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**A Study on the Chinese Manuscript
“Eight Gross Transgressions”
(*Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo* 八種粗重犯墮)
from Khara-Khoto**

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Abstract: The “Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia” (俄藏黑水城文獻) Volume 6 contains the Chinese manuscript $\Phi 211V$ $\Phi 288V$ $\Phi 266V$ “Dasheng ruzang lu juan shang 大乘入藏錄卷上”, and its verso side preserves a number of Western Xia written manuscripts. The purpose of this paper is to study one of the manuscripts on the verso side, namely “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” (八種粗重犯墮) which means “Eight Gross Transgressions”. Individual tantric classes have their own enumeration of precepts. Anuttara Yoga Tantra tradition abides by precepts such as the twenty-five uncontrived activities, samaya of the five Buddha families, the fourteen root downfalls, and the eight gross transgressions. Among them, the “Eight Gross Transgressions” manuscript, unique to Anuttara Yoga Tantra, is an important tantric material. Analysis of its content suggests that the manuscript “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” belongs to the precepts of the Anuttara Yoga Tantra. The paper contains the manuscript’s full transcription as well as a comparison with the parallel text of ltung ba sbom po [Gross Transgressions] in Derge Tanjur and sDom-gSum rNam-Nges [Perfect Conduct: Ascertaining the Three Vows].

Key words: Heishuicheng manuscripts, precepts of Anuttara Yoga Tantra, Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo

(1)

The present paper focuses on the Chinese manuscript “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” (八種粗重犯墮) found in Khara-Khoto that is kept in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg. The “Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia” (俄藏黑水城文獻) Volume 6 (hereinafter referred to as Vol. 6) contains the Chinese

manuscript Φ211V Φ288V Φ266V “Dasheng ruzang lu juan shang 大乘入藏錄卷上” [Mahayana scripture catalogue, part 1], page 72–79 (photographs 15–1 to 15–15). Its verso side bears a total of five written manuscripts and the first one is a Chinese version of “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” (八種粗重犯墮). The specific manuscript has ten consecutive folios and two lines of written text originating from the collection of Φ211V Φ288V Φ266V “Dasheng ruzang lu juan shang” (hereinafter referred to as Φ211V “Dasheng ruzang lu juan shang”). Most of the text is in good condition, only a few Chinese characters are incomplete or missing. Some observations on the correlation of the eight gross transgressions and Anuttara Yoga Tantra are made.

The Appendix / Descriptive Catalogue (附錄·敘錄) of Vol. 6 lists information on the Φ211V “Dasheng ruzang lu juan shang.” It is a manuscript of Wu Dai 五代 (Five Dynasties), folded form, written on thin calligraphy paper treated with cork tree juice. A total of 152 lines. Black calligraphy boundary column. Regular script, thick and uniform ink. The lower part is slightly rotten. The first title is “Dasheng ruzang lu juan shang” (大乘入藏錄卷上). Its back has five Western Xia manuscripts: (1) “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” (八種粗重犯墮) (hereinafter referred to as Φ211.1 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo”), (2) “Chang suo zuo yi gui ba zhong bu gong” (常所作儀軌八種不共) [Eight kinds of uncommon rituals that are often performed], (3) “Da cheng mi mi qi fa” (大乘秘密起發) [Setting out Mahayana secrets], (4) “Xi cai zhe xiang” (惜財者像) [Portrait of those who cherish wealth], (5) “Xi cai zhe ji” (惜財者偈) [Verse of those who cherish wealth]. The manuscript Φ211.1 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” has a total of 72 lines of script, each line has 4 to 21 words. Regular script, in ink. It is written in prose with verse. On the first line, the title “八種粗重犯墮” is listed and below the title is “ma ming pu sa zao” (馬鳴菩薩造) (made by Aśvaghōṣa Bodhisatva).¹ According to the web site of the Resources for Kanjur and Tanjur Studies (*rKTs*), Sthūlāpatt (Tib: ltung ba sbom po, lit.: gross transgressions) of Aśvaghōṣa can be found in Derge Tanjur No. 2479. Aśvaghōṣa stated the eight gross transgressions; however, the Φ211.1 version has a different sequence of the eight gross transgressions.

In general, the manuscript is in good condition. Its content is useful for investigating some forms and details of tantric precepts of the Western Xia society. In the manuscript, the Chinese character “麤 cu” is often used, which is different from the “粗 cu” used in the relevant photograph title

¹ *ECHW* 1996: 45.

description on pages 80–82 and the appendix/descriptive catalogue on page 45 of Vol. 6. The 17th c. Chinese dictionary “Zheng Zi Tong” (正字通) [Orthography] explains that 麤 cu is the vulgar character of 麤 cu (麤, 俗麤字). The Han dynasty Chinese character dictionary “Shuowen Jiezi” (說文解字) states that 麤 cu is the vulgar character of 麤 cu. Nowadays people generally use 粗 cu; therefore, 麤 cu is practically abandoned (麤, 俗作麤。今人槩用粗。粗行而麤廢矣).

Fang Guangchang collated Φ211.1 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” and the following is an extract from his description:

“Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo,” an Indian Buddhist esoteric manuscript. The author is unknown but used the term “made by Aśvaghōṣa Bodhisattva” (馬鳴菩薩造) instead. The translator is unknown. This manuscript depicted esoteric precepts, eight in total, hence the name. This manuscript is neither recorded in Chinese scriptures nor collected by the Tripitaka. It is now in the St. Petersburg branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (i.e. the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences. — Chung Tsui-fun), numbered Φ221, and is regarded as a surviving work of Dunhuang literature. However, based on the analysis of its various features, this manuscript is not a surviving work of Dunhuang literature, but a Xixia document unearthed in Khara-Khoto, a city of Western Xia. This document has considerable reference value for the study of Western Xia Buddhism. The collator recorded the text using the original volume during his visit in St. Petersburg in 1991. The collated version is based on the above recorded text and the photographs are from the “Russian Collection of Dunhuang Documents” (Volume 4) published by the Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House. No collated version.²

However, the “Eight Gross Transgressions” is not simply a text of esoteric precepts, it is also a work of precepts that practitioners of Anuttara Yoga Tantra must abide by.

These ten folios, plus additional materials, are consecutive and almost intact, with only a few Chinese characters incomplete or missing. From a practical point of view, this manuscript can be seen as teaching material for religious education for the author and readers. From Tanjur, it is known that Sthūlāpatti was made by Aśvaghōṣa, however, it may not be the case that the

² FANG 1992: 72–78.

composition of Φ221.1 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” is related to Aśvaghōṣa. Though the copy of the manuscript may not be a rarity, it is a valuable addition to the group of manuscripts relating to tantric precepts. It sheds light on the precepts of Anuttara Yoga Tantra observed in Western Xia. It also broadens our knowledge of the different kinds of precepts found in the tantric tradition of that period. The manuscript Φ211.1 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” may be related with some of the other four manuscripts on the verso side of the Φ211V “Dasheng ruzang lu juan shang”.

The text of Φ211 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” is composed of a mixture of Buddhist verse and prose, it explains the eight gross transgressions and is an important source for later commentaries on the samaya commitments. The actual text about the eight gross transgressions is in verses that are placed between prose passages of related annotations. There are also examples of people who have committed various blameworthy transgressions and their sinful acts. The language and style have an informal structure but are of scholarly interest to researchers as an example of a Tibetan tantric document. The manuscript does not mention any tantric sects, practice methods, training and so on, but the eight gross transgressions listed in detail are consistent with the precepts of the Anuttara Yoga Tantra stated in sDom-gSum rNam-Nges [Perfect Conduct: Ascertaining the Three Vows], so it can be inferred that Φ211.1 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” is related to the precepts observed by Anuttara Yoga Tantra practitioners. In Dge-lugs-pa’s four tantric classes, the Anuttara Yoga Tantra also observed the same fourteen root downfalls and eight gross transgressions.³

(2)

The Tantric Vehicle is said to be secretive and deep, impossible to understand for ordinary people, and it should be kept secret among those who possess superior sensibility as fit vessels. The Tantric Vehicle is also known as Vajrayana. “Vajra” means indestructible, which refers to the three secret virtues of the Buddha’s body, speech and mind. “Yana” is known as a vehicle, but here it means a rider carrying righteousness, morality, and legality, that is, the secret path or Dharma. Tantric scriptures are teachings attributed to the Buddha, or to those who have been blessed by the Buddha. Tantras are usually classified in two, three, four, five, and six classes and the general division in four classes is the most common one. The four tantric

³ LIU 2001: 151, 173–174.

classes are Kriyā Tantra, Upa Tantra, Yoga Tantra and Anuttara Yoga Tantra. Precise content of the precepts varies in different classes and traditions, and different monasteries set their own standards on its implementation. According to the sects, there is a four-theory system, namely the Vaibhāṣikas, the Sutrāntikas, the Yogācāras and the Madhyamika and they are respectively related to the four classes of tantra.⁴

Tantric training begins with initiation (abhiṣeka), disciplines and right practice (caryā).⁵ When the initiation is successfully completed, a highly qualified hierophant gives a neophyte (yogī) the right and duty to practise tantras. Those who take refuge in the Tantric Vehicle must take the samaya when they receive initiation, those who do not observe samaya will never reach accomplishment.

(3)

Sila (ethics), samadhi (meditation) and prajña (wisdom) are the “three studies” of teachings in Buddhism that occupy a very important position. One needs to learn the commandments and to guard against evil consequences of error by mouth, body or mind because wisdom can be attained only by strictly abiding by the precepts. Doing good deeds is a necessary condition. The ten virtues are the general term for the good deeds and non-committal of the ten evils, namely (three kinds of bodily karma): to stay away from killing, stealing and sexual misconduct; (four kinds of speech karma): to stay away from lying, double tongue, evil speech and flattery; (three kinds of mind karma): to stay away from greed, hatred and ignorance. In order to retrain from committing any negative deeds, Buddhists must follow guidelines of physical and mental disciplines. There are different sets of disciplines in Buddhism, and in Tibetan Buddhist tradition they are classified into three sets of vows. The three sets of vows are the vows of prātimokṣa (or individual liberation), the vows of bodhisattva (or adherent of enlightenment) and the samayas of tantra, which are related to Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana respectively.

The prātimokṣa has eight categories of disciples and mainly emphasizes disciplining one’s physical behaviour and not harming others, namely the vows of: 1. upāsaka (male lay practitioner), 2. upāsikā (female lay practitioner), 3. śrāmaṇera (novice monk), 4. śrāmaṇerikā (novice nun), 5. śikṣāmānā

⁴ LIU 2000, 152–153.

⁵ LIU 2000: 168.

(female novice in training for full ordination), 6. bhikṣu (full ordained monk), 7. bhikṣuṇī (full ordained nun) and 8. upavāsikā (the one day lay vows). The Bodhisattva precepts have three major divisions, namely: 1. refraining from harmful deeds, 2. amassing virtuous deeds and 3. performing service for others. They also assemble the three major subjects of all dharma: observing the precepts, practicing the good deeds and benefiting sentient beings.

The manuscript Φ211.1 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” mentioned a number of times the term *ji ju* 記句 (Tib: dam tshing) which actually has the meaning of *shi ju* 誓句 (samaya). Tantric samaya has four meanings of equality, basic oath, riddance of unclean hindrances and awakening. Tantric masters confer these vows with initiation and permission to have the right and duty to read and practice tantras. The tantric vows are made before the principal deity and one must adhere to them until reaching enlightenment. “gSang sngags snga ’gyur rnying ma ba’i bstan pa’i rnam gzhag mdo tsam brjod pa legs bshad snang ba’i dga ’ston” (善說顯現喜宴) states that “refuge is the foundation and support of the path, because (refuge) is the cause of the oath, and (the oath is) the basis for nirvana. Therefore, if one does not seek refuge, then oath will not be made; if one is not bound by oaths, there will be no right path”.⁶ After receiving the initiation of the tantric vehicle, disciples should also be restricted by the vows of prātimokṣa and the bodhisattva vows. Each sect of tantra has different views and practices, and the content of precepts is not the same. According to “sDom-gSum rNam-Nges” [Perfect Conduct: Ascertaining the Three Vows], each of the four tantra classes has the *Shi si gen ben duo* (that is, the fourteen root downfalls), but only the Anuttara Yoga Tantra observes the eight gross transgressions, which are discussed here. Detailed discussion is given in this paper in order to lay a foundation for further studies.

The fourteen root downfalls of Kriyā Tantra are the lack of the following: 1. have deep faith in the Three Jewels of Buddha, dharma and sangha, 2. have faith in the secret mantra, 3. respect Mahayana wholeheartedly, 4. respect the guru (lama) and vajra family, 5. do not underestimate the wisdom of the worldly or wisdom deity, 6. make offerings to one’s own deity at the right times, 7. do not make offerings to other traditions, 8. do not make offering to uninvited guests, 9. do not forsake your compassion, 10. make effort to accomplish altruistic matters, 11. recite mantras with perseverance, 12. maintain one’s basic oath according with one’s own sensibility, 13. do not give secret mantra to immature recipients, and 14. guard one’s own vow and

⁶ H.H. DUNJOM RINPOCHE 2011: 37.

realize the real meaning. The fourteen root downfalls of Upa Tantra are to follow both the “ten non-virtues” and the “four roots”. The four roots are as follows: 1. abandon the Buddha’s Dharma, 2. abandon bodhicitta, 3. lack generosity due to covetousness, and 4. damage and annoy other sentient beings.⁷

The fourteen root downfalls of Yoga Tantra are consistent with the “samaya of the five Buddha families”. “Samaya of the five Buddha families” are as follows: 1. samaya of the Buddha family is the three vows of refuge. 2. samaya of the Vajra family is to maintain a vajra, bell, mudra and vajra acharya. 3. samaya of the Ratna family is never to give up the four generousities (the giving of charity, wealth, fearlessness and Dharma). 4. samaya of the Padma/lotus family is to fully maintain and uphold all dharmas. 5. samaya of the Karma family is to accept and uphold all vows and to persevere in making offerings.⁸

The Anuttara Yoga Tantra requires adherence to the precepts of twenty-five uncontrived activities, samaya of the five Buddha families, the fourteen root downfalls, and the eight gross transgressions. The fourteen root downfalls are as follows: 1. disrespecting the vajra master, 2. contradicting the Buddha’s words, 3. expressing contempt toward the vajra family, 4. abandoning love, 5. abandoning bodhicitta, 6. disrespecting other religious philosophies and doctrines, 7. revealing secrets, 8. disrespecting the aggregates, 9. doubting the Dharma, 10. failing to liberate if the ten prerequisites are met, 11. measuring the Dharma through logic, 12. causing someone to lose faith, 13. failing to rely upon the appropriate samaya substances, 14. disrespecting a wisdom woman. The eight gross transgressions are as follows: 1. relying on a consort who has not matured through empowerment and samaya, 2. physically or verbally fighting during the gaṇacakra, 3. receiving the nectar of an unauthorized consort, 4. failing to reveal the secret mantras to a qualified recipient, 5. teaching something other than what has been requested by a faithful aspirant, 6. staying seven complete days together with a sāvaka, 7. proclaiming oneself to be a tantric adept when the yoga of primordial wisdom had not been realized, 8. teaching unsuitable recipients.⁹

The Shi si gen ben duo (fourteen root downfalls) are terms used in tantric precepts and are the fundamental root downfalls for breaking the samaya. Samayas are the core of tantric precepts and the foundation of all practice. These fourteen root downfalls can damage the roots of the path and increase confusion and suffering. “The fourteen root downfalls are linked to the trunk

⁷ H.H. DUNJOM RINPOCHE 1996: 105–106.

⁸ H.H. DUNJOM RINPOCHE 1996: 106.

⁹ H.H. DUNJOM RINPOCHE 1996: 117–122.

of a fruit-bearing tree. In dependence upon the trunk, all the branches and leaves develop. If the trunk deteriorates, the entire tree will tumble down. The root vows are like the trunk, and if they are guarded it is through them that all the noble qualities of the path develop. If the trunk is damaged, this becomes the root cause for falling to the lowest hell realm. There will not be a chance for liberation and there unbearable suffering is endured”.¹⁰ The manuscript Φ211.1 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” mentions that “ma ming zao shi si gen ba cu zhong” (馬鳴造十四根八匱重) (Aśvaghōṣa made Shi si gen Ba cuzhong) (page 2). In this context, “Shi si gen” (十四根) (fourteen roots) should refer to “Shi si gen ben duo” (fourteen root downfalls). Since the manuscript does not specify the content of the fourteen root downfalls, no comparison can be made.

Although similar to the root downfalls in weight, the eight gross transgressions do not qualify as causes for the loss of the words of honours. However, they create obstructions to the swift accomplishment of spiritual attainments. If main branches of a fruit-bearing tree fall, this affects the ability of the tree to bear fruit and may cause fatal damage to the tree.¹¹ The eight gross transgressions can be considered as less serious faults, but their violation will still harm attainments or realizations of tantric practice. To observe the eight gross transgressions, one should persevere in learning and abide by them. To violate any one of them is to commit sin.

(4)

In Tibet Buddhist tradition, disciplines (commandments) are classified into three categories. “sDom-gSum rNam-Nges” [Perfect Conduct: Ascertaining the Three Vows] is written by Ngari Panchen Lama Pema Wangjie Gyalpo (1487–1542) and the commentary is made by His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche (1904–1987). Its content covers the precepts of Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana, and specifically clarifies that the three precepts (prātimokṣa, bodhisattva vows, and tantric samaya) can be combined and cultivated together without contradicting each other. The Venerable Longchen Rapchampa (無垢光尊者) in “Samten Ngalso” (禪定休息論) also states that: “The Precepts of Sāvaka, Bodhisattva and Chi Ming 持明 (here, the practice of the Tantric Vehicle precepts),¹² the three

¹⁰ H. H. DUNJOM RINPOCHE 1996: 117.

¹¹ H. H. DUNJOM RINPOCHE 1996: 122.

¹² LONGCHEN RAPCHAMPA 2002: 141.

disciplines do not contradict each other.” The unconflicted three vows are steps that lead to the same goal of enlightenment.

After receiving the precepts, from time to time, tantric practitioners may forget the precepts or offend against them. They recite the precepts such as the ten virtues or fourteen root downfalls together regularly in order to repent of sins and purify the three karmas, and to remind each other to be vigilant again, so that they can keep the precepts cleanly.¹³ It is important to note that the work enjoys great popularity even today, the eponymous precepts are chanted in public in various tantric assemblies or feasts, in which practitioners get together to practise various tantric rituals.

(5)

The text of the manuscript Φ221.1 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” in Vol. 6, page 80–83 (photographs 15–1 to 15–7) is being cited here entirely in Table 1. It has ten consecutive folios with the last two lines written on the first page of the following manuscript Φ211V Φ288 Φ266V 2. (15–7). The number on the left of the recorded text indicates the page of the original text as shown in Vol. 6, “/” means the original text continues on the next line, “//” means that the original text continues on the next page, “[]” marks words that are difficult to decipher and have to be inferred from the context, and “□” marks a missing word. The English translation in “{ }” bracket is given immediately after the relevant gross transgression.

Table 1

Φ211.1 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” (八種粗重犯墮)	
1	○八種麤重犯墮 馬鳴菩薩 造 / 最上尊師於花足 以真實心而頂禮 / 諸本 [續] 中所宣說 麤重犯墮略演說 / 且最上尊師者是聖天菩薩所禮住能禮人馬 / 鳴初敬禮足功驗因禮聖天之足有多應驗[者] / 聖天之威德後馬鳴啓最上志成三荼虔恭頂 / 禮聖天之花足也 //
2	聖天問禮者禮住云何禮因禮緣故馬鳴造十四根 / 八麤重依禪定本續中略開演觸犯儀軌 / ○持密禪定母 強爲自受用 {1. upholding esoteric meditation consort forcefully for own use} 此中有二種 / 初是新授戒母 二已授戒母 / 無有人見禪定母勇猛等要受用作無二加行故 / 不依法作強受用者犯麤重罪 / 西天有一在於竭囉怛山初受大乘戒人見持[禪] //

¹³ FAZUN 1990: 205.

3	定母要行姦染令狂受用禪定母實不解無二 / 加行於禪定母處起姦染心故馬鳴菩薩造 / 第一麤重罪此是說初受戒人犯罪 二已受戒 / 人犯罪者勇猛等先來受戒解無二加行女人 / 初發心受戒勇猛不依法作犯第一重罪 / 西天競伽河側有一持禪定人名折囉沒怛自 / 七歲來時受大乘秘密戒因有一女人河邊過 //
4	來見自女人顏兒端嚴此法師心中起姦染心言你 / 受大乘秘密戒速疾成佛因自行逐姦故馬鳴 / 造第一重罪。第二頌云 /。○棄捨自禪定 於趣輪中諍 {2. abandoning self-meditation and causing disputes to arise at the assembly} / 初受戒人不了聚輪義中諍話犯罪 / 西天有一人實持禪定人八月十五日於屍堂林 / 中持禪定或至一更來有多勇猛 [作集]輪時於 //
5	時此人問師因緣法滅後再在不 □ [師] 當時生嗔 / 默然不荅勇猛等驚疑依此馬鳴造第二重罪 /。○非器有情處 說秘密法者 {3. delivering esoteric teaching to unfit vessels} / 此中有二種 一初未受戒人處說此法者或見 / 本尊等像或見秘密禪觀文字犯罪 / 二後持禪定者先受大乘戒已不作禪定不念真 / 言不放施食等經一年不依法修者此人處 //
6	以不說秘密法若說時犯麤重罪若再受戒 □ [許] □ / 法不犯罪。第四頌云 /。○具信心有情 所說顛倒法 {4. inverting right and wrong teaching to confident sentient beings} / 此中有二種 一無記句師不解[秘密法] □□□□ / 所說顛倒法 / 西天有一法師名山及多羅先受小[乘]別 [解]脫 / 戒能講三乘五性一切法門見[此] □□□□ 師說有 //
7	多人受戒却將顯教法充作 [秘] □□而說實不解 / 秘密就利養故所說顛倒法因此馬鳴造第四麤 / 重。第五頌云 /。○我慢聲聞者 共宮在七夜 {5. living with a sāvaka for seven full nights} / 持秘密禪定人与小乘聲聞等不得同房在七 / 夜犯麤重罪 / 西天有一法師常持小乘戒或於一日逢着一箇 //
8	持禪定人同房共住七夜持禪定人依法修作法師 / 心生諍謗馬鳴因此造第五麤重。第六頌云 /。○若不作法事 密者自受用 {6. not conducting dharma event, tantric practitioner suffers himself} / 持禪定者受大乘秘密戒已不作禪定不念真 / 言不放施食等係破戒再不受戒但名持禪定人 / 者犯重罪 / 西天有一般彌怛法師常与人受密戒有一人受 //
9	了密戒已經一年於上師處並不學此法戒相此 / 人不肯懺悔死入地獄因此馬鳴造第六麤重 /。○第七頌云 /。○不解禪定智 密者起我慢 {7. not understanding the wisdom of meditation, tantric practitioner becomes self-conceited} / 持禪定者不解此教法義強言我能解秘密法 / 狂初受戒人實不解妄生解犯麤重罪 / 西天有一法師實不解秘密法或與多人說法有 //
10	一僧到說法處法師你說法有其差別此法師生嗔 / 犯麤重罪。第八頌云 /。○無記句明母 倚托故受用 {8. relying on and using a consort with no oath} / 持禪定者要行加行倚托秘密法於無記句母住 / 作加行犯麤重罪 / 若或此故觸犯者 依此建立於壇場 / 隨依聚輪所作法 以實思慮皆懺悔 //
	若有人犯此麤重須是集輪中作懺悔對本尊 / 面前名白懺悔方可滅罪了[畢]

Table 2 juxtaposes for comparison the passages of manuscripts corresponding to the “Eight Gross Transgressions” that are found in the “*ltung ba sbom po* [Sthūlāpatti]” Tanjur No. 2479 and in the “*sDom-gSum rNam-Nges*” [Perfect Conduct: Ascertaining The Three Vows]¹⁴ regarding the eight gross transgressions of Anuttara Yoga Tantra. It is clear that there were certain variations in the order of explanations and contents, but it is not difficult to see that the three versions of eight gross transgressions have many similarities. There is no uniformity in expressions describing the transgressions, and they differ from document to document. It is possible that this variation was caused by the circumstances at the time when the manuscripts were composed, and it may shed light on the process of transmission of the gross transgressions.

Table 2

	Tanjur No. 2479 ltung ba sbom po		Φ211.1 Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo		Ascertaining The Three Vows
1	acquire possessions by the power of insight	1	upholding esoteric meditation consort forcefully for own use	1	relying on a consort who has not matured through empowerment and samaya
2	acquire by one’s power of nectar	8	relying on and using a consort with no oath	3	receiving the nectar of an unauthorized consort
3	not maintain secrecy toward the unfit vessel	6	not conducting dhamma event, tantric practitioner suffers himself	4	failing to reveal the secret mantras to a qualified recipient
4	dispute in an assembly	2	abandoning self-meditation and causing disputes to arise at the assembly	2	physically or verbally fighting during the gaṇacakra
5	teach heterodox doctrines to the faithful	4	inverting right and wrong teaching to confident sentient beings	5	teaching something other than what has been requested by a faithful aspirant
6	stay seven days among the sāvaka	5	living with a sāvaka for seven full nights	6	staying seven complete days together with a sāvaka

¹⁴ H.H. DUNJOM RINPOCHE 1996: 122–123.

7	falsely claim to know yoga	7	not understanding the wisdom of meditation, tantric practitioner becomes self-conceited	7	proclaiming oneself to be a tantric adept when the yoga of primordial wisdom had not been realized
8	teach the doctrine to a non-believer	3	delivering esoteric teaching to unfit vessels	8	teaching unsuitable recipients

(6)

There were two ways for the introduction of the esoteric vehicle to Western Xia: one way was from the Central Plains of China, and the other was the introduction of Tibetan Buddhism from Tibet. In the middle and late period of Western Xia, tantric teachings from the Central Plains of China and Tibet were widely disseminated, and the accompanying tantric precepts were extended to the lives of ordinary disciples. The practice of Vajrayana Yoga has its own establishment in each dharma system to match the results and practice. There are inconceivable numbers of methods to reach liberation, these teachings are grouped into different categories and condensed into the *prātimokṣa*, *bodhisattva* and tantric vehicles. There are innumerable commentaries, annotations, guides and supplements written by many learned scholars and accomplished hierophants. Many commentaries intended to reveal the manner through which an individual can engage in the vows and practice of *prātimokṣa*, *bodhisattva* and tantra by incorporating the essence of all three.

The “Eight Gross Transgressions” are the precepts of the Anuttara Yoga Tantra, which is still in existence. The manuscript Φ221.1 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” is well-organized and relatively clear. Its primary charm lies in its frank outspokenness, but this quality may have hampered its study. With the diffusion of tantras in the Western Xia, various Buddhist scriptures and ritual practices became popular in the Western Xia, such as initiation, offerings, homa and so on, but records of the “Eight Gross Transgressions” are rather few. All neophytes indoctrinated to enter the Anuttara Yoga Tantra are mandatorily bound by the *samaya*; therefore, the teaching must be accompanied by the precepts and the precepts must be spread along with the teachings. The existence of Φ211.1 “Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo” may reflect the situation of diffusion of the Anuttara Yoga Tantra, and it probably was more secretive than its counterparts. Although the text is not unique in its treatment of tantric practices, its commentary is special and it is hard to find

elsewhere such information presented with this kind of clarity and richness in details. It is hoped that more materials will come to light or be found in other depositories to reveal the socio-historical context.

As for the fourteen root downfalls, a testimony to their popularity throughout the ages is a large number of surviving manuscripts that correspond to the fundamental depravity in Tanjur. There is no lack of discourses on root tantric vows: rdo rje theg pa'i rtsa ba'i ltung ba'i rgya cher 'grel pa (Vajrayāna-mūlāpatti-ṭīkā), rdo rje theg pa rtsa ba'i ltung ba bsdus pa (Vajrayānamūlāpattisaṃgraha), rdo rje theg pa'i rtsa ba'i ltung ba bcu bzhi pa'i 'grel pa (Vajrayānacaturdaśamūlāpattivṛtti), rdo rje theg pa'i rtsa ba'i ltung ba'i rgya cher bshad pa (Vajrayānamūlāpattiṭīkā), rtsa ba'i ltung ba'i rgya cher 'grel pa (Mūlāpatti-ṭīkā), etc. Unfortunately, records of "Eight Gross Transgressions" in relevant tantric literature and discourse are scarce, except for ltung ba sbom po (Sthūlāpatti) by Aśvagoṣa and rdo rje theg pa'i sbom po'i ltung ba (Vajrayānasthūlāpatti). Rarely found in other forms of literature, Φ221.1 "Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo" confirms that the eight gross transgressions were observed by tantric practitioners in Western Xia in the medieval period. The origin of this specific manuscript is still unknown and the historical aetiology is also a matter for future investigation. Access to more information is definitely needed to facilitate further and in-depth study.

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