

*Civilisation at the Foot of Mount Sham-po. The Royal House of lHa Bug-pa-can and the History of g.Ya'-bzang. Historical texts from the Monastery of g.Ya'-bzang in Yar-stod (Central Tibet).* Annotated Translation, Transliteration and Facsimile Edition by Tsering Gyalbo, Guntram Hazod and Per K. Sørensen. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000. (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Denkschriften, Band 290). 340 pp.

Reviewed by Rudolf Kaschewsky

While we are comparatively well informed on the history of the early kings of Tibet up to the destruction of the monarchy in the mid-ninth century, there is a considerable gap in our knowledge of the subsequent period. Therefore any work on the later periods is greatly appreciated. The book under review presents a detailed study of the history of southern central Tibet from the 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> centuries onward, based on three local historical texts: a 'Genealogy of the Royal House' (10 fols.), a 'Dharma History' (of g.Ya'-bzang) (52 fols.) and a 'Short Biography of the Founder of g.Ya'-bzang' (5 fols.). Thus, the focus is on g.Ya'-bzang, one of the thirteen 'myriarchies' (*khri skor bcu gsum*) of the Yüan period, situated south-east of Lhasa. Nowadays, this is called Ne-gdong rdzong or Naidongxian; the main city is Tsetang which is also the capital of the whole Lho-ka or Shannan district.

The introduction of his book throws light not only on the rather intricate rise and downfall of the relevant dynastic families, but also on, among other topics, the original meaning of the name 'Yar-lung' (and its different spellings), which is considered to be the home of the Tibetan kings, on the specific ideological basis of the g.Ya'-bzang bKa'-brgyud-pa order, etc.

The main body of the book is a precise translation of the above-mentioned source-texts and a careful transliteration, the latter being especially helpful on account of the fact that the facsimiles of the manuscripts, presented on the (unnumbered) pages 289-317, are in places hardly legible.

There are seven appendices which cover topics closely related with the g.Ya'-bzang area, among them a survey of the Yum-brtan lineage and the 'genealogical manipulations' connected with the (step)son of king Glang-dar-ma, and one containing supplementary data and a summary concerning the land of g.Ya'-bzang-pa (both by G. Hazod).

Seven tables provide, among other topics, lists of the Dvags-po bKa'-brgyud line, the 'Religious Lords of g.Ya'-bzang' and a chronological table. The latter is, in fact, not as undisputed as it looks at first sight: the years are those calculated according to the three texts, which—as the authors state elsewhere (e.g. the year 569 as the year of the birth of king Srong-btsan sgam-po, p. 36, note 91)—are in no way historically reliable. A short notice indicating this fact at the beginning of the chronological table would have been helpful.

As there are many Buddhist terms in the texts, the authors have often attempted to give the Sanskrit forms. Here some minor inaccuracies are to be noted: *iṣṭadevatā* (p. 34 and Sanskrit Index) should be *iṣṭadevatā*; *uṣṇiṣa* (p. 45 and Ind.) should be *uṣṇiṣa*; *caityāri samgraha-vastūni* (p. 100, Index: p. 101) should be *catvāri samgraha-vastūni*. However, this is generally rendered by *bsdu ba'i dños po bzhi*, but perhaps the original wording *bslu ci thub* could have been retained: “(He could even protect those who secretly made inappropriate actions) by pretending as much as he could”, i.e. because of his loving mercy he acted as if these evildoers were good fellows. *javālamukhī* (p. 46 and Ind.) should be *javālamukhī*, *daka* (p. 65 and Ind.) should be *ḍāka* (however, Tib. *dpa' bo* usually renders *vīra*, not *ḍāka*); Dharmaprāṇin (p. 67, Index: Dharmaprāṇin) should be Dharmaprāṇin; Mahāsaṃmata (p. 58 and Ind.) should be Mahāsaṃmata; Lokaprajñāpti (pp. 25, 44 and Ind.) should be Lokaprajñāpti; Vajraśekhara (p. 44 and Ind.) should be Vajraśekhara; Vimalakīrti° (p. 44 and Ind.) should be Vimalakīrti°; Śātānika (p. 58 [Index: p. 59]) should be Śātānika; *sarvanīvarana*° (p. 44 and Ind.) should be *sarvanīvarana*°; Saddharmapuṇḍarīka (p. 49 and Ind.) should be Saddharmapuṇḍarīka (correctly on p. 104 [not: 103, as the Index says]); Hanūmān (p. 53 and Ind., also in the Tibetan Index p. 330a) should be Hanumān. The labial nasal before a labial is sometimes spelled *m* (e. g. *saṃpanna*, *saṃbhoga*), sometimes *m* (e. g. °*viṣkambhin*); it should be uniform (preferably *m*).

The surprising wealth of names (personal names, place names, text titles) contained in the texts and the annotations is made accessible through very informative indices. In the Tibetan index of personal names, in a few cases only the folio numbers, but not the relevant text (I, II or III of the three sources) are indicated, e. g. s.v. bKa'-brgyud-pa or sKal-ldan ye-shes seng-ge (in both cases the text is no. II); s.v. Phag-mo gru-pa instead of '41a' read 'II 41 a'; s.v. Rāhula for 'I b' read 'I 5 b'.

Mention should be made of the two carefully drawn maps of the g.Ya'-bzang area and the beautiful photographs (38 plates) of both the local area and relevant objects of art. Here a vivid picture is given of where the events described in this study had taken place.

To sum up, the book reviewed here is a scientific work of the highest standard and it is to be strongly recommended to Tibetologists, specialists of Central Asian history and, in a broader sense, to scholars of ‘historical geography’ in general because of its highly exemplary methodology.

*Popular Buddhist Texts from Nepal: Narratives and rituals of Newar Buddhism* by Todd T. Lewis. Albany: SUNY, 2000. 236 pp, 25 figures, bibliography, index. ISBN 079144612-3

Reviewed by Will Douglas

This book is a valuable contribution to the burgeoning field of Newar Buddhist studies. With his long experience working in the Urāy community of Asan in Kathmandu, Lewis is able to document the interaction between mercantile sponsors and Vajrācārya specialists, mediated through the public deployment of Buddhist sacred texts. This volume contains both the local Newari versions of Sanskrit Vajrayāna texts, translated by two learned Urāys together with Lewis, and discussions which set these texts into their ethnographic and historical contexts. In format, the book has five chapters each considering a specific text, together with an introduction and conclusions.

As with many other recent studies, Lewis is intent upon correcting a perceived tendency in past Buddhist studies to listen to, or rather read, the work of the religious elite without also paying proper attention either to their lay sponsors or to the “local literati” (xiv) as Lewis calls them. He is also keen to ground his discussion historically, relating the Vajrayāna Buddhism of the Newars to its Indian antecedents. To this end, he presents a wide range of textual types, from the widely known popular narrative of Śrī Sārthavāha to a Mahākāla *vrata*. Typically the use of the text is described from the perspective of the lay participants in the recitation and accompanying rituals, although we get occasional hints of the manipulation of the tradition by the officiating Vajrācāryas; thus, in accounting for the particular Tārā text he prints, Lewis writes, “These volumes arise both from a patron’s need to have new ritual manuals for the family’s own *vrata* observances and from [Badri Ratna] Bajrācārya’s own effort to revive the performance of Newar Buddhism.” (p. 95)

This book is poorly edited and far too ambitious for its brief format. The editing cannot be laid at Lewis’s door, although the numerous errors in transcription bring down the tone of the book as a whole. As to ambition: in setting out to achieve his