

TIBETAN WRITTEN IMAGES
A STUDY OF IMAGERY
IN THE WRITINGS OF DHONDUP GYAL

RIIKA J. VIRTANEN



STUDIA ORIENTALIA 115

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Helsinki 2014

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Thupten K. Rikey: The Yellow River (rMa chu) with a Tibetan village in the background in Centsa (gCan tsha) in Qinghai

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PREFACE

This book is an improved version of my dissertation, which was defended at the University of Helsinki in September 2011.¹ At that time it appeared in the publication series of the Institute for Asian and African Studies and also in electronic form in E-thesis web service of the University of Helsinki. I am glad that I received this opportunity to turn it into a book and correct some inaccuracies that were still found in the manuscript. It is hoped that the accuracy of the work has improved; however, I decided to leave the contents of the work basically the same as in the earlier dissertation version since the manuscript is essentially the outcome of the research work that I undertook during the years of my post-graduate studies at the University of Helsinki between 2003–2011.

This work has long roots reaching back to the mid-1990s when I was living in Dharamsala among the Tibetan refugee community. It was at that time that I first became acquainted with the works of Dhondup Gyal and developed an interest in modern Tibetan literature, although I was not aware that a decade later I would write my doctoral dissertation on the topic. I would like to express my gratitude to the Library of Tibetan Works & Archives and its staff for providing a wonderful environment for my studies of Tibetan language and literature, which have acted as a basis for my recent research on Tibetan literature. I am especially grateful to Acarya Sangye Tandar Naga, who introduced to his students in the Tibetan intensive training course so many wonderful works of Tibetan literature, including some works by Dhondup Gyal.

My dissertation work led me to take my first research trip to Amdo and the Tibet Autonomous Region in 2005. It was very meaningful to me that I had a chance to meet and talk with some family members and relatives of Dhondup Gyal during that trip. My long email correspondence with Lobsang Choegyal, the younger brother of Dhondup Gyal, led to my visit at his home in Centsa (gCan tsha), where I met Dhondup Gyal's mother Mingme (Mying med), step-father Gyatso (rGya mtsho), sister Tsering Kyi (Tshe ring skyid), brother Cagjam Gya (lCags byams rgya), other siblings and relatives, and also Wangpa (dBang bha) and his wife in Xining. During my stay in Xining, I had the special opportunity to hear about Dhondup Gyal from his wives from his first and second marriages, Rinchen Kyi (Rin chen skyid) and Yumkyi (Yum skyid). I am most grateful to

1 Dissertation published at <ethesis.helsinki.fi>, ISBN 978-952-10-7134-8.

Dhondup Gyal's relatives and family members for agreeing to meet me and share their experiences.

I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to receive guidance for my dissertation work from three professors at the University of Helsinki: Prof. Emeritus Asko Parpola, Prof. Klaus Karttunen (South Asian Studies), and Prof. Hannu Riikonen (Comparative Literature). I am deeply thankful to all of them for their support and help during my studies. Prof. Hannu Riikonen's theoretical advice has been invaluable, and I am deeply grateful to him for reading and commenting on several of my articles and the final draft of the dissertation. I also received valuable advice from Prof. Klaus Karttunen, who commented on my papers in the South Asian Studies research seminar, read the final draft of the dissertation and made many good suggestions, and also helped me in several practical matters, such as getting a work room in the Institute for Asian and African Studies.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Prof. Heta Pyrhönen and all the participants in the research seminars of Comparative Literature and South Asian Studies, who kindly read my seminar papers and presented comments on them.

During the several years of my dissertation work, I also received information, advice, help and materials from a number of persons whom I would like to take this opportunity to thank. Because they are so many, I decided to simply list their names: Prof. Chen Qing-ying, Gangtso (Gangs mtsho), Choekyong (Chos skyong), Dawa Lodroe (Zla ba blo gros), Tashi Dhondup (bKra shis don grub), Dolma Yangkyi (sGrol ma g.yang skyid), Sonam Tso (bSod nams mtsho), Prof. Buzhi (Bu bzhi bsam pa'i don grub), Bande Tashi (Ban de bkra shis), Migyur Dorje (Mi 'gyur rdo rje), Namjam Tsering (gNam byams tshe ring), Jangbu (lJang bu), Bande Tsering (Ban de tshe ring), Dr. Norbu Wangden (Nor bu dbang ldan), Tenpa Yargye (bsTan pa yar rgyas), Dhondup Tsering (Don grub tshe ring), Dr. Lhundup Dorje (Lhun grub rdo rje), Dorje Thar (rDo rje thar), Chokden Tsering (mChog ldan tshe ring), Dr. Françoise Robin, John Bellezza, Franz Xaver Erhard, Dr. Lauran Hartley, Alice Grünfelder, Prof. Per K. Sørensen, Dr. Yangdon Dhondup, Dr. Howard Sklar, Dr. Volker Rybatzki, and Dr. Lara Maconi. I am also thankful to the teachers whose courses I had the chance to attend during my post-graduate studies and which proved very helpful in various ways: Prof. Henry Bacon, Kate Moore, and Boris Vidović.

The discussions I had with friends and colleagues were invaluable during the years when I was writing this work. I would especially like to thank Erika Sandman, Anni Palta, and Mari Rissanen; together we arranged several activities of the Society of Himalayan Studies in Finland and had many wonderful meetings in cafés. Erika Sandman also kindly helped me to check the Chinese transliterations in this work. Dr. Harry Halén, former amanuensis of the Institute for

Asian and African Studies, encouraged me from the very beginning of my studies there. Human Resources Specialist Maria Colliander and Amanuensis Marianna Ruutala kindly helped me in practical matters during my stay at the Institute, which in the final stage of my PhD studies became part of the Department of World Cultures. Other persons who have given their time for discussions or otherwise encouraged me include Dr. Anelma Lammi, Dr. Bertil Tikkanen, Dr. Jaana Toivari-Viitala, and Dr. Heidi Jauhiainen.

During the final stage of working on my dissertation, I received valuable suggestions on how to improve the manuscript from its reviewers, Prof. Peter Schwieger from Bonn University and Prof. Leonard van der Kuijp from Harvard University, whom I thank for their comments. Prof. Peter Schwieger also kindly travelled to Helsinki and acted as my official opponent during my defence ceremony. I would also like to thank Dr. Mark Shackleton, who kindly revised the English language of the entire manuscript and greatly improved its fluency and style of expression. Any remaining errors are, of course, my own. I also received some advice on matters related to typesetting the text from Juha Laulainen, whom I would also like to thank. The new beautiful layout and design of the book are thanks to the efforts of the editors of *Studia Orientalia*, Dr. Lotta Aunio and Patricia Berg. I wish to thank them both for their careful editing work, which has made the manuscript much more presentable, and also for helping me to locate the places in the text that still needed to be checked and corrected.

This improved version has some illustrations that were not included in the earlier version. I wish to thank Lobsang Choegyal and Prof. Chen Qing-ying for contributing the photos of Dhondup Gyal and allowing me to use them as illustrations in this book. Most of the other photos were taken by me during my visit to Amdo in summer 2005. Some of them show the landscape in Amdo in places where I visited to speak with people who had known Dhondup Gyal, while several of the photos represent either places mentioned in his writings or towns where he stayed for some period of his life. I also wish to thank Thupten K. Rikey for letting me use some of his photos as illustrations, including the cover photo.

During the years of my dissertation work, I received financial support for this research from three funds. Their support was a great encouragement to me and was indispensable for the realization and completion of this project. The support from the Sasakawa Young Leader's Fund made possible my research trip to Amdo and the Tibet Autonomous Region, and it greatly helped me in the beginning stages of my dissertation project. I am also grateful to the fellows and other persons affiliated with the Sasakawa Fellows Association of the University of Helsinki for arranging many inspiring events and for their comments on my

research. In the final stages, I received support from the Kone Foundation, which helped me to conclude the writing process. The finalization of the work was supported by a grant from the Funds of the University of Helsinki. Various travel grants from the Chancellor of the University of Helsinki and Letterstedtska föreningen also made it possible for me to participate in several conferences during my dissertation project.

During the considerably long span of time which has elapsed between the publication of the original version and this book, my post-doctoral research has been generously supported by the Kone Foundation. Its support of my recent post-doctoral research on characters in modern Tibetan literature has made it possible for me to continue scholarly work at the University of Helsinki and also from time to time when the need arose, aside from my recent research, check matters related to this book during its long editorial process. I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the Kone Foundation for all the support it has given for my research on Tibetan literature. Finally, this work would not have been possible without valuable support from my family: my mother Pyry Kirves has always supported me in my studies, and my husband Thupten K. Rikey has always been ready to help with almost any problem related to the Tibetan culture and language. He has encouraged me in my studies and also fortunately has the ability to take wonderful photos. I also wish to thank my children, Leena and Leevi, for their understanding and patience towards my research work, although I have sometimes had to spend long hours at my desk or away from home at the university.

A Note on Tibetan spellings

This book contains two types of spellings of Tibetan words. Names have been given in the main text in the style that is the usual way for Tibetans living outside Tibet to spell their names in English, and these spellings give a reasonably good idea of the pronunciation. However, after the first occurrence of a name I have also given in brackets the exact spelling in Wylie transliteration. References to entries in the bibliography are given in Wylie transliteration. All the transliterated passages and other words that are not personal or place names have been written using Wylie transliteration, which is the commonly accepted scholarly style of transliteration.

Although this is an academic research work, I thought that it would be useful to give “pronounceable” transcriptions of Tibetan personal and place names, because I hope that in addition to specialists in Tibetan studies, this book would be read by a wider audience of students and scholars interested in comparative literature and cultural studies. In the Appendix at the end of the book, two types

of spellings of Tibetan names have been given: first, the approximate transcription, indicating how to pronounce the names; and then the scholarly Wylie transliteration, indicating the way in which the name is spelled in Tibetan writing. The titles of Tibetan works referred to in the text have been given in Wylie transliteration, but I have also, at least after the first occurrence of a title, given a translation in English. Also, when a certain title has not been mentioned for a while, I have sometimes again translated the name into English. However, in order to avoid unnecessary repetition, if a certain subsection contains several references to the same Tibetan work, then I have only given the translation after the first occurrence.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to discuss the images in the literary works of Dhondup Gyal (Don grub rgyal, 1953–1985). This great Tibetan writer from Amdo played a significant role in the beginning stage of modern Tibetan literature in the 1980s and he is regarded as the founder of modern Tibetan literature.¹ Rich imagery is characteristic to Dhondup Gyal's writings and there is a real wealth of imagery both in his poems and prose. A special feature of Dhondup Gyal's style of writing is that he wrote using many styles: part of his poetry uses more traditional structural and metric forms and part of it is written in modern free verse. Dhondup Gyal's prose style could be in most cases characterized as realistic because the topics of his prose works are usually related to the life and matters relevant to the Tibetan society in Amdo in the writer's time.² However, his prose works also contain at least two texts that could be better classified as fantasy, and his essay style has a special personal flavour. The external forms of the compositions vary, but most of Dhondup Gyal's works contain an abundance of imagery. It is evident in this work that imagery is a phenomenon that crosses genre and style boundaries, and the images discussed here are from works which often belong to different genres and styles.

The word "image" is often used for visual phenomena. In this work the images are written images that are conveyed through the medium of writing. However, a kind of visuality is connected with them. The encounter with written images normally produces lively visually imagined objects in the world of the mental imagination of the reader. Compared to the actual direct perception of an object visible to the eye, through making use of written images it is possible in literature to create

1 For comments on the pioneering nature of Dhondup Gyal's works, see, for instance, Chos skyong 2006: 299; Tsering Shakya 2000b: 36; Pema Tsering 1999: 112–114; bKra shis dpal ldan 1991: 464.

2 *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms* gives the following general definition for realism: "Broadly speaking, a term that can be applied to the accurate depiction in any literary work of the everyday life of a place or period." (Murfin & Ray 2003: 398). Sometimes Dhondup Gyal's works are characterized as "social criticism", which also seems to be a suitable term to describe several of his prose works. A Tibetan scholar Choekyong (Chos skyong 2006: 177–181) discusses Dhondup Gyal's style at length, depicting it in terms of *blo 'byed las 'gul* and *ther 'don rtsom rig*. The latter is close to the notion of criticism, but the former could be translated literally as 'the movement of opening the mind' and thus seems to mean rationalism or enlightenment (in a non-spiritual sense), which highlights a different aspect of Dhondup Gyal's literary style.

imaginary objects that have no actual counterparts in the real world. However, by this I do not mean that when two or more concepts are combined, the resulting metaphoric object would only be of relevance in an imaginary world. The images often enhance the text making it easier to understand and more communicative and also they may act as a strategy to communicate new creative ideas. To exemplify the communicative function of the images, when Dhondup Gyal writes that a character, for example, resembles a wolf, most people tend to develop an immediate understanding of the ferociousness of the character in question.

Some Dhondup Gyal's poems have a very special kind of imagery in which the reader may get a feeling of the voice of the poem blending with one or another element of nature. These images may often receive multiple interpretations and resist any definite explicit definition. These poems may often be interpreted as expressing the idea of freedom, which can be understood in several ways. When writers use metaphors that are difficult to interpret or can be interpreted in several ways, the images often convey new messages and ideas that could not be expressed directly for various reasons. To get their works published writers usually have to take into account certain policy lines and cannot write freely about everything they might wish to. Writers living under authoritarian regimes might employ metaphorical means to avoid censorship and introduce new themes into the prevailing discourse. Thus metaphors could also be thought to function as a tool for achieving some freedom of expression.

To illustrate in a more concrete manner what kind of phenomena – written images – are in focus in this study, I will first quote a passage which is rich in imagery. It is from the first part of Dhondup Gyal's short story "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs" ("The Waves of Love"),³ which begins with a letter written by a young woman named Drugmo ('Brug mo):

*snying gi grogs po dpal ldan lags/ khyed kyi snyan ngag bzhin du snyan zhing ri
mo ji bzhin mdzes pa'i sug bris de kho mo'i 'dren byed mig gi lam du shar ba'i skal
ba dang ldan par gyur pas zhag gsum gnyid kyi bde ba'ang skad cig nyid la sangs
par gyur te kho mo'i sems kyi bsam pa'ang rgya mtsho'i rba rlabs ji bzhin brang gi
nam mkhar lang long du 'phyur ba'i mod la/ khyod rang dran pa'i brtse dungs kyi
'dun ma'i rlabs phreng ni sems khrel gyi dri bzhon rlung gis g.yos te skad cig tsam
la'ang 'jags pa'i go skabs ye nas ma byung/
(Don grub rgyal, "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs")*

My dear friend, Palden-la,
When I had the luck to see with my eyes your letter which is pleasant like a
poem and beautiful as a painting, I immediately lost my sleep for three days

3 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 18.

and even the thoughts in my mind were billowing like the waves of an ocean in the sky of [my] chest. At the same time the rows of waves of wishing for love caused by missing you were moved by the wind of worries. Even for one single moment they could not find an opportunity to stay in peace.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Waves of Love”)

The first sentence presents a comparison: a letter is simultaneously likened to a poem and a painting. This passage provides an instance where images produced by writing are seen to be as beautiful as the visual impressions caused by seeing a painting. The idea presented here with the words of a character in Dhondup Gyal’s story is also the focus of this work: How may words and concepts be imagined visually like mental paintings, and how does a writer form these “paintings” or images through the medium of written expression. The above passage contains several similes and metaphors: a letter is likened to a poem and a painting, thoughts to waves and the chest is the sky. The excerpt quoted above can be viewed as containing a composite image as it has several images that could also be analysed separately. Composite images are a characteristic feature of the literary works of Dhondup Gyal. In many places his works appear to be like paintings, so vivid is their imagery.

The above passage also contains nature imagery, which occupies the largest part of this work. Nature images appear as separate images and as parts of composite imagery scattered in various places throughout his prose works and poems, and most remarkably as strong central images, which is especially typical of free verse poetry but is also found in some compositions of other genres. Dhondup Gyal seems to have liked the idea of using images from nature to bring forth various kinds of messages and to convey ideas related to life and human existence. It is very common that images of nature and humans intermingle in his works: this is achieved by either mappings from one domain of existence to the other (either projecting the characteristics of the outer world or environment on us or projecting characteristics of our own body or parts of it on the outside world) or projecting elements from both domains into a blend.

The topics and focuses of the chapters and subchapters are determined by the imagery found in the works. I have paid more attention to images that are numerous and thus typical of Dhondup Gyal’s writing as well as to images that have a central role in some particular work. (On the other hand, I have sometimes mentioned some less frequent or otherwise special kind of images in order to consider their potentially innovative role.) It has to be noted, however, that for practical reasons, some selection was necessary. Dhondup Gyal’s works contain a great deal of plant and animal imagery but it is scattered over a wide array of works of both poetry and prose – thus the chapters on plants and animals have

references to a large number of Dhondup Gyal's works. A significant part of the chapter on aquatic imagery is devoted to an analysis of the works of Dhondup Gyal in which water imagery is central, but this chapter also contains some discussion of water images in other works by him. Also, in the chapter on aerial and celestial imagery I have paid special attention to poems in which moon or cloud imagery is the most prominent image. In the chapter on images related to the external environment the image of a path is particularly significant – it will be considered in several individual works and then as the central image of the essay “rKang lam phra mo” (“The Narrow Footpath”). The images of paths would seem to be important in the works as they are often found in the conclusions. When we think about Tibetan literature and nature, most people will no doubt first think about the mountains of the high Tibetan plateau. However, mountain images do not play a central part in Dhondup Gyal's poems, and thus I have only discussed these images quite briefly.

In this work some parts are concerned with depicting the common occurrence of certain images across Dhondup Gyal's literary output and some parts are more focused on a discussion of central imagery in some individual works. Thus attention is sometimes paid to the images themselves without much contextualization or only a short passage surrounding the image in the text is provided when an understanding of the imagery has required it. If we compare the chapters on nature to the chapters containing imagery about material and cultural objects, it is apparent that these objects are not used as central images in Dhondup Gyal's works, although their use is very common in source domains of metaphorical expressions that normally occur scattered throughout his works.⁴

1.1.1 Research questions

The main purpose of this book is to analyse Dhondup Gyal's imagery in order to gain a better understanding of the images in the writings of this modern Tibetan writer. Through studying this imagery I have gained more insight both into the imagery of this individual writer and also into imagery in Tibetan literature in general. My main research questions may be divided into three parts, and all help to throw light on Dhondup Gyal's imagery:

1. What kind of images can be found in the poetry and prose of Dhondup Gyal? In order to discuss imagery it is first necessary to analyse the writings carefully in order to identify the images. The identification and description of the images

4. An exception to this is the discussion of religio-mythical objects in “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gnam” in Ch. 10. In this narrative poem personified objects play a significant role.

forms the foundation for this study on which further discussions are based. Surveying the imagery and passages quoted from Dhondup Gyal's works will help the reader form an idea about the images in his writings and also make this study a reference work for others wishing to draw comparisons of various kinds of imagery with images in the works of a Tibetan writer.

2. What kind of meanings are conveyed with the help of the images? Answering this question contains my interpretations of the imagery and discussion on the way the images function. The imagery may normally be used in several different ways and there is also plenty of room for creativity. However, there are also many images with literary precedents that may occur repeatedly and thus images could be characterized to add an additional feature to the understanding of a language and texts produced in that language. Images have an important function in communicating meanings and making abstract meanings more concrete and lively. An important function of the images is to act as a tool of creativity – by metaphoric means it is possible to introduce new ways of thinking into discourse. To study the meanings of images of different cultural origins than one's own is especially interesting but it is also challenging from the point of view of interpretation. The fact that often the images studied here had two parts (source domain and target domain) helped the interpretative process. Whenever possible I have also consulted essays and studies written by Tibetans to see how they interpret Dhondup Gyal's works.

3. In placing the images in an intertextual and cross-cultural context,⁵ how could the relationship of the images in the writings of Dhondup Gyal be characterized in relation to traditional Tibetan images and images found across the globe in various cultures? How innovative are the images with respect to the Tibetan literary context? In answering these questions we will also pay attention to the strategies involved in creating new imagery.

In order to be able to reply to these questions I shall compare the images in Dhondup Gyal's writings to images in traditional Tibetan literature and also sometimes in world literature. These comparisons are of course limited in number and scope but they do help to discern shared and differing features of

⁵ By intertextuality I mean the fact that the same or similar kinds of images might occur in a number of Tibetan texts from different periods of time. I have not made use of any separate theory of intertextuality, but I have discussed the phenomenon with the help of tools provided by a cognitive theoretical framework to draw comparisons between texts and sometimes explain the similarities from a cognitive perspective – mental processes and human embodied experience provide a grounding for both the production and reception of any literary work. For a brief explanation of the general meaning of the term intertextuality, see Murfin & Ray 2003: 219–220.

imagery more clearly. They enable the reader to perceive some common ground instead of thinking of the images as peculiar and isolated phenomena and they also pinpoint innovative creativity when it occurs. The discussion of the images using the cognitive theoretical framework will also help the reader understand and appreciate some shared features of imagery that can be explained by showing ways in which human cognition functions and the consequences which follow from the human embodied experience of, and perspective on, the world.

In this work I aim to see if it is possible to find in traditional texts images resembling those found in the literary works of this modern writer. In short, can the images employed by Dhondup Gyal also be identified and located in the tradition or in cross-culturally common or shared imagery? In cases where comparisons can be drawn with traditional literature, I shall pay close attention to their form to see whether traditional images have been used “as such” and “directly” or whether the writer has somehow adapted tradition and used it to express more modern concerns. In cases where Dhondup Gyal has somehow adapted and renegotiated the traditional, I shall ask whether it is possible to point out his means and strategies of doing it. I shall also ask what are the features which characterize Dhondup Gyal’s use of imagery and make it special, giving his writings a special and individual flavour.

In this study I shall show that it is possible to understand many features of Dhondup Gyal’s use of images in terms of reshaping and reinterpreting the tradition. When discussing the connections with traditional texts and literature from other cultures, innovative features of imagery can be discerned more clearly. There are often innovative shifts in meanings, though equally frequently images show some kind of connection to tradition, and in this way comparisons with traditional texts contribute a diachronic perspective to my study of Dhondup Gyal’s images. Many images also share some similarities with conceptual metaphors proposed by scholars who have written about the cognitive theory of metaphor. Thus it is worthwhile to study Tibetan poetic metaphors with methods derived from a cognitive theoretical framework in order to explain features of Tibetan imagery. A large number of scholars who write about the cognitive theory of metaphor seem to focus on an analysis of English language materials. An analysis of Tibetan texts, however, will bring cultural aspects into the discussion. Cognitive theory and the theory of conceptual blending are also useful in understanding and appreciating the creative qualities of Dhondup Gyal’s imagery. I shall show that among the special features which characterize his imagery are his tendency to build composite imagery and blend elements from input domains, resulting in innovative structures with new emergent meanings.

1.2 Written images

Image may be understood in a wide variety of ways and can refer to objects in art, literature, film, or a reflection on the surface of a mirror. However, as this work discusses literature, my focus is on images that are created by means of writing. Of course, when writing or reading almost anything in a language we understand well (except perhaps codes), the imagination makes us “see” the characters, milieus, and happenings through the eye of our imagination. One of the reasons for my choice of the word image for the phenomena discussed in this work is that the visual kind of quality often associated with imagery and its apparent contrast with the medium of writing provided a starting point for my studies on written images. My work reflects a fascination with the function of words to convey and evoke lively visual imagining in the mind of the reader.

Defining the theoretical concepts employed in a research work is a task of central importance. It is especially challenging when researching the literature of another culture and literary tradition, which of course possesses its own literary theoretical concepts. Tibetan and Western theoretical concepts have different scopes and applications. Although there are shared features, the differences are often vast. A text produced in a certain culture is a product of that culture, although many outside influences may be present. However, theories are not culture specific and may be applied to materials coming from different cultural milieus.⁶

First we shall look at some definitions of “imagery” and “image” in both Western and Tibetan sources. *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms* gives two main meanings for the word “imagery”:

- 1) the actual language that a writer uses to convey a visual picture [...];
- 2) the use of **figures of speech**, often to express **abstract** ideas in a vivid and innovative way.⁷

Another glossary of literary terms *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* gives the following meanings for the term image:

A poetic i[mage] is, variously, a metaphor, simile, or figure of speech [...]; a concrete verbal reference; a recurrent motif; a psychological event in the read-

6 The topic of “East-West Comparative Literature” has been discussed by the Chinese scholar Zhang Longxi. He has also discussed Claudio Guillén’s three models of studies which cross the boundaries of national literature, the third one being “common problems in the theory of literature” (1998: 30). He points out how theories may transcend cultures and how they become tested and modified when applied to new materials from other cultural origins (p. 31).

7 Murfin & Ray 2003: 210.

er's mind; the vehicle or second term of a metaphor; a symbol [...] or symbolic pattern; or the global impression of a poem as a unified structure [...].⁸

This definition shows that the concept of poetic image may be very widely applied. Another term quite close to its meaning is a figure of speech, which is mentioned in both of the above definitions. However, partly due to the nature and characteristics of imagery in the texts under study, and also because of the differing understandings of figurative speech in different cultural theoretical contexts (e.g. the understanding of figurative speech covers phenomena in the Indo-Tibetan context that are not covered in Western context),⁹ I have not used the notion of a figure of speech as a general term to depict the objects of my research, but have instead used the concept of images, stressing their lively visual quality.

If we take a look at Tibetan words and terminology, there are some terms that are close or bear some resemblance to the idea of image. The most direct translation of image would be *snang brnyan*, which is the general Tibetan word for an 'image' that appears to the eye and has shape, form and colour, such as for example the reflection of the moon on the surface of the water.¹⁰ When the word *rtsom rig* 'literature' or *sgyu rtsal* 'art' are attributed to *snang brnyan*, resulting in the notion of 'literary image' (*rtsom rig gi snang brnyan*) or 'artistic image' (*sgyu rtsal gyi snang brnyan*), the meaning becomes somewhat more specific and applicable to a written object of art. Generally, Tibetan critics stress the lively visual quality associated with literary images. But, judging from the examples in some recent theoretical writings, a literary image usually has a wide application and scope: it can be applied to a longer passage depicting in a lively way a certain event or character, to passages having lively depictions that may also contain such imagery as similes, metaphors, and personifications, or it might be applied to a detailed description of scenery, giving a list of its features.¹¹ Thus by the word *snang brnyan*

8 Preminger & Brogan 1993: 556.

9 The Indo-Tibetan theory for figurative-speech ("ornamentics") also covers figures related to sound patterns. *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* comments on the current Western notion of figures of speech, enumerating the following: "synecdoche, metonymy, simile, metaphor, personification, allegory and – a different but related device – symbol" (Preminger & Brogan 1993: 560). Here I shall not pay much attention to metonymy, synecdoche, or symbols. Symbols are discussed only when they are somehow connected with metaphoric expressions. The main focus has been on images that are to some degree characterized by metaphoricity.

10 See for example *Dag yig gсар bsgrigs* (bSam gtan 1989/2004: 286) and *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* (Krang dbyi sun 1993: 1588).

11 See, e.g. Rin chen bkra shis 1998: 26–35 or sMyug brtse 2003. Rinchen Tashi has an entire chapter on the literary image (*rtsom rig gi snang brnyan*) in his book *rTsom rig gсар rtsom gyi rnam bshad*. His general approach stresses the connection of society and literature, which is commonly found in literary criticism influenced by socialist ideology. In his book on contemporary writing he emphasizes the connection of literature to real-life experience and defines a literary image

Tibetan critics seem to understand an accumulation of details and specific characterizations rather than for example a single simile or metaphor. The criterion seems to be that the written passage creates a lively impression or mental picture in the reader's mind.

Dhondup Gyal himself has published a theoretical essay about “literary images” in which he first defines the concept *snang brnyan* in literature in a very general way:¹²

go don ni rtsom rig sgyu rtsal gyi brtsam bya'i nang du 'byung ba'i bsam blo'i nang don nges can zhig dang/ gzhan gyi yid 'gug thub pa'i sgyu rtsal gyi nyams 'gyur nges can yod pa'i dpe ris gson nyams dang ldan pa zhig yin/
(Rang grol [Don grub rgyal], “rTsom rig sgyu rtsal gyi snang brnyan skor cung tsam gleng ba”)¹³

[The literary image is] a definite inner meaning of thought inside the written composition of literature and a lively picture possessing a definite artistic quality that can attract the interest of others.

(Rangdol [Dhondup Gyal], “A Short Discussion on Literary Images”)

He writes further that in the essay in question he has used the word for the depiction of human characters. However, he also points out that it is possible to use the word for the representations of various objects in the surrounding environment and other matters related to life. Thus the word *snang brnyan* may be used for “concrete” or “single” images in a text where they are depicted in a lively way and

as follows: “rtsom rig gi snang brnyan zhes pa ni/rtsom mkhan gyis 'tsho ba dngos rmang gzhi byas shing/ de nyid kun rtog la brten nas bzo bcos dang las snon byas te gsar skrun byas pa'i mi tshe'i 'tsho ba'i ri mo zhig la zer zhing/ ri mo de yang nges par du gson nyams ldan zhing don snying yod dgos la/ bden ngos yod pa zhig kyang yin dgos/” (Rin chen bkra shis 1998: 26–27). Translation: ‘in literary image the writer has made real life as his basis; relying on the imagination he shapes and adds to it, forming a newly-created picture of the life of the people. The picture should also be lively and insightful, and should be truthful.’ In addition to liveliness, he writes that the images are also “specific” (*bye brag*) thus making it clear that he means a form of depiction that is quite concrete as opposed to a description created using abstract concepts (Rin chen bkra shis 1998: 27). Interestingly, Rinchen Tashi separates two usages of *snang rnyan*: that of “ornamentics” (*tshig rgyan rig pa*) and “literary art” (*rtsom rig sgyu rtsal*). According to Rinchen Tashi in ornamentics “the language of images” means “a lively way of combining words”. However, he separates this usage from the “literary image”, stressing that literary images are newly-created images found in literature, whereas ornaments may also be found in academic research articles (1998: 26). Nyugtse (sMyug brtse) has also discussed the concept of *gzugs brnyan* in literature in an article on ancient Tibetan poetry, stressing especially their lively visual quality. At the end of his article he expresses the need for a Tibetan treatise on Tibetan poetics as he does not consider that an Indian treatise of poetics applied to Tibetan texts is sufficient. Nyugtse's article was published originally in 1992 in *rTser snyeg*, no. 3.

¹² At the end of the essay it is stated that it is based on some writings in the magazine *rTsom rig shes bya*.

¹³ Rang grol 1982: 48.

elicit a certain visual perception in the reader. It is noteworthy that Dhondup Gyal writes about “a definite inner meaning of thought” thus referring to the capability of images to communicate ideas as vehicles of communication.¹⁴ However, this definition does not contain any specific reference to metaphors, even though it is possible to think of them as something that could be included inside this wide definition. In the essay Dhondup Gyal also points out that the writer has a “greater freedom” compared to other art forms in his creation of images.¹⁵

The word *snang brnyan* thus seems to be a very general word for image. Due to its communicative function in literature and lively visual quality, it is perhaps the most suitable Tibetan term for the word “image” used in this work.¹⁶ In his discussion of modern poetry Tibetan poet Ju Kelsang ('Ju sKal bzang) has also used the word “image” (*snang brnyan*). He discusses how with images modern poetry represents subjective states and experiences that would be otherwise difficult to convey with direct words.¹⁷

The Tibetan word close to the term figure of speech is *tshig rgyan*, which can be translated literally as ‘ornament’ (Skt. *alankāra*). This word is strongly associated with the style of composition, *kāvya*, that spread to Tibet from India starting in the thirteenth century. The definition of “ornament” (*rgyan*) or poetic figure is the following in the Tibetan translation of the *Kāvyaḍarśa*:

snyan ngag mdzes par byed pa yi// chos ni rgyan zhes bya bar brjod//
(Daṅḍin, *Kāvyaḍarśa*)¹⁸

The feature that beautifies poetry is called a poetic figure¹⁹
(Daṅḍin, “The Mirror of Poetry”)

In the explanation of this passage in his commentary of the *Kāvyaḍarśa* Dungkar Losang Thrinley (Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las), who was Dhondup Gyal’s teacher, explains the passage with the help of a simile of a naked person beautifying himself with ornaments and clothes. In accordance with the traditional view

14 The word *nang don*, which is translated above as ‘inner meaning’ may signify the essential, core meaning, and it also has the meaning of essential content or subject of a text.

15 Rang grol 1982: 49–50.

16 However, there are differences in scope and application: in this study many of the images are strongly characterized by metaphoricity. A shared quality between the words “image” and *snang brnyan* is also that both are very general terms covering various meanings and they may be applied to both visual and written objects.

17 'Ju skal bzang 1991: 24.

18 This part of the root text of Daṅḍin’s *Kāvyaḍarśa* may be found in the commentary by Dungkar Blo bzang 'phrin las (2004: 67).

19 I gratefully acknowledge the help from Prof. van der Kuijp for suggesting this way of translating this definition.

Dhondup Gyal (1985: 234) in his *mGur glu'i lo rgyus dang khyad chos* (“The History and Characteristics of Songs”) writes: “Generally, poetic figures in poetry and songs have to be understood to be those objects that beautify the text formed of words”. In traditional Indo-Tibetan theory the figures of speech are understood as something beautifying the actual meaning. Furthermore, the concept of *tshig rgyan* also covers *sgra rgyan*, literally translated as ‘sound ornaments’, and also various kinds of word plays, thus from one perspective the concept of *tshig rgyan* is wider in its scope than image as it also covers sound patterns.

However, figures of speech are not understood as being an essential part in building the core of the actual desired meaning. In modern Tibetan free verse poetry imagery is used to communicate new meanings, not only for beautifying the composition. Because the term *tshig rgyan* is strongly associated with the traditional *kāvya*-theory whose rules the new poetry actually rebels against, I did not wish to use the theory of *alaṅkāras* as the theoretical framework of this study, but have instead opted for a theoretical framework created in the West that claims to be universal. In my opinion the function of images is communicative and creative and not merely “beautifying”. Dhondup Gyal has also written about the discrepancy between the traditional concepts of literature and new Tibetan poetry. In his unfinished work entitled “Slob khrid dang sbyar ba'i rtsom rig gi zin bris” (“Notes for Teaching Literature”) Dhondup Gyal (1997, VI: 92) writes that even though there are traditional treatises on ornaments (*tshig rgyan rigs pa'i bstan bcos*) and the various forms of composition of verse, prose, and combinations of both, new ways of writing are not included in them. In fact, several of Dhondup Gyal's compositions such as his prose and free verse poems are very far from the *kāvya*-style and the imagery in the new poetry is structurally often very different from traditional imagery. Dhondup Gyal actually made a call to create a new treatise on Tibetan indigenous poetics in his letter to Sangye (Sangs rgyas), which was published in the *sBrang char*-magazine.²⁰

To understand Tibetan imagery better I have in this work made use of some concepts and ideas derived from the cognitive theory of metaphor. To gain insights into imagery in contemporary Tibetan writing and to understand its relation to traditional literature it seemed best for me to use theory and terminology that did not have a strong bond either to the past or the future: cognitive terminology felt more neutral and provided a possibility of generalizations over a large range and type of images. The framework of the cognitive theory of meta-

20 See Don grub rgyal 1984b: 88–89, 118. See also Hartley 2003: 224–225; Chos skyong 2006: 297–298. Choekyong observes how this call for a new Tibetan poetics shows Dhondup Gyal's special courage.

phor has been applied by scholars to materials in various languages of the world,²¹ therefore I thought that it could also be helpful in revealing insights into Tibetan literary materials. I felt that it allows me to make some wider generalizations over the material, thus gaining insights into imagery that might have small differences in their written form but nevertheless possess shared underlying structures.

Cognitive theory is a theoretical framework that has been applied to a wide variety of fields. Its application to the analysis of literature seems to be suitable since the human capacity for thought and imagination is so central to both writing and reading literature. Generally, cognitive theory with its focus on mental processing and human embodiment could be seen to offer a basis for further literary studies.²² When the cognitive theory of metaphor is applied to literature, the focus of attention is on poetic metaphors and poetic imagery in a wider sense. The metaphoricity of the words of ordinary language, which often goes unnoticed in everyday language use, is not discussed to the same extent in this work, but may sometimes be touched upon briefly.²³ However, there are connections, and these may be better understood with the help of conceptual metaphors. George Lakoff and Mark Turner (1989: 67) have characterized the relation of poetic thought to everyday thought by explaining that the former is based on the latter, but using various strategies poetic thought “goes beyond the ordinary”. The oxymoronic expression “written images” brings our attention to the way in which images in literature are at the same time objects created by writing, but at the same time are characterized by lively visuality.

Other Tibetan terms that are close to the idea of imagery are *dpe* and *bsdus brjod*. The word *dpe* is usually translated as ‘model’, ‘image’, or ‘proverb’. It is a term that is used to describe poetic phenomena in both traditional and modern poetry. However, this term *dpe* (Skt. *upamāna*) is usually used in Indo-Tibetan poetic theory to refer to one of the two parts of metaphor or simile, the part that is often referred to with the word “vehicle” or in cognitive theory as “source domain”, and the other term closely corresponding to “tenor” or “target domain” being *dpe can* (‘the one having the image’, Skt. *upameya*). The term *bsdus brjod* seems to have many uses and it is often applied by modern critics when discussing strong central

21 Many of the studies belong to the field of linguistics.

22 For a discussion on the relation between cognitive theory and literature, see e.g. Richardson 1999, and for recent cognitive views on the imagination, see Turner 2008.

23 Because a poet is also a speaker and user of his/her own language, examining the metaphoricity of all possible words of the language in the literary works would make the researcher’s task very large. Although examining the word level metaphoricity of normal, conventionalized lexical items can help us to understand a language and the etymologies of words better, focusing on poetic imagery contributes to the understanding of the special quality of the works of a certain author and their innovativeness and relation to the preceding literary tradition.

metaphors in modern free verse poetry. It can also be translated as ‘symbol’.²⁴ It is used to describe metaphors which are ambiguous and may be interpreted in several ways. When discussing modern poetry the term *bsdus brjod* is usually used; however, in traditional ornaments there is also an ornament called *bsdus brjod kyi rgyan*. According to Dungkar Losang Thrinley’s commentary (2004: 289) on the *Kāvyaśāstra* this particular ornament refers to such figures of speech that do not contain an explicitly given *dpe can*, but the *dpe* is given and the reader has to infer indirectly the intended meaning.

In a wider sense a poetic image can of course be anything depicted in a text in such terms that it may produce a lively visual image in the mind of the reader who encounters it. To limit the scope of this study I have focused here on images that are constructed in relation to two (or multiple) conceptual domains. Thus the images in the focus of this study are characterized by metaphoricity to some degree. This is partly for practical reasons as the texts are full of concrete images. Especially the last words of the above-quoted excerpt from *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* which explains that it is also possible to understand a poetic image “the global impression of a poem as a unified structure” fits well to an understanding of the images in some free verse poems of Dhondup Gyal that possess a strong central image. Even though most of the theoretical terminology in this work comes from cognitive theory, I have chosen to use the terms image and imagery as general overall terms to describe the phenomena under study, as I did not wish to subsume similes and other tropes under metaphor, but felt instead that metaphors are one of the subcategories of images. Another reason was to highlight the lively visual quality of imagery which would not necessarily be understood when speaking about metaphors: some metaphors have become such integral parts of everyday thinking that they might appear automatically in speech without any visual, imaginative thinking. Poetic images are usually characterized by some special flavour or quality that draws the reader’s attention.

In this work I use the term imagery as a general term for phenomenon where through writing two (or more) different conceptual domains become intertwined with each other or are understood in relation to each other. Most typical images

24 It seems that it is also possible to translate *bsdus brjod* as ‘symbol’. In his article in *Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal* Dhondup Tsering (Don grub tshe ring 1995, Part 3: 85) gives ‘symbolism’ as the English translation of *bsdus brjod ring lugs*. He characterizes symbolism as emphasizing the expression of the inner mental sphere rather than external reality. He explains that subjective emotions are expressed with the help of *bsdus brjod* – symbols – indirectly (p. 86). He also discusses Charles Baudelaire’s poem “Correspondances”, Tib. *rTen 'brel*, Eng. *Correspondences*, providing a Tibetan translation of this poem. The line in the poem that in its English translation reads: “Here man wanders through a forest of symbols” is translated using the word *bsdus brjod* for symbol (p. 86).

in the works of Dhondup Gyal are metaphors and similes and thus their analysis forms the core of this study. But in discussing Tibetan literature parallelisms are also an important strategy to illustrate meanings. Some can be found in Dhondup Gyal's works, especially in proverbs, but because they are so common in indigenous Tibetan literature, the parallelistic strategy of employing imagery may be seen in comparisons with traditional literature. Some of the later compositions of Dhondup Gyal form larger images at the discourse level and there is also allegory. In all of these phenomena two (or multiple) conceptual domains are understood in relation to each other. Understanding both the domains in the light of each other creates a new third understanding, the emergent meaning. This process of relating and combining two (or more) different conceptual domains creates mental objects that are objects essentially created in the realm of the imagination: they are not mere representations of the real world but rather something that cannot be pointed at directly in the real outside world. Therefore metaphoricity can be seen to be in a certain tension with the mimetic tendencies of texts.

The emphasis on the analysis of similes and metaphors is also motivated by the material itself. I do not want to approach the material with a ready model such as metaphor and then ignore all the other related phenomena. However, it is better to speak about the metaphoricity of the images as there seems to be a scale of metaphoricity – depending on the interpretation some concrete images too may sometimes be interpreted metaphorically. Interpretation and analysis proceeds in a hermeneutic manner in a dialogue with texts that are rich in metaphors and similes and also with the strong central images of the free verse poetry. These poetic tropes form the imagery in Dhondup Gyal's writings and form the basis of my analysis. A recent trend in cognitive studies has been to use theory for a wider range of tropes than merely metaphors – there are, for example, studies on apostrophe, allegory, and metonymy.²⁵ The power of imagery is its potential to create new meanings. In a Tibetan context, in Tibetan areas which are under the rule of the People's Republic of China (PRC), images may sometimes also be used as a tool for expressing meanings that might not be permitted if expressed with direct, straightforward words: especially metaphors could be suitable for such a purpose, because they may be ambiguous having multiple layers of meanings and many possible interpretations.

²⁵ See Fludernik 2005 and articles in *Style* 2002.

1.2.1 Types of images

I have used here the term “image” as a general term to cover such literary phenomena as metaphor, simile, parallelism and allegory. The scope of the term “image” here is motivated by the materials under study: after a careful analysis of the texts I found a large number of instances that could be seen as expressions where a source domain image is used so that it is related to some other concepts by means of metaphor, simile, parallelism, or allegory. Most of this book consists of analysis and discussion of metaphors and similes in Dhondup Gyal’s works. It is important to pay attention to all these phenomena as they seem to be closely related forms of expression that relate or combine two different conceptual domains. Of course, concrete images such as lively detailed depictions of landscapes are also written images. However, in order to limit the scope of this work they have not been the central focus, though they are sometimes touched upon in my text. Occasionally I might also point out some other figures of speech, like metonyms and apostrophes, but those phenomena are not the main focus of this study, which is mainly concerned with two concepts from different conceptual domains being understood in relation to or together with each other.

Metaphor. Metaphors are images where usually two concepts are intertwined or combined and are understood at the same time. An example of a metaphor found in Dhondup Gyal’s works is *gangs can rtsom rig pad tshal*, “the lotus garden of the literature of the Snow Land”.²⁶ Here the two separate concepts: “lotus garden” and “literature” are combined with each other. Scholars have called the parts of a metaphor by different names, such as “tenor” and “vehicle” or “subject” and “modifier”, and so on.²⁷ In cognitive theory the terms the source domain

26 This metaphor is found in the second line of Dhondup Gyal’s poem “rTsom gyi mtsho mor rlabs kyi me tog dgod” (“In the Lake of Writing the Flower Waves are Blooming”) (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 138). The expression of the “lotus garden of the literature of the Snow Land” is here given without context to illustrate the structure of a metaphor. However, if we consider the actual context of the poem where it occurs, Dhondup Gyal writes that the garden blooms because of the “wonderful sunlight of the policy of the party”. This could be interpreted as a poetic way of describing the more relaxed policies concerning Tibetan writing in the beginning of 1980s. Before that during the Cultural Revolution it seems that hardly any creative writing was published, but there were some publications of a political nature, translations, a dictionary, and so on. For information on Tibetan language publications during the Cultural Revolution, see Hartley 2003: 81–82.

27 I.A. Richards introduced the terms “tenor” and “vehicle” and his view on metaphor, presented in his *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, is based on the interaction between the parts of metaphorical expression. Good, concise introductions on his views on metaphor may be found in Ricoeur 2003: 88–96 and Elovaara 1992: 22–25. Beardsley used the terms “subject” and “modifier”. For his verbal-opposition theory see Beardsley 1962 and Elovaara 1991: 40–45. Black (1979: 27) uses the term “subjects” for both parts of a metaphorical statement and also uses the terms “focus” and “frame” to characterize them.

and target domain of a metaphor are employed.²⁸ In the above quoted example, “lotus garden” is the source domain that is mapped on the target domain “literature”. Thus here when the concept of “lotus garden” is mapped on “literature”, it is likely to cause the reader to think of literature as a pleasant and attractive place filled with ponds growing blooming lotuses. The word “garden” is also likely to induce ideas of nurturance because gardens are usually areas where plants and flowers are carefully tended by gardeners. The source domains and target domains, if considered separately, are normally non-metaphorical, but when they are connected or intertwined with each other, the resulting concept is a metaphorical concept.²⁹ There are also several personifications in the works of Dhondup Gyal. Because they are structured as metaphors, they can well be regarded as a subtype of metaphors in accordance with the views of the cognitive theory of metaphor.³⁰

To describe the images and to facilitate comparisons between the images in Dhondup Gyal’s works and those in traditional works I have made some use of the theoretical concept of “conceptual metaphors” as presented in the cognitive theory of metaphor.³¹ I have in particular made comparisons of Dhondup Gyal’s metaphors with some of the conceptual metaphors discussed in the research works of scholars engaged in the studies of the cognitive theory of metaphor to gain an understanding of a common ground.

In the theories introduced by Lakoff and Johnson metaphors are understood as metaphorical concepts on the human mental level of thought processes rather than on the surface level of actual appearances of metaphors.³² This is the reason why the theory of these scholars is normally considered a cognitive theory of metaphor. They speak about basic domains of experience. According to their theory, when it is question of metaphor, one basic domain of experience becomes understood in relation to some other basic domain of experience.³³ Conceptual metaphors have been depicted as basic metaphorical structures (written in the works of cognitive theory in small caps) that can be used to generalize images that display the same kind of ideas even though they might have some structural differences or differences in the choice of words. I have sometimes generalized

28 Lakoff & Turner (1989: 3–4, 63–64) write about the mappings between two conceptual domains, discussing the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY. A concise definition of the terms can also be found, for example, in Kövecses 2002: 4.

29 Lakoff & Turner 1989: 59.

30 See Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 33–34.

31 See the works by such scholars as George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, and Mark Turner.

32 Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 6.

33 Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 117.

the structures of metaphors in this study with the help of the analytical tool of conceptual metaphors. My usage of them has been motivated by pragmatics and is not a question of any deep insight about such structures or patterns on the level of human mental function or in the function of the brain. That is the task of neuroscience, cognitive science, and other fields of related research and is not within the scope of this study where the principal task has been to understand Tibetan imagery in written texts. The principal object of my study is literature and thus I consider that it is acceptable to use conceptual metaphors mainly as pragmatic tools for understanding some shared features or underlying structures of poetic metaphors. However, although the focus is on the analysis of texts, it is hoped that this work might also contribute to an understanding of the Tibetan way of thinking and perceiving the world because according to the cognitive theory figurative processes are central to human cognition. In any case, such generalizations as conceptual metaphors allow for discussion and comparison of the multitude of metaphors in the work of an author and also make it possible to make comparisons in the axis of time and cross-cultural comparisons.

The theory of conceptual blending is a later development of cognitive theory. It has been introduced in the works of Fauconnier and Turner.³⁴ I have supplemented the cognitive framework of study with some application of views and concepts from the theory of conceptual blending. That has been the case especially in the discussion of Dhondup Gyal's free verse poetry and some other works such as "Dri bzhon gyi bu mo" ("The Girl of the Wind") and the song "E ma mtsho sngon po" ("Oh, Blue Lake!"). The concepts of blended space and emergent structure have been especially valuable in cases when it has not been possible to speak about directionality and also for the analysis of strong central images that combine several elements to form one dominant image. Strong central images are a characteristic of modern Tibetan poetry. Contemporary Tibetan poets when writing free verse poetry, rather than producing the detailed ornaments of *kāvya*, tend to communicate their emotion to the reader by using a central image in their work.³⁵

34 Their paper "Conceptual Integration Networks" is a concise introduction to the theory of conceptual blending. Also on blending, see Turner's (1999) article "A Mechanism of Creativity". For recent contributions on blending, see the special issue of *Language and Literature* (2006) and especially Barbara Dancygier's preface to that issue with its informative "Selected bibliography", as well as Mark Turner's (2006) article in the same issue.

35 See, for example, Hartley 2003: 290. Lauran Hartley paraphrases the views of the Tibetan editor Pel Lhamo (dPal lha mo), who defines poetry (*snyan ngag*) as "a literary genre or form in which the writer conveys a mental image to the reader in order to evoke the strong emotion felt by the writer, and he/she does this by linking sound and emotion".

This book has primarily been organized into chapters on the principle of source domain images. Because one source domain may be mapped onto several different target domains it was more practical to organize my work based on the source domain images themselves rather than on the often abstract concepts in the target domains. In the case of blends where it is difficult to discern a clear source and target domain (when there is no clear directionality) the placement has been done based on the central image or dominant image.

There are many possible ways of classifying metaphors. When making use of the cognitive theory of metaphor, because images usually have two parts, it is possible to classify and organize them either according to their source domains or their target domains. When discussing some particular theme, it is often more useful to classify images on the basis of their target domains which may be thematically related.³⁶ During the reviewing process of my dissertation, I was made aware of a significant contribution in the field of research on Tibetan metaphors, namely Peter Schwieger's article "Fuchsherz und Tigergesicht: Metaphorik im Tibetischen" which appeared in 2003. In it Schwieger introduces a way of classifying Tibetan metaphors into two main divisions: substantial and relational. His system appears to be especially suitable for describing the basic structural characteristics of linguistic metaphors.

However, in my study, which analyses literature, a different system of classification (and division into chapters) based on the source domain images was chosen, because it is especially useful for discussing the poetic imagery in the literary production of a modern Tibetan writer. My chosen form of classification of imagery in this work shows how similar kinds of source domain images may appear in images which differ in their structural characteristics and facilitate comparisons with similar types of imagery (animal, corporal, material, etc.) in the literatures of other cultures. Furthermore, although the images have been arranged into chapters based on their source domains, also the way in which the images have been constructed has not been neglected: in the respective chapters there are examples of individual images and discussion, for example, on the types and structure of the images. Using a general means of classification that is not designed specifically for the purpose of describing a particular language or culture, but may be applied to literary works from different cultural backgrounds, has the advantage that it contributes to discussion in the field of world literature, and does not only focus on the field of Tibetology.

³⁶ This way of classification was used in my article "Images of Love in Don grub rgyal's Short Stories" (Virtanen 2011b).

The Tibetan term that is usually translated as metaphor comes from the Indo-Tibetan tradition of *kāvya*-poetics (*alamkāraśāstra*), that is the theory of poetics widely studied by Tibetans in their institutes of learning. In it the metaphors are usually classified as a poetic figure called *gzugs can gyi rgyan* (Skt. *rūpaka*).³⁷ It is a subcategory of the poetic figures called *don rgyan* ('ornaments', Skt. *arthālamkāra*). *gzugs can gyi rgyan* has several subdivisions (20), but they all share a general structure of having a *dpe* ('model', 'image') and *don* ('meaning') or *dpe can* ('the one having an image') that are not separated.³⁸

For *gzugs can gyi rgyan* it is typical that both sides of the metaphor are mentioned explicitly and are placed in close connection with each other. However, when speaking about free verse poetry, the Tibetan concepts of *dpe* and *don* become used in a free way and there is no need to try to identify any patterns constrained by the rules of *kāvya*-poetics. For the strong central images of Dhondup Gyal's free verse poems, the Tibetan critics tend to use the term *bsdus brjod*.³⁹ It is usually found in their discussions of free verse poems and seems to be used to depict images that in the cognitive framework are best described with the analytical tool of blends. Characteristic to these kind of images is the way in which elements and features from two different frameworks become combined or intertwined. As mentioned above, this term *bsdus brjod*, which is sometimes translated as 'symbol', can be applied to images which do not possess clear explicit target domains but are more ambiguous in their nature. In this work, by metaphor I refer both to metaphors in which both domains are given explicitly and also to metaphors that are more ambiguous and may be interpreted in multiple ways.

Similes. In contemporary Western literary criticism, scholars mostly concentrate their attention on metaphors rather than a wider selection of images of literature. The Western cognitive theory of metaphor as its name suggests is a theory of metaphor, and for some reason similes seem to have received less theoretical

37 According to Gerow (1971: 36) this Sanskrit word literally means 'characterizer', and to express the meaning of the word he uses the English word "identification". Gerow's footnote 78 (1971: 36) contains a subtle remark about the difference of *rūpaka* and the Western concept of metaphor.

38 The following explanation can be found in Dhondup Gyal's teacher's Dungkar Rinpoche's commentary on the *Kāvyaśāstra*: "The image' (*dpe*) and the 'one having the image' (*dpe can*, the depicted) are not separated. That meaning which is wished to be expressed is placed in the form of the image (*dpe*) – this is what is called the 'ornament having a form' (*gzugs can gyi rgyan*)." Dungkar blo bzang 'phrin las 2004: 179.

39 For some examples on how Tibetan literary critics use the term *bsdus brjod*, see, for instance Choekyong's (Chos skyong 2006: 305) discussion on the poem "Lang tsho'i rbad chu". Rinchen Tashi (Rin chen bkra shis 1998: 173) mentions this concept when speaking about the techniques of modern poetry (also mentioning *rab rtog*, that may sometimes be used as personification but also has other uses, and *dpe*). He analyses poems by Dhondup Gyal and Jangbu (pp. 173–176).

attention.⁴⁰ It is common in Western theory that similes are simply subsumed under the category of metaphors, treating them as slightly differing surface manifestations of metaphors, or they may be discussed in articles on metaphors without any particular emphasis on their being similes. But for various reasons that will be explained below, I wished to keep the distinction of metaphors and similes clear and treat them both as same-level categories subsumed under the general term of images.

In *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* a simile is defined as “an explicit comparison using ‘like’ or ‘as’”, though it is also mentioned that this is the most conservative way of defining the concept.⁴¹ I shall now take an example of a simile from Dhondup Gyal’s writings. In the short story “Pad mtsho” (“Petso”) Tashi receives a letter and reflects in his mind on its sender, the young Tibetan nomad girl. The shape of her face is illustrated through the use of a simile: “Pad mtsho/ kho mo gzugs phra zhing skra ring ba dang/ gdong dbyibs sil kham bu dang 'dra zhing”. In English: “Petso, her body was thin and her hair long and the shape of her face was like an apricot” (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 22). The Tibetan word '*dra*' means ‘like’. Here the “shape of her face” is likened to an “apricot”.

In a simile there are two concepts that are connected with each other with a word or particle stating their relation of resemblance. It can be said that in a metaphor the relation of the two concepts can be viewed as closer as the two concepts are combined and are no longer separate, but in a simile the relation is slightly more distant because the two concepts remain separate and only their relation is pointed out. Because they are likened with each other, the reader is made to view or recognize in them some common quality or characteristics. In this book I have extended the terminology of source domains and target domains to the discussion of similes, but will however, mention whether the example in question is a simile or a metaphor (or this will be clear for the reader from the translated excerpts from Dhondup Gyal’s works). It is suitable to use the word target domain in similes also in the sense that it is the intended primary referent or concept of an expression and the concept that it is likened with brings more light or depth to its understanding. Although in similes the source domain is not

40 For a recent contribution on similes in literature, see the article by Fontana (2005), where he discusses similes in the sonnets of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. The article shows that “pre-facing” similes can be interpreted as a stylistic signature of the writer. In the beginning of his article (pp. 1–2) he points out, referring to the views of Janet Soskice and Eva Kittay, that these days the distinction between similes and metaphors is not made in such a clear manner, and that they are considered as surface aspects of the same phenomena on the conceptual level. Ricoeur discusses similes and metaphor in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, where, according to his interpretation, Aristotle subordinates simile to metaphor (Ricoeur 1975/2003: 26–30).

41 Preminger & Brogan 1993: 1149.

mapped directly onto the target domain which combines with it, nevertheless some aspects from the source domain contribute to the understanding of the target domain.⁴²

When dealing with materials that were created in other cultures than our own, Western definitions and limitations are not always ideal although they can be very helpful in some sense. When dealing with Tibetan materials it is not at all self-evident that the metaphors would be a primary category under which the similes would be subsumed on account of the culturally-specific Tibetan theoretical, literary historical, and semantic perspectives. Also from the viewpoint of frequency it seems to me that in the Tibetan materials similes occur at least as often as metaphors.

In the Indo-Tibetan theoretical tradition of poetics similes and metaphors are both subcategories of *don rgyan* ('ornaments'). In the commentarial treatises belonging to this tradition similes are discussed before metaphors and metaphors are defined through an understanding of similes. In Indo-Tibetan theory similes seem to be more primary than metaphors.⁴³ If considered historically, according to Tibetan scholar Gonchung Rabten (dGon chung rab brtan 2003: 520), there are many similes and parallelisms in ancient indigenous Tibetan Dunhuang documents, however, extant metaphors from that time are only found in translated documents, like for example in the Tibetan translation of the *Rāmāyaṇa* (*Rā ma ṇa'i rtogs brjod*). He also quotes a passage from the Tibetan translation of this work which contains several metaphors.⁴⁴ Later on of course an abundance of metaphors can be found in indigenous Tibetan literature, and it might also well be that their absence from the earliest documents could be explained by the fact that only a small fraction of early textual materials are still extant today.

Taking into consideration these matters, it is more fruitful for an understanding of Tibetan imagery to select a wider approach in which metaphors and similes are both understood as subsumed under the general category of imagery and due attention is paid to similes. However, in Dhondup Gyal's writings there is often a close connection between similes and metaphors in the sense that a

42 If comparison (*upamāna*) is considered from the viewpoint of Indian philosophy, it is regarded as one of the means of attaining knowledge about some object which is compared to another object. See Grimes 1996: 329.

43 Gerow (1971: 35) writes about the views of the Indian theorists on poetics and describes a simile as "the figure par excellence".

44 De Jong has done research on the early Dunhuang manuscripts containing several manuscript versions of the Tibetan translation of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. He has published a critical edition of these manuscripts in the *Indo-Iranian Journal* (de Jong 1977) and also discussed the Tibetan translations of the Indian epic in other articles, see, for example, de Jong 1972. Information on the imagery of the *Rāmāyaṇa* can be found in Brockington 1977.

same source domain image might appear in both types of images and even in the same literary work; thus in order to understand imagery, it is necessary to study them both together.

The Indo-Tibetan theory of poetics has the concept *dpe rgyan* for similes (Skt. *upamā*),⁴⁵ and it uses the same concepts, *dpe* (Skt. *upamāna*) and *dpe can* (Skt. *upameya*) for the two parts of the similes as well as for metaphors.⁴⁶ The clear distinguishing structural feature of metaphors and similes is that in similes there is some particle or word indicating the relation of similarity whereas in metaphors there is not.⁴⁷ In Tibetan this type of words or particles are called *mtshungs pa gsal byed kyi sgra* ('word indicating resemblance'; Skt. *dyotaka*).⁴⁸ In the Indo-Tibetan theory several types of similes are enumerated. Here to gain an understanding of the images I shall mostly only speak about similes. This is on account of the wide range of compositions by Dhondup Gyal in styles other than the *kāvya*-style, and it is helpful for making generalizations and comparisons. But when commenting on some excerpts from Dhondup Gyal's poem "Slob dpon la bsngags pa'i glu dbyangs" ("A Song in Praise of the Professor") I shall use some terminology from the traditional theory of similes because Dhondup Gyal has structurally shaped the poem as examples of various types of similes. I have extended the use of the

45 See Gerow 1971: 140 ff.

46 In a longer form: *mtshon byed kyi dpe*, which means 'image that represents', and *mtshon bya don gyi dpe can*, 'that having the image which is the meaning to be represented'. See, for instance, bSe tshang Blo bzang dpal ldan 1997: 99.

47 Dungkar Rinpoche's commentary explains the meaning of a simile in verse as follows: "When stating the image (*dpe*) and the meaning (*don*) separately, what makes them understood to be similar is the image ornament (*dpe rgyan*)." Dungkar Rinpoche provides an explanation: "The meaning of this is that when stating that the image and the 'depicted' (*dpe can*) are of separate nature, that which makes those two to be understood to be similar is the definition of what is called image ornament (*dpe rgyan*). It has different varieties according to the common characteristics displayed and those that are left undisplayed." (Dung dkar blo bzang 'phrin las 2004: 127). This definition is very close to the normal understanding of the term "simile" in our culture. For an explanation about the difference between similes and metaphors, see Setshang Losang Palden's commentary on the *Kāvyaḍarśa* (bSe tshang Blo bzang dpal ldan 1997: 214).

48 Sanskrit terminology in this discussion on poetic figures here comes from Gerow's glossary (in other places of this work I have also used Eppling's dissertation on *Kāvyaḍarśa* (1989) to find the Sanskrit equivalents for Tibetan terms related to *kāvya*). Gerow's glossary (1971: 140–170) contains a long and insightful discussion of similes and he also draws comparisons between the various Indian theoreticians of poetics. There seem to be significant differences in the understanding of similes and their categorizations between various Indian masters of poetics from different times. Gerow also discusses Daṇḍin's views and interestingly characterizes Daṇḍin's categories as "illustrating a variety of intuitional situations" (1971: 145). Gerow discusses the structural properties of similes and also discerns a fourth structural quality, namely, what he calls "shared property" (Skt. *sādhāranadharmā*; 1971: 142). He also points out correspondences with Sanskrit terminology which was used by Pāṇini before.

tool of conceptual metaphors also to analyse similes and to make comparisons between various kinds of imagery.⁴⁹

Parallelisms. Parallelisms are a way of expressing ideas with images, and they are a very typical feature of Tibetan language and literature. Parallelisms are structures where two or more expressions, usually characterized by rich imagery, contribute to an understanding of a particular statement or meaning. They can be said to illustrate some matter. Dhondup Gyal himself (1985: 242) in his *mGur glu'i lo rgyus dang khyad chos* (“The History and Characteristics of Songs”) explains how successive *ślokas* can function so that the preceding *śloka* (or preceding two *ślokas*) can function as an image or model (*dpe*) for the latter following *śloka* (*dpe can*), which expresses the real intended idea. He illustrates this with passages from folk songs. He also observes that various compositions of *mgur* type contain a large number of them. Parallel structures do not need to be complete successive *ślokas*, but two lines of text or two ideas can also be arranged so that the first one contains the image and the second the actual intended meaning that the image illustrates.⁵⁰

Parallelistic expressions are especially typical for works of aphoristic style (*legs bshad*), *mgur* songs, folk songs, and proverbs. Dhondup Gyal’s writings also include a large number of proverbs many of which contain parallel structures. Parallel constructions also sometimes occur in Dhondup Gyal’s poetry as, for example, in the metric poem “Le lo can dang brtson 'grus can” (“The Lazy Person and the Diligent Person”, see 3.2 below). If the characters sing a song, there may be long passages containing parallel structures, as for example in the short story “Brong stag thang” (“The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”). In the songs heavenly objects such as the sun and clouds in different weathers are employed parallelistically to illustrate the vicissitudes of a romantic relation between a young man and a woman.⁵¹ It is possible that the songs within the text are actual folk songs and therefore they do not reveal much about the characteristic imagery created by the writer himself. This is the same with proverbs, but they are a field

49 In some cases I have added the word “like” in the basic conceptual structures when some image appeared typically as a simile.

50 Parallelisms are also familiar in literatures of other cultures, such as for example Western and Hebrew literature. For a discussion on parallelism in Chinese classical literature, see Plaks 1990. He also gives some general information on parallel structures in literature and explains the use and definition of this term in literary criticism by Robert Lowth in the 18th century (pp. 524–525).

51 See Don grub rgyal 1981b: 6, 17–18.

of study of their own and will not be discussed extensively here.⁵² Of course, proverbs with indigenous images and the writer's choice in including them add their own Tibetan native flavour to the texts.

Parallelistic structures are especially important from the viewpoint of comparison. Thus, when the source domain images of Dhondup Gyal's imagery are compared to traditional materials, it is often the case that some traditional work may contain a similar image which appears in a parallelistic expression.

Allegory. As an extension of the study of images I have also briefly discussed allegory, especially in connection with analysing Dhondup Gyal's rather lengthy allegorical poem, "rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gnam" ("A Discourse on Seven Precious Possessions of Universal Monarch"), which makes use of interesting imagery derived from traditional beliefs. The allegories share some features with the types of images discussed above: in allegories, too, concepts become understood in terms of other concepts – or rather, they have two narrative levels (which may make use of lively imagery) that are understood in terms of one another. Some scholars have characterized allegories with the help of concepts of similes or metaphors, relating the concept of allegory to them. A classical study on allegory is C.S. Lewis's *The Allegory of Love*. He writes: "Allegory, after all, is simile seen from the other end; and when we have seen the point of simile we do not throw it away."⁵³ Madeline K. Spring's research work contains a good introduction to various views on allegory starting with Aristotle and taking us up to modern times.⁵⁴ It provides useful information on allegory in the Chinese literary context. In modern research into metaphor which uses a cognitive framework, allegories have been discussed as an extension of the cognitive theory of metaphor. Mark Turner has employed the idea of conceptual metaphors to discuss allegories in his book *Death Is the Mother of Beauty*. There is also an article on allegory by Michael Sinding (2002) which appeared in the special issue of *Style* on the cognitive theory of metaphor. Sinding discusses allegory within the framework of the theory of conceptual blending. Allegories typically contain personifications that are metaphoric and several source domains may be mapped on the plot to illustrate the main thematic content.

52 For information on proverbs, see Cüppers & Sørensen's Introduction (1998). They have collected over 10,000 Tibetan proverbs from various sources listing them in alphabetical order. Their book also contains a valuable index and a good bibliography containing information on proverb collections as well as research works on proverbs. An extensive Tibetan collection of proverbs entitled *Bod kyi gnam dpe phyogs bsgrigs* has been compiled by Hor khang bsod nams dpal 'bar et al. (2004).

53 Lewis 1936/1958: 125.

54 Spring 1993: 1–10.

2. DHONDUP GYAL AND TIBETAN LITERATURE

2.1 Life and works of Dhondup Gyal, a Tibetan writer from Amdo

Dhondup Gyal's (1953–1985) writings constitute the primary material and source of this research work. There are some excellent biographical materials on Dhondup Gyal in Tibetan and also some shorter research articles in Western languages. I shall here only write a short introduction to the writer's life, and the reader who would like to know in more detail about Dhondup Gyal's life is advised to read Choekyong's (Chos skyong) *Rang grol zhib 'jug*.¹

I had a chance to travel to Amdo in 2005 and during that journey I met several of Dhondup Gyal's relatives and family members and also people who had known him personally. Therefore in writing about the life and literary career of Dhondup Gyal, I have based my discussion partly on interviews and partly on information available in written sources and earlier research works.²

Dhondup Gyal was born in 1953 in a small village called Gurong phowa (dGu rong pho ba) in the region of Amdo, located in the province of Qinghai. The names of his parents were Mingme (Mying med) and Bande (Ban de). Dhondup Gyal's father died when he was still a very young child. After nine years, his mother Mingme married a man named Gyatso (rGya mtsho), and six children were born from this new marriage.³

In summer 2005, I had the opportunity to visit Dhondup Gyal's mother and her family in a village near Centsa (gCan tsha), where the family had moved from Gurong phowa. In the presence of Dhondup Gyal's mother and some of his sisters, his stepfather Gyatso told me about the writer's childhood. Dhondup

1 Chos skyong 2006.

2 Especially important for me has been Pema Bhum's (Padma 'bum) introduction to the life of Dhondup Gyal "Don grub rgyal gyi mi tshé" in *Lang tsho'i rbab chu*, a selection of Dhondup Gyal's writings edited by Padma 'bum (1994). It was the first source from which I could read about the life of Dhondup Gyal and also read many of his works. Some of the works in the title in question were used as course material in Sangye Tandar Naga's Tibetan language intensive training course at the Library of Tibetan Works & Archives (LTWA) in Dharamsala, and I am very grateful to Sangye Tandar for his discussions and explanations on several of Dhondup Gyal's works during his classes.

3 I am grateful to Dhondup Gyal's younger brother Lobsang Choegyal, who helped me to check this part (2.1) of Dhondup Gyal's life story and especially the information concerning his childhood (pers. comm. 5 Jan 2010 and 20 Jan 2010). According to information from him and his mother, Dhondup Gyal was only one year old when he lost his father. For information on Dhondup Gyal's birth and parents, see also Padma 'bum 1994: 9; Chos skyong 2006: 108, 112; Sangs rgyas rin chen 2006: 43.

Gyal first went to a nearby school in Gurong Thil (dGu rong mthil) and learnt to read when he was eight years old. Gyatso related that the writer was intelligent and was often top of his class.⁴

After his primary school education, Dhondup Gyal went to a Teachers' Training School in the area of Rebgong. He was successful in his studies, whereas the other six persons who went to the same school from their village dropped their studies and returned to their village.⁵ After his studies at Rebgong, when he was about fifteen years old, Dhondup Gyal obtained work at Qinghai Radio in Xining.⁶ His first wife Rinchen Kyi (Rin chen skyid) told me about those years when Dhondup Gyal worked at the radio station.⁷ They got married in 1977 and after a couple of years their son Choedar (Chos dar) was born. At the radio station Dhondup Gyal read the news and later on did translations from Chinese into Tibetan. The radio station sent him to study at the Central Institute of Nationalities in Beijing in 1972, where he studied Tibetan language.⁸ His own CV gives the name of his subject of study as "translation".⁹ In 1975 Dhondup Gyal returned to Qinghai Radio station before starting his studies as an MA research student at the Central Institute for Nationalities in Beijing in 1978.¹⁰

Rinchen Kyi related to me how Dhondup Gyal wrote very spontaneously: he drank beer (*chang*) and finished a literary work in one night. In the morning he showed what he had written to his wife. Before the 1980s and the appearance of Tibetan literary magazines, Dhondup Gyal published writings in the Tibetan language newspaper in Qinghai in the mid part and latter part of the 1970s.¹¹ Besides publishing writings using his own name, he also used the pen

4 Lobsang Choegyal has done some research about Dhondup Gyal's school years and his interviews with Dhondup Gyal's teacher Phagmo (Phag mo) and schoolmate Lama Kyab (Bla ma skyabs) are published in a book edited by him, *Rang grol zhib 'jug, A Study of Rangdrol – Monument in Heart of Tibetan People*, series No. 1, which is produced by Rangdrol Institute Centre in Xining, an institute he founded.

5 Dhondup Gyal's brother Cagjam Gya, pers. comm. in Centsa, 2 July 2005. Although Dhondup Gyal was mostly away from the parental home because of his education, Cagjam Gya had much to tell about him because he had stayed for six months in his brother's house in Chabcha to attend a school there.

6 Tib. mTsho sngon rlung 'phrin khang.

7 She worked at the radio station from 1974 when she was fifteen years old.

8 It seems that Dhondup Gyal was first assigned to study flute playing during his first study period in Beijing, but he was then transferred to study the Tibetan language (information from Rinchen Kyi during a personal interview, 6 July 2005).

9 Dawa Lodroe (Zla ba blo gros) from the office of the *sBrang char* literary magazine kindly gave me a copy of Dhondup Gyal's CV, written by Dhondup Gyal himself. I am thankful to Lhundup Dorje, who helped me to read this document, which is written in Chinese.

10 Sangye Rinchen (Sangs rgyas rin chen 2006: 44) mentions that the class where he studied was called "a research class in ancient Tibetan literature" (*bod yig gna' rtsom zhib 'jug 'dzin grwa*).

11 According to Dawa Lodroe (Zla ba blo gros), a close friend of Dhondup Gyal, and the present-

name Lungthrin Gyal (Rlung 'phrin rgyal, 'Radio Gyal'). I have not managed to get copies of these early writings yet,¹² but should they be found, they would no doubt also be very interesting material for research on imagery. During my field research trip I discovered that some publications from the 1970s and 1980s are becoming quite difficult to find as the libraries at Qinghai did not seem to have systematically preserved the issues of literary magazines and newspapers from that time period.

Rinchen Kyi also told me about Dhondup Gyal's great interest in books and reading. At that time it was more difficult to get books and consequently, when the writer noticed any person reading something, he did all he could to acquire the book for himself. When Dhondup Gyal travelled to Beijing to complete his studies, the sum of three hundred yuan had to be paid for the train transport of three or four big boxes of books that the writer took with him. At that time this sum was much greater than the monthly wages they received from the radio station. Dhondup Gyal liked to read both Chinese and Tibetan books. His wife told me that Dhondup Gyal examined carefully the style of writing of Malchin Hūü, a Mongolian writer.¹³ He also translated some of his writings into Tibetan.¹⁴ Rinchen Kyi mentioned that Dhondup Gyal was well acquainted with Buddhist treatises and treatises on traditional fields of Tibetan learning (*rig gnas*). She thought that probably *Mi la ras pa'i mgur 'bum* ("The Collected Songs of Milarepa") and *Ge sar sgrung* ("The Stories of King Gesar") greatly influenced him. However, she characterized Dhondup Gyal's style as "a style of writing very much his own". Other informants told me that he admired Gendun Choephel's (dGe 'dun chos 'phel) writings, such as the historical work *Deb ther dkar po* ("The White Annals"). Also, according to Buzhi (Bu bzhi), Dhondup Gyal mentioned in 1981 that he had read through the entire *bsTan 'gyur*.¹⁵

The period of higher studies in Beijing marked the appearance of Dhondup Gyal's first book, *'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs* ("The Dawn of Clear Writing").

day editor of the literary magazine *sBrang char*, these writings appeared between 1974 and 1978 (pers. comm. in summer 2005 at the *sBrang char* office). According to rNam sras (2005: 1) "Pad mtsho" and "Brug mtsho" appeared first in the newspaper *mTsho sngon bod yig gсар 'gyur*.

12 These early writings are not included in the list of Dhondup Gyal's writings in Padma 'bum 1994: 47–53.

13 Prof. Chen Qingying, who studied for an MA at the Central Institute of Nationalities at the same time as Dhondup Gyal, confirmed Dhondup Gyal's admiration for Malchin Hūü's work. Prof. Chen Qingying also mentioned that Dhondup Gyal liked Mongolian songs and the work of Li Yin, who was at that time a famous Chinese poet in Beijing (pers. comm. at the Chinese Center for Tibetan Studies, Beijing, 20 June 2005).

14 For more information on these translations, see 2.2 and n. 67.

15 Among the Tibetan works that Dhondup Gyal had read Sangs rgyas rin chen (2006: 48) also mentions the *bKa' 'gyur* and the *gSung 'bum* of Tsongkhapa (Tsong kha pa).

It appeared in 1981 published by the Qinghai Nationalities Press.¹⁶ According to the Tibetan writer Tashi Palden it was the first collection of writings of Tibetan modern literature.¹⁷ It is a small book of over a hundred and fifty pages with a cover depicting birds flying above pink waves of water in the early rays of the violet-coloured light of dawn (see Fig. 4). Its preface entitled “Dzad med me tog bzhad pa'i gсар skyes ljon pa'i myu gu” (“A Sapling of a Young Tree with Limitless Blossoming Flowers”) was written by his teacher, the great Tibetan scholar Dungkar Losang Thrinley, whom Dhondup Gyal admired greatly.¹⁸ In the preface Dungkar Rinpoche writes about a new generation of excellent young writers and identifies “the student of the Tibetan language research class”, Dhondup Gyal, as one of them. Dungkar writes that Dhondup Gyal had written the pieces included in the collection over a period of two years. He did this work in periods of free time when he was not studying. He characterizes their uniqueness by saying that Dhondup Gyal “had created them out of the power of his own intelligence” and also that some of them “represent clearly the wishes of very many young people after the Cultural Revolution period”.¹⁹

The collection *'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rens* contains thirteen pieces of writing belonging to different genres. Most of the writings, nine of them, are poetry. Their titles are “Slob dpon la bсngags pa'i glu dbyangs” (“A Song in Praise of the Professor”), “Khrul min rmi lam ngo mtshar dga' skyed” (“The True Dream of Wonder and Joy”), “Le lo can dang brtson 'grus can” (The Lazy Person and the Diligent Person), “rTswa thang dran glu” (“A Song of Missing the Grassland”), “Slob grwa'i zhogs pa” (“Morning at School”), “bsTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes” (“The Beautiful Flower Garland of Eulogy”), “rGya bod bar gyi mdza' mthun” (“The Friendship Between China and Tibet”), “rTswa thang gi lha mo” (“The Goddess of the Grassland”) and “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gтам” (“Discourse on the Seven Precious Possessions of the Universal Monarch”). These poems are written in a traditional verse form characterized by a regular number of syllables in each line, though the length of lines varies from poem to poem. Their content often seems to encourage the young generation to study,

16 Tib. mTsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang. Heather Stoddard (1994: 826–827) has written about the contents of this book, mentioning especially three pieces of writing: “sGrung pa” (“The Storyteller”), “Slob dpon la bсngags pa'i glu dbyangs” (“A Song in Praise of the Professor”) and an essay about Labrang monastery (Bla brang). She translates the title as “Writing on the Pillow at Dawn”. In my opinion *'bol rtsom* does not need to be connected with “pillow”, but can be understood as a genre of writing which is easy to comprehend.

17 bKra shis dpal ldan 1991: 424.

18 Sangye Rinchen in his article about the life of Dhondup Gyal mentions several other teachers at the Institute of Nationalities in Beijing. See Sangs rgyas rin chen 2006: 50.

19 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 2–3.

praising learning and diligence and also often conforming to the policies of the PRC, for instance the poem “rGya bod bar gyi mdza' mthun”. There are also poems about Dhondup Gyal’s homeland Amdo, which the writer seemed to miss during his studies far away in Beijing.

Dhondup Gyal’s first collection of writings contains three short stories: “Pad mtsho” (“Petso”), “sGrung pa” (“The Storyteller”) and “Brug mtsho” (“Drugtso”). The first and last of these are names of women. Both stories are again quite “pedagogical” in their nature, for example the story “Brug mtsho” praises the career of a woman teacher called by the nickname “Heroine” (dPa’ mo). The special characteristic of the prose works in this collection, compared to traditional literature, is their secular nature. Fictional stories of a traditional kind usually had some connection with religiosity. The collection *'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs* also contains an essay about the monastery at Labrang (Bla brang) and its history entitled “Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil gyi mthong thos mdor bsdus” (“A Brief Discussion about Impressions of Labrang Tashi Khyil”). However, to limit the scope of this study, I have only analysed the imagery of Dhondup Gyal’s fictional works and poetry, not his academic essays.

Dhondup Gyal completed his MA studies in 1981. His MA thesis on the history of Tibetan lyrics entitled *mGur glu'i lo rgyus dang khyad chos* (“The History and Characteristics of Songs”) is a remarkable work 332 pages long.²⁰ It was published by the Nationalities Press in Beijing in 1985. This work provides a great deal of information about the writer’s literary interests and his views on the poetry and lyrics of ancient Tibet. He has also devoted a separate chapter to poetic figures (*rgyan*) in the songs.

Another book appeared almost at the same time as *'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs*, namely Dhondup Gyal’s translations of Thung In Krin’s²¹ novellas “Dre 'bod rkang gling” (“The Bone Horn for Calling the Demons”) and “mTsho 'brug gi rjes snyeg mkhan” (“The Searchers of the Lake Dragon”). The volume bears the title of the first-mentioned novella on its cover and it was published by the Qinghai Nationalities Press. Both novellas could be described as fantasy stories which combine ancient elements and modern science fiction. They are located

20 I am grateful to Namjam Tsering (gNam byams tshe ring) of the Tsholho Teachers’ Training School (in Chabcha) for kindly making available to me the original editions of both Dhondup Gyal’s first collection of poetry and prose and his MA thesis. For an overview of the contents of the chapters of *mGur glu'i lo rgyus dang khyad chos*, see Stoddard 1994: 828–829. Sujata’s book (2005: 185–188) on Kalden Gyatso’s (sKal ldan rgya mtsho) spiritual songs (*mgur*) also contains interesting information on Dhondup Gyal’s views on the poetic figures in Tibetan songs of the *mgur* type.

21 This is a transliteration of the Tibetan way of writing this Chinese name. Probably Tong Enzheng is referred to, whose story *Xueshan modi* is located in Tibet. See Wagner 1985: 22.

in Tibetan areas, so it seems that these exciting and fantastic science fiction stories probably fascinated Dhondup Gyal.²² The translation does not contain any preface or translator's note.

Dhondup Gyal's studies at the Nationalities Institute were a time of intensive creative and scholarly activity. In July 1981 Dhondup Gyal together with Chen Qingying completed a scholarly book about the ancient Tibetan king Thride Songtsen (Khri lde srong btsan).²³ I only have the version of this work included in the later published *The Collected Works*, but according to Pema Bhum it appeared earlier in 1984 in an edition edited by Dhondup Dorje (Don grub rdo rje).²⁴ Dhondup Gyal also worked with Chen Qingying when they translated into Tibetan the section of The New and Old Tang Annals (*Thangyiggsar rnying*) dealing with Tibetan policies. This huge work was completed in May 1980 and appeared as a separate publication published by the Nationalities Press in Beijing in 1983.²⁵ Chen Qingying explained the way they cooperated: they combined their language skills, as Dhondup Gyal had excellent skills in Tibetan and Chen Qingying in Chinese. In this way they were able to attain good results in this kind of demanding historical research and translation work.

After completing his studies and attaining an MA degree in 1981, Dhondup Gyal started to work as a teacher at the same institute in Beijing. He taught a special class of students from Amdo during 1982–1984,²⁶ studying with them such works as Zhangzhungwa Choewang Dragpa's (Zhang zhung ba Chos dbang grags pa) version of the *Ra ma na'i rtogs brjod* ("The *Rāmāyaṇa*"), the Fifth Dalai Lama's historical work, *dPyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs* ("The Song of the Queen of Spring"), and *Mi la ras pa'i rnam thar* ("The Life Story of Milarepa"). There were twenty-four students in that class, one of them being Dhondup Gyal's first wife, Rinchen Kyi.

Apart from his first book *'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs*, Dhondup Gyal also published a large number of writings in various literary magazines, which began to be published at the beginning of the 1980s, such as *sBrang char* ("Gentle Rain"), *Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal* (*Tibetan Art and Literature*) and *mTsho sngon mang tshogs sgyu rtsal* ("The Folk Art of the Blue Lake"). Some of the poems that

22 To read more about the contents of these two novels, please refer to my unpublished MA thesis (Virtanen 2003: 57–59).

23 Don grub rgyal 1997, III: 313.

24 See Don grub rgyal 1994: 48. The title of the work (the way of writing the name of the king) differs somewhat from the edition in Don grub rgyal 1997, III: 230, however. It is probably the same scholarly work on the history of the Tibetan dynastic period.

25 I only have the edition given in Don grub rgyal 1997, IV: 273–524. The information about the original publication in separate book form is based on Pema Bhum's list in Don grub rgyal 1994: 47.

26 Tib. *bod yig zab sbyong 'dzin grwa*. Rinchen Kyi, pers. comm. in Xining, 6 July 2005.

appeared in literary magazines were free verse poems, such as the famous poem “Lang tsho'i rbab chu” (“The Waterfall of Youth”), “Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying gson po zhig 'dug” (“Here Too Is a Heart Alive Strongly Beating”) and “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma” (“The Petals of White Clouds”). Dhondup Gyal is especially famous for these free verse poems (*rang mos snyan ngag*). If the Tibetan term is translated literally it means: “poems according to one’s own wish”, thus proclaiming a freedom from rules and restrictions.

Many of Dhondup Gyal’s prose works also first appeared in literary magazines. Especially remarkable is the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” (“A Flower Destroyed by Frost”), which appeared originally divided into two parts in the magazine *sBrang char*. Other well-known short stories that appeared in literary magazines were “sPrul sku” (“Tulku”), “Brong stag thang” (“The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”), and “Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs” (“The Love of Flesh and Bone”). It seems to be a common practice for Tibetan writers to publish several of their works in literary magazines, and longer works as serials, and only later on compile them as independent collections of writings. In cases where I had access to the original first editions of the writings of Dhondup Gyal that appeared in the literary magazines, I then used the original first edition.²⁷ In many cases when I did not manage to get a copy of the old issues of the literary magazines, I based my readings and analysis on *The Collected Works of Dhondup Gyal*.

Dhondup Gyal and his first wife Rinchen Kyi were divorced in 1983. Several people I interviewed mentioned his liking for drink,²⁸ and his excessive drinking habits seem to have been the main reason for the divorce. While still working at the Nationalities Institute in Beijing, Dhondup Gyal met his second wife, Yumkyi (Yum skyid), who is Mongolian. Yumkyi studied English at the same institute. Dhondup Gyal left Beijing in 1984 for Chabcha, where he became a Tibetan language teacher in the Teachers’ Training School in Tsholho.²⁹ After a couple of months in Chabcha and after Yumkyi had completed her studies at Beijing, they got married in 1984 and lived together in a small house near the school. They had a daughter, Ganglha Dolma (Gangs lha sgrol ma).

27 During the course of my research I did not have a chance to study the original handwritten manuscripts. When I enquired after them in the *sBrang char* office which published several of his writings, it was explained that when they published something they had to hand the manuscripts over to another office which checked their contents. People who had known Dhondup Gyal, told me that most of the remaining manuscripts are with Benkho (Ban kho) in Chengdu, but I did not have a chance to visit him. However, *The Collected Works* and the available original publications provide good material for research into the imagery of Dhondup Gyal’s writings.

28 See also Stoddard 1994: 826 and Chos skyong 2006: 79–83.

29 Tib. mTsho lho mi rigs dge thon slob grwa. In Dhondup Gyal’s time this school was a middle school (*bring rim*), but today it is a high school (*mtsho rim*).

A separate book appeared in 1984, this time edited by Dhondup Gyal himself. The book *sGrung rtsom phyogs bsgrigs me tog phreng mdzes* (“A Collection of Stories: The Beautiful Garland of Flowers”) was published by the Qinghai Nationalities Press and it contained a selection of twelve prose works by various authors, including Dhondup Gyal. In the preface to this publication the editor explains that the writings included were selected from the literary works published during the years 1980–1982 in Tibetan literary magazines such as the *sBrang char* (“Gentle Rain”) and *Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal* (*Tibetan Literature and Art*). In the preface the editor writes: “The fact that now quite a number of new young writers are appearing is the main force behind the development of Tibetan culture. Therefore, which thinking person would not have a happy smile about this.”³⁰ The writer included his own (quite long) short story “sPrul sku” (“Tulku”) in this collection. It had earlier appeared in 1980 in the literary magazine *sBrang char*.³¹

Some of the teachers from the Teachers’ Training School told me about Dhondup Gyal’s teaching career in Chabcha.³² According to them, he was always thinking about the development of the life of the Tibetan people and was in many ways ahead of his time in his views. This and his more modern way of teaching caused difficulties with some more conservative older teachers and the principal of the school at that time. It would seem that Dhondup Gyal’s time at the school was not so harmonious. He had completed an MA degree from a university in the capital of the PRC and had also published a lot of writings, but he still had to work as a teacher in a middle school in a small town in the grassland of Amdo. Apparently he sought work in some other institution,³³

30 Don grub rgyal 1984: “dPe skrun gsal bshad”.

31 See the list of Dhondup Gyal’s writings compiled by Pema Bhum in Don grub rgyal 1994: 50. The works of other authors that Dhondup Gyal included in *sGrung rtsom phyogs bsgrigs me tog phreng mdzes* were Kelsang Namdol’s (sKal bzang rnam sgröl) “Bu mo spun gsum gyi rnam thar”, Kelsang Tseten’s (sKal bzang tshe brtan) “brJed du mi rung ba’i ‘das don”, Wangchen Tobgyal’s (dBang chen stobs rgyal) “rTa ‘dul mkhan gyi gtam rgyud”, Pasang’s (Pa sangs) “Gro so phye mar bsgrigs pa’i chag sgo”, Niphun’s (Nyi phun) “Bu tshe ring la gshin po’i ‘das mchod thengs gsum byas pa”, Dhonden’s (Don ldan) “dGa’ skyel zhu ba”, Tenpa’s (bsTan pa) “Jur ta spen tshe”, Gangtog Tsering’s (Gangs tog tshe ring) “Bu mo skal bzang dang khong gi rag skyogs”, Lhundup’s (Lhun grub) “sTon mjug tu byung ba’i gtam rgyud rta nag sgrog ‘gros”, Jampa Choedzom’s (Byams pa chos ‘dzoms) “Yang cun me tog”, and Magya’s (rMa rgya) “Mi don phug ron gyis dpyad pa’i gtam rgyud”.

32 Their names are Bande Tashi (Ban de bkra shis), Namjam Tsering (gNam byams tshe ring) and, Migyur Dorje (Mi ‘gyur rdo rje). The teachers told that they went to listen when Dhondup Gyal was teaching and read his writings immediately after they were published. Bande Tashi was a student at the Central Institute for Nationalities in Beijing when Dhondup Gyal worked there as a teacher.

33 It was said that the day after he died, someone arrived in Chabcha to invite him to work in an institution elsewhere. Dr. Norbu Wangden (Nor bu dbang ldan), pers. comm. Xining, summer 2005. This is also reported in Sangs rgyas rin chen 2006: 45–46. He also explains how Dhondup

and some sources also mention difficulties in his private life.³⁴ At the end of November 1985 the news spread throughout the school campus, that Dhondup Gyal had suddenly died, followed by a deep sense of shock. Dhondup Gyal had died in his house alone.³⁵ According to most of the earlier scholarly sources in both Tibetan and English he committed suicide, which is also suggested by the notes or letters of testament (*kha chems yi ge*) the writer left.³⁶ The Tibetan translation of one of these notes has been published in Choekyong's book (2006: 56).³⁷ Because there are many versions told by different people and mentioned in various sources about the possible reasons that might have contributed to Dhondup Gyal's untimely death, it is not possible to know for certain what actually led to the tragic ending of his life.³⁸

Because Dhondup Gyal died at the early age of 32, his period of literary productivity was comparatively short. However, he left behind an astonishing number of works. After their first publication, several of Dhondup Gyal's poems and stories were reprinted in various collections containing works by several

Gyal had been asked to work in his native region Amdo, but the real situation in the school did not correspond to his expectations. See also Chos skyong 2006: 152–153. Stoddard (1994: 826) also discusses the posting of Dhondup Gyal to Chabcha and remarks how it would have been more appropriate if he had been given a better post in a higher institute of learning in the PRC.

34 See, e.g. Pad ma 'bum 1994: 38–39 and Chos skyong 2006: 97, 104–105.

35 See Chos skyong 2006: 105 and Padma 'bum 1994: 39.

36 See Chos skyong 2006: 148–152, 153–160; Padma 'bum 1994: 39; Stoddard 1994: 825–826, which contain information on his letters of testament. Padma 'bum mentions two letters, one addressed to Dawa (Zla ba) and the other to Dhondup Gyal's wife. Choekyong mentions the existence of three letters of testament written in Chinese, though he has not been able to see the third letter so its contents are unknown.

37 The note contains words of farewell to life and to friends. Towards the end, Dhondup Gyal writes about his literary work and how he had aimed to “awaken” the Tibetan people, but felt a sense of failure. For the complete text and contents of the note, see Chos skyong 2006: 56.

38 For a scholarly discussion concerning the death of Dhondup Gyal, see Stoddard 1992: 826; Padma 'bum 1994: 39; Chos skyong 2006: 153–160; Sangs rgyas rin chen 2006: 46; Stevenson 1997: 60. Choekyong's research work contains an insightful discussion about suicide. He suggests that there could be many personal and social reasons that accumulate during a person's life time and may lead to a tragic suicide (Chos skyong 2006: 153, 155–156). Padma 'bum (1994: 39) discusses how apparently a charcoal-burning stove had been moved to an inner room, which would have produced poisonous fumes. See also Chos skyong 2006: 147–148. Stevenson and Sangye Rinchen also mention poisoning by charcoal fumes, though in Sangye Rinchen's account it is not specified whether it was suicide or accidental poisoning. One person from Centsa (gCan tsha) in a discussion told me that she thought that the death of Dhondup Gyal could have been an accident because Dhondup Gyal had been drinking and would not have known how to handle the stove properly (Sonam Tsho (bSod nams mtsho), pers. comm. in gCan tsha, 2 July 2005). Stevenson (1997: 60) mentions that according to information he had received in Rebgong, Dhondup Gyal would have heard that he would soon be arrested and consequently committed suicide.

writers.³⁹ Also some of his works have been included in the teaching curriculum of Tibetan schools in the PRC.⁴⁰

About five years after Dhondup Gyal's death a collection of his prose works was edited by Ngawang Phuntsog (Ngag dbang phun tshogs) and published by the Nationalities Press in Beijing. The Publisher's Note praises the author and sees him as a model for young Tibetans engaged in writing in Tibetan whose writings would advance the cause of Tibetan literature and culture in Tibet, the PRC and the entire world.⁴¹ This collection contains eight prose works by Dhondup Gyal. Nearly all of them had been published earlier in various literary magazines. One of the works, entitled "Tshul khriims rgya mtsho" ("Tsultrim Gyatso"), is unfinished, but its first part was published earlier. This collection also contains a short story, "sNgo tshod tshong khang gi mthong thos" ("Seen and Heard at the Vegetable Seller's Shop"). I have found no evidence that this was published earlier and thus this might possibly be a previously unpublished work.⁴² The appendix to this collection also includes a poem written by Dhondup Gyal's friend Dawa Lodroe (Zla ba blo gros) alias Lodroe Gyaltzen (Blo gros rgyal mtshan). According to the editor this poem was written for the memorial event which took place one year after Dhondup Gyal's death. The editor writes, "this poem is able to represent the achievements of Dhondup Gyal's life time and it shows the deep love people held for him".⁴³

Chapter 3 of Choekyong's (2006: 163–167) book provides a concise introduction to Dhondup Gyal's published works. He also mentions some of his other writings that were not included in the *gSung 'bum*, such as a Chinese language autobiography.⁴⁴ Another very carefully done listing of Dhondup Gyal's work

39 Several reprints in various collections are listed by Pad ma 'bum (1994: 48–50) in his list of Dhondup Gyal's writings. Some volumes have appeared in a series entitled *Bod kyi deng rabs rtsom rig dpe tshogs* ("The Series of Modern Tibetan Literature") published by mTsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, which contain works by Dhondup Gyal. One of the volumes, published in 1993, is entitled *Lang tsho'i rbab chu* after Dhondup Gyal's poem. Choekyong (Chos skyong 2006: 164) mentions how a reprint of Dhondup Gyal's poem "Khrul min rmi lam ngo mtshar dga' skyed" can be found in a book published by Mi dmangs rtsom rig dpe skrun khang, which contains works that have been awarded minority literature prizes.

40 See Upton 1999: 21.

41 Don grub rgyal 1990: 2.

42 According to Choekyong (Chos skyong 2006: 166) "sNgo tshod tshong khang gi mthong thos" is not Dhondup Gyal's work and he writes that the style and content of the work are not typical of Dhondup Gyal's writing. Although the authorship of this short story is unclear its content is socially critical and in this respect there is at least some connection to other prose works of Dhondup Gyal. On the other hand, it has little imagery and is very straightforward in its telling, and thus does not appear to be very typical of Dhondup Gyal's usual style.

43 Don grub rgyal 1990: 231. Appendix (*zhar byung*).

44 He lists such titles as "mTho sgang gi rlung 'tshub dmar po", "Bod yig shing rta'i srol 'byed thu

has been provided by Pema Bhum in the collection of Dhondup Gyal's writings that he edited.⁴⁵ It is a very valuable listing because it provides information on the original places of publication of several works that were later on included in *The Collected Works*.

The Collected Works of Dhondup Gyal (dPal don grub rgyal gyi gsung 'bum) appeared over a decade after his death in 1997. It comprises six volumes of writings in all and was published by the Nationalities Press in Beijing. This publication, which was edited by Benkho (Ban kho) and Tagyal (bKra rgyal), is a major source for any research on Dhondup Gyal and his works.⁴⁶ Its appearance was significant since the issues of the literary magazines that appeared in the 1980s, where many of Dhondup Gyal's writings first appeared, are becoming increasingly difficult to acquire. The publication of the volumes of *The Collected Works* preserves the literary production of Dhondup Gyal for future generations and also makes his writings more available to today's reading public. Also, this publication contains several previously unpublished works, some letters of Dhondup Gyal, and even some works which were left unfinished. The cover design of the volumes depicts typical Tibetan elements and symbols: a wild yak which stands amid a sun and a moon set against a red sky, and below them is the landscape of the magnificent snow mountains (see Fig. 5). The front pages of the volumes also contain specimens of Dhondup Gyal's handwriting and his photos. The subtitles for these six volumes of *The Collected Works* are the following: 1) *sNyan ngag phyogs bsgrigs*, the collected poems; 2) *brTsams sgrung phyogs bsgrigs*, the collected stories; 3) *dPyad rtsoṃ phyogs bsgrigs*, the collected research works; 4) *bsGyur rtsoṃ phyogs bsgrigs*, the collected translations; 5) *'Grel rtsoṃ phyogs bsgrigs*, the collected commentaries, and 6) *Thor rtsoṃ phyogs bsgrigs*, the miscellaneous writings.

mi'i drin dran pa", "Khri ka'i 'jam dbyangs chos rdzong la bstod pa lhag bsam dung gi sgra dbyangs", "Pe cing dran glu", "gCan tsha la ring brgyud pa", "Ka rtsoṃ shol ka gcig", "Me tog gso ba", "rGya'i dpe chos shan sbyar", "Me tog gangs lha", "Od lam lam 'tsher ba'i skar ma 'od chen". However, one of these, "Me tog gso ba" ("Cultivating Flowers"), is a translation of Lao She's (1898–1966) essay, which was published in the volume of Dhondup Gyal's *Collected Works* containing his translation works (IV: 131–133). (For more information on Lao She's essay, see Virtanen 2003: 54–55.) Choekyong also mentions two other works, one titled "Gyod bshags", written by Dhondup Gyal and "sPun mched slar gso byed pa", translated by Dhondup Gyal and Kyablo (sKyabs lo) (Chos skyong 2006: 167). Thus much research remains to be done, and it would appear that Dhondup Gyal's literary output is larger than the works that were included in *The Collected Works*. Recently a work by Rangdol (Rang grol) entitled "rTsom rig sgyu rtsal gyi srog" was included in a relatively new publication, *Rlung rta* (2002). Rangdol was Dhondup Gyal's pen name.

45 Don grub rgyal 1994: 47–53.

46 In addition to the main editors Benkho and Tagyal, each volume gives the name of its volume editor: I, III, IV & VI: Phur kho; II: mGon po dar rgyas, and V: Dar rgyas.

All of these volumes are of course important for a study of Dhondup Gyal's literary works. However, the most significant materials from the viewpoint of this study on imagery in his literary works are volumes one and two, which contain his poetry and prose works, and also four of the works contained in volume six. Those four works could be classified as a literary essay, a prose poem, a fairytale-like story, and a poem structured in a six-syllable metre typical of folk songs.⁴⁷ The other volumes such as those containing his translations and commentaries provide ideas about the writer's interests, such as literary works that he felt interested in translating and commenting on. In the volume containing research work, those writings related to the study of literature, such as his notes for teaching the subject, are of interest for his views on literature.

The volume of poetry contains altogether twenty poetic works of various lengths ranging from a couple of pages to almost ninety pages. Before inclusion in *The Collected Works* most of them have appeared previously in various publications. Nine of them appeared originally in Dhondup Gyal's first book '*Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs*' ("The Dawn of Clear Writing"). Some of the other poems in *The Collected Works* were published originally in the then newly-established Tibetan language literary magazines such as *sBrang char* ("Gentle Rain"), *Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal* (*Tibetan Art and Literature*), *mTsho sngon mang tshogs sgyu rtsal* ("The Folk Art of the Blue Lake"), and *Gangs rgyan me tog* ("Snow Flower").⁴⁸ *The Collected Works* does not contain any information where the literary works were first published, but information on the original publication places and several reprints can be found in Pema Bhum's list of Dhondup Gyal's works included in the selection of Dhondup Gyal's writings he edited.⁴⁹

The first text in the volume of poetry is a long (89-page) poetic work in 21 sections (*le'u*) entitled "Rā ma na'i rtogs brjod go bder sbyar ba mgur dbyangs blo gsar rna ba'i dpyid glu" ("An Easy Adaptation of *Rāmāyaṇa*: The Melodious Spring Song for the Ears of the Young"). This work is obviously based on the *Rāmāyaṇa* – Dhondup Gyal in his preface (1997, I: 12) explains that he used as its basis the Chinese translation of the *Rāmāyaṇa*⁵⁰ and Zhangzhungwa Choewang Dragpa's *rTogs brjod dri za'i bu mo'i rgyud mang* ("The Story of the Lute of the Gandharva Girl"). I shall not discuss the imagery of this work as it is very likely that in Dhondup Gyal's adaptation the images imitate or echo those found in the

47 I do not know why "Nga dang khu byug gnyis ka" has been included in the volume of miscellaneous works and not in the volume of poetry.

48 Literally 'snow ornament flower'.

49 Don grub rgyal 1994: 47–53.

50 According to Dhondup Gyal himself (1997, I: 9), the Chinese translation in question was done by Sung yun from the English translation of *Rāmāyaṇa*.

Rāmāyaṇa. Indeed, this work abounds in such typical Indian imagery as lotuses, parrots, and elephants. In Tibetan literature the images of flora and fauna more typical to a warmer Indian climate have mostly been loaned and transmitted from Indian literature, later becoming an integral part of the stock of images found in Tibetan literature. Another reason why I shall not discuss Dhondup Gyal's poetic adaptation of *Rāmāyaṇa* is its length.⁵¹

Previously unpublished⁵² poems contained in *The Collected Works* are the free verse poems “Rig pa'i dpa' bo rnam la phul ba'i bstod tshig” (“A Eulogy to the Heroes of Wisdom”), “Goms gshis lags/ bdag gi snying gnam 'di la gson” (“Convention, Please Listen to My Heart-felt Words”) and a short metric poem “Ka rkyang legs bshad gur gum me tog” (“Good Sayings with the Letter Ka: A Flower of Saffron”) in which all lines start with the first letter of the Tibetan alphabet, *ka*.⁵³

I discuss at least some features or give some examples of the imagery in poems other than Dhondup Gyal's adaptation of *Rāmāyaṇa*. However, as Dhondup Gyal's poetry is so rich in imagery, it has only been possible to give some examples rather than discuss his poetic images exhaustively. Some of his poems that are in the complicated *kāvya* style, such as “sNyan ngag la sbyar ba'i sgrung rtsom gzhon nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan” (“A Poetic Narrative: The Beautiful Ornament for the Minds of Young Persons”) and “'bsTod pa' bklags pa'i 'char snang” (“Impressions on Reading ‘Eulogies’”), have received less attention because their style clearly imitates the traditional *kāvya* style of writing and because the poetic figures (*rgyan*) are too numerous to be dealt with in detail. However, where relevant, I have discussed some of their images and I also pose the question whether the imagery is primarily traditional or whether there are features in the works that separate them from tradition and mark them as contemporary compositions.

I have centred my attention on works that I find more typical of modern literature, namely the imagery of Dhondup Gyal's short stories and free verse poetry. I have paid special attention to his free verse poems as they clearly differ from traditional styles of writing poetry. In particular I have focused on the central

51 For more about this long poetic work, see Lin's recent article (2008), which discusses Dhondup Gyal and *Rāmāyaṇa*. At the moment it remains an open question whether Dhondup Gyal's adaptation of the *Rāmāyaṇa* was published before its appearance in *The Collected Works*. Pema Bhum's list (1994: 53) refers to a work bearing almost the same title published in the *Gangs rgyan me tog* literary magazine.

52 At least no previous publications have come to my knowledge.

53 The main structural principle of the poem is to play with the sound *ka*, which could be classified as a sound ornament, and is thus not directly linked to my concern with imagery.

or dominant images of these poems, especially where their structuring seemed highly innovative with regard to the preceding tradition.

I have also paid some attention to images in Dhondup Gyal's early metric poems and song-like compositions, such as the poem "Nga dang khu byug gnyis ka" ("Me and the Cuckoo"). Because of the range of Dhondup Gyal's images, I have had to select only those images that shared the same kind of source domain that was discussed in a particular chapter, or those images that were very significant or central to the work in question and seemed to deserve special attention. As the earlier scholarly works tend to give more attention to works that are well-known, such as "rKang lam phra mo" ("The Narrow Footpath") and "Lang tsho'i rbab chu" ("The Waterfall of Youth"), I felt it would be of interest to also discuss imagery in lesser known earlier works of poetry and prose that were available.

Dhondup Gyal's prose is also rich in imagery. I have examined all his fictional prose works and will analyse the images they contain. I will also discuss imagery in the literary essay "rKang lam phra mo" and the prose poem "Dri bzhon gyi bu mo" ("The Girl of the Wind"), and will present some remarks about the fairytale "Bu ldom po dang klu'i sras mo" ("The Wanderer Boy and the Daughter of Nāgas").

Dhondup Gyal's short stories have been included in volume two of *The Collected Works*. This volume contains fifteen prose works. Most of these are short stories (*sgrung thung*), but there is also a rather long novella (*sgrung 'bring*), the above mentioned "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" ("A Flower Destroyed by Frost"). Two of the works included in the collection are parts of longer unfinished prose works, "Tshul khirms rgya mtsho" ("Tsultrim Gyatso"), which is named after its main protagonist, and "bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud" ("A Story of Searching for the Royal Tombs"). They are probably the beginnings of novels (*sgrung ring*) which remained unfinished due to the early demise of the writer. Three of the short stories – "Pad mtsho" ("Petso"), "Brug mtsho" ("Drugtso"), and "sGrung pa" ("The Storyteller") – were originally published in 'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs ("The Dawn of Clear Writing"). Most of the other short stories appeared first in literary magazines, such as *sBrang char*, *Nyi gzhon* ("The Young Sun"), *mTsho sngon mang tshogs sgyu rtsal* ("The Folk Art of the Blue Lake"), and *Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal* (*Tibetan Art and Literature*). The titles of the other stories are: "Sems gcong" ("Depression"), "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs" ("The Waves of Love"), "rGan po blo gyong" ("The Stubborn Old Man"), "rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma" ("A Shameless Bride"), "sPrul sku" ("Tulku"), "Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs" ("The Love of Flesh and Bone"), "Brong stag thang" ("The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger"), "Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam" ("The Impermanent Illusory Dream"), and "sNgo tshod tshong khang gi mthong thos" ("Seen and Heard at the Vegetable Seller's Shop").

It is not completely clear to me why certain works have been classified in *The Collected Works* as “miscellaneous writings” rather than placing the prose works in the volume containing stories and the poem in the poetry volume. Having said that, admittedly the style of the prose works does differ slightly from the prose in volume two, being written either in an essay style (“rKang lam phra mo”, “The Narrow Footpath”), in the form of a prose poem (“Dri bzhon gyi bu mo”, “The Girl of the Wind”) or in a more fairytale-like way (“Bu ldom po dang klu'i sras mo”, “The Wanderer Boy and the Daughter of Nāgas” and “Lham ya gcig”, “A Pairless Shoe”).⁵⁴ The poem “Nga dang khu byug gnyis ka” (“Me and the Cuckoo”) is written in the traditional six-syllable verse typical in Tibetan folk lyrics. Volume six of *The Collected Works* contains a work entitled “Bod yig slob pa” (“Studying Tibetan”), written in Amdo dialect in the form of a dialogue or rather an argument (*kha shags*), the writer’s notes on lecturing about literature, which are of great interest for understanding his writings, a long work on Tibetan history, and some letters the writer sent to his friends.

Another work which is interesting from the point of view of the study of imagery is the famous song “E ma mtsho sngon po” (“Oh, Blue Lake!”), with lyrics by Dhondup Gyal. For some reason it has been omitted from *The Collected Works*. This popular song, often heard on the radio, has also been available as a VCD in compilations of songs with accompanying videos. I have used the lyrics from one of these music videos in my discussion.

2.2 Placing Dhondup Gyal in the context of literary traditions and some remarks on traditional Tibetan literature

Dhondup Gyal’s literary production raises many questions about the background of his writing and its influences. His position as the founder of modern Tibetan literature makes it especially important to place and understand his writing in the context of literary traditions.⁵⁵

Earlier scholarship has suggested three influences on modern Tibetan writing: the Tibetan tradition, Chinese literature, and influences from Western litera-

54 The original publication of “Lham ya gcig” in *sBrang char* says under the title that “Dhondup Gyal collected and edited” the work. Thus it seems that this fairytale is not Dhondup Gyal’s original composition, but instead reflects his interest in folk culture. For this reason I have not discussed its imagery.

55 For information on the beginning stages of modern Tibetan literature and Dhondup Gyal’s role at that time, see, for example, Tsering Shakya 2000b: 36; Pema Tsering 1999: 112–114; Stoddard 1994; Kapstein 1999; Hartley 2003: 185–194; and in Tibetan bKra shis dpal ldan 1991: 424; Chos skyong 2006.

ture.⁵⁶ The Tibetan tradition contains indigenous Tibetan styles of writing as well as influences and loans from India, which during the course of history have been incorporated into the Tibetan literary tradition.

After the Chinese occupation of Tibet, the Tibetan-populated regions of the PRC have been strongly influenced by Chinese language and culture. Tibetan youths who received their education or part of it in China had an opportunity to gain a good knowledge of Chinese literature and writing.⁵⁷ In China modern writing had already started in the first part of the twentieth century with the May Fourth Movement and the writings of well-known Chinese writers like Lu Xun.⁵⁸

During Dhondup Gyal's lifetime a number of Western literary works were published in Chinese translations. Therefore the genres of secular short stories, novels, and free verse poetry were no doubt familiar in their Western and Chinese forms to young Tibetans who received their education in mainland China. In "Slob khrid dang sbyar ba'i rtsom rig gi zin bris" ("Notes for Teaching Literature") Dhondup Gyal stresses the importance of studying literature produced in other cultures:

*nga tshos bod rang nyid kyi rtsom pa'i gnas la 'jug tshul gyi rigs pa'i gzhung lugs la slob
sbyong byed pa'i rmang gzhi'i thog nges par du mi rigs gzhan dag gi rtsom 'bri ba'i shes
bya dang nyams myong la'ang nan tan gyis slob sbyong byed dgos/
(Don grub rgyal, "Slob khrid dang sbyar ba'i rtsom rig gi zin bris")⁵⁹*

In addition to our studies of the traditional system of the Tibetan art of writing, there is also a clear need to study the knowledge and experiences of other cultures on writing.

(Dhondup Gyal, "Notes for Teaching Literature")

Tashi Palden in his research article on Dhondup Gyal's works also writes about Dhondup Gyal's style viewing it as a combination of traditional Tibetan ways of writing and the influences of other countries which came from the writer's

⁵⁶ See A.A. Moon 1991, Part 3: 13. According to Moon, Western influences came through Chinese translations. See also Hartley 1999: 35; 2003: 151; Hartley & Shiaffini-Vedani 2008: xxi for some influences from Western literature. The Tibetan writer Tashi Palden (bKra shis dpal ldan 1991: 426) describes how Dhondup Gyal studied both Tibetan literature and the literatures of other countries. Stevenson (1997: 58) suggests some influence from the Chinese writer Lu Xun on Dhondup Gyal's writing.

⁵⁷ Yangdon Dhondup's (2004) PhD dissertation contains valuable information on the language situation in Tibet and discusses Tibetan writers who have chosen Chinese language as their literary medium.

⁵⁸ See McDougall & Louie 1997: 19, 98–99. For information on Lu Xun and his works, see Eva Shan Chou's article (2007), which contains a good bibliography on Lu Xun's writings.

⁵⁹ Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 92.

studies of world literature.⁶⁰ He mentions in particular Dhondup Gyal's studies of Western free verse poetry (p. 437). Choekyong mentions Dhondup Gyal's familiarity with Mayakovsky's poem "The Cloud in Pants" and suggests his influence on Dhondup Gyal's free verse poems.⁶¹

Generally such factors as the political atmosphere and the social situation influence writers in authoritarian regimes like the PRC. Writers there have to obey certain restrictions and follow political guidelines on what can be published. In a Communist society literature is strongly linked to society: it is viewed to emerge from society, depict society, and also serve society. The Tibetan Rinchen Tashi, for example, explains the origins of literature in terms of society, basing his views on Marxism.⁶² According to him the life of a society is the main object to be represented by literature. These kinds of attitudes make it more difficult to produce literature that would be independent of the requirements of society. Dhondup Gyal in his literary critical essay "rTsom rig sgyu rtsal gyi srog" ("On the Contents of Literature")⁶³ refers to Marxist views about the way in which literature is related to the life of society (*rtsom rig gi 'tsho ba*). However, he observes that this relation is not a direct reflection, and that the writer brings into the literary work his subjective experience too.⁶⁴ In his lecture notes on literature he advises those aspiring to become writers to study the life of society and characterizes it as "an inexhaustable source for writing".⁶⁵

According to the interviews of people who knew Dhondup Gyal, he eagerly read almost any kind of books he could get hold of. As mentioned earlier (2.1), Dhondup Gyal liked the writings of the Inner Mongolian writer Malchin Hūü.⁶⁶ The two works of Malchin Hūü which Dhondup Gyal translated are included

60 bKra shis dpal ldan 1991: 426.

61 Chos skyong 2006: 62. Choekyong received this information in his interview with Chen Qingying (Khrin chin dbyin), see Chos skyong 2006: 62. For Dorian Rottenberg's translation of "The Cloud in Pants", see Mayakovsky 1986, II: 7–26.

62 Rin chen bkra shis 1998: 3–4.

63 The Tibetan term *srog* normally means 'life', but as a literary critical term it requires an alternative translation. Here I have translated it as 'contents', which would seem to fit the explanations given in the critical essay. The term *srog* is also explained in Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaḍarśa*. See, for example, the verses of the root text of *Kāvyaḍarśa* and their commentary by Dungkar Losang Thrinley in his *sNyan ngag la 'jug tshul tshig rgyan rig pa'i sgo 'byed* (Dung dkar blo bzang 'phrin las 2004: 42–53). According to the explanation in *Kāvyaḍarśa*'s root text which has been quoted in the commentary, *srog* is characterized as "brjod bya'i don", 'the meaning of the topic' (p. 43).

64 Rang grol 2002: 84–85.

65 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 90.

66 In Chinese, Malaqin Fu. He is reported to live in Beijing and writes in Chinese. I am grateful to Prof. Juha Janhunen for this information.

in the volume of translations in his *Collected Works*.⁶⁷ In one of the stories called “sNyan ngag gi rba rlabs” (“The Waves of Poetry”) Malchin Hüü depicts an old woman who is so thankful to the Communist Party because her life has been saved in a modern hospital that she decides to become a tractor driver to serve the Party. In the other short story by Malchin Hüü, titled “Glu sgra – sngon chad kyi gtam rgyud” (“The Sound of Song – A Past Story”), the story is told of a troubadour who goes to collect food for the ordinary folk. This story contrasts the rich and the poor, the rich being depicted in a very negative light, thus showing the influence of Communist views concerning the class struggle. The prose is intercut with dialogue and beautiful lyrics, written in the style of socialist realism in that they depict the heroes of the people in a romantic, idealized light. The idea of the hero of the people also figures in Dhondup Gyal’s short story “Brug mtsho”, where a woman teacher is called a “Heroine”. A feature shared with Malchin Hüü is the intercutting of prose with dialogue.

Dhondup Gyal’s literary essay “rTsom rig gi snang brnyan” (“Literary Images”) also has quotations from, and references to, the views of Gorki and Lu Xun, showing that he was familiar with both their writings. The essay also mentions Balzac. This demonstrates a certain degree of acquaintance with world literary traditions on Dhondup Gyal’s part. Mark Stevenson (1997: 58) in his essay on Dhondup Gyal’s “rKang lam phra mo” has compared his essay style to the “meditative *zawen* style of Lu Xun”.

Judging from Dhondup Gyal’s *Collected Works* it is possible to say quite a lot about his literary interests. Among the translations there is, for example, a work by the Chinese writer Lao She.⁶⁸ But based on his writings it is also clear that Dhondup Gyal had a great interest in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. This Indian epic came early to Tibet, and Dhondup Gyal himself translated almost half of Kālidāsa’s drama *Śakuntalā* (*Bya len ma’i zlos gar*) into Tibetan.⁶⁹ Dhondup Gyal’s scholarly writings and commentaries also make it clear that he was very interested in earlier Tibetan traditional literature, like the songs of the yogi Milarepa (Mi la ras pa), the history work of the Fifth Dalai Lama entitled *Deb ther dpyid kyi rgyal mo’i glu dbyangs*, Dunhuang documents, and so on.

Thus having a good basis in Tibetan traditional literature, Dhondup Gyal brought together literary ideas in the literary atmosphere of the China of his day,

67 See Don grub rgyal 1997, IV: 134–178. For information on Dhondup Gyal’s translations see Virtanen 2003: 52–59.

68 Lao She (1899–1966) was a Chinese writer who wrote fiction in a realistic style. See Wang 1992: 14–18, 111–200.

69 For the unfinished translation, see Don grub rgyal 1997, IV: 1–58. There is a Finnish translation of Kālidāsa’s original Sanskrit and prakrit drama by Karttunen, see Kaalidaasa 1988.

a contemporary China that was also familiar with world literature. This explains how he could introduce a literary style of writing that combined genres that were new to Tibetan literature but also had many features of traditional styles of writing. In his works it is possible to perceive a shift from writings that were more traditional in their style to writings that experimented with new styles and techniques.

To understand better Dhondup Gyal's imagery and to be able to see its connections, I shall make some comparisons with traditional literature. But owing to the breadth and scope of this literature, I have had to be selective in my choice. Mostly comparisons have been drawn with some extremely well-known works which are commonly read in Tibetan communities and that also in most cases must have been known to Dhondup Gyal.⁷⁰ They are all works that have been originally written in Tibetan. Among these works are Milarepa's songs dating from the eleventh century,⁷¹ Sakya Paṇḍita Kunga Gyaltsen's (Sa skya paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan) *Legs par bshad pa rin po che'i gter* ("The Treasury of Good Sayings") from the thirteenth century,⁷² Dokhar Zhabdrung Tsering Wangyal's (mDo mkhar zhabs drung Tshe ring dbang rgyal) *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud* ("The Tale of the Incomparable Prince") from the eighteenth century,⁷³ the songs of the Sixth Dalai Lama (1683–1706),⁷⁴ and *sNang sa 'od 'bum gyi rnam thar* ("The

70 The choice has also, of course, been affected by which works were available to me.

71 I have often used the edition of Rus pa'i rgyan can's *rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po mi la ras pa'i rnam mgur* ("The Lifestory and Songs of the Great Yogi Milarepa"), which was published by mTsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, and sometimes the edition of this same work published by the Tibetan Cultural Printing Press (Shes rig dpar khang) in Dharamsala. However, I have sometimes also drawn direct comparisons with an English translation in Garma C.C. Chang's *Sixty Songs of Milarepa*.

72 Comparisons have been made with the Tibetan original stanzas in *Legs par bshad pa rin po che'i gter gyi don 'grel blo gsal bung ba'i bsti gnas* published by Bod gzhung shes rig par khang. There is also an English translation of this work by John T. Davenport entitled *Ordinary Wisdom: Sakya Pandita's Treasury of Good Advice*. For a study of Sakya Paṇḍita's work, see Bosson (1969).

73 This remarkable Tibetan work has been studied by Beth Ellen Solomon in her 1987 PhD dissertation, "*The Tale of the Incomparable Prince: A Study and Translation of the Tibetan Novel gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud* by mDo mkhar zhabs drung Tshe ring dbang rgyal (1697–1763)". Her translation of the tale has also been published by HarperCollins: Tshe ring dbang rgyal, *The Tale of the Incomparable Prince* (1996). Because her dissertation was more readily accessible to me than the published book, I have used her translation provided there (though at points I have used the Tibetan original) to locate images for comparison. See also her article Newman 1996: 411–421, especially for a summary of the plot (pp. 414–416) and also discussion about the thematic influences and some ideas about the metaphors and their sources.

74 I have used the Tibetan edition of the songs entitled *Rig 'dzin tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho'i gsung mgur dang gsang ba'i rnam thar* published from Mi rigs dpe skrun khang in 1981. I am thankful to Tenpa Yargye (bsTan pa yar rgyas) for giving me this book as a present. For a research work on these songs, see Sørensen 1990. Also K. Dhondup's book 1981/1996 contains information on the Sixth Dalai Lama and the Tibetan text and English translations of his songs.

Life Story of Nangsa Oebum”).⁷⁵ I will also present some comparisons with the songs of Kalden Gyatso (sKal ldan rgya mtsho, 17th c.)⁷⁶ and occasional comparisons with the imagery in the old Tibetan Dunhuang documents⁷⁷ as well as the Tibetan epic *Gling ge sar rgyal po'i sgrung* (“The Stories of King Gesar of Gling”).⁷⁸ Another motivating feature for the selection of the above works is that it is evident that they possess a richness of imagery in various forms. The comparisons have been partly drawn with Tibetan originals and partly with Western translations. This has depended partly on which versions were available to me and largely on where I first managed to locate an image bearing some kind of similarity with an image in the writings of Dhondup Gyal. I am aware that more comparisons would be needed, but it is challenging and time-consuming to locate images suitable for comparison and thus for practical reasons the comparisons could not be done as carefully and in such detail as I had initially desired. Significant images can also be found in folk songs and stories and some comparisons have been made with them, too.⁷⁹

I have also presented some comparisons of Dhondup Gyal’s imagery with the Indian treatise by Daṇḍin, the *Kāvyaḍarśa* (Tib. *sNyan ngag me long*, Eng. “Mirror of Poetry”). It was first transmitted and translated into Tibetan since the thirteenth century, beginning with Sakya Paṇḍita translating parts of it in his *mKhas 'jug* (“The Entrance Gate for the Wise”). Later in the same century the treatise was translated completely by Shongton Dorje Gyaltzen (Shong ston rDo rje rgyal mtshan) and Lakṣmīkara.⁸⁰ It has had a tremendous influence on the development of Tibetan poetry. The formal theoretical study of poetics in Tibet and in Tibetan areas has for several centuries been dominated by the

75 From *Shes rig par khang*. It is a libretto used as a basis for the performances of the Tibetan *Lhamo* opera.

76 See Sujata 2006.

77 On some occasions comparisons have been drawn to the old documents in the OTDO database and also to secondary studies, such as Stein’s *Tibetan Civilization*, which contains a lot of valuable information on Dunhuang documents. However, these comparisons are very limited, because imagery in the old Tibetan materials is a separate field of study and because these materials are so ancient that reading and interpreting them is very demanding.

78 Some comparisons have been made to a volume of the Gesar epic narrated by Dragpa (Grags pa 1999) and entitled *Sog po rta rdzong*.

79 A collection of folk tales that has been used for several of the comparisons is called *Byis sgrung dga' ba'i rtsed 'jo* and was collected by Karma Khabum (Karma mkha' 'bum) and Jambu ('Jam bu). The folk song collections that have been used include *Bod kyi dga' gzhas sos ka'i tshor ba* compiled by Tashi Tsering, and *La gzhas* compiled by Zhin dbang rgyal.

80 For transmission of *Kāvyaḍarśa* in Tibet, see van der Kuijp 1996: 395. He has enumerated seven stages of transmission (p. 396). Epling’s dissertation (1989: 1444–1516) contains a long discussion on *kāvya* in Tibet and also contains information on the section discussing poetry in Sakya Paṇḍita’s *mKhas 'jug*. See also R.R. Jackson 1996: 374–377.

Indian theory of poetics presented in it.⁸¹ I shall present comparisons to see the connecting and differentiating features with respect to imagery and structural characteristics. It also has to be remembered that some of Dhondup Gyal's verse writings were written in the Indic-influenced ornamental style, but the main feature differentiating them from earlier *kāvya*-compositions is that their themes may be related to some issues or phenomena related to the life and society of the time of their writer. Dhondup Gyal seems to have been somewhat against the use of complicated synonymical terminologies (*mngon brjod*), although his own writings do contain them. Therefore in the discussion I have also made use of some commentaries of synonymical treatises.⁸²

I have also presented some comparisons with literature from various cultures other than Tibetan, often relying on English translations when the works have not been originally in English, as for example, in the case of some literary works in Chinese or Sanskrit. The Tibetan works, especially the works of Dhondup

81 The author of the *Kāvyaadarśa* Daṇḍin lived in the 7th century CE in Kāncipuram. See Warder's *Indian Kāvya Literature* (I: 94–95, 211; IV: 165–211) for information about Daṇḍin and his works. According to the bibliography in vol. I the actual title of *Kāvyaadarśa* is *Kāvyalakṣaṇa*, and in Warder's opinion the first title is a "corrupt title" (p. 227). In present-day India Kāncipuram is located in the state of Tamil Nadu in South India. After the early spread of the *Kāvyaadarśa* into Tibet, Tibetan theorizing about poetics has mainly consisted of commentaries on this treatise normally containing the root text, its explanation and the writer's own examples written according to the rules in the root text. Some well-known Tibetan commentaries on the *Kāvyaadarśa* are, for instance, the commentaries written by the Great Fifth Dalai Lama Ngawang Losang Gyatso (Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho) entitled *sNyan 'grel dbyangs can dgyes glu* ("The Commentary on Poetry: The Song Delighting Sarasvatī") and Boekhepa Mipham Geleg Namgyal (Bod mkhas pa Mi pham dge legs rnam rgyal) called *sNyan ngag gi bstan bcos chen po me long la 'jug pa'i bshad sbyar daṇḍi 'i dgongs rgyan* ("The Root Text and Commentary for *The Mirror*, The Great Treatise on Poetry: The Ornament of Thought of Daṇḍin"). Two of the more recent commentaries on this treatise are those by Setshang Losang Palden (bSe tshang Blo bzang dpal ldan) and Hortsang Jigme (Hor gtsang 'jigs med), among many others. *Kāvyaadarśa* is a treatise which even today is commonly taught to young Tibetans in schools and institutes. Students commonly use one of its Tibetan commentaries which normally contain the Tibetan translation of Daṇḍin's root text too. In the process of studying the treatise, students often memorize the root text by heart and also compose their own examples (*dper brjod*) based on those provided in the root text (*rtsa ba*) and commentaries.

82 For information on *mngon brjod* terminologies Tibetan commentarial works have been used, see gZhis rtse dge 'os slob grwa'i bod yig slob dpyod tsho chung (1991) and Nor bu dgra 'dul & Tsho ring nam rgyal (1992). Interestingly, Sakya Paṇḍita translated part of an important Indic treatise of *abhidhāna* (*mngon brjod*) into Tibetan in his work *Tshig gi gter* ("Treasury of Words"), see Eppling (1989: 1444). For comparisons with the *Kāvyaadarśa* I have made use of the Tibetan translation of its root text in such Tibetan commentaries as Dungkhar Losang Thrinley's (Dung dkar blo bzang 'phrin las) commentary *sNyan ngag la 'jug tshul tshig rgyan rig pa'i sgo 'byed* ("How to Enter Poetry: Opening the Door to the Theory of Poetic Ornaments") and Setshang Losang Palden's (bSe tshang blo bzang dpal ldan) commentary *Tshangs sras bzhad pa'i sgra dbyangs* ("The Melodious Sound of Sarasvatī's Laughter").

Gyal, have been studied in their original Tibetan language, unless otherwise indicated in the text when some already available translations or scholarly works have been used (see 2.2, nn. 71–79). The comparisons and discussions of the views of modern cognitive theorists and studies on literature are also helpful for understanding the general characteristics of imagery shared cross-culturally and those that are more culture specific or could be characterized as innovation by a particular author.

2.3 Earlier research on Dhondup Gyal and modern Tibetan literature

Earlier research on Dhondup Gyal and his works exists both in Tibetan and in Western languages. I shall first mention some Tibetan contributions. In 1989 in *Bod ljongs zhib 'jug* Tashi Palden's (bKra shis dpal ldan) long research article appeared on the writings of Dhondup Gyal. Tashi Palden is himself a well-known author and he discusses insightfully the literary characteristics of several of Dhondup Gyal's works of both prose and poetry that were available at that time.⁸³ Another especially influential contribution on the studies of Dhondup Gyal is Pema Bhum's (Padma 'bum 1994) essay about the life of Dhondup Gyal, which appeared as an introduction to a selection of Dhondup Gyal's works published in India entitled *Don grub rgyal gyi lang tsho'i rbab chu/ dang ljags rtsom bdam sgrig* ("Dhondup Gyal's Waterfall of Youth and Selected Writings").⁸⁴ His essay provides good biographical information and was for a long time, before the appearance of Choekyong's (Chos skyong) book, the most detailed source about the life story of the great writer from Amdo.

The most remarkable and comprehensive research work on Dhondup Gyal in Tibetan is no doubt Choekyong's (Chos skyong) *Rang grol zhib 'jug (A Study of Don grub rgyal)*, which appeared quite recently in 2006. Choekyong is a scholar and writer from Amdo, who currently works as an editor for the *sBrang char* magazine. His book contains an extensive overview of earlier Tibetan writ-

83 Some works of Dhondup Gyal were published posthumously, many of them in *The Collected Works*, which appeared in 1997. Tashi Palden's article was reprinted in 1991 in his book *Phyi nyin gyi gnam gshis de ring las legs pa yong nges*.

84 Pema Bhum's introduction to the life of Dhondup Gyal has been translated into English by Lauran Hartley, see Pema Bhum 1995. There is also another article by him on Tibetan modern poetry (Pema Bhum 1999). It discusses this subject in a more general manner, but also mentions Dhondup Gyal's significant contribution and presents an interesting interpretation of his poem "Lang tsho'i rbab chu" (Pema Bhum 1999: 13). According to note 1 of Ronald Schwartz's English language translation of Pema Bhum's article, the original Tibetan version appeared in 1999 published by the Amnye Machen Institute under the title *Mi rabs gsar pa'i snying khams kyi 'phar lding/ snyan ngag gsar pa'i skor gleng ba*.

ings and articles about the writer, and also some information on publications in Western languages.⁸⁵ The book has over a hundred pages on Dhondup Gyal's life story and is to date the fullest biographical account available on him. The biographical part is special value because Choekyong was able to do extensive and careful interviews with people who knew Dhondup Gyal. The biographical part also contains interesting details about the background of several literary works. Chapter 3 of the book is devoted to Dhondup Gyal's writings and the analysis of their style, structure, characters, and other literary features. The last part of Choekyong's study contains a long discussion on innovation which is discussed both generally in the framework of Tibetan society and also from the point of view of Dhondup Gyal's works. Choekyong's research contains several original views (for example about style) and is critical in its approach. I will refer to it and also discuss it in several places in this work.

Another recent Tibetan essay about Dhondup Gyal is Sangye Rinchen's (Sangs rgyas rin chen 2006) article. It contains many interesting details about Dhondup Gyal's life and also discusses his thoughts and views on writing at considerable length.

There are also a large number of essays in Tibetan about various literary works of Dhondup Gyal. Tibetans have continued to discuss Dhondup Gyal's writings starting from the lifetime of the author himself to the present times: Dhondup Gyal's works discuss issues that continue to be of relevance in Tibetan society today and also have the unique quality of attracting the attention of new readers.

Tibetan criticism that I have had access to includes Choedzom's (Chos 'dzoms 1984) essay on Dhondup Gyal's short story "Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dung" ("The Love of Flesh and Bone"), Sangdren Bu's (Sangs dran bu 1985) essay on Dhondup Gyal's and Tsering Dhondup's (Tshe ring don grub) short story "rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma" ("A Shameless Bride"), Dekyi Tso's (bDe skyid 'tsho 1995) essay on two works by Dhondup Gyal: "rKang lam phra mo" ("The Narrow Footpath"), and "Dri bzhon gyi bu mo" ("The Girl of the Wind"); and another Tibetan essay on "rKang lam phra mo" by Dongpa Thar (lDong dpa' thar 2002). There are also Dulha Gyal's (bDud lha rgyal 1999; 2003; 1998) essays on Dhondup Gyal's free verse poem "Lang tsho'i rhab chu" ("The Waterfall of Youth"), the short story "sPrul sku" ("Tulku"), and his brief commentary on the free verse poem "sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma" ("The Petals of White Clouds"), and Agyur's (A 'gyur 2003) discussion of Dhondup Gyal's short story "Brong stag thang" ("The Plain

85 Anybody doing research on Dhondup Gyal should check Choekyong's account of earlier research on Dhondup Gyal, especially for its coverage of the Tibetan materials, such as essays and articles. Choekyong's account is more detailed than my own as I was unable to acquire some publications that appeared in some Tibetan literature journals and it was sometimes difficult to find certain publications from the 1980s in public libraries.

of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”).⁸⁶ These essays are especially valuable in that they reveal viewpoints and interpretations of the literary works in question by Tibetan critics. Dhondup Gyal’s works have also been discussed in Tibetan research on modern Tibetan literature. These include Namsey’s (rNam sras 2005) book on modern Tibetan prose writing, which contains some information on Dhondup Gyal and especially his novella “Sad kyis bcom pa’i me tog”,⁸⁷ and from the Tibetan community in exile appeared Hortsang Jigme’s (Hor gtsang 'Jigs med 2000) comprehensive work about modern Tibetan writing, which also contains information on Dhondup Gyal’s literary works.

Other important sources for information on Dhondup Gyal are the prefaces to *The Collected Works of Dhondup Gyal (gSung'bum)* by six authors: Nya Lodroe Gyaltsen (gNya' Blo gros rgyal mtshan), Dungkar Losang Thrinley (Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las), Dorzhi Dongdrug Nyemlo (Dor zhi gDong drug snyems blo), Jigme Thegchog ('Jigs med theg mchog), Nyenshul Khyenrab Osel (Nyan shul mKhyen rab 'od gsal), and Bengo (Ban go or dByangs can sgeg pa'i blo gros). There is also the preface to Dhondup Gyal’s first book by his teacher, Dungkar Rinpoche (Dung dkar rin po che), which also appeared in Dunkar Rinpoche’s *Collected Works*.

Early Western contributions to research on Dhondup Gyal are A.A. Moon’s article series on modern Tibetan literature and Heather Stoddard’s article on Dhondup Gyal. Moon’s article series (1991) contains information on the life of Dhondup Gyal and discussion of some of Dhondup Gyal’s works including “Sad kyis bcom pa’i me tog” (“A Flower Destroyed by Frost”), “sNgo tshos tshong khang gi mthong thos” (“Seen and Heard at the Vegetable Seller’s Shop”), and “sPrul sku” (“Tulku”), and it also has an excerpt from a story titled “Gyod bshags” (“Repentance”).⁸⁸ Heather Stoddard’s article about Dhondup Gyal was

86 I am thankful to Franz Xaver Erhard for sending me from Lhasa several of the essays that appeared in *Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal*, and to Chokden Tsering, who provided me with information on Dulha Gyal’s research work and his brief commentary on “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma” and Sangye Rinchen’s article on Dhondup Gyal’s life.

87 I would like to thank Dhondup Tsering (Don grub tshe ring), University of Lhasa, for recommending Namsey’s book to me.

88 According to n. 103 in Part 2 of Moon’s article, Dhondup Gyal’s short story “Gyod bshags” was published in the literary magazine *Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal* 1984 (4), but has for some reason not been included in *The Collected Works*. I am grateful to Pavel Grokhovski for sending me a copy of “Gyod bshags”. However, in the time when I was still writing this study this short story was not available to me and consequently I have not discussed this story’s imagery. In his article, Moon has quoted and translated a passage from this short story that depicts the tragic situation of a woman and her just-born baby suffering from hunger during a famine. Moon’s article mentions also (n. 153 of Part 3) probably the first English language contribution on Dhondup Gyal: Thupten Samphel, “Achieving in Death What He Failed in Life”, *Tibetan Bulletin*, XVII(3), 1987:

presented in the IATS conference in 1992 and was published in 1994. It has a concise introduction to the life-story of Dhondup Gyal and also discusses the contents of his first book *'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs* ("The Dawn of Clear Writing") and his master's thesis *mGur glu'i lo rgyus dang khyad chos* ("The History and Characteristics of Songs").

Among other Western contributions are two articles by Matthew Kapstein (1999; 2002). The first article gives a review of Dhondup Gyal's *Collected Works* and the other discusses his short story "sPrul sku", contextualizing it against the background of criticisms of religious personages in earlier traditional Tibetan literature. Stevenson's (1997) essay focuses on Dhondup Gyal's essay "rKang lam phra mo" ("The Narrow Footpath"), and Lauran Hartley's (2003) PhD dissertation also contains valuable information on Dhondup Gyal and his writings.⁸⁹ Articles on modern Tibetan literature normally mention Dhondup Gyal due to his great influence on its development. These include Tsering Shakya's articles (1999; 2000), which provide a general idea about the development of modern writing in Tibet, and Lauran Hartley's (1999) article, which contains some discussion on Dhondup Gyal's "rKang lam phra mo". Janet L. Upton's (1999) article is about contemporary literature in Tibetan schoolbooks and it also contains some discussion of Dhondup Gyal's "rTswa thang dran glu" ("A Song of Missing the Grassland") and "Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam" ("The Impermanent Illusory Dream"). There is also Françoise Robin's (2002) article on Tibetan free verse, which contains discussion on Dhondup Gyal and his poetry. Yosay Wangdi (2005) interprets and discusses Dhondup Gyal's "Lang tsho'i rhab chu" in connection with a translation of the poem that appeared in *Studies on Asia*. A recent contribution is Anna Stirr's (2008) article "Blue Lake" about a song entitled "E ma mtsho sngon po" with lyrics by Dhondup Gyal.⁹⁰

I shall not go into detail about research work on other contemporary Tibetan writers and their works. However, I shall mention some important book-length

6. I did not have access to Thupten Samphel's article.

89 The full title of Hartley's PhD dissertation is *Contextually Speaking: Tibetan Literary Discourse and Social Change in the People's Republic of China (1980–2000)*. It is a wide-ranging research work on modern Tibetan literature, various writers, and works and literary theory. It contains good information on translation and publishing activities in the period since the Communist occupation of Tibet and also some discussion on Gendun Choephel. I am thankful to Lauran Hartley for sending me a copy of her dissertation.

90 My own contributions include "Water Imagery in the Writings of Don grub rgyal", available in electronic form on the 6th Nordic Tibet Research Conference website. Virtanen (2008) contains discussion of some of Dhondup Gyal's works, and there is my forthcoming article "Images of Love in Don grub rGyal's Short Stories" that I presented at the IATS conference in Königswinter in autumn 2006. My unpublished MA thesis in Finnish (Virtanen 2003) also discusses Dhondup Gyal and his writings.

contributions to the study of modern Tibetan literature. In 2000 *The Song of the Snow Lion: New Writing from Tibet* appeared, edited by Frank Stewart, Herbert J. Batt, and Tsering Shakya. The volume contains several translations of poetry and prose by Tibetan authors writing in both Chinese and Tibetan. It also includes Tsering Shakya's translation of Dhondup Gyal's "Waterfall of Youth" as well as Tsering Shakya's above-mentioned article, "The Waterfall and Fragrant Flowers" (2000). An anthology, *Tales of Tibet*, edited and translated by Herbert J. Batt, contains translations of prose written by Tibetan authors writing in Chinese. A special issue of *Lungta* (1999) completely devoted to modern Tibetan literature contains some of the articles mentioned above as well as Robin's article on the theme of death in modern Tibetan poetry. Recently in 2007 a volume edited by Steven J. Venturino was published that contains several papers presented in the IATS conference in Oxford by scholars specializing in modern Tibetan literature. Worthy of notice is a contribution in German by Alice Grünfelder (1999), who has published a book about Tashi Dawa.⁹¹ In 2008 a volume from Duke University Press edited by Luran Hartley and Patricia Schiaffini appeared containing several studies on a variety of topics related to modern Tibetan literature. Furthermore, in the recent years several doctoral dissertations have been written on modern Tibetan literature, including Hartley's (2003) above-mentioned dissertation and Yangdon Dhondup's (2004) dissertation "Caught Between Margins: Culture, Identity and the Invention of a Literary Space in Tibet".⁹² Robert Barnett (2008) has also mentioned other doctoral works on modern Tibetan literature in his Introduction to *Tibetan Modernities* (p. xiv), including dissertations by Françoise Robin, Tsering Shakya, and Patricia Schiaffini-Vedani.⁹³

Some translations of Dhondup Gyal's works are currently available in Western languages. The free verse poems, "Lang tsho'i rhab chu" ("The Waterfall of Youth") and "'Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying gson po zhid 'dug" ("Here Too Is a Heart Alive Strongly Beating") have been translated,⁹⁴

91 I am grateful to Alice Grünfelder for sending me a copy of her book and also an anthology (2002/2004) of writings from the Himalayas, *Himalaya: Menschen und Mythen*.

92 Yangdon Dhondup's dissertation focuses on Tibetan authors who write in Chinese. I am grateful to her for sending me a copy of her dissertation.

93 At the time of writing this study I had not as yet been able to obtain copies of these dissertations. Robin's dissertation is in French and according to information from her it contains discussion on a wide range of works by Tibetan writers writing in Tibetan. I heard also that Robin wrote her master's thesis about Dhondup Gyal (Lara Maconi, pers. comm. in Trondheim, Nov. 2008). The title of this unpublished thesis is "Don-grub-rgyal (1953–1985), L'Enfant terrible de la nouvelle littérature tibétaine" (1998) as recorded in the bibliography of Maconi's article (2001), which also contains information on translations of Western literature into Tibetan.

94 There are at least three English translations of "The Waterfall of Youth" by Tsering Shakya (Dhondup Gyal 2000), Luran Hartley (2003: 186–190), and Yosay Wangdi (2005). I have

and some of his short stories are available in English and French. There are also translations of “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” (“A Flower Destroyed by Frost”), “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma” (“A Shameless Bride”) that Dhondup Gyal wrote together with Tsering Dhondup, and “Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs” (“The Love of Flesh and Bone”).⁹⁵ Dhondup Gyal's essay “rKang lam phra mo” has also been translated into English.⁹⁶

This survey shows that Dhondup Gyal and some of his literary works are already quite well known to Western scholars. However, there are also several works that to my knowledge have not been discussed by Western scholars or translated into English or French.⁹⁷ Among them are, for example, the short stories “rGan po blo gyong” (“The Stubborn Old Man”) and “brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs” (“The Waves of Love”), the poems “rTswa thang gi lha mo” (“The Goddess of the Grassland”) and “Ka rkyang legs bshad gur gum me tog” (“Good Sayings with the Letter Ka: A Flower of Saffron”), and “rGya bod bar gyi mdza' mthun” (“The Friendship Between China and Tibet”).⁹⁸ It would seem that translators have preferred prose works and free verse poetry and, to my knowledge, no complete translations of the metric poems of Dhondup Gyal exist. Several prose works and some free verse poems have not yet been translated into Western languages.

It is evident that a good amount of research work on modern Tibetan literature and on the works of Dhondup Gyal already exists. The situation over the last decade has improved and now modern Tibetan literature is a dynamic and expanding many-sided field of research. Today Tibetans are primarily producing literature in three languages: Tibetan, Chinese, and English, and the number of

translated the same poem into Finnish, and it appeared in *Kirjo*. Dhondup Gyal's “Here Also Is A Living Heart Beating Strongly” may be found in the appendix of an anthology of modern Tibetan literature, *A Blighted Flower and Other Stories*.

95 The English translations of the first two works may be found in the anthology of modern Tibetan literature I compiled (2000), and the French translations of “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” and “Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs” have been translated by Françoise Robin (Thöndrupgyäl: 2006; 2007). I am at present compiling an anthology of modern Tibetan literature which is going to include Finnish translations of stories by several Tibetan contemporary writers. This anthology will also contain my translation of Dhondup Gyal's short story “sPrul sku” and possibly also “Brug mtsho”.

96 See Rang grol 1997.

97 This, of course, reflects only the materials I have been able to read. My lack of French, restricts my knowledge of research publications in that language, especially the contributions of F. Robin.

98 Some of Dhondup Gyal's free verse poems have not received much scholarly attention, however, though there is my recently published article (2011a), which concentrates on “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma” (“The Petals of White Clouds”) and “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo” (“The Girl of Wind”). I have also discussed such free verse poems as “Goms gshis lags/ bdag gi snying gnam 'di la gson” (“Convention, Please Listen to My Heart-felt Words”) and “Rig pa'i dpa' bo rnam la phul ba'i bstod tshig” (“A Eulogy to the Heroes of Wisdom”) in a conference paper that was presented at the “Asian Creativity in Culture and Technology” conference in Trondheim in November 2008.

literary works available for reading and research is increasing all the time, and in addition to the publication activities by various publishing houses, there are also blogs and websites publishing Tibetan contemporary writing.

This study is the first book-length study in English about Dhondup Gyal and his use of imagery. I have applied the theoretical framework of the cognitive theory of metaphor to Tibetan literary materials, and by doing so I have tried to offer some new insights into poetic images and culture and also into the way the use of imagery may undergo changes if viewed from a diachronic perspective. There is an earlier research article on metaphors in modern Tibetan language by Peter Schwieger, who has discussed theories of metaphor and cognitive theory, and has proposed his own system of classifying Tibetan metaphors (see 1.2.1 and Schwieger 2003), and I shall discuss his views in connection with my analysis of some of the images in Dhondup Gyal's writings. Works which focus on or discuss at length imagery in traditional Tibetan literature are not that numerous. They include Sujata's (2006) research work on the spiritual songs of Kalden Gyatso (sKal ldan rgya mtsho) in which she also discusses poetic figures and quotes and discusses some views of Dhondup Gyal. There is also Per Sørensen's article presenting his idea of creating a dictionary of folk literature using idiomatic phrases and imagery.⁹⁹ In this work I also draw some comparisons with traditional and folk imagery, thus providing information on Tibetan imagery on a more general level. In the field of comparative literature, my research contributes to an understanding of images in literature, especially in the Tibetan context, and also increases the awareness and knowledge of literature written in Tibetan.

99 See Sørensen, "Prolegomena to a Dictionary of Tibetan Folk Literature and Popular Poetic Idiom: Scope and Typology". I am thankful to Per K. Sørensen for sending me a copy of his unpublished paper. According to the conference programme of IATS 2006, Dan Martin presented a paper on animal imagery titled "Pha Dam-pa's animal metaphors and the question of Indian-ness (theirs and his)". There are also some works that contain valuable information on motifs and images in different cultures. These include Aarne's (1910) contribution on classifying folktales and its translated and enlarged version (Aarne & Thompson 1961), the six volume *Motif-Index of Folk Literature* by Thompson (1966), and Uthers *The Types of International Folktales* (2004). These are helpful for understanding the possible folkloristic cross-cultural connections of Tibetan images typically associated with some particular motifs found in the folkloristic tradition.

3. VEGETAL IMAGERY

Many of the writings of Dhondup Gyal contain breathtakingly beautiful depictions of nature. For instance in the beginning of the narrative poem “rTswa thang gi lha mo” (“The Goddess of the Grassland”) there is a long, detailed description of the landscape in Dragkar (Brag dkar) in the Amdo region. The various characteristics of the landscape on a sunny day include the blooming flowers on the grassland, ponds, a meadow in the distance, rocky mountains surrounded by misty fog, and a stream descending from the mountain slope and all the animals living there such as bees, butterflies, ducks, deer, and antelope.¹ In this passage the various elements form a concrete image of the milieu of the poem. In Dhondup Gyal’s works there are many such depictions of the beauty of the scenery of the grassland – this could be called the topos of pastoral grassland. However, when discussing imagery I will pay attention to the metaphoric aspects of nature and to those elements which belong to the realm of nature. But in order to properly understand the use of images of nature in metaphors, there will also be some discussion on the common and differing features of nature found in the settings and nature in metaphoric images. Also the concrete images of landscapes have functions which go beyond concrete depictions, for they are often connected with the events of the plot and the depiction of the inner mindscape and moods of the characters.

The concept of embodiment is central to cognitive theory. It acknowledges the subjective nature of human knowledge, which is seen as always formed from a human perspective through the encounter of humans with nature and the external world. In Dhondup Gyal’s works, too, which stem from the Tibetan cultural background, a certain focus on humans can be noticed: the characters of the stories and the speakers or voices of the poems and the plots are normally centred on human actions and fates. Moreover, a considerable proportion of the imagery has human persons or their qualities, parts or activities either as their source or target domains. Another domain is very often conceptions of nature or its part or aspect. Whereas the Western notion of embodiment often seems to be very subject-centred, somehow separating off the human, who only encounters and perceives the world, from nature, in Dhondup Gyal’s imagery, especially in some of his free verse poems, the boundaries of man and nature are transcended and humans and

1 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 70. The word translated as ‘antelope’ is *dgo ba*. Goldstein (1975: 229) explains this word as “*dgo ba*: type of antelope found in Tibet”.

nature are blended together. Thus the emerging picture and world view is more comprehensive: nature and man intermingle in imagery, especially in metaphors, and a human being and subjectivity is rather seen as part of nature than something opposed to it. Rather than the subject projecting him- or herself on nature, nature is often used to depict the human subject, the mental world and abstract concepts.

3.1 Seasons and flowers: On the function of flower imagery in Dhondup Gyal's novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog"

In Dhondup Gyal's writings there are many images of flowers and plants, flowers being one of the most common images used in metaphors and similes in both his prose and poetry. Reading his works one might get the feeling that flowers are scattered in them to make them more attractive and appealing. Often the source domain is simply "a flower" (*me tog*), but there are also source domains of flowers belonging to specific species.

In one prose work, the novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" ("A Flower Destroyed by Frost") flower imagery is given a central place, whereas in other poems and prose works by Dhondup Gyal images of flowers are more scattered. Most of Dhondup Gyal's works contain flower imagery.² I shall discuss the flower imagery in the above mentioned novella and then also present some remarks on flower images in various works of Dhondup Gyal.

In the novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" ("A Flower Destroyed by Frost") the flower imagery is prominent and very significant for its interpretation. This novella first appeared in two successive parts in 1982 and 1983 in the literary magazine *sBrang char*. Later on it appeared in *The Collected Works of Dhondup Gyal* and some other selections of his writings³ and now it is also available in English and French translations. It is a love story and deals with relations between the sexes and the problems caused by the custom of arranged marriage. It is certainly a work that may touch the hearts of readers from various cultural backgrounds and it is also a work that is socially critical. In the Tibetan literary context it is considered to have had an important role in the development of modern Tibetan prose writing and especially middle-length stories (*sgrung 'bring*).⁴

2 There are some exceptions, especially if we consider some shorter works which might consequently contain fewer images, for example the short stories "rGan po blo gyong" and "sNgo tshod tshong khang gi mthong thos" and some others.

3 See the collection of Dhondup Gyal's prose works titled *Don grub rgyal gyi brtsams sgrung phyogs bsgrigs*, which appeared in 1990, and also the selection of his writings titled *Don grub rgyal gyi lang tsho'i rbab chu/ dang ljags rtsom bdams sgrig* (1994).

4 See, for example, bKra shis dpal ldan (1991: 463). According to his article, this novella filled "the vacuum" in this genre in Tibetan literature.

The title of the novella, “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” (“A Flower Destroyed by Frost”), contains an image that after reading the entire story is revealed to be a metaphor. The image of a flower destroyed by frost also occurs in the text of the story and functions as a central image of the work. It is left open for the reader to imagine any kind of flower one would wish to, as the flower is only referred to with the generic name for flowers: *me tog*. In *sBrang char* magazine, where the novella was originally published, the illustrator has drawn a picture of a rose covered with snow on the first page. Using only the generic name for flowers, might well be because it is not so important to be very specific with the species in a flower image that is anyway used metaphorically: the mental image of a flower combined with some other concept will be different than a concrete image of a particular flower.

Although most of the flowers functioning as source domains in metaphoric images are just generally “flowers”, there are also some occasions when the source domain is a lotus flower (*padma*).⁵ Using this flower to depict feminine beauty is a connection with Indian literature and the long tradition of Tibetan literature which has integrated influences from India.⁶ In Dhondup Gyal’s short story “Pad mtsho” (“Petso”) Tashi picks a lotus flower from a garden and then Petso’s beautiful face is likened to a lotus. The story also depicts affection by means of the lotus flower (*mdza' mthun pad ma'i me tog*).⁷ In *Kāvyaḍarśa* too, which has strongly influenced Tibetan poetry, a woman’s face becomes likened to a lotus.⁸

5 *Padma* refers to the lotus flower with the Latin name *Nelumbo Nucifera*, which according to an article headed “Nelumbonaceae” (2008) in *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online* is the “sacred lotus of the Orient (*Nelumbo nucifera*) and is found in tropical and subtropical Asia”. This flower is very typical to India, though in another article, “Tibet” (2008), in the same encyclopaedia, the lotus is also mentioned among the wildflowers of Tibet. Although the lotus is not normally considered a typical flower in Tibet, and is generally thought to grow in warmer regions, Tibet has different vegetation zones and some areas with a lower altitude and a warmer climate. It is also possible that there might be some confusion between the lotus and the water-lily, which grows in lakes during the summer in colder regions. Beer (1999: 38) remarks that “the yellow *utpala* lotus is actually not a water lotus or lily; it grows as a small alpine flower throughout Tibet”. Nowadays the lotus has also been successfully cultivated in Tibet, as reported in an article by Zhang (2008).

6 For instance Dhoyi’s *Pavanadūta* describes women metaphorically as flowers, the translation using the expression “lotus faces” to depict the faces of women (Mallinson 2006: 3.57).

7 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 34. In one place in “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”, the image of a lotus is mapped on Lhakyi. The chapter told by Rigyang, the elder brother of Tsering, whom the parents wish Lhakyi to marry, describes her as a “lotus among flowers and a moon among planets” (*lha skyid ni me tog khrod kyi padma dang/ rgyu skar khrod kyi zla ba yin pas.../*). Here the image of a lotus is used to express unusual beauty. (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 24)

8 See the example of *ḍngos dpe* in the root text that can be found in bSe tshang blo bzang dpal ldan’s commentary of *Kāvyaḍarśa* titled *Tshangs sras bzhad pa'i sgra dbyangs* (1997: 100–102). Brockington (1998: 420) has written about the plants and animals in Sanskrit epics. He observes that the lotus flower in its several varieties is the most common plant in *Rāmāyaṇa*.

There are also other occurrences of the lotus as a source domain in the writings of Dhondup Gyal showing some influence from a strong tradition⁹ – the lotus is one of the most common flowers in Tibetan literature and art – although it is more typical to the hot Indian climate than the colder northern regions.¹⁰ However, the writings of Dhondup Gyal also mention the lotus in depicting a school environment: both lotus (*padma*) and “grass-lotus” (*rtswa padma*) are listed among the flowers growing in the school garden in Rebgong in the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”.¹¹ These flowers and also some other flowers (*me tog a gar* and *gres ma*) become likened in a simile to young, attractive women. In both this novella and “Pad mtsho” the lotus flower is mentioned as growing in a planted, cultivated environment like a garden or school campus area.¹² In the depictions of environments and landscapes the names of flowers may sometimes be mentioned in more detail with the name of their species. At the end of the short story “Brug mtsho” (“Drugtso”) the marigold (*me tog ser chen*) is mentioned in a concrete image.¹³

9 For example, the image of a lotus occurs in the poetry of Dhondup Gyal. See the image of “a sky lotus” (*mkha' yi pad mo*) in the free verse poem “Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying gson po zhig 'dug” (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 92). It illustrates the impossibility or difficulty of something occurring. In Dhondup Gyal's poem “rGya bod bar gyi mdza' mthun” the image of the sun and a lotus flower is used parallelistically as a source domain image to illustrate the target domain of the harmonious relation of China and Tibet (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 66).

10 A similar kind of phenomenon has also been observed about Medieval European literature. Ernst Robert Curtius (1953: 184–185) points to the presence of the olive tree in literature of the European regions located in non-Mediterranean northern regions, where olive trees were probably not that common. For the lotus as a religious symbol of purity and also as a sexual symbol, see Beer 1999: 37–38.

11 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 9.

12 Interestingly, in our discussion of this passage and the flowers in it with a Tibetan writer in exile whose home region was in Amdo, he commented that there would not in fact have been such a splendid display of flowers surrounding the school. Enhancing the depiction of the school environment with flowers might thus be an artistic means of conveying the positive associations connected with the institution of learning.

13 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 95. In the short story “Brug mtsho”, too, a flower image is used to depict the main protagonist's face by means of comparison: Drugtso's face is described as “more beautiful than even a flower” (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 95). There is also another interesting case of flower imagery, which could be characterized as an image of transformation. These are the words of the first-person narrator who is sitting in a bus on his way to the pastoral area where a girl whom he loves, Drugtso, is working as a teacher: “I was staring at the beautiful scenery of the grassland. In front of my eyes the grassland gradually turned into a big flower and that flower also gradually turned into a young woman. The face which was like the centre of a flower turned towards me revealing her smiling teeth and the lips that were like the petals of a flower were moving fluttering” (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 90–91). Tib. “ngas rtswa thang gi mdzes sdug ldan pa'i yul ljongs la mig hrig ger lta bzhin du/ nga'i mig lam du rtswa thang de rim gyis me tog chen po zhig tu gyur pa dang/ me tog de yang rim gyis gzhon nu ma zhig tu gyur te/ me tog gi 'dzum ril lta bu'i zhal khyim nga la 'khor nas 'dzum pa'i so phreng dgod pa dang/ me tog gi 'dab ma lta bu'i mchu sgros

To understand how the central image of a flower functions in “Sad kyiis bcom pa'i me tog”, it is first necessary to say a few words about this novella: it is a story about the love of a girl from a village in Amdo who is named Lhakyi (Lha skyid)¹⁴ and a boy named Tsering (Tshe ring). There is an obstacle in the way of their relation. Their parents have, even before Lhakyi was born, agreed to give her in marriage to Tsering's brother Rigyang (Rig yag). This is completely against the wishes of Lhakyi, who after a failed suicide attempt, finally escapes from her home and plans to go to the school where her boyfriend Tsering is studying. However, on the way a tragic event occurs when she is raped by another man. Being ashamed of what has happened to her she cannot face her boyfriend, and she decides to stay with an elderly nun called Dolma (sGrol ma). After various events the story finally ends in the scene where Tsering sits in a bus on his way to see Lhakyi in the hermitage where she is staying with the nun. The end is left open and the reader is left to reflect whether Tsering will be able to persuade Lhakyi to come back and live with him.

On the plot level the characters are the centre of attention. They are ordinary Tibetans living in a rural village, and the choice of depicting the life and problems of ordinary Tibetans such as villagers and nomads is very typical of Tibetan modern literature. Here there is a change from the earlier traditional focus on spiritual persons or kings and epic heroes. This could reflect both the interest of the writers to write about ordinary people and also the more general demand placed on literature in a Communist society to be of benefit to society by focusing on social issues relevant to ordinary people.¹⁵ Furthermore, the choice of depicting the life and problems of one's own society is connected with the idea coming from Marxist literary theory of the need for writers to base their writing to some extent on their experiences of life in society.¹⁶

In addition to the level of the fictional events and characters, this story has a second level of imagery. However, that level is not continuously present or pointed at, instead the reader becomes aware of it gradually. The story is not allegorical because the depiction of the actions of the characters in their world is the main focus, rather than the level of imagery or metaphor. I have called the

ni lhem lhem du 'gul bzhin/”.

14 A discussion about this character in the novella can be found in Chos skyong 2006: 209–211.

15 According to Perry Link (2000: 21) during the time of Deng Xiaoping's leadership a new party slogan was created: “Literature in the Service of the People and Socialism”. The new slogan replaced the older one “Literature in the Service of Politics”. He also mentions the idea how literature was thought to be able to improve society (p. 249).

16 See Link 2000: 119. Dhondup Gyal has also written about the importance of life experiences for writing. In his “Slob khrid dang sbyar ba'i rtsom rig gi zin bris” he quotes Maxim Gorki's view on how the topics of writing come from the writer's own experience (Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 105).

level of the flower the imagerial mini-narrative, using the word narrative because there is a kind of plot where the flower grows, blooms, and then is harmed.

This excerpt from the beginning part of the novella illustrates the centrality of the flower imagery:

lha skyid dang nged gnyis ni ldum ra gcig gi nang du skyes pa'i me tog gi gang bu chung chung gnyis yin la/ 'jig rten gyi 'tsho ba dang chung ngu'i dus kyi mdza' mthun kyi srad bus nged gnyis kyi sems kyi rtsa ba gzhi gcig tu sbrel bar ma zad/ dungs pa'i 'dab ma lhan cig tu bzhad mod/'on kyang snying rje med pa'i goms srol gyi sad ngan zhig gis 'tsho ba la dga' zhen dang ma 'ong bar re bas khengs pa'i me tog gzhon nu ma zhig gi lang tsho'i dpal yon glo bur du bcom pa dang/ de la chags shing 'khor ba'i bung ba gzhon nu nga yang sems sdug gi rgya mtsho'i nang du lhung dgos byung/
(Don grub rgyal, "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog")¹⁷

Lhakyi and I were tiny flowerbuds maturing in the same garden. The roots of our minds were connected together by one thread of life and affection from our childhood times. Moreover, the petals of our love unfolded and bloomed together. But, this young flower girl's blossoming youth, her zest for life and her hopes for the future were suddenly destroyed by the frost of a merciless custom. I, the bee who had hovered round the flower with attachment, sank into an ocean of misery.

(Dhondup Gyal, "A Flower Destroyed by Frost")¹⁸

The above passage connects the image of the flower with two different target domains, those of people and youth, and the concept and emotion of love between the opposite sex. Even though the image of a flower seems to be more often used to depict a female, in this passage it is also used for both sexes in their childhood.¹⁹ To depict the attraction between male and female in adolescence, the text has the two-part image of the flower and bee, the latter being associated with the male.²⁰

A child is depicted as a flowerbud growing and being tended and taken care of inside the protective area of a garden. The metaphor of a child as a flowerbud can be interpreted as a manifestation of the PEOPLE ARE PLANTS conceptual metaphor in the cognitive theory of metaphor.²¹ The plants may be of various kinds, but

17 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 6–7.

18 The translation is based on my translation of this novella (Virtanen 2000: 32). However, so that the images can be translated more accurately for a discussion of metaphors, there are some changes of expression which make the translation more literal.

19 Also in Dhondup Gyal's "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs" in a letter written by the character Drugmo, her male friend Palden's face is likened to the "flower on the grassland" (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 19). The passage describes how Drugmo reflects on Palden's face: sometimes she only hears sounds and sometimes she sees the soundless, silent image of the "flower on the grassland".

20 For more discussion on the image of the flower and bee, see below in the same subchapter.

21 See Lakoff & Turner 1989: 6.

the common idea cross-culturally is evidently the shared factor that plants have their beginning stage, their growth as a mature plant, and then the decaying stage, resembling the life-cycle of humans. Flowerbuds are the early stages of flowers and are thus suitable for depicting children.

The image of love as a flower or rather the flower petals of love opening has here been skilfully connected with the image of people as flowers, depicting how the “roots of their minds” entwine – an image of closeness. In love the two persons experience closeness and they may be described metaphorically as united in oneness. Normally the time when the flower starts to bloom is considered its best stage: the stage of blooming. Here blooming is connected with two young people attaining maturity and developing feelings of love. Notably, flowers are associated with the warm season. Using its image for love has both aesthetic reasons and also the idea of blooming is somehow connected with the idea of sunshine and warmth – there are no flowers in winter. Thus it could be thought that connecting flowers and summer sceneries with the emotion of love is also related to the cognitive conceptual primary metaphor AFFECTION IS WARMTH that is, according to scholars of cognitive theory, based on the pleasant bodily experience of feeling warm.²²

The Tibetan writer Tashi Palden in his article about Dhondup Gyal’s writings interprets the flower as “the just opened flower of youth of Lhakyi”.²³ Also in traditional literature the image of a flower may be metaphorically used to illustrate youth. In *gZhon nu zla med kyig tam rgyud* (“The Tale of the Incomparable Prince”) it is said that the young prince’s “attractive flower of youth was shining”.²⁴ Typically, the image of a flower is mapped onto young women and the stage of youth. This is partly explained by the facts of nature: flowers blossom in spring and summer and those are also the times when nature blooms and animals give birth to their young: a period of growth.²⁵ Milarepa also likens youth to “a summer flower” emphasizing its transient nature,²⁶ and Goethe uses the metaphor of “the bloom of youth” when writing about the famous Indian drama *Śakuntalā*. He also has the metaphor “fruit of later years”: these are manifestations of life cycle metaphors.²⁷

22 See Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 50.

23 bKra shis dpal ldan 1991: 448.

24 mDo mkhar zhabs drung Tshes ring dbang rgyal, *gZhon nu zla med kyig tam brgyud*, 7: “mchor sgeg lang tsho'i me tog 'bar”.

25 For example in the classical Chinese poem by Han Yu (8–9th c.), “Encountering Spring in the Eastern Capital”, youth is associated with spring, and old age with winter (Frankel 1976: 41–43).

26 In the song “The Fleeting Bubbles” in Chang’s translation (1966: 25).

27 See the quote from Goethe in the beginning of Barbara Stoler Miller’s essay about *Śakuntalā* (Miller 1990: 165).

As we saw in the above excerpt from “Sad kysis bcom pa'i me tog” in a two-part image of flower and bee, the flower is metaphorically mapped onto a woman and the image of the bee onto a man, Tsering, the narrator of the first chapter. These flower-and-bee images are also frequent in other writings of Dhondup Gyal.²⁸ Although the primary usage of this image seems to be for depicting the attraction between the sexes, there are examples of other kinds of use in his writings: for instance in “Slob grwa'i zhogs pa” (“Morning at School”) the students busy in their studies are depicted as bees extracting the “honey of good qualities” from the “flower of knowledge” (*shes bya'i me tog*).²⁹ In the poem “Khrul min rmi lam ngo mtshar dga' skyed” (“The True Dream of Wonder and Joy”) the flowers are signs of the “happiness and peacefulness of the state” and the bees signal “the enjoyment of joyful life” by the people.³⁰ This could be interpreted to mean that the images convey a sense of attraction toward something. The source domain of a bee searching for honey from the flowers is a physically perceivable activity. The feelings of attraction between the sexes can be partly attributed to the bodily physical nature of human beings and thus can be said to be based on embodiment. The images where the target domain is knowledge or a political state of some region are of a more abstract kind. It could be possible to view them as extensions and projections of the idea of attraction between two beings to a more abstract level of human conceptualization. In such a case, the bees are people buzzing around abstract concepts and entities in the same way as flowers have the capacity to attract bees.

The two-part image of bees and flowers is a common image that can also be found in traditional literature to do with the theme of love, as for example in the song of the Sixth Dalai Lama:

stobs ldan ha lo'i me tog
mchod pa'i rdzas la phebs na/
gyu sbrang gzbon nu nga yang/
lha khang nang la khrid dang//
 (Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho)³¹

Oh, magnificent hollyhock³²
 if you went to the temple as an offering

28 Although normally the bee depicts the man and the flower the woman, in one of the prose works of Dhondup Gyal titled “Tshul khrims rgya mtsho”, a woman attracted to the male protagonist is depicted by means of the bee image, thus revitalizing the image (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 93).

29 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 55.

30 See Don grub rgyal 1981a: 16.

31 Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho & Ngag dbang lhun grub dar rgyas 1981: 6, song no. 15.

32 This is given the English name of *ha lo* in the dictionary of Das (1902/1991: 1326). There is

would you please take me, a young turquoise bee,
with you inside the temple.
(Tshangyang Gyatso)

These kinds of flower and bee images are also found in some other songs of the Sixth Dalai Lama, *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud* and also in folk songs.³³ Moreover, *Śakuntalā* contains a passage connecting the concrete images of women, flowers, and bees and the idea of “summer love”.³⁴ It is also possible to find images in traditional literature where the flower-and-bee image, or one part of it, occurs.³⁵

In the excerpt from “Sad kiyis bcom pa'i me tog” quoted earlier both the growth and decay of a flower is depicted. Here on the level of the imagerial narrative the flower is destroyed by frost.³⁶ Looking at the above passage it is evident that the novella does not actually aim at speaking about the sad fate of an actual flower during the cold season, but tells about a girl suffering from tragic and unfortu-

also a reference to Jäschke's dictionary explaining this flower as “a large beautiful garden flower”. Sørensen (n.d. 14) has described the hollyhock as “a favourite euphemism for a beloved girl”. He also points out a reference to the hollyhock in ancient Dunhuang documents, where according to him it conveys a sense of auspiciousness in divination.

33 For these types of images in folk songs, see bKra shis tshe ring 1986: 20 & 68. In *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud* the princess Manohari addresses the prince Devatisa trying to delay sexual union with him until later: “When I reach the age of sixteen, / I will be like a flower in full, open bloom. / Then it will be proper for you, like a bee / To joyfully enter and blissfully partake of the honey of my embrace.” (Solomon 1987: 269) The Sixth Dalai Lama's songs no. 7 and no. 8 also contain the images of bee and flower, see Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho & Ngag dbang lhun grub dar rgyas 1981: 3. According to Sørensen (n.d. 14) too, this image of the bee and flower (especially the hollyhock) is common in Tibetan folk poetry and is also found in traditional Tibetan literature, as for example in the *Ma ni bka' 'bum* (12th c.) and the *IHo brag chos 'byung* (15th c.).

34 See Miller 1990: 171, which contains a translation of an excerpt from *Śakuntalā*: “Sensuous women / in summer love / weave / flower earrings / from fragile petals / of mimosa / while wild bees / kiss them gently.”

35 Sometimes the flower is not mentioned directly, although the overall concept is referred to. For example Sujata's (2005: 365) translation of Kalden Gyatso's songs says “Although the liberation-wanting bee of my own mind / Longs to fly on the path of liberation, / [I] am attached to the feast of honey, the eight [worldly] *dharmas*,”. In *Sa skya legs bshad* the image of flower-and-bees has been used in a parallelistic way to illustrate the attraction of a learned and civilized person around whom others gather. In the image the flower becomes mapped onto the learned person and the bees onto people gathering around him, *Legs par bshad pa rin po che'i gter gyi don'grel blo gsal bung ba'i bsti gnas*, 52.

36 There are also images of a flower and frost in two other works of Dhondup Gyal, “Sems gcong” (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 16) and “Bu ldom po dang klu'i sras mo” (Don grub rgyal 1981c: 29, 65). Interestingly, at the end of “Sems gcong” the image of a flower and hail and frost is also used to depict how hopes of life with the person, whom the main protagonist Detso loves, are destroyed with the “hail and frost of the other's forceful power”. Tib. “brtse dungs zab mos sbrel ba'i rang gi mdza' bo dang lhan cig 'grogs pa'i re ba'i me tog de gzhan dbang sad ser gyis bcom nas yid mya ngan gyis gdungs” (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 16). Images of flowers in bad weather can also be found in Chapter 2 of Dhondup Gyal's *kāvya*-style poem “sNyan ngag la sbyar ba'i sgrung rtsom gzhan nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan” (1997, I: 104–110).

nate events. The frost is the source domain for the target domain of custom. The tradition of parents arranging the marriage of their children is here criticized and viewed in the negative light of something cold and cruel bringing destruction and sadness. This same flower metaphor is also repeated in the nun's words about Lhakyi. She calls her "a flower destroyed by frost".³⁷

A somewhat similar kind of image is used by Kālidāsa to depict the suffering of a *yakṣa* woman who is tormented by separation from her husband. Waiting for him on the slopes of Mt. Kailash, she is first likened to a bird but in the last line of the following excerpt she is compared to a lotus flower that is harmed by frost:

But, with me, her companion, far away,
the sweet-voiced girl, as dear to me as life,
will be like a lonely *chakravaka* hen,
and with the passing of the days,
their intense longing weighing her down,
I think she will have changed,
like a lotus laid waste by frost.
(Kālidāsa, *The Cloud Messenger* 2.80)³⁸

The image of a flower withering in the autumn and being destroyed by the cold of winter seems to be common in literature. Also in traditional Tibetan literature we can find in Milarepa's song the use of the image of flowers destroyed by frost to depict impermanence. Milarepa acknowledges and accepts the fact of the impermanence of everything and instructs listeners/readers to engage in religious practices.³⁹ In Milarepa's song "On Yolmo Gangra" the source domain of a flower is mapped onto compassion.⁴⁰ Victoria Sujata's translation of a song by Kalden Gyatso (17th c.) also contains the image of a flower being destroyed by hail:

Although the flower of good behavior
Was watered again and again
By the river of faith and respect,

37 See Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 16.

38 Mallinson (tr.) 2006: 75.

39 Chang 1966: 23.

40 Rus pa'i rgyan can 2005: 255. Milarepa sings as follows: "In the desolate empty place of the country/ the song of happiness of the yogi echoes like thunder/ the pleasant rain descends in the ten directions/ the leaves and petals of the flower of compassion grow/ the fruit of the mind of enlightenment ripens/ the deeds of enlightenment are spreading everywhere." Tib. "rgyal khams kyi mi med lung stong du// rnal 'byor skyid glu 'brug bzhin sgrog// snyan pa'i char ba phyogs bcur 'bab// snying rje'i me tog lo 'dab rgyas// byang sems kyi 'bras bu dag par smin// byang chub kyi 'phrin las thams cad khyab//".

[It] was helplessly vanquished
 By the hailstorm of laziness. Hey!
 (Kalden Gyatso's song in Sujata 2005: 289)

In Kalden Gyatso's song the image of a flower is mapped onto the target domain of good behaviour. Laziness, an obstacle for any spiritual progress, is metaphorically depicted as a hailstorm.⁴¹ In another traditional Tibetan work, *sNang sa 'od 'bum gyi rnam thar* ("The Life Story of Nangsa Oebum"), the images of lotus flower, hail and frost are also found in the scene in which Lord Drachenpa (sGra chen pa) and Dragpa Samdup (Grags pa bsam grub) sing, holding the body of Nangsa Oebum, who has passed away. Thinking she is only pretending, they do not realise she is dead, and they use the images of the moon and then the lotus in their song urging Nangsa to rise. The image of the lotus illustrates their idea of her pretense:

ma gi'i rgyal po'i skyed tshal ldum ra'i nang//
me tog pad sdong sad kyis khyer khul byed//
pad sdong ser bas bcom pa los bden kyang//
ston ka ma slebs sad kyis ga nas skam//
bu mo ma nyal da ni yar la longs//
snang sa ma gzims cis kyang bzhengs rogs mdzod//
 (sNang sa 'od 'bum gyi rnam thar, 92–93)

In the garden of the park of the king
 a stalk of the lotus flower is pretending that it has been destroyed by frost
 although it is true that the stalk of lotus has been destroyed by hail
 when the autumn has not arrived how would it be destroyed by frost?
 girl, do not sleep but rise up now
 Nangsa, do not sleep, please get up
 ("The Life Story of Nangsa Oebum")

In the above passage the image of a lotus flower is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain of a girl – Nangsa – in a parallel structure. Two source domain images – hail and frost – are used to depict the causes of suffering, hail being a milder unfortunate condition and frost a more serious state of destruction causing the death of the flower. This image resembles the image of a flower suffering from frost in Dhondup Gyal's "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog". However, in Dhondup Gyal's story its main protagonist Lhakyi does not pass away, but

41 Victoria Sujata (2005: 210) has counted several occurrences of flower images in similes and especially metaphors in Kalden Gyatso's songs. According to her, in those songs flowers are associated with the "accumulation of merit, compassion, and experiential knowledge, and so on". Thus in the songs of the yogi the source domain images of flowers are associated with spiritual target domains.

suffers from others' actions and a tragic event. In Dhondup Gyal's novella it would not be necessary for the metaphorical flower to suffer in cold weather if the situation and people's attitudes could be changed. He uses the image for the purpose of social criticism. If we compare the use of the image of the flower and frost in *sNang sa 'od'bum gyi rnam thar* and in "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog", both images depict the suffering of a woman. However, the images are used in slightly different ways, when the contexts of the stories are considered. In *sNang sa 'od'bum gyi rnam thar* worldly married life with its problems is depicted as a cause of suffering and something to be renounced. In her life story, Nangsa returns from death and becomes a spiritual practitioner renouncing worldly concerns. In Dhondup Gyal's story too, after her rape, Lhakyi becomes interested in spiritual practices, but the story does not seem to criticize worldly life as such, but rather criticizes the practice of arranged marriages and violence against women. At the end Lhakyi's loved one Tsering goes to fetch her from the hermitage, but we do not know what she will decide. Therefore, discussing the unfortunate consequences of parents trying to arrange their children's marriages, seems to speak for love marriages and the freedom for young people to themselves choose their spouses. Using similar kinds of images, different aims can be achieved.

In *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud* we find the image of a flower at the mercy of natural powers that is in some cases connected with the image of a flower mapped onto a woman and are thus closer to Dhondup Gyal's usage of the flower and frost image than the spiritual songs of Milarepa and Kalden Gyatso. The female protagonist, princess Manohari is captured on her way to the "Gem of the World" kingdom by a minister of "Myriad Lights" and the depiction of this may resemble in some degree the image of a flower destroyed by frost, but here the disturbing power is that of the storm wind: "Uddhatamanas Moksabhadra and his forces pursued her. Manohari was powerlessly borne away like a Champaka flower before a gale."⁴² Princess Manohari also uses the image of a flower destroyed by frost in her own reflection on her hopeless situation: "my hope of having the opportunity to be in front of the youthful religious king has withered like a lovely flower destroyed by frost."⁴³

Connecting the image of a plant – here a flower – with a person, the plant undergoing different stages such as growing, blooming, and then suffering in cold weather or withering in autumn, is often used to depict the life cycles of humans.

42 Solomon 1987: 250.

43 Solomon 1987: 252. There is still one more instance of the flower and hail imagery in the same chapter (Ch. 9) of *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud*. Bhavakumara addresses princess Manohari as follows: "Kva ye! Lovely Manohari!/ Is the marvellous flower of our hopes/ For which we strove for so long/ To be cut asunder by destructive hail?" (Solomon 1987: 253).

Lakoff and Turner illustrate the conceptual metaphor PEOPLE ARE PLANTS with an example from the Greek epic *Iliad* in which Glaukos speaks about generations of people as leaves, old and new, and also a passage from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in which old age is illustrated with the image of a "yellow leaf".⁴⁴ Lakoff and Turner (1989: 18) also discuss the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS WINTER that they consider as part of another conceptual metaphor, A LIFETIME IS A YEAR. They observe its connection to the facts of nature, the spring being a time of birth and growth and the winter the time when many plants die. This metaphor connected to the relatedness of nature and lifecycles of beings is very strong in the literary works of Dhondup Gyal. Blooming, happiness, and young people are connected with the warm seasons, whereas the mention of winter is rarer and if it is mentioned, it seems to represent a time of difficulties as in "sGrung ba" ("The Storyteller"), or a time of death.⁴⁵

To draw cross-cultural comparisons with ancient Chinese literature, there is a beautiful example of images of flowers used to express ideas connected with the human life-cycle in Frankel's translation of a poem by Song Zihou entitled "Tung Chiao-jao".⁴⁶ In this poem the concrete images of a girl and nature images of blossoming trees are juxtaposed. In the spring time the trees are covered with blossom and in the autumn they fall. In the poem the branches and blossoms are given a voice and speak with the girl who is picking them. In the following excerpt the ancient Chinese poem connects the ideas of people and plants, though also pointing out a dissimilar feature:

In autumn we fall naturally
 In spring we are fragrant again.
 We're not like people when they pass their prime
 To be forgot forever by those who loved them.
 (Song Zihou in Frankel 1976: 68)

Analysing the poem, Frankel remarks: "The fragility and transience of youth and beauty is a recurrent motif in Chinese poetry, as is the analogy of feminine charm and spring blossoms", also referring to several poems included in his book.⁴⁷

Although the idea of depicting the life cycle of humans with plant and flower imagery seems to be cross-culturally common, in Dhondup Gyal's imagery it may be interpreted as depicting a new motif in Tibetan literature: the social criti-

⁴⁴ See Lakoff & Turner 1989: 13.

⁴⁵ In "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" the old nun Dolma tells about her own life and about the death of her baby during a cold winter (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 15).

⁴⁶ According to Frankel's footnote (1976: 234, n. 8) the title is a name of a girl.

⁴⁷ Frankel 1976: 68.

cism of arranged marriages in favour of love marriages and the freedom to choose one's life companion.⁴⁸ If we follow the plot of the mini-narrative of the flower, in “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” the “flower” is not only harmed by the frost of custom but also experiences another harm. In the chapter told by Lhakyi herself she recounts a terrible event: a Tibetan man whom she has met on the road rapes her. In this passage the image of a flower is also connected with youth and purity. The act of rape is told in the following way: “then the wicked and cruel rain of mud soiled the stainless petals of the flower of my youth tingeing them with dirt.”⁴⁹ Here the “rain of mud” is the act of rape and perhaps more explicitly the flow of male semen destroying the virginity of a young woman.⁵⁰

Considering how it is common to associate flowers with attractive women, love, and the time of youth, we could consider Dhondup Gyal's way of using the image of flower and its suffering from frost to share cross-culturally common features with other literatures and also traditional Tibetan literature. However, there is also something new: the image is used to depict and explore a new kind of motif in Tibetan literature, namely the criticism of arranged marriages and the promotion of love marriages. In Western literature Shakespeare used the image of the flowerbud to illustrate the emotion of love in *Romeo and Juliet*. A case from medieval literature that bears some resemblance in its imagery is Guillaume de Lorris's *Roman de la Rose* (*Romance of the Rose*) dating from the thirteenth century. C.S. Lewis (1936: 118) has summarized its essential contents in *Allegory of Love*: according to him, it is a love story that is written in the form of an allegory. The dreamer or the narrator of the allegorical story wishes to pick a rose, which symbolizes the love of a lady from a medieval court living in a castle. Lewis's insights in the way allegory helps to create psychological depth

48 I have here characterized this motif as new, but “newness” is of course a relative concept. There are also depictions of women who do not wish to get married in traditional literature (see for instance Anonymous, *sNang sa 'od 'bum gyi rnam thar*, 30–36), but their motives are often depicted as connected with religion. When speaking about the newness of the motif, it is only meant that the motif is “new” in the sense that it has some new characteristic features and aspects which differentiate it from traditional Tibetan literature.

49 Tib. “sems gnag cing sbyor ba rtsub pa'i 'dam char des nga'i lang tsho'i me tog gi 'dab ma dri dang bral ba'i thog tu mi gtsang snyigs ro'i 'dam khu gos zin pas/... ..” (Don grub rgyal, 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 13).

50 In the Tibetan tradition it is well-known that the image of a lotus may sometimes be associated with the female sexual organ. In *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud*, for example, reference is made to “the lotus of the womb” (*mngal gyi pad mo*, 6). See also Dhondup Gyal's narrative *kāvya*-style poem “sNyan ngag la sbyar ba'i sgrung rtsom gzhon nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan” (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 114–115). One of its sections (*le'u*) has a passage which appears to include a description of sex that has been carefully wrapped in dense *kāvya*-imagery. It also contains a lotus image.

and subjectivity in *Roman de la Rose* are especially valuable.⁵¹ In the same way, in Dhondup Gyal's "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" the use of the image of a flower to depict a young girl, her innocence and her wish for love give more depth and create an empathetic feeling in the reader. If the plot were merely related in plain straightforward language it might fail to move the reader to such an extent. The reader contemplates in his or her mind the image of the flower undergoing growth and decay, producing a deeper response to the tragic events portrayed.

Although the flower image for women and love is found in tradition and cross-culturally, Dhondup Gyal's use of the image introduces new elements. Inspecting the whole context of the story reveals the writer's innovation. The novella is a socially critical work criticizing the custom of parents arranging their children's marriages. Showing the difficulties that follow from parental interference, it supports the cause of empowering women with the right to decide for herself about her future and life partner. Thus Dhondup Gyal has made use of a very common and well understood image to communicate a new message: the idea of rebellion against an old custom and speaking for the personal freedom to choose a life companion. He uses the image in a very powerful and coherent way throughout the novella, making it a discourse-level image that communicates to the reader the essential message of the story – the sad fate of the flower in cold weather and the fate of a young woman in a suppressive society.

Although a socially critical modern novella about the life of ordinary Tibetan people was something new to the Tibetan literary scene, in Chinese literature it is easy to find socially critical stories of women's life from earlier periods. One example, is the short story collection *The Wild Roses* from the 1920s by the well-known Chinese writer Mao Dun. According to an article by Yu-shis Chen the collection contains five stories which all have a Chinese woman as their main character. In one of the stories, "Suicide", the female protagonist hangs herself because her lover has left her and, being pregnant, she is afraid of the reaction from society.⁵² In "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" Lhakyi also tries to hang herself because she does not want to marry a man whom she does not love, though she receives help and survives. In both stories the female character is driven to desperate actions due to the repressive and intolerant attitudes of other people and society in general. Mao Dun's story "Haze" also depicts a situation where a woman escapes because of her conflicted feelings about her father's wish to arrange her marriage with someone she does not love and also due to the unfaith-

51 See C.S. Lewis 1936: 112–156 and Curtius 1953: 124.

52 Yu-shis Chen 1979: 306–309.

fulness of the boy she herself loves.⁵³ It is evident that in Chinese literature a tradition of socially critical stories related to the theme of love and all its problematics already existed. In 1979, a few years before Dhondup Gyal wrote his novella, a short story entitled “Love Must Not Be Forgotten” was published by a Chinese woman writer, Zhang Jie. The story tells about a girl and her mother. The girl reads her mother’s diary, which describes her feelings of love for a man who is married to somebody else. The mother had had a loveless marriage and her daughter chooses not to marry at all. The story clearly speaks for romantic relationships based on love and criticizes marriages based on some other more rationalistic or traditional kinds of reasons.⁵⁴ It is evident that the theme of love and discussing the differences between traditional and modern attitudes was very much in the air in Dhondup Gyal’s time. Perry Link in his discussion of Chinese literature during this period writes how the theme of romantic love again appeared in Chinese literature in the late 70s and early 80s and how it had been earlier suppressed during the Cultural Revolution.⁵⁵ What Dhondup Gyal has contributed in “Sad kyis bcom pa’i me tog” is to tell a story about his own people, locating it in a Tibetan environment, and criticizing his own Tibetan society with the aim of improving it. It can be said that the target domain, even though it shares common features with tradition and cross-culturally, is partly new: the present situation of Tibetan women and the writer’s criticism of the custom that would not allow them to themselves decide about their marriages.

It is worth noticing Dhondup Gyal’s special fondness for the image of the flower and his use of it to convey a wide variety of meanings. The source domain of a lotus flower is not used exclusively for women but also, for example, for students or a professor.⁵⁶ The poem “rTsom gyi mtsho mor rlabs kyī me tog dog” (“In the Lake of Writing the Flower Waves are Blooming”) contains flower metaphors related to writing and written composition: the poem contains

53 Yu-shis Chen 1979: 315–316.

54 Herdan (1992: 135–136) discusses the works of Zhang Jie and also the plot and characters of this short story. “Love Must Not Be Forgotten” was translated into English by Gladys Young and appeared in 1986 in a collection of Zhang Jie’s stories named after this short story.

55 Link 2000: 278.

56 See Don grub rgyal 1981a: 52 and 2. In the first two verses of the fourth stanza of Dhondup Gyal’s poem “Slob dpon la bsnags pa’i glu dbyangs” the professor is first likened to a lotus flower and in the latter two verses the lotus flower is likened to the mind of the professor because they both share the quality of being pure and free from stains or errors: the professor’s mind is described as “shining white” and “stainless”. In the stanza in question the image of the lotus flower functions both as a source and a target domain. Purity is a special quality associated with the lotus as it is a flower whose roots are in the mud but its petals float unstained and attractive on the surface of the water.

the metaphor “the lotus garden of the literature of the Snowy Land”.⁵⁷ Generally it could be said that in Dhondup Gyal’s writings blooming flowers are used to convey ideas of beauty and youth, delightful and positive phenomena like love and harmony, and also to express creativity. They are not usually associated with negative phenomena unlike Baudelaire’s *The Flowers of Evil* in which flowers may sometimes be connected with death and evil.⁵⁸ Associating the flower imagery with some positive phenomena is a common feature in Tibetan literature that is shared even with literature from the Dunhuang caves. It is also possible to find images of flowers in Old Tibetan documents. In a manuscript titled “Prayers of the foundation of the De ga yu tshal monastery” (ITJ 0751 (1) in OTDO), there is flower imagery in the form of a simile. A good time is said “to rise as a sun and grow as a flower”.⁵⁹

To consider Dhondup Gyal’s “Sad kyis bcom pa’i me tog”, although Lhakyi has been depicted with the image of a flower that gets frozen, the protagonist is not completely destroyed, it could be rather interpreted that her youthfulness and innocence come to a premature end. In life cycle images withered flowers and yellow leaves are often associated with old age, but they can also be used to illustrate a state in which something has spoiled the time of youth although life still continues.⁶⁰ It seems in the end that there is hope of something positive for Lhakyi when her boyfriend travels to meet her. However, the end of the story is left open and the reader cannot be certain whether the story of Lhakyi and Tsering will actually lead to marriage, the customary happy end in fairytale stories and love stories.

57 Tib. “gangs can rtsom rig pad tshal” (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 138). Here is influence from the *kāvya*-style that has been shifted and adapted to depict the modern society: the garden’s lotuses blossom under the “wonderful sunlight of the policy of the Communist party”. In *kāvya*-poetry and *mngon brjod* synonymic terminologies the lotus is the friend of the sun (*nyi ma’i gnyen*): it opens when the sun shines. Here clearly Indian, Chinese, and Tibetan elements are mixed: the object of description is the state of Tibetan literature. However, as this metric poem contains some water imagery, it will be discussed in more detail in 5.1.

58 There are some exceptions. Sometimes the source domain of a flower may be used to illustrate a tear drop as in “Lham ya gcig”, a fairy tale collected by Dhondup Gyal (1997, VI: 30). Also, a flower image which may have positive associations if considered in isolation, can be modified so that it then expresses a negative idea. An example of this was the flower image in the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa’i me tog” when the flower suffers from cold weather.

59 The spelling of the word flower is *men tog* in the passage: ITJ 0751 (1): 41v1: “yongs su bde ba’I dus nI nyI ma bzhIn du shard/ men tog bzhIn du rgyas nas” (OTDO).

60 An example of this is also contemporary writer Tashi Palden’s story “dByar kha’i lo ma ser po” (“The Yellow Leaves of Summer”). In the story a young woman has an unfortunate love affair with her sister’s husband and when her sister comes to know about the illicit relationship, it is decided that she should marry an elderly man. Before the marriage is to take place, she perceives yellow leaves in a tree and shortly after that she vanishes. The end of the story hints at the possibility that she might have become a nun. The yellow leaves could be interpreted to express the idea of the time of youth and love coming to its end too soon.

3.2 On grassland, gardens, and other images of cultivation and growth

When thinking about nature poetry a poem by Dhondup Gyal titled “rTswa thang dran glu” (“A Song of Missing the Grassland”) immediately comes to my mind. It is a short poem of only three pages containing ten four-line stanzas of regular 11-syllable per line metre.⁶¹ It is one of the relatively early poems of Dhondup Gyal that appeared in his first collection of writings *'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'iskya rengs*.⁶² Reading the poem the grassland of Amdo is immediately evoked. This type of depiction of natural landscape could be characterized as pastoral poetry. The characteristics of the grassland and its inhabitants are seen in a somewhat idealized light and the harshness of life is avoided.⁶³ Emphasizing the beauty of one's native land has a certain national romantic flavour. Grassland could be said to be depicted as *locus amoenus* in this type of songs and poetry.⁶⁴ To name some typical elements of pastoral poetry there are, for example, flowers of the grassland, bees, birds, a pond and a rivulet, shepherds and shepherdesses. In the Tibetan pastoral scenery presented in several modern Tibetan literary works the animals of the nomads grazing on the mountainside are also often seen in a highly aesthetic light. Dhondup Gyal's poem “rTswa thang dran glu” also has horses and a typically Tibetan animal *'bri mo* (a female yak). These characteristics sound very Tibetan and typical to pastoral life; Indian elephants, peacocks, and lotuses are totally missing from this poem.

In Dhondup Gyal's poem the grassland is depicted with various types of imagery: largely the images are concrete ones describing in a lively way the characteristics of nature and life in the grassland, but there are also metaphoric images. Images of nature may function either as a target domain or a source domain. An example of an element of nature as a target domain is when the mountains are said to wear “the hats of white snow” (*gangs dkar cod pan*).⁶⁵ The poem shows the grassland in day and night and during the four seasons. Although Dhondup Gyal rarely writes much about landscapes wrapped in snow, winter here is also depicted in a favourable light, and the celebrations of the Tibetan New Year are mentioned (*lo gsar*).⁶⁶ The metaphoricity of the poem is heightened towards its

⁶¹ The stress is on syllables 1, 3, 5, 7, and 10.

⁶² Don grub rgyal 1981a: 49–51.

⁶³ In her discussion of modern Tibetan literature in the curriculum of Tibetan schools in the PRC, Janet Upton (1999: 20–21) also mentions this song and provides translation of stanzas one and three.

⁶⁴ *Locus amoenus* is a topos in Greek and Latin literature. See Curtius 1953: 195–200.

⁶⁵ Don grub rgyal 1981a: 49.

⁶⁶ Don grub rgyal 1981a: 50.

end as in the last three lines the natural characteristics of the landscape are used as source domains to convey ideas of progress and development.

Stanzas 8 and 9 of the poem contain vegetal imagery:

*dbyar gsum nyi ma shar phyogs ri rtse nas 'dzum dus//
rig gnas me tog bzhad pa'i rtswa thang 'di mdzes pa//
slob gso'i las don dar ba'i 'dab ma 'di rgyas pa//
tshan rig lag rtsal 'phel ba'i ze'u 'bru 'di dga' ba//*

*ston gsum gyur za ldem pa'i 'bras ldan gyi dus 'dir//
can bzhi'i ljon shing grub 'bras lo 'dab kyis brgyan zhing//
thon skyed 'bras bus bkklubs pa'i dge mtshan 'di mthong nas//
rtswa thang dran pa'i glu dbyangs dbang med du shor song//
(Don grub rgyal, "rTswa thang dran glu")⁶⁷*

When the summer sun smiles from the peak of the eastern mountain
how beautiful is this grassland where the flowers of culture are smiling
how extensive are the petals of the education movement spreading
how delightful is the anther of the improving science and technology.

In this time of autumn the trees bending with the weight of ripening fruits
the tree of four modernizations is decorated by the leaves of results
seeing this good sign of [the tree] being covered with the fruits of production
I could not help but sing a song of missing the grassland.
(Dhondup Gyal, "A Song of Missing the Grassland")

Here the images of flowers and a tree bearing fruit are used to illustrate such abstract concepts as culture, education, science, and the political concept of four modernizations. Thus the level of the discourse of the poem is transferred to discuss modernity by means of the depiction of the pleasantness of the grassland. Here the usage of the plant images can be understood in the light of the conceptual metaphor proposed by Kövecses (2002: 98–101) COMPLEX ABSTRACT SYSTEMS ARE PLANTS. For example, he connects flowering with the "best stage of development" and fruits or crop as "beneficial consequences". He discusses how people have everyday knowledge of plants which helps them to understand the development of something through the image of a plant growing (p. 101). It is much easier to imagine culture as a blossoming flower than to try to imagine the possible different activities by various persons and products that improvement in the cultural arena might include. Also it is helpful and concrete to imagine a tree growing green leaves and bearing fruit when considering the development and results achieved in some arena of human concerns and activities. The more

⁶⁷ Don grub rgyal 1981a: 51.

abstract ideas become understood with the help of ideas related to flowers and trees, and obtaining fruits that are familiar to most.

When the plant imagery in the poem “rTswa thang dran glu” is used in connection with the cultural, educational, scientific, and political issues of the society of Dhondup Gyal’s time, it is evident that the target domains are derived from a relatively recent time period. In the context of Tibetan literature it is, when compared to traditional literature, innovative to speak about the tree of four modernizations. The concept of the four modernizations belongs to the domain of terms related to Chinese Communist policies. However, the metaphor also shares certain characteristics with tradition: the blooming of flowers and fruits on trees are traditionally used to convey associations of positive developments and results achieved. In the last stanza of the poem the entire landscape undergoes a metaphorization, becoming “the landscape of the future” (*ma ’ongs yul ljongs*) which the poet sees through the eyes of the imagination.⁶⁸ This seems to be the speaker’s imaginative picture of the future destinies of the grassland and its people. In this light the preceding stanzas depicting the wonderful characteristics of the grassland in addition to the framework of a romanticized description of one’s native region, could also be interpreted in the context of the positive vision of the voice of the poem concerning the progress and development in several fields relevant to the Tibetan people.

Dhondup Gyal often uses images of plants to describe the development of different kinds of phenomena. The development or passing through stages may be in several different areas of life, such as the development of an individual through an education process, the development of a feeling experienced by the characters of a story, or undergoing mental or spiritual growth. The poem “Rig pa’i dpa’ bo rnam la phul ba’i bstod tshig” (“A Eulogy to the Heroes of Wisdom”) contains a wealth of imagery, and it also has a passage alluding to the growth of a plant to illustrate the development of a phenomena. This poem is a lengthy free verse poem of ten pages that is included in the volume devoted to poetry in Dhondup Gyal’s *Collected Works*. I have no knowledge of any earlier publication of this poem, but the text under its title gives information about the time and place of its writing. According to the text, the poem was given as a present to students who had just completed their studies in the Teachers’ Training School in Chabcha (mTsho lho dge thon slob grwa).⁶⁹ It is therefore likely that it was written during the two last years of Dhondup Gyal’s life.

68 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 51.

69 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 147.

This poem differs from some other free verse poems by Dhondup Gyal in the sense that it is not centred around a single powerful image. It rather concentrates on the students and the significance of education and towards the end it even addresses some individual students by name. Onto the target domain of students and studies are then mapped various kinds of source domain images that make the poem more lively, and the process of engaging in studies more concrete. The process of doing studies during the course is depicted with source domain images of cultivation and the growth of a plant from a seed. The excerpt starts from the middle of a slightly longer stanza that first mentions that the teacher and students had studied together for only one term and then says:

*'u bu cag gis lnga rig gi lding khang nas/
mdza' mthun gyi ri mo bris pa dang/ ra ma'i rtogs brjod
kyi brlan zhing gsher ba'i zhing sa'i thog la/
dge slob zung 'brel gyi rmon pa dor du bsdebs par ma zad/
mi rigs la rgya yi thong btsugs te/
shes bya'i sa bon grung bo dag legs par btab ste/
da lta'i dus su yon tan gyi ljang smyug rgyas par ma zad/
sbyangs 'bras kyi me tog kyang bcos min mngon sum du bzhad' dug
(Don grub rgyal, "Rig pa'i dpa' bo rnam la phul ba'i bstod tshig")⁷⁰*

We, in the tent of five fields of learning
draw a picture of affectionate friendship and on the moist and
fertile field of the epic of *Rāmāyaṇa*
have we teacher and students together worked with a plough;
moreover, we have placed on it the plough of people's dignity
and after having well planted the proper seeds of knowledge
now the sprouts of education have grown, and furthermore
also the flowers of the results of studies are actually blooming.
(Dhondup Gyal, "A Eulogy to the Heroes of Wisdom")

Interestingly, the above excerpt has depicted the topic or text being studied as a field and the process of doing studies as the agricultural work of first preparing the fields, then sowing seeds and finally the plants growing. Dhondup Gyal has used the image of flowers to depict the joy of achieving results at the end of one's studies. The excerpt reveals the joy of the teacher who had taught the Indian epic *Rāmāyaṇa* to his students. If the text contained no imagery and merely said that the teacher and students studied together and learned the topic, it would convey much less than it does with the image of cultivating plants. The idea of cultivating a field together and then seeing the flowers expresses the notion of the process

⁷⁰ Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 148.

of studies and the appreciation of good results. Speaking about the “plough of people’s dignity” has a national romantic sound. “Dignity” or *la rgya* in Tibetan is a word that appears repeatedly in Dhondup Gyal’s poetry,⁷¹ expressing a feeling of affection and appreciation of one’s own people and their unique qualities. Many of Dhondup Gyal’s poems show the deep love and concern he had for the Tibetan people. His reference to the *Rāmāyaṇa* probably alludes to the Tibetan version by Zhangzhungwa Choe wang Dragpa’s (Zhang zhung ba Chos dbang grags pa) “Dri za’i rgyud mang” (“The Lute of Gandharvas”), which is famous for its beautiful poetic style.⁷²

The idea of connecting a person’s development in some field to the imagery of agriculture is not new in Tibetan literature. When Milarepa sings to people engaged in construction work he illustrates his meaning with the same kind of images of agricultural cultivation and growing plants:

*nga kun gzhi’i zhing sa bzang dang gcig/ gdams ngag gi sa bon thebs dang gnyis//
nyams len gyi myu gu ’khrungs dang gsum// sku gsum gyi ’bras bu smin dang bzhi//
de bzhi bsdebs pa’i so nam de// nam gzhag gtan gyi so nam yin// khyed ’jig rten so
nam gyis bslu bslu ’dra// lto rgyab kyi khol po de bor la thongs//
(Mi la ras pa, “Ras chung pa dang mjal ba’i skor”)⁷³*

Firstly, [for] me the field of consciousness-in-all (*ālayavijñāna*) is good/
Secondly, [I] sow the seed of instruction/ thirdly, the sprout of practice will be
born/ fourthly, the fruit of the three enlightened bodies ripens/ the agriculture
of sowing those four/ is a system of permanent agriculture/ it seems that you
are lured by worldly agriculture/ stop being the servant of food and clothes
(Milarepa, “On Meeting with Rechungpa”)

71 *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* characterizes it as “affectionate attachment to one’s own side” (*rang phyogs kyi sha zhen*; Krang dbyi sun 1993: 2744).

72 Dhondup Gyal is known to have taught this text to his students. Sangye Rinchen mentions the special classes during the winter and summer holidays (Sangs rgyas rin chen 2006: 54–55). Dhondup Gyal also wrote an accessible version of that poetic work, which is located at the beginning of the volume containing poetry in his *Collected Works*, and entitled “Rā ma ṇa’i rtogs brjod go bder sbyar ba mgur dbyangs blo gсар rna ba’i dpyid glu”. Brockington (1998) is a good source on the Indian epic *Rāmāyaṇa*, and contains a concise summary of the epic’s plot (pp. 34–40). In the following stanza of the same poem (“Rig pa’i dpa’ bo rnam la phul ba’i bstod tshig”) are also images of a flower and fruit. The image of a flower is mapped on youth (*lang tsho*) and the students are exhorted to strive to make “a meaningful tasty fruit” ripen. Although here the “fruit” or goal is not explicitly mentioned, it seems evident that it refers to obtaining an education (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 149). Similar kinds of imagery illustrating the importance of education is found in Dhondup Gyal’s poem “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba’i ’bel gtam” (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 134). The poem contains the images of “planting the seed of effort” and the “fruit of wisdom”. Pursuing studies is metaphorically connected with the idea of agricultural cultivation.

73 Rus pa’i rgyan can, *rNal ’byor gyi dbang phyug chen po mi la ras pa’i rnam mgur*, 2005: 270.

Here clearly suggested is the process of a person's development, however, the goal of progress and growth is completely spiritual and religious. To compare the passage from Milarepa's songs and the passage from Dhondup Gyal's poem quoted earlier, Dhondup Gyal has simply applied the already existing structure of images of growth to the target domain of the education process of his students engaged in studies of the Tibetan language. There is here a shift in the type of education from religious to secular education.

In the cognitive theory of metaphor Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 170) have written about "event-structure concepts". One of their conceptual metaphors under "The Object Event-Structure Metaphor" is characterized in a way that could be generally thought to resemble the structure of the above-mentioned poetic passage. They have characterized it as TRYING TO ACHIEVE A PURPOSE IS AGRICULTURE (pp. 196–197) and give examples that relate concepts from the agricultural domain to other domains of life in which achievements are obtained. Thus the above passage makes use of our understanding of the processes of cultivation and the growth of plants. Dhondup Gyal's imagery of cultivation is also based on the human physical experience of working in the field tending plants. It is normally considered hard physical work and this is also metaphorically projected in the activity of engaging in studies. Thus the image helps the reader through the use of accessible images to make more sense of studies of *Rāmāyaṇa*. Even a person who has not attended the course is likely to feel it to be deeply meaningful to obtain the result of cultivation: the flower or the state of having attained an education. To opt for some kind of highly innovative and special kind of image would potentially make the task of the reader more difficult or it even might make the process of engaging in studies sound more complicated. It demonstrates how age-old images can be applied to the concerns of today.

Entire gardens or their characteristics may be used to build imagery. This is the case in Dhondup Gyal's early metric poem "Le lo can dang brtson 'grus can" ("The Lazy Person and the Diligent Person") in which the spring garden becomes the main image illustrating the central message of the poem. In general, this short poem could be characterized as a pedagogical exhortation to study. It appeared in *'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs* and it is written in a regular metre of eight syllables per line. The stress is on the first, third, sixth, and eighth syllables. It tells about two brothers called "Diligence" (brTson 'grus) and "Laziness" (Le lo). They could be interpreted as personifications or embodiments of these two opposite natures of people. In the poem the brothers take a walk in a beautiful flower garden, where the younger brother "Diligence" addresses the older brother "Laziness". He makes use of the characteristics of a beautiful garden in spring – trees, birds, meadows, flowers, and bees – to illustrate the vitality of a young person. Then he

makes use of vegetal and animal imagery to illustrate the necessity of diligence in studies. It is pointed out how it is necessary to plant seeds and seedlings so that the flowers and trees can grow. Furthermore, birds and bees also require skills so that they can sing and collect honey. All these conditions of nature are used in the poem in a parallelistic manner to illustrate the need for studies while one is still young.⁷⁴

It is a common feature in some of Dhondup Gyal's poems that there are strong exhortations encouraging diligence and abandoning laziness. Some examples are "rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam" ("A Discourse on the Seven Possessions of a Universal Monarch"), "Slob grwa'i zhogs pa" ("Morning at School") and "Ma rabs spun gnyis dang ya rabs spun gnyis" ("The Bad Brothers and the Good Brothers"). Generally, the theme of the importance of educational pursuits appears in several works of Dhondup Gyal. Sangye Rinchen (Sangs rgyas rin chen 2006: 48) has pointed out in his article how Dhondup Gyal felt about the importance of development in Tibetan society and how the improvement in educational standards was regarded as a necessary basis for achieving any progress.

Images of growing plants are found both in Dhondup Gyal's poetry and prose. The unfinished prose composition "Tshul khrim rgya mtsho" ("Tsultrim Gyatso"), for example, contains the source domain images of a field and its cultivation, and the process of a plant growing. The story describes the childhood of Tsultrim Gyatso, whose childhood name was Tsering Namgyal (Tshe ring rnam rgyal). The child's mind is seen as a field in which the parents sow seeds that grow shoots.⁷⁵ The parents are depicted as deeply religious and therefore the seeds and shoots are those of the law of *karma* (*las rgyu 'bras*).⁷⁶ The work on the field of the child's mind is done using "the fertilizer of *karma*", "the plough and plow of *karma*", and "the water of *karma*". Here the imagery conveys a religious meaning which is not frequently found in his writings.⁷⁷

74 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 19.

75 Also in the short story "Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs" (Rang grol 1984: 25) a child's mind is metaphorically depicted as a "small field" where a parent, in this story the father, plants the "seed" of his words that "take root" and "sprout".

76 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 79.

77 Another instance of vegetal imagery in prose is found in the letter in Dhondup Gyal's short story "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs" ("The Waves of Love"). In the passage the image of the growing plant is used to discuss the possibility of happiness, affection, and harmony developing between two persons. The love is depicted metaphorically with the source domain image of a flower. Drugmo addresses Palden: "My dear friend, as you said, it is not suitable to put the root of one's own happiness on the earth of other's suffering. Even if one did so, it could not grow an independent root and the branches of harmony could not grow and the leaves of affection and the flowers of love also could not flourish leaving aside the fruit which was desired. How true indeed were those words." (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 19–20). The suffering and happiness are

The story also tells about the fate of the “sprout of *karma*” and “the flower of love and compassion” in the child’s mind. Hail (*ser ba*) is the natural destroyer of flowers and in the story a tragic event destroying both the child’s innocence and the family is depicted as “the hail of bad intentions” that immediately destroys “the flower in the depths of the mind”.⁷⁸ Hail functions in this story as an image for the terrifying event that the child witnesses: the local chieftain has come to their house intending to rape his mother. The child throws a stone at the chieftain’s head and, on wounding him, escapes to a monastery. At home, very tragic events take place: the child’s mother is killed by the chieftain and in turn his father kills the chieftain and runs away.⁷⁹

In the beginning of Dhondup Gyal’s poem “*bsTod pa' bklags pa'i 'char snang*” there is a wonderful description of a garden – called “the garden of Snow Land” (*gangs can ldum ra*) where the young readers – likened to bees – are invited to enjoy “the dew of the hundred petalled lotus of knowledge”. This poem – especially its introductory part with long lines of 23 and 31 syllables – is written in an excessively ornate *kāvya*-style containing an abundance of Indian originated synonymic terminologies proving Dhondup Gyal’s mastery of this traditional style of sophisticated and complicated poetic expression. The flowers flourishing in the garden are characterized as the abundant petals of “*kumudas* of eulogies” (*bstod tshig sa mos*). Therefore it is clear that this garden depicted in the poem is of literary nature. The trees growing in this garden of ornate imagery are also very special: “the golden trees of good sayings” (*legs bshad gser gyi 'kbri shing*) that grow on a mountain that is formed of “all the particles of the clear wisdom of the scholars of the three realms”. The image of the aphorisms as trees is personified further into a beautiful female with delicious fruits who throws her “arrow glances” to attract others. This image of a garden does not feel very Tibetan for the abundance of *kumuda*-flowers have Indian associations and the “golden trees” that are embraced by the “wind of Malaya”⁸⁰ accompanied with “the fire god of

not explicitly explained in the letter itself. However, the last sentence of the preceding paragraph contains a hint: if she did not have the “good advice” of Palden, how might Drugmo’s life and the happenings after their relation “possibly be controlled by others” (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 19). As it becomes clear later from the story, this refers to other people’s intervention in their love affair. There are more flower images: in the following page of the story imagery of seeds and flowers illustrate love. The first-person narrator recollects earlier events and tells how “the seed of affection was planted between Drugmo and me and the flower of love bloomed”. (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 20).

78 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 81.

79 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 84–85.

80 Tib. “*ma la ya yi mgyogs 'gro dga' ma*”. Prof. Karttunen pointed out to me that the wind of Malaya is a common image in classical Indian literature and refers to the soft wind coming from the Nilgiri Annamalai mountains (pers. comm. in summer 2008 in Helsinki).

the knowledge of logics” are of traditional origin. This kind of “garden of Snow Land”, which has many elements derived from Indic traditions and mythology, could be interpreted as commenting on the earlier poetic eulogies composed for example to praise lamas and deities. The point is that such a garden does not have many Tibetan features that would be relevant to an ordinary Tibetan reader. This demonstrates the great variety of styles of Dhondup Gyal’s writing and his skill in employing them. When he writes in the ornate *kāvya*-style as in the beginning section of this poem, the entire imagery is transformed into a traditional kind of imagery that is very different in its flavour from the depiction of grassland in his short stories and poems. There are two environments, the one transmitted and received from tradition, and the environment of the writer that can be perceived around him: the magnificent green grasslands of Amdo.

The intended function of the rather long introduction inviting the young persons to the marvellous sounding garden of literature is not clear to me: the passage could have been purposefully structured in a very complicated style to demonstrate to its reader the complexity of the style of eulogies⁸¹ or as Lauran Hartley has described it as “preface material”, which seems a very suitable description.⁸² She has discussed this Dhondup Gyal poem from the point of view of the Tibetan literary debate on poetic content, but I shall here focus my attention on its imagery.

Interestingly, the image of the garden created with the *kāvya*-style is depicted as growing both mythical and Indian species of vegetation. In this poem Dhondup Gyal seems to criticize styles of writing which are artificial and without real content and message:

rtsom rig sgeg mo'i mgul rgyan du//
bcos ma'i me tog nyer phul kyang//
dpyod ldan rkang drug gsar pa'i khyus//
sbrang rtsi'i dga' ston ji ltar myong//
don med tshig gi shing skam la//
mdo med lo 'dab brgya btags pa//

81 Characteristic to the *kāvya*-style is the way of defining concepts using complicated names that have to be specially studied, and do not render themselves easily to translation, for example a mountain is called *sa 'dzin*, ‘holder of ground’, and the sun may be called *rta ljang bdag po*, ‘owner of green horse’, as in this Dhondup Gyal poem.

82 See Hartley 2003: 229–231. She has also translated several stanzas from the part of the poem containing lines of seven syllables, but those stanzas are different from the ones excerpted above. Interestingly, she mentions the possibility that the poem might have had two authors: Dhondup Gyal and “Drag-btsan”, which she explains is Dawa Lodroë’s penname.

gzhan phan me tog ltar snang yang//
'bras bu smin pa srid na med//
 (Don grub rgyal, “’bsTod pa' bklags pa'i 'char snang”)⁸³

even if one offered artificial flowers
 for the necklace of the attractive woman of literature
 how could the group of young intelligent bees
 then enjoy the festival of honey?
 attaching a hundred faded leaves and petals
 to the dry tree of meaningless words
 it is not possible that a fruit would ripen
 even though it might appear as flowers to benefit others
 (Dhondup Gyal, “Impressions on Reading ‘Eulogies”)

A dry tree and artificial flowers are images used to criticize a style of writing which is empty of real meaning and content. Reflecting on this and on the way flowers and trees are usually associated with life, growth, and creativity, here they are used to convey an opposite meaning. This reveals the flexibility of imagery and the need in many cases to interpret it within a context. Here the opposite meaning is conveyed by specifying that the flowers are not real but fake, and that the tree is not lush and green but a dry tree that is doomed to collapse and die. Also in Dhondup Gyal’s instructive poem “Ma rabs spun gnyis dang ya rabs spun gnyis” (“The Two Bad Brothers and the Two Good Brothers”) evil persons are likened to “a tree trunk whose root is devoid of moisture” and there is a further warning about the danger of “becoming like a stiff corpse”.⁸⁴ This imagery is used pedagogically by the child’s mother. The poem also depicts the transformation of the child’s mind caused by the mother’s advice: metaphorically the tree starts to “prepare to produce green leaves” as a result of “gentle rain”.⁸⁵ It is clear from this that the image of a tree can be mapped to illustrate the characters and may convey different kinds of meanings depending on the state and also on shape of the tree that is employed as an image. In the short story “Sems gcong” (“Depression”) a straight tree is used metaphorically to describe a character’s honest nature,⁸⁶ whereas in “Brong stag thang” (“The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”) the

83 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 143.

84 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 227. Tib. “gal srid ma rabs bya ba lhur blangs te// bstan bshig spyod pa rgya yan btang ba na// rtsa ba brlan dang bral ba'i shing sdong ltar// mi ro rengs pa bzhin du 'gyur nyen che//”. According to a footnote in *The Collected Works* the poem was written by Dhondup Gyal and Chen Qingying (Khrin chin dbyin).

85 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 228.

86 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 3.

nature of an old stubborn man is depicted with the image of old crooked trunks that resist straightening.⁸⁷

It seems that a large part of Dhondup Gyal's metaphoric tree images are images of trees in general. However, sometimes the qualities associated with special types of trees might be used to express some quality or behaviour of a character. Willow branches, for example, are very flexible. In the novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" Lhakyi goes to beg for rations with the nun Dolma. The old nun depicts how Lhakyi feels ashamed in the way her head hangs, likening her head to the hanging leaves of the willow.⁸⁸ In the settings it is possible to find trees of some specific species as concrete images. For instance, the short story "sGrung ba" ("The Storyteller") has an old pine tree (*thang shing*) under which the storyteller used to tell his stories and in "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" there are the eucalyptus trees (*ya gal gyi ljon shing*) growing in the school area.⁸⁹ There is not always a need to represent some specific quality or characteristics of a certain tree species, in which case merely "trees" are referred to. However, when describing landscapes it sometimes makes the reader's task of visual imagining easier when specific kinds of tree species are mentioned.

There are other plant images in Dhondup Gyal's writings. I will here present short remarks on two plant images: that of a thorn which seems to resemble cross-cultural and traditional usages, and that of a garlic, which would appear to be directly connected with everyday experience. Thorns and thorn-like sharp parts of plants, of course, are connected with unpleasant associations and feelings. According to Eichinger Ferro-Luzzi (1995: 17), a researcher of Tamil literature, spines are "a cross-cultural metaphor for unpleasant feelings". She illustrates this with an example from a contemporary Tamil writer, Ramamirtham. In his imagery spines are found in clothes that a character is wearing, and are used to illustrate the experience of living in an unhappy marriage. In *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud* the army of the enemy is likened to "a thorn in one's eye".⁹⁰ In Dhondup Gyal's writings a poisonous thorn (*dug tsher*) may function as a source domain image for the target domain of "words" (*tshig*). "Words like poisonous thorns" may "prick" (*zug*) either the ear or the heart of that person who hears those words.⁹¹ Examples of this usage abound in his writings, for example in "rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam" ("A Discourse on the Seven Precious

87 Don grub rgyal 1981b: 14.

88 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983: 18. Tib. "kho mo'i mgo bo ni rgya lchang lcug ma'i lo 'dab ltar thur du bsnar ba las yar dgye mi thub par 'gyur/".

89 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983: 9.

90 Solomon 1987: 331.

91 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 355; Don grub rgyal 1981b: 9.

Possessions of the Universal Monarch”) “deceitful words of lies” (*gyo sgyu'i rdzun tshig*) are likened to “poisonous thorns piercing the holes of ears” (*rna ba'i bu ga 'bigs pa'i dug tsher*).⁹² In the short story “sGrung ba” the feeling caused by the words of an old woman telling about the death of the storyteller are depicted with the simile “to prick the ear like a poisonous thorn”.⁹³ Generally, Dhondup Gyal’s prose is full of dialogues between characters and this gives the writer plenty of occasions when needed to place in their mouths sharp, hurting words.

Garlic (*sgog pa*) does not seem to be a very pleasant image in the writings of Dhondup Gyal. However, it is an image that is very familiar from people’s everyday experience. In the short story “Brug mtsho” (“Drugtso”) the eponymous Drugtso disagrees with her boyfriend about their future plans to find work. The speech with which she refutes his views is experienced by him using the clear and dramatic alimentary image of one’s mouth feeling “like having eaten a garlic”.⁹⁴ In the short story “Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam” (“Impermanent Illusory Dream”) the image of a garlic occurs in connection with the process of thinking:

*khos de ltar bsam zhing bsam zhing da lta'i gnas bab la zhib 'jug byas te sgog pa'i shun
pags bshu bshu byas na yang/ dpon po'i go sa thob pa'i thabs lam gsang ba de rnyed
par ma gyur/
(Don grub rgyal, “Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam”)⁹⁵*

Keeping thinking like that he examined his present situation and even though he was peeling the covers of the garlic he could not find out that secret method how to get the status of a leader.
(Dhondup Gyal, “Impermanent Illusory Dream”)

Here it is up to the reader to decode the metaphoric expression “peeling the covers of the garlic”, but a likely interpretation seems to be that the “problem” that is under consideration is depicted with the image of “a garlic” and the thinking process as the act of removing its covers. In the quoted passage the main character is considering the problem of how to attain the high status of a

92 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 138.

93 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 45.

94 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 80. Tib. “dgag pa sgog pa 'dra ba zhig”. Tashi Palden (bKra shis dpal ldan 1991: 459–460) has paid attention to the skilfulness of the verbal expression (*skad cha*) employed in the dialogue and argumentation between the first-person narrator and Drugtso. He comments favourably on the many expressions peculiar to the local expression of Amdo embedded in the narrative, which is written in standard Tibetan.

95 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 331.

leader. It is one of the central problems possessing him and a source of negative emotions such as jealousy.⁹⁶

To sum up the results of examining the vegetal imagery, some main tendencies of Dhondup Gyal's use of the images of flowers, trees, and other plants have emerged. We have seen how images of flowers are very frequent in his writings. In the novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" the flower image was the central metaphor. In other writings flower images occasionally appear and are usually associated with positive feelings such as love, youth, and joy. The life cycles of plants were also used to depict metaphorically human life cycles. Imagery associated with the quality of plants to grow and their cultivation was also found, whereas in Dhondup Gyal's tree imagery the shapes and qualities of trees were often used to depict characters. The source domain images of vegetal imagery are often such that they can be found in cross-cultural and traditional Tibetan images. However, as we saw when discussing the flower image in "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" they may be employed in such a way that they convey a meaning relevant to today's Tibetan society.

96 There is also another more recent Tibetan poem written in English in which a process of peeling an onion is described. In question is Tenzin Tsundue's (1999: 32) "Looking for My Onion". But the image of the onion seems to be used to convey another kind of meaning: at the end of this short poem the speaker comes to appreciate the fact that he in fact had had an onion which he could peel. In the context of this poem it is possible to interpret the process of peeling an onion as the course of living one's life and the onion as a metaphor for life and personal existence.

4. ANIMAL IMAGERY

Dhondup Gyal's writings are rich in animal imagery. A number of typical animals of the grassland feature in these images, both grazing animals and wild animals. If we consider, for example, folk tales from Tibet, Gesar epic and ancient manuscripts found from Dunhuang,¹ it could be said that there is a strong tradition of representing indigenous animals in the texts and imagery of Tibetan writing and storytelling. Unlike flower imagery, the species of animals are specified. In Dhondup Gyal's works horses, asses, wild yaks, goats, sheep, musk deers (*gla ba*), antelopes (*go bo*), cats, dogs, wolves, and different kinds of birds, fish, bees, and butterflies are mentioned. The animals may occur in natural settings, or as owned or as perceived by characters, or they might occur metaphorically. Legendary animals of mythical origin, such as snow lions, dragons and *garuḍa* are also found. The animals which occur most frequently are those that are found in the native Tibetan environment. However, there are also some animals that seem to have found their way into the works through textual transmission, or by some other means, as they are not indigenous to the Tibetan high plateau. These animals include, for example, peacocks, elephants, and lions. Except the peacock, their images are very rare. Reading Dhondup Gyal's works, the animals in them clearly differ from the typical animals in Indian texts such as, for example, in the *Rāmāyaṇa*.²

Analysing Dhondup Gyal's animal imagery, I pay attention to how these animal images are used and what the writer wishes to convey with animal imagery in his writings. This chapter contains a selection of images from various stories and poems. This is because the animals do not play a leading role in any of the stories or do not function as a central image in any of the poems. Dhondup Gyal did not write any fables or works comparable to *Animal Farm*. However, in the short story "Brong stag thang" ("The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger") the rocks resembling the two animals have an important symbolic function and an ancient animal legend has an important role. In most of the works animal images are

1 In Old Tibetan Documents Online there is, for example, an ancient manuscript (ITJ 0731) entitled "End of the Good Age and tragedy of the horse and yak". For discussion of some old Tibetan documents from Dunhuang which mention certain Tibetan animals, see also Fedotoff 1998: 19–22.

2 For discussion of various animals in classical Indian texts, see, for example, articles by Karttunen (2000; 2001; 2003), and for information on Indian animals as depicted in Greek textual sources, see Karttunen 1997: 167–187. For information on animals in the Sanskrit epics the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, see Brockington 1998: 192, 194–195, 198, 417–419.

occasionally used to describe the outer appearance of characters or their character or behaviour. Therefore, the use of animal imagery could be described as human centred. When the source domain of an image is an animal, the target domain lies in the domain of humans, their actions or some other domain. Even if we focus on animal images, we do not focus on the animals themselves or are concerned with them, rather the focus lies elsewhere. The use of animal images transcends genre boundaries and an animal belonging to a certain species may equally well be found in a prose work as in poetry. This transcending quality of the images is explained by the shared cognitive structures underlying the images employed in works belonging to various genres.

Humans are normally in central place in prose and the animal images are commonly used to provide a deeper understanding or a clue to the reader to understand the nature of a certain character. This is often the case in poems, too, that have human characters, such as “Rig pa'i dpa' bo rnam la phul ba'i bstod tshig” (“A Eulogy to the Heroes of Wisdom”) and “Ya rabs spun gnyis dang ma rabs spun gnyis” (“The Two Good Brothers and the Two Bad Brothers”). This tendency to either map the source domain image from nature on ourselves or our activities and behaviour or on the other hand to perceive nature with the help of human personifications could be explained with the concept of embodied experience from cognitive theory, as was the case when considering vegetal imagery. Everything humans perceive in nature is perceived from our own human perspective, and we describe nature in terms of our own encounters with it. However, in Dhondup Gyal's animal imagery there are also some occurrences when an animal image is not mapped on a character but rather illustrates some concept, but these are rarer than mappings on characters. It seems that there are cultural differences in Tibetan and Western ways of thinking about various animals. Therefore a discussion on animal imagery is worth pursuing in order to perceive shared and differing features of use and thinking. Why, for example, are such animals as snow lions, dragons, and *garuḍa* found in modern Tibetan writings and sometimes in realist stories?

It is of interest to ask whether the animals that are employed in the imagery have the same characteristics that appear in the folkloristic tradition or in traditional Tibetan literature? Are they then carried on into modern literature and used to illustrate human nature, outlook, and behaviour? Or is Dhondup Gyal in some respects innovative in his use of animal imagery? It is also of value to examine the representation of mythical animals in modern realist stories. Why does a writer decide to write about an animal he knows does not exist? In short, what could be the purpose of employing images of legendary animals in modern often socially critical realist prose works?

4.1 Images of birds

Various kinds of qualities and associations are attached to birds.³ According to people's common ideas about birds, they possess wings and are able to fly. These characteristic features are also made use of in bird imagery. Although the image of a bird is usually metaphorically mapped on the human target domain, in one of the stories "Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs" ("The Love of Flesh and Bone") a fast-moving bus is likened to "the flying of a bird".⁴ Furthermore, the reader can almost hear the sound of the bus when Dhondup Gyal depicts it producing "the sound of a snoring ox".⁵ Here the imagery makes it easier for the reader to imagine the manner in which the bus appeared than if it had merely been mentioned that the bus was fast and noisy. Related usages of the simile of flying like a bird are found in both ancient and contemporary Tibetan literature. The target domains of fast movement have enlarged with the improvement of technology since ancient times.⁶ In accordance with this, it can be observed that the source domain "bird" is today and in the time of Dhondup Gyal applied to a wider range of target domains. However, expressing a fast unhindered movement of some object is not specifically new, but is a common idea connected with birds flying in the sky.

Just as the quality of bird flight may be used to describe the manner of some human activities, a very common image in Tibetan literature is the image of a bird rising high in the sky to illustrate how a human being should become well-educated and learned or reach heights of spiritual realization.⁷ A winged being

3 For information about birds in Finnish poetry before and especially during the second half of the 20th-century, see Lummaa 2005 and 2006.

4 Rang grol 1984: 32.

5 Rang grol 1984: 32.

6 The simile "like a bird" (*bya ltar*) can be found in Dunhuang documents, see Lhagpa Choephel's article (Lhag pa chos 'phel 2003: 514) which contains an excerpt from a song from a Dunhuang document. Also here the quality of flying is connected with the bird. However, the passage seems to predict a sad end as the bird in the source domain image becomes the prey of a hawk (*khra*). In a folktale the expression "to vanish like a flying bird" (*bya 'phur ba ltar yal*) is used to illustrate fast movement, for example, in a tale entitled "Mi dang spyang ki ri bong gsum gyi gtam rgyud" ("A Story of a Man, a Wolf, and a Rabbit"), see Karma mkha' 'bum & 'Jam bu 1996: 92. This image is also found in modern Tibetan literature, see, for example, Tenpa Yargye's short story (bsTan pa yar rgyas 2002: 78) in which the passing cars are described as follows: "they went fast like it is always said in literary works: 'like birds flying'."

7 For example in Tenpa Yargye's (bsTan pa yar rgyas) short story entitled "rTswa thang gi glag phrug" ("The Young Eagle of the Grassland") which appeared in the collection *Byang thang gi mdzes ljongs* ("The Beautiful Northern Plain"), the eagle is a metaphor for an excellent student whose learning career is depicted in the story. For a discussion of this story, see Virtanen 2008: 246–247. In Milarepa's songs translated by Chang (1966: 89–91), in a song Milarepa sang to the nuns from Mon, the image of the vulture as well as several other animal images are used in a parallelistic way to illustrate an accomplished yogi who takes delight in his meditative practice.

can easily cross unopposed from one high place to another. In a similar way a person with good learning can usually achieve more than somebody without a proper education. In Dhondup Gyal's writing, these kinds of bird images, usually alluding to quite large birds such as vultures, eagles and the mythical bird *garuḍa*, can be found in both prose and poetry. An example of this type of image is found in the novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog". The following extract is from a father's speech to his son. Notably, it also contains an image of fish and both the skills of swimming and skills of flying are likened to becoming able and knowledgeable enough to manage in life:

*da khyod glag phrug dang' dra na gshog rtsal rgyas zin/ nya phrug dang' dra na rkyal
rtsal rgyas' dug da song song song/ glag phrug khyod gnam 'phang bstod ran red/ nya
phrug khyod mtsho la rkyal ran red/ yon tan sbyong dang de las lhag pa med*
(Don grub rgyal, "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog")

Now, if you are like a young eagle, the skills of your wings have developed. If you are like a young fish your swimming skills have developed. Now go, go, go. It is time for you young eagle to soar in the sky and time for you young fish to swim in the lake. Educate yourself well, there is nothing better than that.
(Dhondup Gyal, "A Flower Destroyed by Frost")⁸

The image of a bird rising high can also be reversed. In an unfinished longer prose work Dhondup Gyal has made use of the simile to illustrate descent "like a bird whose wings have been broken [falling] from the sky" to depict how the first person-narrator falls into a deep hole in the ground.⁹

In Dhondup Gyal's literary expression the image of a vulture (*bya rgod*) is sometimes employed to describe the appearance of certain characters or some feature of their appearance, such as their eyebrows. Vultures are common in the high Tibetan plateau and are often mentioned in literary works, folk songs,¹⁰ and spiritual songs such as in the imagery of Milarepa's songs. The image of a vulture may be employed in many ways. In Dhondup Gyal's works, for example, a great beauty, such as a heroine in a love story may well have eyebrows "like the out-stretched wings of a vulture".¹¹ In the short story "Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs" the old *thangka*-painter, Wangden (dBang ldan), is likened to a vulture that "has landed on a rock". The simile uses the Amdo dialect word *a na ma na* to indicate similarity.¹²

8 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983: 8.

9 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 361: "bar snang nas 'dab gshog chag pa'i bya bzhin".

10 See, for example, song no. 3 in Causemann 1993: 22–25.

11 In a description of Lhakyi in "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog", Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983: 10. Tib. "thang dkar rgod yi gshog zung nman par brkyangs pa lta bu'i smin ma".

12 Rang grol 1984: 23. The eyebrows of the *thangka*-painter are also likened to the outstretched wings of a vulture (Rang grol 1984: 20).

Some other birds found in the writings of Dhondup Gyal are crows, cuckoos, peacocks, and owls. The owl or rather its sound is mentioned only once in “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” in the scene of Lhakyi’s suicide attempt, where the sound coming from her throat circled by a rope is likened to the sound of an “old owl”.¹³ An interesting case of intertextuality is found in the short story “Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam” when its main character cites Sakya Paṇḍita’s *Sa skya legs bshad*, saying “although a bird in rain would feel thirsty, it does not drink water from the ground”.¹⁴ Dhondup Gyal connects the aphorism to an entirely new context to illustrate how a man is too “dignified” to get married to a widow.¹⁵ The *Sa skya legs bshad* is a classical text that is probably one of the most common textual sources of intertextual loans and adaptations. Many Tibetans know several aphorisms from it by heart and may sometimes site them to comment on some happening or situation in their everyday lives. In *Sa skya legs bshad* the image of a bird in need of water is not used to illustrate the unsuitability of a spouse, but the classical treatise uses it to illustrate how “a wise person, however much he might suffer, will not follow the path taken by fools”.¹⁶

13 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 27. According to personal information from an anonymous Tibetan informant in 10 September 2006, the owl, also called *srin bya*, is regarded as an omen of death. Its sound is also found in a stanza of Sakya Paṇḍita’s *Sa skya legs bshad*, where it is a bad omen and is used to illustrate the behaviour of a bad person. Interestingly, in the same stanza the peacock (*rma bya*) is used as an illustration of the behaviour of a good person because it is described as viewing its own physical appearance, i.e. a good person pays attention to his own mistakes, not to those of others. (Sakya Paṇḍita’s root text in Mai tri bu ddha sha san dha ra’s [Sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin] commentary 1991: 197.) Also in another stanza of the same treatise, the owl is used parallelistically to convey the idea of a deceitful person (p. 190). In Western cultures the owl tends to be associated with quite opposite kinds of ideas. Commonly, owls are depicted as old, particularly wise birds. For English translations of these two stanzas (109 and 145) from Sakya Paṇḍita’s aphoristic treatise, see Bosson 1969: 224, 234; Davenport 2000: 91, 111.

14 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 329–351. The stanzas of Sakya Paṇḍita’s *Sa skya legs bshad* can be found inside a 20th-century commentary of this classical work by Mai tri bu ddha sha san dha ra (1991).

15 The citation in Tibetan: “char sdod bye'u skom na yang/ sa la babs pa'i chu mi 'thung.” Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 346.

16 Sakya Paṇḍita’s stanza in Mai tri bu ddha sha san dha ra’s commentary (1991: 43): “mkhas pa ji ltar thabs rdugs kyang// blun po 'jug pa'i lam mi 'gro// char 'dod byi'u skom na yang// sa la 'bab pa'i chu mi 'thung/.” For English translations of this stanza (13), see Davenport 2000: 38; Bosson 2000: 203. In *Sa legs 'grel pa*, the bird is described as “wishing for rain” rather than “staying in the rain”. The commentary identifies birds which do not drink from the ground as cuckoos (*byi'u khu byug*). Prof. Karttunen has pointed out to me that the bird in question is the *cātaka*-bird. Bikram Grewal discusses legends connected with birds in the introduction to his *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent*, remarking how it is believed that this particular bird only drinks rain water. He identifies the bird as “the hawk cuckoo” (Lat. *hierococcyx varius*) or “the pied crested cuckoo” (Lat. *clamator jacobinus*). (Grewal 2000: xv) For further information on these two birds, see Grewal 2000: 25–26.

In “Ka rkyang legs bshad gur gum me tog”, a poem in which all the lines start with the letter *ka*, the synonymic terminologies (*mngon brjod*) are likened to the “melody of *ka la ping ka* bird” (Skt. *kalaviṅka*)¹⁷ and its last stanza also has the same auidial image:

ka phreng rtsom la don snying mi ldan na//
ka sgrogs skad ltar rna bar gzon 'gyur bas//
ka la ping ka'i dbyangs 'dir khyod soms la//
ka phreng rtsom gyi zlos gar sgyur cig gu//
 (Don grub rgyal, “Ka rkyang legs bshad gur gum me tog”)¹⁸

if there is no essence of meaning in an alphabetical poem
 it becomes irritating to the ear like proclaiming *ka*
 think about this melody of *ka la ping ka*
 and perform the dance of the *ka*-poem!
 (Dhondup Gyal, “Good Sayings with the letter *Ka*: A Flower of Saffron”)

Here it sounds as if the singing of the *ka la ping ka* bird was depicted as lacking any substantial meaning. In fact, the sound of this particular bird seems to have been chosen because the name of this bird begins with the letter *ka*. If the Sanskrit word refers to the sparrow, the sound of the *ka la ping ka* bird would then perhaps not be considered to have some particularly exceptional melodic qualities. But as the species of the bird is somewhat unclear, *ka la ping ka* could possibly also refer to a bird known to have a beautiful voice, such as the nightingale.¹⁹ Of the above-mentioned birds, I will pay more attention to the cuckoo and the peacock because they are found quite frequently in Dhondup Gyal’s writings.

4.1.1 Mimetic and metaphoric cuckoos

One of the specific species of birds mentioned in the writings of Dhondup Gyal is the cuckoo (*khu byug*).²⁰ The cuckoo is normally associated with spring and it

17 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 249. According to Das (1902: 10) *ka la ping ka* is: “a sparrow; a singing bird with a sweet voice. According to *Lex.* the Indian cuckoo.” According to Karttunen (2000: 197, n. 2) *kalaviṅka* can be one of the Sanskrit names for a sparrow, the other names sometimes used being *kuliṅga* and *caṭaka*. However, he remarked (pers. comm. summer 2008) that the species of this little bird is not absolutely clear and there might be some variation.

18 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 251.

19 In a folk tale that seems to be a Tibetan variant of Aesop’s “The Crow and the Fox”, the fox holds the voice of the *ka la ping ka* bird as an example of a beautiful singing voice, and flatters the crow into making it show its singing skills. Karma mkha' 'bum & 'Jam bu 1996: 171.

20 There are many varieties of cuckoos and I am not certain about the scientific name of the cuckoo (*khu byug*) that is found in Tibet. Das (1902: 145) gives the word *kokila* as one of its Sanskrit names. According to Prof. Karttunen this Sanskrit word refers to the Indian cuckoo or koel (Lat. *eudynamus scolopacea*). Grewal (2000: 25–28) mentions seven or eight species of

sometimes appears as a concrete image, symbol or as a topos. Often the image has metaphoricity, namely combining and intertwining two or more conceptual domains. The image of the cuckoo may be often interpreted as metaphoric as it refers beyond itself and introduces associations of spring, summer, love, and happiness in certain contexts that support these interpretations. It is often given a name which is in itself metaphoric: *dpyid kyi pho nya*, “messenger of spring”.²¹ With the cuckoo, however, it is problematic to discern when it is question of a purely mimetic concrete image and when it would be better to highlight metaphoricity. The tendency to connect the cuckoo with spring is so strong that it could perhaps also be regarded as a symbol of spring. If we consider Indian literature, for example, the cuckoo is connected with spring.²² In Finnish culture the arrival of birds is also connected with spring and this is grounded on the actual observation of the arrival of migratory birds.

When discussing images of cuckoos in Dhondup Gyal’s writings, it would be better to speak about the degrees or scale of metaphoricity. The image is more likely to be a concrete image when the presence of a mimetic cuckoo (a bird) can be discerned, though even here the bird may be accompanied by metaphoric associations of spring. But in cases when the cuckoo is only a source domain image and when there is no presence of a mimetic cuckoo, the image would have a high degree of metaphoricity.

In the Tibetan folk tradition the cuckoo is a bird strongly connected with the arrival of spring. A folk tale from Amdo called “Khu byug dmyal bar lhung ba” (“A Cuckoo That Fell into Hell”) is an interesting tale that provides an explanation why the cuckoo is called the messenger of spring. It tells about a cuckoo that once sang its spring song at a bad time just before a rain and hail storm. As

cuckoos in India: the pied cuckoo, the common hawk cuckoo, the Indian cuckoo, the grey-bellied cuckoo, the drongo cuckoo, the Asian koel and the Sirkeer Malkoha (cuckoo) and the greater coucal. According to the information he gives about their voices, they all seem to be noisier during spring and the summer during the monsoon. He also provides information about areas these cuckoos are found in India. Both the Asian koel, and the Indian cuckoo can be found in the Himalayas. However, because his book is about birds in India, it does not say anything about the area and the species of cuckoos that can be found in Tibet. According to Tibetan literary sources, cuckoos are normally said to arrive from Mon, a region south of Tibet, and India is not normally mentioned in connection with them. According to the article “Cuckoo” in Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, cuckoos are found around the globe and there are many different species.

21 Not only humans are messengers, as animals and other objects or phenomena can carry messages. Thus, this image does not have to be classified as an anthropomorphic image. For three Sanskrit poems by different authors centred around the idea of messengers of various kinds, see Mallinson 2006. Prof. Karttunen has pointed out to me that there is a whole genre of Sanskrit literature related to the idea of messengers, in Sanskrit called *sandēśakāvya*.

22 See, for example, the part entitled “Spring” in Kālidāsa’s *Ritusamhāra* (“The Seasons”), VI/14, VI/20, VI/21, VI/22, VI/24, VI/25, VI/27, VI/28, in the translation by Roberts 1990.

a result of the cuckoo's song about the arrival of spring, several small animals that arose from their lairs in the earth were killed, as was the cuckoo. There is a description of the cuckoo and the small animals meeting *Yamarāja* ("The Lord of Death") and suffering in the realms of hell. The story relates how the seasons in the human realm become mixed when the cuckoo is not there to announce the arrival of spring. By divine intervention, the cuckoo is allowed to return to the human realm and is persuaded again to sing its spring song. The story relates how the cuckoo "promises to act as the messenger of spring" and explains that based on its earlier bad experience the cuckoo learned to sing its song after the rain.²³ In the tale the cuckoo is partly mimetic and partly anthropomorphic, and this is true for the description of other animals and insects too. The tale is clearly about animals and their behaviour, but the animals are depicted with the anthropomorphic quality of being able to speak.

A prose work by Dhondup Gyal in which the cuckoo has quite an important role is "bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud" ("The Story of Searching for the Royal Tombs").²⁴ This is a very interesting work: it seems to be the beginning part of a novel that was left unfinished because of the untimely demise of its writer. The excerpt from the novel in *The Collected Works* contains the preface and the first two chapters, but the second chapter would appear to be unfinished and ends abruptly. The work could be characterized as a fantasy novel: it mixes elements of fantasy, like the heavens, and elements of our time and past Tibetan history. In the story the first-person narrator comments "the people of the Snow Land praise [the cuckoo] as messenger of spring". The expression "messenger of spring" is an expression that may also be found in Dharmabhadra's "rGya mtsho'i chu thigs" ("A Drop of Water from Ocean"),²⁵ a concise treatise on synonyms. A recent commentary on the treatise explains that the cuckoo is so called "because it arrives in spring".²⁶ It has become so common to allude to the cuckoo in literary language with this metaphor that it has become a kind of lexicalized metaphor.

The image of the cuckoo or perhaps rather the echoing of its voice often marks the introduction of the motif of spring and summer. In "bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud" there is quite a long passage which connects the cuckoo and

23 Karma mkha' 'bum & 'Jam bu 1996: 251–258. The end of this folktale states that it was collected by Nyungbu (sNyung bu).

24 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 352–397.

25 dNgul chu Dharmabhadra, "mNgon brjod kyi bstan bcos rgya mtsho'i chu thigs", 180. Dharmabhadra's text can also be found included in its commentaries gZhis rtse dge 'os slob grwa'i bod yig slob spyod tsho tshung 1991, *mNgon brjod kyi 'grel pa btus bsgrigs legs bshad 'dren pa'i dung sgra* and Nor bu dgra 'dul and Tshe ring rnam rgyal (ed.) 1992, *mNgon brjod rgya mtsho'i chu thigs kyi rtsa 'grel*.

26 gZhis rtse dge 'os slob grwa'i bod yig slob dpyod tsho tshung 1991: 102.

the warm seasons to the overall theme of love. In the Tibetan context it is therefore possible to notice a small extension, namely the cuckoo is associated with both spring and summer; in India these two seasons are dramatically different because there the summer months are marked by heavy monsoon rains. The first-person narrator is wandering in grassland filled with fog. He hears the sound of the “messenger of spring” – the cuckoo – which he, however, associates with summer. The singing of the cuckoo comforts him in this strange and lonely place:

*thag ring nas yong ba'i bya khu byug gi gsung skad des nga'i sems la bde ba byin pa
dang/ bdag gi bsam pa'i brtse dungs kyi' dun ma de'ang bya khu byug gi gsung skad
der bcol ba yin/*

(Don grub rgyal, “bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud”)²⁷

The sound of the cuckoo echoing from the distance comforted me and I also associated with that sound the aspiration of love in my mind.

(Dhondup Gyal, “The Story of Searching for the Royal Tombs”)

Although this passage mentions the “aspirations of love”, introducing the motif of love, though more precise features of love are not given. The sound of the cuckoo is a sign indicating the presence of an imaginary mimetic cuckoo. The words of the narrator create metaphoricity by associating his ideas of love with the sound. The narrator continues to wander in the empty plain imagining its wonderful beauty covered by fog that gets thicker and thicker, whereas he distances himself from the sound of the cuckoo. Later events tell about a love story between a human and a goddess, but as the story is unfinished, the reader cannot know much how it would have developed.

The sound of the cuckoo is considered melodious and enchanting. It is one of the images based on sound in a series of images used to characterize the sound of the waterfall and the song of youth in Dhondup Gyal's free verse poem “Lang tsho'i rhab chu” (“The Waterfall of Youth”). The series of source domain images mapped on the combined space of the two above-mentioned sounds are “the melody of Brahma”, “the speech of Sarasvatī”, and “the sound of the cuckoo”.²⁸ Images of the gods are elements derived from the Indo-Tibetan tradition and it is interesting how these traditional elements are added to a structurally innovative modern free verse poem.

The poem that starts the collection ‘*Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs*’ (“The Dawn of Clear Writing”) is titled “Slob dpon la bsngags pa'i glu dbyangs” (“A Song in

27 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 359.

28 Rang grol 1983: 56–57.

Praise of the Professor”). It is written in a *kāvya*-style that is metrically not very complicated, and likens the speech of a professor to the singing of a cuckoo:

slob ma'i 'khor gyis bskor ba khyod kyi gsung//
skal bzang rna bar dga' ston 'gyed pa bzhin//
lo 'dab tshogs kyis phyug pa'i ljon dbang rtser//
dpyid kyi pho nyas snyan 'jibs glu dbyangs sgrog/
(bzlog pa'i dpe)
 (Don grub rgyal, “Slob dpon la bsngags pa'i glu dbyangs”)²⁹

Surrounded by an entourage of students, your voice
 offers a festival to the ear of the lucky ones in a similar way
 in the peak of a tree rich with an abundance of leaves
 the messenger of spring is singing a pleasant song.
 (a simile of transposition)
 (Dhondup Gyal, “A Song in Praise of the Professor”)

In Tibetan poetics it sounds perfectly normal and pleasant to associate the sound of the cuckoo with a speech or voice of somebody whose qualities are being praised. Here the professor being praised is Dungkar Losang Thrinley, who was Dhondup Gyal’s teacher in the Institute of Nationalities in Beijing.³⁰ At the beginning of the poem the school is identified as a “school of different nationalities”.³¹ The poem is provided as an exercise in writing similes according to the model of the *Kāvyaḍarśa*. It has 34 stanzas and after every stanza except the last, the name of the simile (*dpe rgyan*, *upamā*) in question is given in brackets. The similes are in the same order as in the *Kāvyaḍarśa*. In fact, the *Kāvyaḍarśa* mentions 32 main types of *dpe rgyan*, but has two subdivisions of one of them, thus Dhondup Gyal’s poem has 33 stanzas demonstrating the poetic figures in successive order.³²

The above stanza is an example of *bzlog pa'i dpe* (Skt. *viparyāsa*, “The Upamā of Transposition”), which is the third of the similes.³³ According to the root text of *Kāvyaḍarśa* this particular simile establishes the relation of similarity by means

29 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 2.

30 The professor’s name Blo bzang 'phrin las is found spaced over two lines and enclosed in the text in the simile called “*mnyam nyid kyi dpe*” (“the simile of equality”) (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 6).

31 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 1.

32 The 29th simile “ngag don dpe” is divided into two types: one having only one *bzhin*-particle indicating similarity, and the other having several *bzhin*-particles inside it.

33 For the Sanskrit names and their English translations here I have referred to Eppling 1989. For an explanation of “The Upamā of Transposition”, see Eppling 1989: 471–472. Pointing out that a simile and *upamā* do not have the same scope and do not exactly correspond, Eppling has chosen not to translate the names as “simile” but has used the Sanskrit words as such. I have here translated *dpe rgyan* as simile, but I am also of the opinion that there is no exact correspondence, though similarities do exist.

of changing the positions of *dpe* (*upamāna*) and *dpe can* (*upameya*), that is by exchanging the two parts of the simile with each other. Thus, here the target domain of the professor's speech has become the source domain (the poem is about the professor and not about the cuckoo) and is used to illustrate the source domain of the cuckoo that has become the target domain. (The cuckoo is understood with the help of the idea of the professor).³⁴ In the root text of *Kāvyaḍarśa* a lotus is illustrated with the face of a beautiful woman, thus the Indian text does not use the image of the cuckoo. Most of the source domain images in *Kāvyaḍarśa* illustrating the similes are such natural phenomena as the lotus and the moon, and the cuckoo is not mentioned. However, the image of the cuckoo does appear frequently in Indian Sanskrit literature, although it does not occur in the similes of the *Kāvyaḍarśa*.

Dhondup Gyal's poem "Slob dpon la bsngags pa'i glu dbyangs" has several stanzas where the source domain of a simile is the sound of the cuckoo. These stanzas include, for example:³⁵ *the tshom dpe* (Skt. *saṅśaya upamā*, "The Upamā of Doubt", stanza no. 12, 12th simile); *gtan 'bebs dpe* (Skt. *nirṇaya upamā*, "The Upamā of Resolution", stanza no. 13, 13th simile); *dgag pa'i dpe* (Skt. *pratiṣodha upamā*, "The Upamā of Negation", stanza no. 20, 20th simile); and *ngo bstod dpe* (Skt. *caṭu upamā*, "The Upamā of Flattery", stanza no. 21, 21st simile). In "the simile of doubt" the voice of the poem wonders whether what he hears is the singing of the "messenger of spring" or the voice of his professor.³⁶ In the next stanza ("the simile of resolution", *gtan 'bebs dpe*) the speaker of the poem becomes certain that the sound is not that of the cuckoo, but the voice of his professor. In the simile of "negation" (*dgag pa'i dpe*) it is said that it is not worthy to compare the speech of the professor to that of the sound of cuckoo as the sound of the cuckoo lacks many properties, such as deep meaningfulness.³⁷ The image of the cuckoo's sound (in a more positive sense) also continues in the next stanza the "simile of flattery" that praises both the qualities of the professor's voice and the cuckoo's singing.³⁸ It is noteworthy that in this poem humans are not compared to the cuckoo, but only the speech or sound produced by these two

34 See mKhas dbang Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las 2004: 131.

35 The Sanskrit terms and English translation are from Eppling 1989: 491, 494, 519, 522. For more information on them see Eppling's explanations after the translations of the stanzas of the root text.

36 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 5.

37 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 7.

38 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 8.

are compared.³⁹ All these similes are carefully expressed according to the model of the *Kāvyaḍarśa*: the writer shows his skill in writing in accordance with a particular traditional poetic style rather than trying to be creative in some new way. There is a long tradition of writing praises for the spiritual teacher, thus the target domain of a professor here is not particularly new but rather in accordance with traditional models. Also, if we consider the anonymous Tibetan treatise *Bya chos rin chen 'phreng ba* (“The Dharma among the Birds, a Precious Garland”),⁴⁰ a special cuckoo has the main role: the bird is a manifestation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, who teaches dharma to the other birds. Of course, if we return to Dhondup Gyal’s poem in praise of the professor, a slight shift or adaptation to a secular modernity might be discerned because the professor works in an institution of modern secular education. Writing examples taking model from *Kāvyaḍarśa*’s verses is very usual among Tibetan students, and teachers normally require that students memorize the root text and write their own examples (*dper brjod*) of the various poetic figures (ornaments, *rgyan*).

Although the image of the cuckoo does not come from the *Kāvyaḍarśa*, the association of the cuckoo with spring is not an innovative feature of Dhondup Gyal’s work, but could rather be described as a feature which is deeply rooted in both the Tibetan and the Indo-Tibetan tradition. The cuckoo is also mentioned several times in the songs of the Sixth Dalai Lama.⁴¹ Its arrival is associated with the coming of spring and the season of love, and its return to Mon, a region south of Tibet, becomes associated with autumn. Somehow in the Tibetan tradition and also in Dhondup Gyal’s writing it is thought that the cuckoo comes from Mon (and not from India). This might well be in accordance with actual perceptions of the seasonal migratory movement of birds. At the end of Dhondup Gyal’s novella “Sad kyis bcom pa’i me tog” the first-person narrator Tsering hears a cuckoo calling, connecting it with summer. Thus in the text there is the mimetic cuckoo that sings, but it indicates a metaphoric interpretation of the coming developments in the lives of its characters that will remain undisclosed to the reader. The signs of the warm season create the feeling for the reader that a story might well have a happy ending, although it is left open. The arrival of the cuckoo can

39 However, it is interesting to note that the title of a recent anthology edited by the *Qinghai Tibetan Language Newspaper* office is called *Nags klong khu byug 'du gnas* (“Forest Abode of the Cuckoos”), containing a representative selection of 42 Tibetan writers with their biographical information and photos. One is led to think that the word “cuckoo” might be a metaphoric image for the writers and the “forest abode” for the book itself.

40 Tr. Conze 1955.

41 See, for example, songs no. 46 (p. 17), no. 75 (p. 27), no. 76 (p. 28), and no. 80 (p. 29) in Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho & Ngag dbang lhun grub dar rgyas 1981. Folk songs also mention the cuckoo and its singing. See, for example, Causemann 1993: 24.

well be considered one of the standard topoi in Tibetan literature. The elements connected with the arrival of cuckoo are often flowers and warm season and the associations of love, happiness, and positive developments. In “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” the narrator comments that it is actually summer when speaking about “the messenger of spring”. His explanation is that “it is the beginning of spring when the cuckoo comes from Mon, but when it arrives in the midsts of trees, the glory of summer has arrived”.⁴²

In the poem “Khrul min rmi lam ngo mtshar dga' skyed” (“The True Dream of Wonder and Joy”) there is an innovative use of the image of the cuckoo mapped on a different kind of target domain. In this poem images are commented upon in a way which relates them to the phenomena of modern society in the People’s Republic of China. This is the passage about the cuckoo:

*nags la shing sna 'dzoms pa de//
krung gor mi rigs mang pa'i rtags//
shing la khu byug babs pa de//
slob gso'i las don dar ba'i rtags//
skad lhang lhang gsung snyan sgrog pa de//
slob la 'bad pa byed pa'i rtags//
nags sil tog mngar mo za ba de//
don zab mo'i yon tan 'byor ba'i rtags//
(Don grub rgyal, “Khrul min rmi lam ngo mtshar dga' skyed”)⁴³*

The abundance of various kinds of trees in a forest
is the sign that there are many nationalities in the PRC
the landing of cuckoos on the trees
is a sign of the education movement spreading
the sounding of its melodius clear voice
is the sign of striving in studies
the enjoying of the sweet fruits of the forest
is the sign of attaining a meaningful education
(Dhondup Gyal, “The True Dream of Wonder and Joy”)

Here the image of the cuckoo is used differently from the traditional signaller of the arrival of spring. The target domain is education and engaging diligently in studies. To connect it loosely to the ideas related with spring, it would be possible to think about the “spring of education”. Of course, when the reader has the traditional idea of the “glory of spring” in his mind, and encounters this image, the positive associations are likely to be carried over to the more modern target domain. When the poem is in the form of an explanation, it is possible to make

42 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 47.

43 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 16.

more loose mapping of ideas as the reader will understand the connection when it is stated explicitly in the form of one thing being a sign of another.

4.1.2 *Dancing peacocks: Influences from Indian aesthetics*

The image of the peacock is used to express beauty when it is used in connection with a description of the characteristics of a landscape. Its feathers spread wide are very beautiful. In the short story “Brong stag thang” (“The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”) the place itself, the grassland whose name is also the title of the story, is depicted with the help of the peacock in its opening line:

*dbyar zla drug pa'i 'brong stag thang ni rma bya'i sgro gur phub pa dang 'dra bar
mdzes shing lta na sdug pa zbig red/
(Don grub rgyal, “Brong stag thang”)⁴⁴*

The plain of the wild yak and tiger of the sixth summer month was beautiful and attractive like the feathers of a peacock spread wide.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”)

The following landscape description paints the breathtaking beauty of the natural landscape and then brings the reader’s attention to boulders that have animal shapes: those of the wild yak (*'brong*) and the tiger.⁴⁵ Here the beauty of a landscape with Tibetan native characteristics is depicted with the simile of a peacock that has spread its feathers, albeit that peacocks are typically found in hot Indian climes. According to the information in Grewal’s book (2000: 8) peacocks can be found everywhere in India as well as in the Himalayas up to the height of 2000 metres.⁴⁶ If we consider the words for peacock in Sanskrit and Tibetan, according to Rybatzki (2008: 198), although the Sanskrit *mayūra* and Tibetan *rma bya* are not directly connected, however, the first syllable of the Tibetan word (*rma bya*) could have a connection with the first syllable of the Sanskrit word. Based on the frequent occurrence of peacocks in Sanskrit literature, it seems that the Tibetan images of peacocks were influenced by Indian aesthetics that over of period of more than a thousand years were gradually transmitted into Tibet. Of course, it is not possible to say for certain where Dhondup Gyal actually got his idea

44 Don grub rgyal 1981b: 4.

45 Don grub rgyal 1981b: 4. See also below Ch. 4.2. Agyur (A 'gyur 2003: 56–57) also quotes this first sentence of the short story. His discussion shows how the nature descriptions have been used to convey both ideas of nature and the mental state of the characters.

46 Grewal (2000: 8) describes peacocks using the name “Indian peafowl” (Lat. *Pavo cristatus*). Peacocks are only found in some parts of the world: The Encyclopaedia Britannica Online mentions the following three types of bird: 1) the blue, Indian peacock, 2) the green Javanese peacock, and 3) the Congo peacock.

of peacocks and their beautiful feathers from – it could be that he saw them somewhere in zoos in China or even on television and then decided to use the image to give the reader the idea of the beauty of a landscape in his native region.

Due to their aesthetic qualities the feathers of peacocks and parrots are also mentioned in “Lang tsho’i rhab chu” where light reflecting on a waterfall is depicted using these images along with images of brocade and a rainbow.⁴⁷ The peacock image also appears on the first page of the poem “rTsom gyi mtsho mor rlabs kyi me tog dgod” (“In the Lake of Writing the Flower Waves are Blooming”), where the poem tells about the meeting of the Tibetan writers in Xining that took place in 1981.⁴⁸ The image contains two parts: the sound of thunder and dancing peacocks. These two elements are often combined in poetry and can be considered as a topos originating from Indian ideas of the monsoon season. Giuliano Boccali has described “the theme of monsoon” in Sanskrit literature, and he also mentions thunder and peacocks among several other images connected with the monsoon.⁴⁹ Boccali discusses the theme of happy lovers enjoying each other’s company while it is raining outside and on the other hand the motif of monks meditating while there is bad weather outside.⁵⁰ If we take a look at Kālidāsa’s *Ritusamhāra* and its chapter devoted to the rainy season, there are three stanzas that depict dancing peacocks.⁵¹ In Tibetan literature and especially in the works of Dhondup Gyal thunder and erotic motifs do not seem to be connected. However, the beautiful sight of dancing peacocks is used to convey a sense of delight and wonder.⁵²

47 Rang grol 1983: 56.

48 Yangdon Dhondup gives information on this conference called “The First Five-Province Tibetan Writers Conference”. She attaches special importance to this conference and writes: “The conference was a historical event since it was the first time that Tibetans involved in the literary field from all Tibetan areas were gathered in one place.” (Yangdon Dhondup 2004: 59) She also provides many details about the conference and its achievements, using Jamphel Gyatso’s work in Chinese whose title she translates as “Being Grateful to Life. Me and My Novel ‘Kelsang Metok’”, see Yangdon Dhondup 2004: 59, n. 137.

49 Boccali 1999: 16, 29.

50 Boccali 1999: 13–15.

51 The three stanzas are II/6, II/14, and II/16 in Roberts’s (1990) translation of Kālidāsa’s *Ritusamhāra*. For more Sanskrit works with depictions of peacocks, see Karttunen 2000: 199–200.

52 For example in *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud* the happiness of Prince Devatisa on hearing the deceitful plan of Bhavakumara to make armour is described as follows: “Devatisa became as happy as a peacock touched by the first fine drizzle of the rainy season.” (Solomon 1987: 315) In The Sixth Dalai Lama’s song the peacock is mentioned to be from “East India”, whereas the parrot is from “Kongpo”. In the Sixth Dalai Lama’s poem these birds from different regions meet in Lhasa. See Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho & Ngag dbang lhun grub dar rgyas 1981: 22, song no. 59 “Dzoms sa chos ’khor lha sa”.

'di ni gangs can rtsom rig gсар rtsom gyi/
 mkhas dbang rma bya'i zlos gar dang po ste//
 tang gi tshogs chen drug pa'i dbyar rnga la//
 ram 'degs rtsom gyi gtsug phud ngom pa'ang yin//
 (Don grub rgyal, “rTsom gyi mtsho mor rlabs kyi me tog dgod”)⁵³

this is the first dance of the peacock scholars
 of the new writing of the literature of the Snow Land
 the thunder of the sixth meeting of the assembly of the party
 causes [them] to display their head feathers of writing.
 (Dhondup Gyal, “In the Lake of Writing the Flower Waves are Blooming”)

Here thunder is represented with a synonymous expression, *dbyar rnga*, the “summer drum”.⁵⁴ As in Indian literature, it is possible to notice here the contrast between the images of thunder and happy peacocks – it seems aesthetically to enhance and stress the delightfulness of the scene.⁵⁵ In its style and imagery the peacock images in the stanza can be viewed as strongly influenced by the Indo-Tibetan literary tradition. However, using the images in connection with the beginning stages of modern Tibetan literature and mapping the source domain of thunder to the meeting of the Chinese Communist Party, seem to be new innovations. Here we can again observe a shift in target domains. It is also interesting how an originally Indian image becomes mapped on aspects of Tibetan culture and Chinese politics.

Dhondup Gyal’s metric poems “bsTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes” (“The Beautiful Flower Garland of Eulogy”), “Slob dpon la bsngags pa'i glu dbyangs” (“A Song in Praise of the Professor”), and “bsTod pa' bklags pa'i 'char snang” (“Impressions on Reading ‘Eulogies’”) also contain peacock images. The peacock would appear to be a bird that stirs the Tibetan aesthetic imagination. In “bsTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes”⁵⁶ the speech of a Communist leader is metaphorically illustrated with the source domain image of thunder, and peacocks function as a source domain image for the subjects “that are busy in dancing”.⁵⁷ Here an image influenced by the Indian *kāvya*-tradition has been used to express a political meaning of the writer’s time. In “Slob dpon la bsngags pa'i glu dbyangs” the good deeds (*mdzad bzang*) of a professor are likened in a simile (*mtshungs*

53 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 138.

54 The noise of thunder is usually associated with the sound of a dragon (*'brug*).

55 Boccali (1999: 14–15) mentions Siegfried Lienhard’s observation concerning the aspect of contrast and tension related to “the theme of the monsoon”.

56 This Dhondup Gyal poem will be discussed in more detail in the section on moon imagery in Ch. 6.1.

57 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 59.

sbyor dpe) to “a happy dancing performance of a peacock” that is said to “bring improvement to the culture of the Snow Land”. The same stanza also mentions an image related to thunder: “the joyful song of the turquoise dragon” is said “to fill the space”.⁵⁸ Although I have mentioned several images where the qualities of the professor praised in a poem are likened to those of the peacock or a cuckoo, the poem also contains other images like those of the moon, flowers, Mt. Meru, a pine tree and gentle rain which are mapped on the target domain of the professor and his activities and characteristics.

In the passage concluding the poem “*bsTod pa' bklags pa'i 'char snang*” (“Impressions on Reading ‘Eulogies’”) an image of a peacock is again found. This passage is written in a complicated *kāvya*-style with 23 syllables per line. As was seen before, the peacock is very often connected with thunder and in the poem in question a storm precedes the appearance of a peacock and destroys the “head of the rock mountain of meaningless eulogies”.⁵⁹ In the last line of the poem the peacock becomes so happy that it spontaneously dances.⁶⁰ The sentence seems to express joyfulness and mentions the “glory of celebration” that is caused by the happiness of having (with the help of colourful imagery) refuted the “meaningless eulogy”.

4.2 Animals of the grassland and depicting characters

I will now take a look at some cognitive observations on animal metaphors and then try to see whether they are applicable to the animal images in the works of Dhondup Gyal. Zoltán Kövecses (2002: 124–125) presents several English sentences in which humans and/or their behaviour is depicted with the help of animal metaphors. He outlines two general-level conceptual metaphors: PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS and HUMAN BEHAVIOR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOR. These metaphors suggest that animal images are often used to depict humans and their way of behaving. When speaking about literature, this of course would mean that animal images are used to depict characters and their ways of acting. The above conceptual metaphors do not indicate whether the meanings and associations related to animals could be of various kinds: positive, negative, and neutral. However, Kövecses seems to think that the animal metaphors would be mainly used to depict the negative traits of human behaviour instead of highlighting some good qualities.

⁵⁸ Don grub rgyal 1981a: 11.

⁵⁹ Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 146.

⁶⁰ The peacock *rma bya* is here referred to with the expression “*mdongs mtha'i bu mo*”. Krang dbyi sun (1993: 2149) gives the words *mdongs mtha' can* and *mdongs ldan* as synonymous with the peacock. Literally, ‘it has no option but to raise its umbrella of feathers’.

He suggests the modification of the metaphors to: OBJECTIONABLE BEHAVIOR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOR and OBJECTIONABLE PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS.⁶¹ On the basis of analysing Dhondup Gyal's employment of animal images, I would like to hold to the more general versions of the conceptual metaphors because I think that in the light of Tibetan materials both good and bad characters as well as different kinds of behaviour are depicted with the help of animal images. Although we cannot say that animal imagery would automatically indicate some objectionable trait in a character, in Dhondup Gyal's works there are several occasions when animal images are used to depict objectionable or even violent behaviour.

In Dhondup Gyal's writings both good human characteristics or behaviour and bad behaviour or characteristics may be depicted with the help of animal imagery. But it seems to be the case that certain animals are used to illustrate objectionable behaviour, whereas other animals are used to depict other human characteristics or are employed otherwise. Dhondup Gyal typically uses images of wolves and dogs as a source domain image for negative types of behaviour or personality. For example, using an expression of the type "somebody is a wolf" is an economical way to convey in a clear and lively way to the reader the evil nature and harmfulness of a character's behaviour. In the preceding chapter we discussed the flower image in the novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" and the scene of Lhakyi's rape. In this novella animal imagery is made use to depict the evil nature of the man who will turn out to be a rapist.⁶² I have discussed several images from "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" as it is a lengthy composition, rich in imagery, and thus it contains a wider range of images than would a shorter composition. Here are Lhakyi's words describing the man whose real nature she understands too late:

*nga la sha tsha tsha dang snying nye nye byed pa'i mi de ni lug pags gyon pa'i spyang
ki zhig dang/ g.yo sgyu che ba'i wa mo zhig red/
(Don grub rgyal, "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog")⁶³*

That man who had been kind and affectionate to me was a wolf wearing
sheep's clothing and a deceitful fox.
(Dhondup Gyal, "A Flower Destroyed by Frost")

The image is in the form of two metaphors which follow each other and are mapped on the same target domain of a male character. The image stresses the negative aspects of the behaviour of wolves and foxes. These words foreshadow to

⁶¹ Kövecses 2002: 125.

⁶² Lakoff (1987: 392) has also mentioned the conceptual metaphor PASSIONS ARE BEASTS INSIDE A PERSON, which relates to the way a rapist is depicted as a wolf in Dhondup Gyal's novella.

⁶³ Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 12.

the reader that something bad will happen and that the character is evil in nature. After the rape scene, the evil character vanishes from the story and nothing more is known about him. The reader's attention is then focussed on the developments in the life of the main character.

The novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" also contains other images of wolves and/or foxes. Explaining something to somebody who does not understand or take a matter into account is likened in a simile to "preaching dharma to the ear of a wolf" (*spyang ki'i rna la chos bshad pa dang 'dra*).⁶⁴ Of course, considering the nature of a wolf, it is not helpful to try to explain religious views to it. Attributing evilness to wolves is a human idea of their behaviour that is probably based on the human knowledge that wolves kill other animals and especially the cattle that are owned by humans. Therefore, based on our experiences and on inherited tradition, humans tend to view wolves in a negative light. A wolf viewed from the perspective of another wolf is most likely to be valued or perceived in a completely different light. Thus our own embodied perspective plays a significant role in the formation of imagery that is used for literary purposes. More objective books about animals which avoid ascribing human values in their descriptions include biological studies and reports about animals. However, the creation of animal imagery in general seems to be largely based on everyday ideas about various animals and also on transmitted and inherited cultural values. Kövecses insightfully describes the process underlying the creation of animal metaphors:

The only way these meanings can have emerged is that humans attributed human characteristics to animals and then reapplied these characteristics to humans. That is, animals were personified first, and then the "human-based animal characteristics" were used to understand human behavior.
(Kövecses 2002: 125)

In the Tibetan context the use of animals in creating imagery in modern fictional works can often be understood in the light of the way animals are depicted in folk literature.⁶⁵ In the fables the animals are not usually described only as animals,

64 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 20. In a proverb that is found in the same novella the fox is, however, depicted in a slightly better light: "The delicious meat was eaten by Mr. Wolf and the bad reputation was given to Miss Fox" (*sha zhim po a pho spyang kis zos/khag ngan pa a che wa mor bkal zer ba cis ma bden*), Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 29.

65 In addition to Tibetan fables published in the Tibetan language, mention should be made to a remarkable German project which has gathered Tibetan folk stories. Led by Dieter Schuh this project has produced 17 volumes in the series Beiträge zur tibetischen Erzählforschung. I am grateful to Prof. Schwieger for kindly providing me information on the website of the project which contains information on the series and its volumes. See <tibetinstitut.de/folktales-maerchen.html>, accessed 2 Oct. 2012. The first four volumes of the series, published under the title *Märchen, Sagen und Schwänke vom Dach der Welt*, contain a real treasure of Tibetan

instead many human traits, behaviours or ways of thinking are applied to them. Often the animals are attributed with speech, indicating that they are anthropomorphised to a certain degree. In addition stereo-typical ideas about animals' human qualities can be transmitted to children with the help of fables.

The wolf is often mentioned in Tibetan traditional literature and folk stories. In a collection of Tibetan folk stories from Amdo entitled *Byis sgrung dga' ba'i rtsed'jo* ("The Happy Play of Children's Stories") and edited by Karma Khabum (Karma mKha' 'bum) and Jambu ('Jam bu), there are at least six stories where a wolf is one of the main actors. Also in the collection of Tibetan folk stories *Märchen, Sagen und Schwänke vom Dach der Welt* there are several stories about wolves.⁶⁶ In the folk stories the wolf is often described as an animal who wishes to eat other animals or humans, but often its intelligence does not seem to be high for in several stories it falls prey to the tricks of other weaker animals and dies.⁶⁷

In a tale entitled "Ra ma dang spyang ki" ("The Goat and the Wolf") the wolf and fox join forces: the fox deceives the goat so that it sends its guardian dog away and then the wolf kills the goat and the two animals share its meat.⁶⁸ The animals are attributed with speech so that they can talk with each other. For example, in this folk story the bad intentions of the wolf are understood when it speaks to "sister fox" about joining together in their plan to kill the goat.⁶⁹ In folk tales the fox is commonly depicted as very clever, in this collection in a tale titled

folk tales – altogether 288 stories – translated into German. See Schuh 1982; Kretschmar 1982; Bielmeier & Herrmann 1982; Phukhang & Schwieger 1982. Some of the volumes in the series contain detailed linguistic analyses of the tales. For example vol. X, Peter Schwieger's *Tibetisches Erzählgut aus Brag-g'yab* (1989), contains eight Tibetan folk tales in both Tibetan and German translation with linguistic analysis of the language of the stories. Although several of the volumes are based on oral materials collected by the researchers, the series also contains a work based on a textual source, namely Silke Herrmann's research work, *Die tibetische Version des Papageienbuches* (1983). Herrmann's work contains a critical edition and a translation of a Tibetan version of the *Śukasaptati*, which can be found in *bKa' gdams glegs bam*. One of the main characters of the frame story is a parrot, who tells the fairy tales in the work.

66 See Schuh 1982: 221–222, tale no. 51; Kretschmar 1982: 269–272, tale no. 37 and 277–279, tale no. 39, and 296, tale no. 48; Bielmeier & Herrmann 1982: 33, tale no. 33 and 34–36, tale no. 8.

67 See, for example, the stories in Karma mKha' 'bum & 'Jam pa (1996): "Mi dang spyang ki ri bong gsum gyi gtam rgyud", "Bong bus spyang ki btul ba", and "Ra ma dang spyang ki" (p. 228). Although there are two stories bearing the same title "Ra ma dang spyang ki" in this collection of folk tales, they are very different and in one the goat manages to survive by playing a trick on the wolf. Wolves tricked by other animals is in fact an international topos. See, for example, Uther 2004, I: 122A, 122Z, 122K, 122L, 122M, and 122N. In one of the tales related to wolves in the collection of folk tales translated by Kretschmar (1982: 296), wolves help a man by protecting him from the attack of a demon.

68 In Karma mKha' 'bum & 'Jam pa (1996: 61–62). As indicated at its end, this tale was collected by Chabgag Dorje Tsering (Chab 'gag rDo rje tshe ring) and published earlier in the literary magazine *mTsho sngon mang tshogs sgyu rtsal*.

69 Karma mKha' 'bum & 'Jam pa 1996: 61.

“Khwa ta dang wa mo” (“The Crow and the Fox”) the fox manages to flatter the crow into demonstrating its singing skills and consequently the crow drops a piece of meat from its beak, which is then snapped up by the fox.⁷⁰

These folk tales are animal stories, but it is noteworthy that in them certain properties and characteristics are attributed to the wolf and the fox that have then been carried with their images when they are, for example, used as a source domain imagery in modern writings such as the works of Dhondup Gyal. It is likely that the ideas are partly transmitted through tradition and partly through the experience gained through human encounters with animals. The wolf is an animal that is also often found in other works of modern Tibetan literature, such as for example Anyon Tashi Dhondup’s (*A smyon bKra shis don grub*) short story “sPyang ki lug rdzi dang kho’i chung ma” (“Wolf: Shepherd and His Wife”).⁷¹ The ease in finding mimetic and metaphoric wolves in folk stories and modern writing could be partly connected to the real life of nomads: the wolf is a major problem for shepherds tending their flocks. The connection between negative ideas concerning wolves and the life style of Tibetan nomads has also been observed by Schwieger (2003: 112). In his article he presents several metaphors with images of wolves used to illustrate evilness and lust. Interestingly, Schwieger observes that the associations connected with foxes differ in different cultures. The title of his article has the metaphoric expression “Fuchsherz, Tigergesicht”, in Tibetan: *wa snying stag gdong*, which translated literally into English is “fox heart tiger face”. He interprets that the expression is used to convey the idea of a person who looks strong on the outside, but inwardly is a coward. He also gives other examples of the image of the fox that are used to illustrate cowardice (2003: 110–111). This kind of usage (in addition to the deceitfulness attributed to the nature of foxes) is also found in a saying in the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa’i me tog” which goes: *stag mchongs sar was mi slebs pa’i dpe* (“the saying of the fox who does not come to the place where tigers leap”)⁷² which occurs in the

70 In Karma mKha' 'bum & 'Jam pa 1996: 170–171. See Ch. 4.1, n. 17. Also a tale called “Der Fuchs und der Wolf” (Schuh 1982: 221–222) tells about a clever fox who by trickery manages to save himself from the bad designs of a wolf.

71 This short story is found in *A smyon bKra shis don grub* 1999: 112–134. The depiction of the wolf in Tashi Dhondup’s short story is special because the main character, a shepherd, starts to believe that the wolf he has shot was the guardian dog of Srin po rdza rgan, the mountain and local guardian deity. He feels a sense of regret and tries to make amends for his action. It is a story which deeply conveys man’s relation to nature: at its end the dark clouds clear from the mountain and from the signs of nature the main character is led to think that everything will be well. Thus this story does not accept the stereotyped evilness of wolves but takes a different environmental consciousness (albeit influenced by folk beliefs) towards the wolf in the story.

72 Don grub gyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 24.

speech of the character Rigyang when he relates how he had considered his position weak compared to the other men who were interested in forming a relation with Lhakyi, the heroine of the story.

Humans may indeed be harmed by wolves and that is most likely the reason why it is also possible to find negative depictions of wolves in the European literary tradition. For example, in the fairytale “Little Red Riding Hood” the wolf dressed as an old woman eats Little Red Riding Hood.⁷³ However, unlike in the Tibetan literature, in Europe sometimes ideas of loneliness are associated with the image of the wolf that I have not noticed in Tibetan texts, which mostly attribute the characteristic of evilness to wolves. Attributing loneliness to wolves is found, for example, in Hermann Hesse’s *Der Steppenwolf*, where the main protagonist Harry Haller is a lonely person.⁷⁴

Another example of likening a human with a wolf and a fox is found in the metric poem “Ma rabs spun gnyis dang ya rabs spun gnyis” (“The Bad Brothers and the Good Brothers”) by Dhondup Gyal and Chen Qingying (Khrin chen dbyin). The boy Lhundup behaves badly and his bad behaviour also negatively influences the first-person voice of the poem. Lhundup is depicted as follows:⁷⁵

*kho ni wa skyes rgyal po bzhin//
slob ma'i 'khor la shin tu 'tshé//
kho ni lug khyu'i spyang ki ltar//
re'u dang lu gur rtag tu gnod//*

(Don grub rgyal & Khrin chen dbyin, “Ma rabs spun gnyis dang ya rabs spun gnyis”)⁷⁶

He like the king of foxes
is harmful to the entourage of students
he like a wolf in a flock of sheep
always harms the kids and lambs
(Dhondup Gyal & Chen Qingying, “The Bad Brothers and the Good Brothers”)

In the above excerpt the “king of foxes” comes from the story that is also referred to in the *Sa skya legs bshad*, and the entire story is found in its commentary.⁷⁷ In

73 For information on this tale, see Uther 2004: 224–225.

74 The association with loneliness may sometimes occur in literary works, but not usually in folk tales.

75 This name is also used by Dhondup Gyal in the above-mentioned novella “Sad kyiis bcom pa'i me tog”, as a name of a negative character.

76 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 224.

77 See Sakya Paṇḍita’s stanza and the commentary by Mai tri bu ddha sha san dha ra [Sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin] 1991: 137–140 and in English in Davenport 2000: 72–73.

the story the fox gets colour on its fur and because it looks like a special animal, it becomes enthroned as a king. However, the new king treats the other foxes especially badly and they soon find out about the actual nature of their king.⁷⁸ In his article Schwieger (2003: 110) points out that the idea of the fox as a king who turns against other foxes is a popular saying among Tibetans. In fact, many of the aphorisms of Sakya Paṇḍita are very well known to Tibetans, who might cite them in their everyday conversations. In the poem by Dhondup Gyal and Chen Qingying the images are in the form of similes. Notably, in this narrative poem the character and behaviour of Lhundup and the character of the first-person voice undergo a change for the better. Consequently, the animal imagery also undergoes a change: the two boys are depicted with the source domain images of lambs and bees in two similes.⁷⁹ This indicates that lambs are considered kind and unproblematic animals. This view also influences the way in which the image of lambs is used in literature. The colour of a lamb is white, which also suggests innocence and goodness. However, it is possible that in metaphoric expression that the way of behaving in a lamb-like manner is sometimes considered artificial, masking the evil intentions of a character.⁸⁰

In “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma” (“A Shameless Bride”) Kuntu Sangmo’s (Kuntu bzang mo) father Soepa (bZod pa) is accused during a struggle session of being an enemy of the people. The parallel images preceding this expression are a “wolf among sheep” and an image related to plants “an oat in a field”.⁸¹ Thus it is quite clear that here the wolf is thought to be a bad, harmful animal whereas sheep are harmless, docile animals.

Although the fox is usually depicted as deceitful, in one of Dhondup Gyal’s poems, “Slob grwa'i zhogs pa”, there is an image of a fox that is very positive, depicting the fox as a diligent animal. The narrator of the poem observes two young people in the garden and comments on their wish to strive in their studies.

78 This idea of the fox becoming enthroned as a king is also found in a simile in the poem “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam”. See Don grub rgyal 1981a: 141.

79 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 229.

80 In “sPrul sku” in one of the scenes, the state of mind of the eponymous character, the tulku, when he sees a beautiful woman, is described with the expression: “sprul sku'i sems ni lu gu 'ba' 'ba' ltar gyur song/”; in English: ‘The mind of the tulku became like a lamb saying ‘ba' 'ba’’. Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 143.

81 Tib. “lug nang gi spyang ki and zhing nang gi yug go”. Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 60. The word *yug go* is not found in standard dictionaries, but according to information from Lhundup Dorje (emails 12 Feb. 2008 & 4 Dec. 2008) in response to my enquiry about this word, *yug go* could be translated as ‘oat’ (Chin. *yanmai*). This plant is usually regarded by Tibetans as a weed when it grows in the fields, but nowadays it is also planted as fodder for animals.

He admires the way in which they “study like a female fox striving for its food” to obtain “learning that gives out the fragrance of jasmin”.⁸²

Images of dogs are not particularly flattering in the short stories of Dhondup Gyal. However, the type of negative behaviour associated with dogs is very different to the highly evil behaviour attributed to wolves. In Dhondup Gyal’s stories a dog waving its tail and following its owner is not such an endearing and heartwarming sight as it might be to some readers from other cultural backgrounds. In the short story “Mi rtag sgyu ma’i rmi lam” its narrator thinks that his former classmate will help him to rise to a higher position. Consequently, he behaves in a dog-like and obsequious fashion:

*de nas bzung kho rang la dga' spro tshad med skyes te dpal grags ni kho rang gi mgon
skyabs su brtsis pa dang/ dpal grags kyi gzbug na rnga ma yam yom g.yo ba'i rgyug
khyi zhig tu gyur song/
(Don grub rgyal, “Mi rtag sgyu ma’i rmi lam”)⁸³*

Since then he rejoiced immeasurably and he counted Paldrag as his protector.
He became a dog wagging its tail running behind Paldrag.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Impermanent Illusory Dream”)

This passage has the metaphor of a man as a dog running after its owner. A dog is owned by somebody and lacks independence, loyally obeying the commands of its master.

Another quite similar kind of image is found in the short story “sNgo tshod tshong khang gi mthong thos” (“Seen and Heard at the Vegetable Seller’s Shop”). This is a story which criticizes social inequality.⁸⁴ Eggs are sold at the greengrocer’s and people are waiting in a queue. When a wife of a local leader appears and wants to buy eggs, the greengrocer’s expression is likened to a dog:

*a cag de ga ler tshong sgrom mdun du thon pa dang/ tshong pa rgan pa des sngar bas
kyang' dzum mdangs ston ci thub byed cing/ lag gnyis brang khar 'khyer nas phur
phur byed pa sogs la bltas na sgo khyis rang gi bdag po mthong ba dang gnyis su med
pa ltar red/ rnam pa 'di ngo ma skyug bro ba zhig red ang/
(Don grub rgyal, “sNgo tshod tshong khang gi mthong thos”)⁸⁵*

82 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 54. I have translated *dza ti* as ‘jasmine’ in accordance with the dictionary of Das, which gives as one of the possibilities to translate the word as “n. of the flower *Jasminum grandiflorum*”. The other meaning given is ‘the nutmeg’ (1902: 1047).

83 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 336.

84 According to some (see, for example, Chos skyong 2006: 166), this story was not written by Dhondup Gyal. However, as it was included in his *Collected Works*, its editors seem to have reason to believe that it was written by him. Also its social critical perspective connects it to other works by Dhondup Gyal.

85 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 399.

The woman arrived slowly in front of the shop. The old saleswoman showed her best smile and putting her both hands on her chest she rubbed them together. Looking at her it was exactly like a watchdog seeing its owner. How disgusting indeed is her expression!
(Dhondup Gyal, “Seen and Heard at the Vegetable Seller’s Shop”)

In this simile the word indicating the relation of similarity is *gnyis su med pa ltar* indicating a resemblance of fundamental unity that cannot be divided into two. For Dhondup Gyal it seems that the idea of someone owning a dog and the dog wanting to please its owner is repulsive, and he has used this image to criticize the unequal relations between people in society.⁸⁶

Metaphoricity in lexical choices may also be observed: a woman who behaves badly can be called *khyi mo*, ‘a bitch’. In the short story “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma”, Kuntu Sangmo’s mother-in-law Lhatso (Lha mtsho) calls her daughter-in-law by this name (or rather “a stray bitch”, *khyi mo ldom po*) when she speaks alone to herself. This is because the old woman has had to move to a separate tent due to her daughter-in-law’s bad behaviour towards her.⁸⁷ She has even been deprived of good food and proper butter tea. In folklore tradition there are also examples of using the word “dog” to curse badly behaved people: in a folk story titled “Sle bo” (“Basket”) an old grandfather scolds his ungrateful and cruel son who is about to carry him away to another place in a basket, calling him a “shameless old dog” (*ngo tsha med pa'i khyi rgan*).⁸⁸ Also in a Dunhuang document the images of “a vicious guard-dog” and “a vicious woman” are paralleled.⁸⁹

Not surprisingly, the expression “dogshit” is presented as something especially undesirable – an object to be immediately avoided and rejected. In the short story “Sems gcong” (“Depression”) the first-person narrator Detso (bDe mtsho) uses this image when thinking about the mental torment and sufferings of her life that would result “if she threw away her boyfriend like dogshit”.⁹⁰

There are other images of dogs in Dhondup Gyal’s work. One image that is found both in “sPrul sku” and in “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” reflects the situation when two people do not get along and their relation is likened to “a dog and

86 There is also a similar type of image in the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”: some boys’ behaviour when they are trying to get a girl’s attention, is compared to the behaviour of a watchdog seeing its owner (“la las sgo khyis bdag po mthong ba na mgo sgur zhing rnga ma g.yug pa'i tshul ltar zhu ba byed pa dang/”). Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 15.

87 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 68.

88 Karma mKha' 'bum & 'Jam bu 1996: 41. At the end of the story it is stated that the story was collected by Gendun (dGe 'dun) and published earlier in *mTsho sngon mang tshogs sgyu rtsal*.

89 See Stein’s (1972: 259) translation from the “Sumpa Mother-Book”.

90 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 7.

a goat meeting” (*khyi dang ra 'phrad pa lta bu*).⁹¹ Another idea that is attributed to dogs is wandering around, which is associated with ideas about stray dogs and their continuous, restless movement.⁹²

Images of cats are found in the works of Dhondup Gyal, but they are not frequent. Unlike in Western culture, cats and members of the cat family are not associated with women in Tibetan culture. I am now here looking at one cat simile in Dhondup Gyal’s “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”, a text that is unusually rich in imagery, the image of a cat occurs in a way that is familiar in Western literature and ideas, though the image considered as a whole is also creative and original. Tsering has received a silver ring and the passage describes his inner thoughts:

*'jig rten gyi 'tsho ba/ bde skyid kyis snang ba/ brtse dungs kyis 'dun pa bcas ni byi la tsi
gur 'jab pa dang rmgon pas ri dwags la sgug pa ltar rkang 'jab lag 'jab kyis nga'i bsam
pa'i khang bzang nang du 'dzul 'ongs pa dang/ pho mo'i brtse dungs kyis bsam blo'i
myu gu de tsho gang la skyid sdug mnyam myong byed pa'i re 'dun gyi lud bcud bzang
bo dang mdza' zhing mthun pa'i nyi 'od kyis bskyangs te thog dang por nga'i gangs
dkar sems kyis sa zhing gshin po'i thog tu 'dab ma rgyas pa dang me tog bzhad mgo
tshugs song/*

(Don grub rgyal, “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”)⁹³

The life of the world, the appearance of happiness, the desire for love entered stealthily the good house of my mind like a cat prowling a mouse and a hunter anticipating a wild animal. The sprouting of the thoughts of love between a man and a woman was fertilized by the hope of sharing the happiness and sorrows of life and by the sunlight of affection and harmony, and for the first time [it] grew petals and started to bloom on the fertile soil of my snow-white mind.

(Dhondup Gyal, “A Flower Destroyed by Frost”)

These images are grounded on everyday human experience and are based on human observations of how cats hunt for mice and their silent, flexible movements. The idea of cats hunting mice can also be found in several folk tales.⁹⁴

91 See “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”, Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 25 and “sPrul sku”, Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 154.

92 See the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”, Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 22.

93 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 12.

94 A collection of folk tales edited by Karma mkha' 'bum & 'Jam bu has, for example, a story explaining the reason for the enmity between cats and mice, called “Lo skor bcu gnyis nang byi la med pa'i rgyu mtshan ci” (“What is the Reason Why the Cat is not in the Animals of the Cycle of Twelve Years?”; 1996: 1–5). The same collection also has two other tales entitled “Byi lar bya dga' gngang ba” (“Giving a Prize to the Cat”) and “Byi las chos bton pa” (“A Cat Taught Dharma”), which describe cats hunting mice in various ways (1996: 57–58). In a folk story “Die dankbaren Tiere”, which can be found in a research work on Tibetan folk tales by Peter Schwiieger (1989: 98–105, story no. 7), there are cats who protect a jewel and a mouse who manages to take the

However, if we examine the passage above, in Dhondup Gyal's novella the way in which the images are combined creates the feeling of newness and creativity. The image belongs to a larger composite image, which is one of the strategies for forming poetic imagery outlined by scholars of the cognitive theory of metaphor.⁹⁵ By combining several images the resulting larger image ends up being a new and unique image. Here the entire passage is devoted to depicting the movements in Tsering's mental scenery metaphorically depicted as "a good house" and "a fertile field", and being white in colour associations of goodness and innocence are evoked. Here the series of two animal similes illustrate the way in which the thoughts regarding worldly life, happiness and love enter into a person's mind. The passage also depicts the effect of these thoughts with the help of plant imagery.⁹⁶

Dhondup Gyal's writings also have a variety of other animal images. Unlike the images of wolves, foxes, and dogs, these other animal images are often positive or neutral in a sense that they might simply describe some feature in a character's outlook or behaviour without any pejorative or negative meaning. Because there are many species of animal images found in the writings of Dhondup Gyal, it has not been possible to pay attention to each and every species mentioned. However, I shall pay special attention to images of the wild yak (*'brong*) and the horse (*rta*). Yak images (*g.yag*) are commonly found in modern Tibetan literature and there is also a wild yak on the cover of each of the volumes of Dhondup Gyal's *Collected Works*. However, unlike the works of several other writers, the yak image is not frequently used in Dhondup Gyal's writings. However, because it is a very important animal to Tibetan nomads and is a typical feature of Tibetan culture and nature, I shall look at images of both the wild yak (*'brong*) and the yak (*g.yag*) that I have been able to locate in his works, and also at the image of the horse (*rta*) that is more common in Dhondup Gyal's writings.⁹⁷ I will also present some brief observations of the image of the ass (*bong bu*) because it plays a symbolic role in the discussion of the state of present-day Tibetan society in some works by Dhondup Gyal.

Yaks, although not typical to the literature that was translated from Sanskrit, can be found in earlier Tibetan indigenous literary tradition. Horses are also often mentioned in old Tibetan texts. In the Dunhuang documents there is for

jewel with the help of two other animals. For references to tales about cats and mice, see tales no. 111, 217, and 1281 in Uther 2004.

95 Lakoff & Turner 1989: 70–72.

96 For a discussion on plant imagery, please refer to the previous chapter.

97 *rTa* is the general word for horse. When the text has the word *rta rgod*, it is translated as 'wild horse'. Otherwise, the poetic imagery often uses the general word for the horse without specifying its type, so it is not normally clear whether the horses are tame or wild.

example a text entitled “The End of the Good Age and the Tragedy of the Horse and the Yak” (ITJ 0731), and there are several other documents whose titles are connected with horses.⁹⁸ Yaks and horses also abound in the Gesar stories. In the documents found from the caves of Dunhuang in the collection whose title is translated by Stein as the “Sumpa Mother-Book, Maxims Left as an Example to Future Generations” there is a saying that contains a horse image in a parallelistic expression. It is notable that in this ancient manuscript the horse image is associated with the idea of a wise person. Stein’s translation of the saying in question is as follows:

(1) A wise man’s mind: even in the sky letters appear; (it is like) the running of a swift horse: even in chasms or precipices he is long-suffering.⁹⁹

In other sayings in the same collection (quoted and translated by Stein 1972: 259) wise men and swift horses are mentioned in the same connection. It is evident that from ancient times, horses have played an important role in the life of Tibetans. There are also several folk tales with horse characters in most of which horses are personified at least to some degree.¹⁰⁰

Dhondup Gyal’s short story “Sems gcong” (“Depression”), which can be found in the volume of prose in *The Collected Works*, tells about unhappy love and a failed arranged marriage. I will briefly introduce the story here, although its images will be discussed in various places in this work depending on the types of source domains the images have. In the story the female character Detso does not have the power to decide about matters relating to her own life, instead her parents decide that she should get married to a certain teacher instead of getting married to a young man called Dawa (Zla ba) with whom she has fallen in love. Dawa leaves for another place, while Detso, feeling depressed, stays with the teacher. She gets pregnant, however, and the teacher decides to leave for Xining to improve his educational level. He has even on a pretext refused to obtain for them an official marriage certificate. Later on, Detso decides to go and search for him in Xining at the Qinghai Institute of Nationalities. There she hears the devastating news that the teacher has already completed his education and has left

98 See the list of titles in the Old Tibetan Documents Online database (OTDO). See, for example, documents Pt 1060, Pt 1096, and Pt 1297.

99 Stein 1972: 258.

100 See the collection Karma mkha' 'bum & 'Jam bu 1996: “rTas rig pas spyang ki bsad pa” (“How Horse Killed a Wolf with its Cleverness”), “rTa dang rnga mong” (“A Horse and a Camel”), and “Ri bong dang wa/ sprel/ rta bcas kyi gtam rgyud” (“A Story of a Rabbit, a Fox, a Monkey, and a Horse”). Yaks, wild yaks, and horses are also typical animals in Tibetan folk songs. See, for example, a song entitled “Das Lied vom Himmelssee”, in Tibetan “gNam mtsho'i gzhas”, in Causemann 1993: 34–37.

with another woman to her home region. The main theme of the story is love and women's position and rights in society. The end of the story is left open, but there is also some hope as she is depicted thinking of Dawa whom she had accidentally met on her way to Xining.¹⁰¹ The story is clearly about the fate of a woman and shows her in relation to the other characters. However, it also has several animal images which depict human characters – their minds, behaviour, and outlook. The passage below presents a scene outside the village in which Detso meets Dawa and she presents him with a silver ring and receives a kiss in return.

There are a number of animal images in “Sems gcong”, among them these two images:

*rgyang ngos kyi zhing tshigs thog nas pho gsar 'brong 'dra ba zhig tshur 'ong gi' dug pas/
ngas myur bar 'gro dgos snyam nas yar lang rtsis byas kyang pha bong dkar po 'di ni
nga'i sems kyi rta rgod 'dzin pa'i 'ching zhags dang 'dra bar nga'i brtse gdung gi' dun
pa de de gar dbang med du bkyigs/ phar phyogs kyi mi de ni rngon pa zhig dang 'dra
bar nga'i sems kyi ri dwags 'dzin phyir brel 'tshub 'tshub ngang tshur yong bzhin' dug
(Don grub rgyal, “Sems gcong”)¹⁰²*

From a distant corner of field a young man resembling a wild yak was approaching. I thought that I should go away soon, I even intended to rise up, this white rock like a lasso catching the wild horse of my mind bound my aspirations for love helplessly there. That man over there was hastily approaching like a hunter coming to catch the wild animal of my mind.
(Dhondup Gyal, “Depression”)

The first image in the above passage is a simile. A young man is likened to a wild yak (*'brong*). The resemblance of the external appearance or some feature of the human and animal are compared. The following metaphor is the “wild horse of the mind”. The mind is the target domain on which is mapped the source domain “wild horse” (*rta rgod*). It is difficult to imagine the mind visually, but when the source domain of the wild horse is mapped on it, the image becomes more concrete and immediate. Associations of fast movement and being difficult to tame are also linked to the “wild horse”.¹⁰³ In one other short story “Tshul khrim rgya mtsho” another animal image becomes mapped on the mind of the main character, namely a “mad elephant” (*glang chen smyon pa*). This image comes from the Indian literary tradition, whereas an image of a wild horse has a

101 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 1–17.

102 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 1–2.

103 The first stanza of “rTswa thang dran glu” also likens the mind to a horse. In this poem the mind is likened to “a winged horse” that may fly to the grassland although the poem’s voice is physically in Beijing. Don grub rgyal 1981a: 49.

native Tibetan flavour.¹⁰⁴ These animal images stress the aspect of the difficulty of controlling the mind. The third metaphor the “wild animal of mind” in “Sems gcong” is more general and does not have a specific reference to some particular animal. The way in which Dawa approaches Detso is likened to the behaviour of a hunter and this has to do with characterizing the way a character acts. The images deepen our understanding of the characters’ minds, physical appearance or behaviour. The creativity of the passage is enhanced by the individual images of animals, a lasso and a hunter, functioning together and forming a composite image which helps the reader to understand the emotional relation that is forming between the characters. In this short story the animal imagery is clearly inspired by the actual animals living there on the grassland of Amdo which are familiar to the local people. There is also another horse image in the scene that sounds like a proverb, namely “if a horse does not wish to run, there is no need to buy a saddle”, illustrating a situation in which somebody does not wish to engage voluntarily in some action.¹⁰⁵

There are also several other horse images in Dhondup Gyal’s writings, both concrete and metaphoric images. Concrete mimetic images of two horses can for example be found in the final chapter of the short story “Brug mtsho”.¹⁰⁶ Its main characters, a man and a woman teacher, ride horses on the grassland. The depiction of the horses is quite detailed in a sense that their saddles, straps, and the way how a horse neighs are mentioned, and the grassland is viewed from horseback. At the end the way the “sounds from the hooves of the horses echo together” and how the two characters ride close by side of each other is described. Although a concrete image, it may also evoke a metaphoric interpretation (together with other concrete images such as those of a bee and a flower and two butterflies) and can be viewed as anticipating for its main characters a possible life-long journey together in this open-ended story.

In Dhondup Gyal’s prose we find the following kind of simile with a horse image:

*bsam tshul de ni kun tu bzang mo'i 'dod thog la rta rgyugs pa bzhin 'khel song/
(Don grub rgyal, “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma”)¹⁰⁷*

104 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 106: “gal srid de dus ngas sdom khrims kyi thag pas rang gi sems glang chen smyon pa lta bu de ma btags pa yin na/” According to Karttunen (2000: 197) the image of elephants in rut is an image that is often used to express a sexual meaning in Sanskrit literature.

105 The proverb in Tibetan is: “rta rgyugs 'dod med na sga nyo don mi 'dug”. Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 3.

106 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 91–96.

107 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 67.

That idea was in accordance with Kuntu Sangmo's wishes as if a horse had run.
(Dhondup Gyal, "A Shameless Bride")

This expression means that something happens exactly according to one's wishes or as best suits the person in question.¹⁰⁸ Here the horse image is not directly used to depict a character but rather characterizes the adverbial manner of other's thoughts or ideas fitting into one's own wishes.

Dhondup Gyal's free verse poem "Rig pa'i dpa' bo rnam la phul ba'i bstod tshig" ("A Eulogy to the Heroes of Wisdom") also contains a horse image. The poet and teacher Dhondup Gyal addresses his students on the day they complete their studies:

*khyed tsho ni dus rabs kyi rta pho yin pas/
shes bya'i thang chen 'dir/
rang gi rkang lag gnyis/
nam yang sgrog gis ma bcings par/
tshan rig gi lcag gis skul bzhin par/
dpa' ngar chen pos mdun du rgyugs dgos la/
rgyugs nges kyang red/
(Don grub rgyal, "Rig pa'i dpa' bo rnam la phul ba'i bstod tshig")¹⁰⁹*

you are the steeds of the era
in this great plain of knowledge
your hands and feet
never bound by hobbles
being exhorted by the whip of science
you have to run forward with great courage
and you will certainly run
(Dhondup Gyal, "A Eulogy to the Heroes of Wisdom")

The source domain image, "steeds of the era", is metaphorically mapped onto the target domain "you". From the context it is clear here that "you" is understood as plural and refers to the students whom he addresses at the beginning of this verse unit as "comrades" (*blo mthun*) and "student friends" (*slob grogs*).¹¹⁰ The poem is a eulogy (*bstod tshig*) and it is clear that the metaphorical reference to students as

108 A similar kind of image can also be found in the novella "Sad kyiis bcom pa'i me tog", Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 22: "da ni rig yag dang khyod gnyis ka ma bgros rang mthun byung bas nga'i blo thog tu rta rgyugs pa ltar babs yod/" ('Now when Rigyang and you have agreed between yourselves without discussion, it has happened according to my wishes as if a horse had run').

109 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 149–150.

110 The word *slob grogs* is normally used to refer to a person who has studied at the same school as oneself, but here it is understood as a friendly way of referring to students (*slob ma*) as friends. Dhondup Gyal worked at this time as a teacher at the Teachers' Training School in Chabcha (mTsho lho dge thon slob grwa).

horses is meant to be a positive, encouraging image. “Steeds of the era” is itself a metaphor, so it is possible to read double metaphorical mapping in this poem. “Era” (or “century”) draws attention to the present times and one may think of the horses running quickly forward. It is evident that this image can be associated with progressive ideas. Mapping the image of a horse onto students could be interpreted as a case of metaphorical extension and filling a metaphorical slot, as in the next line we have the image “great plain of knowledge”. It is common in various cultures to view knowledge and learning as something vast, and for example in Arabic literature we find the metaphor “ocean of knowledge”.¹¹¹ The expression “knowledge is a great plain” conveys the same sense of vastness, though it is more fitting for a setting which is far from the sea. Thus when the poem speaks about a plain, then it is natural to imagine horses galloping there.

In the penultimate line of the quoted passage the essential characteristic of a horse “to run forward” is mentioned. The idea of progress connects the frameworks of learning and galloping animals. Being free of chains expresses the idea of freedom, though the “whip of science” somewhat distorts it. However, the last mentioned metaphor evidently has a modern-sounding target domain, “science” (*tshan rig*), although the source domain image of “the whip” (*lcag*) is by no means new or modern. Here it is also possible to observe how the shifts in the usage of imagery often first occur in mappings to new kinds of target domains. Considering the Tibetan fondness for horse races, the idea of using the image of a horse seems to have indigenous roots. The emphasis on the ideas of progress and forward movement is also found in several other works by Dhondup Gyal. This is in accordance with the political spirit of the time, but also, stylistically, it brings some avant-gardist flavour to some of the free verse poems. Yangdon Dhondup, while discussing Tashi Dawa and his works, describes well the political guidelines of the time in which Dhondup Gyal’s career as a writer was located: “The official line, however, was to promote Deng Xiaoping’s Four Modernisations and in accordance with this, writers throughout China were publishing stories which included some aspects of modernisation.”¹¹² In Dhondup Gyal’s free verse poetry the destinations of the forward movement are not clearly outlined, but many of

111 See Hämeen-Anttila 2001: 148. The metaphor of knowledge as a sea is found in a letter written by Badī‘azzaman al-Hamadhani, which also contains several other source domain images that are mapped onto the target domain of knowledge. It has also been used as a title of the collection of aphorisms compiled and translated by Hämeen-Anttila: *Tiedon valtameri*. There is also a Sanskrit word for “ocean of knowledge”: *vidyārṇava*.

112 Yangdon Dhondup 2004: 189.

his prose works emphasise the importance of education and the fields of culture and science are mentioned too in connection with speaking about development.¹¹³

If we wish to draw comparisons to traditional Tibetan literature, a passage in a song of Kalden Gyatso bears a degree of resemblance in its imagery. In the song the metaphoric horses also run on a metaphoric plain. I quote Victoria Sujata's translation of the song:

Although the good horse of faith and respect/
Was made to gallop again and
again/ On the plain of qualities/ [He] got helplessly caught/
In the tethering ropes of false knowledge. Hey!
(Kalden Gyatso; tr. Sujata 2005: 289)

Here the horse gets caught – an image that depicts obstacles to spiritual practice. The horse is associated with “faith and respect” and the plain on which it gallops is depicted as “the plain of qualities”. This image – with its description of a horse running on a plain – is not dissimilar to Dhondup Gyal's modern image, although in the song the target domains are linked to religion.

Interestingly, Dhondup Gyal also mentions “the best horse of poetry” (*snyan ngag gi rta mchog*) in his free verse poem “Lang tsho'i rhab chu”.¹¹⁴ This is immediately followed by the animal images “the elephant of metrics” and “the lion of synonymic terminologies”. The poem raises questions how to help these animals when they face hardships.¹¹⁵ The idea here seems to be to highlight the need to take care of the animals: if animals are not taken care of they may die, and this could also happen with various fields of culture if they are not appropriately cared for. It is natural to use images of animals typical to India mapped onto

113 See, for example, the short stories “Brug mtsho” (“Drugtso”) and “Pad mtsho” (“Petso”) and the end of the poem “rTswa thang dran glu” (“A Song of Missing the Grassland”) in Don grub rgyal 1981a: 51. For the expression of ideas of progress and moving forward in Dhondup Gyal's free verse poems, see also the poem “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma” (“The Petals of White Clouds”) in Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 233 and “Lang tsho'i rhab chu” (“The Waterfall of Youth”) in Rang grol 1983: 61. There are also images of “the horse of progress” (*sngon thon gyi rta pho*) and “the ass of underdevelopment” (*rjes lus kyi bong bu*) in a more recent poem by Khawa Karpo (“White Snow”), which appeared in *Bod kyi rtsum rig sgyu rtsal* in 2003. See Kha ba dkar po 2003: 65. It praises the people of Lhasa and their ability to mount “the horse of progress” and the wisdom “to abandon the ass of underdevelopment”. The two lines in question from the poem read as follows in Tibetan: “lha sa bar/ sngon thon gyi rta phor 'gos pa'i rkang stegs yod la/ rjes lus kyi bong bu bskyur ba'i rnam dpyod ldan/”.

114 The name of the “horse of poetry” is not given in the poem. However, the idea of “the horse of poetry” could well have some connection with Pegasus.

115 Rang grol 1983: 60.

metrics and synonymies, as those fields of learning came from India.¹¹⁶ The animal images are here clearly not mapped on humans or their behaviour, but on fields of culture and learning. The function seems to be to concretize the fields and make them appear as living beings.

In Chinese culture horses also seem to have been appreciated animals. According to Spring's book *Animal Allegories in T'ang China* horses were highly esteemed in China during the time of the T'ang dynasty (eighth–ninth-century CE) and they were attributed many special characteristics and skills. It is interesting to note that writers could in some cases be so closely connected with their horses that similar expressions could be used of both horses and writers.¹¹⁷

The image of the ass (*bong bu*) is quite different. Whereas horses act as images of progress and fast movement, asses are associated with images of slow movement and lagging behind. In some passages the ass is used as a symbol of underdevelopment, as in the essay “rKang lam phra mo” (“The Narrow Footpath”).¹¹⁸ In the allegorical poem “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam” an ass (named mGrin bzang bong bu, “Ass Good-Throat”) that covers itself with the hide of a leopard is used as an image of someone who by his own deeds causes harm to himself.¹¹⁹ This image is familiar from the classical collection of aphorisms, Sakya Paṇḍita's *Sa skya legs bshad*.¹²⁰ A fable of an ass covering itself with a hide of a leopard can also be found in Indian story collections, such as the *Pañcatantra*.¹²¹

In the passage quoted above from Dhondup Gyal's “Sems gcong” a male character's appearance was likened to a wild yak. I will first take a look at images of the wild yak (*'brong*) and domestic yaks (*gyag*) and then present brief remarks

116 A recent example of mapping a source domain of an animal onto the target domain of a field of science is found in Tashi Dhondup's poem “sNyan tshig pad dkar chun po” (“A Bunch of White Lotus of Poetic Words”; bkra shis don grub 2002: 35). The poem praises traditional Tibetan medicine, and the metaphor “the steed of modern medicine” (*deng dus gso rig rta pho*) is used.

117 Spring 1993: 132.

118 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 5. In the poem “bsTod pa bkags pa'i 'char snang”, resorting to a traditionally popular genre of literature, the eulogy (*bstod tshig*), is depicted metaphorically as riding an ass as contrasted with the way “the missile of art flies in the sky of contemporary writing”. It is clear that the ass cannot fly. Tib. “deng rabs rtsom gyi lha lam ngor// sgyu rtsal 'phur mda' bgrod pa'i tshe// 'bstod pa'i' bong bu la zhon nas// mkha' la 'phur 'dod ngal ba'i rgyu//”.

119 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 140.

120 See Sakya Paṇḍita's aphorism with the image of “the ass hiding itself with the hide of a leopard” (*gzig lpags bkab pa'i bong bu*) as cited in a 20th-century commentary of *Sa skya legs bshad* by Mai tri bu ddha sha san dha ra [Sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin] 1991: 257. The image in a parallel structure is found in the fifth chapter of the treatise, which examines bad behaviour. The commentary also contains the story about the ass with the leopard hide.

121 See Olivelle 1997: 112–113 for a fable called “The Ass in a Leopard's Skin”. The introduction of Olivelle's translation of the *Pañcatantra* contains concise information on the animal characters of the treatise (1997: xxi–xxv). See also Virpi Hämeen-Anttila's Finnish translation of the fable in Pürnabhadra & Hämeen-Anttila 1995: 236.

on images of the musk deer (*gla bo*). Images of a wild yak and a tiger are significant in the short story “Brong stag thang” (“The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”). The title has to do with the physical and concrete details of the mimetic landscape. Interestingly, in this story the writer has made use of rocks shaped as animals to develop the central images of the work. The plain in which the story is set derives its name from the two rocks on different sides of the river crossing the plain. One of the rocks resembles a wild yak and the other a tigress. Similes are used to describe the rocks, but rather than being mere figurative speech they explain the visual shape of the rocks. In actual fact in the plain on the way to Rebgong two rocks resemble these animals.¹²² According to the short story itself, there are legendary stories about wild yaks and tigress on that plain, though I have not been able to ascertain whether the legend presented in the story is an actual folk legend or was invented by the writer. Because it is important for understanding the symbolics and metaphoricity of the rock animals, I shall here briefly summarise the legend as it is presented in Dhondup Gyal’s short story.

The legend of the wild yak and the tiger is a story of hatred and violence. According to the legend, there was a large population of wild yaks on the plain. However, the arrival of a tigress scared them away. The legend tells about a special wild yak that “meditated in the dark slate mountain”. When that wild yak descends to the plain it fights with the tigress so fiercely, that the god Indra (brGya byin) has to interfere by throwing down from the sky a vase of pacifying nectar which turned into a river which separated the fighting animals. Their intense hatred leads them to turn into rocks,¹²³ so that the animal-shaped rocks signify hatred and revenge.

In this short story the two animals represent the two communities: the community of 'Brong thang (“The plain of the wild yak”) and the community of sTag thang (“The plain of the tiger”). They act as symbolic representations of a fight going on in more recent times. Thus the title could in addition to being a concrete

122 The Tibetan poet Jangbu (lJang bu) informed me about the real existence of the place named after a yak and a tiger and the rocks which resemble these animals there during a conversation in Xining in summer 2005.

123 Don grub rgyal 1981b: 5. Here it is possible to notice the intertwining of elements from both Tibetan influence and Indic origins. Indra is a god of Indic Hindu origin who is often also depicted in Buddhist legends that spread to Tibet from India. Tigers are also mentioned in Tibetan folk tales and songs. For instance see “Ri bong gis stag btul ba” (“A Rabbit Tamed a Tiger”) in the collection of folk tales *Byis sgrung dga' ba'i rtsed 'jo* (Karma mkha' 'bum & 'Jam bu 1996: 73) and several Tibetan folk tales translated into German (Schuh 1982: 228–230, tale no. 54 and 231–232, tale no. 55; Phukhang & Schwieger 1982: 219–220, tale no. 74 and 1989: 64–67, tale no. 2; Biemeier & Herrmann 1982: 267, tale no. 62) and a song from South-West Tibet titled “Angmas Vaterland” in Causemann 1993: 22–23.

image, be thought as a metaphor for the situation prevailing between the two communities. It is said that there is a custom that young people are not allowed to marry persons from the other community but rather have to find a partner who belongs to their own community. One man who loves a girl from the community across the river is badly hurt by men from this community and has to be taken to hospital. However, in the end a marriage between the young man and the girl he is in love with is accepted and the people are described making incense offerings in the place where the rocks resembling the two wild animals are located. Thus there is harmony at the end.

In this story the allusions to animals are symbolic and interpreted through an ancient myth. In the context of the narrative the fight and the attainment of harmony between the animals and the communities named after them is projected metaphorically onto the entire story. The place name of “The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger” (*Brong stag thang*) and the physical characteristics of that place are metaphorically used to characterize the events of the story by simply telling the ancient mythical narrative of the wild yak and the tigress at the beginning. The images of the two enemy animals also appear in a riddle-like speech of a character who has engaged in cross-community violence:

*khyod dmar yags stag gi kha che na/ nga bre ser 'brong gi gnya' los sbom/ khyod stag
thang gi shwa bo dung rwa can la 'gro lugs bco brgyad yod na/ nga 'brong thang gi
rngon pa dug mda' can la sgug lugs nyi shu yod/
(Don grub rgyal, “Brong stag thang”)¹²⁴*

If your red tiger’s mouth is big/ my white-mouthed¹²⁵ wild yak’s neck is large/
if your white horned deer of the Plain of the Tiger have eighteen ways of
moving/ me the hunter with poisonous arrow from the Plain of the Wild Yak
has twenty ways of anticipating
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”)

Here the meaning of the image of the wild yak and the tiger is created through the textual strategy of first introducing the legend to the reader. In other contexts wild yaks or tigers would not be automatically interpreted in a similar way or introduced as manifestations of hatred.

A further image of a yak is also found in another connection in the same story. Cagjam (ICags byams), the boy to whom the parents were planning to marry the girl, Lhamo Tsering (Lha mo tshe ring), thinks that he does not want to pressurize the girl into marrying him. The following imagerial expression is used:

¹²⁴ Don grub rgyal 1981b: 13.

¹²⁵ *bre ser 'brong* is a wild yak that has grey fur around its mouth and/or eyes. See the entry *bre bo* in Krang dbyi sun 1993.

*g.yag la chu 'thung 'dod med na gnya' nas gnon pa thabs rdugs red bsams nas don de
snang med du bskyur/
(Don grub rgyal, "Brong stag thang")¹²⁶*

if a yak does not wish to drink water it is a poor method to push its neck
down. Thinking in this way he let the matter go and ignored it.
(Dhondup Gyal, "The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger")

Despite the young man's own opinion, the other people in the community pressurize him to take revenge on the man Lhamo Tsering loves. These allusions to yak are evidently based on the Tibetan pastoral way of life.¹²⁷ The yak is very familiar to Tibetans and thus the people refer to it and its qualities in their sayings, which normally contain vivid imagery. Dhondup Gyal's use of proverbs and the ideas they contain can be said to possess a rich indigenous imagery.

Some recent writers allude to yaks to represent Tibetanness. For example, Pema Tsering, an exiled Tibetan writer from Amdo, has written a poem entitled "g.Yag" ("Yak") in which yaks and Tibetan people carrying rosaries and reciting mantras could be interpreted to represent Tibetanness.¹²⁸ Yangdon Dhondup in her dissertation mentions how in Yidam Tsering's (Chinese language) poem "The Path" (*Lu*) the yak can be said to symbolise the Tibetan people.¹²⁹ In Dhondup Gyal's writings the yak image is not used to represent Tibetan identity, but it is occasionally used for other purposes, for example, to represent the outlook of some character, in some proverbs and then the wild yak together with the tiger is found in the short story "Brong stag thang". It is common to map source domain images of animals onto the target domain of the characters of a work, and there is a wide variety of animal images used for this purpose. The mapping is often a partial meaning in which the animal type of behaviour or quality becomes mapped only onto some aspect or way of behaving or a quality of a person.

To illustrate the partial nature of metaphoric mapping I shall present an animal image that is sometimes used to characterize the movement of the characters. The animal in question is *gla bo*, the musk deer. In the short story "rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma" by Dhondup Gyal and Tsering Dhondup the image of a wounded musk deer is mapped onto the way of moving of a lame father of the eponymous character. Soepa has become lame due to a beating he suffered during a struggle session. His way of moving is described as follows:

126 Don grub rgyal 1981b: 12.

127 The proverb about a yak not wanting to drink can also be found in the novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 20).

128 Gangs bzhad n.d: 127–130.

129 Yangdon Dhondup 2004: 45.

'gro tshul la bltas na rkang ba rmas pa'i ri dwags gla ba zbig nags gseb tu mchong
 lding byed pa dang a na ma na red/
 (Don grub rgyal, "rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma")¹³⁰

looking at his walking style it was similar to a musk deer whose leg has been
 wounded, jumping in a forest.
 (Dhondup Gyal, "A Shameless Bride")

This simile displays a special feature of the Amdo dialect in its choice of a lexical item marking the relation of similarity. *A na ma na* means that something is "exactly the same". Looking at the above quoted passage and the clear indication of its focus, the image of the wounded musk deer emphasises only the old man's style of moving, but there does not seem to be any need to imagine him in some other respects as resembling a deer.

4.3 Mythical animals and tradition

In Dhondup Gyal's writings it is possible to find several references to mythical animals. For example, there are *garuḍas* (*khyung*),¹³¹ dragons (*'brug*), snow lions (*gangs seng*), and *nāgas* (*klu*).¹³² In most cases the images of these animals are not mimetic or concrete, but metaphoric. The exception is the *nāga*: in the fairytale "Bu ldom po dang klu'i sras mo" ("The Wanderer Boy and the Daughter of *Nāgas*") the female protagonist is a *nāga*.¹³³ However, in this subchapter I shall now focus on the *garuḍas* and snow lions and present some short observations about dragons.

Dhondup Gyal was well acquainted with the lifestory of Milarepa and wrote a commentary explaining its vocabulary and also another work in which he presents comments on the title of Milarepa's life story.¹³⁴ In his master's thesis one of the chapters is completely devoted to analysing Milarepa's songs.¹³⁵ When considering Dhondup Gyal's use of mythical animals in his imagery, it is helpful first to take a look at the animal imagery in a song of Milarepa.¹³⁶

130 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 57.

131 For information on this mythical bird in both Indian and Tibetan tradition (also Bon), see Beer 1999: 65–68.

132 For information on *nāgas*, serpent spirits, see Beer 1999: 70–71.

133 For more discussion on this tale, see Ch. 10.

134 Don grub rgyal 1997, V: 215–233, 234–305.

135 Don grub rgyal 1985: 138–189.

136 For more information on the *mGur 'bum* of Milarepa, see Lhag pa chos 'phel, *Bod kyi rtsom rig lo rgyus*, II: 51–78. On p. 53 there are a few lines concerning Dhondup Gyal's views on *Mi la'i mgur 'bum*, especially how central he saw its position in his division of the *mGur 'bum*:s ("Collected Songs") into various periods.

The images of many animals including the *garuḍa* and snow lion appear in Milarepa's "Song of Having Confidence in the View" (*lta ba gdeng dang ldan pa'i mgur*):

To father, victorious over the armies of four demons
 to translator Marpa's feet I bow
 I don't call myself as I am called
 I am the son of the white lion of the glacier
 from the womb of [my] mother were the three skills completed
 as a lion cub I slept in the lair
 when three years old I protected the entrance to the lair
 when young I stayed in the snow mountain
 I am not afraid of snow storms
 I am not scared of rock abysses
 I don't call myself as I am called
 I am the son of *garuḍa*, the king of birds
 from the egg the feathers of my wings developed
 as a little bird I slept in the nest
 when three years old I protected the entrance to the nest
 when the great *garuḍa* was young, it flew high in the sky
 I am not afraid of the width of the sky
 I am not scared of the narrow gorges

 I don't call myself as I am called
 I am a son of a Kagyu-lama
 from my mother's womb [my] faith developed
 in childhood I entered the door of *dharmā*
 when three years old I studied
 when I was a young meditator I stayed in a mountain hermitage
 I am not afraid of the roughness of ghosts
 I am not scared about the miraculous appearances of spirits
¹³⁷

In the song Milarepa announces metaphorically that he is the son of a snow lion and a *garuḍa* and expresses that he possesses the qualities and skills of these mythical animals. There is immediate metaphoricity when Milarepa declares himself to be a young one of the animals in question, but there is also parallel metaphoricity: the images in the beginning part – the snow lion and the *garuḍa* – function as source domains to the latter part, where Milarepa portrays himself as human, though in a metaphorical sense, “a son of the Kagyu-lama” meaning

137 Rus pa'i rgyan can 1990: 201–202.

the spiritual master-and-disciple relationship. The images depict the birth and growth of the animals and the meditator.

The most prominent images of these animals in the works of Dhondup Gyal are found in the short story “sPrul sku” (“Tulku”) and the free verse poem “Rig pa'i dpa' bo rnam la phul ba'i bstod tshig”. “sPrul sku” is a story about a fake lama who one day appears in a small mountain village in Amdo. The people put their faith in him, but at the end it is revealed that the main character is a criminal who thieves and deceives women and is not a real lama at all.¹³⁸ The short story includes a song that the tulku sings to his audience and it is in the style of yogic songs, mimicking them in a slightly parodical manner. The song, the false tulku sings in response to people’s questions about his native place of birth, bears certain resemblances to the song of Milarepa that was quoted above. The beginning has the usual homage to the spiritual teacher, exhortation to listen and the purpose of the song. Then the actual body of the song in which its singer introduces himself, contains animal imagery:

*mi nga dang nga ngo shes ma shes//
 mi nga dang nga ngo ma shes na//
 mi nga rang bya rgyal khyung gi bu//
 khyung sgo nga'i nang nas gshog rtsal rgyas//
 brag dmar po'i tshang nas phyi la 'bud//
 mtho ri gsum rtse nas ngal cig gsos//
 dgung a sngon sbyings nas lding skor brgyab//
 sprin bang rim gtor nas nam 'phang bstad//
 mi nga dang gangs stod seng ge 'dra//
 seng a ma'i mngal nas rtsal drug rgyas//
 nags rgya rdzong dkyil nas gyu ral rgyas//
 bar g.ya' spang mtshams nas sder rtsal rgyas//
 stod gangs ri'i rtse nas dpa' rtsal rgyas//
 grogs med par gangs ri'i khrod du rgyu//
 (Don grub rgyal, “sPrul sku”)¹³⁹*

Do you know me or not?
 In case you do not know me
 I am the son of the king of birds, *garuḍa*

138 Matthew Kapstein (2002) has discussed this story connecting it with the background of fake lamas. For a discussion of this short story, see also Tsering Shakya 2000b: 38–39. Tsering Shakya’s article contains information on the Communist party policies of Dhondup Gyal’s times. According to him, stories depicting some kind of negative aspects of religion or religious persons were officially favoured. In his discussion he also points out how in Dhondup Gyal’s story the main character is not a real lama, but a false one, and also suggests the possibility of an alternative interpretation of the story.

139 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 138.

the skills of my wings developed inside the egg
 I fly out from the nest in red rocks
 I rested on the heaven of Sumtse
 I floated around in the sphere of the blue sky
 blasting the conglomeration of clouds I arose towards the heights of the sky
 I and the lion of the snowy mountains resemble
 the six skills developed in lion mother's womb
 the turquoise mane grew in the midsts of big forests
 the skills of the claws developed in the slate mountains and meadows
 the skills of bravery developed in the peak of high snow mountains
 I ran without friends amidst the snow mountains
 (Dhondup Gyal, "Tulku")

The song continues with telling about the actual birth place of the tulku in Tashikhyil (bKra shis 'khyil) and the progress of his religious studies and spiritual development. Although there are differences compared to the song of Milarepa such as Milarepa's song mentions first the snow lion and then the *garuḍa* and also some differences in the details, nevertheless the two songs resemble each other to a considerable degree. The excerpt quoted from the song of the Tulku mentions "the nest in red rocks" (*brag dmar po'i tshang*), and the red rock of Chonglung (mChong lung) is also the place where Milarepa is said to have sung his yogic song. It is possible that the writer has intentionally made the song resemble the well-known song of Milarepa and the tulku would have largely appropriated it from this famous collection of yogic songs. The song is meant to arouse faith in the listeners and according to the text "the old people were moved".¹⁴⁰ By using traditional animal imagery the tulku also connects himself to the tradition of hermits practising meditation in the snow mountains.

Garuḍa is a mythical bird of Indian origin¹⁴¹ which is often found in Tibetan literature, mythology, and folk stories.¹⁴² This bird looks very special as it has human arms and torso, though the face and lower parts of the body resemble a bird. It also possesses large wings.¹⁴³

The passage from Milarepa's song and the above passage from "sPrul sku" also closely resemble the imagery found in a free verse poem by Dhondup Gyal

140 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 139.

141 See Brockington (1998: 38, 99, 444) for discussion of *garuḍa* in the great Indian epics. In the *Mahābhārata*, according to him, there are ten similes with *garuḍas*.

142 For example, a *garuḍa* appears in the story "Le lo can gyi mi gnyis" ("Two Lazy Persons") in the story collection *Byis sgrung* (Karma mkha' 'bum & 'Jam pa 1996: 64–65), and in a folk tale entitled "Der Mann und der König der Vögel", which was collected and translated by Phukhang and Bielmeier (Phukhang & Schwiieger 1982: 76–81, tale no. 32).

143 See the five *garuḍa* images in Beer 1999: 67.

entitled “Rig pa'i dpa' bo rnam la phul ba'i bstod tshig”. When analysing this poem, it could be interpreted that the traditional imagery of mythical animals is here placed in a modern context in order to raise a matter relevant to today's Tibetan society. In the middle of the poem the students are addressed as “*garuḍas* of people” flying “in the celestial sphere of learning”. The following excerpt strongly resembles the above-quoted passages:

*gal srid khyed rang tsho khyung phrug dang' dra na/
da ni khyung sgo nga'i nang nas gshog rtsal rgyas zin pa dang/
shes bya'i nam 'phang bstod pa'i dus la babs zin/
gal srid khyed rang tsho seng phrug dang' dra na/
da ni seng a ma'i mngal nas g.yu ral rgyas zin pas/
yon tan gyi gangs ri'i spo nas sder rtsal ngoms pas'os/
(Don grub rgyal, “Rig pa'i dpa' bo rnam la phul ba'i bstod tshig”)¹⁴⁴*

If you are like the young *garuḍa*-birds
now the *garuḍa* has developed the skills of its wings from inside its egg
and the time has come to fly to the high sky of learning
if you are like lion cubs
now since your turquoise mane has grown from the lion mother's womb
it is worth proudly showing the skill of your claws from the top of the snow
mountain of knowledge.
(Dhondup Gyal, “A Eulogy to the Heroes of Wisdom”)

The animal images are the same: the students are likened to young *garuḍa*-birds and snow lion cubs. The difference with the preceding quoted passages is that here the first-person voice is not speaking about his own qualities but the teacher is addressing his students and likening them to the mythical animals. The students are told that they have now developed the necessary skills because they have completed their course of studies. Why does Dhondup Gyal use the images of mythical animals to inspire the Tibetan students of his time? One answer is that by using the images he shows a rootedness in tradition, a connection to the cultural heritage which nevertheless conveys a meaning which is relevant to the youth of today. Using these images he represents the notion of Tibetanness. Speaking about the “*garuḍas* of the people” he displays a love towards his own people and encourages the students to use their newly-acquired knowledge and education to improve the lives and culture of their own Tibetan people. The above-mentioned animals are by no means the only ones in the poem: students are metaphorically said to be “the spots of the red tiger”¹⁴⁵ and “the tips of the

¹⁴⁴ Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 150.

¹⁴⁵ The exact Tibetan word for this animal is *dmar yag stag*, but I could not locate its scientific name.

horns of *mdzo*¹⁴⁶ and it is told how they have the skills of various animals.¹⁴⁷ The “spots” and “tips of the horns” are here considered special characteristics of the animals, thus metaphorically praising the unique qualities of the students. The poem is nationalistic in a cultural sense and promotes the notion that the students represent “the dignity of the people” (*mi rigs kyi la rgya*), “the road forward for Tibetans” (*bod rigs kyi mdun lam*), and “the hope of the future” (*ma 'ongs pa'i re ba*). Similar kinds of expressions are also found in other free verse poems and the song “E ma mtsho shgon po”.

The images of mythical animals seem to be less common in prose. However, an impressive image of a snow lion is used to depict the main protagonist of the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”. Lhakyi’s father has come to fetch her home from the dwelling of the nun where Lhakyi has been staying for some time. They start to fight and Lhakyi cuts the plaits of her hair. She is then depicted as staying in the wind, full of anger, her hair fluttering freely in the wind and is likened to a lion with “a turquoise mane”. The text says: “it was not clear whether she was angry or tossing her turquoise mane”.¹⁴⁸ The snow lion is a mythical animal of Tibetan indigenous origin, and it has also become a powerful symbol in modern Tibetan poetry. We have already seen its images in some of the above excerpts where the lion cubs are depicted as the young ones of snow lions because of their “turquoise manes”. The image of the snow lion is here to express Tibetanness.¹⁴⁹

The sound of a dragon is also mentioned in prose works. For example, in the short story “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma” the sound produced by Kuntu Sangmo when calling her father is likened to the “roaring of the blue turquoise dragon”.¹⁵⁰ The “sound of a dragon” (*brug sgra*) which is the word for “thunder” also has associations with sadness. In the short story “Sems gcong” Detso feels upset as her parents want her to marry a man she does not love and there is the “thunder” or “sound of the dragon” of sadness in her mind accompanied by

146 *mDzo* as defined in Goldstein’s dictionary (1975: 947) is a “cross between a yak and a cow”.

147 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 150–151.

148 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 20. Also in the narrative poem “gZhon nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan” the black hair of a young man is likened to “the shaking of the turquoise mane of a lion” (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 102). For discussion on the image of the snow lion in the poetry of Yidam Tsering (Yi dam tshe ring), who wrote in Chinese, see Lara Maconi’s article “Lion of the Snowy Mountains” (2002: 180–182).

149 Being strongly associated with Tibetanness and Tibetan identity, it may also be sometimes used to express ideas related to independence. A quite recent poem centred around the image of the snow lion entitled “Gangs seng 'tshol du phyin pa” (“In Search of the Snow Lion”) can be found in a poetry collection bearing the same title by Gangshey (Gangs bzhad) that was published in the Tibetan exile community in the last years of the 20th-century. Images of snow lions are often found in Tibetan folk songs, too. See Causemann 1993: 13, 108–109.

150 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 57–58.

various phenomena characterizing bad weather.¹⁵¹ The dragon commonly appears in traditional Tibetan texts and has long roots in the Chinese tradition.¹⁵²

In several cases Dhondup Gyal's use of animal images is in some way related to the traditional uses and conceptions of animals in folklore, in traditional Tibetan literature and also in Sanskrit literature, which had a significant influence on the development of Tibetan literature. Connections with traditional conceptions and beliefs about various animals also make the images understandable and communicative for the readers. There are many images of animals that are common in the Tibetan environment. Also innovative shifts occur in the way source domains are mapped onto the target domains so that the images may illustrate some ideas connected with matters discussed in today's society. In the images of mythical animals we can see, how some of the images originated in the neighbouring countries of Tibet, while the image of the snow lion is of indigenous Tibetan origin. These mythical animals have a strong connection to the Tibetan literary heritage (although some were assimilated from other cultures) and using them to build imagery helps the writer to show his connection to his own traditions and also to express Tibetanness in a contemporary context. We saw, for example, how the animal images in a free verse poem were used to emphasise the Tibetan identity of certain students.

151 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 9. There are also dragon images in "rKang lam phra mo" (Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 3) where the "turquoise dragon" is used to depict the appearance of a path after rain as well as also in the short stories "Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam" where a horse is likened to a dragon in a dream (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 332), and in "Tshul khirms rgya mtsho", where fame is metaphorically depicted as "the great sound of the dragon" (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 86). The task of the dragon to fly up to the sky and create rain after first fetching water from the ocean is also told in a Tibetan folk tale "Der Junge und der Drache" collected and translated by Schuh (1982: 167–168, tale no. 33).

152 According to Robert Beer, in China the dragon is also associated with thunderstorms. He writes: "The basic image of the Chinese dragon first appeared in unearthened carvings from the Neolithic period, dating back to around the fifth millennium BC." He also remarks that in Chinese and Tibetan culture the dragon is not always regarded as mythological (Beer 1999: 63–65). For the dragon in Chinese culture, see Spring 1993: 142–153. It is interesting that in Dhondup Gyal's writings the image of the dragon is not directly mapped on humans, but mostly on strong sounds (which may be produced by humans). According to Spring when in Chinese culture a human is represented by the image of a dragon, a human of especially high rank is implied, such as for example an emperor or a holy man (see Spring 1993: 142).

5. AQUATIC IMAGERY

The writings of Dhondup Gyal contain an abundance of water imagery. In this chapter I will analyse how the image of water in its various forms has been used by Dhondup Gyal in the creation of imagery. Water transforms its form in different temperatures and weather conditions changing from a fluid liquid into snow and ice. It assumes different forms and external shapes according to the conditions and terrain of the environment. There are, for instance, lakes, ponds, smaller and larger rivers, and glaciers in the upper reaches of mountainous regions.¹ Likewise in imagery there are a variety of images of water in its various forms.

Several of the images discussed here will be images that have water as a source domain image in a metaphoric expression. The source domain images are mapped onto different target domains. Usually one source domain image may be mapped onto several target domains whose features may greatly vary. Although being fluid in one of its forms, water is a substantial element and it is commonly employed as an image to facilitate the understanding of more abstract target domains, such as abstract concepts. Naturally, water in its various forms may also be a target domain image. There are many milieu descriptions in Dhondup Gyal's writings containing descriptions of lakes, rivers, hot springs, and so on. However, I have focused my attention here on metaphoric expressions in which two conceptual domains are understood in relation to each other or as intermingling.

Some of the literary works of Dhondup Gyal contain passages where it is difficult to distinguish between source and target domains: they might change places and combine with each other in a highly imaginative way. I have therefore made use of the theory of blends to discuss images of water in the free verse poem "Lang tsho'i rbab chu" ("The Waterfall of Youth") and the song "E ma mtsho sngon po" ("Oh, Blue Lake!").²

I will start my discussion with the image of a stream of water. The image of a waterfall will be dealt with in its own subsection in which I will focus on Dhondup Gyal's famous poem "Lang tsho'i rbab chu". I shall also analyse the

1 For even more forms of water, see Kalnická 2001: 100–103. For example, she also mentions mixtures of water with other elements such as earth, air, and fire.

2 For the theory of conceptual blending, see Turner 1996: 57–84; Kövecses 2002: 227–238. See also Fauconnier and Turner's article "Conceptual Integration Networks" (1998). The chapter on blends in Kövecses's book summarizes the theory of blends that was originally introduced by Fauconnier and developed further by Fauconnier and Turner.

images of ocean and lakes and especially the image of the Blue Lake (mTsho sngon, Kokonor). The discussions of some of the images also contain some interpretation of the icy form that water or bodies of water take in cold weather during winter.

5.1 Rivers and time

Rivers are generally viewed as a flowing continuum. Water flows continuously forward in its course. This quality also applies when the image of a river is used in Tibetan literature. This notion of a process or continuum, which at the same time has its enduring and momentary aspects, can be used to illustrate a wide range of target domains.

In the field of the cognitive study of metaphor, Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 144) have discussed the image of a river in connection with the conceptual metaphor *TIMES ARE MOVING OBJECTS*, the so-called “Moving Time” metaphor. Metaphors using the image of a river are seen as a variation of this basic metaphor which replaces “moving objects” with “a flowing substance”. They write: “Thus, we speak of *the flow of time* and often conceptualize the linear flow of time in terms of a common linear moving substance – a river.” Relating time with movement has, according to them, a bodily basis: as we move around in our environments we relate our movements to the time that has passed during the movement. Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 153) also use this notion to explain why the “Moving Time” metaphor is common in various languages. Kövecses (2002: 60–61), for example, discusses a passage from the Bible containing the image of a river in a Pharaoh’s dream which is connected with predicting the times ahead. The “Moving Time” metaphor may also be found in Tibetan literature and is apparent in several passages in the writings of Dhondup Gyal that I shall now discuss.

The concepts of time and history are closely related. In the works of Dhondup Gyal the image of a river may be used as a source domain image for the target domain of the unfolding of historical events, the transmission coming down from distant times. The essay “rKang lam phra mo” (“The Narrow Footpath”), for example, contains the image of the “great river of the vicissitudes of history” (*lo rgyus 'phel 'gros kyi chu klung chen po*). In the passage in question the narrator ponders upon the ancestors who first built the path (the main topic of the essay) and then remarks that even their names have been forgotten: they have been “hidden in the sands of the great river of the vicissitudes of history”.³ The metaphor of “the river of history” also appears in a poem written in a regular metre of

3 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 4.

six syllables per line that is characteristic to folk lyrics. The poem in question is a relatively early one by Dhondup Gyal which appeared in *'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs* and is entitled “rGya bod bar gyi mdza' mthun” (“The Friendship between China and Tibet”). The poem mentions in the beginning the rivers Dri chu ('Bri chu) and Machu (rMa chu) and “the fish of friendship and harmony” (*mdza' mthun nya mo*). It compares the relation of the two countries with the harmonious relation of the water and the fish.⁴ The text metaphorically says that the Machu River is “the witness of friendship and harmony” and highlighting its long course speaks about the river of history (*lo rgyus gtsang po*),⁵ after which the poem depicts the historical event of the marriage of the Tibetan king Songtsen Gampo (Srong btsan sgam po) and a Chinese princess.

A poem in nine-syllable verse entitled “rTsom gyi mtsho mor rlabs kyi me tog dgod” (“In the Lake of Writing the Flower Waves Are Blooming”) contains a passage that has an impressive amount of water imagery with a special Tibetan flavour.⁶ This poem was inspired by the meeting of Tibetan writers. It refers to several Tibetan writers of that time and the titles of some of their well-known literary works.⁷ The passage containing water images appears at the end of the poem and closes with the image of “the lake of writing of the Snow Land” – the image also chosen as the title of the poem.

The passage begins with the image of the original abode of the rivers high in the snows of the upper mountain ridges: “the cool snow hermitage of the five traditional sciences” (*bsil ldan lnga rig kha ba'i ri khrod*).⁸ This is described to be the place where “the clear and pure stream of water of good qualities” descends. Depicting learning as a stream focuses on the continuity in the tradition of learning. The poem comments furthermore on the qualities of “the stream of water”, saying “that there will never be an occasion that it would dry up”, stressing the long-lasting continuity conveyed by this image.⁹

4 The images of fish and river are also interrelated in Kalden Gyatso's song translated by Victoria Sujata (2005: 325): “The blue Dgu chu – one;/ The fish that go around in [the river] – two./ An interrelationship between times and circumstances/ Comes about suddenly.” The second stanza of this short song is religious, depicting the relationship of the singer of the song and his disciples and advises on the importance of religious practice when the opportunity is presented.

5 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 62–63.

6 It can be found in vol. I of *The Collected Works*, Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 138–140. According to Pema Bhum's list of Dhondup Gyal's works, it first appeared in *sBrang char* in 1981, no. 2: 4. For information on the meeting of Tibetan writers mentioned in the poem, see Yangdon Dhondup 2004: 59.

7 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 138.

8 The adjective *bsil po*, ‘cool’ or ‘moderate’, evokes associations of pleasant coolness and not biting cold.

9 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 140.

The source domain image of “the stream of water” associated with the tradition of learning is also expressed using a traditional term from the lexicons of synonyms (*mngon brjod*). The word for “water stream” or “river” is here *nyal 'gro'i rgyun*, meaning literally ‘the stream of that one going lying down’. The synonymic terminologies are expressions that have their origin in the Indic tradition, but they became widely used in Tibetan texts.¹⁰ In a recent commentary of synonyms containing also root verses of Ngulchu (dNgul chu) Dharmabhadrā’s *mNgon brjod kyi bstan bcos rgya mtsho'i chu thigs* (“Treatise on the Synonyms: The Water Drop of Ocean”), the word *nyal 'gro* (among several other expressions) is said to be “a name of water” (*chu*).¹¹

In Dhondup Gyal’s poem there is a series of source domain images of various Tibetan rivers. In the earlier treatise of synonyms by Dharmabhadrā mentioned above synonyms are given for several large rivers flowing through India, like the Ganges (Gaṅgā).¹² However, Dhondup Gyal’s poem has its own strong indigenous flavour:

sngon byon mkhas pa'i ljags rtsom 'bri chu ni//
chal chil g.yo ba'i lbu ba mngon mthor brtsegs//
dmangs khrod rtsom rig rma klung dal ba'i rgyun//
yan lag brgyad dang ldan pa'i sgeg nyams ngom//
deng gi gsar rtsom chu klung sna tshogs kyang//
lhung lhung glu dbyangs bar med sgrog par rtsom//
 (Don grub rgyal, “rTsom gyi mtsho mor rlabs kyi me tog dgod”)¹³

10 Amarasimha’s *Amarakośa* (Tib. ‘*Chi med mdzod*) was translated into Tibetan and after that several commentaries were written by Tibetan authors. For information about the Sanskrit lexicon and its author, see the Introduction in vol. I of the text edition with commentaries edited by Ramanathan (1971: xv–xxviii).

11 The commentary explains this with the following words: “*nyal 'gro*: water is like going or running lying down” (*nyal 'gro ni chu nyal nas 'gro ba'am rgyug pa lta bu'o*). The other words given in the root text for water are *dag byed* (‘that which makes clean’), *ngan sel* (‘that which removes evil’), *'bru phan* (‘that which benefits the grains’), and *btung bya* (‘that which can be drunk’). These reflect traditional Indic understanding of water as something which purifies and is very beneficial for the growth of the harvest and for quenching thirst. See gZhis rtse dge 'os slob grwa'i bod yig slob dpyod tsho tshung 1991: 70.

12 Darian’s research work about the River Ganges (1978) is a fascinating work. It describes the river viewed from many angles: geographical, historical, mythological, symbolic, and artistic. The mythological views and legend on the origin of the Ganges are especially interesting: in them Gaṅgā is a goddess (1978: 17–37). Discussion on the Ganges in Kālidāsa’s *Meghadūta* can be found in an article by Pigoñiowa. According to her, Ganges is often used in comparisons to depict women (2003: 410–411). She also remarks about the association of women with rivers and men with oceans, which is typical of Indian culture (2003: 413). In Dhondup Gyal’s works I did not find any corresponding ideas which connect females with rivers or males with ocean.

13 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 140.

Drichu of the writings of the earlier scholars
 has been foaming up its bubbles to the heights
 the slow stream of folk literature of Machu river
 is showing off its eight attractive qualities¹⁴
 the various water streams of the modern new writing
 are constantly beginning to sing their pleasant songs
 (Dhondup Gyal, “In the Lake of Writing the Flower Waves Are Blooming”)

Drichu and Machu are two great rivers that flow through Tibet: Machu descends towards China through Amdo (in China this great river is called Huang He, “The Yellow River”) and Drichu through the eastern Tibetan region of Khams is called Yangtse in China. The above excerpt focuses on the cultural traditions of writing: writing and literature are seen as a kind of never-ending stream-like continuum passing from one generation to the next. Here the conceptual metaphorical structure using the images of rivers to express continuity is clearly connected with understanding something in the framework of time and thus may be interpreted as a Tibetan cultural reflection of the “Moving Time” metaphor. This conceptual metaphorical structure receives a special Tibetan flavour by using the names of actual Tibetan rivers in the image. In this kind of case it could be seen that the cross-culturally shared way of conceptualizing times as moving substances or objects is based on shared human experiences of our embodied encounters with the surrounding environment. The presence of culture is, however, very clear in the above passage: it could be described as “soaked” in Tibetan culture: Tibetan traditional, folk, and contemporary literature. Thus the target domain depicts Tibetan culture but also the source domains become Tibetan: the practice of mentioning the names of the rivers is likely to cause in the reader an imaginative process of imagining the Tibetan river sceneries and the strong movement of the currents. Thus the process of contextualizing based on certain hints in the text makes the image appear culturally Tibetan. The underlying shared conceptual structure makes it possible for the reader to often be able to gain a general understanding of images produced in some other cultural environment.

The end of the poem contains the image of the “lake of literature” (*rtsom gyi mtsho mo*). It is the gathering place of the rivers of traditional, folk, and new literature. The waves on its surface are characterized metaphorically as “blooming flowers” (here water has been used as a target domain image), an image that can easily evoke associations of joy and creativity. The poem ends with assurances about

14 Krang dbyi sun (1993: 2553) explains the eight qualities or literally “branches” of water to be: “sweetness, coolness, softness, lightness, clearness, cleanness, not irritating the throat and beneficial to the stomach”.

“the ripening of tasty fruit in the summertime” that may be interpreted in the light of viewing optimistically the near future development of Tibetan literature.

In addition to discussing writing in its relation to tradition, the source domain image of a river may be used to depict several other target domains. However, there seems to be the common factor that the image of the river associated with various target domains arouses the idea of some kind of continuity characterizing that target domain. Some typical target domains are, for example, studies and love. A person who is very enthusiastic in his studies may be described as studying with the same effort as “a stream of river”. The novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” has a passage containing this type of image as well as another water image:

de ltar yul ljongs mdzes shing lta na sdug pa'i slob grwa der zhugs te skom pas chu dang ltogs pas zas 'dod pa ltar slob skabs gcig la 'bad pa chu bo'i rgyun bzhin byas mthar sbyangs 'bras bzang bo thob par gyur/
(Don grub rgyal, “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”)¹⁵

Having entered that attractive school surrounded by a beautiful environment, like a thirsty person needs water and a hungry person needs food, during one semester I put in effort like a river in full stream. Finally I obtained a good result in my studies.
(Dhondup Gyal, “A Flower Destroyed by Frost”)

In the above passage a water image is also used to depict the state of desiring something very much in the form of a simile: “like a thirsty person needs water”.¹⁶

A metaphor making use of the source domain of a river (*chu bo*) mapped onto the target domain of love is found in the short story “Brug mtsho”. This passage has “waves” arising in the river of love:

rtswa thang gi yul ljongs dang 'brog phyogs kyi mi dmangs rnams dran tsa na/ nga'i bsam pa'i brtse dung gi chu bo la rang dbang med par rba rlabs 'kbrigs shing/ bod rigs gzhon nu ma zhig gi bzhin ras de nga'i khra chung mig lam du shar te yal dka' bar gyur/
(Don grub rgyal, “Brug mtsho”)¹⁷

When I remember the scenery of the grassland and its people, the waves arise spontaneously in the river of love in my mind and the face of a young Tibetan girl arises in front of my eyes and does not easily disappear.
(Dhondup Gyal, “Drugtso”)

15 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 9.

16 In “Pad mtsho” the main character’s way of engaging in self studies is depicted with the simile “like hungry person wishing for food and thirsty person wishing for water”. See Don grub rgyal 1981a: 34–35.

17 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 78–79.

“The river of love” here seems to refer to both love for one’s native place, the grassland and its people, and the young girl whom the character feels attracted to. The source domain of “river” connected to the target domain of “love” highlights the continuing and enduring aspects of this feeling. The image of waves has more to do with emotion. It is very common to speak about the “river of love” in Tibetan and this is one of the metaphors often used in connection with love. This seems to reflect a view of love as a long-lasting, long-term phenomenon.¹⁸

Apart from continuity another aspect of a stream is that it is never still but moves forward all the time passing the viewer standing on its bank. This makes it possible to use the image of a stream to express something that is momentary and passing. In the short story “Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs” there are two similes attached to one target domain: feelings. The second of these similes is a water image, namely the image of the river Rongphu (Rong phu). The first person narrator of this passage, the old *thangka*-painter relates:

*yin na yang/ nga'i tshor snang'di dag ni zhag gcig gi mgron po dang'dra bar yun ring
bor gnas ma thub la/ rong phu'i chu bo dang'dra bar skad cig skad cig la bzhur nas
bud song/
(Rang grol, “Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs”)¹⁹*

however, these feelings of mine like a guest of one single evening could not
tarry long and flowed on moment by moment like the Rongphu river.
(Rangdol [i.e. Dhondup Gyal], “The Love of Flesh and Bone”)

It is interesting to note that the image of water flowing in a river may, depending on the context, be thus used for quite different aspects of time: its continuity and its momentary nature.

In traditional literature too, it is possible to find images of rivers that have been used to express continuity and unceasingness. Dhondup Gyal himself has quoted a passage from a Dunhuang document in his book about the history of Tibetan songs, which has an image of the river Yarlung Tsangpo (Yar klung gtsang po).²⁰ In the passage the target domain of the unceasing continuity of royal lineage of the King of Tibet is depicted with images of the unmelting nature of the snow on the Yarlha Shampo (Yar lha sham po) mountain and the ever-flowing nature of the Yarlung Tsangpo river. Although the passage speaks about damming the flow of the river and diverting it upwards, it is an image of impossibility: the

18 The short story “Pad mtsho” also contains a metaphor, namely the image of the “river of affection”. See Don grub rgyal 1981a: 35.

19 Rang grol 1984: 27.

20 The original text of the Dunhuang document is found in Don grub rgyal 1985: 110–115.

stream of water is eternal and cannot dry up or be extinguished. Therefore, this image too has to do with rivers as continuous phenomena.²¹ Typical to the style of expression in old Tibetan songs, the images are arranged in a parallel way to illustrate the target domain coming after the source domain images.

Also in *Mi la ras pa'i mgur'bum* (“The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa”) it is possible to find the metaphorical use of the image of “a stream of river” (*chu bo'i rgyun*). In Milarepa’s song this source domain image is mapped onto the target domain of meditation and depicts a kind of continuous meditative state:

sgom pa 'od gsal chu bo'i rgyun//
bsgom rgyu'i thun mtshams gzung rgyu med//
bsgom bya sgom byed stor nas thal//
sgom pa'i snying rus bzang nas byung//
 (Rus pa'i rgyan can, *Mi la ras pa'i rnam mgur*)²²

The water stream of meditation upon clear light
 need not be meditated in separate retreats
 the meditation and the meditator became one
 this came from due diligence in meditation.
 (Rupai Gyencen, “The Life Story and Songs of the Great Yogi Milarepa”)

The spiritual concept of diligence in meditation practice could well be compared with diligence in doing secular studies. In contemporary writing an age-old image may be applied to a secular corresponding field, such as studies in a college. These shifts regarding the natures of target domains are indicative of the way in which metaphors change. Sometimes they also show a writer’s special creativity in using images that are familiar to people but transforming them so that they communicate ideas relevant to their own time and society which may express new kinds of meanings.²³

Victoria Sujata (2005) in her research on Kalden Gyatso’s spiritual songs dating from the seventeenth-century also mentions the simile “like the flow of a river” (*chu bo'i rgyun ltar*). She presents (pp. 191–193) several passages from songs containing this simile and remarks that it “is most frequently used to refer to striving, exerting oneself to practise religion”. She discusses (pp. 202–205) the

21 A concise presentation of figurative speech (*rgyan*) in Dunhuang documents may be found in dGon chung rab brtan 2003: 519–526. According to him (2003: 520), imagery in the structural form of metaphors first came to Tibet when *Rāmāyaṇa* was translated into Tibetan.

22 Rus pa'i rgyan can 2005: 218.

23 Margaret H. Freeman (1995) has insightfully written about metaphors in Emily Dickinson’s poetry. In her article she has been able to show how a poet may introduce changes into the existing metaphors of a culture so that a new world view and conceptual world may emerge and be communicated.

origins of this type of simile, pointing out that similes with the words *ltar* and *bzhin* may be found in old Tibetan Dunhuang documents, although a similar type of simile may also be found in *sNyan ngag me long* (*Kāvyaśāstra*, “The Mirror of Poetry”).

Based on the above comparisons to traditional materials, Dhondup Gyal’s use of the image of a river may be said to have the same underlying idea or structure as traditional metaphorical expressions. However, it should be noted that Dhondup Gyal has largely used the image to discuss aspects of the modern society of his time such as culture, education, and secular love. This indicates a slight shift in the target domains and reflects the phenomenon that source domains often change more slowly and tend to be more conservative, whereas target domains may undergo changes depending on the needs of the communication. This reflects the characteristic trend in modern Tibetan literature: the writings tend to be about secular topics and are located in the indigenous Tibetan environment with Tibetan people as characters. This naturally makes it necessary that the target domains of the metaphors are largely related to the life of the people, Tibetan society and their environment.

5.2 “The Waterfall of Youth”: Conceptual blending in free verse poetry

I shall now discuss one of the free verse poems of Dhondup Gyal in which water imagery is central. “Lang tsho’i rhab chu” (“The Waterfall of Youth”) is perhaps the most famous of Dhondup Gyal’s poems.²⁴ He wrote it under his pen-name, Rangdol (Rang grol), and it appeared in 1983 in the *sBrang char* literary magazine. “Lang tsho’i rhab chu” is perhaps the work of Dhondup Gyal that has attracted most literary critical attention and there are several discussions of different length and depth on it by both Tibetan and Western critics and scholars.²⁵ Some reasons for the critical attention are probably the popularity and the artistic quality of the poem. There is also a literary historical reason: it is usually considered that

24 For translations of this poem into Western languages, see Ch. 2.3, n. 85. I have based my discussion entirely on the Tibetan original which appeared in *sBrang char* 1983 (2) and the excerpts of the poem that I have included in this section were translated by me into English from Tibetan. This was necessary for the sake of the analysis and in order to preserve the metaphorical expressions as exactly as possible.

25 Several scholars have mentioned the poem when discussing the works of Dhondup Gyal, but for discussions of some length, see, for example, Chos skyong 2006: 236–243; Yosay Wangdi 2005: 130–135; bDud lha rgyal 1999; Hartley 2003: 185–193; Tshe grub 2005: 9–16. Some shorter discussions by Tibetan critics include, for example, Rin chen bkra shis 1998: 173–175; Hor gtsang 'Jigs med 2000: 35–37; Pema Bhum 1999: 13; bKra shis dpal ldan 1991: 435–437. Another work that has also attracted a great deal of critical attention is “rKang lam phra mo”, which will be discussed in Ch. 7.

“Lang tsho'i rbab chu” was the first modern free verse poem written in Tibetan and thus it started a new style and genre in Tibetan writing.²⁶ Another reason why critics have discussed this poem is on account of the quality of its imagery: the central image is multilayered and ambivalent, thus providing the possibility of various and multiple interpretations by different readers – it creates a space for discussion and interpretation.

The poem is written in a step-shaped form – a characteristic shared with several poems of the Russian poet Vladimir Mayakovsky. Some of the Tibetan critics in their discussions of “Lang tsho'i rbab chu” acknowledge the influence of Western modern poetry. Most interestingly, Choekyong (Chos skyong 2006: 62) mentions that in an interview with professor Chen Qingying he had learned that Dhondup Gyal was greatly inspired by Mayakovsky's poem “Cloud in Pants” and thought about the possibility of writing something in Tibetan using the step-shaped form.²⁷ Tashi Palden (bKra shis dpal ldan 1991: 437) writes how Dhondup Gyal studied Western free verse poetry and how it influenced him so that he could express his ideas without the restrictions of the traditional *kāvya*-style. It is also possible that Dhondup Gyal received influences from Chinese modern poetry.²⁸

The image of the waterfall is the central image of the poem. It is on the one hand an image connected with streams of water. However, it has also another aspect, namely that of falling water. Thus it can be viewed as a variation of the metaphorical structures connected with rivers that also possess additional characteristics. Because the creation and style of image structuring is quite different

26 For views stressing the poem's importance in the development of Tibetan literature and its newness, see, for example, bKra shis dpal ldan 1991: 435; bDud lha rgyal 1999: 125; Chos skyong 2006: 238; Tshe grub 2005: 10; Hartley 2003: 185; Hor gtsang 'jigs med 2000: 35. Hortsang Jigme (36) interestingly quotes a view that appeared in a Chinese language publication by Yidam Tsering (Yi dam tshe ring) that Dhondup Gyal composed “Lang tsho'i rbab chu” with Dhondup Wangbum (Don grub dbang 'bum).

27 For Dorian Rottenberg's translation of Mayakovsky's “Cloud in Pants” into English, see Mayakovsky 1986, II: 7–26.

28 Hartley (2003: 191) reports this kind of view based on a paper by Jangbu, a well-known poet. She also mentions the possibility that the poem might have some elements of “Chinese Communist-style rhetoric” (Hartley 2003: 190). This is, of course, possible as the poem was written in the time when the official policy emphasized the four modernizations and the poem also stresses the future and the forward-looking direction (for information on the four modernizations, see Link 2000: 18, 83, 159). When I presented a paper on Dhondup Gyal's free verse poetry in the conference “Asian Creativity in Culture and Technology” in Trondheim on 14 November 2008, the conference coordinator Martin Bech communicated to me afterwards his observation that some of the features that I had described in the free verse poems had something in common with ideas that were presented in the 1980s in a Chinese TV series called “He shang”, “Death Song of the River”.

in this poem compared to several other literary works by Dhondup Gyal, I have chosen to discuss this poem in its own subsection.

Although I have used the concepts of source and target domains to discuss imagery in short stories and poetry in verse and also the images in some other free verse poems, the analysis and interpretation of this poem seems to require the use of the analytical tool of conceptual blends. The theory of conceptual blending, introduced by Fauconnier and Turner, can be viewed as a further development of the cognitive theory of metaphor and is thus suitable for use in this work in places where the nature of the literary works seems to require it – that is in cases when the structure of the imagery is more complicated and resists simple divisions into source and target domains.²⁹ Some Tibetan critics in their discussions use the term *dpe* for the waterfall and *dpe can* or *don* for the Tibetan youth,³⁰ but it is more useful in the context of this particular study to highlight the two frameworks and the way they are combined to create new meaning and to use the theory of conceptual blending to discuss the poem.

The powerful image of the waterfall is strongly presented throughout the poem. It has two frameworks: that of the waterfall and that of Tibetan youth, both functioning as input spaces. The poem creates a conceptual blended space in which both the characteristics of youth and those of a waterfall are present and also projects back to its input spaces characteristics from that blended space. It seems to me that the concept of blended space is especially useful for poems with a strong central image that becomes “imprinted” in the mind of the reader even though the poem often receives other interpretations that as such may belong to different conceptual domains. Considered as a whole, the poem could be viewed as a single extended metaphor existing in blended conceptual space.

The poem starts with a description of the beautiful landscape characterized by flowers and high mountains bathed in sunlight: the Tibetan milieu in which

29 For an introduction to the theory of conceptual blends, see Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner’s article “Conceptual Integration Networks” (1998) and Kövecses 2002: 227–238. Although in this work the theory of blends is used to depict the structure of images in some free verse poems and a song, it is evident that it is just one of the many possible applications of the theory of blends. In fact, in his recent work Mark Turner has shown how blending is characteristic of almost any act of imagination and largely happens as part of normal everyday activities when persons performing blending on the mental level are not likely to notice it at all. See Turner 2008 (I read the draft version of the article, 2007, that is available in Turner’s Blending and Conceptual Integration website).

30 See bKra shis dpal ldan 1991: 437; Rin chen bkra shis 1998: 174.

the waterfall of the poem is located.³¹ Also the typographical layout of the poem resembles a waterfall to some extent: the lines in the different sections of the poem descend gradually towards the right of the pages. The image of a waterfall does of course appear in literature of various cultures,³² but here mentioning the mountains and depicting the landscape creates the impression of a Tibetan waterfall – a native image that does not have to be borrowed from the imagery of any other culture.³³

Then the waterfall is introduced first as a concrete image: a waterfall tumbling down from the rocks. Its characteristics such as its bubbles and the light reflecting on it are described in words of poetic beauty. Here the waterfall is clearly a representation of a real natural waterfall and all its elemental characteristics – forming the other input space for the blended space in the core of the poem.

The beginning of a blended space can often be noticed by linguistic markers (or words mentioning characteristics that the object does not normally possess).

31 Although to me the landscape depicted in the poem appears typically Tibetan, the Tibetan critic Dulha Gyal comments that Dhondup Gyal would have created the beautiful milieu and atmosphere in order to illustrate the “new society” (meaning Tibetan society after the 1950s). bDud lha rgyal 1999: 127–128.

32 A fine example of an image of the waterfall in a Chinese text is Li Bai’s (8th-c. CE) poem “Watching the Waterfall at Lu Mountain”. In Li Bai’s poem the waterfall simile is in the target domain image of the source domain image of the stars of the Milky Way: “Sunlight steams off purple mist from Incense Peak./ Far off, the waterfall is a long hanging river/ flying straight down three thousand feet/ like the milky river of stars pouring from heaven” (Barnstone & Ping 2005: 119).

33 Although waterfalls are sometimes mentioned in traditional Tibetan texts, according to Choekyong (Chos skyong 2006: 238) the use of this image “gives the reader the feeling of newness”. Thus it seems that a waterfall was not a very common image used when writing poetry or in poetic examples, and thus it can be viewed as innovative that Dhondup Gyal used it as a central image of his poem. Waterfalls are typical of mountainous terrain, and in the opening scene of the *Bya chos rin chen 'phreng ba*, depicting the milieu of the mountain in the border region of India and Tibet, the waters described there bring to mind the idea of a waterfall (Conze’s translation 1955: 15–16): “stretches of water which have flown down from the cliffs, rocks, and glaciers. These gurgling, murmuring waters”.

In *Sa skya legs bshad* a waterfall is used as a poetic image, but in a very different light than in Dhondup Gyal’s poem. Sakya Paṇḍita uses the image to depict a bad person in the chapter “examining the fool”: “skye bo ngan pa 'byor thob kyang// lhag par spyod pa ngan par 'gyur// 'bab chu ji ltar ldog gyur kyang// thur du 'bab pa kho nar 'dod//”. In English: ‘Even if a bad person acquires wealth/ his behaviour will become particularly bad/ however much one would try to change the direction of the waterfall/ it will only wish to fall downwards’ (Sakya Paṇḍita’s stanza cited in the commentary of *Sa skya legs bshad* by Mai tri bu ddha sha san dha ra [Sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin] 1991: 132). The shared feature between the waterfalls of Sakya Paṇḍita and Dhondup Gyal are that both are uncontrollable and free; they cannot be stopped or their directions altered. However, for Dhondup Gyal this signifies a positive quality of courage to achieve one’s aims and create anew, but for Sakya Paṇḍita in this particular stanza it depicts a bad quality in a person – a kind of stubbornness – that cannot be transformed. The connecting factor is that both waterfall images are mapped on persons, but otherwise the texts do not seem to have anything in common.

In this poem, the first hint of a metaphoric interpretation is in the line describing the sound of the waterfall; simultaneously speaking about “the melodious song of the youth” that is like “the song of *gandharvas*”.³⁴ A clear marker for the blend is found in the line which explicitly states: “Hey – this is not an ordinary natural waterfall” thus indicating its metaphoric nature.³⁵ Several human characteristics are also mentioned to illustrate the waterfall, such as “fearless heart” and “well-developed body”. Following closely, the other framework or input space of the poem is stated in a clear manner. The voice of the poem defines the identity of the waterfall by saying: “This is – the waterfall of youth of the young persons of Tibet, the Snow Land”.³⁶ The two frameworks are intermingled in the lines where the waterfall is addressed in such a way that the two input spaces are exchanged with one another or rather blended together:

*kye kye/ rbab chu yi lang tsho ya/
lang tsho yi rbab chu/
(Rang grol, “Lang tsho’i rbab chu”)*³⁷

Oh, oh, the youth of waterfall, oh
the waterfall of youth
(Rangdol, “The Waterfall of Youth”)

This kind of passage is a clear indication that to analyse one part of a metaphorical expression as a source domain and the other as a target domain is difficult and not purposeful in this poem. In this case the assumed unidirectionality (a mapping process from source to target) is not valid. One clear linguistic marker in the poem for the blended space of the waterfall and the youth is the use of the pronoun *khyed* (“you”) in addressing the waterfall. The passage quoted above is also the place from where the voice of the poem starts to address the waterfall directly. Addressing an object that does not actually have the power to comprehend, such as an element of nature, means engaging in the act of apostrophizing. When the object addressed cannot understand speech, it can be supposed that the speech will actually communicate to some other audience who has the capacity to comprehend.³⁸ Here in the beginning of Dhondup Gyal’s poem there is an

34 *Dri za* refers to the mythological concept of “heavenly musicians”, which is of Indian origin. Rang grol 1983: 56: “lang tsho’i glu dbyangs ni dri za’i glu/”.

35 Rang grol 1983: 57: “kye-’di ni rang bzhin gyi rbab chu dkyus ma zhig ma yin te/”.

36 Rang grol 1983: 57: “di ni–bod gangs can gyi gzhon nu rnam kyi lang tsho’i rbab chu red/”.

37 Rang grol 1983: 57.

38 Alan Richardson (2002) has written an informative article on apostrophe, discussing the problematics of communication connected with this figure and the other audience that is supposed to “overhear” the speech.

indication of the other listening audience: the waterfall first appears as an object that the voice of the poem encourages others to take a look at and listen to. Towards the end of the poem the voice of the poem and the audience melt into “we” (*nga tsho*), who are imagined together to address the waterfall. At the end the dichotomy between “we” and “you” seems to vanish when it is said that the waterfall is located in the mindscapes of Tibetan youth.

The imagery in this poem has both highly innovative and traditional features. As for the traditional and cross-culturally shared properties, it is possible to discern the familiar underlying metaphorical structure associating water streams with ideas of time or continuity (related with the TIMES ARE MOVING OBJECTS metaphor). The waterfall has its source of origin from where it streams down, and beyond the waterfall the stream of water continues onwards. The water keeps cascading in a continual stream. However, even a waterfall is a stream in one sense, yet it has an additional property of its own: a natural and powerful uncontrollable deluge that may evoke associations of freedom.³⁹

The framework of youth (*lang tsho*) combined with that of the waterfall seems to be a strategy to discuss the idea of innovation and progress. It is possible to think of human beings as part of the lineage of earlier generations “streaming” to the present from ancient times and continuing ever forward. However, it is notable that Dhondup Gyal has chosen to write about Tibetan youth and not simply about the Tibetan people. The concept of youth itself evokes the ideas of newness, freshness and energy to create anew. There might be some influence from that time of Chinese writing in Dhondup Gyal’s emphasis on youth. Innes Herdan (1992: 132, 142) in her book about Chinese modern literature mentions a poem by Shi Zhi entitled “Trust the Future” and quotes some lines from it. The poem has an optimistic view of the future and encourages its reader to “trust in the victory of youth”. According to information Herdan supplies in a footnote, Shi Zhi’s poem circulated among interested readers in the 1970s, and was published in an unofficial publication *Today*. We do not know whether Dhondup Gyal was familiar with this poem, but it does show that some other writers in China also expressed views stressing the power and ability of the young people of that time. A Tibetan scholar Tshedup (Tshe grub 2005: 12) in his analysis of Dhondup Gyal’s poem interprets youth as representing the future. The ideas of places of origin (for people the historical background and for the river its place

39 Kövecses (2002: 57) has discussed a non-linguistic visual image in a scene from the film *Pocahontas*, which presents two young lovers and a waterfall. Kövecses interprets the scene as a manifestation of the metaphor FALLING IN LOVE IS PHYSICAL FALLING. In Dhondup Gyal’s poem, of course, it is not a question of falling in love, but it is possible to think of the metaphor at a higher level of abstraction as: UNCONTROLLABILITY IS PHYSICAL FALLING.

of origin) and the idea of the movement or progress forward rather than staying still are the shared characteristics of the waterfall and the Tibetan people – they could be understood to be in the generic space of the poem.

The idea of innovation is first expressed with the help of the input space of youths: the poem speaks about their “courage to innovate anew” (*gsar gtod kyi snying stobs*). This property is connected to a waterfall in the blended space: the waterfall is attributed qualities such as “fearless courage”, and combining various streams of water the waterfall is characterized as the water of unity (*mtshun sgril*).⁴⁰ The connection of the water stream with innovation is suggested:

khyed la gsar byung gi chu sna bsdu ba'i spobs pa dang ldan pas/
(Rang grol, “Lang tsho'i rbab chu”)⁴¹

as you have the confidence to gather together various new waters
(Rangdol, “The Waterfall of Youth”)

The word *gsar byung* means literally “newly originated” and refers to something which has recently come into existence. Furthermore, the waterfall is described as follows: “your flowing stream is long and falling stream strong”.⁴² These descriptions of the waterfall join the ideas of continuity as a stream, and adds new elements: the heavy, strong falling and the innovative properties. Several Tibetan critics stress the courage of Tibetan youth in their interpretation of the poem.⁴³ Both the courage of youth for innovation and the quality of the waterfall to merge new streams are combined in the blended space to stress the importance of the emergent meaning of openness to new ideas and experiences.

The visual images of water are made even more lively by mentioning different types of water that unite as a waterfall. First we read about waters in the different seasons: the rainwater of spring, the springs of summer, the frost and hail of autumn, and the snow in winter. A fascinating list of various types of water follows: “snowy water, water coming from rock and slate mountains” (*gangs chu*, *rdza chu* and *gya' chu*), forest water (*nags chu*), water flowing on the grassland (*na*

⁴⁰ Rang grol 1983: 58.

⁴¹ Rang grol 1983: 58.

⁴² Rang grol 1983: 58.

⁴³ See, for example, Rin chen bkra shis 1998: 175; Pema Bhum 1999: 13.

chu), mountain water (*ri chu*), water in the valley (*lung chu*), water of the upper slopes (*phu chu*), and water of the lower slopes” (*mda' chu*).⁴⁴

The poem contains discussions about time and cultural transmission. In the following excerpt the flowing and cascading water stream is clearly connected to the framework of discussing time:

*rbab chu ya/
khyed ni lo rgyus kyi dpang po dang/
ma 'ongs pa'i lam 'dren red/
khyed kyi dri ma bral ba'i chu thigs re re'i nang du/
gangs can bod kyi 'phel 'grib 'khod yod la/
khyed kyi gzegs ma 'bar ba'i rdul phran re re'i nang du/
bsil ldan kha ba'i ljongs kyi dar rgud 'dus yod/
(Rang grol, “Lang tsho'i rbab chu”)⁴⁵*

O waterfall,
you are the witness of history and
the guide to the future
in each of your limpid drops of water
are written the ups and downs of the Snow Land of Tibet
in each of your shining droplets of water
are gathered the ebbs and flows of the cool region of snows
(Rangdol [i. e. Dhondup Gyal], “The Waterfall of Youth”)

44 Rang grol 1983: 57–58. If we look at this long list of various types of water, most of the words are found in dictionaries. Although the listing might sound imaginative, the words are generally known to Tibetan speakers and therefore they cannot be considered neologisms. The Tibetan word *gangs chu* is found in the dictionary *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* and is glossed as water that results from melting snow (Krang dbyi sun 1993: 345). Also both the words *rdza chu* and *gya' chu* are found in the same Tibetan-Chinese dictionary, which explains *rdza chu* as “water that falls down amongst the clay of the mountain top” and *gya' chu* as “water descending down from the rock mountain” (Krang dbyi sun 1993: 2350, 2616). According to an anonymous Tibetan, the words referring to mountains, *rdza ri* and *gya' ri*, can be translated as ‘rock mountain’ and ‘slate mountain’. The word *na chu* is found in the lexicon *Dag yig gсар bsgrigs* is an example of one of the words where the word *na* appears in its meaning of ‘meadow which is damp or has many water springs’ (bSam gtan 2004: 424). A Tibetan from Amdo explained to me that *na chu* means ‘water flowing on the grassland’. *Phu chu* is found in Krang dbyi sun (1993: 1712), explained as “water descending from the upper part of the valley”, whereas *mda' chu* has not been given its own entry although its meaning as “water descending from the lower slopes of the valley” seems evident. Goldstein has translated *mda' chu* as “river in the lower part of the valley” (1975: 594). Thus in the list of various types of water only the words *nags chu* (‘forest water’), *ri chu* (‘mountain water’), and *lung chu* (‘water in the valley’) are not listed in the dictionaries mentioned above, but this does not mean that they would be neologisms, but rather the meanings of their two syllables (which have been separately listed in dictionaries) are so clear that it has not probably been seen as necessary for the dictionary compilers to add explanations.

45 Rang grol 1983: 58–59.

The waterfall is metaphorically said to be the witness of history and a guide to the future. Thus the waterfall comes down from ancient times and moves towards the future. This way of discussing time strengthens the idea of continuity and there is a clear similarity with the river images presented earlier. Associating the drops of water in the waterfall with the fate of Tibet gives it nationalistic sounding overtone. The words referring to Tibet – *bod* ‘Tibet’, and *gangs can* ‘Snow Land’ – are frequently repeated in the poem. However, today such words may also be understood in the context of the minority nationalities of the People’s Republic of China, but be this as it may, the poem expresses a sense of love and devotion to the people belonging to one’s own nationality.

The waterfall of youth does not freeze in cold weather. The expression “your mind can never be frozen under the ice of winter”,⁴⁶ for example, displays a very clear blend in which the blended poetic space characteristics of human beings and of the waterfall are combined. It is a characteristic of blended spaces that new qualities emerge: in cognitive theory the new features are called the emergent structure of the blend. The never-freezing continuity of falling water evokes an optimistic view of the future of the Tibetan people: Tibetan youth will achieve their wishes and they cannot be stopped.

The poem speaks about the indispensability of the waterfall in the blended space for the traditional sciences: grammar, handicrafts, medicine, and logic bringing the attention of the reader to the cultural transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next – a kind of stream-like phenomenon.

In the final lines of the poem the place of the waterfall that was first depicted in the Tibetan milieu and then in the blended space is shifted again to a new “environment”, and a new kind of identity is also revealed:

*rbab chu'i lang tsho la yal ba med cing/
lang tsho'i rbab chu ni de bas kyang nyams pa med/
'di ni –
bod gangs can gyi gzhon rabs rnams kyi ngag las byung ba'i
lang tsho'i rbab chu red/
'di ni –
bod gangs can gyi gzhon nu rnams kyi sems na 'bab pa'i lang tsho'i rbab chu red/
(Rang grol, “Lang tsho'i rbab chu”)⁴⁷*

the youth of the waterfall does not vanish and
the waterfall of youth does not diminish even less
this is –

46 Rang grol 1983: 59.

47 Rang grol 1983: 62.

the waterfall of youth originating from the speech of the young Tibetan generation
 this is –
 the waterfall of youth descending in the minds of young Tibetan people.
 (Rangdol, “The Waterfall of Youth”)

That the waterfall does not vanish seems to refer to a vision of cultural and national continuity in the future. The last lines focus more on the framework of youth and the waterfall becomes interpreted in that framework: “the waterfall of youth” has originated from their speech and descends in their minds.⁴⁸ From the concrete image of the waterfall viewed by the voice and the audience outside, the poem progresses through the blending of the two input spaces to an ending where the waterfall becomes internalized. Thus there is a change in perspective and focus: whereas the waterfall is more strongly present in the beginning, the end focuses more on Tibetan youth, but the waterfall has been completely blended with them.

It is possible to interpret this poem in several ways: as an expression of cultural continuity, a sense of belief in progress and innovation, and an expression or a wish for freedom. “The waterfall of youth” descending in the minds may also evoke this kind of interpretation. A waterfall is a powerful natural force which flows where it wants and will continue its flow. The word freedom can be interpreted in more than one way, namely poetic freedom, personal freedom, and/or national freedom. Freedom in the personal context is a theme that can be found in other works by Dhondup Gyal, for example freedom to choose one’s spouse. It might also be possible to talk of the freedom to live as one wants and work for one’s culture in a way one would choose.

Poetic freedom is a quality that is usually thought of as characteristic of Tibetan modern free verse poetry – the Tibetan term *rang mos snyang ngag* if literally translated, would mean ‘poetry according to one’s own wishes’, and this could also be translated as ‘free-style poetry’. The Tibetan scholar Choekyong (Chos skyong 2006: 239–241) calls this poetic freedom “the liberation of structure” (*rnam pa’i thad kyi bcings’ grol*). He understands it to refer to freedom from metric structure and freedom to select one’s topic. This outer freedom of poetic form would make possible the greater inner freedom. Analysing the poem, Choekyong (Chos skyong 2006: 242) notes how it reflects on the “courage for freedom and innovation of the Tibetan youth of the 1980s”.

48 Rang grol 1983: 62.

Tibetan critics inside the People's Republic of China usually seem to interpret freedom as personal freedom in society and freedom of thought.⁴⁹ In Tsedup's (Tshe grub 2005: 11) analysis of "Lang tsho'i rhab chu" the words "freedom" (*rang dbang*) and "confidence" (*spobs pa*) appear emphatically and he characterizes the poem as "a call of happiness originating from freedom". At the end of his essay Tsedup (2005: 16) stresses how "free consciousness burning with youth" is essential for writing poetry. The freedom in the poem is ambiguous and not clearly defined. Especially outside the People's Republic of China it may therefore also arise nationalistic political interpretations. Yosay Wangdi's essay interprets the poem in a clearly nationalistic way. He writes (2005: 130): "In the poem *Lang tsho'i rhab chu* ("Waterfall of Youth"), Dhondup Gyal uses nature as a thinly disguised metaphor for a simple, bold, and dangerous idea: the Chinese state cannot repress the vitality of Tibetan youth". Yosay Wangdi's essay is entitled "An Expression of Tibetan Identity", and speaking about Tibetan identity in the context of this poem is deeply insightful – when speaking about youth Dhondup Gyal engages in the discussion of the future of his own people and shows his deep concern. Clearly the poem and its central metaphor have the quality to arouse reflection and discussion. In its ambiguity the poem becomes meaningful in different ways to different readers, raising discussion on the future of Tibetans and their culture.

In this poem the innovative and traditional or cross-culturally shared elements are effectively combined together to form the central image. The underlying familiar structure of the "Moving Time" metaphor, stressing the idea of continuity that may be associated with rivers, makes the image understandable to the reader. The elaboration of the cascading water and the other input domain of youth creates a new sense and meaning. The imagery also has a strong Tibetan flavour for several reasons: the youth in question refers to the Tibetan youth, the environment of the waterfall is Tibetan, the smaller rivulets combining to form the waterfall may be imagined descending from the mountainous upper regions of the Tibetan plateau, and the poem also mentions several other elements of Tibetan and Indo-Tibetan culture that contribute to the central image and the blended space. The way the various elements are blended in this poem is structurally very different from traditional poetry and consequently the structure of the image may be regarded as highly innovative. In "Lang tsho'i rhab chu" it seems

49 According to Link (2000: 19, 34, 87), who writes about literature in the larger context of the People's Republic of China, there were also official calls for "freedom of thought" in the PRC during the late 1970s and early 1980s. However, he remarks that it was not easy to understand exactly what was meant, because the writers were at the same time also exhorted to "oppose bourgeois liberalism".

that influences and elements from several directions and cultures are combined into an innovative whole that also has some cross-culturally shared underlying structures enabling the poem and its central image to communicate to its readers from both Tibetan and from other cultural backgrounds.

5.3 Oceans, lakes, and waves

Oceans, lakes, and waves may be used as source domain images to be mapped onto several kinds of target domains. These water images are often connected with depicting different kinds of mental states and even emotional “storms”. However, I will start this part with a simile based on similar kinds of external features expressed through visual imagery. In the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” the scenery is depicted as follows:

*dbyar zla drug pa'i nang/ sde ba'i kho ra khor yug gi sa zhing nang lo tog sngo ljang
ljang du skyes 'dug la/ 'jam zhing bsil ba'i rlung gis dal bur reg pa na de ni rgya
mtsho'i rlabs gnyer shig shig 'gul ba dang mtshungs/
(Don grub rgyal, “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”)⁵⁰*

In the sixth summer month the harvest had grown green in the fields surrounding the village. When the soft and cool wind touched it slowly it resembled the rippling waves of an ocean.
(Dhondup Gyal, “A Flower Destroyed by Frost”)

In this simile the images of two concrete objects are related to each other in a relation of similarity. In the cognitive theory of metaphor these types of images (when associated with metaphors) would be called image metaphors.⁵¹ There are certain correspondences in the mental images (the outer shape, the lines which cross the landscape, and colour).⁵²

Oceans can be presented through visual images, but they can also express mental scenery. In the Tibetan tradition the human mind is sometimes depicted using the image of an ocean, and this image can be used to express various kinds of emotions, such as worries, love, and jealousy. In all these images the source domain image of an ocean is mapped onto the target domain of the mind. Both eastern and Western traditions commonly employ metaphors to discuss mental states. In *Philosophy in the Flesh* Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 235) write: “It is

⁵⁰ Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983: 10.

⁵¹ For more about image metaphors, see Lakoff & Turner 1989: 89–96.

⁵² In Tibetan the lively green colour of harvest is expressed with the colour word *sngo ljang ljang*, lit. blue-green. Tibetans sometimes use the word *sngon po*, blue, when speaking about green vegetables. However, in this context it is normally translated as ‘green’.

virtually impossible to think or talk about the mind in any serious way without conceptualizing it metaphorically.”

We could perhaps say that Tibetan has the basic conceptual metaphor: MIND IS AN OCEAN. This metaphor seems to be frequent in English, too.⁵³ It does not, however, correspond to any of the metaphors in Lakoff’s and Johnson’s (1999: 235–266) chapter on metaphors of the mind. However, the above mentioned scholars also mention “the container image schema” at the end of the chapter (1999: 266) and it might be possible to view the ocean as a kind of large container containing thoughts.

The Tibetan idea of conceiving the mind as an ocean seems to go back to the meditative tradition: the Tibetans have a long tradition of developing their mental faculties and reaching enlightenment through meditative means. An example of this type of idea may be found in Milarepa’s song to the rock ogress and her entourage. The song has a series of images all used to illustrate the nature of the mind (*sems kyi mtshan nyid*) and the actual nature of existence (*chos nyid*). The series of images starts with images of the sky, but there is also an image of the ocean:

*chu klung dang chu bur chu rlabs gsum// byung yang rgya mtsho rang las byung//
thim yang rgya mtsho rang la thim//
(Rus pa'i rgyan can, Mi la ras pa'i rnam mgrur)⁵⁴*

Even though there come into being water, bubbles and waves, they originate from the ocean itself. Also they become absorbed into the ocean itself.
(Rupai Gyencen, “The Life Story and Songs of the Great Yogi Milarepa”)

The song continues to explain how the karmic imprints (*bag chags*), attachment (*zhen chags*) and grasping (*'dzin chags*) originate from the “mind-basis-of-all” (*kun gzhi*) and also absorb into it. In a spiritual song the idea of “absorption” or calming down of the various disturbing emotional states is focused on. But in Dhondup Gyal’s works the characters generally do not meditate. Quite the contrary, this image could be considered to be used in a reversed way than in the “meditation manual” type of texts. Whereas in meditation the goal is a state of calm, metaphorically calming down the waves of thought, in Dhondup Gyal’s writings the

53 Dr. Mark Shackleton kindly brought to my attention the fact that Googling this metaphor produces an enormous number of hits. For example, an online dictionary entitled *V2 Vocabulary Building Dictionary* (<vocabulary-vocabulary.com/dictionary/metaphor.php>, accessed 5 Oct. 2012) has the metaphor: “The mind is an ocean of constant change” as an example of a metaphor and “the mind is like an ocean” as an example of a simile.

54 Rus pa'i rgyan can 2005: 236.

minds of characters experiencing strong emotions are depicted as an ocean that has stormy, billowing waves.⁵⁵

In the unfinished long story “bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud” (“A Story of Searching for the Royal Tombs”) there is a passage containing an image of the ocean and its waves. In it the stormy state of the ocean is used to express a state of confusion and worry. The first-person narrator is in a wide open grassland and does not know the directions and where he is going. This is how he feels:

*nga'i sems ni rgya mtsho'i rba rlabs ltar 'khrugs te 'jags par 'dod kyang rlabs phreng re
re bzhin gcig rjes gnyis mthud du 'ongs pas rang dbang ni mi' dug*
(Don grub rgyal, “bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud”)⁵⁶

My mind was storming like the waves of an ocean. Although I wished it would calm down, the lines of waves approached following one after another and I did not have any control over them.

(Dhondup Gyal, “A Story of Searching for the Royal Tombs”)

In another story waves are used as images of thoughts and experiences of love. The short story “brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs” (“The Waves of Love”) contains the word “waves” in its title, and in the Introduction I quoted a passage containing a water image of the ocean and waves from this short story. The connecting characteristic of being worried and experiencing intense love emotions seems to be that the mental scenery undergoes forceful active thoughts in an emotional, and strong manner which is almost beyond control.⁵⁷ The image of the mind as

55 In folklore, too, the source domain image of an ocean may be mapped onto mental activity. In a tale entitled “Ri dwags rgyal po dang a ma rgan mo'i gtam rgyud” (“A Story of the King of Animals and an Old Woman”) we find the expression: “dang rgyag gi rgya mtshor lhung ba” (‘to fall into an ocean of thinking’). See Karma mkha' 'bum & 'Jam bu 1996: 114. The tale is located in India, so like so many other tales, it is likely to be a Tibetan version of an originally Indian tale. Writing about waves, Kalnická (2001: 147) mentions the connection between mental processes and waves in philosophical texts.

56 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 358.

57 In Dhondup Gyal's long narrative poem “sNyan ngag la sbyar ba'i sgrung rtsom gzhon nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan” the mind of Dawa Dolma is depicted with the help of water imagery and the metaphor “the ocean of the mind” (*yid kyi chu gter*) is used. Because the poem is in the *kāvya*-style, the word used for ocean is *chu gter*, ‘treasury of water’ instead of the normal word *rgya mtsho*, ‘ocean’. The poem depicts how she starts to experience interest in the opposite sex and how the aspiration for love starts to arise in her mind. All this is depicted with water metaphors: the feeling of affection is depicted with the movement of waves and the emotion of love with the source domain image of the bubbling drops of water rising towards the sky: “on kyang 'di yi yid kyi chu gter zhi zhing dul bar gnas sems kyang// sred ldan tshig gi dri bzhon bdag pos lan gcig min par 'khyud pa'i tshé// yid dga'i rlabs kyi phreng ba'i gnyer ma dbang med shig 'gul ba'i mod// rtsé dungs wu ba'i zegs ma'i phon po kun gsal lam du 'bros par rtsom//” (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 102).

water also has some variation: for example, in the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” the girl’s mind or her secretive mental state is depicted in terms of a pond:

bu mo'i sems kyi gsang ba ni snyigs ros sbags pa'i 'dam gyi rdzing bu dang a na ma na red
(Don grub rgyal, “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”)⁵⁸

The secrets of the mind of a girl are similar to a muddy pond polluted by rubbish.
(Dhondup Gyal, “A Flower Destroyed by Frost”)

This is an elaboration of the image of the mind as water. To describe a state of mind that is difficult to understand or interpret, Dhondup Gyal has used an image of a small pond in which the bottom cannot be discerned due to mud and rubbish.⁵⁹

The source domain image of an ocean may also be mapped onto some other target domains. Typically, the ocean is something vast and thus it is very natural to use it as an illustration of something big and large.⁶⁰ In the unfinished story “Tshul khirms rgya mtsho” the eponymous character’s life story is commented on by the narrator as follows:

khong gi 'tsho ba'i nang du sdug bsngal gyi chu phran yod la/ bde skyid kyi rgya mtsho yang yod pas/ khong gis lha mo sgröl ma'i skor gleng skabs skyo snang zhig skyes 'dug la/ bya ba'i skor gleng skabs dga' 'dzum zhig shar 'dug
(Don grub rgyal, “Tshul khirms rgya mtsho”)⁶¹

In his life there has been a small stream of suffering and also an ocean of happiness. He looked sad when he was speaking about Lhamo Dolma and he smiled happily when he talked about his work.
(Dhondup Gyal, “Tsultrim Gyatso”)

58 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 11.

59 In the same novella Lhaki’s state of mind is also described with the help of another kind of water image, namely that of a flood. Many thoughts entering her mind are in a simile likened to a big flood (*chu log chen po*). Her mind is metaphorically depicted as “the canal of the mind” (*sems kyi yur ba*). Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 11.

60 This usage can also be found in the Gesar stories. See, for example, the story entitled “Sog po rta rdzong” (“The Mongolian District of Horses”) told by Dragpa (Grag pa). It describes a large army with a metaphor which has the source domain of an ocean (1999: 32).

61 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 112.

In the above passage the “small stream” refers to a small number of hardships and the “ocean” to a considerable amount of happiness.⁶² Sometimes the image of the ocean can be interpreted to illustrate both ideas, namely the mental state and a large amount of something, as for example, if somebody is described as being “like having fallen into the ocean of despair” as is found in the fairy tale “Bu ldom po dang klu'i sras mo” (“The Wanderer Boy and the Daughter of Nāgas”).⁶³ The image of the ocean may also be mapped onto jealousy or regret as in the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”.⁶⁴ Both images are metaphors and the latter is especially interesting as it also speaks about the “waves of anger of the mind”. It is more common to speak about anger in terms of fire, however, though here the emotion of anger is expressed with the help of a water image. This is probably due to the context as the expression connects to the preceding image of an “ocean of regret”.

The image of an ocean may also be connected to wisdom and wise persons or possibly to their state of mind, as is found in Dhondup Gyal's poem “Slob dpon la bsngags pa'i glu dbyangs” (“A Song in Praise of the Professor”), which is written in the traditional *kāvya*-style in regular nine-syllable verse. The stanza in the poem containing the image of an ocean is in the form of *rmaḍ byung dpe*, ‘the simile of wonderfulness’, which is one of the 32 similes (*dpe rgyan*).⁶⁵ The stanza tells that the ocean is a fitting image of “you scholar”, but only if the ocean contains jewels. It is typical for this type of simile to state a condition when a certain image may be used to illustrate some definite meaning. The ocean is characterized as “stainless and sapphire coloured” and “its other shore not visible and its depth difficult to estimate”.⁶⁶ This use of the image is very traditional and a similar type of passage containing images of the scholar and an ocean may be found in the thirteenth-century treatise on aphorisms *Sa skya legs bshad* also, although in the treatise the image is structured as a parallelism.⁶⁷

The ocean is a common image in traditional Tibetan literature. Victoria Sujata (2005: 206) has counted several occurrences of metaphors containing the image

62 Conversely, a bubble is an image of something very small – in the writings of Dhondup Gyal it usually conveys the meaning of something which vanishes or dissolves away. There are several examples of these kinds of usages of the bubble image. See, for example, “Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam” (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 345), in which a character's unfulfilled wish to be promoted is likened to “a bubble of water”. Also in “Pad mtsho” unfamiliarity with another person “disappears like a bubble of water” (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 29).

63 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 21.

64 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 11 and Part 2: 20.

65 The Sanskrit name for this simile is given in Eppling (1989: 487–489) as *Adbhuta Upamā*, which he translates as “The Upamā of the Wondrous”.

66 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 4.

67 See Sakya Paṇḍita's root text in Mai tri bu ddha sha san dha ra [Sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin] 1991: 8.

of the ocean in Kalden Gyatso's songs, although she does not discuss this image further in her discussion about figures of speech. In fact, many Tibetans had not seen the ocean in earlier times as there is no ocean in Tibet or even within its borders, for it is a country characterized by high mountain ranges. Thus it seems likely that there is some Indian influence in the fact that this image became so popular in Tibetan literature. However, the idea of an ocean can be easily imagined by a person who has no actual experience of it: they may just mentally picture a big lake whose far shore cannot be discerned.

But what about the image of the ocean and cold seasons? Images of a frozen ocean are not found in the writings of Dhondup Gyal, probably because India – which is likely to have influenced the use of this image in Tibetan literature – is in a warm region of the globe, and the oceans surrounding India do not freeze. However, in Dhondup Gyal's short story "sGrung ba" ("The Storyteller") the image of a lake has been mapped onto people's minds and the story mentions a time when those "lakes were frozen". In the passage below the first person-narrator upon returning to his native region reminisces about Uncle Storyteller:

*khos sgrung gi phan yon la brten nas/ mi tshe gang la lo chung rnams kyi snying stobs
dang 'dun ma bskul ba dang/ rgan pa rnams la lang tsho bsnan pa red/ mi rnams
kyi bsam pa' i mtsho mo 'khyags pas bsdams pa' i dus su' ang/ khong ni nya mo zbig
dang 'dra bar mtsho zhabs na 'khyug 'gros byed pa dang/ dpyid rlung dang mtshungs
par mi rnams kyi sems gting du ga ler rgyu bzhin bde skyid kyi spro snang dang mdzes
sdug gi 'dun ma gnang ba 'di/ gser srang stong gi rin pa byin na' ang khug pa' i re ba
yod re skan/*

(Don grub rgyal, "sGrung ba")⁶⁸

Due to the good influences of his storytelling, during all his life he gave courage and hope to the younger people and gave youthfulness to the elder ones. Even in the time when the lake of people's minds was bound by ice, he moved like a fish in the bottom of the lake and like a spring wind he blew slowly in the depths of people's minds and gave them joy and wonderful hopes. That is something that is difficult to buy even with a thousand gold coins.
(Dhondup Gyal, "The Storyteller")

"The time when people's minds were frozen" most likely refers to the time of the Cultural Revolution. That time was characterized (among other things) by the way in which traditional culture and its expressions were forbidden.⁶⁹ Thus this passage could be interpreted to mean that even during those times the Storyteller brought happiness to people telling stories despite the fact that his activities

⁶⁸ Don grub rgyal 1981a: 44.

⁶⁹ For information on the suppression of Tibetan culture during Cultural Revolution, see, e.g. Smith 1997: 543–546.

had been banned. However, the end of Uncle Storyteller's life was very tragic: the narrator hears from some elder people that he passed away due to injuries received in a struggle session. He had been accused of opposing the modernization process by telling his stories.⁷⁰ If we return to the image of frozen minds, here the image of ice is used to criticize the politics and social situation of the Cultural Revolution.⁷¹ Criticizing the politics of those times became permissible after the demise of the Gang of Four and during the time of greater lenience at the beginning of 1980s. Writing and exposing the sufferings of individual persons during the Cultural Revolution is a characteristic of the genre of literature called "literature of the wounded". Literary works belonging to this genre were written in China during the time of Dhondup Gyal's literary career and this is likely to have influenced him to write some works in which the sufferings of some people during the times of the Cultural Revolution are described.⁷²

5.4 The image of the Blue Lake

From the discussion of a frozen lake in people's minds I will now move on to discussing the image of a famous lake in Amdo in Dhondup Gyal's native region, the Blue Lake (mTsho sngon po, Qinghai Lake or Kokonor). In contrast to the image of the ocean, the image of the Blue Lake is obviously of indigenous Tibetan origin. It is used in various images as a simile to convey depth: love may be "deeper than a blue lake" or something may vanish "like throwing a stone into the Blue Lake".⁷³ But no doubt the most famous occurrence of the image of the Blue Lake in the writings of Dhondup Gyal is the song about this lake.

⁷⁰ Don grub rgyal 1981a: 45.

⁷¹ A cover of ice can also be used to express non-political, but otherwise negative or undesirable meanings. For example in "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs" the fate of the "waves of love" is a sad one as it says: "a beating cold of cruel intentions froze the love of Drugmo and me under a cover of ice". (Tib. "sems gnag gi grang ngar zhig gis 'brug mo dang nged gnyis kyi brtse dungs de 'khyag rom gyi sgrom nang du bcug"; Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 21).

⁷² See Herdan (1992: 131–132) for information on the literature of the wounded, called in Chinese *shangben wenhua*.

⁷³ In the novella "Sad kiyis bcom pa'i me tog" "a love deeper than a blue lake" characterizes the love between parents and their children: "pha ma bu phrug gi brtse dungs ni sngon mo mtsho las zab pa/" (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983: 17). Here the words "blue" and "lake" are in a different order than in the name of Kokonor, thus here this word implies any lake that is blue. A similar image is also found in the short story "Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs" ("The Love of Flesh and Bone"; Rang grol 1984: 34). In the short story "Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam" ("The Impermanent Illusory Dream") the main character's applications to become a member of the Communist party do not receive a reply: "kho rang gi tang la zhugs rgyu'i 'dod yig zla rer thengs re bris pa de dag ni mtsho sngon po'i nang la rdo 'phangs pa ltar phar 'gro yod kyang tshur yong med par gyur ba dang/" (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 337). "Those application letters to become a member of the

“E ma mtsho sngon po” (“Oh, Blue Lake!”)⁷⁴ is a song with lyrics by Dhondup Gyal and its melody was composed by Ma Coepa (Ma gcod pa).⁷⁵ It has not for some reason been included in *The Collected Works*.⁷⁶ The reader (or listener) might on first impression think that the Blue Lake is a mere image of the lake when the name of the lake is repeated several times at the beginning of the song. However, it soon becomes evident that the image of the lake evokes a metaphoric interpretation as it is attributed various characteristics that are not naturally present in lakes. For example, the song says that “when the dignity of the people and magnificence of the motherland arises from these blue waves, the mind of the duck is happy”.⁷⁷ This is contrasted to the sad feelings of the duck in winter when the lake is frozen.

In this song too, it is very difficult and perhaps not purposeful for the analysis to try to identify target and source domains. The song is very much about the lake and in that way it could be seen as the target domain. But on the other hand, in the song the lake is addressed with the pronoun *khyed* (“you”) and in apostrophizing the lake the song says, for example, that “you are the truth of happiness and the livelihood of the future”. Apostrophe could be seen as related to personification. In cognitive theory, personification is explained by the tendency of humans making other phenomena more understandable to themselves by relating them to human terms. Here again, as was the case of “Lang tsho'i rbab chu”, the

Communist party that he wrote on a monthly basis were like throwing a stone into the Blue Lake: even though they were sent nothing came back.”

74 *E ma* in the title is a type of interjection. It may express that something is wonderful or marvellous or it may also express sad feelings when seeing something.

75 For information on the composer, several music video VCD versions of the song and interpretations of the song by some Tibetans, see Anna Stirr's (2008) article “*Blue Lake*: Tibetan Popular Music, Place and Fantasies of the Nation”. My analysis only concerns the lyrics (focusing on the imagery) and I have not analysed the visual side or the musical side of the VCD I have of “E ma mtsho sngon po”. Anna Stirr's article contains for example valuable historical information on the occasion when Dhondup Gyal wrote the lyrics of the song (308) and also Tsering Shakya's translation of the lyrics of the song (309). To present interpretations of the song, Stirr also interviewed five Tibetans about its meaning and thus part of her article is a study of the reception of the song (319–326).

76 I copied the words of this song from the text line of the music video in Centsa (gCan tsha) in the house of Sonam Tso (bSod nams mtsho). I also bought a VCD from Xining entitled *mTsho sngon po'i bstod glu* (“Song in Praise of the Blue Lake”) produced by The Qinghai People's Radio Office (mTsho sngon mi dmangs kun khyab rlung 'phrin las khungs). The song “E ma mtsho sngon po” is the first song on the VCD, which contains songs and also a humorous theatrical performance in the Amdo dialect. This VCD gives the name of the composer of the song's melody in a slightly different form as Coepa Thar (gCod pa thar).

77 Tib. “mi rigs kyi la rgya/ mes rgyal gyi gzi brjid/ rlabs sngon po 'di nas 'phyur dus/ bya ngang ba'i sems pa dga' song/”. The word *mes rgyal* is literally translated as ‘the country of the ancestors’. It is the political term commonly used to refer to the People's Republic of China.

song seems to be indirectly meant to be “overheard” by the listeners, the Tibetan people.⁷⁸ Only echoing in the ears of the twentieth- and twenty-first-century Tibetans and people familiar with the Tibetan situation, the song is likely to arouse nationalistic interpretations. As is the case in a couple of Dhondup Gyal’s free verse poems, it is thus more sensible to analyse the image of the lake in the song with the help of the concept of blend. In this song it is possible to discern a creation of a blended space containing both the properties of the lake and the characteristics of the Tibetan people, their identity and future. The song also uses animals to express mental states of happiness and unhappiness with regard to the lake. These animals are: the duck (*ngang pa*), the “golden-eyed” fish (*nya gser mig*), and the white sheep (*lug.g.yang dkar*). The following passage is from the middle of the song:

*mtsho sngon po/
mes rgyal gyi bde skyid/
mi rigs kyi mgon skyabs/
mtsho sngon po 'khyag pas bsdams dus/
nya gser mig mtsho la 'thims song/
mtsho sngon po/
mtsho sngon po'i 'gram dar lhung dus/
lug.g.yang dkar sems pa dga' song/
mtsho sngon po/
khyed ni da lta'i bde skyid dang/
mi rigs kyi re ba red/
khyed ni 'jig rten gyi bdag po dang/
ma 'ongs pa'i 'tsho ba red/
(Don grub rgyal, “E ma mtsho sngon po”)*

Blue Lake
the happiness of the motherland
the protector of the people
when the Blue Lake was covered by ice
the golden-eyed fish was imprisoned inside the lake
Blue Lake
when the ice melted on the banks of the Blue Lake
the white sheep became happy
Blue Lake
you are the happiness of this time
and the hope of the people
you are the owner of the world
and the livelihood of the times to come
(Dhondup Gyal, “Oh, Blue Lake!”)

78 On apostrophe and “overhearing”, see Richardson’s article on apostrophe (2002).

In the above excerpt the image of the lake is represented with the help of its different states: the frozen lake in winter and the lake without ice cover during the warmer seasons. This is a restatement of a similar kind of image of the lake at the beginning of the song. These states of the lake are commented on with the help of animals: the animals like the lake free of ice (both the sheep and the duck earlier) and they are sad or hide in the depths of water when the lake is frozen.⁷⁹ When these two states of the lake are embedded in the context of, for example, “the hope of the people” a nationalistic kind of interpretation may be raised in the mind of the reader.⁸⁰

The Blue Lake also appears in other compositions. A more traditional song about the Blue Lake of Amdo is by Kalden Gyatso from the seventeenth-century, translated by Victoria Sujata (2005: 356–359).⁸¹ The song is a spiritual one. On one hand it shares some elements with Dhondup Gyal’s song and on the other it widely differs in its imagery. In Kalden Gyatso’s song the beautiful whiteness of the lake in winter is admired and its sacredness is declared with references to many supernatural beings and holy lamas who visited the lake. The song also mentions “the golden eyed fish”, birds, and wild animals. However, none of these animals is suffering from sadness, but are depicted happily enjoying their lives. Dhondup Gyal’s images have the power to communicate to and move readers because they are often as such familiar, though they are used or elaborated in a slightly different way so that new meanings emerge. In “E ma mtsho sngon po” the reader or listener reflects on the sadness of the animals when the lake is frozen and thus they are guided towards interpreting the central image not only as an image of a lake in different seasons but instead to realize that the image could be interpreted metaphorically.

The lake free of ice may also be interpreted as an image of freedom (as it is then “free” of its earlier ice cover). The general idea of a lake or even that of

79 The Sixth Dalai Lama’s poem, entitled “Rang sems kho thag chod song” (“A Decision”), contains an image of a duck that decides to leave the place when the lake, where it would like to stay, becomes frozen. See song no. 9 in Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho & Ngag dbang lhun grub dar rgyas 1981: 4. This image could be interpreted either as a concrete image or as a metaphoric image, or as both, depending on the reader’s wish. Explicitly it is a concrete image as the other side of the metaphor is not mentioned, but because several of the Sixth Dalai Lama’s poems have romantic allusions, this poem could also be interpreted to metaphorically depict a rejected lover.

80 This song with lyrics by Dhondup Gyal would also appear to have influenced some other contemporary Tibetan writing. Tsewang Dorje (Tshe dbang rdo rje) writes in his literary essay about Kyabha’s (sKya bha) poetry collection and his poem about mTsho sngon po. The critic writes how in the poem mTsho sngon is the “feeling and impression of the writer having listened to a song called mTsho sngon po” (Tshe dbang rdo rje 2003: 29).

81 To the best of my recollection, the Blue Lake is also mentioned in the songs of yogi Zhabkar (Zhabs dkar), translated into English by M. Ricard.

the Blue Lake of Amdo are not usually interpreted as images of freedom. But here such a meaning is conveyed to the reader or listener because of the context, the surrounding sentences of the different states of the lake. In the cognitive theory of metaphor, freedom has been characterized in terms of what is called the “Event Structure” metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 190) have described a conceptual metaphoric structure which they formulate as “Freedom Of Action Is The Absence Of Impediments To Movement”. Although they do not mention ice, the ice cover of the lake could be conceived of in terms of an impediment to the free movement of the water. With the help of the image of the lake this poem can be interpreted to convey ideas of freedom, the identity of the Tibetan people and associations related to a kind of cultural nationalism.⁸² These features and its strong central image connects this song to some of the free verse poetry of Dhondup Gyal, such as “Lang tsho'i rbab chu” (“Waterfall of Youth”) and “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma” (“The Petals of White Clouds”). The Blue Lake becomes a symbol for Tibet and its people. It shows the love and concern the writer had for the people of his own nation.

In this chapter we saw how several water images, such as those of rivers and oceans, have connections with traditional imagery. However, sometimes there are shifts and modifications so that meanings relevant to the life of the Tibetans in Dhondup Gyal's time could be expressed. The greatest innovation occurs in the free verse poetry. When examining the free verse poem “Lang tsho'i rbab chu” we observed that the way in which the various elements of the poem were combined together was structurally innovative. However, the image of the waterfall also has some connection to traditional images because it has the underlying structure of the stream expressing a continuum, although additional features have been added to it. This makes the image more understandable to readers. The image of the Blue Lake is highly interesting because it is clearly an indigenous Tibetan image. In our discussion we saw how the modifications with changes helped to modify it so that the image could be interpreted to express meanings related to freedom and Tibetan identity.

82 Stirr (2008: 305) gives information supporting the possibility of a nationalistic reading of the lyrics, at the same time pointing out the ambiguity in the song itself. She writes: “Many hear a strong Tibetan nationalist message in the song and it was banned from 1989 to 1992, the height of the Tibetan pro-independence movement.”

6. AERIAL AND CELESTIAL IMAGERY

This chapter will concentrate on images of heavenly bodies and such atmospheric phenomena as clouds and wind. Because several of these images are connected with ideas of light and darkness, some remarks on phenomena related to them are also presented. First I will look at the images of the sun and the moon. These source domain images are attached to many target domains in Dhondup Gyal's literary output. Among them are target domains related to the society of his time and also target domains with a political flavour. The moon is the most salient image in the poem "bsTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes" ("The Beautiful Flower Garland of Eulogy"), a metrical poem in praise of a Chinese political leader. This poem is one of the early poems of Dhondup Gyal. Although it is an ideologically influenced eulogy which is not structurally innovative, it is interesting to see how the image of the moon has been employed.

Weather phenomena are often used in imagery to depict emotional states and they are also connected to light and darkness. Phenomena connected with weather are numerous, such as lightning, thunder, and rainbows, but as it is not possible to pay detailed attention to them all here, I have chosen as another focus of this chapter the images of clouds and wind. This is because these images occur as central or dominant images in two works of especially high literary standard by Dhondup Gyal: "sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma" ("The Petals of White Clouds") and "Dri bzhon gyi bu mo" ("The Girl of the Wind"). Comparing the early poems such as "bsTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes" and "Slob grwa'i zhogs pa" ("The Morning at School") with the poem "sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma", it is possible to understand what great changes Dhondup Gyal's literary style and use of imagery underwent during a short time span.

The heavenly bodies, clouds, and wind can be observed from every corner of the world and their images are common in most poetic traditions. It is interesting to see, therefore, to what degree their representations and use in imagery differs in a Tibetan cultural context.

6.1 The sun and the moon and images of light

It is very common to associate light with happiness and positive phenomena, and darkness is viewed more negatively. These associations are grounded on the basic

human experiences of light and darkness.¹ The light of the sun and its warmth is a basic condition for life on earth and the survival of humankind. Therefore it is very natural for writers and people in general to take delight in the increase of light and the sources of light, and to appreciate and value them. This also reflects on the use of images of heavenly bodies whose nature is radiant and shining. In Dhondup Gyal's poetry there are several references to the morning, the dawn, and a "new day".² These images indicate the increase of light and thus convey a positive outlook on life and belief in positive developments. The title of Dhondup Gyal's first book *'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs* contains the image of dawn: "The Dawn of Clear Writing". Dawn signals the sunrise and the coming of light. The title might convey that the writings included belong to the early literary output of the young writer, but on the other hand the metaphor also conveys positive expectations of the development of new writing – modern Tibetan literature – both on the personal level of the writer himself and on a wider level of national culture. It is an especially apt title considered from the historical perspective of viewing Dhondup Gyal as a pioneering writer of modern Tibetan literature. It is evident that the metaphors of light tend to be grounded on the human embodied cognitive experience of light that can also be found when analysing the images in Dhondup Gyal's works.

The poem "bsTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes" contains several stanzas in which the moon functions as the source domain image. This makes the moon and its light the dominant image in the poem, although some of the stanzas contain other images. The poem was published in the collection *'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs* and has twenty stanzas and a regular nine-syllable metre in each line. It is a eulogy for Liu Shaoqi, a Communist leader who in the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s acted in a high place in the Communist leadership, but was removed from his positions during the Cultural Revolution. From the internal evidence of the poem it seems that Dhondup Gyal's intention was to praise a leader whose reputation was restored after the Cultural Revolution ended and a change took place in the political climate.³ Possibly on account of the fact that it is a eulogy and also because of its political flavour, this poem has not aroused the interest of

1 See Kövecses 2002: 19, 49. He has insightfully written about the grounding of the imagery connected with light in basic human experience, and also writes about the connection to weather phenomena. Among other conceptual metaphors, he mentions the metaphor LIFE IS LIGHT in his discussion of a passage from a Shakespearean sonnet.

2 For example, there are descriptions of sunrise in the early morning at the beginning of both "Slob grwa'i zhogs pa" and "sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma" (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 195, 231).

3 See Don grub rgyal 1981a: 60, stanza 3. About Liu Shaoqi, see Fairbank & Goldman 1992: 390–391. McDougall & Louie (1997: 326) write: "Although not yet by name, Liu Shaoqi was accused of protecting 'obscene' operas and foreign works such as *Swan Lake*".

either Western or Tibetan critics. Moreover, its metrical form is conventional. However, focusing on imagery, it is worth discussing how the image of the moon has been mapped onto the target domain of a politician. The poem depicts his politic career through images which convey, for example, how he was a brilliant youth and a successful leader, and the more difficult times are depicted with images such as stormy black clouds. The fact that this poem is about a Chinese leader is exceptional in the works of Dhondup Gyal, because most of the characters are Tibetan both in his prose and in narrative poems. Undoubtedly, there is something special in depicting a twentieth-century Chinese politician with the image of the moon, but we shall also see how this representation is related to traditional images of the moon.

In the poem's first stanza, presenting the birth of Liu Shaoqi, he is depicted as the "son of moon" (*zla ba'i sras po*),⁴ but mostly he is addressed as the moon, as in the following stanza (no. 4):

skye stobs dpal gyi lang tsho 'bar ba yi//
gung gzhon sde tshogs rgyu skar bye ba'i kbrod//
phugs bsam can gyi zla ba khyed shar tshe//
mun pa'i sdug bsngal yongs su gzhom par gyur//
 (Don grub rgyal, "bsTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes")⁵

Shining the youth of natural glory
 among the millions of stars of the Communist youth group
 when you moon, having the thought of the future, arose
 all the sufferings of darkness were eliminated
 (Dhondup Gyal, "The Beautiful Flower Garland of Eulogy")

Here Liu Shaoqi is addressed directly although according to the text of the poem itself, he had already died by the time Dhondup Gyal wrote it (1981a: 59). Again we have here the poetic apostrophe, so common in the poetry of Dhondup Gyal. In several places in the poem Liu Shaoqi as the moon is credited with eliminating darkness. If we try to see what is meant by "the sufferings of darkness", in the third stanza of the poem (p. 56) "the trap of darkness" is defined more explicitly as "imperialist feudalism" (*btsan rgyal bkas bkod rgyud' dzin*, p. 56) and in the fifth stanza the source domain of "the group of darkness" is mapped onto the "system of suppression and discrimination" (*btsan gnon bshu gzhog lam lugs*, p. 57). Compared to the traditional spiritual concept *rmongs pa*, 'ignorance' – erroneously holding to the existence of an independent self – which is often traditionally depicted as the "darkness of ignorance", in Dhondup Gyal's poem the "darkness" is seen

4 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 56.

5 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 57.

in a very political light as a condition of society.⁶ Feudalism and discrimination commonly occur in Chinese political propaganda texts and are used to refer to the situation in Tibetan society before the Chinese Communist occupation – in several places it was common for peasants to work under landowning landlords. However, darkness does not always have a political meaning for Dhondup Gyal, in some of his other works a person who is without education is metaphorically in “a prison of darkness”.⁷

The connecting feature with traditional literature is to use the image of moon to depict a person in high position. Traditionally also, both the images of the sun and the moon, radiant objects in the sky, have been used to depict the magnificence of kings and lamas, who embody power.⁸ In the earlier mentioned poem by Dhondup Gyal, “Slob dpon la bsngag pa'i glu dbyangs” (“A Song in Praise of the Professor”), the images of both the sun and the moon are mapped onto the target domain of the professor being praised.⁹ For instance in the stanza illustrating a simile called “sbyar ba'i dpe”,¹⁰ the professor is likened to the full moon (*nya gang zla ba*). The moonlight is said to “destroy all the darkness of ignorance”.¹¹ When Dhondup Gyal uses the image of the moon to depict a political leader, the target domain is clearly not a religious personage, demonstrating a shift in the usage which may be understood in the light of the framework of the situation

6 However, in another poem by Dhondup Gyal, the metaphor is used traditionally: the “darkness of ignorance” (*ma rig rmongs mun*) is mentioned in the poem “Slob dpon la bsngags pa'i glu dbyangs” (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 5).

7 The metaphor of “the prison of darkness” is found, for example, in the allegorical poem “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam” (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 133). In the poem, it is “lazy people” (*le lo can rnams*) who have to stay in the “prison of darkness” (*rmongs pa'i btson*).

8 An example of how the image of the moon has been used to depict lamas may be found in Victoria Sujata's translation of a song by Kalden Gyatso. One of the songs is a poem about a lama named Tenzin Lobsang (bsTan 'dzin blo bzang), who has already passed away. In the beginning of the song the lama's smile is compared to moon rays. From Sujata's (2005: 321) translation: “When [I] saw that smile, like the light of the moon, [on your] face – Oh, delight!” . Characters of high status, king and prince, are also depicted with the source domains of the moon or the sun in *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud*, see Solomon 1987: 183, 202, 211. In *Sog po rta rdzong*, King Gesar is likened to the sun, see Grags pa 1999: 53: “gling seng chen khri gdugs nyi ma 'dra/”, “Gesar of Ling is like the sun”. In the title of an allegorical Sanskrit play from the 11th-century CE, Kṛṣṇamiśra's *Prabodhacandroya* (“The Rise of the Moon of Wisdom”), the source domain image of the moon is mapped onto wisdom. Das (2005: 64) writes that according to the author of the play it was written to honour the victory of a certain king. For a detailed introduction and the Sanskrit text of the play and its translation into French, see Pédraglio 1974.

9 The first stanza of the poem contains a simile with the source domain image of the sun (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 1).

10 Eppling (1989: 496) has translated the Sanskrit name of this simile, *śleṣa upamā*, as “The Upamā of Multiple Embrace”.

11 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 5.

of writing in the political context of the People's Republic of China.¹² However, the image is still related to the earlier tradition in that it is used to depict a person who had an influential position in society.

The poem “bsTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes” bears surprising similarities to the *kāvya*-style of poetry in its imagery, even though its mode of expression is not highly complicated. It uses some expressions from synonymic terminologies, but they are mainly the best-known ones, such as the different names used to write about the moon. One of these expressions is *ku mud gnyen*, ‘the friend of the water-lily’.¹³ In Indian aesthetic views the moon is the friend of the water-lily, which opens during night in the moonlight, whereas the sun is the friend of the lotus (*padma*), which opens its petals in sunlight.¹⁴ In the following stanza Liu Shaoqi is metaphorically depicted as the moon who shines light on the water-lilies. The flowers function as the source domain image metaphorically here mapped onto the “ocean of the labour movement” (literally “the movement of workers”). The “ocean” conveys the idea that the “labour movement” is hugely expansive:

de nas bzung ste bzo pa'i las 'gul gyi//
rgya mtsho'i ku mud phyogs bcur rgyas pa'i khur//
zla gzhon khyed kyi gtsug tu bzhes gyur te//
skyed mos tshal' dir bsil zer 'gyed la rings//
 (Don grub rgyal, “bsTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes”)¹⁵

Since then the water-lilies of the ocean
 of the labour movement spreading everywhere
 you young moon accepting the burden of responsibility
 you were shining cool rays onto this garden
 (Dhondup Gyal, “The Beautiful Flower Garland of Eulogy”)

12 A good source for understanding the literary culture and the situation of writing and publishing in the People's Republic of China between the years 1950 and 1990 is Link 2000.

13 According to Das's (1902: 17) dictionary *ku mud* is: “the water-lily which opens at the appearance of the moon; said to be *Nymphaea esculenta*”. The dictionary gives the word in Sanskrit: *kumuda*, thus the Tibetan spelling is a transliteration of the Sanskrit word into Tibetan letters. The dictionary gives the following synonyms for *ku mud*: “ut pa la dkar po; zla ba'i dri; sa mos; sa dga'; sa'i gdu gu; steng 'thung dkar po; zla bas dga'; si ta; sa sgrog; sa stobs; mtshan mo bzhad”.

14 See gZhis rtse dge 'os slob grwa'i bod yig slob dpyod tsho tshung 1991: 46. Dharmabhadra's root text enumerates *ku mud gnyen* as a name of the moon and the commentary explains that the reason for calling the moon the water-lily's friend is because the flower opens when the moon rises (47). Beth Solomon (1987: 132) in her dissertation discusses the image of the moon and night-lilies in Āryaśūra's *Jātakamālā*. The image in question is found in Speyer's (1895) translation of “The Story of Visvantara” (IX: 47).

15 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 57.

The target domain can be characterized as being both secular and modern, namely Communist China, workers' mobilization and the Communist movement. An example of a traditional use of the image may be found in *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud* ("The Tale of the Incomparable Prince"). The sixth chapter contains a passage in the form of a letter that brings together the image of the moon and the "night-lily". One of the ministers in the story is pretending to be Prince Kumaradvitiya and in the passage containing the letter that he has written to Manohari, the source domain image of "the full moon" has as its target domain the prince:

As the moon, I have come to this mountain summit
 To befriend the night-lily, a paragon of beauty.
 Manohari, in a smile of love, your petal teeth
 Should open into full, lovely bloom:
 When the moon and lily unite, they feel great joy.
 I summon you to taste this supreme bliss...
 (Dokhar Zhabdrung Tsering Wangyal, "The Tale of the Incomparable Prince")¹⁶

Clearly, in this passage the image of moon and the lily has been used to depict the emotion of mutual love. The images share the feature that both elements in the image are depicted in harmony and enhance each other. However, they also differ dramatically in their mode of metaphorical mapping and meaning.¹⁷

A similar kind of image and usage may be found in another early poem by Dhondup Gyal entitled "rGya bod bar gyi mdza' mthun" ("The Friendship between China and Tibet") in which there is also an image of the moon and the water-lily. Here the target domains are male and female, as in the above passage from *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud*. The ancient Tibetan king Songtsen Gampo (Srong btsan sgam po) is the target domain of the moon metaphor and the Chinese princess Kongjo (Kong jo) is the target domain of the source domain image of the water-lily. When the moon rises the lily opens.¹⁸ In the poem "Slob dpon la bsngags pa'i glu dbyangs", when "the full moon of the fame" of the professor shines, the garden of water-lilies blooms and darkness vanishes.¹⁹

The seventh stanza of "bsTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes" has a nice example of the use of a lexical item stemming from India. In the stanza the light of the moon

16 Solomon 1987: 215. The stanza is from Solomon's English translation of the Tibetan tale.

17 Another example of this two-sided image of the moon and the water-lily is found in Ch. 10 of *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud* in the words of King Candramati in reference to Manohari, who has just arrived in his kingdom. The King says: "Merely by seeing her lovely moon-like face./ The petals of my lily-mind flutter with joy/" (Solomon 1987: 259).

18 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 64.

19 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 12.

is metaphorically defined as “the light of struggle” (*thab 'dzing 'od snang*), probably referring to the “class-struggle” in the context of Chinese Communist politics. The moon in a simile with the target domain of “you noble” (*dam pa khyed*) is expressed with another name stemming from synonymic terminologies, namely “bde 'byung gtsug rgyan”, literally ‘the head ornament of the Origin of Bliss’ which refers to the moon as the head ornament of the god Śiva.²⁰ It is evident that the text in its imagery intertwines ideas stemming from the Indo-Tibetan poetic tradition to illustrate a Chinese target domain (the Chinese political leader). Therefore it could be said that the tradition is used to illustrate modernity. The poem displays a kind of amalgamation of at least three cultural layers.

The poem can also be viewed as a work promoting the policies of modernization: the idea of modernization appears near its conclusion where Liu Shaoqi is exhorted “to look how [we] are going to the road of Four Modernizations”.²¹ The Four Modernizations (*deng rabs can bzhi*) is a political idea and programme that characterized the post-Mao era in the People’s Republic of China. According to Hsü’s (1990: 803) history of modern China the policy of the modernizations was included in the constitutions of both the party and the state, a programme which started in 1978. Its aim was to create a modern China, a goal which was hoped to be achieved by the end of the second millennium. The period when China was under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping is exactly the time when this early poem by Dhondup Gyal saw daylight. The ideal and goal of the four modernizations mentioned in this and some other early poems thus matches the official policy guidelines.²² The concept is explained by the four fields of modernization that were especially targeted: agriculture, industry, science and technology, and defence.²³ The Modernizations in the poem in praise of Liu Shaoqi are portrayed as a continuum which takes us to the present day, the Modernizations being foreshadowed in the good actions and thought of Liu Shaoqi himself.

It is also possible to use the image of the sun to illustrate political meanings in Dhondup Gyal’s writings. Images of the sun and the moon are ancient and

20 *bDe 'byung* is one of the names of this Indian god. For the names of the moon, see, for example, the commentary of Dharmabhadra’s treatise entitled *Legs bshad 'dren pa'i dung sgra* (gZhis rtse dge 'os slob grwa'i bod yig slob spyod tsho tshung 1991).

21 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 60.

22 For more examples of the concept of the four modernizations occurring in some other metric poems of Dhondup Gyal, see Ch. 7.2. Considering the policy in the Tibetan context, Hartley (2003: 167) mentions how the development of Tibetan writing was also discussed in the Conference on modern Tibetan literature in Xining in 1981 in the context of the policy of four modernizations. She also writes (2003: 164) how the aim of the conference in Xining was held to create a “Socialist Tibetan New Literature”.

23 Hsü 1990: 803–816; Fairbank & Goldman 1992: 343.

I think that the expression *bde skyid kyi nyi ma*, ‘sun of happiness’ appears in different types of Tibetan texts and songs.²⁴ There is a huge difference in the meanings and contents of how the “sun of happiness” has been used on the one hand in exile Tibetan writing and on the other hand in the writings produced in Tibetan areas under the People’s Republic of China. It has to be remembered that in the PRC writers had to follow the Party line, and therefore it is difficult to know whether some expressions in their writings really reflect their views or were simply written to avoid censorship.

In a Dhondup Gyal poem which has the structural principle of imagerial commentary, “*Khrul min rmi lam ngo tshar dga' skyed*” (“The True Dream of Wonder and Joy”), the image of the sun is mapped onto Communist policies.²⁵ The poem is not critical in tone and would seem to praise the People’s Republic of China. At the end it points out that the “picture in front” of the voice of the poem – the future – will be even more wonderful than the dream. These brief references to political matters and the praise of Communist policies seem to be occasionally found in some earlier metric poems by Dhondup Gyal, but do not seem to occur in his later free verse poetry.

The way of mapping the image of the sun on some secular target domain of Dhondup Gyal’s time has both its connection to tradition – depicting something seen as good and causing happiness like the sun – and the innovative shift to use these images to depict new phenomena.

The long narrative poem in complicated *kāvya*-style, “*sNyan ngag la sbyar ba'i sgrung rtsom gzhon nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan*” (“The Beautiful Ornament of the Mind of the Young”), contains an image of the “sun of policies” that destroys the “darkness of poverty”. Here the sun (*nyi ma*) is referred to with the expression “*nyin byed zer brgya'i snang ba*”, literally ‘the illuminating day maker with a hundred rays of light’.²⁶ This kind of language which uses longer and more complicated terms for concepts that could well be expressed in a simpler way is typical of the poem in question. In fact, although the poem is in a highly ornate style, it tells a tragic, socially critical story of the period of the Cultural Revolution. Thematically, it could be classified to belong to the “literature of the wounded” that emerged in Chinese writing near the end of the 1970s.²⁷ However, as it is written

24 Sujata’s (2005: 311) translation of a spiritual song by Kalden Gyatso contains the metaphor “sun of happiness”, but the way to enjoy happiness is to gain enlightenment.

25 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 14–15.

26 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 97. In the beginning of Ch. 1 of this poem telling about the birth of its main protagonist, the sun is metaphorically combined with happiness (*bde skyid nyin byed*) in the context of speaking about morning and sunrise (p. 98).

27 For information on this genre of Chinese literature, see Herdan 1992: 131–132. She discusses

in the *kāvya*-style, it clearly differs stylistically from works that were produced by Chinese writers. Another feature clearly differentiating it from Chinese works in the genre, is the fact that the poem tells a story about Tibetan characters. Although Dhondup Gyal might speak about “the sun of policies”, in some of his works such as this narrative poem and the short story “sGrung ba” (“The Storyteller”), he is critical and tells about the unfortunate fates of Tibetan people during the Cultural Revolution. The main protagonist in “gZhon nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan” is a young woman named Dawa Dolma. She is tragically influenced by the politics of the times of the Cultural Revolution and leads her own father to the struggle session. Dawa Dolma also gets pregnant against her wishes, but the pregnancy ends in a miscarriage. At the end Dawa Dolma realizes the value of her father’s learning in Tibetan culture and starts to appreciate education.²⁸

Several of these mappings of the sun and moon had secular target domains connected in some way or other with the society of Dhondup Gyal’s time.²⁹ However, it is also possible to find in his writings imagery in which both the target and the source domains are of similar type as in earlier texts. The moon is both in earlier literature and in the writings of Dhondup Gyal used as a source domain to depict beautiful women. This way of using the image of the moon is also commonly found in Sanskrit literature. The style and structure of the image may vary depending on the type of composition, but the underlying idea is the same. It can be observed that the images of the heavenly bodies may be used in both ways: in a manner corresponding to traditional models and also in some ways that are partly connected with tradition, but partly there is a shift in the target domains.

One of the very common ways in which the image of the full moon shining on the night sky is used both traditionally and also in modern times is to depict the face of a young woman. Well-known is the first song in the collection of the songs of the Sixth Dalai Lama, a classic example of employing the image of the

a work by Lu Xinhua entitled *The Wounded* in which the main character is a young girl who turns against her own mother during the Cultural Revolution.

28 The poem’s style is complicated and ornate, so that it is difficult to gain a full understanding of several of its details. However, the main interest from the viewpoint of studying the imagery of Dhondup Gyal is the fact that he has applied traditional Indo-Tibetan ornamental devices in a highly skilful way to depict a secular story of the times of the Cultural Revolution. Therefore this poem also depicts recent problems in Tibetan society under the Communist rule by means of traditional images.

29 Images connected to light and sun may also be used to illustrate good times, as in “Slob grwa'i zhogs pa” (“The Morning at School”), where “the auspicious time of youth” is said to “shine sun-rays” (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 197).

moon to illustrate the beauty of a young attractive woman. Here the image of the moon is employed structurally as a parallelism:

*shar phyogs ri bo'i rtse nas/
dkar gsal zla ba shar byung/
ma skyes a ma'i zhal ras/
yid la 'khor 'khor byas byung//*
(Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho, *Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho'i mgul glu*)³⁰

From the peak of the eastern mountain
the white and shining moon arose [to the sky]
the face of a young maiden
revolved in my mind again and again.
(Tshangyang Gyatso, “The Songs of Tshangyang Gyatso”)

Dhondup Gyal also uses the image of the moon in similes and metaphors to depict beautiful girls. For example, a very beautiful girl may be depicted as “the moon among the stars” as the main heroine Lhakyi is depicted in the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”.³¹ In the same novella the moon in another shape, namely the new moon of the “third of the month” is used in a simile to illustrate the shape of her hairline.³² Partly the basis of using the image of the full moon mapped onto a face is because of the similarity of the round shape and partly it is connected with a beautiful shining appearance.

In “sNyan ngag la sbyar ba'i sgrung rtsom gzhon nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan” the beauty of the girl named Dawa Dolma (*Zla ba sgrol ma*, “Moon Tārā”) is illustrated with a richness of images of various types. The image of the moon is also used for various aspects of her beauty, for example, to illustrate the whiteness of her skin and the shape of her breasts.³³ In this poetic narrative the source domain of the full moon is also mapped onto the target domain of a young man's face (*nya zla'i gdong*)³⁴ and notably in the same depiction of the face of the young man his eyes are depicted as suns (*dkyus ring miggi nyi ma*).³⁵ Typical of the *kāvya-*

30 In Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho & Ngag dbang lhun grub dar rgyas 1981: 1.

31 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 24. Tib. “rgyu skar khrod kyi zla ba”. In the same sentence Lhakyi is also described with a flower image as “a lotus among the flowers”.

32 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 10: “dpral ba'i dbyes ni tshes gsum gyi zla ba dang 'dra la/”.

33 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 99, 101.

34 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 102.

35 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 102. Also in the poem “Slob grwa'i zhogs pa” the moon is a metaphor for a young man's face, and the girl is illustrated with the image of the lotus flower (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 197). “gzhon nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan” illustrates the crowd of people on the street with the metaphor of “shining stars”. It occurs in the chapter that relates the tragic and sad event during the Cultural Revolution of Dawa Dolma leading her own father to the struggle session (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 108). The tears flowing down the face of her father are illustrated with

style of this poem is the use of synonymical terminologies. For example, in the verse depicting the woman's breasts, the name for the moon is "the one having the shape of a rabbit [in the middle of it]" (*ri bong gzugs brnyan*), which is an allusion to an ancient *jātaka*-story.³⁶

The source domain image of the moon mapped onto a face may also be found in the root text of the *Kāvyaḍarśa*, for example, in the following lines:³⁷

bzhin zla 'dzum pa'i zla 'od ces//
gzugs can bsdus dang ma bsdus pa'o//
 (Daṅḍin, *Kāvyaḍarśa*)³⁸

the so-called moonlight of smiling face moon
 is an abbreviated and non-abbreviated metaphor
 (Daṅḍin, "The Mirror of Poetry")

The source domain image of the moon (or *dpe* as expressed in the Tibetan poetics) is one of the favourite images in Daṅḍin's *Kāvyaḍarśa* in the examples of types of similes and metaphors and they are very numerous. In the examples it is mapped onto the target domain (*dpe can*) of a beautiful woman.³⁹ It is possible that there is some Indic influence in the Tibetan tendency to depict beautiful women with moon imagery, but it may also well be that some of the Tibetan images (like the image in the Sixth Dalai Lama's song) could have simply been inspired by observing the resemblance between a full moon and a shining face of a beautiful woman. In Chinese tradition the image of the moon seems to evoke different kinds of associations. Yue Daiyun (2004: 165) writes: "In Chinese poems the

the metaphor of "a constellation of tears" (p. 110).

36 The *jātaka*-story in question is entitled "The Story of the Hare"; see Speyer's (1895: VI) translation. An important study of the moon and its role in beliefs and myths in different cultures around the world is Tallqvist 1948. Chapters 12 and 13 contain information on perceptions of the moon in different shapes. Tallqvist (1948: 170) also mentions the Buddhist legend about the rabbit in the moon.

37 In question is the third type of metaphor (*bsdus shing ma bsdus pa'i gzugs can*), where one of the source domains is connected without the genitive particle whereas the composite image contains a connection with the help of the genitive particle.

38 See Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las 2004: 183.

39 For images of a woman's face illustrated with the help of the image of a moon, see the verses in Daṅḍin's root text of the *Kāvyaḍarśa* in Dungkar Rinpoche's commentary (Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las 2004: 136, 140, 143, 144, 147, 148, 149, 150, 153, 158, 160, 199, 200, 201). For information on the depiction of beautiful women in Indian classical literature and the similes and metaphors found in ancient Indian texts, see Rossella 2003. She also mentions the image of the moon (pp. 467, 471).

moon always symbolises eternity and loneliness, forming a sharp contrast with worldly worries and fleeting lives.”⁴⁰

Different shapes of the moon have also inspired imagery. The growing moon in Dhondup Gyal’s writings is a sign of desirable developments most typically in the field of education. This image may be found for instance in the last stanza of the poem “Slob grwa’i zhogs pa”:

*e ma dpyid ka’i slob grwa’i zhogs pa la//
dge mtshan bye bas rab tu snang byas pa//
'di ni mi rigs slob gso’i las don sogs//
yar ngo’i zla ltar ’phel ba’i mtshon rtags lags//
(Don grub rgyal, “Slob grwa’i zhogs pa”)⁴¹*

Oh, the spring morning of the school
is illuminated by ten million good signs
this is the sign of the education of the nationalities
growing like the waxing moon.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Morning at School”)

A same type of image may also be found in the short story “Pad mtsho” (“Petso”).⁴² The simile of the waxing moon is used to illustrate the improvements of “the socialist cultural revolution and construction” in a text passage that criticizes the fact that many people have difficulty in obtaining proper education. In the same story Tashi reflects how during “the old society” many people had to remain in “a world of darkness” (*rmongs mun gyi ’jig rten*).⁴³

In the short story “Brong stag thang” (“The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”) the image of the sun is used to illustrate other kinds of meanings than political ones. The same short story also contains passages of a love song (*la gzhas*). The style of the song appears similar in its style and usage of imagery as a song in a book containing love songs from Amdo.⁴⁴ The passages from the songs in the short story of Dhondup Gyal contain several images of the sun used in a

40 However, I found a Chinese poem in Frankel’s translation in which the moon is associated with a person. In Chinese classical poetry a poem by Lü Benzong (11th–12th-century) entitled “Feelings at Separation” bears some resemblance to the Sixth Dalai Lama’s poem in connecting the thoughts of missing a person and the image of the moon (in this poem its reflection in the river). The following is Hans H. Frankel’s (1976: 37) translation of the Chinese poem: “I wish you were like the moon on the river./ South, north, east, or west,/ South, north, east, or west./ You’d always be near and never part./ I wish you weren’t like the moon on the river./ Full for a time, it wanes again./ Full for a time, it wanes again./ How long the wait for full reunion?/”.

41 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 55.

42 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 26.

43 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 26.

44 Zhin dbang rgyal 2001: 201–202.

parallel way that is typical of the indigenous Tibetan strategy of using images. In the song the image of the sun “having difficulty in rising” due to wind and black clouds is used in a parallel structure to illustrate how the lovers have obstacles in meeting each other. The song expresses the courage the lovers have by stating that the “path for the sun’s rising is wide”. Furthermore, in the end when the loving couple is married, the sun is depicted rising “welcomed by dawn” and followed by white clouds into the wide sky. The sun is also here an image of happiness, but connected to the idea of happiness experienced in love and in marriage.⁴⁵

It is difficult to say whether Dhondup Gyal has just included a song from Amdo in his story, or how much he has adapted it. At least there is some adaptation to suit the purposes of this particular story, for instance in the end when the character Lhamo Tsering is singing, she mentions the name of the man whom she is getting married to. The sun shining without obstacles signifies happiness both traditionally and also in recent times. However, the different target domains attached to the sun may be interpreted with a wide variety of meanings and ways in which people have regarded happiness and desirable phenomena.

A phenomenon connected with light, but a more fierce and violent one, is the blazing fire. A fire is associated with external reality, of course, and is not only located in the celestial sphere, being commonly found in stoves, candle flames, forest fires, and so on. But because it is a phenomenon concerning the nature of light, I will present some short remarks here following the discussion of celestial lights. The image of fire is an image that has attracted special attention in cognitive theory especially in discussions of metaphors of anger, and thus it provides an interesting case of comparison between cross-cultural uses of imagery. The reason why fire and anger are so interesting from the viewpoint of cognitive theory is that images of fire often have a physiological grounding and are thus good examples of the embodied nature of metaphorical processes. When people are angry scientists have been able to prove that body heat rises. In several languages of the world feelings of anger tend to be depicted metaphorically with images of heat, boiling, flaming fire, and so on.⁴⁶ Lakoff (1987: 383) presents the following conceptual metaphor of anger: ANGER IS HEAT. The concept of heat has subdivisions of boiling substances and fire, and metaphors of fire related to anger can be characterized with the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS FIRE. He presents (1987: 388) some common metaphorical English expressions to support his viewpoints, such as “Your insincere apology just *added fuel to the fire*”. In addition to the metaphors having associations of heat, Lakoff (1987: 389–397) also

45 Don grub rgyal 1981b: 6, 17–18.

46 See Lakoff’s case study of anger (1987: 380–415).

shows that there are other possible source domain images of anger, such as source domains related to insane behaviour.

Tibetan language and literature display similar kinds of tendencies. The source domain of fire and heat can be connected with bodily states in which the temperature of the body tends to rise somewhat. In addition to anger, embarrassment may also cause such a rise. An example of depicting the state of anger with the image of fire is found in Dunhuang documents in the “Sum pa mother’s sayings” where we find the expression: *phrag dog pa'i myi ni zhe sdang mye ltar 'bar*: ‘a jealous person: hatred burns like fire’.⁴⁷ In the writings of Dhondup Gyal images of fire are commonly connected with the emotions of embarrassment and anger.

There are several examples when the image of fire is used to depict the anger experienced by a character. The flames of fire might blaze from the eyes, as in the depiction of Kuntu Sangmo when she accuses her father of having hidden a gun during the struggle session.⁴⁸ Also the mind of a character who is angry is sometimes depicted as blazing in fire.⁴⁹

Dhondup Gyal’s way of using images of fire to express anger is in accordance both with cognitive theoretical views and also with images of anger in traditional Tibetan texts. For example, in *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud* we find the following stanza explaining the situation of Minister Bhavakumara, who has been taken captive by the army of “Myriad Lights”:

In the world, even Brahma cannot rival
The wise man whose hatred blazes inside
As fiercely as the fire at the aeon’s end,
But outside, a smile cool as ambrosia ripples forth.
(Dokhar Zhabdrung Tsering Wangyal, “The Tale of the Incomparable Prince”)⁵⁰

In Dhondup Gyal’s works the source domain of fire may also be mapped onto feelings of embarrassment and the emotion of desire or passion. An example of its use to express embarrassment can be found in the short story “Sems gcong” (“Depression”). When the young man she takes a liking to arrives in front of her, the main protagonist Detso relates her feeling with the words: “my face was

47 The quotation is from line (6) of the scroll of text number ITJ_0730 (IOL Tib J 730) in the database of Old Tibetan Documents Online (OTDO).

48 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 62.

49 For example in “bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud” (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 356) and in “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983: 12). The image may appear both in the form of a simile or a metaphor.

50 This excerpt is from the translation of the tale by Solomon (1987: 258).

heated by the fire flames of shame and became burning hot”.⁵¹ This image too has a bodily physical grounding: when people become embarrassed, it is very common that their faces turn hot and blush red.⁵²

Fire may also be used as an image of the emotion of desire or passion. In “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” the image of “a mind in fire” is used by the character Lhamo to depict the state of mind of Rigyang, who has fallen in love with the main character Lhakyi and mistakenly thinks that his feelings are reciprocated. Lhamo comments how difficult it feels to try to tell him about the true situation by saying that she “does not wish to give explanations resembling pouring icy water to a mind in fire”.⁵³ In cognitive theory Lakoff (1987: 410) has also connected heat with metaphors of lust. It is possible to find images of “the fire of love” also in Indian literature, for example, in Dhoyī's *Pavanadūta*.⁵⁴

There are also other uses for the source domain image of fire in the works of Dhondup Gyal.⁵⁵ It is in fact a rather common image, but it is not felt to be that central when reading Dhondup Gyal's works because it occurs normally at the sentence level and is not an image which dominates an entire discourse or text.

A culturally specific Tibetan image related to light is the image of the butter lamp, a small but beautiful source of light. The light of the butter lamp has to be taken care of and without care the butter in the lamp will finish soon and the light become extinguished. The feeble flame is under the threat of weather conditions such as stormy wind. In the short story “sGrung ba” (“The Storyteller”) the butter lamp in the wind being near extinction is used as a simile for “the happy cultural life” that is threatened by difficult times.⁵⁶ It is a notable image and illustrates the conservative nature of imagery that the butter lamp appears in

51 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 2. Tib. “nga'i gdong ni ngo tsha'i me lces bsros te tsha hur hur du gyur pa”.

52 An example of a male character blushing with embarrassment is depicted in “Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam” (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 338): literally the text says that “his face became burning hot as if embers had been poured on it”. Tib. “kho rang gi gdong la me ro blugs pa ltar tsha lam lam du gyur pa dang”.

53 Tib. “me 'bar ba'i sems la chu 'khyag pa lta bu'i tshig bshad 'dod nga la'ang mi 'dug” (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 19).

54 Mallinson 2006: 3.75 & 3.94. In 3.94 of Mallinson's translation we have: “Her slender body is being consumed/ by the fierce fire of passion – / sandal applied to her bosom/ dries instantly.”

55 Two different kind of uses can be found in the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” in which we find a saying using the image of fire: “shog bu'i nang la me mi thums pa'i dpe ltar”, ‘Similarly as a fire cannot be enclosed in a paper’, illustrating how difficult it is to keep a sensitive issue secret from someone. In the following lines, there is also the simile: “kho tsho'i kha ni me 'bar ba dang mtshungs”, literally ‘their mouths are similar like being in fire’ illustrating the way people spread rumours (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 21).

56 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 36.

Dhondup Gyal's imagery, although I have not noticed any images with the source domains of electric bulbs – a more modern source of light.⁵⁷

6.2 The enigmatic cloud in the poem “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma”

The main focus of the discussion in this section will be the image of the cloud in Dhondup Gyal's free verse poem “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma” (“The Petals of White Clouds”). Four editions of this poem were available to me: the poem published in Dhondup Gyal's *Collected Works*; the same poem in a selection of Dhondup Gyal's writings edited by Pema Bhum (Padma 'bum) published by the Amnye Machen Institute in Dharamsala; the poem included in Dulha Gyal's (bDud lha rgyal) book on modern Tibetan literature; and in a volume titled *Lang tsho'i rbab chu* edited by Gyurme ('Gyur med) in the “Series of Modern Tibetan Literature” published by the Qinghai Nationalities Press.⁵⁸ The versions are close in their wordings;⁵⁹ however, their layout is strikingly different. The version of the poem in *The Collected Works* has the typical step-shaped form of free verse poems in the same manner as in “Lang tsho'i rbab chu” (“The Waterfall of Youth”), and so does the poem in the volume published from the Qinghai Nationalities Press. The version of the poem in the selection published from India and also the version in Dulha Gyal's book has the form of a prose composition or an essay. According to the Tibetan critic Dulha Gyal (bDud lha rgyal 1998: 447), this work by Dhondup Gyal is a prose poem (*lhug rtsom snyan ngag*). His explana-

57 However, a more recent poem by Yudrug (g.Yu 'brug) is entitled “Glog sgron” (“Electric Lamp”) and it praises the lamp as a light giver. The title of her poem collection is *Hphi hri ri 'dabs kyi 'kbreng sems* with the English cover title *A Leave of Love*.

58 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 231–235; Don grub rgyal 1994: 103–106; bDud lha rgyal 1998: 445–447; 'Gyur med 1993: 24–29. I am thankful to Chokden Tsering for sending me the part of Dulha Gyal's (bDud lha rgyal) book that contains this poem by Dhondup Gyal and Dulha Gyal's short commentary about the poem. The title of the book, published in 1998, is *Bod rtsom gсар ba bdams bkod dang de dag gi bshad pa*.

59 I compared only the exact wordings of the three versions that were mentioned first, as I noticed the poem in the volume *Lang tsho'i rbab chu* only while finalizing this work. The versions in Padma 'bum (ed.) 1994 and in Dulha Gyal's book are almost identical in their wordings, but the first-mentioned version has more *shad* (vertical lines) and also it has a longer description of how the rain sometimes issues from the cloud. Whereas Dulha Gyal's version (p. 447) only has “lan rer sbrang char sho sho ru 'bab pa dang/”, Pema Bhum's version (p. 105) has: “lan rer sbrang char zim zim du 'jo ba dang mtshams rer sbrang char sho sho ru 'bab pa dang/”. The version in *The Collected Works* is – except for its line structure – almost similar to its wording in the other two versions, but there are a couple of small differences, which however, do not radically alter the overall meaning. For example, it uses the word *lha mo* (“goddess”; Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 232), whereas the other versions have *bu mo* (“girl”). In *The Collected Works* the cloud likened to the *gandharva*-girl (p. 233) shows her row of teeth (*tshems phreng*) while smiling, whereas in the other editions the word used is *mtshams sprin*, referring to the clouds coloured by the rays of the setting sun.

tion appears to be intended for Tibetan students because it is followed by two questions “for reflection”. The second question points out that “some hold this work to be a poem and some a prose poem”. The reader is then asked to reflect on these two possibilities of classification and present reasons for his choice. In my opinion “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma” can well be called a free verse poem: *The Collected Works* version and the version in the book titled *Lang tsho'i rbab chu* do full justice to the beautiful rhythm of the work, which is in the form of a step-shaped free verse poem.

According to a note after the poem in the volume *Lang tsho'i rbab chu*, it was originally published in *Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal* in 1987 (no. 5). It seems that the poem was published in several publications, because an editorial note in the version edited by Pema Bhum also gives information on the earlier posthumous publication of the poem in 1991 in the literary magazine *Gangs rgyan me tog* (“Snow Ornament Flower”).⁶⁰ Because of its posthumous publication and also because of its style, it might be assumed that this poem was probably written during the last years of Dhondup Gyal's life.⁶¹ Because I did not have access to the original publication, I do not know in which external form this poem appeared originally or what it looked like in Dhondup Gyal's manuscript. However, I have based my discussion on *The Collected Works* and the excerpts that will be quoted are from that edition. When discussing imagery, it is not, after all, vitally necessary to know the precise form the original publication took.

The general atmosphere of this poem can be described as joy mixed with hope. The reader may well sense a floating joyful sensation while reading the poem. This is what the first-person voice says on the second page of the poem:

*nga rang pha yul gyi rtswa thang du langs nas/
mdzes sdug gi nam mkha' la rgyang lta byed thengs re dang/
kho rang mtsho sngon po'i mtsho 'gram du 'grengs nas/
khyed kyi gzugs brnyan la zhib lta byed thengs rer/
bdag gi khra chung mig lam du ngo mtshar gyi
dpe ris gson po sna tshogs shar 'ongs pa dang
kho bo'i gangs dkar sems la bde skyid
kyi snang ba gson po gang mang shar zhing 'ongs/
(Don grub rgyal, “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma”)⁶²*

60 My translation here only gives the literal meaning of the words for the name of the flower. This expression probably refers to some actual flower species with a specific name that is not known to me. The poem was published in the third number of the 1991 issue of this literary magazine (*Gangs rgyan me tog* 1991 (3): 34–36) as given in Pema Bhum's list of Dhondup Gyal's writings “lJags rtsom gyi ming gzhung” (Don grub rgyal 1994: 47–53).

61 I could not locate any information about the year when the poem was actually written.

62 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 232.

when I stand on the grassland of my native land
 every time I look at the beautiful sky
 when I stand on the bank of the Blue Lake
 every time I watch thoughtfully your appearance
 in front of my eyes various wonderful
 lively images arise and
 my snow white mind is filled
 with feelings of vivid happiness
 (Dhondup Gyal, “The Petals of White Clouds”)

Mentioning the grassland of Amdo and the Blue Lake creates a profound Tibetan “native land” feeling. The voice of the poem viewing the clouds above his native land is filled with joy.⁶³ The Tibetan critic Dulha Gyal (bDud lha rgyal 1998: 448) has also noticed the happy atmosphere of the poem and he writes that the poem represents “the joy in the mind” of its writer. In some other works by Dhondup Gyal the clouds may be depicted as something covering the sun or obstructing the light or even as signs of a thunderstorm: these images are sometimes used as source domains for emotional storms experienced by a character as, for example, in the short story “Sem gcong” (“Depression”).⁶⁴ In “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma” the clouds are viewed in a very positive light and not as something that obstructs or

63 In Mayakovsky’s poem “Clouds up to Tricks” the poem describes the different shapes of the clouds that the voice of the poem perceives in anthropomorphic and animal forms.

64 In the short story “Sems gcong” the black clouds and other natural phenomena occurring during stormy weather are used to describe emotion in the main character, Detso’s, mind. She undergoes extreme feelings of desperation and suffering when her parents force her to marry a man, a teacher, whom she does not love and does not know well. She is, in fact, in love with another man. This is how she feels hearing the harsh words of her father: “nga’i sems la rang dbang med par sdug bsngal gyi sprin nag lang long du 'khrigs pa dang/ dran shes kyis gdungs pa’i glog dmar 'tshub 'tshub tu 'khyugs te/ yid skyo ba’i 'brug sgra dang lhan cig mchi ma’i char rgyun lhung lhung du babs/” (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 9). “My mind was uncontrollably darkened by the black clouds of suffering, due to thoughts of missing [my boyfriend], the lightning of suffering flashed, together with the thunder (‘the sound of the dragon’) of sadness the downpour of the rain of my tears fell down.” Here the mind (even though not explicitly stated) is thought of in terms of a sky where various weather phenomena may occur, signifying various kinds of intense emotions. In the *kāvya*-style poem “gZhon nu’i yid kyi mdzes rgyan” there is a passage in which black clouds and the stormy weather are apparently used to depict the time of the Cultural Revolution. In the second section (*le’u*) of the poem there is an elaborate passage in 15-syllable per line verse beginning with the lamentation: “*Kye hud*, from the black clouds covering the ugly face of time/ come words of the sounds of lightning and at the same time accompanied with hail”. The passage goes on to depict the way in which the storm “destroys the lotus petals in the garden of benefit to all beings” and how bees cannot get honey (an image of people desiring education) and then tells how young Red Guards torment “the group of dense leaves of scholars” (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 105). On reading this chapter its contents reveal that the time mentioned in the passage containing the image of the black cloud bringing disaster with it seems to refer to the time of the Cultural Revolution.

covers. The colours of the clouds used in images strongly influence their interpretation: the fact that the clouds are white in the title of “sPrin dkar kyi 'dab ma” also contributes to interpreting the clouds in a positive manner. Kövecses (2002: 85) has written about different conceptual metaphors about happiness and he enumerates a variety of source domain images. Among them are some metaphors associating happiness with upward direction. For instance, he mentions the conceptual metaphors: BEING HAPPY IS BEING OFF THE GROUND and HAPPY IS UP. As an example of the first he gives: “She was *on cloud nine*.” He also points out that vitality is associated with happiness and this is grounded in everyday experiences of joy. Grounding the source domains related to upward direction in human experience can be understood to refer to certain feelings of lightness and energy associated with happiness and joy.

When reading the poem the multilayered nature of the cloud imagery becomes evident. In the beginning the reader’s attention is drawn to the sky and the spectacular clouds of various colours at dawn. The image of clouds is then modified and given additional life and splendour using other images, and in the end the cloud and the voice of the poem intermingle and the voice of the poem internalizes the cloud. It becomes clear that the cloud referred to is a metaphoric cloud illustrating some other target-domain associated with breathtaking beauty and a dream in one’s heart.

The fact that its main image is that of a cloud connects this poem with some other works of Dhondup Gyal that also have a strong central image connected with nature. Earlier I have discussed the imagery in the free verse poem “Lang tsho'i rhab chu” (“The Waterfall of Youth”) and the song “E ma mtsho sngon po” (“Oh, Blue Lake!”) and later in this chapter (6.3) I shall discuss the essay “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo” (“The Girl of the Wind”).⁶⁵ Dhondup Gyal wrote several poems and other works that have a different nature image as their central focus, but they all appear to have something in common. Is this a sign of the writer’s fondness for nature or is there something else that makes nature images of various types especially suitable for the purpose of poetic expression? The works centred on nature images would also seem to have something in common with Western romantic poetry, although of course the Tibetan flavour of the poems is uniquely characteristic to them. Also, the way in which the entire poem can be interpreted as a metaphoric image has something in common with modern Chinese poetry.

⁶⁵ Also the poem “Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying gson po zhig 'dug” (“Here Too Is a Heart Alive Strongly Beating”) in which the main image is a heart, seems to bear a resemblance to this poem in some respects.

Michelle Yeh, who has researched modern Chinese poetry, mentions how Chinese poets have used metaphor as a central structuring principle. She writes:

Not only do modern Chinese poets create rich, complex metaphors, but they also explore using the metaphor as a structuring device. In other words, the structure of the entire poem sometimes becomes a metaphor for the theme it wishes to convey.

(Michelle Yeh, *Modern Chinese Poetry*)⁶⁶

Yeh (1991: 64–65) discusses the significance of imagery for modern Chinese poetry and acknowledges the influence from Western poetic movements such as symbolism. Thus it would seem plausible that Dhondup Gyal might also have received some influences from Chinese modern poetry especially in creating the strong central images of his free verse poetry. The poetic image of the cloud is interesting when we consider the question of the cultural features and flavour of the image. Clouds are the same around the globe, but seen through the human perspective and depicted in the art of different cultures they may be represented in different ways.

6.2.1 Two main levels of metaphoricity: Modifying the cloud

“sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma” can be characterized as a multilayered poem. In several places in the text various source domain images are mapped onto the image of a cloud, although the cloud is the central image that is used metaphorically. Structurally, the poem could be characterized as containing two main levels of metaphoricity: on one of the levels the cloud is the target domain of a series of source domains mapped onto it; and on the other level there is the metaphoric central image of the cloud that can be interpreted in several ways.

A, B, C ... → cloud → blended space ← X

A, B, C, and so on refer to the source domains of the images that are mapped onto the clouds. The level of the central image can be best discussed with the concept of blending: the input space of representations of clouds in nature becomes blended with other input spaces that are discussed below. The other input space(s) contributing to the blend are marked with X as the interpretations of X might be multiple and are open to interpretation. The projections from the input spaces structure the blended space of the metaphoric cloud and create the emergent structure. The possibility of interpreting the poem in multiple

⁶⁶ Yeh 1991: 69.

ways provides a large space for innovation and creativity. In this kind of poem it could be said that innovation is always present as during the reception process each reader produces his/her own interpretations. The first level is more related to specific places of the poem and the other layer could be characterized as the discourse of the entire poem. Two different frameworks are intertwined: the frame of a nature poem depicting the wonderful beauty of nature and the frame of discussing a matter of human concern that is left open for interpretation.

I shall first discuss the source domain images that are used to modify the cloud. In the poem entitled “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma” (“The Petals of White Clouds”) flower petals are metaphorically mapped onto white clouds: clouds which look like flowers blooming in the sky. In this metaphor the cloud would be a target domain. The idea of mapping the image of flowers onto a cloud can also be found in Kālidāsa’s *Meghadūta* (“The Cloud Messenger”), where a *yakṣa* addresses a cloud saying: “Turn yourself into a cloud of blossoms/ and bathe him [Skanda] with showers of flowers.”⁶⁷ In Dhondup Gyal’s poem the image of petals of clouds appears at the beginning, first pointing out the existence of clouds in the sky and then also in some other places in the poem.⁶⁸ The cloud is likened to the “flower of the sky” and the image is then associated with progress, creativity, and innovation:

*khyed ni nam mkha'i me tog zbig dang 'dra bar/
gangs can gyi mtho sgang la skye stobs kyi dpal yon bsnan pa dang/
bsil ldan gyi yul gru 'dir/
byad bzhin gyi sgeg chos dang/ lang tsho yi mdzes pa/
zungs kbrag gsar pa dang nmam shes gsar pa yang khyer yong ba red/
(Don grub rgyal, “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma”)⁶⁹*

you like a flower of the sky
add the glory of growth to the high plateau of the Snow Land
to this region of moderate climate
you show your attractive face and beauty of youth
bringing new blood and new consciousness
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Petals of White Clouds”)

In the poem the first-person voice addresses the cloud with the second-person pronoun (*khyed*). The poem appears like a speech directly addressed to the cloud.

67 Mallinson 2006: 1.43. Kālidāsa’s poetry is still well-known in Tibet, where he is called Nag mo khol. According to information in a recent commentary on the treatise by Nordrang Ugyen (Nor brang O rgyan 2004: 3) it can be found in Tibetan translation entitled “sPrin gyi pho nya” (“The Cloud Messenger”) in the *bsTan 'gyur*.

68 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 232–234.

69 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 232–233.

This addressing of natural forces – apostrophe – is a shared characteristic with “Lang tsho'i rbab chu” and “E ma mtsho sngon po”. In addition to the image of the flower, the poem has several other source domain images that become mapped onto the cloud in the form of similes or metaphors. This creates the special artistic quality of the cloud image. Among these source domain images we find: a young man, a goddess, a messenger, a girl of rainbow, a *gandharva*-girl, a heap of white curd, a person wearing a white silken *sham bu*,⁷⁰ a *ngakpa*, and a yogi.

I have here tried to sketch the kind of aspects the various source domain images highlight concerning the target domain of the cloud in Dhondup Gyal's poem. The images modify the reader's mental perception of the cloud. Mapping so many images onto clouds develops a unique kind of cloud imagery that is difficult to find in any other poem, although it is possible to compare at least some of the individual source domain images with images of clouds in some other texts. Here creativity is achieved by using a wealth of source domain images to depict one target domain – the clouds in the sky. Below the mappings are sketched roughly in accordance with the text of the poem:⁷¹

- the cloud is a young man
 - aspect: declares a message of “new time”
- the cloud is like a goddess wearing white clothes
 - aspects: whiteness and singing in praise of changes
- the cloud is a messenger
 - aspect: carries message about the arrival of a new era
- the cloud is like the flower of sky
 - aspect: growth, beauty, innovation, creativity
- the cloud is like a girl of a rainbow
 - aspect: gives hope and encourages to proceed forward
- the cloud is like a *gandharva* girl
 - aspect: smiles (happiness), brings good message
- the cloud is like a heap of curd
 - aspect: whiteness and outer shape
- the cloud acts in a manner of a person wearing a white silken *sham bu*

⁷⁰ *Sham bu* is a type of ornament or decorated type of clothing.

⁷¹ By this I mean that the conceptual metaphors (in the form cloud is A, B ... etc.) are formulated according to the expressions in the poem, but they simply indicate the conceptual structure of the images in a clear manner and do not necessarily translate the wordings of the poem exactly. For example, the first line “the cloud is a young man”, is in the poem “that young man of the cloud”, and the poem uses in this place for the cloud the expression *chu 'dzin*, water-holder, which is one of the names of the cloud in the synonymic lexicons.

- aspect: white colour and peaceful nature
- the cloud acts in a manner of a *ngakpa* wearing a black cloak
- aspect: black colour and stormy nature
- the cloud is like a yogi
- aspect: altruism and wandering about

Most of these mappings could be generalized with the help of the conceptual metaphor: A CLOUD IS (LIKE) A PERSON. Thus most of the images are personifications.⁷² Generally in the cognitive theory of metaphor personifications are explained to facilitate our understanding of other phenomena by means of relating them to ourselves.⁷³ The personifications in Dhondup Gyal's poem function so that they remarkably widen the scope of activities of the cloud: by means of personification the clouds may sing, carry messages, and give hope to people. They also function as image metaphors: the appearance of the clouds becomes especially lively when the reader can imagine the goddesses, *ngakpa*, and so on, in clothes of various types and having different kinds of appearances.

In some well-known Western poems, too, clouds can be personified. In Shelley's (1931: 101–104) poem "The Cloud" is personified using the first-person pronoun and the cloud itself tells about its own activities. In Torquato Tasso's *Ad Nubes* the cloud is addressed directly using the second-person pronoun.⁷⁴ In Dhondup Gyal's cloud poem the cloud is personified using many varieties of personality in order to show or highlight the various aspects of the cloud. In the cognitive theory of metaphor the tendency of different source domains to highlight different aspects of the target domains has been characterized as the partial nature of metaphoric mappings.⁷⁵

Two of the source domain images are related to the fact that clouds move across the sky in various directions. These images are associated with a wandering yogi and "the messenger of the era".⁷⁶ The cloud as messenger is an image that is likely to have been ultimately derived from Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta* ("The Cloud Messenger"), where the cloud is used as a carrier of messages between the

72 The idea of a cloud described as being alive is expressed by Dulha Gyal with its representation as an entity having a mind (*sems ldan*; bDud lha rgyal 1998: 448).

73 Lakoff & Turner 1989: 72.

74 See Riikonen's research work on this 16th-century ode (1982: 12–13), which also contains the original Latin text and its translation. The cloud is also an image that has inspired Asian poets in several countries. In the poem of the Chinese poet Li Bai, for example, clouds are associated with wandering and impermanence. His poem "Seeing a Friend Off" expresses the sadness and pain when a friend departs to another place (Barnstone & Ping 2005: 121).

75 See Kövecses 2002: 89; Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 52–55.

76 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 231–232, 234.

separated lovers. However, in Dhondup Gyal's poem it is one among several images, and the message delivered is also different from the romantic message in Kālidāsa's work. In Dhondup Gyal's poem the cloud metaphorically depicted as "a young man" is said to "be declaring messages of the arrival of the new period of wellbeing (*dge legs*) to the cool Land of Snow".⁷⁷ Here it could be said that there are two frameworks: that of representing the actual cloud and that of representing the fate of Tibet. The cloud is depicted as a young man embracing the beloved of the sunrays "signalling the arrival of a new day" but in the framework of speaking about the destinations of Tibet and the Tibetans the cloud suggests a new era. Similar to some other poems of this poet "the new era" is spoken of in very abstract terms and is open to interpretation. References to the ideas of progress and modernity are also common in other poems by Dhondup Gyal, but mostly they remain very abstract.

Some of the source domain images mapped on the cloud are likely to cause the reader to imagine that the cloud has a specifically Tibetan cultural reference. We find, for example, source domain images of a *ngakpa* and a yogi (*rnal 'byor pa*), and white curd, a common food substance in Tibet, which is being regarded as auspicious due to its colour. The image of the *gandharva*-girl comes from Indo-Tibetan Buddhist mythology and the image of the goddess can be of either Tibetan or Indo-Tibetan origin. At the same time these images are both used to personify the cloud and facilitate its viewing from a culturally coloured Tibetan perspective. It is a special characteristic of literature and art that despite the fact that the external clouds look similar viewed from different corners of the globe, by means of literary art representations of clouds may be modified to look very different depending on the cultural background and individual choices of the writer.

6.2.2 *The metaphoric cloud in the blended space*

As mentioned earlier "sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma" has two main levels of metaphoricality. We saw above how in the first level various source domain images were used to modify the target domain image of the cloud. The second level is the level of the metaphoric cloud as the central image of the poem. The poem is both about the beauty of nature where a cloud floating in the sky is addressed, and a poem in which the cloud itself is an image through which a message the poet wished to convey is communicated. Mostly the lines related to nature and the lines related to the other framework(s) are intermingled so that the shift from representing ideas related to the external cloud moves smoothly to speaking

⁷⁷ Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 231.

about the other framework(s) or input spaces of the blend. This results in the forming of a blended space that has elements or aspects which come from the domain of the cloud and those of the other frameworks or input spaces. It has a creative emergent structure of very open nature providing space for personal reflections and various interpretations. Considering the poem as a whole, the cloud could be considered a powerful discourse level metaphor.

The framework of representing the actual cloud in the sky depicts the cloud in the morning coloured with the first rays of the sun, how the cloud is seen above the Blue Lake, and its importance to the growth of the plants and the survival of animals and other living beings (due to it bringing rain). At the same time the other framework stressing the importance of the cloud is introduced. The poem says: “You are the base for the existence of the world and the life force (*bla srog*) of the life of the living creatures.”⁷⁸ The characteristics of actual clouds include their white appearance in good weather and darkness in stormy weather, how they bring rain, and float in the sky in various directions.

In many places of the poem it is evident that the cloud is metaphoric. These textual places include: speaking about the cloud declaring a new era for the Land of Snows,⁷⁹ praising the developments in the region, and stating that the cloud is “the happiness of the people” (*mi rigs kyi bde skyid*). This resembles the fact that in the song “E ma mtsho sngon po” the lake addressed directly is said to be the “happiness of the people”. It is also clearly metaphorical to depict a cloud as carrying “new blood” and “new consciousness”. Furthermore, the personified cloud is said to provide “the hope of life” and “happiness” and “the courage to move forward” for the people.⁸⁰ The fundamental importance and necessity of the cloud is conveyed by referring to the cloud as “the rope of life of living creatures” (*skye dgu'i srog gi gzung thag*) and “the nurse of the mind of living beings” (*gro ba'i yid kyi ma ma*).⁸¹ The poem also identifies the cloud as the “shadow soul”, a “life force”, and “the basis of existence”:

*khyed ni 'jig rten gnas pa'i gzhi ma dang/
'gro ba 'tsho ba'i bla srog red/
(Don grub rgyal, “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma”)*⁸²

78 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 234.

79 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 231.

80 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 233.

81 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 233.

82 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 234.

You are the basis of the existence of the world and
 the shadow soul and life force for the living of the creatures
 (Dhondup Gyal, “The Petals of White Clouds”)

Even some meditative elements are added by speaking of “the womb of contemplation” (*bsam gtan gyi mngal 'bur*) of the cloud from where the “little boy of raindrops” takes birth.⁸³ The poem also speaks about the great compassion and wisdom of the cloud.⁸⁴

These are clearly poetic expressions and it is difficult to claim that they would clearly have a single meaning. The poem itself admits the enigmatic nature of the cloud with the words: “What a secrecy unfathomable to comprehension you are!”⁸⁵ This enigmatic quality of the poem could also be seen as an innovative and creative strategy – the process of blending and reflection continues during all the reception process of the poem.

The cloud in the poem can be interpreted in many ways, but it is very clear that it is used as a metaphor. It may be interpreted to express freedom (*rang dbang*),⁸⁶ belief in progress, development and change or creativity, and openness to innovation. The interpretation as progress, development, and change is supported by the lines in the poem speaking about “a new era”, “moving forward”, and praising changes. These are all abstract concepts and demand further interpretation from readers. Interpretations suggesting freedom are supported when the poem speaks about “the happiness of the people” and the significance of the cloud for everything. The nature of the clouds also supports this interpretation in the sense that they are essentially free to wander across the sky and float towards any destination whatsoever. Natural forces are free and beyond control. The natural state of freedom is a characteristic that is related to images of lakes, waterfalls, clouds, and wind – they are ideal images of freedom.

The interpretation of freedom is not contrary to other interpretations. It can be said that it is possible to view freedom as something that is necessary in order for changes and progress to take place, for artistic creativity and writing poetry, and for fulfilling the purposes and dreams of people. The interpretation of creativity and openness to innovation is related partly to the first interpretation but stresses the artistic aspect. Because the cloud is depicted as something essential for life and as something that expresses the hopes of the people, it could also be

83 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 233.

84 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 234–235.

85 “Khyed ni ji 'dra'i blo ngor mi shong ba'i gsang ba zhig red ang/” (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 234).

86 An anonymous Tibetan informant interpreted the cloud to signify freedom, stating that several of Dhondup Gyal's poems can be interpreted in a similar way. Notably, “freedom” is a term that can be interpreted in several different ways.

thought to be people's purposes or dreams in life. In my reading of the poem I notice that I tend to think of it in terms of creativity or more specifically as creativity in poetry. Possibly for each reader it is a dream or a meaning of life that is treasured and makes life meaningful. The Tibetan critic Dulha Gyal also leaves some space for the reader's interpretation:

skabs 'di' i sprin phung 'di yang sprin phung rang ga ba zhig ma yin par/ de ni rang nyid dga' spro skyed byed gang zhig gi mtshon don yin/ bye brag chos gang zhig gi mtshon don yin pa klog pa bo rang rang la bsam tshul don dang 'byor ba zhig yod na des chog rtsom las gsal bar bstan med la/ de' i phu thag gcog pa' ang rtsom 'dir mtshon na gts'o bo ma red/ gts'o bo ni kho' i sems khong gi dga' spro' i sems pa de sgyu rtsal gyi thabs kyis ji ltar du nus ldan lhug lhug tu mtshon yod pa nges rgyu de yin/
(bDud lha rgyal, "Phran bshad")⁸⁷

In this case this conglomeration of clouds is not an ordinary conglomeration of clouds. It represents the meaning of that which makes one happy. What it represents specifically can be interpreted as the meaning that the reader himself/herself wishes to imagine. It [the meaning] is not shown clearly. To decide on its meaning is not of primary importance in this work. The main thing is how he has powerfully and fluently represented by artistic means the joy in his mind.

(Dulha Gyal, "A Brief Commentary")

Interestingly, the Tibetan critic stresses the importance of the poet representing a feeling or emotion in the writer's mind.⁸⁸ Thus the poem could be thought to express the subjective state of its writer. Expressing one's own subjective feeling by means of a single powerful image can be seen as a new development in Tibetan poetry in the 1980s considering the long tradition of writing verses that were often in praise of a lama or communicated a religious message or related a story in verse form. It is possible to perceive in the poem movement in-between subjective and external concerns. Subjectivity and expressing an internalized emotion can be also viewed as a feature modern Tibetan poetry shares with Chinese modern poetry, which has received some influences from Western symbolist poetry.⁸⁹

The end of "sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma" is highly metaphoric and it is clear that the image of the cloud has multiple interpretations:

*sprin dkar gyi 'dab ma ni nga' i re ba yin pa dang/
chu 'dzin gyi phon po ni nga' i snying gi dga' ma dang/*

87 bDud lha rgyal 1998: 448.

88 Dulha Gyal in his essay on the poem "Lang tsho'i rbad chu" also mentions this tendency of modern Tibetan poetry to represent subjective states of the mind with the help of images (bDud lha rgyal 1999: 132).

89 See Yeh 1991: 60–62.

*sems kyi ma ma/
 'tsho ba'i gzi brjid/
 'dun ma'i rten gzhi/
 la rgya'i bdag po yin/
 khyed rang dus nam yang bdag gi yid kyi nam mkha' la rgyu ba dang/
 khyed rang dus gtan du kho bo'i snying gi mdzes rgyan du bzhuigs par smon//*
 (Don grub rgyal, "sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma")⁹⁰

The petals of white clouds are my source of hope and
 the accumulation of clouds is the lover of my heart and
 the nurse of my mind
 the glory of life
 the basis of expectations
 the owner of dignity
 You are always floating in the sky of my mind and
 I pray that you will always reside as an ornament in my heart.
 (Dhondup Gyal, "The Petals of White Clouds")

The clouds are associated with such ideas as hope, aspirations, a happy life, dignity and are given great importance and thought as something that is beloved. Again, speaking about expectation (*'dun ma*) and dignity (*la rgya*) reminds one of the song "E ma mtsho sngon po". The clouds are something that one always thinks about and the voice of the poem hopes that will always be with him. Freedom and creative power appear to be appropriate interpretations. This kind of "lasting quality" (or at least its aspiration) and internalization of the cloud are characteristic features in the poem. In some other poems by different authors or from different cultural backgrounds clouds may be connected with transcendence as they move across the sky leaving places behind, or they may be connected with the idea of rootlessness.⁹¹ A common feature shared with the poems "Lang tsho'i rbad chu" and "Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying gson po zhig 'dug" is their way of ending: in all three poems the central concepts are internalized and are in the minds and hearts of humans. "sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma" ends by praying that the cloud will remain inside one's own heart and mind. Thus it seems to be a kind of basic necessity for each person's life, the thing, idea or dream that keeps one alive.

90 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 235.

91 See, for example, in Frankel (1976: 44–45) Yan Jidao's (11–12th c.) Chinese classical poem illustrating the departure or absence of a woman with the departure of "the brilliant cloud". Frankel also quotes from Li Bo's poem: "I only regret that singers and dancers disperse; turning into brilliant clouds, they fly away." For information on images of clouds in ancient Chinese poetry, see Yu 1987: 144, 192–193.

Other works by Dhondup Gyal also contain cloud images, although they are not as central to the interpretation of the whole work as in “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma”. One of the striking cloud images is that of “the blue cloud” in the poem “Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying gson po zhid 'dug”. This is also a free verse poem of Dhondup Gyal and thus seems to use imagery more innovatively.⁹² The passage in question has two cloud images and other images of nature:

*rmying zhen gyi mkha' dbyings 'dir/
bag chags kyi chu 'dzin lang long g.yo ba dang/
bag 'khums kyi glog zhags shig shig tu 'khyug pa ltar snang yang/
sngon thon gyi sbrang char zim zim du 'jo ba' i skal ba ni phra tsam gda' /
yin na yang/
mi rigs kyi re ba' i rlang pa ni mkha' la 'phyur nges yin pa dang/
gangs ljongs kyi la rgya' i sprin sngon yang lho nas lding nges yin la/
yul 'khyar ba dang gnas sdod pa' i gzhis byas kyang lhang la 'bud nges red/
(Don grub rgyal, “Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying
gson po zhid 'dug”)⁹³*

In this atmosphere of conservatism
the clouds of habitual patterns waver
and even though it seems that the lightning of cowardness flashes
and there is little opportunity for the light rain of progress to ripple
nevertheless,
the vapour of people's hopes are sure to rise to the sky and
the blue cloud of the dignity of the Snow Land is sure to float from the south
also those who have wandered to far off places and those who have remained
in their home country are sure to rise up
(Dhondup Gyal, “Here Too Is a Heart Alive Strongly Beating”)

The first instance here making use of the image of a cloud is the expression in line two, “the clouds of habitual patterns”. The Tibetan word for cloud is here *chu 'dzin* which has its origins in synonymical terminologies.⁹⁴ “Habitual patterns” depicted with the image of clouds here seems to refer to the cloud's capacity to cover the sky and obscure sunshine. Connected with the image of the cloud is the metaphor of “the lightning of cowardness”. It seems to be an innovative expression that is formed as an extension of the first idea of clouds illustrating “habitual patterns”. Vapour arises into the sky and forms clouds. However, the poem expects the “blue cloud of dignity of the Snow Land to certainly float from

92 There is further discussion of this poem in Ch. 8.1.

93 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 92–93.

94 See gZhis rtse dge 'os slob grwa'i bod yig slob spyod tsho tshung 1991: 40.

the south”. This latter image is somewhat enigmatic and is likely to encourage many interpretations.⁹⁵ For me it brings to mind the exiled leader of the Tibetans H.H. the Dalai Lama who resides in the North Indian hill town of Dharamsala. The expression “dignity of the Snow Land” resists exact interpretation: it could refer to freedom, a good future for one’s people, or anything deemed good for the country. It is however clear that the poem’s voice is not satisfied with the current situation and longs for some kind of improvement and change. The image of the blue cloud is an image that seems to resist definite interpretation: ambiguity and openness to several different interpretations is one of the characteristics of many poetic images.

6.3 Being in the mystic wind

The image of the wind may be used to communicate a wide variety of meanings. The wind can be stormy, pleasantly cool, or freezing cold. It may blow gently or as violently as a hurricane. Accordingly, images of wind may be used to illustrate many kinds of meanings. In the following discussion the main focus is the image of the wind in Dhondup Gyal’s prose poem “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo” (“The Girl of the Wind”), because in this work the wind functions as the main image.⁹⁶ This prose poem shares some features – such as its focus on an aerial image – with “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma”, but on the other hand it is very different. Whereas the atmosphere in “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma” is joyful, in “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo” it is possible to sense a kind of melancholy.

“Dri bzhon gyi bu mo” is located in vol. VI of Dhondup Gyal’s *Collected Works*, which contains miscellaneous works and letters by the writer.⁹⁷ Choekyong has

95 I am not certain whether colouring the cloud “blue” is a special poetic creation by the poet or whether clouds can sometimes be naturally perceived as blue. I encountered references to “blue clouds” and “the blue mountain” in a classical Chinese poem by Meng Haoran (7–8th-c.) entitled “Seeing Off a Friend on His Way to the Capital”. The translation and analysis of the poem is found in Frankel (1976: 35–36), but he does not comment about the color of the cloud, probably because he does not find it anomalous.

96 Interestingly, Luran Hartley (1999: 35–41) writes about another more recent Tibetan wind poem, Lhagyal Tsering’s (Lha rgyal tshe ring) “Dri bzhon bu mo’i glu dbyangs” (“The Song of the Girl of the Wind”). She translates the title of the poem as “Song of the Wind”. In her article (p. 35) there is a full translation of this rather long poem and she observes how this poem resembles Shelley’s “Ode to the West Wind”. According to n. 37 in Hartley’s article, Lhagyal Tsering’s poem was published in 1991 in *sBrang char*, no. 1.

97 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 8–11. According to the publisher’s preface in vol. VI of *The Collected Works* (2), “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo” is among those works that were published previously before inclusion in the volume in question. However, *The Collected Works* does not contain any information on its original publication.

written in detail about the events during the last month of Dhondup Gyal's life. According to him, "Dri bzhon gyi bu mo" was written during the last month of its writer's life in November 1985 in Zhan dbyang, where he was applying for a teacher's post.⁹⁸ Dekyi Tso (bDe skyid 'tsho 1995: 21–22) characterizes the work as a personal account of the "situation and thought" of the writer expressed with the help of "the girl of the wind" and a kind of result or "summary" of the writer taking a critical look at himself. Dhondup Gyal's essay is written in prose and could perhaps best be characterized as a prose poem on account of its powerful poetic imagery. It is located in *The Collected Works* immediately after an essay by Dhondup Gyal entitled "rKang lam phra mo" ("The Narrow Footpath"). Dekyi Tso (bDe skyid 'tsho 1995: 25) speaks about "Dri bzhon gyi bu mo" as being *lhug rtsom*, a prose text. Because the last volume of *The Collected Works* contains writings belonging to various genres, but does not contain clear indications to which genres some of the individual works belong, it is possible to call this work a prose poem (*lhug rtsom snyan ngag*). The fact that the writer has employed a strong central image is a feature that this poem shares with some of the free verse poems. However, it is structurally different because it has been written in prose.

This work is among the works of Dhondup Gyal that are somewhat mysterious in nature, and possibly this is the reason why Western scholars have not paid much attention to it. The work is enigmatic in the sense that it can be interpreted in several ways,⁹⁹ both literally and more metaphorically. I tend to understand the work more in the latter way, but the interpretation offered by Dekyi Tso (1995: 26) seems to be at least partly more literal: she speaks of the loneliness of the writer that would lead him to take a liking to the girl of the wind. Her observation about loneliness is in accordance with views presented by Sacha-Piekło (2001: 271), who writes about the element of air in aesthetics: "A monotonously blowing wind may symbolise melancholy, and the emptiness and an open expanse of the air the abyss of despair, loneliness, and fear."

If we first look at the word used for wind, *dri bzhon*, on the lexical level, it is in fact a metaphor in itself, but a metaphor whose use is so common in written Tibetan that readers are unlikely to consider it metaphorically, but would link it

98 See Chos skyong 2006: 103. Tibetan poet Jangbu told me in a personal interview (summer 2005 in Xining) that Dhondup Gyal wrote the essay as an exam for a teacher's post in the school in Zhan dbyang. The name of the place in Wylie transliteration is based on its Tibetan spelling, because I am not sure of the spelling in *pinyin*. I have been told that the place is located somewhere near Xian.

99 Choekyong (Chos skyong 2006: 103) connects this work to the writer's life saying that "if one does not know the complicated events at the end of his life, it is not possible to understand what kind of emotion the writer himself has absorbed into it".

to the concept of “wind”, *rlung*. Literally *dri bzhon* means ‘mount of fragrance’ in which *dri* means ‘fragrance’ and *bzhon* means ‘to ride’, or as a noun *bzhon pa* ‘a mount’. It is an expression that can be found in dictionaries and treatises of synonymic terminologies (*mngon brjod*). Ngulchu Choesang (dNgul chu Chos bzang or Dharmabhadra, 18th–19th-c.) writes:

*dri bzhon rtag 'gro ma mos 'phel/
rdul gyi kha lo rlung spyi'i ming/
(dNgul chu Chos bzang, rGya mtsho'i chu thigs)*

Mount of fragrance, always moving, increased by *kumuda*¹⁰⁰
the stealer of dust are the names of the wind
(Ngulchu Choesang, “The Water Drop from the Ocean”)

In a recent commentary written by Norbu Dadul (Nor bu dgra 'dul) and Tsering Namgyal (Tshe ring rnam rgyal) the word *dri bzhon* is understood as follows: “Mount of fragrance: because the wind appears to ride on the fragrance.”¹⁰¹ The treatises of synonymic terminology were actually of Indic origin, thus these written Tibetan expressions usually have their etymological roots in Indian expressions often employed by poets.¹⁰²

Before making an attempt to interpret the work and its images, I shall on account of its apparently mysterious nature first summarize its contents briefly so that the reader might gain some idea about it. Because the entire work is about the girl of the wind, sketching the contents will also be helpful for the interpretation of the main image of the prose poem. I have numbered the passages that I have paraphrased below according to the number of the paragraphs in *The Collected Works*:

1. The first-person voice tells about the closeness of himself and the girl of the wind. He depicts the girl of the wind as essential to his life, relating that she has been all the time with him assisting him since the time of conception and birth.

100 I am not sure of the meaning of *ma mo* here as for example, Krang dbyi sun (1993: 2047) gives it many meanings, none of which is *kumuda*, but the commentary on this lexical item mentions the flower *kumuda* (Nor bu dgra 'dul & Tshe ring rnam rgyal 1992: 71).

101 Tib. “*dri bzhon/rlung ni dri la sogs par bzhon nas 'gro ba lta bu yin pas so/*”. See Nor bu dgra 'dul & Tshe ring rnam rgyal 1992: 71.

102 For example, Kālidāsa has a passage in his *Meghadūta* where the wind carries fragrance: “Cool Himalayan breezes head south,/ fragrant with the oozing sap of deodar trees/ whose folded young leaves/ have just now burst open./ I embrace them, good lady – / they might have touched your body.” (Mallinson 2006: 2.104).

2–3. A discussion of the wind in the context of the four elements: earth, water, fire and air. The way in which scholars define the girl of the wind is related, as the nature of the wind is “light and moving”. The first-person voice is not satisfied with the solely materialist definition of “the shapeless girl of the wind” and he points out that the essential quality of the girl of the wind is her life force (*srog*) of the wind (*dbyang rlung*).¹⁰³ He explains that this life force of the wind is necessary for the continuous existence of the girl of the wind herself and all the other elements. Thus the girl of the wind is needed for the existence of all vegetation and living creatures on the earth.

4. A description of the talk of natural elements in the beginning of the spring. The personified earth and the sun are speaking with each other. They both blame the girl of the wind for creating an obstacle to their relation during the winter when the earth is covered with snow.

5–6. An argument between ice and water. The water accuses the ice of changing its nature according to the moods of the girl of the wind.

7. The girl of the wind arrives and all the personified natural elements act respectfully towards it. The different qualities of wind during the four seasons are viewed in the light of the moods of the girl of the wind.

8. The good qualities of the girl of the wind are so great that they cannot be underestimated. She is so significant that the realms of existence would not continue without her.

9. Blending of the wind and the first-person voice. The wind and the mind of the person are combined into an inseparable unity.

In brief it could be said that paragraph 1 shows the importance of the girl of the wind on the personal level and paragraphs 2–3 on the level of all life on earth. Paragraph numbers 4–7 depict nature in the beginning of spring in its transition from the cold time to the period of greenery. This part contains personifications of the natural elements and their talks with each others. Paragraphs 8–9 stress further the importance of the girl of the wind and then combine the girl of the wind and the first-person voice in unity.

We should now take a closer look at the imagery in “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo”. It has in its title and in several places of the text an anthropomorphic source domain image of a girl. However, the wind is the central element of the imagery in this prose poem. Therefore I have included the discussion of the imagery of this work here rather than in the chapter containing corporal imagery and personifi-

¹⁰³ The expression *dbyang rlung* cannot be found in dictionaries. *Rlung* is the usual word for wind, but the meaning of *dbyang* is not clear. According to information received in a message from Lhundup Dorje, the meaning is probably ‘oxygen’ and the word in Chinese is *yangzi*. This interpretation connects the expression with breathing.

cations.¹⁰⁴ The schema below characterizes the basic structure of imagery in the prose poem, revealing a kind of double-mapping quality and blended space of the imagery related to the girl of wind:

girl → wind → blended space ← X

Here feminine qualities are mapped onto the personified wind that then acts as a central image of the poem. Here the metaphoric structures differ: the first metaphor – the girl of the wind – has two parts stated explicitly, however, the second one – the metaphoric wind in the blended space (in which the “girl of the wind” as a whole acts as an input space) – is a metaphor whose other domain is not stated in an exact, clear way, but may have multiple interpretations. In this prose poem there is blending from several frameworks or input domains, but the reader has first to interpret some of the most essential input domains. The Tibetan poet Ju Kelsang ('Ju sKal bzang 1991: 26) in his article on free verse poetry has also mentioned these kinds of metaphoric images in which the image has been given, but the other side of the metaphor is not mentioned explicitly.¹⁰⁵ He also writes that sometimes it is difficult to define an exact meaning, for a poem may speak on a more general level. This description fits well to many of Dhondup Gyal's free verse poems.

Before discussing the meaning of the central image itself, I shall first discuss the mapping of the source domain of a girl onto the target domain of wind to understand an important aspect of the forming of the central image.

In the metaphor “girl of the wind” the “girl” is the source domain and the “wind” is the target domain. It belongs to the class of both image metaphors and personifications. If considered as an image metaphor this would mean imagining the wind in the external shape of a girl and if considered as a personification this would mean attributing human characteristics and ways of acting and feeling to the wind. Why is the image of a girl mapped onto the wind and how does it function?

The image of the female appearance is mainly conveyed by the word “girl”, *bu mo*. However, the idea of feminine shape is not really developed otherwise. She

104 It did not seem wise to divide the discussion of this essay into two chapters since all the elements blend together and contribute to the understanding of the function of the image of “the girl of the wind” as a strong central metaphoric image.

105 He actually uses the words *mtshon byed* ‘that which represents’ and *mtshon bya* ‘the one to be represented’. He mentions that the way of not clearly defining the intended meaning bears some resemblance with the traditional ornaments *nges bstan gyi rgyan* and *bsdus brjod kyi rgyan* ('Ju sKal bzang 1991: 26). The subdivision of his article is called “*mtshon byed tsam 'god pa*” (‘only writing the one that represents’).

is instead called “shapeless girl” (*gzugs med kyi bu mo*)¹⁰⁶ and her invisibility is said to be a secret that cannot be explained. However, when the text continuously speaks about the “girl of the wind” the reader is likely to imagine an airy and light female kind of shape or quality fluttering in the wind.

The “girl of the wind” as such does not seem to be an innovative new metaphor, but the way in which it is then used as a central image is a different matter. The expression “girl of the wind” can, for example, be found in Thukwen Choekyi Nyima’s (Thu’u bkwan Chos kyi nyi ma, eighteenth-century) poem “I ho skyed tshal gyi bsngags brjod” (“A Praise of the Yiheyuan”).¹⁰⁷ Also the metaphor “girl of the wind” occurs in some other works of Dhondup Gyal. In “rTswa thang gi lha mo” (“The Goddess of the Grassland”) the voice of the “girl of the wind” prophesies the arrival of a beautiful goddess Kunga Lhaki (Kun dga’ lha skyid) to the grassland of Amdo.¹⁰⁸ In another poem “Slob grwa’i zhogs pa” (“Morning at School”) the way in which the wind flutters in the trees is depicted with the help of the image of “the girl of the wind embracing the necks of trees with her soft and flexible hands”.¹⁰⁹ A modern Chinese poem by Ai Qing, “Snow Falls on China’s Land”, also contains an image of wind likened to a woman. However, in the simile the cold wind of winter is likened to “a grief-stricken old woman” and her hands are said to be “icy claws”.¹¹⁰ In an Indian poem by Dhoyī (twelfth-century CE) “the wind from Mount Malaya” sounds to be masculine¹¹¹ and the personified appearance of the wind is depicted, mentioning its palms and forehead. A shared feature is that in Dhoyī’s poem the *gandharva*-girl who sends with wind the message of love addresses the wind directly.¹¹² Thus the image of “the girl of the wind” is connected to traditional texts both on the lexical and on the metaphoric level.

The strategies of personification attribute to the girl of the wind various actions and qualities (such as wisdom) more characteristic to humans than the external elemental wind, and also sometimes refer to her with the pronouns *kho*

106 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 9.

107 See p. 2 of this poem in Thu’u bkwan Chos kyi nyi ma 2001. According to a footnote after Thukwen’s poem, Yiheyuan is the name of a garden in Beijing.

108 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 71.

109 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 55.

110 See Lau & Goldblatt 1995: 519–521. This poem by Ai Qing has a very sad and desperate atmosphere and life is depicted in dark colours as a difficult struggle. However, the end is slightly more optimistic and reveals the possibility of art bringing some light to life. Ai Qing writes: “China,/ The feeble poem I write/ On this lampless night,/ Can it bring you a little warmth?” (Lau & Goldblatt 1995: 521). The poem was translated by Marilyn Chin from Chinese into English.

111 Mallinson 2006: 3.5, 3.61.

112 Mallinson 2006: 3.96.

mo ('she') and *khyed* ('you'). Here also at times the voice addresses the girl of the wind directly. She is also attributed two other names referring to a female.¹¹³ In cognitive theory the way in which nature is personified is explained by the human tendency to comprehend better such phenomena that we are able to relate to ourselves. If we think of the external element of the wind, although it can be felt, it seems to lack a concrete form. Mapping the source domain image of the girl onto the target domain of the wind helps to concretize and give easily imaginable form to this airy element.

The wind is made alive by saying that the girl of the wind has life (*srog*) or is alive (p. 9). This might be one of the main reasons why the image of a young woman is mapped onto the wind. The mapping of the feminine form and spirit makes the wind intensely alive instead of being a kind of mindless force. The personification of the wind also makes it feel very natural to the reader that the speaker of the essay is addressing the wind:

*lam la rgyu ba'i tshe na'ang mgyogs shing myur ba ni smos ma dgos pa zhing red/ yin
na yang/ gnad kyid don po ni de kho nar ma nges te/ khyed la dbyang rlung gi srog
dang ldan pa'i rkyen red/ gal srid khyed la srog de lta bu ma 'dzoms na/ sra zhing
'thas pa'i bdag nyid can de gas 'gro ba dang/ brlan zhing gsher ba'i khengs dregs can
de rul 'gro ba ma zad/ tsha zhing sreg pa'i khro gnyer can de yang shi 'gro la/ bu mo
rang gi tshe srog kyang 'jig 'gro nges red/
(Don grub rgyal, "Dri bzhon gyi bu mo")¹¹⁴*

also when she moves along the road it is needless to say that she is very fast. But the essential meaning lies not only in that. It is because you have the life of the wind. If you did not have that kind of life, what is hard in nature would crack and the arrogant one, which is moist and wet, would get rotten. Moreover, the hot and burning wrathful element would be extinguished and your own life, girl, would certainly be destroyed.
(Dhondup Gyal, "The Girl of the Wind")

The quality of the vital life energy of the girl of the wind is here depicted as her most essential defining feature that makes life on earth possible. Therefore it is possible to interpret the girl of the wind as a kind of life force or vital energy of life without which everything would be lifeless and spiritless. This is supported by the opening paragraph of the essay in which the "girl of the wind" is attrib-

113 See Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 10. The two names are *sna nag ma* and *drod med ma*. These expressions both have the final particle *ma*, which indicates that they refer to a female. Literally these would mean 'the female with a black nose' and 'the female without warmth'. They are expressions located in the words of the personified earth and sun when they refer to the "girl of the wind".

114 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 9.

uted qualities that are not normally associated with wind in real life: for example accompanying the first-person narrator of the essay from the day of his conception, providing the child “natural wisdom”, advising on the “union of body and consciousness”, and bringing a baby into the world.¹¹⁵ The girl of the wind here sounds very much like the power of life. The essay says that “she” (i.e. the girl of the wind) is all the time with him (“like a body and shadow”) and “a holding rope of his life”, thus pointing towards the importance of “the girl of the wind”. According to this interpretation the girl of the wind would be the power of life itself.¹¹⁶ The Tibetan critic Dekyi Tso (bDe skyid 'tsho 1995: 25) has written that Dhondup Gyal’s attachment towards the girl of the wind in the work seems to convey “high esteem to the value of one’s own life”.

The above-quoted excerpt also says that other natural elements would be diminished without the life energy of the girl of the wind. This seems to point towards the interpretation of X as life, including its very important aspect, change. Without change everything would be as if it were frozen to death. Wind is very strongly associated with movement, and in cognitive research this would be linked with the conceptual metaphor CHANGE IS MOTION.¹¹⁷ Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 183–184) write about movement from different states or locations to others as a metaphoric way of depicting changes in situation or state. However, in Dhondup Gyal’s essay the girl of the wind flies in the sky and runs on the earth without any mention of particular destinations.¹¹⁸ The girl of the wind could be interpreted as an image of change in general or the essential nature of change that is necessary for sustaining life on earth and is also visible everywhere in nature. Change in nature has two sides: growth and decay. In this essay both sides are depicted – including the “decay” or passing away of individual existence. The idea of the all-encompassing nature of change and degeneration creates a kind of melancholic atmosphere for the work. Reading the poem it is possible to imagine a person in a windy landscape becoming one with the wind and losing his personal boundaries. One could perhaps imagine a kind of cosmic breathing, human breath being just part of a larger breath of life. Openness to various kinds of interpretations reflects the mystic quality of the work.

115 Here, interestingly, the world is referred to with the name of a Buddhist paradise “og min stug po bkod pa'i zhing khams”. This could perhaps be explained by viewing this human world to be as wonderful as heaven – a real heaven located on earth (Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 8).

116 For valuable information on Tibetan conceptions on life and related terms, see Stein 1972: 223–229.

117 Kövecses 2002: 159; see also Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 183–184.

118 Kövecses (2002: 19) mentions the wind among various forces and characterize their function as effecting “various changes in the thing acted on”.

In Dhoyī's poem *Pavanadūta* ("The Wind Messenger") the wind is also associated with breath and movement.¹¹⁹ At the beginning of the poem the *gandharva*-girl Kuvalayavati addresses the wind and characterizes its qualities:

Then, in spring, when it changed
and started toward a different region,
she bowed before the wind from Mount Malaya
and with profound longing made a request of it:

"From you, o wind, comes
the breath of all living creatures,
you are *able: from the south by nature*
and you are said to move
even faster than the mind.
(Dhoyī, *Pavanadūta* 3.3–3.4)¹²⁰

Associating wind with breath (Skt. *prāṇa*) can be also found in an early text such as *R̥gveda*. In the beginning of her research paper on "Air" Sacha-Piekle (2001: 271) quotes an excerpt from W.K. Mahony's translation of this ancient Indian text in which breathing is likened to the wind. The idea of associating wind with breathing is grounded, of course, on the physical nature of man and all organisms living on the earth. Therefore it could be said that the image of the wind used to express ideas related to being alive has a clear physically embodied grounding. Thus, associating wind with breathing has connections both to tradition and to human embodied experience.

Wind is one of the four elements: earth (*sa*), water (*chu*), fire (*me*), and air or wind (*rlung*). In this work of Dhondup Gyal, in addition to the image of the girl of the wind, the other elements are also personified. In the dialogue between natural elements the personified sun apparently represents fire, the speaking earth the same element of earth, and water and ice the elements of water (pp. 9–10). Dekyi Tso (bDe skyid 'tsho 1995: 25) writes insightfully that the personifications of the elements represent natural affection and wrath (*rang bzhin gyi dga' sdang*) and according to her the examination of the elements is also a careful examination of "the naked nature of many inner aspects of human beings". Here a human being is observed to be of the same nature as other aspects of existence and apparently

119 Also in Dhondup Gyal's poetic work based on the story of *Rāmāyaṇa*, "Ra ma ṅa'i rtogs brjod blo gsar rna ba'i dpyid glu", (see 2.1 above n. 51) the sound of monkey mGrin bzang's breathing is compared to the "wind of the end of times" (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 51).

120 Mallinson 2006.

“representing natural affection and wrath” would mean the warm and growing aspects of nature as contrasted to nature in winter and in a state of decay.¹²¹

Speaking about the natural elements and nature in early spring makes the reader become intensely aware of the seasonal transformations of nature and how natural and necessary the changes are. In the essay the changes are attributed to the personified wind: for instance when “the girl of the wind” is angry the water turns to ice and when the girl is joyful the streams flow freely. In spring nature gradually frees itself from the cover of snow and starts to grow green shoots of grass.¹²² Through personification of the natural elements nature by means of art is made even more lively and interesting than it would be in reality. This work by Dhondup Gyal moves skilfully between the very personal levels of birth and individual experience to the general level of nature and all life on earth, interrelating them with each other.

The moving end of the poem is characterized by the blending of all frameworks: the wind becomes internalized and the “heart blood of the mind” of the voice of the essay becomes externalized in the wind. At the end the wind and the voice become completely inseparable:

*nga rang ni dri bzhon bu mo la dga' ba dang/ kho mo'ang bdag la snying nye ba yin/
nga'i sems kyil khang bzang na dus nam yang dbyang rlung ldang ba dang/ kho mo'i
snying gi dkyil dbus na nga'i sems kyil zungs khrag'khyil yod cing/ dbyang rlung ma*

121 If we consider the imagery related to the wrathful aspect of wind, in the short story “sGrung ba” (“The Storyteller”) the “winter wind blows in the mind” of the narrator (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 36). His mental scenery becomes directly contrasted with the surrounding spring time environment. To interpret the story, after reading it, it seems that “the winter wind blows in the mind” (*dgum gsum gyi lhags pa*) refers to the sad feelings as the storyteller, whom the narrator felt close to, had died in unfortunate circumstances in the times of the Cultural Revolution. Another very different kind of wind image, which is related to its affectionate aspect, is found in the short story “Pad mtsho”. In the following passage from this short story the image of wind is connected with thinking about the beloved staying in a distant place: “lo gcig gi ring la/ nga'i bsam pa'i brtse dung gi dri bzhon de rtswa thang dang/ pha yul/ 'brog phyogs bcas su g.yugs pa dang/ pad mtsho sdod sa'i sbra gur gyi khor yug tu g.yugs myong bar ma zad/ gzugs med kyil stobs shugs shig gis nga'i sems la gshog pa btsugs te mu mtha' med pa'i bar snang du lding skor byas pa dang/ pad mtsho dang nged gnyis bsdebs te mtho ba'i ri gsum rtse la babs pa dang/ dma' ba rgya mtsho'i mtha' la 'phur te gcig rgyus gcig gis lon pa yin mod/” (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 28–29). “During one year the wind of my thoughts of love blew in the direction of the grassland, homeland and nomadic area. It blew around the surroundings of the nomad tent where Petso was staying. Moreover, a formless power attached wings to my mind and it flew in the limitless sky. Connecting me and Petso we flew as high up as on the peaks of three mountains and then we flew as low as the shore of the ocean gaining better understanding and knowledge of each other.” However, flying with the “wind of love” is mentioned to be only dreaming. The wind seems to be strongly connected with imagination. The “formless power” can here also be interpreted as the power of love.

122 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 10–11.

*tshar bar du zungs khrag zad pa med la/ zungs khrag ma zad bar du dbyang rlung
yang 'dzad rgyu ma red/
(Don grub rgyal, "Dri bzhon gyi bu mo")¹²³*

I like the girl of the wind and she also is friendly to me. In the good house of my mind the wind always blows and in the centre of her heart the vital blood of my mind circulates. Not until the wind stops blowing will the vital blood run out. Not until the vital blood runs out, will the wind be exhausted.
(Dhondup Gyal, "The Girl of the Wind")

Here the wind can be interpreted in many ways: the life energy or spirit for living or inspiration, freedom, innovation or creativity, and development and change. These aspects are interconnected: without life there cannot be creativity and creativity means to be intensively alive. Without any freedom creativity would become impossible. The work is very spontaneous and shares in its central wind imagery some characteristics with the later free verse poems of Dhondup Gyal, namely the multilayered nature of the imagery, the ambiguity of interpretation, and the possibility of interpreting the work within the framework of freedom and creativity. In this prose poem the special emphasis is on the vitality of life that is one side (or rather in the centre) of change, freedom, and creativity. We could perhaps say that the poet breathes with the whole universe and that breathing is essential for both personal and universal creativity to take place. Without that creativity there would be no life at all but only the coldness of death. However, there is something very moving, painful, and melancholic about the boundaries of the personal self disappearing and one might also sense the presence of death through dissolving and uniting with the wind. The end of the essay which says that "the vital blood will not run out when the wind blows" seems to transcend the limits of the end of personal existences of individuals and points towards the continuation of life in different forms. The other side of life is death and in the nature of life is its change into the passing away of individual creatures and the birth of new ones. It is also touching in the sense that it suggests or causes in the reader a sensation of the presence of the writer somehow in the nature of the wind or in a spirit which is intensively alive.

There is something similar in this essay by Dhondup Gyal and Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem "Ode to the West Wind" (1820). In Shelley's (1966: 97) poem the voice of the poem addresses the west wind as "wild" and "uncontrollable" and wishes to be like the wind, depicting it as "tameless, and swift and proud". The fifth section of the poem contains words that express the poet's wish to

123 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 11.

intermingle or blend with the wind. Throughout the poem the speaker addresses the wind as “thou”:

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
 What if my leaves are falling like its own!
 The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
 Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
 Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
 My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!
 (Percy Bysshe Shelley, “Ode to the West Wind”)

In Shelley’s poem the poetic voice wishes the wind to carry his words everywhere.

To sum up, the idea of describing the function of the central image of “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo” in terms of blending is useful, because with blending it is easy to depict the intermingling of two basic frameworks: 1) that of the wind blowing in the sky and 2) that of the framework of life, intensity, freedom, creativity, and change. Reading Dhondup Gyal’s essay, which has a very personal tone, is likely to cause the reader to reflect on the poet and his early death. One feels his intensity for life, as well as his strong sense of the changing nature of existence, which has its melancholic side, too. In the context of the prose poem the combining of the poetic voice with the wind could be interpreted as a kind of dissolving of individual boundaries to the greater unity of nature.

When examining aerial and celestial images we see that the images have both connections to tradition and innovation. Several of the images of the moon occur in metric poems and in their structure strongly resemble traditional images. However, it was also possible to notice some shifts in target domains. The images in the free verse poem “sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma” and the prose poem “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo” are innovative in being powerful central metaphors with a multilayered structure and an openness to many interpretations. However, as we saw, they both have some connections to traditional imagery as well. Discussion of the image of the cloud revealed how universally known natural phenomena may in the works of literature be depicted so that they attain a unique, culturally specific Tibetan flavour. The images have their cultural roots that to varying degrees affect the formation of new imagery.



7. TERRESTRIAL IMAGERY

In this chapter I shall discuss imagery related to phenomena or objects that are located on external terrain beginning with some remarks on stones, mountains, and paths. The images of mountains are not that numerous or central in the writings of Dhondup Gyal. However, because mountains are the most prominent external feature of the environment of the high Tibetan plateau, I shall take a look at those textual examples that can be located. The main focus of this chapter is the images of paths. Paths cross the environment marking people's routes to destinations, and in some of the works of Dhondup Gyal paths have an important role. I shall also discuss comparisons with traditional images and the views presented by Western scholars who have written about the cognitive theory of metaphor.

7.1 Images of mountains, rocks, and stones

In Tibetan literature snow mountains are often used to characterize the entire region of the Tibetan high plateau as an area surrounded by these mountains, and in Tibetan modern writing snow mountains are often depicted as breathtakingly beautiful.¹ The mountain sceneries and other images of snow mountains are not particularly common in Dhondup Gyal's writings, indeed grassland (*rtswa thang*) is the first milieu that comes to mind when thinking about his works. Mountains are mentioned for instance in the short story "sPrul sku" ("Tulku"), which is located in a remote mountain village, when the writer wishes to paint a beautiful scenery the blooming grassland is more likely to be foregrounded, the mountains

1 See, for example, a poem by Dhondup Wangbum (Don grub dbang 'bum) entitled "Sa sgang sngas su byas pa'i skar ma 'od chen" in 'Gyur med 1993: 35–43. The voice of the poem views the snow mountains from above, perceiving them in the shapes of flowers and in luminous stars. Among the numerous poems mentioning snow mountains are Lhagyal Tsering's (Lha rgyal tshe ring 1998: 47–49) "Ri bo'i pha rol na" ("On the Other Side of the Mountains") and Hor Zhidei Gyatso's (Hor Zhi bde'i rgya mtsho 1999: 79) "Nga dang kha ba'i mdza' brtse" ("The Affection of Me and Snow") and Chabgag Dorje Tsering's (Chab 'gag rDo rje tshe ring) "Gangs ljongs lags ma yum" ("The Snow Land Mother", in 'Gyur med 1993: 51–55). In Indian literature milieu depictions with snow mountains may also be found. Boccali (2003) has written an informative article on the theme of the mountain and the various motifs associated with it in Sanskrit literature. The Himalayas appear in many Sanskrit works and are often depicted as the abode of the god Śiva. Klaus Karttunen's (2011) article, "Toes and Heels Tormented by Hardened Snow", contains a wealth of information on snow and ice in Sanskrit literature, and Siegfried Lienhard's (1974) article "Bauern, Berge, Nacht und Winter" contains observations on mountains in Tamil poetry.

remaining more distant in the background. Having said this, the image of a mountain does sometimes occur in similes and metaphors in Dhondup Gyal's writings.²

The source domain of the mountain is often used to express ideas of largeness and firmness. In the short story "Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam" ("The Impermanent Illusory Dream") the "pile of dilemmas" (*'gal 'du*) is depicted in a simile using the source domain of the mountain. The main character would like to rise to the position of leader, but when he reflects on his earlier career, this is how he feels:

*yin na yang/kho rang gis sngon chad brgyud myong ba'i kyag kyog 'gro lam de yid
la shar ba'i tshe sems la 'gal 'du'i phung bo ri ltar byung ste/ rang gis rang la mthong
chung dang/ rang gis rang la yi thang chad pa'i dbugs ring nar nar du 'byin dgos
byung/* (Don grub rgyal, "Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam")³

However, when the crooked path that he had traversed earlier arose in his mind, a pile of dilemmas rising like a mountain occurred in his mind. He despised himself and he gave out deep sighs as though tired with himself. (Dhondup Gyal, "The Impermanent Illusory Dream")

Here the mountain can be interpreted as an image of hugeness, something tall and large in size that is difficult to overcome. In Dhondup Gyal's writings may also be found a simile in which a character criticizes the speech of another character by saying: "What is the sense of throwing [aside] one's own faults that are like a mountain and discussing faults of others that are [by comparison] like a lice?"⁴ Here the mountain is an image of bigness and lice of smallness. A specific mountain mentioned by name is Mt. Meru. It is not an actual mountain on the Tibetan terrain, but is a mythical mountain from the Buddhist tradition of cosmogony. Mt. Meru is the central mountain of the ancient conception of the world that is very familiar to all Tibetans. For instance, in "rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gnam" ("Allegorical Discourse of the Seven Precious Possessions of the Universal Monarch") the legs (*sug*) of the precious elephant are metaphorically said to be Mt. Meru (*ri rgyal lhun po*) and its tusks snow mountains (*gangs kyi ri bo*).⁵ In the latter image in addition to the size of the tusks, the image also depicts their shining white colour.⁶ In the novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" the elder

2 According to Victoria Sujata's (2005: 190, 206) research work the image of a mountain is found in Kalden Gyatso's songs in both similes and metaphors. It does not appear to be among the most common images, but in the case of both metaphors and similes, she counts a minimum of two occurrences of both.

3 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 344.

4 The quote is from the novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 29).

5 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 144.

6 In the story of Visvantara in the *Jātakamālā*, a white elephant is also likened to a snow moun-

nun Dolma describes metaphorically her many sufferings with the images of Mt. Meru and an ocean. She says: “Since I was small the Mt. Meru of suffering was piled in my small snow white mind and an ocean of suffering circled between my lungs and liver.”⁷ The large size of the mountain may also act as a positive image. For instance in “Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs” (“The Love of Flesh and Bone”) the love that the main character, a *thangka*-painter, feels towards his mother is depicted as “deeper than a lake” and the affection “bigger than a mountain”.⁸

The mountain peak is the topmost part of a mountain. It may also function as an image signifying achievement. For example the essay “rKang lam phra mo” (“The Narrow Footpath”) contains the metaphor of “the mountain top of progress” (*sngon thon gyi ri rtse*).⁹ Pride may also be “high like the top of Mt. Meru” as in “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”.¹⁰

The image of a mountain may be used to depict that something is very firm and immovable, and in traditional literature it is easy to locate examples of this kind.¹¹ There are also several cases in Dhondup Gyal's works when the source domain of the mountain has been used to express the notion that the decision of a character is firm and there is no possibility of changing his mind. If we again take an example from the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” the decisive state of mind of the main protagonist Lhakyi is depicted as “unmoving like Mt. Meru” and “unchanging like *vajra* rock-mountain”.¹² This usage is also found in Sanskrit literature. According to Brockington (1998: 363) there are many mountain similes in *Rāmāyaṇa* which are used to illustrate immovability.

Mountains are such visible features of Tibetan landscape that other images may also be mapped onto them. In particular, mountains tend to be imagined

tain, specifically the Kailash mountain (Speyer 1895: IX: 7, 8). In the 18th-century *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud* by Dokhar Zhabdrung Tsering Wangyal (mDo mkhar zhabs drung Tshe ring dbang rgyal), elephants are likened to mountains in their size. The same passage in Solomon's (1987: 297) translation also depicts their white colour, likening them to clouds.

7 Tib. “chung ngu'i dus nas bzung nga'i ya chung gangs dkar gyi sems la sdug gi ri rab brtsegs pa dang glo dang mchin pa'i bar na sdug gi rgya mtsho 'khyil yod/” (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 15).

8 In the Tibetan original (Rang grol 1984: 34), the left column: “khong gis a ma la bcangs pa'i brtse dungs ni mtsho las zab pa dang/ a ma la bzung ba'i zhe mdangs yang ri las che ba zhig red/”.

9 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 4.

10 Tib. “mo gsar gyi snang ba ni ri rab kyi rtse mo ltar mtho bas” (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 20).

11 For example in the Sixth Dalai Lama's song (no. 43 in Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho & Ngag dbang lhun grub dar rgyas 1981: 16) the words exhort Mt. Meru to stay firm and unchanging. In the *Sog po rta rdzong*, Ling Gesar is likened in a simile to the “central mountain” (*dbus kyi ri bo*), to Mt. Meru, which is characterized as firm (Grags pa 1999: 53).

12 Tib. “lha skyid kyi bsam pa ni ri rgyal lhun po ltar g.yo ba med pa dang rdo rje'i brag ri ltar 'gyur ba ma byung” (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 15).

as having laps, or the source domain image of a human lap (*phang ba*) is often mapped onto the target domain of a mountain. In the short story “sPrul sku”, for instance, the personified sun is depicted to be “about to sleep in the lap of the western mountain”.¹³ The same metaphor appears in “bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud” where in addition to a lap, the mountain is also depicted as having a neck (*ri bo'i mgul*) decorated by “two big round mirrors”, referring to the sun and the moon.¹⁴

Stones and rocks seem to be used in many cases in the literary works of Dhondup Gyal as images of phenomena which are generally considered to be negative. Obstacles are sometimes depicted using the image of a stone or a boulder (*pha bong*). Images are often combined and connected with each other. In the earlier chapter on water images mention was made to the image of the “stream of love” (Ch. 5.1). When a romantic relation gets into difficulties, this may be described as a “stone of obstacles” having fallen into the stream or river of love. Examples of this image may, for instance, be found in the short story “Brong stag thang” (“The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”). The narrator hears the voice of a young woman singing a song and he infers her situation as follows:

*gzhon nu ma'i glu skad gnyom yang tshig 'bru gsal zhing/ rang sems sdug gis mmar ba
dang/ kho mo'i brtse dungs kyi chu mo'i gzhung la bar chad kyi pha bong zbig lhung
yod pa shes thub*
(Don grub rgyal, “Brong stag thang”)¹⁵

The sound of the young woman singing was even and the words could be clearly heard. It was clear that her mind was tormented by suffering and a boulder of obstacles had fallen into the river of her love.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”)

It is possible to notice here the inner logic of the “language of images”. When a stream of water used to illustrate a steady and continuing romantic relationship, and something – either the ice of winter or large stones – obstructs the course of the river, it signifies problems for the relationship.

13 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 122.

14 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 364. Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 54–55) also mention the conceptual metaphor A MOUNTAIN IS A PERSON. They remark that “the foot of the mountain” is in common use, but other parts of mountains are referred to using corporal imagery or personification mainly by mountain climbers. They mention “the shoulder of a mountain” though they do not say anything about “the lap of the mountain”.

15 Don grub rgyal 1981b: 6.

Boulders can also have a positive aspect in Dhondup Gyal's imagery. A promise can be "unchanging like a boulder"¹⁶ and a person can remain still "like a boulder".¹⁷ The poem "bsTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes", a eulogy to Liu Shaoqi, has already been discussed in connection with the image of the moon. However, this poem also contains an interesting and, at least with respect to its target domain, innovative mountain image. In the fifth stanza of the poem Liu Shaoqi is addressed as "a hero" and it describes the way in which he entered the party with the simile: "steadfast like the unchanging *vajra* rock-mountain, [he] happily entered the womb of the benign Communist party".¹⁸ This image, which appears to express a person becoming a member of the Communist party, has erotic overtones and perhaps it expresses the idea of joining together that is experienced as beneficial and blissful to both sides. Here the intended meanings related to the social and political situation of Dhondup Gyal's time at least indicate an innovative shift of the use of the mountain in an image with an obvious erotic flavour.

Most images of mountains seem to be used to signify matters that are very likely to be related to their size and height – and in this respect most of Dhondup Gyal's mountain images are not highly innovative. Although Dhondup Gyal wrote many free verse poems that are structurally very innovative and centre on various nature images, he apparently did not write any mountain poems as such. However, because mountains *are* a significant feature of Tibetan landscape, it is natural that the image of mountains sometimes occurs as a source domain image in imagery in both prose works and poems.

7.2 Paths and journeys

Path imagery appears in several of the writings of Dhondup Gyal. He expresses ideas related to people's life and destinies that may be viewed as corresponding to the basic structures of metaphors from cognitive theory, namely LIFE IS A JOURNEY and PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS. Lakoff and Turner (1989: 3) write: "When we think of life as purposeful, we think of it as having destinations and paths toward those destinations, which makes life a journey." This conceptual metaphor can also be thought of being based on the principle of embodiment and having the underlying kinaesthetic image schema called The SOURCE-PATH-GOAL Schema.¹⁹ Throughout our lives we perform a series of movements in our envi-

16 As, for example, in "Slob grwa'i zhogs pa" (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 54).

17 For example, in the short story "Brong stag thang" (Don grub rgyal 1981b: 13).

18 Tib. "mi 'gyur rdo rje'i brag ri ji bzhin du// drin can tang gi lhums su bde bar zhugs//" (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 57).

19 Lakoff 1987: 275.

ronments and this is closely related to the idea of the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY. It is based on a fundamental experience of human beings around the globe moving physically around in their environments, and this might explain why the metaphoric structure seems to be so similar across different cultures. The metaphor can be seen as having a concrete basis in people's bodily experience of movement along routes, which is related on a more abstract level to metaphors about life. Commonly path images and the journeys undertaken along them convey meanings related to the choices people make in their life in order to reach certain destinations. This is also the case in Tibetan language and literature.

Images of paths are commonly found in both Dhondup Gyal's prose and poetry. In his poetry, the path does not function as a central image, but it is typically mentioned in several poems near their conclusion. The path image can be found in both free verse and regular verse poems. In the earlier metric poems the structure is often more fixed and the image may appear in a stereotyped form: "to go along the path of four modernizations" (*can bzhi'i lam du'gro*). An example of this is the end of the poem titled "Nga dang khu byug gnyis ka" ("Me and the Cuckoo") from 1980. The composition is in regular six-syllable verse and might be characterized as in the form of a song (*glu*). It is probably for this reason that it is not located in the volume containing other poems by Dhondup Gyal, but is instead placed in the volume of miscellaneous works. It is a poem about two birds – a blackbird²⁰ and a cuckoo – flying together in spring on a tour of Tibet. After praising the people and their life in Tibet, the poem ends:

kwa ye can bzhi'i bgrod lam//
'di ltar yangs shing che ba//
kha ba can gyi mi rnams//
gom chen spo mgo tshugs song//
ga ler rgyal khams 'grims pa'i//
nga dang khu byug gnyis ka//
snyan pa'i gsung dbyangs sgrog bzhin//
can bzhi'i lam du 'phur 'gro/
 (Don grub rgyal, "Nga dang khu byug gnyis ka")²¹

20 Das (1902: 463) writes thus about 'jol mo in his dictionary: "a singing bird of very sweet note, said to be abundant in the juniper groves near Lhasa and in Lhokha". Das does not himself translate the name of this bird but writes only about "Jol-mo". However, he reports that Rev. G. Sandberg in *Handbook of Tibetan* mentions two species of "Jol-mo". These two species are called 'jol nag and 'jol khra in Tibetan. The former of them is described as "a species of blackbird identical with *Merula ruficolis*" and the latter "a middle-sized piebald bird". I have here chosen to translate the name of the bird as "blackbird", choosing one of the alternatives of G. Sandberg. However, it would of course be more exact just to speak about 'jol mo.

21 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 41–42.

Hey, the path of four modernizations
 is so wide and large like this
 the people of the Snow Land
 started to take big steps [along it]
 me and the cuckoo
 who are slowly touring the country
 singing a pleasant melody
 will fly along the path of four modernizations.
 (Dhondup Gyal, “Me and the Cuckoo”)

If we think of this passage from the viewpoint of the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor of cognitive theory, here Tibetans may be thought of as walkers or travellers on the path and the purpose of four modernizations as mapped on the idea of “destination” belonging to the domain of journeys.²² Cognitive theory characterizes the “means for achieving purposes” as “routes” concerning this metaphor. Here in the above poem the route is the “path” on which the Tibetans are taking steps. Also the blackbird and the cuckoo are flying along “the path of four modernizations”. If we consider the main characters, the “travellers” on the path are not directly understood metaphorically, as the poem depicts a journey to Tibet undertaken by the two birds. Although here we are imagining an actual flight journey, naturally the idea of two birds expressing their thoughts in human language is itself metaphorical – the birds are anthropomorphized to some degree. Another metrical poem that contains the image of the “path of four modernizations” is “sTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes” (“The Beautiful Flower Garland of Eulogy”), where the late Liu Shaoqi is requested to take a look at the way “we are going on the road of four modernizations”.²³

The motif of four modernizations also appears at the end of some other poems such as “rGya bod bar gyi mdza' mthun” (“The Friendship Between China and Tibet”)²⁴ and “rTswa thang dran glu” (“A Song of Missing the Grassland”),²⁵ but the images are different: the first-mentioned poem has a “lake of four modernizations” and in the latter poem “a tree of four modernizations” grows. In the allegorical poem “Khrul min rmi lam ngo tshar dga' skyed” (“The True Dream of Wonder and Joy”) the actualization of “the four modernizations” is illustrated through the speed of thunder and lightning²⁶ and the increase in production

22 To see how there are correspondences between the domains of life and journeys, and how the elements from the domain of journeys are mapped onto the domain of life, see Lakoff & Turner 1989: 3–4.

23 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 60.

24 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 248.

25 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 202.

26 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 15.

through extracting natural resources from a mountain. This reference to the four modernizations reflects the Communist policy which was promoted in the time when Dhondup Gyal wrote his works. Dhondup Gyal has introduced it into a context relevant to Tibetans, signifying the opportunity to achieve the goals of progress for his own Tibetan people.

The “road of four modernizations” found in Dhondup Gyal’s poetry is in sharp contrast to traditional Tibetan typical images of paths. Although the idea of a path leading to a desired destination is still a common image, the destination where the path is thought to lead has undergone a huge change. Before in traditional literature “the path of enlightenment” also occurs in the titles of a large genre of texts called *Lam rim*, “The Stages of the Path”. Texts belonging to this genre carefully show the reader gradual progress on the “path of enlightenment” (*byang chub lam rim*). A very famous treatise of this type is Je Tsongkhapa’s (rJe Tsong kha pa) *Byang chub lam rim chen mo* (“The Great Exposition of the Path to Enlightenment”). Religious poetry also speaks about the “path of Buddhahood” (*sangs rgyas lam*) and a fine example of this kind of usage is, for example, found in Zhangzhung Choewang Dragpa’s (Zhang zhung Chos dbang grags pa) praise to Milarepa, stemming from the fifteenth-century. The swiftness in which Milarepa traversed the “long, famous, and difficult to follow path of Buddha” in just a single life-time is illustrated by Choewang Dragpa with the help of a legend of Indian origin: Viśnu (Khyab ’jug) is first manifested as a dwarf and then revealed his actual form and leapt over the earth in a single huge step.²⁷ If we consider the path and destinations of Milarepa himself, one of his songs is about the guides, or those who show the road (*lam mkhan*). Among the “guides” are spiritual qualities, a solitary place, lama and his instructions, and the Three Jewels. The destination is mentioned to be “the plain of great bliss of yoga” and the joys of one’s “own land of self-liberation” are extolled. Thus the “guides” show the path to spiritual liberation.²⁸

The difference in destinations is indeed very clear, but to sum up briefly, earlier paths shown by Buddhist masters were spiritual in nature, but for Dhondup Gyal, the path in his early poetry is secular, namely the path leading to the political goal of modernization which, among other goals, had the clear material goal of increasing productivity in agriculture and in industrial fields. The improvement of science and technology was politically viewed as a necessary condition for

27 Zhang zhung Chos dbang grags pa, “rJe btsun mi la ras pa la bstod pa’i tshigs su bcaḍ pa ka la ping ka’i sgra dbyangs”: 61–62.

28 Rus pa’i rgyan can 2005: 254–255. There is also a song (p. 238) in which Milarepa enumerated the “guides” who show the road. Although the patrons had asked whether the yogi had a guide showing the road to a mountain called Riwo Pelbar (Ri bo dpal ’bar), Milarepa sings about matters related to spiritual practice, and the place to be reached is enlightenment (*byang chub*).

achieving advances in other areas of modernization, and the goals of education (as shown in several of his works) were clearly important to the writer. However, it is difficult to know whether the way of ending a composition with the motif of “four modernizations” actually shows the writer’s admiration of this policy programme or whether it was just something that by conforming to the policy line could help the young writer get his writings published. Also, it is notable that this motif is not presented at the beginning of the poem but occurs briefly near the end. I have not been able to locate the phrase “to go to the road of four modernizations” in Chinese modern poetry, despite consulting such works as *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*. I suspect that, when choosing poems for translation, Western translators tend to avoid political poems, which would not be thought appealing to the Western reader. However, I managed to find a related expression in a bibliography of a major study on Chinese modern literature by McDougall and Kam Louie in a title of one of the anthologies of Chinese modern poetry, Michel Hockx’s *A Snowy Morning: Eight Chinese Poets on the Road to Modernity*. The choice of this kind of title suggests that at least some of the poems might possibly speak about “the road to modernity” or have this motif. Anyway, it seems clear that the image of “road of four modernizations” in the writings of Dhondup Gyal has been influenced by current Chinese ideas and discourse.

In Dhondup Gyal’s free verse poems the image of the road often appears near the end of the poem. In his slightly later literary output the imagery of the path or road requires more description and characterization and it does not bear the label of “four modernizations”. In the poem “Lang tsho’i rbab chu” (“The Waterfall of Youth”), for example, we find the metaphor “the path of the future”:

ma 'ongs pa'i lam khar –
kyag kyog sngar las che na yang/
bod kyi gzhon nu rnams 'jigs pa'i go skabs bral zhing/
nga tshos rang re'i mi rigs 'dir/
mdun bskyod kyi lam gsar ba zhig 'byed nges yin/
 (Rang grol, “Lang tsho’i rbab chu”)²⁹

In the path of the future –
 even the curves are bigger than before
 the Tibetan youth cannot be afraid
 for our own people
 we are certain to open a new road and move forward
 (Rangdol [= Dhondup Gyal], “The Waterfall of Youth”)

29 Rang grol 1983: 61.

It is quite clear here that the reference to “a new road” in order to “move forward” is a metaphorical usage associated with survival and success in the modern world. Later on the poem also mentions a “shining highway” and in following lines the “magnificent responsibility”, “happy life”, and “song of struggle”. What is presented here is the possibility and hope for a better future for the Tibetan people, which the poet envisions. The precise kind of future is not defined and remains on the abstract level. However, the speaker admits that the curves on the path are bigger than before, the “curves” (*kyag kyog*) being understood to stand for the difficulties, complexities, and challenges that have to be negotiated. The curves of the path may be seen as “impediments to travel” that in the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor correspond to “difficulties in life”.³⁰

The short story “Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam” (“An Impermanent Illusory Dream”) depicts the path of life of a person who feels he has not achieved the position he would have liked to. This story too has a clear path metaphor related to making one’s career in life. The narrator of the story has a schoolmate who is nowadays in a leading position. The narrator would also like to improve his status and he comments: “I too will proceed through the path that you have taken.”³¹ Before when discussing the images of mountains, I quoted a passage which also contained a “life as a path” metaphor: the text mentioned “the curved path that he had gone along before”.³² This is mentioned in the context of the main character reflecting on his life. When life has been difficult and not successful, the “path as life” metaphor adds the element from the domain of journeys: the curves, understood as difficulties, emphasize this aspect of the “path of life”.

In his other prose works, too, Dhondup Gyal makes use of the image of the path. The end containing the image of a road in front of the narrator in “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” (“A Flower Destroyed by Frost”) may be interpreted both in literary and metaphorical ways. The first-person narrator, Tsering, is going to fetch his girlfriend Lhakyi, who has experienced a lot of hardships, from the mountain hermitage located near Labrang (Bla brang). Before him he perceives “a wide highway” (*yangs shing rgya che ba'i lam chen*) at the same time he admires the signs of spring in the form of flowers and the singing of the cuckoo.³³ Although the end of the story remains open, these images of a wide road, flowers, and a pleasantly singing cuckoo strongly suggest to the reader that the future life of the

30 Lakoff & Turner 1989: 3.

31 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 332: “bdag gis kyang khyod rang song myong ba'i lam de brgyud nas 'gro rgyu yin/.”

32 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 344.

33 See Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983: 29, 47.

protagonists will be happy and they will be able to find a way for their love to blossom into full bloom.

A significant work of Dhondup Gyal's which has a path, or rather two paths, as its central image is the essay "rKang lam phra mo" ("The Narrow Footpath"), found in the miscellaneous volume of Dhondup Gyal's works.³⁴ According to the dating at its end it was written in Beijing in 1984.³⁵ This essay has been translated into English by Mark Stevenson and Lama Choedak T. Yuthok and the translation appeared in *The Tibet Journal* in 1997.³⁶ Preceding the translation there is also an insightful and contemplative essay by Mark Stevenson in which he considers the notion of paths and literary space in Dhondup Gyal's essay. Through translation this essay has become well known to Tibetologists, and Toni Huber (2002: xi) in his introduction to a volume on Tibetans in Amdo, also quotes a passage from the very end of the essay which contrasts the two roads. There are also several Tibetan discussions about "rKang lam phra mo", indicating that it continues to attract the attention of scholars and other readers.³⁷ The reason why this essay has become so popular is that it discusses the problem how to combine traditional lifestyles and modern changes in today's society. It also relates to the topic that has become so fashionable in contemporary discourse, namely the relationship between local cultures and societies and the globalizing world. Having said that, Dhondup Gyal wrote the essay in 1984, and thus the characterization of the discourse of globalization is only retrospective.

The essay is written in a personal prose style which tells the experiences of the first-person voice. The image of a narrow footpath is painted carefully and it becomes connected with both the personal history of the narrator and the history and legends of the Tibetan people. Mark Stevenson has insightfully pointed out that the style of Dhondup Gyal's essay bears a resemblance to the style of Lu Xun:

34 Tashi Palden (bKra shis dpal ldan 1991: 433) has described the style of this essay as a combination of romanticism (*char yan*) and realism (*dnegos yod*), also mentioning the influence of Western modernist style (p. 458).

35 According to information in Pema Bhum's list (Don grub rgyal 1994: 51), it originally appeared in *sBrang char* 1984 (3): 1–5.

36 Rang grol [Dhondup Gyal] 1997.

37 See, for example, Dongpa Thar's essay, (lDong dpa' thar 2002) "A Call from the Depths of Mind"; and Dekyi Tso's (bDe skyid 'tsho 1995) essay, half of which is devoted to a discussion of "rKang lam phra mo". Choekyong's book contains a subchapter entitled "<rKang lam phra mo>> las mngon pa'i sems kham rigs shig", which discusses this essay (Chos skyong 2006: 244–255).

“A Threadlike Path” is similar to Lu Xun’s writing in a number of ways, evidence that Don grub rgyal may have been influenced by the Chinese author’s *zawen*: a meditative essay style, part autobiographical sketch and part social satire. It is almost certain that Don grub rgyal would have been exposed to Lu Xun’s style during his studies. (Stevenson, “Paths and Progress”)³⁸

Dongpa Thar (IDong dpa' thar 2002: 26) has characterized the style of “rKang lam phra mo” as a mixture of romanticism and realism. Choekyong (Chos skyong 2006: 244–246) discusses the question whether this work by Dhondup Gyal should be classified as a story or an essay. He opts for the latter, basing his choice on the views of a Chinese critic. The principal reason is that a story mainly focuses on characters and their lives, whereas this is not necessarily the case in an essay.³⁹

At first the narrow footpath in “rKang lam phra mo” is a mental image in the mind of the speaker of the essay that remembers the landscape of his native region. This central image of the essay is contrasted with another image of a path, that of the new highway passing through the region. Primarily, these images are concrete, but reading the text it becomes evident that Dhondup Gyal’s paths can also be understood metaphorically. The Tibetan scholar Choekyong (Chos skyong 2006: 247) writes how important it is to recognize the metaphoric nature of the footpath and how the concept of the “magnificent history and glory of Tibet” is combined in the image.⁴⁰ The concept of *brtse dungs* is often used by Tibetan critics in connection with speaking about modern Tibetan poetry. Choekyong too mentions the concept of *brtse dungs*, which in its general meaning is translated as ‘love’, but when discussing a literary work it could be translated as ‘emotion’ and be related to the expression of subjectivity. He gives also “mind-scape” (*sems khamts rigs shig*) as an explanation of the concept. Therefore, the essay

38 Stevenson 1997: 58. Some of Lu Xun’s essays can be found in *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*. If one looks at the three essays that comprise “Excerpts from Wild Grass”, it is possible to see some features that resemble, for instance, the reflections of the first-person voice about his life and some personifications of nature. In a collection titled *Selected Stories of Lu Hsun*, his short story “My Old Home” ends in an image of a road associated with hope. See the translation by Yang Hsien-yi & Gladys Young 1960: 54–64.

39 The name of the Chinese person is given in a Tibetan spelling (and here in Wylie transliteration) as “Ma krin hphang”.

40 When discussing this essay, Choekyong uses the words *bsdus brjod* and *bsdus gzugs*, roughly translated as ‘combined saying’ and ‘combined form’, to express the idea of metaphor. According to the dictionary Krang dbyi sun (1993) *bsdus brjod gyi rgyan* (1489) is one of the figures of speech classified under the category of *don rgyan*, “ornaments of meaning” (Skt. *arthālamkāra*). According to the definition given in this dictionary, *bsdus brjod kyi rgyan* is an ornament in which the target domain (*dpe can*) of a source domain image (*dpe*) is understood through inference.

“rKang lam phra mo” would represent the inner emotion and view of its writer rather than the external landscape.⁴¹ He furthermore stresses (2006: 250) the special quality of the metaphor saying that it is “a metaphor of superior artistic quality”. Choekyong is clearly right in his view, but one should not forget the representation of external landscape in the essay. It is possible to view this essay as a work that blends the two frameworks of the internal view of the destinies of the Tibetan people and the external framework of the depiction of a landscape of the native region of the first-person voice and the path leading there. At least for a reader coming from another place it is also fascinating to read about the path in the mountainous landscape in Amdo.

The ways in which Tibetan people lead their lives may be seen metaphorically as making a journey by proceeding along a path.⁴² The crucial question is which path should one take when there are more than one alternative available. Lakoff and Turner (1989: 4) have pointed out that there is a correspondence and possible mapping between “crossroads” from the domain of journeys and “choices in life”. Also, at the end of Dhondup Gyal’s essay the speaker stands at a crossroads. Choosing a path depends on where one would like to go, and this brings the discourse to the topic of the future of Tibetans. Stevenson (1997: 59) writes about the image of the path saying: “the path is perhaps most centrally a metaphor for the narrative production of personal and cultural identity”. The question of identity is indeed a topic that is very significant for Tibetans these days when they have to live under the rule of the People’s Republic of China and are struggling to retain and keep alive their own unique Tibetan culture.

To discuss the central image of the narrow footpath I will take a look at the ways in which it is characterized in Dhondup Gyal’s essay. In fact, the lively image of the path is enhanced by likening it to a blue dragon in Dhondup Gyal’s simile. The first-person narrator of the essay stresses the ancient nature of the path and the cultural memories attached to it by the Tibetans. The path also evokes personal memories for the writer of his life and childhood. It seems to represent the history of one’s forefathers and also one’s personal history. A Tibetan critic Dekyi Tso (bDe skyid 'tsho 1995: 20, 21) writes in her essay about Dhondup Gyal’s works that the narrow footpath represents the “origins and vicissitudes of our [Tibetan] history”. She writes how the essay shows the gap between modern and traditional Tibetan culture and its function is to “wake the Tibetans from the sleep of ignorance and underdevelopment”. When the image

41 Chos skyong 2006: 246.

42 In the short story “Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs” the life of a person is also metaphorically depicted as “a great path with many curves” (see Rang grol 1984: 43).

of a narrow path is mapped onto history, the idea is of course connected with ideas of time. According to cognitive theory the human understanding of time is often metaphorically related to the idea of moving in a space.⁴³ Taking steps on a path is a concrete image that is simultaneously linked to the understanding of time. Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 151) point out that time metaphors: “arise from our most common everyday embodied experience of functioning in the world”. When something moves to another location, it is easily understandable that the movement takes its own time. Earlier the image of rivers could be linked with an understanding of time, moving along paths being a way of discussing continuums of time, involving a place from where one started on the journey, movement along a route and a future destination.

In Dhondup Gyal’s “rKang lam phra mo” the narrow path raises several ideas in the mind of the first-person voice:

*ngas rkang lam phra mo de yid la dran thengs rer/ bsam pa'i dran shes kyi yol ba'i
ngos la 'char yan gyi snang brnyan mang po zhig dbang med du shar 'ongs pa dang/
brjod bya mi gsal ba'i gtam rgyud kyi 'gros snyan mo zhig nga'i thos 'dzin gyi bu ga
brgyud de sems kyi gting dang glo rgyu'i mtshams na lhang lhang du grags pa'i snang
ba ster cing mchis/ ngo ma de ni nga tsho dang rgyang thag shin tu ring ba'i gna' snga
mo'i dus kyi gtam rgyud cig red/
(Don grub rgyal, “rKang lam phra mo”)⁴⁴*

Every time when I remember the narrow footpath in my mind, many pictures from the imagination spontaneously arise on the screen of my memory. The pleasant narration of a story of unclear topic appears to come through the holes of my ears and sounds clearly in the depths of my mind and in the middle of my lungs and intestines. It is a story coming from far off ancient times.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Narrow Footpath”)

The footpath is a rich source for the imagination and it brings ancient stories to the narrator’s mind. In the essay the opinions of the elder villagers about the origins of the path connect it to old traditions of people long dead, to stories about King Gesar and even to the myth of the origins of the Tibetan people. Here although the image of a path is very common cross-culturally in metaphorical expressions of the “journey of life” type, it is noteworthy how the image of “a narrow path” is given a very typical Tibetan flavour. Tibetan myths and legends are mentioned and the old people believe it to be a path of supernatural beings – an image relating the path of tradition to mythical beliefs. Therefore we can consider that the image of the path brings together both cross-cultural and

43 Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 139.

44 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 1.

specifically Tibetan cultural features. The cross-cultural features can be explained by the universal features of human cognition and the very general structure that relates the journeys of life times to the journeys undertaken through concrete routes on earth. The Tibetan cultural flavour of the image is created through several means, namely depicting the path in the landscape of Amdo, connecting it to various Tibetan legends and epic traditions and also depicting Tibetan people such as a lama and a monk reciting the refuge formula on the path. The Tibetan people's prejudices towards the new highway are also depicted, as the people of the mountain village still opt for the narrow footpath even after the construction of the new highway.

Although in this essay the narrow path is much admired and seen in a deeply nostalgic light, the importance of innovation and creativity is also raised. This theme may also be found in several free verse poems of Dhondup Gyal, such as, for instance, in "Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying gson po zhig 'dug" ("Here Too Is a Heart Alive Strongly Beating"). The narrator of "rKang lam phra mo" admires how the ancient people have created the path but also criticizes the people of his days (himself included) for not having improved it further. He enumerates several means of modern transportation, but says that the Tibetans "are still slowly riding donkeys along the narrow footpath".⁴⁵ The new highway in the essay is characterized as "big and wide" and many vehicles are going along it. However, most Tibetans still use the old footpath and the text speaks about the difference in views of "those carrying a basket" and "those riding in vehicles". At the end the first-person narrator stands at the crossroads of the highway and the footpath. The future in front (the "path in front") is described as "wonderfully shining with thousands of lights". Thinking of his people and his country, he chooses the highway.⁴⁶

The essay of Dhondup Gyal can be compared with another more recent prose work by the Chinese author Zhang Wei. His essay "Blending into the Untamed Land" was written in 1992 and translated into English by Terrance Russell in 2005.⁴⁷ There is something similar in the works, though not in all respects. In both works one's place of origin is viewed in a very nostalgic light and the image of the path is found in both. However, the Tibetan and Chinese writers make opposite choices: Zhang Wei returns along the path to his native place, and his native land and its wilderness seem to be viewed as a source of creativity, whereas Dhondup Gyal steps onto the highway leading to development and modernity.

45 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 5.

46 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 6.

47 Her translation with an introduction was published in *Studies on Asia*, Fall 2005.

It is possible that the later date of the Chinese work accounts for the difference. Already disappointed with urban lifestyles its Chinese author wishes to start a movement back to the native region, and its culture and presents a view of creativity as blending with the wilderness of the natural environment. However, “Blending into the Untamed Land” may also be interpreted metaphorically in several ways. The wish of the voice to blend with the untamed land and his search for the wilderness may perhaps be interpreted as a quest of the writer for artistic creativity and a kind of creative impulse. Dhondup Gyal, on the other hand, lived in a society that was still strongly traditional and clung to the traditional culture and way of life, and thus his wish to travel down a new road can be viewed as looking for some kind of new direction and openness.

Tibetan critics generally emphasize the love Dhondup Gyal had for his own people and country.⁴⁸ This reflects the fact that Dhondup Gyal almost always writes about his own people (the exception being the poem praising Liu Shaoqi) and in “rKang lam phra mo” he ponders the history and future of his own people. However, the significance of the highway has not been reflected in that much detail in the essay. The first-person voice tells that the reason for its construction was to transport natural treasures from the region, and it is described as a noisy place with many vehicles.⁴⁹ It obviously functions as an image of modernity and modern life styles. Significantly, Dhondup Gyal lovingly views the old foot-path representing the traditional life-styles of Tibetans and then stands at the crossroads contemplating. The reader is tempted to imagine the writer himself at the crossroads of traditional literature and modern literature, admiring the tradition but nevertheless setting out on the new path. However, the focus of the essay would seem to be on contemplating the wider question of tradition and modernity.

Dhondup Gyal’s essay is not the only instance in literature where an image of two paths is employed. Lakoff and Turner in *More than Cool Reason* (1989: 3) quote a passage from Robert Frost’s poem “The Road Not Taken” that bears a striking similarity with Dhondup Gyal’s juxtaposition of images of two paths. Frost’s paths are in a forest and the Western poet opts for the path that is less popular, not wanting to choose the mainstream path. One interpretation here is autobiographical – Frost’s choice to become a poet. Dhondup Gyal, on the other hand, chooses the great highway, which raises the question where does it

48 See bDe skyid 'tsho 1995: 21. She writes that in “rKang lam phra mo” Dhondup Gyal has “used the pen of deep love” that “shows a special love and affection for his own people”. Sangye Rinchen (Sangs rgyas rin chen 2006: 48–49) considers that Dhondup Gyal always had in mind the Tibetan people and their development and well-being.

49 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 7.

lead? Lakoff and Turner (1989: 3) have discussed the basic metaphor PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS where the goals of one's action and deeds are metaphorically understood with the help of spatial imagery. Highways may lead to almost any locations, but interpreting the essay it seems that the destination intended is "modernity" as the new highway is contrasted to the narrow path that functioned as an image of Tibetan history. In the essay Dhondup Gyal has not explicitly written where the "shining highway" leads to, but as the general theme of the work seems to be discussing tradition and modernity, the reader is led to interpret the "highway" as representing a way to "modernity".⁵⁰ The images of the two ways – the narrow path and the highway – could, however, be interpreted on a more general level to represent local cultures as opposed to the move towards global cultures that characterizes today's society.

Dhondup Gyal's literary production also contains an image of the path of literature. A passage displaying a metaphor having the source domain of "path" and the target domain of "literature" can be found in the poem "rTsom gyi mtsho mor rlabs kyi me tog dgod":

*bskal pa shin tu bzang po deng gi dus// bu mo spun mched gsum gyi las dbang tshos//
ma 'dres rnam par ston pa'i sgron me yis// rtsom lugs gsar pa'i lam bzang thog mar
phyes//*

(Don grub rgyal, "rTsom gyi mtsho mor rlabs kyi me tog dgod")⁵¹

In the recent highly auspicious times/ the fates of the three sisters /
the clearly illuminating lamp,/ first opened the good path of new literature
(Dhondup Gyal, "In the Lake of Writing the Flower Waves Are Blooming")

The "three sisters" seems to refer to a short story by Kelsang Namdol (sKal bzang rnam sgröl) that Dhondup Gyal included in the collection of Tibetan modern prose which he edited. The volume appeared under the title *sGrung rtsom phyogs bsgrigs me tog phreng mdzes* and contained prose that had appeared between 1980 and 1982 in various Tibetan language literary magazines. The allusion to the story of the three sisters in Dhondup Gyal's poem would appear to attribute the beginning of the new literature to the early 1980s. The expression "the good path of new literature" is metaphorical, and the notion of "opening" the path

50 John M. Flower has done research on cultural landscape in China. In his article "A Road is Made: Roads, Temples, and Historical Memory in Ya'an County, Sichuan" he writes that the road symbolizes development and hope for people living in the villages in the countryside (2004: 651). He also discusses the importance of road building projects in the 1950s and points out their important role for Communist policies of modernization, characterizing road building as "a local manifestation of national construction" (pp. 654–665).

51 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 138–139.

metaphorically expresses a start. The image of the “path” evokes the association that paths progress and lead to some other place, thus creating the idea that the new literature is also a path: it will lead somewhere. Thus one can select this path and write new literature. “The path” is characterized with as “good”, suggesting a positive attitude to new styles of writing.

8. CORPORAL IMAGERY

In this chapter I shall discuss how parts of the human body have been employed in Dhondup Gyal's imagery. I shall pay special attention to the organ of the heart and the inner organs because they have a more salient role in his works than images of other parts of the body. The free verse poem "Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying gson po zhig 'dug" ("Here Too Is a Heart Alive Strongly Beating") is particularly interesting from the viewpoint of corporal imagery. At the end of the chapter I shall concentrate on the analysis of personification with a particular focus on personifications which relate to women. The free verse poem "Goms gshis lags/ bdag gi snying gtam 'di la gson" ("Convention, Please Listen to My Heart-Felt Words") is one of Dhondup Gyal's works that has not received much scholarly attention. Its central image is a personification of an abstract concept in the form of a beautiful woman, and some other personifications related to the figure and characteristics of women will also be touched upon.

The concept of embodiment is of central importance in cognitive theory.¹ This concept has to do with our bodily physical nature and the importance of taking this nature into account in our efforts to understand the formation of metaphors. Part of the metaphors in our language and literary creation are projections from our own bodily nature to other domains such as the outside world and abstract concepts. It is possible to study how parts of human bodies such as the head, the hands, the heart, and so on have been used as source domains of images.² Naturally, our own body is familiar and understandable to us and using it as an image may make other concepts more understandable too.

The body can appear both as a target domain and a source domain. We tend to discuss ourselves metaphorically with the help of concepts from other domains, and we may also use ourselves as source domains to speak and write metaphorically about the reality outside ourselves. When human and natural properties are not combined into a blend and it is possible to discern source and target domains, then often a kind of crossing in terms of metaphorical mappings may be noticed.

1 For cognitive views on embodiment, see Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 16–44.

2 Cognitive theory has paid a great deal of attention to the human body as a source domain for metaphors. See, for example, Gibbs & Wilson 2002. Esperanza Alfonso (2006) in her article "The Body, Its Organs and Senses: A Study of Metaphor in Medieval Hebrew Poetry of Praise" has studied organism metaphors in Hebrew by making use of concepts from cognitive theory and also applying some theoretical insights of Ricoeur.

In literary works nature imagery may be mapped onto human persons and human imagery onto various features and phenomena of nature or external reality. However, it is not always necessary to map the parts of the body somewhere outside ourselves – it is also common that corporal imagery becomes employed to depict human relations and other human concerns and emotions. I will also pay attention to how sometimes characteristics of human action and feeling are attributed to nature and the forms this takes in the writings of Dhondup Gyal.

It is interesting and worthwhile to ask how we use and see other phenomena outside ourselves in terms of our own body and our human characteristics and behaviour. The concept of embodiment is related to our bodily nature and our acquiring of experiences through the “filter” of our bodily existence that is also thought to affect our figurative processes of thought. In some cases, like that of anger discussed above, there is a clear neurophysiological basis for metaphor structuring. I have understood the mappings from nature to humans and vice versa as intermingling. However, the concept of embodiment is applicable to virtually any artistic creation and reception of imagery, because of the role of human perception and experience in these processes. In a way everything that we know about the external world is filtered through us; it is impossible for us to imagine a way of perception and experience that would exclude our human nature.

8.1 Being alive: Heart and its pulse

The heart may be viewed as a central organ due to its location in the chest in the middle of the body and also because of its vital importance for the function of the whole bodily system. When in the Western tradition the heart is used as an image, it is primarily considered as a symbol of love, although there are some other uses too. Pictorial images of the heart in the Western tradition are neat, even and beautifully and symmetrically shaped. The Tibetan use of the heart as a source domain image is quite different in that it is not so strongly concentrated on expressing love between the opposite sexes, although these days the influences from Western culture may also effect its use.³

The bodily basis of organism metaphors is of course clear. In *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things* Lakoff (1987/1990: 271–278) writes about the theory of kinaesthetic image schemas that was first introduced by Mark Johnson. These schemas have to do with conceptual patterns whose foundations are located in

³ In a poem by Gangshey titled “Ngag dbang lha mo” (“Ngawang Lhamo”) that speaks about the suffering after the ending of a love affair, the pictorial symbol of a heart in a rather big size has been actually drawn in the middle of the Tibetan language sentence in which the voice of the poem says how he offered his heart to a woman when in love (Gangs bzhad (n.d.): 30).

our bodily experience in the spatial sense. Discussing the image of the heart, the notion of The CENTER-PERIPHERY Schema presented in Lakoff's (1987: 274) book seems relevant: normally the centre is thought to be more important and essential and it has a role in defining the identity of the thing, creature or phenomena. As parts of this kinaesthetic image schema he mentions: "an ENTITY, a CENTER, and a PERIPHERY". When thinking about the human body, the heart could represent the centre and the limbs the periphery. Although the entity of the human body with its parts could be viewed as a concrete entity on which schema may be applied, abstract ideas and phenomena may also have "cores" and "peripheries". In Tibetan language expressions the notion of the heart as the centre has been observed by Schwiieger (2003: 109). We will now take a look at Dhondup Gyal's use of the image of the heart and its relation to Lakoff's CENTER-PERIPHERY Schema.

In the literary works of Dhondup Gyal the heart is often used in connection with depicting the feeling a parent has for a child, and normally this image appears in the form of a simile. It is an image that can also be found in fairy tales. The image of the heart in this type of simile very often occurs together with the image of an eye. In the same way as an eye or a heart are close and essential for a human being, so is one's child dear to oneself. In the short story "rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma" ("A Shameless Bride") a simile with the source domain image of the heart is used to describe how lovingly father Soepa took care of his daughter Kuntu Sangmo after his wife, the child's mother, had died of famine:

*de nas bzung/ bzod pa ni pha ma gnyis kyi tshab byas te/ rang gi sha dang khrag las
chad pa'i bu mo la dpral ba'i mig dang khong gi snying bzhin gces skyong byas/
(Don grub rgyal, "rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma")⁴*

From then onwards Soepa did the tasks of both parents, lovingly taking care of the girl born from his own flesh and blood like the eye of his forehead and his heart.
(Dhondup Gyal, "A Shameless Bride")

This kind of simile may also be found in the folklorist tradition. For example, in the folk story "Khrul snang" ("Error"), which ends in a very tragic way, there is at the beginning a similar kind of simile which explains how the farming couple took care of their small son "like the heart of their chest and the eye of their face".⁵

There are several occurrences of this simile of loving one's child in the works of Dhondup Gyal. Similar types of images can, for example, be found in "sPrul sku" ("Tulku"), "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" ("A Flower Destroyed by Frost"), "Sems

4 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 59.

5 Karma mKha' 'bum & 'Jam bu 1996: 53.

gcong” (“Depression”), and “Tshul khrim rgya mtsho” (“Tsultrim Gyatso”).⁶ In these occurrences the image of the loving care received by the child is mostly in the form of a simile. Often it occurs in connection with a verb and in these instances it seems more natural to use a simile than a metaphor.

A child is thought to be “a piece of one’s own flesh and blood” (*sha kbrag las chad pa’i dum bu*) as expressed by Lhakyi’s mother Wangtso in “Sad kyis bcom pa’i me tog”,⁷ a way of thinking common to many mothers from various cultures. This could be interpreted as a metaphor or as depicting the actual fact that children are born from the bodies of their mothers. The idea of a bodily connection between the parents and their children may also be observed in the works of Dhondup Gyal in the title of a short story “Sha dang rus pa’i brtse dungs” (“The Love of Flesh and Bone”). This tells the story of a *thangka*-painter who secretly leaves his home and returns years later only to find to his great sorrow and regret that his father has passed away. The “love of flesh and bone” in the title can be interpreted to illustrate the especially close and affectionate relationship between parents and their children. Here it is possible to interpret this as a metonymic expression where parts represent the whole rather than as a metaphor.

Another kind of usage of the image of the heart is found in the free verse poem “Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa’i snying gson po zhig ’dug” (“Here Too Is a Heart Alive Strongly Beating”). In this poem the heart is the most significant image and symbol. The title states that the heart is “alive” (*gson po*), thus attaching to it the quality of being strongly alive and representing life. Except for the title, the image of the heart only appears at the end of this poem. Despite this it functions as an image which dominates the reader’s understanding of the poem.

First I shall briefly introduce this free verse poem.⁸ Along with “Lang tsho’i rbab chu” (“The Waterfall of Youth”), it is one of Dhondup Gyal’s poems that became particularly well-known and popular among Tibetans from Amdo.⁹

6 See Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 141; Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 15 (here a child is “like a piece of [my] heart”), and Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 78. In “Tshul khrim rgya mtsho” the child is depicted as being cared for by his parents in the same way as “the yellow dot in an egg, the heart drop of inside and the black dot of the eye”. For the passage in “Sems gcong”, see Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 1.

7 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 22.

8 See also Robin’s (2002: 453–454) article on Tibetan free verse poetry for an interpretation of the central image of the poem.

9 I recall having seen a performance of this poem by a new arrival from Amdo on the stage of TIPA in Dharamsala. Also in the title of Pema Bhum’s article on Tibetan free verse poetry “The Heart-Beat of a New Generation: A Discussion of the New Poetry” (translated into English by Ronald Schwartz) it is possible to hear an echo of this poem of Dhondup Gyal.

However, if we consider the literary critical writing about Dhondup Gyal's poems, more literary critics write about "Lang tsho'i rbab chu" than "Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying gson po zhig 'dug".¹⁰ At the end of the latter the date of its composition is given as 25 July 1985. According to Pema Bhum's information in his list of Dhondup Gyal's writings it was posthumously published in the literary magazine *mTsho sngon mang tshogs sgyu rtsal* in 1987.¹¹ The Tibetan poet Jangbu also told me about the origin of the poem. According to him Dhondup Gyal wrote the poem while in Xining. Jangbu also said that he had himself typed the text of the poem from the handwritten manuscript. I have been able to consult two editions of the poem: the version in the selection of Dhondup Gyal's writings edited by Pema Bhum published in India in 1994¹² and the same poem in *The Collected Works of Dhondup Gyal*.¹³ The versions are almost identical except for a small omission in the Amnye Machen Institute's version and some differences in the line division of the verses.¹⁴

The poem begins with appreciative observations about history, culture, and the Tibetan people. The voice of the poem tells about the early history of Tibet and the origins of the Tibetan race, referring to the myth of the Tibetans being the descendants of a monkey and a rock ogress which were manifestations of the god Avalokiteśvara and the goddess Tārā. The power of the Tibetan army during the dynastic period of Tibetan history is also described.¹⁵ However, the voice of the poem criticizes the present, lamenting how difficult it is to introduce anything new to the "socialist Land of Snow". Thus the importance of innovation and creativity are emphasized.¹⁶ The idea of innovation is presented with the help of a metaphorically depicted progress (*sngon thon*) using the source domain image of gentle rain (*sbrang char*).¹⁷ Towards the end the voice of the poem addresses "the youth of the Land of Snow" stating directly how necessary innovation is.¹⁸

10 Chos skyong (2006: 303–304) mentions this poem while discussing Dhondup Gyal's courageous innovation and quotes a passage from it. Otherwise it is not very easy to locate detailed critical discussions of this poem by Western or Tibetan critics. My article "Representations of Development in Contemporary Tibetan Literature" (Virtanen 2006: 57–58) has some discussion of this free verse poem.

11 No. 1: 26–29, see Don grub rgyal 1994: 52.

12 Don grub rgyal 1994: 97–101.

13 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 90–94.

14 *The Collected Works* has on p. 93 the line "kye kye/ grogs po lags" ("Oh, oh, friend"), which is missing from the Amnye Machen edition.

15 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 90–92.

16 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 92.

17 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 93.

18 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 93.

The reader is addressed as “friend” (*grogs po*). Here Dhondup Gyal speaks directly to the intended audience of the poem: the young people of Tibet. A strong connection with Tibetan history and culture is noticeable in this work. As usual in Dhondup Gyal’s poems, the innovation (*gsar gtod*) is not defined in any exact terms but remains open for interpretation. In this particular work it could be interpreted as the capacity of cultural renewal.

Choekyong (Chos skyong 2006: 302) has described Dhondup Gyal’s innovation as follows: “If one destroys the inhibitions of one’s own mind, one has the courage of innovation. Any other kind of courage of innovation cannot be found.” He also discusses this poem and gives excerpts from it in his discussion of Dhondup Gyal’s courage of innovation (pp. 303–304). In addition to presenting the ideas of cultural continuity and the necessity of innovation, the poem could be interpreted as having a nationalistic flavour, as we have already seen when discussing the image of the blue cloud it contains (see Ch. 6.2.2). In addition to the image of the heart, the poem also has another image belonging to organism metaphors, namely “the eye of wisdom” in “the mouth of the kingdom”.¹⁹ The image of the heart is only found at the end of the poem:

*'on kyang/
nga'i mig lam du snang ba ni –
bde skyid kyi bdud rtsi yin pa dang/
nga'i rna lam du da lta'ang da dung 'gengs pa ni –
ma 'ongs pa'i 'tsho ba yin/
'di ni/ nga'i sems na drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying gson po zhig yin la/
'di ni/ phal cher khyed rang tsho'i sems na –
drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i
snying gson po zhig –
yin kyang srid//*
(Don grub rgyal, “Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying gson po zhig 'dug”)²⁰

However,
what appears in front of my eyes –
is the nectar of happiness and
what still now fills my ears –
is the life of the future
this is the living heart beating strongly in my mind
this is perhaps in your minds too –

19 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 93.

20 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 93–94.

a living heart
 strongly beating.
 (Dhondup Gyal, “Here Too is a Heart Alive Strongly Beating”)

The heart is characterized as “strongly beating”, using the present progressive tense. It is metaphorical to say that “the heart beats in the mind”. Pulsating is a basic physiological function of the heart in the human body: here it is being mapped onto ideas of happiness and future. However, in the Tibetan tradition the mind is sometimes thought to be located in the area of the heart. In this poem the heart is central all the time in the speaker’s thoughts. The word “this” (*di*) could refer to “the nectar of happiness” and “the life of the future” but it could also have a wider application to the contents of the entire poem or at least to the preceding lines of this passage discussing the need for the power of innovation.

The poem addresses the necessity to orientate towards the future, not the past, however magnificent it may have been. It discusses the entire nation, the Tibetans and their “Land of Snow” (*gangs ljongs*). It is not completely clear what the heart in the mind is, and it requires interpretation. However, the poem strongly asserts that the heart is alive, and is a symbol of being alive. Part of the poem describes the past, the heart is beating in the present and the poem looks toward the future. A kind of continuity can be observed, and the poem could be interpreted in terms of cultural continuity: the Tibetan people and culture which have long roots in the past is still surviving and alive. But to survive it is essential to look towards the future without being conservative or holding on to past events and history.

If we think of the image of the heart in this poem in terms of the structural elements of the cognitive CENTER-PERIPHERY Schema, then the heart would be “a centre” as it is important and vital, and in the poem it is strongly alive. In the human being the periphery would be the limbs, toes, and fingers, and the entity would be the body. However, in the poem the schema is only partially applied. Our common understanding of the vitality and importance of the heart for a human body to stay alive is drawn upon. This vitality or life energy is metaphorically projected onto the entire race of people and its culture, and what results is a more abstract understanding and discourse. The basis for comprehending the image of heart is connected with our physical bodily nature which is concrete and close to us all, but the metaphoric usage creates a completely different understanding of what it means to be alive and have a living beating heart. This new understanding could be interpreted as a kind of openness and creative power.

Another of Dhondup Gyal’s free verse poems contains imagery related to the heart. In “Lang tsho’i rhab chu” (“The Waterfall of Youth”) the word “organ of life” (*sroggi dbang bo*) is used to denote “the heart” (*nying*). In this poem the image

of the body (*bem po'i lus po*) is mapped onto history. The voice of the poem envisions what kind of difficulties would follow if the body did not have a heart “that is in accordance with the times”. The difficulties are expressed with the help of three metaphors, two of them belonging to corporal imagery: without the heart-beat of innovation, “the pulsating pulse of development would be impossible and the heart blood of progress could not circulate”.²¹ To speak about development and progress using the closely-related images of pulse (*'phar rtsa*) and heart blood (*snying khrag*) points towards the great importance of these concepts to the voice of the poem. Without them life cannot exist.

A traditional Tibetan image of the heart is found in the *Ma ṅi bka' bum* which contains an ancient legend about a demoness who lies in the earth and whose heart is located under the place where the Ramoche Temple in Lhasa was built. The demoness (*srin mo*) is depicted in the passage describing the problems faced when building a temple in Lhasa, and the astrological calculations and instructions which the Chinese princess Kongjo gives to overcome the difficulties of building temples in Tibet.²² The legend tells how the land of Tibet resembles a demoness. The location of her heart can be understood when the text says that her heart blood (*snying khrag*) is the lake named 'O thang mtsho. Only after the lake is filled can the temple be built.²³ The legend does not explain directly the meaning of the demoness and her heart blood, but because it is necessary to fill the lake to control the demoness, it could be interpreted that the heart blood represents her life power. Therefore it can be said that the image of the heart is used traditionally here to express the idea of being alive. Most evidently, this use of the image is grounded on the essential role of the heart for human beings and other creatures to stay alive. Both the legend of the demoness and Dhondup Gyal's free verse poems that were discussed above use this same idea of expressing with the heart the idea of staying alive, vitality, and survival. However, the images of course differ in the sense that Dhondup Gyal has used the image of the heart to signify cultural survival, continuity, and the power of creating anew, whereas in the ancient legend the demoness is subdued when the lake which is conceived as her heart blood is dried up.

Although the heart is not the main symbol of romantic feelings in Tibetan culture, it has some applications in this field too. If we consider the lexical expression *snying sdug*, which could be translated ‘darling’ or ‘beloved’, its first

21 Rang grol 1983: 60.

22 For the legend of the demoness and building temples in Tibet, see *Ma ṅi bka' bum*, I: 569–574.

23 Connecting the life power of a person or creature to some place or object may be found in a wide variety of folk tales and it has been called the life-index motif. For information on this motif especially in Indian literature, see Norton's (1920) article.

syllable has the word *snying*, meaning ‘heart’.²⁴ The beloved is a person to whom one feels attracted from one’s heart. The hearts of persons who attract each other get metaphorically closer. An example of this can be found in the short story “Mi rtag sgyu ma’i rmi lam” (“An Impermanent Illusory Dream”). When the main male character of this story speaks with Lhadon (Lha sgron), it is said that “their mouths and minds became more amicable, their hearts more close and their lungs became happier”.²⁵ Two hearts beating closer expresses the positive feeling of closeness and liking. In this story the male character and Lhadon fall in love. Discussing metaphors related to the heart Peter Schwieger (2003: 109) mentions several lexicalized metaphors, insightfully formulating this into the conceptual structure: “Das Herz ist Geist und Gefühl”, ‘The heart is both mind and feeling’. There is a difference in the Western and Tibetan way of thinking about the mind: whereas people from the West normally locate the mind in their head, the Tibetans often tend to instinctively locate it in the region of the heart. However, the heart as a place for deep feelings seems to be an idea shared by both Tibetan and Western cultures. In “Tshul khirms rgya mtsho” the feeling of a man becoming attracted to a woman is expressed with the notion that the woman “entered through the gap of the door of the heart” of the man (*snying gi sgo srub tu ’dzul*). However, the man in question is an ordained monk. He depicts his situation and how he resisted female temptation with a composite image containing a simile and a metaphor: “my mind like a mad elephant” (*rang gi sems glang chen smyon pa lta bu*) which is bound by “the rope of vows” (*sdom khirms kyi thag pa*).²⁶

8.2 Inner organs, human concerns, and emotion

The inner organs of the body are often used as images in Dhondup Gyal’s writings. Roughly characterized, there seems to be two main types of uses for images of inner organs: one related to expressing the relation of two persons and the other using the images to express sentiment and emotion. These metaphors are special in that usually the images of parts of body are not mapped onto some completely different domains, but the target domains are often related to human behaviour, such as emotions, feelings, relations, and concerns. Of the first type, one of the images that appears several times is the metaphor of “the lungs and

24 *sDugpa* has several meanings, one of them being ‘attractive’ and as a noun ‘a close friend’ and also ‘a secret consort’. Krang dbyi sun 1993: 1468.

25 Tib. “kho rang gnyis kyis lab gleng byed bzhin kha sems je mthun yin pa dang/ snying je nye dang glo ba’ang je dga’ ru gyur song/” (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 342). I do not know whether *glo ba* “lung” is the intended meaning, or whether the spelling should be *blo* “mind”.

26 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 106.

intestines of two persons being combined”. It expresses a specially friendly and close relation between two persons, though not usually of a sexual kind. This image is found both in Dhondup Gyal’s short story “sPrul sku” (“Tulku”) and in his fairy tale “Bu ldom po dang klu’i sras mo” (“The Wanderer Boy and the Daughter of Nāgas”). In the former it is used to describe the friendly relation between two women, Drugmo (’Brug mo) and Cagmo Jam (lCags mo byams). The story also contains another bodily image to express their closeness, namely the two women are likened to “body and its shadow”, which are inseparable.²⁷

A passage from “Bu ldom po dang klu’i sras mo” provides a concrete idea about this type of imagery. This story is special in its fairy tale character and thus differs from other short stories by Dhondup Gyal.²⁸ It appeared originally in the *sBrang char* literary magazine in 1981 and it is indicated that the author is Dhondup Gyal. *The Collected Works* also contain another fairy tale-like story, “Lham ya gcig” (“A Pairless Shoe”), though in the original *sBrang char* edition it says that Dhondup Gyal was its collector and editor. “Bu ldom po dang klu’i sras mo” contains a passage where the ministers notice the closeness between the *nāga*-girl and the wanderer boy and bring it to the attention of the *nāga*-king, who becomes angry. The closeness of the *nāga*-girl Gangkar Dolma (Gangs dkar sgrol ma) and the wanderer boy is described as follows:

*bu ldom po dang klu’i sras mo gnyis mdza’ zhing mthun la/ nang sgos su kho gnyis glo
dang rgyu ma’ dres pa dang/ lus dang grib ma’ grogs pa ltar nyin mtshan kun tu’ bral
med lhan du sdod pa’i tshul de mthong nas/ [...]*

(Don grub rgyal, “Bu ldom po dang klu’i sras mo”)²⁹

The wanderer boy and the daughter of *nāgas* were affectionate and amicable. It was as if their lungs and intestines had become mixed and like a body accompanied by its shadow, they stayed inseparable day and night together. Seeing that [...]

(Dhondup Gyal, “The Wanderer Boy and the Daughter of Nāgas”)

The first image is either a metaphor or a simile for closeness and the second image is a simile marked by the word “like” (*ltar*).³⁰ In “sPrul sku” these two images appear in the same passage and the image of the “lungs and intestines

27 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 129.

28 For more information about the contents of this story, see Ch. 10.

29 Don grub rgyal 1981c: 24.

30 The first image does not contain an expression indicating the relation of similarity, however, as the two images are here connected with the particle *dang* ‘and’, it can be thought that the particle *ltar* can affect the first part of the phrase too, turning it into a simile. Here the first image, depending on interpretation, could be translated both as a metaphor and a simile depending on the translator’s choice.

being mixed” is a metaphor and the image about the “body accompanied by its shadow” is in the form of a simile (with the particle *lta bu*, ‘resembling’).³¹ However, there is still another image of closeness preceding the first-mentioned image: the characters Drugmo and Cagmo Jam are described as “friends whose mouth and insides are harmonious and lungs and intestines mixed” (*kha khog pa mthun zhing glo rgyu ma 'dres pa'i grogs mo*).³² In these images physical combinations of organs and their harmony with each other is understood to express the close relation between two persons.

The mouth, the inside of the body (*khog pa*), and some inner organs can be pictured in expressions which appear to be quite idiomatic. They are used to express the idea of speaking openly and not hiding anything in one’s words. Examples can be found in several short stories, such as “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”³³ and “Brong stag thang” (“The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”). This example comes from the latter:

*lcags byams kyis kyang gnas tshul rnam kha khog pas ma gsang/ blo rgyu mas ma
bskums par zhib tu bshad/
(Don grub rgyal, “Brong stag thang”)³⁴*

Cagjam too explained in detail the situation without hiding his mouth with his inside and without covering his mind with intestines.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”)

In this image, which is so idiomatic that it could perhaps also be classified as a proverb, the inner organs are considered to be something that could possibly hide, cover or obscure something. The proverb uses these ideas to set up a contrast by employing the grammatical structure of negation.

The short story “Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam” (“The Impermanent Illusory Dream”) contains the image of “lungs and intestines”. These two are paired together in many images in Dhondup Gyal’s writings. In this short story the

31 Other examples of the simile “like body and its shadow” expressing closeness and inseparability are found in “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo” (Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 8) and in “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 23 and Part 2: 15). The latter also contains an image of mental closeness between two persons: “thoughts agreeable like the mixture of water and milk” (*bsam pa chu dang 'o ma 'dres pa ltar mthun pa*). The expression “lus dang grib ma mnyam 'grogs” is also included in the *dPe chos tshig mdzod* dictionary and it explains it as “an image of mutual inseparability” (*phan tshun mi 'bral ba'i dpe*; dPa' ris sangs rgyas 1999: 451). The dictionary illustrates the use quoting an extract from a Gesar story entitled “Hor gling g.yul 'gyed”.

32 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 129.

33 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 27–28.

34 Don grub rgyal 1981b: 11.

narrator, who is unable to attain a high position, expresses his suffering by means of two metaphors:

*kho rang gis de ltar chig lab byed bzhin du sems skya mo sdug gis gang ba dang/ glo
rgyu ma rnag gis khengs song/
(Don grub rgyal, “Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam”)³⁵*

when he was speaking alone like that his mind became filled with suffering
and his lungs and intestines were filled with pus.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Impermanent Illusory Dream”)

Mere thoughts and emotions do not normally cause one’s inner organs to fill with pus, for such things are rather caused by some serious medical conditions. Here the image of “lungs and intestines becoming filled with pus” suggests the intensity of mental suffering.

The Tibetan conceptions in folk beliefs related to the lungs (*glo ba*) seem to differ from Western ideas, or more exactly, the organ of the lungs is used in a different way in metaphoric expressions. There are passages where the lungs are said “to vibrate”, suggesting a strong emotion. Such a passage is, for instance, found in “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma”. The eponymous character, Kuntu Sangmo, has escaped from her husband, Soebhe (bSod bhe), and left behind her little son:

*lha mtsho dang bzod pa gnyis gnyen bsgrigs pa des kho la snying rlung langs su bcug pa
dang/ kun tu bzang mos dor ba'i ma med kyi bu chung de'i ngu skad kyis kho la glo
ba 'phar du bcug
(Don grub rgyal, “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma”)³⁶*

the [fact] that Lhatso and Soepa had got married caused the “heart wind” to
arouse in him, and the sound of the crying of the motherless small boy left by
Kuntu Sangmo made his lungs vibrate.
(Dhondup Gyal, “A Shameless Bride”)

This passage contains two metaphoric expressions having to do with the human body. The first expression, the “heart wind rising”, is connected with the ideas of Indo-Tibetan medicine and it is also an idiomatic expression meaning that someone is very angry.³⁷ Sometimes these kinds of metaphoric expressions which have become lexicalized expressions of everyday language are treated by some theoreticians as “dead metaphors”, but according to cognitive theory the fact that

³⁵ Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 333.

³⁶ Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 74.

³⁷ The dictionary *dPe chos tshig mdzod* lists also the expression *snying rlung stod 'tshang* and interprets that it means to be very angry (dPa' ris sangs rgyas 1999: 176). The dictionary quotes a passage from *sNang sa 'od bum gyi rnam thar* to illustrate the use of the expression.

some expression is routinely used in everyday talk does not make it “dead”, rather the opposite. So-called “dead metaphors” are deeply embedded into language and thought and are proof of the major role metaphors play in our normal mental and linguistic processes.³⁸ In the above story “lung vibrating” seems to express the feeling of being alarmed.

Generally, when trying to locate passages that could be compared with images of parts of the body and organs in traditional literature, it would seem to be more difficult to find corporal imagery than images of natural phenomena and plants and animals.³⁹ This could possibly indicate that it is far more usual to find source domains from nature that are mapped onto target domains of humans and their concerns than to metaphorically map parts of human body onto some other target domains.

8.3 The beautiful woman of convention and other personifications

Dhondup Gyal’s works have many occurrences of images of human females that are used as source domain images mapped onto the target domains of abstract concepts and various kinds of entities and phenomena. The source domain of young smiling women may be mapped onto the target domain of blooming flowers. Images of women may also be mapped onto the phenomena of the heavens, such as the dawn in the metaphor “the girl of dawn” (*zhogs pa'i skya rengs kyi bu mo*).⁴⁰ The image of a woman or a girl is especially strongly present in two

38 For a discussion whether “dead” metaphors are alive or dead, see Lakoff & Turner 1989: 127–131.

39 This is also confirmed in Sujata’s (2005: 189–190) lists of similes and metaphors in Kalden Gyatso’s songs. In her list of similes there are only three images related either with corporal imagery or personifications: 1) “*mig’bras* [...] *srung*, protect like an eyeball”; 2) “*bu*, son”; and 3) “*srog* life”. In her list of metaphors not a single corporal image is mentioned (pp. 206–207).

40 The metaphor of the “girl of dawn” can be found in the novella “Sad kysis bcom pa’i me tog” (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 14). A beautiful example of anthropomorphic flowers can be found in “Sad kysis bcom pa’i me tog” in the passage where the natural beauty of the environment around the Malho (rMa lho) Teachers’ Training School is described. In the passage in question various kinds of flowers proudly show their “white, yellow, blue and red faces, blossoming so that each one is more attractive than the next like young girls competing who is most beautiful” (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 9). Also, for example, in the unfinished story “bTsan po’i bang sor myul ba’i gnam rgyud” we find: “khra chil gyi me tog rnam s’phyor sgeg lang tshos snyems pa’i gzhon nu ma rnam kysis mo sgo’i mdzes khyad ‘gran pa ji bzhiin yid du ‘ong ba’i zol gyis bzhad pa dang/” (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 358). “The colourful flowers like attractive young girls competing in beauty were smiling in an attractive way”. This is part of the description of the grassland telling how beautiful it would look without the cover of fog. Here the young girls are used to illustrate the beauty of flowers. Flowers are normally regarded as beautiful, mapping the image of young girls competing in beauty and the idea of smiling (=blooming) enlivens the image in the form of a simile.

works: the free verse poem “Goms gshis lags/ bdag gi snying gtam 'di la gson” (“Convention, Please Listen to My Heart-felt Words”) and the prose poem “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo” (“The Girl of the Wind”). The latter and its feminine image, were discussed in Chapter 6 when analysing the image of the wind, so here I shall concentrate on the free verse poem. In “Goms gshis lags/ bdag gi snying gtam 'di la gson” the image of a woman – “the beauty of convention” – functions as the central image. According to the Publisher’s Preface to the volume of poetry in *The Collected Works* (I: 2), this free verse poem is posthumously published for the first time in this volume.⁴¹ The poem is in the typographical form of a typical free verse poem by Dhondup Gyal, the lines descending in a step-shaped manner. At the beginning of the poem customary ways are discussed and then two central concepts of the poem are introduced: the people (*mi rigs*) and convention (*goms gshis*). Every nation or people have their own customs and the main topic of the poem is to discuss the relation of the Tibetan people to their conventions or usual ways of life. Throughout the poem the concept of convention is personified with the image of a beautiful woman, which is the central image of the poem or a discourse level metaphor. Images of beautiful women may of course be found both in traditional literature and cross-culturally, but the way the image is used here is creative and innovative.

There has not been a great deal of scholarly writing on this poem, although Choekyong mentions it in his extensive discussion on “the courage of innovation” (*gsar gtod kyi snying stobs*) in Dhondup Gyal’s works, quoting the last four lines of the poem at the beginning of Chapter 4 of his book. Choekyong (Chos skyong 2006: 271–272) interprets Dhondup Gyal’s innovation to be a matter of attitude or courage, rather than the introduction of the new or the rejection of the old. Thus, rather than discussing, for example, the image of a woman in the poem, Choekyong’s attention is concentrated on innovation as a general thematic element in Dhondup Gyal’s writings.

Choekyong’s (Chos skyong 2006: 280) discussion on the difficulties of modernization efforts in Tibetan society is illustrated by one of Dhondup Gyal’s shorter stories, “rGan po blo gyong” (“The Stubborn Old Man”). Choekyong interprets this apparently humorous and tragi-comic story to mean that successful modernization efforts are possible. Citing this story, he remarks “a vital seed does exist, but it is hidden”, and it would seem that the somewhat strange behaviour of the old man which deviates from the norms of the society could be interpreted as innovation.⁴²

41 The poem is found in Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 236–241.

42 The old man has the habit of investigating everything himself and then forming his own firm

Innovation and creativity are certainly important themes and this is also the case in the poem “Goms gshis lags/ bdag gi snying gnam 'di la gson”, which has as its central image the image of a woman. Why does this poem depict conventions with the image of a beautiful woman? Is this not contrary to Dhondup Gyal’s message of creativity expressed in so many other works? In fact, although convention is described as a “beautiful woman” (*mdzes ma*), the image is used as a means for criticizing a stubborn way of holding onto customs. It is clear that Dhondup Gyal does not advocate a conservative clinging onto conventions for the four last lines of the poem state how necessary innovation is. Innovation is vital for the survival of Tibetan culture, a view supported by Sangye Rinchen’s (Sangs rgyas rin chen 2006: 61) article, which argues that Dhondup Gyal’s writings show how important he felt it was for Tibetans to abandon conservatism and superstition. Personifying convention as a beautiful woman shows the writer’s appreciation of traditional culture, but reservations are also expressed.

According to the views of scholars of the cognitive theory of metaphor, personifications are used to make other phenomena more comprehensible by relating them to ourselves.⁴³ Convention or custom (*goms gshis*) is an abstract concept that covers a wide range of different types of human behaviour. However, “convention” usually means something that has been done before and will be repeated again. To give the concept of convention the human form of a beautiful woman and then speak about the characteristics of this woman makes the abstract concept seem much more concrete and tangible to the reader – something or rather somebody to whom one can speak to, describe her properties, attire and ornaments. “The beauty of convention” is being addressed directly with the pronoun *khyed* (‘you’) and the particle *lags* which is used when addressing somebody politely.

Dhondup Gyal’s use of personification as a central image can be paralleled with modern Chinese poetry. Michelle Yeh (1991: 66) has discussed Wang Jingzhi’s poem “Fate Is a Butcher” in her book on modern Chinese poetry. The poem, written in 1926 and quoted in Yeh’s book, has as its main image fate personified

opinion. He also takes an interest in anything new to him, and changes his behaviour accordingly. For example, he decides to wear in turn the clothes of a monk and then dresses like a Mongol, thus deviating from the dress code of his village (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 53). At the end the old man is considered to be insane by the villagers and even the animals of his own house cannot bear to see him. This story could perhaps represent the great difficulty that one might meet if one even dresses or thinks in a different way from other people, demonstrating the great power of conventions and customs. This short story does not contain many images, except at the end where anthropomorphized domestic animals address the old man (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 55).

43 For personification in cognitive theory, see Lakoff & Turner 1989: 72; Hamilton 2002. Hamilton’s (2002: 418) article also contains an interesting discussion on personifications and conceptual blends.

as a butcher, and depicts how the body and soul of the first-person voice are in the hands of the metaphorical butcher and how the butcher finally swallows his soul. The butcher's activities and tools are described in detail. Dhondup Gyal's poem is very different in theme and atmosphere, but the structuring of the entire poem around a powerful device of poetic personification is a shared feature. Characterizing the Chinese poem, Michelle Yeh insightfully observes how the metaphor in this case becomes used to "embody the substance of the poem".

In "Goms gshis lags/ bdag gi snying gtam 'di la gson" the first-person voice of the poem addresses the "beauty of convention" in a very respectful manner, although some points are questioned. The beautiful woman is said to have grown in "the cool region of snows" and has the outer characteristics of a Tibetan beauty, such as red cheeks and a pleasant nature. However, the beauty is also criticized; her way of being contented with herself is pointed out through the image of "having become crazed with poisonous beer" (*chang*). The voice also claims that the beauty's face has some wrinkles.⁴⁴ In this critique an expression occurs which is typically found in Dhondup Gyal's free verse poems: *mi rigs kyi la rgya*, 'the dignity of the people'. The beauty of convention is criticized for "having thrown the dignity of people away",⁴⁵ and speaking about self-satisfaction and wrinkles could be interpreted as a form of cultural stagnation when development has come to a halt.

The poem lists various kinds of make-up ingredients and garments from different regions such as India, Nepal, China, Bhutan, and Tadjikistan that are used to create the beautiful appearance of the woman. They could be interpreted as the influences and cultural loans the Tibetans received from other countries in former times. The voice of the poem also reminds the beauty of a time which sounds like the Stone Age when the girl was naked or wore only animal hides.⁴⁶ In a passage quite near the end of the poem a term very like *goms gshis*, namely *goms srol*, normally translated as 'custom' is used as a target domain onto which a very different type of source domain has been mapped:

*gal srid/
khyod kyis goms srol gyi 'ching sgrog de gtor thub rgyu na/
khyed rang rjes lus kyi spyi tshogs de 'i gnas sgor 'grims pa' i sdug bsngal kyang yod srid
rgyu ma red/
(Don grub rgyal, "Goms gshis lags/ bdag gi snying gtam 'di la gson")⁴⁷*

44 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 239.

45 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 239.

46 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 240.

47 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 240.

If
 you were able to destroy that binding rope of custom
 you would not have to suffer living in an underdeveloped society
 (Dhondup Gyal, “Convention, Please Listen to My Heart-felt Words”)

This poem discusses the Tibetan people and advocates development and innovation. It exhorts the “beauty of convention” to become free of bonds so that creativity might occur. Here again we have the discourse of freedom that is so typical of Dhondup Gyal’s free verse poems. This is indicative of the fact that typically the free verse poems of Dhondup Gyal seem to display a high degree of innovation, whereas in prose works and metrical poems the images are more connected with traditional imagery. Although the idea of being fettered and its opposite, being free from fetters, has connections with traditional images, there is a shift in the target domain and in what is considered freedom from bonds (see Ch. 9, images of thread-like things).

The “beauty of convention” could well be interpreted as Tibetan culture, but instead of merely attempting to preserve culture, the writer speaks in favour of creative cultural development. The society of Dhondup Gyal’s time is described as “underdeveloped”. The girl as such is beautiful but her beauty cannot be of a static kind but needs new additions, open-mindedness and renewal. The voice of the poem laments how difficult it is for the “beauty of convention” to grow and develop, and at the end of the poem it gives advice about the necessity of innovation:

*gsar byung gi stobs shugs med pa yin na/
 rgya mtsho yin kyang rul bar 'gyur la/
 gsar gtod kyi snying stobs med pa yin na/
 gsar pa yin kyang snying po ga la yod/
 (Don grub rgyal, “Goms gshis lags/ bdag gi snying gtam 'di la gson”)⁴⁸*

if there is not the power of new origination
 even an ocean will become rotten
 if there is not the courage of innovation
 even if something is new, what is the point?
 (Dhondup Gyal, “Convention, Please Listen to My Heart-felt Words”)

In brief, the poem speaks about the importance of being alive and creative. Interestingly, the source domain image is mapped on tradition itself, but a view is advocated in which the beauty could shatter her fetters, meaning that the “beauty of convention” would turn into the “beauty of creativity”.

48 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 241.

Some other words such as *mdzes ma* and *sgeg mo* referring to an attractive female are also used to form metaphors of the kind “x is woman”. For example, in the essay “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo” the earth is spoken of as *sa yi sgeg mo*, ‘the charming woman of earth’.⁴⁹ Personifying nature is very common in the works of Dhondup Gyal – a shared feature with Western romantic poetry – and there is a strong tendency in general to attribute our own human appearance and emotional states to nature.⁵⁰ We tend to enliven nature by giving it a mind and feelings. The human face may also be projected onto the outer environment, the source domain image of the face is often used projected onto the moon, both sharing a round shape, and it is common to depict objects in the sky, especially the moon, as happy, smiling and laughing.⁵¹ The short story “sGrung ba” (“The Storyteller”) contains an image of the face of the full moon, and the Pleiades is also depicted in human terms:

*nya gang zla ba'i zhal ras ni 'dzum pa'i tshems phreng dgod bzhin sngo bsangs lha
lam yangs po'i ngos na dal bur bskyod cing/ smin drug khra mo'ang yid smon skyes te
dbu ske g'yon pa'i tshul gyis zur mig lta bzhin 'dug
(Don grub rgyal, “sGrung ba”)⁵²*

the face of the full moon is laughing, showing its smiling row of teeth and moving slowly on the wide clear blue sky. Also the Pleiades felt delighted and, bending its neck to the left, looks out the side of its eyes.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Storyteller”)

In several passages the face of the moon is said to have teeth which are revealed when the moon is smiling.⁵³ The stars may also show their smiling rows of teeth. This happens, for example, in “Tshul khriims rgya mtsho” in which the stars laugh at the behaviour of the first-person narrator, who has hidden himself under a tree.⁵⁴ Although the faces of the stars are not mentioned directly, this kind of image is created in the mind of the reader who imagines the stars smiling. And just as in Western literature and visual images, the sun in Dhondup Gyal’s texts may also smile.⁵⁵ Normally heavenly objects are depicted as laughing or smiling

49 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 9–10.

50 For a discussion of imagery, especially prosopopoeia, in Western romantic poetry, see Kaunonen 2003.

51 For images of the full moon in different cultures, see Tallqvist 1948: 87–107, which also mentions the notion of the moon as smiling (p. 102).

52 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 43. The translation of the name of the constellation, *sMin drug*, is given by Das in his dictionary as “the Pleiades” (1902: 991).

53 See also the short story “Brong stag thang”, Don grub rgyal 1981b: 8.

54 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 114.

55 See, for example, the fairy tale “Bu ldom po dang klu'i sras mo”: “shar phyogs kyi ri bo'i spo nas nyi ma'ang 'dzum dmul ler shar byung’”. ‘From the peak of the eastern mountain the sun rose

and at least in the works of Dhondup Gyal depictions of heavenly bodies in extreme sadness and possibly crying are hard to find.⁵⁶ Their smiling radiant quality is self-evident, and it is common to associate light with happiness.

Just as the image of the moon can be mapped onto human faces (see Ch. 6.1) the reverse can also be the case: the face is a moon and the moon is a face. The cognitive theory of metaphor theorizes about the unidirectionality of metaphor. However, the principle is not absolute, but only characterizes a large number of metaphors.⁵⁷ In cases like the above, if the moon and the face were considered separated from their contexts in which both concepts can be switched and used as both source and target domains, unidirectionality would not seem to make so much sense. However, when we consider the situation that the images are located in a text, the direction of mapping often makes much sense, for example in stories with a plot or in narrative poetry. The directionality of metaphors is often contextually determined. Thus the mapping is done from the source to a target which functions coherently in the development of the events or plot. When the depiction is about nature, the elements of nature may naturally function as targets, and when the characters of a literary work are depicted it is normally understood that in that case the persons are targets and nature images function as source domains.

Cognitive theory explains that source domains are typically more concrete and target domains more abstract.⁵⁸ When it is a question of more abstract target domains, unidirectionality often describes the practical use of the metaphor quite well. However, when both domains are concrete and physical, it seems that the metaphorical mapping may work and be used in both directions. Of course, in the actual manifestations of the metaphor in texts, it normally becomes clear from the contexts which part is the source domain and which the target domain.

There are also other occurrences of personifications of nature in Dhondup Gyal's works. There are examples of this in a passage from "Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam" ("An Impermanent Illusory Dream"), where scenery can be said to contain the typical elements of a pastoral scene in Amdo – a kind of topos of a grassland. It contains the description of a meadow landscape that is said to look in sunshine

smiling' (Don grub rgyal 1981c: 64).

⁵⁶ However, in "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog", anticipating the tragic event in Lhakyi's life, there is a depiction of a beautiful night with a shining moon and stars, and then the voice of the narrator (here Lhakyi herself) says: "glo bur du ma rung gza' yi gnod 'tshé yong ba su zhiḡ gis shes thub/", in English: 'Who would have known that suddenly harm would come from a harmful star?' (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 12).

⁵⁷ Kövecses 2002: 6, 24–25.

⁵⁸ Kövecses 2002: 6.

as if it was “dressed in a yellow-green dress”. After describing the sounds of sheep and the nomad woman’s songs the text also speaks about “Khri shor rgyal mo feeling attracted by the song”.⁵⁹ Another example of personification of nature is the “girl of sky” (*nam mkha’i bu mo*) depicted in the poem “Nga dang khu byug gnyis ka” (“Me and the Cuckoo”). In the poem the “girl of sky” wears the “clouds of sunset” (*mtshams sprin*) and blushes in the sunshine.⁶⁰ Here the earth is personified as an attractive woman (*dbyig’ dzin nor gyi sgeg mo*) and the wind as a girl, a familiar image from our discussion of images of wind in Chapter 6.

The poem “Lang tsho’i rbab chu” is more innovative in its form of expression. The passage in the poem containing the questions young Tibetans ask the waterfall, has both animal and anthropomorphic metaphors.⁶¹ The target domains of the anthropomorphic metaphors are in traditional and modern fields of learning and skills. These are the metaphors: “the small boy of drama” (*zlos gar bu chung*), “the family legacy of astrology” (*skar rtsis kyi pha shul*), “the young man of science” (*tshan rig gi gzhon nu*), and “the girl of handicrafts” (*lag rtsal gyi bu mo*). The poem expresses serious concern about who would take care of, and in what way, the anthropomorphized fields of learning. Here the employment of first animal metaphors and then anthropomorphic metaphors creates a more human appearance for the fields of learning and skills, so that the idea of their need to be cared for can be expressed more efficiently. This could perhaps be considered an innovative kind of elaboration of the “Nurturant Family” metaphor suggested by scholars adapting the cognitive approach.⁶² Here tradition and learning are viewed as something needing nurture and care.

In the light of the images examined in this chapter, it is possible to see that Dhondup Gyal’s use of corporal images and personifications have both connections to traditional literature, cross-culturally shared features, as well as some innovative features. The main difference with the traditional texts is evidently that Dhondup Gyal has in his free verse poems used the images of a heart and a beautiful Tibetan woman to discuss matters relevant to the cultural survival and renewal of the Tibetan culture in his time. The powerful central images are innovative in their structuring in which the entire context of the poem affects

59 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 338–339. Khri shor rgyal mo is one of the names of mTsho sngon, the Blue Lake in Amdo. Another example of a landscape said to be wearing a dress is in “Sad kysis bcom pa’i me tog”, where the harvest is described as “dressed in a cloth which is yellow like gold” (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 18).

60 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 36–37.

61 Rang grol 1983: 60.

62 For cognitivist views on the “Nurturant Family metaphor”, see Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 310–318.

their interpretation. The image of the heart communicates effectively because it is grounded in the common human bodily experience of the vital importance of this organ for survival. In the poem “Goms gshis lags/ bdag gi snying gdam 'di la gson” the image of the beautiful Tibetan woman is modified to convey a meaning of the necessity of renewal and creativity by adding the wrinkles on her face and by describing her self-satisfied behaviour. No doubt the features shared with the earlier tradition and those grounded in human physiological experience contribute to the easy comprehension of the images and when an image that is already familiar to a reader is modified, applied or constructed in a slightly different way, a firm basis for its reception and understanding exists.



9. MATERIAL IMAGERY

The variety of objects and things that may function as the source domain of a metaphor or a simile is of course large in the writings of Dhondup Gyal. This chapter is devoted to images of material objects that are in most cases man-made (the exception being jewels). The images of material things may be used to express abstract ideas and concepts, making them more concrete and easier to imagine. They may be used to depict natural phenomena, feelings, and objects found in nature. In this chapter I have selected only those objects, or types of objects, that either are used very frequently or that otherwise seem to be of special interest. Some images of objects, for example, may be used to illustrate certain motifs. It seems to be more common for objects to be found scattered throughout several different stories and poems rather than a certain object would characterize a particular literary work. They are not normally central to the work in the sense that some nature images were. No poem or story by Dhondup Gyal is powerfully focused on a single object like a knot, a house, or a jewel, but when several works are examined, it is possible to find objects that might be repeatedly used metaphorically to illustrate some important or even crucial concept in the literary work.

However, some objects have an important function in Dhondup Gyal's prose works as "circulating objects". These objects are circulated among some characters in particular stories or recur repeatedly, and they seem to have a function in the evolving of the plot. These recurring objects, some of which seem to have a symbolic function, occur in such stories as "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" ("A Flower Destroyed by Frost"), "sPrul sku" ("Tulku"), and "Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs" ("The Love of Flesh and Bone"). The ring that is passed around in "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" is, of course, a well-known symbol of love.¹ In "Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs" the repeatedly occurring *thangka*-painting of a goddess is not directly explained, but can be interpreted to depict the loving mother when the entire story has been read (see also Ch. 10.1). Other circulating objects are those that the eponymous character steals in "sPrul sku", or the scarf² in "Sad kyis

1 According to Tresidder (2005: 414) a ring may symbolize many ideas, but it also signifies continuity, eternity, and a pledge, all ideas associated with rings when getting engaged or married.

2 The Tibetan word is *lag phyis* and the literal meaning is 'a towel'. In the novella the object in question is given as a present and worn on women's heads.

bcom pa'i me tog", and the small ornamental box (*ga'u*) in "Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs". However, I do not intend to analyse the function of these specific circulating objects further, but I have here selected for discussion some objects that are commonly found in metaphors and similes in the works of Dhondup Gyal.

9.1 Images of thread-like things: Expressing new and old motifs

I shall start my discussion with objects that may be used for binding, tying, and connecting. These kinds of source domain images include knots, ropes, threads, rosaries, nets, snares, and other things that may somehow be thought of as thread-like or resembling a network of some sort. These images are of special interest as they are very typically used to express a new motif: criticism of tradition and customs. There are also other uses for these images, but I will first take a look at knot and network imagery and the criticism of tradition.

Criticism of tradition and customs is a frequent motif in the writings of Dhondup Gyal. It is, for example, found in the novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" ("The Flower Destroyed by Frost") and the short stories "Brong stag thang" ("The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger") and "Sems gcong" ("Depression"). In all these stories traditional ways of arranging marriages or restrictions on marrying across communities are critiqued. By criticising these traditional restrictions and constraints Dhondup Gyal aims to empower youth. They should be allowed to decide for themselves the course of their lives and especially their life partners. The idea of criticizing old customs reflects the human concerns of the writer and the wish to improve the lives of a young generation of Tibetans, but it also accords with the Communist political ideas of that time, in particular the need to abandon old superstitious customs and emphasize more modern ways of thinking.³

In the novella "Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog" the narrator hopes to "free the elders from the trap of ignorance" (*bsam blo rmongs pa'i rgya*) by telling the story of him and his girlfriend Lhakyi. This "trap of ignorance" appears to refer to the tradition of parents arranging their children's marriages. The short story "Brong stag thang" has a similar kind of imagery. In this short story the problems in the way of the young loving couple are caused by the custom that people from neighbouring communities are not allowed to marry each other. This short story ends

3 According to Link (2000: 83), during the time of the leadership of Deng Xiaoping writers were encouraged to engage in "the work of the Four Modernizations". On discussing problems in Tibetan society before the 1950s, see Tsering Shakya 2000b: 31–32, 36–37. Although Dhondup Gyal's stories are located later in time, the old custom of arranged marriage that he criticizes is connected to traditional Tibetan society.

happily as the young couple finally achieve their dream and marry and the “trap of the old traditional conceptions is cut to pieces”.⁴ At the end of “Sems gcong” Detso realizes how she has been deceived by the man her parents had approved as her husband and stops clinging to traditional ways of thinking. Metaphorically, this is expressed in the story as her “iron fetters of traditional thinking broke into pieces”.⁵ These images can be compared to a metaphor in a Chinese short story (see Ch. 3.1). Zhang Jie (1986: 13) in her short story “Love Must Not Be Forgotten” depicts a loveless marriage with the image of a chain around a person’s neck. Dhondup Gyal’s way of using the images of traps and fetters to illustrate problematic situations caused by customs related to traditional marriages may have been influenced by Chinese writing of that time.

Scholars writing about cognitive theory of metaphor have also discussed structures related to connecting and linking understood in terms of human experience. Lakoff in *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things* (1987: 271) reports Mark Johnson’s views about kinaesthetic image schemas, characterizing them as preconceptual ways of structuring experience.⁶ These schemas have the underlying idea of a human being moving and functioning in his/her environment and making “connections” by touching or holding onto objects and persons. An example is the way a baby is connected to its mother with the umbilical cord and how humans may engage in activities in which two things are connected using various kinds of means, such as ropes. These physical connections are then utilized to create more abstract metaphoric ideas about connections. Lakoff describes several of these schemas (1987: 271–274). One of them is called “The LINK Schema”: this is a very general type of basic structure that may be thought to underlie several Tibetan metaphorical images of knots, networks, ropes, and such. Commenting on the way “The LINK Schema” is used in structuring metaphors, Lakoff writes:

Social and interpersonal relationships are often understood in terms of links. Thus, we *make connections* and *break social ties*. Slavery is understood as bondage, and freedom as the absence of anything tying us down. (Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things*)⁷

The latter example of slavery and freedom aptly describes the semantic structure of imagery of the network type relating to thread-like things, and the beginning of the quotation fits better to knot images, images of ropes, and such.

4 “srol rgyun gyi 'du shes rnying ba'i 'ching rgya'ang sil bur gtubs”. Don grub rgyal 1981b: 16.

5 “srol rgyun 'du shes kyi lcags sgrog de dum bur btang”. Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 17.

6 Lakoff refers to Mark Johnson 1987.

7 Lakoff 1987: 274.

Images of nets may also be used in image metaphors and to express meanings of other target domains than only those related to social criticism. An example of this kind of use can be found in the short story “bTse dungs kyi rba rlabs” (“The Waves of Love”), where in a beautiful description of a meadow in autumn “the rain has drawn a wet and damp thin net between earth and sky”.⁸ In the case of image metaphors the mapping normally crosses conceptual domains and the images are not normally mapped onto the same types of things, but rather objects are mapped onto the domain of nature. A net is also very commonly an image that is mapped onto the target domain of doubt. A person in doubt “enters the net of doubt”, as in the unfinished prose work “bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud” (“A Story of Searching for the Royal Tombs”).⁹

The idea of two people who love each other being connected or bonded together can be depicted through the source domain imagery of knots, threads, and rosaries. The general metaphoric structure of this kind of imagery could be described as LOVE IS A BOND.¹⁰ In cognitive semantics Lakoff (1987: 274), basing his explanations on Mark Johnson's views, defines “The LINK Schema” structurally as: “Two entities, A and B, and LINK connecting them”. If we think of Tibetan images having the structure LOVE IS A BOND, then for instance the source domain of a knot illustrating love is typically the “link” connecting the two persons (A and B).

A net that obstructs freedom may also be found in a song by Kalden Gyatso (the seventeenth-century). I quote here from Victoria Sujata's translation:

Although the eagle of my nonconceptual mind
 Longs to fly to the *dharmadhātu*,
 [It] has been helplessly bound all round,
 By the multicoloured net of egocentricity.
 (Kalden Gyatso in Sujata 2005: 365)

In Kalden Gyatso's song the word used for “net” is *ny'i thag*, which is furthermore characterized with the adjective *khra bo*, ‘multicoloured’.¹¹ In its following lines the voice of the song makes a request that the “egocentricity” would be cut with “the sharp blade of the deep path”.

8 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 28: “ston zla brgyad pa'i char ba 'dis gnam sa gnyis kyi bar la brlan zhing gsher ba'i dra ba zhib mo zhig 'then yod pa dang/ ...”.

9 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 260. Tib. “som nyi'i dra ba'i nang du tshud”.

10 This conceptual metaphor is discussed, for example, in Kövecses 2002: 74.

11 In a footnote Sujata (2005: 365, n. 148) also explains how she has replaced the “vulture” with “eagle” for reasons related to the communicativeness of translation for Western readers.

Especially the image of the “knot of love” (*brtse dungs kyi mdud pa*) is a well-known image related to love and marriage that is commonly found in traditional materials such as folk songs, and seems to evoke the idea of firmness and permanence. For instance, in the folk song collection compiled by Tashi Tsering (bKra shis tshe ring) *Bod kyi dga' gzhas sos ka'i tshor ba* (“The Love Songs of Tibet: The Feeling of Spring”) we find the following stanza containing knot imagery expressing a deep relation of love:

*dkar po dar gyi mdud pa//
bshig na thub sa 'dug ste//
nga gnyis snying gi mdud pa//
bzhigs kyang zhig sa ma red//
(Bod kyi dga' gzhas)¹²*

A white silken knot
can be opened if wished so
the knot of our hearts
even when tried cannot be opened.
 (“The Love Songs of Tibet”)

In this folk song the two hearts are connected with a permanent knot.¹³ In Dhondup Gyal’s “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”, “the knot of love” is mentioned in a scene where the character named Tsering receives a silver ring that has been sent by a young girl who is attracted to him. In this passage this character associates the ring with the aspect of love as something eternal bonding two people.¹⁴ Also in the short story “brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs” there is an image with the source domain of a knot mapped onto love:

*der brten khos 'brug mo la yig lan zhig bskur ba dang/ rab byung na brtse dungs kyi
mdud pa je dam du gtong rgyu dang/ de min na kho mo zhib 'jug slob mar rgyugs ma
'phrod bar du 'brel ba de rgyun 'khyongs bya rgyu' i re 'dun bton pa red/
(Don grub rgyal, “brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs”)¹⁵*

Therefore he sent a reply to Drugmo’s letter. In the best case it would make the knot of love tighter, and if that did not happen he hoped that the relation would continue till she took the entrance examination to become a research student.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Waves of Love”)

12 bKra shis tshe ring 1986: 10.

13 In a song by the Sixth Dalai Lama the promise between a man and a woman is metaphorically depicted as a knot. However, in this particular song the knot is not depicted as lasting, but it is said to have come apart by itself. See Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho & Ngag dbang lhun grub dar rgyas 1981: 4, song no. 11.

14 Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 1: 12.

15 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 42.

There are also other instances of this kind of imagery, for example in “Bu ldom po dang klu'i sras mo”.¹⁶ In the short story “Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam” (“The Impermanent Illusory Dream”) the image of a “thread” (*srad bu*) is used to create the “link” necessary in these types of metaphorical expressions:

de nas bzung lha sgron dang kho rang gnyis kyi bar la gzugs med kyi brtse dungs zbig chags pa dang/ gzugs med kyi brtse dungs de ni mdza' mthun gyi snang ba sbrel byed kyi srad bu zhig yin la/ 'jig rten gyi gnyen mgo sbrel byed kyi bar pa zhig kyang red
(Don grub rgyal, “Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam”)¹⁷

Since then onwards a formless love formed between Lhadon and him. The formless love is the thread connecting the appearance of affection and also the mediator connecting into worldly marriage.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Impermanent Illusory Dream”)

The image of a knot connected with love is an image shared with other cultures, for instance in English it is common to speak about marriage as “tying the knot”. In the short story “brTse dungs kyi rba rlab” the image in which the young man and a woman are connected by a rosary (*phreng ba*) has its own clearly Tibetan cultural flavour:

le dbar brgya phrag du mas chod na'ang 'brug mo dang nged gnyis kyi mdza' mthun gyi phreng ba de 'phrin yig gi srad bus dam por brgyus pa dang brgyus kyin brgyus kyin je dam je dam du gyur/
(Don grub rgyal, “brTse dungs kyi rba rlab”)¹⁸

Although there were several hundred kilometres between us the rosary of affection between me and Drugmo was tightly strung and became tighter and tighter through the thread of letters.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Waves of Love”)

Depicting the attraction between a man and a woman with the image of a rosary can be viewed as a culturally specific Tibetan manifestation of the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A BOND. Usually, in Tibetan culture and in other cultures too, rosaries are associated with spiritual practice and praying. However, in Dhondup Gyal’s image another aspect of the rosary, its shape and thread-like character, have been employed to create the idea of a connection between two persons in love.

Another cultural image of the bond of love between a woman and a man is found in the poem “Slob grwa'i zhogs pa” (“Morning at School”). It takes the form of a simile which alludes to the *patra*, an endless knot that is one of the eight

¹⁶ Don grub rgyal 1981c: 21.

¹⁷ Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 342.

¹⁸ Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 21.

auspicious symbols.¹⁹ In these images where the two lovers are connected with knots, threads, and such we can discern a feature found cross-culturally based on the general human experience of creating connections between two separate entities. It is also possible to find similar types of expressions, for example, in Tibetan folk songs. However, it is noteworthy that the Tibetan images often have their own special Tibetan flavour, especially when the object referred to in the connection is somehow typically Tibetan, such as a rosary (*phreng ba*).

However, the image of a knot (*mdud pa*) is not simply reserved for the connection between two people, it also has very different applications in Dhondup Gyal's stories. For example, in the short story "sGrung ba" ("The Storyteller") the eponymous character has in his mind "a knot that is difficult to open" because, due to a certain policy, it is now forbidden to tell stories.²⁰ Thus the images of knots can express both positive and negative ideas depending on the target domains in which they are mapped.

In the short story "Brong stag thang" the source domain of a knot is used to depict a happening in the political history of the People's Republic of China. This story includes a depiction of the fate of a character named Geshe Jinpa (dGe bshes sByin pa), who had been a prisoner during the Cultural Revolution and later his reputation is cleared. The ending of difficult times is expressed in the following way:

*dge bshes sbyin pa la nyul ma'i nyes ming btags nas btson du bcug "mi bzhi'i tshogs
khag" rdul du brlags rjes dkar nag gi dbye ba phyed shing thag nag gi mdud pa bkrol te
khong slar yang srid gros u yon du bdams pa dang/
(Don grub rgyal, "Brong stag thang")²¹*

Geshe Jinpa had been accused of being a spy and was put in prison. After the Group of Four had vanished into dust and the division between black and

19 The text says: "pa tra'i ri mo bsnol 'dra'i 'u gnyis kyi brtse dung" (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 53–54). Interestingly, Tresidder (2005: 275) in his dictionary of symbols discerns two basic types of knots which are used to symbolize different kinds of ideas. The first type of knot is tight and, according to him, it expresses "union, fixation, or bondage". The idea of union and bondage is also connected with using knots to express commitment in romantic relationships. However, his description of the second type of knot also fits the *patra*: they are interwoven and loose. The ideas of longevity and infinity are associated with these types of knots.

20 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 38. In Western culture a famous knot which was extremely difficult to open is the Gordian knot. According to Tresidder's (2005: 275) dictionary it represented frustration and Alexander the Great cutting it with his sword represents a "short-term solution" to a problem.

21 Don grub rgyal 1981b: 15.

white was made, the knot of black rope was opened and he was again elected as the chairman of congress.²²
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”)

Here the opening of “the knot of black rope” may be both interpreted as the undoing of the injustice when an innocent person was imprisoned and also as the ending of a difficult period of history. The negative evaluations associated with that period of time are further stressed with the writer’s choice in characterizing the source domain of the “rope” as “black”. In traditional *mgur*-literature, the image of the knot has also been used to employ negative ideas, for example in Kalden Gyatso’s song a greedy person is metaphorically depicted as “a tight knot”.²³

The image of a rosary (*phreng ba*) is very common in Tibetan literature. As mentioned above, it can be a connecting element between two lovers (“the rosary of letters”). Due to the structural features of the object, it seems to be used to illustrate a kind of continuity or regular repetition of something. In Dhondup Gyal’s writings there is more than one instance where a rosary is metaphorically mapped onto days to express the passing of time: for example in the short story “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma” (“A Shameless Bride”) we find the expression “the rosary of days passed one after another”.²⁴ In “rKang lam phra mo” (“The Narrow Footpath”) the source domain of a rosary is mapped onto the target domain of speech (*ngag*). The passage contains the idea of repetition and the notion of words being repeated over and over again.²⁵ Mapping the image of a rosary to various everyday phenomena creates a Tibetan flavour, for it is a common sight to see Tibetans carrying rosaries and saying their prayers and mantras.

Still another thread-like object is the lasso (*zhags pa*). It is used by nomads and is quite often found in imagery. It may be used as an image to express that one’s attention is totally caught by some matter, as we have seen in a passage from “Sems gcong” (“Depression”), where the “wild horse” of Detso’s mind is bound to the place of a “white boulder”, which is likened to a lasso catching the horse.²⁶ This image seems to have a special Tibetan pastoral flavour. The poem “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam” (“The Allegorical Discourse on the Seven

22 The word *srid gros* can be found in the expression “srid gros tshogs 'du” in Goldstein’s dictionary (1975: 1182) and is translated as ‘congress’ or ‘parliament’. However, the title in Dhondup Gyal’s story does not contain the word *tshogs 'du*, which is generally used to refer to meetings.

23 Sujata 2005: 329.

24 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 66. A similar kind of expression can also be found in the short story “brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs”, Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 43.

25 Don grub rgyal, 1997, VI: 4–5: “rmongs tshod kyi sgo nas dpa' bo'i mdzad rjes rnam ngag gi phreng bar bzlo ba tsam gyis ci la phan/” ‘how would it help to only superstitiously repeat in the rosary of speech the achievements of the heroes?’

26 See Ch. 4.2; Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 1.

Precious Possessions of the Universal Monarch”) contains the expression “the proud ones are caught by the lasso of arrogance”, obviously expressing a factor which hinders the success of their activities.²⁷ In Dhondup Gyal’s writings a character might throw a sharp look at others by literally “throwing an eye lasso” on them, as Tashi does when he notices that the girls in his office are reading aloud a private letter addressed to him.²⁸

Images of ropes may be understood to possess two different implications. Ropes may either express something that is helpful: it may connect, support, and hold in a desired location or state, or it might be a factor preventing a desired activity that is imagerially depicted as binding a character to some place.

I shall first take a look at the images where ropes are not used for hindering actions but are rather something that supports. The image of a rope may be used for some very essential thing or condition. In the essay “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo” (“The Girl of the Wind”) the all-pervading presence of the “girl of the wind” is represented as “the holding rope of life” of the first-person voice, thus being essential for his existence.²⁹ The image of a rope (*thag pa*) may also be connected to ideas of hope and thoughts which express continuity. When a rope becomes loose or breaks, hope is lost or a thinking process cannot continue further but stops.³⁰ In the short story “Sems gcong” (“Depression”) the main character Detso thinks the entire night about persuading her parents to allow her to marry a boy

27 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 133–134: “nga rgyal can rnam khengs skyungs zhags pas 'dzin”. This metaphoric expression is one in a series of metaphoric expressions in the speech of the precious wheel to those young people who suffer from laziness. The two sentences on either side of this lasso metaphor are: “the lazy ones are put into the prison of ignorance” and “the jealous ones will be cut by the sword of wisdom”. Ignorance can also be a factor that acts as an obstacle as well as laziness. At the beginning of this poem (p. 132) the laziness of the youth is described thus: “sometimes he enters the fetters of ignorance and stays there” (*skabs rer rmongs pa'i srog tu tshud cing gnas*).

28 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 34. This sounds like an almost lexicalized usage, or a metaphor that is very commonly used in everyday speech, but it is not listed as a separate entry, for example, in such a standard dictionary as Krang dbyi sun 1993. The fairy tale “Bu ldom po dang klu'i sras mo” has another metaphor containing the image of a lasso: “the lasso of the loving mind”. Tib. “brtse dungs sems kyi zhags pa// mdza' mthun mdud rgyas bcings nas/” Don grub rgyal 1981c: 29.

29 See Ch. 6.3. Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 8: “kho mo ni nga'i srog gi gzung thag tu gyur pa yin/”. Tresidder (2005: 474) too connects the symbolism of threads with life, and speaks about “the delicate fabric of human life”.

30 See, for example, the short story “Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam” in Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 338: “gal srid kho mo da lta bdag gi gam du yod rgyu na/ rang gi sems kyi sdug bsngal dang da lta'i gnas bab 'di tsho kho mo la bshad chog mod/ 'on kyang ... 'on kyang ... kho rang bsam blo'i rgyun thag de nas chad pa dang/” “If she were now by my side, I could explain to her the suffering in my mind and the present situation, but, ... but, ... at that point the rope of his stream of thoughts got broken”.

with whom she is in love, and she is described as not being able to sleep “not letting her grip from the rope of hope”.³¹

A rope or a chain may be something binding or imprisoning: a person might be unable to speak with his/her “mouth bound by the rope of embarrassment” (as in “Sems gong”),³² or the image of a binding rope may even be used to suggest a metaphorical prison as in “Tshul khrims rgya mtsho”. In this short story the main character has monastic vows. Such a vow also brings some limitations to his life which prevents him from finding happiness with a woman:

*sdom pa zer ba de ni 'tsho ba'i bde skyid sdom byed kyi lcags thag cig yin la/ lang tsho'i
'dun ma 'gog byed kyi btson ra zbig kyang red/ ngas lcags thag gi a long de lta bu zbig
rang gi ske la gon nas btson ra 'di lta bu zbig gi nang du 'dzul don ci yin/
(Don grub rgyal, “Tshul khrims rgya mtsho”)³³*

The so-called vow is the iron chain binding the happiness of life and also a prison preventing the aspirations of youth. Why am I wearing around my neck such an iron chain and have entered into this kind of prison?
(Dhondup Gyal, “Tsultrim Gyatso”)

Here too is a kind of criticism of the restrictions of traditional culture. Monasticism is an important aspect of the traditional Tibetan way of life and culture and in the above passage Dhondup Gyal has depicted the emotional difficulties that a monk may have to undergo.

9.2 Arrows and other weapons

There are many images of weapons in Dhondup Gyal’s writings. What are these images used to convey? The images are of various types and they can be divided into subsections according to the type of weapon. Weapon imagery includes bows and arrows, spears, knives, and swords. Generally, source domain images of arrows and swords are very common, but this is less true of more technically advanced weapons such as guns. This indicated that source domain images have a tendency to be conservative and slow to change.

Images of bows and arrows are mostly not connected to hurt or pain, but depict characters and their behaviour. The basic use of the arrow image relates to its speed and motion, as in the expression “flies like an arrow”. This usage

31 Don grub rgyal 1997, II, 8: “re ba'i dpyang thag ma lhod par mtshan gang bor gnyid dang bral/”. The word referring to rope, *dpyang thag*, is according to Krang dbyi sun (1993: 1642) “a rope that is lowered down from above”.

32 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 3.

33 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 105.

is found in Dhondup Gyal's unfinished short story "Tshul khrims rgya mtsho" ("Tsultrim Gyatso") where the eponymous character, while still a child, throws a stone at the head of a chieftain who is trying to rape his mother: "the stone flew directly without any wavering like an arrow supported by the law of *karma* and hit chieftain Khasho behind his ear".³⁴

Dhondup Gyal commonly uses the straightness of an arrow (*mda'*) to describe the nature of the characters in his stories. For instance, in the short story "sPrul sku" ("Tulku") an old man called Akhu Nyima (A khu Nyi ma) is described as "someone who is as straight as an arrow".³⁵ In the short story "rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma" ("A Shameless Bride") the deceived husband Soebhe's character is also described in similar terms.³⁶ Generally it seems to be very typical in Dhondup Gyal's stories that Tibetan people and good characters are attributed the characteristic of being "as straight as an arrow": even one of the short stories depicts the "nature of the young people of the grassland as softer than wool and in character straighter than an arrow".³⁷ This partly corresponds to the image of a straight tree discussed earlier, which could be used to depict good, honest persons. Of course, "as straight as an arrow" may also be used to describe the outer appearance of a person and not necessarily his character.³⁸

Depicting an honest, good character with an arrow image is in accord with the views of cognitive theory of metaphor scholarship. Kövecses (2002: 63) discusses metaphors related to morality basing his arguments on the views of Lakoff. He lists the conceptual metaphor: BEING GOOD IS BEING UPRIGHT. This clearly makes sense when an image of a straight arrow or a straight tree is used to depict a person's character. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 291) metaphors of morality are grounded in a person's sense of wellbeing. They write: "it is better to be *upright* and *balanced*, than to be off balance or unable to stand".

Commonly in stories glances and words are thrown like "arrows" from one character to another. The glances might also be sharp looks or a girl who is attracted to a boy might send "arrows" from her eyes in his direction. This kind of image can be found in the short story "Sems gcong":

34 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 82: "rdo de ni rgyu 'bras kyi rgyab rtsa gnon pa'i mda' mo zhig dang 'dra bar ma yo ma 'khyog par drang shad ler dpon po kha sho'i rna rting la phog pa dang/'.

35 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 119.

36 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 65.

37 The short story in question is "Brong stag thang". Don grub rgyal 1981b: 18: "tshig de dag las rtsa thang gi gzhon nu rnams kyi ngang rgyud bal las 'jam zhing/ gzhung rgyud mda' las drang ba'i gshis ka de bcos min du mtshon pa dang/'.

38 See, for example, the short story "Tshul khrims rgya mtsho". Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 97.

*'on kyang nga'i zur mig gi nyag phran 'di sems kyi gzhu rgyud dang bral te khong gi
phyogs su bsnyegs pa dang/
(Don grub rgyal, "Sems gcong")³⁹*

However, this arrow of my sideward glances was unleashed from the bow of
my mind and flew in his direction
(Dhondup Gyal, "Depression")

"The bow of the mind" seems to be an extension of the idea of a glance as an
arrow: it is then logical to think of the place of origin of the glances as a bow
which sends them forth. The bow might also be one's body, suggesting tenseness
or nervousness.⁴⁰

These images of bows and arrows to express attraction and love are by no
means new in Tibetan literature.⁴¹ The following example comes from a song by
the Sixth Dalai Lama:

*zur mig gzhu dang ldan pa'i/
thugs sems nyag phran mda' mo/
gzhon pa'i snying gi spang stod/
mthon pa'i dkyil la zug byung//
(Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho, song no. 105)⁴²*

The arrow of [her] mind
from the bow of sideward glances
hit the middle of the proud
heart of the young man
(Tshangyang Gyatso, song no. 105)

The idea of a target is also connected with arrow imagery. "rGyu 'bras med
pa'i mna' ma" ("A Shameless Bride") describes how an old man named Soepa
"becomes the target for arrows shot by the progressives".⁴³ Thus here the "target"
is mapped onto the "victim" or "goal" of criticism, making the idea of the difficult
situation experienced by the character more concrete. In this image the arrow is
used to express something which causes pain and harm.⁴⁴

39 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 2.

40 See "bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud": "nga'i lus po'i dbang rtsa thams cad gzhu rgyud 'then pa ltar 'drong bor gyur cing/'. 'all the nerves of my body became tense like pulling a bow' (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 363).

41 Arrows are connected with love in Greek mythology. According to Tresidder (2005: 51), the Greek god Eros had two types of arrows, one of which could arouse love.

42 Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho & Ngag dbang lhun grub dar rgyas 1981: 37.

43 "bzod pa yang mi dmangs kyi dgra bor gyur pa dang/ dpung rtags dmar po btags pa'i gdong mchong dpa' bo rnam kyi mda' 'phen sa'i 'ben du gyur song/" (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 60).

44 Another example of an angry look that is like "an arrow piercing the lungs and the heart" can be found in the short story "sPrul sku" (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 136). In a poem about the seven

It is also common that arrows are used metaphorically for words said to another party. There is an example of this in the short story “Pad mtsho” (“Petso”), where a girl reading aloud a letter “throws a sharp arrow of words” to the actual recipient of the letter.⁴⁵ Expressions resembling the metaphor “arrow of words” may also be found in traditional Tibetan literature and folk songs. In *gZhon nu zla med kyig tam rgyud* “honest words” are likened to an arrow, suggesting the notion of straightness. At other points in the same work the simile “words as sharp as arrows” is used.⁴⁶

Another weapon, the spear (*mdung*), may be used in Dhondup Gyal’s imagery to express a painful feeling caused by words or some other sounds. An example of this is found in a scene in “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma” in which the daughter Kuntu Sangmo pretends that she does not recognize her father, who has come to see her. The following expresses the feelings which the father Soepa, experiences:

Kun tu bzang mo'i dgod sgra dang btags khyi rgya li'i zug sgra gnyis gzhi gcig tu 'dres pa dang/ de ni dug chu byugs pa'i mdung thung rnon po zbig dang' dra bar bzod pa'i rna ba'i bu ga dbral nas snying dbus su zug pa dang/ sbrid par byed pa'i sman chu dang' dra bar bzod pa'i dran pa nyams te ha ne hon ner gyur tu bcug
(Don grub rgyal, “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma”)⁴⁷

The sounds of Kuntu Sangmo’s laughter and the barking of the guard dog Gyali combined together. It was like a sharp short spear smeared with poison tearing Soepa’s ears and striking the middle of his heart. As though under anaesthetic, Soepa felt his mind becoming unclear and unable to remember clearly. (Dhondup Gyal, “A Shameless Bride”)

Here the use of the image of the poisoned spear effectively concretizes the feeling for the reader, emphasising its intensity. A similar kind of painful feeling

precious possessions of a universal monarch reference is made to “the arrow of deceitful words”, and “the crooked bow of greediness” that misses “the precious target” (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 140). This occurs in the part of the poem containing a dialogue between a lazy young man and a precious jewel.

45 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 30.

46 See the translation in Solomon 1987: 198, 259. Another example of “arrows of words” is found in a song from Kongpo, “Kong po'i mda' glu” (“The Arrow Song of Kongpo”). In the song the singer addresses a snow lion, a vulture, and a deer and asks them to: “Please listen to the arrows of my words” (*nga'i mda' mo tshig la nyan rogs zhu*). Here the idea of depicting words as arrows could be because the singer thinks of them as messengers. Although some places in the song which are in the Kongpo dialect are not entirely clear to me, the singer would seem to be saying that the animals are good beasts and that she has a request for them. The song would appear to be a love song although it is not stated directly. In the VCD a Tibetan boy and a girl are depicted making arrows and singing, holding in their hands bows and arrows in a green field and near bamboo trees. The VCD is entitled *Bod ljongs sgor gzbed* and appeared in 2004.

47 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 72.

is expressed by the lazy young man in the allegorical poem “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam” (“The Allegorical Discourse on the Seven Precious Possessions of the Universal Monarch”).⁴⁸ The precious elephant questions him about his activities and the lazy youngster feels in his heart “a strong pain as if pressed by a long spear”.⁴⁹ The image of the “short spear” also appears in the poem “'bsTod pa' bklags pa'i 'char snang” (“Impressions on Reading ‘Eulogies’”). In this poem Dhondup Gyal apparently criticizes the custom of writing eulogies which are empty of true meaning. The voice of the poem asks: “Does not the short spear of the pleasant name of ‘eulogy’ disturb the ears?”⁵⁰

In one image, Dhondup Gyal uses the image of the hammer. The image of this particular tool seems to be rare in his imagery and therefore it attracts the reader’s attention more than the frequent images of arrows. In the short story “brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs” Palden receives a letter from Drugmo in which she informs him that she has found someone else: the letter is depicted with a simile in which it becomes like “a hammer that hit the heart of Palden”.⁵¹

In “Brong stag thang” hailstones are likened to “big beans” and they are said “to descend like bullets”.⁵² Here a natural element, hail (*ser ba*), is likened to a relatively modern phenomena from the technical field, namely a bullet (*mde'u*).

Other weapons which feature in Dhondup Gyal’s imagery are knives, swords, and needles. Images of swords may be used to convey both positive and negative meanings. In the short story “sPrul sku” (“Tulku”) rumours (*mi kha*) are likened to “a poisonous sword” (*dug gi ral gri*) that causes a disorder in the inner organs of a character.⁵³ Here, as is the case with several other weapon images, mental pain and anguish is concretized with the help of images of actual physical hurt and pain. This idea of using weapon imagery to express mental pain can also be found in traditional Tibetan literature. In *gZhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud*, for example, we find: “However, today the haughty words of the petty king Dyutimat/ Have pierced your breasts like a sword.”⁵⁴

48 In “sNyan ngag la sbyar ba'i sgrung rtsom gzhon nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan” the mother’s questioning words to Dawa Dolma, who returns home pregnant, are depicted as “the short sharp spear of questions” (Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 124).

49 “le lo can gyi sdar ma'i snying khams su// mdung ring bsnun ltar zug ngu drag po skyes//”. Don grub rgyal 1981a: 145.

50 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 144.

51 “brug mo'i yi ge 'di ni [...] dang/dpal ldan gyi snying mgo gcog byed kyi tho ba lta bur gyur pa dang//”. Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 45.

52 Don grub rgyal 1981b: 8.

53 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 151.

54 Solomon 1987: 211. In the same work there is another example where “weapons” are metaphorically mapped onto “curses”. See Solomon 1987: 230.

The allegorical poem “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam” also contains images of metaphorical swords, presented as: “the sword of wisdom” (*shes rab ral gris*),⁵⁵ “the sword of the jealous mind” (*phrag dog yid kyi ral gri*),⁵⁶ and “the sword of the truth of timely practice” (*dus kyi lag len bden gyi ral gri*).⁵⁷ This same long poem contains a wealth of weapon imagery in the depiction of the armour and weaponry of the precious general, who is one of the seven precious possessions. The bow of this mythical general “attracts learning” and the arrow “increases diligence”. “The sword of cutting defilements” (*nyon mongs gtub pa'i ral gri*) is taken from “the sheath” of “deep wisdom”, and so on.⁵⁸ The mapping of the source domain image of a sword on the target domain of wisdom is clearly derived from traditional Buddhist symbolism in traditional paintings and sculptures: the deity of wisdom, Mañjuśrī, holds in his hand a sword symbolizing wisdom.⁵⁹

In Dhondup Gyal’s free verse poem “Lang tsho'i rbab chu” (“The Waterfall of Youth”) images of a sword and a knife are mapped onto traditional fields of knowledge. In the following passage the personal pronoun “you” refers to the waterfall, which the poetic voice addresses:

*khyed med na/
sgra rig pa'i ral gri la ngar ji ltar ldud/
khyed med na/
bzo rig pa'i chu gri la rno ji ltar 'jog/
khyed med na/
gso rig pa'i ljon pa rgyas mi thub la/
tshad ma'i me tog dang nang rig 'bras bu'ang smin mi srid/
(Rang grol, “Lang tsho'i rbab chu”)⁶⁰*

If you did not exist
how would the sword of grammar be tempered?
If you were not there
how would the small knife of handicrafts be sharpened?
If you were not there
the tree of medicine could not grow

55 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 134.

56 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 138.

57 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 149.

58 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 146. The Tibetan expression in the poem is: “blo gros zab pa'i skags gi gri shubs”. I have left the word *skags* untranslated, because I was not certain of its meaning here.

59 However, Mary Brockington (1995) discusses very different types of uses of the image of the sword in Indian literature. In her article, she first mentions its use to express ideas related to violence, power, and justice, but the main part of her article examines the sword as a symbol of sexuality and chastity. For information on the many symbolic functions of the sword, see also Tresidder 2005: 461.

60 Rang grol 1983: 59.

nor would it be possible for the flower of logic and the fruit
of Buddhist philosophy to ripen
(Rangdol [= Dhondup Gyal], “The Waterfall of Youth”)

Here the sword and knife are clearly positive images. These two objects, however, can express both desirable and undesirable meanings. In some contexts they might be understood as tools (especially knives in handicraft) to achieve desired purposes and aims, but in other contexts they can be used to depict feelings of deep pain.

Needles are not actually weapons, but resemble them in some respects. Irritating words may also be likened to needles that “pierce the ears”, and there are some other needle images.⁶¹

9.3 The true jewels of learning: Precious things and valuables

Jewels and treasuries are common source domain images in Dhondup Gyal’s prose and poetry, and, of course, jewels are normally used to illustrate concepts or phenomena that are highly appreciated and valued.⁶² Especially images of precious substances typical of Tibetan jewellery can be found, like turquoise, coral, and gold. For Dhondup Gyal images of jewels and a treasury are normally connected with culture and learning. In “bTsan po’i bang sor myul ba’i gtam rgyud” the first-person narrator has a special fondness for history, which he describes in this way:

*'on kyang bod kyi lo rgyus la slob sbyong dang zhib 'jug byed pa'i spro ba cung chen po
yod/ lbag par du gter ma'i glegs bu la lta 'dod ha cang che ba dang/ <<bka' thang sde
lnga>> dang/ <<bka' chems ka 'khol ma>> <<ma ni bka' 'bum>> gsum ni nga'i
snying gi gces nor lta bu yin/
(Don grub rgyal, “bTsan po’i bang sor myul ba’i gtam rgyud”)⁶³*

However, I liked to study and do research on the history of Tibet. Especially I wished to read the treatises of *gter ma*, and the three [books] *bKa' thang sde lnga*, *bKa' chems ka 'khol ma*, and *Ma ni bka' 'bum* were like the beloved jewel of my heart.
(Dhondup Gyal, “A Story of Searching for the Royal Tombs”)

61 For images of needles, see for instance “bTsan po’i bang sor myul ba’i gtam rgyud” (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 355, 360), where a needle occurs in a simile to illustrate the sharpness of hurting words and also in a proverb.

62 It is also possible to use jewel images to express the colour of some object or a feature of the environment.

63 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 352.

In this passage, of course, the jewels are context-dependent in the sense that they are used to illustrate the likings of a certain character in a prose work. However, it is well-known that Dhondup Gyal himself was interested in Tibetan history and researched historical documents. Therefore, likening these ancient Tibetan books with “the jewels of the heart” probably also reflects the appreciation of the writer himself. Traditionally, the image of jewels frequently occurs in the titles of books. There is, for instance, the well-known *lam rim* text by Gampopa (sGam po pa) called *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*.⁶⁴ In folk stories, too, it is possible to find the target domain of culture being depicted with valuables. For instance, in the folk tale “Shing bzor dga' ba'i rgyal sras” (“The Prince Who Liked Wood Carving”) we find the comparison “the culture in books that is more valuable than precious gold”.⁶⁵

Written documents and fields of learning are also associated with jewels in the short story “Pad mtsho”. The male character Tashi reflects on the fate of Petso, who did not have the opportunity to pursue a proper school education when she was a child. This reflects the real-life situation and the fact that the illiteracy rate of the Tibetan population is quite high in the People’s Republic of China. Against this background it is easy to understand the emphasized significance of education and the repeated images of the “jewels of knowledge” in Dhondup Gyal’s literary works. Here are Tashi’s reflections:

*rang re'i mi rigs' dir lo ngo stong phrag du ma'i lo rgyus ring bo yod pa dang/ rig gnas
dar snga zhing yun ring ba/ nyams pa med pa'i lo rgyus kyi yig tshang dang/ gso
tshad sgra rig la sogs kyi brtsam bya bgrang las' das pa yod pa de rnams ni/ mes rgyal
gyi rig gnas bang mdzod nang na nor bu zhig dang' dra bar gzi mdangs rnam par
bkra bzhin mchis na yang/ [...]
(Don grub rgyal, “Pad mtsho”)⁶⁶*

Our nation has a long history of several thousand years and the fields of learning spread early and have continued for a long time. Well-preserved historical documents and innumerable writings on healing, logic, grammar and so on are like a jewel shining brilliantly in the treasury of culture of the mother country, but [...]
(Dhondup Gyal, “Petso”)

64 Gampopa’s text has been translated into English by Guenther. The Tibetan title is given as: *Dam chos yid bzhin gyi nor bu thar pa rin po che'i rgyan zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i lam rim gyi bshad pa*, which is translated as: “The Explanation of the Stages on the Mahāyānic Path towards Liberation, called a Jewel Ornament of Liberation or the Wish-Fulfilling Gem of the Noble Doctrine” in Guenther’s introduction (sGam.po.pa 1959/1970: x).

65 Tib. “dpe cha'i nang gi rin chen gser las lhag pa'i rig gnas” (Karma mkha' 'bum & 'Jam bu 1996: 108). At the end of the story a note states that the tale was collected by Gyaltzen Buchung (rGyal mtshan bu chung).

66 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 26.

No doubt Dhondup Gyal's emphasis on the jewel-like character of education and culture has contributed to creating a deeper appreciation for them in the minds of his readers. Several of his writings also have a certain educational function, although of course the prose works discuss several other themes. For example, in the short story "Pad mtsho" the theme of love is very strong. Some of the poems have education and diligence in studies and other activities as their main themes, such as "Le lo can dang brtson 'grus can" and "rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam".

In a song of Milarepa, images of material objects have been used to illustrate spiritual qualities and states: his fortress (*mkhar*) is the "emptiness of phenomena" (*chos nyid stong pa*), his cloth is the yoga of *gtum mo* ("yogic heat") and his wealth is "the never-exhausted seven jewels of Āryas".⁶⁷ In another song of Milarepa a precious jewel is one of the images used to convey the idea of impermanence:

The precious jewel that you cherish
 Soon will belong to others –
 This shows the illusory nature of all beings,
 This proves the transient nature of all things.
 Think, *then* you will practise Dharma.

(Milarepa, "The Song of Transience with Eight Similes", tr. Chang 1966: 23)

Milarepa advises against attachment to worldly wealth. For this great yogi "the treasury" is "within the mind".⁶⁸ Sujata's (2005: 289) translation of Kalden Gyatso's song alludes to "the treasury of monastic vows" and "the jewels of good practice", which both have a religious target domain and thus conceive of real wealth as spiritual. Dhondup Gyal's use of the jewel image is normally connected with cultural rather than spiritual or religious wealth.

In traditional literature the image of a jewel may be mapped onto *legs bshad*, aphorisms that are depicted as "jewels of aphorisms", as in the title of Sakya Paṇḍita's classical treatise *Legs par bshad pa rin po che'i gter* (Skt. *Subhāṣitaratnanidhi*, "The Treasury of Jewels of Good Sayings"). This image is also found in one of the stanzas near the beginning of the treatise: "The wise are holding the treasury of good qualities/ they are gathering the jewels of good sayings/".⁶⁹ In a parallelistic way these lines are then further illustrated with water imagery. In such expressions the image of jewels is also mapped onto learning and knowledge. Dhondup Gyal uses the metaphor "the jewel of aphorism" (*legs bshad nor bu*) in "bsTod

⁶⁷ Milarepa's song "Yol mo gangs ra'i skor" in Rus pa'i rgyan can 2005: 257.

⁶⁸ Chang 1966: 32.

⁶⁹ Tib. "mkhas pa yon tan mdzod 'dzin pa// de dag legs bshad rin chen sdud//". Sakya Paṇḍita's stanza cited in Mai tri bu ddha sha san dha ra's commentary [Sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin] 1991: 9.

pa' bklags pa'i 'char snang" ("Impressions on Reading 'Eulogies'"), though here because of the context the usage has an ironic overtone. Dhondup Gyal is here parodying the speech of those who call expressions in synonymical lexicons "jewels". Such people think that merely using synonyms would be sufficient to create a fine composition without actually paying attention to the kind of qualities the objects or persons represented actually have. Such a view is criticized in the poem.⁷⁰ In another metric poem "Slob dpon la bsngags pa'i glu dbyangs" ("A Song in Praise of the Professor") Dhondup Gyal writes in praise of his teacher, addressing him with the word "scholar" (*mkhas dbang*), and likening him to an ocean "rich with various priceless jewels" of the colour of sapphires.⁷¹

In "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs" ("The Waves of Love") the traditional fields of learning are referred to as "priceless treasures". The passage describes Palden, who is a teacher, speaking in the classroom:

*nga tshor rig pa'i gnas chen po lnga dang chung ba lngar grags pa'i mes po rnam kyi
shul bzhang gi rgyu nor rin thang bral ba zbig yod mod/ 'on kyang da cha nga tshos
mes po'i shul bzhang gi rgyu nor de dag phyogs yongs dang cha tshang ba'i sgo nas rgyun
'dzin byed mi thub pa dang/ yar ngo'i zla ltar 'phel ba'i deng rabs kyi tshan rig rig
gnas la ni de bas kyang cha rgyus lon med/
(Don grub rgyal, "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs")⁷²*

We have the priceless treasures left by our ancestors known as the five great fields of learning and five smaller ones. However, at present we are unable to protect those treasures left to us by our ancestors and we do not even know that much about modern science, which is growing like a waxing moon.
(Dhondup Gyal, "The Waves of Love")

Dhondup Gyal maps the source domain image of jewels onto other target domains, such as several phenomena which are valued highly or treated as important for human life. In the short story "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs" a treasury and jewels are associated with fields of learning, but also refer to the main character, Palden. Here are the reflections of Lobsang (Blo bzang) on Palden:

*dpal ldan lags/ khyed kyi lhag bsam rnam par dag pa'i snying gi bang mdzod du mi
rigs kyi la rgya dang/ brtse dungs kyi nor bu/ dga' zhen gyi g.yu byur ci 'dra mang bo
zhig gis gtams 'dug ang/
(Don grub rgyal, "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs")⁷³*

70 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 144.

71 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 4. The ocean is described as "holding the lustre of sapphire" (*dbang sngon*). The stanza is an illustration of a simile called "rmd byung dpe" ("the simile of wonderfulness").

72 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 30.

73 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 31.

Palden, how numerous are the jewels of dignity and love of people and turquoises and corals of affection that are filling your sincere treasury of a heart.

(Dhondup Gyal, “The Waves of Love”)

In this excerpt the treasury is a human heart that contains good, positive feelings. Here, judging from the preceding context, love and affection are directed towards the entire Tibetan people and nation and not to a single person of the opposite sex. In the preceding paragraphs Palden has concerned himself with the future of the Tibetan people: he criticizes Tibetans for being happy with donkeys when other nations are able to travel in rockets.⁷⁴ The love for one’s own people and the dignity (*la rgya*) of the people are common themes in Dhondup Gyal’s works, as in the song “E ma mtsho sngon po” (“Oh, Blue Lake!”).

Images of jewels and precious things are also mapped onto other kinds of target domains. For instance, in the short story “Sems gcong” (“Depression”) the image of a jewel is mapped onto the mind of a character. This mapping is a creative extension of the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS LOSING CONTROL OF ONE’S MIND, which relates to the everyday colloquial Tibetan expression *sems pa shor*, “to fall in love”. Literally, the word *sems pa* means ‘mind’ and the verb *shor* means ‘to lose’, indicating something happening which is beyond the subject’s control. This expression thus seems to evoke the idea that a person who falls in love somehow “loses his/her mind” or loses control. In the short story “Sems gcong” we find the related image of love as theft, which is also a feature of classical Indian literature, as in the title of Bilhaṇa’s *Caurapañcāsikā*.⁷⁵ In Dhondup Gyal’s “Sems gcong” the jewel and its theft is described somewhat like a riddle. Two young people, Detso and Dawa, meet by a white boulder and in the ensuing dialogue Detso gives Dawa a silver ring, though with a certain condition. In the following excerpt the first-person narrator is Detso:

*ngas khong la ku re dang sbrags te “khyod kyis nga’i rin po che zbig brkus song bas
de’i skyin tshab sprad rogs” zhes brjod pas/ zla bas go don ma rtogs par ha las pa ltar
“khyod kyis ci zer/ ngas khyod kyi sa nas dngos rigs khab skud tsam yang ’khyer ba’i*

74 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 30–31.

75 See Stoler Miller’s (1971) research work on and translations of the different versions of this Sanskrit work. According to Stoler Miller (p. 2, n. 1), the literal meaning of the title is “a collection of fifty by a thief”. The work, which has been attributed to Bilhaṇa, is a love poem in which after separation the lover misses his beloved and describes her beauty and other attractive qualities. The explicit reference to a “thief” only appears in the title.

*nongs med/ khyod kyis bdag la rku 'dzugs don ci yin' zhes zer zhing [...] ngas khong la
 "khyed kyis nga' i sems brkus song ba ma yin nam" zhes brjod pas*
 (Don grub rgyal, "Sems gcong")⁷⁶

I said to him playfully: "Because you have stolen a jewel from me, please give me a replacement." Dawa did not understand what I meant, and said: "What are you saying? I am not guilty of keeping any object, even a needle and thread, from you. Why are you accusing me of stealing?" [...] I said to him: "Haven't you stolen my mind?"
 (Dhondup Gyal, "Depression")

In this passage the idea of "losing one's mind" has been extended to "losing through stealing". The mind is depicted metaphorically with the image of a jewel (or something "precious", Tib. *rin po che*). Here the innovation could be characterized as metaphorical extension. According to the cognitive study of metaphors this is one of the features which characterize the poetic metaphor and it is also a strategy to create new metaphors based on earlier existing metaphorical patterns.⁷⁷ In the above passage the man is a thief who steals the girl's mind.

Jewels and precious things normally share the quality of being aesthetically highly beautiful and pleasing to behold. Due to this intrinsic characteristic, the source domain images of precious things are often mapped onto aesthetically attractive phenomena. For example, in the unfinished prose work "bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud" ("A Story of Searching for the Royal Tombs") a "necklace of gold, silver, turquoise, and coral" is mapped onto the target domain of a rainbow, which is referred to with an expression from synonymical lexicons: *dbang po'i gzhu ris* ("Bow of Indra").⁷⁸ This clearly has to do with the visual characteristics of a rainbow and its colours, which correspond to various precious substances. In the fairytale "Bu ldom po dang klu'i sras mo" star constellations are likened to ornaments made of pearls.⁷⁹

A magnificent example of how precious substances may be used to illustrate a beautiful scenery is found in the *kāvya*-style poem "sNyan ngag la sbyar ba'i sgrung rtsom gzhon nu'i yid kyid mdzes rgyan" ("A Poetic Narrative: The Beautiful Ornament for the Minds of Young Persons"). In its poetic preface the wonderful natural beauty of the landscape in Dragkar is described as follows: "the woolly flock of ducks like pearls scattered on the ground / are swimming on the surface of the lake in the meadow as though painted for the hundredth time

⁷⁶ Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 4.

⁷⁷ Lakoff & Turner 1989: 67.

⁷⁸ Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 364.

⁷⁹ Don grub rgyal 1981c: 28.

with melted Vaidūrya”.⁸⁰ As the passage develops the reader becomes aware of Dhondup Gyal’s skilful use of a rich *kāvya*-style to depict typical pastoral scenery on the high Tibetan plateau. One typical element is “the group of nomadic tents”, which are likened to “sleeping turtles”.

Jewels and precious substances may also be used to describe good qualities in a person’s character. In the unfinished story “Tshul khrims rgya mtsho”, the character who is writing the story of Tsultrim Gyatso characterizes the main protagonist of his story using a series of similes: his “thoughts” (*bsam pa*) are compared to a “crystal” (*chu shel*), his character (*gshis ka*) to a “vajra” (*rdo rje*),⁸¹ his patient nature (*ngang rgyud*) to a white greeting scarf (*kha btags*), and his education (*yon tan*) to an ocean (*rgya mtsho*). The narrator considers that the main character of his story represents a Tibetan intellectual.⁸² In the same story when Tsultrim Gyatso speaks to the person who has written his story, he comments about human character using a parallelism in which the nature of gold to have impurities is compared to a person having faults.⁸³ In these images precious substances are mainly used to depict the good qualities of a person’s character. Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 292) have discussed the metaphors used when speaking of matters related to morality, and have observed the conceptual metaphor WELL-BEING IS WEALTH. Mapping precious substances onto the mind and its properties could also be understood to be related to this conceptual metaphor. Using the images of crystal and *vajra* to depict mind and character could be interpreted as expressing good qualities, such as honesty, reliability, and other qualities usually connected with a moral person.

In Dhondup Gyal’s poem “Khrul min rmi lam ngo tshar dga’ skyed” (“The True Dream of Wonder and Joy”), which contains a metacommentary on its own images, there is a passage which describes how the voice of the poem dreams about a fish that fetches the “ultimate jewel” (*don dam pa’i nor bu*) from an ocean

80 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 96: “mu tig sa la brdal ba lta bu’i bal ldan khyu tshogs ngang mo rnams// baidūr zhun mas lan brgyar byugs ’dra’i spang ljongs mtsho mo’i ngogs na rgyu//”. Krang dbyi sun (1993: 1839) describes Vaidūrya as a jewel, mentioning two different sources for its colour. According to one source, its colour is blue, but according to another source yellow, green, and white jewels are called by this name. In English the jewel is called lapis lazuli. I have translated *bal ldan* as ‘woolly’, but it is also close to the word *dpal ldan*, which means ‘glorious’.

81 For information on the meaning and rich symbolism connected to *vajra*, see Beer 1999: 233–243. English words that have been used in reference to it, are for instance “diamond” and “thunderbolt”.

82 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 101.

83 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 101. “gser yin na lhad ma ’dres pa dang/ mi yin na skyon ma gos pa zhig gang na yod/”. The image of gold also occurs in a proverb in “Dri bzhon gyi bu mo”: “gser sa ’og dang ’od nam mkha” (Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 8). This proverb is used to depict the intelligence and wisdom of the girl of the wind.

after first having trained itself in the skills of swimming.⁸⁴ In the poem a queen also appears to the dreamer explaining the meaning of his dreams.⁸⁵ Without detailed explanation the images would probably not be successfully mapped onto the target domains of the poem. If we consider the passage about the fish and the jewel, the expression “ultimate jewel” would be likely to be interpreted by Tibetan readers as a state of Buddhist spiritual realization. However, the queen in Dhondup Gyal’s poem interprets dreaming about receiving “the ultimate jewel” as “a sign of attaining the prize of the golden cup”. The idea of receiving the “golden cup” is connected to winning prizes in sport competitions as is suggested in the immediately preceding interpretative comments of the queen: the training of the fish in swimming is interpreted as people training in sports, and the journey of the fish to the ocean as the sportsmen participating in an international sports event.⁸⁶ These are all secular concerns typical to our own age. The shift in target domains is very innovative here, so innovative that the images require a clearly worded commentary to interpret them.

We have now seen when discussing images of material objects, that here again it is possible to discern both connections to traditional imagery and innovation. Source domain images are slow to change and therefore are mostly similar to those found in traditional literature: for example, when considering weapons, we saw how images of arrows and swords are still common in modern writings. Innovation mostly occurs in shifts in the target domains, though even here there is often some connection to traditional uses that ensures that the image is communicated. Also new motifs, such as the need to get free from the restrictions of old customs, may be expressed with images that have as such nothing especially new and which express the familiar idea of getting free from some kind of undesirable situation. However, that binding factor can be mapped in a novel way onto a different target domain and in this way the idea of freedom may be interpreted differently. It was also possible to discern some cross-culturally shared features in the images such as, for example, the association of precious substances with the good features of a person’s character, or in other words, moral wealth. Creativity in constructing imagery is also achieved through metaphorical extension, as we could observe when examining the image of a jewel to illustrate the mind of a woman and then depicting the man as metaphorically a thief. As we saw in our last example, the use of images in innovative ways can still retain the ability to communicate by means of a commentary or some other textual strategies.

84 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 14.

85 The name of the queen is sMan a ne gong ma rgyal mo.

86 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 16.



10. CULTURAL IMAGERY

The cultural objects discussed in this chapter include both images of objects of art and of religio-mythical origin. In Dhondup Gyal's writings images of objects of art can function both as source domains and as target domains in a metaphoric structure. In the previous chapters we saw some instances when some art form, especially literature, functioned as a target domain. Here I shall take a look at images whose source domains are related to art. It is interesting to ask whether the various art forms are mapped onto phenomena that share some features, like visuality or audibility, or whether the mappings are instead characterized by crossing between the different domains of sensory experience. As we are here analysing literature, it is of course relevant to ask how literary works themselves are used for image formation.

Considering the relation of Dhondup Gyal's imagery with traditional imagery, discussing the images coming from religio-mythical origins is of special interest. An image connected with religious beliefs could be considered religious and normally it could be expected to convey a spiritual meaning or message. Dhondup Gyal's writings also have images which are clearly Buddhist, but their usage, however, seems to be secular. This sounds contradictory, but in this chapter we shall see how a religious image may be used in a secular manner. His writings also contain images which come from earlier tradition, such as history, myths, and earlier literature, and it is worthwhile paying attention to what images Dhondup Gyal has employed which come from a traditional stock. Further, could the way he has employed them be considered to be in accordance with traditional literature, or should it rather be characterized as innovative?

10.1 Art, literature, and music

The art forms of painting and poetry are often found in Dhondup Gyal's imagery. They are very often used to illustrate the quality of the scenery and landscape. Thus there is a cross-mapping from images of human-created cultural objects to the different domain of nature. Usually images of paintings and poetry are used in an aesthetic manner to enhance and emphasize the breathtaking beauty of the scenery in the natural environment.

In two of Dhondup Gyal's stories "rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma" ("A Shameless Bride") and "bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud" ("The Story of Searching for the Royal Tombs"), a scene is depicted which is shrouded in fog, making

it almost invisible. However, the descriptions share a feature of conditionality: they both depict the details of scenery which would be visible if the fog did not enfold everything. The fog is illustrated metaphorically as the “veil of fog” (*smugs pa'i seng ras*).¹ The wordings and ideas of both passages in the two stories closely resemble each other. In both of them the description of the scenery enveloped by fog is in the beginning part, in “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma” right in the beginning and in “bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud” also in the early part of Chapter 1 after the preface (*gleng gzhi*). Here is the scene in “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma”:

*gal srid smugs pa'i seng ras 'di med pa yin na/ sa 'di ga'i yul ljongs ni ri mo mkhan
gyis bris pa ji bzhin mdzes shing lta na sdug pa dang/ snyan ngag mkhan gyis brtsams
pa ji bzhin brjod bya phun sum tshogs pa zhig yin mod/
(Don grub rgyal, “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma”)²*

if there were not this veil of fog, the landscape of this place would be as beautiful and attractive as if it had been painted by a painter and excellent in its content as if written by a poet.
(Dhondup Gyal, “A Shameless Bride”)

There are two similes mapped on the one target domain of the landscape. In the first simile the landscape is likened to a painting and in the second to a poem. The passage continues by describing the kind of things that are hidden by the fog, such as birds, bees, and flowers. The passage in “bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud” has exactly the same similes, depicting the landscape with the help of the images of painting and poetry. This passage is more elaborate in detail when it describes the features of the grassland covered by fog, among them ducks, clear mountain brooks and the singing of young nomads.³

Could this feature of the hidden scenery under fog be related to the fact that in both stories these depictions are located at the beginning? If so, they could be thought to illustrate that the story is still waiting to unfold before the reader's

1 The curtain (*yol ba*) may also be used to illustrate a shadow (*grib ma*) or darkness (*mun pa*) as in the short stories “sGrung ba” (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 39) and “Tshul khirms rgya mtsho” (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 114). These images can be both metaphors or similes in their form, and function like image metaphors: one image is mapped onto other visual phenomena that have some characteristics common with it. In the essay “rKang lam phra mo” the image is suddenly used in connection with the mind or mental phenomena. The first-person narrator reflects on the narrow foothpath in his native village and “imagined appearances arise uncontrollably on the surface of the curtain of the memory of his mind”. Here the curtain (*yol ba*) might well be understood not as a “covering object” but rather as something like white screen or textile on which images may be reflected (see Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 1).

2 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 56.

3 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 358–359.

eyes, who still does not know what kind of story he is reading: the story is still somewhat “hidden”. It might be possible to consider them to reflect a topos of grassland that is depicted in a highly idealized light as a place of marvellous beauty. These reflections and depictions seem to have a national romantic tone which expresses love and devotion for one’s homeland landscape.

In the unfinished story “bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gтам rgyud” we find another description of scenery that is linked to objects of art.⁴ It describes the fairy tale-like scenery visible from the hole in the ground into which the first-person narrator has fallen. He sees a red rock and a marvellous waterfall, its stream looking like “a great road of crystal”.⁵ In this passage the beauty of the scenery is said to look as if it had been moulded by “the heavenly statue maker Viśvakarma (Bi shwa karma)”. The landscape is also said to be “more excellent in content than a poem by Kālidāsa (Nag mo khol)”.

Interestingly, Dhondup Gyal has also employed the poetic ornaments of the *kāvya* as source domain images. The text depicts a conditional imagined situation if Daṇḍin (Slob dpon dByug pa can) had arrived at that place of natural beauty: “he would have had great difficulty in gathering together in that one place the ornaments of poetry”. This obviously means that the wonderful characteristics of the landscape are more than abundant. The text comments further that Daṇḍin would feel his poetic treatise *Kāvyaḍarśa* to be “worthless” when compared with the beautiful landscape.⁶ Here the natural beauty of the environment is metaphorically described with the help of the ornaments of poetry, and it is even said that the beauty of nature surpasses the beauty created with the help of poetic ornaments. This view could perhaps be interpreted to suggest that by describing well the features of natural landscapes, it is possible to depict a beautiful scene better than by employing a full arsenal of poetic ornaments. The details of natural beauty are depicted to be so plentiful, that they cannot even be gathered into a poetic manual by a master writer or expert in poetics.⁷

At the beginning of part five of the short story “Brong stag thang” (“The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”) we find a description of a beautiful scenery which compares the appearance of a meadow to “pictures of golden dragons”:

4 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 364–365.

5 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 365.

6 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 365: “kho bas byas pa'i snyan ngag me long ma de ni 'di ga'i yul ljongs dang bsdur na rin thang gang yang mi 'dug snyam nas ngo tsha zhing kha skyengs par 'gyur nges red/”.

7 Daṇḍin is also mentioned in one of Dhondup Gyal’s poems, “Slob dpon la bsnags pa'i glu dbyangs” in a simile named “rmongs pa'i dpe”. Seeing a commentary written by his professor the poetic voice mistakenly considers that it was composed by the Indian master of poetics (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 4).

*gnam sngon po sngo zhing bsangs la/ sa dog mo mdzes shing sdug/ ston zla brgyad
pa'i 'brong stag thang la dge mtshan gsar ba zhig gis khengs 'dug spang ljongs sngon
mo de da lta'i dus su gos chen ser po'i thog la gser 'brug gi ri mo bkod pa dang 'dra
zhing/ gad yun ring ba'i me tog rnam da dung yang ser lam me/ sngo ldem me/
khra chil ler bzhad' dug*
(Don grub rgyal, “Brong stag thang”)⁸

The sky was clear and blue. The earth was beautiful and attractive. The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger of the eighth autumn month was filled with new and pleasant features. The green meadow scenery was now like the pictures of golden dragons painted on a yellow brocade. The flowers, which had long been blooming, were still smiling in yellow, blue and multiple colours.

(Dhondup Gyal, “The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”)

The passage continues by describing the pastoral idyll of the nomad tents and the animals of the nomads in their natural environment. This beautiful scenery is likened to a shining brocade cloth with beautiful designs.⁹ This and several other passages containing depictions of natural landscapes have been discussed by Agyur (A 'gyur 2003: 58–59) in his discussion of this story. He suggests that the description of the milieu and the fates of the characters are connected. For example, he points out that when the characters have a difficult time, the environment is also “sad”. A similar sensation is evoked in the short story “sGrung ba” (“The Storyteller”).

The passage quoted above from “Brong stag thang” occurs in the part of the story where the joyful occasion of the agreement between two communities and a cross-community marriage of a boy and a girl belonging to the two communities is depicted. Agyur (A 'gyur 2003: 59) interprets this scene as one of the positive turning points of the plot: according to him it represents the love between the couple, the happy birth of a new way, and the abandonment of a former custom. He comments: “Describing in detail a wonderful environment makes it possible to communicate the smiles in the faces of the characters of the work and the glory of minds rejoicing.” This kind of interpretation gives heightened artistic significance to landscape descriptions: lifting them much higher than

8 Don grub rgyal 1981b: 16.

9 Another description of an attractive scene using the image of a painting may be found in “brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs”. The passage depicts the grassland in autumn: “rtse mo ser por gyur pa'i spang ljongs ni ri mor bkod pa'i sa gdan ljang ser zhig dang 'dra bar 'jam la snum shig ger 'dug la/”. ‘The meadow where the tips of grass were becoming yellow was like a yellow-green map in a painting, soft and moist’. In the preceding sentence an image of a mirror is used to depict a lake: the Blue Lake is likened to “a clear mirror having the essence of melted sapphire” (*dbang sngon, indranila*; Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 41).

“mere” descriptions of locations. In fact, detailed descriptions of scenery have all the potentiality of being interpreted as metaphoric images if they are interpreted as representing developments in the plots.¹⁰ Part of the fascination of fiction is to read about cultural backgrounds and environments other than our own, but having said this, it is the duty of the careful reader to see how landscape passages enhance the understanding and interpretation of the fates of the characters in a story.

Mental images are also depicted with paintings or drawings. Something that will be remembered forever by a character is likened to “a picture carved on a stone”¹¹ and something that remains active in the mind may be described as “a memory picture” (*dran 'dzin kyi ri mo*) as for example in the beginning of the essay “rKang lam phra mo” (“The Narrow Footpath”), where the first-person narrator of the essay reflects on the appearance of the narrow path leading to his home village.¹²

To draw a comparison with traditional literature, in Milarepa’s religious poetry in a song in which he uses several similes to depict impermanence, the image of painting is one and the reason is also given: “The gold painting fades when it is completed”.¹³ Dhondup Gyal also uses the image of a picture fading from “the brocade of my heart” in “Tshul khirms rgya mtsho” to suggest that the intensity of attraction felt towards a woman has faded. Reading the preceding lines it becomes clear that the woman described called Lhamo Dolma has been married to another man, and when Tsultrim Gyatso sees her after a long time her appearance has undergone a huge change due to time and suffering. The first-person narrator is here the main character Tsultrim Gyatso:

*'das pa'i bya ba thams cad ni lo rgyus kyi sgam chung nang la bcug ste brjed nges kyi
lcags zwa brgyab pas dga' / kho mo sngon chad nga'i snying gi gos chen zbig yin na
yang da lta ri mo nyams song ba dang/ gra kha nyams pa'i wa mo dang thig le yal*

10 However, analysing the milieu of Dhondup Gyal’s works is beyond the scope of this work.

11 In “bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gnam rgyud” text quotes from “the oral tradition of the wise”: “dam pas khas 'ches mang bo mi byed cing// gal te dka' bas khas ni blangs gyur na// rdo la ri mo brkos pa ji bzhin du// 'chi ba srog la babs kyang blo mi 'gyur//”. ‘A noble person does not make many promises/ if due to circumstances he had to make a promise/ [it would be] like a picture carved in stone/ even if he died he wouldn’t change his mind.’ In the same passage the first-person narrator makes a promise to himself “like a vajra rock” (*rdo rje'i brag*) (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 361). In the free verse poem “Lang tsho'i rbab chu” the voice of the poem proclaims that the answers to some questions presented to the waterfall in the poem will be held in “our minds like they were pictures carved in stone” (“lan de dag –nga tsho'i sems la rdo la ri mo brkos pa lta rzung yod//”; Rang grol 1983: 60). Another example of the same simile may be found in “Pad mtsho” (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 31).

12 Don grub rgyal 1996, VI: 1.

13 Chang 1966: 22.

*ba'i gzig pags la rin thang ci zbig yod/ de nas bzung/ ngas u tshugs kyi sgo nas kho mo
nga'i snying gi khang bzang las phyir phud pa yin/
(Don grub rgyal, "Tshul khrims rgya mtsho")¹⁴*

I thought that it was best to place all the past events in the small box of history and put on it a lock of oblivion. Although she had before been the brocade of my heart, but now its pictures had faded. What value is there in a fox whose fur has become damaged and the hide of a leopard whose dots have faded? After that I determinedly expelled her from the good house of my heart. (Dhondup Gyal, "Tsultrim Gyatso")

In addition to landscapes, especially the remarkable beauty of a woman, or rather a goddess, as in "rTswa thang gi lha mo" ("The Goddess of the Grassland"), may also be depicted with the help of the art of sculpture and painting. The young Tibetan man, Kelsang, who addresses the goddess likens the beauty of her face to "a statue of a deity that has been manufactured from gold by an expert divine sculptor" and her five sense organs¹⁵ are depicted to be similar to "a painting drawn by a special person and drawn in pencil by an artist".¹⁶ In "Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs" ("The Love of Flesh and Bone") a painting occupies an important role in the story. It is also a *thangka*-painting depicting a goddess, but the narration and dialogue in the story seem to hint that the painting should be interpreted as depicting the mother of the main character. Thus in this particular work a goddess symbolizes a mother. However, other qualities may also be communicated with the help of the image of a statue. Simply, being "like statues in a monastery" may be used to convey the notion of remaining still without moving, as in "sPrul sku" ("Tulku") in the scene where the family members of Akhu Nyima concentrate while listening to the speech of the eponymous character.¹⁷ Moreover, images of poetry or painting may be employed to depict the attractiveness of some other object, such as a letter received from a beloved, as in the story "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs" ("The Waves of Love", see Ch. 1.1).

The image of a film may also be employed as a source domain image. Dhondup Gyal's use of this image is not unusual in the sense that it is common to use the sequential pictures of a film (*glog gi gzugs brnyan*) to describe the process of imagining a course of events that have taken place earlier. There is an example of this kind of usage in the short story "rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma" ("A Shameless

¹⁴ Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 110–111.

¹⁵ Tib. "dbang po lnga". They are: the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, and the body. See Krang dbyi sun 1993: 1932.

¹⁶ Don grub rgyal 1981a: 72.

¹⁷ Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 125.

Bride”).¹⁸ In another short story, “brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs”, the use of film as an image is different: here the way in which people are attentively listening to a lecture is as though “they were watching a highly interesting movie”.¹⁹

There are also images that have as their source domain an aural phenomenon. A source domain related to music may be mapped onto another target domain thus forming a metaphor, or it may also be used as the other part of a simile. However, it should be noted that *sgra rgyan* (sound ornaments) are different from these music-related images. Typically, sound ornaments are patterns formed by sounds, not similes or metaphors. In my analysis of several “music” images in the works of Dhondup Gyal I have found that almost always the source domain image of music is mapped onto some other kind of sound phenomena. This is very common with different kinds of sounds and with musical instruments, with the exception of the *damaru*-drum. Normally in Dhondup Gyal’s prose the sound of the *damaru*-drum is not of a quality that lends itself to metaphoric use. However, when the drum is shaken in the hands of a tantric practitioner, producing a fast rattling sound, this action can be mapped onto the movement of a person who is shaking his head in disapproval or negation, as, for example, in the short story “Brug mtsho” (“Drugtso”).²⁰ The image of a drum may also be used to enliven a sound: in “brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs”, for example, the birds are described to be now and then “beating a pleasant drum”.²¹

Generally, mapping the source domain of music onto target domains of other sounds enlivens the sounds and creates an aural environment in the stories. A more original use of mapping occurs when sounds and music are connected with more silent kinds of phenomena such as concepts or visual or concrete things. In, for example, the short story “sGrung ba” (“The Storyteller”) the eponymous character has died as a result of injuries received in a struggle session during the Cultural Revolution. Time has passed and a period of greater leniency in politics

18 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 59: “sdug gis mnar ba’i rgad po bzod pa’i gangs dkar sems kyi yol ba’i ngos la ‘das pa’i dus kyi gnas tshul yid skyo ba rnams glog gi gzugs brnyan dang ‘dra bar lhan ne lham me lhang nger shar yong/”, ‘on the curtain of the snow white mind of the old suffering man Soepa, the sad past happenings arose vividly like a film’. A similar type of film image is used to express the process of mental reflection on past events in the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa’i me tog” (Don grub rgyal 1982 & 1983, Part 2: 22).

19 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 30: “kho tsho’i sems rnal la phab nas sdod pa’i ngang tshul der bltas na lta ‘dod shin tu che ba’i glog brnyan zhig lta bzhin yod pa dang mtshungs/”.

20 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 88–89.

21 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 41: “bya dang bye’u rnams kyis mgo bo krong krong byas nas skabs rer phar ‘phur tshur ‘phur byed pa dang/ skabs rer snyan pa’i rdza rnga brdungs pa/”. In the poem “rTswa thang gi lha mo” in the scenic description in its opening section, the ducks are said to “beat their throat drums *sing sing*” (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 70).

has arrived.²² The first-person narrator addresses the already deceased storyteller saying that his stories are alive,²³ followed by a series of sound images:

*skabs der/ rgyang bsgrags las “dzam gling ge sar rgyal po'i sgrung” gi tshan pa zbig
bshad pa dang/ de ni mya ngan gyi rol mo dang sems gso'i gtam dang 'dra bar a khu
sgrung pa bzbugs sa'i dag pa'i shing la 'phur ba dang/ rgyal kha'i glu sgra dang 'thab
'dzing gi dung brda ji bzhin gnam sa gang bar khyab song/
(Don grub rgyal, “sGrung ba”)²⁴*

At that moment from the loudspeaker came an episode of “The Story of King Gesar of the World” and like funeral music and a consoling speech it flew to paradise where Uncle Storyteller resided, and like a song of victory and the sound of a horn it filled the whole sky and earth.
(Dhondup Gyal, “Storyteller”)

In this simile the target domain is the sound of telling an episode of a Gesar story. There is a series of four source domains (all sounds) likened to that of telling a story: funeral music, consoling speech, a song of victory and the sound of a horn. Attaching various kinds of images has the function of highlighting the different kinds of feelings the hearing of the story caused. Sorrow is experienced as the old storyteller, a close acquaintance of the narrator, has passed away as well as a feeling of victory: the times are more free and it is possible to hear a Gesar story, a great Tibetan epic from a loudspeaker. During the Cultural Revolution many expressions of traditional culture were banned and therefore the sound is described during this time of new policies as “a song of victory”.

There are also other images of “music” (*rol mo*) of different types in Dhondup Gyal's works. In “brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs” in the part titled “Diary of Lobsang” (“Blo bzang gi nyin tho”) Lobsang describes several sounds coming from the surrounding environment, which joined together form a melody that is likened to “the previously unheard polyphonous music” (*mnyam sgrog rol mo*).²⁵ In “bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud” the sound of a character snoring in sleep is likened to “pleasant music” (*snyan 'jeps kyi rol mo*).²⁶

In addition to drums of various kinds, some other musical instruments are used as source domains in Dhondup Gyal's imagery. Images of bells occur quite often and in all cases it is the quality of their sound that is used in the metaphorical

22 The exact time is not mentioned, though the explicit reference to the defeat of the “Gang of Four” provides a clue.

23 Speaking to somebody who has passed away is usually classified as a type of apostrophe.

24 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 47.

25 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 29.

26 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 357.

mappings. A woman's voice may be likened to the sound of a "small bell",²⁷ and words may function like "the sound of the gong of memory" – hearing such sounds a character may be thrown into deep reflection on past events.²⁸

10.2 Images from religio-mythical origins

When considering the relationship of Dhondup Gyal's imagery to traditional imagery, images having source domains connected with religio-mythical meanings are of special interest. Questions raised include: Are the images which originate from traditional beliefs and culture still used in a traditional way and do religious images still retain their spiritual content? Do they convey a religious idea or perhaps something entirely different? How does Dhondup Gyal, a modern Tibetan writer, then apply these images which have long roots in Tibetan and Indian traditions of religion, myth, and culture? The images have a unique cultural flavour, but it is nevertheless worth asking whether they also have some cross-culturally shared features.

10.2.1 *Where are the paradises? Secularizing the heavenly realms*

Dhondup Gyal's writings are normally regarded as secular literature. This is indeed the case because their themes are related to secular concerns, such as secular education, love, and social criticism. However, his works also contain an abundance of elements that have their origins in religious beliefs and mythology. I shall first take a closer look at how Dhondup Gyal has used realms of existence and their inhabitants which are typical to Buddhist beliefs and cosmogony as his source domains. His writings contain, for example, references to paradises ("pure realms", *dag pa'i zhing*), the land of gods (*lha yul*), hells (*dmyal ba*), and also to the land of *nāgas* (*klu yul*).

Associations of great happiness and well-being are attached to Buddhist ideas of paradises, the heavenly realms. Traditionally and also today Tibetan Buddhists

27 An example can be found in the short story "Mi rtag sgyu ma'i rmi lam" (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 341). Another metaphor with a bell image can be found in "rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam". Here the affectionate speech of the jewel to the lazy man is metaphorically depicted as "the bell of the essence of affectionate speech" ("sha tsha'i gtam gyi snying po'i dril bu"; Don grub rgyal 1981a: 142).

28 "dran bskul gyi cong brda". See "rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma", Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 59. According to Goldstein's (1975: 353) dictionary *cong* is translated as "bell, gong" and Krang dbyi sun (1993: 735) defines it as "a big bell".

pray to be born in a heavenly paradise. Birth in a paradise can in Buddhist beliefs be achieved through engaging in good actions and creating good *karma*.

Dhondup Gyal's works contain many places where paradises or heavens are mentioned. In two works one of the main characters comes from some fictional realm of religio-mythical beliefs. In the poem "rTswa thang gi lha mo" ("Goddess of the Grassland") the female protagonist is a goddess and in the fairy tale "Bu ldom po dang klu'i sras mo" ("The Wanderer Boy and the Daughter of Nāgas") the main female character comes from the land of *nāgas*. Also a shared feature between these two works is that the other male protagonist in both of them is a human male. The narrative poem "rTswa thang gi lha mo" is a work written in traditional form in verse and consists of three sections (*le'u*).²⁹ It tells the love story of a young man named Kelsang (sKal bzang) from Dragkar (Brag dkar) in Amdo and the goddess Kunga Lhakyi (Kun dga' lha skyid) from Sumtsen (Sum rtsen), the heaven of the gods.³⁰ In addition to the theme of love between a human and a heavenly being, another central theme of the poem is the discourse on secular and heavenly realms. The characteristics of these two realms are compared in the poem. This poem could be interpreted as an allegory having two levels: the imaginative story of the boy and the goddess, and the level of comparison of the heavenly realm of old beliefs and the present human realm of people's ordinary lives. The poem throws some light on Dhondup Gyal's ideas of heavenly realms and earth, stressing the wonderful characteristics of the latter.

Hinting to the content of the poem, in its first section the milieu of Dragkar is referred to with the word "district of heaven" (*gnam gyi rdzong*), and it is characterized as having all the earthly good qualities as well as "the happiness of the gods" (*lha yi bde skyid*) and "wealth of *nāgas*" (*klu yi longs spyod*).³¹ The goddess Kunga Lhakyi appears in this milieu in a wonderful magical way, riding down from the sky "the horse of the rainbow" and landing in front of the young man Kelsang.³²

In section two the goddess introduces herself, saying that she is the daughter of the two gods, Yellow Brahma (Tshangs pa ser po) and Sarasvatī (*dbyangs can lha mo*). These two gods were originally incorporated into the Tibetan Buddhist

29 It was published in 1981 in Dhondup Gyal's first book 'Bol rtsom zhogs pa'i skya rengs (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 70–76).

30 According to the dictionary of Krang dbyi sun (1993: 2930), *sum rtsen* is a name of a heaven called *sum cu rtsa gsum*, the heaven of "thirty-three". It explains that the name *sum rtsen* is used because the heaven in question is the place where three main gods play. The dictionary of Das (1902: 1272) gives the Sanskrit equivalent for *sum cu rtsa gsum*, which is *trāyastriṃśadeva*, with the English translations: "the residence of thirty-three gods" and "the heaven of Indra".

31 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 71.

32 Rainbow (*'ja'*) is in Tibetan here referred to with the word *dbang gzhu*, Indra's bow. This expression comes from lexicons of synonyms of Indic origin.

pantheon from India. Sarasvatī is a goddess who is especially related to poetry, whom poets often pray to for inspiration.³³ The goddess explains that she has come to visit the human realm because she has heard about its “new good characteristics”. The goddess and the young man from Amdo fall in love with each other.³⁴

In the third section the goddess admires the beauty of the snow mountain and there are two interesting similes related to an “object” (*dn̄gos po*). The object is characterized as sounding “like angry Red Hayagrīva” (*rTa mgrin dmar po*) and being as fast as “the mount of Viṣṇu” (*Khyab 'jug*).³⁵ It is in fact a modern vehicle that is referred to by the word *lcags glang* (“iron ox”), which could refer to a car, a bus, or possibly a train; a modern achievement of technology is described with characteristics attributed to one of the gods and a mount of a god. It becomes very clear how an age-old image may be used to depict something very contemporary. It is noteworthy that the way of mapping is usually so that the source domains are old, whereas the target domains could well be relatively new phenomena, concepts or objects. By contrast, examples where a new or “modern” source domain becomes mapped onto an old target domain are extremely rare (though they do exist, recall, for example, the mapping of the source domain of a bullet onto rain, see Ch. 9.2). An examination of imagery points towards the slowness in the changes of the repository of images. Rather, the images may remain the same, but typically there is a shift in their usages.³⁶

The poetic story ends with the goddess taking a liking to science and the schools of the grassland of Amdo – neither of which being available in the heavenly realms. She is described as wanting to stay in a school of the human realm

33 For Tibetan iconographic images of Brahma, see numbers 270, 404, 1072, and 2312 in Chandra (1991). An iconographic image of Sarasvatī can be found in Tachikawa, Mori & Yamaguchi 2000: 39, no. 8.

According to Darian (1978), the goddess Sarasvatī is connected with hymns and songs in the *R̄g Veda*.

34 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 73–74.

35 Red Hayagrīva is a wrathful tantric Buddhist deity. For its iconographic image, see Tachikawa, Mori & Yamaguchi 2000: 484, no. 436. The vehicle of the god Viṣṇu is the mythical *garuḍa*-bird, see Beer 1999: 66.

36 However, it is difficult to extend this slowness of metaphoric change to literature in general. Yangdon Dhondup (2004: 49) in her dissertation has quoted a passage from Bonnie S. McDougall and Kam Louie, which characterizes Chinese fiction during Cultural Revolution: “Another feature of Cultural Revolution fiction was the type of language used in both narrative and dialogue. This included metaphors derived from military affairs, politics, and economics.” However, the authors do not specify or give any examples of these metaphors. It would have been interesting to know whether military affairs, politics, and economics featured in the source domains or target domains of the metaphors in question. To learn more about this, it would be necessary to look directly at the texts produced during that time in China.

and wishes to “strive for the development of the grassland”.³⁷ Again, the themes of education and modernization are highlighted. These ideas are in accordance with official modernization policies, however. When the poem describes how the young couple wishes to work for the development of the area in Amdo, which is described to possess wonderful characteristics, the poem conveys a sense of love of one’s native place and concern for its future development.

In this narrative poem Dhondup Gyal describes the realm of humans to possess superior characteristics compared to the realm of heavens. Even a goddess finds herself astonished and wants to move to the human realm of the writer’s native land. This kind of view could be interpreted to mean that the good characteristics of the heavens are already here on earth and the earthly realm contains the opportunities for superior concerns, namely education and science. This narrative poem expresses a belief in development that will make the earth a paradise here and now. There is in Western culture also a conceptual metaphor connecting happiness and heaven: among many possible source domains for speaking about happiness Kövecses (2002: 85) mentions the conceptual metaphor BEING HAPPY IS BEING IN HEAVEN. He gives several examples, one of them being: “It was *paradise* on earth.” It seems very common cross-culturally that ideas about happy realms such as heavens are connected with ideas related to happiness and well-being, whereas target domains of suffering and sorrow are often expressed with images of the lower realms such as hells.

The “goddess of the grassland” is described to be of “real” heavenly origins. But what about other goddesses and gods and heavenly places in the works of Dhondup Gyal and their possible use as source domains of metaphorical expressions? At the beginning of “rTswa thang dran glu” (“A Song of Missing the Grassland”, see Ch. 3.2) mention is made of a “capital city like the land of the gods” (*lha yul lta bu’i rgyal sa*), where the first-person voice of the poem resides and misses the grassland. The city evidently refers to Beijing, where Dhondup Gyal stayed for several years in the Institute of Nationalities. It seems clear that in this poem “the land of the gods” does not have any actual spiritual overtone but rather refers to the fact how every possible thing and comfort is available in a modern city: the comfort of modern life and also perhaps the aesthetic qualities of the city. However, again the voice of the poem is not satisfied in his existence in the “city-like heavens”, but his mind escapes to the grassland revealing his great attraction towards the grassland of his native place.³⁸

37 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 76.

38 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 49.

In the lyrics of “Nga dang khu byug gnyis ka” (“Me and the Cuckoo”), found in the last volume of *The Collected Works*, a passage states that the beauty of the Tibetan scenery is superior to the heavens of the gods:

nga dang khu byug gnyis ka//
kha ba can la slebs song//
e ma 'di ga' i yul ljongs//
mtbo ris lha las mdzes pa//
e ma 'di ga' i longs spyod//
'og ma klu las mdzes pa//
 (Don grub rgyal, “Nga dang khu byug gnyis ka”)³⁹

Me and the cuckoo together
 we arrived at the Land of Snows
 oh, the scenery here
 is more beautiful than up in the land of the gods
 oh, the richness of wealth here
 is richer than down in the realm of *nāgas*
 (Dhondup Gyal, “Me and the Cuckoo”)

In these lyrics the Tibet of Dhondup Gyal’s time is depicted to be more beautiful than heavenly paradise and wealthier than the *nāgas* in their realm. Therefore it seems useless to dream about heavenly realms. In short, paradise is here and now for the first-person voice of the poem, the blackbird.

A similar idea of the pleasantness of the human realm compared to that of the gods may also be found in a song of the Sixth Dalai Lama:

smān shar skye 'bras mtshar la/
ja chang 'dod yon 'dzoms pa/
shi nas lha lus blangs kyang/
'di las dga' nges mi 'dug/
 (Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho, *gSung mgur*)⁴⁰

Woman with wonderful looks
 an abundance of tea, *chang* and objects of sensual pleasures
 even if one were reborn as a god after death
 there is certainly nothing better than this.
 (The Sixth Dalai Lama, *Songs*)

In his song the Sixth Dalai Lama highlights the sensual pleasures of the human realm. Of course, the idea of a “paradise on earth” is not new, and may be found, for example, in the motifs of folk culture.

39 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 38.

40 Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho & Ngag dbang lhun grub dar rgyas 1981: 31, song no. 85.

In Dhondup Gyal's short story "sGrung ba" ("The Storyteller") the idea of paradise on earth is found in the words of the old storyteller. Here paradise takes on a politically coloured meaning to depict Tibetan society after the occupation ironically enough which the Chinese called "liberation" (*bcings 'grol*). In the passage the storyteller tells about his positive experiences in society, and he still cannot fully comprehend the policies of the Cultural Revolution when storytelling represented old culture and beliefs and was not allowed:

*ngo ma skyid kyi nyi ma shar 'dra red/ btsan po gnyom chung med la/ gnya' gnon
bshu gzhog med la/ ngo ma dag pa'i zhing zer ba de' ang 'di lta bu zbig min na ji lta
bu zbig yin/ don gzhan dag gleng nas dgos pa mi 'dug*
(Don grub rgyal, "sGrung ba")⁴¹

Really it is like the sun of happiness having risen. There are no oppressors or humble ones. There is no suppression and discrimination. If paradise is not like this then what would it be like? There is no need to say anything else.
(Dhondup Gyal, "Storyteller")

These kinds of statements equating the earthly realm with paradise actually conform to Chinese policies. As Yangdon Dhondup points out in her dissertation: "The mission of the [Chinese] Communists was to transform Tibet into a socialist heaven."⁴² However, in "sGrung ba" it becomes clear that the story actually criticizes the view of the Tibetan-populated areas of the People's Republic of China as heaven. Instead it could be classified as an example of "the literature of the wounded", one of the literary genres in China during the writer's time (see Ch. 5.3). In this story the storytelling activities of the main character are regarded as representing the old and he suffers and dies after a struggle session.

The stories that the old storyteller told were the stories of Ling Gesar (Gling Ge sar). In the first part of the story he is depicted telling about the origin of a certain conifer tree (*thang shing*) which is attributed to Gesar. It is said that Gesar brought a cone from which the tree grew from Mount Kailash to the homeland of the storyteller.⁴³ There are several references to the stories of Ling Gesar in the works of Dhondup Gyal, for instance, in such works as "rKang lam phra mo" ("The Narrow Footpath") and "bTsan po'i bang sor myul ba'i gtam rgyud" ("The Story of Searching for the Royal Tombs"). In "sGrung ba" there is an example of an image connected with the Gesar epic which functions as a source domain: the first-person narrator likens a crow to the spy bird of Hor Gurkar Gyalpo

41 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 41.

42 Yangdon Dhondup 2004: 13.

43 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 37.

(Hor Gur dkar rgyal po).⁴⁴ Interestingly, here in a simile the domain of “epic” animals is mapped onto the target domain of a “real” animal of the same type. The references to the traditional great epic of the Tibetans also show connections to traditional Tibetan folk culture.

In the short story “Brong stag thang” we find an image related to anger and its pacification which uses the source domains of the Buddhist gods:

*skyes pho rab 'di tsho ngo ma thugs kbros na rta mgrin dmar po dang/ spo (khong
kbro) dung na tshangs pa dkar po nang bzhin red*
(Don grub rgyal, “Brong stag thang”)⁴⁵

When these men get really angry they are like Red Hayagrīva and when they
are peaceful they are like White Brahma.
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”)

It might be surprising that a deity is used to illustrate the appearance of angry persons. However, it can be understood to refer here to the idea of a wrathful deity (Hayagrīva) who in the iconography is usually depicted as surrounded by flames of fire and is red in colour. (In cognitive theory heat and fire are commonly connected with metaphoric expressions of anger, see Ch. 6.1.) When a person is pacified his appearance changes, resembling a god depicted as white in colour. Because the deities are used to express ordinary men in various emotional states, it can be said that the target domains of the images are highly secular.

In several cases women may be called goddesses (*lha mo*) or female spirits (*'dre mo*) in the stories of Dhondup Gyal.⁴⁶ This simply means attributing the good characteristics of attractiveness or the negative qualities of evil to the female character in question – but nothing spiritual or religious as such is implied.

44 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 38.

45 Don grub rgyal 1981b: 14.

46 There are examples of both uses in Dhondup Gyal’s short story “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma”. In part three of the story Soebhe speaks to his new woman Kuntu Sangmo likening her to a “heavenly goddess” (*nam mkha'i lha mo*; Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 65). In part four of the same story Kelbhe (sKal bhe), who is the lover of Kuntu Sangmo, refers to his own wife who does not want to give him a divorce, with the expression “old female spirit” (*'dre rgan ma*; Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 69). The names of spirit creatures seem to be used when there is a need to curse or speak roughly about the person or other creature, such as a dog. In the same story the guard dog is called a “spirit dog” (*gdon khyi*) by Kuntu Sangmo. However, Kuntu Sangmo is herself referred to by her mother-in-law as a “bitch” (*khyi mo*), when the mother-in-law notices that she is receiving her lover (Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 68). Also, in the short story “Brong stag thang” a woman is referred to as a “female spirit” (*'dre mo*) and as a “destroyer woman” (*'phung rgan ma*; Don grub rgyal 1981b: 10).

In Dhondup Gyal's stories the idea of paradise (*dag pa'i zhing*) may occur in connection with the death of some character.⁴⁷ This is due to the customary way of expressing the idea of death in Tibetan.⁴⁸ Dhondup Gyal also refers to death by the expression "going to meet the Yamarāja", which has its origins in Hindu and Buddhist religions, as well as the simpler expression "to pass away" (*'das pa*).⁴⁹ These expressions can be used to avoid direct statements about the death of somebody and according to cognitive theory of metaphor expresses the idea of DEATH IS DEPARTURE.⁵⁰ These Tibetan expressions contain the idea of leaving behind a previous location in this world and a community of humans. Many expressions and ideas about death in Tibetan are still deeply connected with religion and tradition and will most likely continue to be so.

What about ideas of hell? One passage in the short story "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs" ("The Waves of Love") contains a reference to the eighteen hells and lower realms, though the tone of the passage is very sarcastic or ironic. It is located at the beginning of the "letter of admitting one's mistakes" written by Palden (dPal ldan). In fact, there is no actual mistake, but a leader named Kharjam Hru'u ci (mKhar byams hru'u ci) demands that Palden produces such a piece of writing because some rumours, hinting at a romantic relation between Palden and a girl named Lhadon, have circulated in the commune. In the letter Palden addresses the leader as "the tulku of the Communist party" and thanks him for "having pulled him with the hook of compassion from the eighteen hells to a very comfortable place".⁵¹ When discussing what he has done, Palden does not confess to any mistakes, because he has only been enjoying meals with the girl's family and the rumours were spread by someone else. So in his letter the Buddhist beliefs are simply used to create an ironic effect and invoking them has

47 This is, for example, the case in the short story "sGrung ba". When speaking about the death of the old storyteller, an old woman says: "phebs thal ya/ na ning zhing la phebs thal/". 'He has gone. He has gone to the realm last year' (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 45). The word *zhing*, 'realm', can in this expression be interpreted as the realm of heaven.

48 Kövecses (2002: 85) gives "I've died and gone to heaven" as one example of the Western usage of the source domain of heaven. Although this expression is metaphoric and expresses extreme happiness, it also shows that there is a connection with the idea of dying and going to heaven. In Christian beliefs "going to heaven" is, of course, usually related to life after death.

49 This expression is used, for example, in the short story "Sha dang rus pa'i brtse dungs" (Rang grol 1984: 42). The Yamarāja is also mentioned in a proverb in the short story "Brong stag thang" (Don grub rgyal 1981b: 5). According to a comment of Prof. Karttunen, the idea of death as meeting with the Yamarāja is common in India and can be found, for example, in the *Kaṭha-upaniṣad*. For an English translation of this *upaniṣad*, see Olivelle 1996: 231–247.

50 Lakoff & Turner 1989: 1–6, 10–11.

51 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 49: "khyed kyi thugs rje'i lcags kyus kho bo dmyal khams bco brgyad las yar drangs te shin tu skyid cing bde ba'i gnas su bkod pa la thugs rje che zhu/".

nothing to do with the spiritual realm. Dhondup Gyal located ideas related to traditional and religious matters in the minds and speech of his characters who are ordinary Tibetans with all their characteristic ways of thinking and believing. However, blind faith comes under criticism in his short story “Tulku” in which the villagers are deceived because of their blind faith to a fake lama.

The idea of hell can also be found in the proverbs that the characters of the stories utter. In “rGyu 'bras med pa'i mna' ma” Soebhe uses a proverb to express his devotion to his woman Kuntu Sangmo: “From tomorrow on, I, Soebhe, for your sake, if I am asked to run, I would not hesitate (to run down) the road of hell, and if I am asked to hit, I would not hesitate (to hit) even my father’s head.”⁵² No doubt there is also a moral dimension connected with the images of hell and heaven: the heavenly realm being associated with goodness, and the lower realms with evil.

Several names of gods like Tārā and Mañjuśrī are mentioned in the final part of the poem “Rig pa'i dpa' bo rnam la phul ba'i bstod tshig” (“A Eulogy to the Heroes of Wisdom”). Here the writer plays with the names of his students that are or contain elements of names of gods and heavenly beings as well as *nāgas*. It is very common that the names of Tibetans are religious or names of gods and this explains the wordplay. Here is the passage related to one of his students named Dolma:

*sgrol ma ya/sgrol ma/
rigs drug'gro ba rnam sdrug bsngal gyi rgya mtsho las sgrol nus na/
khyed kyis thar ba'i gru gzings brten dgos pa dang/
de ni khyed kyi bde skyid dang/rang gi la rgya yang yin pas/
rmongs mun gyi dbye yol de/sgrol ma dkar sngon gnyis
kyi blo gros kyi sor mos cig car du dbral nas/
shes bya yi dag pa'i zhing du/
sang rgyas kyi 'khor du skye ba'i smon lam bdag gis 'debs/
(Don grub rgyal, “Rig pa'i dpa' bo rnam la phul ba'i bstod tshig”)⁵³*

Dolma, O Dolma!

if you are able to liberate the beings of the six realms from the ocean of suffering
you have to rely on the boat of liberation and
that will be your happiness and also your own dignity, therefore
the white and blue Dolmas with their fingers of wisdom will suddenly tear
the curtain of the darkness of ignorance

52 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 65: “sang phyin chad/ nga bsod bhes khyod kyi don du/ rgyugs zer na dmyal ba'i phrang dang/ rgyob zer na a pha'i mgo la'ang the tshom med/”.

53 Don grub rgyal 1997, I: 155–156.

I pray that we will be born to the entourage of Buddhas
 in the paradise of knowledge
 (Dhondup Gyal, “A Eulogy to the Heroes of Wisdom”)

The above passage does indeed have a religious flavour. The metaphors connected with the student’s name are on the mental level: the listener/reader is likely to think of both the student Dolma and the goddess Dolma at the same time, thus metaphorically intertwining the two names and their associations. However, even the voice of the poem prays to be born in paradise, and the heavenly realm in question is specified to be “the paradise of knowledge”. In the context of Dhondup Gyal’s other writings which emphasize education and striving for learning and knowledge, it seems that here paradise and tearing the curtain of “the darkness of ignorance” act as images of devoting oneself to one’s studies and academic pursuits. The point is that the target domain of the image of the goddess is most likely a student who has completed her studies in the Teachers’ Training school in Chabcha. In other wordplays on names in the poem the target domains are also individual students.

Other free verse poems by Dhondup Gyal may at least contain some elements from religio-mythical origins. In “Lang tsho’i rbab chu” “the song of youth” of the waterfall is characterized as “the song of *gandharvas*”, “the melody of Brahma”, and “the speech of Sarasvatī”. In the series there is also another more worldly sound, namely that of “the sound of the cuckoo”.⁵⁴ The purpose of using these images is no doubt to create an idea of a uniquely enchanting sound of “the waterfall of youth”.

Dhondup Gyal’s works also contain some depictions of religiosity. In the beginning of “sPrul sku” (“Tulku”), for example, Akhu Nyima is depicted as engaged in the recitation of the *maṇi*-mantra. However, as metaphoric mappings are usually based on the principle of mapping across domains, it is not particularly typical to depict religious behaviour or thoughts with the help of other images of a religious nature. For instance, the feeling of faith that Akhu Nyima experiences when a lama – the tulku – arrives in his house is illustrated with the help of corporal imagery: he is depicted as feeling “respect causing tears to well in his eyes and happiness moving the hairs of his body”.⁵⁵

The fairy tale “Bu ldom po dang klu’i sras mo” (“The Wanderer Boy and the Daughter of Nāgas”) has several descriptions and ideas connected with the realm of the *nāgas*. The story contains, for example, a fantastic depiction of a

54 Rang grol 1983: 56–57.

55 Don grub rgyal 1997, II: 123: “mig la mchi ma 'khrigs pa'i mos gus dang lus la spu g.yo ba'i bde ba byung/”.

landscape having “turquoise forests” and “coral flowers”, and so on.⁵⁶ This kind of story, of course, is strongly influenced by folktales and Buddhist mythical beliefs and legends. It also reveals something of the writer’s strong connection to folk culture and beliefs. However, due to the nature of metaphoric mappings as crossing domains, the realm of the *nāgas* is more likely to be depicted with images belonging to other realms. The same goes for the *nāga*-girl, who first appears in the story in the form of a marvellous talking fish and then during the sunset arises from the lake in her form as a woman.⁵⁷ At the end of the story the young mortal and the goddess get married in the *nāga*-realm. However, the narrator concludes that “they returned to the realm of the humans and started to enjoy a happy existence”.⁵⁸ One interpretation here is that the movement of the *nāga*-character is from the realm of *nāgas* to the realm of humans. Although the realms are not compared explicitly, the human realm is depicted in such a way that it is possible for a *nāga*-girl to be interested enough to leave her mythical abode and come to the actual world of humans on earth.

10.2.2 Remarks on the seven precious possessions of the universal monarch

Dhondup Gyal’s literary works also contain a work entitled “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba’i ’bel gtam” (“A Discourse on the Seven Precious Possessions of the Universal Monarch”), which may be characterized as allegorical. This work is located last in Dhondup Gyal’s first collection of writings, *’Bol rtsom zhogs pa’i skya rengs*, and is thus a relatively early work. I have devoted a separate subsection to it because it seems to form a whole in its imagery of the seven precious possessions of a universal monarch (*chakravartin*). Although I have already referred to some images in the poem, I shall here focus on the seven possessions. The work could be characterized as a narrative poem⁵⁹ in regular nine-syllable verse, and it has an introductory part and seven sections (*le’u*). The poem has two levels: on one level of the narrative we have an imaginative story of a lazy young man meeting the seven precious possessions of a universal monarch, and on the other more abstract level the poem communicates to the reader the importance of studies and education.

56 Don grub rgyal 1981c: 23.

57 Don grub rgyal 1981c: 21.

58 Don grub rgyal 1981c: 29.

59 The concept of *’bel gtam* at the beginning of the title of the poem is defined in the dictionary of Krang dbyi sun (1993: 1974) in the following way: “’bel gtam/ don gcig rtsal du bton te bshad pa min par bshad bya’i rnam grangs sna tshogs pa nas gleng ba’i gtam/”, “Bel gtam: not expressing one meaning alone, but a speech discussing various aspects of the subject of discussion.”

This poem is rich in imagery, but here I will especially consider the role of the ancient Buddhist notions of the seven precious possessions, as they form the core of the work. Allegories may also be understood as metaphorical structures. *The Bedford Glossary* points out that this kind of view is held by many scholars: “Many critics consider the allegory to be an extended **metaphor** and, conversely, consider metaphors – which involve saying one thing but meaning another – to be ‘verbal allegories’”.⁶⁰ Mark Turner (1987: 102), for example, has used conceptual metaphors related to kinship to interpret allegories.⁶¹ In my analysis I shall try to see whether Dhondup Gyal’s allegory has some conceptual structures that can be understood with the help of an understanding of the culture’s metaphorical structures of cognition. In telling this poetic story Dhondup Gyal makes use of the images of the seven precious possessions that are metaphorically mapped onto more abstract concepts related to education and learning.

I shall first introduce the seven precious possessions and the idea of the universal monarch. These are all imagined mythological entities or objects of belief of Buddhists. They have their roots in ancient Indian ideas and beliefs and were early on absorbed into the Buddhist belief system that was imported and assimilated into Tibet.⁶² In *The Encyclopedia of Tibetan Symbols and Motifs* Beer writes the following about *chakravartin* and the seven precious possessions:

The birth of a *chakravartin* heralds the onset of seven wealths or abundances which arise in the realm: a wealth of faith, morality, honesty, learning, renunciation, and wisdom. At the time of his birth his seven precious jewels or possessions also appear simultaneously: the precious wheel, jewel, queen, minister, elephant, horse, and general. These seven possessions [...] are the “property” of the *chakravartin*, and karmically come into existence as his “mandala”.

(Beer, *The Encyclopedia of Tibetan Symbols and Motifs*)⁶³

Dhondup Gyal has organized his narrative poem into sections each section devoted to one individual precious possession. The sections and the possessions are: 1) the precious wheel (*'khor lo rin po che*), 2) the precious jewel (*nor bu rin po che*), 3) the precious minister (*blon po rin po che*), 4) the precious elephant (*glang*

60 Murfin & Ray 2003: 9.

61 Turner presents passages from John Gower’s allegorical work and analyses them from the point of view of the cognitive theory of metaphor.

62 Beer 1999: 160–162. See also Dargyab Rinpoche’s (1992: 92–115) book on Buddhist symbols, which contains detailed information on the seven precious possessions of *chakravartin* together with illustrations and as well as information on their use in the Buddhist ritual of *maṇḍala*-offering.

63 Beer 1999: 160–161.

po rin po che), 5) the precious general (*dmag dpon rin po che*), 6) the precious queen (*btsun mo rin po che*), and 7) the precious horse (*rta mchog rin po che*).

The poem is quite traditional in style with its regular verse and many stylistic features connecting it to earlier tradition: for example, each of the seven precious possessions introduce themselves in a way that may also be found in the songs of Milarepa and the epic of Gesar.⁶⁴ The ending of the poem also has a certain classical flavour, using a sentence-final particle of classical Tibetan. Foremost of all, a flavour of traditional culture is given by making use of the idea of seven precious possessions. The metaphoric use of these seven is a shared feature with a song of Milarepa, which has been translated by Garma C.C. Chang (1966: 63–64). In the song Milarepa presents himself as a universal monarch and demonstrates how he has the seven precious possessions. Each of the precious objects is said to be something related to spiritual practice, such as meditation and wisdom.⁶⁵

The question is what might be Dhondup Gyal's reason for choosing to make use of ancient religious mythological symbols in his poem. Is it that he wants to be purposefully traditional or is there some other function for the symbols in the allegory? Does the poem actually discuss something relevant to contemporary Tibetan society? Dhondup Gyal states his purpose in the introductory part of the poem: "In order to promote the beneficial culture of the Snowy Land, I will take delight in telling the drama of the seven precious possessions."⁶⁶ The introductory part depicts how "some young persons still remain astonished (in their place) on the road of four modernizations" (*can bzhi'i lam*).⁶⁷ Thus although it seems evident that the direction Dhondup Gyal is advocating is towards modernity and progress, he makes use of ancient symbols in this poem.

If we apply the idea of basic conceptual metaphors, the conceptual metaphor EDUCATION IS WEALTH is underlying the allegory (for an analysis of Dhondup Gyal's images of jewels see Ch. 9.3). The seven precious possessions could generally be regarded as wealth that is desirable to obtain and possess. For a *chakravartin*

64 To illustrate this, the passage in which the precious wheel introduces itself uses the introductory style as follows: "nga dang nga ngo khyod kyis shes ma shes// nga dang nga ngo khyod kyis ma shes na// nga ni [...] /". Although the English translation does not express all the finer nuances of style, this might be translated as: "Do you know me or not? If you do not know me, I am [...]" (Don grub rgyal 1981a: 133). In a Gesar story entitled *Sog po rta rdzong* a place and a person are introduced in a style bearing some resemblance to the style of introducing the precious possessions in the allegorical poem (Grags pa 1999: 2).

65 These kinds of comparisons between the external possessions of a king and the internal, religious qualities of a Buddhist practitioner are also discussed by Dayab Rinpoche (1992: 94) in his book on Tibetan symbols.

66 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 133.

67 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 132.

the precious possessions help him rule his kingdom and signify his knowledge, power, and wealth.⁶⁸ If a human owned precious possessions, for example, had learning, he or she could be considered to be like a *chakravartin*. Each of the possessions can then be understood to highlight certain aspects related in one way or the other to the “wealth of education”. We will see below in more detail how this interpretation fits into an understanding of this allegorical poem.

The main character in the poem is a lazy young man. He does not engage in studies but rather wastes his time by drinking and wandering around. Each of the first six of the precious possessions makes a determined effort to advise the young man to change his behaviour and spend his time in a valuable manner by educating himself. The wheel, who encounters the young man first, introduces itself as “the precious wheel of time”.⁶⁹ The objects among the seven possessions are personified and enter into the dialogue with the lazy young man. The association with time has to do with the quickly passing quality of time, and emphasis is given to the importance of studying while still young. The imagery which illustrates education and knowledge includes images of valuable things, and knowledge or wisdom is characterized as being as wide as an ocean. In contrast, the state of stupidity is expressed with the help of negative images, such as traps and prison.⁷⁰ Here are the words of the precious wheel:

*do nub 'gro ba ma 'ongs phyogs su 'gro// ma 'ongs mkhas pa'i gser khri bzhengs su
'gro// phyis 'byung blun po'i btson ra las su 'gro// le lo can la dran bskul byed cing
'gro// brtson 'grus can la lcag 'debs byed cing 'gro//
(Don grub rgyal, “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam”)*⁷¹

This evening I will go in the direction of the future/ I will go and build the
golden throne of the wise persons of the future/ I will go and prepare the
prison of the fools of the future times/ While I am on my way I will remind
the lazy ones/ I will encourage the diligent ones
(Dhondup Gyal, “The Allegorical Discourse on the Seven Precious
Possessions of the Universal Monarch”)

68 Dagyab 1992: 94.

69 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 133.

70 Here the source domain image of a prison is used to characterize the target of being a fool. In the context of this poem, which encourages diligence in studies, the fool can be interpreted as a person who has not cared to obtain an education. Thus an illiterate person could be characterized as metaphorically being in prison. Monika Fludernik has written several articles on prison imagery. In one of her articles (2005) she discusses several ideas of metaphorical imprisonment which depict marriage as a prison, spiritual ideas of the world viewed as a prison, and some others. It may be that educational ideas are given more attention in Tibetan modern literature than in Western literature and the description of persons without education and the problems faced by them are thus emphasized more in Tibetan writing.

71 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 134.

The quality of the wheel to revolve is associated with the changes which happen in the course of time.⁷² It is also described with the following images: the “thousand-spoked wheel of the vehicle of time” (*dus kyi shing rta 'khor lo rtsibs stong can*) and “the messenger sent by the king of time” (*dus kyi rgyal pos mngags pa'i pho nya*).⁷³ The latter has a kind of multiple mapping: the source domain image of a wheel is mapped onto time, an image of the “messenger” is mapped onto the wheel itself, and the source domain image of a “king” is mapped onto the concept of time. However, if we compare this with the song of Milarepa, for the great yogi the wheel is associated with faith.⁷⁴ Milarepa’s song is short and only describes briefly the precious possessions, while Dhondup Gyal’s is a long narrative poem with frequent dialogues between the lazy young man and the personified precious possessions. Thus the styles of the two poems are very different.

The precious jewel differs somewhat from an ordinary jewel because it possesses several wonderful qualities.⁷⁵ All these precious things take turns in addressing the young man: when one of them becomes invisible, the next precious possession starts their dialogue. The jewel is also personified and introduces itself in a metaphorical manner as the “precious jewel of knowledge” (*shes bya'i nor bu rin po che*) that is also called *dgos 'dod kun 'byung* (“The Wishfulfilling Jewel”). Just like the “ordinary” jewels, this mythical “wishfulfilling jewel” is also a source domain image that becomes mapped onto learning and knowledge. The wishfulfilling jewel advises the young man about the importance of studies. Mapping jewels onto various kinds of abstract concepts clearly shows the high value or esteem in which those abstract matters are held. Although for Milarepa the jewel is wisdom, and the concepts of knowledge and wisdom appear to be close, nevertheless by wisdom Milarepa refers to spiritual wisdom of the actual nature of existence.

I will only briefly mention the images and associations of the next four precious possessions. In section three the young person falls asleep and starts to dream. In his dream the precious minister (*blon po rin po che*) introduces himself as “the precious minister of education” (*shes rig*) and characterizes himself by saying that he knows “the method of administering the kingdom of good qualities” (*yon tan*

72 The quality of movement is also associated with the symbol of the precious wheel according to Dagyal Rinpoche (Dagyal 1992: 96–98). The *chakravartin* is believed to be able to move on the sky to various mythical continents making use of the equipment of the wheel. The wheel also symbolizes Buddha turning the wheel of the Buddhist doctrine while teaching.

73 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 133, 134.

74 Chang 1966: 63.

75 For the eight qualities of the precious jewel as they are explained in a text entitled *'Phags pa dam pa'i chos dran pa nye bar gzbag pa*, see Dagyal 1992: 99–100.

rgyal srid).⁷⁶ He is also the holder of the “key” (*lde mig*) to the “treasury of knowledge” (*shes bya'i bang mdzod*). Perhaps the key could be thought to represent methods which are important in studies and the importance of skills. Thus the image of the precious minister could be interpreted to emphasize the importance of a proper methodical approach. In the traditional context, the precious minister's task is to realize the wishes of the *chakravartin*.⁷⁷ For Milarepa the precious minister is the spiritual practice of meditation. Thus it becomes very clear here how Dhondup Gyal's use of the images of precious possessions is cultural and educational, and how Milarepa's is spiritual. This shows that the same images may be employed to convey both religious and secular meanings.

The precious elephant (*glang po rin po che*) is the guardian of the “treasury of knowledge”. The young person wishes to steal from that treasury and there follows an encounter with the elephant. The elephant identifies himself as “the well-behaved precious elephant” (*khrel yod glang po rin po che*).⁷⁸ Associating the good behaviour with elephant and further connecting it to learning seems to stress the importance of good, moral behaviour when wishing to obtain results in one's studies.

The precious general (*dmag dpon rin po che*) is defined in the text as a “destroyer of enemies” (*dgra bcom*).⁷⁹ The text is high in drama here as the lazy young man is seriously threatened by the general, who places his knee on his chest and after his speech threatens the young person with his weapons.⁸⁰ However, the weapons are also understood metaphorically: the general possesses for example the arrow that increases diligence, and his sword cuts afflictions (*nyon mongs*).⁸¹ At the end of this section the lazy young man awakens from his dream. One reading would be to associate the encounter with the precious general with the difficulties one meets in one's studies, showing how one has to persevere in them.

In the sixth section the young man discusses with “the precious queen” (*btsun mo rin po che*). She is the “precious queen of good qualities” (*yon tan btsun mo*

⁷⁶ Don grub rgyal 1981a: 143.

⁷⁷ Dargyab 1992: 103–104.

⁷⁸ Don grub rgyal 1981a: 144. I have translated *khrel yod* as ‘well-behaved’. It is the opposite of *khrel med* which would refer to being shameless. In Goldstein's dictionary *khrel* is translated as “bashfulness, modesty, shame” (1975: 153). In Dargyab Rinpoche's (1992: 105) explanation the precious elephant is characterized as having the qualities of goodness, wisdom and the ability of self-control. According to information Dargyab Rinpoche cites from a text entitled '*Phags pa dam pa'i chos dran pa nye bar gzhag pa* the elephant can behave so well that even children do not feel afraid of it.

⁷⁹ For discussion of traditional interpretations of the symbol of the precious general, see Dargyab 1992: 109–111.

⁸⁰ Don grub rgyal 1981a: 146–147.

⁸¹ Don grub rgyal 1981a: 146.

rin po che).⁸² She is attired with ornaments, accoutrements, and clothes that are metaphorically associated with various Tibetan traditional fields of learning. For example, she has “the necklace of medicine” (*gso rig do shal*) and “the green cloth belt of poetry” (*snyan ngag gos ling ljang khu'i ska rags*).⁸³ This section seems to emphasize the aesthetic aspects of wealth: how it “beautifies” a person to be learned in several fields of learning. Despite all the advice concerning diligence and the importance of learning obtained from the precious possessions of the universal monarch, no effect at all on the lazy young man and he does not change his lifestyle. The end of section six describes the sad end of the lazy person:

mi tshe stong bar zad pa'i le lo can//
'gyod pa dang bcas dur gyi khung bur yib//
 (Don grub rgyal, “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam”)⁸⁴

The lazy one having exhausted his life for nothing
 regretfully hides in the hole of the cemetery
 (Dhondup Gyal, “The Allegorical Discourse on the Seven Precious Possessions of the Universal Monarch”)

This kind of reminder of the impermanence and quickly passing nature of human life reminds one of the Buddhist tradition that stresses the transience and impermanence of everything. I am reminded here of Peltul Rinpoche’s (dPal sprul rin po che) *gTam pad ma tshal gyi zlos gar* (“The Drama of the Lotus Garden”), which tells the story of two bees, one of them dying in a lotus bud during a storm.⁸⁵ It is a poetic composition which emphasizes impermanence and the uncertainty of life. The text advises Buddhist practice: because life is impermanent, one should use it wisely in spiritual practice. This bears some resemblance to Dhondup Gyal’s “rGyal srid sna bdun la sbyar ba'i 'bel gtam”, but the clear difference is that Dhondup Gyal does not mention that the studies should be spiritual or aimed at attaining enlightenment, but rather speaks about learning, education, and knowledge, relating them to several fields of studies. Considering his allegorical discourse as a whole, it could be considered a poem that makes use of traditional imagery, but there is a tendency to relate the images to a context of studies that may also to a high degree be interpreted in a secular sense. In this poem, too, the target domains of traditional Buddhist symbols have been secularized and

82 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 147. According to traditional views, the precious queen is the queen of the *chakravartin*-king, and in Buddhist interpretations she is also the symbol of perfect joy (Dagyab 1992: 101–103).

83 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 147.

84 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 149.

85 See Anon. 1987: 42.

modernized in a manner comparable to that of many other works and images that have been discussed in this work.

Section seven is devoted to the precious horse (*rta mchog rin po che*). This section opens with the image of the sun (*rta bdun gzhon nu*, ‘young man with seven horses’) dispelling “the darkness of ignorance” for youth. Metaphorically young people “are whipping the horse of diligence and taking delight in competing in the race of good results of studies”.⁸⁶ The horse is “the precious horse of diligence” (*brtson 'grus rta mchog rin po che*),⁸⁷ emphasizing the need for diligence and a kind of constructive competitiveness in engaging in studies.⁸⁸ Its equipments are metaphorically associated with wisdom, patience, and intelligence. The horse advises youth “to steer me, the best horse directly to the great plain of good qualities”. In the end there are also prayer-like wishes: “may this land become the possessor of the wealth so that culture is spread and the people attain long life and happiness”.⁸⁹ It is clear that Dhondup Gyal has made use of the story of the young lazy person encountering the first six of the precious possessions to highlight the importance of education and studies. They function as source domains that are mapped onto the target domains of the various aspects of learning and education and the qualities which enhance the process of attaining various kinds of skills. It is a wonderful mix of tradition and themes relevant for Tibetans today. Even though the text mentions “the five fields of learning” that are normally used for traditional sciences, modernity and the skills and learning needed to attain progress are also required, as indicated by the reference to the “four modernizations” and the road leading to them.

Another group of Buddhist symbols can be found in a passage of another poem by Dhondup Gyal. Earlier in this chapter we saw that in “Nga dang khu byug gnyis ka” (“Me and the Cuckoo”) the scenery of Central Tibet as perceived from the perspective of two birds was regarded as superior to that of the heavens. In the same poem the beauty of the Tibetan natural landscape was described with the help of the eight auspicious signs (*bkra shis rtags brgyad*, Skt. *aṣṭamangala*).⁹⁰ The lines in the verse map the source domains of seven of the eight auspicious signs on the target domain of various features of the landscape, mostly by means

86 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 150.

87 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 150.

88 For traditional views about the precious horse, see Dageyab 1992: 107–108. Traditionally, the precious horse is associated with fast movement.

89 Don grub rgyal 1981a: 151.

90 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 39.

of similes. From the list of eight auspicious signs the victory banner (*rgyal mtshan*) seems to be missing.⁹¹

The eight auspicious signs belong to the Tibetan Buddhist tradition and originally stem from India. Beer (1999: 171) traces them to the ancient Indian signs of royalty and explains their original function in Buddhism: they were presents presented by gods to Buddha when he achieved enlightenment. The seven auspicious signs mentioned in the poem are: the parasol, golden fishes, the eight-petalled lotus, the right-spiralled conch, the vase, the endless knot, and the eight-spoked wheel.⁹² They are mapped onto target domains that are mostly mountains in various locations. This preference for depicting mountains could be due to the perspective of birds: from the sky the mountain peaks are the most visible features of the landscape. For example, the eight-spoked wheel is likened in a simile to the mountain behind Sera monastery. The similes related to the eight auspicious symbols attach splendour to the scenery and create associations of auspiciousness. They also introduce the flavour of Tibetan culture and religion as these symbols belong to the favourite symbols of the Tibetans that are considered to bring good luck.

This discussion on the religio-mythical features of imagery has thrown light on Dhondup Gyal's strong tendency to secularize images. Traditional images connected with religious ideas have been used by Dhondup Gyal to convey secular kinds of ideas related to everyday Tibetan life and the Tibetan society of his time.

91 For information on the eight auspicious signs, see Beer 1999: 171–187; Dargyab 1992: 32–61.

92 Don grub rgyal 1997, VI: 39.



11. CONCLUSIONS

To sum up what has been presented in the preceding chapters, it has been possible to recognize various kinds of features and tendencies in the imagery in Dhondup Gyal's writings. It has become evident that some images are favoured and appear frequently. There are also various types of ways of using imagery: some correspond more closely with traditional uses and some are highly innovative. Overall there is a trend to shift the target domains towards more secular ideas, phenomena, and concepts. This is understandable because in Dhondup Gyal's works some everyday matters of the Tibetan society of his times and the life of ordinary Tibetan people are discussed. Most of his characters are ordinary Tibetans and the number of characters who are religious personages is relatively small.¹

Images have several kinds of functions in texts. Often the use of images makes the text livelier and aesthetically more appealing to the reader, fascinating the imaginative mind. The main function of imagery in Indian *kāvya*-poetics and its Tibetan commentarial tradition was to beautify the text. However, based on the examination of the images in the preceding chapters, it is also possible to discern two other functions of imagery: the communicative and creative functions. Thus it can be said that imagery has three basic functions: the aesthetic, communicative, and creative. It is possible for an image to function simultaneously in all three modes, but it can also be the case that some images have only one or two of these ways of functioning. The communicative function of images is to facilitate and enhance the communicative process by concretizing the meaning. Often the meaning to be communicated might be an abstract one, or it might without resorting to the use of imagery need a lot of explanation. But by using an image, an abstract notion can be communicated very efficiently and in such a concrete way that the reader easily understands it and imagines it. This is one of the reasons why Dhondup Gyal's prose works are so popular. The imagery does not just beautify the text (though it does that, too), but by making the meanings more visual and concrete, the texts are easy to comprehend. The reader is "absorbed" into the reading and drawn into the process of visual imagination. Furthermore, by combining two (or multiple) concepts, the images offer a limit-

¹ Two stories, "Tshul khriims rgya mtsho" ("Tsultrim Gyatso") and "sPrul sku" ("Tulku"), contain characters in main roles who are associated with religion. The tendency of secularization may also be observed with these characters: Tsultrim Gyatso disrobes in the unfinished story bearing his name, and Tulku is revealed to be a fake lama at the end of "sPrul sku".

less possibility of creating and communicating new meanings: they remarkably widen the expressive capability of the language. They may also function as instruments for new ways of thinking to emerge. Images intertwining two conceptual domains are objects of art: they exist in the world of literature, the mind and the imagination, but cannot usually be directly pinpointed in the outside world. Nevertheless, images often communicate meanings that are related to people, society and external reality, and thus they can have definite significance in the lives of readers who encounter them in the texts.

This study has thrown some light on Dhondup Gyal's use of imagery and we have gained a better understanding of the images, their meanings and functions, and their relation with images in earlier tradition and other cultures. Literary images provide an inexhaustible field of study and despite wide-ranging research their mystery remains. The richness of metaphoric images lies in their ambivalence, allowing the possibility of multiple interpretations. When an image is open to various interpretations, its interpretative process continues throughout its reception history. Poetic images exist on the border of two worlds: that of the literary imagination and our everyday reality, and they act as intermediary tools of communication between these worlds. The Chinese poet Ai Qing characterized images as windows between inner and outer worlds.² Depending on how one looks at them and how one interprets what one has seen, it is possible to discern something new or perhaps see the world in an entirely new light. In this sense Dhondup Gyal's works are very much alive and their images, reflected in the minds of readers, can be said to be windows to the external world, to culture, literature, and the imagination.

11.1 Observations on images

We should now briefly review Dhondup Gyal's "favourite" images – the images that often occurred in his works of various genres or were otherwise especially significant or salient. The first thing that probably catches the attention of a reader of Dhondup Gyal's works are images of water in their various forms. When thinking about the Tibetan environment most people first tend to think about the high plateau and the mountains, though water images are much more numerous in Dhondup Gyal's works. It is possible to find a wealth of water images in both his prose, and in his metric and free verse poetry. Some works even have references to water in their titles, such as the short story "brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs" ("The Waves of Love"), the metric poem "rTsom gyi mtsho mor rlabs

2 Yeh 1991: 64.

kyi me tog dgod” (“In the Lake of Writing the Flower Waves are Blooming”), the free verse poem “Lang tsho'i rhab chu” (“The Waterfall of Youth”), and the song “E ma mtsho sngon po” (“Oh, Blue Lake!”). Water images may take various forms: waves, waterfalls, rain, lakes, ice and glaciers, snow and rivers, and such. The transformative quality of water allows it to communicate many kinds of meanings from momentariness to continuity, and a range of emotions from suffering to love. Images of water may have both cross-culturally shared features, such as expressing notions of time, and Tibetan indigenous features, such as the references to the Blue Lake and the rivers Machu and Drichu, which originate in the Tibetan high plateau.

Another image that may be found in almost any of Dhondup Gyal’s compositions is the image of a flower: flowers may be used both as source domain images mapped onto various target domains, or target domains onto which some other source domains are mapped in order to enliven or personify the flowers, for instance in the depictions of gardens and the environment. “Smiling” or blooming flowers are found in a description of a scene that does not at first glance appear to be metaphoric. These blooming flowers are not merely elements of nature but often suggest, for example, positive messages of spring and summer, the happiness of the characters, and good times for the communities depicted in the works. Thus it is not unusual for landscape depictions to have symbolic functions.

Unlike Dhondup Gyal’s images of water, his images of flowers occur more as scattered occurrences than as central images. It is very common to illustrate the life cycles of people with plant images. Flower imagery is given much significance in the novella “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog” (“A Flower Destroyed by Frost”), and the flower passes through different stages of growth and decay on the imagerial level. Dhondup Gyal’s tendency to scatter flower images in numerous places creates the impression that flowers are very much connected with the creative process of writing and that there is a connection between writing and flowering. The appearance of flowers blooming in so many places in the texts encourages a feeling of happiness, beauty, and joy. As we have already seen, flower imagery conveying meanings of youth, beauty, and love can be found in the literary works of many different cultures. In most cases Dhondup Gyal has not specified the species of flower in an image; they are simply “flowers” (*me tog*). It is also common to use plants to convey meanings related to the development of systems and abstract phenomena. Some of the images of flowers such as the lotus flower and *kumuda* (night-lily) are clearly of Indian origin. In some cases, like when mapping the image of the lotus on a face of a woman, the image resembles images in Indian *kāvya*-poetry, but sometimes the mappings are innovative as in the case when the opening *kumuda*-flowers were mapped onto the labour movement. Tibetan

features of Dhondup Gyal's use of flower images is found when their target domains are linked to Tibetan society, Tibetan people or matters relevant to them.

Animal images are also numerous in Dhondup Gyal's works. Although some animals more typically found in warmer climates, such as India, can be found in the texts, several of the animals are species which live on the Tibetan plateau and the grasslands of Amdo. Animals of three types of origin can be found in the works. Firstly, animals more typical to an Indian climate and culture, such as the peacock, typically appear in *kāvya*-style compositions, although they can also be used to express beautiful colours in works of different genres. Secondly, there are animals that are found in Tibetan environments, such as wolves, wild yaks, and horses, which are specified by their species in the images. Commonly, images of animals are mapped onto characters to illustrate some of their features, including both negative and positive properties and ways of behaviour. Thirdly, we find a significant number of mythical animals, such as the mythical bird *garuḍa*, dragons, and snow lions. Interestingly, these mythical animals come from different cultural origins, namely India, China, and Tibet.

Images of jewels and precious things occur frequently, conveying the idea that the target domains on which the images are mapped are highly valued. In Dhondup Gyal's writings images of jewels are connected with education and knowledge. Repeatedly, his writings advise and exhort the reader to gather the jewels of knowledge. These are images that are often related to the strong educational message of several of Dhondup Gyal's works. Examples of these works are "Slob grwa'i zhogs pa" ("Morning at School"), "Rig pa'i dpa' bo rnam la phul ba'i bstod tshig" ("A Eulogy to the Heroes of Wisdom"), and "Ma rabs spun gnyis dang ya rabs spun gnyis" ("The Bad Brothers and the Good Brothers"). The jewels of learning as contrasted with actual precious stones reveal the writer's deep appreciation for the intellectual pursuit of studies and the search for knowledge. In Tibetan tradition jewels and treasures have also been used as source domains to depict literary works and other highly appreciated target domains of a cultural or religious nature.

In the realm of nature images special significance should be given to those works by Dhondup Gyal in which the voice of the work "internalizes" the image or blends with it. These kinds of images include the wind in "Dri bzhon gyi bu mo" ("The Girl of the Wind"), clouds in "sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma" ("The Petals of White Clouds"), and the waterfall in "Lang tsho'i rbab chu".

Nature images in Dhondup Gyal's work can in many cases be interpreted in the context of innovation, progress, freedom, and creativity, although one has to be conscious of their often ambivalent nature and the possibility of multiple interpretations. Reflecting on these images, the fundamental messages of Dhondup

Gyal's literary work seem to emerge: the importance of openness, freedom and creativity. Being creative and open to new things means being intensively alive. The point of using different kinds of images to communicate meanings that appear to be similar to some degree can be explained by the partial nature of metaphoric mappings.³ Each of the images due to their different nature and related associations emphasizes or highlights different elements of their targets or brings different elements to the blended space of the work. By using a variety of source or input domain images, the essential messages of the poet are communicated in an effective and nuanced way to the reader.

Images of paths are especially connected with speaking about the future destinations of Tibetans. This image occurs in several compositions, but it is best known from the essay "rKang lam phra mo" ("The Narrow Footpath"). Although the image of a path may be found in the Tibetan literary tradition and also cross-culturally when discussing the "journeys of life", it seems that the image in "rKang lam phra mo" has also been influenced by Chinese ideas which connect roads and development. A stylistic influence from Chinese modern literature is also likely, as shown in the reflective style of this essay and its use of a metaphor as its driving force. However, the paths discussed are essentially related to the lives of the Tibetan people and located in the Tibetan landscape of Amdo. His writings clearly show the affection and love Dhondup Gyal had for Tibetan people and his native land and its culture.

Dhondup Gyal's writings also contain corporal imagery, such as the poem "Di na yang drag tu mchong lding byed bzhin pa'i snying gson po zhig 'dug" ("Here Too is a Heart Alive Strongly Beating"), where the heart is the central image. An important meaning conveyed by the image of the heart and circulating blood is to express the idea of being alive. There are also other corporal images some of which bear resemblances to earlier traditional images. Personifications are frequent in Dhondup Gyal's works. The metaphoric structure of the free verse poem "Goms gshis lags/ bdag gi snying gtam 'di la gson" might have received influence from the metaphors used as structuring principles in Chinese modern literature. However, the image itself is Tibetan in its flavour and depicts a Tibetan beauty.

Some images may be related to the darker aspects of life, evoked, for example, by images of snares, traps, and nets and rope and other things that may bind a person. However, being freed from shackles is an image of freedom, and knots may also have the positive association of binding into companionship, and so on.

3 For information on the partial nature of metaphorical mappings, see Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 52–55.

When the image illustrates the idea of being freed from some factor that binds, the freedom in question is often freedom from the old customs that restrict the lives of the younger generation. There is also likely to be some influence from Chinese writing in the motif of criticizing the customs restricting romantic relationships. The opposite of being learned and well-educated is the state of being illiterate and uneducated. These kinds of undesirable states or situations are commonly depicted with the help of source domain images of darkness and prisons, making it clear to the reader that one should strive to become educated.

In the introduction (Ch. 1.1) we saw how in the short story “brTse dungs kyi rba rlabs” a piece of writing (a letter) was illustrated with the image of a painting, and art is something that is extremely beautiful and pleasant in Dhondup Gyal’s imagery. Works of art and cultural objects are often used as source domains. Especially paintings and poetry may illustrate beautiful summer and spring landscapes, where flowers are blooming and the beauty of nature is shown at its best. Literature itself as a target domain may be illustrated with images of gardens of flowers or rivers and streams.

11.2 General trends of imagery in Dhondup Gyal’s works

A characteristic feature of Dhondup Gyal’s imagery is their usual secular nature, which means that the target domains are not predominantly connected to religion and spiritual matters. Although the source domain images are often shared with traditional Tibetan literature, their mappings are usually slightly altered so that the target domain is secular in nature, but usually some resembling feature or element is shared with the religious one. For example, it is possible to find similar kinds of source domain images used to illustrate the process of engaging in studies in both Milarepa’s and Dhondup Gyal’s works. However, in Milarepa’s songs the studies or practice are of a religious nature, whereas in Dhondup Gyal’s works the education meant is the modern type of secular education.

Although there are many features of imagery that are connected with tradition in Dhondup Gyal’s work, overall the shift is towards conveying modern secular meanings. Sometimes this shift might be very clear as, for example, when the image of the moon, which has traditionally been mapped onto lamas, kings, and beautiful women, is in one of Dhondup Gyal’s poems mapped onto a Chinese Communist political leader. It is natural that as Tibetans now live under Chinese occupation, some Chinese ideas and influence in the modern literature may be found. Of course, although a great amount of traditional Tibetan literature is connected with religion in one way or another, there are also many non-spiritual texts, such as, for example, the Old Tibetan documents from Dunhuang.

Many meanings, situations, and states are common features of earlier and present times, and thus it is possible sometimes to find a similar image in an Old Tibetan document and a contemporary literary work. Some motifs like those related to love have long traditions that last until the present, although they might acquire some new modern features. For this reason the use of images might strongly resemble or be in accordance with the traditional use. However, if the motives of love are considered, a new feature is the way in which some images have been used to criticize the tradition of arranged marriages. For example, the custom of arranged marriages is depicted with the image of frost in “Sad kyis bcom pa'i me tog”, and being freed from the old ways of thinking is depicted with the image of shaking off fetters in “Sems gcong”. The images of frost or fetters are of course not new, but the way they are mapped onto customs and tradition is. Although this is a new feature in Tibetan literature, it is likely that in the way marriage and love are problematized there is some influence from the Chinese literature of that time in which marriages without love were criticized, as for example in the prose of Zhang Jie.

However, there are also some traditional Tibetan source domain images of religious origin in the writings of Dhondup Gyal. But commonly even the images of gods belonging to the Indo-Tibetan pantheon are used to depict matters which have no relation to religious beliefs or spirituality. For example, the deity red Hayagrīva is used as a source domain in a simile to communicate the state of anger experienced by persons in “Brong stag thang” (“The Plain of the Wild Yak and the Tiger”).

It is possible to perceive modernity in Dhondup Gyal's imagery: he almost always describes the society of his times and does not sing praises to the gods or create poems expressing traditional spiritual meanings. The emerging picture of society and individuals is secular in nature, with a strong emphasis on civilization, culture, and education. The preference for writing works of a secular nature about the lives of ordinary Tibetans could be viewed as both reflecting the interest of the writer in describing the life of his own Tibetan people and society. It can also be seen to be in accordance with certain ideas and goals which were attached to literature in the People's Republic of China of that time, notions that influenced the modern Tibetan writing of those Tibetans who lived in the area of the PRC. It was considered important that literature would serve the people, and the idea from Marxist literary theory about the importance of one's experience of life for writing a literary work was stressed.⁴

4 Link 2000: 21, 119.

In some of the poems that were written in rich, complicated *kāvya*-style, the imagery often has some Indian flavour (for example, the source domains of peacocks and lotus flowers), but the target domains are usually related to the context of the narrative, which is predominantly connected with present-day Tibetan society and its concerns. Of course, the Tibetan atmosphere is also often largely created by the context of the images.

It is indicative of the slow change of imagery that very few of the source domains can be especially characterized as typical to modern times. Thus, fast movement may be characterized with the simile “like a bird” (*bya ltar*), though it is difficult to find source domains of buses, trains, or aeroplanes employed for the same purpose.

Tibetan critics writing about Dhondup Gyal’s works normally emphasize their Tibetan nature and the writer’s great love and concern for the Tibetan people. Dhondup Gyal started his poetic endeavour with more traditional kinds of structures but wrote about new relevant meanings. Sometimes he made direct use of the ornaments of the *kāvya*-style as in his poem “Slob dpon la bsngags pa’i glu dbyangs” (“A Song in Praise of the Professor”). The way in which he wrote secular short stories describing the life of ordinary people in Amdo must have received influences from modern Chinese prose. The thematic connection with Chinese prose is very clear, for example, in the short story “sGrung ba” and the narrative poem “gZhon nu’i yid kyi mdzes rgyan”, which bear some resemblance with the “literature of the wounded”. Interestingly, the imagery in the latter is in ornate Indian *kāvya*-style. However, it is possible to discern a connection with traditional Tibetan literature in a large number of the images that are found in the stories. Imagerial innovation is created in the writer’s way of combining several images in a textual passage. In his free verse poetry Dhondup Gyal shifted to new structures that had not previously been seen in the field of Tibetan language poetry, but that were influenced by the modern poetry of other literatures, especially Chinese modern literature and Western poetry. Such influences include Western romantic poetry, free verse poetry such as for example the poetry of the Russian writer Vladimir Mayakovsky, and the symbolist poetry that had influenced Chinese modern poetry.⁵ The appearance of Dhondup Gyal’s free verse poems did indeed have a remarkable influence on the development of modern Tibetan poetry.

A great number of the source domain images are representations of phenomena or natural elements that can be perceived around the globe and are thus commonly found in various literatures of the world. Such natural elements like the sun and

5 See above 6.2.2 and n. 89.

the ocean are found in imagery cross-culturally. But in Dhondup Gyal's writings it is also possible to observe how he creates a Tibetan cultural flavour in such images as lakes, rivers and clouds. A Tibetan atmosphere is attained when a lake is specified to be the Blue Lake in Amdo or when some great Tibetan rivers are named. These are clearly indigenous Tibetan images, but the cross-culturally shared properties make them understandable to readers from other cultures too. The other strategy is to modify the understanding of the natural objects with characteristics of Tibetan flavour: for instance the 'lake' may have such meanings as "dignity and happiness of the people" attached to it, where the people become understood as Tibetans. And a cloud may for instance be the target of such source domains as "a goddess in white silken clothes" or "a *ngakpa* in a black cloak", which clearly have culturally-specific overtones, as we saw in the free verse poem "sPrin dkar gyi 'dab ma". Creating cultural imagery by adding characteristics typical to that culture may be considered a special strength and power in writing and literature.

11.3 Structural features of imagery, genre, and style

Dhondup Gyal's imagery crosses the genre boundaries. It is possible to find water images that share the same basic structure or underlining idea in prose, essays, metrical, and free verse poetry. To restrict the analysis only to one specific genre would also reduce the understanding of imagery. To clarify this, in prose both sides of metaphors are usually explicitly given, and therefore their interpretation is normally easy and straightforward. Thus, when in a text we encounter the metaphor "the waves of love", it is easy to comprehend that the source domain is "waves" and the target domain is "love". Sometimes understanding the function and meaning of the image in prose may further assist its interpretation in poetry, especially if the target domain has not been explicitly stated in the poem. Although a single image might be mapped onto a multitude of target domains, understanding which target domain it is commonly mapped on may be very helpful in cases when that domain has not been explicitly given and has been left open for interpretation. The images in Dhondup Gyal's writings could be said to be divided into two types: those images in which both the source and target domains are explicitly given, and those images whose target domains have not been explicitly given in a clear manner, or blends in which emergent meanings remain open to multiple interpretations.

On the one hand, we can conceive that texts may contain several different levels of images. Images may occur at the level of single expressions and at the paragraph level composite imagery may be found. Then at the discourse level

images may act as driving forces in the entire work. On the other hand, it is also possible to consider imagery on more generalized levels, such as in the literary output of a certain writer or the imagery in the literature of a certain culture. Some images are grounded on human embodied experience, as has been explained in the cognitive theory of metaphor. The shared cognitive and bodily nature of human beings around the globe also provides a basis for the possibility of the universality of some conceptual metaphors.⁶ Several images in the writings of Dhondup Gyal have basic conceptual structures which can be found in metaphoric images in the literatures of other cultures. However, in order to gain a full appreciation of a writer's imagery, it is also important to reflect on its culturally-specific features. The grounding in our human embodied nature explains why most images are understandable (when translated) to readers from various cultural backgrounds, while the specific cultural features create a unique Tibetan flavour for the images. The various levels of images may help to create a deeper understanding of imagery.

A highly characteristic structural feature of Dhondup Gyal's work is the creation of composite images. Several individual images may be used to form a larger image that comes to be understood as a whole, so that their different parts all contribute to the understanding. Combining several images as a composite image is done in a creative and innovative way, for instance, in Dhondup Gyal's prose works. Often in prose the mappings of source domains on target domains can be more regular in the sense that some connections can often be found with traditional texts and folk culture, and also the images might appear several times in different works, expressing a similar kind of meaning. However, many of Dhondup Gyal's works contain passages in which several images function together to form a composite image that appears as an image cluster. Combining various images together offers great opportunities for creativity. In poetry, of course, composite images of the various details work together and the successive images form the text of the poem. The blends of free verse poetry can also be considered composite images in the sense that they often blend elements from more than two input domains. Blended spaces and their emergent meanings often communicate new meanings and may be used in highly creative ways.

Often an image may appear both in the form of metaphors and similes. However, there are some cases when it seems that there is a preference for using a simile. For example, in some cases when the image is used to illustrate the manner in which some activity grammatically expressed with a verb occurs, then there is a tendency to use a simile. We observed this when we examined the

6 See, e.g. Kövecses 2002: 163–181.

simile expressing the loving care parents devote to their children illustrated with source domains concerning the importance of heart and eyes for a human being as in certain passages from “sPrul sku” (“Tulku”) and “Sems gcong” (Depression) and some other stories (see Ch. 8.1).

However, there are some features that are more characteristic to imagery in certain genres. If we first take a look at the imagery in Dhondup Gyal’s prose works, it is clear that he was also a poet when he wrote prose. But the amount of imagery in his prose varies: “sPrul sku” (“Tulku”), “sNgo tshod tshong khang gyi mthong thos” (“Seen and Heard at the Vegetable Seller’s Shop”), and “rGan po blo gyong” (“The Old Stubborn Man”) have relatively few images, whereas “Sems gcong” (“Depression”), “Sad kyis bcom pa’i me tog” (“The Flower Destroyed by Frost”), and “bTsan po’i bang sor myul ba’i gtam rgyud” (“A Story of Searching for the Royal Tombs”) are rich in imagery. The images in his prose works are often quite conventional in their individual occurrences and it is often possible to locate resembling images in folk stories, traditional spiritual songs, and stories. There are also some innovations, but most of them lie to a great extent in the mappings onto target domains which are secular in nature. In prose the target domains are closely connected with the theme of the literary work and also with what is going on in the story.

Some of the themes in modern Tibetan literature such as social critical stories of romantic relations and exposing the sufferings of people during the Cultural Revolution would seem to have been influenced by Chinese writing in Dhondup Gyal’s time. Creating stories with such secular kinds of themes has also naturally led to the need for shifts to secular kinds of target domains when constructing imagery. The source domains can be characterized as more conservative and often show clear connections to Tibetan earlier literary tradition. However, their usage in modern Tibetan writing to express concerns relating to Tibetan society during the writer’s time has resulted in fascinating combinations of traditional and innovative elements, which reflect the main sources of cultural influence in different time periods. In the source domains, which are slow to change, a strong traditional Tibetan indigenous and Indo-Tibetan influence is observable, but in the selection of secular kinds of target domains some influence from Chinese culture can be noticed, although it is only partial. In general, Dhondup Gyal’s stories and poems (with the exception of “bsTod tshig me tog phreng mdzes” (“The Beautiful Flower Garland of Eulogy”), which praises a Chinese political leader) primarily focus on depicting the life of Tibetans. However, as Tibetan society has since the 1950s been under Chinese rule, its influence on culture and literature has been felt. Communist cultural policies have influenced developments in the literary scene in the PRC by providing a framework for what

kind of topics could be selected and written about in a certain time.⁷ Communist policies influenced both Chinese and Tibetan writers inside the PRC, but some developments in Chinese literature have also influenced modern Tibetan writing. The influence of Chinese Communist ideologies is shown in the selection of new kinds of socially critical themes. These include criticizing the uncritical attachment to some old customs, ideas of progress connected with the policy of the Four Modernizations, and the general focus on depicting the lives of ordinary people in secular fictitious stories. The emergence of the genres of modern Tibetan free verse poetry and secular short stories and novels could also be seen to have received some influence from both Chinese modern literature and the tradition of Western literature (often through Chinese translations). It would seem evident that literary themes change more rapidly in responding to transformations and problems in society and changes in the political climate, while images are much slower to change.

In Dhondup Gyal's works there are also some images that I have not encountered before in other literary works, like the notion of refuting someone's words by placing a garlic in his mouth, or the cat of thoughts prowling into the house of the mind, which both seem to be innovative. Although images in Dhondup Gyal's prose works often share at least some elements with traditional images, there is also remarkable innovation. Of special note is the fact that Dhondup Gyal's prose is often marked with abundant composite images, which according to cognitive theorists is one of the strategies for creating new poetic metaphorical expressions.

Images are much more frequent in poetry, for poetry consists of images. Dhondup Gyal has written in a number of different verse form, including poems in an elaborate *kāvya*-style, such as “sNyan ngag la sbyar ba'i sgrung rtsom gzhon nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan” (“A Poetic Narrative: The Beautiful Ornament for the Minds of Young Persons”) and “'bsTod pa' bklags pa'i 'char snang” (“Impressions on Reading ‘Eulogies’”); poems in a more simple style, such as the narrative poem “rTswa thang gi lha mo” (“The Goddess of the Grassland”); and song-like compositions in regular six-syllable metre, such as “rGya bod bar gyi mdza' mthun” (“The Friendship between China and Tibet”) and “Nga dang khu byug gnyis ka” (“Me and the Cuckoo”). Images in the poems written in an elaborate *kāvya*-style are so abundant that it has only been possible to discuss a few of them in detail. However, the interesting feature in these poems is that their subject matter is usually connected to recent Tibetan society, people, and related matters, as in “sNyan ngag la sbyar ba'i sgrung rtsom gzhon nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan”. There is a tendency to make use of imagery that sometimes has a certain Indian

7 For information on literary control in the PRC, see Link 2000: 56–96.

flavour, as in “bsTod pa' bklags pa'i 'char snang”, in which a genre of literature – the eulogy – is viewed as a flower garden growing *kumuda*-flowers. Dhondup Gyal's innovation is shown in the way he directs the imagery to describe the various kinds of issues, phenomena, and people of the society of his time.

In poems in an elaborate *kāvya*-style, the source domain – although it may in principle be a single object like the sun or a tree – can be elaborated as a complex creation with the help of expressions from synonymic terminologies and additional mappings of other images: it almost appears that in Dhondup Gyal's *kāvya*-style compositions the real referent of an image is covered and almost hidden under the complicated *kāvya*-imagery, as if the writer would be purposefully displaying his great skill in creating poetic images. The imagery in these poems is extremely rich but shares its structural features with traditional *kāvya*-compositions, only the way in which it has been employed to tell and comment on phenomena related to modern life as in “sNyan ngag la sbyar ba'i sgrung rtson gzhon nu'i yid kyi mdzes rgyan” may be regarded as innovative. In this long poetic work Dhondup Gyal combines the theme of exposing the problems in a person's life during the Cultural Revolution with rich *kāvya*-imagery which illustrates the narrative elements of the poem. When Dhondup Gyal in some of his *kāvya*-style compositions appears to skilfully “hide” the real meanings under the rich complex imagery, it is as if he is playfully parodying the traditional rules of poetic composition or raising the question why could one not write in a clear and simple manner?

If we consider Dhondup Gyal's metric poems that are not written in such a highly elaborated style, we see here too that the source domains of images are often mapped onto target domains that are relevant to the life of ordinary Tibetans. Sometimes the shift in the target domain is evident as when the moon is mapped on a Chinese politician, however, the connecting feature is that the image is mapped onto a person of high social status. The style of the versified expression of the poems, as for example in “Nga dang khu byug gnyis ka” and “rTswa thang gi lha mo”, appears to be in accordance with typical Tibetan metric compositions. Usually these compositions are slightly earlier in time in Dhondup Gyal's literary output from the beginning of the 1980s. The imagery is rich but not so abundant and complicated as in the poems in an elaborate *kāvya*-style.

Imagery in free verse poetry and song is characterized by the greatest innovation and creativity. However, it is often also possible to discern at least some underlying connections with tradition or cross-cultural imagery, for example in “Lang tsho'i rbab chu” we saw how the image of a stream of water to express the continuity of time was one of the elements in the image of the waterfall. The images of free verse poetry may be regarded as the most innovative in the

context of the development of Tibetan poetry. The innovations lie in structure and their way of communicating and creating new meaning. Structurally, several of these poems have a strong central image that is a discourse level metaphor. It is possible that the writer was influenced by the structural features of Chinese and also Western modern poetry. The way in which several of the free verse poems display an internalization and intermingling with nature bears a resemblance to some Western romantic poems. Free verse poems could be said to be quite late in Dhondup Gyal's literary output. Several of them can, with regard to their central image, be analysed with the help of conceptual blends and input domains. Often these images have some underlying structures which are shared with traditional and cross-cultural imagery, but there is also a great deal of innovation created by blends that function as strong central images throughout the compositions. It is remarkable how in Dhondup Gyal's poetic output we may find both images constructed according to the principles of the *kāvya* as well as the powerful central images of the free verse poems.

Imagery in works such as "rKang lam phra mo" ("The Narrow Footpath") and "Dri bzhon gyi bu mo" ("The Girl of the Wind") resembles to some extent the images in free verse poetry. They have strong central images, but these works are not in verse form. "Dri bzhon gyi bu mo" can be said to be a prose poem or poem-like essay exhibiting a clear crossing of genre boundaries as a style in the sense that imagery typical to free verse poems is employed. "Dri bzhon gyi bu mo" is very poetic, but "rKang lam phra mo" has a clear narrative structure, although both seem to lack a plot centred on progressive activity and both have a meditative kind of flavour. Because the images in these works dominate the entire works, they bear a closer resemblance to imagery in free verse poems than to imagery in prose.

Although there are several features of imagery that may be considered innovative, it has become clear that the roots of imagerial expression lie in traditional and cross-culturally shared ways of thinking with images. The degrees to which the images share features with earlier images vary: one image might be used as such in texts with great differences in their time and place of origin, and sometimes only some elements or features of images become reused and renegotiated by modernity. The cross-cultural connections grounded in embodiment help readers from different cultures to understand the images. Creativity is to a large extent achieved with a creative combination of images and blending, and by means of novel combinations of elements new meanings often emerge. Especially images that are ambivalent and that may be interpreted in multiple ways are characterized by creativity, and new meanings may emerge for new readers from different backgrounds.

Dhondup Gyal was a master of imagery: his images have deep roots in Tibetan culture and literature and at the same time they are often highly innovative. Reading his writings we see how open he was to influences both from his own and from other cultures. When examining his imagery it is often possible to see how various elements and influences have been creatively brought together to form images that possess a unique Tibetan flavour. His writings and imagery have touched the hearts and shaped the thoughts and attitudes towards life of the readers and writers of his own generation and a later generation. Without Dhondup Gyal's literary career and writings, Tibetan modern literature would not be the same as it is today, so crucial was his influence in its formative stage in the 1980s.



APPENDIX: LIST OF TIBETAN SPELLINGS

**Transcription indicating
the way of pronunciation:¹**

The Wylie transliteration:

Names of persons

Agyur	A 'gyur
Anyon Tashi Dhondup	A smyon bKra shis don grub
Bande Tashi	Ban de bkra shis
Bande Tsering	Ban de tshe ring
Benkho	Ban kho
Bengo	Ban go
Boekhepa Mipham Geleg Namgyal	Bod mkhas pa Mi pham dge legs rnam rgyal
Buzhi	Bu bzhi
Cagjam Gya	lCags byams rgya
Chabgag Dorje Tsering	Chab 'gag rDo rje tshe ring
Choedar	Chos dar
Choedzom	Chos 'dzoms
Choekyong	Chos skyong
Chokden Tsering	mChog ldan tshe ring
Coepa Thar	gCod pa thar
Dawa Lodroe	Zla ba blo gros
Dekyi Tso	bDe skyid 'tsho
Dhonden	Don ldan
Dhondup Dorje	Don grub rdo rje
Dhondup Gyal	Don grub rgyal
Dhondup Tsering	Don grub tshe ring
Dhondup Wangbum	Don grub dbang 'bum

¹ The spellings are not exact phonetic transcriptions, but they are in accordance with the way how Tibetans usually spell their names when writing in English and give an idea of their pronunciation.

Dokhar Zhabdrung Tsering Wangyal	mDo mkhar zhabs drung Tshe ring dbang rgyal
Dongpa Thar	lDong dpa' thar
Dorzhi Dongdrug Nyemlo	Dor zhi gDong drug snyems blo
Dragpa	Grag pa
Dulha Gyal	bDud lha rgyal
Dungkar Losang Thrinley	Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las
Ganglha Dolma	Gangs lha sgrol ma
Gangshey	Gangs bzhad
Gangtog Tsering	Gangs tog tshe ring
Gendun	dGe 'dun
Gendun Choephel	dGe 'dun chos 'phel
Gesar	Ge sar
Gonchung Rabten	dGon chung rab brtan
Gyaltsen Buchung	rGyal mtshan bu chung
Gyatso	rGya mtsho
Hortsang Jigme	Hor gtsang 'Jigs med
Hor Zhidei Gyatso	Hor Zhi bde'i rgya mtsho
Jampa Choedzom	Byams pa chos 'dzoms
Jambu	'Jam bu
Jangbu	lJang bu
Je Tsongkhapa	rJe Tsong kha pa
Jigme Thegchog	'Jigs med theg mchog
Ju Kelsang	'Ju sKal bzang
Kalden Gyatso	sKal ldan rgya mtsho
Karma Khabum	Karma mkha' 'bum
Kelsang Namdol	sKal bzang rnam sgrol
Kelsang Tseten	sKal bzang tshe brtan
Khawa Karpo	Kha ba dkar po
Kongjo	Kong jo
Kunga Lhakyi	Kun dga' lha skyid
Kyabha	sKya bha
Kyablo	sKyabs lo
Lama Kyab	Bla ma skyabs
Lhagpa Choephel	Lhag pa chos 'phel
Lhagyal Tsering	Lha rgyal tshe ring

Lhundup	Lhun grub
Lhundup Dorje	Lhun grub rdo rje
Lodroe Gyaltzen	Blo gros rgyal mtshan
Lungthrin Gyal	Rlung 'phrin rgyal
Ma Coepa	Ma gcod pa
Magya	rMa rgya
Migyur Dorje	Mi 'gyur rdo rje
Milarepa	Mi la ras pa
Mingme	Mying med
Namjam Tsering	gNam byams tshe ring
Namsey	rNam sras
Ngawang Losang Gyatso	Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho
Ngawang Phuntsog	Ngag dbang phun tshogs
Ngulchu Choesang	dNgul chu Chos bzang
Niphun	Nyi phun
Norbu Dadul	Nor bu dgra 'dul
Norbu Wangden	Nor bu dbang ldan
Nordrang Ugyen	Nor brang O rgyan
Nya Lodroe Gyaltzen	gNya' Blo gros rgyal mtshan
Nyenshul Khyenrab Osel	Nyan shul mKhyen rab 'od gsal
Nyugtse	sMyug brtse
Nyungbu	sNyung bu
Pasang	Pa sangs
Pel Lhamo	dPal lha mo
Peltul Rinpoche	dPal sprul rin po che
Pema Bhum	Padma 'bum
Phagmo	Phag mo
Rangdol	Rang grol
Rechungpa	Ras chung pa
Rinchen Kyi	Rin chen skyid
Rinchen Tashi	Rin chen bkra shis
Rupai Gyencen	Rus pa'i rgyan can
Sakya Paṇḍita Kunga Gyaltzen	Sa skya paṇ ḍi ta Kun dga' rgyal mtshan
Sangdren Bu	Sangs dran bu
Sangye	Sangs rgyas
Sangye Rinchen	Sangs rgyas rin chen

Setshang Losang Palden	bSe tshang Blo bzang dpal ldan
Shongton Dorje Gyaltzen	Shong ston rDo rje rgyal mtshan
Sonam Tso	bSod nams mtsho
Songtsen Gampo	Srong btsan sgam po
Tagyal	bKra rgyal
Tashi Dhondup	bKra shis don grub
Tashi Palden	bKra shis dpal ldan
Tenpa	bsTan pa
Tenpa Yargye	bsTan pa yar rgyas
Tenzin Lobsang	bsTan 'dzin blo bzang
Thride Songtsen	Khri lde strong btsan
Thukwen Choekyi Nyima	Thu'u bkwan Chos kyi nyi ma
Tsedup	Tshe grub
Tsering Dhondup	Tshe ring don grub
Tsering Kyi	Tshe ring skyid
Tsering Namgyal	Tshe ring rnam rgyal
Tsewang Dorje	Tshe dbang rdo rje
Tshangyang Gyatso	Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho
Tsongkhapa	Tsong kha pa
Wangchen Tobgyal	dBang chen stobs rgyal
Wangpa	dBang bha
Yidam Tsering	Yi dam tshe ring
Yudrug	g.Yu 'brug
Yumkyi	Yum skyid
Zhabkar	Zhabs dkar
Zhangzhung Choewang Dragpa	Zhang zhung Chos dbang grags pa

Names of places

Amdo	A mdo
Centsa	gCan tsha
Chabcha	Chab cha
Chonglung	mChong lung
Dragkar	Brag dkar
Drichu	'Bri chu
Gurong	dGu rong

Gurong phowa	dGu rong pho ba
Labrang	Bla brang
Lhasa	Lha sa
Machu	rMa chu
Malho	rMa lho
Rebgong	Reb gong
Riwo Pelbar	Ri bo dpal 'bar
Rongphu	Rong phu
Tashikhyil	bKra shis 'khyil
Thrika	Khri ka
Tsholho	mTsho lho
Yarlha Shampo	Yar lha sham po
Yarlung Tsangpo	Yar klung gtsang po

Names of characters in literary works

Akhu Nyima	A khu Nyi ma
Cagjam	lCags byams
Cagmo Jam	lCags mo byams
Dawa	Zla ba
Dawa Dolma	Zla ba sgrol ma
Detso	bDe mtsho
Dolma	sGrol ma
Drachenpa	sGra chen pa
Dragpa Samdup	Grag pa bsam grub
Drugmo	'Brug mo
Drugtso	'Brug mtsho
Gangkar Dolma	Gangs dkar sgrol ma
Geshe Jinpa	dGe bshes sByin pa
Gyali (a dog)	rGya li
Hor Gurkar Gyalpo	Hor Gur dkar rgyal po
Kelbhe	sKal bhe
Kelsang	sKal bzang
Kharjam Hru'u ci	mKhar byams hru'u ci
Khasho	Kha sho
Kunga Lhakyi	Kun dga' lha skyid

Kuntu Sangmo	Kun tu bzang mo
Lhadon	Lha sgron
Lhakyi	Lha skyid
Lhamo	Lha mo
Lhamo Dolma	Lha mo sgrol ma
Lhamo Tsering	Lha mo tshe ring
Lhatso	Lha mtsho
Lobsang	Blo bzang
Nangsa Oebum	sNang sa 'od 'bum
Palden	dPal ldan
Paldrag	dPal grags
Petso	Pad mtsho
Rigyag	Rig yag
Soebhe	bSod bhe
Soepa	bZod pa
Tashi	bKra shis
Tsering	Tshe ring
Tsering Namgyal	Tshe ring rnam rgyal
Tsultrim Gyatso	Tshul khrim rgya mtsho
Wangden	dBang ldan
Wangtso	dBang mtsho

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