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Did Padmasambhava Cite a *Dhāraṇī* from
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Materials for the Study of the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*

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Abstract

This article examines the possibility that Padmasambhava (ca. 8c) cites a *dhāraṇī* from the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* (無量壽宗要經) in one of his longevity practices titled *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*. The majority of the extant sources of the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* is known by a plethora of Tibetan and Chinese manuscripts from the caves of Dunhuang. Besides this vast production of the Tibetan imperial manuscript project, recent research has shown that a Sanskrit fragment found at Gilgit can be identified as the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*. The route connecting Gilgit and Uḍḍiyāna, known as Padmasambhava's birthplace, has been historically traced as a path walked by Buddhist pilgrims. Furthermore, the eras of the two are not so far apart.

The present paper argues that the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, a *gter ma* text revealed by Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can (1337–1408?), could belong to the oldest stratum of the *tshe sgrub* text which propagated the famous *dhāraṇī*. It was well known among his contemporaneous scholar-monks that there were two recensions of the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*, namely one with “*om gsum ma*” and another with “*om gnyis ma*” in its *dhāraṇī*. Nonetheless, the *dhāraṇī* lore that flowed into the *gter ma* literature had little to do with this lively academic milieu. As *gTer-stons* did not so much concern themselves with scholastic matters such as cataloguing and scriptural exegesis, it seems more probable that the *dhāraṇī* spell was held (*√dhr̥*) in the real practice and was passed along from one generation to another through mnemonic chants. As a hypothesis, the present paper attempts to trace the oral transmission back to Uḍḍiyāna, the land of the Magi and *dhāraṇī*.

* I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Dr. Akira Saito, who, in my doctoral defense at ICPBS as one of the viva examiners, helped me improve the arguments relevant to this paper. In the same vein, I must thank Prof. Dr. Florin Deleanu and Prof. Dr. Jay Valentine heartily for their cogent comments on earlier drafts. I also must offer my sincere thanks to Dr. John Cole for carefully proofreading my English and supporting my efforts. Despite the bodhisattvic help from these scholars, there are surely many shortcomings that remain. It goes without saying that these are my responsibility alone.

1. The *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* (無量壽宗要經) A General Background for the Present Study

Despite the relatively large number of the modern studies dedicated to the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* (*Wu liang shou zon yao jing* 無量壽宗要經),¹ they hardly attest to the plethora of its extant manuscripts. The critical editions signal a litany of variant readings not only in Sanskrit, but also collated with various other versions including Khotanese, Tibetan, Chinese, and so forth.² The great popularity and propagation of this literature in Dunhuang are evidenced by the numerous Tibetan and Chinese manuscripts, which were presumably produced by the Sino-Tibetan saṃgha of Dunhuang in the Tubo period (786–848, i.a. during the reign of Khri-gtsug-lde-btsan, a.k.a. Ral-pa-can, r. 815–841).³ In tune with the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*'s emphasis on the meritorious benefits accumulated by writing down its famous *dhāraṇī*, i.e. the 108 names of Tathāgata,⁴ the plentiful surviving manuscripts bear

¹ As is well known, “*Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*” is a general designation. For the various kinds of formula (e.g. *ārya-/āryya-mahā-)/Apari-/Aparamitāyur(-jñāna) nāma mahāyānasūtra(-ratnarāja)/ (ārya-)Aparimitāyur-/Aparamitā(-nāma)dhāra-nī*), see TSUKAMOTO (塚本) 1989:120.

² This is what makes the text so valuable and also so disquieting, as is evident from Konow's remark that his elaborate edition must have ‘a full Apparatus Criticus in order to make it superfluous in future to compare the manuscripts of this dull text’, see KONOW 1916:293–294.

³ For the chronology, see NISHIOKA (西岡) 1985:379. See also FUJIEDA (藤枝) 1961:268–284 for the Tibetan imperial manuscript project. As will be touched upon later (see fn. 53), there is evidence from Dunhuang Library Cave that many of the manuscripts have now been dated to after the end of the Tibetan occupation of Dunhuang.

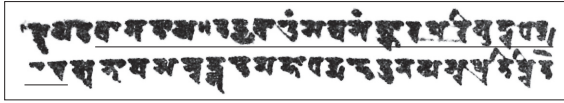
⁴ WINTERNITZ 1972 has remarked that the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* is ‘nothing more than the glorification of a Dhāraṇī’ (vol. 2, p. 382). The 108 appellations of Tathāgata are apparently not given in the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*, and thus the *dhāraṇī* itself has been questioned in various ways until the present day. Some considered it to be translated from Sanskrit (*nāmāṣṭottaraśataṃ*) and Tibetan (*mtshan brgya rtsa brgyad*), hence “108 names”; others take into account the possibility of “108 times” from Chinese (ApS_c1: 一百八名號; ApS_c2: 一百八遍), hence reaching the same maze. For the relevant discussion, see FUJINAKA/NAKAMIKADO (藤仲/中御門) 2018:448–452n15; ROBERTS/BOWER 2022a:n. 50; ROBERTS/BOWER 2022b:n.

testimony to the existence of an institutionalised group in Dunhuang specialised in sūtra-copying.⁵

1.1. Similarity of GBM#3366 to the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*

As reported by TSUKAMOTO (塚本) 1989, already by that time there were some 80 Nepalese Sanskrit manuscripts identified as the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*.⁶ More recently, VON HINÜBER 2014 has pointed out close similarities between a fragment found at Gilgit and a phrase in the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*.⁷

Fig. 1: GBM, pt. 10, plate no. 3366 (≈ApS_s, §§11, 76–78)



50. As DAVIDSON 2009 has discussed (p.118), it may be more appropriate to simply transcribe the Indic pronunciation of the *dhāraṇī* rather than translating it into English or any other modern language. For this approach, see SNELGROVE 2002:143–144 and SILK 2004:425.

⁵ As of 1985, a total of about at least 350 Tibetan manuscripts of the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* have been identified, see NISHIOKA (西岡) 1985:380. Regarding the cumulative process, a careful survey of the IDP will doubtless reveal a far larger number. The *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*, however, stands out not only for the abundant number of manuscripts but also for the unique substances used to write it down. As reported by VAN SCHAİK/HELMAN-WAZNY/NÖLLER 2015, ‘the brown ink’ (p. 118) used for the majority of the IOL Tib J 308, a Tibetan manuscript of the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*, is possibly ‘evidence of the practice of writing with blood’. Their microscopic examination suggests that the scribe and/or sponsor painstakingly produced the manuscript, stroke by stroke, using their own blood. This could be a living proof of the religious fervor associated with this sūtra.

⁶ See TSUKAMOTO (塚本) 1989:120–123. The age of Nepalese manuscripts obviously differs between old palm-leaves and recent paper ones. For the former, referring to the NGMCP data, we can assume that they are generally centred on the 11–17th centuries, and the 16th century onwards for the latter.

⁷ A text edition is given in VON HINÜBER 2014:111 (no. 61b: (*Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*?)). In Fig. 1 above, the parts I have underlined are considered to correspond to the *dhāraṇī*: [1.1] *tathāgatāya || tadyathā om sarvasaṃskārapariśuddhadharma* [1.2] [*te gagaṇasamudga*](*te*). The following lines (ll. 3–6) seem to refer to the six perfections (*pāramitā*) by the *dāna* (charity) and others.

This Gilgit find may in turn suggest that the Gilgit area may have played a certain role in the formation of the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* together with other focal points of influence, such as the Tibetan-ruled Dunhuang and Khotan. Even though only a small proportion of the manuscript has been collated as of yet, if the script is assumed to be Proto-Śāradā, a.k.a. Gilgit/Bamiyan type II as MELZER 2014 has suggested, this fragment (GBM plate no. 3366) is roughly datable to the 7–10th centuries.⁸ It seems significant to incorporate insights about the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* in Northwest India from the Gilgit find with prior studies relying mainly on newer Nepalese manuscripts.

As Map 1 below shows, the route connecting Gilgit and Uḍḍiyāna, the latter known as Padmasambhava’s (ca. 8c) birthplace,⁹ has been historically traced as a path walked by Buddhist pilgrims.¹⁰ Song-yun (宋雲. 6c), for

⁸ See MELZER 2014:230–231nn10, 16. I am grateful to Prof. Dr. Hiromi Habata (ICPBS) for calling my attention to this article. In it, Melzer has lent his support to von Hinüber’s estimate as ‘a loose parallel to the final part of the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* (Ser. no. 61b: GBM 3366)’ (MELZER 2014:231n16), while von Hinüber himself meticulously withholds judgement about this as ‘*Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*?’ (VON HINÜBER 2014:111). As for the dots connecting Gilgit and *dhāraṇī* in general, see VON HINÜBER 2014, where he remarks that according to the material found in Gilgit (Naupur village today), ‘the monks might have practiced medicine, not only from books on Āyurveda, but also by the help of *dhāraṇīs*’ (p. 83).

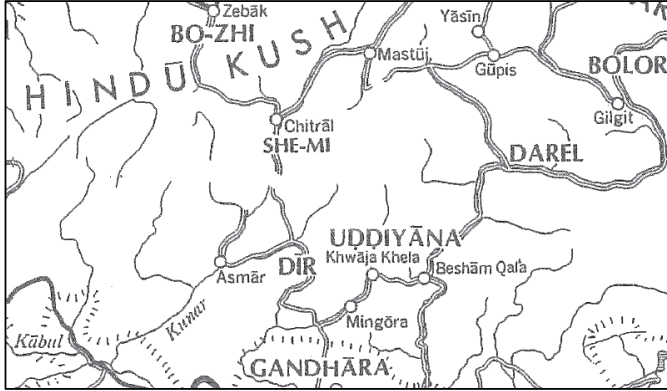
⁹ As a result of people’s fervent devotion, Padmasambhava inevitably entered into the realm of religious myth, whether or not he is a historical figure. In this regard, the present paper follows scholars like Kapstein who has stated ‘Padmasambhava, a marginal Dharma master of the eighth century’ (KAPSTEIN 2000:159) after his intricate arguments (pp. 155–160).

¹⁰ For a detailed discussion on the routes, see NAGASAWA (長澤) 1996:146–147. Based on the bibliographical evidence of the routes, walked by Fa-xian (法顯. 337–422) for instance, Nagasawa states that this route (葱嶺/Mintaka/Kirik—陁陁/Darel≈Gilgit—烏菴國/Uḍḍiyāna—宿呵多國/Swat—犍衛國/Gandhāra) used to be traveled by the ancient pilgrim monks.

According to Hui-chao’s (慧超. 704–787) *Wang wu tian zhu guo chuan* (往五天竺國傳) however, the route was named differently as 吐蕃國/Tu-bo—小勃律國/Gilgit/Yasin—建馱羅國/Gandhāra—烏長國/Uḍḍiyāna, see *Wang wu tian zhu guo chuan*, 20,13–22,7. I owe a debt of gratitude to Tatsuya Saito (ICPBS Library)

instance, recorded Uḍḍiyāna (烏場國) as being his next destination after Gilgit (鉢盧勒國).¹¹

Map 1: Routes taken by Buddhist monks after the mid-6th century¹²



1.2. The Relationship Between Uḍḍiyāna and *Dhāraṇī*

Most scholars agree that Uḍḍiyāna (Tib. U-rgyan)¹³ lies in the Swat River basin.¹⁴ However, when viewed religiously as “hidden land” (*sbas yul*), it

who gave me a detailed bibliography of a genre of Chinese history known as “高僧傳” including the *Fa xian chuan*.

¹¹ See *Song yun xing ji*, 1019c13: 十一月中旬入罽彌國。此國漸出葱嶺。土田峽峻。民多貧困。峻路危道。人馬僅通。一直一道。從鉢盧勒國向烏場國。

¹² This map is partly adapted from KUWAYAMA 2002:Illustration 17 (below).

¹³ As for the term “Uḍḍiyāna”, see BHSD, s.vv. Uḍḍiyāna (p. 120): ‘=Oḍḍiyāna’, Oḍḍiyāna (p. 159): ‘also Oḍī° (and uḍḍiyāna(ka), q.v.), n. of a locality’, Dey, s.vv. Udyāna (p. 274), Ujjānaka (p. 211), Ujjihāna (p. 211). For the Tibetan equivalent “U-rgyan”, see *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, s.vv. *u rgyan* (p. 3138), *o rgyan* (p. 3143). Note that in the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, the term “*o rgyan*” is found, but “*u rgyan*” is not.

¹⁴ As we can see, the exact location of Uḍḍiyāna has given rise to much speculation. In accepting the modern-day Swat River basin due to ‘located west-north-west of Kashmir to the north of Peshawar in what is now Pakistan’ (p. 265), I follow SANDERSON 2007. A clue to solving this issue could be found in an

would need a very different treatment from what they are suggesting. Literally translated as “garden” (Apte, s.v. *udyānam*),¹⁵ Uḍḍiyāna has been regarded as a sacred pīṭha associated with the ḍākinīs.¹⁶ For instance, according to the rNying-ma-pa apology of Ratna-gling-pa (a.k.a. Rin-chen-dpal-bzang-po. 1403–1479. BDRC#P470), Uḍḍiyāna was viewed as inaccessible to the new translation school (*gsar ma*); only the translators of the old school (*sngon gyi lo tsā ba rnams*), i.e. the rNying-ma-pa, are allowed to enter (*bsgrad pa*) the land. Ratna-gling-pa explains that the reason for this is that the rNying-ma-pa translators manifest themselves in the *nirmāṇakāya* (*sprul pa'i lo tsā ba*), while the translators of the gSar-ma-ba were “translators of *prthag-jana*” (*so so skye bo'i lo tsā ba*). Therefore, the latter could not reach (*rtol*) Uḍḍiyāna. They were thought to have gone to India (*rgya gar ba*) and Nepal (*bal po'i yul*), and thus could not open ḍākinīs’ secret treasury (*gsang mdzod*).¹⁷

There are many theories about the linguistic groups in the Swat River basin, and as far as I could learn, experts in this field have yet to reach a

examination of the archaeological sites (e.g. Mirgora) that would have served as a merkmal of salient characteristic of Uḍḍiyāna. For major studies on the issue, see YULE 1929, chapter XXX, note 1 (vol. 1, p. 164); BHATTACHARYYA 1964:43–46; HADANO (羽田野) 1987:70–71; KUWAYAMA (桑山) 1998:126–128n129; DAVIDSON 2002:160–163; MAYER 2020a:71–73. See also UḌḌIYĀNA, from which website we can easily access to visual images as well as numerous literary sources.

¹⁵ Apte, s.vv. *udyānam* (p. 432): ‘Going or walking out’, ‘A garden, park, pleasure garden’, ‘N. of a country to the North of India’, *udyānakam* (p. 432): ‘A garden park’.

¹⁶ Our conception of Uḍḍiyāna today was naturally formed in stages. ‘The aura Oḍiyāna obtained’ (p. 160), according to DAVIDSON 2002, ‘really passed through three stages’ (p. 161): (1.) ‘the early collection of spells evident from the sixth century forward’, (2.) ‘the development of the Indrabhūti myth in the eighth century’, (3.) ‘and the extensive mythologization of Oḍiyāna in the *yoginī* tantras beginning in the ninth century’.

¹⁷ *Chos 'byung rtsod zlog*, 91,2f.

scholarly consensus.¹⁸ Turning to the historiography, the language of Uḍḍiyāna, and in particular the practice of “magical spells” (*jin zhou* 禁呪) by the monks, has been studied with reference to the *Da tang xi yu ji* (大唐西域記), an important document of Central Asia during the early seventh century.¹⁹ HORI (堀) 1912, for instance, has interpreted the term 禁呪 as ‘陀羅尼 (Dhārani [sic])’ (p. 207) and pointed out that of all the Buddhist countries to which the Chinese pilgrim Xuan-zang (玄奘. 602–664) travelled, only 烏仗那 (*wu zhang na*≈Uḍḍiyāna) was recorded as having recited it with great enthusiasm.²⁰ This may have been connected with the existence of Śiva worship in the region since ancient times.²¹

The letter 呪 is generally understood as a rendering of *mantra*, which relates to curses and the like (e.g. *ābhicārika*, *raudra*),²² and for this reason

¹⁸ See GRIERSON 1927:109; MORGENSTIERNE 1973:327–343 (Die Stellung der Kafirsprachen). See also BUDDRUSS 1977; MAYRHOFER 1983; GOTŌ (後藤) 2008:129–130.

¹⁹ *Da tang xi yu ji* (DX_c, vol. 1, 270,1): 烏仗那國。[...] 人性怯懦，俗情譎詭，好學而不功，禁呪爲藝業。[...] 語言雖異，大同印度，文字禮儀，頗相參預。崇重佛法，敬信大乘。夾蘇婆伐窣堵河，舊有一千四百伽藍，多已荒蕪。昔僧徒一萬八千，今漸減少，並學大乘，寂定爲業。善誦其文，未究深義。戒行清潔，特闕禁呪。

According to STEIN 1929, Xuan-zang, ‘the famous pilgrim’, arrived Uḍḍiyāna (烏仗那) ‘about A.D. 630 from the side of Kābul’ (p. 14).

²⁰ HORI (堀) 1912:207: ‘烏仗那の佛者が特に禁呪即ち陀羅尼 (Dhārani) を誦せりといふは注意すべき記事にして，玄奘が遊歴せし佛教國中，盛んに陀羅尼を誦持せしは唯だ烏仗那あるのみ’。Ji (季) has also interpreted “禁呪” as *dhāraṇī*. See Ji (季) 2000:vol. 1, p. 272, fn. 5: ‘禁呪即呪陀羅尼，是佛菩薩在禪定後所發出秘密語言’。For the Tibetan equivalent of the term “禁呪”，Mi-dbang mGon-po-skyabs (b. 18c, BDRC#P4985) has translated it as “*rig sngags/gsang sngags*”, see DX_t, 28b6 (for the part of 烏仗那國 (*udzdzana* ‘i [oṭiyaṇ] yul) in DX_t, see 28b2–33b6). However, the context involving these translations is still unclear to me.

²¹ As for Śiva worship in Uḍḍiyāna, see KUWAYAMA (桑山) 1998:127n129.

²² For the letter 呪, see Mvy no. 4237: 密呪/*mantram/gsang sngags*; no. 4238: 明呪/*vidyā/rig sngags*; no. 4380: 呪咀/飲食之過/*durbhuktam/bza* ‘nyes.

In the context of East Asian Buddhism, the distinction between *dhāraṇīs* and *mantras* is often ignored. According to SHARF 2002, ‘*dhāraṇī* and *mantra* were

its circulation was strictly restricted by order of the Tibetan court.²³ However, for Xuan-zang, the way the Uḍḍiyāna monks engage especially in the recitation of the 禁呪, a dvandva binome, was not inconsistent with the fact that they genuinely observe the monastic rules and practices.²⁴ More plausibly, as recounted in the *Song yun xing ji* (宋雲行紀. 6c),²⁵ in the context of Uḍḍiyāna known as the land of the Magi, memorable for its magic,²⁶ the term 禁呪 can be understood in the sense of “magical spells”. Practiced through blessing, charms, incantations, prayers, and songs, the “magical spells” is assumed to be an essential part of the monastic training and to have retained its sacred authority.

both referred to as “charms” or “spells” (*chou* 呪 or 咒), or “spirit-spells” (*shen-chou* 神呪)’ (p. 337n3).

²³ See HADANO (羽田野) 1986:312–315.

²⁴ This construction of the compound was suggested by Prof. Dr. Florin Deleanu (personal communication, March 2022). Regarding the term 禁呪, the key to Xuan-zang’s intention is how the two clauses (戒行清潔, 特閑禁呪) are connected. As interpreted above, I have understood these clauses as being coordinated in a cumulative relation (“and”) rather than a disjunctive one (“but”). The same interpretation is found in Upasak’s English translation. See UPASAK 1990:49: ‘They lead pure life according to monastic rules but also practise [sic] magical exorcism’. The scholarly resources relevant for 特閑禁呪 can be also found in STEIN 1929 as ‘cultivating instead the science of magical formulas’ (p. 15).

²⁵ In order to slay a venomous serpent (毒龍) which killed people, the King of Karband/Garband (盤陀) visited a brahmin in Uḍḍiyāna (烏場國) to learn magic for four years. When he returned and cast a spell (呪) on the serpent, it turned into a human. This creature repented of its deeds, so the king sent it to live on a distant mountain. See *Song yun xing ji*, 1019a29: 昔有商人。止宿池側。值龍忿怒。呪殺商人。盤陀王聞之。捨位與子。向烏場國。學婆羅門呪。四年之中盡得其術。還復王位復呪池龍。龍變爲人悔過向王。即從之葱嶺山去此池二千餘里。

²⁶ See YAMAGUCHI (山口) 2004:44: ‘ウッディヤーナはまた魔術で知られたマジ教の地でもあったから’. Regarding the place ‘Tāntrism’ originated, related discussion is found in BHATTACHARYYA 1964, (Ch. V), where he concluded that ‘it is, then, in Uḍḍiyāna that Tāntrism first developed, and was probably transmitted to the other Pīṭhas, [...], and thence to the rest of India’ (p. 46). See also DAVIDSON 2002:161: ‘It is further clear that an early canon of spells was strongly associated with the areas between Kashmir and the land of Uḍḍiyāna or Oḍḍiyāna’.

2. Popularity of the *Dhāraṇī* in the 14–15th Centuries Tibet

So far we have no evidence accounting for any solid historical connection between (a.) Uḍḍiyāna/Padmasambhava and (b.) the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*/its celebrated *dhāraṇī*. Hence the possibility that the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*,²⁷ which is “written by the ḍākinīs of the land of Uḍḍiyāna in the ḍākinī’s coded script (*mkha’ ’gro’i brda yig*)”,²⁸ has quoted the *dhāraṇī* from the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* could reveal a hitherto unknown connection.

In the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, the *dhāraṇī* runs as follows:

Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po, §2.4.2

In the early morning, recite the following *dhāraṇī* one hundred times:
“*om namo bhagavate aparimitāyurjñānasuviniścitatejorājāya tathā-gatāyārhate samyaksambuddhāya || tadnyathā || om sarvasaṃskāra-pariśuddhadharmate gagaṇasamudgate svabhāvaviśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā || nṛī bhrūm vajra āyuse āyurjāna siddhi. āḥ bhrūm*”.

As we can see, a close parallel to this *dhāraṇī* is found in the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*:

²⁷ Note that the present study starts with an assumption that the title “*Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*” or the almost identical variant “*lCags sdong ma*” has been universally renowned and referred to in various corpora such as *gsan yig*, *dkar chag* (e.g. *Bras spungs dkar chag*, #010168 (p. 904): ‘*tshe bsgrub lcags sdong ma bzhugs so*. Author unknown’), and so forth. For a discussion which attempts to go into the common archetype of the *Phyi nang gsang ba’i tshe sgrub* and the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, see SHINGA Forthcoming.

²⁸ *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, §0.2.2. What does this imply? Even more perplexingly, the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* bore lines of writing in enigmatic and impenetrable script (at least to me). For a table comparing the three recensions (CD_A, CD_B, CD_C) by each scanned image (e.g. §2.6.1), see SHINGA (信賀) 2020:288–289 (Appendix 2). Regarding the ḍākinī’s coded scripts (*mkha’ ’gro’i brda yig*), I was dismayed to discover, despite extensive acknowledgement of its importance, that the script remains shrouded in myth, and the question is unsettled even among the experts. Nevertheless, despite such limitations, it is quite undeniable that the collations of these arcane scripts can be a very illuminating factor in the historical transmission of the *gter ma* literature as evidenced within the various recensions.

Aparimitāyuhṣūtra, ApS_s, §11 (≈ApS_t, §13)²⁹

om namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya tathā-gatāyārhatē samyaksaṃbuddhāya || tad-yathā || om puṇya-mahā-puṇya-āparimita-puṇya-āparimitāyu-puṇya-jñāna-sambhāropacite || om sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-pariśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā ||

The above text from Duan’s edition (ApS_s, §11≈ApS_t, §13) highlighted in grey is not found in the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* (§2.4.2), a *gter ma* revelation of Rig-’dzin rGod-Idem-can (1337–1408? BDRC#P5254).³⁰ However, it would be hasty to conclude that this *gter ma* text quotes it only in part. As Table 1 below shows, amongst three Tibetan canonical translations, D675/P362 renders the same shorter version with two *oms* apart from the full version with three *oms* (i.e. D674/P361 and D849/P474). Also in the *rNying ma rgyud ’bum*, we find the *dhāraṇī* with three *oms* embedded in the *Rlung las byed ’khor lo’i rgyud* (Ng.803/Tb.530). According to the colophon, this text is known as one of Gu-ru Chos-dbang’s (1212–1270, BDRC#P326) *gter ma* revelation, which was translated from the Indic language (*rgya gar skad*) by Padmasambhava and Lo-chen Bai-ro-tsa-na (ca. 8c, BDRC#P5013).³¹ For a general overview of the diverse number of *oms* as found in the Tibetan canonical texts, see Table 1 below:

²⁹ My citation relies throughout on DUAN 1992 with a few editorial conventions changed.

³⁰ As I have briefly argued in SHINGA 2022:51–52 (fn. 1), rGod-Idem-can’s date is not entirely clear. For a solid detailed discussion of his birth year, see HERWEG 1994:161–165, and year of death, see *ibid.*:175–176. To address the issue on the veracity of the corpus’ transmission, perhaps the problem will be resolved if we are able to someday find additional recensions of the *gSal byed nyi ma’i ’od zer*, a pithy hagiography of rGod-Idem-can written by his direct disciple *Sūryabhadra (ca. 14c, BDRC#P8839).

³¹ *Rlung las byed ’khor lo’i rgyud*, 471,5: *om na mo bhagaba te/ a pa ri mi tā yur jñanasu bhini/ tsittate dzorā dza ya/ ta thā ga ta ya/ arha te samyaksa bud dha ya/ tadya thā/ om pu nye pu nye ma hā pu nye a pa ra mi ta ma hā pu nye a yu pu nye dznyā na sarbarūpa [si]ddhi/ a pa ra mita ayū še/ om sarba-saṃska ri pa ri shud dhe dharmā sde ga ga na sa murdga te svā bha ba bi shuddhe ma hā n ya pa*

Table 1: Number of *oms* in Tibetan canonical translations

No.	Title	Canonical Collections	Number of <i>oms</i>
1.	<i>Aparimitāyuhṣūtra</i>	D674, rGyud, <i>ba</i> /P361, rGyud, <i>ba</i>	three
2.		D675, rGyud, <i>ba</i> /P362, rGyud, <i>ba</i>	two
3.		D849, gZungs-'dus, <i>e</i> /P474, rGyud, ' <i>a</i>	three
4.	<i>Rlung las byed 'khor lo'i rgyud</i>	Ng.803/Tb.530, Mahā-yo-ga, <i>ha</i>	three

2.1. Some Remarks about the *Dhāraṇī* among the 14–15th Centuries Scholar-monks

Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub (1290–1364, BDRC#P155) was born in the same gTsang province of central Tibet as Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can. Well known as the Omniscient one (*thams cad mkhyen pa*), his writings are extensive. Yet when it comes to the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*, the rGyud '*bum gyi dkar chag* (D5204) could be regarded as the first reference. As a Padma'i-rigs-kyi-rgyud, this catalogue has listed the two recensions of the '*Phags pa tshe dang ye shes dpag tu med pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po 'i mdo*, namely “*om gsum byas pa*” (no. 297) and “*om gnyis byas pa*” (no. 298).³²

ri wa re ye svā hā/ [... 484,4] rgya gar gyi mkhan po padma sa bha ba dang/ bod kyi lo tsa ba spa gor bai ro tsa nas bsgyur ba// [... 485,1] 'di chos dbang gi gter ma yin//

³² rGyud '*bum gyi dkar chag*, 1.2 (p. 108): *gñis pa pad ma 'i rigs kyi rgyud la/ [... 1.2.1] dan po la/ [no. 297] 'phags pa tshe dang ye shes dpag tu med pa zes bya ba theg pa chen po 'i mdo/ om gsum byas pa/ bar na puṇya yod pa gcig dan/ [no. 298] om gñis byas pa/ bar na pu ṇya med pa gcig ste/*

For the shorter version, see gSang sngags rgyud sde bzhi'i gzungs '*bum*, 491,3: *tshe dpag tu med pa 'i mdo 'i sngags/ om na mo bha ga wa te a pa ra mi ta ā yur dznyā na su bi ni ṣci ta te dzo rā dzā ya/ ta thā ga tā ya/ arha te samyakasambuddhā ya/ tadya thā/ om sarbba saṃ skā ra pa ri shuddha dharmma te ga ga na sa mudga te swa bhā wa bi shuddhe/ ma hā ya na pa ri wā re svā hā//*. Note that as for the *Tshe dpag tu med pa 'i mdo 'i sngags*, Lokesh Chandra, the editor of BS, identified it as ‘mantras of Aparimitāyur-sūtra [sic] (Kanjur 674)’, see BS, vol. 16, preface (p. 5), no. 230.

Correspondence between the Bu-ston’s catalogue (N)/*dKar chag 'phang thang ma* (KP. ca. 830)/*dKar chag ldan dkar ma* (KD. ca. 836), according to KAWAGOE (川越) 2005, N1254 might correspond to KP334 ('*Phags pa tshe dpag tu med pa*)

As for this demarcation associated with the divine abode of Amitayus, namely, (1.) the *dhāraṇī* of Amitāyus of Akaniṣṭha, and (2.) the *dhāraṇī* of Amitāyus of Sukhāvātī,³³ mKhas-grub-rje dGe-legs-dpal-bzang (1385–1438, BDRC#P55), a renowned dGe-lugs-pa scholar-monk, later mentioned it in his *rGyud sde spyi rnam*.³⁴ His argument, which is most probably against Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub, is to maintain that those two sūtra recensions have been uttered as the *dhāraṇī* of Amitāyus of upper direction/abode (*steng phyogs*). Of course, such confusion due to divergent recensions is not easy to apprehend. Above all, the fact that, as the *dhāraṇī* reads, the specific figure and its abode of the “Aparimitāyurjñānasuviniścitatejorāja” have not been determined with certainty further complicates our analysis.³⁵ For the various designations of Amitāyus/Amitābha/Aparimitāyurjñāna, there was some budding confusion in the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* already prior to the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*.

and KD350, see p. 80: ‘cf. 1254’. For KD350, see also YOSHIMURA (芳村) 1974:150: *’Phags pa tshe dpag tu med pa’i gzungs*.

³³ See NISHIOKA 1983:61: [1253] *Hog min gyi tshe dpag med/* [1254] *bDe ba can gyi tshe dpag med/*

³⁴ *rGyud sde spyi rnam*, 122,24. For an English translation of this part, see LESSING/WAYMAN 1978:123, 125. As mKhas-grub-rje’s argument about the demarcation, however, has no direct relevance to our discussion, I shall not go into it here. For the detailed discussion of this topic, see FUJINAKA/NAKAMIKADO (藤仲/中御門) 2018:448–452n15.

³⁵ For instance, according to Fa-cheng’s (法成. fl. 820s–840s, see CBC@) canonical Chinese translation (T936), “Amitābha’s Pure Land of the Blissful Field in the western direction” is designated as the place where whoever writes down the *dhāraṇī*, or has others write it down, will be reborn (ApS_c1, 84a1: 若有自書寫。教人書寫是無量壽宗要經。受持讀誦。當得往生西方極樂世界阿彌陀淨土). As Ueyama speculates, Fa-cheng may be the same person as ’Gos Chos-’grub (ca. 9c, BDRC#P8221), a translator who appears frequently in the Tibetan canon, but it is doubtful that he was involved in the Chinese translation. See UHEYAMA (上山) 2012: 92–93, 438. The date of composition is a mess, and, as is well known, the necessary clues are scattered in various far-flung locations. For Fatian’s (法天. fl. 973–981 see CBC@) Chinese translation (T937), in particular its presumed date of composition as 981 (太平興國 6 年), see SHINGA (信賀) 2020:96–98.

2.2. Other *gTer mas* Which Contain the *Dhāraṇī*

The *Rin chen gter mdzod chen mo* is a solid testimony to the *gter ma* corpus which conveys the *dhāraṇī*. We can see how each *gter ma* text adopted the *dhāraṇī* in stages, by viewing the composition of this major 19th-century compilation.³⁶ As far as I have studied it up to this point, as shown in Table 2 below, there are at least 16 *gter ma* texts which apparently took the pre-existing formula, and recast it within their own treasures.³⁷

Table 2: Correspondences between the *gTer-stons* and number of *oṃs* among their *gter mas* found in the *Rin chen gter mdzod chen mo* (RT)

No.	RT	<i>gTer-stons</i>	<i>gter mas</i> /Number of <i>oṃs</i>
0.	67, 511–551	Bram-ze sDom-pa-bzang-po (ca. 12c)	<i>mKha' 'gro rlung 'khor bcas chog ma</i>
			0 <i>oṃs</i> (528,3) ³⁸
1.	29, 249–268	Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can (1337–1408?)	<i>Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po</i>
			2 <i>oṃs</i> (256,3)

³⁶ For instance, the classification of the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* in the *Rin chen gter mdzod chen mo* is as a Mahāyoga (rNal-'byor-chen-po) sādhana. More precisely, Padma-gsung-gi-sgrub-skor in the sGrub-pa-sde/bka'-brgyad. For more detail, see Shinga (信賀) 2020:49.

³⁷ This scheme of counting rules out as No. 0 (Table 2). Although “*tshe gzungs*” in Bram-ze sDom-pa-bzang-po’s (ca. 12c. BDRC#P4CZ15360) revelation may have intended the *dhāraṇī* itself, I have not yet come across any definitive evidence to confirm this as an earlier proof of the *dhāraṇī*. Therefore, the present paper adopts the compromise of including the *gter ma* text in the list of *gter mas* referring to the *dhāraṇī*, but excluding it from the total number of 16 by assigning it the serial number “0”. The above figure of 16 may hence expect to rise as the work progresses.

Note that Paṅ-chen Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1570–1662. BDRC #P719) translated the *dhāraṇī* into Tibetan, see *Tshe chog 'chi med 'dod 'jo dbang gi rgyal po*, 552,4–6. The *'Jag 'dzugs ma*, a revelation of Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas (b. 14c, BDRC#P5246), appears to contain the same *dhāraṇī*, see HALKIAS 2013:161. I hope to be able to say more about these sources on a future occasion.

³⁸ Partial citation of the *dhāraṇī*. RT, vol. 67, p. 528, l. 3: *oṃ na mo bha ga zhes pa nas pa ri wā re sbā hā'i bar gyi tshe gzungs tshang ma bris pa'i mjug tu*.

2.	93, 161–173	Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can	<i>Byang gter tshe dpag med nang sgrub lcags sdong mar grags pa 'i sgrub thabs kyi le 'u tshan</i> 2 oṃs (162,6)
3.	29, 311–336	Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can	<i>bKa' brgyad rang byung rang shar las/ Tshe lha yongs rdzogs kyi phrin las smin byed dang bcas pa padma'i rgyan phreng</i> 1 oṃ (314,1) ³⁹
4.	29, 337–381	Sangs-rgyas-gling- pa (1340–1396)	<i>Tshe sgrub nyi zla kha sbyor las/ Tshe dbang don gyi pra khrid kyi zin bris</i> 3 oṃs (344,4)
5.	29, 431–493	Ratna-gling-pa (1403–1479)	<i>Tshe sgrub rdo rje phreng ba 'i lo rgyus nyi ma 'i snying po</i> 3 oṃs (458,6)
6.	70, 459–466	Ratna-gling-pa	<i>Yig sna thod pa rdzas ngan la sogs kun thub: rta mgrin nag po 'i las tshogs gnam skas ma</i> 0 oṃ (464,4) ⁴⁰
7.	77, 23–45	O-rgyan Padma-gling-pa (1450–1521)	<i>Pad gling tshe khrid rdo rje 'i phreng ba las spyi la nye bar mkho ba 'i rigs khol du phyung ba</i> 3 oṃs (38,3) ⁴¹
8.	6, 131–140	mNga'-ris-pan-chen Padma-dbang-rgyal (1487–1542)	<i>dKon mchog gsum gyi gsang sgrub: Rig 'dzin yongs 'dus kyi chos sde 'o</i> 3 oṃs (137,3)
9.	30, 61–151	mNga'-ris-pan-chen Padma-dbang-rgyal	<i>Rig 'dzin tshe yi sgrub pa yang gsang bla na med pa 'i snying tig ye shes 'od mchog</i> 3 oṃs (98,1)

³⁹ Partial citation of the *dhāraṇī*. RT, vol. 29, p. 314, l. 1: *oṃ bha ga wa te a pa ri mi ta ā yurdznyā na sa pa ri bā ra badzra sa mā dza: dza: hūm baṃ ho:*

⁴⁰ Only referring to the designation of the *dhāraṇī*. RT, vol. 70, p. 464, l. 4: *tshe dpag med kyi gzungs rnam bri 'o:*

⁴¹ Sequence changed. RT, vol. 77, p. 38, l. 3: *oṃ puṇye puṇye ma hā puṇye a pa ri mi ta ā yu: puṇye: dznyā na sarba ro pa tsi te oṃ sarba saṃ ska ra pa ri shuddhe dharmā te: ga ga na sa mud ga te swa bhā wa bi shuddhe: ma hā nā ya pa ri wā re swā hā: mu khyud de yi phyi rim la: na mo ratna tra yā ya: [38,4] oṃ na mo bha ga wa te: a pa ri mi ta ā yurdznyā na: su bi nishtsi ta te dzo rā dzā ya: ta thā ga tā ya: a ra ha te: saṃ myag: saṃ buddhā ya: tadya thā: de yi phyi rim mu khyud la:*

10.	30, 153–201	mNga'-ris-pan-chen Padma-dbang-rgyal	<i>Rig 'dzin yongs 'dus las/ Tshe sgrub ye shes 'od mchog gi gsang sgrub phrin las kyi byang bu ye shes 'od kyi thig le</i> 1 om (170,5) ⁴²
11.	47, 483–496	Rig-'dzin Legs-ldan-rdo-rje (1512–1625?)	<i>bDud rtsi 'khyil ba 'chi med tshe 'i rgyud don rnal 'byor rgyun gyi nar ma ye shes snying po</i> 3 oms (486,1)
12.	75, 223–267	Bang-ri Rig-'dzin 'Ja'-tshon-snying-po (1585–1656)	<i>'Ja' tshon ma ning zhi ba 'i las tshogs mkha' 'gro grib sel bklags chog tu bkod pa shel dkar bum pa 'i chu rgyun</i> 3 oms (233,2)
13.	79, 1–19	The 1st lHa-btsun Nam-mkha'-'jigs-med (1597–1650)	<i>Tshe g.yang 'gugs pa 'i phrin las khrigs su bsdebs pa tshe bsod 'dod rgu 'i dpal ster</i> 0 om (6,5) ⁴³
14.	31, 295–316	Rong-ston Padma-bde-chen- gling-pa (1663–1713)	<i>Klong gsal mkha' 'gro snying thig gi yan lag tshe sgrub rdo rje rgya mdud kyi yang gsang smin byed zab mo mdor dril bkod pa bdud rtsi 'i bum bzang</i> 0 om (316,1) ⁴⁴
15.	29, 269–294	The 31st Sa-skya- khri-'dzin Ngag-dbang-kun- dga'-blo-gros (1729–1783)	<i>lCags sdong ma sa bon</i> 2 oms (273,1 and 291,4)
16.	76, 145–170	Rig-'dzin Thugs-mchog-rdo- rje (ca. 18c)	<i>rTsa gsum thugs sgrub dbang chen 'dus pa las/ bKra shis gter sgrub kyi las byang bde legs kun 'byung</i> 3 oms (155,5) ⁴⁵

⁴² Partial citation of the *dhāraṇī*. RT, vol. 30, p. 170, l. 5: *om na mo bha ga wa te a pa ri mi ta sogs tshe gzungs mtshan brgya rtsa brgyad par grags pa ci nus bzlas te*.

⁴³ Only referring to the designation of the *dhāraṇī*. RT, vol. 79, p. 6, l. 5: *tshe dpag med kyi gzungs ring yang bzla*.

⁴⁴ Only referring to the designation of the *dhāraṇī*. RT, vol. 31, p. 316, l. 1: *tshe dpag med kyi gzungs sngags 'don*:

⁴⁵ RT, vol. 76, p. 155, l. 5: *s nang mtha' 'od dpag med pa 'i sngags: om na mo bha ga ba te a pa ri mi ta ā yurdznyā na su bi niṣhita ta te dzo rā dzā ya: ta thā ga tā ya: arha te samyaksam buddhā ya: tadya thā: om puṇye puṇye ma hā puṇye: a pa ri mi ta puṇye: a pa ri mi ta puṇye: dznyā na sam bhā ro pa tsi te: om sarba*

Table 2 above indicates that the chronology of these 16 *gter ma* texts is broadly centred on the 14–17th centuries, which overlaps with the chronology of the two scholar-monks of the 14–15th centuries: (1.) Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub (1290–1364) and (2.) mKhas-grub-rje dGe-legs-dpal-bzang (1385–1438). The earliest gTer-ston who refers to the *dhāraṇī* with two *ōms* is Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can.⁴⁶ For the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, the desirable route is through philological study tracing its historical ancestry, as far back as Amitāyus at the Mā-ra-ti-ka cave.⁴⁷ Along with such an emic/insider perspective, etic/outsider approaches of “the chronological table” could be brought in to further explicate the origin and development of the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*. Beyond the quasi-historical or legendary hindsight, what seems certain about its historical genesis is that Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can,⁴⁸ most probably the de facto author of the *Tshe sgrub lcags*

samskā ra pa ri shuddha dharmā te: ga ga na sa mungga te swa bhā ba bi shuddhe: ma hā na ya pa ri bā re swā hā:

⁴⁶ If we also take into account the *Rlung las byed 'khor lo'i rgyud* (Ng.803/Tb.530), as already discussed (see Section 2. above), Gu-ru Chos-dbang (1212–1270) is apparently earlier than Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can.

⁴⁷ This certain fixed genesis of the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* was later recounted in the *lCags sdong ma sa bon*, 278,3f. In this blow-by-blow account, the 31st Sa-skya-khri-'dzin Ngag-dbang-kun-dga'-blo-gros (1729–1783, BDRC# P805) described in detail that Padmasambhava attained the siddhi of immortal longevity (*'chi med tshe yi dngos grub*) in Mā-ra-ti-ka cave, in modern eastern Nepal. Such idealized and thus legendary accounts about the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, however, do not presuppose any historical attributions; there is, of course, no way to verify these anecdotes.

⁴⁸ Determining the actual authorship of *gter ma* texts remains a thorny issue. There have been numerous studies devoted to the origin of *gter ma* literature. For an argument presenting comprehensive bibliographical details, see *bDud 'joms chos 'byung*, 567,1–578,16. Given the wide variety of complex factors at work, the following statement of Kapstein's approach is suggestive: '[t]he question that we must ask, I think, is not so much whether the “treasures” were real or fake, but rather why it was that, in traditional Tibet, creativity so often masked itself as the retrieval of the past' (KAPSTEIN 2000:136). On the relevant discussion of the role of the rebirth of gTer-stons, see CANTWELL 2020, where she describes that not everyone but 'a rebirth of a Revealer, or a recognized lineage master of the

kyi sdong po, “discovered” it from La-stod-byang in 1366.⁴⁹ It is then followed by the *gTer*-stons, such as Sangs-rgyas-gling-pa (1340/41–1396, BDRC#P5340),⁵⁰ Ratna-gling-pa, and O-rgyan Padma-gling-pa (1450–1521, BDRC#P1693), who refer to the *dhāraṇī* with three *oms*.

Among these 16 *gter ma* texts, it is possible to find some that partially cite the *dhāraṇī* and others that refer only to the nominal designation of the *dhāraṇī*, namely (a.) *tshe gzungs*, (b.) *tshe dpag med kyi gzungs* (the *dhāraṇī* of Amitāyus), and (c.) *s nang mtha' 'od dpag med pa'i sngags* (the *dhāraṇī* of Amitābha). To fit quite well with the hitherto widely accepted assumption, these designations indeed seem to be mutually interchangeable in the context of explaining *dhāraṇī* in terms of the principal deity.

2.3. Internalising *Dhāraṇī* A Product of the Transition from *bKa' ma* to *gTer ma*

Despite the fact that these 16 *gter ma* sources encourage the practitioners to recite the *dhāraṇī* with some exactitude, as far as I can tell at this point, none

revelation’ (p. 355) is considered ‘qualified to create new compilations of a Treasure revelation’. For a brief discussion of the term “*gter byang*” (‘treasure/revelation colophon’) from a bibliographic point of view, see also WANGCHUK 2022:335. A further issue concerns confidentiality and the question of who guides to the treasure.

⁴⁹ For the revelation, see *gSal byed nyi ma'i 'od zer*, S_A 31,3, 38,2; S_B 84,3, 92,2. See also *Fifth gSan yig*, vol. 3, 264,6.

⁵⁰ I have not been able to find the exact year Sangs-rgyas-gling-pa discovered the *Tshe sgrub nyi zla kha sbyor*. According to the *gTer 'byung chen mo*, judging from the sequence of description, his revelation of the *Tshe sgrub nyi zla kha sbyor* (104,7) is thought to be in 1367 (88,1: *me mo lug gi lo*). This chronology matches with the date in the *bDud 'joms chos 'byung*. According to it, Sangs-rgyas-gling-pa found eighteen great treasure troves between the ages of 25 and 32 (457,13: *dgung lo nyer lnga nas sum cu rtsa gnyis kyi bar*) ≈ 1364–1371. This Tibetan age reckoning is characterized by counting inclusively from 1 at birth and increasing at each New Year instead of each birthday. If so, Sangs-rgyas-gling-pa’s revelation (1367?) seems to be one year later than in 1366, when Rig-'dzin rGod-I-dem-can revealed the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*. Regarding Sangs-rgyas-gling-pa’s date and his *tshe sgrub* teachings, i.a. the *Tshe sgrub nyi zla kha sbyor*, see MEI 2012.

of the sources allow us to determine the scripture from which the *dhāraṇī* was taken. Regarding the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, for instance, this *gter ma* text has been transmitted over a long line of luminaries from several different sects in Tibetan Buddhism. Nonetheless, there seem to be no definitive textual testimony to the *dhāraṇī* antecedent.⁵¹ In comparison with the works presented by the scholar-monks which accurately addressed the *dhāraṇī* formula in context with the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* (see Section 2.1. above), these two traditions on the *dhāraṇī* lore obviously differed from one another in manner and degree.

Now what must be recalled is the possibility that these *gTer*-stons perchance have incorporated their internalized *dhāraṇī* into their *gter ma* literature. They may potentially have an implicit identitical proof traceable back to the ancient golden age of Padmasambhava. For instance, as Cathy Cantwell and Robert Mayer have discussed on several occasions in the context of the *Zangs gling ma*,⁵² this early *gter ma* hagiography of Padmasambhava revealed by Nyang-ral Nyi-ma-'od-zer (1124–1192, BDRC#P364) ‘included a substantial section that is almost identical to a text found among the tantric manuscripts at Dunhuang’ (CANTWELL 2020:353), i.e. IOL Tib J 321 (**Upāyapāśapadmāvalivrṭti*).⁵³ I believe that their

⁵¹ The transmission of the *dhāraṇī* to Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can will certainly require further study. So far, at least the following textual evidences have come to light: (1.) the *gSal byed nyi ma'i 'od zer* (S_A 31,3; S_B 84,3) only touches upon the revelation of the gold treasury in the south, (2.) the *Fifth gSan yig* (vol. 3, 287,5f) refers to the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* in the *dbang brgyud*, (3.) the *mNga' dbang skor gyi mtha' dpyod* (643,5f) refers to the same in the *brgyud pa*, (4.) the *RT dkar chag dang brgyud yig* (202,1) refers to the same in the *dbang brgyud*, and (5.) for the *lCags sdong ma sa bon*, see fn. 47 above.

⁵² E.g. CANTWELL/MAYER 2008, MAYER 2011, MAYER 2020b, CANTWELL 2020.

⁵³ For a diagram analysis of the closely parallel verse, see CANTWELL/MAYER 2012:93. This hypothesis has been supported by HIRSHBERG 2016:135. For an investigation of the IOL Tib J 321 from the viewpoint of ‘Padmasambhava’s role’, see VAN SCHAIK 2007. Note that the provenance of the Dunhuang Cave here does

observations on this incorporation are by and large also applicable in the context of Rig-'dzin rGod-Idem-can.

Given the popularity of the *dhāraṇī* among the contemporaneous scholar-monks, one may be inclined to assume that Rig-'dzin rGod-Idem-can would have had the opportunity to be aware of the formula. Indeed, there are a good number of passages where it seems that Rig-'dzin rGod-Idem-can explicitly referred to more than one scheme from the Tibetan translation of Sanskrit literature (e.g. the **Guhyagarbhatattvanirṇaya*. D834/P457).⁵⁴ This, however, need not necessarily imply that he had kept abreast of the relevant knowledge of the canonical sources in the same way the learned scholar-monks and/or Lo-tṣā-bas had studied (*slob gnyer*).

As Cantwell has rightly argued 'when the Revealer does not appear to be involved in scholarly pursuits' (CANTWELL 2020:353), it seems generally reasonable that '[t]he recurring passages of text often come from traditions in which the Revealer has been trained, having become immersed in, and often having memorized, long liturgies from youth'. Also, given its luminous nature, even the theory that the sPrul-skus (*nirmāṇakāya*) have no need to learn anything further has been well-established in the history of Tibetan Buddhism.⁵⁵ We should perhaps not assume a simple reliance on the bookish one. Rather, it seems certain that an active line of oral lineage (*snyan brgyud*)

not necessarily date to the period of Tibetan domination (786–848). As shown by TAKEUCHI 2012, IOL Tib J 321 is one of the 'Buddhist texts that are considered to belong to the post-imperial period' (p. 208).

⁵⁴ For instance, the *rDo rje phur pa'i tshe bsgrub*, another revelation of Rig-'dzin rGod-Idem-can, contains verses which could be attested in the *gSang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa* (**Guhyagarbhatattvanirṇaya*. D834/P457). See *rDo rje phur pa'i tshe bsgrub*, §1.3 (Citation from the Buddhist Canon). For his verbatim citations from the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti* (D360/P2/NG196), see SHINGA Forthcoming.

⁵⁵ For instance, in the *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* (16c), Grub-thob-oryan-pa is mentioned as such a figure. See 914,2 (vol. 2, ch. 3.8. *Karma kam tshang gi chos byung*): *sprul pa'i sku la slob gnyer ma dgos par 'dug gsungs*.

from master to disciple going back to Padmasambhava played a significant role in the popularity of the *dhāraṇī* side by side with the visually literate tradition.⁵⁶

By not familiarizing themselves with passages from *bka' ma* sources, fledgling philologists like myself are cutting themselves off from the ample body of teachings translated chiefly during the period of Padmasambhava's stay in Tibet and transmitted across many generations from master to student, up to the present day. To address this issue, a simple BuddhaNexus search for gauging affinity between *bka' ma* corpus and the *dhāraṇī* turned up partial matches between the two (e.g. the '*Chi med mchog ster*. NK. T.240).⁵⁷

Whether from thier 'internalized text' (CANTWELL 2020:353) or from their substantial library collection,⁵⁸ it is natural that such an incorporated

⁵⁶ A few words about a transmission of the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* seem called for here. According to his hagiographies, Thang-stong-rgyal-po received the treasure teachings of Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can which most probably includes the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* through the complete *dbang lung man ngag* from Kun-spangs Don-yod-rgyal-mtshan. I think this transmission implies several subtle nuances, which are the key to any understanding of the lineage. For a relevant discussion, see SHINGA 2020:2-10-3. The secret yogin (*sbas pa'i rnal 'byor*), who was withdrawn from the secular society, left us few sources that describe his accomplishments. As for Kun-spangs Don-yod-rgyal-mtshan in the successive transmission of Byang-gter lineage, see *rDo rje brag gi chos 'byung*, pp. 127–128; within the context of the *dGongs pa zang thal*, see also *dGongs pa zang thal gyi lo rgyus*, 76,5.

⁵⁷ See '*Chi med mchog ster*, 25,3: *om punye punye ma hā punye a pa ri mi ta a yurdznyā na sarba ro pa tsitte swā hā*/. See also *Ye shes chu rgyun* (NK. T.349), 539,1: *om punye punye ma hā punye/ a pa ri mi ta/ a yurdznyā na/ sarba ro pa siddhi swā hā*/. See also *gNyas pa byin rlabs dbang gi skor la sngon 'gro'i chos spyod* (NK. T.345), 315,5: *om punye punye/ ma hā punye/ a pa ri mi ta/ a yurdznyā na/ sarba ro pa siddhi swā hā*/. Note that my knowledge on the Digital Humanities in the field of Buddhist studies is still rudimentary. It is always a good idea to verify the accuracy and reliability of any information, regardless of its source.

⁵⁸ I presume that many gTer-stons must have their own archives serving as the depositories of literary manuscripts as well as non-textual artefacts. For Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can's 'library and his sources of literary inspiration', see TURPEINEN 2015:218–219. Here Turpeinen mentions that 'Gödem's textual borrowing is a

text may spring up in the gTer-stons' visionary experience, with some changes. In other words, the incorporation of the *dhāraṇī* can be understood as a product of the transition from *bka' ma* to *gter ma*.⁵⁹ It was obviously a laudable contribution of the *gter ma* tradition to see value in incorporating pre-existing texts into the treasures.

To sum up, what is meant by this is that, including the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, the existence and employment of the *dhāraṇī* in *gter ma* corpus are fed by the various oral/aural transmissions (*bka' ma*) among gTer-stons. Especially in the case of *sādhana*, as WINTERNITZ 1972 has mentioned, using the magical spells is taught 'according to very detailed instructions' (vol. 2, p. 391). Like the flow of a great river with many currents, undertows, eddies, *dhāraṇīs* happen to be recorded individually, and these aspects form and develop the diverse sNga-'gyur-nying-ma tradition. A reflection on this suggests that the *dhāraṇī* in their tradition can be understood as a return to the ancient golden age of Uḍḍiyāna/Padmasambhava, the marginal authority

rather natural phenomenon' and that in the case of Tibetan customs, 'ultimately it was the ideas and doctrines that mattered, not the illusory self that wrote them down'. For a relevant discussion about 'an implicit theory of authorship in Tibet' (p. [233]), see CABEZÓN 2001. Cabezón here argues that the work of the great Tibetan scholars in the 13–16th centuries 'evinces a kind of "promiscuity" [...] Borrowing without attribution in these sources was of course the rule rather than the exception' (p. 251). The naive credulity which regards that every text is ascribed to an author thus meets at every step with scepticism, and at the same time there grows a curious sense of wonder towards gTer-stons.

⁵⁹ As for the scheme of the transition from *bka' ma* to *gter ma*, I gratefully acknowledge Prof. Dr. Jay Valentine (Personal communication, March 2020), who spared no effort in sharing his thoughtful comments with me. Regarding the textual continuity of Byang-gter tradition results from the shift from *bka' ma* to *gter ma*, see BOORD 1993 for ideas and methods in researching the cult of Vajrakīla. There Boord argues that '[i]n many respects, the eighth century texts of the *bka' ma* traditions appear better organized than the later *gter ma* discoveries of Rig-'dzin rgod-ldem. Since the overwhelming majority of documents in the Byang-gter school are said to have been delivered as oral instruction by the teacher Padmasambhava, it seems that we witness in these documents vital phases in the evolution of the cult of Vajrakīla' (p. 225).

against the over-all significance of central Tibet, and thus a countermeasure to the upstart tantrism being introduced from India from the late tenth century onwards.⁶⁰

3. Other Similarities

Besides the above-mentioned *dhāraṇī* formula, for further evidence of the influence of the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* on the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* we have at least two other possibilities, namely (1.) the merits (*yon tans*) and (2.) the object of refuge, which should be taken into account.

3.1. Two Merits (*yon tans*)

In the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*, the interlocutor, i.e. Mañjuśrī, is exhorted to cultivate two merits (*yon tan*; *guṇa*) by reciting the *dhāraṇī*, namely (1.) to attain one hundred years life-span, and (2.) to be reborn in the Buddha-field of the Tathāgata Aparimitāyus.

Aparimitāyuhṣūtra, ApS_t, §§14–15 (≈ApS_t, §§12–13)⁶¹

Mañjuśrī, whoever will [1.] write down the 108 names of Tathāgata; or [2.] have others write [it] down; or [3.] write [it] down in a book and keep [it] at home; or [4.] recite [it], [s/he] will have reached one hundred years when his/her life-span is exhausted.

Furthermore, upon passing away afterwards, [the person] will be reborn in the Buddha-field of the Tathāgata Aparimitāyus, [e.g.] in the world-realm of 'Immeasurable Good Qualities', and so on.

⁶⁰ In other sects too, or regardless of whether their heads are tonsured or not, a spectrum of various oral/aural transmissions are made. Among the transmission lineage, gSar-ma-ba and rNying-ma-pa sometimes shade into one another. In this respect, we need not necessarily imagine a clean break between the two traditions.

⁶¹ Cf. ApS_c1, 82a29: 世尊復告曼殊室利。如是如來一百八名號有自書。或使人書爲經卷受持讀誦。如壽命盡復滿百年壽。[82b2] 終此身後得往生無量福智世界無量壽淨土。

ApS_c2, 85b26: 妙吉祥菩薩。此無量壽決定光明王如來一百八名陀羅尼。若有人躬自書寫。或教他人書是陀羅尼。安置高樓之上。或殿堂內清淨之處。如法嚴飾種種供養。短命之人復得長壽滿足百歲。[85c1] 如是之人於後此處命終。便得往生於彼無量壽決定光明王如來佛刹無量功德藏世界之中。

First, the one hundred years life-span can be understood as longevity, which is quite common in Buddhist literature.⁶² The belief that the “natural” life-span of humans is one hundred years is a pan-Indian idea going back to the Vedas.⁶³ Obviously, longing for the longevity is not an attempt to attain deathlessness.⁶⁴ From the practical point of view, the idea of completing the 100-year life-span offers the practitioner a longer period to cultivate the path, and thus a better chance to attain the second and ultimate objective, i.e. to be reborn in the Buddha-field of the Tathāgata Aparimitāyus.⁶⁵

⁶² It seems evident in the numerous Buddhist texts. E.g. *Dhammapada*, vv. 110–115: *yo ca vassasataṃ jīve dussīlo asamāhito [...] ekāhaṃ jīvitaṃ seyyo passato dhammam uttamam; Sutta Nipāta*, no. 804 in Ch. IV. 6. *Jarāsutta*, 1: *appaṃ vata jīvitaṃ idaṃ, oraṃ vassasatā pi miyyati, yo ce pi aticca jīvati, atha kho so jarasā pi miyyati; Visuddhimagga*, Ch. VIII. 1. Maraṇasati (229,20): *yaṃ gatikālāhārādisampattiyā abhāvena ajjatanakālapurisānaṃ viya vassasatamattaparimāṇassa āyuno khayavasena maraṇaṃ hoti:—idaṃ āyukkhayena maraṇaṃ nāma*. See also the *Wu-gou jing guang da tuo luo ni jing* (無垢淨光大陀羅尼經. T1024.19.718c11), where both two merits are recounted as 誦念此呪滿足百年，是人命終生極樂界。

⁶³ Cf. *Atharvaveda(-Samhitā)*, 3.11.1–4 ≈ *Ṛgveda(-Samhitā)*, 10.161.1–4. Not a few scholars suggest that Buddhism includes or appended the need for protective power of a *dhāraṇī* supplied in the Vedic *mantras*, i.a. the *Atharvaveda*. For instance, WINTERNITZ 1972 has argued that the power ‘played far too great a part in the mind of the Indian people, for Buddhism to have been able to dispense with them’ (vol. 2, p. 380).

The methods for prolonging life become a major theme from the early Buddhist tradition onwards. For a recent discussion of this issue, see YAMANAKA/YAMASHITA (山中/山下) 2009.

⁶⁴ The perspective “impermanence” (*mi rtag pa*) and “precious human birth” (*dal ’byor*) are both indispensable for the *tshe sgrub* practice. In this context, I understand why Vāgīśvarakīrti (fl. ca. 11c) emphasises in his **Mṛtyuvañcanopadeśa* again and again that “one has to die”. The relevant discussion is found in SCHNEIDER 2010:69: ‘Dabei leitete ihn nicht so sehr ein akademisches Interesse an Todes-vorzeichen, als vielmehr eine bestimmte didaktische Absicht: In gut hundertfünfzig Strophen betont Vāgīśvarakīrti immer wieder, daß man sterben müsse – in welcher zeitlichen Ferne oder Nähe auch immer’.

⁶⁵ Even for transcendence of the world (*nirvāṇa*), terminating this life, i.e. death, is generally loathed. In this regard, we could even go so far as to quote here a well-

Interestingly, the same twofold scheme is found in the inner *sādhana* (§2. *nang sgrubs*) of the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*.

Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po, §2.8.1

In the early first morning period,
Recite [the *dhāraṇī* shown in the §2.4.2 of] the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*
Hundreds of times by [entering into] clear meditative concentration.
[Thus] even upon reaching the end of life,
[The *sādhaka*] who will have accomplished this [*Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*]
will certainly deserve one hundred years [of longevity].
[Furthermore, s/he will] definitely acquire the lineage of [all] the Buddhas in the
three divisions of time.
Beyond words are the merits [cultivated by reciting the *dhāraṇī*].
[S/he] will enter the ten perfections, the [ten] stages and the [five] paths.
[Thereupon s/he] will be born in the Blissful Field.

The two valuable merits——(1.) to deserve one hundred years of longevity,⁶⁶ and (2.) to be born in the Blissful Field——mentioned by the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* are almost in agreement with the two merits expounded in the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* (ApS_t, §§14–15). Compared to the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*, which lists four conditions for obtaining these two as (1.) writing down the *dhāraṇī*, (2.) having others write it down, (3.) writing it down in a book and keeping it at home, and (4.) reciting it, the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* only conditions (4.) the recitation of the *dhāraṇī* (*sngags*).

Also, regarding the place in which the *sādhaka* will be born, we find considerable differences between (1.) the Blissful Field (CD §2.8.1: *bde ba can gyi zhing*) and (2.) the Buddha-field of the Tathāgata Aparimitāyus, e.g. the world-realm of ‘Immeasurable Good Qualities’, and so on (ApS_t, §15: *de bzhin gshegs pa tshe dpag tu med pa’i sangs rgyas kyi zhing ’jig rten gyi khams yon tan dpag tu med pa la sogs pa*).

known speech of Steve Jobs: ‘no one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don’t want to die to get there’ (Stanford Commencement Address 2005).

⁶⁶ As will be discussed in detail below, the idea of 100 years of human life expectancy is later developed in the secret *sādhana* (§3. *gsang sgrubs*), see §3.7.2.

Despite these admitted differences, as discussed above, the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* and the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* share common features with the twofold scheme of the merits. The first merit, one hundred years life-span, should be recognized as a preparatory stage and/or skillful means for the second and ultimate aspect, i.e. to be reborn in the Blissful Field (CD §2.8.1). This paradigm is presupposed in the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*. For the sādha practitioner, the brilliant and steadfast body consisting of the five elements (§2.6.1: *'byung ba lnga 'dus*) is a necessary requirement for the immutable siddhi of longevity (*mi 'gyur tshe yi dngos grub*), without which the state of the great bliss with no death and hence no birth would become impossible. In the secret sādha (§3. *gsang sgrubs*), it is recounted that the sādha takes pills of the essence-extraction (*bcud len gyi ril bu*), so that their vital energy (*srog*) would be nurtured (*'tsho bar 'gyur ro*) up to 100 years of human life expectancy.

Even though the attainment is considered to be the non-duality of birth and death (§2.6.1: *skye shi gnyis med*), and to be changeless (*mi 'gyur*), this state is to be achieved by the practitioner within their own five psycho-physical aggregates (*phung po lnga*).

3.2. Aparimitāyurjñāna (Tshe-dang-ye-shes-dpag-tu-med-pa)

Another affinity between the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* and the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, though the readings are not quite identical, is found in the name of the holy being, the object of refuge. Aparimitāyurjñāna (Tib. Tshe-dang-ye-shes-dpag-tu-med-pa) literally “Unlimited Life and Wisdom” prominently featured in the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* (ApS_s, §§8...11≈ApS_t, §§10...13),⁶⁷ more or less corresponds to what is called Ye-shes-tshe-dpag-

⁶⁷ Cf. ApS_c1, 82a9: 號無量智決定王如來。阿耨多羅三藐三菩提現為衆生開示說法。[82a16] 若有衆生。得聞是無量壽智決定王如來一百八名號者。

ApS_c2, 85a24: 有佛名無量壽決定光明王如來無上正等菩提。[85b9] 若有衆生聞是無量壽決定光明王如來名號。若能志心稱念一百八遍。

med (§2.7.3. *Jñāna-amitāyus) or Tshe-dang-ye-shes (§3.4.2. [Aparimita]-āyurjñāna) in the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*.⁶⁸

Unsurprisingly perhaps, in the so-called '*Chi med dpal ster*', 'now the most widespread and influential longevity practice in Tibetan Buddhism' (STEARNS 2007:30), the deity to pay homage (*phyag 'tshal*) is addressed as Tshe-dang-ye-shes-dpag-tu-med-pa (*ā yurdznyiā na a pa ri mi ta* ~ *Āyurjñāna-aparimita).⁶⁹ As is well known, Grub-chen Thang-stong-rgyal-po (1361–1485? BDRC#P2778) retrieved the '*Chi med dpal ster*' as an admixture of *gter ma* and *dag snang* (pure visionary revelation) after he practiced the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* for many years.⁷⁰ Although the "'*Chi med dpal ster*'" persisted and was developed further in later centuries, the exact canonical sūtra/tantra upon which the '*Chi med dpal ster*' was affiliated is considered to be controversial.⁷¹ For instance, GYATSO 1981 has

⁶⁸ *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, see §2.7.3: *bcom ldan mgon po ye shes tshe dpag med*: Cf. *ibid.*, §3.4.2: *bcom ldan 'das de bzhin gshegs pa dgra bcom pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas tshe dang ye shes rnam par nges pa'i gzi brjid kyi rgyal po*. The latter "Tshe-dang-ye-shes", as stated above, can probably be understood by complementing it as "Tshe-dang-ye-shes[-dpag-tu-med-pa]" (*[Aparimita]-āyurjñāna).

⁶⁹ '*Chi med dpal ster*, 436,5: *rang tshe dpag tu med par gsal ba'i thugs ka'i hrīh yig las 'od 'phros/ bla ma dang gnyis su med pa'i bcom ldan 'das mgon po tshe dang ye shes dpag tu med pa la brgyud pa'i bla ma sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa'i tshogs kyis bskor ba om bdzra sa mā dzaḥ zhes pas mdun gyi nam mkhar byon pa la/ om gu ru ā yurdznyiā na a pa ri mi ta sa pa ri wā ra maṇḍa le bhyah zhes phyag 'tshal/ na mo gu ru ā yurdznyiā na a pa ri mi ta sa pa ri wā ra arghan sogs kyis mchod/ dkon mchog gsum la bdag skyabs mchi//*.

⁷⁰ See STEARNS 2007:28. 'Tangtong [sic] had practiced the Northern Treasure teachings of the *Iron Tree* for many years before receiving the teachings of the *Glorious Giver of Immortality* from Padmasambhava on Cāmara Island and then rediscovering the treasure texts at Chimpu. It would not be surprising to find some links between the Northern Treasure techniques and Tangtong's own, [...]'. See also *ibid.*:477n119: 'no similarity whatever is found in the actual techniques of the *Iron Tree* and the *Glorious Giver of Immortality*'.

⁷¹ As for disagreement between the 7th lCags-zam bsTan-'dzin-ye-shes-lhun-grub (1739–1795, BDRC#P2691) and the 29th Sa-skya-khri-chen Ngag-dbang-kun-dga'-bkra-shis (1656–1711, BDRC#P2540), see GYATSO 1981:154–155.

argued ‘Aparimiāyurjñāna’ in the ‘*Chi med dpal ster* that it ‘indicates the essentially Old Tantra affiliation’ (p. 155) with reference to ‘Ārya-*aparimitāyurjñāna-nāma-mahāyānasūtra*’ (p. 159, fn. 37).⁷²

My collations above, attempting to demonstrate the affinity between the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* and the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, would support Gyatso’s arguments. Inasmuch as it is reasonably possible that the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* exerted a clear influence on the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po* in ritualistic and doctrinal terms, it could be said that the ‘*Chi med dpal ster* has undergone a similar evolution. The key factor in a thorough study is the identification of the hitherto unknown translator/s of the three Tibetan canonical versions of the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*. This is, however, a topic which I intend to examine in the future.

4. Concluding Remarks

In his longevity practice titled *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, did Padmasambhava (ca. 8c) cite the *dhāraṇī* from the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* (無量壽宗要經)? In view of the fact that only a limited amount of primary sources is now at my disposal, it would be premature to put forth here elaborate hypotheses as to the relationship between the *dhāraṇī* and Padmasambhava. However, as pointed out in the present study, there are several possible links:

There she explicitly describes that bsTan-’dzin-ye-shes-lhun-grub ‘relates the CM to the New Tantra translations of Rong-zom Chos-kyi bZang-po and others’ (p. 154) and Ngag-dbang-kun-dga’-bkra-shis ‘states that the CM is affiliated to the Old Tantras’.

⁷² See GYATSO 1981:155 ‘The issue perhaps could be resolved after a comparative study of the characteristic features of the Discovered Treasure and the New Tantra Amitāyus systems. However, the fact that both the Pure Vision and Discovered Treasure theories of the CM’s origin involve Padmasambhava indicates the essentially Old Tantra affiliation of this system’. See also *ibid.*:159n37: ‘Aparimiāyurjñāna is red, but otherwise iconographically identical to the white Sambhogakāya Amitāyus. Cf. To. 65 [sic] (Ārya-*aparimitāyurjñāna-nāma-mahāyānasūtra*). The introduction of this figure into the CM system seems to be a later interpolation, as he is not mentioned in the ancient writing’.

(1.) As recorded in Xuan-zang's (玄奘. 602–664) *Da tang xi yu ji* (大唐西域記), Uḍḍiyāna (烏仗那) was known for its enthusiastic recitation of *dhāraṇīs/mantras* (禁呪). It thus does not seem far-fetched to assume that Padmasambhava's "hidden treasure" indicates a possible affinity with the *dhāraṇī* ascribed to Uḍḍiyāna, the land of the Magi.

(2.) The majority of the extant sources of the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* is known by a plethora of Tibetan and Chinese manuscripts from the Dunhuang caves. Besides this vast production of the Tibetan imperial manuscript project (786–848, i.a. 815–841), recent research has shown that a Sanskrit fragment found at Gilgit (GBM plate no. 3366, ca. 7–10c) can be identified as the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra*. Given the relatively close proximity of the chronological and geographical framework, at least when compared to the Nepalese manuscripts, a reflection on this Gilgit find suggests a hitherto unknown connection between the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* and Uḍḍiyāna, the latter known as Padmasambhava's birthplace. In the context of the longevity practice revealed by the Byang-gter master Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can (1337–1408?), most probably the de facto author of the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, this find represents a significant textual antecedent going back to Gilgit, together with the antiquity back to the Tibetan-ruled Dunhuang. Needless to say, the available evidence, that is, what we hold today is just a fraction left behind by chance. Therefore, there is a great potential for future finds linking the *dhāraṇī* and Uḍḍiyāna more potently than the Gilgit find.

(3.) The *rlung las byed 'khor lo'i rgyud* (Ng.803/Tb.530), which Padmasambhava is said to have translated, includes the *dhāraṇī* with the same three *oms* as the *Aparimitāyuhṣūtra* (D674/P361). Also, the affinity between *bka' ma* corpus and the *dhāraṇī* is evidenced by the '*Chi med mchog ster* (NK. T.240) and so forth.

Although the extant historical and philological sources do not offer conclusive exegesis, it is reasonable to expect that the citation of the *dhāraṇī* by Rig-'dzin rGod-ldem-can owes much to the oral/aural tradition that

ultimately reaches back to Uḍḍiyāna. Hence we may be inclined to assume that Uḍḍiyāna, one of the ancient epicentres of *bka' ma*, provided an adequate ideological basis for the Tibetan longevity practice. As for the *Tshe sgrub lcags kyi sdong po*, for instance, incorporation of the *dhāraṇī* can be understood as a product of the transition from *bka' ma* to *gter ma*. With historical hindsight, the *dhāraṇī* citation can be regarded as a devout embodiment of the laudable contribution of the sNga-'gyur-mying-ma tradition, which placed great value on the incorporation of pre-existing texts into their treasures.

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- BDRC Buddhist Digital Resource Center.
- Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*
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- BS *Bu ston rin chen grub dang sgra tshad pa rin chen rnam rgyal gyi gsung 'bum*. Śata-piṭaka Series, Indo Asian Literatures, vv. 41–68. 28 vols. New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1965–1971. [BDRC#W22106]
- BuddhaNexus <https://buddhanexus.net/>
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- D sDe-dge edition of bKa'-'gyur and bsTan-'gyur. Numbers according to the catalogues published in: UI 1934 and KANAKURA 1953.
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- GBM *Gilgit Buddhist Manuscripts*. Raghu Vira and Lokesh Chandra. 10 pts. New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1959–1974.
- GK *sGrub thabs kun btus*. 'Jam-dbyangs mKhyen-brtse'i-dbang-po & 'Jam-dbyangs-blo-gter-dbang-po. Kangara, H.P.: Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Literature Publisher, Dzongsar Inst. for Advanced Studies, [19--]. 14 vols. [BDRC#W23681]
- ICPBS International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies.
- IDP International Dunhuang Project.
- KD *dKar chag ldan dkar ma*. Numbers according to the catalogue published in: YOSHIMURA (芳村) 1974.
- KP *dKar chag 'phang thang ma*. Numbers according to the catalogue published in: KAWAGOE (川越) 2005.
- Mvy *Mahāvīyutpatti*. Numbers according to the edition published in: SAKAKI (榎) 1916–1925.
- N *Chos kyi 'byung gnas gsung rab rin po che'i mdzod*. In: BS, vol. 24, pp. 633–1055. Numbers according to the edition published in: NISHIOKA 1983.
- Ng. *rNyīng ma rgyud 'bum*. mTshams-brag ed. Thimphu: National Library of Bhutan, 1982. 46 vols. [BDRC#W21521]
Numbers according to THDL.
- NGMCP Nepalese-German Manuscript Cataloguing Project.
- NK *sNga 'gyur bka' ma shin tu rgyas pa*. Tshe-ring-rgya-mtsho. 133 vols. Chengdu: Si-khron-mi-rigs-dpe-skrun-khang, 2009. [BDRC#W1PD100944] Numbers according to THDL.
- P Peking edition of bKa'-'gyur. Numbers according to the catalogue published in: *A Comparative Analytical Catalogue of the Kanjur Division of the Tibetan Tripitaka, Edited in Peking During the*

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T Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō. Numbers according to the SAT Daizōkyō Text Database. <https://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/>

THDL Tibetan and Himalayan Digital Library. <https://www.thlib.org/>

UDDIYĀNA Uḍḍiyāna: Archaeological and Visual Primary Sources. <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/uddiyana/>

VÖAW Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

VOHD Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.

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(ApS_t) See DUAN 1992:[139]–149.

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*Librarian, Affiliate Research Fellow,
International College
for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies*