

TIBETAN “MAGICAL RITUALS” (*LAS SNA TSHOGS*) FROM THE POWER OF TSONGKHAPA¹

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There can be no doubt whatsoever as to Elliot’s immense expertise in Tibetan history and his vital contribution to Tibetan Studies. Everyone who knows Elliot personally would certainly agree that he is also a person of incomparable wit and a wonderful companion.

Such extraordinary people are often celebrated in lyrical praise in Tibetan tradition. Several years ago I came across the following prayer in the collection of Naprstek Museum in Prague. It was included in a text lacking any title or colophon, but judging from the outer appearance of the manuscript, it could be dated perhaps to the 18th or 19th centuries (acquisition No. A 732, fol. 2b):

*lo rgyus rgya mtsho 'khyil ba nas/
kun gsal nor bu shar mdzad gang/
bye'u mchil ba'i dbyangs sgrogs pa'i/
'jam mgon mkhas pa'i zhabs la 'dud/*

It took me a while to realize that the future appearance of Elliot was prophesized in these verses. The prayer contains the expression *bye'u mchil ba*. This means “sparrow” and, in fact, it is an allusion to Elliot (“sparrow”, *sperling* in German).

Introduction

The fame of the renowned Tibetan master Tsongkhapa (Tsong kha pa /Blo bzang grags pa/, 1357-1419) is connected with the origins of the youngest school of Tibetan Buddhism known as Gelugpa or Gandenpa (dGe lugs pa/ dGa' ldan pa). He is also well-known as a great scholar of the Land of Snow.

In the Western context, Tsongkhapa is mostly seen as a “philosopher” and the author of many influential works on *madhyamaka* (tib. *dbu ma*). A number of Western academic writings—as well as Japanese—are dedicated to his interpretation of the “nature of things” (Tib. *ngo bo*, San. *svabhāva*) as being “inter-dependently originated” (*rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba*) and hence “empty” (*stong*).²

However, it is clear that Tsongkhapa himself saw *madhyamaka* as inseparable from Tantric practice. For example, his direct disciple Khedrupje remembered him in the following way (*mKhas grub rje*, fol. 3a):³

1 I would like to express my thanks to geshe Nyima Woser Choekhortshang for reviewing certain sections of the texts translated in the present paper. His suggestions, as always, were helpful and inspiring.

2 There are a number of works dealing on this topic, see, for example: Shiró 2012, Tauscher 1992, Tauscher 1995, Thakchöe 2007, and Thakchöe 2009.

3 Tib.: *thal 'gyur pa'i lta ba 'di'i lugs kyis kun rdzob rnam par 'jog pa'i pa'i tshul la sogs pa rnam kyid pyad pa bzhin tu mdzad pa'i sa bon shin tu 'dril ba re dang/ sngags mtshan nyid kyid lam thun mongs dang/*

*He used to say that the ordinary path of characteristics—on the one hand, i.e. establishing the conventional truth by the method of *prāsaṅgika*, and on the other hand, by other similar detailed inquiries—is a seed which is very firmly connected with the extraordinary path of tantra on the other hand, namely with the nature of the ‘five stages of *Guhyasamāja*’, the firmly determined order and other main points of the extraordinary [path of tantra]...*

For Tsongkhapa himself, the tantric rituals and *madhyamaka* were parts of one whole. His tantric works⁴ greatly outnumber those dedicated to *madhyamaka*.⁵ Even the sections of his *Secret hagiography* written by Khedrupje do not really contribute too much to the received portrayal of the “rational philosopher.” In this text, it is stated that the main ideas of Tsongkhapa within the field of *madhyamaka*—as well as that of tantra—were formulated through a mystical dialogue with Mañjuśrī. The dialogues were facilitated by certain master Umapa (dBu ma pa dpa’ po rdo rje), who served as the interpreter.⁶

However, within the Tibetan milieu, the labels of “philosopher” or “tantric master” may well be irrelevant. This paper will attempt to reveal a number of particular rituals which deal with Tsongkhapa as a divinity and which have worldly goals as their aim. To my knowledge,

thun mong ma yin pa’i khyad par dpal gsang ba ’dus pa’i rim pa lnga’i ngo bo dang/ go rim grangs nges la sogs pa rnam kyī gnad thun mong min pa shin tu ’dril ba re gsungs/.

4 For an example of Tsongkhapa’s tantric work translated into English, see his commentary on *Guhyasamāja* tantra (Tsongkhapa 2013).

5 Tsongkhapa authored 156 texts collected in 18 volumes on 7568 leaves of the larger Tibetan *pecha* format. Topics concerning *madhyamaka* are dealt with in roughly 6 volumes. The rest of the 12 volumes contain mostly texts dedicated to tantric topics. In the context of the present paper, it is interesting that among them there is also a text on summoning rain (see gSsung ’bum dkar chag, pp.1-17).

6 *mKhas grub rje*, fol. 2b, 4b: Precious lord [Tsongkhapa] met with him in the valley of Tsang and master Umapa served as an interpreter. Lord [Tsongkhapa] was asking many questions through him. He asked Mañjuśrī a number of questions concerning the Teaching. If he would not seek out views on *madhyamaka* from him, he would not find the vivacity of the path (...) Then, when he posed many questions concerning various doctrinal positions and inquired into them in great detail, Mañjuśrī repeated again and again: “It is absolutely inappropriate to tend excessively either to the world of appearance or to emptiness. Namely the world of appearances requires attention (...) Together with Umapa, the disciple and master retired into strict seclusion in Kyisho Gawadong. Each of them made his own abode and they met each other during [the drinking of] tea, etc. When drinking tea, master Umapa served as interpreter and [Tsongkhapa] heard from Mañjuśrī a number of teachings and was asking him an immeasurable number of questions.... Tib.: (fol. 2b) *rje rin po che ’dis gtsang rong du mjal nas/ bla ma dbu ma pas lo tstsha ba mdzad/ rje ’dis ’dri ba po mdzad nas/ rje btsun ’jam pa’i dbyangs la chos kyī dri ba mang du mdzad/ khyad par du dbu ma’i lta ba ’di ma btsal na lam gyi srog mi rnyed.../ (...)* de nas lta ba’i skor la dri ba dang/ brgal brtag mang du mdzad pas/ rje btsun ’jam pa’i dbyangs kyī gsung nas/ snang phyogs dang stong phyogs la nye ring gtan nas byed mi nyan/ khyad par snang ba la gtsig su byed dgos zhes yang gsung/...

(fol. 4b) *skyid shod dga’ ba gdong du bla ma dbu ma pa dang dpon slob gnyis po las med pas sku mtshams dam po bcad/ gnyis po ’ang gzims khang so sor mdzad nas gsol ja sogs la ’shog par mdzad cing/ gsol ja bzhes pa’i skabs su ’ang bla ma dbu ma pas lo tstsha mdzad nas/ rje btsun la chos mang du gsan cing dri ba dpag du med pa mdzad/...*

these texts have never been discussed by scholars, with the exception of an article in Italian by Elena De Rossi Filibeck (1990). However, her paper deals more with a “theological” explanation of the role of Tsongkhapa, as it appears in the text by the 3rd/6th Panchen Lama Palden Yeshe (dPal ldan ye shes, 1738-1780).

This paper will firstly focus on the origins of Tsongkhapa’s mantra *Migtsema* (*dMigs brtse ma*) and subsequently on the “magical rituals” (*las tshogs*) based on this mantra. After an examination of their origin, two examples of such rituals are will be presented in translation. These are rituals causing rain to fall and the ritual protection of the plants of the field from disease. They were authored by a certain yogi Duntse Repa (mDung rtse ras pa), who lived probably at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, and the tradition of whom seems to have inspired the later flourishing of similar texts among the highest-ranking clerics of the *Gelugpa* tradition.

Migtsema: the prayer and the mantra

Migtsema is an omnipresent prayer in the *Gelugpa* environment. Its untranslatable title is a simple abbreviation of the first verse, which is rendered phonetically in Tibetan as ‘**mig**may **tse**way terchen chanrezik’ (*dmigs med brtse ba’i gter chen spyan ras gzigs*). The particle ‘**ma**,’ added to the first syllables of the first two words, is often used for the titles of texts. The *Migtsema*, as it is known nowadays, could be translated in the following way:⁷

*I pray to Avalokiteśvara - the great treasure of inconceivable love,
To Mañjuhośa - the immaculate faculty of knowledge,
To Guhyapati (i.e. Vajrapāṇi) - the conqueror of an entire army of demons.
To Tsongkhapa - the crown of scholars from the Land of Snow,
I pray at the feet of Lozang Dragpa.*

Simply put, in this prayer Tsongkhapa is identified with the family of the so-called ‘triple family of lords’ (*rigs gsum mgon po*), i.e. Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī and Vajrapāṇi.

It is remarkable that the text of the 3rd/6th Panchen Lama tells us that the original wording of this prayer did not contain the line dedicated to Vajrapāṇi, [*I pray*] to *Guhyapati* (i.e. *Vajrapāṇi*) - the conqueror of an entire army of demons. This was added to the prayer only later; several extended versions of this prayer also used to be widely known (*dPal ldan ye shes* /a/, fol. 7a; for one of the extended versions, see Filibeck 1990, p.106).

As for the origin of this prayer, it cannot be determined with total certainty. The *Migtsema* is mentioned in the two texts containing instructions on *guruyoga* and written by Tsongkhapa himself. The first of them was written for his close disciple Khedrupje (mKhas grub rje, 1385-1438); the second for Khedrupje’s younger brother Baso Choekyi Gyaltzen (Ba so Chos kyi rgyal mtshan, 1402-1473). Both of the texts include instructions on the worship of the master Tsongkhapa through *guruyoga*, and it is mentioned several times that the *Migtsema* should be

7 Tib.: *dmigs med brtse ba’i gter chen spyan ras gzigs/ dri med mkhyen pa’i dbang po ’jam pa’i dbyangs/ bdud dpung ma lus bcom mdzad gsang ba’i bdag/ gangs can mkhas pa’i gtsug can tsong kha pa/ blo bzang grags pa’i zhabs la gsol ba ’debs/.*

pronounced as well. Eventually, the adept should visualize the letters of *Migtsema* next to the letters of the mantra of Mañjuśrī (see Tsongkhapa /a/, Tsongkhapa /b/).⁸ These two texts reveal, first of all, that the mantra *Migtsema* was known to Tsongkhapa himself; and secondly, that Tsongkhapa himself used *Migtsema* not only as a prayer, but that its presence next to the mantra of Mañjuśrī in visualization bears witness to the fact that it functioned as a mantra.

There is a narration, widely known, concerning the origin of *Migtsema*. It states that it was originally composed by Tsongkhapa himself, and dedicated to his master Remdawa Zhonnu Lodroe (Red mda' ba gzhon nu blo gros, 1349-1412).⁹ Remdawa then changed the words of the prayer, and it became a vehicle for his reverence of his disciple Tsongkhapa.

One of the hagiographies of Tsongkhapa from the 19th century dates this event to when Tsongkhapa was 45 years old (*Blo bzang 'phrin las rnam rgyal* 1981); another, however, ascribes it to when he was 42 (*Blo bzang tshul khrims* 2006, p.158).¹⁰ The general difficulty with such narrations resides in the fact that they are mentioned only in hagiographies of Tsongkhapa of a rather late date. One of the earliest hagiographies, composed by Khedrupje (1385-1438, see *Mkhas grub rje* 1994), does not mention *Migtsema* at all. Similarly, in the lists of the lineage of transmission of *Migtsema*, it is said that it originates from Mañjuśrī: Remdawa is not does not figure in the account (cf. *Pur bu lcog Bla ma byams pa*).

This silence of the earlier sources allowed the Bonpos to come up with their own version as the origin of the mantra. In the tradition of Bon, the prayer to Sherab Gyaltzen (Shes rab rgyal mtshan, 1356-1415)¹¹ plays a very similar role. Sherab Gyaltzen was a contemporary of Tsongkhapa's, and is—similarly to Tsongkhapa—called the “second Buddha” (*rgyal ba gnyis pa*) or the “unequaled one” (*mnyam med pa*). According to this Bonpo version, again of rather late vintage, Tsongkhapa and Sherab Gyaltzen exchanged prayers as a mark of their respect for each other.¹²

8 The brief text on four folios containing instructions to Baso Choeje mentions *Migtsema* six times (Tsong kha pa /a/), the other text, similar in length to that of Khedrupje's, mentions it twice (Tsongkhapa /b/). This has been noted by Filibeck (Filibeck 1990, p.104) and Wayman (Wayman 1997, p.219).

9 The original prayer by Tsongkhapa can indeed be found in his *Collected Works* in the volume *tha* (Tsong kha pa /c/, fols. 7a-7b). It reads as follows: *dri med mkhyen pa'i dbang po 'jam pa'i dbyangs/ tshad med brtse ba'i gter chen spyan ras gzigs/ gangs can mkhas pa'i gtsug rgyan red mda' ba/ gzhon nu blo gros zhabs kyi padmor 'dud* (var. *padmos 'dul/ thar 'dod bung ba bdag kyang bskyang* (var. *bskyab*) *tu gsol/*. A slightly different version is mentioned in the 19th century hagiography of Tsongkhapa authored by Darhan Trulku (Dar han mkhan sprul sku 1981, p.275), where the last two verses read: *gzhon nu blo gros zhabs kyi padmos 'dul/ thar 'dod bung ba bdag kyang bskyab tu gsol/*.

10 Cha har dge bshes Blo bzang tshul khrims (1740-1810).

11 The prayer is known under variety of titles. It is called Dechen Gyalpo (bDe chen rgyal po), but also Dechen Gyalma (bDe chen rgyal ma) following its first verse. Its another title is Kusum lhundrubma (sKu gsum lhun grub ma). The prayer similarly identifies Sherab Gyaltzen with deities and could be translated in the following way: *I pray to Kunzang Gyalpa Du[pa] – the lord of great joy, to Sherap Maway Seng – fearless and retaining one, I pray to the feet of Sherap Gyaltzen, to incomparable crown of Bon of Jambudvīpa*. The original reads: *bde chen rgyal po kun bzang rgyal ba 'dus/ mi mjed gzungs ldan shes rab mra ba'i seng/ 'dzam gling bon gyi gtsug rgyan mnyam med pa/ shes rab rgyal mtshan zhabs la gsol ba 'debs/* (see for example *rGyun khyer bon spyod phyogs bsodus dad lhan thar lam 'dzegs pa'i them skas*).

12 This episode is described in the hagiography, dating from the 19th century, of Sherab Gyaltzen. The text was arranged by a certain Lungrig Thadag (Lung rig mtha' dag), according to the narration of the 23rd abbot

Thus the origin of the prayer is rather dubious. In any event, it was known to Tsongkhapa himself, and he used it as a mantra within the practice of *guruyoga*.

The growing power of *Migtsema*

One can clearly locate *Migtsema* within Tsongkhapa’s practice of *guruyoga*.¹³ The texts mentioned above containing references to *Migtsema* are, however, not the most wide-spread texts concerning this practice. More widespread was a later text, known as the *Hundred deities of Ganden* (*Dga’ ldan lha brgya ma*), written down in the beginning of 15th century, and which remains one of the most common liturgical texts within the *Gelugpa* milieu until the present day. This text is alleged to have been authored by Sherab Sengge (Shes rab seng ge, 1383-1445/6), a direct disciple of Tsongkhapa. It formed part of the oral tradition and was written down only by his disciple known as Dulnagpa (’Dul nag pa dpal ldan bzang po, 1402-1473). The version mentioned as having been recorded by Dulnagpa does not include *Migtsema* (’Dul nag pa, fol. 29); in later times, however, *Migtsema* was included, forming the conclusion of the text (see bsKal bzang rgya mtsho).

There is an interesting narration about Dulnagpa in a text written by the 7th Dalai Lama, who recorded existing oral tradition. It speaks of the famous deity Pehar, who endangered people in the locality of Sey (Srad) in Tsang (gTsang), even causing the death of several people. He was then tamed by Dulnagpa, who instructed the deity not to harm people who chant the *Hundred deities of Ganden* and *Migtsema*, according to the story (*bsKal bzang rgya mtsho*, fol. 2b-3a).¹⁴

One of the first masters of this lineage was Dulnagpa Palden Zangpo. There was a householder in the Sey [area]. King Pehar was harming him and causing the death of many people. Moreover, [entering the body of] his beloved son, he caused the inside of his body to convulse. So, Dulnagpa tamed the harmer. As [during the taming], the deity was being instructed, Pehar pronounced a vow to not injure those people who perform the guruyoga [of Tsongkhapa] and who recite the Migtsema. It is said in the narrations of the past masters that those who perform such guruyoga and [recite] the Migtsema related to it are not subject to harm caused by deities and the demons of the eight classes in general; and king Pehar in particular...

of Menri monastery, Nyirishel (Nyi ri shel, born 1813): it bears the title *rJe rin po che’i rnam thar mdor bdus skal ldan dwangs ba ’dren byed ngo mtshar padmo stong ldan*. Again, in the earliest hagiography available, which was authored by Dragpa Gyaltsen (Grags pa rgyal mtshan), a disciple of Rinchen Gyaltsen (Rin chen rgyal mtshan)—who was himself a direct disciple of Sherab Gyaltsen—the episode is missing. The title of this second hagiography is *Rgyal ba gnyis pa shes rab rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar ngo tshar padmo’i ’phreng ba*.

13 For general information on *guruyoga* see Lopez 1997.

14 Tib.: ’di’i brgyud pa’i bla ma gong ma ’dul nag pa dpal ldan bzang pos srad kyi nang du khyim bdag zhig la rgyal ba dpe har gyi gnod pas mi mang po gum zhing/ lhag par shin tu gces pa’i bu zhig gi khog tu brlams nas gnod pa byed pa btul/ de’i tshes ’dul nag pas bka’ bsgos pa bzhin pe har gyis bla ma’i rnal ’byor ’di dang ’brel ba’i dmigs brtse ma ’don mi la bar gcod mi byed par bro bor ba ltar/ rnal ’byor ’di dang ’brel bar dmigs brtse ma ’don pa su la’ang sde brgyad spyi dang khyad par pe har sogs rgyal gdon gyis gnod mi nus bar ’dug ces gong ma rnams kyi gsung las byung ba.../

It is hard to ascertain today if narration such as this, explaining the particular protective power of both *Migtsema* and the *Hundred deities of Ganden* within the context of the *guruyoga* of Tsongkhapa, should chiefly be considered as a retrospective attribution. Nonetheless, it might well bear witness to the very early development of viewing Tsongkhapa as a protector from worldly dangers.

The locality of Se and Dulnagpa's monastery Segyu Dratshang (Srad rgyud grwa tshang) gave the designation to the lineage of transmission of the *Hundred deities of Ganden*, which is known as the *Se lineage* (*srad brgyud*).¹⁵ We should, therefore, see this place as an original source of the tradition of turning to Tsongkhapa for protection.

Almost contemporary with Dulnagpa was a very little known master who also hailed from Tsang (gTsang): he seems to be a figure directly connected to the worldly rituals which constitute the focus of this paper. Unfortunately, almost nothing is known about him. He is mentioned under the nickname *Dungtse Repa* (mDung rtse ras pa), i.e. 'The spear-head, cotton-clad one'. In the list of masters constituting the lineage of transmission, he is followed by Thonpa Yonten Gyatsho (Thon pa Yon tan rgya mtsho, 1443-1521); the 2nd Dalai Lama Gendun Gyatsho (dGe 'dun rgya mtsho, 1476-1542) is listed after him (see *mKhyen rab bstan pa chos 'phel*). Thus his life could be dated to the 15th or 16th centuries.¹⁶ All that is known to me about him is contained in the extract from the *History of Vajrabhairava Tantra* (*'Jigs byed chos 'byung*) authored by the 1st Jamyang Zhepa of Labrang monastery, Nawang Tsonдру (Ngag dbang brtson grus, 1648-1721). The extract reads as follows (Phur bu lcoḡ Bla ma byams pa, fol. 8b):¹⁷

As for Duntse Repa, master Bumpacan, he was a siddha born in the valley of Tsang... By the power [obtained through] the "wind-yoga" he remained staying in the space on the tip of a spear (mdung rtse). Cross-legged, his attire was similar to that of the 80 siddhas. Thus he was known as Duntse Repa.

At the markets of various places he made [people] recite the Migtsema. To those who did not recite it he pronounced: "May epilepsy be sent upon you!" If they did not start to recite it, a demon of the upper spheres actually appeared [there].

15 For the list of the Se lineage, see Filibeck 1990.

16 The TBRC mentions him as a disciple of 5th Dalai Lama Ngawang Lozang Gytsho (Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, 1617-1682), which seems therefore to be erroneous. He might have lived two centuries before the 5th Dalai Lama.

17 Tib.: *mdung rtse ras pa bum pa can ni/ gtsang gi rong du 'khrungs pa' grub thob cig ste/ chos skyong dpung pa la khur nas ma rungs ba rnams la sbir bar byed cing/ jo bo rin po che dkar mes mchod pa zhig ste/ rlung gi rnal 'byor gyi nus pas mdung rnon gyi rtse mor phur te skyil krung dang grub chen brgyad cu 'i cha byad mdzad pas mdung rtse ras par grags/ phyogs phyogs su khrom bsdus nas dmigs brtse ma thon du bcug/ sus ma bton pa 'i khar bza' nad thongs zer nas de dus ma bton na stong gdon nges par 'byung ba ste/ rin spungs su yang dmigs brtse ma 'i mdung rtser byas te de ltar lab kyang/ sde ba rin spungs pas ma bton pas kha yon song ba sus bcos kyang ma phan bar/ khong dmigs brtse mas nad mang du bcos pa grags che ba tshor nas bos pas/ khyed kyis de dus dmigs brtse ma ma bton nam gsung bar/ ma bton smras pa na/ 'on thon cig drag 'gro/ de min mi drag gsung bas/ bton ma thag drag/ yang dmigs brtse ma thon dang mtshon gyis mi chod ces grod bu sogs la sngags btab na gris chod mi srid ces srad pa rdo rje 'chang khri rin po che gnyis gsung/ dmigs brtse ma 'i las tshogs brya rtsa 'i nang nas deng dus bcu gcig 'dug pa 'di yang yin snang/.*

He performed similar acts on the spear-head in Rinpung, pronouncing the same [words]. The lord of Rinpung did not recite the Migtsema and his face became twisted. No one was able to help him. [Dungtse Repa], felt that [Migtsema] would be better known if he were to cure many diseases by it. He exclaimed: “You did not recite it!” And said: “Recite it and you will be cured, otherwise [you will] not [be cured].”

Just as he recited it, he became cured.

Both Sepa Dorjechang and the Precious Abbot¹⁸ used to say that he brought invulnerability by the recitation of Migtsema. He pronounced the mantra to the belly and the other places [of the body]. Then it never occurred that such places would be wounded by the knife. It is apparent that this is a ritual from the “Hundred rituals of Migtsema” of which nowadays only eleven are extant...

Such is the rare narration on Dungtse Repa, known also as Bumpacan. He is described as a “mad yogi” and this story reveals his attempts to spread *Migtsema* rather forcefully among the people, and, it would seem, the Gelugpa tradition as well, with the accompanying veneration of Tsongkhapa. At the conclusion, his mastering of the ritual that protects one from weapons is mentioned. Jamyang Zhepa then concludes that he is the originator of the so-called the *Hundred rituals of Migtsema*, which were not extant even during his own life.

The so-called *Eleven rituals of Migtsema*, however, has survived until today in a text which is ascribed to Dungtse Repa. The text contains brief instructions for the following rituals (mDung rtse ras pa; dPal ldan ye shes /a/, /b/):

1. Causing rain to fall (*char dbab pa*)
2. Protection from frost (*sad srung ba*)
3. Protection from weapons by edible paper (*mtshon srung bza' yig*)
4. Protection from weapons by amulet (*mtshon srung gdog pa*)
5. Protection from pollution (*grib bsrung ba*)
6. Enhancing the life-force (*srog rlung bcos thabs*)
7. Overcoming obstacles by edible paper (*rgyal po gri thogs kyi bza' yig*)
8. Binding robbers (*jag 'ching*)
9. Enhancing crops/Protection from diseases of the plants of the fields (*zhing gi rtsa 'don/zhing gi brtsa' bsrung ba*)
10. Instructions for the ritual of bringing food (*kha zas 'ong bar byed pa'i man ngag*)
11. Protection from obstacles during travel (*rang gang du 'gro yang bar chad srung tshul*)

What follows are two examples, taken from the instructions and presented in translation. The first of them is a ritual protection from the diseases of the plants of the fields (9). It seems to be an amalgam of tantric interventions combined with popular magic. The second example is a translation of the instructions for the ritual of summoning rain (1). This ritual seems to have become the most widely used in later times.

¹⁸ It is not clear who exactly is meant here. However, the appellation Sepa Dorjechang attests to it being person from the Se area, as already mentioned.

Protection from the diseases of (the plants of) the fields

(translation, mDung rtse ras pa, pp.47-48)¹⁹

The ninth is protection of the fields from the diseases of the plants. Recite Migtsema similarly as in [the] previous instances. [Prepare] old soil from the place; deepen by the urine of thousands of monks, and old sand. Mix the urine of a full monk, the urine of an eight-year-old boy, and the urine of an eight-year-old girl with the sand. Prepare as much sand as you can. Make as many ritual daggers as you can from [wood] which has not been stepped over by dog or woman. Inscribe the text of Migtsema on the individual daggers. Place parts of the harvest into the skin of a goat that died naturally. For remedying the imprints of bad deeds (lan chags), place both parts of the harvest and [small sacrificial cakes] lanchag into the sack of the goat skin. Recite earnestly the text “bden bdar.”²⁰ By the grace of the Master [Tsongkhapa], may all those who cause harm to the harvest dissolve into the inside [of the sack]. Pitch a tent or build a meditation hut at a place from which the fields of that country are seen. Place all the things prepared in front of the masters and disciples gathered there [in visualization]. Continue blessing them by Migtsema until the seventh day. The [following] visualization is the same as in the previous instances.

On the seventh day, many heroic men with weapons should be invited. They keep the sand in the tips of their clothes; brandishing their weapons they shout “kyi ho!”. Running, they throw the sand into the fields. Then all of them recite Migtsema loudly. The sack from the goat skin [which serves as a] linga is tied by a man who was conceived in the year of tiger (or another suitable person), and he drags it across the fields in front of all.

Each of the men recites Migtsema and throws the sand into the field. “May the diseases of the plants be destroyed! May the diseases of the plants be destroyed! May all of them depart to the other side of the outer ocean!” With this, [the sack made from the goat skin] is carried into the river of that valley accompanied by howling sound: “kyi ho, svāhā!” During the ritual of “instructing,” pronounce the following to the local deity: “Do not send the frost and diseases of the plants here! Do not violate the instructions of the unequalled master Tsongkhapa!”

19 Tib.: *dgu pa zhing gi btsa' bsrung ba ni/ dmigs brtse ma gong ltar 'dren/ dge 'dun stong tshogs pa' chab bsil gyis/ gad gdangs rnying pa'i sa/ srid pa'i bye ma/ dge slong gtsang ma'i dri chu/ bu mo lo brgyad ma'i chu/ bu lo brgyad pa'i chu rnam bye ma dang bsres/ bye ma ci mang byed/ khyi dang bud med kyis ma 'goms pa'i phur pa ci mang byed/ phur pa de rnam yi ge 'bris/ ra'i shun bu gson ma la lo thog gi phud bsdu lan chags mang du bcos la phud dang lan chags gnyis ra rkyal nang du blug/ bden par bya/ rje bla ma'i thugs rje la bten nas/ lo thog la bar du gcod pa rnam de'i nang du thim zhing/ yul de rnam kyi zhing mthong ba'i sar sgrub khang ngam mgur ram/ dpon slob ji ltar tshogs kyi mdun du rdzas rnam bsags nas/ zhag bdun gyi bar rdzas rnam dmigs brtse mas bsnags/ dmigs pa gong ltar ro/ zhag bdun du dpa' bo mtshon cha thogs pa mang po 'bod/ bye ma thu bar gtums nas ku ho zer nas mtshon cha 'don/ bye ma zhing la 'debs shing rgyug/ de na yod tshad kyi dmigs brtse ma 'ur 'ur 'don/ ra rkyal ling ka de stag lo pa'am gang rung gcig gis thi gu btag nas/ de rnam kyi sngon du 'ded/ dmigs brtse ma tshar re 'don/ bye ma zhing la 'hor/ btsa' sod btsa' sod btsa' sod ma lus mtha'i rgya mtsho'i pha rol gyi gram der song shig ces lung pa'i chu la bskur/ ku ho svā di ri ri mang po bya'o/ 'di la btsa' sad ma gtong zhig zer nas gzhi bdag la bka' sgo byed/ mtshungs med dam pa rgyal ba tsong kha pa chen po'i bka' las ma 'da' cig zer nas tho phur pa phyogs thams cad du btsugs/ phyogs bzhir tho bzhi rgyab/ rang nyid rje bla mar sngar ltar bskyed/ bkra shis bya/ rje nyid kyis lo bdun thub pa zhal gyis bzhes so ithi/*

20 *bDen bdar* is a kind of ritual in which the adept negotiates with the deity.

Pile up cairns in the four points of compass and thrust the ritual daggers toward the fields in all the directions. Similarly as in the previous cases, perform the ritual of generation of the precious master [Tsongkhapa] and pronounce the “good luck” prayer. The power of Tsongkhapa is granted up to seven years.

Summoning rain²¹

(translation, mDung rtse ras pa, pp.42-43)²²

The first is causing the rain to fall. (...) Perform the guruyoga of the “generation stage” and meditate yourself as being inseparable from the Lord-master [Tsongkhapa]. Think about Avalokiteśvara while reciting the first verse of Migtsema, about Mañjuhośa during the second verse, Vajrapāṇi during the third and the Lord [Tsongkhapa] himself during the fourth. The five rainbow-colored beams of light emanate from the place of your heart. With the [first verse of Migtsema] “inconceivable...” generate the white garuda, with [second verse of] “immaculate...” the variegated garuda, with [the third verse “crown of] the Land of Snow...” the red garuda, and with [the fourth verse] “Lobzang...” the black garuda.²³ Think that nāgas of the water-spring cannot move from there during the generation of the garudas of the four points of the compass. Recite Migtsema in the state of yourself appearing as Lord-master [Tsongkhapa]. Then pronounce the following to the nāgas of the water-spring: “Listen all you who became nāgas: kings of nāgas Nanda, Mañicunda, Sangkhapāla, Mahākāla, you of lowest status, you deaf ones, crippled ones, mute ones and lame ones!” Blow the thigh-bone trumpet three times.

21 For details on summoning rain rituals see Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, there is a Tibetan translation of such Indian text included in Tenjurs (see Mar me mdzad). For hail protecting rituals see Klein – Khetsun Sangpo 1997 and rDo rje don grub 2012.

22 Tib.: *dang po char 'bebs pa ni/ sgrub pa po gang gis dgos pa ci 'i phyir/ sgrub pa dngos ji ltar zhe na/ rnam grol don gnyer gyi skyes bus/ mar gyur sems can thams cad kyi phan bde sgrub pa 'i phyir/ sgrub pa dngos 'di ltar bskyed rim bla ma 'i rnal 'byor/ dang po 'gro dus su/ rang dang rje bla ma dbyer med par bsgom zhing/ tshig rkang dang po spyān ras gzigs/ gnyis pa 'jam dbyangs/ gsum pa phyag na rdo rje/ bzhi pa rje nyid du bsams nas dmigs brtse ma bzla 'o/ rang gi thugs ka nas 'od zer 'ja 'tshon sna lnga ltar 'phro zhing/ dmigs med ni khyung dkar po/ dri med ni khyung khra bo/ gangs can ni khyung dmar po/ blo bzang ni khyung nag por bskyed/ khyng bzhi phyogs bzhir bskyed la chu mgo de 'i klu gar yang 'phro med par bsams/ rang nyid rje bla mar gsal ba 'i ngang nas dmigs brtse ma bzla zhing/ chu mgo 'i klu la 'di skad du klu 'i rgyal po dga 'bo/ gtsug na rin chen/ dung skyong/ nag po chen po/ gdol pa 'i rigs/ klu 'on pa dang/ zha bo dang/ lkugs pa dang/ 'iheng po dang/ klu 'i rigs su gyur ba thams cad nyon cig zer nas/ rkang dung lan gsum 'bud/ khyod la ya 'o gzung du 'ong ba ma yin/ khon 'tshol du 'ong ba ma yin/ 'dzam gling du char dkon po byung bas khyod la char slong du 'ong ba yin/ char chen po yul phyogs 'dir drag du phob cig ces chu mgor 'bod/ phyogs bzhir tho ba 'i btsigs/ dmigs brtse ma 'don/ pha' gsum brjod/ tho bzhi khyung bzhir bskyed/ yul de 'i gzhi bdag la dkar gtor bsangs mchod bya 'o/ dug sna dang ma 'dres pa 'i me tog sna tshogs dang/ sman sna tshogs gro zan dang sbyar nas/ de rnam la ril bu lug gi ril ma tsam brgya dang brgyad bcos/ mdun du bum pa legs pa cig bzhang/ ril bu de 'dra re la dmigs brtse ma rab brgya/ 'bring rang gi gang thon ril bu la phu btab nas bum pa 'i nang du blug/ ril bu ma rdzogs par du de lrar bya 'o/ bum pa 'i kha dar dmar gyis bcings/ chu mgo 'i phugs su bzhang/ de na gang tshogs kyiis dmigs brtse ma rgyun du 'don/ myur du 'bebs na zhag gnyis/ 'bring gsum/ myur du 'bebs par zhal gyis bzhes so/ char babs nas log yong ba 'i dus su bum pa 'i nang gtor ma de chu mgo 'i nang du blug/ bya khyi mi za bar 'gebs par bya/ miho bzhi sgyel/ khyung bzhi nam mkhar gshegs/ dmigs brtse ma 'i las tshogs las char 'bebs rlung nag tshub ma u ya ithi/.*

23 Note that the version of Migtsema mentioned here consists of only four verses and does not include the verse on Guhyapati.

Exclaim the following by the water spring: “I have not come to capture you as adversaries, to put you in danger! I have not come in search of enmity! I have come to cause the rain to fall, as it has become scarce in the continent of Jambudvīpa. Make a strong and heavy rain fall!

Erect cairns in the four points of compass. Recite Migtsema and then pronounce “phaḥ” three times. The four cairns arise as four garudas. Perform the fumigation ritual with white sacrificial cakes to the local deity of that land.

Mix the plants devoid of poison and medical plants with dough. From this, make one hundred and eight pills the size of sheep dung. Place a good ritual vase in front. The best would be to recite Migtsema for each of the pills a hundred times, the middling would be as much as you can. Blow [onto the pill after it] and place it into the vase. Thus will be the pills kept until the conclusion [of the ritual]. Bind the neck of the vase with red silk and place it at the bottom of the water-spring. Recite Migtsema permanently at that place. If the rain would be summoned quickly, it will appear within two days. Middling would be in three days. It is granted that it will fall soon...

Later texts on “magical rituals” from the power of Tsongkhapa

The main source of information on these rituals is a large collection of texts containing various rituals performed through *Migtsema*. It was compiled by Jamyang Deway Dorje (’Jam dbyangs bde ba’i rdo rje 1682-1741), and bears the title *dMigs brtse ma’i chos skor stod smad kha skong dang bcas pa*. These texts were later reedited by Khyenrab Tenpa Chomphel (mKhyen rab bstan pa chos ’phel, 1840-1907/8) under the title *dMigs brtse ma’i be’u bum*.²⁴ These collections are arranged in 3 large volumes and contain more than 70 individual titles. Some of them are actually collections of several texts by different authors.

These texts contain also rather usual *guruyoga* texts, texts on “consciousness transference” rituals (*’pho ba*), rituals for making pills (*ril grub*), and so on. If one were to extract the ‘worldly rituals’ (*las tshogs*), the result will be the following list of texts:

Volume I

1. *dMigs brtse ma’i las tshogs dngos grub byung gnas* (lCags ngag dbang ’phrin las, 1861-1914)
2. *rJe tsong kha pa gsang grub kyi las tshogs dgos ’dod ’byung bas* (mDung rtse ras pa, 15th-16th century)
3. *dMigs brtse ma’i las tshogs yid bzhin nor bu* (sMan khang pa Ngag dbang chos ’phel, 1635-1707)
4. *Char ’bebs dang sad srung ba’i ’khor lo sgrub tshul* (Blo bzang thugs rje, 18th-19th century)
5. *Las tshogs dngos grub kun ’byung* (Khri chen Ngag dbang mchog ldan, 17th century)
6. *Las tshogs bcu gcig gi don bshad pa* (dPal ldan ye shes, 1738-1780, 3rd/6th/ Panchen Lama)
7. *Nag ’gros* (dPal ldan ye shes, 1738-1780, 3rd/6th/ Panchen Lama)
8. *Char ’bebs* (Khri chen Byang chub chos ’phel, 1756-1838)

²⁴ For details on *be’u ’bum* and rituals called *las (sna) tshogs*, see Cuevas 2010. For some similar Hindu ‘magical rituals’ see Bühnemann 2000.

9. *dMigs brtse ma'i las tshogs brgya dang brgyad pa mu tig phreng ba* (Don grub rgyal mtshan, ? 17th century)

Volume III

10. *dMigs brtse ma'i las tshogs dngos grub char 'bebs* ('Jam dbyangs dga' ba'i blo gros, ?)
 11. *rJe bla ma la brten pa'i char 'bebs kyi cho ga man ngag snyan rgyud khyer bde* (ICang skya Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan, 1642-1714)
 12. *dMigs brtse ma la brten pa'i char 'bebs bya tshul lhan thabs* (Kun mkhyen dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po, 1728-1791)
 13. *dMigs brtse ma la sgo nas char 'bebs byed tshul gyi cho ga dngos grub gru char g.yo ba'i sprin spung* ([3.] Thu'u bkvan Dha rma badzra, 1737-1802)
 14. *Rigs gsum spyi sgrub kyi bla ma'i rnal 'byor la brten nas char 'bebs kyi cho ga lag len gsal byed rdzogs ldan sprin gyi sgra dbyangs dge ldan snyen rgyud man ngag gi gter chen* (Yongs 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan, 1713-1793)

The editor of the volumes authored other texts as well, listing various lineages of masters who transmitted particular rituals (*brgyud tho*, see mKhyen rab bstan pa chos 'phel). However, when comparing the actual texts it becomes clear that in the most cases the transmitted texts of the various lineages mentioned in *brgyud tho* are very similar in their content. Most of them seem to stem from the rituals of Duntse Repa.²⁵

Besides the rituals of Duntse Repa, there is only one such ritual distinctive tradition which can be traced back to Menkhangpa Ngawang Choemphel (sMan khang pa Ngag dbang chos 'phel, 1635-1707). He is reported as having travelled to “meet” the relics of Tsongkhapa, which caused him to become strongly moved. He then had a “pure vision” (*dag snang*) in which the rituals were revealed to him (see *sMan khang pa Ngag dbang chos 'phel*, fol. 10b). The collection of his rituals are contained in the text which is also known (besides the title listed above under the number 3) as the ‘*Magical rituals*’ of Migtsema from the pure vision (*Dag snang las dmigs brtse ma'i las tshogs*). These rituals can be distinguished from those ascribed to Duntse Repa. Their typical feature is the usage of the “magical protective wheel” (*'phrul 'khor/ bsrung 'khor*) and seem to adhere more closely to the usual tantric rituals when compared with those authored by Duntse Repa.

From the list above appears that these rituals flourished during the 17th and 18th centuries. Another important feature is that these texts were not composed by some local insignificant master; on the contrary, the opposite is true.

25 The text mentions the particular lineage of *Las tshogs dngos grub kun 'byung* by Ngagwang Chogden (Ngag dbang mchog ldan, 1677-1751), the abbot of Ganden monastery near Lhasa and the teacher of 7th Dalai Lama. A tradition of rather similar texts, *Las tshogs dngos grub byung gnas*, stems from Cagra Ngagwang Thrinlay (ICags ra Ngag dbang phrin las, 1861-1914). Probably the most widespread and also the most extensive are the works *Las tshogs nag 'gros* and *Don bshed*, by the 6th Panchen Lama Palden Yeshe (dPal ldan ye shes, 1738-1780), which contain eleven rituals ascribed to Duntse Repa. There is a tradition of a single ritual of summoning rain, *Char 'bebs*, composed by the abbot of Ganden monastery Changchub Choemphel (Byang chub chos 'phel, 1756-1838), but the ritual is almost identical with the one contained in the collections of rituals by the Panchen Lama and Duntse Repa, respectively. Also the texts on summoning rain and protection from frost, *Char 'bebs dang sad bsrung*, authored by Lozang Thugie (Blo bzang thugs rje, born 1770?) are almost identical with these aforementioned texts. Although the *brgyud tho* presents these textual traditions as separate, they evidently are not independent and stem from Duntse Repa's rituals. Some of them also include some rituals originally composed by Menkhangpa.

If Duntse Repa can be seen as the inventor of these rituals in the 15th and 16th centuries in Tsang (gTsang), then there was a process of appropriation of his rituals by the high-ranking clergy of the *Gelugpa* tradition. The climax of such a process can be seen in the texts written by the Panchen Lama Palden Yeshe (1738-1780).

In the volume III of the list above, one may encounter the names of important Amdo masters. These are the 2nd Jamyang Zhepa of Labrang monastery, Konchog Jigmay Wangpo (1728-1791, text no. 12); the abbot of Kumbum monastery, the 3rd Thukwan Dharmabadzra (alias Lozang Choekyi Nyima / Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma/, 1737-1802, text no. 13); or the master serving the Chinese emperor in Beijing, the 2nd Cankya Ngawang Lozang Choeden (1642-1714, text no. 11). The presence of such names bears witness to the spread of such rituals from Tsang to Amdo. These elite clergy played a crucial role in spreading the *Gelugpa* sect not only in Amdo, but also in Mongolia. One can assume that these “magical rituals” through Tsongkhapa, closely connected with him since the time of Duntse Repa, served this particular purpose as well. It must be noted that these Amdo masters used the ritual of summoning rain and ritual of protection from hail and frost with great frequency.



The protective wheel of Tsongkhapa (Labrang Monastery)

Concluding thoughts

From the fragments introduced here one can observe that the idea of magical and protective power of *Migtsema* was already present in the story about Dulnagpa and his taming of the worldly protector Pehar. But it was Duntse Repa who, in the 15th and 16th centuries, developed the rituals using *Migtsema* for worldly benefits; equally employed, it would seem as well, for the spread of the *Gelugpa* sect. Duntse Repa was just a local master, but his rituals were appropriated by the high-ranking *Gelugpa* elites. These rituals later became particularly popular in Amdo, and were probably used for gaining influence over the lay people in this region; this was possibly also the case in Mongolia.

One can encounter a similar text using a prayer to Sherab Gyaltzen for similar worldly goals as summoning rain, the purification of misdeeds, protection from disease, etc., in the *Bon* tradition. This text is rather concise and uses the “protection wheel” (*bsrung 'khor*), similar to the Menkhangpa’s rituals (see Khro ta wer zhi). The author of this text is mentioned in the Zhang Zhung language as Throta Werzhi (Khro ta wer zhi), which corresponds to Tibetan Throta Gyaltzen (Khro bo rgyal mtshan). A master with the latter name lived in Kham near Derge, and was the abbot of Throtshang monastery (Khro tshang) after Yeshe Tendzing (Ye shes bstan ’dzin, b. 1772, see Thar 2003, p.359). Thus we can date him to the end of 18th century or the beginning of the 19th century. This is rather late and one can thus assume that the rituals based on *Migtsema* formed the inspiration. This sole text cannot be compared with the flourishing tradition of such texts in *Gelugpa* school.

Certain “theological” explanations, as to why Tsongkhapa in particular is used for such magical and worldly rituals, is contained in the text by the 6th Panchen Lama Palden Yeshe, entitled *Don bshad*. His arguments are presented and translated in the article by Filibeck (1990). These explanations of the extraordinary power granted by his deep understanding of *madhyamaka* and his identification with Mañjuśrī and others might be seen as a retrospective attempt to legitimize such rituals already in use.²⁶

We know with certainty that Padmasambhava was used as a tutelary deity (*yi dam*) in the rituals of the Nyingma (rNying ma) sect; Drenpa Namkha (Dran pa nam mkha’) or Thongyung Thuchen (sTong rgyung mthu chen) were employed in the Bonpo ones earlier than Tsongkhapa. But these masters are portrayed as magically potent semi-mythical creatures in whom the features of divinity and human are intertwined. The “magical rituals” through Tsongkhapa might be viewed in terms of the competition between the various sects in Tibet. But at the same time, it could well be the case that it was the Gelugpa sect that began using the historical master in the role of tutelary deity for the sake of attaining worldly goals for the first time. This statement would require more evidence, which is beyond the scope of this paper.

In Tibetan tradition, worldly goals were usually meant to be secured by worldly deities. Tsongkhapa is presented as having power over them and thus instead of directly addressing the worldly protector, the rituals use Tsongkhapa as an intermediary. If we put aside the various categories used for deities by monks, and try to adapt the perspective of lay

26 For some examples of folklore concerning Tsongkhapa see Fenk – Stuart 1992.

commoners in Tibet, one can envision Tsongkhapa as a procurer of worldly benefits. In this mode of thinking, his function can be compared with that of the worldly protectors. In this inclusive mode, Tsongkhapa somehow retains the features of worldly protectors, whose function dissolve into him.

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