



Yama Dharmaraja

Date

19th century

Medium

Pigments on cloth

Description

This painting depicts one of the primary protective deities of the Gelug tradition, which became popular in Mongolia after the Mongolian ruler Altan Khan (1507?-1582) invited a gifted Gelugpa monk to Mongolia in 1577. The monk, who taught and converted the khan, was given the Mongolian title Dalai Lama. As a protector (dharmapala), Yama is considered the defender of Gelug tradition in particular. The painting depicts him brandishing a skull club and a noose while standing on a buffalo. Below is another form of Yama who is armed with a chopper and a skull cup standing on a corpse. The top register depicts Tsongkapa, the founding teacher of the Gelug tradition

and his two main disciples. The remaining figures are members of Yama's retinue.

Dimensions

30 7/8 × 23 1/8 × 7/8 in.