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# Yúnnán in the Old Tibetan Annals

*An Annotated Translation of Texts Relating to Yúnnán in Tibetan Texts Discovered at Dūnhuáng*

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LUDWIG M BRINCKMANN

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## The Yúnnán Papers

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This text is part of a series of translations of historical Chinese texts concerning Yúnnán.

This series does not aim to present any new research but to allow an English-speaking audience to better understand Yúnnán's history and culture through original texts. The texts are heavily annotated, giving geographical, historical and cultural background information and references to contemporary academic discussions.

The texts in this series are currently in draft and undergoing revision. Those translations that have reached a certain state of maturity can be found on my website at

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[ludwigbrinckmann@gmail.com](mailto:ludwigbrinckmann@gmail.com).

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## 1 Introduction

From the middle of the 7th century CE, the Tibetan Tǔbō 吐蕃 Empire began to expand and came increasingly into conflict with the Chinese Empire, which under the Táng 唐 had renewed its own imperial ambitions. A focal point became the fertile region to the southeast of Tibet and to the southwest of China, i.e. present-day Yúnnán, a region inhabited by dispersed tribal people the Chinese called *Mán* 蛮.<sup>(1)</sup>

The power struggle between the two powers was cleverly exploited by tribal chieftains from the Méng clan 蒙氏, most notably Píluōgé 皮罗阁 and his son Géluófèng 阁逻凤, who went on to unite a number of chieftains to create a new regional power, which became known as Nánzhào 南诏.

Until the discovery of Tibetan annals in the Library Cave at Dūnhuáng 敦煌, the history of the region and its dealings with Tǔbō was only known through Chinese records. It was the discovery and subsequent translation of a key texts by Jacques Bacot, F.W. Thomas and C.H. Toussaint<sup>(2)</sup> that revealed some previously unknown military campaigns by Tǔbō and corroborated other events recorded in Chinese history works.

Charles Backus summarizes the importance of some of these entries:

They confirm that by 703 the Tibetans had extended their domination through campaigns as far as the Erh-hai Lake region of modern northwestern Yunnan.

These were some of the last exploits of King Tǔsong (676-704), who in the winter of 703 personally led an expedition against this area. According to the annals, 'he established his authority over the 'Jan, he imposed tribute on the White Myava (Myava Blanc), he subjugated the Black Myava (Myava Noir), and so forth.' Here it is essential to realize that these bizarre names can all be linked to the inhabitants of the area occupied partially by the Hsi-erh Ho Man, the same peoples whose submission the Chinese sources report was lost to Tibet after the fall of An-jung.

The 'Jan, whose name seems to have been applied by the Tibetans to the entire north-west Yunnan region (*'Jan yul*), have been equated with the Moso peoples (the modern Na-hsi) of that area. Myava, or more properly Myva, seems to have been the Tibetan equivalent of 'Man. Thus the 'Myava Blanc' were the Pai Man (White Man) and the 'Myava Noir' were the Wu Man (Black Man), the two principal ethnic categories of the Nan-chao populace. These annals thus reveal the extent of early Tibetan subjugation of the northern portions of what was to become the Nan-chao kingdom. Indeed, the annals make it clear that King Tǔsong met his death in 704 while on campaign against the Myava, rather than in an expedition against mutinous subject peoples in the Nepal region, as the Chinese sources make it seem. (Backus (1981), pp. 29-30)

Four documents outlining Tibetan 7th and 8th century history were found in the treasure trove of the Library Cave. These are best known by their respective archival numbers:

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<sup>(1)</sup> The history of the rivalry between China and Tibet during this period is outlined in Backus (1981), pp. 24-44. A much more general short outline Tǔbō's dealings with Táng China can also be found in Richardson (1984), pp. 28-33.

<sup>(2)</sup> Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (1940).

**Pelliot Tibetain 1288** Together with IOL Tib J 750, this text forms what Jacques Bacot, F.W. Thomas and C.H. Toussaint called the *Annales* and which Brandon Dotson followed calling the *Old Tibetan Annals Version I*. Pelliot Tibetain 1288 covers the period 641–671 CE and does not contain entries pertaining to Yúnnán. As this part of the text was taken by Paul Pelliot, it is archived in France.<sup>(3)</sup>

**IOL Tib J 750** This text is the continuation of the above Pelliot Tibetain 1288, it covers the period 671–748 CE. As it was removed by Aurel Stein it is archived in England.<sup>(4)</sup>

**Or 8212/187** Brandon Dotson calls this the *Old Tibetan Annals Version II*, it covers the period 743–765 CE.<sup>(5)</sup>

**Pelliot Tibetain 250** Jacques Bacot, F.W. Thomas and C.H. Toussaint called this text the *Chronique*, which Brandon Dotson followed calling it the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*. It contains a narrated genealogy of Tibetan rulers blended with mythological elements.<sup>(6)</sup>

Three of these documents contain entries concerning Yúnnán, these entries are selected here.

## 2 About this Translation

As I cannot read Tibetan, the translations collected here were compiled from scholarly translations, notably Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (1940) (in French), Huáng Xifán 黄希凡 and Mǎ Dé 马德 (2000) (in Chinese), and Dotson (2009).

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<sup>(3)</sup> The document is available online at <https://idp.bl.uk/collection/73AEC65DF5211A48AE207E4F1BE2BF1E> (accessed 1st October 2024). A Tibetan transcription is available at <https://wikisource.org/wiki/%E0%BD%91%E0%BD%BC%E0%BD%93%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%86%E0%BD%BA%E0%BD%93%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%82%E0%BD%93%E0%BD%91%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%96%E0%BD%A6%E0%BE%A1%E0%BD%B4%E0%BD%A6%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%80%E0%BE%B1%E0%BD%B2%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%A3%E0%BD%BC%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%9A%E0%BD%B2%E0%BD%82%E0%BD%A6%E0%BC%8D> (accessed 30th September 2024) (this contains the text of all three annals). A transcription into Latin characters is available online at [https://otdo.aa-ken.jp/archives?p=Pt\\_1288](https://otdo.aa-ken.jp/archives?p=Pt_1288) (accessed 29th September 2024). It is translated into French in Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (1940), pp. 7–52, into English in Dotson (2009), pp. 81–89 and into Chinese in Huáng Xifán 黄希凡 and Mǎ Dé 马德 (2000).

<sup>(4)</sup> The document is available online at <https://idp.bl.uk/collection/FC739AC2FCD648C1AC72C1057F3AA467> (accessed 1st October 2024). A transcription into Latin characters is available online at [https://otdo.aa-ken.jp/archives?p=ITJ\\_0750](https://otdo.aa-ken.jp/archives?p=ITJ_0750) (accessed 29th September 2024). It is translated into English in Dotson (2009), pp. 89–125 and into Chinese in Huáng Xifán 黄希凡 and Mǎ Dé 马德 (2000).

<sup>(5)</sup> The document is available online at <https://idp.bl.uk/collection/C88DD91757F94C70B6A845F5615ED48C> (accessed 1st October 2024). A transcription into Latin characters is available online at [https://otdo.aa-ken.jp/archives?p=Or\\_8212\\_0187](https://otdo.aa-ken.jp/archives?p=Or_8212_0187) (accessed 29th September 2024). It is translated into French in Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (1940), pp. 53–72 and into English in Dotson (2009), pp. 126–134.

<sup>(6)</sup> The document is available online at <https://idp.bl.uk/collection/6A28CDE9230AD44FA3AD75580326B088> (accessed 1st October 2024). It is also reproduced in Jīn Yǎshēng 金雅声 and Guō Ēnzhǔ 郭恩主 (2007), vol. 4, pp. 205–207. The Tibetan text is available online <https://wikisource.org/wiki/%E0%BD%96%E0%BD%99%E0%BD%93%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%94%E0%BD%BC%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%A2%E0%BD%B2%E0%BD%98%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%96%E0%BE%B1%E0%BD%B4%E0%BD%84%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%82%E0%BD%B2%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%A3%E0%BD%BC%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%A2%E0%BE%92%E0%BE%B1%E0%BD%B4%E0%BD%A6%E0%BC%8D> (accessed 3rd October 2024), the text is not labelled correctly, it contains the text of Pelliot Tibetain 250. I found the text by accident searching for references to ལྷ. It is translated into French in Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (1940), pp. 91–170.

I made an effort to find Tibetan transcriptions of the original Tibetan scrolls, but transcription errors are very likely in this text.

## 2.1 Related Literature

Bacot (1913) first presented the annals and chronicles, Petech (1967a) (reprinted in Petech (1988), pp. 261–300, in Italian) contains many important notes on the annals. Dotson (2009) contains a newer annotated translation of the annals. Huáng Xīfán 黄希凡 and Mǎ Dé 马德 (2000) has an annotated translation into Chinese.

## 2.2 Notes on Names in Tibetan

In the Tibetan annals, the region of northwestern Yúnnán is referred to as *jang* རམས་. In Tibetan phonetic transcriptions the term is written as *jang*<sup>(7)</sup>, *vjang*<sup>(8)</sup>, *Jañ*<sup>(9)</sup>, etc. Joseph Francis Rock noted, ‘the word Jang is written in Tibetan in two ways, viiz: ljang ang hjang. The first stands for Mos-so and appears in a Tibetan manuscript of the Ge-sar legend’<sup>(10)</sup> F.W. Thomas argued ‘the Hjan with whom the Tibetan State first came into contact were those occupying the present Hjan [ie., the Moso, now usually referred to as the Na-hsi] region ...west of the Man State of Nan-chao. When their further advance brought them into touch with Nan-chao, or perhaps in consequence of a prior absorption of the Hjan territory by Nanchao, they used the term Hjan to cover also that hinterland.’<sup>(11)</sup> However, Stein (2010), p. 93 thinks this refers to Qiang people. Huáng Xīfán 黄希凡 and Mǎ Dé 马德 (2000) transliterated the term in Chinese as *jiāngdì* 姜地.

The people the Chinese called *Mán* 蛮 are called *myva* མལ་, with their subgroups of the more sinicized *Bái Mán* 白蛮 called the *myva dkar* མལ་དཀར་ and the less sinicized *Wū Mán* 乌蛮 called the *mywa nag* མལ་ནག་. Their territory is called *myva la* མལ་ལ་, literally meaning ‘land of the *myva*’. Charles Backus noted that ‘Myava, or more properly Myva, seems to have been the Tibetan equivalent of ‘Man. Thus the “Myava Blanc” were the Pai Man White Man and the “Myava Noir” were the Wu Man (Black Man), the two principal ethnic categories of the Nan-chao populace.’<sup>(12)</sup> Beckwith (1987), p. 65, note 64 interpreted *myva* མལ་ as a Tibetan writing of *miáo* 苗: ‘Mywa seems to be an Old Tibetan transcription of the same ethnonym transcribed by the modern Chinese as Miao’, this is most likely mistaken.

Two Nánzhào rulers are mentioned in the texts: Géluófèng 阁逻凤 appears as *Kag-La-Bong* ཀག་ལ་བོང་ and Píluōgé 皮罗阁 appears as *Mya-La-Kag* མལ་ལ་ཀག་.

<sup>(7)</sup> Dotson (2009), p. 102.

<sup>(8)</sup> Yáng Míng 杨铭 (2008), p. 72

<sup>(9)</sup> Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (1940), p. 149

<sup>(10)</sup> Rock (1947), p. 192, found via Backus (1981), 174, note 116.

<sup>(11)</sup> Thomas (1955), p. 45 via Backus (1981), p. 43 (I have not been able to find a copy of Thomas (1955)).

<sup>(12)</sup> Backus (1981), p. 29.

### 3 Annotated Translation

#### 3.1 The Old Tibetan Annals I

For the year <sup>(13)</sup> 703–704 CE an entry in IOL Tib J 750<sup>(14)</sup> recorded a military campaign by the Tibetan emperor, the *zànpǔ* 赞普 *btsan po* བཙན་པོ་, Tridu Songtsen 赤都松赞 *Khri 'dus srong btsan* ཁྲི་འདུས་སྟོང་ བཙན་པོ་ into the region of 'jang འཇང་, likely around present-day Lijiāng 丽江 and Jiànchuān 剑川.

༡༩ ཡོས་སུའི་ལོ། [...] དབུ་བཙན་པོ་འཇང་ཡུལ་དུ་གཤེགས། འཇང་ཡལ།	In the year of the hare [...] In the winter the Btsan-po departed to the country of 'Jang, and sacked 'Jang. (translation Dotson (2009), p. 102)
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The following winter 704–705 CE, the military campaign seems to have continued pushing further south into the lands of the *Mán* 蛮 *myva* མུ་, resulting in the death of Tridu Songtsen.<sup>(15)</sup>

༡༩ འབྲུག་ལོ་ལ་བབ་སྟེ། [...] དབུ་བཙན་པོ་ཆབ་སྲིད་ལ་མུ་ལ་གཤེགས་པ་ལས། དབུ་དུ་གཤེགས།	It fell on the year of the dragon. [...] In the winter the Btsan-pho departed on a political campaign to Mywa, but departed to heaven. (translation Dotson (2009), pp. 102–103)
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For the year 733–734 CE, the annals record a tribute mission by the Nánzhào ruler Píluōgé 皮罗阁, *Mya-La-Kag* མུ་ལ་ཀག་, who ruled 728–748 CE.<sup>(17)</sup> This was likely part of negotiations for the Sino-Tibetan treaty signed that year.<sup>(18)</sup>

༡༩ བྱ་གཤི་ལོ་ལ། བཙན་པོ་པོ་སྐྱོན་ན་རྒྱ་ནག་ བཞུགས། བཙན་ཡུལ་དུ་རྒྱ་འོ་པོ་ལ། ལི་ཞང་པོ་ལྷོ་མུ་ ལ་ཀག་ལས། མུ་ལ་ཀག་པ་ལྷོ་ལོ་ལ།	In the year of the bird the Btsan-po's court resided in Dron. At Btsan-yul, the Chinese emissary Li Zhang-sho and Mywa La-kag and others paid homage. (translation Dotson (2009), p. 119)
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Charles Backus notes on this passage:

r 3–4: departed on a political campaign to Mywa ] However, the famous Tibetologist Rolf A. Stein translated part of this passage as 'le roi va prendre épouse au Nan-tch'ao',<sup>(16)</sup> i.e. 'the king went to Nánzhào to take a wife', which Dotson (2009), pp. 35–36 disputes.

<sup>(13)</sup> The Tibetan year began in spring, see Dotson (2009), p. 12.

<sup>(14)</sup> In entry 54 according to Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (1940), p. 19 and Huáng Xifán 黄希凡 and Mǎ Dé 马德 (2000), p. 15.

<sup>(15)</sup> In entry 55 according to Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (1940), p. 19 and Huáng Xifán 黄希凡 and Mǎ Dé 马德 (2000), p. 15.

<sup>(17)</sup> In entry 84 according to Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (1940), p. 49 and Huáng Xifán 黄希凡 and Mǎ Dé 马德 (2000), p. 27.

<sup>(18)</sup> see Pan (1992), who records the treaty for 732 CE, for the reasoning see Pan (1992), p. 130.



But later, in 733 ('annee de l'oiseau'), the annals tell us that, 'while the King was residing in the Dron Palace, the Chinese envoy "Li zan-so" and "Myava-la-kag", along with their entourages, presented to him their homage to Tibet.' That the T'ang court sent a mission to Tibet in 733 led by Li Hao ('zan-so' seems to be the Tibetan approximation of Li's title *Shang-shu*, or 'President' of the Board of Works) is confirmed by Chinese sources. The reference to 'Myava-la-kag' or La-kag of the Myava, on the other hand, is unique and intriguing.

This is almost undoubtedly the Tibetan approximation of the name of the Nan-chao king, P'i-lo-ko. The correlation between the Tibetan 'la-kag' and the Chinese 'lo-ko,' both approximations of the native sound, is too close to be coincidental, especially in the T'ang pronunciation, 'la-kak.' It is not altogether clear why the Tibetans should have dropped the first syllable from his name. Under the laws of the patronymic linkage system, the first syllable was an element passed down from the last syllable of the father's name (in this case the 'p'i' of Sheng-lo-p'i), signifying generational attachment. The Tibetans may have regarded only the last two syllables as the personal name, and this may explain why they alone appear in the Tibetan records. Whatever the explanation, it is clear that P'i-lo-ko did go on a personal mission to the Tibetan court in 733, presumably via one of the direct routes through northwest Yunnan into Tibet. This is very strong evidence that Nan-chao had established at least a superficially submissive relationship with the Tibetans and that the Nan-chao ruler was maintaining such relations with Tibet just at the time that the T'ang court was attempting to cultivate Nan-chao as the principal Chinese ally in the southwest. (Backus (1981), p. 44)

Petech (1967b), p. 285 identified the Chinese envoy from Chinese sources as Lǐ Gǎo 李嵩, whose biography in the '*Old History of the Táng*' 《旧唐书》(第一百一十六卷) records him to be sent as envoy to Tibet in 733 CE:

开元二十一年正月，制曰：「继好之义，虽属边鄙；受命以出，必在亲贤。事欲重于当时，礼故崇于殊俗，选众之举，无出宗英。工部尚书李嵩，体含柔嘉，识致明允，为公族之领袖，是朝廷之羽仪。金城公主既在蕃中，汉庭公卿非无专对，有怀于远，夫岂能忘，宜持节充入吐蕃使，准式发遣。」

以国信物一万匹、私觐物二千匹，皆杂以五彩遣之。及还，金城公主上

**In the 1st month of the 21st year of Kāiyuán**, an edict was issued: 'Maintaining good relations, even though it belongs to the border regions, those who are sent out shouldering these orders must carried out by the virtuous. This is a matter of great importance and rites must be carried out even in the presence of strange customs, selected from the masses, no-one surpasses his heroic lineage. The ministry of works minister Lǐ Gǎo embodies gentleness and virtue, fine knowledge and clear understanding. As leader of the aristocracy, he is the court's protector. The Jīnchéng Princess was at the time in Tǔbō, the Hàn court's officials are certainly up to the situation, how can we forget those far away, and he is suitable to carry the insignia as envoy to entering Tǔbō as envoy, and is sent out according to protocol.'

He carried national gifts of ten thousand rolls and personal gifts of two thousand rolls, all with five colours. When he returned, the

OTA15

OTA110

OTA115

r 4: In the 1st month of the 21st year of Kāiyuán ] 733 CE

OTA120 言，请以今年九月一日树碑于赤岭，定蕃、汉界。👁️ | Jinchéng Princess submitted a memorial, asking that that year on the 1st day of the 9th month a stele be erected at Chiling to define the border between Tübō and the Hàn.

However, it must be noted that the Tibetan text does not suggest that the Chinese and Nánzhào envoys were together at the Tibetan court.<sup>(19)</sup>

For the year 742 CE the annals contain another entry of a tribute mission.<sup>(20)</sup>

༧༩ རྩའི་ལོ་ལ། བཅོན་པོ་ལོ་བུ་དབྱེད་མཚོ་བུ་སྐྱ་ ར་བཞུགས། རྩའི་ལོ་ལ། རྩའི་ལོ་ལ། རྩའི་ལོ་ལ། | In the year of the horse, in the summer the Btsan-po's court resided in Mtshar-bu-sna. The Chinese emissary An Da-lang and the Black Mywa emissary, La-bri, paid homage. (translation Dotson (2009), p. 122)

Dotson (2009), p. 122 points to Petech (1967a), pp. 267–268 for the possible identification of the Chinese emissary written here as *An Da-Lang* ར་བཞུགས་ as either Ān Bōzhù 安波注 or his son Ān Sishùn 安思顺.<sup>(21)</sup>

As for the envoy from *mywa* ལྷ་, he is recorded as a *mywa nag* ལྷ་ནག་, i.e. *Wū Mán* 乌蛮, his name has not been linked to any other known person.

### 3.2 The Old Tibetan Annals II

For 756 CE,<sup>(22)</sup> the annals mention the Nánzhào ruler Géluófèng 阁逻凤, ruled 748–779 CE, here written as *Kag-La-Bong* ཀག་ལ་བོང་, attacking Xizhōu 嵩州, here written as *Se-chu* སེ་ཅུ་.<sup>(23)</sup> This raid is corroborated by an entry in the ‘*Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*’ 《资治通鉴》 for the same year.

སྐྱུ་ལོ་ལ་བབསྟེ། | It fell on the year [of] the monkey

l20: 👁️ ] Source text: <https://ctext.org/library.pl?if=en&file=61787&page=46>

<sup>(19)</sup> see also Backus (1981), p. 45

<sup>(20)</sup> In entry 93 according to Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (1940), p. 51 and Huáng Xifán 黄希凡 and Mǎ Dé 马德 (2000), p. 27. This passage is also translated (into Italian) in Petech (1967b), p. 287.

<sup>(21)</sup> Luciano Petech writes:

Il nome dovrebbe trascrivere in cinese An *ta-lang* 安太郎 (ant. an d'ai lang). Il titolo non ricorre in tale forma, ma sembra indicare vagamente un segretario del ministero (*lang*) superiore. La persona qui menzionata potrebbe essere il generale di origine sogdiana An Po-chu 安波注 (zio del famoso ribelle An Lu-shan), che nel 742 condusse una spedizione vittoriosa contro due eserciti tibetani. Oppure potrebbe trattarsi di suo figlio maggiore An Ssu-shun 安思顺, che in quella guerra servi agli ordini del padre, e che piu tardi fu commissario imperiale del Ho-hsi (747-752) e di Sho-fang (750-751, 752-755). (Petech (1967b), p. 287, which is a reprint of Petech (1967a))

<sup>(22)</sup> Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (1940), p. 63 and Huáng Xifán 黄希凡 and Mǎ Dé 马德 (2000), p. 27.

<sup>(23)</sup> Huáng Xifán 黄希凡 and Mǎ Dé 马德 (2000), pp. 56, 117 translates the Tibetan term as Xizhōu 嵩州.



OTC <sub>10</sub>	ལྷ་མོ་འི་རྒྱ་བས་དང་ཐབས་ཀྱིས་བཀའ་སྐུལ་ཏེ། ལྷ་མོ་འི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཀའ་ལ་བོང་ཞེས་བྱ་བ། །འབངས་སུ་བྱལ་འཚལ་ནས། ཐབས་གཙུང་སྐུལ་ཏེ། ལྷི་མང་གི་སྤོན་བཏབ། ཡུལ་ཆེ་འི་ནི་འདབ་བསྐྱེད་དོ། །འཇང་གི་རྒྱལ་པོ་བོད་ཀྱི་འབངས་སུ་བཞེས་པས། །རྒྱ་འི་ཆབ་སྲིད་ལ་ཡང་ཤིན་དུ་དམའ་ཞིང། ལྷི་བདེ་བར་བྱས་སོ། །འཇང་	to him with the breadth and depth of his mind, <i>Kag-La-Bong</i> , the prince of the <i>myva</i> , offered his homage. By obtaining his submission, the king added many inhabitants to the great country and expanded it. The subjugation of the king of <i>'jang</i> as a vassal of Tibet was an irritating humiliation for the Chinese empire.
OTC <sub>15</sub>	ལྷ་མོ་འི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ལྷ་ཞིག་རྒྱ་ལ་ལྷ་ལྷ་བ་ལས། །རྒྱ་རྗེས་དབྱར་གྲངས། ། །བཅོན་པོ་ལྷི་ལྷེ་གཙུག་བཙན་གྱི་ལྷ་སྲར་གྲོ་བ་ཉེ་ནས། །རྒྱ་ཡུལ་པའ་ཀྱིས་ནི་ཡུལ་དང། །མཁའ་དུ་བཆས་ཏེ་སྤུལ། །གཡུལ་སྤྲད་ཀྱིས་ནི། རྒྱ་བཅོན་ལུག་ལྷར་བསྐྱེད་སོལ། །འབངས་བཅོན་པོ་ལྷི་	Since the king of the <i>myva</i> in <i>'jang</i> considered himself Chinese, the emperor declared him an enemy. However, he aligned himself with King Tridu Songtsen and offered him the conquered Chinese lands, including estates and castles. The Chinese prisoners captured in battle were kept like sheep. Later, when Dvan-cun-kog, minister of <i>Kag-La-Bong</i> ,
OTC <sub>20</sub>	ལྷེ་གཙུག་བཙན་གྱི་ལྷ་སྲར། །པང་དང་གི་ལང་མོ་ཆེར། །ཀའ་ལ་བོང་གི་སྤོན་པོ། དུན་ཅུང་ཀོག་བྱལ་འཚལ་བ་འི་ཆེ། །བཅོན་པོ་རྗེས་འབངས་ཀྱིས་མགུར་གྲངས་པ་འི་ཚིག་ལ། །	Phañ-dañ-gi khañ-mo-che to present homage to King Tridu Songtsen, the lord king and his subjects sang as follows:

The prose text is followed by a eulogic chant in which *Kag-La-Bong* ཀའ་ལ་བོང་ appears in a shortened form as *La-Bong* ལ་བོང་. <sup>(24)</sup>

OTC <sub>25</sub>	།དགུང་སྤོ་ནི་བདུན་རིམ་གྱི། །ལྷ་ཡུལ་ནི་གུང་དང་ནས། །ལྷ་སྐས་ནི་ལྷི་འི་མཐོ་ན། །ལྷི་ཡུལ་ནི་ཐབས་ཆད་དང། །ལྷི་མཚུངས་ནི་ལྷི་འདྲ་འཇེ། །ཡུལ་མཐོ་ནིས་གཙོང་བས། །བོད་ཡུལ་ནི་གཤམ་(གཤམ)དུ་གཤེགས།	Venus from Guñ-dañ, the land of the Gods, From the sevenfold blue sky, The sons of the Gods protect mankind. Like among the lands of men, This one is the peerless, High the country, pure the earth, They descend into the valleys of Tibet.
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<sup>l23</sup>: [ ] Source text: <https://wikisource.org/wiki/%E0%BD%96%E0%BD%99%E0%BD%93%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%94%E0%BD%BC%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%A2%E0%BD%B2%E0%BD%98%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%96%E0%BE%B1%E0%BD%B4%E0%BD%84%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%82%E0%BD%B2%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%A3%E0%BD%BC%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%A2%E0%BE%92%E0%BE%B1%E0%BD%B4%E0%BD%A6%E0%BC%8D/%E0%BD%A3%E0%BD%BA%E0%BD%A0%E0%BD%B4%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%96%E0%BD%91%E0%BD%B4%E0%BD%93%E0%BC%8B%E0%BD%94%E0%BC%8D>

r 24: Venus from Guñ-dañ, the land of the Gods, ] Venus du Guñ-dañ, pays des Dieux,  
 r 25: From the sevenfold blue sky, ] Du septuple ciel bleu,  
 r 26: The sons of the Gods protect mankind. ] Les fils des Dieux protègent les hommes.  
 r 27: Like among the lands of men, ] Comme entre les pays des hommes,  
 r 28: This one is the peerless, ] Celui-ci est le nonpareil,  
 r 29: High the country, pure the earth, ] Haut le pays, pure la terre,  
 r 30: They descend into the valleys of Tibet. ] Ils descendent aux vallées du Tibet.

<sup>(24)</sup> My English translation is based on the French translation in Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (1940), which is given in the annotations.



	རྒྱ་འབངས་ནི་མང་བསྐྱུས་ནས།	And subdued many Chinese subjects.
OTC55	ཡུལ་དང་ནི་སྤྲེར་བཆེད། བོད་ཡུལ་ནི་ཐིལ་དུ་བགྲིས། ཡར་ཉེ་ནི་གནས་ཡང་དགྲེས། མར་ཉེ་ནི་ས་ཡང་དགའ། ལ་བོང་ནི་རྗེ་དང་སྐོལ།	And from the countries with their peoples, Tibet becomes the capital. On high, the sky rejoices, As below, the earth is joyful, Lord La-boñ and his clan
OTC60	རི་ཉེ་ནི་རི་ཉེ་འོ། ལྷ་ཉེ་ནི་གུང་དང་ཉེ། རི་བརྟན་ནི་རི་བརྟན་ན། གམ་པོ་ནི་གཉན་ལ་བརྟན། དི་རིང་ནི་སང་ལྷ་ན།	Will be ever more faithful. The Gods, the Guñ-dañ are friends. If he grows ever firmer, The Sam-po will be formidable. Today, as well as tomorrow,
OTC65	ཕུང་ཀོག་ནི་དཔོན་དང་གཡོག། གནས་ས་ནི་ཡིད་སྦྱོར་བ། ན་བུན་ནི་ལྷ་འཛིན་སྐབས། འགོང་གང་ནི་ཀུན་ལ་དཔེན། །སྲ་བསུས་ནི་བྱིས་བསྐྱུལ་ཞིང།	Cuñ-kog the chief, with his people, Is united with us as sky and earth are. The Gods who pierced the mist Fill us, propitious to all. Meeting the morning and accompanying until evening,
OTC70	སྐྱུ་སྐྱེས་ནི་བོ་བརྟུངས་པའ། དགོས་ཀྱིས་ནི་རིམ་གྲོ་བགྲིའ།	We offer, singing and dancing, The ceremonies that are due.

### 3.4 The Tibetan Treaty of 783

There are some claims of a reference to *jang* རང་, i.e. Nánzhào on a stele in Lāsà 拉薩 recording the 783 CE treaty between Tibet and Táng China.

Following the chain of citations here, I have come to the conclusion that such a claim is a misunderstanding. I include the various arguments here as far as I could find the original texts for reference.

r54: And subdued many Chinese subjects. ] Et réduit maints sujets chinois.

r55: And from the countries with their peoples, ] Et des pays avec leurs peuples,

r56: Tibet becomes the capital. ] Le Tibet fait la capitale.

r57: On high, the sky rejoices, ] En haut le ciel s'est réjoui,

r58: As below, the earth is joyful, ] Comme en bas la terre est joyeuse,

r59: Lord La-boñ and his clan ] Le seigneur La-boñ et sa gent

r60: Will be ever more faithful. ] Seront de plus en plus fidèles.

r61: The Gods, the Guñ-dañ are friends. ] Les Dieux, le Guñ-dañ sont amis.

r62: If he grows ever firmer, ] S'il est de plus en plus ferme,

r63: The Sam-po will be formidable. ] Le Sam-po sera redoutable.

r64: Today, as well as tomorrow, ] Aujourd' hui, de même que demain,

r65: Cuñ-kog the chief, with his people, ] Cuñ-kog le chef, avec les siens,

r66: Is united with us as sky and earth are. ] Nous est uni comme le sont ciel et terre.

r67: The Gods who pierced the mist ] Les Dieux qui ont percé la brume,

r68: Fill us, propitious to all. ] Nous comblent, propices à tous.

r69: Meeting the morning and accompanying until evening, ] À la rencontre du matin et accompagnant jusqu'au soir,

r70: We offer, singing and dancing, ] Nous offrons, chantant et dansant,

r71: The ceremonies that are due. ] Les cérémonies qui sont dues.



but also to the east and south-east, as well as in other directions. How far the designation *Hjan* may have reached, it would be premature to speculate; but it has been observed by M. Bacot (*Les Mo-so*, p. 13)<sup>(32)</sup> that ‘le nom des mo-so, *Djung (Hdjang)*, est relate dans l’épopée du roi Géser (Gésar) et designe un pays situe entre le *Ling (Gling)* et la Chine’. It is possible that the Mo-so in their southern migrations took with them the name Hjan. (Thomas (1928), pp. 84–85, this text is also available as Thomas (1951), p. 107)

But once again, the original translation of the treaty, in Waddell (1909), does not refer to *'jang* རཇང, he only makes a conjecture in a note.

L.A. Waddell wrote:

བརྒྱུད་ཀྱི་བྱ་བ་ལྟེན་མཐོ་བཞི་གྲུ་ལོ་ཀུན་དང་ཡང་། མཇལ་ཅིང་འདུམ་པར་མཛད་ན། བྱ་དང་ལྷ་ཞི་བ་གཉིན་ ལྷོགས། (Tibetan text transcribed from Waddell (1909), p. 951	For that [purpose] he penetrated the eight directions, outwards and inwards, and meeting all the four exalted kings made a sworn peace. (translation Waddell (1909), p. 933)
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In a note, Waddell added:

These four kings would doubtless be the kings of China, India (Magadha), Parthia or Persia (Tib. aTag-gzig), and the Scythian or chief of the Mongols or of the Uigur Turkish Tartars (Hor). (Waddell (1909), p. 951)

The text of the treaty (or at least an edict memorializing it) is contained in the ‘*Old History of the Táng*’ 《旧唐书》, its text is translated in Bushell (1880), pp. 488–490. It does not refer to four kings, let alone Nánzhào, I think that this link came about through a chain of misunderstandings. As Backus himself concludes,

In any case, there is indisputable evidence of extensive Nan-chao contacts with Tibet throughout the first half of the eighth century. It is strange that Chinese sources should not have picked this up, especially since they frequently and righteously point out instances of contact between Tibet and other peoples in the southwest. Presumably, the Nan-chao missions to Tibet mentioned in the Tibetan annals were not at the Tibetan court at precisely the same time as the Chinese missions of those years. Yet even so, if Nan-chao did participate in the negotiations for the treaty of 730, the Chinese must have taken note of their presence. How could they have been so deluded about the ‘meritorious’ and ‘heroic chieftain’ P’i-lo-ko and his own contacts with the Tibetans? Were they willing to overlook all such connections as part of their cultivation of Nan-chao support? Or did they simply not know? That the Chinese sources have nothing at all to say about these contacts remains a puzzle. (Backus (1981), p. 45)

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<sup>(32)</sup> i.e. Bacot (1913), p. 13.



## 4 Glossary

- Ān Bōzhù** 安波注: father of Ān Sishùn 安思顺, possibly a Chinese envoy to 吐蕃, see Petech (1967b), p. 287, – see page 10
- Ān Lùshān** 安禄山: rebel during the Táng dynasty period, – see page *see* 安禄山之乱
- Ān Lùshān Zhī Luàn** 安禄山之乱: Ān Lùshān rebellion, rebellion during the Táng dynasty period, – see page 17
- Ān Sīshùn** 安思顺: son of Ān Bōzhù 安波注, Chinese general related to Ān Lùshān 安禄山, possibly a Chinese envoy to 吐蕃, see Petech (1967b), p. 287, \*690–†756 – see page 10, 17
- Bái Mán** 白蛮: Bái Mán, tribal classification during the Táng dynasty, the Bái Mán were the considered closer to Chinese culture than the Wū 乌 Mán, – see pages 7, 11, 17
- Chìdū Sōngzàn** 赤都松赞: Tridu Songtsen, 吐蕃 emperor, ruled 676–704 CE – see pages 8, 11, 12, 17
- Chìlíng** 赤岭: Sino-Tibetan border point in the treaty of 733, – see page 10
- Dūnhuáng** 敦煌: one of the most important sites of early Buddhism, – see page 5
- Ērhǎi** 洱海: Lake Ērhǎi, highland lake in western Yúnnán with the center of Nánzhào on its western side. It was also called Xiěr 西洱, Xiěr Hé, – see page 17
- Géluófēng** 阁逻凤: ruler of Nánzhào, ruled 748–779 CE, ruled 748–779 CE – see pages 5, 7, 10, 17
- Gōngbù** 工部: ministry of works, ‘ministry of Works, one of the top-echelon agencies’, see Hucker (1985), 3462 – see page 9, 17
- Hàn Cháo** 汉朝: Hàn dynasty, Chinese dynasty, 202 BCE–220, – see page 17
- Hàn** 汉: Hàn, main ethnic group of China, also name of early dynasty, – see pages 9, 10, 17
- Jiànchuān** 剑川: , – see page 8
- jiāngdì** 姜地: name for western Yúnnán in the old Tibetan annals, in appears in IOL Tib J 750 for the year 703, see Dotson (2009), p. 102 for a translation, Huáng Xifán 黄希凡 and Mǎ Dé 马德 (2000), p. 101 for notes, – see page 7
- Jīnchéng Gōngzhǔ** 金城公主: Jīnchéng Princess, princess sent out to 吐蕃, – see pages 9, 10, 17
- Jiùtáng Shū** 《旧唐书》: ‘*Old History of the Táng*’, major Chinese history work about the Táng dynasty, – see pages 9, 16, 17
- Kāiyuán** 开元: 713–741 BCE, second reign period of Táng Xuánzōng 唐玄宗, – see page 9
- Lāsà** 拉萨: Tibetan capital, – see page 14
- Lǐ Gǎo** 李嵩: Chinese envoy to 吐蕃 in 733, recorded in his biography in the 《旧唐书》第一百一十六卷, see Petech (1988), p. 285, \*683–†740 – see page 9, 17
- Lìjiāng** 丽江: present-day city in northwestern Yunnan, – see page 8
- Mán** 蛮: historically a generic term for non-Chinese people in the southwest, – see pages 5, 7, 8
- Méng Shì** 蒙氏: Méng clan, ruling clan of Nánzhào, – see page 5, 17

- Nánzhào** 南诏: southern *zhào*, regional power with its center on Ěrhǎi during the 8th and 9th centuries, – see pages 5, 7, 8, 10, 14, 16, 18
- Píluōgé** 皮罗阁: fourth ruler of Nánzhào, ruled 728–748 CE, ruled 728–748 CE – see pages 5, 7, 8, 18
- Shàngshū** 尚书: minister, ‘minister, head of a top-level administrative agency in the central government’s Department of State Affairs’, , see Hucker (1985), 5042 – see page 9, 18
- Sìchuān** 四川: Chinese province, –
- Táng Cháo** 唐朝: Táng dynasty, Chinese dynasty, 618–907, – see page 18
- Táng** 唐: Táng, Chinese dynasty contemporary with Nánzhào, 618–907, – see pages 5, 14, 18
- Táng Xuánzōng** 唐玄宗: Táng dynasty emperor Xuánzōng, Táng dynasty emperor, 712–756, ruled 712–756 CE – see page 18
- Tǔbō** 吐蕃: Tibetan empire, – see pages 5, 9, 10
- Wū Mán** 乌蛮: *Wū Mán*, , – see pages 7, 10, 11, 18
- Xīchāng** 西昌: administrative center in southern Sìchuān, –
- Xīěr** 西洱: shorter form of Xīěr Hé, a reference to Ěrhǎi, –
- Xīěr Hé** 西洱河: Xīěr River, historic name for Ěrhǎi, now in use for the river that flows out of the lake, – see page 18
- Xīzhōu** 巂州: Xīzhōu, a prefecture at present-day Xīchāng 西昌, – see page 10, 18
- Yúnnán** 云南: at the time of the Táng dynasty the name for the geographic region south of its Jiannan district, – see pages 5–7, 11
- zànpǔ** 赞普: title of the ruler of 吐蕃, akin to emperor (not king), see Beckwith (1987), 14–15, note 10, – see page 8
- zhào** 诏: *zhào*, term for a local ruler or his realm, – see page 18
- Zīzhì Tōngjiàn** 《资治通鉴》: ‘*Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*’, , – see page 10, 18

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