

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

DEPARTMENT OF
ORIENTAL LANGUAGES
BERKELEY 4, CALIFORNIA

May 24, 1948

Mr. George Roerich
Mandihouse
New Delhi, India

Dear Mr. Roerich:

Thank you for your letter and reprint which arrived today and which I appreciate very much.

I am very much disappointed and sorry to hear that you can not find the funds for the publication of your dictionary for which we have been so eagerly waiting. Do you have any specimen pages you could let me have? I should like to make an attempt at least to interest people who might be able and willing to contribute to the cost of publishing it.

The second volume of the Yung-ho-kung is still far away in the future as the pressure of work here makes it impossible for me to give any appreciable amount of time to it.

I would appreciate greatly some used Indian stamps if you have time to think about such little details, but I do not wish this request to be a burden to you. A few used stamps would be welcome as I am making a collection for a gift to my grandsons.

Very sincerely yours,

F. Lessing

Ferdinand D. Lessing

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Department of Oriental Languages
University of California
Berkeley, California
May 25, 1951.

Dr. George W. Roerich
"Crookety",
Kalimpong.
West Bengal, India.

Dear Dr. Roerich:

I hope your work is progressing and that you are well.

The University of California recently printed an article of mine for the Popper Anniversary volume. It is entitled, Calling the Soul: A Lamaist Ritual. Under separate cover, I am forwarding to you a reprint of this admittedly trifling production.

Cordially yours,

F. D. Lessing

F. D. Lessing.

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660 Euclid Avenue
Berkeley 8, Calif.
February 18, 1952.

Dear Dr. Roerich:

Going over my correspondence, I have the impression that I forgot to thank you for your article on the author of the Hor chos 'byuñ, which I think is very important. Please accept my belated thanks and my apologies.

The Mongolian-English dictionary on which I am working with Professor Poppe now in Seattle, Mr. Kassatkin, and the very competent Mongol informant Madai Haltod, is expected to be ready on cards by the middle of next year, but I am afraid its publication may be delayed for some time. On the whole, it will be a practical, comprehensive dictionary, not a scientific one. Mr. Wayman and myself will contribute Buddhist technical terms (with Tibetan and Sanskrit equivalents as far as possible). Would you have any contributions or suggestions to make? They would be most welcome.

We are anxiously awaiting the publication of your Tibetan-English dictionary. Is there any tangible hope now?

Thanking you once more,

Cordially yours,

F. D. Lessing
F. D. Lessing.

F. D. Lessing
660 Euclid Avenue
Berkeley, 8, California
U.S.A.



AIR LETTER

**VIA AIR MAIL
PAR AVION**

Dr. George Roerich
"Crookety",
Kalimpong,
West Bengal,
India.

IF ANYTHING IS ENCLOSED, THIS LETTER
WILL BE SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL

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REC'D BY REGISTER

660 Euclid Ave.
Berkeley 8, Calif.
February 8, 1954.

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Dear Dr. Roerich:

It has been a long time since I heard from you. My co-worker Wayman gave me your regards, and I learned from him that your valuable research is progressing satisfactorily. I hope that you are in good health.

Assuming that you read German, excellent linguist as you are, I am permitting myself to enclose a circular letter which reports on my activities during the last year. If you should not read German, just dispose of the letter as you see fit.

I wonder whether I may bother you to purchase for me the books listed on the enclosed sheet. My own attempts to get in touch with Mr. Tharchin have not been successful and it is for this reason that I permit myself to ask your help. If it would inconvenience you, please advise me how to proceed best.

With many thanks in advance, I am

Sincerely yours,

F. D. Lessing

F. D. Lessing.

List of books:

The Tibetan First Book by G. Tharchin	2 copies.
The Tibetan Second Book by "	3 copies.
Primer of Current Hand-writing by "	1 copy.
Tibetan Syllables by Sir Basil Gould	1 copy.
Tibetan Sentences by " " "	2 copies.
Tibetan Word Book by " " "	2 copies.

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April 13, 1955

Dr. G. Roerich
P.O. Kalimpong
W. Bengal
India

Dear Dr. Roerich:

I am mailing to you under separate cover a few pages from an exhibition guide which were published as a separate article - an undeserved honor. May be they will amuse you for a few minutes.

I am glad to report that we received the second volume of your Blue Annals in the Library.

With best wishes for your health and further success,

Sincerely,

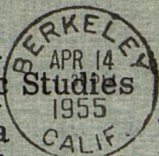
F. D. Lessing
F. D. Lessing

F. D. Lessing

Institute of East Asiatic
University of California

Berkeley 4, Calif. USA

**AIR LETTER
AÉROGRAMME**



**VIA AIR MAIL
PAR AVION**

Dr. G. ROERICH

P. O. Kalimpong

W. Bengal

I N D I A

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

INSTITUTE OF EAST ASIATIC STUDIES
BERKELEY 4, CALIFORNIA

8th June
asked for Roerich,
and Schofer.
6
May 5, 1954.

Dr. G. Roerich
Kalimpong

Dear Dr. Roerich:

Thank you so much for your letter, received yesterday. It was really very kind of you to find the books for me which you announced. I only hope I did not put you to too much trouble. I will reimburse you as soon as I know how much I owe you. If there is anything I can do for you, please do not hesitate to let me know. Of course I would like to have a copy of Yig bsgur rnam gzhag when it will become available.

I am glad you met my former pupil and friend professor Hoffmann, who, I understand, is now already on his way back.

You may know that the former Tibetan Government permitted the University to send a copy of the Lhasa edition of the Kanjur. I understand that this copy did reach Kalimpong, but what finally happened to it, I do not know. In any case it never reached us. I wonder whether you have any information about it, for I am still interested.

Mr. Harrer is now in this country and may be now in Alaska to study the eskimos there. He is engaged for a lecture tour this fall and I hope to meet him later this year in Berkeley.

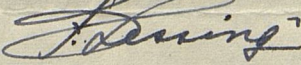
I permit myself to include a brief description of the 3rd part of the Mongolian English Dictionary assuming that you may be interested. Any suggestions, criticisms or contribution you are willing to make will be very welcome.

I cannot tell you how sorry I am that your own Tibetan-English Dictionary has not yet seen the light. We all need it so badly, but I understand very well that your important work "The Blue Annals" has consumed very much of your time and energy. May I extend my warmest congratulations on the publication of the 2nd Volume of that admirable work.

I am very unhappy that my Dictionary consumes practically

all of my time and therefore the publication of Mkhas grub is being delayed, but Alex Wayman is busy collectioning notes from Tibetan sources, thus making this work more and more his exclusive production. I am glad to have such a competent and conscientious co-worker.

Sincerely yours,



Ferdinand D. Lessing.

Encl. 1.

MONGOLIAN DICTIONARY

Part III Buddhist Terminology.

A. Reasons for Compiling this Supplement: Since the days of the father of Mongolian lexicography, J. Kovalevsky, more than 100 years ago, no attempt has been made to include the intricate Buddhist terminology in any of the more recent dictionaries of the Mongolian language. The reason is that almost none of the lexicographers and very few of the other Mongolists were familiar with that branch of Mongolian literature which surpasses in volume the entire profane literature of the Mongols by far. Mongolists generally agree that a Buddhist terminological dictionary is indispensable even for such readers of Mongolian texts who are not especially interested in Buddhism. The largest number of Buddhist terms coined during and after the so-called Second Conversion of the Mongols, from around 1600 A D onwards are patterned after Tibetan models which in turn reflect Sanskrit originals.

The Tibetan translators of lo tsha wa felt the need of rendering a given Sanskrit term as closely as possible, but they could not dream to compete with one of the richest of all languages regarding its wealth of roots or the variety of compounds and derivations. However, they succeeded at least in replacing, on the one hand, Sanskrit prefixes with formations made up of a noun (substantive or adjective) in one of its oblique cases which was prefixed to the basic word, and on the other hand some of the Sanskrit suffixes which make abstracts by special words which in the process lost or modified their original meaning.

The Mongols, docile pupils, followed suit when they, during and after their second conversion, began translating the sacred scriptures from the Tibetan and writing on religious subjects in their mother tongue.

A few examples, chosen at random, will make that clear.

T.	M.	S.	English
<u>yongs</u>			All, whole.
<u>yongs su</u> (loc. case)	<u>oyuyata</u>	<u>pari -</u> (cf. Greek peri -)	Wholly.
<u>dag pa</u>	<u>ariyun</u>	<u>cuddha</u>	Clean, pure.
<u>yongs su dag pa</u>	<u>oyuyata ariyun</u>	<u>pari - cuddha</u>	Wholly pure.

T.	M	S.	English
<u>rnam pa</u>			Manner
<u>rnam par</u> ("in a manner")	<u>tein byged</u> ("thus")	<u>vi -</u>	
<u>ces pa</u>	<u>medekyi</u>	<u>jnāna</u>	Knowledge.
<u>rnam par ces pa</u>	<u>tein byged medekyi</u>	<u>vi - jnāna</u>	Cognition.
<u>nyid</u> "self"	<u>cinar</u> "nature, character" (Ch. hsing)	<u>- tā</u> (abstraction suffix)	- ness
<u>ston pa</u>	<u>xoyusun</u>	<u>cūnya</u>	Void
<u>ston pa nyid</u>	<u>xoyusun cinar</u>	<u>cūnya - tā</u>	Voidness

From these examples which could be easily increased ad infinitum it is obvious that we have to deal in both languages, Tibetan and Mongolian, with an artificial idiom, full of "loan translations". Contrary to the Tibetan, the Mongolian language has a considerable number of either indirect borrowings from Sanskrit, such as nirvan S. nirvana, sansar S. samsara and of direct loan words from the Uigur, as nisvanis = S. Kleṣa "passion, defilement, etc.

Western scholars have early sensed the problems involved in translating religious and philosophical terms occurring in Chinese, Tibetan and Mongol texts and stressed the necessity of going back to the original Sanskrit wherever possible. About 100 years ago the great Russian Orientalist Vassilyev stated the problem concisely writing that "it is in the Sanskrit word that the whole etymological [we would now say "semantic"] horizon is mirrored." On the other hand, when two German scholars wrote an article in which they tried to determine the meanings of such a polysemantic word as dharma on purely philological grounds, disregarding its connotations in various philosophical contexts, they drew sharp criticism from that great authority on Buddhist philosophy Stcherbatzkoï. Tracing a Sanskrit word to its ultimate source, thus trying to establish its Urbedeutung - an often very elusive magnitude - is certainly important for the history of semantics, but I do feel that it is not possible to build a correct and intelligible translation on the findings so obtained, because this method leaves a decisive factor, Sprachgebrauch, usage, out of consideration.

The ultimate limit to which we can go back in establishing the "semantic horizon" of terms used in Mahāyāna Buddhism is their Sanskrit prototype.

It may be argued that the Mongolian translations of Buddhist texts play too unimportant a part to justify the compilation of a dictionary, that many Mongolian terms are inept, or outright incorrect, that in contrast to the situation in Tibet, there was in Mongolia never an organized tendency towards uniformity and homogeneousness in the creation of a Buddhist terminology. These objections are only partly valid. More and more Mongolian sources, including the Kanjur and Tanjur have come to light waiting for our research. This fact alone would justify a Mongolian - English Terminological Dictionary. It disposes also of the arguments touching upon the aptness and homogeneousness of the terminology. Moreover it must be conceded that the Mongolian syntax owing to its more developed morphology is superior to the Tibetan in this respect. Finally the better Mongolian translators knew very well how to choose between the various synonyms of their own language so as to make the sense perfectly clear.

I believe the old philological principle that the Western translator of a difficult text should explore all the available material which would help him in solving the problems involved in his work, and I believe that the Mongolian language, which is of such an easy approach, is an excellent tool to work with, provided that it is used with discretion.

In addition to that, the Tibetan and Sanskrit equivalents added plus a Tibetan and Sanskrit index will make the dictionary useful for readers of texts written in any of the three languages concerned.

B. Purpose and General Features of the Dictionary of Buddhist terms.

I am well aware of the immensity of the task I have undertaken, and the impossibility to solve it to everybody's satisfaction, certainly not to my own. Nevertheless I feel I should put the result of my studies at the disposal of others working in this field.

Besides the Mongolian terms this part of the Dictionary will show the Tibetan and Sanskrit equivalents and their English meanings gathered from the writings of the best authorities.

A Tibetan, Sanskrit, and English terminological index will be added so as to make the book a quadruple key. It would have been desirable to add the Chinese equivalents, but that would have been an interminable task.

C. Scope of the Dictionary.

Of course the task of compiling this part of our Mongolian-English Dictionary had to be limited. The bulk of the terms to be explained will come from the well-known Sanskrit Tibetan dictionary of Buddhist terms "Mahāvvyutpatti" of which the University has a record print copy with the Mongolian equivalents added to it. Its translation into English is now in progress. After elimination of the duplicates, errors, and superfluous items, this work is expected to yield about 10,000 entries. Additional material is coming from Kovalevski's Dictionary which has to be very carefully sifted, on account of the many mistakes in forms and translations which are unavoidable in a pioneer work.

As a third source I may mention my own collection of words, phrases and realia.

Finally the current research in Lamaist literature carried on by A. Wayman is expected to enrich the Dictionary appreciably. In all these studies the Dictionary of Hybrid Buddhist Sanskrit by Prof. Franklin Edgerton is of invaluable help.

It is hoped that this part of the Dictionary Project will be ready in approximately two years, possibly at the end of 1955.

Berkeley April 3, 1954.

F.D. Lessing.

June 17, 1954

Dr. G. Roerich,
Kalimpong, W. Bengal
India

Dear Dr. Roerich:

Thank you very much for your letter of June 8th and for your kind help in finding those books for me. So far I have not yet received any of the books you mention, but I trust they will arrive one of these days.

I am going to find for you Mr. von Koerber's "Morphology of the Tibetan Language". I think it is still available. I have shown your letter to Mr. Wayman who promised to write you immediately.

Thanking you again,

With kind regards,

Sincerely yours

Ferdinand D. Lessing.

P. S. Just before mailing this letter I received your package containing two copies of Tibetan Primers. Thank you very much. Mr. Wayman and I shall be very glad to look for any books you desire to purchase in this country.

*It simplifies matters if you give us
University address, esp. for registered
mail.*

F. D. Lossing
Institute of East Asiatic Studies
University of California
Berkeley 4, Calif. U. S. A.

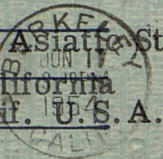


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AIR LETTER

**VIA AIR MAIL
PAR AVION**

Dr. G. Roerich,
Kalimpong
W. Bengal
India

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August 25th, 1954.

Dr. G. Roerich
P.O. Kalimpong
West Bengal,
India

Dear Dr. Roerich:

I received two copies of the Tibetan Primer and one copy of the Letter Writer which contains very interesting material.

Would it be too much of imposition on you to ask you to send four additional copies of the Letter Writer some time at your convenience.

I thought I had a copy of von Koerber's MORPHOLOGY OF THE TIBETAN LANGUAGE when I received your letter and I wanted to mail it to you, but at the moment I cannot find it. I therefore ordered a copy from P. D. and Ione PERKINS which will be mailed to you directly. The bill will be paid by me. The price is \$5.00. I hope that this arrangement is satisfactory to you. Please let me know how much I owe you.

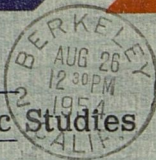
I am really very grateful for your generous cooperation.

With best wishes and kindest regards,

Very sincerely,

F. D. Lessing
F. D. Lessing.

F. D. Lessing
Institute of East Asiatic Studies
University of California
Berkeley 4, Calif. USA



AIR LETTER

**VIA AIR MAIL
PAR AVION**

Dr. G. Roerich
P. O. Kalimpong
West Bengal
India

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Allen, die diese Zeilen lesen, wünsche ich ein gesundes und frohes neues Jahr!

Liebe Freunde: Wie im vorigen Jahre, so möchte ich auch von diesem Jahreschlusse mich Ihnen allen in Erinnerung bringen, indem ich Ihnen wenigstens einen, wenn auch trockenen Bericht über mein "Tun und Treiben" senden. Trostlich muß er leider ausfallen, da das Jahr an äußeren Erlebnissen nicht gerade reich war. Aber dann schaut man ja in meinem Alter am wenigsten aus. Eigentlich kann ich also nur über meine Arbeit berichten, denn die füllt meinen ganzen Tag aus. Das einzige "Ereignis", das mir gerade einfällt, war die Tagung des Westzweiges der Amer. Orientgesellschaft, die im vergang. Frühjahr in Seattle stattfand. Sie war der Entfern. wegen, von auswärts, außer von Berk., schwächer besucht als man hätte wünschen mögen, und es war meist der Nachwuchs-erfreulicherweise--der zu Worte kam. Ueberwiegend waren tibetologische Gegenstände, die zu Worte kamen. Ich selbst gab meinen Abschiedsvortr. als Vorsitz. über das gewagte Thema: Dionysos und Yama (Parallelen und Vergleiche). Ich erntete Beifall, a. b. kein Echo. Kein Wunder! Es war erfrischend, so viele alte Bekannte zu grüßen: H. Wilhelm, Franz Michael, Ruth Krader (Schlesinger, Li Fang-kuei u. a. m. Sie alle ließen uns fühlen, daß wir willkommen waren. - Zur eigenen Arbeit: Die Zettelsammlung zur 1ten Bande des mong. Wörterbuchs--mong.-engl.--näher sich dem Abschluß. Im Jan. hoffen wir mit der Maschschrift zu beginnen. Das mag ein Jahr dauern. Von dieser Abschrift wird durch Photo-offset das Buch vervielfältigt. Da wir die moderne antl. Schreibg u. Form der Wörter, wo nötig und angänig, bringen, brauchen wir 2 elektr. Schreibmaschinen. Im Sommer hatten wir das große Glück, Koll. Poppe aus Seattle hier zur Zusammenarbeit zu haben. Er hat uns großzügig mit Rat u. Tat unterstützt: eine unerschöpfliche Quelle der Belehrung. Der 2te Teil soll einen engl. Index nach dem Muster von Mostaerts musterhaften Wörterb. enthalten, ferner das mong. tib. Sanskrit Fachwörterb. für Buddhismus. Für diesen Teil rechn ich noch 2 Jahre, doch kann ich im Augenblick nichts sagen, ob ich es beenden kann, da die Univ mich nicht über den 30ten/6ten 54 hinaus beschäftigen kann. - Am Yung-ho-kung arbeiten Alex Waymann und ich fleißig weiter. Die Tatsache, daß wir jetzt eine kleine tib. Bibliothek haben, macht eine zeitraubende Um- arbeitg vieler Teile des bisherige n. nötig. Außerd. arbeitet Wan seiner Übersetzung des Lam rin von Tsongkhapa u. ich mit ihm am "System des Tantrismus", das wir bis zum Juni 54 fertig zu haben hoffn. - Den Rahmen meines oben erwähnten Fachwörterbuchs bildet die mong. Übersetz. der Mahāvvyutpatti. 2mal in dies. Jahre bin nach dem reizenden Carmel--etwa 200 km von hier--"entflohen, um still für mich zu arbeiten. Das war eine gute Erholung. Carmel, alte Franziskanermission--als es noch Indianer gab--dann Künstlerkolonie, hat seinen alten Anziehungskraft immer noch nicht ganz eingebüßt. Ich wollte, ich könnte ständig dort wohnen!--Am 2ten Dez hörte ich einen Vortrag des deutsch. Generalkons. Stahlberg über die Einschaltg Deutschlands in Europa (Vereingte Staaten v. Eur), der starken Beifall und zustimmende Wiederhall hervorrief. Die Botschaft hör ich wohl," (ich hörte sie auch gern). Hiermit schließe ich diese trockene Epistel, von der ich immerhin hoffe, daß sie wenigstens einigen Empfängern Interesse ab-

Hessner

herzliche Grüsse

Allen F. ...

Abgeminnert

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

INSTITUTE OF EAST ASIATIC STUDIES
BERKELEY 4, CALIFORNIA

December 1, 1954

Dr. G. Roerich
P. O. Kalimpong
W. Bengal, India

Dear Dr. Roerich:

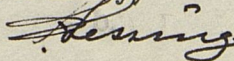
Since a number of weeks I am receiving regularly the YULCHOG SOSOI SARGYUR MELONG. I believe it is through your good offices that I am happy to get this interesting publication which, however, I have sometimes difficulty to read as the dictionaries which I have at my disposal leave me in the lurch. This applies to many of the modern terms.

Please let me know how much I owe you in the way of subscription fees or, if that is not the matter of your concern, would you be so kind as to ask the publisher to send me a bill (unless it is a courtesy copy, which I do not assume it is).

I hope you are well and make good progress with your important studies. The Mongolian Dictionary is moving at a snail's pace, but some time at the end of the next year it will be ready for the press, I hope.

With sincere thanks for your kind cooperation,

Cordially,



Ferdinand D. Lessing.

077. 7.11.55.