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 CHANTING, HERDING, AND CARRYING
 

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Sangs rgyas bkra shis སངས་རྒྱས་བཀྲ་ཤིས།<sup>1</sup>

I heard many Uncle Ston pa stories from my neighbor's uncle, Lhun 'grub, my father's second sister's father-in-law. He was well-known for his eloquence and settled many conflicts between villagers.

My parents drove our livestock to distant pastures and lived in a tent for much of the year. Grandmother took care of our house, other property, and my brother and me when we were children.

Uncle Lhun 'grub and his nieces took care of their family's property. He and Grandmother were of the same generation, and grew up in the same community. He often came to my home, we ate together, and he and Grandmother talked about the past.

Uncle Lhun 'grub told us many stories about King Ge ser, ghosts, A rig rgad po, and riddles while spinning his hand prayer wheel as Grandmother softened sheepskins.

This was one of the most memorable times in my life.

Long ago, a mother and her beautiful daughter decided to invite a monk to their home to chant scriptures to protect them and their livestock. As she was walking down a path, she met Uncle Ston pa.

"Where are you going?" Uncle Ston pa inquired.

"I'm going to invite a monk to come chant at our home. Where are you going?" she asked.

"I was chanting at a home and now I'm going to my own home," Uncle Ston Pa answered, pretending to be a monk.

When the woman heard this, she was delighted and asked Uncle Ston pa to come to her home to chant.

Uncle Ston Pa agreed and mumbled the few religious phrases that he knew over and over at different rhythms and speeds, as though he were chanting.

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Sangs rgyas bkra shis. 2017. Chanting, Herding, and Carrying. *Asian Highlands Perspectives* 47:170-172.

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The beautiful daughter got up every morning and drove their sheep to the mountain. Wolves were a serious threat and she had to watch the sheep the whole day. Sometimes her mother went with her.

One day, Uncle Ston pa heard that the mother would go to another village and said, "Today I'll help your daughter. I'll go with her to the mountain and stay there with her."

The mother happily thanked Uncle Ston pa. When they were leaving in the morning, the daughter's mother told them that they should not pee on the mountain. "If you must pee, then go to the foot of the mountain, because the mountain is where deities live," she explained.

While Uncle Ston pa and the beautiful daughter were herding sheep on the mountain, Uncle Ston pa saw a creek. He ran there and drank some water. The girl saw this and asked, "Are you thirsty?"

He said, "Your mother said this is where deities live so this is certainly divine water."

The girl believed Uncle Ston pa and also drank a lot of water.

At noon, the girl told Uncle Ston pa that she had to pee. Take care of the sheep until I return," she said.

Uncle Ston pa said, "I also must pee," looked thoughtful, and then said, "If both of us go pee, wolves will surely attack the sheep. I'll stay here and herd if you take my pee."

The girl asked, "How can I do that?"

"I have a good way," Uncle Ston pa said, and then had sex with the girl.

When the girl reached the foot of the mountain, she met her mother, who asked, "Who is herding the sheep?"

She told her mother that they both had needed to pee, so she had taken Uncle Ston pa's pee so that he could stay behind and protect the sheep.

Her mother asked, "How did you take Uncle Ston pa's pee?"

After the girl told her everything, her mother angrily scolded her.

The girl cried and returned to the mountain. Uncle Ston pa saw her sad face and asked her what had happened.

"Mother scolded me because I took your pee," she sobbed.

"If your mother isn't happy about that, then I can take my pee back," said Uncle Ston pa and then had sex with the girl again.

#### NON-ENGLISH TERMS

ge sar གེ་སར།

Lhun 'grub ལུན་རྒུབ།

sangs rgyas bkra shis སངས་རྒྱས་བཀྲ་ཤིས།

ston pa ལྷོན་པ།