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A TIBETAN HYMN TO UṢŃĪṢAVIJAYĀ FROM KHARA-KHOTO KEPT AT THE BRITISH LIBRARY¹

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This article continues a series of publications on Tibetan texts dedicated to various Buddhist deities, discovered in Khara-Khoto within a large corpus of texts from the Tangut State period (11th–13th centuries). While the main part of this corpus was brought by Petr Kozlov to Saint Petersburg in 1909, a small yet significant collection was later acquired by Aurel Stein as a result of his 1913–1915 expedition. Among Stein’s collection kept at the British Library (London) is a single manuscript folio, IOL Tib M 143, which contains what appears to be an entire text entitled *Gtsug gtor rnam par rgyal ma’i bstod pa byin brlabs can* (“The Hymn to Uṣṅṅāvijayā with the Blessing”), the colophon lacking any other details including the author’s name. It is one of several pieces of textual evidence highlighting the important role of the cult of the goddess Uṣṅṅāvijayā, one of the most popular long-life deities, in 12th and early 13th century Tangut Buddhism. I would date the manuscript to this period as it features some elements of old orthography.

This hymn is not found in the Tibetan Buddhist canon and may have been composed by a Tibetan-speaking author. This assumption is indirectly supported by the analysis of the assonances, alliterations and sometimes even rhymes in the text, which reveal a high level of poetic craftsmanship. Such sophistication might be less expected from a translation, although this does not preclude the possibility of a translation being equally skillful. The text consists of eight stanzas of praise and two stanzas of prayer, the latter seemingly referred to as “the blessing” in the title. The praising part moves from describing Uṣṅṅāvijayā’s divine nature, merits, and main iconographic features to her spiritual and soteriological roles. The iconographic part is not very detailed, it omits attributes held by her in the eight hands or colors of her three faces. However, I provide these details in my paper for a fuller picture.

The text of the manuscript is published as a diplomatic transliteration, where I attempted to address several issues with unclear places, particularly reconstructing lacunas caused by holes in the folio. I believe that, except for one or two instances, I was able to arrive at a reliable version. The full English translation of the text is also supplied.

While the hymn does not explicitly provide any historical information concerning the cult of Uṣṅṅāvijayā among the Tanguts, this edition may prove useful for scholars of Tangut Buddhism. Perhaps they will be able to identify its Tangut or Chinese version among Khara-Khoto fragments.

Keywords: Khara-Khoto manuscripts; Tibetan Buddhism; Tangut Buddhism; Uṣṅṅāvijayā; Buddhist hymns; Tibetan poetry

This article aims to present a small Tibetan manuscript from the Tangut period, tentatively dated to the 12th (or early 13th) century, featuring a hymn to one of the major Buddhist goddesses. It pertains to the main fields of academic interest of Dr. Olena Ogneva, to whom it offers praise and admiration on the occasion of her jubilee. Dr. Ogneva has made significant contributions to the studies on the artistic and textual representations of worship and devotion to various deities in the

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Tibetan and Mongolian Buddhist Pantheon, particularly those preserved in Ukrainian collections. One of her earliest publications also focused on a protective circle included in the Petr Kozlov Khara-Khoto collection [Ogneva 1975, 61–69].



An image of Uṣṇīṣavijayā in Lcang kya rol pa'i rdo rje's (1717–1786) album of 300 deities²

She is depicted with three faces (the central one is white, the right is yellow, and the left is blue) and eight arms. In her right hands, she holds a crossed vajra (at her heart), a figure of Amitābha (in later iconography, usually on the lotus), and one or two arrows; her lower hand presents the *mudrā* of generosity. In her left hand with a threatening forefinger (at her heart), she holds a noose, a flask with nectar (in the lower hand that presents the *mudrā* of concentration), and a bow; the upper hand presents the *mudrā* of giving refuge⁶. The image of Vairocana sometimes adorns the crown of Uṣṇīṣavijayā, linking her origin to this Buddha, as seen in the Khara-Khoto icon (XX-2469).

Most of these iconographic details are not mentioned in the text below, which limits itself to a brief description in stanza 5: she “has a youthful body the color of a snow peak, beautiful with three faces, eight arms, three eyes”.

The manuscript is preserved in the British Library, London, within the Aurel Stein collection of Tibetan texts from Khara-Khoto, under pressmark IOL Tib M 143. Stein meticulously recorded exact sites where he excavated objects in Khara-Khoto. Thus, IOL Tib M 143 was marked by him as K.K.V.b.029.a, indicating that it was found, like the majority of Tibetan texts in the Stein collection, in one of the two groups of stūpas near the northwestern corner of the dead city (K.K.V.b) (see: [Takeuchi, Iuchi 2016, 7, also the sketch plan on 18]). A high resolution digital copy with a brief description is now available on the website of the International Dunhuang Project (IDP) [IOL Tib M 143]. Previously, its description, tentative transliteration and photo were included in the catalogue of the Stein collection of Tibetan texts from Khara-Khoto, compiled by Tsuguhito Takeuchi and Maho Iuchi [Takeuchi, Iuchi 2016, 114, 489: No. 219].

IOL Tib M 143 is a single folio of small size: according to the IDP website, its dimensions are 21.1×10.2 cm. There is no information about the paper; judging by the photographs, it has a brownish color with numerous lighter spots. Generally, it looks similar to that of Tangut manuscripts. It has several holes, all damaging the text to a certain extent, but just a few syllables cannot be safely reconstructed. There is no frame; the text is written in black ink in a neat *dbu med* script, with a style of handwriting that is quite typical for Khara-Khoto texts⁷. Elements of the old orthography are found: the *ya btags* in the syllable *myi*, and 'a as the *rjes 'jug* in the syllables with final vowels different from *a*,

such as *bcu*, *gtso* or *'chi*'. The recto side has ten lines, while the verso has six lines, a blank line, one more line with the colophon written in smaller letters, and a blank space below where two more lines could have been added if there had been more text. There are no marginalia, so we do not know whether it belonged to a larger manuscript. The text seems to be complete, even though it lacks a heading. Thus, it might have been produced as a single folio. I think we will not make a mistake if we date it to the 12th or early 13th century.

The title, *Gtsug gtor rnam par rgyal ma'i bstod pa byin brlabs can* ("The Hymn to Uṣṇīṣavijayā with the Blessing"), is provided in the colophon, which does not give any other information. Although the IDP website suggests the Sanskrit version of the title, *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-stotra sādhiṣṭhāna*, there is no evidence that the text was translated into Tibetan from Sanskrit. Such a text is not found in the Tibetan Buddhist canon. Moreover, all my attempts to find it in the BDRC online library using various keywords have proved futile. The list of Tangut and Chinese texts on Uṣṇīṣavijayā does not contain such a title, either⁸. Thus, at the moment, IOL Tib M 143 is the only representation of this hymn.

The text consists of ten stanzas, each with four verses, all composed in a 7-syllabled meter. The first eight stanzas praise the goddess, each concluding with the formula *khyod la bstod* "to you [I] raise a salutation"; the last two stanzas contain a prayer to Uṣṇīṣavijayā.

While each of the praising stanzas may appear independent at first glance, there seems to be a thematic progression that moves from describing her divine nature, merits, and main iconographic features to her spiritual and soteriological roles:

1. The first stanza emphasizes the luminosity of her body and refers to her name.
2. The second her role as the enlightened one and mother of the Buddhas.
3. The third her invincibility and endless merits.
4. The fourth her sublime position and possession of wisdom as a weapon against ignorance.
5. The fifth describes her iconography (see above) and her role as a deity of longevity.
6. The sixth portrays her as a Buddha guiding sentient beings out of saṃsāra.
7. The seventh highlights her function as a Tantric deity.
8. The eighth emphasizes her role as a refuge and guide to the "city" of nirvāṇa. Then, the text logically passes to the praying part:
9. The ninth stanza requests Uṣṇīṣavijayā to give refuge to all sentient beings tormented in saṃsāra.
10. The tenth lists the bad phenomena to be dispelled and the good to be granted. Notably, it does not include a request for longevity but contains a plea to guide the pious worshipper throughout all future lives.

These two stanzas are apparently referred to as "the blessing" in the title, indicating that this is what the devotee hopes to obtain from the goddess.

The hymn is not rich in poetic embellishments: just a few metaphors are used, all rather standard, such as "utterly pure like the sky" (stanza 1) and "the foul swamps of saṃsāra" (stanza 8). However, the anonymous author was able to produce a versified text with a smooth flow and pleasant sound. It is challenging to explain how this was achieved, as the formal analysis of Tibetan verses remains in an embryonic state. And yet this little text may be a very suitable piece of poetry for such an attempt.

Without requiring any special effort, we can see that each of the ten stanzas concludes with a rhyming word: stanzas 1–8 with *bstod*, stanza 9 with *gsol*, and stanza 10 with *mdzod*. This observation puzzled me a little because I always believed that Tibetan verses do not use rhymes, whether in their final parts (like classical European or Persian poetry) or in the initial parts (like Mongolian or Turkic poetry). I decided to look more closely at the phonetic aspects of the verses and recorded the sequences of vowels and initial consonants of each syllable. Although they do not exhibit a clear structure, some assonances

seem to create certain patterns that function as rhymes (in either the initial or final parts) or at least contribute to the smoothness of reading. As for the consonants, at least some of the combinations with them appear to be intentional devices used by the poet as well. My preliminary and brief analysis of these phonetic elements is provided below, under the second table that also includes a simplified transliteration.

It is preceded by the first table, which contains the diplomatic transliteration of the manuscript⁹ and its parallel English translation. Given the scarcity of Tibetan sources from Khara-Khoto, this edition seems meaningful. While it does not provide any historical information useful to scholars of Tangut Buddhism, it may help them identify its Tangut or Chinese version among Khara-Khoto fragments.

Table 1. Diplomatic transliteration and English translation of IOL Tib M 143

The transliteration is based on the Wylie system, with the following additions:

@##	yig mgo
	shad
i	decorative sign
.	tsheg
—	blank space within the text area
+	absence of tsheg
[]	missing syllables, their suggested reconstruction is typed in smaller letters
3	Tibetan digit, equivalent to <i>gsum</i>
:	(unusual) dotted sign <i>shad</i>

Recto	
(1) @## __i__ mkha'·lta[r·rang·] ¹⁰ bzhin· nam·dag·sku__ _ 'od·zer·sto·gi·'phring· ¹¹ ba·'khril· __ _ 'gro·	[To you] whose body is of the utterly pure nature, like the sky, / Enveloped with garlands of a thousand ¹² light rays, /
(2) ba·i·ma·rig·mun·sel·ba·__ _ gtsug+tor·d·ge· ¹³ ma·khyod·la·bstod·__ _ sa·bcu·'rab·'gon· ¹⁴ rdzu· ¹⁵ phrul·che·__	Eliminating the darkness of the migrators' ignorance, / To you, the virtuous Uṣṇīṣa, [I] raise a salutation! / [To you,] the perfect protector of the ten grounds, [endowed with] great miraculous abilities, /
(3) dbang·stobs·pha·rol·phyin·bcu·rdzogs·__ _sang·rgyas·kun·gyi·skyed·byed·yum·__ tshe·dpag·myi·mnga·'khyod·	The strength of power and ten parāmitās (perfections) accomplished, / The mother that generates all the buddhas, / To you, who [grants] measureless life,
(4) la·bstod·__ _ gzhan·gyis·mi·thub·nam· rgyal·che· _ dran·dang·blo·gros·phun·sum·'tshog s·__ _ bsnyeng·s·	[I] raise a salutation! / [To you,] the great victorious one, invincible by others, / Splendid in mindfulness and intelligent insight, /
(5) pa·myi·mnga·'rdo·rje·s[ku]·__ _ yon·tan· mtha·'yas·khyod·la·bstod·__ _ sang·rgyas·mang·pos ·rab·bsngags·	Free from fears and [possessing] the vajra body, / To you, with endless merits, [I] raise a salutation! / [To you, who] is finely praised by numerous buddhas, /
(6) shing·__ _ 'ji[g·rten·3] ¹⁶ ·mchog·bla· myed·gtso·__ _ spang·d·ka· ¹⁷ las·kyi·sgrib·pa·gcod[· __ _] ¹⁸ shes·rab·mtsho·n·rnon·	The chief, the highest, the best in the triple world, / Cutting off karmic obstacles hard to reject, / To you, with the sharp weapon of wisdom,
(7) khyod·la·bstod·__ _ lang·tsho·gzugs·can· gangs·ri·m[d]og·__ _ zhal·3·phyag·brgyad·sphyan·su m·mdzes·__ _	[I] raise a salutation! / [To you, who] has a youthful body the color of a snow peak, / Beautiful with three faces, eight arms, three eyes, /
(8) tshe·thung·las·kyi·tshe·gso·'ma·__ _ 'chi· bdag(?) ¹⁹ ['joms·] ²⁰ mdzad·khyod·la·bstod·__ _ ngan·'gro·srid·pa·i·rgya·	The reviver of karmic life for those with a short lifespan, / To you, the defeater of the Lord of Death, [I] raise a salutation! / [To you,] who, out of mercy, leads those sunk

I did not take into account the final consonants (two instances are, however, discussed specially) and tones as they do seem to me less important elements in this aspect of study.

Simplified transliteration	Vowels			Initial consonants		
	12	34	567	12	34	567
[1] (r1) mkha' lta[r rang] bzhin rnam dag sku 'od zer sto[ng] gi 'phring ba 'khril 'gro (r2) ba'i ma rig mun sel ba gtsug gtor dge ma khyod la bstod	aa öe o[i] uo	ai oi ai ea	aa iai üea öaö	k ^{ht} 'z dw [ts]t	rž tg mr gm	ndk t ^{hw} t ^h msw k ^{hy} lt
[2] sa bcu' rab 'gon rdzu 'phrul che (r3) dbang stobs pha rol phyin bcu rdzogs sangs rgyas kun gyi skyed byed yum tshe dpag myi mnga' khyod (r4) la bstod	au ao aä ea	aö aö üi ia	uüe iuo eeu öaö	sč wt sg ^y [ts ^h]p	rg p ^{hr} kg ^y m ^y η	[dz] t ^h č ^h č ^h č[dz] k ^y jy k ^{hy} lt
[3] gzhan gyis mi thub rnam rgyal che dran dang blo gros phun sum 'tshogs bsnyengs (r5) pa myi mnga' rdo rje s[ku] yon tan mtha' yas khyod la bstod	äi äa ea öä	iu oö ia aä	aäe üuo oeu öaö	žg ^y d ^{dh} ñp yt	mt ^h lđ m ^y η t ^{hy}	ng ^y č ^h p ^h s[ts ^h] dj k ^{hy} lt
[4] sangs rgyas mang pos rab bsngags (r6) shing 'ji[g rten gsum] mchog bla myed gtso' spang dka las kyi sgrib pa gcod shes rab mtshon rnon (r7) khyod la bstod	aä ie aa ea	aö uo äi öö	aa aao iaö öaö	sg ^y jt pk śr	mp sč ^h lk ^y [ts ^h]n	rñś lm ^y [ts] dpč k ^{hy} lt
[5] lang tsho gzugs can gangs ri m[d]og zhal gsum phyag brgyad spyang sum mdzes (r8) tshe thung las kyi tshe gso' ma 'chi' bdag ['joms] mdzad khyod la bstod	ao äu eu ia	uä aä äi oä	aio äue eoa öaö	l[ts ^h] žs [ts ^h]t ^h č ^h d	zč č ^h g ^y lk ^y j[dz]	grd čs[dz] [ts ^h]sm k ^{hy} lt
[6] ngan 'gro srid pa'i rgya (r9) mtsho' ru bying zhing sdug bsngal nyam thag rna[ms] nyid kysis thug rjes rnam 'dren ma ngan song (r10) gsum sbyong khyod la bstod	äo ii ii äo	i[i] uä ue uo	aou aaa aea öaö	ñđ jž ñk ñs	sp dñ t ^{hj} sj	g ^y [ts ^h]r ñt ^h n ñđm k ^{hy} lt
[7] bder gshegs [stong] gi snying po mchog gsang sngags grub pa'i rnal (v1) 'byor ma rig 'dzin kun gyi gtso' mo ste bdud rtsis dbang bskur khyod la bstod	ee aa ii üi	oi u[i] üi au	ioo äoa ooe öaö	dś sñ r[dz] d[ts]	tg đp kg ^y wk	ñpč ^h njm [ts]mt k ^{hy} lt
[8] gang zhig (v2) khyod la skyabs song bas 'khor ba'i 'dam [rdzab la]s srol zhing thar pa'i grong khyer 'jug mdzad ma (v3) rdo rje rgyal mo khyod la bstod	ai o[i] a[i] oe	öa aa oe äo	aoä äoi uäa öaö	g ^h ž k ^{hw} t ^{hp} đj	k ^{hy} l d[dz] đk ^{hy} g ^y m	k ^{sw} lđž j[dz]m k ^{hy} lt
[9] dus ngan snyi[gs ma'i] gna(?)s skyes par sdug bsngal mang pos lus (v4) sems gdungs sdig pa'i grogs pos zin pa [rnams] lha mo mthu' chen bskyab du gsol	üä uä i[i] ao	i[i] aö oö ue	äea üeu iaa ²⁸ auö	d ^h ñ dñ đp l ^h m	ñm mp đp t ^h č ^h	nk ^y p lsd zpñ k ^y ds
[10] (v5) nad dang phyi nang g[d]o[n] bgegs rnams lha mo khyod gyis gtan sol la dpal dang 'byor pa (v6) kun stsol te tshe rabs kun du bshes gnyen mdzod	äa ao äa ea	ia öi oa üu	öea äöa üöe eeö	nd ^h l ^h m pd ^h [ts ^h]r	čn k ^{hy} g ^y jp kd	dgn tsl k[ts]t śñ[dz]

The main observations concerning vowels are as follows:

1) Five stanzas start with *a*, and three more with *ä* (perhaps the author pronounced it as *a*). Additionally, six stanzas have *a* as the first vowel in the last group of the first verse (plus one more with *ä* here).

2) There is a number of repetitions of the same pairs of vowels in the same position but in different verses of the same stanza. For example, in stanza 2, *aö* appears in positions 3–4 of the first two verses, supported by *ao* in positions 1–2 of the second verse. In stanza 9, *üä* and *uä* occur in positions 1–2 of the first two verses. In stanza 6, *äo* appears in positions 1–2 of the first and fourth verses, while *ii* appears in positions 1–2 of the second and third verses, forming an enclosed rhyme (type: abba) in the initial position.

3) Six stanzas end at least one verse with *o/ö*, creating a rhyme (or at least an assonance) with the final *ö*. In three more stanzas, *o/ö* is found in the 6th syllable of at least one verse (in stanza 10, *ö* is found in each verse in the final group of vowels).

4) Within individual verses, there are numerous assonances that sometimes resemble internal rhymes. For instance, the first verse of the text contains five *a* sounds. In stanza 2, the second verse has *o/ö* in positions 2, 4, and 7, at the end of each group of syllables. In stanza 4, the fourth verse has *ö* in positions 3, 5, and 7, with only one change in the middle of the last group of syllables. In stanza 8, the repetition of *o* in positions 1 and 4 rhymes with the final combination *öaö*, supported by alliteration. We find the similar sounds *r* and *l* in middle positions between 1–2 and 3–4, and in position 6, as well as the combinations *dó* in position 1 and *tó* in position 7, both stressed in the trochaic rhythm of recitation: *dórje gyälmo khyö la tö*.

The last example demonstrates how final consonants in syllables can significantly contribute to creating long strings of alliteration and various types of rhyme. Another instance is found in stanza 9, where the final consonant *-k* is repeated four times at the beginnings of the first three verses: *ñik* (verse 1: position 3), *duk* (verse 2: position 1), *dik* (verse 3: position 1), *dok* (verse 3: position 3). However, since many final consonants are not pronounced, at least in modern Central Tibetan, I did not create a separate table for them within this non-specialized study.

The main observations regarding initial consonants are as follows:

1) They, like vowels, form both “vertical” and “horizontal” connections, i.e., between verses in the same stanza and within individual verses. The use of *duk* and *dik* (both even have the same *sa mgo* superscript) in neighboring verses (stanza 9) is one of the clearest examples of the first phenomenon. Another one is found in stanza 1, where *rang zin* in the 1st verse seemingly prepares the combination *ʰin wa ʰil* (*ʰhring ba ʰhril*) in the 2nd verse, followed by *do w[i]* (*ʰgro ba ʰi*) in the 3rd verse, which also features *rig* in the middle. In stanza 2, the final parts of the first two verses also feature alliteration, suggesting intentional poetic craftsmanship rather than mere coincidence.

2) The combination *ʰin wa ʰil* also exemplifies alliteration within individual verses. Additional examples can be found, such as in the 3rd verse of stanza 2: *saṅgye küngyi kyeje yum*, where the alternating sounds *gʷ* and *k/kʷ* are used, and *yum* corresponds with the suffix *y*. (Following modern Eastern Tibetan pronunciation, the alliteration in this verse becomes even more apparent: *sanje künji çeje yum*.) As another example, I would refer to stanza 6 as a whole, as it is rich with various nasal sounds, both in initial and final positions.

These observations, though preliminary, clearly show that the author paid close attention to “orchestrating” the Tibetan text to ensure its sound flow was elegant and captivating for both reciter and listener. In the religious context, this was aimed at pleasing the goddess to whom these stanzas were devoutly addressed. This elaboration also may serve as evidence that this is the original Tibetan text, rather than a translation.

Conclusion

The Khara-Khoto manuscript IOL Tib M 143, preserved in the British Library, stands as one of the textual pieces of evidence regarding the role of Uṣṇīṣavijayā in Tangut

Buddhism. It is most likely dated to the 12th (or early 13th) century. Comprising a single folio, it contains a hymn to this goddess composed in standard seven-syllable verses, adorned with a few metaphors. While its content may lack originality in this regard, it compensates with a thoughtful phonetic orchestration: rich in assonances and alliterations, sometimes even forming rhymes. This suggests the text was originally composed in Tibetan by an anonymous author. Thus, IOL Tib M 143 offers an example of early devotional Buddhist poetry in Tibetan and remains the only known copy of this text to date. An enhanced edition of the text, along with an English translation, could aid scholars of Tangut and Chinese texts from Khara-Khoto in identifying its potential translations among the texts they study.

¹ The research was carried out with the assistance of the Center for Integration in Science, Ministry of Aliyah and Integration, State of Israel.

² Borrowed from the edition: *Sbornik izobrazheniy 300 burkhanov. Po al'bomu Aziatskogo Muzeya s primechaniyami izdal S. F. Ol'denburg. Chast' pervaya. Risunki i ukazatel'* [The Collection of Representations of 300 Burkhans. According to the Album from the Asiatic Museum. Edited with notes by S. F. Oldenbourg. Part 1: drawings and the index]. St. Petersburg, 1903. (*Bibliotheca Buddhica*, V).

³ See: Catherine Dalton's introduction to her translation of "The Uṣṇīṣavijayā Dhāraṇī with Its Ritual Manual" for the project "84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha" [The Uṣṇīṣavijayā Dhāraṇī...].

⁴ See: [Linrothe 1998, 91–121; Lundysheva, Turanskaya 2017, 47–66; Sizova, forthcoming].

⁵ See, for instance, the image painted on wood (XX-2469) from the Kozlov collection kept in the Hermitage Museum.

⁶ The description is based on the sādhana of Uṣṇīṣavijayā as quoted in: [Willson, Brauen 2000, 286].

⁷ This is based on my personal experience working with the Khara-Khoto manuscripts, while the detailed study of handwritings found in them has yet to be carried out.

⁸ It is presented in the draft version of Alla Sizova's article, "Tibetan Translation of the Uṣṇīṣavijayādhāraṇīsūtra..." [Sizova 2024, 5–6].

⁹ I used the tentative transliteration provided by Takeuchi and Iuchi, while also proposing more contextualized readings in several instances and making plausible assumptions to fill in the gaps caused by the holes in the text.


¹⁰ The photograph does not show these syllables, but the edition by Takeuchi and Iuchi records them (perhaps the syllables can be seen when examining the original). In any case, there is no doubt that this is the correct reading.

¹¹ The variant 'phreng ba is commonly accepted orthography of this word, but 'phring ba is also attested in Khara-Khoto manuscripts.

¹² The manuscript has *sto gi* here, thus lacking the letter *nga* (in *stong*). It may be a mistake of the scribe unless the *tsheg* sign should be read as *nga* (in the *dbu med* script, it can look very similar to *tsheg*); if this assumption is true, the transliteration should run as *stong+gi*, that is, without *tsheg*.

¹³ The prefix *da* is written as a superscript (very similar to *ra mgo*), which is a feature found in several Khara-Khoto manuscripts; see also *d-ka* in line 6 of the recto side.

¹⁴ The variant *mgon* is commonly accepted orthography of this word, but 'gon is also attested in Khara-Khoto manuscripts.

¹⁵ The writing of the ligature *rdz-* in IOL Tib M 143 is quite distinctive: the *ra mgo* superscript, along with the upper line and the "hand" stroke of the letter *dza*, is written as if it were the *sa mgo* superscript ; see also the syllable *rdzogs* in line 3 of the recto side and the same syllable in the colophon, as well as the conjectured *rdzab* in line 2 of the verso side.

¹⁶ The lowest elements of these symbols are visible on the folio, and I have no doubt about this reading.

¹⁷ The syllable *spang* employs the "horizontal" ligature *spa*; the next syllable is equivalent to *dka'*, but the prefix *da* is written as a superscript (see No. 17).

¹⁸ The lowest elements of the double *shad* signs are visible on the folio.

¹⁹ This syllable is not legible in the photograph because the letters in the corresponding place are blurred. However, it is recorded by Takeuchi and Iuchi, so it might be visible when examining the original; the syllable also fits the context perfectly.

²⁰ The selected word is most often found in combination with *'chi bdag* and *mdzad*.

²¹ The reading fits the context, but it is worth noting that the photograph shows an empty space after the ligature *rma*, followed by a hole.

²² The expression *bder gshegs stong gi snying po* is attested in several texts, according to the BDRC online search. The possible variants, with *bdag* and *gsung*, seem less plausible as I did not find examples with them. Perhaps the manuscript had another variant that I have missed.

²³ The expression *'dam rdzab* is quite common, and a small initial fragment of the ligature *rdza* is visible (see No. 19).

²⁴ The fact that the missing part starts with the ligature *snyi-* defines the conjecture in the parenthesis; the following word written after the hole is more problematic, as the root letter is blurred and does not really resemble *na*, but I failed to find a better solution than *gnas*.

²⁵ A purely contextual conjecture; I believe the syllable *pa* is visible in the photograph shifted to the right of the hole, whereas the fragment should logically be placed before that. If this is incorrect, and Takeuchi and Iuchi read it as *zin [...] pa*, I cannot find a suitable filler for this lacuna.

²⁶ In connection with the following *bgegs*, there is probably no other possible reading but *gdon*.

²⁷ Not *ñ* (as in modern Central Tibetan), as this combination in the syllables *myi* and *myed* in the old orthography would likely not have been pronounced that way.

²⁸ The last vowel is a pure conjecture.

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О. В. Зорін

Присвячений Ушнішавіджаї тибетський гімн із Хара-Хото, що зберігається в Британській бібліотеці

Ця стаття продовжує серію публікацій тибетських текстів, присвячених різним буддйським божествам, виявлених у Хара-Хото в складі великого корпусу текстів періоду Тангутської держави (XI–XIII ст.). Переважну частину цього корпусу в 1909 році було вивезено Петром Козловим у Санкт-Петербург, проте під час своєї експедиції, що тривала з 1913-го до 1915 року, невелику, але важливу колекцію пізніше придбав Аурель Стейн. У колекції Стейна, що зберігається в Британській бібліотеці (Лондон), є єдиний рукописний фоліант

(IOL Tib M 143), у якому, очевидно, міститься повний текст із назвою “Gtsug gtor nam par rgyal ma’i bstod pa byin brlabs can” (“Гімн до Ушнішавіджаї з благословенням”). Будь-яких інших деталей, включно з іменем автора, у колофоні немає. Це одне з кількох текстових свідчень, що підкреслюють, яку важливу роль у тангутському буддизмі XII і початку XIII ст. відігравав культ богині Ушнішавіджаї – одного з найпопулярніших божеств довголіття. Я б датував рукопис саме цим періодом, оскільки в ньому є деякі елементи старої орфографії.

Цього гімну немає в буддійському каноні Тибету. Можливо, він був створений тибетомовним автором. Це припущення опосередковано підтверджується аналізом асонансів, алітерацій, а іноді навіть рим у тексті, що виявляє високий рівень поетичної майстерності. Від перекладача важко очікувати такої витонченості, хоча не можна виключати можливості створення настільки ж майстерного перекладу. Текст складається з восьми строф хвали та двох строф молитви; остання, очевидно, у назві згадується як “благословення”. Частина з прославлянням переходить від опису божественної природи, чеснот і головних іконографічних рис Ушнішавіджаї до її духовної та сотеріологічної ролей. Іконографічна частина не дуже детальна, у ній бракує атрибутів, які богиня тримає у восьми руках, не зауважені кольори її трьох облич. Однак у своїй статті я наводжу ці подробиці для більш повної картини.

Текст рукопису опубліковано у вигляді точної транслітерації, у якій я намагався вирішити кілька проблем із незрозумілими місцями, зокрема – реконструюючи лакуни, спричинені дірками у фоліанті. Вважаю, що, за винятком одного чи двох випадків, я зміг дійти до правдоподібної версії. Також надається повний англійський переклад тексту.

Хоча гімн не містить жодної експліцитної історичної інформації про культ Ушнішавіджаї серед тангутів, ця публікація може стати в пригоді дослідникам тангутського буддизму. Можливо, серед фрагментів Хара-Хото їм вдасться ідентифікувати його тангутську чи китайську версію.

Ключові слова: буддійські гімни; рукописи Хара-Хото; тангутський буддизм; тибетська поезія; тибетський буддизм; Ушнішавіджая

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