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PRINCETON READINGS IN RELIGIONS

Princeton Readings in Religions is a new series of anthologies on the religions of the world, representing the significant advances that have been made in the study of religions in the last thirty years. The sourcebooks used by previous generations of students, whether for Judaism and Christianity or for the religions of Asia and the Middle East, placed a heavy emphasis on "canonical works." Princeton Readings in Religions provides a different configuration of texts in an attempt better to represent the range of religious practices, placing particular emphasis on the ways in which texts have been used in diverse contexts. The volumes in the series therefore include ritual manuals, hagiographical and autobiographical works, popular commentaries, and folktales, as well as some ethnographic material. Many works are drawn from vernacular sources. The readings in the series are new in two senses. First, very few of the works contained in the volumes have ever have made available in an anthology before; in the case of the volumes on Asia, few have even been translated into a Western language. Second, the readings are new in the sense that each volume provides new ways to read and understand the religions of the world, breaking down the sometimes misleading stereotypes inherited from the past in an effort to provide both more expansive and more focused perspectives on the richness and diversity of religious expressions. The series is designed for use by a wide range of readers, with key terms translated and technical notes omitted. Each volume also contains an introduction by a distinguished scholar in which the histories of the traditions are outlined and the significance of each of the works is explored.

Religions of Tibet in Practice is the fourth volume of Princeton Readings in Religion and the first substantial anthology of Tibetan religious literature to appear in English. The seventeen contributors are leading scholars of the religions of Tibet, each of whom has provided one or more translations of key works, most of which are translated here for the first time. Each chapter in the volume begins with an introduction in which the translator discusses the history and influence of the work, identifying points of particular difficulty or interest. The works they have translated here represent many genres; they are drawn from a millenium of Tibetan history and from many regions of the Tibetan cultural domain.

In addition to acknowledging the cooperation and patience of the contributors to *Religions of Tibet in Practice*, I would like to thank Zeff Bjerken for his assistance in the initial editing of the manuscript.

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Hail Protection

Anne C. Klein and Khetsun Sangpo

The practice of hail protection incorporates numerous aspects of Tibetan religion and culture. A social practice as well as a meditative one, it also involves the visual and prognostic arts. The following discussion draws from a traditional Tibetan text detailing the rituals involved in protecting an area from hail, and from Khetsun Sangpo's commentary on that work. This format seemed best suited to conveying the hail-protection practice as a whole, as well as the cultural tensions it embodies. No textual excerpt could provide this. At the same time, the present selection is not altogether different in kind from the primary text translations found elsewhere in this volume in that it adheres closely to the oral and written material from which it derives, following an abbreviated outline of the written text made by Khetsun Sangpo. His ordering does not always strictly follow the order of the text but is devised to bring a bewildering array of subtopics into a comprehensible format. The final section includes material elaborated by Khetsun Sangpo in discussion but not specifically included in his outline.

Khetsun Sangpo Rinpoche is a Nyingma lama, best known among Tibetan scholars for his thirteen-volume series on Tibetan history. However, in the three years prior to his departure from Tibet in 1960, Khetsun Sangpo was in charge of protecting an area south of Lhasa from hail. In 1990, after I had known him for over fifteen years and studied several classic Buddhist texts and practices with him, it finally occurred to me to ask about the hail-protection practices that had occupied his early years. He agreed to explain them, and after careful reflection he decided to base his discussion on the *Tent for [Holding Off] Ferocious Fire and Water, the Instructions for Guarding against Hail through Secret Accomplishment of Hayagrīva* (*Rta mkhrin gsang sgrub gyi sgo nas ser ba bsrung ba'i gdams pa me rlung 'khrugs pa'i gur*).

Hailmaster traditions are linked with the earliest forms of Buddhism in Tibet, coming almost exclusively from the Nyingma and, occasionally, Kagyü sects of Tibetan Buddhism. The rich descriptions of the spirits associated with hail, together with careful elucidation of the substances that injure them, very likely derive from the pre-Buddhist period.

Mahāyāna Buddhism is famous for its intention to help all beings without exception. However, because hail is understood to be brought by malevolent spirit-figures, some of whom are figures in the retinues of bodhisattvas, it becomes the business of the hailmaster to prevent these spirits from accomplishing their goals. In doing so, sometimes he must harm them. This violation of the Mahāyāna spirit was obviously uncomfortable for Khetsun Sangpo, and he spoke of hail prevention as a dirty business, something he was glad to be out of.

> If you ask how was it that I became a hailmaster, was this something that I had aspired to do for a long time? Not at all. It was not something that I wanted, but the circumstances fell out that way and I became a hailmaster quite against my wishes. [In fact, though his own father was a hailmaster, Khetsun Sangpo in his early youth went to study with scholars and meditation masters rather than follow his father's trade.] Because, after all, hailmasters are involved with harming and making trouble for beings who bring hail. This is quite a sin and I have no wish at all to be involved in this kind of nonvirtuous activity. In effect, the hailmaster understands himself to be making war on various spirits, ghosts, and others involved with the bringing of hail. Of course, these are not beings who have form like we do—humans make war with people who have form like ourselves—but this is a war on unseen beings.

He acknowledged my surmise that the nonvirtue of hail prevention might be mitigated if the hailmaster was motivated mainly by a wish to protect the crops and livelihood of persons in his area, but he doubted that this was often the case. More often, he emphasized, hailmasters were motivated by money. Indeed, those who succeeded in protecting their areas from hail were well paid and politically powerful. Khetsun Sangpo expressed his sense of good fortune that he had never needed to engage in the fiercer techniques of hail protection.

Despite this tension between the goals of hail protection and normative Mahāyāna Buddhist sensibilities, the practice of stopping hail is intimately related with orthodox Buddhist tantric practices. That is, in preparing to become a hailmaster one learns to identify with one's own personal deity, or *yi dam*, through traditional practices of recitation and visualization, preceded by the Mahāyāna cultivation of refuge and compassion (see chapters 13, 14, and 16). One chooses a deity based on one's own predilections or one's connection with a lama. Any *yi dam*, male or female, in whom one has faith can be a basis for hail protection, but it should be a fierce one.

The explanation of the hail-protection practice has two main parts: (1) the prior (and higher) activities, which are aimed at accomplishing enlightenment; and (2) various latter (and lower) activities specifically associated with hail protection. In brief, the higher activities involve gaining enlightenment, that is, becoming a buddha oneself, whereas the lower activities, including that of actually preventing hail, pertain to the purposes of this life. The former are crucial for becoming a hailmaster.

The prior activities comprise well-known forms of tantric practice. Khetsun Sangpo condensed them into the four activities of (1) empowerment (*dbang*), (2) training in ritual practice (*phyag len la mkhas par sbyangs*), (3) accomplishing

recitation and establishing oneself as a deity *(lha'i brnyan sgrub)*, and (4) augmentation *(kha sgong)*. These are methods for acquiring the realizations of the stages and the paths, including the traditional Buddhist accumulations of virtue and wisdom. Properly performing these is the basis for the rest, and thus temporally and spiritually prior to what follows. As Khetsun Sangpo explains: "Why emphasize these prior activities? They are associated with achieving buddhahood, and our condition is such that unless we gain some enlightenment ourselves, it is impossible to help others."

Empowerment accomplishes two things: it plants the seed of the capacity to prevent hail, and it grants permission to read the texts and perform the ritual practices that "ripen" these seeds. To receive an empowerment is to be initiated into a relationship with one's *yi dam*, the figure whose being one takes on during meditation proper and, also, during the act of protecting an area from hail. Once initiated, practitioners are empowered to accomplish, emulate, and experience themselves as the deity to whom they have already been introduced. Training in these practices constitutes the second and third of the prior activities: gaining skill in the ritual practices associated with the deity, and accomplishing the recitation and establishment of oneself in the form of the deity, that is, training in the classic tantric stages of development and completion.

Khetsun Sangpo explained the second activity, "gaining skill in the ritual practices of the deity," in this way:

> Traditionally, Buddhist practices are divided into those having to do with method and wisdom; here in tantra the stages of development and completion correspond to method and wisdom. What is the method? We take our ordinary sense of what we look like, our sense of ourselves as flesh and blood, and put it aside. Instead, we think that our body is the body of the enlightened deity associated with our practice. We practice developing a clear appearance of ourselves as the deity, and if we become accustomed to this sufficiently, it becomes possible to have this experience visually. Not only this, but we imagine that the entire world which we inhabit is itself a maṇḍala mansion, made of light. Everyone we meet, then, is a male or female deity. But such visualization is not sufficient. We also need to understand it to be empty, as discussed in Madhyamaka and other texts. For this reason we practice the stage of completion, the second stage of tantric practices, especially associated with the wisdom of emptiness. With the stage of generation as the method and the understanding of emptiness applied to the stage of completion as wisdom, we can enter into the profound path.

The third prior activity is "approaching the deity through recitation." The word for recitation *(brnyen)* also means "to approach" or "come close." One recites the mantra or sound associated with a particular enlightened being and, in this way, both approaches and becomes like that figure. The first and highest of the three levels at which recitation can be accomplished requires one to continue recitation practice until there arise signs of having achieved the deity *(brtags bsnyen)*. Of such signs the best and most difficult to achieve is the experience of a direct

meeting with that deity. Other signs include nectar emerging from ritual sculptures *(gtor ma)* made of butter and barley; or liquid in offering vessels bubbling up as if boiling. The second level of accomplishment is to recite innumerable, almost uncountable, numbers of the deity's mantra *(grangs bsnyen)*. The power one gains is a function of this number. The lowest level of accomplishing the practice of recitation is to recite one hundred thousand repetitions for each syllable of the mantra *(las rung)*.

Performing these practices carefully is said to make activities such as the stopping of hail possible, an enterprise that involves combat against beings associated with hail. According to Khetsun Sangpo, if you can clearly and with an unwavering mind visualize yourself as, for example, Hayagrīva, then worldly deities cannot harm you. Even if you have not understood emptiness and thus not fulfilled the practice of the stage of completion, your own strong visualization causes these worldly spirits to see you as the fierce and powerful Hayagrīva, not as an ordinary an human being. Therefore one is protected, since they would never attempt to harm Hayagrīva.

Once the recitation facilitating emulation of the deity is complete, one undertakes the fourth and last of the prior practices. Peaceful augmentation *(kha ṡgong la zhi ba'i skyes bsrog)* involves thirteen substances offered to the deity by placing them in fire. These are firewood, melted butter, wheat, beans, shelled barley, unshelled barley, rice, grass roots, kusha grass, sesame, yogurt mixed with tsampa, the other twelve substances mixed together, and the juice made by chopping up beetle-nuts. Except for the firewood, which is in effect their means of delivery, these substances are forms of human food that can also be food for deities. Offering in this way is a peaceful activity.

Once the prior activities have been completed, it is possible to begin any of a variety of activities, including the hail-protection practices that are our focus here. The prior activities are the root of all the functions they make possible.

For hail protection, the various latter activities are five: (1) making ritual artifacts, (2) preparing mantra-empowered pills, (3) meeting the law-enforcer, (4) walking the protected area, (5) during the summer retreat, actually undertaking the activities that will protect an area from hail. These techniques are passed from father to son. In Tibet there were almost no women who worked to prevent hail. In the 1950s a hailmaster passed his skills on to Khetsun Sangpo, his son-in-law, rather than to any of his seven daughters. Still, says Khetsun Sangpo, "these methods would work for anyone who had the ability, woman or man, American or not, and anyone who had that ability would be respected."

There are an enormous number of complex rituals and items associated with this practice. All must be learned with detail and precision. Someone destined for the activity of protecting against hail generally trains in it from childhood and does not engage in any other kind of study. Tibetans consider the training of a hailmaster to be much like that of a Tibetan doctor: both must memorize the names and functions of innumerable herbs and elements and be able to identify them.

The first activity after augmentation is the making of a triangular stand out of birchwood *(shing stag pa'i byang bu)*. On this is attached the figure of one's *yi dam*, at whose heart is placed a circle inscribed with certain mantras and designs. Such a circle is not part of ordinary tantric practice. A second mantra is written on the figure's back, as is often done with Tibetan thankas. In this case however, the mantra is incorporated into a phrase that includes the name of the place to be protected; for example, the writing on the back of the figure Khetsun Sangpo made while staying in Texas is entirely in Tibetan except for the English word "Houston." This ritual object must be made by the hailmaster himself, who will have trained in the intricate designs and mantras required. Khetsun Sangpo observes that, "Of course, there are some inadequate persons who really don't know how to do all the drawings and so forth properly, but there are also those who are very well trained. It is important to make great effort to do everything correctly since success depends on this."

Next, one makes a traditional figure in the shape of a dagger known as a *phurba* and places mantras at two points on the figure; in addition, a scented packet is tied around its neck. Although *phurbas* are most commonly made of metal, for the purpose of protecting from hail one must use a *phurba* made from a red-hued wood known as *acacia catechu (seng ldeng gi phur pa)*. This is a tree that bears a three-pronged leaf; when its bark is peeled back, its color is pure yellow. Thread is wound around the *phurba* as well as the hair of a great lama or a great tantric practitioner, and these also are attached to the top of the *phurba,* fastening the packet of spices and other contents. Later the *phurbas* will be set up inside each of the four huts on the protected property.

Next, one empowers certain substances with mantras that are held very secretly. The substances involved in this practice and the use made of them is not, as in burning the thirteen substances, a case of offering something nice to the deities, of pleasing them or helping them in any way whatsoever. This is a case of making trouble for such beings, harming or hurting them. In this connection it is also the hailmaster's job to examine the astrological situation and learn whether the stars indicate things will go well or not, and which types of beings are involved with the hail on any particular occasion. Thus, the arts of astrology and divination are also part of the hailmaster's education.

There are sixteen substances considered to be antidotes that interfere with beings associated with hail. From these substances one will make pills within which are placed certain fierce mantras. The pills are then empowered through ritual recitation during the hailmaster's twenty-seven-day retreat.

These sixteen antidotal substances are an evocative list, suggesting mysterious but poetically resonant connections among the items it contains:

1. Antidote for the earth demon is earth from a place struck by lightening.
2. Antidote for the earth deity is water from melted hail.
3. Antidote for the earth deity leaders is earth from a place where there has been fighting (e.g., rubble from a house hit by a cannon).

4. Antidote to the *tsen (btsan)* is powdered copper.
5. Antidote to the mother nāgas is a wool-like aquatic grass plucked from very still water.
6. Antidote to the father *srin* is black sulphur (very bad smelling).
7. Antidote to the *dmu*-demons (who also cause dropsy by casting an evil eye on one) is soil from a rushing stream.
8. Antidote to the *lha srin* is the fangs of a musk deer or, if one cannot find this, the fangs of a mad dog.
9. As an antidote to [the worldly] Dorje Legba (Rdo rje legs pa) one needs the flesh of a weasel *(sre mong)*.
10. As an antidote to demons *(bdud)* one needs the flesh of a hopoo bird. One puts mantras in this flesh, which prevents the demon from doing harm. This flesh does not help or feed the demon in any way; it has a bad smell which turns the demon around. Khetsun Sangpo noted that it is a sin to kill a hopoo bird for its flesh, but difficult to obtain otherwise. "That's the business of a hailmaster. Sometimes one inherits these items from one's father."
11. As an antidote to the four female spirits *(srid mo)* one needs acrid black earth.
12. As an antidote to the female servant nāgas one needs the *spru ma* flower, which the dictionary defines as "a hellebore which cures plague, fever, worms and leprosy."
13. As an antidote to the worker deity group one needs earth from a place where a person has been killed.
14. As an antidote to Yama one needs earth from a crossroads.
15. As an antidote to the *tīrthikas* (non-Buddhists) one needs *grogs shing*—a kind of small clinging plant (not moss) or lichen that can grow on trees or, in Tibet, on doorways.
16. As an antidote to *bhin ya ka* one needs earth from a place where there has been fighting.

Pills are made from these substances for later use in preventing hail. In commenting on the secrecy that has prevailed regarding these substances and the mantras that empower them, Khetsun Sangpo observes:

> Except for the *māntrika*—a father and the son to whom he passes this knowledge—Tibetan people do not know these things. They are kept secret because this kind of power does not depend on substances, or on people, but is derived from the power of mantra. This is completely different from, for example, publishing explanations about how the body works—looking at the cells and so forth, or printing diagrams of these. If such things are not kept secret their power dissipates, just as when you carry a candle it lights the room, but if you give it to someone else you are in darkness. Even the rosary used for mantra recitation should not be seen, it is kept hidden under the sleeve. In this way the customs of Tibet and modern Western countries are completely different.
>
> The thirteen substances offered to the deity as food are not at all secret, nor is the peaceful augmentation through fire offering. But the sixteen antidotes are secret because they are intended only to harm, not to help, their recipients.

> Still, if things are published and not really understood [and the assumption seems to be that they will not be, for Khetsun Rinpoche did not object either to speaking of them publicly or publishing their names], their power does not dissipate.

The hailmaster stays in retreat for twenty-seven days while he empowers these articles and makes pills from the mantrically empowered substances. Gathering all these substances as well as the other ritual articles may entail some difficulty; however, as already indicated, the hailmaster often inherits most of what is needed. Making the pills involves two activities: blackening them in a fire fueled by wood that was initially blackened when used to burn a corpse, and placing them in musk water. Mantras are then positioned inside the pills as one recites a related mantra. The mantra within the pills is written with blood extracted from many beings on a poisonous paper made from a particular bad-smelling wood. Afterward the hailmaster keeps these with him when he walks and guards the area under his protection.

Prior to the hail season, a meeting between the hailmaster and the local law-enforcement officer takes place in the third month of the Tibetan year. It is customary for the hailmaster to write out the rules to be enforced, and for the officer to act as a sort of spy, keeping his eye on the people of the area. Anyone who disobeys the rules is reported to the hailmaster, who may then decide to send hail to descend on the offender. Under such circumstances, the hail is considered the fault of the law-breaker, not the hailmaster, because the officer will have documented that this person did in fact break the law. In other words, the likelihood of hail destroying crops bears some relationship to the actions or karma of the people in the area. From a Tibetan perspective, if the people in an area are involved in war, theft, and so forth, the deities are more likely to send hail. Khetsun Sangpo observes:

> In this sense [in preventing hail] the hailmaster is interfering with the cause and effect of karma. There is a lot of quarreling about this in Tibet. People complain about the hailmaster, saying, "What happened, you were supposed to protect us from hail and you didn't do it." He responds, "Look, I did my part, I stopped the hail, but you are behaving badly and this makes my work similar to trying to plug a leak in a wall with many, many holes. If you behave like this, what can I do?"

After concluding his meeting with the law-enforcement officer, the hailmaster makes his rounds of the area under protection. At this point, then, following whatever length of years it might have taken to emulate fully his protector deity in accordance with the prior activities, the practitioner has spent twenty-seven days in retreat empowering the antidotal substances with mantra. Now he turns his attention to the local terrain, the area that will be under his protection. This area is marked with stone dividers or, less commonly, with wooden fences.

Some time prior to his twenty-seven day retreat he established four huts in the four directions of the property. He now proceeds to each of these, or at least to one of them, carrying the birchwood stand, the *phurba* or ritual dagger, and

various other substances such as cedar, which will be offered as food for the deities. It is not that when they eat these their power becomes less, but that they accept this food as a plea not to send hail. If the assigned area is large, it might take two to three days to complete the walk; it may also be of a size that can be walked in a single day.

Now he also places two stone circular plaques known as "reversing discs" (*zlog 'khor*) in each of these four directional points, facing outward. These are decorated with specific designs and mantras. Two other plaques, known as "protective discs" (*srung 'khor*), are also placed there, facing inward. These are inscribed with their own appropriate mantras. Then, with the new crops in the ground, the actual three-month summer retreat for preventing the summertime hail will begin.

There are various methods for preventing hail or altering its course. Peaceful methods include recitation of the mantra of Śākyamuni Buddha and burning *tsang* (cedar) for offering and using the offering vessel (*gser skyems*). Semiwrathful methods involve visualizing oneself as Hayagrīva, with one's flames destroying the hail clouds. Very wrathful methods involve placing substances known as epidermal flakes from a black stallion (*rda bon bdug pa*) in a fire, or using poison pills and a slingshot.

There are other methods as well. One can make a frog out of clay and harden it in the fire. In an opening at its underside one places an enormous number of mantras and other things as well. When hail is imminent, the frog is pointed at the hail cloud. A clay turtle can be used in the same way. There are also methods for trapping the hail-bringing deities underground, or for dispossessing deities of their power. This is done by burying different substances.

During the summer hail season, while in retreat on the highest point of the property he protects, the hailmaster spends his time looking at the skies and analyzing his dreams to determine whether or not there will be hail that day. If hail is indicated, he takes appropriate measures very early in the morning. For example, if the Sun shines through two layers of cloud in a particular way, this is an indication of hail. Or, if one looks not so much at the clouds but at the light coming between them, and if the Sun's rays come very straight in a small opening between the clouds, this is also a sign of hail. If there is one set of clouds over another, and if the Sun is able to get out from between them, hail will come. If two layers of clouds are vertically placed one in front of the other, and if there is space between them for the Sun to shine, this too is a sign of imminent hail. Or if we see the blue sky between the two layers of clouds with the sunlight pouring out horizontally between them, hail is imminent.

One can also judge the likelihood of hail by the clouds themselves. When rain clouds come, they cover the sky from both sides. For this reason rain is much more difficult to prevent than hail; one can target one's energies better on the far more localized hail clouds. These are immediately recognizable. They move like bubbles rising in water, like roiling water, not in a straight path. When one does the practice, one can immediately see the cloud disappear and it cannot hail. Hail is said to occur only in the afternoon and is particularly likely to come on

the fourth, eighth, eleventh, fifteenth, eighteenth, twenty-second, twenty-fifth, or twenty-ninth days of the lunar calendar because the earth demons walk about on these days.

As already suggested, it not sufficient just to know that hail is on its way, one must be aware of which kinds of beings are bringing it. Indeed, there is a two-volume text on this subject written by Lelung Shebe Dorje (Las lung shes ba'i rdo rje), a Gelukpa who was a student of Terton Lingba (Gter ston gling pa) and then became a Nyingma during the time of the fifth Dalai Lama. One can understand which types of beings are involved either through watching the clouds or through observing dreams.

To receive signs in a dream, one says a certain mantra before going to sleep, holding some water in the palm of one's hand as one repeats one round on a rosary, and then drinking the water one has thus empowered with this recitation. The dreams do not simply predict hail, but indicate which types of beings are connected with it. For example, if one dreams of sheep eating the crops, this is a sign that nāgas will send hail. If one dreams of a yak, this indicates the demons will send hail, for the demons are something like the lords of the yak. If one dreams of a Tibetan stag *(gsel ba)*, an animal with ten or twelve points on each horn, this indicates that the female demons known as *mamo* will send hail. If one dreams of a horse eating the crops, this indicates that the *tsen* will send hail. If one dreams of a cow eating crops, this also indicates that certain kind of *tsen* that lives in the rocky places of a mountain will send hail. If one dreams of small bugs harming the crops, a kind of *yakṣa* will send hail. If one dreams of a frog and snake eating the crops, this indicates that other kinds of nāgas will send hail. (There are many kinds of nāgas, each kind has a different set of figures associated with it.) If one dreams of a woman cutting the crops, this indicates that the *mamo* deities will send hail. If one dreams of a person wearing white clothing walking alone in the fields, this indicates that the chief of the deities will send hail. If one dreams of a great deal of snow, the deities will send hail. If one dreams of the cabins that one has placed on the four directions on one's land, then one of the eight groups of deities will send hail.

In analyzing clouds, reddish and blackish-yellow clouds in the east that alternately disappear and return is a sign of hail to be sent by *tsen*. In the east, three clouds that look like white felt indicate that female deities known as the Tsomen *(tsho sman)* are angry and want to fight; because of their anger, they will send hail. If in the southern sky at morning there are three brownish-black clouds in the shape of sentient beings, it is the demons who will send hail. If there are clouds shaped like the weapons of the *go cha khyon*—very early tribes in Tibet who carried arrows and other weapons, this indicates that the angry *mamo* will send hail suddenly, without the people knowing it is coming, like a thief moving in secret. A cloud in the north in the form of an alertly sitting monkey means that a king of deities *(dkor bdag)* will send hail. A bluish or reddish cloud like a coiled snake in the middle of the sky indicates that the nāgas will send hail. Depending on where the cloud lies and what the particular signs are, matters

enumerated in great detail in various texts, one determines what spirit or figure is likely to be associated with the hail approaching that day, and one responds accordingly. Depending on the type of figure involved, one might be able to use peaceful means, such as simply making an offering to dissuade them from sending hail. Or one may have to have to use harsher methods, such as visualizing oneself as a very fierce figure with flames coming out of one's body, and these flames, then, can burn the arms and legs of the would-be hail-bringing figures. Or one can use the fierce method of putting in fire things that will smell very badly to these figures. In short, there are a number of different methods one can employ, from rather peaceful to very, very fierce. Khetsun Sangpo observes:

> If one takes measures as soon as the cloud appears, even a yogin who is not very powerful can be effective. But once the hail has begun, only someone with great power can send it away. If one is careful from the beginning, it is easy.
>
> I spent four years in the monastery learning the practices of a hailmaster and three in the field. I was very young, I had a very limited mind, I had no power at all, but on seeing the clouds of hail and so forth I did the peaceful offerings and there was never any hail. I was in my twenties at the time, just a child.

The text summarized above appears in the *Collected Works of Thu' 'bkwan blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma* (1737–1802), vol. 7 (Ja), edited and introduced by Ngawang Gelek Demo, with an introduction by Gene Smith. It comments on another text, the *Iron Tent House Guarding against Hail (Ser bsrung gnam ljags gur khang)*, a work from the *Northern Treasure (byang gter)* by Rig 'dzin rgod gyi ldem phru can (also known as Rig 'dzin dngos grub rgyal mtshan, 1337–1408). This latter work is considered a *terma* (recovered treasure) from the time of Songtsen gampo (c. 640).

Further Reading

For more on Tibetan astrology, divination, and dream analysis, see Norbu Chophel, *Folk Culture of Tibet* (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1983).