), which was Buddhahood for all. The eight Mahāyāna traditions of China, differed only in the practices (C. *xing*) that led to the fruit of Buddhahood. “The eight traditions were all equal, each having its own special point, therefore I would not show particular inclinations, or even say that this was good and this was bad, or this was high and this was low.”<sup>260</sup> Indeed, the eight schools were all Mahāyāna schools, even the *Mizong*.

Finally, in the third period from 1924 to 1942, Taixu discusses the history of Buddhism through Oriental philology’s view of the formation of the Tripiṭaka. Imagining what the Dharma looked like when the Buddha was alive in ancient India, Taixu writes:

I thought: when the Buddha was alive, the Buddha was the foundation of the Dharma, and the Dharma had the Buddha as its master and refuge; although on some occasions the words he spoke were immeasurably different, there were no distinction into Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna, sudden or gradual teachings, therefore with the Buddha as the foundation of the Dharma, the Dharma as a whole was of one flavor; what the Buddha said was just

<sup>259</sup> See Taixu, “Wo zenyang panshe yiqie fofa,” in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, 1 (Taipei: Taixu dashi quanshu yingyin weiyuanhui, 1970), p. 511.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 512.

what the Buddha said. Although those who heard the teachings understood them according to their special inclinations, one cannot separate them on the basis of this. Hence one cannot by all means divide them into traditions. Because the Buddha is unique, the Dharma he speaks is certainly of one flavor. Yet, after the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*, the Dharma of the Buddha was no longer of the same flavor.<sup>261</sup>

Although the Buddha set forth one teaching, this teaching changed with the formation of the Tripitaka. Moving to the last transformation of his notion of the history of Buddhism, Taixu divides this history into three great periods: (1) *xiao xing da yin shiqi* (the age when the Hīnayāna is popular and the Mahāyāna is hidden), (2) *da zhu xiao cong shiqi* (the age when the Mahāyāna leads and the Hīnayāna follows), and (3) *da xing xiao yin mi zhu xian cong* (the age when the Mahāyāna is popular and the Hīnayāna is hidden, and when *Mizong* leads and *Xianzong* follows). The first Buddhist compilation (*C. jieji*), Taixu reminds his readers, was presided over by Kāśyapa, Ānanda, and Upāli during the first council, during which the Buddha's early disciples collected the so-called Tripitaka. Then, two hundred years after the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*, discord developed among the disciples, until the Buddhist traditions became twenty in number, giving shape to what would be the Hīnayāna as a whole, with its many interpretations of the Buddha's teachings. "And this is the Pāli Tripitaka that was transmitted to Ceylon and elsewhere."<sup>262</sup> Successively, five hundred years after the *parinirvāṇa*, there occurred other fractures among the Hīnayāna traditions. Still, these divisions did not produce modifications in the Hīnayāna Tripitaka. Moreover, although in this period the Mahāyāna teachings were already present in the Buddhadharma, this was the period of greater success for the Hīnayāna.

Having identified the early form of Buddhism with that of Ceylon, Taixu concludes his discussion of Buddhist history by linking the second and third periods of Indian Buddhism with

---

<sup>261</sup> Ibid., p. 514.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid., p. 515.

two other forms of Buddhism in the contemporary world. And so, in the second period, six hundred years after the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*, the Mahāyāna began to flourish with great figures such as Aśvaghōṣa, Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Asaṅga, and Vasubandhu. In this period, the Hīnayāna scriptures and teachings still existed. But they had fallen into a subsidiary position. Therefore, Taixu remarks, one could call this period the period in which Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna coexisted, or the period when the Mahāyāna began to be more important than the Hīnayāna. As for the third period, about one thousand and two hundred years after the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*, the Mādhyamika saw the appearance of Bhāvaviveka, and the Yogācāra of Dharmapāla, who debated about emptiness (*C. kong*) and existence (*C. you*). The seeds of their debate, however, already existed in the second period, when the Mahāyāna had become prominent. Hence, Taixu explains what distinguished the third period from the second. "After this time, the dissemination of the Mahāyāna had already reached its peak, and the Hīnayāna had become almost non-existent. Due to the great development of the Mahāyāna, the Buddhadharma then became widespread among the people. And in this very moment, Nāgabodhi and others came and spread the Secret Mantra, taking the popular customs of India and mixing them within. Therefore, the secret methods began to develop, and this may be called the age of the flourishing of Secret Mantra."<sup>263</sup> Again, Taixu clarifies that in this third period the Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna teachings did not disappear, they were simply subsumed in the practice of Secret Mantra (*C. Mizhou*). Hence, the flourishing of *Mizong* in India could be traced back about one thousand years after the Buddha's passing into *nirvāṇa*, to the third period that he called "the age when *Mizong* leads and *Xianzong* follows."<sup>264</sup> At the time of Xuanzang, the *Mizhou* had not yet become popular, yet when Yijing traveled to India a few decades later, the *Mizhou* was very widespread, to the point

---

<sup>263</sup> Ibid., pp. 516-7.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid., p. 517.

that, observes Taixu, Yijing describes his fellow students learning the secret mantras. This was also proved by the fact that Nālanda, a center of *Xianjiao*, had been transformed into a *Mizong* monastery. Later on, drawing on Lü Cheng's history, Taixu remarks, Vikramaśīla was entirely dedicated to *Mijiao*.

Toward the conclusion of his 1942 essay, Taixu identifies these three great forms of Buddhism in ancient India with three great forms of Buddhism in the modern nations of 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 world.”<sup>265</sup> These three great systems, according to Taixu, were linguistic systems, but also systems in which Buddhism, departing from India, had developed according to the characteristics of a specific place. Hence, the (1) Hīnayāna form of Buddhism that developed in the early period took Ceylon as its center in the modern world, and from Ceylon it then disseminated to Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, and to the Malay archipelago: this was the “Buddhism of the Pāli linguistic system” (C. *Bali wenxi Fojiao*), or “Ceylon system of Buddhism” (C. *Xilan xi Fojiao*). The (2) Mahāyāna form of Buddhism that flourished in India in the second period then took China as its center, and from China it then spread to Korea, Japan, and Vietnam: for Taixu, this form of Buddhism could be called the “Buddhism of the Chinese linguistic system” (C. *Han wenxi Fojiao*), or else, the “Chinese system of Buddhism” (C. *Zhongguo xi Fojiao*). Lastly, the (3) “Secret Mantra” form that developed during the third phase of Buddhism in India, in the modern world took “China's Tibet” (C. *Zhongguo de Xizang*) as its center, and, from Tibet, it disseminated to Khams, Mongolia, Gansu, and Nepal: this form of Buddhism could be called “Buddhism in the Tibetan language” (C. *Zangwen Fojiao*), or “Tibetan system of Buddhism” (C. *Xizang xi Fojiao*).

---

<sup>265</sup> Ibid., p. 517.

Concluding his discussion, Taixu then writes:

In sum, when the Buddha was alive in ancient India, his teachings were of one unique flavor, and there were no divisions into vehicles or doctrines; therefore, the Buddha was the refuge and master of the entire Dharma, the Buddha was the root of the Dharma, and the Dharma was of one flavor. After the Buddha passed into *nirvāṇa*, Buddhism in India divided into three periods, and until our present day it has spread to all nations of the world, transforming into the Pāli, Chinese, and Tibetan languages.<sup>266</sup>

After growing into three distinct periods, Indian Buddhism had spread to all the nations of the world in the three languages of Ceylon, China, and Tibet. The forms of Buddhism that existed in the Pāli, Chinese, and Tibetan languages contained the forms of Buddhism that had developed in ancient India over the three periods of its development.

There is something unsettling, or at least, excessively neat and oversimplified, about Taixu's grand narrative. During the revival of Tantrism in Republican China something clearly went wrong in his classification of the history of Buddhism. For, in order to convey this history, Taixu had to leave one important thing out. In his picture of Buddhism in the modern world, Taixu failed to include the Sanskrit language, in the scriptures that had been preserved by the Newar community of Nepal. In Taixu's classification, the Buddhism of Nepal belonged to *Zangwen Fojiao*, or *Xizang xi Fojiao*.

Taixu's classification of the history of Buddhism would not have been true one century earlier, when, in the 1840s, Eugène Burnouf analyzed the Nepalese collection of Sanskrit books that Brian Hodgson had dispatched to Paris. It was in Burnouf's *Introduction*, in his analysis of the tantras, that Taixu's history was first formulated. The Sanskrit term *Tantra*, that is, what Taixu called *Mijiao*, was what guided Burnouf in his theory about the origins and development of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka in ancient India, whereby Buddhism could be said to have developed into three, or four distinct forms. Hence, for Burnouf, the first form of Buddhism belonged to the

---

<sup>266</sup> Ibid., p. 519.

simple sūtras, where Śākyamuni taught a simple morality to an audience made of humans and gods. The second form of Buddhism belonged to what Burnouf called the developed sūtras, where the Buddha preached the Mahāyāna, conversing with buddhas such as Amitābha and with bodhisattvas such as Avalokiteśvara. In the third form of Buddhism, the first two forms had been altered by the popular idolatry of Śaivism. Mantras and dhāraṇīs, absent in most simple sūtras, and yet present in the developed sūtras, had developed into the system of the tantras. Finally, in the fourth form of Buddhism, the compilers of the tantras had taken the theistic elements of Amitābha and Avalokiteśvara, transforming them into the adoration of a supreme being called Ādi Buddha in the *Kālacakra tantra*. And so, Ādi Buddha, venerated in the modern world in Nepal, together with the Sanskrit *navadharmā*, did not fit into Taixu's new history of Buddhism.

Since his early training in Nanjing, the changes in Taixu's understanding of Buddhist history were guided by his shifting understanding of the category of *Mijiao*. After the Cultural Revolution, Chinese scholars, among whom some of his former students, would take Taixu's claims, transforming his hypothetical statements into a compelling discourse. With his new terms *Han wenxi Fojiao*, *Zangwen Fojiao*, and *Bali yuxi Fojiao*, Taixu in fact provided future generations of scholars with the foundation for a new classification of the forms of Buddhism within the territory of the People's Republic. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the names of Taixu's three forms of Buddhism in the modern world were localized to China. Chinese Buddhism (C. *Zhongguo fojiao*) could then be said to embrace three major forms, preserved in three of the sacred languages of Buddhism: Chinese, Tibetan, and Pāli. The three forms were: *Hanchuan Fojiao*, *Zangchuan Fojiao*, and *Daichuan Fojiao*.

## CONCLUSION

In 2001, a decade after martial law ended in Tibet and after the publication of Li Jicheng's *Zangchuan Fojiao - Mizong*, a neologism was recorded in Melvyn Goldstein's *The New Tibetan-English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan*. The brief entry, providing the new Tibetan word *Bod brgyud nang bstan* offered an existing English expression as its translation. This English expression was "Tibetan Buddhism."<sup>267</sup> The word *Bod brgyud nang bstan* was the Tibetan equivalent of the Chinese term *Zangchuan Fojiao*. As neologisms, both seemed to have no previous translation in English. The two terms expressed an idea whose meaning was foreign to the sense of the old Chinese term *Xizang Fojiao*. As a result, this meaning appeared to be also foreign to the English term, which had translated, and still translates to our day, the sinograph *Xizang Fojiao* in Taiwan and *Seizō Bukkyō* in Japan.

Although imperfect, in *The New Tibetan-English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan* the translation of the new Tibetan term had been made possible. The dictionary's simple equivalence between the Tibetan and the English term had created the potential for a shared meaning. Li's erasure of Tibetan Buddhism in Chinese now entered the Tibetan language. As this dissertation has sought to demonstrate, in acts of equivalence that may at first seem simple, translation can become a powerful means of control. In the end, should the English term "Tibetan Buddhism" matter at all in China's ongoing colonization of Tibet?

This dissertation has centered on the many ways in which Tibetan Buddhism has been

---

<sup>267</sup> See Melvyn C. Goldstein, ed., *The New Tibetan-English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press), p. 726.



understood in China over three generations of late-Imperial and early-Republican Buddhist innovators: in the historical works by Wei Yuan; in the canonical catalogs and modern textbooks by the publisher and educator Yang Wenhui; in studies of Tibetan Buddhism and Tantrism by scholars in Yang's lineage such as Li Yizhuo and Lü Cheng; in Taixu's essays about the revival of Tantrism and in his quest for Japan's and Tibet's *Mijiao*; in the essays on modern Tibet and in the books on Tibetan history that Fazun produced during the Japanese occupation, relying for the first time on Tibetan sources. I have argued that the work of these early innovators reveals fissures between the Republican-era discourse of *Mijiao* and that of the contemporary People's Republic; one such fissure is found in their grand narratives about the role of Tibetan Buddhism and Tantrism in Chinese Buddhist history. I have examined the response of these figures to global trends in Buddhist studies, identifying their various individual motives.

The main goal of this dissertation has been to offer a genealogy of Tibetan Buddhism during the revival of Tantrism in modern China. As I have acknowledged in the introduction, one of the self-imposed boundaries of my study is that the dissertation only charts the history of the term *Xizang Fojiao* in the discourse about *Mijiao* and *Mizong* in the latter half of the nineteenth and in the first half of the twentieth century. After a preamble on the anthropological study of Tantrism in the PRC before and after the Cultural Revolution, the first half of the dissertation has explored the understanding of Tantrism in what I have called the "origins of the revival" of Buddhism in late Imperial China, and the role of Tantrism in the formation of the Buddhist Tripitaka in Europe and East Asia during the nineteenth century. In the second half of the dissertation, I have discussed the changing names and meanings of *Mijiao* and *Xizang Fojiao* during the first decades of the Republican period, repositioning the discussion on the European origins of the revival of Tantrism, and discussing the first history of Buddhism in Tibet based on

Tibetan sources. I have shown how Republican-era revivalists, who made historical claims about a golden age of Tantrism in China in a nostalgic mode, were the primary audience of the endeavor of bringing the *Mijiao* rituals, *abhiṣekas*, and instructions back from Tibet. The boundaries of my study are mainly imposed by my selection of materials in Chinese, Japanese, and European languages written within the timeframe of my focus.

The discourse of Lamaism has a long history in China and in Europe. The implications of this discourse in China's ongoing occupation of Tibet have so far been little explored. In the introduction, I sought to show that Helmut Hoffmann's particular image of Lamaism—the blending of Indian Tantrism and Siberian Shamanism—was germane to the formation of the new term *Zangchuan Fojiao* in the Chinese language. But China's discourse of Tibetan Buddhism has deeper roots. The emergence of the new term *Zangchuan Fojiao* does not simply entail the erasure of *Xizang Fojiao*, intended as the Tibetan form of Buddhism. During the revival of Tantrism, when the term *Xizang Fojiao* began to circulate in China (as a loan word from Japanese), the notions of “Tibetan Buddhism,” “Chinese Buddhism,” “Indian Buddhism,” and “Ceylon Buddhism” had been in circulation in the European languages for about a century.

In terms of method, therefore, the scope of this dissertation is limited by the fact that it only partially considers the parallel genealogy of the words denoting the plurality of forms of Buddhism in European languages. Therefore, this dissertation does not offer a historical analysis of its own discourse. It shows instead how this discourse took root in China after the discourse of Tantrism and Tibetan Buddhism had already become established in Europe. Still, many of the implications of this parallel genealogy of Tibetan Buddhism unfold in the pages of this dissertation. The materials in Chinese and Japanese show the continuities and discontinuities in the many senses that the term Tibetan Buddhism has assumed in the discourse of *Mijiao* over the

course of time.

During the short-lived revival of Tantrism, the terms *Mijiao* and *Mizong* acquired new meaning in Chinese. Before the twentieth century, Buddhist exegetes briefly used the terms *Mizong* and *Mijiao* to explain the presence of mantras and dhāraṇīs in Buddhist scriptures, and to exalt their value among the Buddha's teachings. But these terms also denoted in a more general way the subtlety of the Buddha's intention, and the teachings the Buddha explained with a particular purpose and for a particular audience. A first change in meaning occurred in the last decades of the nineteenth century, with the adoption in Japan and China of Zhixu's classification of the Buddhist canon. But the major change occurred with Lü Cheng, when *Mijiao* and *Mizong* assumed the meaning of the concept of Tantrism, elaborated by Louis de la Vallée Poussin around the same time Yang Wenhui worked with Nanjō Bunyū on the modern Chinese Tripiṭaka.

The roots of China's nostalgia for its lost *Mijiao* can be traced back to the European discourse of Tantra in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Existing scholarship on the revival of Tantrism follows Taixu's account, placing the revival in the historical period between 1915-1935. In this dissertation I have challenged this narrative. I have shown how Taixu's narrative of the origins of the movement is itself a narrative that traces its origins to the European study of Buddhism. Unlike Welch, by the term "revival" I do not only refer to the "movement" of monks and scholars who went to Japan and Tibet in this period. Instead, by the revival of Tantrism I intend the modern invention of Chinese Buddhism. For, the articulation of the object "Chinese Buddhism" has also deep roots in China's past during the nineteenth century, in both the imperial policies of the ruling Qing dynasty and of the European colonial powers. The category of *Mjiao* played an important role in the construction of this object. The irony is that China's nostalgia for its lost *Mijiao* bears profound implications for Tibet.

In the first chapter, in what I called the “erasure of the Tibetan nation” from the name of Tibetan Buddhism, I sought to show the particular working, in the case of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism, of the convention that represents geographical regions in relation to forms of Buddhism. In contemporary China, the term *Zangchuan Fojiao* demonstrates how this convention can be changed to transform the fate of a nation, in this case, Tibet, within a certain discourse, and for a particular purpose. However, the workings, or put another way, the mechanism of this convention, must be traced back to the nineteenth century study of Buddhism, to the European discourse of the plurality of forms of Buddhism in ancient India and in the modern nations of Asia.

The notions of “Indian Buddhism,” “Tibetan Buddhism,” “Chinese Buddhism,” and “Ceylon Buddhism” were the earliest conventions to appear in this discourse through the nineteenth century. Their emergence was closely related to the place of the category of Tantra in the study of Buddhism, but also with the European understanding of the geography of idolatry in the Buddhist world. In this discourse, the term Tantrism may be understood as the academic term for the idolatry of India (neither Hindu nor Buddhist), that European scholars imagined to have traveled, at different times and with different degrees, to the nations of Asia during the transmission of Buddhism from India. Hence, the logic of Tantrism outside of India implies its degree of blending with the local forms of worship found in the nations of Asia, in China, to form “Chinese Buddhism” and in the Tartar nations of Tibet, Mongolia, and Manchuria, to form “Tibetan Buddhism.”

Through my analysis, I have shown how, between the Opium War and the Cultural Revolution, the concept of *Mijiao* has articulated China’s imagination of the history of its own Buddhist tradition: “Chinese Buddhism.” In the process, Tibetan Buddhism was identified with

China's *Mijiao*. In this sense, what I call the "origins of the revival" are not the origins of the Republican-era movement, but the modern invention of the concept of *Mijiao*. Still, this *Mijiao* has little to do with the way in which Tibetans understand the Vajrayāna they inherited from India. Through the twentieth century, China's interest in Tibet's *Mijiao* was fueled by the nostalgia for *Mizong*, a tradition that never existed in China and Japan in the way it existed in India and Tibet.

This nostalgia has become embedded in China's colonial project in Tibet. To this day, PRC scholars have continued to understand the history of Chinese Buddhism through Japanese historiography from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As I showed in the first chapter in my close reading of Li Jicheng's study of Tibetan Buddhism, published in 1991 during martial law in Tibet, the narratives of the revival of Tantrism are reiterated in contemporary scholarship. Despite the end of the revival of Tantrism in 1937, in today's People's Republic *Zangchuan Fojiao* is *Mizong*, a religion entirely foreign and yet strangely familiar.

In the end, I return to the question I posed at the beginning: should the English term "Tibetan Buddhism" matter at all in China's use of the discourse of religion in its ongoing colonization of Tibet? I do not know the answer. My only contribution here is to say that "Tibetan Buddhism" is not a native category in Tibet. It is a category that scholars have used since the early nineteenth century to describe the Buddhism of Tibet. This is not to deny the usefulness of the concept in the academic study of Tibetan religion. Nor do I wish to diminish the importance of the concept of *Xizang Fojiao* in Taiwan and Japan, where this sinograph is still common. In China's discourse of *Mijiao*, the importance of *Xizang Fojiao* lies in recognizing Tibetan Buddhism as the Buddhism of the Tibetan nation; the replacement of this term in the People's Republic testifies to its importance. Upon reflection, however, the appearance of the

word *Bod brgyud nang bstan* in the colonial realm of Tibetan Buddhism leaves much to ponder.

One of the aims of this dissertation has been to direct the reader to Fazun's *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi*. Thus, the question may be reformulated as follows: can scholars of Tibet and Buddhism write histories of the political and religious institutions of the Tibetan nation without naming "Tibetan Buddhism" or "Xizang Fojiao"? The answer, I believe, lies in our understanding of the relation of Buddhism with Tantrism, for the history of the terms in English and in Chinese points to the logic that this type of convention reproduces when it is invoked. It is my hope that this study might provide scholars in various disciplines with new questions to ask about the study of Tibetan religion and China-Tibet relations.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### CHINESE SOURCES:

Chen, Bing 陈兵, and Deng, Zimei 邓子美. *Ershi shiji zhongguo fojiao* 二十世紀中國佛教 (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2000).

Chen, Menglei 陳夢雷. *Gujin tushu jicheng. Fangyu hubian. Bianyi dian* 古今圖書集成。方輿彙編。邊裔典 (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1934).

Ding, Fubao 丁福保. *Foxue dacidian* 佛學大辭典 (Shanghai: Shanghai chubanshe, 1995).

Dongchu 東初. *Zhongguo fojiao jindai shi* 中國佛教近代史 (Taibei: Zhonghua fojiao wenhua guan, 1974).

Fazun 法尊. *Wo quguo de xizang* 我去過的西藏 (Chongqing: Hanzang jiaoliyuan kanxing, 1937).

—. *Xiandai xizang* 現代西藏 (Chongqing: Hanzang jiaoliyuan kanxing, 1937).

—. *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi* 西藏民族政教史 (Chongqing: Chongqing Beibei mukeben, 1940).

—. *Xizang yu xizang fojiao* 西藏與西藏佛教 (Taibei: Tianhua, 1980).

—. *Xiandai xizang* 現代西藏 (Beijing: Xinhua shudian, [1937] 1991).

Hoffmann, Helmut. "Xizang de zongjiao," trans., Li Youyi, in Ge Lei, Zhang, Jianghua, eds., *Li Youyi yu zangxue yanjiu* 李有义与藏学研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, 2003).

Huang, Liyong 黃麗鏞. *Weiyuan nianpu* 魏源年譜 (Changsha: Jiangnan renmin chubanshe, 1985).

Huang, Yingjie 黃英傑. *Minguo mizong nianjian* 民國密宗年鑑 (Taibei: Quanfo wenhua chubanshe, 1995).

- Huili 慧立. *Datang daci'en si sanzang fashi zhuan* 大唐大慈恩寺三藏法師傳, T. vol. 50, no. 2053.
- Ji, Yun 紀昀, and Lu, Xixiong 陸錫熊. *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要 (Taipei: Dadong shuju, 1970).
- Jiang, Weiqiao 蔣維喬. *Zhongguo fojiao shi* 中國佛教史 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, [1929] 2009).
- Li, Jicheng 李冀誠. *Xizang Fojiao - Mizong* 西藏佛教密宗 (Beijing: Jinri zhongguo chubanshe, 1989).
- . *Fojiao Mizong baiwen* 佛教密宗百問 (Beijing: Zhongguo jianshe chubanshe, 1989).
- . *Zangchuan Fojiao* 藏傳佛教 (Beijing: Jinri zhongguo chubanshe, 1991).
- Li, Yizhuo 李翊灼. “Xizang fojiao shilue 西藏佛教史略,” in *Minguo fojiao qikan wenxian jicheng* 民國佛教期刊文獻集成, 1, 2 (Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zhongxin).
- Lin, Chong'an 林崇安. *Xizang fojiao de tantao* 西藏佛教的探討 (Taipei: Huideng chubanshe, 1997).
- Lü Cheng 呂澂. *Xizang foxue yuanlun* 西藏佛學原論 (Taipei: Laogu chubanshe, [1933] 1979).
- . *Fojiao yanjiu fa* 佛教研究法 (Taipei: Taiwan yinjing chu, [1926] 1955),
- Lü, Tiegang 呂鐵鋼. “Fazun fashi yi zhu nianbiao 法尊法師譯著年表,” in *Fayin* 法音, 12 (1990): 14-19.
- . *Fazun fashi lunwenji* 法尊法師論文集 (Taipei: Daqian chubanshe, 2000).
- Miaozhou 妙舟. *Meng zang fojiao shi* 蒙藏佛教史 (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, [1935] 1988).
- Sun, Houzai 孫厚在. “Dayong asheli zhuan 大勇阿闍黎傳,” in *Haichao Yin* 海潮音, 11, 4 (1930).
- Taixu 太虛. Ed., Yinshun, *Taixu dashi quanshu* 太虛大師全書 (Taipei: Taixu dashi quanshu yingyin weiyuanhui, 1970).
- Tong, Jie 同傑. “Yi Fazun shangshi 憶法尊上師,” in *Fayin* 法音, 12 (1990): 6-10.
- Wang, Hongyuan 王弘願. *Mizong gangyao* 密宗綱要 (Taipei: Tianhua, [1918] 1981).



- . *Mijiao jiangxi lu* 密教講習录, 5 voll. (Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 2009).
- Wang, Furen 王辅仁. *Xizang Fojiao Shilüe* 西藏佛教史略 (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1982).
- Wang, Sen 王森. *Guanyu Xizang Fojiaoshi de shibian ziliao* 關於西藏佛教史的十遍資料 (Beijing: Zhongguo kexuayuan minzu yanjiusuo, 1964).
- . *Xizang fojiao fazhan shilüe* 西藏佛教发展史略 (Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, [1987] 2002).
- Wei, Yuan 魏源. *Wei Yuan quanji* 魏源全集 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011).
- Xu, Mingyin 許明銀. *Xizang fojiao shi* 西藏佛教史 (Taipei: Fozhe shushe, 2006).
- . *Xizang mijiao* 西藏密教 (Taipei: Shihua, 2010).
- Yang, Wenhui 楊文會. *Yang Renshan jushi yizhu* 楊仁山居士遺著 (Taipei: Heluo tushu chubanshe, [1919] 1973).
- Yao, Ying 姚瑩. *Kang you ji xing* 康輶紀行 (Taipei: Guangwen shuju, 1968).
- Yinshun 印順. *Taixu fashi nianpu* 太虛法師年譜 (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua, 1995).
- Yu, Lingbo 于凌波. *Zhongguo jinxindai Fojiao renwu zhi* 中国近现代佛教人物志 (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 1995).
- . *Yang rensan jushi pingzhuan* 杨仁山居士评传 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1995).
- . *Minguo gaoseng zhuan xubian* 民國高僧傳續編 (Taipei: Banruo wenku, 1998).
- Zhiyi 智顓. *Tiantai sijiaoyi* 天台四教義, T. vol. 46, no. 1931.
- Zhixu 智旭. *Yuezang zhijin* 閱藏知津 (Nanjing: Jinling kejingchu, 1892).
- Zongkaba 宗喀巴. Trans., Dayong, Fazun. *Putidao cidi luelun* 菩提道次第论 (Shanghai: Shanghaishi xinwen, [1942] 1991).
- . Trans., Fazun. *Ru zhonglun shanxian miyi shu* 入中论善现密意疏 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 1987).
- . Trans., Fazun. *Mizong daocidi guanglun* 密宗道次第广论 (Taipei: Daqian, 1999).

— Trans., Fazun. *Zongkaba dashi ji* 宗喀巴大师集, 5 voll. (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2000).

— Trans., Fazun. *Puti daocidi guanglun* 菩提道次第广论 (Taipei: Fangguang wenhua shiye, 2002).

#### TIBETAN SOURCES:

Kātyāyanīputra, trans., Blo bzang chos 'phags (Fazun), *Chos mngon pa bye brag tu bshad pa chen po bzhugs so* (Beijing: Krung go'i Bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2011).

#### JAPANESE SOURCES:

Chin, Keitō (Chen, Jidong) 陳繼東. *Shinmatsu Bukkyō no kenkyū: Yō Bunkai o chūshin to shite* 清末仏教の研究 : 楊文会を中心として (Tōkyō: Sankibō Busshorin, 2003).

Ogurusu, Kōchō 小栗栖香頂. *Ramakyō engaku* 喇嘛教沿革 (Kyōto: Ishikawa Shundai, 1877).

— Ed., Chen, Jidong 陈继东, and Chen, Liwei 陈力卫. *Beijing jishi, Beijing jiyou* 北京纪事, 北京纪游 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008).

Sakaino Kōyō 境野黄洋. *Shina Bukkyō shikō* 支那佛教史綱 (Tōkyō: Mori'e shuten, 1907).

Shimada Bankon 島田蕃根, ed., et al. *Dai Nihon kōtei Daizōkyō mokuroku* 大日本校訂大藏經目錄 (Tōkyō: Kōkyō Shoin, Meiji 18 [1885]).

Yamaguchi, Zuihō 山口瑞鳳, ed., *Chibetto no Bukkyō to shakai* チベットの仏教と社会 (Tokyo: Shunjū-sha, 1986).

Uchida, Masao 内田正雄, and Nishimura, Shigeki 西村茂樹, *Yochi shiryaku* 輿地誌略 (Tokyo: Ushida Masayoshi, 1873).

#### SOURCES IN EUROPEAN LANGUAGES:

Abel-Rémusat, Jean-Pierre. *Foë Kouë Ki ou Relation des royaumes bouddhiques: Voyage dans la Tartarie, dans l'Afghanistan et dans l'Inde, exécuté à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle, par Chy Fă Hian* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1936).

- App, Urs. *The Birth of Orientalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).
- Bureau, André. *Les premiers conciles bouddhiques* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1955).
- . Trans. Boin-Webb, Sara, and Skilton, Andrew. *The Buddhist Schools of the Small Vehicle* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013).
- Beal, Samuel. *Abstract of Four Lectures on Buddhist Literature in China, Delivered at University College, London* (London: Trübner & Co., 1882).
- Bernstein, Anya. *Religious Bodies Politic: Rituals of Sovereignty in Buryat Buddhism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).
- Bianchi, Ester. *The Iron Statue Monastery. "Tiexiangsi", a Buddhist Nunnery of Tibetan Tradition in Contemporary China* (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 2001).
- . *L'insegnamento tantrico del 'lama cinese' Nenghai (1886-1967). Inquadramento storico e analisi testuale del corpus di Yamāntaka-Vajrabhairava.* (doctoral thesis, Paris-Venice: Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia – Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, 2003).
- . "The Movement of 'Tantric Rebirth' in Modern China, Esoteric Buddhism Re-vivified by the Japanese and Tibetan Traditions," in *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungarica*, 57 (2004): 31-54.
- Brokaw, Cynthia J., and Chow, Kai-Wing. *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
- Burnouf, Eugène. *Introduction à l'histoire du Bouddhisme indien* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1844).
- . Trans. Buffetrille, Katia, and Lopez, Donald S., Jr. *Introduction to the History of Indian Buddhism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).
- Chandra Das, Sarat. "Contributions on the Religion, History, &c. of Tibet," in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 50 (1881, part 1): 187-251.
- Chaudhuri, Saroj Kumar. "Siddham in China and Japan," in *Sino-Platonic Papers*, 88 (1998).
- Csoma de Kőrös, Alexander. "Analysis of the Dulva," in *Asiatic Researches*, 20 (1839, part 1): 43-93.
- . "Notices on the Life of Shakyā, Extracted from the Tibetan Authorities," in *Asiatic Researches*, 20 (1839, part 2): 286-317.

—. “Analysis of the Sher-chin—P’hal-chen—Dkon-séks—Do-de—Nyáng-das—and Gyut; being the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th divisions of the Tibetan Work, entitled the *Kah-gyur*,” in *Asiatic Researches*, 20 (1839, part 2): 393-585.

Dibeltulo, Martino. “Traces of Tantra: Buddhism and the World of Nations” (unpublished manuscript, 2014).

—. “I testi della scuola dGe lugs pa nella parole di Fazun fashi: Traduzione annotata e studio della sezione ‘Biepo weishizong’ nel *Ru zhonglun shanxian miyi shu* di Lama Tsongkhapa” (master’s thesis, Ca’ Foscari University of Venice, 2005).

Edkins, Joseph. *The Religious Condition of the Chinese, with Observations on the Prospect of Christian Conversion amongst that People* (London: Routledge, 1859).

—. *Chinese Buddhism, a Volume of Sketches, Historical, Descriptive, and Critical* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1880).

Eitel, John Ernst. *Hand-Book of Chinese Buddhism* (Hong Kong: Lane, Crawford & Co., 1870).

—. *Hand-Book of Chinese Buddhism, being a Sanskrit-Chinese Dictionary, with Vocabularies of Buddhist Terms in Pali, Singhalese, Siamese, Burmese, Tibetan, Mongolian and Japanese* (Hong Kong: Lane, Crawford & Co., 1888).

Esposito, Monica, ed. *Images of Tibet in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Paris: École française d’extrême orient, 2008).

Flaherty, Gloria. *Shamanism and the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

Fogel, Joshua. *The Cultural Dimension of Sino-Japanese Relations: Essays on the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Armonk: East Gate, 1995).

Foucaux, Philippe Édouard. *Histoire du Bouddha Sakya Mouni* (Paris: Benjamin Duprat, 1860).

Franke, Herbert. “Helmut Hoffmann 24.8.1912–8.10.1992,” in *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Jahrbuch 1992* (1993).

Goldfuss, Gabriele. *Vers un bouddhisme du XXXe siècle, Yang Wenhui (1837-1911), Réformateur laïque et imprimeur* (Paris: De Boccard, 2001).

Goldstein, Melvyn C., ed. *The New Tibetan-English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press).

Gyōnen, trans. Pruden, Leo M. *The Essentials of the Eight Traditions* (Berkeley: Numata, 1994).

Hanes, Jeffrey E., and Yamaji, Hidetoshi, eds. *Image and Identity, Rethinking Japanese Cultural History* (Kobe: Kishimoto Printing, 2004).

Hamberg, Theodore. *The Visions of Hung-siu-tshuen, and Origin of the Kwang-si Insurrection* (Hong Kong: China Mail Office, 1854).

Hastings, James, ed. *The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, 12 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922).

Hayashi, Makoto, Ôtani, Eiichi, and Swanson, Paul L., eds., *Modern Buddhism in Japan* (Nagoya: Nanzan, 2014).

Hodgson, Brian Houghton. *Essays on the Languages, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet* (Varanasi: Bharat-Bharati, 1971).

Hoffmann, Helmut. "Quellen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Bon-Religion," in *Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse*, 4 (Wiesbaden: Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur in Mainz, 1950).

—. *The Religions of Tibet* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961).

Hübner, Johann. *Allgemeine Geographie aller vier Welt-Theile* (Dresden und Leipzig: Walther, 1762).

Hunter, William Wilson. *Life of Brian Houghton Hodgson* (London: John Murray, 1896).

Julien, Stanislas. "Reinseignements bibliographiques sur les relations de voyages dans l'Inde et les descriptions de *Si-yu*, qui ont été composées en chinois entre le Ve et le XVIIIe siècle de notre ère," in *Journal Asiatique*, X (1847): 265-295.

—. *Histoire del la vie de Hiouen-Tsang, et de ses voyages dans l'Inde* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1853).

—. *Mémoires sur les contrées occidentales, traduit du sanscrit en chinois, en l'an 648, par Hiouen-Tshang*, 1 (Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, 1857).

—. *Mémoires sur les contrées occidentales, traduit du sanscrit en chinois, en l'an 648, par Hiouen-Tshang*, 2 (Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, 1858).

Kircher, Athanasius. *China Illustrata* (Amsterdam: J. Meurs, 1667).

Kristof, Nicholas D. "Martial Law Ends in Tibet's Capital," *New York Times*, May 1, 1990.

Lamotte, Étienne. *History of Indian Buddhism* (Louvain: Université Catholique de Louvain, 1988).

- Leonard, Jane Kate. *Wei Yuan and China's Rediscovery of the Maritime World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984).
- Li, Jicheng. *The Realm of Tibetan Buddhism* (Hong Kong: The Commercial Press, 1985).
- Lopez, Donald S., Jr. *Prisoners of Shangri-la: Tibetan Buddhism and the West* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1996).
- . *Buddhism and Science* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008).
- . *The Scientific Buddha: His Short and Happy Life* (New York: Yale University Press, 2013).
- . *From Stone to Flesh, A Short History of the Buddha* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013).
- MacNair, Harley Farnsworth. *Modern Chinese History, Selected Readings* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1923).
- Makeham, John, ed. *Transforming Consciousness: Yogācāra Thought in Modern China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).
- Masuzawa, Tomoko. *The Invention of World Religions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005).
- McGillivray, Donald. *A Century of Protestant Missions in China (1807-1907)* (New York, Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1907).
- Müller, Friedrich Max. "On Sanskrit Texts Discovered in Japan," in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 2 (1880): 153-188.
- Nanjio, Bunyiu. *A Catalogue of the Buddhist Tripitaka, the Sacred Canon of the Buddhists of China and Japan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1883).
- Ohlmarks, Åke. *Studien zu problem de schamanismus* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1939).
- Oldenberg, Hermann. *Buddha: His Life, his Doctrine, his Order* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1882).
- Orzech, Charles. "Saving the Burning-Mouth Hungry Ghost," in *Religions of China in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 278-283.
- . "The 'Great Teaching of Yoga,' the Chinese Appropriation of the Tantras, and the Question of Esoteric Buddhism," in *Journal of Chinese Religions*, 34 (2006): 29-78.
- Pelliot, Paul. "Quelques transcriptions chinoises de noms tibétains," in *T'oung Pao* 16, 1 (1915): 18-20.

- Reinders, Eric. *Borrowed Gods and Foreign Bodies. Christian Missionaries Imagine Chinese Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).
- Ritzinger, Justin. *Taixu: To Renew Buddhism and Save the Modern World* (doctoral dissertation, Lawrence University, 1999).
- Senart, Émile. *Essai sur la légende du Buddha: son caractère et ses origines* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1875).
- Sharf, Robert. *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2002).
- Sullivan, Brenton. “Venerable Fazun and his Influence on Life and Education at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute” (master’s thesis, University of Kansas, 2007).
- Tāranātha, trans., Anton Schiefner, *Tāranātha’s Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien, aus dem tibetischen Uebersetzt* (St. Petersburg: Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1869).
- The Three Pure Land Sutras*, trans., Inagaki, Hisao (Berkeley: Numata, 2003).
- Thuken Losang Chökyi Nyima. *The Crystal Mirror of Philosophical Systems, A Tibetan Study of Asian Religious Thought* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009).
- Tseten Zhabdrung. “Research on the Nomenclature of the Buddhist Schools in Tibet,” in *Tibet Journal* 11, 3 (1986): 43-44.
- Tucci, Giuseppe. *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (Roma: Libreria dello Stato, 1949).
- Tuttle, Gray. *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).
- . “Tibet as the Source of Messianic Teachings to Save Republican China,” in Monica Esposito, ed., *Images of Tibet in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, 1 (Paris: École française d’extrême orient, 2008), pp. 303-327.
- de la Vallée Poussin, Louis. *The Buddhist Councils* (Calcutta: Bagchi, 1976).
- . “Tāntrism (Buddhist),” in James Hastings, ed., *The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, 12 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1922), pp. 193-197.
- Waddell, Lawrence Austine. *The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism, With Its Mystic Cults, Symbolism and Mythology and in Its Relation to Indian Buddhism* (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1896).
- Walter, Michael. *Helmut Hoffmann. Bibliography* (Bloomington: Eurolingua, 1982).

Wang-Toutain, Françoise. "Quand les maîtres chinois s'éveillent au bouddhisme tibétain. Fazun: le Xuanzang des temps modernes," in *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient*, 2, 87 (2000): 707-727.

Welch, Holmes. *The Buddhist Revival in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967).

—. *Buddhism under Mao*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972).

Wilson, Horace Hayman. "On Buddha and Buddhism," in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 16 (1856): 229-265.

—. "Notes of a Correspondence with Sir John Bowring on Buddhist Literature in China," in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 16 (1856): 316-339.

Znamenski, Andrei A. *The Beauty of the Primitive: Shamanism and Western Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

Zumoto, M. "Nanjio Bunyu: His Life and Work," in *Pacific World III*, 6 (2004): 128-132.