

## **Abstract**

The thesis presents an analysis of the ritual text titled *Gto nag mgo gsum gyi cho ga bzhugs so* – “*The Black Gto of the Three-Headed One*” – from the *Gto 'bum* collection of the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. Tibetan religious traditions typically differentiate between Buddhist rituals, referred to as *cho ga*, and rituals associated with older, non-Buddhist traditions, known as *gto* rituals. *Gto* are rituals intended to liberate victims from hostile forces and are typically used to ward off harm or illnesses caused by demonic beings. The thesis explores the ritual’s structure, narrative, and symbolic elements, focusing on the offering practices and the central figure of the three-headed demon effigy, which has been subdued by the Bodhisattva Manjushri to avert malevolent forces and protect the ritual’s patron. Through a comparative approach, the thesis also examines similar rituals from the Bon tradition, highlighting both commonalities and differences in practice. The examination of spirits and demons within the ritual, combined with the inclusion of Tibetan astrological and divinatory elements, characterizes the ritual’s nature and situates it within the diverse and intricate landscape of Tibetan ritual practices. The thesis underscores the importance of rituals in Tibetan culture as mechanisms for maintaining social and spiritual balance and addressing various misfortunes encountered in life. The work includes a critical translation of the original Tibetan text, offering insights into the challenges and specific linguistic nuances of translating a Tibetan ritual text.

## **Keywords**

Tibetan ritual, *gto* ritual, Nyingma, *nag po mgo gsum*, Three-headed Black Man