

ສେ ଶେ ଲୁଙ୍ଗମା
ହର୍ରେ

Seseylungma Harrer

Process of designing
Tibetan typefaces for
Museums

Tanvi Dev
Avantika University
2017 - 2021

Seseylungma Harrer

Process of designing Tibetan typefaces for Museums

Graduation Project
Communication Design

Tanvi Dev
Avantika University, 2017 - 2021

Contents

| | | |
|----|--|----|
| 01 | Acknowledgments | 2 |
| 02 | Introduction | 3 |
| | Project Details, Methodology & Scope..... | 4 |
| | Purpose and context of the typeface..... | 5 |
| 03 | Studies | 9 |
| | Origin of Language..... | 9 |
| | Introduction to language & phonetic transliteration... | 15 |
| | Historical analysis of variants in script..... | 18 |
| | Developing familiarity with Tibetan characters..... | 21 |
| | Lettering proportions and stroke modulation..... | 22 |
| | Primary research & physical references..... | 25 |
| 04 | Conceptualization | 29 |
| | Concept variations & Improvisations..... | 31 |
| | Physical experiments & reviews..... | 39 |
| 05 | Development of the type family | 43 |
| | Design decisions & detailing of character sets..... | 43 |
| | Open Type Scripting of fonts..... | 49 |
| 06 | Conclusion | 54 |
| 07 | Bibliography | 65 |
| 08 | Appendices | 66 |

01

Acknowledgments

“Viewed from space, Tibet is one of those distinct zones on the globe that can immediately be recognized—a vast, landlocked plateau ringed by the highest mountains in the world, threaded with glaciers and riven by the upper valleys of some of the world's mightiest rivers.¹”

I consider myself fortunate to have been able to work on the language of the beautiful plateau and the people of Tibet.

I take this opportunity to thank my mentor Prof. Rupesh Gajbhiye for his continuous availability and unending support throughout the project, Co-Guide Dr Jo De Baerdemaeker for his patience and for providing me guidance throughout the last six months, Prof. Kirti Trivedi and other faculties at the University for their relevant remarks and suggestions. I am grateful to have learnt from all of you.

I am also thankful to Nima Sherpa, Sonam Dawa, Lobsang Dolma, Buddharam Limboo and Aditya Mahajan for their contributions and help for the completion of my project.

To my dearest family, my friends who accompanied me on one of the greatest adventures in the Himalayas & my classmates,

Thank You.

1 - *Voices from Tibet : Selected Essays and Reportage*, Introduction by Robert Barnett, Tsering Woeser and Wang Lixiong (authors); 2014.

02

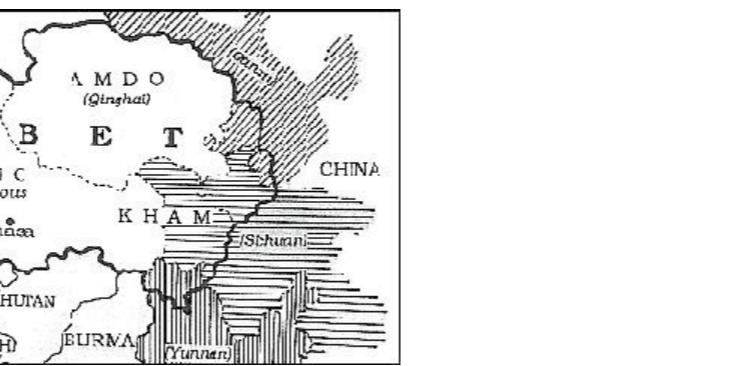
Introduction

2.1 Tibet

Tibet is a region in East Asia covering much of the Tibetan Plateau spanning about 2,500,000 km² (970,000 sq mi). It is the traditional homeland of the Tibetan people as well as some other ethnic groups such as Monpa, Tamang, Qiang, Sherpa, and Lhoba peoples and is now also inhabited by considerable numbers of Han Chinese and Hui people. Tibet is the highest region on Earth, with an average elevation of 4,380 m (14,000 ft).

Since October 1950, the central region of Tibet is an autonomous region within China, the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and is a province-level entity of the People's Republic of China.

Tibetan languages are spoken by some 6 million people². With the worldwide spread of Tibetan Buddhism, the Tibetan language has spread into the western world and can be found in many Buddhist publications and prayer materials; with some western students learning the language for translation of Tibetan texts. Outside Lhasa itself, Lhasa Tibetan is spoken by approximately 200,000 exile speakers who have moved from modern-day Tibet to India and other countries. Tibetan is also spoken by groups of ethnic minorities in Tibet who have lived in close proximity to Tibetans for centuries.



[fig.1] Map of Tibet between 1914 and 1950, showing major provinces of Amdo (now Qinghai), U-tsang (now Tibetan Autonomous Region) and Kham.

2.2 Project Details, Methodology & Scope

Designing fonts for an unknown script can be both challenging and hectic, and without proper knowledge can turn into a chaotic design.

Dr Jo De Baerdemaeker's intensive inputs throughout the project were particularly helpful to make sure that the design process is accurate, resulting in a readable as well as legible font for a language I don't speak or read.

Over the past 6 months, the project involved learning a new writing system, software and most importantly, comprehension of the Tibetan culture and tradition to estimate the requirements of the users. It was also important to take feedback and reviews from native Tibetans, from time to time, to make sure, that the font is practical and has recognizable distinguished characters. Tibetan refugees and monks that I interacted with in Sikkim as well as online interviews of Tibetans in Dharmshala, contributed to the most constructive insights for the development of both the typefaces.

“ Language Diversity and how digital representation affects it is important.

If your written language is not encoded, you can't communicate effectively using computers or the internet or things. If it is encoded, but it is not implemented in fonts or keyboards because your population is really large but has no money and so some company isn't interested, then you're just out of luck until you can get somebody to do that.

There is an absolute good, in making books and other materials available in minority languages because you have to remember that some of these languages are spoken by tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands or millions of people, even though they are economically disadvantaged and don't get the technical support³.

There are only very few, countable Tibetan fonts available as compared to the other writing systems of the world. This project is a mere attempt to add, if not many, one more option in fonts, for the Tibetan community.

2.3 Purpose and context of the typeface

Throughout research, it was observed that Museums play a crucial role and hold great importance among the Tibetan communities.

Museums manufacture narratives. Through displays of objects and accompanying text, they produce representations of Others for consumption by diverse audiences. In the case of Tibetan culture, curatorial staff in British and American museums cater to a variety of audiences, including Tibetans settled in the UK and US, and non-Tibetan Tibetan Buddhists.

Tibetan Museums have become a popular strategy to draw attention, increase awareness and even a source for revenue for some. Tibetan exhibitions are a way to preserve and showcase of what is left of the sacred culture⁴.

Since the mid-20th century, Tibetan art and culture has received increasing international focus, in large part because of its forced dissolution as an autonomous nation. Global attention helps to garner wide-ranging support and patronage, particularly from Western countries where democracy and autonomy are highly valued.

In recent years, there has been a steady demand for traditional Tibetan art, with rapidly increasing prices at auction. One of the explanations for Tibetan works' increasing value is the result of large scale removals of cultural objects from Tibet during the absorption of the region into China⁵.

The Central Tibetan Administration is Tibet's elected parliamentary government based in Dharamshala, India. It is also referred to as the Tibetan Government in Exile. It is composed of a judiciary branch, a legislative branch, and an executive branch.

The Five-Fifty Youth Forum is facilitated and organized by the Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) to exchange views and deliberate on recommendations for Action Plans to restore freedom and dignity in Tibet, contribute to Tibetan society inside and outside Tibet and work towards making the world a better place.

The Recommendations of Five-Fifty Forum: Towards a Resilient Tibetan Community conducted on 13 to 16 September 2018 mentions:

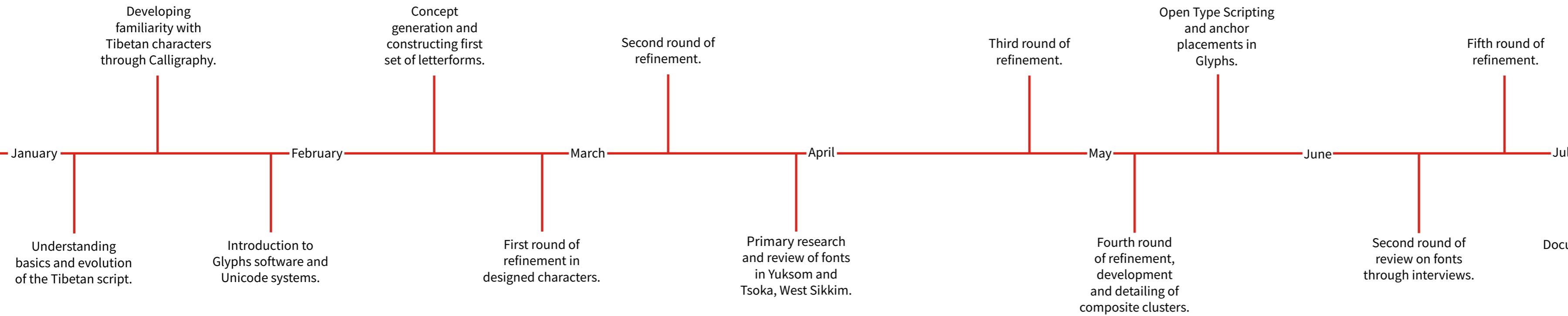
'D. Preserving Tibetan Culture through Museums, Libraries and Archives'. The recommendation is further expanded and talks about sustaining, safeguarding and preservation of existing Tibetan museums and cultural institutions for future generations and establishment of new museums in India and internationally.

Given the importance of Museums in the Tibetan community, the typefaces were developed with keeping in mind, the legibility and readability of letterforms in museum environments.

4 - *Exhibiting the Exotic, Simulating the Sacred: Tibetan Shrines at British and American Museums*, Research paper by Imogen Clark, University of Oxford; 2016.

5 - *World Systems Perspectives and Art: A Case Study of the Museum of Contemporary Tibetan Art in the Netherlands*, Research paper by ILaura E.A. Braden and Naomi Oosterman; 2019.

2.4 Timeline



[fig.2] Timeline displaying different stages and progress of typefaces over 6 months time.

03

Studies

3.1 Origin of Language⁶

Tibet's historical traditions are almost unanimous in attributing the invention of the Tibetan script to a figure known as Tönmi Sambhota. The Tibetan writing system appeared alongside other cultural innovations during the first rapid expansion of the Tibetan Empire in the mid-seventh century.

3.1.1 Historical Background

According to traditional accounts, the first appearance of the written word in Tibet occurred simultaneously with the first appearance of Buddhism in Tibet. This was during the reign of the King Lha Totori.

The preliterate Tibetans were surrounded by literate cultures, the oldest being the Chinese, followed by northern India and the more recently literate city-states of the Central Asian Silk Routes, including Kashgar, Khotan and Kucha. Due to a consistent contact between Tibetans and these literate cultures, a readiness to adapt one of the writing systems to the Tibetan language was evident, which came with the united Tibetan kingdom and empire of the seventh century.

3.1.2 The Invention of Writing

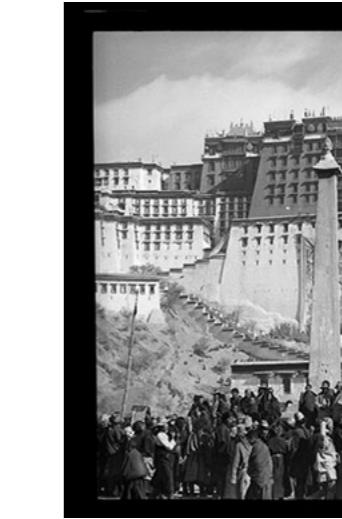
The existence of writing in other cultures was brought to the then king, Songtsen Gampo's attention when messengers from neighbouring states in China, India and Persia sent letters that were read to the king by the messenger. Resolving to bring a writing system to Tibet, the king sent a number of Tibetans to India to learn their writing systems, but all failed, some in the extreme heat. Then the king appointed a man from the Tönmi clan to go to India. Tönmi at last was successful. With gold given to him by the king, he was able to procure the services of an Indian scholar, a Brahmin called Lijin, which took place during the Ashokan period.



[fig.3] Traditional thangka painting by Tashi Mannox depicting the great scholar Thönmi Sambhota.



[fig.4 & 5] Film negative, Manual Catalogues - 'INSCRIPTIONS ON RDO RINGS' (circa 1946-50), the Sertreng ceremony photographed by Hugh E. Richardson.

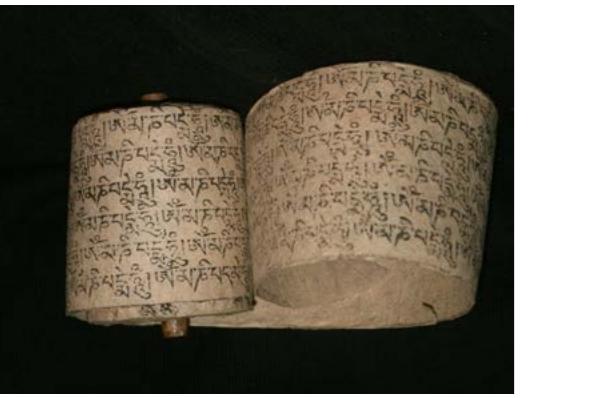


The earliest sources of the Tönmi story are the treasure text known as The Pillar Testament and the clan history called 'Testament of Ba'. The Pillar Testament has an ingenious dovetailing of the invention of the writing with the influence of Tibetan Empire, in which Tibet's subject neighbours contributes the first letters for the six Tibetan sounds (*ca, cha, ja, 'a, za, zha*). It states that Tönmi found *ca* in the country of Chogro, *za* in the country of Zahor, *zha* in the country of Zhangzhung and '*a*' in the country of Azha. On the other, there were palatal sounds *ta, tha, da, dha, na* and the aspirates *gha, jha, dha* and *bha*.

In this way, the Tibetan alphabet was born, with its thirty consonants, four vowels signs and seven signs attached to the tops or bottoms of consonants. One of the earliest examples of writing that we have is monumental inscribed pillar that stands in front of Potala in Lhasa, known as the Zhol pillar and dated to circa 767, over a century after the time when Tönmi is supposed to have invented the Tibetan alphabet. Later, the Tibetan writing systems became popular and were used for various documentation purposes. The earliest examples of dated documents are the pillar inscriptions and the Dunhuang manuscripts that can be dated to the Tibetan imperial period, including some numerous Buddhist sutras and prayers.



[fig.6] Tibetan wooden print block used for printing Tibetan Buddhist scriptures; The Tibet Museum.



[fig.7] Tibetan book pages in the form of scrolls, Spiperato.



[fig.8] Tibetan Xylograph (CUL Tib.149): King Songtsen Gampo's instructions on the practice of Avalokitesvara; University of Cambridge.

3.1.3 Writing on what?

The early documents specifically concerned with the writing of the legal codes, going back to the early ninth century, states that the Prime Minister Gar Tsongtsen obtained small stones (*rde' u*) and pieces of wood (*shing bu*) in order to inscribe the laws, implying that the earliest Tibetan records were carved into rectangular wood tablets using a stone tool.

The first Tibetan books were in the form of scrolls. Important documents were occasionally written with red or black Indian ink on rolls of yellow silk. However, scrolls were soon replaced by block prints and manuscripts, modelled on the poti or palm-leaf books of India. Tibetan block-printed books consist of separate long sheets printed on both sides. The sheets are placed one on top of the other, wrapped in a silk cloth and then tied tightly between two wooden covers, the upper one of which is frequently embellished with artistic carving. In the case of a work in several volumes a broad strip of material with a protective flap of brocade, giving the number of the volume and details of the work, is generally fastened between the wrapping and the wooden cover and projects at the narrow edge of the book. The individual volumes are not distinguished by numbers, but by letters of the alphabet.

Tibetan Xylographs⁷: Printing with wooden blocks used to be the most common method of producing a fair number of identical copies of a specific text in East and Central Asia. In Tibet, monasteries functioned as spiritual and intellectual centres, and ran print shops which enabled them to make religious texts which were used in spiritual teaching or in rituals & other literature available to monks and laymen alike on a larger scale. As the basis for the production of a printing block, that is as master copy, serves a calligraphed manuscript of the text in question. It was written, in general, on light paper with the common ink made from lampblack pigments. At this stage, the text could be proofread before the next production steps.

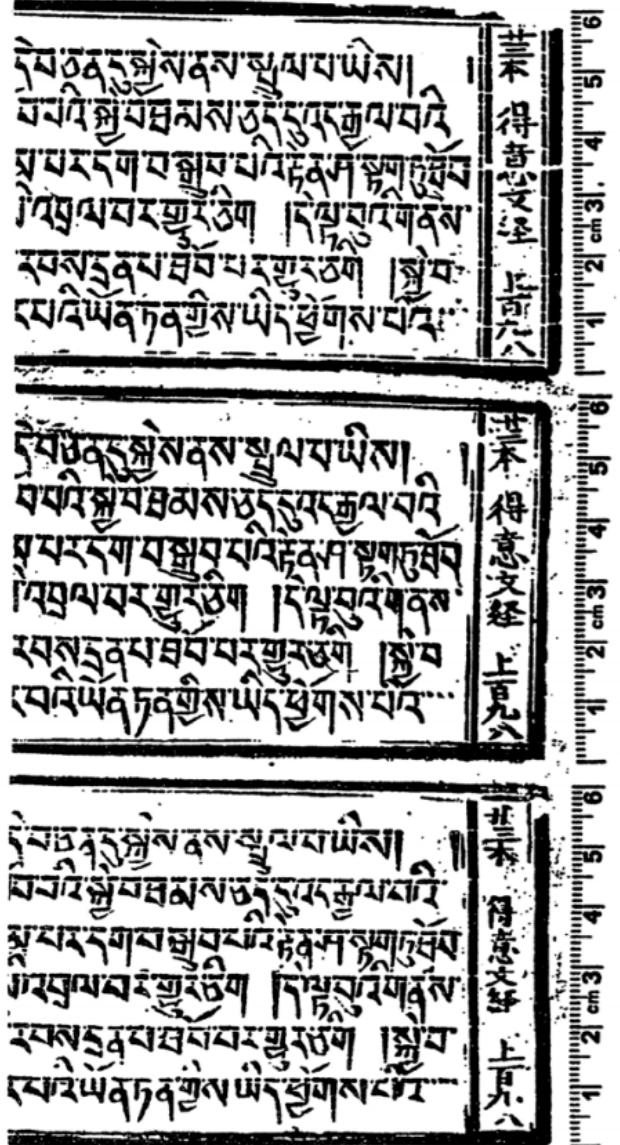
The completed manuscript master copy was glued face-down with starch paste to a wooden plank prepared for the purpose and kept moistened for a span of time. After the removal of the master copy, which was destroyed in the process, the mirror image of the writing was visible on the wood. The carver cut away all parts not covered by characters or lines and, thus, produced a wooden plate with elevated script, that is a block for relief printing.

For printing, the colour was applied to the plate with a brush or pad. Then the paper was placed on top, as far as possible without creases, and carefully pressed to the block with a hand roll or a clean pad. Simple, light paper was sufficient for block printing – an advantage when transporting the completed books. The paper for manuscripts – which in Tibet were written with a bamboo pen and not, as in China, with a brush – was heavier, because it had to be ink-proof. To make it so, starch was added to the fibre pulp; the paper thus produced could later be glazed, too, which required the use of additional glue.

The ink used for printing was usually the black made from lampblack pigment. Books which were regarded as particularly valuable sometimes were printed in red ink, like some editions of the Kanjur. The first volume of the Tanjur, the *bstod tshogs*, was printed in red, the pigment was vermillion, i.e., cinnabar, a rare, costly mineral. Printing in red was only possible with a new printing plate, because once lampblack ink was applied, the plate could only be used for prints in black colour.

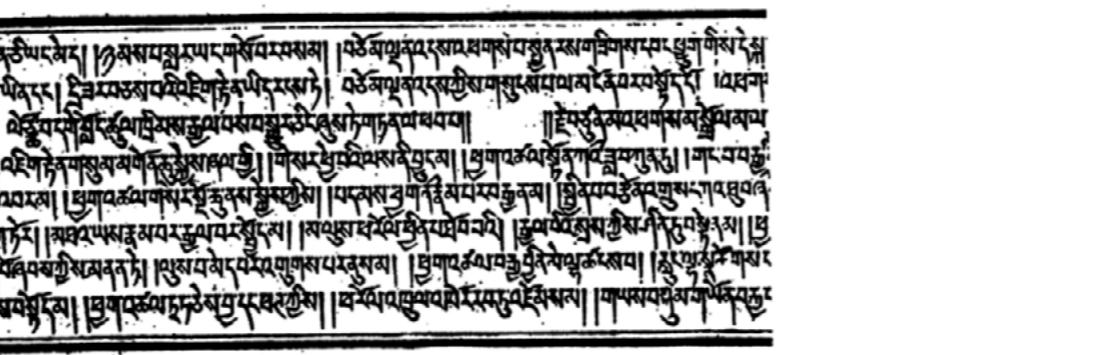


[fig.9] A local canonical collection from Ragya Monastery in the Amdo Golok region of eastern Tibet — known as the Ragya Kangyur; Buddhist Digital Resource Center 2015.



[fig.10] 'Phags pa bDe ba can smon lam. Top: H.6035.O / first copy, middle: H.6035.O / second copy, below: H.6035.P (cf. Eimer 1970, 431, repr. in Eimer 1992, 193).

6 - A New Look at the Tibetan Invention of Writing, Old Tibetan Documents Monograph Series, Vol.III: Research paper by Sam Van Schaik, The British Library, Endangered Archives Programme; 2011



[fig.11] 1717/20 Kangxi edition, volume rgyud, ca (5) [TT Vol. 3, 136].

3.1.4 Conclusion

The Tibetan alphabets were finalized sometime around 630's or 40's. The Tibetan letterforms do not mirror any one set of Bramhi script. In the paleographical enquiry into the sources of Tibetan script, two levels of influence were found, chronologically distinct. The first influence as the Gupta script of the late fifth and sixth centuries, the simple and elegant style that lends Tibetan script its clarity and ease of execution. The second influence coming from developments leading to the Siddhamatrka script. It is observed in the looped 'ma' and in the acute angles of 'pa, pha, ba, ya' and 'la'. This raises possibility that the Tibetan alphabet was not innate in the form that we have it today, but developed over time⁶.

"The Tibetan alphabet must be one of the most beautiful forms of writing in Asia. The Tibetans look upon their script as sacred, for it was created especially to enable the works of Buddhism to be translated into the Tibetan language. Today it is also used for profane purposes, but even so, nothing bearing these letters must be cast on the ground, far less trodden upon. If a piece of writing is no longer required it must be consigned to the flames.⁸"

8 - 44, *Where the Gods are Mountains, Three years among the people of the Himalayas; René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz; 1956.*

3.2 Introduction to language & phonetic transliteration

3.2.1 Thirty Consonants
The Tibetan alphabet is made up of 30 basic letters and 4 vowel signs. The sound (aa) is inherent in all of the letters, regarded as the mother of all sounds, the perfection of wisdom in one sound⁹.

The consonants are distinguished by their basic sound and by either high or low tone and by the presence or absence of aspiration.

The first letter in each of the lines is short and high-pitched. The second is aspirated and high-pitched. The third is long and low-pitched. The fourth is soft, long and low sound.

| | | | |
|-----|------|-----|-----|
| ka | kha | ga | nga |
| ca | cha | ja | nya |
| ta | tha | da | na |
| tsa | tsha | zha | wa |
| pa | pha | ba | ma |
| zha | za | 'a | ya |
| ra | la | sha | sa |
| ha | aa | | |

[fig.12, 13] Wylie transliteration method for transliterating Tibetan script using only the letters available on a typical English-language typewriter.

3.2.2 Six Reversed Letters:
The six reversed letters correspond to the letters in the third series of letters in the Sanskrit alphabet, which is called the retroflex series because the tongue curls back along the roof of the mouth, making a sharper sound.

| | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| Ta | Tha | Da |
| Na | Sha | ksa |

9 - Tibetan Language Institute, The Tibetan Alphabet; Lama David Curtis

3.2.3 Four Vowels:
The four vowel signs added above or below the consonants change the inherent 'a' sound.

| | | | |
|------------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| း | ္ | ျ | ြ |
| 'i' (gigo) | 'oo' (shabkyu) | 'ey' (drengbu) | 'o' (naro) |

3.2.4 Consonant Clusters:
One aspect of the Tibetan script is that the consonants can be written either as radicals or they can be written in other forms, such as subscript and superscript forming consonant clusters. Which means some of the letters are added below or above specific 'root' consonants to form composite letters with different sounds.

ဃ + ဌ = စ

င + ဌ = ဇ

င + ဌ = ဈ

[fig.14] Examples of Tibetan cluster combinations with ra, la and sa as superscript consonants respectively and ka as root consonant.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ဃ | + | င | = | စ |
| င | + | ဃ | = | ဇ |
| င | + | ဃ | = | ဈ |

[fig.15] Examples of Tibetan cluster combinations with wa, ya and ra as subscript consonants respectively and ka as root consonant.

| Die 30 Grundbuchstaben | | Die Vokale | | Subskribt. အ | | | | Subskribt. ဃ | | | | Subskribt. င | | | |
|------------------------|---|------------|---|--------------|---|---|---|--------------|---|---|---|--------------|---|---|---|
| ဗ | ဘ | ဢ | ဣ | ပ | ဖ | ဦ | ဦ | ပ | ဖ | ဦ | ဦ | န | ဈ | ဉ | ယ |
| စ | ဒ | ထ | ဍ | န | ပ | န | န | န | ပ | န | န | တ | ယ | ဓ | ဌ |
| ခ | ဇ | မ | လ | န | စ | န | န | န | စ | န | န | ဒ | ယ | ဓ | ဌ |
| ခ | ဇ | မ | လ | န | စ | န | န | န | စ | န | န | ဒ | ယ | ဓ | ဌ |
| ခ | ဇ | မ | လ | န | စ | န | န | န | စ | န | န | ဒ | ယ | ဓ | ဌ |
| ခ | ဇ | မ | လ | န | စ | န | န | န | စ | န | န | ဒ | ယ | ဓ | ဌ |
| ခ | ဇ | မ | လ | န | စ | န | န | န | စ | န | န | ဒ | ယ | ဓ | ဌ |
| ခ | ဇ | မ | လ | န | စ | န | န | န | စ | န | န | ဒ | ယ | ဓ | ဌ |
| ခ | ဇ | မ | လ | န | စ | န | န | န | စ | န | န | ဒ | ယ | ဓ | ဌ |
| ခ | ဇ | မ | လ | န | စ | န | န | န | စ | န | န | ဒ | ယ | ဓ | ဌ |
| ခ | ဇ | မ | လ | န | စ | န | န | န | စ | န | န | ဒ | ယ | ဓ | ဌ |
| ခ | ဇ | မ | လ | န | စ | န | န | န | စ | န | န | ဒ | ယ | ဓ | ဌ |
| ခ | ဇ | မ | လ | န | စ | န | န | န | စ | န | န | ဒ | ယ | ဓ | ဌ |

[fig.16] Tibetan syllabary, Image courtesy of Dr. Jo De Baerdemaeker.

3.2.5 Modifiers:

 *yig mgo* - marks beginning of text

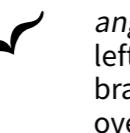
 *don-tshan* - full stop (marks end of a whole topic)

 *sbrul shad* - separates sections of meaning equivalent to topics and sub-topics

 *bskur yig mgo* - list enumerator

 *gug rtags g.yon* - left bracket

 *gug rtags g.yas* - right bracket

 *ang khang g.yon* - left bracket used for bracketing with a roof over

 *ang khang g.yas* - right bracket used for bracketing with a roof over

 *tseg* - morpheme delimiter

 *tshig grub* - full stop (marks end of a section of text)

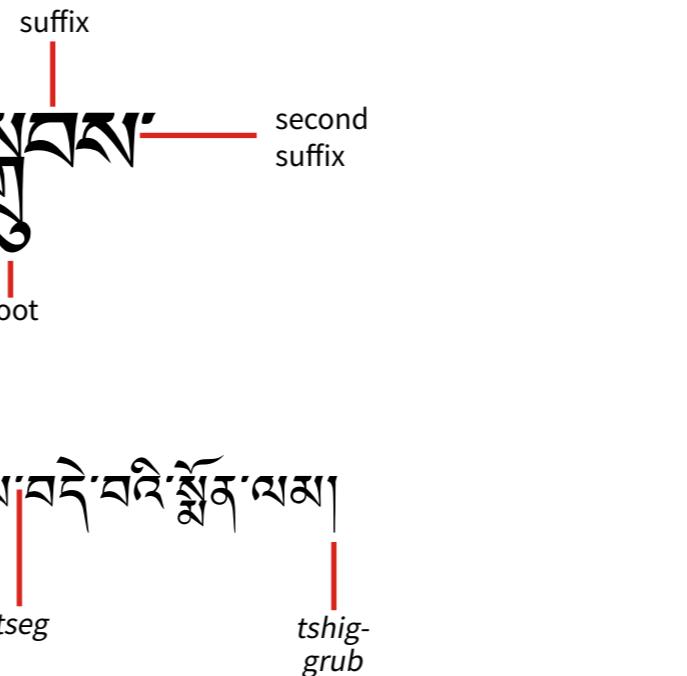
3.2.6 Numerals:

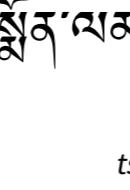
၀ ၁ ၃ ၅ ၈ ၄ ၂ ၇ ၉

3.2.7 The Tibetan Writing System:

A Tibetan syllable can have a prefix and one or two suffixes added to the root letter, whether it is a single or composite. The first suffix will determine the sound which ends the syllable. A prefix and second suffix are silent and do not alter the sound.

Here is an example of a syllable with all possible constituents:



[fig.17] The Epigraphic Style: Details from the Lhasa treaty pillar; Photo courtesy of Kazushi Iwao.

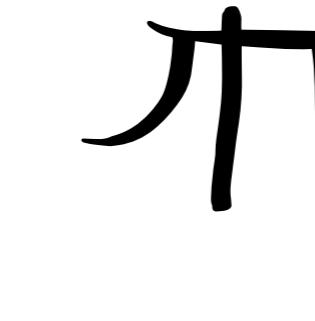
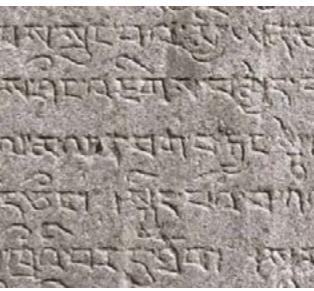
3.3 Historical analysis of variants in script¹⁰

The Tibetan tradition distinguishes two basic types of Tibetan script, the ‘headed’ or *uchen* (*dbu can*) and the ‘headless’ or *umé* (*dbu med*). The first script is characterized by short horizontal lines (the ‘heads’) along the tops of many letters, like the serifs of the Latin script, while the second script dispenses with these lines.

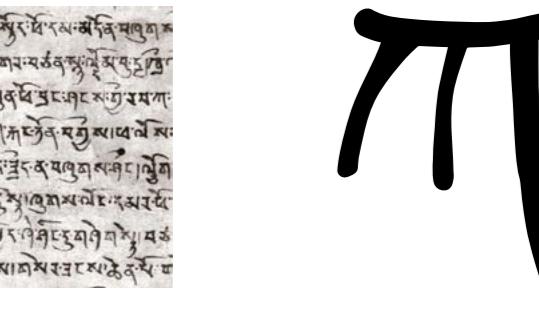
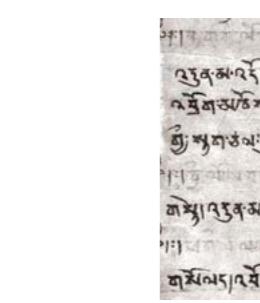
To understand more clearly how these scripts have changed, we will briefly study the Tibetan writing styles from several periods and how one particular letterform ‘ka’ has evolved through different centuries.

3.3.1 The Epigraphic Style (Imperial Period)

This writing style covers a period of over 60 years and resembles in many aspects the Indic script. The writing systems are in ‘acute-angle’, prefer straight lines and do not extend lines any further than necessary. Similar to the Roman capitals, the letters are evenly proportioned so that most would fit within the shape of a square.



[fig.18] *ka* during the Epigraphic Style: The Old Tibetan Annals (I), IOL Tib J 750; The British Library.



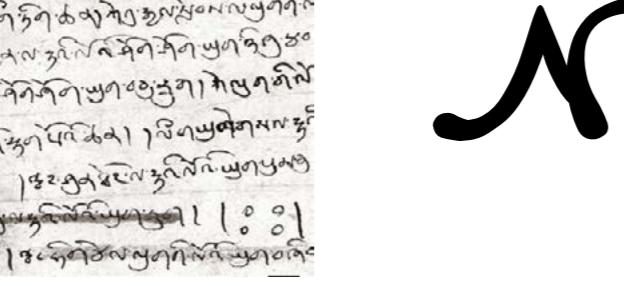
[fig.19] *ka* during the Square Style from Lhasa Treaty Pillar, belonging to the ‘Uchen’ script.

3.3.3 The Sutra Style (Imperial Period)

The script is recognizable as a formal style but can be written more quickly than the square style. In general, this is affected through the reduction of strokes and pen-lifts. Secondary characteristics that are the side-effects of quick writing include the increasing length of final strokes (mainly descenders and vowel signs) and collapse of four-cornered shapes into three-cornered, triangular shape.

3.3.4 The Official style (Imperial Period)

The headless version eliminates all strokes except those that are absolutely necessary for recognition of the letters. This form of the letter shows further changes in the ductus, reducing the number of strokes to two. We also see the rounding of corners, another feature of fully cursive styles and fast writing. The official style represents the first clearly dated appearance of a fully-fledged headless script in Tibet.



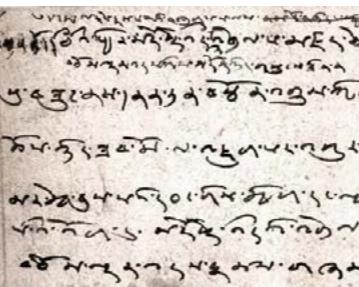
[fig.21] The Sutra Style: 9th Century, Aparimitāyurnāma sūtra, IOL Tib J 310.1210; The British Library.



[fig.22] *ka* during the Sutra Style from Old Tibetan Annals, early 9th C, belonging to the 'Uchen' script.

3.3.5 The Monastic Style (Imperial Period)

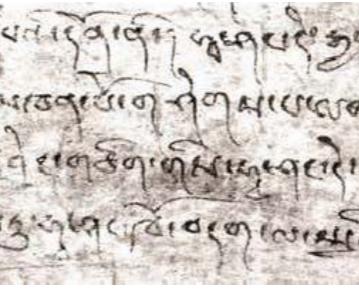
The monastic style manuscripts show signs of having been written at great speed. The strokes of the letters look incomplete, leaving small gaps in the letters. The letters are small and compact and tend to extend further horizontally than vertically.



[fig.25] The Monastic Style: mid-9th Century, Yogācara commentary, IOL Tib J 301; The British Library.



[fig.26] *ka* during the Monastic Style from Yogacara Commentary, mid-9th C, belonging to the 'Ume' script.



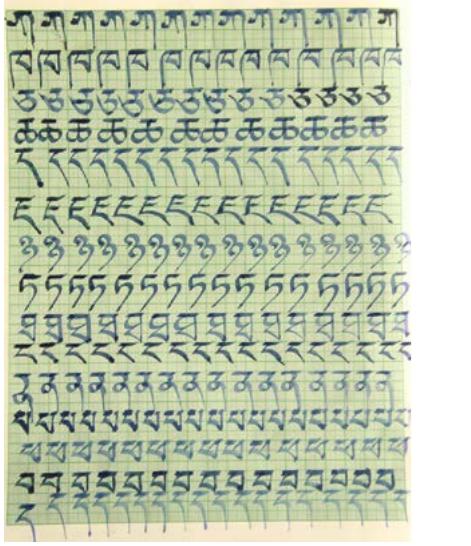
[fig.27] The Epistolatory Style: Letter of passage from the Tsongka region, 960s.



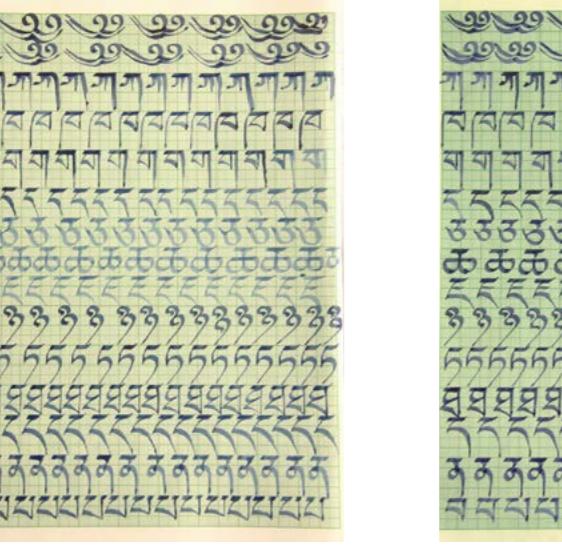
[fig.28] *ka* during the Epistolatory Style from Letter of passage, 970 C, belonging to the 'Ume' script.

3.4 Developing familiarity with Tibetan characters

Calligraphy was an important art, and until the mid-20th century, central to learning in lay schools. While in monasteries, philosophical studies were the area of focus, as in other parts of East Asia, nobles, high lamas, and persons of high rank were expected to have high abilities in calligraphy. Unlike other East Asian calligraphic traditions, calligraphy was done using a reed pen as opposed to a brush.



དྲྲ དྲྲ དྲྲ དྲྲ དྲྲ
ନୁ དྲྲ དྲ དྲ དྲ དྲ
ନୁ དྲྲ དྲ དྲ དྲ དྲ
ନୁ དྲྲ དྲ དྲ དྲ
ନୁ དྲྲ དྲ དྲ



ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା

Some manuals on calligraphy enabled to get familiarized with the shapes and stroke modulations of the letters before designing typefaces.



ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା



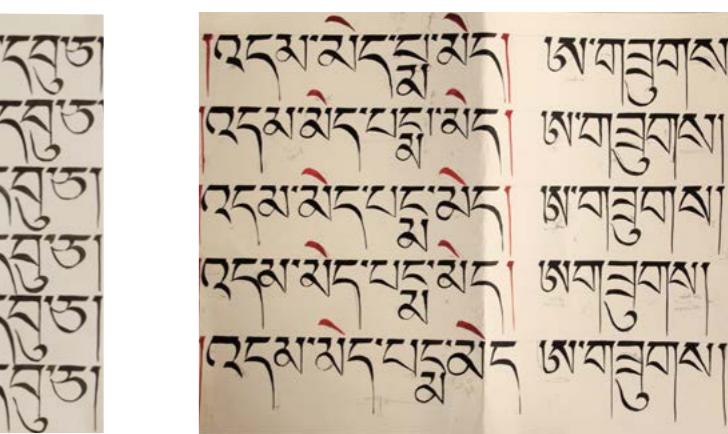
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା



ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା



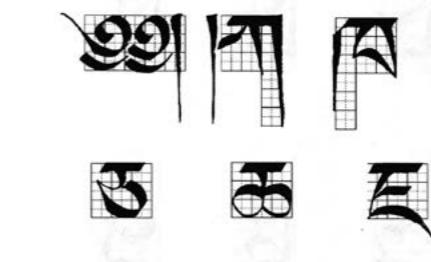
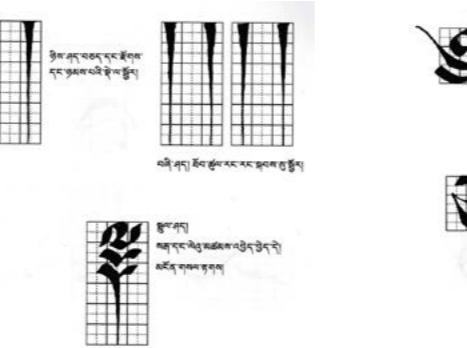
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା ରୋଶନଦିବନା



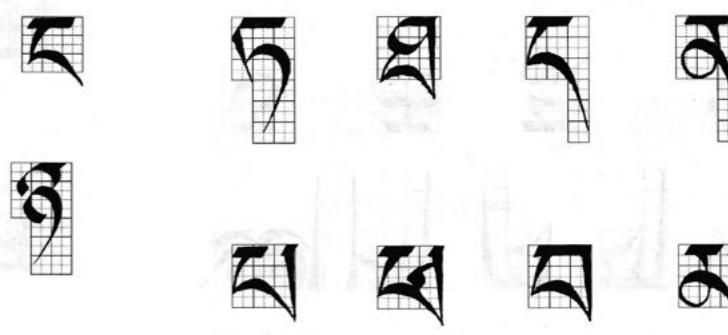
ଆଶାନୀଶାନୀ
ଆଶାନୀଶାନୀ
ଆଶାନୀଶାନୀ
ଆଶାନୀଶାନୀ
ଆଶାନୀଶାନୀ
ଆଶାନୀଶାନୀ

3.5 Lettering proportions and stroke modulation

Tibetan Calligraphy manuals were used as guidelines for understanding the stroke behavior and modulation. These models were eventually also used to verify proportions of the Tibetan characters when digitalized.



ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା
ରୋଶନଦିବନା



ଆଶାନୀଶାନୀ
ଆଶାନୀଶାନୀ
ଆଶାନୀଶାନୀ
ଆଶାନୀଶାନୀ

[fig.29 - 31] Image courtesy of Dr. Jo De Baerdemaeker.

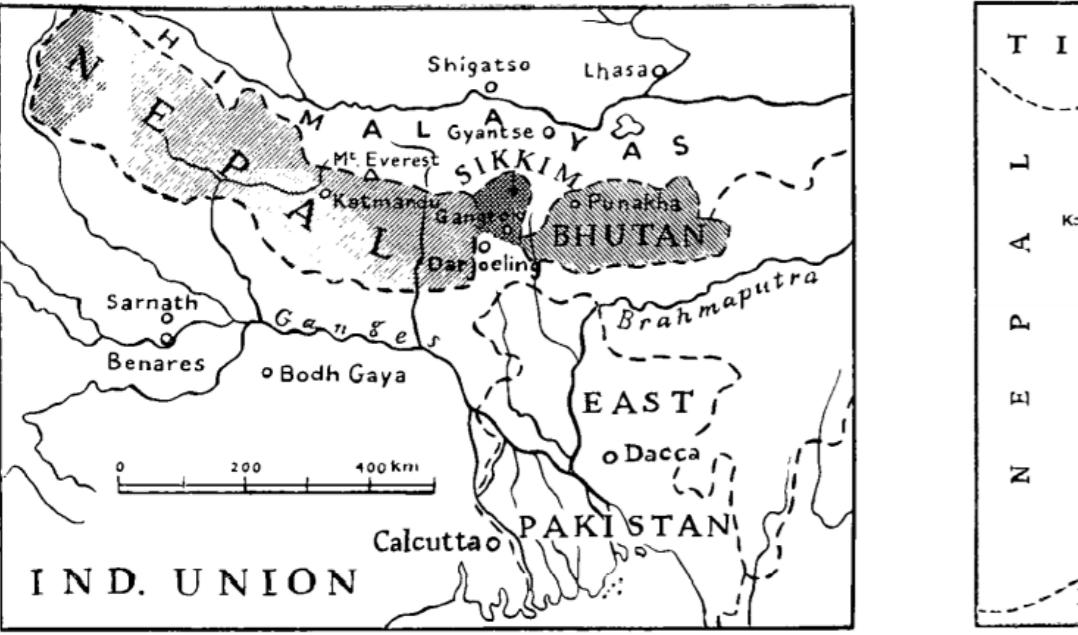
ରେତ୍ରାନ୍ତିକ
ଶବ୍ଦିକିକି

ଶବ୍ଦିକିକି
ଶବ୍ଦିକିକି

3.6 Primary research & physical references

3.6.1 Sikkim

In the end of the sixteenth century, Tibetans first entered Sikkim through the Chumbi Valley in search of a new land on which to settle. Their leader was a nobleman from East Tibet named Gyebumse. Soon after, in 1641, the Tibetans gained the upper hand over the Lepchas of Sikkim and the descendant of Gyebumse was crowned the first King of Sikkim¹¹.



11 - Excerpts from a History of Sikkim: Joseph F. Rock, Anthropos, Anthropos; 1906-2017.

3.6.2 The Five Treasures of the Eternal Snow

To the Lepchas, and Tibetans, Kanchenjunga is a holy mountain. The sons of the Land of Snow (Tibet) believe that the Tibetan god of wealth made it his abode, storing on its five peaks five kinds of riches: gold, silver, precious stones, corn, & sacred books. Hence the Tibetan name of this mountain 'The Five Treasures of the Eternal Snow'.

It is believed that when Lhatsun Chempo, the Buddhist patron saint of Sikkim came to Sikkim four centuries ago, to spread the teachings of Buddha, the mountain god Kanchenjunga rendered him good service. An old Sikkimese legend also mentions, when the saint reached the borders of Sikkim, he flew himself to the top of Kabru, a neighbouring mountain to Kanchenjunga, from which vantage point he could survey the whole of Sikkim. From the summit of Kabru, Lhatsun Chempo perceived the best route to Sikkim¹².



[fig.47, 48] Map of Transhimalyan states and a map of the route which Tibetans followed to enter Sikkim in the 16th century.

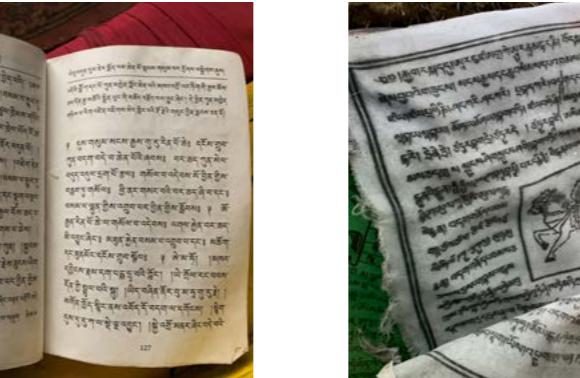
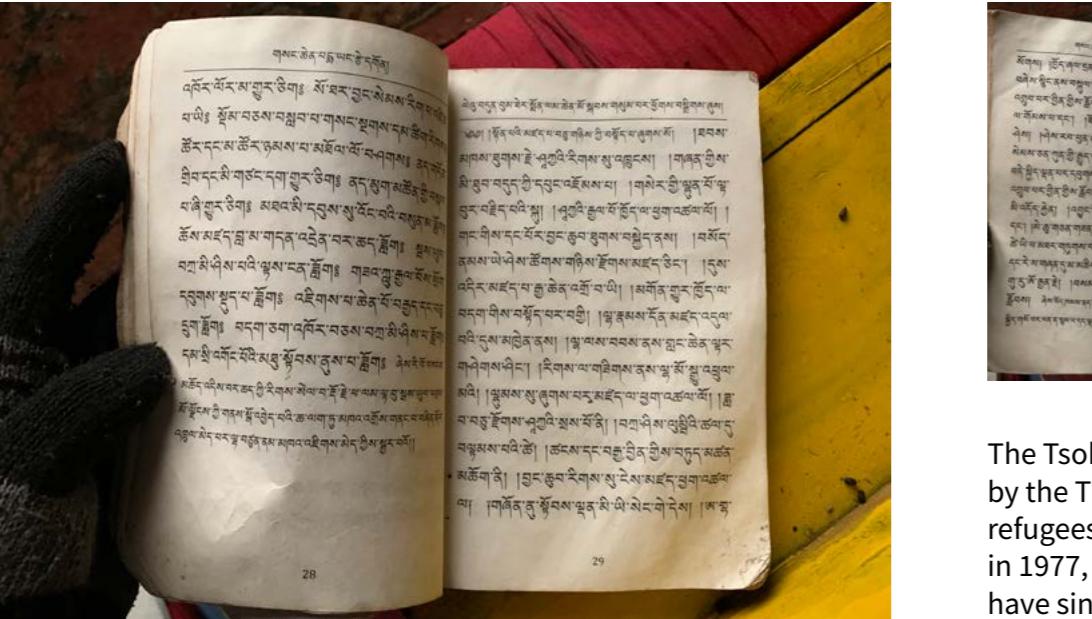
12 - Excerpts from a History of Sikkim: Joseph F. Rock; 1953 and Where the Gods are Mountains; René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz; 1956.

Some time after that, 500 years ago, when the first Tibetan Buddhist Rinpoche arrived in India to pay homage to the great Mt Kanchenjunga, he along with his pupils carved prayers on some stones on their way, which rest in a place called 'Lamuney' to this present day.

The carvings on the Mani stones served as a significant reference for the entire project.



[fig.49 - 52] Images of Mani stones at campsite Lamuney; 2021.



27

[fig.53 - 60] Tibetan Buddhist prayer books of Tsoka Monastery, prayer flags of Dzongri, rock inscriptions around the town of Yuksom, Sikkim.



[fig.61] Mani stones with Mt Kanchenjunga and Mt Kabru in the background, 2021.

28

04

Conceptualisation

Unicode Block

Any computers or gadgets that use Tibetan fonts must use “Unicode” fonts. Unicode, or the Universal Character Set, is the global standard for representing the world’s scripts in a computing context. Though scholarly work around the development of Tibetan Unicode predates the release of Microsoft Vista for nearly a decade, Windows Vista was the first mass-market operating system providing built-in support for Tibetan Unicode giving it a kick-start into the world-wide stage. Shortly after the release of Vista, Apple followed suit by including Tibetan Unicode based fonts and keyboard methods in the Leopard release of the Macintosh OSX operating system. Users of various Linux distributions have built-in support for Unicode Tibetan even earlier. Using a computer to read and write Tibetan became much easier in and after January, 2007.

Windows Vista included a pre-installed Tibetan font and keyboard method. The font called ‘Microsoft Himalaya’ which uses the shape of the Tibetan letters similar to those used in books from Tibetan Publishing Houses in China. Because Microsoft supported Unicode, new Tibetan documents started emerging nationally and internationally¹³.

Since then, the production of Tibetan fonts as well as cell-phones, computers and other technologies using Tibetan fonts have become widely used in the Tibetan areas.

| Tibetan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| OF00 | OF01 | OF02 | OF03 | OF04 | OF05 | OF06 | OF07 | OF08 | OF09 | OF0A | OF0B | OF0C | OF0D | OF0E | OFFF |
| 0 | ༄ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| 1 | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| 2 | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| 3 | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| 4 | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| 5 | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| 6 | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| 7 | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| 8 | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| 9 | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| A | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| B | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| C | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| D | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| E | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |
| F | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | ༅ | |

The Unicode Standard 9.0, Copyright © 1991-2016 Unicode, Inc. All rights reserved.

Setting the Glyphs file

The Glyph info for the file is set such that the headlines of the Tibetan consonants aligns with the cap height of the Latin consonant ‘H’. Tibetan vowels below and above, may extend and go beyond the cap height as well as the base line of the Latin alphabets.

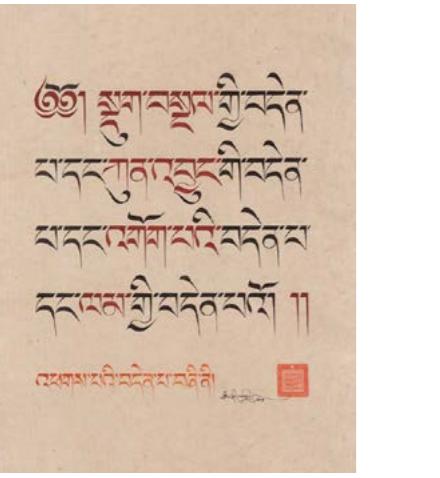


[fig. 63] Tibetan Mani Stone typeface and Microsoft Himalaya.

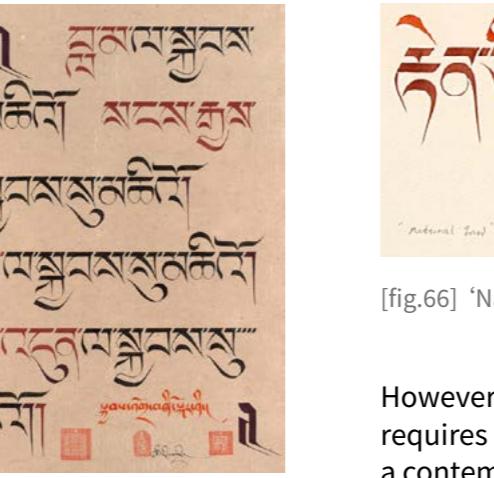
4.1 Concept variations & Improvisations

4.4.1 High Uchen (also known as Honorific Uchen)

High Uchen is an honorific script style originating in the 15th-16th century in central Tibet and was mostly used for illuminated title pages of manuscripts. This script form has a particular refined elegance that sets it apart from the regular classical Uchen style of calligraphy.



[fig.64] 'The Four Noble Truths', Calligraphy by Tashi Mannox.

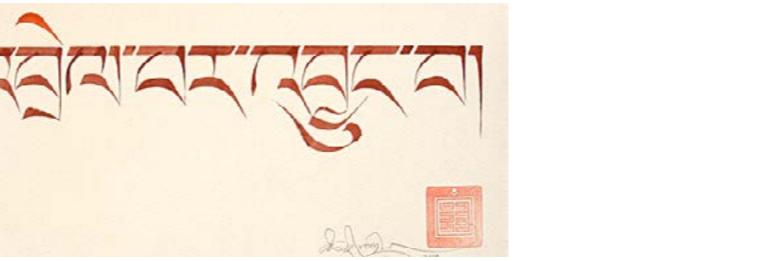


[fig.65] 'The Four Fold Refuge', Calligraphy by Tashi Mannox.

ཀ བ ད ལ ག མ བ ན བ ད ར དྷ ད གྷ ཁ ང

31

One of the first concepts involved digitalizing the High Uchen style of calligraphy.



[fig.66] 'Natural Law', Calligraphy by Tashi Mannox.

However, to digitalize and study this script form, requires referencing a large part of Tashi Mannox's work, a contemporary Tibetan calligraphy/ Dharma artist due to lack of sources for referencing old manuscripts and hence the concept was discarded.

4.4.2 Latinised Tibetan

Since the second half of the 20th Century, Lhasa and other parts of Tibet have experienced a sudden boom infiltration of western retail shops which often use Chinese and Tibetan fonts for shop banners.



[fig.67, 68, 69] Photographs of the Tibetan market place displaying use of Chinese, Tibetan and English fonts in banners for shops, photographed by John Henshall, Kit Yeng Chan in Barkhor Street and Jokhang, Lhasa, Tibet.



Referencing notable features from Latin typefaces:
High contrast in strokes
Flat hairline serifs
Thin horizontal strokes
thick vertical strokes
Vertical axis
Thick-thin-thin at curvature of letters
No curved brackets
Moderate x-height
Symmetrically balanced

Bodoni Didot

32

[fig.70] Tibetan Latinised font, 18.03.21

༄༅༅༅༅༅༅༅༅༅

[fig.71] Tibetan Latinised font, 25.03.21

༄༅༅༅༅༅༅༅༅

[fig.72] Tibetan Latinised font, 07.04.21

༄༅༅༅༅༅༅༅༅

[fig.73] Tibetan Latinised font, 15.04.21

༄༅༅༅༅༅༅༅

[fig.74] Tibetan Latinised font, 028.04.21

༄༅༅༅༅༅༅༅

In spite of make multiple improvisation attempts, it was getting increasingly difficult to harmonise fonts from two different languages especially for letterforms with counters. The letterforms from this concept also seemed unbalanced and difficult to read in small sizes and hence, was discarded.

4.4.3 Light weight Uchen with Serifs

There are very few light-weight/ thin-weight fonts in Tibetan. This concept focuses on the creation of a Tibetan letterforms more delicate in structure with an attempt to achieve uniformity in strokes.

The font will also include an experimental approach towards combining elements from the Latin script, especially elements such as the transitional or bracketed serifs.



[fig.75] Transitional serifs in Baskerville typeface.

༄༅༅༅༅༅༅༅

[fig.76] Tibetan modernist typeface, 18.03.21.

4.4.4 The Tibetan Mani Stones

Mani stones are stone plates, rocks and/or pebbles, carved or inscribed with the six syllabled mantra of Avalokiteshvara as a form of prayer in Tibetan Buddhism. Creating and carving mani stones as devotional or intentional process art is a traditional *sadhana* of piety to *yidam*.



[fig.77] Mani stones at Dudh Kosi valley, Solukhumbu, Nepal; photographed by Egmont Strigl.

There are many methods of carving the stones, as in early centuries the tools are not that sophisticated hence, they use harder stones to craft on the softer stones by making a stone block as a hammer and some use an abrasive that was rubbed on the stones remove unwanted areas for the stones. Later the development of iron made possible for stone carving tools such as chisels hammers, and saws.

35

The use of chisels for stone carving has several ways; the masons stroke, which is flat chisel tip is used at around ninety degrees to the surface in an organized sweep. It shatters the stone beneath it and each successive pass lowers the surface. The lettering stroke, in which the chisel is used along the surface around thirty degrees to cut beneath the existing surface.

The traditionalists might use hand tools only as the lettering chisel for incising small strokes create the details of letters in the large applications and fishtail carving chisels are used to create pockets, valleys and for the intricate carving provides good visibility around the stones.

The masonry chisels are used for the general shaping of stones and the stone point tools are used to smoothen out the surface of the stones. The stone claw tools are used to remove peaks and troughs left from the previously used tools.

Usually, by using primitive tools like chisel and hammer it takes a week to complete twelve by eight inches' rock plate but by drilling machine, it takes a day to complete it.



[fig.80] A Tibetan girl carving Mani stone plates, Namtso Lake, Tibet; photographed by Gunther Deichmann.



[fig.78, 79] Masonry chisels and stone claw chisels used for carving of the Mani Stones.

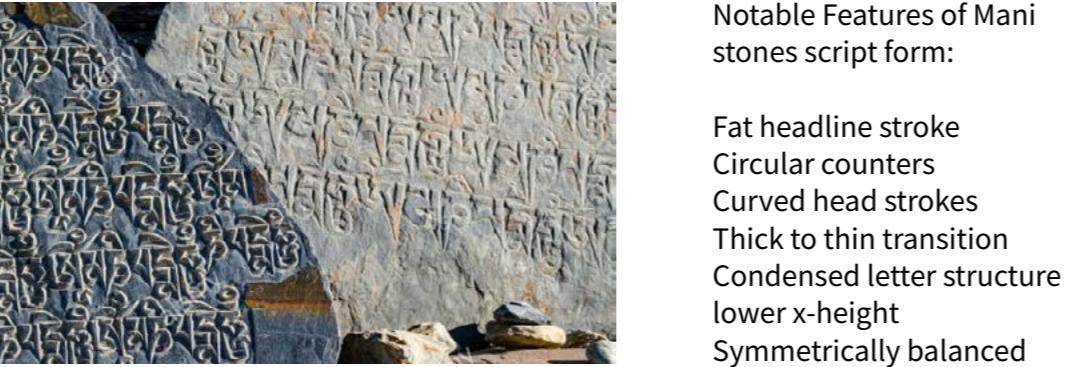
A stone is more durable than wood, and carvings on stone last much longer than wooden artifacts. After carving, they painted with a different color on the carved texts and sometimes uses the golden and silver on it. These days there are many sophisticated tools such as drillers, diamond saw, and water erosion methods for those huge rocks to paddles.

36

This concept involves studying and digitalizing the distinct characters of the script form on these mani stones. Throughout research and in Sikkim, it was realized that these stones remain largely undocumented for and have been slowly declining in number due to their destruction as well as due to weather conditions.



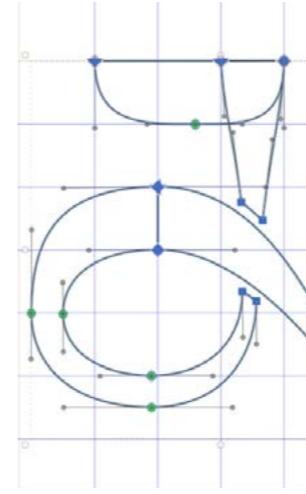
[fig.81, 82, 83] Photographs of the Tibetan mani stones corroded due to extreme weather conditions in Lamuney, West Sikkim; photograph by China Photos of soldiers and people rebuilding Mani Stones destroyed in the Yushu earthquake in Gyegu Township, Qinghai Province in 2010.



[fig.84] Mani stones at Manang, Manang District, Nepal photographed by Egmont Strigl.

Notable Features of Mani stones script form:

- Fat headline stroke
- Circular counters
- Curved head strokes
- Thick to thin transition
- Condensed letter structure
- lower x-height
- Symmetrically balanced
- High Contrast in strokes
- Thin terminals



Based on the Mani stone style, one of the ideations also included extending the font to create the very first and only, Tibetan Stencil font. Currently, in Lhasa and Tibet, a lot of graffiti is made with cardboard and copper stencil letters, which people cut out or carve to create letters on different backgrounds.

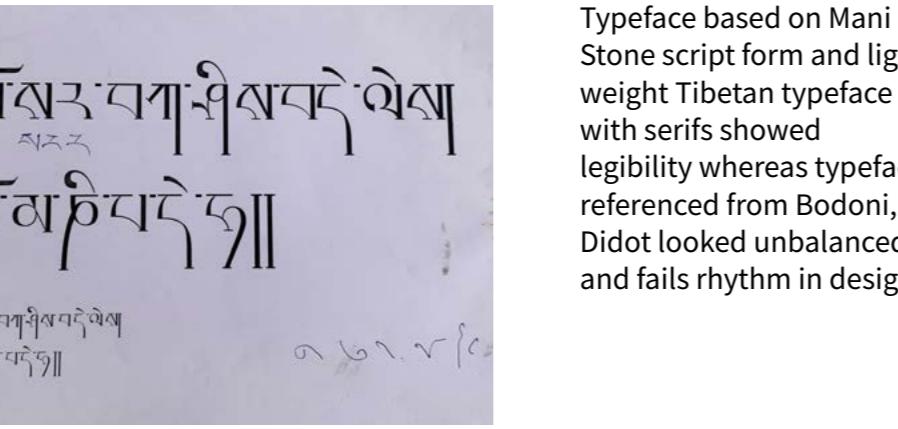
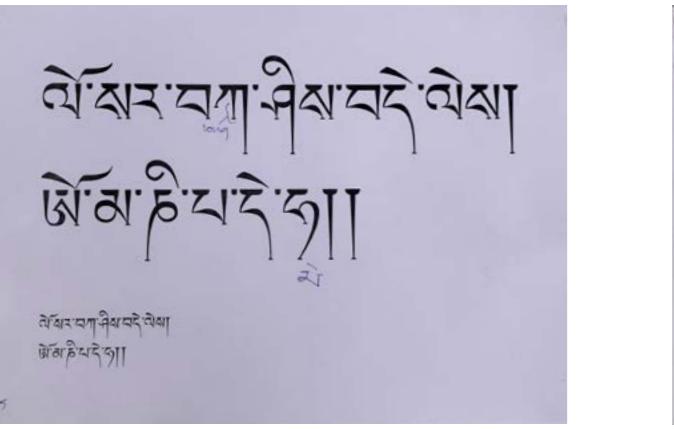
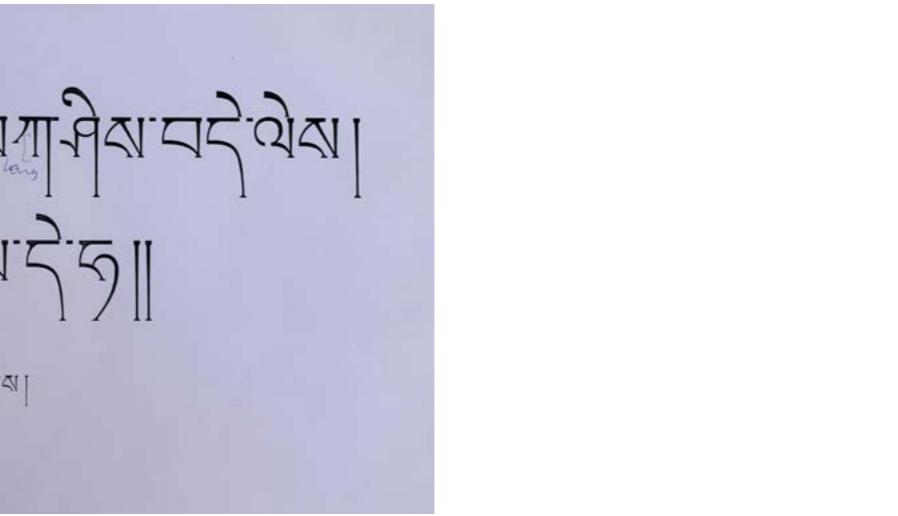
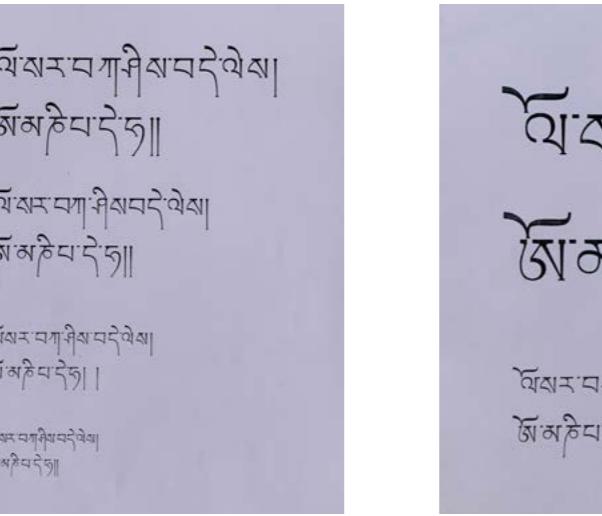
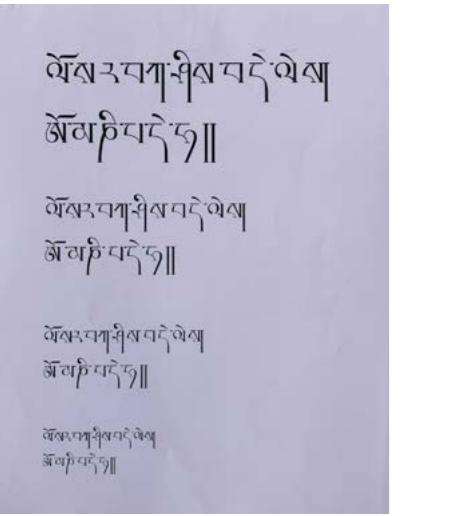
Upon research, it was also found out that Tibetan museums¹⁴ also hold ‘Visiting Exhibitions’, where stencil fonts would be an easy to use, fast, and affordable medium for fast production of texts.

14 - The Tibet Museum of Dharamshala, India holds Travelling Exhibitions across India and internationally.

[fig.85] Tibetan Mani stone typeface, 18.03.21.

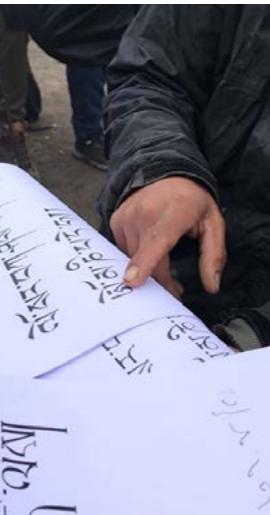
4.2 Physical experiments & reviews

Testing readability of fonts by printing two sentences in various point sizes and page orientations - ‘Losar Tashi Delek’ meaning ‘Happy New Year in Tibetan’ and ‘Om Mani Padme Hum’, the Tibetan prayer.



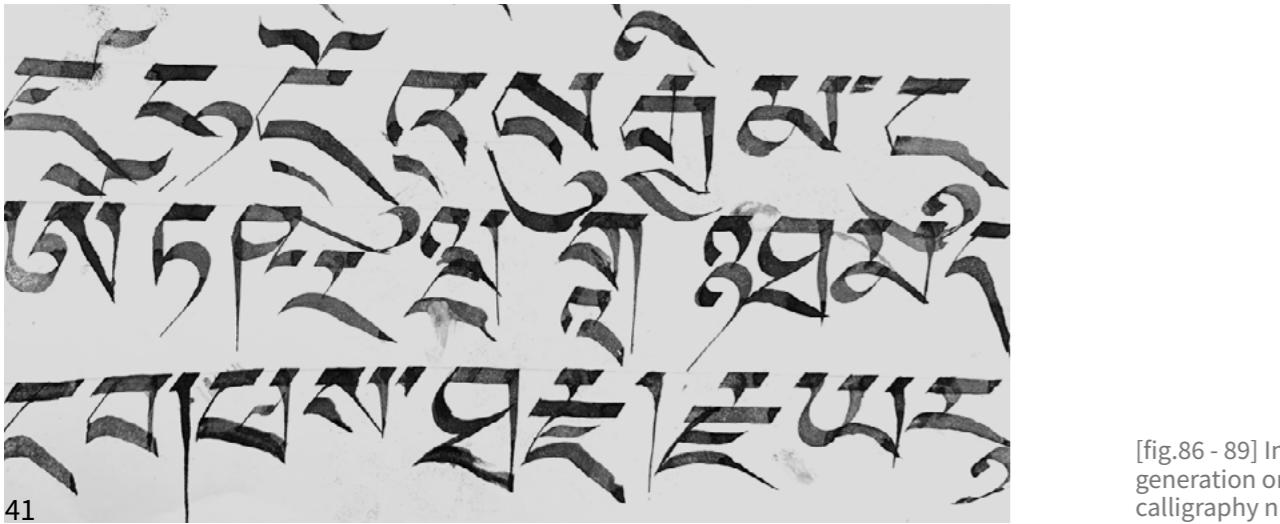
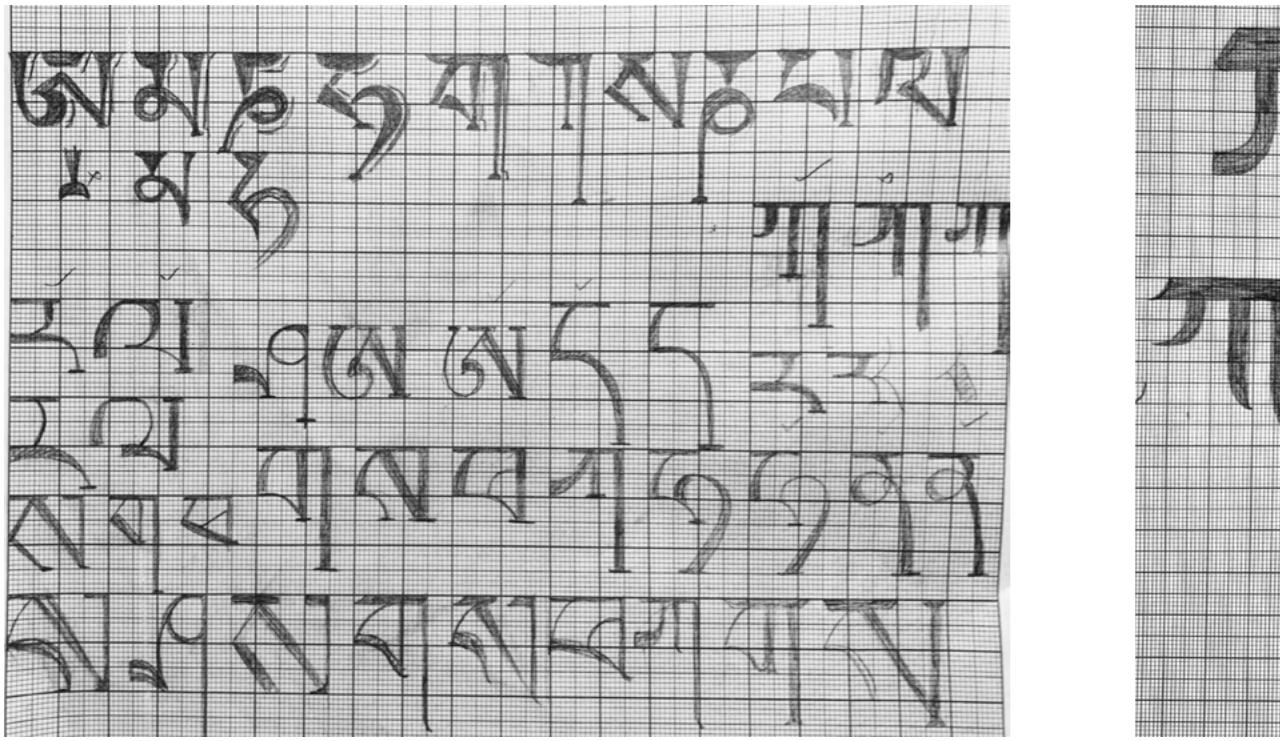
39

Typeface based on Mani Stone script form and light-weight Tibetan typeface with serifs showed legibility whereas typeface referenced from Bodoni, Didot looked unbalanced and fails rhythm in design.

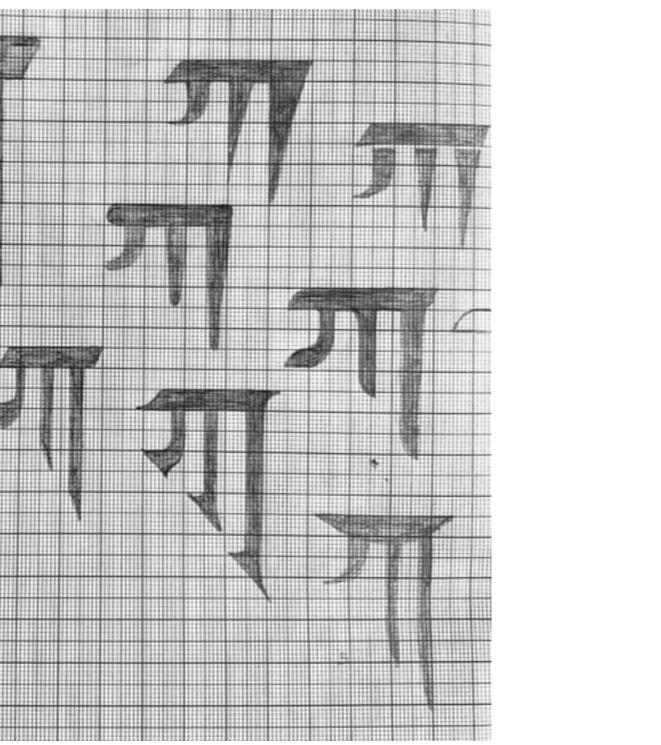


Taking review and feedback on typefaces from native Tibetan speaking refugees and monks in Tsoka and Deorali top.

40



41



[fig.86 - 89] Initial stages of Concept generation on graph papers using calligraphy nibs.



42

05

Development of the type family

5.1 Design decisions & detailing of character sets

5.1.1 Tibetan Mani Stones

As more characters were developed, small details of each letterform were finalized by referencing the script style on the stones. It was important to catch small differences and features that differentiate the letters from the general Uchen script.

For example, a ‘yig mgo’ can be written two ways:



[fig.90] Difference in *yig mgo* in fonts, Yagpo Tibetan Uni and Noto Sans Tibetan.

Notice how the down stroke ends halfway in Yagpo Tibetan Uni and extends full length in Noto Sans Tibetan.



After referencing research papers & documents on records of these stones, a *yig mgo* with a shorter down stroke was finalized.



[fig.91] Old Tibetan Documents Online Monograph Series Vol. II, Published by Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

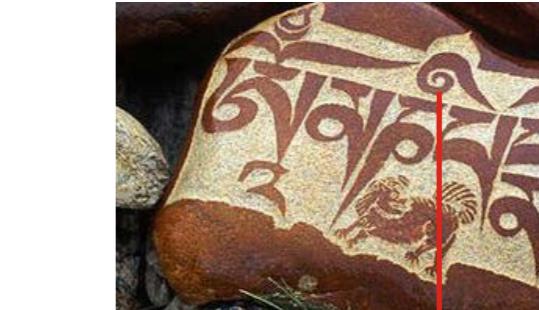
The Tibetan ‘a’ is perhaps the most distinct character on these Mani stones and is carved much differently than how it is written today.



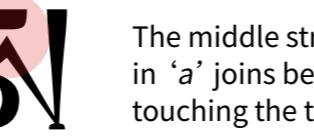
[fig.92] Tibetan ‘a’ in Microsoft Himalaya and Jomolhari.



[fig.94] Gigo in Noto Sans Tibetan, Microsoft Himalaya, Yagpo Tibetan Uni and Jomolhari.



[fig.95] Mani Stones at Lake Manasarovar , Kailash, Tibet; Photographed by Craig Lovell.

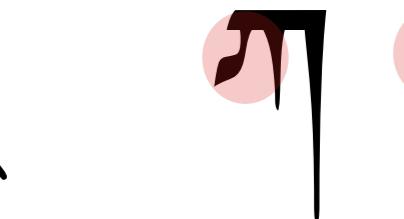


The middle stroke in ‘a’ joins before touching the topline.



A stylistic *gigo* is designed based on mani stone designs.

‘ka’ is often written differently in Bhutanese Tibetan and Central/ Lhasa Tibetan.



[fig.96] Notice the curves in *ka* from Yagpo Tibetan Uni and Noto Sans Tibetan.



ka finalised based on Central Tibetan script style.

The Tibetan reversed consonants also have to be separately designed according to the stroke modulation of the pen.



5.1.2 Light weight Uchen with Serifs

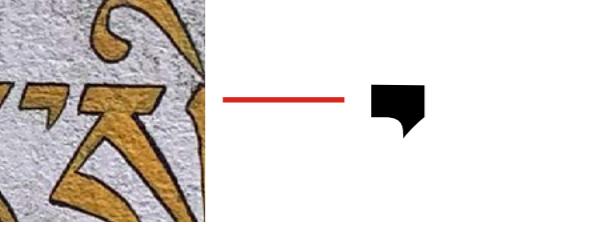
During the establishment of visual language in letterforms, there was a confusion on the design of the ‘tseg’ in this concept. The initial design showed signs of inconsistency and lacked visual weight. While I searched for references for the design, a particular photograph of painted ‘matra’ on a wall came to the best help.



[fig.97] Painted Matra on the walls of stupa, Tsoka.



[fig.98] An inconsistent tseg from initial designs.



The tseg here is well-defined with a calligraphic stroke modulation. It was digitalized, implemented with the elements of the light weight serif style, and when tested, turned into a successful experiment.

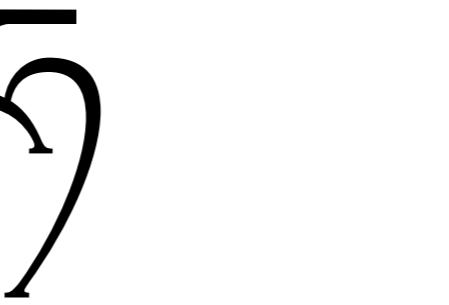
Traditionally, Tibetan typefaces include high contrast in strokes.



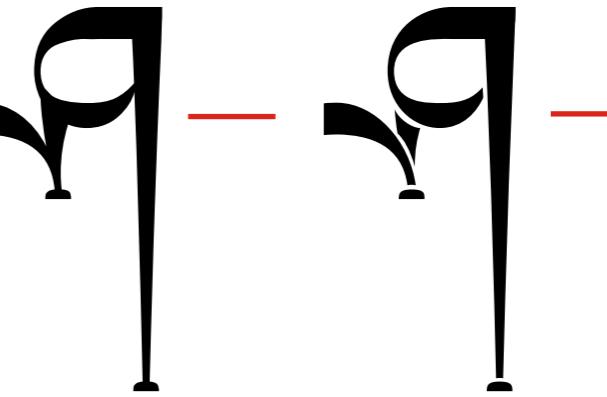
[fig.99] Tibetan ‘ha’ with high contrast in strokes in Yagpo Tibetan Uni and Jomolhari typefaces.

5.1.3 Mani Stone Stencil

Gradual improvements and changes were made in Mani Stone typeface to extend it to create a ‘stencil Tibetan typeface’.



The initial design was slowly improvised with minimum stroke contrast in all letterforms so as to result in a thin-weight typeface.



Initially, the headline and the body which were a part of one shape, were added more negative spaces in between to separate them both as separate shapes/ strokes.

唵嘛呢叭咪吽

唵嘛呢叭咪吽

唵嘛呢叭咪吽

唵嘛呢叭咪吽

唵嘛呢叭咪吽

47

Red circles highlight mistakes of consistency, stroke modulation, counter spacing, x-height and stroke weight.

[fig.100] Tibetan Mani Stone Font, 18.03.21

[fig.101] Tibetan Mani Stone Font, 25.03.21

[fig.102] Tibetan Mani Stone Font, 28.04.21

[fig.103] Tibetan Mani Stone Font, 11.05.21

[fig.104] Tibetan Mani Stone Font, 02.06.21

唵嘛呢叭咪吽

唵嘛呢叭咪吽

唵嘛呢叭咪吽

唵嘛呢叭咪吽

唵嘛呢叭咪吽

[fig.105] Tibetan Uchen serif font, 18.03.21

[fig.106] Tibetan Uchen serif font, 25.03.21

[fig.107] Tibetan Uchen serif font, 28.04.21

[fig.108] Tibetan Uchen serif font, 11.05.21

[fig.109] Tibetan Uchen serif font, 02.06.21

Gradual improvements in typeface over the course of 5 months, corrections by Dr. Jo De Baerdemaeker.

Gradual improvements in font over the course of 5 months, corrections by Dr. Jo De Baerdemaeker.

Gradual improvements in font over the course of 5 months, corrections by Dr. Jo De Baerdemaeker.

48

5.2 Open Type Scripting of fonts

When writing or typing Tibetan, the measurements of consonants change as they combine to form ‘consonant clusters’. In Tibetan, several letterforms have a different base lines and hence, when combined with other letterforms need to be adjusted or created as new ligatures.

Glyphs App allows to use to code and write Python scripts and fix the problem of overlapping shapes or colliding letterforms. Both the typefaces use the following Open Type Features:

5.2.1 Below Base Substitutions

Letterforms like *na*, *ka*, *ga* and others which have a taller baseline whereas *ba*, *ca*, *pha* have a shorter baseline. To compensate the difference, two sets of ‘*u Matra*’ vowel variants are created for different baselines.

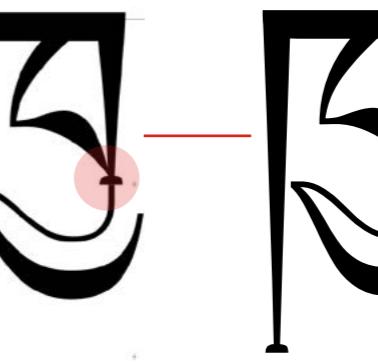


[fig.110] ‘*u-Matra*’ with different baselines.

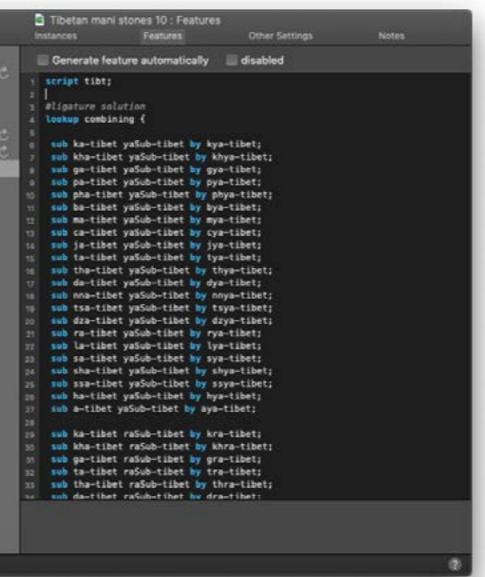


[fig.111] Characters with different baselines use different vowel variants.

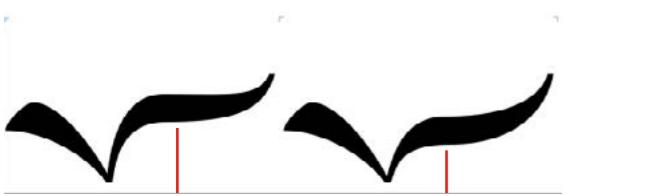
Other subscript marks, conjoined consonants also use Below base substitutions. For example, *ga* with a ‘*ya-ta*’: the mark collides with the stem of the letter and also requires removal of the ‘serif’. Hence, needs to be adjusted, redesigned and ‘substituted’ .



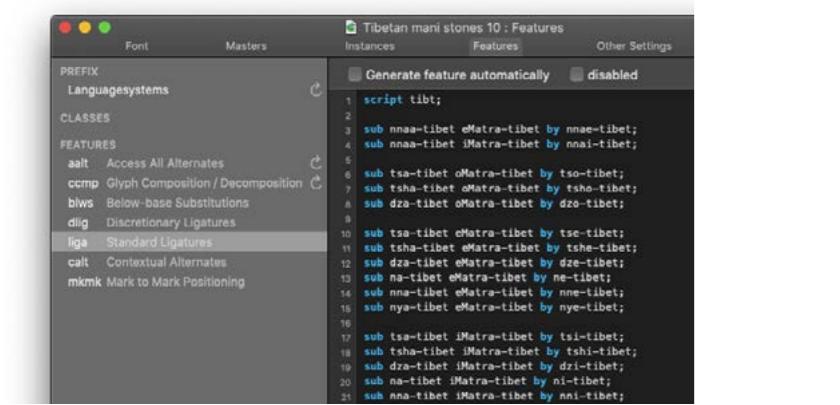
[fig.113] Characters *ta*, *tsha*, *dza* flags colliding with ‘*o-Matra*’. There is no clear definition of both shapes and is unclear or unreadable.



[fig.112] Below Base substitution scripts for *ya* and *ra* subscript.



A different ‘o-Matra’ is created for characters with flags, with stroke height higher than usual.



[fig.114] Standard Ligature scripts for characters using a different ‘o-Matra’.



All stacked letterforms also require Open Type Scripting, for example, taking ‘a-Matra’ as a subscript.



To avoid such overlapping shapes and confusing design, scripting allows ‘substitution’ of ligatures:



5.2.3 Contextual Alternates

During research and while making design decisions, it was realized that some of the same characters are written or carved in different ways. For example, ‘i-Matra’ based on two designs found of Mani stones, a complex design & another more simpler in nature.



With Open Type Scripting, the user can get the freedom to choose a design of his/ her liking. An ‘i-Matra’ with a complex design can be used in (for example) a short verse, decorative *mantra* or text whereas, a simple design can be used in long texts to avoid clustered shapes in small spaces.



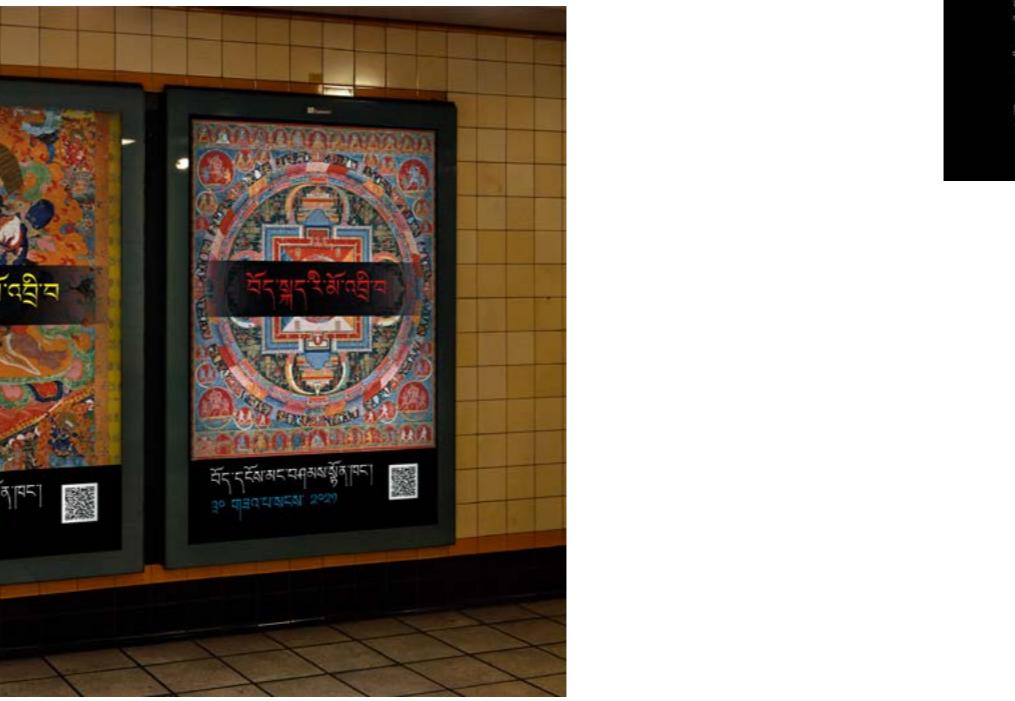
To solve this confusion, ‘a’ has been made in two designs and can be used as per the user’s preference or comfort.

5.3 Prototyping

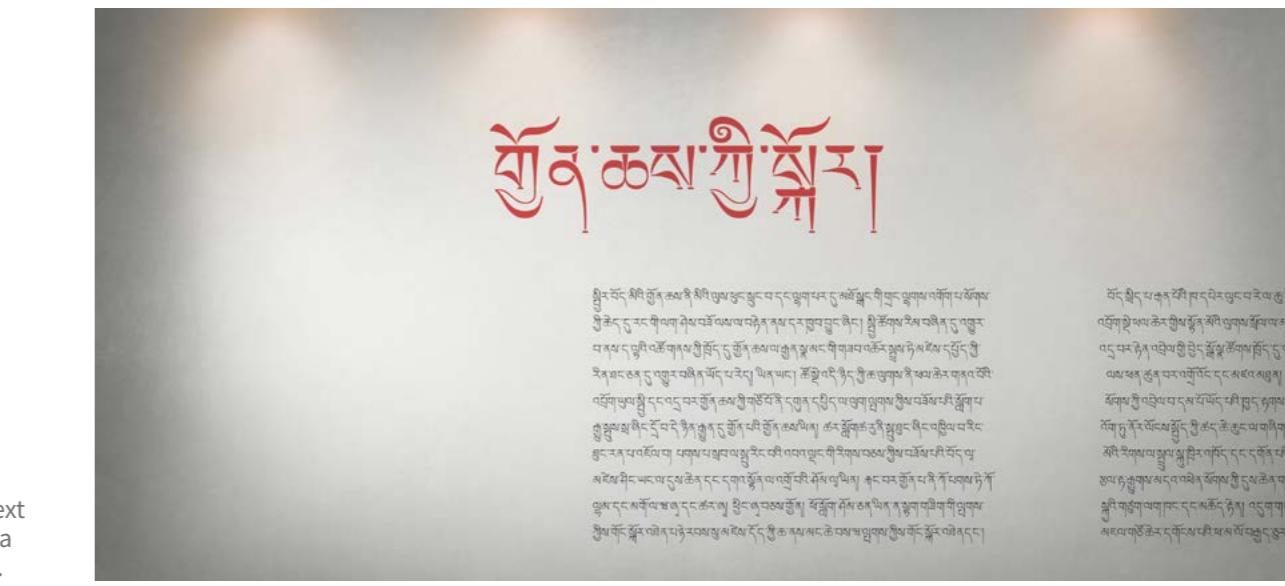
After all characters were checked and finalised, the typeface is then tested using mock-ups of Museum environments and some sample Tibetan museum texts. The objective behind this stage is to check if the typefaces relate to the context of the content as well as visibility and readability of letterforms in certain spaces.



[fig.115, 116] Sample posters for a Tibetan visiting exhibition.



[fig.117] Brochure with the information on the Tibetan Revolution of 1959, mountains, attire and festivals of Tibet.



[fig.117] Brochure with the information on the Tibetan Revolution of 1959, mountains, attire and festivals of Tibet.



06 Conclusion

To dedicate efforts to a typeface for six months and see it work, is an extremely grateful feeling. This project taught me every aspect of Design, working on a software I had never used before, researching topics I had never known before and developing a typeface for a language I had never heard before. But even more so, I was able to meet, interact and learn from the most humble personalities, which I will never forget. Besides my academic learnings, I was also able to dive deep and learn a thing or two about Buddhism turning the project into a profound experience.

I am gratified by how the project turned out to be and hope to continue gaining more knowledge along my journey as a designer.

I thank everyone who has accompanied me through the past wonderful six months.

Om Mani Padme Hum.

Final Character Sets

6.1 Tibetan Mani Stones - Seseylungma

ଆମା ପିଲାଖା ନେହା ଯାଦି
 କରିବାକୁ ଦେଖିବା
 କାହାରିବାକୁ ଦେଖିବା

6.2 Tibetan Mani Stones Stencil - Seseylungma Stencil

༄༅ །

༄༅ །

6.3 Light weight Uchen with Serifs - Harrer

༄༅ །

༄༅ །

Seseyungma



Seseyungma Stencil

Harrer

07 Bibliography

- Towards a Tibetan Paleography: Developing a Typology of Writing Styles in Early Tibet*; Sam van Schaik.
- A New Look at the Tibetan Invention of Writing, Old Tibetan Documents Monograph Series, Vol.III*; Sam van Schaik.
- Observations Made in the Study of Tibetan Xylographs*; Helmut Eimer.
- Origin of Tibetan Writing*; Berthold Laufer.
- Tibetan Language Correspondence Course*; Sarah Harding and Jeremy Morrelli.
- World Systems Perspectives and Art: A Case Study of the Museum of Contemporary Tibetan Art in the Netherlands*; Laura E.A. Braden and Naomi Oosterman.
- Exhibiting the Exotic, Simulating the Sacred: Tibetan Shrines at British and American Museums*; Imogen Clark.
- The Tibetan language Institute*; Lama David Curtis.
- The Unicode Consortium (Standard 13.0)*.

08 Appendices

- World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), Requirements for Tibetan Text Layout and Typography*; Richard Ishida and Chunming Hu .
- Central Tibetan Administration*; Dharamsala, India.
- The Tibet Museum*; Dharamsala, India.
- A Cultural History of Tibet*; David Snellgrow & Hugh Edward Richardson.
- Amdo Tibetan: A Comprehensive Grammar Textbook*; Kuo-ming Sung and Lha Byams Rgyal.
- Tibetan Language Channel*; Geshi Michael Roach.

- COLOPHON -

Cover page & certificates typeset in
Charter, inside text typeset in Noto Sans

Seseylungma, Seseylungma Stencil,
Harrer

Mumbai, India
August 2021

શાસ્ત્રીય
કુદાળ

કાન્દે

Tanvi Dev

In partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Bachelor' s of
Communication Design

Avantika University
2017 - 2021