

A discussion on the honorific verses to gods and spirits in King Gesar narratives

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One: Definition of the honorific verse

The so-called honorific verse here refers to the verse that the narrators sing about gods, local deities, and religious protectors at the beginning. This verse includes singing about jewel (konchok); sing about Buddhist deities; protectors of Bon religion; singing about gods, dragon and Nyan; singing about local deities; singing about white, black and stripe creatures (Thesrang karnaktra). The way of placing the different honorific verses indicates the emotional attitudes of the narrators towards a particular addressee.

Two: Functions of the honorific verse

Gesar story includes starting, worship, recognizing location, describing oneself, main body of the story and ending. The honorific verse is one the most important contents of the story, which carries unique art characteristics by combining with other parts.

Three: The main contents of the honorific verses

Since Tibetans commonly believe in religion, religion becomes the foundation of all thoughts and behaviors. The honorific verses in Gesar story are also reflections of religious belief. The writers, narrators and listeners of Gesar story get satisfaction of their belief by expressing and enjoying their artistic work.

Four: The artistic characteristics of the honorific verse

The honorific verses of Gesar story generated from social life, where people worship gods and protectors. The honorific verses are not copies of social activities. They have slightly been changed according to the content and artistic reasons of story, according personalities of different roles in the story. For instance, singing about Tatrín marpo and Ludolba nakpo in order to express wrathful personality of a role; sing about Manjushuri (Jamyang) and white Tara to express a peaceful and compassionate personality of a role. Besides these, the honorific verse also carries some characteristics – which cannot be found in other parts of the story such as beauty of Nyangga.