

The Tibetan Image of Confucius

By Shen-yu Lin

Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po is a visible figure which frequently appears in the Tibetan texts for the *gTo*-rituals. Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po, a name generally found both in the literature of the Bonpo and Buddhist traditions, is regarded as the innovator of the *gTo*-rituals, which are performed to solve various problems of daily life. This kind of ritual, though popular among the Tibetan common folk, is customarily not open to strangers. While its framework resembles the "Stage of Generation" (*bskyed rim*) of tantric practices, the core of the ritual is proven to be related to sorcery.¹ During recitation, the ritual master talks to the spirits or the negative forces which are considered to be the sources of misfortune and thus should be exorcised. Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po is often referred to as an authoritative personage in this ritual whom the evil beings should regard with reverence and awe.² Using threat or persuasion, the ritual master forces the spirit to leave so that the victim is freed from troubles. Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po is regarded as one who possesses magical power and his role in the *gTo*-rituals reinforces the magical effect of the ritual itself. The *gTo*-ritual is conducted by the skillful simultaneous implementation of several favorable conditions, creating an atmosphere which induces magical healing. The magical healing powers generated by invoking Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po is consistent with the meaning of this epithet *'phrul gyi rgyal po*, which is usually interpreted as "the king of magic".

According to the tradition of the *gTo*-rituals and Sino-Tibetan divination (*nag rtsis*), to which the *gTo*-rituals are considered to belong,³ Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po is the Tibetan equivalent of the Chinese philosopher Confucius (551-479 B.C.). It is nevertheless well known that Confucius was not fond of focusing excessively on the spiritual realm or unusual phenomena. One famous sentence in the *Analects* of Confucius (*Lunyu* 論語) is that "the topics the master did not speak of were prodigies, force, disorder, and gods".⁴ This inclination stands in complete contrast to the position of the Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po in Tibetan *gTo*-rituals as the "king of magic". The inconsistent dispositions of the famous Chinese philosopher and the Tibetan "king of magic" arouse curiosity and interest in the following questions: how is the Chinese sage Confucius transformed and adapted by Tibetans? How did

¹ Shen-yu Lin, *Mi pham's Systematisierung von gTo-Ritualen* (Halle, Saale: IITBS GmbH, International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, 2005), 70-71.

² Shen-yu Lin, "Tibetan Magic for Daily Life: Mi pham's Texts on *gTo*-rituals," *Cahiers d'Extrême Asie* 15 (2005): 116-117.

³ Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, *Baidūr dkar po las 'phros pa'i snyan sgron dang dri lan g.ya' sel* (The Vaidurya g.Ya' Sel of sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, reproduced from original texts from the collection of Tsepon W. D. Shakabpa by T. Tsepel Taikhang, 2 vols., New Delhi, 1971), 147r1. See the citation in n. 90 below.

⁴ D. C. Lau, trans., *Confucius, The Analects (Lun yü)* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1979), 61. For more explanation of this sentence in the Chinese scholastic tradition, cf. Zhang Dainian 張岱年, ed., *Kongzi Da Cidian* 孔子大辭典 (Shanghai: Shanghai Cishu Chubanshe, 1993), 183-184.

Tibetans shape this character in different periods of time throughout history? Are there differences in interpreting the characteristics of the personage in different disciplines of religion or sciences? Since little research has been conducted which focuses on these issues, it may be worth investigating the image of Confucius as reflected in Tibetan literature. The result of such studies will help answer the above mentioned questions. In this article, the depictions about Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po as well as other related epithets in the Tibetan literature are investigated. The discussions are divided into three sections according to textual traditions: literature from the earlier period, the Bonpo tradition, and the Buddhist tradition.

Early Tibetan literature on Kong tse

The application of the designation "Kong tse" in Tibetan literature can be traced back to the earliest collection of Tibetan literature currently available: the Tibetan manuscripts of the Tun-huang documents. Pelliot tibétain (P. tib.) 987 and 988, two manuscripts of the same work, are identified as a translation or a paraphrase of the Confucian maxims.⁵ The fundamental laws recorded in the documents were instituted by the "sages of ancient times" including Confucius, whose designation in Tibetan is Kong tse (P. tib. 988) or Kong tshe (P. tib. 987). Kong tse/tshe as the Tibetan name for Confucius was already in use at least by the first half of the eleventh century, when the Tun-huang cave was closed. In the nineteenth century, while introducing the founder of the Confucianism, the Tibetan scholar Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1737-1802) wrote in his famous work *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long* (*Tenets, the Mirror of Crystal*, 1801):

"At the beginning the teacher was known as Khung phu'u tsi or Khung tse. Since the Tibetans do not pronounce [this name] as the Chinese do, [the Tibetans] call him Kong tse."⁶

Obviously Khung phu'u tsi is a phonetic translation of Chinese Kongfuzi 孔夫子, and Khung tse of Kongzi 孔子. According to Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, the application of the appellation Kong tse in Tibet is a result of the understandable fact that the Tibetans were unable to pronounce the name of Confucius exactly like the Chinese did. This commentary shows that from ancient times to recent ages, the Tibetan "Kong tse" was generally regarded as corresponding the Chinese Confucius.

However, the designation Kong tse seldom appears independently in Tibetan literature. It is usually attached with an epithet, such as 'phrul gyi

⁵ R. A. Stein, "Tibetica Antiqua VI: Maximes confucianistes dans deux manuscrits de Touen-houang," *BEFEO* 79.1(1992): 9-17; the Chinese translation by Geng Sheng 耿昇, "Langjuan Dunhuang Zangwen Xieben Zhong de Rujiao Geyan 兩卷敦煌藏文寫本中的儒教格言," in Wang Yao 王堯 et al., ed., *Guowai Zangxue Yanjiu Yiwen Ji* 國外藏學研究譯文集 (Xizang: Xizang Renmin Chubanshe, 1994), 11: 268-283. See also Marcelle Lalou, *Inventaire des Manuscrits tibétains de Touen-houang conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale*, (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1950), II: 31.

⁶ Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long* (Lan kru'u: Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1984), 394: "thog mar ston pa bo ni khung phu'u tsi'am khung tse zhes grags pa ste/ bod rnam kyis rgya skad ji bzhin ma thon par kong tse zhes 'bod pa de'ol"

rgyal po or its abbreviation *'phrul rgyal*, like the Kong tse *'phrul gyi rgyal po* in *gTo*-rituals mentioned above. Occasionally "Kong tse" is combined with other appellations, e.g. Kong tse *'phrul gyi bu*, Kong tse *'phrul chung* or Kong tse *'phrul bu chung*. Regardless of whether or not they all refer to Confucius, it is interesting to note that most of these names contain the word *'phrul*. This seems to suggest that the Tibetan image of Kong tse is correlated with the idea of *'phrul*, the meaning of which will be discussed later. The following discussion focuses on clarifying to whom these appellations refer and how they were applied in Tibetan literature. The discussion then delves into the main topic of this article, "Kong tse *'phrul gyi rgyal po*".

Let us first discuss the name "Kong tse *'phrul gyi bu*". "Kong tse *'phrul gyi bu*" is used in P. tib. 988 parallel to "Kong tse", and both designations here refer to Confucius. "Kong tse *'phrul gyi bu*" also appears in a Tibetan manuscript preserved in the Indian Office (I. O. 742) on the subject of *mo*-divination. F. W. Thomas introduced the text by transcribing and translating some of its lines at the beginning as well as at the end:⁷

"This text (c) commences with an announcement as follows:

*gnam dang po kong tshe 'phrul kyi bu/ gcug lag mang po zhig mdor bsdus
te/ gtan la phab pa/*

[By?] supernatural (*'phrul*) son Kong tshe, originally (*dang po*) [of] heaven [*gnam*], much wisdom summarized, edited (*gtan la phab*)

and the conclusion is –

*... /dkong tse 'phrul gyis mdzad pa'i dong tse bcu gnyis kyi mo// brdzogs
so//*

... Composed by Dkong-tse, the supernatural, the 'Coins-twelve mo' is finished."

Ariane Macdonald provided a slightly different transcription for the announcement at the beginning of the text and supplemented one more sentence right after the one given by Thomas:

*gnam dang po kong che 'phrul kyi bu// gtsug lag dang gtsug lag mang po zhig
mdor bsdus ste/ gtan la phab pa/ 'phrul kyi rgyal po li bsam blang gis chib
gong nas thugs ring nas mo 'di gtan la phab pa lags so//*⁸

Two names in the transcription of Thomas, *kong tshe 'phrul kyi bu* and *dkong tse 'phrul*, as well as the designation *'phrul kyi rgyal po li bsam blang* in Macdonald's supplement has drawn the attention of scholars. Macdonald interpreted *kong tshe 'phrul kyi bu* as the "son of Kong tshe with magical power".⁹ This understanding is probably influenced by the name *dkong tse 'phrul* at the concluding part of the manuscript; when *dkong tse 'phrul* was regarded as a person and *dkong tse* an alternative way of writing for *kong tshe*, it is comprehensible that *kong tshe 'phrul kyi bu* is interpreted by Macdonald as the "son of *kong tshe*". Furthermore, Macdonald held that *kong*

⁷ Text Indian Office Library Manuscript, Stein (c): Fr. 55 (vol. 68, fol. 115-6). See F. W. Thomas, *Ancient Folk-Literature from North-Eastern Tibet* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1957), 151.

⁸ Ariane Macdonald, "Une lecture des P.T. 1286, 1287, 1038, 1047 et 1290. Essai sur la formation et l'emploi des mythes politiques dans la religion royale de Sroñ-bcan sgam-po," in Ariane Macdonald, ed., *Études tibétaines dédiées à la mémoire de Marcelle Lalou* (Paris: A. Maisonneuve, 1971), 283n354.

⁹ Macdonald, "Une lecture des P.T. 1286, 1287, 1038, 1047 et 1290," 282: "le fils aux facultés magiques de Kong tshe". Note that *kong che* in the transcription was equated with *kong tshe* in the translation.

tshe 'phrul kyi bu and the following *'phrul kyi rgyal po li bsam blang* ("le roi aux facultés magiques Li Bsam-blang") refer to the same person.¹⁰ R. A. Stein supported this point, but disagreed that *kong tshe 'phrul kyi bu* should be read as the "son of Kong tshe". We will come back to *'phrul kyi rgyal po li bsam blang* later. Here let us first focus on *kong tse 'phrul kyi bu*. According to the above mentioned P. tib. 988, in which the form "Kong tse 'phrul kyi bu" and "Kong tse" both refer to Confucius, there seems no doubt that in this context *'phrul gyi bu* is used to portray Confucius. However, an interesting question is why *'phrul kyi bu* was used as an epithet of Confucius. Having cited his earlier interpretation of *'phrul kyi bu* as "enfant sage" (wise child), Stein mentioned the story about a conversation between Confucius and Xiang Tuo 項託.¹¹ Xiang Tuo, though merely a small child, replied to the questions of Confucius with unexpected wisdom.¹² By pointing out that Confucius humbly raised questions to the wise child Xiang Tuo and was identified as a "garçon lettré" (*rutong* 儒童), Stein tried to establish a connection between the epithet of Kong tse "*'phrul kyi bu*" and the child Xiang Tuo in order to explain why *'phrul kyi bu* was associated with Confucius. This correlation seems to be based on a role-confusion between Confucius and Xiang Tuo. No evidence can be found that *'phrul kyi bu* is applied to Xiang Tuo. Instead, it was consistently used to refer to "Kong tse". Moreover, the way Confucius questioned Xiang Tuo could hardly be described as "humbly". Rather, one senses a certain tension in the dialogue. Thus, it is unconvincing to identify Confucius with *rutong* on account of his attitude toward Xiang Tuo during the conversation. Generally speaking, the term *rutong* signifies a learned youth.¹³ *Rutong* was also used by non-Confucians, e.g. Chinese Buddhists and followers of some mystic religions, to address Confucius in the sense of a transformed religious figure.¹⁴ *Phrul*

¹⁰ Macdonald "Une lecture des P.T. 1286, 1287, 1038, 1047 et 1290," 283. I will give more detail about this opinion later.

¹¹ Stein, "Tibetica Antiqua VI," 11; Chin. trans. 271-272. I am indebted to Dr. Fabienne Jagou of the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, who helped me to interpret the French terms in Stein's articles.

¹² The story is depicted in the Tun-huang manuscripts in both Chinese and Tibetan. A French translation of the Chinese version P. 3883: *Kongzi Xiangtuo xiangwen shu* 孔子項託相問書 and the transcription as well as translations of two Tibetan version (P. tib. 992 and 1284) are found in Michel Soymié, "L'entrevue de Confucius et de Hiang T'o," *Journal Asiatique* CCXLII.3-4 (1954): 311-392. The Tibetan version was translated into Chinese by Fong Zheng 馮蒸 in 1981. For this translation, see Wang Yao 王堯, "Tufan Shiqi Zangyi Hanji Mingzhu ji Gushi 吐蕃時期藏譯漢籍名著及故事," *Zhongguo Guji Yanjiu* 中國古籍研究1(1996): 561-563. I am indebted to Dr. Hoong Teik Toh in Academia Sinica, Taiwan for pointing out this translation in Wang Yao's article. The Tibetan name for Confucius in both Tibetan manuscripts (P. tib. 992 and 1284) is "Kong tse".

¹³ Shanghai Cishu Chubanshe 上海辭書出版社, *Hanyu Da Cidian* 漢語大詞典 (Shanghai: Shanghai Cishu Chubanshe, 1986), 1: 1715.

¹⁴ In this case *rutong* is an abbreviation of *rutong pusa* 儒童菩薩, see The Institute for Advanced Chinese Studies 中國文化研究所, *The Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Chinese Language* 中文大辭典 (Taipei: The Institute for Advanced Chinese Studies, 1963), 3: 1241. *Rutong pusa* as a designation of Confucius by the non-Confucians, see Zhang, *Kongzi Da Cidian*, 19. In the eyes of Buddhists *rutong pusa*, i.e. Confucius, was sent by Buddha to instruct China, cf. William Edward Soothill

gyi bu may relate to *rutong*, since the Chinese word *tong* 童 can have the same meaning as the Tibetan word *bu*. On the other hand, the last character of the Chinese designation for Confucius “Kongfuzi”, *zi* 子, when interpreted with the meaning “son”, might also correspond to the Tibetan *bu*.

It would probably be valuable to read other scholars’ elucidations on the meaning of *’phrul* before attempts are made to interpret any one of Kong tse’s epithets, since most of these epithets contain the word *’phrul*. Macdonald’s study traces the transition of its connotation from divinity to spirituality, secularity and physicalness. *’Phrul* initially denotes the power of magic, especially the ability to move between heaven and earth. This applied to the ancient Tibetan kings, who are said to originate from the gods’ family in heaven. The expression *’phrul gyi lha btsan po*, an epithet used for Tibetan kings, points to this close relationship between the heaven and the kings. Later on, in a document pertaining to Khri gtsug lde btsan (806-841), *’phrul* is associated with the esprit of the king, and even more, with the idea of royal power. With the help of the magical (*’phrul*) ability of the kings and the ministers, the Tibetans subjugated their neighboring countries. The connection of *’phrul* with physical strength is seen in the case of Khri ’Dus Srong (676-704), who was designated as *bla dags ’phrul gyi rgyal po* due to his profound esprit and great physical strength.¹⁵ Macdonald’s interpretations, which tend to comprehend *’phrul* as “magic” in the sense of possessing a supernatural ability, are rather unique. Most scholars however, tend to relate *’phrul* to “incarnation”. Fang-Kuei Li translated *’phrul gyi lha* as “God Incarnate”, while indicating that the epithet is translated by the Chinese words *sheng* 聖 for *’phrul* and *shen* 神 for *lha*.¹⁶ Hugh Richardson identified *’phrul* to be “specifically Tibetan and to foreshadow the practice of reincarnating Lamas — *sprul pa’i sku* — so popular in Tibetan Buddhism from the twelfth century onwards”, although he accepted that the word usually means “magic” or “illusion” in a Buddhist context in early Tibetan documents.¹⁷ G. Uray translated *’phrul gyi lha* as “the incarnate gods”, which Macdonald disapproved of, with the argument that the idea of *’phrul* as “incarnation” did not occur before the eleventh century.¹⁸ R. A. Stein, on the other hand, explained the meaning of *’phrul* as its Chinese equivalent *sheng* by means of citing phrases from different texts. Although he provided three possible interpretations of *’phrul* as meaning: “supernatural power”,

and Lewis Hodous, ed., *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms: with Sanskrit and English Equivalents and a Sanskrit-Pali Index* (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 446. Followers of Bailian Jiao 白蓮教 and Changsheng Jiao 長生教 designated Confucius as *rutong fuo* 儒童佛, see Pu Wenqi 濮文起, ed., *Zhongguo Minjian Mimi Zongjiao Cidian* 中國民間秘密宗教辭典 (Chengdu: Sichuan Cishu Chubanshe, 1996), 239-240.

¹⁵ Macdonald, “Une lecture des P.T. 1286, 1287, 1038, 1047 et 1290,” 337-339; the Chinese translation by Geng Sheng 耿昇, *Dunhuang Tufan Lishi Wenshu Kaushi* 敦煌吐蕃歷史文書考釋 (Qinhai: Qinhai Renmin Chubanshe, 1991), 194-196.

¹⁶ Li Fang-Kuei, “The Inscription of the Sino-Tibetan Treaty of 821-822,” *T’oung Pao* 44 (1956): 57n2.

¹⁷ Hugh E Richardson, “A New Inscription of Khri Srong Lde Brtsan,” *JRAS* 1964: 12.

¹⁸ Macdonald, “Une lecture des P.T. 1286, 1287, 1038, 1047 et 1290,” 336n492; Chin. trans., 317.

"magic", or "wisdom", Stein believed that 'phrul actually referred to wisdom. He translated 'phrul gyi rgyal po as "wise king" (roi sage) and 'phrul gyi bu as "wise child" (l'enfant sage)¹⁹. This interpretation was employed by scholars in later research. For example, Samten G. Karmay interpreted 'phrul gyi rgyal po as "wise king" or "king of sagacity".²⁰ Moreover, while reading Richardson's translation of the title 'phrul gyi lha byang chub chen po as "Great enlightened supernaturally wise divinity",²¹ one perceives the alteration of the translator's interpretation of the meaning of 'phrul, when compared with his earlier publication.²² In a later publication, Stein surveyed the vocabularies in the Tun-huang manuscripts and pointed out that the Chinese sheng is translated to Tibetan 'phrul, while according to the "new vocabularies" in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* conforming to the edict proclaimed in 814, 'phrul was translated as 'phags pa.²³ His translation of 'phrul gyi rgyal po deviated somewhat from his previous proposition and became "le Saint roi" or "roi sage ou saint".²⁴ However, Stein's method of seeking the Tibetan equivalent of this Chinese title was rejected by David L. Snellgrove, who claimed that the application of a Tibetan title as an equivalent of Chinese "does not mean that it carried the same meaning and the same implication for Tibetans as the corresponding Chinese title carried in Chinese understanding".²⁵ This assertion predisposed him to side with the majority of scholars and assume

¹⁹ R. A. Stein, "Un ensemble sémantique tibétain: créer et procréer, être et devenir, vivre, nourrir et guérir," *BSOAS*, 36.2 (1973): 418n21; the Chinese translation by Chu Junjie 褚俊杰, "Gu Zangyu zhong de Yige Yuyiqun: Chuangzao he Shengzhi, Cunzai he Biancheng, Huozhe, Yanghuo he Jiuhuo 古藏語中的一個語義群：創造和生殖，存在和變成，活著、養活和救活," in Wang Yao 王堯 et al., ed., *Guowai Zangxue Yanjiu Yiwen Ji* 國外藏學研究譯文集 (Xizang: Xizang Renmin Chubanshe, 1990), 7:16-18.

²⁰ Samten G. Karmay (1975), "The Interview between Phyva Keng-tse lan-med and Confucius," in Samten G. Karmay, *The Arrow and the Spindle, Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet* (Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 1998), 171; Samten G. Karmay (1987), "The Soul and the Turquoise: a Ritual for Recalling the bla," in Karmay, *The Arrow and the Spindle, Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet*, 324.

²¹ Hugh Richardson (1987), "Early Tibetan Inscriptions, Some Recent Discoveries," in Hugh Richardson, *High Peaks, Pure Earth, Collected Writings on Tibetan History and Culture* (London: Serindia Publications, 1998), 262.

²² Richardson, "A New Inscription of Khri Srong Lde Brtsan," 12.

²³ R. A. Stein, "Tibetica Antiqua I: Les deux vocabulaires des traductions Indo-Tibétaine et Sino-Tibétaine dans les manuscrits de Touen-Houang," *BEFEO* LXXII (1983): 163, 186-187; the Chinese translation by Geng Sheng 耿昇, "Dunhuang Xieben zhong de Inzang he Hanzang liang zhong Cihue 敦煌寫本中的印藏和漢藏兩種辭匯," in Wang Yao 王堯 et al., ed., *Guowai Zangxue Yanjiu Yiwen Ji* 國外藏學研究譯文集 (Xizang: Xizang Renmin Chubanshe, 1992), 8: 112, 148-149. See also R. A. Stein, "《Saint et divin》, un titre tibétain et chinois des rois tibétains," *Journal Asiatique*, CCLXIX (1981): 256; R. A. Stein, Geng Sheng 耿昇, trans., "Dunhuang Zangwen Xieben Zongshu 敦煌藏文寫本綜述," in Wang Yao 王堯 et al., ed., *Guowai Zangxue Yanjiu Yiwen Ji* 國外藏學研究譯文集 (Xizang: Xizang Renmin Chubanshe, 1984), 3: 11.

²⁴ Stein, "《Saint et divin》, un titre tibétain et chinois des rois tibétains," 256, 257.

²⁵ David L. Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism, Indian Buddhists and their Tibetan Successors* (London: Serindia Publications, 1987), 381n2.

that the “Tibetans would surely understand *’phrul* in its more usual meaning, and so associate it with the well-established myth of their supreme ruler as a divine manifestation of miraculous power.”

The epithet *’phrul gyi rgyal po* probably developed from *’phrul gyi lha btsan po* and was originally used to refer to the Tibetan kings, specifically Khri ’Dus srong (676-704) and Khri Srong lde btsan (742-797).²⁶ The translator Blo ldan shes rab (1059-1109) also used this term to designate lha bla ma Zhi ba ’od (b. eleventh cent.).²⁷ Besides referring to Tibetan kings, *’phrul gyi rgyal po* applies to special figures as well. For example, in the above mentioned manuscript preserved in the Indian Office, *’phrul kyi rgyal po li bsam blang* is cited as the one who “determined” (*gtan la phab pa*) the *mo*-divination described in the manuscript. While interpreting this annotation, Macdonald pointed out that this manuscript was probably written by a Chinese emperor, because according to the 26th line on the eastern side of the inscription in Lhasa dating 822, *li bsam blang* referred to the Chinese emperor Tang Xuanzong 唐玄宗 (reign 713-756).²⁸ Stein seemed to agree with Macdonald by indicating that Confucius shares the same epithet with the emperor.²⁹ On the 26th line of the inscription there is a long title which reads “*rgya rje sam lang kha’e ’gwan sheng b’un shin b’u hwang te*”.³⁰ This corresponds to the Chinese *sanlang kaiyuan shengwen shenwu huangdi* 三郎開元聖文神武皇帝,³¹ which indeed refers to Tang Xuanzong.³² Due to the fact that the emperor was the third son of his father, he was called *sanlang*.³³

²⁶ Samten G. Karmay (1980), “An Open Letter by Pho-brang Zhi-ba-’od,” in Karmay, *The Arrow and the Spindle, Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet*, 23n38; Hugh Richardson (1963), “Early Burial Grounds in Tibet and Tibetan Decorative Art of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries,” in Richardson, *High Peaks, Pure Earth, Collected Writings on Tibetan History and Culture*, 224, 227; Helga Uebach, *Nel-pa Paṇḍitas Chronik Me-Tog Phren-ba* (München: Kommission für Zentralasiatischen Studien, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1987), 59. See also Erik Haarh, *The Yar-Luñ Dynasty* (København: G.E.C. Gad’s Forlag, 1969), 54.

²⁷ Karmay, “An Open Letter by Pho-brang Zhi-ba-’od,” 23.

²⁸ Macdonald, “Une lecture des P.T. 1286, 1287, 1038, 1047 et 1290,” 283, 344n529; Chin. trans., 121, 321n529.

²⁹ Stein, “Tibetica Antiqua VI,” 11; Chin. trans., 272.

³⁰ Hugh Richardson, *Ancient Historical Edicts at Lhasa and the Mu Tsung/ Khri gtsug lde brtsan Treaty of A.D. 821-822 from the Inscription at Lhasa* (London: The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1952), 56; Li Fang-Kuei and W. South Coblin, *A Study of the Old Tibetan Inscriptions* (Nankang: Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, 1987), 48.

³¹ Li Fang-Kuei and W. South Coblin, *A Study of the Old Tibetan Inscriptions*, 108.

³² Richardson (*Ancient Historical Edicts at Lhasa and the Mu Tsung/ Khri gtsug lde brtsan Treaty of A.D. 821-822 from the Inscription at Lhasa*, 64n27) identified him nevertheless as the emperor Chung Tsung (中宗, reign 683-710).

³³ Two parts at the end of the Tun-huang Chronicle read “*rgya rje ni bsam lang zhiḡ...rgya rje ni bsam lang ...*”, see J. Bacot, F. W. Thomas, and Ch. Toussaint, *Documents de Touen-Houang, Relatifs a l’Histoire du Tibet* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1940), 122. The related paragraph is translated and discussed by Hugh Richardson (1969). See “Further Fragments from Tun-huang,” in Richardson, *High Peaks, Pure Earth, Collected Writings on Tibetan History and Culture*, 31-32. Richardson indicated that *bsam lang* refers to the Emperor Xuanzong, however it is unclear how the name came to be applied to

However, this does not necessarily mean that every *sanglang* (the third son) refers to Tang Xuanzong. In fact, in the Tibetan literature where Tang Xuanzong is mentioned, *rgya rje* (the Chinese emperor) rather than *'phrul gyi rgyal po* is applied, which suggests that *'phrul gyi rgyal po li bsam lang* is not necessarily an emperor, but in all likelihood an unknown person.

While there is no strong evidence to support that *'phrul gyi rgyal po li bsam lang* refers to Tang Xuanzong or to a Chinese emperor, the Chinese emperor in Tibetan literature is sometimes associated with Kong tse. In the work *sBa bzhed* (*The Testimony of the sBa Clan*), which is attributed to the fourteenth century,³⁴ a passage regarding the marriage of the Tibetan kings with Chinese princesses refers to the Chinese emperor Tang Taizong 唐太宗 (reign 626-649) as "Kong rtse 'phrul chung":³⁵

"Since all Tibetans are the offspring of monkey, none of them is suitable to serve as their queen. A daughter of the Chinese [emperor] should be accepted as a queen.' Regarding the Tibetan king who said [the above words], he is the noble grandfather Srong btsan [sgam po], who is known as an emanation of the Superior Palo.³⁶ His relative by marriage is the Chinese emperor Kong rtse 'phrul chung. He is also known as an emanation of the Superior Palo. His daughter is [Wencheng] Kong co. He possessed the 360 *gab rtse* of the science of divination (*gtsug lag*). The son of the one who is known as the supreme emperor of China is the Chinese emperor 'Brom shing. The son of ['Brom shing] is the Chinese emperor The ba. The son of [The ba] is called the Chinese [emperor] Hān phan. The son of [Hān phan] is the Chinese emperor Cang bzang. The son of [Cang bzang] is called the Chinese emperor Li khri bzher lang mig ser. The daughter of the present [Chinese emperor] is called Gyim shang ong jo. It is appropriate to accept her [as a queen]."³⁷

him. The application of this nickname to Tang Xuanzong is recorded in the Chinese history book *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑, see Wang Yao, *Tufan Jinshi Lu* 吐蕃金石錄 (Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe, 1982), 58-59.

³⁴ Pasang Wangdu and Hildegard Diemberger, *dBa' bzhed, The Royal Narrative Concerning the Bringing of the Buddha's Doctrine to Tibet* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000), 1.

³⁵ R. A. Stein, *Une chronique ancienne de bSam-ayas: sBa-bžed* (Paris: Publications de l'Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1961), 2: "bod thams cad spre'u bu yin pas 'di'i jo mor mi 'os/ 'di la rgya'i bu mo zhig blang bar chad bod kyi rgyal po la bzang ba mes srong btsan yin tel/ ārya pa lo'i sprul par grags/ de'i gnyen zla rgya rje kong rtse 'phrul chung yin/ de yang ārya pa lo'i sprul par grags/ sras me [read "mo"] kong co yin/ de la gtsug lag gi gab rtse sum brgya drug cu yod de/ rgya nag gtsug gi rgyal por grags pa de'i sras rgya rje 'brom shing/ de'i sras rgya rje the ba/ de'i sras rgya hān phan zer/ de'i sras rgya rje cang bzang/ de'i sras rgya rje li khri bzher lang mig ser bya ba/ da lta bzhugs pa de'i sras mo gyim shang ong jo bya ba de blang bar rigs so..."

³⁶ Macdonald ("Une lecture des P.T. 1286, 1287, 1038, 1047 et 1290," 283) interpreted *ārya pa lo* as Avalokiteśvara.

³⁷ Princess Wencheng 文成 was named as bride for Srong btsan sgam po (?-650) in 641. She spent the rest of her life in Tibet until 680. Princess Jincheng 金城 was officially designated as bride for Khri lde gtsug brtsan (ca. 705-755) in 707. She died in 739. See Hugh Richardson (1997), "Two Chinese Princesses in Tibet, Mun-sheng Kong-co and Kim-sheng Kong-co," in Richardson, *High Peaks, Pure Earth, Collected Writings on Tibetan History and Culture*, 208, 210-211, 213. The year

According to this citation the relative by marriage of Srong btsan sgam po was Tang Taizong 唐太宗, who is called “Kong rtse ‘phrul chung”. Moreover, he is associated with the 360 *gab rtse*³⁸ of the science of divination (*gtsug lag*)³⁹. Macdonald interprets this sentence as meaning that, “As he possessed 360 astrological tables of divination, he is called the king of divination of China.”⁴⁰ In my understanding, the attribution of the title “the king of divination of China” to Tang Taizong is a misinterpretation. The corresponding Tibetan *rgya nag gtsug gi rgyal po* is probably read by Macdonald as *rgya nag gtsug lag gi rgyal po*. Moreover, if this *rgya nag gtsug gi rgyal po* is to be interpreted as Tang Taizong, as Macdonald has done, it would be troublesome to follow the royal lineage of the Tang Dynasty. From Tang Taizong to the father of Princess Jincheng 金城 Tang Zhongzong 唐中宗 (reign 683-710), only Tang Gaozong 唐高宗 (reign 649-683) ruled officially between the two. However, altogether seven emperors are listed in the passage above. Although it is difficult to identify their names, they are

of Srong brtsan sgam po’s birth is not conclusive. According to Richardson, Srong btsan sgam po could have been born between the years 609 and 613, see “How Old was Srong-brtsan Sgam-po?” in Richardson, *High Peaks, Pure Earth, Collected Writings on Tibetan History and Culture*, 6.

³⁸ While David L. Snellgrove (*The Nine Ways of Bon, Excerpts from gZi-brjid*, London: Oxford University Press, 1967, 293) interpreted *gab rtse* as “horoscope”, Samten G. Karmay (*The Treasury of Good Sayings, A Tibetan History of Bon*, London: Oxford University Press, 1972; repr., Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2001, 24, 146) translated it to “astrology” and “horoscope chart”. From the description in *gZi brjid* about the undertaking of the calculation of *gab rtse* (see Snellgrove, *The Nine Ways of Bon, Excerpts from gZi-brjid*, 33) and the diagram *gab rtse ‘phrul gyi me long* in Fig. XIX (287), a chart with the sixty-year cycle, the twelve year-cycles, the eight *spar kha* and the nine *sme ba* on a tortoise (256n3), “*gab rtse*” seems to resemble the Sino-Tibetan divination (*nag rtsis*); at least the basic principles of both systems are the same. Cf. Abb. 2 in Philippe Cornu, *Handbuch der tibetischen Astrologie*, übersetzt von Rolf Remers (Berlin: Theseus Verlag, 1999), 69. As to why it is called “*gab rtse*”, Nam mkha’i nor bu said: “Regarding [why the term] *gab rtse* [is called], because the *lha*, *gnyan*, or *sa bdag* and *klu* etc. that master the element, *sme ba*, *spar kha* of the dominating year, month, day and time for a [certain] year cannot be actualized in the experience of the five ordinary sense faculties, they are concealed (*gab pa*). These [above mentioned] crucial times are, like the apex of a weapon, very ‘sharp’ and they are the utmost pinnacle of essence which can produce immediately good or bad results. Hence they are called the apex (*rtse*). Because the special wisdom that elucidates the essential point of such *gab rtse* is like a miraculous mirror, its name is also renowned in these words.” See Nam mkha’i nor bu, *Zhang bod lo rgyus Ti se’i ‘od* (Bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1996), 146: “‘*gab rtse*’ *zhes pa ni lo gcig la dbang ba’i lo zla zhag dus kyi ‘byung khams dang/ sme ba/ spar kha de dag la dbang byed pa’i lha dang/ gnyan nam sa bdag dang klu sogs thun mong gi dbang po rnam lnga’i snang ngor mngon sum du ma grub pas gab pa dang/ dus gnad ‘di dag ni mtshon cha’i rtse ltar shin tu rno zhing/ bzang ngan gyi ‘bras bu ‘phral du ‘byin thub pa’i gnad kyi yang rtse yin pas rtse zhes bya zhing/ de ‘dra’i gab rtse’i gnad gsang gsal rgyas su bstan pa’i shes rig khyad par du gyur pa de ni ‘phrul gyi me long dang ‘dra bas na mtshan yang de skad du grags pa yin!”*

³⁹ For *gtsug lag*, see Lin, *Mi pham’s Systematisierung von gTo-Ritualen*, 86n289.

⁴⁰ Macdonald, “Une lecture des P.T. 1286, 1287, 1038, 1047 et 1290,” 283: “Comme il possédait trois-cent soixante tables astrologiques de divination, on l’appelait le roi de la divination de Chine.”

probably not limited to the emperors of the Tang Dynasty. Some of them possibly refer to emperors preceding the Tang Dynasty in Chinese history.

There is not enough information to clarify why Tang Taizong is called in *sBa bzhed Kong tse 'phrul chung*. The 5th Dalai Lama Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617-1682) followed this tradition by using Kong rtse 'phrul chung to designate Tang Taizong in his *Annals of Tibet* (1643).⁴¹ The Tibetan scholar dPa' bo gtsug lag 'phreng ba (1504-1564/1566) on the other hand used "Kong tse 'phrul rgyal" to refer to the Chinese emperor while introducing Tang Taizong (*thang tha'i dzung*) in his important historical work *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (*The Festival of Scholars*).⁴² To Tibetan scholars, the Chinese emperor is somehow correlated with Confucius. One can assume that this correlation is somehow related with the development of a kingly Kong tse in Tibetan Bonpo tradition, which will be discussed later. Names like "rKong rtse'i rgyal po" or "rKong rtse lha yi rgyal po", by whom it is said that the treasury text (*gter ma*) *Dag pa gser gyi mdo thig* (*The Pure, Golden Drop of Discourse*) was once read,⁴³ convey similar ideas, a relationship of Confucius with kingship. The examples of "Kong tse 'phrul chung" and "Kong tse 'phrul rgyal" suggest that an epithet containing the name "Kong tse" does not necessarily refer to Confucius. The majority of cases testify to the fact that "Kong tse" is not exclusively used to refer to Confucius. At the end of two chapters in P. tib. 1429, the name "Kong tse" and "de'u Kong tshe" are cited as referring to the one who wrote (*bris*) the manuscript.⁴⁴ One of the four Tun-huang manuscripts preserved in the Central Library of Taipei (No. 7521) is also cited as having been written by "Kong tshe".⁴⁵ These examples indicate that even when "Kong tshe" appears alone, this name does not necessarily correspond to Confucius. One can thus conclude that when Confucius is mentioned in Tibetan literature from the earlier period, "Kong tse/ tshe" is applied. However, when dealing with a name containing "Kong tse", one ought to be cautious; "Kong tse" does not always refer to the Chinese sage Confucius.

⁴¹ Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1643), *rGyal rabs dPyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs* (http://www.thdl.org/xml/show.php?xml=/collections/history/texts/5th_dl_history_text.xml&m=hide), 3.2.5.3 rgya bza' dang bas bza' gdan drangs pa'i skor.

⁴² dPa' bo gtsug lag 'phreng ba, *Chos 'byun mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, microfiches, (New York: Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, 19--?), Ja: 27v1-2.

⁴³ Ariane Macdonald, "Préambule à la lecture d'un rGya-bod yig-chañ," *Journal Asiatique* 251.1 (1963): 123-124, n76; the Chinese translation by Geng Sheng 耿昇, "Hanzang Shiji Chushi 《漢藏史集》初釋," in Wang Yao 王堯 et al., ed., *Guowai Zangxue Yanjiu Yiwu Ji* 國外藏學研究譯文集 (Xizang: Xizang Renmin Chubanshe, 1988), 4: 86n76. Macdonald indicated that rKong rtse'i rgyal po or rKong rtse lha yi rgyal po refers possibly to Confucius.

⁴⁴ Lalou, *Inventaire des Manuscrits tibétains de Touen-houang conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale*, 2: 54.

⁴⁵ Wu Chi-yu, "Quatre manuscrits bouddhiques tibétains de Touen-houang conservés à la Bibliothèque Centrale de T'ai-pei", in Macdonald, *Études tibétaines dédiées à la mémoire de Marcelle Lalou*, 568; the Chinese translation "Taipei Zhongyang Tushuguan Cang Dunhuang Zangwen Xiejuan Kaucha 台北中央圖書館藏敦煌藏文寫卷考察," in Wang Yao 王堯, comp., *Guowai Zangxue Yanjiu Xuanyi* 國外藏學研究選譯 (Lanzhou: Gansu Minzu Chubanshe, 1983), 51.

Bonpo tradition

Probably contemporary to or somewhat earlier than the date of the Tibetan Tun-huang manuscripts, Tibetan Bonpos developed their own tradition of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po. Already in the shortest version of the mystic founder sTon pa gShen rab mi bo's biography *mDo 'dus*, a treasure text (*gter ma*) which is said to have been excavated in the late-tenth or eleventh century, there are narrations about Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po.⁴⁶ Detailed descriptions are found in another treasure text (*gter ma*) *gZer mig*, a medium-length version of gShen rab's biography which is said to have been rediscovered in bSam yas khri thang dur khrod in the eleventh century.⁴⁷ *gZer mig* contains the following passage regarding the homeland and family of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po.

"In the region of rGya lag 'od ma'i gling, a continent with 10,000 castles [each with] 100 house roofs, in a city which is best arranged by magical transformation, there was [his] father, the king Ka mda' la gser gyi mdog can. [His] mother was the queen Mu tri la gsal 'od ma. As to their wealth, there are the seven precious possessions of sovereignty etc., which is more than the amount of human beings of the world."⁴⁸

The depiction of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po's origin reveals his mystic nature: he is from a "city which is best arranged by magical transformation (*'phrul sgyur*)". The term *'phrul sgyur* implies the meaning of *'phrul* in his designation on one hand and accentuates his epithet of *'phrul gyi rgyal po* on the other. *gZer mig* continues by noting that Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po had been a king named gSal mchog dam pa in his previous life. Due to the strength of merit, he was born as the son of the king Ka mda' la gser gyi mdog can. When he was born, there were 30 magic kong rtse letters (*kong rtse 'phrul gyi yi ge*) imprinted in a circle on the palms of his both hands, which pleased his father immensely.⁴⁹ The mystic character is again demonstrated by the unusual existence of 30 "magic" letters on his palms from birth. Note that the magic letters were named *kong rtse 'phrul gi yi ge*, with kong rtse written in a slightly different manner from his name Kong tse. He was thus named "Kong tse, the Chinese king of magic" (*rgya kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po*), because he originated from the Chinese royal clan and

⁴⁶ The date of *mDo 'dus* is the earliest among the three versions of the Bonpo founder's life story. See Dan Martin, "'Ol-mo-lung-ring, the Original Holy Place," *The Tibet Journal*, 20.1(1995): 52.

⁴⁷ Karmay, *The Treasury of Good Sayings, A Tibetan History of Bon*, 4n1; Per Kvaerne, "The Canon of the Tibetan Bonpos," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 16.1 (1974): 38.

⁴⁸ Nam mkha'i nor bu, *Zhang bod lo rgyus Ti se'i 'od*, 75: "yul rgya lag 'od ma'i gling/ mkhar khri sgo rtse brgya'i gling/ grong khyer 'phrul sgyur bkod pa'i mchog de na pha ni rgyal po ka mda' la gser gyi mdog can zhes bya'ol /ma ni btsun mo mu tri la gsal 'od ma zhes bya'ol/ dkor ni rgyal srid rin po che la sogs tel 'jig rten gyi mir gyur pa las che'ol" The names of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po's parents are given with slight differences in *mDo 'dus*. The father was Ka 'da ma gser 'od, the mother was Mu tri gsal 'od ma. See Martin, "'Ol-mo-lung-ring, the Original Holy Place," 77n76.

⁴⁹ For the Tibetan text, see Nam mkha'i nor bu, *Zhang bod lo rgyus Ti se'i 'od*, 75. This paragraph is translated into English in Namkhai Norbu, *Drung, Deu and Bön* (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives 1995), 151.

was born with 30 *kong rtse* magic letters imprinted in a circle on both of his hands.⁵⁰

By consulting the magic letters on his hands, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po could foresee the development of events. Moreover, he frequently invoked magic formulas. However, both abilities were not enough to enable him to prevent demons from destroying the magnificent Bon-temple built by him for the sake of propagating the Bon-religion and suppressing all evil spirits.⁵¹ In the end, with the help of gShen rab, the temple was saved from destruction. Later, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po became a disciple of gShen rab.⁵² According to *Legs bshad rin po che'i mdzod* (*The Treasury of Good Sayings*), gShen rab took Kong tse's daughter 'Phrul sgyur as wife, who bore him a son named 'Phrul bu chung.⁵³ To 'Phrul bu chung, the grandson of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po, gShen rab taught the science of the three hundred and sixty kinds of astrology (*gab tse*).⁵⁴ It is interesting to note that the names of the daughter and the grandson of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po both contain the word 'phrul, exactly the same word used to denote Kong tse's city of birth as well as the magical letters imprinted on his palms upon birth. The figure Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po was thus created and enshrouded with an image of mystery.

Samten Karmay commented that Confucius is the prototype of Kong tse

⁵⁰ Besides Nam mkha'i nor bu (*Zhang bod lo rgyus Ti se'i 'od*, 76), who insisted that the word *rgyal* does not denote "China" and related it with a region called *rgod rje rgya'i yul* described in *gZi brjid*, the longest version of sTon pa gShen rab's biography written in the fourteenth century, other scholars, e.g. Helmut Hoffmann (*The Religions of Tibet*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961, 92) and Samten G. Karmay (1975: "A General introduction to the History and Doctrines of Bon," in Karmay, *The Arrow and the Spindle, Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet*, 106; "The Interview between Phyva Keng-tse lan-med and Confucius," 178), associated the word *rgyal* with China.

⁵¹ According to *mDo 'dus*, the temple is called dKar nag bkra gsal and its consecration was performed by gShen rab. See Martin, "Ol-mo-lung-ring, the Original Holy Place," 77n76.

⁵² Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet*, 91-92; Karmay, "The Interview between Phyva Keng-tse lan-med and Confucius," 181.

⁵³ Nam mkha'i nor bu, *Zhang bod lo rgyus Ti se'i 'od*, 65.

⁵⁴ Karmay, *The Treasury of Good Sayings, A Tibetan History of Bon*, 213, line 24: "*ston pa sangs rgyas gshen rab rab mi bos kong tse 'phrul rgyal gyi tsha bo 'phrul bu chung la gab tse sum brgya drug cu bstan pa ...*". Karmay (23) translated this line to: "The Enlightened One, sTon pa gShen rab Mi bo, taught the science of the hundred and sixty kinds of astrology to 'Phrul-bu-chung, the nephew of Kong-tse 'Phrul-rgyal." Karmay interpreted *tsha bo* as "nephew". However, according to the information in *gZi brjid* (see Nam mkha'i nor bu, *Zhang bod lo rgyus Ti se'i 'od*, 75-76: "*phyi ma ni rgya kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po'i sras mo 'phrul bsgyur la 'khrungs pa'i ston pa nyid kyi sku'i [p.76] sras kong tse 'phrul bu chung la ston pas gab tse sum brgya drug cur bstan pa ...*"), *tsha bo* should be understood with its other meaning of "grandson". See also a table (*Zhang bod lo rgyus Ti se'i 'od*, 65) summarized by Nam mkha'i nor bu according to *Legs bshad rin po che'i mdzod* regarding the wives and children of gShen rab. The son of gShen rab and rGya bza' 'Phrul sgyur was 'Phrul bu chung. In addition, *gab tse sum brgya drug cu* in the above citation was translated by Karmay improperly into "the science of the hundred and sixty kinds of astrology".

'phrul gyi rgyal po.⁵⁵ Some parts of the story about Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po in *gZer mig* resemble the life of the Chinese philosopher. For example his roaming throughout the country far away from home⁵⁶ reminds us of the travels of Confucius, which extended over several years. Moreover, his conversation with the child Phyva Keng tse lan med on his journey was, according to Karmay, an adaptation from the story about Confucius and Xiang Tuo,⁵⁷ which was actually a creation of Chinese folklore.

While evaluating the relationship between Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po and Confucius, questions arose among some scholars concerning the homeland of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po, a region called rGya lag 'od ma'i gling. According to the longest version of sTon pa gShen rab's biography *gZi brjid* written in the fourteenth century,⁵⁸ the homeland of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po is located

"in the western direction of the holy place 'Ol mo lung ring, at the shore of the river Gyim shang nag po, at the base of the great mountain Ta la po shan, at the shore of the ocean Dang ra 'khyil chen, there is [a region] called rGod rje rgya'i yul."⁵⁹

This rGod rje rgya'i yul is the kingdom of the king Ka mda' la gser gyi mdog can, the father of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po. It is situated in the western direction of 'Ol mo lung ring, which is the sacred place of the Bon-religion and was the birthplace of its mystic founder gShen rab mi bo.⁶⁰ The origin of Confucius, China, is located according to the Bonpo text *Nyi zer sgron ma* (*The Lamp of Sunlight*) in the eastern direction of 'Ol mo lung ring, just in the opposite direction of the native country of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po.⁶¹ Nam mkha'i nor bu thus argued that Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po is not a Chinese king.⁶² Karmay, on the other hand, translated a phrase used to address Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po "*rgyal po rgya yi rigs rgya kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po*" into "A king, Chinese by birth; Kong tse, the wise king!"⁶³ Nevertheless, Karmay also noticed the contradiction that rGya lag 'od ma gling and China are located in the opposite direction of 'Ol mo lung ring.⁶⁴ R. A. Stein viewed this contradiction as a confusion of the geographic conception in the Tibetan literature, since many geographical names in the

⁵⁵ Karmay, "The Interview between Phyva Keng-tse lan-med and Confucius," 171n6; "A General introduction to the History and Doctrines of Bon," 107.

⁵⁶ Karmay, "The Interview between Phyva Keng-tse lan-med and Confucius," 172.

⁵⁷ Karmay, "The Interview between Phyva Keng-tse lan-med and Confucius," 171.

⁵⁸ It is also called *mDo dri med* or *Dri med* in abbreviated form. For more on this topic, see Snellgrove, *The Nine Ways of Bon, Excerpts from gZi-brjid*, 3; Karmay, *The Treasury of Good Sayings, A Tibetan History of Bon*, 4n1.

⁵⁹ Nam mkha'i nor bu, *Zhang bod lo rgyus Ti se'i 'od*, 76: "gnas mchog dam pa 'ol mo lung ring gi nub phyogs/ chu gyim shang nag po'i 'gram/ ri bo chen po ta la po shan gyi rtsa bal rgya mtsho dang ra 'khyil chen gyi 'gram na/ rgod rje rgya'i yul zhes bya ba yod do/".

⁶⁰ Regarding 'Ol mo lung ring, see Karmay, *The Treasury of Good Sayings, A Tibetan History of Bon*, xxviii-xxxi.

⁶¹ Karmay, "The Interview between Phyva Keng-tse lan-med and Confucius," 107.

⁶² Nam mkha'i nor bu, *Zhang bod lo rgyus Ti se'i 'od*, 76.

⁶³ Karmay, "The Interview between Phyva Keng-tse lan-med and Confucius," 189, 178.

⁶⁴ Karmay, "A General introduction to the History and Doctrines of Bon," 107.

eastern side of Tibet were moved to the western side.⁶⁵ If one carefully examines the names of the river Gyim shang and the mountain Ta la po shan in the above citation from *gZi brjid*, one may note that they sound like phonetic transliterations of Chinese.⁶⁶ These are signs of an attempt to correlate Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po with China. In fact, not every event depicted for a created figure must be in agreement with that of its original model.⁶⁷ The depictions in the Bonpo tradition about Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po demonstrated the talent of Tibetans in shaping a new figure of their own tradition by adapting a famous personage from a neighboring country.

Regardless of the disagreement among scholars' interpretations about his origin and the inconsistency in the Bonpo literature concerning the direction of his birthplace,⁶⁸ Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po definitely plays a significant role in the Bonpo tradition. It is generally believed that Kong tse who taught astrology was one of the four distinct masters, and that Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po was a manifestation of the mystic founder of the Bon-religion sTon pa gShen rab.⁶⁹ As recounted in *gZer mig*, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po was capable of predicting future events with the help of the magic letters on his palms. This capability could relate him with astrology. That the Bonpos relate Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po or Kong tse 'phrul bu chung with astrology seems to echo the descriptions in Tun-huang documents (I. O. 742) about Kong tse 'phrul gyi bu, who summarized many science of divination (*gtsug lag*) and determined how they really are. In *Legs bshad rin po che'i mdzod* on the other hand, it is stated that gShen rab mi bo taught his own son Kong tse 'phrul bu chung, the grandson of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po, 360 kinds of astrology (*gab tse*). However, the special role of Kong tse as a master of astrology was ignored. If these two statements correlate with each other, the inconsistency is probably due to a confusion between Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po and Kong tse 'phrul bu chung. Otherwise, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po and Kong tse 'phrul bu chung are both recognized in the Bon-tradition as masters of astrology.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ R. A. Stein, *Les tribus anciennes des marches Sino-Tibétaines, légendes, classifications et histoire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1961), 29-30; the Chinese translation by Geng Sheng 耿昇, *Chuan Gan Ching Zang Zoulang Gu Buluo* 川甘青藏走廊古部落 (Chengdu: Sichuan Minzu Chubanshi, 1992), 49-50.

⁶⁶ About the river Gyim shang, see Stein, *Les tribus anciennes des marches Sino-Tibétaines, légendes, classifications et histoire* 30n72; Chin. trans., 50n1.

⁶⁷ Instead of being regarded as a historical personage, Kong tse 'phrul rgyal was classified as one of the "supernatural beings" by Per Kvaerne ("The Canon of the Tibetan Bonpos," 53).

⁶⁸ Martin, "'Ol-mo-lung-ring, the Original Holy Place," 67, 77n76.

⁶⁹ Karmay, *The Treasury of Good Sayings, A Tibetan History of Bon*, xxxiv. The other three masters were sPyad bu Khri shes who teaches medicine, gTo bu 'Bum sangs who teaches ritual, and Shākya Muni who teaches Dharma. According to *Legs bshad rin po che'i mdzod* (1922) written by Grub dbang bKra shis rgyal mtshan dri med snying po (1859-1934), gTo bu 'Bum sangs and sPyad bu Khri shes were both the sons of gShen rab mi bo. See Norbu, *Drung, Deu and Bön*, 65. As indicated above, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po was the father-in-law of gShen rab mi bo.

⁷⁰ Similar to the diverse statements about the idea of 'Ol mo lung ring within Bon-traditions throughout the history (see Martin, "'Ol-mo-lung-ring, the Original Holy Place," 49), a similar situation could have occurred concerning the master of astrology.

In addition to his role as a distinct master of astrology, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po was also associated with ritual practices. Several writings collected in the Bonpo *brTen 'gyur* are attributed to the name Kong tse, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po, or Kong tse 'phrul rgyal as shown in the *Catalogue of the New Collection of Bonpo Katen Texts* published by National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka in 2001.⁷¹ The related texts are sorted out and summarized below. The original numeration and pagination are listed along with the title of the texts. The margin titles, when they exist, are included in square brackets. Corrections or supplements of the editors of the catalogue are in the round brackets.

The texts ascribed to “Kong tse” are as follows:

- 084-5 Kang (Kong) tse'i bsang khros [khros] pp. 31-34
- 157-9 gTo bsgyur mi kha dgra bzlog (zlog) bsgyur [gto bsgyur] pp. 62-91
- 157-45 Kong tse gsang ba [gsang ba] pp. 453-461
- 253-19 Shin ris nad sel bzhugs pa'i dbu yi khang pa bde zhing yangs pa pp.447-455 (gter ma)

The texts ascribed to “Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po” are:

- 157-37 Bon lug mgo gsum (gsum) gyi bskyed chog gsal ba'i me long [bskyed chog] pp. 331-341

The texts ascribed to “Kong tse 'phrul rgyal” are:

- 088-32 gShen rab rnam par rgyal ba'i mchod skong chen mo [rnam rgyal] pp. 719-745 (gter ma)
- 104-10 gShen rab rnam par rgyal ba'i mchod bskangs (skong) [bskang (skong) ba] pp. 427-447 (gter ma)
- 157-8 dGra bzlog (zlog) khyi nag lcags mgo'i mdos gtor cho ga pp. 51-61
- 230-49 Man ngag gto sgro dkar nag khra gsum rin chen kun 'dus [gto sgro] pp. 967-1011
- 253-35 (sBal pa'i nad sel) [rus sbal] pp. 923-934 (gter ma)

The texts containing “Kong tse” in the title are:

- 157-12 Kong tse pas (pa'i) keg bsgyur [keg bsgyur] pp. 117-135
author: gTo bu 'bum sangs
- 157-45 Kong tse gsang ba [gsang ba] pp. 453-461 author: Kong tse

All of these texts are associated with ritual practices. In addition, two texts in *gTo phran*,⁷² a collection of 24 manuscripts on Bonpo rituals, were also attributed to Kong tse 'phrul rgyal. They are listed below. The original text numbers are preserved.

⁷¹ See Samten G. Karmay and Yasuhiko Nagano, ed., *A Catalogue of the New Collection of Bonpo Katen Texts* (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2001).

⁷² *gTo phran/ sNang srid gdug pa zhi ba'i 'phrin las dang gto mdos sna tshogs kyi gsung pod* (New Tobgyal: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre), 1973.

21. Srid pa'i gto nag mgo gsum Bl. 513-562
22. Man ngag gto gro chen po gto dkar nag khra gsum gyi don rin chen kun 'dus rgya mtsho Bl. 563-597

How Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po became associated with ritual practices is an intriguing question. The narration in *gZer mig* about Kong tse's proficiency in mantra recitation provides clues about the reason for this development. On the other hand, the merit which many have attributed to Confucius — considered by Samten Karmay as “the prototype of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po” — in revising the *Five Classics* (*Wujing* 五經), which includes the *Book of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記), possibly contributes to this connection. The *Book of Rites*, which records social etiquette and ceremonies, together with the *Book of Poetry* (*Shijing* 詩經), the *Book of History* (*Shujing* 書經), the *Book of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經) and the *Annals* (*Chunqiu* 春秋) later became main subjects of learning for the Chinese intelligentsia. Due to their popularity as Confucian textbooks, some people even attribute the Five Classics to Confucius.⁷³ Possibly as a result of such attribution and the specific characteristics of the *Book of Rites* in recording rites, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po is correlated with ritual practices. The association of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po with divination/ astrology could also have developed under similar conditions. Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po was probably correlated with divination and Chinese culture due to two reasons. First, according to legend, Confucius revised the *Book of Changes*. Secondly, the *Book of Changes* was the most important work used for Chinese divination. This connection was adapted by Tibetan Buddhists and a system of Sino-Tibetan divination, in which Kong tse became an important figure, was created.

Buddhist tradition

The depictions of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po in the Tibetan literature of the Buddhist tradition are found mainly in the context of Sino-Tibetan divination (*nag rtsis*). The Sino-Tibetan divination is said to have originated in China. Fascinating passages in Tibetan literature show how Tibetans relate China with divination and Buddhism. According to *bShad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu* (*The Treasury of Sayings, the Wish-Fulfilling Gem*), which was probably written in the sixteenth century,⁷⁴ the element-divination (*'byung rtsis*) appears in China in the following circumstances:

⁷³ This attribution even influenced the views of some western scholars, for example Ariane Macdonald, who stated that Confucius was the author of the *Book of Changes*. See “Une lecture des P.T. 1286, 1287, 1038, 1047 et 1290,” 283n359; Chin. trans., 304n359.

⁷⁴ E. Gene Smith (*Among Tibetan Texts, History and Literature of the Himalayan Plateau*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2001, 213) dates the writing of this work to the last half of the fifteenth century or the early years of the sixteenth. According to a paragraph in *bShad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu*, the exact date and time of writing was recorded in the Tibetan way of dating: at the iron-dog time on the iron-dragon day of the earth-rabbit month in the fire-tiger year, when the author was 50 years old. See the Tibetan text in *Among Tibetan Texts, History and Literature of the Himalayan Plateau*, 212. Believing they all refer to years, Smith failed to

“Since the [people living on the] land of the Chinese king cling overtly to the heretic knowledge, they do not involve in the Dharma of the Bhagavan. To this [observable fact], [the Buddha] prophesied to Mañjuśrī by saying that ‘Since the [people living on the] land of China will not believe in my Dharma of the ultimate reality and the elements of the conventional reality are included in the science of calculation, Mañjuśrī! Subdue them with your [knowledge of the science of] calculation!’”⁷⁵

Mañjuśrī, the Bodhisattva symbolizing wisdom, was assigned by Buddha to subdue the Chinese by means of the science of calculation (*rtsis*), because the Chinese are fond of heretic knowledge rather than Buddhist teachings. Therefore, the narration which follows the above citation portrayed how Mañjuśrī emerged from a gold-colored lotus in a lake situated on the eastern side of the Chinese sacred mountain Wutai shan 五台山 (*ri bo rtse lnga*) and the appearance of a divinational turtle.⁷⁶ These all aimed at subduing the Chinese people. At the same time, the science of divination was adopted into the scope of Buddhism. This was undertaken by way of corresponding the terms of element-divination with the Buddhist concepts, e.g. the five elements (*byung ba lnga*) to the five wisdoms (*ye shes lnga*); the eight *spar kha* to the “Eight-fold Noble Path” (*phags pa’i lam brgyad*); the nine *sme ba* to the “Nine stages of vehicles” (*theg pa rim dgu*); the twelve year-cycles (*lo skor bcu gnyis*) to the twelve deeds of Buddha (*mdzad pa bcu gnyis*); the twelve months (*zla ba bcu gnyis*) to the twelve links of interdependent arising (*rten ’brel bcu gnyis*); the eight planets (*gza’ chen brgyad*) to the eight collections of consciousnesses (*rnam par shes pa tshogs brgyad*); the 28 constellations (*rgyu skar nyi shu rtsa brgyad*) to the 28 Ishvaris (*dbang phyug ma nyi shu rtsa brgyad*) etc.⁷⁷ Mañjuśrī’s instruction in the element-divination (*byung rtsis*) was given upon the request of several groups of supernatural beings. After the requests of such groups led respectively by the goddess *lHa mo rnam rgyal ma*, the king of Nāgas *Klu rgyal ’jog po sbrul mgo bdun pa* and the Brahman *Bram ze gser kya*, Kong tse⁷⁸ ’phrul gyi rgyal po together with three other

identify the date of writing in four compartments of year, month, day and time. Instead, he provided four sets of four years in western calender with which he himself was not satisfied (213). According to Table 8 in Te-ming Tseng, *Sino-tibetische Divinationskalkulation (Nag-rtsis) dargestellt anhand des Werkes dPag-bsam ljon-šin von bLo-bzan tshul-khrims rgya-mtsho* (Halle, Saale: IITBS GmbH, International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, 2005, 78-79), the fire-tiger year with *sme ba* two-black are the years of 1026, 1206, 1386, 1566, instead of 1086, 1266, 1446, 1626 as suggested by Smith. Combining these dates with the other information provided (212), one could conclude that *bShad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu* was finished in 1566 and that Don dam smra ba’i seng ge was born in 1516.

⁷⁵ Don dam smra ba’i seng ge, Lokesh Chandra, ed., *A 15th Century Tibetan Compendium of Knowledge, The bShad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu* by Don dam smra ba’i seng ge. Sata-pitaka Series, vol. 78. (New Delhi: Jayyed Press, 1969), 418.2: “/rgya nag rgyal po’i rgyal khams de mu teg [read “stegs”] gi rig byed la mngon par zhen pas/ bcom ldan ’das kyi chos la ma tshud par/ ’jam dpal la lung bstan pa/ rgya nag po’i rgyal khams ’di/ nga’i don dam chos la mi mos shing/ kun rdzob ’byung bas rtsis la ’dus pas/ ’jam dpal khyod kyi rtsis kyis thul cig gsungs nas lung bstan te/”.

⁷⁶ Don dam smra ba’i seng ge, *bShad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu*, 209v6-210v1.

⁷⁷ Don dam smra ba’i seng ge, *bShad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu*, 210v1-210v4.

⁷⁸ In *bShad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu* “Kong tse” was written as “Gong rtse”.

kings of magic (*'phrul gyi rgyal po*) also asked for instruction in element-divination from Mañjuśrī.⁷⁹ In a reply, Mañjuśrī expounded 31 tantra sections of element-divination as well as 360 *gab rtse*. The term *gab rtse*, which appears quite often in passages relating to Kong tse *'phrul gyi rgyal po* in Bonpo literature, comes into sight along with “element-divination” (*'byung rtsis*) in *bShad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu*. In later Buddhist literature, “*gab rtse*” disappears and “element-divination” (*'byung rtsis*) is often replaced by its equivalence “Sino-Tibetan divination” (*nag rtsis*). Nevertheless, every now and then “*'byung rtsis*” is still used.

According to the 5th Dalai Lama Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617-1682), after Mañjuśrī handed down the Sino-Tibetan divination in Wutai shan, the teaching prospered in China. Texts of Chinese divination were brought to Tibet first by Princess Wencheng, the Chinese wife of Srong btsan sgam po.⁸⁰ By applying the concepts which Mañjuśrī passed on to Kong tse *'phrul gyi rgyal po* as foundation of calculation, like those of year (*lo*), month (*zla*), day (*zhag*), time (*dus tshod*), “vital force” (*srog*), “body” (*lus*), “prosperity” (*dbang thang*), “fortune” (*rlung rta*), *spar kha*, *sme ba*, etc., diverse calculations were developed in Tibet.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Don dam smra ba'i seng ge, *bShad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu*, 212v2: “/de nas gong rtse *'phrul gyi rgyal po dang/ byi nor 'phrul gyi rgyal po dang/ ling tshe 'phrul gyi rgyal po dang/ dbang ldan 'phrul gyi rgyal po dang bzhis/ rang rang gi ci phrod phrul nas nas zhus pa/ kyai ma ho/ 'jam dbyangs gzhon nu lha mi 'dren pa'i dpal/ thams cad mkhyen pa'i the tshom so sor gcod/ 'dod pa'i don grub dgos 'dod skong mdzad pa'i/ bdag cag 'gro ba mi'i rigs rnam ni/ ma rig dbang gis bdag tu 'dzin pa skyes/ 'khrul pa'i dbang gis rtag tu 'khor bar 'khyams/ skye rga na 'chi'i sdug bsngal dang/ dar (213r1) gud phyugs dbul rnam dang gdon la sogsl/ 'jigs pa brgya dang bcu gnyis las bsgral phyir/ 'byung rtsis chen po bdag la stsal du gsol/ zhes zhus pas/ 'phags pas bka' stsal pa/ 'gro ba sems can 'byung ba lnga las grub/ 'byung ba lnga rnam 'byung bdud 'byung bas gcod/ de phyir 'byung rtsis chen po bshad/ ces gsungs nas/ ma hā nag po rtsa ba'i rgyud/ 'jig rten sgron ma sngar rtag gi rgyud/ rdo rje gdan phyi rtag gi rgyud/ 'byung don bstan pa thabs kyi rgyud/ mkhro' ma rdo rje'i gtsug gi rgyud dang/ yang rgyud bar ma gsungs/ ging sham rin po che'i dmigs gsal kyi rgyud/ zang ta rin po chen gson gyi rgyud/ a tu rin po che dmigs gsal gyi rgyud/ phung shing nag po ngan thabs kyi rgyud/ zlog rgyud nag po lto'i rgyud lnga (213v1) gsung/ yang rgyud phyi ma 'byung ba lnga rtsegs kyi rgyud/ 'jam yig chen po phyi'i rgyud/ ka ba dgu gril spar sme'i rgyud/ sdong po dgu 'dus rab chad bu gso'i rgyud/ gser gyi nyi ma gyiing shong bag ma'i rtsis dang lnga gsungs sol/ de ltar lto 'byung rtsis kyi rgyud sde sum bcu rtsa cig gsungs sol/ gab rtse sum brgya drug cu gsungs sol”.*

⁸⁰ Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, *rTsis dkar nag las brtsams pa'i dris lan nyin byed dbang po'i snang ba* (in *Thams cad mkhyen pa rgyal ba lnga pa chen po Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i gsung 'bum*, reproduced from Lhasa edition, Gangtok, Sikkim: Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology, 1991-1995, vol. wa: 568), 3v6: “*rgya nag gi rtsis gzhung yang 'phags pa 'jam dpal dbyangs kyis ri bo rtse lngar gsungs nas/ ma hā tsi na'i rgyal khams su dar ba rgya mo bza' kong jos thog mar bod du bsnams (4r1) nas mchog dman kun gyis spang blang bya bar med du mi rung ba ste*”. See also Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, 2 vols. (Rome: La Libreria della Stato, 1949; repr., Bangkok: SDI Publications, 1999), 136.

⁸¹ Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, *rTsis dkar nag las brtsams pa'i dris lan nyin byed dbang po'i snang ba*, 10r1: “/’phags pa 'jam dpal gyis kong rtse *'phrul gyi rgyal po la gnang ba'i/ lo zla zhag dus tshod/ srog lus dbang thang rlung rta spar rme sog rtsis gzhir bzung nas/ gson rtsis la mi 'gyur rtsa ba'i rde'u drug/ gcod dral gyi rde'u nyi shu rtsa gcig/ rda'u zhe bdun ma/ bcu bzhi ma/ brgyad ma/ nad rtsis la/ thang shing gi rtsis/ tshe rtsis la/ rgya ma phang gi rtsis/ gza' bzhi ma klung gi rtsis/ lha dpal che gsum gyi rtsis/ ging gong gnyen sbyor gyi rtsis/ gshin rtsis la/ zang 'khyam rnam grangs mi 'dra*

The proposition that Mañjuśrī handed down the knowledge of calculation to Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po is modified by the regent of the 5th Dailai Lama sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653-1705) in his monumental work about Tibetan science of calculation *Baidūrya dkar po* (*The White Beryl*):

“As to Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po, by merely meeting [with Mañjuśrī] he understood spontaneously the 84000 *dPyad* and 360 *gTo*.”⁸²

In agreement with the above mentioned two works, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po also appears in a context of the transmission of element-divination in *Baidūrya dkar po*. Yet his role as a student of element-divination changed in Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's depiction. Instead of learning from Mañjuśrī by listening to his instruction of element-divination, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po knew how to perform the *dPyad* healing method and the *gTo*-ritual by merely seeing Mañjuśrī. *gTo* refers to a certain type of ritual performed to avoid or to eliminate disaster as well as to bring about luck and happiness. The meaning of *dPyad* is, according to the Bonpo tradition, related to medical treatment.⁸³ The association of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po with *gTo* reminds us of the texts in Bonpo *brTen 'gyur* attributed to Kong tse/ Kong tse 'phrul rgyal. The texts numbered 157-9 and 230-49, for instance, are contributions of *gTo*-rituals. Based on a wide variety of text collections pertaining to the science of calculation including astronomy, divination and related issues, the composition of *Baidūrya dkar po* demonstrated an enormous effort of bringing teachings of different traditions together.⁸⁴ The alteration of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po's position in this tremendous work indicates the author's different view on this subject, which could well be a result of reference to foreign literature. Due to the significant position of *Baidūrya dkar po* in the Tibetan science of calculation, this account was followed by experts, especially those belonging to the dGe lugs pa schools. For example, the corresponding verse in Blo bzang tshul khrims rgya mtsho's (1889-1958) work for Sino-Tibetan divination reads:

“Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po understood spontaneously the 84000 *dPyad* and 360 *gTo* without effort by merely meeting [with Mañjuśrī].”⁸⁵

ba bcu gsum sogs rgya nag gtsug lag gi rtsis rnams kyang gong du bshad pa ltar yid bzor bsdu nus sol”. Tucci (*Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, 136) claimed that the “system (of *nag rtsis*) is founded on the works of Kong tse, the incarnation of 'Jam dbyangs, who revealed it on the Ri bo rtse lnga”. I have not found the corresponding passage in Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho's work.

⁸² Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, *Phug lugs rtsis kyi legs bshad bai dūr dkar po*, 2 vols. (Bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1996), sTod cha, 237: “/Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po ni/ /mjal ba tsam gyis dpyad brgyad khri/ /bzhi stong sum brgya drug cu'i gto/ /rang bzhin babs kyiis thugs su chud”.

⁸³ Both Snellgrove (*The Nine Ways of Bon, Excerpts from gZi-brjid*, 301) and Karmay (“A General introduction to the History and Doctrines of Bon,” 141) interpreted *dPyad* as “diagnosis/ diagnoses”. An example of illness management by employing a four-fold method, in which *gTo* and *dPyad* are applied, was illustrated by Karmay (141).

⁸⁴ The authorship of this famous work is usually attributed to sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho. E. Gene Smith (*Among Tibetan Texts, History and Literature of the Himalayan Plateau*, 243) indicated with certainty that the actual author should be lDum bu Don grub dbang rgyal (born sixteenth /seventeenth cent.).

⁸⁵ Blo bzang tshul khrims rgya mtsho, *Mahā ci na'i rtsis rig dge ldan mkhas dbang yongs kyiis phyag rgyun du bstar ba'i rdel 'grem 'thor bsduud rgyas 'dril du bkod pa dpyod*

With only slight differences in wording, the verse conveys exactly the same information as in *Baidūrya dkar po*. Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po, unlike the other students: Brahmā (*tshangs pa gdong bzhin pa*), the goddess rNam rgyal ma (*lha mo rnam par rgyal ma*), the Nāga king 'Jog po (*klu yi rgyal po 'jog po*), Brahman Ser skya (*bram ze ser skya*), who received teachings from Mañjuśrī,⁸⁶ understood *dPyad* and *gTo* through his innate ability triggered by an inspiring encounter with Mañjuśrī.

As a complement to *Baidūrya dkar po* as well as a feedback to the objections raised by scholars who challenged the assertions in the work, *Baidūrya g.ya' sel* (*The Removal of Dirt of the White Beryl*), another encyclopaedic volume, was compiled by Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho.⁸⁷ The regent's reply to the ninety-third question was about the establishment of the science of divination (*gtsug lag*) in Tibet. This paragraph provides information which could be regarded as the possible foundation of the above mentioned statement about Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po. This includes the relationship of *gTo* with the science of divination and the role of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po in the early transmission of *gTo* in Tibet. The beginning part of this paragraph reads:

“As for the manner of the commencement of the science of divination (*gtsug lag*) in Tibet at the time of gNam ri srong btsan, it is stated reliably [and] in detail in the [works like] the Royal Annals written by the honoured supreme protector⁸⁸ etc. However, regarding the consideration of these [authors], it appears that the manner of the beginning of the science of divination (*gtsug lag*), namely the commencement of its introduction in Tibet, was their main concern. To take some classes of *gTo*, a main branch [of the science of divination], as an example, it appears to be likely that [the science of divination] emerged in Tibet from the time of [the Tibetan kings like] gNya' khri btsan po, etc. As to the reason for [proposing this statement], among the previous lineages of some methods used in the science of divination (*gtsug lag*) there emerges a lineage [opining] that at the time of *rje yab lha brdal drug* Kong tse 'phrul rgyal was invited to Tibet and composed the method of *gTo*. Until now, the continuity of these writings has not abated. Prior to the establishment of a writing system in Tibet, it is likely that [such methods] were transmitted by recitation, similar to the transmission of the Bon-stories. With the emergence of a writing system, [these methods] were recorded in documents. Moreover, [we] know that due to the emanation of compassion of the great compassionate, superior Avalokiteśvara, Kong tse reached Tibet. As to the reason [for this statement], according to the speech of the Superior Ones, it is said that

ldan spyi nor 'dod dgu 'jo ba'i dpag bsam ljon shing, 1921, 3v5: “/kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po yis/ mjal ba tsam gyis dpyad brgyad khri/ bzhi stong sum brgya drug cu'i gto/ 'bad med lhun grub thugs su chud!”. See also Tseng, *Sino-tibetische Divinationskalkulation (Nag-rtsis) dargestellt anhand des Werkes dPag-bsam ljon-šiiñ von bLo-bzañ tshul-khrims rgya-mtsho*, 60.

⁸⁶ Tseng, *Sino-tibetische Divinationskalkulation (Nag-rtsis) dargestellt anhand des Werkes dPag-bsam ljon-šiiñ von bLo-bzañ tshul-khrims rgya-mtsho*, 59-60.

⁸⁷ To *Baidūrya g.ya' sel*, see Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, 136.

⁸⁸ Refers to the 5th Dalai Lama.

'The seeds of the Tibetan people are produced from a monkey and a rock demoness. Afterwards, the Superior One pondered in his mind: "Now, it is not enough [for them] to merely obtain the human body. I ought to let them become Buddhas." Previously the monkey, the rock demoness and the pasture demoness were tamed by him. Now they are to be subdued by the royal discipline. Their human lineage is to be cut off from the god. The water flow is to meet with snow. The hands between human and gods are to be linked together. When the human does not have a god, a god will be appointed [for the human]. When the livestock does not have a child herder, a child herder will be appointed [for the livestock]. When the demons do not have offerings (*yas*), offerings will be given. The *yab lha brdal drug* is to be appointed as the god of the human. The uppermost field (*yar klungs*) etc. is to be appointed as the center of the country. An arrangement like this was written down nicely, for the sake of propagating the rules of conduct in the capital city.'

So it was said that because of the compassion of the Superior One, gNya' khri btsan po descended at the famous front side of the eight mountains.⁸⁹ Therefore, according to the '*lha yab lha brdal drug*' and the '*rje yab lha brdal drug*', [God and King] respectively, the '*yab lha brdal drug*' in the above paragraph refers to one of the many names for the king gNya' khri btsan po. And the [sentence] 'When the demons do not have offerings (*yas*), offerings will be given.' was [clearly written] with Kong tse's establishment of ritual offerings in mind. [However, this sentence] might also refer to the lineages of offerings (*yas rabs*). [On the other hand,] according to the lineages of some of the [rituals of] *gTo* and *Yas* [conducted] for turning back gossip etc., it is said that at the time of gTsang rje thod dkar, Kong tse arrived in Tibet and composed [the rituals]. It is likely that this ritual of offering (*yas*) has mixed with the Bonpo's ritual of offering. If one examines [these statements] in detail, they appear to be acceptable."⁹⁰

⁸⁹ The mountain where the first Tibetan king gNya' khri btsan po descended was lHa ri gyang to. See Samten G. Karmay (1992), "Mount Bon-ri and its Association with Early Myths," in Karmay, *The Arrow and the Spindle, Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet*, 221-223.

⁹⁰ Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, *Baidūr dkar po las 'phros pa'i snyan sgron dang dri lan g.ya' sel*, 147r1: "go gsum pa yang bod du gnam ri srong btsan gyi dus gtsug lag gi dbu brnyes tshul ni skyabs mgon mchog gis gnang ba'i rgyal rabs sogs khungs ldan nas zhib tu gsungs mod/ de dag gi dgongs pa ni gtsug lag skor 'go'i tshul bod du srol btod kyi dbu brnyes pa gtsor dgongs pa gnang zhing/ gtsug gi le lag gto'i skor 'ga' zhis gi dbang du btang na gnya' khri btsan po sogs pa'i dus nas bod du byung bar dogs pa snang zhing/ de'i rgyu mtshan ni gtsug lag gi thabs 'ga' zhis gi sngon rabs su/ rje yab lha brdal drug gi dus kong tse 'phrul rgyal bod du spyang drangs te gto thabs mdzad pa'i rabs 'byung zhing/ de dag gi yig rgyun da bar ma nub par byung ba dang/ de yang bod du yig srol ma btod bar bon sgrung ltar ngag 'dzin brgyud pa dang/ yig srol dod nas yig char 'khod par dogs shing/ de yang thugs rje chen po 'phags pa spyang ras gzigs kyi thugs rje'i 'phrul las/ kong tse bod du khugs par shes tel rgyu mtshan ni/ 'phags pa'i gsung las/ bod kyi mi'i sa bon spre'u dang brag srin las bskrun rjes/ 'phags pa'i thugs dgongs la/ da mi lus thob pa tsam gyis mi chog sangs rgyas par byed dgos snyam nas/ na ning nas spre'u dang/ brag srin mo dang/ 'brog srin mo dang/ khong rnam kyis btul ba yin/ da ni rgyal khrims kyis 'dul bar bya'ol/ de yi mi'i brgyud ni lha las chad par bya'ol/ chu'i brgyud ni gangs la thug

The author argued that the inauguration of the science of divination (*gtsug lag*) can be traced back to the time of the Tibetan king gNam ri srong btsan, the father of Srong btsan sgam po, i.e. at the end of the sixth or in the beginning of the seventh centuries A. D.⁹¹ Yet, if some classes of *gTo* were taken into consideration, the time of beginning of the science of divination could be even earlier, perhaps during the time of the first Tibetan king gNya' khri btsan po.⁹² This inclusion of the method of *gTo* as a branch (*le lag*) of the science of divination is widely accepted in the later literature on element-divination. Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po was, according to an early lineage of the science of divination, a foreign master invited to Tibet and initiated *gTo* at the time of *rje yab lha brdal drug*, who was identified by the author as the king gNya' khri btsan po. By the time of the establishment of the chieftainship of gNya' khri btsan po, the relationship between human and ghost/demon was one of the main aspects which should be taken care of. Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po was thus invited to Tibet to compose rituals for pacifying the unknown power. This narration provides a sound foundation for those ritual texts in which Kong tse 'phrul rgyal is referred to as the originator of the *gTo*-rituals.⁹³ Since gNya' khri btsan po's descending from heaven in Tibet was ascribed to the compassion of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po's visit to Tibet was in the same way accredited to Avalokiteśvara's compassion and thus linked with Buddhist myth. The author further pointed out that the rite introduced by Kong tse, who according to another lineage arrived in Tibet at the time of the Tibetan king gTsang rje thod dkar,⁹⁴ has often been mixed with the Bonpo's rite. This statement showed the author's attempt to make a pronounced distinction between the Buddhist and the Bonpo tradition concerning Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po and to show that although the rites of both traditions might share some common features, their origins are different.

The proclamations in *Baidūrya dkar po* and *Baidūrya g.ya' sel* are regarded as the "norm" in the field of the science of calculation. According to this system, Kong tse 'phrul rgyal acquired the knowledge of *gTo*-rituals due to the inspiration of Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. Owing to the compassion of

par bya'o// mi dang lha ru lag pa sbrel/ mi lha med la lha gcig bsko/ phyugs rdzi'u med la rdzi'u bsko/ 'dre srin yas med la yas byin/ yab lha brdal drug mi yi lha ru bsko/ yar klungs sogs pa yul gyi dbus su bsko/ de ltar bkod pa bris legs kyang/ /rgyal sa chos khrims spel ba'i phyir/ /zhes 'phags pa'i thugs rjes gnya' khri btsan po ri brgyad la rgyang grags kyi kha ru (147o1) babs par gsungs shing/ des na lha yab lha brdal drug dang/ rje yab lha brdal drug gnyis las 'di skabs kyi yab lha brdal drug ces pa rje gnya' khri btsan po'i mtshan gyi rnam grangs dang/ 'dre srin las [read "yas"] med la yas byin zhes pa 'di kong tses mdzad pa'i yas la dgongs pa yin par shes shing yas rabs rnam dang yang 'grig mi kha sogs pa'i gto yas 'ga' zhig gi rabs su gtsang rje thod dkar gyi skabs kong tse bod du byon nas mdzad par bshad pa yas bon yas dang 'dres par dogs pa tsam 'dug rung zhib par brtags na mi 'grig pa mi snang stel'.

⁹¹ Haarh, *The Yar-Luñ Dynasty*, 12.

⁹² For gNya' khri btsan po, see Haarh, *The Yar-Luñ Dynasty*, 17, 18; Giuseppe Tucci, *The Religions of Tibet*, trans. by Geoffrey Samuel (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 223.

⁹³ See e.g. Lin, *Mi pham's Systematisierung von gTo-Ritualen*, 233.

⁹⁴ In the Tun-huang Manuscript P. tib. 249 this name designates the ruler of one of the rGyal-phran countries, the pre-historic individual states within the Tibetan realm. See Haarh, *The Yar-Luñ Dynasty*, 240-241.

Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, Kong tse 'phrul rgyal introduced the rituals to Tibet. Nevertheless, scholars who had close contact with China, whose source of knowledge regarding Confucius is not restricted to the messages handed down by tradition, would not agree with these conventional statements. The scholar Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1737-1802) expressed his opinion on Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po as follows:

"The Tibetans created Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po as a king who possesses miraculous power and established in some *gTo*-managements, which belong to Sino-Tibetan divination (*nag rtsis*), the way of cultivating manifest realization of Kong tse, etc. Moreover, there are some people who understood 'bzo bo Kong tse' as an expert in the formation of handicraft. As for these, they manifest an analogy of 'grasping something in darkness by hand'."⁹⁵

Although Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma also belonged to the dGe lugs pa school as Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho did, his opinion clearly deviated from the "official proclamation". In his view, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po is an invented figure. His attitude illustrated the fact that there is no consensus among Tibetan scholars regarding Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po. Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma's view was cited by the contemporary scholar Nam mkha'i nor bu (1938-) to support his position in rejecting the traditional concept of seeing Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po as the Tibetan equivalent of Confucius.⁹⁶ On the other hand, the famous scholar 'Jam mgon Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas (1813-1899) followed the traditional view on the issue pertaining to Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po. In a paragraph in his encyclopaedic work *Shes bya kun khyab mdzod* (*Treasury of All pervading Knowledge*) which discussed the origin and transmission of Sino-Tibetan divination (*nag rtsis*) in Tibet, he wrote:

"The origin of the [science], which is known as element-divination or Sino-Tibetan divination, is China. At the time of the first [Chinese] emperor sPa hu hshi dhī, a commoner living on the seashore offered a gold-colored turtle [to the emperor]. After [the emperor] examined it by way of looking upon it [carefully], the signs of the eight *spar kha* appeared at the first time in his mind. On the basis of this, works of calculations pertaining to *spar kha*, *sme ba* and the twelve year-cycles were composed. On the basis of these, [related] works were composed successively by the incarnated kings, ministers and scholars. There are a lot of texts which appeared later, particularly, 'Khong spu tsi', the

⁹⁵ Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long*, 395: "bod dag gis kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po zhes rgyal po rdzu 'phrul can zhig tu byas pa dang/ nag rtsis kyi gto bcos la lar/ kong tse'i mngon rtogs bsgom tshul sogs kyi rnam gzhag byas pa dang/ yang la las bzo bo kong tse zhes bzo'i 'du byed la mkhas pa zhig tu go 'dug pa ni mun nag lag nom gyi dper snang ngol!". Das's translation of this paragraph deviates significantly from the Tibetan version I obtained. It reads: "The Tibetans believe that their celebrated Sron-tsan Gampo was an incarnation of Khun-fu-tse — one of miraculous birth — in whom was manifest the spirit of Chenressig. Some authors conjecture that Khun-fu-tse was the inventor of astrology from the few verses bearing his name and praise, which head almost all the astrological works of China and Tibet. He is also believed by some people to have been the inventor of handicrafts, manufacture, technology etc." See Sarat Chandra Das, "Ancient China, Its Sacred Literature, Philosophy and Religion as Known to the Tibetans," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 1882(2): 101.

⁹⁶ Nam mkha'i nor bu, *Zhang bod lo rgyus Ti se'i 'od*, 75.

incarnation of Mañjuḥośa, who is known as Kong tse 'phrul rgyal in Tibet, also introduced infinite texts about calculation and *gTo*. The former and the latter [Chinese] princesses⁹⁷ first brought the texts of Chinese divination here to Tibet and initiated the [corresponding] system."⁹⁸

According to the above paragraph, several points of interest may be summarized as follows. First, the Chinese sage Khong spu tsi is the incarnation of Bodhisattva Mañjuḥośa; secondly, Khong spu tsi is known as Kong tse 'phrul rgyal in Tibet; and thirdly, Kong tse 'phrul rgyal introduced many texts of calculation and *gTo* to Tibet. Despite the controversy among scholars mentioned above, a general consensus among Tibetan intellectuals on the topic of Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po exists, as reflected by the fact that Kong sprul's statements are rendered in summarized form in *Shes bya kun khyab mdzod*, a work intended as an encyclopaedia.

The idea that Khong spu tsi alias Kong tse 'phrul rgyal is regarded as the incarnation of Bodhisattva Mañjuḥośa was integrated into a ritual called *Kong tse gsol mchod 'dod yon sprin spung* (*Prayers and Offerings to Kong tse, a Heap of Cloud of Desirable Qualities*) in which Confucius became the main deity of worship. Discovered by Ferdinand D. Lessing in the 1930s in the Yunghe Kung 雍和宮 palace temple situated in the Chinese capital, the text of this ritual was written in the form of a *sādhana* (*grub thabs*) and was probably composed around the middle of the eighteenth century.⁹⁹ The iconography of the "Bodhisattva or future Buddha" demonstrates the traditional association of the Chinese sage Confucius with Sino-Tibetan divination: he sits on the "cosmic" tortoise, is surrounded by 100,000 sages (*drang srong*), and is venerated for his role as the protector of the science of divination (*gtsug lag*). At the outset of the ritual, Mañjuśrī is summoned as a protector of worldly knowledge. Lessing indicated that "this represents Confucius as a kind of incarnation of Mañjuśrī".¹⁰⁰ After hundreds of years of development in Tibetan literature since the earliest testimony of the existence of "Kong tse" in the Tibetan Tun-hunang manuscripts, Confucius became the central character of a Tibetan ritual text found in a palace temple situated in the Chinese capital. Lessing's report of this text shows an interesting recurrence of the veneration of the Chinese sage in his homeland. Parallel to the worship of Confucius by the Chinese, the Tibetans have

⁹⁷ This refers to princess Wencheng and Jincheng. For their dates, cf. n. 37.

⁹⁸ 'Jam mgon Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas, *Shes bya kun khyab mdzod* (Delhi: Shechen Publications, 1997) vol. E, folio 220: "byung rtsis sam nag rtsis su grags pa byung ba'i khungs ni rgya nag stel/ de'ang gong ma rnams kyi thog ma spa hu hshi dhī rgyal po la rgya mtsho'i mtha'i 'bangs zhig gis rus sbal gser gyi kha dog can phul ba la gzigs pas brtags nas spar kha brgyad kyi phyag rgya thog mar thugs la shar/ de la brten nas spar sme lo skor gyi rtsis rnams mdzad/ de la brten nas sprul pa'i rgyal blon mkhas pa rnams kyis rim par mdzad pa dang/ khyad par khong spu tsi zhes 'jam dbyangs kyi sprul pa bod du kong tse 'phrul rgyal du grags pa des kyang rtsis dang gto gzhung mtha' yas pa'i srol gtod pa sogs phyis byung gi gzhung shin tu mang zhing/ bod 'dir thog mar kong jo snga phyis rgya nag gi rtsis gzhung bsnams te srol phyis/".

⁹⁹ Ferdinand D. Lessing, "Bodhisattva Confucius," in *Ritual and Symbol, Collected Essays on Lamaism and Chinese Symbolism* (Taipei: The Chinese Association for Folklore, 1976), 94.

¹⁰⁰ Lessing, "Bodhisattva Confucius," 92.

integrated the famous Chinese sage into the context of Tibetan Buddhism, namely in the form of a Bodhisattva symbolizing wisdom.

Conclusion

The famous Chinese sage Confucius was probably known to the Tibetans already at the time of Tibetan empire. The marriage alliances between Tibet and China in the seventh and the eighth centuries undoubtedly enhanced and strengthened cultural exchanges between the two countries. The statement in *Baidūrya g.ya' sel* regarding Kong tse's visit to Tibet at the time of gNya' khri btsan po, though unlikely to be reliable, could be an indication that the fame of Confucius had already spread to Tibet before the time of the father of Srong btsan sgam po. Nevertheless, direct textual evidence emerged relatively late. The depiction of the teachings of Confucius are found in the Tibetan Tun-huang manuscripts, the earliest Tibetan documents currently available, in which Confucius was designated as "Kong tse/ tshe" in Tibetan. Although the Chinese term for Confucius is translated in Tibetan literature as "Kong tse/ tshe", it does not necessarily follow that the designation "Kong tse/ tshe" always refers to Confucius when it appears in the Tibetan literature. The image connected with the appellation "Kong tse", which originally directly referred to the Chinese sage Confucius, evolved and changed with time and tradition. Interestingly enough, the development is accompanied by his special power of prediction. In one Tun-huang manuscript (I. O. 742) Kong tse appeared as the author of a text for divination by using twelve coins. Then in the Bonpo tradition, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po was seen as a Chinese king with the magical ability to predict the future by consulting the magic letters on both of his palms. He was also recognized as a master of *gab tse*. Later in the Buddhist literature, Kong tse 'phrul gyi rgyal po inherited the knowledge of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī on element-divination (*'byung rtsis*) or Sino-Tibetan divination (*nag rtsis*), which the Bodhisattva intended to use to subdue the Chinese. Apart from acting as the bearer of the knowledge on divination, Kong tse was identified as the originator of *gTo*-rituals. This assertion probably developed in accordance with the Bonpo tradition, which attributed several ritual texts for removing hindrance to Kong tse 'phrul rgyal. A survey of the designation of "Kong tse" in Tibetan literature demonstrates the creativity of the Tibetans in shaping a personage of their own system based on the Tibetan image of Confucius. This process also demonstrates the attempt by Tibetan Buddhists to adapt cultural elements from a neighboring country for the purpose of transmitting Buddhist teachings. Through a trustworthy image originating from a highly developed culture, Tibetan Buddhists ensured the acceptability of a new system of divination, into which Buddhist concepts were integrated.

