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HOPE THAT BURNS, FRIENDSHIP THAT HEALS:

AN ANTHOLOGY BY TIBETAN WOMEN WRITERS

Guest Edited by Erin Burke, Jue Liang, Tashi Dekyid Monet & Andrew S. Taylor

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གངས་ཅན་སྐྱེས་མའི་རྩོམ་རིག་ཆེད་སྒྲིག་གྲོགས་ཀྱི་དྭངས་མ།

Hope That Burns, Friendship That Heals: An Anthology by Tibetan Women Writers

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Erin Burke, Jue Liang, Tashi Dekyid Monet, Andrew S. Taylor

Cover Image:
KULHA, Untitled (2021))
Acrylic, 20×30 cm
Courtesy of the artist

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གངས་ཅན་སྐྱེས་མ་རྩོམ་པ་པོའི་རྩོམ་རིག་ཆེད་སྒྲིག་འདི་ནི་སྤྱི་ལོ་༢༠༢༢་ལོའི་ཟླ་བཞི་པར་ཨ་རིའི་ཝར་ཇི་ནི་ཡ་སློབ་ཆེན་ལ་བསྐངས་པའི་“གངས་ཅན་སྐྱེས་མས་རྩོམ་རིག་གླེང་བ། བོད་མོའི་རྩོམ་རིག་མཛད་རྗེས་གཟེངས་སུ་བསྟོད་པ་”ཞེས་པའི་བགྲོ་གླེང་ཚོགས་འདུ་ལ་ཞུགས་པའི་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་རྩོམ་རིག་གཅེས་བཏུས་ཤིག་ཡིན། བགྲོ་གླེང་ཚོགས་འདུ་དེ་ནི་རྒྱལ་སྤྱིའི་རྣམ་པ་ཅན་གྱི་གངས་ཅན་སྐྱེས་མ་རྩོམ་པ་པོའི་འདུ་འཛོམས་དང་པོ་དེ་རེད་ཅེས་བཤད་ཚོག་སྙམ། དེར་བོད་ནས་ཕེབས་པའི་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་གཉིས་དང་། རྒྱ་གར་ནས་ཕེབས་པའི་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་གཉིས། ཨ་རི་ན་བཞུགས་པའི་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་གསུམ་བཅས་ཁྱོན་བུད་མེད་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་བདུན་ཡུལ་དངོས་སུ་ཕེབས་ཡོད་ལ། རྩོམ་པ་པོ་གཅིག་དྲྭ་འབྲེལ་བརྒྱུད་ནས་བཞུགས། ཚོགས་འདུ་དེར་བྱང་ཨ་རི་དང་ཡོ་རོབ་ཀྱི་སློབ་ཆེན་ཁག་ནས་ཕེབས་པའི་བོད་རིག་པའི་ཆེད་མཁས་པ་སྤྱི་དང་། དམིགས་བསལ་བོད་ཀྱི་རྩོམ་རིག་ལོ་ཙཱ་བ་དང་ཞིབ་འཇུག་པ་སོགས་མང་པོ་ཞུགས་ནས་བགྲོ་གླེང་ལྷོད་པོ་དང་ཞིབ་ཚགས་གནང་སོང་། ཚོགས་འདུ་དེས་བོད་ཀྱི་རྩོམ་རིག་སྤྱི་དང་ལྷག་པར་དུ་སྐྱེས་མའི་རྩོམ་རིག་གི་སྒོ་མོ་ནུབ་ཕྱོགས་ནས་འབྱེད་པ་ལྟར། ལོ་འདི་གཉིས་ཀྱི་རིང་ལ་ཨ་རི་དང་ཡོ་རོབ་ཏུ་བོད་དང་ཧི་མ་ལ་ཡའི་སྐྱེས་མ་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་དང་སྐྱེས་ཆེན་མ། ཁོང་ཅག་གི་རྣམ་ཐར་དང་རྩོམ་རིག་སོགས་བརྗོད་སྙིང་ལ་འཛིན་པའི་བགྲོ་གླེང་དང་དགའ་སྟོན་གྱི་མཛད་སྒོ་རིམ་དང་རིམ་པ་བྱུང་དང་འབྱུང་ཤུས་རེད། དཔེར་ན། ཉིས་སྟོང་ཉེར་གཉིས་དང་ཉེར་གསུམ་གྱི་ལོར། ཨ་རིའི་ཧཱ་ཕར་སློབ་ཆེན་ (Harvard)། ཀོ་ལམ་བི་ཡཱ་སློབ་ཆེན་ (Columbia)། ཁོ་ལོ་ར་ཌོའི་བོ་ལྡར་སློབ་ཆེན(Colorado-Boulder)། ནུབ་བྱང་སློབ་ཆེན་ (Northwestern)། ཕྲ་རན་སིའི་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་ཀྱི་ཤར་ཕྱོགས་སྐད་ཡིག་དང་རིག་གནས་སློབ་གླིང་(Inalco)་སོགས་ལ་སྐྱེས་མའི་རྩོམ་རིག་དང་བོད་བརྒྱུད་ནང་བསྟན་གྱི་སྐྱེས་ཆེན་མའི་བརྩམས་ཆོས་དང་ལྟ་བ། མི་ཚེ་སོགས་གཙོ་སྙིང་ལ་འཛིན་པའི་རིག་གཞུང་བགྲོ་གླེང་དང་གཏམ་བཤད་ཀྱི་མཛད་རིམ་སྣ་མང་སྤེལ་སོང་།

ཚེད་སྒྲིག་ཐུང་ངུ་འདི་ནི་ཏག་ཏག་གངས་ཅན་སྐྱེས་མའི་རྩོམ་རིག་འཛམ་གླིང་ལ་ཁྱབ་པའི་སྐབས་འདིར་བོད་ཀྱི་རྩོམ་རིག་དང་སྐད་ཡིག་སྤར་བཞིན་ཡར་ངོའི་ཟླ་ལྟར་འཛམ་གླིང་ཡོངས་ལ་འཕེལ་བའི་སྨོན་འདུན་དང་རེ་བའི་ས་བོན་དུ་འབུལ།

ཚེད་སྒྲིག་འདིའི་ནང་དོན་དང་ཁྱད་ཆོས་ངོ་སྤྲོད་མདོར་ཙམ་ཞུས་ན། འདིར་སྐད་གཉིས་ཤན་སྦྱར་གྱི་བརྩམས་ཆོས་བརྒྱད་དང་དགེ་རྒན་ཆེན་མོ་ལྷུན་ནེ་ཟི་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ལགས་ཀྱིས་བྲིས་པའི་བརྩམས་ཆོས་འདི་དག་འགྲེལ་བརྗོད་གནང་བའི་སྔོན་འགྲོའི་གཏམ་བཅས་རྩོམ་ཡིག་དགུ་འཁོད་ཡོད། མ་རྩོམ་བོད་ཡིག་ཡིན་པའི་རྩོམ་ཡིག་ལྔ་དབྱིན་ཡིག་ལ་བསྒྱུར་ཅིང་། མ་རྩོམ་དབྱིན་ཡིག་གི་རྩོམ་གཉིས་བོད་ཡིག་ལ་བསྒྱུར། རྒྱ་ཡིག་གི་རྩོམ་ཡིག་གཅིག་དབྱིན་ཡིག་ལ་བསྒྱུར་ཡོད། སྐད་གཉིས་ཤན་སྦྱར་གྱི་རྩོམ་ཡིག་རེའི་སྔོན་དུ་རྩོམ་ཡིག་དེའི་ལོ་ཙཱ་བ་ཡིས་བྲིས་པའི་ཕྲན་བཤད་རེ་འཁོད་ཡོད། དུས་ཚོད་དང་ནུས་པའི་བཀག་རྒྱའི་དབང་གིས་ལོ་ཙཱ་བའི་ཕྲན་བཤད་ནི་བོད་ཡིག་ལ་བསྒྱུར་ཐུབ་མ་སོང་། འོན་ཀྱང་། དབྱིན་ཡིག་བརྩམས་ཆོས་གཉིས་བོད་ཡིག་ལ་བསྒྱུར་ཐུབ་པ་མ་ཟད། བོད་ཡིག་གི་མ་རྩོམ་རྣམས་འགོད་ཐུབ་པ་ནི་དགའ་འོས་པ་ཞིག་གོ། རྒྱ་མཚན་ནི་ནུབ་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་བོད་རིག་པ་དང་བོད་ཀྱི་རྩོམ་རིགས་ཞིབ་འཇུག་གི་པར་སྐྲུན་ཁྱབ་ཁོངས་ནི་དབྱིན་ཡིག་གིས་སྙེར་སྐྱོམ་བྱས་པ་ཡུན་རིང་ནས། བོད་ཡིག་གི་ཁྱབ་ཁོངས་དང་བར་སྐོང་ཆེ་རུ་གཏོང་འོས་པའི་དུས་ལ་རན། ད་དུང་སྐད་ཡིག་སྣ་མང་གི་ལམ་ནས་བརྗོད་པའི་བོད་ཀྱི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་དག་ཕན་ཚུན་མ་ཡིག་གི་ལམ་ནས་ངོ་འཕྲོད་པའི་གོ་སྐབས་ཡང་རེད་སྙམ།

"ཡེ་ཤེས་བོད་ཀྱི་རྩོམ་རིག་དང་། སྒྱུ་རྩལ། རིག་གཞུང་དུས་དེབ"འདི་ཡི་སློག་པ་པོ་འཛམ་གླིང་ཡུལ་གྲུ་གང་སར་ཡོད་པས། ཁོང་རྣམས་ལ་མ་ཡིག་དང་འགྱུར་ཡིག་གཉིས་ཀར་སྦྱོང་རོལ་དང་ཞིབ་བསྡུར། དཔྱད་བརྗོད་སོགས་བྱེད་པའི་གོ་སྐབས་ཤིག་ཀྱང་བསྐྲུན་

ཡོད་སྐམ། ཡིག་སྒྱུར་བརྒྱུད་ནས་བརྩམས་ཆོས་བྱེ་བྲག་པ་ཞིག་རང་གི་མ་རྩོམ་གྱི་ཁོར་ཡུག་ལས་བཀྲལ་ཅིང་སྐད་ཡིག་གི་ཀློང་རིམ་བརྗོལ་ནས་ཀློག་མཁན་གྱི་ཁྱབ་ཀྱ་དང་དོ་སྣང་། ཞེས་བྱ་བརྗེ་རེས་བྱེད་པའི་གཡུལ་ངོ་གསར་བ་ཞིག་ལ་སླེབས་ཀྱི་ཡོད་པ་རེད། ཀློག་པ་པོ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་འགྱུར་ཡིག་འདི་དག་ལ་ཞིབ་ཀློག་བྱས་ནས། བརྒྱུད་རིམ་དེ་ལས་བརྩམས་ཆོས་ལ་འགྱུར་བ་གང་དང་ཇི་ལྟར་ཕྱིན་མིན་སོགས་བསམ་གཞིགས་བྱེད་ཐུབ་པའི་རེ་བ་ཡོད།

གཞན། ཚེད་སྒྲིག་འདི་དང་ལྷག་པར་དུ་ཚེད་སྒྲིག་འདི་ཡི་མགོ་ཁུངས་སྟེ། ཨར་ལི་ནོ་ཡ་སློབ་ཆེན་ལ་ཚོགས་པའི་གངས་ཅན་སྐྱེས་མ་རྩོམ་པ་པོའི་རྩོམ་རིག་བགྲོ་གླེང་གི་སྔ་ཕྱིའི་ལས་ཀ་ལ་འགན་འཁུར། རོགས་རམ་དང་རྒྱབ་སྐྱོར་གནང་བྱེད་མཁན་ཡོངས་ལ་ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཆེ་ཞུ། དེ་ལས་བགྲོ་གླེང་འདི་ཡི་ས་བོན་ནི་དགེ་རྒན་ཆེན་མོ་ལྗོན་ནེ་ཐེ་རྒྱ་མཚོ (Janet Gyatso)། འབུམ་རམས་པ་མདའ་ཚན་ན྄་མ་སྐྱབས། འབུམ་རམས་པ་ལྷང་ཇུའེ (Jue Liang) བཅས་ཡིན་ལ། ཁོང་ཅག་གིས་༢༠༡༩ལོའི་རྒྱལ་སྤྱིའི་བོད་རིག་པའི་ཚོགས་ཆེན་ཐོག་བོད་ཀྱི་སྐྱེས་མ་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་དང་དེ་དག་གི་བརྩམས་ཆོས་ལ་དོ་སྣང་བྱེད་དགོས་པའི་གྲོས་གཞི་བཏོན་པས། ལྷང་ཇུའེ་དང་མོ་རེ་བཀྲ་ཤིས་བདེ་སྐྱིད་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་༢༠༡༩ ལོའི་སྟོན་ཀ་ནས་བགྲོ་གླེང་འདུ་འཛོམས་འདི་ཡི་འཆར་གཞི་དང་རོགས་དངུལ་བཙལ་བ་སོགས་ཀྱི་ལས་ཀའི་མགོ་བརྩམས།

༢༠༢༠ལོའི་ནད་ཡམས་ཀྱི་རྐྱེན་གྱིས་ཚོགས་འདུ་དེ་ལོ་གཉིས་ལ་ཕྱིར་འགྱངས་བྱེད་དགོས་བྱུང་། ཡིན་ནའང་། སྤྱི་ལོ་༢༠༢༢ལོའི་ཟླ་བཞི་པར། རྒྱལ་སྤྱིའི་འགྲོ་འོང་སོགས་ཀྱི་ཐད་ལ་དཀའ་ཁག་མང་པོ་ཁྱད་དུ་བསལ་ནས་ཡུལ་དངོས་སུ་འདུ་འཛོམས་ཐུབ། འདུ་འཛོམས་ལེགས་འགྲུབ་བྱུང་བ་ལ་མི་མང་པོ་ཡི་དངོས་ཤུགས་བརྒྱུད་གསུམ་གྱི་དཀའ་ཚགས་གང་མང་ལ་བརྟེན་ཡོད་པ་སྟེ། ཡུལ་དངོས་ཀྱི་བཀོད་སྒྲིག་པ་གཙོ་བོ་ནི་མོ་རེ་བཀྲ་ཤིས་བདེ་སྐྱིད་དང་ཨེ་རིན་ བྷར་ཁི་༼Erin Burke༽གཉིས་ཀྱིས་འགན་ཁུར་ཡོད་ལ། དགེ་རྒན་ལྗོན་ནེ་ཐེ་དང་

བླ་མ་སྐྱབས། ལྷང་ཧྲའེ། ཨན་སྒྲུའུ་ཐེ་ལྷར་༼Andrew Taylor༽། དགེ་རྒན་ཆོས་ཉིད་དབང་མོ་༼Francoise Robin༽་སོགས་ཀྱིས་མཇུབ་སྟོན་གནང་། ད་དུང་ཚོགས་འདུ་འདིའི་ལེགས་འགྲུབ་བྱུང་བ་ལ་མེད་ཐབས་མེད་ཀྱི་རྒྱབ་སྐྱོར་དང་རོགས་རམ་གནང་མཁན་ནི་ཕར་ཇི་ནི་ཡའི་སློབ་ཆེན་གྱི་བོད་ལྗེ་གནས་ཀྱི་དགེ་རྒན་ཆེན་མོ་ཧྲེ་བེ་ཊེ་ཇར་མ་ནོ་༼David Germano༽དང་། ཨ་རི་ཡ་ན་མག་ཁི་༼Ariana Maki༽དང་རོང་བོ་བློ་རྒྱལ་བཅས་ཡིན། རིག་འབྱུང་དོན་འགྲུབ་བཀྲ་ཤིས་ཀྱིས་ཚོགས་འདུའི་ཡིག་སྒྱུར་དང་ལོ་ཙཱ་ཡི་འགན་གཉིས་འཁྱོགས་ཀྱིས་དཀའ་བ་ཁུར་ཡོད། ཆེད་སྒྲིག་འདི་ཡི་རྩོམ་སྒྲིག་གི་འགན་ཁུར་བ་གཙོ་བོ་ནི་ཨན་སྒྲུའུ་ཐེ་ལྷར་༼Andrew Taylor༽ཡིན། ད་དུང་ལོ་ཙཱ་བ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་བརྩོན་འགྲུས་དང་རྣམ་དཔྱོད་གཉིས་ལྡན་གྱིས་ཡིག་བསྒྱུར་བརྒྱུད་ནས་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་དང་གློག་པ་པོའི་བར་ལ་གདམ་གྱི་ཟམ་ཐག་འཐེན། ཆེད་སྒྲིག་འདི་ཡི་མདུན་ཤོག་གི་རི་མོ་ནི་བོད་ཀྱི་གཞོན་སྐྱེས་རི་མོ་པ་ཀུ་ལ་ཡག་གིས་གངས་ཅན་སྐྱེས་མ་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་འདུ་འཛོམས་འདི་ལ་རྒྱབ་སྐྱོར་དང་དགའ་སྟོན་གྱི་ཚུལ་དུ་ཕུལ་བས། ང་ཚོས་ཀུ་ལ་ཡག་ལ་བཀའ་དྲིན་ཆེ་ཞུ། ཀུ་ལ་ཡག་གིས། རི་མོ་འདི་ལ་ཁ་བྱང་དམིགས་བསལ་ཞིག་བཏགས་མེད་ཀྱང་། ཁོ་མོས་བོད་ཀྱི་སྐྱེས་མའི་ལས་དང་ལྷུང་རྟ་བསམ་ནས་བྲིས་པ་ཡིན་ཟེར། གཞན་མི་མང་པོས་ལྷག་བསམ་ཟོལ་མེད་ཀྱིས་རྒྱབ་སྐྱོར་གནང་ཡོད་པས། ཚང་མ་ལ་བཀའ་དྲིན་ཆེ་ཞུ་འོ། ། རྒྱལ་སྤྱིའི་འགྲོ་འོང་དང་ནད་ཡམས། བདེ་འཇགས་སོགས་ཀྱི་རྙོག་འཛིངས་ཤིན་ཏུ་ཆེ་བའི་དུས་སྐབས་འདི་འདྲ་ལ་དཀའ་ཁག་དང་ཉེན་ཁ། རེ་དོགས་སོགས་དང་དུ་བླངས་ནས་ཐེབས་པའི་བོད་མོ་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་ཡོངས་ལ་ལྷག་ཏུ་བཀའ་དྲིན་ཆེ་ཞུའོ། །

མཐར། བོད་ཀྱི་རྩོམ་རིག་སྤྱི་དང་ལྷག་པར་དུ་སྐྱེས་མའི་རྩོམ་རིག་རྒྱལ་སྤྱིའི་རྩོམ་རིག་དང་སྒྱུ་རྩལ། རིག་གཞུང་གི་གླེང་སྟེགས་ལ་ཁྱབ་པ་དང་དོ་སྣང་བྱུང་བ་ནི་བོད་ཀྱི་རིག་གནས་དང་སྤྱི་ཚོགས་ལ་འབྲེལ་འདྲིས་དང་ཤེས་རྟོགས་བྱེད་པའི་ལམ་ཁ་གལ་ཆེན་ཞིག་ལ་འགྱུར་བཞིན་འདུག་སྙམ། ནུབ་ཕྱོགས་སྤྱི་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་མཐོང་སྣེ་རུ་བོད་ནི་ནམ་ཡང་ཆབ་སྲིད་

ཀྱི་དཀའ་རྙོག་གིས་བསྐྱེད་པའི་དཀའ་སྡུག་ལ་ཚུད་པའམ། ཡང་ན་ཆོས་ལུགས་ངོ་མཚར་བ་ཞིག་གི་འབྱུང་ཡུལ་ཙམ་ལས། བོད་ཀྱི་རིག་གནས། སྤྱི་ཚོགས། རིག་གཞུང་། ཁོར་ཡུག་སོགས་ཕྱོགས་མང་པོའི་རྣམ་པ་དང་དངོས་ཡོད་དེ་མཐོང་ཐུབ་ཀྱིན་མེད།

དེ་ལས་ལྡོག་སྟེ། བོད་ཀྱི་རྩོམ་རིག་གིས་བོད་ནི་ལྷ་བ་དང་མཐོང་སྣེ་སྣ་མང་ཞིང་རྙོག་འཛིངས་ཆེ་བའི་སྤྱི་ཚོགས་དང་། སྲོལ་རྒྱུན་གྱི་ལུགས་རིང་ལ་གསར་གཏོད་ཀྱི་རྣམ་རིག་གྲོད་པའི་རིག་གནས། ཡ་རབས་བཟང་སྤྱོད་ལ་བརྩོན་ཞིང་དགའ་སྐྱོ་ཆགས་སྡང་གི་ཚོར་འདུ་གྲོད་པའི་མིའི་རིགས་ཤིག་ཞིག་ལ། གངས་ཅན་མཐོ་སྒང་གི་བླ་སྲོག་ལྡན་པའི་མི་རིགས་ཐུན་མོང་མ་ཡིན་པ་ཞིག་ཡིན་པ་བརྗོད་ཐུབ་པའོ། །

གངས་ཅན་སྐྱེས་མའི་རྩོམ་རིག་གིས་ནི་ལྷག་པར་དུ་བོད་ཀྱི་སྤྱི་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་ཆེས་རྒྱུན་ལྡན་དང་ཐུན་མོང་བའི་འཚོ་བ་དང་བདེ་སྡུག་བརྗོད་པ་སྟེ། རང་ཅག་གི་ཁྱིམ་གཞིས་ཀྱི་ཀ་བ་ལ་འགྱུར་བའི་མེས་མོ་དང་། སྐྱེད་མ་དང་སྐྱེས་མ། བྱིས་པ་སོགས་ཀྱི་འཚོ་བ་དང་སྐྱིད་སྡུག་གི་མཐོང་སྣེ་ནས་མི་རིགས་ཤིག་གི་རིག་གནས་ཀྱི་ཡང་སྙིང་ངམ་ཉིང་ཁུ་ལ་བརྩེ་ཚོག་པའི་བློ་རིག་དང་ཉམས་མྱོང་། བདེ་སྡུག་དང་རེ་འདུན་སོགས་གླེང་ཐུབ་པའོ།། ད་དུང་རྩོམ་འབྲི་དང་རྩོམ་རིག་ནི་བོད་སྟོད་སྨད་བར་གསུམ་དང་ཕྱི་ནང་གཉིས་ཀ་ལ་གནས་པའི་སྐྱེས་མ་རྩོམ་མཁན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་བརྩོན་ལེན་དགོས་པའི་འཐབ་ར་ཞིག་རེད་འདུག་ལ། ཕོ་དབང་རིང་ལུགས་སོགས་ཀྱི་སྒྲིག་གཞི་བཙན་པོའི་འོག་ལ་མཐུན་སྒྲིལ་གྱི་ལག་རྡང་དང་བློ་ཐུབ་ཀྱི་སྟོང་གྲོགས་སུའང་འགྱུར་འདུག

ཆེད་སྒྲིག་འདི་དང་སྤྱི་ལོ་༢༠༢༣ལོའི་བགྲོ་གླེང་གཉིས་ཀ་ནི་བོད་ཀྱི་སྐྱེས་མ་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་བློ་རིག་དང་བགྲང་བྱ་མང་པོའི་བརྩོན་འགྲུས་ཀྱི་འབྲས་བུ་ལ་སྨིན་པའི་དེབ་ཕྲེང་དང་བགྲོ་གླེང་མང་པོའི་རྐྱེན་གྱིས་འགྲུབ་པ་ཡིན། བོད་ཀྱི་སྐྱེས་མ་རྩོམ་པ་པོའི་འདུ་འཛོམས་

དང་པོ་ནི་ལོ་རབས་གཅིག་གི་སྔོན་དེ་སྤྱི་ལོ་༢༠༡༣ལོའི་ཨ་མདོ་ཁྲི་ཀ་ལ་འཚོགས་ཤིང་། དགེ་རྒན་ཆེན་མོ་དཔལ་མོ་ལགས་ཀྱི་སྣེ་ཁྲིད་དང་གཙོ་སྒྲིག་གི་འོག་སྐྱེས་མ་རྩོམ་པ་པོའི་ཆེད་སྒྲིག་དེབ་ཕྲེང་དང་དཔེ་ཚོགས་སྤུ་རྗེས་སུ་ཐེངས་ལྔ་དཔར་སྐྲུན་བྱས། སྤྱི་ལོ་༢༠༡༡ལོའི་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་སྣ་མང་གི་ཕྱོགས་བསྒྲིགས་ཀྱི་དེབ་བཞི་ཅན་གྱི་དཔེ་ཚོགས་ནས་དེའི་རྗེས་ཀྱི་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་རེ་རེའི་དེབ་གཅིག་རེའི་བདག་ཉིད་ཅན་གྱི་དཔེ་ཚོགས་བཞི་བཅས་ཁྱོན་བསྡོམས་དེབ་༢༨་ལྷག་བོད་ཡིག་ཏུ་དཔར་ཟིན། དེབ་དེ་དག་གི་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་དང་ཁ་བྱང་མཇུག་མཆན་ལ་གཟིགས་རོགས། ད་དུང་མི་སྒེར་གྱིས་དཔར་པའི་དེབ་དང་རིག་གཞུང་ཞིབ་འཇུག་སོགས་བོད་ཕྱི་ནང་གཉིས་ན་སྐད་ཡིག་སྣ་མང་གི་ལམ་ནས་བྲིས་ཡོད་པ་ནི་སྨྲས་ཅི་དགོས། ང་ཚོས་ཁོང་ཅག་གི་རྩོམ་རིག་གི་མཛད་རྗེས་གཟེངས་སུ་བསྟོད་པ་དང་ལྷན་དུ་བཀའ་དྲིན་བསམ་བཞིན་ཡོད།

སྤྱིར་གནས་ཅན་སྐྱེས་མ་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་ཡོངས་དང་དམིགས་སུ་ཆེད་སྒྲིག་འདིའི་རྩོམ་པ་པོ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ང་ཚོ་ལ་གནང་བའི་རྩོམ་རིག་གི་ལེགས་སྐྱེས་ཀྱི་དྲིན་ལན་དུ་ཁོང་ཅག་གི་རྩོམ་རིག་དར་སྤེལ་ལ་རྒྱབ་སྐྱོར་དང་གོ་སྐབས་བསྐྲུན་རྒྱུ་ནི་ང་ཚོ་ཀློག་པ་པོ་རྣམས་ལ་ཡིད་འཇགས་ཡོད་པ་འཚལ།

མཇུག་ཏུ་བོད་ཀྱི་རྩོམ་རིག་དང་སྐད་ཡིག ལྷག་པར་དུ། བོད་ཀྱི་ཤེས་རིག་དང་སྒྱུ་རྩལ་གྱི་འབྱུང་ཁུངས་གནས་ཅན་མཐོ་སྒང་གི་ལྗུང་ཧྲ་དར་ཞིང་རྒྱས་པའི་རེ་སྨོན་དང་བཅས་བྲིས་པ་དགེའོ། །

Editorial Introduction

Erin Burke, Jue Liang, Tashi Dekyid Monet, Andrew S. Taylor

Tibetan contemporary literature (བོད་ཀྱི་དེང་རབས་རྩོམ་རིག) not only depicts the complexity of modern relationships – in this volume alone, we see an illicit love affair that ends with the couple finding refuge as mountain meditators, a loving father work day and night to stitch his daughter a chuba for school, and a polyandrous marriage unravel through a silent cell phone – but has become a relational site in itself. Depictions of Tibetan lives, both human and more-than-human, make the Tibetan experience legible to Tibetans themselves, and, increasingly, to readers around the world. These lives, ordinary and extraordinary, dynamic and elusive, have rarely been visible to dominant cultures. For far too long, the Euro-American and Chinese worlds have persisted in seeing Tibetans either as the source of an "exotic" religion or a political dilemma to be solved. We are deeply grateful and excited for the opportunity to curate this anthology of works by Tibetan women writers that we hope enriches such provincial perspectives.

Given that recent critical studies have shown the close relationship between social taxonomizing and political subjugation, one may question the utility and limitations of using the terms "Tibetan" and "women" to organize this anthology. Writers of non-dominant groups of genders or races have often been seen as inferior to mainstream or whitestream writers, with such delimiting labels supporting their continued marginalization. Why then continue to use

the category of "Tibetan women writers"? Although these are valid concerns, we believe that the categories of "Tibetan" and "woman" also have liberatory dimensions and can be used to critically challenge the liberal assumptions that erase other cultures and genders in favor of a "universal" literature that claims to transcend cultural and political categories. The lived contexts of the authors of these pieces are complex and diverse, and in their particularity represent a challenge to any attempt at universalization. Some are writing in Tibetan, some in Chinese, some in English. Many have lived in multiple countries or regions. The stories, essays, and poems offered here provide glimpses into lives of complex individuals inhabiting diverse worlds, from Himalayan retreats to exile schools, from a tailor's sewing-machine to a mother's tsampa box, belongings that the authors show are worlds unto themselves, each reality presenting its own problems, logic, and paradox.

And yet, for all these differences, when the authors represented in this anthology gathered at the first symposium of Tibetan women writers held at the University of Virginia in April 2022,[1] the writers celebrated their common aspirations, struggles, and hopes, and affirmed a commitment to bringing forth the voices of Tibetans from all walks of life, especially those who too often pass unheard. Moreover, it became clear that writing itself is a site of struggle and insight, but also of healing and friendship, particularly for writers who have endured displacement, patriarchies, and dispossession. As new friendships were forged and old ones renewed, the Symposium soon became known

1 "གངས་ཅན་སྐྱེས་མས་རྩོམ་རིག་གླེང་བ། བོད་མོའི་རྩོམ་རིག་མཛད་རྗེས་གཟེངས་སུ་བསྟོད་པ།· (The Tibetan Women Writing Symposium: A Celebration of Tibetan Women's Literature)." April 8-10, 2022. University of Virginia.

informally as the Celebration.

Moreover, the rubric of "Tibetan women writers" has been useful in creating institutional space for writers who have long been denied it by a confluence of patriarchal systems. The first gathering of Tibetan women writers was held in Trikha, Amdo, in 2012. A decade later, we were finally able to convene for the first symposium of Tibetan women writers outside of Tibet at the University of Virginia, and subsequent gatherings have taken place at Havard, Columbia, Colorado-Boulder, Northwestern,[2] and Inalco[3]. This strategic rubric has also been instrumental in securing funds and publishing opportunities. For instance, Palmo (དཔལ་མོ།), a poet, scholar, and professor at Northwest Nationalities University (ནུབ་བྱང་མི་རིགས་སློབ་ཆེན།), published five series devoted exclusively to works by Tibetan female authors, totaling 14 books in the Tibetan language alone,[4] joining the swelling ranks of anthologies and individual books penned by Tibetan women both inside and outside Tibet.[5] Academics and translators are also

2 "The Second Lotsawa Translation Workshop: Celebrating Buddhist Women's Voices in the Tibetan Tradition." October 13-16, 2022. Northwestern University.

3 "Charting the Uncharted World of Tibetan Women Writers Today. An Ongoing Conversation." January 5-7, 2023. Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales (Paris).

4 These have been published in four series by Palmo (དཔལ་མོ།). The first series was entitled དེང་རབས་བོད་རིགས་བུད་མེད་ཀྱི་དཔེ་ཚོགས།, and comprised of four books, all published by China Tibetology Press: 1. དཔྱད་རྩོམ་ཕྱོགས་བསྒྲིགས། 2. སྒྲུང་རྩོམ་ཕྱོགས་བསྒྲིགས། 3. ལྷུག་རྩོམ་ཕྱོགས་བསྒྲིགས། 4. སྙན་རྩོམ་ཕྱོགས་བསྒྲིགས།. The second series, བོད་ཀྱི་དེང་རབས་བུད་མེད་རྩོམ་པ་པོའི་དཔེ་ཚོགས། (དེབ་ཕྲེང་ཐོག་མ།), was published in 2014 by Tso-Ngon Nationalities Press and included: ཁ་བ་ལྷ་མོའི《ཁ་བའི་ན་ཆ།》རྟོགས་སད་ལྷ་མོའི་《བོད་པའི་བུ་མོ།》དཔལ་མོའི་《དབྱིད་ཀྱི་དཔལ་མོ།》ཚེ་རིང་གཡང་སྐྱིད་ཀྱི་《མི་ཚེའི་འགྲུལ་བཞུད།》མཚོ་ཡི་《སེམས་པ་བཞུད་པའི་དབྱངས།. The third series, བོད་ཀྱི་དེང་རབས་བུད་མེད་རྩོམ་པ་པོའི་དཔེ་ཚོགས། (དེབ་ཕྲེང་གཉིས་པ།), was published in 2016 by Sichuan Nationalities Press (སི་ཁྲོན་མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྐྲུན་ཁང་།) and was comprised of five books: བདེ་སྐྱིད་སྒྲོལ་མས་བརྩམས་པའི་《བྱུར་དམར་འབྲི་ཤིང་།》བོད་གཞུག་སྐྱིད་ཀྱི་《སྐྱ་རེངས།》ཚེ་སྒྲོན་སྐྱིད་ཀྱི་《ཞེན།》ཚེ་རིང་འཚོ་ཡི་《ཨ་མའི་བཙོ་ཟེའུ།》འཆི་མེད་ཀྱི་《རྒྱུའི་ལང་ཚོ།》 The fourth series, བོད་ཀྱི་དེང་རབས་བུད་མེད་རྩོམ་པ་པོའི་དཔེ་ཚོགས། (དེབ་ཕྲེང་གསུམ་པ།), was published in 2018 by Sichuan People's Press (སི་ཁྲོན་མི་དམངས་དཔེ་སྐྲུན་ཁང་།) and consisted of the following works: རྡོར་མོའི《རི་རྩེའི་དར》དང་། མཁའ་མོ་རྒྱལ་གྱི་སྙིང་ལོག་པ་སྒྲོན་པ་འཚོའི《ལུག་རྫི་བུ་མོ 》མཚོ་ཡི《ཁང་མིག་སྒོ་མེད》མར་བཟའ་སྒྲོལ་ཀྱི་《སྣང་བའི་འཛིག་རྟེན》 A fifth series, entitled བོད་ཀྱི་དེང་རབས་བུད་མེད་རྩོམ་པ་པོའི་དཔེ་ཚོགས། was published in 2023 by Tso-ngo Natioalities Press (མཚོ་སྔོན་མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྐྲུན་ཁང་།) and consisted of the following books: དཔལ་མོའི་སྙན་ངག《བདག་སེམས་ནམ་ཡང་ཁྱེད་ལ་ཕྱོགས》ཚེ་རིང་འཚོའི་སྙན་ངག《གཡུ་ཆུང་།》གཡུ་སྒྲོན་འཚོའི་སྒྲུང་གཏམ་《གཟིམས་པ་མེད་པའི་སྒྲོན་མེ།》ཟ་བ་ཚེ་རིང་སྐྱིད་ཀྱི་སྒྲུང་གཏམ་《ལྕུང་ནང་གི་གཡོག་པ།》རྡོར་མོའི་ལྷུག་རྩོམ་《ལམ

5 Especially noteworthy is a 53-volume curated collection of writings by and/or about Buddhist women throughout history published by the khenmos at Larung Gar Five Sciences Buddhist Academy. These women are held up as exemplars for contemporary Buddhist practitioners. See Bla rung arya tāre'i dpe tshogs phyogs rtsom sgrig khang, editor. མཁའ་འགྲོའི་ཆོས་མཛོད་ཆེན་མོ་ *[Ḍākinīs' Great Dharma Treasury]*. Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 53 vols. Sarah Jacoby and Padma'tsho have pioneered the study of these important volumes. For more on their publication and importance, see Jacoby, Sarah and Padma'tsho, "Gender Equality

starting to pay greater attention to their own biases in their selections of subjects, and studies of important women throughout Tibetan literary history have increased within the Tibetophone and Anglophone academies. We hope this anthology of pieces selected by the authors at the Celebration is a welcome addition to this burgeoning movement.

Readers can find brief introductions to each piece in Janet Gyatso's thoughtful preface and bios of each author below each piece and translation, including links to purchase their works when possible. Each piece is briefly introduced by its translator, wherein the translator calls attention to especially challenging or interesting dimensions of the piece that might have otherwise escaped the reader's attention, particularly when reading in a different language than the original. These introductions were provided only in English so that the translators could devote their resources to providing bilingual editions of each literary work. The original text is provided atop its translation. We have dispensed with Wylie in favor of Tibetan text where possible—a benefit of Yeshe's digital format—and have deliberately left Tibetan phonetics unstandardized, as many of the authors already have their own preferred phonetic renderings. Moreover, the works gathered here depict Tibetans from a variety of linguistic backgrounds, and so we have left phonetic choices up to each translator, as the same word might be pronounced quite differently across the Plateau.

in and on Tibetan Buddhist Nuns' Terms," Religions, vol. 11, no. 10, 2020, pp. 543-562, and Jacoby, Sarah, and Padma'tsho, "Lessons from Buddhist Foremothers: The Editors of the Ārya Tāre Book Series," Voices from Larung Gar, edited by Holly Gayley. Boulder, Colorado, Snow Lion, 2021, pp. 219-233. The collection also includes an eight-volume series of scholastic commentaries (འགྲེལ་པ་) penned by Khenmo Yonten, which are possibly the first commentaries published by a woman in Tibetan history. For more on Khenmo Yonten, see Liang, Jue, and Andrew S. Taylor, "Tilling the Fields of Merit: The Institutionalization of Feminine Enlightenment in Tibet's First Khenmo Program," Journal of Buddhist Ethics, vol. 27, 2020, pp. 231-262, at 252-253. Chelsea Hall also presented on Khenmo Yonten and her commentaries in a paper, "Khenmo Yönten's Quiet Commentaries: Publishing Female-Authored Buddhist Texts at Serta Larung Gar," at the 2017 American Academy of Religion conference on the panel "Voices from Larung Gar."

A few different motivations inspired the choice to make this edition bilingual: First, there is no such thing as an objective or perfect translation, and we hope that this volume will call attention to the process of translation too often left unacknowledged in hermeneutic encounters. Second, we hope to support the physical presence of the Tibetan language as it has been often absent in Euro-American Tibetan Studies publications, as previous translation efforts have been mostly unidirectional from Tibetan into European languages. Third, we hope that a bilingual edition will broaden the audience of each of the writers anthologized here. Those writing in Tibetan or Chinese have rarely received an Anglophone audience, while those writing in English may have received only a limited Tibetophone audience despite actively theorizing and engaging Tibetan themes and imagery in their works. Finally, the readership of Yeshe is cosmopolitan and multilingual, with varying levels of proficiency in the languages contained in this volume. We hope that readers will not simply accept our translations at face value, but actively reflect on the translators' choices: What is gained and lost in each translation?

Although we hope that the materials here read smoothly, or at least are challenging in deliberate ways, a number of obstacles had to be overcome for the Celebration and this volume to manifest, and we wish to thank some of our supporters: The Symposium was initially organized by Jue Liang and Tashi Dekyid Monet, and could not have gotten off the ground without the help of Lama Jabb and Janet Gyatso, who should be credited with its original inspiration and were indispensable in the initial planning and grant-writing. As a global pandemic delayed the Symposium for months and then years, Andrew

Taylor and Erin Burke joined the organizing team. As the on-site organizers, Erin and Tashi shouldered the lion's share of the work, shepherding the Symposium to its celebratory conclusion. We also must thank Dhondup Tashi Rekjong, who, on top of contributing his own translations and knowledge of Tibetan literature as a participant, tirelessly served as interpreter throughout the symposium. The process of securing funds and visas for the writers from Asia to travel during this period of restrictions and isolation was unimaginably complicated, and we wish to thank David Germano, Ariana Maki, Rongwo Lugyal, Eben Yonnetti, and the Tibetan community in Charlottesville for all their help. We are also most grateful to Shelly Bhoil, Patricia Schiaffini-Vedani, and the entire Yeshe editorial team for enthusiastically offering their prestigious journal as a venue for these authors' writings. Their guidance has been invaluable.

We would like to encourage readers to support and reciprocate the gifts of creativity and insight that these writers have shared with us. For example, if one of the pieces in this collection speaks to you, please consider buying the author's book or inviting them to speak at your institution. We hope that Lungta or the vitality of Tibetan voices, languages, Land, and imaginations will flourish interdependently with the land and life of the places where we live.

Introduction
Women’s Literature: Vistas of Modern Tibetan Trauma

Janet Gyatso

Abstract: The introduction surveys the contributions to the anthology from a literary perspective. It asks questions about the relationship between narrator and characters, as well as the role of trauma, sorrow, longing, and wit in each case.

Keywords: homeland, nostalgia, trauma, Tibetan women writers

We have before us something rare and valuable. The reader will find in this short issue a rich display of the diversity—and array of brilliances—in Tibetan women's writings today. Some of the authors are writing from inside Tibet, some from the exile community in India, and some are abroad in the West. They write in Tibetan, English, and Chinese. An integral part of the growing modern literary scene among Tibetans world-wide, women writers have unfortunately received little attention. Hence the impulse for this issue, and the symposium at University of Virginia in April 2022 that occasioned it.

How shall we read these varied works? As examples that represent modern Tibetan literature? As sites for feminist analysis of women's distinctive ways of writing? As pieces of literature to enjoy? Of course, these approaches need not be mutually exclusive. But among the choices for focus, I prefer to read them first and foremost as literature. We can give ourselves license to zero in on the achievement

of the writer in her attempt to use her medium as art. That also means we can feel free to appreciate how that art speaks to us, the readers, who need not be limited to the author's intended audience but still can find resonance across cultural and geographical distances. We readers of literature are looking for insights and ways of being to appreciate and live our lives better. I recommend this approach not only out of hedonism or possibly even self-indulgence. I also think it is our responsibility, as readers and translators of Tibetan literature, to give these writings their due as art, and not merely as yielding information on Tibetaness, or woman's predicament, or some other construct of identity. To focus only on the latter would be to confine Tibetan literature, perhaps even to prevent it from really being literature after all. We owe it to these stories to read them for their creative efforts, for their contribution to being human (and/or animal).

Of course, that is not to say to ignore the particularities of context—of the author's background, social circumstances, literary influence, linguistic constraints and possibilities. The more we know of such things, the more we appreciate the accomplishment of each piece. And so even when we note their evident efforts to address the modern Tibetan predicament, we should not miss what makes these stories and essays literature and not mere documentary resources: we can appreciate how their skillful use of language and timing and nuance and intimation and irony enhances the punch of their story and its reception in the reader's heart and mind.

The short space of this introduction allows only a few scratches on the surface of what I just suggested. Given my past interest in autobiography in premodern Tibet, my own attention is drawn to the

emerging forms of self-figuration we find in these works. By that I mean the way that the author configures her characters and narrators—especially those that stand in for herself—in relation to the pressures of culture and society and politics and economics and colonialism all around her. And that is not to mention the deep emotional currents palpable in every piece.

On first encountering this collection I found it interesting to realize that Tsedrön Kyi's "Silent Dusk" is the only one not written in the first person (even Tsering Wangmo Dhompa's complex narrator uses the first person, among others, to refer to herself). I would add that Tsedrön Kyi's characters are also the purest and simplest in the collection, if perhaps the hardest to take in. The story offers no redeeming hope, just a totalizing predicament of a female protagonist who seems totally subject to the whims of two husbands, each unsatisfying in different ways. The heroine is immersed in a static double-bind, oppressed by her inability to please either of her men, one because he is unrelentingly drunk, jealous, and demanding, the other because of his education that the heroine can never share. Strikingly, she cannot even take refuge in the vast landscape of her homeland, a sight that many others might find inspiring. But no, even here "(i)n the sky, the moon had no brightness, and even the constellations did not shine." Can we presume that the author is at least offering her readers the consolation of the art of expression itself? We can only wonder if she is identifying with her character Metok Lhadzé. Or is she using her art of desolation to help herself—and the rest of us—to distance ourselves from her?

Like "Silent Dusk," Min Nangze's "Mother's Tsampa"

presents us with a mostly univocal, simple calculus. Recounted in the first person, “Mother's Tsampa” foregrounds absence, nostalgia and irreconcilable loss, an irreplaceable preciousness that was once in her hands. Interestingly, however, the first person perspective here manages to transcend itself. As already prefigured in the long tradition around eating this quintessential Tibetan food that her mother used to tell her family, the narrator appeals to the communitarian loyalties of her readers by proclaiming that all Tibetans raised in tents have had the same experience that she is reminiscing about here. Similarly, and despite singling herself out as the one who most appreciated her mom's tsampa in her entire family, the narrator realizes, in a dream of reuniting with her mother in that primal scene of feeding, that she cannot keep it all for her individual self. The image of her entire family holding out their hands to receive some of the treasured staple breaks open both the dream and the story itself.

In both “Silent Dusk” and “Mother's Tsampa” we see literature providing a place to register a complaint, about loss and lack of fulfillment, even though at least one of the stories seems to suggest a change of perspective that might somehow offer some deliverance from pained longing. Pema Lhadze 's “Love Is a Pair of Unloosed Arrows” seems also to be about longing although the reader has to work harder to discern it. We are less clear about the narrator's positionality than we are about any of the other voices in this collection, but she is clearly fascinated with the lifestyle of two religious adepts who are also lovers. Apparently, they abandoned their homes in eastern Tibet to run away together and are now managing a nunnery at the famous Tibetan mountain retreat at Chimphu. The narrator/author ends up visiting them twice over the course of some years. But despite her own account of

herself as an obtrusive and nosy interviewer, she never really seems to get the full story of how and why the couple is living as they do, including the boldly inquisitive question around whether they are happy. The reader is left wondering as well. This is not an omniscient narrator, but as Liang and Taylor point out, she seems to read the minds of the couple, at least for their sorrows. What we do know by the end of the story is that her own heart is aching, as she bemoans her empty life.

Similar to Min Nangdze's "Mother's Tsampa," Nyima Tso's "My Father's Skills" is filled with nostalgic longing for the world of the past, idealizing her father's meticulous and ethical work as a tailor back in Tibet. However, various oppositional juxtapositions in her narrative carve out some space for movement, reflection, and perhaps deliverance. These include the discrepancy between being in exile versus being in her homeland, and the miserable miniature sewing machine she obtained in exile versus the beautiful device that was so productive in the hands of her father. Most of all, the distinction that the author keeps driving home between the character that she was in the past and the self-critical narrator she is now—both of them are "her," and yet they are at odds—achieves what some autobiography theorists have called a "duplex" self. For the narrator of Nyima Tso's story, her moral failures as a child may be uncomfortable and troubling, but it actually gives her adult self the space for critical distance and reevaluation. It allows her some redress of her former ungrateful self and perhaps even to recuperate a happier childhood than she had thought she was having in the past. The process returns her to the Tibetan identity she had scoffed off as a child, but any idealized nostalgia is chastened, replaced by a recognition that self-fulfillment is hard-won—and yet still achievable.

Chimé's tour de force piece, "Tales of Myself and Snow," transports herself—and her reader along with her—to a place of self-invention and transformation, through her astonishing powers of poetic vision. Grounded in the prosaic, if enchanting, event of a snowfall, the beauty of the moment serves to initiate a series of juxtapositions regarding the poet's homeland and corresponding images of paradise, female deities, and most of all the protectress whom she so earnestly seeks to encounter. This union is never entirely consummated. But we still witness an elevation of the poet. This comes not only via a virtual yogic breakthrough that partakes liberally of Buddhist meditative techniques, but perhaps even more so through the power of writing itself. This power is bestowed by none other than the very queen of poetry Sarasvatī with whom the poet seeks to unite. We begin to suspect that her verses have already effected the divine union that the poet seeks. This is so even if her "passionate expression" has only "barely evaded shamelessness." Indeed, such shamelessness (if it is that) is something for which the reader can only be grateful.

Tsering Wangmo Dhompa's free verse essay "Somewhere Else" offers a deeply complex portrait of Tibetan life in exile, with all of its attendant memory, mistrust, and unfulfilled desire. We don't quite know who is the "her," or "she," with whom the essay begins, although we suspect it is the narrator's mother. And yet, evocative of the transgenerational trauma that the refugee community shares, the pronouns of this essay are unreliable, with the narrator shifting from first to second person, and perhaps even to third, ever seeking the best container to hold her conflicting experiences. Even the Tibetan Buddhist teachings to which the narrator often turns don't provide

unambiguous hope, but rather serve as warnings: warnings about the proper vessel (or "pot") with whom to share one's story; injunctions both to remember words in proper sequence and to look beyond them; and allusions to karma, the deeds that we don't remember, but which are like a "…seed no bigger than a sesame grain [that] grows into a tree." The question of whether it is actually one's own unremembered past actions which caused the bad fortune of exile must plague every refugee; it certainly did plague the entire Tibetan population when they lost their independence and their homeland, the land "at whose center a demoness was pinned to the ground." Tsering Dhompa draws in her reader into this somber state of reflection, the reader who feels directly addressed even if she does not have access to any of the pronouns that the essayist embodies, and even if she might be the arbiter of who gets to escape refugee status and become human.

Painfully moving in different ways is the short but astonishingly candid reflections from the erudite Kelsang Lhamo, excerpted from her 1999 book Dreaming at the Sage's Abode: Biographical Sketches of Four Living Tibetan Nuns. The author shares with her reader a gorgeous love poem actually written by a man, Gonpo, as an offering to her, and with whom she apparently had a deeply affective relationship. The relationship was never consummated, for reasons we are given to understand had to do with the fact that Kelsang Lhamo was a celibate nun at the time of the events depicted. Her description of Gonpo remains deeply observant and attuned to his depth of character, a depth that is amply exhibited in his letter to the author. His respectful discernment of her commitment to her vows is palpable and sensitive, just as is his cautious portrayal of her as a delicate deer. And yet he also detects the "warm vital blood" flowing beneath her demure demeanor.

Among other things, Kelsang Lhamo reveals with this exceptional self-portrait the deep human complexities of the emotional life of the renunciate, perhaps even more so when that devoted renunciate is a woman.

Finally, we have the pleasure of “The Lottery,” another sublimely crafted autobiographical essay. Tenzin Dickie seamlessly situates herself within Tibetan exile culture, even while using the affordances of literature to stray far beyond that. She and her community are keenly alert to the different values of white European-descent foreigners, or “Injis, ... a proud and narrow-minded people, we thought, who would take kindness for contempt.” But she spends most of “The Lottery” peering into the depths of her own childhood self. She freely exposes not only her shame as a childhood bed-wetter but also her own self-absorption (“They assumed I was miserable about my parents’ leaving for abroad. I was only thinking, how do I stop peeing in bed?”), thus boldly departing from expectations around Tibetan filial piety. Tenzin Dickie even questions the nature of autobiographical memory altogether, arriving at what we could label a “triplex” perspective on the self, one that knows not only the difference between the narrating self and the narrated one, but also the necessary distortions of narration altogether. Even as she tells her story as a child in exile with exuberance and wit, the reader gets the impression that she is not above questioning the entire project of focusing on herself to begin with, an anxiety far from unknown in world literature, not to mention the enormous reservoir of premodern Tibetan writing that all of our authors here are heiresses to, consciously or not.

I appreciate that the editors of this issue decided to provide

the first-language version of all of the stories, along with a translation into either English or Tibetan when these were not the original. This meant rendering the two Anglophone contributions, “The Lottery” and “Somewhere Else,” in Tibetan, a venture as challenging, if not more so, as is translating modern Tibetan or Chinese into English. We readers owe all of the translators much gratitude for wading into the very choppy waters of cultural contact, where terms, values, assumptions, implications, and intertextual echoes are set loose, at best finding uneasy landing spots in the target language that unavoidably make for new associations of their own. Our own literary imaginations have been set loose as well, but in the expert hands of these fine authors, translators, and editors we can feel free to take in the new vistas.

ང་དང་ཁ་བའི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད། (Tales of Myself and Snow)

འཆི་མེད། Chimé

(Translated from Tibetan by Tashi Dekyid Monet and David Germano)

Abstract: In this essay, we offer a translation of the famed Tibetan contemporary poet Chimé's poem, "Tales of Myself and Snow," written in 2012 in twenty stanzas of traditional metric verses. The essay introduces the poem with biographical notes on the author as well as our interpretation of the poem's key themes based upon extensive interviews with the author. We read the poem as deeply embedded in the author's relationship with her Tibetan homeland and Palden Lhamo–a principal female protective deity of Tibet and the Tibetan people. These stanzas trace a pilgrimage across the landscape of Tibet and its seasons of life and death, as well as across the landscape of her own body and mind, with poetic creation acting as the beating heart of the pilgrim driving her forward to this goddess whose usual dark body is reimagined as white as snow.

Keywords: Chimé, winter, Palden Lhamo, spiritual protectors, Tibetan language, Buddhism

Translators' Introduction

Chimé (འཆི་མེད།) is the pen name for Pematso (པདྨ་འཚོ།), a

famed contemporary poet and Tibetan language teacher from Rebgong, Amdo. She is among the first Tibetan women writers educated in the secular schools in Tibet and is one of the most well-known Tibetan poets living today. She graduated from Qinghai Nationalities Institute in 1987 and taught in Rebgong for over three decades. Chimé has composed many important essays in addition to her powerful books of poetry. "Tales of Myself and Snow" (ང་དང་ཁ་བའི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད།) is a poem from Chimé's first collection of poems, Dreams of the Moon (ཟླ་བའི་རྨི་ལམ), published in 2012 in Ziling (Xining). She published a second book of collected poems, The Youth of Water (ཆུའི་ལང་ཚོ།) in 2016, while one of her most famous poems, "The Ring" (ཨ་ལོང་།) was separately published in 2017 and subsequently translated into English and powerfully interpreted by Dr. Lama Jabb. A third book of poetry and essays was published in 2023, The World in a Copper Mirror (ཟངས་ཀྱི་མེ་ལོང་ནང་གི་འཇིག་རྟེན།), which concludes with her autobiographical reflections and thoughts on the creative process (the latter was also separately published in a bilingual edition in 2023 with English translation by Rongwo Lugyal with the same title). Her poems have been awarded the highest recognitions for Tibetan literature in China, including the 2015 Wild Yak Prize for Literature and the 2017 Annual Award for Nationalities Literature from the China Writers' Association.

Chimé's life has been marked by intense suffering and loss, which have left indelible marks on her poetry. She grew up in the violent chaos of the Cultural Revolution, during which her mother and family were especially brutalized as a result of their previously privileged social status. Her father was unfairly imprisoned and died as a result when she was just six. Chimé's mother was forced to give her

away when she was nine, such that she was raised as a foster child by an older couple. Her mother later passed away when she was seventeen. In Chimé's adult life she has suffered as a female writer at the hands and words of a misogynist Tibetan world, including over a decade of enforced silence as an author that she alludes to in her autobiography. There have also been private sufferings at the scale of her childhood, but which are not ours to share. This is the personal context for the dark vein of suffering, loss, betrayal, and grief which runs like black quicksilver through her writing. That said, "Tales of Myself and Snow" is actually one of the more joyful of her major poems with its lovely descriptions of a vibrant natural landscape interwoven with the pervasive figure of birds embodying the compelling power of poetic creation. Despite this, her personal grief is still evident, such as in the poem's second stanza characterizing the poem overall as words of her own sorrow, which in the next-to-last stanza transmutes into the yearnings of Tibetan souls across the plateau against the background of "these chaotic times" when "the darkness of opaque paths conceal the land which holds us." It also manifests in her reference to the rarity of "friendship without deceit," and her twice entertaining her own death or living death in evocative and violent images, "this desiccated cairn, a barely standing thing, a body separated from mind," and "the terror of the body's flesh and skin being rent asunder."

Chimé's poems are also deeply spiritual in character but engage enduring Buddhist themes in compelling ways that are uniquely personal rather than simple evocations of Buddhist terminology and themes as articulated in the classical literature. Thus, her evocation of suffering and grief in "Tales of Myself and Snow" echoes the first noble truth of suffering, a primordial concern

to which Buddhist meditations endlessly return. This pattern is also exemplified in the entire poem being cast as a prayer and supplication to the Tibetan goddess and protectress Palden Lhamo (དཔལ་ལྡན་ལྷ་མོ།, literally "Glorious Goddess") in the context of a deep meditation on grief, solitude, Land, and the nature of art itself. The poem weaves seamlessly through her own life, the Tibetan people, and the vast Tibetan landscape with its swirling storms of snow. In interviews with Chimé in the summer of 2022, she related that the inspiration for the poem occurred in a dream in the winter of 2010. That night she dreamed of a snowfall and woke up to find it was indeed snowing outside, which she interpreted as a sign of Palden Lhamo communicating with her. The poem is thus centrally concerned with Tibetan place-based relationships and the role of Tibetan more-than-human communities in Tibetan lifeways and ways of knowing.

Pelden Lhamo, never explicitly named in the poem but rather addressed primarily by Chimé simply as protectress (བདག་མོ།), is one of the most important female divinities in Tibet, as well as its most famous spiritual guardians, regardless of gender. She was, and is, also closely associated with the Tibetan people and their protection as a people. Her typical iconographic representation is a dark blue figure with fierce appearance, including a crown of five skulls and often holding a skull cup full of blood. While the title represents a category of tantric female divinities who can take many visual forms, including at times being white or red in color, the overwhelming majority of depictions are fierce in demeanor and dark blue in bodily color. Indeed, Chimé's earliest relationship with Palden Lhamo emerged in the context of nightmares she had as a teenager, in which she was chased

by a fierce dark nomadic woman, who whistled and tried to paint her black with charcoal but never caught her. A tantric teacher told her that the nightmares were indicative that Palden Lhamo was seeking a relationship with her, and after Chimé began offering juniper incense and chanting to the goddess, as well as later performing visualizations and meditations centered on her, the nightmares ceased and gave way to a life-long relationship and inspiration.

Of particular importance in the present context is that Palden Lhamo is often considered to be a fierce emanation of the goddess Sarasvatī (དབྱངས་ཅན་མ། དབྱངས་ཅན་ལྷ་མོ།), the goddess of knowledge, music, and poetry with a deep and enduring relationship to speech and artistic inspiration, as well as secondary associations with healing and protection. In Tibet, she is also identified as "Melodious Savioress" (Tibetan དབྱངས་ཅན་སྒྲོལ་མ།, Sanskrit tārā sarasvatī), identified in some enumerations as one of the twenty-one forms of Tārā, the most important of all female divinities in Tibetan Buddhism and also a goddess closely connected to the protection and sustenance of the Tibetan people and Land. Chimé in fact understands her own poetic vocation, as well as her life-long relationship with Palden Lhamo, to be fundamentally linked to a ritual initiation to Sarasvatī which she received as a college student many years ago from a famous Buddhist lama, who oddly summoned her to the initiation without explanation (only later did Chimé come to recognize the relationship of Sarasvatī and Palden Lhamo). The relationship between Sarasvatī, Palden Lhamo, and her own art has thus been a topic of deep reflection for her entire adult life. These reflections, and poetic meditations, have also been interwoven with a life-long concern for the agency and rights of

Tibetan women, coming to terms with her own grief at unimaginable losses, and her deep love of the Tibetan language, people, and Land.

This is the backdrop for the poem's evocation of the protectress, who Chimé reimagines as a goddess of snow, hence as white in color as the blizzards of snow descending upon the Tibetan Land as she sleeps. She also evokes the goddess as present in white bones, imaging the bones of a frozen winter landscape animated by her divine spirit. Overall, the poem explores Tibet as a people and a Land, with the Protectress intimately intertwined with a Land that she both blesses and of which she herself is an expression. We discern in it a recasting of the primordial Tibetan story of the Tibetan plateau as a fierce female demoness who must be violently tamed by temples and the constant reiteration of Buddhist esoteric rituals of subjugation. Here the Tibetan landscape, blanketed by snow in the dead of winter, merges with Palden Lhamo, such that her typical dark blue body is now the uncharacteristic whiteness of Tibetan snow, also imaged as the whiteness of bone and conch shells. Thus in the poet’s repeated beseeching of Palden Lhamo, the protectress, we would suggest she is also implicitly evoking the Tibetan Land as divine, thereby undoing the original subjugation of a female gendered Tibetanness, as well as the Buddhist fissuring of Land as the subjugated subject of Buddhist ritual mastery. Instead, the female, and Land, are the divine, who she implores for a vision, for a relationship, and for acknowledgement throughout the poetic meditation. The whiteness may also evoke Palden Lhamo’s inner core as the goddess of poetry, Sarasvatī, who is typically painted and visualized as white, and who is here clearly present as Chimé explores the intimate connections of Palden Lhamo to the act of poetic creation and inspiration.

While the opening two stanzas portray the immediate context of the poem in a snowstorm in the dead of winter, it isn't until the fourteenth stanza that winter reemerges in the specter of Palden Lhamo's white bones. In between, the Land of Tibet is evoked in lovely and joyful terms outside of winter (stanzas three, four, seven, nine, ten, and eleven). Once winter returns with those white bones, it is next described as a delightful emissary of Palden Lhamo (stanza fifteen), but then immediately is imaged as the conch-white protectress contrasted to a reference to the poet's own violent death (stanza sixteen), after which it concludes in stanzas eighteen and nineteen with a silent, possibly ominous dark winter landscape at nighttime with "massive mountains in natural alignment, draped by snow" and "souls roaming across the four regions of Tibet." This poem thus begins with the death of winter, returns to vibrant life, and concludes with a fervent prayer across a still winter landscape. Across this changing landscape of Tibet, two threads weave a tapestry of reflection—the nature of poetic creation and the intense hope for a vision of Palden Lhamo. The first two stanzas self-consciously refer to the process of writing as "tales of myself and snow" described as "words of my own sorrow" that she offers as "sustenance for the winds so intimate with snow." The fifth stanza imagines poetic creation as the supreme goddess unraveling her natural freedom from within her body, which becomes "designs falling to the surface of a mirror" (stanza six) and melodies stemming from "the exquisitely blissful vast matrix of body and speech" (stanza eight). She brings forth two exemplars of Tibetan female poets from ancient times, each vividly evoked with colored landscapes of turquoise and red copper respectively, who this time constitute "tightly woven knots of composition in naturally free speech" (stanza nine). She then images

the poets as "a feathered flock" flying through a forested landscape with song and dance (stanza eleven), before returning to the image of poetry as sketches upon the mind's crystal mirror (stanza twelve) that constitute her gift, though people understand her inspired words in a hundred ways due to divergent karma (stanza thirteen). She then in the final verse (twenty) vividly describes speech blossoming into the mind's seeds via letters at her fingertips, asking Palden Lhamo to witness the moment.

Palden Lhamo herself appears first implicitly in the images of snow falling in the first two verses but then is explicitly evoked in verses four and five as the protectress of all life and the inspiring muse behind Chimé's own poetic capacities. Verse eight addresses the goddess directly, linking her to the stirring of melodies within the poet, and in a dramatic image asks her for inspiration, even if the poet is just "this desiccated cairn, a barely standing thing, a body separated from mind?" (stanza ten). The protectress is then addressed in every stanza from the twelfth to the final, twentieth stanza in an intensifying crescendo, as the poet asks her to acknowledge her own poetic acts (twelve), inquires as to when a personal vision will be forthcoming (thirteen), requests a presence in the naked white bones of winter beyond all guile and betrayal (fourteen), asks how snowfall could be anything but emissaries of the protectress's impending arrival (fifteen), claims that even death would be nothing in the face of such an embrace (sixteen), requests her to come this moment in a blaze of flames (seventeen), plaintively asks if she thinks of we Tibetans as the winter landscape sleeps in the dead of night (eighteen), supplicates for a collective encounter for all Tibetans (nineteen), and then concludes by asking her to witness with joy the poet's own poetic acts of

transmutation.

As we read the poem, we began to think of it as a contemporary version of a Buddhist scripture, a sūtra or a tantra which always begin with a narrative frame (གླེང་གཞི།) that lays out the sublime teacher, retinue, teaching, place, and time framing the ensuing dialog in which an interlocutor asks a Buddha questions, and the Buddha responds. Just so, the poet begins by detailing a place (Rebgong in Tibet) and a time (the dead of winter), while the teacher is Palden Lhamo and the retinue is the same as the interlocutor, namely Chimé herself, who poses six questions and requests to Palden Lhamo. In a distinctively modern inversion, however, her questions are unanswered, left lingering on the page, chasms of uncertainty compared to the confident, lengthy sermons that usually ensue in Buddhist scriptures when questions are posed. The teaching itself is explicitly about the interweaving of Land and person, betrayal and suffering, the hope for redemption, and the process of poetic inspiration and creation. Indeed, Palden Lhamo clearly functions in part as a poetic muse for Chimé, inspiring her poetry and acting as a religious subject of veneration. The English word muse ultimately derives from the Greek word mousa, which literally means song or poetry, as well as nine sister goddesses of knowledge and the arts. Such connection of divinity to inspiration for composition is a long standing one in Tibetan Buddhism, as visions of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Goddesses might inspire a composition or revelation, while in the Tibetan revelatory treasure (གཏེར་མ།) tradition, historically concealed and later revealed scriptures were mediated by various male and especially female guardian spirits tasked with protecting and then facilitating recovery of the texts in question. The preponderance of such

texts was in fact in verse, such that divinely-inspired Buddhist poetry has a long history in Tibet. Indeed, the treasure tradition is pervaded by accounts of the deeply symbolic and mysterious processes of revelation, which can be interpreted in terms of accounts of a poetic process of inspiration and creation.

The poem's fifth stanza on unraveling knots of blockage in the body resulting in spontaneous songs of creativity and freedom are a long-standing theme in terms of subtle body meditations unleashing spontaneous compositions of esoteric songs. The ninth stanza then beautifully inverts this by imaging poetic compositions by historical Tibetan women as “tightly woven knots of composition in naturally free speech,” suggesting the specificity of their experience constitute intricately woven knots of value in their poetic expressions, not obstacles to be dissolved. The poem then concludes with a lovely image of mind running like a dark ink through letters, speech, fingers, and pen to become a poem, transforming her grief into a redeeming vision of the protectress, and of the very soul of Tibet and Tibetans. These twenty stanzas then, are a pilgrimage across the landscape of Tibet and its seasons of life and death, and the landscape of her own body and mind, with the act of poetic creation constituting the beating heart of the pilgrim driving her forward to this goddess with a body white as snow. Unlike a Buddhist scripture, the questions and pleas to the Buddhist divinity are never answered, and the poem concludes with two requests posed to Palden Lhamo, asking that she rejoice and witness the Tibetan poetic process that flows through Chimé in the very act of poetically invoking the protectress. Yet, in a sense, Palden Lhamo has been talking throughout the poem, manifesting in the medium of the Tibetan Land’s vibrant agency present stanza after stanza, as well as

internally as the dynamic force that stirs within the poet to give rise to the poem itself.

ང་དང་ཁ་བའི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད།

1. མེ་ཏོག་ཟེ་བ་ལྡེམ་མེ་དབྱར་གཞུང་གི །
ཡིད་འོང་དུས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་པ་མི་མཐོང་བའི།།
གྲང་རླུང་གངས་ཆར་དཀྱིགས་པའི་དགུན་དཀྱིལ་ནས།
ང་དང་ཁ་བའི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་འདི་ལྟར་བྲིས། །

2. ལྷབ་ལྷུབ་འཕྱུར་བའི་ཁ་བ་ལེབ་མོའི་ཚོགས། །
དོ་ཐུབ་བདག་གི་སྙེའུ་ཁུང་འགྲམ་དུ་བབས། །
རིག་བྱེད་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་མིན་པའི་སྐྱོ་སྙིང་འདི། །
ཁ་བའི་དུམ་ལ་ལྷགས་པའི་ཟས་སུ་འབུལ། །

3. གནས་གཡང་ཆགས་ཀྱི་རེབ་གོང་གསེར་མོ་ལྗོངས། །
གོས་དུར་སྒྲིག་གི་རྒྱལ་མཚན་བསྒྲེངས་པའི་ཡུལ། །
གནས་ལྔ་རིག་གི་ཡུལ་དབུས་མ་ག་དྷ། །
དུས་ད་ལྟའང་ངོ་མཚར་བཀོད་པས་ཕྱུག །

4. སྣོད་རི་ཚུ་ལ་གཡང་གི་རེ་ཁྲ་བཀྲ།
བཙུད་སྐྱེ་རྒྱུ་ལ་བདག་མོས་དངོས་གྲུབ་བསྐུལ། །
དཔལ་མཛེས་སྤུག་གིས་གླིང་བདུན་ཐིག་ལེར་བརླུམས། །

ཡིད་མཚོ་གླིང་ལ་སྨོན་པའི་རླབས་རིས་འགྱུ། །

5. སེམས་སྟོང་དབྱིངས་ནས་བསྒོམས་པའི་ལྷ་མོ་མཆོག །
ལུས་དྲོད་ལམ་མེ་གྲེ་བར་བསྐྱིལ་བ་ན། །
དག་རང་གྲོལ་གྱི་མདུད་རྒྱ་ལྷོད་ཤིག་གེར། །
སེམས་མ་གོམས་པའི་འཇིག་རྟེན་སྣང་གླུར་ཐལ། །

6. དངུལ་མེ་ལོང་གི་ངོས་སུ་བབས་པའི་རིས། །
གསོན་མི་ཡུལ་གྱི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་མི་གཙང་བ། །
ཡིད་དུང་དུང་གིས་བརྗོད་པའི་དོ་ནུབ་ལ། །
གནོང་བག་མེད་ཀྱི་བྲེད་ཤ་མི་མངོན་ཙམ། །

7. རི་གངས་དཀར་གྱི་ཅོད་པན་ཐོད་ལ་བླངས། །
སྤང་གཡུ་མདོག་གི་ས་གཞི་གདན་དུ་བཏིང་། །
ཤེལ་རྫ་ཆབ་དང་ནགས་ཆུ་ཧུབ་ཀྱིས་མེད། །
གྲོགས་འདབ་ཆགས་ལས་མེད་ཀྱང་སྐྱིད་སྣང་ཆེ། །

8. ངའི་འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་བདག་མོ་ངོ་མཚར་མ། །
ཡིད་སྣང་སྲིད་ཀྱི་ཁམས་ལ་ཉམས་རོལ་པའི། །
གནས་ལུས་ངག་གི་ཀློང་ཡངས་བདེ་ཆེན་ནས། །
གདངས་མཐའ་མེད་ཀྱི་རྩོམ་རྟོག་བདག་ལ་བརྙེས། །

9.ལྷོ་གཡུ་མཚོ་ཡི་ངོགས་སུ་སད་མ་ཀར། །

ཟངས་མཁར་དམར་གྱི་རི་ན་ལབ་ཀྱི་སྒྲོན། །
ཡིད་རོ་མཉམ་གྱི་མགུར་གླུ་སྙན་ལྷང་ལྷང་། །
ངག་རང་གྲོལ་ལ་རྩོམ་མདུད་དམ་སེ་བཞུགས། །

10. གྲོང་རི་གསེབ་ནས་འཁྱོམ་པའི་རྣམ་ཤེས་ལ། །
རྫོད་བདེ་དཀྱིལ་ནས་སྐྱོལ་བའི་བདག་མོ་ལགས། །
ལུས་སེམས་བྲལ་གྱི་བེམ་པོ་མ་འགྲེལ་ཅམ། །
ཐོ་སྐམ་པོ་ལ་དངོས་གྲུབ་ག་རེ་གནང་། །

11. ནགས་ལོ་འདབ་ནས་འཕུར་བའི་འདབ་ཆགས་ཁྱུ། །
མགྲིན་དབྱངས་བདུན་གྱི་འགྱུར་བ་སྣ་ཚོགས་ཤིང་། །
ལུས་སྦྱུ་སྦྱུག་གི་གཤོག་ཟུང་མཁའ་དབྱིངས་སུ། །
གར་སྟངས་སྟབས་ཀྱིས་སྒྲེག་པ་ཡི་གར་འོང་། །

12. དེ་སྒྲིབ་མེད་ཀྱི་སྣང་བརྙན་མངོན་གསལ་བའི། །
ཡིད་དྭངས་ཤེལ་གྱི་མེ་ལོང་ངོས་གཉིས་ལ། །
ངག་རིག་བྱེད་ཀྱི་རི་མོ་བྲིས་པ་ཡིས། །
དོན་བདག་མོ་མཆོག་བསུ་བ་དགོངས་ལགས་སམ། །

13. ལས་འོ་སྐོལ་གྱི་བསྐོས་ཐང་མི་འདྲ་ལ། །
བརྒྱ་ཁ་གཅིག་གིས་ཐོས་པ་མི་འདྲ་ཡང་། །
དུས་བདག་མེད་ཀྱིས་བདག་ལ་བསྐྱལ་བ་སྟེ། །
ཁྱེད་ནམ་ཞིག་ལ་བདག་གིས་དངོས་སུ་རྙེད། །

14. གྲོགས་བསླུ་མེད་ཀྱི་བདེན་པ་མཐོང་དཀའ་བ། །
དུས་ད་ལྟའང་ད་དུང་འཚོལ་བཞིན་ཡོད། །
ཀེང་རུས་དཀར་གྱིས་འགྲེང་བའི་བདག་མོ་ལགས། །
གནས་ཕྱོགས་ཆ་ཙམ་བདག་ལ་གསལ་བར་ཞུ། །

15. གངས་དཀར་པོ་ཞིག་བདག་གི་སྙེས་འོག་ཏུ། །
ནམ་མཚན་དཀྱིལ་ལ་འཛུལ་བ་ཨ་རེ་སྐྱིད། །
འདི་བདག་མོ་ཡི་ཕོ་ཉའི་འགྲོ་འོང་སྟེ། །
སྐུ་དངོས་མཇལ་གྱི་ཉེར་བསྡོགས་ཅི་ལ་མིན། །

16. ཡིད་མཁའ་དབྱིངས་ནས་འོད་དཀར་འཛུམ་དམུལ་ལེ། །
དུང་བདག་མོ་ཉིད་ག་ལེར་བཞུད་གྱུར་ན། །
ལུས་ཤ་པགས་གཉིས་བྲལ་པའི་འཇིགས་སྣང་གིས། །
གསོན་མི་ཡུལ་ལ་ནམ་ཞིག་གྱེས་ཀྱང་ཚོག །

17. གསུང་ངོ་མཚར་གྱི་དཔལ་མོ་ཡིད་འོང་མ། །
སྐུ་སྲིད་གསུམ་གྱི་བདག་མོ་ཊ་ཀི་མ། །
ཡིད་མེ་རླབས་ཀྱི་གློང་ཡངས་མཆོད་པའི་མཐིལ། །
དུས་སྐད་ཅིག་སྤྲོན་ནོ་བརྩེ་ལྡན་མ། །

18. གྲལ་མ་བསྒྲིགས་པའི་ལྷུན་པོ་གངས་ཀྱིས་གཡོགས། །
ཉི་མ་རེག་པའི་ཟླ་དཀར་དབྱིངས་ན་འཛུམ། །

ལམ་མི་གསལ་བའི་མུན་པས་འཛིན་མ་བཀབ། །
ངག་བསླུ་མེད་ཀྱི་བདག་མོས་དགོངས་ལགས་སམ། །

19. གནས་ཏུ་བཞི་ན་རྒྱུ་བའི་རྣམ་ཤེས་ལ། །
དཔལ་འགྱུར་མེད་ཀྱི་རྡོ་རྗེའི་ལུས་གསོལ་ཏེ། །
གནས་བསིལ་ལྗོངས་སུ་ཅུལ་བའི་དགོས་དོན་ཉིད། །
སྐུ་དངོས་མཇལ་གྱི་སྐལ་བར་སྨོན་པའོ། །

20. ཡིད་འཕྲིན་ལམ་དུ་འཕོས་པའི་ངག་གི་དཔལ། །
སོར་སྨྱུག་རྩེ་ནས་བཞད་པའི་ཟློས་གར་ལ། །
ཐུགས་མཐིལ་གཏིང་ནས་དགྱེས་སམ་བདག་མོ་མཆོག །
སྤྲུན་ལན་གཅིག་ལ་གཟིགས་སམ་བདག་མོ་མཆོག །

Tales of Myself and Snow

1. Mid-summer flowers with swaying anthers,
 colors and shapes of lovely times no longer visible,
enveloped by deep winter's freezing winds and blizzards,
I write these tales of myself and snow.

2. Waves of snowflakes undulating
in descent before my window tonight,
I offer words of my own sorrow rather than some ancient fable
as sustenance for the winds so intimate with snow.

3. The golden lands of Rebkong form a sacred site
where the victory banners of the saffron robes fly,
a central region for the five fields of knowledge, ancient Magadha embodied,
abundant even now in displays of wonder.

4. Sacred lines adorn mountains and rivers, the vessel,
the protectress grants spiritual attainments to all life, the elixir,
their glory and beauty encircle the seven continents,
rippling waves of prayer flow in the ocean island of my mind.

5. The supreme goddess contemplated from the expanse of an empty mind,
gathers in my throat as vivid warmth spreads through the body
the knot blocking speech's natural freedom unravels,
passing into world-imagining songs beyond the mind's ken.

6. Designs falling to the surface of a silver mirror,
impure tales of life in the human realm,
tonight my passionate expression
just barely evades fears of being shameless.

7. Taking the crown of white snow mountains to my head,
laying the ground of turquoise meadows as a seat,
drinking fully the waters of crystal slate and forest streams,
how happy, even if winged birds are my only companions.

8. Wonderful protectress of my world,
from the exquisitely blissful vast matrix of body and speech
where my mind enjoys the realm of all that appears,
the composition of melodies endlessly falls to me.

9. Queen Sadmakar at the banks of the southern turquoise lake,
and Saint Labkyidrön at the mountain of the red copper fortress:
vivid melodies of the same flavor of mind are present,
tightly woven knots of composition in naturally free speech.

10. My protectress, who has bestowed warmth and bliss via the heart
to this soul wandering through mountain villages,
what spiritual attainments will you grant to this desiccated cairn,
a barely standing thing, a body separated from mind?

11. A winged flock flying through a forest's canopy,
diverse songs modulating in seven melodies,
pairs of lovely feathered wings in the sky's expanse
rhythmically dancing, graceful and exquisite.

12. On the two surfaces of the mind's bright crystal mirror,
such images shine vividly without obscuration,
and I sketch designs of poetic knowing
to welcome you, supreme protectress —do you understand?

13. Though a hundred people will hear different things
given our distinct karmic trajectories,
these chaotic times have bestowed to me this gift,
and yet when will I meet you in person?

14. Still searching even now for this rarity,
the truth of friendship beyond deceit,
I request that you lend to me a mere sliver of it,

protectress who stands in naked white bones.

15. White snow slipping in under my pillow
in the middle of night, how delightful!
How could these visits of the protectress's emissary
not be preparations for a personal encounter?

16. Should the conch protectress slowly approach,
luminously white and smiling from the sky expanse of my mind,
I would be content even if torn from the realm of the living
with the terror of the body's flesh and skin being rent asunder.

17. Exquisite glorious lady with awe inspiring Speech,
sky dancing protectress of the three realms with your Body,
please come this very moment, loving lady,
to my heart's offering of a vast space of blazing flames.

18. A natural array of massive mountains draped in snow,
the stainless white moon smiling in the expanse,
the darkness of opaque paths concealing the land which holds us,
do you think of us, protectress who never deceives?

19. I request glorious, unchanging, adamantine bodies
for the souls roaming across the four regions of Tibet,
I pray that our very purpose of wandering in these cool lands,
be fulfilled in the fortune of meeting you in person.

20. The glories of speech transferring mind through letters,
this drama blossoming from my fingers and the tip of a pen,

supreme protectress, are you pleased from the depths of your Heart?
supreme protectress, will you read it this one time with your Eyes?

དྲང་སྲོང་བསྟི་གནས་ཀྱི་རྨི་ལམ་ཡུན་ཅིག
(Dreaming at the Sage's Abode)

སྐལ་བཟང་ལྷ་མོ། Kelsang Lhamo

(Translated from Tibetan by Kelsang Lhamo and Miranada Smith)

Abstract: Kelsang Lhamo's Dreaming at the Sage's Abode (1999) is one of the first modern poetry collections composed by a Tibetan nun. This essay offers a brief biography of Kelsang Lhamo, and background on her composition of the work in Northern India in the 1990s, along with a translated excerpt from the book's Chapter 2, Wanderer. The translation features a section of the author's prose-preface, and three letters in verse that are part of a longer correspondence between the novice nun Kelsang Lhamo ("Lhamo" in the story), and local poet, editor and publisher, Gonpo Tsering. This essay discusses the collaborative translation process, formal features of the verse with a focus on metrics, and figurative language such as symbolism and metaphor.

Keywords: Tibetan literature, Tibetan women's writing, poetry, poetics, translation

Translator's Introduction

Tibetan poet and author Kelsang Lhamo was born in 1973 in the town of Lhokha, south of Lhasa, where she attended primary school through high school. While growing up in Central Tibet, she received

primarily Nyingma teachings from Sheldak Khen Rinpoche and Dungkar Losang Tinley on the topics of Tibetan medicine and the Five Minor Sciences. In 1989, she left for India to pursue further studies. Kelsang belongs to the cohort of the earliest female Tibetan writers in India to have escaped from Tibet in the late 1980s and early 1990s, a group which also includes Chukyé Drolma and Tsering Kyi, both of whom have published poetry collections in Tibetan.

While in India, Kelsang received novice vows from His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama and, for a period of ten years, studied and received Lamrim (ལམ་རིམ།) and other teachings from Geshe Dupthob Rinpoche, and many other masters. She also studied Hindi language and the Vedas in Varanasi. Her first book of poetry, Dreaming at the Sage's Abode: Biographical Sketches of Four Living Tibetan Nuns was published in 1999. Kelsang moved to the USA in 1999 and for several years taught Tibetan language and culture to the son of Sogyal Rinpoche. During this time, she also translated Sogyal Rinpoche's Tibetan Book of Living and Dying into the Tibetan language with Ringu Tulku. In 2002, with the kind support of Alak Zenkar Rinpoche and Tashi Tsering, she joined the Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC), formerly the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (TBRC). Under the guidance of Gene Smith, BDRC's founder, she continued her study of Tibetan literature. Kelsang has taught Tibetan language and literature to many students. At present she is working as Senior Librarian and Cataloger at BDRC.

I collaborated with Kelsang in translating this excerpt from the second chapter, Wanderer (འཁྱམས་མོ།), of her poetry collection

Dreaming at the Sage's Abode: Biographical Sketches of Four Living Tibetan Nuns (1999). Kelsang composed this mixed genre work initially as a series of journal entries kept between meditation sessions as a nun in extended meditation retreat in Dharamsala, in an area of Himachal Pradesh known locally as "the Sage's Abode." After ordaining as a nun with His Holiness in India, Kelsang remained in retreat in Dharamsala for a total of nine years, approximately between 1989 and 1998, and also gathered notes for the book while in retreat approximately between 1993 and 1997.

The majority of Dreaming at the Sage's Abode is biographical, with four chapters recounting the life stories of the nuns Kelsang encounters while in residence at the Sage's Abode, such as the nun Tenzin Palmo and others. The book's second chapter, Wanderer (འཁྱམས་མོ།) is autobiographical, and describes Kelsang's early life and middle years, including her upbringing in Central Tibet, journey across the Himalayas, and life as a young nun in deep extended retreat in Dharamsala, India. The chapter features an epistolary correspondence that took place while Kelsang resided in retreat and showcases four letters exchanged between herself and local Tibetan poet, editor and language teacher Gonpo Tsering. Gonpo Tsering (better known as the poet Dhatsenpa Gonpo Tsering, and by the pen name Two-armed Gonpo [མདའ་ཚན་པ་མགོན་པོ་ཕྱག་གཉིས།]), also lived in Dharamsala at the time. Kelsang first became acquainted with Gonpo in 1992 when he reached out to her via letter, and they corresponded for about two years, meeting for the first time late in the winter of 1993 or at the beginning of 1994.

Gonpo was born in 1963 in Manlho Tsokdzong (རྨ་ལྷོ་སོག་རྫོང་།), a county in Amdo. After attending university in Amdo, Gonpo arrived in Dharamsala in approximately 1989, soon taking on a position as teacher of Tibetan language. After his job as a teacher, he worked for Amnye Machen Institute, serving as editor for the journal Young Shoots (ལྗང་གཞོན།) and the newspaper Democracy (དམངས་གཙོ།), publications which were started in Dharamsala in the 1990's.

This excerpt includes a section of prose preface, and three letters composed in verse that were exchanged between the poets. The letters are ornate verse compositions with lofty diction and rich metaphorical language, suggesting the refined poetic style of *nyan ngag* (སྙན་ངག།) that reflects Tibetan adaptation of Sanskrit verse forms. Kelsang's verse relies on long lines of classical Tibetan verse, eleven-syllable lines and the typical four-line stanzas. Gonpo's verse has shorter line lengths which reflect the influence of classical verse as well as Tibetan folk song rhythms; his first letter is in the often-used classical meter of regular seven-syllable lines in four-line stanzas, while the second letter is composed in terse six-syllable lines of four-line stanzas, suggestive of Central Tibetan folk song rhythms, *zhay* (གཞས།).

In interview, Kelsang could not precisely recall how many letters were exchanged in total with Gonpo, but likely more than 10. Kelsang expresses uncertainty regarding how the four letters fit into the larger correspondence and the development of the relationship; difficulty dating the letters with precision adds ambiguity to interpretation for readers. The first letter was composed shortly after

their first in-person meeting, and Kelsang explains she selected these letters for inclusion because they express the pair's mutual curiosity while getting acquainted.

Throughout the translation process, I asked Kelsang for more explanation regarding the work's dense symbolism, Indic and Tibetan cultural references and biographical allusions. In interview, Kelsang explained the significance of extended metaphors in the letters; for example, in the first letter, the lotus offering suggests the depth of Gonpo's romantic feelings towards the young nun, who he personifies as a deer. In the second letter, Kelsang identifies as the vulture living alone in the rocky mountain.

དྲང་སྲོང་བསྟི་གནས་ཀྱི་རྨི་ལམ་ཡུན་ཅིག

(43)ཡིན་ནའང་ག་ལེར་ངོ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་ངོ་བོ་གྱུར་ཏེ་ཁོང་གིས་ང་ལ་མཛའ་གཅུགས་ཀྱི་འབྲེལ་ལམ་བཙུགས་གནང་རྟུང་ཁོ་མོ་ནི་སྤྲིར་ཁོང་གི་ཐོལ་མེད་ཀྱི་བརྩེ་སེམས་(44)མཆིས་པའི་སྤྲིན་དཀྱུས་དང་སྐམ་ཞིང་དལ་བའི་གཤིས་བཟང་ལ་མ་འདོད་པ་མིན་རྟུང་འདི་ནི་ལམ་བཟང་པོ་ཞིག་མ་ལགས་པས་ཁོང་ལ་རྟག་ཏུ་གཟུར་གྱི་ཡོད།

ཁོང་བསམ་ཤེས་དང་གོ་ཤེས་གཉིས་ཀ་ལྡན་པས་ཨུ་ཚུགས་ཀྱི་མཁྲེགས་བཟུང་མི་བྱེད་ལ་སྡིག་ཉེས་ལའང་སྐྲག་པ་འདྲ་ལམ་གཞན་དུ་བཞུད་སོང་། ''''གང་ལྟར་ཡང་མགོན་པོས་ངའི་གཟུགས་དང་ལང་ཚོའི་ཆ་ཤས་ལ་བལྟ་བ་མ་ཡིན་པར་སེམས་ཀྱི་གནས་ལུགས་གཅིག་ཏུ་བསྡེས་ཏེ་མདུན་ཕྱོགས་སུ་བྲེས་པ་མ་ཟད་ངོ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་དུས་ཡུན་དེའི་རིང་དགའ་སྤྲུག་གང་གི་ཚེ་ཡང་མཐུན་ཕྱོགས་ཁོ་ན་འཛིན་པ་ལས་ཕ་རོལ་པོའི་སྙིང་དབང་བསྒྱུར་གྱི་བསམ་པ་མེད་

པ་དང་ང་ཁོ་ནར་བརྩེ་བ་ལས་ངའི་འཛིན་ཐང་དང་ཕྱོགས་གཞན་ལ་མི་བལྟ་བའི་ཚད་ལྡན་གྱི་དུང་སེམས་བཙངས་གནང་འདུག་ཀྱང་ང་ནི་དམ་པོར་བཅིངས་པའི་རང་ཁྲིམས་དེ་ལས་ཐར་མ་ཐུབ་སྐབས་ཁོང་ལ་འོས་ཤིང་མཚམས་པའི་གྲོགས་མོར་བརྗོས་མ་སོང་། ཡིན་ནའང་ཁོང་གིས་ང་ལ་གནང་བའི་སྙན་ངག་གི་ཆུན་པོ་རེ་རེ་ངའི་མི་ཚེའི་རིན་ཐང་དུ་འདོད་པ་མ་ཟད་ཁོང་གི་ཟོལ་མེད་ལྷག་བསམ་དེ་ང་སྤྲོ་སྣང་དང་འདུས་དོན་ལ་བསམ་གཞིགས་བྱེད་སྐབས་ཆེས་ཐོག་མར་དྲན་གསོ་བྱེད་པ་དང་ཁེར་རྐྱང་དང་ཡིད་སྨུག་གི་དུས་སུ་ངའི་སེམས་གསོར་མཆིས་པར་ཡིད་ཆེས་ལྡན་པ་ནི་གླེང་མེད་ཡིན།

མགོན་པོས་ང་ལ་གནང་བའི་ཐོག་མའི་ཕྱག་བྲིས་ནང་།།

ནོར་ལྡན་ནོར་གྱིས་ཁྱུག་དཀའ་ལ།།
དབང་ཤུགས་བཙན་པོས་འཕྲོག་དཀའ་བ།།
རང་བཞིན་གཤིས་ཀྱིས་འཛུམ་པ་ཡི།།
མེ་ཏོག་ཀཱང་འདི་སུ་ལ་འབུལ།།

རི་སྐྱེས་བུ་མོའི་རྗེས་བསྙེགས་ན།།
རི་ཁྲོད་འཛིན་པའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་མར།།
མཆོད་པའི་ཡོན་དུ་འཐོར་བ་ལ།།
ཕན་དང་དགོས་པ་གང་ཞིག་མཆིས།།

(45)འཆིང་ཞགས་རིང་མོས་མ་བསྡོམས་ཤིང་།།
བཙོས་མའི་གོས་ཀྱི་མ་ཁོག་པའི།།
འཚུལ་ཆོས་ཞིག་པའི་མཛའ་མོ་རེ།།

བཞུགས་ན་དེ་ཡི་མགྲུལ་བར་འོས།།

ཇོན་པ་རྒན་པོའི་མདའ་ཆེན་གྱིས།།
འབྲོག་དགོན་གཡང་དུ་བདས་པ་ཡི།།
ལུང་སྟོང་ཡུ་མོ་འཁྱུར་མ་རེ།།
མཆིས་ན་བསུ་མའི་སྐྱེས་སུ་འདེགས།།

གསང་བའི་མཆི་མ་ཕོག་ན་འཁྱིལ།།
གདུང་དབྱངས་ཞུགས་རིང་ཕྱི་ན་སྦྱུང་།།
གཙོང་གི་ཟིན་པའི་ནད་པ་རེ།།
ཡོད་ན་སེམས་གསོའི་སྨན་དུ་འབུལ།།
སྲང་ལམ་སྣོལ་མའི་བཞི་མདོ་ན།།
གར་འགྲོ་དམིགས་པ་བྲལ་བ་ཡི།།
དོགས་བཀྲུས་བཙིངས་པའི་སྙིག་མོ་རེ།།
སྲིད་ན་ལམ་སྟོན་མཚན་མར་འགྲིག །

མདའ་མདུང་གྲི་མཚོན་མ་བསྣུབས་པར།།
བདུད་ཀྱི་གཡུལ་ངོ་བཟློག་པ་ལ།།
དཔའ་བའི་སྨྱུག་ཐོགས་དབང་མོ་རེ།།
བྱུང་ན་སོར་མོས་བཏེགས་ཏེ་འབུལ།།

ཤ་ཏུས་གསེང་ནས་རྩ་བ་བཀྲུས།།
ཟུངས་ཁྲག་ཟློན་མོས་རྒྱུན་གྱིས་བསྐྱངས།།

རིན་བྲལ་པད་མའི་མེ་ཏོག་འདི།།
(46)གང་གི་སྙིམ་པས་བཞེས་སམ་ཅི།།

ཞེས་བསྐུར་འདུག   ཁོ་མོ་ནི་གཏམ་འདི་དག་ངའི་བསམ་ཡུལ་ན་ཤི་ཟིན་པའི་སྲོག་དབང་ཞིག་སླར་རོ་ལངས་རྒྱག་པ་དང་འདྲ་བར་ཞེས་དངངས་དང་ཧ་ཅང་ཡིད་མི་བདེ་བ་ཞིག་བྱུང་ཏེ་འཕྲིན་ལན་བསྒྲིངས་པར།

སྔོན་ཆད་དུར་ཁྲོད་གནས་ནས་གདན་འདྲེན་གྱི་གླིང་བུས།།
ཁེར་ལུས་སྐྱོ་སྣང་ཆེ་བའི་རྒོད་པོ་འདི་མ་བོས།།
ཡིད་སྨུག་ཉི་རྡོད་སྐྱོངས་བའི་བྲག་ཚང་འདིའི་རྟོགས་བརྗོད།།
བསམ་ཞིང་མ་བཅོས་གླལ་བའི་ཤུགས་རིང་ཞིག་ཤོར་སོང་།།
ཡུན་རིང་བྲག་ལ་བཅས་ཀྱང་ལྗོད་བབ་ཅིག་མེད་པས།།
ཡུན་ཅིག་ཨ་ཐང་ཆད་པས་དྲན་མེད་དུ་བརྒྱལ་ཏེ།།
ཕྱོགས་བྲལ་སྣང་མིན་གཡང་སར་ལྷུང་བ་དང་ཆབས་ཅིག །
རྒྱུས་མེད་འབྲོག་དགོན་གནས་སུ་ཐང་དཀར་ང་ལྷུང་སོང་།།

ཚེ་གང་བསམ་དོན་མ་འགྲུབ་དབུགས་རྫུབས་ཀྱི་ཁ་ལྷངས།།
སྐད་ཅིག་ཕྱི་ནང་རྒྱུ་བའི་དབེན་ཙམ་གྱི་རིང་དེར།།
ཁྲོད་ཅིག་ཕྲུག་གི་གཡོབ་པའི་སྙིང་སྟོབས་ཤིག་སྐུལ་ཡང་།།
གྲོགས་དག་ཧུ་མ་རྒོད་ཀྱི་སྐྱོ་གྲོས་དེ་ཕྱིས་སོང་།།

ཀྱི་ལགས་ཕྱུགས་བསམ་མཐིལ་གྱི་བཟའ་ཤིང་གི་རྣ་བར།།
འབད་པ་སྟོང་གི་སྒྲུབ་པའི་སྨྱུག་ཚལ་འདིས་བསླུ་བས།།

སྙན་གྲགས་དོན་གཉེར་མཁས་པའི་གྲལ་རིང་གི་དབུས་ན།།
བརྟན་པའི་དཀྱིལ་གྱུར་འཆའ་ལ་ཡིད་སྨོན་ཞིག་མི་ཞུ།།

ཁེར་རྐྱང་སྐྱོ་སྣང་ཆེ་བ་ཏ་ཅང་གི་བདེན་ཀྱང་།།
གཉིས་ཆར་བདེ་བ་མེད་ཅེས་རྣ་བ་ལ་འཛགས་པ།།
བདེ་མེད་ངོ་འཛིན་ཅན་གྱི་ཤང་སྙིགས་ཀྱི་ཁྲི་ལས།།
(47) རྩྭ་རྩེའི་ཟིལ་པས་བརླན་པའི་ཤང་ལམ་དེ་སྐྱིད་པ།།

ཁྲིད་ཐུགས་ཟླ་བ་བརྩེགས་པའི་ངོ་ཡོན་ཞིག་མིན་ན།།
སྣག་ཤོག་གྲོན་གྱི་ངལ་བ་ལྷུར་ལེན་དེས་ཅིས་བྱ།།
གྲུབ་བརྙེས་སེམས་དཔའ་དུ་མས་ཡུན་རིང་དུ་བསྙེན་པའི།།
ཡབ་མེས་དབེན་པའི་རི་རྡུ་ལྷ་མོ་ང་ཆས་འགྲོ།

ཚོར་འདུ་དབྱངས་སུ་ཁྱེར་བའི་མདོ་སྣད་ཀྱི་གྲོགས་དག །
ཇོ་བའི་སྨྲི་ངག་དྲག་པོ་འཇེར་སྐད་དུ་མ་སྒྲོག །
སྐྱིལ་བསུའི་སྐྱོ་ཉམས་གདུང་ཡུས་དང་བཅས་པའང་མི་དགོས།།
ལྕུགས་ཐག་སྒྲོག་གིས་བཅིངས་པའི་བཙོན་མ་ཞིག་མ་འདོད།། (end of second letter)

ཅེས་སྤྲིངས་པས་དེར་འཕྲིན་ལན་མང་དུ་མཆིས་ཀྱང་འཕྲིན་ཐ་མའི་ནང་།།
སྒྲ་དབྱངས་ལྷ་མོའི་སྐུ་དེ།།
ཏ་ཅང་སྙིང་ལ་བབ་ཀྱང་།།
སྒྲ་དབྱངས་ལྷ་ཡི་ཚ་མོས།།
བདག་སེམས་ལན་གཅིག་དཀྲུགས་བྱུང་།།

ལྷ་མོས་གཞན་རྗེས་བསྙེགས་ནས།།
ལྷ་མོས་ཕམ་ཁ་ཁྱུར་འདུག །
ང་ཡི་ལྷ་རྗེས་བསྙེགས་ནས།།
ང་རང་ཕམ་ཁ་ཁྱུར་འདུག

ལྷ་མོས་ཕམ་ཁ་ཁྱུར་བ།།
ཧ་ཅང་སྙིང་ལ་གཟན་པ།།
བུ་ཆུང་ཕམ་ཁ་ཁྱུར་པ།།
བཟོད་བསྲན་བྲུས་ཀྱང་ཚོག་པ།།
ལྷ་མོའི་སྒྲོ་ལྡན་མདའ་ཡིས།།
(48)ཁོ་བོའི་བྲིས་ཆུང་རྨས་ཡོད།།
ཁོ་བོའི་འཁྲུལ་གྱི་ཞགས་པས།།
ལྷ་མོ་མ་ཟིན་ཤོར་སོང་།།
སྒྱུ་འཕྲུལ་ལྷ་ཡི་ཚ་མོ།།
ནམ་མཁའི་འཇའ་ཚོན་འདྲ་བྱུང་།།
བློ་ཆུང་བྲིས་པ་འཕྲུལ་ནས།།
བདས་ཀྱང་ཟིན་ཐབས་ཅི་ཡོད།།

ལྷ་མོ་ཕེབས་ཞིག་ཕེབས་ཞིག
དགའ་པའི་ཞིང་ལ་ཕེབས་ཞིག
མ་སྙིང་པད་མ་དཀར་པོ།།
སྐྱིལ་མའི་རྫོངས་སུ་སྐྱུར་ཚོག །

ལྷ་མོ་ཡར་ཡར་ཕེབས་ན།།
ཕྱི་མིག་མར་མར་མ་གཟིགས།།
དམ་པའི་ཆོས་ལས་ལྷག་པའི།།
གྲོགས་ཤིག་ཡོད་ཚོད་མི་སྣང་།།

ཞེས་སོགས་ཟུག་གཟེར་མཆིས་པའི་སྙན་ངག་དག་ནི་ང་ཕོ་ནའི་ཆེད་དུ་ཟགས་པའི་འཛིག་རྟེན་འདི་ཡི་སྲོག་ལྡན་གྱི་ཡིག་འབྲུ་ཞིག་ལགས་ཀྱང་ངས་ནི་དམ་པའི་ལུགས་ལས་མི་འགོང་བར་རང་གི་བརྩམས་པ་མཐར་ཕྱིས་པའི་ལུགས་བཟང་ལྷུར་བླངས་ཁྲུལ་གྱིས་ཆོས་ཀྱི་ལམ་དུ་མཆིས་པས་གྲོགས་ངན་དུ་སོང་བའི་ནོངས་པ་མེད་སྙམ།

Dreaming at the Sage's Abode

He had a gaze that was genuinely loving, long and deep, and his personality was relaxed and unhurried; it's not that I didn't long for that, however, I always avoided him because this would not have been the right path.

He had empathy and was sensible. Nor was he stubborn or overly demanding, and he had an aversion towards misconduct. Nor did he focus on my physical or youthful aspects. The essence of our minds was inseparable, as one, and we were emotionally inseparable, but our paths would diverge. No matter the circumstances and at all times, whether joyful or sorrowful, he was continuously friendly and harmonious to be around. Not only that, in general he had no thought of dominating or manipulating others. Beyond having love for me,

he didn't scrutinize my skills and abilities or look in the direction of other women. Though his love for me was genuine, I couldn't be free from my personal restrictive vows. I was not an appropriate girlfriend for him. However, I cherished the letters he sent in verse, and needless to say, regarding his genuine good intentions, whenever I review our history of happiness together, what I remember first of all is that his sincerity has been my consolation in sadness and loneliness.

This was inside the first letter Gonpo sent me.
Rich people cannot buy it with wealth,
And the powerful cannot seize or control it.
This heart's personality like a just-blooming spring flower,
This one flower like a smile, to whom do I offer it?
The girl-practitioner who stays in a mountain retreat,
Having followed a female deity up the mountain—
If I were to offer her that uncontrived flower,
What's the use? Is there any need?
If there were a lady unshackled by nun's robes,
Nor dressed in the artificial clothes of ordinary women,
If there were a lady free of hypocritical conduct,
I'd want to place a suitable flower garland around her neck.
An old hunter man's bow and arrow
Chases a deer away from the herd, into the middle of nowhere—
She wanders into an erosion of frightening desert abyss.
If there were a deer in this condition, I'd
wish to help her and give her a garland,
A welcoming gift, to comfort her—
If there were a deer like this, I'd be her savior.
Secret tears gather inside, while outside,

I exhale a long, painful sigh.
If there were a sick person with a disease
hard to cure, I'd offer this heart's flower
As medicine, comfort and cure.
If there were a beautiful girl with hundreds of doubts
At an intersection, not knowing which way to turn,
I would give her good guidance and direction.
Without grasping weapons
Such as bow and arrow, spear, or sword,
She wins the war and repels demons.
Courageous warrioress holding a pen,
With raised hands, I would offer you this flower.
Between bone and skin, root extends,
Sustained and nourished by warm vital blood.
This priceless lotus flower—
Will you accept this flower in both hands?

He sent me this. I had already decided to become a nun, so the words of love letters were long dead in my mind; I had been satisfied not to act on those feelings in the past. Now that I received his letters, feelings which I'd thought were dead revived and came back to me like a zombie, and I felt scared and very uncomfortable. Then I sent him a reply.

In the past, when yogis practiced Chod
in the cemetery with kangling flute,
No one ever summoned me, the vulture.
In the mythical story, the lonely vulture stays by herself in the sunshine of a rocky mountain nest.

Then I heard your voice, and reflecting upon the account of my loneliness,

I sighed a deep yawn.

Though I'd lived in the rocky-mountain nest a long time, it was an uncomfortable life and without relaxation.

Then one day, I tired myself out and lost consciousness—
I fell into the deep abyss without reference points.

I, the white vulture, fell, and woke up in the middle of nowhere.

I'd been unsuccessful my whole life—then between out-breath and in-breath,

I saw your hand waving and giving me courage.

My one friend through laughter and tears— your comfort is too late for me now.

You know, when my goal was to farm a big fenced-in vegetable garden with edible fruit,

Some of them didn't grow well, even with hard work,

So I gave up gardening;

I'm not admiring the queue of those pursuing worldly aims such as riches, good reputation, and scholarship—

I don't want to be stuck waiting in a long line, legs crossed.

Yes, of course, loneliness is sorrowful,

But even with two together, there isn't always a happy ending—this I've always heard.

If there is no permanent happiness up on a high throne,
I'd prefer my feet wet, walking along a dewy grassland path.
If your heart wasn't pure as a convergence of bright moons,
I wouldn't waste time or money, or ink on paper.
But it wasn't just the many great masters and lamas

Who lived a long time in wilderness— I, Lhamo, would like to follow them up the mountain.

My dear friend from Amdo who sings his feelings out loud,
Please don't send me this heavy, hoarse moaning.
These feelings, whether enticing, or feelings of sorrow and sadness,
Please, I don't need them—
I don't want to be a prisoner in iron chains.
He sent me many letters, but this was his final letter to me.
A vision of Sarasvati
Really entered my heart,

But Sarasvati's niece hurts my heart.

She totally broke my heart—
You, Lhamo, follow the paths of others.
Lhamo has given up everything to do this.

Then, following Lhamo,
I gave up everything.
You, Lhamo, giving up everything,
You injure me.

But I am a hardy youth. I can take loss and defeat—
I can be patient.
Lhamo, your feathered arrow
Has injured this small child.

My rope, like the magician's rope in the jataka tale of King Norsang,
Couldn't catch the dakini Lhamo as she flew away.
You, Sarasvati's niece,
Are like a rainbow in the sky.

I am like a deluded young innocent
Chasing it, but with no way to catch it.
Lhamo, I beg you, please go, go, go
To the Pure Land!

As you leave, I offer you a fresh white lotus flower—
As you go higher and higher,
Never look back.
It seems there's no better friend than the Buddha dharma.

He wrote many other painful poems just for me. Each letter seemed alive— full of living words for my sake alone, but I wanted to adhere to the Buddha's discipline and keep the nuns' Vinaya, so I felt that even if I turned him down, I wasn't really a bad friend.

ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་དྲན་པ།

(Remembering My Mother's Handmade Tsampa)

སྨིན་སྣང་མཛེས། Min-Nangzey

(Translated from Tibetan by Annabella Pitkin)

Abstract: Contemporary Tibetan poet and essayist Min-Nangzey shows how women's lineages of work and oral tradition are vital aspects of the transmission and flourishing of Tibetan culture. She highlights the value of women's caregiving work as mothers and preparers of the Tibetan staple food, through vignettes of her own mother preparing tsampa (roasted barley flour).

Keywords: tsampa, lineage, oral tradition, women's activity, cultural transmission

Translator's Introduction

Memories abide in the physical textures of our bodies and the bodies of those we love, in a smudge of barley flour or in the touch of many fingers on the sides of an old wooden storage box. Memories activate with particular force through the smells and tastes of the food of childhood. The contemporary Tibetan poet and essayist Min-Nangzey invites the reader into an embodied world of sensory memory in the spare, resonant piece translated here. Whether tracing

ancestral ties through the remembered aroma of her mother's cooking or mapping the ache of homesickness via the hunger felt in a dream, throughout this piece Min-Nangzey takes tsampa (roasted barley flour) as a touchstone for thinking about cultural continuity through the intimate lens of food and home. Tsampa, that most familiar, quotidian, staple food of the Tibetan world, here forms the vital substance of a generational and personal lineage of memory and transmission.[6]

Min-Nangzey is part of a generation of Tibetan writers and artists who center the lived realities of nomadic life as touchstones of cultural survival. Such familiar daily objects as the black yak hair tent, the grassland itself, or the staple food of tsampa take on a heightened significance under contemporary circumstances, freighted with the pain of imminent loss. Under increasingly intense political and economic pressures, ordinary Tibetan lifeways—the smell of cooking, a turn of phrase, the peg that holds a tent to the ground—resonate with poignant urgency.[7]

Through a series of vignettes of her own mother preparing tsampa during her childhood on the grasslands of Golok in eastern Tibet, Min-Nangzey conveys a sense of women's caregiving work as mothers and as preparers of the Tibetan staple food. These two roles of mothering and preparing food emerge here as inextricably linked with the transmission of culture. Min-Nangzey's mother nurtures her children's physical health with tsampa, while at the same time

[6] See Shakya 1993; also Lama Jabb 2015.

[7] Lama Jabb 2015; Robin 2014; Ju Kalsang 2006.

she nourishes their relationship to their Tibetan identity. Repeatedly throughout the piece, Min-Nangzey asserts tsampa's special role at the core of Tibetan cultural continuity, in particular when it is a mother's "handmade tsampa." In her words, "tsampa made by a mother's hands…is the special food of the Tibetan people, the best food. Its nourishment is indispensable, essential to Tibetan livelihood."

At a deeper level, as the guardian and provider of the family's tsampa, Min-Nangzey's mother connects her children with an inherited Tibetan past that stretches back to that "primordial ancestor" who has made tsampa-eating possible for Tibetan people in the present day. This link to the resources of the generative past is in fact part of what gives tsampa its special value: "Through toil and sweat, a kind primordial ancestor brought into being this custom of eating tsampa. That makes tsampa our inheritance—the foundation of our lifeforce as one people, and the extraordinary foodway of our shared lineage."

Notably, the "shared lineage" of transmission that Min-Nangzey honors here is a specifically female one, a chain of mothers and daughters who are keepers of the family tsampa box, and with it the family's history, as well as its sustenance. The tsampa box emerges as both the literal repository of nourishment and maternal care, and as the container of irreplaceable oral tradition. By explicitly asserting the value of her mother's tsampa preparation and care work in the home, and more broadly, by asserting the value of women's practices of memory and storytelling, Min-Nangzey focuses on an aspect of women's activity that is often taken for granted or devalued, so familiar as to be invisible. Countering that invisibility, Min-Nangzey here frames women's tsampa-making as part of a lineage that is both

ancient and essential to Tibetan cultural flourishing, profoundly worthy of respect. Indeed, Min-Nangzey makes a powerful intervention simply in her use of the term "lineage" (བརྒྱུད།) for women's knowledge and stories, and for the literal, physical transmission of tsampa and the wooden box that holds it.

"Lineage" is a term usually reserved for religious contexts or for transmissions of scholarly, high-status learning and interpretation, such as literary theory or medicine. Lineage can also refer to the reincarnation sequences of important religious teachers, or the dynastic generations of aristocrats and kings. But here, Min-Nangzey uses the term to assert a lineage of women's knowledge and action, manifest in ordinary household work and caregiving. In this sense, this women's lineage is inseparable from the physical and biological web of family life, which so much of Tibetan Buddhist literature, by contrast, describes as at best an entanglement, and sometimes as a poisonous snare.

Through small details, Min-Nangzey roots this women's tsampa-making lineage in the lived reality of women's hands, bodies, implements, stories, and relationships. Her mother's remembered words are telling: "This tsampa box, which has become grey with sticky dirt, is a precious treasure, a legacy from our kind ancestors." Here, the sticky grey dirt itself hints at the physical traces of generations past, of the mothers, daughters and grandmothers who have all touched and used this wooden "treasure." The sticky dirt on the box speaks of effort, of work, of the difficult struggles of daily life, and the ordinary impermanence of bodies and things. In a similar way, the constant refrain of "hands" and "my mother's hands" running through

every section of this piece returns the reader over and over again to the physicality and intimacy of cooking and nurturing, and the tactility of kneading and eating tsampa in particular.

This bodily intimacy heightens the poignancy of Min-Nangzey's subsequent separation from her mother and from her mother's tsampa, in section 4. Although she notes that she loves her mother's tsampa best out of all her siblings, and boldly asserts that "tsampa is a supreme food, from which I will never be parted in my whole life," section 4 sees the narrator on a "lonely path," far from home. In the final dream sequence with which the piece concludes, Min-Nangzey poignantly reflects on her own sense of longing for her mother, and for her family on the grasslands. Expressed as a hunger for the food of her mother's hands, Min-Nangzey's dream evokes the pain of separation from home as an unsatisfied desire for tsampa. As a writer now living in diaspora, Min-Nangzey's grieving metonymy of separation from both her mother and her mother's handmade tsampa expresses her own longing for home, and by extension, the longing of so many others.

The final moments of the dream sequence also hint that the making and partaking of tsampa is linked with ways of being together with others in ongoing forms of relationship. Although never said directly, the closing lines open the possibility that the inheritance of tsampa Min-Nangzey's mother has given to her children is also an inheritance of mutual support and care. Consider the piece's final lines: "But all around me are my siblings. When they get a good look at me, they all hold out both hands. They come crowding around our mother's handmade tsampa." Part of the poignancy of these words lies in the

reader's confidence that, inspired by her own hunger, Min-Nangzey will surely share her tsampa with all those relatives who long for it.

ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་དྲན་པ།

༡ རྩྭ་ཐང་ནས་གཉོམ་ལག་རྒྱས་ཤིང་སྦྲ་འདབས་ནས་ཚེ་སྲོག་འབྱུས་པའི་བོད་མི་ཞིག་ཡིན་ཕྱིན་ཕལ་ཆེར་ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་གྱི་རོ་བཅུད་ལ་བརྟེན་ཏེ་འཚར་ལོངས་མ་བྱུང་བ་གཅིག་ཀྱང་མེད། ཁོ་མོར་མཚོན་ན་ཡང་ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་ལ་རོལ་ཏེ་ནར་སོན་པའི་འགྲོག་ཐུག་མ་ཞིག་ཡིན། ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་ནི་བོད་མིའི་ཐུན་མོང་མ་ཡིན་པའི་ཟས་ཏེ་བོད་མིའི་འཚོ་བའི་ཁྲོད་དུ་ཆེས་མེད་དུ་མི་རུང་བའི་བཅུད་ལྡན་གྱི་ཟས་མཆོག་ཅིག་ཡིན།

༢ གདོང་མའི་མེས་པོ་བཀའ་དྲིན་ཅན་སུ་ཞིག་གིས་དཀའ་སྤྱུག་གི་རྩལ་ནག་ལས་བརྩོལ་བའི་རྩམ་པ་ཟ་བའི་སྲོལ་འདི་བྱུང་བ་ནས། རྩམ་པ་འདི་མི་རིགས་ཤིག་གི་ཚེ་སྲོག་གི་རྟེན་གཞི་དང་རིགས་རྒྱུད་ཅིག་གི་ཐུན་མོང་མ་ཡིན་པའི་ཟས་སྐལ་དུ་གྲུབ། མི་རིགས་འདི་ལ་མགོ་ནག་རྩམ་ཟན་པ་ཞེས་པའི་མིང་འདི་ཡང་དུས་དེ་ནས་ཐོགས་པར་སྙམ། དེའི་ཕྱིར། བོད་པ་ཞིག་ཡིན་ཕྱིན་རྩམ་པ་ཟ་བར་མི་དགའ་མཁན་ཉུང་ཉུང་ཡིན། ཁོ་མོར་མཚོན་ན་ཡང་བོད་པ་ཞིག་ཡིན་ཕྱིར་རྩམ་པ་ཟ་བར་དགའ་ལ། ལྷག་པར་དུ་དེང་ཚང་གི་ཤིང་སྒམ་དུ་བླུགས་པའི་ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་ཟ་བར་ཧ་ཅང་དགའ། ངས་དྲན་པ་ནས་བཟུང་དེང་ཚང་གི་མར་སྐྱིད་འགྲམ་གྱི་ཤིང་སྒམ་གྲུ་བཞི་དེའི་བདག་པོ་ཨ་མ་ཡིན་ལ། ཟས་ཐུན་སླེབས་ཐེངས་རེར་དྲི་ཞིམ་འཕྱུལ་ཞིང་དྲོད་ཁོལ་མ་ཡལ་བའི་ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་ལ་རོལ་དུས་སེམས་སུ་སྤར་མེད་སྤྲོ་བ་ཚད་མེད་རེ་སྐྱེས་མྱོང་ལ། མྱུར་དུ་ཐམ་ཟ་བྱས་ཏེ་སླར་ཡང་ལག་པ་བཟེད་བར་དགའ།

༣ དེང་ཚང་གི་ཤིང་སྒམ་གྲུ་བཞི་དེའི་ནང་ན་ཉར་བའི་ཨ་མས་ལག་འཐག་གི་རྩམ་

པ་ནི། ཕ་མེས་ཡང་མེས་ནས་བརྒྱུད་པའི་གཅེས་ནོར་དང་། ལོ་ངོ་སྟོང་ཕྲག་དུ་མའི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཏུམ་ཞིང་མི་རབས་དུ་མའི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་ཁུར་ཏེ་ཚེ་སྲོག་གྲངས་མེད་ཅིག་ལ་ལང་ཚོའི་ཁོ་ལག་རྒྱུས་སུ་བཙུག་སོང་། དེར་བརྟེན། ངེད་སྤུན་མཆེད་སུ་ཞིག་ཡིན་ཡང་ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་གྱི་རོ་བཅུད་ལ་བརྟེན་ཏེ་ནར་མ་སོན་པ་གཅིག་ཀྱང་མེད། ལྷག་པར་དུ་ཁོ་མོ་ནི་སྤུན་མཆེད་གཞན་ལས་ཀྱང་ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་ལ་རོལ་བར་དགའ་བའི་བུ་མོ་ཞིག་ཡིན་ཕྱིན། ནམ་རྒྱུན་ཨ་མ་དང་འབྲལ་མ་མྱོང་ལ་ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་དང་ཡང་འབྲལ་མ་མྱོང་བས། ཁོ་མོའི་ཚེ་སྲོག་གི་ཏུས་ཆང་རེ་རེ་ལ་ཡང་ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་གྱིས་གསོན་ཤུགས་རྒྱུས་སུ་བཙུག་སོང་།

༤ ཨ་མས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་ན་ཚི་དྲིག་ཆགས་ཤིང་སྐྱ་བོར་གྱུར་བའི་རྩམ་སྣམ་འདི་ཕ་མེས་བཀའ་དྲིན་ཅན་ཚོས་ཤུལ་བཞག་གི་གཅེས་ནོར་ཡིན་པས། ཨ་མས་ཀྱང་རྗེས་མར་རྩམ་སྣམ་འདི་བུ་མོར་བརྒྱུད་སྤྲོད་བྱེད་དགོས་ཞེས་ཐེངས་མང་གསུངས་མྱོང་བ་མ་ཟད། སྐབས་རེར་ཨ་མས་རྩམ་སྣམ་དང་འབྲེལ་བའི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་རིང་པོ་རེ་ཡང་བཤད་མྱོང་། གང་ལྟར། ང་ནི་ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་གྱི་གསོས་པའི་བུ་མོ་ཞིག་སྟེ། རྩམ་པ་ནི་ངའི་མི་ཚེའི་ནང་འབྲལ་དུ་མེད་པའི་ཟས་མཆོག་ཅིག་ཡིན་ལ། ངའི་ཚེ་སྲོག་གི་གྲུབ་ཆ་གལ་ཆེན་ཀྱང་ཡིན། ཡིན་ན་ཡང་། ངའི་གོམ་སྟབས་ཁེར་རྐྱང་དུ་ཕྱོགས་པ་ནས་ང་ཨ་མ་དང་བྲལ་ཟིན་ལ་ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་དང་ཡང་བྲལ་ཟིན།

༥ དྲན་གདུང་གི་ན་ཟུག་ལྡི་ལ། ཁེར་རྐྱང་གི་སེམས་ངལ་མྱོད་པའི་དུས་འདིར། ང་སྔར་བཞིན་ཁེར་རྐྱང་དུ་ཁང་མིག་གྲུ་བཞི་འདི་ན་ཨ་མའི་འཛུམ་ཞལ་ཡིད་ལ་སྒོམ་ཞིང་ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་དྲན་བཞིན་མིག་ཆུའི་ཐིགས་པ་རེ་རེ་མཁུར་ཚོས་བརྒྱུད་དེ་ས་རུ་ཟགས་བྱུང་། སྐབས་འདིར་རང་དབང་མེད་པར་མདང་དགོང་གི་རྨི་ལམ་དེ་དྲན་བྱུང་། རྨི་ལམ་དུ་ཁོ་མོ་དང་ཨ་མ་གཉིས་སྦྲ་འདབས་ན་འཛོམས་ཤིང་ཨ་མས་སྔར་བཞིན་ཚ་བེར་བེར་གྱི་ལག་རྩམ་བརྫིས་ཏེ་ཁོ་མོའི་ལག་ཏུ་བཞག་པར། ཁོ་མོས་ཨ་མས་ལག་རྩམ་དྲན་དྲགས་ནས་ཧམ་ཟ་བྱེད་

བཞིན་འདུག ཁོ་མོའི་མཐའ་འཁོར་ན་ཡོད་པའི་སྤྱན་མཆེད་ཚོས་ཀྱང་བདག་ལ་མིག་ཟུང་རིག་རིག་གིས་གྱེར་ཞིང་ལག་ཟུང་བཟེད་བཞིན་ཨ་མའི་ལག་རྩམ་ལ་འཚང་ཁ་བྱེད་བཞིན་འདུག

Remembering My Mother’s Handmade Tsampa

1. Among those Tibetans who start their lives among the black yak hair tents that flourish on the grasslands, not a single one grows up without being nurtured on their mother's handmade tsampa. I myself am an example. As a nomad girl, I too grew up savoring the tsampa my mother made.

Consider it: tsampa made by a mother’s hands. It is the special food of the Tibetan people, the best food. Its nourishment is indispensable, essential to Tibetan livelihood.

2. Through toil and sweat, a kind primordial ancestor brought into being this custom of eating tsampa. That makes tsampa our inheritance—the foundation of our lifeforce as one people, and the extraordinary foodway of our shared lineage. It’s no wonder that our people are often called “the black-haired tsampa eaters.” Few are the Tibetans who don’t like tsampa, for that reason.

Take me for instance: I also like eating tsampa, because I’m a Tibetan. In particular, I love eating my mother’s handmade tsampa, which fills my family’s wooden storage box.

I've clung to the memory of that square wooden box, in front of my family's red hearth, with my mother in charge of it…. Every time she cooked, a delicious smell would spread, as mother's handmade tsampa heated up, bubbling and steaming. Every time I would savor that smell, I would be consumed with longing, as if for the first time. Immediately, it would make me ravenous to eat. I would eagerly hold out my hand time and time again.

3. My mother hand-mills the tsampa kept inside my family's square wooden box. This hand-milled tsampa is a cherished treasure passed on in a lineage from our ancestors. For thousands of years of history, generations of oral tradition have emphasized how it keeps one's whole body youthful and vibrant. That's why every single one of my siblings has been nurtured on our mother's handmade tsampa.

And yet, even compared to my other siblings, I was a daughter who specially loved to savor the tsampa made by our mother's hands. For as long as my mother and I were inseparable, I was never parted from the tsampa my mother made. In that sense, my mother's handmade tsampa is what has infused life into the very marrow of my bones.

4. My mother used to say, "This tsampa box, which has become grey with sticky dirt, is a precious treasure, a legacy from our kind ancestors." Mother would continue, "Moreover, later on, you will have to pass this tsampa box on to your own daughter." She told me this many times. Not only that: each and every time, my mother would also recount a long oral tradition linked to the tsampa box.

All of which is to say, I am a girl nurtured on her mother's handmade tsampa. That tsampa is a supreme food, from which I will never be parted in my whole life. It's a core element of my very lifeforce. And yet. Despite all of this, I have turned toward a lonely path, parting me from my mother. And so, in the same way, I have been parted from the tsampa made by my mother's hands.

5. In the here and now, loneliness burdens me, and the heavy ache of tormenting memory. In this four-cornered room, alone as usual, I bring my mother's smiling face to mind. Remembering Mother's handmade tsampa, tears leak across my cheeks. Then, unbidden, I remember last night's dream.

In the dream, the two of us, my mother and I, are together near the black yak-hair tent. My mother is kneading hot handmade tsampa just as usual. She places some into my hands. I miss my mother's tsampa so sharply that I long to eat it all. But all around me are my siblings. When they get a good look at me, they all hold out both hands. They come crowding around our mother's handmade tsampa.

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བདག་གི་ཨ་ཕ་དང་ཨ་ཕའི་ལག་ཤེས། (My Father's Skills)

མུ་ཏིག Mutik

(Translated from Tibetan by Nicole Willock)

Abstract: Written and translated for the second Tibetan Women's Writing Symposium at the University of Virginia in April 2022, Mutik's memoir draws upon everyday objects to poignantly reflect on her childhood. Feelings of regret mingle with questions of Tibetan identity as she recalls her childhood wish to wear new store-bought clothes when her father, a tailor of incredible expertise, had made her traditional Tibetan clothing. Built on mutual trust and intimacy in shared reading practices, the approach to the translation of this piece was dialogical whereby authorial and translation choices were discussed throughout the process.

Keywords: translation theory, childhood memories, Tibetan identity, father-daughter relationships, Tibetan traditional clothing

Translator's Introduction

My reflections on this translation of "My Father's Skills" (བདག་གི་ཨ་ཕ་དང་ཨ་ཕའི་ལག་ཤེས།), an autobiographical memoir by Nyima Tso/Mutik, draw on insights from translation theorists that view acts in the translation process as involving ethical decision-making. The

translation process was dialogical between the author and me, the translator. This entailed surrendering both to the text and to the other as our friendship grew in moments of intimacy that the shared act of reading requires. We also formed a trust in each other and in our shared ethical values and commitments, in particular to the promotion of Tibetan literature in the world today despite our very different subject positions.

Nyima Tso left her home near Labrang Tashikyil Monastery in Gansu Province in 1999, when she was only fifteen. She then earned a bachelor's and a master's degree from the Norbulingka Institute in Himachal Pradesh, India, where she currently works as a production manager. She published a book of poems with Jamphel Drolma, First Journey of this Life (མི་ཚེ་འདིའི་འགྲུལ་བཞུད་དང་པོ། 2003), and a collection of short stories titled *A Fragment* (ཟུར་ཞིག 2007).

Within the framework of the Tibetan Women's Writing Symposium, I first met Nyima Tso over Zoom in the summer of 2020 when we mutually developed a dialogical approach to reading and translating her award-winning poem, "Life in Samtha/the Borderlands" (ས་མཐའི་འཚོ་བ།). This culminated in several public bi-lingual readings and its publication in A Living Treasure: Tibetan and Buddhist Studies in Honor of Janet Gyatso. Nyima Tso wrote "My Father's Skills" for the second Tibetan Women's Writing Symposium which took place in person at the University of Virginia in April 2022. She chose her subject matter—childhood memories of her native Amdo—because she knew Tibetan writers from China were attending the symposium. The Tibetan-language memoir was also posted on Facebook. The inspiration

for this piece came from the organizers celebrating Tibetan women's writing, and in this way, the inspiration was also inherently dialogical.

The translation process involved surrendering to the text and to each other in reading together both Tibetan and English texts. Lawrence Venuti (The Translation Studies Reader; The Translator's Invisibility, among others) brings attention to the ethical dimensions of inscribing and domesticating foreign language literature. The process of domestication—turning a foreign text into an English one—usually begins with the translator's choice to translate a particular text. In this case, I, as translator, stepped back from making this choice and surrendered to the author's choice to decide which text of her corpus should be translated. In her seminal essay, "The Politics of Translation,"[8] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak brings attention to a feminist approach of surrendering to the linguistic rhetoricity of the text in the intimate act of reading while also considering the status of language in the world. After reading through the Tibetan of "My Father's Skills" a couple of times on my own, Nyima Tso and I met on Zoom to read and discuss the text together in the same process that we had used for translating "Life in Samtha/the Borderlands" (ས་མཐའི་འཚོ་བ།). I attentively listened to the cadence and affective inflections of Nyima Tso's voice during her recitation in Amdo dialect, a form of spoken Tibetan that I had learned during my dissertation fieldwork. Then after each of our sessions, I drafted an English translation, which I shared with her and which we discussed further.

[8] Venuti 2002, 369–387.

After finishing the first good complete draft of the translation, I let it rest for some months before returning to it for final edits. I noticed upon re-reading that the opening paragraph of "My Father's Skills" might need a few additional words for an Anglophone readership without which readers could not understand how this memoir relates to Nyima Tso's other occupation as a translator from English into Tibetan and as an entrepreneur. Nyima Tso has translated over forty-four children's books into Tibetan from English (in the World Explorer Series of Manoj Publications, Delhi). Noticing the paucity of interesting Tibetan-language children's books, she began translating them on her own with the goal to awaken children's curiosity. Readers of these series follow the main character Benny on adventures through various landscapes to cope with extreme cold or to find water in the wild (For more information on this series, contact: Mutik Books mutikbooks@gmail.com). So, Nyima Tso bought the mini-portable sewing machine mentioned in the first paragraph of "My Father's Skills" for the purpose of wrapping parcels of children's book to ship them from her home in Himachal Pradesh to other parts of India and abroad. For readers of the original Tibetan this context is understood. However, for English readers, I contextualized this by adding "Tibetan-language" before "children's books" and interpolated "from India."

In that intimate act of reading, "My Father's Skills" also evokes affective dimensions of the complicated father-daughter relationship. Two scenes were particularly salient for me as they evoked my own memories of joy, shame, and regret. The joyous laughter of youth playing on a "horse" sewing stool brought me back to the endless hours of playing pretend as a kid. The pangs of regret and shame of the young Nyima Tso standing in the courtyard listening to the school principal

rekindled those feelings in the adult me of realizing how unappreciative I was as a child of my father's hard work and good advice. In this way, "My Father's Skills" encompasses the universal themes of childhood and coming of age.

However, these universal themes exploring the father-daughter relationship from childhood to adulthood take place in the specific context of Gansu Province, Eastern Tibet, of the People's Republic of China in the 1990s. When translating specific Tibetan terms, the reader surrenders to my choice of retaining the foreign word in the English-language text. In this case, in leaving chuba untranslated, it is incumbent upon readers to either familiarize themselves with this traditional Himalayan clothing, or not. The first time I use the term, however, I provided an English translation differentiating chuba made from lambskin (tsharu) or from sheepskin (logpa). We also discussed technical terms related to sewing machines, which I studied online. Later Nyima Tso showed me photos of her father's tailor supplies and materials and the "horse" sewing stool that he made (see figures).

Nyima Tso's writings, including "My Father's Skills" and "Life in Samtha/the Borderlands," show her versatility as an author. She writes, whether in prose or poetry, with a sensibility that evokes complex and conflicting emotions. Since we began working with each other in the pandemic, I have come to admire Nyima Tso's tireless efforts to promote Tibetan language among Tibetan women and children in exile. I think we share a similar value and understanding that if Tibetan language is to survive into the 22nd century and grow as a world language in the 21st century, it is through her interventions of teaching the youth and encouraging women to write in Tibetan.

However, there are many challenges. When we last met in November 2023, I learned that despite her position as executive secretary of the Tibetan Writers Abroad PEN Centre (PEN TIBET) and as editor of Mayum (མ་ཡུམ།), the latest issue of Mayum, a literary magazine showcasing female Tibetan writers in exile, had to be postponed because there were not enough contributions. Nyima Tso attributed this to several factors including the precarious political position of Tibetan refugees and how Tibetan women often become overburdened with family or work life to continue writing.

Father's sewing machine at her family home © Gom Mei, 2022

The "horse" stool © Gom Mei, 2022

བདག་གི་ཨ་ཕ་དང་ཨ་ཕའི་ལག་ཤེས།

ངས་དྲ་ཐོག་ནས་སྐབས་བདེ་ཆེམ་འཁོར་ཞིག་ཉོས་པ་ཡིན། དེ་ཡང་གཙོ་བོ་བྱིས་སྒྲུང་དཔེ་ཆ་དག་ཕྱི་འདྲེན་བྱེད་དུས་རས་ཐུམ་རྒྱག་བྱེད་ཀྱི་ཆེད་དུ་ཡིན་ཟེར་ཚོག འཁྱེར་བའི་ཉིན་དང་པོར་ཚོད་ལྟ་བྱས་པས་ཐོག་མར་འཁྲིག་འཁྲིག་འདྲ་བ་དང་དེ་ནས་བེད་མེད་དུ་གྱུར་སོང་། ཕལ་ཆེར་ཟླ་བ་གཉིས་ཙམ་འདས་སོང་ཡང་ལག་པ་ཙམ་འཆང་རྒྱུ་མ་བྱུང་།

དེ་རིང་ལྟ་ཕྱོགས་ཤིག་གིས་ཅོག་ཅེའི་གྲུ་ཟུར་ནས་ཆེམ་འཁོར་བེད་མེད་དེ་མིག་ལ་ཐོགས་པ་དང་མཉམ་དུ་ཨ་ཕའི་བཟོ་འཁོར་ཞེ་ལ་འཁོར་བྱུང་། ངའི་ཨ་ཕ་ཆེམ་བཟོ་བ་ཞིག་ཡིན། དེ་ཡང་ཁྱིམ་ཚང་གི་བཟོ་བ་ཙམ་མིན་པར་ཚོ་བ་ཞིག་གི་བཟོ་བ་ཡིན་ཟེར་ན་ཡང་ལབ་མིན། དེ་མ་ཟད་ངའི་ཨ་ཕ་དགའ་བཟང་ཞིག་ཡིན་པས་ཁྱིམ་ཚང་སུ་ཞིག་གིས་བཟོ་བར་རེ་ན་ཐེ་ཚོམ་མེད་པར་ཁས་བླངས་ནས་འགྲོ་རྒྱུར་གོམས་ཡོད། མཚམས་རེར་ཁྱིམ་ཚང་གཅིག་ནས་གཅིག་ཤོས་ཀྱིས་རེ་བ་བརྒྱབ་པས་རིམ་བཞིན་ང་ཚོས་ཨ་ཕ་བོར་ནས་ཟླ་འགའ་རེ་འགོར་འགྲོ ནམ་ཞིག་ཨ་ཕ་ཡུལ་ལ་འཁོར་དུས་སྐྱེ་བ་དང་སྐྱེ་བ་སྐྱུལ་ནས་ཚ་རྒྱུ་དང་སློག་པ་སོགས་བཟོས་པའི་སྐད་ཆ་དང་མཉམ་དུ་ཁྱིམ་ཚང་ག་གེ་མོ་ཚང་གི་ཚ་རྒྱུའི་སྲམ་ཁ་ཆེ་རབས་དང་མག་པ་ཆེ་གེ་མོའི་སློག་པའི་གཟིག་ཁ་མཛོ་རབས་སོགས་གླེང་མི་ཚར་བའི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་རེ་ཡོད། ཨ་ཕ་ཡུལ་ན་ཡོད་དུས་ཀྱང་ནམ་རྒྱུན་ཚ་རྒྱུ་དང་སློག་པ། ཕྱིན་ཚར། བོད་ལྷམ་སོགས་ཁབ་སྐྱུད་དང་བཟོ་བའི་ལས་ཀར་འཛུས་ནས་ཡོད། དེ་དག་ཀྱང་ཁྱིམ་ཁ་ངོ་ཤེས་སོགས་ཀྱིས་སྐྱུལ་ངོར་དང་ཡང་ན་སྐྱེ་བའི་ནང་གི་བག་གསར་མག་གསར་དག་གི་ཤོམ་ལྭ་ཡིན།

ཨ་ཕའི་དྲིན་ལ་ངེད་ཚང་གི་མིང་སྲིང་ཚོར་ཡང་བོད་ལྭ་བདེ་མོ་རེ་ནམ་ཞིག་གོན་བསམ་ཡང་དཀའ་ངལ་མེད་པ་མ་ཟད། ང་སློབ་ཆུང་ལ་ཞུགས་བཞིན་པའི་སྐབས་ཐོག་ཀྱང་ཨ་ཕས་ང་ལ་བོད་བཟོའི་སྟོད་ལྭ་དང་སྨད་གོས་སྣ་ཚོགས་བཟོས་མྱོང་མོད། བག་ཆགས་དན

པ་དང་གླེན་འདང་རྒྱག་སྙོལ་ཞིག་ལོས་ཡིན། སྐབས་དེར་བྲིས་པ་ཚང་མས་གྲོང་ཁྱེར་གྱི་ལྭ་བ་ཡག་པ་ཏག་ཏག་གོན་ནས་འདུག་པས། ང་གཅིག་པུས་ཡུལ་བཟོས་འདི་འདྲ་གོན་ན་ངོ་ཚ་བ་ལ་བསམ་སྐྱོང་། ད་ལྟ་བསམ་ན་ངས་དེ་ལྟར་བསམ་བློ་བཏང་བར་གནོང་འགྱོད་ཆེན་པོ་སྐྱེས་པ་མ་ཟད། སློབ་གྲྭ་ནས་ཆེས་བསོད་ནམས་ཅན་གྱི་བུ་མོ་དེ་ཡང་ང་རང་ཉིད་མིན་ན་སུ་བསམ་ཡང་དུས་ཚོད་དང་བསྟུན་པའི་རིན་ཐང་ཞིག་ཏུ་ལྟ་མ་ཤེས་ནི་མ་ཤེས་པ་རང་ལས་ཁག་སུ་ལ་འཇོག ད་དུང་དེས་ག་ལ་ཚད། དགུན་མགོ་ཚུགས་དུས་ཨ་ཕས་དེད་མ་བུ་ཚོར་བོད་ལྷམ་བདེ་མོ་རེ་བཏབ་མོད། ང་ནི་སྲུན་སྣང་གིས་སྐྱོས་འགྲོ། ད་ལོའི་དགུན་ཁར་ཡང་གྲོང་ཁྱེར་གྱི་ལྷམ་གསར་བ་དེ་དག་གོན་སྐལ་མེད་པ་འདྲ་བསམ་ནས་ནང་སེམས་ལ་སྡུག་བསྔལ་རྫོགས་མཐའ་མེད་པ་རེ་སྐྱེས་སྐྱོང་བ་མ་ཟད། མཚན་མོ་རེ་རེར་ཨ་མའི་སྐྱེ་ལ་འཇུས་ནས་ང་ལ་གྲོང་ཁྱེར་གྱི་ལྷམ་ཞིག་ཉོ་རོགས་ཞེས་ཞུ་བ་འཐེན་པ་ད་ལྟ་ཡང་དྲན་རྟོགས་ན་གསལ་པོ་འདུག

ངས་ཤེས་དུས་ངའི་ཕ་མ་གཉིས་ལག་བཟོ་ལ་བྱང་ཆ་ལྡན་པ་མ་ཟད། ཨ་ཕ་ལ་བཟོ་འཁོར་ཞིག་འདུག ཨ་ཕས་ཤིང་བཟོའི་ལས་ཀ་ཡང་ཤེས་པས་བཟོ་འཁོར་ལ་རྐྱང་བསྐྲུམས་རང་དབང་ན་ཡོད་པའི་ཤིང་ཅོག་ཅིག་ཀྱང་མཐུད་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཟད། ཤིང་ཅོག་དེ་བརྐྱངས་རྗེས་བཟོ་འཁོར་གྱི་ཐོག་ནས་བོད་ལྭ་ཆེན་པོ་ཞིག་གང་དུ་བརྒྱངས་བརྒྱངས་ཡིན། ད་དུང་ཨ་ཕས་ཤིང་གི་རྐུབ་སྟེགས་ཤིག་ཀྱང་བཟོས་ཡོད་ལ་དེད་ཚང་གིས་དེ་ལ་བཟོ་འཁོར་ཨོང་བཀུག་ཅེས་བཏགས་ཡོད། ཨ་ཕ་ཁྲིམ་ན་མེད་དུས་དེད་ཅག་བྲིས་པ་གསུམ་བཞི་རེ་རྐུབ་སྟེགས་དེར་ཞོན་ཏེ་རྟ་ཡིན་ཁུལ་གྱིས་རྟོག་བཟོའི་གྲོང་ཁྱེར་དུ་སོང་བ་མ་ཟད། རྟ་རྒྱུགས་འགྲན་སྡུར་གྱིས་ས་ནས་ཁ་བཏགས་བླངས་པའི་རྩེད་མོ་ཡང་རྒྱུན་དུ་བརྩེས་སྐྱོང་། མཚམས་རེར་སྤྲ་གཞུག་ལྟི་ཡང་ཤོར་ནས་ཀླད་པར་ཐོགས་བརྒྱབ་པ་ལྟ་བུའི་ཐང་ལ་བརྒྱབ་པ་ཡང་གྲངས་ཀྱིས་མི་ལངས་མེད། ཨ་ཕའི་རྐུབ་སྟེགས་ནི་ཨར་འདམ་གྱིས་བཟོས་པ་ལྟར་ཤིང་སིལ་ཙམ་ཡང་འཐོར་རྒྱུ་མེད། ད་ལྟ་བསམ་བློ་ཞིག་བཏང་ན་དེང་རབས་ཀྱི་རྐུབ་སྟེགས་ཤིག་ང་ཚོས་དེ་ལྟར་བཀོལ་ན་

ཉིན་གཅིག་ལ་འདང་མིན་ཟེ་ཚོམ་ཡིན་ཡང་། ཨ་ཕའི་རྒྱབ་སྙེགས་ནི་ལོ་རབས་ནས་ལོ་རབས་བགོལ་ཡོང་བའི་ཁྲིམ་ཆས་ཤིག་ཏུ་གྱུར་ཡོད།

ད་དུང་ཨ་ཕ་ལ་དབུར་ཧྲི་ཞིག་ཀྱང་ཡོད། དེ་ནི་ཁྲོ་ཡིས་བཟོས་པ་དང་བ་མ་ཆུང་ཆུང་ཡུ་བ་ཅན་ཞིག་དང་ཨ་ན་མ་ན་ཡིན། བལྟས་ཚོད་ལ་ལག་ཡ་གཅིག་གིས་ལས་སླ་མོས་འདེགས་ཐུབ་བསམ་བྱེད་ཅིག་ཡིན་མོད། ངས་ལག་པ་གཉིས་ཀས་འཇུས་ཀྱང་བཀྱག་ཐབས་མེད་པའི་ལྗིད་ཚད་ཅིག་ཡོད། ཨ་ཕས་དེར་ཨོང་སྐམ་གྱི་མེ་རོ་བཀང་བྲུས་རྗེས་ལྷུགས་ཐབ་སྟེང་བཞག་པ་དང་། ལྭ་བ་བཟོ་མཚམས་རེ་ནས་ཆུ་ཏུབ་གང་གཏོར་རྗེས་ག་ལེར་དབུར་ཧྲི་དེ་དྲུད་ཡོང་ནས་སྨུབ་ཀ་གཙོག་ངེས། མཚམས་རེར་བྲིས་པ་ཚོ་ཡང་ཨ་ཕའི་འགྲམ་དུ་བོས་ནས་བོད་ལྭའི་ཕྱོགས་སོ་སོར་འཇུས་ནས་ཤུགས་ཀྱིས་འཐེན་དུ་བཙུག་པ་དང་ད་གཟོད་ཆུ་ཏུབ་གང་རེ་བཏབ་ནས་དབུར་ཧྲི་དྲུད་ངེས།

བོད་ཟླ་བཅུ་གཉིས་པའི་ནང་ལ་ཁྲིམ་ཁ་རེ་རེ་ནས་རེས་མོས་ཀྱིས་མ་ཧེ་ཚོགས་པ་དང་བྲིས་པ་ཚོ་ཡང་ཟ་ཐོག་ཏུ་དེར་འཛོམས་ངེས། སྐབས་དེར་ཁྲིམ་བདག་ཅིག་གིས་ང་ལ་བལྟས་ནས་བཤད་རྒྱུར། ཨ་ཕ་ལག་རྩལ་ཅན་གྱི་བུ་མོ་འདྲ་རྒྱུ་མི་འདུག ཡ་མཚན་གྲལ་དག་ཅིག་རེད་ཅེས་བཤད་བྱུང་། ང་ནི་སེམས་སྐྱོ་བའི་སྡུག་བསྔལ་མ་ཐེག་པར་ཨ་མའི་གམ་ལ་སོང་ནས་ཡིད་ཆེམ་པ་ཞིག་དྲུས་པ་ཡིན། རྒྱུ་མཚན་ནི་བོད་ལྭ་གོན་ཡོད་པའི་བྲིས་པ་ང་གཅིག་པོ་ཡིན་ལ་དེ་ཡང་ཞོགས་པ་རེ་རེར་ཨ་ཕས་ང་ལ་བོད་ལྭའི་སྐེད་རགས་བཅིངས་པ་རེད། སྐེད་རགས་བཅིངས་རྗེས་མི་རྐྱན་ཞིག་གི་རོགས་རམ་མེད་པ་ང་རང་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་གྲོལ་ཐབས་མེད། སྐབས་དེ་དག་ཏུ་བྲིས་པ་གཞན་ཚོའི་གྲོང་ཁྱེར་གྱི་གོན་པ་ལ་ཡིད་སྨོན་ཤོར་ནས་ནམ་ཞིག་ངའི་བོད་ལྭ་འདི་མེར་སྲེག་རྒྱུ་བྱུང་ན་བསམ་སྒྱོང་ལ། ཨ་ཕ་ལ་སྡང་མིག་གིས་བལྟས་སྒྱོང་།

གཙོད་བོད་རིགས་སློབ་འབྲིང་དུ་ཞུགས་རྗེས་སློབ་གྲྭའི་སྒྲིག་ལམ་ནི་དམིགས་བསལ་བ་ཞིག་སྟེ། བོད་ཀྱི་སློབ་མ་ཡིན་ན་ངེས་པར་དུ་བོད་ལྭ་གོན་དགོས་པ་དང་བོད་ལྭ་མེད་ན་སློབ་ལྭ་གོན་པ་ལས་གཞན་སློབ་གྲྭར་ཡོང་ཆོག་གི་མེད། སྐབས་དེར་རང་ཉིད་ཀྱང་ནར་སོན་འདུག་ལ་ཕལ་ཆེར་ཨ་ཕའི་བཀའ་མངགས་ནས་ཡོངས་སུ་ཐར་ནས་གང་དགའ་ཅི་མོས་ཀྱི་གོན་པ་རེ་གོན་གང་ཐུབ་བྱེད་བཞིན་པའི་སྐབས་རེད། ཕལ་ཆེར་ལུས་ཀྱི་ཚ་ཤས་ན་ཨ་ཕས་བཟོས་པའི་གོན་པའི་གྲིབ་མ་ཙམ་ཡང་མེད་པར་སེམས་ཀྱི་གཏིང་རིམ་ནས་ཡོངས་སུ་གཏོར་ཐུབ་སོང་སྙམ་ཡོད་པའི་དུས་ཚོད་ཅིག་ཀྱང་རེད། སློབ་གཙོ་གྲལ་མགོར་ལངས་ནས་གསུངས་རྒྱུར། ཕ་མ་བོད་ཡིན་པའི་སློབ་མ་ཚོས་བོད་ལྭ་གོན་ཤོག བོད་ལྭ་མ་གོན་ན་ཡང་ཤ་ཁྲག་བོད་ཡིན་པས་བཀྲུ་ཐབས་ག་ལ་ཡོད། དེ་བས་བོད་ཅིག་ཡིན་བསམ་པའི་སྤོབས་པས་བོད་ལྭ་གོན་དགོས་པ་རེད། ང་ཚོས་རང་མི་རིགས་ཀྱི་ལྭ་བ་མི་གོན་ན་འོ་ན་སུས་གོན་ཞེས་བཤད་བྱུང་། སྐབས་དེར་ང་ལ་འགྲོད་གདུང་གཉོན་ཐབས་མེད་པ་ཞིག་སྐྱེས་བྱུང་།

གཟའ་མཇུག་ཏུ་ཡུལ་ལ་སོང་ནས་ཨ་ཕར་ང་ལ་བོད་ལྭ་ཞིག་བཟོ་རོགས་ཞེས་བཤད་པ་ཡིན། ཨ་ཕས་མིག་ཤེལ་དཀར་པོ་ཞིག་གོན་འདུག་ལ། ད་བར་ཁབ་ལ་སྐུད་པ་འཛིན་རྒྱུ་ཡང་དཀའ་ངལ་འདུག་ཟེར། གང་ལྟར་ཨ་ཕས་ཉིན་བཟོས་མཚན་བཟོས་ཀྱིས་བོད་ལྭ་སྟབས་བདེ་ཞིག་ཡོངས་སུ་གྲུབ་སོང་། དེ་ཡང་ཨ་ཕའི་བསམ་ཐོག་གི་བོད་ལྭ་ཞིག་མིན་པར། ཕུ་རུང་གི་རིང་ཐུང་དང་ཁ་ཞེང་སོགས་ང་རང་གི་འདོད་པ་གཞི་ལ་བཞག་ནས་བཟོས་པ་ཞིག་ཡིན། སློབ་གྲྭར་འགྲོ་ཁར་ཨ་ཕས་ང་ལ་བཤད་རྒྱུར། དགེ་རྒན་དེ་རྩུས་པ་ཅན་ཞིག་རེད། ཨ་ཕ་སྤྱ་མོ་ནས་འཚུགས་མེད་པ་དེ་ཡང་དགེ་རྒན་དེས་ཁྱོད་ལ་གསལ་པོ་བཤད་འདུག་པས་མང་པོ་མི་བཤད། ཨ་ཕའི་མིག་ཞར་སོང་ཡང་ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་བོད་ལྭ་གོན་ཐུབ་ནི་རེད་ཅེས་བཤད་བྱུང་།

དེ་རིང་བེད་མེད་དུ་གྱུར་པའི་སྐབས་བདེ་འཚེམ་འཁོར་འདིས་ང་ལ་ཨ་ཕའི་བཟོ

འཁོར་དྲན་དུ་བཙུགས་པ་དང་། ཨ་ཕའི་བཟོ་འཁོར་ནི་ལོ་རྫོང་དེ་འདྲའི་མང་པོ་ཞིག་ལ་གནང་དོན་ཅི་ཡང་མ་བྱུང་བའི་ཅ་དངོས་ཤིག་ཡིན་ལ། བོད་ལྭ་སྟོང་ཐུག་ཁྲི་ཐུག་བཟོས་སྒྱོང་བའི་བཟོ་འཁོར་ཞིག་རེད་ཟེར་ན་ཡང་ཚད་བརྒལ་གྱི་སྐད་ཆ་ཞིག་མིན་བསམ་བྱུང་། དེ་རིང་ཨ་ཕའི་བཟོ་འཁོར་ལྷ་བུའི་ཅ་དངོས་ཤིག་དང་ཨ་ཕ་ལྷ་བུའི་བཟོ་བ་ཞིག་རང་གི་གམ་ན་ཡོད་ན་ཅི་མ་རུང་སྙམ་པ་དང་། རང་ཉིད་ནི་དེ་འདྲའི་མི་རིན་ཐང་ཅན་ཞིག་དང་མཉམ་དུ་འཚར་ལོངས་བྱུང་ཡང་། རང་གི་ན་ཚོད་ཀྱིས་དུས་ཐོག་ཏུ་རིན་ཐང་སྤྲོད་མ་ཤེས་པར་འགྱོད་གདུང་ཚད་མེད་སྐྱེས་བྱུང་།

ཆེམ་འཁོར་བེད་མེད་འདིས་ཨ་ཕ་དྲན་དུ་བཙུག་བྱུང་། རིམ་བཞིན་ཨ་ཕའི་ལག་ཤེས་རྩིལ་བོ་དྲན་དུ་བཙུགས། ད་ལྟ་བསམ་ན་ངའི་ཨ་ཕ་ནི་ངའི་ཕ་ཡུལ་གྱི་ཤིང་བཟོ་དང་འཚེམ་བཟོ་ཆེད་ལས་པ་དེ་ཡིན་ཟེར་ཆོག་ལ། གླ་ཆ་མི་དགོས་པར་དང་བླང་གིས་ལྷ་བ་བཟོ་མཁན་དེ་ཡིན་ཟེར་ཆོག ད་དུང་ཕ་ཡུལ་ནི་རང་ལས་གཞན་གཙེས་ཀྱི་གནས་མཆོག་ངོ་མ་དེ་ཡིན་པ་ངའི་ཨ་ཕས་ར་སྤྲོད་གསལ་བོ་བྱས་སོང་མོད། སྐལ་བ་བཟང་པོ་དེ་དུས་ག་ཚོད་བར་དུ་གནས་མིན་འུ་ཅག་རང་རང་གི་སེམས་ན་གསལ་བོ་ཡོད་ངེས།

ཨ་ཕ་ལགས། བཀའ་དྲིན་ཆེ། ངའི་བྱིས་དུས་ནི་ངས་བྱིས་དུས་སུ་བསམ་པ་ལྟར་གྱི་བསོད་སྐམ་དེ་མིན་པར། ངའི་བྱིས་དུས་ནི་བྱིས་པ་གཞན་ལས་ཀྱང་རིན་ཐང་ལྡན་པ་ཞིག་ཏུ་བཏང་ཡོད་པར་བཀའ་དྲིན་ཆེ་ཞུ།

My Father’s Skills

I bought a handheld mini-sewing machine online, mainly for making fabric covers needed to ship parcels of Tibetan-language

children's books from India. The day that I got it, I tried it out; it seemed to work well at first, but then it jammed. A couple of months passed, and I didn't touch it.

Today as I looked in the direction of that mini-sewing machine perched on the corner of a table, it caught my eye, and my father's large sewing machine came to mind. My father is a tailor, but he's not an ordinary tailor just for local households; he's a travelling tailor for an entire district. With that said, I am not only referring to my father being a tailor. My father is kind-hearted, so if someone asked him to do some work, he agreed without hesitation, and then set off to their house. Every now and then, one family after another placed orders; then, father left us, and a few months passed. On the day that father returned home, he told endless stories about having wandered from one village to the next, and about making a chuba from tsharu (lambskin) or from logpa (sheepskin), and how such-and-such a family's tsharu had added sable fur on its edges, or how a groom's coat had a leopard skin collar. When my father was at home, he was always holding sewing materials—threads, needles for Tibetan shoes, or pieces of fake fur, tsharu, or logpa. Neighbors and acquaintances would stop by to order a particular item or to order clothes for a new bride or new groom in the village.

Considering my father's kind-hearted nature, one might think that wearing fine Tibetan clothing every day would not have been a problem for my family—my brothers, sisters, and myself. But when I was attending elementary school and my father made me Tibetan style tops and trousers, I definitely had negative karmic tendencies and a stupid way of thinking. Since all the children were wearing fashionable

store-bought clothes, and I was the only one to wear homemade Tibetan clothes, I was embarrassed. These days I think about that time and feel immense regret. I now think that in school, I was the luckiest girl and there wasn't anyone like me. At that time, I didn't know the value of things, but who's to blame for ignorance and what's its use? At the beginning of winter, my father made my mother, sisters, and I beautiful Tibetan shoes, but I nearly went crazy thinking of how boring and strange they were. I thought such things as, "Again this winter, like the last one, I am not lucky enough to wear new shoes," and I agonized over this. Every night I hugged my mom's neck, and I begged, "Please, please, please, buy me a new pair of shoes." I remember this clearly now.

As a child, I was conscious that my father and mother were talented in handicrafts and that my father had a sewing machine. Because my father was skilled in carpentry too, he built a foldable extension table that was joined to the sewing machine. When that table was extended to its full length, he laid out a large chuba on the sewing machine. My father also made a wooden stool for this, which my family called "the sewing machine stool." When my father wasn't at home, three or four of us kids would ride it. We played games continuously, like pretending a horse was galloping into town, or that during a horse race, we picked up a white scarf-khatag from the ground. Sometimes the stool became unbalanced, tipped over, and we hit our heads. We fell over and over again like this, countless times. It was as if my father's stool was made of cement because not even the slightest piece of wood split. When I think of this now, I doubt that a modern chair used in the way that we had used the-sewing-machine-stool would last even a day. The stool my father made, a piece of our

family's furniture, was used for decades and decades.

My father still has an iron. It is made out of bronze and looks just like a small cooking pan with a handle. It looks like you could pick it up easily with only one hand, but it's so heavy that I can barely pick it up, holding it with both hands. My father used to fill it with coals of dried yak dung and place it on the stove to keep it hot. Occasionally when he was making Tibetan clothing, he sprayed a sip of water over the cloth and slowly dragged the iron over it to press the seams together. I recollect that from time to time, my father called us children to stand near him; each of us held up a section of the Tibetan cloth and stretched it out with full strength, then he put it back down and sprayed a mouthful of water and ironed it some more.

I remember that in the twelfth month of the Tibetan calendar, each family took turns to host a prayer ceremony and a meal; at those times, everybody gathered together. On one such occasion, the head of a household looked at me and said, "You're the daughter of a very skilled tailor. You are not like other children. You are dressed so well!" I was so sad and couldn't bear what he had said and went to my mother's side and cried it all out. This was because I was the only child who wore Tibetan dress and every morning my father tied a Tibetan belt around my waist. It was so tight that I couldn't untie it myself without the help of an adult. In those days, I got caught up in desiring the store-bought clothes worn by the other kids. Once I even thought about setting all my Tibetan clothes on fire and scowled at my father.

Later, I attended a Tibetan middle school, and the school's policy was special. If a student was Tibetan, then either they had to

wear Tibetan clothes, or if they didn't have Tibetan clothes, they had to wear a uniform, or else they weren't permitted to attend school. At that time, I myself felt older and being that I was almost free from my father's orders, I thought I could wear whatever I wanted, whatever clothes that I liked. For a while, I had thoughts of throwing all my Tibetan clothes away as I pondered deeply that not even the slightest shadow of clothes that my father had made would fall anywhere on my body. Then the school principal stood in the front of an assembly and announced, "Students whose parents are Tibetan should wear Tibetan clothes. If you don't wear Tibetan clothes, since you are Tibetan by flesh and blood, how can you wash that away? So, since you are confident at the thought of being a Tibetan, you should wear Tibetan clothing! If we don't wear our own ethnic clothing, then who will?" At that, I felt such unbearable regret, that when I went home on the weekend, I asked my father to please make a Tibetan chuba for me. My father wore white-rimmed glasses and said that it was getting difficult to thread a needle. In the end, by working day and night, he completed a simple chuba for me. It wasn't my father's idea of a chuba. He made it according to my wishes—with shorter and tighter-fitting sleeves. As I was about to return to school my father observed, "That teacher is Tibetan to the bones. I don't need to say much because that teacher convinced you that your father wasn't wrong earlier. Even if I lose my eyesight, you'll wear Tibetan clothing."

Today this useless mini-sewing machine stirred up memories of my father's sewing machine. His sewing machine worked for years and years without even the slightest problem. I think I can say without exaggeration that his sewing machine made thousands upon thousands of chuba. Today, I think how wonderful it would

be if a tailor like my father or an instrument like my father's sewing machine were near to me. I grew up with such a valuable person. In my youth, I didn't appreciate that, and I feel full of regret. This useless mini-sewing-machine sparked memories of my father, and in turn, it reminded me of his skills at everything. Now I can say that my father was the best tailor and carpenter of my homeland. I can say that he was an expert tailor of Tibetan clothing who accepted not having a salaried job. My father is living proof that my homeland remains a truly incredible place where helping others is valued more than focusing on oneself. Such good fortune can't last indefinitely; if you think about it, this is certain.

Dear Dad,

Thank you. My childhood was not unlucky in the way that I had thought when I was a child. I had a precious childhood in comparison to many other children; I am so grateful for that.

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ཁུ་སིམ་པའི་ས་སྲོད། **(Silent Dusk)**

ཚེ་སྒྲོན་སྐྱིད། Tsedrön Kyi

(Translated from Tibetan by Erin Burke and Eben Yonnetti)[9]

Abstract: "Silent Dusk" (ཁུ་སིམ་པའི་ས་སྲོད།) is a short story composed by contemporary Tibetan author Tsedrön Kyi (ཚེ་སྒྲོན་སྐྱིད།). She presented the story, along with its translation, at the Tibetan Women Writing Symposium held at the University of Virginia in 2022. The story follows a young woman over the course of an evening as her hopes and desires strain against the realities of her polyandrous marriage.

Keywords: Tibetan literature, women writers, Tsedrön Kyi, translation, polyandry

Translator's Introduction

Contemporary Tibetan writer Tsedrön Kyi (ཚེ་སྒྲོན་སྐྱིད།) is from Ba County (འབའ་རྫོང་།), in Amdo, close to Tso Ngonpo (མཚོ་སྔོན་པོ།) in

[9] We are especially grateful to Tashi Dekyid Monet for first introducing us to this short story and patiently answering numerous questions we had while reading it the first time. Additional thanks go to Tsedrön Kyi for sharing her reflections on this story and permitting us to translate it into English. Finally, we would like to thank all of the participants in the Tibetan Women Writing Symposium for their comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this translation.

the northeastern region of Tibet. For several decades, she has worked as a Tibetan language and literature teacher at Yushu Nationalities High School in Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (ཡུལ་ཤུལ་བོད་རིགས་རང་སྐྱོང་ཁུལ།) and written many short stories and essays that have been published in literary journals. Like many other contemporary Tibetan women writers, Tsedrön Kyi writes in her spare time, balancing writing with her career as an educator. Still, she has published two books of her own short stories, A Melancholy Drama (སྐྱོ་སྣང་གི་ཟློས་གར།)[10] and Remembrance (ཞེན།)[11], in which the story translated here appears. She has also contributed essays, poems and short stories to Tibetan literary journals and anthologies of contemporary Tibetan literature.[12]

Tsedrön Kyi frequently elevates the perspectives of Tibetan women and often centers her fiction around their experiences. She is particularly skillful at conveying the intense unspoken emotions and innermost struggles of women, voices that have been historically underrepresented in much of Tibetan literature. As she noted in a recent interview, she finds inspiration for her short stories in the everyday world around her, often crafting her stories based upon "the general fate of Tibetan women (བོད་ཀྱི་བུད་མེད་སྤྱིའི་ལས་དབང་།) and actual oral testimony (གཏམ་རྒྱུད་དངོས་བྱུང་།)" of women she has met and is

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[10] Tshe sgron skyid 2005.

[11] Tshe sgron skyid 2016.

[12] Her essay, མི་ཚེའི་བཞུད་ལམ་ཁྲོད་རྙེད་པའི་འོད་སྣང་དང་དད་མོས། appears in the 2017 anthology Discussions of New Literature by Tibetan Women Writers (བུད་མེད་རྩོམ་པ་པོས་གསར་རྩོམ་གླེང་བ།). Her short stories also appear in Palmo's (དཔལ་མོ་) anthologies of Tibetan women's writing (2011, 2016).

intimately familiar with from her career as a secondary school teacher.[13]

"Silent Dusk" (ཁུ་སིམ་པའི་ས་སྲོད།) tells the story of Metok Lhadzé (མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས།) and her painful struggles within her polyandrous marriage in rural Tibet. The story is set in an undisclosed village in contemporary Tibet, punctuated with both bucolic images of the Tibetan landscape as well as mobile phones and highways. As the story opens, Metok Lhadzé is gazing off into the sunset on a hilltop near her home, unsettled and restless over the absence of her beloved husband, Wangdül. Confused and anxious, she trudges back to her home where she is confronted with her despised and drunken second husband, Drakpa. Like many other Tibetan and Himalayan women, Metok Lhadzé is in a polyandrous marriage with two brothers whose contrast in terms of education and worldly success, life choices, and temperament toward her are a clear source of tension throughout the story. As darkness engulfs the valley, Metok Lhadzé's hopes dissolve like the red clouds at sunset and Drakpa's drunken rage overwhelms everything. The story ends in blackness.

Although "Silent Dusk" offers only a brief glimpse into one evening of a woman's life, Tsedrön Kyi manages to contrast the tense atmosphere of Metok Lhadzé's claustrophobic helplessness with the spacious emptiness of her environment and what feels like an eternity of loneliness that stretches out before her. She is focused tightly on her white cellphone, her most precious gift from her beloved husband Wangdül, compulsively returning again and again to check for his call.

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[13] Tsedrön Kyi quoted in Bhum and Gayley 2022, 86.

At the same time, the vast sky is slowly darkening, and Metok Lhadzé can see the road stretching far away from her village. She imagines Wangdül in another city with another woman, which seems a world away, but she cowers in her kitchen, avoiding the other husband who has come home.

During the Tibetan Women Writing Symposium held at the University of Virginia in April 2022, Tsedrön Kyi noted that while she wrote the first draft of "Silent Dusk" over the course of one evening in 1997, she continued to return and revise it for over twenty years. The short story is a deeply moving depiction of contemporary Tibetan women's struggles with love, rural life, marriage, and education in a world that seems to offer hope for a better life in the towns and cities just over the horizon. Although the end of the story is heart wrenching, one of the saddest moments in the story is Metok Lhadzé's wish to sit quietly reading next to Wangdül. As an uneducated woman, her wish for literacy is one that Wangdül cannot fulfill. Tsedrön Kyi emphasized in conversation that Metok Lhadzé not only longs for the company of the kinder of her two husbands, but for the educational opportunities that take and keep him so far away from her as well.

Although there are elements of broader social commentary and realism in this story—drunken and absent husbands, inequities in educational opportunities—the story lives in Metok Lhadzé's inner world. Readers do not get a stark depiction of social realities, but a personally inflected lived experience of them from one woman's perspective. Tsedrön Kyi does not portray Metok Lhadzé flatly as a type—a woman oppressed by a traditional marriage custom.

Similarly, we see glimpses of her deadbeat husband Drakpa's personal struggle with his own experience of rural life and a complicated marriage. As despicable as his behavior in the story is, Drakpa seems to face similar frustrations over his limited education and career opportunities, and lack of status as the younger brother in a polyandrous marriage. In our discussions at the Symposium, Tsedrön Kyi emphasized that contrary to what first impressions might impart to readers, her intention in this short story is to take the sides of neither Tibetan women nor men. If she did, she continued, it would not make for a very interesting story.

We chose to translate the title of this story as "Silent Dusk." The Tibetan word khu sim po (ཁུ་སིམ་པོ།) means both "silent" and "without agitation or conflict." Tsedrön Kyi describes the setting sun and darkening valley beautifully, but the dusk that settles around Metok Lhadzé does not ease her mind and bring her peace—just the opposite. Her angst only increases the lower the sun dips below the horizon. We understood "silent," therefore, as having multiple references throughout the story. First, it alludes to Metok Lhadzé's phone, which never brings the sound of Wangdül's call, no matter how desperately Metok Lhadzé wishes it would. Second, Metok Lhadzé is also silent in the story, never once responding to Drakpa's tirade of drunken questions and demands. Finally, the darkening valley is also silent, devoid of the sounds of other life and the motor of Wangdül's car. Given the foreboding quality of the atmosphere and disturbing ending, we hope "Silent Dusk" conveys some of the cruel irony of the original Tibetan title.

Tsedrön Kyi's short stories describe in intimate detail the tremendous struggles and complex emotional tensions experienced by

Tibetan women as they navigate their lives in contemporary Tibetan society. Women's obstacles as they pursue an education, attempts to balance familial expectations with their own aspirations, as well as experiences with sexual violence and the pulls and pitfalls of urban life are all important themes across much of Tsedrön Kyi's writings, and are especially central to "Silent Dusk." The first time we read this story, we were both absolutely devastated by it and simultaneously drawn in by the vivid characters and beauty of the prose. Tsedrön Kyi's powerful writing invites readers to envision Metok Lhadzé's dreams and to share in her heartbreak. We hope our English translation conveys the tensions present within Metok Lhadzé's inner life to readers and allows them to enter the world of this beautiful tragedy.

ཁུ་སིམ་པའི་ས་སྲོད།

ལོ་ཟླ་མང་པོར། མཚམས་སྦྲིན་དམར་པོས་མཁའ་མཐའ་ལེགས་པར་སྤྲུད་པ་བགྲང་ལས་འདས་མོད། དེ་ནི་རྟག་བརྟན་གྱི་མཛེས་པ་ཞིག་མིན་པས་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱིས་རྟག་པར་སྣང་ཚུལ་དེ་སྣང་མེད་དུ་བསྐྱུར་སྐྱོང་། དེ་རིང་ཡང་ཉི་མ་བཞུད་ཤུལ་དུ། ནུབ་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་གནམ་སའི་མཚམས་སུ་མཚམས་སྦྲིན་དམར་པོས་བརྗོད་བྱ་མི་གསལ་བའི་སྣུམ་ཚོན་རི་མོ་ཞིག་གང་བྱུང་དུ་བྲིས་འདུག མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱིས་རང་བྱུང་གི་རི་མོ་མཚར་པོ་དེར་དབྱེ་ཞིབ་དང་རོལ་སྐྱོང་བྱེད་པར་ཧུར་བརྩོན་བྱས་ཀྱང་འབྲས་བུ་གཅིག་ཀྱང་མ་ཐོབ། རེ་ཞིག་ན། མོས་ལག་གི་ཁ་པར་དཀར་པོ་དེ་ཉ་སྒོར་ཡང་ཡང་གཏུགས། བཅོ་ལྔའི་དུང་ཟླ་བཞིན་མཛེས་པའི་གདོང་ལ་རེ་སྐྱུག་གི་སྐྱོ་སྣང་ཞིག་ཤར་ནས་དེའུ་འབུར་ལས་མར་བབས།

དེ་རིང་ནི་གཟའ་སྤེན་པ་ཡིན་པས། མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱིས་མོའི་ཁྲོ་ག་ཆེ་བ་དབང་འདུལ་ཡོང་བར་རེ་སྒུག་བྱས་ཡོད། འོན་ཀྱང་། དབང་འདུལ་གྱིས་ད་དུང་ཁ་པར་ཞིག་ཀྱང་བཏང་མ་བྱུང་བས་ལམ་བར་དུ་ཐུངས་འཕོར་ལ་ཆག་སྐྱོན་ཤོར་བ་ཡིན་ནམ། ཡང་ན་དབང་འདུལ་གྱི་སེམས་པ་བུད་མེད་གཞན་ལ་ཤོར་བ་ཡིན་ནམ། ཡང་ན་ཅི་ཞིག་བྱུང་བ་ཡིན་ནམ། གང་ལྟར། དེ་རིང་ངོས་ཇ་གཟུར་མ་ཐག་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་རང་ཁྱིམ་རྒྱབ་ཀྱི་དེའུ་འབུར་དེར་ཐེངས་འགར་ཡར་འཛེགས་མར་འབབ་བྱས། རེ་སྒུག་དང་སེམས་ཁྲལ་གྱི་ངང་ནས་དུས་ཚོད་འགྲོལ་དཀའ་བར་གྱུར། ད་ནི་ས་སྒོད་ཀྱི་ཡོལ་བས་ཡུལ་འདིའི་བར་སྣང་ཡོངས་སུ་བསྒྲིབ་ལ་ཉེ། མོ་རང་མགོ་བོ་སྒྱུར་སྒྱུར་གྱིས་ཐབ་ཚང་དུ་མི་འགྲོ་ཐབས་མེད་ཡིན།

ཁྱིམ་སྒོར་ཐོན་མ་ཐག ཁ་པར་ཁ་གྲག་བྱུང་། མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་དགའ་ཐག་ཚོད་དེ་ཁ་པར་ནྭ་སྒོར་གཏད།

"མོ་རེ། ང་ཁྱིམ་ལ་ཐོན་རན་ཡོད། ཤ་ཚོན་པོ་ཚོས། ཇ་ཞིམ་པོ་སྐོལ། སྒོ་ཁར་ང་བསུ་རུ་ཡོང་རྒྱུ་བརྗེད་མ་འགྲོ གོ་ཨེ་ཐལ"ཡང་གྲགས་པའི་སྐད་ངན་རེད།

གྲགས་པ་ནི་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱི་ཁྲོ་ག་ཆུང་བ་ཡིན། ཁོ་ནི་ཚོང་ཅ་གེ་ཅིག་གེ་རྒྱག་ཤེས་པ་ཙམ་ལས། རྩོལ་རྒྱུག་ཆེ་བ་དང་དྲན་རྒྱུ་མང་བ་ཞིག་ཡིན་པར་མ་ཟད། མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱིས་བཟོད་བསྲན་བྱེད་དཀའ་བ་ཞིག་ལ་ཁོས་ནམ་རྒྱུན་ཉལ་ཁང་དུ"ཁྱོད་རང་དོན་ངོ་མ་སུ་ལ་དགའ། ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་དབང་འདུལ་ལ་འཛུམ་མདངས་སྟོན་པ་དང་ང་ལ་མིག་ཟུར་གྱིས་ཀྱང་མི་ལྟ་བ་ཅི་ཡིན"སོགས་དགོས་མེད་ཀྱི་དྲི་བ་རྒྱང་རྒྱང་འདོན།

དབང་འདུལ་ནི་སློབ་ཆེན་འགྲིམ་མྱོང་བ་དང་ད་ལྟ་རྫོང་སློབ་འབྲིང་གི་སྐད་ཡིག་དགེ་རྒན་ཞིག་ཡིན། ཁོ་ལ་མཚོན་ན། ཞུག་གཅིག་ཁྲོ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་གཉེན་དོན་འདིར་གཏན་ནས

མི་འཐད་མོད། ཕ་རྒན་གྱི་བཀའ་བཙན་ཁར་མ་རྒན་གྱིས་མནའ་ཐོག་མནའ་ཡིས་མནན་པ་སོགས་ཐབས་བརྒྱ་ཇུས་སྟོང་བཀོལ་བས། ཁོས་ཀྱང་བརྩེ་དུང་དང་རང་དབང་བློས་བཏང་སྟེ་ཉུ་བོ་གྲགས་པ་དང་མཉམ་དུ་ཚུང་མར་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་བླངས།

དོན་དངོས་སྟེང་དབང་འདུལ་དང་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་གཉིས་ནི་གཉེན་སྒྲིག་ཡི་གེ་བླངས་ཡོད་པའི་ཁྲིམས་མཐུན་གྱི་བཟའ་ཟླ་ཡིན། ལྷག་པར་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱིས་སྒྲོད་བཞིན་པའི་ཁ་པར་དཀར་པོ་དེ་ནི་དབང་འདུལ་གྱིས་མོ་ལ་ཆེས་ཐོག་མར་ཉོས་པའི་ལེགས་སྐྱེས་ཡིན། དབང་འདུལ་ལ་སྙིང་གཏམ་མང་པོ་བརྗོད་རྒྱུ་མེད་མོད། ཁོ་ནི་གཙང་སྦྲ་ལ་དགའ་བ་དང་དགོས་མེད་ཀྱི་སྐད་ཆ་མི་གླེང་བ་མ་ཟད། རྒྱུན་པར་དཔེ་སྒྲོན་གྱི་མདུན་ནས་ལྷིང་འཇགས་དང་དཔེ་ཀློག་བྱེད་པར་དགའ་བས། མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱི་སེམས་ལ་"གལ་ཏེ་རང་ཉིད་ཀྱང་སློབ་གྲྭར་འགྲིམ་མྱོང་ཡོད་ན། ཁོ་དང་མཉམ་དུ་དཔེ་ཀློག་བྱེད་ཆོག དེ་འདྲ་ཡིན་ན་ཅི་འདྲའི་དགའ་བ་ལ"ཞེས་ཡང་ཡང་དྲན་མྱོང་། ལྷག་པར་དབང་འདུལ་གྱིས་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ལ་"ང་ལ་འདི་དགོས་དང་གན་དགོས"སོགས་ཀྱི་རེ་བ་ནི་ཐེངས་གཅིག་ལ་ཡང་བཏོན་མ་མྱོང་། གཉེན་སྒྲིག་བྱས་པ་ནས་བཟུང་། སློབ་གྲྭ་རུ་དམིགས་བསལ་གྱི་དོན་དག་ཡོད་ན་མ་གཏོགས་གཟའ་མཇུག་ལ་ཐོན་མ་ཐག་དབང་འདུལ་དུས་ལྟར་རང་ཁྱིམ་དུ་ལོག་ཡོང་བ་དང་། ཡོང་ནས་ཀྱང་ཁྱི་ནང་གི་ལས་ཀ་ལས་གང་ཐུབ་བྱེད་པ་མ་ཚད། ཁོ་རང་ཁྱིམ་ན་མེད་པའི་སྐབས་སུའང་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ལ་འཚམས་འདྲིའི་ཁ་པར་གཏོང་བ་སྲོལ་དུ་གྱུར་ཡོད། གང་ལྟར། མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ནི་ཁ་ཞེ་གཉིས་མེད་ཀྱིས་དབང་འདུལ་ལ་དགའ་ཡོད།

བསམ་ཡུལ་ལས་འདས་པ་ཞིག་ལ། ཐེངས་འདིར་གཟའ་འཁོར་གཉིས་ཀྱི་རིང་ལ་དབང་འདུལ་ཕྱིར་རང་ཁྱིམ་དུ་མ་ལོག ཐ་ན་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ལ་ཁ་པར་ཞིག་ཀྱང་བཏང་མ་བྱུང་། མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ནི་དྲན་གདུང་དང་སུན་སྣང་གི་གཡང་སར་ལྷུང་། ཐབ་ཚང་གྲུ་བཞིའི་ནང་དུ། མོས་ཁེར་རྐྱང་གི་མིག་ཆུ་ཕྱིས་པའང་ཐེངས་གཅིག་ག་ལ་ཡིན། ལྷག་པར་དེ་རིང་

གྲགས་པའི་སྐད་ངན་གོ་འཕྲལ་མོའི་སེམས་ལ་རྡོ་ཕ་བོང་ཞིག་གིས་མནན་པ་ལྟར་གྱུར་པས་དབུགས་ལྡོད་པོ་ཞིག་ཀྱང་འབྱིན་དཀའ་བར་གྱུར།

མཚམས་ཤིག་ན། ཨ་རག་གི་དྲི་མ་སྣར་གཟན་པ་ཞིག་དང་མཉམ་དུ་གྲགས་པ་ཁྱིམ་དུ་འཛུལ། ཁོའི་མིག་རྩ་དམར་པོར་གྱུར་པ་དང་ཁ་ལས་མཆིལ་མ་འདག་འདག་གང་བྱུང་དུ་འཕེན་བཞིན།

"མོ་རེ། ང་བསྒུ་རུ་མི་ཡོང་དོན་ཅི་ཡིན། ཨ། དབང་འདུལ་……དབང་འདུལ་ལ་རེ་བ་བྱས་ཀྱང་སྡུག་གྲོང་རེད། རྒྱལ་ཁབ་ཀྱི་ལས་བྱེད་པ་ཞིག་ཡིན་ཚེ……ཕའི……" ཞེས་ཁ་ནས་མགོ་གཞུག་མེད་པའི་སྐད་ཆ་ལྷབ་ལྷིབ་བཤད་པ་དང་ཐད་ཀར་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱི་ཉལ་ཁང་ནང་དུ་ཕྱིན།

ཁྱིམ་མི་གཞན་རྣམས་ངལ་གསོས་ཟིན་པས། མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱིས་ཐབ་ཚང་ནས་གྲགས་པར་ཤ་བཙོ་བཞིན་དབང་འདུལ་གྱི་ཁ་པར་ཡོང་བར་ཡིད་ཆེས་བྱས་ཡོད།

"མོ་རེ། ཁྱོད་རང་ངའི་ལོགས་ལ་མི་ཡོང་དོན་ཅི་རེད། མོ་རེ"གྲགས་པས་ལྷུ་བེ་ལྷིབ་བེའི་ངང་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་བོས།

"རོ་འདྲེ། ད་ཅི་ཁ་པར་གཏོང་དུས་ཁོ་ཨ་རག་གིས་བཟི་མེད་པ་འདྲ། ཏག་ཏག་དུས་ཚོད་ཕྱེད་ཀའི་ནང་ཡང་སུ་ཞིག་དང་མཉམ་དུ་གང་ཞིག་ནས་སྐྱོ་ཚུ་སྐྱོ་འཐུང་བྱས་པ་ཡིན་ནམ"མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱིས་ཐབ་ཚང་ནང་ནས་དེ་ལྟར་རང་ཉིད་མ་གཏོགས་སུས་ཀྱང་མི་གོ་བའི་སྡུག་སྨྲེ་བཏོན། གདོང་ལ་དངངས་སྐྲག་དང་ཞུ་ཞུག་པའི་ཉམས་ཤིག་ཤར། མོས་ཁ་པར་ལ་ཡང་ཡང་རེག ཁ་པར་ལ་རེག་བཞིན་རང་གི་སྙིང་ནས་བརྩེ་བའི་ཁྲོ་ག་དབང་འདུལ་གྱི་

རིག་བྱ་འཛམ་པོ་དང་གཞིས་སྐྱོད་འཛམ་པོ་ཡིད་ལ་ཡང་ཡང་དྲན།

གློ་བུར་དུ། མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་སྙར་ཡང་དེའུ་འབུར་གྱི་རྩེར་འཛེགས་ཤིང་རྒྱང་རིང་ལ་བལྟས། རྒྱང་རིང་རྫོང་མཁར་གྱི་ཕྱོགས་སུ་འཐེན་པའི་གྲུ་གྲུའི་གཞུང་ལམ་སྟེང་དུ། འགྲོ་འོང་བྱེད་པའི་རླངས་འཁོར་དང་རླངས་འཁོར་གྱི་གློག་སྒྲོན་གཅིག་ཀྱང་མཐོང་རྒྱུ་མེད། ས་སྒོད་ཀྱི་མི་ཡུལ་ནི་ཁུ་སིམ་མེ། དལ་ཅག་གེ ཡོད་ཚད་གསལ་ལ་མི་གསལ་བར་རབ་རིབ་ཞིག་ཏུ་གྱུར་འདུག

མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱིས་ཁ་པར་དཀར་པོར་རེག་རེག་འགའ་བྱས་ཀྱང་ཁྲོ་ག་དབང་འདུལ་ལ་ཁ་པར་གཏོང་བའི་སྤོབས་པ་ཞིག་གཏན་ནས་མ་རྙེད། དབང་འདུལ་ལ་ཐལ་ཆེར་སེམས་གནམ་ཤོད་སའི་སྙིང་གྲོགས་ཤིག་ཡོད་ངེས་རེད། ལོ་འདི་དག་གི་རིང་ལ་ཁོས་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ལ་ཁ་ཞེ་གཉིས་མེད་ཀྱིས་སྙིང་གནམ་ངོ་མ་ཞིག་བརྗོད་མ་མྱོང་ལ། ཁ་རྫོད་ཚིག་རྫོད་ཞིག་ཀྱང་བྱས་མ་མྱོང་བས་རྒྱུན་ལྡན་གྱི་བཟའ་ཚང་ནི་དེ་འདྲ་ཞིག་གཏན་ནས་ཡིན་མི་སྲིད། འདི་དག་ཚང་མ་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱིས་ཧ་ལམ་ཧ་གོ་ཡོད་ངེས། འོན་ཀྱང་། དབང་འདུལ་གྱི་གཞིས་རྒྱུད་ཕྱོད་པོ་དང་སྐད་ཆ་འཛམ་པོ། རིག་བྱ་འཛམ་པོ། ད་དུང་། ནམ་ཡང་མིའི་སྐྱིད་སྡུག་ལ་བསམ་ཤེས་བྱེད་པ་སོགས་ནི་མོའི་བདེ་སྐྱིད་ཆེ་ཤོས་སུ་གྱུར་ཡོད། དབང་འདུལ་གྱི་ཁ་པར་རེ་རེ་ཡིས་མོར་རེ་བ་ཚད་མེད་སྦྱིན་མྱོང་ལ། ཁོའི་གཞིས་རྒྱུད་འཛམ་པོ་དང་དང་སྐད་ངག་དྭངས་མ་དེས་མོ་རང་དཀྱིལ་བ་ལས་ལྷ་ཡུལ་དུ་ དྲངས་མྱོང་།

མུན་པ་ནི་གཅན་གཟན་གདུག་རྩུབ་ཅན་དེ་ཡིན་པས། ཉམ་ཆུང་གི་ཡུལ་ལུང་ཆུང་ཆུང་འདི་སྐད་ཅིག་ཉིད་ལ་ཁྱུད་མིད་བྱེད་པར་རྩོམ་པ་འདྲ། ད་ནི་རྒྱང་རིང་གི་རྒྱང་རིང་དེ་སུས་ཀྱང་མཐོང་ཐབས་མེད་པར་གྱུར།

ཁ་བར་དཀར་པོ་གདན་ནས་ཁ་མ་གྲག　　མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱིས་“ངོ་མ། མི་ཡུལ་གྱི་རི་བ་དང་བདེ་སྐྱིད་ནི་དགུང་གི་མཚམས་སྤྲིན་དམར་པོ་ཇི་བཞིན་ཡིད་རྟོན་མི་རུང་བ་ཞིག་རེད་ཨང་།”　ཞེས་ཁ་སང་གི་ཚིག་དེ་རང་སེམས་ནས་བསྐྱར་ཟློས་བྱེད་བཞིན་སླར་ཡང་ལྡིད་ཧིག་ཧིག་གི་ཆང་པ་རྡུད་དེ་དེའུ་འབུར་ལས་མར་བབས།

རྨི་ལམ་དང་སྟོང་བསམ་བོར་བའི་བྱིས་པ་ཞིག་དང་འདྲ་བའི་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཉལ་ཁང་གི་སྒོ་ཁར་ཐོན་ལ་ཉེ་བ་ན། ལག་པ་འདར་བཞིན་ཁ་བར་དཀར་པོའི་ཁ་གདན། དངན་པ་རིང་པོ་ཞིག་འཐེན། ནས་རྒྱུན་ལྟར་གྲགས་པའི་རྡུམ་ལ་འཛུལ།

“མོ་རེ། ཁྱོད་གང་ནས་ཤི་སོང་བ་ཡིན། ལས་བྱེད་པ་སྨྲུག་ལ་སོང་བ་ཨེ་ཡིན། ཁ་གྲོགས་དང་། ཁ་གྲོགས་དང་།”གྲགས་པས་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ཀྱི་སྐྲ་ནས་བཟུང་སྟེ་སྤྲུག་སྤྲུག་ལན་འགའ་བྱས་པ་དང་།　གློ་བུར་དུ་འདོད་སྲེད་ཀྱི་མྱོས་པར་གྱུར་པས་སེར་སྣ་མེད་པར་མེ་ཏོག་ལྷ་མཛེས་ལོངས་སུ་སྤྱོད་མགོ་བརྩམས།

མཁའ་དབྱིངས་སུ་ཟླ་འོད་མེད་ལ་སྐར་ཚོམ་ཡང་བགྲ་བ་མི་མཐོང་།　ཡོད་ཚད་སྐྱི་གཡའ་བའི་གཤིན་རྗེའི་འགག་འཕྲང་དང་ཨ་ན་མ་ན་རེད།

༢༠༡༩ལོའི་ཟླ༡༠ཚེས༣༠ཉིན་སྐྱེ་རྒྱུ་ནས་བཅོས།

Silent Dusk

Over many months and years, reddish clouds had beautifully adorned the horizon at dusk countless times. Nevertheless, because

these clouds created little more than passing beauty, Metok Lhadzé hardly ever noticed this ever-present scene anymore. Today once again, after the sun had set, the red clouds on the western horizon were like an indecipherable[14] oil painting. Even though Metok Lhadzé tried to carefully study and appreciate this wonderous natural image, she wasn't very successful. For a little while, she tapped the white mobile phone in her hand repeatedly against her earring. Her beautiful face, like a full conch-moon, was marked by a longing[15] melancholy as she finally walked down the hill.

Today was Saturday, so Metok Lhadzé had been expecting her elder husband, Wangdül, would come. But, Wangdül hadn't called yet. Could he have been in an accident with a truck on the road? Could he have fallen in love with another woman? What could have happened? In any event, after lunch today Metok Lhadzé had paced up and down the hill behind her home quite a few times. She found the hours difficult to pass in anticipation and worry. Now that twilight had faded, the sky in the valley was almost completely dark and Metok Lhadzé had no choice but to return to the kitchen, her head hanging low.

As soon as she opened the front door, her phone rang. Overjoyed, Metok Lhadzé picked up and placed the phone to her ear.

[14] བརྗོད་བྱ་མི་གསལ་བ་ translates literally as "an unclear subject." Tsedrön Kyi explained that here the term is describing a blurry or indecipherable painting, the lack of clarity mirroring the mood of Metok Lhadzé.

[15] རེ་སྒུག་ a term we have translated the term alternately as "longing," "expecting," and "anticipation." It appears three times in the opening lines to this story and is an important descriptor of Metok Lhadzé's emotional state.

"Hey woman! I'm about to head home. Cook up some juicy meat and make some good tea. And don't forget to come and greet me at the door. Got it?" It was Drakpa's unpleasant voice.

Drakpa was Metok Lhadzé's younger husband. He only knew how to trade in odds and ends. He was careless and scatter-brained,[16] and Metok Lhadzé found him impossible to put up with. From inside the bedroom, he would always call to ask her pointless questions, like "Who do you really love?" "Why do you always flash smiles at Wangdül, but barely glance at me?" and so on.

And then there was Wangdül…Wangdül had gone to college and was now a language arts teacher at the county middle school. For his part, he fundamentally disagreed with this polyandrous marriage. However, in addition to his elderly father's commands, his elderly mother had used all manner of ways to force him into it, swearing oath after oath and carrying on. In the end, he had no choice but to renounce his affections and autonomy and marry Metok Lhadzé together with his younger brother, Drakpa.

In reality, it was Wangdül and Metok Lhadzé who were legally husband and wife and had the marriage certificate. Moreover, the white mobile phone Metok Lhadzé used was the best gift Wangdül had ever bought for her. Wangdül didn't express his affection very much, but he loved

[16] དྲན་རྒྱུ་མང་བ་ literally translates to "having a manifold stream of thoughts." Here the term negatively implies Drakpa having an unproductive overabundance of thoughts and ideas.

cleanliness and never said more than was strictly necessary. Usually, he just liked to sit beside his reading lamp and peacefully read his books. In Metok Lhadzé's mind, she would imagine and say to herself over and over again: "If only I had gone to school, then I could sit and read with him. If only our lives could be like that, how wonderful it would be!" Moreover, Wangdül never once told Metok Lhadzé his desires, saying "I need this and that," and so on. Ever since they were married, unless there was some special event, as soon as it was the weekend Wangdül would leave the school and return home. When he came home, he would busy himself right away doing whatever chores he could inside or outside the house. Even when Wangdül wasn't home, he would call Metok Lhadzé on her phone. And so, Metok Lhadzé truly and sincerely loved him.

For the last two weeks, however, Wangdül inexplicably hadn't returned home. He hadn't even so much as called. Metok Lhadzé fell into an abyss of longing and worry. She often cried alone in her kitchen. And, today when she heard Drakpa's unpleasant voice, she felt as if she'd been crushed by a boulder. Her normally relaxed breathing had become labored and difficult.

Just then, Drakpa entered the house accompanied by the overpowering[17] smell of alcohol. His eyes were bloodshot, and strings of spittle spewed everywhere from his mouth when he spoke.

[17] གཙན་པ་ might also be translated here as "harmful" or "oppressive." We have chosen "overpowering" to connote the strength of this smell and how revolting Metok Lhadzé finds it.

“Hey woman! Why didn’t you come out to welcome me home? Ah, Wangdül…you were hoping for Wangdül, huh? But now you’re disappointed? ‘A white-collar worker’[18]…Phuh!” Drakpa trailed off, and muttering to himself he went straight to Metok Lhadzé’s bedroom.

After the others in the house had gone to bed, Metok Lhadzé cooked the meat for Drakpa in the kitchen. All the while, she still really believed that Wangdül’s phone call would come.

“Hey woman! Why won’t you come near me? Hey woman!” Drakpa called out to Metok Lhadzé, slurring his words.

“That jerk![19] When he called a little while ago, he didn’t seem drunk. Who was he with, and where did he get so drunk in just a half an hour?” Metok Lhadzé cried to no one but herself in the kitchen. A look of panic and helplessness appeared on her face. She touched the phone again and again. She ran her hand across the phone again and again. As she touched the phone, she kept thinking of the soft touch and gentle character of her dear husband, Wangdul.

Suddenly, Metok Lhadzé got up, climbed to the top of the hill again, and looked into the distance. She couldn’t see a car—or even a headlight—coming or going on the winding highway leading to the far-off town. All of the peaceful and relaxed twilit surroundings started to

[18] རྒྱལ་ཁབ་ཀྱི་ལས་བྱེད་པ་ literally translated means “one who works for the state” which might be translated as “a civil servant.” Here Tsedrön Kyi noted that she meant to imply someone with stable office work in contrast to Drakpa’s intermittent employment.

[19] རོ་འདྲེ་ translates literally as “corpse-demon.” It is a derogatory insult that could also be translated in much harsher terms but is not necessarily an expletive.

blur.

Though Metok Lhadzé ran her hand over the white phone a few times, in the end, she didn't find the courage to call Wangdül. Most likely, Wangdül had a soulmate he could confide in. In all these years, he hadn't sincerely told Metok Lhadzé anything that was truly from the heart, but there is no such thing as a normal marriage without problems. Metok Lhadzé certainly knew all of these things. Nevertheless, Wangdül's easy-going temperament, kind speech, gentle touch, and understanding nature had made her so happy. Every one of Wangdül's calls had given her tremendous hope, and that gentle disposition and clear voice of his had pulled her out of hell and into heaven.

Darkness is a cruel predator and seemed in the span of a single instant to begin to devour this small, insignificant valley whole. Now no one could see very far at all.

The white phone made no sound at all. Yesterday's words repeated again in her mind, "Really, no one should rely on worldly hopes and happiness. Those are just like the red clouds on the horizon." Dragging her feet heavily, Metok Lhadzé went back down the hill.

Like a child lost in dreams and fantasies, as Metok Lhadzé was about to come through the door to the bedroom she closed the white phone with trembling hands. She let out a long sigh, and, as usual, got into Drakpa's bed.

"Hey woman! Where did you disappear to? Were you waiting for that accomplished man? Tell me! Speak!" Drakpa grabbed Metok

Lhadzé by the hair and shook her a few times. Suddenly, intoxicated with desire, he began to have his way with Metok Lhadzé without restraint.

In the sky, the moon had no brightness, and even the constellations did not shine. Everything was just like the terrifying Lord of Death's[20] difficult path.

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[20] Shin jé (གཤིན་རྗེ།) in Tibetan or Yamarāja in Sanskrit, is a wide-ranging deity in Tibetan Buddhism. In paintings of the wheel of life (སྲིད་པའི་འཁོར་ལོ་) he is depicted as the personification of death, holding all of cyclic existence in his grasp. In images of the hell realms, Shin jé is depicted as the king of the hungry ghosts, judging beings who have been born in the hell realms.

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爱是一双出发的箭 (Love Is a Pair of Unloosed Arrows)

白玛娜珍 པདྨ་ལྷ་མཛེས། Baimanazhen

(Translated from Chinese by Jue Liang and Andrew S. Taylor)

Abstract: Baimanazhen is one of the most celebrated and prolific Sinophone Tibetan women writers. This essay provides a brief biography as well as a discussion of the major themes and techniques of her works. Translated from Chinese into English for the first time, the essay "Love Is a Pair of Unloosed Arrows" tells the story of Yangchen and Dundrup, a pair of former extramarital lovers turned spiritual companions.

Keywords: Baimanazhen, Sinophone Tibetan literature, essay, creative nonfiction, women in Tibet

Translators' Introduction

Baimanazhen (Tib. པདྨ་ལྷ་མཛེས།, Chn. 白玛娜珍, b. 1967) is a prolific writer who works across many genres. She was born in Lhasa into a family established in the local literary circle: Her father worked at the Lhasa branch of Xinhua News Agency, an official state news agency and publisher, and her mother was also a writer. She writes in Chinese about her experiences as a Tibetan woman in a variety of vocations: professional dancer, radio host, and television producer, among many others. Her first career as a dancer took her all over Tibet,

from Kham to Ngari, and she writes about the cross-cultural tensions that she witnessed contemporary Tibetans facing during her travels, as in the essay translated below. Other topics include her friendships with conservative nuns and Lhasa socialites, her pilgrimages to sacred sites, and her reflections on the materialist influences of city life. Her writings include the novel Lhasa, World of Dust (Chn. 拉萨红尘), translated into English as Love in Lhasa by James Yongue and Wan Jiahui.[21] Set in 1980s Lhasa, the novel follows the trajectories of two young Tibetan women, Nangsa and Yama, as their lives unfold in two divergent directions. It received an honorable mention in the fiction category at the Second Women's Literature in China Awards

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Baimanazhen's essay "Love Is a Pair of Unloosed Arrows," translated below, has been selected from her collection Lhasa Rain (Chn. 拉萨的雨). "Arrows" is a brief but penetrating essay that caused the translators some angst in capturing its subtleties. As such, they are grateful for the opportunity to direct the reader's attention to some of its more profound passages and perhaps hedge their own shortcomings.

One of the most eye-raising aspects of the essay for readers not familiar with Tibetan monastic culture is the relationship between Dundrup and Yangchen, neighbors turned lovers turned quasi-monastic partners. Is their relationship scandalous? An instance of redeemed forbidden love? Not exactly. Although certainly not normative, it is not surprising that relationships between men and women, including monks and nuns, have always been complex in a society where as much as

[21] Nordrun 2015. The translators of the novel made a mistake in rendering Baimanazhen's name, hence the discrepancy.

fifteen to twenty percent of the population might enroll as monastics at some point in life.[22] Although some monastics take tonsure as adolescents and maintain their monastic vows their entire lives, others might enroll only during their adolescence, after a longtime spouse has passed, or even for a predetermined period of time in adulthood. In Tsering Yangzom Lama's novel We Measure the Earth with Our Bodies, a novel that explores similar social complexities, a Tibetan woman is told of a potential love interest, "Don't pity him. He's a monk now." Only for her to rejoin, "Maybe he won't always stay a monk." The remark is met with laughs and a perfunctory swat.[23] Yangchen and Dundrup's relationship, although unorthodox and no doubt a subject of gossip in their original community, is not unique or unintelligible. It also sets in motion a complicated emotional dynamic that gives an element of dramatic tension to what might otherwise seem like a character study. One Chinese friend to whom the translators gave the essay exclaimed halfway through, "Is Yangchen going to be the author's mother?"

Another especially interesting dimension of Baimanazhen's essay is its centering of the silent Yangchen. Her physical presence and silence are deftly juxtaposed in the story's central paradox. The first time the author visits Yangchen, she has taken a vow of silence, and so sits by silently as Dundrup tells their—her—story, emoting, but not contributing verbally. The second time the author visits the hermitage, she has physically departed—only upstairs, for a brief retreat, but

[22] Ryavec and Bowman 2021.

[23] Lama 2022, 172.

renders herself inaccessible to the author and the world outside her small hut. Has she surpassed Dundrup spiritually and transcended the mundane "world of dust," or is her silence socially expected?

Nevertheless, there are two significant moments when the author either intuits Yangchen's thoughts despite her lack of communication or perhaps projects her own emotions onto the silent practitioner. The first time is in one of the most interesting and only explicitly philosophical passages in the essay:

Yangchen's face was covered in tears. She thought, the river that runs through the village has flowed so far only to arrive here. In the same way, all of her and Dundrup's karma across many lifetimes had led to their coming together. Just as a river cannot flow backward, their relationship was fated and could not be reversed.

How does the author know this? Does she know what Yangchen is thinking or does she merely think that she knows what Yangchen is thinking? Is she recording something Yangchen told her later, after her day of silence? The reader is not told but is left to wonder if there is some sort of shared experience or bond that unites them across the silence.

The second time comes in a more explicitly gendered passage, when the author asks Yangchen if she misses the children she has abandoned to go practice with Dundrup—a question that she does not ask Dundrup, who also left his children:

Yangchen was taking a vow of silence that day. My question

about her children startled her. She looked dazed and stopped fingering her prayer beads. But she shook her head in silence. The resolution in her expression made my tears begin to flow. I could almost feel the agony that her maternal heart must have experienced.

Yangchen shows only silent resolution, but the author interprets her headshake as intense maternal sadness, despite no indication that this is the case. Is the author making a mistake in her projection? Is she showing us the inaccurate conception of a shared women's essence commonly imposed by readers, or is she sincerely asserting the existence of a maternal sadness as a gendered universal?

In addition to centering Yangchen as a subject, we also see the author's concern for women's experiences in the discussion of the domestic objects that thread the essay together. The trope of the ignorant city-dweller hiking up to the mountains to receive a teaching is established in the initial description of the hermitage's proximity to Samye, its remoteness, and its sacred pedigree. And yet when the author arrives, she instead provides a catalogue of domestic objects, focusing on kitchenware instead of meditative practices—dark red clay teapots, a stove for butter tea, the happiness of the nuns going about their morning chores, descriptions of the small huts that had been built brick by brick and plank by plank. Similarly, when the author returns to the nunnery after a nine-year absence, she shows how the hermitage has changed by talking about the new objects that have appeared in the kitchen, for instance an olive-green blender operated by a new nun. Even in a place built for transcendence, gendered mundanity is never elided.

The translators were equally baffled by what might seem like minor technical difficulties, which we found nevertheless were hubs for the larger socio-political issues at work in the piece. These difficulties began with the title, which might be translated as "Love Is a Pair of chufa Arrows." But what to do with this chufa? The word can be used as a noun or verb and is most commonly translated as "departure" or "start" in Chinese—for instance, a plane or ship leaving port can chufa, as can a person or army leaving a city. But arrows do not commonly chufa—would it be best to capture that awkwardness in English, for instance as "Love Is a Pair of Departing Arrows"? It's a tricky tradeoff—an English reader might well blame the translators or, more significantly, the author, and not read the piece instead of assuming that the awkwardness is intentional. Our sense is that the title describes the arrows immediately after they have been shot from a bow, soaring but not aimed toward any particular target, except perhaps beyond.

A final point worth communicating in this work of creative nonfiction is that the author writes herself as a character. For anyone who has met Baimanazhen, it is difficult to imagine such a kind and considerate woman barging into houses and interjecting herself between a monastic couple—is she perhaps the beetle crawling through the open windowpane? This perpetual discomfort in her own space and body, as well as her surprise when the monk speaks fluent Chinese, among other scenes, depict a sense of dislocation that is perhaps felt by much of the Sinophone Tibetan community more generally.

Ensuring that Tibetan remains a viable language in arts, politics, and the home is one of the great challenges facing the contemporary Tibetan community, one that all Tibetan studies academics should

work to support. We hope this Yeshe volume reflects that concern by providing bilingual editions, which will allow native Tibetan readers to read along while also allowing students of Tibetan or second-generation Tibetans access to the original works. But the same colonial and neoliberal forces that have threatened the Tibetan language with functional extinction have also alienated many Tibetans from their mother tongue—Tibetans who, through no fault of their own, have grown up in Sinophone, Anglophone, or other linguistic spheres, and we risk erasing their experiences if they too are not recognized as part of the Tibetan literary community. Baimanazhen shows the possibility of using Chinese to communicate the experiences of many contemporary Sinophone Tibetans in Tibet, ranging from their liminal status to their reverence for Buddhism, with all its lived ambivalences and complexities.

爱是一双出发的箭

九年前的一个夏天，我和朋友第一次去青朴。

青朴位于西藏山南地区扎囊县，在县内桑耶寺东北约15公里的纳瑞山腰，海拔4300米，纳瑞山被称为青朴。传说是从前山上有一户青氏家族。藏传佛教宁玛派创始人莲花生、西藏第一位女密宗大师益西措加、寂护大师、藏王赤松德赞、密宗大师白若扎纳等都曾在青朴山上修法。青朴是西藏最著名的隐修圣地。从桑耶寺坐船横渡雅鲁藏布江，对岸，就是青朴了。

青朴大山像伸开手臂在等候我们。胸膛盛开着野蔷薇花和缤纷的山花。

山半腰，有一所小“文则寺”。天已晚，寺院住持顿珠拉（化名）安排我们在寺里一间空房里住下。

顿珠拉高高的个子，微微有些驼背，戴着眼镜，和蔼可亲。那晚，他的身后，跟来一位看上去30多岁的尼姑央金拉（化名），顿珠拉说，央金是和自己一起从安多地区来的。

这晚，在青朴文则寺的小院里，漫天星光中，央金拉守在顿珠拉身旁一言不发。顿珠拉用流利的汉语和我朋友交谈着。我有些惊诧，我没想到这样偏远的地方，一位藏地出家人竟能把汉语说得那么好。

第二天一早，我们被邀请到寺院厨房喝茶。厨房的黑壁墙上，涂满了民间白色的吉祥图，暗红的土陶茶壶在火炉上飘散出酥油茶的浓香。五六位尼姑红扑扑的脸蛋像苹果，她们在为早间开法会的尼姑们煮糌粑粥。一面说笑着，背来叮叮咚咚的山泉水。

我好奇地向她们问起住持顿珠拉哪里学的汉语，尼姑央金拉为什么不说话……

从厨房出来，我闯进一排排尼姑宿舍中间——顿珠和央金的家。和文则寺其他尼姑宿舍一样，顿珠和央金的家也是土坯和木头盖的简易小屋。

我敲开门，拿着笔记本，莽撞地坐在僧人顿珠和尼姑央金中间。

房子狭长、窄小。除了两张藏式单人木床，没有任何家具。地上满是山里的尘土。锅碗瓢盆和一个烧煤油的小炉子、糌粑口袋等

凌乱地扔在靠窗的一角。从一扇破窗子里，钻进来的甲壳虫，在地上爬来爬去。

“您现在还爱央金拉吗？”一开口，我唐突地问。

盘坐在我对面卡垫上的顿珠拉，并不回避。他微笑着看看我，又望一眼沉默的央金。

窗外，野蔷薇树在摇曳，山雨就要来了，雅鲁藏布江闪着白光，像要把尘世和青朴分成两半。

顿珠拉拨着念珠，缓缓地说：“现在，我随时准备好了往生。只是央金，她跟我来青朴，我放心不下她……”

原来，在安多藏区的某个小村庄，顿珠和央金是邻居。四十出头的顿珠是村里的党支部副书记，他儿女成双，妻子贤惠。央金一家住在顿珠家隔壁，她沉默寡言，是三个孩子的母亲、村委会的会计。丈夫是村里的农民。

顿珠和央金两家，和睦为邻。两家的孩子也很要好。

顿珠懂藏、汉文，常教央金的孩子认字读书；央金做了好吃的面疙瘩汤，也要送半锅给顿珠一家。但一天，夜半月圆，顿珠和央金，从相互敬慕到暗恋，爱情在这个晚上像冲破了堤岸，终于越过了两家人相隔的墙。

央金泪流满面，她想，村里的小河，历经多少，才来到这个村庄，她和顿珠，也经历了生生世世缘分才走到一起，河水不会倒

流，他们的宿缘没有退路。

他们抛下孩子、家庭和婚姻，抛下一切，出走了——

但黑夜茫茫，该去往哪里?

他们风餐露宿，去了印度、尼泊尔，朝拜了西藏所有的神山圣湖。一天，路仿佛到了尽头，他们到了青朴。

阳光像白银，微风像密语，山上，莲花生和益西措加密修的岩洞，像青朴的心窝。传说中，108个修行洞、108尊刻在岩壁石上的佛塔、108个天葬台、108个泉眼如梦......

顿珠和央金，再也没有离开过108颗念珠。

顿珠和央金在青朴岩洞，一住就是8年。

直到一位活佛重建文则寺，活佛请顿珠和央金管理小寺。文则寺，是尼姑院。

从此，顿珠腰上挂起一大串文则寺的钥匙。除了管理寺院，他要给尼姑们讲解佛经、教授藏文、主持寺里的法事......

那天，听着顿珠拉的讲述，我突然问：“尼姑央金拉，这些年，您想念孩子吗？”

央金在禁语，不说话。听到我问她的孩子们，她怔住了。她停下手里拨动的念珠，一脸恍惚。但她沉默着，对我摇头。望着她坚毅的神色，我的泪水哗哗流淌，我仿佛感觉到她做母亲的心，曾

怎样痛过。

多年后，我再来到青朴，协助基金会送酥油、茶叶和日常药品。

那一路，黑夜像蜜一般醇厚，天蒙蒙亮时，我们到了。

路，这时已经修到青朴半山的文则寺。山上下来一位年轻的僧人清点我们捐赠的物资。中午一点，桑耶寺也会送来一批粮食，这位僧人对我们说，那时山上会下来十几位僧人，把物品扛上山，再通知每个山洞里的隐修者来领取。

我们却是租车来的。遥望青朴，司机当天要回。我想去看望顿珠和央金。

顺着文则寺旁的小路，我先去了寺里的厨房。厨房也扩建了，洒满了阳光。正用果绿色的搅拌机搅拌着酥油茶的尼姑，是新来的。她给我斟满茶，告诉我顿珠拉和央金拉还在青朴，在文则寺。

寺外的野蔷薇树长得更茂密了。有一栋两层小楼，红色的小门锁着，透过门缝，我看到院子里盛开着花，我猜那该是央金种的。门旁边的墙上，有一块小木板挡住窗口，我敲了敲，顿珠拉在！他拉开小木板，露出笑容。

“顿珠拉，你们好吗？”他的身后，我看到房子里摆放着彩色藏柜，床上铺着羊毛卡垫。液化炉旁，几个擦得锃亮的暖瓶闪着光。

“很好，谢谢。”

顿珠拉看起来胖了，气色也很好。

“您还记得我吗？” 我问。

顿珠拉微笑着，好像忘了。

又聊了几句，我告辞了。刚走到一处看上去新装的自来水池旁，我的心头突然一阵痛。

9年了。

远眺青朴山下，我的生活空无痕迹，身后，顿珠拉和央金拉在一起，9年来没有分离一天。

我擦干眼泪决定再返回去。

我敲开顿珠拉的小木窗。

“你是——”

顿珠拉怔怔地望着我，他叫出了我的名字。

“这些年……你还好吗？”顿珠拉眼里透出沧桑。

我摇摇头。

但我丰衣足食，我还缺什么吗？

我没见到央金拉。顿珠拉说，央金在楼上闭关，不能出来见面。

回去的路上，我回想着青朴，想顿珠拉和央金拉，——像青朴山上，一双突破红尘的箭。

Love Is a Pair of Unloosed Arrows

I first visited Chimpu with a friend one summer day nine years ago.

Chimpu is the name given to a Tibetan area about fifteen kilometers northeast of Samye Monastery, in the Lhokha region of Dranang County. When you reach the waist of Mount Yari at 4,300 meters elevation, that is Chimpu.

Legend has it that the Chim clan once lived on the mountain. The Lotus-Born, who founded the Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism, Tibet's first female tantric master Yeshe Tsogyel, the master Shantarakshita, the Tibetan king Trisong Detsen, and the tantric master Vairocana have all practiced at Chimpu: It is the most famous solitary retreat site in Tibet. If you take a boat from Samye onto the Yarlung Tsangpo River, the far shore is Chimpu.

The mountain awaited us with open arms, its bosom filled with blossoming rambler roses and other colorful mountain flowers.

Halfway up the mountain was a small hermitage called Wendza. It was already late, and the abbot, Dundrup (pseudonym), arranged for us to stay in one of its empty rooms.

Dundrup is a tall man, though slightly hunchbacked. He looks kind and approachable in his glasses. That night a nun who looked like she was in her 30s named Yangchen (pseudonym) was following him around. Dundrup told us that he and Yangchen had come together from Amdo.

That night, starlight filled the whole sky above the small courtyard of the hermitage. Dundrup was chatting with my friend in fluent Chinese, while Yangchen stood near him, silently watching. I was a bit surprised; I hadn't expected that a Tibetan monk from so remote a place could speak fluent Chinese.

Early the next morning, we were invited to have tea in the kitchen. The black walls of the kitchen were plastered with auspicious white folk symbols. The dark red clay teapots on the stove filled the room with the rich fragrance of butter tea. The five or six nuns who were preparing the tsampa porridge for the nuns' morning teachings all had faces as plump and red as apples. They laughed and chatted as they carried water from the babbling mountain spring.

I was curious, so I asked them where Abbot Dundrup had learned Chinese and why the nun Yangchen didn't speak at all…

I left the kitchen and barged into Dundrup and Yangchen's

home, one of many among the rows and rows of residences for the nuns. Their humble hut was made of mud bricks and wood, just like the homes of the other nuns.

I knocked and opened the door. Notebook in hand, I sat obtrusively between Dundrup and Yangchen.

It was a narrow, small room with no other furniture than two Tibetan-style single beds made of wood. The floor was dusty. Pots, pans, utensils, a small stove, and bags of tsampa were piled in the corner by the window. A beetle crawled in through a broken pane.

"Do you still love Yangchen-la?" I asked abruptly.

Dundrup-la sat cross-legged on a cushion in front of me and did not avoid the question. Smiling at me, he looked at the silent Yangchen.

Outside the window, the ramblers and trees swayed gently. There would soon be rain on the mountain. The white waves of the Yarlung Tsangpo River glistened as though separating Chimpu from the world of dust.

Dundrup-la spoke slowly as he counted his rosary beads.

"At this point, I'm ready for the next life. It's just Yangchen that I worry about; she followed me to Chimpu…"

It turned out that Dundrup and Yangchen had been neighbors in a small village in Amdo. The forty-something Dundrup had been

deputy party secretary in the village. He had a son, a daughter, and a virtuous wife. Yangchen's family lived next door. She was reticent, a mother of three, and the accountant for the village party committee. Her husband was a farmer in the village.

Dundrup and Yangchen's families were friendly—their children were especially close.

Dundrup spoke both Tibetan and Chinese and would often teach Yangchen's kids to read and write. Whenever Yangchen made her delicious noodle soup, she would send half to Dundrup's family.

But one night under a full moon Dundrup and Yangchen crossed from mutual adoration to a secret tryst, their love overflowing the wall separating their houses like water over a bank.

Yangchen's face was covered in tears. She thought, the river that runs through the village has flowed so far only to arrive here. In the same way, all of her and Dundrup's karma across many lifetimes had led to their coming together. Just as a river cannot flow backward, their relationship was fated and could not be reversed.

They left behind their children, families, and marriages. They let go of everything and left.

But the dark night is long—where could they go?

They roughed it, pilgrimaging to India, Nepal, and all the sacred lakes and mountains of Tibet. One day they arrived at Chimpu and

somehow knew their road had come to an end.

The sun shone like silver and the breeze whispered its own secret language. On the mountain, the secret retreat cave of the Lotus-Born and Yeshe Tsogyal was the heart of Chimpu. Legend says it contains 108 meditation caves, 108 stupas carved into the cliffs, 108 sky-burial platforms, and 108 dreamlike springs…

Since they arrived, Dundrup and Yangchen have never parted from their rosaries, strung with 108 prayer beads.

They had lived in the Chimpu cave for eight years when a Living Buddha, called a tulku in Tibetan, started rebuilding the Wendza hermitage, and asked Dundrup and Yangchen to manage it. The hermitage had gradually become a nunnery.

Hanging from Dundrup's waist was a long stream of keys for the nunnery. In addition to managing the temple, Dundrup also taught the nuns Buddhist scripture, Tibetan language, and how to perform temple rituals.

That day, as Dundrup was telling their story, I suddenly asked, "Ani Yangchen-la, do you miss your children after all these years?"

Yangchen was taking a vow of silence that day. My question about her children startled her. She looked dazed and stopped fingering her prayer beads. But she shook her head in silence. The resolution in her expression made my tears begin to flow. I could almost feel the agony that her maternal heart must have experienced.

Many years later, I returned to Chimpu to help a charity deliver butter, tea, and medicine.

The darkness of the road was as thick as honey. We didn't arrive until dawn.

The road had been expanded and now reached all the way up the mountain to the hermitage. A young monk came down from the mountain and took inventory of the donations. At 1pm there would also be a food delivery from Samye, and the young monk told us that a dozen or so monks would come down to carry everything up the hill, and that they would notify everyone in the retreat caves to come and collect their share.

We just rented a car. I knew the driver needed to return that same day but looking at Chimpu, I wanted to check-in on Dundrup and Yangchen.

Following the small path through the hermitage, I stopped first at the kitchen. The kitchen too had been expanded and was filled with sunshine. I didn't recognize the nun making butter tea in an olive-green blender; she must have been new. She said that Dundrup-la and Yangchen-la were still at the hermitage as she filled my teacup.

The rambler bushes in the fields outside the temple had grown even more lush. There was a modest two-story building with a little red door locked. Through the keyhole I could see flowers blossoming in the courtyard, probably Yangchen's work. I knocked on a small wooden

board covering the window. Dundrup-la appeared in the window! He pulled the plank aside and smiled.

“Dundrup-la, how are you?” I saw that behind him were colorful Tibetan-style cabinets. Wool blankets covered the bed, and a few polished thermoses stood next to the gas stove, glistening in the sunlight.

“Well, thank you.”

Dundrup-la seemed to have put on some weight; he looked good.

“Do you still remember me?” I asked.

Dundrup-la smiled; it looked like he had forgotten.

We chatted for a little while, and I said goodbye. As I walked beside a newly dug reservoir, my heart abruptly started to ache.

It had been nine years.

Looking down Chimpu hill, I realized my empty life left no traces. Behind me, Dundrup-la and Yangchen-la had been together for nine years without separating for even a single day.

I wiped away my tears and decided to return.

I knocked again on Dundrup-la’s board.

"You are —"

Dundrup-la looked at me and recalled my name with a start.

"After all these years…are you still well?" I could see all the vicissitudes of life in Dundrup's eyes.

I shook my head. But I had enough to eat and clothes to wear, what else did I need?

I didn't get to see Yangchen-la. Dundrup-la told me that she was in solitary practice upstairs and couldn't come down to see me.

I thought of Chimpu on the way back. Dundrup-la and Yangchen-la were like a pair of arrows unloosed from the mountain that had pierced this mundane world of dust.

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The Lottery (རྒྱན་ཤོག་དེ།)

Tenzin Dickie བསྟན་འཛིན་བདེ་སྐྱིད།

(Translated from English by Dhondup T. Rekjong)

Abstract: "The Lottery" describes a historical event that transformed the fate of thousands of Tibetans in exile in the early 1990s. The story centers on the disorientation that accompanied the departure of the author's parents, who left the author and her brother in a Tibetan boarding school in India. It explores themes of displacement, emotional repression, cultural transition, and the awakening of existential awareness as understood through a child's inner world.

Keywords: displacement, memory, separation, childhood

Translator's Introduction

One of the major reasons why Tibetan Buddhism and culture hold an important place in global civilization is the tremendous translation of Indian Buddhism that Tibetans performed for centuries. Tibetans established their own translation dictionaries early on; one of the first bilingual lexicons is called *sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa* (སྒྲ་སྦྱོར་བམ་པོ་གཉིས་པ།), which is concerned with translating Sanskrit into Tibetan. This text includes a primary translation guide, emphasizing the significance of understanding the meaning of the original text as

well as making it accessible in the target language. This theory has been the beacon of Tibet's translation culture for thousands of years, still sustaining its relevance when translating something from a foreign language into Tibetan. This principle might appear simple, but it is difficult to fully embrace in practice, as I have tried to do here.

I enjoyed Tenzin Dickie's essay, which narrates an important historical event in exile through an individual's experience. This single event transformed the fate and future of thousands of Tibetans in exile in the early 1990s. Since I had the great joy of reading it in English first, I thought I should generate the feeling of that enjoyment in Tibetan, but that wasn't an easy task at all. The act of reading is different from the work of translating; the translation is inevitably different from the original.

In the process of translating this essay, my first challenge was translating the foreign fictional characters into Tibetan because, in my estimation, Tibetan language readers are not familiar with fictional characters such as *Lady Bird, Cinderella, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, or the Little Mermaid*. If Tibetan readers do not have any sense of those characters, allusions to them mean nothing because they don't have any relevant memories or experience in their cultural and educational environment. Thus, when translating the fictional characters, I mostly translated their meanings and even kept the English names in parentheses.

Capturing irony was another major challenge. The question was how to produce the humoristic and sarcastic qualities in Tibetan that are seen in the original English. The writer's discussion of the gendered

dimensions of the English mistranslation of the French word *verre* is hilarious. However, the nuance and subtlety of this humor attached to a technical word can't be captured in Tibetan, except by providing the context for Tibetan readers. Thus, I retained the words *verre* and *vair* in my Tibetan translation to keep their visual representation. Not only that, but there are layers of irony within the writer's own observation of westerners' delicate and distinctive smell, like decaying rose tissue, and their worldview of accepting kindness when they did not need it. I think I was successful at capturing these qualities; I am quite sure that Tibetan readers will burst into laughter when reading those parts. Having said that, one's own cultural sense, psychosocial view, and even linguistic utterance are the core of understanding humor. I think humor is best understood in its own culture.

After China's occupation of Tibet, the standardization of Tibetan language terms has been a major problem amongst Tibetan scholars and language experts, both in and outside Tibet. The question is often whose translation we should consider authentic and authoritative: the translation of new terms standardized inside Tibet under China or those used in exile under the Tibetan government. In both cases, the impossibility of standardizing Tibetan terms for the new foreign terms is inescapable. Foreign terms, such as *PowerBalls* and Thumbs Up don't have standardized Tibetan terms yet. I think this is not a challenge of translation for this particular essay so much as a national challenge going forward, as long as Tibetans do not have complete sovereignty over their own language.

These challenges are not necessarily only true when translating from English to Tibetan or other languages; when translating from

Tibetan to English, we might face the same kind of problems. My final observation is that a translation is neither the original work nor a replication of it. A translation is only a translation, nothing else.

The Lottery

We called it the lottery. The lottery to go to America. It was a list of a thousand names. How did the Tibetan government officials decide who got on this list? Did they fold thousands of names into thousands of tiny rolls of paper, mix them up for good measure, and pick out a thousand lucky winners?

Before the lottery, the only lotteries we knew about were school raffles which my brother Tendor had a knack for winning. His luck held through several years of raffle drawings before it vanished abruptly and he stopped winning. One of the last things he won was a pair of beautiful black ankle high leather boots that all the female teachers had their eyes on. Later they came to our apartment to try them on—the black leather boots with small heels—elegant, comfortable, enduring. The leather was soft and flexible, and the zip smooth and seamless. The shoes must have been Italian. Back then even if you had the money for such luxurious items, which of course none of the teachers had, you couldn't have found shoes like that anywhere in India, even in bazaars in Delhi. One by one, each woman tried to slip a bare foot into a shoe and one by one, each gave up in resignation—the toes were too narrow, the arch too high, the ankle too tight. The shoes would not fit anyone. "Cinderella's shoes," my mother said.

I knew all about Cinderella and her shoes from the Ladybird books that my mother brought me from the school library. I knew about Snow White too and Sleeping Beauty and the Little Mermaid—beauties with skin as white as snow and hair as black as ebony or yellow as silk or red as sunset. None of these princesses looked anything like any of the women I knew. My mother put the shoes away. We'll keep them for you when you grow up, she promised. I arched my feet and smiled with secret delight. I was eight. I had years to grow into my Cinderella shoes but I knew that when I did they would fit. They fitted no one else but they would fit me. I know now that in the original French fairytale, Cinderella's shoes weren't glass at all but fur. The translator mistook the word 'vair' for 'verre' and transformed fur to glass—the translator must have been a man, a woman would know that glass shoes are for looking at and not for wearing. Still, this blunder rectified a detail, transforming the shoes from ordinary fur to transcendent glass. Fur after all can be stretched, while glass shoes must be made just for you. Different objects have different symbolic value. Imagine Eve or Snow White biting into a mango. It just doesn't work.

So those were the lotteries we knew, school raffles in which the most you won was a teddy bear or a pair of shoes that fit no one. Lotteries such as my friend Sonam buys now, the PowerBalls with tens of millions of dollars for the winner, and the Scratch tickets that my mother likes to buy and scratch out, the meager winnings always slightly less than the initial outlay, these were unknown then in India. Shows such as *Kon Banega Crorepati*, the Indian version of *Who Wants to Become a Millionaire* (a *crore* being ten million rupees), were unthinkable. India was still recovering from the economic slumber of its Socialist Nehru years, its markets opening slowly with

hairline cracks to the world. Coca-Cola, which you could find all over Kathmandu, had yet to come to India. On the rare occasions that we could afford soft drinks, we drank the local imitation Thumbs Up and wondered how it measured against the original. India was poor and Tibetans poorer still. The idea of a lottery that made you rich, a lottery that gave you a new life, was not just ridiculous but subversive.

And then it came. The lottery to America, the lottery that split our future. We were refugees. We lived in exile in small Tibetan villages dotted across India. We knew our future—we would have our parents' refugee lives, our parents' exile futures. We would grow up, graduate from our Tibetan boarding schools, go off to Indian colleges in the great subcontinental cities of the heartland (Chandigarh, Delhi, Bangalore), make friends with Indians but not too well because it wasn't for us to make love or war with them, and then return to our Tibetan settlements in the north or south to work in our own schools and communities, our own government. With America came the possibility of living outside these settlements, the possibility of unsettling. With America, the future split infinitely.

America. *Chigyal*. Outside Country. Abroad. *Nubchok.* The West. The west was a composite, the land of the yellow-haired, blue-eyed *Injis*. We were inordinately curious about them, that mysterious charmed species that stepped through India so lightly, smiling at complete strangers and taking their photos. We couldn't help but be infected by some of the obsequious reverence the Indians had for these *Injis*, so lately their overlords. The confidence with which they acted like people for whom things went right all the time was awe-inspiring for us, a people for whom things had gone so wrong. They

were a people who had a place not just in their own world but every other world they chose to enter, whereas we had no place anywhere, not even in our own world. Whether the *Injis* came from England, America, Germany, or France made no difference to us. They were *Injis* with their yellow hair and colorless eyebrows, skin pale pink like that of baby mice. They had a smell too, not rancid like the Indian smell but rather delicate and distinctive, something faintly sweet, like decaying rose tissue. It was not an unpleasant smell.

There were very specific things I knew about *Injis*. I knew they were a proud people who could accept kindness only when they did not need it. We had had two *Inji* guests at a special school dinner once. Before the dinner our principal made an announcement to the entire school: one of the two *Injis* was blind but not one of the teachers or the students was to help him because he would be insulted and offended. What a proud and narrow-minded people, we thought, who would take kindness for contempt. But we knew they could be kind. Machen Phuntsok, the cook and the only person at Patlikuhl who had travelled abroad, insisted on their kindness. In fact, he hadn't travelled so much as he was shipped abroad, with a cardboard notice hanging around his neck with his destination written in a foreign hand, while helpful yellow-haired strangers bore him along through different airports to the correct arrivals gate in Switzerland where he was joyfully retrieved by his relatives.

Another time a group of *Inji* tourists stopped by the school on their way to Manali. They had these strange cameras slung around their necks. They took a few photos on the playground and handed out these photos, right then and there, to the overjoyed subjects. Of course

they got mobbed. They spent the rest of the afternoon taking portrait pictures of us one by one. I jostled my way into the line. I had been in family pictures before, but never in a photo just by myself. For many of my schoolmates, it was their first photo of themselves. After I had my picture taken, I held the square grey-white sheet of paper by its tip, watching the grey-white fog color into an image of myself. I looked startled, as if I had been there all along and I was only now noticing it.

For all that the lottery changed my life, I don’t remember how I heard about it. Did I hear it from my parents? The other staff children? One week the conversations in the staff room were about the new Hindi movie in the cinema and the love affair between Miss A and Gen BC and the next they were all about America. Who wanted to go, who did not want to go but was going to sign up anyway because regret always came too late, who would survive, who would have to learn English, who thought they would be unhappy but what was there in Patlikuhl for them anyway, with a pay that was just enough to last from month to month with nothing saved towards your future, your children’s future.

Years later I would learn the specifics. It was Representative Barney Frank, a Democrat from Massachusetts, who introduced the Tibetan provisions to the 1990 Immigration Act to allow one thousand Tibetans entry into the country. For fear of Chinese displeasure, the American government would not give either refugee or immigrant status to Tibetans, but Congress had finally settled on a compromise: Tibetans would be recognized as ‘displaced’ rather than ‘refugees’ and given 1,000 immigrant visas. Then all we knew was that the American

government had said to our government, we'll take one thousand of your people.

An expanded version of this essay appears in *The Penguin Book of Modern Tibetan Essays* (2023).

རྒྱན་ཤོག་དེ།

ང་ཚོས་རྒྱན་ཤོག་ཞེས་འབོད། ཨ་རི་ལ་འགྲོ་བའི་རྒྱན་ཤོག དེ་ནི་མི་སྟོང་ཕྲག་ཅམ་གྱི་མིང་ཡོད་པའི་ཐོ་གཞུང་ཞིག་རེད། བོད་གཞུང་གིས་ཇི་ལྟར་མི་སུ་ཞིག་གི་མིང་དེ་ཐོ་གཞུང་དུ་འཇོག་པའི་ཐག་གཅོད་བྱས་པ་ཡིན་ནམ། ཁོང་ཚོས་མིང་སྟོང་ཕྲག་ཡོད་པའི་ཤོག་རིལ་སྟོང་ཕྲག་ཅམ་བཟོས། དེ་རྣམས་བསྒྲེ་བསྒྲེ་བཏང་། དེའི་ཁྲོད་ནས་བསོད་ནམས་ཅན་གྱི་རྒྱལ་ཁ་ལེན་མཁན་ཚིག་སྟོང་འདེམས་པ་ཡིན་ནམ།

ཨ་རིར་འགྲོ་བའི་རྒྱན་ཤོག་གི་སྐོར་གོ་ཐོས་མ་བྱུང་སྔོན་ལ། ང་ཚོར་ཆ་རྒྱུས་ཡོད་པའི་རྒྱན་ཤོག་ནི་སློབ་གྲྭའི་རྒྱན་ཤོག་སྟེ། ངའི་ཕུ་བོ་བསྟན་རྫོང་ལ་ཐེངས་འགའ་ཐོབ་མྱོང་། བསྟན་རྫོང་ལ་ལོ་ཤས་རིང་སློབ་གྲྭའི་རྒྱན་ཤོག་འཐོབ་ཅིང་དེའི་རྗེས་ནས་ཐོབ་མ་སོང་། ཁོང་ལ་ཐོབ་པའི་རྒྱན་ཤོག་མཐའ་མ་དེ་ནི་རྐང་གདུབ་མཐོ་བའི་བུད་མེད་ཀྱི་གོ་ལྷམ་ནག་པོ་ཆ་གཅིག་ཡིན། བུད་མེད་དགེ་རྒན་ཚང་མས་གོ་ལྷམ་དེར་མིག་ཤོར་མྱོང་། ད་དུང་རྗེས་སུ་ཁོང་ཚོ་རེ་རེ་བཞིན་དེད་ཚང་ལ་ཡོང་ནས་རྟེང་ཀ་དམའ་ཞིང་མིག་ལ་མཛེས་པ། རྐང་ལ་བདེ་བ། བཀོལ་སྤྱོད་རིང་བའི་གོ་ལྷམ་དེར་ཚོད་ལྟ་བྱས་སོང་། གོ་ལྷམ་དེའི་གོ་བ་སྒྲི་ཞིང་འཇམ་ལ། ཆེར་ཡང་ཧ་ཅང་བདེ། གོ་ལྷམ་འདིའི་རིགས་ཕལ་ཆེར་ཡིས་ད་ལིས་ (Italy) ནས་ཡིན་རྒྱུ་རེད། སྐབས་དེར་ཁྲོད་ལ་འབྱོར་ལྡན་གྱི་གོ་ལྷམ་འདི་འདྲ་ཉོ་རྒྱུའི་སྒོར་མོ་ཡོད་རུང་། (དགེ་

གན་རྣམས་ལ་སྔོར་མོ་ཡང་མེད) རྒྱ་གར་ཁྲིན་ཡོངས་ནས་ཀོ་ལྷམ་དེ་འདྲ་ཞིག་རྙེད་དཀའ་མོ་རེད། ཐ་ན་རྗེ་ལིའི་ཁྲིམ་གཞུང་ཁག་ནས་ཀྱང་མཐོང་དཀོན། དགེ་རྒན་བུད་མེད་རེ་རེས་སོ་སོའི་རྐང་རྗེན་མ་དེ་ཀོ་ལྷམ་དེར་བཙུག་ནས་ཚོད་ལྟ་བྱས་མོད། རེ་རེ་བཞིན་ཁོ་ཐག་ཆད་སོང་། ཀོ་ལྷམ་དེའི་སྣ་རྩེ་ཧ་ཙང་དོག དཀྱིལ་གྱི་གུག་ཆ་དེ་ཧ་ཙང་མཐོ། རྐང་གདུབ་དེ་ཧ་ཙང་དམ། དགེ་རྒན་གཅིག་ལ་ཡང་ཀོ་ལྷམ་དེ་ཤོང་མ་སོང་། ངའི་ཨ་མས་ཀོ་ལྷམ་དེ་ སིན་ཌྲིལ་རེལ་ལ་ཡི་ལྷམ་རེད་ཟེར།

ངས་ཨ་མ་ལགས་ཀྱིས་སློབ་གྲྭའི་དཔེ་མཛོད་ནས་འཁྱེར་ཡོང་བའི་ བུད་མེད་བྱིའུ་མ (Lady Bird) ་ཡི་དེབ་ཁག་བརྒྱུད་ནས་ སིན་ཌྲིནས་རེལ་ལ་ (Cinderella) དང་མོའི་ལྷམ་ཆ་ཚང་གི་སྐོར་ཤེས་ཀྱི་ཡོད། ངས་གངས་དཀར་ལྷ་མོ་ (Snow White) དང་གཉིད་ཤོར་མཛེས་མ (Sleeping Beauty)། ཀླུའི་བུ་མོ་ཆུང་ཆུང་ (Little Mermaid) སོགས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཤེས་ཀྱི་ཡོད། ཁོང་ཚོའི་གངས་ལྟར་དཀར་ཞིང་འཇམ་པའི་སྐྱི་ལྤགས། རྒྱ་ཤིང་ནག་པོ་ལྟ་བུའི་སྐྲ་ལོ། དར་གོས་ལྟ་བུའི་སྐྲ་སེར། ཉི་མ་ལྟ་བུའི་སྐྲ་དམར་སོགས། ཁོང་ཚོ་གཅིག་ཀྱང་ངས་ཤེས་པའི་བུད་མེད་ཚོ་དང་གཏན་ནས་འདྲ་གི་མ་རེད།   ངའི་ཨ་མས་ཀོ་ལྷམ་དེ་ཉར་ཚགས་བྱས། ཨ་མའི་གསུངས་དོན། ཁྱོད་འཚར་ལོངས་བྱུང་ན་ཀོ་ལྷམ་དེ་གྱོན་ཟེར། ངའི་རང་གི་རྐེང་ཀ་མགྱོགས་ཙམ་དང་དགའ་འཛུམས་སྟོན་ཙམ་བྱས། དེ་དུས་ང་ལོ་ན་བརྒྱད་ཙམ་ཡིན། སིན་ཌྲིལ་རེལ་ལ་ཡི་ལྷམ་གྱོན་རྒྱུར་ད་དུང་ལོ་ངོ་ཁ་ཤས་སྒུག་དགོས། འོན་ཀྱང་། དེ་གྱོན་པའི་དུས་ཚོད་སླེབས་ན་ལྷམ་དེ་ང་ལ་ཤོང་རྒྱུ་ཡིན་པར་ཡིད་ཆེས་བྱས། གཞན་སུ་ལ་ཡང་ཤོང་གི་མ་རེད། ང་ལ་ཤོང་གི་རེད་བསམ་སྐྱོང་། ད་ལྟ་ངས་ཤེས་ཚོད་ལ། ཐོག་མའི་ཧྥ་རན་སིའི་རྟོག་སྒྲུང་གི་ཁྲོད་དུ།   སིན་ཌྲིལ་རེལ་ལ་ཡི་ལྷམ་དེ་ཤེལ་གྱིས་བཟོས་པ་མ་ཡིན་པར་ཀོ་བས་བཟོས་བ་རེད། འོན་ཀྱང་། ཡིག་བསྒྱུར་བ་དེས་ ཐ་སྙད་ vair དེ་ verre བརྗེས་ནས་ཀོ་བ་དེ་ཤེལ་ལ་བསྒྱུར་བ་རེད། ཡིག་སྒྱུར་མཁན་དེ་སྐྱེས་པ་ཞིག་ཡིན་ཤག་རེད།

བྱུད་མེད་ཞིག་ཡིན་ན་ཤེལ་གྱི་ལྷམ་རྣམས་ནི་བཤམས་རྒྱུ་ཡིན་པ་མ་གཏོགས་གྱོན་རྒྱུ་མིན་པ་ཤེས། ད་དུང་ཡང་། ནོར་འབྲུལ་དེ་ཡིས་ཞིབ་ཆ་ཞིག་ཡོ་བསྒྲང་བྱས་ཡོད། ཀོ་བས་བཟོས་བའི་ལྷམ་རྣམས་ཤེལ་གྱིས་བཟོས་བའི་ལྷམ་ལ་བཏང་། ཀོ་བ་ཡིན་ན་འཇེན་སྙེ་བྱས་ཆོག ཤེལ་ཀྱི་ལྷམ་ཡིན་ན་ཁྲོད་ཁོ་ནའི་ཆེད་དུ་བཟོས་བ་ལྟ་བུ་རེད། ཅ་དངོས་མི་འདྲ་བར་རིན་ཐང་མཚོན་དོན་མི་འདྲ་བ་ཡོད། གངས་དཀར་ལྷ་མོ་དང་ཨེ་བ་གང་ཧུང་གིས་ཤིང་འབྲས་ཨ་སྦྲ་ཟ་བར་ཆོད་དཔག་བྱོས་དང་། དེ་ནི་ཡོང་མི་སྲིད་པ་ཞིག་རེད།

གང་ལྟར། འདི་དག་ནི་ང་ཚོས་དྲན་པའི་རྒྱན་ཤོག་གི་སྐོར་རེད། སློབ་གྲྭའི་རྒྱན་ཤོག་དག་གི་ཁྲོད་དུ་ཁྱོད་ལ་ཐོབ་འོས་པ་ནི་ཨ་གུ་དོམ་ཐུག་ཞིག་གམ་སུ་གང་ལ་ཡང་མི་ཤོང་བའི་ལྷམ་ཆ་གཅིག་ལྟ་བུ་རེད། ངའི་གྲོགས་མོ་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱིས་ཉོ་བཞིན་པའི་ སྟོབས་ལྡན་ལྒང་ཐུག (PowerBalls) ལྟ་བུ་སྟེ་རྒྱལ་ཁ་ཐོབ་ན་ཨ་སྒོར་ས་ཡ་བཅུ་ལྷག་ཐོབ་པའི་རེ་བ་ཡོད་པའི་རིགས་དང་ཡང་ན་ངའི་ཨ་མ་ལགས་ཀྱིས་ཉོ་བཞིན་པའི་ལག་འདྲེད་རྒྱན་ཤོག་སྟེ་རྒྱལ་ཁ་ཐོབ་ན་ཡོང་སྒོ་ཁྲབ་བསྒྲགས་ཀྱི་གྲངས་ཀ་ལས་ཉུང་བའི་རྒྱན་ཤོག་དག་ནི་སྔོན་མར་རྒྱ་གར་སོགས་ནས་རྒྱུས་མེད། རྒྱ་གར་གྱི་བརྙན་འཕྲིན་ལས་རིམ་དེ་ Kon Banega Crorepati ལྟ་བུ་སྟེ་ སུ་ས་ཡའི་བདག་པོ་ཆགས་འདོད་དམ་ཟེར་བ་ལྟ་བུའི་རིགས་ནི་བསམ་ཡུལ་ལས་འདས་པ་ཞིག་རེད། སྐབས་དེར་རྒྱ་གར་ནི་སྤྱི་ཚོགས་རིང་ལུགས་ཀྱི་དཔལ་འབྱོར་ཅན་གྱི་ནེ་རོའི་དུས་ཚོད་ནས་སླར་གསོ་ཡོང་བཞིན་ཡོད་ཅིང་དཔལ་འབྱོར་གྱི་ཁྲིམ་ར་ག་ལེར་འཛམ་གླིང་ལ་སྒོ་ཕྱེ་གི་ཡོད། བལ་ཡུལ་གྱི་རྒྱལ་སའི་གང་སར་མཐོང་རྒྱུ་ཡོད་པའི་ འཐུང་ཆུ་ཁུ་ནག་ལྟ་བུ་ཡང་རྒྱ་གར་ལ་ད་དུང་སླེབས་མེད། སྐབས་ལན་རེར་ང་ཚོར་ཡང་བསིལ་ཁུ་འཐུང་བའི་གོ་སྐབས་ཡོད་ཅིང་ང་ཚོས་ས་གནས་ཀྱི་ Thumbs Up ལྟ་བུ་འཐུང་ཞིང་དེ་འཐུང་ཆུ་ངོམ་དང་ཇི་ལྟར་བསྡུར་དགོས་བའི་སྐོར་ལ་བསམ་བློ་འཁོར་སྐྱོང་། རྒྱ་གར་ནི་སྔོན་ཆད་དབུལ་པོ་ཡིན་ལ་བོད་མི་རྣམས་ནི་ད་དུང་ཡང་དབུལ་པོ་ཡིན། རྒྱན་ཤོག

གིས་ཁྱེད་རང་ཕྱུག་པོ་བཟོ་བའམ་ཡང་ན་ཁྱོད་ལ་མི་ཚེ་གསར་པ་ཞིག་སྤྲོད་ཀྱི་རེད་སྙམ་པའི་བསམ་བློ་དེ་ནི་ཁྱད་མཚར་བ་ཙམ་མ་ཡིན་པར་མགོ་འཇུག་ལོག་པ་ལྟ་བུ་ཞིག་རེད།

དེ་ནས་ཨ་རི་ལ་འགྲོ་བའི་རྒྱུན་ཤོག་སླེབས་པ་རེད། ང་ཚོའི་འབྱུང་འགྱུར་ཁ་ཁར་བཏང་བའི་རྒྱུན་ཤོག ང་ཚོ་སྐྱབས་བཅོལ་བ་ཡིན། ང་ཚོ་རྒྱ་གར་གྱི་གང་སར་ཁ་འཐོར་དུ་ཡོད་པའི་བོད་མིའི་གཞིས་ཆགས་ཁག་ཏུ་འཚོ་སྡོད་བྱས། ང་ཚོས་ང་ཚོའི་འབྱུང་འགྱུར་རྟོགས། ང་ཚོའི་འབྱུང་འགྱུར་ནི་ང་ཚོའི་ཕ་མ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྐྱབས་བཅོལ་གྱི་མི་ཚེ་དང་ང་ཚོའི་ཕ་མ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་བཙན་བྱོལ་གྱི་མ་འོངས་པ་ཡིན། ང་ཚོ་འཚར་ལོངས་བྱུང་། བོད་མིའི་གདན་སྡོད་སློབ་གྲྭར་ཕྱིན། དེ་ནས་རྒྱ་གར་གྱི་གྲོང་ཁྱེར་ཆེ་ཁག་ཅན་ཌེས་སྐར་དང་ཌེ་ལི། ཐུན་སྐྱ་ཡོར་སོགས་སུ་ཡོད་པའི་རྒྱ་གར་གྱི་མཐོ་སློབ་འགྲིམས། རྒྱ་གར་གྱི་གསར་བུ་གསར་མོ་ཚོའི་ལྷན་དུ་གྲོགས་པོ་བསྒྲིགས། འོན་ཀྱང་། འབྲེལ་འདྲིས་གཏིང་མི་ཟབ། ཁོང་ཚོའི་ལྷན་དུ་དགའ་རོགས་བསྒྲིགས་པའམ་ཡང་ན་རྩོད་པ་བྱེད་རྒྱུ་ང་ཚོའི་ལས་མིན། དེ་ནས་ཕྱིར་རྒྱ་གར་ལྷོ་བྱང་གང་སར་ཡོད་པའི་བོད་མིའི་གཞིས་ཆགས་ལ་ཡོང་ནས་བོད་མིའི་སློབ་གྲྭའམ་སྤྱི་ཚོགས། སྲིད་གཞུང་བཅས་ལ་ཞབས་ཞུ་བསྒྲུབས། ཨ་རིར་འགྲོ་བ་ནི་བོད་མིའི་གཞིས་ཆགས་ཀྱི་ཕྱི་རོལ་དུ་འཚོ་བ་རོལ་བའི་འབྱུང་ཉེན་ལྟ་བུ་ཞིག་རེད། གནས་གཅིག་ལ་གཞིས་མི་ཆགས་པའི་གནས་སྟངས་ཤིག ཨ་རིའི་ལྷན་དུ། འབྱུང་འགྱུར་ལ་དུས་གཏན་དུ་གས་འཐོར་ཤོར་སོང་།

ཨ་རི། ཕྱི་རྒྱལ། ལུང་བའི་ཕྱི་རོལ། རྒྱལ་ཁམས། ནུབ་ཕྱོགས། ནུབ་ཕྱོགས་ནི་སྐྲ་སེར་མིག་ལྡིང་གི་མི་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ས་ཆ་རེད། ང་ཚོ་ཁོང་ཚོའི་སྐོར་ལ་ཧ་ཅང་མཚར་སྣང་ཆེ། ཀློག་གྲུར་གྱི་འཇམ་མདངས་ཅན་གྱི་མི་འདི་རིགས་ཀྱིས་ཆ་རྒྱུས་མེད་པའི་མི་ལ་འཛུམས་

མདངས་སྟོན་ཞོར་འདྲ་པར་ལེན་ཞོར་ལ་རྒྱ་གར་གཡས་སྐོར་གཡོན་སྐོར་བྱས་ནས་འགྲོ་ ང་ཚོ་ལ་ཡང་རྒྱ་གར་བ་ཚོས་ཕྱི་རྒྱལ་བར་འཛིན་པའི་ངོ་དགའ་སྤྲོ་ལད་ཀྱི་བརྩེ་བཀུར་ངེས་ཤུགས་ཆེན་ཐེབས་ཡོད། དེ་དག་ག་ལེར་སོ་སོའི་ཁུར་པོ་ཆགས་འགྲོ་ བྱ་བཞག་ཐམས་ཅད་དུས་རྟག་དུ་མ་འགྲིག་ལྷུན་གྲུབ་ལྷ་བུའི་ཁོང་ཚོའི་གདེང་ཚོད་ངེས་ང་ཚོ་ངོ་མཚར་བར་བྱེད་ལ། ང་ཚོ་ནི་བྱ་བཞག་ཐམས་ཅད་རྟག་ཏུ་ལམ་ལྟོང་མེད་མཁན་རྐྱང་ཡིན། ཁོང་ཚོ་ནི་སོ་སོའི་འཛམ་གླིང་དུ་སྡོད་གནས་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཟད་འཛམ་གླིང་གི་ཕྱོགས་གང་ལ་སོང་ན་ཡང་དེ་རུ་སྡོད་གནས་ཡོད། དེ་ལས་ལྡོག་སྟེ། ང་ཚོར་གང་དུ་ཡང་སྡོད་གནས་མེད་པ་མ་ཟད་ཐ་ན་རང་གི་ལུང་པར་ཡང་སྡོད་གནས་མེད། ཕྱི་རྒྱལ་བ་རྣམས་དབྱིན་ཡུལ་དང་ཨ་རི། འཇར་མན། རྒྱ་རན་སི་སོགས་གང་ནས་ཡོང་རུང་ང་ཚོར་ཁོང་ཚོ་ཚང་མ་གཅིག་པ་རེད། དབྱིན་ཇི་རྣམས་ནི་སྐྲ་སེར་པོ་དང་མིག་སྨུ་ལ་མདོག་མེད་མཁན། སྤྱི་ལྡགས་ནི་ཟིང་སྐྱ་སྐྱེ་ཅིག་ཕྲུག་དམར་རྗེན་གྱི་མདོག་ལྟ་བུའོ། ཁོང་ཚོར་ཡང་དྲི་དད་ཞིག་ཡོད་ཅིང་དེ་ནི་རྒྱ་གར་བ་ཚོར་ཡོད་པའི་དྲི་ངན་དེ་མ་རེད། ཅུང་གཞན་ཞིག་རེད། ཕལ་ཆེར་ཤོག་བུའི་བཟོས་པའི་རྒྱ་སེ་མེ་ཏོག་གི་རྡུལ་དྲི་ལྟ་བུ་ཞིག་རེད། གང་ལྟར་དྲི་མ་ཞིམ་པོ་ཞིག་མིན།

ངས་ཕྱི་རྒྱལ་བ་ཚོའི་སྐོར་ལ་གནད་དོན་དམིགས་བསལ་བ་ཁ་ཤས་ཤེས་ཀྱི་ཡོད། ཁོང་ཚོ་ནི་སྟོབས་པ་ལྡན་པའི་མིའི་རིགས་ཡིན་ལ་ཁོང་ཚོར་བྱམས་བརྩེ་དགོས་མཁོ་མེད་དུས་བྱམས་བརྩེ་དྭངས་ལེན་བྱེད། ང་ཚོའི་སློབ་གྲྭའི་དགོང་ཚུགས་ཤིག་ལ་དབྱིན་ཇིའི་མགྲོན་པོ་གཉིས་སླེབས། དགོང་ཚུགས་ཀྱི་སྤྱ་རོལ་དུ། སློབ་སྤྱི་ཡིས་དགེ་སློབ་ཚང་མར་གསལ་བསྒྲགས་གནད་དོན། དབྱིན་ཇིའི་མགྲོན་པོ་གཉིས་ལས་གཅིག་དེ་ལོང་བ་རེད། འོན་ཀྱང་། དགེ་སློབ་སུས་ཀྱང་དགོང་ཚུགས་ཀྱི་སྐབས་སུ་ཁོང་ལ་རོགས་རམ་སོགས་མ་བྱེད་ཟེར། དེ་ལྟར་བྱས་ན་ཁོང་ལ་མཐོང་ཚུང་དང་དོ་ཕོག་འགྲོ་གི་རེད་ཟེར། ང་ཚོའི་སེམས་ལ། ཇི་འདྲའི་སྤྱི་རིགས་ང་རྒྱལ་ཅན་དང་སེམས་རྒྱ་དོག་པོ་ཞིག་རེད་བསམ་སོང་། བརྩེ་བ་མཐོང་ཚུང་ལ་བརྩེ་

མཁན་ལྷ་བུ། འོན་ཀྱང་། ཁོང་ཚོ་སྙིང་རྗེ་ཅན་ཡིན་པ་ང་ཚོས་ཤེས། ང་ཚོའི་སློབ་གྲྭའི་མ་བྱིན་ཕུན་ཚོགས་ནི་ང་ཚོའི་སློབ་གྲྭ་རུ་ཕྱི་རྒྱལ་ལ་འགྲོ་མྱོང་མཁན་གཅིག་པོ་དེ་ཡིན་ལ། ཁོང་གིས་དབྱིན་ཇི་ཚོ་སྙིང་རྗེ་ཅན་ཡིན་པ་ཡང་ཡང་འགྲེལ། དོན་དངོས་སུ། ཁོང་ཉིད་གཅིག་པོ་ཕྱི་རྒྱལ་ཡུལ་གྲུ་ཁག་ལ་འགྲུལ་བཞུད་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོ་བྱས་མྱོང་མོད། འགྲུལ་བཞུད་ཞིག་གི་སྐབས་སུ་ཁོང་གིས་སོ་སོའི་སྐྱེ་ལ་འགྲོ་ས་གང་ཡིན་པ་དེའི་མིང་བྱང་ཞིག་བཏགས་ནས་ཕྱིན་པ་རེད། ཕྱི་རྒྱལ་མགོ་སེར་ཡ་རབས་འགས་གནམ་ཐང་སོགས་སུ་ཁོང་ལ་ལམ་སྟོན་རོགས་རམ་གནང་ཞིང་མཐར་ཁོང་སི་བས་སི་ (Swiss) ལ་སླེབས་ནས་སོ་སོའི་ནང་མི་དང་ལྷན་འཛོམས་བྱུང་བ་རེད།

སྐབས་གཞན་ཞིག་ལ། ཕྱི་རྒྱལ་ཡུལ་སྐོར་སྐྱོ་འཆམ་པ་འགའ་མ་ན་ལེར་འགྲོ་ཞོར་ལ་ལམ་བར་དུ་ང་ཚོའི་སློབ་གྲྭ་སླེབས། ཁོང་ཚོའི་སྐྱེ་ལ་ངོ་མཚར་བའི་པར་ཆས་སྣ་ཚོགསབཏགས་འདུག་ཅིང་། ཁོང་ཚོས་ང་ཚོའི་སློབ་གྲྭའི་རྩེད་ཐང་དུ་འདྲ་པར་མང་པོ་བླངས་ཤིང་སྐབས་ཐོག་ད་ག་རང་ལ་འདྲ་པར་རྣམས་ཕྱིར་སྤྲོད་པ་དེས་སློབ་ཕྲུག་རྣམས་ལ་དགའ་བ་བསྐྱེད། ཁོང་ཚོར་འཕྲོག་བཅོམ་འབྱུང་བ་ནི་སྤྱིར་བཏང་རེད། ཕྱི་དྲི་ཧྲིལ་བོ་ཞིག་ལ་ཁོང་ཚོས་ང་ཚོ་རེ་རེ་བཞིན་ངོ་པར་ལེན་འགོ་ཚུགས་ཤིང་ང་ཡང་དེའི་གྲལ་ལ་འཚངས། ང་ལ་ཁྲིམ་མི་གང་བོའི་འདྲ་པར་ཡོད་མྱོང་རུང་སོ་སོ་སྒེར་གྱི་འདྲ་པར་ཡོད་མ་མྱོང་། ངའི་སློབ་གྲོགས་རྣམས་ལ་མཚོན་ན་ཡང་དེ་ནི་སོ་སོ་སྒེར་གྱི་འདྲ་པར་ཐོག་མ་དེ་རེད། ངའི་འདྲ་པར་བླངས་པའི་རྗེས་སུ་ངས་འདྲ་པར་གྱི་པར་ཤོག་དཀར་སྐྱ་དེའི་སྟེ་ནས་བཟུང་ཞིང་དཀར་སྐྱ་སྨུག་མདོའི་ཁྲོད་ན་མདོན་པའི་རང་གི་གཟུགས་བརྙན་ལ་ཅེར། ང་རང་གཅིག་པོ་དེ་གར་ལུས་པ་བཞིན་ཏང་སངས་ནས་བསྡད་པ་གཞི་ནས་ཆོར།

རྒྱུན་ཤོག་གིས་ངའི་མི་ཚེ་ལ་འགྱུར་བ་བཏང་། ངས་རྒྱུན་ཤོག་གི་སྐོར་ཐོག་མར་གང་ནས་ཐོས་བ་མི་དྲན། ངས་དེ་ངའི་ཕ་མ་རྩ་ནས་གོ་བ་ཡིན་ནམ། ཡང་ན་དགེ་རྒན་གཞན་པའི་བུ་ផྲུག་གི་རྩ་ནས་གོ་བ་ཡིན་ནམ། བདུན་གཅིག་གི་རིང་ལ་དགེ་རྒན་རྣམས་པའི་ཡིག་ཚང་དུ་གླེང་མོལ་གྱི་ཁ་ཕྱོགས་ནི་རྒྱ་གར་གྱི་སློག་བརྙན་གསར་བ་ཞིག་གི་སྐོར་ཡིན་ཞིང་། སློག་བརྙན་དེའི་ཁྲིད་ཀྱི་མཁྲིན་པ་དང་མཁྲིན་མ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་བརྩེ་དུང་གི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་དེའི་སྐོར་ལ་རེད། བདུན་རྗེས་མ་དེར་གླེང་མོལ་ཆ་ཚང་ཨ་རིའི་སྐོར་ལ་རེད། སུ་ཨ་རི་ལ་འགྲོ་གི་རེད་དམ། སུ་འགྲོ་གི་མ་རེད་དམ། གང་ལྟར། ཚང་མས་འགྲོ་བར་ཐོ་འགོད་གི་རེད། རྒྱུ་མཚན། རྗེས་སུ་འགྱོད་པ་སྐྱེ་སྲིད། སུས་ཨ་རིར་འཚོ་བ་སྐྱེལ་ཐུབ་བམ། སུས་དབྱིན་ཡིག་སྦྱང་གི་རེད་དམ། སུ་ཨ་རིར་མི་སྐྱིད་པ་ཆགས་སམ། གང་ལྟར། པ་དེ་བཀོད་ (Patlikuhl) ལ་བསྡད་ན་ཁོང་ཚོར་ཅི་ཞིག་ཡོད་དམ། ཁོང་ཚོའི་ གླ་ཐོག་ནི་ཟླ་གཅིག་ལ་འདང་ཙམ་ཡིན། ཁོང་ཚོར་སོ་སོའི་མ་འོངས་པ་དང་རང་གི་བུ་ཕྲུག་གི་ཆེད་དུ་དངུལ་གསོག་རྒྱུ་ཅི་ཡང་མེད།

ཡོ་རོ་མང་པོའི་རྗེས་སུ་ངས་གནས་ཚུལ་ཞིབ་ཕྲ་ཤེས་བྱུང་། ཕྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༠ ལོའི་ནང་དུ་བོད་མི་ཆིག་སྟོང་ཨ་རིར་ལེན་པའི་གཞིས་སྒྱོའི་ཁྲིམས་ཆར་དེ་འདོན་མཁན་ནི་ཨ་རིའི་མངའ་སྡེ་མ་ས་ཆུའུ་སེཊ་ཁྲི་ནས་ཡིན་པའི་གྲོས་ཚོགས་འཐུས་མི་ སྦར་ནས་ ཧྥ་རིན་ཁུ་ (Barney Frank) རེད། རྒྱ་ནག་དགའ་གི་མ་རེད་བསམ་ནས། ཨ་རིའི་གཞུང་གིས་བོད་མི་རྣམས་ལ་སྐྱབས་བཅོལ་བའམ་ཡང་ན་ཡུལ་གྲུར་བ་སོགས་ཀྱི་གོ་བབས་ཅི་ཡང་སྤྲོད་འདོད་མེད་ཙུང་། མཐའ་མ་དེར་གྲོས་ཚོགས་གོང་མས་ཐབས་མཁས་ཀྱི་སྒོ་ནས་གནད་དོན་དེ་ཐག་བཅད་པ་རེད། དེ་ཡང་། བོད་མི་རྣམས་སྐྱབས་བཅོལ་བ་ལ་ངོས་འཛིན་མ་བྱས་པར་གནས་སྡོ་མཁན་ལྟ་བུར་ངོས་འཛིན་གནང་ནས་བོད་མི་ཆིག་སྟོང་ཨ་རིར་ཡོང་བའི་ཨ་རིའི་མཐོང་ཆན་སྤྲད་པ་རེད། ང་ཚོས་ཤེས་བའི་དེའི་སྐབས་ཀྱི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ནི་ནི། ཨ་རིའི་གཞུང་གིས་

བཙན་བྱོལ་བོད་གཞུང་ལ་ང་ཚོས་བོད་མི་ཚིག་སྟོང་ཞ་རིར་ལེན་གི་ཡིན་ཟེར་བ་དེ་རེད།

(གོང་གི་བོད་འགྱུར་དེ་འབོལ་རྩོམ་ཧྲིལ་པོའི་ཚན་པ་ཞིག་ཡིན། འབོལ་རྩོམ་འདིའི་མ་རྩོམ་ཆ་ཚང་ཕྱི་ལོ ༢༠༢༣ ལོར་པེན་སྒྲོན་(Penguin) དཔེ་སྐྲུན་ཁང་གིས་དཔར་བའི་བོད་ཀྱི་དེང་རབས་འབོལ་རྩོམ་གཅེས་བཏུས་སུ་བཀོད་ཡོད།)

Somewhere Else (ས་ཆ་ག་གེ་མོར།)

Tsering Wangmo Dhompa སྒོམ་པ་ཚེ་རིང་དབང་མོ།

(Translated from English by Dhondup T. Rekjong)

Abstract: “Somewhere Else” is a reflective poem that evokes exile, memory, and historical trauma through the lens of a refugee's spiritual and emotional journey. It depicts exile as not only one’s physical dislocation but also a psychological and spiritual condition passed from one generation to the next.

Keywords: Refugee, exile, trauma, poetry, buddhism

Translator’s Introduction

In Lama Jabb’s brilliant talk on translation, “An Act of Bardo: Translating Tibetan Poetry” (2018, 2024), he argues that “like a journey through the bardo realm, translation is full of pitfalls and enlightening opportunities.” On the one hand, “something of the originals remains uncaptured in translations.” On the other hand, Lama Jabb encourages translators to toil in our task until we gain enlightenment. In the process of translating Dhompa’s poem, I felt the existence of bardo. From the outset, I was trying to share one possible version of her poem with Tibetan readers, rather than trying to capture the original and complete feel of the poem engrained in English.

Translation is not simple and linear; it is a complex process and a delicate task to perform. Like bardo, translation is a sort of intermediate conversation between the original text, the translator, the writer and the reader. I felt that I was part of that conversation when translating Dhompa's beautiful yet historically tragic poem. The word "refuge" is the center of the poem, not just the word, but its historical formation and burden, in which words like "patience," "prayer," "sacrifice" and "hope" are imprisoned. It also provides us a glimpse of the repressive history that led to her becoming a refugee and the future that it hopes for, to be legitimized on foreign soil. Hope and patience are the only qualities that a refugee can claim.

In the process of translating this poem, I have tried to touch upon three major elements: voice, economy of language, and the multiplicity of perspectives. Translating the poem's use of voice into Tibetan is very difficult because there are several: "her" voice, her uncle's voice, and the poet's own voice. Each of these voices has its own historical anecdote and significance. For example, her voice is the memory of history as well as a historical beacon that guides the poet from time to time. Also, the uncle's voice suggests a force that reminds the poet to keep the historical memories intact. The poet's voice narrates others' voices, situating them where they fit best in terms of historical significance and positionality. Also, the tone or mood that each voice evokes is another difficult domain to deliver in Tibetan, because the poet uses alliteration, repetition, and internal rhymes within certain lines to produce specific emotional effects.

Even I can feel their voices through the textual community of the poem; I think their voices in English are not equal to their voices

in Tibetan. I think the poetic effect, tone, and mood should be felt and experienced in English, rather than in Tibetan. Despite the significance of their voices in English, it is entirely fair to say that my translation is only the translation of their voices rather than the originality of them.

Economy of language was another major challenge when translating this poem. In most cases, I was not able to keep the same length: each line in Tibetan is a little longer than the English version. Maybe I was unable to be perfect in my diction while focusing on the meaning. I tried to capture the meaning of each line for the Tibetan readers, rather than maintaining the length. However, in some cases, I think I was able to do better than the original English. For example, the pot metaphors can be better captured in Tibetan because we already have standardized terms. Just the names of those terms in Tibetan are more than enough to capture the precise meaning because they commonly pass the lips of Tibetans.

Perspective was another challenge because there are some slightly abrupt shifts in the narrative time and between historical events and figures. The story is not linear; rather, it is woven through the history and memories of different individuals related to the poet. Having said that, of course they all have something to contribute to the history of refugees to some extent. I was able to capture the perspectives of the poem because I am also familiar with that particular history which I myself have experienced.

The challenges that I have described could be understood as opportunities, as Lama Jabb stresses in his talk. With that in my mind, I would say that my translation is primarily a translation of the meaning

of Dhompa's excellent poem. Rather than reading poems in Tibetan and English, if I am a poet in both, there might be better opportunities for me to capture the rhythm, the form, and even the effect of the poem in Tibetan.

Somewhere Else

Remembering her, I draw the net away from the future's dry riverbank.

Remembering, not losing myself to the words, nor ignoring words, their order, the meaning.

Persevere, she would say, even if the words don't reach you. If the story is too difficult, do not be disheartened. Give equal attention to a simple word as you would a complex theory.

Pouring water on an upside-down pot will drench the pot but you'll remain thirsty.

Pouring water into a pot with a hole will be like listening to a story in a language where you know only five words. Pouring water into a pot that has poison in it will turn medicine into a knife.

The attitude with which you listen is important.

I hear her voice in the Words of my Perfect Teacher.

It is, as she was, talking about a spiritual journey.

Story is remembered with levels: what is heard, what is meant to be heard (indirectly), and the meaning. If you mix up the order with each telling, the story will be different, and the levels will change.
If you alter details, the meaning will shift. Do not reorder my story, uncle said. He did not want me to paint the walls of his prison cell. No bait to get to meaning. Remember everything, he said, the words, the meaning, and the sequence of events.

She pulverized rocks
to build a road for her host nation
in exchange for a ticket to the future:
a refugee-citizen, a citizenship to come
at whose center a demoness was pinned
to the ground.

The leaders of the future nation said:

1. Practice patience.
2. Pray.
3. The rules that govern the house you build today may not apply tomorrow.
4. You are a product of actions that predate your memory.
5. Sacrifice.
6. Hope is crucial. Do not trust hope to alter your karma.
7. Hope.

She survived survival
in a substitute heart, hers hung

elsewhere.

The category of refugee demands evidence of dispossession. Scars of war are recorded in a different column. We remember, life is suffering.

That's also when the lama points to karma: everything fades except the effect of actions. A seed no bigger than a sesame grain grows into a tree.

This is also true of negative actions. She believed that above all laws that govern us, whom no law protects, is karma. The life of karma

is outside the knowledge of remembered life.
Karma of self, of people, of land, of history, and so on.

She believed that justice would correct her mother's jump to death. The river that had helped her live, accepted her to drown.

As a citizen I carry documents to verify I am who I am not.
When I say I was a refugee the audience conjures a narrative from which I emerge a plucky winner who has proved their worthiness.

Then, I am equal to a concept of human, because of their humanity.

When I was a refugee, I apologized for the lime stains on guests whose spines leaned against the walls in our home. I blamed myself for the unpreparedness to pick an option, between A and B on entry and exit forms.

When I am a refugee, I work hard to prove I am exceptional to ordinary people. I fight desire for something as ordinary as having a team to root for.

Everything that blooms is the last time. The last marigold, the last new baby. Confident about returning, we turn homecoming into a ritual.

The embarrassment of uncertainty follows us through new streets festooned with trees, that for years were pictures of how others lived.

Now we enter doors that were symbols.
The walls are left white, in case we must leave.

The category of refugee comes with benefits, they say, so you fulfill their expectations. Knowledge of, acceptance of, analyses of losses don't change how you feel.

You begin to worry you have not suffered enough. If only you had scars where your bones were broken for a convincing narrative.

Your mother was shot by the Chinese.

Your sisters spent their youth in labor camps.

As one who came after, you memorize the names of the dead to legitimize the self or perhaps it is about suffering I am attempting to write here.

The state of refugee is the state nobody wants to conquer. You are there;

we cannot leave.

Before I understood your suffering as having no end, I thought imagination would color over facts. Time heals all wounds, I said offering you language from school.

In exile, you crack peanuts between thumb and index fingers. It is also the way I write, being the one who came after.

Imagine, you are in the waiting room with an open wound and a ticket with your name on it.

You practice patience. The best you can do is hope.

Year after year you wait for your name to be called.

The blister called hope,

burns before it peels off.

ས་ཆ་ག་གེ་མོ་ར།

ཁོ་མོ་དྲན་བཞིན། ངས་འབྱུང་འགྱུར་གྱི་གཙང་པོའི་རབ་ཁ་ནས་ཉ་རྒྱ་ཚུར་འཛིན།

དྲན་པ། ངས་རང་ཉིད་ཚིག་ལ་བོར་བའམ་ཚིག་དང་དེའི་གོ་རིམ། ནང་དོན་བཅས་ལ་སྣང་མེད་བྱེད་པ་མིན།

ཁོ་མོས་གསུངས་དོན། ཐ་སྙད་དག་གིས་ཁྲིད་ལ་མི་སློབས་ཟེར། སྙིང་རུས་བསྐྱེད། གནམ་རྒྱུད་དེ་གོ་དཀའ་ཆེ། སེམས་ཤུགས་མ་ཆགས། ལྷ་གྲུབ་འགངས་ཆེན་ལ་དོ་སྣང་བྱེད་པ་བཞིན་ཐ་སྙད་སྤྱིར་བཏང་བ་ལ་ཡང་དོ་སྣང་བྱོས།

སློད་ཁ་སྦྱབས་ཞིག་ལ་ཆུ་བླུགས་ན་བུམ་པ་དེ་རློན་པར་བྱེད་མོད། ཁྱོད་རང་ད་དུང་སྒོམས།

སློད་ཞབས་རྗོལ་ཞིག་ལ་ཆུ་ལྷུག་པ་ནི་ཚིག་རྐང་རེ་གཉིས་མ་གཏོགས་མི་གོ་བའི་གནམ་རྒྱུད་ཞིག་ལ་ཉན་པ་དང་མཚུངས།

སློད་མི་གཙང་བ་ཞིག་ལ་ཆུ་བླུགས་ན་དེ་ཡིས་ཕན་པ་གནོད་པར་བསྒྱུར།

ཀུན་སློང་ཅི་ཞིག་འཁྲེར་ནས་ཉན་པ་ནི་གནད་ཀྱི་དམ་པའོ། །

ཀུན་བཟང་བླ་མའི་ཞལ་ལུང་དུ་ངས་ཁོ་མོའི་སྐད་ངག་གོ

དེ་ནི། སྔར་བཞིན་ཁོ་མོས་དད་མོས་ཀྱི་འགྲུལ་བཞུད་གླེང་བ་དང་མཚུངས།

གནམ་རྒྱུད་ནི་རིམ་པ་ལྔར་བྲན་དགོས་སྟེ། ཅི་ཞིག་གོ་བ་དང་ཅི་ཞིག་གོ་སྙིང་འདོད་པ། དེའི་ནང་དོན་བཅས་སོ། །
གལ་སྲིད་ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་བྱུང་བ་རེ་རེའི་གོ་རིམ་དཀྲུགས་ཆེ།
གནམ་རྒྱུད་གཞན་དུ་འགྱུར་ལ་དེའི་གོ་རིམ་ཡང་འཁྲུགས་འགྲོ

གལ་སྲིད་ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་ཞིབ་ཆ་ལ་འགྱུར་བ་བཏང་ཆེ།
དེའི་ནང་དོན་འགྱུར་འགྲོ
ཨ་ཞང་གི་གསུངས་དོན། ངའི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་གོ་རིམ་མ་དཀྲུགས།
ཁོང་གིས་ང་ལ་ཁོང་གི་བཙོན་ཁང་གི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་ལ་ཚོན་རྩི་གཏོང་འཛུག་མི་འདོད།
གཏམ་རྒྱུད་རེག་པའི་སླད་དུ་བསླུ་བྲིད་མ་བྱེད་ཟེར།
ཁོང་གིས་གསུངས་དོན། ཐམས་ཅད་དྲན་པར་གྱིས། གཏམ་རྒྱུད་དག་དང་དེ་དག་གི་གོ་དོན།
དོན་རྐྱེན་གྱི་བྱུང་བ་བཅས་དྲན་པར་གྱིས།

ཁོ་མོས་རང་ཉིད་གནས་བཅའ་སའི་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་དེའི་ལམ་བཟོའི་སླད་དུ།
བྲག་རྡོ་བྱེ་མར་བསྒྱུར།
དེ་མ་འོངས་པར་བགྲོད་པའི་སྤྲེ་སེ་ཞིག་ལ་བརྗེས།
སྐྱབས་བཅོལ་གྱི་མི་སེར་ཞིག་ནས་ ཕྱིར་སོ་སོའི་མི་སེར་དབང་ཐང་རེག་པའི་ཆེད་དུའོ།།
གང་གི་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་དེ་ནི་སྲིན་མོ་ཞིག་ཐང་ལ་བསྙལ་བའི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་དེའོ། །

འབྱུང་འགྱུར་གྱི་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་དེའི་འགོ་འཁྲིད་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་བརྗོད་དོན།
༡) བཟོད་སྒོམ་གནོང་།
༢) གསོལ་བ་ཐོབས།
༣) དེ་རིང་ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་བསྐྲུན་པའི་ཁང་པ་དེར་དབང་བསྒྱུར་བའི་སྒྲིག་གཞི་རྣམས་སང་ཉིན་ལ་
བེད་སྤྱོད་མེད་སྲིད།
༤) ཁྱོད་ནི་ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་དྲན་པའི་སྨུ་རོལ་དུ་བྱུང་བའི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་དེའི་མཇུག་འབྲས་ཡིན
༥) བློས་གཏོང་།
༦) རེ་བ་ནི་གལ་ཆེ། རེ་བ་ལ་ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་ལས་དབང་ཁ་ལོ་བསྒྱུར་བའི་ཡིད་ཆེས་མ་བྱེད།

༧) རེ་བ།

ཁོ་མོས་སྙིང་ཚབ་དེའམ་ཡང་ན་བཀྲེས་ལྟོགས་ཀྱི་ཁྲོད།   གནས་གཞན་ཞིག་ཏུ་འཚོ་སྡོད་ལ་གསོན་གནས་ཐུབ་ཡོད།

སྐྱབས་བཅོལ་གྱི་གནས་སྟངས་དེས་སོ་སོའི་བདག་དབང་ཤོར་བའི་ཁུངས་སྐྱེལ་ལ་དགོས་འདུན་འདོན།

དམག་འཐབ་ཀྱི་རྨ་ཁ་ནི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཀྱི་གོང་བུ་རེ་རེར་འཁྱིལ་ཡོད། ང་ཚོས་དྲན་པ་ནི་མི་ཚེ་སྡུག་བསྔལ་ལོ།།

དེ་ནི་ន្លួ་མས་ལས་འབྲས་ལ་བསྒྲོན་འཛུགས་པའི་སྐབས་དེ།   ལས་ཀྱི་འབྲས་བུ་མ་གཏོགས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡལ་བར་འགྱུར།

ཏིལ་གྱི་འབྲས་བུ་ལས་ཆུང་བའི་ས་བོན་ཞིག་ཀྱང་འཚར་ལོངས་བྱུང་ན་ཤིང་སྡོང་ལ་འགྱུར་བ་ལྟ་བུ།

འདི་ནི་ལས་མི་སྡུག་པ་ལ་ཡང་གཅིག་མཚུངས་སོ།།

ཁོ་མོའི་ཡིད་ཆེས་ལ།   ང་ཚོ་དབང་བསྒྱུར་བའི་ཁྲིམས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་མགོ་ཐོག་ཏུ།   ཁྲིམས་ཀྱིས་སྲུང་སྐྱོབ་མི་ཐུབ་པ་ནི་ལས་འབྲས་རེད་ཟེར།

ལས་འབྲས་ཀྱི་མི་ཚེ་ནི་ང་ཚོས་དྲན་པའི་མི་ཚེ་ཡི་ཞེས་བྱའི་ཕྱི་རོལ་དུ་ཡོད།

དེ་ཡང་སྙིང་གྱི་ལས་འབྲས། མང་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་ལས་འབྲས། ས་ཡི་ལས་འབྲས། ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཀྱི་ལས་འབྲས་སོགས།

ཁོ་མོས་དྲང་བདེན་གྱིས་ཁོ་མོའི་ཨ་མ་ཚུ་ལ་ལྡེབས་པ་དེ་ཡོ་བསྲང་བྱེད་པའི་ཡིད་ཆེས་བྱེད། ཁོ་མོའི་འཚོ་སྡོད་ལ་དྲིན་ཆེ་བའི་གཙང་བོ་དེས་ཁོ་མོའི་ཚེ་སྲོག་ཀྱང་འཕྲོགས།

མི་སེར་ཞིག་ཡིན་པ་དེས། ངས་ང་རང་གང་ཆགས་པ་དེ་ང་རང་མིན་པ་ར་སྒྲོད་པའི་ཆེད་དུ་ཡིག་ཆ་བསྣམས། ངས་ང་རང་སྐྱབས་བཅོལ་བ་ཞིག་ཡིན་བརྗོད་དུས། ལྷོད་མོ་བ་ཚོས་གནམ་གྲུད་ཞིག་ལ་བསམ་བློ་འཁོར་ཅིང་།

གནམ་གྲུད་དེ་ལས། ང་ནི་སྙིང་སྟོབས་ཅན་གྱི་རྒྱལ་ཁ་ལེན་མཁན་ཞིག་སྟེ་ཁོང་ཚོའི་ཆེ་མཐོང་དེ་རྙེད་པར་བྱས།

དེ་ནས། ང་ནི་འགྲོ་བ་མི་ཞིག་དང་གཅིག་མཚུངས་སྟེ། ཁོང་ཚོའི་བརྩི་བཀུར་ཐོབ།

ང་སྐྱབས་བཅོལ་བ་ཡིན་དུས། ངས་དེད་ཚང་གི་རྩིག་པར་རྒྱབ་བསྙེལ་མཁན་གྱི་མགྲོན་པོ་ཚོའི་སྙིང་གི་ནག་ནོག་གི་ཆེད་དུ་དགོངས་སེལ་ཞུས། ངས་ནང་འཛུལ་དང་ཕྱིར་ཐོན་གྱི་གདམ་ཀ་ལ་གྲ་སྒྲིག་མེད་པའི་སོ་སོར་ལེ་བདའ་བྱས།

ང་སྐྱབས་བཅོལ་བ་ཡིན་དུས། ངས་མི་ཕལ་བ་རྣམས་ལ་ང་རང་དམིགས་བསལ་བ་ཞིག་ཡིན་པ་ར་སྒྲོད་པའི་སླད་དུ་དཀའ་སྤྱད་བྱས། ངས་ཆེས་སྤྱིར་བཏང་གི་རིགས་ལ་ཡང་རྒྱབ་གྲོགས་རྙེད་པའི་འབད་བརྩོན་བྱས།

ཚང་མར་བཀྲགས་མདངས་རྒྱས་པ་དུས་མཐའ་མ་དེ་ཡིན། མཐའ་མའི་གྲུར་ཀུམ་མེ་ཧྲོག

མཐའ་མའི་བྲིས་པ།

ཕྱིར་ལོག་ཐུབ་པར་གདེང་ཚོད་ཡོད་རྫུང་། ང་ཚོས་ཕྱིར་ལོག་དེ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་ཚོ་ག་ལ་བསྒྱུར།

ངེས་མེད་ཀྱི་ངོ་ཚ་དེས་ སྡོང་ལོའི་མེ་ཏོག་གི་ཕྲེང་བ་འཐེན་པའི་སྲུང་ལམ་གསར་བ་ཚང་མར་ང་ཚོར་རྫེས་འདེད་གཏོང་།

ལོ་ངོ་མང་པོའི་རིང་ལ། དེ་དག་ནི་གཞན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ཇི་ལྟར་འཚོ་བ་སྐྱེལ་བའི་སྣང་བརྙན་འགོད།།

ད་ལྟ། ང་ཚོ་སྡོན་ཚད་མཚོན་རྟགས་ཙམ་ཡིན་པའི་སྒོའི་ནང་ལ་འཛུལ།

བརྩིགས་གྲུང་ཐམས་ཅད་དཀར་སེང་ངེ། གལ་སྲིད་ང་ཚོ་ངེས་པར་དུ་ཐོན་དགོས་ཚེ།

སྐྱབས་བཙོལ་གྱི་གནས་བབས་ནི་ཁེ་བཟང་དང་ལྷན་དུ་འབྱུང་།

ཁོང་ཚོས་ཁྱེད་ཀྱིས་ཁོང་ཚོའི་འདོད་མོས་སྐོང་ཟེར།

གོད་ཆག་གི་ཞེས་བྱ་དང་ངོས་ལེན། དབྱེ་ཞིབ་བཅས་ཀྱིས་ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་ཇི་ལྟར་ཚོར་བ་དེ་བརྗེ་མི་ཐུབ།

ཁྱེད་ཀྱིས་སོ་སོས་སྡུག་བསྔལ་ཆེ་ཙམ་མ་མྱོངས་པ་ལ་སེམས་ཁྲལ་བྱེད། ཁྱོད་ལ་རླུ་འགྲུག་གི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་ཆེད་དུ་རྡུས་པ་ཆགས་པའི་ རྨ་ཤུལ་ལྷ་བུ་ཞིག་ཡོད་ན་མ་གཏོགས།

ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་ཨ་མ་རྒྱ་ཡིས་བསད།

ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་ཨ་ཅེ་ཡིས་གཞོན་པའི་ལང་ཚོ་བཙོན་དུ་བསྐྱལ།

ཁྱེད་རང་རྗེས་སུ་སྐྱེས་པས། ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་ཤི་པོ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་མིང་བློ་བཞིན་རང་ཉིད་སུ་ཡིན་པ་ར་
སྤྱོད་བྱེད་པའམ། ཡང་ན། དེ་ནི་ངས་འབྲི་འདོད་པའི་སྡུག་བསྔལ་དེ་ཡིན།

སྐྱབས་བཅོལ་བའི་གོ་གནས་ནི་སུ་གང་གིས་ཏམ་བཟུང་བྱེད་འདོད་མེད་པའི་གོ་གནས་ཤིག་
གོ ཁྱེད་རང་དེ་གར་ཡོད། ང་ཚོ་བྲལ་མི་ཐུབ།

ང་ཡིས་ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་སྡུག་བསྔལ་ལ་རྫོགས་མཐའ་མེད་པ་མ་ཤེས་བའི་སྔ་རོལ་དུ། ང་ཡི་བསམ་
པར། འཆར་སྣང་གིས་དོན་དངོས་འགེབས་ཐུབ་ཀྱི་རེད་བསམ་བྱུང་། དུས་ཚོད་ཀྱིས་རྨ་ཁ་
གསོ། འདི་ནི་སློབ་གྲྭའི་སྐབས་ནས་གོ་བའི་སྐད་ཆ་ཞིག

བཙན་བྱོལ་དུ། ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་རང་གི་མཐེ་བོང་དང་གོང་མཛུབ་ཀྱིས་སྨར་ཀ་གཙོག དེ་ནི་ང་ཡིས་
རྩོམ་འབྲི་བའི་རིམ་པའོ། ། ང་རང་རྗེས་སུ་སྐྱེས་བ་ཡིན་པས།

ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་རང་གི་ལག་ཏུ་སོ་སོའི་མིང་ཐོགས་པའི་སྦྲ་སེ་ཞིག་བཟུང་ནས་གཤག་བཅོས་བྱེད་
པར་སྨྲུག་བཞིན་པ་ལ་ཚོད་དཔག་བྱོས་དང་།

ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་བཟོད་སྒོམ་བྱེད། ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་གང་ཐུབ་པ་ནི་རེ་སྨྲུག་བྱེད་རྒྱུ་དེའོ། །
ཁོད་ཀྱིས་རང་གི་མིང་འབོད་པར་ལོ་ནས་ལོ་བསྟུད་མར་རེ་སྨྲུག་བྱེད།

རེ་སྨྲུག་ནི་ཆུ་བུར་ལྟ་བུའོ། །

དེ་མ་བརྡོལ་སྨོན་ལ་ན་ཟུག་གཏོང་།

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About the Authors

Baimanazhen (白玛娜珍 པདྨ་ལྷ་མཛེས།) is a Tibetan writer. She is based in Lhasa and writes primarily in Chinese. Her work explores the role of spirituality in the lives of contemporary Tibetan women as they face various socio-political challenges.

Chimé (འཆི་མེད།) is a famed contemporary poet and Tibetan language teacher from Rebgong, Amdo. She has published two books of collected poems, Dreams of the Moon (ཟླ་བའི་རྨི་ལམ།) and The Youth of Water (ཆུའི་ལང་ཚོ།) in 2012 and 2016 respectively. A third book of poetry and essays, The World in a Copper Mirror (ཟངས་ཀྱི་མེ་ལོང་ནང་གི་འཇིག་རྟེན།), was published in 2023. Her poems have been awarded the highest recognitions for Tibetan literature in China, including the 2015 Wild Yak Prize for Literature and the 2017 Annual Award for Nationalities Literature from the China Writers' Association.

Kelsang Lhamo (སྐལ་བཟང་ལྷ་མོ།) was born in Lhokha, south of Lhasa in Tibet. She received teachings on Tibetan medicine and on the Five Minor Sciences from Sheldrak Khen Rinpoche and Dungkar Losang Trinlé. She traveled to India in 1989, where she received novice vows from His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and received Buddhist teachings from Geshe Drubthob Rinpoche and other masters for ten years. She also studied Hindi and the Vedas in Varanasi. Kelsang moved to the U.S. in 1999 and translated Sogyal Rinpoche's The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying into Tibetan with Ringu Tulku. In 2003, with the kind support of Alak Zenkar Rinpoche and Tashi

Tsering Josayma, Kelsang joined the Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC). Under the guidance of Gene Smith, the founder of BDRC, she continued her study of Tibetan literature. Kelsang has taught Tibetan language and literature and currently works as senior librarian at BDRC. Her writings and translations include Dreaming at the Sage's Abode: Biographical Sketches of Four Living Tibetan Nuns, Biography of Great Kalayanmitra Geshe Yeshe Topden, Collection of Contemporary Writings of Tibetan Women, and A Maiden's Wandering Westward.

Min-Nangzey (སྨིན་སྣང་མཛེས།) is an emerging poet and essayist from Golok; she now lives in Dharamshala. She has published two books of collected poems and lyrics respectively: Princess of the Snow Mountain (གངས་རིའི་སྲས་མོ། 2006) and Songs of Emotions (ཚོར་བའི་གླུ 2015). "Remembering My Mother's Handmade Tsampa" first appeared in the publication Chitsok Melong (སྤྱི་ཚོགས་མེ་ལོང་།).

Nyima Tso/ Mutik (ཉི་མ་འཚོའམ་མུ་ཏིག) is a prolific translator and author of poetry and short stories. She writes in Tibetan. Born in Bora village near Labrang Tashikyil Monastery in eastern Tibet or Amdo, she went into exile in 1999. She has been based in India ever since. After completing high school at the Tibetan Children's Village, she studied at the Academy of Tibetan Culture, a Tibetan Studies program at Norbulingka Institute, completing her bachelor's degree in 2005 and master's degree in 2008. In addition to her book on poetry, *First Journey of this Life* (མི་ཚེ་འདིའི་འགྲུལ་བཞུད་དང་པོ།) with Jamphel Drolma (2003), and collection of short stories, *A Fragment* (ཟུར་ཞིག 2009), she has conducted research and published a report on *"Inter-Racial*

Marriage Policy" (Tibetan Women's Association, 2013). To date she has translated forty-four children's books from English to Tibetan. She is editor of Mayum, a quarterly publication with articles written in-Tibetan-by-Tibetan women writers. She also works as a Production Manager at Norbulingka Institute and serves as Executive Secretary for Tibetan Writers Abroad PEN Centre (PEN TIBET).

Tenzin Dickie (བསྟན་འཛིན་བདེ་སྐྱིད།) is a poet, writer, and translator. She is the editor of Old Demons, New Deities: Twenty-One Short Stories from Tibet (2017), and The Penguin Book of Modern Tibetan Essays (2023). Her works are available for purchase here.

Tsedrön Kyi (ཚེ་སྒྲོན་སྐྱིད།) was born in Badzong County in Amdo. She has taught Tibetan language at Yushü Nationalities High School for decades. She primarily writes short stories and has published several poems and articles in newspapers and journals as well. Her publications include two books of short stories—A Melancholy Drama (སྐྱོ་སྣང་གི་ཟློས་གར།) and Clinging (ཞེན།). She has also contributed short stories to other collections, such as a recent collection of essays by Tibetan women writers entitled Women Writers Discussing New Writing (བུད་མེད་རྩོམ་པ་པོས་གསར་རྩོམ་གླེང་བ།).

Tsering Wangmo Dhompa (སྡོམ་པ་ཚེ་རིང་དབང་མོ།) is the author of the poetry books My Rice Tastes like the Lake (2011), In the Absent of Everyday (2005), and Rules of the House (2002), all from Apogee Press, Berkeley, and three chapbooks. Dhompa's first non-fiction book, Coming Home to Tibet, was published by Penguin India in 2014 and

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About the Translators

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