

READING CHINA:
TIBETAN STORIES

· 阅读中国 ·
藏族青年作家丛书

འབྲུ་ཟླ་ག་པོ་

PURPLE
HIGHLAND
BARLEY

紫青稞

尼玛潘多 著
Stephen F. Pomroy 刘玉洁 译

中国出版集团
中译出版社

REAL

ORIES

PURPLE HIGHLAND BARLEY

紫青稞

尼玛潘多 著

[美] Stephen F. Pomroy 刘玉洁 译

中国出版集团
中译出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

紫青稞: 英文 / 尼玛潘多著; (美) Stephen Francis Pomroy, 刘玉洁译. —北京: 中译出版社, 2015. 10

(藏族青年作家丛书)

ISBN 978-7-5001-4340-6

I. ①紫… II. ①尼… ②弗… ③刘… III. ①英语—语言读物
②长篇小说—中国—当代 IV. ① H319.4:I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2015) 第 253691 号

出版发行 / 中译出版社

地 址 / 北京市西城区车公庄大街甲 4 号物华大厦六层

电 话 / (010) 68359376, 68359827, 68358224

传 真 / (010) 68357870

邮 编 / 100044

电子邮箱 / book@ctph.com.cn

网 址 / <http://www.ctph.com.cn>

总 策 划 / 张高里

策划编辑 / 范 伟 曹晓雅

责任编辑 / 张显奎

封面设计 / 潘 峰

排 版 / 竹叶图文

印 刷 / 北京天来印务有限公司

经 销 / 新华书店

规 格 / 880mm×1230mm 1/32

印 张 / 10.5

字 数 / 262 千

版 次 / 2016 年 1 月第一版

印 次 / 2016 年 1 月第一次

ISBN 978-7-5001-4340-6 定价: 40.00 元

版权所有 侵权必究

中 译 出 版 社

Born after the 1970s in Shigatse, Tibet, **Nyima Pendor** once served as a civil official and a journalist. She is currently a member of the China Writers Association and Vice Chairwoman of the Tibetan Writers Association. Since 1992, her novels and prose have been successively published in *Works*, *National Literature*, *Tibetan Literature*, *Journal of Literature and Art*, *People's Daily* and many other newspapers and periodicals. Her novel *Purple Highland Barley* was published and reprinted in *Selected Novels*. Her works have also been selected for *China City Tour*, *Tibetan Poetry* and so on. Her short story 'Yangzom of Xiegar Village' won the 2012 Annual Novel Prize of National Literature.

Books in “Reading China: Tibetan Stories” series

Love in Lhasa

Purple Highland Barley

The Way of Khams-pa

Paper Airplanes

Realm

Khams-pa

The Oath of Polungde

The Secluded Face

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	5
CHAPTER 2	29
CHAPTER 3	56
CHAPTER 4	93
CHAPTER 5	117
CHAPTER 6	144
CHAPTER 7	171
CHAPTER 8	197
CHAPTER 9	228
CHAPTER 10	260
CHAPTER 11	279
CHAPTER 12	299
CHAPTER 13	317

REAL

ORIES

PURPLE HIGHLAND BARLEY

紫青稞

尼玛潘多 著

[美] Stephen F. Pomroy 刘玉洁 译

中国出版集团
中译出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

紫青稞: 英文 / 尼玛潘多著; (美) Stephen Francis Pomroy, 刘玉洁译. —北京: 中译出版社, 2015. 10

(藏族青年作家丛书)

ISBN 978-7-5001-4340-6

I. ①紫… II. ①尼… ②弗… ③刘… III. ①英语—语言读物
②长篇小说—中国—当代 IV. ①H319.4:I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2015) 第 253691 号

出版发行 / 中译出版社

地 址 / 北京市西城区车公庄大街甲 4 号物华大厦六层

电 话 / (010) 68359376, 68359827, 68358224

传 真 / (010) 68357870

邮 编 / 100044

电子邮箱 / book@ctph.com.cn

网 址 / <http://www.ctph.com.cn>

总 策 划 / 张高里

策划编辑 / 范 伟 曹晓雅

责任编辑 / 张显奎

封面设计 / 潘 峰

排 版 / 竹叶图文

印 刷 / 北京天来印务有限公司

经 销 / 新华书店

规 格 / 880mm×1230mm 1/32

印 张 / 10.5

字 数 / 262 千

版 次 / 2016 年 1 月第一版

印 次 / 2016 年 1 月第一次

ISBN 978-7-5001-4340-6 定价: 40.00 元

版权所有 侵权必究

中 译 出 版 社

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	5
CHAPTER 2	29
CHAPTER 3	56
CHAPTER 4	93
CHAPTER 5	117
CHAPTER 6	144
CHAPTER 7	171
CHAPTER 8	197
CHAPTER 9	228
CHAPTER 10	260
CHAPTER 11	279
CHAPTER 12	299
CHAPTER 13	317

Chapter 1

1

LIKE MANY OTHER small villages near the Himalayas, Pu Village consisted of only around thirty households. It was tightly enclosed by huge mountains and seemingly isolated from the outside world.

“Kar-kar!” the caws of common ravens hovering over the mountaintop echoed across the valley. Hearing this, Pu villagers walking on the mountain paths would search the skies to see the ravens flying from afar, lest they miss news from beyond the mountains.

Mother, please show me mercy.

Don't marry me to someone from behind the mountains.

It's so barren. How can I live happily?

This song, sung throughout Tibet, expressed the reality of Pu Village: snowy mountains, hills and barren land. Yet this valley in

the mountains managed to nurture hardy people. They laboriously ploughed a small gravel patch in the spring and hoped to harvest several bags of purple highland barley in the autumn.

Pu Village was the most remote village in Karton County. Due to the harsh local environment, a tenacious variety of purple highland barley had become the villagers' main crop. In several counties in Shigatse Prefecture, this variety had entirely fallen from use because of its low yield and poor quality. There was even a phrase, "Purple highland barley eaters", which expressed outsiders' scornful view of Pu villagers.

As the saying goes, "If Pu Village has a good harvest, the whole world will." Good harvests were rare events in Pu Village. Droughts, floods, insects and hailstones seemed to have fallen deeply in love with this poor community.

Remote as it was, Pu Village was famous in Tibet for its singing and dancing. As soon as the men started playing the Tibetan stringed instrument called the Tanenchien, the women would immediately spring up to sing and dance. No matter how hard their lives were, they never gave up singing and dancing.

When the morning light shone on the top of the mountain nearest to Pu Village, the dazzling reflections of sunlight on snow would illuminate the whole mountain. At the same time, the village at the foot of the mountain would be thrown into a darkness which contrasted sharply with the bright mountainside. The village houses were small and low, and as they were blocked by the shadow of the mountain, the sun's rays always arrived late in the day. At first, the village had only a dozen households and was the smallest village community in Karton County. Over the years, almost all its families became related to one another through marriage. These

relationships bound Pu Village into a tightly-knit community.

Seen from the mountaintop, the layout of this village was very distinctive. At the east end stood the only house with a name, because it belonged to the richest and most noble family in Pu Village, “Apagbu” Chamsu”. Chamsu referred to a branch of the Champei Family, which could be traced back to the Champei Clan of Senke Village, Jum Township. There appeared a Nyingma Zhügu who was proficient in Pañcavidyā and achieved great accomplishments in Buddhism. Nyingma’s Vinaya stipulated that its believers were allowed to get married, bringing endless benefits to the family. Boys inherited the cause from their father and became the patrimonial Apagbu. Their skills were famous throughout the region; rumour had it that they were so extraordinary they not only excelled in Tibetan medicine, but were also able to prevent natural disasters. No one in Jum Township or even Karton County was ignorant of the renowned Champei Family. Family members would be invited to cast divinations at every important event, and locals so venerated the family that no one dared address them directly. The Chamsu family expanded over time, developing many branches, and other families joined their extended family tree. Apart from fortune-telling and divination, the head of the family also knew something about Tibetan medicine. Whenever a villager became ill or needed a divination, the Chamsu family patriarch would be called upon. Due to his kindness, his fellow villagers addressed him respectfully with the honorific “Chamsula” or “Chamsu Rinpoche”.

The Chamsu house used to be in the middle of Pu Village, but the family enclosed a large section of land at the east end and

* Apagbu refers to a Domiciliary Vajrayāna Master in Tibetan culture.

built a two-story building there in order to avoid floods. It could be seen clearly from the mountaintop. The door of the house was theatrically large with two big scorpions painted on either side. Its first floor was a livestock shed, while the upstairs rooms with their small glass windows were arranged in an orderly fashion along a railing.

At the west end of the village was the house of Blacksmith Tashi. Tashi used to make a living as a travelling performer before he came to Pu Village and fell in love with a local girl. The villagers soon came to know him well, although his origins as an outsider and wanderer led many to regard him with contempt. In those years, class conflict was a serious matter even in such a small village. Whosoever dared to openly despise poor peasants like Blacksmith Tashi would be publicly criticized and denounced, so those villagers who resented the blacksmith had no choice but to disguise their contempt and wear a false smile whenever they greeted this instrument-playing tramp from parts unknown. However, there was a striking contrast to this kind of behaviour. To reward the girl who broke out of the shackles of feudal thought and married Tashi, the entire village helped them build a small house next to the Chamsu house. We will never know whether this generous deed concealed some hidden motive.

Several years ago, a few people left to make a living outside Pu Village. By virtue of his previous experience, Blacksmith Tashi was able to remove his son from the shadow of the big mountain. Together, they tanned furs, built houses and made copper bells for the herdsmen of northern Tibet. Every time they returned, they came ostentatiously driving a flock of goats before them. Soon, Blacksmith Tashi enclosed a plot of land at the west end of the

village and built a grand house in a completely contrasting style to that of the Chamsu house, saying, "The Chamsu family value their noble descent very much. Our family is inferior to them, after all. We are not qualified to live in such a solemn house."

When Tashi decided to rebuild his house, his son Wangchuck insisted that it be built in the same style as the Chamsu's. At first, Tashi managed to persuade his son by reminding him of their humble origins, but later relented somewhat when he considered what his son had suffered with him in northern Tibet. Shortly after that, a bungalow with two courtyards appeared at the west end of the village. The outer courtyard was for livestock. The family's living quarters lay behind the middle door. There were many things hanging on the walls, such as copper bells for livestock and even fire shovels, lest anyone forget they were in the house of a blacksmith.

Apart from these two big houses, the other dwellings in Pu Village were almost the same size, but if you looked carefully you could discover something interesting. Most of the larger houses were followed by several smaller houses, which trailed after their larger neighbours in a tail-like pattern. These were the houses of families with too many children. When the children grew up, only a few of them could stay with the family. If the others couldn't marry into other families, parents would build small houses for them behind their own home. Those small houses were like shy kids, curiously poking their heads out from behind the legs of their parents.

Other houses had no courtyards and looked cast aside like abandoned matchboxes. The owners of these houses were all unfortunate women. Some had been married, but their marriages had broken down and they were forced to return to their parents' houses with their children. No one proposed marriage to them

anymore and after such a long time they often couldn't get along with their sisters- and brothers-in-law. As they had already married once, their parents had no patience or energy to make another such arrangement for them. Instead, they would hastily build them a small house, leaving out the courtyard as this was thought too luxurious to waste on an unmarried woman. Some of these women were not refugees from failed marriages, but had become pregnant while unmarried. Furthermore, they either didn't know or refused to say who the father was. Even though some revealed the truth eventually, the father of the child often refused to marry them. Their heartbroken parents couldn't treat their daughter like they used to, and built her a small house as a way of turning her away from their own door. In this way, small houses without courtyards were like children without parents. Perhaps the parents of such daughters felt sad when they saw their disappointing offspring, so they used the new, small house as a way of physically distancing themselves. As the saying goes, "Out of sight, out of mind".

It is not difficult to pick out the house of our protagonists, Ama Chozom and her daughters. Amongst rows of similar houses, Ama Chozom's was like a burning candle with oil running over the ground. You could hardly figure out its layout. It was located on a slope in the middle of the village. A gutter ran beside it like a beast with an open mouth. The gutter was formed a few years ago when floods surged over the village. At that time, Ama Chozom's house was completely swallowed. The violent floods left the gutter to remind people of their power. Neighbours were inclined to erase the dark memory of the floods, and moved to higher ground one by one. Without neighbours, Ama Chozom's house looked as lonely and shabby as an ancient ruin.

2

When Ama Chozom was pregnant with her youngest daughter, her husband went to another world. The hardship of bringing up four kids alone prematurely grayed her hair. The wrinkles on her forehead and at the corners of her mouth and eyes made her look older than her peers. Even so, she never gave up hope for a happy life. Never. She named her three daughters Sangjee, Dhajee and Penjee* and longed for happiness.

It is said that a mother loves her children equally, but Ama Chozom favoured her simple and honest eldest son, Norbu Tenzin. She often called him “Norbu” (sweetheart). Every time, the dew of happiness would moisten her dry throat and bring her refreshment. Hoping that he could stabilize her family, Ama Chozom named him Tenzin.

Norbu Tenzin was the only man in Ama Chozom’s family and her hopes rested on his shoulders. After he grew up, if the family needed to do any heavy labour, he would take it on. He was known around the village for his great strength and he was even able to do strenuous farm work delicately and carefully. When villagers were in need of help, Norbu Tenzin was the first name that would spring to mind, because he was not only a hard worker but honest as well. He did nothing but work. Ama Chozom depended on him to support the family and wanted to find him a good wife.

Nevertheless, God seemed to be against Ama Chozom. Just when

* The suffix “-jee” means “happiness” in the Tibetan language.