



HEAVEN AND HELL

and What Lies Between: Representing the Afterlife from Central Asia to the Himalayas

Monday 13 to Wednesday 15 November 2023

University of Warsaw

**Main Campus of UW, Faculty of History, Column Hall
Krakowskie Przedmieście 26/28, Warsaw**

Rewards await the righteous and punishments attend the wicked after their departure from mortal life. This is a belief that is shared by all the major religions from Central Asia to the Himalayas and, of course, well beyond these regions. This general formulation embraces a wide spectrum of notions about the nature of heaven and hell: they may be temporary or permanent places or conditions, and may be partitioned into many component territories with characteristics appropriate to the particular forms of goodness or wrongdoing that distinguished the earthly lives of their inhabitants. The routes to these destinations may themselves have an elaborate topography, fraught with predatory demons and other challenges for the recently deceased, often with intermediary stopping places along the way. We know what these places look like thanks to the more-or-less detailed descriptions that are found in the literature, whether the canonical works of the religions in question or the accounts of visionaries who have been permitted to visit them without having to depart their mortal lives forever, often in the company of semi-divine guides who point out to them the major landmarks and introduce them to the supernatural personalities encountered in the course of their visit.

But literature is not the only medium: heaven and hell, and post-mortem realms more generally, have long been a favourite theme among painters and other artists, featuring especially on the walls of shrines and temples as encouragements and warnings to worshippers, pilgrims and other visitors.



SEECHAC

Société Européenne pour l'Etude des
Civilisations de l'Himalaya et de
l'Asie Centrale
European Society for the Study
of Central Asian and Himalayan
Civilisations

in collaboration with

UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW

The Faculty of Oriental Studies and
The Faculty of Journalism, Information
and Book Studies



Programme

MONDAY 13.11.2023

9:00	Welcome
9:30–10:15 Keynote lecture	Marek Mejer: <i>Śakra, the King of Gods Asks the Buddha... Sa'i mdo (Bhūmi-sūtra), a Rare Sutra Found in the Manuscript Kanjurs from Ladakh, Co-translated by Rin chen bzang po</i>
10:15–11:00 Keynote lecture	Hildegard Diemberger: <i>Separating the Living from the Dead: Funerary Rituals and the 'Un-doing' of Kinship</i>
11:00–11:15	Coffee break
11:15–11:45	Ingeborg Baldauf: <i>Threat and Lure: What Central Asian Muslim Turkic Literary Texts Tell Us about the Hereafter</i>
11:45–12:15	Chiara Gasparini: <i>The Way of the Hu 胡: Tuyuhun-Tibetan Afterlife in the Making</i>
12:15–12:45	Fang Wang: <i>Between the Heaven and the Earth: Mural Depictions of Two Episodes from the Buddha's Life in Turfan</i>
12:45–13:15	Ebru Zeren: <i>Manichaean and Buddhist Heavens in Uyghur Eschatology</i>
13:15–14:30	Lunch
14:30–15:00	Yukiyo Kasai: <i>Afterlife in Uyghur Buddhism</i>
15:00–15:30	Katarzyna Marciniak: <i>Some Remarks on the Description of Hells in Selected Buddhist Sanskrit and Pali Texts</i>
15:30–16:00	Karolina Kłoszewska: <i>The Goddess Is Born: Death as the Beginning of Life in Tamil Tradition</i>
16:00–16:15	Coffee break
16:15–16:45	Joanna Białek: <i>Celestial Semantics or Where Heaven Was Born: A Lexicological Inquiry into the Conceptual World of Tibetans in the Tibetan Empire</i>
16:45–17:15	Gerald Kozicz: <i>Imagery as Visual Metaphors of Horror: Depictions of Suffering Used to Highlight the Effectiveness of the Dharma</i>
17:15–17:45	Pascale Dollfus: <i>Focus on Hell: The Buddhist Wheel of Rebirth in Western and Eastern Himalayas</i>
17:45–18:15	Agnieszka Helman-Ważny: <i>Long Life Ritual Manuscripts from the Drangsong Collection in Upper Mustang</i>
18:30	Concert: "Silken Amber" by Maria Pomianowska and Mingjie Yu
19:00	Dinner

TUESDAY 14.11.2023

9:30–10:00	Charles Ramble: <i>Halfway Houses for the Wandering Dead in Tibet and the Himalayas</i>
10:00–10:30	Petra Maurer: <i>How to Calculate One's Rebirth Realms</i>
10:30–11:00	Diana Lange: <i>Death is not the End: The Role of Cosmographic Maps in Representing the Afterlife in Tibet</i>
11:00–11:15	Coffee break
11:15–11:45	Berthe Jansen: <i>Yama, the Judge of the Underworld: Justice and Law in the Tibetan Buddhist Afterlife</i>
11:45–12:15	Brigitte Steinmann: <i>Classical and Baroque Hells in Hindu and Buddhist Mythologies in Nepal: Social Space as a Metaphorical Model of the Underworld</i>
12:15–12:45	David Andolfatto: <i>Hell on Earth. A Reassessment of Torture Scenes from Newari Struts</i>
12:45–14:30	Lunch
14:30–15:00	Cristiana Turini: <i>The Belief System of the Hä zhi pi in the Naxi Funeral Ritual Framework</i>
15:00–15:30	Ewa Paśnik-Tułowicka: <i>The Afterlife of the Transcendent. Representations of the Daoist Paradises in Chinese Religious and Fictional Literature</i>
15:30–16:00	Tianshu Zhu: <i>Ox-head, Horse-face and the Little-ghost: Images of the Hell-keepers (nārakas) in Buddhist Art</i>
16:00–16:15	Coffee break
16:15–16:45	Rita Kuzder: <i>A Text on Post-death and Overcoming Sins</i>
16:45–17:15	Zsuzsa Majer: <i>Separating the Hands (of the Living and the Dead): Data From Present-Day Mongolian Buddhist Practice on a Text for the Protection of the Bereaved</i>
17:15–17:45	Agata Bareja-Starzyńska: <i>Words and Images: Notes on Mongolian Buddhist Cosmological Terminology and Depictions</i>
17:45–18:15	Closing Remarks
18:30	Dinner

WEDNESDAY 15.11.2023

10:00–13:00	Museum visits: National Museum in Warsaw – Department of Oriental Art
-------------	---

ABSTRACTS

DAVID ANDOLFATTO

Hell on Earth. A Reassessment of Torture Scenes from Newari Struts

Torture scenes are not a widespread topic in the Newar art of the Kathmandu valley. While painted depictions of tortures can be found in the hell division of the Wheel of Life (Skt. *saṃsāra-cakra*) or in paintings of the Bardo, these images are related to Tibetan Buddhism. Nevertheless, two monuments of the valley contain carved wooden struts with representations of tortures. Interestingly, one of these monuments is a multi-tiered Hindu temple and the other one a Buddhist monastery (New. *bāhā*).

The Tadhicheñ Bāhā of Bhaktapur is a Buddhist monastic compound established in the 15th-16th century. Six of the courtyard's twenty-eight struts were installed in 1654 (NS 775). They are decorated with large carvings of the four Tathāgatas, of Vairocana and Vajrasattva. In the lower register, are representations of individuals submitted to all kinds of tortures. The scenes are explained by inscriptions engraved in Newari below them. The second monument is the Hariśaṅkara temple. Located on the Patan Durbar Square, this Hindu temple was consecrated in 1706. Twenty-eight struts support its lower overhanging roof. As in Tadhicheñ Bāhā, the main register is occupied by large images of deities, in this case Hanumān, Viṣṇu and Gaṇeśa, and torture scenes explained by inscriptions in the lower register.

Both sets of struts illustrate the specific punishments imposed on people who committed sins (New. *pāpa*). The struts were first mentioned by Aldabert Gail (1984), who published a translation of the inscriptions. This was followed by more recent mentions authored by Niels Gutschow (2011 and 2019). Despite these works' valuable contributions, little has been said about these images' contexts of production and the iconography of torture in the Newar context of the Kathmandu valley.

This paper will thus focus on two aspects of the struts: what they represent (the carvings) and what they say (the inscriptions). It will present edited readings of the inscriptions and compare their contents with punishments described in texts such as the *Manusmṛti* and the *Arthaśāstra*. Furthermore, the iconographies will be contextualised with their architectural location and in the broader context of Himalayan arts in order to investigate their precedents and their continuity.

INGEBORG BALDAUF

Threat and Lure: What Central Asian Muslim Turkic Literary Texts Tell about the Hereafter

The Hereafter is a favorite topic of popular literary texts that were read and recited among Turkic-speaking Central Asian Muslims until the end of the 20th century. The agony of death, distressful questioning in the grave, the dismay of Resurrection Day, painful punishment in hell and finally, the rewards awaiting the pious in paradise are laid out in a number of literary genres which all enjoyed wide circulation. Regardless of their often horrific content and wording, according to field research findings from the 1990s these texts were until then highly appreciated by performers and audiences alike, although Muslim reformists and Soviet-style enlighteners had spared no trouble in eradicating this kind of perceivedly backward popular religious beliefs and any practices related to them.

In my presentation, I will review selected text samples and try to address the question of what literary devices may have rendered these stories so attractive to audiences.

AGATA BAREJA-STARZYŃSKA

Words and Images: Notes on Mongolian Buddhist Cosmological Terminology and Depictions

Words evoke images. The paper will examine Buddhist names and terms used in the selected Mongolian cosmological depictions. Were they repeated by the well-known translators or created by each of them anew? Did they help to evoke certain images?

Study of cosmological depictions in the Mongolian language will include translations by the 16th-century Širegetü Güüsi Čorji and the 17th-century Oirat Zaya Pandita Nam mkha'i rgya mtsho in Classical Mongolian and the Oirat language which was recorded in the so-called "clear script" (*todo bičig*). The attempt will be made to trace whether cosmological terms and notions were used consistently within one text and by one translator.

The important revision of Mongolian Buddhist terminology was initiated in the 18th century together with the *Bstan 'gyur*'s translation and creation of the *Merged yarqu-yin oron* or *Dag yig mkhas pa'i byung gnas* dictionary. The translation of the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* dictionary into Mongolian followed. How did these dictionaries influence Mongolian imagination?

The present study will attempt to contribute to the understanding of Mongolian way of imagining heaven and hell and what lies between.

JOANNA BIAŁEK

Celestial Semantics or Where Heaven Was Born: A Lexicological Inquiry into the Conceptual World of Tibetans in the Tibetan Empire

Old Tibetan literature attests to the existence of at least several terms connoting the sky and, less certainly, in some cases maybe also heaven: *gnam*, *dguñ*, *nam ka*, *mkhay*, *mtho ris*, *bar snañ*, and *lha yul*. Some of them have complementary distribution: they occur in either non-Buddhist or Buddhist texts, but not in both; some other appear to be mere honorific forms, but the exact scope of denotation and connotations of the terms have never been studied. Moreover, considerable differences in their semantics are observed depending on whether a term is used in native Tibetan compositions or in texts translated from other languages. In order to fill the gap in our understanding of this subset of Old Tibetan vocabulary, I will examine the semantics of the terms, sketch their connotations and semantic prosody, reconstruct their etymologies, and trace their distribution in texts. Special attention will be paid to the term *nam ka* attested in the corpus with three quite diverging meanings: 'object carried in a funerary procession' (in later literature equated with *mdos* 'thread-cross'), 'dawn', and 'the sky'. A detailed lexicological analysis will shed more light on the history of the term, bringing us closer to the conceptual world of the Tibetans. The peculiar morphological form of *nam ka* suggests that we are dealing here with one polysemantic lexeme but the meanings are only hardly reconcilable. This term appears to have been central to beliefs of non-Buddhists as it was explicitly targeted by Buddhists in their re-interpretations and critiques, for instance, of non-Buddhist ideas about afterlife. It is also the term appropriated by Buddhists as *nam mkhay* for their concept of heaven. But in what way might the meanings 'thread-cross' (?), 'dawn', and 'the sky' have informed the concept of heaven? Especially as serious doubts might be raised whether non-Buddhist beliefs, as they are represented in the literature preserved from the imperial period, referred to a realm that could reasonably translate to English 'heaven'. In the paper, I will attempt to clarify to what extent non-Buddhist beliefs and religious practices might have influenced the early Tibetan Buddhist concept of heaven and what role the term *nam ka* (with its non-Buddhist cultural connotations) might have played in this conceptualisation.

PASCALE DOLLFUS

Focus on Hell: The Buddhist Wheel of Rebirth in Western and Eastern Himalayas

The wheel with 5 or 6 spokes as a representation of the process of rebirth is found all over Buddhist Asia (India, China, Tibet, Central Asia, and Japan).

At the center of the Wheel are the three animals—the bird, the snake, and the pig—which symbolize the three poisons of hatred, greed, and delusion. The paths of rebirth are arrayed around this hub: heaven and the gods are at the top, with humans and demi-gods; hell is at the bottom, with animals and hungry ghosts. The outermost ring of the circle surrounds them. It is divided into 12 segments, corresponding to the 12 links in the chain of dependent origination. A large demon, a dreadful form of Yama, the ‘Lord of Death’, grasps the wheel.

Wall paintings of the Wheel of Life or Wheel of Rebirth are found in most modern Tibetan Buddhist temples. They are located on the outer porch, where they can be seen before one enters the temple and even when the temple is locked. This location also allows them to be clearly visible in broad daylight, in contrast with the often dark interior of the temple. Hell and its torments are painted very vividly and at eye level—which certainly isn’t a coincidence. The Wheel of Rebirth is often the only painting, that local visitors who come to make offerings and prayers at the temple look at.

In our presentation, we will describe some examples of these paintings of Hell selected from Ladakh and Spiti at the Western end of the Himalayan range, and also in Eastern Himalayas from Shertukpen and Monpa Buddhist temples in North-East India.

CHIARA GASPARINI

The Way of the Hu 胡: Tuyuhun-Tibetan Afterlife in the Making

Information regarding Tuyuhun-Tibetan funerary practices is scant. The first and most important documents on early Tibetan History, the *Old Tibetan Annals* and the *Old Tibetan Chronicles*, found in Mogao Cave 17, in Dunhuang, Gansu Province, China, do not make any mention of their burial practices. Nonetheless, the material excavated in the western regions of China has revealed some similarities with early Türko-Mongolic and Iranian customs and traditions, but also a later preference for Chinese aesthetics. Besides metalworks and textiles, images on coffins from Dulan, Qinghai Province, have visually exemplified the nomadic lifestyle of Tuyuhun-Tibetan people living in the area, including the Türkic custom of self-laceration for mourning the dead. According to the *Zhou Shu* 周书 (*Book of Zhou*), when a Türk died, the body was laid in the tent while his family’s members sacrificed sheep and horses, then, they rode their horses around the tent seven times and slashed their faces each time they came to the opposite side of the tent’s entrance. Eventually, they burned all the dead’s belongings including the tent, and buried the ashes. After the fall of the first Türkic khaganate in the 7th century, however, the funerary custom of cremation was changed to burial. Not only does the material excavated suggest their Tuyuhun-Tibetan way of hunting, banqueting, and mourning in the nomadic way of Northern and Central Asian people, but also their further adoption of Chinese mythological iconography, such as the phoenix. Through a comparative analysis of the material from Gansu and Qinghai, this paper explores the key role of Türko-Mongolic and Iranian (at large) traditions, generally referred to in Chinese sources as *hu* 胡 (nomadic people or non-Chinese), and the eventual adoption of Chinese aesthetics in the making and transformation of Tuyuhun-Tibetan funerary context between the 7th and 9th century

AGNIESZKA HELMAN-WAŻNY

Long Life Ritual Manuscripts from the Drangsong Collection in Upper Mustang

This study explores the materiality of a selection of Long-life ritual manuscripts belonging to the Bon religion. They are part of the collection of 341 manuscripts, which were used by generations of royal priests belonging to a family named Drangsong. They contain for the most part ritual texts for the protection and prosperity of the kingdom of Mustang and its subjects. The presentation will discuss both symbolic and the technical details of the books examined, the interdependence of the format and function of these manuscripts, as well as their manufacturing materials in the context of their provenance, and the social history of the region. In particular, the connection between text, materials and ritual practices will be discussed based on the rituals performed in the region, as well as the physicochemical examination of the manuscripts designed to identify the materials used. These include detailed examination of the manuscripts' paper, such as identification of the raw materials using fibre analyses. Knowledge of both the materials and of the ritual practices involved in the creation of physical objects helps us to understand the interaction between religion, art and material culture.

BERTHE JANSEN

Yama, the Judge of the Underworld: Justice and Law in the Tibetan Buddhist Afterlife

Yama is seen not just as the lord of death but also as the dispenser of 'karmic justice'. Chinese literature provides access to elaborate descriptions of the judiciary proceedings in the afterlife, drawing on Daoist and Buddhist notions of what happens after death. These descriptions are depicted in some detail in Chinese paintings. Yama, as the ultimate judge, is seen as holding court in the various realms of the afterlife. The artworks are often instructive in imagining how actual court houses functioned.

In the Tibetan Buddhist context, Yama is often referred to in a similar way: the one who will weigh the deceased person's good and bad karma and pronounce the final judgment. This paper will explore the ways in which Yama is represented in Tibetan Buddhist literature (and art) as a judge and how this may help us understand Tibetan ideas of justice and fairness that go beyond the karma-based moral philosophies that abound in well-known Buddhist textbooks (such as the *lam rim* genre). Using 'das log stories, the Gesar epic, various works of poetry and story-telling, artworks, as well as legal texts, I will paint a picture of Yama as a judge in the underworld.

I will furthermore examine how, if at all, this very depiction is a reflection of how the Tibetan justice system was organized. To what extent was the judge in Tibetan Buddhist regions seen as a Yama in-the-flesh? By extension, could this provide us with information on justice, karma, and the role of the law in the Tibetan Buddhist lands of the living?

YUKIYO KASAI

Afterlife in Uyghur Buddhism

In the second half of the 10th/at the beginning of the 11th century, Buddhism became the major religion for the Uyghurs, a Turkish-speaking tribe, in Turfan. They translated many Buddhist texts into their language, Old Uyghur, and in many cases, their source languages are Tocharian or Chinese. Among them, there are some which describe the afterlife. One of the most famous texts is the *Foshuo yexiu shiwang sheng qi jing* 佛說預修十王生七經 [Scripture Spoken by the Buddha on Worshipping the Ten Kings for attaining Rebirth after Seven (by seven days)] which

was translated from Chinese. This text and the related rituals were widespread in the neighboring oasis of Turfan, Dunhuang, from which the Uyghurs absorbed various Buddhist elements. Thus, this text was probably translated into Old Uyghur in a close connection with Dunhuang.

However, some questions on the Uyghurs' conception of the afterlife stay unclear: Were the rituals based on this text also practiced in Turfan? Were there various conceptions of the afterlife in Turfan which based on different (Tocharian or Chinese) traditions? Did the Manichaean conception of the afterlife influence on that of the Buddhist Uyghurs? In my talk, I will discuss the Uyghurs' conception of the afterlife primarily on the basis of various ideas presented in different Buddhist texts in Old Uyghur and compare them with their counterpart, mostly in Chinese. In addition, artefacts in Turfan, the relevant sources, which tell us the Uyghurs' Buddhist worship, including their idea of the afterlife, are also taken into consideration.

KAROLINA KŁOSZEWSKA

The Goddess Is Born: Death as the Beginning of Life in Tamil Tradition

Death is an inseparable part of life but what if it does not mean the end? What if the dead person returns to earth and claims his rights? What if he or she receives divine powers after death and takes the revenge and all this with social approval? This kind of beliefs in post mortem deification is widely shared among Tamil rural communities and expressed in religious narratives such as legends or myths representing a death stories group (T. *iṛanta katai*). These stories have always two necessary factors constituting the plot and enabling the deification – suffering in life and vengeance after death. What is more, the death has to always be unjust and violent. It comes too soon and unexpectedly. Then, this kind of death is called 'bad' (T. *keṭṭatu maraṇam*) in Tamil language and it stands in opposite to a „good death” (T. *nalla maraṇam*) which is natural and expected.

The stories are most popular in rural Tamil nadu and they always share the same social context – a young woman unfairly accused of losing her virtue (T. *karpu*) is killed violently and returns as a furious village goddess craving for revenge. She brings diseases, plagues and death. Her ambivalent nature is highly troublesome and even though she sometimes acts supportively and graciously, she is generally a bloodthirsty and vicious deity. Further more, the goddess becomes a guardian deity of her home village where she receives a temple and iconic representations. People worship her and pray for her protection but, first of all, they share the burden of her fury. On the basis of these narrations there are religious poems of praise composed and sung during festivities or daily pujas to gain the grace of the goddess. They used to be only oral, but nowadays they represent Tamil folklore literature as they are published in a shape of the anthologies of songs and even regular books. The paper presents the mythological background to the religious poems focused on a violent death of a mortal woman and her after death deification and the poems themselves which generally show on the way how to deal with the deified victim, how to avoid her anger and win her favour.

GERALD KOZICZ

Imagery as Visual Metaphors of Horror: Depictions of Suffering Used to Highlight the Effectiveness of the Dharma

To begin with, I would want to comment on a key sentence of the call wherein it is stated that 'we know what these places (i.e. heaven and hell) look like'. We actually don't unless we refer to personal experience and, in the case of hell, trauma. What texts and images inform us about is the idea of hell that found expression through words and visual art in which descriptions of pain and suffering were used as metaphors to trigger emotions of fear and horror: physical

torture with the most immediate impact, but also heat and cold, hunger and thirst, physical handicap—the more brutal, the more visually effective; the more small-dosed, the more subtle and long-lasting. Even a simple, ever-evolving and repetitive task could become torture due to the impossibility to escape from it and create a hell on its own right.

I would like to focus on such metaphoric aspects. It is also about how such imagery displaying suffering were used to highlight the 'salvation' through the Dharma: Images of suffering used to contrast and thereby highlight the effectiveness of the Dharma. There are well-known iconographic configurations where such imagery of hell and suffering were essential for the understanding of the Buddhist Teaching: Hell as the worst-case scenario for rebirth in the south-eastern quarter outside the *Pariśodanamaṇḍala* or the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara feeding and thereby rescuing the Preta *Sūcimukha*, the 'needle head' who can't swallow anything because of contraction of his neck.

The talk will present as a case study a similar, hellish iconographic setting from a mural painting centering on *Vaiśravaṇa*, the God of Wealth, inside the temple of Skidmang in Upper Ladakh. The respective panel is on the entrance wall. Besides the God of Wealth holding the mongoose and sitting on his snow lion, it includes a wild bull with flaming horns, a shamanic looking priest and additional figures below. These figures create a sort of demonic „underworld“-like stage. The paper will provide an analysis of the painting which introduces a strong visual narrative aspect into the otherwise clear iconographic structure of the wall painting. It will also discuss the painting in context with the other major components of the entrance wall that flank the entrance: *Vajrabhairava* and the other three Guardian Kings of the Four Quarters.

The *Vaiśravaṇa* scene and its compositional elements seem unique among the murals of Ladakh and may reflect a specific iconography emerging from a Sakyapa background, the order that founded Skidmang in the 15th century.

RITA KUZDER

A Text on Post-death and Overcoming Sins

One of the pivots of Tibetan Buddhist teachings is the issue of life after death and rebirth, the possible forms of which (gods, demigods, humans, animals, pretas, and hell dwellers) are realized as a consequence of our actions. My presentation is based on a manuscript, which is a text about the situation after death and the overcoming of sins (Tib. འཇིག་རྟེན་ཕྱི་མའི་ལམ་རྒྱལ་ལེན་ཚུལ་དཔྱད་བའི་སྐུག་ལྷལ་བསམ་ཚུལ་དང་། ལས་ངོས་འཛིན་ནས་ཐྱིག་པ་ཕྱིར་བཅོས་ཚུལ་དང་། འཆི་བ་བསྐྱུ་བའི་ཐབས་སྟོགས་བཞུགས་སོ།། Wylie: *'jig rten phyi ma'i lam rgyags len tshul/ dmyal ba'i sdug sngal bsam tshul dang/ las ngos 'dzin nas sdig pa phyir bcos tshul dang/ 'chi ba bslu ba'i thabs sogs bzhugs so*) [File EAP031/1/9]. The text was digitized within the framework of the Endangered Archives Program [Project EAP031].

The chosen text belongs to the manuscripts of Danzan Ravjaa (Tib. *bstan 'dzin rab gyas*; 1803–1857) [Collection EAP031/1], the 5th incarnation in the lineage of the Gobi Noyons, whose monastery was the centre of a political and artistic renaissance at the crossroads of Tibet, Mongolia and China in the 19th century. Danzan Ravjaa is significant for his eclectic religious outlook that combined both the reformed 'Yellow Hat' and the unreformed 'Red Hat' sects of Tibetan Buddhism. Besides his eclectic religious orientation, he was an artist and polymath who left behind scores of operas, poems, and prophecies. In 1938, during the suppression of Buddhism in Mongolia under the communist regime, Danzan Ravjaa's works were hidden in the mountains along with the rest of the monastery's artistic and intellectual heritage. A map was passed down from father to son in the family of the monastery's gatekeepers. After the transition to democracy in 1991, the current gatekeeper, Altangerel, unearthed 24 crates of manuscripts and artifacts which he housed in a small museum.

DIANA LANGE

Death is not the End: The Role of Cosmographic Maps in Representing the Afterlife in Tibet

In 1994 the geographer Joseph Schwartzberg provided in his “Maps of Greater Tibet” a first general overview of the cartography of Tibet, published in the “History of Cartography Series”. Schwartzberg suggests that the roots of cartography in Tibet extend far back in time and probably first took hold outside the region itself; and that it seems clear that Tibetan cartography owes much to foreign cultural influences, in particular from India and China. Tibetan maps have evolved over many centuries and assume many forms. Schwartzberg distinguished between cosmographic maps and geographic Tibetan maps. In general it can be stated that cosmographic mapping has a long and rich history in Tibet. Cosmographic maps include mandala, bhavacakra (Tib. *srid pa'i 'khor lo*) or wheel of life, lineage fields, Mount Meru world-system, depictions portions of the universe such as various heavens and hells, and astrological and geomantic charts. Other cosmographic maps focus on a geometrically ordered assembly of its deities. Such maps were made for example to support religious education and meditation, they were also made as adjuncts to illuminated religious texts or to glorify places of religious importance such as pilgrimage site. Since stylistic and iconographic canons play an important role in Tibetan painting, sculpture, and architecture it is not surprising that these rules were also applied for the production of cosmographic maps. Using the example of the bhavacakra I want to demonstrate how scenes of the afterlife are represented in Tibetan cosmographic maps and how such maps influenced the production of Tibetan geographical maps.

ZSUZSA MAJER

Separating the Hands (of the Living and the Dead): Data From Present-Day Mongolian Buddhist Practice on a Text for the Protection of the Bereaved

My presentation will be about, based on fieldworks on after-death rituals in Mongolia, a short ritual text used in current after-death practices as well to cut the connection between the dead and a relative who is supposed to be, based on astrologic calculations, in danger due to this connection.

Buddhist lamas in Mongolia have a twofold task in their after-death duties. Consequently, after-death texts also belong to two main groups: texts for the deceased helping the quicker and better rebirth and texts for the protection of the bereaved, the relatives, being different *zasal* (Tib. *bcos thabs*, ‘remedy’) or *gürem* texts (Tib. *sku rim*, protective prayer-ritual, healing ceremony). Of the many text types used for the protection of the bereaved I will present on two Tibetan versions of *Gar salgakh*, ‘separating the hands’ gained at my fieldworks in Mongolia in 2016 and 2017. The short Tibetan title is *lag brel*, ‘grasping hands’, the longer title is *gson gshin lag brel bral pa'i bcos thabs*, ‘the method for separating the grasping hands of the living and the dead’. Alice Sárközi had published two articles on such a text in the Oriental Collection of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Egy mongol halotti szertartás kézikönyve, 1993, A Bon Funeral Rite in Lamaist Mongolia, 1987), but these versions from present-day practice are much shorter. My field researches supplement well her work, as first-hand information from present-day ritual practice make more interesting the precious material preserved in libraries mirroring older practice.

The aim of this ritual which is done in the presence of the dead body and the given relative, possibly in the home of the deceased, is to separate the dead and the living. The ritual is based on the assumption that the demons or evil spirits who caused the death may also be a danger to the relatives, especially to those who are in a way the ‘same as’ or ‘similar to’ the deceased, that is, whose astrological signs are the same as that of the deceased (*nas baragchtai khamt neg*

suudald suukhad). The two versions are very similar in their structure (short text describing the ritual in a practical form, including the mantras, and a simple drawing with short explanatory inscriptions), text and terminology. However, the details of performing the rite can vary, as it is clear from the interviews I conducted with Mongolian lamas performing the rite. The ritual today exists in a shortly performable form, the main element of which is the recitation of the mantras included in the text and the usage of the drawings of the black and white hands: joining them by a string then cutting this connecting thread by which act the ritual, the 'separation' itself is performed.

In my presentation I will speak shortly on the different types of texts for the protection of the bereaved and the different notions behind them to place this text in context, then show the two short texts and speak about the details gained in the interviews on how it is performed today.

KATARZYNA MARCINIAK

Some Remarks on the Description of Hells in Selected Buddhist Sanskrit and Pali Texts

The paper presents some observations on the description of Buddhist hells as preserved in the chapter *Narakaparivarta* ("Chapter on hells") of the Buddhist Sanskrit text *Mahāvastu* ascribed to the school Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravāda. The account has been preserved in prose as well as in verses. However, in the *Mahāvastu* the text is partially corrupted. The verses have been preserved also in the Pāli text *Lokapaññatti* and the Chinese translation found in the Taishō Tripitaka (vol. 32, no. 1644). Some of the verses parallel with those preserved in several other Buddhist texts, such as *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Pāli *Jātaka*, *Majjhima-Nikāya*, *Mahāniddeśa*, and others. Some of the stanzas have been preserved also in Sanskrit fragments, edited by Kazunobu Matsuda as "Bonbun danpen Loka-prajñapti ni tsuite" (梵文断片 Loka-prajñapti について; Sanskrit Fragments of the Loka-prajñapti).

There are some interesting variant readings in the verses preserved in the various aforementioned Buddhist Sanskrit and Pāli texts. Through their comparison, it has become possible to improve the distorted readings in the *Mahāvastu*, as well as pointing out variant readings and differences in the understanding and interpretation of particular passages in the extant versions of the account. Moreover, we can behold how the Chinese translator of the chapter dealt with the passages that had become obscure. Also, in some cases, the Chinese translation has proved helpful in reconstructing the original readings which had become vague or distorted in the accounts extant in the Buddhist Sanskrit and Pāli texts.

PETRA MAURER

How to Calculate One's Rebirth Realms

In the Buddhist cultural context, rebirth is usually determined by *las* (Skt. *karma*), that is to say, the good and bad deeds someone commits in his life.

Tibetan divination provides another method to determine a person's realm for rebirth that is not connected with one's actions in life: the calculation.

Divinatory texts such as the *White Beryl* ascribed to the regent Sanggye Gyatso (Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho 1653-1705) and the *Wish-fulfilling Tree* by Lobzang Tsultrim Gatso (Blo bzang tshul khriims rgya mtsho 1896-?) explain several methods of calculating one's rebirth realm.

According to Tibetan divination, time is determined by astronomical constellations and specific entities that are partly introduced from China. These time-related dimensions determine not only the calendar calculation but create a specific system for each person. These dimensions

are, for example, the twelve zodiac signs, the planets, the nine dots or *mewa (sme ba)* and eight trigrams (*spar kha*), the bone element (*rus khams*), and also the activities of specific space lords (*sa bdag*). The individual entity and their reciprocal relation to each other determine the life of each person with its ups and downs, well-being, and diseases.

Moreover, Tibetan divinatory concepts assume an influence on a person's death and rebirth; that is to say, the constellation at the moment of a person's death determines his / her realm of rebirth, his sex, his possible activities in the next life, and even the animal species in case of rebirth in the animal realm. Occasionally, religious activities might help to change the rebirth determined by these entities.

The present paper introduces some of these constellations with their impact on a person's rebirth realm.

MAREK MEJOR

Śakra, the King of Gods Asks the Buddha... Sa'i mdo (Bhūmi-sūtra), a Rare Sutra Found in the Manuscript Kanjurs from Ladakh, Co-translated by Rin chen bzang po

The Buddha dwells in the Thirty-Three heaven, among the Thirty-Three Gods. Śakra, the king of the gods, approaches the Buddha with questions formulated in verse – which living beings go to a good state of existence? Which living beings attain the heaven? Which living beings increase their merit day and night? The Buddha explains in 25 verses what kind of meritorious actions should be done to attain a good state and rebirth in heaven. The *Sa'i mdo / Bhūmi-sūtra* shows some affinities with the canonical Pali *Sakka-pañha-sutta* (Dīgha Nikāya 21) and the Sanskrit *Śakra-praśna-sūtra* (Turfan). The text has been preserved in the Tibetan translation made by Indian paṇḍita Padmākaravarman and Tibetan lotsava Rin chen bzang po (958-1055). The Sūtra is found only in a few manuscript Kanjur editions from the Them spangs pa group, viz. in two Kanjurs from Ladakh – Stog (#172) and Shey (#203), Tokyo (#173), Ulaanbaator (#222) and Bhutan Kanjurs as well as in the Western Tibetan canonical collections (www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/rKTs916).

Bu ston mentioned the *Sa'i mdo* among the texts translated but not available at his time (Nishioka I, 1983: 68 #100).

EWA PAŚNIK-TUŁOWIECKA

The Afterlife of the Transcendent. Representations of the Daoist Paradises in Chinese Religious and Fictional Literature

The main aim of the presentation is to describe and analyse the different representations of paradise in the Daoist religious and the literary texts. The presentation focuses mainly on texts from the Chinese middle ages (ca. 4th–6th) such as the 《真誥》 *Zhengao* (Declarations of the Perfected) - composed at the end of the 5th century, one of the most famous Daoist religious texts, but also short stories called 志怪小說 *zhiguai xiaoshuo* (stories about supernatural phenomena).

The presentation also summarises the various ways of obtaining transcendence, i.e. the conditions that had to be fulfilled to be able to enter the Daoist paradise which also refers to a certain “in-between” state, because as it requires a certain transformation mainly of the body, but also of the immaterial substances present in the body.

In contrast to the topic of the Chinese hell, representations of Daoist hereafter are not a topic that is frequently addressed by scholars of Chinese literature or religion, so this presentation is a valuable addition to the state of research on the Chinese afterworld.

CHARLES RAMBLE

Halfway Houses for the Wandering Dead in Tibet and the Himalayas

It is well known that when followers of Tibetan Buddhism or the Bon religion die, their consciousness traverses an intermediate stage before being reborn in one of the six realms of cyclic existence. The fate of the deceased in many Himalayan societies, like that of Tibetans who do not subscribe completely to Buddhist orthodoxy, is less clear. To begin with, it is not their consciousness but their soul that survives their physical body, and while they do not (usually) reincarnate but travel to a distant realm of the dead, it is not very clear what that realm is like. However, these disembodied souls are often provided with temporary accommodation where the living can interact with them, feeding them and reassuring them, before letting them continue on their onward way. Drawing on ethnographic research in the Himalaya as well as on Tibetan literary sources, including the recently-discovered Drangsong manuscript collection in Mustang, Nepal, this presentation will consider a number of post-mortem rituals surrounding such platforms – which include elaborate effigies or simpler receptacles of clay, cloth or paper – before addressing certain problems concerning the nature of the Tibetan “soul-stone” (*bla rdo*).

BRIGITTE STEINMANN

Classical and Baroque Hells in Hindu and Buddhist Mythologies in Nepal: Social Space as a Metaphorical Model of the Underworld

In Tibetan-inspired cosmologies in Nepal, gShin rje is the “king of the underworld”. But he is more popularly referred to by his Sanskrit name of Yama, Yama rāja or “King Yama,” forming a pair with his consort, “Yama rānī.” The rNying ma pa Tamangs lamas, in their funeral rites, refer to these infra-mundane places as Narak, while the shamans, bompos, speak of pātala. For the latter, these are places where other infernal entities reign, acolytes of Yama, whom they call Onga rāja, Onga rānī, fallen kings venerated exclusively by them in their songs and their hunts for the lost souls of the sick. They confront these hellish beings and bargain hard for the person’s life, in exchange for statuette-substitutes (tormos, solmos), ransoms for the demons.

Hell, as described in the books of the rNying ma pa, is classically linked to the “six modes of the sphere of passions”, or “six destinies” (*kham*s). There are hot and cold hells described, as well as other subsidiary and ephemeral hells. Being reborn in these different hellish worlds is conditioned by the sum of negative acts, especially those produced by anger. Many masked dance performances (*cham*), particularly in Sikkim, feature the moment of the weighing of souls by the judge of the dead, who stands at the gate of the underworld and weighs the good and bad deeds that will decide the fate of the deceased.

Now, among the Tamangs of Nepal, it is an intermediary character between the lamas and the shamans, the aedic Tamba, who explains to his flock the close relationship that exists, in fact, between the spaces “above” and the infra-underworlds. The judgment of the dead, which decides on good or bad deeds, is closely conditioned by the nature of the “soul” (*bla*, *srog* or *rnam shes*) which goes to the Underworld to be judged, and which leaves or does not leave the body of the deceased (becoming then an ectoplasmic vampire, *shinde* [*gshin 'dre*] or *'dre*, attacking the living).

To explain the ambiguities and contradictions found between indigenous notions and Buddhist dogma, and the extraordinary difficulties of human consciousness in imagining absolute disappearance, nothingness, the popular imagination devised a way to escape the horror of the underworld, borrowing from the syncretism between Christian and Buddhist ideas an idea of defilement resulting from “horrific promiscuity” in social spaces: “by dint of frequenting bad places, places filled with miasma, where one finds no place to urinate, defecate or spit!”, the Tam-

ba explains to his flock that one is condemned to wander in the same way after death, in an eternal reclusion in the middle of pestilence.

We assume that this baroque image of the Underworld is a faithful reflection of the reclusion of populations defeated by the Hindus, pushed back into remote and infertile spaces, suspected of incestuous promiscuity, and impurity due to their drunkenness, their taste for meat and fornication. It thus appears, in the speeches of the Tamba, a form of “baroque theology” resembling point for point the ideas introduced in Christendom by the Jesuits, about the representations of Hell as a place where there is no latrine, a space filled with fetid sewers, pestilential emanations, where one is condemned to wander in an atrocious promiscuity in the middle of the mire and the spittle. Now, lamas and shamans perform all kinds of exorcisms, frenetic dances and apotropaic conjurations while men are still alive, creating an anti-model suggested by the popular culture of satire and carnival (Saturnalia) that accompanies and follows the great funerary and ancestral rituals, in order to eliminate the terror of the common destiny of mortals through laughter and wackiness.

CRISTIANA TURINI

The Belief System of the Hä zhi pi in the Naxi Funeral Ritual Framework

Many Tibeto-Burman groups in Southwest China, including the Yi, Lisu, and the Pumi, share a conception of space associated with migrations and ancestors. The ancestral road map or *Hä zhi pi* (Gods' Road Map) of the Naxi people is traditionally used in funeral ceremonies to guide the soul of the deceased to the realm of the gods/ancestors. It is a painted hempen or cotton cloth scroll, some 10-15 meters long and 35-40 centimeters wide, illustrating various levels of the underworld, human world and heavens. It consists of two parts, the first showing rather briefly the nine black spurs guarded by demons and the second depicting the various stages of the road from hell to heaven that the deceased must travel before he gets to his ancestors. Although the structure and content of Naxi funeral rituals may vary according to the wealth, age, sex, and manner of death of the deceased, all of them include the use of some version of the Gods' Road Map.

The aim of the proposed paper is to investigate the connections between the content of *Hä zhi pi* and the Naxi funeral ritual framework, between the images in the Gods' Road Map, ritual action, and funeral rituals manuscripts.

FANG WANG

Between the Heaven and the Earth: Mural Depictions of two Episodes from the Buddha's Life in Turfan

This survey examines four mural scenes discovered at Buddhist sites in the Old Uyghur Kingdom of Turfan (9th-13th centuries) that depict two legends from the early life of the Buddha. They include a scene from Toyok Cave VI that illustrates the conception, showing the Bodhisatva on an elephant, and three other scenes situated in Sengim Cave 6, Baixiha Cave 2 and the ground monastery Chotscho Ruin β respectively, each of which represents the great departure, showing the Bodhisatva on a horse. These murals are the only known depictions of these two events in the life of the Buddha in Turfan art. Located in close proximity to each other, they share the common feature of being placed separately in a central medallion on the ceiling, emphasizing their symbolic significance more than their narrative elements.

Two of the medallions, the scene of the conception and one of the representations of the great departure, are surrounded by constellation diagrams which bear resemblance to astral representations found on tomb ceilings in North China. The central placement of these scenes

and the background filled with radiating rays suggest that they may have been conceived as the sun or the moon by the local Uyghurs. The knowledge that Manichaeism in Turfan once coexisted with Buddhism and—together with it—shaped daily religious life supports the interpretation of these scenes as related to the salvation in the afterlife. It will therefore be suggested that the Turfan paintings under discussion which depict episodes from the life of the Buddha in medallions filled with radiating rays or even surrounded by astral bodies, serve as symbols of light and of a soteriology encompassing both the present life and the afterlife. These paintings are innovative means to express such a symbolism; they depart from earlier artistic narratives of the Buddha's life in Kucha, thus reflecting the unique cultural milieu of Turfan.

EBRU ZEREN

Manichaean and Buddhist Heavens in Uyghur Eschatology

Uyghurs, whose main national faith was Sky God Religion (or Tengrism), officially adopted Manichaeism in mid-8th century in Mongolia under Bögü Kagan's reign. After migrating to Turfan and Kansu regions and establishing new states, they converted to Buddhism in the 10th century due to the intense Buddhist culture prevailing in Eastern Turkestan. Uyghur Manichaeism, which is studied under Eastern Manichaeism and carrying significant Buddhist impacts, came together more with Buddhism as they simultaneously survived for some period and Manichaean cave shrines were later used as Buddhist temples, i.e. in Khotcho. So, this amazing history brought to today via texts and magnificent art works, gives us many clues regarding the interactions of two religions' eschatologies.

In almost every religion, heaven is defined as the final absolute place where people with good deeds is rewarded, welcomed with amazing nature, music, fragrance and heavenly creatures dancing, chanting and serving them. There is no more pain, examination or worries. But the real award is to be with God, in God's realm with a transcendent existence. In some religions having multiple gods, there are many heavens, i.e. countless Buddha realms as there are countless Buddhas.

In Manichaeism, the unique heaven, called the "Realm of Light", implicitly takes its name from its God, "Father of Light". In the first period, this is the primordial realm of Father of Light where he lives with his retinue before Darkness attacks. The later form of heaven is completed when all light particles mixed with dark elements are purified and returned to the Realm of Light, in the peaceful time of third period. Manichaean eschatological texts describe how light particles ascended to heaven and were received by Maiden of Light. This belief has also visual representation, thanks to Manichaean Uyghurs' miniatures and textiles where the heaven is described with flowers, musicians and dancers. Heaven is symbolized with the Tree of Life and the heavenly beings gathered around it in Uyghur wall paintings in Sengim and Bezeklik caves.

In Buddhism, there are favorable Buddhas whose believers pray to reach their heavens to get rid of their bad deeds before they are reborn. This fact is visible in Buddhist iconography in the form of babies born from lotus flowers. The best-known heavens are Sukhavati of Buddha Amitabha and Tushita of Buddha Maitreya. There are plenty of texts and images describing these heavens in Uyghur Buddhist art and literature. In Buddhist heaven scenes, the centered Buddha, mostly in preaching form, is surrounded by bodhisattvas, devas, yakshas, apsaras and gandharvas. Donors sometimes feature as small figures at the bottom of the scene, decorated with lotus flowers, palmets, silk banners, pool, etc.

In this paper, the common literal and visual motives of Uyghur Manichaean and Buddhist heavens will be analyzed in order to trace the intense interactions of these two religions in Central Asia, especially during the Uyghur period.

TIANSHU ZHU

Ox-head, Horse-face and the Little-ghost: Images of the Hell-keepers (nārakas) in Buddhist Art

In China, Ox-head and Horse-face (*niutou mamian* 牛头马面) are known as the heads of the hell-keepers (*nārakas*), who are called *xiaogui* 小鬼, or the little-ghosts. They are the torturers and the guards in hell. Their images can be traced back to the 6th century in Chinese Buddhist art, and their iconographies have remained rather consistent since then. The former are animal headed beings, and the latter have up-standing hair and often bony bodies. They eall bare torso and wear only a short *dhoti*. Such images of the ox-head, horse-face and the little-ghost spread in east Asia and even appeared in Tibetan Buddhist art. This paper is a study of the formation of these iconographies, which I believe come from two sources, mainly related images from Central Asia and Gandhāra, and the indigenous Chinese images of spirits.