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# Amdo politics and religion—Tuken Losang Choki Nyima (Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, 1737-1802)<sup>1</sup>

Paul K. Nietupski

## Introduction

**C**hinese and Tibetan deities are believed to be able to influence human affairs, and bestow blessings and rewards on many levels. Qualified or at least well guided humans are in turn able to invoke and control deities. Given this, deity invocation, control, and place-identification were parts of a religious, social, and political process asserted by Chinese and Tibetan emperors, local elites, and common Chinese and Tibetans. Gods were subject to rituals performed by qualified individuals, who invoked and controlled deities for religious merit (*punya*), victory in battle, expressions of political fealty, economic prosperity, and cure of disease.

One of the most famous Chinese deities was Guan Yun Chang (關雲長, ca. 162-220), also known as Guandi (關帝), Guanyu (關羽, 关羽), in Tibetan Kwan Lo Ye, Kwan Yun Chang, and Kwan Sprin Ring, or by one of his very many other names and titles, to this day still well

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<sup>1</sup> Material related to this essay was presented as “Amdo politics and religion—Guan Yun Chang,” at the Columbia University Collaborative Reading Workshop organized by Gray Tuttle, titled: <Tibetan Buddhist Networking in the 18th century: Lives and Letters>. The Workshop was supported by the Henry Luce Foundation/ACLS Program in China Studies. It was held at Columbia University, 6-8 March 2015. Relevant research material has been published in Paul K. Nietupski, “Understanding Sovereignty in Amdo.” In *Trails of the Tibetan Tradition: Papers for Elliot Sperling*. Edited by Roberto Vitali, with assistance from Gedun Rabsal and Nicole Willock, 217-232. Dharamshala (H.P.), India: Amnye Machen Institute, 2014, [http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/journals/ret/pdf/ret\\_31\\_15.pdf](http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/journals/ret/pdf/ret_31_15.pdf); and in Paul K. Nietupski, “Labrang Monastery’s Jamyang Zhepa Invokes Protective Deities.” In *Sources of Tibetan Tradition*. Edited by Kurtis R. Schaeffer, Matthew T. Kapstein, and Gray Tuttle, 600-604. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013. In this essay I use “Guandi” and “Guan Yun Chang” unless specified in a quoted source. Thanks to Christine A. Sanders and Grace Blanchard for editorial assistance.

known in China.<sup>2</sup> He is believed to have been a general in the Eastern Han Dynasty who went on to develop an illustrious career, or careers in China's military, political, and religious institutions. Over time, Guan Yun Chang, in a redefinition or "superscription" process played different roles in history. Prasenjit Duara showed how Guandi in different times and places in China served as a validating source for victory in war, for Buddhist benefit, and for the acquisition of wealth and power. Here, the argument is that when invoked and controlled by Tibetans, Guandi/Guan Yun Chang would reward Tibetans with territorial definition and protection, political autonomy, religious authority, and rewards of any description.

Over time—like many other Chinese and Tibetan (Gesar, for example) mythic heroes, Guandi became deified and venerated in temples in Chinese communities around the world. There are today books, plays, movies, and video games about Guandi. Besides being associated with warfare, he represents loyalty (*zhong*, 忠) to the community and country, righteousness (*yi*, 義), and other traditionally Chinese, and "Confucian" values. To this day, he is an important figure in Chinese folk religion, in Confucianism, Daoism, Chinese Buddhism, and in modern Chinese national sensibilities, noted in detail by Duara.<sup>3</sup> But Guandi was not the only iconic deity in the Tibetan and Chinese worlds. For the Chinese, the Southern Song general Yue Fei (岳飛, 1103-1142), the goddess Mazu (媽祖, 妈祖), perhaps the modern Lei Feng (雷鋒, 1940-1962), or even Chairman Mao Zedong, became deified and venerated in Chinese communities around the world.

This malleability however allows for continuity of identity, resulting in a situation where myths are both continuous and discontinuous. This is relevant to our present project in several Amdo Tibetan communities, which have maintained their own interpretations of the status, roles, and capabilities of deities, and at the same time, in a number of places engaged foreign powers, in this case, Guandi. This is what Duara, drawing on Malinowski and others, argues is the adoption of a foreign myth: in the process losing some of the original details, but where "... extant versions are not totally wiped out. . . but by adding

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed outline of Guandi, his many names, related legends, etc., see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guan\\_Yu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guan_Yu) (accessed 26 December 2014). This source is however not very useful for the present project.

<sup>3</sup> Duara, Prasenjit. "Superscribing Symbols: The Myth of Guandi, Chinese God of War." *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 47.4 (Nov., 1988): 778-795. For a study of local deities in another context see Günther-Dietz Sontheimer (tr. Anne Feldhaus), *Pastoral Deities in Western India*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

or 'rediscovering' new elements or by giving existing elements a particular slant, the new interpretation is lodged in place."<sup>4</sup>

Thus, imperial Guandi is the Chinese—and Tibetan—god of war, the god of Confucian loyalty to state and family, a Buddhist door guardian, a Daoist protector, a god of wealth, a Han loyalist,<sup>5</sup> and more. But acceptance and worship of Guandi and at the same time redefinition and control of the deity, is arguably the situation with the Tibetan adoption of this Chinese "God of War."<sup>6</sup> Here, however, in the hands of Tuken and others cited below, our protagonist Guandi is drawn into the service of Amdo Tibetans by a translation of his story, and especially by a ceremony and liturgy that bind the deity to the service of the Tibetans.<sup>7</sup>

This is how we can understand the Tibetan adoption of the Chinese deity Guandi, who appears in a number of Tibetan contexts. In Duara's words, "[s]uperscription thus implies the presence of a lively arena where rival versions jostle, negotiate, and compete for position. . . . to establish its own dominance over the others." Guandi lives in Tibet, and is absorbed into the already massive Tibetan divine realms, and superscripted or interpreted or accepted, on Tibetan terms.<sup>8</sup>

Adopting foreign deities was a symbolic process, but it had concrete results. The Tibetan adoption of Guandi constituted recognition and acceptance, but we hasten to add that it did not mean full acceptance of Chinese authority. Again, in Duara's rendering, "historical groups are able to expand old frontiers of meaning to accommodate their changing needs . . . [but] the legitimacy of the old is drawn upon."<sup>9</sup> Writing of the Qing Dynasty, and here very resonant with seventeenth century and centuries following in Amdo, Duara argues that

The struggle to survive within this arena may be desperate, and so also to dominate, as with the Qing. But although the Qing was able to reorder the interpretive arena of the myth, its hegemony was never

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<sup>4</sup> Duara 780.

<sup>5</sup> For example against the Manchus, Duara 787.

<sup>6</sup> Duara 783-4.

<sup>7</sup> [Thu'u bkwan] Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma. "Kham s gsum bdud 'dul rgyal chen bkwan yun chang gi lo rgyus dang gsol mchod bya tshul 'phrin las char rgyun bskul ba'i 'brug sgra." "Thunder that calls down a deluge of good deeds: The history of the great king Guan Yun Chang (關雲長, 关云长), who overcomes the demons of the three realms, and the way to invoke him." In *Gsung 'bum*, Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (Lhasa: Zhol par khang gсар pa, 2000). Volume 5 (ca), ff 783-796. Work W21507. [http://tbr.org/link?RID=O00CHZ0102865|O00CHZ01028652870\\$W21507](http://tbr.org/link?RID=O00CHZ0102865|O00CHZ01028652870$W21507).

<sup>8</sup> Duara 780.

<sup>9</sup> Duara 791.

absolute. . . . In the end it had to be satisfied with a nominal acceptance of the official version by particularly defiant subaltern groups.<sup>10</sup>

In this essay our focus is on Tibetans and Chinese in the eighteenth century, the Qing Dynasty period, in which Duara suggests that for the Chinese Guandi, “Emperor Guan,” was prominent. For some the implication might be that the peoples of Tibet were under the actual rule of the Manchu emperors. Our primary Tibetan source texts, however, present a scenario in which Guandi, the Chinese “God of War,” is appropriated and used by Tibetans.

The very short Tibetan text translated below has two main parts; first, an historical sketch of the mythological “emperor” of China Guandi/Guan Yun Chang, in Tibetan, Kwan Phrin Rings, and several other names, and second, a liturgy for invoking and controlling him. The text was composed by Tuken Losang Chokyi Nyima (1737-1802), a scholar from Amdo who was well connected in the Qing court, well connected in Lhasa at Gomang College of Drepung Monastery, and not the least, well connected in a network of prominent scholars and religious leaders in Amdo.

The inclusion of China and a well-known Chinese deity who exemplifies loyalty to the Chinese state government in these Tibetan liturgies and art objects attests to the close involvement and self-assertion of the Tibetans in the Qing court. The liturgies are thus remarkable for the Tibetan assertions of local Tibetan sovereignty and at the same time their acknowledgement of the outside authority of the Qing emperors and their armies.

### *Communities of the Faithful*

Drawing on central Tibetan religious heritage and social models, Amdo Tibetan monastic estate owners in this period amassed much of their often enormous wealth and political authority from local nomad and farming communities. Internal sovereignty and regional economic control were often validated by Lhasa religious pedigrees and endorsed by powerful outside forces, in this period, and in the case of Tuken, especially the Mongols and Manchus. These internal monastery-centered networks and effective engagement with external powers were crucial to the well-being of the Amdo “monastic” consortium.

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<sup>10</sup> Duara 791.

Like the Chinese deities, including Guandi, the Tibetans have their own pantheons of deities, including Buddhist, Bon, local Tibetan deities, important Indian deities, and Guandi, altogether in an arguably even more complex pantheon than the Chinese. These include many historical figures transformed, or apotheosed, and widely recognized Tibetan adepts in lineages of reborn scholars and practitioners. Common Tibetan deities include very many local inhabitants, and, noted in the texts under study here, many well-known bodhisattvas and tantric deities, including Vajrapāṇi, Avalokiteśvara, Vajra Bhairava, and Mahākāla.

These deities and their followers, the human communities of believers, were not isolated from one another. This is very much the case in advanced meditations for individuals and their primary objects of meditation (*iṣṭadevatā*). Katia Buffetrille has noted that deities, in this respect like humans, have relationships with each other, as spouses or lovers, offspring, or competitors,<sup>11</sup> often in close physical proximity to one another.

Briefly, in Buddhist technical language, Tibetan and Chinese deities engaged in human-like, mundane *laukika* religious (*mi chos*) matters, and in transcendent *lokottara*, often tantric concerns (*lha chos*).<sup>12</sup> The former worldly matters were important in establishing local political sovereignty, less concerned with matters of religious insight and Buddhist enlightenment. However, knowledgeable lay Tibetan and Chinese people and even well-educated lamas did not strictly differentiate between the categories of the religions of gods and humans. Epstein & Peng noted that Tibetan, and might add, Chinese lay faithful did not hesitate to ask the Buddhist tantric deities for mundane favors:

. . . as Samuel and others have pointed out, the Tibetan folk and more formal religious traditions have interpenetrated each other to the extent that it is difficult to disentangle them. Monks, for example, often perform readings of religious texts for laymen, which, in the eyes of the latter, accomplish the same this-worldly ends as do, say, folk rituals of purification. They also confer some degree of otherworldly

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<sup>11</sup> Katia Buffetrille, "Reflections on Pilgrimages to Sacred Mountains, Lakes and Caves," in *Pilgrimage in Tibet*, ed. Alex McKay (Surrey: Curzon Press, 1998), 20-23. Again, how this "competitiveness" or territorial prominence manifests in actual communities is evident in specific places and events, for example when the Second Jamyang Zhepa moved and re-installed a deity in Dngul rwa. See also Katia Buffetrille, "Le jeu rituel musical (*glu/klu rol*) du village de Sog ru (Reb gong) en A mdo." *Études mongoles et sibériennes, centrasiatiques et tibétaines* 35 (2004): 3.

<sup>12</sup> R.A. Stein, *Grottes-Matrices et Lieux Saints de la Déesse en Asie Orientale*. (Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1988), 37-49.

merit on them. Similarly, Buddhist or Bon rituals and texts are often employed in folk rituals.<sup>13</sup>

The point here is that even if formally separated there is a conflation of the categories of religions of gods and humans into what might be a third category, a fusion of religious deities (tantric and non-tantric, *lokottara* and *laukika*) and religious goals (apotropaic and transcendent).<sup>14</sup> Religious and political, temporal motives and goals are not separate in these communities. The religious vision of the unity of human and divine realms in Amdo, and the applications of divine power to the physical realities of Amdo economics, weather, territorial sovereignty and warfare were, as above, arguably very real. Evidence of these visions and concerns are in Tuken's text under study here, and in the texts of his Amdo contemporaries noted below.

Competition between communities and their respective deities are expressions of territoriality, even on national levels. Deity invocation and place-identification are a political process asserted by local lay chieftains and Buddhist leaders, who derive their authority not only from the central Tibetan or other governments, but also from more local resident deities.<sup>15</sup> These deities are subject to rituals performed by qualified individuals, like Tuken, who can invoke and control deities like Guandi. This process was an invisible political agency located in living communities that defined ownership of land, boundaries, and the community's territorial and political autonomy.

These scholars demonstrate a strong sense of history, perhaps better described as Brown's "intervisibility," or even better, an intersubjectivity by which Tibetan and Chinese peoples and histories were mutually cognizant of one another. Again, considering Waugh, the importations of Guan Yun Chang into Tibetan communities were instances of

". . . movement, resettlement, and interactions across ill-defined borders . . . also the story of artistic exchange and the spread and mixing of religions, all set against the background of the rise and fall of polities which encompassed a wide range of cultures and peoples . . ."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Epstein and Peng 1998, 121.

<sup>14</sup> See R.A. Stein, 37-49. The material in these paragraphs is taken in part from Paul K. Nietupski, "Understanding Sovereignty in Amdo." In *Trails of the Tibetan Tradition: Papers for Elliot Sperling*. Edited by Roberto Vitali, with assistance from Gedun Rabsal and Nicole Willock, 217-232.

<sup>15</sup> Buffetrille 1998, 22-23.

<sup>16</sup> Waugh, Daniel C. "The Silk Roads in History." *Expedition* 52.3 (2010): 9-22.

And similarly, echoing Brown, the engagement of Guan Yun Chang by these Tibetans was “. . . juxtaposition of the known and the exotic,” a kind of “archaic globalization.”<sup>17</sup>

### *Liturgy as Literature*

The short text translated below has two parts: first an historical sketch of the mythological “God of ar,” and “emperor” of China Guandi, aka Guan Yun Chang, and second, a liturgy for invoking and controlling him. The text was composed by Tuken Losang Chokyi Nyima (1737-1802), again an Amdo Monguor scholar educated in Lhasa, well connected in the Qing court, and highly regarded in Amdo. In addition to this text by Tuken, this project references altogether six works by five major figures in Tuken’s network, all with similar religious and academic pedigrees, with similar political orientations and assumptions of sovereignty. The five authors are (1) Tuken himself, (2) Chahar Géshé (Cha har dge bshes Blo bzang tshul khirms, aka Cha phring ’jang gсар bstan ’dzin, 1740-1810), author of two liturgies to Guandi, (3) the Second Jamyang Zhepa (’Jam dbyangs bzhad pa Dkon mchog ’jigs med dbang po, 1728-1791), (4) the Third Jangkya, Rolpé Dorjé (Lcang skya Rol pa’i rdo rje, 1717-1786), and (5) the Sixth Panchen Lama, Losang Pelden Yeshé (Slob bzang dpal ldan ye shes, 1738-1780). The six liturgies are remarkable for the assertions of local sovereignty and at the same time for their diplomatic acknowledgement of the outside authority of the Qing emperor and his armies.

Tibetan liturgical (*gsol mchod*) literature is very scripted, and more like screenplays or dramatic programs than prose narratives. The texts here signal religious and community events. They typically involve the exercise of procedures and processes and are often preceded by prayers, invocations of deities, and acknowledgements of teachers and teachings.

All texts include breaks for ritual processes and explanatory asides: offerings of herbs, fragrant plants, foods, recitation of spells, music, and so on. The texts give the impression of being notes taken at, or in preparation for an actual ritual, in the example translated here likely with Tuken officiating, contributing the central texts and prayers, but not writing out everything in the actual sequence, leaving this to assis-

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<sup>17</sup> Brown, Peter. “The Silk Road in Late Antiquity,” in *Reconfiguring the Silk Road: New Research on East-West Exchange in Antiquity*, ed. Victor H. Mair & Jane Hickman. 15-22. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.



tants in the community. Tuken includes prayers and mantras from canonical texts, quoted passages, and some references to historical documents, evidencing a broad literary education.

The style and genre of Tuken's selection here is also reflected in the works of other Tibetan writers, perhaps in this respect part of the necessary repertoire for Tibetan writers. Tuken's text colophon tells us that our present piece was given in the presence of the Mongol Khalka Jinong Beisi, at Jis bu, in the country of Kwachu. It was requested (*bskul*) by one Darhan Choje Yeshe Dragpa Sangpo (Chos rje ye shes grags pa bzang po), assembled, or edited (*sbyar*) by Ku swa yi [UNCLEAR] Dharmavajra, and the writer (*yi ge pa*) was Ngag dbang phun tshogs. The performance was likely attended by many local monks and laypersons. These details speak to the process of "writing" or "composition" of Tibetan texts and are similar to those found in all of the texts under study here, and in much of Tibetan literature in general.

In terms of literary structure and content, two of the five authors under study here, Tuken and Chahar Géshé, began their liturgies with brief historical or better mythological accounts of Guan Yun Chang. The histories here are mixed with myth. Descriptive titles of kings, generals, and lamas are defined in their own respective terms, and assumptions of sovereignty asserted by each writer. But for all of the mixing and vision, the liturgies were grounded in very real persons and places. The network of scholars is marked by Chahar Géshé in his colophon, where he notes that the first of his two compositions to Guandi/Guan Yun Chang is "based on Tuken's oral composition (*zhal snga*), and a little expanded according to models in other propitiation rituals."<sup>18</sup>

Interaction, or networking, is clearly evident in the historical sections of Tuken's and Chahar Géshé's liturgies. In a comment that signals some historical blending, or perhaps Brown's "juxtaposition" or a signal of "archaic globalization," Tuken notes that the deity Guandi/Guan Yun Chang is "of the same mind" (*thugs rgyud gcig pa yin te*) as Begtsé Jamsing (*beg tse lcam sring*). Tuken explains further that in ancient texts (*sngon gyi yig rnying rnam su . . .*) it is said of Begtsé that "he was a Chinese demon (*dam sri*)." He goes on to say that Lālitavajra (Rolpé Dorjé) orally translated this into modern Indian language.<sup>19</sup> Chahar Géshé makes no mention of Beg Tsé's supposed Chinese origins or Rolpé Dorjé's use of ancient texts, but both authors state

<sup>18</sup> *Zhal snga nas thu'u bkwan rin po ches mdzad pa bzhin byas kyi steng du bskang gso'i cho ga gzhan la rigs 'gres kyis cung zad rgyas su btang nas . . .*, 10b2). Chahar Géshé has two liturgies to Guan Lo Ye/Yun Chang, full details noted in the bibliography. Here, the first is abbreviated "*Gsol mchod*" and the second "*Dod rgu 'gugs pa'i lcags kyu*."

<sup>19</sup> *Gsol mchod*, (fol. 2b3-4).

that Beg Tsé Jamsing/Guan Yun Chang is the “owner” (*bdag po*) of all of China, and that he has many donors of food and drink in Tibet, and in particular, that “. . . a great venerable being (*bla chen sku gres po*) in Tsang, . . . [is] the chief of our donors.”

Chahar Géshé concurs with two quotations similar in content, but not literal renderings of Rolpé Dorjé’s text, alluding to “the great being of Tsang, who, it is said, is in the lineage of the Panchen Rinpoche [and] . . . relied on Beg Tsé. . . . And, it says in the biography of the designated Prince Don grub (*gsungs pa’i rgyal bu kyi rtogs brjod der . . .*) that when the omniscient [6<sup>a</sup>/3<sup>sa</sup>] Panchen Lobzang Yéshé (1738-1780)<sup>20</sup> was young,

a red man came and said ‘I am called Beg Tsé.’ In the future I vow to be your protector, and so on. It is clear that this is the deity, [and] it is certain that this very one is identical to Beg Tsé (*beg tse dang ngo bo gcig yin par nges so*). Furthermore, the minister Dorjé Dudul also said that they are identical. . . . (fol. 3a2-4)

Chahar Géshé continues that since the time of Srongtsan Gampo and Princess Wencheng, Tibet sent ministers to China and that previous Tibetan kings paid their respects to Guandi/Guan Yun Chang, naming him in Chinese and in Tibetan “The great emperor who defeats the demons of the three realms (*khamsum bdud ’dul rgyal po chen po*).” He mentions that when Wencheng went to Tibet she was followed by Guandi/Guan Yun Chang, who was installed in a fortress in the Grib region of Lhasa, in the Crystal Cave in Yarlung, today known as Btsan bshan, and subsequently in many other places.

Chahar Géshé closes his historical account by crediting the *Yig Tshang*, presumably the *Rgya Bod Yig Tshang Chen Mo* of the 15th century writer Dpal ’byor bzang po,<sup>21</sup> citing “the testimony of many erudite people (*tshad ma’i skyes bu*), and the writings of many previous meditators (*sngon gyi hwa shang*).” These two historical accounts, by Tuken and Chahar Géshé again attest to the interaction between Tibetan and Chinese deities, their visions, and their roles in Tibetan culture.

<sup>20</sup> I understand that this passage refers to the 6th (3rd in the Bkra shis lhun po system) Panchen Lama Losang Palden Yéshé, 1738-1780, author of a *Collected Works* that contains a liturgy to Guan Yun Chang, and not the 5th Panchen Lama, Losang Yéshé (1663-1737). The text reads Blo bzang ye shes (3a2), the 5th, but the 6th (3rd) wrote the liturgy. The 5th Panchen received novice vows from the 5th Dalai Lama (1617-1682), and went on to give novice vows to the 6th Dalai Lama. Both Panchens were in contact with the Qing court.

<sup>21</sup> *Gsol mchod*, (fol. 3a6-3b4).

Of the six Tibetan liturgies to Guandi, these two, our present text by Tuken and the other by Chahar Géshé, contain historical introductions, as above. Three of the six compositions are quite different, very short, and include mostly verses of invocation to Guandi. These three short pieces are, with colophons, (1) the very brief verses by Rolpé Dorjé, (2) a brief composition by the 6th [3rd] Panchen Lama Losang Palden Yéshé, and (3) the second liturgy by Chahar Géshé, the *'dod rgu 'gugs pa'i lcags kyu,*" very different from his long liturgy appended to his history, which he credits in part to Tuken.

In addition to these three short writings, three others (of the six) liturgies are more detailed, longer compositions. These include visualization instructions, use of ritual materials, and notes of sequences of the rituals. These three are (4) Tuken's liturgy, translated here below, (5) Chahar Géshé's piece appended to his history (again, credited in part to Tuken), and (6) the Second Jamyang Zhepa's composition. Altogether these make six liturgical works, including two with attached historical sketches.

### *Religious Contexts*

These detailed writings contain much description of religious ritual and mention of philosophical contexts (*stong pa nyid tu 'gyur . . .*), deity families and hierarchies, historical persons (Tsong kha pa, etc.), and not the least, the idea of the Tibetan "unity of religion and worldly matters." Outside of the fact that he intends to invoke and control invisible deities, the Sixth Panchen Losang Pelden Yéshé has little to say about religious or metaphysical contexts. In his similarly brief writing Rolpé Dorjé, however, instructs one to begin the liturgy after emerging from meditation on the "superior deities (*lhag pa'i lha*) Guhyasamāja, Cakrasaṃvara, or Vajrabhairava," and continue to recite the six mantras, the six mūdras,<sup>22</sup> and the three seed syllables (*om ah hum*).

Tuken gives more detailed information taken from tantric ritual contexts about how to approach Guandi/Guan Yun Chang. At the opening of his historical section he invokes Hayagrīva, and in the actual liturgy he begins with a mention of the necessary material offerings--refined alcohol, medicinal substances--and, like others of the liturgies, notes when musical instruments are to be sounded. Tuken goes

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<sup>22</sup> The six mantras and six mūdras are "used especially in the contemplative generation from Emptiness of ransoms or substitutes," in Stephan Beyer, *The Cult of Tārā: Magic and Ritual in Tibet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 346-347; see the list in Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po, *Collected Works of Kun mkhyen dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po*. Vol. *tha*, 44b2-4.

on to describe how one is to visualize a gold and silver vessel appearing from the letter *hūṃ*, on top of which are three vajras from which one offers an oblation of nectar. One recites *Oṃ aḥ hūṃ* three times and proceeds with the oblation. The other authors are even more explicit; in his eloquent work the Second Jamyang Zhepa clearly uses ritual processes from the tantric traditions as preliminaries to his invocation of Guandi/Guan Yun Chang, including a fire offering fueled by precious substances, all absorbed and answered by hosts of deities, where appearance and emptiness are not mutually obstructive (*snang stong ma 'gag*). This type of language and ritual process is elaborated in even more detail in Chahar Géshé's liturgy.

These brief compositions are one very small example of a dynamic and rich religious culture, an important part of the broad expanse of Tibetan religious practices. The liturgies display the Tibetan religious worldview, densely populated by invisible spirits of broad description. Guandi/Guan Yun Chang is variously described as a regional deity (*gzhi bdag*), an enemy deity (*dgra lha*), and a Dharma protector (*bstan bsrung*). In all cases, Guandi/Guan Yun Chang represents forces to pay attention to, to control, and at best, manipulate to one's own advantage. In this regard Guandi/Guan Yun Chang and similar spirits are very involved in human affairs, both for better and for worse, and are accessible to religious experts, who through various means, including liturgy recitation and ritual, can bridge the normally impenetrable barrier between gods and humans.<sup>23</sup>

### *The Network*

With so many liturgies and so many deities, one might suppose that such studies and performances become repetitive and boring. The tedious generic qualities are, however, quickly lost in the specific contexts, which in our case include a group of five prominent religious and political leaders, specific places in Amdo, and local constituents. Liturgies have an important role as a dynamic contact point between high level religious figures, political leaders, their own extended communities, and outside forces, which here include especially the Manchus and Mongols, all with their own vested interests.

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<sup>23</sup> See Paul K. Nietupski, "Understanding Sovereignty in Amdo," in *Trails of the Tibetan Tradition: Papers for Elliot Sperling*, ed. Roberto Vitali, with assistance from Gedun Rabsal and Nicole Willock. (Dharamshala (H.P.), India: Amnye Machen Institute, 2014), 217-232. For a thorough study of local deities in another context see Günther-Dietz Sontheimer (tr. Anne Feldhaus), *Pastoral Deities in Western India*. (NY: Oxford University Press, 1989).

The five authors are remarkable for their Amdo roots (except for the Sixth Panchen Lama Losang Pelden Yeshé, 1738-1780, from central Tibet, but who had extensive contacts with Amdo lamas, and wrote liturgies to deities from Kokonor/Mtsho sngon po /Qinghai, etc.), their Lhasa-derived religious education, their proximate Mongol neighbors, their engagement with the Qing court and Qing authorities, and their compositions focused on Guandi/Guan Yun Chang. One particular point noted in the works by Tuken and Chahar Géshé that seems revealing is the episode of the mysterious “red man” who appeared in a dream, and is identified as Begtsé/Guandi, and fully described, but not as clearly identified, in the Second Jamyang Zhepa’s liturgy. The deity advises Rolpé Dorjé to go to Tsang, where he has many loyal followers and supporters. This seems to indicate the importance of Tsang, home of the Panchen Lamas, to Guandi/Guan Yun Chang, who describes himself as the “owner” of all of China. The identification of Tsang as a support base for the Chinese deity Guandi/Guan Yun Chang seems to be a telling episode, given that our writers are mostly from Amdo, but perhaps signaling a close connection to central Tibet.

#### *A Community of Scholars*

Guandi/Guan Yun Chang, a Chinese-originated deity and his mythic stories, was a “God of War,” appropriated and manipulated by Amdo Tibetans. Such deity invocation and manipulation was widespread across Amdo and all of Tibet, at all levels of society. This example is especially interesting for its cross-border movement between Tibet and China. In addition to Tuken, the invocation and manipulation of Guandi/Guan Yun Chang appears in the writings of several of his colleagues, several mentioned above.<sup>24</sup> These well-known and prolific

<sup>24</sup> See [Thu’u bkwan] Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma. “Rgyal chen bkwan yun chang gi lo rgyus dang gsol mchod bya tshul ‘phrin las char rgyun bskul ba’i ‘brug sgra” [“Kham ssum bdud ‘dul rgyal chen bkwan yun chang gi lo rgyus dang gsol mchod bya tshul ‘phrin las char rgyun bskul ba’i ‘brug sgra”]. In *Gsung ’bum, Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma* (Lhasa: Zhol par khang gsar pa, 2000). Volume 5 (ca), ff 783-796. Work W21507. [http://tbr.org/link?RID=O00CHZ0102865|O00CHZ01028652870\\$W21507](http://tbr.org/link?RID=O00CHZ0102865|O00CHZ01028652870$W21507). Dkon mchog ‘jigs med dbang po, “Ma hA tsi na’i yul gyi dgra lha chen po dmag dpon bye ba ‘bum gyi sde dpon kwan lo ye gyi mchod gtor/” [“Mthu stobs kyi mnga’ bdag ma hA tsi na’i yul gyi dgra lha chen po dmag dpon bye ba ‘bum gyi sde dpon kwan lo ye gyi mchod gtor/]. In *Gsung ’bum, Dkon mchog ‘jigs med dbang po*. (Bla brang par ma), 683-687, Volume 10 of Work W1KG9560. Location: ff. 21b-23b (pp.672-676). TBRC W1KG9560. (New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1971). [http://tbr.org/link?RID=O4CZ28036|O4CZ280364CZ298014CZ29843\\$W1KG9560](http://tbr.org/link?RID=O4CZ28036|O4CZ280364CZ298014CZ29843$W1KG9560); Lcang skya Rol pa’i rdo rje. “Kwan lo ye’i gsol mchod.” In *Gsung ’bum, Rol pa’i rdo rje*. TBRC W28833. 5: 473-476. (Beijing: Krung go bod brgyud mtho rim nang bstan slob gling nang bstan zhib ‘jug khang, 1995).

scholars in part made up a network of scholars in teacher-student relationships, and often in tantric guru-disciple relationships. All were in the Gelukpa order, and were celibate Tibetan Buddhist monks; in this they were very different from their famous pupil and supporter, the Qianlong emperor.<sup>25</sup> Outside of literary compositions, other evidence of Tibetan appropriation of Guandi / Guan Yun Chang in central Tibet include the Guandi statue, with Gesar in the ca. 1793 temple near Chakpori in Lhasa. This temple is credited to the Reting Regent, Losang Yeshe Tenpa Rabgye (1759–1815). The list of associations goes on, and signals an important component of Tibetan religious and political sensibilities, far beyond the scope of this short essay.

Finally, a word about our Monguor Amdo scholar-politician-enlightened bodhisattva, the Third Tuken (1737-1802). Briefly, his religious biography begins with his studies with the Third Jangkya, Rolpé Dorjé and the Second Jamyang Zhepa. He was educated at Gonlung Monastery and at Gomang in Lhasa. He was identified as the rebirth of the Second Tuken by Rolpé Dorjé, by the Second Jamyang Zhepa, and by other prominent Tibetan teachers. He was ordained (*dge tshul*) by Rolpé Dorjé. After the passing of the Second Jamyang Zhepa, one of his primary teachers in Lhasa, the Third Tuken went on to validate the rebirth of the Third Jamyang Zhepa (Blo bzang thub bstan 'jigs med rgya mtsho, 1792-1855), and later granted him renunciate (*rab byung*)

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[http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O00PD107753|O00PD1077537934\\$W28833](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O00PD107753|O00PD1077537934$W28833); Blo bzang tshul khirms, Cha har dge bshes blo bzang tshul khirms (Cha phring 'jang gсар bstan 'dzin). "Bkwan lo ye'i gsol mchod 'dod don kun stsol (na)." ["Bstan srung rgyal po chen po bkwan lo ye'i gsol mchod 'dod don kun stsol"]. In *Gsung 'bum, Blo bzang tshul khirms*. TBRC W23726. 6: 219-238. (Sku 'bum byams pa gling, 2002). [http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O2CZ5408|O2CZ54082CZ5704\\$W23726](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O2CZ5408|O2CZ54082CZ5704$W23726); Blo bzang tshul khirms. "Bkwan lo ye la gser skyems 'bul tshul 'dod rgu 'gugs pa'i lcags dkyu (na phyi ma)." ["Dbang phyogs tsi na'i yul gyi dgra lha'i rgyal chen bkwan lo ye la gser skyems 'bul tshul 'dod rgu 'gugs pa'i lcags dkyu"]. In *Gsung 'bum, Blo bzang tshul khirms*. TBRC W23726. 6: 239-244. (Sku 'bum byams pa gling, 2002). [http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O2CZ5408|O2CZ54082CZ5705\\$W23726](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O2CZ5408|O2CZ54082CZ5705$W23726); Blo bzang tshul khirms. "Dgra lha'i gsol mchod 'dod dgu'i char 'bebs (pa)." In *Gsung 'bum, Blo bzang tshul khirms*. TBRC W23726. 6: 245-270. (Sku 'bum byams pa gling, 2002). [http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O2CZ5408|O2CZ54082CZ5706\\$W23726](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O2CZ5408|O2CZ54082CZ5706$W23726). In addition, Guandi appears in a ca. 1793 temple with Gesar, near Chakpori in Lhasa, credited to the Reting Regent, Losang Yeshe Tenpa Rabgye (1759–1815). Thanks to Gray Tuttle for reminding me of this temple. The Sixth Panchen Lama Pelden Yeshé (1738-1780) also composed a liturgy to the deity; see Dpal ldan ye shes. "rgya yul gyi gzhi bdag kwan lo ye'i gsol mchod /." In *gsung 'bum / \_dpal ldan ye shes*. TBRC W2046. 4: 342-343. New Delhi: Mongolian lama gurudeva, 1975-1978. [http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O00EGS103132|O00EGS1031324CZ346914CZ347784CZ347854CZ348274CZ348384CZ348494CZ34860\\$W2046](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O00EGS103132|O00EGS1031324CZ346914CZ347784CZ347854CZ348274CZ348384CZ348494CZ34860$W2046).

<sup>25</sup> See Evelyn S. Rawski, *The Last Emperors: A Social History of Qing Imperial Institutions*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, 142.

vows. The Third Tuken went on to serve as executive administrator of Zhalu Serkang, Gonglung Jampa Ling, and Kumbum monasteries.

In addition to his Amdo roots, his education in Lhasa, and his prominence in his home institutions, Tuken and his network of Amdo teachers and scholars also shared strong involvement with the Qing and Mongol courts. The Third Tuken spent a good deal of time traveling between Beijing, Mongolia, and Lhasa. He made three trips to Beijing, the first for five years, and the others much shorter. He spent much time with the Qianlong Emperor, serving as one of his closest Buddhist teachers. He was honored by the Lhasa government, the Chinese Emperor, and was highly regarded by Mongol, and not the least, Tibetan nobility.<sup>26</sup> The similarities in homeland, education in Amdo and in central Tibet, and involvement in the Chinese imperial court are evidence of political and religious institution building.

### Conclusion

The discussion of Guandi/Guan Yun Chang and the Tibetan lamas and deities becomes more relevant when one considers that social and political authority were very often understood as integrated with religious ideologies and institutions.<sup>27</sup> Ideologies, including interactions

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<sup>26</sup> See the biographical entry at <http://www.treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Lobzang-Chokyi-Nyima/3008>. See Rawski 1998; Gray Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); et al.

<sup>27</sup> For decentralized governance in pastoral nomadic societies see Bat-Ochir Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society: A Reconstruction of the 'Medieval' History of Mongolia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001); David Sneath, *Imperial Statecraft: Political Forms and Techniques of Governance in Inner Asia, Sixth-Twentieth Centuries* (Bellingham: Western Washington University Center for East Asian Studies, 2006); David Sneath, *The Headless State: Aristocratic Orders, Kinship Society, & Misrepresentations of Nomadic Inner Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Paul K. Nietupski, "Understanding Religion and Politics in Amdo: The Sde khri Estate at Bla brang Monastery." In *Monastic and Lay Traditions in North-Eastern Tibet*. Edited by Yangdon Dhondup, Ulrich Pagel and Geoffrey Samuel, 67-86. Leiden: Brill, 2013. For issues of nationalism see Georges Dreyfus, "Proto-nationalism in Tibet," in *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies, Fagernes 1992*, ed. P. Kvaerne (Oslo: Institute for Comparative Research, 1994) 1: 205-218; Paul Nietupski, "Nationalism in Labrang, Amdo: Apa Alo/Huang Zhengqing." In *Studies in the History of Eastern Tibet. [PIATS 2006: Proceedings of the Eleventh Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies. Königswinter 2006.]* Edited by Wim van Spengen & Lama Jabb, 179-208. Halle: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies GmbH, 2010. For early perspectives on the Tibetan world view, see Dan Martin, "'Ol-mo-lung-ring, the Original Holy Place," in *Sacred Spaces and Powerful Places In Tibetan Culture: A Collection of*

with deities, were the groundworks of ethical, legal, political, and religious behavior. Put simply, Amdo monastic authorities, in the name of divine beings, exercised authority over farm and pasture land, received tax revenues, corvée, and profits from livestock, and received a wide range of donations. They were recognized and respected by their neighbors. In return, deities were believed to be capable of “eliminating outer and inner obstacles, fulfilling the community’s wishes, providing for their long and prosperous lives, healthy livestock, not too much or too little rain, and bountiful crops.”<sup>28</sup> They were thought to expedite Buddhist practice and merit-making activities, and here most importantly could, in the eyes of local Tibetan communities, provide grounds for political sovereignty in their designated fields of control.

*Translation*

“Thunder that calls down a deluge of good deeds: The history of the  
great king Guan Yun Chang,  
who overcomes the demons of the three realms and the way to invoke  
him”<sup>29</sup>

Tuken Losang Chokyi Nyima (1737-1802)

Homage to the teacher Hayagrīva,  
Who binds all beings tightly with the noose of compassion,  
Who pulverizes<sup>30</sup> legions of demons with his wrathful dance,  
And is the great wrathful king<sup>31</sup> who terrifies with all fearsome things.  
I bow with respect to the feet of Great Lotus<sup>32</sup> [Hayagrīva]  
Who by merely raising the banner of his inexhaustible power  
Destroys [even] the name of evil.

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*Essays*, ed. Toni Huber (Dharamsala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1999), 258-304.

<sup>28</sup> There are many different kinds of local deities in Amdo, including *yul lha*, *gzhi bdag*, *gnyan*, *gdon*, *bgegs*, *rbad 'dre*, *rbod gtong*, *klu*, and others.

<sup>29</sup> [Thu'u bkwan] Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma. “*Khams gsum bdud 'dul rgyal chen bkwan yun chang gi lo rgyus dang gsol mchod bya tshul 'phrin las char rgyun bskul ba'i 'brug sgra*.” In *Gsung 'bum*, Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (Lhasa: Zhol par khang gsar pa, 2000). Volume 5 (ca), ff 783-796. Work W21507. [http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O00CHZ0102865|O00CHZ01028652870\\$W21507](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O00CHZ0102865|O00CHZ01028652870$W21507).

<sup>30</sup> The text is unclear here; I read provisionally “*thal mar rlog*,” to smash, crush, pulverize.

<sup>31</sup> *Khro rgyal chen po bzhi*, four wrathful kings, protectors of the four directions: Vijaya, Yamāntaka, Hayagrīva, Amṛtakuṇḍali.

<sup>32</sup> Padma dbang chen is an epithet of Hayagrīva.



Let us gently proclaim with a storm of praise  
To invoke a deluge of the great king's wish fulfilling goodness.

Here is the method for offering tormas of praise to the one known as King Yun Chang, who controls the demons of the three realms. In this there are two parts, the history of the great king and the actual explanation of the method for offering tormas of praise.

First,

Long ago, in the great country of China, there was a Han (*han gur*) emperor named Xuande 玄德 (also known as Liu Bei 劉備, 刘备, 161-223). His minister, named [Guan]Yu (*yu'u*; 羽) (ca. 160-220),<sup>33</sup> was of noble birth and courageous [in battle]. [Guan Yu's] power was great; he was appointed military commander. He conquered different hostile enemy countries, and brought innumerable regional emperors (*sa steng gi rgyal po*) and lesser kings under his control. And, when arrogant persons, proud of their bravery gathered around him they became like garudas and little birds. Everywhere, just by hearing his name there was not even one among them who did not bow. Moreover, it is said that he was one of unwavering righteousness in any circumstance, peaceful or violent, without the ferocity that does not discriminate between those to be protected and those to be subdued. He was like Aśoka, king of the Buddhist teachings (*dharmarāja*), a wheel turning king (*cakravartirāja*) who protects a great country in accordance with the Buddhist teachings. Further, as it is said, he quickly bypassed mental delusions (*thugs mug pa'i rnam pas*) and then assumed a birth as a great dragon (*nya mid chen po*).<sup>34</sup> At the end of his life, when there were battles with others, he appeared as if angry, and afterwards, there was [only] a light rain [remaining]. (. . . 'og rol tu zi khron gyi sa'i char).

At Yuquan Mountain<sup>35</sup> there is a high peak today called Zhang Ling. There, [Guan Yu] became Shu po che, a spirit of the *nāga* class. He is extremely disruptive. Mere travel by others in sight of that mountain was difficult.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> These identifications are tentative. The text is *Sya na dhI . . . yu'u*, the king and minister. This could be Xiandi 獻帝 (181-234), but Xuande is connected to Guan Yu/Guandi.

<sup>34</sup> Unclear text; *nya mid chen po'i skye bslangs par . . .*, 2a1.

<sup>35</sup> See note 13.

<sup>36</sup> The text here is unclear. I tentatively read: 2a2: *klu'i rigs kyi mi ma yin shu po che zhig tu gyur pa shin tu tsub drag pas . . .*

Then, after about four hundred years passed, the great master Zhiyi (智顓),<sup>37</sup> who upheld the lineage of Protector Nāgārjuna [and Āryadeva], the father and son, came to that place for retreat (*sgrub pa la*).<sup>38</sup> It is said that even though the local people were extremely hostile, he didn't go back [home], and meditated on that mountain. Then, by the machinations of local spirits a giant snake appeared and wrapped itself around that mountain three times, leading (*drang*) many tens of millions of armies of gods and nagas. The great mountain shook (*brdegs*). The sun and moon crashed (*brdeb*) together. A deluge of weapons fell. A blizzard raged above. [However,] whatever kinds of terrifying apparitions and so on appeared were not able to distract him from his concentration (*ting nge 'dzin*).

At that moment, the great general [Guan Yu], decorated with armor and ornaments appeared with eight military battalions (*sde*). He prostrated to the master, apologized for trying to inflict harm, and said "In the past I was a great general. Because I was able to get over my anger I changed into this type (*rnam pa can*) of snake. Doing good deeds gave rise to this great power and apparition." [Then,] the master lectured extensively on the teachings of karma and its effects.

[Guan Yu] vowed that "Now, I will be a protector of the Buddha's teachings. Wherever there is an image of the Buddha, I will install my image in whatever kind of entry gate or left and right antechamber, and I will protect the monastic community and the Buddhist teachings (*chos 'khor*)." From that time on he became a protector of the Buddhist teachings.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Thanks to Zhang Linghui 张凌晖, who provides us with a reference to Ti ce da shi, and his identification as Zhiyi (538–597): "*rGya nag hwa shang gi byung tshul grub mtha'i phyogs snga bcas sa bon tsam smos pa yid kyi dri ma dag byed dge ba'i chu rgyun*," by Kaḥ-thog-Rig-'dzin Tshē-dbang-nor-bu (1698–1755), In *Kaḥ thog rdo rje gdan gyi rig 'dzin chen po tshē dbang nor bu'i zhabs kyi gsung 'bum* (6 vols). Dalhousie, H.P.: Damchoe sangpo, 1976–1977, vol. 5, pp. 419–450. See p. 439, "ṭi ce dā shī'a thwa wan," a transliteration of the Chinese 智者大师德安, a biographical description of Zhiyi 智顓. He is called Ti ce da shi; Zhiyi is also called Zhizhe dashi 智者大师.

<sup>38</sup> Text unclear, 2a3.

<sup>39</sup> This speaks to Guandi/Guan Yu/Guan Yun Chang's wide range of roles in China. From the internet, with a similar story of Guan Yu, but with very different contexts; compare with Duara's version, and the present Tibetan version. "In Chinese Buddhism, Guan Yu is revered by most practising Buddhists as Sangharama Bodhisattva (simplified Chinese: 伽蓝菩萨; traditional Chinese: 伽藍菩薩; pinyin: Qiélán Púsà) a heavenly protector of the Buddhist dharma. . . . The term Sangharama also refer to the dharmapala class of devas and spirits assigned to guard the Buddhist monastery, the dharma, and the faith itself. Over time and as an act of syncreticism, Guan Yu was seen as the representative guardian of the temple and the garden in which it stands. His statue traditionally is situated in the far left of the main altar, opposite his counterpart Skanda. According to Buddhist legends, in 592, Guan Yu manifested himself one night before the Zen master Zhiyi, the founder of the

In that way (*de lta bu'i*) this very great emperor (*rgyal po chen po*) is of the same mind (*thugs rgyud*) as Begtse Chamsing (*beg tse lcam sring*).<sup>40</sup> In ancient (*sngon gyi yig rnying rnams su*) accounts it is said that "he was a Chinese demon (*dam sri*)," and that Begtse is red colored. His weapons include a scorpion-shaped lance (*ral gri'i yu pa*) and others as in the ancient histories. These are the spoken words of Lālitavajra, our excellent leader, the Lord protector of the teaching (*'khor lo'i mgon po*), who translated it 'into modern Indian language'."

Then, on the way to U and Tsang in Tibet, he stayed at the approach to that place [mentioned] above. One day (*zhag mdzad pa'i tshe*), in a dream, a huge red man appeared. He said "The peak of this mountain is my home. I will lead you there." Taking one step he arrived at that mountain peak. He saw a beautiful house in the middle of many unbelievable ones (*chog mi shes*). He was offered all different kinds of food and drink. He said [introduced] "This is my daughter and son," and many came to meet and greet him. From here on down is the country of China. "I am the owner of all of this, from the center to the borders. I also have lots of donors of food and drink in Tibet. In particular, there is a great old being (*bla chen*) in Tsang who continuously offers food. He will come here to meet you and will be your guide. Briefly, he is the chief of our donors. He will protect and shelter you from any unexpected harm. Your longevity, merit, prosperity, and possessions (*yeags tshogs*) will increase. Your old friends and good deeds will not decline over time."

Give praise and increase your good deeds in this way.

You, Conqueror, with your retinue, who controls the demons of the three realms

Today, go [return] to wherever you live.

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Tiantai school of Buddhism, along with a retinue of spiritual beings. Zhiyi was then in deep meditation on Yuquan Hill (玉泉山) when he was distracted by Guan Yu's presence. Guan Yu then requested the master to teach him about the dharma. After receiving Buddhist teachings from the master, Guan Yu took refuge in the triple gems and also requested the Five Precepts. Henceforth, it is said that Guan Yu made a vow to become a guardian of temples and the dharma. Legends also claim that Guan Yu assisted Zhiyi in the construction of the Yuquan Temple (玉泉寺), which still stands today." [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guan\\_Yu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guan_Yu) (accessed 26 December 2014).

<sup>40</sup> For a brief mention, and extended analysis of the phenomenon of deities like and including Beg tse lcam sring as non-Buddhist deities, see José I. Cabezón (ed.), "Introduction," in *Tibetan Ritual*, (Oxford University Press, 2009), 10, 1-34, passim. Beg tse lcam sring has a Mongolian connection, but perhaps Indian origins. As above, it is related to Hayagrīva, and to the Dge lugs pa order. From the many sources see for example [http://huntingtonarchive.osu.edu/Exhibitions/sama/Essays/C95\\_013Begtse.html](http://huntingtonarchive.osu.edu/Exhibitions/sama/Essays/C95_013Begtse.html) (accessed 27 December 2014).

Then, whenever I call you forth as guests, come quickly without delay and  
Carry out good deeds.

Saying that, praise their departure and ornament the ending with these good luck verses. Recite:

The leader of all atmospheric demons, divinities, spirits, aggressive demons

The divinity diligent in practice, like protecting a child.

[Is like] a butcher who cuts to the heart of enemies of the teachings

This liturgy for generating the happiness of Guan Yun Chang is based on valid (*tshad ma*) oral instructions, and on histories. And, there is no contradiction with the techniques for invoking divinities and guardians by excellent ancient ones (*sngon*). I think that there are no mistakes. However, these days there are some extremists (*dpang gyur skye bo zad*) who disagree. There are incorrect practices of Buddhism everywhere. Therefore, it is like scolding a blind person (*dmus long mig ldan 'phya ba bzhin*). Let those who delight in senseless banter do what makes them happy.

“Ethical behavior [like] tens of thousands of sun rays  
The Buddhist teachings spread into a garden of white lotuses.  
Happiness is an unceasing honey[-sweet] festival  
Embodied beings, bees and others; come and play!”

This great protector of the teachings who rules in this powerful country is known as Emperor Long Cloud, who conquers the demons in the three realms. This method for invoking and worshipping him is titled “Thunder that calls down a deluge of good deeds.” These days, the engagement between most people and the wisdom deities, who protect the teachings, has deteriorated. From this, at this time, for every (re la? Unclear text, 6b1) spirit (*mi ma yin*) and malevolent being (*gdug pa can*), lamas, places of refuge more precious than jewels, have increased [works] like this. This is to be avoided (*dqag bya che na'ang*), but because it was requested by some interested persons, and for some other reasons, the one called [Thu'u bkwan] Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, composed [this]. [He] is the one who was titled by order of his excellency, the authentic, wise [Qianlong Emperor]<sup>41</sup> as “Tuken: Pure, Wise

<sup>41</sup> The titles given to the Jamyang Zhepas and others by the Manchus were rather indiscriminate. See for some of the many examples Erdeni nominhan (Dharma king) to the first, Jamyang hu tuk tu (Emanation Body), nominhan (dharmarāja) and jasagh to the second, Samati pakši (a Sanskrit term) to the third, see Ngag

Master of Meditation” (*rnam dag bslab ldan bsam gtan gyi slob dpon*, 靜修禪師 *jing xiu chan shi* Thu’u bkwan Hu thog thu),<sup>42</sup> an honorable figure who has travelled far. He composed this in the Garden of Solitude [at] Dechen Rabgye Ling (*dben pa’i dga’ tshal bde chen rab rgyas gling*).

Best wishes to all.

### The Way to Invoke [Guan Yun Chang]

I bow to all teachers.

When one is worshipping and offering to Emperor Long Cloud and wants to offer a libation, put powder of precious medical seeds into alcoholic spirits (*chang rgod kyi nying khu*). Pour it into an offering cup and put it in front of you. From BHRUM there are large vessels of gold, silver, and so on. A person with the five qualities (*yon tan*)<sup>43</sup> for offering a libation of nectar conferred (*byin brlabs*) with three vajras becomes capable of satisfying guest [deities].

OM AH HUM (Recite three times)

Then, taking the cup in your hand [recite]:

KYAI!

Once, long ago, there was an imperial general. Because of karma and conditions he became a powerful spirit. At that time he realized the ultimate (*chos nyid mngon gyur pa*) and in front of the Hwa shang master Master Zhiyi he promised to protect the teachings. His name is Emperor Long Cloud, a warrior deity (*dgra lha*) of the local protectors (*sa*

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dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa’i rnam thar*, 270-271. For the Second *Jam dbyangs bzhad pa*, see Gung thang bstan pa’i sgron me, *Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa’i rnam thar*, 137 (jasagh), 138 (nominhan). Gung thang bstan pa’i sgron me, *Kun mkhyen ‘jam dbyangs bzhad pa sku ‘phreng gnyis pa rje ‘jigs med dbang po’i rnam thar* (Lanzhou: Gansu Minorities Publishing House, 1990). See Grupper, “Manchu Patronage and Tibetan Buddhism during the First Half of the Ch’ing Dynasty,” 66n15.

<sup>42</sup> *Rnam dag bslab ldan bsam gtan gyi slob dpon*, 靜修禪師 *jing xiu chan shi*, 6b2-3. The quotation: *gnam bskos ‘jam dbyangs gong ma chen po’i bka’i lung gis jing zi’u Chan shi Thu’u bkwan Hu thog thu zhes rnam dag bslab ldan bsam gtan gyi slob dpon du bsngags pas mthar ‘khyams pa’i btsun gzugs*. *Huthuk tu* means *sprul sku*, *nirmanakaya* but is here used for *slob dpon*.

<sup>43</sup> Five qualities for offering, in one rendering: Buddhafields, celestial palaces, pure rays of light, thrones, enjoyment.

*skyong*). His powerful emanations are all pervasive; he controls the entire country of China. His many emanations, Rdo rje bdud 'dul chen po, Srog bdag zangs kyi Beg tse can,<sup>44</sup> Rdzong btsan bshan, and so on, protect Tibet and guard the Buddhist teachings.

His religious (*dharma, chos*) activities are magnificent; he engages in virtuous activities (*'phrin las sgrub*). He subdues harmful enemies of the teachings and government (*bstan srid*).

He is the Lord, he gives refuge for honor and praise.

KYAI!

“Oh deity, to generate your (*khyod*) happiness, with a faithful attitude I offer this most pure libation, with reverence, and with pleasant, melodious sounds.”

This wonderful, excellent libation actuates (*phabs sbyar*) the medical potency in the essence of good fruit. It extracts jewels and gold and releases their potency. The physical strength and luminosity of whoever drinks this will increase. It brings a contented happiness to the heart (*snying la dga' bde'i sim pa ster*). Drinking this wondrous nectar satisfies Kwan Yun Chang, the emperor of the warrior deities, his queen and children, the clan (*tshang*) of Kwan Phing gro'u, and so on. [It also satisfies] the officials, the messengers, the servants, and the divisions of armored and weapons-bearing [soldiers]. This fearsome group of military heroes completely fills the earth and sky.

We offer! We praise! Be content and pleased!

May those who offer this excellent libation, who spread the teachings, and uphold the teachings have stable lives and expand good works. May the leaders of the country guide us to the dharma. In particular, when I and our community hope and are confident, please don't turn your good works away from whatever undeceiving friends think of, according to their wishes.

Saying that, pour the libation and play music.

Further, this narrative (*zhes pa*), was given in the presence of the faithful Khalka Jinong Beisi, at Jis bu, in the country (*yul*) of Kwachu. It was requested by Dar han Chos rje Ye shes grags pa bzang po and written

<sup>44</sup> For images and general descriptions of Beg tse chen, see <http://www.himalayanart.org/image.cfm/484.html>; <http://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=3013>; <http://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=137>. (Most recently accessed 11 January 2015).

down by Ku swa yi [UNCLEAR] Dharmavajra. The scribe was Ngag dbang phun tshogs.

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