



CZECHOSLOVAK COLLECTORS IN MONGOLIA AND VOTIVE PAINTINGS OF GREEN TĀRĀ IN THE NÁPRSTEK MUSEUM¹

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ABSTRACT: The goddess Tārā, the motherly helper and protector, belongs among the most popular deities in the countries under the influence of Tibetan Buddhism, including Mongolia. Portrayed in sculpture, print and painting, her iconography is established for centuries. She is depicted as a beautiful woman with the green body sitting on a lotus throne, her hands in gestures of protection. Her main attribute is a blue or a pink lotus in her hand.

The selection of small votive paintings of the Green Tārā found in the Collection of Tibetan and Mongolian art in the Náprstek Museum were collected by the Czechoslovak COMECON experts working in Mongolia in the 1960s the 1970s. Although relatively contemporary, the paintings represent the changes in her iconography and material processing, as well as the paintings' function in the society undergoing social and religious changes, as Mongolia did during the 20th century.

KEY WORDS: Mongolia – COMECON – Czechoslovak travellers – Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures (Prague) – Mongolian ritual painting – Buddhism – Green Tārā female deity – Green Tārā iconography

The Collection of Tibetan and Mongolian art in the Náprstek Museum consists of approximately three thousand items. Among them six hundred objects belongs to religious painting. This essay deals with only a few examples from the large collection; small votive paintings of the female deity Green Tārā, selected especially for their origin and acquisition history. They were collected by Czechoslovak experts working in Mongolia in the 1960s the 1970s, and although these relatively contemporary paintings do not correspond to the high aesthetic level of traditional Tibetan art in Mongolia, they tell us much about changes in iconography and material processing, and the objects' function in a society undergoing deep social and religious changes, as Mongolia did during the 20th century.

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The goddess Tārā (Tārā तारा in Sanskrit, *sgrol ma* སྐྱེལ་མ་ in Tibetan, *Dara*, Дара in Mongolian) belongs among the most popular deities in Tibetan Buddhism. She represents the compassionate saviouress who swiftly comes to help those in distress. Her iconography is established for centuries, and paintings with her images are found in temples, village dwellings, nomads' tents and yurts, as well as in contemporary city homes. Large thangkas (religious paintings on a scroll) of Tārā belong among the highlights of Tibetan and Mongolian art, small paper cards with her portrait serve for daily worship, and pictures of various qualities are today sold as popular souvenirs.

The pictures of the goddess Tārā, as well as other religious paintings from the region, did not escape the attention of Czechoslovaks who travelled to Mongolia in the second half of the 20th century. The colourful and bizarre deities painted on scrolls mounted in rich brocades and covered with fine silk covers represented the strangeness of the distant land they visited. The Lamaistic Collection in the Náprstek Museum benefited greatly from their donations. Fortunately for the study of the Museum acquisitions, the Czechoslovaks were not sporadic and solitary travellers to Mongolia, but belonged among selected experts and workers who were sent to Mongolia with the COMECON projects during the 1960s to 1980s. Although they were not trained anthropologists and art historians, they often developed an interest in Mongolian culture which resulted in their extensive collecting activities.

The COMECON Czechoslovak experts visited a country that had passed through enormous social, political and economic changes. Czechoslovakia belonged among the first group members when the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance was established by the Soviet Union and countries of the Eastern Block in 1949. Mongolia joined the COMECON in 1962. The cooperation between Czechoslovakia and the Mongolian People's Republic began with the signing of the intergovernmental agreement in 1963. Czechoslovakia organised mutual cultural, scholarly and economic exchanges in various fields including humanities, medicine, engineering, geology, constructions, and veterinary medicine.³

The Czechoslovaks in Mongolia might have felt that their dreams about adventures in exotic lands were coming true. The beauty of the landscape, the harsh but invigorating living and working conditions, and vestiges of an ancient culture were all experiences that had a tremendous impact on their lives.⁴ They felt the need to help the country however, they were hardly aware that Mongolia was largely a broken country during that period of time, politically, economically and culturally as well. After the fall of the Qing dynasty in China in 1911, Mongolia declared independence however, soon after the Communist turnover in Russia the country fell under Soviet influence for several subsequent decades. The religious purges begun, the monasteries – the traditional centres of culture – were destroyed and monks were expelled. However, traditional culture remained, although only marginally, and at the time when the COMECON experts visited Mongolia, it had already begun its transformation. In the book *Mongolian Journey* (1960) the Czech archaeologist and scholar of traditional Mongolian art, Lumír Jisl (1921–1969), mused about the fate of Mongolian culture: “[The book] is an attempt to set down some at least of the things that have survived and that for us make up Mongolia – dead cities, ancient tombs, and the traditional way of life, its customs,

³ The extensive materials about the mutual Czechoslovakian and Mongolian relationships covering the years 1960 to 1980 are found in the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁴ For the purpose of this study I also personally interviewed some of the retired experts.

clothes, religion, art and architecture. Before long there is bound to be someone eager to comment on the new life of Mongolia but it may well be within a few years all trace of even the few things shown in this volume may have vanished” (Jisl: 6). Lumír Jisl pointed to changes in the post-war Mongolia and its rapid development that crushed the traditional society in order to build the new one. Although he praised the vanishing culture, he also gave testimony about the traditional culture that was still alive, even though it struggled on the margins of a modern society. Lumír Jisl visited Mongolia at about the same time as the Czechoslovak experts. They all witnessed the changes in the traditional culture and its ability to survive.

Tārā, the Saviouress

As in other countries under the influence of Tibetan Buddhism, the goddess Tārā also belongs among popular deities in Mongolia. She represents the motherly principle, a helper and protector. Her loving and kind nature attracts worshippers, but she “helps everybody”, even those who do not believe in her.

Her long history originated in India where she was one of the female deities surrounding male gods (Arènes: 22). In Tibet her cult as a separate female deity appeared for the first time during the second half of the first millennium when Buddhism began to spread there. However, her popularity mainly increased during the second arrival of Buddhism in the eleventh century. The important person in dissemination of her cult was the Bengali scholar Atiśa Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna अतिश दीपंकर श्रीज्ञान (982–1055). Tārā was his personal deity. According to legend, she approached him in dreams and asked him to leave his native country for Tibet. Atiśa is the author and translator of the texts invoking Tārā that belong among the *Cheating death* ritual texts (*‘Chi ba slu ba* འཛིབསྐྱབ་, Beyer: 11-12; Landesman: 59).⁵ The major role in further development of her worship had a Tibetan scholar Kun dga’ snying po ཀུན་དགའ་སྤྱིང་པོ་ called by his Sanskrit name Tāranātha तारनाथ (after 1575–1634). In 1604 Tāranātha wrote the crucial text devoted to Tārā: *Sgrol ma’i rgyud kyi byung khungs gsal bar byed pa’i lo rgyus gser gyi phreng ba* སྐྱོལ་མའི་རྒྱུད་གྱི་བྱུང་ཁུངས་གསལ་བར་བྱེད་པའི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་གསལ་བྱི་ཤེང་བ་ (The Golden Rosary of History which Illuminates the Origin of the Tantras of Tārā)⁶. Atiśa’s and Tāranātha’s works formed the fundamentals of Tārā’s worship in the countries under the influence of Tibetan Buddhism. The third widely spread work dedicated to Tārā is the prayer known under its short title *Phyag ‘tshal nyi shu rtsa gcig* ཕྱག་འཚལ་ཉི་ལུང་གཅིག་(The Twenty-one Praises of

5 *‘Chi ba slu ba’i bsdus don* འཛིབསྐྱབ་འཇིགས་པོ་ (The Essence of the Cheating death), by (Vāgīśvarakīrti वागीश्वरकीर्ति), P. 4806, vol. 86, 19.2.2-19.5.7, rgyud-’grel zhu 146a-147b. *Phags ma sgrol ma ‘jigs pa brgyad las skyob pa zhes bya ba’i sgrub thabs* འཕགས་མ་སྐྱོལ་མ་འདིགས་པ་བརྒྱུད་ལས་སྐྱོབ་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་སྐབ་ཐབས་(Āryaṣṭabhyatrāta nāmātārāsādhana आर्यअष्टभयत्रातनामतारासाधन, Sādhana of the Venerable Tārā, Protector against the Eight fears), by Candragomin (6th or 7th century), P. 4494, vol. 81,74.1.1-74.5.4, rgyud-’grel du 373a-375a. D. 3672, mu 284b5-286a7. N. du 335a5-337a1. Kinsha 2496, du 406b2, p. 205-1-2. *Phags ma lha mo sgrol ma la bstod pa mu tig ‘phreng ba zhes bya ba* འཕགས་མ་ལྷ་མོ་སྐྱོལ་མ་ལ་བསྐྱོད་པ་ལུ་དྲིལ་འཕྲེང་བ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་(Āryatārā-devīstotramuktikāmālānāma आर्यतारादेवीस्तोत्रमुक्तिकामालानाम, The Pearl Garland, The Praise of the Venerable Goddess Tārā), by Candragomin, P. 4869, vol. 86, pp. 123-124, rgyud ‘grel, zu 178-181a. D.-. N. zu 178a1-180b1. Kinsha 2868, zu 236b1, p. 119-3-1. *Sgrol ma dkon mchog gsum la bstod pa* སྐྱོལ་མ་དཀོན་མཆོག་གསུམ་ལ་བསྐྱོད་པ་ (Triratnatārāstotra त्रिरत्नतारास्तोत्र, The Praise to the Three Jewels of Tārā), P. 2567, vol. 59, p. 72, rgyud ‘grel, la 61b8-62a4. D. 1695, sha 52a5-52b1. N. la 54a3-54a6. Kinsha 570, la 72b2, p. 37-3-2.

⁶ Translated into English by David Templeman and Martin Willson.

Tārā)⁷. The *Praise* appeared in Tibet in the eleventh century, and later it was translated into Chinese⁸ and Mongolian⁹.

Buddhism spread along the Silk Road and influenced numerous peoples in the region. When the Mongols conquered the area and established the Yuan 元 dynasty (1279–1368) in China, Tibetan lamas served as imperial preceptors at the court. Buddhism among the Mongols after the fall of the Yuan dynasty revived in the mid-16th century. The revival was linked with the rise of the institution of Dalai Lamas in Tibet and spread of the Gelug School (Berger and Bartholomew: 211). Among the Gelugpa Tārā belonged among the favoured deities.

Tārā's Iconography

The goddesses' earliest images in India dating to the 6th century depicted her as a beautiful female companion to the male bodhisattva of compassion Avalokiteśvara अवलोकितेश्वर (Shaw: 313), holding a lotus in her hand. By the 9th century she appeared as an independent female deity (Berger: 286).

Tārā is depicted in a number of manifestations, which take various visual forms that express her different qualities. Scholars believe that the name Tārā might be a general designation for various female deities with various functions (Shaw: 336). The most distinctive trait that distinguishes her forms and functions is the colour of her body. In the Tibetan and Chinese translations of the lost original text *Mahāvairocanaśūtra* महावैरोचनसूत्र from the mid-7th century she is described as a mature lady with a green body and a blue lotus (Shaw: 314).¹⁰ In the Indian tradition she was displayed in white or green (Shaw: 321). Arènes points out that in Sanskrit there is a semantic opposition between the terms *śyāma* श्याम with the meaning of dark shades of blue, green, brown, black, and *gaura* गौर, clear, white, yellowish, light shades (Arènes: 31). Tārā depicted in white embodied the calm and peaceful aspect. The green Tārā represented an active principle. Green, with the mixture of white, yellow and blue colours signified her pacifying, increasing and destroying functions. However, Tārā appeared in other colours as well; well-known is the Red Tārā symbolising a fearful aspect of her.

Green Tārā is depicted sitting on the lunar disc on a lotus throne. Her one leg rests upon a small lotus flower. She holds her hands in gestures of protection, boon-granting and giving refuge (*mi 'jigs pa'i phyag rgya* མི་འཇིགས་པའི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ, *skyabs sbyin gyi phyag rgya* སྐྱབས་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ, Beer: 156). Tārā is depicted as a beautiful woman. Her splendour is emphasised with three creases on her neck which are the symbol of female beauty

⁷ P. 0077, vol. 3, p. 154.2.3-154.4.7, rgyud, ca 45a3-46a7. D. 0438, rgyud, ca 42b3-43b6. N. ga 286b6-288b3.

⁸ One Chinese translation is dated to the Mongolian dynasty Yuan 元 (1279-1368), both translations are found in the *Taisho collection* (Beyer: 13).

⁹ For the translations into Mongolian see Chandra, Lokesh, ed. *Hymns to Tārā*, International Academy of Indian Culture v Dillí (Beyer: 504). "Tara. The Praise of Tara". In Tumurtogoo, D. ed. *Mongolian Monuments in Uighur-Mongolian Script (XIII-XVI Centuries)*. Introduction, Transcription and Bibliography. Taipei: Institute of Linguistics, Academia Sinica Taipei, 2006, pp. 202–208.

¹⁰ The original Sanskrit is lost, however, there are translations into Chinese and Tibetan. The contemporary English translation of the Chinese version called *Dapiluzhena chengfo shenpien jiachi ching* 大毗盧遮那成佛神變加持經 by Śubhākarasimha 善無量壽 (637-735) and his pupil Yi Xing 一行 (683-727), dated 725, depicts Tārā "in the form of a middle-aged lady of an intermingled blue and white colour. She holds a blue lotus in the añjali-mudrā with a circular light pervading all over. She emanates light like pure gold and smiles in a fresh white robe" (Chikyo Yamamoto: 21).

(Beer: 162). She is semi-naked, showing her full breasts and a slim waist. She wears a red skirt with golden patterns on it, sometimes with white trousers with multi-coloured strips. A fluttering shawl of red, yellow or orange colour is draped around her shoulders. She is adorned by bodhisattva jewellery: earrings with gemstones, gold necklaces, bracelets and anklets. Her smiling, kind face is lined with black tresses plaited in a high bun. Her headdress is embellished by a crown with five jewels resting on a white scarf. In the background there are an aureole and a halo around her body and head. Both the aureole and the halo are circular, painted mostly in one colour, sometimes shaded and accentuated on the edge by lines in different colours, and with golden wavy lines which emanate from the body of Tārā. The rays represent the protective circle of multi-coloured light *srung 'khor* སྤུང་འཁོར་ (Shaw: 335).

Tārā's main attribute is a blue (*utpala* उत्पल) or a pink lotus (*padma* पद्म). She holds either one or two lotuses represented by buds or flowers in bloom. Usually she holds the flowers in her hands, however sometimes they are depicted as if they have grown from behind her body. The lotus is a sacred plant in Hinduism and Buddhism. It has a number of connotations. Mostly it is associated with spiritual purity and beauty. The botanical lotus (*Nelumbo*) is a water plant native to the tropical and subtropical regions of Asia. The rhizomes grow out of the mud. Strong stems carry large leaves and flowers with distinctive seedpods. Rhizomes, seeds, even young leaves and flower buds are edible, and are used in traditional medicine. Although Tārā holds lotuses according to her iconography, they resembled rich peony flowers more than the botanical lotus. In the small votive paintings the lotuses are reduced to only a few lines and dots of colour.

Tārā belongs among popular deities who are often portrayed in sculpture, print and painting. Her images play a crucial role in religious life, being a medium through which religious ideas were evoked (Jackson and Jackson: 9). Large paintings of deities and major figures of religious tradition that were used in ceremonies and temple rituals were distinguished by precise iconography, fine painting techniques and complex meaning. Small votive paintings were used for personal meditation. The aesthetic value of the images was not important for practitioners. Therefore the artistic value of the works may be very uneven. The masterpieces of Buddhist art are highly appreciated by Western collectors today, whereas artistically less skilful paintings are regarded as folk arts.

Although small votive paintings were visually simpler than large paintings, the process of painting was similar. The cotton fabric was stretched into the frame before the "gesso" made of kaolin and animal glue was applied on both sides and smoothed by a stone. After the canvas was prepared, the design was sketched on it. Mineral pigments ground into powder and mixed with gelatine binders were applied to the canvas. The technique resembled distemper or gouache in Western painting. Finished paintings were sewn into cloth frames and consecrated. Small votive paintings were enclosed in wooden or metal boxes that could be easily carried.

The Contemporary Tārā

Traditional paintings were religious images. The precise composition and iconometry, as well as fine painting, represented the material basis which expressed the religious ideas for which they were praised. Small votive paintings represented the image of the goddess in a simple form; however, both the elaborated and complex paintings and small votive images were parts of the religious cult. They did not serve for purely aesthetic appreciation.

Tārā's iconography has formed over centuries, but although her iconography became a norm, many elements changed when the religious life in contemporary Mongolian society altered. The small votive paintings collected during the 1960s and 1970s and painted probably at that time or during the previous decades show how the traditional iconography and technique transformed. The artisans employed the elements of the traditional iconography, but in a simplified form. Elements of composition such as Tārā's throne or the clouds in the sky above her were roughly sketched. It is interesting to note that elements of her bodhisattva's dress such as her skirt and a shawl with golden patterns were almost always finely painted, whereas her jewellery, headdress and crown were oversimplified to a few dots and lines. The three creases on her neck that symbolised her beauty were never omitted. Some painters depicted her face in detail with red smiling lips and large eyes gazing directly at the viewer, while others reduced it to only a few touches of the brush. The lotus, her major iconographical trait, is also painted in various ways. Mostly it looks like a gorgeous fantasy flower with a variety of petals and pistils, however, some painters reduced it to simple lines and dots. The artisan usually maintained Tārā's posture that he considered being important in terms of iconography, or perhaps in terms of the audience perspective. Especially the gestures of her hands and her fingers were emphasised, probably in order to show that she helps and protects the worshippers.

The small votive paintings collected in Mongolia during the 1960s and 1970s were sold or given to the Czech travellers for a variety of possible purposes. Probably they were perhaps even produced in order to be sold to foreigners. Although they may be products of contemporary artisans, they show that the traditional culture did not perish. The ancient culture was weakened, however it was not lost. The artisans who created the paintings were well aware of the traditional iconography however, they used the tradition freely and for various purposes including both religious devotion and commerce.

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Catalogue

These examples of votive paintings of Tārā are part of the collections of three collectors. The first collection was donated to the museum during the years 1969 and 1971, and included 63 items, mostly religious paintings. The collector participated in a construction of a hospital in Mongolia, as mentioned in the documents accompanying the acquisition¹¹. The other collection of 24 items came to the museum in 1982, and there are unfortunately no detailed data about the collector. The third collection of 87 items was obtained in 1983, and the collector visited Mongolia on a study. These collections generally contain similar types of objects: metal sculptures, traditional books, ritual implements, textile items, and paintings.

The Single Image of Tārā

Unlike in the large paintings with an elaborate background, Tārā is depicted on a simplified setting in small votive paintings. The lower half that represents the landscape is painted green. The upper half is blue. It denotes the sky, with the Sun and the Moon, and with shaded clouds painted in white and pink.

No. 1

Inv. n. A/8910

Acquisition: Private Owner, 1971

3.3 cm x 2.7 cm

20th century, Mongolia

Composition:

Central Green Tārā, her dress in red, yellow and orange, holds one golden lotus. White and orange aureole.

Background: blue sky with symmetrical white cloud, green landscape.

Notes: simple drawing and painting, bright colours + golden colour.

No. 2

Inv. n. A/8912

Acquisition: Private Owner, 1971

6.8 cm x 5.9 cm

20th century, Mongolia

Composition:

Central Green Tārā on a simple throne, in a red skirt and blue shawl, holding one pink lotus.

Background: dark blue sky, green landscape.

Notes: simple drawing and painting, bright colours (red, blue, green) + golden colour.

No. 3

Inv. n. A/8916

Acquisition: Private Owner, 1971

¹¹ The letter dated 7/12/1966 by Lumír Jisl to the Náprstek Museum. Administrative Documentation, No. 2138/64.

4.8 cm x 3.9 cm
20th century, Mongolia

Composition:

Central Green Tārā on a throne, holding two golden lotuses.

Background: blue sky with clouds, green landscape with stylised white mountains.

Notes: The artisan toyed with thin lines in a decorative, spiralling, playful style of drawing.

No. 4

Inv. n. A/8917

Acquisition: Private Owner, 1971

6 cm x 5.2 cm

20th century, Mongolia

Composition:

Central Green Tārā on a throne with white and pink shaded petals, in a red dress with golden spiralling pattern, with a yellow shawl, holding two blue and white lotuses with buds. Red and orange aureoles with golden lines.

Background: dark blue sky with symmetrical clouds, green landscape with dark green dots.

Notes: bright green and red with golden colour.

No. 5

Inv. n. A/17078

Acquisition: Private Owner, 1980

7.4 cm x 5.8 cm

20th century, Mongolia

Composition:

Central Green Tārā on a simple throne, in a red dress with golden spirals and dots, and red, yellow and blue shawls, with two white lotuses, red aureoles with golden lines.

Background: dark blue sky with simple clouds, green landscape.

Notes: This is the simplest image of Tārā in the entire collection of Green Tārās. The drawing is simplistic, with heavy lines in black. Colours are bright, and they are painted in large areas. A golden colour is used for the pattern on her skirt and for lines in the aureole.

The throne consists of two white discs; there are remains of pink shading and the golden outline of petals. She sits in an iconographical correct position, and wears a red skirt and shawls, but her bodhisattva jewellery and crown are missing. She seems to wear only a necklace. Her headdress is a single bun in black. Her face consists of a few quick brush touches that represent eyes, eyebrow, nose and smiling red lips. The lotuses are white and black discs. Green dots represent leaves.

No. 6

Inv. n. A/17226

Acquisition: Private Owner, 1983

7.2 cm x 6.2 cm

20th century, Mongolia

Composition:

Central Green Tārā on a throne supported by white and pink petals, her right leg rests on a lotus flower, and she wears multi-coloured leggings and a red skirt with golden dots, white and pale coloured shawls; she holds one elaborate pink lotus. White and orange aureoles are painted with golden lines.

Background: blue sky with symmetrical white cloud with pink shading, greenish landscape.

Notes: small but fine drawing outlined in black and painting with details and shading. Colours are pale, as if faded.

The lotus is elaborated. The stem with tiny leaves is painted in a golden colour; the large flower consists of a white colour and shades of pink and red. Atop the flower there are expressive yellow and black pistils.

Tārā holds a ritual flask, according to the iconographical tradition of Atiśa, in her right hand (Willson: 118).

No. 7

Inv. n. A/17230

Acquisition: Private Owner, 1982

8 cm x 7 cm

20th century, Mongolia

Composition:

Central Green Tārā on a throne with white and pink petals, her right leg on a lotus flower; she is wearing a double skirt in green and red, a yellow shawl, with two pink lotuses.

Her crown sits on a red shawl. Aureoles in pink-orange and deep green with golden lines.

Background: sky and landscape in two shades of green, white greenish clouds.

Notes: Two jewels in front of her throne.

Fine drawing and detailed painting.

No. 8

Inv. n. A/17238

Acquisition: Private Owner, 1982

8 cm x 6.4 cm

20th century, Mongolia

Composition:

Central Green Tārā on a simple throne with simplified white and pink petals, her right leg resting on a lotus bud, in a red skirt with spiralling pattern, wearing a yellow shawl, with two white lotuses. Aureoles in shaded pink and white with golden lines.

Background: blue sky with white clouds, green landscape.

Notes: Tārā is finely painted with many details, unlike the background. The painting looks like the background and the figure were painted by different artisans.

Twenty-one Tārās

Twenty-one Tārās are depicted in rows surrounding the central figure, according to three iconographical forms: each of the Tārās hold a different posture, mood and

attributes representing the tradition of *Sūryagupta* *सूर्यगुप्त* dated to the mid-9th century; Atiśa's tradition depict the Tārās with an identical posture and mood, but with a different body colour, with a flask in her right hand. According to the Nyingma *Rnying ma* *རྟོན་མ་* school similar Tārās hold a different attribute aloft on a lotus (Berger: 292).

No. 9

Inv. n. A/8914

Acquisition: Private Owner, 1971

20 cm x 15 cm

20th century, Mongolia

Composition:

Central Green Tārā, in a red skirt and red shawl, with two white lotuses, blue aureole; above her head is the Buddha figure.

Tārās in various body colours and aureole in white, red, blue, brown and pink, in six rows around the central figure: all seated in the same position on a lotus throne holding two blue lotuses.

Background: simple: dark blue sky with pink clouds, green landscape.

Notes: simple drawing and painting, bright colours + golden colour, little shading.

The Other Examples of Tārā

No. 10

Inv. n. A/17455

Acquisition: Private Owner, 1987

7.8 cm x 6.7 cm

20th century, Mongolia

The tiny votive painting in a wooden, lacquered box serves as a portable shrine.

No. 11

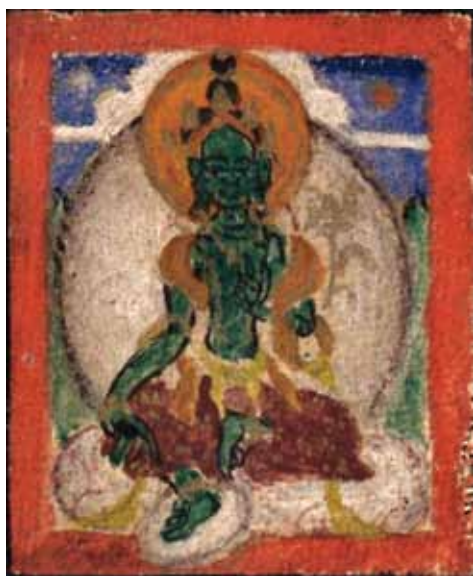
Inv. n. A/29161

Acquisition: purchased by the Klenoty shops network, 1976

36 cm x 32 cm

20th century, Mongolia

The image of Tārā sitting on a lotus throne dressed in exquisite skirts with golden patterns and adorned with jewellery and a crown, holding a blue and pink lotus flower with a bud. The painting represents the aesthetically pleasing and more elaborated image of Tārā than the above-mentioned examples.



No. 1



No. 2



No. 3



No. 4



No. 5



No. 6



No. 7



No. 8



No. 9



No. 10



No. 11