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**TOWARD A TYPOLOGY OF  
CHÖDRUP'S (TIB. CHOS GRUB, CHIN.  
FACHENG 法成) CURSIVE  
HANDWRITING: A  
PALAEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE**

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TOWARD A TYPOLOGY OF CHÖDRUP’S (TIB. CHOS GRUB,  
CHIN. FACHENG 法成) CURSIVE HANDWRITING:  
A PALAEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE\*

CHANNA LI

*Abstract*

In this paper, I focus on the palaeography of a collection of eight Tibetan manuscripts hypothesised to have been written by the same scribal hand. The eight manuscripts—IOL Tib J 217, IOL Tib J 686, IOL Tib J 687, IOL Tib J 625, IOL Tib J 588, IOL Tib J 619, P. T. 770, and P. T. 783v—are closely related, not merely in light of their sophisticated cursive handwriting, but also by virtue of their common textual genre (being summaries or commentaries rather than direct scriptural translations) and thematic content: these Tibetan texts were all based on Chinese sources and attributed to Gö Chödrup (fl. first half of the 9th c., Tib. 'Gos Chos grub, Chin. Wu Facheng 吳法成), either directly or indirectly. Moreover, many manuscripts produced by the imperial Tibetan copying project contain editorial records written in the same hand; these records indicate that Chödrup acted as the final proofreader. Therefore, we can now more confidently attribute this hand to Chödrup himself. By establishing a typology of this handwriting and offering a table of how syllables are written by this hand in the appendix, this paper contributes to a better reading of manuscripts containing this type of script and can potentially provide a benchmark for further recognition of works written in the same hand.

1. *Introduction*

Manuscripts are not only carriers of texts, but also artefacts. Beyond transmitting intellectual or literary messages, a manuscript is also an archaeological object *per se*, the material outcome of a social and human endeavour.<sup>1</sup> Having first flourished in Western classical, medieval, and

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early modern studies, the sciences of codicology, orthography, and palaeography have also been taken up in the studies of the Dunhuang (敦煌) manuscripts in recent decades.<sup>2</sup> Amid this academic trend, pioneering Dunhuang scholars have cast ever more light on the material aspects of Dunhuang manuscripts in order to reveal new social and historical data.<sup>3</sup> By applying codicology, orthography, and palaeography

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acknowledge the inspiration I received from the pioneering works of Cristina Scherrer-Schaub, Sam van Schaik, Brandon Dotson, and Jacob Dalton in the palaeographical studies of Dunhuang manuscripts. Last but not least, I extend my thanks to Wenjing Zeng, at Lanzhou University, for her help in acquiring photos of Dunhuang manuscripts preserved in Gansu that have been recently published in China.

<sup>1</sup> Christina Scherrer-Schaub and George Bonani, “Establishing a Typology of the Old Tibetan Manuscripts: A Multidisciplinary Approach,” in *Dunhuang Manuscript Forgeries*, ed. Susan Whitfield (London: British Library, 2002), 186. The bifunctional role of manuscripts is summarised as “archaeological object (materiality)” and “intellectual or cultural message (textual content)”.

<sup>2</sup> The basic concerns of codicology in European intellectual traditions and the application of this discipline to South Asian/Tibetan studies have been discussed previously in Christina Scherrer-Schaub, “Towards a Methodology for the Study of Old Tibetan Manuscripts: Dunhuang and Tabo,” in *Tabo Studies II*, ed. Christina Scherrer-Schaub and Ernst Steinkellner (Rome: IsMEO, 1999), 3–36. Also cf. Scherrer-Schaub and Bonani, “Establishing a Typology of the Old Tibetan Manuscripts.” The history of palaeography in South Asian and Tibetan studies is briefly summarised in Sam van Schaik, “Towards a Tibetan Palaeography: Developing a Typology of Writing Styles in Early Tibet,” in *Manuscript Cultures: Mapping the Field*, ed. Jörg Quenzer, Dmitry Bondarev, and Jan-Ulrich Sobisch (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 299–300.

<sup>3</sup> Agnieszka Helman-Ważny and Sam van Schaik, “Witnesses for Tibetan Craftsmanship: Bringing Together Paper Analysis, Palaeography and Codicology in the Examination of the Earliest Tibetan Manuscripts,” *Archaeometry* 55.4 (2013): 707–41; Brandon Dotson and Agnieszka Helman-Ważny, *Codicology, Paleography, and Orthography of Early Tibetan Documents: Methods and a Case Study* (Vienna: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2016); Jacob Dalton, Sam van Schaik, and Tom Davis, “Beyond Anonymity: Palaeographic Analyses of the Dunhuang Manuscripts,” *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies* 3 (2007): 1–23; Sam van Schaik, “The Origin of the Headless Script (Dbu Med) in Tibet,” in *Medieval Tibeto-Burman Languages IV*, ed. Nathan Hill (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 411–46; Sam van Schaik, “Dating Early Tibetan Manuscripts: A Paleographical Method,” in *Scribes, Texts, and Rituals in Early Tibet and Dunhuang*, ed. Brandon Dotson, Iwao Kazushi, and Tsuguhito Takeuchi (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2013), 119–135; Sam van Schaik, “Towards a Tibetan Palaeography”; Sam van Schaik, “The Uses of Implements Are Different: Reflections on the Functions of Tibetan Manuscripts,” in *Tibetan Manuscript and Xylograph Traditions*, ed. Orna Almogi (Hamburg: Universität Hamburg, 2016), 221–242; Sam van Schaik, Agnieszka Helman-Ważny, and Renate Nöller, “Writing, Painting and Sketching at Dunhuang: Assessing the Materiality and Function of

to deciphering manuscripts, Dunhuang scholars are better able to determine their historic scope: for instance, limiting a manuscript to a specific period based on the manuscript format; locating a manuscript in a particular social or religious context on the grounds of its script type; or even identifying the individual figure (or group) that was behind the writing of the document.<sup>4</sup> The most well-received study in this direction is Sam van Schaik's proposal of five styles of Dunhuang Tibetan script: epigraphic style, square style, *sūtra* style, official (headed or headless) style, and monastic style.<sup>5</sup> By associating different writing styles with distinct literary genres from different historical periods, he has successfully laid the groundwork for a palaeographical approach to manuscript dating.

That being said, while several years have passed since van Schaik's foundational work, there have been no analytical studies aimed at establishing the typologies of individual scribes<sup>6</sup> in Dunhuang Tibetan studies. This is not because we lack the materials needed to identify

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Early Tibetan Manuscripts and Ritual Items,” *Journal of Archaeological Science* 53 (2015): 110–132; Scherrer-Schaub, “Towards a Methodology for the Study of Old Tibetan Manuscripts”; Scherrer-Schaub and Bonani, “Establishing a Typology of the Old Tibetan Manuscripts.”

<sup>4</sup> As I will elaborate in the following discussion, scholars have established a basic scheme for establishing these palaeographical typologies by collecting multiple idiosyncratic *ductus* features (including the number, direction, angle, and sequence of strokes), peculiar ligatures, punctuation, and so forth. Cf. Dotson and Helman-Ważny, *Codicology, Paleography, and Orthography of Early Tibetan Documents*, 91–93; van Schaik, “The Origin of the Headless Script (Dbu Med) in Tibet,” 417–418.

<sup>5</sup> Van Schaik, “Dating Early Tibetan Manuscripts” and “Towards a Tibetan Palaeography.”

<sup>6</sup> In this article, when I state that Chödruṃ was the potential scribe, I mean solely that he was possibly the one who wrote the text down. It is by no means a statement concerning his social or labour status. In most cases, I argue that he was both the author and the scribe of his own compositions, whereas in less frequent cases, he was the commentator of his own compositions that had been written down by others (possibly his students or fellow monks). Of course, he indeed served as scribe in the imperial Tibetan *sūtra*-copying project (see fn. 54). However, since the scribes of such official projects may have adopted a prescribed writing style, it is difficult to say whether these manuscripts can reflect Chödruṃ's idiosyncratic handwriting. Therefore, I exclude the texts produced from the copious copying project as the object of study in this paper. Future studies of the copious copying project in imperial Tibet, however, are very likely to identify more specific scribes.

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individual hands;<sup>7</sup> on the contrary, an experienced reader of Dunhuang texts may already notice the same hands across multiple manuscripts. The overall quantity of scribal writings in Dunhuang preserves enough raw material to identify scribes. Moreover, since large numbers of manuscripts were produced (or reprocessed) from the same few main temples in Dunhuang,<sup>8</sup> we potentially have various manuscripts copied by the same teams—or even the same scribes—affiliated with the same temples. In addition, many Dunhuang manuscripts exhibit strong thematic coherence. For instance, many of them are intellectual writings concerning the same figure or doctrinal lineage. This thematic coherence can facilitate the recognition of particular handwriting styles: sparing us the trouble of finding a needle in a haystack, we can limit an initial search for the same hand to a group of manuscripts with a congruent theme. In sum, the large quantity, the common institutional affiliations and strong thematic coherence of Dunhuang manuscripts predict that a palaeographical analysis of Dunhuang manuscripts would be quite fruitful.

In the following discussion, I will concentrate on a hand that appears in one group of thematically connected Dunhuang manuscripts. I will argue that the scribe of this handwriting can plausibly be identified: namely, it is the handwriting I ascribe to Chödrup, the famous Dunhuang-based bilingual translator. As an empirical study in applying palaeography to identifying individual scribes, I will start with an overview of Chödrup's intellectual heritage. I will then proceed to a selection of manuscripts arguably copied by Chödrup and use them as the basis for building a typology of his handwriting. I will show that this typology can further be applied to improve the readings of manuscripts with similar cursive hands, and can tentatively be used to recognise more of Chödrup's works.

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<sup>7</sup> As an excellent model to follow, Linne Mooney's project "Late Medieval English Scribes" also focused on the writings of specific authors (accessed October 8, 2020. <https://www.medievalscribes.com>).

<sup>8</sup> Rong Xinjiang 荣新江, "Dunhuang Cangjingdong De Xingzhi Jiqi Fengbi Yuanyin 敦煌藏经洞的性质及其封闭原因 [The Nature of the Dunhuang Scripture Cave and the Reason for Its Sealing]," *Dunhuang tulufan yanjiu* 敦煌吐鲁番研究 [Dunhuang and Turfan Studies] 2 (1996): 23–48. Translated into English by Valerie Hansen, "The Nature of the Dunhuang Scripture Cave and the Reason for its Sealing," in *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 11 (1999): 247–275.

## 2. Methodological Remarks

There is a good candidate for Chödrup's handwriting, which was identified by Ueyama Daishūn (上山大峻) thirty years ago<sup>9</sup> and is termed by Sam van Schaik as the "monastic style".<sup>10</sup> What prevents van Schaik from unreservedly accepting Ueyama's identification is the lack of direct information about Chödrup's writing style and the incomplete knowledge about Chödrup's bibliography. In the following sections of this paper, I will attempt to test against Ueyama's argument to see whether it is possible to ascribe this hand to Chödrup in a more analytical and scientific manner.<sup>11</sup> Before that, some methodological remarks are in order here.

We can use the concept of set in mathematics to represent our argument in a more graphic way. We define that the whole set refers to the whole Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts; S1 indicates the subset of 'manuscripts authored by Chödrup'; S2 is the subset of 'manuscripts written in the monastic style'; and S3 is the complement of S1, which refers to 'manuscripts not authored by Chödrup'. For the argument that the 'monastic style' of script is ascribed to Chödrup, it can be valid in two situations:

In the first situation, that the monastic style of script is ascribed to Chödrup (or to his intellectual circle) must be valid when two promises, namely, 'texts in manuscripts written in the monastic style can be ascribed to Chödrup' (Promise 1) and 'manuscripts not containing texts falling into the category of Chödrup's intellectual heritage do not contain such a hand' (Promise 2) are both true. Promise 1 can be expressed as: S2 'manuscripts written in the monastic style' is a subset of S1 'manuscripts authored by Chödrup'; and Promise 2 can be expressed as: S3 'manuscripts not authored by Chödrup' has no interaction with S2. See Fig. 1.

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<sup>9</sup> Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū*, 93, 154; see also Ueyama, "Daibankoku daitoku sanzōhōshi shamohōjō no kenkyū (jō)," 194. However, Kapstein ("The Tibetan Yulanpen Jing," 245) has translated the colophon as "composed by the *bhikṣu* Chödrup", which seems avoid the question of whether Chödrup was the scribe.

<sup>10</sup> Van Schaik, "Dating Early Tibetan Manuscripts," 124.

<sup>11</sup> Here, Chödrup can also be understood as a cultural identifier, representing the group of disciples or followers who always wrote down Chödrup's works.

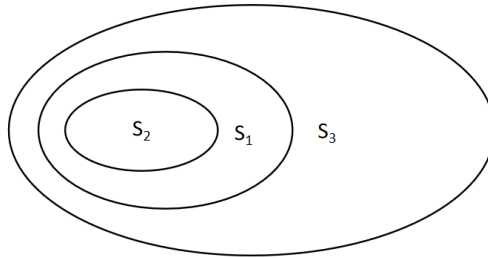


Figure 1. The first situation in which the monastic style of script could be ascribed to Chödru

In the second situation, the monastic script is possible to have been written by Chödru when at least one part of the manuscripts written in the monastic style are ascribed to Chödru. This is the situation in which Chödru copied other people's works. In mathematics, it is expressed that  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  have an intersection and  $S_2$  is not necessarily a subset of  $S_1$ . The intersection between  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  in dotted lines means manuscripts written in the monastic style and ascribed to Chödru. See Fig. 2.

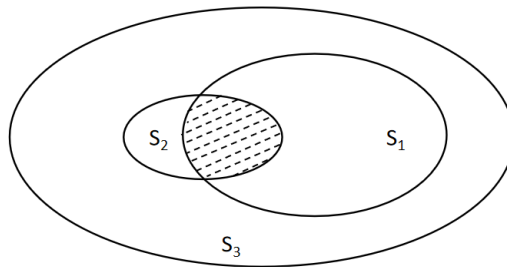


Figure 2. The second situation in which the monastic style of script could be ascribed to Chödru

That is to say, it is not necessary to meet the above two promises simultaneously to argue for a Chödru's hand, as Chödru may have copied other people's works; however, when a script meets both promises, this script can be more confidently ascribed to Chödru (or to



his intellectual circle). Confronted with the reality that we have neither been able to locate all manuscripts with Chödrup's texts, nor identify all the manuscripts written in the monastic style, it is more practical to focus on the second situation as illustrated in Fig. 2. The larger proportion of the dotted intersection occupied in S2, the closer correlation between the monastic script and the figure Chödrup. In light of our current scope of knowledge, although the whole number of manuscripts in the monastic style (i.e. S2) is unknown, it must be a fixed number; therefore, the proportion of the intersection will increase when the intersection itself becomes larger in number.

Therefore, we need to show as many manuscripts of Chödrup's works in this hand as possible in order to strengthen the likelihood that this script was made by Chödrup (or his intellectual circle). There are indeed frequent records of Chödrup as the composer or copyist in manuscripts written in the monastic style of script. As discussed in detail in Section 4, two manuscripts IOL Tib J 686 and 687 written in the same 'monastic style' contain the name Chödrup as the composer in their colophons. The same style of script also appears in many copiously copied manuscripts produced in the Tibetan imperial period, with the name Chödrup as the proofreader. When we extend the search into other Dunhuang manuscripts related to Chödrup, we repeatedly notice the appearance of the same monastic style (e.g., in IOL Tib J 217, IOL Tib J 625, IOL Tib J 588, IOL Tib J 619, P. T. 770, P. T. 783v). Therefore, an empirically adequate identification of the monastic style as Chödrup's hand (or hand of an unidentified core member of Chödrup's circle) can be reached by the concrete correlation frequently revealed in manuscripts.

In addition, once we have established an empirically adequate identification of Chödrup's one handwriting style (i.e. the monastic style), we could use this identification to potentially recognise more texts that were possibly written down or even composed by Chödrup (namely, [part of] S4 in Figure 2). Section 5 aims to establish a typology of the suspected Chödrup's hand to identify more manuscripts from the set S4. The appendix is a table of typical writings in this hand, which can serve for comparison in the process of identification.



### 3. Context: Chödrup and His Works

Chödrup's life would have remained largely in obscurity without the information from the Dunhuang manuscripts:<sup>12</sup> we only find this name attested in several colophons of the Tibetan canonical texts, sometimes together with his family name Gö.<sup>13</sup> The Gö family was influential in the Tibetan Imperial Period; its members frequently appear in Tibetan historiographies.<sup>14</sup> The Chinese version of his name, Wu Facheng (吳法成),<sup>15</sup> is equally famous, and frequently mentioned in colophons of

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<sup>12</sup> A recent critical review of the preexisting theories about the nature of the Dunhuang cave is seen in Sam van Schaik and Imre Galambos, *Manuscripts and Travellers. The Sino-Tibetan Documents of a Tenth-Century Buddhist Pilgrim* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 18–27. Also Cf. Channa Li, “By No Means Doodles or Scraps: Reading Manuscripts IOL Tib J 3 & 218 as Bilingual Dunhuang Vinaya Works,” forthcoming.

<sup>13</sup> Ueyama Daishūn 上山大峻, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū* 敦煌仏教の研究 [Studies on Dunhuang Buddhism] (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1990), 95 lists several Kangyur texts that mention Chödrup's family name in colophons. His family name, 'Gos, is also attested in Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 219 v. Sometimes his family name is written as *mGos*, for instance in the colophon of Stog 11.07.

<sup>14</sup> For instance, the minister Trizang Yaplak (fl. 8th c., Tib. Khri bzang Yab lag), from the *mGos* family (interchangeable with 'Gos), is mentioned in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* (P. T. 1287, l. 113: *mgos khri bzang yab lag*); B. Dotson, *The Old Tibetan Annals: An Annotated Translation of Tibet's First History* (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 128–130; Jacques Bacot, Frederick William Thomas, and Gustave Charles Toussaint, *Documents de Touen-Houang relatifs à l'histoire du Tibet* (Paris: Paul Geunther, 194), 102. Cf. also Wang Yao 王堯, “Tufan yishi guan facheng shenshi shiji kao 吐蕃譯師管·法成身世事蹟考 [Studies on the Life Activities of the Tibetan Translator Gö Chödrup],” in *Xizang wenshi kaoxin ji* 西藏文史考信集 [Collection of the Studies of Tibetan Literature and History] (Beijing: China Tibetology Publishing House, 1994), 17, in which he mentions three famous ministers of the 'Gos family in the *Blon po bka'i thang yig*; cf. the *Blon po bka'i thang yig* (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1987), 437: *'gos la blon po gsum byung ste/ khri bzang yab lhag dang/ yang gong bla ma dang/ lha gro gro dang ni gsum*.

<sup>15</sup> The identification between Gö Chödrup and Wu Facheng has long been solidly established. Cf. Paul Pelliot, “Notes à propos d'un catalogue du Kanjur,” *Journal Asiatique* 11. 4 (1914): 142–143; Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū*, 95–97; Wu Chiyu 吳其昱, “Daibankoku daitoku sanzō hōshi Hōjō denkō 大蕃国大德 三藏法師 法成伝考 [Studies on the Biography of the Great Monk of the Tibetan Empire, Tripiṭakācārya Chödrup],” in *Kōza Tonkō 7: Tonkō to Chūgoku Bukkyō* 講座敦煌 7: 敦煌と中国仏教 7, ed. Makita Tairyō and Fukui Fumimasa (Tokyo: Daitō shuppansha, 1984), 384; Wang Yao, “Tufan yishi guan facheng shenshi shiji kao,” 17.

Usually, 'gos in Tibetan and *wu* in Chinese are conjectured to have the same phonetic value and can represent each other in bilingual transcription. In Dunhuang bilingual texts,

Dunhuang manuscripts, as a lecturer and translator active in several local temples in Shazhou (沙州) and Ganzhou (甘州).<sup>16</sup>

Chödrup was, first and foremost, a great translator. He translated many Buddhist texts from Chinese to Tibetan,<sup>17</sup> but none of Chödrup's

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we encounter cases where 'go serves as the phonetic parallel of *wu* (吾), whose pronunciation is the same as *wu* (吳) in medieval Chinese, both as \**ɲu*, in William Baxter and Laurent Sagart 2014, *Old Chinese. A New Reconstruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 365 (<http://ocbaxtersagart.lsa.umich.edu/BaxterSagartOC2015-10-13.xlsx>). Cf. Zhou Jiwen 周季文 and Xie Houfang 谢后芳, *Dunhuang Tufan Hanzang Duiyin Zihui* 敦煌吐蕃汉藏对音字汇 [A Compilation of Sino-Tibetan Phonetic Parallelism as Recorded in Dunhuang Manuscripts] (Beijing: Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe, 2006), 94.

The question of Chödrup's ethnic identity, or in other words, whether he was Chinese or Tibetan, is still open to dispute. While the majority of scholars tend to believe that he was Tibetan (e.g., Wang Yao, "Tufan yishi guan facheng shenshi shiji kao," 17; Wu Chiyu, "Daibankoku daitoku sanzōhōshi hōjō denkō," 387; Rong Xinjiang, *Eighteen Lectures on Dunhuang* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 129, Ueyama argues that the use of 'gos as a Tibetan family name is not attested in any other Dunhuang manuscripts. It is more probable that 'gos was a transcription of the Chinese family name *Wu* (吳), and consequently that Chödrup was a Chinese monk (Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū*, 96).

<sup>16</sup> Based on the colophons of Dunhuang Chinese manuscripts, Chödrup was mainly active in Shazhou (today's Dunhuang) and Ganzhou (today's Zhangye 張掖). Cf. Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū*, 104–112.

<sup>17</sup> These include (cf. Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū*, 112–153; I will produce another review paper on the previous studies of Chödrup in which these translations are examined more carefully. Channa Li, "Toward Reconstructing a History of Chos grub's Monastic Career: A Review Study," forthcoming):

(1) *Go cha'i bkod pa bstan pa* [The Teaching on the Armour's Array] (Derge 51);

(2) *dGa' bo mngal du 'jug par bstan pa* [The Teaching to Nanda on Entering the Womb] (Derge 58);

(3) *Bu mo nram dag dad bas zhus pa zhes bya ba* [The Question of the Girl Vimalaśraddhā] (Derge 84);

(4) *Lang kar gshes pa rin po che'i mdo las sangs rgyas thams cad kyi gsung gi snying po'i le'u* [The Chapter of the Quintessence of the Speech of All Buddhas, from the Sūtra of the Precious Lañkāvatāra] (Derge 108);

(5) *mDzangs/'Dzangs blun gyi mdo* [The Sūtra of the Wise and Foolish] (Derge 341);

(6) *Legs nyes kyi rgyu dang 'bras bu bstan pa* [The Teaching on Wholesome and Unwholesome Cause and Effect] (Derge 354);

(7) *gSer 'od dam pa mchog tu nram par rgyal pa mdo sde rgyal po* [The King of Sūtras, the Supremely Victorious, Excellent Golden Light] (Derge 555);

(8) *Byang chub sems dpa' spyen ras gzigs dbang phyug phyag stong spyen stong dang ldan pa thogs pa mi mnga' ba'i thugs rje chen po'i sems rgya cher yongs su rdzogs pa zhes bya ba'i gzungs* [The Incantation entitled the Complete Perfection of the Broad Mind of the Unimpeded Great Compassion of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara with 1,000 Hands and 1,000 Eyes; abbr. The Great Compassion Incantation] (Derge 691=897);

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(9) *Spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug gi gsang ba'i mdzod thogs pa med pa'i yid bzhin gyi 'khor lo'i snying po zhes bya ba'i gzungs* [The Incantation entitled Avalokiteśvara's Secret Treasure, the Quintessence of the Unimpeded Wish-fulfilling Wheel] (Derge 692=Derge 898);

(10) *Zhal bcu gcig pa'i rig sngags kyi snying po zhes bya ba'i gzungs* [The Incantation entitled the Quintessence of the Spell of the 11-faced Avalokiteśvara] (Derge 694);

(11) *dGongs pa zab mo nyes par 'grel pa'i mdo'i rgya cher 'grel pa* [The Extensive Commentary on the Sūtra of Elucidating the Profound Intention] (Derge Tengyur 4016);

(12)–(13) *Khar sil gyi mdo* and *Khar sil 'chang pa'i kun tu spyod pa'i cho ga* [The Sūtra of the Ringing Staff; The Rites for the Practices of Holding the Ringing Staff] (Derge 335 and Derge 336; IOL Tib J 205);

(14) *Dus dang dus ma yin pa bstan pa zhes bya ba'i mdo* [The Sūtra entitled the Teaching on the Proper and Improper Time] (IOL Tib J 213);

(15) *Lang kar gshegs pa rin po che'i mdo las sangs rgyas thams cad kyi gsung gi snying po'i le'u rgya cher 'grel pa* [The Extensive Commentary on the Chapter of the Quintessence of the Speech of All Buddhas, from the Sūtra of the Greatly Precious Laṅkāvatāra] (IOL Tib J 219);

(16)–(17) *Yi ge brgya pa zhes bya ba'i rab tu byed pa tshig le'ur byas pa* and *Yi ge brgya pa'i rab tu byed pa rnam par bshad pa* [The Verse of the Treatise entitled the 100 Syllables; The Exposition on the Treatise entitled the 100 Syllables ] (IOL Tib J 588 I, II);

(18)–(19) *rTen cing 'brel par 'byung ba tshig le'ur byas pa sum cu pa* [The Thirty Verses on Dependent Arising] and *Rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba tshig le'ur byas pa sum cu pa'i rnam par bshad pa* [The Exposition on the Thirty Verses on Dependent Arising ] (IOL Tib J 588 III, IV; IOL Tib J 619; P. T. 770);

(20) *'Jug pa'i sgra brgyad bstan pa tshig le'ur byas pa* [Exposé in Verse Form (of) the Set of Eight Nominal Cases (as they) Occur (in use)] (IOL Tib J 625r; P. T. 783); See Pieter Verhagen, “A Ninth-Century Tibetan Summary of the Indo-Tibetan Model of Case-Semantics,” in Proceedings of the 5th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Narita 1989, ed. Shōren Ihara and Zuihō Yamaguchi (Narita: Naritanshinshoji, 1992), 833–844.

(21) *Yongs su skyobs pa'i snod ces bya ba'i mdo* [The Sūtra entitled the Vessel of Complete Protection] (Stog 266/ Ulan Bator 314/ Tokyo 266); Matthew Kapstein, “The Tibetan Yulanpen Jing,” in Contributions to the Cultural History of Early Tibet, ed. Matthew T. Kapstein and Brandon Dotson (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 211–237.

(22) *Dga' bo mngal na gnas pa bstan pa* [The Teaching to Nanda on the Abiding in the Womb] (Derge 57) is plausibly attributed to Chödrup; cf. J.A. Silk “Chinese Sūtras in Tibetan Translation: A Preliminary Survey,” The Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhism at Soka University 22 (2019): 233.

It is unclear whether (23) *'Phags pa lang kar gshegs pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo* [The Mahāyāna Sūtra entitled Laṅkāvatāra] (Derge 107) was also a translation of Chödrup from Chinese. Cf. Channa Li, “A Survey of Tibetan Sūtras Translated from Chinese, as Recorded in Early Tibetan Catalogues,” *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 60 (2021): 198.

Tibetan translations are clearly dated.<sup>18</sup> He also translated many Chinese texts, some of which were possibly from Tibetan.<sup>19</sup> Apart from taking charge of bilingual or even trilingual translation projects, Chödrup also produced many subcommentaries on the *Dasheng daogan jing* 大乘稻芊經 [The Mahāyāna Sūtra of the Rice Stalk] (*Śālistambasūtra*), the *Dasheng sifa jing* 大乘四法經 [The Mahāyāna Sūtra of the Four Teachings] (*Āryacaturdharmakanāmahāyānasūtra*), and Xuanzang’s (600/602–664, 玄奘) translation of the *Liumen tuoluoni jing* 六門陀羅尼經 [The Dhāraṇī-sūtra of the Six Entrances] (*Ṣaṇmukhīdhāraṇīsūtra*, T.1360.21) and their commentaries.<sup>20</sup> There are a large number of Dunhuang manuscripts produced directly from his teachings on the *Yogācārabhūmi* (*Yujia shidilun* 瑜伽師地論 [Treatise on the Different Stages of Yogācāra Practice]).

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<sup>18</sup> However, the *terminus ante quem* for those that are collected in the Kangyurs should be 848, the founding year of the Guiyijun Government (851–1036?, 歸義軍, Return-to-Allegiance Army). Wu Chiyu argues that, since there were no Dunhuang manuscripts (as Wu assumed) bearing Chödrup’s name between 815 to 833, Chödrup probably stayed in Central Tibet during this period, working on translation projects at the invitation of the Tibetan emperor. However, the hypothesis that Chödrup once stayed in Tibet lacks concrete evidence. Wu Chiyu, “Daibankoku daitoku sanzōhōshi hōjō denkō,” 399–407. Even if Chödrup was ordered by the Tibetan emperors to translate texts from Chinese, he may have undertaken the projects in Dunhuang. Cf. Li, “Toward Reconstructing a History of Chos grub’s Monastic Career” for a chronology of Chödrup’s works including translations and commentaries. The whole history of the ups and downs of the Guiyijun Government is reconstructed in Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, *Guiyi jun shi yanjiu* 歸義軍史研究 [Studies of the History of Guiyijun] (Shanghai: Shanghai guiji chubanshe, 1996).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Ueyama, *Tonkō buaskkyō no kenkyū*, 170–186; Ueyama, “Daibankoku daitoku sanzō hōshi shamon Hōjō no kenkyū (Ge) 大蕃國大德三藏法師沙門法成の研究 (下) [Studies on the Venerable Monk of the Tibetan Empire, Triṣṭakācārya, Śramaṇa Chödrup],” *Tōhō gakuho* 東方學報 *Journal of Oriental Studies*, Kyoto 39 (1968): 119–135. Among these Chinese translations, the *Banruo boluomi duo xinjing* 般若波羅蜜多心經 [The Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom] (e.g., P. 4882) and *Zhu xingmu tuoluoni jing* 諸星母陀羅尼經 [Sūtra of the Mother Dhāraṇī Among the Stars] (*Grahamāṭṛkādhāraṇī*; e.g., Or.8210/S. 5010; corresponding to Derge 661) were presumed by Ueyama to be possibly translated from Tibetan, which should be verified by more concrete studies.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Li, “Toward Reconstructing a History of Chos grub’s Monastic Career” for a more detailed study.



#### 4. Manuscripts Possibly Written by Chödrup

Thirty years ago, in his masterpiece *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū* 敦煌仏教の研究 [Studies on Dunhuang Buddhism], Ueyama Daishūn (上山大峻) argued that IOL Tib J 686 had possibly been written down by Chödrup himself. This untitled manuscript narrates the story of Maudgalyāyana saving his mother from hell, and its colophon states that “it was composed by the monk Chödrup” (*dge slong chos grub kyis bgyis*; Fig. 3).<sup>21</sup> On the basis of his subjective observations, Ueyama further claimed that IOL Tib J 687, 217, 218,<sup>22</sup> and P. 2035v were also in the same handwriting, and should all have been written by Chödrup.<sup>23</sup> In his study on the five styles of Imperial Period handwriting, van Schaik accepts Ueyama’s identification with reservation. Instead of attributing this handwriting style to Chödrup’s hand, van Schaik terms it as “monastic style”, commenting that “this style is seen in the manuscripts produced in the circle of the Dunhuang-based translator Gö Chödrup.”<sup>24</sup> It seems that the lack of further supporting evidence and convincing analytical argument in Ueyama’s study prevents van Schaik from attributing the handwriting directly to Chödrup.

In order to assess the plausibility of Ueyama’s identification, we should, as a first step, conduct a more extensive philological investigation of the usage of *bgyis* in Dunhuang or other ancient manuscripts—namely, to see whether this term connotes authorship or scribeship in such texts. The basic meaning of *bgyis* is “to make, to perform (the past tense of *bgyid*)”, which can encompass a wide range of nuances.<sup>25</sup> Although I do not intend to carry out an exhaustive semantic

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<sup>21</sup> Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū*, 93, 154; see also Ueyama, “Daibankoku daitoku sanzōhōshi shamonhōjō no kenkyū (jō),” 194. However, Kapstein (“The Tibetan Yulanpen Jing,” 245) has translated the colophon as “composed by the *bhikṣu* Chödrup”, which seems avoid the question of whether Chödrup was the scribe.

<sup>22</sup> As my forthcoming paper demonstrates, IOL Tib J 218 is not a work by Chödrup, but a collection of *vinaya* translations. Therefore, we have no safe grounds for attributing the handwriting to Chödrup. Cf. Channa Li, “By No Means Doodles or Scraps,” forthcoming.

<sup>23</sup> Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū*, 93–94, 154, 159, 217; see also Ueyama, “Daibankoku daitoku sanzōhōshi shamonhōjō no kenkyū (jō),” 194.

<sup>24</sup> van Schaik, “Dating Early Tibetan Manuscripts,” 124.

<sup>25</sup> *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, ed. Zhang Yisun (Beijing: mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1993[2009]), 469, s.v. *bgyid*.

analysis of this verb here, I indeed find many cases, albeit mainly after the fourteenth century, in which *bgyis* precisely denotes scribeship, as we find in the phrase *yi ge* [...] *bgyis*.<sup>26</sup>

With regard to *bgyis* in Dunhuang manuscripts, I find another relevant attestation, in IOL Tib J 687. This manuscript was potentially written down by the same hand as that of IOL Tib J 686 and uses the term *bgyis* in the colophon as well: “*dge slong chos grub kyis mdo sde dang/ ’dul ba dang/ bstan bcos nams las btus te bgyis so* [Monk Chödrup collected [passages] from *sūtras*, *vinayas*, and treatises, and composed the texts]” (Fig. 4). The overlapping parts of the two manuscripts share a remarkably similar handwriting style (for instance, the word “*dge*” is slanted to the left while the word “*slong*” is slanted to the right in both manuscripts).

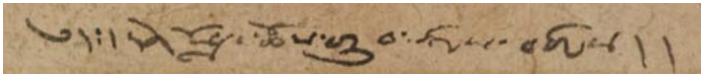


Figure 3. IOL Tib J 686 Colophon

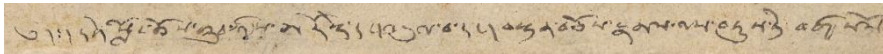


Figure 4. IOL Tib J 687 Colophon

Moreover, the Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts produced by the copious copying project<sup>27</sup> provide us with further affirmative evidence.

<sup>26</sup> For instance, in the colophon of the *Kun dga’ grol mchog gi thun min rang mam* [The Extraordinary Autobiography of Kun dga’ grol mchog] (BDRC no. W3CN2594), it says the scribe was Sakyapa Künga Zöpa (Tib. Sa skya pa Kun dga’ bZod pa) (*yi ge pa ni sa skya pa kun dga’ bzod pas bgyis so*). The *Ral pa gyen brdzes kyi rtog pa chen po* [The Great Contemplation on Tārā of Upswept Matted Hair] (BDRC no. W4CZ5369)—which was composed in the 7th century, translated into Tibetan by Bu Tön (Tib. Bu sTon) in the 14th century, and later compiled in the Kangyur—also uses *bgyis* for expressing scribeship (*yi ge pa ni lo tsā ba chen po ’di nyid kyi zhabs drung du nye bar gnas pa/ shākya’i dge slong bsod nams grub kyis bgyis so*).

<sup>27</sup> These include the *Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* in Tibetan, the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* in Chinese, and the *Aparimitāyurnāmasūtra* in Chinese and Tibetan. Cf. Kazushi Iwao, “The Purpose of Sutra Copying in Dunhuang under the Tibetan Rule,” in *Dunhuang Studies: Prospects and Problems for the Coming Second*



Of the newly published Tibetan manuscripts that were preserved in Gansu province, China, many manuscripts contain detailed editorial records in which the scribes and the proofreaders are listed by name. We find Chödrup's name in these manuscripts,<sup>28</sup> sometimes as the scribe,<sup>29</sup> other times as the proofreader in the first or second round,<sup>30</sup> and most frequently, as the final proofreader of the copying project. For instance, in Dunhuang Museum Db. T. 1125, Chödrup acted as the final—that is, fourth-round—proofreader (*Chos grub bzhi zhus*; Fig. 5).<sup>31</sup> Db. T. 444 is

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*Century of Research*, ed. I. Popova and Liu Yi (St. Petersburg: Slavia, 2012), 102–105. A more extensive introduction to this copious copying project, especially its editorial process, is seen in Brandon Dotson, “The Remains of the Dharma: Editing, Rejecting, and Replacing the Buddha’s Words in Officially Commissioned Sūtras from Dunhuang, 820s to 840s,” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 36–37 (2015): 5–68, esp. 18–20, 28–31, 35–52.

<sup>28</sup> A list of such manuscripts proofread by Chödrup is offered in Zhang Yanqing 张延清, “Fanyijia jiaoyue dashi facheng jiqi jiaojing mulu 翻译家校阅大师法成及其校经目录 [The Great Translator and Proofreader Chödrup and a Catalogue of His Proofread Manuscripts],” *Dunhuang xue jikan 敦煌学辑刊 Journal of Dunhuang Studies* 3 (2008): 75–93.

<sup>29</sup> Chödrup was the scribe of the manuscript Dx Tib 100, a copy of the *Tshe dpag tu myed pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo* [*Aparimitāyurnāmamahāyānasūtra*] manuscript, which is now preserved at the Institute of Oriental Studies, USSR Academy of Sciences. It is written in the Uchen style. Cf. Zhang Guangda 张广达, *Shijia Shixue Yu Xiandaixueshu 史家, 史学与现代学术* [Historians, Historical Studies, and Modern Scholarship] (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue, 2008), 313; L.S. Savitsky, *Opisanie tibetskikh svitkov iz Dun'khuanu v sobranii Instituta vostokovedeniia AN SSSR* (Moscow: Nauka Publishing House, 1991), 48. However, all scribes adopted a similar hand in these copious imperial-funded *sūtra*-copying projects, and therefore, it is difficult to say whether Dx Tib 100 reflects Chödrup's idiosyncratic handwriting style.

Moreover, I am indebted to Dr. Lewis Doney for his knowledge of the situation of *Aparimitāyurnāmamahāyānasūtra* manuscripts at the British Museum. Chödrup is recorded as scribe in the following manuscripts: IOL Tib J 310.65, IOL Tib J 310.266, IOL Tib J 310.703, IOL Tib J 310.1083, IOL Tib J 310.1093, and IOL Tib J 310. 1094. Since I have not seen the photos of the manuscripts, I cannot make a judgement on their handwritings.

Also note that there existed multiple monks who were named Chödrup. For instance, in IOL Tib J 310.689, there is a Sag Chödrub (Tib. Sag Chos grub); in Dx Tib 111, there is a Palgyi Chödrub (Tib. Dpal gyi Chos grub).

<sup>30</sup> E.g., Db. T. 0274 and 2913.

<sup>31</sup> Ma De 馬德 and Kancuoji 勘措吉 ed., *Gansu cang dunhuang zangwen wenxian juan 6: Dunhuang shi bowuguan juan 甘肃藏敦煌藏文文献卷 6: 敦煌市博物馆卷* [Dunhuang Tibetan Manuscripts Preserved in Ganzu, Vol. 6: Dunhuang Museum], (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2019), 325. In the same manuscript, the proofreaders



a discarded folio from the *Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* (*Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa stong phrag brgya pa*). As noted in the marginal records, Chödrup, the inspector and proofreader of this copying project, discarded this folio, copied by Leng ho zhir hing (bottom margin: *Leng ho zhir hing gi ro*; left margin: +++ *hing gyi ro chos grub gis phyungo*//; Fig. 6).<sup>32</sup> Other folios rendered obsolete in Chödrup’s proofreading process are seen in manuscript Db. T. 487 (*chos grub gyi grar*<sup>33</sup> *phyungs; an tsheng tshe’i ro*; Fig. 7), Db. T. 2910 (*kim kang ro dang zhus pha chos grub phyungo*; Fig. 8), Db. T. 2920 (*legs bzang ro chos grub phyungo*; Fig. 9), Db. T. 2921 (*se’u hvan ro dang zhus pha chos grub phyungo*; Fig. 10), and Db. T. 2932 (*ke’u ke’u ro dang zhus pha chos grub phyungo*; Fig. 11). The handwritings of all these editorial records closely resemble that of IOL Tib J 686 and 687. Therefore, there are good grounds to hypothesise that in all these manuscripts, it is Chödrup’s hand (henceforth, I simply term it as ‘Chödrup’s handwriting’). Noteworthy is that in these editorial records, *bris* is consistently used to express ‘to copy. In this sense, *bgyid* as used in IOL Tib J 686 and 687 seems to denote not only ‘to copy, but also ‘to compose and write down’. Dotson also notices that “type II” *Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*, a group of copiously copied *Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* manuscripts in Dunhuang (shelfmarks P. T. 1322–1493), contains editorial notes similar to this hand.<sup>34</sup> Therefore we see no need to doubt Ueyama’s speculation that this hand belongs to Chödrup.

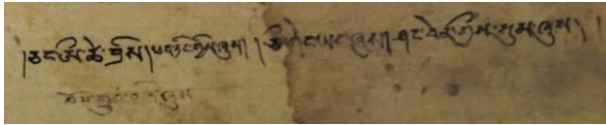


Figure 5. Db. T. 1125

of the three former rounds exhibited different hands: *cang ĩ tshe bris/ phab ting gyis zhus/ cĭ geng yang zhus/ shang ben gyis sum zhus*.

<sup>32</sup> Ma De and Kancuoji. *Gansu cang Dunhuang zangwen wenxian juan 4*, 287; Ma De 馬德 ed., *Gansu cang dunhuang zangwen wenxian xulu* 甘肅藏敦煌藏文文獻叢錄 [A Catalogue of Dunhuang Tibetan Manuscripts Preserved in Gansu] (Lanzhou: Gansu minzu chubanshe, 2009), 211; Zhang, “Fanyijia jiaoyue dashi facheng jiqi jiaoqing mulu,” 83.

<sup>33</sup> Doston, “The Remains of the Dharma,” 44.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* 28.

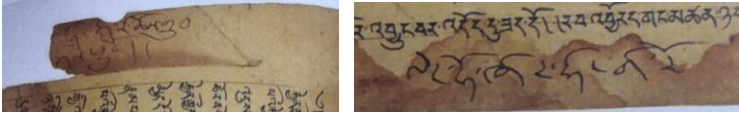


Figure 6. Db. T. 444 Part 1 and Part 2.

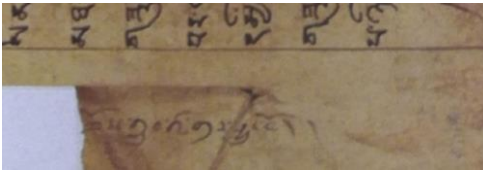


Figure 7. Db. T. 487

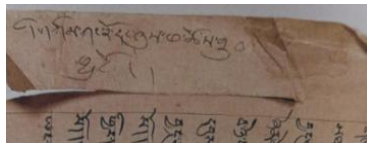


Figure 8. Db. T. 2910

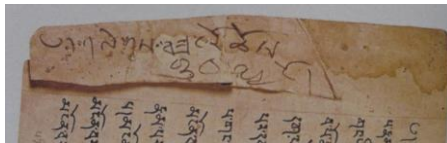


Figure 9. Db. T. 2920

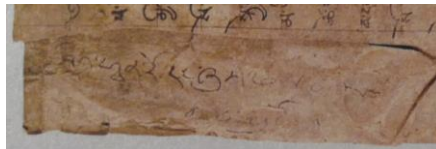


Figure 10. Db. T. 2921

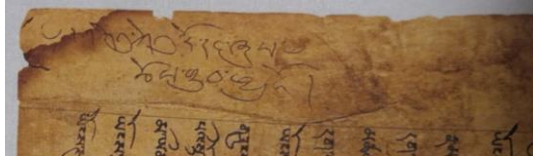


Figure 11. Db. T. 2923

Having substantiated Chödrup's connection with the handwriting in IOL Tib J 686 and 687, it is now possible to tentatively identify other manuscripts that were written by Chödrup. To be on the safe side, in searching for other possible samples of this hand, I have sifted through only those Dunhuang manuscripts falling under the category of Chödrup's intellectual works (namely, texts that were translated or composed by him, with explicit attribution).<sup>35</sup> I identify six more manuscripts (i.e., IOL Tib J 217, IOL Tib J 625, IOL Tib J 588, IOL Tib J 619, P. T. 770, P. T. 783v)<sup>36</sup> with writing features resembling this hand. A brief introduction to the content of the manuscripts is given in Table 1. The consistency of the handwriting across these eight manuscripts is visually evident in the Appendix in which I compare the handwritings of representative syllables across all these manuscripts. In order to lessen the subjectivity of the identification and present the results in a more analytical way, I establish a typology of this hand across the different manuscripts, which is the main topic of the next section.

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. the second section of this paper.

<sup>36</sup> There is one more manuscript that was probably written down by Chödrup. It is P. T. 2205 [=P. 2035v], a part of the *Notes on Categorized Preachings* of the *Yogācārabhūmi*. However, I have set it aside in the current typological study because a separate study would be needed to clarify the content of and intertextual relationship between the Tibetan texts and the Chinese sentences alongside them, as well as the relationship between these Tibetan texts and the Chinese texts on the other side of the folio.



Mss	Location of the Hand	Title/ Content	Authorship
IOL Tib J 686	Main body <sup>37</sup>	Maudgalyāyana saving his mother from hell. <sup>38</sup>	Mss colophon: <i>dge slong chos grub kyis bgyis</i>
IOL Tib J 687	Main body <sup>39</sup>	Different fruits of obeying or disobeying the eight precepts (Chin. <i>baguan zhajie</i> 八關齋戒, Tib. <i>sdom pa</i> ). Only the last four are preserved: (1) against false speech; (2) against alcohol, dancing, singing, and using perfumes; (3) against sleeping on high beds; and (4) against untimely eating.	Mss colophon: <i>dge slong chos grub kyis mdo sde dang/ 'dul ba dang/ bstan bcos rnam las btus te bgyis so</i>
IOL Tib J 217	Main body <sup>40</sup>	A summary condensed from the <i>Ka pi na chen po</i> chapter of the <i>Sūtra of the Wise and Foolish</i> (' <i>dzangs blun gyi mdo las 'byung pa [...]</i> <i>ka phyi na 'i le'u las 'byung ngo</i> ).	<i>lo tshā ba 'gos chos 'grub kyis rgya gar dang rgya nag gi dpe las bsgyur ba</i> <sup>41</sup>

<sup>37</sup> This has only one folio (9 lines on the recto and 7 lines on the verso). Cf. Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkūō no kenkyū*, 154–158; Matthew Kapstein, “A Dunhuang Tibetan Summary of the Transformation Text on Mulian Saving His Mother from Hell,” in *Dunhuang Wenxian Lunji* 敦煌文獻論集 [Collected Papers on Dunhuang Documents], ed. Hao Chunwen 郝春文 (Shenyang: Liaoning Renmin Chubanshe, 2001), 235–247.

<sup>38</sup> This untitled text is summarised from the Dunhuang Chinese transformation text (Chin. *bianwen* 變文) *Da muqianlian mingjian jiumu* 大目乾連冥間救母 [Mahāmaudgalyāyana Saving His Mother from Hell] (preserved in P. 2319). An English translation of this famous Chinese transformation text can be found in Victor Mair, *Tun-Huang Popular Narratives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 87–122. Cf. Kapstein, “A Dunhuang Tibetan Summary of the Transformation Text on Mulian Saving His Mother from Hell.” Another famous mythology about death, in which Buddhist ideas interacted with and changed indigenous ideas, is studied in Y. Imaeda, “The History of the Cycle of Birth and Death: A Tibetan Narrative from Dunhuang,” in *Contributions to the Cultural History of Early Tibet*, ed. Matthew Kapstein and Brandon Dotson (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 105–183.

<sup>39</sup> Only three folios have been preserved. Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkūō no kenkyū*, 167 contends that the original manuscript must have contained more than ten folios. Cf. also Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *Catalogue of the Tibetan Manuscripts from Tun-Huang in the India Office Library* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1962, 687.

<sup>40</sup> One folio (14 lines on the recto; 3 lines on the verso).

<sup>41</sup> Fr. *sDe dge'i bka' 'gyur dkar chag*, 135b7. However, Kangyur colophons rather state that it is translated from Chinese (*rgya nag las 'gyur bar snang ngo*; fr. D. 341, *mdo sde, a*, 298a7).

IOL Tib J 625	Interlinear sentences <sup>42</sup>	<i>Exposé in Verse Form (of) the Set of Eight Nominal Cases (as they) Occur (in Use)</i> . Cf. Chödrup’s Tibetan translation from Chinese no. (20).	IOL Tib J 625 colophon: <i>zhu chen gyi mkhan po dang/ lo tsa pa ban de chos grub kyis rgya’i dpe las bsgyur cing zhus te/ gtan la phab pa</i>
P. T. 783v	Interlinear sentences in red <sup>43</sup>		
IOL Tib J 588 I–III <sup>44</sup>	Interlinear sentences	IOL Tib J 588 contains three texts translated by Chödrup, namely: <i>The Verses of the Treatise Entitled the 100 Syllables</i> , the <i>Exposition on the Treatise Entitled the 100 Syllables</i> , the <i>Thirty Verses on Dependent Arising</i> . Cf. Chödrup’s Tibetan translation from Chinese no. (16), (17), (18).	IOL Tib J 588, 1v1: <i>zhu chen gyi lo tsa pa ban de chos grub kyis rgya’i dpe las bsgyur cing zhus te/ gtan la phab pa</i> ; 21v4: <i>zhu chen gyi lo tsa pa ban de chos grub kyis rgya’i dpe las bsgyur cing zhus te/ gtan la phab pa</i> ; 24v7: <i>zhu chen gyi lo tsa pa ban de chos grub kyis rgya’i dpe las bsgyur cing zhus te/ gtan la phab pa</i>
IOL Tib J 588 IV <sup>45</sup>	Interlinear sentences	The <i>Exposition on the Thirty Verses on Dependent Arising</i> . Cf. Chödrup’s Tibetan translation from Chinese no. (19).	IOL Tib J 588, 44r6: <i>zhu chen gyi lo tsa pa ban de chos grub gyis rgya’i dpe las bsgyur cing zhus te/ gtan la phab pa</i>
IOL Tib J 619 & P. T. 770 <sup>46</sup>			

Table 1. Manuscripts possibly written down by Chödrup

<sup>42</sup> The main body contains one folio (5 lines on the recto; 3 lines on the verso). Interlinear commentaries appear below the fifth and sixth lines on the recto and the first line on the verso.

<sup>43</sup> These are written on the verso of the *Lecture Notes* of the *Yogācārabhūmi* possessed by Fajing.

<sup>44</sup> In building the typology of this hand, I omit the first three texts of IOL Tib J 588, and only focus on its fourth text, IOL Tib J 588 IV, as this text has two other witnesses in Dunhuang and is therefore more useful to the handwriting comparison.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū*, 150–152. Note that he wrongly refers to IOL Tib J 588 as P. T. 588.

<sup>46</sup> IOL Tib J 619 and P. T. 770 seem to have originally been part of the same manuscript. IOL Tib J 619 contains folios numbered from *ka, go bzhi* (94), up to *ka, brgya’ tham* (100) and *kha, gcig*, while P. T. 770 contains the folio *kha, lnga* (5).



#### 4. A Typology of Chödrup's Cursive (Tib. *dbu med*) Handwriting

Apart from van Schaik's work, which has established a solid foundation for a more detailed palaeographical study of this handwriting style,<sup>47</sup> Dolson and Helman-Ważny (2016) have devoted a book to the application of codicology, orthography and palaeography in dating Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts. In this book, they specify a set of detailed terminology for describing the different visual forms of various handwriting styles. Not strictly following van Schaik's five-style classification, they analyse the *ductus* of each selected index letter (i.e., *ka*, *ga*, *nga*, *ca*, *pha*, *ra*, and *sa*), and divide the handwritings of each index letter into four styles. Their *ductus* analysis mainly consists of the number of strokes; the position and angle of the descender and ascender; the presence or absence of a 'head', a ticked head, or a loop; and the proportion of one stroke to another.

Drawing on manuscript studies in both Tibetology and Western classical studies, I individualise the palaeographical analysis of Chödrup's handwriting in terms of its particular features. First and foremost, since this handwriting is very cursive, and strokes are ligated more often than not, simply analysing the root letter does not suffice to capture the idiosyncrasies of this hand. Consequently, I also index distinctive ligatures of syllable clusters, for instance, consonant clusters or roots with vowel markers. I largely follow the terminology adopted by Dolson and Helman-Ważny in 2016, which applies the conventions of Western manuscript studies<sup>48</sup> to the study of Tibetan handwriting.

For vertical stokes, there are minims (the short, upright strokes appearing in *ka*, *nga*, *ja*, *ta*, *tha*, *da*, *pa*, *pha*, *ba*, *dza*, *za*, *ya*, *ra*); ascenders and descenders (the strokes ascending or descending from the body of the letter in *ka*, *ga*, *kha*, *ma*, *la*, *sha*, *sa*, *a*);<sup>49</sup> the tooth (the short, middle vertical stroke of *ka*); shoulders (the leftmost or rightmost

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<sup>47</sup> Van Schaik, *Dating Early Tibetan Manuscripts*, 124–125.

<sup>48</sup> A glossary with detailed explanations can be found on the website "French Renaissance Palaeography: Glossary of Terms Useful for this Website", accessed October 1, 2020. <https://paleography.library.utoronto.ca/content/glossary-of-terms>.

<sup>49</sup> I do not follow the Western palaeographical convention of defining ascenders and descenders as strokes above or below the headline, as in Tibetan scripts, there is no stroke above headline.

vertical [sometimes slightly slanted] strokes connecting the head to other strokes, e.g., in *kha, ga, nga, da, sa, ha, a*); and necks (the short, vertical strokes below the head, with the starting point in the middle of the head, e.g., in *ca, cha, na, tsa, tsha*).

For horizontal strokes, there are heads (the top horizontal strokes of *ka, kha, ga, nga, ca, cha, ja, ta, tha, da, na, ba, ma, tsa, tsha, dza, za, ra, sa, ha, a*) and bellies (the horizontal strokes lower than the head in *ga, nga, ja, dza, za ra*); for curved strokes, there are loops or lobes (the circles attached to the stem appearing in *ca, cha, na, ma, tsa, tsha, zha, sha*), limbs (the curved, downward strokes appearing in *ta, da, na, la, zha, 'a, ha*), and bowls (the open circles or semicircles in *nya, 'a, la, zha, a*). It is noted that sometimes the same stroke can be described in two or more ways (for instance, every shoulder is at the same time a minim). Table 3 illustrates how the terminology is applied to selected letters in Uchen (Tib. *dbu can*) script appearing in printed form.

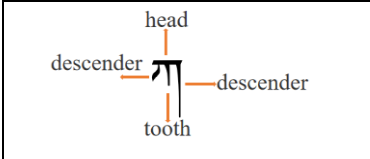
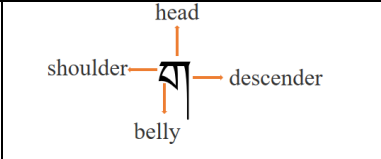
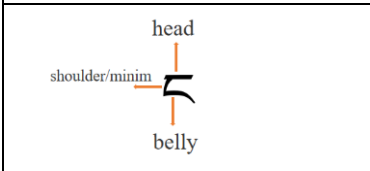
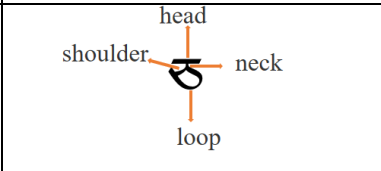
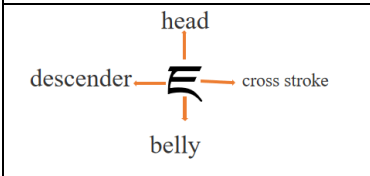
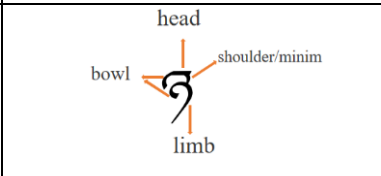
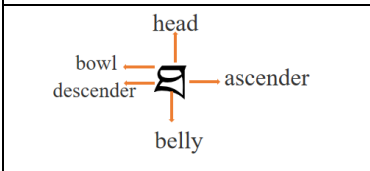
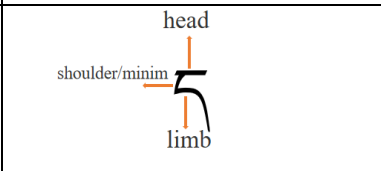
	
	
	
	


Table 2. Illustration of palaeographical terms used in analysing the Tibetan syllabary

Chödrup’s cursive (Tib. *dbu med*) handwriting contains a considerable number of idiosyncratic features. First and foremost, this style is ornately cursive and small. The *ductus*<sup>50</sup>—to put it simply, the





<sup>50</sup> James J. John, “Latin Palaeography,” in *Medieval Studies*, 2nd edition, ed. James Powell (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1992), 8, describes *ductus* as “the number, sequence, and direction of the *strokes* used in forming each letter of the script’s alphabet [...]. A knowledge of ductus, which is more concerned with the dynamic than with the static aspect of letters, can be helpful in reading, dating, and placing scripts, but its most important service comes in explaining changes in the appearance of letters. It is largely



number, sequence, and direction of strokes—was modified for swifter execution: strokes are elided or joined unless they are essential for recognition. For instance, the head of a syllable is frequently omitted or reduced to a tick or a small line. Most syllables are executed in a single stroke.

Second, with regard to the structure, letters tend to extend further horizontally than vertically. Descenders/ascenders are generally shortened and the horizontal strokes are lengthened. There are also rather big gaps between the prefix, root letter, and postfix, which makes the words appear more horizontally detached. Therefore, the letters look vertically compact but horizontally loose. Moreover, superscribed *sa* and *la* are frequently written to the upper left of the root letter (especially in *ska*, *spa*, *sda*, *stsa*, *lja*, *lda*). The *ya* (*ya btags*) subscribed below *ka*, *kha*, *ga*, and *ma* is shifted slightly to the right of the root letter. The subscribed *la* (*la btags*) often appears slightly to the left of the root letter.

Third, most letters are slanted to the left, including those vertically oriented in the Uchen writing (e.g., *ga*, *nya*, *zha*, *sha*, *ha*). However, *kha* and *ta* are slanted to the right.

Fourth, when a subscribed, superscribed, or postscribed letter joins the root letter, more often than not, the whole structure of the syllable undergoes a change. For instance, when superscribed *sa* (*sa mgo*) is combined with *pa*, the syllable becomes a ligature of two side-by-side headless squares (*spang*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r1). When superscribed *sa* joins *du*, the root letter *da* is shadowed by the more conspicuous *sa* and the long *zhabs kyu* (*sdug*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, v4). Moreover, subscribed *ra* (*ra btags*) is changed into a slanted line extending downward to the left in syllables such as *khra*, *gra*, *pra*, and *smra*. However, in *tra* and *dra*, the *ra btags* points to the right. In many cases, it is difficult to distinguish *gra*, *bra*, *phra*, and *pra*. Syllables with subscribed *ru* and *lu* have light heads but heavy feet (e.g. *khru*, *gru*, *spru*, *phru*, *bru*, *sru*, *klu*, *glu*, *slu*). The subscribed *ru*, executed in one stroke, has a nearly horizontal head and a longer *zhabs-kyu* limb (*'bru*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 3r1). The subscribed *lu* is often written with two strokes: the first to write the root letter with *zhabs kyu*, and the second to write *la btags* (*bslu*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r3).

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


*ductus* which determines where the inertial forces and strains generated by rapid writing will express themselves.”


*BuddhistRoad Paper 1.2.* Li, “Toward a Typology of Chödruṅ’s Cursive Handwriting”





I choose the following representative letters and letter combinations as the index letters for Chödrupe’s cursive handwriting.




Vowels: *Gi gu* is almost horizontal, with a downward tick; *na ro* has two flat wings and is usually longer than the consonant cluster; and *'greng po* is a roughly 45-degree line, sometimes with a short hook on top. *Zhabs kyu* is frequently joined with the root letter in writing, sometimes resembling the subscribed *ra btags* (e.g., *ku, du, gu, gyu, cu, chu, tu, du, thu, dru, spru*).


*Ka*: The shape of *ka* is horizontally oriented, as its width exceeds its height. Its head disappears, and the three descenders are usually written in two strokes: one is the leftmost descender, and the other combines the tooth and the rightmost descender. The rightmost descender, usually with a small ticked tail, is sometimes shortened to the same height as that of the leftmost descender, especially when combined with subscribed letters such as *ya btags* and *la btags*, and with the superscribed letter *sa mgo* (*ka*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r1; *kyang*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, v2; *skad*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r5).

*Ku*: The *zhabs kyu* is joined to the rightmost descender. The syllable is written in two strokes: one is the leftmost descender and the other is the tooth combined with the right descender and the *zhabs kyu* (*kun*  fr. IOL Tib J 588 IV, 1r5[c]).



*Kha*: The enclosed square becomes a triangle. The left descender is shortened to roughly the same height as that of the triangle (*kha*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 2r5). Note that *kha* and its syllable cluster are slanted to the right, as opposed to most other syllables in this hand.


*Khru*: Executed in two strokes: the left descender is the first stroke, while the head, loop, descender, and convex bowl form the second stroke (*khrus*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r4).


*Ga*: The most noticeable feature is the opening of the enclosed loop (*dge*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r5) which is sometimes written as a long, ticked head (*gang*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r8), or even a straight line without a hook (*ga*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r6).



*Gya*: Due to the elision of the enclosed loop, *gya* looks like a slanted *ya* (*gyi*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 2r1).



*Gyu*: The strokes can be executed in one of two ways. In some cases, we can tell that the *gya* was written first, and the *zhabs kyu* added after. However, it is more frequently executed in a single stroke, and the



ascender of *ya btags* is bitten by the descender of *zhabs kyu* (*gyur*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r7; comp. 'gyur'  fr. IOL Tib J 687, r1).


*Nga*: Headless. The shoulder and belly form an acute angle that is usually smaller than other syllables (*mngon*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r2).


*Ca*: The head disappears, but the neck is preserved. It is executed in one stroke (*can*  fr. IOL Tib J 588 IV, 3r4 [c]).


*Cu*: Written in one stroke (*cu*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r2); sometimes the loop is elided in favour of a short, straight line (*bcug*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r8).


*Cha*: This headless form is written in one stroke. Usually, the left loop is smaller than the right loop. The right loop is sometimes not completely closed (*che*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1v6). It is joined with the vowel *i* (*ching*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r5).



*Chu*: The strokes can be executed in one of two ways: either *cha* is written first and then *zhabs kyu* is added (*chu*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 3r1), or *na* is written first and an arc is added to form the second loop (*chub*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r1).


*Ja*: Headless. The lower belly bends slightly convexly (*je*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r4).


*Nya*: Looks like the Arabic numeral 3, but usually with a bigger upper bowl (*nye*  fr. IOL Tib J 687). It is usually slanted to the left.






*Ta*: Headless. Its limb frequently extends to the same vertical position as that of the shoulder, sometimes even further left (*tan*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 2v2). Therefore, it is slightly slanted towards the right.


*Tha*: Instead of having two enclosed areas, it is written as a hooked head with a triangle. The syllable is executed in a single stroke, starting from the ticked head, then downward to the left, to the right, and finally upward to form a triangle. Usually, its head exceeds its belly in length (*tha*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, r3).



*Da*: Headless. The combination of the shoulder and limb is frequently simplified to a ticked limb (*dang*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r8). Sometimes the limb has a hooked tail (*dag*  fr. IOL Tib 687, 1r6).



*Du*: The ligature of the ticked limb and the *zhabs kyu* makes *du* look like *ta* (*du*  fr. IOL Tib J 686 r2).



*Na*: The letter is oriented more horizontally than vertically. The limb is stretched to the right side (*na*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r1).


*Pa*: The open square is simplified to a ticked descender and an ascender with a small hooked tail (*pa*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r5). The descender can become quite flat below the vowel *na ro* (*po*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r6). When *pa* joins with the postscript *ra* or *sa*, the descender becomes more horizontally oriented, and the ascender serves as the common stroke shared by the ligature of the root letter and the postscript (*par*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r9; *par*  IOL Tib J 687, 1r1; *pas*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, v1)



*Spa*: The ligature has two open-headed squares joined horizontally to each other. The left square is slightly higher and smaller than the right one (*spong*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, v5).

*Spya/spra/spru*: Differently from *spa* with its right angles, the angles of these syllables are round. The cluster *sp-* here looks similar to the Tibetan letter *ya* (*spyad*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r3; *spring*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r5).


*Pha*: In one stroke, this letter preserves its loop. It is round in shape. Sometimes the loop and the horizontal belly are squeezed together (*phan*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1v6; *pho*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r1).


*Phu/Phya/Phru*: In these syllables, the loop of *pha* is almost totally eaten by the first stroke of the subscribed letter. Only in some cases can we observe a trace of the loop before the subscript was written (*phrag*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r2; *phyir*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r1).

*Ba*: Triangular in shape (*ba*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r1)

*Bu/Bra*: The *zhabs kyu* from *bu* is joined with the triangle and preserves its concave curve. The *ra btags* of *bra* is changed into a descender extending downward to the left. The direction of the subscribed part is the key to telling the difference between *bu* and *bra* (*bu*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r1; cf. *bral*  *ibid.*, 1r1).



*Byung*: An idiosyncratic form.



*Ma*: Without a head, *ma* is executed in one stroke (*ma*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r6).


*Mya*: Executed in one stroke. The final ascender of *ma* is eaten by the descender of the *ya btags*. The shape of the *ya btags* resembles the English *z* (*myi*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r7).



*sMra*: This syllable is idiosyncratic to Chödru's hand. It is written in one stroke. The superscript *sa* only preserves one descender and one almost horizontal ascender. The *ma* only preserves its neck and the lobe.


The ligature formed by the descender of *ma* and the *ra* *btags* extends downward to the left (*smra*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r6).


*Tsa*: Executed in one stroke: first the neck, then the loop. The final stroke of the loop extends further upward to the right, symbolising the *tsa* 'phru. The loop looks like a deflated balloon (*tsam*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r1; *rtsa*  fr. IOL Tib J 687 1r1).


*Tsha*: Executed in one stroke. The head combined with *tsa* 'phru is simplified into a neck (sometimes rightward ticked) above the two loops (*tshang*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1v2). The end of the right loop, instead of converging towards the left loop, turns upward to the right. Consequently, there is often no cusp between the two loops (*tshogs*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, v2).


*Zha*: The right descender is shortened, sometimes even to the same height as the left bowl. The letter looks like an Arabic numeral 3 that is slanted to face downward and has a small loop in the middle (*gzhan*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r5).


'*a*: Executed in one stroke. The left descender, the head, the bowl, and the right descender combine to form a frequently ticked convex curve (*'phos*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r7; *de'i*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r1).


*Yu*: Executed in one stroke, joining the root letter directly with the *zhabs kyu* (*yug*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r2). Sometimes it is difficult to tell *yu* apart from *sphra*.

*Ra*: Has a ticked neck and a short belly. In most cases, the two parts are written in one stroke (*rabs*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r2).

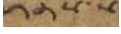
*rLu*: The root letter *ra* becomes relatively small, while the subscribed *lu* appears as an open circle (*rlung*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r7).




*La*: Executed in one stroke, first a convex loop and then an ascender (*la*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1v3).



*Le*: The vowel 'greng *po* is written in the same stroke as the consonant *la* (*legs*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r1).


*Sha*: Executed in one stroke: first the ticked bowl, then the lobe, and finally the slightly curved descender. The tick is stretched to the far left and looks like a horizontal line (*bshad*  fr. IOL Tib J 588 IV, 1r6[c]).

*Sa*: Simplified into a one-stroke combination of descender, belly, and ascender. The ascender is sometimes upright, but occasionally slanted to the right. It resembles the Uchen writing of *pa* in shape. The key to

recognising *sa*, instead of *pa*, in this hand is the appearance of the left descender (*gnas pa*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r2).

*Su*: Executed in one stroke: first the left descender, then the horizontal stroke that is slightly higher on the right, then descending to form a concave bowl with a long curve stretching to the left (*su*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r2;  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r7). It is difficult to tell *su* and *sdu* apart. Usually, the concave bowl of *sdu* is longer than that of *su* (cf. *sdug*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r6).

*Sra*: Executed in one stroke; the *ra* *btags* points to the lower left. It resembles *phra* in shape. A possible distinguishing feature is that *phra* frequently preserves the trace of a loop (*srid*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 3r2; cf. *phrad*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r5).

*Lha*: Executed in one stroke: first by writing a *la* in the same hand, then continuing downward to draw two convex bowls side by side. The rightmost convex bowl is bigger than the other parts of the syllable. It is horizontally oriented (*lha*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r9).


## 5. Application





Scripts are the graphic embodiment of knowledge, and how scripts are written certainly affects the ways in which knowledge is organised, transmitted, and received. In this regard, palaeography, the study of the graphic features of scripts, can facilitate the conveyance of the knowledge stored in ancient manuscripts.



I will use IOL Tib J 686 as an example to demonstrate how the palaeographical study of Chödrup's handwriting can improve the reading of texts written in this cursive hand. IOL Tib J 686 is a well-studied manuscript.<sup>51</sup> Despite this, the question of how to read and translate its first sentence has continued to puzzle scholars in the past decades (Fig. 12). In his study, Ueyama transcribed this line as “*ston zla ra ba nya la dur tshun cī’i phyir byed pa’i lo rgyus mdo tsam du bstan pa*”, and translated the sentence as “a brief narration of the story of why (we) make offerings on the full-moon day of Ston month [孟秋滿月に施物を

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<sup>51</sup> Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū*, 93, 154–159; Kapstein, “The Tibetan Yulanpen Jing.”

何故に為すかの因縁を要約して説く]”<sup>52</sup> However, the transcription is already problematic in light of the fact that Chödrup wrote the *tshun* in a totally different form than it appears in this line (cf. *tshu* in Appendix, e.g.,  fr. IOL Tib J 686, v4), not to mention that the question of how to understand *dur tshun* in this context is another puzzle.<sup>53</sup>

Kapstein offers a different possibility for reading this sentence. He reads *hur sun* instead of *dur tshun* and takes *hur sun ci* together as the name of a Chinese patron. While *sun* seems plausible from a palaeographical perspective, the graphic form of *ha* in the typology of Chödrup’s handwriting differs from what we see in this sentence (cf. *ha* in Appendix). The various samples of *ha* in Chödrup’s hand suggest that Chödrup intentionally preserved the shoulder and descender in the execution of strokes (*lha*  fr. IOL Tib J 686, r9; *lha*  fr. IOL Tib J 687, 1r5; *ho*  fr. Db. T. 444; *hvan*  fr. Db. T. 2921).

I would propose yet another reading of this sentence: *ston zla ra ba nya la yu ra phun ci’i phyir byed pa’i lo rgyus mdo tsam du bstan pa*, in which the *yu ra phun* is possibly the phonetic transcription of Chinese *yulanpen* (盂蘭盆). To begin with, I propose to read the root letter of  as a sloppy writing of *ya*, whose final ascender is eaten by the vowel *u*. As for the reading *ra*,<sup>54</sup> the disappearance of the nasal before the plosive *ph-* is indeed hard, but not impossible to explain. It could have been a phonological contraction,<sup>55</sup> or was possibly just a mistake in writing. The identification of *phun* is supported by the presence of *phu* in a similar form in this typology (*phul*  fr. IOL Tib J 217, r3). This reading, although tentative and containing many questions, seems to be

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<sup>52</sup> Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū*, 154.

<sup>53</sup> Ueyama translates *dur tshun* as *semotsu* (施物), but he does not explain how he arrives at this interpretation. The entry on *dur tshun* in the Rangjung yeshe Wiki, written by Jim Valby, seems to borrow Ueyama’s translation (accessed October 21, 2020; [http://rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/dur\\_tshun](http://rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/dur_tshun)). I could not find a single attestation of the term *dur tshun* in any other Tibetan dictionary or in the searchable texts on the BDRC website.

<sup>54</sup> As Prof. Kapstein insightfully pointed out in private communication, another difficulty in accepting my tentative reading of *yu ra phun* lies in the fact that *ra* and *la* are distinguished in the majority of cases in Dunhuang manuscripts. This is indeed a trenchant point, although very occasionally the misuse of *ra* and *la* is attested (cf. Zhou Jiwen and Xie Houfang, *Dunhuang tufan hanzang duiyin zihui*, 33, 34, 132).

<sup>55</sup> I am grateful for Prof. Takata Tokio for taking the time to review my hypothesis and encouraging me to propose it.

plausible, considering that the text in fact tells us a narrative version of the origin of the Yulanpen Festival.

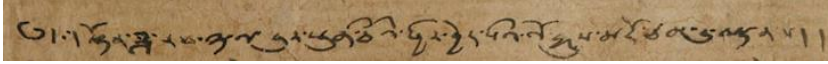


Figure 12. Citation of the First Sentence of IOL Tib J 217

## 6. Conclusion

In this paper, I have undertaken a palaeographical analysis of an individual scribe, whose hand appears in a number of Dunhuang manuscripts linked to the intellectual production of Chödrup. These eight Tibetan manuscripts are IOL Tib J 217, IOL Tib J 686, IOL Tib J 687, IOL Tib J 625, P. T. 783v, IOL Tib J 588, P. T. 770, and IOL Tib J 619. They are closely connected in terms of both their (sophisticated cursive) handwriting and their textual content: they are Sino-Tibetan Buddhist compositions associated with Chödrup's team, and they are mainly summaries or commentaries rather than direct scripture translations by way of text genre. Ueyama is the first to argue that this hand belonged to Chödrup, based on the colophon *dge slong chos grub kyis bgyis* in IOL Tib J 686. However, he does not provide more supporting evidence nor convincing analytical argument. Therefore, Ueyama's identification is only accepted with reservations by van Schaik in the latter's theory of five-style handwriting in early Tibet. The recently published Tibetan manuscripts from Gansu provide us with plenty of editorial records to indicate that Chödrup acted as the final proofreader. Many of them are records of scraps that Chödrup decided to discard. All these editorial records contain precisely the same handwriting style as that of IOL Tib J 686, which strengthens the case for attributing this handwriting to Chödrup himself.

Using the above eight manuscripts as samples, I have established a typology of this hand, adopting the conventions of palaeography from Western manuscript studies. Establishing this typology, on the one hand, lessens the degree of subjectivity in the hand's identification, and on the other, allows us to double-check the substantiation of Chödrup's scribeship. After all, the similarity of the writings in this hand across



these different manuscripts is graphically apparent. Previous Dunhuang studies have provided us with a convenient toolkit for ensuring a more systematic graphical analysis of Dunhuang Tibetan scripts. A number of idiosyncratic scribal features are identified and analysed in this process, features that can further be applied to improving the readings of manuscripts with similar cursive writing.

Building a typological model for studies of individual scribes is not an end in itself. It should serve as a means and tool for obtaining new knowledge. One application of this typology, as I have demonstrated, is to improve our reading and understanding of the manuscripts written in this hand. Moreover, although I have not explored the possibility in this paper, we can tentatively use the typology of this hand to recognise further manuscripts written in the same hand.<sup>56</sup> We may be able to find more of Chödrup's unsigned works, and could thus broaden our current knowledge of Chödrup as well as intellectual history in Dunhuang. Moreover, as cultural production, this handwriting style was inherited and further developed in the post-Chödrup period, both in Dunhuang and further afield. How this sort of writing influenced or evolved into the more popular cursive style is a question waiting to be addressed in the future.

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<sup>56</sup> A quick look suggests that IOL Tib J 300, 301, 302, 589, 591 (commentary), 592 (commentary), 616, 618 (commentary), and P. T. 1261 were also written in the same hand. This hypothesis needs to be validated by more detailed research in the future.

*BuddhistRoad Paper 1.2.* Li, "Toward a Typology of Chödrup's Cursive Handwriting"

7. Appendix. The Typology of the Hand Ascribed to Chödrup

Syllable	IOL Tib J 686	IOL Tib J 687	IOL Tib J 217	IOL Tib J 588 IV	IOL Tib J 619	P. T 770	IOL Tib J 625	P. T. 783v	Db. T. no.
ka (i/e/o)	r6	3v2	r1  v2	1r2(c) <sup>57</sup>	1r2(c)	bkag r6(c) 	∅	∅	444
	v1	3v3	r6	1v4	1r6(c)				2910
	r1		v2	1v5	1v2(c)				
ku	v6	2r1	r3	1r5(c)	1r3(c)	r4(c)	∅	∅	2932
		3v4	v1	3v5 (c)					
kya (i/e/o)	r2		v3		2v4 (c)	r2(c)			
	v2	2v4	r9	1r4(c)	1v6 (c)	r3(c)			
	v3	3v5	r6	3r6(c)	1v4(c)				

<sup>57</sup> In this table, ‘c’ is an abbreviation for commentary. 1r2 (c) denote that the targeted syllable is located in the commentary on line 1r2. Db. T. no. (e.g. 444) means the image is taken from the manuscript numbered Db. T. 444.

						r3(c)			
<i>ska</i> (i/e/o)			r5  r6 r7	1r4(c) 1v6 (c)	1r3(c) 1v5(c)	r1(c) r2(c)	∅	∅	
<i>skya</i> (i/e/o)	v4  r8 r9	1r2  1r6 1r4	v2	1v6(c) 1r3(c)	2v2(c)  v6 1v1(c)	r3(c)	∅	∅	
<i>kha</i> (i/e/o)	r2 r6 v5	2r5 1r1	r4 r6	2v1(c) 1v6(c) 5r3(c) 3r4(c)	1r4(c) 2r1(c) 3v5(c) <i>khungs</i>	r2(c) r4(c)	∅	∅	
<i>khya</i>	v1 1r2  1r9	3v2 3v4	r4 r6	14r2(c)	3v6(c)		∅	∅	
<i>khra</i>		1r4  1v1	r10				∅	∅	
<i>khru</i>		3r1	r4	4v6			∅	∅	
<i>ga</i> (i/e/o)	r6 r9	1v2 3v3	r6 r5	1r5(c)	1r1(c)	r1(c)			444

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	r8 r6 v3	1v5 1r1 3v5 3r4 3r3	r7 r9 r2	1r3(c)	1r4(c)				
<i>gu</i>		3r4	r 14	17r1(c)			∅	∅	
<i>gya</i> (i/e/o)	v2 v7	2r1 1r2 3v5	r1 r9	1r6(c)	1r3(c)		∅	∅	487
<i>gyu</i>	r7 r8 v4	1r1 1r2 1v4	r14 v3 v4	18r5(c)	2v2(c) 2v6(c)	r1(c)	∅	∅	
<i>gra</i> (i/e/o)	r1 r2 r6 v7	1v1 1v5 1r3	r9	3r4(c)	2r6(c)	1r1(c)	∅	∅	487
<i>gru</i>		1r5							444

		1v3							2920 
									2932 
<i>rgya</i>	r1 r2	1v4	r1	16v4(c) 					444 
<i>rgyu</i>	r1	1r4  1v3 1r2  1v3	r5	1r6(c) 3r6(c)	1r4(c)	r4(c)	∅	∅	
<i>sgyu</i>	r6		r6				∅	∅	
<i>nga</i> (i/e/o)	v5 v1 v2 1r2	3r5 3r2 3v4	r3 r4	1r6(c) 1r4(c)	1r4(r) 1r3(c)	r4(c)	∅	∅	
<i>lga</i>			r14	2v3(c)	2r2(c)	r4(c)			
<i>snga</i> (i/e/o)	r5 r3  r7	2v1  v3 3r6		16v3(c) 			∅	∅	



<i>ca</i> (i/e/o)	r1 r5 v2 r8	1r3 1v5 1r1 3v5	r12 r9 r10	3r4 (c) 1r5(c) 2r1(c) 1r3(c) 2r1(c)	1r3(c)	r2(c)	∅	∅	
<i>cu</i>	v5 r8		r2 r10	1r4(c) 18r5(c)	1r2(c) 2r1(c)	r5(c)	∅	∅	
<i>cha</i> (i/e/o)	r7 r6 r1 r6 v4	3r1 1v2 1v6 3v5	r4 r9 r2 r10 r5 r1	1r5(c)	1r2(c) 1r3(c)		∅	∅	444 2910 2932

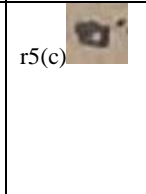
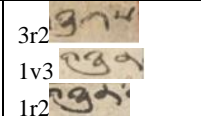
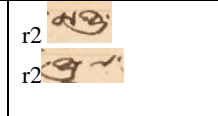
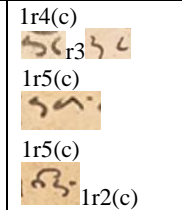
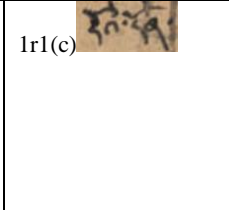
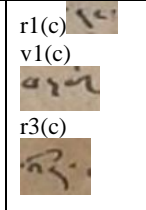
<i>chu</i>		3r1  1r1 1r1  1v6	r13 v2	13v5(c)	3v5(c)		∅	∅	
<i>ja (i/e/o)</i>		1r4 1v1 1v2  1v4	r3  r9	2v3(c)	1r4(c) 3r2(c)	r5(c) r3(c)	∅	∅	
<i>ju</i>	v2						∅	∅	
<i>rja</i>		1r3  3v1 1v5	r8	18r6(c)		r2(c)	∅	∅	
<i>lja</i>				5v2(c)					
<i>nya (i/e/o)</i>	r1  v4  v4	3r5  1r6  1 v4	r3  r10 r1 r2	1r4(c) 1r6(c)	1r2(c) 1v6(c)	r1(c) r5(c)	∅	∅	

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	r1 r4		r8						
<i>snya</i>	v6		r9		4v1(c)		∅	∅	
<i>ta</i> (i/e/o)	v2	1v2 3v5 3v3	r6 r10 r2 r9	5v4(c)	1r2(c)		∅	∅	
<i>tu</i>	r2 r3	2v2 3v5	r2		4v1(c)		∅	∅	
<i>tra</i>	∅	1v6 tri					∅	∅	
<i>rta</i>	r8	3r2 1r4	r14	16v3(c)	4r4(c)	r5(c)	∅	∅	
<i>lta</i>	v5 r8 (?)	1r2 2v2 1r1	v2	2r1(c)	3r6 (c)	r1(c)	∅	∅	
<i>sta</i>	r1	1v6 2r2		1r3(c)	1r2(c)	r3(c)	∅	∅	



									
<i>tha</i> (i/e/o)							∅	∅	
<i>thu</i>							∅	∅	
<i>da</i>							∅	∅	

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











































	v3 r6 r5 v5	1r2 3v5	r1	1r5(c) 1r6(c)				
du	r1 r2 r7 v4	1r1 1r4 1r3 2r4 3v5	r1 r2 r4 r9	1r4(c) 1r5(c)	3r6(c)	r3(c)	∅	∅
dra	r6 r4	3r3 v2	r5	2r5(c)	1v5(c)		∅	∅
dru		3r2	r2 r10	6v4(c)			∅	∅
lda	v5	2r5 2v6	r2 r7 r4	5v6(c) 6v4(c)	2v6(c)		∅	∅
sda		3v5 2v2	r5			r2(c)	∅	∅

<i>sdu</i>	r7  v4 	1v6  3r6 	v3 	5v1(c)  18r5(c)  10r4(c) 			∅	∅	
<i>na</i> (i/e/o)	r2  r8  r7  r8  v2 	1r1  1r2  1v3  1r1  1r6 	r1  r4  r6  r8  r3  r1 	2v5(c)  1r5(c)  1r3(c) 	1r2(c) 	r2(c)  r6(c) 			
<i>nu</i>				18r5(c) 		r1(c) 	∅	∅	
<i>rna</i>	r1  r5 	1r3  1r5  3v5  1r6 	r9 	1r3(c)  3r4(c)  2r1(c) 	1r2(c) 	r4(c) 	∅	∅	

*BuddhistRoad Paper 1.2. Li, "Toward a Typology of Chödrup's Cursive Handwriting"*



	v3 rnams par	1v3						
<i>sna</i>	v2	3r6	r7				∅	∅
<i>pa</i> (i/e/o)	r1 r6 1r1 par r9 pas v1 r1 v6	1r1 1r5 1r1 v5 1v3 1v4	r1 r2 r1 r6 r1	1r3 (c) 1r3(c) 1r3(c) 1r2(c) 1r2(c)	1r2(c) 1r3© r(3) 1r2(c)		∅	
<i>pyi</i>			r1 r3				∅	∅
<i>spa</i> (i/e/o)	v5	1r1 1v5 1v4			4r4(c)		∅	∅

		spangs pa'i							
<i>spya</i> (i/e/o)	v1 	1r3  1v5  2v6 		18r5(c)  12v2(c) 			∅	∅	
<i>spra</i>			r4  r5 				∅	∅	
<i>spru</i>			r7  sprul r6  spruld				∅	∅	
<i>pha</i> (i/e/o)	r4  r4  r7 	1v6  2r4  3r4  2v 6 	r1  r1  r1 	16v4 	4v4(c) 	r6(c)  r3(c) 	∅	∅	2910  2932 
<i>phu</i>			r6  r3 				∅	∅	
<i>phya</i> (i/e/o)	r1  v2 	3v2 	r10  r7  r2  r4  r3  r1 	1r5(c) 	1r3(c) 	r3(c) 			
<i>phyu</i>		3r1 					∅	∅	444 



									2910  2923 
<i>phra</i> (i/e/o)	r5 v2	3r4	r2 r5 r4	r10 18r3(c) 18r5(c)	3v3(c)		∅	∅	
<i>phru</i>	r4 v2		v2	2v4(c)			∅	∅	
<i>ba</i> (i/e/o)	r1 r8 v3	r1 v6 3r1 3r2	r1 r3	18v1(c) 18r5(c)		r5(c)			
<i>bu</i>	r2 v2	1r1 3r2	r3	8r5(c) 8r6(c)	2r1(c)	r1(c) r6(c)	∅	∅	

<i>bya</i> (i/e/o)	r2 r1 r6 v1	1v4 1r4 1v1 3r3	r1 r2 r1	1r4(c) 1r4(c)	1r3(c) 2v2(c)	r4(c)			
<i>byu</i>	r3	1v2 1v4	r1	1r6(c) 2r1(c)	1r4(c)		∅	∅	
<i>bra</i> (i/e/o)		1r1 1r3 1r3 1v5 v1 1v1	v4	3r4(c)	2r1(c)	r2(c)	∅	∅	
<i>bru</i>		1r4 3r1					∅	∅	
<i>bla</i> (i/e/o)	v6 r1 v5	2r1 2v3 3r3	r8 r7				∅	∅	
<i>sbya</i> (i/e/o)		3v2	r8	18v1(c)	2r3(c)		∅	∅	

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					3v5(c)				
<i>ma</i>	r6 v1	1r1 1r3 1v6	r2	1r5(c) 2r1(c)	3r2(c)	r1(c)	∅	∅	
<i>mu</i>		1v2 mug		13v4(c)	1r3(c)		∅	∅	
<i>mya</i> (i/e/o)	r7 r7 r7	3r5 1r1 v1 1r3	r2 r4 r2	3r2(c) 1r5(c)	3r6 (c) 1r3(c)	v1(c) r3(c)	∅	∅	
<i>myu</i>		3r5 3v1		17r1(c)			∅	∅	
<i>rmo</i>		3r2 r5		3v5(c)	1r2(c)		∅	∅	
<i>rmyar</i> <i>myi</i>		1r2 v3		2r5(c)	1v5(c)		∅	∅	
<i>smo</i>		3r3		1r4(c)	2r6(c)		∅	∅	




<i>smra</i>	r6	1r1  r3		3r2(c) 4v4(c)			∅	∅	
<i>tsa</i>	r1		r15						
<i>rtsa</i> (i/e/o)		1r5  1r1  3r2 2r6 1v2	r12	18r4(c) 18r5(c)	2v2(c)	r1(c)	∅	∅	
<i>rtsu</i>		2r5					∅	∅	
<i>stsa</i> (i/e/o)	v1 stsald	3r6 3r6 3v2	r6	1r5(c)	1r3(c)		∅	∅	
<i>tsha</i> (i/e/o)	v4 v5 r7 r8	3v4  1r6 1v2 1r2  1v3 2v6	r3 r10 r1 r4	1r5(c) 1r6(c) 1r4(c)	1v4(c)	r1(c)	∅	∅	

*BuddhistRoad Paper 1.2. Li, "Toward a Typology of Chödrup's Cursive Handwriting"*



		3v2  Ø	r2						
tshu	v2 v4			1r3(c)	1r2(c)		Ø	Ø	
dza	r5	3r3	r1				Ø	Ø	
rdza	rdzogs v6	2v5 3r5		3r6(c)	4v4(c)	r4©	Ø	Ø	
rdzu	v2	1r1  1r3	v2				Ø	Ø	
zha (i/e/o)	r5 r2  v3 v6 r1  v4	3r3 1r2 1v2 1v3  v5	r1  r3 r2 r5	2v4(c) 1r5(c) 1r5(c)	1r3(c)	r5(c) r2(c)			444

zhu	r8 	1r6 	r1 				∅	∅	2910  2932 
za (i/e/o)	r3  r9  v3 	2r5  3r1  2v  2r6 	r4  r2  r4 	18r4(c) 	4r3(c) 		∅	∅	2920 
zu	r1 			1v5(c)  2v1(c) 	1v6(c) 		∅	∅	
zla	r1  v5 			7v4(c) 			∅	∅	
'a/ prefix	r7 		r9 			r6(c) 	∅	∅	
'i	r7 	3r2 	r1 	18r5(c) 	1v4(c) 	r2(c) 	∅		

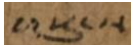

















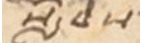

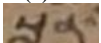






	v3	(?)							
'u	'u 1r3		r5				∅	∅	
'o			r3 r3 r5 r8	1r5(c)	1v4(c)		∅	∅	
ya (i/e/o)	r3 r6	1r1 v3 2r4 1r1 1v5 1r1 3r1 3r4	r9 r3 r1'	1r3(c) 1r4(c)	1r2(c)	r1(c)	∅	∅	
yu	r1		r3 r2 r1 r2	5r5 5r6		r6 (c)	∅	∅	




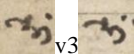




<i>ra</i> (i/o)	r1 r8 r7 r6	1r2 1v3 2r6	r2 r7 r9 r7	1r4(c) 2r1(c) 1r5(c) 2r1(c)	1r3(c)	r4(c)	∅	∅	2910 2921 2932
<i>rlu</i>	1r7						∅	∅	
<i>la</i> (i/e/o)	r1 r9 v1 v3 r4 r1	1r2 v3 3v5 1r1 2v2 2v6 3r1	r2 r6 r9 r1 r3	1r3(c) 1r2(c) 1v1(c)	3r5(c) 1r2(c)	r1(c)			444 2920
<i>lu</i>		1v4 v6		16v4(c)	3v2(c) 3v5(c)		∅	∅	



<i>sha</i> (i/e/o)	r4 r2 v5	1r3 v5 2v6 3r5 3r2 r4	r2	1r6(c) 1r5(c)	1r3(c)	r1(c)				
<i>sa</i> (i/e/o)	v1 v5 v3	1r6 3r4 1r3 1v5 2v1 v6 3r4	r2 r1 r2 r1	1r6(c)	1r4(r)	r1(c) las	∅	∅		
<i>su</i>	r7 r4 v1 v4 r6	1r2 v3 1r2 1r5 1v3	r2 r10	18r5(c) 1r6(c) 2r1(c) 2v4(c)	1r4(c)	r2(c) r5(c)	∅	∅		

	v5 								
<i>sra</i> (i/e/o)		3v2  3r2  r3 		2v4(c)  4r5 (c)  4v1(c) 	2r3(c)  		∅	∅	
<i>sru</i>		1r1  2v2  2v6 					∅	∅	
<i>sla</i>	r4  v7  v6 	3v5  3v2 	r8 	1r2(c) 	1r2(c) 	r1(c) 	∅	∅	
<i>slu</i>		1r3 					∅	∅	
<i>u</i>				1r2(c) 	1r2(c) 		∅	∅	
<i>ha</i>									444 



									
<i>hva</i>									2921 
<i>lha/ lho</i>	r9  v4	1r5  v3	r1 	1r6(c) 18r5(C) 	1r4(c) 	r1(c) 	∅	∅	



### Abbreviations

BD	Collection of Dunhuang Manuscripts preserved in the National Library of China, Beijing.
BDRC	Buddhist Digital Resource Center, <a href="https://www.tbrc.org#!/footer/about/newhome">https://www.tbrc.org#!/footer/about/newhome</a> .
Derge	Kangyur, Derge edition.
Derge Tengyur	Tengyur, Derge edition.
Db. T.	<i>Gansu cang dunhuang zangwen wenxian</i> 甘肃藏敦煌藏文文献 [Dunhuang Tibetan Manuscripts Preserved in Gansu], 30 vols, ed. Ma De 马德 and Kancuoji 勘措吉. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2019.
Dx Tib	Tibetan Manuscript in the St. Petersburg Collection. <i>Opisanie tibetskikh svitkov iz Dun'khuana v sobranii Instituta vostokovedeniia AN SSSR</i> , ed. L. S. Savitsky. Moscow: Nauka, 1991.
IOL Tib J	Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts preserved at the British Library in London (formerly in the India Office Library (IOL)).
Royal Library of C.	Dunhuang Manuscripts in the Collection of the Royal Library in Copenhagen.
Or.	Stein Collection of Chinese Dunhuang Manuscripts preserved at the British Library in London (the old inventory nos. are referred to as Or. whereas they later changed to S.; identical to Or. xxx/S).
P.	Pelliot Collection of Chinese Dunhuang Manuscripts preserved at the Bibliothèque National in Paris.
P. T.	Pelliot Collection of Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts preserved at the Bibliothèque National in Paris.
S.	Stein Collection of Chinese Dunhuang Manuscripts preserved at the British Library in London.
Stog	Tibetan Kangyur Manuscript of the Stog Palace Collection.
Shanghai Library	Collection of Dunhuang Manuscripts preserved at the Shanghai Library.
T.	<i>Taishō shinshū daizōkyō</i> 大正新脩大藏經 [Taishō Tripiṭaka], edited by Takakusu Junjirō 高順次郎 et. al. Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924–1935.
Tokyo	Kangyur, Tokyo edition.
Ulan Bator	Kangyur, Ulan Bator edition.



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