



A Study of Tibetan Paper Money

with a Critical Bibliography

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1997



by
Wolfgang Bertsch

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Tibetan Paper Money

WITH A CRITICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

by
Wolfgang Bertsch

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

We are pleased to be publishing this numismatic study of Tibetan paper currency, entitled *A Study of Tibetan Paper Money with a Critical Bibliography*, by Mr Wolfgang Bertsch. This carefully compiled volume contributes handsomely to research into various aspects of Tibetan material culture.

As Wolfgang Bertsch indicates, although paper currency was only introduced into Tibet in the early years of this century, the notes are arguably the most attractive and artistic to be found among all the banknotes of the world. This could be accounted for by the combination of highly developed printing and painting skills within the Tibetan historical tradition.

Moreover, this research provides tangible proof of the use of Tibetan currency by citizens of an independent Tibet in the first half of the 20th century. It is an important adjunct to other works which investigate the authenticity of Tibet's independence prior to the Chinese occupation of our homeland.

We hope that our readers will enjoy exploring the details of this study which Wolfgang Bertsch has presented in such a fascinating and accessible manner.

Gyatsho Tshering, Director
Library of Tibetan Works and Archives
March 1997

PREFACE

In 1974 during a visit to the Swayambhu Stupa near Kathmandu I saw my first Tibetan banknote on the small table of a curio dealer. It was a 100 Srang note which immediately struck me as a small work of art and I could hardly believe it when I was told that it was merely a banknote. Since that day, intrigued by these fascinating products of Tibetan workmanship, I collected Tibet's paper money and tried to find as much background information on it as I could. Over the years I built up a small collection, including all the major types. At the same time I gathered all available literature dealing with Tibetan paper money and started a more thorough study of this subject. The result of my studies is this small volume, perhaps too modest a tribute to Tibet's paper notes which represent an incomparable contribution to Tibet's material culture of the 20th century.

This study focuses only on the numismatic aspect of Tibetan paper money. The social and economic impact of the issue of paper currency in Tibet would certainly be worthy of further investigation, but the author of this study, not being qualified for such undertaking, hopes that one day somebody will write an economic history of Tibet in which such aspects could find due attention.

Without the help and advice of numerous persons who share my interest in Tibetan paper money, this booklet could not have been written.

Foremost I wish to thank Bhupendra Narayan Shrestha (Kathmandu) who showed me the manuscript of his *Tibetan Paper Currency* long before it was printed in 1987, who allowed me to examine his outstanding paper money collection, perhaps the best existing, and with whom I had many discussions on the banknotes and coins of Tibet. Valuable information was published in Shrestha's *Tibetan Paper Currency* and has been incorporated in the present volume.

I also wish to thank fellow collectors and students of Tibetan paper money who generously shared their knowledge on this subject with me, let me see their collections or sent me photocopies of their rare and unusual notes. My thanks go in particular to the late Karl Gabrisch who encouraged me to write this study and had various Chinese articles on this subject translated into German, to Wesley Halpert, Alexander B. Lissanevich, Colin Narbeth, Nicholas G. Rhodes and Gylfi Snorrason.

Wolfgang Bertsch

Gundernhausen (near Darmstadt), Germany

July 1996

INTRODUCTION

Paper currency was introduced rather late into Tibet, although for more than 1,000 years this country was in close contact with China and India, where paper money circulated for centuries or at least for years before it made its appearance in Tibet. However, the fact that most Tibetans were both illiterate and conservative, preferred barter trade and, whenever this was impossible, used to pay for their goods obtained in large transactions with silver coins or ingots, would have made the introduction of banknotes at an earlier date¹ next to impossible. It is not surprising that even after 1912 the circulation of banknotes in Tibet was met with great suspicion by the majority of the Tibetan people. Tibet's paper notes are possibly the most beautiful and artistic specimens known among the world's 20th century banknotes. They represent a unique blend of the printer's skill, drawing on a printing tradition of more than 1,000 years, and artistic genius inspired by an equally long tradition of painting in Tibet.

It is likely that the woodblock printing technique which was used for the early banknotes was principally inspired by the printing of Tibetan paper charms, amulets and prayer flags. Not only were sacred texts printed on these flags or paper amulets, but also images, usually set into a frame, the most popular being the "wind horse" (*lung rta*) which is surrounded by the animals who guard the four quarters;² it is possibly not mere coincidence that the latter animals appear on the back of the multicoloured 50 Tam notes. Before the first banknotes appeared, printing in Tibet was normally done exclusively with black ink. As far as I know, the production of banknotes represents the first attempt at colour printing in Tibet. This technique was perfected with the initial production of multicoloured 50 Tam notes in 1926, when the use of different printing blocks was introduced, one for each colour.

The main subjects represented on the Tibetan banknotes are religious and in this way the notes admirably reflect Tibetan culture. However, the designs on the faces of all the banknotes are inspired by a deep nationalistic feeling. The snow lion, or a pair of these animals, stands for Tibet³ and probably existed already as part of the design of Tibet's national flag before it made its appearance on the banknotes, coins and postage stamps of this country.

Mention should be made of some Chinese notes with both Tibetan and Chinese legends, which were issued by the Provincial Bank of Xikang in Kangding. Notes of the Central Bank of China and of the Farmers Bank also exist, with overprint in the Tibetan language. These notes were issued in the 1930s for the Tibetan-speaking population in Western Sichuan and in Xikang, a province which the Chinese formed at the beginning of this century by incorporating former Tibetan territory annexed by China. However, these notes never circulated in Tibet proper and are therefore outside the scope of this study.⁴

Part One

The Notes in Tam Denomination

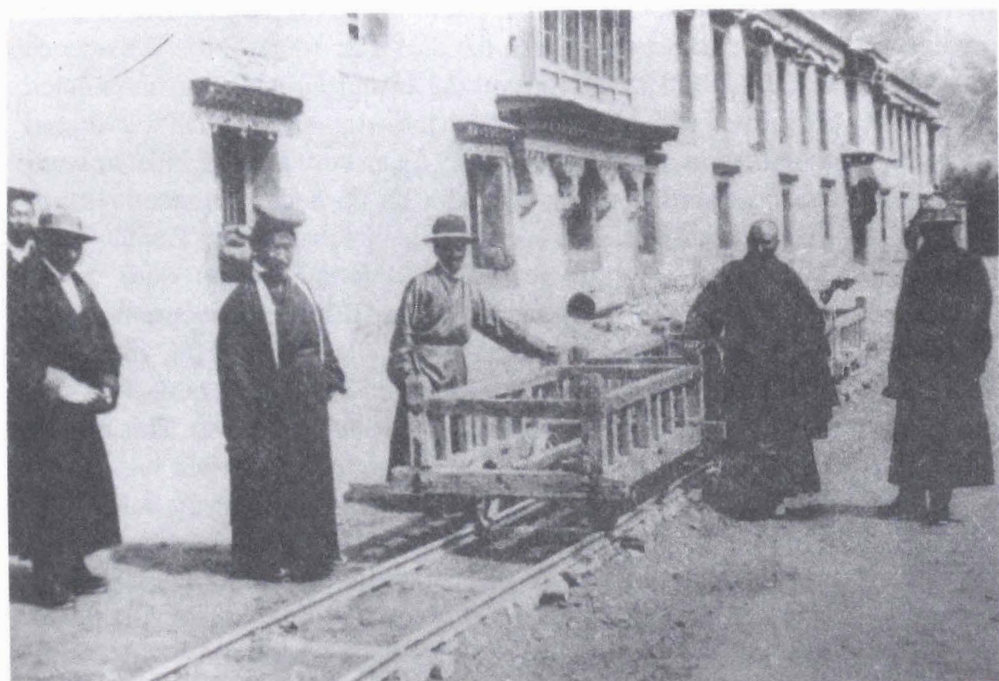
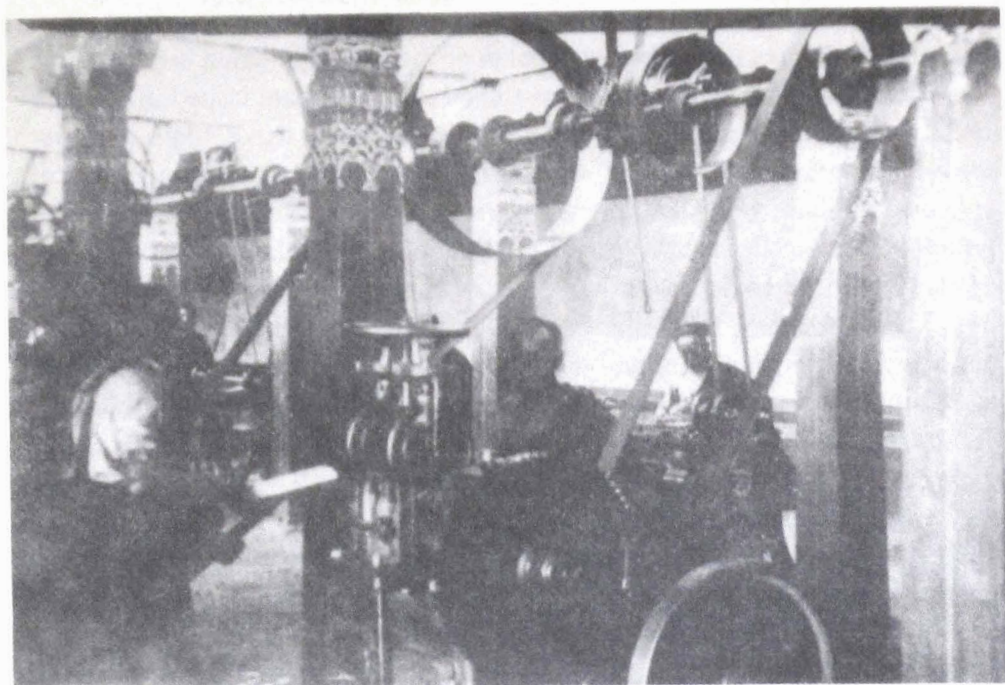
PART ONE

The Notes in Tam Denomination

The first banknotes issued by the Tibetan government are dated T.E. (Tibetan Era) 1658,⁵ and it is now generally assumed that they were issued in the year 1912. However, there are some reasons to believe that these notes were not released before January 1913. The year 1912 saw a lot of fighting and political upheaval in Lhasa while the Tibetans were trying to drive out the Chinese who found themselves in a weak position after the fall of the Manchu Dynasty. It is unlikely that the ambitious programme of introducing paper currency was initiated at this time. The Dalai Lama had left his exile in India in mid-1912, but delayed his arrival in Lhasa until January 1913,⁶ waiting en route for the last Chinese troops to leave the Tibetan capital, which they did on 6th January. While some of the banknotes may have been printed already in 1912, the presence of the Dalai Lama was necessary for their issue, which suggests that they were not sealed and released before 13th January. Since the T.E. year 1658 starts in February 1912 and ends in February 1913, the T.E. date on the first notes still corresponds to the year of their first release.

The date 1658 was not altered on the 5 Tam notes which were issued after that year but it was altered to 1659 on the 10 Tam notes some time after serial number 3600. To date, the only notes of 15, 25 and 50 Tam (monochrome first issue) known today bear the date 1659, but I believe that some notes of these denominations must have existed with the date T.E. 1658. There is evidence that all the existing 10 and 15 and most of the 25 and early 50 Tam notes dated T.E. 1659 were printed with blocks on which the original date 1658 was altered to 1659, since numerous notes exist bearing a gap between the Tibetan word for 1659 and the final vertical stroke (Tib. *shad*) at the end of the second line of the legend (see tables VI-IX). This is due to the fact that for the Tibetan word "eight" (*brgyad*) three spaces are necessary, while the Tibetan word "nine" (*dgu*) occupies only two spaces. Notes of 25 and 50 Tam (monochrome) with higher serial numbers are known without this gap after the word for "nine" and were obviously printed from new blocks (see the 25 Tam note in table V).⁹ The lowest known serial number of the 15 Tam note is 482 (table VI). This note is printed with the gap after the word for "nine", which suggests that very few if any of the notes of this denomination can have been printed with the date 1658. This supports our assumption that the first 10 Tam and possibly also the first 15, 25 and 50 (monochrome) Tam notes were printed towards the end of T.E. 1658 (i.e. end of 1912 or January 1913) and that there was not enough time in that year to issue large quantities of notes with this T.E. date.

PLATE I



The Mint Trabshi Lehung photographed in 1933 by Mr. Williamson

During his periods of exile in China and India the 13th Dalai Lama certainly had opportunities to acquaint himself with paper currency and decided to introduce it into Tibet as part of his scheme for the modernisation of his country. During his Indian exile he was in close contact with Charles Bell, who often acted as his interpreter while dealing with the British. Either the Dalai Lama himself or one of his officials may have approached Bell regarding the introduction of paper currency into Tibet. Bell notes in April 1912: "The government hopes also to issue currency notes and so to make money; I pointed out to Palhese some of the difficulties and requirements of a note currency, and he said Shatra (Shatra Lönchen) was ignorant of these."¹⁰ Probably one of the requirements that Bell pointed out to the Tibetans was the necessity of a gold backing for the paper currency.

It seems that measures towards such a backing with gold were not taken until about 1925, at the instigation of Tsarong Shabpe who was in charge of the Mint. From that year onwards apparently, 300 gold ingots weighing 27 tolas each which had been imported from India were stored away in the Potala Palace in Lhasa.¹¹ Before that time depreciation of Tibetan paper currency was avoided by strictly limiting the number of notes issued.¹² In 1925 a bank (the name "Finance Department" is probably more appropriate for this institution) was also established in Lhasa, the first manager of which was Phungkhang Kung. Tsarong later joined as head of this establishment.¹³

It seems that the early Tibetan paper notes were not received with great enthusiasm by the Tibetan population. During the first years of their issue they were hardly used outside the few cities of central Tibet. One reason for this may have been the fact that they had to compete with Indian currency notes, of which small amounts were circulating in Lhasa and along the major trade routes from India and Nepal to Tibet. Even 10 years after they were first released the banknotes were, according to A. David Neel, regarded as curios and traders did not accept them in the Lhasa area.¹⁴ However, it is reported in 1922 that Tibetan silver money and banknotes from Lhasa were circulating in Chamdo and Batang in Eastern Tibet, and that these had driven out Chinese copper coins.¹⁵

The first series of Tibetan banknotes was issued between 1913 and 1934, this last being the year when the notes were withdrawn from circulation. Since the blue 50 Tam note was frequently forged, it had already been replaced in 1926 by a multicoloured note with a more intricate design, and this later note continued to circulate after 1934. The date on the new 50 Tam note was altered every year, while the notes of the first set were printed with the date 1658 (5 Tam note), 1658 or 1659 (10 Tam note), 1659 and possibly also 1658 (15, 25 and blue 50 Tam note) at least up to the 1920s. This means that after the date had been changed from 1658 to 1659 it was never changed again, and in the case of the 5 Tam note it was not even changed from 1658 to 1659. These fixed dates are sometimes referred to as "frozen dates" in numismatic literature.

6 Tibetan Paper Money

The early notes were printed by hand from woodblocks¹⁶ at the Trabshi lotrü kung Mint (*Grva bzhi glog 'krul khungs*) which had been closed temporarily by the Chinese in 1910 and was reopened by the Tibetans in 1913.¹⁷ The multicoloured 50 Tam note was the first Tibetan issue which was printed with machines from metal blocks or metal sheets mounted on woodblocks. It was printed between 1926 and 1932 in the Dode Mint which was located in the valley of the same name to the north-east of Sera and had been established in 1904.¹⁸ It is reported that some multicoloured 50 Tam notes were also printed in the Luo Dui Mint (otherwise known as *gser khang* Mint) near the Norbu Lingka before 1931.¹⁹ From 1932 onwards they were printed in Trabshi Lekhung (*Grva bzhi las khung*) which had been established in late 1931 as the only Tibetan Government Mint at a place north of Lhasa²⁰ where a Mint of this name existed already (plate I). This new institution also incorporated the other Mints which had existed earlier. It is not known if the early 5, 10, 15, 25 and blue 50 Tam notes were printed after 1926. If this was the case, we can assume that they continued to be printed with woodblocks and by hand, since the surviving notes of this series do not show any evidence of a change in the printing technique.²¹

The ink for the printing of the notes was imported from India. It seems that different shades of colour were produced unintentionally with each new batch of notes. However, the notes which have a similar colour do not form blocks of continuous serial numbers as one would expect. Therefore, one has to take into account that the colour on the paper notes probably also changed after printing as a result of exposure to the elements and with long-term use.²² This may be the case particularly with the 5 Tam notes which show numerous shades of colour; some specimens also exist on which the colour has faded almost completely, making it almost impossible to recognize the design.

The notes were printed on paper made in Tibet, where the tradition of paper-making dates back many centuries, although authorities on Tibet do not agree on the ingredients which were used for the production of the paper for the early banknotes. Chinese sources report that banknote paper was produced from the root of a spurge plant in Sgyom Stor (Jung Dong district: Kemdong?).²³ A Tibetan source mentions the bark of a tree called *shog phing* and the place of production is given as Kemdong district in the province of Dhakpo.²⁴

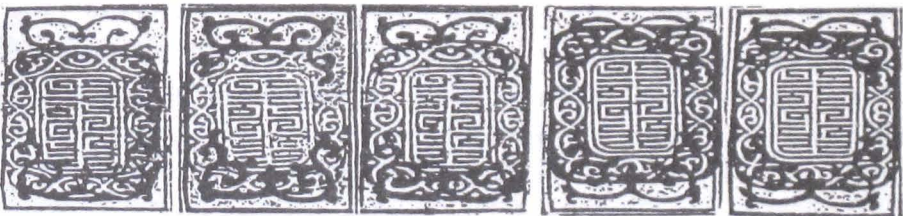
At any rate, it is very likely that a special paper, different from the one used for books, was developed for the early banknotes. This paper had to be very durable, resistant to insects (I have not encountered any notes half-eaten by insects or with worm holes) and difficult to imitate. The paper for the early notes is generally thicker than the one used for the multicoloured 50 Tam note. The obverse and the reverse of the early notes were probably printed on separate sheets and then these were pasted together, after a third and smaller sheet had

been inserted in the middle,²⁵ on which was printed a security legend which shows like a watermark when the notes are held up against the light.


After printing, the paper notes were numbered by hand by specially trained calligraphers, both to control the number of notes issued as well as to protect the notes from possible forgery. These calligraphers were known as *E ba* (another name for them was *I trug pa*)²⁶ and were trained from childhood in the art of calligraphy. Those who numbered the notes worked in a special office called *dnkul par yon brtan* (this could be translated as “money quality supervision”).²⁷ This office was also apparently responsible for detecting forged banknotes. It seems that the calligraphy of the numbers on the banknote is virtually perfect and not easy to copy which makes forging very difficult.²⁸

The last and most important step for the production of the paper notes was the application of two seals, one red on the left and one black on the right side of the obverse of the banknotes. The red seal is generally taken to represent the authority of the Dalai Lama, and is reported to be—at least in the case of the early paper notes—used only in the presence of the Dalai Lama. The red seal does not show any script, is purely ornamental, and its design is called *yig man* (without script) in Tibetan.²⁹ The central part of the black seal of the early notes is filled with two columns of *phags pa* characters whose transliteration is *gzhung dnkul khang*. This can be translated as “government treasury” or “government bank” and most probably refers to the financial institution (mostly referred to as “bank”) which according to some Chinese sources had been founded in 1913 or, as mentioned above, in 1925.


Owing to an error regarding the last letter *nga* in the word *khang* and to two different ways of writing the u-vowel (Tib. *zhabs kyu*) in the words *gzhung* and *dnkul*, one can distinguish between the following five types of black seals on the notes in Tam denomination:³⁰



Type: 1 1A 1B 2 2A

Type 1: The letter *nga* at the bottom of the right column is written correctly, similar to a reversed “s”:  the second horizontal line of the left column is aligned with the third horizontal line of the right column. The upper left part of the u-vowel in the words *gzhung* and *dnkul* is open as seen on the following page:



Type 1A: The same as type 1, but the letter *nga* at the bottom of the right column is reversed like a normal “s”. 

Type 1B: Normal *nga* and upper left part of the u-vowels open as in type 1, but the second horizontal line of the left column is not aligned with the third horizontal line of the right column.

Type 2: Normal *nga* and second horizontal line of left column aligned with the third horizontal line of the right column as in type 1, but the upper right part instead of the upper left part of the u-vowel in the words *gzhung* and *dngul* is open.³¹



Type 2A: Normal *nga* and upper right side of the u-vowels open as in type 2, but the second horizontal line of the left column is not aligned with the third horizontal line of the right column.

Types 2 and 2A are only known for the multicoloured 50 Tam issue.

1. The 5 Tam note

This note, as mentioned above, exists only with the date T.E. 1658. I only list the main colour varieties which are known. The lowest serial number of this note known to me is no. 31, the highest no. 37943, which means that most probably no more than about 40,000 pieces of this note were issued.³²

DESCRIPTION OF THE 5 TAM NOTE (PLATES II & III)

Obverse: the design is divided into nine panels, the central one being the largest. The central part shows a snow lion facing left and turning his head backwards, sitting in front of a flower vase. In the background is a mountainous landscape with the sun in the upper right corner, below clouds which are drawn in conventional Chinese style. To the left and right of the middle field two

rectangular spaces are filled with a flower and leaf design and reserved for the red and black seals. The four rectangular fields in the angles are filled with the design of a losange to which four smaller losanges are attached. In the large losanges of the two upper fields the word *tam* is written in *dbu can* script while in the large losanges of the two lower fields the word for “five” (*lnga*) is written in the same type of script. The serial numbers are handwritten and appear in the upper left and lower right of the panels just mentioned, i.e. they are inscribed on top of the words *tam* and *lnga* respectively. The remaining two oblong panels above and below the central field, similar to cartouches, each contain two lines in *dbu can* script which read as follows:

*gangs ljongs bod rgyal khab chen bo'i lugs zung chab/
srid dbu brnyes kyi lo chig stong drug brgya lnga bcu nga brgyad
(or: dgu)/
phun tshogs sde zhii dpal mnga phan bde'i spyi nor/
chos srid gnyis ldan gyi rab byung bco lnga ba'i shog dngul/*

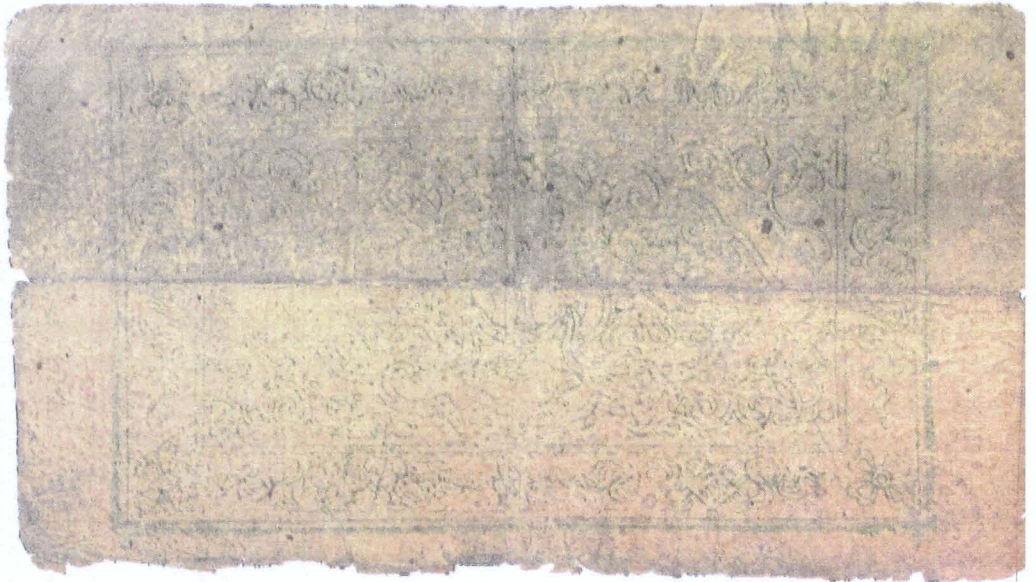
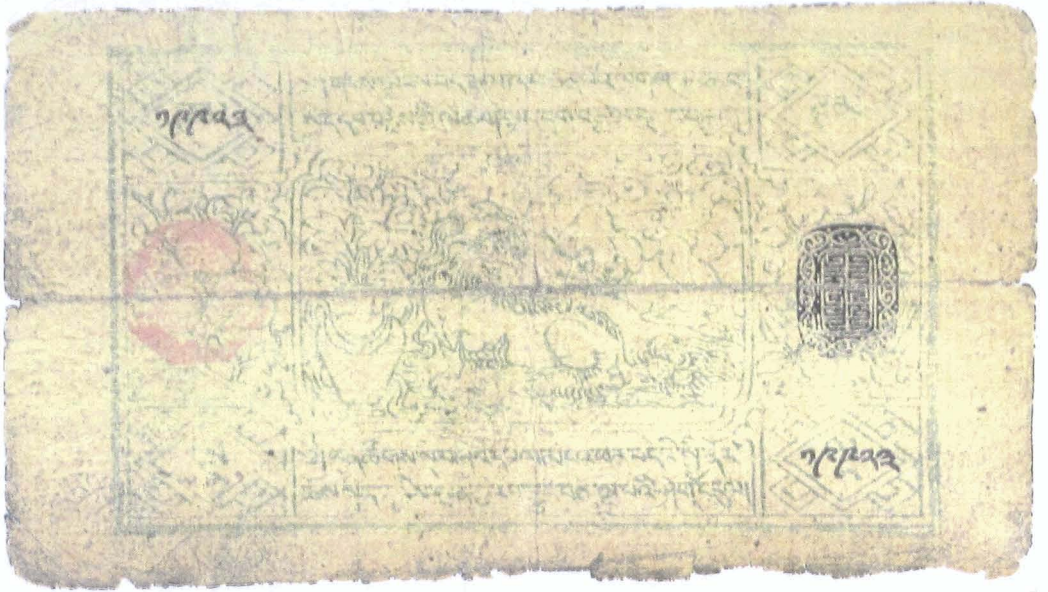
The following translation has been suggested for this legend:

“1658 years from the founding of the religious-secular form of government in the great country of Tibet, the land of snows, paper money (*shog dngul*) of the 15th cycle (*rab byung bco lnga*) of the government of religion and politics (*chos srid gnyis ldan*), the universal Jewel (*spyi nor*) of benefit and bliss, endowed with the four types of auspiciousness.”³³

Reverse: a rectangular central panel is surrounded by a frame. The central field is occupied by an oval-shaped cartouche and scroll work in each corner. Inside the cartouche the five symbolic objects which stimulate the senses (Tib. ‘*dod yon sna lnga*) are represented: the mirror (Tib. *me long*) symbolises the physical forms (Tib. *gzugs*) that appeal to the eye; the two peaches (Tib. *shing tog*) on either side of the mirror are pleasing to the taste (Tib. *ro*); the pair of cymbals (Tib. *sil snyan*) below the mirror represent the sounds (Tib. *sgra*) which reach the ear; the pieces of material which are attached to the cymbals excite the sense of touch (Tib. *reg bya*); the conch shell (Tib. *dung*) below the cymbals is supposed to contain a fragrant liquid which stimulates the faculty of smell.³⁴

The border is decorated with six flowers and five out of seven objects, which probably refer to the seven Auspicious Jewels or royal attributes (Tib. *rgyal srid sna bdun*) indispensable for a universal ruler (Skt. *Cakravartin*, Tib. ‘*khor lo bsgyur ba'i rgyal po*): on the lower part of the frame the branch of coral symbolises the supreme queen (Tib. *rgyal mo lags*) and a square earring (Tib. *rgyan*) stands for the supreme minister; on the upper part of the frame the round earring stands for the wish-granting gem (Tib. *nor bu*), while the horn of the unicorn (Tib. *bse ru'i ra*) represents the ruler’s mount. The object on the

PLATE II



The green 5 Tam note. Serial number 19923. Black seal type 1A

PLATE III



The blue 5 Tam note. Serial number 34647. Black seal type 1

left part of the frame may represent an ornament called *khyi sna* standing for the wheel of law.³⁵

The legend in two lines which is printed on the paper in between the obverse and reverse sheets, and which shows like a watermark unless the notes are printed on very thick paper, is the following:

gnam bskos dga' ldan
pho brang phyogs las rnam rgyal

“The heavenly appointed Gaden Palace, victorious in all directions.”

This line refers to the Fifth Dalai Lama’s residence in Drepung Monastery before he moved to the Potala Palace.³⁶ It was also occupied by successive Dalai Lamas whenever they visited this monastery. Later, the expression *dga' ldan pho brang* was used in official documents in a figurative way with the meaning “Tibetan government”.

Catalogue of the 5 Tam note

1.	5 Tam	T.E..1658	blue	black seal type 1
2.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658	blue	black seal type 1A
3.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658	green	black seal type 1
4.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658	green	black seal type 1A
5.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658	green	black seal type 1B
6.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658	yellow	black seal type1
7.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658	yellow	black seal type 1A
8.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658	yellow	black seal type 1B

In addition the following faulty notes exist:

9.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658	blue	black seal and serial no. is missing
10.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658	green	serial numbers are missing
11.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658	green	black seal type 1 is inverted
12.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658	green	black seal is missing
13.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658	blue	black seal type 1 is inverted
14.	5 Tam	T.E. 1658		the reverse of the note is printed inverted.

2. The 10 Tam Note

This is the only early note known which has two different dates. The lowest serial number recorded for the notes dated T.E. 1658 is no. 161 and the highest no. 3600. For the notes dated T.E. 1659 the lowest recorded serial number is 14620, which suggests that a block of serial numbers—possibly ranging from 5,000 to 10,000—may not have been used. However, an insufficient number of notes has survived to confirm this assumption. I believe that the total number

of 10 Tam notes issued cannot be much higher than 20,000—approx. 5,000 with the 1658 date and approx. 15,000 with the 1659 date. All the notes dated 1659 are printed from blocks on which the original date 1658 was altered to 1659, with a gap after the word *dgu* in the second line of the legend.

DESCRIPTION OF THE 10 TAM NOTE (PLATES IV & V)

Obverse: the centre is occupied by a cartouche inside which a crouching snow lion, facing left and looking backwards, is playing with a ball; he is surrounded by leaf ornaments and the sun on the upper left. The spaces to the left and right of the central cartouche are filled with scroll ornaments and a flower with eight petals in the places where the red and black seals are applied. The four corners are made up of four squares which each contain a cartouche. The two upper ones contain the Tibetan word *tam* and the two lower ones the word for “10”, (*bcu*) written in *dbu can* script. As is the case with the 5 Tam notes, the serial numbers are inscribed on top of the words for *tam* and *bcu* respectively. The 15, 25 and monochrome 50 Tam notes are numbered in similar fashion. The oblong rectangles above and below the central panel are filled with the same legend in four lines as on the obverse of the 5 Tam notes, but on either side of the legends we find additional scroll ornaments. Depending on the date of the note, the second line of the legend ends with the Tibetan word *brgyad* (eight) or *dgu* (nine).

Reverse: a large central rectangle is filled with flowers and scroll work at the four corners. In the centre is a vase surrounded by leaves and flowers. The vase is composed of the eight auspicious buddhist symbols (Tib. *bkra shis rtags brgyad*): below, the lotus flower carries the knot of life, which in turn supports the wheel of the doctrine, with the two golden fish on either side. Above is the banner of victory and the parasol with the conch shell on top. The eighth symbol is the vase which is made up of the seven symbols just enumerated. This way of arranging the seven lucky symbols is called *rtags brgyad bum gzugs* in Tibetan.³⁷ The central rectangle is surrounded by a frame which is completely filled with scroll work and four small flowers.

Catalogue of the 10 Tam Note

- | | | | |
|-----|------------------------------|-----|------------------------|
| 15. | 10 Tam 1658 | red | black seal type 1 |
| 16. | 10 Tam 1658 | red | black seal type 1A |
| 17. | 10 Tam 1659/58 ³⁸ | | red black seal type 1 |
| 18. | 10 Tam 1659/58 | | red black seal type 1A |

In addition, the following faulty note exists with the serial number 3600:

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------|-----|---|
| 19. | 10 Tam 1658 | red | without red and black seals ³⁹ |
|-----|-------------|-----|---|

PLATE IV



The red 10 Tam note dated T.E. 1658. Serial number 163. Black seal type 1

PLATE V



Face of the red 10 Tam note, dated T.E. 1659. Serial number 17674.
Black seal type 1A



Face of the brown 25 Tam note dated T.E. 1659, without space between the Tibetan letter "dgu" and the vertical stroke "shad" at the end of the second line of the legend. Serial number 61135. Black seal type uncertain

3. The 15 Tam note

The only note of this kind which is known to exist bears the date T.E. 1659, and is printed from blocks which have the original date 1658 altered to 1659, and show a gap after the word *dgu* at the end of the second line of the legend. The lowest serial number recorded is no. 482 and the highest 14289; one can conclude from these figures that few more than 15,000 of these notes were probably issued.

DESCRIPTION OF THE 15 TAM NOTE (PLATE VI)

Obverse: in the central field a lion is standing upright in a mountainous landscape with the sun on the upper left. The snow lion is supporting a large plate with his front paws. This plate is filled with precious objects, such as rhinoceros horns, jewels, coral and elephant tusks. The areas to the left and right of the central rectangle are filled with flower and leaf ornaments, together with a mirror and a conch on the left and a plate and an object which resembles a rhinoceros horn on the right. Four cartouches, similar to the ones on the obverse of the 10 Tam note, occupy the four corners. The upper ones are filled with the Tibetan word *tam* while the lower ones contain the Tibetan word for "15" (*bco lnga*) in *dbu can* script. The legend of four lines is placed above and below the central rectangle as on the 5 and 10 Tam notes, but it is not surrounded by a frame.

Reverse: the central rectangle is filled with scroll work at the four corners. The central design represents a large plate which is supported by a lotus flower. The plate is filled with what are probably mustard seeds in the middle, wood apples on the left, and red powder, piled up like pyramids, on the right. Above, a large mirror revealing one's karma supports a bowl filled with curd which was offered to the Buddha by a peasant girl after he had meditated under the *Bo* tree. Above the curd bowl a conch represents the spread of the Buddhist teachings.⁴⁰ All this is surrounded by scroll work forming the shape of a losange. The central rectangle has a triple frame, the middle part of which is filled with flowers of eight petals together with others which have only four petals and small circles placed between the flowers.

Catalogue of the 15 Tam Note

20.	15 Tam T.E. 1659	violet	black seal type 1
21.	15 Tam T.E. 1659	violet	black seal type 1A

4. The 25 Tam Note

This note is recorded only with the date T.E. 1659. Notes which have the original date 1658 altered to 1659 and show a gap after the word for *dgu* in the second line of the legend exist as well as notes printed from new blocks on which the gap after the word *dgu* has been deleted. In the catalogue we indicate the date of the former notes as 1659/58 and that of the latter notes as 1659.⁴¹ The lowest recorded serial number for the 1659/58 notes is 5345 and the highest 40763. For the 1659 notes the lowest recorded serial number is 47724 and the highest 66719. There is the possibility that a block of serial numbers was not used as in the case of the 10 Tam notes. This block could range from about nos. 50,000 to 60,000. On the base of this assumption we can calculate the total number of 25 Tam notes issued at around 60,000 pieces.

DESCRIPTION OF THE 25 TAM NOTE (PLATE VII)

Obverse: this is divided into 13 panels, the central one being the largest, in which a snow lion is facing left, looking sideways, and playing with a ball. In the background is a mountainous landscape with the sun to the left. On either side of the central panel a cartouche in the form of a losange is surrounded by rectangles. In the lower corners the Tibetan word for "25" (*nyi shu tsa lnga*) is written in *dbu can* script. As on the obverse of the 10 Tam note, the legend of four lines is placed into oblong rectangles above and below the central panel, and scroll work is seen on either side of the legends. The serial numbers are placed in the upper left and lower right corners.

Reverse: a large central panel is surrounded by a frame which is—as on the reverse of the 5 Tam note—decorated with eight flowers with four petals. Between these is scroll work, different from that seen on the reverse of the 5 Tam note. The central panel shows two different scenes which are divided by a high mountain with the sun above. On the left we see a palace, on the terrace of which a person of some importance is seated conversing with another person seated to his left. Behind the second person three more people are seated, the one in the front raising his hands in adoration or respect. Behind and to the right of this scene a hermit is sitting in a cave. In the right half of the panel an elephant is standing under a fruit tree carrying a monkey, a hare and a bird. This scene refers to a Buddhist legend which relates how the four animals were trying to find out who could be considered to be the eldest among them. The elephant said that the tree was already fully grown when he was young, the monkey that the tree was small when he was young, the hare that he saw the tree as a sapling when he was young, and the bird that he had carried the seed from which the tree grew. So the bird was recognised by the other animals as

PLATE VII



*The brown 25 Tam note, dated T.E. 1659, with gap after the Tibetan word "dgu" at the end of the second line of the legend.
Serial number 15383. Black seal type 1*

being the eldest and the four animals lived together in harmony.⁴² This is why this scene is known by the name of “the four harmonious brothers”.

Catalogue of the 25 Tam note

22.	25 Tam 1659/58	brown black seal type 1
23.	25 Tam 1659/58	brown black seal type 1A
24.	25 Tam 1659/58	brown black seal type 1B
25.	25 Tam 1659/58	yellow black seal type 1
26.	25 Tam 1659	brown black seal type 1
27.	25 Tam 1659	yellow black seal type 1A

The following faults have been noted in 25 Tam notes:

28.	25 Tam 1659/58	colour error: lavender blue (serial no. 40763; black seal type 1)
29.	25 Tam 1659	black seal type 1 inverted (serial no. 66719; colour not recorded).

5. The blue 50 Tam Note

Like the 25 Tam note, the 50 Tam note is known with the date 1659 altered from 1658, and was also printed from new blocks without the gap after the *dgu* in the second line of the legend. The lowest recorded serial number for the 1659/58 notes is 545, the highest 35765. For the 1659 notes the lowest recorded serial number is 46289 and the highest 67421.

Of the early banknotes this was the one which for obvious reasons was often forged. Charles Bell wrote that a monk was convicted of involvement in the forgery of blue 50 Tam notes.⁴³ B.N. Shrestha illustrates a forged blue 50 Tam note, which could be a sample of this forgery which had occurred in 1921. Another forgery case involving the blue 50 Tam notes among others is known to have occurred in Calcutta, the main forger being a Nepali called Bekhraj Newar who was active in 1926 and 1927. One of the characteristics of his forged 50 Tam notes is the missing subscribed *ra* (*rata*) in the second word (*srid*) of the last line of the legend on the obverse of the note.⁴⁴ To date, we have not seen a note which has this feature. According to G.W. Surkhang, two of the petals of each of those flowers which are located in the frame to the left of the red seal and to the right of the black seal on the obverse of the 50 Tam notes were purposely drawn with a split in them, as a security measure.⁴⁵ These petals are located on the invisible horizontal line along which the notes were usually folded so that one could easily form the impression that the petals became split due to frequent folding and unfolding of the note. Karl Garbrisch's

collection contains one blue 50 Tam note which has fully - drawn (i.e. unsplit) petals among the flowers located along the horizontal folding line. Based on the evidence of G.W. Surkhang, one may consider this note as a possible forgery, although the design of the note is of good style and only the legends are somewhat at variance with those of the genuine 50 Tam notes (Plate VIII).⁴⁶

DESCRIPTION OF THE BLUE 50 TAM NOTE (PLATES VIII & IX)

Obverse: the central part is divided into nine panels which are surrounded by a frame, adorned with eight flowers and scrollwork. Only the flowers to the right of the black seal and to the left of the red seal have two split petals each. In the central panel two lions are shown facing each other and playing with a ball. A mountainous landscape with the sun in the centre and clouds is seen behind. All four corner panels contain a cartouche. The upper ones have the Tibetan word *tam* inside the cartouche and the lower ones the Tibetan word for "50" (*Inga bcu*) in *dbu can* script. The panels to the right and left of the central rectangle are filled with scroll work and are reserved for the two seals. Two oblong panels above and below the central rectangle contain the legend in four lines, the second line ending with the Tibetan word for 1659.

Reverse: the large central panel is surrounded by a frame which is adorned with half flowers placed on either side of a zigzagging line. The central panel shows an old man (Tib. *mi tshe ring*) sitting on a throne under a peach(?) tree, his left hand resting in his lap and holding a rosary, his raised right hand holding a water pot. Three jewels are placed in front of him and to his right is seen a pair of deer and a pair of cranes. Behind the cranes are the sun, clouds and mountains. To the left of the old man are a waterfall, rocks and flowers. This scene is probably inspired by similar Chinese scenes: Shou Lao, the god of longevity, is commonly shown enthroned upon a rocky platform in the Hills of Longevity, holding in one hand a curious knotted staff to which rolls of writing are attached, and in the other a peach, and surrounded by his special attributes—the spotted deer, the stork, and the *ling chih fungus*.⁴⁷

Catalogue of the blue 50 Tam Note

30.	50 Tam 1659/58	blue	black seal type 1
31.	50 Tam 1659/58	purple	black seal type 1
32.	50 Tam 1659/58	purple	black seal type 1A
33.	50 Tam 1659	blue	black seal type 1
34.	50 Tam 1659	blue	black seal type 1A

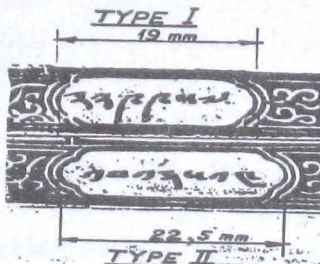
35. 50 Tam on the reverse one of the cranes is turning back and opening his mouth. The year type and type of black seal are not recorded.⁴⁸

The following faulty note is known to exist:

36. 50 Tam black seal and serial numbers are missing. The year type has not been recorded.⁴⁹

6. The multicoloured 50 Tam Note

As a result of the frequent forgery of the early blue 50 Tam note, the Tibetan government was compelled to issue a new multicoloured 50 Tam note in 1926 which had a more intricate design, in the hope that this new note would not be so easily forged. The machine printing of this note was much more complex and involved many more procedures than the printing of the earlier notes. Five different printing blocks were necessary for the obverse and three for the reverse. As in the case of the earlier notes, the red and the black seals on the obverse probably had to be applied by hand. The serial numbers were inserted by hand into the two cartouches which were specially designed for this purpose and left empty of other ornaments. From 1926 to 1931 the notes were first printed by machine in the Dode (Tib. *dog sde* or *rdo sde*) Mint and later possibly as well in the Gold Mint (Tib. *gser khang*)⁵⁰ located near the Norbu Lingka. As an additional security measure the notes received new dates with each new issuing year. When the printing of this note was started in the Trabshi Lekhung Mint in 1932 the face of the note was redesigned: the two cartouches reserved for the serial numbers were enlarged from 19 mm to 22.5 mm. The scroll design to the right of the upper cartouche and to the left of the lower cartouche was also changed.⁵¹



The enlargement of the cartouches was necessary to accommodate the ever higher serial numbers, and the scroll design was probably changed in order to be able to detect forgeries. In the year 1931 a considerable number of 50 Tam notes were forged in Qinghai province and brought to Lhasa by a merchant from Xining called Ma Baowang.

But despite all the security measures taken, in 1933 the 50 Tam note was forged again in Nepal by a person called Juegenata (Chinese transcription;

PLATE VIII



The blue 50 Tam note dated T.E. 1659. Serial number 9831. Black seal type 1A. With fully drawn petals in the two flowers which are located to the left of the red and to the right of the black seal on the face of the note. The note could be a contemporary forgery. (The note is illustrated in reduced size; source: Karl Gabrisch: Geld aus Tibet. Winterthur 1990, p. 100.)

PLATE IX



The blue 50 Tam note dated T.E. 1659. Serial number 25200. Black seal type 1A. Two petals in each of the two flowers located to the left of the red and to the right of the black seal are drawn split

probably Jaganatha) and in 1935 by one Awangdue from Xikang and again in 1937 (T.E. 1683).⁵² Forged notes with the date T.E. 1677 were discovered in large numbers as late as 1937; the government decided to stamp the genuine 50 Tam notes with the date T.E. 1677 and to place an additional red seal on the upper border of the note.⁵³

The lowest recorded serial number for the multicoloured 50 Tam note is 1345 (T.E. 1672), the highest 1019995 (T.E. 1687). In order to get an idea of how many notes were printed with each different date, I also give the lowest and highest recorded serial numbers for each year from T.E. 1672 to T.E. 1687.⁵⁴ The total number of notes issued between 1926 and 1940 is recorded as 957,196,55. Adding the issues of the year 1941 (T.E. 1687), we get the total number of 50 Tam notes issued as 1,119,000.⁵⁶ In order to replace damaged earlier notes, about 100,000 notes had to be issued for some of the years.⁵⁷

From 1937 onwards paper notes with the denomination *srang* were issued, and it seems that at this time the 50 Tam notes began to be called “seven-and-a-half” Srang notes (1 Srang = 6.66 Tam) by some people. This designation is occasionally used in Chinese and Western literature to refer to the multicoloured 50 Tam note. However, a paper note with the denomination 7.5 Srang officially printed on it was never issued in Tibet.

I have found no documentary evidence to show that the multicoloured 50 Tam note was demonetized; it must have circulated together with the Srang issues until 1959. After this date many specimens were taken out of Tibet by refugees.

The black seal types 1, 1A and 1B, known from the early monochrome notes, were used for the multicoloured 50 Tam notes only during the first years of issue, i.e. from T.E. 1672 to T.E. 1677. It is likely that each of the three Mints (Trabshi, Dode and Serkhang) in which the multicoloured 50 Tam notes were apparently printed during these early years was exclusively using one of these three seals. Yet it is impossible to attribute a particular black seal type to one of these Mints. Starting with the notes dated T.E. 1678, only seal types 2 and 2A appear on the multicoloured 50 Tam notes. The two latter seals clearly were especially created for the notes which were printed from 1932 onwards in the newly opened Mint Trabshi Lekhung, in order to make it easier to detect forged notes.

Similar to the earlier monochrome Tam notes, the multicoloured 50 Tam notes are dated both with the year of the Tibetan Era, and the cycle (*rab byung*). However, the date in T.E. was changed with every new year of issue; notes exist with every T.E. year, starting from T.E. 1672 up to the year T.E. 1687.⁵⁸ It is interesting to observe that the note dated T.E. 1672 is the only one which mentions the 15th cycle in the last line of the legend on the face of the note. The banknote of the following year, T.E. 1673, is dated to the 16th cycle in the

last line of the legend; hence it must have been issued in the first year of the 16th cycle, thus furnishing a clue for the conversion of the T.E. date to Western date (T.E. date + 254 = Western date),⁵⁹ since it is a well-known fact that the 16th cycle started in A.D. 1927 (February).

DESCRIPTION OF THE MULTICOLOURED 50 TAM NOTE (PLATES X & XI)

Obverse: the inner rectangle is divided into nine panels and surrounded by two frames. The outer frame is printed in yellow and composed of diagonally-aligned small flowers with four petals. This frame is part of a block which was printed first and covered almost the whole surface of the paper; part of the design disappears, however, since other colours and designs were printed on top of the yellow design. The inner frame is printed in blue and adorned with the eight Buddhist lucky symbols (Tib. *bkra shis rtags brgyad*), scrollwork and six flowers. In the upper right and lower left parts of this frame two cartouches are left blank and reserved for the serial numbers. The innermost panel is printed in red on a yellow background and contains the design of two snow lions facing each other and playing with a silk ball. The empty spaces are filled with scroll work and two flowers. The two panels to the left and to the right of the one just described show simple scroll work printed in blue and are reserved for the red and black seals. The remaining six panels all have a yellow background composed of small flowers like the outer frame. The four corner panels each have a cartouche with three leaves at each angle and are printed in blue. The upper corner panels have the word *tam* while the two lower ones contain the Tibetan word for "50" (*lnga bcu*). As on the notes of the monochrome series, an identical legend of four lines is placed into two oblong rectangles above and below the central panel. With each new date the second half of the second line of this legend is altered to the corresponding T.E. year. As pointed out above, the fourth line of the notes dated T.E. 1672 mentions the 15th cycle; notes of subsequent years mention the 16th cycle in this line.

Reverse: a large rectangle, which occupies almost the whole paper, is printed with small flowers in yellow in exactly the same design as on the obverse of the note. The same block might have been used for both the obverse and reverse to print this background. A blue design occupying the same surface was then printed on top, made up of flowers, leaves, eternal knots, earrings, rhinoceros horns, books represented crosswise and a ball with streamers in the centre similar to the Yin Yang symbol. Above this symbol there are two crosses (possibly representing books as well) and below it are two swastikas. Four cartouches are printed in red on top of this blue design. These contain the four animals which are believed to be the guardians of the four quarters, a concept which

PLATE X



The multicoloured 50 Tam note dated T.E. 1672 and "rab byung" (cycle) fifteen.
Serial number 1345. Black seal type 1



The multicoloured 50 Tam note dated T.E. 1677 and cycle sixteen.
Serial number 319656. Additional red seal. Black seal type 1B

PLATE XI



The multicoloured 50 Tam note dated T.E. 1679 and "rab byung" (cycle) sixteen.
Serial number 533000. Black seal type 2

goes back to Tibet's *Bön* religion: snow lion (*seng ge*, upper left), dragon ('*brug*, upper right), tiger (*stag*, lower left) and garuda (*khyung*, lower right).

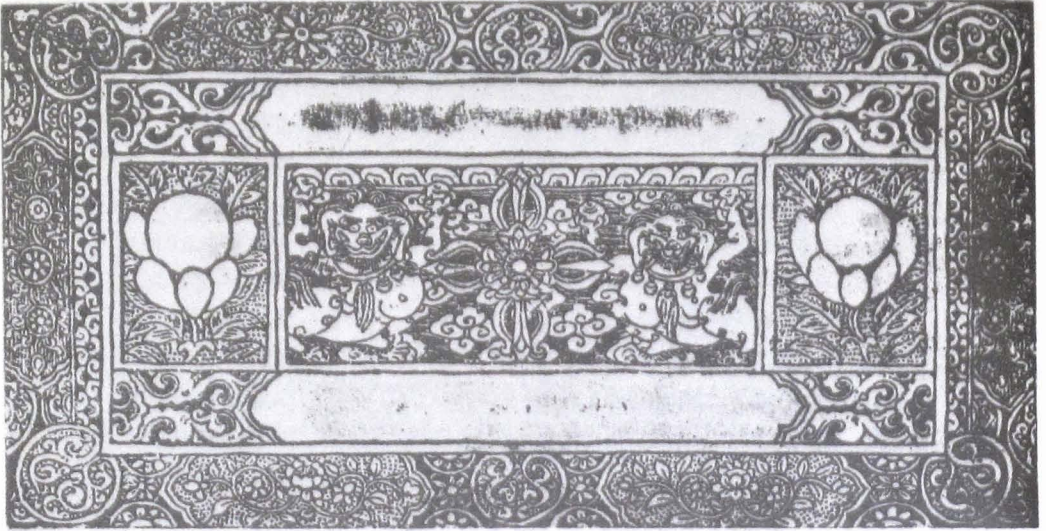
The legend in two lines, seen when the notes are held up against the light, is identical to the one used for the earlier Tam notes.

Looking at the notes from the obverse, one notices two holes at the right margin through which strings were passed and the notes packed into bundles of 10, some of which have survived.

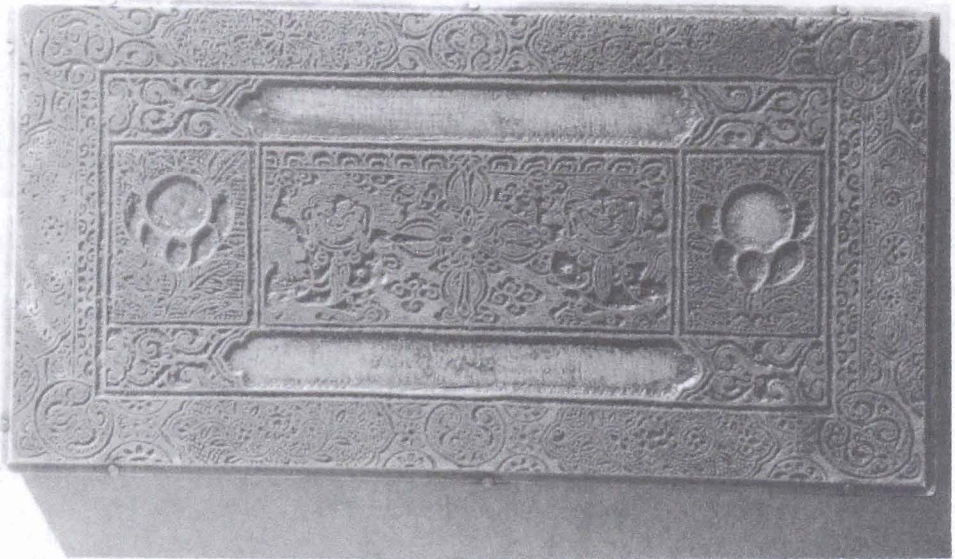
Catalogue of the multicoloured 50 Tam Note

37.	T.E. 1672	Serial no. 1345 - 3672	black seal type 1
38.	T.E. 1672		black seal type 1A
39.	T.E. 1673	Serial no. 20,394 - 64467	black seal type 1
40.	T.E. 1673		black seal type 1A
41.	T.E. 1673		black seal type 1B
42.	T.E. 1674	Serial no. 71,137 - 99,545	black seal type 1
43.	T.E. 1674		black seal type 1B
44.	T.E. 1675	Serial no. 106,807 - 175,466	black seal type 1
45.	T.E. 1675		black seal type 1B
46.	T.E. 1676	Serial no. 185,319 - 267,178	black seal type 1
47.	T.E. 1676		black seal type 1B
48.	T.E. 1677	Serial no. 271,607 - 366,410	black seal type 1
49.	T.E. 1677		black seal type 1A
50.	T.E. 1677	with additional red seal	black seal type 1
51.	T.E. 1677	with additional red seal	black seal type 1A
52.	T.E. 1677	with additional red seal	black seal type 1B
53.	T.E. 1678	Serial no. 371,137 - 442,280	black seal type 2
54.	T.E. 1679	Serial no. 454,842 - 531,900	black seal type 2
55.	T.E. 1680	Serial no. 536,646 - 545,779	black seal type 2
56.	T.E. 1681	Serial no. 549,343 - 643,984	black seal type 2
57.	T.E. 1682	Serial no. 648,164 - 782,196	black seal type 2
58.	T.E. 1683	Serial no. 784,162 - 805,289	black seal type 2
59.	T.E. 1683		black seal type 2A
60.	T.E. 1684	Serial no. 806,339 - 813,184	black seal type 2
61.	T.E. 1685	Serial no. 817,310 - 873,193	black seal type 2
62.	T.E. 1685		black seal type 2A
63.	T.E. 1686	Serial no. 878,151 - 956,798	black seal type 2
64.	T.E. 1686		black seal type 2A
65.	T.E. 1687	Serial no. 958,168 - 1,019,995	black seal type 2
66.	T.E. 1687		black seal type 2A

PLATE XII



Print from block which was produced in the 1950s, possibly on a trial basis in view of the issue of new series of banknotes



*Photograph of the block belonging to the print illustration above
(reproduced in reduced size)*

Part Two

The Notes in Srang Denomination

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After the 13th Dalai Lama died in December 1933, Tibet entered a period of political instability and lacked responsible leadership for many years. The first Tibetan banknotes had been issued in strictly controlled numbers and—as we have seen—to a certain extent had a gold backing. It seems that both these precautions were already largely abandoned after the opening of the Trabshi Lekhung Mint which began to operate in 1932. Banknotes were issued in ever larger numbers to cover government deficits and inflation increased, particularly after the 100 Srang notes were released in 1937. To give an example, by 1959 the price for barley, the Tibetan staple, was 20 times greater than in 1936.⁶⁰

It was only in 1947 that a decision was made to send a trade mission abroad, whose main task was the purchase of silver and gold for the backing of the paper currency. Such a request was submitted by Tsarong Dzaza, Trunyichemmo Cawtang and Tsipön Shakabpa who jointly headed the Trabshi Mint at that time. In May 1949 the trade mission of Tibet bought \$425,800 worth of gold from the United States,⁶¹ although we cannot be sure that this gold was actually used to back Tibet's paper currency. And the amount of gold would not have been sufficient to back the ever-increasing numbers of notes which were issued from 1950 onwards. According to statistics from Trabshi Lekhung, banknotes to the total value of 97,900,000 Srang were issued between 1951 and 1959. During the more extended period from 1935 to 1950, the total value of the banknotes issued was 71,150,000 Srang.⁶² Some or all of the gold purchases were stored in a treasury called Langsai, according to a Chinese source, which reports that 30 ingots of gold and 100 silver ingots, each weighing about 1,000 Chinese *Liang* (= ca. 37 kg), were taken to India in 1950.⁶³

The paper for the Srang issues and that of the later 50 Tam issues was no longer produced in provinces south-east of Lhasa, but near Lhasa in a special paper factory called Jing-Dong, which was established in 1932 in a former cartridge factory. It only functioned for three months of each year⁶⁴ and was staffed by involuntary labour recruited from five large estates. The paper produced there was only used for banknotes and its sale to private persons was forbidden. The monthly paper production is estimated at 300 boxes, each of which contained between 500 and 1,000 sheets of paper.⁶⁵ This paper was probably not produced from the same raw material as the paper used for the first banknote series.⁶⁶ In general, one can observe that the paper used for the Srang notes is much thinner than that used for the early Tam notes. It tends to become thinner still during the later years of the Srang issues, obviously in order to make the same amount of raw material last for greater numbers of banknotes printed.

When held up against the light, the Srang notes show the same legend in two lines as the Tam notes, except for the 5 Srang note which has a one line legend as a “watermark”. However, the method of producing this “watermark” was not the same as the one used for the Tam notes. Examples of late 100 and 25 Srang notes examined recently show that the interior legend was not printed on a separate piece of paper but directly in reversed script on the back of the sheet of the face, or in normal script on the back of the back sheet of the notes.⁶⁷ This new method may have already been initiated in the course of the printing of the multicoloured 50 Tam notes and represents a further measure taken to save paper.

The colours for printing the banknotes continued to be imported from India,⁶⁸ but the colour variation for the Srang issues during the many years of issue is neither as great in number nor as extreme as that found in the early Tam notes. The variation is particularly noticeable among the 100 Srang notes which are spread over the longest period of issue.

The Tibetan banknotes were demonetised together with the Tibetan coinage in August 1959; this date marks the end of Tibet’s short history of paper currency. The official exchange rate was fixed by the Chinese at 50 Srang in paper currency which was equal to one Yuan Renminbi. At that time the Chinese silver dollar was exchanged for 1.566 Yuan Renminbi or 3 Rupees. According to these exchange rates, the value of the Rupee in paper Srang was 26.1 and the value of the silver dollar 78.3 Srang.⁶⁹ Twelve years earlier (in 1947) 50 Srang were worth 3.33 Mexican silver dollars in Sakya.⁷⁰ Taking the Mexican dollar as being on a par with the Chinese dollar, we can calculate that in 1959 the Tibetan paper Srang (in relation to the silver dollar) was worth 5.22 times less than in 1947.

Despite the fact that the paper currency increasingly lost its value, it was accepted by the population, and in 1949 it was reported to be even preferred to Tibetan coins in Lhasa. However, it had to compete with Indian paper currency which was also used in Lhasa at that time. In areas close to British India the situation was quite different: in 1950 it is reported that the 100 Srang notes were not accepted in the Chumbi valley and purchases could be made only with Tibetan coins or Indian rupees.⁷²

In Western literature it is mentioned that notes of 100, 150 and 500 Tangkas were issued.⁷³ If such notes ever existed, it is surprising that none of them has survived. Chinese authors who had access to Tibetan government documents do not mention such notes of high denomination in Tangka. However, it is likely that the Tibetan government was preparing the issue of new banknotes, possibly some of higher denominations, as late as 1959. In March 1959 the Chinese Army closed down Trabshi Lekhung and confiscated printing blocks and unissued banknotes.⁷⁴ Among the confiscated printing blocks there were probably some which were prepared for new issues. In my collection I have a

printing block of the middle part of an unissued note of unknown denomination:⁷⁵ the central design shows two snow lions standing on either side of a double dorje (*visvavajra*). The design is engraved on a thin metal sheet which is mounted on a woodblock. This block was possibly produced for the planned issue of new notes (Plate XII).

1. The 100 Tam Srang Note

In 1937, during the regency of Reting Rinpoche, it was decided to issue notes with the high denomination of 100 Tam Srang. The following official promulgation regarding this issue was released:

“In order to develop politics and the economy, 100,000 pieces of a 100 Srang banknote will be printed by machine in the Trabshi Lekhung. These banknotes will be issued for the whole region. The same seal (official seal of the Dalai Lama) will be printed on these notes. The previous seal of the bank will be suspended and replaced by a new seal of Trabshi Lekhung. The inscription of this seal is the following: You Jing Miao Yan (‘Government and Religion are Prospering’).”⁷⁶

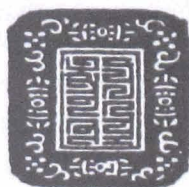
In fact, only 50,000 notes with the denomination in “Tam Srang” were issued. While the red seal of the Dalai Lama is the same one used on the earlier issues of Tam notes, the black seal is completely new and has the following two lines in *phags pa* script:

srid zhi dpal 'bar

The following alternatives have been suggested to the above-quoted translation: “Two famous governments”, “The glory of both (lay and religious) government houses,”⁷⁷ and “Every form of being augments the good”.⁷⁸

It was also suggested that this seal may represent the authority of the council of ministers, Kashag (*bka' gshags*),⁷⁹ but the above-quoted official announcement, which relates the seal to the Trabshi Lekhung Mint, should be accepted as the authoritative interpretation.

While only one type of black seal has been used for the 100 Tam Srang, three different types are recorded for the later 100 Srang notes:



Type 3

The mushroom-like ornament above and below the vertical vajras on the left and right part of the black frame are pointing to the right. This type of seal is only recorded for the Tam Srang notes, but continued to be used for the 100 Srang issues.



Type 3A

The mushroom-like ornament above the vertical vajras are pointing diagonally upwards, while those located below the vertical vajras are pointing to the right as in seal type 3. This is a rare seal type which is recorded only for the first issues of the 100 Srang notes, which have the following prefixed letters in their serial numbers: *ga*, *nga*, *ca* and *cha*.



Type 3B

The mushroom-like ornaments above the vertical vajras are pointing upwards, while those located below the vertical vajras are pointing downwards.

Three different blocks were necessary for the printing of the obverse of these notes, while six or even seven different blocks must have been used for the reverse side. For reasons unknown to us the notes do not show a T.E. date nor do they indicate the Tibetan cycle during which they were issued.

DESCRIPTION OF THE 100 TAM SRANG NOTE (PLATES XIII & XIV)

Obverse: virtually the whole of the surface was first printed in yellow with a white leaf design and the syllable *brgya* (100) in *'phags pa* script appearing in white. The central panel surrounded by two frames was printed in red on top of this. The outer frame is divided into small losanges. In the upper and lower part of the frame these losanges contain the letter "a" in Bujinmol script,⁸⁰ the losanges of the right and left part of the outer frame are filled with swastikas.

The inner frame accommodates two cartouches for the serial numbers at the upper left and lower right. These are filled with yellow. On the rest of the frame the eight lucky Buddhist symbols are shown with scroll work. In each of the four corners the design of the flower contains either the Bujinmol letter "a"

PLATE XIII



Face of the 100 Tam Srang note. Serial number kha 06241. Black seal type 3

PLATE XIV



Back of the 100 Tam Srang note. (For the face of the same note see Plate XIII.)

(upper right and lower left) or a small flower-like round design (upper left and lower right). Flowers with a round design in the centre are also in the middle of each of the four sides of the inner frame. The inner panel is divided into nine smaller panels, all of which show the yellow underprint with designs, except for the central panel which has a background printed in plain yellow. A pair of standing lions are facing each other in the central panel and support a large plate with one of their front paws. The plate is filled with precious objects such as a pair of elephant tusks, a pair of rhinoceros horns, a branch of coral, five jewels, and one round and one square earring. To the left and the right of the central panel two rectangles are filled with the design of two bats which stand for good luck, according to Chinese tradition. These two panels are reserved for the seals. The four square panels in the corners are filled with flower designs and cartouches made of four curved lines. These contain the Tibetan word *Tam Srang* (above) and the figure "100" (below). The remaining two oblong panels above and below the central panel have the yellow underprint with ornaments and each contain one line in *dbu chan* script:

*gnam bskos dga' ldan pho brang phogs las nam gyäl/
chos srid gnyis ldan gyi shog dngul srang brgya tam pa/*

"From the heavenly appointed Gaden Palace, victorious in all directions. One hundred paper silver srang of the religious and worldly government".

Reverse: it looks as if seven different blocks were used to print the reverse:

1. The yellow backing of the outer frame.
2. The small losanges in red. These contain, as on the obverse of the note, the Bujinmol letter "a" in the upper and lower part and swastikas in the left right part of the outer frame.
3. An inner frame printed in green with flower decoration: the flowers in the upper and lower right corner contain the letter "a" in Bujinmol script, while those of the upper and lower left corner contain cross-hatching. The left and right parts of the green frame have the following legend in the *'phags pa* script: *dga' ldan pho brang phyogs las nam rgyäl*.
4. The four corners of the central panel are first printed with red losanges containing a cross design.
5. Thereafter they are printed in dark blue and show a stylised dragon in each corner separated from the central design by lines which form a cartouche.
6. Yellow backing for the central part.
7. Design of the central part in red: the scene is similar to the one which is seen on the reverse of the early monochrome 50 Tam note, except that the old man is holding a vase in his right hand, he is accompanied by a

boy sitting to his left, and the tree under which he is sitting can be identified as a pomegranate. Some fruits have opened and have revealed their seeds. This tree in Chinese tradition symbolises fertility, i.e. a large progeniture.⁸¹ To either side of the tree a bat is flying. Below on the left a plate decorated with lotus leaves is filled with fruits and leaves. A specific feature of the reverse design of the 100 Tam Srang note (and also of the 100 Srang notes printed later) is a small dot (similar to yin-yang) printed in blue in the upper right part of the scene. It is reported that this dot was intended as a security measure against forgeries,⁸² although forgers had no problem with this feature. On the forged notes we know of, this security dot was reproduced perfectly.

Catalogue of the 100 Tam Srang note

67. A.D. 1937	serial nos.		
	prefixed by <i>ka</i>	00396-14362	bl. seal type 3
68. A.D. 1938	prefix <i>kha</i>	00399-24314	bl. seal type 3

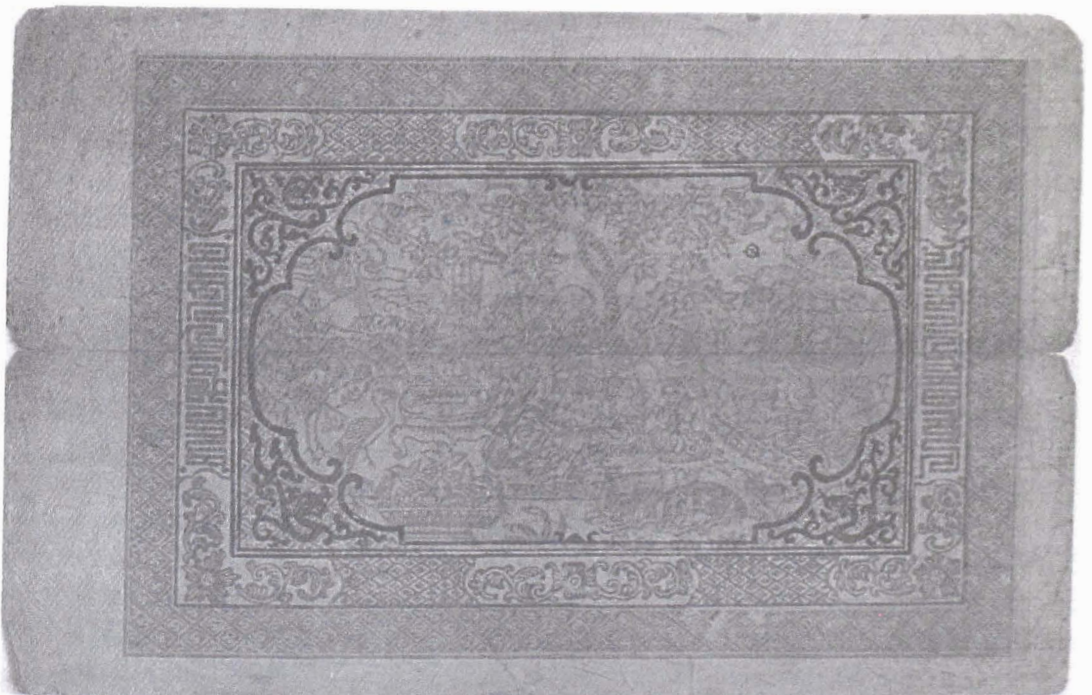
1 A. The 100 Srang note

After 50,000 notes of 100 Tam Srang had been issued, the denomination was changed to “srang”. A different red seal and some changes in the design of the obverse of the notes were introduced. The 100 Srang notes which were popularly called *brgya lor* are a continuation of the 100 Tam Srang notes, since the letter prefixes of the serial numbers logically follow the two prefixes which occur on the Tam Srang notes, i.e. the first character used for the Srang notes is *kha*, the third letter of the Tibetan alphabet.

The first notes in the denomination “100 Srang” were most likely issued in 1939; the years 1937 and 1938 were probably dedicated to the issue of the “100 Tam Srang” notes only. The total number of notes issued for every year, except for the years 1937 and 1938, is known. The figures, according to the records of Trabshi Lekhung,⁸³ are as follows:

Year	Number of 100 Srang notes issued
1939	41,000
1940	8,000
1942	14,406
1943	34,684
1944	101,910
1945	300,000
1951	42,000
1952	83,000
1953	125,000

PLATE XV



Forgery of the 100 Srang note. Serial number kha 08356. Note the inverted Bujinmol character on the upper and lower part of the frame of the backside of the note. (The note is illustrated in reduced size)

1954	91,000
1955	174,000
1956	115,000
1957	22,000
1958	164,000
1959	44,000
Total of 100 Srang notes issued:	1,359,964

The *E ba* (calligrapher) Gong Chen Ban Jue (Chinese transcription) reports that 100 Srang notes were numbered until 3rd February 1959, and that a total of 54 Tibetan letters were used as prefixes to the numbers.⁸⁴ Since 25,000 notes were issued for each letter, according to this record a total of 1,350,000 notes of 100 Tam Srang and 100 Srang were issued—this is presuming that the letters *ka* and *kha* which were used for the 100 Tam Srang notes are included in the total of the 54 letters used.

According to the statistics given above, the total number of Srang notes issued is reported as being 1,359,964 and the total number of Tam Srang notes must be 50,000. From these figures we can conclude that more than 54 letters were used, and possibly as many as 57. I have found 100 Srang notes up to the letter prefix *sa*l; this means that actually a total of 58 letters could have been used, which would increase the total number of notes issued (including the Tam Srang notes) to nearly 1,450,000, presuming that the full amount of 25,000 notes were numbered for each prefixed letter.

It could be that in the statistics given above some issues either were not recorded or not fully recorded; it is even more likely that for some of the last prefixed letters the number of notes did not reach 25,000 or that some letters may even have been left out altogether (probably the letters *l/la* and *l/sha*), in which case the total of 1,409,964 for all Tam Srang and Srang notes issued could be correct.

In cataloguing the 100 Srang notes I tentatively give the approximate date of issue for each group of notes with the same letter prefix, data which I derive from the above statistics and which I base on the assumption that in 1937 and 1938 only Tam Srang notes were issued.

The printing of 100 Srang notes was suspended in 1950 and it was intended that the highest denomination, produced from this year onwards, was to be the 25 Srang note. However, the responsible officials of Trabshi Lekhung who accompanied the Dalai Lama to Yatung in that year took with them what was left of the gold, silver and banknotes in Trabshi Lekhung. The Mint officials who stayed behind in Lhasa, being without resources, decided to resume the printing of 100 Srang notes.⁸⁵

Forgeries of the 100 Srang notes have been recorded by B.N. Shrestha, who describes and illustrates three different forged note.⁸⁶ At first sight all the forged notes illustrated by Shrestha look quite professional. They can be

distinguished from the genuine notes only by some small details such as changes in the design of some flowers or the bujinmol character “a” which is reproduced inverted on the lower and upper part of the frame of the back of the notes (Plate XV). We know of one forger who came from outer Mongolia and was called Dharma. He worked as a tattooist in Lhasa and tried his skills on imitations of the 100 Srang notes some time before 1945.⁸⁷

A new red seal was created for the 100 Srang notes. It is smaller than the previously used octagonal seal and consists of a round frame decorated with a sun and moon in the upper part. The round middle part shows some Tibetan characters like *cha*, repeated five times, surrounded by an undecipherable script which remotely resembles Mongolian or Manchu characters.

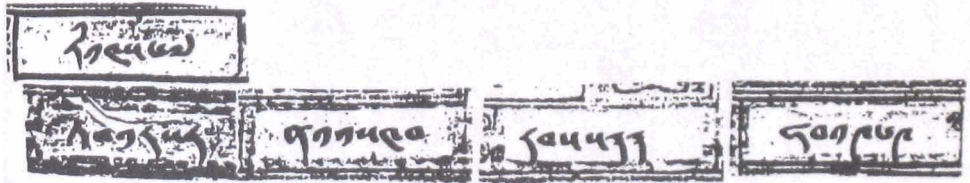
DESCRIPTION OF THE 100 SRANG NOTE (PLATES XVI & XVII)

Obverse: the same as the 100 Tam Srang notes, except for the following details: a round red seal on the left; designs of different flowers instead of bats below and above both seals; the word “srang” instead of “tam srang” in the upper square panels.

Reverse: the same as the reverse of the 100 Tam Srang notes.

Catalogue of the 100 Srang note

It should be noted that the letter prefixes *ta* and *na* can be confused with the prefixes *ra* and *ha* respectively, since they occur in two different varieties,⁸⁸ sometimes on the same note, and one of these forms closely resemble the letters *ra* and *ha*:



ta

na

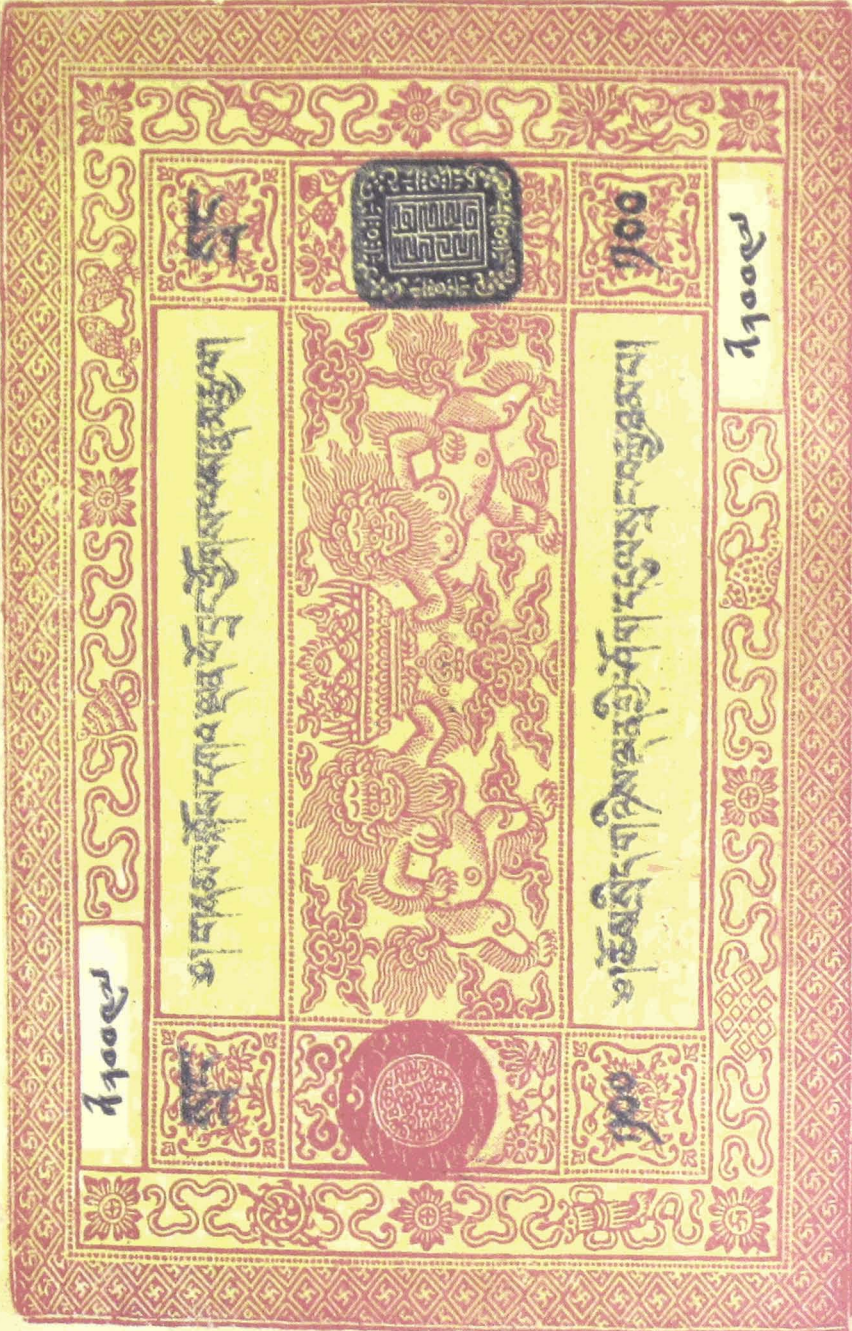
ra

ha

The two varieties of the characters *ta* and *na* and the letters *ra* and *ha*

69. (ca. 1939)	<i>ga</i> 0658-24758 ⁸⁹	black seal 3
70. (ca. 1939)		black seal 3 A
71. (ca. 1939-1942)	<i>nga</i> 00560-24588	black seal 3
72. (ca. 1939-1942)		black seal 3 A
73. (ca. 1942-1943)	<i>ca</i> 0031-24448	black seal 3
74. (ca. 1942-1943)		black seal 3 A

PLATE XVI



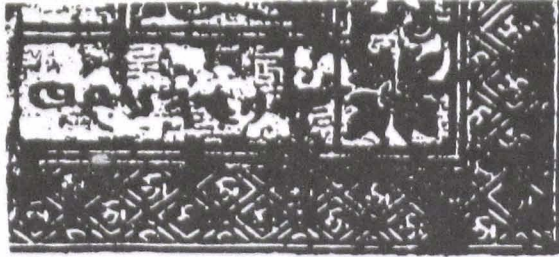
Face of the 100 Srang note. Serial number a/1 20047. The black seal is printed inverted (type 3B)

PLATE XVII

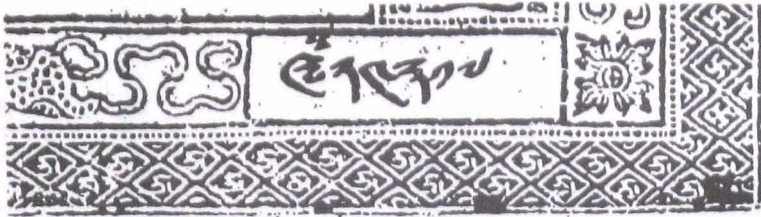


Back of the 100 Srang note. (For the face of the same note, see plate XVI.)

From the notes with prefixed letter *cha* onwards, the obverse of the notes presents the following change: the yellow underprint, including the Tibetan word *brgya* and some other designs which are left in white, is no longer used in the cartouches which are reserved for the numbering and are now left blank:



a) cartouche for serial number with underprint



b) cartouche for serial number without underprint

75. (ca. 1943-1944)	<i>cha</i> 00130-24275	black seal 3
76. (ca. 1943-1944)		black seal 3 A and 3 B
77. (ca. 1944)	<i>ja</i> 00034-23764	black seal 3
78. (ca. 1944)		black seal 3 B
79. (ca. 1944)	<i>nya</i> 00002-24817	black seal 3
80. (ca. 1944)		black seal 3 B
81. (ca. 1944)	<i>ta</i> 02131-19739	black seal 3
82. (ca. 1944)		black seal 3 B
83. (ca. 1944-1945)	<i>tha</i> 07906-23867	black seal 3
84. (ca. 1944-1945)		black seal 3 B
85. (ca. 1945)	<i>da</i> 00363-24964	black seal 3
86. (ca. 1945)		black seal B
87. (ca. 1945)	<i>na</i> 01085-24749	black seal 3
88. (ca. 1945)		black seal 3 B
89. (ca. 1945)	<i>pa</i> 00622-24929	black seal 3
90. (ca. 1945)		black seal 3 B

91. (ca. 1945)	<i>pha</i> 00844-23235	black seal 3
92. (ca. 1945)		black seal 3 B
93. (ca. 1945)	<i>ba</i> 00224-24815	black seal 3
94. (ca. 1945)		black seal 3 B
95. (ca. 1945)	<i>ma</i> 03342-24364	black seal 3
96. (ca. 1945)		black seal 3 B
97. (ca. 1945)	<i>tsa</i> 03677-24771	black seal 3
98. (ca. 1945)		black seal 3 B
99. (ca. 1945)	<i>tsha</i> 03691-24448	black seal 3
100. (ca. 1945)		black seal 3 B
101. (ca. 1945)	<i>dsa</i> 00048-24823	black seal 3
102. (ca. 1945)		black seal 3 B
103. (ca. 1945)	<i>wa</i> 00178-24972	black seal 3
104. (ca. 1945)		black seal 3 B
105. (ca. 1945)	<i>zha</i> 00025-24817	black seal 3
106. (ca. 1945)		black seal 3 B
107. (ca. 1945 & 1951)	<i>za</i> 05922-24873	black seal 3
108. (ca. 1945 & 1951)		black seal 3 B
109. (ca. 1951)	<i>'a</i> 00016-24568	black seal 3
110. (ca. 1951)		black seal 3 B
111. (ca. 1951-1952)	<i>ya</i> 00006-24638	black seal 3
112. (ca. 1951-1952)		black seal 3 B
113. (ca. 1952)	<i>ra</i> 00095-24548	black seal 3
114. (ca. 1952)		black seal 3 B
115. (ca. 1952)	<i>la</i> 00204-24844	black seal 3
116. (ca. 1952)		black seal 3B
117. (ca. 1952-1953)	<i>sha</i> 00437-24507	black seal 3
118. (ca. 1952-1953)		black seal 3 B
119. (ca. 1953)	<i>sa</i> 00002-00468	black seal 3
120. (ca. 1953)		black seal 3 B

Starting with no. 121 a minor change on the reverse side of the notes has been noted: in the centre of the flower in the bottom left corner of the green frame there is the letter "a" in Bujinmol script instead of cross-hatching.⁹⁰

121. (ca. 1953)	<i>sa</i> 06580-24623	black seal 3
122. (ca. 1953)		black seal 3 B
123. (ca. 1953)	<i>ha</i> 00501-24323	black seal 3
124. (ca. 1953)		black seal 3 B
125. (ca. 1953)	<i>a</i> 00272-24151	black seal 3
126. (ca. 1953)		black seal 3 B

A new series of prefixed letters starts with no. 127. The letters have the figure "1" written above in order to distinguish them from the previous 30 letters. The design of the notes, however, remains unchanged.

127. (ca. 1953)	<i>l/ka</i> 00675-23962	black seal 3
128. (ca. 1953)		black seal 3 B
129. (ca. 1953-1954)	<i>l/kha</i> 00871-24666	black seal 3
130. (ca. 1953-1954)		black seal 3 B
131. (ca. 1954)	<i>l/ga</i> 00007-24598	black seal 3
132. (ca. 1954)		black seal 3 B
133. (ca. 1954)	<i>l/nga</i> 00631-24774	black seal 3
134. (ca. 1954)		black seal 3 B
135. (ca. 1954)	<i>l/ca</i> 00314-24410	black seal 3
136. (ca. 1954)		black seal 3 B
137. (ca. 1954)	<i>l/cha</i> 00050-24093	black seal 3
138. (ca. 1954)		black seal 3 B
139. (ca. 1954-1955)	<i>l/ja</i> 00223-24586	black seal 3
140. (ca. 1954-1955)		black seal 3 B
141. (ca. 1955)	<i>l/nya</i> 02032-24258	black seal 3
142. (ca. 1955)		black seal 3 B
143. (ca. 1955)	<i>l/ta</i> 01858-23449	black seal 3
144. (ca. 1955)		black seal 3 B
145. (ca. 1955)	<i>l/tha</i> 00326-24976	black seal 3
146. (ca. 1955)		black seal 3 B
147. (ca. 1955)	<i>l/da</i> 00397-24299	black seal 3
148. (ca. 1955)		black seal 3 B
149. (ca. 1955)	<i>l/na</i> 00313-24509	black seal 3
150. (ca. 1955)		black seal 3 B
151. (ca. 1955)	<i>l/pa</i> 00976-22542	black seal 3
152. (ca. 1955)		black seal 3 B
153. (ca. 1955-1956)	<i>l/pha</i> 00093-24911	black seal 3
154. (ca. 1955-1956)		black seal 3 B
155. (ca. 1956)	<i>l/ba</i> 00424-24197	black seal 3
156. (ca. 1956)		black seal 3 B
157. (ca. 1956)	<i>l/ma</i> 00320-24294	black seal 3
158. (ca. 1956)		black seal 3 B
159. (ca. 1956)	<i>l/tsa</i> 03468-23535	black seal 3
160. (ca. 1956)		black seal 3 B
161. (ca. 1956)	<i>l/tsha</i> 01159-23774	black seal 3
162. (ca. 1956-1957)		black seal 3 B
163. (ca. 1957-1958)	<i>l/dsa</i> 00574-24634	black seal 3
164. (ca. 1957-1958)		black seal 3 B

165. (ca. 1958)	<i>l/wa</i> 00158-24920	black seal 3
166. (ca. 1958)		black seal 3 B
167. (ca. 1958)	<i>l/zha</i> 07664-24796	black seal 3
168. (ca. 1958)		black seal 3 B
169. (ca. 1958)	<i>l/za</i> 02101-24769	black seal 3
170. (ca. 1958)		black seal 3 B

The last issues of the 100 Srang note were accompanied by numerous irregularities which can be explained by the political situation at that time, as the Chinese began to interfere increasingly in Tibetan affairs and the Dalai Lama had to flee to India in 1959.

Most of the notes with the letter prefix *l/a* were printed erroneously with the black seal 3 or 3B inverted. Only the following three notes (nos. 171 and 172) are known to me with the correct black seals 3 and 3 B:

171. (ca. 1958)	<i>l/a</i> 01203 & 01313	black seal 3
172. (ca. 1958)	<i>l/a</i> 01101	black seal 3 B
173. (ca. 1958)	<i>l/a</i> 04046-21826	black seal 3 inverted
174. (ca. 1958)		black seal 3 B inverted

All the notes with the letter prefix *l/ya* known to me are printed erroneously with the black seals inverted; I recorded only one note with the seal type 3B.

175. (ca. 1958-1959)	<i>l/ya</i> 02665-02743	black seal 3 inverted
176. (ca. 1958-1959)	<i>l/ya</i> 00732	black seal 3 B inverted

No notes with the letter prefixes *l/la* and *l/sha* have been found so far. There is a possibility that notes with these numbers had been prepared and were taken out of Lhasa when the Dalai Lama fled to India and were later lost or destroyed. It is also possible that for reasons unknown to us these two letters were not used.

177. (ca. 1959)	<i>l/sa</i> 12156-19476	black seal 3
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2. The 10 Srang Note

This note was issued between 1941 and 1948 and is the only Srang issue which is dated yearly in T.E. and shows the same legend in four lines as the earlier notes in Tam. The issue was not continued after 1948, since at that time the Tibetan government started to mint 10 Srang coins. The following decree was published in 1941, when 5 srang notes were also released alongside the 10 Srang notes:

“The banknotes become worn out after some time and are no longer suitable for circulation. They should be collected by the government and exchanged for new ones, so that the population should suffer no damage and in order that the counterfeiting of banknotes be prevented. According to orders from the Regent, the printing of the 50 Tam notes will be discontinued this year. Now the coloured 10 Srang note will be printed. On the face of the note are two snow lions with a wheel in between.

“The distinguishing marks of the 5 Srang note are: in the middle of the face of the note a lion is represented; he carries a treasure in his mouth and a flame in his paw. On the back there is a vase in the centre. The seals of the Dalai Lama and of the bank will also be printed on the banknotes. It has been decided to issue these notes for the whole region and to release them for circulation. This decision should be carried out and nobody should have any objections. Samples of the notes will be issued, so that the banknotes can be distinguished from false notes. All reasonable human beings, above all government officials and employees, should be on the alert for false notes, examining the notes of others. Whoever finds false notes should consider the general interest. The fact should be verified and reported to the police. A satisfactory recompense will be received. These orders shall be carried out.”⁹¹

The following figures are the total number of 10 Srang notes which were issued:

1941 (T.E. 1687)	35,000
1942 (T.E. 1688)	20,600
1943 (T.E. 1689)	40,000
1944 (T.E. 1690)	40,000
1945 (T.E. 1691)	90,000
1946 (T.E. 1692)	200,000
1947 (T.E. 1693)	200,000
1948 (T.E. 1694)	98,000
Total	723,600 ⁹²

One 10 Srang note dated T.E. 1686 (1940) exists without a serial number. The Tibetan government might have started preparing the 10 Srang issue by that year already and a few samples might have been printed. There is a remote possibility that this note is one of the sample notes referred to in the above-quoted decree, although it differs in some respects from the design of the later issues, for which reason it is also thought to be a contemporaneous forgery.⁹³

Another 10 Srang note in my collection can easily be identified as a forgery. The style of the letters of the legend in four lines on the obverse of the note in particular indicates a very inexpert hand. More notes of this vintage exist with the same serial numbers (Plate XVIII).⁹⁴

The seals used on the 10 Srang notes are not known from earlier note issues. The red seal has a round frame and a trilobed middle part which is filled with indecipherable characters. The black seals have the same inscription as the ones of the earlier Tam issues but are much smaller. We can distinguish between the following types:



Type 4 (enlarged): normal type with complete frame



Type 4a (enlarged): the upper right corner of the frame is cut or broken



Type 4b (enlarged): the upper right and lower left corners of the frame are cut

PLATE XVIII



*Forgery of 10 Srang note, dated T.E. 1690. Serial number 168350.
Note the unprofessional style of the Tibetan script on the face of the note*

DESCRIPTION OF THE 10 SRANG NOTE (PLATE XIX)

Obverse: in the central panel two lions (possibly a lioness with her cub), are facing left, playing with a wheel which has eight spokes and long streamers. In the lower centre is a flower and above it are clouds and mountains. This panel is surrounded by eight smaller ones which have a red underprint of small flowers with four petals. In the upper corner panels, each of which contains a cartouche, the Tibetan word *srang* appears, while in the lower corner panels the word *bcu* is inserted. The two panels to the left and right of the central part are decorated with flowers in the corners and leaves inbetween and are reserved for the red and black seals. The oblong rectangular panels above and below the central panel contain a legend in four lines in *dbu can* script, identical to the one found on the Tam notes, with changes occurring at the end of the second line according to the different dates. The 16th cycle is mentioned in the last line.

In the right and left parts of the outer frame the legend *dga' ldan pho brang phyogs las rnam gyäl*" in 'phags pa script appears together with four flowers. The upper part of the frame is decorated with five flowers and leaves, while the lower part has the cartouche reserved for the numbers in the centre and a flower with leaves on either side.

Reverse: there is only one large rectangular panel with red underprint consisting of small flowers with four petals; all of this is surrounded by a frame which has the seven precious objects (*rin chen dun*). Starting at the lower left corner and going clockwise we see: a branch of coral, a pair of the king's earrings, a pair of elephant tusks, the cloud-like *ju-i*, an ingot, a pair of the queen's earrings, and a rhinoceros horn. Flowers with four petals are placed in between. In the centre of the lower part is a round ornament with two comma-shaped lines inside it, surrounded by four small circles and a streamer on either side, possibly representing the yin-yang symbol. The middle part of the central panel is enclosed by lines which form a cartouche. Below is a pond in which a lotus flower and a large flower on either side are growing. Above there are three mythological animals: on top a snow lion with garuda head, below left a sea monster (Tib. *chi sin*) issuing from a conch, and below right an otter or tiger (?) with the head of a fish.⁹⁵ On either side of the cartouche are two dragons and a ball with streamers among clouds.

The 10 Srang notes have two holes on the right margin (looking from the front) for bundling the notes with a string into packets of 10, of which a few have survived intact.

Catalogue of the 10 Srang note

178. T.E. 1686 (1940)	no serial number	black seal 4 (genuine?)
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179. T.E. 1687 (1941)	83-34163	black seal 4
180. T.E. 1688 (1942)	35070-54587	black seal 4
181. T.E. 1689 (1943)	55621-94437	black seal 4
182. T.E. 1690 (1944)	97426-134845	black seal 4 and 4b
183. T.E. 1691 (1945)	135722-224561	black seal 4
184. T.E. 1692 (1946)	<i>ka</i> 000280-098546	black seal 4, 4a and 4b
185. T.E. 1692 (1946)	<i>kha</i> 000118-099916	black seal 4, 4a and 4b
186. T.E. 1693 (1947)	<i>ga</i> 003073-099630	black seal 4 and 4a
187. T.E. 1693 (1947)	<i>nga</i> 001890-098402	black seal 4 and 4a
188. T.E. 1694 (1948)	<i>ca</i> 002045-097433	black seal 4 and 4a

3. The 5 Srang Note

This note was first issued in 1941, the same year as the 10 Srang notes were released. The notes are undated, except for mentioning the 16th cycle, and have a legend in two lines only. These correspond to the first and fourth lines of the obverse legend of the 10 Srang notes:

gnam bskos dga' ldan pho brang phyogs las rnam rgyal
chos srid gnyis ldan gyi rab byung bcu drug pa'i shog dngul

The security legend printed on a separate paper or on the reverse of one of the outer sheets of the note consists only of one line:

dga' ldan pho brang

The red seal printed on the 5 Srang notes is the same as that used on the 10 Srang notes. Moreover, the same black seals were used for the 5 Srang note, but only types 4 and 4a have been recorded. The following number of notes were issued each year:⁹⁶

1942.	10,000	nos. 1-10,000
1943.	30,100	nos. 10,001-40,100
1944.	21,000	nos. 40,101-61,100
1945.	30,000	nos. 61,101-91,100
1946.	43,500	nos. <i>ka</i> 000,001- <i>ka</i> 043,500

The fact that for the issues of 1946 a six-digit number was chosen indicates that originally the printing of further 5 Srang notes was planned. However, a large number of a new type, Gaden Tangka, was minted in 1946. This coin circulated at the value of 5 Srang and obviously made the issue of further 5 Srang notes unnecessary.

PLATE XX



The 5 Srang note, dated to the 16th cycle. Serial number 60438.

Black seal type 4

DESCRIPTION OF THE 5 SRANG NOTE (PLATE XX)

Obverse: the middle panel is printed in blue. A snow lion facing left and looking sideways has a silk ball in his mouth; there is a tree with flowers on his left, clouds in the background on the left, and the sun to the right. Below and above this panel the legend in two lines is placed into oblong panels. To the left and right of the central panel two squares are reserved for the red and black seals. Below the lower legend an oblong space is left blank for the serial number. In the two corner squares above is the word *srang* and in the two corner squares below is the word *lnga*. In the left and right part of the frame is the following legend in 'phags pa script: *dga' ldan pho brang phyogs las rnam rgyal*. The note is printed in four colours: blue for the central panel and for the flower and leaf ornament placed into a long panel above the upper line of the legend; red for the frame and the outlines of all panels; yellow as underprint for all panels except the central one and the one reserved for the numbering; and black for the legends in *bdu can* script.

Reverse: the reverse is printed in red and has a blue underprint consisting of small flower-like ornaments. Two dragons, each with a large ball containing the yin-yang symbol, are facing each other and are separated by a cartouche. Within the cartouche is a drawing which most probably consists of the eight auspicious emblems (Tib. *bkra shis rdzas brgyad*): from top to bottom one sees a conch, a bowl filled with curd, vermilion powder (*li khri*) in four small boxes, a mirror, below the mirror secretions from the glands of an elephant (*gi vang*), Darwa grass (*rtsa dur ba*), peaches (*shing to bir ba*), and white mustard seeds (*yungs skar*) placed in a bowl. These objects commemorate eight scenes from the Buddha's life.⁹⁷

The 5 Srang notes, like the multicoloured 50 Tam and the 10 Srang issues, have two holes at the right margin for bundling the notes into packets. However, so far I have not encountered any intact bundles of 5 Srang notes.

Catalogue of the 5 Srang note

189. (1942-1945)	1-91,100	black seal 4
190. (1946)	ka 000,001-ka 043500	black seal 4
191. (1946)		black seal 4a (lower left corner is cut)

4. The 25 Srang Note

This note is undated, like the 100 Srang notes, and was first issued in 1949. The following decree authorising the printing of the note was issued:

“In order to be able to withdraw and exchange the 100 Srang notes which are worn out and also to provide funds for the government it was proposed to print 25 Srang notes. This proposal has been authorised by the Regent Da Zha [Taktra Rimpoche] and a note in orange colour should be printed. On the face of the note within a frame there are five snow mountains, the sun, the moon, the stars and a pair of standing lions, holding a wheel in their paws. Below is the ocean and seven pairs of treasures. In the middle a vase set with precious stones and jade represents long life. In the four corners “25 srang” is written with Tibetan letters. The inscription *dga ldan pho brang phyogs las rnam rgyal* is also printed on the note. Below the inscription, “Union of religion and government, 25 Srang”.

“The back is orange in colour. Within a frame which is decorated with treasures and green leaves is a view of the city of Ga Xi [Chinese transcription]. In this city there are rulers and officials, immortals and the four animals which symbolise union. In the four corners are ornaments consisting of green twigs. On the edge are leaves, lotus flowers and red silk ribbons. This banknote will be issued for the whole region. The whole population shall put this banknote into circulation with the distinguishing marks described above.”⁹⁸

The same security legend in two lines as the one on the 100 Srang notes and the earlier banknotes is printed on the back of the face or reverse of the note.

In addition, the red and black seals used for the 25 Srang notes are the same as those which I recorded for the 100 Srang notes. However, only the varieties 3 and 3B of the black seals are used. A total of 700,000 25 Srang notes were printed in the following years:⁹⁹

1950	224,000	<i>ka</i> 000,001- <i>ka</i> 100,000 <i>kha</i> 000,001- <i>kha</i> 100,000 <i>ga</i> 000,001- <i>ga</i> 024,000
1951	256,000	<i>ga</i> 024,001- <i>ga</i> 100,000 <i>nga</i> 000,001- <i>nga</i> 100,000 <i>ca</i> 000,001- <i>ca</i> 090,000
1952	59,000	<i>ca</i> 090,001- <i>ca</i> 100,000 <i>cha</i> 000,001- <i>cha</i> 049,000
1953	61,000	<i>cha</i> 049,001- <i>cha</i> 100,000
1954	86,000	<i>ja</i> 000,001- <i>ja</i> 086,000
1955	14,000	<i>ja</i> 086,001- <i>ja</i> 100,000

DESCRIPTION OF THE 25 SRANG NOTE (PLATE XXI)

Since both sides of the note have been described in sufficient detail in the above-quoted Tibetan decree, I shall only add a few points. The face of the note is printed with three different blocks, one for printing the plain yellow background of the frame and the central part of the note, one for printing the background of the rectangles reserved for the legends (with swastika design) and for the squares reserved for the seals (design of flowers with four petals), and one for printing the main design in red.

Five blocks were necessary to print the back of the note:¹⁰⁰ two for printing the yellow backing and the red design of the frame, one for the cartouche-like design in blue which frames the central part, one for the backing of the cartouche in yellow (flower design), and one for the printing of the central design in red. The central design has a yellow backing which was either printed with a sixth block or with the same block which was used to print the yellow backing of the frame.

Catalogue of the 25 Srang note

It should be noted that many notes are known which have the cartouche-like design of the back printed inverted; since this is hardly noticeable, it was probably not even considered an error by the Tibetans.¹⁰¹ I do not list this common variety separately.

192. (1950)	<i>ka</i> 000908-099332	black seal 3
193. (1950)		black seal 3 B
194. (1950)	<i>kha</i> 000572-096133	black seal 3
195. (1950)		black seal 3 B
196. (1950-51)	<i>ga</i> 000088-098525	black seal 3
197. (1950-51)		black seal 3 B
198. (1951)	<i>nga</i> 000191-099229	black seal 3
199. (1951)		black seal 3 B
200. (1951-52)	<i>ca</i> 000077-099938	black seal 3
201. (1951-52)		black seal 3 B
202. (1952-53)	<i>cha</i> 000100-099928	black seal 3
203. (1952-53)		black seal 3 B
204. (1954-55)	<i>ja</i> 000033-099807	black seal 3
205. (1954-55)		black seal 3 B

PLATE XXI



The 25 Srang note, undated. Serial number ka 094173. Black seal type 3B

APPENDIX I

The Tibetan prefixed letters in “U-med” script as they appear on the 100 Tam Srang and 100 Srang notes

As I pointed out previously, the 100 Srang notes were printed in a very large number which necessitated the Mint employing many scribes specialised in calligraphy, each of whom would have had his own style. This explains why some letters differ from each other in appearance, occasionally having a significant variation. Therefore, I am providing here a list of all letters and their major variants which were used as prefixes for the numbering of these notes.

Most of the letters found as prefixes on the 5, 10 and 25 Srang notes are similar in style to those which I list below.

The Tibetan alphabet (to be more precise: syllabic system) consists of 30 basic letters which are grouped according to their pronunciation, in a similar way to the letters of the Devanagari script. The 100 Srang notes were the only issue for which the full syllabic system was used as number prefixes.

Ka



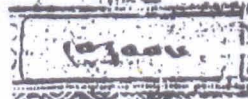
Kha



Ga



Nga



Ca



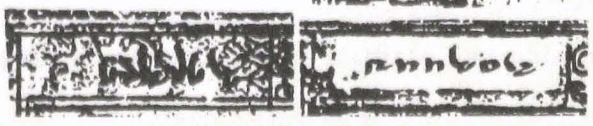
Cha



Ja



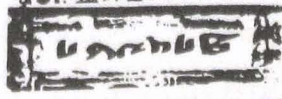
Nya



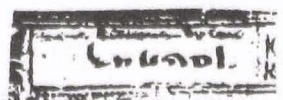
Ta



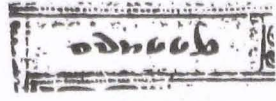
Tha



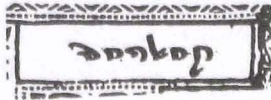
Da



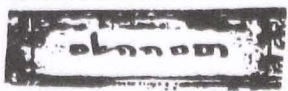
Na



Pa



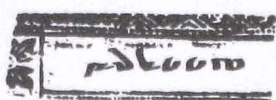
Pha



Ba



Ma



Tsa (za)



Tsha (tsa)



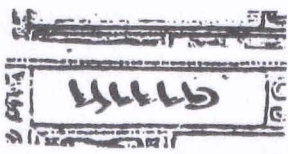
Dsa (dza)

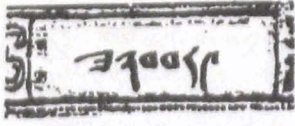


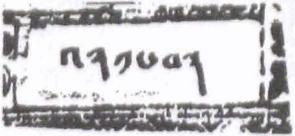
Wa




Zha



Za 

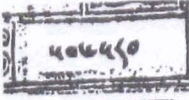

A 

Ya 

Ra  

La 

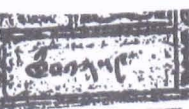

Sha 

Sa  

Ha 






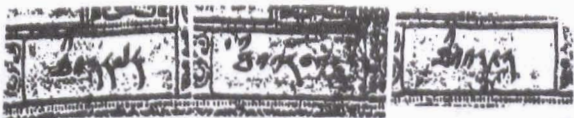
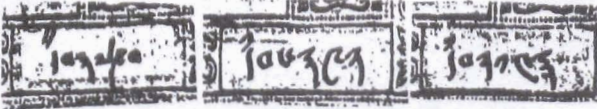

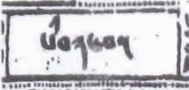


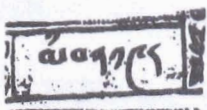
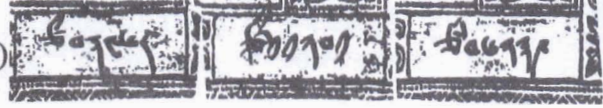
A 




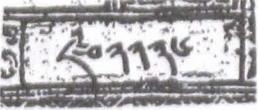
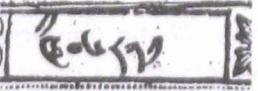
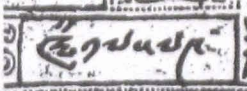
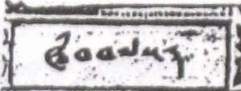
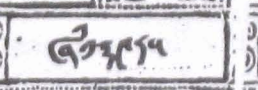
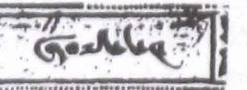
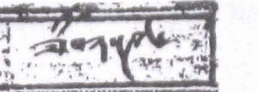


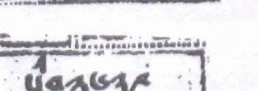
Ka/l  

¹ Kha/l  

Ga/l   

¹ Nga/l 

Ca/1	
Cha/1	
Ja/1	
Nya/1	
Ta/1	
Tha/1	
Da/1	
Na/1	
Pa/1	
Pha/1	
Ba/1	
Ma/1	
Tsa/1 (Tza/1)	

Tsha/1 (Tsa/1)			
Dsa/1 (Dza/1)			
Wa/1			
Zha/1			
Za/1			
A/1			
Ya/1			
Sa/1			

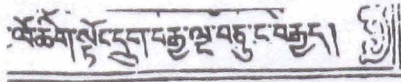
APPENDIX II

The dates on Tibetan banknotes

Two different dating systems were used on the banknotes. The Tibetan Era date can be found on all notes in Tam denomination and on the 10 Srang issues. The first year of the Tibetan Era was 254 A.D.; this year, according to the inscription on the banknotes, was the year of the founding of the Tibetan government. According to other traditions it was the year when Tho-tho-Ri, the first historical Tibetan king of the Yarlung Dynasty, was born. Yet another tradition takes it as the year when the first Buddhist scriptures fell from heaven at the Yumbu Lhakang, which had been built earlier by the legendary first Tibetan king, Nyatri Tsenpo.¹⁰² This event supposedly took place during the rule of Tho-tho-Ri.

The following dates are found on the notes in Tam:

T.E. 1658 = AD 1912



T.E. 1659 = AD 1913



T.E. 1672 = AD 1926



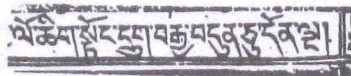
T.E. 1673 = AD 1927



T.E. 1674 = AD 1928



T.E. 1675 = AD 1929



T.E. 1676 = AD 1930



T.E. 1677 = AD 1931



T.E. 1678 = AD 1932



T.E. 1679 = AD 1933



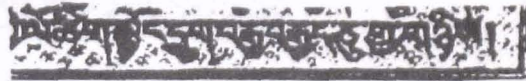
T.E. 1680 = AD 1934



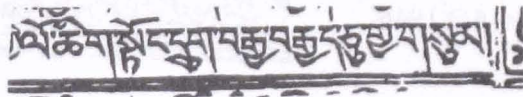
T.E. 1681 = AD 1935



T.E. 1682 = AD 1936



T.E. 1683 = AD 1937



T.E. 1684 = AD 1938



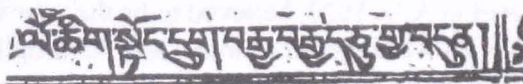
T.E. 1685 = AD 1939



T.E. 1686 = AD 1940



T.E. 1687 = AD 1941

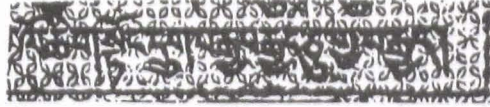


The following T.E. dates can be found on the 10 Srang issues:

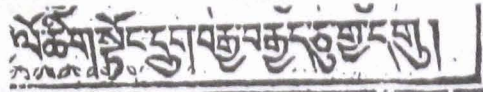
T.E. 1687 = AD 1941



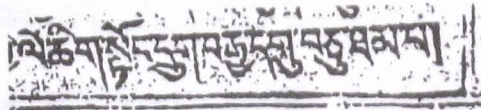
T.E. 1688 = AD 1942



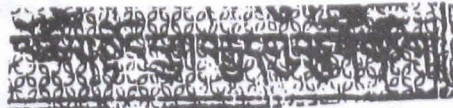
T.E. 1689 = AD 1943



T.E. 1690 = AD 1944



T.E. 1691 = AD 1945



T.E. 1692 = AD 1946



T.E. 1693 = AD 1947



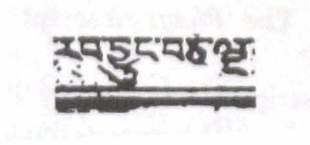
T.E. 1694 = AD 1948



The second dating system found on all the notes in the Tam denomination and on the 10 and 5 Srang notes is the Tibetan sexagenary cycle system (*rab byung*) which started in A.D. 1027, believed to be the year when the Kala Cakra (Tib. *dus kyi khor lo*) was introduced into Tibet from India via Kashmir.¹⁰³

The 15th cycle is mentioned on the early Tam notes and on the first multicoloured 50 Tam notes. The 15th cycle started in A.D. 1867 and ended in A.D. 1927.

15th Cycle:



The 16th cycle is mentioned on the later multicoloured 50 Tam notes (starting with the notes which bear the T.E. date 1673) and on the 10 and 5 Srang notes. The 16th cycle started in A.D. 1927 and ended in A.D. 1987.

16th Cycle:



APPENDIX III

The 'Phags pa script

According to tradition this script was invented by 'Phags pa¹⁰⁴ and is also called the "square script". It is used on all black seals found on the banknotes, and can also be found on the obverse of the 5, 10 and 25 Srang notes and on the reverse of the 100 Srang issue. The script is aligned into vertical lines (columns) and uses the following letters:¹⁰⁵

	a	b	c	d	e	f (Poppe)
Ka	ཀ	ཁ				ཁ
Kha	ཁ					ཁ
Ga	ཀ					ཀ
Nga	ཀ					ཀ
Ca	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ			ཀ
Cha	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ			ཀ
Ja	ཀ					ཀ
Nya	ཀ					ཀ
Ta	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Tha	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Da	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Na	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Pa	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Pha	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Ba	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Ma	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Tsa	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Tsha	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Dsa	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Wa	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Zha	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Za	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
'a	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Ya	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Ra	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
La	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Sha	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Sa	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
Ha	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ
A	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ	ཀ

NOTES

1. Two paper notes of the Yuan dynasty were found in 1959 in the Sakya monastery, and a Chinese author takes this as evidence that Chinese paper notes circulated in Tibet in the context of the close financial relations which supposedly existed between China and Tibet during the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368 A.D.). I believe, however, that this single find is not sufficient evidence to support this thesis. Taking into account the great respect which Tibetans show for all printed matter, one would expect more than just two Yuan Dynasty notes to have survived in Tibet, if these notes actually did circulate there. See "Anonymous" (Committee for the Administration of Tibetan Cultural Relics): "Xi Zhang Sa-Jia Si Fa Shian De Yuan Dai Zi Bi" ("The Paper Notes of the Yuan Dynasty Found in the Sakya Temple") in *Wen Wu*, 1975, pp. 32-34.
2. See Douglas, Nik, *Tibetan Tantric Charms and Amulets*, New York 1978: an example of the four guardian animals is given on Plate 51; an illustration of the wind-horse, surrounded by the four guardian animals, can be found on Plate 52.
3. See Brauen Martin, *Heinrich Harrers Impressionen aus Tibet*, Innsbruck and Frankfurt a.M. 1974, p. 112. According to Brauen, the pair of snow lions found on the face of the 100 Srang note represents the political and religious power of Tibet. In this case the precious objects in the bowl, which the lions raise with their paws, are interpreted as religious objects. Since these objects are related to the perfect religious ruler, I think it more likely that the lions and the bowl mainly represent the political power (Tib. *srid*), while the religious power (Tib. *chos*) is represented by the mostly Buddhist motifs on the back of the notes.
4. Publications on these banknotes are listed in the second part of the Bibliography.
5. The Tibetan Era started in 254 A.D. when, according to tradition, the first Buddhist scripts fell from heaven at Yumbu Lhakhang near the Yarlung Valley at the time of Tho-Tho-Ri, who is considered the founder of the Tibetan government. See Rhodes, Nicholas G., "Obscure System. The Dating of Tibetan Banknotes" in *Coin & Medal News*, January 1987, pp. 89-90.
6. The Dalai Lama was waiting in Samding Monastery for the surrender of the Chinese in Lhasa. See Shakabpa, Tsepon W.D., *Tibet. A Political History*, New York 1984, pp. 242-243.
G. Schulemann (*Geschichte der Dalai-Lamas*, Leipzig 1958, p. 403) gives July 1912 as the Dalai Lama's arrival date in Lhasa. Schulemann is probably confusing the Dalai Lama's departure date from Kalimpong with his arrival date in Lhasa. The 13th Dalai Lama himself gives his arrival in Lhasa as 1913 (Year of the Water-Bull) in his political testament. See Bell, Charles, *Portrait of the Dalai Lama*, London 1946, p. 379.
7. Shakabpa, Tsepon D.W., *op. cit.*, p. 245.
8. Surkhang, W.G., Letter to Hugh Richardson of 19th July 1966. I thank Mr. Richardson for making this letter available to me.
9. Bertsch, Wolfgang, "Some notes on Tibetan Paper Currency" in *The Tibet Journal*, Vol. XVI, No. 1, Dharamsala, Spring 1991, p. 128. In normal printing of Tibetan texts the *shad* always immediately follows the preceding character.
10. Bell, Charles, Diary entry 15th April 1912 (unpublished).

11. Taring, Rinchen Dolma, *Daughter of Tibet*, Reprint New Delhi 1978, p. 107.
12. Bell, Charles, *Tibet Past & Present*, Reprint New Delhi 1990 (originally published Oxford 1924), p. 255.
13. Ya Hanshang, *The Biographies of the Dalai Lamas*, Beijing 1990. According to *Xiao Huayuan* (*Xizang Difeng Huobi*, Beijing 1987, chapter 5), a Tibetan bank was already established in 1913.
14. David Neel, Alexandra, *My Journey to Lhasa*, Reprint London 1983 (first published in 1927), p. 268.
15. Teichmann, Eric, *Travels of a Consular Officer in Eastern Tibet*, Cambridge 1922, p. 146.
16. In January 1996 the author saw in Kathmandu a printing block for the face of the 10 Tam note. The block was made from iron (steel) and had a thickness of about 2 cm. The scrolls in the four corners of the central part were drawn with a single instead of a double line as seen on the surviving notes. Some other details of the design were also at variance with the actual notes. Therefore, this block must either be a rejected trial plate or it was produced by a forger. The existence of this block, presuming that it is a genuine product of the Mint, suggests the possibility that woodblocks were only used during the first years of printing the Tam notes, and that these were replaced by iron blocks in the later years because the lifespan of the earlier woodblocks must have been rather short. It should also be noted that, after extended use, woodblocks can look as bright as iron; it is possible that people who witnessed the printing of the early banknotes mistook iron blocks for woodblocks. Both Chinese and Western authors unanimously believe that the early banknotes were printed with woodblocks, but neither group of authors can support their view with Tibetan documentary evidence, instead basing it solely on the fact that Tibet has a long tradition of woodblock printing.
17. Xiao Huayuan, *Xizang Difeng Huobishi* (The History of Tibetan Money), Beijing 1987, chapter 5.
18. The Dode Mint probably did not start operating until 1907 and was closed temporarily between April 1910 and about 1912; in the 1920s it was modernized. See Rhodes, Nickolas G. "Tibetan Mints", *Oriental Numismatic Society, Information Sheet No. 19*, August 1978, p. 3.
19. Numismatic Research Team of the Institute of Finance of the Tibet Branch of the People's Bank of China, "Xi-Zhang-He-Ping-Je-Fang-qian-Yin-Zi-qian-Bi-Gai-Kuang" ("Brief Information on the Minting and Printing of Tibetan Currency before the Peaceful Liberation") in *China Numismatics*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (1988), pp. 50-55.
20. During a visit to Lhasa in October 1995, I was told that the Trabshi Lekhung Mint was located at the site of the present-day Xinhua Printing Press, about halfway between the centre of Lhasa and Sera Monastery. It seems that none of the old Mint buildings has survived.
21. However, see Note 16.
22. Narbeth, Colin (ed.), *Tibetan Paper Money*, in print. Different colour shades have been recorded for the 5, 10, 25 and early 50 Tam notes. Most of the known colour varieties were recorded by Bhupendra Narayan Shrestha in his *Tibetan Paper Currency*, St. Albans 1987, p. 25.

23. Xiao Huayuan, *op. cit.*, chapter 5. I was unable to identify Sgyom Stor on available maps.
24. Rhodes, Nicholas G., "Tibetan Forgeries made in Calcutta" in *The Numismatic Chronicle*, 1982, p. 93. The information was given in Calcutta by the Tibetan official Ngawang Tsultrim Kesang in 1927.
An informant now living in Switzerland mentioned the plant *arwo drawo* (Tib. *ar bo gra bo* literally meaning "multicoloured Aloe") as one of the ingredients used for the production of banknote paper. See Gabrisch, Karl, *Geld aus Tibet*, Winterthur 1990, p. 49, footnote 3. See also footnote 64.
25. Shrestha, Bhupendra Narayan *op. cit.*, p. 2. However, the three papers must have been pasted together before printing at least in the multicoloured 50 Tam notes, since a note in Shrestha's collection shows part of the design of the back on the face of the note on a portion of paper which had been folded up. See Shrestha, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3. There is no doubt that the Srang notes were pasted together before printing, since numerous 100 Srang notes exist showing what is generally called "kissprint", i.e. the paper had creased during printing and, when carefully drawn apart, reveals white stripes on both sides of the note. Had the parts been glued together only after printing, then white stripe(s) would show only on one side of the note or, more likely, not at all.
26. Goldstein, Melvin C., *A History of Modern Tibet*, Indian edition, New Delhi 1993 (U.S. edition 1989), p. 150, note 5. According to Goldstein the *l-truggpas* were also employed as carvers of woodblocks, as well as copied official reports and files and kept the diary of the Dalai Lama. However, we don't know if they were also employed to carve the woodblocks for the first banknote series.
27. Rhodes, N.G.: *loc. cit.* Rhodes gives the name "Currency Office" for the place where banknotes were numbered. Xiao Huaiyuan, *op. cit.*, chapter 5.
28. Harrer, Heinrich: *Sieben Jahre in Tibet*, Wien 1952, p. 174.
29. Surkhang, W.G., Letter to H. Richardson dated 9th August 1966.
30. I am grateful to Mr. Gylfi Snorrason who suggested the classification of the black seals into five types. See Narbeth, Colin, *Tibetan Paper Money*, in print.
31. Both these variants of the *zhabs kyu* in 'phags pa script are correct. See Schuh, Dieter, "Grundlagen Tibetischer Siegelkunde", *Monumenta Tibetica Historica*, Abteilung III, Band 5, Sankt Augustin 1981, p. 43. See also Appendix III, p. 59.
32. Shrestha, B.N., *op. cit.*, p. 21. Shrestha gives the lowest and highest serial numbers which we mention, yet believes that as many as 50,000 pieces of the 5 Tam note were issued (*op. cit.*, p. 8). Since the 5 Tam note is the only one of the early notes which has survived in considerable numbers (ca. 1,000 notes), it is unlikely that serial numbers higher than 40,000 will be discovered. That is why I prefer to give a lower estimate than Shrestha.
33. This translation has been suggested by the staff of the Museum of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamsala. A somewhat different translation of the last two lines is given in *Catalogue of the Tibetan Collection and other Lamaist Material* in the Newark Museum, Vol. V, Newark 1971, p. 30: "Paper money of the 15th cycle which is endowed with religion and government, being the crest jewel (*spyi nor*) of the fourfold perfection, namely power, glory, welfare and happiness."

For yet another translation of this legend, see Brauen, Martin, *Heinrich Harrers Impressionen aus Tibet*, Frankfurt a.M. 1974, p. 167. Brauen gives the following German translation: "...Jahre seit Beginn der zweigeteilten rechtmäßigen Herrschaft im mächtigen Schneeland Tibet" (oben), und "Papiergeld im 15. Rabjung zu Nutz und Frommen der Allgemeinheit und der Herrschaft von den Vier Guten Qualitäten (Gesundheit des körpers, Hab und Gut, Gute Untertanenschaft und Schriftgelehrsamkeit), welche sowohl die geistliche wie auch kie weltliche umfasst."

34. For the description of the five sense stimulating objects I follow Olschak, Blanche Christine and Wangyal, Geshe Thupten, *Mystic Art of Ancient Tibet*, London 1973, p. 45. See also Shrestha, B.N., *op. cit.*, p. 9. These five objects are also represented on a Tibetan 10 Tam silver pattern coin. See Gabrisch, Karl, *op. cit.*, Plate 21 (p. 89).
35. Olschak, Blanche Christine and Wangyal, Thupten Geshe, loc. cit. For a somewhat different interpretation of the objects on the reverse frame of the 5 Tam note see Shrestha, B.N., loc. cit.
36. For a more detailed discussion of this legend see Bertsch, Wolfgang, "The 'Gaden' Inscription on Tibetan Coins" in *Numismatics International Bulletin*, Vol. 25, no. 9 (Dallas, September 1990), pp. 204-207.
dGa' ldan may be a short form of *dga' ba brgya ldan* (possessing a hundred happinesses). See Phuntsog, Wangyal, "The influence of Religion on Tibetan Politics" in *The Tibet Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Dharamsala July/Sept. 1975, p. 85, footnote 3.
 The word *dga' ldan* on its own is used to refer to the "Tushita" heaven, presided over by the coming Buddha, Maitreya. See Das, Sarat Chandra, *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*, reprint, Jalandhar 1985 (first edition: Calcutta 1902), pp. 263-264.
37. The eight Buddhist auspicious symbols also figure on most of Tibet's coins. See Shrestha, B.N., *op. cit.*, p. 40.
38. Following a suggestion made by Nicholas G. Rhodes I refer to the notes which bear the date T.E. 1659 altered from an original T.E. 1658 as "1659/58" notes, while those notes of 25 and 50 Tam (blue) which were printed from new blocks (and do not show any gap after the Tibetan word *dgu*) are referred to as being dated simply "T.E. 1659".
39. For an illustration of this note see Shrestha, B.N., *op. cit.*, p. 40.
40. Most probably the objects form part of the "eight auspicious substances" (*bkra shis rdsas brgyad*): *melong* (mirror), *gi lbang* (concretion of the brains of elephants), *zho* (curd), *rtsa dur ba* (durva grass), *shing tog bil pa* (bilva, wood-apple), *dung dkar gyas 'khyil* (right-whorled conchshell), *li khri* (vermilion) and *yungs dkar* (white mustard seeds). See Tsepa Rigzin, *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Buddhist Terminology*, Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, Dharamsala 1986, p. 16.
41. See Note 37.
42. See Shrestha, B.N., *op. cit.*, p. 11. I have noted a different interpretation of this scene at the entrance of the Nature Interpretation Centre in Kalimpong: "Ancient Buddhist fable, originating from the famous White Horse Monastery at Lo-Yang (A.D. 65-150). The saplings, watered and nurtured by the elephant, grew up to mature and bear fruits beyond its reach. A living ladder of elephant, monkey,

rabbit and bird helped pluck the fruits and pass them downwards to be enjoyed by all animals. The surplus fruit trees were enjoyed by mankind, and peaceful co-existence prevailed (Ugen Wangchuk)."

43. Bell, Charles, *Tibet Past & Present*, Indian reprint, New Delhi 1990 (originally published Oxford 1924), p. 204. Unfortunately, Bell does not illustrate a forged note but only a genuine specimen of the 50 Tam. See also McGovern, William, *To Lhasa in Disguise*, Indian reprint, New Delhi 1992 (first published in 1924), p. 390.
44. Rhodes, N.G., *op. cit.*, p. 94.
45. Surkhang, W.G., Letter to H. Richardson of 9th August 1966. See also Bertsch, Wolfgang, "Buyer Beware! The Forgeries of the 1913 50 Tam banknotes of Tibet" in *Banknote News*, No. 40, March/April 1991, p. 24.
46. For an illustration of this note see Gabrisch, Karl, *op. cit.*, p. 100, Plate 32. Recently I have seen further specimens of the monochrome 50 Tam note showing fully drawn petals on the obverse and looking genuine. Therefore I now believe that not necessarily all notes which present this feature can be identified as forgeries.
47. Hobson, R.L., *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, reprint, New York 1976 (originally published London 1915), p. 286. This scene is also called the "six symbols of long life" (*tshe ring drug skor*) which are: 1. The old sage, 2. a pair of deer, 3. a pair of cranes, 4. a tree, 5. rocks, and 6. spring water. See Gabrisch, Karl, *op. cit.*, p. 64. See also Loden Sherap Dayyab, "Tibetan Religious Art" in *Asiatische Forschungen*, Vol. 52, Part II, Plates, p. 35.
48. See Shrestha, B.N., *op. cit.*, p. 11.
49. Shrestha, B.N., loc. cit. According to Shrestha this note is the property of the Mahendra Memorial Museum in Kathmandu, Nepal.
50. See Numismatic Research Team of the Institute of Finance of the Tibet Branch of the People's Bank of China, *op. cit.* The *gser-khang* mint is called *luo dui* in this Chinese article. Another Chinese source suggests that the multicoloured 50 Tam notes were first printed by hand and only from 1932 by machine. See Ci-ren Ping-cuo, Yan Lunzhang and Zhu Jinzhong, *Zang-Bi-Yan-Jiu-Ji-Qi-Xian-Si-Yi* (Research in Tibetan Currency and its Actual Importance). However, we believe that the early notes of this series were also printed by machine, since the actual notes do not provide any evidence of a major change in the printing technique.
51. Muszynski, Maurice, "Varieties of the Tibetan 50 Tam Note" in *Bulletin of the International Banknote Society*, 1970, pp. 99-102.
52. Xiao Huaiyuan, *op. cit.*, chapter 6.
53. Surkhang, W.G., Letter to H. Richardson of 9th August 1966. According to a Chinese author the forged notes dated T.E. 1677 received an additional red seal and were thus made legal. When comparing the 50 Tam notes of T.E. 1677 with the additional red seal with those of the same date lacking an additional seal, one cannot notice any major difference. This is why I prefer Surkhang's interpretation of the additional red seal. See Xiao Huaiyuan, loc. cit. It should be noted that the 50 Tam of T.E. 1677 is the only note which was legally stamped with an additional seal. A 50 Tam note of T.E. 1677 with four additional red seals together with a 5 Srang, 25 Srang and 100 Srang note also stamped with four additional red seals

- were “discovered” in the 1990s and offered as rarities by a dealer from Singapore. The additional red seals on these notes are clearly modern fabrications.
54. The lowest and highest serial numbers which I give for the multicoloured 50 Tam notes are based on data recently supplied by N.G. Rhodes. For all other notes I mostly follow B.N. Shrestha (*op. cit.*) in regard to lowest and highest serial numbers. In some cases I also consulted Narbeth, Colin, (*op. cit.*). Some of the data have been corrected on the basis of lower or higher serial numbers found on notes in my own collection.
 55. Numismatic Research Team of the Institute of Finance of the Tibet Branch of the People's Bank of China, *op. cit.*
 56. Xiao Huaiyuan, *op. cit.*, chapter 5 (p. 49).
 57. Numismatic Research Team of the Institute of Finance of the Tibet Branch of the People's Bank of China, *op. cit.* The figure 100,000 per year is correct only for certain years. In the years 1926 to 1930, 1937 and 1938 the number of notes issued was much lower.
 58. See Charles Panish: “Tibetan Paper Money (2nd part)” in *Whitman Numismatic Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 9, Sept. 1968, p. 504. Panish mentions the date T.E. 1689 for the multicoloured 50 Tam note. This year could never be confirmed and most probably represents an erroneous reading, perhaps of the year T.E. 1686.
 59. Shrestha, Bhupendra Narayan, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
 60. Xiao Huaiyuan, *op. cit.*, chapter 6. For further examples of inflation in Tibet see Gabrisch, Karl, *Geld aus Tibet*, Winterthur 1990, p. 52 and Bertsch, Wolfgang, “Exotisches Papiergeld aus Tibet. Part II.” in *Der Geldscheinsammler*, Vol. 8, July 1994, p. 18.
 61. Goldstein, Melvyn, *A History of Modern Tibet. 1913 - 1951*, Indian edition, New Delhi 1993, pp. 570-571 and p. 606, footnote 124. A copy of a letter from the Reserve Bank of India, Calcutta, to L.Y. Pangdatshang, Tibet Government Trade Agent, Kalimpong, dated 7th July 1949 mentions an import licence which allowed Tibet to import 12,044,090 fine Troy ounces of gold from the USA. (The copy of this letter is presently in the possession of the author.)
 62. Zhu Jingzhong, Ci-Ren-Ping-Cuo and Yan Lungzhan, *Yuan-Xi-Zang-Di-Fang-Qian-Bi-Gai-Kuang* (A General Introduction to Tibetan Local Currency), Lhasa 1989.
 63. Xiao Huaiyuan, *op. cit.*, chapter 7.
 64. Spencer Chapman visited Trabshi Lekhung in late 1936 or early 1937 and writes: “I had heard that owing to the fact that the paint on the paper notes will dry only during the three months of summer, the Tibetans are saved from the dangers of inflation; but this story, attractive as it is, is not true.” (*Memoirs of a Mountaineer*, London 1945 (first published as *Lhasa: The Holy City*, London 1938), p. 375. Chapman's informant most probably confused the banknote paper production with the printing of the notes.
 65. Institute of Finance of the Tibet Branch of the People's Bank of China, “Xi-Zhang-Di-Fang-Zhen-Fu-De-Zhao-Bi-Chang” (“The Mint of the local Tibetan Government”) in *China Numismatics*, No. 28 (1990.1), pp. 29-42.
 66. According to analysis, the fibres in the paper of the 100 and 25 Srang notes are of *Daphne Papyracea* and *Daphne Bholua*. See Bower, Peter, *Banknote*

- Examination. Five Tibetan Banknotes from the collection of Colin Narbeth*, London 1995, p. 6.
67. Bower, Peter, *op. cit.*, passim.
 68. One of the suppliers of colours to Tibet was John Dickinson & Co. Ltd. of Calcutta. An invoice of this company, dated 11th May 1950 and addressed to Tsipon Shakalpa (*sic* for Shakabpa who was the Tibetan government's agent in Calcutta at that time), mentions the following colours: scarlet red, bright green, brilliant blue, primrose chrome, bronze blue. Some of these colours were possibly also used for printing postage stamps which were produced in Trabshi Lekhung at the same time as the banknotes.
 69. Xiao Huaiyuan, *op. cit.*, chapter 7.
 70. Cassinelli, C.W. and Ekvall, Robert B., *A Tibetan Principality. The Political System of Sa skya*, New York 1969, p. 376 (Appendix D).
 71. Lowell, Thomas, *Tibet im Gewitter. Die letzte Reise nach Lhasa*. (Original title *Out of this World*), Berlin 1951, pp. 26-27.
 72. Oral communication by R.K. Sprigg to the author in Kalimpong in 1995.
 73. See Macdonald, David, *Cultural Heritage of Tibet* (originally published as *The Land of the Lama*, London 1929), New Delhi 1978, p. 222. And Maraini, Fosco, *Secret Tibet*, London 1954, p. 194. Macdonald mentions 150 and 500 Tangka notes in bright blue colour, while Maraini writes about 100 and 500 Tangka notes.
 74. Xiao Huaiyuan, *op. cit.*, chapter 7.
 75. Bertsch, Wolfgang, "Some Notes on Tibetan Paper Currency" in *The Tibet Journal*, Vol. XVI, No. 1, Dharamsala Spring 1991, p. 137 (Plate V).
 76. Zhu Jingzhong, Ci-Ren-Ping-Cuo and Yan Lungzhang (Finance Department of the Tibetan Autonomous Region Branch of the People's Bank of China), *Yuan-Xi-Zang-Fang-Bi-Gai-Kuang* (A General Introduction to Local Tibetan Currency), Lhasa 1988.
 77. Shrestha, B.N., *op. cit.*, p. 6.
 78. Gabrisch, Karl, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
 79. Surkhang, W.G., Letter to H. Richardson of 9th August 1966.
 80. See Shrestha, B.N., *op. cit.*, p. 14.
 81. See Eberhard, Wolfram, *A Dictionary of Chinese Symbols*, London 1986, p. 240: "Pomegranate: is full of seeds (zi) and by the rules of transfer (homonymic), full of children, thus symbolises fertility."
 82. Surkhang, W.G., Letter to H. Richardson of 9th August 1966.
 83. Xiao, Huaiyuan, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
 84. Zhu Jingzhong et alia, *op. cit.*
 85. loc. cit. in Note 69.
 86. Shrestha, B.N., *op. cit.*, pp. 64 and 72-74.
 87. Kimura, Hisao, *Japanese Agent in Tibet*, London 1990, p. 129.
 88. For further varieties of prefixed letters see the Appendix.
 89. The lower numbers of the *ga* series are written with four digits only, while from the fourth letter of the Tibetan alphabet (*nga*) onwards they are usually written with five digits. Exception: One note of the *ca* series in the author's collection shows only four digits: no. *ca* 0421.
 90. See Shrestha, B.N., *op. cit.*, p. 15.

91. Zhu Jingzhong et alia, *op. cit.*
92. Xiao Huaiyuan, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
93. Shrestha, B.N. and Rhodes, N.G., "The Earliest 10 Srang Tibetan Bank Note?" in *International Bank Note Society Journal*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (1991), pp. 20-21.
94. One is illustrated by B.N. Shrestha, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
95. See Shrestha, B.N., *op. cit.*, p. 12.
96. Xiao Huaiyuan, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
97. Shrestha, B.N., *op. cit.*, p. 13; and Olschak, Blanche Christine and Wangyal, Geshe Thupten, *op. cit.*, 44-45.
98. Zhu Jingzhong et alia, *op. cit.*
99. Xiao Huaiyuan, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
100. Karl Gabrisch saw two printing blocks for the back of the 25 Srang issue with a dealer in Lhasa (August 1995). The blocks were made of copper and served to print the central part and the cartouche-like frame respectively. A third block made from a copper alloy (possibly bronze) showed part of the cartouche-like frame in incuse. It is probably an unfinished master die from which printing plates were going to be cast in copper whenever necessary, thus insuring that new blocks were not at variance with the used ones which they were meant to replace. The blocks are now in a private collection in Nepal.
101. See B.N. Shrestha, *op. cit.*, p. 53.
102. See Rhodes, Nickolas G., "The Dating of Tibetan Banknotes" in *The Tibet Journal*, Vol. XIII, No. 1, Spring 1988, pp. 57-60. Also see Shakabpa, Tsepon WD., *Tibet. A Political History*, New York 1984, pp. 24-25. Shakabpa believes that the Buddhist text, which was called "Nyenpo Sangwa" (The Secret) by King Tho-tho-ri, was given to this king in 233 A.D. and that the king was born 60 years earlier, i.e. in 173 A.D. He therefore assumes that currency notes were first introduced in 1890 A.D., taking 232 A.D. as the first T.E. year. However, this is inconsistent with the evidence of the banknotes themselves.
103. Some authorities have suggested a slightly earlier date for the introduction of the Kalacakra. See Schlagintweit, Emil, *Buddhism in Tibet*, Indian reprint, Delhi and Varanasi 1988, pp. 276-277. Schlagintweit believes that the Kalacakra was introduced in the year 1025 A.D. and that the first Tibetan cycle started in 1026 A.D. See also Csoma de Körös, Alexander, *Grammar of the Tibetan Language*, Reprint Budapest 1986, p. 148. Tsepon WD Shakabpa (*op. cit.*, p. 17) suggests that the Kalacakra Tantra was translated into Tibetan in 1027 A.D. and that this became the first year of the first 60-year cycle.
Some Tibetan pattern coins exist bearing the Western date as well as the Tibetan cycle date, which show that the year 1027 A.D. is taken as the first year of the first cycle for Tibet's coinage. There is every reason to believe that the same year of commencement for the first cycle was assumed for the dating of the banknotes. See Bertsch, Wolfgang, "Tibetan Patterns of the Year 1951" in *Numismatics International Bulletin*, Vol. 27, No. 4, April 1992, pp. 94-96.
104. 'Phags pa died in 1280 A.D. See Shakabpa, Tsepon W.D., *op. cit.*, p. 69.
105. The 'phags pa letters are given according to Schuh, Dieter, *Grundlagen Tibetischer Siegelkunde. Monumenta Tibetica Historica*, Abteilung III, Band 5, Sankt Augustin 1981, pp. 40-44.
106. Letter to Hugh Richardson, dated 9th August 1966.

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A. PUBLICATIONS IN WESTERN LANGUAGES

A1. Anonymous, *Catalogue of the Tibetan Collection and other Lamaist Material in the Newark Museum*, Vol. V. Newark, New Jersey 1971, pp. 30-32 and Plate 17.

A brief introduction to Tibetan paper money. "From about 1932, the paper was manufactured in Kyemdong, in the district of Dhagpo, a famous paper-making center in southern Tibet, and only the printing was done in Lhasa, with electrically-worked machinery from England." A translation of the legend of the early Tam issues is given. The 5 Tam, the multicoloured 50 Tam, the 10 Srang and the 100 Srang notes are described. A multicoloured 50 Tam note dated T.E. 1673 and a 100 Srang note are illustrated on Plate 17 (p. 51).

A2. Anonymous, "Lama-Ruled Tibet Issued Exotic Notes" in *World Coins*, Vol. 4, No. 42, Sydney, Ohio June 1967, p. 480.

A brief introduction to the different issues of Tibetan notes with numerous incorrect statements. The face of a 100 Srang note is illustrated.

A3. Anonymous, "Tibetan Bank Notes" in *The Numismatist*, Vol. 55 (1942), p.27.

Records notes of 1, 5 and 10 Yuan placed into circulation by the Central Bank's branch in Kanting, Sikang province. Unfortunately no description of these notes is given.

A4. Anonymous, "Tibetan Bank Notes" in *The Numismatist*, Vol. 53 (1940), p. 419.

Reports notes of the Farmers Bank of China, surcharged in the Tibetan language.

A5. Bell, Sir Charles, *Portrait of the Dalai Lama*, London 1946, p. 162.

Treasury notes of 5, 10, 15, 25 and 50 trang-kas were issued starting in 1914.

A6. Bell, Sir Charles, *Tibet. Past & Present*, Oxford 1924, pp. 203-204.

The case of a monk who had counterfeited Tibetan currency notes is reported. A plate facing p. 204 shows the convicted monk and a blue 50 Tam banknote with the serial number 9428.

A7. Beresiner, Yasha, *A Collector's Guide to Paper Money*, New York 1977, pp. 154-155.

Claims that the Srang notes are printed on 'edible' rice paper. Chinese issues overprinted with Tibetan characters for use by Tibetan communities in China include those of the Manchu-Mongol Bank of Colonisation, the China and South Sea Bank, and the Central Bank of China.

A8. Bertsch, Wolfgang, "Some notes on Tibetan paper currency" in *The Tibet Journal*, Vol. XVI, No. 1, Dharamsala Spring 1991, pp. 128-137.

The author publishes a 10 Tam note, dated T.E. 1658 (= A.D. 1912) and suggests that the early 15, 25 and 50 Tam notes which are only known with the date T.E. 1659

may have already been issued with the date T.E. 1658. Most of the notes dated T.E. 1659 are obviously printed from blocks with the 1659 altered from an original 1658. Also mentioned is a forgery of a 50 Tam note dated T.E. 1659, and a printing block is illustrated which may have been a pattern for a note which was planned in the 1950s but was never issued.

A9. Bertsch, Wolfgang, "Buyer Beware! The forgeries of the 1913 50 Tam banknotes of Tibet" in *Bank Note News*, No. 40, March/April 1991, p. 24.

The forged 50 Tam note can be recognised by the fully drawn petals of the flowers located on the horizontal line of the obverse of the notes. Two different genuine notes and one, possibly forged, 50 Tam note are illustrated.

A10. Bertsch, Wolfgang, "Exotisches Papiergeld aus Tibet" in *Der Geldschein Sammler*, Vol. 8, No. 6, Regenstauf 1994, pp. 6-11 and Vol. 8, No. 7, Regenstauf 1994, pp. 12-21.

An introduction to the history of Tibetan banknotes, based on a thorough study of both Chinese and Western publications and profusely illustrated with photographs of paper notes from the author's collection.

A11. Bower, Peter, *Banknote Examination. Five Tibetan Banknotes from the Collection of Colin Narbeth*, London May 1995.

Three 100 Srang and two 25 Srang notes were examined. The paper seems to be a blend of fibres of *Daphne Papyracea* and *Daphne Bholua*. The notes consist of two layers of paper which were glued together before printing. The "security legend", which appears like a watermark, was printed on the verso sheet in the case of a delaminated 25 Srang note. It was printed in inverted script on the back of the face layer in the case of a delaminated 100 Srang note. (B.N. Shrestha found a third interior layer of paper on which the security legend was printed, but when interviewed in 1995 by the compiler he could not remember which notes he had delaminated and was no longer in possession of the delaminated notes. It is likely that both methods of producing the security legend were used even within the same series of banknotes.)

A12. Bowker, H.F., "A Tibetan Paper Note" in *The Numismatist*, Vol. 64, No. 2, 1951, pp. 141-142.

Illustration and description of a 5 Srang note (Serial no. ka 024831).

A13. Brauen, Martin, *Heinrich Harrers Impressionen aus Tibet. Mit Bildlegenden von Eva Stoll*. Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich. Frankfurt a.M. 1974, p. 167 and Plate 105.

A brief description of all Tibetan notes. A German translation of the legend in four lines on the early Tam issues is given. The face of a red 10 Tam note (serial no. 19450), the back of a purple 50 Tam, the face of a 10 Srang (T.E. 1693) and of a 100 Srang note are illustrated in colour.

A14. Bruce II, C.R., Deyell, C.S., Rhodes, N.G., Spengler, W.F., *The Standard Guide to South Asian Coins and Paper Money since 1556 A.D.*, Iola, Wisconsin, 1st edition 1982, pp. 525-528.

Lists and illustrates all types of Tibetan banknotes. Also listed are the notes of the Central Bank of China with overprint in Tibetan and the 50 cents and 1 Yuan issue for the Sikang province.

A15. Chapman, Spencer F., *Memoirs of a Mountaineer*, London 1945 (reprint), p. 375.

Reports a visit to the Trabshi Government Mint: "We saw silver and copper coins being stamped out, and paper notes being printed, mostly by up-to-date electrically worked machinery from England...I had heard that owing to the fact that the paint on the paper notes will dry only during the three months of summer, the Tibetans are saved from the dangers of inflation: but this story, attractive though it is, is not true. Owing to the debasing of the coinage and lack of backing for the notes, the tranka, which twenty-five years ago was three to the rupee, is now twenty-five."

Chapman's visit to the Mint took place some time in the 1930s.

A16. Cresswell, Oliver D. and Hogan, P.D., "An Unrecorded Date of Tibetan 50-Tangka Note Issue" in *T'ung Pao*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1975, p. 73.

The multicoloured 50 Tam note dated T.E. 1680 (= A.D. 1934) is recorded for the first time.

A17. Dahnke, K.H., *Tibet. Handbuch and Katalog der Marken and Stempel. Handbuch der Forschungsgemeinschaft "China-Philatelie e.V."* Essen 1978 & 1981.

Contains some remarks on Tibetan banknotes and illustrations of the backs of the 25 Tam, the blue 50 Tam and the 100 Srang notes. The obverse of a 25 Srang note is also illustrated (nos. 117-119).

A18. Dhondub, K., *The Water-Bird and Other Years*, p. 105.

The introduction of the 100 Srang notes in 1936 by the regent Radreng was a failure since it tended to raise the price of all commodities (see entry no. A58).

A19. David-Neel, Alexandra, *Voyage d'une Parisienne a Lhasa*, Paris 1927, p. 292.

The Tibetan banknotes are an object of curiosity and even in Lhasa traders refuse to accept them.

A20. David-Neel, Alexandra, *My Journey to Lhasa*, London 1927 (reprinted London 1983), p. 268.

English translation of the previous publication in French (see entry no. A19).

A21. Gabrisch, Karl, "Six Unrecorded Dates of the Tibetan 50 Tam Note" in *Spink's Numismatic Circular*, Vol. 85, 1977, p. 544.

The following dates for the multicoloured 50 Tam note are recorded: T.E. 1678, 1679, 1681, 1682, 1683 and 1686.

A22. Gabrisch, Karl, "An Unknown Date of the Tibetan 10 Srang Note" in *Spink's Numismatic Circular*, Vol. 86, 1978, p. 189.

The 10 Srang note dated T.E. 1690 is recorded for the first time.

A23. Gabrisch, Karl, "Abriß der Münzgeschichte Tibets" in Müller, C.C. and Raunig, W. (ed.), *Der Weg zum Dach der Welt*, Innsbruck and Frankfurt/Main 1982, pp. 220 and 237.

A brief description of Tibet's banknotes and illustrations in colour of the 10, 15, 25 and blue 50 Tam notes, as well as of a multicoloured 50 Tam and a 100 Srang note.

A24. Gabrisch, Karl, *Geld aus Tibet*, Winterthur 1990, pp. 45-49 and 99-105.

Chapter X gives a summary of Tibet's paper currency, mainly based on Chinese publications. Total numbers of notes issued are given for the 100, 10, 5 and 25 Srang notes. The book includes clear illustrations of a violet 5 Tam note (serial no. 971), a violet 50 Tam note (possibly a contemporaneous forgery; serial no. 9831), a multicoloured 50 Tam note dated T.E. 1677 with additional red seal, a 100 Srang and a 10 Srang note. A red half Yuan note for Sikang province of 1939 A.D. is also illustrated.

A25. Goldstein, Melvyn C., *A History of Modern Tibet. 1913-1951. The demise of the lamaist state*, Indian edition New Delhi 1993 (first published in USA in 1989), pp. 151-152 and 570.

Appointment of Kumbela as head of Trabshi Lotrü Laygung (Trabshi Electrical Machine Office) in 1931. This complex merged previously separate offices such as the various coin and currency Mints. The idea of sending a trade mission abroad originated in the Trabshi Mint in 1947 and was mainly promoted by Tsarong, who wanted to see Tibet's currency notes backed by gold or some other commodity.

A26. Gore, Francis, *Trente Ans aux Portes du Thibet Interdit. 1908-1938. Imprimerie de la Société des Missions Etrangères de Paris*. Maison Nazareth, Hongkong 1939, pp. 283-284.

Reports that the banknotes issued by the Tibetan government were withdrawn from circulation since they were easy to counterfeit. The exact year is not given, but the author refers to the late 1930s.

A27. Grosch, Günter, "Tibet und seine Geldgeschichte, ein Versuch. Schluss" in *Geldgeschichtliche Nachrichten*, Vol. 2, No. 10 (1968) pp. 61-62.

A brief description of the Srang issues and of the multicoloured 50 Tam, which the author calls a "seven-and-a-half Srang" note. Both sides of each type of these notes are illustrated.

A28. Hage, Sidney, "Tibetan Paper Money" in *International Banknote Society Magazine*, Autumn 1963, pp. 4-5.

A29. Harrer, Heinrich, *Sieben Jahre in Tibet. Mein Leben am Hofe des Dalai Lama*, Wien 1952, p. 174.

All attempts to forge Tibetan banknotes were thwarted by the inability of the forgers to imitate the calligraphy of the handwritten serial numbers on the notes.

A30. Haverbeck, H.D.S., "The Postage Stamps and Postal History of Tibet" in *The Collectors Club Philatelist*, Vol. 31, No. 2, New York March 1952.

The 10 Tam note T.E. 1659 with serial no. 18080 is illustrated.

A31. Hayden, Sir Henry and Cosson, César, *Sport and Travel in the Highlands of Tibet*, London 1927, p. 96.

"Since the war, silver is no longer employed for coinage in Tibet, and all the money is now copper, except in Lhasa, where notes issued by the Tibetan Government are used to some extent; but they are not accepted or understood in the remoter parts of the country..." The author refers to the year 1922.

A32. Helfer, L. André, "Tibetan Paper Money" in *International Banknote Society Magazine*, Summer 1964, p. 20.

A33. Hellrigl, Wolfgang and Gabrisch, Karl, *Tibet. A Philatelic and Numismatic Bibliography*, Santa Monica, California 1983.

In Section B, "Paper Money", 19 items are listed with short comments by K. Gabrisch. Naturally the 19 titles are included in this present bibliography.

A34. Keller, A., *Das Papiergeld des Ersten Weltkriegs*, Berlin 1957.

A35. Keller A., *Das Papiergeld des Zweiten Weltkriegs und der Nachkriegszeit*, Berlin 1953.

A36. Kimura, Hisao, *Japanese Agent in Tibet*, London 1990, p. 129.

Reports that a tattoo artist from outer Mongolia, called Dharma, tried to forge 100 Srang notes in Lhasa. Unfortunately, the author does not give the year when these forgeries were produced.

A37. Klaasesz, Paul F., "Tibet. Part 1—Paper Money" in *The Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*, Vol. 15, No. 10, October 1949, pp. 848-853.

Illustrates and describes a purple 15 Tam (serial no. 4375), a yellow 25 Tam (called "3 sangs or seven-and-a-half shyos"; serial no. 39236), a blue 50 Tam (called "seven-and-a-half sangs"; serial no. ?), a multicoloured 50 Tam dated T.E. 1675 and a 10 Srang, dated T.E. 1692. It is likely that these notes were part of the samples brought to the USA by the Tibetan Trade Mission.

A38. Lehmann, Peter Hannes and Ullal, Jay, *Tibet. Das stille Drama auf dem Dach der Welt*, p. 106.

A multicoloured 50 Tam note and the 5, 10, 25 and 100 Srang notes are illustrated.

A39. Lowell, Thomas, *Tibet im Gewitter. Die letzte Reise nach Lhasa* (title of the original English edition is *Out of this World*), Berlin 1951, pp. 26-27.

In 1949 the Tibetans in Lhasa preferred Indian or Tibetan paper currency to coins.

A40. MacDonald, David, *Cultural Heritage of Tibet*, New Delhi 1978 (reprint), p. 222.

It is reported that notes of 50, 150 and 500 tankas were in use in Tibet. The 150 and 500 tangka notes have never been found and were most probably never issued. (See also entry no. A43.)

A41. McGovern, William, *To Lhasa in Disguise. An Account of a Secret Expedition through Mysterious Tibet*, London (second edition) 1924, pp. 112 and 333. Indian reprint: New Delhi 1992.

Currency notes of 10, 15 and 25 trankas are reported. Also the following case of forgery is mentioned: "During the last few months the Tibetans have just begun to adopt compulsory labour. In a notable case of this kind a clever young monk from Sera was found guilty of forging some of the new government paper money. In admiration of his skill he was sentenced to work for two years without pay as a craftsman in the new Lhasa arsenal." McGovern's stay in Lhasa was during 1923.

A42. Mao, King O., *History of Chinese Paper Currency, Vol. I, Hongkong 1968, pp. 167-196.*

The 1, 5, 10, 50 and 100 Yuan notes of the Central Bank of China with overprint in Tibetan are described and illustrated. The author suggests that these notes were printed in Burma during the Second World War, probably in 1944 (p. 171).

A43. Maraini, Fosco, *Secret Tibet*, London 1954, p. 194.

Banknotes of 10, 50, 100 and 500 trankas are reported. 500 Tranka notes have never been discovered and were most probably never issued. (See entry no. A40.) The mention of the "100 tranka" note is probably a reference to the 100 Srang issue.

A44. Mitter, J.P., *Betrayal of Tibet*, Bombay, New Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, London and New York 1964.

A 100 and a 10 Srang note (T.E. 1691) are illustrated on plates between pages 48 and 49.

A45. Muszynski, Maurice, "Varieties of the Tibetan 50 Tam Note" in *Bulletin of the International Banknote Society*, 1970, pp. 99-102.

Discusses some interesting variants of the multicoloured 50 Tam note. The tablets which contain the handwritten serial numbers were enlarged from the original 19 mm to 22.5 mm in length on later issues in order to accommodate the higher serial numbers. Most of the 50 Tam notes dated T.E. 1677 bear an additional red seal which was stamped on genuine banknotes after inspection; this became necessary because false 50 Tam banknotes had been discovered in 1930.

A46. Narbeth, Colin, "Tibet" in *Coin & Medal News*, November 1987, pp. 71-72.

A review of B.N. Shrestha's *Tibetan Paper Currency* (St. Albans, Herts, 1987—see entry no. A56). Includes illustrations of the face of a 5 Srang, the reverse of a 10 Srang and the faces of a 25 and 100 Srang note.

A47. Neame, P., "Tibet and the 1936 Lhasa Mission" in *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, Vol. 26 (1939), p. 41.

Hand-made and hand-worked currency-note and postage-stamp presses are reported to have been in the Lhasa Arsenal and Mint in the year 1936.

A48. Obojski, Robert, "The Coins and Currency of Tibet—The Forbidden Land" in *Numismatic News*, Vol. 12, No. 11, 25th May 1964, pp. 9-10.

A49. Panish, Charles K., "Tibetan Paper Money" in *Whitman Numismatic Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 8, August 1969, pp. 467-471 and Vol. 5, No. 9, September 1968, pp. 501-508.

This was the best work on Tibetan paper notes until 1987, when B.N. Shrestha's monograph appeared (see entry no. A56). The issues for Sikang province with Tibetan script and the Central Bank of China issues with Tibetan overprint most probably never circulated in Tibet according to the author. All notes which were produced in Tibet are listed and the following notes are illustrated: 15 Tam (purple) serial no. 12132; 50 Tam (blue) serial no. ?; multicoloured 50 Tam dated T.E. 1675 and another one dated 1687; a 10 srang dated T.E. 1692; and a 5, 25 and 100 Srang note. The date T.E. 1689 for the multicoloured 50 Tam note has been recorded by Panish, but could never be confirmed. Most probably he refers to a 1686 note whose date was misread.

A50. Pick, Albert (editors: Shafer, Neil and Bruce II, Colin R.), *Standard Catalog of World Paper Money*, Vol. II, General Issues, 7th edition, Iola 1994, pp. 271-272 and 1155-1156.

Similar listing to the one given in the Standard Guide to South Asian Coins and Paper Money from A.D. 1556 (entry no. A14), but with fewer illustrations and excluding the issues for Sikang. The 5, 10, 50 and 100 Yuan of the Central Bank of China (1936 A.D.) with Tibetan overprint are listed on pp. 271-272 with an illustration of the 10 Yuan note.

A51. Pick, Albert (editors: Bruce II, Colin R. and Shafer, Neil), *Standard Catalog of World Paper Money*, Vol. I, Specialized Issues, 7th edition, Iola 1995, pp. 339.

The half, 1 and 5 Yuan notes for the province are listed with illustrations of the first two values.

A52. Rhodes, Nicholas G., "The Dating of Tibetan Banknotes" in *The Tibet Journal*, Vol. XIII, No. 1, Dharamsala 1988, pp. 57-60.

Supporting his arguments with convincing evidence, the author suggests that the Tibetan Era (T.E.) dates have to be increased by 254 for conversion into A.D. dates. (See also following entry no. A53).

A53. Rhodes, Nicholas G., "Obscure System. The Dating of Tibetan Banknotes" in *Coin & Medal News*, January 1987, p. 89-90.

Same article as previous entry no. A52.

A54. Rhodes, Nicholas G., "Tibetan Forgeries made in Calcutta" in *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1992, pp. 92-94.

Reports the case of Nepalese forgers of Tibetan coins and banknotes, who were sentenced in Calcutta in 1927. The paper of the notes is made in the Kemdong District in the Province of Dhakpo out of tree-bark, shog phing, the seals for the notes are made in the Do-pay Government Factory and the notes are numbered in the Currency Office by E ba clerks who are trained from their childhood in the art of calligraphy. Some design details are provided on forged Tam notes which are at variance with their genuine counterparts.

A55. Shakabpa, Tsepon W.D., *Tibet. A Political History*, New Haven and London 1967 (second printing 1973 and reissued by Potala Publications, New York in 1984), pp. 10-11.

The author states that the Tibetan government introduced paper currency in 1890 and that government-held gold reserves backed up the currency notes. Since Shakabpa was Finance Secretary in independent Tibet, his statements were taken as authoritative and some authors repeated the date 1890 as the year when the first Tibetan notes were issued. The first Tibetan banknotes of 5, 10, 15, 25 and 50 Tam to which Shakabpa refers bear the date T.E. 1658 or 1659 (1912 or 1913 A.D.). Banknotes with earlier dates have never been discovered, nor are Tibetan banknotes mentioned by any foreigner who visited Tibet before 1912.

A56. Shrestha, Bhupendra Narayan, *Tibetan Paper Currency*, St. Albans, Herts 1987.

To date this is the most thorough work on Tibetan banknotes published in English, profusely illustrated with photocopies of notes from the author's collection which may be the best extant. The black seals are read for the first time, many details of the design of the notes are explained and, based on the recorded serial numbers of surviving notes, fairly exact figures of the total numbers printed of each denomination are given. The following rare early notes are illustrated: 10 Tam (red), dated T.E. 1658, black and red seals missing, serial no. 5654; 25 Tam, serial no. 18180; and 50 Tam (blue), serial no. ? Also a forged blue 50 Tam note and some forged Srang notes are illustrated. (See entry no. A46.)

A57. Shrestha, Bhupendra Narayan and Rhodes, Nicholas G., "The Earliest 10 Srang Tibetan Bank Note?" in *International Banknote Society Journal*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (1991), p. 20-21.

A 10 Srang note without serial numbers and bearing the so-far unrecorded date of T.E. 1686 is illustrated and discussed. The authors think that the note is either a trial printing of an unissued date or a forgery.

A58. Smith, Ward D. and Matravers, Brian, *Chinese Banknotes*, Menlo Park, California 1970, pp. 70-71 and 100-101.

The 1, 5, 10, 50 and 100 Yuan notes issued in 1936 by the Central Bank of China and bearing overprints in Tibetan are listed with an illustration of the 10 Yuan note. Also listed are the 50 c. and 1 Yuan note of the Sikang Provincial Bank of 1939 with an illustration of the 50 c. note.

A59. Surkhang, Wangchen Gelek, "Tibet: The Critical Years (Part III). The Regent Reting Rinpoche" in *The Tibet Journal*, Vol. VIII, No. 2, Dharamsala Summer 1983, p. 36.

The Regent Reting introduced a 100 Srang note which tended to raise the price of every product (see entry no. A18).

A60. Taring, Rinchen Dolma, *Daughter of Tibet*, Indian reprint, New Delhi 1978 (first published 1970), pp. 107-108.

“Shortly after Tsarong’s degradation from the Kashag, His Holiness set up a new government department, called the Trapchi Lekhung, to take care of the Mint, the paper currency factory and the ammunition factory...In 1925 two officials from the Mint were sent to Calcutta to buy printing presses and learn how to use them. After a lot of paper currency had been printed Tsarong said that this was not good for the country and suggested that we should have a gold reserve. So every year three hundred small slabs of gold, each weighing twenty-seven tolas, were put away in the Potala. This gold was imported from India—along with silver and copper for the Mint—because our own mining was not well developed.”

A61. Teichmann, Eric, *Travels of a Consular Officer in Eastern Tibet*, Cambridge 1922, p. 14.

It is reported that in Chamdo and Batang in eastern Tibet Tibetan silver money and banknotes from Lhasa have driven out Chinese copper coins.

A62. Tsung-Lien Shen and Shen-Chi Liu, *Tibet and the Tibetans*, New York 1973, pp. 176-177.

A 10 Srang note dated 1691 is illustrated. The red seal is identified as that of the Dalai Lama, while the black seal is of the Ka-Sha (cabinet).

A63. Williamson, M.D., *Memoirs of a Political Officer’s Wife in Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan*, London 1987, p. 124.

Gives a brief description of the Trapchi Mint in 1933. The workshops ran on electricity generated in Dode (bDog bde). The electrical machinery had all been acquired by Ringang in 1924 in England. “Silver coins were being cut, mailed and stamped, bank-notes printed.” Note: a photograph of the Trapchi Mint, taken by D. Williamson (1934?) was published by K. Gabrisch (see entry no. A24).

A64. Ya Hananzhang, *The Biographies of the Dalai Lamas*, Beijing 1991, pp. 233, 320, and 415.

Zhang Yintang’s report on Tibet to the Board of Foreign Affairs (1907) contained the suggestion to “take back the right to mint silver and copper coins and the right to print paper currencies. Set up banks to help with the circulation of money. These banks will be the only institutions responsible for paying troops and government officials.” (p. 233) Around the year 1925 a bank was set up, first managed by Phunkhang Kung and later concurrently by Tsarong Dzaza. “Also put in circulation were Tibetan monetary certificates in a number of denominations such as fifty tramka and one hundred tramka. These certificates could not be cashed, but their issues were kept below a ceiling, and each new issue required the withdrawal from circulation of the previous one,” (p. 415). This is the only reference from which one could deduce that paper money was already printed before 1912. But most probably “the right to print paper currencies” was not used by the Tibetans at that time (1907).

B. PUBLICATIONS IN CHINESE AND TIBETAN

Note: further Chinese publications which deal with Tibetan banknotes and/or give illustrations thereof exist in my collection but are still awaiting translation and could therefore not be included in this listing.

B1. Anonymous (Research Team of the Institute of Finance of the Tibet Branch of the People's Bank of China), "Xi Zhang He Ping Je Fang Qian Yin Zi Qian Bi Gai Kuang" ("Brief Information on the Minting and Printing of Tibetan Currency before the Peaceful Liberation") in *Zhongguo Qianbi* (China Numismatics), Vol. 20, No. 1, Beijing 1988, pp. 50-55.

In 1912 five different banknotes were printed by hand with woodblocks: 5 Tamga (= 7 sho + Skar), 10 Tamga (= 1 Srang + 5 Sho), 15 Tamga (= 2 Srang + 2 sho + 5 Skar), 25 Tamga (= 3 Srang + 7 Sho + 5 Skar) and 50 Tamga (= 7 Srang + 5 Sho). All Tibetan banknotes were hand-numbered until February 1959. Between 1926 and 1940 a total of 957,196 multicoloured 50 Tam notes were printed. These notes were first printed in the "Duo Dai (Dode)" Mint and from late 1931 onwards in "Za-Xi-Le-Kung". The 100 Srang notes were introduced in 1937, the 10 and 5 Srang notes in 1941 and the 25 Srang notes in 1949. A multicoloured 50 Tam note of T.E. 1677 (without extra red seal) and a 25 and 100 Srang note are illustrated.

B2. Anonymous (Finance Institute of the Tibet Branch of the People's Bank of China), "The Mint of the Local Tibetan Government" in *Zhongguo Qianbi* (China Numismatics) 9, Beijing 1990, No. 1, pp. 29-42.

This is a paper on the organization and history of the Trabshi Lekhung Mint. In 1932 a paper factory "Jing-Dong" was founded in Zar-ji, north of Lhasa, on the site of a former cartridge factory. The paper produced there was for the exclusive use of printing paper money. Every month 3,000 boxes of paper containing 500-1,000 sheets each were produced. Thirteen different blocks were necessary for the printing of the 100 Srang notes and nine for the 25 Srang notes. These notes were bundled into packets of 25 notes each. A total of 1,350,000 notes of 100 Srang, 700,000 of 25 Srang and 331,292 of 5 Srang were printed.

B3. Anonymous, "Discovery of the Yuan Dynasty Paper Money" (Tibetan Autonomous Region; Cultural Relics Supervision Committee) in *Wen Wu*, No. 9, 1975, pp. 32-34.

Describes two banknotes of the Yuan Dynasty which were discovered in the Sakya Monastery, south-west of Shigatse (Tibet) and probably represent an early gift to the monastery.

B4. Bur Wen, "Zheng Yang Ying Hang Zhang Wen Fa Bi Juan" ("The Currency Notes issued by the Central Bank with Tibetan Overprint") in *Collection of Papers of the First Annual Meeting of the Numismatic Society of Shanghai*, 1985, pp. 121-123. (First published in *Quan Tan*, 2 Vol, No. 3, Taipei 25. 12. 1985.)

The first notes of the Central Bank with Tibetan overprint were issued in Kangding on 2nd November 1941. This first issue included only notes of 1, 5 and 10 Yuan and

notes to the total value of 1,000,000 were released. All overprinted 50 Yuan notes of the Central Bank are forgeries. Other values with forged overprint exist, but they were not made by Qian Wannan (see entry no. B10), but were brought to Shanghai by a stamp dealer from Sichuan.

B5. Ding Zhang, *Zhong-Yang-Ying-Hang-Jia-Gai-Zhang-Wen-Quan-Zi-Zhen-Xiang* (The truth of the banknotes with Tibetan overprint issued by the Central Bank) (No further details known to the compiler.)

Article mentioned by Bur Wen (see entry no. B4.).

B6. Hai Xieng and Zheng Wang, "Zhang Chao Gai Kuan" ("An account of Tibet Money") in *Mongolia Numismatics*, October 1985, pp. 86-87.

A brief discussion of Tibetan banknotes with illustration of the face of a 100 Srang note.

B7. Li Dongyuan, *A Study of the History of Tibetan Stamps and Currency*, Taipei 1959.

Contains some remarks on the Srang paper notes and the issues of the Mongol-Tibetan Bank. Part of this book was reprinted by Xiao Huayuan (Xi-zang Di-fang Huo-bi-shi, see entry no. B14).

B8. Qian Wannan, *Monography on the Banknotes of the Central Bank*, (place and date unknown).

Book mentioned in the article by Wang Songling and Yixiangzheng (entry No. B11).

B9. Shakabpa, Tsepon W.D., "Tibet's Gold and Silver Coins and Paper Money: The Historical Origin" in *Samatok*, Vol. 1, Tibet House, New Delhi, Earth Dragon Year (probably 1987), pp. 73-82 (published in the Tibetan language).

All the Tibetan paper notes are described. The date T.E. 1685 of a multicolored 50 Tam note is converted to A.D. 1931 and the date T.E. 1692 of a 10 Srang note to A.D. 1938. The notes were first printed in Lhasa and later in Dagpo Kemtong. The first notes were printed by hand and with wood blocks, while the later notes were mechanically printed with copper blocks, after some Tibetans had been sent to Calcutta for training. Ink for printing was also imported from India. The black seal on the early notes is interpreted as the seal of the bank. The (first?) date of printing of the 100 Srang notes is given as 1940, that of the 25 Srang notes as 1945 and that of the 5 Srang notes as 1943.

B10. Wang Chengzhi, "Si-Chuan Zhang-Yang" ("The Silver Coins for Tibet of Sichuan Province") in *Zhongguo Qianbi* (China Numismatics), Beijing 1988, No. 3, pp. 12-18 and 54.

Exchange certificates of 1 Yuan for the Sichuan Rupee were first issued in 1918. They were printed in pink, were the size of two matchboxes and illustrated a Sichuan Rupee. A second issue of exchange certificates occurred in 1937, when notes for 9,853 Yuan were issued and withdrawn later except for 128 Yuan. In order to withdraw the Sichuan Rupees the Bank of Xikang Province issued exchange certificates for a total of 2,100,000 Yuan in 1939. They were issued in the denominations of 0.5, 1 and 5 Yuan

and the exchange rate was 1 Yuan = 1 Sichuan Rupee. On the face of the green 1 Yuan note the Potala is represented. These notes circulated from 1939 to 1941, when notes of a total of 136,350.5 Yuan were withdrawn.

Examples of the first and second issue have not been discovered so far. The last-mentioned notes are Pick S1739-S1740. The 1 Yuan note does not show the Potala on the face, but most probably some place in Eastern Tibet (Xikang), possibly Litang.

B11. Wang Songling and Yu Xiangzhen, *Discovery of the Secrets of the so-called Military Notes with Tibetan Overprint issued by the Central Bank, Shanghai?*

A careful examination of the 50 Yuan notes of the Central Bank with Tibetan overprint reveals that they must be modern fabrications, since the authors discovered four different types of overprints in a small block of notes with serial numbers ranging from C/H 160112L to C/H 160690L. The forger is most probably a Mr. Qian Wannan who wrote that these notes are rarities in his Monography of the Paper Notes of the Central Bank, but who also published an article, signed as "Ansen" and entitled "Short Report on Collecting Stamps and Coins" in which he declares that the overprinted Central Bank Notes are all forgeries. Since they could not find any documentary evidence for the issue of the overprinted notes, the authors think that all values (1, 5, 10, 50 and 100 Yuan) are forgeries.

B12. Wang Songling and Yu Xiangzhen, "Guan Yu 'Zhang Wen Quan' Bu Chung Cai Kao" ("Additional Remarks on the 'Paper notes with Tibetan Overprint'") in *Collection of Papers of the First Annual Meeting of the Numismatic Society of Shanghai*, 1985, p. 123.

The authors somewhat revise their opinion expressed in an earlier article (see entry no. B10) following an article by Mr. Bur Wen (see entry No. B4). They now believe that all 50 Yuan notes with Tibetan overprint are forgeries while there are both genuine and forged notes among the remaining values.

B13. Wu Chouzhong and Gu Wenbing, "Zhong Yang Ying Hang Jia Gai Zhang Wen Quan De Kao Si Yü Nun Ming Ying Hang Jia Gai Zhang Wen Quan De Fa Xian" ("Examination of the Tibetan Bill with Central Bank Stamp and the Discovery of the Tibetan Bill with the Stamp of the Farmers Bank") in *Zhongguo Qienbi* (China Numismatics), Beijing 1990, No. 1, pp. 51-54.

B14. Wu Chouzhong and Wu Zhongying, "Sikang Provincial Bank Notes with Tibetan Inscriptions" in *Zhongguo Qienbi* (China Numismatics), Beijing 1995, No. 1.

B15. Zhu Jingzhong, Ci-Ren-Ping-Cuo and Yan Lunzhang, *Yuan-Xi-Zang-Di-Fang-Qian-Bi-Gai-Kuang* (A General Introduction to the Local Tibetan Currency), Finance Department of the Tibet Autonomous Region Branch of the People's Bank of China, Lhasa 1988.

Chapter 3 gives an introduction to the Tibetan banknotes. The early banknotes were printed manually with woodblocks. The multicoloured 50 Tam notes were printed in the Dode Mint, which was founded in 1922. From 1926 onwards machines were used for printing.

B16. Xiao Huaiyuan, *Xi Zang Di Fang Huo Bi Shi* (The History of Tibetan Money), Peking 1987.

The most important work on Tibetan currency in the Chinese language. The early banknotes are described in chapter 5. Based on Tibetan records the exact number of notes per year is given for the 100, 10, 5 and 25 Srang notes. Cases of forgeries of Tibetan banknotes are reported in chapter 6. The book includes colour plates which illustrate the backs of the early 5 Tam notes, of the multicoloured 50 Tam and the 10 Srang note. Both sides of the 100, 5 and 25 Srang notes are also illustrated in colour.

B17. Xiao Huaiyuan, "Xi Zang Di Fang Huo Bi De Fang Xing Lu Liu" ("The Issuing and Circulation of the Tibetan Local Currency") in *Xizang Yanjiu* (Tibetan Studies), Vol. 2, Chengdu 1983, pp. 16-25.

This study was extended and published later as a book (see previous entry no. B16).

B18. Xu Feng and Zhao Longye (editors), *Zhongguo Gesheng Difang Yinhang Zhibi Tulu* (1911 Nian Yihou) (Catalogue of paper money issued by the regional banks of China—after 1911), Beijing 1992, pp. 76-77 and 161-163.

The editors list both series of Tibetan banknotes and illustrate a multicoloured 50 Tam (dated T.E. 1686, serial no. 880038), a 100 Srang, a 10 Srang and a 5 Srang note (serial no. 63349). Also listed and illustrated are the 0.5 Yuan, 1 Yuan and 5 Yuan notes with Tibetan and Chinese legends which were issued in 1939 A.D. for the Xikang province.

B19. Zhang Gongliang, *A Brief Introduction to the History of the Chinese Military Banknotes*, Taipei 1984.

B20. Zhang Huying, "Research in the Circulation of the Currency Note of the Yuan Dynasty in Tibet" (newspaper article), Beijing n.d.

The author discusses two banknotes issued during the Yuan Dynasty in the late 13th century and found in 1959 in the Sakya Monastery in Tibet. He does not believe that they were only a gift to the monastery but are proof that Chinese paper currency circulated in Tibet at this early date, since China had already close financial relations with Tibet at that time.

B21. Zhu Jingzhong, Ci-Ren-Ping-Cuo and Yan Lunzhang (Finance Department of the Tibetan Autonomous Region Branch of the People's Bank of China), *Yuan-Xi-Zang-Di-Fang-Qian-Bi-Gai-Kuang* (A General Introduction to the Tibetan Local Currency), Lhasa 1988.

Apart from a brief description of Tibetan banknotes, original Tibetan decrees regarding the issuing of the 100, 10, 5 and 25 Srang banknotes are given in Chinese. Both sides of the following banknotes are illustrated in colour: 5 Tam (green, serial no. 23556), 10 Tam (red, T.E. 1659, serial no. 21862), 15 Tam (violet, serial No. 690), 25 Tam (brown, serial no. 15043), 50 Tam (blue, serial no. 50464), 50 Tam (multicoloured, date T.E. 1677, serial no. 287426, without extra red seal), 5 Srang (serial no. 40232), 10 Srang (T.E. 1694, serial no. ca 071140), 25 Srang (serial no. ka 006019) and 100 Srang (serial no. ca/1 13641).

Tibetan Paper Money

with a Critical Bibliography

Paper currency was only introduced into Tibet in the early 20th century, and yet Tibetan banknotes are arguably the most attractive among world currencies. The designs on the banknotes include both religious and national symbols, such as the snow lion and the *lung rta* ("wind horse"), and most are printed in vivid colours.

This currency represents a unique blend of printing skills and the artistic genius inspired by a long historical tradition of painting in Tibet. Those banknotes which survive are a testament to Tibet's independent status prior to 1959, and serve as a tangible reminder of Tibetan material culture.

The author of this numismatic study, Wolfgang Bertsch, explores both the content and design of the currency, and provides a thoroughly researched and comprehensive Bibliography for those who wish to pursue the subject further.