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Kalachakra and the Twenty-Five Kulika Kings of Shambhala: A Xylograph from Prague

Luboš Bělka*

The Tibetan mythic land, the kingdom of Shambhala is – according to the Tibetan written texts and oral recounting – a parallel world, invisible and inaccessible to common people. This world has only limited connections with the visible world of people and animals.¹ The kingdom of Shambhala is the place where the teaching of the *Wheel of Time* (Sa. *Kalachakra*, Tib. *Dunkhor /dus khor/*) remains preserved. For Tibetans this is its main role, but it is not the only one. According to this Tantric text, Shambhala will be also the place of spiritual and earthly revival after the Buddhist world is saved from destruction by barbaric unbelievers.² Shambhala as a mythic kingdom probably existed even before the “Turning Wheel of the Law”, that is before the origination of Buddha Shakyamuni’s teaching. If we consider Tibetan sources, we can assume that the first Dharmaraja and ruler of Shambhala, Suchandra, approached the Buddha to ask for the Kalachakra teaching as a king of a country that had

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1 Details see e.g. Gar-je K’am-trul Rinpoche, “A Geography and History of Shambhala”, *Tibet Journal* 3/3, 1978, 3-11.

2 About Tibetan understanding of the term “barbarian” see e.g. Karénina Kollmar-Paulenz, “Der Buddhismus als Garant von *Frieden und Ruhe*: Zu religiösen Legitimationsstrategien von Gewalt am Beispiel der tibetisch-buddhistischen Missionierung der Mongolei in späten 16. Jahrhundert”, *Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft* 11/2, 2003, 202-205; see also Martin Slobodník, “Čína a ‘barbari’ – stereotypy v zobrazování ‘iného’” [China and “Barbarians” – Stereotypes in Depiction of the “Others”, in Slovak], in: Viktor Krupa (ed.), *Orient a Okcident v kontaktoch a konfrontáciach*, Bratislava: Veda 1999, 90-101; see also Martin Slobodník, “The Perception of Tibet in China: Between Disdain and Fascination”, *Fu Jen Historical Journal* 17, 2006, 71-110; and Alexander Berzin, “Mistaken Foreign Myths about Shambhala”, (November 1996, revised May and December 2003) <http://www.berzinarchives.com/kalachakra/mistaken_foreign_shambhala.html> (22. 1. 2004).

all the attributes of a mythic kingdom. This country differed from all the others at that time, later and before in that suffering did not have the extent that is common on earth. In fact, this country did not really need Buddha's teaching whose main topic was suffering (Sa. *dukkha*). However, what it needed was a historical vision justifying the redeeming, or soteriologic role of this kingdom, and such vision was present in the *Kalachakratantra*. The text, brought here by Suchandra, offered Shambhala the historical prospect, or prophecy. The „spiritual revival“ of Shambhala is universal in nature, because according to *Kalachakratantra* and other texts relating to Shambhala, after the terminal battle everybody will adhere to the only correct religion (Buddhism), universal peace and bliss will embrace all the earth, and barbarians and heretics will be exterminated from the world. The concept of the „spiritual revival“ supposes an antecedent period of decline, which includes our present time and a few next centuries.³

Traditionally, the Tibetan myth of Shambhala is closely related to the teaching about the Wheel of Time and the relevant Tantric text (Sa. *Kalachakratantra*), which originated in northern India in the 10th or 11th century. The time when this text, dealing with the Buddhist conception of the end of the world and time (i.e. with an eschatological topic), was written, was characterized by the sensation of danger. In northern India, Buddhism was subject to the growing pressure from traditional Hinduism, and on the other hand, it was endangered by quickly spreading Islam. Both of these facts were projected in the text and the later interpretations of the Tantra itself. Historical events of the 11th century were recast into a Buddhist vision, or the Buddha's teaching, which was supposed to win over “barbarian Islam” with the help of subordinated (not defeated) Hinduism in the future. The historical reality of the 11th century was however completely different. Buddhism at that time was not the winning religion; as a matter of fact, it went through probably the worst period of its existence in India. After fifteen centuries, it was being driven away from its cradle. There were several causes for the extinction of Indian Buddhism, the most important being the pressure from its religious rivals – the quickly spreading Islam and Hinduism. This, together with the inability of the Sangha to resist strong external influence led to the expulsion of Buddhism to neighboring countries. Even though the time and historical circumstances of the genesis of texts capturing the Shambhala myth are known, these texts cannot be branded as originally Buddhist, since they represent a new interpretation.

3 For details see Anonymus, “Shambhala – The Magic Kingdom”, <<http://kalachakra-net.org/shambhala.html1>> (22. 1. 2004).

The connection to original Hindu texts is mainly represented in the figure of Kalkin, the chief of Brahman warriors. As John Newman stresses, the *Kalachakratantra* text was since its very beginning understood as having two interpretations. The first, esoteric interpretation of the Buddhist myth embraces the illusionary image and thus speaks about an “inner” last battle; the second, exoteric interpretation is about real, factual and thus an “outer” last battle:

In fact, the external war will simply be a magical display. Kalkin Chakrin will conjure up to overwhelm the arrogance of the Muslims: through meditative concentration he will radiate countless magic horses that will captivate the minds of the barbarians, causing them to convert to Buddhism. Furthermore, the actual war will not take place in the macrocosmos – the outside world – it will occur within the microcosmos – the body of the practioner of the *Wheel of Time Tantra*.⁴

Sofia Stril-Rever,⁵ in the article published on the internet server *Buddhaline* in 2001, states that all Shambhala rulers are bodhisattvas. One of the most important and typical qualities of every bodhisattva, according to the Buddhist teaching, is the ability to choose the time and place of their rebirth and to choose their parents. That means that each bodhisattva is born on Earth deliberately. One good example of such a situation is the last rebirth of the Bodhisattva as Prince Siddhartha, the future Buddha Shakyamuni. Bodhisattvas are born out of their own decision and free will, motivated by compassion.

To answer the question whether this holds true about mythical Shambhala rulers, we would have to study relevant Indian and, above all, Tibetan sources in great detail. However, the view of Stril-Rever is an isolated one. The succession of rulers in Shambhala is solved in the way that is closer and more comprehensible to our cultural and historical background than is the typical bodhisattva line of rebirth. The Shambhala rulers pass on the reign from father to son. Such a form of succession is typical of monarchical families and has a biological and genetic foundation. In the case of bodhisattvas, for instance in the line of Tibetan Dalai Lamas, a different form of succession was chosen. Every Dalai Lama, being a bodhisattva, intentionally chooses his rebirth, but is born in the same way as any other child. Thus, a problem arises how to tell that a certain child is the new rebirth (the use of the word “reincarnation” is incorrect) of the bodhisattva. To ascertain correctness, the whole institution of procedures of finding and

4 John Newman, “Eschatology in the Wheel of Time Tantra”, in: Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (ed.), *Buddhism in Practice*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1996, 284-289: 285.

5 Sofia Stril-Rever, “Raudra Chakrin, vingt-cinquième roi-kalkin de Shambhala”, <<http://www.buddhaline.net/sommaire.php3>> (30. 7. 2002).

recognizing the new tulku developed in Tibet. It is usually a team or a commission who make the first selection of children, out of whom one is chosen as the tulku.⁶ It means that the line of Tibetan Dalai Lamas represents repeated rebirths of one and only bodhisattva – the patron saint of Tibet, bodhisattva Chenrezig (Tib. *spyan ras gzigs*; Sa. *Avalokiteshvara*). As opposed to the Shambhala rulers, the newly born and later recognized Dalai Lama is thus not a son of the preceding Dalai Lama (he would have been rather a spiritual clone of a kind). One of the reasons is that dignitaries of the Gelugpa order in Tibet lived in celibacy (it was not the rule elsewhere, e.g. in Buryatia), another and the decisive one is that the prerequisite for a new tulku is the death of the preceding one. The Shambhala rulers on the other hand pass their empire to their sons, regardless whether they are bodhisattvas or not.

After a short overview of the literary sources of the Shambhala myth, the historical context and discussion about the status of the Shambhala rulers, we can focus on the various enumerations of them.

There exists various lists of Shambhala rulers; they are diverse, because not all Tibetan Buddhist monastic orders hold identical views of this matter. For instance, the list of Tibetan Buddhist order Jonangpa *ljo nang pal* differs substantially from the list of another Tibetan Buddhist Gelugpa *ldge lugs pal* order.

As far as the names and succession of thirty-two Shambhala rulers are concerned, they are not identical in Tibetan and Mongolian literature. There are differences in names, numbers and succession.⁷ For instance, Andrei Mikhailovich Strelkov states that the number of Shambhala rulers could be thirty-three, if Suryaprabhu, the father of Suchandra was acknowledged as the first king.⁸ Considering this is not a real historical monarchical line, the succession and names are not relevant. For the purposes of this article, it seems appropriate to work on one particular published pantheon as a source. The authority may be the leading Indian Buddhistologist Lokesh Chandra, who has been extensively engaged in Buddhist iconography, mythology and the Buddha's teaching in general for many

6 See Dalai Lama, *Freedom in Exile: The Autobiography of the Dalai Lama*, London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd. 1990.

7 Edwin Bernbaum, *The Way to Shambhala*, New York: Anchor Books 1980, 287; see also Georges Roerich, "Studies in the Kālacakra", *Journal of Urusvati Himalayan Research Institute* 2/1, 1932. (Reprinted in: Yuri Rerikh [= Georges Roerich], *Izbrannye trudy* [Collected Works, in Russian], Moskva: Nauka 1967, 151-164.

8 Andrei M. Strelkov, *Legenda o Shambale po tibetoyazychnym buddiiskim istochnikam XVIII – nachala XX vv.* [The Shambhala Legend in the Tibetan Buddhist Sources from the 18th to beginning of the 20th Centuries, in Russian], Ulan-Ude: Institut Mongolovedenia, Buddologii i Tibetologii 2003, (Ph.D. Thesis), 51.

years.⁹ The advantage of using one source list is obvious: the differences in names and order of succession seldom concern rulers who are viewed as the key ones in the past, present and future of Shambhala, and so it is possible to use only one list accompanied with pictorial material.

The first important figure is undoubtedly the founder of the kingdom, i.e. the first Dharmaraja Pundarika, the second one is the unifier of the empire and the winner of the first Shambhala battle Manjushrikirti and finally the third one is the winner in the last battle, Rudra Chakrin. The other Dharmarajas and Kulikas do not present such important figures in the Shambhala history that their life stories would be preserved. Who is Rigden Jamyang Dragpa, in Sanskrit Manjushrikirti? What is the meaning of the Tibetan expression Rigden /*rigs ldan*/ and the Sanskrit word Kulika?

Rigden, literally translated, means “of a good family” and in Tibetan it stands for “having an origin, an ancestry”. Another variant is “unifier of castes, holder of lineage (succession)”. The Sanskrit expression *Kulika* or *Kalki* is older and it should be equivalent to the Tibetan Rigden. However, as for instance Andrey M. Strelkov says, the whole matter is more complex. After seven Shambhala rulers, Kings of Dharma (Sa. *dharmaraja*; Tib. *chogyal /chos rgyal/*) suddenly Kulikas, unifiers of family, arrive on the scene due to the fact that the eighth ruler, being the first to bear the title of Kulika, Manjushrikirti, granted delegation to all Shambhala inhabitants (Sa. *abhisheka*, Tib. *wang ldbang/*), united them, and invited them to the Kalachakra mandala. Thus, he was the ruler who united the Shambhala people into one spiritual family.

The existence of various, overlapping, but different lists of names of Shambhala rulers is evidenced by the following enumeration of Sanskrit names of seven Dharma Kings, Dharmarajas, and twenty five lineage (succession) holders, Kulikas, which was provided by current monks of Namgyal monastery in Dharamsala:

Kings of Dharma

1. Suchandra
2. Devendra
3. Tejasvin
4. Chandradatta
5. Deveshvara
6. Chitrarupa
7. Devesha

9 About his work *Sata-Pitaka Series* (“One Hundred Baskets”) see e.g. Josef Kolmaš, *Suma tibetského písemnictví* [Sum of Tibetan Literature, in Czech], Praha: Argo 2004, 55-56.

Lineage holders

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 8. Manju Yashas | 21. Chandraprabha |
| 9. Pundarika | 22. Ananta |
| 10. Bhadra | 23. Parthiva |
| 11. Vijaya | 24. Shripala |
| 12. Mitrabhadra | 25. Singha |
| 13. Ratnapani (Raktapani) | 26. Vikranta |
| 14. Vishnugupta | 27. Mahabala |
| 15. Suryakirti | 28. Anirodha |
| 16. Subhadra | 29. Narasingha |
| 17. Samuda Vijaya | 30. Maheshvara |
| 18. Durdjaya | 31. Anantajaya |
| 19. Surya | 32. Raudra Chakri |
| 20. Chitrarupa | |

In his work on Buddhist iconography, the outstanding Italian Buddhologist and Tibetanist Giuseppe Tucci provides information on the origin of Shambhala rulers and the list of these rulers itself, which is based on Tibetan sources, particularly on the works of the 14th century historian, Buton Rinchendub (*Jbu ston rin chen grub*, 1290-1364). Lokesh Chandra states that the following seven Dharmarajas and twenty-five Kulikas (Tib. rigden nyernga /*rigs ldan nyer lngal*) are Shambhala rulers (names in Sanskrit were added later); the first number stands for the serial number of the ruler regardless whether he is a Dharmaraja or a Kulika:

- (1.) 1. Chogyal Dawazang /*chos rgyal zla ba bzangl*, Sa. Dharmaraja Suchandra.
- (2.) 2. Chogyal Lhaiwang /*chos rgyal lha yi dbangl*, Sa. Dharmaraja Devendra, Sureshvara.¹⁰
- (3.) 3. Chogyal Zijicen /*chos rgyal gzi brdzhid canl*, Sa. Dharmaraja Tejasvin
- (4.) 4. Chogyal Dawechin /*chos rgyal zla bas byinl*, Sa. Dharmaraja Chandradatta (or Somadatta).
- (5.) 5. Chogyal Lhaiwangchug /*chos rgyal lha'i dbang phyugl*, Sa. Dharmaraja Deveshvara (or Sureshvara).
- (6.) 6. Chogyal Natshogzug /*chos rgyal sna tshogs gzugs*, Sa. Dharmaraja Chitrarupa (or Vishvamurti).

10 Another variant of the Tibetan and Sanskrit name of the second Dharmaraja is published in the Collection of 156 images of the deities of the Mongolian Kalachakra Mandala: Lhaiwang Chugchen /*lha yi dbang phyug chenl*, see Andrey A. Terentyev, *Opre-delitel' buddiiskikh izobrazhenii/ Buddhist Iconography Identification Guide*, Sankt-Petersburg: Nartang 2004, 256, Fig. 2a.

- (7.) 7. Chogyal Lhaiwangden /*chos rgyal lha'i dbang ldan*/, Sa. Dhar-maraja Devesha (Sureshana).
- (8.) 1. Rigden Jampal Dragma /*rigs ldan 'jam dpal grags pa, 'jam dby-angs grags*/,¹¹ Sa. Kulika Manjushrikirti, also known as Manju Yas-has. His attributes are a book (Sa. *pustaka*; Tib. *poti lpo til* or leg-bam /*glegs bam*/, *pecha ldpe chal*) and a sword¹² (Sa. *asi, khadga*, Tib. *raldri lral sgril*) – as the only figure in the list possessing these two attributes. Manjushrikirti is together with the last Shambhala King Rudra Chakrin a manifestation of the bodhisattva Manjushri.¹³ The book is in this case Tibetan religious text which is in an ornately carved wooden book cover (Sa. *pustakashtha*; Tib. *legshing lglegs shing*).¹⁴
- (9.) 2. Rigden Pemakar /*rigs ldan padma dkar*/, Sa. Kulika Pundarika, his attributes are prayer beads /*rosary*/ (Sa. *mala*; Tib. *thengwa l' ph-reng bal*) and lotus blossom (Sa. *padma, kamala, utpala*; Tib. *pad-ma, pema lpadmal lpad mal, chukye lchu skyes*/, *utpala lut pa la'*).
- (10.) 3. Rigden Zangpo /*rigs ldan bzang po*/, Sa. Kulika Bhadra, his attributes are a wheel (Sa. *chakra*, Tib. *khloro l' khor lol*; *berdo lbe rdol*) and a white conch shell (Sa. *shankha*; Tib. *dungkar ldung dkar*).
- (11.) 4. Rigden Namgyal /*rigs ldan rnam rgyal*/, Sa. Kulika Vijaya, his attributes are an elephant goad or iron hook (Sa. *ankusha*; Tib. *chagkyu llcags kyul*) and a snare, noose or lasso (Sa. *pasha*; Tib. *zhagpa lzhags pa*).
- (12.) 5. Rigden Shenyenzang /*rigs ldan bshes gnyen bzang*/, Sa. Kulika Mitrabhadra (or Sumitra) his attributes are a bow (Sa. *dhanus, cha-pa, sarasana, kodanda, karmuka, sarnga*; Tib. *shu lgsul*) and ar-row (Sa. *sara, ish, bana*; Tib. *da lmda'*).
- (13.) 6. Rigden Rinchenchag /*rigs ldan rin chen phyag*/, Sa. Kulika Rat-napani/Raktapani, his attributes are a vajra (Sa.; Tib. *dorje lrdor rje*) and bell (Sa. *ghanta*, Tib. *drilbu ldril bu*).
- (14.) 7. Rigden Khyabjugbelwa /*rigs ldan khyab 'jug sbal bal*/, Sa. Kuli-ka Vishnugupta, his attributes are a trident (Sa. *trishula*; Tib. *tsesum lrtse gsum*/, *thishula lrti shu la*) and prayer beads /*rosary*/).

11 Lokesh Chandra, *Transcendental Art of Tibet*, (Sata-Pitaka Series 385), New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture and Aditya Prakashan 1996, 77.

12 Robert Beer, *The Encyclopedia of Tibetan Symbols and Motifs*, London: Serindia Publications 1999, 276-277, Plate 123.

13 See Tsyren-Bazar Badmazhapov (ed.), *Ikonografia Vadzhrayany*, [An Iconography of Vajrayana, in Russian] Moskva: Dizain – Informatsia – Kartografiia 2003, 384-385, Fig. 346-347.

14 R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia of Tibetan Symbols...*, 223-224, Plate 103.

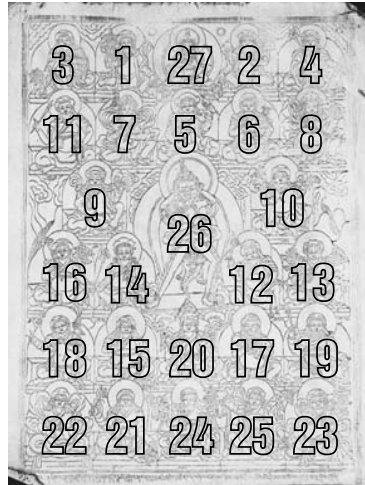
Fig. 1. Sahaja Kalachakra and the Twenty-Five Kulika Kings of Shambhala, black and white xylograph, Mongolia, ca. 51.5 x 39.2 cm, from Asian collections of Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures in Prague, Czech Republic (Collection No. A 16 330).

The xylographic thangka is published with the permission of the Museum.

- (15.) 8. Rigden Nyimadrag *lrigs ldan nyi ma gragsl*, Sa. Kulika Surya-kirti (or Arkakirti) his attributes are a sword and shield (Sa. *phalaka, khetaka, charma*; Tib. *phub /phubl*).
- (16.) 9. Rigden Shintuzangpo *lrigs ldan shin tu bzang po*, Sa. Kulika Subhadra, his attributes are the same as in the previous case, i.e. a sword and shield.
- (17.) 10. Rigden Gyatsho Namgyal *lrigs ldan rgya mtsho rnam rgyall*, Sa. Kulika Samuda Vijaya, his attributes are an axe (Sa. *parashu, kuthara, kulisha*; Tib. *drata /dgra stal, tare /sta re*) and a severed head of Brahma (Sa. *brahmamukha*; Tib. *tshang pa'ingo bo*).
- (18.) 11. Rigden Gyalka *lrgyal dka'*, Sa. Kulika Durjaya, Aja, his attributes are a club (Sa. *danda, gada*; Tib. *chugpa /dbyug pa*), chugto

Fig. 2. Lineage holders (Tib. Rigdens, Sa. Kulikas) and Sahaja Kalachakra:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| (1) Jampal Dragpa (Sa. Manjushrikirti) | (25) Dragpo Khorlochen |
| (2) Pemakar (Sa. Pundarika) | (Sa. Rudra Chakrin) |
| (3) Zangpo (Sa. Bhadra) | (26) Dukhor Lhankje |
| (4) Namgyal (Sa. Vijaya) | (Sa. Sahaja Kalachakra) |
| (5) Shenyenzang (Sa. Mitrabhadra or Sumitra) | (27) Dorje Sempa (Sa. Vajrasattva) |
| (6) Rinchenchag (Sa. Ratnapani/Raktapani) | |
| (7) Khyabjugbelwa (Sa. Vishnugupta) | |
| (8) Nyimadrag (Sa. Suryakirti or Arkakirti) | |
| (9) Shintuzangpo (Sa. Subhadra) | |
| (10) Gyatsho Namgyal (Sa. Samuda Vijaya) | |
| (11) Gyalka (Sa. Durjaya or Aja) | |
| (12) Wonang Nyima (Sa. Surya) | |
| (13) Dawa'i Wo (Sa. Chandraprabha or Shashi) | |
| (14) Natshogzug (Sa. Chitrarupa or Vishvarupa) | |
| (15) Sakyong (Sa. Parthiva or Mahipala) | |
| (16) Thayenyen (Sa. Ananta) | |
| (17) Sengge (Sa. Singha/ Simha or Harivikrama) | |
| (18) Pelkyong (Sa. Shripala) | |
| (19) Namparnon (Sa. Vikranta) | |
| (20) Tobpoche (Sa. Mahabala) | |
| (21) Magagpa (Sa. Aniruddha) | |
| (22) Misengge (Sa. Narasimha) | |
| (23) Wangchug (Sa. Mahabala or Maheshvara) | |
| (24) Thaye Namgyal (Sa. Anantajaya) | |





- ldbyug tol*, bechon *lbe conl*, beng *lbengl*) and iron chain (Sa. *srinkhala*, *sphota*; Tib. *chagdrog lchags sgrog*l).
- (19.) 12. Rigden Wonang Nyima */rigs ldan 'od snang nyi ma/*, Sa. Kulika Surya, his attributes are an axe and noose.
- (20.) 13. Rigden Dawa'i Wo */rigs ldan zla ba'i 'odl*, Sa. Kulika Chandraprabha, (or Shashi) his attributes are a wheel and conch shell.
- (21.) 14. Rigden Natshogzug */rigs ldan sna tshogs gzugs/*, Sa. Kulika Chitrarupa, (or Vishvarupa) his attributes are a hook and noose.
- (22.) 15. Rigden Sakyong */rigs ldan sa skyong/*, Sa. Kulika Parthiva (or Mahipala) his attributes are a curved knife or chopper (Sa. *kartri*, *kartari*; Tib. *drigug lgrigugl*) and a skull or skull-cup (Sa. *kapala*; Tib. *thopa lthod pal*, *kapala lka pa la/*, *bandha lban dhal*, *dungchen ldung chen/*).
- (23.) 16. Rigden Thayenyen */rigs ldan mtha' yas gnyen/*, Sa. Kulika Ananta, his attributes are a hammer (Sa. *mudgara*; Tib. *thowa lthoba/*) and lotus blossom.
- (24.) 17. Rigden Sengge */rigs ldan seng gel*, Sa. Kulika Singha/ Simha (or Harivikrama) his attributes are a vajra and bell.
- (25.) 18. Rigden Pelkyong */rigs ldan dpal skyong/*, Sa. Kulika Shripala, his attributes are a trident and a tantric staff (Sa. *khatvanga*; Tib. *khatamga lkha tam gal*, *khatwamga lkha twam gal*).
- (26.) 19. Rigden Namparñon */rigs ldan rnam par gñon/*, Sa. Vikranta, his attributes are a club and iron chain.
- (27.) 20. Rigden Tobpoche */rigs ldan stobs po chel*, Sa. Kulika Mahabala – he is the only one Shambhala ruler depicted without the *aura* around his head, his attributes are a drum *damaru* and cup of gems.
- (28.) 21. Rigden Magagpa */rigs ldan ma 'gags pal*, Sa. Kulika Aniruddha, his attributes are a hook and noose.
- (29.) 22. Rigden Misengge */rigs ldan mi'i seng gel*, Sa. Kulika Narasimha (literally “Human lion”), his attribute is a wheel.
- (30.) 23. Rigden Wangchug */rigs ldan dbang phyug/*, Sa. Kulika Mahabala (literally “Big powerful”), or Maheshvara, his attributes are a chopper and skull cup.
- (31.) 24. Rigden Thaye Namgyal */rigs ldan mtha' yas rnam rgyall*, Sa. Kulika Anantajaya (literally “Unlimitedly victorious”) his attributes are a vajra and bell.
- (32.) 25. Rigden Dragpo Khorlochen */rigs ldan drag po 'khor lo chan/*, Sa. Kulika Rudra Chakrin,¹⁵ his attributes are a spear (Sa. *kunta*, *shakti*, *shula*; Tib. *dung lmdung/*) and shield.

15 See Tsyren-Bazar Badmazhapov (ed.), *Ikonografija Vadzhrayany*, [An Iconography of Vajrayana, in Russian] Moskva: Dizain – Informatsia – Kartografiia 2003, 387-388, Fig. 349-350.

An Image of Kalachakra and the Twenty-Five Kulika Kings of Shambhala is usually made in colors on painted scrolls (Tib. *thangka*) and temple frescoes and it is also executed in black and white and printed from xylographic matrixes on silk, canvas or other type of fabric. One of these depictions, so far not published in literature, is found in the collections of Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures in Prague, Czech Republic (Collection No. A 16 330). The Prague xylographic *thangka* is printed in black from a wooden matrix on a thin, damaged, yellowish white cloth. There are one central figure and twenty-six other figures; they are positioned around the central and biggest figure of Kalachakra. Its height is 51.5 cm; its width is 39.2 cm. We may assume that it comes from Mongolia, one reason being that the donor, who he gave it to the museum in the mid-1980's, acquired it in Mongolia and the other reason being that its style is similar to a colored *thangka* with a similar motif and composition found in the collections of Zanabazar Museum in the capital of Mongolia Ulaanbaatar.¹⁶

The central figure of the xylograph is Kalachakra with his partner Vishvamatra, it is a standing figure in the *yab-yum* position (Tib., means "father-mother position"). The almost naked body is adorned with ribbons and Kalachakra is clad in tiger skin and he wears also a necklace or garland of severed human heads (Sa. *chinnamunda mala*; Tib. *dbu bcad ma' phreng ba*),¹⁷ which is not clearly visible in the Prague depiction. Kalachakra is most often depicted with four faces, twenty four arms and two legs;¹⁸ in this case he is depicted as Sahaja Kalachakra (Sa.; Tib. *Dunkhor Lhankye /dus 'khor than skyes/*) with his partner Vishvamatra; (Sa.; Tib. *Natshog Yum /sna tshogs yum/*) and it is a "simpler" version of this yidam, when Sahaja Kalachakra has only one head, three eyes, a Tantric crown and large circular earrings in his ears. He also has only two arms, embracing his partner. In his right hand he holds a vajra and in his left hand he holds a bell. This is a gesture of the highest energy (Sa. *vajrahumkara mudra*),¹⁹

16 See Patricia Berger – Terese Tse Bartholomew, *Mongolia: The Legacy of Chinggis Khan*, London – San Francisco: Thames and Hudson 1995, 183-185; see also <<http://www.himalayanart.org/image.cfm/50135.html>> (22. 1. 2007).

17 R. Beer, *The Encyclopedia of Tibetan Symbols...*, 317, Plate 137.

18 Frederick W. Bunce, *An Encyclopaedia of Buddhist Deities, Demigods, Godlings, Saints and Demons: With Special Focus on Iconographic Attributes I*, New Delhi: D. K. Printworld 1994, 241; see also e.g. Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls III: Description and Explanation of the Tankas*, Rome: Liberia dello Stato 1949, 371-372, Plate 51; Laura Harrington (ed.), *Kalachakra: Namgyal Monastery*, Roma: Tibet Domani 1999, 79-90; Marilyn M. Rhie – Robert A. F. Thurman, *Wisdom and Compassion: the Sacred Art of Tibet (Expanded Edition)*, London: Thames and Hudson 1996, 480, Fig. 236 (156a).

19 P. Berger – T. T. Bartholomew, *Mongolia: The Legacy...*, 183.

or the gesture of victory over three worlds (Sa. *humkara mudra*; Tib. *humdzekyi chaggya lhum mdzad kyi phyag rgyal*). Sahaja Kalachakra, like his partner, has two legs, whereas his right leg is red, the left leg is white; Sahaja Kalachakra is of a dark blue color and his partner yellow or golden.

Although the Prague xylograph is black and white, in literature we can find relevant colors thanks to the fact that two colored reproductions of this type of Sahaja Kalachakra have already been published. The first is similar to the Prague depiction mainly in its composition, i.e. it captures Sahaja Kalachakra and twenty five Shambhala rulers;²⁰ the other one depicts Sahaja Kalachakra with his partner and it is a unique picture from a xylographic collection dating back to the beginning of the 19th century, known under an older and not precise title *Five Hundred Deities of Narthang*; the original and correct title is *Icons Worthwhile to See lbris sku mthong ba don ldan!*

The first complete edition of mechanical reproductions of the whole xylograph was brought by the Japanese researchers Musashi Tachikawa, Mori Masahide and Yamaguchi Shinobu at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries.²¹ Another complete edition, also based on the original xylograph, forms a *sui generis* unique specimen. It is a recent publication of the “Zürich copy”, which is manually colored on the original xylograph. Through the efforts of Martin Willson and Martin Brauen not only the colored reproductions of these paintings were published, but both authors processed this material with great solicitude, including various comparisons of the xylograph *Icons Worthwhile to See lbris sku mthong ba don ldan!* already published. Here, we find the following text describing Sahaja Kalachakra:

He is blue, with one face and two arms, holding a *vajra* and bell and embracing the Mother. His bent left leg, which is white ... and his extended, red right leg ... He has a topknot of tresses and the crown of his head is adorned with a wish-granting gem and a crescent moon. He has *vajra* ornaments and a tiger-skin loincloth. His thumbs are yellow, the forefingers white, the middle fingers red, the ring fingers black and the little fingers green. On the palm side, the first sets of finger-joints are black, the second red and the third white. He is crowned with Vajrasattva and is in the middle of a five-colored fire mountain. His consort is Vishvamatra, yellow, with one face, two arms and three eyes. She holds a knife and skull and is embracing the Father. Her legs in *pratyaldha* (right bent), she is in union with him. She is naked and adorned with the five symbolic ornaments, her hair half loose.²²

20 *Ibid.*, 182-184.

21 Musashi Tachikawa – Mori Masahide – Yamaguchi Shinobu, *Five Hundred Buddhist Deities*, (Senri Ethnological Reports 2), Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology 1995.

22 Martin Willson – Martin Brauen, *Deities of Tibetan Buddhism: The Zürich Paintings of the Icons Worthwhile to See*, Boston: Wisdom Publication 2000, 254, see also 54-55,

The Prague xylograph – similarly to Ulaanbaatar thangka – comprises a short Tibetan inscription at the bottom of the picture. Transliteration of the text is as follows:

rigs ldan nyer lnga'i slu brnyan 'di// mkhr rdo'i grwa tshang tshugs skabs su// rta mgrin zhes bya gyi na bas// bzhangs ba'i dpar brko 'jam dbyang kyis// bgyis pa'i dge bas pha ma sogs// shambha la ru skyes par shog//

and translation:

This depiction of twenty-five Kulikas was formed in the time of establishing the *Mkhar rdo* monastery and caused by the illness of one called Tamdrin (*rta mgrin*). By the virtue of engraving work of Jamyang (*jam dbyangs*) let parents and others be born in Shambhala.²³

There are two forms of depiction of Tibetan deities and figures of the pantheon, i.e. quiet, peaceful and wrathful, angry forms. As far as Shambhala rulers are concerned, depictions of the last Kulika Rudra Chakrin are best known. The Prague thangka is a typical example of the first, quiet depiction. Due to the fact that similar depictions of twenty five Kulikas and Kalachakra (we have in mind just those pictures where only these figures are present without the context of the capital city of Kalapa and the last Shambhala battle) have not been extensively published and described in the world literature, we can say that the Prague thangka represents a rare type of depiction, and therefore it deserves our attention. It does not mean that this depiction type was not widespread in Inner Asia, particularly in Tibet, Mongolia and Buryatia. The contrary is true, we may assume that it was quite common, which is evidenced by the fact that the thangka is an uncolored xylograph of rather rough appearance. It was probably intended for purchase by common believers, who then placed it on the home altar in their yurt, nomadic tent or a village or city dwelling. That is a xylographic black and white thangka, a typical representative of folk art, or art created to suit vast masses of common Buddhists.

In the end we must mention one big peculiarity. Although this type of thangka (Kalachakra and the Twenty-Five Kulika Kings of Shambhala) have been described and reproduced in literature, this particular thangka has not yet been published in expert literature. The only known copy printed on white canvas and found in Prague was unexpectedly joined by another copy, printed on red canvas, found in the collection of Rudolf Pe-

Fig. 72; the same text written by Jamyang Kyentse Wangpo, 1820-1892 see <<http://www.himalayanart.org/image.cfm/924.html>> (22. 1. 2007).

23 Translated by Daniel Berounský.



sl (Pestl-Stiftung) in Munich.²⁴ Probably the most remarkable fact is that both the above-mentioned copies were printed from one and the same xylographic matrix in Mongolia in the 19th century. It is quite a rare case for the same prints to appear in the same time once in a Czech and once in a German collection.

RESUMÉ

Kálačakra a dvacet pět kuliků: pražská xylografie

Příspěvek se zabývá ikonografickým popisem vzácné mongolské xylografické thangky zachycující božstvo Kola času (sa. Kálačakra) a dvacet pět kuliků, králů buddhistického mytického království Šambhaly. Tento typ zobrazení byl sice v literatuře již popsán a reprodukován, tato konkrétní thangka dosud publikována nebyla. K jedinému dosud známému exempláři v tibetské sbírce Náprstkova muzea v Praze nečekaně přibyl exemplář další, provedený pro změnu na červeném plátně a nacházející se ve sbírce Rudolfa Pesla (Pestl-Stiftung) v Mnichově. Oba exempláře jsou tištěné ze stejné xylografické matrice v 19. století v Mongolsku. Zobrazení třiceti dvou šambhalských vládců, dharmarádžů a kuliků je v tibetském buddhismu poměrně časté, vzácnější je zobrazení pouze kuliků, jako je tomu na popisované thangce. Obraz obsahuje i tibetský text zachycující okolnosti vzniku této thangky.

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24 See Alla Gomboyeva, “Vmesterozhdenyi Kalachakra, cherno-belaya ksilografiiia” [Innate (Sahaja) Kalachakra, Black and White Xylographic Thangka, in Russian], *Description of the from the Rudolf Pestl Collection*, unpublished manuscript.