

## Reassessing the Qutan Hall in Qutan Monastery, Qinghai, Part Two: The Visual Evidence of *Vajrāvali* (*rDo rje phreng ba*) in Early-Ming Amdo

Chung Tzu-yin  
Department of South Branch  
National Palace Museum

### Abstract

Qutansi 瞿曇寺 (Gro tshang rdo rje 'chang) was the most magnificent monastery sponsored by Ming 明 court in Amdo (A mdo) in early-15<sup>th</sup> century. This paper is the second part of a continuing research about this important monastery, which identified an almost complete set of deities (Yi dam) of *Vajrāvali* (*rDo rje phreng ba*) painted on the walls of Qutan Hall 瞿曇殿, which is the first hall of the three main halls.

Previous researches about the 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century thangkas of *Vajrāvali* were mostly considered as Sakya order works from sTsang. Moreover, there is none visual evidence of *Vajrāvali* discovered in early-Ming Amdo, Shanxi, Nanjing, and Beijing nor studies focusing on the very little literature of the propagation of the teaching in these areas. The recognition of these mural paintings of *Vajrāvali* in Qutan Hall is the first visual evidence which verified the teaching had been spread in Early-Ming Amdo and contributed to the understanding of the esoteric Buddhism in Early-Ming.

**Keywords:** Qutansi (Gro tshang rdo rje 'chang), *Vajrāvali* (*rDo rje phreng ba*), *Nipannayogāvalī* (*rDzogs pa'i rnal 'byor gyi phreng ba*), Tibetan Buddhist art in Ming dynasty