

VENERABLE FAZUN 法尊法師 AND HIS INFLUENCE ON

LIFE AND EDUCATION AT

THE SINO-TIBETAN BUDDHIST INSTITUTE 漢藏教理院

BY

Copyright 2007


Brenton Sullivan

Submitted to the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures

and the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Kansas

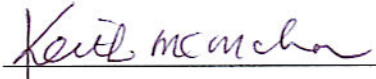
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts



Chairperson

Committee Members



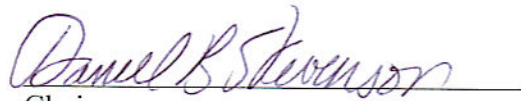


Date defended: 6/8/07

The Thesis Committee for Brenton Sullivan certifies  
That this is the approved version of the following thesis:

VENERABLE FAZUN 法尊法師 AND HIS INFLUENCE ON  
LIFE AND EDUCATION AT  
THE SINO-TIBETAN BUDDHIST INSTITUTE 漢藏教理院

Committee:

  
Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved: 6/12/07

## ABSTRACT

Venerable Fazun 法尊 (1902-1980) was the Director at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute (*Hanzang jiaoli yuan*) for twelve of the seminary's eighteen years of existence. This seminary, founded in 1932 outside of Chongqing, was the most progressive and successful institute for the study of Tibet in China during the first half of the twentieth century. Fazun, China's greatest modern translator of Tibetan texts, brought with him to the seminary the knowledge, experience, and discipline to make it a flourishing academic environment. The goal of this essay is to better understand what led to the academic success of this seminary. The factor that most contributed to this success was "human talent" (*rencai*)—in particular, Fazun—and the intense and dynamic academic environment instilled in the institute by its founder, Ven. Taixu 太虛 (1889-1947). I begin with a summary of the experiences in Fazun's life that lent to his deciding to become a Buddhist pilgrim and translator of scripture, much like Xuanzang of the Tang Dynasty. This is followed by an overview of the educational environment at the seminary, with particular emphasis given to Fazun's implementation of a Tibetan Geluk curriculum. Then, I will analyze one important text used at the seminary: Fazun's *Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People* (*Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi*). This work, first published in part in 1939, is the first study of Tibetan history in China to be based on Tibetan language materials and extensive time (nine years) spent studying in Tibet. In the concluding chapter, I will discuss Fazun's place in the landscape of Republican Period China, and I will identify some examples of the pervasive and continuing influence of Fazun and his work.

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Sometime in November of 1930 in Chongqing, China, plans were set in motion to establish an institute for the study of Sino-Tibetan relations.<sup>2</sup> The warlord that controlled eastern Sichuan at the time, Liu Xiang 劉湘 (or Liu Fucheng 劉甫澄), was himself keenly interested in the idea. Liu had his sight on uniting all of Sichuan under his command, and recent incursions by Tibetans along Sichuan's border with Kham and Tibet in places such as Ganzi 甘孜 (T. Kardzé) were a threat to the region's stability. Liu, a successful but brutish regional military ruler, was also known to be a devout Buddhist.<sup>3</sup> The renowned reformist monk and creator of "Humanistic Buddhism" (*rensheng fojiao* 人生佛教) Taixu 太虛 tells the story of their meeting as follows:

Last year [i.e. 1930] Liu Fucheng of Chongqing was promoting his plan to send monks to Kham and Tibet to study. Long ago, I went to Europe and America. I proposed the building of the World Buddhist

---

<sup>1</sup> There are countless individuals who gave tremendous help and support to me throughout the process of researching and writing on this topic. At this time I wish to especially thank the following: Daniel Stevenson, my advisor at Kansas who first introduced me to Chinese Buddhism as well as the Republican Period figure Taixu; John Dardess and Keith McMahon, who served on my thesis defense committee; Gray Tuttle, whose scholarship first explored Sino-Tibetan interactions in the Republican Period and whose personal assistance was crucial to the present study; Huang Xianian of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, for sharing with me his great knowledge of Buddhist history and especially Sichuan Buddhist history; Venerable Zhenggang, for always welcoming and facilitating my visits to Jinyun shan; and, Venerable Daojian, for spending time and resources to help me better understand Buddhism in Chongqing. I would of course also like to thank my family and friends who have patiently supported me throughout the seemingly endless series of "important deadlines." Despite all the help I have received, this thesis still has many errors and imperfections. These are due entirely to my own shortcomings.

<sup>2</sup> On the dating of this event see Yinshun, *Taixu Dashi nianpu* (The Chronicle of Master Taixu) (Taipei: Zhengwen chubanshe, 1992), 316.

<sup>3</sup> See Gray Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China* (hereafter *Tibetan Buddhists*) (New York: Columbia University Press), 94, and Robert A. Kapp, *Szechwan and the Chinese Republic: Provincial Militarism and Central Power, 1911-1938* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1973), 24-33.

Institute (*Shijie foxue yuan* 世界佛學苑) and [noted] the urgent need for the planning of a Sino-Tibetan research academy of Buddhist studies. Last fall I received an invitation from Buddhist clergy and laity in Sichuan and so made a trip to travel there [i.e. to Sichuan/Bashu 巴蜀]. I heard Liu mention his plan [to send monks to Tibet], to which I stated ‘sending monks off to study abroad is not as [good] as building an institute right here in Sichuan, inviting Han and Tibetan lecturers, and admitting Han and Tibetan youth to study and do research there.’ Pan Zhongsan 潘仲三, Pan Changyou/po 潘昌猷, He Beiheng 何北衡, Wang Xudong 王旭東, and Wang Xiaoxi 王曉西, all concurred with his idea and asked Liu to push the proposal through. A site [for the institute] was settled upon, funds were allocated, and that was the beginning of the present institute.<sup>4</sup>

The institute was the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute (*Hanzang jiaoli yuan* 漢藏教理院).<sup>5</sup> Located at the Jinyun Monastery 縉雲寺 atop Jinyun Mountain in Beibei

District 北碚 outside of Chongqing, the institute was a seminary for young monks and young, male lay Buddhists to study Buddhism, particularly its Tibetan form.<sup>6</sup>

Classes began in the fall of 1932 and ran through the spring of 1950. Although it was

---

<sup>4</sup> Taixu, “Shijie foxueyuan Hanzang jiaoli yuan yuanqi” (The Origin of the World Buddhist Institute’s Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute), in *Taixu Dashi quanshu* (Complete Works of Master Taixu), 20 vols, (Taipei, 1956), 19.61.143: 1033-35. All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated. I currently do not have access to this collection and must rely upon a digital version of the 1956, Taipei publication that does not give page numbers for each individual page. The first number refers to the *bian* (volume), the second to the *ce* (book), and the third to the document number, followed by the page numbers of the article.

<sup>5</sup> Holmes Welch in his *The Buddhist Revival in China* (1968), Don Pittman in his *Toward a Modern Chinese Buddhism* (2001), and Gray Tuttle in his *Tibetan Buddhists* and his “Tibetan Buddhism at Ribotse Inga/Wutai shan in Modern Times” (2006) all follow this translation. The Chinese has obvious Buddhist overtones. Ding Fubao’s Buddhist dictionary from the Republican Period (1925) defines “*jiaoli*” as the truth or reason of the dharma and as Shakyamuni Buddha’s teachings. Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute is therefore an acceptable translation, and I too will use it (or just Sino-Tibetan Institute for short). See *Ding Fubao foxue da cidian* 丁福保佛學大辭典, s.v. “教理”, <http://www.stonesutras.org:8080/exist/servlet/db/dfb/dfb.xml> (accessed December 2006). An announcement for a lecture series given at Jinyun si in February of 2005 made use of an insignia on which it read “Han-Tibetan Academy of Buddhist Studies” (see Appendix B, Photo 1). I cannot say, however, whether this was the “established” English translation of the seminary’s name from that time.

<sup>6</sup> See photo, Appendix B. Gray Tuttle mistakenly identifies the lower Wenquan Monastery for the upper Jinyun Monastery. See photo 7.1 in his *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China* (hereafter *Tibetan Buddhists*) (New York: Columbia University Press), 195. There were apparently plans to matriculate female students at the seminary, though these never materialized.

only around for eighteen years and graduated less than 200 students, in retrospect one can see that the Sino-Tibetan Institute was one of the more outstanding academies for Buddhist studies (*foxue yuan*) of the time, and it was no doubt the most progressive and successful institute for the study of Tibet in China during the first half of the twentieth century. As Venerable Weixian 惟賢 notes in his essay “The Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute and Venerable Taixu” (Hanzang jiaoli yuan yu Taixu fashi), graduates of the seminary went on to become influential leaders in national and regional Buddhist organizations and at monasteries throughout the country, and several went to Tibet, India, and other foreign countries for further studies.<sup>7</sup> The institute also published numerous translations of important Tibetan Buddhist texts, works discussing Tibetan history and culture, books on Tibetan grammar and on studying the language, and a Tibetan-Chinese dictionary.<sup>8</sup> One book published by the Sino-Tibetan Institute, Huang Chanhua’s *A Short History of Chinese Buddhism* (*Zhongguo fojiao jian shi*), was written for use as a textbook in the seminary.<sup>9</sup> Today, the book is still used as a textbook in classes at the Chongqing Buddhist Institute (*Chongqing foxue yuan*) at Huayan Monastery 華嚴寺.<sup>10</sup> Another text, Fazun’s 法尊

---

<sup>7</sup> Weixian, “Hanzang jiaoli yuan yu Taixu Fashi” (The Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute and Venerable Taixu) in *Weixian fashi shiwen ji* (Collected Poems and Essays of Venerable Weixian) (Chengdu?: Dongfang foxue wenhua ziliao congshu), 11.

<sup>8</sup> Weixian, “Hanzang jiaoli yuan,” 14; Gray Tuttle, “Tibetan Buddhism at Ri bo rtse Inga/Wutai shan in Modern Times,” in *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies* 2 (August 2006), 7; Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, 204; Françoise Wang-Toutain, “Quand les maîtres chinois s’éveillent au bouddhisme tibétain: Fazun: le Xuanzang des temps modernes,” in *Bulletin de l’École Française d’Extrême-Orient*, 87 (2000), 722.

<sup>9</sup> See the preface (*bianyan*) to the book. Huang Chanhua, *Zhongguo fojiao jian shi* (Short History of Chinese Buddhism) (Gaoxiong, Taiwan: Fojiao wenhua fuwu chu, 1970 [1944]).

<sup>10</sup> Li Zhengsi 李正思, personal communication, February, 2006. Li Zhengsi told me that he has used the book in his classes there since 1996.

*The Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People* (*Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi*), was also used as a textbook in the seminary. Of this work's continuing influence, one scholar of Tibetan Buddhism in China, Lü Tiegang 呂鐵鋼, writes:

Throughout history, scholars have always appreciated the study and research that go into a historiographic work in a field of study. One could say that a successful example of such a history, besides encapsulating the author's various accomplishments, can engender a new era of scholarship and educate a new generation of scholars. Fazun's *The Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People* is just such a work for the fields of Tibetan studies and Buddhist studies. Fazun made use of many types of Tibetan historical sources in his search for textual evidence for the production of a concise and comprehensive history. It was in this way that this monumental work, the standard for Tibetan history, came to be.<sup>11</sup>

For Taixu, the Sino-Tibetan Institute fit into his plan for a World Buddhist Institute (*Shijie foxue yuan* 世界佛學苑) complete with different branch schools each with its own emphasis. The Wuchang Buddhist Institute (*Wuchang foxue yuan* 武昌佛學院) in Wuhan emphasized English language study, was an advanced research institute for the study of Buddhism, and housed the overall organization's library.<sup>12</sup> The Minnan Buddhist Institute (*Minnan foxue yuan* 閩南佛學院) in Xiamen specialized in the study of Japanese and Japanese Buddhism. Both of these seminaries are still around today, though they long ago lost their area studies specializations. The study of Japanese and Japanese Buddhism lost favor as Japan further encroached

---

<sup>11</sup> See the afterword in *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi* (Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People), (Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zhongxin, 1991 [1940]), fascicle (*juan*) 6, 4b-5a.

<sup>12</sup> One individual, Chengjing 澄靜居士, was a student of Venerable Yinshun 印順 and followed him to the Wuchang Institute in 1947. Chengjing notes that the Wuchang Institute, unlike Taixu's other institutes, was not a monastery. Instead, it was situated at the former residence of the deposed president, Li Yuanhong 黎元洪, and was setup completely for research. Personal communication, July 19, 2006.

upon Chinese territory. The Wuchang institute was set up for research and did not offer regular classes for its students. It also closed down as the war with Japan escalated.

Compared with other schools and programs set up for the study of Tibet, the Sino-Tibetan Institute was long-lived and very productive. For example, the Buddhist Tibetan Language Institute (*Fojiao Zangwen xuewen* 佛教藏文學院) in Beijing, which was also connected with Taixu, existed for a year before being transformed into the Team to Study the Dharma Abroad in Tibet (*Liu Zang xuefa tuan* 留藏學法團) by its founder, Dayong 大勇, a disciple of Taixu. A later government-sponsored exchange program lasted for almost a decade and financed some twenty Chinese monks to go to Tibet to study.<sup>13</sup> However, several of the monks sponsored by this program had also been students at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute, and there is little record of the fruits of this program apart from these monks connected with the Sino-Tibetan Institute.<sup>14</sup>

At least two factors may explain why the Sino-Tibetan Institute excelled when other schools and programs for the study of Tibet did not. First, as Holmes Welch noted in his *The Buddhist Revival in China*, the Sino-Tibetan Institute “was perhaps the only Chinese Buddhist institution to enjoy a government subsidy during the Republican period.”<sup>15</sup> The Sino-Tibetan Institute stood out for the political and

---

<sup>13</sup> This was the exchange program of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (*Meng Zang weiyuanhui*), inaugurated in 1936. See Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, 200-204.

<sup>14</sup> Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, 200.

<sup>15</sup> *The Buddhist Revival in China* Harvard East Asian series, 33 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), 177. Tuttle says the same, *Tibetan Buddhists*, 126.



financial backing that it received—first from Liu Xiang and the provincial government, and later from Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist government—and that made possible the seminary’s existence. Second, the concentration of “skill and talent,” or *rencai* 人才, at the institute, embodied by such figures as Taixu, Fazun, Yinshun 印順, Weixian, and others, was something that had not occurred on such a scale before and is something that Buddhists today still speak of with a touch of admiration and nostalgia. Obviously, one event in particular is partially responsible for these two factors: the Nationalist government’s move from Nanjing to Chongqing in 1937. Along with the hundreds of thousands of Chinese that fled East China for Yan’an, Kunming, and Chongqing came religious leaders and intellectuals.

Of these two factors that contributed to the success of the Sino-Tibetan Institute, the first has already been discussed to some extent by Gray Tuttle in his *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China*.<sup>16</sup> The thesis of Tuttle’s book is that “Buddhism was the key factor in maintaining a tenuous link between China and Tibet during the Republican period (1912-1949), a link the Communists could exploit when exerting control over Tibet by force in the 1950s.”<sup>17</sup> The Sino-Tibetan Institute, then, is an example of such a link, for this “pre-Cold War, regional studies institute trained monks and cadres to cultivate Buddhist links with Tibet.”<sup>18</sup> The founding of the seminary came right at what Tuttle calls “the zenith of Tibetan Buddhist activity in China,” and is exemplar of an enthusiastic “government-supported effort to link

---

<sup>16</sup> *Tibetan Buddhists*, 194-204.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 228.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

Chinese and Tibetan Cultures.”<sup>19</sup> Françoise Wang-Toutain, in an essay summarizing Fazun’s life, including the twelve years he spent as director of the Sino-Tibetan Institute, also sees the 1930s as a time of changing attitudes among Chinese:

Si l’on considère les raisons qui amenèrent les religieux chinois à aller étudier le Dharma au Tibet, on pourrait donc distinguer deux périodes. Des années vingt au début des années trente, l’intérêt est essentiellement centré sur l’étude du Dharma. Après le début de la guerre avec le Japon, le gouvernement s’immisce dans cette activité afin de maintenir les liens avec le Tibet.<sup>20</sup>

Although it seems perilous to infer that the state-supported monks who went to Tibet were not as devout as their immediate predecessors, the point is that there was indeed a change at this time among the various provincial and national governments of China with respect to their support of Buddhism. The almost 7000 *yuan* that the seminary received annually from Liu Xiang’s government and, beginning in 1937, the 5000 *yuan* it received annually from the Nationalists both bespeak the importance these governments gave to this seminary.<sup>21</sup> No doubt the additional 4800 *yuan* a year the seminary began to receive for its editing and translation office in 1938 helped it to

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 178. On page 156 Tuttle more clearly distinguishes two periods—a pre-1930s period and a post-1930s one—the latter characterized by a considerable shift in the Nationalist government’s interest in supporting and using Buddhism to resolve its border issues.

<sup>20</sup> “If one were to consider the reasons that led the Chinese religious practitioners to study the Dharma in Tibet, he could distinguish two periods. From the twenties to the beginning of the thirties, interest is essentially centered on the study of the Dharma. After the beginning of the war with Japan, the government involved itself in this activity in order to maintain connections with Tibet.” “Quand les maîtres chinois s’ éveillent au bouddhisme tibétain,” 719.

<sup>21</sup> Luo Tongbing, “Hanzang jiaoli yuan shilüe,” (A Sketch of the History of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute) in *Renmin ribao haiwai ban* (Overseas Edition of the People’s Daily) (July 20, 2001), 8, citing Ruo Si, “Leishi si li Hanzang jiaoli yuan chujia xuesheng fangwen ji” (Leishi Monastery’s Record of Visits Made by Student Monks of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute) (June 6, 1938), in *Zhonghua Minguoshi dang’an ziliao huibian* (Compilation of Archival Materials from China’s Republican Period), 5<sup>th</sup> edition, vol. 2, 785. See also Weixian, “Hanzang jiaoli yuan,” 5. Weixian also speaks of an additional 3680 *yuan* coming annually from the institute’s board of directors, which was made up entirely of prominent political leaders and lay Buddhists in the region. Similar figures are attested to throughout the materials available at the Chongqing City Archives.

produce the more than forty manuscripts and translations and to publish more than twenty of them.<sup>22</sup>

The current study instead looks primarily at the second factor that contributed to the seminary's success. That is, I want to describe and understand the unique education and life that was enjoyed by members of the seminary while there. Success can be understood in a number of ways. For Tuttle, the seminary was a success because it was funded by the government, which allowed it to become "the only branch [of the World Buddhist Institute] that actually fulfilled Taixu's grand expectations" and, concurrently, the expectations of the government.<sup>23</sup> In other words, the seminary did in fact serve a vital role in linking up Tibetan Buddhists and Chinese Buddhists as well as Tibetans and Chinese over all. That the textbooks on Tibetan language and grammar produced by the institute were later used by the Ministry of Education in the Borderlands School of Education (*bianjiang jiaoyu xuexiao*) is just one example of this.<sup>24</sup> But this is also an example of another kind of success. More than just a political or ideological success, this also exemplifies an *educational* success.

---

<sup>22</sup> Weixian, "Hanzang jiaoli yuan," 5 and 14. It is important to note that, although the Sino-Tibetan Institute was relatively well-funded throughout the war years, those at the seminary still faced financial difficulties. For example, Fafang notes in 1939 that they were five months behind in paying the teachers' salaries. *Han Zang jiaoli yuan zuijin kaikuang* (The Recent Status of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute).

<sup>23</sup> *Tibetan Buddhists*, 122.

<sup>24</sup> Weixian, "Hanzang jiaoli yuan," 14. Tuttle speaks of a "Borderlands School" (*Bianjiang xuexiao*), *Tibetan Buddhists*, 205-6. It seems plausible that these are the same school, especially given that both were managed by the Ministry of Education.

As noted above, the institute brought together a number of ambitious and intelligent teachers and students, and this during an extremely tumultuous time. One visitor to Jinyun Mountain in 1940 wrote:

The limitless Dharma Ocean is originally vast and deep/  
The palm leaves form sutras in magnificent bundles/  
The alarms suddenly portended a lowly thing/  
In an instant the white sun was led to darkness  
and emitted no rays.<sup>25</sup>

The author follows this passage with a description of the circumstances at the time. Just as he was preparing to pen some flourishing remarks on longevity (*shou* 壽) and prosperity (*chang* 昌), the sky was blacked out by Japanese bombers and the town of Beibei was bombed. Twenty-seven were killed and sixty-four injured that day. This was the third bombing in Beibei in two months.<sup>26</sup> At the commencement of the Japanese invasion of China that wreaked death and destruction over the land, the Sino-Tibetan Institute reached a level of academic success that some monks today insist has not since been duplicated in China. This phenomenon occurred despite and even because of the Japanese bombers that blackened out the sky. The arrival of the country's "eminent monks" (*gaoseng*) added to the vitality of the seminary.

Taixu, who did not settle at the Sino-Tibetan Institute until after the Japanese invasion of 1937, was just such an eminent monk, and his presence at the seminary attracted many of the brightest monks to Jinyun shan. Also, his radical approach to education in seminaries engendered an atmosphere conducive to learning. For

---

<sup>25</sup> Wang Zhuang and Li Xuanhua, "Zhengui de wenwu, lishi de jianzheng" (Precious Cultural Artifacts, History's Testimony) in *Hanzang jiaoli yuan mingren shuzuo diancang* (Collected Compositions of Famous Figures at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute), ed. Yang Xiaohua (Chongqing: Zhengxie Chongqing Shi Beibei Qu Di shiyi jie weiyuanhui xuexi wenshi weiyuanhui), 12-13.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

example, laity studied alongside monks in modern classrooms, and laypersons—including politicians and military officers who paid visits to Taixu—often lectured to the students at his seminaries. This was a phenomenon that had not been common before, and it does not occur today in China’s Buddhist seminaries (*foxue yuan*). One elderly monk with whom I spoke attributed the poverty of education among Buddhists in China today to this very fact.<sup>27</sup>

One former student, Venerable Daguo 大果法師, recalls the pressure students had on them to perform well in the presence of so many others, especially the country’s most prestigious monks:

... the atmosphere of study at that time was quite intense and very tough. It’s nothing like today’s students. How intense were the students then? One person would come yelling that [it’s lights out and that] students can’t study any more. After he went to sleep, the students would sneak over beneath the street lamp ... or, one would get some of his own money and buy an oil lamp, prepare a “nest” on top of the bed, and in it read books and “pull an all-nighter” (*kai ye che* 開夜車). If you get caught you suffer the consequences. In the evening you only have two hours to study by yourself. [So, later,] around the oil lamp, you’d sometimes have three or even four people ...<sup>28</sup>

This sort of enthusiasm and dedication parallels the language of the seminary’s director, Fazun, who wrote about his travels in Kham and Tibet a decade earlier: “Although life was difficult, my morale was completely happy—so much so that sometimes, when I was reading and writing, I would forget to sleep. This is all so extraordinary!”<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Weixian, personal communication, December 3, 2005.

<sup>28</sup> Daguo, personal communication, February 2006.

<sup>29</sup> Fazun, “Zhuzhe ru Zang de jingguo” (Author’s Experiences in Tibet), in *Collected Buddhist Studies Essays of Venerable Fazun (Fazun Fashi foxue lunwen ji)* (Beijing: Zhongguo fojiao wenhua

The journey to Kham and Tibet that began in 1925 and of which Fazun was a part was indeed full of difficulties. “By the fall of 1929, four years into their tour of study, the group had dropped from more than thirty members to fewer than twenty. Some had returned to China, and several had died.”<sup>30</sup> It was precisely Fazun’s perseverance and ability to traverse such difficulties that provided him with the opportunities to study in Tibet and secure the knowledge and skills he would later take back to the Sino-Tibetan Institute. “Only those Chinese monks who took the time to cultivate the proper connections were able to go to Tibet, build their knowledge, and return to share what they had learned with other Chinese.”<sup>31</sup> Altogether Fazun spent approximately nine years living and studying in different parts of Tibet. He eventually established the connections and proved his seriousness to Tibetans so that he was able to make his way to the preeminent institution for studying Buddhism in Tibet, Drepung Monastery. Therefore, from 1934-35 and again from 1937-48, when Fazun was the Acting Director (*daili yuanzhang* 代理院長) of the Sino-Tibetan Institute, he commanded a certain respect and an intense academic rigor. This study

---

yanjiusuo, 1990), 365. This passage was first brought to my attention by Wang-Toutain, “Quand les maîtres chinois s’éveillent au bouddhisme tibétain,” 717.

<sup>30</sup> Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, 109, citing Yu Lingbo, *Zhongguo jin xiandai fojiao renwu zhi*, 265, and Fazun’s “Wo quguo de Xizang,” 267. “Wo quguo de Xizang” (The Tibet I Visited) was originally published in the Buddhist periodical *Hai chao yin* (Sound of the Ocean’s Tide) in 1937 under the author’s name of Bixiao Shizhu 避霧室主, and in 1943 it was appended to his *Xiandai Xizang* (Modern Tibet) and republished.

<sup>31</sup> Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, 110. One student at the Sino-Tibetan Institute, in his short essay entitled “My Wish to Study Abroad in Tibet” (Wo qu Xizang liuxue de yuanwang), outlines the difficulties he expects to encounter when he leaves the seminary and makes his way to Tibet (they are “the difficult and far off terrain, financial concerns, the differences in culture and language, and the lack of a solid foundation in Chinese Buddhist studies”) and speaks with admiration of his teacher Fazun who had already paved the way. In *Shijie foxue yuan Han Zang jiaoli yuan tekan* (Special Issue of the World Buddhist Institute’s Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute) (Chongqing: Han Zang jiaoli yuan, 1944), 46-48.

looks in general at the academics of the Sino-Tibetan Institute and specifically at what Fazun contributed to them.

Chapter one is simply a review of Fazun’s life, his motivations, his intellectual inclinations, and his academic and monastic discipline. The content of this chapter comes principally from the same sources on which Gray Tuttle and Françoise Wang-Toutain draw for their respective works. Those are Fazun’s “Experiences in Tibet” (Ch. “Zhuzhe ru Zang de jingguo” 著者入藏的經過, lit. “Author’s Experiences in Tibet”<sup>32</sup>) and his autobiography (Ch. *Fazun Fashi zi shu* 法尊法師自述, lit. “Fazun Fashi’s Autobiography,” hereafter “autobiography”<sup>33</sup>), and other writings such as those that stemmed from the Memorial Convention for Venerable Fazun on the Twentieth Anniversary of his Passing (*Fazun Fashi yuanji ershi zhou nian jinian hui*) held in 2000. In particular I look at Fazun’s devotion to Buddhist scripture, its study, and its translation.

Chapter two is an historical overview of the education and life within the seminary. Although Weixian’s “Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute and Venerable Taixu” provides a framework for understanding the curriculum, pedagogy, textbooks, and daily life found at the seminary, alone it is insufficient. First of all, it is the viewpoint of a single individual (Weixian), who was at the seminary from the

---

<sup>32</sup> In *Collected Buddhist Studies Essays of Venerable Fazun*, 358-371. Originally published in Fazun’s *Modern Tibet (Xiandai Xizang)* (Chongqing: Han Zang jiaoli yuan yinxing qianyin ben, 1937). This is the same work as his “Wo ru Zang de jingguo” (My Experiences in Tibet), in Fazun’s *Xizang yu Xizang fojiao* (Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism), *Tian hua yingluo congshu* 27 (Taipei: Tian hua chuban shiye fufen youxian gongsi: 1997), 116-136.

<sup>33</sup> In *Collected Buddhist Studies Essays of Venerable Fazun*, 372-376. Originally published in *Fa yin* (Voice of the Dharma) 6, 1985.

spring of 1936 until 1941. Also, Weixian wrote this in 1981, forty years after he had left the seminary, twenty of which had been spent as a political prisoner. Obviously some of the details of his education there are quite distant now. When talking with him in 2005, he laughed in response to my asking if he could give an example of the topics that the seminary's students would speak and argue on during their weekly speech presentations (*jiangyan hui* 講演會).<sup>34</sup> Therefore, I draw principally on two types of sources to fill out the picture of life and education at the seminary.

The first consists of interviews I conducted with four graduates of the seminary and a fifth who studied at the Huayan Buddhist Institute (*Huayan foxue yuan*) in Chongqing and was familiar with the Sino-Tibetan Institute at that time.<sup>35</sup> The stories these figures shared with me describe the unorthodox educational setting found only at those institutions associated with Taixu. Trivial matters, such as monastics being allowed to wear leather shoes when it was wet out, somewhat humorous matters, such as young Daguo's surprise and embarrassment upon learning that the seminary's students would swim and bathe alongside the regular visitors to the warm springs, including the females, and more education-related matters, such as the process by which a student was admitted to the institute (usually by exam), were all relayed to me. All of these details bespeak the liberal yet serious environment at the Sino-Tibetan Institute. The disciples of some of the seminary's students, local lay Buddhists, and local historians have also provided many details. I have found that

---

<sup>34</sup> Weixian, personal communication, December 3, 2005.

<sup>35</sup> These five individuals are Chen Wenjie 陳文杰 (aka Tongjie 同杰; years at seminary: 1934-1939), Weixian 唯賢 (1936-1941), Daguo 大果 (1941-1947), Chengjing 澄靜 (1945-1947), Hongchan 洪禪 (1946-1950), and Peng Zongmin 彭宗民, who entered the Huayan Buddhist Studies Academy in 1942.



these speakers are usually quite honest (e.g. Weixian's laughing, mentioned above, rather than concocting some sort of answer). Furthermore, I have tried to refrain from using these individual's recollections and anecdotes to make universal generalizations about the life and education at the seminary.

The second consists of archival materials. The Chongqing City Archives contains a vast amount of records related to the Sino-Tibetan Institute.<sup>36</sup> Although I visited these archives four times in 2005-2006, my time and financial resources prevented me from doing much more than reviewing the overall contents of the materials.<sup>37</sup> Instead, I have focused mostly on materials written and sometimes published that bear on the current status of and goings-on at the seminary, some correspondences between the seminary and the provincial government, and a transcript of the institute's Student Association (*tongxue hui* 同學會). The Beibei Library also possessed thirteen "string-bound" texts (*xianzhuang shu* 線裝書) published at the institute in the 1930s and 40s. Although most of these have since been reprinted in less fragile formats, among these texts was a first edition copy of Fazun's *Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People* (*Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi*), the focus of the next chapter.

In short, what I found was that Taixu, the Sino-Tibetan Institute's founder, and Fazun, the seminary's principal director, contributed two different yet complementary aspects to the academics at the seminary. Taixu's prestige as well as

---

<sup>36</sup> Gray Tuttle told me that the city library's archives has materials relating to the Sino-Tibetan Institute. Unfortunately, I have not yet gone to investigate. E-mail communication, August 19, 2005.

<sup>37</sup> Many of the photocopies I have of the archival materials were given to me by Tuttle via his amiable and patient acquaintance, Jampa Gelek. I am extremely grateful for both of their help.

his dynamic and novel educational contributions were mentioned above. In addition, his emphasis on Chinese Buddhist Yogācāra (Ch. *weishi* 唯識) philosophy can be seen as a creative recovery of tradition, or even “traditionary invention,”<sup>38</sup> in response to various cultural and intellectual importations and invasions from abroad. As for Fazun, his most important contribution (for he had many) was his creation of a curriculum unique in the history of China: he mastered, imported, and implemented a Tibetan Geluk Buddhist curriculum at a Buddhist seminary for Chinese-speaking students. Fazun’s study of Geluk Buddhism and his propagation of it in China can be seen as his own “creative recovery of tradition,” in this case a tradition that never fully emerged in China. Gelukpa’s scholasticism and its emphasis on Madhyamaka and Yogācāra philosophy melded well with Taixu’s own emphasis on a “traditional” and text-based Chinese Buddhism. It was this blending of “tradition” and “modernity” and the outstanding capabilities of these figures that made the Sino-Tibetan Institute a success.

As noted above, *The Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People* (hereafter *History of the Tibetan People*) seems to be the first history of its kind. It is perhaps the first Chinese account of Tibetan history based on Tibetan language sources. In particular, his treatment of certain events that have drawn the attention of modern Western scholars interested in Sino-Tibetan relations, such as the Council of

---

<sup>38</sup> Lionel Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism: Chinese Traditions and Universal Civilization*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 277-279. Jensen says: “Instead of an uninterrupted transmission of value through successive generations of undeviating practices, tradition is more like a frame within which invention is contained, wherein the past serves as cultural stock that informs present invention.”

Lhasa in 792 and the relationship between the Sakya monk Pakpa and the Mongols, seems to reflect traditional, normative Tibetan accounts of history and does not serve any modern political or ideological attempts to historically link Tibet or Tibetan Buddhism to China. For instance, one of Fazun's teachers, Taixu, who was not a student of Tibetan Buddhism, once made the simplistic claim that "the reason Tibetan Buddhism flourishes is based upon the fact that Princess Tang Wencheng 唐文成公主 went to Tibet."<sup>39</sup> Fazun, on the other hand, has a much fuller understanding of Tibetan history. In his *History of the Tibetan People* he relates how the Chinese (from *Handi* 漢地) monk Moheyanna (Mahayana), the representative of the "sudden path," was defeated by Kamalashīla (Lianhuajie Lunshi 蓮華戒論師), the representative of the "gradual path," and was ordered to return to China. In addition, Fazun recounts, all of his works were collected and buried.<sup>40</sup> Today in China one still regularly hears people aver that Buddhism was transmitted to Tibet from China and that Tibetan Buddhism (*Zangchuan fojiao* 藏傳佛教) is a more degenerate form of Buddhism. One monk who had been a lecturer at the China Buddhist Institute (*Zhongguo foxue yuan*) at Fayuan Monastery 法源寺 in Beijing assured me that deep and lasting cultural and religious connections were made between Tibet and China as far back as the Tang. Although such simplistic understanding of Tibetan history still abounds in China, Fazun did much to correct this.

---

<sup>39</sup> Taixu, "Shijie foxueyuan Hanzang jiaoli yuan yuanqi."

<sup>40</sup> Fazun, *Political and Religious History*, f. 1, 21b.

Of course, Fazun's attempt to convey Tibetan history to Chinese readers *as told by Tibetans* is itself colored by his own experiences and preoccupations. Fazun trained with Geluk Tibetan monks and at Drepung Monastery, one of the principal "three seats" of the Geluk sect. Many of his translations are works of the founder of the Geluk sect, Tsongkhapa. Also, the curriculum he implemented at the Sino-Tibetan Institute was modeled on the standard Geluk curriculum. Therefore, it is no surprise that his *History of the Tibetan People* focuses on and builds up to the preeminence of the Geluk sect, therefore at times overshadowing the other components of Tibetan Buddhist history.

My concluding chapter surveys the pervading and continuing influence of Fazun and his work beyond the confines of the Sino-Tibetan Institute. The Chinese scholar Lü Tiegang says that "in the area of Tibetan Buddhist studies one cannot get away from having to be familiar with Fazun's work."<sup>41</sup> Because Fazun's *History of the Tibetan People* is really just a broad introduction to Tibetan history, it is not extremely helpful to the advanced Tibetologist. However, Fazun had an unsurpassed understanding of the Tibetan language, making Fazun's insights into Tibetan issues invaluable additions to the study of Tibet in China. After the Communist Revolution of 1949, scholars such as Wang Sen 王森, Wang Yao 王堯, and Huang Mingxin 黃明信 all made use of Fazun for beginning their studies of Tibet. In the 1980s, when studies of Tibet picked up again after a hiatus of several years, scholars such as Wang Furen 王輔仁 once again looked to Fazun. Despite this, Fazun's influence on modern

---

<sup>41</sup> Lü Tiegang, personal communication, October 11, 2006.

Tibetology in China has gone largely unnoticed. One history of Tibet published in 1981 by Dungkar Lozang Trinlé (T. *Dung dkar Blo bzang ‘phrin las*), *The Merging of Religious and Secular Rule in Tibet*, has been called “the most important general history of Tibet published in the PRC since its inception.”<sup>42</sup> Accordingly, it has been widely published, translated, and even noted by Western scholars. In comparison, Fazun’s *History of the Tibetan People*, though equally influential, has hardly been given the merit it deserves. It is true that Fazun’s text was never published in large quantities, and the number of copies produced is surely not commensurate with the number of Dungkar Lozang Trinlé’s text produced in 1981 and thereafter. However, the influence it had on the PRC’s first generation of scholars in the 1950s is well worth considering. Moreover, some of Fazun’s own writings in the 1950s, such as his “Tibetan Buddhism’s First Period of Dissemination” (*Xizang qian hongqi fojiao*) drew largely on his *History of the Tibetan People*.<sup>43</sup>

Also, as was mentioned above, another significant aspect of Fazun’s work is his refraining from using the Sino-centric and communist rhetoric in Chinese scholarship that began especially in the 1940s. One scholar has said that “Chinese Tibetologists [today] have not attempted to delineate their goals and interests from those of the state, largely because of the continued sensitivity of the political status of

---

<sup>42</sup> Gray Tuttle, “Modern Tibetan Historiography in China” in *Papers on Chinese History* 7 (Spring 1998), 101.

<sup>43</sup> In *Collected Buddhist Studies Essays of Venerable Fazun*, 31-44.

Tibet.”<sup>44</sup> This is certainly not the case for Fazun’s work, and it has therefore been a valuable contribution to Chinese Tibetology.

In addition to having an academic impact, Fazun has also had a larger cultural and religious impact. Chinese monks from Venerable Nenghai’s 能海 lineage at Wutai shan still make use of Fazun’s translation of Tsongkhapa’s *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* (T. *Lam rim chen mo*) and *Great Treatise on the Steps of the Esoteric Path* (T. *Sngags rim chen mo*) in their studies.<sup>45</sup> Thus, the growing number of adherents to Tibetan Buddhism in China<sup>46</sup> are still indebted to Fazun despite his death over a quarter of a century ago. In addition, figures associated with the Sino-Tibetan Institute have since immigrated to North America and elsewhere where they have kept up their interest in and practice of Tibetan Buddhism. This is significant because the handful of graduates of the seminary that I have met in China have long since given up their interest in Tibet and forgotten their Tibetan.<sup>47</sup> Venerable Luosang Zhenzhu 洛桑珍珠, formerly known as Bisong 碧松, was a student at the Sino-Tibetan Institute. In 1937 he went to Tibet to study, and later ended up in the United States where he now practices.<sup>48</sup> Significantly, Bisong was the first Chinese to ever attain the rank of lharampa geshé (T. *lha rams pa dge bshes*), the highest rank in the *Geluk* system of scholasticism. This brings me to my last point.

---

<sup>44</sup> Tuttle, “Tibetan Historiography,” 87.

<sup>45</sup> Tuttle, “Tibetan Buddhism at Ri bo rtse lnga/Wutai shan in Modern Times” in *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies* 2 (August 2006), 8.

<sup>46</sup> See, for instance, *ibid.*, and Raoul Birnbaum, “Buddhist China at Century’s Turn,” in *The China Quarterly (Religion in China Today)* 174 (2003): 428-450.

<sup>47</sup> One individual, Chen Wenjie 陳文街 (formerly Tongjie 同傑), could, however, still recite the “Four Refuges” (*si gui yi* 四皈依) in Tibetan when I met him. Personal communication, July 19, 2006.

<sup>48</sup> Li Zhongsi first told me about this monk. Personal communication, February 14, 2006.

The presence of Tibetan Buddhism in “China Proper” is one of the more understudied academic sub-fields. Recent publications have begun to note the extent of the popularity of Tibetan Buddhism among Chinese in the Republican Period and today. This resurgence of interest in esoteric Buddhism among Chinese is no doubt linked to at least two other phenomena of the Republican Period: the creative recovery of tradition, as seen in the revival of interest in the study of Yogācāra, which had been largely dormant since the Tang Dynasty; and, the spread of new universal concepts, such as “the world religions” and “a Buddhism.” This study of Fazun and the Sino-Tibetan Institute should contribute some to our understanding of these cultural and intellectual phenomena.

Fazun’s contribution to the success of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute and to Tibetan studies in general cannot be overstated. Taixu recognized Fazun’s potential early on, hence the series of letters he sent to Fazun when the latter was in Lhasa in 1931 imploring him to return to China to direct the Sino-Tibetan Institute. The seminary had many problems in its first year of operation. In 1933 a report on the situation at the seminary was published, and in it we learn that fifty-eight of the original sixty students had left the seminary.<sup>49</sup> Fortunately new students had come during the year so that approximately forty students were still enrolled at year’s end. However, it was not until 1937, when Fazun was there permanently as the acting

---

<sup>49</sup> “Han Zang jiaoli yuan niankan” (Annual Publication of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute), as quoted in Luo Tongbing, “Han Zang jiaoli yuan shilüe,” 6. See also “The Recent Status of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute” (*Hanzang jiaoli yuan zuijin kaikuang*) (1939) in the Chongqing City Archives.

director, that the seminary was at its “zenith.”<sup>50</sup> Likewise, after Fazun left in 1948 the seminary’s quality of education would fall off quickly. No doubt other significant social and political changes, such as the Nationalist’s return to Nanjing and the Communist victory in China, affected the seminary’s ability to function as well as it had before. Nonetheless, that Fazun’s contributions to the study and practice of Tibetan Buddhism in China stretch beyond the temporal and spatial constraints of the Sino-Tibetan Institute lend further credence to his greatness.

---

<sup>50</sup> Weixian and Luo Tongbing have both named the years from 1937-45 as the institute’s zenith, though Luo may simply be reissuing Weixian’s understanding of the time period. Weixian, “Hanzang jiaoli yuan,” 9, and Luo Tongbing, “Hanzang jiaoli yuan shilue,” 7.



## Chapter One: Venerable Fazun 法尊法師

The details of Fazun’s life can be gleaned from a variety of sources. In Chinese, his autobiography, “Fazun Fashi zishu” (Venerable Fazun’s Autobiography), and his record of his trips to Tibet, “Zhuzhe ru Zang de jingguo” (Author’s Experiences in Tibet, hereafter “Experiences in Tibet”), are the most comprehensive primary sources. Other primary sources that would no doubt prove useful to a longer and more detailed study of Fazun’s life are the letters he exchanged with friends and fellow Buddhists. His *Collected Essays*<sup>51</sup> includes letters he wrote to several prominent monks and laymen, such as Taixu and Hu Zihu 胡子笏. Conversely, Taixu’s *Collected Works*<sup>52</sup> alone contains sixty letters that he wrote to Fazun. Unfortunately I have not taken the time to carefully peruse these letters for the present study.<sup>53</sup> As for secondary sources, Lü Tiegang’s “Fazun Fashi yizhu nianbiao” (Chronology of the Works of Venerable Fazun) and a couple other articles published in the Chinese Buddhist Association’s publication, *Fa yin* (The Sound of the Dharma), in commemoration of Fazun ten years after his death are the most helpful.<sup>54</sup> In Western languages there are Françoise Wang-Toutain’s “Quand les maîtres chinois s’éveillent au bouddhisme tibétain: Fazun: le Xuanzang des temps modernes,” Gray

---

<sup>51</sup> I.e. *Collected Buddhist Studies Essays of Ven. Fazun (Fazun Fashi foxue lunwen ji)*.

<sup>52</sup> I.e. *Complete Works of Master Taixu (Taixu Dashi quanshu)*.

<sup>53</sup> An interesting and recent publication that has collected, reproduced, and transcribed over sixty letters from prominent Republican Period monks to the layman Gao Henian 高鶴年. See *Fangwai lai hong: Jin xiandai gaoseng zhi Gao Henian Jushi xinhan shouji* (Letters from the Other World: Handwritten Letters of Modern Eminent Monks to Layman Gao Henian) (Beijing: Zhongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2001).

<sup>54</sup> *Fa yin* (December 15, 1990), no. 12. There have also been articles published in the periodical *Wutai shan yanjiu* (Mount Wutai Research), though they do not seem to be as helpful.

Tuttle's "Tibetan Buddhism at Rib o rtse/Wutai shan in Modern Times,"<sup>55</sup> and Tuttle's *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China*.<sup>56</sup> These Western language works rely primarily upon the aforementioned Chinese works for their accounts of Fazun's life. The following account of Fazun's life is based on the same materials; however, given the focus of this thesis (Fazun's influence on the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute), my perspective and interpretation of their content is quite different.

I have divided Fazun's life into five periods: his childhood and adolescence at home (1902-1919); the beginnings of his education (1920-1924); the formative years of Fazun's education (1924-1936); his productive years as administrator, teacher, translator, and author while at the Sino-Tibetan Institute (1934-1935 and 1936-1948); and, the Communist period (1950-1980), during which Fazun continued his work as administrator, teacher, and translator, though now at national institutes and organizations in Beijing. Fazun tells the reader very little about his childhood and adolescence at home. For Fazun, his story seems to get underway in 1920 when he left home for Wutai shan and became a novice monk (*shami*). This is the period during which Fazun began to make the personal contacts with individuals—such as Taixu and Dayong—that would largely shape the course of his life and career. Of Fazun's own writings on his life and travels, ninety percent focuses on the third period, during which time he traveled to Kham and Tibet and received most of his formal monastic training. In particular, his "Experiences in Tibet" discusses in detail

---

<sup>55</sup> Especially pp. 6-8.

<sup>56</sup> Especially pp. 103-113.

the arduous processes by which he entered Tibet and gradually worked his way to the preeminent monastic college in Tibet, Drepung.

Less information is available in his biographical writings for his years spent at the Sino-Tibetan Institute. His influence on the seminary as teacher, administrator, and translator/author is reflected in other sources and is the subject of the next chapter. Finally, despite Fazun eventually becoming the director of the Chinese Buddhist Academy and the Chair of the China Buddhist Association (*Zhongguo fojiao xiehui*),<sup>57</sup> details of Fazun's life during the Communist Period are not readily available. This is not surprising since very little at all has been written about Buddhism in Communist China. Fazun was probably all the more overlooked due to his connections with Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism, scholarly topics that have not been widely publicized. In any case, this period of Fazun's life is unfortunately beyond the scope of this study.

In the following synopsis of Fazun's life I have attempted to follow Fazun's own description of his life as told in his autobiography, first published in 1985,<sup>58</sup> and his "Experiences in Tibet," first published in 1937.<sup>59</sup> That means that the most attention goes to his "formative years" in Kham and Tibet. As we will see, these years stand out for Fazun as the time during which he cultivated a devotion to scripture, study, and translation. Even before he left for Tibet he began to develop a deep admiration for China's most famous Buddhist pilgrims and translators, and he

---

<sup>57</sup> In the fall of 1980, not long before his death, Fazun was made Director of the seminary. Lü Tiegang, "Fazun Fashi yizhu nianbiao," 19.

<sup>58</sup> In *Fa yin*, no. 6.

<sup>59</sup> See n. 32 above.

obviously modeled many of his own plans and actions on them. Thus, in this chapter, as in later chapters, *texts* and their *study* stand out as central to Fazun's life and his contributions to the world.

### Early Years (1902-1919 and 1920-1924)<sup>60</sup>

Fazun was born on December 14<sup>th</sup> in the twenty-eighth year of the Guangxu reign period (1902). He was born with the surname Wen 溫 in Shen County 深縣 in Hebei Province. He only received three years of primary education and was thus rather uncultured, to use Fazun's own words.<sup>61</sup> In 1919, due to the poor financial circumstances at home, he went to Baoding to study leather shoe making. His health was poor, however, and so he never completed his studies there. Instead, at the end of spring of the following year, he abandoned the world of which he was weary (*yanshi* 厭世) and fled to Wutai shan to become a monk (*chujia*). His tonsure master was RuiPu 瑞普<sup>62</sup> of Yuhuang Temple 玉皇廟 (now known as Puhua si 普化寺<sup>63</sup>). His dharma name was Miaogui 妙貴, "Fazun" being his style (*zi* 字). At once he fell into the normal work routine, while in the evenings he participated in the morning and evening religious services and studied.

In the fall of the same year Ven. Dayong and Ven. Xuanyi 玄義 passed through Yuhuang. Fazun approached Dayong and asked him to elucidate the dharma

---

<sup>60</sup> Unless otherwise noted, the following information is drawn primarily from Fazun's autobiography ("Fazun Fashi zishu") and Lü Tiegang's "Fazun Fashi yizhu nianbiao."

<sup>61</sup> "Autobiography," 372.

<sup>62</sup> His dharma name (*faming*) was Juexiang 覺祥. "Autobiography," 372.

<sup>63</sup> See Wen Jinyu 溫金玉, "Fazun Fashi yu Puhua si" (Ven. Fazun and Puhua Monastery), in *Wutai shan yanjiu*, 1995 (2).

(*kaishi* 開示). Dayong responded by lecturing on the *Sutra of the Eight*

*Understandings of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas* (Ch. *Badarenjue jing* 八大人覺

經)<sup>64</sup> and the *Sutra of the Last Teaching of the Buddha* (Ch. *Foyijiao jing* 佛遺教

經).<sup>65</sup> This experience drew forth Fazun's interest in listening to scripture (*jing* 經):

I immediately felt that if one is to be a home-leaver then he should do some of the things home-leavers (*chujiaren*) do. If I were to spend my days muddling along around a monastery, that would truly be a disservice to my original motivation for becoming a monk (*chujia de benxin*)!"<sup>66</sup>

During the spring of 1921 he lived and studied at Guangji Monastery's 廣濟寺 Maopeng 茅蓬.<sup>67</sup> That summer he listened to Dayong lecture on the *Amitabha Sutra* (Ch. *Mituo jing* 彌陀經)<sup>68</sup> and Ven. Yuancan 遠參 lecture on the *Brahma-net Sutra* (Ch. *Fanwang jing* 梵網經).<sup>69</sup> At that time, Fazun explains, "I had a meager and crude understanding of the technical terms and distinctions (*mingxiang*) [used] in Buddhist sutras and treatises." Despite his ignorance Fazun became more and more passionate about Buddhist literature.

[At that time] I would hear common practitioners say that the recitation of Buddhist sutras in quest of rebirth in a Pure Land is the principal task of a monk. I of course had to agree with these words. However, in my leisure time I would listen to Dayong recount the stories of eminent monks (*gaoseng*) from the past. I then immediately knew that a monk's task is not just recitation and re-birth in a Pure Land (*nianfo wangsheng*) and escaping from samsara, but that right in

---

<sup>64</sup> Translated by An Shigao 安世高 of the Eastern Han (25-220). T 17.779.

<sup>65</sup> Translated by Kumārajīva. T 12.389.

<sup>66</sup> "Experiences in Tibet," 358.

<sup>67</sup> This is probably a "grass hut" of some kind used for retreats and recluses. Fazun first went there for a seven-day retreat in 1921.

<sup>68</sup> Translated by Kumārajīva, T 12.366.

<sup>69</sup> Translated by Kumārajīva in 406. T 24.1484.

the midst of life and death (or, samsara) there is much work to be done, such as the translation of Buddhist scripture and the upkeep of the True Law (*zhengfa*).<sup>70</sup>

Given the importance Dayong had on Fazun's life already in these early years, a few words discussing his life and background are in order.<sup>71</sup> Dayong (1893-1929) was a disciple of Taixu. In the early 1920s he twice traveled to Japan where he lived and studied esoteric Buddhism (J. Shingon 真言) at Mount Kōya Esoteric University (高野山密宗大學) and received initiations from the Esoteric Master (S. *Acārya*, J. *Ajari* 阿闍黎) Kaneyama Bokushō 金山穆韶.<sup>72</sup> After he returned to China in 1923 he quickly had a following of devotees interested in esoteric Buddhism, and Dayong performed many initiations for them. Later, he met the Mongolian Lama Bai Puren 白普仁 in Beijing and began studying Tibetan esoteric Buddhism. Fazun first met Dayong at Beijing's Guangji Monastery, where they had both gone to listen to Taixu speak. In 1925 Dayong organized and led over twenty monks and laymen to Tibet. Included in that group was Fazun, Nenghai 能海, and many others that would later do much to introduce Tibetan Buddhism into China.

In the winter of 1921 Fazun went to Fayuan Monastery in Beijing (Beiping) and took precepts under the Venerable Elder Daojie 道階. With the help of his precept master and Master Bawei 八位 of Mount Baohua 寶華山 he then went to

---

<sup>70</sup> "Experiences in Tibet," 358.

<sup>71</sup> This following information is taken from Yu Lingbo, *Zhongguo jin xiandai fojiao renwu zhi* (Beijing, Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 1995), 184-189.

<sup>72</sup> Kaneyama Bokushō's name may actually be written 金山穆韶. Further investigation is needed. Daniel Stevenson, personal communication, June 2007.

Baohua shan to study the vinaya (*jie* 戒). As is well known, Baohua Mountain was one of the preeminent monasteries in China for the study of the precepts and proper deportment that are supposed to guide a monk's life.<sup>73</sup> It could also be a draconian environment for the new ordinee.<sup>74</sup> As an ordained monk, Fazun apparently did not have to suffer such treatment. While there, Fazun notes, he heard the senior ordination instructor (*kaitangshi* 開堂師) and the other ordination instructors (*wushi* 五師) lecture on the *Tiantai sijiao yi* 天台四教儀.<sup>75</sup>

This immediately brought about my habit of listening to lectures on scripture. I began to feel that listening to scripture ranked higher than studying the vinaya and that it was a much richer [experience] than the “water and land” (*shuilu*), “burning mouth” (*yankou*), [and other such rituals].<sup>76</sup>

Here again Fazun emphasizes his zealous interest in scripture rather than such practices as the recitation of the Buddha's name (*nianfo*), the performance of rituals such as the *shuilu* or that for the release of hungry-ghosts, and the study of monastic rules and precepts. Thus, in the winter of 1922 when the fortuitous opportunity arose

---

<sup>73</sup> See, for instance, Welch, *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism*, pp. 287-9.

<sup>74</sup> See Chen-hua, *In Search of the Dharma: Memoirs of a Modern Chinese Buddhist Pilgrim*, ed. Chün-fang Yü, trans. Denis C. Mair (Albany, New York: State University of New York, 1992), 45-59.

<sup>75</sup> This text, by the Koryŏ (Korean) Buddhist monk Chegwan 諦觀, was a common primer for Tiantai study beginning at least in the Southern Song (1127-1279). It appears in T 46.1931. Daniel Stevenson, personal communication, May 2007.

<sup>76</sup> “Experiences in Tibet,” 358. The *shuilu fahui* (水陸法會), or rite for the deliverance of creatures of water and land, is a major ritual performed for the release and absolution of an immense number of beings that reside in the various realms of existence. It is particularly associated with the Tiantai school of Buddhism. The ritual for the feeding or release of burning-mouth hungry ghosts (*fang yankou* 放焰口) is performed periodically for the particular benefit of hungry ghosts (*egui* 餓鬼). See Daniel B. Stevenson, “Text, Image, and Transformation in the History of the Shuilu fahui, the Buddhist Rite for Deliverance of Creatures of Water and Land,” *Cultural Intersections in Later Chinese Buddhism*, Ed. Marsha Weidner (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 30-70, Charles Orzech, “Saving the Burning-Mouth Hungry Ghost,” in *Religions of China in Practice* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr., 278-283. Hun Lye wrote a dissertation on the rite of the release of the hungry ghosts (University of Virginia, 2004?), though I do not have the citation available at this time.

for him to study at Taixu's newly created Wuchang Buddhist Studies Institute (*Wuchang foxue yuan* 武昌佛學院) Fazun immediately enrolled and began his studies there.<sup>77</sup>

It is likely that Fazun first met Taixu through Dayong in the fall of 1921 when Taixu went to Guangji Monastery 廣濟寺 in Beijing to lecture on the *Lotus Sutra* (Ch. *Fahua jing* 法華經). It was again through Dayong that Fazun was able to attend Taixu's Wuchang Institute in 1922. The Wuchang Institute was the earliest seminary established by Taixu (in 1920). Fazun did not write much about his two years spent at the Wuchang seminary except to mention the names of some of the important Madhyamaka, Yogācāra, and other texts that he studied.<sup>78</sup> These included the *Treatise on the Completion of Consciousness-Only* (Ch. *Cheng weishi lun* 成唯識論), the *Sam.dhinirmocana Sutra* (Ch. *Jie shenmi jing* 解深密經), a text entitled [*Indian*] *Logic* (Ch. *Yinming* 因明, S. *nyāya* or *hetuvidyā*),<sup>79</sup> the root verses of Vasubandhu's *Treasury of the Abhidharma* (Ch. *Jushe song* 俱舍頌), and Gonda Raifu's 權田雷斧 (1846-1934) *An Overview of the Esoteric School* (J. *Mikkyō kōyo*).<sup>80</sup> Many of these texts will reappear in later chapters, especially in chapter two when discussing the curriculum at the Sino-Tibetan Institute.

---

<sup>77</sup> The monk Zhenhua 真華, who was ordained at Baohua shan in the mid-40s, similarly left Baohua shan and jumped at the opportunity to study at a seminary of Taixu's, this time in Nanjing. Apparently the plans for the seminary came to naught. Chen-hua, *In Search of the Dharma*, 65.

<sup>78</sup> Fazun, "Autobiography," 372.

<sup>79</sup> This is likely Dignāga's *Nyāyadvāratarkapravesha śāstra* (Ch. *Yinming zhengli men lun* 因明正理門論), translated by Xuanzang in T 32.1628 and Yijing in T 32.1629.

<sup>80</sup> Ch. *Mizong gangyao*, trans. by Wang Hongyuan 王宏願, a well-known Chinese Shingon devotee in the Republican Period.



In the winter of 1923 Dayong returned from Japan and went to Wuchang to transmit (*chuan* 傳) the Eighteen Paths (Ch. *shiba dao*, J. *jūhachidō*), an elemental Shingon practice (*fa* 法). Fazun says that “Buddhists—both clergy and laity—from every corner all thought that only esoteric [Buddhism] was the most elevated.”<sup>81</sup> Fazun too was caught up in the frenzy: “I also served as Dayong’s acolyte (*shizhe* 侍者) for a few days. I also studied the Eighteen Paths and made offerings to a singular tutelary deity (Ch. *yizungongyang* 一尊供養).”<sup>82</sup> However, Fazun also emphasizes his ignorance of esoteric Buddhism:

My karmic roots were very weak: I did not experience samadhi<sup>83</sup> (*sanmodi* 三摩地) or Sakyamuni’s empowerment (*benzun de jiachi* 本尊的加持), nor did I [even] attain any great magical powers (*mo nonggui de da shentong* 魔弄鬼的大神通) So, my knowledge of esoteric methods (*mifa*) was very weak and dim (*danbo* 淡薄).<sup>84</sup>

Here Fazun describes the most and least one can hope for when receiving esoteric initiations if he has not first had proper training in the underlying doctrine: at most one might have a little samadhi experience and then mistake that for enlightenment; at worst one might get totally disoriented and walk away having acquired a few magical powers (*moye huo guigu shentong* 魔業或鬼孤神通) and thinking that is enlightenment. Tibetan Geluk Buddhism, which composed the majority of Taixu’s studies in Tibet, emphasizes a solid foundation in exoteric doctrine *before* beginning any esoteric practice. Therefore, this description can be seen as a subtle critique by

---

<sup>81</sup> “Experiences in Tibet,” 359.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> “Absorption,” or “meditative concentration.”

<sup>84</sup> Fazun, “Experiences in Tibet,” 359.

Fazun of certain Buddhists who give tantric empowerments to those not equipped to receive them.

Even in 1923 Fazun was already keen on studying. So, in the summer of 1924 when Dayong opened his Buddhist Tibetan Language Institute (Ch. *Fojiao Zangwen xueyuan*), Fazun eagerly followed his fellow graduates of the Wuchang seminary to Beijing to attend.<sup>85</sup> He says

When I was in Wuchang listening to lectures on the Three Treatises (*sanlun* 三論, i.e. Madhyamaka) and Consciousness-only (*weishi* 唯識 [schools and scriptures]), I began to deeply admire the great, former presence (*qingchen* 清塵) of Shi, Xian, Zang, and Jing.<sup>86</sup> Then, when I heard Dayong's call regarding going to Tibet, I obviously leapt up ten meters into the air and feared only that I would not get to the door in time!<sup>87</sup>

### Formative Years (1924-1936)

Following his graduation from the Wuchang Institute, Fazun went to Beijing to join the Tibetan Language Studies Institute. The school was started through the joint effort of Dayong, Bai Puren 白普仁, and the laymen Hu Zihu 胡子笏. Studies

---

<sup>85</sup> Mei Jingxuan, in his “Minguo yilai de Han Zang fojiao guanxi (1912-1949): Yi Han Zang jiaoli yuan wei zhongxin de tantao” (Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Relations of the Republican Period (1912-1949): an Inquiry Focused on the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute), misinterprets what Fazun is saying here. Min believes that Fazun is indifferent towards esoteric Buddhism. He then uses this as evidence to justify his claim that the Buddhist Tibetan Language Institute did *not* in fact draw away support from the Wuchang Institute. In particular, Min is challenging Venerable Dongchu 東初法師, who authored the standard history of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, *Zhongguo fojiao jindai shi* (A History of Modern Chinese Buddhism) (Taipei: Zhonghua fojiao wenhua guan, 1974). Dongchu suggests that the new Tibetan Language Studies Institute and the Wuchang Institute students' infatuation with esoteric Buddhism are the reasons that the Wuchang Institute lost much of its funding and support. Although a direct correlation cannot be proven, the fact is that many of the Wuchang Institute's best students left to join the Tibetan Language Institute in the summer of 1924. Mei, “Minguo yi lai de Han Zang fojiao guanxi,” 260.

<sup>86</sup> China's four most renowned Buddhist pilgrims and translators of scripture were Kumārajīva (Ch. Jiuluomoshi 鳩摩羅什), Faxian 法顯, Xuanzang 玄奘, and Yijing 義淨.

<sup>87</sup> “Experiences in Tibet,” 360.

began in August. Fazun found himself in the company of several other monks and laymen: Ven. Dagang 大綱, Ven. Miyan 密嚴, the layman Shanzhe 善哲居士, Ven. Langchan 朗禪, Ven. Hengyan 恆演,<sup>88</sup> Ven. Chaoyi 超一, Ven. Guankong 觀空, and Ven. Fafang 法舫, to name a few. Many of them later became instructors or administrators at the Sino-Tibetan Institute. The Tibetan language teacher was a man from Kangding 康定, Chong Baolin 充寶林. He was a disciple of the lama Ciyuan 慈願 of Paoma Mountain (in Kangding), who became Fazun's teacher later in 1926. In the spring of the following year (i.e. 1925) the school was transformed into the Team to Study the Dharma Abroad in Tibet (*Liu Zang xuefa tuan* 留藏學法團).<sup>89</sup> They set off that summer in high spirits: "On the road we received *ācārya* consecration (*chuanfa guanding* 傳法灌頂, J. *denbō kanjō*) and we took refuge and took precepts (*shuogui shoujie* 說皈授戒). It was super exciting!"<sup>90</sup> Fazun mentions how old classmates they encountered along the way tried to convince the team to stay in China, emphasizing a lack of good monks in the monasteries of China and the difficulty of traveling to Tibet. Fazun, however, was undeterred. In fact, it was during this time that he developed a sincere and ardent devotion to translating the dharma into Chinese:

That fall while at Wulong Monastery 烏龍寺 [in Jiading] I read the Vinaya and the *Nanhai jigui zhuan* 南海寄歸傳 (A Record of Buddhist Practices Sent Home from the Southern Sea). I began to have

---

<sup>88</sup> This is the author of *Xizang zhi fojiao* (Tibet's Buddhism). See chapter three.

<sup>89</sup> I am following Tuttle's translation for consistency and identification purposes. See *Tibetan Buddhists*, 104, etc.

<sup>90</sup> "Experiences in Tibet," 360.

a truly faithful and respectful interest in Tripitika Master Yijing 義淨三藏.

Yijing (635-713) was a Tang period monk that traveled to India and studied there for twenty-five years. While there he gathered many Sanskrit texts, and after he returned to China he translated a great deal of them, particularly those associated with the Vinaya and the Saravastivada tradition. His *Record of Buddhist Practices Sent Home from the Southern Sea*,<sup>91</sup> like Xuanzang's *Record of the Western Countries* (Ch. *Da Tang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記)<sup>92</sup> and the *Records of the Buddhist Kingdoms* (Ch. *Fo guo ji* 佛國記)<sup>93</sup> based on Faxian's pilgrimage to India, was a record of his pilgrimage to India to study and retrieve Buddhist scripture. It quite possibly served as a model for Fazun's own "Experiences in Tibet." It clearly further inspired him to undertake his travels. Commenting on Yijing's writings and other translations, Fazun writes

I feel that every character and stroke [of the brush] of these scriptures is the product of a drop of blood and a teardrop. They [represent] the great compassion and great fearlessness emitted, the great vows taken, and the selfless sacrifices made by our enlightened forbears. When we later students take these received and translated [texts], we should at least remember the great vows, industry, sacrifices, and kindness of our enlightened forbears ..."

This was the mindset that carried Fazun through the many hardships he was to face during his travels to and in Tibet and throughout the rest of his life.

The Team to Study the Dharma Abroad in Tibet traveled through Wuhan, Yichang 宜昌 (Hubei Province), Chongqing, Jiading 嘉定 (Sichuan Province), Emei

---

<sup>91</sup> T 54.2125.

<sup>92</sup> T 51.2087.

<sup>93</sup> T 51.2085.

shan, and Yaan 雅安 (Sichuan) before reaching Kangding. Fazun expected to encounter difficulties and dangers. He quotes a poem of Yijing: “Those who set out are equal to a hundred; those who come back are not even ten. Those who remain behind have minds at rest (*an zhi* 安知); those who go ahead face difficulties.”<sup>94</sup>

Already in the fall of 1925 the group seemed to encounter obstacles.

From Yaan to Dajianlu 打箭爐 (Darsedo?) there were also many brigand territories. I remember the day we set out from Rongjing 榮經. We ran into an army force for suppressing brigands on its return home. They were toting several human heads. It was very frightening! It was only later that I realized that they had cleared the path of obstacles especially for us. On the morning of the second day when crossing the Daxiang Range 大相嶺 [on the way to Kangding] we again ran into brigands. But they let us go past. They robbed the textile merchants following behind us. It was not until later that I learned that word had been sent along; so [the brigands] could not rob us.<sup>95</sup>

In fact, along the way Dayong sought protection from local governments and military officers. This seemed to work in their favor. Moreover, the team seemed to be well cared for under Dayong’s leadership. “It was as if I was his tonsure disciple,” Fazun describes his relationship with Dayong. “There was never a time he did not look after me.”<sup>96</sup> Thus they arrived safely in Kangding. There they spent that fall and winter studying Tibetan under a rather inept teacher.<sup>97</sup> “To be frank for a moment,” Fazun relates, “even though [our Tibetan teacher’s] Tibetan was better than ours, he really did not know more about Tibetan than we.”<sup>98</sup> So, in the spring of 1926 he and his

---

<sup>94</sup> “Experiences in Tibet,” 361.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*,” 362.

<sup>96</sup> “*Ibid.*,” 360.

<sup>97</sup> The teacher’s surname was Qiu 邱. “Autobiography,” 373.

<sup>98</sup> “Experiences in Tibet,” p. 362.

good friend Ven. Langchan came up with the idea of climbing the nearby Paoma Mountain to study.

Fazun, Langchan, and Dayong all went and studied with Master Ciyuan on Paoma shan for a year. It was the most formative year up to that point in Fazun's education. They studied the *Thirty Verses* (Ch. *Sanshi song*)<sup>99</sup> and such "language primers" as the *Changing Marks* (Ch. *Zhuanxiang lun* 轉相論),<sup>100</sup> the *Treatise on Different Names* (Ch. *Yiming lun* 異名論), the *Treatise on One Name and Many Meanings* (Ch. *Yiming duoyi lun* 一名多義論), and the *Book on [Tibetan] Characters* (Ch. *Zi shu*).<sup>101</sup> More importantly, they studied some of the works of Tsongkhapa (1357-1419), the illustrious Tibetan Buddhist lama known today as the founder of the Geluk sect of Tibetan Buddhism:<sup>102</sup> the *Explanation of the Bhikshu Precepts*,<sup>103</sup> the *Explanation of the Bodhisattva Precepts*, and the *Concise Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*. This gave Fazun "a good base in Tibetan Buddhist studies" on which he could continue to build.<sup>104</sup> It was also during this time he also developed an "uncommon belief" in Tibetan Buddhism:

[These texts] were extraordinary treasures I had never even dreamed of. I felt as if my aspirations of setting my mind upon seeking the dharma had finally resulted in a small result. Even if I were to die in Tibet I would [therefore] not have a remorseful heart or be regretful.<sup>105</sup>

---

<sup>99</sup> This is likely Vasubandhu's *Verses on the Thirty Consciousness-Only Treatises* (Ch. *Weishi sanshi lun song*), which are the root verses of the *Cheng weishi lun*, which Xuanzang translated into Chinese.

<sup>100</sup> I have not yet been able to identify this and the following two texts.

<sup>101</sup> This may be the thirteenth Dalai Lama's *Yi ge'i mdo*, in *Tohoku Daigaku* (Sendai, Japan: Toshakan, 1953) (hereafter TOH) 7074.

<sup>102</sup> For more information see, for instance, Donald Lopez Jr., ed., *Religions of Tibet in Practice* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 28.

<sup>103</sup> See chapter two for more information on this and the following two texts.

<sup>104</sup> "Autobiography," 373.

<sup>105</sup> "Experiences in Tibet," 363.

Thus, for Fazun, the spring of 1927 marked the formal start of their travels.<sup>106</sup> More importantly, the texts he studied that year are some of the very works he later translated and used for formulating a curriculum at the Sino-Tibetan Institute (see chapter two).

Dayong ordered the group to divide in two and enter Tibet. At that time, Fazun tells us, “a letter came from the Tibetan government ordering that all Chinese monks be stopped from entering Tibet. ... They suspected that the [Chinese] government had sent us.”<sup>107</sup> This apparently was a result of their less than covert promenade approaching Tibet. Dayong traveled in a rather grandiose and showy manner, relying upon officials for their support and protection. Due to the holdup Fazun and Langchan dressed as “ordinary monks” (*putong sengren*), joined a merchant’s caravan and made it Kardzé (Ch. Ganzi 甘孜).

Once there, they had no choice but to stay put for a while. Langchan left to head back to Muniang Township 木娘鄉 to study. Dayong arrived in Kardzé and Fazun followed him across the river to Drakkar Monastery (Ch. Zhajia si 扎迦寺).<sup>108</sup> At Drakkar Monastery Fazun approached the elder Drakkar Lama. Because the latter was infirm Fazun studied under his head disciple. Later, he ended up studying with

---

<sup>106</sup> “Experiences in Tibet,” 363.

<sup>107</sup> “Autobiography,” 373-4.

<sup>108</sup> Tibetan reconstruction based on Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, 111 and 270n40. The Chinese Zhajia si comes from “Experiences in Tibet,” 363, etc. In “Autobiography,” 374, he writes Zhaga/ge si 扎噶寺.

Getok Trülku (Ch. Getuo Zhugu 格陀諸古).<sup>109</sup> Fazun had great admiration for this teacher and stayed with him for four years. During this time he made his first attempts at translation. It was also through him that he met the celebrated master from Golok (Ch. Guoluo 果洛<sup>110</sup>) Amdo Geshé Jamröl Rölpe Dorjé (Ch. Andong Geshe Jiang re, 1888-1935) in the fall of 1928. The latter had come to Kardzé to pay respects to Drakkar Lama and to ask about the construction of a monastery in Chamdo (Ch. Changdu 昌都).<sup>111</sup> This was a teacher Fazun had been yearning to meet. On their first encounter Fazun asked him several questions, all to which Amdo Geshé gave satisfying and penetrating answers. Fazun decided then that he wanted to make Amdo Geshé his teacher.

In the summer of 1929 Drakkar Lama passed away. Six days later Dayong also passed away. With the guidance of Getok Trülku, Fazun and a few other followers of Dayong constructed a pyre and cremated his remains. The following spring Dayong's relics (*linggu* 靈骨) were taken to Kangding and a pagoda was erected. Fazun was on his own without Dayong. Despite the showy and official manner in which Dayong had traveled—something Fazun seemed to find unappealing from the start—traveling with Dayong had had its benefits:

The first year I was in Ganzi (Kardzé) I stayed with Dayong and got my meals. I obviously ate well. The second year, after splitting up, I would use a large ceramic thermos that I would fill with cold water. At

---

<sup>109</sup> The Tibetan reconstruction is a modification of Tuttle's (*Tibetan Buddhists*, 111). Fazun uses the Chinese *zhugu* 諸古 to transliterate the Tibetan term “*sprul sku*,” which means “living buddha” (Ch. *huofo*), or reincarnated lama. See Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, f. 5, 3a.

<sup>110</sup> Fazun writes “*Kuoluo* 廓羅.”

<sup>111</sup> Tibetan reconstruction of Amdo Geshé based on Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, 111 and 270n41.



night, right before bed, I would rest it on top of an urn filled with cow dung. I then cover it with some tattered felt to insulate it. Gradually I would get the coals of cow dung hotter and hotter until the water boiled. The next morning I would first pour out a little to wash my face. In the rest of the water I would throw in a handful of coarse tea and half a handful of Tibetan (or “barbaric,” *man* 蠻) salt. This is called making Tibetan (*man*) tea. When I finished my morning class (or “recitations”), I would set [the thermos] in front of the bed. [Then] I would get out a wooden bowl, half of a small sack of tsampa, a piece of butter, and a few slices of raw radish to make breakfast. ...<sup>112</sup>

Dayong’s funeral services taken care of, Fazun returned to Kardzé where he listened to the complete works of Drakkar Lama. Finally, in the spring of 1930 he traveled to Chamdo. Langchan and Ven. Changguang 常光 continued on to Lhasa. Fazun and Ven. Huishen 慧深 stayed in Chamdo to study. Having approached Amdo Geshé, Fazun received over forty initiations of the “Adamantine Necklace Collection” (Ch. *Jingangman lun* 金剛鬘論) that spring, summer, and fall. Fazun followed Amdo Geshé into Tibet and later received more training. In Naxu 拏墟<sup>113</sup> Dapu Lama 達樸大師 taught him a “peerless practice of the mandala of the body of Green Tara” (*lüdu mushen mantuoluo zhi bugong xiufa* 綠度母身曼陀羅之不共修法). In October they arrived in Lhasa where Fazun proceeded to enroll in Drepung Monastery (Ch. *Biebang si* 別邦寺).

---

<sup>112</sup> “Experiences in Tibet,” 365.

<sup>113</sup> “Experiences in Tibet,” 364. Wang-Toutain writes “Nulu.” “Quand les maîtres chinois s’éveillent au bouddhisme tibétain,” 716.

Drepung monastery was the preeminent Geluk monastery. It officially held 7,700 monks, though in 1951 it had about 10,000.<sup>114</sup> Fazun, though enrolled at the monastery, explains that he actually continued studying under Amdo Geshé and lived in the city. Therefore he was not enrolled in any particular “college” (or, sub-monastery) (T. *grwa tshang*, Ch. *zhacang* 扎倉).<sup>115</sup> He studied several texts, including Tsongkhapa’s *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* (Ch. *Putidao cidi guanglun* 菩提道次第廣論, T. *Lam rim chen mo*, hereafter *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*) and the *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Esoteric Path* (Ch. *Mizongdao cidi guanglun* 密宗道次第廣論, T. *Sngags rim chen mo*),<sup>116</sup> both of which he later translated (in 1935 and 1937, respectively). He also studied with other masters during this time.

During these several years that Fazun was in Kham and Lhasa his “typical day” began with a coarse meal of Tibetan tea as described above.

After breakfast I would go to my teacher to have class and listen to lectures. At noon I would go back to my place and drink a few more cups of tea. I would knead another bowl of tsampa to eat. In the afternoon I would go to class again. In the evening I would eat whatever. And that would be another day’s time. The next day would be the same old thing. Three hundred sixty days a year would have the

---

<sup>114</sup> Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet: 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 25.

<sup>115</sup> The Chinese reads “*biebang si fang zhacang jun ze*” 別邦寺放扎倉郡則 (“Experiences in Tibet,” 364.) “*Fang zhacang*” might mean “free from a *tratsang* (T. *grwa tshang*),” or “no *tratsang*,” since it does not correlate with any of the Chinese renderings of Drepung’s *tratsang* in Fazun’s *History of the Tibetan People* (see f. 4, 25a). Wang-Toutain misreads this as “... visit the Master Zhacang.” “Quand les maîtres chinois s’éveillent au bouddhisme tibétain,” 716. I do not know what Fazun means by “*jun ze*.” It may mean “rules (*ze*) of the prefecture (*jun*),” referring to the residential subunits known as *khangtsen* (T. *khang mtshan*, Ch. *kangcun* 康村), thus implying that he was “free” from the *khangtsen* as well as the college or sub-monastery (*tratsang*). See Kapstein, *The Demise of the Lamaist State*, 24-31.

<sup>116</sup> For more information on these two texts see chapter two.

same routine. ... I was so busy getting up early and going to sleep late to study books and recite sutras that I even had to steal time from my breaks in order to eat. During the days and nights of these eight or nine years, I was able to learn a little about both exoteric and esoteric [Buddhist] truth (*jiaoli* 教理), which must explain why I was inattentive towards life's basic necessities.<sup>117</sup>

Thus Fazun's passion for studying, learning, and translating the dharma, which caused him to "forget to sleep," seems to have made the material and cultural obstacles he encountered obsolete.

In 1933, however, his period of intensive study in Tibet came to an end. He received several letters from Taixu urging him to return to China to help set up the Sino-Tibetan Institute. Fazun was disappointed since he felt as if he had not completed his studies. Furthermore, Fazun had hoped to take Amdo Geshé back to China (*neidi* 內地) with him to teach at Taixu's World Buddhist Institute. However, Amdo Geshé and the Dalai Lama himself both told Fazun that he should return first and that Amdo Geshé would come later.

His departure was delayed when his good friend Langchan passed away. Fazun was devastated. Not only was Langchang one of the few members of the original team of 1925 that had made it to Tibet, but also Fazun had counted on his help in encouraging Amdo Geshé to go to China to teach. In fact, death seemed to hound Fazun at that time. In a 1934 letter to Fafang, Fazun recounts his sorrow and dismay:

Human life is too impermanent! Before, when in Kardzé, I blinked several times and saw that Master Dayong was gone forever. I had to

---

<sup>117</sup> "Experiences in Tibet," 365.

take care of his cremation. The pain in my heart was something indescribable. The next spring ... I witnessed the cremation of Brother Zhisán 智三. Brother Fang! Brother Zhisán was the same year as I! What fortune do I have that has kept me from dying? Could it be that my death is not far off?! Right before I returned [from Lhasa] I had good discussions with Chanlang. I would return to prepare [things], and he would stay in Tibet and study and wait. When Master [Amdo] was ready to come, the two of us would work together [to bring him to China]. Who knew that things would not go according to our wishes? I planned to leave on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October, but [Langchang] beat me by five days and went off to the Western Paradise! Again it was me that cared for him at his side. And it was me that took care of all the affairs that followed [his death]. Brother Fang! Do you see how many obstacles the Buddha-dharma has? How little luck do the Chinese (*Hanzu* 漢祖) people have? Those like Chanlang that study and have effort (*jingjin* 精進) and vows (*zhiyuan* 志願) are hard to come by. If another one or two like this die then we can consider the Tibetan Language Institute (*Zangwen xueyuan*) finished.<sup>118</sup>

Fazun then left for India. He went on pilgrimage for over a month to the various sites associated with Shayakumuni Buddha's life, not knowing if he would live to ever make it back there again. He traveled through Calcutta, Rangoon, Pulau Penang (Malasia), Singapore, and Hong Kong, and at the beginning of May, 1934 he arrived in Shanghai. He paid his respects to Taixu and then traveled on to Nanjing, Baohua shan, Beijing, etc. to visit old friends, his ordination instructor, and his family. This was the second time since leaving home that Fazun had gone back to visit his family, the first time being in April of 1925. In August he arrived at the Sino-Tibetan Institute.

Fazun was at the Sino-Tibetan Institute until September of the following year (1935). While there he acted as administrator, teacher, and translator. Every day he taught three hours of class (*san dian zhong de ke*) and translated Tsongkhapa's *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment, Concise Treatise on the Stages of the Esoteric Path*,

---

<sup>118</sup> Fazun, "Yu Fafang Fashi shu" (Letters to Ven. Fafang), in Fazun's *Collected Essays*, 381-2.

his *Explanation of the Bodhisattva Precepts*, etc.<sup>119</sup> He seems to have been biding his time, however. His main goal at the time was still to bring Amdo Geshé back to China. It seems clear that Fazun was somewhat bitter that he had had to prematurely terminate his studies in Tibet and that he never became a geshé<sup>120</sup>:

Were I to use a lifetime's amount of energy to study Tibetan Buddhist studies, with no concern whatsoever with the goal of becoming a first-grade geshé, would time permit me? Would Master [Tai]xu let me? Would Amdo Geshé<sup>121</sup> permit me? No. No. None of them would let me do this.<sup>122</sup>

Moreover, he felt that his knowledge was insufficient and that he needed to study longer under a teacher:

My will was set on translation. My studies had not yet been successful. Without a virtuous and outstanding [teacher] of great knowledge who had a perfect and penetrating understanding of the exoterica and esoterica to guide [me], I thought that my translation endeavors would not be satisfactory.<sup>123</sup>

So, after a trip to Chengdu to lecture and collect funds to pay for Amdo Geshé's trip to China, he left Ven. Weifang 葦舫 in charge of his duties as Education Director (*jiaoyu zhuren*) at the Sino-Tibetan Institute and headed east.

---

<sup>119</sup> See chapter two for more information on these texts.

<sup>120</sup> In the entry for Fazun in *Xizang lishi wenhua cidian* (Dictionary of Tibetan History and Culture), Wang Yao and Chen Qingying, eds. (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 1998), it says that Fazun “once attained the highest scholarly rank in the Gelupka sect of Tibetan Buddhism—lharampa geshé (Ch. *lارانبا gexi* 拉然巴格西, T. *lha-rams-pa dge-bshes*)” (p. 82). This appears to be false, however, given Fazun's own lamentations over not ever becoming a geshé.

<sup>121</sup> Here and in several other places Fazun actually refers to his teacher Amdo Geshé as *enshi* 恩師, “benevolent master.”

<sup>122</sup> “Travels in Tibet,” 368.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 368.

He stopped at Mount Wutai and Datong in Shanxi to visit and worship at the sacred mountain and the famous Buddhist sites.<sup>124</sup> He then passed through Beijing and Tianjin to raise funds among his old friends in order to publish his translation of the *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*.<sup>125</sup> He left Hong Kong for India at the end of the tenth month. On the eighteenth of the twelfth month, after proper preparations in India had been made, he and a Mr. Ye Zenglong 葉增隆 hired a mule to make the trek to Tibet. This trip to Tibet was riddled with difficulties and suffering just like the first trip:

In order to avoid being seen by the [road]blocks set up by the British, every time we approached a mountain pass we had to take hiding. In the middle of the night we would sneak through. Due to the fact that I had not hiked in over a year and to my new leather boots being too small, on the afternoon of the [second day] the heels of both my feet had been rubbed raw and three toenails had fallen off. It hurt so bad it was extremely hard to bear. I grinded my teeth with each step. ... 'In my past lives I was given to greed, anger, and ignorance, and the pain I suffered as a result of my pursuing the five pleasures must have been hundred times greater than this. ... In the three worlds [of past, present, and future], there are many beings who suffer this kind of pain and even greater pain. They are truly very pitiable. On top of the pain I am suffering I should accept all the sufferings of all sentient beings. My only wish is that no being ever again suffers.' With this thought in mind I forgot about the pain in my foot and body. When sleep would come I would fall into a dark sleep until daylight. The next day I would try to walk a few steps. Like this I walked with pain and accompanying sickness until the twenty-fourth when we got to Bokeli 帕克里 ... and I rested for a few days.<sup>126</sup>

Finally, on the ninth of the first month of the new year, they arrived in Lhasa. His toilsome trek and triumphant arrival were met with a defeat of sorts. Amdo Geshé, his

---

<sup>124</sup> For information on Fazun's visit to and connections with Wutai shan, see Tuttle, "Tibetan Buddhism at Ri bo rtse Inga/Wutai shan in Modern Times."

<sup>125</sup> This was in fact published in various editions from this year 1935 through 1942.

<sup>126</sup> "Travels in Tibet" 369.

sole purpose for returning to Tibet, had passed away seven days earlier. “It seemed as if I had a mouthful of blood and it rushed directly upwards. Fortunately it quit quickly and I did not faint.” He followed the messenger to Naxu where Amdo Geshé’s remains were. Along the way it snowed several feet, an old spasm in Fazun’s leg began acting up, and he suffered from diarrhea.

When they arrived and Fazun finally joined the group taking care of Amdo Geshé’s remains, Fazun was selected to officiate at the mortuary rites. This demonstrates the intimacy that existed between Fazun and his teacher. It also shows how ethnicity was no obstacle for one who passionately pursued the dharma in Tibet. After the funeral services were taken care of Fazun left to travel back to Lhasa. It had snowed more and the traveling was just as difficult as before. He rested in Lhasa for five months, studying and translating, while his body recovered. He also continued looking for a virtuous and willing (*you de you zhi* 有德有志) teacher to take back with him to China. Although he studied with a “Dharma King Zhijiangze” 止降則法王,<sup>127</sup> he was apparently unable to convince him or anyone capable to go with him back to China. As he explains in a letter to Fafang, written in Lhasa on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1936, “I would rather go back [to China] empty-handed than with a teacher that is not suitable. ... If after searching I am not able to get the [right] person, I will request a hundred or more scriptures (*jingshu*) and return to China.”<sup>128</sup> He did not, in fact, find

---

<sup>127</sup> Here “dharma king” (T. *chos rgyal*) is the prestigious title given to a few high-ranking lamas by the emperor of China. It originated when Khubilai Khan gave it to Pakpa Lama in the Yuan Dynasty.

<sup>128</sup> Fazun, “Yu Fafang Fashi shu,” 385.

a suitable replacement for Amdo Geshé.<sup>129</sup> Sometime in the eighth or ninth month he took the Tibetan Tripitika and works of Tsongkhapa that he had requested and left Tibet.

This marked the end of Fazun’s second and last trip to Tibet. The deaths and setbacks he had experienced had had their impact on Fazun. Though he claimed to be more devout and committed than ever following Amdo Geshé’s death, he also believed that he lived in a period of the decline of the dharma (*mofa shidai* 末法時代), when “the dharma was weak and demons (*mo* 魔) strong.”<sup>130</sup> Nonetheless, Fazun worked tirelessly, *translating*, up until his death in 1980. One of the last texts he translated in the last year of his life was Dharmakīrti’s *Commentary on Valid Cognition*, a treatise on Indian logic (Ch. *yinming* 因明) that is central to Tibetan Buddhist, especially Geluk, scholasticism. Thus, Fazun maintained a devout and ardent interest in some of the core elements of monastic education—texts and their study—throughout his life. This is a topic covered in the following chapter.

---

<sup>129</sup> Fazun explains the reasons for why so few Tibetan *students* are willing to go to China to pursue studies, the main reasons being the costs of such a journey and the comfort and even prestige a monk may have to give up in order to confront the unknowns of China. Fazun, “Yu Fafang Fashi shu,” 385. Many of these reasons could also be applied to why he was unable to find a “willing and able” teacher.

<sup>130</sup> “Yu Fafang Fashi shu,” 386.



## Chapter Two: Life and Education at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute

Of all the “Virtuous Ones” (*dade* 大德) working and teaching at the Sino-Tibetan Institute, Fazun was no doubt the driving force behind what happened at the seminary. The institute’s mission statement mentions Tibet five times: “This institute takes as its purpose to recruit Chinese (*Han*) and Tibetan youth, research Sino-Tibetan Buddhist studies, connect Chinese and Tibetan cultures, bring Chinese and Tibetan spirits into solidarity, solidify the defense of the Western borderlands, and to promote and develop Chinese and Tibetan Buddhism to enhance world culture.”<sup>131</sup> Fazun, having spent almost a decade in Kham and Tibet, was the obvious choice for director of the seminary. Although he was a teacher, administrator, advisor, writer, and translator, his largest impact at the seminary was perhaps his development of the curriculum. Unique in the history of the world, Fazun mastered, imported, and implemented a Geluk scholastic curriculum for the young Chinese monks at the Sino-Tibetan Institute. His attempt to implement such an orthodox Geluk curriculum in China, though novel, undermines the belief that all of Taixu’s academies were “modern” and merely mimicking Western models.

As the founder and motivating force behind the creation of the seminary, Taixu also contributed instrumentally to its success. His name and connections attracted political and financial support as well as excellent teachers, administrators,

---

<sup>131</sup> *Han Zang jiaoli yuan li'an wenjian huibian* (Compilation of Registered Documents of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute) (Chongqing: Han Zang jiaoli yuan, 1936), 21-2.

and students. His impact on the seminary is also attested to by the unorthodox methods of education found there. Though claiming to be recovering lost traditions and truth, the dynamic academic environment he helped bring about was no doubt “modern” in some sense of the word. He and Fazun are emblematic of the “human talent” (*rencai* 人才) that made the seminary the best place in its time to study both Buddhism and Tibetan.

### Taixu and Background to the Seminary

The often repeated story of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute’s genesis has already been told in the introduction to this paper. Taixu’s own “Shijie foxue yuan Han Zang jiaoli yuan yuanqi” (The Origin of the World Buddhist Studies Institute’s Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute) seems to be the origin of that account. The “General Regulations of the Preparatory Committee for the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute” also credits Taixu with the “idea” (*chuangyi* 勸義) for creating the seminary.<sup>132</sup> However, Taixu is not the only claimant to the idea. In the fall of 1930 there were local officials who proposed making Jinyun Monastery into a park. The abbot of Huayan Monastery 華嚴寺 in Chongqing, Venerable Juechu 覺初法師 (1891?-1935), contested this. Juechu’s biography in the *Huayan si zhi* 華嚴寺志 (*Gazateer of Huayan Monastery*) says that Juechu

Invited Venerable Foyao 佛瑤和尚 of Guizhou to be abbot. He asked the military government to initiate the creation of [a] Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute at the monastery, making Ven. Taixu the

---

<sup>132</sup> “Han Zang Jiaoli yuan choubeichu jianze,” in *Hai chao yin*, vol. 12, no. 11, November 15, 1931, 7-8.

institute's director, and creating a splendid place for the office of monastic studies of Central Sichuan.<sup>133</sup>

Juechu was the 54<sup>th</sup> abbot of Huayan Monastery and is known in Chongqing for his efforts to promote Buddhist education.<sup>134</sup>

The seminary is also seen as the fruit of the work of Chongqing lay Buddhists, especially the Chongqing Buddhist Studies Society (*Chongqing foxue she* 重慶佛學社). While in Sichuan, Taixu met with some of the warlords ruling parts of Sichuan during this time, such as Deng Xihou 鄧錫侯, Tian Songyao 田頌堯, and of course Liu Xiang,<sup>135</sup> as well as with the rather influential lama Norlha Khutugtu.<sup>136</sup> He also traveled to famous Buddhist sites, such as Mount Emei and Mount Le (Le shan). Nonetheless, his primary activity consisted of lectures he delivered at lay societies, colleges and universities, and monasteries.<sup>137</sup> Moreover, the Chongqing Buddhist Studies Society was entrusted with assisting in the creation of the office of the Sino-Tibetan Institute's Preparatory Committee.<sup>138</sup> This underscores the importance of the laity with regard to the creation of the seminary. Even so, regardless of who first

---

<sup>133</sup> *Huayan si zhi*, "Juechu Heshang zhuan" (Biography of Ven. Juechu) (Huayan Monastery Edition). My thanks to Professor Huang Xianian for sharing this information and his digital photo reproduction of the *Huayan si zhi* with me. Huang further insists that Taixu, who had no ties in Sichuan, would surely need the invitation of regional clergy in order to get a footing there. It seems possible, however, that Taixu's notoriety and appeal amongst the laity, mentioned below, might also have been enough for him to get plugged into the Sichuan network. Personal communication, June 2006. See also Huang Xianian and Daojian, "Chongqing Fojiao jiaoyu shi (History of Chongqing Buddhist Education)," in *Fa yuan* (Source of the Dharma), 2006.

<sup>134</sup> See Cui Baohua, *Bashan lingjing: Huayan si* (Spiritual Realms of Chongqing's [Ba] Mountains: Huayan Monastery) (Chongqing: Chongqing Shi Jiulongpo Qu zhengxie wenshi weiyuanhui, 2001), 78. Elsewhere in the same book Juechu is referred to as the 55<sup>th</sup> abbot of Huayan si (50).

<sup>135</sup> For information on these generals see Robert A. Kapp, *Szechwan and the Chinese Republic*, 24-33.

<sup>136</sup> For information on this lama and his broad support base in Sichuan see Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, 93-97.

<sup>137</sup> See the relevant time frame in *Taixu Dashi nianpu*.

<sup>138</sup> See "Han Zang Jiaoli yuan choubeichu jianze."

suggested the idea for the seminary, there is no doubt that Taixu's influence on it was great.

Besides securing funding for the seminary through his close association with Liu Xiang and Chang Kai-shek, he also brought contingents of teachers, administrators, and students to the seminary. Three of the seminary's first administrators—Ven. Mandu 滿度,<sup>139</sup> Ven. Longguo 隆果, and Ven. Longxing 隆興—had all transferred from Taixu's Minnan Buddhist Studies Institute 閩南佛學院 in Xiamen (Amoy).<sup>140</sup> After the infamous “Lugou Bridge 盧溝橋<sup>141</sup> Incident” of July 7<sup>th</sup> 1937, also known as the “Incident of 7/7,” when the Japanese army launched an attack on the city of Wanping in Hebei Province, effectively inaugurating World War II, Taixu left the Wuhan Buddhist Studies Institute and traveled back to the Sino-Tibetan Institute with Ven. Fafang, Ven. Yinshun, Ven. Chenkong 塵空, and others in tow.<sup>142</sup>

As for the students, of 61 students overall on the roster in June of 1936 (the year the first class of students graduated), most were from Sichuan, many of them having studied at the Konglin Buddhist Studies Institute 空林佛學院 of Chengdu's major monastery, Wenshu yuan 文殊院.<sup>143</sup> In fact, the overwhelming presence of

---

<sup>139</sup> Bisong (also known as Xing Suzhi) notes that Mandu studied at Drepung. Xing Suzhi, *Xueyu qiufa ji: yi ge hanren lama de koushu shi* (Record of a Search for the Dharma in the Land of Snow: a Chinese Lama's Oral History) (Beijing: Shenghuo dushu xinzhì san lian shudian, 2003), 194.

<sup>140</sup> Xing, *Xueyu qiufa ji*, 40.

<sup>141</sup> See Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: Norton, 1991), 444-5. There is also an updated second edition of Spence's book (1999) available.

<sup>142</sup> Xing, *Xueyu qiufa ji*, 40.

<sup>143</sup> *Han Zang jiaoli yuan li'an wenjian huibian*, 41-46.

Sichuanese monks gave the monk Bisong, from Jiangsu, plenty of opportunity to observe and judge his Sichuan brethren:

Having lived alongside each other, I realized that most of the students from Sichuan were not as well-disciplined as those who were from the areas of Jiangsu and Zhejiang. Ordinarily, when they were at school they would follow along and eat vegetarian. But once it was Sunday they would get into groups of three to five, flow out of school to a restaurant, and break the precept against eating meat. From the viewpoint of those of us students from Jiangsu and Zhejiang this was simply unimaginable behavior.<sup>144</sup>

Nonetheless, there were still seven students that were from programs associated with Taixu, including the Minnan Institute and the Team to Study the Dharma Abroad in Tibet. Moreover, these students made up half of the fourteen or so students traveling to Sichuan to study. What makes these students presence all the more significant is that they seem to be the most *serious* students, as Bisong implies. Although I have not yet come across the grades for this first graduating class of students, I have found those for the subsequent class. Therein we find that most of the students that traveled to Sichuan to study at the Sino-Tibetan Institute graduated in the top half of their class.<sup>145</sup> Since the first class of students is known as the “poor class” (*cha ban* 差班),

---

<sup>144</sup> Xing, *Xueyu qiufa ji*, 41.

<sup>145</sup> Ven. Huiming 慧明法師 is third of nineteen, Ven. Xinyue 心月法師 is fourth, and Ven. Changbing 昌炳法師 is seventh. Ven. Longfa 隆法法師 is eleventh in his class. A similar phenomenon is attested to in Tibet where it is the common belief among Tibetans that monks from Kham and Amdo are much better students at Lhasa’s three major monasteries than those monks that are from in and around Lhasa, since the former must have a will and abilities in order to get to Lhasa in the first place. Hence the saying “The old lady of Lhasa never goes to see the Lhasa Buddha” (*lha sa’i rgad mos lha sa’i jo bo ma mjal*). Nicolas Tournadre and Sangda Dorje, *Manual of Standard Tibetan: Language and Civilization*, trans. Charles Ramble (Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 2003), 259.

<sup>146</sup> those students who were already connected with Taixu likely appeared all the more outstanding.

Taixu is perhaps the most well-known Chinese monk of the twentieth century. He is credited with formulating “Humanistic Buddhism” (*renjian fojiao* 人間佛教), a sort of “engaged Buddhism,” to use the monk Thich Nhat Hanh’s term, that espouses a this-worldly (*rushi* 入世) orientation and the creation of a Pure Land (*jingtu* 淨土) right here on earth. In contrast, Buddhism focused on rites for the dead (*sigui shi fojiao* 死鬼式佛教)<sup>147</sup> and religion aimed at appeasing and seeking favors from the gods (*tianshen zongjiao* 天神宗教) are criticized by Taixu and other reformers. He has been the focus of numerous studies in Taiwan and the mainland<sup>148</sup> and a few works in English.<sup>149</sup> Many of the most respected or outspoken leaders in Chinese

---

<sup>146</sup> Chen Wenjie 陳文杰 (formerly Ven. Tongjie 同杰法師), personal communication, July 19, 2006. Tongjie himself seems to have been an exception, since he managed to finish his “general” (undergraduate) studies in approximately three years and his “specialized” (graduate) studies in about two and a half years. He claims also to have consistently been second in his class. See also *Han Zang jiaoli yuan li'an wenjian huibian*” 43.

<sup>147</sup> For a description and criticism of this “type” of Buddhism by a Republican Period monk, see Chen-hua (Zhenhua), *In Search of the Dharma: Memoirs of a Modern Chinese Buddhist Pilgrim*, trans. Chün-fang Yü (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1992), 85.

<sup>148</sup> To name a few, see 1) Zhou Xuenong, *Chushi, “rushi” yu qi li qi ji: Taixu Fashi de “renjian fojiao” sixiang yanjiu* (Otherworldly, “This-worldly” and According with the Doctrine and the Times: A Study of the Thought of Venerable Taixu’s “Humanistic Buddhism”) (Peking University diss., 1996), republished in *Zhongguo fojiao xueshu lun dian: Shuo Bo shi xuewei lunwen* (Collection of Scholarly Essays on Chinese Buddhism: Theses/Dissertations for the Master’s and Ph.D. Degrees) 8 (Gaoxiang, Taiwan: Foguang shan wenjiao jijinhui, 2001), 2) Hong Jinlian, *Taixu Dashi fojiao xiandaihua zhi yanjiu* (A Study of Master Taixu’s Modernization of Buddhism), *Zhonghua foxue yanjiusuo luncong* (Collection of Essays of the Chung Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies) 3 (Taipei: Fagu wenhua shiye gufen youxian gongsi, 1999), 3) Chen Yongge, *Renjian chaoyin: Taixu Dashi zhuan* (The Sound of the Ocean’s Tide in the Human Realm: a Biography of Master Taixu) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 2003), and 4) Deng Zimei and Chen Weihua, *Taixu Dashi zhuan* (Biography of Master Taixu) (Xining, China: Qinghai minzu chubanshe, 1999).

<sup>149</sup> Long Darui, “Humanistic Buddhism from Venerable Tai Xu to Grand Master Hsing Yun,” in *Hsi Lai Journal of Humanistic Buddhism*, vol. 1 (2000), 53-84. A chapter in Holmes Welch’s *The Buddhist Revival in China* is on Taixu. Don A. Pittman’s dissertation turned book, *Toward a Modern Chinese*

Buddhism today, such as Ven. Xingyun 星雲, Ven. Shengyan 聖嚴, and Ven. Zhengyan 證嚴 in Taiwan and Ven. Jinghui 淨慧 in the mainland, seem to see themselves as heirs of Taixu.

For most individuals who have only a cursory knowledge of Republican Period Buddhism or of Taixu, the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute is seen as just one branch seminary of his World Buddhist Studies Institute. The World Institute was comprised of several seminaries each having its own “area studies” focus. The seminary at Bolin Monastery 柏林寺 in Beijing, like the Wuchang Institute,<sup>150</sup> specialized in English-language studies (ostensibly for approaching the study of South Asian and Southeast Asian Buddhism and for interacting with Western scholars).<sup>151</sup> His Minnan Buddhist Studies Institute (1925-1939) specialized in Japanese-language studies.<sup>152</sup> His Pali Tripitika Institute (Bali sanzang yuan 巴利三藏院) at Daxingshan Monastery 大興善寺 in Xi’an specialized in Pali studies (1945-

---

*Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001) is the only book-length study in English on Taixu. Stuart Chandler's *Establishing a Pure Land on Earth: The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004) also includes much information on Taixu.

<sup>150</sup> The Wuchang Institute, Taixu's earliest seminary, opened in 1922 and closed with the Japanese invasion of Wuhan. Like the Minnan Institute, it is today functioning, though I do not know what relationship, if any, it has with its pre-1949 self.

<sup>151</sup> Pittman says the institute only functioned for the 1930-1931 academic year. However, according to Xu Yunqiao's "Fafang fashi xing zhuan" (Account of the Travels of Venerable Fafang), it closed in 1932 due to shortages in funding. Regardless of how long exactly the institute operated, its significance should not be underestimated. Fafang, who acted as an instructor for the institute and as its Supervisor of Studies (*jianxue* 監學), supposedly lectured often in English, and he is perhaps the most learned Chinese scholar of the Pali Buddhist Canon of the Republican Period. "Fafang fashi xing zhuan" first appears in *Nanyang xuebao* (Journal of the South Seas), vol. 7, no. 2 (Singapore: Nanyang xuehui, 1951). My thanks to my friend and classmate Yang Zeng for showing me this article.

<sup>152</sup> Pittman, *Toward a Modern Chinese Buddhism*, 99. The Minnan Buddhist Studies Institute did not resume operations until 1985, now of course without the Japanese-language studies orientation.

1946?).<sup>153</sup> Students and faculty often traveled between the various institutes, and the seminaries all appear to have incorporated rather progressive pedagogies and curriculums like Taixu promoted. The truth, though, is that the seminaries all functioned independently of their parent organization and of each other. As we shall see, differences of time and place and the fluctuations in personnel and financial support seem to have had more affect on the make-up and operation of these seminaries than the plans Taixu had drawn up for them on paper and in his head.

In August of 1932 Taixu flew from Wuhan to Chongqing just in time for the opening ceremony of the Sino-Tibetan Institute at Jinyun shan. He gave the school a motto—Undulating, Peaceful, Bright, and Clever (*dan ning ming min* 澹寧明敏)—and composed a poem for the occasion:

Warm springs open up to hidden paths; [they] climb up Jinyun Mountain.  
Cliffs and gullies are loud and foaming; pines and firs reveal a smiling face.  
Chinese classics meld with Tibetan scripture; doctrine kowtows before meditative passes.  
The Buddha stage is without further obstacles; humans and gods commune together.<sup>154</sup>

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of that month, he wrote his first letter to Fazun urging him to come back as soon as possible to run the seminary. He had great aspirations for the seminary.

“Not only will it be the crown of the World Buddhist Institute (*Shijie foxue yuan*), it will hold the highest position amongst Buddhist studies academies (*foxue yuan*) in

---

<sup>153</sup> Pittman, *Toward a Modern Chinese Buddhism*, 99.

<sup>154</sup> See Mei, “Minguo yilai de Han Zang fojiao guanxi,” 270, Yinshun, *Taixu Daishi nianpu*, 345, and Weixian, “Han Zang jiaoli yuan,” 22. There are some inconsistencies between Weixian’s version of the poem and Yinshun’s. I have followed the latter’s version.



China, and in the future it promises to expand to become one of the three seats of Lhasa.”<sup>155</sup> However, Taixu was soon off to Chongqing, Chengdu, Wuhan, Kunming, and other places to carry on with his normal schedule of accepting invitations and lecturing. Thus, Taixu did not have an active presence at the seminary. The school was left in the hands of the faculty and administrators there, namely Ven. Manzhi 滿智, Ven. Bianneng 遍能, Ven. Xiulu 岫廬, and Ven. Huisong 慧松, to name a few more not already mentioned.<sup>156</sup>

Taixu did, of course, visit the seminary, and even took up residence there after 1937, encouraging students and giving lectures. And, when he left in 1945, the “academic atmosphere was not as lively,” as one monk reflects.<sup>157</sup> Even so, Taixu seems to have devoted most of his time to writing and traveling. When he did lecture there was no guarantee that his audience would even understand him. One student recalls:

When he said [the word] “fofa” (Buddhadharma) he would say “weiwai.” Bad! At that time we were bad (*zaonie* 造孽)! The first time I saw him, he taught a class. I had a terrible time of it that whole week. Later I found a local student from [among] the first class of students and asked him what this “weiwai” was. “Fofa!”<sup>158</sup>

Taixu was from Zhejiang Province, a land of multitudinous dialects. The question of how Taixu communicated with national and even international audiences has yet to

---

<sup>155</sup> See *Complete Works of Master Taixu*, vol. 17, document 49, p. 56. The “three seats” are Sera, Ganden, and Drepung Monasteries. They are the most important centers for Geluk scholasticism.

<sup>156</sup> Yinshun, *Taixu Dashi nianpu*, 346.

<sup>157</sup> Daguo, personal communication, February 2006.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

be explained. Thus, one must look elsewhere to find what made the life and education within this seminary so exceptional.

## Faculty

The first Tibetans to teach at the seminary seem to be Tupten Gyatso (Ch. Tudeng Jiangcuo 土登降錯)<sup>159</sup> and Lozang Tenpa (Ch. Luosang Dengba 羅桑登巴). Also, according to one student, Fazun was apparently able to allure a geshé from Drepung Monastery. Although Fazun's own master, Amdo Geshé, had passed away just days before Fazun's arrival in Lhasa in 1936, he did successfully invite Dongben Geshé 東本格西 to come to the Sino-Tibetan Institute.<sup>160</sup> Unfortunately, Dongben Geshé died shortly after his arrival in China (*Handi*). Two other Tibetans who taught at the institute are Tuoxi Wenlan 拏希文藍, who was a professor of Tibetan language from at least 1937 through 1944,<sup>161</sup> and Master Xijiao Jiacao 喜僥嘉錯法師, who supposedly stayed at the seminary for a relatively long period of time and lectured on

---

<sup>159</sup> Mei, "Minguo yilai de Han Zang fojiao guanxi," 267. Citing the *Han Zang jiaoli yuan niankan* (Annual of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute) (Chongqing: Han Zang jiaoli yuan, 1933). *Han Zang jiaoli yuan tekan* has "Tudeng Jiang"土登絳 on the teacher's roster (p. 16). Tuttle has "Tudeng jiangzuo" for the Chinese (*Tibetan Buddhists*, 196). Also, Tuttle has questioned his level of education (p. 196). He cites examples of orthographic mistakes by this monk and others at the Sino-Tibetan Institute (p. 298n5). He also refers readers to a bilingual version of some prayer verses by Tsongkhapa prepared by the Chinese monk Chaoyi 超一. It appears in the *Han Zang jiaoli yuan jinian tekan* (Special Publication Commemorating the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute) (Chongqing: Han Zang jiaoli yuan, 1932), 110-120. I have compared this version of the text with other readily available publications. The number of orthographic mistakes in Chaoyi's text, although worth pointing out, are not any more numerous than in these other publications. My thanks to Champa Lhunpo for helping me check this.

<sup>160</sup> I do not know what Tibetan name this Chinese transliteration might represent. Xing, *Xueyu qiufa ji*, 40. See also Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, 197.

<sup>161</sup> Again, I do not know the Tibetan name that this Chinese transliteration might represent. *Han Zang jiaoli yuan tekan*, 17.

Tibetan Madhyamaka.<sup>162</sup> In addition, several other lamas came “one after another” to the seminary to visit.<sup>163</sup>

As Tuttle notes, by 1936, following Fazun’s two trips to Tibet and his installation as the seminary’s acting director, the seminary had developed a roster of very capable Chinese teachers. Tuttle, referencing the 1936 “Han Zang jiaoli yuan li’an wenjian huibian,” notes that five of the teachers had spent significant time abroad in Tibet in addition to having studied at Buddhist academies in China.<sup>164</sup>

These are Miyan 密嚴, the seminary’s Director of General Affairs (*Shiwu zhuren* 事務主任), Yanding 嚴定, professor of translation and Tibetan Buddhist studies, Guankong 觀空, professor of Tibetan language history and geography and Chinese Buddhist studies, Changguang 常光, professor of Tibetan language, and Fazun.

The period from 1937 through 1945—that is, the eight years of the Anti-Japanese War (World War II)—are designated by Ven. Weixian as the “apogee” (*jisheng* 極盛) of the Sino-Tibetan Institute.<sup>165</sup> Luo Tongbing follows suit, though substituting a synonym (*dingsheng* 鼎盛).<sup>166</sup> Mei Jingxuan, too, marks off the period from 1937-1949, calling it the “late period” (*houqi*). The names and dates differ slightly, but they all point to the same historical event: the flight of China’s masses west. Much like the unique university Lianda (Xinan Lianhe Daxue, or “National Southwest Associated University”) that was brought together in Kunming during the

---

<sup>162</sup> Weixian, “Han Zang jiaoli yuan,” 10.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> *Tibetan Buddhists*, 196.

<sup>165</sup> Weixian, “Han Zang jiaoli yuan,” 9.

<sup>166</sup> Luo, “Hanzang jiaoli yuan shilüe,” 30.

war years,<sup>167</sup> the Sino-Tibetan Institute benefited from the fact that many of the most scholarly, rich, and powerful individuals in China at that time converged on Chongqing, the wartime capital of the Nationalist Party (Guomindang). Weixian did not write his short history of the Sino-Tibetan Institute until 1981, but his perspective on the significance of the war years was already around in 1939 when Fafang wrote his “Han Zang jiaoli yuan zuijin kaikuang” (The Recent Status of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute):

Since the war, the Buddhist academies in every province, including Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong (Canton), Henan, Anhui, Hubei, Hunan, Beijing, and Shanghai, all have come to a halt. Therefore, this academy’s [i.e. the Sino-Tibetan Institute] status in the entire country’s monastic education has [risen to] become the only Buddhist academy. In terms of the future of Chinese Buddhism it has a large mission and responsibility.

And,

... The Virtuous Ones [i.e. learned and outstanding monk] who have left Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Shanghai, and [other places in] China to come to Sichuan have also converged at this institute. The boost this has given to education is immense. Thus, in two years the atmosphere of this institute has been renewed and its spirit has been saved.

By comparing two extremely helpful documents—the Institute’s “Han Zang jiaoli yuan li’an wenjian huibian” (Compilation of Registered Documents of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute), from June of 1936, and Fafang’s handwritten “Han Zang jiaoli yuan zuijin kaikuang,” apparently written in the summer of 1939—one can see that the list of faculty totally changed after the war began. The only two

---

<sup>167</sup> See John Israel, *Lianda: A Chinese University in War and Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

faculty members still on the roster in 1939 are Fazun and Changguang.<sup>168</sup> As described above, in 1936, the faculty was already made up of an all-star group of individuals, most of whom had spent time studying in Kham or Tibet or at one of Taixu's seminaries. By 1939, however, "big names," such as Yinshun and Fafang had arrived. The former had studied at the Minnan Institute and later became perhaps the most renowned Buddhist scholar of the twentieth century. The latter had graduated from the Wuchang Institute, was editor of the best-known Buddhist periodical of the era, *Hai chao yin* (Sound of the Ocean Tide), and was the librarian for Taixu's World Buddhist Institute. Later in life he became a professor at Ceylon National University.

Aside from the regular faculty at the seminary, there were often guest lecturers at the seminary.

[Taixu] would often host academic research forums. The high-level professors of our society at that time, such as Guo Moruo 郭沫若 and Xiong Fuxi 熊復西 ... When many university intellectuals came to see [Taixu], he would want them to deliver an academic presentation. The students would listen. Each lecture lasted one to two hours. In this way ... [Taixu] broke with most of China's monastic schools.<sup>169</sup>

The presence of scholar Guo Moruo at Jinyun shan is attested to in *Hanzang jiaoli yuan mingren shuzuo diancang* (Collection of Letters and Compositions of Famous Figures at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute).<sup>170</sup> This un-circulated collection includes the calligraphy and remarks of over a hundred individuals who traveled to Jinyun shan to visit Taixu. Among these individuals are Han Tian 漢田,

---

<sup>168</sup> In addition to his former position as professor of Tibetan language, Changguang is listed here as Supervisor of Studies (*jianxue* 監學).

<sup>169</sup> Daguo, personal communication.

<sup>170</sup> Pp. 12-13.

best known perhaps for having written the national anthem of the Republic of China, the famous author Lao She 老舍, the Buddhist studies scholar Wang Enyang 王恩洋, numerous officials in the national and regional governments, and even foreign dignitaries. The presence of such figures added to the already unique and broad curriculum of the seminary.

### Seminars

In 1945, in order to “make proper use of resources and provide more opportunities for thinking and debate,”<sup>171</sup> Taixu created seminars or study groups (*yanjiu hui* 研究會) in four different fields: Tibetan Buddhism; Indian Buddhism; Chinese Buddhism; and, Modern Buddhism.<sup>172</sup> Tibetan Buddhism was led by Fazun and focused primarily on Tsongkhapa’s works. “Works from other sects were ancillary.”<sup>173</sup> Indian Buddhism was led by Yinshun and focused primarily on the *Agama Sutras* (Ch. *Ahan jing* 阿含經). Chinese Buddhism was led by Weifang 葦舫 and focused on the study of Chan, Tiantai, Huayan, and Pureland Buddhism. Modern Buddhism was led by Chenkong and focused primarily on Taixu’s own works. Each week one of the groups would host a meeting to present its findings.

### Presentations

Another interesting feature of the academic life at the seminary was its weekly lectures or presentation (*jiangyan hui* 講演會) given by students. It seems to have been a part of the curriculum throughout the life of the seminary, since all of the

---

<sup>171</sup> Mei, “Minguo yi lai de Han Zang fojiao guanxi,” 271.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 271 and Yinshun, *Taixu nianpu*, 516.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

students I spoke with participated in it. According to a February 1947 “Report of the Student Association of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute,” students either spoke about questions relating to the “present world” (*xianshi wenti*) or those that are more “other worldly” (*chushi wenti*), though the students chose their own specific topics.<sup>174</sup> The former category included such subjects as “rebuilding a new Buddhism” (during the previous fall semester there had been 3 presentations on questions relating to this topic), current affairs (8 speeches), criticism of lifestyles (*shenghuo jiantao* 生活檢討) (4 speeches), human life (9 speeches), and “memoirs” (*zagan* 雜感) (7 speeches). The latter category also consisted of Buddhist studies (19 speeches) and the six classical philosophical systems of Brahmanism (*liu pai zhexue*) (1 speech).

The students met every Saturday evening in the Great Lecture Hall (*da jiangtang* 大講堂) to lecture. It was usually a lively atmosphere in which the faculty, including Taixu and Fazun, would listen in, and students debated various points made in the presentations “much like Tibetan Buddhist debates.”<sup>175</sup> The purpose behind the weekly presentations was to strengthen students’ public speaking abilities and overall “human talent” (*rencai*).<sup>176</sup> The opportunity to speak in the monastery’s lecture hall on such a wide range of topics seems to be one of the unique aspects of the Sino-Tibetan Institute.

## Tibetan Language Studies

---

<sup>174</sup> Ven Hongchan, personal communication, July 17, 2006.

<sup>175</sup> Daguo, personal communication.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

One of the things that made Taixu's Buddhist Studies academies appealing to aspiring students was their structured and rigorous curriculum. Thus, when Fazun first heard about Taixu's Buddhist studies academy in Wuchang, he responded with unbounded enthusiasm:

One of my ordination brothers (*jiexiong* 戒兄) wrote to me saying that [at the Wuchang Institute] each day scripture is lectured on for six hours and there is independent study for two or three hours. When I saw that letter I was just like a small child waiting in anticipation for New Year's. I was so happy I did not even know what to do! Right then I made going there my purpose.<sup>177</sup>

According to the 1936 "Han Zang jiaoli yuan li'an wenjian huibian" which outlines the standard schedule for the Sino-Tibetan Institute, one can see its regimen was no less intensive. Each week students of the "general program" (or, "undergraduate program," *putong ke* 普通科) had

1 hour of [Nationalist] Political Theory (*dangyi* 黨義);  
6 hrs. of Tibetan Grammar;  
6 hrs. of Tibetan Buddhist Studies;  
6 hrs. of Chinese Literature (*guowen* 國文);  
6 hrs. of Chinese Buddhist Studies  
2 hrs. of Health (*weishengxue* 衛生學)  
2 hrs. of Common Agricultural Knowledge;  
2 hrs. of Law;  
2 hrs. of History;  
2 hrs. of Logic (*lunlixue* 論理學), and  
1 hr. of Athletics,

for a total of 36 hours of class per week.<sup>178</sup>

The "specialized program" (or, "graduate program," *zhuanxiu ke* 專修科) had fewer courses, while Tibet and Tibetan language were emphasized more:

---

<sup>177</sup> "Experiences in Tibet," 359.

<sup>178</sup> "Han Zang jiaoli yuan li'an wenjian huibian," 8-9. See also Weixian, "Han Zang jiaoli yuan," 5-6.



6 hours per week of Tibetan Buddhist Studies;  
6 hrs. of Translation (*jiaoshou fanyi* 教授翻譯);  
6 hrs. of History of Tibetan History;  
6 hrs. of Tibetan Geography; and,  
6 hours of Chinese Buddhist Studies.<sup>179</sup>

Tibetan language was the core of the curriculum at the seminary. The goals of having “normal, applicable Tibetan” skills for graduates of the general program and “scholarly and relatively deeper, applicable Tibetan” skills for graduates of the specialized program had been established.<sup>180</sup> Good Tibetan language teachers, a rarity even today, were essential. The professors of Tibetan language had all spent an extensive amount of time studying in Kham and/or Tibet. By 1940 there was apparently even the ability to support “teaching assistants” (*Zangwen zhujiao* 藏文助教).<sup>181</sup> When Bisong was there (1932-1936), Changguang first taught the Tibetan alphabet and spelling. Fazun taught grammar and writing sentences. This was eventually assisted by teaching materials developed by Fazun. Perhaps the biggest difficulty these instructors had was the dearth of teaching materials. Fazun helped to solve this by completing the *Tibetan Grammar* (T. *Zangwen wenfa* 藏文文法) in 1935 and by publishing his *Tibetan Reader* (Ch. *Zangwen duben* 藏文讀本) in 1940.<sup>182</sup> Both of these were core textbooks in the curriculum. A study of one or both of these texts would provide useful insight into understanding the history of Tibetan language instruction in China.

---

<sup>179</sup> “Han Zang jiaoli yuan li’an wenjian huibian,” 9.

<sup>180</sup> Fafang, “Zuijin kaikuang.”

<sup>181</sup> See “Han Zang jiaoli yuan tekan,” 18-19.

<sup>182</sup> Fafang, “Zuijin kaikuang.”

Yanding, the Tibetan Tuoxi, or Fazun used Tibetan to read and discuss important texts, such as Maitreya's *Ornament of Realization*, Candrakīrti's *Introduction to the Middle Way*, or Tsongkhapa's *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*.<sup>183</sup> Writing in 1939, Fafang explained that during the sixth and last semester of their study, the "specialized" students studied the Tibetan *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* and *Treatise on the Ornament of Clear Realization*.<sup>184</sup> They also did "proof-reading" of Tibetan (*jiaodu Zangwen*), which probably consisted of them reading and proofing another's translation of a Tibetan text. The intensive language study required of students at the seminary turned many young monks away,<sup>185</sup> and it added to the heavy academic load which kept students drinking green tea to stay awake and literally running from class to class.<sup>186</sup>

### Pedagogy

There is no comprehensive account of what went on in the classrooms and during other extra-curricular activities. Letters from students might be the best source for such information, since students were eager to share with their cohorts the advantages of studying at a particular place. Unfortunately such material is not often published and is difficult to track down. In my case, I have relied principally upon interviews with graduates and a few quotes from some otherwise obscure archival documents. Follow-up interviews with these individuals, if possible, would be very

---

<sup>183</sup> Xing, *Xueyu qiufa ji*, 40.

<sup>184</sup> "Zuijin kaikuang."

<sup>185</sup> See, for instance, Li Li, ed., *Zhuxia Fashi zhuan* (Biography of Ven. Zhuxia) (Chongqing: Chongqing youzheng yin wu youxian gongsi yinshua, 2001), 60.

<sup>186</sup> Dago, personal communication.

beneficial. Though the examples I have collected and described below are few, they should highlight the dynamism and intensity that existed in this academic environment.

Ven. Dago recall,

When the bell rang everybody hurried into the classroom. No one was supposed to make noise. ... They (i.e. the teachers) would come walking by and the master (*fashi*) would come in to start class. In a very disciplined fashion we would all sit down and stand up. When he entered through the door we would all stand and yell out [a greeting]. Then everybody sat down. Then we'd stand again and place our palms together in greeting (*heshi* 合十). The master would step up on the podium. ... We would sit and class would begin. He would talk some and then write on the blackboard some.<sup>187</sup>

For anyone familiar with a typical Chinese classroom, this is not an unordinary description. However, in terms of how a “traditional monastic class” might be run, this is quite extraordinary. The use of blackboards in a monastic setting, though not an innovation of this seminary, was a rather new phenomenon. It helped students to comprehend proper nouns and specialized vocabulary. Even the setting is completely different than what one would expect in a traditional monastic setting.<sup>188</sup> Rather than the abbot or some esteemed scholar monk lecturing from the Dharma Hall (*Fatang* 法堂) on a specific text, monks and laymen sat in a particularly modern classroom while the professor lectured and fielded their questions.<sup>189</sup> Not too much should be made of this, however. The curriculum of the seminary shows that classes were still usually

---

<sup>187</sup> Dago, personal communication.

<sup>188</sup> On sutra lecture and study see Yirun's 義潤 *Baizhang qinggui zhengyi ji* 百丈清規證義記, in the *Xuzangjing*, vol. 63, no. 1244. My thanks to Daniel Stevenson for directing me to this work.

<sup>189</sup> Dago, personal communication.

centered around specific texts on which the professor, usually a learned monk, lectured. Questions were saved until the end of the lecture.<sup>190</sup>

As mentioned above, Tibetan was the exclusive medium of communication in the upper-level courses on such texts as the *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* as well as courses on debate (Ch. *bianlun fa* 辯論法, literally “Methods of Debate”).<sup>191</sup> It was also the predominant language in the Tibetan “proof-reading” course.<sup>192</sup> In translation class Chinese would be used, and a fervent discussion would sometimes ensue: “[The professor] would first use Tibetan to read out loud the original text. Then he would let the students discuss how to translate it into correct and fluent Chinese.” These methods and practice seemed to produce results:

After repeated study sessions and practice the results would be immense. My progress during this timeframe was amazingly quick. In just half a year I had already basically grasped Tibetan grammar. After three years I already had a rough understanding of the five required treatises of Tibetan Gelupka monks.<sup>193</sup>

### Fazun and a Geluk Curriculum

This last quote is an important clue to further understanding the curriculum at the Sino-Tibetan Institute. The “five required treatises of Tibetan Gelupka monks” are what Georges Dreyfuss refers to in his recent book on Tibetan monastic education as

---

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Fafang, “Zuijin kaikuang.”

<sup>192</sup> Fafang, “Zuijin kaikuang.”

<sup>193</sup> Xing, *Xueyu qiufa ji*, 40.

the “root texts,” or *tsaba (rtsa ba)*.<sup>194</sup> These are the “great Indian texts (*rgya gzhung*)” that provide “the authoritative and canonical foundation” for monastic scholasticism.<sup>195</sup> These are usually memorized by student monks, though they are otherwise seldom used. Instead, as Dreyfuss explains, there ensues a process of reading and studying these root texts through the lens of, in a progressive order, other Indian commentaries (Sanskrit: *bhāṣ.ya* or *vr.tti*, T. ‘*grel ba*), Tibetan commentaries (*bod ‘grel*), and (Tibetan) monastic manuals (*yig cha*).<sup>196</sup>

The Sino-Tibetan Institute primarily used the root texts and the canonical Tibetan commentaries (esp. Tsongkhapa’s works) in their Tibetan Buddhist studies curriculum. These texts made their way to the seminary in two ways: Fazun brought back many of them from Tibet and India, while the seminary also ordered texts from other Tibetan presses, such as the Derge (Ch. Dege 德格, T. Sde dge) in Kham.<sup>197</sup>

The five root texts of the Geluk curriculum are:

1. The *Ornament of Realization*, attributed to Maitreya (彌勒);<sup>198</sup>
2. Dharmakīrti’s (Ch. Facheng 法稱) *Commentary on Valid Cognition/Knowledge*;<sup>199</sup>

<sup>194</sup> *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping: The Education of a Tibetan Buddhist Monk* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 91.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, 107-108.

<sup>197</sup> See Fafang, “Zuijin kaikuang.”

<sup>198</sup> Sanskrit (“S”): *Abhisamayālam.kara* (no. 3786 in the Derge (Degé) edition (“D”) of the Tibetan *tengyur* (i.e. the canonized collection of the shastras or Buddhist treatises) and no. 5184 in the Peking (“P”) edition). Ch. *Xianguan zhuangyan lun* 現觀莊嚴論. This and the following information on Geluk monastic education is taken from Dreyfus’ *Sound of Two Hands Clapping* and Donald S. Lopez, Jr.’s *Prisoner’s of Shangri-la: Tibetan Buddhism and the West* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1998), 166-168.

<sup>199</sup> S. *Pramān.avārttika* (D 4210, P 5709). Ch. *Shiliang lun* 釋量論.

3. Nāgārjuna's (Ch. Longshu 龍樹) *Treatise (Verses) of the Middle Way*.<sup>200</sup> Or, Candrakīrti's (Ch. Yuecheng 月稱) *Introduction to the Middle Way*;<sup>201</sup>
4. Vasubandhu's (Ch. Shiqin 世親) *Treasury of Abhidharma*;<sup>202</sup> and,
5. Gun.aprabha's (Ch. Junabolapo 瞿拏鉢刺婆) *Discourse on Vinaya*.<sup>203</sup>

Of these six texts (including Candrakīrti's *Introduction*), two had already been translated into Chinese: Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Abhidharma* was translated by Xuanzang in the seventh century, and Nāgārjuna's *Treatise of the Middle Way* (with commentary) was translated by Kumārajīva in the fifth century, long before they were ever introduced to Tibet. A third, Gun.aprabha's *Discourse on Vinaya*, was never translated into Chinese, while the remaining three titles were rendered into Chinese for the first time by Fazun himself. Buddhism in China had already developed its own system of monastic codes and discipline that were different from those in Tibet.

Furthermore, as Dreyfuss has pointed out,

the Vinaya is only partly relevant to Tibetan monastic practice. ... [T]he Tibetan practice of monasticism does not strictly conform to the strictures laid down in the Vinaya. The vows are the same, but they are studied by monks only after ordination, in summaries called "Training for Bhikshus" (*dge slong gyi bslab bya*).

Fazun *did* translate such a "Training for Bhikshus" text, namely Tsongkhapa's *Explanation of the Bhikshu Precepts*.<sup>204</sup> Thus all of the remaining "root texts" beyond

---

<sup>200</sup> S. *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (D 3824, P 5224). Ch. *Zhongguan lun* 中觀論.

<sup>201</sup> S. *Madhyamakāvātāra* (D 3861, P 5262). Ch. *Ruzhong lun* 入中論. This is actually a commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Treatise*, though it often replaces the latter's work as the central text of Madhyamaka studies. See Dreyfuss, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 106-107, 113-114, and 357n24.

<sup>202</sup> S. *Abhidharma-kosha* (D 4089, P 5590). Ch. *Jushe lun* 俱舍論 (T 29.1558).

<sup>203</sup> S. *Vinaya-sūtra* (D 4117, P 5619).

<sup>204</sup> See TOH 5272. Ch. *Bichu xuechu* 苾芻學處 or *Bichu jieshi* 苾芻戒釋.

the *Treatise on the Middle Way* and the *Treasury of the Abhidharma* were translated into Chinese by Fazun.<sup>205</sup>

Fazun also translated a large number of Tsongkhapa's works, the most important two perhaps being the *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* and the *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Esoteric Path* (Ch. *Mizongdao cidi guanglun* 密宗道次第廣論, T. *Snagsrim chenmo*).<sup>206</sup> The former, along with the aforementioned root texts of Geluk monasticism, regularly figured into the curriculum at the Sino-Tibetan Institute. Below I will primarily list the *Geluk components* of the seminary's curriculum as they appear in a handful of documents produced by the institute. These components make up the largest part of the overall curriculum. I do not mean to present a monolithic and unchanging description of the seminary's curriculum. The sources on which I have drawn are limited in scope and vary on certain specifics. Furthermore, it may be the case that different sources may reveal that what "actually" happened in the seminary's classrooms was very different than what was idealized and publicized by the seminary's teachers and students.<sup>207</sup>

---

<sup>205</sup> Dharmakīrti's *Commentary on Valid Cognition* was one of the last texts Fazun translated before his death in 1980.

<sup>206</sup> TOH 5281.

<sup>207</sup> For example, Chengjing, who was at the seminary from 1946-1950, says that "Tibetan Buddhist studies only made up one eighth of the curriculum." Personal communication, July 19, 2006. However, Chengjing was of the very last class of the seminary. Many of the outstanding teachers and administrators, such as Taixu, Fazun, Fafang, and Yinshun all left before or during this period. What is needed are a) follow-up interviews with the seminary's graduates to ask questions specifically pertaining to the Tibetan Buddhist curriculum and b) a perusal and study of the students' homework assignments (available at the Chongqing City Archives) in order to better ascertain the impact the curriculum had on the students. For instance, Zhuxia, a student at the seminary from 1938-1942, apparently left behind two notebooks: one from his class on Tibetan language and another on "Chinese studies" (Ch. *Guoxue*). They are now at the Shapingba Library in Chongqing. See Li Li, *Zhuxia Fashi zhuan*, 65.

However, the few materials I have, from 1936, 1937,<sup>208</sup> 1939,<sup>209</sup> and 1945, consistently show preeminence given to standard Geluk texts.

The curriculum for the general program as recorded in June of 1936<sup>210</sup> included classes that incorporated the following:

- *Explanation of the Verses Exhorting and Admonishing the King* by the Changja (Lcang skya) Khutugtu,<sup>211</sup>
- Tsongkhapa's *Explanation of the Bodhisattva Precepts*;<sup>212</sup>
- Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Abhidharma*;
- Tsongkhapa's *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*;
- Ngülchu's *Grammar* (S. *shabdavidyā*, one of the classical five branches of learning in India and Tibet<sup>213</sup>); and,
- Ngülchu's *Methods of [Tibetan] gāthā and letter composition*.<sup>214</sup>

---

<sup>208</sup> See Zhu Xuqun 朱煦群, "Jinyun si: Han Zang jiaoli yuan" (Jinyun Monastery: the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute), in *Hai chao yin*, vol. 18, no. 4 (April 1937), 88-89, cited in Chen Yongge, *Renjian chaoyin*, 234n2.

<sup>209</sup> Fafang, "Zuijin kaikuang."

<sup>210</sup> "Han Zang jiaoli yuan li'an wenjian huibian," 12-16.

<sup>211</sup> This is likely the third (also known as the second) Changja Khutugtu (T. lchang skya hu thog thu), Ye shes bstan pa'i sgron me, alias Rol pa'i rdo rje (1717-86). The text (Ch. *Quanjie wang song shi* 勸誠王頌釋) is commenting on Nāgārjuna's *Suhr.ilekha* (Ch. *Quanjie wang song* 勸誠王頌). For the identification of the Tibetan names of this text and author as well as many of the following texts and authors I am indebted to Jann Ronis and Champa Lhunpo for their help. Any mistakes in these identifications are due solely to my own inabilities and lack of time. For the name of this reincarnation lineage I have followed Tuttle's phonetic rendering. See Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, p. xviii.

<sup>212</sup> This is Tsongkhapa's *Byang chub gzhung lam zhes bya ba*. See TOH 5271. Ch. *Puti jiepin shi* 菩薩戒品釋.

<sup>213</sup> Ngülchu Dharmabhadra (T. dngul chu d+hurma b+ha dra) (1772-1851) was a "very significant Geluk master and scholar [who] studied at Trashi Gepel (T. bkra shis dge 'phel) and established his seat at the ancient Ngülchu Monastery of Gyalré thokmé zangpopé (T. rgyal sras thogs med bzang po dpal) in Western Tibet." Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center, s.v. "d+hurma b+ha dra" (P289), [www.tbrc.org/](http://www.tbrc.org/). This text is probably his *Yul gang can gyi skad kyis brda sprod ba'i bstan bcos su sum cu pa dang rtags kyi 'jug pa'i rnam bshad mkhas mchog si tu'i zhal lung*, TOH 6388. The Chinese reads only *Shengming* 聲明 (S. *shabdavidyā*) by Shuiyin 水銀 (lit. Water Silver).



Aside from these two texts of Tsongkhapa and the *Treasury of Abhidharma*, there are included a text written by the Changja Khutugtu, who was a prominent Geluk *trülku*, or “living buddha” (Ch. *huofo*), from Amdo, and the texts of Ngülchu Dharmabhadra, also an important Geluk master and scholar.<sup>215</sup> This was in addition to other classes on Indian Buddhism, Tibetan History, Tibetan grammar (*wenfa* 文法), and so on.

The curriculum for the specialized program as recorded in June of 1936<sup>216</sup> included classes that incorporated the following

- Candrakīrti’s *Introduction to the Middle Way*;
- Tsongkhapa’s *Commentary on the Golden Garland of the Ornament of Realization*;<sup>217</sup>
- Tsongkhapa’s *Commentary on the Ocean of the Correct Truth of the Treaty of the Middle Way*;<sup>218</sup>
- Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise (Verses) of the Middle Way* (with embedded commentary by Treatise Master Qingmu’s 青目論師) (this is listed under the Chinese Language Buddhist Studies class);
- Maitreya’s *Ornament of Realization*; and,
- Tsongkhapa’s *Explanation of the Introduction to the Middle Way*.<sup>219</sup>

---

<sup>214</sup> This might be Ngülchu Dharmabhadra’s *Yig skur rnam bzhad mdor bsdus*, TOH 6396. The Chinese reads *Gejie shuxin zuofa* 歌偈書信作法.

<sup>215</sup> Another text that I have been unable to identify is Champa Lama’s (Ch. 絳巴阿喇嘛) *Notes on Liberation by Refraining from Evil* (Ch. *Bie jietuo jie jiangyi* 別解脫戒講義), which is obviously an explanation of monastic precepts and discipline.

<sup>216</sup> “Han Zang jiaoli yuan li’an wenjian huibian,” 10-11

<sup>217</sup> T. *Legs bshad gser phreng*, TOH 5412 (A-B). Ch. *Xianguan zhuangyan jinman shu* 現觀莊嚴金鬘疏.

<sup>218</sup> T. *Rigs pa’i rgya mtsho zhes bya ba*, TOH 5401. Ch. *Zhonglun zhengli hai shu* 中論正理海疏.

Aside from the root texts and Tsongkhapa's texts, there is Qingmu's *Explanation of [Nāgārjuna's] Treatise of the Middle Way*.<sup>220</sup> The text, which combines a prose commentary by the unidentified Indian master Qingmu (Blue Eyes) with Nāgārjuna's *Verses on the Middle Way (Madhyamakakārikā)*, was translated by Kumārajīva at the beginning of the fifth century. As the earliest and most influential Chinese translation of Nāgārjuna's *Verses*, the text exerted an enormous impact on the formation of indigenous Chinese Buddhist traditions such as the Tiantai and Sanlun (Three Treatises) schools. Although the text received diminishing attention in later periods, its existence was exceedingly well known to Chinese Buddhists as one of the earliest and most important translations of a key Madhyamaka text.<sup>221</sup>

The enduring presence of such works in China is precisely what is meant when figures such as Taixu propounded the idea of "mutual compensation." The Tibetan *Gangyur* and *Tengyur* contained many important texts not found in the Chinese Tripitika, and the Chinese Tripitika had treasures not found in the Tibetan canon and sometimes an even more immediate connection to the supposed Indian source of these treasures.

The curriculum for the general program in 1945 has further additions to the curricular picture.<sup>222</sup> There is the class "Political and Religious History of Tibet,"

---

<sup>219</sup> T. *Dgongs pa rab gsal zhes bya ba*, TOH 5408. Ch. *Ruzhong lun shu* 入中論疏.

<sup>220</sup> T 45.1504.

<sup>221</sup> My thanks to Daniel Stevenson for helping me clarify this.

<sup>222</sup> "Shijie Foxue yuan Han Zang jiaoli yuan putongke kecheng biao" (Curriculum for the General Program of the World Buddhist Institute's Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute), 1945.

now presumably complete with Fazun's *History of the Tibetan People* (in 1936 it was "pending compilation"<sup>223</sup>) and the following subjects/texts:

- Tsongkhapa's *Concise Exposition of the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*,<sup>224</sup>
- Sham.karasvāmin's (Ch. Shangjieluo zhu 商羯羅主) *Introduction to Logic*,<sup>225</sup>

Sham.karasvāmin's *Introduction to Logic* was originally translated by Xuanzang in the seventh century and thus also had a venerable history in China. It provides an overview of Dignāga's 陳那 logic,<sup>226</sup> which in Tibet was later provided by translations of Dharmakīrti's writings. There was also a class just on Madhyamaka (Ch. *faxing konghui* 法性空慧), which presumably did not focus exclusively on one specific text as was the case in the other classes.

Besides Maitreya's *Ornament of Realization* and the Geluk and Madhyamaka components of the curriculum, there were many other important Yogācāra texts studied at the seminary, as well as a class specifically on Yogācāra (Ch. *weishi xue*). The presence of these distinctively Yogācāra elements in the curriculum could perhaps be seen as preparatory or supplementary to an overall Geluk curriculum. However, it is more likely that it is the result of the popularity of Yogācāra in Republican Period China and the revival of interest in Yogācāra by major figures such as Taixu and Ouyang Jingwu 歐陽竟無 (aka Ou Yangjian 歐陽漸, 1871-

---

<sup>223</sup> "Han Zang jiaoli yuan li'an wenjian huibian," 16.

<sup>224</sup> T. *Lam rim chung ba*, TOH 5393. Ch. *Putidao cidi lüe lun* 菩提道次第略論.

<sup>225</sup> Ch. *Yinming ru zhengli lun* 因明入正理論. T 32.1630. Translated by Xuanzang in 647, it is the first Indian logic text ever translated into Chinese.

<sup>226</sup> Also written as Dayulong 大域龍. See n. 79.

1943).<sup>227</sup> Moreover, Fazun himself recognized the real differences separating Chinese Yogācāra from that studied in Tibet.<sup>228</sup> As such, these Yogācāra texts were usually studied in the students' Chinese Buddhism class. The texts in the curriculum included Asanga's (Ch. Wuzhu 無著) *She dacheng lun* 攝大乘論,<sup>229</sup> Vasubandhu's disciples' *Treatise on the Completion of Consciousness-Only* (Ch. *Cheng weishi lun* 成唯識論),<sup>230</sup> and Vasubandhu's *Twenty Verses on Consciousness-Only* (*Weishi ershi lun* 唯識二十論),<sup>231</sup> to name some.

The remaining Buddhist texts, such as the *Treatise on the Miscellaneous Agama Sutras* (Ch. *Za ahan jing lun* 雜阿含經論)<sup>232</sup> (a text that discusses early Buddhist texts important to Theravada or Hinayana Buddhism) demonstrate Taixu's real commitment to creating a "World Buddhism." Taixu once said,

When I herein speak of the renewal of the status of Chinese Buddhism, [I mean to say that one should] take Chinese Buddhism which has evolved and changed over 2000 years as the base, and then when encountering China's present and future needs, absorb and choose the

---

<sup>227</sup> Cf. the curriculum as Taixu's Minnan Buddhist Studies Institute, described in Gao Zhenrong, "Taixu Fashi seng jiaoyu sixiang chu tan" (A First Look at Taixu's Thought on Monastic Education), in *Zhejiang fojiao* (Zhejiang Buddhism), n. 4 (December 20, 1999), 153-155. The Minnan Institute's current curriculum can be seen on the seminary's website, <http://nanputuo.com/fxy/index.htm>. There has yet to be a study focusing on the revival of Yogācāra in China. Chen Bing and Deng Zimei identify three causes to this: a reevaluation and retrieval of "tradition" in order to counter the intellectual onslaught of Western science, rationality, logic, philosophy, and psychology; the reintroduction of texts from Japan that had been lost in China; and, the discovery of Tibetan Yogācāra texts not found in the Chinese canon. See Chen and Deng, *Ershi shiji Zhongguo fojiao* (Twentieth Century Chinese Buddhism) (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2000): 224-230.

<sup>228</sup> Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, f. 2, 28b and f. 3, 23a.

<sup>229</sup> *Mahāyānasangraha* ("dot" over the second "n") (or, *Mahāyānasam.graha*). T 31.1592, 1593, etc.

<sup>230</sup> Compiled by Dharmapāla and nine other disciples of Vasubandhu. Trans. by Xuanzang in 659. T 31.1585.

<sup>231</sup> *S. Vijñaptimātratasiddhi vimśatikākārikā*. Translated by Xuanzang in 661. T 31.1590.

<sup>232</sup> I have not been able to identify this text, though it is obviously a commentary on the *Miscellaneous Agama Sutras* (T 2.101). See Fafang, "Zuijin kaikuang."

special characteristics of Buddhism from each time and each place ...<sup>233</sup>

Thus the root texts of Geluk scholasticism and Tsongkhapa's writings made up the largest component of the curriculum of the Sino-Tibetan Institute; Chinese Madhyamaka and Yogācāra texts were of secondary importance; other texts such as the *Treatise on the Miscellaneous Agama Sutras* and the *Sutra of the Contemplation of the Mind of the Buddha's Lives* (Ch. *Bensheng xindi guan jing* 本生心地觀經)<sup>234</sup> rounded out the curriculum. A few courses on Chinese language, health, and law, etc., gave the seminary its modern air.

## Degrees

When the student Tongjie 同杰 joined the seminary in February or March of 1934, he had some 20 to 30 classmates with him in the general program. Only five or so graduated, however!<sup>235</sup> This would seem surprising had the seminary not already experienced such rates of attrition. The first year, 1932, the seminary recruited and enrolled sixty students: Then,

according to statistics, 14 individuals withdrew, 6 had insufficient grades and were kicked out, 4 broke the rules and were expelled, 6 left without permission, 6 had an affair to deal with and left, and there were as many as 22 who overstayed their time off and never returned. Altogether the total number of people who left school was 58.<sup>236</sup>

---

<sup>233</sup> Gao, "Taixu Fashi," 154.

<sup>234</sup> T 3.159.

<sup>235</sup> Chen Tongjie, personal communication, August 19, 2006. According to the "Shijie Han Zang jiaoli yuan putong ke di er jie biye tongxue lu" (Record of [Those] Classmates [Who] Graduated in the Second General Class of the World Buddhist Institute's Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute), from July 8, 1940, there were eighteen graduates in Tongjie's general (*putong*) class and only six in his specialized (*zhuanxiu*) class (p. 54).

<sup>236</sup> Luo Tongbing, "Han Zang jiaoli yuan shiüe, 30, citing the "Han Zang jiaoli yuan nian kan" (Annual of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute) of the second semester of 1933.

Fortunately, the seminary had new students enroll monthly so it was able to keep up its numbers. Normally students had to test into the seminary. This is attested to by Daguo, who studied at the seminary from 1941 through 1947. In fact, Daguo had to take two tests, one first in Chengdu, and then another in Chongqing.<sup>237</sup> In addition, according to the “General Regulations of the World Buddhist Institute’s Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute,”<sup>238</sup> students had to have a referrer confirm their qualifications. Tongjie relied solely upon this, admitting he did not have to test to get in. “We were the poor class!” he declares.<sup>239</sup>

Students enrolled in either the general program, which was to last four years, or the specialized program, which was to last three years. In 1940 the time needed to complete the specialized program was permanently change from three years to two years in order to facilitate the recruitment of students (i.e. the recruitment for the specialized program would be every two years, like that for the general program).<sup>240</sup> Once the students completed all the requirements for degree and passed all their tests, which they had at least once a month,<sup>241</sup> the list of graduates and their grades would be passed along to the provincial government for approval.<sup>242</sup> Then, during a graduation ceremony complete with the singing of the Nationalist Party anthem and

---

<sup>237</sup> Daguo, personal communication.

<sup>238</sup> “Shijie foxueyuan Han Zang jiaoli yuan jianze,” in *Hai chao yin* (Sound of the Ocean Tide), vol. 13, no. 1, January 15, 1932. Cited in Mei, “Minguo yi lai de Han Zang fojiao guanxi,” 267.

<sup>239</sup> Chen Wenjie, personal communication.

<sup>240</sup> Fafang, “Zuijin kaikuang.”

<sup>241</sup> Daguo, personal communication.

<sup>242</sup> See, for example, the “Shijie foxueyuan Han Zang jiaoli yuan gao” (Manuscript of the World Buddhist Institute’s Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute” with the subject (*shiyou* 事由) “Chengbao benqi xueseng biye xingming chengji biao” (Submission of the names and grades of those student monks graduating this semester), dated July 10, 1940.

visiting dignitaries,<sup>243</sup> the students would be awarded diplomas. Tongjie (now Chen Wenjie 陳文杰) still has and shared with me copies of his two diplomas from the seminary.<sup>244</sup> His diploma for the general program reads simply:

The student Ven. Tongjie is from Ba County in Sichuan Province. [He] formerly received the sramanera (*shami* 沙彌) precepts [while enrolled] in the first class of the general program of this institute. [He] has studied all the courses of the curriculum. [He] has studied in observance of [this institute's] accords, and [he] has satisfactorily [completed] the tests [of the institute.] It is [therefore] appropriate to confer this dharma certificate of graduation as proof.

[Signed,]

Taixu  
Institute Director

He Beiheng  
Institute Protector (*yuanhu*)

The 27<sup>th</sup> Day of the 1<sup>st</sup> Month of the 26<sup>th</sup> Year (1937) of the Republic of China

The language on Tongjie's diploma for his specialized studies, received on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 1939, is almost identical. Apparently students could also receive a "Certificate of Study" (*xiuye zhengshu* 修業證書), as a Wang Qizhi 王其志 did for having "studied two years of Tibetan ..."<sup>245</sup>

## Conclusion

Thus this totally novel curriculum at the Sino-Tibetan Institute was mastered, imported, and implemented by Fazun. "The foundational period did not have any real development," says Ven. Bisong 碧松法師, a member of the seminary's first class.

"It was not until 1934 when Fazun returned from Tibet and became director that [the]

---

<sup>243</sup> See Min's description in his "Minguo yilai de Han Zang fojiao guanxi," 270. Citing "Han Zang yuan di yi jie biye zhisheng" (Record of the First Graduate of the Sino-Tibetan Institute), in *Hai chao yin*, vol. 18, no. 3, March 15, 1937, 90.

<sup>244</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>245</sup> In the year 1939. This certificate is at the Chongqing City Archives.

educational administration was completely revamped.”<sup>246</sup> Besides formulating a novel and intense curriculum, Fazun contributed to the development and success of the seminary in a number of other ways. Most important was his role as writer and translator. As Mei Jingxuan has remarked, although there were several others who worked at the Office of Editing and Translation, the translation process was not like that of the large translation teams set up formally under imperial auspices.<sup>247</sup> He no doubt received help from others such as Dongben Geshé (東本格西).<sup>248</sup> However, of 26 compositions and translations listed in Fafang’s 1940 essay, *all* of them have Fazun listed as the sole author or editor and translator.

Although Fazun’s first year at the seminary, 1934-1935, seems to have been given over mostly to fundraising in order to bring back Amdo Geshé from Tibet and to publish his recently completed translation of Tsongkhapa’s *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, he did not leave without first having an impact. He did not leave until September of 1935, apparently waiting until the new semester began.<sup>249</sup> In April he had already finished his *Tibetan Grammar*.<sup>250</sup> In the winter following his departure his translation of the *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* was published in Wuhan. Both of these texts became fundamental parts of the curriculum. Fazun built on Dayong’s partial and problematic translation of the *Stages of the Path to*

---

<sup>246</sup> Xing, *Xueyu qiufa ji*, 40.

<sup>247</sup> Mei, “Minguo yilai de Han Zang fojiao guanxi,” 272.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid. See Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, 197 for a brief reference to this monk.

<sup>249</sup> His “Lun xueseng zhi chengji: Han Zang jiaoli yuan kaixue xunci” (Discussion on the Achievement of Scholarly Monks: Instruction at the Beginning of the Term of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute) was written and published in 1935, presumably for the beginning of studies in 1935. See Lü Tiegang, “Fazun Fashi yizhu nianbiao,” 15.

<sup>250</sup> Fafang, “Zuijin kaikuang.”



*Enlightenment* beginning in 1931.<sup>251</sup> In 1934 he lectured on it at the seminary while continuing to work on the translation.<sup>252</sup> When it was later republished in Wuhan, two thousand copies were produced. It later became a standard for the study of Tibetan Buddhism in China, and its continued use today at Mount Wutai has been observed.<sup>253</sup> The *Tibetan Grammar* was picked up and used by the Ministry of Education in the Borderlands School of Education.<sup>254</sup>

When Fazun left the seminary in September, he temporarily handed over his duties as Acting Director<sup>255</sup> to Ven. Weifang 葦舫. He did not return to the seminary until the tenth of the first month, 1937. Soon after, the war brought new and excellent faculty to the seminary, each with his own specialized knowledge. At the same time, Fazun completed many new compositions and translations and solidified his Tibetan Geluk curriculum.

---

<sup>251</sup> Zong ka ba [Tsongkhapa], *Puti dao cidì guāng lùn jìzhū* (Commentaries on the Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment), trans. Fazun, compiled by Zhimin (Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 2003), in “Explanation of [this] publication.”

<sup>252</sup> Ibid. Herein it also explains that a mimeographed edition (*youyin ben* 油印本) was produced in 1934. There is also a version published by the Sino-Tibetan Institute itself in March of 1936. Wang-Toutain, citing Tong Jie’s “Yi Fazun Shangshi” (Remembering Fazun Lama), says that the first text Fazun lectured on in 1936 was the *Lamrim chemo*. The date is different, but her point is the same: “Le *Lam-rim* fut le premier texte enseigné par Fazun à ses élèves en 1936, alors qu’il venait de prendre la direction de l’Institut des études du bouddhisme sino-tibétain” (p. 724). Italics my own.

<sup>253</sup> See n. 45.

<sup>254</sup> See n. 24.

<sup>255</sup> In the 1936 “Han Zang jiaoli yuan li’an wenjian huibian” he is also listed as the *xunyu zhuren* 訓育主任 (“Director of Ethics”). This position does not appear on the 1939 “Han Zang jiaoli yuan zuijin kaikuang.” Fafang explains that “Master Taixu has established the principle of [ethical] instruction and abolished the [position of] Director of Ethics” and that it was to be subsumed by the Acting Director, the Education Director, and the other faculty and administrators of the seminary. Nonetheless, it is listed again as one of Fazun’s positions in the 1944 “Han Zang jiaoli yuan tekan,” 16.

### Chapter 3: The Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People

As I have shown in the previous chapter, the resources available to students at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute were plentiful. Chief among these resources was Fazun himself. He played an important role in attracting good faculty, he taught classes, he advised and encouraged students, and, most of all, he composed and translated texts on Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism. His role as author and translator should not be underestimated. As the “Special Issue of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute” from 1944 says, “the educational goal of this institute is to produce people talented (*rencai*) at linking Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist cultures. The path to [building] these links must make translation its base.”<sup>256</sup> A Translation Office (*fanyi chu*) was established in October of 1937 with Fazun as the chief translator and graduate students as assistant translators. Then, in the spring of 1938, Chairman Chen of the Ministry of Education (of Sichuan Province) paid a visit to Jinyun Mountain. He spoke with Taixu about the problems the government faced regarding education in the remote areas bordering Tibet and other western regions (*bianjiang jiaoyu wenti*).

[Chairman Chen] deeply felt that there was a paucity of textbooks. Since the ministry would pay compensation, he asked that the institute first write the Chinese-Tibetan Elementary [Reader] textbook (*Han Zang hebi [duben] jiaokeshu*). Beginning in April, [the ministry] compensated 400 yuan per month. At this time the name of the Translation Office was changed to the Editing and Translation Office (*bianyi chu*).<sup>257</sup>

---

<sup>256</sup> *Han Zang jiaoli yuan tekan*, 28. See also, Fafang, “Zuijin kaikuang.”

<sup>257</sup> *Han Zang jiaoli yuan tekan*, 28. Tuttle, citing Weixian, also notes this. *Tibetan Buddhists*, 203. Much of the information in Weixian’s essay is identical to the 1944 *Han Zang jiaoli yuan tekan*.

This was supplemented in September of 1939 by the establishment of a printing press (*kejing chu*) for which Fazun was able to secure the necessary technology.<sup>258</sup> Their runs of texts were very short, and so there was apparently a huge demand for them. Schools in Qinghai, Kham, Lijiang (Yunnan Province) and other places are said to have bought the seminary's Tibetan language textbooks.<sup>259</sup> The *Origins and Development of the Buddhist Sects (Zongpai yuanliu)*,<sup>260</sup> Tsongkhapa's *Explanation of the Bhikshu Precepts (Ch. Bichu xuechu 苾芻學處)*<sup>261</sup> and *Explanation of the Bodhisattva Precepts (Ch. Puti jie pin 菩提戒品)*,<sup>262</sup> and other texts were bought by Buddhist academies (*foxue yuan*), and more general texts such as the *Gazetteer of Jinyun Mountain (Jinyun shan zhi)*<sup>263</sup> and *An Overview of Buddhism (Foxue gailun)*<sup>264</sup> were picked up by tourists and visitors to the mountain who made "donations" for them.<sup>265</sup>

Another fruit of the Editing and Translation Office was Fazun's *The Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People (Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi 西藏民族政教史*, hereafter *History of the Tibetan People*). Fazun wrote this during the war years

---

<sup>258</sup> Just what type of printing press was built is unclear. Woodblocks were used for at least some period of time during the seminary's history if not the entire time. Also, in the *Han Zang jiaoli yuan tekan*, (p. 30), the seminary's Director of General Affairs, Ven. Shengguan 聖觀, is mentioned as having a lot of experience with printing.

<sup>259</sup> Also, the provincial government of Qinghai had requested a dictionary from the seminary. *Han Zang jiaoli yuan niankan* (Annual of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute) (Chongqing?: Han Zang jiaoli yuan?, 1933?).

<sup>260</sup> This is likely Taixu's *Fojiao ge zongpai yuanliu 佛教各宗派源流* (The Origins and Development of Each of the Buddhist Sects), written in 1922. See his *Complete Works*.

<sup>261</sup> This is Tsongkhapa's *Explanation of the Bhikshu Precepts (Ch. Bichu jie shi 苾芻戒釋)*. See n. 204.

<sup>262</sup> This is Tsongkhapa's *Explanation of the Bodhisattva Precepts (Ch. Pusa jie shi 菩薩戒釋)*. See n. 212.

<sup>263</sup> This was edited by Ven. Chenkong 塵空 (Chongqing: Han Zang jiaoli yuan, 1942).

<sup>264</sup> By Taixu (1930). In his *Complete Works*, vol. 1, pp. 1-70.

<sup>265</sup> *Han Zang jiaoli yuan tekan*, 30-1.

at the Sino-Tibetan Institute for use in teaching Tibetan Buddhist history.<sup>266</sup> An official statement (*zhiding* 指定) from the Ministry of Education dated the 11<sup>th</sup> of January, 1942 notes that the ministry received a copy of *The History of the Tibetan People*, and that “there is nothing that does not meet up to standards [for use] as reference.” The statement continues: “This ministry has examined and approves. This notice is for [your] records.”<sup>267</sup> The book was actually finished and available much earlier than this. The publication of the text began in 1939 when an early version of the preface and the chapter on ancient history was published in the periodical *Hai chao yin*<sup>268</sup> under the title “The Political and Religious History of Tibet” (Xizang zhengjiao shi). The *History of the Tibetan People* in its entirety was completed on the Buddha’s birthday (the eighth day of the fourth lunar month) in 1940. It was written in six “fascicles” (*juan*) but published together in two “volumes” (*ce*), volume one containing the first three fascicles and volume two the last three.<sup>269</sup> This was reissued again in a very small number (200 copies) in 1991<sup>270</sup> and again in 2002 in a volume of the enormous *Zhongguo shaoshu minzu guji jicheng* (Compendium of Ancient Writings on China’s Minorities).<sup>271</sup>

I have yet to find out exactly how many copies of the *History of the Tibetan People* have been produced and how widely it circulated. It seems probable that very

---

<sup>266</sup> Fazun, “Autobiography,” 375. “Han Zang jiaoli yuan li’an wenjian huibian,” 16.

<sup>267</sup> From the Chongqing City Archives.

<sup>268</sup> *Hai chao yin*, vol. 20, no. 10 and 11.

<sup>269</sup> See photograph in Appendix B. This is the “woodblock print in two volumes” that Lü refers to in his “Fazun Fashi yizhu nianbiao,” 17. Since Fazun finished this text several months after the formal establishment of the institute’s publishing press, then it seems likely that woodblock printing was the type of printing being during the press’ existence.

<sup>270</sup> Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zhongxin.

<sup>271</sup> Ed. Xu Lihua 徐麗華 (Chengdu: Sichuan minzu chubanshe, 2002), 1-93.

few copies were ever made.<sup>272</sup> Although I do not know the actual reason for this, my suspicion is that Fazun's *History of the Tibetan People*, which is based primarily on Tibetan sources and tells Tibetan history from a typical Tibetan standpoint, did not fit well within the Marxist and Han-centric parameters guiding historical and ethnographic scholarship already in the 1940s and especially after 1949.<sup>273</sup> It is possible that the text was simply overlooked and unappreciated. However, given the uniqueness of its content and the relatively high caliber of the scholarship put into it, this seems unlikely.

Unfortunately, I have not yet taken the time to extensively survey and review Chinese works on Tibetan history from the Republican Period. Doing such would obviously help to contextualize Fazun's work and better understand its significance. For this purpose I have instead relied upon the work of others, especially Gray Tuttle's "Modern Tibetan Historiography in China" published in 1998. Tuttle's essay is mostly oriented towards understanding the current state of Tibetan historiography in China. To do that he gives a brief overview of the Republican Period "forefathers" of modern Tibetan historiography. He focuses on three figures: Yu Daoquan 于道泉, who helped develop the program for Tibetan studies at the Central Nationalities Institute (*Zhongyang minzu xueyuan*) and fostered Dunhuang studies in China;<sup>274</sup> Ren Naiqiang 任乃强, who was president of the Research Society for Kham and Tibet

---

<sup>272</sup> This would explain the exorbitant cost of one copy, which in 1944 was 240 yuan, second among the institute's publications only to Fazun's *Zangwen duben* (Tibetan Language Reader), which cost 360 yuan. *Han Zang jiaoli yuan tekan*, 54.

<sup>273</sup> See Tuttle, "Tibetan Historiography," 89.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

(*Kang Zang yanjiu she*) (1946-1949) and wrote many articles for this group's journal, the *Kham and Tibet Research Monthly* (*Kang Zang yanjiu yuekan*);<sup>275</sup> and, Gendun Chopel (Dge 'dun chos 'phel), an Amdo Tibetan who wrote "the first modern historical work by a Tibetan."<sup>276</sup> Notably absent from his discussion is Fazun. Fazun figures prominently in Tuttle's later work, so one explanation for this lacuna might be that he was not yet aware of Fazun at the time he wrote this essay. Lü Tiegang, a lay disciple of Fazun and current professor at the Chinese Buddhist Academy in Beijing, writes in the afterward to the 1991 republication of Fazun's history,

There are two important works on the history of Tibet. They have had a large influence on the study of Tibet today, and many scholars cite them. One is Ven. Miaozhou's 妙舟法師 *History of Mongol-Tibetan Buddhism* (*Meng Zang fojiao shi*) and the other is Ven. Fazun's *Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People*.<sup>277</sup>

Even if we do not consider these comments of Fazun's faithful disciple, there are many reasons Fazun's history *should* be noted when considering Tibetan historiography in Nationalist and contemporary China.

First of all, Fazun's history might very well be the first Chinese history of Tibet that utilizes Tibetan sources.<sup>278</sup> There is at least one other contender for this

---

<sup>275</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>276</sup> I.e. *The White Annals* (*Deb ther dkar po*). Ibid., 90. Tuttle notes that since Gendun Chopel "was born and grew up in regions nominally administrated by China (in Amdo), and as he had to wait several months for permission [from the Lhasa government?] to even enter central Tibet for further studies, despite his Tibetan ethnicity, there is some justification for including him in this discussion of Tibetan historiography in China" (p. 89). A recent work on this figure and his writings is *The Madman's Middle Way: Reflections on Reality of the Tibetan Monk Gendun Chopel* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006) by Donald S. Lopez, Jr.

<sup>277</sup> F. 6, afterword, 1a.

<sup>278</sup> Tuttle has already suggested this. See *Tibetan Buddhists*, 204.

status: Li Yizhuo's 李翊灼<sup>279</sup> (1881-1952) *History of Tibetan Buddhism* (*Xizang fojiao shi* 西藏佛教史).<sup>280</sup> This was published in 1929 by the Shanghai Buddhist Studies Press (Shanghai foxue shuju), and according to one scholar it is the earliest text to introduce Tibetan Buddhism (to a Chinese audience).<sup>281</sup> Li's *History of Tibetan Buddhism* is a very short (around 20,000 characters) introduction to Tibetan Buddhism. It is a very apologetic<sup>282</sup> account that speaks of Tibetans' supposedly in-born, compassionate disposition,<sup>283</sup> and otherwise traces the origin and evolution of the "red sects" and the "yellow sects" and provides a discussion of Tibetan Buddhist monasteries, rituals, scripture, and education. Li does seem to draw on Tibetan sources, since he relates parts of Tibetan history not found in the standard Chinese accounts.<sup>284</sup> Just how much access he had to these Tibetan works (in terms of the amount of materials and his language ability) is uncertain, since he does not specifically cite his sources. He certainly does not appear to be familiar with the complex histories of the various monastic orders, instead stating that there are no differences among the various "red sects" nor among the various "yellow sects."<sup>285</sup>

---

<sup>279</sup> His style (*zi* 字) is Zhenggang 證剛.

<sup>280</sup> Li Yizhuo, *Xizang fojiao shi* (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1933). I recently came across a reference to another work for which Taixu had written a preface in 1930. Unfortunately I did not have time to track it down and look at it before this writing. It is Shi Hengyan's 釋恆演 *Xizang zhi fojiao* (Tibet's Buddhism), which seems to have been published as *Xizang fojiao lueji* 西藏佛教略記 (Shanghai: Fojiao shuju, 1931). See Chen, *Renjian chaoyin*, 224.

<sup>281</sup> Yu Lingbo, *Zhongguo jin xiandai fojiao renwu zhi*, 500. My version of the text was published in 1933 at Shanghai's *Zhonghua shuju* press.

<sup>282</sup> See especially the preface.

<sup>283</sup> Compare this with Fazun's description of Tibetans as shrewd and manipulative. "Wo qu guo de Xizang" (The Tibet I Went To), in *Xizang yu Xizang fojiao* (Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism), Tian hua yingluo congshu 27 (Taipei: Tian hua chuban shiye fufen youxian gongsi: 1997), 161.

<sup>284</sup> For instance, he gives a long account of Padmasambhava's coming to Tibet on pp. 25-6.

<sup>285</sup> Li, *Xizang fojiao shi*, 21 and 36.

His transliteration of Tibetan names and terms is also idiosyncratic and frustrating.<sup>286</sup>

Fazun's history, by comparison, is an extensive (about 84,000 characters) and detailed work and, for the most part, a joy to read.

Fazun says in the opening lines of his *History of the Tibetan People* that “Tibetan history can be divided into two chapters (*zhang*). The first is ancient history, from before Buddhism entered [Tibet], through Buddhism's introduction and dissemination, up to the formation and propagation of the Yellow [Geluk] Sect. The second is modern history, ranging from Tsongkhapa's founding of the Yellow Sect down to present day.” It hardly need be pointed out that this framing of Tibetan history is teleologically directed to a grand Geluk<sup>287</sup> finish. Indeed, even in his earlier draft, “The Political and Religious History of Tibet,” Fazun maintained such a framing, with Gelukpa listed as the fifth and final “chapter” of Tibetan history.<sup>288</sup> The table of contents (see Appendix A) also clearly shows a disproportionate amount of attention given to Geluk Buddhism. All of the fourth fascicle and half of the fifth discuss Gelukpa. The sixth fascicle provides biographies of all of the Dalai Lamas up

---

<sup>286</sup> For instance, for Songtsen Gampo (T. *srong btsan sgan bo*) he has Sulang Sideng 蘇朗司登 (he also lists the alternatives of Songzan Gemubu 松贊葛木布 and Shuangzan Sigangpu 雙贊思甘普, which bear a closer resemblance to the standard Tibetan pronunciation. Fazun has Songzan Gangbo 松贊崗薄, and Wang and Chen, eds., *Xizang lishi wenhua cidian*, have Songzan Ganbu 松贊干布.

<sup>287</sup> The Geluk (T. *Dge lugs pa*) sect, with the Dalai Lama as its head, eventually came to be the most socio-politically and religiously dominant sect of Tibetan Buddhism in Central Tibet. It originates with the renowned reformer Tsongkhapa (1357-1419, see more below) and his immediate disciples.

<sup>288</sup> The first four are 1) the period before Buddhism, 2) the period of Buddhism's first dissemination, 3) the period of the destruction of the dharma—from Lang Damo's persecution until the resurgence of Lhasa (Ch. Lasha 拉莎) Buddhism, and 4) the resurgence of Buddhism—from the second florescence of Buddhism up until before the promotion of the Yellow Sect. See Fazun, “*Xizang zhengjiao shi*,” p. 13 (237).



through the thirteenth in that lineage and a list of all of the Panchen Lamas up through the ninth in that lineage.<sup>289</sup>

This preeminence given to the Geluk sect bespeaks the kind of Tibetan Buddhism that Fazun was introducing to his readers and to his students at the Sino-Tibetan Institute. The text gives a social-historical and philosophical background to most of the core Geluk texts and teachings, which of course made up the curriculum at the seminary. This aside, there are still other features of Fazun's history that make it stand out.

The *History of the Tibetan People* is quite comprehensive and critical scholarship. As noted above, it was much longer than any previous work on Tibetan Buddhism, and its table of contents demonstrates the breadth of the topics it covers. The variety of sources on which Fazun draws contributes to this. Although he does not usually cite his sources it is clear that he makes use of many of the Chinese dynastic histories (e.g. the *Yuan shi*, *Ming shi*, and *Qing shi*), especially for dates. As for Tibetan materials, his main source for much of the section on "ancient history" is Budön's *History of Buddhism in Tibet*,<sup>290</sup> a well-known and widely read 14<sup>th</sup> century political and religious history of Tibet. Tukwan Lobsang Chokyi Nyima's (1732-1802,

---

<sup>289</sup> The Dalai and Panchen Lamas are the most important reincarnation lineages in Tibet and are especially connected with the Geluk sect. The former is the manifestation of Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva of compassion, and is the "patron saint" of Tibet. The latter is the manifestation of Mañjushrī, the bodhisattva of wisdom. The two have teacher-disciple relationship, wherein the mature lama will act as teacher to the young and newly recognized lama. Tsongkhapa's disciple Gendundrup (T. Dge 'dun grub, 1391-1474) was recognized retroactively as the first Dalai Lama.

<sup>290</sup> Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290-1364) wrote this, the *Bde bar gshegs pa'i bstan pa'i gsal byed chos kyi 'byung gnas gsung rab rin po che'I mdzod chos 'byung* in 1322. See E. Obermiller's translation, *History of Buddhism in India and Tibet by Bu-ston* (Heidelberg, 1931). See also János Szerb's *Bu ston's History of Buddhism in Tibet: Critically Edited with a Comprehensive Index* (Vienna: Der Österreichischen Akademie Der Wissenschaften, 1990).

T. Thu'u bkwan blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma) *History of the Origin and Development of the Religions*,<sup>291</sup> and several other texts such as the *Biography of Tsongkhapa*, which was one of the first texts Fazun translated and compiled (*yishu* 译述) (around 1930), also served as his main Tibetan sources.

Fazun is somewhat inconsistent in his transliteration and translation of Tibetan names and terms. Sometimes the terms are transliterated, sometimes they are translated, and less frequently the Tibetan is provided in parenthesis. Apparently he set out to provide the Tibetan for every proper noun and technical term; unfortunately, he never got around to doing this.<sup>292</sup> Still, a Chinese-Tibetan glossary of his history could perhaps prove useful for navigating through Chinese scholarship on Tibetan Buddhism, since Fazun was obviously familiar with the terminology used in the dynastic histories and since his compositions and translations have become standards for the study and practice of Tibetan Buddhism in China.<sup>293</sup>

Yet another feature of the text is its recounting to Chinese readers (sometimes for the first time) the stories of Sino-Tibetan interactions that hold an important place in the historical *imaginaire* of most Tibetans. Such events include the famous Samye Debate(s) and the Dalai Lama's coming to ultimate power through the sincere

---

<sup>291</sup> Fazun does not cite this text anywhere in his history, though Lü says in the postface that this is the source of much of Fazun's information. The Tibetan is *Grub mtha' thams cad kyi khungs dang 'dod tshul ston pa legs bshad shel gyi me lung*. It does not appear to have been translated into Chinese until 1980. See Shanhui Fari 善慧法日 (Lobsang Chokyi Nyima), *Zongjiao liupai jingshi* (The Mirror History of the Sects of the Religions), trans. Liu Liqian 劉立千 (Xibei minzu xueyuan yanjiushi, 1980). For an explanation of the phonetic rendering of Tukwan's name see Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, p. xviii.

<sup>292</sup> See Lü's postface to Fazun's text, 5a.

<sup>293</sup> One example is the Tibetan term "*trülku*" (T. *sprul sku*), normally translated into Chinese as "living buddha" (*huofo* 活佛), and transliterated by Fazun as *zhugu* 諸古. Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, f. 5, 3a.

faithfulness of Gūūshi (Gushri) Khan and the support of the Qing emperor Shunzhi. Fazun highlights these events not in order to root Tibet in China's past, but because his is a Chinese audience that is not always familiar with *Tibetan perspectives* on the history of Sino-Tibetan relations.

The following overview of the text is meant to complement and fill out the table of contents, which I have translated in Appendix A. I will highlight what Fazun himself highlights, which is the importance of Geluk Buddhism in the history of Tibetan Buddhism.

### Fazun's *Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People*

The first fascicle covers the time in Tibet before the introduction of Buddhism and the period of the first dissemination of Buddhism (late 7<sup>th</sup> century through 836). Fazun begins, though, with a preface in which he explains the overall structure of the text (i.e. the “two chapters” of Tibetan history), that Tibet has two religions (Buddhism and Bön<sup>294</sup>), and the significance of the Geluk sect, which corrected the “weak and disorderly state” of Buddhism and “became the religious authority (*jiaozheng* 教政) of the past 600 years.”<sup>295</sup> From this point on, his account of Tibet's “ancient history” closely follows the famous Tibetan history by Budön (Bu ston), the *History of Buddhism in Tibet*. In short, he discusses the traditional mythic account of the origins of the great Tibetan kingdom, with its core emphasis extending back to the

---

<sup>294</sup> Bön is often referred to as the pre-Buddhist, indigenous religious of Tibet, though this is not exactly an historically accurate statement, since “Bön” did not recognize themselves as such until after the formation of Buddhism in Tibet. As most scholars have suggested, today Bön has much more in common with other sects of Tibetan Buddhism than such rhetoric might lead one to believe. See, for example, Lopez, *Religions of Tibet in Practice*, 28-30.

<sup>295</sup> Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, f. 1, 1b.

illustrious Songtsen Gampo (Srong btsan sgam po), a figure who has been likened to that of King Arthur in the West,<sup>296</sup> and his royal predecessors.

In this section he also makes use of the two Tang histories (*Tang shu*) and Du You of the Tang's 唐杜佑 *Tongdian* 通典, among other sources. He uses these Chinese sources when possible to further critically confirm or question the Tibetan sources on which he principally relies. For instance, he uses Chinese records of Tang Princess Wencheng's 文成公主 journey to Tibet to date the deaths of King Songtsen Gampo's sons. This, of course, traditionally marks the formal introduction of Buddhism into Tibet.

The section on the first dissemination of Buddhism recounts the coming to Tibet of Padmasambhava (Ch. Lianhuasheng 蓮花生) and the "Ācārya" Bodhisattva<sup>297</sup> Shāntarakṣita (Ch. Jingming 靜命, T. Zhi ba 'tsho) as well as the ordinations of the first Tibetan monks. Several pages are thereupon given to discussing the famous Samye Debate, also known as the "Council of Lhasa" or the "Councils of Lhasa," another quasi-legendary event which is presented (in standard Tibetan historiographic fashion) as a definitive moment for the development of Buddhism in Tibet.<sup>298</sup> The core issue at hand is nothing short of the nature of the path

---

<sup>296</sup> Matthew Kapstein, "Remarks on the *Man.i-bka*'-'bum and the Cult of Avalokites[h]vara in Tibet," in R. Davidson and S. Goodman, eds., *Tibetan Buddhism: Reason and Revelation* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992): 86, 88. Cited in Germano, "Remembering the Dismembered Body of Tibet," 59 and 167n16.

<sup>297</sup> Cf. Obermiller, trans., *History of Buddhism in India and Tibet by Bu-ston*, 188.

<sup>298</sup> Modern critical historical studies of the Samye episode suggest that an on-going series of encounters between Chinese and Tibetan Buddhists occurred between 792 and 794, rather than a single momentous debate. See Luis O. Gomez, "Purifying Gold: The Metaphor of Effort and Intuition in Buddhist Thought and Practice," in *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese*

to enlightenment: if enlightenment is a state of omniscient awareness in which one witnesses both the seemingly isolated components of reality as most deluded beings experience them *and* reality in its totality (in which the seemingly isolated components of day-to-day reality, cause and effect, are interpenetrating, indistinguishable from each other, and boundaryless), how then does one go about arriving at this state?

In the context of the Samye Debate we can speak generally of two groups representing two different approaches to this question: the “subitist” or “sudden” group, represented by the Chinese monk Moheyanna 摩訶衍那 (i.e. Mahayana, ca. 720-795?<sup>299</sup>); and the “gradualist” group, represented by the Indian monk Kamalashīla (ca. 750-795). Others have already written extensively on the Samye Debate.<sup>300</sup> But rather than explore its factual historicity, here I wish only to discuss its representational value within the narrative arc of Fazun’s history. To anyone familiar with Tibetan historical narrative, there is nothing exceptional about it. In fact, it is almost a literal translation of a section from Budön’s *History of Buddhism in Tibet*.<sup>301</sup>

---

*Thought*, Studies in East Asian Buddhism 5, ed. Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1987), 69 and 137-8n8.

<sup>299</sup> Gomez, “Purifying Gold,” 153n119.

<sup>300</sup> Paul Demiéville, Giuseppe Tucci, Bernard Faure, and others have all written on the topic (see bibliography). In addition, there are also works in Japanese and Chinese on the subject, such as Zhu Lixia’s 朱立霞 “Liang zhong chuantong xia chanshi de dacheng xueshuo: yi Zongkaba (Gelü pai) he Moheyann (Chan zong) wei lie de tantao” (Two Traditional [and] Explanatory Mahayana Teachings: An Investigation Using Tsongkhapa (Geluk sect) and Moheyanna (Chan sect)), in *Xizang yanjiu* (Research of Tibet), no. 4 (2003), 51-58. For Japanese sources on the topic see Gomez, “Purifying Gold,” 136-138n8, and Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy: A Critical Genealogy of Northern Chan Buddhism* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1997), 219n85-87.

<sup>301</sup> There are, however, some additions and ellipses in Fazun’s text. One detail in Budön’s account of the Samye Debate, significant for its negative portrayal of Moheyanna, is left out in Fazun’s text. After Moheyanna was defeated in the debate, “later on, four Chinese butchers, sent by [Moheyanna], killed

What makes the story noteworthy in Fazun's case is that it does not seem to have been relayed to a Chinese audience before.<sup>302</sup> Li Zhuoyi's *History of Tibetan Buddhism* does not mention it, and I do not know of any earlier texts that mention it. In Tibet, meanwhile, the figure of Moheyanna has in many ways long served as a trope, and that is what Fazun seems to be introducing to his audience.

The character of the *hwa shang*,<sup>303</sup> that is the Chinese monk Moheyanna, continues even today to live on in the Tibetan imagination. The *hwa shang* is most visible in the monastic ritual dance performances (*'cham*) performed at Buddhist and (and sometimes Bön) monasteries throughout Tibetan cultural areas. He usually appears as chubby figure with a yellow *kasaya* (Ch. *jiesha* 袈裟), or Buddhist robe, and an enormous head. Mona Schrempf has shown how the *hwa shang* can play many different social roles, including the Chinese emperor, a Tibetan lama (*bla ma*) receiving imperials rewards, and the Chinese monk Moheyanna.<sup>304</sup> His standard role, though, is that of Moheyanna.<sup>305</sup> He is sometimes venerated as the representative of

---

the teacher Kamalashīla by squeezing his kidneys." See Obermiller's trans., 196 and Szerb's critical edition of Budön history, 42.

<sup>302</sup> The only place where a Chinese account of this occurs is in materials found at Dunhuang. Luis Gomez's "The Direct and the Gradual Approaches of Zen Master Mahayana: Fragments of the Teachings of Mo-he-yen," in Robert M. Gimello and Peter N. Gregory, eds., *Studies in Ch'an and Hua-yen*, Studies in East Asian Buddhism, no. 1 (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1983), 69-168, includes English translations of some fragmentary Tibetan materials that are themselves translations of Chinese originals. Also, there are two manuscripts of the *True Enlightenment of the Sudden Mahayana* (Ch. *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*). The complete one was reproduced and translated in Demiéville's *Concile*. The manuscript is Pelliot 4646, vol. 134, pp. 138-228. Information on the second one (Stein 2672, vol. 22, pp. 183-4) can be found in Demiéville's "Deux documents" in *Choix d'études bouddhiques* (1973).

<sup>303</sup> This is a Tibetan transliteration of the Chinese word *heshang* 和尚, meaning "monk" or "preceptor." The Chinese *heshang* is itself as translation of the Sanskrit word *upādhyāya*.

<sup>304</sup> Mona Schrempf, "Hwa shang at the Border: Transformations of History and Reconstructions of Identity in Modern A mdo," in *JIATS*, no. 2 (August 2006), 13, [www.thdl.org?id=2721](http://www.thdl.org?id=2721).

<sup>305</sup> Schrempf, "Hwa shang at the Border," 4.

Chinese influence on Tibetan culture, and sometimes he is ridiculed as the under-qualified loser of the Samye Debate. Fazun's account falls under the latter category.

In it we read about Moheyanna disagreeing with and “kicking away” the

*Sam.dhinirmocana Sutra* (Ch. *Shenmi jing* 深密經), a scripture basic to Yogācāra.

We further read that at the end of the debate

the “sudden door” advocates admitted that they had lost. They presented the flower garland to Master Kamalashīla. The Tibetan king then proclaimed, “henceforth the correct wisdom (*zhengjue* 正覺) of Nāgārjuna (Longmeng 龍猛) should be received and upheld. The ten methods of upholding the Buddhist sutras (*shi fa xing* 十法行) and the six perfections should be practiced, and it is not permitted that the methods of the “sudden door” be practiced. Moheyanna was escorted back to China (*neidi*), and his works were exhaustively collected and buried.<sup>306</sup>

Such a description underscores the Indo-Tibetan link and downplays the Sino-Tibetan one. It illustrates a formative turning point in Tibetan Buddhist history. In Fazun's telling of the Samye Debate, as in traditional Tibetan accounts, Moheyanna advocates “not thinking about anything.”<sup>307</sup> To this Kamalashīla responds that quieting one's mind and not having any discursive thought is akin to sleeping, being intoxicated, or simply being stupid. Chinese of Fazun's time only gradually became aware of the importance of this India connection. Taixu himself once exclaimed that “the reason Tibetan Buddhism flourishes is based upon the fact that Princess Tang Wencheng 唐文成公主 went to Tibet.”<sup>308</sup> Even today I have had learned Chinese

---

<sup>306</sup> Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, f. 1, 19a-19b.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid.

<sup>308</sup> Taixu, “Shijie foxueyuan Hanzang jiaoli yuan yuanqi.”

monks explain to me that Tibetan Buddhism is the result of Chan monks traveling to Tibet in the Tang dynasty.

For Tibetans, however, the Chinese monk Moheyanna and his teachings are the epitome of perverse teachings. Tsongkhapa himself once wrote in his *Great*

*Treatise on the Stages of the Path*:

Others (彼等門) wrongly understand the nature of emptiness (*kongxing* 空性). . . . Later, when [they] deludedly think that they have acquired right views, [they then] see everything prior as clinging and bondage to birth and death. They then go on to give rise to perverted understanding, thinking that those wholesome practices were [simply] expounded [as expedients] on behalf of those who have not yet acquired full and correct view like they possess. They thus deludedly see all discriminating as a fault and from this deluded discrimination [of their's] slander the correct law. *They are much like the "Chinese abbot"* (Ch. *Zhina kanbu* 支那堪布).<sup>309</sup>

The "Chinese abbot" is none other than Moheyanna. He also says that

To claim that all conceptual thought involves the apprehension of signs of true existence, and thus prevents enlightenment, is the worst possible misconception insofar as it disregards all discerning meditation [i.e. discursive contemplation]. *This is the system of the Chinese abbot Ha-shang*. I explain its refutation in the section on serenity and insight. This misconception also interferes with the development of deep respect for the classic texts, because these texts are mainly concerned only with the need to use discerning analysis, whereas Ha-shang's [i.e. *hwa shang*] system sees all analysis as unnecessary during practices. This is also a major cause of the teaching's decline, because those who have this misconception do not recognize the classic scriptures and their commentaries to be instructions and therefore belittle their value.<sup>310</sup>

---

<sup>309</sup> Zhu Lixia, "Liang zhong chuantong xia chanshi de dacheng xueshuo," 52-3, citing *Putidao cidi guanglun jizhu* (The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment with Annotation), ed. and trans. Fazun (Shanghai: Foxue shuju yinxing), 491. Emphasis mine.

<sup>310</sup> Tsong-kha-pa, *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, trans. The Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee, edited by Joshua W. C. Cutler and Guy Newland (Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 2000), 112. Emphasis mine.



Taixu's views on esoteric Buddhism changed with the times. He found problematic the taking of consorts by some Tibetan clerics and the transmission of precepts by some laity. His personal discovery of Tsongkhapa, however, greatly impressed him.

From reading the book *Tibet's Buddhism (Xizang zhi fojiao)*, Taixu discovered that Tsongkhapa's reformation of Tibetan Buddhism unexpectedly shared many similarities with his own reforms of Chinese (*Handi*) Buddhism that he was promoting. [Tsongkhapa's reformation] was similar to what he himself advocated in 1925: "[those who study esoteric Buddhism] should follow Buddhist doctrine to order their thoughts and model their actions on monastic laws and customs; only then will the efficacy of tantra's means succeed in being the efficacy of Buddhism's means."<sup>311</sup>

Thus it was the monastic discipline promoted by Tsongkhapa that most caught Taixu's attention. However, he was no doubt enthusiastic about Gelukpa's scholasticism as well, since it fit well with his interest in Yogācāra and his desire to rediscover tradition, or the original "principle" of Buddhism, and use it to "fit the times" (Ch. *qi li qi ji* 契理契機<sup>312</sup>). In fact, he urged Fazun many times to translate Tsongkhapa's work into Chinese and even wrote prefaces for many of these translations.<sup>313</sup>

As for Fazun, in 1934 he had completed his translation of the *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path*. He had also translated and edited a biography of Tsongkhapa in 1935. By 1940, when the full translation of his *History of the Tibetan People* was published, Fazun had translated several others of Tsongkhapa's works.

---

<sup>311</sup> Chen Yongge, *Renjian chaoyin*, 224.

<sup>312</sup> See Zhou Xuenong's *Chushi*, "rushu" *yu qi li qi ji*.

<sup>313</sup> Chen, *Renjian chaoyin*, 225.

Fazun clearly saw himself as a follower of Tsongkhapa, and his familiarity with Tsongkhapa's work is apparent in his *History of the Tibetan People*. Therefore, it is no surprise to find Fazun in his history employing the same language as Tsongkhapa to ridicule "Chinese abbots" and others whose views do not accord with the "Middle Way" of Nāgārjuna.

The second fascicle begins with a description of the persecution of Buddhism by Langdarma (Ch. Lang Dama 朗達瑪, T. Glang dar ma, ruled c. 836-842), the flight of three devout monks to Kham to wait out the persecution, and the assassination of Langdarma by the monk Pelgi Dorjé (Ch. Lalong Jixiang Jingang 拉龍吉祥金剛, T. Pal gyi dor rje) of Lalün (T. Hla lun). Then what follows is the lineage of kings that descended from Langdarma's two wives. A special note is made of Khoré,<sup>314</sup> better known as King Yeshe Ö, who we are told became a monk and later invited Atisha (982-1054) to Tibet.<sup>315</sup> Atisha later becomes seen as the most important contributor besides Tsongkhapa to the development of Geluk Buddhism. Thus, it is no surprise that Fazun here foreshadows his coming to Tibet.

Atisha came to Tibet to "rectify Buddhism."<sup>316</sup> This, we are told, marks the beginning of the Kadam (Ch. *Jiadang* 迦當, T. *Bka' gdam*) sect and is "the pinnacle of Tibetan Buddhism's resurgence [i.e. second dissemination]." Atisha's coming to Tibet, his writings, his chief disciple Dromtön (Ch. Zhongdun 種敦), Dromtön's four

---

<sup>314</sup> Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, f. 2, 4a. Obermiller writes "Khor-de" (T. H.khor lde), *History of Buddhism in India and Tibet by Bu-ston*, 200.

<sup>315</sup> For more information see Hubert Decleer, "Atis[h]a's Journey to Tibet," in *Religions of Tibet in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 157-177.

<sup>316</sup> Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, f. 2, 12a.

disciples, the first Kadam monastery (i.e. Ch. Rezhen 惹真, T. Ra sgreng), and the teachings of the Kadampa are all introduced. Fazun writes that that “there are none who are not influenced by Kadampa and still evolve.”<sup>317</sup> This particularly pertains to the Geluk sect. One transmission or teaching (Ch. *jiaoshou* 教授) that was brought to Tibet by Atisha<sup>318</sup> was recognized for its unique excellence (*shusheng* 殊勝) by Tsongkhapa, who therefore chose to further disseminate it. Also, the “seven treasures of Kadampa”<sup>319</sup> were transmitted “from Atisha to Dromtön, from generation to generation, on an individual basis up to the first Dalai Lama.”<sup>320</sup> Fazun ends his section on the Kadampa with these references to the Gelukpa.

The rest of the second fascicle discusses the Sakya (T. *Sa skya*) sect. Several pages are given to discussing Sakya Pandita (Ch. Sajia Banjida 薩嘉班枳達) and his nephew Pakpa (Ch. Basiba 發思巴, T. ‘Phags pa). These two are well known in the history of Sino-Tibetan relations because of the Mongolian prince Köten’s (Göden) invitation to his court and because Pakpa later became Khubilai Khan’s Imperial Preceptor (Ch. *dishi* 帝師).<sup>321</sup> Fazun writes that “henceforth Sino-Tibetan sentiments became closer up until the point that they became one family.”

Fascicle three begins with the Kagyü (Ch. *Jiaju* 迦舉, T. *Bka’ brgyud*) sect, including the various sub-sects, such as the Dakpo Kagyü (Ch. *Dabo jiaju*, T. *dwags*

<sup>317</sup> Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, f. 2, 17b.

<sup>318</sup> I.e. the “*qi yi xiu puti xin jiaoshou*” 七義修菩提心教授 (The transmission of the seven meanings of cultivating the bodhisattva’s mind).

<sup>319</sup> These are made up of the teachings of the four deities (Ch. *si zun* 四尊) and those of the three “baskets” (Ch. *zang* 藏, i.e. the three parts of the Buddhist canon).

<sup>320</sup> Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, f. 2, 20a.

<sup>321</sup> See, for instance, Herbert Franke’s essays (see bibliography).

*po bka' brgyud*), the Pakdru Kagyü (Ch. *Pamo jiaju* 帕摩迦舉, T. *Phag gru bka' brgyud*), the Drukpa Kagyü (Ch. *Zhuba jiaju* 主巴迦舉, T. '*brug pa bka' brgyud*), and so on.<sup>322</sup> Then, as shown in the table of contents (see Appendix A), the Shangpa Kagyü, Zhije, Chöyül, and Jonang sects are introduced. Gelukpa only comes up once when Fazun notes that Tsongkhapa studied the “Diamond Kalacakra” (Ch. *shilun jin'gang fa* 時輪金剛法) from a Jonang teacher.<sup>323</sup> The famous scholar Budön is also introduced along with the small Zhalu sect that is associated with him. As is well known, Budön is known to have had an enormous impact on Tsongkhapa's education and development.

The last half of the third fascicle focuses on the important philosophical and technical components of Tibetan Buddhism, especially Tibetan Buddhist scholasticism: Madhyamaka, Abhidharma, Logic, Yogācāra, and Esoteric teachings. This provided a context for the texts that the students at the Sino-Tibetan Institute studied. Figures that were introduced in previous sections, such as Atisha and Dromtön, are now reintroduced as the translators and/or disseminators of Candrakīrti's *Introduction to the Middle Way*, Maitreya's *Ornament of Realization* and other four treatises, Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Abhidharma*, Dharmakīrti's writings, and so on. The attention given to such texts obviously reflects Fazun's own Geluk training.

---

<sup>322</sup> For a brief overview of these and other Tibetan Buddhist sects see “Tibetan and Himalayan Religions and Sects,” ed. David Germano, THDL, [www.thdl.org/thdl/collections/religion/sects/th-sects.doc](http://www.thdl.org/thdl/collections/religion/sects/th-sects.doc). Another printed resource is Per Kvaerne's “Tibet: the Rise and Fall of a Monastic Tradition,” in *The World of Buddhism: Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Society and Culture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1984), 253-271.

<sup>323</sup> Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, f. 3, 16b.

Fascicle four begins with a normative Geluk description of Tibetan Buddhism at the time of “the end of the Yuan and beginning of the Ming” (i.e. mid-fourteenth century).<sup>324</sup> It was marked by decadence, lack of discipline, poor scholarship, and sectarianism. It is interesting to note that this rhetoric is precisely the same as that being used during Fazun’s lifetime by many individuals, including Taixu, to describe the current state of Chinese Buddhism. Then came along “the most outstanding one who alone managed to reorganize and broadly spread Buddhism,” namely Tsongkhapa.

Fazun’s telling of Tsongkhapa’s life and education is also littered with references to the texts central to the Gelukpa and, consequently, the Sino-Tibetan Institute’s curriculum. It is an extensive account of the teachers with whom he studied, the texts that he studied and on which he expounded, his compositions and other innovations (e.g. the annual Mönlam festival in Lhasa), his important disciples, such as Gyaltsapje (Ch. Jiacaojie 賈曹傑, T. Rgyal tshap rje) (1364-1432), Khedrupje (Ch. Kezhujie 克主傑, T. Mkhas grub rje) (1385-1438), and so on, and the founding of the main Geluk monasteries. This continues well into fascicle five.

One of the more interesting sections of the fifth fascicle is “The Doctrine of the Yellow Sect.” This section is set up as a series of hypothetical questions and answers pertaining to Tibetan Buddhism in general and Gelukpa in particular. It differs radically from the flow of the text up to this point, and it gives Fazun away as an ardent Gelukpa apologist. He begins:

---

<sup>324</sup> Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, f. 4, p. 1b.

To found any school or sect one must have unique and outstanding human capacity and unique and outstanding doctrine. Gelukpa's founder and disseminators were briefly discussed above. Now I will look at its doctrine. Then one will be able to see how it is different from other sects and know what makes it alone able to be magnificent and vast.

Fazun then precedes with a series of "some say ..." statements followed by discussion. For example, he writes

Some say ... that all correct religious teachings are contained within the Tripitika (i.e. the Buddhist canon) and that there is no other teaching outside of it.<sup>325</sup>

To this Fazun insists that one must seek out and learn from as many teachers as possible, much like Tsongkhapa did. A second statement reads

Some say ... that having absolutely no thoughts when practicing is the true meaning of cultivation.<sup>326</sup>

Fazun says that this view "is not at all different from the views and practices of some Chinese abbots (*Zhina mo kanbu* 支那某堪布)," which, significantly, is the same language used by Tsongkhapa when talking about the Chinese monk Moheyanna (see above). Another statement reads

Recently there are people who say 'although Gelukpa is superior to other sects in debating Yogācāra, it does not have any esoteric transmissions/teachings (Ch. *jiaoshou* 教授). Therefore it is not complete. It rigidly adheres to Vinaya and is [therefore] more similar to Hinayana.'<sup>327</sup>

---

<sup>325</sup> Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, p. 8a.

<sup>326</sup> Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, p. 9b.

<sup>327</sup> Fazun, *History of the Tibetan People*, 12b.

In response Fazun mentions the esoteric transmissions and the tantric colleges he wrote about previously in the text and then proceeds to defend the advantages of esoteric Buddhism over exoteric Buddhism.

The questions to which Fazun gives the longest responses concern the concept of emptiness (Ch. *kong* 空) and mental discrimination (Ch. *fenbie* 分別) and how it relates to practice.<sup>328</sup> These questions and the answers he gives to them are the same as those put forth by Kamalashīla in the Samye Debate and by Tsongkhapa in his critiques of wrong views and wrong meditation practice. Just as there is disagreement between the Indian Kamalashīla and the Chinese Moheyanna over religious doctrine and practice, here Fazun concerns himself with promoting the most correct and orthodox form of Buddhism. Fazun is therefore clearly setting himself apart from many of his Chinese readers, including even Taixu, who defend Chan<sup>329</sup> as the essence of Chinese Buddhism. The refrain throughout this series of questions and answer is constant: the hypothetical askers of these questions have “wrong views,” and Gelukpa’s views and practices are “faultless.”

---

<sup>328</sup> See esp. pp. 9b-12a and 13b-14b.

<sup>329</sup> One of the most famous axioms of Chan Buddhist thought is that one “does not rely on words” (Ch. *bu li wenzi* 不立文字) in seeking enlightenment.

## Conclusion: Beyond the Sino-Tibetan Institute

I first came to this topic—Fazun and the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute—through my interest in both Buddhism and education. Today in China, as it was during the Republican Period, the two are commonly spoken of in the same breath. In the opening pages of the Chinese periodical *Foxue yanjiu* (Buddhist Studies) is the following reminder: “Continue to improve Buddhist education and cultivate more Buddhist “human talents” (*rencai*) who are both virtuous and able.”<sup>330</sup> In September of 2005 at Mount Emei in Sichuan Province, the Board of Directors of the Chinese Buddhist Association (CBA) held the Seventh Conference of the Committee for Buddhist Education and Cultural Work.<sup>331</sup> In December of 2005 in Chongqing, another conference was held whose main theme was Buddhist education.<sup>332</sup> All of this points to an overriding concern among Buddhists today for education as well as a continuation of the apocalyptic cries of the degradation of the Buddhist clergy made by Republican Period figures such as Taixu.

The first time I met with the eminent and elderly Ven. Weixian, who had studied at the Sino-Tibetan Institute from 1936-1941, I asked him how today’s Buddhist seminaries (*foxue yuan*) compare with the Sino-Tibetan Institute. As the current director of the Chongqing Buddhist Studies Academy (located at Huayan Monastery), he is in a suitable position to comment on this. “They cannot compare,”

---

<sup>330</sup> *Foxue yanjiu*, vol. 14 (2005).

<sup>331</sup> I.e., *Zhongguo fojiao xiehui di qi jie lishihui fojiao jiaoyu he wenhua gongzuo weiyuanhui huiyi* 中國佛教協會第七屆理事會佛教教育和文化工作委員會會議.

<sup>332</sup> The *Chongqing Huayan fojiao wenhua luntan* 重慶華嚴文化論壇.



he began.<sup>333</sup> “Those today are of much poorer quality.” When asked the reasons for this he enumerated three. First, instructors are all widely learned (*bo* 博), but few have any specialized knowledge (*zhuan* 專). At the Sino-Tibetan Institute, with the likes of Ven. Yinshun, who was extremely knowledgeable in “Consciousness-only” (Ch. *weishi* 唯識, S. Yogācāra) Buddhist philosophy, and Fazun, who was China’s expert on the Geluk sect of Tibetan Buddhism, this was not a problem. Second, students do not have a common base. That is, students enter the seminary with varying levels of education, thus making it difficult to teach them together. Since the Sino-Tibetan Institute had strict standards for admittance, most of the students who studied there had already graduated from a Buddhist seminary elsewhere. And, of course, those that could not keep up simply left. Third, today’s seminaries do not allow laity to participate. The Sino-Tibetan Institute had some lay students, lay instructors, and even non-Buddhist instructors. Although the seminary was a fully functioning monastery, the fact that non-monastics were allowed to learn and especially teach contributed to a fuller and more dynamic environment.

Weixian’s observations are more acute than my own. Still, the points he has made fall within the rubric I have outlined in this paper. In the preceding chapters I have identified and described one general factor that accounts for the success of the Sino-Tibetan Institute: unmatched “human talent” (*rencai*). Having faculty with specialized knowledge, good students with a “common base,” and laity who participate in the learning process all fall under the category of “human talent.”

---

<sup>333</sup> Weixian, personal communication.

Specifically, I have followed one figure, Fazun, as student and pilgrim, as administrator and teacher, and as translator and author of texts related to Tibetan Buddhism. Fazun was the principal reason that the seminary excelled. Other factors surely contributed. Taixu's insistence on a liberal and progressive education allowed for and encouraged innovation (e.g. the incorporation of Fazun's newly completed compositions, such as his *Modern Tibet* (Ch. *Xiandai Xizang*), into the curriculum).<sup>334</sup> His own connection to the seminary and his presence there after the war began attracted money and scholars. Students had to take competitive entrance exams, and if they were accepted their tuition was waived and they were given a small monthly allowance, things other seminaries at the time could not afford.<sup>335</sup> However, it should not be forgotten that the Editing and Translation Office, where Fazun worked incessantly as the head translator and editor, secured for the seminary an additional 4800 yuan per year.<sup>336</sup> More importantly, Fazun provided a concrete solution to the spiritual crisis that many Buddhists of his time felt: a systematic and time-tested path

---

<sup>334</sup> Li Li, *Zhuxia Fashi zhuan*, 57.

<sup>335</sup> Nonetheless, life was simple at the seminary, and sometimes things got so bad that programs had to be cut. For instance, its graduate studies program was temporarily brought to a halt in 1942 and its general studies program was temporarily halted in 1944. "Shijie foxue yuan kaikuang baogao biao," cited in Chen Yongge 陳永革, "Taixu Dashi yu Chongqing fojiao: yi hongfa kangzhan yu Han Zang jiaoli yuan wei zhongxin" (Master Taixu and Chongqing Buddhism: With Focus on Spreading the Dharma [During] the War of Resistance and the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute), in *Chongqing Huayan fojiao wenhua luntan lunwenji* (Collected Essays of the Conference on Chongqing Huayan Buddhist Culture) (26 December 2005), 153. Chen, *Renjian chaoyin*, 236.

<sup>336</sup> This figure is attested to by Weixian ("Han Zang jiao li yuan") and by the archival materials of the seminary. However, circumstances changes in the 1940s. As Lloyd Eastman explains, "rice prices in Chongqing ... increased 500 percent between May and December 1940." And, "by the latter half of 1941 and through 1944 ... prices were more than doubling each year. Thereafter the rate of increase again spurted sharply upward, prices rising 251 percent in just the seven months from January to August 1945." This might explain how the seminary's expenditures reached 23.8 billion yuan in 1944. Lloyd E. Eastman, *Seeds of Destruction: Nationalist China in War and Revolution, 1937-1949* (Stanford University Press, 1984), 47 and 221.

for studying the dharma, modeled on the Geluk education he had received in Kham and Tibet.

In chapter one I explained how Fazun cultivated and acted upon an intense devotion to scripture. This is a rather typical reformist “return to orthodoxy.” Buddhism in China was “in decline.” Buddhist reformers perceived an unprecedented amount of energy being spent on mortuary rites and other relatively mindless tasks rather than on studying and seeking out the Buddha’s true law. The fall of the Qing Dynasty and concomitant loss of imperial patronage may indeed have been felt by the Buddhist sangha and may have led to Buddhists seeking out new ways to support themselves financially and materially. At the same time, China’s confrontation with a more “modern” and “scientific” imperialist West (and Japan) surely caused many Chinese to *see* more problems with their own traditions or at least with their own inability to maintain and uphold those traditions.

As a result, while some took steps to distance themselves from their native traditions, others sought to recover them. For many Buddhist reformers, like Taixu, indigenous traditions of scholasticism were sought out. Texts translated in the fourth and fifth centuries by Kumārajīva and in the seventh century by Xuanzang were read and studied again with excitement. Fazun, inspired by the feats undertaken and sacrifices made by such pilgrims and translators sought out his niche in Tibet. There he found Tsongkhapa’s teachings, which, as we have seen, specifically identify the Chan “Chinese abbot,” Moheyanna, and his teachings as contributors to the problems facing Buddhism in Tsongkhapa’s time: “this [i.e. the wrong views of those like

Moheyanna] is also a major cause of the teaching's decline, because those who have this misconception do not recognize the classic scriptures and their commentaries to be instructions and therefore belittle their value."<sup>337</sup>

In chapter two I showed how Fazun translated and otherwise implemented the “classic scriptures and their commentaries” into the curriculum at the Sino-Tibetan Institute. In particular, the root texts of Geluk scholasticism and their key Tibetan commentaries demanded the most attention of the teachers and students at the seminary. At the same time, important Chinese texts dealing with classical Madhyamaka and Yogācāra philosophy, such as the *Treatise on the Completion of Consciousness-Only* (Ch. *Cheng weishi lun*), were presented as possessing essential and foundational truths that would help balance the predominance in Chinese Buddhism of the “thoughtless chanting” of the Pure Land school or the “mindless meditation” of the Chan school. In addition, unorthodox means were implemented to train students. Students wrote out homework assignments that teachers graded, and they had weekly presentations on scholarly and polemical topics in front of their peers and teachers. Thus “old” and “new,” “traditional” and “modern” came together in order to get at a more “authentic and original Buddhism.”

In chapter three I introduced an important composition of Fazun's that was also used at the seminary as a textbook: his *Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People*. For sure, its purpose is to introduce Tibetan history and Tibetan Buddhist history to a Chinese audience. The scope of the work and the scholarship

---

<sup>337</sup> See n. 310.

put into it were unprecedented in China. At the same time, it seems clear that Fazun (and Taixu too!) saw Tsongkhapa's reforms as suitable for China. After bringing his readers "up to speed" on Tibet's "ancient history" and the first and second disseminations of Tibetan Buddhism, Fazun's history gets to the culmination and perfection of Tibetan Buddhism: the Gelukpa.

Like Tsongkhapa, Fazun saw an emphasis in Chinese Buddhism on "no thought" and "not relying upon words" that was simply incorrect. In Fazun's case, his audience was precisely the group he was indirectly admonishing: Chinese Buddhists. Why might Fazun's ideas have found favor among Chinese Buddhists? First, since "Buddhism" was more and more something that transcended ethnic and political boundaries, the study of its various "manifestations" (e.g. in China, Japan, Sri Lanka, Tibet, etc.) was deemed acceptable and even necessary. Around the time of the World's Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in September 1893, new identities were being formed and "Buddhism" was no longer pitted only in a local or national religious context. Fazun's study of Tibetan Buddhism was thus fitting. Second, the "new" Madhyamaka and Yogācāra texts that Fazun brought back with him to the Sino-Tibetan Institute complimented the recovery of native traditions, like the Sanlun (Three Treatises) school.

Today, when Buddhists speak about "cultivating human talent" (*peiyang rencai* 培養人才 or *peizhi rencai* 培植人才) or "monastic talent" (*sengcai* 僧才), many of the same rhetorical refrains are employed. An alleged erosion of the "quality" (*suzhi* 素質) or character of monastics has sparked endless talk over the

need to systematically train a new generation of educated and upright Buddhist leaders. Whether or not there has been such a downturn in the moral character of Buddhist clergy is difficult to say. For many Chinese since at least the late-Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), everything after the *Tang Dynasty* (618-907) has been a decline. Over the past couple of decades Western scholars have attempted to correct this view by focusing on both the intellectual advancements and the popular appeal of Buddhism in the post-Tang period, particularly the Song (960-1279). Today, Chinese Buddhists and scholars seem willing to concede that the Song was an intellectually productive period for Buddhism but insist that what followed was merely the popularization of and concomitant devolution of Buddhism in China.<sup>338</sup> The late-Qing and Republican Period have been identified as a particularly degenerate time, when monks performed popular rituals merely for pay and monasteries were taken over by the government for schools, army barracks, and other secular purposes.

Significantly, today there are plans in motion to reestablish a Buddhist seminary at Jinyun shan. Ven. Zhenggang 正剛, a disciple of Weixian, is now the abbot of Jinyun shan and has plans to develop a Maitreya Buddhist Academy (Ch. *Cishi foxue yuan* 慈氏佛學院). The emphasis? Yogācāra. This is not surprising, since Zhenggang was a lecturer on Consciousness-Only at the Chinese Buddhist Academy in Beijing in the nineties.<sup>339</sup> I was fortunate that my first visit to Jinyun shan

---

<sup>338</sup> This opinion is based on my own conversations with Chinese Buddhist studies scholars.

<sup>339</sup> Shi Zhenggang also recently published a book entitled *Notes on Consciousness-Only* (Ch. *Weishi xue jiangyi* 唯識學講義) (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2006).

coincided with a conference on Yogācāra.<sup>340</sup> Two professors, Hu Xiaoguang 胡曉光 of Jilin University and Lu Xinguo 呂新國 of the Research Institute for Modern International Relations in Beijing, had been invited by Zhenggang to lecture, and the same two are planning to become faculty members of the new seminary. They were both devout Buddhists and explained everything in terms of Yogācāra. “Pure Land and Chan are misguided,” they told me. They referred most to the very Republican Period figures that were connected with the Sino-Tibetan Institute or with Yogācāra studies in general: Taixu; Nan’ou Beihan 南歐北韓 (aka Qingjing Layman 清淨居士, 1873-1949); and, Ouyang Jingwu. These last two, I was told, “are two of the few examples of real fundamentalists (Ch. *jiyao zhe* 基要者, *yuanjiao zhe* 元教者).” Hu told me that he too considered himself a “fundamentalist.” Therefore, today we find a conscious effort to “recover tradition” and a continuation of the scholastic approach to the revival of Chinese Buddhism established in the 1920s and 1930s by the like of Taixu and Fazun.

As long as we live in an age of “decline,” there will be calls for the creative recovery of the traditions we have supposedly lost. Chinese Buddhism is particularly troubled at the moment. There is a missing generation of Buddhist teachers (i.e. those who would be in their 50s and 60s today were it not for the disruptions leading up to and during the Cultural Revolution). Who will replace Taixu, Fazun, Yinshun, Nan

---

<sup>340</sup> See photo 1 in Appendix B.

Huaijin 南懷瑾,<sup>341</sup> Bisong 碧松,<sup>342</sup> Fafang, and the other venerables who are already in their 80s or 90s or have already entered into final nirvana? One can almost hear Fazun's cry from 1934:

Brother Fang! ... How little luck do the Chinese (*Hanzu* 漢祖) people have? Those like Chanlang that study and have effort (*jingjin* 精進) and vows (*zhiyuan* 志願) are hard to come by. If another one or two like this die then we can consider the Tibetan Language Institute (*Zangwen xueyuan*) finished.<sup>343</sup>

Maybe there is still hope, though. The efforts of the next generation of Buddhist leaders in China, such as Ven. Zhenggang, Ven Daojian 道堅 at Chongqing's Huayan Monastery, and Ven. Zongxing 宗性 at Chengdu's Wenshu Monastery 文殊院, have already made great efforts to improve the fate of Buddhism, especially Buddhist education, regionally and nationally. Also, there seems to be an interest in Tibetan Buddhism growing among Chinese laity, though little has been written about it. Raoul Birnbaum suggests that the dissatisfaction with the current state of Buddhism in China is what has driven many new (or revived) developments

---

<sup>341</sup> Nan Huaijin was a student at the seminary from 1947-1950. He is one of the most popular and prolific Chinese writers on Buddhism and Chinese philosophy in general.

<sup>342</sup> Bisong (1916- ) traveled to Kham and Tibet to live and study at the age of twenty-one. He now goes by his secular name Xing Suzhi 邢肅芝. He went to study at the Sino-Tibetan Institute at the age of 16. In 1937 he went alone to Kham and Tibet. He eventually ended up at Drepung Monastery where he studied for an arduous seven years. In 1945 he passed an examination before the regent of Tibet (*Xizang shezhengwang* 西藏攝政王) thereby becoming "the first Chinese to attain the highest scholarly rank in Tibetan Buddhism—lharampa geshé (Ch. *laramba gexi* 拉然巴格西, T. *lha rams pa dge bshes*)." Today, Bisong lives in Los Angeles, where he continues to have an active presence amongst Buddhist communities and even to lead Buddhist rituals. See his autobiography, *Xueyu qiufa ji*. Long Darui, personal communication, April 18, 2007. Also, see the photo of Xing Suzhi (Bisong) in his monastic attire, Appendix B.

<sup>343</sup> See n. 118.



such as *biguan* (sealed retreat) and travel to Tibet to seek out spiritual teachers.<sup>344</sup> He also notes the use of Tsongkhapa's *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* among Chinese lay study groups.<sup>345</sup> This no doubt is Fazun's translation. Gray Tuttle has also noted the use of it at Mount Wutai.<sup>346</sup> Françoise Wang-Toutain has seen the modern-day use of Tsongkhapa's *Concise Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* in Shanghai.<sup>347</sup> This too is without a doubt Fazun's translation. David Germano has witnessed numerous Chinese monks and nuns seeking out teachings from Tibetan Buddhist masters.<sup>348</sup>

My own encounters with Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhists in China Proper are no less convincing that there is much more interaction between Chinese and Tibetans than is traditionally believed. One Chinese friend, a graduate student at China's preeminent university, Peking University, is biding his time before he can travel to Vancouver to be with his (Chinese) Tibetan Buddhist master. Another Chinese friend has traveled to Kardzé numerous times to visit her Tibetan Buddhist teacher. There is indeed hope that the future of Chinese Buddhism and of Sino-Tibetan relations will be marked by the Buddha's wisdom and compassion.

---

<sup>344</sup> "Buddhist China at the Century's Turn," in *The China Quarterly* (2003), 428-450.

<sup>345</sup> Birnbaum, "Buddhist China at Century's Turn," 448.

<sup>346</sup> See n. 45.

<sup>347</sup> Wang-Toutain, "Quand les maîtres chinois s'éveillent au bouddhisme tibétain," 724. It should be noted that Bisong lectured on this text in Hong Kong when he lived there in the 1950s. He says he had no translation, and so he lectured from the Tibetan and gradually developed his own. This was supposedly published in 2000. Xing Suzhi, *Xueyu qiufa ji*, 351.

<sup>348</sup> David Germano, "Re-membering the Dismembered Body of Tibet: Contemporary Tibetan Visionary Movements in the People's Republic of China" in *Buddhism in Contemporary Tibet: Religious Revival and Cultural Identity* (University of California Press, 1998), eds. Melvyn C. Goldstein and Matthew T. Kapstein, 68.

## **Bibliography**

Abbreviations:

D = Derge Tengyur.

P = Peking Tengyur.

T = *Taishō shinshū daizōkō*. Edited by Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku.  
Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924-1932.

TOH = *Catalogue of the Tohoku Daigaku (University) Collection of Tibetan Works on Buddhism*. Edited by Yensho Kanakura, Ryujo Yamada, Tokan Tada, and Hakuyu Hadano. Sendai, Japan: Toshakan, 1953.

The World Buddhist Institute's Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute Collected Archives (major works). Chongqing City Archives. Chongqing, China.

Fafang. *Han Zang jiaoli yuan zuijin kaikuang* (The Recent Status of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute). 1939.

*Han Zang jiaoli yuan jinian tekan* (Special Publication Commemorating the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute). 1932.

*Han Zang jiaoli yuan li'an wenjian huibian* (Compilation of Registered Documents of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute). 1936.

*Han Zang jiaoli yuan niankan* (Annual of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute). 1933?.

*Shijie Han Zang jiaoli yuan putong ke di er jie biye tongxue lu* (Record of [Those] Classmates [Who] Graduated in the Second General Class of the World Buddhist Institute's Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute). 1940

*Shijie Foxue yuan Han Zang jiaoli yuan putongke kecheng biao* (Curriculum for the General Program of the World Buddhist Institute's Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute). 1945.

*Shijie foxue yuan Han Zang jiaoli yuan tekan* (Special Issue of the World Buddhist Institute's Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute). 1944.

- Birnbaum, Raoul. "Buddhist China at Century's Turn." *The China Quarterly* (*Religion in China Today*), 174 (2003): 428-450.
- Bu-ston [Budön]. *History of Buddhism in India and Tibet by Bu-ston*, translated by E. Obermiller. Heidelberg, 1931.
- Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub. *Bu Ston's History of Buddhism in Tibet*. Translated by János Szerb. Wien: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990.
- Cai, Huiming 蔡惠明. "Xi zong xian xian, bi jian gu de: jinian Fazun Fashi shiji shi zhou nian" (Faint Traces of Virtues Forebears, Measuring Up to Old Virtue: Commemorating the Tenth Anniversary of the Death of Ven. Fazun). *Fa yin* (Voice of the Dharma), 12 (December 15, 1990): 11-13.
- Chandler, Stuart. *Establishing a Pure Land on Earth: The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004.
- Chen, Bing 陳兵 and Deng Zimei 鄧于美. *Ershi shiji Zhongguo fojiao* (Twentieth Century Chinese Buddhism). Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2000.
- Chen Yongge 陳永革. "Taixu Dashi yu Chongqing fojiao: yi hongfa kangzhan yu Han Zang jiaoli yuan wei zhongxin" (Master Taixu and Chongqing Buddhism: With Focus on Spreading the Dharma [During] the War of Resistance and the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute). *Chongqing Huayan fojiao wenhua luntan lunwenji* (Collected Essays of the Conference on Chongqing Huayan Buddhist Culture), December 26, 2005.
- . *Renjian chaoyin: Taixu Dashi zhuan* (Sound of the Ocean Tide in the Human Realm: Biography of Master Taixu). Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 2003.
- Cui, Baohua 崔保華, ed. *Bashan lingjing: Huayan si* (Spiritual Realms of Chongqing's [Ba] Mountains: Huayan Monastery). Chongqing: Chongqing Shi Jiulongpo Qu zhengxie wenshi weiyuanhui, 2001.
- Decleer, Hubert. "Atis[h]a's Journey to Tibet." *Religions of Tibet in Practice*. Edited by Donald S. Lopez, Jr. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997: 157-177.
- Demiéville, Paul. *Choix d'études bouddhiques, 1929-1970*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973.

- . *Concile De Lhasa: Une controverse sur le quietisme entre bouddhistes de l'Inde et de la Chine au VIIIe siècle de l'ère chrétienne*. Paris: Collège de France, Institut des hautes études chinoises, 1987.
- Deng, Yumei 鄧于美 and Chen Weihua 陳衛化. *Huixia yi dai xin seng: Taixu Dashi zhuan* (Directing a Generation of New Monks: Biography of Master Taixu). Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1999.
- Dreyfus, Georges B. J. *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping: the Education of a Tibetan Buddhist Monk*. Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 2003.
- Eastman, Lloyd E. *Seeds of Destruction: Nationalist China in War and Revolution 1937-1949*. Stanford, Ca: Stanford University Press, 1984.
- Faure, Bernard. *The Will to Orthodoxy: A Critical Genealogy of Northern Chan Buddhism*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- Fazun. *Fazun Fashi foxue lunwen ji* (Collection of Buddhist Studies Essays of Ven. Fazun). Zhongguo fojiao wenhua congshu. Edited by Lü Tiegang 呂鐵剛. Beijing: Zhongguo fojiao wenhua yanjiusuo, 1990.
- . *Fazun Fashi zi shu 法尊法師自述* (Fazun Fashi's Autobiography). *Fazun Fashi foxue lunwen ji*. Beijing: Zhongguo fojiao wenhua yanjiusuo, 1990.
- . "Wo qu guo de Xizang" (The Tibet I Went To). *Xizang yu Xizang fojiao* (Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism). Tian hua yingluo congshu 27. Taipei: Tian hua chuban shiye fufen youxian gongsi, 1997.
- . "Wo ru Zang de jingguo" (My Experiences in Tibet). *Xizang yu Xizang fojiao* (Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism). Tian hua yingluo congshu 27. Taipei: Tian hua chuban shiye fufen youxian gongsi, 1997.
- . *Xizang minzu zhengjiao shi* (Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People). Peking: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zhongxin, 1991 [1940].
- . *Xizang yu Xizang fojiao* (Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism). Taipei: Tian hua chuban shiye gufen youxian gongsi, 1980.

- . “Yu Fafang Fashi shu.” (Letters to Ven. Fafang). *Fazun Fashi foxue lunwen ji*. Beijing: Zhongguo fojiao wenhua yanjiusuo, 1990.
- . “Zhuzhe ru Zang de jingguo” 著者入藏的經過 (Author’s Experiences in Tibet). *Fazun Fashi foxue lunwen ji*. Beijing: Zhongguo fojiao wenhua yanjiusuo, 1990.
- . *Zongkaba Dashi zhuan* 宗喀巴大師傳 (Biography of Master Tsongkhapa). Zhongguo shaoshu minzu guji jicheng, vol. 97. Chengdu: Sichuan minzu chubanshe, 2002.

*Foxue yanjiu* (Buddhist Studies), vol. 14 (2005).

- Franke, Herbert. “From Tribal Chieftan to Universal Emperor and God: The Legitimization of the Yüan Dynasty,” in *China under Mongol Rule* (Brookfield, Vermont: Variorum, 1994). Previously published in *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte 2* (Munich, 1978).
- . Franke, Herbert. “Tibetans in Yüan China,” in *China under Mongol Rule* (Brookfield, Vermont: Variorum, 1994). Previously published in *China under Mongol Rule*, ed. John D. Langlois, Jr. (Princeton University Press, 1987).
- Gao, Henian 高鶴年. *Fangwai lai hong: Jin xiandai gaoseng zhi Gao Henian Jushi xinhan shouji* 方外來洪: 進現代高僧之高鶴年居士信函手跡 (Letters from the Other World: Handwritten Letters of Modern Eminent Monks to Layman Gao Henian). Beijing: Zhongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2001.
- Gao, Zhenhong 高振農. “Taixu Fashi seng jiaoyu sixiang chu tan” (A First Look at Taixu’s Thought on Monastic Education). *Zhejiang fojiao* (Zhejiang Buddhism), n. 4 (December 20, 1999): 153-155.
- Germano, David. “Remembering the Dismembered Body of Tibet.” *Buddhism in Contemporary Tibet Buddhism in Contemporary Tibet: Religious Revival and Cultural Identity*. Edited by Matthew T. Kapstein. Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1998.
- Goldstein, Melvyn C. *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

- Gomez, Luis O. "The Direct and the Gradual Approaches of Zen Master Mahayana: Fragments of the Teachings of Mo-he-yen." *Studies in Ch'an and Hua-Yen*. Edited by Robert M Gimello and Peter N. Gregory. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983.
- . "Purifying Gold: The Metaphor of Effort and Intuition in Buddhist Thought and Practice." *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*. Studies in East Asian Buddhism 5. Edited by Peter N. Gregory. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987.
- "Han Zang Jiaoli yuan choubeichu jianze." *Hai chao yin*, vol. 12, no. 11 (November 15, 1931): 7-8.
- Hong, Jinlian 洪金蓮. *Taixu Dashi fojiao xiandaihua zhi yanjiu* (A Study of Master Taixu's Modernization of Buddhism). Zhonghua foxue yanjiusuo luncong (Collection of Essays of the Chung Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies) 3. Taipei: Fagu wenhua shiye gufen youxian gongsi, 1999.
- Huang, Chanhua. 黄懺華. *Zhongguo fojiao jian shi* (Concise History of Chinese Buddhism). Gaoxiong: Fojiao wenhua fuwu chu, 1970.
- Huang, Xianian 黄夏年 and Daojian 道堅. "Chongqing Fojiao jiaoyu shi (History of Chongqing Buddhist Education)." *Fa yuan* (Source of the Dharma), 2006.
- Israel, John. *Lianda : A Chinese University in War and Revolution*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1998. Jensen, Lionel M. *Manufacturing Confucianism: Chinese Traditions & Universal*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997.
- "Juechu Heshang zhuan" (Biography of Ven. Juechu). *Huayan si zhi* (Gazetteer of Huayan Monastery) (Huayan Monastery Edition).
- Kapp, Robert A. *Szechwan and the Chinese Republic; Provincial Militarism and Central Power, 1911-1938*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1973.
- Lai, Whalen and Lewis R. Lancaster, eds. *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet*. Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series 5. Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1983.
- Li Li, ed. *Zhuxia Fashi zhuan* (Biography of Ven. Zhuxia). Chongqing: Chongqing youzheng yin wu youxian gongsi yinshua, 2001

- Li, Yizhuo 李翊灼. *Xizang fojiao shi* (History of Tibetan Buddhism). Xin wenhua congshu. Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1933.
- Long, Darui. "Humanistic Buddhism from Venerable Tai Xu to Grand Master Hsing Yun." *Hsi Lai Journal of Humanistic Buddhism*, vol. 1 (2000): 53-84.
- Lopez, Donald S. *Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West*. University of Chicago Press, 1998.
- Lü, Tiegang. "Fazun Fashi yizhu nianbiao" (Chronology of the Works of Venerable Fazun). *Fa yin* (Voice of the Dharma), 12 (December 15, 1990): 14-19.
- Luo, Tongbing. "Hanzang jiaoli yuan shilüe" (A Sketch of the History of the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute). *Renmin ribao haiwai ban* (Overseas Edition of the People's Daily), July 20, 2001.
- Mei, Jingxuan. 梅靜軒 "Minguo yilai de Han Zang fojiao guanxi (1912-1949): Yi Han Zang jiaoli yuan wei zhongxin de tantao" (Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Relations of the Republican Period (1912-1949): an Inquiry Focused on the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute). *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Studies*, no. 2 (1998): 251-88.
- Orzech, Charles. "Saving the Burning-Mouth Hungry Ghost." *Religions of China in Practice*. Edited by Donald S. Lopez, Jr. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996: 278-283.
- Pittman, Don A. *Toward a Modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001.
- Schrempf, Mona. "Hwa shang at the Border: Transformations of History and Reconstructions of Identity in Modern A mdo." *JlATS*, no. 2 (August 2006): 1-32. [www.thdl.org?id=2721](http://www.thdl.org?id=2721).
- Shi, Dongchu 釋東初. *Zhongguo fojiao jindai shi* (Modern History of Chinese Buddhism). Taipei: Zhonghua fojiao wenhua guan, 1974.
- Spence, Jonathan D. *The Search for Modern China*. New York: Norton, 1990.
- Stevenson, Daniel B. "Text, Image, and Transformation in the History of the Shuilu fahui, the Buddhist Rite for Deliverance of Creatures of Water and Land."

*Cultural Intersections in Later Chinese Buddhism*. Edited by Marsha Weidner. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001: 30-70.

Taixu. "Shijie foxueyuan Hanzang jiaoli yuan yuanqi." *Taixu Daixu quanshu*. 20 v.

Tongjie. "Yi Fazun Shangshi" (Remembering Fazun Lama). *Fa yin* (Voice of the Dharma), 12 (December 15, 1990): 6-10.

Tournadre, Nicolas and Sangda Dorje. *Manual of Standard Tibetan: Language and Civilization*. Translated by Charles Ramble. Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 2003.

Tsongkhapa (Zongkaba 宗喀巴). *Putidao cidi guanglun jizhu* (The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment with Annotation). Translated by Fazun and annotations by Zhimin 智敏. Vols. (*juan*) 1-13. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2003.

———. (Tson-kha-pa Blo-bzan-grags-pa). *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*. Ithaca, N.Y: Snow Lion Publications, 2000.

Tucci, Giuseppe. *Minor Buddhist Texts*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986.

Tuttle, Gray. "Tibetan Buddhism at Ri bo rtse lnga/Wutai shan in Modern Times." *JlATS*, no. 2 (August 2006): 1-35. [www.thdl.org?id=T2723](http://www.thdl.org?id=T2723).

———. *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

———. "Tibetan Historiography." *Papers Chinese History* 7 (Spring 1998).

Wang Zhuang 王庄 and Li Xuanhua 李萱華, "Zhengui de wenwu, lishi de jianzheng" 珍貴的文物, 歷史的見證 (Precious Cultural Artifacts, History's Testimony). *Hanzang jiaoli yuan mingren shuzuo diancang* 漢藏教理院名人書作典藏 (Collected Compositions of Famous Figures at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute). Edited by Yang Xiaohua 楊小華. Chongqing: Zhengxie Chongqing Shi Beibei Qu Di shiyi jie weiyuanhui xuexi wenshi weiyuanhui, n.d.

Wang-Toutain, Françoise. "Quand les maîtres chinois s'éveillent au bouddhisme tibétain: Fazun: le Xuanzang des temps modernes." *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient*, 87 (2000).



- Weixian. “Hanzang jiaoli yuan yu Taixu Fashi” (The Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute and Venerable Taixu). *Weixian fashi shiwen ji* (Collected Poems and Essays of Venerable Weixian). Chengdu?: Dongfang foxue wenhua ziliao congshu, n.d.
- Welch, Holmes. *The Buddhist Revival in China*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968.
- . *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism, 1900-1950*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967.
- Wen Jinyu 溫金玉. “Fazun Fashi yu Puhua si” (Ven. Fazun and Puhua Monastery). *Wutai shan yanjiu* (Mount Wutai Studies), 1995 (2).
- Xing, Suzhi 邢肅芝. *Xueyu qiufa ji: yi ge hanren lama de koushu shi* 雪域求法記：一個漢人喇嘛的口述史 (Record of a Search for the Dharma in the Land of Snow: a Chinese Lama’s Oral History). Edited by Zhang Jianfei 張健飛 and Yang Nianqun 楊念群. Beijing: Shenghuo dushu xinzhishi san lian shudian, 2003.
- Xu Yunqiao 許雲樵. “Fafang fashi xing zhuan” (Account of the Travels of Venerable Fafang). *Nanyang xuebao* (Journal of the South Seas), vol. 7, no. 2 (Singapore: Nanyang xuehui), 1951.
- Yinshun 印順. *Taixu Dashi nianpu* (Chronicle of Master Taixu). Daibei Shi: Zhengwen chubanshe, 1992.
- Yu, Lingbo 于凌波. *Zhongguo jin xiandai fojiao renwu zhi* (Record of Modern Chinese Buddhist Personalities). Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 1995.
- Zhenhua (Chen-hua). *In Search of the Dharma: Memoirs of a Modern Chinese Buddhist Pilgrim*. Introduction by Chün-Fang Yu and translated by Denis C. Mair. Albany, N.Y: State University of New York Press, 1992.
- Zhou Xuenong 周學農. *Chushi, “rushì” yu qì lǐ qì jì: Taixu Fashi de “renjian fojiao” sixiang yanjiu* (Otherworldly, “This-worldly” and According with the Doctrine and the Times: A Study of the Thought of Venerable Taixu’s “Humanistic Buddhism”). Ph.D. dissertation, Peking University, 1996.

Zhu Lixia's 朱立霞. "Liang zhong chuantong xia chanshi de dacheng xueshuo: yi Zongkaba (Gelü pai) he Moheyan (Chan zong) wei lie de tantao" (Two Traditional [and] Explanatory Mahayana Teachings: An Investigation Using Tsongkhapa (Geluk sect) and Moheyanna (Chan sect)). *Xizang yanjiu* (Research of Tibet), no. 4 (2003): 51-58.

## Appendix A: Table of Contents to Fazun's

### Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People

[Fascicle 1]

Chapter 1: Preface

Chapter 2: Ancient history (*gudai shi*)

Section 1: [Period] before Buddhism entered

Section 2: The period of the first dissemination of Buddhism

[Fascicle 2]

Section 3: The period of the destruction of Buddhism

Section 4: The period of the second dissemination of Buddhism

Section 5: The different sects (*xuepai*)

1) Kadam (Ch. *Jiadangpai* 迦當派, T. *Bka' gdams pa*) (13 pp.)

2) Sakya (Ch. *Sajiapai* 薩嘉派, T. *Sa skya pa*) (21 pp.)

[Fascicle 3]

3) Kagyü (Ch. *Jiajupai* 迦舉派, T. *Bka' brgyud*) (24 pp.)

4) Shangpa Kagyü (Ch. *Xiangbajiujupai* 嚮巴迦舉派, T. *Shangs pa bka' brgyud*) (2 pp.)

5) Zhije (Ch. *Xijiepai* 希結派, T. *Zhi byed pa*) (2 pp.)

6) Chöyül (Ch. *Jueyupai* 覺宇派, T. *gcod yul pa*) (3 pp.)

7) Jonang (Ch. *Juenangpai* 覺囊派, T. *jo nang pa*) (5 pp.)

8) Other small sects (2 pp.)

Section 6: Circulation of the teachings (“doctrines,” *jiaofa* 教法)

1) Madhyamaka (Ch. *Zhongguanxue* 中觀學) (3 pp.)

2) Abhidharma (Ch. *Duifaxue* 對法學) (2 pp.)

3) Logic (Ch. *Yinmingxue* 因明學, T. *gtan tshigs kyi rig pa*) (4 pp.)

4) Yogācāra (Lit. “Maitreya Studies,” Ch. *Milixue* 彌勒學) (7 pp.)

5) Esoteric Teachings (Ch. *Mixue* 密學) (14 pp.)

[Fascicle 4]

Chapter 3: Modern history (*jindai shi*)

Section 1: The founding of the Yellow Sect

1) Great aspirations from the beginning (*shi huai hongyuan* 始懷宏願)

2) Extensive scholastic learning (*guang shi duo wen* 廣事多聞)

3) Many teachings practiced and upheld (*jiao zhong xiu chi* 教重修持)

4) Vast and deep views and actions (*jian xing shen guang* 見行深廣)

5) The merits of esoteric practice (*xiu mi gongde* 修密功德)

6) Establishing the Sage's teachings (*jianli sheng jiao* 建立聖教)

Section 2: The dissemination of the Yellow Sect

- 1) Gyaltsapjé (Ch. Jiacaojie 賈曹傑, T. Rgyal tshab rje) (1364-1432) (2 pp.)
- 2) Kedrubjé (Ch. *Kezhujie* 克主傑, T. Mkhas grub rje) (1385-1438) (2 pp.)
- 3) (Ch. *Shanchuangdeng* 善幢等) (3 pp.)
- 4) Jamyang Chöjé (Ch. *Miaoyin Fawang* 妙音法王, T. ‘Jam dbyangs chos rje) (4 pp.)
- 5) Shākya Yeshé (Ch. *Daci Fawang* 大慈法王, T. Byams chen chos rje shākya ye shes) (3 pp.) (1354-1435)
- 6) Gendün Drup (Ch. *Gendun Zhuba* 根敦主巴, T. Dge ‘dun grub) (2 pp.) (1391-1474)

[Fascicle 5]

- 7) (Ch. *Shanghuixian* 上慧賢) (1 p.)
- 8) (Ch. *Xiahuixian* 下慧賢) (2 pp.)
- 9) Amdo and other places (Ch. *Andong deng chu* 安東等處) (2 pp.)
- 10) The dissemination of esoteric methods (Ch. *Mifa hongchuan* 密法宏傳) (8 pp.)

Section 3: The Doctrine (*jiaoyi*) of the Yellow Sect (15 pp.)

Section 4: The Evolution of the Sects

- 1) Nyingma (T. rning ma) (4 pp.)
- 2) Sakya (16 pp.)
- 3) Jonang (2 pp.)
- 4) Kagyü (7 pp.)

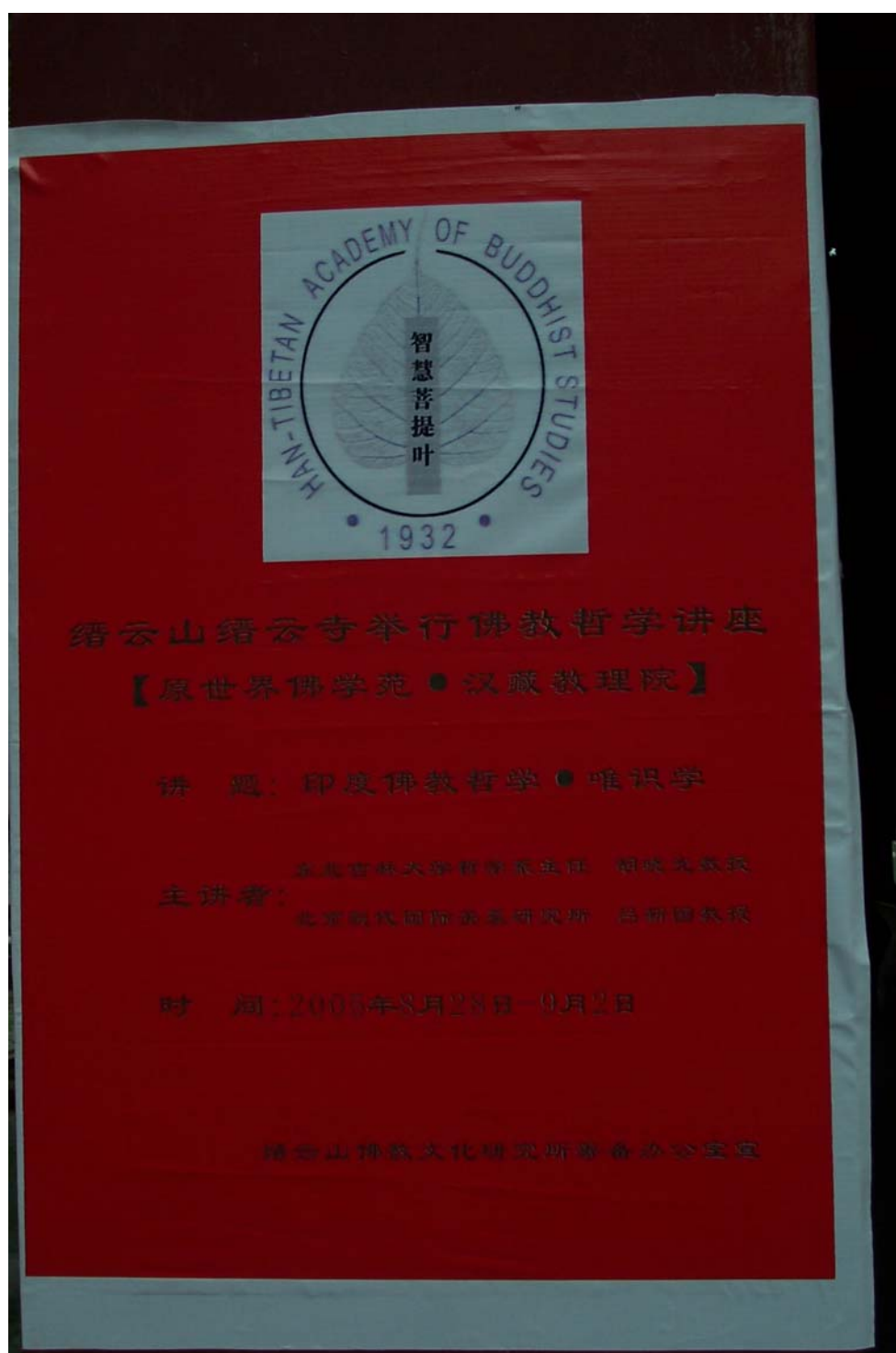
Section 5: Political changes (5 pp.)

[Fascicle 6]

Section 6: Lineage of the Dalai Lamas (Appendix: Chart of the Lineage of the Panchen Lamas (55 pp.)

Chapter 4: Conclusion (4 pp.)

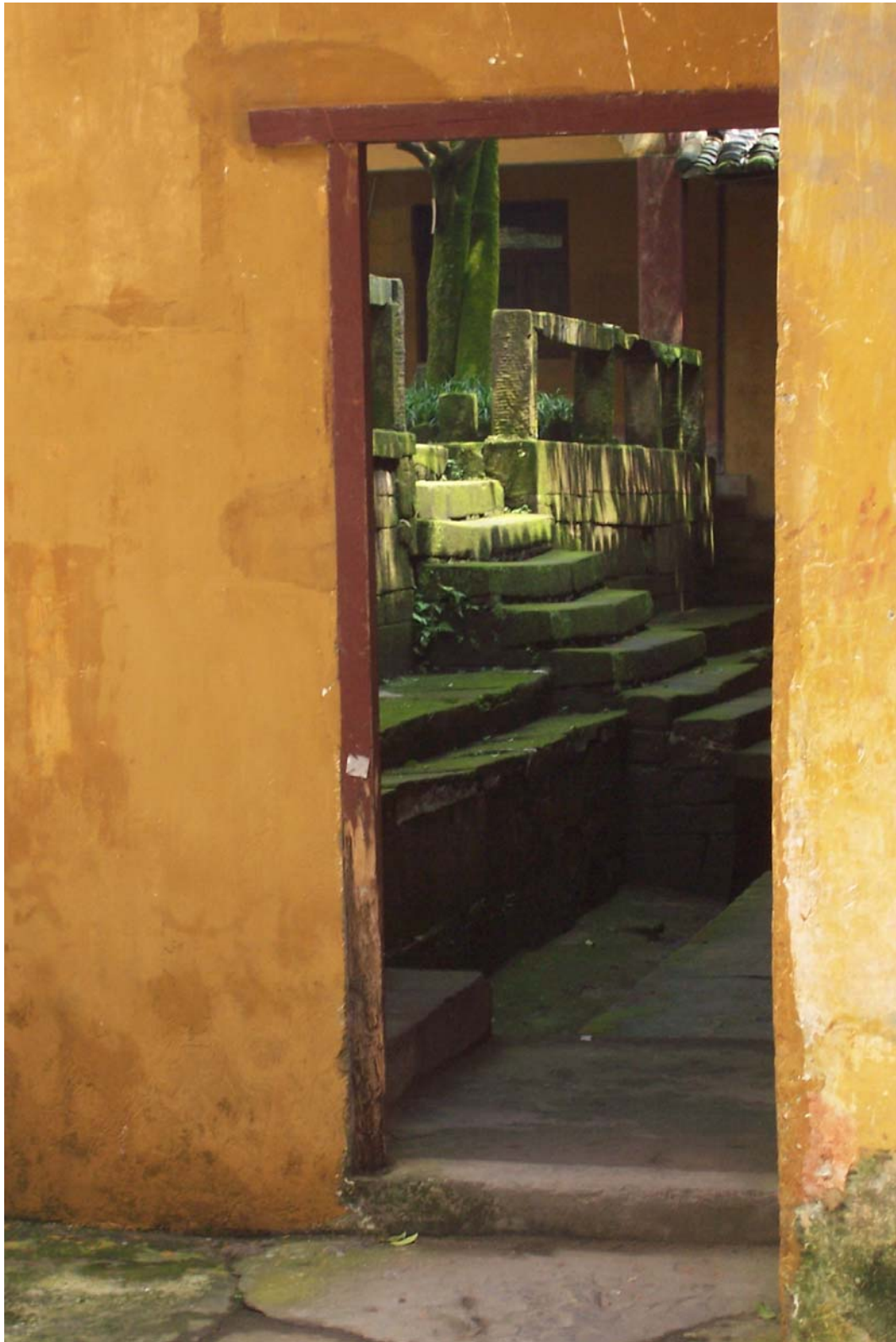
Appendix B: Photographs



*Photo 1* Emblem of the “Han-Tibetan Academy of Buddhist Studies” (all photos are by the author unless otherwise noted)



*Photo 2* The Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute



*Photo 3* The Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Institute



Photo 4 Ven. Tongjie's diploma for the "general program" (i.e. undergraduate studies)



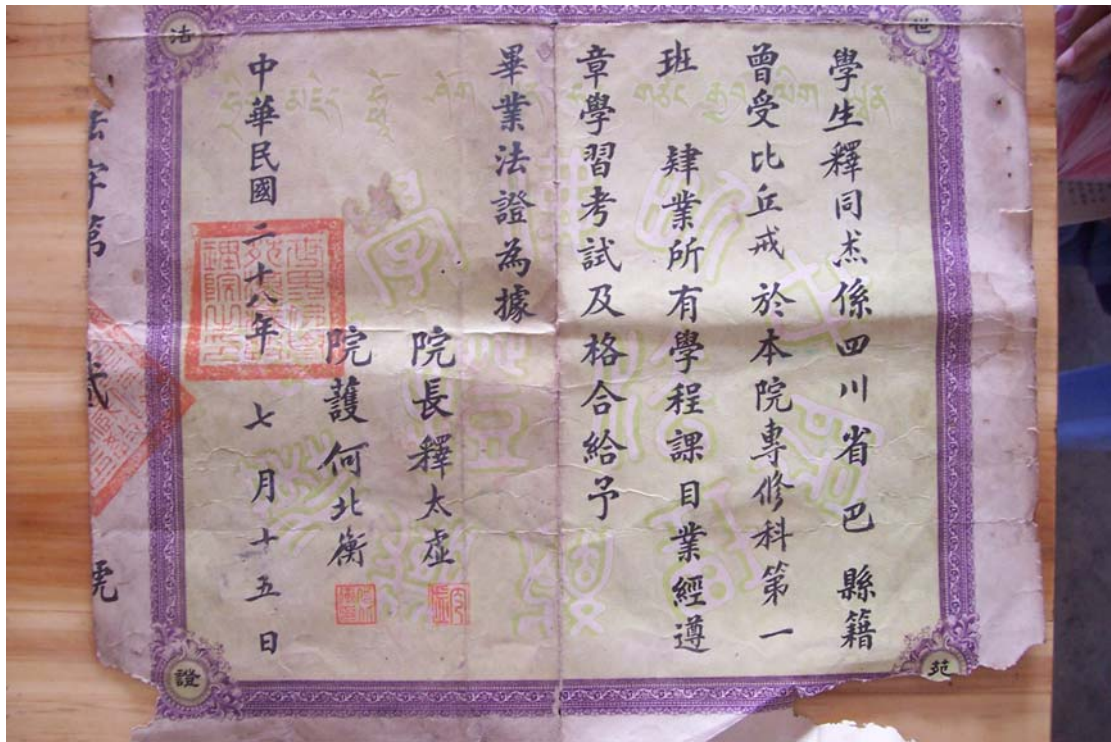


Photo 5 Ven. Tongjie's diploma for the "specialized program" (i.e. graduate studies)



*Photo 6* Fazun's *Political and Religious History of the Tibetan People* (1940 "string-bound" version)



*Photo 7 Xing Suzhi (Bisong) in Los Angeles (photo from *Xueyu qiufa ji*, p. 350)*



*Photo 8* Fazun (this photo has been widely disseminated; here it is taken from Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, p. 99)