SOURCES FOR THE *OLD TIBETAN CHRONICLE*: A FRAGMENT FROM THE NON-EXTANT *CHRONICLE POTHI*[*]

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The *Old Tibetan Chronicle* (P.t.1286 + P.t.1287) is one of the most important and most interesting of the Tibetan documents recovered from cave 17 at Mogao. It stands at the beginnings of the Tibetan historical genre and, as a transitional text showing traces of composition in performance, it is an ancestor to Tibet's famous epic tradition. In fact, what we refer to as the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* is only a tattered and broken scroll. Alongside this extant *Chronicle* scroll, there are two "*Chronicle* Fragments" in *pothi* format, P.t.1144 and IOL Tib J 1375. As Uray has pointed out, these two fragments are evidently the only extant leaves from a larger document. We can refer to this lost work as the "*Chronicle pothi*." It is not at all surprising that there should have existed other versions of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*. Uray demonstrated long ago that episodes from the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* have been transmitted continuously by Tibetan historical tradition, and thease are quoted in later sources such as the *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston* (Uray 1967) and the Dba' bzhed (Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 97-98, n.387). This constitutes firm evidence that our extant *Chronicle* scroll was part of a fairly widespread tradition, probably with several versions in circulation. In what follows, I will adopt a text-critical approach to the *pothi*-format "*Chronicle* Fragment" IOL Tib J 1375 and its corresponding passage in the *Chronicle* scroll in order to investigate Uray's claim that the former was the proximate source for the latter. This exercise will shed some new light on the nature of the *Chronicle* scroll and the approach of its author(s)/compiler(s)/redactor(s) to its sources, and will also afford us some limited insight into the nature of the *Chronicle pothi*.

In a three-page footnote to his seminal article on law and state in early Tibet, Géza Uray examined the two *pothi*-format "*Chronicle* Fragments," P.t.1144 and IOL Tib J 1375, and noted their similarity in size and format, their ruled lines, and the identical placement of the string hole in each. Uray also pointed out that both folia appear to be written in the same hand, and noted a ligature in which "the double *cheg* partly or totally merges into the *shad* following it." In this way Uray

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demonstrated that they belong to the same non-extant *pothi* document (Uray 1972a:37, n. 91). Having been able to consult high quality images of both folia, and the manuscripts themselves, I can add to Uray's observations a few other notes on their physical features that further confirm Uray's conclusion. Both *pothi* fragments share the following features, which are most conveniently presented in a list:

Margins: 8mm left margin
Laidlines per 3cm: not observed
Chain lines: not observed
Thickness: not measured, but thick to the touch
Translucency: not measured, but opaque to the eye
Guidelines: only on *recto*
Space between lines/ leading (measured from bottom of the *ba* – without descender – to the heads on the line below): 9mm
Ornamentation: *mgo yig*: $ and $//; no ornamentation around string holes
Punctuation: single and midline *tsheg*; two or three double *tsheg* on each side, tending to be at the end of a sentence; straight *shad* and *kyog shad,* inclined 5:30–6:00 o'clock; single and double *shad*; *anusvara*; no strikethroughs or annotations
Position of vowels over the root: mostly center, some left
gi gu's curl in degrees: 180 (plus or minus 20)
Ratio of *gi gu* to *gi log*: 6:1
Ratio between head and tail of *na ro*: 1:1.5
greng bo's angle in clock terms: 9:30, sometimes looped
Degree of inclination of descenders: 5-6 o'clock
Noteworthy consonants: *kha*: left descender inclines to 7:30; *cha*: headed; *pa*: 1 stroke, sometimes with a loop; *ba*: some square, some triangular, some trapezoidal (triangular with head); *'a*: no hooks
da drag: not observed
Final *'a* (as in *pa'*): not observed
Position of root under superscripts: slightly right or centered
Subscripts:
ya btags: inclines to 1 o clock; combines with *zhabs kyu* in a single stroke; sometimes it is to the right, not under the root
la btags: is one stroke, normal size
ra btags: points to 8:30, has no descender

The *shad* to which Uray refers, which approximates a *kyog shad*, the sparing use of the double *tsheg*, and the adjacent (not under) *ya btags*, along with an otherwise identical *ductus*, leave little doubt that we have two leaves of the same *pothi*, written by the same person.
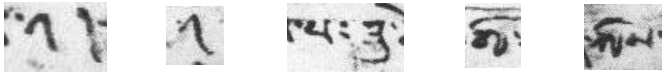
Beyond using the above description to augment Uray's observations, I also present it here as an example of an evolving template for descriptions of Old Tibetan manuscripts. In quantifying some of these observations, such as the angle of a *greng bo* or the degrees of a *gi gu's* curl, there will naturally be some variation. The human hand does not always make the same stroke every time, so a scribe's *gi gu* may turn 160 degrees one time and 200 degrees the next. Still, I think this is an improvement over simple prose descriptions such as "curly" or "very curly." Similarly, if vowels are inserted to the left above the root, this is a predominant trend within a piece of writing, and it will likely also include instances of vowels directly above or even to the right of the root, so it is probably impossible to quantify this accurately in millimeters. As part of a larger database, these manuscript descriptions could never be a substitute for consulting images or for consulting the manuscripts themselves, but they could prospectively narrow the field of likely manuscripts for comparison when one is attempting to define a particular style, scribe, and so forth. As will be obvious, this template-in-progress is deeply indebted to the excellent works of Cristina Scherrer-Schaub and of Sam van Schaik and Jacob Dalton.[1]

Looking to their contents, Uray pointed out that P.t.1144, which concerns the imprisonment of Stag bu Snya gzigs (the grandfather of Khri Srong btsan/ Srong btsan sgam po), has no corresponding passage in the *Chronicle* scroll, but that the tradition of Stag bu's imprisonment is preserved in Bon po historiography (Uray 1972a: 37–38, n. 91).[2] More importantly for our purposes, Uray recognized that IOL Tib J 1375, which concerns the career of minister Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse in the early-to-mid-7th century, overlaps significantly with passages in the *Chronicle* scroll. Uray pointed out that the *Chronicle pothi* version is focused on the career of Zu tse as such, and that this career spans the reigns of two kings,

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1   See Scherrer-Schaub 1999 and Scherrer-Schaub and Bonani 2002. See also Dalton, Davis, and van Schaik 2007 and van Schaik's contribution to this volume.

2   Uray cited the *Rgyal rabs bon gyi 'byung gnas*, which drew on "an unknown work entitled *Bsgrag byang*." This seems to be the *Bsgrags pa gling grags*, which is now known to us in at least four versions; Dondrup Lhagyal, "A comparative study of four different editions of the *Bsgrags pa gling grags*, an early text on Bon history." Paper presented at the 11th Seminar of the IATS, Königswinter, 31 August 2006. See also Blondeau 1990. Indeed the tale of Stag bu Snya gzigs' imprisonment by the king of Lho brag is known in the *Bsgrags pa gling grags*, but the only apparent similarity between this version and the fragment in the *pothi* – which is quite damaged – is that Stag bu is imprisoned by the King of Lho brag. In the *Bsgrags pa gling grags* version he is rescued by a Bon po, but this is not found in the *pothi* fragment P.t.1144, so it is not possible to speak of textual transmission in this instance, but only of a more general relationship in which both sources recount the same narrative episode, though in different circumstances.

Gnam ri Slon btsan and Khri Srong btsan (d. 649). Uray emphasizes that the scroll version of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, on the other hand, organizes its chapters according to the reigns of the kings, and as a result it splits the "Zu tse biography" into different parts, one appearing in a chapter relating to Slon btsan, another in a chapter relating to Khri Srong btsan (and yet another in the list of chief ministers). Uray saw in this a telling difference between the two works such that the *Chronicle* scroll has forced its source(s) into its (imperfect) chronological organization according to the reigns of the Tibetan kings.[3]

After his comparison of the parallel passages, Uray reflected on the nature of the *Chronicle pothi* and its role in the redaction of the *Chronicle* scroll: "[a]ll in all the two folios referred to as *Chronicle Fragments* of Tunhuang are remnants of an historical work, the redaction of which is older and in several respects wider ranging than the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, moreover it must have been one of the direct sources of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*" (Uray 1972a: 39, n. 91). This is a striking and important conclusion, and one that I will seek to verify by subjecting IOL Tib J 1375 to a careful text-critical analysis and comparison with the relevant passage from the *Chronicle* scroll at chr. vii, ll. 315–322, or "Part 2 of the History of Minister Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse."[4] Below, the two passages are presented in adjacent columns for ease of comparison. I have introduced spacing not found in the originals so that the two columns line up easily. The passages can also be compared alongside each other in the reproductions of the originals. For digital images, one should consult the Artstor and IDP websites, and of course full transliterations of these texts can be found at the OTDO website.

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3   See discussion in Uray 1992. See also the relevant arguments in Macdonald 1971: 333–35 and in Spanien and Imaeda 1979: 21–31 concerning the structure and genre of the *Chronicle* scroll.

4   The abbreviations of the chapter divisions of the *Chronicle* scroll follow those in Uray 1992. This treats the *Royal Genealogy* (P.t.1286) and the *Chronicle* (P.t.1287) as two parts of the same document.

IOL Tib J 1375

(r1) $ / 'i bka' gros la gtogste zu tse glo ba nye 'o / / 'ung gi 'og du / / btsan po [yab? khri?] srong rtsan gyi ring la /
(r2) myang zhang snang glo ba rIngs pa zu tses dku 'pel te / / btsan po'i snyan du gsol te / / zhang snang bkuM nas zu tse
(r3) glo ba nye'o / / to yo chas la'I rjo bo bor yon tse brlag ste / / to yo chas la lastsogs te byang gi zhang zhung thams
(r4) cad / khrI srong rtsan gyi phyag du phul te / / zu tse glo ba nye'o / / btsan po'i blon po nang na / spung sad zu tse las glo ba
(r5) nyes ba sngan chad kyang ma byung ngo / / zu tse 'dzangs so shes so / / sgyu che zhing mkhas so / / dpa' shes pa'o / chu gang
(r6) che'o / / yang ba rIng ngo / / myi chig la tshogs dgu tshogs na / spung sad zu tse la tshogs dgu tshogs so / /
(v1) $ / 'ung gI 'og du btsan po khri srong rtsan gyi rIng la / / khyung po spung sad zu tse lta zhig rgaste nyi ma 'der gnang ngo / / 'ung nas
(v2) btsan po'i zha sngar / zu tses gsol pa / / sngun yab gnam rI'i ring la / / bdag gis 'bangsu bkug pa lta zhig / yab
(v3) kyis kyang ma gzigs / zhabs kyis kyang ma bcags na / / btsan po sras kyis / spyan kyis gzigs shing / zhabs kyis
(v4) bcagste / / bdag rgan po'i sdum pa khri bomsu dgyes skyems ston mo gsol bar ji gnang zhes gsol nas
(v5) btsan po khri srong rtsan gyis zu tse gsol ba bzhin du gnang ngo / 'ung gi rjes la / / mgar yul zung pho brang sa 'dri
(v6) bar bka' stsal te / / zu tse gan du mkhar khri bomsu mchis nas / / / / mgar [yul? zung?] gis bltas na / mkhar

P.t.1287

/ zing po rje srid brlag pa 'I blo la' / (203) gthogs te / / zu tse glo ba nye 'o / /

315) $ / / 'ung gI 'i 'og du / / khyung po spung sad zu tses / / myang zhang snang btsan po la glo ba rings pa / / zu tses dku' bel te / / zhang snang bkum ste / / zu tse (316) glo ba nye 'o / /

btsan po 'i blon po 'i nang na / / khyung po spung sad zu tse las glo ba nye ba sngon chad ma byung ngo / / zu tse 'dzangs she na 'dzangs / / dpa' (317) zhe na dpa' 'o / / chu gang che zhe na che / / yang ba rIng zhe na ringo / / myI chig la tshogs dgu' tshogs na / / spung sad zu tse 'o / /

'ung gI 'og du / (318) btsan po 'dI 'i ring la / / khyung po spung sad zu tse lta zhIg / / rgas te nyi ma 'der gnang ngo / /

btsan po zha sngar khyung po spung sad kyis gsol pa' / (319) sngon btsan po 'i yab gnam rI 'i ring la / / bdagIs rtsang bod 'bangs su bkug pa lta zhig / / yab kyis spyan gyIs ma gzigs / / zhabs (320) kyIs ma bchags na / / btsan po sras kyIs spyan gyIs gzigs / / zhabs kyIs bchagste / / bdagI sdum pa khrI bomsu / / dgyes skyems / (321) ston mo gsol du jI gnang zhes gsol nas / / btsan pos spung sad gsol ba bzhin gnang ste / / mgar yul zung pho brang sa 'drir (322) bka' stsal nas / / yul zung khri boms su mchis te / brtags na / / dku gang pub par yul zung gIs tshor nas / / yul zung slar broste (323) btsan po 'i snyan du gsol to / /
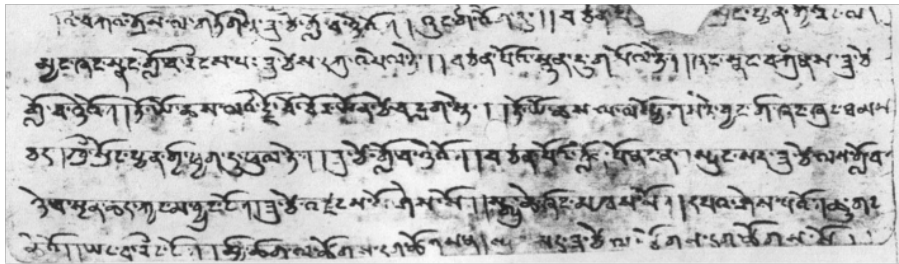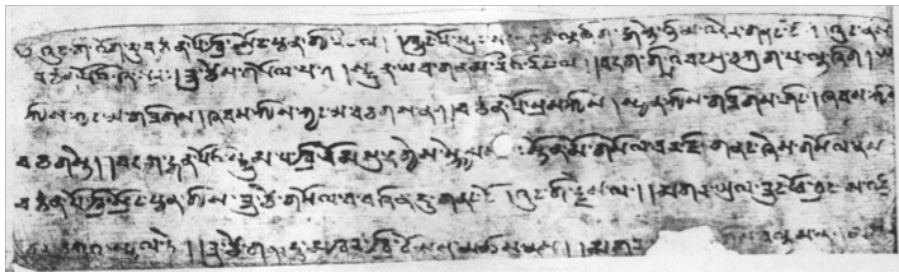
Figure 1: IOL Tib J 1375, recto.

Figure 2: IOL Tib J 1375, verso.

Since I shall take Uray's comparison of these passages as my starting point, it will be useful to quote his observations in full. Uray noted three points in his comparison of these two passages:

> 1. In the sentence of the *Chronicle Fragments* which speaks of the decoying of Myang Zhang snang the adverbial phrase *bcan-po [Khri] [sro]ṅ gyi ring la* is used, because the preceding sentence referred to Slon bcan's age; on the other hand, this adverbial phrase was omitted in the *Chronicle*, because in this work the preceding part also dealt with Khri Sroṅ rcan's age. 2. In the *Chronicle Fragments* the agent of the sentence speaking of the decoying is only Zu-ces, i.e. the instrumental case of the short form of the name, because in this work Khyuṅ po's biography was continuously narrated; on the other hand, in the *Chronicle* at the beginning of the sentence, Khyuṅ po Spuṅ sad Zu ces, i.e. the instrumental case of the full name was inserted as an agent, thereby indicating the change from Myang Mang po rje Zhang snaṅ's biography to the second part of Khyuṅ po's biography. 3. In the *Chronicle*, even the original agent, Zu-ces which now became unnecessary, was left in its place with the new agent. This error clearly proves that the version of the Biography [of Zu-tse] in the *Chronicle* is secondary both in its structure and its text as compared with the version in the *Chronicle Fragments*. (Uray 1972a: 39, n. 91).
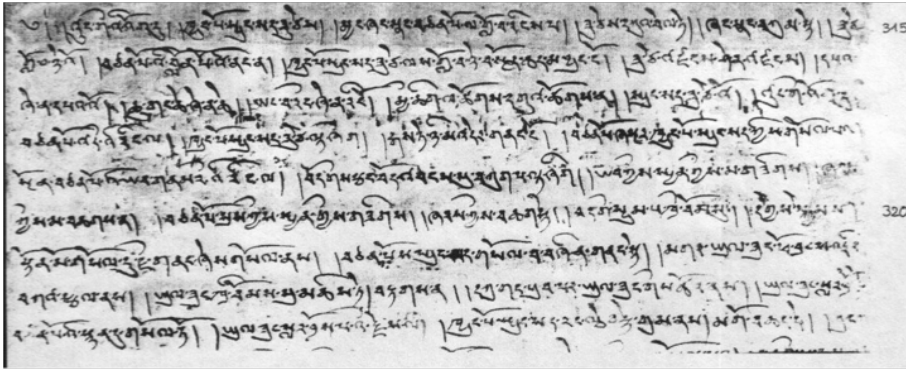
Figure 3: P.t.1287, ll. 315–23.

This is quite an impressive conclusion, especially when one considers that it is based on a comparison of only two lines of text. Uray's first two points have to do with a change of topic. The second point is obvious, since the passage immediately preceding line 315 in the *Chronicle* scroll has to do with Myang Zhang snang, thus necessitating an explicitly marked change of agent. The first point is less obvious, though I have given above what I, following Uray, believe to be the parallel passage to the opening words of r1 in IOL Tib J 1375 (Uray 1972a: 39, n. 91). This is l. 203 from chr. iv, part of a paean to Zu tse punctuated by the phrase *zu tse glo ba nye'o*. This passage refers to Zu tse's conquest of Rtsang Bod, and constitutes what Uray refers to in his outline of the *Chronicle* scroll as "Part 1 of the History of Minister Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse." The correspondence between the two passages – the end of this section of chr. iv with the very beginning of the Zu tse fragment – is not perfect, and one might raise an objection. In the latter we have what is obviously a continuation from the previous folio: *'i bka' gros la gtogste zu tse glo ba nye 'o*, which I equate with *zing po rje srid brlag pa 'I blo la' / gthogs te // zu tse glo ba nye 'o* at P.t.1287, ll. 202–03. This partly depends on the interchangeability of *blo*, which is a cunning sort of stratagem, with *bka' gros*, which usually means "counsel."[5] This is plausible, as

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5   The primary meaning of *blo* is "mind" and "intellect," and Bacot and Toussaint translated *blo la btags* with "mit dans la confidence," "avoir décidé" (Bacot et al. 1940-1946: 135, 139). Macdonald translated it with "rallie à sa cause" (Macdonald 1971: 235). A secondary meaning of *blo* as "plot" or "stratagem" is evident, however, from several passages in the *Chronicle* scroll, chiefly a line concerning Zu tse at chr. iv, l. 202: *zing po rje srid brlag pa 'I blo la' / gthogs te / / zu tse glo ba nye 'o*; "included in the plot to overthrow Zing po rje's realm, Zu tse was loyal." See, however, a perplexing translation at Macdonald 1971: 239: "Il a inspiré l'idée de la destruction du royaume du Ziṅ-po-rǰe." It is this same plot that is referred to when Dba's Dbyi tshab and Myang Tseng sku recruit conspirators at chr. iii: "[t] hen Myang and Dba's both rebelled from Zing po rje and became loyal to the Btsan po, Spu rgyal, and they swore oaths even more greatly. After that, Dba's Dbyi tshab attached to the plot his maternal uncle, Mnon Bzang to re Sron. He swore an oath, but he died, and [Dbyi tshab] attached to the plot his son, Pang sum 'Dron-po, who served in Zing po rje's

both can concern a political or military campaign that requires discussion and thought. The *Chronicle* scroll and the *pothi* fragment IOL Tib J 1375 follow each other very closely, and correspond exactly on the eight syllables *'i gtogste zu tse glo ba nye'o*. While the last five syllables are an oft-repeated formula, they occur in the *Chronicle* only once in combination with *'i gthogste*, at the passage cited above, making it all but certain that the previous folio in the *Chronicle pothi* concerned "Part 1 of the History of Minister Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse."

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inner retinue, and he swore an oath. Myang Smon to re attached Tshes pong Nag seng to the plot, and he swore an oath." (*'ung nas / myang dba's gnyIs zing po rje las 'khus te / / btsan po spu rgyal la glo ba nye bar byas nas / mna' mtho' yang cher bchad do / / 'ung gI 'og du dba's dbyi tshab kyis / / zhang po mnon bzang to re sron / blo la btags te / / mna' mtho bchad pa las / / bzang to re shi nas / / bu pang sum 'dron po / / zIng po rje 'i nang kor byed pa blo la btagste mna; mtho' bchad do / / myang smon to res / tshes pong nag seng blo la btags te / mna' mtho bchad do /*; P.t.1287, ll. 153–57). The point is made clearer still in the oath that Khri Srong btsan and six of his ministers give to the aging Dba's Dbyi tshab and his descendants at chr. v:

"Even if one among DbyI tshab's lineage
Should, without thinking, become disloyal,
We shall never disgrace any but the one who is disloyal.
Never shall we disgrace those unattached to a plot."

(*dbyI tshab kyi bu tsha la la zhig gis / ma bsams ste snying rIngs na yang / / gang snying rIngs pa nyi tse 'i sgor myi bkyon re / / gzhan blo la ma gthogs pa rnams la / bkyon re /*; P.t.1287, ll. 281–83).

The similarity of the meanings of *blo* and *bka' gros* is suggested by a passage at chr. iv: "After that, Dags po revolted from subjugation. Then the lord and ministers all convened and held counsel concerning the subjugation of Dags po Lha de." (*'ung gI rjes la dags po 'bangs su mnga' ba las log go / / 'ung nas rje blon yongs su 'dus te / / dags po lha de dgug pa 'I bka' gros mdzad nas /*; P.t.1287, ll. 203–04.) Bacot and Toussaint translate *bka' gros mdzad* with "délibérèrent" (Bacot et al. 1940-1946: 139), and Macdonald (1971: 239) renders it "faire choix." Beckwith, on the other hand, translates *bka' gros* with "a conference" (Beckwith 1977: 209). Li and Coblin similarly render *bka' gros* as "council" in their glossary to their translations of Old Tibetan inscriptions (Li and Coblin 1987: 373). In some cases, however, Li and Coblin's choice sits uncomfortably with the passages in question, and in the case of the East inscription at Zhwa'i Lha khang, for example, they translate *legs pa'i bka' gros* with "good advice" (Li and Coblin 1987: 291). The term appears four times in the south face inscription of the Zhol Pillar, and my translation differs markedly in places from Li and Coblin's; compare Dotson 2009: 148–49 and Li and Coblin 1987: 158–60. Here I will only point out that the final of these four instances is semantically relevant in terms of the overlapping definitions of *bka' gros* and *blo*: "Ngan lam Klu khong requested to be appointed as great head of the *bka' gros* for Tibet to lead an army to the Chinese lord's court at Keng shi, the center of China." (*ngan lam klu khong gis// rgya yul gyI thild / rgya rje'I pho brang keng shir/ bod gyIs dmag drang ba'i bka' gros gyI mgo chen po gsold nas*; ll. 53–55). Here one has the impression of a war council, and indeed this was one place where I agreed with Li and Coblin and rendered *bka' gros* with "council," which, as a homophone to an Anglophone's ears, seemed a neat enough solution. But this perhaps does not capture the sense of "advice," "counsel" and "deliberation" intended by *bka' gros*, a range of meaning that, as we have seen in the numerous examples from military settings, overlaps significantly with "plot." One of the first fascicles of the excellent new dictionary in production at the Bavarian Academy of Sciences draws on some of the above examples and agrees with my definition, stating that *bka' gros* means "1. Rat, Beratung, Gespräch" and "2. beratendes Gremium, Staatsrat" (Franke et al., eds, 2007: 191).

Extending Uray's observations to a fuller comparison, we find further support for his conclusions. His first two points lead to a more general observation: the Zu tse fragment is focused on Zu tse, so it is not at any pains to give his full name; similarly, the *Chronicle* scroll focuses on the reigns of this or that king and assuming such a context it has little need to restate the name of the king in whose reign the events are set. We see this circumstance behind the appearance of the fuller form of Zu tse's name given in the *Chronicle* scroll at ll. 316 and 318, and also in the appearance of Khri Srong rtsan in the Zu tse fragments at v1 and v5.

Uray's conclusions are drawn mainly from his third point, where he seems to have caught out the *Chronicle* scroll's author(s)/compiler(s) where he added *khyung po spung sad zu tses* in the ergative at the beginning of the phrase, but also retained the *pothi*'s *zu tses*, again in the ergative, later on in the same phrase. I am less sure than Uray that "this error clearly proves" that the *Chronicle* scroll was based on the *Chronicle pothi*. Still, it is surely significant, and becomes more significant when weighed with Uray's first two points.

Turning now to the rest of the overlapping passages, we can add some observations. From some of the differences already observed, such as the *Chronicle* scroll's use of *blo* instead of the *Chronicle pothi's bka' gros*, it is obvious that the former is not strictly speaking a copy of the latter. If the Zu tse fragment is indeed a source for the *Chronicle* scroll, the scroll's author(s)/compiler(s) makes selective use of it. Still, assuming that the scroll's author(s)/compiler(s) was using the *pothi*, he is rather faithful, and although he revises, he does not omit much. At l. 315, however, he omits the phrase *btsan po'i snyan du gsol te* at r2 of the *pothi*, perhaps because it is slightly redundant.

The largest omission from the scroll is at r3–4 of the *pothi*, which describes Zu tse's conquest of To yo chas la, and has no corresponding passage anywhere in the *Chronicle* scroll. I can think of no editorial reason why the inclusion of this episode would be objectionable. Its omission is more likely due to a scribal error, namely *saut du même au même*, from *zu tse glo ba nye 'o* at r2–3 to the same formula in the middle of r4. This would be more convincing were the two phrases found in roughly the same position on their respective lines, but such a *saut du même au même* is well documented even so (cf. West 1973: 24ff).

After this, the texts differ in their description of Zu tse's qualities. The *pothi* is compressed and unclear when compared with the *Chronicle* scroll. The scroll omits the emphatic *kyang*, and the phrase *sgyu che zhing mkhas so* found at r5. Its use of the inessive *na* at ll. 317–18 gives this passage a rhythm that is lacking in the *pothi* version, and lends it a faintly Gesaric (e.g. "If you don't know who I am, well I am...") quality.

The final phrase of the *recto* differs slightly, with the repetition of *tshogs dgu tshogs* in the *pothi* seeming slightly redundant, while the ending in the *Chronicle* scroll at l. 318, *spung sad zu tse 'o*, seems perfunctory. Incidentally, the same phrase is found with another variation in the genealogy of chief ministers at chr.

ii, l. 101: *myI chig la tshogs dgu tshogs na / / zu tse lte bu su ga la yang myed do*.

The remaining passages overlap very closely. In the *pothi* at v1, the phrase *'ung nas btsan po khri srong rtsan gyi ring la* would seem to be redundant, since this is already clear from the context. In fact, this unnecessary phrase might be cited as a counterexample to Uray's, where the phrase apparently signals a change of reign in r1.

Moving on to other significant differences, at l. 318 the *Chronicle* scroll inserts Rtsang Bod as what Zu tse had subjugated, while this is not named in the *pothi* at v2. This is another bit of circumstantial evidence for Uray's premise that the *pothi* was the source for the scroll, since the immediately preceding folio of the *pothi*, as discussed already, almost certainly concerned Zu tse's conquest of Rtsang Bod. Given this context, the *pothi* did not need to repeat this, since it was already clear that Rtsang Bod was what Zu tse subjugated. In the *Chronicle* scroll, on the other hand, Zu tse's subjugation of Rtsang Bod was placed at chr. iv in the reign of Gnam ri Slon btsan, so it was necessary to restate it here at chr. vii some one hundred lines on. In the passage that immediately follows, Zu tse's words are altered somewhat in the *Chronicle* scroll, which omits the emphatic *kyang* in two places at l. 319 and at l. 320. It also makes the passage clearer by adding *spyan gyIs* to form a poetic repetition and reversal that the *pothi* used with *zhabs kyis*, but not with *spyan gyis*.

The *Chronicle* scroll omits the humilific *bdag rgan po'i* found at v4 of the *pothi*. This could be construed as a sign of the *pothi* version's greater sympathy for Zu tse, but such a reading is a bit of a stretch.

The passages differ towards the end, where the final line of the *pothi* is damaged. The *pothi* ends with z*u tse gan du mkhar khri bomsu mchis nas / / / mgar [yul? zung?] gis bltas na / mkhar*, which contrasts with the *Chronicle* scroll's *yul zung khri boms su mchis te / brtags na / /*. The *Chronicle* scroll omits *zu tse'i gan du mkhar*, and names *khri boms* without any classifiers or modifiers. The grammar is slightly different, and where the *pothi* states that Mgar "looked" (*bltas*), the scroll replaces this with "examined" (*brtags*).

The final word on the *verso* of the *pothi*, barely legible, is *mkhar*, and this offers us a hint that it would have included a story similar to what immediately follows in the *Chronicle* scroll, namely, the conclusion of "Part 2 of the History of Minister Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse," in which Mgar discovers that the stronghold (*mkhar*) of Khri boms was filled with plots, and reports this to the king, whereupon Zu tse commits suicide and his son remonstrates with the king. Together with the observation that the first part of the *pothi* contains the end of "Part 1 of the History of Minister Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse," found in the *Chronicle* scroll at ll. 198–203, we can plausibly reconstruct parts of the preceding and following leaves of the *Chronicle pothi*. Working backwards, if we calculate based on our parallel passages that 8 lines of the *Chronicle* scroll equal 12 lines in the *Chronicle pothi*, then a version of "Part 1 of the History of Minister Khyung

po Spung sad Zu tse" would have occupied all of the *verso* of the preceding folio, and approximately the last line of the *recto*. One can only guess whether or not the passage began with a paean to Zu tse similar to that found at chr. ii, ll. 96–101. Following our folio, the continuation of "Part 2 of the History of Minister Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse" would have occupied just over eight lines in the *pothi*, or, all of the following *recto* and the first two lines of the *verso*. Placed in a table for ease of comparison, the correspondences are as follows (where "0" is our *pothi* folio and "-1" and "+1" are the proposed reconstructions of the preceding and following folia):

Chronicle Pothi	Episode	Chronicle Scroll
-1 recto l. 1 to 0 recto l. 1	History of Zu tse, Part 1	chr. iv, ll. 198–203
0 recto l. 1 to 0 verso l. 6	History of Zu tse, Part 2	chr. vii, ll. 315–22
+1 recto l. 1 to +1 verso l. 2	End of History of Zu tse Part 2	chr. vii, ll. 322–27

Table 1: Correspondences between the scroll *Chronicle* and the *pothi Chronicle* (partly reconstructed).

Beyond the Zu tse episode, and the story of Khri Stag bu Snya gzigs' imprisonment included in the other extant sheet of the *Chronicle pothi* P.t.1144, we cannot accurately reconstruct what else the *Chronicle pothi* would have contained. To conclude, there is no single "smoking gun," such as an error found in the scroll that can be attributed to a physical defect in the *pothi*, to prove unequivocally that the *pothi* IOL Tib J 1375 was the proximate source for parts of the history of Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse in the *Chronicle* scroll at chr. vii, ll. 315–22. The collective weight of evidence, however – the assumed topic and omission of the temporal marker at l. 315; the marked change of topic with the addition of *khyung po spung sad zu tses* in the same line; the duplication of the marked agent in the same clause with the presumed copying of a redundant *zu tses* from the *pothi*, also at l. 315; the possible *saut du même au même* involving the formula *zu tse glo ba nye 'o* accounting for the loss of r3–4 and the absence of Zu tse's conquest of To yo chas la in the *Chronicle* scroll; and the scroll's insertion of Rtsang Bod at l. 319 as "what Zu tse subjugated," when this was assumed from the preceding passage in the *pothi* – strongly suggests that Uray was correct in stating that the *pothi* was the source for the *Chronicle* scroll's passage.

Having firmly established Uray's conclusions we can turn to more general reflections on the nature of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* and the manner in which it was composed. While we can discern a number of other influences, allusions, and instances of transference in different sections of the *Chronicle* scroll, be these from the *Shiji*, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the tale of the unhappy marriage of Lho rgyal Byang mo tsun, scapegoat rituals, or divination prognoses, it is only the *Chronicle pothi* that we can point to as a direct, proximate source for a passage

in the *Chronicle* scroll.[6] It is no stretch to imagine the author(s)/compiler(s) of the *Chronicle* scroll writing on the scroll with the *pothi* set out before him. In our close comparison of the two passages, we can also clearly see how he approached his work, making use of the *Chronicle pothi* by adapting it to his chronological organization of events, and by paraphrasing, copying, adjusting, and improving. The main difference that we can observe, namely the *Chronicle* scroll's breaking of the Zu tse narrative into two parts, already raises some interesting questions. The material that the *Chronicle* scroll's compiler inserts between the two halves of the Zu tse narrative is particularly fascinating. It is here that we find its most explicit borrowing, which is the transference of an episode from the *Shiji* that replaces its Warring States subject matter with people and places from seventh-century Tibet. This is then followed by the famous songs exchanged between Zu tse and Myang Zhang snang, and then chr. v with the famous oaths exchanged between Khri Srong btsan and Dba's Dbyi tshab (Bacot et al. 1940–1946: 140–46). We have no way of knowing if the transferred narrative of the *Shiji* and these songs and oaths were included in the *Chronicle pothi*. In his re-ordering of the narrative, and transference of tales and songs probably drawn from other sources and from memory, we can gain a window into the *Chronicle* scroll compiler's creative processes. This mode of composition is not unlike that found in subsequent Tibetan literary traditions: on the one hand it is reminiscent of the type of composition in performance that we find in the bardic tradition of Gesar, where a given setting and narrative frame calls to words a well-worn formula, and on the other hand it prefigures some of the methods of subsequent composers of Tibetan histories and of *gter ma*. And in the case of the *Shiji* episode, we might also perceive the influence of the vibrant and multilingual milieu of the scroll's Dunhuang compiler.

   It is possible that with advances in the paleography of Tibetan writing we shall know more about the *Chronicle* scroll's author(s) or compiler(s) by, for example, identifying his hand at work in other manuscripts.[7] Such a discovery would facilitate further reflections on agency and creativity on an individual level. Alongside this (and in the absence of any other manuscripts reliably identified as coming from the same hand), we can widen our gaze to the larger question of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* tradition. Our confirmation of Uray's observation that there existed a separate, *pothi* version of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* also deflates the artificial canonicity that has grown up around our extant *Chronicle* scroll in the seventy-odd years that it has been studied both within Tibet and internationally. Furthermore, depending on the extent to which we see in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle's* composition – and particularly in its songs – not just residual oral

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6 On the Tibetan adaptation of a passage from the *Shiji*, see Takeuchi 1985; on the tale of Lady Lho rgyal Byang mo tsun, see Uray 1972b: 35–36, and Macdonald 1971: 264–65.
7 For a demonstration of this method and its utility, see Dalton, Davis, and van Schaik 2007.

elements of the type that we would expect to find at this time and in this genre, but also a direct inheritance from composition in performance, we can imagine that behind the "versions" once in circulation, there existed various "tellings" of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*.[8] Widening our horizons beyond what is extant, we might even imagine the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* not as a fixed text, but as something more akin to a genre where, like the Gesar epic, the telling (or the writing) is partly determined by setting and by patronage.[9] Any such conclusions on the status of the *Chronicle* scroll as a transitional text with residual oral elements will have to be based on a full analysis of its songs, and here again we can look to Uray's work as an example.

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8   On "tellings" and "retelling" in the context of composition in performance and transitional texts, as opposed to "variants" or "versions," which presuppose a standard or ur-text, see Ramanujan 1992: 24.

9   On this point see FitzHerbert 2009: 189.

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