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

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

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

In fact, the external war will simply be a magical display. Kalkin Chakrin will conjure up to overwhelm the arrogance of the Muslims: through meditative concentration he will radiate countless magic horses ... place in the macrocosmos – the outside world – it will occur within the microcosmos – the body of the practitioner of the Wheel of Time Tantra.

Sofia Stril-Rever, in the article published on the internet server Buddhaline in 2001, states that all Shambhala rulers are bodhisattvas. One of the most important and typical qualities of every bodhisattva, according to the Buddhist teaching, is the ability to ... the future Buddha Shakyamuni. Bodhisattvas are born out of their own decision and free will, motivated by compassion.

To answer the question whether this holds true about mythical Shambhala rulers, we would have to study relevant Indian and, above all, Tibetan sources in great detail. However, the view of ... is incorrect) of the bodhisattva. To ascertain correctness, the whole institution of procedures of finding and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Kings of Dharma**
1. Suchandra
2. Devendra
3. Tejasvin
4. Chandradatta
5. Deveshvara
6. Chitrarupa
7. Devesha

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

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<tr>
<th>Number</th>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Raudra Chakri</td>
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In his work on Buddhist iconography, the outstanding Italian Buddhistologist and Tibetanist Giuseppe Tucci provides information on the origin of Shambhala rulers and the list of these rulers itself, which is based on Tibetan sources, particularly on the works of the 14th century historian, Buton RinchenDub (lbu ston rin chen grub, 1290-1364). Lokesh Chandra states that the following seven Dharmarajas and twenty-five Kulikas (Tib. rigden nyernga /rigs ldan nyer lngal/) are Shambhala rulers (names in Sanskrit were added later); the first number stands for the serial number of the ruler regardless whether he is a Dharmaraja or a Kulika:

2. Chogyal Lhaiwang /chos rgyal lha yi dbang/, Sa. Dharmaraja Devendra, Sureshvara.¹⁰
3. Chogyal Zijicen /chos rgyal gzi brdzhid can/, Sa. Dharmaraja Tejasvin
5. Chogyal Lhaiwangchug /chos rgyal lha'i dbang phyug/, Sa. Dharmaraja Deveshvara (or Sureshvara).

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

(8.) 1. Rigden Jampal Dragpa /rigs ldan ‘jam dpal grags pa, ‘jam dbyangs grags/., 11 Sa. Kulika Manjushrikirti, also known as Manju Yashas. His attributes are a book (Sa. pustaka; Tib. poti /po ti/ or leg-bam /glegs baml/ , pecha /dpe cha/) and a sword12 (Sa. asi, khadga, Tib. raldri /ral sgril/) – as the only figure in the list possessing these two attributes. Manjushrikirti is together with the last Shambhala King Rudra Chakrin a manifestation of the bodhisattva Manjushri.13 The book is in this case Tibetan religious text which is in an ornately carved wooden book cover (Sa. pustakashttha; Tib. legshing /glegs shing/).14

(9.) 2. Rigden Pemakar /rigs ldan padma dkar/, Sa. Kulika Pundarika, his attributes are prayer beads /rosary/ (Sa. mala; Tib. thengwa /’phreng bal/ and lotus blossom (Sa. padma, kamala, utpala; Tib. padma, pema /padma/ /pad ma/, chukye /chu skyes/, utpala /ut pa la’/).

(10.) 3. Rigden Zangpo /rigs ldan bzang po/, Sa. Kulika Bhadra, his attributes are a wheel (Sa. chakra, Tib. khorlo /’khor lo/; berdo /be rdo/) and a white conch shell (Sa. shankha; Tib. dungkar /dung dkar/).

(11.) 4. Rigden Namgyal /rigs ldan rnam rgyal/, Sa. Kulika Vijaya, his attributes are an elephant goad or iron hook (Sa. ankusha; Tib. chagkyu /lcags kyu/) and a snare, noose or lasso (Sa. pasha; Tib. zhagpa /zhags pa/).

(12.) 5. Rigden Shenyenzang /rigs ldan bshes gnyen bzang/, Sa. Kulika Mitrabhadra (or Sumitra) his attributes are a bow (Sa. dhanus, cha- pa, sarasana, kodanda, karmuka, sargna; Tib. shu /gshul/) and arrow (Sa. sara, ish, bana; Tib. da /mda’/).

(13.) 6. Rigden Rinchenchag /rigs ldan rin chen phyag/, Sa. Kulika Ratnapani/Raktapani, his attributes are a vajra (Sa.; Tib. dorje /rdo rje/) and bell (Sa. ghanta, Tib. drilbu /dril bul/).

(14.) 7. Rigden Khyabjugbelwa /rigs ldan khyab ‘jug sba’ bal/, Sa. Kuli-ka Vishnugupta, his attributes are a trident (Sa. trishula; Tib. tsesum /rtse gsunl/, thishula /ri’i shu la/) and prayer beads /rosary/.

11 Lokesh Chandra, Transcendental Art of Tibet, (Sata-Pitaka Series 385), New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture and Aditya Prakashan 1996, 77.
14 R. Beer, The Encyclopedia of Tibetan Symbols…, 223-224, Plate 103.
Fig. 1. Sahaja Kalachakra and the Twenty-Five Kulika Kings of Shambhala, black and white xylograph, Mongolia, ca. 51.5 x 39.2 cm, from Asian collections of Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures in Prague, Czech Republic (Collection No. A 16 330).
The xylographic thangka is published with the permission of the Museum.

(15.) 8. Rigden Nyimadrag /rigs ldan ngya ma grags/, Sa. Kulika Surya-kirti (or Arkakirti) his attributes are a sword and shield (Sa. phalaka, khetaka, charma; Tib. phub /phub/).

(16.) 9. Rigden Shintuzangpo /rigs ldan shin tu bzang po/, Sa. Kulika Subhadra, his attributes are the same as in the previous case, i.e. a sword and shield.

(17.) 10. Rigden Gyatsho Namgyal /rigs ldan rgya mtsho rnam rgyal/, Sa. Kulika Samuda Vijaya, his attributes are an axe (Sa. parashu, kuthara, kulisha; Tib. drata /dgra st, tare /sta rel) and a severed head of Brahma (Sa. brahmamukha; Tib. tshang pa’ ingo bo).

(18.) 11. Rigden Gyalka /rgyal dka’,/ Sa. Kulika Durjaya, Aja, his attributes are a club (Sa. danda, gada; Tib. chugpa /dbyug pal, chugto

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

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

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

1. Jampal Dragpa (Sa. Manjushrikirti)
2. Pemakar (Sa. Pundarika)
3. Zangpo (Sa. Bhadra)
4. Namgyal (Sa. Vijaya)
5. Shenyenzang (Sa. Mitrabhadra or Sumitra)
6. Nyidan (Sa. Indra)
7. Yanzang (Sa. Shiva)
8. Rigden Nyimadrag (Sa. Kulika Suryakirti or Arkakirti), his attributes are a sword and shield (Sa. phalaka, khetaka, charma; Tib. phub). 
9. Rigden Shintuzangpo (Sa. Kulika Subhadra), his attributes are the same as in the previous case, i.e. a sword and shield. 
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An Image of Kalachakra and the Twenty-Five Kulika Kings of Shambhala is usually made in colors on painted scrolls (Tib. thangka) and temple frescoes and it is also executed in black and white on paper. A similar motif and composition found in the collections of Zanabazar Museum in the capital of Mongolia Ulaanbaatar.


(20.) 13. Rigden Dawa’i Wo /rigs ldan zla ba ‘od/, Sa. Kulika Chandraprabha, (or Shashi) his attributes are a wheel and conch shell.

(21.) 14. Rigden Natshogzug /rigs ldan sna tshogs gzugs/, Sa. Kulika Chitrarupa, (or Vishvarupa) his attributes are a hook and noose.

(22.) 15. Rigden Sakyong /rigs ldan sa skyong/, Sa. Kulika Parthiva (or Mahipala) his attributes are a curved knife or chopper (Sa. kartri, kartari; Tib. driug /gri gulg/) and a skull or skull-cup (Sa. kapala; Tib. thopa /thod pal, kapala /ka pa lal, bandha /ban dhal, dungschen /dung chen).]

(23.) 16. Rigden Thayenyen /rigs ldan mtha’ yas gnyen/, Sa. Kulika Ananta, his attributes are a hammer (Sa. mudgara; Tib. thowa /tho bal) and lotus blossom.

(24.) 17. Rigden Sengge /rigs ldan seng gel/, Sa. Kulika Singhal Simha (or Harivikrama) his attributes are a vajra and bell.

(25.) 18. Rigden Pelkyong /rigs ldan dpal skyong/, Sa. Kulika Shripala, his attributes are a trident and a tantric staff (Sa. khatvanga; Tib. khatamga /kha tam gal, khatamga /kha twam gal).]

(26.) 19. Rigden Namparnon /rigs ldan rnam par gnon/, Sa. Vikranta, his attributes are a club and iron chain.

(27.) 20. Rigden Tobpoche /rigs ldan stobs po chel/, Sa. Kulika Mahabala – he is the only one Shambhala ruler depicted without the aura around his head, his attributes are a drum damaru and cup of gems.

(28.) 21. Rigden Magagpa /rigs ldan ma ’gags pal/, Sa. Kulika Aniruddha, his attributes are a hook and noose.

(29.) 22. Rigden Misengge /rigs ldan mi’i seng gel/, Sa. Kulika Narasimha (literally “Human lion”), his attribute is a wheel.

(30.) 23. Rigden Wangchug /rigs ldan dbang phyug/, Sa. Kulika Mahabala (literally “Big powerful”), or Maheshvara, his attributes are a chopper and skull cup.


(32.) 25. Rigden Dragpo Khorlochen /rigs ldan drag po ‘khor lo chan/, Sa. Kulika Rudra Chakrin,15 his attributes are a spear (Sa. kunta, shakti, shula; Tib. dungs /mdungs/) and shield.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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20 Ibid., 182-184.
22 Martin Willson – Martin Brauen, Deities of Tibetan Buddhism: The Zürich Paintings of the Icons Worthwhile to See, Boston: Wisdom Publication 2000, 254, see also 54-55,
The Prague xylograph – similarly to Ulaanbaatar thangka – comprises a short Tibetan inscription at the bottom of the picture. Transliteration of the text is as follows:

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

and translation:

This depiction of twenty-five Kulikas was formed in the time of establishing the *Mkhar rdo* monastery and caused by the illness of one called Tamdrin /rt* a mg-rin/. By the virtue of engraving work of Jamyang /j* am dbyangs/ let parents and others be born in Shambhala.23

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

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

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

RESUMÉ

Kálačakra a dvacet pět kuliků: pražská xylografie


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