Orientation: Tibetan collections in the Beinecke
September 16, 2014

Wesley E. Needham Papers, Tibet MSS 64
http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.needham

Wesley E. Needham (Yale 1954 MA honorary), scholar of Tibetan art, language, and literature, and Adviser in Tibetan Literature, Yale University Library, 1953-1992. Needham also worked for Bullard’s furniture store in New Haven, and he was an architectural draftsman for James Gamble Rogers, New York City, 1929-1930s, participating in the construction of Yale University buildings including Trumbull College, Sterling Memorial Library, the Hall of Graduate Studies, and the Law School.

- Box 1 (2 folders): Correspondence with Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV
- Box 8: Correspondence with Joseph Weiler about uncat “Newari” collection.
- Box 33: About the Beinecke Kanjur (5 folders)
- Box 50: Tibetan flag

Bryher Collection, GEN MSS 97
http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.bryher

Annie Winifred Ellerman was born on September 2, 1894, in Margate, Kent, the daughter of industrialist and financier Sir John Reeves Ellerman, Bart., and Hannah Glover Ellerman. The family remained in England until 1900, then went abroad, spending winters in France, Egypt, Italy, and North Africa, and summers in Switzerland. The Ellermans returned to England in 1909, where Bryher's brother John was born.

- Box 117, Folder 4107: Photographs of Tibet (no date)

Robert Byron Papers, GEN MSS 605
http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.byron

In 1929 Byron flew to India for the Daily Express in order to write a series of articles on the Indian air mail. Once in India, Byron continued his travels throughout the region (including a stint in Tibet) which he wrote about in articles as well as in his book An Essay on India (1931). Byron later recounted his travels in Tibet following a trip to Russia (1932) in his book First Russia, Then Tibet (1933).

In 1933 and 1934 Byron traveled to the Middle East, spending time largely in Persia and Afghanistan, but also passing through Cyprus, Palestine, Syria, and Iraq. These travels resulted in Byron’s best known book: The Road to Oxiana (1937).

- Box 22, Folder 429a: Background material on “First Russia, Then Tibet.” Includes letter from Jigmed Tehring, pass for entry into Tibet, and menu (1929-1930).
- Box 50, Folders 727-737: Photographs of Russia and Tibet
**Individual items (Orbis, no finding aid)**

1. **Tibetan Buddhist broadside**: Na mo bu dha ya, na mo dharmā ya, na mo saṅgha ya. [Western Tibet, 18??]. BrSides Tibet T 50. A Tibetan Buddhist broadside prayer for the welfare of all beings containing an illustration of Padma Sambhava, a tantric Buddhist magician who established the Rñīṅ-ma-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. [Western Tibet, 18??]. A Tibetan Buddhist broadside prayer for the welfare of all beings containing an illustration of Padma Sambhava, a tantric Buddhist magician who established the Rñīṅ-ma-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. [Western Tibet, 18??]. A Tibetan Buddhist broadside prayer for the welfare of all beings containing an illustration of Padma Sambhava, a tantric Buddhist magician who established the Rñīṅ-ma-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. [Western Tibet, 18??]. A Tibetan Buddhist broadside prayer for the welfare of all beings containing an illustration of Padma Sambhava, a tantric Buddhist magician who established the Rñīṅ-ma-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. [Western Tibet, 18??]. A Tibetan Buddhist broadside prayer for the welfare of all beings containing an illustration of Padma Sambhava, a tantric Buddhist magician who established the Rñīṅ-ma-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. [Western Tibet, 18??]. A Tibetan Buddhist broadside prayer for the welfare of all beings containing an illustration of Padma Sambhava, a tantric Buddhist magician who established the Rñīṅ-ma-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. [Western Tibet, 18??]. A Tibetan Buddhist broadside prayer for the welfare of all beings containing an illustration of Padma Sambhava, a tantric Buddhist magician who established the Rñīṅ-ma-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. [Western Tibet, 18??]. A Tibetan Buddhist broadside prayer for the welfare of all beings containing an illustration of Padma Sambhava, a tantric Buddhist magician who established the Rñīṅ-ma-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. [Western Tibet, 18??]. A Tibetan Buddhist broadside prayer for the welfare of all beings containing an illustration of Padma Sambhava, a tantric Buddhist magician who established the Rñīṅ-ma-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. [Western Tibet, 18??]. A Tibetan Buddhist broadside prayer for the welfare of all beings containing an illustration of Padma Sambhava, a tantric Buddhist magician who established the Rñīṅ-ma-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism.

2. **Lhasa Kanjur**: Dúl ba ka pa. Tibet Kanjur 1 1. Part 1 of Book 1 of the Lhasa Kanjur, which deals with monastic discipline (Vinaya pitaka). The Lhasa edition of the Tibetan compendium of Buddhist canonical writings, commissioned by the XIII Dalai Lama and based on the Snar-thaṅ xylograph edition of 1730-1732; the blocks for the present Lhasa xylograph edition were carved in 1920-1927, and this set was the penultimate set printed before the blocks were destroyed when the Chinese entered Tibet in 1959.

3. **Tibetan Book of the Dead**: Tibet T 252: Khro boi bar do čhar chul bstan pa / Karma-glin -pa. 1800s. “Descriptions of the wrathful deities encountered in the first stage of the intermediate state (Bar-do) between death and rebirth from the compendium commonly called the Tibetan Book of the Dead and popularly attributed to Padma Sambhava.”

4. **Terma texts**: Tibet Bernard 1 (volume 1 of 63). [Rin chen gter mdzod] (Mtshur-phu : Mtshur mdoí chos grwa, 1893.) A compendium of discovered texts (terma) attributed to Padma Sambhava (Nyingmapa). Title in Sanskrit and Tibetan; text in Tibetan. Vol. 2 contains a list of titles in the work. Theos Bernard (“The White Lama”) supposedly received the oral transmission when he was in Tibet some time between 1936-1938. His collection of received Tibetan texts is now housed in the Beinecke.

5. **“Durgā Saptasatī with Kavaca”**: Uncat MS Newari, BOX 33-38, MSS 34. 1454 CE. Palm leaf mss. Copied during the reign of King Yakṣamala.

6. **“Caryāgītas (Buddhist songs)”**: Uncat MS Newari, BOX 62-73, MSS 65. Possibly 17th – 18th century? Cloth mss, sewn into accordion binding.

7. **Ogyaṇ padma b̕yuṅ gnas kyi gsuṅs pai̕ gsol d̕ebs bsdus**. Tibet MSS 12. Tibet: s.n., [18--?], 45 leaves ; 10 x 24 cm. Stitched binding. In Tibetan in dbu-can script. A collection of manuscript prayers devoted to Padma Sambhava.

8. **Gu ge phyo sme sad wer rbaṅs**. Tibet MSS 60, Tibet: s.n., [17--?], 1700, 126 leaves ; 20 x 56 cm. In Tibetan in dbu-can script on black paper. A manuscript Bon-po canonical work.

9. **Mdzaṅs blun ... mdo.** Tibet T 62, Tibet: s.n., [17--?], 1700, 260 leaves ; 12 x 52 cm. A compendium of Buddhist legends. In Tibetan in dbu-can script. Wooden covers.
Other items not requested today:

- **Gser őd dam pa mdo sdeī dbaṅ po rgyal po.** Tibet MSS 36, Tibet: s.n., [17--?], 1700, 172 leaves; 14 x 40 cm. In Tibetan in dbu-can script. A manuscript commentary on the *Suvarṇaprabhāsasūtra*. [http://hdl.handle.net/10079/bibid/4117373](http://hdl.handle.net/10079/bibid/4117373)

- **Ŷphyags pa šes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa rdo rje gcod pa.** Tibet MSS 53, Tibet: s.n., [18--?], 1800, 67 leaves; 8 x 27 cm. A manuscript Tibetan version of the "Diamond Cutter Sūtra". In Tibetan in dbu-can script. [http://hdl.handle.net/10079/bibid/4117495](http://hdl.handle.net/10079/bibid/4117495)

- **Šes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa stoṅ phrag bṛgya pa bam po.** Tibet MSS 57, Tibet: s.n., [17--?], 1700, 340 leaves; 26 x 70 cm. A manuscript Tibetan version of the "Perfection of Wisdom" sutra. In Tibetan in gold dbu-can script. [http://hdl.handle.net/10079/bibid/4117622](http://hdl.handle.net/10079/bibid/4117622)

- **Gser őd dam chen.** Tibet MSS 61, Tibet: s.n., [17--?], 1700, 260 leaves; 14 x 40 cm. In Tibetan in red dbu-can script. A manuscript Tibetan version of the "Perfection of Wisdom". [http://hdl.handle.net/10079/bibid/4117694](http://hdl.handle.net/10079/bibid/4117694)

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**Tanka Collection, Tibet MSS 62**

[http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.tankas](http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.tankas)

The collection consists of tankas, which are Buddhist scrolls or fabric temple banners, chiefly Tibetan, but also Nepalese, Bhutanese, Indian and Chinese, which bear religious images, circa 1600-circa 1950. Some tankas also bear inscriptions on their versos.

- **Box 34 [Tib. 60.4]: Tanka of Gautama Buddha and scenes from the Starving Tigress Jātaka:** circa 1700-1800. "A Tibetan watercolor painting on cotton that depicts Gautama Buddha surrounded by scenes from "The Starving Tigress Jātaka." In the story a bodhisattva sees a starving tigress about to eat her own cubs, and the bodhisattva offers her his own body. Inscription in Tibetan on verso describes the position of the tanka in relation to other tankas. The tanka includes a silk cover and ribbons."
  [http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3757257](http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3757257)

- **Box 42 [Tib. 85.15]: Tanka of Mahākāla (?):** circa 1650-circa 1750. “A watercolor painting on cotton that depicts Mahākāla with a dark blue body, three heads, and six arms, with ornaments made of human skulls, and accompanied by thirty-eight figures. Consecrated by a lama on the verso with an om-ah-hum and the red hand prints of the lama and the patron.”
  [http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3757264](http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3757264)

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**Other thangkas not displayed today:**

- **Box 1 [Tib 68.1]: Tanka of Mañjuśrī:** circa 1950. Given by Chogyal of Sikkim Tashi Namgyal to publisher Elliott Beach Macrae, who then gifted it to the Beinecke. “A Sikkimese watercolor painting on cotton that depicts Mañjuśrī, accompanied by a white Tārā with seven eyes and Višrāvaṇa, the chief of the Four Heavenly Kings. The figures are reportedly modeled after the
Macrae family. Inscriptions in Tibetan on verso.”
http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/yufind/Record/3757227

- **Box 3 [Tib. 67.3]:** Tanka of Gautama Buddha and scenes from the Vessantara Jātaka: circa 1700-circa 1800. "A Tibetan watercolor painting on cotton that depicts Gautama Buddha surrounded by scenes from "Vessantara Jātaka," In the story a compassionate prince gives away everything he owns, including his wife and children, thereby displaying the virtue of perfect charity.” http://hdl.handle.net/10079/8sf7mc3

- **Box 4 [Tib. 67.2]:** Tanka of Gautama Buddha and scenes from the Ruru Deer Jātaka: circa 1700-circa 1800. “A Tibetan watercolor painting on cotton that depicts Gautama Buddha surrounded by scenes from "The Ruru Deer Jātaka," In the story the Ruru Deer saves man, who then betrays the deer, but the deer survives and teaches.” http://hdl.handle.net/10079/n2z356c

- **Box 7 [Tib. 83.3]:** Tanka of Bardo Thodol Deities: circa 1900-circa 1950. “A watercolor painting on cotton that depicts the 42 Peaceful Deities of Bardo with Samantabhadra in a rainbow framed circle accompanied by human figures below in Nepalese dress and holding black umbrellas. Inscription in Tibetan on the verso. Nine of the inscriptions are consecrations of the divinities on the recto.” http://hdl.handle.net/10079/47d7wzg

- **Box 37 (Art) [Tib. 58.1]:** Tanka of Hayagrīva: circa 1900-circa 1950. Given by the King of Nepal, Tribhuvan Bir Bicrum Shah (circa 1951-1953) to Chester Bowles (Yale 1924), first US ambassador to Nepal. "A Tibetan watercolor painting on cotton with embroidery that depicts Hayagrīva surrounded by thirty-six figures. The painting is mounted on brocade that depicts dragons.” http://hdl.handle.net/10079/kd51cj2

- **Box 41 [Tib. 85.9]:** Tanka of Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen: circa 1600-circa 1700. “A watercolor painting on cotton that depicts Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltsen wearing yellow and seated on cushions with smaller figures of protective divinities, ten lamas, and Güshi Khan (1582-1655), a Khoshut prince and leader of the Khoshut Khanate.” http://hdl.handle.net/10079/ttdz0nd

**More information...**

http://guides.library.yale.edu/SouthAsiaBeinecke

This guide includes more detailed information about other parts of the Beinecke’s Tibetan collection and other parts of the Beinecke South Asian collection. There is also a bibliography of books and articles that discuss the history of the items in the Beinecke collection.