Katsom Alphabetical Composition

Katsom ($\eta \circledast$) is a type of poetry in the Himalayan world where the poem starts its lines or verses with the thirty alphabets in a sequence. The poem starts with the syllable ka (η) to begin the first line or verse and the subsequent lines or verses begin with the other alphabets in the sequence they are normally used.

The *katsom* is often composed by knowledgeable and creative person on various themes including spiritual reflections, instructions and songs. The poem may have 30 lines beginning with 30 consonants in classical Tibetan or have only some of the alphabets. Bhutanese lamas have composed their religious hymns, songs of happiness, hardship or love using this style of poetry. While most *katsom* are in Chokey or classical Tibetan and Dzongkha, it is also composed in other languages.

For example, the following is a *katsom* in Tshangla language of eastern Bhutan, which is widely sung by the people of eastern Bhutan.

गायायायायादाखाला विषयित्यायायायाया । त्यादाव्येत्वाद्याः ह्यादायायाया ।

Coming from Kalikhola, (I) arrived at the Khaling School. I met a Galingpa who gave me a fish to eat.

ङ'म्रेन्ट'र्स्'गनेवाबा'ते। १२८८-'श्रे'च'श्रेत्'सुर'ग्री। हि'सुर'य''ते'हरूगंथा ।ति'य' कें'थें'ट्य'था ।

Arriving at Chaling Shongphu, a girl from Changmi gave me a tea to drink, and asked me to stay over.

७.छ.ञ.क्र.चे.स । व.रे...रे...क्रूबा इंट.सेव । ८.रू. व.स. च. यट.वी । वव. गाय वे.रू...क्र.ज ।

Even if you don't always stay, remain faithful, she said. For it is not just for now; I will remain with you always.

५८⁻ घट-छट-छन]वट-ग] वि'अदे:ळगुषापदि'ष'वेटा । झिं झॅन्टपदे'ग]वट-ग] वि'व्य'र्वे वट-घे'लें।

In the dry flat meadow, on the farmland where my parents settled, in the house that is bamboo hut, I do not feel so happy.

Once in Tsamang Tokari, there are no oranges to eat. Among all places in this world. I feel happy in Wamrong.

ବ୍ୟାକ୍ଷାବିଶାକ୍ଷାଜ୍ଞା (ଆର୍ମା ସାହାରୁ ସେମ୍ବର ଅନ୍ମା (ସେମ୍ବର ଓ ସେମ୍ବର (ଆର୍କ୍ଷା ସେମ୍ବର ସେମ୍ବର ସେମ୍ବର)

Feeling weak and feeble, I have no power to eat. In the midst of haste and noise, I am left frail and confused.

Climbing upward from the bottom, I arrived at the laptsa cairn. When two deers showed up, the Sakteng nomad took them.

5'5'કે'લ'લે | લાધો ગાહર ખરા કરવા નિરો હાળવા રહે નિયા | Laughing haha hehe, and wearing *aikapur* gho, I went to study.

An example of a katsom is the following song sung by Khadro Drowa Zangmo to King Kala Wangpo from the mythical biography of Khadro Drowa Zangmo:

ण'अ'भ'भे' झे फ़्रेंग भेदन का ।य'र्न्या क्षेत्र 'धन्ये कुभ'र्य' पत्र्याभाषांका ।या'त्रक'प्तक्षेका ग्रान् क्षेत्र 'घं के' वर्त्या ध्या निः त्रेन्य ध्ये क्षेत्र केंब दि फ़ु झेंबा ।

O beautiful lotus flower. Listen to me, the radaint king. There is no meaning from all angles, I strongly wish to pursue the divine dharma.

O Drowa Zangmo, the White Tara. The mother and children can come to meet. Remain now in a retreat for divine dharma. Hold this in your heart, beautiful maiden.

Drowa Zangmo responds to the King:

 $|a|_{a}a_{a}|_{a}^{b}|_{a}^{b}$ \tilde{a}_{a} \tilde{a} $\tilde{a$

There is no essence to the hat and parasols on the head. Even if there is great enjoyment of food and drinks, if one does not engage fervently into dharma, the lazy one will soon reach the court of Lord of Death.

ম:জ'দ্যাম রূমেওদা দ্বীজন্তবে বজামন্ত্রীনা দেওদেশের্যাবদেশের বিদ্যালয় নিজ কের দ্বীদাদর র্মাদার্মদের অদা দিয়ে ষ্টানের্দ্র ক্যান্ত্র ক্রিয়া জারে রামবি স্ক্রা দি কলমর্প্তর রূমেজারে রামবি স্ক্রা দি কলমর্প্তর রূমেজারে রামবি স্ক্রা দি কলমের্প্তর রূমেজারে রামবি স্ক্রা দি ক জার্জার্মদের মের্দ্র স্ক্রামের মার্দ্র বিদ্যালয় বিদ্যালয় বিদ্যালয় বিদ্যালয় মের্দ্র মেরাদের মেরা স্ক্রা মেরা বিদ্যালয় মেরা স্ক্রা মেরা স্ক্রা বিদ্যালয় বিদ্যালয় বিদ্যালয় বিদ্যালয় বিদ্যালয় বিদ্য

The white mother goat, although surrounded by sheep, and having crossed mountains and valleys, will end with the demonic butcher. Even if one has a loving relation, the mother and children feel sadness in this world. When Hashang, the queen, devours the mother and children, I, the mother, shall not remain but leave for the realm of divine beings.

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