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# Introduction

The monograph presents the biography of the First Khalkha Jetsundampa Zanabazar (1635-1723) as a literary work of the 17th century Mongolian Buddhist monk, the Khalkha Zaya Pandita Losang Prinlei (Tib. Blo bzang 'phrin las, Mong. Luvsanprinlei, 1642-1715).<sup>1</sup> It was composed in the Tibetan language, which soon became the language of the intellectual religious elite of the Mongols. The aim of this study is to show how a Buddhist disciple described the life of his master using new tools—the Tibetan language and *namthar*—a Tibetan biographical genre which presents an exemplary life leading to the Buddhist liberation. The genre of biography and its Tibetan counterpart will be discussed in the present work in more detail. At the same time it will be briefly examined whether there are any peculiar Mongolian features to the text, how it was understood by the Mongols and how it was preserved in the works of the next generations of Mongolian monk-writers. Different aims of Mongolian religious and lay authors will be mentioned. The life and career of the First Khalkha Jetsundampa Zanabazar, the protagonist of the biography, and of Zaya Pandita, the author of the biography, will be presented briefly in the work as well.

To introduce the subject it is important to remember that the First Khalkha Jetsundampa, known in Mongolia as Öndür Gege(ge)n,<sup>2</sup> lived in

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<sup>1</sup> Further in the present text he will be referred to just as Zaya Pandita, unless making a distinction between him and other incarnations called Zaya Pandita is necessary. The Sanskrit title *paṇḍita* is written in a simplified way as Pandita.

<sup>2</sup> This is the Mongolian title of Zanabazar which means 'High Serenity'. 'Serenity' is written as *gegegen* or *gegen* in the Classical Mongolian language. In Modern Mongolian it

very turbulent times. He lived long and passed away at the age of 88 (89 according to the Asian fashion). Therefore his biography provided material of great interest for future generations of the Mongols, Asian historians and all who wanted to know details about the important political events of the 17th-18th century history of Mongolia and its neighbouring lands. Starting as a son of a local Khalkha ruler, Zanabazar became one of the most important incarnations of Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism and the actual political leader of Northern Mongolia. His motherland was attacked by the Oirat Galdan Boshugtu (1644-1697) which forced him to escape with his people to Southern Mongolia and seek out the support of the Manchu Emperor Kangxi (r. 1662-1720). Northern Mongolia preferred to accept the Manchu Qing dynasty protection rather than be subdued by the Jungars (i.e. Western Mongols). At the time of Zanabazar's childhood, the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1782) became the unchallenged ruler in Tibet. Zanabazar was fortunate to become his personal disciple and to receive his Gelugpa (dGe lugs pa) recognition from him. Against the background of the biography, the Tibeto-Mongolian-Manchu relations can be seen. Finally Galdan Boshugtu was defeated, the Fifth Dalai Lama passed away and the Manchu Qing dynasty became the main power in Inner Asia. All this happened during the First Jetsundampa's life and therefore correct reading and understanding of these events was one of the principles guiding the translation of the biography with the hope to serve all interested in the subject. However, the political events were not the main focus of the work.

The object of the study is a text composed by the Khalkha Zaya Pandita in 1698-1702, included in his greatest work which is called: (*Sha kya'i btsun pa blo bzang 'phrin las kyi*) *zab pa dang rgya che ba'i dam pa'i chos kyi thob yig gsal ba'i me long*,<sup>3</sup> and belongs to the so called *gsan yig* or *thob yig* genre, i.e. notes made by a Buddhist believer, usually a monk, about teachings which he received. Such a register makes it easier for the practitioner to remember his spiritual heritage and to connect him with the

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is written as *gegeen*. The subsequent incarnations were called *boᠷda gege(ge)n* in Classical Mong. (*bogd gegeen* in Modern Mong.) which means 'Holy Serenity'.

<sup>3</sup> The standard Beijing xylograph edition vol. *nga*, ff. 62v6-77v2, Lokesh Chandra's edition 1981: 124-154; Byambaa Ragchaa's edition 2012: ff. 34b6-49b2.

whole lineage of his teachers and previous practitioners back to the time of the Buddha. The list may be very brief just to document main titles of the teachings. However, in the case of Zaya Pandita, his work developed into four volumes of very detailed information about all whom he regarded as important personages in his spiritual development.

The biography of the First Jetsundampa is just one among many other biographies of eminent Buddhist masters, mainly from Tibet and India, included in this encompassing work. This setup will be discussed later in a more detailed way. Zaya Pandita wrote in Tibetan, which was a novelty among the Mongolian writers. It may be mentioned briefly that during the second wave of dissemination of Buddhism in Mongolia in the late 16th century, the main effort was put into translating the canonical Buddhist writings from Tibetan into Mongolian. Only in 1629 was the main part of the Tibetan Canon, namely the Kanjur (*bKa' 'gyur*), translated into Mongolian. The names of eminent translators, such as Shiregetü Gūūshi Chorji (Siregetü gūūsi čorji) and Kunga Odzer (Kun dga' 'od zer), written in colophons of the Mongolian translations of sutras, documented their great efforts in making the words of the Buddha available in the Mongolian language. It is not without its significance that this work was done at the court of the Mongolian khans: Altan Khan (1507-1582) and Ligden Khan (1588-1634). It is important to underline that besides gaining religious merit, the act of making translations was inspired by the lay Mongolian Buddhist longing to learn and understand Buddhism in their mother tongue. It may be added that although we are not sure about the ethnic background of Shiregetü Gūūshi Chorji, one of the most important Buddhist masters acting both in Köke Khota in Southern Mongolia and as well in the Erdeni Juu (Erdene Zuu) monastery in Khalkha, i.e. Northern Mongolia, we see his literary works written only in Mongolian.<sup>4</sup> The same concerns the Oirat Zaya Pandita, Namkhai Gyatso (Nam mkha'i rgya mtsho, 1599-1662), who was the greatest translator of Tibetan Buddhist texts into the Oirat lan-

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<sup>4</sup> There are doubts to which extent his treatise *Čiqula kereglegči tegūs udqatu šastir* was an original composition or rather a compilation or a translation of a Tibetan text, but nevertheless there are no proofs that he has ever written his compositions in Tibetan. See Bareja-Starzyńska 2006: 57-60.

guage (i.e. Western Mongolian). In the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century, emphasis was still placed on making Buddhism available in Mongolian for perception of the Mongols.

It can be proposed here that the First Khalkha Jetsundampa and his disciple and biographer Zaya Pandita, soon the most influential personalities among Mongolian Buddhists, bring us to a different problem: that Mongols educated in Tibet started to communicate in writing among themselves and with the much broader circles of readers in the Tibetan language, the *lingua franca* of Buddhism in this part of the globe. The contents of their writings were addressed not to the lay Buddhists and not necessarily to the Mongols: they belonged to the world of Tibetan Buddhism and their message was addressed to their fellow monks and future generations of Tibetan educated believers.

This aim was successfully achieved and even until today Buddhist prayers and other religious texts composed by the First Jetsundampa are recited in Tibetan by Buddhist monks, mainly in Mongolia.<sup>5</sup> In the case of the Khalkha Zaya Pandita, his fame as a Buddhist scholar made monks and Tibetologists read his texts and treat them as sources of knowledge about many Buddhists, Indian, Tibetan and Mongolian alike. For the Mongolian Buddhist scholars, his writings, especially the biography of the First Khalkha Jetsundampa, became the basis for getting source information about this incarnation. All later biographies of Zanabazar written in Tibetan followed the account of his life as presented by Zaya Pandita, who was contemporary and sometimes a witness of the events.

It is not surprising that finally the Mongolian translation of the Tibetan biography of the First Khalkha Jetsundampa also appeared. It is rather striking that only one copy of this text has been found so far. It was included in the bilingual Tibeto-Mongolian manuscript of the biography entitled *Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i khrungs rabs bco lnga'i rnam thar* and preserved in the Aginsky Datsan in Buryatia. It was found there in 1967 by the great Indian scholar Raghu Vira and reproduced

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<sup>5</sup> For the list of compositions of the First Khalkha Jetsundampa Zanabazar see Byambaa 2004a: 5-56. They were reproduced in Chandra 1982 and in Byambaa 2004c.

by Lokesh Chandra in his *Life and Works of Jebtsundampa I*, pp. 411-549. There are no details about the author of the translation, nor about the date of the translation. According to Byambaa Ragchaa it can be dated within the 18th-19th centuries,<sup>6</sup> which seems correct due to the letter shape and language features represented in the manuscript.<sup>7</sup>

Although the text became available in Mongolian, there have not yet been found any traces of using this translation for writing Mongolian versions of the biography of the First Jetsundampa.<sup>8</sup> It should be remarked upon that the manuscript contains misplaced pages 457-464. The passage which ends on page 457 (line 2) with the word *bka'* should be followed by text which was erroneously written on page 461 (line 2). On page 457, however, there is a passage which should be placed on page 464 (line 2). Therefore one has to restore the right order of the text sequence on the basis of the xylograph.<sup>9</sup>

The textual basis for the present monograph is a critical edition made on the grounds of the very mentioned bilingual manuscript and the xylograph (block printed) edition of the First Jetsundampa's biography in Tibetan included in volume IV (*nga*) of Zaya Pandita's work.<sup>10</sup> The critical edition is presented in the form of transliterated text, Tibetan in the so called THL

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<sup>6</sup> Personal communication by Byambaa Ragchaa.

<sup>7</sup> Bira 2006: 205 commented upon Buryat features of the manuscript: "If one studies the [Mongolian] translation more closely it seems, on the basis of the handwriting of some words and the shape of the letters, that the translation itself was done by a Buryat." Modern Mong.: *Orchuulgyg nyagtlan üzvel, zarim ügiin bichleg, bichgün khelberees kharakhad ug orchuulgyg buriad khün khüisen bololtoi baina.*

<sup>8</sup> On the comparison between the Tibetan biography of Zanabazar by Zaya Pandita and several versions of the Mongolian biography *Öndür gegen-ü namtar* some remarks were made in Bareja-Starzynska 2010b, Bareja-Starzynska 2013.

<sup>9</sup> See the Transliteration of Zanabazar's Biography in Part II of the present volume.

<sup>10</sup> Beijing xylograph ff. 62v6-77v2. It was reproduced in Lokesh Chandra 1981, *Life and Works of Jebtsundampa I*, Śata-Piṭaka Series, vol. 294, New Delhi, vol. IV, pp. 124-6-154-2. The references in the present work are made to this edition. It was also published by Byambaa Ragchaa in 2012, ff. 34b6-49b2, (reproduced in the present work).

Extended Wylie Transliteration Scheme<sup>11</sup> and Classical Mongolian in the international way of transliteration.<sup>12</sup> In other parts of the present work Tibetan names and titles are written in simplified English transcription, i.e. Ngawang Gyatso for Ngag dbang rgya mtsho with the Wylie transliteration in brackets at their first appearance in the text. Mongolian historical names are written in simplified transcription referring to the Classical Mongolian, i.e. Tüshiyetü Khan and not the modern TüsHEET Khaan. The title Jetsundampa is written in its Tibetan transcription, although in Mongolia it is pronounced Javzdamb. Since, however, this Buddhist incarnation title is originally Tibetan and the biography concerned within the present work is Tibetan, the Tibetan version of the title is retained. Some Classical Mongolian words are rendered in ways well established in the English secondary literature, such as Oirat for *oyirad* etc. Modern Mongolian is transliterated in the fashion that is standard in Mongolia. The Sanskrit words are written in the international system, while the Chinese names and phrases are in Pinyin. In quotations from modern works the transliterated or transcribed forms are retained as they appear in the originals.

The annotated translation of the biography presented in this monograph is the first full translation of this text into a Western language. In 1995 Bira Shagdaryn made a Modern Mongolian translation of the biography and included it in the collection of Zanabazar's biographies entitled *Öndör gegeeniin namtruud orshvoi*. In 2002 a Korean scholar, Jin Chengxiu, defended a doctoral dissertation in Chinese based on Zaya Pandita's biography of Zanabazar and later published it in book form which included a translation of the biography into Chinese. The title can be translated into English as: "The 16th and 17th century Mongolian political reform theory and Tibetan Buddhism—with focus on the Left Wing of Tümed and Khalkha", though in her English abstract the author translated the title as "Reformation of Mongol nation state and Tibetan Buddhism in 16-17th

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<sup>11</sup> The Tibetan & Himalayan Library, see Bibliography for details. However, the Sanskrit words which appear in the Tibetan text are transliterated according to the international system of Sanskrit transliteration, see for example Edgerton 1985.

<sup>12</sup> See Poppe 1991.



century.”<sup>13</sup> Jin Chengxiu also included the transliteration of the Tibetan and Mongolian versions which are commented on in the present work.<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, the lack of knowledge of the Chinese language made it impossible for the present author to get acquainted with the whole content of the Chinese book.<sup>15</sup>

## Composition

The present work consists of two main parts: Part I: Studies; and Part II: Translation and Transliteration, as well as an Appendix that includes a reproduction of the Tibeto-Mongolian manuscript of the biography and a reproduction of the Tibetan xylograph as well as photographs related to Zanabazar. Part I contains studies of Zaya Pandita’s biography of Zanabazar organized in three chapters. Each chapter focuses on a different scholarly problem and can be read independently of the others. Chapter I deals with the author and the text. It presents the text against the broader background of biographical literature in Tibet and Mongolia and discusses Zaya Pandita, the author of Zanabazar’s biography, as a pioneer in the field of Tibetan-language works by Mongols. Chapter 2 investigates the skillful narration technique of Zaya Pandita who related the complicated history of Tibeto-Khalkha-Oirat-Manchu relations during a crucial moment in the late 17th century. Chapter 3 depicts the political changes initiated during the time of Zanabazar: the shifting of Mongolian political authority from Khan to Gege(ge)n leading to the emergence of the Tibetan model of hierocratic

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<sup>13</sup> *Shilin, shiqi, shiji Menggu zhengzhi gaige lun yu Zangchuan fojiao-yi Tumote, Kaerka zuoyi wei zhongxin*. The doctoral dissertation was supervised by Feng Erkang, University of Nankai, VI 2002. The author of the present work would like to thank Jerzy Bayer for his help in transcribing Chinese characters and for the translation of the title page into English (p. ii).

<sup>14</sup> I would like to thank Choyiji (Qiao Ji) for making a Ph.D. dissertation available to me and Osamu Inoue for presenting me with a copy of the published book based on the doctoral work.

<sup>15</sup> However, my thanks go to Choyiji for kindly checking with me selected passages from the Chinese translation. Needless to say all faults in the misunderstanding of the Chinese text are mine.

rule in Khalkha Mongolia in the 20th century. Part II consists of the annotated English translation of Zaya Pandita's biography of Zanabazar and a critically edited transliteration of the biography in which comparison is made between a bilingual Tibeto-Mongolian manuscript from Buryatia and the Tibetan xylograph editions. It is followed by a bibliography containing information about the source materials and secondary literature used in the book. Next comes the Index with proper names of places, titles and historical figures. Finally, the Appendix includes a reproduction of the bilingual Tibeto-Mongolian manuscript of the biography that was found by Raghu Vira in the Aginsky Datsan, i.e. monastery in Buryatia in 1967 and published by Lokesh Chandra in volume 294 of the Śata-Piṭaka Series in 1982 (pp. 411-549), as well as reproduction of the Tibetan xylograph published by Byambaa Ragchaa in 2012 and several photographs related to Zanabazar.

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Biography of Zanabazar written by Zaya Pandita was studied thanks to the excellent publication of Lokesh Chandra who reproduced all the important biographies of the First Khalkha Jetsundampa in the volume *Life and Works of Jebtsundampa I*, Śata-Piṭaka Series, vol. 294 in 1982. Moreover, Lokesh Chandra kindly agreed to include in the present publication a reproduction of the bilingual Tibeto-Mongolian manuscript of the biography

discovered in 1967 in the Aginsky Datsan, or Aginsky monastery in Buryatia by his father, Raghu Vira, and printed in the above mentioned volume. I am heartily thankful for this generous gesture.

I would like to express my deep thanks to many colleagues who helped me during the study throughout my time studying the biography.

First of all I would like to thank Byambaa Ragchaa for generously sharing his extensive knowledge about the literature on the Khalkha Jetsundampas and for making his collection available for my study. His enthusiasm and encouragement were a source of inspiration to continue this work. He also kindly agreed to reproduce his copy of the Tibetan xylograph of the biography (published by him in 2012) in the present volume.

Many important issues concerning Mongolian incarnations and questions of reading the Tibetan text were solved thanks to the kind help of Ganzorig Davaaochir to whom I am very indebted.

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I benefited greatly from discussions on the Tibeto-Mongolian relations with Elliot Sperling. Here I would like to express my gratitude for his helpful comments, review of my work and standing help.

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tu, for the study of Zanabazar's biography. It served as invaluable source of information.

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I found excellent conditions to work on the *Öndür gegen-ü namtar* in the Kotwicz Archive in the Archive of Science of the Polish Academy of Sciences and Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences in Cracow. My special thanks are addressed to Rita Majkowska, the Head of the Archive and Ewa Dziurzyńska, who takes care about the Kotwicz heritage.

In 2004 I was able to work briefly in the Central National Library in Ulan Bator and use all necessary manuscripts. I am very grateful for this valuable opportunity.

During my short visit in February 2007 to the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamsala I was given the excellent opportunity to use the Tibetan materials there. I would like to thank the Director, Ven. Geshe Lhakdor for his kind acceptance and help.

On the 4th of February 2007 the author was able to conduct an interview with H.H. the Ninth Jetsundampa Dorjee Chang Jampel Namdrol Choekyi Gyaltzen (rDo rje 'chang 'jam dpal rnam grol chos kyi rgyal mtshan, 1932-2012) in the Takten House in Dharamsala. It was a memorable meeting which helped in better understanding of the position of this reincarnation in the past and in today's reality.

My sincere thanks go to Magdalena Szpindler for critical proofreading of the text and continuous support.

I am indebted to Aaron Bryson for correcting my English.

Needless to say, all errors and inaccuracies are my responsibility alone.

I am deeply grateful to Jacek Starzyński, my husband, for his invaluable help in typesetting the book in L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X.

Last but not least I would like to thank my dear family for constant encouragement and firm support.

## Special Signs and Abbreviations

< > → text inserted by a scribe between the lines

// → text marked by a scribe as not necessary

ḡ → g written with two dots

ḡ → g written instead of γ

γ → γ written instead of g

ô → used in Mong. for foreign o and long o, like in Skt. *namō*

(..) → letters redundant in the word

[..] → letters missing in the word

[-] → space missing between the words or words and grammatical particles

(124-6) → page and verse number of the Tib. xylograph in Chandra 1981, for example page 124, verse 6th

(=62v6) → folio and verse number of the standard Beijing xylograph of the *Thob yig*, vol. *nga*, for example folio 62v, verse 6th

(=BR 34b6) → folio and verse number of the Tib. xylograph in Byambaa 2012, for example folio 34b, verse 6th

(for: ) → correct or expected form in Classical Tib. or Classical Mong.

Bawden → see Bawden 1997 in the Bibliography

- Be. → Beijing xylograph of Zaya Pandita's *thob yig*
- BHSD → see Edgerton 1985 in the Bibliography
- BR → Byambaa Ragchaa's edition of 2012 of the Tibetan xylograph
- Chin. → Chinese
- Das → see Das 1902 (1985) in the Bibliography
- Jäschke → see Jäschke 1881 in the Bibliography
- JC → transliteration in Chengxiu 2002
- LC → Lokesh Chandra's edition of 1981 of the Tibetan xylograph
- Lessing → see Lessing 1982 in the Bibliography
- lit. → literally
- M → verse in Mongolian in the Tibeto-Mongolian manuscript
- Modern Mong. → Modern Mongolian
- Mong. → Classical Mongolian
- Mvy. → *Mahāvvyutpatti*, see Ishihama, Fukuda 1989 in the Bibliography
- Rerikh → see Rerikh 1983-1993 in the Bibliography
- [RY], [IW], [JV] → abbreviations used in the Nitārtha online dictionary
- Skt. → Sanskrit
- T → verse in Tibetan in the Tibeto-Mongolian manuscript
- Thob yig* → *Sa ka btsun* [Śākya'i btsun pa] *blo bzang 'phrin las kyi* // *ngag rnam phyogs su bsgrigs pa las* // *rang gyi 'khor bar spyod pa'i tshul* // *shin tu gsal ba'i sgron me bzhugs*
- Tib. → Tibetan
- ZP → Zaya Pandita