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Rulers on the Celestial Plain

Ecclesiastic and Secular Hegemony in Medieval Tibet
A Study of Tshal Gung-thang

Volume 2

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in Cooperation with Tsering Gyalbo
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Front cover: Gung-thang Bla-ma Zhang (see p. 394: Fig. 5)

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I. ICONS OF LHA-SA RULERS

Embodied Buddhas, Political Power, and Ancestral Authority

The Bla-ma Zhang and gNyos Patriarch thangka

Per K. Sørensen

The way ideal lives of religious masters and the enduring triumph of lay potentates in the Tibetan world were recorded or depicted assumed myriad forms. The motive for recording or depicting these were just as many as the format such representations took: Some reflected the basic need for documenting or for providing record of authorization or representation and legitimacy — whether religious, spiritual, hegemonic or otherwise, or they met the overarching need for commemoration. Other records, both the written and the artistic forms, assumed model character intending to unfold before the very eyes of their audience the nature and form behind ideal or enlightened conduct of a saint or they sought to resuscitate and justify bygone glories and heroic feats depicted in order to exalt once-held or contemporary prerogatives of lay masters. In a Tibetan context, portraiture of rulers without a religious identity is unwarranted. Iconic representations embodying spiritual numinosity in form of statues and thangka indeed served similar purposes, but with the added quality of conveying an aesthetic, visual and communicative dimension to such representations that served as an unmediated gateway or a strongly evocative intermediary between the pious practitioner or the spectator and the divine world.

Two remarkable thangka icons have fortunately survived the vicissitude of time, depictions that to a considerable extent assist us in catching a glimpse of the modus operandi of authoritative representation and of the religio-political functions of rule. Being moreover masterpieces of clerical art, these icons — which in terms of finish are different, but cognate in terms of artistic style and iconographic repertoire reflecting an early Pāla-inspired, probably East Indic style (shar [b]ris [ma]) that dominated early deity- and monk-portraiture in Tibet — arguably were manufactured during roughly the second wave or generation that marked the spread of this particular artistic development. The paintings depict two charismatic masters and lay rulers of IHa-sa who reigned in the period between 1150 and 1200, namely the affluent gNyos spiritual master and lay ruler Grags-pa-dpal (1106–1165/1182 A.D.) and the contemporary Tshal Gung-thang founder Bla-ma Zhang g.Yu-brag-pa (1123–1193), personages that wielded both political and ecclesiastic power. Not only did they have remarkably parallel lives, their biographies are also compelling stories of ancestral commitments, religious trials, warring conflict and ultimate triumph. By fate or sheer coincidence, they were destined both to establish influential polities in the near vicinity of each other and to share the fate of succeeding one another as rulers in the very heartland of Tibet, where we find them recorded in Tibetan history as the first post-imperial rulers of IHa-sa in the sKyid-shod district; as such they shall count as true precursors of the dual rule characterizing the much later Dalai Lama institution. Based upon a wide range of sources: art-historical, biographical, literary, doctrinal and esoteric, the present essay probes into the background behind the icons and attempts to reinstall these in a proper historical, artistic and cultural context, an inquiry — by no means exhaustive — that enables us to acquire a better and deeper appreciation of the artworks; similar in-depth enquiries shall in fact prove quite feasible for a host of other masterpieces of Tibetan art.
Despite a veritable flurry of publications in the field of Tibetan art, its study and documentation is still in its infancy, since these inquiries are mostly conducted by scholars without proper mastery of Tibetan sources; however the prospects are by no means gloomy – materials related to art and not least to the documented history of innumerable pieces of religious art – due to the unbridled *furor scribendi* of the Tibetan themselves – are fortunately readily at hand.

1. **THE GUNG-THANG BLA-MA ZHANG KESI TAPESTRY**

Icon of Empowerment: Transition of Power and its Investiture

1.1 Historical Presupposition and Ideological Background

With his victory over the joint armies of the Sa-skya in the 1350’s and with his subsequent reorganization of the conquered territories, the charismatic and able *ta’i si tu* Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan (1302–1364) – as vividly retold in a number of unique contemporary sources (e.g. *Si tu bka’ chems* or *Rlangs*) – changed the political landscape of his country. Yet the changes introduced by the new regime had less impact on the inner structure that still allowed an appreciable amount of autonomy and independence to local patrimonial hegemonies, ruling houses and major monastic centres against a fair degree of loyalty sworn to the Phag-gru. The former myriarchic *wan hu*-structure, a Yuan invention set up in the mid-13th century proved to be ridden by a number of innate defects such as being all too susceptible to betrayal and disloyalty once the central power, either the Mongol empire itself or their local *Statthalter* and representatives in Tibet the Sa-skya-pa displayed signs of exhaustion, were ridden by political corruption or were marked by military weakness, and all these shortcomings appeared to be present in the late 1340’s. In the wake of *ta’i si tu’s* victory, the Phag-gru in an attempt to strengthen the political administration and its military structure, and in order to enhance its control erected a number of strategically located *rdzong*-based governorships or dependencies throughout Central Tibet. In this process a number of former semi-independent hegemonies were compelled, either voluntarily or by sheer force, to submit themselves to the new political realities, occasionally to witness the confiscation of land or loss of prerogatives or were bound to swear allegiance or submit themselves to bygone foes. Re-mapping the many territories and hegemonies was a long process that lasted close to one century in order to be implemented fully, before they again were altered by new hegemonies.

It was during the tenure of the 16th Tshal dpon chen dNgos-grub rgya-mtsho, so according to *GT* 39a-b, that the Tshal-pa were confronted with these issues. As one of the former myriarchies of the now moribund Sa-skya organization, and despite being at that point one of the most illustrious centers of erudition in Central Tibet, Tshal too was compelled to abandon most of its numerous myriarchic *mi sde* territories that as landed estates and fiefships formerly had been donated to them through their particularly close relationship to the Yuan emperors. This divestment took place at the beginning of the 15th century in the wake of the actual take-over and the transference of power to the new Phag-mo-gru-pa rulers who at that point had controlled Central Tibet and skYid-shod since the 1350’s. During the reign of the 5th Phag-gru *gong ma* Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1374–1432) – the most powerful and efficient ruler in (Central) Tibet, in fact regarded as “King of Tibet” during this spell – Tshal’s last bastion, the heartland around Tshal Gung-thang, was finally relinquished to the new rulers, probably in around 1415 A.D. The remaining confiscation of Tshal territories evidently
had followed minor humiliations such as the sequestration of Mt. Potala[kā] or dMar-po-ri in rHa-sa which until then had been controlled by the Tshal-pa, before it was donated to the 5th Karma-pa De-bzhin gshegs-pa in 1410 by the same ruler (a donation incidentally reaffirming a similar donation to the 3rd Karma-pa tendered by the Tshal-pa back in 1310 and which in the 16th century played no small role in the embittered and prolonged fight over the hegemony of the rHa-sa area between the Karma-pa and the dGe-lugs-pa). During the same period, Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan paved the way for Tsong-kha-pa’s ambitious and expansive plan by establishing the important sMon lam chen mo Festival as well as by erecting the three key dGe-lugs monasteries around Lhasa, thereby initiating a political union between gDan-sa-mthil and the dGe-ldan-pa that led to the gradual rise of the latter sect as the dominating one in Tibet.

Having ruled for over 45 years, the redoubtable mi dbang Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan passed away in 1432, and the demise of this both efficient and undisputed Central Tibetan ruler triggered a heated rivalry over his succession among a number of nephews who as prospective heirs laid claim to the chair. Grags-pa ’byung-gnas [rgyal-mtshan] (1414–1444/45), who as nephew earlier (1428–1432) had occupied the abbatial see of rTsed-thang, eventually took over the powerful seat as the 6th sde srid or gong ma of the Phag-mo-gru-pa the following year (1433). During his brief tenure until 1444, however, he proved to have no particularly lucky hand politically. A man of deep spirituality and well-versed in mantra but with a parochial outlook not cut out for worldly affairs, his rule under the long shadow of his ambitious father was ridden by the internal upheavals at Phag-gru while his hegemony externally remained embroiled in wearisome warfare throughout Central Tibet. His tenure heralded the gradual decline of the ruling house of the Phag-mo-gru-pa, barely having ruled as sovereigns of Central Tibet for one full century, and thus signalled another shift of power emblematic of the ephemeral nature of secular rule in late medieval Tibet. The tenure of the 6th incumbent thus was marked by an investiture that can be regarded as part of the final confirmation of the new political landscape. The last major appropriation of the central heartland of Tshal Gung-thang meant the end to a hegemony or a polity (but not of an influential religious institution).

1 The new incumbent was son of the former throne-holder’s younger brother, the ambitious Che sa Sangs-ryas rgyal-mtshan (1389–1457), who had married a lady of a governor under the Phag-gru house, the Rin-spungs line (of the sGer/ dGyer clan) in the gTsang province. Che sa initially attempted to resume power upon his brother’s demise (in 1431) which led to a serious situation at sNe’u-gdong with different factions vying for power. In the internal politics, the long hand of the incumbent’s father should be felt for many years. However, upon sphyin sngag rin po che bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan’s (1386–1434) advice, the inexperienced Grags-pa ’byung-gnas was finally elected new sde srid. The former, before he passed away, in fact urged the latter to take over the seat (nga’i go’ sa’i khved kyi’ dacm dgos; op. cit. bSod nams rgyal mtshan rnam thar 70a3ff.). His father nevertheless repeatedly intermingled in the affairs by attempting to usurp the throne, once the authoritative sphyin sngag had passed away. The Wood-Tiger year of 1434 was to come down in Tibetan history as the culmination of a classical family conflict, this one popularly known as the “Grand Conflict of the Tiger Year” and as the “Year of the Internal Dissolve of the Phag-gru Ruling House.” For Rin-spungs, their revolt against the Pha-gru began the following year 1435. Upon the untimely (unnatural?) demise of Mi-dbang (or “King,” also titulated Chos-rgyal) Grags-pa ’byung-gnas, Sangs-rgyas rgyal-mtshan in 1448 (after a few years of vacancy at sNgogd) finally succeeded in installing his second son Kun-dga’ legs-pa (1433–82) on the secular throne (1448–81) who prior to this point should hold the throne as abbot of rTsed-thang and later of gDan-sa-mthil. See now also Czaja 2006.

Grags-pa ’byung-gnas nevertheless proved more of a liability than an asset to the Phag-gru hegemony, the Rin-spungs line (the house of the incumbent’s mother) eventually should oust the ruling Phag-gru mother house from power. Sources: e.g. the 5th Dalai Lama, Bod kyi deb ther 148–151; Deb dmar gsar (Tucci 219–21); Deb ther kun gsal me long 234–36; sNe’u gdong sde srid 52–64; Shakabpa, Tibet A Political History 86–87; Ehrhard 2002c: 53f.
2a. Silk Tapestry (kesi) of dPal-ldan g Yu-brag-pa alias Gung-thang Bla-ma Zhang
(64.5 x 59.9 cm)
Appendix I: Icons of lHa-sa Rulers

2b The inscription on the backside of the Tapestry Thangka
The Inscription of the Gung-thang
Tapestry Thangka*

_dus gsum sangs rgyas thams cad ngo bo_
'gro ba'i mgon po dpaldan g.yu brag pa'i sku 'dra brtags
sku rin po che'i drung du ||
'dzam gling sa'i bdag po gu śri Grags pa 'byung gnas rgyal
mtshan dpal bzang pos phul pa'i dge bas sangs rgyas thob
par shog |
rgyal ba rnams kyi dam pa'i chos ma lus pa rgyal ba'i
dgongs pa ji lta ba bzhin 'dzin nus par gyur cig |
bkra shis dang bde legs 'phel bar gyur cig |

[Embodying] the Essence of all Buddhas of the Three Times,
The Lord of the Living Beings [jagannātha; i.e. Bla-ma Zhang]
the Glorious (*śrīmat) g.Yu-brag-pa’s
embroidered precious image
In its Presence
The Lord of the World, the National Preceptor (guoshi)
Grags-pa 'byung-gnas rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po
by virtue of the merit [acquired] from presenting
[offerings] may the [lofty state of] Buddhahood
be attained!
The entire Sacred Doctrine of the Buddhas and
The Intent of the Victor [Jina] as it really is
may he prove capable of upholding [and perpetuating] it!

[During his reign] may auspiciousness and happiness prosper!

* The inscription on the backside of the _kesi_ tapestry _thangka_ has been
couched in a traditional – here somewhat sweeping and forceful – 'bru
tsha zhabs ring ma calligraphy, i.e. the long-legged 'Bru-tsha form, a
cherished style in medieval documents. The inscription is written on a
separate piece of possibly red patterned thin and slightly transparent
15th cent. material and was attached at a later point to the _kesi thangka._

_dpaldan = dpal ldan; brtags = btags_
1.2 The Dual Function of an Icon as Emblem of Spiritual and Political Authority

The attached inscription on the Zhang thangka records or authorizes, in other words seeks to legitimize a political change in power that took place by the inauguration and enthronement of a new ruler, in this case the donations and offerings presented by the 6th gong ma Grags-pa 'byung-gnas (or on his behalf) in connection with the formal enthronement ceremony as new incumbent. We shall argue that the text was formulated concomitant with the ceremony and the inscription was formally issued in connection with this ruler’s enthronement 1433–34 A.D. at rTsed-thang (alternatively a few years later, probably around 1437, when the new ruler visited the sKyid-shod district). The text thus both marked and commemorated this conferral of authority, an act of transference and of legitimacy according to which the Phag-mo-gru-pa formally took over the secular authority and factual position of the Tshal-pa dpon chen, with the important addition that the local dpon institution continued its line but vested with very restricted or nominal power only.

The inscription and the event commemorated was not the actual take-over by the Phag-mo-gru-pa that had taken place during the tenure of Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (ca. 1410–15 A.D.). The inscription instead marked the investiture of the new incumbent Grags-pa ‘byung-gnas that officially sealed the actual transfer of power. For the now moribund supraregional Tshal hegemony, the event meant the obliteration of the effective (but as said not nominal or suzerain) local control over the position as dpon chen which had been headed by the mGar-clan for more than 200 years. It can be assumed that the narrow land around Tshal Gung-thang continued to remain under the jurisdiction of the Tshal and the independence of some of the seminars or colleges (grva rshang) remained unquestioned. It may well be argued that the content of the inscription – which in the first place is a political document, here conspicuously bereft of mantra formulae or seed syllables commonly decorating consecratory inscriptions on thangka – thus not only intended to signal a political change in power, but should as well be understood as a sign of continuity inasmuch as the act of enthronement and investiture as dpon chen in Tshal traditionally was accompanied along ceremonious lines by presenting offerings in the presence of an image of the founding figure Bla-ma Zhang and his lineage, an act performed in order to receive the empowerment and blessing issuing from these founders and up until the Phag-gru take-over conceivably performed in front of this very thangka (albeit we still possess precious little information on the modalities and procedure of secular enthronement in medieval Tibet). The take-over as documented in the inscription nevertheless ushered in a major turning point in the history of Tshal. With this inscription – a political document in itself – the Zhang tapestry thereby assumed a new function and identity.

It is a very common phenomenon in Tibetan art history that the point between the manufacture of a painting and its formal consecration (often in this connection outfitted with a consecratory and benedictory inscription on the rear side) differs considerably. The icon tapestry, until its symbolism and function as a source of authority was renewed or rather reconfirmed in the 1430’s most likely until then had not been fitted with any inscription, serving until that point as an icon restricted exclusively to the internal Tshal religious and secular hegemony. The tapestry in its primary function and in its symbolism no doubt was manufactured as a religious icon, extolling its central religious figure, here in his capacity of putting on display his status as a Buddha and as a teacher of its specific Tshal-pa lore, and in the same vein provide a record of the founder and hierarch transmission of one or more of his most prominent esoteric cycles.
As to the wording of the investiture inscription, curious in this respect is only the appellation dpal ldan prefixed to g.Yu-brag-pa, an epithet not overly common in the indigenous Tshal tradition (currently only attested in the important 14th-century biography by Kun-dga’ rdo-rje, dGos ’dod re skong ma’i ’grel ba 532.2, 575.2 and the rare Tshal-treatise Chos kun gsal ba’i me long (13th cent.), i.e. dpal ldan g.Yu-brag-pa). This epithet, in a Tshal context hitherto undocumented during the earliest history of this school and hegemony, may arguably have gained currency from the 13th century and seems to have been preferred by the new Phag-gru rulers, obviously in an attempt to express traditional respect to the founding Tshal master. As shall be documented below the idolized tapestry before the Phag-gru take-over was already imbued with ample ritual and, by extension in a Tshal context, major religio-political authority. The subsequent 15th-century transfer of power from the Tshal to the Phag-gru hegemony nevertheless was important enough to ensure the formal issue of documents – not least the present inscription – followed by a concomitant solemn act of consecration, which essentially was a political act but one which had to be conducted or sanctified in a wholly ritual setting and ambience by secular leaders and religious hierarchs carrying political positions. So singular was this act, it shall be argued, that once the written investiture was attached to the tapestry the text of the authoritative document was neither changed nor replaced when in the future a new incumbent was installed on the throne as the new Phag-gru sde srid.

That the present embroidered silk tapestry of Bla-ma Zhang had a long story and in medieval times (during the local Tshal hegemony) arguably may have carried considerable ritual-mythic import first of all as a religious icon for granting empowerment and blessing may indirectly be inferred from another parallel: In the biography of (gNyan-ston) Mus-chcn rGyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po (1275/1287–1347), a prominent representative of an eclectic blend of bKa’-brgyud-pa lines (gNyang ston gdung rabs 128f., 263ff.) – and signally a nephew of ’Gro-mgon ’Phags-pa rin po che (1235–1280) – we are informed that this learned scholar similarly resided in China, eventually being registered as imperial tutor (dishi) to the XIth and the XIIth Yuan emperor Ayurbarwada Buyantu Qan (i.e. Renzong; rl. 1311–1320) and his son Gegen (Yingzong; rl. 1321–1323), but also as preceptor to successive emperors at the court at Dadu (Beijing), such as Toyon Temür. Upon leaving the imperial palace for Sa-skya for the first time at the age of 21 (in 1295 / 1307) and again later (after his third visit, this time as dishi, obviously in 1333), he literally was showered with costly presents, among these also embroidered and painted images (btags sku and bris sku; thangka), etc. – types of gifts that appear to have been a very common sort of present, right from the time of the Mi-nyang rulers, an observation which corroborates that the manufacture of tapestries

2 A reminiscence of the use of the later prevalent adjective dpal is found in the 12–13th cent. Bla-ma Zhang writings, so the uncommon form dpal Gung-thang, later so popular, could be registered in one case.

3 Sa-skya Zangs-tsha bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan (1184–1239) had five consorts and should – lineage-conscious like other ’Khon patriarchs – produce eight children. Among these, with the senior consort ma cig Kun-skyid, Zangs-tsha fathered the famous ’Phags-pa Bla-ma (1235–1280) and the latter’s younger brother Phyag-na rdo-rje (1239–1267), and with ma cig Jo’ Bro he then fathered slob dpon Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan (1238/39–1279/1282) and the daughter slob dpon ma mDo-sde’Od-zer’bum (b. 1240). The latter went to the Mus district in gTsang where she eventually gave birth to Mus-chcn rGyal-mtshan-dpal-bzang. With Zangs-tsha’s third consort ma cig Rd-o-rje-gdan, he fathered Bla-ma Ye-shes ’byung-gnas (1238–1274) and with a fourth consort, the daughter of the Gung-thang btsad-po, lha cig mDzes-ma, he begot the slob dpon ma bSod-nams’bum and Nyi-ma’ bum. Finally with Jo-lcan Hor-mo, he fathered slob dpon ma Rin-chen ’byung-gnas. Cf. e.g. A-myes-zhabs, Sa skya gdung rabs 234–35; Yar lung chos ’byung 153.4ff; Mar lung rnam thar 127b4–6; TPS Tucci: Table I.
thrive under the Mongols too. Being the nephew of the great 'Phags-pa bla-ma, he also received an edict and rescript ('ja 'sa) from the Mongols that bespoke extensive privileges for him and for his native districts (he and his gNyags clan received both monastic and landed estates in the gTsang province) including the obligatory tax exemption privileges, etc. He there made extensive donations to his local religious establishments. In fact, his fame and repute – being considered a manifestation of Árya Avalokiteśvara – during his life-time spread so much that, as his biography informs us, a saying ran (ibid. 136.1–3, 271.3–6):^4

“If [you] do not see [i.e. meet] Se-chen rgyal-po [i.e. Qubilai Qan]
Look [instead] at [i.e. turn to] the “Embroidered Image of Gung-thang”
gung thang btags sku!

If you do not see 'Gro-mgon 'Phags-pa
Look at Mus-chen rGyal-mtshan-dpal-bzang-po!

This eulogy places Mus-chen on a par with the great 'Phags-pa bla-ma and through the accompanying analogy delivers a clue to the apparent importance attached to the embroidered tapestry thangka of Gung-thang. Where the last couplet contains a strong religious equation, the first signals a political statement or point of reference. The saying explicitly purports that Mus-chen be regarded as a natural successor or representative of 'Phags-pa – on equal terms with the latter and as a 'Khon-line scion – just as it purports that – in a local Central Tibetan context – the stitched image at Gung-thang [i.e. of Qubilai Qan; emperor Shizong from 1271–72], here in his iconic form, as a visual symbol of Qubilai’s personal supremacy or hegemony over Tshal serves as a source of power and authority. Another tempting, but probably not feasible reading would suggest that it refers to the present kesi btags sku of Bla-ma Zhang. It further suggests to us that the woven image assumed this symbolic status during Qubilai’s reign or later well into the early 14th century. It must not be forgotten that the Tshal Gung-thang vihāra was held in high esteem as the personal vihāra of Qubilai Qan in Tibet (GT 32b, Tshal rnam, passim) and that Tshal Gung-thang stood under the special protection of the great Qan and emperor, a rapport initiated between the 5th Tshal dpun chen Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan (1233–1289 A.D.) and the Mongol court in 1260, but the preliminary work that paved the way for a favourable atmosphere for the Tshal-pa and their amicable relationship with the Mongols had been done by a Tshal monk carrying the name Grags-pa seng-ge (see below).

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^4 In the foreword to the Yuandai huasu~i (ed. Beijing 1964) – i.e. the “Paintings and Sculptures of the Yuan Dynasty” and an important source for imperial portraiture – it is specifically maintained that initially official paintings (often called small portraits or xiao Ying) of the ruling imperial family or court members were executed before they were woven in large formatted silk tapestries. Unfortunately, none of these silk-woven emperor/empress portraits have survived to this date. These Yuan-period portraits were kept as ancestor cult objects installed in specific “Halls of Portrait (lit. Shadow, yingtang)” that were accommodated within a [Buddhist] temple. For Yuan-period imperial portraits (Yuandai di / dihou hanshenxiang) executed either by Anige, by Liu Guandao or by Li Xiaoyan in the 14th cent., see Gugong shuhualu (National Palace Museum Taipeh, 1965: Vol. 8) or more recently, the samples publ. in the exhibition catalogue Dshengis Khan und seine Erben: 303–311; Jing 1994. See also App. II: Chap. 2.5 below.

^5 For the wording of the numerous edicts, i.e. one called Mus lung sa bdag pa i ja’ sa; cf. gNyags ston gzung rabs 266–86. See now also the extensive discussion in Everding 2006b.

^6 se chen rgyal po ma mthong na / gung thang btags sku de la llos /
‘gro mgon ‘phags pa ma mthong na / mus chen rgyal mtshan dpal bzang la llos /
It must be recalled that during the reign of the 7th Tshal dpon chen, dGa’-bde-dpal (1254/56–1310 A.D.), a private Memorial Hall dedicated to Qubilai Qan was built, probably in 1304 (cf. GT 34b) in the western part of the Gung-thang temple complex – an imperial chamber (akin to an imperial yingtang Hall and in Gung-thang appropriately denoted “the Qubilai Palace” or se chen pho brang) that accommodated a tablet image or statue (‘dra ’bag) of Qubilai himself (and eventually with tablet icons and images of successive Mongol rulers and emperors). The hall – resembling the Taimiao Hall in Dadu (see App. II, Chap. 2.5 below), may go a long way in explaining the statement that Gung-thang in toto was regarded as the emperor’s private chapel. dGa’-bde-dpal’s son, the 9th ruler of Tshal, sMon-lam rdo-rje (1284–1346/47), in addition had an adjacent thugs dam hall or rather chamber erected, dedicated to the Mongol ruler Gegen (Yingzong), also at Gung-thang. Sacrifices and ceremonies of worship regularly were conducted in these memorial halls exclusively dedicated to Tshal’s eastern patrons and clearly served to demonstrate Tshal’s unflagging, but profitable loyalty to the eastern throne. The period referred to in the Mus-chen biography, in casu ca. 1310–30 represented the heydays of the Tshal-pa hegemony in Central Tibet around IHa-sa and we have sound reason to believe that the status and repute of the Qubilai thangka (or the present Gung-thang Bla-ma Zhang kesi) was as undisputed as the authority and influence exerted by the Tshal-pa during this spell. If the reference to the latter icon is warranted, the function of the thangka thus may have changed from conveying and embedding a purely religious to wield politico-religious authority too. Of signal importance, in 1319, the Yuan emperor Renzong (i.e. Buyantu Qan) through the hands of his local Tibetan emissary gZhon-nu rgyal-mtshan – and at court arguably spurred by Mus-chen rGyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po himself (?) who reportedly sojourned there – donated to Tshal-dpon sMon-lam rdo-rje a statue of Qubilai Qan – is this circumstance arguably referred to in the above stanza? It too was set up in its own private memorial chamber at Gung-thang. If so, it is not unimaginable – as alluded to in the stanza saying just cited – to assume that both icons, the kesi thangka of Bla-ma Zhang and the memorial statue (and/or a kesi thangka?) of Qubilai had been seen by Mus-chen at Tshal Gung-thang (his bonds to the site and to the local ruler sMon-lam rdo-rje, incidentally, are well documented) – inspiring Mus-chen personally to formulate the above statement. On this background, Mus-chen indeed must have been the one who personally was instrumental in ensuring that the Qubilai statue (and even the Qubilai brags sku referred to above? and/or even Gung-thang Bla-ma Zhang kesi tapestry?) was/were donated to the site. It nevertheless was during the reign of these powerful Tshal-pa lords in the early 14th century that an attempt was made at Tshal Gung-thang to copy a number of imperial structures at the court at Dadu.

If this line of argumentation is deemed valid for the tapestry’s origin, it may well be further speculated that the present Zhang kesi specimen represents an early 14th-century Yuan-time reproduction and indeed exquisite copy of (an original or earlier) Tangut kesi or a prior Tibetan thangka painting. Cogent argumentations for a possible Tangut link or origin, however, are mooted in details below (see Chap. 1.4). An additional point to broach is that – irrespective of the tapestry’s indisputable artistic quality and finish – the lineage figures (and Bla-ma Zhang himself) in the transmission depicted on the kesi indeed are only imperfectly and anonymously reproduced, even to the point that the figures are hardly identifiable iconographically, a strong argument behind the assumption that the kesi is a mechanical, yet distinguished copy of an iconographically more refined and authentic Vorlage.
1.3 Patronage and the Legacy of Time:
In Search of the Tapestry’s Origin and a Reappraisal of its Artistic Background

The finely stitched kesi silk tapestry has been reproduced several times and its provenance moreover has been subject to some speculation, wherefore we shall touch upon the art-historical questions only briefly here. The so-called early thangka portraiture tradition in Tibet (it may in part have been an indigenous artistic refinement or adaptation of the East Indian pata painting tradition (shar bris) with the deity or hierarch as the icon’s dominating centrepiece that prevailed in Tibet before the Tibetan artists themselves developed their own schools and styles) was widespread since at least the mid-12th century, but the specific patronized tapestry tradition in particular received a major surge via Xi Xia or the Buddhist Mi-nyag empire (982/1038–1227 A.D.) and it continued later during the Mongol period and under Ming. Samples of tapestry and thangka, both proper portrayals and traditional images (such as contemporary Tangut-time kesi tapestries of Acala and Śyāmā Tārā) that display some or even substantial material resemblances with the Bla-ma Zhang tapestry both in style and artistic lay-out, have been published and discussed (see also below). Especially during the reign of emperor Renzong (1139–1193 A.D.) of the Great Xia (Da Xia) state, the tradition of patronized portrayals blossomed, both what concerns royal, secular or religious portrayals and images. A clue to the provenance of the masterful and idiosyncratic Bla-ma Zhang icon points to Xia for several reasons. The Xia state, ruled by pious Buddhist monarchs, vigorously promoted its contact to Tibet and other Buddhist centres starting from mid-12th century.

7 The kesi or “cut-silk” tapestry has already been reproduced in Bod kyi Thangka (Xizang Tangjia) 1985: Pl. 62; in Dunnell 2001: Pl. 6 and (the currently best copy albeit slightly retouched) in Tibet Museum Catalogue 61. Over the years the colours of the silken threads have faded somewhat. The kesi (size 64.5 x 58.9 cm) was originally kept in the Potala Palace (Inventory: Potala Palace no. 927); presently it is kept in the Tibet Museum (Bod-longs rten-rdzas bshams-mdzod-khang, no. 06033). For earlier discussions of this remarkable tapestry; cf. e.g Martin 2001b: 175–76; Dunnell 2001: 108–10, 118–19; see also Singer 1988: 21–25; 1995: Pls. 15–17; Reynolds 1997: 123–24; and Kossak 1998 passion for comparative materials such as other early contemporary portraits displaying many similar stylistic and iconographic traits. For pertinent comparative paintings such as those depicting the stag-lung hierarchs bKra-shis-dpal and dBon-po Bla-ma, another painting, allegedly the sNar-thang hierarch Zhang-blon Chos kyi bla-ma and their iconographic components in Singer and Denwood 1997: 52–67. For cogent portraits (albeit using a different painting style) of g.Ya’-bzang-pa and his successors, see Mignucci 2001.

Strictly speaking, biags/thags sku means “woven image or tapestry” whereas the verb ‘tshem for stitching or embroidery is the correct term, only the term *btsems/tshem sku (resp. tshem drub ma) for embroidered images is fairly uncommon as terminus technicus. Still, Tāranātha (1575–1634) among others, on a few occasions does refer to executed samples of tshem sku icons as well as other exemplars of silk stitched images (zab sku and si thang gsar rying; where si thang prob. is the approx. Tibetan equivalent of the term kesi tapestry), etc. see Tāranātha rnam thar 224a6–7, 256b4, etc. Large-size gobelins was also called yol thang, thang chen or curtain thangka. Late medieval silk-thread and colourful brocade-framed thangka tapestries or silk embroidery usually were denoted goz thags grub [= drub] si’u bkras kyi bris sku or biags sku si hu ras bris; cf. e.g. Pan chen chos rgyal rnam thar 299, 304. The surviving terminology for such fabrics in Tibetan art- and textile history thus is fairly broad, and a survey a rewarding task to undertake, yet outside the pale of this short essay. For the kesi tapestry style in general, see Watt and Wardwell, 1997. For an informative documentation of selected Ming samples and its rich tradition during Yuan and early Ming. Cf. M. Henss 1997; Valrae Reynolds 1997; Kuhn 1977; Schäfer 1998 and Schäfer and Kuhn 2002.

8 The Xia rulers or emperors e.g. in the Secret History of the Mongols were commonly designated Burqan (bu’erhan), i.e. embodied Buddha which clearly underlines the idealized or ultimate nature of their self-portraiture. Cf. R. Dunnell 1991: 169. To the rulers of the Great Xia state, the salvific and protective powers of Buddhist lore played a decisive role behind their state logic.
Prior to the Tshal-pa (followed by the 'Bri-gung-pa), it was the Karma-pa and the 'Ba'-rom-pa – but initially it was the Sa-skya-pa – who entertained close ties (as said already from early or mid-12th century) to the Xia court, not least by gradually serving as imperial preceptors and tutors in return for which they were sumptuously rewarded with gifts and donations. It can also be noted that the relationship between the leading Karma-pa and Tshal-pa remained amicable throughout this period, not least cemented through the close relationship between the founding figures Bla-ma Zhang and Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa. Attached to the Xia court thus developed long-standing patron-tutor relationships (yon mchod), an institution and indeed a mutual beneficial arrangement which later was emulated and expanded during the ensuing classical church-state arrangement during the Sa-skya-Yüan period, from which not least the Tshal-pa benefitted. Exchange of gifts, in the field of religion and art, between the Xia elite as benefactors and its monastic clients in Central Tibet must have been considerable and versatile, in fact much more intensive, as we shall see, than commonly realized.

How and when did the Bla-ma Zhang tapestry then originate? It may initially be speculated, a point already mooted by others, that either artists went to Tibet and worked there, being commissioned by their local patrons or indeed an artistic Vorlage for the image, irrespective of whether the portrait displayed some resemblance to Zhang’s facial and physiognomic features, was brought to a Mi-nyag atelier for final reproduction. The first assumption is hardly tenable. A 12th-century portrait of an anonymous, evidently Tibetan Bla-ma traced in the Baisikou Stūpas at the slope of the Ala Mountain in Ningxia (outside the former Xia capital) and a thangka found in Khara Khoto displays a number of traits in common with the Zhang tapestry. The tapestry could represent an attempt to create a realistic portrayal of the Tshal founder, but far more likely we are here dealing with an anonymous portrayal or a model of a hierarch that followed standard iconographic conventions in their reproduction.

Exploring the origin of the original painting (which must have served as Vorlage or model for) the later tapestry thangka, the most obvious clue is provided with the help of the story of Yar-lung-pa, also called Gung-thang-pa Grags-pa seng-ge, one of the earliest recorded (early 13th century) Tshal-pa who was dispatched by Bla-ma Zhang to eastern Tibet and who ended up serving as chaplain at the Mi-nyag court. Our main source GT (28b–29b, 30b–31a; cf. Part I: fns. 378–379, 390 supra) that in part drew upon genuine 14th-century materials and in particular upon the 14th century. Zhang-biographical commentary (dGos 'dod re skong ma'i 'grel ba 565.2–4) chronicle that Grags-pa seng-ge, like in previous cases with other Tibetan monks and serving dishi, was showered with presents for his services by the Mi-nyag emperor. He, in turn, repeatedly dispatched such donations to his mother seat in Tshal Gung-thang, among others gifts and presents that included “religious book[s] written in gold, golden draperies as well as unusual btags sku (i.e. stitched tapestry)” so in a Rat year, arguably 1216 A.D., during the reign of the 2nd Tshal dpon chen 'Byung-gnas brtson-'grus (rl. 1215–27 A.D.) – nephew of the Tshal co-founder Dar-ma gzhon-nu

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9 For a competent treatment of this topic, see Ruegg 1995.
10 A good essay on the complexity of Tangut art is offered by Linrothe 1995.
11 Reproduced in Lei Runze, Xi Xia fota 20. Cf. Dunnell Pl. 4. Further, Samuusuk 1998; M. Pjotrowskij ed. 1993: 238–39 et passim for other comparable samples, although clearly the 12th-cent. Tangut samples may generally appear to be less refined compared to the Zhang kesi. A text of Bla-ma Zhang was even translated into the Tangut language, cf. Dunnell ibid. 119.
– donated to the Gung-thang vihāra. Trusting the entries in GT concerning rGya Yar-lung-pa, his flourit appears to span from being a personal disciple of Zhang (i.e. from ca. 1185–90’s) until the mid–1230’s. According to the brief description in the relevant sources, he initially arrived in the bTsong-kha area of East Tibet where it is said that he founded the Go-ra monastery and where he served as teacher to a local king. Proceeding to Mi-nyag, he was to serve in the same capacity. Yar-lung-pa allegedly was instrumental in inviting Ti-nyag-pa Shes-rab seng-ge (1164–1236 A.D.) to bTsong-kha meeting him there for the first time ca. 1196 whereupon he invited him to the Xia state ca. 1206. On the recommendation of one gtseang-pa Dung-khur-ba dBang-phyug bkra-shis (d. ca. 1230; another Zhang pupil who allegedly had won some still unconfirmed fame in the service of Činggis Qan), Yar-lung-pa much later made a second visit – so it is reported – in order to become the private teacher to Sorqoqtani Beki – Činggis Qan’s daughter-in-law and the chief consort and later widow of Tolui and his ruling prince line – i.e. her sons, the young prince Qubilai and his brothers whose prince-line had inherited the conquered Tangut land as imperial appanage. This would suggest that he resided at least more than once among these rulers of the East. Another indirect clue is given in a Sa-skya source12 where it is recounted how in 1253 (the second year following Sa-skya Paṇḍita’s passing, who had died on old Xixia soil, close to Liangzhou), it was Chabi (married 1240 to prince Qubilai; d. 1281), Qubilai’s favourite wife, who finally argued for choosing ‘Phags-pa Bla-ma as successor by stating that the latter far surpassed those among the former elderly Tibetan monks at the Mongol court such as the Tshal-pa bande. This information is merely found in an overly Sa-skya apologetic text, and hence must be treated with care, still, if authentic, it would evoke fresh memories of a foregoing presence of Grags-pa seng-ge at court.13 The pious and strong-minded Chabi, more than anyone else, proved instrumental in supporting Tibetan monks and in converting the Mongol elite to Buddhism. We therefore shall conclude that it was Grags-pa seng-ge who in a seemingly seamless way bridged the phase between the Tshal polity and their successive interaction and liaison with the Tangut and Mongol court respectively.14

Is it conceivable that Yar-lung-pa donated to Tshal a fine and unusual btags sku portrait of his guru and mentor? Or else had its manufacture commissioned? This is more than likely as we shall attempt to demonstrate below. It is important to note that the Tshal–Xia and Tshal-pre-Yüan Mongol connections had a long history and clearly involved many commodities, cultural, intellectual and

12 Cf. Sa skya gdung rabs 151–152; see also Schuh 1977: 89–90.
13 The nineteen years old 'Phags-pa in 1253 stayed at Liangzhou. He was summoned to his first meeting with Qubilai at his palace at Liupanshan (in present-day Guyuan prefecture of Ganzu). See Nakano 1976: 30–32. 'Phags-pa should enjoy a brilliant career at the imperial court in China, yet in fact he – hostage-like – spent almost his entire life there.
14 Most sources target Karma Paksi (1204–83) as ‘Phags-pa bla-ma’s main antagonist. The true identity of Grags-pa seng-ge, his activities and the length of his sojourn in the Eastern borderlands of Tibet requires further research. It is not infeasible that the statement (in the primary sources quoted) that he was a direct pupil of Bla-ma Zhang should prove to be untenable due to the fact that he in this capacity simply may have been confounded with another direct disciple of Bla-ma Zhang, either gnas brtan Grags-pa seng-ge/Seng-ge grags-pa, or IHa-rje Srab-sman Grags-seng, see II.C.5 and II.F.15 in Table V.4 in Part II below. See also Part I: fns. 364–365. Although namesakes appear to abound, and allowing the old Tshal-pa teacher a high age, it would be tempting to connect him with the leading teacher of Sa-skya Pandita and 'Phags-pa bla-ma, viz. sNyey-thang-pa chos rje Grags-pa seng-ge who e.g. participated in 'Phags-pa’s final ordination in the mid–1250’s in Eastern Tibet. It is also reported that he in 1242 compiled a bstan rtis (TH Martin 44); cf. Sa skya gdung rabs 168–72. This identity however remains highly conjectural, since assuming a flourit close to half a century would strain credibility. From Mongol histories we know that it was one Tshal-pa who at court had suggested to Qubilai the invitation of 'Phags-pa bla-ma; cf. W. Heissig 1959: 118–19.
otherwise, where patronage and rich donations (including no doubt religiously inspired *btags sku*, etc.) from the above dynasties proved vital for the prosperity of the Tshal hegemony as much as it did for other orders. In a late 13th-century description which reports about the initial dissemination of Tshal influence, the latter’s expansion eastwards reached until Mi-nyag (cf. *GT* 43a), a clear approval and appreciation of existing contacts that had prevailed between the Tshal mother seat and its eastern patrons. In fact, the incipient Xia contacts had existed even prior to Tshal itself (1175 and 1187 A.D.), through the activities in the mid-12th century in the Mi-nyag area of at least two of Bla-ma Zhang’s root teachers, *rGva lo tsā ba* (also called Mi-nyag *rGva-lo*) and the Indian Vairocanavajra. Unfortunately, our knowledge of the initial mid-12th-century relations is regrettable sparse compared to the information gathered a number of decades later in the early 13th century.

If therefore this dating of the original icon (first part of 1200’s) could be otherwise corroborated, it could speak in favour of the contention that the portrait of Zhang was an attempt at creating a realistic depiction, made shortly after his passing, yet the authenticity of this very portraiture must be deemed quite questionable (see below). Noteworthy here is that the repute of Bla-ma Zhang (also in the wake of his demise) was never small in Mi-nyag, obviously due to the prominent position of Tshal and of Bla-ma Zhang in key Mahākāla transmissions. Still again, it is not *prima facie* infeasible that the icon may also have been commissioned at a later point by some Tshal patrons accounting for the artistic result, which displays many traditional Indo-Tibetan or Central Tibetan influences and elements in the hierarch and monk portraiture mixed with the unmistakable exquisite finish well-known from the Tangut-time or Chinese weave technique. Other *kesi* that are expected to have left the Tangut- or Yūan- and Ming-time Chinese workshops display an amalgam of stylistic influences too. Still, the question who commissioned the tapestry nevertheless is a most pertinent one and shall constitute a key to a better understanding of the icon’s overall political and religious symbolism. Certain is that a few years later the Tangut state, the unique Buddhist empire, ceased to exist (destroyed 1227) and the bonds to Tshal were severed for several years like to other monastic centres in Tibet. The last person of major importance witnessing the impending demise of the Xia dynasty was Ti-shri ras-pa, who went directly from Xia to Tshal Gung-thang in 1226. We have reliable information that leading members of the Xia court fled to Tibet, such as those who established the ruling house of La-stod Byang in gTsang province (arguably descendants of the Tangut emperor *rGyal-rgod* or Shenzong) who played no small role in Central Tibetan politics in the coming years during the Sa-skya regime.

It has been proposed that the patron – less the sacrificiant – who commissioned the image may be depicted in the bottom left hand corner of the portrait, and a representative of the mGar clan (the leading donors or patrons of Tshal Gung-thang from 1231–32 A.D. whereupon they occupied the position of the *dpon chen*) may therefore be considered commissioner for this art-work. But if the tapestry was manufactured earlier, as suggested above, during the tenure of the 1st and 2nd dpon chen, the benefactor could as well be found in the circles around the Tshal co-founder Dar-ma gzhon-nu or even his nephew *'Byung-gnas brtson-grus*. Either circles of patrons would fit nicely into our attempted chronology, yet is still pending final corroboration. On the other hand, if we accept that Yar-lung-pa Grags-pa seng-ge was involved in the process of donation (as alluded to in the original sources), the figure on the tapestry may also depict this master. Relevant nevertheless is to point out that the position of this figure equals the figure in the lowest right hand corner

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15 See e.g. Dunnell 2001: 119; Martin 2001b: 176.
of the tapestry, namely Bya-rrog-gdong-can, the “Raven-headed Protector” or Mahâkâla. Divine protectors are typically depicted iconographically in the lower register of a painting. The Tshal-pa dpon chen incidentally were regarded as earthy manifestations of Mahâkâla, the Protector Deity of Tshal Gung-thang, for the first time associated with the 7th Tshal dpon chen dGa'-bde-dpal (1254–1310) but this identity may be older, since the functional symbolism of Mahâkâla in Tshal goes all the way back to the Tshal founder and his root teachers in the 12th century. It is worth mentioning that when the 9th Tshal-pa Myriarchy dpon sa sMon-lam rdo-rje (1284–1346/47) in 1308 arrived in China to pay his tribute to the Yuan emperor Wuzong (1305–1311), he initially paid his respect to a [silk-?]woven portraiture (thangka, btags sku) of the former Emperor Öljeitü (i.e. Chengzong) by making a flower offering in front of the idolic relic; and in 1319, the Tshal-dpon was presented with a sku ‘dra or statue of Qubilai Qan intended to be set up in the latter’s “private temple” (sgos kyi lha khang) of Gung-thang (cf. sMon lam rdo rje rnam thar 12a3–4. 13a2–4, 16a4). A confirmation of this identification therefore would arguably be conducive to unravel the ultimate provenance of the icon and contribute to ascertain the date of its benefactor. If this equation would carry some weight for an identification of the donor or patron in the icon, it would suggest that the stitched icon might be dated, contrary to our former assumption, to the mid-13th century. More likely, however, is the option that in this connection the kesi had been manufactured in form of a copy or a reproduction of an already existing painted portrait of Bla-ma Zhang (we shall in fact assume that all portrait kesi had been based upon prior painted models) and that the kesi then had been executed or commissioned in the Far East upon request. As an Auftragsarbeit in this capacity, it had served as a donation of sorts. The original painted Vorlage for the woven icon no more exists, but kindred paintings that show striking facial and corporeal semblance prevail that witness the existence of such stylized portraiture. Although the kesi technique and the btags sku weave fabrication blossomed under Yuan well into the 14th century and particularly beyond this date during Ming times as documented by numerous specimen, it is safe to assume, on the background of the above Mus-chen biographical reference, that the terminus ad quem for its fabrication must be situated in the early or mid-13th century at the latest.

1.4 Tangut Interlude: Common Origin of the Zhang kesi and the Blue Acala kesi

Support for the assertion that the (original model? for the) Zhang kesi icon indeed must be recognized as an early 13th-century manufacture – under the provision that the kesi icon is not an exquisite Yuan reproduction or imperial copy of an original early 13th-century painting – is provided by another source, namely by way of its artistic and material affinity to another well-known kesi tapestry which in a similar way has survived the vicissitude of time. The icon in question is an highly exquisite Acala kesi thangka that had been executed for and donated to the famous Sa-skya Hierarch rje btsun Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1147–1216) – one of the leading Tantric and esoteric masters of his time lauded for his restrained and ideal conduct, he never indulged in meat or alcohol – after it had been commissioned – as indicated in the lower dedicatory inscription line of the icon – by an apparently affluent student of his, the Khams-pa slob ma Kang brTson-grags who stemmed from the bTsong-kha district. In fact, this Vajrayâna pupil of his is among others recorded in Sa-skya sources, so in the colophon of a major work by this Sa-skya master written 1210 A.D.\footnote{He is counted among the eight pupils of Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan carrying the name-element -grags; Sa skya gdung rabs 83–84 here calls him gTsang-ston (also bTsan-ston is registered, read: Cang-ston) brTson-grags-grags who stemmed from the bTsong-kha district. In fact, this Vajrayâna pupil of his is among others recorded in Sa-skya sources, so in the colophon of a major work by this Sa-skya master written 1210 A.D.}
The origin of the Blue Acala kesi (or an original thangka serving as Vorlage for the kesi tapestry?) as a Auftragssarbeit and donation therefore must be situated roughly between ca. 1200 and 1216. Considering the background of the relation between this Sa-skya master and his pupil, it is more than likely that the īṣṭadevata icon of Acala was presented to Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan personally confused with his famous namesake Bla-ma Zhang brTson-'grus grags-pa); Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan, 'Phags pa rdDo rje gur gyi rgyan 72b1–73a6 reports that prior to the completion of this commentary to the esoteric Vajrapāñjara tantra in 1210, written at Sa-skya, the Sa-skya master had been requested by the Tsong-ga'i dge slong Cang-ston brTson-'grus-grags* and one [s]Mu-chu Byang-chub-grags, among others to compose it. It is thus evident that the monk Cang-ston came from the Tsong-kha/ga area in present-day A-mdo. The composition of other works by Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan similarly followed the request of his Tantric students from Tsong-kha (a text speaks about his Tsong-ka'i dge slong, and his Vajra friends or rdo rje grogs mched). A Tsong-kha dgon-pa is in another colophon of his registered as a place of writing. This information poses a problem, since on the one hand, it would suggest or document a visit by the Sa-skya Hierarch to some monastery in the area (and beyond to Mi-nyag?). We also know that Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan in 1202 A.D. erected a gTsang-kha dgon-pa (spelling corrupt?) in Ru-mtshams district of sNye-mo (between dBu and gTsang, obviously in gZhu-phu) in Central Tibet, which would appear to be the place of writing in question; see here Ngor chos 'byung 156a3. This piece of information would even lead us to speculate that Cang-ston may be a corrupt abbreviation of gTsang[-kha'i] ston{-pa} i.e. from gTsang-kha dgon-pa (recalling the graphic vacillation or proximity between Cang/ gTsang, and the slip of the pen or here the needle is never infeasible). It would be tempting to conjecture that Cang-ston was a bTsong-kha-born teacher associated with gTsang-kha dgon-pa in Central Tibet, an assumption that would open up for the possibility that the Acala kesi may not necessarily have originated in Xia, but represented an art-work ordered from and executed in China. However, this construct is altogether feeble and the arguments for a Xia provenance remains more plausible. Moreover, the general Acala cult that prevailed there speaks in favour of the latter. We shall uphold the possibility that the Acala kesi may have covered the period up until 1210, roughly ca. 1195/1200-1210.

The [b]Tsong-kha area ("Onion Land" also Tsong-kha'i thang, east of Kokonor Lake in present-day Xining district between rMa-chu and bTsong-chu) in the 11–12th cent. was ruled by a scion of the Yar-lung Dynasty, but soon became an important and oft-frequented gateway from Central Tibet to China, from the late 11th cent. also to Mi-nyag (in Ordos, the territory within the loop of the Yellow River in present-day Ningxia, Shaanxi of Gansu). We are e.g. informed that rTsā-mi lo tsā ba Sangs-rgyas-grags sMon-grub shes-rab, the great Tangut scholar (first half of the 12th cent.) who himself boasted descent from one line of the Mi-nyag ruler rGyal-rgod (see below) and his student rGva-lo (1110–1198; Bla-ma Zhang’s root teacher)** both were born in bTsong-kha of mDo-khams smad Mi-nyag, i.e. he was defined as a Khams-pa (see e.g. Sa skya gdung rabs 50: Khams-pa Tsheva-lo; and also Sperling 1994: 801–3 for the discussion of the (later) distinction between the northern Mi-nyag area of Xia and the later Khams Mi-nyag (also called Mi-nyag Rab-sgang of mDo-khams stod, close to Dar-rtses-mdo (present-day Kangding) where throngs of Mi-nyag people settled following their post-1227 diaspora). On this background, it may be argued that Cang-ston also came from Mi-nyag or that geographically Mi-nyag, at least from a Tibetan perspective, was regarded as a part of (or considered indistinct from) Khams / bTsong-kha. The reason for the ambiguity is obvious: Mi-nyag’s population originally was of a Qiang stock, speaking a Tibetan-related tongue and the people in these north-western flanks of the Sino-Tibetan borderlands had in part become effectively Tibetized or had been living in close cultural interaction with the latter in the preceding centuries (cf. Dunnell 1984).

* Cang may theoretically reflect a (Tangut?: Chinese?) family or clan name like Zhang. Deeming the fact that Cang-ston must have descended from a rich family (a kesi icon is a gift of inestimable value), one may refer to a non-Chinese Zhang/Shang clan (descending from southern Ordos, along the Wei river; and arguably of Qiang or Dangxiang stock) who played a decisive role in the area already from the mid-10th century (Horlemann 2004: 82, 94ff. and personal communication).

The links between Sa-skya and East Tibet were plenty. Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan’s mother, incidentally, descended from a noble house in Tsha-mo-rong and an important, but still unsubstantiated line issuing from one of the purported nine children fathered by the patriarch Kun-dga’ snying-po is said to have settled in A-mdo, in rMa-yul Rong-po which, if further substantiated, may account for the presence of branches of the ‘Khon clan in North-East Tibet.

** rGia in rGi[ya]-lo may indeed reflect the toponym Xia. From rGva-lo, Bla ma Zhang in the early 1150’s incidentally received Acala cycle teachings; cf. Zhang rnam thar zinbris 27b5.
as a token of respect on the occasion of some consecration ceremony of Cang-ston and others that evidently involved teachings and cycles related to the Vajrapaññjara tantra. Being a so-called explicatory tantra (bshad rgyud; vyākhya-tantra) regularly employed in connection with the Hevajra tantra, it is to be assumed that the occasion refers to a consecration or empowerment into this very cycle, considered the esoteric and authoritative core cycle of the Sa-skya-pa, a ceremony, moreover, arguably having taken place in and around 1210 A.D. Theoretically, it is a period that would fit neatly with the fabrication and commissioning of a cognate Zhang icon in the very same period.

The Acala or, alternatively called, Candamahāroṣana form depicted — following here the basic sādhana for the [dark] blue (mthing [nag]) Acala form (i.e. commonly known as the “hindrance-

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17 The Acala kesi (presently kept in the IHa-sa Museum; formerly Potala Palace) is well-preserved — it clearly only seldom was on display and has been reproduced in the following books: Bod kyi thang ka (Xizang Tangja) 102; Tibet Museum Catalogue 66; and most superbly in Religious Deposits Vol. 2: 84–87; see also Byrd ed., Tibet: Treasuries from the Roof of the World 192–93. For a detailed treatment of the Acala thangka, see now the Catalogue Tibet (2006).

The Acala form in question is the popular [azur-]blue ([indra-]nila) mahākāroḍarahā in the Greatly Fierce One (Candamahāroṣana) manifestation, a wrathful male protector — considered an embodiment of Compassion — here in the traditional kneeling (avanīhitājānū, pus bṣugs ma) posture. Sa-skya gong ma Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan was considered a transmitter of the Acala cycle and e.g. wrote a Mi g.yo ba'i bstd pa (SKKB 2: 121a1–122a4, similar incidentally to other Sa-skya gong ma), see also his brief gTum mo'i sgrub thabs (in his sGrub thabs so so'i yig sna 327a1–b1). The description delivered in his brief stotra to the Acala-nātha that was written on the request of his younger brother, the lay bla ma dPal-chen `Od-po (i.e. before 1203 when the latter passed away) remains close to the present icon. Confusingly, other sources concerning the Acala cult as protector deity are attributed to one Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan such as a translation of the Mi g.yo rnal 'byor chen po'i rgyud (also called Mi g.yo bla na med pa'i rgyud as well as other tantric works such as the Candamahāroṣana tantrarāja), but this refers to another famous and later namesake wherefore the arguments advanced by A. Heller (2001: 213, in an article that contains a number of additional misunderstandings) that the translation of sGrub thabs rgya mtsho (not Sādhanaṁālā but Sādhanaśāgara) should be ascribed to Sa-skya rje bṣuns Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan cannot be upheld; it definitely was the work of Yar-lung-pa lo tsā ba Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1242–1346 A.D.?!) who also was active at Sa-skya; see e.g. Ngor chos 'byung 127a3–4; Tārānātha rnam thar 231b3–5; DL5 Thob yig i 65b6–67a2; further Nishioka 67, 106; Bühnemann 1994: 15–17; Naudou 1968: 204.

The kneeling (left genuflect knee) form is indeed much prevalent in South Asian images or icons, perhaps representing the oldest form of Acala; cf. R. Linothe 1999: 152; see also Oguibène 1997. It not least was this specific Acala form and cycle in an early Indo-Tibetan context that was transmitted to and commented upon by Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan’s elder brother bSod-nams rtse-mo; see the latter’s informative rDo rje gdan pa'i chos drug and Mi g.yo ba'i chos skor rgya gzhung bstd pa dang bcas pa in his Collected Writings. It largely corresponds to the form Mi g.yo sgron po pus bṣugs ma that later was incorporated into the Rin 'byung braya rtsa pantheon collection of Tārānātha (no. 173 in Willson and Brauen) and its popularity is attested in the Acala-chapel in the RGYal-rtsu skyu-bum, the blue pus mo g.yo bṣuns pa posture is, incidentally, also attested in two most remarkable 13th-cent. Acala thangka (no. 22 in Sacred Visions; arguably depicting bSod-nams rtse-mo in the central top-register) and in Hahn’s Collection no. 58 (Art of Thangka), both related to Sa-skya. See also a statue originally set up in gSang-phu; cf. Berti Aschmann Coll. 116. A similar icon of Acala here with consort is kept in the Ford Collection. A rare 12th-cent. later Pāla styled and sculptured form of the kneeling Acala is documented in Potala (BST von Schroeder 97D-E). Also the celebrated Phag-mo-gru-pa reliquary, a bKra-shis sgo-mangs caitya contained a statue of the genuflect Acala with golden fangs; see the Phag mo gru pa rten bka' shis sgo mangs dkar chag bsdus pa 341. It later won considerable and widespread popularity. The Acala cult in a Tangut context is amply confirmed too, e.g. from excavations from Khara Khot (e.g. Lost Empire no. 31), the latter however is less refined in its execution, but possibly represents an even older iconic specimen of the same blue kneeling form. See also a more recent thangka in the dGe-lugs tradition; see Essen, Die Götter des Himalaya II 301. For a cognate Acala kesi, see below.
slayer” or bgegs ’jom) – is represented in the posture with the left leg kneeling on the ground (pus mo g.yon btsugs pa) and the right slightly bent and resting (g.yas pa cung zhig bskum nas bzhangs la khad). Set on the background of a flaming aureole, it is endowed with one head, two arms, the right brandishing the sword of wisdom, the left hand menacingly presses to his heart a vajra noose wound trice (zhags pa lan gsum dkris pa); he further has standard Acala-features: three eyes (round and red), a face contracted in a frown that displays his intense fury and wrath. His body exudes lights of flames that burn and eliminate the hosts of yaksa, (round and red), a face contracted in a frown that displays his intense fury and wrath. His yellow hair stands up straight and is tied in a topknot and his jewel-laden coiffure crowned in the center by Buddha Aksobhya[vajra]. Twisted around his body is a white snake functioning as shoulder-belt (se ral kha). This unique form is prominently found in the Sa-skya milieu, but this particular cycle in fact stems the Indian master Jetärī.  

18 The description follows here bSod-nams rtse-mo’s texts. The sādhana from Jetärī (Tib. dGra-las rnam-rgyal) is a brief Acala-sādhana tr. into Tibetan; cf. Nishioka 75.* The anujñā-transmission for this specific sādhana was from the latter handed down to the two Vajrāsānika (i.e. rDo-rgyud-pa che-ba and chung-ba; the Mi g.yo sngon po form is listed among what was considered one of the latter’s chos drug or six istadevātī deities).** Then transmitted to Ba-rj-lo sras ba Rin-chen-grags (1040–1112 A.D.) and further on to Sa-chen (1092–1158), bSod-nams rtse-mo (1142–82), then to Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan and to other leading Sa-skya-pa. Cf. e.g. Bu ston gsal yig 69a1–5; Tārānātha’s dPal gsum po khro bo chen po mi g.yo bla med kyi sgrub thabs bdud las rnam par rgyal ba (905–22 in Vol. 7 of his Coll. Works). ’Brug-chen Chos kyi snang-ba, sGrub thabs lo rgyus 63a1–64a7 and his comprehensive Mi g.yo sngon po ’i lo rgyus sgrub skor las tshogs rjes gnang dang bcas by mKhyen-brtse’i dbang-po in sGrub thabs kun btsus (vol. 5: 562–603; ed. Dehradun 1970).

It is easy to assume that the present kesi icon (or its painted Vorlage or even an earlier kesi tapestry) indeed had served as a Bestellungarsarbeit of a popular protective and of a strongly personal tutelary yi dam deity and cycle deliberately executed as a personal donation to the Sa-skya hierarchy by a devoted student of his. The practice of the Blue Acala cycle aimed at removing external hindrances (phyi ’i bar chad sel ba), which together with the inner hindrances usually allude to the elimination of mental disturbances that hamper spiritual progress as well as outward hindrances such as sickness and enemies. A not insignificant therapeutic aspect, to propitiate Acala was often used in connection with the prevention of illnesses, which may also have played a role here with an ailing Sa-skya master, who incidentally – like his older brother – was an able painter himself (cf. Jackson 1996: 69). Of similar pertinence perhaps, the kneeling Acala is considered the slayer of the demon of the Lord of Death (’chi bdag gi bdud ’jom), an added argument behind the motive for this particular gift. It was in the main from his father that Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan received the majority of tantra transmissions.

For a final interpretation of the icon, the identity of the two figures left and right of the central Acala is not unimportant. Gauged from later Acala-cycle transmission lineages they represent father and son:

Sa-chen Kun-dga’ snying-po (1092–1158) (left) and his (second) son rje btsun Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (right) – rather than depicting bSod-nams rtse-mo (which however cannot be excluded).

The conventional depiction of Sa-chen, with whom contacts to Xia initiated,*** as an elderly almost bald-headed man is uniformly corroborated by a host of thangka and statues, needless to list. His son, Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan is usually depicted as a middle-aged man and if it constitutes an attempted portraiture – which is not unlikely since we are dealing with a personal donation – it would represent him in his 50’s, in other words as he would have looked like ca. 1200–05 A.D. Apparently, Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan, in his old days inherited his father’s receded hair-line; cf. Pathak 1986 Pl. 33. Further, the identity of these two Sa-skya masters as a pair on the Acala kesi seems confirmed by thangka found c.g. in the Rubin Collection nos. 23, 203, 459, 705, 944 and indeed in a host of other paintings.

The icon is beset with stitched inscriptions of standard protective mantra-formulae: Om mani padme hum, Om Cambodia mahārājo hūm phat, Om tāre tattāre ture svāhā and Om hūm svāhā. The four incantations to Avalokiteśvara, Acala, Tārā and Uṣṇīṣavijayā.

* This is the Canda mahārājo sādhana conserved in TTPE 3887: Vol. TU 137a6–82a. See also TTPE 5110, 5111. For Jetärī, see Tārānātha’s History (Chattapodhaya 1990: 290–92).

** For these forms, see nos.195–201 in Rin ’hyaung brgya rtsa (Willson and Brauen 2000). The cycle was also known as Rig pa’i ’hum chung.
It may here be worthwhile to look into the historical background of these connections. Bonds are reported to have prevailed between these peoples already from the 8th century. For the present purposes, later – both in bTsong-kha and the later core districts of Mi-nyag – the Tshal presence in the early 12th century is corroborated, as we have already seen, by a Zhang pupil with the name gTsang-pa Dung-khur-ba dBang-phyug bka-shis (GT 29b–30a) who at that point arrived in the Eastern borderlands and who allegedly ended up serving Činggis Qan in some capacity. The nature of his activities among the pre-Yüan Mongol nomadic rulers still remains dim, however. During the first two decades of the 1200’s, it was in this very milieu that multinational circles of teachers and students convened at the Xia court and were active in their numerous monastic centres. Among these the Tibetans, aside from Chinese and even Indian (i.e. Kashmiri masters such as Jayānanda), were most prominent and they included representatives of the Karma-pa: the dishi gTsang-so/ po-pa dKon-mchog seng-ge (d. 1218 in Liangzhou of Xia, i.e. Ergiuul; present-day Wuwei), the Tshal-pa (and 'Ba'-rom-pa): the dishi Yar-lung-pa Grags-pa seng-ge (see above), the eclectic Ti-shri ras-pa (1164–1236) – the latter served almost for 20 years (ca. 1206–1226 A.D.) as dishi in Xia and respectively established temples in the Sino-Tibetan or Tibetan-Tangut borderlands, in the bTsong-kha district as well as in Ganzhou, Lingzhou and at Liangzhou (Byang-ngos). This group prominently included Sa-skya-pa representatives and adherents: i.e. guoshi Jo-'bum and, not unlikely, the present donor Cang-ston. Similarly fairly unexplored, but thriving was the 'Bri-gung-Tangut bonds that linked the founder 'Jig-rten mgon-po with Xia. The latter entertained intense contacts with its ruling court, and he was recipient of precious silk, brocade gowns and even gold. In return, for his services in religious and apotropaic respect, he ensured that peace and happiness prevailed in Xia for 12 years – so his biography claims. At one point, 'Jig-rten mgon-po dispatched a statue of Mañjuśrī (or rather a Pāla-styled (rgya gar ma) Mañjuṣṭhāra) to Xia that similarly served as a palladium icon wielding its protective influence throughout the country (Phyogs bcu dus gsum ma 157.4–6, 165.3–5, 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 83, etc.; see also his bKa’ 'bum, passim). Following on his trail, one of the latter’s pupils, dPal Šī-phug-pa and, not least, mGar Chos-sdings-pa served in Mi-nyag (Chos sdings pa'i rnam thar 502.6–509.1; 'Bri gung chos 'byung 323), obviously in the second decade of the 1200’s. Contacts between the ruling 'Bri-gung hierarch Grags-pa 'byung-gnas and one dishi Rin-chen-dpal who resided in Mi-nyag is recorded, too. Finally, mention should be made of the incipient bonds between the sTag-lung founder and the Mi-nyag rulers. Up to five hundred local monks of Mi-nyag alone were said to be followers of bKra-shis-dpal. It may not come as a surprise that we also possess information that the bKa’-gdams-pa entertained bonds to the Mi-nyag court too: A pupil of the early Rva-sgreng abbot Zhang 'Od-'jo-ba (fl. early 12th cent.), by the name dge bshes gDugs-phub-pa is recorded to have served as court priest of sorts in Mi-nyag for a total of about 25 years, but no further details are provided.19 From this brief list of Tibetan hierarchs alone, we shall conclude that both spiritual bonds and political commitments to almost all major establishments in Central Tibet were thriving.

It thus was at the Xia court and in their royal circles among pious patrons that the later pervasive custom of favouring or promoting unmitigated clientelism – later adopted by the Mongols and the Chinese in dealing with the Tibetans and so characteristic of the country’s contact to the outside

19 Cf. Manggo la śrī'i rnam thar 284.1–2; sTag lung chos 'byung I 293; lHo rong chos 'byung 470, Rva sgreng dkar chag 88. For Jayānanda, see van der Kuijpp 1993b.
world – took its beginnings. The history of Tangut Buddhism must be seen in the light of the state formation of this non-Han dynasty, the local elite’s complex ethnic self-conceptions and the particular role that Tibetan esoteric Buddhism came to play there, since it was to influence the state cults and its underlying rationale. The art of exchange was principally divided along the following lines: Tangut patronage (and later Mongol and still later again Chinese when they took over the entire philosophy and commitment of patronage to Tibetan masters upon their conquest and appropriation of the Xia), donations, alms, and assistance in matters of institutional built-up as well as extensive economic support in return for religious guidance from Tibetan bla ma. The latter’s role in merit-building and in providing spiritual protection (not least in proffering assistance in esoteric and ritual commitments e.g. in military matters related to fierce and apotropaic forms of Mahākāla, among others) for the ruler or the ruling house – no unimportant commitment – thus often aimed at catering for their emperor’s basic needs for worldly as well as otherworldly protection and success, all standard commitments and obligations of court priests. During the last crucial decades of the Tangut dynasty that were almost permanently haunted by sieges, warfare or military campaigns, the relevant sources maintain that the main task of these Central Tibetan teachers at the Xia court and at the religious establishments was – aside from the conferral of esoteric empowerment and consecrations – to serve as magus or diviners who rendered rites of apotropy, or they revolved around strategies and issues of defence and deterrence, assisting, by sheer exorcistic means – with battle-field strategies and not least through, so the texts attempt to depict it, a feast of mirabilia – their patrons in averting foreign raids from the side of the Mongols, Khitan or from Jin.

This is not the proper place to dwell upon the fascinating history regarding the common ancestral roots and strong cultural ties between the Tangut people and the neighbouring Kokonor (Qingtang, or bTsong-kha) Tibetans. We know that present-day north-western Ganzu area (including Liangzhou, Ganzhou, Guazhou, etc.; all later Tangut or Xia towns and territories) in the 8–9th century had been populated by increasingly Buddhist-oriented Tibetans. The Tangut ancestral people, the Dangxiang tribal stock originally had emigrated from present-day Sichuan province in waves and were gradually moved or relocated northwards towards present-day Ningxia Hui region. Looking back on the earliest rulers of Xia and their educated elite in the 11th century – we can observe that they early adopted Buddhism as their basic creed and ideology; members of the ruling families even commanded a fanyu language (here Tibetan) and entertained close relations with the Kokonor Tibetans, even if these occasionally remained strained and contentious. More pertinent for the present discussion, the beginnings of the bonds between Central Tibet and Xia must be sought in a network of people, teachings and cycles that reached back to the mid-12th century and that involved figures like Sa-chen Kun-dga’ snying-po and his student Mi-nyag rGva-lo gZhon-nu-dpal (1110/14–1198/1202). The latter was teacher to Phag-mo-gru-pa, to Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa and was root-teacher to Bla-ma Zhang and he himself had been disciple of the immensely influential Mi-nyag rTsa-mi lo tṣā ba Sangs-rgyas-grags famed for the dissemination of the Kālacakra (and the collateral Sadaṅgayoga system) as well as the equally crucial Māhakāla teaching cycles which became immensely popular and find direct and effective use in the service of providing imperial state protection of Xia. The polylingual and cosmopolitan rTsa-mi must be considered the single

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20 bTsong-kha area had already been conquered by the Tibetans in the 7th century as recorded on imperial inscriptions. The ancestral Tibetan bDong clan is related to the Dangxiang people, the backbone of the Mi-nyag racial stock as already suggested by R. Stein BEFEO 44.1: 224. See also recently Dunnell 1996: 6–7, 36, 59; Pinks 1968: 64–66 and for a recent study of the bTsong-kha confederation and the relationship to its neighbours; cf. Horlemann 2004.

21 The pre-Mongol Sa-skyā-Tangut link can be corroborated from numerous sources. It obviously had initiated with
most important figure in forging stable bonds between the Mi-nyag ruling elite and religious circles and the Central Tibetan hierarchies at this early point and his activities and his great impact on Central

Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan’s father Kun-dga’ snying-po. Sa skya gung rabs (op. cit. 75) also chronicles that a student of Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan’s younger brother (i.e. dPal-chen ‘Od-po (1150–1203 A.D.), who had studied at the feet of his elder brother for a long period and who as layman later fathered Sa-skya Pandita) called gnoshi Jo-bum (‘? = the rnal ‘byor Jo-bum, a student of Sa-skya Pandita Kun-dga’ snying-po and Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan too as registered in one of his writings; cf. Sa skya gung rabs 144; SKKB 5: 343a1–345a2)* served as court purohita to the same Mi-nyag emperor Rgyal-rgyud / Zunwu wherefrom he tendered to Sa-skya and to Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (prior to 1216) different sorts of donations such as a particular multi-fabric long-sleeved monk’s gown (phod ka), silver-made gadgets and canopies (bla bre), etc. This may indirectly be corroborated in the biography of ‘Phags-pa Bla-ma, where the latter is reported to have claimed that his ancestors (pha mes, i.e. Kun-dga’ snying-po and Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan?) were recipients of donations tendered by the Mi-nyag kings, gifts that e.g. consisted of brocade-made canopies; cf. Sa skya gung rabs 151–52. For an illustration of such contemporary silk-made canopies; cf. Watt and Wardwell: 85–86, 194–96. For the 12th-cent. rTsva-mi and his importance, see also Sperling 1978b, 1994.

As indicated above, it was descendants of the same strongly pro-Tibetan Xia emperor who fled to the gTsang province in Tibet where the noble house became rulers of La-stod Byang (main seat Ngam-ring) as detailed in numerous sources. Through intermarriage with the Sa-skya elite, they occasionally served as high officials in the subsequent Sa-skya organization (cf. e.g. gYus ru Byang pa’i rgyal rabs, passim; Petech 1990a: 53, 132 and TBH Sorensen: 86). A family member of the line of Rgyal-rgyod** called Mi-nyag rDo-rje-dpal studied under Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (cf. the Fifth Dalai Lama, Bod kyi deb ther 113.5–12 = tr. Tucci TPS 631; with a problematic chronology, however). See also the informative Kham lugs rdo rgyus 26–38. To Sa-pan, Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan’s nephew, is ascribed a missive in form of an eulogy to the Tangut state (evidently written prior to 1227), where he praised the Tangut state and their rulers as Dharmaraja and Bodhisattva and their court preceptors as a “grand life-pole” of the precious Buddhist Teaching. See his missive Mi nyag gi rgyal kham s su gnam ba’i yi ge in his Collected Works.*

A Jo-bum is also listed in a Usnīṣa or gTsug tor dẖārāni transmission followed by one Mi-nyag rDo-rje-grags [= rDo-rje-dpal(?), cf. bsTsong kha pa’i gsal yig 57a4–7. Concurring chronologically, this would appear to confirm the existence of this late 12th–early 13th-cent. noble-born master rDo-rje-dpal’s grandson? ‘Bum-sde (in the 1240’s?) was patron to Sa-pan and patrons to the Sa-skya, and est. Ngam-ring. Its last ruler was Byang-bdag Ngag gi dbang-po (1580–1639), a teacher to the 5th Dalai Lama; cf. Ngag gi dbang po’i rnam thar 18a3f.

** The repeated and almost uniform mention of this particular emperor Zunwu and his royal Xia line may not in all cases reflect historical fact, rather it mirrors the circumstance that precisely this line became known in Central Tibet and rose to prominence (to the extent that in some sources rGyal-rgyod became something of a synonym for Mi-nyag), or that indeed members of this line that later produced this emperor long before (say from 1170–80’s) had entertained close bonds to Tibetan religious centres. Zunwu, son of Yangzong, the Zhongwu Prince of Qi – and cousin to the deceased Tangut emperor – is said to have come from the Tangut ruling house of Ngwei-mi (cf. Dunnell 1991: 171–179; 1992: 84–86; 1996). rGyal-rgyod alias Zunwu was a man of great learning (with a top examination graduate, probably the first and only scholar-emperor that East Asia ever produced, yet is also registered as an ardent Buddhist). In the last, turbulent years of the Xia empire, he was forced to abdicate (1223), his first son defied his father by becoming a monk (is this person Mi-nyag), or that indeed his second son Weiming Dewang (rl. 1224–1226 A.D., alias Xianzong) became the next (penultimate) Tangut emperor. It is still unclear how many of the different wings of the royal Xia family that managed to flee East Asia ever produced (to the extent that in some sources rGyal-rgyod alias Zunwu was a man of great learning (with a top examination graduate, probably the first and only scholar-emperor that East Asia ever produced, yet is also registered as an ardent Buddhist). In the last, turbulent years of the Xia empire, he was forced to abdicate (1223), his first son defied his father by becoming a monk (is this person Mi-nyag, Dunnell refers to the adopted regnal name Wei-ming (in Chinese transcription = Ngwei-mi in Tangut sources) and proposes different etymological explanations for the name. Their power-base may have been in and around the district of Ganzhou. Taking into account that the early 12th-century Tangut scholar rTsva = rTsva-mi (etym. the “One from the Steppe People”?) descended from this line and his Tibetan biographies state that he stemmed from Upper Tangut (other texts: mDo-khams smad), from the noble house(s?) by the name rTsas-mi (Shing-mi (“Steppe People”) – “Forest People,” under which usually the people of Mi-nyag are divided; cf. also Vitali 2003: 57; see analogously Padma bka’ ’phung 475) = Ngwei-mi. The element Mi (i.e. People) as said remained the indigenous tribal name used by the Tanguts to designate themselves.

Appendix I: Icons of lHa-sa Rulers

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Tibetan masters also provide evidence that the teaching exchange worked both ways. We in fact are only at the beginning of a reappraisal of the generally undocumented Sa-skya-Tangut relationship and the milieu surrounding some of the ruling Xia families as ardent Buddhists and as devoted patrons to Buddhist hierarchies and religious teachers. In the 11th century we also have reports on the Indian master Sumatikirti who at the close of his life served both the rulers of Xi-Xia and Khitan. Indian masters in the 11th century had visited the eastern borderlands and their numerous patron rulers, such as the Song emperors to disseminate the popular Buddhist teachings there. Another hitherto uncharted early link to the Mi-nyag court was the service rendered to the local emperors as court chaplain by the mid-12th-century Zhi-byed practitioner Bu-shong sgom-pa, pupil of Pa-tshab sgom-nag (1077-1158 A.D.) – himself pupil of Pha dam-pa sangs-rgyas (d. 1117).

Trust the biographical data, the relationship between Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan’s father Sa-chen and rGva-lo and the latter’s long-standing teacher, Mi-nyag lo tsā ba rTsa-mi shall strengthen our assumption that personal bonds must have prevailed between these main actors, bonds that also ultimately led to the origin of the present Acala icon (or its painted Vorlage at least). The same Xia families as royal refugees fled the Xia state upon its demise and were to seek asylum in Central Tibet, not least under the auspices of the Sa-skya-pa and Cang-ston of bTsong-kha, himself obviously either a Tibetan or a Tangut pupil of Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan stemming from an area adjacent to or identical with the Xia state may well have served or have acted as an intermediary between the Xia ruling Buddhists and the Central Tibetan residence of his Sa-skya root teacher. It was not least in the court circles of this royal Tangut lineage of rGyal-rgod (i.e. Shenzong, alias Weiming Zunxu; rl. 1211-23; d. 1226) that the Tshal-pa and the Sa-skya-pa masters among others met. They represented pious students who were backed by influential donors and they commissioned out of respect to their root teachers – or had their ruling Xia patrons convinced – to manufacture paintings and possibly also such portable kesi.

Summing up, and pursuing the Tangut clue as to the provenance of these icons, we shall remark that although these two art-works are different in composition, both kesi due to their striking material affinity and finish originated from the same atelier, arguably as Yuan-time gifts (or as so-called imperial Belobungsgabe) in a local Chinese workshop or studio. If we assume that a silk specimen in both cases had served as Vorlage for those later imperial-time copies – and indeed if we disregard that detailed Tibetan paintings had served as basis – it can be speculated that the lost kesi-originales be regarded as “studio twins,” probably executed and manufactured during the same epoch, in the period between 1205-15 A.D. Most surprisingly, however, these exquisite almost 800 years old

22 Cf. BA (Roerich 923-58); Pha dam pa rnam thar 208; Gu hkra chos ’byung 304.

23 Not to be excluded – it was manufactured in a Chinese silk workshop, but conceived, supervised and commissioned by Tangut patrons. Would this make it a Chinese piece of art or a Tangut? Perhaps both, albeit in Tibetan art history the answer would be clear. We may take the example of a number of ’Bri-gung images. The origin of an item always followed the sponsor or donor, seldom the artist; so e.g. a number of images depicting the ’Bri-gung founder ’Jig-rten mgon-po, executed (i.e. commissioned) by his pupil ’Gar Chos-sding-pa were denoted Hor sku or Mongol Images: although manufactured by Indian / Chinese artists (rgya hzo bu), still their sponsors were the Xia/Mongols.

The border fabrics or silk border designs on the icons today may accordingly not be original on any of the kesi icons; they may have been added or stitched onto the items at a later point of reconsecration during Yuan or Ming times when the old ones were worn out. Such border fabrics “frames” should, however, generally be treated disassociated from the religious icons themselves, since these are most readily exchangeable. The Acala icon is equipped both on the upper and lower border section with a silk-made inscription couched in the decorative and age-old laṅkīsa script which here reads Om mani padme hūn hṛi.
and stylistically obviously wholly Tibetan or Indo-Tibetan icons bear witness to a cultural dominance.

To the same kesi group arguably belongs another remarkable (but less preistine) dark blue Acala (in this form also designated Vighnāntaka) kesi thangka (in Cleveland Museum of Art, purchase J.H. Wade Fund) standing in a right-bent or pratālīḍha (g.yas bs skim g.yon brkyang) posture. It is endowed with the traditional Acala attributes and on account of a number of striking iconographic and decorative similarities to the kneeling Acala, it appears to have originated in the same period, possibly from a similar workshop or commissioned through a Chinese atelier. Cf. the discussion in Watt and Wardwell, When Silk was Gold (1997: 90–94). This very form is known as the Blue Acala bKa’-gdamgs lugs or Atiśa Mi g.yo sNgon po jo lugs (cf. e.g. Willson and Brauen 2000; no. 174) that has been based upon the eulogy to this deity by Atiśa in his brief Áryācala kroḍhaṇāja stotra conserved in the canon: TTPÉ 3885: TU 134b1–35b4 (but see also 4892). Acala was the yi dam of the Indian master.* It represents one of the “seven divine cyclic doctrines” of Atiśa or of the bKa’-gdamgs-pa (Iha chos bdun), an expanded version of celebrated the bka’-gdamgs Iha bzhi (i.e. Munindrā, Avalokiteśvara, Acala und Tārā). Most interesting is a kesi thangka of Blue Acala in the pratālīḍha pose of the tradition of Atiśa, which both in material finish and in style obviously bears remarkable resemblance to the piece under debate in this essay. Most important is the circumstance perhaps that Jetārī was a teacher of Atiśa. Nevertheless, it may suggest to us that such art pieces – from the same atelier – even at this early point were far more frequent than generally assumed; cf. Gems of the Potala Palace 236; see also the Jo lugs sample in Watt and Wardwell. The popularity of the Blue Acala in pratālīḍha pose of Atiśa is also documented in a masterful, probably West-Tibetan bKa’-gdamgs-pa thangka, a 12th-century icon in the former Essam Sammlung (Die Götter des Himalaya no. 99).

The background behind the exquisite kesi icon based upon the Jo-lugs system in a possible Tangut context evidently requires further research.

* An early painting – an East-Indic pata scroll executed by Indian artists – of Acala (mid-11th cent.; in the pratālīḍha form) – one of the arguably oldest recorded in Tibetan – once in the private possession of Atiśa was upon the latter’s demise given to his sNyé-thang bla mchod or purohita dGon-pa-pa; it was an icon that subsequently was given to Rva-sgreng monastery where dGon-pa-pa was abbot 1078–82 A.D.; cf. rNam thar rgyas pa Yonggs grags 167, 212–20; Eimer 1979: 293–97. It is recorded that the icon was still in Rva-sgreng dgon-pa in the early 14th cent. The same text records that upon Atiśa’s demise, other ras bris paintings of the master and of his yi dam etc. were executed by Indian artists probably from Atiśa’s homeland of Bihar (cf. here also Kossak 2002). Another mid-11th cent. Tārā thangka was the thugs dam icon of Nag-tsho lo tsā ba (1011–64), consecrated by Atiśa; in the 14th cent. it turned up in Tshal; cf. Tshal rnam 62b7. This early 11–12th artistic tradition, as said, is in Tibet commonly known as the shar bris or East Indian Style, and tremendously influenced early Tibetan painting style. Atiśa took a keen interest in painting and art and invited Indian artists to Tibet (see e.g. Jackson 1996: 85). It may be contended that the Indian pata specimen known as the spYil-bu-pa or Rva-sgreng Green Tārā (Ford Collection) was modelled upon (rather than being identical with) one of these mid-1050’s thangka. In fact, a large number of allegedly 11–12th cent. thangka are reported for Rva-sgreng monastery; see Rva sgreng dkar chag 121f. A thorough study of 11th-cent. thangka as recorded in different sources is a desideratum.

Art-historically, the Zhang kesi icon’s stylistic affinity to the above-mentioned Green Tārā thangka in the Ford Collection equally speaks for a date safely within the early 13th cent. similar to the early Tangut kesi Green Tārā (St. Petersburg) and the Acala icon’s similarity to even earlier and less sophisticated Cakrasamvara and Vajravārāhī icons from Helan (in Wisdom and Compassion no. 92; Lost Empire no. 26) – themselves presumably either from a similar Tangut or a Chinese kesi workshop – would also argue for the mastery of the delicate technique prevalent in Xia or at least commissioned by Xia rulers.

Aside from stray references in Tangut materials to the fabrication of silk and the existence of such ateliers, another clue is delivered by the celebrated Secret History of the Mongols (comp. ca. 1240; but the core part around 1228 A.D. its initial compilation following the Great Qan’s demise). In § 248–49 (see here R. de Rachewiltz, PFÉH 30: 83–85) the 1211 incident of the submission of the Jin and the Tangut by the Mongols is narrated, and how the Xia ruler petitioned the Great Mongol Qan to be favourable towards them, offering – in an act of diditio – traditional Tangut gifts and commodities such as “. . . we shall weave wool material and make satin, and we shall give them to you.” It underlines the general value ascribed to such fabrics as not untypical Tangut commodity. The need for silk (fabrics) in the Tangut state was also met through payments that China (Song) dispatched to Xia in recognition of the latter’s seniority in foreign affairs; Kychanov 2001: 207.
or preference of Tibetan artistic concepts and styles (at least in certain religious circles in Xia). In conclusion, despite the clearly datable circumstances behind both kesi objects discussed above, we may now conclude that both (i.e. Acara and Bla-ma Zhang kesi) masterpieces in the final analysis most probably represent exquisite – early 14th century? – Yuan-period products executed in a Chinese atelier, but based upon or selected from prior, evidently early 13th cent., paintings of Bla-ma Zhang and the Acara respectively. As such, both were Auftragsarbeiten and served as exquisite gifts.

1.5 The Bla-ma Zhang Icon: Proto-typical Buddha Portrait and Idealized Hierarch

After this brief Tangut detour in which, as seen, the Tshal-pa played no small role, we again shall return to the Bla-ma Zhang kesi icon: The central figure is here depicted with his right hand in the gesture of earth-witness (bhūmisparśamudrā), in other words as a Buddha, and the left hand in the gesture of reasoning, i.e. explicating the Dharma (vitarkamudrā) respectively and his figure (whether or not depicting his real physiognomy) perhaps poses the least problem among the host of questions that still surrounds this enigmatic figure. The right-hand “earth-witness gesture” is usually combined with the “gesture of concentration” (dhyānamudrā) and the left-hand gesture of explicating the teaching with the “gesture of supreme generosity” or “boon-granting” (varadamudrā). The gestures of Bla-ma Zhang thus appear to deviate from or represent a variant of the traditional set of positions. The sole and palm of hands and feet are further endowed with the thig le, a Buddha-mark. Nevertheless, reading a deeper level into the thangka, the mudrā indicates Bla-ma Zhang’s role as an enlightened being or as a Buddha as well as indicating his role and position as a propagator of the Buddhist creed of his, both principles, incidentally, ideally fitting the icon’s subsequent and overall symbolic functionality. These aspects are moreover most conventional in monk and hierarch representations and are hence not specific for Bla-ma Zhang. The central figure, the body of which is presented frontally in cherished three-quarter view, is seated on an ornate multi-coloured petalled double-lotus on a Pāla-styled simhāsana throne in front of a green cushion, itself leaning towards the throne, the throne-back being supported by two thin white-coloured and elaborate leogryphs (vyāla) resting on their haunches and standing on elephant pedestals and the base filled with successive heads of elephants and lions. Crowning the throne – also typical of medieval Indian art – are symmetrical pairs of makara with twisted proboscis, which enclose or curl with their decorative tails the halo of Bla-ma Zhang’s distinctive features. Not untypical of such monk or saint portraits, his inner robes are yellow and red and his outermost sitting mantle in elaborate yellow.

This entire iconographic setting and composition surrounding the central figure with a hybrid blend of Nepalese and Indo-Tibetan elements carries strong reminiscence of similar settings and repertoires as e.g. reproduced in sets of early bKa’-gdam-pa, and in numerous bKa’-brgyud-pa (i.e. sTag-lung and g.Ya’-bzang), but also for instance in the gNyos hierarch or monk paintings (all firmly datable to the 13th century, but also witnessed in coming centuries) which all appear to be remarkably close to the Zhang icon. It is not the place here to dwell further on this most interesting theme, since a fair amount of discussion already has gone (and indeed will go) into debating the possible provenance of Zhang perhaps instead could be interpreted as that of "mental repose" (sems n`yid n`gal gso). Noteworthy, a statue of Srong-btsan sgam-po displays almost the same gestures, here the left hand in repose and the right hand in the gesture of teaching; cf. Essen and Thingo 1989: 107.
and dissemination of this particular repertoire. The latter was or became quite popular since it is not only documented in the above medieval hierarch or monk icons, but also in a large number of deity icons depicting Amoghasiddhi, Ratnasambhava, Maitreya and Vairocana (and surely in a host of other medieval deity icons once a thorough comparative perusal has been undertaken). The manufacture of the Zhang tapestry in the early 1200’s thus represents an uniquely early instance of this particular style and further bespeaks a strong Central Tibetan involvement in its manufacture and composition, irrespective of the provenance of each individual component.

The artistic and iconographic tradition in Tibet has delivered various depictions of Bla-ma Zhang that differ sharply from one another. The sensitively and delicately created Bla-ma Zhang portray on the tapestry as a thin middle-aged man with a goatee and bald-headed (almost a case of Tibetan mannerism) is in stark contrast to other portraiture where Bla-ma Zhang is depicted as a short, stout, rather podgy man (cf. Fig. 4–10 below), but even this style appears to be quite conventional not least for 13th-century bKa’-brgyud-pa statues. These and in particular one miniature painting (cf. Fig. 8), conserved in an early gSer phreng Collection which depicts him as an elderly monk with an unusual forward-bending or lunging and intimidating mien far more reflects the aggressive and violent nature of Zhang’s volatile personality as contemporary and diverse sources faithfully have painted him. The stocky stature and body corpulence of his may far more carry reminiscence of the iconographic or statuary representation of Mahākāla. Anyhow, the small miniature image in all its simplicity may altogether come closer to his actual physiognomy. We have other depictions, both in thangka and sculpture form, of Bla-ma Zhang similarly with stocky corpulence presented below, thus strengthening our assumption of the authenticity of this particular physiognomic portrayal. We therefore venture to argue that the depiction on the tapestry represents an idealized attempt made along standard, stylized iconographic conventions used in contemporary portrayals, attributing to his stature, dignity and splendour fitting for a founding figure or a mandriarch of a leading hegemony. The facial outline, as already argued, dramatically resembles that on a thangka of Zhang-ston Chos kyi bla-ma, to the extent that a case of plagiarism is at hand. We shall even argue that the choice of modelling in standardized, idealized style was consciously cherished and evidently actively promoted. Still, it should not go unrecorded that texts like e.g. GT (10a etc.) report the existence, even during Zhang’s life-time, of apparently real-life, arguably sculptured.

For pertinent comparative paintings such as those depicting the celebrated sTag-lung hierarch bKra-shis-dpal and dBon-po Bla-ma, another painting, the sNar-thang hierarch Zhang-blon Chos kyi bla-ma and their iconographic components in Singer and Denwood 1997: 52–67. More, however, could be said about the provenance of these sTag-lung icons. It should be noted that the early 13th cent. thangka of the sTag-lung founder referred to in the former source possibly had been pre-dated by a man-size thangka of sTag-lung thang-pa manufactured (i.e. commissioned) in 1209 by one of the latter’s pupils Mu-to-ba; sTseg lung chos ’byung I 251.

Cf. Singer 1995: 84, 90. It indeed would suggest that either a common proto-type served as Vorlange for these art-works. Dating the Zhang kesi either to the early 13th cent. or indeed as an imperial copy to the early 14th cent., its painted Vorlange must be even older, possibly executed soon after Bla-ma Zhang’s demise (1193). This may have served as model for the depiction of Zhang-ston Chos kyi bla-ma. If the caption Zhang-ston [Chos kyi bla-ma] is correct, it cannot be related to Bla-ma Zhang, since Zhang-ston never was used to refer to the latter.
(miniature) portraiture (here called 'dra 'bag, i.e. simulacrum) of Bla-ma Zhang, not least the artwork of the Zhang-disciple and foremost sculpture-maker (lha bzol) Mar-pa lha-dkar (see below). On the tapestry the peripheral figures (whether divine or human) that circumscribe the central figure in most of the other niches, both in the side registers as well as in the top and bottom sections, are still largely unidentified. As argued above, most still-unidentifiable figures are reproduced stereotyped and possibly in a faulty way since the kesi likely is a copy. The lineage figures (arguably representing two distinct lineage transmission) are either seated or standing and veiled in nimbuses of light red and yellow hues or from red flames. The tapestry therefore still awaits a proper decipherment. Without an obvious clue to the cycle’s identity beyond the depicted figures themselves, this important task must await further comparative research and hence is outside the scope of the present essay, but it would be feasible to identify most of these secondary, minor figures once the esoteric writings of Bla-ma Zhang and his successors have been thoroughly perused. Some are easily identified such as the two-armed Cakrasamvara in yab yum, etc. The numerous gsan yig – the rewardingly informative curriculum studiorum genre – which record the transmission line of teachings received may contribute to unravel the individual members and figures of the lineage(s) depicted on the tapestry, just as such sources have already done for deciphering similar transmission lineage thangka. It is therefore here not unimportant to reiterate the circumstance that aside from its (secondary or additional) function as an icon of political authority, a function it may gradually have assumed in line with the growing political influence of Tshal Gung-thang, its primary or original function was its role as a religious icon and hence as an artistic record documenting the transmission line of Bla-ma Zhang. In fact, the extensive esoteric writings of his remain a rich source of information. But it is a fair contention to maintain that among the 12 or 13 historic or human figures depicted in the tapestry some individual members of the traditional six root-teachers of Zhang shall be identified, possibly crowned by Dvags-po sGom-tshul or rG[va]-lo (upper register, center). The ultimate identification of the transmission lineage(s) and the underlying cycle(s) would be tremendously conducive to a proper appreciation of the tapestry.

1.6 Icon of a Lost Empire: An Attempted Reconstruction of its Odyssey

Tibetan religious history is replete with cases that tell us compelling stories of the transfer of statues and icons between monastic establishments, more rarely of regular confiscations. A host of artistic masterpieces in the history of Tibet that was imbued with strong symbolic power and that were considered emblems of authority and legitimacy – to mention the most celebrated images and icons such as the 'Phags-pa Lokesvara and Jo-bo Va-ti bzang-po Statues, of which the former one – used as a pignus foederis or as "a pawn for alliance" – permanently ended up in the Potala Palace – their history often was characterized by cases of abduction and confiscation, of acts perpetrated by different hegemons and chieftains who evidently sought the immense symbolic or sacred capital residing in the items or who intended to instrumentalize the same innate blessing powers for political or personal gains. The odyssey of the kesi tapestry appears to have been quite exciting too. The tapestry, once the Tshal Gung-thang polity itself had become an empire of the past and in search of a new identity, did not avoid a similar fate, falling victim, as demonstrated above, to the ever-shifting fortunes and vicissitude that characterized Tibetan polity down through the centuries. Transfer of power often was accompanied, as we have seen, by a transfer or confiscation of the symbols of power and authority that then went through a process of revaluation and reinterpretation in order to
fit new rulers or a different ideology. Following its early 13th century manufacture, the tapestry’s initial haven no doubt was Tshal Gung-thang, most evidently the central sanctuary of Gung-thang gTsug-lag-khang. At some point in time the icon, however, embarked upon a journey that much later found its temporary culmination in the Potala Palace where it has been kept until most recently. A number of feasible routes for its journey from Tshal and the residence of the Dalai Lama is thus conceivable. A reconstruction of this odyssey shall here be undertaken, but one that evidently is fraught with assumptions and fair guesses. It appears to be altogether amiss to assume that the kesi thangka was to leave the monastic center in Tshal after the inscription had been formally attached. The political transfer of Tshal and its subsequent inclusion into the new political order of the Phag-gru’s and, in due time, into that of the dGe-lugs (the subsequent inheritors of the Phag-gru hegemony) was characterized by a continuity in the veneration of the founding figure. It is of signal importance to note that Bla-ma Zhang during this spell (latest from mid-15th cent.) in tandem with Phag-gru rDo-rje rgyal-po (1110–1170) and bTsong-kha-pa (1357–1419) were regarded as the “Three Jewels of Tibet” (Bod nor bu rnam gsum). The Zhang icon – and all the more so when fitted with the investiture or consecration inscription – served the new rulers of Tshal as a heirloom and a legacy documenting bygone glories and so the icon in question remained an object of veneration and particularly so in situ. The year 1546 or 1547 A.D. constituted another dramatic juncture in the history of Tshal, truly a year of horror since – as unanimously chronicled in numerous sources – the Gung-thang vihāra fell victim to a devastating fire that almost destroyed the entire institution. Only a part of the entire monastic inventory, in principal only a few statues, were to survive the fire, and their identity appears to have been duly recorded by the author of GT. Here we find no mention of a portable kesi thangka. This may not surprise, since only larger items normally are mentioned. If we logically assume that the kesi tapestry had been originally set up in the vihāra (rather than in Tshal, which is not entirely infeasible, or in one of the colleges), it follows that it by 1546 had already been removed from its original place. There exists a famous “transfer story,” aside from the present story of a transfer of power, which records and documents the route from Tshal Gung-thang to the residence of the Dalai Lama: this is the story of the removal or transfer of the later State Protector or Oracle-medium Pehar, which formerly had arrived at Tshal coming from bSam-yas. Later, so according to the fascinating story of Pehar’s long odyssey, it arrived at ‘Bras-spungs during the tenure of the ‘Bras-spungs chos rje dGe-’ dun rgya-mtsho (1475–1542 A.D.; in retrospect the 2nd Dalai Lama) where he was requested to take up the position of (i.e. was installed as) the local srung ma of the former Dalai Lama residence. In the mythological development of this transfer story which follows a local tradition that combines or relates this journey with the Gung-thang fire (see App. IV), an attempt no doubt in retrospect was made to signal the historic annexation of Tshal into the future dGe-lugs monastic and theocratic network which at that point was about to take shape. It was the dGa’-Idan pho-brang residence in ‘Bras-spungs that had become the new center and power

27 This particular sort of appellative classification – much cherished among the Tibetans incidentally – surely reflects, aside from its evident religious implications, the political realities prevalent during exactly this spell, and it appears to be centered around the narrow sKyid-shod area, where Phag-mo gru-pa rDo-rje rgyal-po was seen to embody the spiritual heritage and ideological legacy as well as represent the seat of Rlangs Phag-mo-gru-pa who during their heydays had arrived and appropriated the area around lHa-sa incl. Tshal Gung-thang. The sKyid-shod heartland of the Tshal-pa was moreover encircled by the numerous foundations of the Great bTsong-kha-pa and his disciples, who rose to power not least through their successful working relationship and patron-client union with the Phag-gru. Seen from the viewpoint of lHa-sa, the above epithet thus seems to indicate the initial hegemony and rule of Bla-ma Zhang, who was followed by bTsong-kha-pa initially under the auspices of the Phag-gru, founded by rDo-rje rgyal-po.
basis of the ambitious dGe-lugs order, and it was this center which in the mid-17th century was transferred to the Potala Palace in a political process which by the dGe-lugs-pa was conceived as natural, since they spiritually and politically regarded both hegemonies as one. It may therefore be conjectured that the prestigious icon of Gung-thang Bla-ma Zhang undertook the political journey from Tshal to 'Bras-spungs too, in fact it was such objects and emblems of power and authority that both embodied and legitimized the actual transfer. It therefore may have been donated to dGe-'dun rgya-mtsho during one of his visits to Gung-thang or at any time thereafter; such visits are registered in GT too. The 5th Dalai Lama later had it transferred to the newly erected Potala Palace. This chain of events seems more cogent than assuming that the icon went on a temporary detour to gDan-sa-mthil or to the sNe'-gdon Kun-bzang-rtsa pho brang of the Phag-mo-gru-pa before it ended up in Potala. In the Potala Palace the story of the “Three Jewels of Tibet” mentioned above finds its logical culmination. The 5th Dalai Lama prominently counted Bla-ma Zhang among his pre-existences28 and in addition to his strong leanings towards Zhang and his hegemony, the former both adopted and adapted ideologically the long hegemonic heritage of lHa-sa, the heartland and epicenter of Tibet, and skilfully combined it with his own political aspirations. This went hand in hand with the final appropriation and annexation of Tshal Gung-thang vihāra and their colleges into the widely ramified network of dGe-lugs monastic institutions, a transfer that was sealed when large parts of Tshal Gung-thang were donated to Zur-chen Chos-dbyings rang-grol, the principal esoteric tutor of the 5th Dalai Lama who initially arrived there in 1633 A.D. The transfer of the icon to the Potala Palace, this we shall equally assume, contributed to its fortunate survival into our times. But there its odyssey did not end.

Following the sweeping changes during recent years, after a temporary detour into custody in Beijing, it found its way back to lHa-sa, where it is locked up in the new Tibet Museum (and recently 2006 was again returned to Potala) as one of the highlights in its permanent exhibition. The tapestry thangka and the inscription thus represent an iconological source and historical document of the highest order that shall allow us a rare and telling glimpse into the modus operandi of political and ritual symbolism in Tibet and not least their fascinating combination.

28 Cf. the Fifth Dalai Lama, 'Khrungs rabs 9a1–4 = 593.1–4 (vol. Ba) of his gSun ghum; DL5 IV (= Ahmad 1999: 190–92), DL5 I 6b3–5; ‘Dzam gling rgyun gcig 634.12–14 and DL3 88a2–89a3 which also addresses the apparent inherent contradiction in the circumstance that for instance Sa-chen (1092–1158), Bla-ma Zhang 'Gro-ba'i mgon-po (1123–93) and e.g. Myang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zcr (1136–1204), three contemporary pre-existences of the Dalai Lama, were alive during the very same century. The apparent simultaneity (or at least overlapping) of these lives is countered by the 5th Dalai Lama when he maintains – here employing the cherished uDaKacAndropamā simile for depicting “illusion” – that it is tantamount to the capability of a moon to be reflected in the waters a multitude of times at one and the same time (zla ba gcig la chu zla grangs med 'hyung ba ltar). See also Sørensen 2005b,c.
It was through the sheer authority accruing from bygone prerogatives or from records of yore delineating the heydays of their glorious past that clans and aristocratic families in Tibet often later would advance their hegemonic claims in an attempt to underpin political authority. The erstwhile Tibetan dynasty originally had been ensured through a complex network of clan alliances, ethnic or tribal matrimonial confederations knitted together not least through exogamic marriage allegiances (at court with prevalent polygyny and tiered concubinage) important for the sustained integration of the empire. Although neither counting among such “bride-giving” clans or peoples during the imperial period nor counting directly among the so-called “primeval clans” in Tibet, the gNyos – usually listed as a sub-sect of the dMu clan people – should, similar to a number of other celebrated clans in Tibet, nevertheless boast mythic or theogonic origins, stating that it be counted among or

2. ANCESTRAL LEGACY: THE GNYOS PATRIARCH ICON
2.1 Hybrid Lineage Construction:
The Esoteric Guhyasamāja and Vajrabhairava Transmission and their Commemoration
Krṣṇapāda Junior or Nag-po-zhabs-chung\(^{31}\) – became gNyos' main-teacher from whom he received in the first place the cycle of Guhyasamāja tantra according to the prevalent and immense popular system of Jñānapāda, but also a number of other cycles such as the Krṣṇa Yāmāra, Cakrasamvara, Hevajra, Mahāmāyā and even the Maṇjuśrīnāmasamrtī, all studied under and transmitted via the same teacher. He supported the otherwise elusive Indian master for over seven years (ca. 1028–1034 A.D.), but he allegedly sojourned a total of 20 years in India. The latter subsequently urged him to return to Tibet to work for the well-being of the people there. Joining Mar-pa in Nepal, he returned to Tibet and arrived at Kha-rag (also written mKha’-reg), and then La-stod Cung-po (in the gTsang province; cf. App. V, Table 4), where his eldest son eventually would be born. He there allegedly wrote a commentary on Guhyasamāja based upon the translation formerly executed by the Great Translator Rin-chen bzung-po. Well-versed in Sanskrit, he himself executed partial translations of Yamāntaka and Hevajra tantra\(^{32}\) and assisted by other translators, so it is reported, he even rendered parts of the huge Kālacakra tantra commentary Vimalaprabhā into Tibetan,\(^{33}\) none of his partial or preliminary translations however should find their way into the Buddhist Canon. Back in Tibet, he should rise to great affluence and power, becoming a regional patriarch or landlord in gTsang and a local potentate quite similar to the position and influence enjoyed by Mar-pa in lHo-brag.

For his religious activities and duties not least in form of bestowing empowerment and blessings related to esoteric cycles (that eventually ensured the person thus blessed a smooth path to Enlightenment), the person in question often was remunerated with large stretches of landed estates in return. gNyos received estates in the gTsang province, mainly in the nomadic and hilly areas of 'Go[s]-yul sTod-gsum, 'Brig-[ng]-mtshams, and rGya-mro, etc.\(^{34}\) Such exchanges between a religious figure to date the life of many religious figures one lo skor earlier, which however do not in all cases seem tenable), instead of the commonly accepted 1012 A.D. Finally, Vitali (2004) suggests 973–1113 A.D. Further research is needed to further narrow down his dates.

\(^{31}\) The identity of the otherwise elusive Balyācārya (or Balin[tapāda]) – who is recorded to have composed one Chos skyong thams cad pa'i gtor ma'i cho ga, transl. into Tibetan by rMa Chos-bar – with Krṣṇapāda Junior is still open. The latter too is recorded to have composed other works and, a Krṣṇapāda (not Junior) e.g. composed works related to Yamāntaka, cf. Nishioka 1982: 89 (nos. 2162–67), 111–12. The unusual sobriquet of his (gtor ma'i slob dpon; cf. e.g. gSang 'dus chos 'byung 57b3) may refer to the office at Vikramasila enacting “the votive cakes rituals” (halividhi), the propitiatory food offering (to principal deities), cf. Nyang ral chos 'byung 476–77, B4 372; Mar pa rnam thar 26; Tāranātha's History of India (Chattopadhyaya 1990: 294); Templemann 1989: 103, 140–41.

The 4th 'Brug-chen Chos kyi snang-ba incidentally identifies Balyācārya with one *[Krṣṇa] Devaśraddha ([Nag-po-lha-la dad-pa); cf. sGrub thabs lo rgyus 112b5–6, probably due to his position in the transmission. This is confirmed in Traksad chos 'byung 11 6b6–7.

\(^{32}\) Tāranātha appears to confirm the existence of a translation of a Yamāntaka tantra executed by gNyos, although unseen; cf. gShin rje gshed chos 'byung 1 39a4–40a2; see also Kun dga' rnam rgyal gсан yig 44.

\(^{33}\) Cf. also the incredible story contained in 'Brag pa'i chos 'byung 308.12–309.2. It is generally maintained that it was the prolific translator Gyi-jo Zla-ba 'od-zer – assisted by Gayādhara – who made the first Tibetan rendition, possibly in 1027, of the Kālacakra tantra commentary Vimalaprabhā; cf. e.g. Stearns 2001: 219–20. It thus appears to be at variance with the statement in gNyos rabs, and one may speculate that the latter, rather apologetic text here represents a wishful fabrication or it rests upon a misunderstanding, since in one of the twenty-one Kālacakra transmissions in Tibet, precisely in the one transmitted through Gyi-jo one of its subsequent recipients were one gNyos 'Od, who however is not identical with gNyos lo tsā ba. See also Dus 'khor rgyud bla ma lo rgyus 11a1f; Bu-ston's Dus 'khor chos 'byung 61–62.

\(^{34}\) For these nomadic districts, see Myang chos 'byung 66f., 77–79; DL6 110; Chos rje spnyil dkar rnam thar I 24b4; II 3b4f. The first source chronicles that huge stretches of the Myang (var. Nyang) district (in the 11–12th cent. often characterized as territories of low dharma haunted by mischief and brigandage; cf. also lHa nang pa'i rnam thar 100–02) of
and his lay and pious benefactor do inform us about the overwhelming importance and the highly
treasured prize attached to being the authoritative holder of esoteric teachings. We repeatedly see
that many masters and their clans acquired great affluence not least based upon their “treasured
capital,” the possession of specific esoteric teachings. The acquisition of original Indian esoteric
 teachings (often in form of original Indian manuscripts from authoritative Indian masters) and
cycles dearly purchased and remunerated with gold in India often exceeded the value of the latter
and promised the holder considerable income and prestige back in Tibet. In rGyang-ro (at sPel-
gsar = sPel-dmar) of Myang-stod, an otherwise unidentified rGya-ston Aryadeva supposedly
donated him as fee (von) for religious teachings large stretches of land, monastic estates of what
was known as lHo-kha Mon-bzh, i.e. the area commonly covering what constitutes present-day
[western] Bhutan which at that point known as the southernmost part of ’Gos-yul. Clearly the
detailed modalities of such estate grants are still largely unclear, did it imply actual appropriation
of the territories or was it reduced to certain rights only? It nevertheless was a grant that laid
the foundation for the subsequent rise of the dominant gNyos clan (later called the lHa-pa) in the same
and neighbouring (Phag-ri) area. His repute and power spreading far and wide, gNyos lo tsā ba is
recorded for having also met with a number of prominent 11th-century masters such as pan chen
Gayadhara, and the latter’s Tibetan student Gyi-jo Zla-ba ’od-zer, and he invited both to Thod-phu
of Kha-rag. It is finally recorded that he met Atiṣa and the Kashmiri Somanātha, evidently all

gTsang that extended over Phag-ri to sPa-gro or sKyer-chu lha-khang (present-day west Bhutan) had been given to the
’Gos clan, part of these areas (located between sPa-gro and Rva-lung until Myang-stod of rGyal-rtsa khul) later became
known as the Three Upper Reaches [sTod-gsum] of ’Gos-yul,4 and originally had been given as territorial appanage (to
the famous minister ’Gos Khri-bzang and confirmed by king Ral-pa-can) in the 9th cent. It was this affluent ’Gos clan
and its leading masters that served as patrons for the arrival and support of members of the rGya clan, not least ’Jam-dpal
gsang-ba (who came from bSam-yas where he had served as sku rim pa of Khri-srong Ides u-btsan and as root-teacher to
Sad-na-legs and who est. the gNas-mying seat and the Bye-mda’ lha-khang in Myang-stod, etc.) was actively involved in
this process, which may explain the later presence of this clan and of the ’Brug-pa in the areas. The old ’Bring area (which
included the district of sNyā-nam / gNyā’-lam) and esp. the adjacent area of ’Bri[ng]-mtshams was located south-east of

The appropriation and control of the areas by the gNyos clan must be ascribed to the period following this and probably
only meant that parts of these districts (and far from the entire area) fell into their hands. It remains a puzzle why the
otherwise informative Myang chos ’byung is largely silent on this gNyos presence in the area.

* ’Gos-yul, rGyang-ro, Sa-lu of rGyal-rtsa khul are still registered, see e.g. the 1830 A.D. Tax Survey (ICags stag zhib
gZhung 463, 469) and rGyal rtsa rdzongs lo rgus, passim.

35 The value attached to books and their contents is underpinned by a quote from Mar-pa’s biography. Accusing gNyos
lo tsā ba of throwing Mar-pa’s books into the water, he states: bod du gsar tshol ba ’i dka’ las rgya gar du bla ma tshol ba ’i
dka’ las chos dang gdam pa de ’dra gshan la dkon pa med pa. Trade between territories and estates in return for gold and for
precious teachings is also vividly recounted e.g. in rMog-lcog’s biography (77).

36 Gayadhara according to one tradition visited Tibet four times, initially in 1041 A.D. being invited by ’Brog-mi
(b. 993), and commonly considered the latter’s principal teacher concerning the specific Lam-’bras teachings and the
Hevajra tantra cycle. It was during the third visit at a point when Gayadhara was invited by Gyi-jo that gNyos (also
called Kha-rag gTsang-pa) – by now affluent and influential – in turn could invite both to Upper Thod of Kha-rag (lo-
cated between Srin-po-ri (of gZad) and Bya-rgod-gshong (of gTsang); cf. Bla ma rgyu gar ba ’i lo rgus 345a7–b5; Rva
lo rnam thar 149–50; Mus chen rnam thar 89.2–3, 550.4–6; bsTan rtis gsal ba ’i nyin byed 93–94; Tshar chen rnam
thar 8a5–9b3; mGon po rnam thar 21a3–5 for this hermitage and place. cf. also Chos rje spyil dkar rnam thar II 28b2;
Table VI.7 below; and Chan 86d); it should be recalled that such invitations were a question of providing ample funding
to remunerate the cost for teachings delivered (the argument usually being to test the seriousness of the disciple or the
recipient), the fee not least to be delivered in gold, the most common “hard currency.” Gayadhara allegedly passed away
in the mid-11th century. The same century was a period of immense religious activity and of fruitful cross-pollination, where numerous religious masters returned to Tibet bringing along original Indian texts (rgya dpe) of specific tantric esoteric or ritual treatises—only one only needs to read the biography of Mar-pa (and his alleged skirmishes with gNyos) to appreciate the value and importance attached either to these precious commodities or to their translations and renditions into Tibetan. The individual hermeneutic interpretation and the often idiosyncratic transmission of these texts led to a variety of distinct exegetical schools or systems that was further compounded by the complexity of the individual tantric deity cult behind the different text cycles. Three main cycles transmitted through gNyos lo tsā ba became popular in Tibet: the cycle of the Guhyasamāja tantra (in the 'Jam-rdor or Mañjuvajra form) according to the system of Jñānapāda,37 the Kṛṣṇa Yamārī cycle commonly known as gNyos lugs lha dgu ma38 as well as the cycle of the Protector Traksad Mahākāla known as the Traksad gNyos lugs.39 Another cycle of gNyos of some note was the Samvara tantra based upon the

(both 1079, 1097? or as late as 1103–04 A.D.) in the Thod-phu hermitage as guest of gNyos. For Gayādhara, the great Indian master, see esp. the details conveniently provided by Stearns 2001: 47–57, 97, 219–20 et passim. Again, we have chronological inconsistencies, since at that point, gNyos since long had passed away. If the latter data are more relevant, it would suggest that the dates of gNyos should be situated well within the 11th century. On the other hand, gTer gling rnam thar II 15b6 maintains that gNyos lo tsā ba initially received the Guhyasamāja from the late 10th–early 11th cent. mnga' bdag Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan, ruler of bSam-yas (on him, see Gyalbo et al. 2000: 181f.), before he went to India and there met Bālyācārya, from whom he received the same cycle based upon the system of Jñānapāda. Chronologically and historically not quite infeasible, only a high age ascribed to this gNyos master would cover this span of activities.

37 Mahāsiddha Buddhajñānapāda or just Jñānapāda (= Buddhāśrījñāna) was a 9–9th cent. Indian ascetic. For his life, see Taranātha’s History (Chattapodhaya 1990: 278–83, 325). He was the principal teacher of king Dharmaśāla (ca. 775 (fl. 775–812 A.D.) Among his teachers count Lalitavajra (or sGeg-pa’i rdo-rje), who himself was an author of a Nīḍānagaurāḍesa in the Guhyasamāja tradition; as well as pupil of Haribhadra, wherefrom he was taught the Prajñāpāramitā. He was active at Vikramalāśīla. Various commentaries on the Guhyasamāja mūlatantra belong to the Jñānapāda exegetical school (zhabs lugs). Cf. Wayman, 1991: 94–98; Templeman 1983: 56–65; 1989: 141; Davidson 2002: 309–18. Cf. also Deb dmar (Dung-dkar ed. 442).

Vajrācārya Buddhajñānapāda transmitted via his teacher Lalitavajra the Yamānīkā cycle too, known as nag po’i skor; cf. gShin rje gshed chos ‘byung I 28a5ff., 34b3–4; II 74a4f., 80a6f. It was this specific form which was known as the gNyos lugs. Cf. next note.

38 Slightly different descriptions in the sources: Myang chos ‘byung 128; Deb dmar 125 (comm. 442) maintains that it (or another cognate cycle?) refers to the 13-deity form (bcu gsum ma) of this cycle. DL6 107–09 maintains that he from Bālyācārya received the Kṛṣṇa Yamārī cycle. Cf. gShin rje gshed chos ‘byung I 63a2–b1, 64b7; whereas II 74b2 maintains that it was the three-deity Black Yamāntaka.

The Guhyasamāja of the Jñānapāda system was later known as the one spreading from the gNyos stronghold of Gye-re lha-khang. A cognate lineage refers to the 19-deity Mañjuvajra form transmitted through Dipamkārābhadra. Cf. Nyang ral chos ‘byung 476–77; Bu ston gsal yig 50b4–5; bTsang kha pa gsal yig 41b3–4; BA Roerich 367–72; DL5 gSal yig I 129b5–130a2; gSang ‘du chos ‘byung 56b3–57b5, 63a6–b1; gTer-bdag gling-pa’s gSal yig 266b3–267b2; Klong-rdo lba-ma, gSung ‘bum l 176.6–11, etc.

39 Cf. DL5 gSal yig I 121b6–13b2; ‘Brug-chen Kun-gzigs Chos kyi snang-ba’s sGrub thabs lo rgyus 112a6ff.: mNyos lugs ye shes gyi mgon po traksad kyi gtor chos bsdus pa 1b1–7b4; and the Ye shes mgon po sogs bstan sgrung gi gtor bsdus mdo bsdus 4b4–5a6. See in particular, Taranātha, Traksad chos ‘byung I–II. For an illustration of this form, see Rin chos ‘byung brgya rtsa no. 377 (Willson and Brauen 2000). A Mahākāla lineage was transmitted to gNyos through Balin and include the same six members of the gNyos clan following Yon-tan-grags. After lHa-nang-pa, it was then transmitted to his nephew lHa Rin-chen rgyal-po. Deb dmar 125 (comm. 442), an early witness, purports that it was a Vajrabhairava cycle mixed with Traksad (see below).

For a cognate Mahākāla cycle in the form mGon-po Bram-ze (*Nātha Brahmarāpa), also transmitted through Jñānapāda and Balintapāda; cf. the Rubin Collection no. 343.
system of Lüiyipā, hence known as gNyos lugs Lüyiopa. Three of these in all four cycles constituted what may be defined as the set of gNyos esoterica that were handed down as the Tantra Triology of the gNyos [Lo tsā ba] Tradition (gNyos kyi rgyud gsum), also called the Patriarch or Father Tantra Triology (Pha rgyud skor gsum), and all transmitted to him through Balyācārya/Balin.\(^4\)

The two main cycles associated with gNyos lo tsā ba, however, were the Guhyasamāja teachings according to the system of Jñānapāda and the Yamāntaka cycle, the lineage(s) of which is also documented in the celebrated gNyos Master thangka. It was in the third generation after gNyos lo tsā ba that his descendant in direct line (cf. Table 7 below) the redoubtable Grags-pa-dpal made his entry onto the scene. His residence was located in Cha-dkar of Bur (of sNye-thang) in sKyid-smad, supported by his kin inhabiting the adjacent G(y)e-re Valley and propped by the dominant 'Bring communities as well as by his numerous armed lay benefactors, he led the clan to glory and make the gNyos clan-based lHa-pa the most powerful house in the mid-1150’s in the lHa-sa area. It was he who in part paved the way for Bla-ma Zhang in inheriting the position in the area as detailed in the ensuing Appendix.

2.2 The gNyos Scroll:
Ruler in Religious Garb and his Lineage Esoterica

The central figure in the remarkably representative early 13th Central Tibetan scroll is the influential patriarch and one-time ruler of lHa-sa, gNyos Grags-pa[-dpal] (1106–1165/1182), here depicted as local ruler poised in a religious setting with the figure’s right hand in the gesture of reasoning, i.e. explicating the Dharma (vitarkamudrā) and the left hand in the gesture of Concentration (dhyāna-mudrā). According to the inscription on the back, the central figure is identified as slob dpon chen po gNyos Yab Drags [= Grags]-pa-dpal. His body is presented frontally in cherished

\(^{40}\) Cf. e.g. Bu ston gsan yig 53a7–b2; DLS gSan yig 1175b1–2. Also called gNyos lug bDe-mchog Lo-hi-pa; cf. gsang 'duschos shyang 63a6–b1, 64a1. It was from one Bhadanta (pupil of the Nepalese Pham-mthing-pa Vāgiśvarakirti; a pupil of Nārapa) and Nag-po lHa-la dad-pa (who may – arguably dubious – be identical with Balyācārya; see above) that the Samvara and Heruka cycles, etc. were transmitted to gNyos lo tsā ba, whereupon it in succession was transmitted to gNyos bla-ma, gNyos dpal-mo/le, then in succession to Phug-pa Ba-jo-'bum, gTsang lHa-stongs-pa, and lCe Jo-mdo, etc. The 5th Dalai Lama, however, identifies this with the 62-deity Cakrasamvara cycle and considers it one among the nine prevalent bka’ babs lines of this deity prevalent in Tibet.

\(^{41}\) Cf. also Sangs rgyas tshig mdzod 498.

For further details as to an analysis and discussion of the gNyos thangka, which unfortunately is not in a pristine state, see Eva Allinger 2000 and 2001 (replacing earlier, incomplete descriptions by P. Pal, Tibetan Paintings and by J. C. Singer, Orientations 1986) where an attempt is also made to place the icon in the context of contemporary Central Tibetan painting styles, not least compared to similarly styled thangka such as the late 11th or 12th specimen of the Green Tārā and the Avalokiteśvara Sadakṣari (Ford Collection), which to some extent must have inspired the artist of the gNyos thangka.

A few inconsistencies in the article of Allinger (2001): The chronological data of the protagonist are problematic. The death year of gNyos Grags-pa-dpal given in one source (gNyos rubs) as 1210 is untenable, 1182/3 A.D. would seem more feasible and the dates given for gZi-brjod-dpal are the dates for the 'Bri-gung founder 'Jig-rten mgon-po. Now, one of his pupils rMog-locog (1110–1170 A.D.) mentioned that Bur-sgom nag-po passed away in a “bird” year which in this case can only be 1165 A.D. It would appear somewhat early. It thus suggests that his dates are to be situated to 1106–1165. For further data anent Grags-pa-dpal, his clan, his dates and his central role in the lHa-sa area in the 12th century; see App. II (Chap. 1) and for the gNyos family tree, see App. V, Table 7 below.
3. The Lineage thangka of the gNyos Patriarch (yab) Grags-pa-dpal

Courtesy: Formerly, Jucker Collection (101.6 x 81.9 cm). Distemper on cloth
three-quarter view seated on a multi-coloured petalled double-lotus dias on a Pāla-styled simhāsana throne filled underneath with successive heads of elephants and lions, and leaning against a green delicately patterned cushion, set against a red-draped throne-back. The figure is being flanked by a pair of leoglyphs (vyāla) with riders turning their faces in awe towards the central figure. The entire center-piece is set in a cave, not untypical of such monk and hierarch portraits from this period, circumscribed by a palette of colours. Surmounting the throne above are a symmetrical and decorative pair of hamsa which close the curls around the halo of Grags-pa-dpal’s head, whose face appears remarkably realistically painted. His inner robes are dark blue scattered with delicate floral golden-coloured roundels, often a nobleman’s attire and raiment, similar to his (now somewhat faded) outer garment in yellow hue.43 He thus is vested with apperalls fitting for a lay ruler of some note. This may be all the more surprising when we recall that Grags-pa-dpal was formerly known as Bur-sgom nag-po, an ascetic master and teacher of a number of celebrated figures among these foremost Phag-mo-gru-pa rDo-rje rgyal-po and the later Shangs-pa bka’-brgyud-pa Bla-ma rMog-lcog.

The entire iconographic setting and composition surrounding the central figure carries reminiscence of similar (almost stereotype) repertoires found in other contemporary icon portraits as can be documented in currently accessible early medieval bKa’-gdams, sTag-lung and g.Ya’-bzang hierarch or monk paintings.44 The gNyos patriarch too is surrounded by a large number of secondary or peripheral (human and non-human) figures, all seated in similar miniature cave-like niches in the upper and bottom as well as lateral registers, perched and intertwined in between stylized multi-coloured staves intending to resemble elongated mountain peaks, typical of contemporary hermit and saint paintings. Like in the case of the Zhang icon, the full identity of all the figures on the thangka, which may reflect different cycles or a combination thereof, must await future research. And it is quite conceivable that the narrative scenes detailed in the lower register and the remaining secondary figures shall be deciphered once the relevant tantra as well as that of the lives of the mahāsiddha have been subjected to closer scrutiny.

The reverse of the scroll (cf. also Fig. 65 in Allinger 2001) is furnished with inscriptions of some of the individual figures in the niches, providing us with information which allow us an initial identification of the main figure and some of the lineage figures.45 An initial perusal of the extant written gNyos lugs transmission lineages and the name list on the icon’s reverse readily would lead us to the conclusion that it indeed refers to the transmission of the Guhyasamāja tantra. However, the solution to its decipherment may be more complex than that.

In the transmission of these cycles some contradictory data can be registered which hamper an immediate identification of the specific lineage(s). Listing the four or five gNyos clan members since gNyos lo tsā ba, it can be concluded that it was not dPal-le (written dPal-sde in the inscription), the son of gNyos rDo-rje bla-ma that transmitted the cycle supposedly depicted in the thangka and

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43 Thangka depiction of noblemen or secular rulers in a wholly religious setting and attire is e.g. attested with sde srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho; Bod kyi thang ka 78–79. However, a similar garment is displayed in the central figure of the upper register of an Acala thangka (no. 22 in Sacred Visions).

44 The greatest artistic affinity, as said, is documented in the Green Tārā and the Sadaksāri Avalokiteśvara icons, both in the Ford Collection; cf. Allinger 2001: 63. We may also call attention to obvious similarities in a Tibetan pre-1227 thangka evidently traced to the Basikou Stūpas at the slope of the Ala Mountain in Ningxia; cf. Lei Runze, Xi Xia fot'a 20.

45 See the discussion in Allinger 2001.
listed in Blue Annals (BA Roerich 372–73; evidently based upon Bu-ston’s gSan yig). From a first perusal, the transmission registered on the thangka and in BA either appears to refer to two (different) cycles or they are at least at variance on one transmissional point. The remaining number of individual figures in the guruparamparā are largely identical. In BA (and so also earlier by Bu-ston and others) the gNyos lineage listed refers to the specific Jñānapāda-based Guhyasamājā transmission that indeed was transmitted through dPal-le, whereas the lineage on the thangka appears to represent a combination of the latter’s cycle with or including Yamāntaka or [Vajra-] Bhairava, a cycle similarly treasured in the clan as a core cycle of gNyos lo tsā ba – in fact, the blue Yama is depicted central in the lowest register of the thangka with the characteristic Buffalo head (ma he gdong), here in singular form, ithyphallic and in pratyāśādha (right leg bent) posture. The icon’s composition may reflect one lineage, but most likely a double lineage transmission. Aside from the central figure and its slightly peripheral figures of the main gNyos lineage holders situated around the head and nimbus of Grags-pa-dpal, we find in the top left register as well as in the entire left lateral column the Indian figures of the Guhyasamājā (cum Yamāntaka / Yamāri) gNyos lineage depicted, a lineage confirmed by the overwhelming correspondence that prevails between the lineage transmitted in most gSan yig and the inscription on the back of the thangka. In the top register, the central figure is the saffron-coloured (dmar ser = gur gum) Mañjughoṣa, one-headed and with four arms (as it appears) – but more relevant for the icon’s transmission, in the lower register, second figure from left is the six-armed Mañjuvajra seated within a stūpa – returning to the top register, further to the right in succession are Vajradhara, Vajrapani and a red-skinned Daṇkini (top farmost right) as indicated from the inscription on the back. The figures of entire right lateral column (except the top right figure) remain unidentified, but, signal, behind the second figure (listed as no. 18 according to Kreijger’s transliteration and Allinger’s diagram) an inscription (in different hand) appears to purport “Herein [within the thangka] the Bhairava (= ‘Jig[s]-byed) transmission [lineage is embodied, a consecration secured] for this very life (? ‘di tshe = tshe ‘di’).” But the text, evidently corrupt, may also be construed differently, i.e. that the remaining figures of the right column in descending line (mar) from the second figure and the entire lower register refer to scenes from the [Vajra-]Bhairava transmission and cycle. Unfortunately none of the nine or ten figures carry any name inscription on the back to assist us with a proper identification. We can only conclude that the last (i.e. most recent) two recipients (next to Gragspa-dpal, the central figure) are identified from their Tibetan dresses.

Returning to the identified lineage covering the top left and entire left column, one central source maintains that it was precisely through dPal-le’s brother named dPal [gyi] ’byung[-g nas] (the one registered in the inscriptive list on the reverse of the gNyos icon) that the Yamāntaka cycle was transmitted as confirmed in gNyos rabs (22.3) too. On the other hand, Tāranātha (gShin rje

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46 Of which in Tibet at least six Jñānapāda-hka ‘babs or transmission-lines spread (the gNyos-line is the one via Balin; see e.g. the detailed list in DL5 gSan yig I 129b5–130a2). This Guhyasamājā system, known in the Sa-skya school too. cf. Phags-pa Bla-ma’s important gSong ‘dus ye shes zhabz kyi rnam thar dang brgyud pa’i rim pa written 1258 A.D. at the palace of Qubilai and contained in his collected writings.

47 The upper register figure is somewhat unclear on the icon. Usually one would expect the esoteric Mañjuvajra form of Mañjuśrī with three heads and six arms in embrace as delineated in the lineage transmission.

48 Text: ‘di na mar kyi ‘di tshe’ jig byed brgyud pa. There was no occasion to inspect the reading. Alt. reading: ‘di phyi, “this and the subsequent life.” If this construe is justified, it would support the assumption that the thangka is a commemorative icon. Despite direct access to photos of the inscription (courtesy of Dr. Weldon), it was impossible to confirm this reading.
gshed chos 'byung I 63a2–b1) not only purports that the Indian lineage of the gNyos' Yamāntaka transmission is largely identical with the Guhyasamāja, but also in the Tibetan part of the gNyos' lineage transmission of Yamāntaka, he lists dPal-le in lieu of dPal-'byung. Aside from the possibility that scribal blunders have crept into the list of names in a transmission—a phenomenon of notorious regularity in Tibetan written sources—it thus can be concluded that—either way—the lineage on the icon's reverse safely can be identified with that of the latter's transmission too. Bhairava, as said, played a crucial role in the gNyos-specific teachings and curricula. The cult, practice and propitiation of this particular deity was widespread in the gNyos family (see App. V, Table 7 below). Signally, both tantra, based upon the exegetical school of Jñānapāda, were transmitted to gNyos and his clan line via Balin. To complete the picture, a number of lineage histories inform us that Yon-tan-grags in fact received not only the 13-deity and the 9-deity Bhairava cycle, but also the 13-deity dGra nag, i.e. the gshin rje gshed nag po skor, or the Black Yamāntaka / Krṣna Yamāri, which was considered very powerful (mthu stobs shin tu che). Interestingly, the same author also underlines that it was Grags-pa-dpal's son lHa-nang-pa who decisively disseminated the cycle followed by the latter's nephew line (dbon rigs), i.e. lHa Rin-chen rgyal-po. A circumstance also reported in numerous gSan yig. It therefore shall be contended that the thangka in fact attempts to represent the Guhyasamāja / Yamāntaka hybrid lineage tradition with a supplementary Vajrabhairava lineage as transmitted through gNyos; in other words, it reflected a hybrid or combined lineage of the gNyos' specific Guhyasamāja transmission linked with the Yamāntaka/Yamāri. The affinity between the systems, as said, is repeatedly addressed by scholars. Conducive to the identification of the icon as adhering to Black Yamāntaka (the wrathful form of Mahājñāna), incidentally, may be the inscription on the reverse of the thangka, behind each figure we find the ōm āh hūṃ, i.e. the hṛdaya dhārani or heart formula of Yamāntaka written. But this formula is commonplace and therefore may not be very conclusive. The remaining, still unidentified, lineage on the icon seems to indicate, as said, the Bhairava or Vajrabhairava lineage-holders. The Bhairava cult in Buddhist India, originally non-Buddhist, is complex and no less are the numerous lineages that were transmitted to Tibet, introduced by the main upholders of the Bhairava cult in Tibet (bod kyi 'jigs byed mkhan po) and their main exegetical schools or systems (lugs). The most prevalent were the different systems transmitted through Rva lo tsā ba rDo-rje-grags and his ancestral lineage.

50 A narrative that delivers the rationale for the gNyos transmission recounts, seemingly legendary, how Yon-tan-grags is reported to have sought a protector deity that ideally combined spiritual and secular needs (chos don 'dril ba), wherefore Balin tendered him the Jñānapāda-based Guhyasamāja cycle. Upon repeated requests, he then asked for a powerful iṣṭadevata, and was given the cycles of Yamāri. For his return to Tibet, he requested protection and as a small pass was to be negotiated en route, gNyos finally requested a protector (pha' srung), and so was given the wrathful Vajrabhairava in a combined form with Traksad Mahakāla (see above). This (combined set of different cycles?) in fact constitutes the sgrub skor of gNyos that spread in Tibet; cf. gShin rje gshed chos 'byung II 83ba5–b3. As for the dgta nag cycle, it is defined as dgta nag gnyos lugs kyi ro langs brgyad skor dgta nag.

This seems corroborated by Tāranātha, Traksad chos 'byung I 3a3–6. This story sounds like providing no more than an explanation behind his acquisition of gNyos kyi rgyud gsum listed above. It is not infeasible that all these protective and esoteric aspects, in some hybrid fashion, remain retracable in the thangka in question. This reading may in fact be crucial for a proper and deeper understanding of the nature and origin of the icon.
51 Cf. gShin rje gshed chos 'byung I 72a5–b2.
52 Restricting us to the reception in Tibet, aside from Rva, the most widespread were the different cycles transmitted through Mal lo tsā ba Blo-gros-grags (Mal lugs), sKyo lo tsā ba 'Od kyi 'byung-gnas (sKyo lugs), Zhang lo tsā ba Shes-rab bla-ma (Zhang lugs) and of Atiśa (Jo lugs); a specific form was the Śrīdhara system popular among the "Bri-gung-pa."
In order to narrow down the milieu that led to the manufacture of the icon, it is noteworthy to reiterate that the 'Bri-gung founder 'Jig-rten mgon-po, the root-teacher of IHa-nang-pa gZi-brjiddpal\(^5\) – the latter being the son of Grags-pa-dpal – himself had visions, already at the age of eight, of the wrathful Vajrabhairava (cf. 'Bri-gung gdan rabs III 70)\(^4\) and IHa-nang-pa’s close companion, mGar dam-pa Chos-sdings-pa (1180–1240 A.D.) was a prominent practitioner of the same cycle and lineage stemming from Rva (cf. IHo rong chos ‘byung 431–32).\(^5\) The latter’s Bhairava transmissions in Tibet – known as Rva-lugs – no doubt at that point were the most widespread, or rather the different cycle(s) stemming from Rva lo tsā ba. The latter text informs us that mGar dam-pa, having tendered a red piece of dar yug silk, requested and received from dge bshes IHa-nangs the complete cycles of both Guhyasamāja and Yamāntaka.\(^6\) Here again we encounter the dual transmission. It is in this milieu and upon the above transmissionally hybrid background that the thangka be appreciated. The thangka, clearly an Auftragsarbeit, was meant to constitute an iconic, mainly religious document that recorded or commemorated the ceremonious inauguration or consecration of Grags-pa-dpal into the particular cycle(s).

The icon as a consecration thangka had been made in commemoration of the great master Grags-pa-dpal, the ruler of the IHa-sa area most likely in the period sometime between 1160 and 1180 A.D. The commemorative nature, incidentally, would underpin the “transmissional hybrid” nature of the icon. For a dating, one estimate would most readily situate its manufacture at the close of Grags-pa-dpal’s life, early 1180 A.D. (or already 1165? as less likely alternative date) or shortly after. The inscriptive yab (i.e. allegedly commissioned by his son, IHa-nang-pa gZi-brjidd-pal) would immediately support such an estimate. The icon as a document for consecration and empowerment normally would imply the participation and presence in the ceremony of the main-figure, too. On the other hand, where the caption on the hierarch portrait indeed can be understood as “father,” such a “personal” and filial use in this particular case and milieu would be rather uncommon, and yab far more likely indicates the neutral and respectful “patriarch” of a line(age) or a tradition, an appellation (pha is often also used) quite prevalent in the bKa’-brgyud transmissions. It therefore shall be assumed that the thangka icon was not a “personal” but was treated as a religious icon dedicated to the gNysos paternal ancestry and historically intended to record and commemorate...

\(^{53}\) But e.g. A-khu’s dPe dkon refers to a Guhyasamāja tantra commentary and a bsadus don written by him (non-extant).

\(^{54}\) It is reported that 'Jig-rten mgon-po had a statue of the Guhyasamāja Mañjuvajra erected in commemoration of Phags-mo-gru-pa (i.e. after 1170); cf. IHo rong chos ‘byung 363.

\(^{55}\) mGar Chos-sdings-pa gZhon-nu rdo-rje (~ Sākyapa-dpal). The mGar lugs of Vajrabhairava was based upon the gNysos transmission; cf. Chos sdings pa’i rnam thar 447.3–448.2; gShin rje gshed chos ‘byung 162; ‘Bri gung chos ‘byung 322–25; IHo rong chos ‘byung 428–441. mGar dam-pa had erected a statue of Vajrabhairava and later spread its cycle in particular in mDo-khams. In Reb-gong district, mGar established the mGar-rtses-mthil g Yu-lang-dpal gyi dgon-pa; cf. Reb gong chos ‘byung 150–51. Other sources mention that prior to this he erected the Zu-re Chos-sding dgon-pa in Klung-shod. A large number of statues (sku ‘dra) of 'Jig-rten mgon-po was commissioned by mGar, known as Hor sku, executed by Indian / Chinese artists yet sponsored by Mongol princes, hence its name. Cf. e.g. 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 91.

\(^{56}\) Most gSran yig curricula such as that of the 5th Dalai Lama inform us of a very large number of the lineages through him, both the Guhyasamāja but also the complex Yamāntaka cult in Tibet. Relevant for our purposes here are the transmissions via Rva-lo of the two-faced black Yamāntaka cycle which went through Jñānapāda, Dipamkārabhadra, dPal-bde. Vimālagupta, Karnapa, Samantabhadra, and Śrīdhara, etc. until Rva’s teacher in Nepal Thugs-rje chen-po. Another line is the Zhang lugs lha cu gsum mo of Krsna Yamāri which was also transmitted through Jñānapāda and Dipamkārabhadra. Cf. DL5 gSan yig 1 136a5–b1, 155b2–4.
the common *patrilineal* transmission treasured as the specific gNyos lineage, corroborated by the presence on the icon itself of several generations of gNyos teachers, crowned by Grags-pa-dpal who brought the clan to fame and affluence. Such pious acts of commemoration (*dgongs rdzongs, gshegs rdzongs*) regularly held at specific times in the aftermath of a high-ranking master’s or ruler’s demise was very common. This is also corroborated by the caption on the back which clearly identifies the central figure as gNyos yab, the ”gNyos Patriarch.” To underpin the function of the scroll, this interpretation is also suggested by the reference to the cycles in the gNyos lineage which are designated as adhering to *pha rgyud*, here it may refer to “the father tantra class” (both cycles are classified as father tantra), but also to the *tantra* of the gNyos patriarch or ancestor as indicated above. If the “filial” interpretation of the icon thus is disavowed, it follows that the commissioner of the icon not necessarily is identical with lHa-nang-pa gZi-brjid-dpal (1164–1224). It therefore can be dated to the period around 1220 at the earliest, or slightly later during the last years of lHa-nang-pa or during that of his nephew lHa Rin-chen rgyal-po (1201–70) – himself not depicted on the icon – who is otherwise listed as a direct recipient of the Yamântaka as well as Mahâkâla, etc. transmissions of gNyos, manufactured at a point when the lHa-pa bKa’-brgyud-pa for a short period probably was considered the most powerful order in parts of Central Tibet or sKyid-smad, a position that lasted at least up until ca. 1250.

In conclusion, the gNyos Patriarch scroll remains an intriguing wonder of early Tibetan art. The artist himself – this can only be speculated – most likely was a Tibetan trained in the Newar tradition or a Newar artist himself.

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57 The word *yab* as patriarch is similarly understood in the context of the ’Brug-pa; see Blythe Miller 2006: 22.
3. THE MANY FACES OF BLA-MA ZHANG

True to the nature of his charismatic personality, the overriding number of depictions of Bla-ma Zhang, whether sculptured or painted, usually presents him as a sturdy and stocky man, resolute, dominant, almost invincible in appearance, and occasionally endowed with an irascible and sardonic mien of the self-complacent sort. A saint who thus seems to embody an inborn paradox, epitomizing the coincidentia oppositorum so prevalent in esoteric thought and mystic art: he exudes an air of both benign and terrifying authority and power (potestas and violentia), of enforced compassion, upheld under ambiguity’s playful mask, and thus perfectly encapsulates the eternal conflict of representation: he may cross the boundary between conventional and absolute reality, at the same time by crossing or bridging these seemingly disparate worlds, it helps us revealing the apparent lack of difference between them.

This depiction dovetails perfectly with the portrait and rascal-like profile one gathers of his personality from his own writings. Still, the depictions presented here are all remarkably similar, a common style evidently, that clearly reflects standard iconographic conventions, almost to the point of anonymity, already found in a very large number of similar statue samples prevalent already from the 13th century statues. He is here portrayed in cherished diamond seat attitude (vajraparyarikasana), the left hand resting in the lap, whereas the right hand displays the gesture of earth-witness (bhūmisparśa-mudrā), seated on a double lotus pedestal with an upper and lower beaded border. One exemplar is without such cast pedestal base. The entire iconographic setting is basically Indic and, as said, utmost conventional and stereotype, in fact it is an iconographic convention to be found as the most widely prevalent form for statuary depiction of the historic Buddha: endowed with an authoritative poise and robust physique and with minor Buddha marks such as here the equally cherished elongated or protracted ears (pīṇāyata-karna), etc. In such depictions, the mudrā depicts the hierarch in the capacity of bespeaking Enlightenment. In other words, to the awesome practitioner and the pious audience alike, as apotheosized portraiture it thus intends to depict Zhang – the embodiment of Enlightenment – as a Buddha in person.

In these wholly Tibetan iconic interpretations or adaptations of Zhang in Buddha manifestation, the Tshal master is portrayed clad in the patchwork monastic garment (cīvara), richly decorated with brims and floral patterns. The corpulent physiognomy and the visage with the dominant elongated ears and smile, however, are most conventional, and the same iconic form is therefore witnessed in countless statuary samples of other early bKa’-brgyud-pa ascetics, saints and hierarchs such as icons depicting Phag-mo-gru-pa rDo-rje rgyal-po and 'Bri-gung 'Jig-rten mgon-po, among others. One may even suspect that this cherished form was proto-typical for depicting hierarch representations. In the case of Bla-ma Zhang, however, the blend of conventional portraiture and individual traits with the overly expressive visage of his nevertheless would seem to carry some portrait-like features, traits evocative of his purportedly arrogant, intractable and eccentric personality. We thus encounter the volatile and many-sided faces of Zhang known from the literature – ambiguous, arrogant, benevolent, dignified and so on. More than anything, this observation allows us to argue that the present statues, of which some may be later copies, may represent portraiture closer to the reality than any other idealized depiction of him. We are informed that Mar-pa lHa-dkar, one of Bla-ma Zhang’s foremost disciples and a famed sculpture-maker and architect – who was responsible for the erection of the Grand Jo-bo Mahābodhi Statue in 1189 A.D. at Tshal Gung-thang – manufactured 108 different effigies or images (called 'dra 'bag; i.e. simulacrum, lit. “mask of resemblance”) of Bla-ma Zhang, statues respectively referred to as mdzub gang ma (i.e. ca. 3 inches = ca. 7 cm), khyud re ma (hand-sized, approx. 6 inches = ca. 14 cm) but also samples of the diminutive tshon re ma (thumb-sized, 0.4 inch = 1 cm), etc. These statues were later known as Mar-pa lHa-dkar-ma (one particular icon was designated Mar-pa lHa-skal-ma). The statues thus in fact were statuettes, the measurement of which had been based
upon conventional hand and finger measures. It is quite likely that more but at least one of the sculptures reproduced here must count among one of these late 12th- and early 13th-century mdzub gang ma or khyud re ma-sized Zhang statues executed by this famous artist. The miniature portrait, one of the many frontispiece of him that prevail, depicts him, true to the general depiction of him, as as elderly monk wearing a peculiar sgom zhva or meditation cap (captioned as the sgom zhva of Dvags-po sGom-tshul; see Introduction: fn. 15) and with an unusual, slightly forward-bending and intimidating mien. This too would seem to reflect the aggressive and violent nature of Zhang’s protean personality as contemporary sources vividly have painted him (see Introduction: Chap. 6).
5. Bla-ma Zhang – the Redoubtable One

The Halpert Collection. Courtesy of Carlton Rochell, Ltd.
6. Bla-ma Zhang – the Benevolent One
Courtesy of Oliver Hoare (London)
7. Bla-ma Zhang – the Content One
14th cent. (?) statue of medicinal clay kept in Potala

Miniature drawing from a gSer ’phreng manuscript

9. Zhang Tshal-pa
Miniature painting from a gSer phreng manuscript
Appendix I: Icons of Ha-sa Rulers

10, 11. Bla-ma Zhang –
the Dignified One

Detail from a lineage *thangka*
of the Fifth Dalai Lama

Detail from a lineage *thangka*
of the Ninth Dalai Lama
APPENDIX II
1. Prof. Sørensen photographing Bla-ma Zhang's birthplace at Tshal Gung-thang (2002).
   The place is marked by the white stone
II. CONTROL OVER THE LHA-SA MAḌALA ZONE
Geo-political Schemes, National Monuments, Flood Control Politics
and Ideological Battlefield

Per K. Sørensen

1. THE FOUR RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES (sde bzhi):
Factional Struggle for Supremacy and the Control of a National Sanctuary

The break-down of the Tibetan dynasty in the 9th century and the relatively lengthy interregnum that was to follow – a prolonged epoch overshadowed and haunted by civil anarchy – eventually led to a long-felt power vacuum in Central Tibet, an ensuing deadlock that was to last well into the early 11th century. The turmoil and commotion that reigned in connection with the mainly clan-led warring skirmishes over once-held territories and over access to and the reappropriation of these or of new districts proved to have devastating bearing on numerous temples, sanctuaries and residences, barely sparing any institution on that score. In the throes of incessant warfare, they had fallen victim to bouts of ransacking and looting. With the break-up and redistrubutive organization and the re-emergence of new hegemony, the ensuing conflicts in the first place also meant the gradual migration or the forced resettlement of many clans into neighbouring areas, leading to new conflicts and to the strategic birth of new alliances and confederations. Our knowledge of this migratory [re-]settlement history and the outcome of most of the local, occasionally supralocal conflicts are still superficial, reflecting the paltry data at our disposal for those remote centuries close to a millennium ago. What seems certain is that in an epoch marked by decentralization and chaos at a point when numerous centres and hegemonies vied for supremacy, one site in particular was held in common awe and exuded adequate cultural prestige to become a national center. In the ensuing centuries dogged by countless conflicts, refurbishments and occasional destructions, it not least was the enduring struggle for supremacy over this lHa-sa area as home of Tibet’s true sanctum sanctorum (Ra-sa ’Phrul-snang) that governed and shaped medieval Tibetan politics.

At the very outset, Ra-sa (later renamed lHa-sa; for its symbolic importance see next chapter) barely consisted of more than this sanctuary as well as of Ra-mo-che that had followed the erection of a residential palace of Srong-btsan sgam-po on dMar-po-ri, whereto the royal family and court shifted from the Yar-lung valley, the one-time cradle of the dynasty. For the dynastic period, later sources report the erection in the four directions around lHa-sa (= the two Ra-sa sanctuaries) of four monk congregations or communities (dge ’dun gyi sde) originally erected by Ral-pa-can in the early 9th century and set up as chapels in order to provide religious service to the main sanctuary. These

1 These four (sometimes six are listed) were the rMe-ru (orig. dMar-ru or “Red Horn,” which later developed its own line of abbots), Ke-ru (orig. dKar-ru or “White Horn”) (both located towards the east), then dGa’-ba, dGa’-od (both located to the south) and Brang-khang as well as Brang-khang [m]tha[-]ma (usually towards the north); it appears that one of the southward directed establishments was actually situated towards the west.

One of these institutions turned into the well-known Ra-mo-che bZhi-sde/sDe-bzhi institution. Cf. for details Table
institutions were known as the sDe-bzhi or “four [monk] communities,” and they may well have constituted the forerunners (or have served as models) for what was later known as the lHa-sa sde-bzhi communities, although the latter communities as indicated below may have included or been backed by local lay settlements. Beyond that, our knowledge of the social topography and incipient urban organization as well as our knowledge of the historical development in the lHa-sa area proper and its relative chronology both what concerns the late dynastic period and the initial phyi dar epoch still remains deplorably rudimentary. Only of the historical development in Western Tibet do we possess a rough but fairly reliable chronology for the early post-imperial spell. In Central Tibet and especially around bSam-yas and the lHa-sa heartland, as reported in a host of sources such as dPa’bo’s mKhas pa’i dga’ston, it is detailed that in the wake of the early 10th-century kheng log and its chaotic aftermath, warfare at some point broke out between four religious communities that had taken form following the inceptive return of a number of religious figures from Eastern Tibet. They had arrived in Central Tibet, initially bSam-yas, in order to resuscitate Buddhism there. Lacking an unifying power in Tibet’s old heartland as elsewhere at this juncture, the sources merely speak about the religious movements in this period: the four groups or communities (sde ba, tsho ba bzhi) – sometimes also four groups in or around lHa-sa (lha sa sde bzhi, lha sa tsho [ba] bzhi) are spoken of – represented the sarvāstivādin-propounding communities and their lay supporters that had issued from Klu-mes, rBa, Rag and ‘Bring (occasionally rBa and Rag count as one group (sBa-rag) and sometime a fifth (resp. fourth) rMa tsho group is introduced too) respectively, also known as the monastic institutions of the Lower Vinaya Schools or the smad ‘dul sde or tsho bzhi (see Table 6 infra for the major settlements and their geographical distribution). Behind the names stood in the first place not clans, but merely the ethnonymic clan-name of the founding figure and his stock of successive master and disciple lineages (mkhan bu), the outcome of which was a fast developing network of communities established throughout many areas.

Another kind of information – admittedly scarce too – gleaned from a number of stray sources concerns the distribution of clan and families throughout most of Central and Western Tibet. Their incessant conflicts are reported too, not least among the descendants and scions of the royal lines that had issued from the former Yar-lung dynasty and their supportive aristocratic clans such as the dBa’ and mGar. They recur again in some sources, this time because they were won over to serve as active patrons for these emerging religious communities. It remains one of the most rewarding commitments for future research to sketch out and to determine the clan distribution in the succeeding centuries in the territories in question. We do know that later scions and princes of the former dynasty resorted to their prestigious link to the dynasty of yore, bonds that proved to be their most treasured capital.

In the wake of the ensuing internal fighting among the re-emerging religious factions now backed by a patronizing clan aristocracy, bSam-yas was put to the torch, probably in 1106 A.D., an event that followed a fate similar in Ra-sa, victim of bouts of sacrilegious vandalism during the late imperial period. In the throes of the demolishing and ransacking, Ra-sa ’Phrul-snang viharā literally was reduced to “a beggar’s nest.”* Nested as it was in a rugged Tibetan landscape, it paradoxically...
remained a robust (on that score to this very day arguably being the oldest surviving timber-frame building in the world), yet also a fragile sanctuary throughout all times. In essence, we actually only know that it was a renowned translator, Zangs-dkar lo tsā ba ’Phags-pa Shes-rab along with one [m]Dol-chung skor dpon who carried through the first proper, but extensive post-dynastic repair of the Jo-khang.3 During the same spell, stray information moreover seems to indicate that it was prior to the chos ’khor Council in 1076 A.D. that two true pioneers of the incipient Pramāṇa school in Tibet, Dvags-po dBang-rgyal and Khyung-po Grags-se each set up small competing schools (or seminars; grva) on dMar-po-ri and Po-ta-ri (BA Roerich 71, 93) respectively – which here suggest two sites on one and the same hill.4
A glimpse of the four groups and their manoeuvrings, we gain from the writings related to Atiśa or Dipamkāraśrījñāna (see e.g. H. Eimer 1979: 261f., 298). Behind one of the issues of dispute loomed the question which group were permitted or were in a position – by providing adequate patronage – to invite the Indian master to their settlements, an issue of considerable prestige which apparently triggered occasional feuds. From the exasperatingly brief descriptions, we also gather some insight into their relative strength and their internal hierarchic position, spiritually as much as materially. Of special interest here, the sources list four temples that initially had been erected by four of Atiśa’s principal pupils and that evidently were sustained by the aforementioned four religious groups. The four vihāra seats (gdan sa) erected in token respect and commemoration of their Indian master in Central Tibet wherefrom the bKa’-gdams-pa movement evolved on a firmer footing included:

- sNye-thang ’Or vihāra originally raised by Bang-ston; it was held (i.e. represented) by the sBa-rag group.
- lHa-sdings or Se-rdur vihāra of ’Dren in Yar-klungs built by Khu-ston was held by the Klu-mes group.
- gSang-Phu vihāra incl. the seat of rGya-Phibs was est. by rNgog-ston and hence was held by the ’Bring

The fourth and the largest site was erected as a proper (ecumenical or unifying) convenent seat

- Rva-sgreng and the Khyung-mgo-can or “Garuda-headed” vihāra erected by dge bshes ston-pa (i.e. ’Brom-ston) and rNal’byor-pa Byang-chub rin-chen following the demise of the Indian master.5

It was a period where different masters occupied hermitages elsewhere in the nearest area; so in the hilly areas around lHa-sa (not least in the neighbouring hermitic Yer-pa area, mythically connected to lHa-sa), so e.g. Khyung-po rNal’byor-pa (978/90–1127?) and Pha-dam-pa Sang-rgyas (d. 1117) said to have occupied ’Or ri khrong of ’Phan-yul due north of Ra-sa. Other ascetics associated with dMar-po-ri, e.g. were gter ston Sha-mi rDo-rje rgyal-po.

5 Khyung-mgo-can originally may refer to the ossuary chapel (gdung bzhugs) of Atiśa at Rva-sgreng. The centrality of Rva-sgreng related to Srong-btsan sgam-po – erected as a common seat of Tibet (bod kyi spyi mchod) – is repeatedly addressed in bKa’-gdams-pa sources, foremost in the bKa’ gdams glegs bam associated with the cult of ’Brom-ston.

The quadripartite community distribution reflects the situation as of the mid-11th cent. Entries in the Atiśa biography rNam thar rgyas pa yongs grags 210–221, 442–43 (Eimer 1979: 291–99, 304–06) compared with Grags-pa rgyal-rtsshan’s brief sDe pa’i gyes mdo 297.1.6–298.2.2 convey the impression that formerly – following the demise of the Indian master in 1054 A.D. – the communities of the Lower ’Bring tsho ha originally had been divided between the ’Bring and the communities of sBa-rag (i.e. orig. the distinct sBa and Rag groups). The latter group(-s) in sNye-thang area had been headed by sKa-ba Śākya dbang-phug/byang-chub who took ’Or in possession (once established by Bang-ston of the now fused sBa-rag group), the preferred main seat of Atiśa. Strong bonds were said to have prevailed from the very outset between Rva-sgreng and gSang-phu (which might presuppose ties between the ’Bring and the sBa-rag groups). It clearly not only was the skirmishes following in the wake of the contentious invitation of this master to Central Tibet, but also, in the wake of his successful missionary errand to Central Tibet, the subsequent distribution of the Atiśa relics and associated memorabilia as well as the prestige-laden occupation of the religious seats and the concomitant cultural prestige of representation associated with them that may possibly have triggered the ensuing century-long dispute.

It incidentally was at Bye-ma-lung of gNam district (where ’Brom-ston’s birthplace is located; Part I: lns. 418, 422) that ’Brom-ston initially intended to erect a temple in the summer of 1055 A.D., but a local patron – spurred by the envy nurtured by one otherwise little-known Khyi-ston (= sKyi-ston?) Jo-bo Ye-shes – refused to grant (land and) permission whereupon he erected Rva-sgreng to the north-east. Members of the Ber clan (of Phrang-kha) (a mid-11th-cent. ruler of Phod-mdo area) sponsored its erection there; cf. Rva sgreng dkar chag l 72–76; II 8, 21.
The dispute that was to flare up and that prevailed for so long was less grounded in issues related to the question whether or not the above-mentioned three or four seats associated with the authoritative master turned into common centers or remain allocated to individual groups. Without more detailed knowledge concerning any underlying doctrinal issue or whether the question of the local hegemonic structure and personal ambitions during this period played any role, the true cause for the dispute and the clan affiliations behind the benefactors of this arrangement largely remain unknown. The same Atiša biography nevertheless appears to tell us that the temples initially had been erected to serve the Jo-bo statues in IHa-sa simply suggesting that the four groups and their main seats originally had been set up as institutions in order to uphold the bKa’-gdams-pa teachings and the maintenance of the Jo-bo sanctum in IHa-sa.

Certain is that a number of authoritative sources purport that rNgog Legs-pa’i shes-rab – the prominent and popular figure adhering to the ’Bring tsho group therefore was a representative of the gradually strongest group in the nearest vicinity of IHa-sa. At that point he was in a position to invite Atiša to Ra-sa ’Phrul-snang, clearly to the discomfort or frustration of other factions. In this endeavour, rNgog was assisted by a collateral clan member of his, rNgog Byang-chub ’byung-gnas (of the Klu-mes group) who during the same period succeeded in inviting Atiša to Yer-pa during the latter’s stay in IHa-sa. It clearly indicates that the four factions were present and active in the area. Although the biographical materials related to the Indian master indicate that Atiša certainly was far from welcomed in all corners of Central Tibet (e.g. in the Yar-lung valley, attesting to widespread animosity between the groups; others maintain that his lack of success in Yar-lung was due to Khu-ston’s improper handling of the situation; DL6 342) and resistance to his presence occasionally is recorded, the prestige associated with him must have weighed heavy – guru-prasādāt always implied unequivocal devotion.

rNgog Legs-pa’i shes-rab had been ordained in the presence of ’Bring Ye-shes yon-tan – about whom we still possess deplorably little concrete information – whereas the rNgog master, as a kind of patriarch, ultimately emerged as the fountain-head behind all subsequent ’Bring settlements. Gauging the extent of their subsequent dissemination, from the later dGe-lugs doyen of Vinaya, with an ironic bent of history, it was in the environs of this former site that the 2nd Zhva-dmar mKha’-spyon dbang-po was born and it was here in gNam (= gNam-mtsho?) located in Byang of ’Dam-gzhung district that Yangs-pa-can much later was erected – by the emergent arch-enemy of the dGe-lugs-pa. Currently deplorably unavailable, but informative appears to be a Rva sgren bzhengs pa’i lo rgyus written by one ’Brom Shes-rab me-Ice (Ms 32 fols.); see Drepung Catalogue II: 017285.

Confusingly, Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan further states that nowadays (i.e. at the point of writing sDe pa’i gyes mdo; early 1200’s?) Rva-sgrel was associated with (i.e. supported by) the sBa-rag tsho; ’Or (i.e. sNye-thang) now linked to the rMa tsho group, whereas gSang-phu still remained with the ’Bring tsho. New information may substantiate or alter the picture, but it appears that the erstwhile supporters of ’Or, sBa-rag now served the Rva-sgrel seat, being replaced by the rMa group what concerns the former seat (confirmed Zul phu mkhan rabs 4a2–3). Without being able to assess the true position and influence of rMa in the area, it is the position of the ’Bring communities that had remained stable, and considering their role in the area circumscribing and adjoining the central sNye-thang area, it at least would suggest to us their almost all-dominant position in sKyid-smad and beyond. The actual extent of the ’Bring tsho domain in the late 12th cent. had gradually expanded beyond their original settlement boundaries. The data at our disposal in the following note nevertheless remain inconclusive or questionable. The actual dominance and hegemony of the rNgog-based and later gNyas-based ’Bring communities, as recorded in some sources, must in toto be dealt with cautiously as it merely covers sections of Central Tibet.
'dzin Ye-shes rgyal-rtshan we are informed ("Dul ba'i chos 'byung II 88b4–89a2) that in the wake of the establishment of gSang-phu Ne'u-thog in 1073, the number of Vinaya students and followers of rNgog Legs-pa'i shes-rab (and eventually of his nephew, the equally erudite rNgog Blo-lsdan shes-rab – 1059–1109) in the late 11th century – i.e. both prior to the initial destruction of Ra-sa (possibly in the late 1080's), but evidently also in the wake of its restoration – counted over 17,300 students in lHa-sa (i.e. attached to or under the jurisdiction of Ra-sa 'Phru-l-sngag?) – these figures probably refer to the sum of Vinaya students in the communities within the narrow lHa-sa area including gSang-phu under the 'Bring. The same text claims that a large number (of rNgog students attached to the overall 'Bring [Ye-shes yon-tan] communities) were found in bSam-yas (13,000), rGyang-mkhar (20,000; whereas other sources purport that he had in total 23,000 disciples; cf. dGa' ldan chos 'byung l 47b6) and in Ngan-lam (10,000),6 in the settlement areas of this strong group. As with any sort of statistics, aside from being unable to assess whether these figures (evidently drawing upon data culled from currently non-extant biographies of rNgog Legs-pa'i shes-rab and Blo-lsdan shes-rab or from rare Vinaya histories) refer to different settlements (i.e. including the other religious factions), they altogether seem somewhat exaggerated or scribal errors may have crept into the material. It appears that the initial spread of rNgog’s celebrated translation-based teachings had emanated from the rGyang-mkhar seat in gTsang which here seems to refer to the late dynastic or early phyi dar-epoch and hence extremely old seat – no more extant – of rGyang-mkhar sTag-lung (also called Ba-'ug lha khang), located in rGyang-mkhar lung-pa Valley of Upper 'Dus-byung district in present-day Pa-nam county of gTsang province.7 It thus evidently

6 Ngan-lam of 'Phan-yul, on the other hand, refers to the ancient 'Bring stod settlement and old imperial Ngan-lam clan land where the late 10th-cent. 'Bring establishment Ngan-lam dByi-mo-dgon was erected, also reported to have served as the original point of departure for the subsequent 'Bring ramification (such as the later 'Bring smad communities in sKyid-smad, incl. gSang-phu, etc.). Later, this 'Phan-yul seat turned into the combined Sa-skya and dGe-lugs temple of Ngan-po (var. Len-po; now in ruins; located: 29°58'N 91°08'E in Byang-kha xiang of lHa-sa; cf. App. IV).

7 The old rGyang-mkhar sTag-lung monastery was seized by gZu-ston 'Phan-grags prior to rNgog Blo-lsdan shes-rab's activities there. The seat was consequently taken over by the former's followers, the gZu tsho community throughout most of the 11–12th cent. Cf. MTP Uebach 131; Bu ston chos 'byung (= Szerb 70); rGya bod yig tshang 463.

The 'Dus-byung valley (named after its main settlement, 'Dus-byung) is the valley of the rGyang-mkhar (rGyal-mkhar) gzhung-chu, a large area comprising the adjacent Mag-lung and dKyil-mkhar valley. See Part I: Map 9.

In the 17th cent., most of the area adhered to the later influential 'Brum Pho-lha family (cf. e.g. DLS II 58b4–5). A rGyang-mkhar-la or the Pass of rGyang-mkhar is further registered (at 29°06'N 89°45'E). A rGyang-mkhar Pa-tshab yul is known from the Gri-gum story (mKhas pa'i lDe'u chos 'byung 245.16) which according to context appears to refer to the confluence area of the rGyang-mkhar-chu and gTsang-chu in Pa-tshab close to Pa-nam (Hazod 2007, forthcoming b, Part I: Map 9).* Cf. for details Myang chos 'byung 104–09, where a plethora of old settlements is listed scattered throughout present-day Pa-nam district, not least the central dGa'-ba-gdong seat that entertained close religious bonds to the sKyid-smad settlements and its later namesake there. In fact, rNgog Blo-lsdan shes-rab initiated the spread of his teachings from rGyang-mkhar, and his lore successively disseminated to the Bo-dong area of gTsang and finally into dBu-ru and g.Yo-ru. Cf. also rNgog lo bstan bskyangs 448–49.

The temple (today in ruins) was situated in the upper part of the 'Dus-byung or rGyang-mkhar gzhung-chu valley (geograph. position: 29°45'57.3"N 89°07'44.8"E). In the Myang chos 'byung (105) as well as in the local tradition the Ba-'ug or rGyang-mkhar lha-khang is described as a foundation of the period of Srong-btsan sgam-po. The site is lo-
refers to one of the first 'Bring smad establishments that originated with 'Bring Ye-shes yon-tan initially issuing from bSam-yas (i.e. at Khams-gsum Zangs-khang with 13,000 students) and who subsequently established first a branch seat in Ngan-lam of 'Phan-yul and successively in sKyid-shod (i.e. the sites of sKar-chung and rNam-khang of Zhal in the area south and south-east of lHa-sa) and the rGya-gar seat (= gGyang-mkhar; cf. Table V.6 below). gGyang-mkhar temple would seem to have disappeared mysteriously at some later point, since no trace of it seems to have survived today. It remains beyond doubt that a major force behind the spiritual and scholastic success of the 'Bring rested with the impetus coming not least from rNgog that had initiated in gTsang, because it was the erudite rNgog Legs-pa'i shes-rab and his nephew who established gSang-phu. rNgog’s tangible proselytic success seems corroborated by the information that rGyang-mkhar purportedly (but still doubtful) had been the center of a staggering number of 20,000 followers or students.*

The other rNgog seats with a large number of disciples gradually, it appears, went into oblivion not least after gSang-phu had risen to become the main center of his teachings.

Prior to his visit to the Ra-sa sanctum, Atisa had dwelled for 14 days at the temple of rGya-phibs of Sri (east of later Tshal),9 which was another 'Bring smad settlement and following his visit to Ra-sa, he sojournered at dGa’-ba ’od-’phro,10 a seat that had been (previously) destroyed (at a point when it was appropriated?) by the 'Bring community. In the 12th century, the 'Bring held three major community settlement areas (stod, bar, smad) which respectively inhabited and spread out from lHas of sKyid-stod, from sKar-chung of Grib and sNye-thang of sKyid-smad. Tracing their geographical distribution, it is nevertheless worthwhile to take a look at the clan allegiances behind the communities also, despite our meagre data available. As we shall see the strong rNgog clan along with the sNa-nam (i.e. the Zhang sNa-nam clan of Bla-ma Zhang) and the gNyos, possibly in confederation with the mGar clan (of Grib and sTod-lung), either were the stout supporters of the 'Bring, or they constituted the political-hegemonic backbone behind the 'Bring themselves (cf. also Table V.6). At least, they played in this part of sKyid-smad the leading, indeed the formative, political and religious role during this early spell of bstan pa phyi dar, a position they clearly secured by entering effective alliances of secular and religious leadership, strengthened, as we shall see, on the secular side through a widespread network of marriage alliances. Thus, their relative success not least was hinged upon an ideal combination of ample military and secular power

cally also known as “Ru-lag lha khang,” alluding to its imperial history. It may be noted in this context that the temple is located at the traditional route connecting the areas of Myang and Srad, the latter to be identified as the centre of Ru-lag (see TF Sorensen and Hazod 2005: 44; for the relationship of rGyang-mkhar and Srad, see also BA Roerich 419).

In U rgyan rnam thar l 222, a temple is reported to have been established in upper rGyang-mkhar in the late 1280’s (see also rGyal rtse chos rgyal rnam thar 183), probably referring to a neighbouring temple in upper 'Dus-byung or to a temple in rGyang-mkhar of Rin-spungs.

* The name Pa-snam originally refers to a moiety-structured territorial rule of the two clans of Pa[-tshab] and s[Na]-nam respectively. The precise dating of this toponymic coinage is still unclear.

* Conducive to the success of the 'Bring no doubt was the massive patronage that rNgog received: he e.g. was recipient of wholehearted patronage from the side of dBang-phyug-sde, son of rTse-lde and king of Gu-ge. dBang-phyug-sde e.g. financed the former’s lengthy stint to Kashmir.

9 Cf. App. V: Table 6; App. IV.

10 rNam thar rgyas pa yongs grags 177 purports that it now (i.e. at the time of the text’s composition) is known as slya khang chung chung or “the little lay house” of sKar-chung. The former dGa’-ba ’od-’phro may have been identical with one of the local 8th-cent. lHa-sa sde-bzhi (i.e. custodianship) settlements known as dGa’-od; see Table V.10 below. This settlement initially may have been located in the heart of lHa-sa, whereas from the above reference, it (now?) was located in sKar-chung in Grib, wherefore this inconsistency may in the first place not constitute a contradiction.
combined with appropriate ancestral prestige and background linked up with necessary spiritual and religious repute embodied in a number of prominent hierarch figures and their lineages (often born into the same clan to cement loyalty and commitment or to ensure adequate patronage) who held their position through sheer religious authority, ensured not least by being main propagators and transmitters of both orthodox and esoterically idiosyncratic key cycles. It was this complex network of common interests among different clan members and individuals involved that was emblematic of hegemonic rule in Tibet throughout these centuries and the alliances contributed to their enduring political success in remapping the political landscape in this period.

A formidable group, the 'Bring settlements would grow increasingly dominant in large areas abutting the lHa-sa center in the 12th century, and it was this dominance that may have repeatedly triggered skirmishes with the other groups.

2. rNgog Legs-pa'i shes-rab

2a. The ruins of the rGyang-mkhar alias Ba-'ug lha-khang in Myang of gTsang (2007)
Appendix 11: Control over the IHa-sa Mandala Zone

Map 1. The 11–12th-century 'Bring communities in the nearest environs of IHa-sa. Precursors of the initial hegemony in the IHa-sa area
1.1 Circumscribing the Ra-sa Sanctum: The Four Local lHa-sa Communities as Model of Representation or the Question of Shared Custodianship

Prosecuting the question of the initial custodianship of the Ra-sa sanctum, the sources regularly refer to the sde or tsho ba bzhi, at times to the lha sa sde bzhi, the four communities, settlements or groups of (or around) lHa-sa, commonly identified with the aforementioned religious factions that, as already said, in the wake of their expansive establishments occasionally were at odds with one another: The Klu-mes, rBa, Rag and 'Bring factions had their settlements spread over Central Tibet and certainly not – at least not exclusively – within the nearest environ around the lHa-sa sanctum. We nevertheless have reasons to assume that the shared custodianship of the Ra-sa vihāra resembled a prior arrangement or a distributive system introduced at the prestigious bSam-yas vihāra by the same four groups when they initially arrived in Central Tibet at the end of the 10th century and the beginning of the 11th century. We are informed that the overly pious Klu-mes group appropriated the nearby Kva-chu temple (having initially rejected as prominent seat bSam-yas after having been offered the central dBu-rtses – but rejected this offer tendered them by a local bSam-yas king since they deemed the adjacent treasury kept there unsuitable as religious abode), the 'Bring group initially took over the Khams-gsum Zangs-khang temple in bSam-yas, whereas the groups of rBa and Rag appropriated the chapels of dGe-rgyas and dBu-tshal respectively. Importantly, the central dBu-rtses rigs-gsum temple in the bSam-yas Mandala temple complex was chosen to serve as a site or chapel for “common offering” (spyi mchod du byas) among the groups,11 a sort of ecumenical endeavour set up not least in order to cope with the great and common challenge of restoring the many dilapidated sites and institutions in the old heartland of Tibet. It should be the Rva-sgreng temple that assumed a similar position in northern Central Tibet.

The way paved for the gradual urban development of the lHa-sa site, as already mentioned, was initiated with the establishment of a number of institutions that in the first place had been set up at the end of the dynastic period to cater for the ritual, liturgic and cultic needs of the central sanctum. It is justified to assume that the four groups, after their common efforts in bSam-yas, strove for a joint solution to the common administration to wield their influence in lHa-sa too, but with the decisive difference that it eventually was the 'Bring group and not least the strategy, charisma and prestige of rNgog’s personality and of his lay supporters supported by their successful clan alliances that paved the way for their gradual dominance over the latter groups in sKyi-dshod. Despite our dearth of sufficient informative and comparative sources, it nevertheless must be specified that the “four groups of lHa-sa” (which, incidentally, as fixed term and concept and contrary to the aforementioned four religious factions regularly find mentioning up until at least to the 18th century)12 do not represent the religious factions in toto, but far more constituted four local

11 The hitherto oldest presentation is found in Nel-pa Pandita’s Me tog phreng ba (MTP Uebach 142–43). Rva-sgreng, too, later was conceived of as a temple for “common offering” of Tibet (bod kyi spyi mchod) among the bKa’-gdams-pa seats around lHa-sa, see bKa’-gdams chos byang III 102; Rva sgreng dkar chag l84. See also the discussion in Stoddard 2004: 97–99.

12 We occasionally come across the “four communities or groups of lHa-sa” as social categories. In folk literature, but also in religious literature such as biographies of early masters active in lHa-sa, a popular social group, evidently a communal and over the years – starting from the 12th century – a “municipal” institution or guild in lHa-sa was the so-called age-old lHa-sa sde-bzhi’i chung ma, which appears to indicate female Weinschenker committed to prepare and serve
social (originally family-based?) settlements within the narrowest area of lHa-sa, arguably situated strategically in the four cardinal directions of the lHa-sa Mandala Zone (but not necessarily being geographically identical with these).\footnote{General but stray references in disparate sources such as Red mda’ ba rnam thar 23b3: lha sa sde bzhi i sprang po thams cad and e.g. bKa’ brgyud gdan rabs 288.6 (early 15th cent.): lha sa sde bzhi pha’i sde dgu thams cad, i.e. “all nine [= all] districts / settlements of the lHa-sa sde bzhi,” where the latter sde bzhi maay be identical with ru bzhi and suggest an all-inclusive geographical term that includes all districts or settlements in the narrow lHa-sa area distributed within this basic quadripartite scheme. Other sources – especially in the later medieval phase right up until most recent times – speak of the lHa-sa or lHa-ladan ru-bzhi (in the 17th century also lHa-ladan ru-bzhi spyi-tshogs; the “lHa-sa Four Horn Community,” cf. e.g. Dzam gling rgyan gcig 728; Ga zi gdung rabs 423a5: bKa’ blon rtags brjod 87. etc.; evidently headed by Cho-s’khor lHa-sa’i ru dpod bzhi; cf. DL.lII 261b4) that may represent the same or an expanded form of four original social groups or communities, but at this point no more directly or exclusively committed to the patronizing maintenance of Jo-khang, but to related commitments. It is e.g. repeatedly chronicled that their tasks included the regular annual offerings in connection with rituals of perpetuation and longevity (lo ldar ‘char cun gyi zangs brtan, ring ‘sho rten ‘byang, etc.), or with providing horse cortege and escort (chibs skyel) for arriving or departing hierarchs and guests, or indeed for performing various plays and entertainments during the sMon lam chen mo, etc. During the last centuries, the lHa-sa ru-bzhi nevertheless appear in toto to be tantamount to the entire lHa-sa populace and its institutions, albeit their original function in the social topography still needs to be clarified and their history written in some detail. Our assumption is further corroborated by expressions such as lha sa ru bzhi i skye bo mchod dman mha’ dag, lha sa ru bzhi lha sde mi sde sogs (e.g. DL.lII 44; 723) and lha ldan ru bzhi sogs kyi gtsos grong dang grong khyer dag na gnas pa’i khym po pho mo which commonly stand for lHa-sa and its populace in its entirety. See also the early 14th-cent. bKa’ gdams gleggs bam (Vol. II: Bu chos 585): nga’i rgyal sa lha sa sde bzhi. For a mural illustration of the sde/ru bzhi community, cf. Precious Deposits Vol. 3: 182–83.

Parallel clan- or family-based sde bzhi structures, we encounter in the sde bzhi of Burn-thang (in present-day Bhutan), suggesting a similar proto-archaic clan structure behind the lHa-sa settlement; cf. M. Aris, Sources for the History of Bhutan, 47–55.}

It nevertheless appears that some terminological vacillations or confusion has crept into the sources at an early point. Whereas the four religious factions and their widespread settlements represented units with distinct size and structure, the lHa-sa area settlements appear to have been made up of or conceived to represent a more fixed quadripartite scheme, in its outer form a socio-religious or sociological model, consciously set up in order to concentrically circumscribe the epicentric sanctum of Ra-sa ’Phrul-snang. The deeper relation between the communities and the imperial-time establishment of the sde bzhi congregation chapels set up in order to meet the liturgical needs and seasonal, cultic-ritual commitments of the lHa-sa sanctum remains to be clarified in detail and an answer to this may indeed constitute a key to our understanding of this unique custodianship arrangement. The communities down through time evidently played no small role in the genesis and formation of Ra-sa as a ceremonial center, with the Jo-bo sanctum as eminent shrine and as sacred enclave holding the palladium, the nation’s cult icon par excellance. The origin (or better perhaps early history) of the sde bzhi and lha sa sde bzhi nevertheless appears to have distinct roots and backgrounds. The lHa-sa sde-bzhi scheme (later known as the Four Horns/Banners or the lHa

\footnote{Bla-ma Zhang in the 1150’s both practised asceticism and committed to writing some of his esoteric teachings at Dog-sde sGo-phu of the lHa-sa sde-bzhi (i.e. the Upper Corridor (i.e. Pass) of Dog-sde within the lHa-sa sde-bzhi [area]; also listed as lHa-sa sgo-phu; see bKa’ thang sde inga 195). A yon bdag of his also came from this area; it would on the one side suggest that lHa-sa sde-bzhi = lHa-sa as term and, on the other side, suggest that the northern point in this scheme and the lHa-sa sde-bzhi ditto were identical (cf. App. IV: Graph 1). It thus can be surmised that at least one (but arguably all four) communities dovetailed with the identical points in the zone.}
sa ru bzhi) basically represents a center-periphery model, originally cosmogonic in nature (cf. also Chap. 2 below and TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: App. II). Such quatripartite models proved to be much cherished in the history of lHa-sa too, where they assumed different forms all stemming from or reflecting this basic, possibly mandalic model (cf. further App. IV: fn. 12 below). The social units (tsho ba, sde) – not exclusively religious – entertained relations of some nature to the four contemporary religious groupings (tsho ba) of Klu-mes, sBa, Rag and 'Bring and in this connection the lHa-sa sde-bzhi represented such social groups that individually were attached to, proved loyal to or perhaps even had been called upon to represent the rights and commitments of each of the religious factions locally, in other words functioned as their representatives and custodians in situ. The lHa-sa groups anyhow enjoyed a shared or distributive custodianship of the Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang and it may well be argued that such family-based communities represented a guild of sorts with inherited rights and obligations, at least this may account for the confusion in properly identifying the four tsho ba units.

That this political arrangement did not always work seems corroborated by the circumstance that dissent, followed by warring skirmishes flared up among them, arguably for a number of reasons, but not least because some parties or members may have felt their rights violated or position misrepresented. It certainly also can be speculated that actual fighting did not emanate from the local lHa-sa settlements themselves, and that it indeed was lHa-sa and hence the four local communities that were the hapless victims of warfare triggered by disagreement that had prevailed among or sprung from the religious factions supported by their ambitious and armed lay patrons. This may in fact come closer to the truth. Aside from the assumption whether misrepresentation of rights held by the individual groups being neglected or whether deeper doctrinal and spiritual conflicts played a prominent role as casus belli, we can only speculate. But a major reason for conflict clearly rested with the crucial issues of access to, maintenance or supervision of the lHa-sa sanctum.

Another clue to the ancient quadrupartite model of representation in lHa-sa in organizing and upholding shared patronage – consisting in administering and implementing a distributive form of custodianship – established to cater for the liturgical, ritual and ceremonial (and finally financial) needs of the center, we may gather, aside from bSam-yas, from other monastic or religious seats of yore in Tibet where regular maintenance and supervision often was deputed to different groups distributed into smaller units or even families of four: We may take the example of the establishment and custody of the bTsan-thang g.Yuli lha-khang, an ancient branch temple of Khra-'brug in the Yar-lung Valley probably erected in the 8th century. This site had been pre-dated by another temple, the sGo-bzhi lha-khang, which was in the custody of the four original families (lit. “doors”) of bTsan-thang, for which reason it also was known as bTsan-thang sgo bzhi. A similar quadrupartite institution was the Khra-'brug sgo-bzhi, allegedly representing the four original families of the temple, who – this is only known or documented from oral tradition – allegedly had lived there even before the arrival of Srong-btsan sgam-po and his subsequent erection of the temple. The four families or settlements originally reflected a territorial division or classification, and their prime function down through history similarly was as keepers in order to ensure, on a rotational principle, the maintenance of the temple (cf. G. Hazod in App. II in TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005). Like in the case of lHa-sa, we here see the contours of an underlying structure executed along the criteria of an original geomantic terrestrial sa dpyad classification. Doubtless such sociological models reflected an early social stratum or structure in the formative history of Tibetan civilization (cf. e.g. Allen 1978). Whatever the ultimate identity and function of
the four local IHa-sa communities, it cannot be excluded that when therefore in the earlier sources the fighting among the four phyi dar communities in and around IHa-sa is briefly reported, in most cases it simply was a question of confounding the two distinct groups with one another. In the early 13th century, when Sangs-rgyas-'bum, the Yang-dgon throne-holder of Tshal, was designated the "Lord of the Four IHa-sa sde-bzhi," it evidently never was intended to refer to the religious factions per se (they had largely vanished or otherwise absorbed had been by this junction), but precisely to the now well-established lay communities in IHa-sa itself (inhabiting different quarters of the town) which as communities were responsible for the material maintenance of Jo-khang, in fact such communities stand as an overall synonym for the IHa-sa Jo-khang itself. On the other hand, when a source like the gNyos rabs refers to the IHa-sa sde-bzhi, it means the four religious communities. The same text also allows us a glimpse into the background as to which person – at least according to this rather apologetic source – finally broke the warring deadlock among the religious factions and bring peace and order to the site.

1.2 The gNyos Clan:
Old Rulers of IHa-sa District and
Predecessors of Bla-ma Zhang’s Tshal Hegemony

In the mid-12th century, a crucial phase of the so-called Renaissance Period (phyi dar) as we have seen, witnessing the expansive establishment of numerous religious communities – and coinciding with the explosive dissemination of both lay and religious movements and of lineages transmitting esoteric cycles or corpora not infrequently upheld by leading clan members and their relentless struggle to ensure adequate local patronage – one clan rose to extraordinary prominence and thus be destined to play no insignificant role behind the site’s development, even to the point of emerging as temporary masters of IHa-sa, or at least wielding a pronounced political influence in the area. Whereas the gNyos may not be regarded as the first true polity that combined chos srid, clerical and secular rule on a systematic scale in Tibet (usually this honour is ascribed to the Tshal polity est. by Bla-ma Zhang), at least they could be seen as precursor to the latter polity. The first proper royal polity-based chos srid arrangement seems to have originated in Western Tibet – in and beyond mNga’-ris sTod (i.e. “Upper = Western Dominion”), where monarchies such as the confederative kingdom of Gu-ge was to pave the way for a dual secular-religious rule embodied or invested in a number of quite autocratic monk-rulers, a political system that set the standard of securing rule and hegemony in the coming centuries throughout Tibet.

The clan or people in question was the widely ramified gNyos clan, an ancient gentry stock, and originally a IHa-sa-based lineage, known later from Tibet’s history not least from the main seat and ruling house of the IHa-pa, or from its religious school, the so-called IHa-pa bka’-brgyud-pa – commonly regarded as a clan-based offshoot or sub-school of the ’Bri-gung-pa, due to their close spiritual bonds to this denomination. From a number of important sources, we shall be in

14 The early history of the clan and the later aristocratic house is mainly based upon two primary sources, viz. the Kha rag gnyos g dang rabs (of 1431 A.D.; abbr. gNyos rabs; here using version B) and the rare and recently surfaced biography IHa nang pa’i rnam thar I (adding hereto the bio. written by Jo-nang Kun-dga’ grol-mchog. i.e. IHa nang pa’i rnam thar II and the recently surfaced and hugely important IHa nang pa’i rnam thar III, in the sequel, resp. abbr. IHa rnam I, II, III) passim; also consulted were informative sources such as DL6 67, 104ff. (the 6th Dalai Lama Tshangs-
a position to recount the main lines of this ruling lineage in the area in question. It is worthwhile to make a brief detour into their exciting history, as well as to introduce the clan’s most illustrious actors, not only because of their formative role in shaping the history of IHa-sa at that very point, but also because our sources for this crucial period are otherwise scarce or disfigured by too many gaps. A more detailed treatment here of the clan and their main actors are warranted because of their role in paving the way for the ensuing Tshal hegemony under Bla-ma Zhang.

Like a number of celebrated clans in Tibet, the gNyos boasted mythic or theogonic origins too, stating that it be included among or rather was destined to become one of the four great clans or people of Central Tibet (dBu-gTsang). Attempts to provide legitimizing interlinkages to noble proto-clans of yore in Tibet’s remotest past, in particular to claim divine = royal descent (lha, i.e. regia stirpe) of erstwhile ruling houses or – only less pronounced in this very case – to seek divine origins and roots remained emblematic of many noble clans as can be witnessed in most ethnogenetic sources. No doubt, such steps were deemed indispensable in bolstering ancestral and historical credentials, in other words the bare necessity or priorities of ensuring hegemonic legitimacy and the continuous quest for asserting political (later spiritual) authority prompted the durable fabrication of much genealogical and ancestral fiction, the core of which, however, may have contained some modicum of historical truth.15 As it seems, in this lineage reinvention and

14 Such genealogical arrangements are commonplace and well documented in European medieval historiography too, where scribes or historians attempted to reconstruct family histories behind narratives of ruling families, noble houses or entire clans – concerned as they were with what amounts to gloria et nomen perpetuum. Spurred and motivated therefore by concepts similar to nobilitas carnis and by the credenda and miranda of power, they attempted to invent or reconstruct often fictitious genealogical “ancestral linkages” (stirps, i.e. “Anissungen” always in retrospect and invariably to noble, divine or royal origins) consciously forged or contrived in order to underpin or reinvent contemporary hegemonic claims, in order to generate a sense of identity and common origin and course, to glorify ancestral or social prestige, or in order to surmount and counterbalance former ancestral and genealogical deficiencies and gaps; cf. the telling samples provided by Gerd Althoff, Inzensierte Herrschaft (Darmstadt 2003) 2f., 25f. K. Bosl, Leibbilder und Wertzvorstellungen des Adels (München 1974: 22-23). The urge of prominent or noble clans (esp. the many local jo bo or btsan po claiming imperial legacies), often as causa scribendi prompted Tibetan authors of ethnogenetic tracts such as of the gNyos genealogy, but certainly also in extant writings related to other major clans in Tibet (e.g. to ‘Khon, [IHa-gZigs] Rlang, mGar, gNyags. Khyung, [s]Kyu-ra, Ie, Thon[-mi], Myang, sPyil, Khu, Shud-phu, rNyi-ba, rNgog, rDong, dGi[yer] (= sGer) etc.) to take recourse to similar narrative strategies and rhetorical means as a tool of legitimation and identity.

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deb dmar 124–26 (ed. Dung-dkar); rGya bod yig tshang (abbr. GY): IHa sa i [= pa i]* chos brgyud byung tshul 553–555; lHo rong chos 'byung 425–426; bKa’ brgyud chos 'byung I 57b4f.; Nyang ral chos 'byung 476–77; mKhyen brtse’i abang po’i rnam thar 12b2f.; further, some standard ‘Bri-gung histories; DL5 passim as well as the richly informative sMyos rabs 56ff. (sNyos is the often preferred ethnonymic variant when offshoots of one of the major lines of the gNyos clan later rose to pre-eminence in Southern Tibet and Bhutan – so e.g. Padma gling-pa was a gNyos – as well as the ruling hierarchies of the sMin-grol-gling seat that emerged from a southern Central Tibetan patriline).** For a more detailed synoptic survey of the lineage or genealogy of the gNyos; cf. Table 7 below.

* Most texts vacillate between IHa- pa and IHa-sa in referring to them, and aside from the graphic proximity of pa and sa in dhu med Mss accounting for this confusion, it is quite feasible that the original form IHa- pa was (or had been abbreviated from) IHa-[sa]-pa, rather than the cherished and equally feasible abbreviation, viz. from IHa-nang-pa.

** Bla-ma gSangs-snga gs, the compiler of sMyos rabs further refers to a number of currently non-extant, but significant biographic and ethnogenetic sources pertinent to the history of the IHa-pa gNyos such as IHa gZi brjod rgyal po’i gdung gi phreng rgyun Dri med ral gsal; IHa rabs kyi riogs brjod sGer gyi phreng ba by IHa Rin-chens gyal-po; further, one dGe legs kun 'byung, another biography of IHa-nang-pa as well as a number of invaluable local sources on the Bhutanese gNyos line. Their existence needs to be otherwise corroborated, and if extant, it is hoped that these additional sources one day shall surface.

15 Such genealogical arrangements are commonplace and well documented in European medieval historiography too, where scribes or historians attempted to reconstruct family histories behind narratives of ruling families, noble houses or entire clans – concerned as they were with what amounts to gloria et nomen perpetuum. Spurred and motivated therefore by concepts similar to nobilitas carnis and by the credenda and miranda of power, they attempted to invent or reconstruct often fictitious genealogical “ancestral linkages” (stirps, i.e. “Anissungen” always in retrospect and invariably to noble, divine or royal origins) consciously forged or contrived in order to underpin or reinvent contemporary hegemonic claims, in order to generate a sense of identity and common origin and course, to glorify ancestral or social prestige, or in order to surmount and counterbalance former ancestral and genealogical deficiencies and gaps; cf. the telling samples provided by Gerd Althoff, Inzensierte Herrschaft (Darmstadt 2003) 2f., 25f. K. Bosl, Leibbilder und Wertzvorstellungen des Adels (München 1974: 22-23). The urge of prominent or noble clans (esp. the many local jo bo or btsan po claiming imperial legacies), often as causa scribendi prompted Tibetan authors of ethnogenetic tracts such as of the gNyos genealogy, but certainly also in extant writings related to other major clans in Tibet (e.g. to ‘Khon, [IHa-gZigs] Rlang, mGar, gNyags. Khyung, [s]Kyu-ra, Ie, Thon[-mi], Myang, sPyil, Khu, Shud-phu, rNyi-ba, rNgog, rDong, dGi[yer] (= sGer) etc.) to take recourse to similar narrative strategies and rhetorical means as a tool of legitimation and identity.

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reconstruction – replete with antiquarian lore – the more distant the imperial pedigree, the more intense the claim to the selfsame ancestry.

In the case of gNyos, with its ramifications and its numerous offshoots, the clan like other lines dispersed throughout Tibet from Skyid-shod – its place of origin. Its ethnogenesis was said to initiate with one Bya-thul or Bya-khyung dkar-po. This mythical figure, a white Garuda or a “Bird-Cloaked” primogenitor, made his celestial descent – similar to (and evidently adapted from) the overall pan-Tibetan mythical advent of gNyay-khi btsan-po – onto the summit of a mountain, here Mt. Brag-rtse of Shun, a summit that towers in the western outskirts of lHa-sa, its distinct

16 DL6 106–07 vividly recounts how the first gNyos arrived from the supernatural realm of the Ābhāsvara to descent upon Mt. Shun, in the realm of humans. Initially the mythic progenitor was a White Garuda endowed with a diamond (or vajra) beak, a winged creature occasionally wreaking havoc on man and cattle in the neighbourhood of Shun – surely this totem Gestalt indicates the strategic means of the gNyos in defending and conquering new land. The name of the celebrated hermitage Khysung-thang Brag-khung at Shun or the “Garuda-nest Cave” allegedly alludes to the mythic gNyos progenitor bird. Later, having gradually transformed itself into a manifestation garbed in a cloak that consisted of white bya rgo or “vulture” feathers, the progenitor was also known as Bya-thul dkar-po. (The white female vulture robe is a common apparel of the Bon-po recounted in Bon sources). Soon after it divested itself of its bird-like manners and fowl identity and manifested itself into a 16-year old fair-bodied human with all limbs fully developed, a high bridged nose, large forehead, long brows, ended with clear senses and white skin. Arriving at the foot of Mt. Shun, the people inquired whence he came and he responded that he was [originally] non-human having descended from the gods of the Ābhāsvara. Awestruck, they made him an object of worship. Due to the pollution or contamination (grīh) – accruing from partaking of human food and cloth (again borrowing a motif from the canonical Buddhist theo- or anthropogenesis) – he became delirious or went “insane” (sMyos), hence the clan’s construed ethnonym. sMyos rabs however delivers other popular ethnonomic etymologies. The story clearly carries reminiscence not only of the celebrated anthropomorphic origin of man found within Buddhist canon-based cosmogonic paradigmata, but also reminiscences of indigenous (in part pre-historic) Tibetan progenitor origin myths, a clan’s totemistic origo gentis (here from a carnivorous Garuda-like mythic super-eagle) intertwined with an aetiological popular ethnological narrative; cf. similarly TBH Sorensen 48f.; Haahr 1969 168ff. The gNyos ethnogenesis clearly appears to be an elaborative adaption of such prototypical origin myths.

17 Different names for the summit of Brag-rtse are transmitted: Shun gyi Brag-rtse and Shun gyi Brag-dmar gTe’u-gdong (= rTe’u-gdong, “Cult’s Countenance of Red Cliff of Shun”). They are evidently two names deriving from different sources but referring to the same mountain(-summit or limestone top) in the Shun district in the western outskirts of the lHa-sa district, albeit often listed as distinct mountains; “both summits” count as vital points in the topomantic lHa-sa Mandala layout. The origin myth clearly not only served to underpin the clan’s non-human origin, but also served as a local story of legitimation that provided proof of the homestead (with its underlying claims and prerogatives) of the clan within the nearest lHa-sa area. For this key mount in the sacred lHa-sa landscape: cf. TBH Sorensen: 256, 260; see also App. IV: Graph 1 and Map 1 below. For the site’s role as a gter ma site associated with Guru Rinpoche, see Akester 2000. In the biography of gTer-bdag gling-pa, himself a gNyos, the mountain of Kha-rag gi ri-rtse is listed as the mountain of the clan’s descent in lieu of Shun; cf. gTer bdag rnam thar II 15b2–3. Arguably adding to the confusion (or even mistaken identity), the mountain chain situated between the gTsang-po river and Yar-brog lake is often denoted Kha-rag Khysung-thang-ri. Anyway, it may suggest two different versions of the myth, where the latter option may represent a slight adaptation of the former. As part of the lHa-sa Zone and hence as strategic site, Shun gyi Brag-rtse was also furnished with an image and statue of Buddha Śākyamuni, obviously in form of stone carving, which more than once was erected or renewed at the site according to the sa gnad gso thabs scheme (see below Map 4), evidently executed for the first time in 1659, repeated in 1677 and again 1697 A.D.; cf. TF Sorensen and Hazod 2005: 90–92. Also a yellow Mahendra bDud-’dul mchod-rtsen was erected there in the late 17th cent., set up to counterweight and eventually pacify the local “spying Demon” as reported by Sargs-rgyas rgya-mtsho in his ’Dzam gling rgyan gcig and in DL5 III.

Shun area also counted as one of the thirteen bon po ’du gnas or assemblage places, a holy site, identified by the name Shel gyi Brag-dkar rTse-rdzong (= Shun kyi brag). The Bon link may also have had some bearings on the gNyos
silhouette being visible from afar. It is situated in the very heartland of sKyid-shod (Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho denotes Shun, the “center,” i.e. thig le of sKyid-shod to indicate its centrality). With this descent the clan’s point of origin thus can be identified with lHa-sa – or its westernmost outskirts towards the stTod-lung-phu estuary, where the forefather of gNyos made his arrival from the realm of the gods upon one of the cardinal points (West) in the lHa-sa Mandala Zone (see App. IV: Graph 1 below). Similar to a host of other noble or royal clans in Tibet, gNyos further boasted descent from the Ābhāṣvara or “Gods of Clear Light.”

The clan’s place of origin was the heartland of sKyid-shod, yet it was in particular during the fourth generation counting from the common ancestor that the different lines ramified by gradually crossing gTsang-po to spread out into g.Yor-po, into western lHo-kha and into the gTsong province itself (cf. Table V.7 below): The different scions chose to settle in different districts – one bKra/ rTa-mkhar-rje settled in g.Yor-po – and it was from his well-recorded line that later scions spread to Kha-rag and to 'Brang-sil as well as to gZhung district in lHo-kha. Another brother settled in presence. The clan was considered a sub-clan of the primeval r/dMu clan-people and we do find a number of gNyos clan members listed in Bon sources; so e.g. gNyos A-rin (i.e. Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan) and his son gNyos sTag-rtse alias Kun-dga’ tshul-khrims (allegedly contemporaries of lHa-lung dPal gyi rdo-rje; ca. late 9th-early 10th cent.), who acted as propounders of the Vinaya teachings as transmitted within Bon, apparently in mimicry of the Buddhist transmission during the same epoch. Cf. e.g. Dar rgyas gsal sgron 698; see also Karmay 1972: 107-09; Martin 2001: 100-01.

" Cf. CFS Gyalho et al. 2000: 25. The divine descent from the Ābhāṣvara gods was another cherished mythic-narrative strategy in linking a clan with royal or divine cosmogony.
La-stod of gTsang, and still another brother sought his fortunes in Khams of eastern Tibet. Finally, the last brother line settled in sKyid-smad, and it was this highly respected patriline that became increasingly dominant in Gye-re Valley of Chu-shur district, and in fact remained in the area until the 20th century (see below).

Among these family lines, the initially most celebrated patriline which decisively contributed to the initial spread and fame of the gNyos clan was the one that had spread out into Khra-rag (var. mKha’-reg) in present-day sNa-dkar-rtses rdzong of old g.Yo-ru/g.Yor-ru, an area that constituted the ancient border between dBus and gTsang. From here they successfully spread to other districts of neighbouring gTsang. It is for this reason that the dominant gNyos lineage is commonly addressed Kha-rag gNyos.

Significantly, a major or dominant component in the clan’s initial ascent to ancestral prominence and later to considerable spiritual prestige rested with their claim or affirmation of being the exclusive lineage-holders of specific or idiosyncratic Indian esoteric tantric teachings in an unbroken line. Unlike a number of other prominent clans which history had assigned a prominent role in dynastic Tibet thereby acquiring considerable terrestrial appendage and landed estates, gNyos could not claim a similar position during the rule of the kings, and they resorted to other means of constructing hegemony and lineage prestige. The privileged and exclusive transmission of esoteric or tantric corpora in this period proved a viable strategy to achieve the goal of enhancing and consolidating political power and spiritual prestige. This exactly was what happened with the gNyos clan. In this case, it was the most prominent figure gNyos lo tsā ba who almost singlehandedly contributed to perpetuate the name and repute of the clan in Tibet. In the 13th generation from the mythic forefather (whose descent thus may tentatively be dated to the 6th century) – so according to the gNyos rabs – the erudite gNyos lo tsā ba Yon-tan-grags (b. ca. 973 A.D.) emerged. He was commonly known in Tibetan history as an elder contemporary of and rival to Mar-pa lo tsā ba; both went to India in search for teachers and religious instructions and it is recorded that they developed a strained relationship. Some notes about his life and in particular his impressive religious legacy have been detailed in the previous Appendix (Chap. 2). We know that three celebrated cycles gained some popularity in Tibet, transmitted through gNyos lo tsā ba, namely the cycle of Guhyasamāja tantra according to the system of Jñānāpāda, the Kṛṣṇa Yamārī / Vajrabhairava cycle commonly known as gNyos lugs lha dgu ma as well as the cycle of the Protector Trakṣad Mahākāla known as the Trakṣad gNyos lugs. They constituted what later became known as the Tantra Trilogy of the gNyos [Lo tsā ba] Tradition (gNyos kyi rgyud gsum), also called Pha rgyud skor gsum corpora.19

Upon his return to Tibet with texts, consisting of a backlog of esoteric cycles, he became, just as spectacular as in case of Mar-pa, a famous teacher and an affluent landlord. The gNyos transmission is a perfect example of the dissemination of an esoteric Buddhist lineage in which the attempt was made through the affirmation of an unbroken lineage from a living Indian pandita master to a Tibetan translator and master to ensure himself and his family ample esoteric authenticity as well as social and cultural prestige. Countless cases could be listed and examples cited of Tibetan masters (mostly from prominent clans, like the Shud-phu, Rva, rGya, Chag, etc. – all either holding vast estate land already in Tibet or following their successful missions) in the 11th and 12th century.

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19 See also Sangs rgyas tshig mdzod 498 where the three cycles are identified with the Guhyasamāja tantra, Kṛṣṇa Yamārī and the Vajrabhairava. Reading brgyud, it may indicate the Transmission Trilogy of gNyos or the Three Lineage Cycles of the Father.
affluent enough to set out on their mission to Nepal and India with gold in their baggage, which either ensured ancestral or spiritual-esoteric prestige through this tantric lineage and legacy.

His two gNyos family lines, spreading out from Kha-rag district, ruled over considerable stretches in the central and eastern part of the gTsang-province, an expansion ensured through his matrimonial alliances: firstly with a consort from La-stod Cung-pa – at that point already a well-known hub of religious activities in the gTsang province – as well as with one consort from Gro-mo (i.e. Chumbi) with whom he also settled down and established a family-branch line in rGyang-ro district (M/ Nyang-stod; present-day rGyal-rtse district). Numerous clan heads in this period ensured great prestige by constructing (real or fictional) lineages not least by incorporating in their lineages representatives of Indic Buddhist tantric systems.

His younger brother gNyos 'Byung-gras shes-rab on the other hand had been ordained in the presence of dBya'-btson dKon-mchog rgyal-ba. He clearly sought his fortune by contacting his gNyos kin in the Gye-re Valley of sKyi-dam-smad. In the mid- or late 11th century, it was he who became mkhan po or headmaster of Brang Ra-mo-che in Lower sTod-lung (cf. Table V.8), one of the 'Bring smad establishments in the sKyi-dam-smad district (cf. gNyos rabs 16.5–17.1); he was regarded as the founding figure behind the establishment of up to thirteen further monastic 'Bring settlements, among them Khi-lidar of sKul and Nya-mo-skyur (~'gyur) of gZhung south of gTsang-po, Sog-pa-ri (= Sog-po-ri = Srin-po-ri?), gSang-khang and Thang-skya all of bZad district, and so on. He eventually became ruler over all 'Bring communities (see for details Table V.6 [B IIIb]). Worth adding is that in the second generation after bKra-mkhar-rje of gNyos who had initially settled in g.Yor-po, a 'Bring-sde and 'Bring-chung occurred (see Table V.7), which may have some bearings on or connection to 'Bring.

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20 It was in fact in the neighbouring old imperial-time rTsis gNas-gsar temple of M/Nyang-ro or -stod that gNyos and Mar-pa met before they set out for Nepal in the 1040’s.

21 b/gZad district is an old imperial yul dpon tshan (together with Chu-shul; cf. lDe’u 2 257) later in the early phyi dar period a site of signal importance, partly identical with partly comprising present-day Sras-phu and Sras-mdar (= Srad, ~gZad). gZad (also occasionally (mis?)spelled Zangs or bZang-mo) area as said included not only present-day Sras Valley, a side-valley west, north-west of Chu-shur rdzong, on the northern side of gTsang-po, but eastwards also including the oft-frequented Icags-zam area at the confluence of gTsang-po with sKyi-chu. Usually we encounter [g]Zad Chu-shur mentioned together, thereby occasionally blurring the actual border lines between these age-old district, cf. e.g. Ga zi gdung rabs 426b1; bKa’ blon rtogs brjod 96. Yet only after a thorough mapping of all registrable sites related to gZad shall we be able to distinguish this area from the larger Chu-shur area. However, in the 1830 Tax Survey, Zad is registered as part of Gong-dkar khul: cf. lCags stag zhib chung 55–6. bZad – b/gZad khul, according to official documents, evidently covered areas both located in Chu-shur and in Gong-dkar rdzong; cf. Rang ‘byung gsud ‘tshe ser skyon skor 136.

Namesake temples included the Thang-skya temple located in dMar xiang of sTod-lung bDe-chen district (at 29°52’N 90°49’E) and more importantly, the 10th-cent. Thang-skya monastery (29°53’N 91°54’E) near Mal-gto rdzong.

Eastwards, yet still within gZad and close to the confluence of the two rivers, the clearly visible Mt. Drang-srong Srin-po-ri temple (a site where later the Kashmiri Sākyasirihadra sojourned, in the famous bDe-mchog lha khang or gtsug lag khang chen mo). The site treasured a celebrated image of Cakrasamvara Ekavira allegedly manufactured and raised by Vibhūtisundara in order to atone the sin allegedly accumulated by accusing 'Bri-gung 'Jig-rten mgon-po of teaching fake Mahāmudrā lore; e.g. e.g. mGon po rnam thar 58b1–4. For this event, see also Jackson 1990: 20–21. This site and the numerous religious figures that sojourned there down through time deserve a fuller study. Other sites of some note in the surrounding area included, as said, gSang-khang or Thang-skya also located in gZad, its connection to gNyos lHa-nang-pa is attested in 'Bras spungs dgon bca’ yig 291–92; cf. also App. V: Table 6 III-B below.
Among the three (or four) sons of gNyos Yon-tan-grags, most prominent was gTsang-tsha rdDo-rje bla-ma (1008–1086 A.D.),22 born in La-stod Cung-pa (for this place in gTsang, cf. Table V.5 fn. 4 below). Being well versed in the cycles and teachings transmitted through his father, such as the above gNyos Tantra Trilogy, including the Saṃvara and Hevajra tantra (a now-lost commentary on the cycles is said to have been composed by him and possibly was known up to most recent time), he made great progress in ascetic exercises, a hallmark of the gNyos practice at that point and his fame as a siddha disseminated far and wide. He became pupil of one of Mar-pa’s favourite students, mTshur-ston dBang gi rdDo-rje. Initially he settled in sPang-po of bZangs = bZad,23 where he perfected his ascetic practices and became a great master of the Guhyasamājā tantra. It is reported that he was eventually requested to consecrate most of the temples of dBus-gTsang as well as the temple’s receptacles. The prestige associated with this expanded further, to such an extent, according to the overly apologetic gNyos rabs, that the importance ascribed to a temple often was linked with the question whether or not it had been consecrated by him or not and it is also maintained that blessings from him would ensure that the progeny of a family would multiply. It was he who, following in the trail of both his father and uncle, received or rather inherited the ‘Bring community areas both within their Kha-rag homeland but also further ‘Bring settlement areas in sKyi-d-shod, possibly donated as large monastic estate grants by his most devout lay patrons and gNyos clan relatives. It is stipulated that it actually was through his flourishing activities that the gNyos clan rose to become one of the four great clans of dBus-gTsang or Central Tibet. During the 10th and the 11th century, the clan now held strongholds and major land holdings in the La-stod area of gTsang, in rGyang-ro of Nyang-stod as well as in the adjacent border area of Kha-rag towards Yar-brog up until the Gye-re Valley of sKyi-d-smad.

The latter had three sons. The intermediate one was dPal gyi seng-ge (1054–1120 A.D.), who like his brothers was well versed not least in the specific cycles transmitted through their famous grandfather gNyos lo tsā ba which he studied under his father and uncle. The oldest son of dPal gyi seng-ge is recorded to be Grags-pa-dpal (1106–1165/1182),24 considered – due evidently to his monarch-like and “pious” rule – an incarnation of Dharmarāja Asoka in order to tinge him with a prestigious Cakravartin-like status – and occasionally addressed gNyos-nag (> gNyos kyi Nag-po spyod-pa or a gNyos-born Kṛṣṇācārya – an epithet also applied to his son – often merely Bur-sgom nag-po) Grags-pa-dpal. It was he who brought not only great political but also renewed spiritual fame to the family.

22 Also called gNyos rdDo-rje. gNyos rabs briefly informs us that he reached the age of 78. The precise dates of some of the earlier gNyos masters are here based upon the sMvos rabs. But since its compiler Bla-ma gSang-sngags neither in his book nor during an interview with him in Thimphu (2000) could provide further documentation for these dates (e.g. precise source reference, etc.), these tentative dates are not conclusive and must ultimately await additional corroboration.

23 It may refer to sPang-gshong of present-day mNyos-thang xiang of Chu-shur rdZong.

24 He is registered as either having reached 61 or 78 years of age; hence either 1106–1182/3 (obviously to be preferred) or, less likely 1106–1165/66 A.D. He is registered as teacher to Phag-gru (1110–70). The biography of another pupil of his, rMog-lcog (also 1110–1170) mentions that Bur-sgom nag-po – alias Grags-pa-dpal – passed away in a “bird” year – which in this case would correspond to 1165 A.D. (i.e. evidently prior to rMog-lcog’s own passing). An important information, which would dovetail with the contention that he merely reached the age of 61, yet it contradicts most other sources. Grags-pa-dpal seems to have been involved in the subsequent take-over of lHa-sa and the renovation of its sanctum in 1169 (the mentioning of his passing in the biography therefore to be tentatively situated to another “bird” year, say 1177 or even 1189 – so e.g. lHa rnam III 1985 suggests that he was still alive 1188 A.D.; cf. rMog lcog rnam thar 104). Vitali 2004b: 137 argues that Grags-pa-dpal reached the age of 61 years, and dates him 1126–1186 or 1138–1198 A.D.; the latter dates seem untenable. Cf. also App. V: Table 7 below.
His broad religious apprenticeship was impressive: Age 11, his itinerary brought him into the presence of a truly major authority in this early epoch, namely rGya-dmar-pa of sTod-lung district, to whose feet he sojourned for a number of years being groomed in the basic treatises of Buddhist scholasticism. He further deepened his knowledge of Guhyasamāja tantra by studying with rNgog Mu-ne for six

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25 It refers to the late 11th and early 12th-cent. (fl. ca. 1095–1135) dge bshes rGya-dmar-pa Byang-chub-grags of sTod-lungs ([Gad] Se/Sa-thang; where he set up a grva gsar, probably located ca. 29°39′N 90°54′E in sByar-rags xiang of sTod-lung?), pupil of Khyung-po Rin-chen-grags (of Dar-yul in 'Phan-yul; himself pupil of rNgog Blo-Idan shes-rab) and of Gangs-pa She-'u Blo-gros byang-chub (=? dge bshes Gangs-pa alias Lum-pa-ba Ye-shes byang-chub; fl. late 11th and early 12th-cent.).

The highly influential rGya-dmar-pa was a true pioneer of early scholasticism in Tibet and a teacher to a host of pupils such as another recorded pioneer or father of Tibetan epistemology, Phya-pa Cho Kyi seng-ge (who at the former’s feet received teachings related to Madhyamaka and Pramāṇa) as well as being teacher to a host of other pupils including Kha-mo Ze'u-ston (of Khu-le dist.). It cannot surprise that Grags-pa-dpal developed a link with rGya-dmar-pa, since it was in the old (in part gNyos controlled) nomadic rGyantso district (of Myang-ro or Myang-stod where the latter practised) that Gangs-pa She-'u – himself pupil of the learned Madhyamaka pioneer Pa-tshab Byang-chub-grags (b. 1055) of rGyal of 'Phan-yul – taught extensively and it was in the old gdan sa seat of Khyung-po, called Glang-pa 'Phang-thang robs-pa where rGya-dmar-pa himself was active. It was at this site that this teacher of rGya-dmar-pa resided and where the Gangs-pa She'u dgon-pa (also called Gangs Kyi gyi gsar, = rGyang-ro) had been erected, in Upper ICang-ra dist. of Myang-stod; cf. Myang chos 'byung 31–2, 43, 72–3, 76, 91–2, 104–6; BA Roerich 332, 386. A pupil of Gangs-pa She-'u was 'Khon-phu-ba Cho Kyi rgyal-po (1069–1144 A.D.). Notably, the bk'a'gdam-pa Shar-ra-ba Yon-tan-grags (1070–1141), but later also Dus-gsun mkhyen-pa dPal Chos kyi grags-pa (1110–1193) and Phag-mo-gru-pa rDo-rje rgyal-po studied under rGya-dmar-pa – of little surprise when we recall that one of Phag-gru’s teachers were La-stod-pa or gNas-rgying-pa dKon-mchog mkhar-ba of Myang-stod, as mentioned above (see here Vitali 2004b and 2006). Phag-gru was ordained at Zul-phu (see Table V.8) in rGya-dmar-pa’s presence in the early 1130’s (1127 A.D. acc. to dKar brgyud chos ‘byung 355.5). Still other disciples of the great and long-living sTod-lung master included: Ye-shes bla-ma (b. 1115) and Pa-tshab sgom-pa or sgom-nag (1077–1158).

Among rGya-dmar-pa’s now lost writings arguably count a commentary on the [Atiśa’s] Satyadvaya, as well as and commentaries on the seminal Pramāṇasamuccaya and Pramāṇaviniścaya treatises.

It was at rGya-dmar-pa’s site (a grva gsar) that leading masters would receive authoritative teachings related to the pure Madhyamaka Svātāntrika school (i.e. the dBu-ma rang-rgyud shar-gsum tradition; cf. e.g. gSer-mdog’s dBu ma'i byung tshul 12b): it was also here that one of the major transmission lineages of Sāntideva’s celebrated Bodhicaryavatāra was handed down. He therefore has a secured position in the annals of early Tibetan scholasticism, and it is most unfortunate that no proper biography of him has surfaced so far.

Sources: e.g. Shar ra ba rnam thar 244; Yar lung chos ‘byung [B] 126, 129; Phag gru rnam thar l 3b4; II 3a2–4; ’Bri gung gdan rabs III 59; Rlangs 356 = Si tu bka’ chems 265; BA 555f.; bsTan rtsis gsal ba’i nyin byed 137; Myang chos ‘byung 29–30; DL6 113; Tshur phu dgon dkar chag 660–61; rNgog lo bstan bskyangs 450–54; rGyal rtse rdo rje lo rgyus 48–49; see also gShin rje gshed chos ‘byung l 44a1–3; Ras chung rnam thar 568–73 and Pha dam pa rnam thar 205–09; Mig byed ‘od stong 15a5, 52a6; Drepong Catalogue II: 015397; and finally van der Kuijip 1983: 60, 283; 1993c: 288–89.

26 rNgog/rDog* Nyi-ma seng-ge (ord. name Mu-ne, Mu-le; orig. Muni) was nephew of rNgog Ye-shes seng-ge (the latter brother to rNgog Ye-shes ‘byung-gnas and rNgog rDo-rje grags-pa; see rNgog rabs 3bff.).** Age 21, he took over the Brag-ltag hermitage of ‘Jad district in gTsong (formerly having been est. by his father), and he erected age 21 the Brag-ltag hermitage of ‘Jad district in gTsong. rNgog Mu-ne was pupil of Ba-ri lo tsā ba Rin-chen-grags (1040–1112 A.D.). He was famed for having erected in total 13 temples throughout the gTsong province. He reached the age of 60 years. Mu-ne’s son (before ordination) was called rNgog Āryadeva (also known as ‘Phags-pa-skyabs and ‘Bum-legs), reported to be author of a number of works such as Rim lnga'i sgron chung, etc. A pupil of Mu-ne was Mal Yer-pa-ba (1105–1170); cf. Mal Yer pa ba rnam thar 4a4f. from whom he heard the cycles of the celebrated Phags skor such as Pratīpoddhotana. He further established the rDog-grong seat. He held the see of Brag-ltag dga’-Idan for 32 years. For
years, then the cycle of A-ro with Brag-dkar-po, as well as with one 'Jam lotsāba, etc. On more than one score, his religious training bears striking similarities with that of Phag-mo-gru-pa rDorje rgyal-po, occasionally sharing the same teachers and curricula. Small wonder since their paths crossed at several occasions. Probably in the mid-1150's, he is recorded to have been active in the Cha-dkar area of sBur of sNyê-thang, evidently old gNyos land relatively close to Shun, their biographies and the lineage of the seat, see rNgog gdun gabs 3b4ff. It would place his flourit in the later part of the 11th and of early 12th cent.

The clan lines of the rDog/rNgog spread out into different territories. The line had originated in bTsong-kha and later settled down in 'Jad and in sGro-mon of rTa-nag, whereas another (or the real rNgog) early had settled in the peninsular Yar-brog Do area, in gZhung Ri-bo and at sPre 'u-ting and yet another line in sKyid-smad (i.e. sTod-lung-mdā').

The cycle studied by gNyos Grags-pa-dpal refers to the rNgog Mu-ne system (or rNgog-lugs) of Ghyayasamāja tantra based upon the widespread Aryan Nāgārjuna hermeneutic system ('phags lugs) among the three systems that were prevalent in Tibet: 'Gos lo tsā ba lHa-bsas bSod-nams rtse-mo, through rNgog and thirdly via Mar-pa lo tsā ba; cf. e.g. Buston gsan yig 48b7–49a6; gSang 'das chos 'byung 25a1–4, 26a6, 60a1–63b1. Among a host of masters, the sTod-lung founder bKra-shis-dpal also received this cycle and Grags-pa-dpal's son sPhin-nang-pa too: lHa rnam 1 l12.

* The proper clan name is not conclusively clarified: rDog (var. rNgog), the former reading arguably to be preferred, since this line seems unrelated to the equally famous rNgog and since bTsong-kha as the place of origin of the present rDog? line more likely may be related to the proto-clan sT/Dong. In bShad mdzod (Smith 2001: 219), sNgog and rTog (= rNgog) are listed separately as two of the eight sTong clans.

** The line settled in Gad-phyu of 'Jad. Ye-shes seng-ge, a specialist in Abhidharma and Prajñāparamitā, later became well-versed in the Ghyayasamāja tantra initially based upon the translation stemming from Rin-chen bzang-po's pen. It was he who originally erected the mother seat of Brag-ilag dga'-ldan dben gnas hermitage.

27 From Brag-dkar Kumārabodhi (= gZhon-nu byang-chub according to a Phag-gru biography), he heard the A-ro precepts (i.e. the rdZogs-chen man ngag precepts), referring to the cycles of thams cad mkhyen pa A-ro Ye-shes 'byung-gnas. Notwithstanding the above identification, Brag-dkar-ba conversely could refer to Brag-dkar-pa Shes-rab ye-shes, pupil of rTogs Idan sBra-sgom; cf. lhO rong chos 'byung 202 (but see ibid. 308, here called Brag-dmar). The latter was also pupil of Bla-ma Zhang (see Table V.5 below), which however would make the chronology quite problematic. Another, less likely, candidate is 'Phan-yul Brag-dkar-pa (1068/1081–1147/1159 A.D.), a prominent pupil of Po-to-ba. Cf. Sørensen 1999: 181; 2002: 243. See also CFS Gyalbo et al. 2000: 77; Myang chos 'byung 32. From the biography of Phag-gru, we are informed that at approximately the same time, the latter received the same cycles from Brag-dkar who resided in the gTsang province (which seems to exclude the latter option).

28 He may likely be identical with one bla ma 'Jim lo tsā ba who similarly taught Phag-mo-gru-pa some mantric precepts around 1130 A.D. Cf. Phag gru mam thar II 363.

29 Cha-dkar (read: Bya-dkar? or retain Cha-dkar "White Apparel/Dress [of the progenitor bird]?" see above)) is also the name of an early phyi dar foundation in sKyid-smad which is given in the sources as rNams (= gNam) gyi Cha-dkar or sNyê-thang Bur gyi Cha-dkar (MTP Uebach 148, fn. 963). Today it refers to the present-day area of Ra-stod (R>[v]a-stod bDe-ba-can or Ra-stod-phu, located ca. 29°32'N 90°53'E). This is confirmed in the sMon-lam chen-mo donation-list of 1409 A.D., where the community of the Bur-pa bDe-pa-can is spoken of; cf. Tsong kha pa i rnam thar 326.* See below Map 2 and Fig. 4. Worth mentioning, yet evidently unfounded is the equation of the older 'Bur (or sBur) to 'Or of sNyê-thang (where sNyê-thang of 'Or is also registered).**

The toponym's considerable antiquity is nevertheless attested in the Dunhuang Annals, where we find Bur of sKyī already mentioned for 761 and 762 A.D. (Dotson, forthcoming; Hazod forthcoming b); at that point the place served as a winter assembly and it may be speculated that it in the dynastic time already was an ancestral seat of the gNyos clan, a lineage otherwise unmentioned in the dynastic Dunhuang materials.

At Bur Atiśa preached at a hermitage called Nyams-dga'-mo presided over by his bla mdchod dGon-pa-ba; cf. Eimer 1979: 274. It was at Cha-dkar that Grags-pa-dpal's most prominent son lHa-nang-pa gZi-brjid-dpal was born in 1164 A.D. and Cha-dkar constituted Grags-pa-dpal's main residence wherefrom he ruled large part of the neighbouring lHa-sa area. lHa-nang-pa addressed himself Brag-sna-pa, the one from Brag-sna in sNyê-thang, one of the settlements of the Bring smad communities of which Cha-dkar again was a branch settlement. Brag-sna corresponds to the place of the
where he practised asceticism and evidently at one point settled down in order to work there for the well-being of the people (often euphemistic for a rule as secular and religious master). His initial fame however is recorded to have been won in the field of asceticism, being at that point commonly known as Bur-sgom nag-po and as such reportedly one of Ras-chung’s most prominent pupils – albeit this is not detailed in the extant biographical sketches of him. It was at [s]Bur of sKyid-smad that Phag-mo gru-pa sought his help and where the latter received many teachings and instructive precepts from Bur-sgom. The sources paint a vivid picture of a strong and increasingly stern local potentate who occasionally was at odds with his neighbours, in particular with the so-called “Cave-dwellers” (Brug-rum-pa) of Shun.30

1Bring tsho foundation of sNyos-thang Brag-sna bkra-shis (rGya bo dbyig tshang 461.15) where, incidentally, rNgog Blo-ladan shes-rab conducted a number of translations and later a dGe-lugs establishment was erected; cf. Table V.6 below. IHa-nang-pa, like his father, also made retreat sessions in Bur gyi la (or: Bur-la: 29°30′N 90°52′E; see Map 2), in the hermitic “pass” area of Bur; also called sNyos-thang sBur-bu’i ri. The last information informs us that his hermitage was located on the ridge across from the ‘Brug monastery; see Part I: Map 8. The ‘Brug dgon-pa, the seat of the neighbouring ‘Brug-pa (the present-day ‘Brug-pa dgon-pa village located at 29°32′N 90°48′E), with which the IHa-pa later entertained a contentious relationship which eventually – following repeated military conflicts – led to the fusion of the IHa-pa and ‘Brug-pa into the mi sde IHa-Brug in the 13th century under Tshal-pa khri skor hegemony. Anyhow, Cha-dkar thus was close to the ‘Bring smad communities, not far from the Gya[ye-rc Valley controlled by their sNyos kin.

The actual extent of the ancestral Bur area in former time remains unclear, but the reference to the 11th-century establishment ‘Jangs-pa Iha-khang of Bur suggests that Bur during this period indeed may have included the area of IJang in present-day gNam district (loc. 29°27′N 90°53′E), located due south from mNyes-thang towards Chu-shur. If this extension seems warranted, it would indicate that Gye-rc Valley (see below fns. 75–76) too, the homeland of another large gNyos settlements was part of the old extended Bur territory.

* It may be assumed that Grags-pa-dpal’s Bur Cha-dkar headquarters was dissolved or abandoned (destroyed?) following his demise, and the famous bDe-pa-can seminary (in present-day Upper Rva-ba-stod) in 1205, arguably was raised upon the former’s ruins or close to it, est. by rGya ’Ching-ru-ba Shes-rab dhang-phug, pupil of gNyal/dMyal-zhig ’Jam-dpal seng-ge, resp. the 3rd and 4th Gling-stod abbot of gSang-phu (see Table V.8.5 below). In the 15th cent., with the establishment of the dGe-lugs-pa, bDe-ba-can turned into Rva-stod bDe-ba-can monastery. Today Bur (sBur) as toponym is widely unknown in the valley which has taken on the name of Rva-stod. A remnant is evidently the aforementioned Bur-la (pass), perhaps also the locality pronounced "Bung (*dBung = Bur?)" by local informants referring to the innermost part of the valley. An early ‘Brug-master rKyang-mo-kha-pa in Bur est. a similar-named seat; cf. Mig ’byed ‘od stong 76b1–3.

** The above reference that Cha-dkar was part of the Bur area of sNyos-thang immediately prevents us from suggesting that Cha-dkar refers to the site of Cha-dkar of gNas-chung ’srog (loc. 29°36′N 90°59′E, adjacent to Shun, cf. also ’Deam gling rgyan ’gyi 847 mentioned for 17th cent.; cf. Dimenchi 101), in relative close distance to sNyos/mNyos-thang. If the territorial extension of Bur is warranted (see above), it may well have been the case. This Cha-dkar was located adjacent to Brang Ra-mu-chen. On the other hand, the sNyos-thang site and Shun still would seem too distant to allow for an identification; the latter was registered in the 1830 A.D. Tax Survey (’rgags stag zhig chung 33). Nevertheless, Shun Cha-dkar, at a later point, as estate was affiliated with Se-ra monastery as well as with the Klu-khang and Phu-khang aristocratic families, whereas ’Or (originally the 11th-cent. sNyos-thang ’Or gyi gling lag khang est. by Atisa’s pupil Bang-ston) eventually was linked to Se-ra-smad grva-thang. Therefore, the toponymic equation Bur ’Or cannot be maintained (a toponym Hor-la is registered (cf. Xiang Dimenchi 1116) and refers to a pass between mNyes-phu (upper part of northern section of mNyos-thang) and upper Brang of lower sTod-lung. Perhaps the name is related to the ancient ’Or (Hor-la = ’Or-la?) which was part of sNyos-thang).

30 Grags-pa-dpal and his pupils Phag-mo-gru-pa and rMog-lcog Rin-chen brtson-'grus (*Ratnavīra) had studied in the presence of the same teachers, and the reference in the biographies of the latter two to bla ma Bur (‘sBur-sgom or Bur-sgom nag-po) as well as Phag-mo-gru-pa’s ten (or eight) months sojourn in Bur-lung and rMog-lcog’s even longer stay there (at sBur-sgom’s feet where he honed his meditative skills and e.g. received the Lo-ro Ras-chung cycles, etc.) clearly indicate Grags-pa-dpal’s status of seniority. This is confirmed in BA (Roerich 735) and in rMog-lcog’s biography (74–75) where Bur-sgom’s hassles with the neighbouring Shun-pa (inhabiting his ancestors’ homeland, may be within the old borders of the Bur territory? see above) is reported, even punitive measures in retaliation – in conformity with Grags-pa-dpal’s unyielding personality. It was rMog-lcog whom Grags-pa-dpal called in to assist almost as a cadre or
Appendix II: Control over the IHa-sa Mandala Zone

Map 2. The old Bur (f/s) Bur-lung, now known as Rva-stod valley) in mNyes-thang district. Former main residence of gNyos Grags-pa-dpal

[Sigla: N = sNye-thang sGrol-ma lha-khang  C = Chos-rdzong dgon-pa (ruins)  R = Rin-chen-gling
M = rMog-lcog ri khrod  D = Ra-stod bDe-ba-can]  Photo: Google Earth 2006

4. The lower part of Bur-lung valley looking towards sKyid-chu (PKS 2005)
It is to be assumed that he later remained in his family residence of sBur/Bur, after he became the undisputed ruler of the wide 'Bring-controlled lHa-sa area. Designated as a lay esoteric tantric household master (khyim pa'i sngags 'chang pa), he clearly rose to become a Mar-pa-like patriarch – equally stern, ambitious and uncompromising in his dealings. At that point the lHa-sa sde bzhi (which, as we have seen above, may refer to the four religious factions in dBus) were still enmeshed in internal fighting and the sources (gNyos rabs 24.2–3; sMyos rabs 81; DL6 113) in this connection claim that there were “none who possessed the key to open [the door] to lHa-sa (i.e. Ra-sa “Phurl-snang),” for which reason the deities (i.e. statues) inside were despairing. To retain the analogy, the warring situation remained a “deadlock,” or a stalemate, a scenario as we shall see below, that clearly attempts to tell us that the sanctum in lHa-sa not only was inaccessible, i.e. in ruins, but that no one was the actual or exclusive ruler of the site. We gain the impression that monks overly preoccupied with warfare and brigandry inhabited or controlled the site throughout the first part of the 12th century. Whatever it may be, Ra-sa was in ruins, badly in need of renovation, having until then been the hapless victim of a prolonged and seemingly forlorn conflict.

Tradition commonly holds that at that very juncture, it was Dvags-po sGom-chung [= Dvags-sgom Tshul-khrims snying-po] (1116–1169 A.D.),11 the paramount rGyal-tshab or successor-representative of the peerless bk’a’-brgyud patriarch Dvags-po lHa-rje who decisively influenced events in lHa-sa. The nephew of sGam-po-pa, Tshul-khrims snying-po evidently was invited to soldier and similar to the initial role of Ti-shi ras-pa when requested to assist Bla-ma Zhang – who by magical means (e.g. by way of hail-attacks) was urged to punish Grags-pa-dpal’s enemies (identified as the Brag-rum-pa (= Brag-rtse-pa?, cf. fn. 17 above) of Shun; Brag-rum evidently had been a yul dpon tshag in imperial time; cf. IDe’u 2 257) for stealing or abducting gNyos’ livestock. The outcome – reminiscent of (or plagiarized from?) the biography of Mi-las ras-pa – allegedly was the destruction of his enemy’s harvest and a massacre of people and livestock. The Brag-rum-pa soon were to seek a truce with gNyos and proved willing to return the confiscated livestock in addition to offering gifts such as horses and turquoise-studded armour as a token of submission. It may tentatively be speculated that the enemies from the “cliff-pockets” or Brag-rum of Shun may refer to the lHa-zhing seat. See below fn. 45.

Bur-sgom, as said, had been a prominent pupil of Ras-chung – in the latter’s biography, it is mentioned that Bur-sgom usually resided in the hermitage of sBur-bu of sNye-thang; cf. Ras chung rnam thar 406, 414, 638; Phag gru rnam thar I 4b3f.; rMog lcog rnam thar 72f.; lHo rong chos’ hyung 114, 308, 327. Mig ’byed ’od stong 14b5–6, 20a1 briefly confirms that Bur-sgom was a teacher of Phag-mo-gru-pa.

* The Shangs-pa master rnyam med rMog-lcog erected the rMog-lcog hermitage (loc.: 29°32'N 90°56'W) on Mt. mgon-po-ri towering behind Atisha’s sGrol-ma lha-khang in mNyos-thang adjacent to Bur-lung (see Map 2). In dpal Phag-gru’s sKyes rabs chen mo 69.2–3, it is maintained that rDo-rje rgyal-po’s relationship to both Bur-sgom and rMog-lcog essentially was that of an alternating teacher-pupil, resp. a relation between a mchud gnas and yun dbag, thus indicating to us that Bur-sgom Grags-pa-dpal in Bur-lung had been hosting both masters as a local patron.

11 gNyos rabs 24.3 mentions Dvags-po sgom-hyang (= chung), i.e. Shes-rab byang-chub (alia Rog-chung; 1130–1173; Vitali 2004b: 136 has combined sGom-chung Tshul-khrims snying-po and giving his dates 1129–81), the younger brother of Dvags-sgom, yet in this connection it appears to be a lapsus for his elder brother, mentioned in most other sources. It is generally maintained that it was the elder brother Dvags-po sGom-tshul who was invited to lHa-sa by the protective deities lHa-mo (var. srung ma Remati) and Grib rDzong-bscan; cf. e.g. Dvags po sgo pa’i rnam thar (in ZhK III (KA) 72b3–5); dGos’ dod re skong ma’i ’grel ba 548.6–49.2; mkhas pa’i dga’ ston 548–49; sGam po pa’i rnam thar 267.5f., Tsong kha pa’i rnam thar 360–66; Jig rten mgon po rnam thar II [B] 87.1–3, etc. The witness contained in the Dvags-po sGom-tshul biography, a rather mythic narrative, purports that the two deities miraculously turned into a black-dressed woman and into a young dog cloaked in silk that had been called in from sTed-lung. The cryptic allusion requires further deliberations. Signally, sGom-tshul’s actual role in lHa-sa is confirmed, since in the Dvags-po hermitage a sku ’dra statue of sGom-tshul is found, consecrated by sGom-chung, made from the cremation ashes of the former, and set up there facing lHa-sa in order to protect the site against flooding; cf. Dvags lha sgam po gnas yig 38a1–2; sGam po khri rabs 27b6, 30a2–3.
IHa-sa by the chos skyong dPal-ladan IHa-mo and rDzong-btsan\(^3\) in the mid-1160’s to mediate in the conflict and subsequently to carry through extensive repair works. His biography\(^4\) relates how he succeeded in renovating Ra-sa ‘Phrul-snang and bring this task to completion in 1167 A.D. Behind the two protector deities of the IHa-sa area and behind the invitation we most readily shall see the responsible “caretakers” of IHa-sa (i.e. the IHa-sa sde-bzhis custodians), who here were entreating a strong religious personality (and subsequently a lay ruler from the neighbouring sNyen-thang district) to come and intervene. One source even purports that among the IHa-sa sde-bzhis until that point war-like lawlessness reigned wherefore Dvags-po as a pis aller had been requested to intervene, in other words as a last resort of impartiality to break the deadlock, evidently due to his repute or due to the mediating prestige that he enjoyed among all warring parties. Behind the vague references in the relevant sources, however, it cannot be excluded that it in fact was the gNyos clan and their kin (in sTod-lung and ‘Phan-yul where many gNyos families are registered for this period) who had been instrumental, at least in part, in inviting the Dvags-po patriarch to IHa-sa, expecting in return a favourable treatment in any post-war settlement perhaps. As recorded in gNyos rabs (which is a partisan tract that rather intends to glorify gNyos’ role in the development), speaking to three representatives of the monk communities, i.e. probably representatives of those communities involved in the dispute,\(^5\) Dvags-sgom reminded them that whoever was in possession of the key\(^6\) brought it here – a phrase evidently signalling that whoever held (or ventured to hold?) claim over the site came forward and appropriate the site. He then continued, addressing Grags-pa-dpal with the words:

since you gNyos Grags-pa-dpal, the actual lord of the ‘Bring communities, both of upper and lower sKyd-shod, and since at this point the IHa-sa sde-bzhis [i.e. either the four warring factions or the closer IHa-sa region] had been seized by the gNyos clan and people, no one else than you would presently be capable of lifting the yoke (in other words of breaking the spell and bring peace). Therefore you must appropriate it and manage [the site] by bringing the fighting to a halt and by rendering service to the Jo-bo in form of renovating the temple, etc. (gNyos rabs, 12b3–13a2 = 24.3–25.2).

Being thus motivated, perhaps even entreated by sGom-tshul, Grags-pa-dpal evidently acquiesced to the commitment, and along with his disciples, he subsequently arrived at Ra-sa ‘Phrul-snang.

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\(^3\) Behind the invitation we shall therefore assume rDzong-btsan of Grib, the yul lha of the mGar clan who ruled in this area south-west of IHa-sa. Grib rDzong-btsan gi ri is the clan’s bla ri (cf. Grib btsan rdo rje mchog gtor chog). The mGar clan had settled in Grib already in the 12th century and most of Tshal Gung-thang district (spanning from Grib until Sri) most likely was a former mGar estate wherefore it is surmisable that Dvags-sgom was invited by the mGar and not by gNyos. Cf. also App. IV. Misunderstood by R. Davidson 2004: 328.

\(^4\) Cf. e.g. mkhas pa’i dga’ ston 801f.; sGom po pa rnam thar 267.5f.; Dvags po sgom tshul rnam thar in ZhK I 352.4–360.3 = ZhK III (KA) 72b3–76a1; Chab-spel 1982: 19.

\(^5\) Dvags-po sGom-tshul’s biography informs us that he several times contemplated leaving IHa-sa due to the immoral and materialistic monks present in IHa-sa. The denominational background of these monks is still unclear. Lawlessness reigning, he mentions the need for the introduction of a rgyal khrims or civil law to cope with the anarchism.

\(^6\) See previous note. gNyos rabs here merely mentions three bsam pa, but this, it appears, can only be understood as the representatives of the other? three communities (aside from the fourth, here the dominant ‘Bring) engaged in the warfare.

\(^3\) This phrase either alludes to the key to “open the Ra-sa ‘Phrul-snang,” in other words the physical control of the site or it indicates either the partial access to the site that each community held in turns through the shared custodianship by all communities (as indicated by the four communities of IHa-sa). Incidentally, the phrase “to hand over the key” implies “to hand over the control” or to appropriate an institution.
One reliable source conversely purports that Grags-pa-dpal indeed was urged by Dvags-sgom to come to lHa-sa, but that it in particular was through the combination of Grags-pa-dpal’s untiring endeavours for instance in form of offering affluent donations and teachings that he had delivered to his kin, the G[y]e-re gNyos (in order to win them over on his side) as well as through craft and (military?) stratagems, that Grags-pa-dpal succeeded in bringing peace to the warring parties. The relevant sources do not give much detail on warring skirmishes at this point, – these are after all religious sources attempting to depict the gNyos protagonists in a proper light – but they must have preceded the settlement.

What seems to be purported from the above passage is that at an early point the gNyos, backed by the numerous ’Bring communities, had become the de-facto rulers of the lHa-sa area since in the period preceding this intervention by Dvags-po the lHa-sa sde-bzhi (whether referring to the lHa-sa area or to the areas of the warring religious factions?) had been conquered by the gNyos clan. This would strengthen our assumption that Grags-pa-dpal or his kin practically speaking stood behind the invitation of Dvags-po with a view to ensure spiritual legitimation and endorsement behind their (prior de-facto?) appropriation of the area. Anyway, Grags-pa-dpal at that point nevertheless must have been an imposing local potentate, in the eyes of Dvags-sgom obviously the most powerful figure in the area in the mid-12th century backed by a formidable basis of lay supporters and cadres. As ruler of both ’Bring tsho communities, he easily could muster or field a cohort of militia which he could conscript from his communities of sKyid-smad such as Grib (incl. sKar-chung), sNye-thang, sTod-lung, as well as large ’Bring settlements from Mal-gro and ’Phan-yul (also called ’Bring tsho stod) and even conscripts from settlements in Gong-dkar south of gTsang-po River in the district of Dol, gZhung and Grva (cf. Part I: fn. 422) could be fielded if need be. Other clans controlled many areas within these districts, such as the position of the mGar clan in Grib and sNgog of sTod-lungs-mda’, barring us from clarifying in detail the actual relationship between gNyos and these (minor?) local rulers. We do know that at that point Grags-pa-dpal was decisively assisted by the head of the different settlements of the Gye-re gNyos clan in sKyid-smad, headed by one gNyos Seng-ge-’od who eventually decided to donate to Grags-pa-dpal whatever territory his kin held in lHa-sa, controlled by the ’Bring communities.17

16 The mGar clan in the sKyid-shod area occupied the territories of Grib and of Ram-pa in lower sTod-lung, see for details App. IV.

17 gNyos rabs 13a2-3 = 25.2-3, reads dg yer gnyos kyi gtsa bo rnam s phyogs phyogs su sogs | ston mo rnings gdab thi da du byas gnyos seng ge ‘od kyi kyang khang rang gi lha sa’i [= lha pa 🅰️?] mnga’ ris ci yin phul.
Of major significance, albeit still relatively undocumented is the relationship at that point between the mGar clan, the gNyos clan/people and the local 'Bring communities in Grib and beyond that included, as we know, both the western areas of gSang-mda' and -phu as well as the adjacent sKar-chung area. A connecting or mediating, certainly a powerful link had been held by the influential rNgog, the clan of the leading religious masters of gSang-phu, with its seat on the southern side of sKyid-chu. It must be recalled that it was with one member of a sub-line of this clan that Grags-pa-dpal had studied intensively during his youth and another of his teachers, rGya-dmar-pa of sTod-lung too stood in the line of rNgog Blo-Ildan shes-rab. We are thus informed about prevailing spiritual or doctrinal bonds between this line and other lines of the rNgog clan and of gNyos. It is noteworthy that Grags-pa-dpal’s uncle gNyos dpal-le (one of the dBu-gtsang Jo-sras bzhi; mid- and late 11th cent.; see Table V.7 below) similarly is registered as student of the gTsang-based rNgog Mu-ne, too. Future research shall hopefully deepen our knowledge of the crucial linkages that seem to have prevailed between the clans of gNyos, rNgog and the Zhang sNa-nam (in confederation with mGar) and their concomitant and formative roles in shaping the political landscape of the 11.-12th-cent. Central Tibetan heart-land. The bonds between Zhang and the rNgog clan – it may be recalled that the principal among the teachers of Bla-ma Zhang was rNgog mDo-sde, whose father was related to rNgog lo tsā ba of the 'Bring – was close and cordial. Friendly bonds also existed between the rGya clan (of gTsang-pa rGya-ras), Zhang as well as gNyos i.e. lHa-nang-pa. Most significant for the complex network of clan alliances or affiliations, however, was the circumstance that rNgog is registered as the clan name of Grags-pa-dpal’s mother. Grags-pa-dpal therefore boasted descent from two powerful clans dominant in sKyid-smad and lHa-sa – the gNyos and rNgog. His pedigree served as an ideal but clearly also necessary precondition for the successful implementation and hence survival of his hegemony. Aside from these traceable clan settlements in the narrow sKyid-shod area, the prior presence – up to a few hundred years earlier – of the dBa’s clan is still unexplored (during this period they were military rulers of sKyid-stod and sKyid-smad; see bKa’ thang sde lnga 439: TF Sorensen and Hazod 2005: App. II, Chap. 3) in the same area. Notwithstanding, the role putatively held by the imperial dBa’[s], a house and clan line commonly regarded as the true rulers of the wider lHa-sa marchland throughout the early imperial period is still uncharted.

Akester (2004: 58) in this context suggests reading this account so that Grags-pa-dpal proved successful in pacifying the four communities of lHa-sa, seen by him to be represented by a conflict between the heads of the dGyer and gNyos clans. Indeed, the passage is here not unproblematic, and the presence of the dGyer clan (see TF Sorensen and Hazod 2005: Intro.) in the conflict otherwise remains fully undocumented. we would argue that the text refers to the heads of gNyos clan of the dGyer / Gye-re valley (to distinguish them from other areas populated or dominated by gNyos).

 Doubtless, the clans entertained relations affinally as much as consanguinely. Another clue to the bonds between gNyos and rNgog, however feeble, is corroborated by the fact that Po-to-ba (‘Phan-yul, of the gNyos clan) in the mid-1050’s had been ordained at Brag-rgyab of ’Phan-yul in the presence of rNgog Byang-chub ‘byung-gnas (of rNgog, however, of the Klu-mcs group – here not of the ‘Bring group) – suggesting that clan links possibly overlaid religious commitments and affiliations); cf. Pu to ba rnam thar 4b4–6.

 One text speaks about his root-teacher being rNgog sTod-lung-pa, linking mDo-sde with this area; cf. Part I: fn. 18.

 See here Vitali (2004a: 16) based upon a recently surfaced Tsa ri dkar chag putatively written by gNyos IHa-nang-pa.

 His mother ‘Od-gsal-ma from the rNgog line stemmed from Thang-phu of (lower) sTod-lung and his grand-mother from the Ne-ring local families. Thang-phu was situated not far from sNyé-thang and ‘Bur, the main-residence of Grags-pa-dpal. The latter thus had chosen a lady from a powerful clan in the nearest neighbourhood. Interestingly, Bla-ma Zhang also practised asceticism in Thang-phu of sTod-lung. It was at this site that later the dGe-lugs seat of Thang-phu was erected.
In particular it was through this united front, propped by the seemingly massive gNyos domination or control over many settlements, that peace was resumed in the area. It cannot surprise that most sources flattering (but not unrealistically) designated Grags-pa-dpal as bdag po or ruler of up to one hundred establishments and monasteries inclusive of IHa-sa. The renovation of the war-torn Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang, long overdue, could finally find its commence. Dvags-po sGom-tshul, the rgyal tshab or successor of his famous uncle and the fountain-head of the bKa'-'brgyud-pa, safely could assure the three (remaining) monk communities that their wishes (of seeing Jo-khang repaired and of ensuring peace) finally had come through (gNyos rabs 25; DL6 113–14; IHa rnam 1 4–5).

Following the successful renovation of the central sanctuary in IHa-sa, sponsored not least by the gNyos and brought to completion evidently in 1167 A.D. under the active participation and authoritative guidance of Dvags-po sGom-tshul, an unusual event is recorded to have taken place which appears to have had some bearings on the question of the claim to and subsequent transfer of power in the area.

1.3 Cornucopia:  
The Cintâmanî Skull of gNyos and its Legacy –  
Clan Trouvaille or Victory’s Trophy

The gNyos sources chronicle an episode that appears to have taken place in late 1163 or early 1164 A.D., an event foreboding and hence intimately associated with the birth of Grags-pa-dpal’s famous son, IHa-nang-pa: a group consisting of gSang-phu-ba Rin-chen-dpal and one Khams-pa ‘Jad/’Dzing, but also including, it appears, gNyos Grags-pa-dpal, being teacher and pupils once were busy reciting the Guhyasamâja [tantra], one of the esoteric key cycles of the gNyos, on the grassy plain between Ra-sa and Ra-mo-che. They decided to proceed to circumambulate the mChod-rten Ka-ru (i.e. Garu[da]), a holy shrine filled with sacred Tathâgata relics which was located towards the south. Suddenly they spotted an apparently smiling (’dzum mul) corpse with

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42 Cf. IHa rnam III 7a4–5. Rin-chen-dpal deplorably remains unidentified, whereas gSang-phu was affiliated with the rNgog clan where Ne’u-thog, the celebrated seminary was established in 1073 A.D. It was a lower ‘Bring establishment. Later as mi sde, it adhered to the Tshal-pa khri skor under Zhang’s hegemony (cf. Part I: fn. 434). The ’Bri-gung founder ‘Jig-rten mgon-po was in part associated with teachings offered at Ne’-thog and among his pupil may well have counted the 7th throne-holder ’Jam-seng.

Rin-chen-dpal is a very common name throughout this period, also held by the ’Bri-gung founder sKyob-pa rin po che. The only seemingly realistic clue – perhaps an important and convincing one since it suggests a flourit in the very early 13th cent. if not earlier – was one gNyos [= gNyos]-ston Rin-chen-dpal (who by chance may not be identical with IHa-nang-pa’s younger brother Byang-chub-dpal?), reported to have performed a ganacakra (in Pu-rang of West Tibet) with Mar-lung-pa; cf. Mar lung rnam thar 129a1.

43 A number of candidates could be identified as the proper site: The Ka-ru/Ke-ru cativa alludes to a receptacle the origin of which stems from or seems to have been associated with the basic terrestrial lay-out of the IHa-sa geomantic landscape. It originally refers to the site in the southern direction of IHa-sa, once (and still) the abode of a terrestrial antagonist (sa dgra) that configuratively resembled a black scorpion pouncing on its prey. In the relevant sources, it was generally (and falsely?) identified with the eastern summit of Yug-ma-ri; i.e. sKar-chung g.Yug-ma-ri, the summit and southern coordinate of the IHa-sa Mandala scheme, cf. App. IV: Graph 1. For its pacification, the sa dgra was affronted and suppressed by a garuda-bird, in form of a receptacle. It is therefore conceivable that the inchoate keru = garuda. Cf. TBH Sørensen 255–56. It remains unclear whether, or if at all, any link could be made between the mythic gNyos progenitor Gestalt and the garuda-receptacle.
a well-preserved skull (kapāla, thod pa) that had been washed to the place by the water of sKyid-chu. One source signally claims that it was the corpse of a monk (hande). They shaved the head (i.e. purified it ritually?) and hid it underneath the sand. At dusk, having arrived upon the upper floor of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang, they observed how in the direction of the place where the skull had been concealed, fire was ablaze (i.e. all by itself light emitted miraculously from the object). The following morning they therefore went to fetch the skull. The wondrous object immediately aroused faith and wonder among all people of the lHa-sa sde-bzhi, which possibly tells us that the disinterred object either became a (common) religious object of veneration or an object to be coveted by everybody. The location where it got stranded, at the base of a Ke-ru caitya may thus may refer to a receptacle already known from the lHa-sa mythic-topomantic lay-out as detailed in the primeval Buddhist geomantic probe of the site, namely located in sKar-chung area of Grib, south-west of lHa-sa. This indicates that the corpse had washed ashore at the southern bank of sKyid-chu, close to present-day Ra-ma-sgang. Alternatively, it may refer to a cemetery located along the northern shore of sKyid-chu close to Jo-khang, at a site where Srong-btsan sgam-po sat meditating in an “earth-pit” in order to protect lHa-sa from being flooded.

The texts continue by informing us that the discovery of the cornucopia-like precious skull proved a true miracle: an affluent amount of riches [was produced that provided the revenue for the implementation e.g. of] banquets for the four [lHa-sa] communities and an immeasurable amount of material donations manifested themselves, in fact over four(teen) (var. forty) times donations and offerings consisting of one hundred thousand (?) items or commodities emerged. One text seems to conversely suggest that the huge amount of riches was the result of a sheer endless amount of presents that were donated by the four lHa-sa communities after they had won great

Another lead would suggest that it refers to a “white caitya” located along the northern shore of sKyid-chu, adjacent to the sa khung cave-pit of Srong-btsan sgam-po (cf. fn. 116) where a “white stūpa shrine” once stood. The nearest neighbourhood comprised a cemetery (which evidently would account for the occurrence of a corpse there). A clue to this place is given in Mar lung rnam thar (89a5-6) which relates the history of Bla-ma Zhang and his Tshal polity. A future rebirth of the master was prophesied to be born adjacent to lHa-sa gtsug lag khang, at a site resembling an opened “horse cadaver,” said to house a mchod rien ka ru.

Still another – yet less likely – option is the site presently called Ka-ru Ko-sa or Ferry Station upstream from lHa-sa, where an imperial rdo ring and an ancient drawing of a caitya have been found; cf. Richardson 1985: 156–57. The latter may be a viable alternative to Grib. Finally, a less likely option is the reference to the ancient dKar-ru or “White Horn” establishment in the early lHa-sa topography (cf. fn. 1 above).

An illustrative discovery in the sKar-chung area, unrelated to the gNyos trouvaille, was the story of the corpse of the 10th-century cultic Mer-khe ruler, whose spirit later transformed itself into a sTag-lung protector deity. It too had been carried along by the waters of sKyid-chu only to wash ashore at Ra-ma-sgang. The site at sKar-chung evidently constituted a central ritual or cultic meeting-point in the archaic sKyid-chu geography. Cf. Dung-dkar. Tshig mdzod 1620–21.

Text: sde bzhis i ston mo dang 'bul mo che dpag tu med pa byung. This refers, as we shall see below, to grand gatherings and charity banquets like the Brown Sugar Festival, i.e. the funding or subsidizing of religious gatherings; it may have somewhat resembled later institutionalized gatherings like the Curd Feast in lHa-sa during dGa'-'ldan pho-brang times; the latter charity banquets may well find parallels in early bKa’-gdam-pa circles; so it is reported that the sister of Sha-ra-ba Yon-tan-grags (1170–1141 A.D.) in the early 12th century, sponsored and entertained up to 8000 monks during a Yoghurt Festival in ‘Phan-yul.

No details are offered and the description remains vague. The text is slightly corrupt as it merely reads 'bum tshar bcu bzhis [read: bcu?] lhag pa 'bul mi (= ni?) byung pa. One may also conjecture, recalling that the wish-fulfilling jewel thod pa washed to the shore at the dKar-ru caitya in lHa-sa, that what miraculously was created were 14 huge dome reliquaries or 'Bum mo che filled with riches?
faith in the precious object (DL6 114). In fact, one part or segment (of donations, i.e. from this veritable cornucopian skull) was kept in or was donated to IHa-sa itself (possibly donated to or safeguarded by the Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang custodians to finance its maintenance); one part was offered to Zhang Rin-po-che and finally one faction was donated to gTam-chad IHa-zhing Iha-khang. Furthermore, a rain of grants of land, territories and sites thus was secured by Grags-pa-dpal which included land and territories under the former royal hermitage of Brag-nga [klu-phug in IHa-sa] that later had been appropriated by the IHa-rgje treasury (IHa-rgje zo'u-tshang; or rather storehouse; Iha rje zo'u tshang (= zo'u 'bru [or ke'u] tshang) (? of Dvags-po IHa-rgje sGarn-po-pa or Dvags-po dBang-rgyal), and a number of minor religious estates incl. its subjects in the narrow area around IHa-sa such as sGung-pa chen-po of Shun, Chu-skor-gnas, Ra-mo-che'i gnas [of sTod-lung], Rinch'en-gshongs, rTsis-ma-gnas, Nag-rong gzhis kha, mKhar-gsar-pa, Be'u-rnu, La-ba-nang, and 'Brog-mo-gnas, as well as Thag-ma lha-khang [of sTod-lung] and Rin-chen lha-khang, etc. – i.e. all establishments, it appears, to be situated within in the narrow southern IHa-sa area that thus fell into the hands and dominion of gNysos.

46 It is identical with (gTam-chad? = ? smra chad, referring to ascetics who had taken a vow of silence) IHa-zhing gnas-gsar, the “new settlement or site” of the “Divine Field” located in the Lower sTod-lung area (exact location is most deplorably still unclear) established by the group behind sNa-nam rDo-rje dbang-phuyug of the Klu-mes group; cf. Table V.6 (1lb). It e.g. was visited by ’Jig-rten mgon-po and gNysos [Grags-pa-dpal?]; cf. ’Jig rten mgon po nam thar II [B]: 85.2f. Also the important mkhas pa chen po dbang-phuyug rdo-rje (a pupil of sTag-lung thang-pa) received teaching at sTod-lung lha-zhing (cf. Iho rong chos 'byung 618) from the teachers Shu-ru 'dul 'dzin sNa-'phar-ba, Cog-so sTon-grags, and from Brang-ti Shes-rab seng-ge [= sBal-ti Shes-rab seng-ge (1181–1253), the 39 sKyor-mo-lung throne-holder; cf. Table V.8 below]. Another reliable information suggests that it was a hermitage-like settlement located in a brag rum i.e. a “cliff-pocket” (and as such it suggests that the hermitage was located somewhere on or close to the Massif of Shun. This equation is supported by other sites listed here to be identified as former sNa-nam settlements. The nature of the relation between Bla-ma Zhang and the sNa-nam clan – aside from common clan roots – still remains to be clarified. If this equation is unfounded, it remains unclear which community or lay supporter actually stood behind this temple. Gauged from the gNysos story, being the apparent recipient of large quantities of riches, it or they must have held a prominent political or spiritual position in the narrow IHa-sa area.

47 The former hermitage site of Srong-btsan sgam-po in IHa-sa; cf. TBH Sørensen 297.

48 See above fn. 4. It is still uncertain what this refers to. Dvags-po IHa-rgje (1079–1154) was also listed for having erected a community, namely Gye-re'i gnas as reported in one source; but this seems untenable; it is commonly regarded as the establishment of gNysos; cf. Ucbach 1987: Table V.6 and fn. 147.

49 Aside from the IHa-sa area itself, most of the partly unidentified estates and sites listed here were evidently situated close to IHa-sa, to the south-west, in the nearest neighbourhood of Lower sTod-lung and related to the sNa-nam clan of Bla-ma Zhang, viz.

1 sGung-pa chen-po evidently was an older or alternative name for sGung-mtsho, an estate (during the dGa'-ldan pho-brang rule) located in Shun-khul area due west of IHa-sa in lower sTod-lung. The latter may refer to the later site of sGang-khang-gsar (located: 29°35'N 90°59'E; cf. also DLS I 293b6–94a1 attached to the sKyor-mo-lung monastery) of gNas-chung area.

2 Chu-skor-gnas* refers to Brang Chu-skor-gnas of lower sTod-lung (cf. MTP Ucbach 141; the water-mill est. for the grinding of roasted grain, as one text maintains; in sTod-lungs Brang-phu, it was here that Bla-ma Zhang practiced asceticism and here the infamous Tibetan minister Ma-zhang Grom-pa-skyes in the 750's was buried alive; his tomb is still found there). For its name, see sKyor lung chos 'byung 34; it was one of the Vinaya establishments of sNa-nam rDo-rje dbang-phuyug (himself pupil of Klu-mes); cf. Table V.6 below. sTod-lung Brang-phu and Zhong-pa constituted the old dynastic territory of the sNa-nam clan (wherefrom Bla-ma Zhang also stemmed), areas constituting their dbang rits (mKhas pa'i dga' ston 187.3; sBa stshad 18.7; TBH Sørensen 365).

3 mKhar-gsar is mentioned in Zhang's writings e.g. Zhk I 279.7. It may have been located in Lower sTod-lung.
What follows in the pertinent gNyos sources is the drawing of a positive depiction of Grags-pa-dpal as a true religious master who proved capable of winning scores of teachers and benefactors alike for his quest, all engaged in furthering the Buddhist doctrine under his auspices and benign hegemony. His fame as a great ascetic – as Bur-sgom nag-po – and as one-time teacher of Phagmo-gru-pa rDo-rje rgyal-po and rMog-lcog must have earned him considerable cultural and spiritual prestige in the eyes of the younger Bla-ma Zhang and ‘Jig-rten mgon-po, two bKa’-brgyud-pa founders who were directly influenced by Grags-pa-dpal and the latter’s secular polity. The text attempts to depict him as a man deeply devoted to religion, yet he also proved successful in cementing his hegemony that guaranteed his success in the religious field. It informs us that he generally took recourse to warfare throughout this period as a means of pursuing his religious and hegemonic objectives, but that these were strictly guided by religious principles and that killing eventually could be avoided or proved unnecessary. We have reason to believe that warfare was a common means to resolve conflicts. Moreover, this depiction revealingly resembles the stance and approach chosen by Bla-ma Zhang who during the same or following years attempted to expand his own power basis by using (un?)usually draconic means yet simultaneously wrapped this quest in benign terms and altruistic objectives. Was Grags-pa-dpal directly serving as model for Bla-ma Zhang? It certainly tells us that the latter sought to emulate the successful, aggressive strategy chosen by gNyos Grags-pa-dpal in cementing his rule. The dominion of gNyos, like other hegemonies during this spell, had been characterized by strict patrimonialism. All considered, it is probably not amiss to claim that it was gNyos Grags-pa-dpal who served, more than anyone else, as a precursor to and a model for Bla-ma Zhang in his coming crusade and in his idiosyncratic quest for his religiously oriented hegemony at Tshal and it was Zhang who clearly inherited the position and prestige that had been held, at least in part, by gNyos in the wider IHa-sa area following the loss of gNyos’ dominance after Grags-pa-dpal’s demise due to his son IHa-nang-pa’s disinterest for secular rule (see below). This was precisely the period when Zhang successfully initiated the establishment of his twin edifices in 1175 and in 1187 at Tshal Gung-thang. Bla-ma Zhang, we know, had entertained amicable relations with the gNyos clan as may be gleaned from the relevant sources. It therefore can be assumed that the (gradual?) transfer of control over the IHa-sa area from the gNyos clan to Zhang and his associates in the 1180’s for the most part had been peaceful rather than followed in the wake of warring clashes between the parties. But Bla-ma Zhang even expanded his domain and turned it into an even more durable polity than in the case of gNyos.

4 La-ba-nang and Be’u-ru (sic) most readily refer to La-chung Ke-ru of lower sTod-lung, similarly a sNa-nam establishment (cf. Table V.6 below); or to Lab-nang (= La-ba-nang?) located in sByar-rags of sTod-lung (ca. 29°46’N 90°46’E). close to sTod-lung-chu and gZhong-pa. Alternatively and far less likely, it refers to Lva-ra village in Chu-shur district (in present-day mNyes-thang area; located at 29°32’N 90°59’E) a southern side-valley in Bur-lung (now Rva-stod Valley; see Map 2).

5 ‘Brog-mo-gnas most probably refers to ‘Brog-mo (loc.: 29°41’N 90°52’E) in sByar-rags district of Lower sTod-lung. The latter in turn may be identical with ‘Brog-mo (listed as late as in the 1830 A.D. Tax Survey where it is registered to adhere to the gNas-chung religious estate; cf. CTZhZh 17). Also? called ‘Brog-ma, reported to be located in a southern valley from sTod-lung-chu, not far from gZhong-pa-lHa-chu (see Part I: Map 3).

* gnas as term appears to be an early or cherished pre-12th-century synonym for dgon pa. The corn (’bru. or “popped corn” yos) stemming from this mill was famed all over Tibet, in recent centuries, the Dalai Lama is said to have received flour exclusively from this mill.

50 Cf. e.g. IHa rnam I 37.
The full implication of the discovery and the deeper symbolism of this talisman-like precious item still need to be fully appreciated. In the initial part of the story, this talisman along with a vajra-bell were considered auspicious portents for the birth and rise of the new-born IHa-nang-pa into becoming a true religious master. It appears that the skull which would become known as the “maroon-coloured skull of gNyos” (gnyos kyi thod pa smug po; snyos kyi nor thod yid bzhin nor bu sm[gu] 11) was tantamount to a wish-fulfilling cintāmani. It carries obvious reminiscence of the general symbolism surrounding kapāla as a ritual object employed in connection with arcane and esoteric rites of “skull observances” (kāpālavrata). According to tantric practice and its cultic ritualism, it is well-known that usually a search shall be undertaken for a corpse with the cranium attached; such descriptions emphasize that the skull subsequently be ritually purified, be wrapped up and buried in mud or clay. The kapāla after proper treatment and beset with specific mantra then is qualified as a “wish-granting jewel” which turns it into an object of worship, or it may turn into an offering vessel or bowl. Another use of the skull in rituals is as a paraphernalia to the thaumaturgic narrative modes, yet such symbolic narrative discourses never remained arbitrary, when the inexplicable a brownish or maroon colour.

A maroon or maroon-coloured skull of deceased ascetics, usually kept and treasured as blessing-bestowing objects or ring bsrēl producing relics. Tibetan literature is showered with references to such items that usually are inserted in other nang rten to retain their blessing power. Worthy of note is the import associated with skulls in the Guhyasamaja and Yamantaka tantric cycles, both central to the gNyos spiritual or esoteric lore. And it cannot be excluded that this particular

\[11\] The entire narrative setting and plot reminds us of similar narratives that commonly vex medievalists of European historiography when confronted with historical events where modes of perception and techniques of argumentation in retelling the past often differ from contemporary conventions and norms. To the medieval mind, it remained consistent that supranatural or otherworldly agencies regularly intervened through signs in order to indicate their approval or rejection. Historical events often were accompanied by, or were garbed in anecdote, magic or thaumaturgic narrative modes, yet such symbolic narrative discourses never remained arbitrary, when the inexplicable often could only be communicated in such format. See e.g. Das argumentative Gedächtnis in G. Althoff 2003a.

\[12\] IHa nam 137 calls it “the Precious Jewel of Tibet – the Origin of All Wishes” (bod kyi nor bu rin po che dgos ’dod kyi ’byung gnas); II 3b1–3 adds that it was an object rarely seen in Tibet. The same wording and characterization, we later find employed to describe the Cintāmani of Tibet, the Dalai Lama institution. Aside from Yid bzhin nor bu, the Dalai Lama is also designated Yid bzhin dbang gi rgyal po; e.g. DL 12.481. In religious sources, we occasionally find mentioning of such thod pa smug po. See also Sanghabhadra’i rtiogs hrjod 549–50.

A somewhat similar object is reported in the biography of the ‘Brug-pa master rDo-rje gling-pa Seng-ge Shes-rab (1238–80 A.D.), a blessed “rainbow-[patterned] maroon-colour skull” (ka pā la smug gu ’ja’ ighton ma), known as the specific precious object (khyad nor) of the bKā’-brgyud-pa, and allegedly once being the drinking bowl (gsol zhal) of Nāropa. Cf. Seng ge shes rab rnam thar 210.2–5. In fact, smug po (orig. dark hue of any colour) often is tantamount to a brownish or maroon colour.

We still have no indication whether the gNyos (and later ’Bri-gung) maroon skull similarly was used as a drinking bowl of sorts or whether it carried the same religious symbolism as the Nāropa bowl. For another skull associated with gNyos IHa-nang-pa; see ‘Bras spungs dgon be’i yig 291–92.

In Tibet, as detailed in prevailing Tibetan skull histories (such as the ones paraphrased in Losernes-Leick 1992: 160–61), a skull is considered a yid bzhin nor bu when it bears specific marks or when discovered under specific circumstances; a proper skull moreover “gleams and sparkles brightly.” This would seem to carry some outward resemblance to the gNyos skull story. Parallels drawn to similar stories in India are obvious, also in terms of its connotative function. An anonymous Tibetan text Thod pa ’i lo rgyus, offering a description and examination of different sections of a skull as signs in dreams, reports how e.g. a herdsman with the help of a skull gained control over an entire country and himself turned into a bodhisattva, etc. (op. cit. 163). Skulls finally often were treasured and concealed as a gter ma.
form of the treasury may have been associated with or understood in the light of these cycles. The gNyos skull discovery must in this context be seen as a tantric terrestrial or geomantic ritual (sa’i cho ga, sa dpal) where here a sand burial had been included.\textsuperscript{53} Born from the waters of skYid-chu, the rin chen thod pa itself had originated from the realm of the local klu rgyal and thus may be read as a donation presented to Grags-pa-dpal or gNyos by the powerful local telluric gods, resembling in this capacity the sKyid-chu, (sa ‘i The thus may be read as a donation presented to Grags-pa-dpal or gNyos by the powerful local telluric gods, resembling in this capacity the sKyid-chu, (sa ‘i

The crucial role both for the material, ideological and the legitimate basis behind the rise of Bla-ma Zhang\textsuperscript{55} Although we can only assume the deeper rationale behind such supernatural legitimation, it appears that the interaction through a non-human agency – similar to a \textit{deus ex machina} in a narrative plot that heralds a decisive \textit{volte face} in the events, here the intervention from the local klu realm powers, themselves the indigenous \textit{genius loci} or inhabitants of the site that may be seen to harbour or embody “the key” to the particular site – served as an indispensable prerequisite for the establishment of a human edifice. Their collaboration as interlocutor between the divine and human worlds and their sanctions constituted a \textit{sine qua non} for the viability and perpetuity of the man-made project.\textsuperscript{56} We have reason to assume that the same holds true for the gNyos story, albeit the skull object here seems to have further or slightly different (at least still not clarified) implications, it follows the same basic pattern of granting approval \textit{pro indicio}. Each prospective ruler, it appears, had to be individually approved anew by the \textit{genius loci}, in other words had to be accepted either as new rulers or as founder of any prospective new edifice and the non-human mediation thus carried reminiscence of a coronation and a royal empowerment. It therefore may not surprise that similar aetiological legitimation stories abound in clan sources and royal histories which recount the background for and the mythic rationale behind once-held terrestrial claims or served to underpin contemporary prerogatives. The discovery of precious jewels or similar costly commodities prior to a major event in particular appears to be common-place in local

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{53} It is here perhaps relevant to mention that precisely the location between Ra-sa and Ra-mo-che where the Guhyasam\textsc{\textsubscript{a}}utra \textit{tantra} was recited also was the place where the statue of Kong-jo allegedly in the 7\textsuperscript{th} cent. got stuck in the sand (i.e. the plain of Ra-mo-che); cf. TBH Sørensen 243, 594. Another reference to the site is located in the biography of Klong-chen Rab-\textsc{\textsubscript{b}}yams-pa as a site where he preached intensively; cf. rDzogs chen chos 'byang I 92a4–5. The same site was also known from the story of a “water-abating or apotropaion temple” which similarly was erected between Ra-sa and Ra-mo-che on a “hill-top” resembling a tortoise (reminiscent of the initial IHa-sa landscape profile?) – anyway the sacred space between the two sanctuaries seems to hold special significance in the mythic topography of IHa-sa; cf. Chapter 2.8 below.
\item \textsuperscript{54} Cf. Part I: fn. 588. By extension, everything which has to do with IHa-sa sKyid-chu ultimately stems – in cultic-mythic terms – from terrestrial or telluric god gNyans-chen Thang-Iha, the source or genetrix of sKyid-chu river. The telluric nāga played a role by the founding of almost all major seats in Tibet, so e.g. for the building of bSam-yas and e.g. later ‘Bri-gung in Mal-gro, the prior approval from Mal-gro gZi-can was a \textit{sine qua non}. For the position of the nāga in Indian cosmological myths, see Rawlinson 1986.
\item \textsuperscript{55} For completeness, the precious Jo-bo statue in IHa-sa was also euphemized as a Cintāmāni.
\item \textsuperscript{56} This indeed was the case too with the prestigious Ra-sa or IHa-sa founding project allegedly associated with Srong-btsan sgam-po that had required otherworldly or non-human mediation in order to be successful. We may also refer to the prolonged struggle over the appropriation of the utmost prestigious royal \textit{can dgu} regalia and heirlooms in the wake of the break-down of the dynasty; cf. G. Hazod in Gyalbo \textit{et al}., 2000: 192–97.
\end{itemize}
clan-myths but also in the treasury-findings by gTer-ston such as in case of Sangs-rgyas gling-pa (see below). The narrative frame is easily detectable: Like in common treasury detection stories, the precious object or item itself as symbol seems to be constitutional to such stories. For clans and indeed for ruling hegemons such legitimacy stories constituted what might come close to an (often prophetically legitimised and anticipated) self-staging in retrospect where the object’s prior concealment heralded its subsequent discovery, a commonly seen modus operandi of Treasure Revealers or a cherished literary technique employed in historiographic writings, often characterized as vaticinium ex eventu. This very kind of technique not least constituted the strategic technique or the mechanism that governed the detection or revelation of “treasuries” (gter ma) by a Tibetan gTer-ston. In case of the gNyos revelation, it probably served as a sort of foresight as well as a visible symbol of the legitimacy concerning their actual or prospective hegemonic rule and at the same time provided evidence of their material affluence. If this interpretation is valid, did it imply some measure of forgery? If anything, it was rather a strategy for authentication. In its concrete manifestation, the discovery would seem to symbolize either a “gift” – purporting approval of their rule – that had originated from the local genius loci or it may simply have served (symbolically) as a war-trophy. It may be argued that the symbolic skull insignia in the wake of certain rituals therefore had been concealed at the selected site beforehand, possibly accompanied by a “terrestrial probe” (sa dpyad); anyhow, the discovery in no way was arbitrary, it far more can be argued that it in the end was a carefully plotted mis-en-scène enacted by the clan itself, the outcome of which not surprisingly produced a trouvaille ideally serving the purpose of providing an appropriate amount of legitimacy behind already held or sought-for claims.

Whereas GT and some ‘Bri-gung sources confirm that gNyos indeed was the most affluent power in lHa-sa in the mid-12th century – in fact until the mid-13th century, the first actual ruler of large stretches of Chu-shur and lower sTod-lung districts, or as one source puts it, Grags-pa-dpal simply was designated sa chen po ’i bdag po – the majority of Tibetan historiographical writings has nonetheless preserved a slightly different and much briefer story, namely that it was Dvags-po sGom-tshul who entrusted the care and maintenance of Ra-sa ’Phrul-snang directly to Bla-ma Zhang, a transfer that evidently must have followed upon Dvags-po’s demise in 1169 A.D.58 The position of Chos kyi rgyal-tshab which went from Dvags-po lHa-rje via Dvags-po sGom-tshul to Bla-ma Zhang would seem to indicate that the religious responsibility of lHa-sa went between the three figures, a lineage which does not exclude that gNyos Grags-pa-dpal may have held the secular or political responsibility, before also this went into the hands of Bla-ma Zhang. In this last transfer version, however, there is no mention of gNyos. The role of the clan, aside from isolated

57 So e.g. in the dGe-lugs-pa origin myth, its power symbolically was associated with a klu gift, a white conch once detected by bTsong-kha-pa in dGa’-ldan; it later was handed over to his pupils and eventually ended up in dGa’-ldan pho-brang of ’Bras-spungs. Similarly, in the origin myth of Khra’-brug, often described as Tibet’s oldest temple, at the place where the subterranean sea flowed away, a dbang gi rgyal po (synonym for a cintâmant) was found. Finally, a similar precious object is mentioned in connection with the erection in lHa-sa of a “water-abating chapel” by Zhig-po gling-pa in the mid-1550’s; cf. below.

58 Dvags-po sGom-tshul was designated Chos kyi rgyal-tshab – a general term prototypically used in bKa’-brgyud-pa sources to indicate a successor; cf. e.g. dGos ‘dod re skong ma ’i ’gyel ba 548.3-4; also used for the spyan snga of the Phag-gru seat at gDan-sa-mthil. In the same text, Bla-ma Zhang was designated Rgyal-tshab too, i.e. successor of sGom-tshul, in this case in lHa-sa when he was charged with the care of Ra-sa ’Phrul-snang. Following Zhang, mNyam-med Sâkya ye-shes was designated Chos kyi rgyal-tshab. In Tshal-pa sources, the school evidently saw themselves as rightful heirs to sGam-po-pa.
references to dge bs hes gNyos in Zhang’s own writings, is signally and inexplicably absent from these and other Tshal-pa bKa’-brgyud-pa writings. Conversely, the version embedded in gNyos sources, as we have seen, confirms that Bla-ma Zhang initially received one third (or one fourth?) of the “abundant wealth” (arguably here also implying “rights” and “prerogatives” associated with the maintenance of the prestigious IHa-sa sanctum) that was procured from the skull trouvaille or cintâmani of donations. Beyond the conflicting testimonies, the precise succession and modalities in the transfer of power and rights between the spiritual authority sGom-tshul, gNyos Grags-pa-dpal and Bla-ma Zhang still need to be further explored.

Gauged from the above description, it is also unclear to what extent the skull object was taken as a concrete object. Clearly it was seen as an auspicious talisman of sorts, and later certainly as some sort of clan heirloom. But it is not unlikely that the discovery of the skull, perhaps the entire story, in the first place served as an ill-veiled euphemism for the affluence that stemmed from the concrete war spoils or the booty that was confiscated during the preceding battles that had been successfully waged by gNyos on behalf of the ’Bring communities, in other words it constituted a dearly won “war-trophy” – it may be recalled that the skull as cintâmani later was used as or domesticated into becoming an insignia of the dominance or hegemony of the gNyos clan. Following this reading, the distribution of the spoils such as one third to Bla-ma Zhang and his cohorts would suggest to us that the latter had been actively participating in the warfare on gNyos’ side and therefore was suitably rewarded in the ensuing post-war settlement when the conquests were parcelled out to loyal supporters; more than anything, gNyos and Zhang must therefore have joined hands in surmounting common foes, and this also accounts for the smooth transition from gNyos to Zhang in controlling IHa-sa. The gNyos clan was a dominant political factor in this period, and the control and care of IHa-sa indeed would seem to have passed over to the gNyos in the early 1170’s, before the “key” to IHa-sa directly was transferred to Bla-ma Zhang, latest at the point of Grags-pa-dpal’s demise around 1182/83. One key text maintains that this took place at the point when Grags-pa-dpal and his son handed over the gNyos skull (here understood as insignia, by extention, euphemistically standing for their wholesale patronage commitment or obligation) to the latter’s root-teacher, the ’Bri-gung founder in the same year the former passed away – donated possibly in a state of religious favour after he had been urged by his son. There had been many suitors vying for the precious

69 dGe bs hes gNyos in the Zhang writings here refers to IHa-nang-pa, the pupil of ’Jig-rt Sen mgon-po. Among IHa-nang-pa’s writings, we hitherto only have at our disposal a work compiled by him on ’Jig-rt Sen mgon-po’s teachings entitled Tshogs chos Rin chen rgya mtsho commonly included in the latter’s bka’ bum. Beyond that, we are informed that IHa-nang-pa also authored other mainly doctrinal treatises (some listed in ’Bri gung chos ‘byung 321–22). Importantly, IHa-nang-pa’s bka’ bum (or most of it?) has survived, contained in dPal ’Bri gung bka’ brgyud kyi chos mdzod che mo (vol. C1), mainly consisting of an (auto)biography and his 20-chapter pivotal doctrinal treatise Them skas bang mdzod.

60 This seems corroborated when in the mid-1240’s the Tshal-pa were enmeshed in warring skirmishes with the ’Brug-pa of the neighbouring gNam valley, arguably on the side of the IHa-pa. The ’Brug-pa and the IHa-pa again were at odds with one another in the 1250’s, before both districts as one mi sde unit (IHa ’Brug) were donated to Tshal by the Mongols; cf. Part I: fn. 420.

61 Signally, prevailing skull stories further purport that proper skull vessels (often from a deceased master himself) are most apposite in tantric cults, and that it ideally was offered to a saintlike teacher who will make the best use of the skull for the welfare of sentient beings. The gNyos skull donation to the ’Bri-gung founder may evidently represent such an example. Cf. Loseries-Leick 162.

IHa rnam II 3b4–5 maintains that the skull object was wrapped up in silk, donated to ’Bri-gung (i.e. to ’Jig-rt Sen mgon-po) and kept as a precious relic in the local gSer khang. Its whereabouts at ’Bri-gung (and in the current gSer khang)
object (IHa rnam I 37–39), but they had been rejected. Following the father’s demise, the same main source seems to indicate that most of the closest kin and relatives (such as the younger brothers of IHa-nang-pa and most of the gNyos relatives based in Kha-rag) too passed away – a circumstance that suggests to us that they were victims of a prior large-scale warring skirmish that had flared up during and after the father’s demise. The younger brothers of IHa-nang-pa like slob dpon Byang-chub-dpal – possibly foreseen to inherit the gNyos heritage (and as we have seen may have been involved in the detection of the “skull” in the beginning) – displayed little interest in the extensive care needed for the many monasteries under their sway and the result was a gradual loss of these to other hegemonies. Assessing the donation to ’Bri-gung of the precious object in connection with the demise of Grags-pa-dpal and the ensuing warring conflict – it may even be speculated that the old patriarch had not died peacefully in the wake of this “betrayal” – entailing that most of the monastic settlements such as Ra-sa ’Phrul-snang were appropriated by others. The same text suggests that the Thang-skya-mo-ba and the Gru-gu-sgang-pa – both of Chu-shur district, were the temporal winners of the set-back of the gNyos house. Nevertheless, most of the former gNyos settlements, landed estates and monastic centers, were appropriated by other hegemonies in the mid–1180’s – headed by the Ra-sa ’Phrul-snang which, to all appearance was gradually appropriated by Bla-ma Zhang, as said either accompanied by warring skirmishes or, more likely, through peaceful means – at least we possess no information that the many gNyos-controlled sKyid-smad settlements directly went into the hands of the ’Bri-gung-pa, their main seat being located relatively far to the northeast from IHa-sa. At least, it can be noted that the gNyos skull object thus was neither handed over to nor entrusted to Bla-ma Zhang, despite the circumstance that the relationship between the two hegemons at that point would appear to have been amicable. Zhang’s politi at this early point in the 1180’s had not yet fully been established. It also seems to tell us that the skull foremost represented a sort of cornucopia, a fount or a source of material wealth, rather than carrying specific or exclusive religious import. It suggests that Grags-pa-dpal clearly divested himself willingly of the lineage’s heirloom, symbol of the clan’s wealth and prosperity which for many courted misfortune and initiated a temporary decline of the clan. The relevant sources recount that rumours circulated which bespoke that his son IHa-nang-pa indeed had wasted the paternal heritage and wealth.

The seat or headquarter of Grags-pa-dpal and hence of his line was situated in Cha-dkar of ’Bur in sNye-thang of Chu-shur district, where the master resided for most of the 1160’s and beyond. It was here that his famous son IHa-nang-pa was born (major events like this usually take place in a ruler’s private residence). ’Bur is located not far from the Gye-re Valley, the valley with the largest number of Grags-pa-dpal’s clan relatives. In close proximity, we find the settlements of his many lay supporters and the area of sNye-thang was further circumscribed by numerous ’Bring settlements. Grags-pa-dpal’s mother ’Od-gsal-ma stemmed from the rNgog clan of the neighbouring sTod-lung-mda’, a circumstance which would explain a good part of his bonds to the powerful rNgog, who played a major role under the ’Bring communities and altogether smoothed his way to pre-eminence among the sde bzhi communities. Cha-dkar was nevertheless located relatively close to IHa-sa, but not close enough to ensure supervision of IHa-sa itself. As we shall see, once Bla-ma Zhang took over the control in the area in the 1180’s, he wisely established the seat of his hegemony within visual sight of Jo-khang at Tshal Gung-thang, his natal seat that was strategically closer to IHa-sa, right across the sKyid-chu river, doubtless also to ensure a more direct or personal supervision of the holy site.

today remains unknown, and it is to be assumed that it fell victim to and was lost in the throes of the massive destruction of ’Bri-gung during the Gling log of 1290.
From the relevant sources the picture therefore allows us to conclude that it was the powerful and strong-minded Grags-pa-dpal who ruled the lHa-sa area already from the early 1160's until his death most likely in the early 1180's. His life as a ruling house-holder and lay patriarch may have resembled that of Mar-pa in lHo-brag a century earlier and surely was similar to a number of other local patriarchs throughout Tibet in this period. It initially may have been Grags-pa-dpal (continued by his son, see below) who as patron and benefactor subsidized the huge religious “Molasses Festival” (bur ston) that convened at ‘Bri-gung, staged or set up as a prelude to the foundation of the main seat by ‘Jig-rten mgon-po (see below). Invited to this festival and grand religious teaching session were allegedly 55,525 monks (which is probably a distortion; akin to the one which took place in Sham-bu-bcal when the monastery of g.Ya’-bzang in 1206 A.D. was founded; Gyalbo et al. 2000: 77–78), but it tells us how affluent the gNyos were at that point as secular supporters within the larger lHa-sa area. It may even be argued that the gNyos-based hegemony and influence made gNyos the most powerful man in Central Tibet at this particular point, at least a major part of it, in view of the different picture delivered by a number of sources. But these sources probably do not exaggerate when they occasionally stress the prominent position that the gNyos and later the lHa-pa held in wide parts of Tibet until ca. 1250. Grags-pa-dpal thus remained an undisputed clan patriarch, a man of great determination, fortitude and with a stern and evidently earthly character who with different wives fathered up to seven sons – of which four alone died a tender age – and at least one (some sources say two) daughter(s).

Most prominent among these counts rGyal-ba lHa-nang-pa (alia ses gZi-brjyd-dpal, Chos kyi gZi-brjyd; 1164–1224). Born in Cha-dkar of ’Bur,62 his destiny was to establish a sect which became known as the lHa-pa bKa’-bryug, and he rose to great fame, even overshadowing his father on that score. Prophesied as a rebirth of Kṛṣṇācārya by Bla-ma Zhang, he is commonly regarded as one of the eight principal disciples of the ‘Bri-gung founder ‘Jig-rten mgon-po, being counted as one of the members of a triumvirate of rTs-a-ri peregrinating ascetics and “sacred site openers” (the trio was commonly abbreviated gNyos ‘Gar Chos gsum) that thus included gNyos lHa-nang-pa, grub chen mGar Dam-pa Chos-sdings-pa gZhon-nu rdo-rje (a.k.a Šākya-dpal; 1180–1240) and dpal idan Chos kyi ye-shes.

His initial years of studies took him to the nearest surroundings around his home in sKyi-smad district then under gNyos control. Age five in 1168 A.D., gNyos-chen lHa-nang-pa arrived at sKri-gma [sic? = sPro g-ma / 'Bro g-ma] monastery in Chu-shul district,64 where he began his studies

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62 The many names of gNyos chen-po included versatile appellations and later sobriquets such as Sangs-rgyas ras-chen, Brag-sna-ba, rTs-a-ri ras-chen and dPyal-kha chos rje (in Upper sPa-gro Valley of Bhutan, i.e. towards the Jo-mo lHa-ri Massif where a lHa-pa seat had been established in the late 12th cent. that lasted until 1240’s, when it was destroyed by an earthquake and the local headquarters of the lHa-pa was transferred to Rin-chen-sgang of Phag-ri), as well as gNyos-sgom ras-pa.

63 Sources: e.g. Zhang lo tsā ba rnam thar 3a5; lHa rnam l and II, III, passim; DL5 gSan vig III 129b6; bKa’ bryug chos ‘byung I 57b5–58a2; Mig ‘byed ‘ad stong; 27a6–b5; Jo nang chos ‘byung 47–48; ‘Bri gung chos ‘byung 319f. An alternative (and incredible) version of lHa-nang-pa’s pedigree is contained in DL6 (104–05), obviously originating from Padma gling-pa writings where an incongruous attempt is made to link lHa-nang-pa with a royal line in Sa-tham (in ‘Jang or Yūnnan).

64 Also sKhy-dgod sBu-ru/ru or sBur. Cf. fn. 29 above and lHa rnam l 107, 124; II 8b1; III 7b4f. The birthplace is given as Ba-ma sgang-po of Bur.

65 From the still unidentified master Pu-rangs-pa, he took a lay practitioner’s vows to be kept on certain days, such as
under **dge bshes** Pu-rangs. Age six, he received teachings in the Yamāntaka cycle and age seven (**ca.** 1170 A.D.), he was invited to Gung-thang along with his father where he met Bla-ma Zhang, who immediately accorded him a grand reception, positioned the young infant on a high throne and foresaw that he would become a perfect ascetic. This early meeting in 1170 must have coincided with the renovation of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang in around the same period. From his father IHa-nang-pa simultaneously received all the tantric cycles, teachings and relevant empowerments stemming from the great grandfather gNyos lo tṣā ba and with Dan-'bag-pa sMra-ba'i seng-ge, in the field of scholasticism, he studied Madhyamaka and Pramāṇa. At sKar-chung (of Grib), he studied with one g.Yor **dge bshes** Shes-rab 'byung-gnas (the Five treatises of) Maitreya, another of his father's pupils, the otherwise unknown Rong-ka Jo-'bum (of gNyāl?), he heard the Guhyasamāja according to Mar-pa's system and became a master of pranayama; from La-stod sMon-mkhar-pa, he heard the Lam 'bras system according to Ma-gcig Zha-ma. By now a young man of quite impressive stature as it seems, he

on the 8th, the 15th and the 30th of the month. The identification of the corrupt sKrog-ma [read: sKrog-ma? = sProg-ma] is not fully clarified.

It refers to the otherwise little-documented sBrogs/sProgs/sRogs-ma-dgon* of Chu-shur where in the early 1200's, Kha-che Pan-chen Śākyāśrī sojourned (cf. *Yar lung chos 'byung* [B] 170; *Dul ba'i chos 'byung II* 101a4–b1; DL5 III 566b–571a); it may be queried whether or not the latter is identical with *Brog-mo-gnas* /Brogs-ma (however in neighbouring sTod-lung), one of the sites given to lHa-nang-pa's father as estate in the 1160's, but this is still questionable (see above).

A gloss in gNyois rabz identifies it – still questionable – with Grum/Gru-ma-dgon, which may be corrupt for sKyid-smad Grum-bu (or Grum-po)-lung, a site of some note mentioned in medieval literature; cf. e.g. *IHo rong chos 'byung* 610.11; Tsong kha pa'i rnam thar 295, 299, 416; Kaschewsky: 159–60. The latter place refers to Grum-bu-lung of gZad (with [g]Zad as part of Chu-shur rdzong; cf. BA 142, 411).** The Grum-bu-lung again either may refer to present-day Grum-pa Khog-tshang village (located at 29°10′N 90°39′E) of present-day rTa-dkar district in Chu-shur (as suggested in HLSG Vol. 8: 34–35, 49; *IHa sa'i dgon tho 305*) or it refers to Gru-mo-lung Iha-mo-khang (= sKyid-shod Gru-mo-nub?; present-day located in Chu-phu xiang of Chu-shur rdzong; a temple later associated with the neighbouring 17th-century rNying-ma-pa center Chu-shur Thar-pa-gling, located 29°23′N 90°43′E; both seats were e.g. visited by the 13th Dalai Lama in 1912 on his way back to IHa-sa; cf. DL13 507). A pupil of Po-to-ba was known as Grum-bu-lung-pa (at whose feet 'Ba'-rom-pa Dar-ma dbang-phyug later received teachings; cf. *Jo nang chos 'byung* 44–45).

* For clusters sb/spr → sr., i.e. a so-called merger, see also Part I, fn. 403. Srong-ma-dgon of Upper Chu-shul is confirmed by *IHa rste ba rnam thar* 55b4–6, 76b6. It later (around 1594) became known as Cog-mo Byang-chub snying-po ri khrod erected by the local sde pa IHa-yul-pa and used by the ascetics of the local dGa'-ldan-gling.

** The place was also associated with rTa-ston Jo-yes (1169–1230). As said, gZad was an old imperial *yal dpon tsham*, later in the early phyi dar period an area of major importance located in present-day Sras-phu and -mda'. *IHo rong chos 'byung* locates it in adjacent gNam district, which may indicate to us that the borders of the latter district ran differently in former times.

65 One source even maintains that IHa-nang-pa was offered the seat of Gung-thang from Bla-ma Zhang (**sic**) – chronologically impossible; cf. *Jo nang chos 'byung* 47.

66 *IHa rnam II* 2a4 maintains that he was only seven years of age, and that he from **dge bshes** g.Yor (also known as g.Yor-gnyag) received the Pramāṇaviniścaya. Quite an early age to study Dharmakīrti. It is further maintained that he composed a *zin brix*; cf. *Jo nang chos 'byung* 47; *IHo rong chos 'byung* 618. In the same area, in the early 12th cent., sKar-chung ring-mo, a teacher of Bla-ma Zhang, was also active.

67 The "Fruit with Path" here in the system transmitted through Ma-gcig Zha-ma, which gZi-brjed has received from
at one point wished, confident that he would be capable of withstanding the hardship of India, to proceed thither in the glorious trail of gNyos lo tsā ba, but his repeated attempts were hindered by his anxious father who reminded the young son of the many dangers and the hardship involved. He was instead requested to serve as the paternal purohita. His main biography informs us that he excelled in many disciplines and crafts, whether in debate, or in conquering vicious enemies on the battleground or whether indulging in worldly pleasures and female company – a depiction that would seem to resemble the standard description of the earthy life enjoyed by the historic Buddha prior to his worldly renunciation. His father wanted him to settle down and marry, wherefore the son was introduced to lHa-gcig bDe-mchog-ma, a daughter of bTsan-po Mang-bkur – a mighty ruler of numerous districts in sKyi-smad. It was in fact Bla-ma Zhang who intervened, trying to persuade him from entering the bonds of matrimony by alluding to his status and commitments as Kṛṣṇācārya. Disgusted with worldly affairs – again resembling the biography of the historic Buddha – he now more than anything wanted to become a lo tsā ba like his great grandfather and sought means and ways for funding his trip to India – independent of his father evidently or in the wake of the latter’s passing. Wanting to embrace religious life in the same year of 1182 (other sources suggest 1184), he finally was persuaded to seek the presence of the ‘Bri-gung chos rje ’Jig-rten mgon-po in Mal-gro-mdā, a meeting that turned out to be the most decisive spiritual encounter in his life. The latter, however, requested him to complete his preliminary studies of Vinaya. He therefore was dispatched to the latter’s favourite student, Thag-ma dūl ’dzin, also known as dge bshes rDo-rje gzhon-nu at Thag-ma lha-khang in sTod-lung. There he completed his teacher sMon-mkhar-ba rGyal-po-grags; lHa-nang-pa conversely is registered as teacher to Ko-brag-pa (1170–1249/1182–1261 A.D.) in the Ma-gcig-based transmission of Lam-bras teachings. Cf. Stearns 2000: 24.

lHa-nang-pa evidently also received teachings from another pupil of ’Jig-rten mgon-po, namely the influential Zhig-po bdud-rtsi (1149–99); cf. gTer-bdag gling-pa’s gSan yig 20b2–5.

The local king carrying the same name as the first mythic Indian king according to the Buddhist cosmogony Mahāśāṃmata, the fabled progenitor of the Śākya line. It is most unfortunate that we know neither the territories of this local ruler nor his clan affiliation. Other sources maintain that lHa-nang-pa indeed begot a son, but it remains uncertain (the sources are at variance). It does tell us that the father would use matrimonial alliances as a useful strategem in order to solidify his hegemony. Anyhow, after she had conceived, she was dispatched to her own district where she begot one bDe-mchog (? alias gNyos-ston ’Khru lhzig chos rje; 1179–1265 A.D., so according to sMgyos rabs, the alleged fountain-head for the entire later sMgyos line in Bhutan that produced i.a. Padma gling-pa and the 6th Dalai Lama).

DL6 115 conversely maintains that he was offered the daughter in marriage, but refused to settle down just like his father as an household ascetic, he wanted to pursue an ideal ascetic life and subsequently went into the presence of ’Bri-gung-pa.

Thag-ma lha-khang, which is still not precisely localized, yet clearly to be situated in the narrow sTod-lung-mdā area – was a former 11th-cent. centre at least until the 13th century, widely famous all over Tibet for its Vinaya hermeneutics, a settlement of the Rag-si group (cf. Table V.6 below).

The first important (in fact the founding) figure at Thag-ma was dūl ’dzin Thag-ma Ka-ba Dar-[ma] seng[-ge], pupil of sNé u zur-pa (1042–1118) and of Sha-mi sMon-la-mbar (1084–1171); cf. e.g. Lam rim bla ma bryug nram thar 222–223; ’Dul ba’i chos ’byung I 32–34; II 91a1–3; rGyal rabs sog s 3a1; Jo nang chos ’byung 44–45. He at one point sought ’Jig-rten mgon-po and became his pupil. Among his main disciples counted gZhung-pa sTon-ye, rNal-b’yr Byang-chub seng-ge (in the third generation after Po-to-ba (see Shen Weirong 2002: 159), when he erected the dPe’i [sic; ’Phan-yul] Gro[s]-sa dgon-pa (loc. 29°49’N 91°04’E of Gad-po xiang in present-day lHun-grub rdzong);* albeit other texts speak about Sangs-rgyas dBon-ston (1138–1210) or sBsal-ti (of sKyor-mo-lung) as founder).

Thag-ma-pa’s main pupil and successor on the Thag-ma see was Go-sa che-ba (~ Gu-ra-ba / Gu-rub-ba) dPal-chen rDo-rje gzhon-nu (var. dBang-phyug gzhon-nu?). Known also as dPal-chen Thag-ma-pa [phyi ma] rDo-rje gzhon-nu, he too had many celebrated students (cf. lHo rong chos ’byung 409–11; Khu dbon nram thar 432–33; bKa’
his ordination, having rDo-rje gzhon-nu serving as upadhyāya and the sKyor-mo-lung founder sBal-ti Jo-sras dGra-bcom-pa as ācārya (for the latter, see Table V.8 below).

The events surrounding his adult spiritual life are more commonly known, and was marked by incessant peregrination as detailed in his biography. The sources thus draw a picture of gZi-brjijd-pal where he, surely to the discomfort of his father, displayed no particular interest in the paternal wealth or property. By nature – or under the long shadow of his father – he had grown into a feeble person deeply devoted to ascetic life, a person, unlike his assertive father, not cut out for worldly affairs. He or his father initially sponsored large gatherings and donated great wealth to sKyob-pa rin po che Rin-chen-dpal at ‘Bri-gung, a patronage policy which culminated when the father at the close of his life donated the mysterious gNyos cintāmani skull to sKyob-pa rin po che. This charity and patronage polity was repeated and even enhanced by his devoted son to the point of sacrificing his whole life and body to his ‘Bri-gung root-teacher, as custom normally dictated. The kind of gathering mentioned mainly consisted of grand-scale religious banquets, a tradition which in fact has gone down in the ‘Bri-gung history as the “Molasses Festival of the gNyos Clan” (gnyos kyi bur ston);70 and it initially reflected patronage that was yielded in return

brid gdan rabs 152.3–55.3) such as Tshul-khrims rdo-rje (1154–1221/22?), he in fact was temporary successor (rgyal tshab) and a major pupil (from 1199 A.D.) of the ‘Bri-gung founder ‘Jig-ten mgon-po (1143–1217 A.D.) – between 1214–17 and/or 1217–21, he even served in two? terms on the see of ‘Bri-gung as abbot; cf. ‘Jig rten mgon po rnam thar II [B] 154.5; ‘Bri gung gdan rabs III 106–07; ‘Bri gung chos ‘byung 327–28). Most importantly, ‘Ba’-rom-pa Darma dbang-phug was ordained at Thag-ma in the presence of the above first two Thag-ma see-holders.

rDo-rje gzhon-nu’s main tenure at the Thag-ma seat is to be dated to the late 1210’s, and he may well have been Darseng’s son (alt. nephew); further among his pupils included Sangs-rgyas dbon-ston, gNyos lHa-nang-pa, but also Zhig-po bdu-dtsi (1149–99) and Ti-shri ras-pa (1164–1236), etc. A hla ma bZang-[= bZad] yul-ba? (but another bZang-yul is located in Dar-yul of ‘Phan-yul) is mentioned to be active there in the late 13th century; cf. Sangs rgyas ston pa rnam thar 267; bKa’ gdam gos ‘byung IV 76a3; rGya bod chos ‘byung 9a6. At Thag-ma between five hundred and one thousand Vinayadhara are reported to have congregated; cf. ‘Bri gung gdan rabs III 105–07; BA Roerich 79. The relation between Thag-ma and ‘Bri-gung remained close in their founding phase.

* Gro-sa indeed may reflect the site of the imperial sGro clan and their old territories in ‘Phan-yul.

70 The “Molasses or Syrup Festival” (bur ston, i.e. bu ram kyi dga’ ston) at ‘Bri-gung (already known from the earliest years of the ‘Bri-gung founder, but similar banquet gatherings were arranged in lHa-sa too, see above) were repeatedly (one text speaks about seven times in all; four times during the time of Phag-mo-gru-pa at gDan-sa-mthil, i.e. until 1170 A.D. and three times until the demise of ‘Jig-rten mgon-po, i.e. until 1217 A.D.) sponsored by the gNyos’ and usually characterized or accompanied by food distributions and charity not least to the monk community as reflected in sayings that were used in this connection to illustrate gNyos’ generosity: “a hundredfold gift was replaced by thousandfold and thousandfold topped by myriadfold contribution” (brgyud thog stong bzhag stong thog khri bzhag gi ‘bul). The last and most spectacular of such religious charity feasts (akin to or forerunners of the later hugely popular and obligatory mang ‘gyed distributions) was staged in 1215 A.D. at ‘Bri-gung, followed by a final commemorative gathering after lHa-nang-pa’s passing in 1224. As a token of respect, during the 1215 grand festival held on the Bri-gung-thang (i.e. Bla-dbyethang courtyard, at the foot of the slopes of the ‘Bri-gung-mthil monastery), lHa-nang-pa was offered half the main seat (usually occupied by ‘Jig-rten mgon-po) and was crowned as Chos kyi rgyal tshab, as his worthy ‘Bri-gung successor).

The same text offers details as to the actual extent of distribution flowing from the rich gNyos revenue that were collected in their large areas in Central Tibet and lHo-mon, which they controlled. During the first? of the grand ‘Bri-gung festivals, other sources chronicle (DL6 116; sMyos rabs 92–93) that molasses amounting to an arrow-size cubit, etc. was distributed to each of the 55.525/55 monks (other sources mention up to 90.000 monks!) presided over by lHa-nang-pa, and sponsored by him. Large-scale molasses distribution and charity donations are also well documented from the early sTag-lung-pa and Sa-skya-pa traditions.
for religious teachings and guidance. There are fair reasons to assume that Grags-pa-dpal and in particular his son thus remained the single most important benefactor behind the rise of 'Bri-gung in Mal-gro district in its founding phase, evolving in this period into something of a patron-priest or patron-client relationship where the 'Bri-gung revenue to an appreciable extent came from the large gNyos-controlled estates in dBus and from Mon-yul. The ascent of 'Bri-gung in the 13th century as powerful religious seat and as political hegemony - being the only other seat to seriously challenge the Sa-skya position in the later part of the 13th century - not least was grounded in the wholehearted support and backing that 'Bri-gung enjoyed from powerful (and revenue-generating) regional sub-schools not least the lHa-pa bKa’-brgyud-pa.

In the aftermath of the loss or rather the voluntary divestment of the gNyos skull talisman to 'Bri-gung, it was lHa-nang-pa who was targeted for any “ill talk” or malicious gossip and for the unlucky hand in handling a good deal of the patrimonial or inherited share. His one-sided or partisan patronage politics in general soon led to widespread disgruntlement towards his person from other settlements that had not been blessed by similar donations and it is generally maintained that it triggered waning conflicts and thus contributed to the loss of power that had formerly been enjoyed by his line and which had been symbolically invested in or had been represented by the cin tâmanî skull, insignia of the gNyos wealth and hegemony. As said, it was at this junction that Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang went into the hands of the now prospering Tshal. Following these family setbacks and pursuing his ascetic life, lHa-nang-pa remained devoted to spiritual ideals throughout his entire life. His peregrinations included not least prolonged sojourns and retreats at Tsa-ri, to Ti-se and in particular to sPa-gro of Mon-yul (where he allegedly remained for a total of 11 years) in the old estate lands there once tendered to his ancestor gNyos lo tsā ba. Here he should leave behind a strong clan legacy, known and appreciated in the area even today. He was active tendering teachings, displaying numerous ascetic miracles such as reverting the course of the waters at Ram-pa lHa-sdings and in establishing hermitages and recluse convents, or opening up “hidden lands and regions” throughout the remote western and southern Tibet, etc. One source purports that the lHa-pa establishments in fact spread all the way up to the borders of Mi-nyag. The institutions constitute the birth hour of a school which came to be known as convents of gNyos lHa-nang-pa or lHa-pa bka’-brgyud-pa. Later he succeeded, after gNyan-chen thang-lha had accepted to act as patron as it is said, in erecting a hermitage-cloister named IHa-nang which eventually comprised a community with close to one thousand monks (other sources claim up to 5000). At one point,

In the 'Bri-gung founder’s writings, Bla-ma lHa-pa (= lHa-nang-pa) is praised as one of his heartiest spiritual sons, whose service and veneration remained unmatched – clearly a reference to gNyos’ extensive charity and affluent patronage.

Sources: cf. his bkA ‘bum III 582-86; ‘Bri gung gdan rabs III 82, 101; gNyos rabs 36.3-37.1; ‘Brug pa ’i chos ’byung 417.12-14; ’jug rtan mgon po rnam thar II 388.6-389.1= [B] 170.1; ’Bri gung chos ’byung 300; BA Roerich 598-99; mkhas pa ’i dga’ ston 826.18-19; lHa rnam I 42, 125; lHa rnam II 3b5-4b3; III 36a2-3; Sanghabhadra ’i rtags brjod 549-50.

71 Cf. also ’Brug pa ’i chos ’byung 417.

72 At the confluence or estuary of sTod-lung-chu and sKyid-chu in connection with flooding in the lHa-sa area, due to which we included lHa-nang-pa among a number of contemporary “water-controlers” in the area (lHa rnam I 67-69; III 33b6, 35b2; see Chap. 2 below). Prior to this, in the same area, Rva lotsāba is said to have conducted similar feats; cf. Rva lo rnam thar 259.

73 The lHa-pa bonds to Mi-nyag were strengthened through the close and seemingly affluent companion of lHa-nang-pa by the name ’Gar Chos-sdings-pa and his visits to the East.
he was at ‘Bri-gung elected as rGyal-tshab in the wake of ‘Bri-gung-pa’s demise (1117), although this is not confirmed in standard ‘Bri-gung sources. Its assertion is probably the reason why some sources speak about a schism within the ‘Bri-gung-pa, where the IHa-pa constituted one wing that developed its own school and convents. At the close of his life, in 1119 (or 1120) he returned from sPa-gro in Mon-yul and established the IHa-pa heritage seat of IHa Rin-chen-thel in Byang of Central Tibet, in the mountains of the gNyan-chen thang-lha massif, in one of his favourite hermitic areas. At the point of the demise of this great ascetic in 1224, it is recorded that even the ancestral Thang-lha was mourning. It was IHa-nang-pa’s nephew IHa Rin-chen rgyal-po, however, who became his successor and who carried out the legacy of his great uncle and founding figure of the IHa-pa school.

1.4 The IHa-pa Ruling House of the Gye-re Valley in sKyid-smad –
Clan Loyalty and Ancestral Prestige

Given the strong presence and overwhelming influence stemming from the gNyos clan in this epoch, it is small wonder that we regularly come across the name of the ancient house and apparently affluent clan in Tibetan literature: The prestige-conscious G[y]e-re IHa-pa, a hereditary lineage of religious masters, whose residence, landed estate and monastic seat, as we have seen, were located in the Gye-re Valley (G[y]e-re-phu-mdak) and the vicinity of the village of Kun-dga’ grol-mchog (he considered himself a reincarnation of the latter). Among the most famous, awe-inspiring relics possessed by the IHa-pa is a three-storied Chos-rgyal Nor-bzang pho-brang Mansion* of the IHa-pa estate (now in ruins) that developed its own school and convents. At the close of his life, in 1119 (or 1120) he returned from sPa-gro in Mon-yul and established the IHa-pa heritage seat of IHa Rin-chen-thel in Byang of Central Tibet, in the mountains of the gNyan-chen thang-lha massif, in one of his favourite hermitic areas. At the point of the demise of this great ascetic in 1224, it is recorded that even the ancestral Thang-lha was mourning. It was IHa-nang-pa’s nephew IHa Rin-chen rgyal-po, however, who became his successor and who carried out the legacy of his great uncle and founding figure of the IHa-pa school.

74 Its was located in the mountain-range of gNyan-chen thang-lha – regarded as a seat of Avalokiteśvara – on the glacial spur of the Thang-lha pass; cf. IHa rnam ii 7b3–8a4; III 34a5–6. IHa-nang Shel-phug reportedly was visited by the 14th Yangs-pa-can throne-holder Ngag-dbang bka'-shis, see Kam tshang brgyud pa 316a1. The proper identification of the seat still needs to be made. The IHa-thel site is said to have resembled in lay-out the main seat of the ‘Bri-gung-pa.

75 It was also during his reign at Gye-re that another esoteric talismanic treasury – allegedly consisting of genuine “Buddha relics” – i.e. so-called “multiplying remains” (‘phel gzung) that stemmed from the historic Buddha and that had been the rten skal of the latter’s historic patron, King Bimbisāra, etc. – fell into the hands of the IHa-pa, namely Buddha relics as well as 108 statues of Guru Rinpocche once detected by the 12th-cent. gser ston Gu-ru Jo-rtses at Zangs-yag-brag (Brag-dmar Zangs-pa’i rgyal-[n]g Nam-mkha’-rdzongs; a hermitage complex located at IHa-nang-po-rtse-Inga (Ri-bo rTse-Inga; the Tibetan “Wutaishan”), a few miles from ‘U-shang-rdo opposite Gye-re Valley; see e.g. Bya-rigs-pa 2004). The great Jo-nang rje btsun Kun-dga’ grol-mchog Blo-gsal rgya-mtsho i sde (1507–65) in his informative biography chronicles a visit to the Gye-re seat of IHa-nang-pa (he considered himself a rebirth of the latter), and lists its most famous, awe-inspiring relics kept there: a small statue of Avalokiteśvara ‘phel gzung, also a statue of Padmasambhava, known as Nga-thim-ma (“Absorbed-in-Me”), a zhab srye of Tilopā, a stone-statue of Samvara given to Mar-pa by Naropā, and a hand-bell of Sangs-rgyas ston-po. He also personally inspected writings kept there from the pen of IHa-nang-pa. Cf. rJe btsun Kun-dga’ grol-mchog rim thar 196. Another IHa-pa talisman was the Gye-re IHa-pa i bls u g yu, a gift of the telluric gzhi bdag Ra-ma klu-bsdan of the neighbouring gNam valley. Cf. rDo ring rnam thar [B] 363–64.

The IHa-pa served as patrons to this treasure-finder. These objects – considered the most powerful relics possessed by the IHa-pa (i.e. the so-called ‘phel gzung) – was later appropriated by Zhig-po gling-pa (and lists its most famous, awe-inspiring relics kept there: aside from the above Tathāgata ‘phel gung, also a statue of Padmasambhava, known as Nga-thim-ma (“Absorbed-in-Me”), a zhab srye of Tilopā, a stone-statue of Samvara given to Mar-pa by Naropā, and a hand-bell of Sangs-rgyas ston-po. He also personally inspected writings kept there from the pen of IHa-nang-pa. Cf. rJe btsun Kun-dga’ grol-mchog rim thar 196. Another IHa-pa talisman was the Gye-re IHa-pa i bls u g yu, a gift of the telluric gzhi bdag Ra-ma klu-bsdan of the neighbouring gNam valley. Cf. rDo ring rnam thar [B] 363–64.

76 The 17th century?) three-storied Chos-rgyal Nor-bzang pho-brang Mansion* of the IHa-pa estate (now in ruins) is located in Gye-re-mdak at 29°25'N 90°49' (E; 120°7'W; 3a); the valley is now part of Tshan-pa-nang/sna xiang). M. Akester 2004 incidentally designates the Nor-bzang pho-brang Mansion as the gSang-sngags
in sources from the 13th up until the 19th century and thus alludes to the estate of one of the oldest and most prominent aristocratic houses in Central Tibet inhabited and ruled by the even older gNyos gentry aristocracy who once settled there. At the entrance to the Gye-re valley, they had their religious main seat. Initially erected by IHa-nang-pa as a hermitage, following the expansion of their power, it subsequently was expanded into the Gye-re IHa-khang in 1231 A.D. (completed 1244/46 A.D.) raised by IHa-nang-pa's nephew, IHa-pa dBang gi rgyal-po, *alias* IHa Rin-chen rgyal-po (1201–1270 A.D.) and assisted by his pupil and loyal cadre 'Dam-pa ri-pa (1200–1263 A.D.). IHa Rin-chen rgyal-po had sojourned for a longish period in another old estate land of the IHa-pa, the area of sPa-gro valley (IHo-Mon Kha-bzhi or present-day western Bhutan), later he sojourned at IHa-thel in gNyan-chen thang-Iha and finally at the Rin-chen-sgang monastery (erected 1244–46 A.D.) in Phag-ri of Chumbi valley.

Tracing the origin of the IHa-pa, we conclude that they constitute nothing but an offshoot, a separate main patriline of the gNyos clan that, issuing from Kha-rag, had settled in sKyid-smad – south-west of IHa-sa. The specific IHa-pa stemmed from the settlement of one bKra/Ta-gur-rgje (*ca*. late 7th...
IHa Rin-chen rgyal-po played no small role in Central Tibetan politics in the initial Sa-skya-Yuan period. He is reported to have been involved in warring conflict with the 'Brug-pa in the late 1240’s and early 1250’s and it is chronicled that it was rGod-tshang-pa who personally called for a truce by paying his respect to the throne-holders of the G[y]e-re lHa-khang; cf. Table V.7 below. The text reads 1251 (lceugs phag), better is 1252; cf. gNyos gdung rabs 45–46; Petech 1990a: 12–13. However, its historicity is unclear.

Other seats claimed similar feats that in hindsight evidently were associated with cultural or political prestige:

'Bri-gung sources, referring to two successive invasions (the first Hor-dmag led by Dor-ta during the 1240 invasion.

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80 The fourth generation after the progenitor Bya-Khyung-thul dkar-po; see Table 7 below. Cf. VS 163–4.

81 This combined ethno- and toponym on the one hand refers to the local name of the valley where gNyos settled and lHa (of lHa-pa) refers to the theogonic origin of the clan from the 'od gyal lha, similar to other prominent clans which have this metonym in anteposition of their clan name. Another clue to its origin may be from the hermitage of lHa-nang (var. lHas-gnang), attached to and later used as metonym for gZi-brjed-dpal.

82 For the initial abbatial lineage of the throne-holders of the G[y]e-re lHa-khang; cf. Table V.7 below.

83 The text reads 1251 (lceugs phag), better is 1252; cf. gNyos gdung rabs 45–46; Petech 1990a: 12–13. However, its historicity is unclear.
lives of most people and prevented the Mongols from their usual marauding. The prestige won by him for this mediation – true or fictitious – may have been tremendous. The same (apologetic) text even seems to suggest that his loyal assistant 'Dam-pa ri-pa in the period between 1245 and 1263 served as (local?) spyi dpon, a position which subsequently was taken over by one mi dpon Jo-bo rDo-rje-dpal.44 Unable to assess or corroborate the value of the information, it rings true, though immediately in conflict with most sources, which maintain that the Sa-skya-pa, following the devastating 1240 intermezzo, eventually rose to become the most powerful force in Central Tibet, albeit and not unimportant for assessing the role of the lHa-pa – the 'Bri-gung svyan sngag Grags-pa 'byung-gnas at one point should hold a very central position in the initial dealings with

where the 3rd 'Bri-gung throne-holder allegedly intervened, headed by one Hor kyi rgyal-po Khas-te-kha / Kho-le-ta during the 4th 'Bri-gung throne-holder, gCung rin po che (1210–79), and since the latter’s actual tenure was 1255–78, the last invasion either must be identical with the invasion of Tufan (A-mdo) by general Qongridar (Ch. Huanggläser) in 1264 or the punitive incursion in 1267–68, in the wake of the passing of Phyag-na rdo-rje; cf. 'Bri gung gdan rabs l475: III 112, 115–16; Petech 1990b: 18. Si tu bka’ chems 7 ascribes it to the tenure of svyan sngag rin po che.

Conversely, the ‘Brug-pa claim to have rendered service of mediation on that score too and roughly during the same period: cf. rGos thshang rnam thar l157.

sTag-lung sources on the other hand argue that their 3rd throne-holder Sangs-rgyas yar-byon similarly was successful in appeasing the unruly Mongols. It, however, refers to (another) invasion of a Mongol force in 1263 headed by general Du-mur (Temür); cf. lhö rong chos 'byung 498; Sangs rgyas yar byon rnam thar 51lf. One may also consult the impressions left behind in Yang-dgon-pa’s biography. Even to the 3rd Zul-phu abbot Chos kyi byang-chub (ca. 1220–1300) are ascribed similar feats; cf. Zul phu mkhan rabs 9a3–4.

It thus appears that each major monastic seat in Tibet attempted to boast initiative on that score; it is nevertheless not unlikely that different missions may have entered negotiations with the Mongols following the wholesale diditio of all Tibetan centres.

44 gNyos gdung rabs 47–48: spyi dpon of lHa-pa or dBus-gTsang. It remains unclear exactly in which function he was chief administrator. From the notes below, it appears to be a local adm. or secular position in the pre- or initial Sa-skya-Yuan period. A number of candidates may be mooted to identify him: Firstly and most obvious is the first Phag-gru khri dpon rDo-rje-dpal (d. 1266), who in 1254/58 erected an administrative center at sNe’u-gdong. Cf. e.g. Si tu bka’ chems 10–18; Petech 1990b: 88–90; Vitali 2004b: 140.

Secondly, and far less likely – it may allude to the gNyos-affiliated 'Bri-gung dpon po rDo-rje-dpal (fl. late 13th cent, in other words at a point when he was administrator or sgom pa, roughly during the tenure of the 8th and 9th 'Bri-gung throne-holders). This rDo-rje-dpal was a younger brother to Ye-shes-dpal, who had served as administrator for 25 years, partly under the 8th 'Bri-gung throne-holder bCu-gnyis-pa (1278–1314; rl. 1296–1314) where Ye-shes-dpal signally ruled as dhus khri stong thams cad spyi dpon. Here the spyi dpon position seems to be different from the position of the sgom pa or anyhow seems unrelated. In fact, 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 123 mentions Sa-chen rDo-rje-dpal, a blon po of [i.e. under] sgom pa Šákya rin-chen and he theoretically may be the spyi dpon alluded to (cf. 'Bri gung chos 'byung 365). The son of dpon (= dbon?) rDo-rje-dpal was sgom pa Kun-dga’ rin-chen. Cf. e.g. Phun tshogs skra bris rnam thar II 601–02. Evidently, this is the best alternative option, although the chronology is shaky.

Equally possible is his adversary, Ag-len rDo-rje-dpal, the powerful Sa-skya dpon chen (rl. 1290–98).

Finally, another candidate – yet too early to be a serious option and hence not particularly realistic – is a family member of the line of the Mi-nyag or Xixia ruler rGyal-rgod (i.e. Shenzong, alias Weiming Zunxu; rl. 1211–23; d. 1226) called Mi-nyag rDo-rje-dpal who had studied under Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1147–1216 A.D.); cf. the 5th Dalai Lama, Bod kyi deb ther 113.5–12 ( = tr. Tucci TPS 631; with a problematic chronology, however). It would explain Jo-bo or lord (of noble birth – though), rDo-rje-dpal’s grand-son ‘Bum-sde (in the late 1240’s?) was patron to Sa-pa and this line in fact served as patrons to the Sa-skya-s, and following their exodus from Xia established Ngam-ring as main seat of their La-stod Byang-bdag ruling line. This line were great patrons (and in part artists) behind the manufacturing of art-objects, and included rulers like Byang-bdag rNam-rgyal grags-bzang (1395–1425 A.D.), Byang-bdag Nam-mkha’ legs-pa and Byang-pa’i dpon bKra-shis rin-chen, etc.
the Mongols in Central Tibet. In the 1240’s, he was invited to Sa-skya by Sa-paṅ where he was eulogized and commanded their undivided respect (Mig 'byed 'od stong 30a3–5). Corroboration for the prominent position of gNyos in this period may be adduced from the circumstance that 'Phags-pa either in 1244, himself as a minor, or in the mid-1250’s upon his first return from Mongolia in some capacity was involved in the consecration of G[y]e-re dgon-pa. During his visit 1265 to the lHa-pa, the imposing lay-out and perimeter of Gye-re Iha-khang inspired the Sa-skya-pa to use the lHa-pa temple as model for the erection of the lHa-khang chen-mo at Sa-skya,85 erected a few years later. It may therefore be argued that in the initial period in Central Tibet and in the absence of the leading Sa-skya-pa who sojourned among the Mongols, the lHa-pa as ardent supports of the 'Bri-gung-pa – the only serious inner-political challenge to the rising tide of Sa-skya-pa in Central Tibet at that stage – for a short while held large revenue-generating territories under their sway, and wielded strong influence throughout large areas. The nature of the early relationship between gNyos and Sa-skya remains one of the still uncharted questions of 13th century Tibet.

In the late mid-13th century, the territories of the lHa-pa became part of the Tshal khri skor (in conjunction with the neighbouring 'Brug territory in gNam district as part of a mi sde denoted IHa 'Brug, see the App. III and below Map 3a). Following the dissolution of the khri skor structure in the mid-14th century with the emergence of the Phag-gru hegemony, the lHa-pa eventually resumed full control over their estate land and again win a fair modicum of strictly local autonomy, yet the central Gye-re dgon-pa did not survive the vicissitude with warring insurgencies and internal strife that in the 1380’s raged in the present-day Chu-shur district of sKyid-smad.86 The main temple fell victim to a devastating fire during those unruly years, a common outcome of warfare. Its ensuing renovation coincided with its conversion into a dGe-lugs-affiliated centre (thus ensuring adequate spiritual and economical patronage) known as gSang-sngags pho-brang dgon-pa which as institution – as indicated by the name associated with esoteric teachings – survived into our time. For the following period, we only have stray information on the old gNyos land. The Central Tibetan lHa-pa entertained close bonds to the dGe-lugs-pa,87 and like other former independent minor schools, remained a grateful recipient of the

85 It alludes to the visit to Gye-re dgon-pa by 'Phags-pa Bla-ma in 1265 A.D. which inspired the Sa-skya dpon chen Sākya bzang-po to take Gye-re dgon-pa as model for the erection of the lHa-khang chen-mo in Sa-skya. Cf. cf. Yar lung chos 'byung 154–55; mKhas pa'i dga' ston 1367.

86 It may be speculated that the Gye-re temple which served as model was not Gye-re in sKyid-smad, but the Gye-re Glang-ra in gTsang; cf. rGya bod yig tshang 463. The Gye-re Glang-ra temple counts among the early phyi dar foundations (Bu ston Szerb 69), i.e. the later gTsang-stod Gye-re-dgon? cf. Eveding 2000: 9. Klöng-rdol (vol. 'A 445 in his gSung 'bum), however, clearly identifies the model as sKyid-shod Ge-ra [sic] IHa-sa'i Iha-khang. Most likely, deeming the fact IHa Rin-chen rgyal-po at that point was considered one of the most powerful and affluent men in Central Tibet (cf. e.g. IHo rong chos 'byung 426.11–16), it shall be argued that it was the spacious lHa-pa seat that served as model. This seems confirmed by gNyos rabs 47.4 which remarks that the same 'Phags-pa, as a minor, had been involved in some capacity in its consecration in and around 1246.

87 The war was the outcome of prolonged internal anarchy in the lHa-pa controlled areas in the period ca. 1350–80, involving many settlements in the Chur-shur area; cf. Table V.7 below.

88 A statue of gNyos clan Protector Traksad Mahākāla was e.g. erected in Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang by Gye-re lHa-pa (lHa ldan dkar chag 27.7–9). Its donation clearly reflects the wish of the lHa-pa to contribute to the refurbishment of the lHa-sa sanctum. One of the ancestral gNyos cycles was known as the Traksad gNyos lugs; cf. App. l.

The data available are scarce: G[y]e-re-pa Grags-pa tgya-mdzo (1552–1623; born at Gye-re dgon-pa) was the 33rd dGa'-ldan throne-holder. The Gye-re IHa-pa seat was in 1569 visited by 'Bras-spungs chos rje bSod-nams tgya-mdzo;
overall patronage and support proffered by the dGe-lugs-pa, at least initially and throughout 15th and part of 16th century, but we also possess information of their apparent sectarian vacillations or shifting loyalties already in the 16th century, which appear to reflect some hesitations on their part in choosing side strategically in the struggle for supremacy in the IHa-sa area during this period (cf. e.g. Pad dkar rnam thar I 100b2–101a3).**

** Among their known figures IHa rin po che or gNyos-ston IHa dbang rgya-mtsho, repeatedly mentioned at the close of the 16th cent. where they were active in IHa-sa. He (here called IHa bsTan-pa'i rgya-mtsho; id.?2) transmitted the Trakṣad protector cycle of the gNyos to Tāranātha. A IHa-pa regularly mentioned in the literature was the ruler Gye-re IHa dbsun or “noble/prince monk” Srong-bsan Tshangs-pa who both invited and rendered service to the 4th Dalai Lama in the early 1600’s (cf. DL4 33a1–3; dGa' ldan chos 'byung I 36b5) as well as the influential zhabd drung IHa-pa sprul sku incarnations, Blo-bzang bstan-pa dar-rgyas and Blo-bzang 'phrin-las during the same epoch.

The G[ye]-re IHa-pa kept playing a role locally in the following centuries (and a larger role in the present territories of Bhutan until at least the 17th cent.), at least until the 19th century. During the tenure of the 13th Dalai Lama, but probably already earlier in the 18th cent., the Gye-re temple had become a dependency of Se-ra. In the same period, a part of the area (generally known as G[y]e-re Shar-pa and G[y]e-re IHa-pa) finally, through intermarriage, became landed estate dependencies (gzhis lag) – akin to a latifundium – associated with the IHa-klu noble house (yab gzhis). One of the last references to the Gye-re IHa-pa house dates from 1913 A.D. in connection with some governmental reshuffling; cf. DL13 523.
Map 3a. The area of "lHa 'Brug" in sKyid-smad
Photo: Google Earth 2006

Map 3b. The Gye-re Valley in sKyid-smad.
Old estateland of the lHa-pa ruling clan
Photo: Corona Satellite 1970

7b. Ruins at Gye-re lHa-pa (2002)
2. WATER MONSTER’S WRATH – NATURE’S CURSE:

lHa-sa Diluvium –
Concentric Cosmology,
the Birth of Flood Control Politics
and the Survival of a Holy Site

Before the water overflows, a dike must be erected
chu ma shor gong nas rags rgyag dgos pa
bsTan-'dzin dpal-'byor, rDo ring rnam thar 168
[Tibetan proverb]

Once lHa-sa was submerged in water, Bar-skor
ring could only be crossed in a coracle
mTshur phu dgon gvi dkar chag 572

Notwithstanding the vicissitudes of the key sanctum or “national shrine” of lHa-sa during the unruly 11th century, at a point when it was unclear who initially had been in charge of the site, one source ominously claims that it, at one point, was without “owner” which means proper care. We know that the unprotected site soon was dragged into the mire of warring conflicts, in a period coinciding with the first serious attempts to reconstruct ideological links to its glorious imperial past. It cannot surprise when we recall the site’s historic position, in fact Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang can boast of a long and rich past. Its erection in the middle of the seventh century documents - both in original concept, structure and in artistic lay-out - the strong Nepalese artistic and cultural influence that prevailed at this very early stage of the civilisatory history of Tibet. In the ensuing centuries – in particular in the post-dynastic period – its central position ensured it an unrivalled position both as an epitome and monument of national heritage and legacy, first for the introduction and gradual spread of Buddhism, later for its geo-political importance in the conceptual formation of a center-oriented model in the struggle for hegemonic supremacy in Central Tibet. It seems just to maintain that generally the site as an emblem of national prestige, lineages of spiritual masters and local rulers were vying for supremacy in providing patronage and in controlling the site (cf. also R. Vitali 1990: 69-83). Remarkable is the unanimously high esteem it commanded – similar only to the other early national edifices such as bSam-yas and in part the Khra-'brug vihāra – from all denominations and schools down through history. Its key image, the Jo-bo statue of Śākyamuni, counted as the country’s most sacred object, the cynosure of countless devoted pilgrims for over a millennium and a permanent vortex of Tibetan spirituality. The esteem and prestige of the sanctum as such naturally hailed from the central statue, and its numinous properties that sanctified the site and its surroundings. However, its rise as a national sanctuary primarily was linked to its central role in the rise and formation of the cult of Avalokiteśvara in Tibet initiated and both forcefully and intellectually boosted with the arrival of Aτiśa in Tibet, the one person who should become its most vigorous promoter, actively assisted, as we shall see, by his favourite disciple and successor, the patriarch 'Brom-ston-pa. Knowledge of the vicissitude of the site during the dynastic time, initially merely known as ra sa (or lha sa) [d]pe/ spe har (cum var. lect.), i.e. the lHa-sa vihāra99 called accordingly in emulation of its Indian vihāra

99 This simple name “the Ra-sa Temple” found on imperial inscriptions and earlier documents appears to be another indication that the epithet 'Phrul-snang, a metonym that originated or that was coined in connection with the introduction of the Indic-Nepalese legend of the Svayambhūcayita (see next note), was not in use in the earliest period. Whereas it may be contended that the same artists may have brought this popular legend and motif along to lHa-sa in the 7th century.
idiot, is deplorably sparse and fragmentary as indicated in previous chapter. We are informed that it suffered destruction in the wake of the factional dispute in the late 10th or early 11th century and from the onset of the bstan pa phyi dar period our knowledge of the shrine is intimately linked with the history of its ever-changing architectural, artistic and cultural refurbishments and renovations, a knowledge that increases proportionally with the increase in the number of informative sources. Generally, our picture of the site and its history has been enriched by a relatively popular mid-17th-century pilgrim book or guide written by the 5th Dalai Lama – the hierarch who would prove to be mainly responsible for elevating the site into becoming the key state shrine and to incorporate it into his elaborate ritual state calendar. Available also are a number of historiographical treatises that offered in-depth descriptions of the shrine and its mythic or miraculous origin (‘phrul snang),\(^9\) that gave it its name. Further, we also have at our disposal stray texts which describe the occasional renovations or refurbishment of the cult shrine in the wake of deluge-destruction such as the one written by Sangs-rgyas gling-pa and the one by the 13th Dalai Lama, among others (see also the convenient but not exhaustive survey by Shakabpa in his Guide). We finally can avail ourselves of a number of ritual manuals that in one way or another are dedicated to a description of the pre-emptive ways and means of protecting the shrine from natural or elemental menaces, in particular its foremost natural enemy water (or rather river-waters) and deluge that required extensive and incessant flood diverting measures (chu bzlog, chu bsgyur) and endorsed the erection of dikes. As it turns out the lha-sa history and society proved to be a diluvian one.

\(^6\) The lHa ldan dkar chag by the 5th Dalai Lama is a comprehensive 17th-cent. inventory of the central sanctum and its numerous chambers and annexes. It may have replaced another, similar work dealing with the site compiled by Pha-bong-kha dPal-'byor lhun-grub (1561–1637 A.D.), also titled ‘Phrul snang gtsug lag khang gi dkar chag (deplorably non-extant) or the 5th Dalai Lama may have reworked the latter and finally had it published in his name; cf. dPal 'byor lhun grub rnam thar 25a6.

\(^9\) In the original concept behind the mythic genesis of Ra-sa ‘Phrul-snang (i.e. “Miraculously Manifested / Emerged,” a epithet still in common use) as it is contained in the earliest (11th cent.) gter ma sources such as the Mani bka’ yum, Ka khol ma, and Nyang ral chos ’byung, etc. (ref. in TBH Sørensen 264–65), it is narrated how initially the temple rose [self-]manifestly from the middle of a lake as a light-emitting caitya. This concept has been adapted from or inspired by the origin myth of the Swayambhūcāitya or Self-Evolved Stūpa (cf. e.g. the version Svayambhūdārmadhātusamutpat-tinidānakeṭāhā (8r4–7) of the Svayambhūpurāṇa) which narrates how similarly the latter as a crystalline (sphatikamaya) and light-shaped (jęvitrūpa) caitya rose autogenous (svayam abhūt samutpannah) in the middle of a lake; see von Roepstor 2000: 5-6, 254; for a source survey, H. Decler 2000. In its Tibetan adaptation, a ring is thrown into the ‘O-thang sea by the queen, modified from the Swayambhūpurāṇa where a lotus seed is cast by Tathāgata Vipaśvin. It would be worthwhile to conduct a close comparison of different topical and narrative elements in either legent. The shared motifs, the outcome of cultural loan, cannot surprise if we recall that the Ra-sa vihāra was erected by Nepalese artisans who employed Indic/Nepalese models and conceptions.
2.1 Genesis of IHa-sa:
Ocean’s Drainage, Cosmos’ Dramaturgy and
the Sanctification of Space

It is still relatively unclear what settlements actually existed along the marshy riverland of the IHa-sa Valley prior to the erection of the Ra-sa sanctum in the 7th century. The Dunhuang sources are largely silent, allowing for no clear picture. It not least was the antecedent sKyid-chu river (i.e. the river of sKyi-dshod district, i.e. ancestral land of the sKyi clan) which cut its NE-SW winding course through the valley floor that gave the district its decisive contours and topographic features. The narrow IHa-sa area during the imperial epoch was known as the landed territories of the ancestral dBa’s (var. sBa, dBas) clan (see TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 237) and it probably remained their homeland for a lengthy period, at least until the Yar-lung kings set up more permanent residences in the area. Looking further back in time, excavations unearthed in the closer IHa-sa area as well as findings in the wider dBu-ru district, however, suggest (pre-)historic human settlements dating from the times of late Paleolithic, Neolithic culture and from the Early Iron Age. In the Holocene epoch, traces of neolithic culture are verified by farming, pottery and cattle breeding in the valleys, cultures that had vanished before the first recorded settlement took place in the 7th century. Yet excavations in the IHa-sa area, in the northern suburb close to Chag-grong (also at Glang-ru and at Rags towards Yer-pa) have displayed late neolithic findings (more than 4000 years old) of stone spades, knappers, vessels etc. indicative of a thriving agriculture but also of a fish-hunting civilization in the nearest environs of IHa-sa. Only further archaeological and pedological evidences, supported by detailed palaeoecological, limnological and not least palynological investigations related to the physiography, geomorphology and the vegetative lay of the narrow IHa-sa landscape during the late Holocene shall inform us about shifting climatic structures or anomalies prevailing during those remote periods. The data in turn may be indicative of the preconditions reigning during the area’s incipient settlement history and the extent of its flooding vulnerability.

8. The dried-up 'O-thang lake upon which Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang was built.
Wall-Painting in Eastern Srid-zhi'i
Phun-tshogs Hall in the Potala
(sMan-gsar Style, executed 1648)

92 Archaeological findings (including different stone tools, bones, grinding stones, late Neolithic pots as well as bronze and copper arrowheads, clay masks, stone-coffin tomb; etc.) are documented from Rags-mda’ and Chos-gong village (the latter due west of Se-ra monastery, discovered 1984); cf. P. Aufschnaiter, East and West 7 (1956); Chan 1994: 375–77; Chayet 1994: 48–50; Precious Deposits I: 44f. Chinese estimates suggest human settlement in the area in late Neolithic time and as early as 2nd to 3rd century agriculture and cattle breeding was practised; Huang Weiwen, The Early Paleolithic in China (The Quaternary Research 2 (1989): 237–42).
It has since long been widely recognized that important cultural insights can be gained from detailed studies of the ecological context in which civilizations were born and prospered. Still short of such analyses, all we know is that later Buddhist historiography—our main sources along with the Dunhuang materials—merely chronicle the site’s relatively recent settlement history, namely the initial conquest and occupation of the valley in the wake of a gradual transfer (along what may be designated Tibet’s “Royal Path” or via regia) that passed from Yar-lung, through ’On and rGya-ma Valley until the royal entourage and the kings reached lHa-sa and set up the new residence there; cf. TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: App. II) of the royal main seat from the Yar-klung Valley at a particular point in the royal line that initiated with the presence on one of the hill-tops in the valley-floor, namely of a castle complex (sku mkhar) linked to King Srong-btsan sgam-po on the Red Hill (dMar-po-ri), the predecessor of the later Potala Palace. But the civilizatory and cultural history of lHa-sa should initiate with the building of the sanctum. The stories detailing its foundation—overly mythographic—were arguably compiled in the 11th century, having in part been based upon late dynastic, orally transmitted narratives and their compilation coincided with or were accompanied by the execution of a series of contemporary renovations of the sanctuary including narrative murals limning its origin as well as containing other moral-edificatory and aetiological stories executed in dynastic temples during renovation in the 10–11th century. It is therefore not amiss here to turn our attention briefly to these literally reworked and mythographically couched histories concerning the origin or genesis (byung khungs) of the Ra-sa sanctuary and hence the incipient beginnings of lHa-sa as urban enclave; it can altogether be surmised that the narrative descriptions certainly have older roots, yet they evidently received their final draft in the early post-dynastic centuries.

In retelling the origins of the lHa-sa site from the vantage point of the 11th century, the focus in the narratives initially was on its idiosyncratically topomantic distinctiveness in the overly mythically layered landscape of early Tibet, being linked with the grandious and radical process of implanting Buddhism onto Tibetan soil. The mythic narrative behind the drainage story of the subterranean lake (or ocean) is well documented and repeatedly told and therefore shall not be reiterated here. In the popular and telling metonymic depiction or hypostatization of Tibet as a “supine demoness” (srin mo gan rkyal du nyal ba) (cf. Aris 1979; TBH Sørensen 253f. and App. I in TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005 for details behind this ideology) – an imagery and classification that evidently was steadily elaborated and revised during the early post-dynastic centuries – the shrine was seen to have been raised upon the very “heart-blood” of the demoness. The ideology behind this depiction bespoke that the local territory, the home of the local telluric lords (sa bdag) inhabiting the site in the topographical and territorial lay of the land, had assumed different forms – whether in the form of rocks, cliffs, valleys, rivers or very often mountains, etc., employing an imagery where the “ominous signs” (sa dgra) were compared – in tangible mimicry of nature – to the topographic configuration and formation of certain bodily limbs and features, whether human or animal and later intended to resemble certain Buddhist emblems raised as powerful apotropaion. The focal points behind this scheme surely had different sources of inspiration. The suppression of the concentric ensemble of sites that were considered key focal points compared to me btsa’ or moxabustion in a healing process fixed upon “a hypostatized body” of Tibet; an imagery of the suppression of nature and landscape is thus envisaged, in which an adequate mirror of the territorial expansion of the empire is presented. The set of three concentric squares arranged around a matrix governing the “supine or prostrate demoness model” (i.e. 0 (= center) + 12) has, as is well-known, been both ably and cogently discussed by Aris (1979:15f.). He has drawn interesting parallels to the territorial
conception and concentric (sifang) models prevalent in ancient imperial China where cosmomagic models were developed which carry witness to the widespread existence of territorial schemes in state building and imperial urban planning. It were models that attempted to bring into reality a reduced version of cosmos through the imitation of a celestial archetype (cf. Wheatley 1971: 411f.). However, aside from Princess and Geomancer Kong-jo’s celebrated involvement in the birth of the temple in the heart of IHa-sa (this may well represent a disjunct myth), it still remains unclear to what extent, if at all, the underlying concept or model derived from Chinese sources or not. The original quadripartite model may well be exclusively Tibetan and as model may as well have served the body of a vertebrate or other animal, a quadripartite concept of a “body” as or in form of a “territory” which was always conceived of as concentric.

Whatever the foreign origin of a central part of this basic concentric scheme, an initial, arguably older — on its side based part on indigenous archaic models, part on Indic-oriented cosmic, center-oriented — hybrid models behind the demoness representation is euphemistically represented in what shall be aptly called the IHa-sa Mandala Zone scheme, a “quadripartite or pentadic” construct that

93 In a gradually unfolding territorial sanctification of Tibet (i.e. its sacred geography), numerous areas and pilgrimage sites too underwent similar recordings. One example was the ‘Bri-gung Mandala Zone around the ‘Bri-gung-mthil seat.

Tradition commonly imparts to us that the origin of this “mandalic” structure goes back to the sage or wise-woman Kong-jo’s geomantic scrutiny (sa dpyad) of Tibet and specifically the IHa-sa landscape where the Ra-sa sanctum was considered the concentric epicenter of the surrounding landscape and where evolving concentric sets of cardinal points — each dotted with a number of fixed sacred centres — conceived of as protective zones around IHa-sa, were made out; cf. App. IV: Graph 1 and the discussion there. This pattern we shall aptly call the IHa-sa Mandala Zone. The language used in these descriptions allows for no other interpretation, although the native Tibetans, so it appears, employed it neither as a technical term, nor as a fixed political metaphor nor as a toponymic metonym specifically for the zones or districts circumscribing the IHa-sa Valley.

On a local level, IHa-sa (Ra-sa) was conceived of as a mandala as may be referred to in the name of the inner courtyard (variously spelled [IHa-sa / IHa-ladan / Chos-'khor chen-po) dkyil 'khor sdings, *steng, *mthil) of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang, the epicentric or cosmocentric navel, omphalos (ite gnas) or central axis (i.e. universalis columna) and hence very heart of IHa-sa. Although the concept thus seems very old, its common use appears to have come into full and conscious usage only during the establishment of the dGa'-ldan pho-brang rule, wherefore the assumption that the Nepalmandal scheme at this point gradually may have served as model is not entirely unfounded.

It is likely that the mandalic concept applied to Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang at the earliest is an 8th-cent. invention, despite the description delivered e.g. in bKa’ thang sde lnga 156–57. It was in the IHa-sa dkyil-'khor-mthil/sdings* or Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang’s “Mandala Zone” that selected monks and hierarchs regularly conducted both secular and religious state rituals (bstan srid kyi sku rim, gzung gi sku rim); for instance those conducted upon the request of the 5th Dalai Lama. such as gTer-bdag gling-pa’s long-life rites and ganacakra presided over by the 1st Pao-chen, to mention a few. It was also the site where secular patrons and their client priests conjointly (mchod von lhan cig) conducted such rituals already during the pre-pho brang gzung period so in the early 1600’s (see e.g. dPag bsam rnam thar 54b3; sTag lungchos ’byung / 740).

It is reported that this inner courtyard (i.e. the Inner Hall, ‘du khang or mandapa) incidentally contained a small stone that was designated “the navel of the earth” (sa ’i lde ba) – it evidently refers to the stone-slab in [the north-east corner of] the dKyil-'khor-mthil Hall in the ‘O-thang rgya-mtsho Iha-khang that usually was a gateway accessing the alleged subterranean ocean; this would seem to aptly equate an axis mundi and allude to the site’s purported cosmocentrism; the stone (and its underlying history) is unknown today in Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang. In fact, as part of the epithe of IHa-sa — the stone conceptually merged with the site — was later known as Bod yul sa ’i lde ba rdo rje gdan chos ’khor dpal gvi IHa sa; cf. e.g. sTag lungchos ’byung (A) 1516. See further M. Akester’s note in Alexander 2005. See also Fig. 31.

* It was here (in the 1080’s?) during the first post-imperial renovation that Zangs-dkar lotsāba carried out artistic refurbishments and e.g. erected a Kashmiri-styled Vajradhātu chapel; cf. Tāranāha rnam thar 298a3–4.
received its final form in the 17th century and which is repeatedly mentioned in the literature, but a matrix or model which, incidentally, had its precedents or parallels throughout Asia, where the cosmic-hegemonic model as concept served to form what Tambiah not inaptly has called “a galactic polity” (Tambiah 1976: 102f.; 1977). This localized cosmocentric matrix had a division, according to perspective, into four (if including the center into five) sections, in other words it constituted a quincunx of four cardinal points with a zenith as a fifth geocentric locus. To what extent the widely known Nepalmanda scheme — conceived already in the Licchavi period (7-8th century) and itself modified down through the medieval period — served as model (itself reflecting the idealized state concept and political theory detailed in the classic Arthaśāstra by Kautilya) and to what extent it was conducive to influence the initial conception of the Tibetan model remains to be clarified.

The outer cardinals of the IHa-sa Maṇḍala Zone (see App. IV for further details) were physically marked by four mountains which encompass the epicentric IHa-sa (C): these were situated in the areas of Lower sTod-lung (W), Nyang-bran/Dog-sde (N), Ba-lam (E) and Grib (S):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Nyang-bran/Dog-sde (N)} \\
sTod-lung (W) &- IHa-sa Sanctum (C) - Ba-lam (E) \\
Grib (S)
\end{align*}
\]

This centre-periphery model basically was cosmogonic in nature, and with its orientations and horizons may well have had rudimentary precedents in the history of Tibetan society and civilization (Allen 1978). It fundamentally reflects a notion of cosmos, a local microcosmic paradigm or perspective which was considered complete as a mimicry or as a representation of the outer cosmos as a whole. It largely resembles the concept of a celestial archetype, of archaic ontology and the symbolism of the center as formulated by Eliade.\(^3\) The full “cosmic” intactness originally intended to indicate some sort of universal harmony or idealized equilibrium by creating an empowered site, a “sacred zone” or terra sacra in and around the Jo-bo sanctum.\(^4\) As a demarcation between the sanctified and civilized vs. a less civilized or a savagery world, the process and its cult eventually turned profane (hostile) space into sacred (auspicious) space. This exactly was the empowering and transformational process that the landscape of IHa-sa was seen to undergo and as an imagery for the introduction of Buddhism unto Tibetan soil, the srin mo depiction underwent major changes.

\(^3\) Somewhat along the lines of the process taking place in China. “Before territory could be inhabited, it had to be sacralized, that is cosmicized. Its consecration signified its “reality” and, therefore, sanctioned its habitation; but its establishment as an imitation of a celestial archetype required its delimitation and orientation as a sacred territory within the continuum of profane space.” Cf. Wheatley \textit{op. cit.} 417. This could be effected only in relation to a fixed point. See also the classic study by Arthur Wright, The Cosmology of the Chinese City (in W.G. Skinner, ed., \textit{The City in Late Imperial China}; Stanford Univ. Press, 1977: 33–73). Similarly, a process thus can be observed in China, where Ch’\u2019an masters were engrossed in enshrining relics and in erecting receptacles in order to fix chthonic influences and create sacred spaces; cf. e.g. B. Faure 1987: 355.

In lHa-sa itself, a number of concentric quadripartite structures later developed, all attempting to circumscribe the Jo-khang as an *axis mundi*. In the larger perspective, as elsewhere formulated by Tambiah (*op. cit.* 110–111), numerous samples could be cited to the effect that this center-periphery scheme served as an ideal model and as a point of departure for state or nation building, being conducive to linking and conjoining a spatial relationship with a distinctive conception for social and political relations. In its Tibetan adaptation, the scheme proved useful in smoothing the transitional process that gradually turned lHa-sa into the political and cultural center of the country. And it was the same centripetal forces surrounding this unrivalled mythic and ceremonial center that eventually turned the *sanctum* into a matrix for nuclear urbanism. It was only natural that the settlement of other shrines around Jo-khang in lHa-sa, aside from the *sde bzhi* communities, congregated here in the course of time, contributing to the development of the site through the synergetic process of synoecism. Incidentally, by way of extension, once the center developed, the peripheral polities or satellites that evolved around the lHa-sa zone themselves emulated similar models, with their own center and outer satellite zones.

The site of lHa-sa down through history has been characterized by various epithets. Its centripetal role and the implications of its cosmological model to represent the totality paved the way for the creation of such euphemizations. The metonyms reflect the religious and geo-political idealization that characterized the site down through history and hence contributed to its development into a key national site. Some were ideological and strictly Buddhist in concept such as the idea of lHa-sa as a spiritual focal point in form of a Tibetan Vajrāsana or (Bod kyi) rDo-rje-gdan, the equation with the cultural center of Buddhist India where the Buddhas of the Fortunate Age are considered to gather or the concept that lHa-lDan lHa-sa is considered a Dharmacakra or Chos-'khor – on a par, to be true, with bSsam-yas and Khra-'brug – a holy pilgrim site wherefrom the Wheel of the Teaching [of Buddha] revolved and was disseminated. At least from the time of Bla-ma Zhang (so in Zhang’s writings and e.g. in his biography of Dvags-po sgom-tshul), but arguably even earlier, the Ra-sa *vihāra santum* was addressed *bstan pa'i gzhi mo lHa sa'i mthil*, i.e. the heart of lHa-sa was considered the “Fundament of the Teaching” (*bstan pa'i gzhi mo*)73 or *Sangs rgyas*.

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72 It was Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang which was considered the quintessential Tibetan Vajrāsana; cf. e.g. *lHa lidan dkar chag* 33; *DL9* [B] 710. Still, a number of local Tibetan establishments and centers in Tibet down through time were euphemized as rDo-rje-gdan (the Adamantine Seat of the Buddhist world), such as Gong-dkar rDo-rje-gdan (erected by Thu-ston Kun-dga' rnam-rgyal, 1432–96), rTa-nag rDo-rje-gdan (est. by Pha-rgod Kun-dga' bzang-po, great-grandfather of the 2nd Dalai Lama) and as equation we find it associated with Rva-lung, the main seat of the 'Brug-pa but also the Sa-skya main seat (cf. e.g. Seng ge rgyal po rnam thar 314.5–315.3; Mus chen rnam thar 452.3) as well as with the main-temple of sTag-lung, and even Byang bDe-chen Yangs-pa-can of the Zhva-dmar hierarchies. In sum, all ambitious main seats in Tibet almost routinely associated themselves with the prestigious Vajrāsana seat.

73 rDo-rje gling-pa from a late 14th-cent. perspective portrays the celebrated lHa-sa site in full: |chos 'khor lha sa rdo rje gdan | sākya thub sku tshab jo bo rin chen bzhugs | u rgyan ngo bo bla ma zhang gi gnas | mdo dang ngsags kyi rgya mitsho lta bu gzhi | Cf. his *Thar pa'i rgyun lam* 252.2–4). Noteworthy here is the use of the then still-valid (late 14th cent.) designation of lHa-sa as pilgrimage site of Bla-ma Zhang.
kyi bstan pa thams cad kyi ma mo, in later dGa’-ldan gzhung texts Ra-sa is similarly denoted Bod gangs can gyi lde ba or cosmocentrically the Chos-’khor lHa-sa’i sa’i gnad, later even as lHa-ldan rgyal khab, now in order to convey its state-like status.98 In the same circles, older toponymic characterizations developed further.99 lHa-sa is similarly denoted the “life-pole” or yaṣṭi of Tibet (just like Yer-pa is the life-pole of lHa-sa in cultic interdependence), which appears to bespeak that lHa-sa, similar to the indispensability of a yaṣṭi in the construction of a religious sanctuary or receptacle, was considered a sine qua non for the country’s bare survival, a raison d’être within a larger Tibetan cultural context. Concurring with this end yet strictly more political in concept is therefore the euphemism or metonym that bespeaks lHa-sa/Ra-sa as constituting “the root and branches (rtsa lag) of benefit and happiness (phan bde) in Tibet,”100 in other words the very reason and fundament for happiness and prosperity in the country. The latter concepts may in fact boast old roots in Tibet too, as they were already conceived in the 12th century at the very latest, yet they should here not be regarded as mere standard clichés and formulae of eulogy. Elevated as a center and symbol of national heritage and as a source whence prosperity can be sought, the latter concept in the 16th century became the starting point for a protracted rivalry for ultimate supremacy between competing sectarian factions and ideologies, the antagonists foremost being represented by the dGe-lugs-pa vs. in turn the Karma-pa and the ‘Bri-gung-pa backed by their local lay rulers, a rivalry that eventually translated into a prolonged conflict over the control and sovereignty of the site (pars pro toto of the whole of Tibet). The ensuing supraregional feuds in the 17th century would find their temporary culmination in the theocratic rule of the dGa’-ldan pho-brang government (see below), but also in this case it was a rise as a hegemony born from and secured through the intervention and participation of foreign powers, the curse of Tibetan politics.

2.2 Divine Foresight:
Providence and Prophecies of Guru Rinpoche and Pre-emptive Strategies

In connection with the formulation and description of the erection of the sanctum, the question of its perpetuation and survival was addressed from the very outset. In the early phyi dar period, when the mythic-ideological basis and its interpretative foundation behind the introductory

98 Cf. e.g. ’Bri gung gdan rabs III 294.
99 Combining both the Ra-sa sanctum and dMar-po-ri: gangs ri dpal dang ldan pa’i phreng bas ’khor mo yug tu dkrigs pa’i yal kham kun gyi mchog rab dam par gyur pa skyid shod nor ’dzin gvi lde ba lha ldan spral pa’i gtsug lag khang dang ’phugs pa’i jig rten dbang phyug gi pho brang dmar po ri; cf. e.g. ’Dzam gling rgyan geig 95.
100 The “root and branches” imply the totality of an entity. Cf. e.g. DL2 551–553, 618. An old epithet of lHa-sa, bstan pa’i rtsa lag is e.g. documented in the 14th-cent. Zhang biography dGos ’dod re skong ma’i ’grel ba 548.6. Later as concept used by Sangs-rgyas gling-pa and Thang-stong rgyal-po among others. It was reapplied to include other imperial royal temples such as dBu-ru Ka-tshal and Khra’-brug; cf. ’Bri gung gdan rabs III 200.

To be true, it may also be taken in a very general sense since the phrase is also (at least at some later point) applied to other key sanctuaries, the Nepalese Bya-rung kha-shor or Bodhnath too was called bstan ’gro’i phan bde’i rtsa lag; cf. Mi dbang rtags brjod 257b2–3. Ultimately, the epithet in actual fact is an attribution to the two precious Jo-bo statues in lHa-sa; cf. e.g. Phan bde’i rtsa lag Jo šākya rnam s kyi bstan bzhugs kyi cho ga (Vol. BA of his gSung ’bum). The phrase later found usage in the epithets and metonym of religious figures, such as rNgog lo tsā ba being known as Gongs lhongs phan bde’i rtsa lag.
phase of Buddhism in Tibet and its main protagonists was being laid, the elemental hazards and contingencies facing the key Buddhist sanctuaries, bSam-yas (fire) and IHa-sa (water) (me chu'i gnod) respectively were also formulated and communicated in written – mostly prophetic – format for the first time. The envisaged hazards were deemed to depict serious or worst-case menaces to the virgin status or intactness of this local cosmic model. These imaginative visions surely were meant as strong reminders to future generations that the act of “a national birth” was tormented and hence staged to generate a sense of immediacy and urgency that required prompt action. However imperfect and however much the watery threats or the “disaster scenario” were depicted to be almost preordained and in some texts had been employed to convey signs of social, religious or military upheaval (see below) – so cherished in Tibetan prophetic or gter ma literature – this evidently was not always the case. It certainly not only was perceived as some envisaged symbolic hazards, but was grounded in most real and concrete cases, based upon former incidents of flooding and cataclysms that carried the blame for the destruction of land, crops, property and human lives in the past. The destruction following in the wake of flooding never became apocalyptic in IHa-sa or Tibet, but was devastating enough to ruin the life and property of entire communities. In their literary representations, the diluvial threats had been addressed variously in the two major “mythographic” and narrative collections related to the two grand temple complexes of Ra-sa and bSam-yas101 and in this capacity they were intimately linked up with the life and activities of King Srong-btsan sgam-po and of Khri-srong lde-btsan, the respective founders of the temples as detailed in the idealized biographical or testamentary collections such as Ka khol ma, Mani bka’ ‘bum as well as in Padma bka’ thang and Thang yig chen mo related to the life of Padmasambhava (cf. TBH Sørensen 9f.). More than anything, the comprehensive Treasury literature in this and succeeding period greatly contributed to the legitimation of the mythic depiction of the Tibetan kings as dharmarāja or pious Buddhist royal rulers and heros.102 The mentioning of the hazards and their pre-emptive measures initially embedded in a prophetic format alone served as a prerequisite for their ensuing implementation.

In the overly legendary retelling, the rationale behind and the necessity of the site’s perpetuity ad infinitum as well as the modalities behind temporal protection of the two former royal sanctuaries thus became ritually sanctioned and predictably anticipated, most evidently in form of vaticinium ex eventu executed by the latter-mentioned protagonists. The modus operandi of such foretellings – almost as a providential design – mostly assumed a self-staging form, an ancient technique – and forthwith a literary motif – known from many cultures employed in the narrative recounting of past histories. On the one side, the writings contained manuals on how to protect the sanctuaries from water (i.e. deluge), fire or sand and, on the other side, provided details on the provident concealment of ample material provisions or “treasuries” that served as a sort of future endowment

101 Other imperial-time temples assumed similar symbolic roles; so Zhva’i Iha-khang, built by the monk-minister Myang-ban Ting’dzin bzang-po (in the early 9th cent.), was considered a chu rags (here understood as a sort of bulwark, against the flooding of IHa-sa and bSam-yas); prophetically, it was maintained that if the temple decayed – pars pro toto – Tibet would decay, and conversely, if it was restored, Tibet would prosper; this, more than anything, motivated Klong-chen himself to conduct renovation work at Zhva’i Iha-khang in 1349 A.D., cf. e.g. Klong chen rnam thar 116–18, 187–88. For the geomantic lay-out of Zhva’i Iha-khang, the rationale behind the ideology, the function and national import of the temple as well as its artistic inventory and major renovations; cf. Kun-mkhyen Ngag gi dbang-po, Zhva gtsug lag khang bstod pa 10af.

102 See here the essay by G. Dreyfus 1994.
considered necessary in order to refurbish, repair or expand the sites at any point of need in the future. The ultimate objective clearly was the protection of the sanctuary for all eternity and hence secure the survival of the sacred Buddhist doctrine in the country, by fatefully interlinking both objectives. The last incentive clearly was the *primum movens* behind the endeavours.

The theme deserves an entire study of its own, and here only the major lines of this dramatic and fascinating story can be addressed. Perusing a large number of biographies, diaries and memories or pilgrim travelogues written by the Tibetan themselves (innumerable saints conducted, almost obligatorily, the so-called *lha sa’i jo skor*, also in short *jo mjal*), a richly faceted depiction can be drawn as to the way water – the *sanctum’s* formidable and undermining foe – determined the lives of the people in and around IHa-sa. A number of the aspects, certainly not all, shall be addressed in the following. The building of stone dikes or dams to protect the narrow area of IHa-sa = Ra-sa ’Phrul-snang and Ra-mo-che from floods and deluge that stemmed from sKyid-chu, or from the tributaries Dog-bde’i phu-chu103 (and further downstream from sTod-lung phu-chu) eventually turned into an institution, in fact it assumed the nature of a “ritual agenda” or a “ritual project,” the importance of which was on a par with the later (from the 1240 A.D. and henceforth) nationally important and widely applied apotropaic rituals of “averting or expelling the Mongols / Border armies” (*hor bzlog*, [mtha’] *dmag bzlog*).104 Both were considered prime perils facing Tibet and

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103 Down through centuries, Dog-sde and Nyang-bran (cf. Part I: fn. 416, 417) valley or corridor constituted the entrance to IHa-sa from the north through ’Phan-po sgo-la. The area formerly had been forested with often gigantic juniper trees (i.e. relict juniper forests reminiscent of a primeval forest, today only stray samples remain), but most trees have long fallen victim to the increased erosion and sedimentation, aggravated by the incessant need for firewood. This again contributed to intensify the process of erosion and hence flooding. Cf. the observances of P. Aufschnaiter in Brauen 1988: 84–85, 91–92; Bräuning et al. 2005. Beyond IHa-sa, especially mNyes-thang and Rva-stod and the opposite Bye-nub *xiang* regularly were areas hit by natural disasters.

104 For a brief survey of the rationale and history behind this ritual, see Sog-bzlog, *Sog bzlog bgyis tshul lo rgyus* 217.3ff. The latter, whose cognomen or sobriquet – *nomen est omen* – is “Expeller of the Mongols,” usually lists three major Mongol incursions: 1240 A.D., 1280 and 1290 A.D. (albeit the last two generally are considered to count as one prolonged invasion). The devastating destructions and ravages following in the trail of a Mongol invasion, especially the 1240 incident left a lasting impression with the Tibetans, accounting for the permanent fear of future Mongol insurgencies, wherefore these ”expulsion rituals” were permanently on the agenda of most subsequent *gter ston*, and in particular were employed whenever renewed threats of such Mongol (sog, *hor*) intrusions into Tibet were deemed imminent, particularly from the 14th century onwards (but already in the wake of the 1240 event, Ko-brag-pa arguably shortly after conducted such rites; cf. Stearns 2000: 196; and later the same century by Gu-ru Chos kyi dBang-phugy too) or were used purely as a deterrent. The 1240 episode had prompted the collective political *deditto* on the side of the Tibetans.

In Sog-bzlog’s view, the emergence of Mongol raids were logically and consciously interlinked with different disaster scenarios for Tibet, such as IHa-sa being threatened by water. The entire gamut of involved *gter ston* in Tibet in fact should be concerned with such deterring rituals; so e.g. *rDo-rje gling-pa* reports his exclusive visit to IHa-sa in the late 14th cent. invited by the then undisputed ruler of dBus mi dbang Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan, as well as by the Gong-dkar rdzong dpon and the local sNe’u-pa ruler of IHa-sa in order to conduct a *rgya’i dmag bzlog*; see his *rGya’i dmag zlog par lha sar byon skabs gsungs* 313.1–320.5, 421.3–423.6 in *rDo rje gling pa rnam thar I*, mChog ldan mgon po rnam thar 410f.

Similar mirific feats were conducted by *gter ston* mChog ldan mgon-po (and no doubt by a host of other masters) in IHa-sa; cf. *Nor bu’i rdo shal* 258.

The history of the origin and the gradual deployment of *hor bzlog* rituals in Tibet, however, deserves a full-fledged inquiry based upon a host of sources. In fact, the roots behind the protection from foreign (not necessarily Mongol) military incursions may well pre-date the 13th century, since zab *gter dmag bzlog* cycles are also ascribed to Nyang-ral Nyi-ma ’od-zer.
their executions were deemed vital for securing the prosperity, happiness and survival of Tibet. The present essay shall restrict itself to the descriptions embedded in literary and historical sources, but further hydrological data and palaeoclimatological investigations of the entire area would allow us a more precise picture of the actual extent of water's impact on nature and society (see e.g. the studies by Bräuning 2002; Kaiser 2004).

dPa'-bo, mKhas pa 'i dga' ston 48b3–5, 149b7ff. (= 450f.),105 summing up the aforementioned gter ma narratives, has retained an informative description that delineates – both mythic-historically as well as, so it seems, matter-of-factly – the elemental threats to IHa-sa. Aside from delivering a wholly Buddhist, somewhat cosmo- or eschatological explanation behind the hazards, the threats of fire and water being due to low merit of the people (during a degenerate era) as the standard formula reads, dPa'-bo provides details as to how the gTsug lag khang had been erected along the bank of the gTsang-po river (i.e. sKyid-chu), wherefore the people of posterity as pre-emptive means were urged to construct embankments. The water of the river (gtsang chub) – potentially or by nature harmful – was considered the cause for the destruction of the temple, below which fiendish-oriented or malicious Nāgarājā had taken up abode.106 These were ultimately considered the perpetrators of such diluvial catastrophes, their genetrix. By propitiating and cajoling the hypogeal genius loci, by erecting Buddhist sanctuaries to affront them, by building dikes, altering or damming up parts of the river to prevent shore erosion, etc., the local deities and creatures would eventually be barred from causing any inundation. Crucial for our appreciation of the underlying cult and myth around the erection of the sanctum is the question why the edifice was erected in the middle of a lake. True, its location seems to remain faithful to the legend's original concept of the miraculous emergence of a caitya from amid a lake; yet the Nepalese Svayambhū caitya model itself was not erected on the valley-floor, but upon a hill-top in the Kathmandu valley (out of safe reach of any potential flooding). The reason for the establishment of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang on the valley floor in IHa-sa must be sought elsewhere. It may reflect ignorance on the side of the Tibetans of the potential dangers facing the shallow and marshy area where the sanctum was erected; but given the regular occurrence of flooding in the area, this seems improbable. The only logical conclusion seems to suggest that the sanctum was built precisely and deliberately upon the most vulnerable locale – perpetually susceptible to flooding – which was considered the gateway or entrance to the subterranean worlds of the Nāga.107 It was precisely here – in fact only here – that the potentially destructive forces could be kept at bay, ultimately propitiated or tamed, in its very heart, the locus and meeting-point between the human and non-human world, where their collaboration and goodwill was requested. Considering flooding episodes haunting IHa-sa regularly, their pacification and propitiation appears to have been a sheer never-ending task.

105 For ref. and a tentative translation. see e.g. TBH Sørensen 310. 327–28.

106 The original nature of or rationale behind their purported maliciousness, however, is seldom addressed. It can be noted that the watery supply of sKyid-chu in the main are said to derive from subterranean and phreatic sources; cf. Brauen (ed.) 1988: 91.

107 A lake in Dog-bde district due north of IHa-sa is called l-mtsho or E-mtsho. situated north of mKhar-rdo ri-khrod (a chu mug and a chu tshan or thermal source are also found there). It was commonly considered to be subterraneously connected with an ocean directly linked to the assumed waters below the IHa-sa site. It was perpetually feared that the lake overflowed and flooded IHa-sa town. The 8th Dalai Lama e.g. here had a number of chapels erected (prior to this point the 5th Dalai Lama yearly arranged prayer services along its banks) and during monsoon in the summertime, they were occupied by monks who propitiated the telluric and protective rDzong-btsan and rDo-rje g.yu-sgron in order to avert flooding; cf. e.g. sPang rgyan me tog 1994:3: 13–14; rDo-phan ed. 1995: 236–38.
Attempting to identify the original or earliest source for the prophetic descriptions, dPa'-bo, and the 5th Dalai Lama (DLs gSan yig III 75b4–5), respectively cite and refer to a lHo-brag mKho thing gi gter ma, a dossier traced or extracted by Bla-ma mNgag'-bdag chen-po, i.e. obviously Myang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer108 (in tandem with treasury-texts discovered by Grub-thob dNgos-grub) in this temple from underneath a statue of Amitābha, the topic of which was a versified exposition delineating – prophetically – the condition and circumstances behind envisaged flood or Hochwasser contingencies and destruction of the IHa-sa and bSam-yas temples respectively (Iha sa bsam vas gsnyi kyi 'jig rkyen) and the practical means of its aversion (bzlog thabs) in connection with prophecies allegedly once articulated by Padmasambhava. The very same tradition and theme was taken over by Sangs-rgyas gling-pa and Zhig-po gling-pa (see below). It is commonly purported that Padmasambhava initially had concealed – gter ma-wise – such instructive manuals for the benefit of future generations (cf. e.g. Nor bu'i do shal 59.5–61.4). The apotropaic means to avoid natural threats were, similar to the divinatory probe offered by Kong-jo in order to suppress the terrestrial foes of Tibet, the erection of various Buddhist emblems and sanctuaries, but, as said, also the extensive and on-going (re-)building of dikes. In the words of one of Srong-btsan sgam-po’s future prophecies concerning the temple addressed to his descendants and to posterity in general, it is specifically said that central to the survival of the holy IHa-sa sanctum was its preservation, the responsibility of future generations entailed the building of embankment on the outside and the renovation of its statues inside the temple (phyi'i rags dang nang gi zhig gos).

The struggle between natural chaos and mankind’s attempt to counteract or redress this imbalance is also prevalent in Tibet. The history of mankind is replete with stories of the clash between man and nature, between man-made constructions of settlements, cities and edifices and the unpredictable forces of nature. A fight with no clear winners, and far more often than not nature had the upper hand. Flooding and deluge (or to use here the original Latin term diluvium; although this term today carries another specific geological meaning), just like drought, being deemed one of the curses of civilization, also in Tibet, home to a majestic and gigantic nature, the unbridled destructive forces of nature along Tibet’s numerous water-ways usually were devastating. Leaving aside for a moment the ideologically conceived and ritually embedded rationale or logic behind this story, the more dire background must here be addressed. Throughout its entire inhabited history, the core part of IHa-sa (and in fact large stretches of shallow land along the sKyid-chu river) were visited well-nigh annually by a similar scenario: Especially during the seventh to the ninth month with its occasional torrents of seasonal monsoon precipitation, the area would witness a Sintflut (shva 'od)-like flooding overflowing from the monsoon-fed sKyid-chu river which encroached on large parts of the inhabited IHa-sa township. The sKyid-chu river and the physiography of IHa-sa both to the west and to the east display a so-called braided river system that had been deeply embedded and carved into quaternary sediment (dating from the last Ice Age). Like any other “overgrown” and alluvial fan river-system, when excessive precipitation (drag char) occurs, it inevitably floods and this usually in an uncontrollable way so that especially erratic monsoon would drench swathes

108 Another tradition links this text to Gu-ru Chos-dbang (1212–1270/73 A.D.), himself considered a prominent earthy manifestation of Avalokiteśvara, who underneath this statue unearthed the deplorably non-extant bSam vas Iha sa rags pa'i bka' chems (but see fn. 143 below) along with other relevant Mahākārunkā cult texts (such as the important Gab pa mgon 'byung cycle) of obvious rDzogs-chen creed or provenance, which had been kept in a rhinoceros-hide box; cf. Gu ru Chos dbang rnam thar 14a6–b1 = 27.6–28.1. For Chos-dbang and his ambitious agenda for disseminating the divinity cult, see Phillips 2004. In the same temple in IHo-brag, bZhod-ston and Nyang-ral discovered other texts, cf. Blondeau 1984: 90–107. The same or a similar treasury text was discovered and transmitted by Zhig-po gling-pa; see below.
of land in the surrounding areas. To some extent, however, such flooding processes were and are quite normal. Adding to this scenario, historically speaking erosion and landslides contributed to denude the protecting soil cover in the montane area and terrain, common phenomena too that occasionally had been the result of prior tectonic activities. In other areas, the massive volumes of mud and gravel contributed to dam up the river and tributaries.

The Tibetan Plateau – usually characterized as a semi-arid temperate monsoon climate positioned in subtropical latitudes – makes out the largest part of the highest mass elevation on earth (average ca. 4,500 m a.s.l.). On account of the monsoonal regime, the positive thermal anomaly prevailing there and the vertical circulation of air masses carry abundant vapour from the Indian Continent during summer, where the air drawn onto the plateau not least through its many trans-section valleys leads to considerable south-west (i.e. Indian summer monsoon) and south-east (i.e. East Asian monsoon) disturbances with irregular and massive precipitations. The narrower IHa-sa valley floor along both sides of the heavily degraded sKyid-chu river and catchment that stretches from Chu-shur in the south-west up until Mal-gro in the north-east is situated at an average altitude of about 3,500 m a.s.l., whereas its northern tributary valleys reach up until about 5,900 m a.s.l. Statistics show a rainfall or precipitable water in the region with an annual 450mm, of which, however, over 90% falls precisely in the monsoon period between May-September. In addition to the melting of glacier water from the northern valleys and its tributaries, the amount of water usually causes great havoc. It often took a heavy toll on mankind, land and property. The physical problems were aggravated by progressive erosion and desertification since the widely braided sKyid-chu river constantly changes its course. It often encroached on the fields along the usually narrow valley floors with extensive cultivation, with arable land, polders, clad with paddy fields and terraces – the mainstay of agriculture – situated between the riverbed and the hillside and silted it up with riverine sediments. The narrow hillside above the inhabited stretch of land between these and the river often were deeply gullied because of a raised riverbed when the occasional rainstorms carry floodwater laden with debris and deposits, sand and silt.

The Tibetan highlands are now widely treeless with alpine desert, alpine steppe and pastures and semi-desertic shrubland. The strength of the regional and seasonally changing winds are bringing about topoclimatic modifications (in an area marked by strong spring and winter drought) in the valley and the burden of sand from the river-bed which they expose can be inferred from the sand dunes and bars which are usually banked up high against many hillsides. When flooding was on the rise the entire valley often was flooded throughout its entire width. It meant a progressive loss of cultivable area (only possible on upslope terraces) and of soil fertility due to degradation in the surrounding hills (Liu Yanhua 1988; Thomas and Shenbin 2002; and Osmaston in G. Clarke ed. 1998: 123, 130–31, 141). The IHa-sa basin area and wetlands had evidently been almost entirely deforested since ancient times. Formerly, no doubt, various juniper species (juniperus tibetanus and juniperus convallium) were endemic to most districts of Central Tibet and woodland abounded. Of note, the sKyid-shod area holds a large number of sites with the element -lcang or

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110 A turf profile taken for pollen analysis in the IHa-sa swamps in 1994 seems to indicate that the main deforestation may be quite old in the IHa-sa basinland. The decrease may have started with the foundation of the first large recorded
“willow groves” and -sbyar or “poplar-groves” in their name suggesting the prevalence of larger and scattered willow and poplar groves, artificially cultivated, in a number of places. Along the richly braided or alluvial sKyid-chu river – which annually was ice-free, never particularly deep and its nearest flat riverbed land hence seasonally under water – wetlands were distributed and the changing river and not least the floods formed lakes and marches in between sand bars. Recently, it was only through concerted human activity that such areas were reclaimed as cultivated land and as residential settlement area. The major – in fact the most permanent – problem with seasonal flooding for the local agricultural population (mainly producing barley and wheat) was and is the temporal shift between the vegetative period often characterized by evaporation and climatic drought and the period of precipitation during summer monsoon. However, agriculture being rain-dependent, improved irrigation technique therefore was permanently required.

As the monsoon period was setting in, the alarm “IHa-sa under water!” surely resounded through the tracts with distressing regularity, in fact with such frequency that the inhabitants of the central sKyid-chu and IHa-sa area gradually must have generated quite hydrophobic sentiments. Water was considered a mixed blessing, a godsend boon or blessing as much as a curse. The many-headed “hydras” of inundation kept causing havoc and was a perennial source of anguish. The trials and tribulations visiting the local population and the mortal harvest from such insurinacies was occasionally aggrevated by its antithesis, the drought – recurring with similar frequency and required the incessant execution of ablution rituals – which destroyed the harvest and produced famine (mu ge), equally craving a high death toll, in fact only surpassed by the regular occurrence of plague or the outbreak of epidemics, not least unpredictable bouts of small-pox (sku ’brun) – the human vector remained the one stable denominator in paring down the population down through history. For IHa-sa, water nevertheless would continue to remain the single main foe and more than once, it was the dramatic and unpredictable shift between emergencies of drought and flood that caused much havoc and distress. Numerous times the entire vulnerable central urban part of settlement in the 7th cent. but may also reach as far back as Neolitic times. Today, zero juniper pollen. Cf. Schlüt 1999: 91–96; Miehe and Zhang 2000: 242–43. Whatever may have survived of juniper forests or virgin relic forests in the areas up until the 1970’s were generally eliminated in the ensuing years, when for example the sTod-lung valley up until Yangspa-can but also other areas of sKyid-shod was a major resource of firewood. Cf. Clarke 1997: 20. The need for wood and the need for restituting the forests in Tibet were early on the political agenda of local rulers, so in the 14th century, cf. e.g. Rlangs 372. The 9th Tshal ruler sMon-lam rdo-rje in the same century cultivated – doubtlessly also in an attempt to erect a retentive soaking wall or barrier against the ever-occurring flooding – the plantation of willow groves throughout the sKyid-shod and g. Yor-po districts under his jurisdiction; cf. sMon lam rdo rje rnam thar 23a4. These textual witnesses suggest that reforestation measures were prevalent throughout the different regional polities and supported by their rulers.

The attempts proved successful, from the 14th cent. onwards, IHa-sa was “green,” in a belt of lush wooden groves (Ijon shing bzang pos’ khor; e.g. DL2).

The dilemma that often faced IHa-sa (and surely also other sites in Tibet along its battered waterways), with climatic aberration and with the shift vagaries of nature – i.e. hydrological extremes emblematic of the IHa-sa climate – between too little and too much precipitation, may be illustrated by the events in 1809 and again 1810 A.D. during the early years of the 9th Dalai Lama (about whom it is said that he, incidentally, had special bonds to Bla-ma Zhang, little wonder when we recall that the latter was considered a manifestation of the former; cf. DL9 [A] 37a1–3. [B] 643.18–20, 661.8–10, 667.1–5). In the fifth month of that year rain had been absent for a long time and not least the farmers, as so often the case, were suffering badly from its dearth. The High Hierarch found the sufferings unbearable and prophesied that the following day it would pour down the whole night which indeed also happened. The two ambiance were profoundly grateful, it is reported, for this true wonder and expressed their gratitude. However, the precipitation, once setting in, now would not stop (probably because, as usually was the case, the dried-out soil was incapable of containing
lHa-sa including its holy sanctum, itself raised on marshy land, submerged in water (see below) and were only passable in coracles. The nuclear township’s and mainly the Jo-bo shrine’s bare survival ensured that preventive precautions remained a stable component on the ritual and later the political agenda for local rulers and religious teachers alike, and eventually compelled them to join hands in fighting the catastrophe.

The history of lHa-sa is the history of water, the site and the element being inextricably or rather fatally interlinked with one another, because this life-giving and life-destroying element both defined and shaped its history. Significantly yet paradoxically, it had been the fresh-water reservoir waters of sKyid-chu that had allowed the rise of riparian settlements and communities along its banks, and the waterways in Tibet as elsewhere often became the lifevein of society. Conversely, it was water and not least its destructive forces that decisively kept a curb on the development of the site into a larger urban center. The phenomenon water surfaces in innumerable ways in the relevant literature, right from the concept that the original lHa-sa landscape was shaped in connection with the now celebrated cultic story of the erection of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang upon a drained lake that concealed the subterranean realm of the nāgas (klu yul), a myth to a certain part modelled upon foreign concepts. In connection with the envisaged perpetuation of the site in the wake of its erection, during four different flooding incidents visiting the surrounding lHa-sa landscape – or “floodscape” – the area was in its configurative lay of the land depicted to undergo gradual “aquatic” stages (so vividly delineated e.g. in mkHas pa’i dga’ ston) in its terrestrial transformation. The flood caused havoc with the resultant braided or meander-rich and alluvium-shaped delta and shallow basinland of lHa-sa was prophetically seen to resemble, by analogy, different configurative forms such as a pisciform or ichthyoid (nya ’dra) shape, over a batrachoid to a simiad shape.112 These topographical configurations vividly reflect the ever-changing forms that the lHa-sa basinland no doubt took down through history. Flooding as natural phenomenon, as we shall see, was to remain a continuously unfolding drama of quite epic dimensions.

2.3 Royal Legacies:
The Avalokiteśvara Cult and the Invention of Ancestral and Spiritual Genealogies

It is here meaningful to briefly return to the fundamental questions pertinent to the religious milieu in which both the sūtra-exoteric and the tantra-esoteric corpora of cycles and teachings behind these origin tales were born and forcefully transmitted: The myths and stories that traditionally and the huge amount of rain), and before long sKyid-chu expanded beyond all former bounds. It was feared that the lHa-sa sanctum could be damaged by water, and the ambans dared not remain in their residence (i.e. their Yamen located close to sKyid-chu) and sought shelter in Potala. Again, it was the High Hierarch who intervened, assuring them that no harm was threatening lHa-sa sanctum, and before long the water indeed abated. Again the ambans won undivided faith in the wisdom and foresightiveness of the young Dalai Lama; cf. DL9 [A] 101a6. 110b4–11b2 [B] 683.28–685.5.

An almost identical intervention by the 10th Dalai Lama is reported for the fifth month of 1824 when the same scenario was staged in lHa-sa with an overflowing sKyid-chu and with the populace perplexed what to do out of hydrophobic fears (chus ’jigs pas yon pas ci bya gdol med kyi gnas su gyar). Again, the High Hierarch’s assurance that no perils were threatening lHa-sa (i.e. Ra-sa), alongside the enactment of appropriate rituals to the protective deities and to Triratna eventually brought the water to recede; cf. DL10 155.15–156.1. In both cases, incidentally, the Dalai Lamas were in their minority.

112 Aside from the last animal, the other were all aquatic animals known from pre-Buddhist mythologic schemes in Tibet, wherefore we shall argue that the ape was confounded for a gecko.
ideally were ascribed to the founding king Srong-btsan sgam-po and his main sanctuary in IHa-sa, in other words the latter’s legendary Vita narratives which were to become part and parcel of the crucial transmission of the Great Compassionate One and its paramount cult in Tibet, or more precisely of its underlying ideology and its popularization as a national icon, the all-dominant Patron Deity and Saint of Tibet. It was in the pioneering and vibrant milieu around the increasingly numerous bKa’-gdams-pa seats, established and associated with its main founding figures, the spiritual patriarchs Atiśa and 'Brom-ston that the tales surrounding the origin of the sanctuary evidently should be primarily embedded. It was in the early post-imperial part of the Renaissance Period, that a significant part of the transmission of their influential core teachings and cycles was disseminated by the latter and their circles of disciples.

It is commonly argued that two major sets of “testamentary” materials – compositionally consisting of a motley blend of devotional, esoteric, and narrative-biographical components, namely the two fundamental sources at our disposal, the 11th-century bKa’ chems Ka khol ma and the 12th-century Ma ni bka’ bum (cf. CFS Gyalbo et al. 147–48) – constituted the popular [re]sources for the dissemination and gradual evolution of the divinity cult into a national deity saint and with them correlative topics were addressed such as the theogonic and cosmogonic associations of the founding king. Before we enter a brief discussion on this testamentary literature dedicated to the founding king of the Tibetan empire and its narrative and mythic legends, it is important to look at another instructive corpora of literary sources, equally important for our understanding of the genesis, development and propagation of the cult in Tibet: The seminal bKa’ gdams glegs bams anthology, an early 14th century compilation, which equally consists of an anthologization of teachings, narrative dialogues and an amalgam of biographical materials, most of which with oral roots in the late 11th and early 12th-century bKa’-gdams-pa circles. The literary corpus had been transmitted and eventually collected, first at sTabs-ka monastery in Mal-gro, but eventually received its final compilation or editorial format in about 1302 at sNar-thang, the mother seat for the subsequent spread of its teaching and associated authoritative curricula.113 Reading the anthology more closely, it is obvious that the post-imperial beginnings of the Avalokiteśvara cult (notwithstanding that its roots and cultic impetus well may go back to a late imperial era milieu in the 9th cent.), as well as its meditational techniques focussing on this deity, was deeply linked to Atiśa and the incipient bKa’-gdams-pa milieu.

It was the portrayal of the Indian patriarch and, relevant in this connection, not least the depiction of his principal student, the Tibetan-born 'Brom-ston who in this anthology was limned not only as a genuine embodiment of Avalokiteśvara but also as the unique promoter par excellence of its cult. It is in fact the “ultimate deification” of the latter which the anthology is all about: The Tibetan patriarch being depicted as a cultural hero and as a divine soul – a worthy inheritor and legitimate successor of Atiśa – staged to embody in his person the entire legacy of Buddhism as it was transmitted through Atiśa from India to Tibet. The anthology’s literary corpus thus can be seen as a specific literary reworked attempt at instantiating an envisaged indigenization

113 The 'Brom clan, ruling lords inter alia in the Klung-shod area, wielded great political and spiritual power, not least at sTabs-ka monastery. 'Brom gZhon-nu blo-gros (b. 1271) proved instrumental, from 1285 A.D., in compiling most of the teaching legacy of the 'Brom patriarch, not least the pivotal Glegs ham rin po che, cf. bKa’ gdams chos 'byung l [B] 528f. See the pertinent discussion and analysis in A. Sims Miller 2004, drawing in part on Ehrhard 2002.

For the Avalokiteśvara cult in the 10th century on the threshold of the Renaissance Period, see Van Schaik 2006.
of Buddhism on[to] Tibetan soil. Perusing the anthology’s entire second volume Bu chos or “Son Teachings” of ’Brom-ston (in contrast to and in direct continuation of the first volume that contains the biographical Pha chos or the “Father Teachings” of Atiśa), which contains twenty pre-existences stories of ’Brom-ston — clearly all early 12th-cent. Tibetan fabrications or ill-veiled adaptations modelled upon the authoritative Indian jātaka genre — the many didactic stories invariably, forcefully and resourcefully equipped the Tibetan bKa’-gdams-pa patriarch with a princely or royal background. Depicted as an Indian prince or king in a multitude of former existences, his perceived Indian royal roots and pedigrees are linked with a Tibetan ditto, thereby ensuring Tibet’s continuous spiritual and royal interlinkage with India. Signally, the anthology repeatedly purports that it was ’Brom-ston, in his pre-existential garbs as Indian prince, who willingly and purposefully promised to manifest himself in due course as king of Tibet with the aim, as an embodiment of Avalokiteśvara, to disseminate Buddhism in Tibet and thereby to safeguard land and people. To this end, the legendary rebirth stories thus tell the tale how he re-embodied himself — whether staged as a national mission or as if governed by fate — as the founding monarch of Tibet, namely as Srong-btsan sgam-po. It continues to recount how he in due course and most opportunely embodied a row of other renowned imperial-era dharmarāja of Tibet. The need in leading bKa’-gdams-pa circles to legitimize the patriarch on a grand scale clearly was imperative. The tenor of the anthology is amply suffused with the “royalization” or “royal legitimation” of ’Brom-ston’s very person, depicted as a worthy inheritor of the founding monarch. The strategy was crowned with success when the mythic legacy and legitimation of the Tibetan patriarch was adopted by the Potala court in the 17th century.

9a, b. Atiśa (9a) and ’Brom-ston rGyal ba’i ’byung-gnas
Details of murals in the Mani lhā-khang of Ba-lam in Upper sKyi-d-shod. Photo: Ted Katsargiris 2001
**bKa’ chems Ka khol ma**

*gTer ma.* Discovery-cum-compilation in its core form ca. 1050 A.D. on the instigation or agency of Atiśa and within bKa’-gdams-pa circles (i.e. jo bo rje’i gter ma Ka khol ma)

Contents: Mythic hagiography ascribed to King Srong-btsan sgam-po. Bereft of esoteric material. Cosmogony based upon adaptation of Indic-Buddhist systems.

Flood protection and dike building for the lHa-sa sanctum endorsed:

Transmission holders: bKa’-gdams-pa circles

*chos sku:* sNang-ba mtha’-yas / Amitābha

*longs spyod sku:* sPyan-ras-gzigs / Avalokiteśvara

*sprul sku:* Srong-btsan sgam-po / Gu-ru Rin-po-che

Jo-bo-rje Atiśa (982–1054) [cum ‘Brom-ston?]

Bang-ston Shes-rab rin-chen (~ Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan)

sTod-lungs-pa Rin-chen snying-po (1032–1116)

*spyan snga ba* Tshul-khrims’-bar (1038–1103)

sNe’u-zur-pa Ye-shes’-bar (1042–1118)

*Bri-gung-pa [sic = lHa ‘Bri-sgag-pa]

* (ca. 1100–1190)

*rGya-ma-pa [alias? dBon-ston Rin-po-che] (1138–1210)

Rva-sgreng-pa

dKon-mchog bzang-po

rDo-rje tshul-khrims [alias Gu-ru-ba?] (1154–1221)

[Anonymous Compiler]

**rGyal po’i bka’ ’bum / Maṇi bka’ ’bum**

*gTer ma.* Discovery-cum-compilation ca. 1175 A.D. by a triumvirate of rNying-ma-pa treasure-finders.

Contents: Mythic hagiography and Avalokiteśvara-related teaching materials ascribed to King Srongs-btsan sgam-po. Three corpora: sūtra, sādhanā and upadesa. The teaching material strongly doctrinal and esoteric. The cosmogony exclusively Tibetan in origin. Flood protection and dike building for the lHa-sa sanctum chu bzlog rituals and precepts endorsed, transmitted and in part actively executed by the textual lineage-holders below.

Transmission-holders: rNying-ma-pa/rDzogs-chen circles

*chos sku:* sNang-ba mtha’-yas / Amitābha

*longs spyod sku:* Avalokiteśvara

*sprul sku:* Srong-btsan sgam-po/ Gu-ru Rin-po-che

Khri-srong lde’u-btsan

Myang-ral Nyi-ma ’od-zer (1136–1204) cum gter ston Śākya bzang-po & grub thob dNgos-grub

La-stod-pa Mi-bskyod rdo-rje

rJe-btsun Śākya bzang-po

lHa-rje dGe-ba’-bum (fl. ca. 1183–1261?)

lCam-mo Ye-shes-mchog

grub thob Chu-sgom-pa

mTha’-bzhis Bya-bral-ba (fl. ca. 1280–1310)

mKhas-pa bSod-nams seng-ge

Bla-ma bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan

lHa-sa’i chu rags pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan

Nor-bu bzang-po

bSod-nams ’od-zer

dPal-lidan bzang-po (1402–1473)

Nam-mkha’ rgyal-mtshan

gNyug-la chos rje Ngag-dbang grags-pa (1458–1515)

chos rje mKhas-pa’i dbang-po, etc.
It is important to retain some measure of chronology before our eyes in assessing the development of the cult also in connection with the site: After the erection of the sanctum in the mid-7th century, we shall anticipate that centuries passed — in fact first well into the late 10th and, more likely, early 11th century, at some point in time in the wake of the long civil war as the sanctum was in ruin, the hapless victim of sheer endless conflicts, that again the question of the site’s origin, its alleged founder and its history received renewed attention, in the first place, so much seems clear, through Atiśa and his circle of influential disciples. The compilation and the bKa’-gdams-pa-internal transmission of the bKa’-ches Ka’khol ma (see above) — in its core doubtless an 11th-cent. literary product — was an outcome of this endeavour.

A century later, in the latter part of the 12th century, other circles of actors for the promotion and ideological fixation of the Avalokiteśvara and Padmasambhava cult had entered the scene. On more than one score, the new esoteric actors obviously should borrow much of the strategies that had been successfully implemented by the bKa’-gdams-pa in disseminating and personalizing the Avalokiteśvara cult. It should include religious ascetics and spiritual masters who proved quite obsessed with the cult which they attempted to transmit or to embody: one may indeed speak about a sort of Guru-mania and fixation on Avalokiteśvara, often of quite personal or obsessive
dimensions, an obsession – almost on the verge of impersonation – that should grasp most of the followers and disciples of these pioneers too, not least the coming generations of Treasure-revealers, but also political and religious hierarchs such as leading 'Bri-gung-pa and Karma-pa hierarchs, and most notably crowned by the excentric Fifth Dalai Lama, who equally entertained an obsessive proclivity, spiritually, personally as much as politically for the triad Avalokitesvara, Srong-btsan sgam-po and Padmasambhava. It was in the selfsame circles that a pronounced esoterization of the founding figures took form. The deeper incentive behind this 12th-cent. undertaking or agenda is still not entirely clear and readily told, but must be seen in connection with the spiritual and eventually literary legacy related to Guru Rinpoche, at a point when the mythical hagiographies surrounding his person were being compiled and transmitted for the first time, initially by the mid-12th-century pioneering lHa-btsun sngon-mo (himself of noble or royal-imperial birth; cf. TBH Sørensen 443) and by Myang-ral himself. Another fillip doubtless centered on the issue of ancestry for the emergent treasure-finders – i.e. the attempt to reconstruct an unbroken lineage purposefully invented for reasons of legitimation, spiritually and much as personally, etc.114 The rNying-ma-pa felt themselves as rightful and orthodox upholders of doctrines, teaching cycles and legacies associated with Guru Rin-po-che and his celebrated, albeit historically shadowry, role in imperial Tibet. In this process, it in the first place was the rNying-ma-pa who strongly contributed to the popularization of the latter’s cult in Tibet.

The 11-12th centuries had seen a period of great upheavels and changes in Tibet, when a new society slowly rose from the ashes of the imperial period and its chaotic and warring aftermath. Issues focussing on cultural values acquired new content or were redefined. In the religious sphere, competing lineages claimed to uniquely transmit and uphold the word and teaching of Buddha or they vied for pre-eminence and survival on the issue of validation of their transmitted teachings and cycles. Old, hermeneutically well-documented and authoritative teachings of indisputable Indian origin that usually were transmitted and blue-printed through an Indian pandit and a Tibetan lobsawa now increasingly competed with teaching systems of more uncertain, dubious or even apocryphal origin, at least so dubbed by the latter purists. Verification of an Indian origin being the hallmark of authenticity, this yardstick was applied to almost all transmitted teachings, religious cycles and practises circulating in Tibet. Spiritual authority, just like political authority, had until then been transmitted in linear succession (within lineages of master and pupil and within clan families), but now increasingly gave preference to a new articulation of instantiating Buddhist identity and authority. A re-evaluation of the very nature of authenticity itself and the very access to authority was seriously to challenge old patterns. Innumerable esoteric, not least tantric but also exoteric cycles in the first two post-imperial centuries were brought to Tibet and translated into Tibetan. Disputes and ingrained polemics over this heated topic and over normative standards marred Tibetan discourses on authenticity and hermeneutics. Also the transmission of the Avalokitesvara teachings emerged in the midst of this heated discourse. The Treasury-revealers, in order to tinge their cycles and teachings with the hue of authenticity, too had rooted their revelations or revealed teachings in the period of the Yar-lung dynasty, as if this glorious period by itself constituted a point of reference and a blue-print for legitimation and authenticity.

In accordance with the religious or mythic interpretation of the causes behind the flooding, the 11-12th-century genesis behind this origin myth and behind the concept and implementation of

114 See e.g. TBH Sørensen, passim; Phillips 2004: 131f., 388f.
such ritual manuals and practical measures therefore appear to have initially been born in bKa'-gdams-pa circles before the transmission was expanded or further enriched by esoteric, but also folk-religious elements and transmissions handed down by leading members in rNying-ma and rDzogs-chen gter ston circles (see e.g. Gu bkra chos 'byung, passim), in the latter case in the milieu grouped around the central figure Myang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer (1136–1204 A.D.), Gu-ru Chos dbang and their lineages. It should be noted that they too to a large extent drew upon the narrative and doctrinal matters contained and transmitted in the Ka khol ma cycle, as may be gathered from an appreciable number of thematic correspondences between the texts.

It nevertheless was in the assertive bKa'-gdams-pa milieu that the first documented or recorded post-imperial attempts were made to valorize a royal and political link between this milieu and the cult around Srong-btsan sgam-po. The one who invited Atiśa to lHa-sa and to Ra-sa sanctum (which eventually led to the famously celebrated discovery (cum compilation?) of three Srong-btsan sgam-po-centered testaments, not least the Ka khol ma) was a local ruler and a scion of the selfsame former founding monarch, in other words, a direct descendant of the old Yar-lung kings (here issuing from the line of Yum-btsten), namely Bodhirāja (“king” of bSam-yas in the mid-11th cent.) who clearly took a strong ancestral and personal interest in perpetuating the repute and cultural prestige linked to these historic places in Central Tibet – in other words to evoke memories of yore, and evidently to establish an ancestral genealogy that linked his person and lineage and the site directly to the king’s lineage. It was Bodhirāja who – as a ruling “royal prelate” (lha btsun) similar to his remote relatives on the Gu-ge throne who combined or merged religious and political authority – in 1047 “by royal order” (bka’ lung) had requested Atiśa to translate into Tibetan the Pañcaskandha-prakarana, among other texts. The “command” or authority of a secular ruler would commonly remain weightier compared to any religious command. It cannot come as a surprise that almost all the initial holders of the Ka khol ma transmission after Atiśa stemmed from the bKa’-gdams-pa and the Indian master’s milieu. Signally, within the same circles, an entire transmission line, i.e. that of the core precept line (gdams ngag pa) stemmed from a royal Yar-lung line, upheld by scions claiming descent from the former kings (the transmission line was appropriately called the yar lung chos rgyal brgyud pa or jo bo brgyud pa). They all were of royal descent (lha) – being remote scions of King Srong-btsan sgam-po and Khri-srong lde’u-btsan and clearly were both socially, politically and eventually spiritually committed to their imperial legacy. It was a line born from the teaching circles stemming from Atiśa (who incidentally was considered/considered himself a manifestation of Avalokiteśvara, yet the former is generally considered the inspirator or mentor, rather than the actual inventor behind the Ka khol ma discovery) and bKa’-gdams-pa.115 It

115 For a discussion of prevailing rNying-ma elements (if indeed there are any, this is still not conclusively clarified) in Ka khol ma, see now also Davidson 2003: 77–78. The inclusion of topics like water-control and water-abating rites (chu bzlog) in order to ensure the perpetuation of the lHa-sa sanctum as part of the narrative tradition and the Avalokiteśvara-cult itself is quite old, and allegedly may go back to the late dynastic period, perhaps back to the period around Srong-btsan sgam-po. Its inclusion in the Ka khol ma narrative would suggest that the theme was part of the oldest stratum of the Ra-sa’ Phrul-snang foundation-legend and the testamentary literature as contained in a possible Urfasung of the Ka khol ma text widely known and articulated in the mid-11th cent.: it nevertheless appears that the actual implementation, endorsement or spread of chu bzlog ritual manuals and precepts – as indicated in our text – prominently originated with Myang-ral roughly one hundred years later; yet the mentioning of such practical precepts in Ka khol ma itself, if anything, provides evidence of the interpolated nature of the Ka khol ma that was notoriously manipulated and redacted down through time when being copied from hand to hand. The three currently extant versions of this ancient gter ma
was a narrative and visionary tradition that in the 13th century was kept alive in sNar-thang. It may come as no surprise that the first printed version of *Ma ni bka’* bum should be manufactured under the auspices of the Mang-yul Gung-thang royal house (remote yet proud scions of Yar-lung kings, as it is stipulated in the sources), no doubt for the same reason that motivated other direct scions of royal Yar-lungs house to share the unrivalled cultural and spiritual prestige wielded and dearly treasured by this legacy.

It is again worth reiterating to what extent the entire concept was embedded within or was conducive to the implementation of the overall Avalokiteśvara or Great Compassionate One cult, proportionally gaining significance with the dissemination of this cult. The implementation of such early set(s) of rituals – of which we deplorably know little in terms of their actual execution as well as in terms of its social implications – ultimately was considered to be merit-accumulating means of worshipping or rendering service to the deity and to the lHa-sa seat. Unclear in this initial phase is what kind of relation, if any, that prevailed between Myang-ral and his circle of companions and Bla-ma Zhang, the ruler of the lHa-sa site in the period in question. Aside from Myang-ral, it was his principal pupil and his own son, *chos rje* Nam-mkha’-dpal who, as we shall see, commonly is registered as the first dike-builder or *chu rags pa* (cf. e.g. *Gu bkra chos* ’byung 650.1–10, 976.13–14) in Tibet. It is not entirely clear whether Myang-ral and his line entertained any political ambitions for the site, aside from their well-founded and documented ideological interest in its cultic history.

The overall cognitive project with the origin of the lake/ocean story of lHa-sa was conceived and formulated at some point in the 11th century. It drew its inspiration from older prevalent archaic materials related to deluge myths known in Tibet, but also was modelled upon foreign, similarly legendary materials (such as the *Svayambhūpurāṇa*), and involves questions as to how and why the site was born in a watery ambience, raised upon a dried-up lake, in tandem with the overall

(’? – this may also be queried, since the text lacks all the marks of a treasury-text except its status of being initially gter ma-wise “unearthed”) all seem to date from a later period and thus invariably represent later interpolated versions.

The ancestral interests nourished among the disciple circles grouped around Atiśa would explain why the cult of the royal cosmogony and its testamentary-biographical tenor was transmitted in this milieu (cf. TBH Sørensen 14; Sørensen 1999: 179; CFS Gyalbo et al. 2000: 148). This crucial point is ignored by Davidson (2003, so also Davidson 2006). In discussing the origin of the *Ka khol ma*, he remarks (op. cit. 78–79) that the attempt to link one of the bKa’-gdams-pa transmitter sNe’u-zur-pa to the ’Bri-gung founder is unconvincing – true, but oversees that it, as remarked, evidently is a traditional scribal corruption for the bKa’-gdams-pa master lHa ’Bri-sgang-pa (pupil of sNe’u-zur-pa) who, signalingly and tellingly, too stemmed from the royal line of the former kings. In other words, he too was a remote royal scion, directly related by blood to Srong-btsan sgam-po. He too was harvesting cultural prestige from the ancestral capital invested in this descent. There are more than cogent reason to assume that the spiritual quest and ideological interest among these scions (whose families and noble houses often provided affluent patronage to the self-same bKa’-gdams-pa settlements and thus contributed greatly to bKa’-gdams-pa’s undeniable proselytic success and political power in these early post-imperial centuries) attached to leading bKa’-gdams-pa circles but here merged with personal ancestral interest. It cannot wonder therefore that also the next *Ka khol ma* transmission-holder, namely rGya-ma-pa (= rGya-ma Rin-chen-sgang-pa alias dBon-ston rin-po-che himself boasted ancestral roots or pedigree, namely stemming from the old dByer clan which was intimately linked to Srong-btsan sgam-po and himself served as teacher to scions of the royal Jo-bo line; see TBH Sørensen 475–77; TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: Introduction), born in the rGya-ma area of Mal-gro, the birthplace of Srong-btsan sgam-po.

The unique combination of spiritual genealogy working hand in glove with personal ancestral quests is documented in numerous cases among clan-based masters such as Chag, Mar-pa, gNyos, Shud-pu, rGya, Rva etc.
configuration of the surrounding territory, etc. and it may in part have been prompted by the necessity felt at that point to provide a viable aetiological explanation of the rationale behind the regularly occurring deluge scenario that wreaked havoc on land and people. In other words, it shall here be contended that a large part of the origin myth and the accompanying water stories surrounding the central shrine was retroactively actively invented and developed in this sacred environmental setting and can only credibly be assessed on this particular background. The incentive spurring those individuals who actively invented, circulated or transmitted the mythically embedded precepts including the deluge scenario thus was a basic need to provide a viable and plausible account of the recurring watery disasters that kept on haunting lHa-sa, as well as a convincing account for the need of its remedial-preventative strategies. In the end, such stories and narratives catered for the basic needs of local rulers and communities in handling catastrophes. It may be concluded that whereas the impetus, rather than the formative beginnings of the origins of the cult and legacy behind the lHa-sa shrine was born in bKa’-gdam-pa circles, the credit for the widespread popularization and for the practical engineering of protective means in safeguarding the lHa-sa site must be ascribed to the inventive rNying-ma-pa.

2.4 Taming the Nāga:
The Construction of the lHa-sa Embankment or Water Dikes (chu rags)

When we now turn our attention to the crucial issue concerning the practical protection of the site, we soon trace some vague references to early attempts to counter natural disasters allegedly initiated during the time of Srong-btsan sgam-po and to avert nature’s tyranny. To him is ascribed, although historically still undocumented, a sa khung, “earth pit” or “earth cave” evidently considered a recluse site, dug into the ground in the upper part of the sKyid-chu bank of lHa-sa purportedly in order to “avert flooding from sKyid-chu.” Assuming it was dug out after the initial erection of Ra-sa ’Phrul-snang, it must be regarded as the earliest recorded attempt to safeguard the sacred environment surrounding the sanctum, yet it may also be a later fabrication. Much later, as the shore line of sKyid-chu altered, the site accommodated a small nunnery, renamed [bTsun-dgon] mtshams-khung or “the Recluse-Pit [Nunnery].”116 Beyond this, reliable references from this early

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116 This hermitage-pit (or “earth pit,” sa phug) (see Fig. 12) once was situated along the bank of sKyid-chu, now after its territorial reclamation, it is part of the south-east Rab-gsal Gling-skor district of Bar-skor (see e.g. Larsen 2000: 88). The cave-pit itself is a 7th-century installation (rather than assuming that it might stem from the 12th cent. if not actually set up during the time of Ku-cor). In former times, to the east of the mtshams-khung seat, the so-called Rab-gsal [Rags-ze or Dike Point] bTsan-khang of the Lower Dikes and to the west the so-called Rags-rgyab Dur-khrod (both also called Rags-kha std/mad; cf. Chab-spel 1982; Chos-phel 2004: 32-33; Lhasa Interviews 2 (reprint Tsering Gyalbo 2005: 421) calls it ’O-pa-gling) cemetery were located.

It is reported that before 1959, one still could come across some Butterfly (i.e. the species Buddleias; Tib. shar len) bushes, remnants of a once-deserted dike barrier. Today, due to the circumstance that the ground level of the surrounding area had risen considerably, the old banks have been reclaimed and become part of the Gling-skor lho-lam urban area. Formerly, the pit-cave site once accommodated a cubit-large statue of the monarch, known as Nga-'dra-ma or “My Resemblance” (lost in the 1960’s; now replaced by another modern statue of the king, cf. Fig. 12), set up as a substitute for the absent monarch to ensure his continuous protective presence.

Ku-cor rtogs ldan (1386–1445 A.D.), a pupil of bTsong-kha-pa, erected a small temple which eventually turned into a nunnery (btsun dgon, a ni). For this story and other anecdotes behind its erection, see Byams-pa dbang-mo 1986; Byarigs-pa 2003. Ku-cor allegedly also received ’Bri-gung teaching cycles; cf. ’Bri gung chos’ byung 395.

At the beginning of the 20th cent., Pha-bong-kha bDe-chen snying-po, and the 90th dGa’-ldan throne-holder along
period are otherwise paltry. Aside from such activities—historically shadowy since his status as a Buddhist monk largely appears to be a later construct—asscribed to the founding figure of the Tibetan dynasty, we are inadequately equipped with information as to any concrete measure taken in the dynastic period in the narrow lHa-sa area to protect against flooding that mercilessly visited the area at regular intervals. It must be reiterated that up until at least the 14th century, lHa-sa barely comprised of more than the Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang and the Ra-mo-che vihāra (with the bZhi-sde and the adjacent rMe-ru sites), its “sister” temple as well as a few hamlets around the central edifices. In other words, there was no barrier in the form of protecting houses or walls between the two vulnerable temples and the shore-line of sKyid-chu with its many ever-shifting meanders.

12a, b. The Srong-btsan sgam-po cave erected upon the 7th century subterranean retreat cave (sa khung, mtshams khung) in lHa-sa ascribed to the king. Today located in a Ani-dgon-pa erected upon the site. The first recorded attempt to control the waters of sKyid-chu
Photos: PKS 2005

13. Ku-cor rtags-idan. Founder of the 15th cent. mTshams-khang-dgon seat and a noted chu rags pa
Modern Statue kept in mTshams-khang
Photo: PKS 2005

with others restored the site (a statue of the former commemorating his service is kept there today). Before 1959, it accommodated ca. 127 monks, but recently these figures have been reduced dramatically. The site’s protectress is dPal-idan lha-mo or Dur-khrod lha-mo. Cf. A. Alexander 2005: Chap. 7, lHa sa’i dgon tho 18 21.
Following the hectic phase with the domination of the gNyos clan and their brief rule in IHa-sa, the ensuing peace-settlement among the four communities in the area, the renovation of the site etc., it appears that the IHa-sa sde-bzhis mediator and Jo-khang renovator himself, i.e. Dvags-po sgom-tshul, was the first (post-dynastic) dike builder in IHa-sa (or the first known from the sources). One source (sGam po khri rabs 24a6f.) briefly notes that he erected a (IHa-sa) chu rags construction called chu rags dkar po nyyi shar, an event registered for the year 1169 A.D. The chronologically next chu rags pa recorded in the sources was ‘gro mgon Nam-mkha’-dpal” (ca. 1181/2–1244 A.D.), the entrepreneurial master in the footsteps of his famous father Myang-ral Nyi-ma ‘od-zer,” who is reported to have initiated the construction of water dikes against the recurring floods on a more systematic scale and certainly in a spectacular way, evidently for the first time in the late 12th century in order to control the hydra-like nāga inhabiting the site.

At that point IHa-sa was, however, firmly under Zhang’s formal jurisdiction. It is thus all the more surprising to find no mention of Bla-ma Zhang in his biography. If for no other reason, it may suggest to us a prevailing loose hegemonic structure in the implementation of larger ritual projects in the IHa-sa area, where the IHa-sa sde-bzhis communities still played a major, perhaps a decisive role. In the biography of Nam-mkha’-dpal called Yid bzhin nor bu’i phreng ba or Rosary of Wish-granting Jewels, we are informed that he too was considered, in retrospect, a manifestation of Avalokiteśvara and of Padma Dbang-chen (i.e. Guru Rinpoche). The assumed or borrowed identities of his, we shall see, proved vital for the outcome of his endeavours. It is reported that he initially had a vision of this deity in which he was prophesied to protect Ra-sa from any watery perils; e.g. the disciple of Atisa. The second son of Myang-ral was called Nam-mkha’-od-zer (other sources speak of one La-stod-pa Mi-bskyod rdos-rga; but this refers to sMan-lung-pa, one of his favourite pupils).

Prior to the 12th century, similar activities in IHa-sa were attested to (e.g. in the chronologically unreliable Rva lo nram thar 263), but such reports merely document the same tradition. Outside of IHa-sa, such as in Dol-mda’ and other places embankments and dikes against the turbulent gTsang-po river are attested to; in Dol-mda’, the disciple of Atisa, A-myis Byang-chub assisted Jo-bo in erecting an embankment, possibly already in mid-11th century, later to be known as IHa-rje-rags; e.g. mKhas pa’i dga’ ston 684.15–17; Deh sngon (BA Roerich 256); Eimer 1979: 73a1–2 (Yongs grags 163).

We have no documentation that Nyang-ral himself was involved in the physical construction of dikes in IHa-sa. The diction of the versified biography is slightly corrupt and archaic (anyway a diction bespeaking authenticity), both concerns the language and in question of the rendition of toponyms.

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117 Son of Myang-ral and his wife Jo-‘bum-ma. According to his biography (Nam mkha’ dpal rnam thar [Text A] 2b1, 4a4, 33a1–2, 34a3–4; [Text B] 2b2–3, 4a6, partial also cited in sMra-bo-lecog 1994: 29f.; Myang ral rnam thar 136.7–143.7) the dates of Nam-mkha’-dpal in his biography are somewhat contradictory: born in a spre’u year (1164, 1176, 1188 A.D.?) would not seem to dovetail seamlessly with the information that he was twenty-three when the father died (1192 or better 1204 A.D.); age 56 or 63 (sic) drug cu phyed dang drug, drug cu dang drug phyed in a shing pho spre’u or 1224 or 1245 (recte: shing shraul), he passed away. If, on the other hand, we assume that the only reliable information is that he was twenty-three when his father died (1192 or, more likely, 1204), it would suggest that he was born 1170/1171 or 1182/3 and that he passed away 1232, resp. 1244 (Phillips 2004 suggests 1171–1237). In sum, as a preliminary working hypothesis, we therefore shall opt for 1181/2–1244 A.D. In his biography (10b4–5) a gNyos is referred to, arguably identical with IHa-nang-pa gZi-brjid-dpal (1164–1224); Nam-mkha’-dpal was alive and active when the Kashmiri Śākyasrībhadrā (1140’s–1225) visited Tibet (ab 1204) and it is recorded that he erected sanctuaries and statues of his father; cf. Jackson 1996: 85; Phillips 2004: 147f. for a detailed discussion of Nam-mkha’-dpal. Anyway, although his dates are not conclusively clarified, his active ūniit must be situated to the early 1200’s. Nam-mkha’-dpal’s skull is reported 1670 A.D. where it is listed as a consecratory object; cf. DL5 II 97a5.

The second son of Myang-ral was called Nam-mkha’ ‘od-zer (other sources speak of one La-stod-pa Mi-bskyod rdo-rje; but this refers to sMan-lung-pa, one of his favourite pupils).
gNy-en-chen thang-lha\textsuperscript{120} manifested himself in front of him, and requested him to render service to the two lhA-sa Jo-bo Brother Statues. This was followed by a dream in which he found himself in the presence of the deity who urged him not only to safeguard the lhA-sa site threatened by the waters of the [subterranean] ocean, but also to motivate the local lhA 'dre – masters of the site and of the natural elements – to assist him in constructing the embankments. Tradition holds that Nam-mkha'-dpal and his team managed to bond-slave, i.e. to propitiate the local territorial lhA-srin spirits and then succeeded – most miraculously – in bringing large amounts of stones (see below) from Nyang-lung-yul and from dBu-stod to the bank of sKyi-chu.\textsuperscript{121}

His biography – paraphrased below – vividly recounts his activities as a thaumaturge and how the process of erecting embankments consisted of two stages, first an abortive attempt followed by a more successful one (akin to the erection of 'Phrul-snang that had also followed through trial and error). The initial attempt was initiated by transporting to the river-bank stones (rgyab rdo, i.e. foundation stones) for the dikes by way of three hundred skin coracles,\textsuperscript{122} whereupon the barricade walls were erected, being stuffed with various articles, and spanning two fathoms in diameter; this was followed by another wall made from sod (la ma), equally two fathoms in diameter. In between trunks two fathoms wide were set up, stuffed and solidified with pulverized stone-dust. Behind and between the sod-made walls, a massive mound of small pebbles (gram gsog) was made. The entire embankment finally measured eight fathoms [at the top] and over ten fathoms in diameter at the base (kha zheng rmang zheng) respectively. The embankment in fact was large enough to allow [on its top] eight horsemen to gallop upwards and downwards [in each direction at the same time] abreast.\textsuperscript{123} At its most narrow place the dike or embankment measured “the range of an arrow-shot by an athlete.” However, at one point when the dike-building was about to be continued – during the summer monsoon rains – so the biography recounts, the sKyiid-chu river expanded again whereby the embankment was overflowed. However, through blessings, prayers and gtor ma offerings, Nam-mkha'-dpal succeeded in diverting the course of the water. Since however the season was growing late [i.e. no time was found to complete the dike], the remaining embankment ultimately was carried away by water.

\textsuperscript{120} gNy-en-chen thang-lha is the leading territorial or telluric god of northern Central Tibet, who among others occupied a seat at sKyiid-shod dMar-po-ri (also present in the protective mountains of the “lhA-sa Mandala”) and at bSam-yas Has-po-ri; cf. 'Dzam gling rgyan gcig 89; dBa' bzhed 64, 66; Nebesky-Wojkowitz 205f. The god constitutes the central indigenous or ancestral protector god in the lhA-sa Mandala. The somewhat unusual form Gung-thang gNy-en-chen Thang-lha indeed shall allow us to speculate that the embankment was constructed after lhA ma Zhang had his hegemony and polity of Tshal and Gung-thang, i.e. post 1187 and possibly after 1193, yet prior to the demise of Zhig-po bdud-rtsi (d. 1199) whom he allegedly met. Further, it would suggest that Gung-thang [gNy-en-chen] thang-lha was thus named after the foundation of the Central Gung-thang Temple, and the protector deity became its key reference point and spiritual fulcrum.

\textsuperscript{121} The same transportation of stone by lhA-rje dGe-ba' bum from the areas of Zhang (= Zhang-sdebs, east of lhA-sa), Nyang, Dvags and Mal-gro; cf. DL5 IV 112b2–113b2 (tr. Z. Ahmad 1999: 192).

\textsuperscript{122} The stone quarry in the vicinity of lhA-sa was used to procure stones and other building materials; cf. GT 40b; Part I: fn. 522. For an illustration of the process of quarrying and transporting stones in coracles during the erection of Potala Palace in the 17th cent.; cf. the Potala murals reproduc in Lading ed. 2000: 109-115; Liu 1989: 190-191.

\textsuperscript{123} The idea of eight horsemen may make out either a measurement or indeed may be a mythic phrase that alludes to the rTa-bdag brgyad retinue of rNam-thos-sras; this protector or lokapāla of the northern direction usually served as the model or prototype for the external protection of a center; cf. e.g. the founding myth of Khotan (Brough 1948).
After this failure, the IHa-sa inhabitants again requested him the following year to erect an embankment to which he gave his consent. The biography reports how he subsequently went to 'Bri-gung with his retinue and where he met chos rje Rin-chen Zhig-po bkd-rtsi (sic), i.e. Rin-chen [dpal = 'Jig-rten mgon-po (1143–1217) and] Zhig-po bkd-rtsi (1149–99 A.D.) and subsequently Ras/Rin-chen tshogs (sic), from whom he received teachings. Nam-mkha' dpal made a second attempt to erect an embankment. The chos rje expressed his gratitude to Nam-mkha' dpal [and to one Chos-stengs-pa = ? mGar Chos-sdings-pa gZhon-nuru rdo-rje (1180–1240 A.D.), another key disciple of the 'Bri-gung founder] for the service rendered to IHa-sa hitherto. He requested for merit-dedication and transference for the part of the dike already erected and was asked to generate his mind towards the erection of the remaining part of the embankment. At that point, mnga 'hdag requested to become a renunciate [in the presence of the 'Bri-gung founder?]. Still, the ['Bri-gung] chos rje stated that becoming a monk was not necessary because of the great benefit already being done by him and instead [he remained a layman] and instead urged him to fulfill these commitments.

Following the winter season, he again arrived in IHa-sa and after a detour to sKar-chung gong-ma, he levelled the ground [along the embankment]. He subsequently conducted religious practices and delivered empowerment of Hayagriva and Mahakarunika. He subsequently went to the monastery of sTag-lung-thang, where chos rje Bla-ma (= sTag-lung thang-pa?) also was requested for merit-dedication for the part of the dike already erected and asked to generate his mind towards the erection of the remaining part of the embankment.

On the way back to IHa-sa, he made extensive offerings to the Sadaksari. In order to initiate

124 We read here two names: The founding figure of 'Bri-gung and Pha rgyan Zhig-po bkd-rtsi was regarded a pupil of the former, 'Bri gung gdon rabs III 92, 106.

If our assumption is correct, it would suggest a strong influence and involvement during this period of the 'Bri-gung-pa in the narrow IHa-sa area – clearly simultaneous with the Tshal-pa. Notable is the possible involvement of Chos-sdings-pa of the mGar clan, an ascetic and associate of IHa-nang-pa (1164–1224 A.D.) of the gNyos clan (see above), both leading pupils of the 'Bri-gung founder. Cf. also App. I above.

125 Both readings in his biography seem corrupt: Text B merely has Ras-chjen Tshogs-pa (sic) of 'Bri-gung, a gathering of “Great Cotton-clad Ones or Retreatees.” If, however, Rin-chjen [phun-?]tshogs (1509–1557 A.D.) is referred to, this anachronism would indicate that the biography of Nam-mkha'-dpal had been reworked in the 16th cent. at the earliest; this, however, is not likely. As we shall see in the ensuing section, the 'Bri-gung throne-holder 'Bri-gung Rin-chjen phun-tshogs in fact was active in promoting the building of dikes and in participating in the flood control of IHa-sa.

126 This would appear to indicate that Nam-mkha'-dpal thereby received political support from the sTag-lung and the 'Bri-gung rulers for his endeavour.

127 This may refer to the specific form of Avalokitesvara (cf. Willson and Brauen no. 102). A better reading however may be that it refers to the inscription of the six-syllable mantra at G[y]e-re Yar-'phrang, opposite dGa'-ldan, on the right
the construction of the embankment erected up to Yer-mda' towards the east, one So-ston \(^{128}\) requested his helpers to beg for grass and firewood and [in the opposite direction?] in order to ensure that it reached until 'Bring and Dan'-bag (i.e. Dar'-bag; cf. Part I: fn. 574) \(^{124}\) towards the west, they solicited donations and finally were capable of amassing immeasurable amounts of grass, wood, meat and butter, etc. Thereafter they were able to fill a whole storehouse with barley-corn collected to serve as remuneration for the dike's erection. Touching the embankment [with his hands], a great merit [in the form of a miracle] happened: again, with the help of about three hundred

skin coracles the supportive stones were transported, borne by the boats and brought in place along the bank, but this came to a halt when the stones were used. Nam-mkha'-dpal therefore went into retreat for three days, made supplications and prayers to his bla ma and yi dam and after three days a prophecy heralding the coming availability of stones occurred. The 12 brtan ma goddesses proffered a grand treasury in the form of stones: The Sha-med gangs-dkar-[ma], Kong-bsun Demo; \(^{130}\) gTam-lha with nine Brothers (spun dgu; var. spun bdun); \(^{131}\) rGyal-mtshan (corrupt for 'O-lde gung-rgyal?) with three Brothers (spun gsun) and the lha srin of gNyan-chen thang-lha as well as those from Kong-po, Dvags-po, E and DMyal districts all gathered in a spectacular way both day and night to assist in the mammoth construction work. Binding the local lha 'dre by oath, the latter obeyed and the stones now arrived without hindrance onto the bank in an orderly manner just like a shepherd is capable with his slingshot (`ur rdo) "to chase and keep together a flock of sheep on a meadow." \(^{132}\) The stone blocks were thus able to move all by themselves. Ordinary people,
due to bad karman, were not able to see this true wonder. However, one shepherd vested with pure vision and busy herding his flock of sheep, proved able to see directly how the stones arrived all by themselves. Wondering whether it was a display of self-illusion, he kept on beholding the wonder. In fact, the shepherd saw how three yogis were capable of moving the stones [through sheer magic force]. Doubting whether it was a bad omen, [out of embarrassment and fear] he felt unable to tell others of his sight. He finally reported a part of the story to a female dānapati, who declared that the scenario showed an ascetic constructing water dikes in lHa-sa, an ascetic who was a manifestation of Padma dBang-chen. After this assurance his doubts vanished.

The stone blocks now arrived unhindered, so the biography recounts, due to magical faculties at the bank of sKyid-chu. Still, Nam-nkha'-'dpal being motivated by his father Myang-ral – they may be regarded as the Li Bing and his son Er Lang of Tibet – urged his pupils and patrons to undergo hardship and launch their coracles. Like the former attempt, the stones were transported in place by the boats. A huge square boulder was then created that resembled a dice. It was so huge that no-one could move it. Nam-nkha'-'dpal therefore entered into contemplation in order to generate magic force, whereby the huge stone arrived all by itself at the other end of the river. The fundament for the embankment thus was laid. With their hands and feet the mud was trampled evenly. Eventually the embankment was completed, and people gathered to request from Nam-nkha'-'dpal teachings and precepts. His fame as thaumaturge spread in all directions. The dike in length(?) amounted to the distance of two arrow shoots and the height as much as a horseman could hold high his spear. In terms of its diameter, it was broad enough to allow eight horsemen to gallop up and down [simultaneously]. It remained a wonder how it had been raised. The embankment was foreseen to last for many years.

language as an be documented in proverbs like “one hundred birds can be scared away with one single slingshot; one hundred sheep can be chased [i.e. kept] together by one [single] shepherd (hva brgya 'ur rdo gcig gis 'drog / lug brgya lug rdzi gcig 'ded); cf. Cuppers & Sørensen 1998, no. 6308. Sling-hurling shepherds also occur in oral narratives concerning the transportation of so-called “long stones” (rdo ring) from Zhal district (opposite Yer-mdā’). Their faculty of hurling slings employed behind the strongly symbolic imagery of lifting up, transporting or moving large stone-blocks over long distances (such as from Zhang [= Zhal?], Nyang and Mal-gro) for the erection of dikes ultimately goes back to the fabled exploits, mirabilia or thaumaturgic activities ascribed to lHa-rje dGe-ba-’bum (see below); cf. DL5 IV [= Ahmad 192]. Cf. somewhat differently, Gyurme Dorje 1991: 758.
From this paraphrase, it is signal to note that Nam-mkha'-dpal too was repeatedly pleaded by the lHa-sa sde-bzhi or the four local Jo-khang custodian communities (= the entire lHa-sa population) to undertake the construction work. However, this reference shall lend the entire story some credibility, and suggest to us that it was constructed prior to or in the initial years of Zhang's local rule. A pertinent question arises: is the description of the dimension and the extent of the embankment realistic? The initial problem is that the above vague description as to its dimension does not allow us to properly assess the problem. The question is therefore not easy to answer. The long stretch of shallow and marshy land along the vulnerable northern bank of sKyid-chu river where dikes were to be erected, i.e. from Yer-mda' north of lHa-sa until well below Dan-'bag (see also Part I, fn. 574) south of lHa-sa roughly encompasses the river-land wherefrom the sKyid-chu flood occasionally mutated into a watery Hydra monster of inundation unleashing onto the inhabited lHa-sa township. Many toponyms in the narrow sKyid-shod area, along sKyid-chu riverland carry the hydronymic element -rags in their toponyms, evidence of the import of dike-building and urban settlement in this connection. Assuming that the embankment or mound was raised along the entire stretch of land

16a. b. The photos display sections of the Bye-rags or Sand Dunes of lHa-sa in the northern section of lHa-sa, a naturally created embankment which ran from the spur of Mt. Giang-ri running south of Se-ra dgon-pa until it reached Brag-ri in the west
Photo: H. Harrer,
Meine Tibet Bilder

113 It remains a desideratum to survey the geographical and archival material of the entire area in order to write the history of flooding in Tibet in general. Cf. Zhou Wei 1990: 106–19. In our present essay, further dGa'-ldan gzhung material on flooding disasters (that usually were recorded in written dossiers known as Chus khyer chag sgo de) could not be taken into consideration. Still, some of the data used by Zhou were taken from such comparative data on National Hazards publ. in 1987 (see Rang 'byung gnod 'ishe Vol. 1; another vol. on earth-quake was published 2003 in lHa-sa).
from Yer-mda’ until at least Dan-bag probably well over 20 kilometers – and deeming its breadth and size, it would overstretch credibility to assume that such a long wall could be raised, perhaps even section-wise. The full length along the long river-bank would appear to be quite implausible, whereas smaller sections are more credible, such as the distance of two arrow-shots. But shorter sections indeed may have offered less or no efficient protection against flooding. Notwithstanding this, it is altogether not infeasible that by joint efforts comprising a very large number of the local population over a long period it is possible to erect sections of a protective mounded wall, of whatever length and form. Other independent clues are provided by Rva-lo whose biography reports the consecration of water dikes in IHa-sa (Rva lo rnam thar 263), but it remains inconclusive when this was conducted by him since the chronology in the biography is notoriously unreliable and his activities may well reflect episodes to be situated in the 12th century.

In chronological order, the next prominent figure notably associated with water protection appears to have been an elder teacher and companion of Nam-mkha’-dpal, chos rje Zhig-po bdud-rtsi (1149–1199 A.D.), who himself is reported to have repaired the banks four times. We do not, however,

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Also metathetical bDud-rtsi zhig-po; born in gZad as son of Sangs-rgyas Dvags-chung, the latter was invited by the patrons of gZad where he was offered several monasteries (IHa-gdong, ‘Ug-skad, a.o.). Zhig-po had many pupils. He himself was a pupil of Bla-ma Zhang, cf. dgOš ‘dod re skong ma’i ’grel ba 565.5; Cf. IHo rong chos ’byung 205.15–20; Gu bkra chos ’byung 280.17–283.15; bDud-’joms’ History (The Nyingma School 653–58). See also Dung dkar tshig mdo’od 1770–71, App. V, Table 5: fn. 11. Different stories prevail as to his passing: He passed away while repairing the stone-dikes a fourth time; another version states that he passed away in rGya-ra Gang/Gad-logs monastery of gSang-phu (his remains allegedly being carried by the water of sKyid-chu to the nearby Thang-skya monastery of gZad).
have detailed reports about his embankment activities nor do we have any safe chronological frame. It is, however, usually reported that he later manifested himself as lHa-rje dGe-ba-'bum, wherefore some of the activities ascribed to him are credited the next figure.

lHa-rje dGe-ba-'bum,\textsuperscript{135} the next and probably the most prominent dike-builder in this pioneering period, certainly belonged to the first consignment of chu rags pa. As an ascetic-cum-physician, he surfaces in a number of different contexts throughout the 12th century, but most probably was an early 13th-cent. ascetic. He was associated with the dissemination of the physical as well as the written legacy behind the Avalokiteśvara cult (himself considered a physical manifestation of the deity) such as the Mani bka’ bum devoting himself, just like his mentor Myang-ral Nyi-ma ’od-zer, to extensive repair-works of the lHa-sa embankment. His flood control politics or water-abating programs and, behind this, his promotion of the paramount Cult of the Great Compassionate One and its foremost edifice in lHa-sa ensured that he was included in the official list of pre-existences...

\textsuperscript{135} It is deplorable that we so far cannot avail ourselves of a detailed biography or a testament of him. The chronological data concerning him seem somewhat contradictory, too. He (or a namesake) was registered as patron to lHa-rje sGam-po-pa (i.e. prior to 1153 A.D.). Inexplicable dates have moreover been proposed for him (1123–1182 A.D.?) so – more than doubtfully – according to Ming mdzod 1848 (confounded here with the dates of lHa-rje Zla-ba ’od-zer?) and only the date of his birth would appear to dovetail with his patronage of sGam-po-pa. But this dating appears to be quite spurious when we consider that his root-teacher is listed as chos rje Lo-ras (1187–1250 A.D.) and that he was also registered as pupil of Sang-rgyas-'bum (who held the see of Yang-dgon between 1214–1219/1231 A.D.). A later flourit than that proposed is altogether more plausible, since the above vacillation as to his actual dates is also addressed in the tradition.

We should finally take into account that the tradition speaks of an earlier and later dGe-ba-'bum, seen in the light of the assertion that Zhig-po bdud-rtsi later should have manifested himself as dGe-ba-'bum. It may not surprise that in the transmission-line of the Srong btsan sgam po bka’ ’bum (i.e. the Ma ni bka’ ’bum), we find aside from dGe-ba-'bum and lcum Ye-shes-mchog, also one grub thob Chu-sgom-pa and later Chu-rags-pa dBus-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (e.g. DL5 gSan vig II 152b3–6, III 75b6–77b). It carries evidence of the close bonds between the transmission of these texts (where the building of the water dikes is endorsed) and people actually executing these as part of their ritual agenda.

\textsuperscript{135} Sources on lHa-rje dGe-ba-'bum: Rin chen phun tshogs rnam thar 359.3–368.3; BA (Roerich 1006); lHa ldan dkar chag, passim: DL4 45a4–5; DL5 IV [= Ahmad 190–92]; dGia’ ldan chos ’byung l 67a4–5; Sog bzlog bgyis tshul gyi lo rgyas 229–230; Zur chen rnam thar 14.2–5; further, see also Shakabpa Guide 18, 56; Dung dkar tshig mdzod 235–6, 2149, 2168; ILSL Vol. 6: 94–96; Nang rig 272; Byams-pa phrin-las 2000: 169–70; R. Prats 1982: 31–32.
which in retrospect was sanctified by the 5th Dalai Lama. 

This circumstance, more than anything else, carries witness of the inestimable import attached to water-regulation in the battle for the IHa-sa heritage and particularly to the significance of dGe-ba’-bum in this struggle. because precisely in dGe-ba’-bum, unlike anyone else, the entire local legacy seems invested. The emanational link to Myang-ral, to dGe-ba’-bum as well as the one to Bla-ma Zhang, however, had initiated with the 3rd Dalai Lama, verily in a grand genealogical plan conceived by the Great Fifth. All three figures adroitly were regarded as prominent former reincarnations of the Dalai Lama. Long before the Great Fifth, however, it was the ‘Bri-gung-pa master Rin-chen phun-tshogs who, by adopting dGe-ba’-bum’s protective scheme, entertained genuine sympathies both for the mythic and the pioneering role accorded to dGe-ba’-bum and for the legacy of Srong-btsan sgam-po in general, doubtlessly in the former’s attempt to position himself and his sect in the struggle for supremacy in IHa-sa. 

There can be little room for doubt that it was the same ‘Bri-gung-pa master who — evidently here basing himself upon a prevailing, older Tshal Gung-thang tradition in this respect — “invented” the subsequent commemorative cult around IHa-rje and it was his interest in the legacy of IHa-rje

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19 Pioneer Dike Builder or chu rags pa of IHa-sa: IHa-rje dGe-ba’-bum
Modern memorial statue installed in the Byams-pa mchog-brgyud Chapel in Jo-khang (PKS 2004)

20 Dike Builder of IHa-sa.
Zhing-po bDud-rtsi
Modern memorial icon installed on the Ground Floor of Ra-sa ‘Phul-snang (PKS 2004)

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16 It proved politically important for the 5th Dalai Lama and Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, at the point when the spiritual lineage of the former was forged, to include in the latter’s list of pre-existences in the pre-dGe-legs times persons and saints who had won a name by rendering service to the IHa-sa sanctum or otherwise had perpetuated the local cult of sPhyan-rabs, in this respect their sectarian background carried little importance. We here find persons originally adhering to the Sa-skya, rNyung-ma and bKa’-rgyud-pa. Cf. 5th Dalai Lama, Khurangs rabs 9a1-4 = 593.1-4 (vol. Ba) of his gsung ’bum; III.5 IV (Ahmad 1999: 190-92); III.5 16a4; Dzam gling rgyan gege 634.12-14; further, Sorensen 2005b.

17 Different transmission lines of the gter ma exist. The ‘Bri-gung-pa – not least chos rgyal Rin-chen phun-tshogs, but also other masters there received the rGyal po bKa’-bum (i.e. Ma ni bka’-bum cycle) which became immensely popular at ‘Bri-gung; cf. the 15th throne-holder Kun-dga’ rin-chen and ‘Bri-gung rgi’ dzin Chos kyi grags-pa (alias dByur-smyon; 1595-1659) in his bKa’-bum (ed. Dehra Dunk 1999) Vol. 7: 403-39. For the legacy of Rin-chen phun-tshogs, see below.
that more than anything else prompted the Great Fifth to place a claim on this pioneering ascetic and thaumaturge and his service to the sanctum by including or ennobling him into his own line of former rebirths. A statue of IHa-rje has been kept in the Byams-pa mchod-bzhi'i Iha khang (alias the Rva-ma rgya-mo Iha-khang; cf. Fig. 19) in Jo-khang to commemorate his great and lastimg service to IHa-sa. And sKu-'bum-thang -- one of the IHa-sa'i thang-bzhi or "four plains" -- was named after the reliquary sKu-'bum gshong-ba'i mchod-rten, purportedly erected by him (other sources suggest Rva lotsaba) and his consort lcam Ye-shes-mchog to redress the imbalance of water in his terrestrial repair or restitution (bco$s) and topomantic profile of IHa-sa. It is reported that he passed away in near-by Nyang-bran. Like Nam-mkha'-dpal, the dike-building measures of dGe-ba-'bum routinely were accompanied by feats of wonder-working: Like in case of his predecessor, to him also is ascribed the siddhi-like faculty of lifting and hurling large amounts of stones a great distance to the bank of sKyid-chu by using a nomad's sling-shot -- evidently a cherished depiction for the "miraculous" transportation of large quanta of material from one place to another. It can be assumed that dGe-ba-'bum performed such measures under the auspices of his teacher and mentor, the Tshal Yang-dgon throne-holder Sangs-rgyas-'bum. The gdung or bodily remains of this thaumaturge reportedly was immured in one of the stone dikes. It was possibly also in this period (or slightly

138 The statue is clearly a modern replica. The 5th Dalai Lama speaks of an old statue blessed by dGe-ba-'bum himself. See also Taring I Floor no. 97; Shakahpa Guide 56: The red ossuary of dGe-ba-'bum.

139 From medieval time the so-called Jo-rags or Jo-[bo'i] rags[kha], i.e. the Jo-bo [Statue] Dike (erected by Myangr-al, his son and dGe-ba-'bum) is still called accordingly in IHa-sa today. It stretched along the bank of sKyid-chu in the sKu-'bum-thang area (due west of 'Khrung-lha), esp. along the northern but also southern bank at the foot of Bum-pa-ri at IHa-gdor Shan-kha (ferry-station; present-day the largest bridge in IHa-sa located there called Ku-ru zam-pa / zamchen). It carries witness of a centuries-long initiative -- crucial for the survival of IHa-sa city, the core of which was spread across a water-logged, marshy area (cf. Sinding Larsen and Larsen 2001: 22).

Another bulwark was the so-called naturally created Sand Dike or rather Sand-dune Dike (bye rags) which consisted of raised heaps of sand and silting that had originated from settlement and natural terrain landsliding (sa rud) when the Dog-stc phu-chu overflowed or expanded. The northerly located Bye-rags started at the spur of Mt. Glang-ri (or Bye-ma chu'-go; located at: 29°45'N 91°03'E), ran south of Se-ra dgon-pa and then proceeded parallel to and towards sKyid-chu behind dMar-po-ri (the area there is still today called Bye-rags) running at the height of Brag-ri in the west, until it was united with sKyid-chu. Cf. sMin-skyid 1991; Richardson 1993: 49; HSLG ibd.; DKTshDz 1491–92. For a photo of the Bye-rags (= Jherag in Sketch Map of Lhasa; Z.J. Taring), see Fig. 20. The Bye-rags sand dunes bordering the diversion channel are registered on many Lhasa maps where it is seen running behind Potala. The Bye-rags was destroyed in 1975 and plastered. For details, cf. fn. 267 below.

Formerly, two additional dike stretches in IHa-sa were the southerly (Iho) Thog-brtsegs-rags located at Phyag-mdzod gling-ka along sKyid-chu (due south of Jo-khang; see Taring Map) and the westernly (nuh) located Chos-rgyal-rags close to rGya-mtsho-smad of sTod-lung (opposite Ra-ma-sgang); cf. Bod kyi dmarngs srold gyes brts 583–84. In fact, one speaks in toto of Four Great Dikes of IHa-sa. For a rapport on the overflowing (chu shor) of the IHa-sa Bye-rags in 1841 and again in the 1880's, see Rang 'byung gnud 'tsho Vol. I: 40, 49–51, 105–06.

140 sKu-'bum-thang (presently located within the IHa-sa area: 29°38'N 91°09'E; cf. also Part I: fn. 52, 663), a plain along and above the northern sKyid-chu bank due east of IHa-sa (south of the present Karma dgon-gsar area), is already mentioned by Rva-lo: he once miraculously created a sku 'bum (or khris 'bum, hence its name). It is here said that it was erected in the upper part (stod) of IHa-sa, and considering that at that point IHa-sa largely consisted of Ra-sa 'Phru-slunag and Ra-mo-che and that the sKyid-chu bank was located further north compared to its present position, this may not be quite amiss (cf. Rva lo rim rang thar 325–27). The site was visited by Thang-stong rgyal-po. The "Caitiya Plain" later surfaced e.g. as cherished governmental camp site, along with other camp sites in the narrow IHa-sa area such as Dan-'bag and Klu-sdings, so e.g. during the 18th-cent. Dzungar war; cf. Petech 1972: 45 and from a host of diaries. It is also regarded as the westernmost part of 'O-rgyal-thang.
later under the 9th Tshal-pa khri dpon, see below) that sections of the so-called Bye-rgags or Sand Dike of IHa-sa come into being, rather conceived of as a water diversion canal, constructed in the northern part of IHa-sa, a naturally created embankment which ran from the spur of Mt. Glang-ri running south of Se-ra dgon-pa and passing dMar-po-ri, before it emptied in sKyd-chu in the west.

Prior to the reign of the Tshal-pa throne-holder Sangs-rgyas-'bum - who patronized the activities of lha rje dGe-ba-'bum and who himself conducted similar operations - it was the same Tshal-pa rulers who right from the beginning in the 1170's gradually took over the control of the IHa-sa area with the support of the IHa-sa sde-bzhi. They were responsible for (overseeing) the practical and ritual implementation associated with the weary maintenance of the chu rags. At least during the lengthy spell ca. 1200-1410 A.D., the overall and systematic maintenance and rebuilding of the dikes remained, for all we know, firmly in the hands of the Tshal-pa assisted by the stewards or sacristans of the Jo-bo shrine. It was a period in Tibet’s history, where new power constellations emerged, the shift away from the central sKyd-shod area gradually took place, from 1250 and onwards, the 'Bri-gung-pa and Sa-skya-pa (after the latter had become regional Kings or Statthalter of Tibet lasting until the 1350's), were on collision course, and after the 1290 temporary weakening of the latter, it was now the slow rise of the Phag-gru hegemony, seated in Upper Yar-lung and in 'On, and later ruling houses in the gTsang province, who should become the main political players in medieval Tibet, at least until the numerous religious establishments of dGe-lugs-pa in the IHa-sa valley and with them the emergence of local, increasingly independent hegemonies that brought the political fate of IHa-sa on the political agenda.

2.5 The Tshal-pa Rulers: IHa-sa’s First Grand Architects

The construction and ensuing maintenance of IHa-sa dikes indeed marked a definite caesura in the gradual development of the area into a urban center and a entrepôt. It was under the strong and overly generous patronage extended by the succeeding Mongol emperors that the late 13th and 14th-century rulers of IHa-sa, the Tshal-pa administrators and myriarchs (dpon chen, khri dpon) enacted a number of initiatives that must be regarded as the first attempts to expand the sacred nucleus of IHa-sa, perhaps even to be recognized as the first faltering attempt to design a first grid-plan layout (in conscious mimicry of the imperial Dadu capital?) for the place and thus laid the founding stone for its expansion into a larger site. The able Tshal-pa administrators - in particular the 7th and the 9th dpon sa of Tshal - dGa'-bde-dpal (1254-1310 A.D.) and sMon-lam rdo-rje (1284-1346/47) of the mGar clan carried out a number of expansions of the centre’s core part. Both IHa-sa rulers had visited the Yuan capital during lengthy stays and must have been inspired by the grand and impressive urban plans among their Eastern patrons.\(^{141}\) Not impertinent perhaps, Dadu and later

During the later part of the dGa'-ldan pho-brang reign, during summer monsoon a rags gnyer pa or “Dike inspector” of sNang-rtsa-shag las khungs resided in sKu-'bum-thang (sKu-'bum IHa-sdings) to monitor the flooding potentials. The erection of dikes in these areas down through history often proved a Sisyphean task, since not least the low-lying area due west and east of dMar-po-ri, as confirmed on many 20th-cent. photos, every year was overflowed, mostly creating a ponding structure.

\(^{141}\) A number of important studies are available on the history and development of Shangdu (“Supreme Capital,” the later “summer residence”) at Kaiping Fu (at present-day Dolon Nor), and Dadu (“Great Capital,” the imperial “winter residence” in Daxing dist. of Hebei province). Dadu was a walled city within a walled city again within a walled city.
the very site of Beijing town – and in particular its origin myth – during Yüan and Ming were in some legends often described as a “Bitter Sea of the Youzhou Dist.” (kuhai youzhou) – an abyss of bitterness – underneath of which a vicious Dragon supposedly was residing, the Chinese pendant to the Indo-Tibetan nāga – somewhat parallel to the older lHa-sa origin story.

In lHa-sa much of the refurbishment of Jo-khang and the Bar-skor quarters goes back to their initiatives. Among his many activities, sMon-lam rdo-rje had extensive repairs and rebuildings of the embankments executed in order to prevent flooding in the area (cf. Gung thang dkar chag 35bf.; sMon lam rdo rje rnam thar 18b3–4f.). Although only a few original memorial or imperial Tshal edicts hitherto have survived (cf. App. III), contemporary sources do allow us a relative precise picture of his endeavours. In addition to the annual maintenance of existing dikes, he put an end to launching boats on the river during summertime – a risky affair evidently, and solidified the dike for almost two miles, by expanding or extending the length of the dikes. It swallowed huge costs and hence took place only after he received extensive donations and financial help from the Yüan emperor Renzong (alias Buyantu; 1311–20), so in 1319 where the accompanying memorial and rescript (ja’ sa) specifically stipulated the necessity to repair the lHa-sa chu rags (ibid. 13a4), in other words an obligation to protect Qubilai’s Gung-thang temple as well as the lHa-sa sites, imposed upon the Tshal-pa administration. It is also reported that sMon-lam rdo-rje succeeded in diverting the course (chu bsgyur) of the many rivers and rivulets that during monsoon and during melting season commonly emptied tons of water over and beyond the lowland embankments creating flash floods that thus threatened the lHa-sa township from the north, such as the waters of Nyang-bran Dog-sde phu-chu. He reportedly managed to divert its flow south-eastwards – this perhaps may be considered the beginning of the later sand dike diversion barrier. It is also reported that he was successful in diverting and in training torrential waters flowing through the Sri and Zhal area that threatened to flood Tshal Gung-thang, in this case by diverting them northwards (ibid. 23a3–5). As another protective measure, he planted willow groves (lcang ma ‘debs) on a grand scale all over sKyid-shod and g.Yor-po areas (evidently within the existing Tshal-pa mi sde areas) – in order to decelerate (or indeed compensate for) the rampant deforestation.

2.5.1 Imperial Mongol Ancestor Cult in Gung-thang

Most notable was the Tshal-pa rulers’ erection of a number of memorial or ancestral temple chambers set up within the Gung-thang precinct and enshrining genealogical altar or ancestor tablet(s) equipped either with statuary or painted portrait(s) of the emperor Qubilai (Se chen sku ‘dra’i pho brang). As temple hall – later including additional emperor chambers for the succeeding rulers like in Dadu – it served the worship and the commemoration of their patrons on the Dragon Throne. This or these edifice(s) are now no more extant and we have little or no information as to their actual size and form, yet as model a similar edifice in China clearly served: The yingtang or “Portrait [i.e. Shadow] Hall” – each emperor usually had his personal or private yingtang. In 1263, Qubilai had ordered the construction of an ancestor temple (Taimiao) in Dadu in other words with a unique triply-walled compound complex. The outer perimeter or “grand city” (dacheng) enclosed a second wall and enclosure accommodating the “imperial city” (huangcheng). Finally, innermost was located the core “palace city” (gongcheng). Dadu had been built between 1272 and 1283 A.D. on the order of Qubilai Qan and following plans drawn by the master architect Liu Bingzhong (1216–1274) and by Yeheide’er. Dadu was destroyed by Ming troops in 1396. For details, see Nancy Steinhardt 1983, 1999; Hok-lam Chan 1967, 1990.
and its eight chambers each housed a tablet of his forbears and ancestors, accommodating (like later in Gung-thang) life-like (painted, silk-woven or sculptured) portraits and statues of former Mongol rulers. A huge portrait of Qubilai was set up in the Wan’an temple of the Baita or White Pagode in Beijing. At Dadu, the annual imperial ancestor cult was foremost dedicated to the three Chinese ancestral emperors (of which the Mongol steppe rulers felt themselves genealogically and legitimately linked) and a genealogical ancestor worship was conducted in both the Taimiao and later Zongmiao Temples. The Mongol Qans already from the time of Činggis had titulated or canonized themselves as paragon Huangdi or “august emperors” in mimicry of previous dynasties. The Mongols, as new rulers of China, adopted Chinese state cults and court ceremonies, in particular, the ancestor cult and offerings to Heaven and Earth. In contrast to Chinese ancestral worship, however, the Mongols preferred to worship life-like portrait statues or idols, whereas the Chinese more abstractly – or depersonalized, anonymously – worshipped the tablet which commonly just contained the ancestor’s ritual name.142 Later, similar to the Manchu or Qing rulers, the Mongol emperors gradually became both Chinese emperors, [Mongol] Qans and Buddhist incarnates.143 The Mongols clearly cherished a more personalized relation to their ancestors. In the Ancestor Temple or Taimiao in Dadu, the tablets had been set up in eight chambers, each occupied by Činggis Qan and his immediate successors and parents, and reflecting the original “Eight White Yurts” (nai màn cayan gur). How much or little of this found its way to Central Tibet?

We are informed that at Gung-thang a row of ceremonies and sacrifices was conducted, being directed towards the living or the deceased imperial forebear possibly on a regular basis, so arguably to commemorate the birthday of Qubilai, reported e.g. for the 23.09.1323 (see ibid. 14b3–15a2 and for details Part I: fn. 479; Part II, App. I: Chap. 1.2). The personalized Qubilai cult (later also including paintings (b)ri mo) of other Mongol emperors, such as Gegen, etc.) clearly underscores the often repeated statement that Gung-thang – at least sp persistently proclaimed and upheld by the Tshal-pa – indeed was Qubilai’s private temple (sgoi kyi lha khang) and by extension collectively also including the two lHa-sa temples (Ra-sa and Ra-mo-che). The cult, more than our available sources currently allow us to assess, must have held a prominent place at Gung-thang, and explain a good part of the respect and awe accorded this seat and polity by contemporary Tibetans.

sMon-lam rdo-rje’s biography allows us to better understand why the Tshal-pa rulers had fared well in managing the areas under their jurisdiction and in convincing the imperial court that the Tshal Gung-thang temple constituted “the private temple” as a local bastion of the paragon ruler, Qubilai, a circumstance that obviously released a regular flow of donations and financial aid serving to cover the running expenditures to maintain, refurbish and repair not only the key temples of Ra-sa and Ra-mo-che, but also Gung-thang itself. We know that the raison d’être for Gung-thang’s erection originally had been to render service (zhabs tog) to the lHa-sa sanctuaries. As may be gathered from the above, it may be queried whether the Tshal-pa rulers attempted to reconstruct lHa-sa and Tshal Gung-thang into a kind of miniature imperial Dadu, without, however, being able – even remotely – to imitate the grand lay-out metropolis of its eastern rulers. What is certain, the massive support from Qubilai Qan and his successors on the throne and in particular the scions of the former paragon ruler contributed to pave the way for the expansion and protection of lHa-sa


area. The Tshal-pa clearly remained, aside from the paramount Sa-skya-pa, the most loyal allies of the Mongols in Central Tibet during this period.

2.6 In the Service of Jo-bo Śākyamuni: 
Merit-building from Environmental Repair, Borrowed Identities and the Dialectics of Prophecies

In the same epoch, a number of individual religious authorities, all clearly avid for the symbolism of the narrow lHa-sa area, reportedly was active: documented are the activities of Guru Chos-dbang (1212–1270), personally devoted to the dissemination of the Avalokiteśvara cult. Similarly, active were Sangs-rgyas gling-pa and rDo-rje gling-pa with their extraction of gter ma, and transmission of practical manuals and “treasury-registers” (kha byang) related to the lHa-sa site. Thang-stong rgyal-po (1385–1464) – with his spiritual crusade – also carried through the

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144 Equipped with a long pre-existence record, and signally pupil of Nam-mkha’-dpal, he in particular must be regarded as one of the first Tibetan equipped with a skyes rabs; cf. Gu ru chos dbang rnam thar; see also Phillips 2004 for the immense important role of this Treasure-recuperator in disseminating the Avalokiteśvara cult.

145 To Gu-ru Chos-dbang and in particular to rDo-rje gling-pa (in the latter’s informative Lung bstan spyi ba rgya msho l1b1–53a5) as well as to gTer-ston Chos-rgyal Sangs-rgyas gling-pa such visions and prophecies were ascribed. To the latter were attributed the deplorably still non-extant hsam yas lha sa [chu?] rags pa’i bka’ chems, but also the still-extant Pho brang Ra sa dang bsam yas gso tshul me chu bya ma’i bzog thabs dus rtags lung bstan a mre ta’i che brjod.

Sangs-rgyas gling-pa was an enormously prolific gter ston, after Myang-ral no doubt the most significant master in the promotion of the lHa-sa site and of the cult centered around the founding king Srong-btsan sgam-po; he spent three years in retreat in lHa-sa, incessantly occupied with visions of Avalokiteśvara and Guru Rinpoche. The 5th Dalai Lama refers to the transmission of a number of (currently non-extant) text cycles, related to the protection and restoration of the holy sanctuaries of lHa-sa and other dynastic temples. At bSam-yas (notably during the ideological heyday of da situ Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan and at a point when the Avalokiteśvara and Srong-btsan sgam-po-cult promoting rGyal rabs gsal ba’i me long was being compiled), Sangs-rgyas gling-pa in the years 1367–68 “detected” additional treasuries and cycles related to the founding king and his testaments such as the famous cycle Yid bzhi nor bu.

Cognate territory-remedial texts or codices, similarly preserved in testamentary format, were extracted by Sangsrgyas gling-pa from below a Vairocana (not Amitābha; cf. above fn. 108) statue in lHo-brag mKho-mthun lhag-khang, texts still largely non-extant. Still, the detected items can be listed under the heading:

\[\textit{hsTan pa’i gzh}i ma gtsug lag khang gso thabs which inter alia included:}\n
- \textit{byung po’i stobs nyams pas mtha’ ’dul gyi gtsug lag khang rnam ’jig tshul}
- \textit{gtsug lag khang phyi bsod nams kyi rten nag gso kyi rten ’brel lkg gyar gtsug lag khang \(zhig pa gso ba’i thabs myug tu sgrub pa sla zhung ma’i’ lhul bya tshul kyi bka’ chems}}

\textit{cf. DL5 gSan yig II 380b3–381a2; Sangs rgyas gling pa’i gter ’byung 67. See also the longevity and perpetuity ritual text to the lHa-sa sanctuaries [Jo-bo mchel gnyis / rnam gnyis = Phan-bde’i rtsa-lag rnam gnyis], detected by the same gTer ston and reproduced by the 5th Dalai Lama in his Phan bde’i rtsa lag rnam gnyis bhran bzhugs cho ga mi ’gyur g yung drung (Vol. BA of the latter’s coll. Works). See also Gu ru Chos dbang rnam thar 27.6–7; g. Yag sde chos ’byung 449–50; and TBH Sørensen 327–30, 587–88.}

In line with most of the treasure findings made by the present gter ston, reports prevail that they were neither welcomed nor supported in all corners. Particularly revealing are the case with the findings of pertinent Srong-btsan sgam-po-related Mahākāraṇikā and Tārā cycles (skor) unearthed by rDo-rje gling-pa at the close of the 14th cent. (\textit{ca. 1378/90 A.D.}?) in lHa-sa (clearly in mimicry of Atisā’s discovery of Ka khol ma; in rDo-rje gling-pa’s case below a foliage-ornamented capital pillar (shing lo can) in Jo-khang), a discovery that included a thumb-sized statue of the Great Compassionate One, reportedly a thugs dam icon belonging to Srong-btsan sgam-po. Signally, rDo-rje gling-pa’s treasure
erection of nature-containing statues and sanctuaries at crucial terrestrial sites (sa gnad me htsa'i lha khang) throughout Tibet. Carrying reminiscence of and arguably emulating the “supine demoness” scheme, it was later taken up and expanded by the 5th Dalai Lama (see below). Similar to other gter ston, a row of revelatory fillips was born from Thang-stong’s vision of Guru Rinpoche. Aside from his famous iron-bridges, it was the extensive building of statues and shrines that were implemented with a view to provide, so it is maintained, the foundation for happiness in Tibet ensured through his extensive “protective agenda.” It thus aimed at ensuring the perpetuation of Buddhism there and to avert any invasion from border-armies. He was active in lHa-sa too, where he occasionally displayed his magic flood abating faculties (Thang stong rnam thar I 314; II 423–24; III 380–82), arguably around 1450’s. Conspicuous and somewhat idiosyncratic is the tradition of the pacification of the chu bdag (Skt. *jalesvara, apāmpati) Varuṇa that was propitiated by him. Varuṇa – like Mitra originally Vedic deities connected with rain-making introduced into the Tibetan pantheon from India – is also known as Nāgarājā Varuṇa (or Ba-ru rgyal-ba).

During the same period, we have only vague rapports of concerted flood control measures in the nascent dGe-lugs circles. Such activities surely must have played a major role and we shall surmise that the origin of the dGe-lugs interest already rested with bTsong-kha-pa, who after inaugurating the financially burdensome and hugely patronized sMon lam festival (in 1409 A.D. for telling details and its actual extent, cf. Tsong kha pa’i rnam thar 295–339) must have been strongly burdened by the responsibility for the preservation and protection of Jo-khang and hence lHa-sa.

The role, function and imagery of Varuṇa in a Tibetan cultural context and its position in the dominant circles. They in this milieu represented competing factions pursuing rival political agendas. The beginning of the gter ston engagement – as we have seen – had been born in the milieu of gter ston Myang-ral and his successors; cf. rDo rje gling pa rnam thar II 106–08.

The many identities and functions of Varuṇa in Indian post-vedic literature and lore, see H. Lüders, Varuna and e.g. von Simson 1997: 12f. Sojourning in the ocean (sāgarālaya) under his sway, he is regarded as the lord of all rivers, their protector and genetrix. He is in Buddhist literature depicted as a Nāga-king, so in Lalitavistara and as such one of the eight great kings. Also Indra or Parjanya are listed as dispenser of rain. In a Buddhist context, Varuṇa usually occupies the western position of the ten directional guardians (Willson and Brauen 337). Among the dGe-lugs-pa, the Varuṇa cult is found in connection with rituals dealing with episodes with too little or too much water. Cf. Nebesky-Wojkowitz 310, 467, 476–77. To bTsong-kha-pa are ascribed texts dealing with water and the Varuṇa cult; cf. Tohoku Catalogue nos. 5361–62. A toponym Va-ru-tshal is even registered where Thang-stong erected a bKra-shis sgo-mangs caitva; cf. Kun dga’ ‘dpal byor rnam thar 472.5–6. The role, function and imagery of Varuṇa in a Tibetan cultural context and its mythic lore deserve a separate study.

Extensive ablation rites associated with bTsong-kha-pa that comprise water or rain rituals abound, not least based upon the celebrated dMigs brse ma prayer cycle, a teaching cycle richly commented upon in dGe-lugs circles. They in particular came into use when the dreaded late spring draught (sos than che) was looming large, or the need for spring rain (sos char) was imminent in order to ensure a good harvest.
But aside from him, it appear that it was primarily the dGe-lugs master rGyud-chen Kun-dga' don-grub (1419–86 A.D.) to whom some measures of water-control or flood training is ascribed, albeit details about his measures are absent.

Similar measures served as starting point for the advent of later generations of gter ston, but also of lay ritual specialists (or indeed high hierarchs), in fact of a flurry of peregrinating masters and saintly entrepreneurs that in the same and coming centuries became associated with the legacy and implementation of such ritual commitments and pre-emptive measures. Recent research has explored into the fascinating ritual and cultic functions of the “treasury-revealers” in Tibet. Their role in reshaping and redressing the cultural and religious landscape, in the symbolic ruminating of the latter and in transmitting and perpetuating recondite teachings and cults, and in their terrestrial sanctification through their “re- or decoding” of prophetically garbed signs and portents related to territory and space – e.g. in form of opening and sealing Hidden Lands (sbas yul) foreseen to serve as refuge in degenerate times (cf. e.g. Ehrhard 1997; Childs 1999), in establishing and upholding monastic establishments for the teachings – not least throughout the rugged, remote or isolated Himalayan borderlands – it all contributed to ensure the survival and diversification of otherwise lost religious traditions nurtured outside the established monastic institutions with their main-stream or orthodox canon and curricula.

In the overall agenda of the inventive and assertive gTer-ston, which aside from any esoteric message often turned out to be politically motivated charters that embodied entire schemata of prophecies ranking from politically sensitive foretelling of social decay, of incidents of religious degenerations, of ominous intruding border-armies (invariably Mongol; horrified and spurred by the initial 1240 A.D. invasion) or again of natural disasters, we shall here only deal with the latter. The lay specialists with the execution of their khang, their basic needs of religious institutions and lay communities such as, in casu, to the sacristans of Jo-khang, their lhAsa sde-bzhi benefactors or to any local ruler and patron of lhAsa, to whom they offered or accommodated their ritual service, often proceeded by or following their grim presage concerning any imminent catastrophe. The tradition, as we have seen, even led to the establishment of the institution of more permanent dike caretakers or chu rags pa (in one case a mid-13th-century Ra-sa chu lhad pa (~ Ra-sa chu las pa) Darma rgyal-mtshan; see e.g. DL5 Thob yig L51a4–5) has been listed, which may have represented specialists exclusively or at least periodically committed

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150 The elusive disciple of Tsong-kha-pa, Ku-cor rtags ldan (i.e. Sangs-rgyas dpal-bzang; 1386–1445 A.D., see Fig. 13 above)* was one of first masters ever to deal with water-control, such as the one conducted in 1409 where he initiated some flood control rituals. The relevant text, it appears, purports that Ku-cor went into retreat at Rags-kha of lhAsa. This may refer to the embankment (rgags) of lhAsa (supported by oral tradition and by an entry by Ngag-dbang Chos kyi rgyal-po in the 1520's where he visited the lhAsa rdDo-rags-kha; cf. his biography 552.4; JCh 129b3), but may also – perhaps more feasibly – refer to the hermitage of Ral[rags]-kha (cf. Part I: fn. 517; i.e. Rags-kha Chu-skor of Glang-ru). See also Yeh 2005.

Most spectacular among the traditional dGe-lugs-pa conducting flood regulating activities was the Shes-rab seng-ge's disciple rGyud-chen Kun-dga' don-grub (see Fig. 21). Due to his allegedly magical faculties, he reportedly was successful in averting flooding in lhAsa. As a token of gratitude, it is recorded that he received the Ra-mo-che temple in which he subsequently erected the rGyud-stod grva-tshang; see Tucci and Heissig 1970: 129.

* Cf. e.g. Tsong kha pa'i rnam thar 305.3–5. He wrote a biography of Tsong-kha-pa – deplorably non-extant. For a brief biography of Ku-cor (in particular his miraculous feats), father to the first rGyal-ba (or Chab-mdo) 'Phags-pa-lha incarnation bDe-chen rdo-rje (1439–1487 A.D.) as well as for details on the Ku-cor clan of lhOs-mdad; cf. bKa' brgyud chos 'byung II 3ff. The 4th Karma-pa Rol-pa'i rdo-rje was born into the Ku-cor clan.
to this task and the commitment indeed was seen as immensely meritorious and rewarding. They may either be seen as a sort of professional “nature conservationists” or as “weather forecasters” (producing what today is called “precipcasts”) of yore that rendered disaster emergency although the measures taken often proved remedial rather than actually preventive. Such ascetic specialists – who almost uniformly took recourse to teachings and precepts that had the format of such telling prophecies and instructions – were crusading places and courting people in perpetual search for patronage in return for their ritual service. In some cases, their own ritual and political ends, possibly also personal agenda was scrupulously advanced.

Such endeavours were conducive to ensuring cultural and social prestige. The set or repertoire of teachings or the mantic prescriptions they transmitted or handed down often were an idiosyncratic stock or even a canon of Guru Rinpoche or Padmasambhava-related esoteric teachings and precepts that the master once – with foresight it is told to ensure an inner coherence to the mission – had delivered to Khri-srong lde’u-btsan and his court, or it was made up of a set of prophecy-based teachings once delivered by Srong-btsan sgam-po to his successors and descendants. Set in a royal ambience, the central texts, as we have seen, therefore were a stock of rediscovered texts (and sacred objects) that were transmitted and perpetuated within a vibrant spiritual dgongs gter and sa gter tradition born from meditative visions (dag snang) in which divine or spiritual messages purportedly were transmitted and hence authenticated its inspired revealer. These transmitters, whether with rNying-ma-pa or Bon-po denominations throughout their entire history had remained in a state of fruitful cross-polination in terms of teachings and precepts. As noted earlier, some of the basic “testamentary” narratives related to Srong-btsan sgam-po and the link to Avalokiteśvara had been born and transmitted from the 11th century in bKā’-gdams-pa circles. It soon inspired rNying-ma-pa ascetics to take up the glove, being spurred by the same topic and by its prestigious cultic and esoteric contents, to further the royal cult through prophecies and precepts, either being divinely inspired, or born from revelations and visitations or said to have been disclosed in such rediscovered scrolls, – anyhow they reflected a wide range of apotropaic, mantic or supplicative precepts against watery or natural menaces or physical or mental hindrances of all sorts. Important for our present purposes, and as suggested by the charters employed, to assess the ambience in which the rituals was set: A sort of pact with the local telluric or terrestrial powers was sought, an agreement to be achieved through rites of beseeching propitiation, of ablution and prayers. The operative agenda and those transmitting these precepts closely resembled a guild or, so it seems, a peregrinating fraternity (or cartel) of active gTer-ston, a select group articulating their (group) identity through these charters.

A particular kind of prophecies usually consisted of ex eventu foretellings regarding specific persons considered manifestations of former saints and hierarchs. It was linked up with the crucial issue
related to the question of authority and authenticity. This issue had been at the root of the conflict from the very beginning, now became increasingly polemic or open to criticism the more this kind of transmission won still larger audiences or were (mis-)jused in a political context. The prophecies within their own fold were categorized as 'khrul med lung or as “infallible authority,” – in an attempt to tinge them with the rewarding hue of upholding unerring scriptural authority (agama) as codified and known from Buddhist hermeneutics – especially those prophecies issued by the earlier treasure-revealers (who were anyway considered to be closer to the source of inspiration and hence held greater prestige), whereas the infallibility or authority of later prophecies often by their antagonists was targeted for being self-fabricated (rang bzo) and overly apocryphal, in a period where the number of both prophets and prophecies issued had inflated dramatically.

The topic prophecy and its valorization as authoritative source is a lingering issue in the overly defensive writings dealing with the hermeneutics of treasure sources. Operating in a hazy climate of authenticity or nymous legitimacy that very often was entwined with or relativized by questions of fraudulence in terms of their purported precepts, central to many of the [self-]proclaimed specialists were, aside from the crucial question of authorization, the perennial question of patronage. Lacking support either from a lay ruler, from a local community or settlement seriously hampered or altogether curtailed their activities. Samples documenting the impact and political ends of a treasure-revealer’s activities are legion, and some will be detailed more below, but the telling case of authoritative and self-conscious gTer-ston or sprul sku bZang-po grags-pa and rGod-Idem (1337–1409) and their prophetic and religious service to underpin and legitimate the Mang-yul Gung-thang royal house (scions of the Yar-lung house) in return for patronage demonstrate beyond doubt the often political (ab)use and self-staged instrumentalization of such activities. rGod-Idem himself, to be true, proudly claimed descent from an imperial-time line too, a circumstance that will explain a good part of his predilection for Tibet’s glorious past. This lingering interest for the founding period of old Tibet, its prestigious past and legacy and its spiritual heritage not least among leading rNying-ma-pa gTer-ston may also have a simple explanation: Many invariably were descended from age-old clans or families that in the late 10th and early 11th century derived much of their cultural prestige from the exclusive transmission of distinct esoteric cycles, like members of the gNyos (as we have seen), or the gNubs, Myang and the Shud-pu clans, to mention a few (see e.g. Gu bkra chos 'byung 321f. – a source that often reads like a “blue book” of visionary Treasure-revealers and their prominent clan affiliation). Powerful Clans, aristocratic families and their lineages, often populated remote border areas where they became ardent supporters of mostly arcane and esoteric teachings. Their seats often were relegated to the periphery of the political centres.

151 Cf. G. Childs 1999: 149–152; K.-H. Everding 2000: 481f. See also the outspoken, but late discussion in Mi-pham’s gTer-ston brtag pa Chu dvangs nor bu, “Examination of the Treasure-Revealer: The Water-cleansing Jewel” more generally on this point (cf. Doctor 2005, but also Martin 2001c). On the nature of prophecies and their dynamic power, see the informative essay by R. Lerner, The Cedar of Lebanon. For the problematic legitimation of gter ma and its strategies, see e.g. Gyatso 1993.

152 For a survey of the relevant material related to bZang-po grags-pa; cf. e.g. DL5 gSang vigs H 3B2b1–85a5; gTer-ston log rgyus 118b3–119a4. The Mang-yul Gung-thang rulers in particular entertained strong bonds with and accommodated a number of gter ston.

The vivid allusion to royal ancestral roots may be exemplified from the biography of rJe btsun ma Chos kyi sgron-ma (1422–1455 A.D.), daughter of the Mang-yul Gung-thang ruling house (and hence ultimately of the erstwhile Yar-lung house), at one point the (auto-)biography poignantly refers to the site of ‘U-shang-rdo erected by her yab mes Khri Ral-pa-can; see Chos sgron rnam thar 138a4–6.
However, it were specific prophecies and rhetorics—often appropriately labelled *dus rtags lung bstan*, “foretellings concerning signs/events in time” (or *snga lhas lung bstan* or “early warning prophecies” evidently capable of operating both progressively and regressively)—that would fuel countless conflicts as dreadful and contentious political weapons; anyway, they all displayed a eerie taste for disaster epics and apocalyptic scenarios. Working either ways, the prophetic literature indeed contains a goldmine of comments and information on contemporary politics—however difficult it occasionally may be to decipher these properly. We are allowed a glimpse of their activities in their biographies, from their dairies or we may find witness of their pre-destined missions in a veritable flurry of personal prophecies (evidently self-issued and self-staged or—as it would appear—self-fulfilling) that circulated in time and place, foretellings heralding their coming, or foretold and contextualized their mission and finally forged—true to the nature of such prognostications or forecasts—close congenial-spiritual or incarnational links (often *ad hoc* linked up with their assumed or selective identities that remained essential tools of legitimacy) to the former trail-blazers, to the divine source of the cult, to the original founder and master of the cult or to the institution in question, whether it be Avalokiteśvara, Padmasambhava, Strong-btsan sgam-po, or most living manifestations like Myang-ral or Bla-ma Zhang.

In fact, the dialectics and the dynamics of such strictly [self-]promotional prophecies ensured that the *gter ston* remained true masters of borrowing identities, assumed and tailored to their specific needs and missions. Reading such biographical sketches, not rarely seems to reflect a tenacious inclination for a complacent *Selbstinszenierung*, an act which, however, did not generate any apparent *crise d’identité*—indeed they absorbed and incorporated their functional or operational *alias*es with some élan, and imbued their self-recognition with great immediacy. No doubt, their borrowed identities—if only in some cases conceived of as the arrogation of a personal destiny—were widely accepted in the milieus they were born into or operated within. It was cases of impersonations—rarely a question of conscious impostors albeit this may also have been the case—that culturally and spiritually was wholly legitimate and indeed badly needed in order to meet the socio-religious requirements to link or bridge the past with the present. In a sense, it carried reminiscence of the performance of a drama or a theatrical play, where an actor must enact a role matching the plot. Nonetheless, the format of such teachings revealingly was designated “testaments,” evidently a signal allusion to the original format that had been ascribed to the founding figures Strong-btsan sgam-po and to Guru Rinpoche, but also a format that was pregnant with concepts or literary *nodes purporting patrimony, inheritance and legacy*. A key to a better understanding of this phenomenon clearly rests with the question of unbroken spiritual legitimacy and the aforementioned impersonation process. In the end, they were crucial for the local or regional success in their terrestrial crusade, spatial renovation, or in their appropriate environmental “remediation” that almost inevitably followed in the wake of their own disaster foretellings, anyhow it was critical for their ability to forge a spiritual link between the relevant cult and/or the specific site and the teachings they purported to transmit, in fact the idiosyncratic nature behind the spiritual bond most often remained the single most important prerequisite for their mission to ensure ample local patronage.

We do not here intend—even remotely—to offer a prosopography of the leading figures involved in this important ritual charter—the topic is too complex and the figures too many. Yet it is worthwhile to enumerate briefly the most prominent ones, in other words those who were actively involved or who occasionally issued prophecies heralding such activities in the first place related
to lHa-sa. Among the main actors, aside from the founders or initiators already mentioned above, we find ritualists and visionary prophets or presagers like Sangs-rgyas gling-pa (1340–1396 A.D.), rDo-rje gling-pa (1346–1405 A.D.), but also Ratna gling-pa (1403–1478 A.D.), Padma gling-pa (1450–1521 A.D.) and his thugs sras Zla-ba rgyal-mtshan; furthermore, byang gter cycle transmitters mNga'-ris Pan-chen and his brother Rig-'dzin Legs-l丹 rdo-rje, as well as mChog-l丹 mgon-po (1497–1531/43 A.D.) and not least Zhig-po gling-pa (1524–1583 A.D.). Close congenial and spiritual bonds prevailed between these treasure-revealers. Finally, Yo-l-mo gter ston Saky a bzang-po153 and gZhan-ph a mtha’-ya s should be mentioned in order to list the most prominent individuals that either discovered, transmitted, invented, wrote, or made – not seldom socio-political – prophecies or implemented similar instructive chu bzlog manuals to avert flooding.154 We thus seem to have general information on the names of at least the most notable ritual specialists in this respect, yet it often remains all but opaque how the actual ritual processes, their proper modus operandi actually were executed, in other words how and in what form the different rituals were carried out, as well as any information on their actual time-tables.

mChog-l丹 mgon-po155 (taking up the lead left behind by his teacher Padma gling-pa who similarly had a plethora of thematically cognate prophecies issued – see his Ma 'ongs Lung bstan kun gsal me long) is recorded to have executed different activities in lHa-sa for the protection of Jo-khang and its pivotal Jo-bo Saky a statue. His biography routinely, almost dutifully addresses, similar to his contemporary gter ston colleagues, the prevailing hazards that threatened the central Jo-bo image from being carried away by water or flood (chs u khyer, chus gdan 'dren, chu yis nyen). It was mChog-l丹 who – as the first one recorded? – based upon or accompanied by a prophecy issued by rDo-rje gling-pa (no wonder when we recall that mChog-l丹 mgon-po was considered a physical manifestation of the latter; gTam zhing lo rgyus 4) intended to erect an octagonal, three-storied shrine (gtsug lag khang zur b rgyad thog gsum) in lHa-sa to be pinnacled by a bdud 'dul mchod rten – upon a “tortoise-resembling” hill (spo to) located between (sic) Ra-mo-che and Ra-sa (vihāra).156

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Also to Padma gling-pa’s thugs sras Zla-ba rgyal-mtshan (1499–1587) is ascribed such rituals of deterrence, as reported in his biography.

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However, such prophetic charters often interacted with or were conditioned on the prior participation and sanctioning from local protectors or telluric Nāga-kings etc. such as Brahmā and Takṣaka (lords of the site who at any point could reclaim or reappropriate the sanctuary if rituals were inappropriately executed or wreak havoc – flooding – if provoked the slightest), the successful propitiatory outcome of which resulted in the bestowal of precious objects – such as jewels denoted “earth’s essence” (*kṣitigarbha, *bhūmigarbha) in the shape of a light-emitting caitya (a play on and direct allusion to the original light-emitting caitya in the IHa-sa origin myth) – as an outer sign of a successfully implemented ritual. This also proved necessary for the erection of a specifically designed protective temple intended to control or revert the course of the river in times of watery perils.\(^{157}\) This protective edifice alone was predicted to protect IHa-sa for a period of up to 180

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- IHa sa chu dang bsam yas me dang bye mas ’jig tshul; de’i gnyen por Klu ’Jog pos phul ba’i rin po che’i chu shel bsam yas kyi srog shing;
- Tshangs pas phul ba’i rin po che sa’i snying po lha sa’i chu bzlog don du hal [= has] po rir shas pa;\(^*\)
- gTsug lag khang gnyis ’jig pa’i snga ltras lung bstan;
- Chu bzlog lha khang rtsig tshul,*
- Chu bzlog dang jo bo’i brtan bzhus gnas brtan gyi gsol ’debs; etc.

Most of these still largely non-extant cycles (and we can expect the prior circulation of many more) which thus go back to revelatory visions of Sangs-rgyas gling-po, the 5th Dalai Lama reports, were in his time already utmost rare but should witness a revival with the latter. It easily explains his principal interest and fascination with this master and with his spiritual-ritual legacy, being intimately linked up with the terra sacra of IHa-sa. Cf. also gTer-bdag gling-po’s gsan yig 217b4f., 221b1–2.

Ironically, both the 4th and the 5th Karma-pa, the former being Sangs-rgyas gling-po’s pupil, took a keen interest in the teachings and writings of this gter ston and so also of his more political prophecies and cycles. Generations later, Zhig-po gling-po – not surprisingly considered a rebirth of Sangs-rgyas gling-po – also included among his foremost pupils the 5th Zhva-dmar-pa dKon-mchog yan-lag (alias dKon-mchog-’bangs)** and other leading hierarchs. Cf. Kong-sprul, gTer ston bo rgyas 84b1–3. Future research may answer the question to what extent these cycles wielded any influence or played any political role behind the claim of the Karma-pa that IHa-sa was to be managed by them – yet it evidently proved to be the case.

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\(^{**}\) Not without irony, the name dKon-mchog-’bangs alludes to a famous bKa’-gdams-pa narrative tradition (initially spread in sNar-thang circles, contained in bKa’ gdams gilegs ham; vol. Bu chos). It is a celebrated ‘Brom-ston Rebirth Stories (adapted from an Indian Jātaaka), namely the life of an Indian Dharmarāja or prince dKon-mchog-’bangs who in this wholly Tibetan legend prophesied that he would be reborn as Srong-bsa gnas-po, and then as ‘Brom-ston. It not least was this Rebirth Sto-
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Ironically, both the 4th and the 5th Karma-pa, the former being Sangs-rgyas gling-pa’s pupil, took a keen interest in the teachings and writings of this gter ston and so also of his more political prophecies and cycles. Generations later, Zhippo gling-pa – not surprisingly considered a rebirth of Sangs-rgyas gling-pa – also included among his foremost pupils the 5th Zhva-dmar-pa dKon-mchog yan-lag (alias dKon-mchog-'bangs)** and other leading hierarchs. Cf. Kong-sprul, gTer ston lo rgyus 84b1–3. Future research may answer the question to what extent these cycles wielded any influence or played any political role behind the claim of the Karma-pa that IHa-sa was to be managed by them – yet it evidently proved to be the case.

* This evidently refers to the same tradition which Zhip-po gling-pa took recourse to, when he erected the rDo-rje lha-khang.

** Not without irony, the name dKon-mchog-'bangs alludes to a famous bKa'-gdam-po narrative tradition (initially spread in sNor-thang circles; contained in bKa' gdamgs glegs ham; vol. Bu chos). It is a celebrated 'Brom-ston Rebirth Stories (adapted from an Indian Jātaka), namely the life of an Indian Dhammarāja or prince dKon-mchog-'bangs who in this wholly Tibetan legend prophesied that he would be reborn as Srong-btsan sgam-po, and then as 'Brom-ston. It not least was this Rebirth Sto-
years. But as things turned out, it should not be him, but his pupil Zhig-po gling-pa who several years later succeeded in erecting the temple.

2.7 Disputed Legacies and Political Conflict: Flood Control and Natural Disaster Management as Instrument and Cause of Sectarian Rivalry

While lHa-sa as *terra sacra* thus remained at the edge of chaos and faced disaster almost on a regular basis, most of the ritual specialists, themselves almost exclusively with professed rNying-ma-pa links, would enact the ritual agenda without – initially at least – regard to their sectarian moorings, the reason being that they in the first place were conducted by wandering ascetics who appear to have proffered their service to any supportive patron or ruler. Still, the dominant rNying-ma orientation cannot come as a surprise: The vast majority of esoteric precepts and cycles that promoted or endorsed the ritual protection of the Jo-khang site were seriously queried in respect to scriptural and spiritual authenticity and historicity, being in most non-rNying-ma-pa corners regarded as apocryphal, fraudulent or fabricated, at best dubious and inconclusive. Yet, it is not without a modicum of irony, that it was the “esoteric monopoly” in terms of Padmasambhava-related esoteric precepts, cycles and prophecies concerning lHa-sa and its protection born and forcefully held in rNying-ma circles that eventually forced the dGe-lugs-pa front to embrace and take these up. This is most evident from the comprehensive study curricula (*gsan yig*) of the eclectic 5th Dalai Lama and to a large extent account for the circumstance that the mentor or mastermind of the lHa-sa dike project, Myang-ral, later was accepted as a “pre-existence” or previous embodiment of the 5th Dalai Lama.

The dire consequences with regularly occurring doom-like prospects that foresaw alien invasions and natural disasters in Central Tibet – real or fictitious, *mta’ dmag bzlog* and *chu bzlog* rituals therefore were both high in demand and for the ritual specialists executing them no doubt not only prestigious but also inordinately lucrative, an added reason why they remained permanently in demand or in stock, ready to be conjured up or enacted, as it would seem, at any appropriate occasion. Sangs-rgyas gling-pa (as indeed his contemporary rDo-rje gling-pa) with links both to the ’Bri-gung-pa and later to the Karma-pa hierarchs proved quite active and “mediating” in this field – his major *ghter* discoveries took place during the crucial years of 1364–71, at a time when Phag-mo-gru-pa was about reorganizing the political landscape in Central Tibet. Sangs-rgyas gling-pa too had equipped himself with a proper spiritual background by resetting himself (for his purposes conveniently) in a proper historical frame – he was considered a manifestation of Mu-rub btsan-po, the son of Khri-srong Id’u-btsan. Already in the late 1350’s, in connection with visits to lHa-sa, he also cultivated various visions of Avalokitesvara. It had followed other visions that instilled in him that lHa-sa truly was his district (*nga’i yul yin*) [i.e. his buddhakṣetra], so once while sojourning on the summit of dMar-po-ri, he visually had encounters with the eleven-headed deity; cf. *Sangs rgyas gling pa’i gter ’byung* 12–13. Beyond doubt, such visions in the first place marked out spiritual encounters and inner experiences of an ascetic – but did such revelations also carry political implications? That the individual *ghter ston* more often than not were entering a difficult territory and were anything but welcome within the premises of Jo-khang, we...
can conclude from the experiences of rDo-rje gling-pa that similar episodes must have been met with by his contemporary treasure-revealers. It can be concluded that the treasure-finder’s errand invited conflict and hence was of a political nature.

Still, their pragmatically conceived chu bzlog rituals, not least, were executed in response to the perpetual need for such services, and the rituals themselves may not always have carried political overtones. Yet, to be in a position to execute such rituals of deterrence, a bond to the rulers of petty ruling houses in Central Tibet throughout the years, however, flood control programs and natural disaster scenarios appear to have become increasingly instrumentalized to serve political or hegemonic ends. The geo-political importance of lHa-sa and of its surrounding heartland around the narrow sKyid-chu basin land that was dotted with major religious establishments now intertwined with the hegemonic struggle between the petty ruling houses in Central Tibet throughout the 15th century.

Allowing a brief glance back on the preceding period, it can be adduced that there were many players in the frequent feuds and petty rivalries behind this struggle for hegemony in the narrow lHa-sa area — too many to be listed here — throughout this spell, yet the main political or secular actors in the initial post-Tshal hegemonic period (i.e. after ca. 1350 and fully after 1415–20 A.D.) were the Phagmo-gru-pa governorship of sNe’u/sNel-pa with their rdzong or administrative seat close to lHa-sa. Another Phag-gru governorship was the Brag-dkar-pa — an equally strong lay benefactor ruling over the area around present-day ’Brom-stod, sTag-rtse district and Mal-gro, a ruling house which had married into and thus at some point was allied with the sNel-pa and which already in the 1460’s had reconfirmed a patron-client relationship with the dGe-lugs-pa, yet already in the 1530–40’s at the latest the line died out and was absorbed by the dGa’-ldan sKyid-shod-pa. The sNel-pa themselves were intimately committed to the dGe-lugs-pa, from the time of Tsong-kha-pa, and they remained the rulers of lHa-sa and of its surrounding heartland around the narrow sKyid-chu basin land that was dotted with major religious establishments now intertwined with the hegemonic struggle between the petty ruling houses in Central Tibet throughout the 15th century.

Footnotes:

158 Cf. Table V.12.1. The sNel-pa were strong benefactors of most monasteries in and around the narrow lHa-sa area. In 1437, a severe famine visited Central Tibet and the sNel-pa rulers (headed by nang so Grags-dbang and his wife skal-bzang) served as caring patrons to ensure the famine was overcome; cf. Thang stong nram thar l 191–97.

A few years later, a major tragedy occurred when skin boats launched by the sNel-pa to cross sKyi-d-chu capsized, the perpetrator, so it was argued, obviously being caused by the gNyan mKhar-nag (= sNye’i mKhar-nag at mKhar-nag in sNye/- mNyos-thang; a local klu water demon) whereby many people died.* Cf. ib. 207–10. The adjacent lake mKhar-nag-mtsho on the mKhar-nag-thang was its abode. For the mKhar-nag klu, see also App. IV. Or read gNyan Kha-gnas?

* Another legend, however, chronicles how the perpetrator is linked to the story of the site at Rags-smad bTsang-khang in lHa-sa, where later? the Great Fifth in order to prevent flooding here had the residence (“Black Fort” or mKhar-nag) erected, allegedly a residence of a local gchi bdag, the demonic “Boatsman” (gNyans-pa), hence called gNyans mKhar-nag. He and his two acolytes (gtsos ‘khor gsam) regularly had to be propitiated in order to prevent them from causing the flooding of sKyi-d-chu and, as we have seen, causing the capsizing of boats (cf. Tsering Gyalbo 2005: 422). Further research may clarify to what extent the institution of the Fifth Dalai Lama is an elaboration of the former tradition once situated in sNye-thang.
The emerging dGe-lugs-pa order founded by Tsong-kha-pa with its three major establishments in the vicinity of lHa-sa and with the inauguration, annual enactment and executive control of the grand sMon lam Festival would wield substantial spiritual and increasingly political influence in the area. The genius and repute of Tsong-kha-pa had enabled him to garner support among a very large number of communities around lHa-sa who all felt committed to his grand project in turning lHa-sa into the spiritual center of the country (as detailed in his biography, too). His three most influential and affluent benefactors included the mightiest ruler in Tibet at that point, the Phag-mo-gru ruler mi dbang Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan at sNe’u-gdong and the latter’s sKyid-shod dependencies, the sNe’u-pa and of Brag-dkar-pa governors. They became zestful and liberal patrons behind the running restoration and refurbishment of the two Jo-bo Sanctuaries at this crucial point and behind the financial burdensome annual sMon lam ceremonies. Tsong-kha-pa’s equally patronized, strategic network of dependencies and colleges that he and his followers had spun in and around the lHa-sa area and around the main dGe-lugs seats were conducive to strengthen the overall dGe-lugs position and presence in the area. It can safely be assumed that the sacristans or dkon gnyer of Ra-sa gTsug-lag-khang entertained strong Yellow Hat sympathies throughout this period too. Most of the funding enterprises related to lHa-sa that took place in the mid-15th century were undertaken by the local house of the sNe’u-pa (Table V. 12.1).

Following the founder’s demise in 1419 who in the first place had concentrated the expansion of his order in the dBus districts, it was the ongoing venture into new, often hostile territory in gTsang that increased tension – so in 1447, when a close student of bTsong-kha-pa, the intrepid dGe’-dun-grub-pa (the later 1st Dalai Lama) established bKra-shis lhun-po in gZhis-kha-rtse. It was the starting signal for a competition between the Karma-pa and the dGe-lugs-pa, a conflict that found its termination over two hundred years later in the mid-17th century only. The establishment of the seat in gZhis-kha-rtse provoked renewed interest on the side of the Karma-pa for lHa-sa.
The 'Bras-spungs chos rje (alias the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Dalai Lama in spe)\textsuperscript{19} even went to the extent of asserting that the protection and maintenance of the central Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang sanctum – proverbially euphemized as the “fundament of happiness and benefit of Tibet and of its populace” – exclusively was due to the grace and kindness of Tsong-kha-pa and his pious followers, due to the fact that the latter must be held responsible for the institution of the sMon lam chen mo Festival and for having set up other permanent liturgical endowments in the temple. The statements seem to provide his justification for their privileged, if not exclusive, access to and maintenance of the sanctum. There was good reason for the high incarnate to reiterate this partisan stance in the light of their opponents (see below) and his description in the biography must therefore be seen in the context that the temple and the sMon lam Festival for a period of ca. twenty years (1498/1500-

\textsuperscript{19} Cf. DL2 551-55, 618. Episodes describing the hazardous and risky affairs when attempting to cross a monsoon-fed sKyid-chu river are often reported in the literature. One spectacular episode happened when the 'Bras-spungs chos rje (i.e. the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Dalai Lama) in 1539 A.D. was on his way back to 'Bras-spungs after having been invited by the dGa'-ldan sKyid-shod-pa rulers to their fortress of bDe-chen-rtse. His party was forced to cross the river, and as it was mid-sum-

Another phenomenon of trite occurrence encountered while crossing the waterways was seasickness (\textit{chu nad}), contracted when the waters were choppy; so Tārānātha e.g. recounts how such sufferings set in in 1585 (a mistake for 1583?) when sailing upon the gTsang-po river. During the same journey, he also reports how the area between Ra-sa and Ra-mo-che had been entirely overflowed and meandered by sKyid-chu, all the circumambulation circuits in IHa-sa were soaked in water and could only be negotiated in a coracle and just as a dike had been erected, it immediately was washed away, causing frustration and annoyance to the people. Cf. Tārānātha rnam thar 31a6–b3, 33a2–5.

Roads barely negotiable and unfordable rivers hardly passable (\textit{chu las thar dka'}) are experiences met with by any traveling Tibetan, and with the increase in traffic and transportation, the use of boats and coracles increased too (considered more convenient than travelling by foot, on horse or in sedan-chairs especially when floods had inundated the trails along the river), even to a dramatic extent: numerous hierarchs and visiting guests took recourse to this convenient means of transportation, not a risk-free enterprise as we have seen. By the 17\textsuperscript{th} cent., we have reports of both gzhung ko boats as well as sger gru or private boats regularly launched, not least between the navigable and oft-frequented water-route linking IHa-sa with Chu-shur (on the way to and fro gTsang). Important hierarchs with large travel parties often were under way, and gauging their size of such parties, it required up to sixty \textit{ko ba} or small boats to carry a party to the other side; cf. e.g. DL6 340.
1518 A.D.) was conducted, not by the usual 'Bras-spungs monks who had been in charge since 1416, but by monks from gSang-phu and from the local Karma-pa monastery of Sa-nag[-ma] during Rin-spungs-pa's brief hegemonic intermezzo in dBus.

Absolute or full control over the lHa-sa sanctuary and its nearest environs, however, was exercised neither by one order nor by one ruling house. We find, both within lHa-sa itself and in its closest vicinity numerous establishments, hermitages and shrines during the same spell that were either erected, maintained or associated with the 'Bri-gung-pa, the Karma-pa, or the sTag-lung-pa, without leading to notable conflicts. lHa-sa, on the other hand, was never a political vacuum. The position and prestige of the lHa-sa dkon gnyer pa therefore was never small. The increasingly assertive presence of the dGe-lugs-pa in lHa-sa and its immediate surroundings should not go unnoticed by their sectarian opponents and their dominant position was seriously challenged barely fifty years after the demise of the universally respected Tsong-kha-pa. The ensuing conflict proved to have strong political and ideological implications. Though never directly articulated, the key issues of dispute were centered around questions like the rightful representation of the true Embodiment of Compassion, or manifestations of Avalokiteśvara, the tutelary patron bodhisattva of Tibet. For the main adversaries, foremost the Karma-pa and the dGe-lugs-pa, the hierarchs of either schools boasted or claimed pre-eminence in embodying precisely this tutelary deity and palladium, the Karma-pa having here taken the lead when gauged historically. The conflict reached a critical point in the late 15th century when the inherent and long-nurtured aspirations entertained by the Karma-pa for the sanctum in lHa-sa came to the fore, at a point when the site was already firmly controlled by the local dGe-lugs establishments, headed by 'Bras-spungs. The remarkable success of the dGe-lugs-pa, after occasional setbacks, must to a large extent be ascribed to the genius of the later 2nd Dalai Lama, in hindsight arguably the greatest of all Dalai Lamas.

The subsequent battle for lHa-sa clearly cannot be seen without taking adequate recourse to the larger political picture of Central Tibet, involving many regional powers and involving the lingering conflict born in the aftermath of the emergence of Phag-mo-gru-pa as [contemporary] hegemonic and political factor, with numerous regionally independent gournerships (sde pa), a situation that was conducive to the rise of a number of ruling houses both in dBus (north and south of gTsang-po river) and in the gTsang province. They soon were at odds with one another, being locked in intercine squabblings. Needless to say, in the present essay we must restrict our presentation to the political actors directly involved in the conflict in and around lHa-sa.

Nourishing such aspirations, the 7th Karma-pa (Zhva-nag) Chos-grags rgya-mtsho (1454–1506 A.D.) paid regular visits to lHa-sa, as in 1478. It was the utmost ambitious and charismatic 4th Zhva-dmar Chos-grags ye-shes (1453–1524 A.D.) who similarly in 1478, 1497, 1500 and again 1505 rendered considerable service and tendered ample donations to the Jo-khang or to the Karma-pa hermitage on Mt. [rTse] Po-ta-la. The peaceful (and somewhat fatalistically bent) 7th Karma-pa discloses in a notably candid way in his biography his sentiments concerning the lHa-sa patrimony occupied by their antagonists. His stance, paraphrased below, was formulated during his peregrination throughout Tibet. When he paid a visit to lHa-sa – in the late 1470's, he was unable to withhold his grievance and his contempt (a stance that at that point possibly was bolstered by the reassuring feeling that he had the military strong Rin-spungs-pa as supporters).

* Other studies suggest that his visit took place in the 1490's, but this is hardly feasible. Cf. D. P. Jackson 1989: 49.
It is reported how [the 7th Karma-pa] three times listened to a prophecy of Maitreya\textsuperscript{165} which bespoke that the image of Jo-bo Śākyamuni (of IIHa-sa) – most inauspiciously – had been set up in the very heart of a Nāga-land (i.e. upon a subterranean watery world of the former 'O-thang lake and the heart-blood of the supine demoness), whereby the Teaching of Buddha generally was destined to deteriorate, but specifically so here in Tibet. This prophecy went on to purport that due to such prevailing circumstances, however – deemed unworthy for ornamenting the supreme incarnation (i.e. rendering service to the Jo-bo Statue)\textsuperscript{166} – Tibet had become a land replete with (impure and unworthy) mendicant monks. Only by establishing a [morally] pure monk community, the prophecy proclaimed, that as retinue would render service to the Jo-bo icon, would the Teaching of Buddha revive and prosper properly. Concurring with the prophecy, the Karma-pa readily contemplated establishing such a community,\textsuperscript{167} [yet misgivings also abound] because even though the local sNel-pa governors (the then de-facto rulers of the IIHa-sa area) were attached to [the Karma-pa] hierarchy and had been patrons of the last three [Karma-pa] embodiments,\textsuperscript{168} due to their dependency on others [i.e. the long-standing patronage obligation of the sNel-pa to the dGe-lugs-pa and the latter's allies and military strength], they could not fulfill the injunction issued by Maitreya. Still Karma-pa was of the opinion that the injunction could not just be ignored. He was firmly convinced that such a Karma-pa monk-community would be beneficial for all practitioners, irrespective of spiritual level, but that it [currently] remained impracticable to realize since no one would support it at this very point. He further contended that in these degenerate times in which he was living those responsible for the site (the dGe-lugs-pa), under the pretext of proper spiritual conduct, in fact were only concerned with amassing riches and material things as simple householders, and being demonically obsessed (as he purports), they were acting as hypocrites who merely wore the insignia of renunciate while at the same time incessantly preparing for war. He estimated that a monk army amounting to 450 fighters, properly equipped, easily could fulfill the injunction and take over the site. On the other hand, he conceded, no Karma-pa follower could ever inflict any harm on others and being true followers of Buddha would not indulge in such sinful activities, take no offence when provoked. Yet the very next day a militia of dGe-lugs monks from Se-ra was immediately mustered, and prepared themselves for battle. They were about to confront him and his retinue of monks as they arrived at his camp wearing on their head begging-bowls, using their cushions as lance banners and accompanied by a number of conscripts. But since no one in the Karma-pa camp transgressed the behest [of the Karma-pa hierarch, i.e. not to take up arms and engage in fighting], they remained unarmed and unmovable in the same position wherefore the dGe-lugs army proved unable to cause them any harm (cf. \textit{Kam tshang brgyud pa} I 280a7–b7; II 60b3–61a4; see also III 6b1–7a3; \textit{Karma sku phreng} II 153–56).

\textsuperscript{165} The locus classicus of this prophecy remains to be identified.

\textsuperscript{166} The supreme incarnation alludes to \textit{ston pa} Śākyamuni, alias Jo-bo Rin-po-che. For the modalities of offering head ornaments (\textit{dhu rgyan phul}); cf. Tsong kha pa \textit{rnam thar} 349–55; \textit{sMon lam rdo rje rnam thar} 3b5.

Evidently an ill-veiled reference to the local dGe-lugs-pa-loyal sacristans and to the monks of 'Bras-spungs. In the eyes of the Karma-pa hierarch, the dGe-lugs establishment – haughty with hubris – was considered unworthy of being entrusted with the exclusive care of the site. Such accusations or even disdainful dismissals (i.e. their practice is impure and the holders beset with materialistic and worldly objectives) were common, and came in use when one party, mostly frustrated, considered their antagonists unworthy of the privileges they held.

\textsuperscript{167} An ill-veiled euphemism for appropriating control of the site.

\textsuperscript{168} This refers to the sNe'u fiefship's patronage of the Karma-pa ever since the 5th Karma-pa De-bzhin gshegs-pa, starting from 1406 A.D. Cf. \textit{mKhas pa'i dga'}\textit{'ston} 1002. If this reflects historic truth, it would indicate that the sNel-pa had sworn patronage to both orders during the same period, in no way an unusual arrangement.
A year or two later the tables slowly turned when the assertive Rin-spungs rulers Kun-bzang and in particular his son Don-yod rdo-rje rGyal-po dpal-bzang-po – the coming strongman of Central Tibet, partisan and vigorously anti-dGe-lugs – not least being instigated by the politically ambitious 4th Zhva-dmar (and the 7th Karma-pa?), invaded the dBus province, conquered 'Phan-yul (under the rule of the Brag-dkar governorship who had replaced the rGya-ma house in this area in the late 14th cent.) and subsequently inflicted a blow on the sNe'u/w/Nel-pa (then secular protectors of lHa-sa) – the first incursion taking place in 1480 followed by another in 1499. That the sNel-pa estate had been devoted to the legacy of lHa-sa is witnessed, aside from the numerous restorations and refurbishments conducted by them, by the erection of a number of statues in Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang that represent former ascetics and craftsmen famous for having rendered great service to the sanctum, such as images of Dol-chung skor-dpon, Bla-ma Zhang and Zhig-po bdud-rtsi.165

The power of chos rgyal Don-yod rdo-rje, numerous sources confirm, at that point (i.e. around 1500’s) was well-nigh absolute (ding sang khong la mi nyan pa'i mi mi 'dug).166 The situation thus changed – if only briefly – during the ensuing Rin-spungs-pa and Karma-pa hegemony (which however proved fragile due to the embittered wrangling reigning between the entourages of the presiding Zhva-nag and Zhva-dmar administrations respectively and the lack of coordination with other polities) with their presence in the lHa-sa area and their control over large parts of Central Tibet between ca. 1480 and 1518 A.D. Their success in lHa-sa itself no least was the outcome of the shift in allegiance on the side of the sNe'u-pa at lHa-sa – and opportune of the Brag-dkar-pa too – who, once defeated or coerced, proved willing to comply with the wishes of the new strong force in Tibet.167 Aside from marking a turning-point in the narrow network of local secular rule in

165 See Fig. 20 and lHa ldan dkar chag 9. In addition to the donation in 1415 of Mt. dMar-po-ri (or part of it) to the 5th Karma-pa, it did not go unmentioned that a presiding sNe'u-rdzong-pa Phag-gru dpon po (sic! i.e. Nam-mkha' bzang-po of the sNe'u estate?) in the 1430’s donated to the 6th Zhva-nag mThong-ba don-lldan (1416–53) a full religious estate grant (spyi sogs kyi gzi len 'bul byas), yet without specifying which estate was donated. Cf. Kam tshang brgyud pa 246al–1 3 8B: 574. It was a period marked by considerable upheaval and unrest at the Phag-gru seats and the beginning of the rise of the Rin-spungs house; cf. App. I above and Czaja 2006. Behind this move taken by the sNe'u-gdong administrators, we no doubt should also see the workings of the 6th Karma-pa mThong-ba don-lldan.

Opposition to the later developments in the 1480’s was organized by the redoubtable 8th dGa'-ldan and 'Bras-spungs throne-holder, sMon-lam-dpal Legs-pa'i bho-gros (1414–1491 A.D.), who – vainly in part – used a method of warfare, namely sorcery to attempt to ward off the Rin-spungs-pa. Most spectacular was sa dhang Don-yod rdo-rje's attack on dGa'-ldan in 1480 to plunder the rich objects kept there. It allegedly was this 8th dGa'-ldan throne-holder’s successful defence – by means of Mahâkâla rites that protected the site from further destruction and pillaging. Cf. Kaschewsky 1970: 251. At that point, sMon-lam-dpal gained a repute as great magician. He passed away on Mt. Potala.

166 See Rin chen rnam rgyal rnam mgu 212.2–3 (= 107a2–3).

167 One of the most intriguing issues of the 15th century centers around the contentious and antagonistic relationship between sNel-pa and Rin-spungs-pa, both originally local governors and fiefholders of the sNe'u-gdong or Phag-gru gong ma. Their earliest clash may be related to events at Rva-lung where the 'Brug nang so Rin-chen bzang-po (father of 'Brug-pa Kun-legs) had been assassinated by a sNel-pa chief in 1467 ('Brug pa kun legs rnam than 3b, 12a, 126b; cd. Stein) – in the wake of such wranglings that in part may have been instigated by the 'Brug-pa at Rva-lung or followed in the wake of the demise of the Rin-spungs ruler Nor-bu bzang-po (1403–66); the young 'Brug-pa Kun-legs was reared by his aunt (married into the Yar-rgyab house of Gong-dkar) and he later went to become servant to the Rin-spungs mi dhang Kun-tu bzang-po (son of Nor-bu bzang-po and elder brother of mi dhang mTsho-skyes rdo-rje). The 7th Phag-gru sde srid, albeit married to a Rin-spungs lady had been dissatisfied with the Rin-spungs ruler Nor-bzang and a war ensued, with Yar-rgyab, Gong-dkar and Bya-sa siding with the lady of the Phag-gru ruler and the sNec'u and 'Ol-kha siding with the Phag-gru sde srid. Cf. Deb dmar gsar 83; Ehrhard 2003c: 46. For further details; see also O. Czaja 2006.
The tension was building up in the 1470’s, and with changing loyalties, it is reported that at one point the Rin-spungs-pa were attacked by Gong-dkar (= Yar-rgyab) and by the sNel-pa. It promptly courted retaliation. Yet, notwithstanding the subjugation or submission of the sNel-pa governorship (along with another little-known independent secular house known as the dPal-byor lhun-po estate* behind dMar-po-ri that later adhered to the sNe’u house) in 1480 – or precisely because of it – the Rin-spungs nang so mTsho-skies rdo-rje (1450/62–1510) and the sNel-pa rulers (out of foregone nostalgia they still prided themselves with the now purely nominal Yuan-time title “Local Commander” (du d Shen shë = duyaunshtai), like so many other petty local rulers in Tibet) were united in showering donations on the 7th Karma-pa, now their common root-teacher. This sign of the new loyalty of the subjugation or submission of estates directly was abolished (having been taught the Klong-rdol (gSun ‘bum II 448).

The most intriguing aspect in this story remains with the circumstance that both the Rin-spungs-pa and the sNe’u-pa were attacked by Gong-dkar (var. sGer) clan stock** (evidently from different patrilines or branches). It is somewhat perplexing to register warring clashes between lines with common roots (although “no love lost” between affinal lines are amply reported in Tibetan literature too); conversely, it could also explicate the shift submission on the side of sNe’u. It cannot fully be ruled out that the dGyer clan of the founder Nam-mkha’ bzang-po within the sNe’u house in the meantime had been ousted from their main seat. Whatever it may be, the sNel-pa in the late 15th cent. was coerced into shifting front, when the sNe’u sa skyong Ngag-dbang bsdod-nams lhun-po and (his younger brother) Ngag-dbang nam-rgyal opened their treasury and soothed the Karma-pa by donating their personal revenue (sku skal; including the sGer/dGyer clan heirloom and regalia? see e.g. Thang stong nram thar I 214–18; and below) to their new root-teacher, the 4th Zhva-dmar (enthroned 1493 as spyan snga at gDan-sa-thel ruling there until his death), a step that evidently prevented the all-out destruction of the sNe’u estate and the lHa-sa seat. It should be added that traditional Karma-pa sources persistently argue that their conduct in this period of momentary superiority had been guided by a behaviour worthy of “the old Dharma kings of Tibet” and that confiscation of estates directly was abolished (having been taught the Dharma-principle of orderly conduct from Rin-chen mam-rgyal; see fn. 170). This remark indeed suggests that criticism had been floating on that score.

In the heated atmosphere, the invasion and pacification of the sNe’u estate nevertheless was welcomed in different corners, so e.g. the learned gSer-mdog wrote a letter of congratulation on the occasion, a step no doubt that later was an added reason for his unpopularity (and subsequent ban on his writings) in dGe-legs circles.

* This estate was the residence of the sNe’u ruler dPal-byor rgyal-po; cf. Table V.12.1.

** The common position that the sNe’u house rose from the Rlangs lHa-gzigs clan (of the Phag-mo-gru-pa; see e.g. Klong-rdol, gSun ‘bum II 448–49) is uncertain and probably untenable, the sNe’u founder Rin-chens bzang-po merely was a minister of ta’i si tu Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan and in no way a kin. Nam-mkha’ bzang-po, who was elected rdzong dpon of the sNe’u family was descended from the sGer line via the Rin-spungs-pa house. The dGyer (var. s/Ge) was a clan striking old roots in Tibet (a major early stronghold and homestead of theirs was Khra-brug in Yar-lung). It allegedly had risen to prominence during the reign of Strong-bsTan sgam-po (a founding figure sGer Ra-la-pa-dzin is listed as his nang blon – albeit historically shaky) and the clan supposedly won pre-eminence through (monopolizing) trade with the precious g.yu gems brought along from Drug-gu (Tujuic; i.e. the Turks); such costly objects were treasured by them as their family regalia and heirlooms. Later, as said, they emerged as the ruling lines behind gYa-ma Rin-chen-sgang of Mal-gro wherefrom the sKu-rab ruling house of Dvags-po was descended; this line of sGer was known as the dGer-dkar line); they were also behind the founding lineages of Nam-mkha’ rgyal-po, the founding figure of the Rin-spungs-pa.

In the narrow Yar-lung area it was important to note that the above Rin-spungs-pa Ma-sangs mTsho-skies rdo-rje returned to the dGyer clan’s homeland of Yar-lung and appropriate the mKhar-thog rdzong. From 1491–99 – during a period his nephew sa skyong Don-yod rdo-rje ruled the entire dBu and sKyid-shod – he acted as regent to the Phag-mo-gru-pa state (reigning together with his religious ally and teachers, the 4th Zhva-dmar-pa Chos-grags ye-shes (1423–1524 A.D.) and the 7th Zhva-nag).

It is not without irony that the g.yu regalia of the sGer clan – inherited and dearly treasured by the Rin-spungs-pa and indirectly linking them to the ancestral legacy of Strong-bsTan sgam-po – later were confiscated by the emerging dGa’ldan pho-
the lHa-sa area, to the dGe-lugs-pa this *volte face* of their traditional allies and long-time patrons was regarded as an act of betrayal. Behind the change in attitude, we also shall anticipate the strategy of the *sphyin snga* of the Phag-gru and of the Rlangs family in sNe'u-gdong with their new strongly pro-Karma-pa stance. The decisive military incursion of 1499 towards the sNe'u/sNel-pa had followed in the wake of an intermezzo that took place the year before. In lHa-sa, the sNang-rtse *sde pa*, a local but powerful ruling house in the neighbouring sTod-lung valley – patrons both of the Zhva-dmar-pa and Zhva-nag-pa – had been assassinated by their (old) foe, the sNe'u-pa, probably because the former attempted to oust or to replace the weakened sNel-pa as secular lords of lHa-sa. Indeed, there are several indications suggesting that the sNang-rtse *sde pa* by Don-yod rdo-rje had been commissioned with the responsibility for the IHa-sa area in the period 1481 to ca. 1500 A.D. It probably was in this period that they had erected a local residence in lHa-sa, the sNang-rtse-shag which soon should turn into a detention.168

The new ruler was commonly addressed as the dBug-rgyal-pa ru-bzhi sa skyong, “Ruler of All Central Tibet.” It was a point when it was the Rin-spungs rulers who were petitioned when issues and natural disasters of supraregional importance had to be attended to (cf. ‘Bri-gung *gyi dgon rabs III* 101, 168–169), so e.g. the outbreak of drought, famine and epidemics that visited sKyid-shod district in the year 1500. It prompted the local Brag-dkar *mi dpon* SgrI-gcig at Glang-ra (of ‘Brom-stod) to request their help and for charity when the Karma-pa were on their way to their allies at ‘Bri-gung-mthil. En route they had also paid Jo-khang a visit, where Zhva-dmar-pa would consecrate the local dikes by strewing blessed barley corn (*phyag nas*) and it is reported that the subterranean Nāga spirit, the “lord of the site,” displayed himself visibly to receive the flower offerings. It thus was both an act of donation and one of reception (signalling an underlying submission and approval) that seem to purport that the Karma-pa were considered as – or regarding themselves as – legitimate heirs and local rulers to lHa-sa. ‘Bri-gung sources chronicle the same episode169 when plague and drought – soon translating into a

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168 In 1498 *bka’ bIon* (sic) sNang-rtse-ba Blo-gros legs-bzang* was assasinated, evidently by the sNe’u chiefs (cf. dGa’ ’Ilan chos byung l 5084–5; *Deb dmar gsar* Tucci 228), a step courting a renewed invasion and retaliation by the Rin-spungs-pa Don-yod rdo-rje the following year. It prompted the asylum of the sNe’u chiefs to the neighbouring sKyor-mo-lung. In the years ahead, the sNe’u estate should be ruled from sKyor-mo-lung; cf. Table 12.1.

During the tenure of the 5th Dalai Lama’s reign, the sNang-rtse manor was formally converted into the residence of the city magistrate (*mi dpon*) and judiciary mansion (later jail). Cf. dKon-mchog lha-skryabs 1998: 189; *HSLG* 6: 167–71; *Lhasa Interviews* 1–12 (see now Tsering Gyalbo 2005: 418–40).

* He may be identical with sNang-rtse Blo-gros blo-bzang (son of one rGya-lu drung ’khor and Dung-’dzens Bu-khrid of sNang-rtse gzhis ka (a rel. estate which at some point was under the rGyud-mdag grva’i tshang). His contemporary was Stle’u (sNe’u) rdzong dpon under which the sNang-rtse gzhis ka at some point had been subordinate. It is reported that the sNe’u [rdzong dpon] Bu-mo A-dzoms (= Sangs-rgyas dpal-’dzens? late 15th, early 16th cent.?; see Table V.12.1 below) eventually killed Blo-gros blo-bzang by setting fire to the sNang-rtse-shag residence where he had been kept prisoner. See lHa sa’i dmangs khrod sprung gtaun (Vol. 1): 435–52. The sNang-rtse-shag mansion housed a srgun ma called sNang-rtse rgyal-po; the srgun ma may be identical with the (later) yul lha of sNang-rtse – originally embodying the assassinated Blo-gros blo-bzang.

169 Cf. Kun dga’ rin chen rnam thar I B: 408–16; III 107–22; III 512–27; IV 25–27; mKhas pa’i dga’ ston 1142; *Kam tshan brgyud pa* I 309b3–4. The fields, grass, leaves etc. all dried out, just like lakes and ponds, suffocating all fish in the water as detailed in the sources. The date is confirmed in the biography of Mus-chen Sangs-rgyas rin-chen (1450/53–1524/25 A.D.) who reports about a widespread drought looming large in dBug-gTsang, blighting the provinces
severe famine – haunts the skiyid-shod district, with a huge death toll. Here the protagonist was the 15th 'Bri-gung throne-holder Kun-dga' rin-chen (1475–1527), who similarly entertained close bonds with Don-yod rdo-rje (regularly camping in this period in the IHa-sa area – in fact his more stationary tent-residence during this period was sNye-thang – and customarily addressed sde pa sgar pa or the "mobile or camping ruler")170 who had summoned him to assist in rain rituals and who – similar to the reception of Zhva-dmar-pa and the local dikes with "blessed barley corn." In fact, both bKa'-brgyud hierarchs met in Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang and were treated as peers by sa skyong Don-yod rdo-rje, received the same grand reception not only in Ra-sa but also on Mt. Potala. We may conclude that sa skyong Don-yod rdo-rje deliberately entertained close patron-client bonds to both hierarchs, indeed eventually to the stagh-lung hierarchy too.171 It may not surprise that both to the 4th Zhva-dmar-pa and the 7th Zhab-nag-pa (from 1486 A.D.) entertained close teacher-pupil relationships with the 15th 'Bri-gung-pa. Remarkable here perhaps is that for the service in halting the drought and in protecting IHa-sa, the 'Bri-gung hierarchy was rewarded with the sMon-grong feudal estate grant (located in 'Brom-stod, conveniently situated as a stop-over estate en route between IHa-sa and 'Bri-gung-mthil).172 Under the auspices of Don-yod rdo-rje, the 'Bri-gung until at least late 1520’s remained the effective rulers of the area to the east of IHa-sa (i.e. skiyid-stod) up until 'Bri-gung, a point in history when the 'Bri-gung-pa reached their apex as regional power. They remained enmeshed in repeated warfare against the Phag-mo-gru-pa, headed by their local governorship, the dGa'-ldan-pa – the coming strong force in the area – who made many inroads into 'Bri-gung territories and destroyed many of their sites starting from 1516. Not uncharacteristically, the early 16th century is denoted a period fraught with internal conflicts between maternal relatives (zhang tshan 'khrugs pa) as the sources depict disloyalty that year and prompting him to carry through a purifying ablation rite. Ill-starred, a true annus horribilis, the same year saw a major epidemic rage in 'Phan-yul too. Cf. Mus chen rnam thar 100.2–3. Just prior to this point, gTsang-smyon (1452–1507) successfully conducted rain rites in IHa-sa after a bout of drought; cf. gTsang smyon rnam thar 117.3–5. The 15th 'Bri-gung tenant had been pupil of the 7th Karma-pa Chos-grags rgya-mtsho from 1486 and entertained bonds to the 14th stagh-lung throne-holder.

170 The camp site was set up at mKhar-nag-thang or "the Black Citadel Plain" of sNye-thang, where he regularly resided in his black tent (shra nog). In the early 1500’s, the old and ailing gTsang-smyon (1452–1507) here repeatedly delivered precepts to the Rin-spungs ruler, instructed him in the dharma principle of rule based upon Suvarnaprabhasottama-sutra – not inappropriately, since this canonical text deals with the issue of the confession of sins and instructions concerning divine kingship. See gTsang smyon rnam thar 126a5–128a3; Rin chen rnam rgyal rnam mgur 12a4–6, 20b1–3.

171 The Rin-spungs-pa entertained close religious bonds and patron-priest relations with a very large number of religious institutions and individuals, aside from the major bKa'-brgyud-pa also to Sa-skya-pa. It included among others great masters such as Go-rams-pa and, as said, Sangs-rgyas rgyal-mtshan, Nam-mka' rgyal-mtshan (1475–1530), Iha btsun Rin-chen mam-rgyal, and Sakyâ mchog-idan (1428–1507), to mention a few.

172 Also denoted sMon-grong skyid-thsal – or sMon'-gro nang-pa not far from this site we find other 'Bri-gung sites such as Zhog skiyid-spro and Phyag-'tshal-sgang.* Later, sMon-grong became a private (sger) and subsequently a Kun-bde-gling monastic estate.

From another, much later 'Bri-gung incident (this time involving the hapless dKon-mchog bstan-'dzin, the 35th 'Bri-gung throne-holder), we may acquire an impression of the ritual modalities during a 1938 drought episode in the 'Bri-gung area which e.g. involved the execution of appropriate apotropaic and incense offerings to local Nâgas (klu gtor klu bsang char 'behs), being conducted at gZi-can bla-mtsho of Mal-gro, cf. 'Bri gung chos 'byung 652.

* This site (present-day identical with Phyag-'tshal-nang? located at 29°34'N 91°24'E; cf. Xiczang Dimenzhì I 185), was already registered in the early 13th cent. as the border site of 'Bri-gung monastic influence and its name may indicate that it was here that guests to and fro 'Bri-gung were welcomed or seen off; cf. Grags-pa 'byung-gmas, gDan sa rin po che'i bla ma dge 'dun rnam la gdams pa 303.4, 304.4.
between rival relatives. It refers not least to the sheer endless conflicts and rivalries in which many governors were locked, headed by families often affiliated with one another by blood. Blood in fact here meant little, since arranged intermarriage indeed was regarded as nothing more than a strategic means of forging indispensable if only temporary alliances. In the early 16th century, the main actors were, aside from the now moribund Rin-spungs-pa, the competing side-lines of the Rlangs family that had settled outside the main seat at sNe'u-gdong, now ruling from Gong-dkar and sKyor-mo-lung (replacing Yar-rgyab and sNe'u sde pa respectively). A characteristic trait of the petty internecine conflicts in these centuries thus was the treasonous lightness with which loyalty transformed into disloyalty, how hubris and fortuitousness were followed by their antithesis, when old friends turned into new enemies or when the harvest of disloyalty was reaped, repaid by betrayal — it often backfired, as a Tibetan saying in one source appositely went: “the slingshot made from goat hair hits the goat’s neck” (ra spu'i 'ur rdo ra yi mjing par 'khor).

With the death of the redoubtable rulers of Rin-spungs-pa, sa skyong Don-yod rdo-rje and mTshos-skyes rdo-rje in 1510 and 1512 respectively, in the wake of the repeated military defeats of the once-strong Rin-spungs-pa army in 1516, Rin-spungs-pa should lose their grip over IHa-sa. Their fate was doomed after a new front had gathered against them leading to repeated clashes with their former ally, the Phag-gru ruler, Ngag-dbang bkra-shis grags-pa, and his coalition-army led by troops from the new rising power of dGe-lugs-pa. The disappearance of the Rin-spungs-pa paved the way for the ascent of the dGe-lugs-pa in the IHa-sa area again, now with the active support and patronage of the Phag-gru ruler. For a brief period, the Phag-gru ruler — who entertained close bonds to 'Bras-spungs chos rje dGe-'dun rgya-mtsho, now was directly wielding his power in the area, evidenced by the posting of family members of his in sNe'u rdzong and sKyor-mo-lung, both strategically close to IHa-sa. The main figure behind this alliance in the period to come was the last sNe'u ruler, the female dpon sa Sangs-rgyas dpal-'dzoms-ma.

Propped by 'Bri-gung-pa’s military strongman and administrator, the redoubtable mGon-po rgyal-mtshan, the 15th throne-holder Kun-dga’ rin-chen remained politically and militarily successful in the 1520’s, and appropriated large areas of 'Phan-yul. They kept remaining an initially military, later ecclesiastic challenge to the dGe-lugs presence in dBis or sKyid-shod right up to the beginning of the 17th century. We can appreciate how the geo-political idealization of IHa-sa (ideally embodied in the two imperial sanctuaries) that was intimately connected with the emergence of the petty internecine conflicts that in the 11th century of the all-pervasive Avalokiteśvara and Great Compassionate One Cult and with the prestige and glorification of the role held by the imperial founder Srong-btsan sgam-po now increasingly became a real issue. In fact, the bone of contention that constituted the spiritual trophy between uncompromising political fronts now focussed around this legacy. It soon turned into a dispute over symbols that occasionally triggered warfare. The ensuing activities appear to have followed a logical path of consolidation: In the year 1503, having made extensive donations that included the two Jo-bo edifices and the Tshal Gung-thang institution (including other Karma-pa objects of veneration found in IHa-sa) to the Karma-pa (as we have seen above the 'Bri-gung-pa were otherwise compensated), the wish — as paraphrased above — of the Hierarch to erect a proper community (dge 'dun gtsang hrug) on dMar-po-ri or Mt. Potala\(^{171}\) proved impossible to fulfil.

\(^{171}\) Although it proved politically impossible (due to the vehement opposition from all dGe-lugs institutions in the area) to erect a proper Karma-pa convent on the hill, it appears that in the 1480’s as sa skyong Don-yod rdo-rje took control over the IHa-sa area, a new residence (khang gsar) — here to be understood as a hermitage on Mt. Potala* was
evidently out of fear that the opposition would be too powerful, and the Karma-pa wish finally was not carried out and sanctioned by the lama ruler Don-yod rdo-rje, concerned as he was for the dire consequences of Realpolitik. The ambitious Karma-pa hierarchs at that point had succeeded in setting up a khang-gsar or "new hermitage residence" on the hill, but it never turned into a proper monastic seat, which was the true objective of the Karma-pa. The 4th Zhva-dmar instead erected in Byang, the Yangs-pa-can monastery\(^{174}\) and the 7th Zhva-nag Cho-sgrags rgya-mtsho had the temple of Thub-bstan Chos-khor-[gling] built in the locality of Sa-nag in the eastern part of IHa-sa township, where he resided during his last years, evidently in an attempt to add weight to the intention of his to strengthen their presence in the area. Both institutions were completed in 1503 A.D.\(^ {175} \) at the height of the Karma-pa control of the IHa-sa area and raised as outposts in the closest

inaugurated by Cho-sgrags rgya-mtsho; cf. *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston* 1142.4–5; the same took place in 1500, when the 4th Zhva-dmar-pa visited the site. This new residence clearly was no more that a renovation of an older institution belonging to the Karma-pa that went back at least to the 13th cent., perhaps earlier. This hermitic seat accomodated among others the thugs dam relic of rje De-bzhin gshegs-pa installed in the latter's hermitage on dMar-po-ri, a sandalwood statue of the White Târâ at the age of six years which in this respect was confiscated and appropriated by the Karma-pa; cf. *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston* 1105; *Kam tshang brgyud pa I* 1294a1–2, 309b1. It was the local legacy of the 5th Karma-pa – who had passed away 1415 on dMar-po-ri in his estate hermitage – that appears to be in vivid memory around 60 years later, motivating the Karma-pa to appropriate and to make use of their legal right.

Later Mi-bskyod rdo-rje (in 1526) – a equally worthy candidate known as the 8th 'Jig-rten dbang-po or Lokesvara manifestation – too lists a speaking statue of drung Rol-pa'i rdo-rje (this person since it was the 3rd Karma-pa, who initially had been granted dMar-po-ri as religious estate in 1310) that requested to be placed in front of the IHa-sa sPyan-ras-gzigs (= Lokesvara), cf. *Ib. II* 14b3–4. It appears that the famous 'Phags-pa Lokesvara (considered the Bod kha ba can gvi rten skal; see below) at that point had been set up in its own chamber on Mt. dMar-po-ri (= the meditation cave of Strong-btsan-sgam-po?) – yet it remains unclear whether this old cave was identical with the seat of the 5th Karma-pa. If so, the renovation in the 1480's may refer to this old Avalokitâsvara hermitage. On dMar-po-ri: sTag-lung Nga-gdbang rnam-rgyal reports in 1605 about a(nother) principal image on Potala, a special alloy (zi khvim) statue of Munendra originally erected in Varanasi, in addition to accommodating other statues; cf. *Tag lung chos 'byung I* 582. A rdzong? or fortification on dMar-po-ri or Potala is reported during 1610 in connection with description of the aftermath of the destruction of the Yar-rgyab house.

Sensing the dangers of the revival of a Karma-pa seat in the heart of IHa-sa, the dGe-lugs-pa probably only allowed – if at all – a Karma-pa presence at its immediate outskirts. An actual Karma-pa convent was therefore only allowed to be erected in the eastern part of the town, resp. three and four kilometers at the most from Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang and dMar-po-ri, and hence out of sight of one another – to avoid or provoke warring conflicts. Still, as we shall see, Sa-nag remained a threat to the dGe-lugs-pa during its entire existence.

In early 1645, the Great Fifth, after his all-out victory in Central Tibet, contemplated where to set up his permanent residence, it is reported that a number of candidates were mooted such as in Mal-gro, and prophecies initially suggested other fortress hills such as Has-po-ri at bSam-yas or Chu-bo-ri, yet the choise was to fall upon dMar-po-ri.

* Or at the feet of Mt. dMar-po-ri, we are informed that a eight-pillered chos grva of Karma bka'-brgyud-pa was destroyed during the reign of the Great Fifth, whereupon the Zhob tson-khang (also called sPa'-steng thugs-kha) was erected. See *Lhasa Interviews 7* (now Tsering Gyalbo 2005: 379–80).

\(^{174}\) Byang bDe-chen Yangs-pa-can (30°05'N 89°32'E) of 'Dam-gzhung county (xian). Cf. e.g. *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston* 1145–1151; *Zhva dmar lha-pa rnam-thar* 6a3–5; *Dung dkar tshig mdzod* 1846–47. He ascended the throne as the first incumbent after the Phag-gru gong-ma had donated him the area as religious estate. The name may have been consciously (provocatively so) chosen since Yangs-pa-can also was the name of the central temple in the dGa'-ldan monastery. Soon after its erection, it became involved in the lingering skirmishes between the Karma-pa and the dGe-lugs-pa.

In 1518, the gTsang troops inflicted major damages on Se-ra and 'Bras-spungs. In 1642, conversely, Byang Yangs-pa-can suffered major damages from their antagonists.

\(^{175}\) Cf. *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston* 1105–06: east of IHa-sa; *Kam tshang brgyud pa I* 1294a4; *DPal 'byor lhun grub rnam thar* 28b4–5.)
IlHa-sa area in connection with their hegemonic endeavours to bolster their presence in the area and set up in an attempt to outshine the large dGe-lugs monastic ka ba gsum pillars in the area. It was the 4th Zhva-dmar who in this period, strongly backed by Don-yod rdo-rije, thus emerged – if only for a few years – as the undisputed hierarch in Central Tibet. He entertained close relations with the Phag-mo-gru-pa and had already in 1493 (1496, according to Zhva dmar lnga pa rnam thar 6a3) taken over the seat at gDan-sa-nrthil and he successfully restored the seat and institution of their then feeble ’Bri-gung ally. It was among the hierarchies of the latter order that the ideological endeavours of Zhva-dmar found a revival.

Faithful to their political ambitions, the gTsang alliance nevertheless kept claiming that IlHa-sa and its key sanctum had passed under their rule long before, a situation that promised that IlHa-sa remained at the cross-road between peace and war. They contended – not quite unjustifiably – that dMar-po-ri, once had been donated to Karma-pa Rang-byung rdo-rije and – later reconfirmed – to the 5th Karma-pa De-bzhin gshegs-pa during the preceding Tshal rule. Following his return from China in 1411, the 5th Karma-pa was invited to sNe’u-gdong at which occasion rTse Po-ta-la in IlHa-sa was donated to him as monastic or hermitic estate grant, reconfirming an older donation. The Tshal-pa and sNe’u-pa, it thus appears, had smoothed the path for the Karma-pa’s claim on IlHa-sa, at a period where the sNe’u-pa now throughout the 15th century rose to become the overall rulers of sKyid-shod and ‘Phan-yul.

The 5th Karma-pa’s tour through Yar-lung Valley in 1411–12 to sNe’u-gdong proved triumphant, during a period when in IlHa-sa bTsong-kha-pa increased his spiritual (and political) leverage, and Karma-pa’s every step no doubt was being monitored carefully by the dGe-lugs-pa. After a final detour to mTshal-min in Dol dist., he returned to IlHa-sa where he decided to sojourn in the erstwhile Srong-btsan sgam-po hermitage. The 5th Karma-pa, a manifestation of Avalokiteśvara, who had conducted extensive repair of the Ra-sa sanctum and was regarded as an universally acclaimed master and imperial preceptor, was to spend his last days (1415 A.D.) in his favourite

Thub-bstan Chos-khor (also called or written Thub-chen, the “Dharmacakra of Buddha’s Teaching,” evidently a word-play on IlHa-sa, since it was one of the three paramount Dharmacakra pilgrimage sites of Tibet) was located in Sa-nag or “Black Soil,” the ancient name for the present-day district of (the more appropriately named) Karma dgon-gsar [gling-kha] in eastern IlHa-sa, adjacent to sKu-bum-thang. Kah-thog reads IlHa-sa’si thod Sa-nag-ma or “Sa-nag-ma [on] the threshold or doorstep of IlHa-sa.” It thus was located in the closest environs, due east of Bar-skor and the Jo-bo Sancrum (as recommended in the Maitreya prophecy reported above), thus fulfilling the earnest wish of the Karma-pa hierarch to establish a Karma-pa temple close to (i.e. “at the threshold” of) Jo-khang. It only survived for a limited number of years, which would explain why the elusive site rarely finds mention of any note in contemporary literature. Thub-chen dgon-pa remained the bone of contention between the two opposing factions (cf. Mi bkhyod rdo rje rnam thar 223–224). Still, their limited success was also admitted to by the Karma-pa, they – in hindsight? – deemed the outcome or the prospect of their project of consolidation in IlHa-sa to be mediocre (rten ’brel ba can’ g’rigs che ba ma yung). The Sa-nag site of the Karma-pa in the “heart of IlHa-sa” and thus in the heart of dGe-lugs territory remained a thorn in their flesh throughout the entire period right up to the early 17th century. The name evidently springs from the “Black Site” i.e. the “Site of the Black [Hats]” (Zhva-nag). The 5th Dalai Lama (cf. DL 4 41b3–4; DL5 IV = Ahmad 1999: 223) pointedly remarks that Sa-nag-ma was located within (and hence under the jurisdiction of) the sNe’us/Nel governorship (having been confiscated from them following their defeat to the Karma-pa in the 1480’s) and he adds, true to his unmistakably polemic style, that it was raised there by the Karma-pa with a view to “dry out” Se-ra and ‘Bras-spungs.

176 An additional reason for the Tshal donation to the 5th Karma-pa may rest with the fact that De-bzhin gshegs-pa stemmed from the same clan as Bla-ma Zhang, namely the sNa-nam Zhang.

177 i.e. skyi ’phan gi bdag pa; cf. mKhas pa’i dga’ ston 1014.
cave on dMar-po-ri, close to Jo-bo Rin-po-che on the mythic seat of sPyan-ras-gzigs. The sources vary as to the reason for his untimely demise, some purport that he succumbed to a bout of smallpox, others suggest that he may have been a victim of poisoning – in any case, the renown master passed away during a time marked by a virulent atmosphere.\(^7\)

It is common knowledge that a number of hierarchs in Tibet such as the Rva-lung 'Brug-pa patriarchs, but also numerous other ascetics and masters, claimed to uphold an emanational nexus (i.e. a spiritual-corporeal consubstantiality) with the deity Avalokiteśvara – no wonder perhaps considering the altruistic and national symbolism accorded to this particular deity, yet, telling here is that the 5\(^{th}\) Karma-pa, like his predecessors, most forcefully were considered a manifestation (rnam 'phrul) of Avalokiteśvara. As a high hierarch, he thus did no more than sojourn in his mythic home on dMar-po-ri in lHa-sa, the Tibetan substitute for the mythic site of this deity. During the subsequent spell, about 18 (var. 13) larger or smaller dGe-lugs-pa establishments were turned into Karma-pa and 'Bri-gung-pa convents (DL2 559–560, Zur chen rnam thar 74b2–4), which in those places, so it is argued, meant the total obliteration of the dGe-lugs teachings there. That the Karma-pa strategy should not pay dividend rested not least upon the circumstance the Karma-pa and behind them the gTSang rulers in the ensuing period were weakened by the internal dissent that prevailed between Zhva-dmar and Zhva-nag factions and their more than unlucky hand in establishing viable and permanent institutions in this area (contrary to their success in the Yar-lung or lHo-kha area incl. Dvags-po and Kong-po), all in all leading to a weakened position that eventually reduced their grip over the sKyid-shod area. Their supremacy in dBus proved short-lived, already 1516, opposition to their hegemony was formed and warfare again broke out. The Karma-pa for the time being receded into the background, but from the 1580’s up until the beginning of 1640’s, they kept vying for ultimate supremacy in Tibet in the wider supraregional dBus-gTsang conflict.

In the early 16\(^{th}\) century, the 2\(^{nd}\) 'Bras-spungs chos rje dGe-'dun rgya-mtsho was successful in establishing a number of dGe-lugs seats in the area of ‘Ol-kha, supported by the local ruler Amoghavajravijaya, i.e. Don-yod rdo-rje rnam-rgyal – his patron who assisted him in establishing rGyal Me-tog-thang – a site that was to hold major cultic importance for the dGe-lugs-pa; the Phagmo sNe’u-gdong rulers in the same period paved the way for the 'Bras-spungs hierarch to establish religious estates in the dGa’-ldan area, a policy that triggered conflicts with the 'Bri-gung-pa (cf. dGa’

\(^{7}\) The full background behind his untimely (and unnatural?) passing remains one of the great mysteries of 15\(^{th}\) century due to its political implications. The circles behind those who may have striven to assassinate him were considered, as it was hinted at, to have brought disgrace to the Phagmo-gru-pa ruling house, and the same circles later may also have been behind an attempted assassination (linked to events there in the 1430’s? cf. fn. 165 above) of members of the ruling house of the sNe’u-sNel rGdung – who, we know, incidentally had stood behind the estate grant of dMar-po-ri to the 5\(^{th}\) Karma-pa. In sum, as possible perpetrators, one source points to certain circles at 'Bri-gung and to the dGe-lugs-pa. The powerful circles at 'Bri-gung (it is purported that the same circle(s) much later may have included the wife of the 14\(^{th}\) throne-holder, viz. 'Bri-gung’s only female ruler or sgom ma Rin-chen dpal-mo (d. 1505) and her entourage who were involved in the planning for assassinating a 'Bri-gung hierarch too). Cf. here 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 156–57; 'Bri gung chos byung 408. More research is required on this point.

We easily imagine that the untimely death (barely 31 years of age) of the 5\(^{th}\) Karma-pa should keep the Karma-pa from securing a firm foothold in the area – at a crucial juncture when bTsong-kha-pa was about – irresponsibility – to change the lHa-sa landscape with his many dGe-lugs establishments. A continuous presence of the 5\(^{th}\) Karma-pa, a master of unrivalled repute and calibre, in his hermitage on dMar-po-ri surely would have provided ideal conditions in the battle for gaining a lasting footing in lHa-sa.
ldan chos 'byung I 32a2f.). The most durable patron(ess) of his, however, proved to be the sNe'u-pa ruler in the lHa-sa area up until 1550 (cf. Table V.12.1). Antagonistic religious schools and regional hierarchs long nurtured political ambitions as we have seen, and spiritual discord more often than not now translated into military conflicts. It was the increasingly independent dGa'-ldan-pa ruling house (here not to be confounded with the similar-named dGa'-ldan monastery) and its lay rulers (along with the rulers of sKyor-mo-lung, which was headed until then by the sBal-ti clan during this period, yet at a certain point their seat gradually was taken over by a side-line of the leading Phag-mo-gru-pa rulers) that were strongly supportive of the dGe-lugs-pa, and in the long perspective it was precisely this dGa'-ldan-pa house – subsequently known as – the sKyid-shod-pa179 alone that in the period mid-1550's–1620 emerged as the dominant political player and religious benefactor in lHa-sa and in the wider sKyid-shod area, taking advance of the gradual decline of the sNe'u-pa and absorbing the neighbouring governorship of Brag-dkar, in fact replacing them altogether as the dominant political force in the area from 1550. The patronage wielded by this house often was conducive to the degree of success enjoyed or held by rivalling religious schools and their struggle for supremacy in this crucial phase of Tibet's history. It also added a cultural and religious dimension to the political struggle. We have reports of growing sectarian tension and occasional warfare between the dGe-lugs-pa and the revitalized 'Bri-gung-pa beginning already from 1516 (cf. e.g. Kam tshang brgyud pa II 14a2f., 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 174f. etc.), which surely had risen as the mightiest sectarian and military antagonist to dGe-lugs supremacy at this junction having by now replaced their allies, the Karma-pa. This is all the more surprising since 'Bri-gung was haunted by a tiring inner conflict (see below). Warfare escalated already in 1526 and again in 1537, when many dGe-lugs monasteries in the Mal-gro and 'Olkha districts were appropriated by the 'Bri-gung-pa who forced them to convert to the latter sect.

We have now entered a period and a century that, even more than the preceding one, was characterized by skirmishes in different corners. It still involved different lay governorships and religious orders that continued being enmeshed in fightings or in forging shifting short-term allegiances. It is worthy of note, as may be gleaned from contemporary sources, that the holder of ecclesiastic authority almost always remained subordinate to temporal rule and authority. We also have ample testimonies how the head of a secular authority often proffered patronage to a number of distinct orders simultaneously or, conversely, that a religious order or personage served different or shifting secular masters. A key to an understanding of this is hinged upon the circumstance that both parties made use of any means available to meet his or their objective, in a decentralized society and in a political climate fraught with shifting loyalties between regional powers. This commonly entailed neither any contradiction nor involved any notable conflict since convention in the Tibetan politico-religious landscape always exacted a loose and liberal exchange of patronized hospitality in return or exchange for religious instructions. Patronage thus never remained all-exclusive. Still we should not fail to register alternative and uncompromising voices such as the one articulated by Padma dkar-po, indicative of a common situation prevailing in late medieval Tibet during this spell: At one point he disapprovingly bewails the shift of allegiance (not infrequently the forceful conversion) of one denomination to another that regularly took place, considering it against the ethics of Dharma.180 Whether cases of ideological roller-

179 The 'a skyon dGa'-ldan sKyid-shod-pa initially (from mid-14th cent.) constituted a governorship as district retainers of the Phag-gru. In the second decade of the 1500's, the dGa'-ldan-pa was still dmag dpun of (parts of) sKyid-shod, 'Phan-yul and g Yor districts, cf. Kun dga' rin chen rnam thar III 178–182 and Part I: fn. 542. For their pedigree and genealogy, see Table V.12.3 below. Later, in the mid-16th century, however, they grew increasingly influential; cf. Introduction: Chap. 9, App V: Table 12.3.

180 chos lugs phar bsgyur tshur bsgyur 'di chos dang 'gal ba yin; cf. Pad dkar rnam thar I 198a4–5.
coasting or being motivated upon premeditation, whether enforced or not, it was such reorientations and shifting alliances that kept fuelling many minor conflicts and haunted medieval Tibetan politics.

The traditional backing from the chiefs of the Upper and Lower Hor communities in the 'Damcoasting or being motivated upon premeditation, whether enforced or not, it was such reorientations and shifting alliances that kept fuelling many minor conflicts and haunted medieval Tibetan politics.

The traditional backing from the chiefs of the Upper and Lower Hor communities in the 'Dam region of northern Central Tibet to the Karma-pa as well as the long-standing Nags-shod Mongol patronage of the 'Bri-gung-pa (which found expression in the execution of prosperity rituals for such patron-client relationships as the 'Bri Hor mchod yon sku rim), and with whom they had earlier entertained long-term amicable relationships and had forged a political union, must be seen in the wider context of the intimate amicable bonds that had prevailed between the Karma-pa and the 'Bri-gung-pa cemented by the 7th Karma-pa who earlier had assisted in a revival of the teaching traditions at 'Bri-gung during the tenure of the 15th 'Bri-gung throne-holder. At that point 'Bri-gung had just witnessed a destructive phase and a weakening of the seat. Already 1495–96, and again 1501 and in the following years, the 'Bri-gung-pa, during the tenure of the 15th 'Bri-gung Kun-dga' rinchen – assisted by rje btsun Kun-dga' nying-ma – but also during the subsequent throne-holders had secured the undivided devotion and support of the Hor and the 'Brog-sde communities living in the wide Nags-shod district north-east of 'Bri-gung, including the tribal confederations (tsba ba) of the 'Ba'-ra-ba and the sGom-sde, the Khyung-po, the Rong-po and Sog then under the control of the Hor kyi rgyal-po Kun-dga' bkra-shis ( 'Bri gung Kun dga' rin chen rnam thar l 86–87; III 94–96, 127–128, 593; IV 81–2, 184). The support to the Karma-pa garnered from the gTsang rulers over 181 They resided north of the district Ko-khyim ("Residence of Hide," i.e. Tents) of 'Dam-gzung (located: 30°35'N 91°19'E). Ko-khyim originally had been an 11th-century bKa'-gdams-pa foundation (est. by Ye-shes bla-ma; cf. 'Dul ba'i chos 'byung l 29; II 89b2). For the Hor communities and their presence there; cf. also Sperling 1992. Their camps were located northwards from Rva-sgreng dgon-pa.

182 E.g. in connection with a traditional gior bzog ritual of the wrathful Hayagriva (Khro-rol; of Myang-ral's bKa' brgyad bde gshegs 'dus pa cycle) conducted in 1545 A.D. by Rin-chen phun-tshogs during the visit to the camp of the Hor tribal chief Thar-pa-'bum and his son Thu-bo Karma-dpal (d. 1583); cf. 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 197; Rin chen phun tshogs rnam thar 348–351. These rituals – serving as apotropaic rite or enemy deterrence – were reiterated at regular intervals. In 1545, Rin-chen phun-tshogs was repeatedly requested by the same Hor rgyal po to enter a political union. Thar-pa-'bum in 1558 – after the demise of his 'Bri-gung teacher – sought to establish religious bonds to bSod-nams rgya-mtsho.

183 The northern nomadic and pastoral settlements served as traditional, almost permanent, vaineeya conversion fields for both the sTag-lung-pa and the 'Bri-gung-pa. However, the story of their interaction remains complex. A large number of these settlements in the 'Dam region and further on in Nags-shod (= Nags-shod 'Bri-ru rdzong), located north, north-east of both seats had in the preceding years entertained shifting bonds to either orders; cf. sTag lung chos 'byung l 372–74, 433; lHo rong chos 'byung 577 reports occasional internal warfare among the settlements and their confrontations with the two orders in the early 1400's (leading to repeated and mixed attempts at bringing about their conversion, at mediation, but also occasions marred by cases of warfare and at securing their lucrative patronage (the Tibetan hierarchs often went on so-called charity and patronage tours, tellingly euphemized as "amassing donations" or 'bul sdu) during the tenure of the 9th through the 14th sTag-lung-pa and the 10th and 11th 'Bri-gung throne-holders; cf. 'Bri gung gdan rabs l 485–86; III 141.

To the relief of the Tibetan religious seats, the Mongol settlements and tribal chiefs more often than not were at odds with one another, a stalemate durable enough to distract them from conducting concerted looting forays into Tibetan inhabited areas, still the regularly occurring military incursions from the side of the Mongols no doubt wearied the Tibetans, in particular those involving attacks (not infrequently only involving military threats) on the most vulnerable northern establishments such as 'Bri-gung, sTag-lung and Rva-sgreng, an easy prey for a Mongol incursion. Often religious teachings were offered to these well-armed nomadic settlements as a means of compensation or even as bribe in order to dissuade them from conducting such invasions at least for a certain amount of years. The massive endeavour to turn them towards Buddhism eventually proved successful (still with regular setbacks), and essentially remained a sheer never-ending task. The visits to these settlements should be repeated even up to the period 1740–70's by the 16th and 17th
the years along with the aforementioned secular and religious heads of the 'Bri-gung-pa and the sTag-lung-pa,\textsuperscript{184} spurred the dGe-lugs establishment in dBu to establish initial contacts with the Mongols too, the initial contacts in late 1558 to the same Hor settlements north of lHa-sa (see e.g. gShin rje gshed chos byung II 252a6f.; DL3 58b1f.),\textsuperscript{185} but soon to the Tumed Mongols through the 3\textsuperscript{rd} 'Bras-spungs chos rje bSod-nams rgya-mtsho in the mid–1570's, contacts that heralded a patronage which, as is well-known, eventually paved the way for the emergence of the Dalai Lama institution and its subsequent sovereignty over Tibet.

\textsuperscript{184} 'Bri-gung, but also by the sTag-lung rulers; cf. 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 207; sTag lung chos byung l, passim.

For some information on the Nags-shod Hor settlements; cf. now Ri-dbang bstan-'dzin, Nag shod 'bri ra'i lo rgyus 176f. A thorough study of the long-standing and troublesome contacts between the Tibetan monastic settlements and the scattered Mongol nomadic people still needs to be conducted.

\textsuperscript{185} Aside from any tension prevailing between the founding figures of either orders and their different orientations, the first serious report about warring clashes between the two main seats (headed by the powerful Ga-zi and Kyu-ra clans) can be situated in the 1220's, evidently in connection with wrangling over access to the Nags-shod area, where the sTag-lung-pa attempted to monopolize or dominate the clear-felling of trees for trading and for refurbish their extensive and lavish monastic buildings. We have reports of clashes in the 1270's, too. A conciliatory note occurred when in the mid-14\textsuperscript{th} cent., the powerful 'Bri-gung sgom pa (or khrig dpon) Šaky bzang-po (b. ca. 1330) married a Ga-zi dpon mo. Stilll later, bonds between the mid-15\textsuperscript{th}-cent. secular chief rdzong ji bSod-nams rin-chen and the sTag-lung seat developed, not least in the joint utilization of the lucrative wood trading and its exploitation in the Nags-shod dist. Early in the 1460's, fuelled by another conflict, the 'Bri-gung army (evidently headed by the ambitious Phag-mo line at 'Bri-gung) unsuccessfully invaded sTag-lung territories at Phod-mdo. The former was to be the last skirmishes between the seats (with the exception of a minor skirmish in the early 1570).

The later part of the 15\textsuperscript{th} cent. would prove to be a period marked by widespread deprivations – spiritually as much as politically – at 'Bri-gung (starting with the 10\textsuperscript{th} throne-holder whose son and grandsons occupied the seat successively) heralding a dramatic decline of their own teaching tradition. It was concerned 'Bri-gung masters like the 14\textsuperscript{th} throne-holder and his elder brother dBang/Wang mKhar-thog-pa – no doubt assisted by the 7\textsuperscript{th} Karma-pa at 'Bri-gung – who therefore approached the 12\textsuperscript{th} sTag-lung hierarch Ngag-dbang grags-pa at Thang-'brog in order to receive teachings and to revitalize the 'Bri-gung tradition on that score.

A dramatic change for the better between the traditionally antagonistic schools therefore was initiated when in 1469, the 14\textsuperscript{th} sTag-lung throne-holder was considered a rebirth of the 13\textsuperscript{th} 'Bri-gung throne-holder – another indication that the 'Bri-gung teaching tradition now had been revived or revitalized by sTag-lung, at least for a short period, and it signalled the mutual study of their respective curricula. The 15\textsuperscript{th} 'Bri-gung throne-holder in 1499 attended the obsequies of the sTag-lung sde pa Tshe-dbang grags-pa (i.e. the Hor-khang nang so), invited by the latter's two sons, the 14\textsuperscript{th} and later the 15\textsuperscript{th} sTag-lung throne-holders. A deepened teacher-pupil relationship gradually developed between the hierarchs. It coincided neatly with the circumstance that the daughter of the 14\textsuperscript{th} 'Bri-gung throne-holder, 'Gro-ba'i sgrol-ma (b. ca. 1478/79) was married into the line of the sTag-lung chiefs to cement the new bonds in a period when both hierarchs now united in becoming the root-teacher of the Rin-spungs chief Don-yod rdo-rgyud – a stance behind which we naturally should also see a clever political stratagem of the latter in forming an united front against their common foe, the dGe-lugs-pa. Full harmony finally was established in the mid–1570, when a lHun-grub rdzong ruler (mi dbang) married the daughter of Rin-chens phun-tshogs, whereby a traditional zhang don relationship – emblematic of Tibetan rule – prevailed between the leading figures at the see; their common son was the powerful 18\textsuperscript{th} sTag-lung throne-holder Ngag-dbang ram-rgyal; the bonds were further cemented when the following lHun-grub mi dbang, also descendant of the ruling sTag-lung Ga-zi family, married the 'Bri-gung lady Bu-khrid rgyal-mo, who gave birth to the coming 19\textsuperscript{th} sTag-lung throne-holder in 1600 A.D.

Sources: Kun dga' rin chen rnam thar III 104–47; III 507–08, 584; IV 25–26, 80; passim; sTag lung chos byung l 257–62, 432. Sangs rgyas seng ge rnam thar 15a4–6; sGam po khrig rabs 81a5–6.

The settlements were headed by hor dpon Thar-pa'-bum, the Mongol chief who from 1543 entertained close contacts with the 'Bri-gung; cf. e.g. DL3 58a2f. The initial meeting between the 16\textsuperscript{th} 'Bri-gung throne-holder and Thar-pa'-bum went back to 1532, where they met in mKhar-thog; cf. Rin chen phun tshogs rnam thar 215.2–3.
2.8 Portents and Mirabilia:
IHa-sa as Ideological Battleground –
Hegemonic Designs among Rival Families and Powerful Hierarchs

Although the lingering rivalry between the Karma-pa, the 'Bri-gung-pa and the dGe-lugs-pa heads for supremacy throughout the larger part of the 16th century thus covered many issues and had different backgrounds – doctrinally, ideologically and not least politically, a topic too detailed to be adequately addressed within the pale of this essay – the conflict proved to have strong repercussion and direct bearings on the political fate of the IHa-sa area with its sacred environment, perpetually at stake. Apart from the traditional regional – occasionally supraregional – skirmishes and clashes reported in the sources, usually involving trifling issues over territorial claims, or fuelled by cases of all too transient loyalties, violation or betrayal of sworn alliances that often dominated medieval Tibetan politics, still a not inappreciable part of the political conflicts, as we have already seen, were sparked off precisely over the issue of the paramount control of IHa-sa. In dBus, it had involved ambitious, local lay rulers as well as monastic chiefs, not only between the Karma-pa and the dGe-lugs-pa, but also included the (long Karma-pa-allied but) independent-minded 'Bri-gung-pa, whereas the sTag-lung-pa appear to have nourished political ambitions only to a limited extent. It had become increasingly clear to the parties involved that control over IHa-sa with its national monuments was part and parcel of control over Tibet (Central Tibet), yet the dynamics of the conflict should not be overseen: the gradually overwhelming presence of dGe-lugs-pa establishments in the area itself provoked other denominations and polities to react.

It is perhaps small wonder that the location of the 'Bri-gung seat in the Upper sKyid-shod area and the traditional political role they had played in the area warrants their lingering ambitions for the overall supremacy and legacy of IHa-sa, right from the time of the presence of their once affluent, but overly independent, Stellvertreter, the 'Bri-gung-affiliated IHa-pa clan and their influence in the area in late 12th century (see above) and the subsequent skirmishes with the Sa-skya-pa which ended in the 1290 Gling log catastrophe. Later, during the tenure of the charismatic 16th throne-holder Chos kyi rgyal-po Rin-chens phun-tshogs (1509–1557 A.D.) – the most illustrious master the 'Bri-gung-pa school ever produced – followed not least by his son, the 20th tenant Phun-tshogs bkra-shis (1547–1602 A.D.), and assisted by the former’s and the latter’s root-teachers, the 4th and 5th Zhva-dmar, indeed brothers in spirit equipped with equal forma mentis – do we have reports of their renewed interest: They appear to have repeatedly undertaken flood preventive measures and to have conducted repairs along the IHa-sa bank and in the sKyid-chu area, thus displaying an interest that went way beyond the regular and obligatory offerings – tendered by all leading hierarchs and ascetics irrespective of sectarian moorings – in Jo-khang to its key images and sanctuaries. Rin-chens phun-tshogs and his influential son and grandsons – all successive throne-

186 The only, now somewhat outdated study so far which touches upon a number of points in this essay is that of G. Tucci in Tibetan Painted Scrolls.
187 Noteworthy is that the 8th and 9th sTag-lung throne-holders in 1359 and 1378 resp. had taken their full ordination in IHa-sa, in front of the celebrated Jo-bo statue. Apart from such symbolic and possibly apolitical incidents, the sTag-lung-pa – rather located on the periphery of Central Tibet or sKyid-shod – wisely refrained from nourishing overly hegemonic designs for the Tibetan heart-land, unlike the 'Bri-gung-pa.
188 See e.g. 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 197.6–9; 225–227; Rin chen phun tshogs rnam thar 270.2–5, 275.5–76.5; 359.3–370.4; Phun tshogs bkra shis rnam thar I 581.1–583.2; II 620.6–621.4; gTer ston lo rgyus 134a5–135a6.
holders – wilfully promoted the Srong-btsan sgam-po and Great Compassionate One cult linked to this legacy.

The 'Bri-gung master was a visionary eccentric – in personality not quite unlike the 5th Dalai Lama. His numerous identities and pre-existences – his protein garbs like so many other "treasure-revealers" served as indispensable pre-conditions both for his present embodiment as much as for his politico-spiritual quest – meant being addressed both lha sras gnyis pa and o rgyan gnyis pa Rin-chen phun-tshogs. Imperial linkages in the form of embodiments of religious and cultural heroes,

189 Through different transmission lines, the Bri-gung-pa – not least chos rgyal (i.e. Dharmaraja) Rin-chen phun-tshogs received the cycle of rGyal po bka’ bum (i.e. the Ma ni bka’ bum cycle) that later became immensely popular as curricula at 'Bri-gung-mthil (cf. e.g. his grandson, 'Bri-gung rig ’dzin Chos kyi grags-pa, alias DBur-smyon; 1595–1659 A.D.; his bKa’ bum, ed. Dehra Dun 1999, Vol. 7 : 403–439).

190 His biography frankly refrains from listing his sheer innumerable “pre-existences” (rnam phreul byej kyis mi lang ba). He may have stemmed on his mother’s side from the Brag-dkar house of 'Brom-stod. In 1512–13, there were serious misgivings at the 'Bri-gung court whether indeed Rin-chen phun-tshogs was a true sKyu-ra scion or not, or whether indeed he was an illegitimate son. Venting such misgivings was ‘Bri-gung’s administrative and military chief, the redoubtable mGon-po rgyal-mtshan. The accused family members were forced to take an oath (mna bshtag) of truth in neighbouring imperial Zhva’i lha-khang – the prestigious imperial temple (see fn. 100 above) that at that point was under the jurisdiction of the ‘Bri-gung-pa (possibly also chosen due to the circumstance that the young candidate was [to be?] considered a royal manifestation). This performative act was tantamount to an humiliating diditto in the face of the dominant Phag-rtse faction ruling within ‘Bri-gung. Soon after, the young sKyu-ra prince was compelled to leave ‘Bri-gung, being dispatched with a small retinue to Yar-lung for a lengthy stint partly for his own safety while the matter was deliberated. Only after several years did the debate – possibly after his personal success – over his allegedly nebulous origin efficace. The accusations and the humiliation – a topic that must have been regularly discussed in 'Bri-gung-pa circles – may have had some impact on his personality (like for instance his deliberate assumption of many emanational identities) and shape his determination to stand the test of time (cf. e.g. 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 186–87; DL5 I 188I). 

Behind these accusations loomed large the conflict within 'Bri-gung, namely between the two lines and their resp. houses within the main Thog-kha-pa patriline who vied for preeminence at 'Bri-gung-mthil after, or 16Ih the young throne-holder (himself nephew of the 16th throne-holder) Rin-chen phun-tshogs as his nephew was eligible for the throne in 1527. At the point of Kun-dga’ rin-chchen’s passing that year, an agreement was reached: the sPro-lung line initially was allowed to occupy the throne, immediately to be followed by a candidate from the Phag-mo line. Following the demise of the 15th throne-holder, the Phag-mo line must have exerted an appreciable amount of influence at the 'Bri-gung seat since mGon-po rgyal-mtshan succeeded in ousting the 15th throne-holder’s sKyu-ra, the sTag-rtse rdzong ruler (of the mGar clan wherefrom he himself may have stemmed) from 'Bri-gung after the latter’s position at the main seat had weakened following the strong female ruler (sgom ma) Rin-chen dpal-mo’s passing in 1505. Already in 1534 – possibly provoking an early infringement of the agreement, and following severe harassment from the side of the Phag-rtse house (see Deh dmar gsar 200) – the path was paved for the impatient ascendent to the throne of the Phag-rtse candidate, the 17th throne-holder (himself nephew of the 16th throne-holder) Rin-chen mam-rgyal. The untimely dethroned Rin-chen phun-tshogs soon after established Yang-ri-sgar as his future seat. The following three throne-holders at ‘Bri-gung-mthil all stemmed from the Phag-mo-rtse line, clearly the strongest faction within ‘Bri-gung at that time – and as such it amounted to a reversal of the proper kha dthon succession principles that had been contrived by an ambitious father.*

The immediate descendants of Rin-chen phun-tshogs, however, with the 20th throne-holder’s ascent in 1583 or 1585
as we have seen, had proved to be an essential component behind the execution of hegemony or of its mere quest in Tibet. Like a host of contemporary gter ston, here transmitting a blend of 'Bri-gung and rNying-ma lore,\(^1\) he too constructed an imperial-time scenario – a sort of personal profile and staged itself – this is most evident from his incisive gter ma and esoteric writings – as a manifestation of lha sras Mu-tig btsan-po (i.e. 'Jing-yon Sad-na-legs; an identity that Rin-chen phun-tshogs forcefully promoted in his esoteric writings and that may account for his care and restoration of the sKar-chung temple in Grib once erected by the king). At the same time he was viewed as a Second Guru Rinpoche – in addition to be considered – according to circumstance or opportunely – as an embodiment of a plethora of other celebrated identities and aliases of pre-existences. His religious and esoteric training, e.g. age eight at the feet of the 4th Zhva-dmar-pa – whom we described above as overly enthusiastic and ambitious on the IHa-sa issue – in addition to his restless peregrinating life, his obsessive interest in the esoteric cycles of Myang-ral, of the Byang-gter cycles (esp. of teachings transmitted from his teacher, gter ston mNga’-ris rig ’dzin bDud-’joms rdo-rje), and the role of lha rje dGe-ba-’bum dramatically shaped his ideological quest. Among events that would hone his awareness and preoccupation with the overall IHa-sa legacy no doubt also count his affair with a noble lady, his secret consort rig ’dzin rGya-mtsho Bu’-khrid (d. 1559/60) (stemming from the ruling house of rGya-ma khri-khang)\(^2\) – their liaison in 1546–47 led to the birth of his only son Phun-tshogs bkra-shis, an infant who similarly was proclaimed to be a legitimate manifestation of a number of the Tibetan kings as conveniently prophesied or foreordained by Rin-chen phun-tshogs’ pupil Zhig-po gling-pa in the build-up – consciously – of the aforementioned imperial linkage and a viable spiritual genealogy. Born in rGya-ma khri-khang, close to the birthplace and homeland of Srong-btsan sgam-po, the birth of his son clearly constituted an added impetus for the powerful 'Bri-gung hierarch to occupy himself with this still-vibrant Srong-btsan sgam-po legacy in the rGya-ma area itself – formerly with close bonds to 'Bri-gung, later the rGya-ma territories were occupied by them through their intermarriage with the ruling rGya-ma house by appropriating the prestigious, imperial Ka-tshal temple).\(^3\) Phun-tshogs bkra-shis’ direct descendants thus were

with the latter’s three sons repeated this arrangement and occupy the see consecutively, before the seat adopted the now widely disseminated incarnate system. Cf. Table V.11: Ngag gi dbang po rnam thar [B] 27b1–2; Deb iher dmar (Tucci 199–201; transl. imperfect) and in particular fn. 228 below.

\(^1\) The key figure behind the abrupt change in 1534 A.D. was the father of the coming I
drung shogs-pa yang zab – evidently a play on the 'Bri-gung founder’s celebrated summa Dam chos dgongs gcig, but here propounding an “utmost profound” or esoteric hermeneutics. The cycle was detected by him 1538 (having followed earlier discoveries already from 1532; and was committed to writing in 1551 A.D.), composed at a point when his spiritual leaning increasingly turned towards rNying-ma-pa lore, cf. 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 194. For the cycle’s dbang brgyud and slob ma rjes ’dzin; cf. Vol. IV 65–66, 225–26, 265–66 (Dam chos dgongs pa yang zab skor; ed. Bir 1980).

\(^2\) The rGya-ma khri-khang (located at 29°45’N 91°40’E) in rGya-ma district of Mal-gro gung-dkar rdzong. She stemmed from the lineage of Sangs-rgyas dBon-ston rin po che (1138–1210 A.D.) of rGya-ma Rin-chen-sgang. This line too adhered to the dBer (var. sGer; i.e. sGer-dkar branch) clan. See Table 10 of App. V.

\(^3\) His biography in greatest details lists his up to 13 former pre-existences, inter alia as Gung-ri gung-btsan, as the mythic Akarmatiśīla (known from the Ka khol ma and Mani bka’ ’bum celebrated story as procurer of items for the installation of the king’s yi dam statue), as rGyal-sras lHa-ra Mu-tig btsan-po, then as gTer-ston Sangs-rgyas bla-ma (the revealer of the key esoteric Bla-rDzogs-Thugs gsam cycle), followed by a re-birth as U-rgyan gling-pa (b. 1323), then eventually as Ming emperor (sic) [= Shizong, Zhu Houcong, 1522–66 A.D.] included no doubt as the latter had bestowed upon the father, Rin-chen phun-tshogs hereditary rank, title and citation.
to play a very important role in Tibetan politics: signalty, one of Phun-tshogs bkra-shis’ sons – grandson of Rin-chen phun-tshogs – would emerge as a serious contender for the rebirth of the 3rd Dalai Lama (see details below), another – final – attempt by peaceful means to exert influence on the overall issue behind the Strong-btsan sgam-po and Avalokiteśvara cult that by now had been held by the ‘Bras-spungs chos rje and the dGe-lugs camp.\textsuperscript{194} The autocratic heritage and the parvenu political legacy of Rin-chen phun-tshogs would be anything but trifling since his son Phun-tshogs bkra-shis would father some of the highest hierarchs in Tibet and his daughter sMon-lam Phun-tshogs bu-khrid (b. ca. 1550) become mother to Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal, sTag-lung’s most illustrious throne-holder and ruling chief.

In the now heated climate in lHa-sa, small gestures had great impacts, so when the 8th Zhva-nag Karma-pa in 1546 attempted to pay a visit to lHa-sa, he was flatly denied access to Ra-sa ’Phrub-snang by monks from ’Bras-spungs. In their denial, they possibly were backed by one of the sKyid-shod-pa governors, who now ruled the sKyid-shod area that spanned from dGa’-ldan over Gung-thang to lHa-sa, where they had set up their mansion dGa’-ldan khang-gsar south of the Ra-mo-che. Recalling the sensibility of the dGe-lugs-pa, their opposition may reflect fears of an impending attempt to appropriate the site just like in the case of his predecessor, the 7th Zhva-nag some fifty years earlier (see above). It was during the same period that the Gung-thang temple – also seat of the sKyid-shod-pa – was destroyed by a great fire, and it may be speculated whether a direct or at least a casual connection between the ban and the fire can be inferred (see Part I: fn. 179).

An episode that may also be linked to the conflict just mentioned was related to the activities of the aforementioned Rin-chen phun-tshogs. After the skirmishes with the Karma-pa reported above, in the mid–1500’s, it was now the ambitious ’Bri-gung-pa who seriously challenged the spiritual claim of the dGe-lugs-pa to the site. The same year, 1546, lHa-sa was visited by yet another major destructive flood.\textsuperscript{195} Rin-chen phun-tshogs is recorded to have conducted various water-abating rituals in this connection. It cannot come as a surprise that at this juncture the influential

\begin{quote}
The ’Bri-gung master also entertained teacher-pupil bonds with gter ston rGya-ma Mi’gyur Las-phro gling-pa.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{194} The sudden demise of Rin-chen phun-tshogs at rGya-ma in 1557, during retreat was kept a secret for almost three years – such secrecy usually was a sign of the passing of a “mighty ruler,” a demise kept in the dark because of fear of negative repercussion for the ’Bri-gung position at the prospect of his untimely (unnatural?) demise at the height of their struggle with the dGe-lugs-pa.

Over his bodily remains a dispute flared up between his pupils at Ka-tshal and the ’Bri-gung-mthil hierarch and their court headed by the Phag-mo-rtshe line: his remains initially were brought from rGya-ma to the neighbouring imperial dBu-ru Ka-tshal vihāra (which he reportedly visited for the first time in 1534 and subsequently renovated in 1544) located deep within old ’Bri-gung domain, yet later the mortal remains were divided, a part inserted into a chos ’khor mchod rten ossuary in ’Bri-gung, while other parts of his relics (gser gdung) were inserted into a bkra-shis ’od-har dome in the same dBu-ru Ka-tshal vihāra. This wish, effectuated by his son in token fulfillment and commemoration (thugs dgongs rdzongs) indeed reflected Rin-chen phun-tshogs’ own testamentary injunction uttered prior to his own death. Many of his pupils (known as the Zur-pa line (or the “Ex-['Bri-gung throne-holder']” line) subsequently held abbotship there, another indication of the token tribute paid to the Strong-btsan sgam-po cult. Cf. ’Bri gung gdan rabs III 200–02, 219–21; Rin chen phun tshogs rnam thar I 1226.2; Phun tshogs bkra shis rnam thar I 536–37; Zur chen rnam thar 111b1–112a1: ’Bri gung chos ’byung 434–435 See also Table V.111 below.

\textsuperscript{195} Also confirmed by Pan-chen bSod-nams grags-pa; see his bSod nams grags pa ’i dpal rnam dpyod mchog gi sde ’i rnam par thar pa 37a3–4 (ed. A Mundgod 1998; B 12a3–4). The hydrological extremes – drought followed by excessive rain – repeated itself in 1551 in lHa-sa; cf. DL3 34a2–4.
sde pa sKyid-shod-pa (i.e. Don-grub rab-brtan/rgyal-po) (rl. ca. 1545–1568)\(^{196}\) intervened. They were the actual ruler of the IHa-sa region and its northern districts (byang phyogs sa 'i hdag po) after the political power of the sNe'u-pa had been weakened and now temporarily was governed by a ruling branch of the Phag-gru seated at sKyor-mo-lung. The dGa'-ldan-pa had entered a patron-priest relationship with the 17th and later the 20th 'Bri-gung throne-holder,\(^{197}\) a truly ominous development to the dGe-lugs. The resumption of the warring conflict between the 'Bri-gung and the dGe-lugs raging in the mid-1550's was one of the consequences of this arrangement. As emerging antagonists on the scene, Rin-chen phun-tshogs and chos rje bSod-nams rgya-mtsho – the latter still a minor – at the height of their ideological struggle, the 'Bri-gung master e.g. in 1556 as alternative war-stratagem was accused of taking recourse to projecting – voodoo-like – ill-boding, stroke- and paralysis-causing Rāhula gza' libels (gza' i than 'gyed zhig htang) towards his main foe, attempting to cause harm to the young chos rje while the latter was under way to rTses-thang – without, however, inflicting any fatal harm to his body, forcing the dGe-lugs-pa as deterrent (bzlog thabs) to seek magic means too (DL.3 47b6–48a2).\(^{198}\)

In the ensuing conflict, one religious figure is recorded to have played a prominent role and thus proved successful in inscribing himself into the annals of the flood control history of the IHa-sa area: sde pa Zhig-po gling-pa Nam-mkha' tshe-dbang/brtan rgyal-po, alias gter ston sNang-rtes-pa Gar gyi dbang-po, a celebrated rNying-ma mystic, through his many visionary revelations from Guru Rin-po-che (of whom, not inconveniently, he for his life-long quest and mission was considered an emanation).\(^{199}\) His background is telling and spectacular: it must be seen on the background of the role of the sNang-rtes sde pa (the father or grandfather of Zhig-po gling-pa) whom we had met half a century before as active players in the struggle for hegemony in IHa-sa, although this aspect of the 15th-cent. conflict remains little known. In order to properly evaluate his personal involvement, we must take a look at the contemporary political situation: The birth of the 'Bras-spungs chos rje bSod-nams rgya-mtsho into the local sde pa family of rTse-kha or Khar-gsar-gong of sTod-lung is essential to keep in mind. The main political player, as we shall see, was the powerful rTses-thang Pan-chen bSod-nams grags-pa dpal-bzang-po – the influential erudite and hierarch who simultaneously and successively had held a number of hierarch seats (khri pa) at Se-ra, dGa'-ldan and 'Bras-spungs within the dGe-lugs ecclesiastic administration. As 20th throne-

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\(^{196}\) Cf. Part I: fn. 695, 697.

\(^{197}\) The changing relationship between the dGa'-ldan sKyid-shod-pa and the 'Bri-gung-pa, at times at odds with one another, at times forging a union, may temporarily have witnessed a change to the better during the lengthy reign of the 17th 'Bri-gung throne-holder Rin-chen nam-rgyal (1519–76 A.D.).

To underpin the delicate strategic alliance policy, dGa'-ldan-pa nobles in the early 1550's also entertained a mchod yon relationship with the 'Bras-spungs hierarch.

\(^{198}\) Other sources purport that Rin-chen phun-tshogs was successful in paralyzing other hierarchs and rulers (temporary foes such as Rin-spungs-pa rulers and dGe-lugs hierarchs) by Rāhula-caused strokes. Cf. e.g. bDud 'joms chos 'byung (cf. The Nyingma School 681); Zur chen rnam thar 74b3–75b3. The use of destructive means of submission = violent sorcery and ritual slaying (mgon spyod, abhicāraka / abhicāraka) in order to eliminate foes had a long tradition in Tibet.

It is still unclear how the great 'Bri-gung master himself passed away the following year. It may be speculated that it was anything else than peaceful, an outcome of the violent and baneful exchange of mortal and physical threats.

\(^{199}\) This account is based upon the following sources: Zhig po gling pa rnam thar 60.3–63.6, 99.2–4; Sag bzlog bgyis tshul gyi lo rgyus 224.2; 226.3 and Lung bstsan rdo rje lha khang, passim (for the latter, see the detailed paraphrase and discussion in Akester 2001); Rin chen phun tshogs rnam thar 356f.; gTer ston lo rgyus 91b4–93b1; Gu khra chos 'byung 447–48; Nor bu'i do shal 292–95.
holder too of the important sKyor-mo-lung abbatial seat from 1543 until his death, it was he who, together with his close associate, the local dpon sa\textsuperscript{200} married to the ruling Phag-gru gong ma, orchestrated the recognition and identification of the successful candidate from the neighbouring Khang-gsar-gong house. This Phag-gru sKyor-mo-lung branch line obviously wanted to offer more than a helping hand in order to govern and control the 'Bras-spungs seat and hence dGe-lugs-pa and, eventually, to be in a better position to provide the next incumbent as sDe-srid gong ma. At that point, the choice of the Khang-gsar candidate, can be viewed as a political move to affirm the Karma-pa and 'Bri-gung-pa in the sTod-lung area too, not least one of their patrons, the sNang-rtsa-pa. The conflict escalated, simultaneous with another conflict: in the early 1550’s, the dGa’-ldan sKyi-dshod-pa – stout supporters of dGe-lugs-pa and of bSod-nams rgya-mtsho – taking side in the succession conflict at the main Phag-gru seat – raided the sKyor-mo-lung seat, where they held the Phag-gru dpon sa and his cadres captive until 1561.\textsuperscript{201} Clearly, the dGa’-ldan-pa were growing increasingly independent.

A controversial figure, Zhig-po gling-pa (1524–83), propped by the 'Bri-gung-pa and the Karma-pa, rose to become an elder contemporary rival of the leading dGe-lugs hierarch, chos rje bSod-nams rgya-mtsho (1543–1588), the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Dalai Lama \textit{in spe}. It appears that Zhig-po gling-pa, as gter ston

\textsuperscript{200} Cf. also DL3 17a6ff. The powerful sNe’u-pa dpon sa was Sangs-rgyas-dpal-'dzoms-ma (ca. 1485–1550/60), she and Pan-chen bSod-nams grags-pa were the mastermind behind the identification of bSod-nams rgya-mtsho. The latter mentored the young hierarch’s initial apprenticeship. The sKyor-mo-lung-pa (once one of the six celebrated Vinaya seminars in Central Tibet; cf. Table V.8.4 below), since 1527 was a gzhis ka and religious seat now under the Phag-gru gong ma Ngag gi dbang-phyug bKra-shis grags-pa rgyal-mtshon, who together with the dGe-lugs-pa patriarch sponsored the dngul gdung or silver-plated ossuary of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} 'Bras-spungs chos rje (= the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Dalai Lama in retrospect, in 1542 erected by the master-artist 'Phreng-kha-ba). From the mid-1540’s, with the presence at sKyor-mo-lung of the Phag-gru dpon sa gDung brgyud rin po che bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po (?1532–66 A.D.), son of the Phag-gru mi dbang ‘Gro-ba’i mgon-po reigning at Gong-dkar, and that of the family of sde pa rNam-rgyal grags-pa (bSod-nams rgya-mtsho’s father) remained close. Signally, they as relatives were of common blood. The predecessor, dGe’-dun rgya-mtsho had repeatedly visited, during the last part of his life, Khang-gsar-gong on his way to sKyor-mo-lung, so e.g. 1536 and 1542. Cf. Table V. 12.1.

\textsuperscript{201} Rīn-chen phun-’tshogs entertained close bonds from 1545 between himself and the local sKyor-mo-lung dpon sa (see prev. note). The sKyor-mo-lung dpon sa simultaneously occupied the position as zhal ngo at sNe’u rdzong (opposite to sKyor-mo-lung, the local Phag-gru governance that after ca. 1500 A.D. had disappeared and been replaced by the Phag-gru branch line, whereas another competing Phag-gru fraction resided at Gong-dkar); cf. e.g. DL5 gSan yig II 123b1; \textit{Rin chen phun tshogs rnam thar l 345.3; 394.1}: ‘Bri gung gdan rabs III 197, 209–10.

The reason behind the occupation or capture of sKyor-mo-lung through the dGa’-ldan-pa in the early 1550’s is not still entirely clear, it appears that 1552 during the enthronement of bSod-nams rgya-mtsho at 'Bras-spungs the conflict had not yet broken out. The following year 1553/54, the mighty 11\textsuperscript{th} Phag-gru sde srid Ngag-dbang bKra-shis grags-pa was compelled to step down at sNe’u-gdong, being temporarily replaced by his grand-son Ngag-dbang grags-pa of the Gong-dkar branch within the Phag-gru regimen. The concomitant appointment as new Phag-gru rtags brtse of one bKra-shis rtsa-pa evidently played a role, too. For more details on this coup and the Phag-gru line at sKyor-mo-lung, see O. Czaja 2006. dGa’-ldan-pa’s important role in the events may have been linked to their temporary support and patron-client commitment to the 'Bri-gung-pa.

It is said that only through the mediation of the 17\textsuperscript{th} 'Bri-gung throne-holder was the sKyor-mo-lung dpon sa set free again; cf. ‘Bri gung chos 'byang 444; sKyor mo lung chos 'byang 103–04 (here maintaining that the sKyor-mo-lung zhab drung rin po che was kept prisoner in dGa’-ldan pho-brang). The point requires further research and it is likely that the role of the patriarch bSod-nams grags-pa may (until his passing) cast some light into the matter.
reportedly active in the Khyung-tshang-brag cave of Shun, – a celebrated site associated with Guru Rinpoche – within the closest district of sKyor-mo-lung in sTod-lung on the western outskirts of IHa-sa and later active at Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang,\(^2\) was destined to enter a prolonged sort of visionary-ideological and ritual competition – a duel for spiritual pre-eminence or supremacy in upholding and in embodying the heritage of IHa-sa as a religious center. His most celebrated revelations which included the Avalokiteśvara cycles such as the *Thugs rje chen po 'khor ha las sgrol* and the *Zab pa skor bdun* cycle with its assertive language and delicate prophetic contents once concealed by Guru Rinpoche and eventually traced by Zhig-po gling-pa in 'Phrul-snang (cf. the 2-vols. Collection; Gangtok 1976) were bound to arouse suspicion and opposition among the dGe-lugs-pa. The activities of Zhig-po gling-pa no doubt must be seen against the background that he stemmed from as thus located close to the the activities of Zhig-po gling-pa. The latter's *sKyid-shod-pa* rulers in lower sTod-lung seem, as we have seen, to have temporarily shifted side (in around ca. 1550).

bSod-nams rgya-mtsho himself – as Zhig-po gling-pa's younger contemporary and antagonist – had been born into the *sDe pa* family of [sKyar-po-pa] rTse-dga'-khá ("rTse-mkhar) Khang-gsar-gong estate of sTod-lung (located at 29°44'N 90°58'E in the present-day 'Yab-mda' *xiang* of sTod-lung-mda') - see also *HSLG* 3: 13; Taring *Kyi chu* Map C3; Fig. 27; Part I: Map 3; located a few (ca. eleven) kilometers from sNang-rts; on his father's side bSod-nams rgya-mtsho descended from a family that formerly had been in charge of rGya-ma khri-skor and on his mother's side descended from the old Zi-na clan, born into the Kun-bzang-rts family, a paternal uncle line of local stewards stemming from *mi dbang Grags-ras pa rgyal-mtshan*, the 5th *sde srid* of Phag-gru. He therefore was considered a Phag-gru scion and his close apprenticeship under bSod-nams grags-pa and his bonds to sNe'u-gdong cemented these family bonds to the Rlangs family and the presiding Gong-ma. Most important, the rTse-dga'/mkhar *gzhis kha* (still mentioned in 1681; cf. *DL6 320*) thus located close to the sNang-rts *gzhis ka* in sTod-lung-mda', which indicated a local feud that had been bequeathed to and executed by both protagonists. We can conclude that the scene of the dispute between dGe-dkar (i.e. between dGe-lugs-pa and the dKar-brgyud-pa, i.e. the Karma-pa and 'Bri-gung-pa) thus had been temporarily transferred from IHa-sa to its neighbouring district *(Iha sa'i nye 'khor)* of sTod-lung.

For another telling example that bespoke this latent rivalry, cf. Vitali 2001. See also *Gu bka' chos 'byung 448; The Nyingma School* 722–24 as cited in Akester 2000.

\(^2\) Cf. here Akester 2000; Ehrhard 2005.

\(^3\) In the contemporary hegemonic mosaic, the Karma-pa alliance (of mTshur-phu, resp. of Yangs-pa-can) with the powerful sNang-rts house (*sDe bdag*) (located at 29°43'N 90°49'E in present-day rGu-rgium shiang of sTod-lung; located some fourteen kilometers from the sKyid-chu estuary on the eastern bank of sTod-lung phu-chu), and hence a local noble house and patron initially must have led to considerable frustration among the neighbouring pro-dGe-lugs patrons such as sKyid-shod-pa (at least one wing of this powerful family), whereas the sNe'u-pa and among others the sKyid-mo-lung-pa rulers in lower sTod-lung seem, as we have seen, to have temporarily shifted side (in around ca. 1550).

\(^*\) From a *bka' 'shog* issued by sKyid-shod-pa bKra-shis rab-brtan (kept in the Kun-bde-gling Archive in IHa-sa) in 1584, it appears that the sNangs-rts area at that point was under the rule of the dGa'-ldan sKyid-shod-pa house. The *sDe pa* sNang-rts later in the 17th cent. was registered under the jurisdiction of bKra-shis-ljongs; and later again during the dGa'-ldan pho-brang period (from mid-17th cent.), the estate was in the hands of the noble family Byang-ngos-pa. Into most recent time, the sNang-rts pilgrimage sites (comprising a local Mt. Potalaka or Gru-'dzin ri-bo and an autogenous (i.e. natural) Jo-bo Khasarpānī statue) and the local cult of Avalokiteśvara attracted treasury-finders such as the *ger ma* revivalist mChog-gyur bde-chen Zhig-po gling-pa who e.g. in 1866 (re-)opened the pilgrimage site (cf. his *Collection* 30: 207–222). A similar but far older Avalokiteśvara seat in sTod-lung was sKyer-sgang.

sNang-rts itself later earned some ill-repute as the locale where sDe srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho met his tragic end in 1705. The latter's *gyung rten* ossuary in form of a large sKu-'bum is still found there (recently repaired after its Cultural Revolution destruction). Cf. *Pan chen blo bzang ye shes rnam thar lJ 224b4; 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa rnam thar lJ 117–18; DLIII. 57a6f. and also Petech 1972: 12. At one point the site had been appropriated by the wife of IHa-bzang Qan, Tshe-ring bka'-shis. The execution of the regent involved a member of the sTag-sna family; cf. g.Yung-drung sgrol-ma 1998: 1–2.
the late 1490’s leading sNang-rtse members in the wake of the local strife had fallen victims to an assassination attempt perpetrated by their lHa-sa antagonists, surely an outcome of their support and unmitigated loyalty to the Karma-pa. The motivation of Zhig-po gling-pa to challenge the dGe-lugs dominance in the mid-16th century must be seen on this background.

**Sideline Conflict**

In terms of the strategies for water-control – read: a strategy for the Jo-bo environmental “remediation” or “restoration” – a strong motive and no doubt also a good part of the concomitant legitimacy, as so often the case, had been the alleged discovery by Zhig-po gling-pa of two scrolls at bSam-yas in 1556 A.D. (other sources say 1554; cf. Nor bu’i do shal 294) that proved to contain, among other things, prophetic instructions by Guru Rinpoche concerning the protection of the lHa-sa vihāra against flood. Yet the decisive impetus for Zhig-po gling-pa had originated with another redoubtable gter ston and mystic, none less than the charismatic Rin-chen phun-tshogs (alias gNam-lcags me-'bar), who, as we have now repeatedly seen, long shared a genuine interest in the ritual heritage of water regulation in lHa-sa – or in its potential use as an effective political instrument not least as embodied and personified in dGe-ba-'bum and his legacy. Backed over the years by a host of long-standing and strong Tibetan (the Karma-pa and minor secular patrons from rGya-ma and from sNye-mo and Shun, etc.) and Mongol patrons – not least to the north from Hor kyi rgyal-po Thar-pa-'bum and

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23 He approached the dGe-lugs-pa in 1558 – after the demise of his former preceptor Rin-chen phun-tshogs – in order to establish religious bonds with bSod-nams rgyal-po; cf. above. Thar-pa-'bum and Karma-dpal (d. 1583) admitted to having been formerly followers of the 'Bri-gung hierarchs, but now their exclusive object of veneration, they assured, would be the 'Bras-spungs chos rje. However, we also know that they entertained relations to the sTag-lung-pa as well as close contacts to the Karma-pa. For some additional details as to the latter bonds, see also Sperling 1992.
his son Karma-dpal – Rin-chen phun-tshogs was, with his strong visions and personal determination – a major ideological and political challenge to the dGe-lugs-pa.

As a precursor to Zhig-po gling-pa's endeavour, Rin-chen phun-tshogs' biography in fact informs us that it was he – who in 1547, when again lHa-sa was haunted by flooding – initiated his own dike mission ten years before the spectacular foray of his pupil Zhig-po gling-pa.207 The 'Bri-gung mystic had been encouraged by a most trusted pupil of his, Bla-ma gTsang-pa Ngag-dbang don-grub who at rGya-ma (where Rin-chen phun-tshogs' consort had just given birth to his only heir, Phun-tshogs bkra-shis) reported to Rin-chen phun-tshogs a dream he experienced the night before that a Mongol invasion was impending that year – possibly a conventional, yet convenient pretext. He resolved that to avert the invasion itself, a Bhairava expulsion rite (bzlog thabs) would prove efficient, only the Mongols this time would unite in invading the entire Tibet.208 As part of its prevention and with it any foreboding and casually-linked flooding episode, he foresaw that if a many-cornered mchod rten between Ra-sa and Ra-mo-che was to be erected on a site resembling a tortoise in accordance with a given prophecy (i.e. evidently alluding to a celebrated one earlier proclaimed by Sangs-rgyas gling-pa), a preventive effort accompanied by intense prayers of powerful noble people (i.e. "political support"), then any forthcoming warring conflict and invasion would dissolve all by itself. If, however, it failed the danger that the Jo-bo Rin-po-che image was carried away by water would be immediately imminent – likely a worst-case scenario and an ominous sign for the deterioration or, still worse, possibly the bare survival of Buddhism on Tibetan soil. During the 7th month of 1547,207 along with a group of monks that included among others, dpon po (also known as 'Bri-gung mkhan-chen) Kun-dga' blo-gros,208 Rin-chen phun-tshogs at IHa-gdong shan-ka village – the locality still so named on the southern bank of sKyid-chu across from IHa-sa – initiated his "site restoration mission" by blessing the dikes with "sacred barley corn" and at the most flood prone stretches with other sacred substances and blessings. Proceeding further (i.e. to the northern bank, across from IHa-gdong), they reached mChod-rtens-sgang gi grong (the village of sKu'-bum-thang in IHa-sa) where they saw the mchod rten and the old dikes that formerly had been built by IHa-rje dGe-ba-'bum and his consort in order to avert flooding.209 Rin-chen phun-tshogs' IHa-sa mission no

207 Rin-chen phun-tshogs' biography adduces that already in 1535, he had paid IHa-sa and bSam-yas a visit, where he allegedly carried out dike repair and concomitantly executed so-called miha 'damar bzlog rites for the perpetuation of both sites. During the same spell, while accompanying his teacher gter ston mNga'-ris Pan-chen, he fathfully received the full empowerment and reading authorization of the rGyal po bka' 'bum of the Great Compassionate One Cult and subsequently was offered the 11th-cent. 'Bri-gung seat of 'On as a monastic estate.

208 The prospect of an united invasion from all the Mongol tribes at no time had been overly realistic; all former insurgencies into Tibet from Mongol tribes – who after the break-down of the Yuan empire rarely were united and hence often in conflict with one another – had been conducted by smaller tribes and groups; any united invasion indeed would have posed an unprecedented threat to Tibet.

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doubt was part and parcel of a power statement and an attempt to test the reactions of the adjacent 'Bras-spungs community. This also become evident when his biography claims that Guru Rinpoche, the spiritual inspiration behind the agenda, appeared and gave his approving blessings by stewing flowers; it is even asserted that the local Jo-khang sacristans, obviously sympathetically disposed, showed Rin-chen phun-tshogs their respect. His biography frankly reports that his mere presence in lHa-sa, e.g. his camping at gSang-mda' and in sKyor-mo-lung aroused the suspicion of the monks of 'Bras-spungs, and his biography again reports the 'Bri-gung-pa camp indeed was looted and destroyed by 'Bras-spungs monks which lead to a minor crisis where the damages inflicted had to be compensated after the Phag-gru sDe-srid intervened (see also rJe btsun Kun dga' grol mchog rnam thar 256). The years 1546 and 1547 had been fateful ones, in 1546 the great 8th Zhva-nag had been denied access to Jo-khang and the same year Tshal Gung-thang (and the mGon-khang at sTag-lung dgon-pa) were destroyed in a great fire.

Rin-chen phun-tshogs’ demise ten years later, in 1557 would bring an abrupt end to his ideologically coloured endeavour, a quest that appears to have been inherited by his pupil, the congenial Zhig-po gling-pa who now – prosecuting what Rin-chen phun-tshogs left unfulfilled – to the north-east of the lHa-sa town (probably on the plain of sKu-'bum-thang, along the northern bank of sKyid-chu) initiated his envisaged erection of an octagonal three-storied rDo-rje lha-khang shrine – a huge apotropaion – raised for the protection against flooding from the monsoon-fed sKyid-chu (see Lung bstan rdo rje lha khang, passim, and M. Akester 2001 for a full translation).

he prosecuted his dike protecting mission by stewing “blessed barley corn” along the gate of the southern dikes (lho rags kyi rags mgo) and along the most vulnerable stretches, he established five [water] mills ([chu’?] ‘khor lo inga) in the area. The mission was finally crowned by a visit to the Jo-bo image in 'Phrul-snang, in an attempt to ensue that the mission was blessed and sanctioned.

Returning towards rGya-ma, they were received en route in gratitude by the local people of Kha-rog shan-ka (= ? Rags-kha shan-ka, at sKyid-chu river, at the foot of Yer-pa in Glang-ru district of 'Brom-thod or rather Kha-rabs/rag shan-kha, a grongs rtsa in bDe-chen xiang of present-day sTag-rtsa xian; loc. 29°39’N 91°23’E; towering above this site is the bDe-chen Kha-rab rgyab-ri (cf. DL6 426; later a Zur-khang estate, cf. Petech 1973: 148). Further upstream, they were received by the people of La-mo Gyang-rgyab chu-skor (of La-mo in present-day sTag-rtsa xian; i.e. La-mo Gyang-ri dmar-po and La-mo Chu-skor; cf. CTZhZh 148; loc. 29°46’N 91°33’E; see Dimingzhi I 86ab).

A year later – in 1548 – the 'Bri-gung master visited sNang-rtsa on his way to sKyor-mo-lung, where he was to deliver religious precepts and it may be speculated, that it was on this or a later occasion that he evidently persuaded Zhig-po gling-pa to carry through his future rdo rje or chu bzlog lha khang enterprise. The sNang-rtsa sde-pa Zhig-po gling-pa reportedly also urged the 'Bri-gung master to commit some of his esoteric writings to paper. Cf. Rin chen phun tshogs rnam thar 353f.

210 At this point it may be mooted what sort of reward – or trophy – Rin-chen phun-tshogs, or for that matter, Zhig-po gling-pa (aside from a personal) had in mind with their mission. Where the Karma-pa’s ultimate objectives would seem overly profane and matter-of-factly in their hegemonic pursuit, the objectives of the two gter ston appear more ideological, at least unarticulated. In the Vajra Temple text of Zhig-po gling-pa, the patrons behind its erection in 1557 were resp. one Drung-gnas dkon gnyer dpon and a gNyer-chen rDo-rje rtags-pa (see Akester 2001: 21). Otherwise unknown, they appear to have been custodians or sacristans, either of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang or from Tshal Gung-thang, and may have been supported by the powerful sde pa sKyid-shod-pa who at that point ruled either seat.

211 The name rdo rje or adamantine, alludes to its indestructible nature, hoping that it would remain intact in perpetuum. The idea was not new: Just as physical sanctuaries were erected to protect lHa-sa from watery destruction (chu skyon), another similarly important quest was to protect bSam-yas from sand and fire. In the early 15th cent., Thang-stong rgyal-po, a pioneer of such remedial crusades or missions, had erected a mchod rten khang bu brtseg to protect bSam-yas from being buried in sand; cf. Thang stong rgyal po rnam thar III 202–03.
Completed the same year, this remarkable and apparently affluently equipped chapel should, with
the wax and wane of time, ideally last for ca. 40 years (as it was proclaimed, yet it barely survived
for one full year), before it fell prey to the turmoil created by man and nature. We have no trace
of it today. In raising this chapel, Zhig-po gling-pa too had followed in the footsteps of his spiritual
mentor, mChog-ltan mgon-po, who, as already mentioned, in vain had attempted to erect a similar
water-protecting chapel, but had been hindered by the dGe-lugs-pa (of ’Bras-spungs) due to their
intense opposition, or as noted by Sog-bzlog, due to their small-mindedness. The most important
question in this matter cannot be adequately answered: who were the lay rulers and patrons behind
the building of this edifice or who were the instigators? The sNang-rtses-pa and the sKyid-shod-pa
ruling house may be convincingly mooted due to the bonds prevailing between Zhig-po gling-pa
and the sKyid-shog-pa, certainly after the latter’s volte face, also the sKyor-mo-lung-pa and the
sNe’u-pa, supported by the religious seats of ’Bri-gung and Karma-pa, a formidable front indeed.
Zhig-po gling-pa too had an old score to settle with the
and the
sNe’u-gdong-pa’s
water-protecting chapel, but had been hindered by the
bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po (d. 1566); cf. also sKyor mo lung chos ’byung (103),
but who at that point was ailing. Well-known incidentally are his numerous appeals, his odes and
advice to the sNe’u-gdong rulers and his uncommonly genuine non-partisan stance (cf. e.g. Mi
bskyod rdo rje nam thar 221–227) in the political strife of his day. Nevertheless, a major impetus
behind the initiative guiding the two gter ston just mentioned must be sought, as we have seen,
with Sangs-rgyas gling-pa. We continue to observe that the main actors in the on-going drama thus
either were divinely inspired gter ston, willingly supported or manipulated by ambitious lay rulers.
Doubtless, the numerous texts and ritual cycles dedicated to the topic concerning the perpetuity,
protection and renovation of the lHa-sa site and ascribed to the latter – not surprisingly – are also
reflected in the interest on the side of the 4th and later the 5th Karma-pa for gter ston Sangs-rgyas
gling-pa’s esoteric teachings. It is therefore no less significant to consider the spiritual genealogy
that may have motivated Zhig-po gling-pa (himself considered a rebirth of Sangs-rgyas gling-pa
and in the words of his biographer Sog-bzlog-pa) to place a claim on being a rightful preserver
of the Buddhist heritage of lHa-sa: Zhig-po gling-pa was conveniently linked up in one of his
pre-existences with Bla-ma Zhang; cf. Zhig po gling pa rnam thar 26.1–2, 29.1–3, 36.5–6, 37.6),
a nexus evidently considered crucial for underpinning the legitimacy concerning any claim and
prestige behind upholding or representing the ideological heritage of the site, since the latter also
emerges later in the pre-existence line and succession of the 5th Dalai Lama,212 who evidently

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212 Telling is the artificial legitimacy or spiritual genealogy forged in Zhig-po gling-pa’s case (as already discussed
in detail by M. Akester 2001: 6–7) to link the latter to ’Brom-ston and its bKa’-gdam-pa line – a core legitimacy upon
which the Dalai Lama institution rested as reported in many Dalai Lama biographies.

This unmitigated attempt to capitalize upon old bKa’-gdam-pa legacies (deeply offensive to dGe-lugs sentiments) and
the unrepentant, almost aggressive demonization of the dGe-lugs-pa (dge lugs ’di bdud lta bur) from the side of a trium-
virate of gter ston accounts for the subsequent antipathy, that was nourished by the 5th Dalai Lama against this rNyin-ma
treasure-finder trio known as sNang-Gong-Sog gsum, i.e. sNang-rtses Zhig-po gling-pa, Sog-bzlog Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan
and Gong/Gangs-ra Lo-chen gZhan-phan rdo-rje (1594–1654), but also against another political visionary prophet, gter ston
Shes-rab ’od-zer (1518–84) that later should lead to a ban on the publication of their writings.*

Many of their political prophecies were deemed dangerous and vicious and were employed as political instruments.
The contents of such prophecies indeed could be controversial since, if accepted at face value, the far-reaching conse-
quences would be explosive, given the fact that they could be interpreted as the authoritative porte parole of Padma-
sambhava. Remarkable here is that two members of the triumvirate had been pupils of ’Bri-gung Rin-chen phun-tshogs.
sought to include or incorporate the very same figures in his endeavour to generate as spiritual genealogy to the site, to its history and its underlying legacy.

A response to the ambitious endeavour launched by Zhig-po gling-pa, not surprisingly, was dealt with by the 5th Dalai Lama in his biography of bSod-nams rgya-mtsho. The Great 5th utilized these developments to link the foray of Zhig-po gling-pa – albeit in this connection never directly mentioning it – with the issue that confront each and every Tibetan, namely that according to Tibetan astrology, each 13th year in a human life constitutes a dangerous year (lo keg) with serious obstacles either to the person’s life and health or to his immediate surroundings: in the case of the high hierarch, this lo keg would seem to coincide with the emergence of the warfare in Central Tibet and the conflict between ‘Bri-gung and dGe-lugs reported above that raged during the mid- and late 1550’s, when paradoxically both parties in the late 16th century unwittingly competed (see below) about the re-embody as the 4th Dalai Lama. The 5th further refers to a number of crucial prophecies issued by Ratna gling-pa, by mNga’-ris Pan-chen Padma dbang-rgyal (1487–1542) and especially by the latter’s younger brother rig ‘dzin Legs-ladan bDud-’joms rdo-rje (1488–1569) – both Byang gter teachers of royal blood (stemming from a side-line of the Mang-yul Gung-thang rulers; the first even

Due to Zhig-po gling-pa’s politically contentious and eclectic ties to Zhva-dmar, to the Sa-skya-pa (i.e. resp. Ngag-dbang Kun-dga’ rin-chen (1517–84), as well as to bDag-chen Ngag gi dbang-po), to rTse-gdong Kun-dga’ bsam-’grub, but also to the ‘Brug-pa (zhabs drung Mi-phamchos-rgyal, 1543–1604/06),** he kept remaining a dreaded figure, precisely because of his political prophecies – often euhemerized as dus rtags lung bstan (stigmatized as lung bstan ngan pa or wicked prophecies by the dGe-lugs-pa) for which reason he remained a target in many orthodox dGe-lugs apogetics and histories. It was said that sNang-rtsa-ba Zhig-po gling-pa’s assertive and contentious treasury finding in Jo-khang themselves hinges upon his close (family?) relations to a local nang pa bZhu-khang-pa of Ra-sa ‘Phrun-snang, his local (and secret) ally no doubt. To make matters worse, Zhig-po gling-pa, with his strong anti-dGe-lugs stance often targeted bTsung-kha-pa in his writings. Cf. bTsong kha pa rnam thar i 1356–58 (referring to the deplorably still non-extant bTsong-kha-pa biography Ngo mtshar lung bstan gi rol mo by Brag-sgo-ba rab ’hrams pa Phun-tshogs rgya-mtsho).

sNang-rtsa-ba thus was viewed as an ideological usurper encroaching on their well-earned rights and hard-won prerogatives. The dGe-lugs-pa mooted (as part of a defamation) issues related to the authenticity and interpretation of some of his esoteric cycles (e.g. the Zah pa skor bdun among his numerous writings; cf. rNyin ma’i gsung ‘bum dkar chag 131–38; DL5 II 170b7–171a6; Nor hu’i do shal 294–99; see also his assertive and prophecy-rich Thugs rje chen po ’khor ba las grol gvi chos kyi lo rgyas lung byang gsal ba’i sgron me 1–41; ed. Gangtok 1976).

Paradoxically, other prophecies of his found sympathy with his antagonists. It would be worthwhile enterprise to investigate the background behind the lingering conflict between a number of gter ston and the dGe-lugs-pa establishment. Cf. also Ngag gi dbang po rnam thar [B] 14b3f., 46b3f.; Sa skya gding rahs 407–18, 44. The dGe-lugs-pa opposition towards the rNyin ma-pa masters (and other masters, eventually involving a printing ban on the writings of the 8th Karma-pa Mi-bskyod rdo-rje and others) initially had been grounded – as we most readily see in the case of Zhig-po gling-pa, aside from ideological difference – in their different alliances forged to political opponents, but also in the opposition nurtured in numerous corners against the above rNyin ma-pa, feared as they were for their dangerous prophecies and rituals that targeted the insidious involvement of the Mongols in Tibetan politics and a motif for this was the unabashed invitation to Tibet by the dGe-lugs administration from the late 1580’s. Worthy of note also, in connection with the elimination of the Yar-rgyab ruling house, sNang-rtsa’s prophecies were employed.

* A closer reading of the writings of the 5th Dalai Lama and access to the still non-extant gTer ston chos ‘byung written by Drc’u-lhas grub dbang g.Yung-mgon rdo-rje, alias Kun-dga’ mi’gyur rdo-rje (1721 69) son of Sle-lung bZhad-pa’s rdo-rje, may shed further light on the dispute.

** Zhig-po gling-pa’s subsequent political importance is evident from the fact that his daughter was the consort of the ‘Brug-pa hierarch Mi-pham chos-rgyal, their son again being Mi-pham bTsang-pa s rin-ri ma, on his side incidentally the father of zhabs drung Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal, the future founder of the site of Bhutan; cf. Ehrhard 2005: 17.
Family Affairs: Father – Son – Grandson

25. Father: Chos-rgyal Rin-chen phun-tshogs (1509 – 1557), ’Bri-gung visionary and mystic – ideological contender to the Ih-ja-ja heritage
16th-century statue kept in the gSer-khang of ’Bri-gung-mthul (PKS 2004)

26. Son: Chos-rgyal Phun-tshogs bka-thugs (1547 – 1602), Great ascetic, father of many ’Bri-gung hierarchy
Statue kept in Puyang monastery in Ladakh (after Binczik and Fischer 2002)

27. Grandson: sTag-lung Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal (1571 – 1626),
Illustrious ruler, scholar and saint
17th-century statue kept on the ground-floor of sTag-lung Ri-bo-che gsung lag khang (PKS 2004)

included into one of the pre-existence lineage of the Dalai Lamas) to ’Bri-gung Rin-chen phun-tshogs and his son which altogether heralded that a statue of Mahâdeva was about to be set up in Ih-ja-ja that would turn its back to (i.e. affront) the central Jo-bo Śākyamuni statue[23] and thus boded

[23] For the inclusion of Padma dbang-rgyal and the role of his younger brother too and the reason for their ennoblement into the Dalai Lama pre-existence lineage; cf. rMad byung bskal pa ma 213 – 16.

The facial orientation of the Jo-bo statue in Jo-khang was towards the west (= towards Nepal/India wherefrom it originated), whereas the orientation of the new statue intended to be installed in the rDo rje lha khang of Zhig-po gling-pa would seem to have been towards SE; in fact, the statues would have their backs turned towards one another; an overly auspicious arrangement boding ill for the territorial integrity, and in turn for the well-being of country and population.
ill – in the eyes of the 5th Dalai Lama – or would impair the local fragile toponymic lay of the land (Iha sa'i sa dpyad nyams) as visualized by the dGe-lugs-pa; the author further refers to a number of other ominous temporal signs (dus rtags lung bstan) that indicated that the site would turn into a “swirling ocean of blood” (aside from alluding to the mythic heart-blood “site” of the supine demoness, here also referring to a prospective horrifying battlefield scenario), etc. and he finally foresaw – no doubt here taking advance of the benefit of hindsight – that it is (the 3rd Dalai Lama’s own re-embodiment) namely 4th Dalai Lama, Yon-tan rgya-mtsho bDe-chen Chos kyi rgyal-po who as a remote scion of Činggis Qan tamed or pacified any menacing border peoples (i.e. any foe).

We thus see that the attempt to assume a central position in the struggle for the IHa-sa heritage by building the disputed rdo rje Iha khang by the 5th Dalai Lama in the longer perspective was seen as the outcome, i.e. a “natural impediment” or imbalance associated with the karmic development of the high hierarch personally, partly to be set right only by way of announcing the recognition of his subsequent embodiment into a glorious ruling family of the Mongols that proved decisive for the final struggle in Central Tibet almost a century later (DL3 70a2–72b3). We easily detect the intention behind the Great 5th with this argumentation when he attempts to soften or incorporate the stances of his opponent by arguing that the Tümed Mongols – rightful descendants and scions of the glorious Činggis Qan would be the true defenders of Buddhism and expeller of hostile border armies. The positive attitude towards a Mongol involvement, aside from his own and his line’s bare survival, no doubt also rested with his own family ties that revealed a Mongol ethnic background too.

By thus linking a local dispute in the IHa-sa area in the mid-1500’s with the prophetic vision that the re-embodiment of the 3rd Dalai Lama was to incarnate himself in the glorious lineage of the powerful Tümed chiefs, the 5th Dalai Lama conveniently provided the rationale behind the step taken by bSod-nams rgya-mtsho and the central dGe-lugs-pa administration at 'Bras-spungs, namely to seek his re-embodiment in Mongolia, a plan generally maturing, when the first attempts from the side of the dGe-lugs to seek help from the Mongols had just been carried through. We shall assume the initial plans for these contacts beginning were rooted in suggestions vented by Kun-bzang-rtsè and the presiding Phag-gru mi dbang Ngag-dbang grags-pa who already in 1571 suggested that contact was taken up with the Tümed ruler in the Kokonor region. It was the dGe-lugs-pa, not least due to the successful missionary endeavours conducted by bSod-nams rgya-mtsho in 1577–78 in Mongolia that gave his denomination the better cards to ensure the undivided support and patronage of the Tümed Mongols and thereby unwittingly herald the start of their ultimate victory over their foes among the gTsang-pa and hence the fate of Tibet. Whatever rationalization here may have been conducted by the 5th Dalai Lama, there remains some reason to assume that the hour of birth for the decision among the dGe-lugs-pa to seek help and patronage from the Mongols also had been rooted in the warring conflict with the 'Bri-gung-pa and possibly also the initiative of Zhig-po gling-pa to challenge the claim of the dGe-lugs hierarchs and their establishments in upholding a monopoly and privilege of administering or representing the site of IHa-sa and its unbroken cultural memory.

It was also a period marked by the attempt from many sides to forge new coalitions and alliances – and not only to the militarily and materially strong Mongol tribes. Also between different Tibetan

Later the ominous story of the set-up of the IHa-chen statue turning its back to the IHa-sa Jo-bo and thereby exerts a negative or ill-boding effect on the “auspiciousness of land and people” conveniently was used to explain the loss of territories during the 1618–19 war in Central Tibet; see DL3 125a1–3.
hierarchs we observe such attempts: the head of one wing of the two dominant brother lines vying for power at 'Bri-gung, namely Rin-chen phun-tshogs' son Phun-tshogs bkra-shis in 1570 arranged a marriage between his younger sister and the ruling mi dbang Kun-dga' rgya-mtsho of the Ga-zi house, the actual ruler behind the powerful sTag-lung seat (see below). The son of the union was to become the formidable 17th sTag-lung throne-holder Ngag-dbang nam-rgyal – of mixed sKyu-ra- and Ga-zi clan blood – and nephew of Phun-tshogs bkra-shis. He ascended the sTag-lung throne in 1585. The union reveals the concern that spurred the 'Bri-gung ascetic, who in 1583 (var. 1585) himself had become the strong man at 'Bri-gung as its 20th throne-holder. He was also the one who made a last attempt to influence the course of history.

When another severe flooding visited IHa-sa in 1583 A.D., it was the 'Bri-gung-pa Hierarch Phun-tshogs bkra-shis (following in the trail of his visionary father Rin-chen phun-tshogs and in the absence of the now 3rd Dalai Lama in Mongolia) who again was requested by the sKyiid-shod-pa, – a request supported by the Karma-pa and thereby reconfirming an old political union – to perform a ritual mediation and he successfully assisted them in eliminating the threat, by bringing the heavy rain to a halt, by reverting the course of sKyiid-chu river and by repairing and solidifying the embankments.\(^{214}\) This feat in fact earned him a great name as grub thob in wide circles. Although other examples of the spiritual rivalry between the dGe-lugs-pa and the 'Bri-gung-pa are to be recorded and are essential for a fuller understanding of the dispute, this shall suffice. It was also during the tenure of sKyiid-shod zhabs drung g.Yul-rgyal-ba (d. 1607; ruling from 1589) that large-scale dikes had been erected or renewed in the sKyiid-shod area (cf. GT 50b).

Adding to the picture, during the same spell a number of 'Brug-pa, albeit nourishing no notable political ambitions in the narrow sKyiid-shod area, also gained some merit as “flood controller.” In the early 1520’s, the 'Brug-chen Hierarch Ngag-dbang Chos kyi rgyal-po (1465–1540 A.D.), at one occasion through his strong prayers was successful in reducing the menacing and expanding river-waters in IHa-sa.\(^{215}\) In 1591 A.D., the 4th Hierarch Padma-dkar-po (1527–1592 A.D.) similarly conducted consecration rituals in form of strewing “sacred barley-grain” (phyag nas) along both the upper and the lower section of the IHa-sa’i chu-rags. In other words, the local dike construction, incessantly renewed or under repair, had turned into an integral piece of sacred environment, an object of veneration and blessing, regarded as a defensive protective wall around the sanctum. Any dignitary of note who passed through IHa-sa (and the Tshal district) was expected to pay ritual service to the Jo-bo Brother statues, not least in form of conducting either pre-emptive or restitutive repair and rituals along the existing chu-rags. As such, a contribution to their maintenance was deemed an obligatory part of paying tribute to the Jo-bo Brothers and its protection. These measures, as said, also had a practical side: the latter-mentioned dignitary had – barely ten years old in 1536 A.D.

\(^{214}\) In 1598, the 20th 'Bri-gung throne-holder repeated the rites in IHa-sa against flooding as requested by the sKyiid-shod-pa rulers. Cf. Rin chen phun tshogs rnam thar 270.2–5, 275.5; Phun tshogs bkra shis rnam thar I 581.5, 583.1–3; II 620.6–621.4; 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 197.6–9, 225, 233.

Some texts suggest that the earlier flooding took place in 1587 (not 1583). Already in the late 1560’s, Phun-tshogs bkra-shis had won some experience in halting the water: he successfully had conducted thaumaturgic flood averting rites in Kong-po. During the 3rd Dalai Lama’s lengthy stint in Mongolia, the sKyiid-shod-pa rulers and the 20th and 21st 'Bri-gung throne-holders resp. entertained close relations. Clearly, Phun-tshogs bkra-shis – strongly supported by the Karma-pa – (like earlier his father) during his successful mission in IHa-sa clearly would unfold his ambitions for the site’s underlying legacy. He reportedly several times by magic means attached the

\(^{215}\) See e.g. Ngag dbang chos rgyal rnam thar 554.2, 559.3–560.1.
been compelled to halt his journey to Tshal Gung-thang, since the skYid-chu had overflowed the area leaving him stranded in mGar-grong for a lengthy period, unable to proceed further.\textsuperscript{216} There can be room for little doubt that that flooding was a serious and permanent impediment to communication and trade throughout the centuries and such personal experiences, along with the often dangerous negotiation of the river itself, provided an added impetus for maintaining and securing the chu rags intact. Adding to this list we should also mention the stTag-lung chos rje who in 1580 or 1581 similarly conducted extensive repairs of the sanctum in lhHa-sa and where he generously donated - customarily it seems - a new golden roof.\textsuperscript{217}

Summing up - in their confrontation with the Karma-pa up to the close of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, it was two figures who proved to be ideological and political challenges that might have spelled disaster for dGe-lugs' strong presence and dominance: the 5\textsuperscript{th} and the 8\textsuperscript{th} Black Karma-pa.

2.9 Chos rje bSod-nams rgya-mtsho:
The Virūpa of Tibet – Master over the Waters and Architect of Alliances

The vexing albeit prestigious issues behind water-control and natural disaster management in Central Tibet - during the warfare in skYid-shod district delineated above that raged in the mid-1550's - forced the 'Bri-gung-pa antagonists not to remain silent. The recognition of chos rje bSod-nams rgya-mtsho had been - almost exclusively - orchestrated by the old and all-powerful Pan-chen bSod-nams grags-pa, who at this point as a ruling mandriarch or lord (responsible both for clerical and secular matters - chos srid) had the final say in all important matters and affairs in leading dGe-lugs circles. In addition, he held numerous ecclesiastic posts and exerted great spiritual influence.\textsuperscript{218} After the detection of the prospective young candidate in stTod-lung, a mis-en-scène staged or choreographed by the monk-patriarch or hierocrate himself, he soon conducted the infant’s tonsure and name-giving ceremonies (a part of his name customarily being the same as his mentor) in 1546 at 'Bras-spungs – where bSod-nams grags-pa served as interim (11\textsuperscript{th}) throne-holder - his oath-taking in 1549 and finally installed him on the 'Bras-spungs throne in 1552 (as 12\textsuperscript{th} 'Bras-spungs chos rje throne-holder and as gZim-khang 'og-ma or "Lower Chamber" incarnate). bSod-nams grags-pa himself simultaneously or just prior to this point in 1548/49 sought retirement at 'Bras-spungs within

\textsuperscript{216} Cf. also Pad dkar rnam thar V 3b6–4a2. To Padma dkar-po is also ascribed the enactment of rituals to prevent watery disasters (chu'i gnod), so once in Kong-po, cf. ibid. 5a7; prior to this, it otherwise was the 'Bri-gung-pa who were active and influential in the Kong-po area - where large stretches and where temples were located that long served as 'Bri-gung outposts in the region, right from the time of the 4\textsuperscript{th} throne-holder – in the mid-1260’s, later again, it was the 10\textsuperscript{th} and 11\textsuperscript{th} 'Bri-gung throne-holder Chos kyi rgyal-po (1335–1407) and Don-grub rgyal-po (1369–1427) - and still later the 14\textsuperscript{th} (so e.g. in 1470 A.D.) and the 20\textsuperscript{th} 'Bri-gung throne-holders, who similarly executed a row of thaumaturgic feats and miracles for the protection against flooding in different areas of Kong-po, ever-vulnerable flood prone stretches - usually after many people had been killed and entire villages destroyed; cf. e.g. bKa' brgyud gdan rabs 283–87; 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 136,142, 155, 223. It may be noted that flood destructions (chu skyen) in Kong-po - due to the larger amount of water – generally were both more frequent and more devastating than the damage visiting the lhHa-sa area.

\textsuperscript{217} It refers to the endeavours of the 17\textsuperscript{th} throne-holder chos rje Kun-dga' bkra-shis rgyal-mtshan; cf. Tāranātha rnam thar 16b1–3, 19b4. Not listed in the otherwise extensive survey of the 5\textsuperscript{th} Dalai Lama in his lhHa ldan dkar chag. In fact, to both the 14\textsuperscript{th} and 15\textsuperscript{th} stTag-lung throne-holders (and certainly a large number of other masters) was ascribed the faculty of reducing flooding too; cf. stTag lung chos byung l 495, 543, 547, 550–52.

\textsuperscript{218} A good part of the young infant’s childhood (following his official recognition in 1544) was spent in sKyor-mo-lung, where he was patronized by gdung brgyud rin po che mi lhung bSod-nams grags-pa rgyal-mtshan. Cf. DL3 16af.
the precinct of the so-called "gZims-khang gong-ma" or Upper Chamber (which then developed its own line). bSod-nams rgya-mtsho at that point was barely nine years old.

bSod-nams grags-pa, for a number of reasons – scholastic and political – was an imposing and indomitable man. He was the very life-blood who embodied in his person the very guarantor behind the delicate, but vital relationship between dGe-lugs-pa and the Phag-gru or Rlangs rulers at sNe'u-gdong, the ruling seat of rTses-thang wherefrom he descended, a link that explains a good deal of his powerful position at dGa'-ldan pho-brang. Growing up under the auspices and guidance of this mentor, it was during the period following the latter's demise in 1554 that the young 'Bras-spungs chos rje bSod-nams rgya-mtsho in 1559 renewed the old alliance with the now increasingly politically and physically feeble 11th Phag-gru gong ma Ngag-dbang bKra-shis grags-pa rgyal-mtshan at sNe'u-gdong (clearly urged by his influential uncle Kun-bzang rtse-pa Chos kyi dbang-phyug, who on most occasions served as his warden and political adviser of sorts). Already 1562 A.D., bSod-nams rgya-mtsho should seize the initiative and conduct extensive water-reducing rituals that included appropriate consecrations and he took other flood disaster relief measures along the embankments after yet another major flooding incident had visited lHa-sa. For his ability to reduce and control the waters, he became known as the Second Virupa, a figure reknown as thaumaturge for his fabled exploits in controlling the water. Flood control measures, as we have seen, remained the single most important issue for the protection and survival of lHa-sa, not least also because the financial costs and human toll that followed in the wake of flooding always were considerable. To be true, this depiction of the 'Bras-spungs chos rje is only conveyed from his biography. See also the essay in Linroth ed. 2006. For his role in Gung-thang, see App. IV, below.

Until this point, the dGe-lugs-pa hierarch at 'Bras-spungs had suffered a row of humiliations concerning lHa-sa and his claim for pre-eminence in the area at the hands of the Karma-pa and now by the 'Bri-gung-pa. The next step taken by him therefore was only logical: the following year

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219 It was the competition between the future successors of these incarnate lines that led to considerable tension within the dGe-lugs organization; cf. G. Dreyfuss 1998; G. Smith 2003: 129.
220 In 1551, a serious drought had hit lHa-sa, and bSod-nams rgya-mtsho, barely eight years old, is said to have succeeded in producing rain-water by way of a chain of rites. Cf. ibid. 34a3-4.
221 In other words, his ascetic practice (brtal zhugs or vrata) was said to equal that of the Indian master (bir va pa dang mnyam pa). The Indian thaumaturge or Yogesvara, i.e. mahāśiddha Virupa was famous for his extraordinary ability to control the waters (when crossing the Ganges river), altering or reversing its courses and even cross the waters without sinking as vividly recounted in his biography. See e.g. here Templmann 1983: 15; Dowman 1985: 43f. See also the essay in Linroth ed. 2006. For his role in Gung-thang, see App. IV, below.

However, not only bSod-nams rgya-mtsho received the flattering appellation of being likened to Virupa. Formerly, in the period around 1220 A.D., lHa-nang-pa (1164–1224) had been compared to the Indian grub thob for his water controlling activities in sTod-lung (cf. lHa nang pa'i rnam thar 66–68). The epithet was also used when another stretch of land – ever-vulnerable to flooding – Gong-dkar simultaneously was destroyed by the water that originated from both gTsang-po and sKyd-chu (gong dkar la skyid gtsang 'dres pa'i chu bo'i gnod pa). The influential and learned Thu-ston Kun-dga’ rnam rgyal (1432–96) of Gong-dkar Do-rje-gdan, while being compared to the Indian thaumaturge, is chronicled to have successfully applied appropriate Vajrakilaya rites in which connection a caitya was erected to ward off the destructive damages from flooding. Cf. Kun dga’ rnam rgyal rnam thar 94.
bSod-nams rgya-mtsho issued a decree compelling the monks of Se-ra, 'Bras-spungs and dGa'-ba-gdong (i.e. key dGe-lugs sites along the most vulnerable stretch of sKyid-chu’s northern bank and along sTod-lung-chu) in connection with the sMon lam chen mo to maintain the dikes, i.e. to ensure its permanent solidification (tha sar chu rags rtag mar rgyag pa'i zhal bkod; DL3 72b5–73b5; Shakabpa Guide 23–4) on an annual basis. Here he took advantage of the overwhelming presence of dGe-lugs institutions that had now mushroomed in the area, an advantage that was born from a basic, but convincing strategy: the dGe-lugs had succeeded in their expansive development which involved combining a gradual conversion of numerous religious seats adhering to other denominations into their own camp with appealing offers of patronage and financial support. Again and again throughout in particular the 15th and 16th century, we come across information that details the ascent to various dGe-lugs-pa thrones of scions descending from contemporary ruling houses, such as in Dvags-po, 'Ol-kha and sNye-mo. It must be reiterated: the survival of an institution was hinged upon ample and constant patronage and denominational shifts were common-place.

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28. The Siddha Virūpa. Stopper of the sun and tamer of the waters

29. The Third Dalai Lama: The Tibetan Virūpa and master of the waters

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\[222\] dGa'-ba-gdong located above the estuary or confluence of sTod-lung-chu into sKyid-chu is a particularly delicate site where flooding often raged: So e.g. in 1697, it was precisely here that a statue (see the sa gnad gso thubs scheme below) was erected to ward off natural hazards. The text purports that from then on “fears of the chu khung” or the monstrous and turbulent flood water accordingly was rendered harmless, in this case irrespective to what extent the local farmers had to bear the brunt, since such incidents formerly had forced them to lay their fields fallow. In this part of Tibet, crops without irrigation usually did not grow. In the lHFa-sa valley, the fields most often were situated on terraces only slightly above the river level, supplied by leats from the sKyid-chu river. Cf. Osmaston in Clarke ed. 1998: 130–31.
This step by bSod-nams rgya-mtsho was also regarded as a sign of respect for the Srong-btsan sgam-po site of IHa-sa as much as it constituted a means of ensuring it for all eternity – "the root and branch of all happiness and benefit in Tibet" as it was euphemistically and fatefuly called. It again underpins the spiritual importance behind any designs for the rule in IHa-sa. Yet, his offensive measures certainly also – as it is candidly reported in the 3rd Dalai Lama bSod-nams rgya-mtsho's biography written by the 5th Dalai Lama – were regarded as a means of "overcoming one's enemies and protecting one's relatives." \[222\] This formulation, aside from being an age-old and cherished aphoristic idiom,\[224\] was nothing but a uncompromising political statement and a stance reflecting the long-felt conviction nourished by the dGe-lugs-pa, namely that IHa-sa rightfully had been under their time-honoured (i.e. since bTsong-kha-pa) protection and their exclusive maintenance. Taking this initiative, the 'Bras-spungs hierarch proved to possess political acumen -- wisely counselled no doubt by his uncle Kun-bzang-rtsa-pa. He adroitly entertained close bonds with the sKyid-shod-pa, in particular with the sa skyong bKra-shis rab-brtan (1531–1589; rl. 1568–89) (see Part I, fns. 694–698), the younger brother of Don-grub rgyal-po, who contrary to his elder brother evidently entertained particularly strong dGe-lugs sympathies. His personal bonds to bSod-nams rgya-mtsho appear to have developed from ca. 1572 A.D., after bKra-shis rab-brtan had the command at Brag-dkar. As it transpires, it constituted no contradiction whatsoever that the same ruling house entertained, during roughly the same period, amicable patron-priest relationships with competing or conflicting orders, although in this case it merely appears to reflect distinct preferences and sworn commitments between two sKyid-shod-pa brothers to different orders rather than political calculus. Reading contemporary literature the leading hierarchs of most orders tendered teachings at regular intervals to leading local hegemons almost indiscriminately. It therefore appears that the 'Bri-gung alliance (the close contact appropriately was coined 'Bri sKyid thugs yid gcig 'dres) from the side of the sKyid-shod-pa was strategic, a temporary step entered and reinforced in the 1580's during the 3rd Dalai Lama's absence in Mongolia. The sKyid-shod-pa increasingly sided with the dominant dGe-lugs-pa during the tenure of the able and learned bKra-shis rab-brtan and his son/nephew sde pa g.Yul-rgyal. Yet it should here be reiterated that alliances often were loose or shifted fast, so the army of the same ruling house was to be defeated, latest in a row of battles, in the early 1600's by a combined 'Bri-gung (now the bitter foe of the sKyid-shod-pa after the latter's unmitigated support to the dGe-lugs and the new Dalai Lama) and gTsang troops, although the wind of success was blowing in the opposite direction. For the 'Bri-gung-pa, their loyalty to the future losing party in the lingering conflict meant the loss of many territories of 'Phan-yul and sKyid-shod later on.\[225\]

\[222\] This reflects a basic two-pronged strategy that outwardly involved an offensive reversal/expulsion (phyir bzlog) of enemies and inwardly a defensive protection (srung) of friends.

\[224\] Cf. e.g. Sørensen 1990: 363, 368.

\[225\] See Chos grags rnam thar I 205–06; 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 280. For their loss of dependencies in 'Phan-yul and Mal-gro (starting already from the 1620's, the remaining 'Bri-gung estates were largely destroyed in the decisive 1641 warfare), the 'Bri-gung-pa eventually were compensated with remote areas in Yar-stod.
2.10 Battered Hopes:
Contested Embodiments and New Identities –
The Drama behind the Dalai Lama Succession

The exclusive alliance that was about to be forged between the dGe-lugs-pa administration, headed by the 3rd Dalai Lama and executed by his entourage of dGe-lugs administrators and hierarchs and supported by loyal lay supporters such as the dGa'-ldan sKyid-shod-pa etc., with the Tumed Mongols eventually would pave the way for the ultimate supremacy of dGe-lugs-pa. Yet, the way to this goal would still be long: when in 1588 the freshly-titled 3rd Dalai Lama suddenly passed away, the choice to seek his rebirth among their northern patrons gradually matured: as it turned out, a Mongol option was tempting at this particular point in history. It was among these hospitable and pious, yet perpetually feared patrons that zhabs drung thams cad mkhyen pa bSod-nams rgya-mtsho had spent the past decade and eventually his last years. The predeliction for choosing a non-Tibetan candidate not least had been born out of the vexing conflict firstly with the Karma-pa, but eventually with the 'Bri-gung-pa and their lingering strife in Central Tibet. And the influence of the latter in the battle for influence in Central Tibet must have been far from trifle, even among the Tumed Mongols in the crucial period. Two prospective candidates for the re-embodiment of the deceased 3rd Dalai lama soon were in play:

1. The son (b. 1589) of Sümbür Sechen Cögükür, the Tumed Mongol chief, grandson and scion of the Tumed ruler Altan Qan (1507; rl. 1543–1583).22h His was a formidable choice that would (and indeed should) carry far-reaching consequences for the relationship between the dGe-lugs-pa and their recently converted and military strong Mongol patrons. Yet, his choice would herald the participation and involvement of Mongols (and indeed later Chinese) in inner-Tibetan affairs. The candidate we now know was to be the future Yon-tan rgya-mtsho (1589–1616).

2. The son (b. 1590) of 'Bri-gung Phun-tshogs bkra-shis. A serious candidate, later known as zhabs drung dKon-mchog rin-chen (1590–1654).227 He was the third thugs sras – and in fact – grandson of none else than 'Bri-gung zhabs drung chos rgyal Rin-chen phun-tshogs (1509–1557 A.D.), who – as we have already seen – had seriously and incessantly challenged – both on an ideological as well as on a physical level – dGe-lugs-pa’s pre-eminence in the heartland of Tibet during the past decades and their claim for an all-exclusive and all-executive representation of the prestigious lHa-sa legacy and the Srong-btsan sgam-po cult.

We recall that the eccentric 'Bri-gung master and ascetic Rin-chen phun-tshogs, as detailed above, personally had experienced many humiliations in his life, the most serious among which was the reservations articulated – within the 'Bri-gung fold itself – in around 1513–14, that he was not a genuine sKyur-ra scion, rumours that were wilfully spread by one branch of his family, namely his antagonist from the Phag-mo-rtses line of his uncle.228

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22h The father of the 4th Dalai Lama was the son of Altan Qan’s fourth son Sengge Dürüeng, identified as Sümbür Sechen / Mergen Cögükür tayiji (Tib. Su-mi Se-chen, ~ Mer Chos-khur thu’i ji) and his wife Bigcoy Bikiyi (Tib. Ba-khen shyu la yi / hiyi).

227 He eventually became the prospective 1st 'Bri-gung Che-tshang hierarch, and in due course the 22nd throne-holder of 'Bri-gung. Cf. also Vaidūrya ser po 127.

228 As already discussed above (fn. 190), this conflict had preoccupied and seriously weakened the 'Bri-gung seat. The
infighting had raged in the inner circles for the most part of the 16th cent. – and indeed should have repercussion into the early 1600's: it involved repeated and bitter armed warfare, and the conflict went down in the history as the 'Bri-gung khang thog nang gyes; it culminated in 1583/85 when Phun-tshogs bkra-shis ascended the throne. In nuce, the conflict rested with the dispute over access to the 'Bri-gung main seat between two strong and uncompromising factions:

'Bri-gung Seat
The sKyu-ra Patriline

The Khang-gsar nang so Line of Phag-rtses
[seat at sTag-sna in Thang-skya dist. of Mal-gro gung-dkar]
Its scions were the 15th, 17th, 18th, 19th 'Bri-gung throne-holders
[Periodically supported by]
dGe-lug-pa
Gla-dla 'Or/Hor-pa,
'Chad-kha-pa of Mal-gro

The Thog-kha nang so Line of sPro-lung
[seat at sPro-lung, above Yang-ri-sgar of gZhu-smad in dBur-stod]
Its scions were the 16th, 20th, 21st, 22nd 'Bri-gung throne-holders
[Periodically supported by] Zhva-dmar,
sTag-lung
dGa'-ldan sKyid-shod-pa, rGya-mkhar-pa
mKhar-rtses, Mang-ra, Bya-yul, and Hor-pa (sTeng Hor)
(i.e. Hor rgyal/Thar-pa 'bum and Karma-dpal)

Phun-tshogs bkra-shis (and surely his father) long nurtured a genuine interest in positioning themselves strongly in this conflict between powerful brother-lines and their resp. houses dominated by two wings: from the original patriline of the Thog-kha-pa (the main ruling sKyu-ra line named after the 12th-cent. Thog-kha gSer-khang mansion; and originating with the 5th 'Bri-gung throne-holder's patriline) which had split into the subsequent Phag-mo-rtses (also called the Khang-gsar nang so) branch- or sub-line versus the sPro-lung or Yang-ri-sgar line est. by Chos kyi rgyal-po (father of Rin-ch'en phun-tshogs).

Its pre-history: Out of the common sKyu-ra Thog-kha-pa patriline at 'Bri-gung, and in the aftermath of the ruinous and autocratic rule at 'Bri-gung of their 11-13th throne-holders, the Phag-mo-rtses line was to originate with the 12th 'Bri-gung throne-holder and his descendants, yet merely half a century later, it was on the brink of dying out, prompting the elder brother of the 15th throne-holder, sgom pa or administrator Rin-ch'en ram-mrgyal (the eldest brother to Rin-ch'en phun-tshogs' father) to take over the landed estate of Phag-mo-rtses (i.e. main seat at the rNam-sras-gling pho brang) in order to revitalize the branch. The conflict in the 1520's had also been rooted in the circumstance that member of the militarily strong 'Bri-gung Phag-mo line proved increasingly conciliatory towards the dGe-lugs, following prior skirmishes between the parties. Members of this line successfully occupied the 'Bri-gung throne with the ensuing 17th through the 19th seat-holders. In other words, following Rin-ch'en phun-tshogs who as 16th throne-holder evidently after a few years (1525-34) had ousted from the throne. Due to this usurpation and due to the doubt about his origin sowed by his Phag-mo-line relatives, he seems to be holding a life-long grudge against this brother line. Upon Rin-ch'en phun-tshogs' demise in 1557, the inner 'Bri-gung conflict was soon to flare up again, when in 1570 the 18th throne-holder passed away. Two events were to mark this hapless year at 'Bri-gung. Firstly, the Phag-mo-rtses line succeeded in securing – somewhat irregularly as it may seem – their candidate Phyo-gs-las ram-mrgyal on the throne instead of Rin-ch'en phun-tshogs' son. In the same year (or shortly before), Phun-tshogs bkra-shis – in the wake of being discarded as rightful candidate to the throne or evidently as a strategic move – succeeded in marrying his sister to the powerful mi dbang Kun-dga' rgya-mthsho - ruler of l'Hun-grub rdzong in 'Phan-yul and main seat of the Ga-zis family behind the sTag-lung chiefs – indeed a formidable ally. The son of this union (with both sKyu-ra and Ga-zis blood – and hence Phun-tshogs bkra-shis' future nephew) was to become sTag-lung most illustrious scholar-saint and powerful chief, their 18th throne-holder Ngag-dbang ram-mrgyal (b. 1571). See Fig. 25-27 above.

The conflict now escalated dramatically: As a result of this alliance, the Phag-mo-rtses chiefs saw their local position
The yearning for recognition – arguably hinted at by his own gter ston-like hypertrophy of borrowed or assumed identities – must have played no small role in his family and his influence – having risen to become both a respected and utmost feared opponent to the dominant dGe-lugs position – thus cast long shadows even after his demise, shadows that reached onto the threshold of the Mongolian tents and be widely debated. But why this 'Bri-gung foray into dGe-lugs territory by attempting to claim or to ensure the birth of the highest dGe-lugs-pa hierarch within the 'Bri-gung fold? Well, we have seen the dogged commitment, almost personal obsession that kept driving the 'Bri-gung hierarch during the last decades for the Srong-btsan sgam-po legacy – a heritage that he felt called upon to represent (too), and had this suprising – but risky – foray of theirs been crowned with success, the 'Bri-gung would indeed be holding a very strong hand in the long-fought battle for the heritage issue in lHa-sa. We have reasons to believe that by curryng favour from both the Mongols princes and the leading dGe-lugs administrators, they attempted to change the course of history. The same perspective, but here mingled with fears, must also have guided certain leading dGe-lugs-pa when responding to this unusual situation. True, to the dGe-lugs-pa the prospects were incomparably more comfortable if not unproblematic, having to cope with a certain prominence of candidates – a true embarras de choix. Opting for the 'Bri-gung infant would have taken the wind out of the sails of a major and vexing foe in Tibet (conversely, the same arguments, even stronger, could be advanced by the 'Bri-gung-pa), yet the princely candidate found in Mongolia within the family of a strong newly converted ally and patron – needless to say, remained quite promising, where a remote Mongol-born candidate with undisputed reputation was deemed a tantalizing and irresistible choice.229 The question remains who in the first place had ventured to introduce the 'Bri-gung candidate, and the answer not surprisingly was sought in certain (nationally minded, or just traditionally anti-Mongol?) circles within the dGe-lugs-pa who nourished blatant misgivings as to the prospect – notwithstanding the attractiveness for future patronage and military protection from Mongol side – that the hierarch in the first place was to be found outside Central Tibet – an unprecedented situation, which suggests to us that some circles in the dGe-lugs fold either may have sympathized with or straightforwardly advocated a

229 The 5th Dalai Lama does reflect upon the nature or provenance of the candidate and the circumstance that the Mongol option stemmed from a grand noble house. In his defence, he refers to the candidate within the 'Brug-pa school of the prince of Bya in lHo-kha who was identified as the 3rd 'Brug-chen 'Jam-dbyangs Chos kyi grags-pa (1478–1523). The Fifth Dalai Lama incidentally was to receive a number of gter ma cycles transmitted e.g. through Rin-chen phun-tshogs as detailed in his comprehensive gSan vig.

Incidentally, within the 'Brug-pa school, it was the 10th Rva-lung throne-holder Kun-dga' dpal-'byor (1428–76) who considered himself a manifestation of the 'Brug-pa founder gTsang-pa rgya-ras, and by extension as a manifestation of Avalokitesvara. It not least was also this incarnational link that inspired the 5th Dalai Lama.

230 The involvement from Mongol side would externalize a Central Tibetan conflict, a point to be repeatedly criticized by the dGe-lugs-pa antagonists.
One characteristic trait in the political development during the 15th and 16th centuries clearly rested with the growing political will to seek priority or preference to the system and claims of rebirth (yang srid, punarbhāva) over more traditional hereditary and family-based religious lineages in the transmission of accumulated religious wealth, in other words a new approach to regulate and represent the linear succession of religious thrones and abbatial chairs. The ‘Brug-pa state of Bhutan was in fact established as a last irreversible attempt to revert this new tendency. It not least was the dGe-lugs administrators who extended their influence by consciously attempting to absorb old aristocratic and religious families through the identification of their scions as re-embodiments of high hierarchs.232 The old system, with a few exceptions, until then had been transmitted almost exclusively within local aristocratic families and clans (preferably transmitted through father-son and paternal uncle-nephew lineage successions) in order to retain the secular and religious control over accumulated wealth and ensure ample political influence and patronage. The sku ’phreng re-embodiment lineage succession now became prominently normative, a popular system (not entirely unknown in Tibet, so among the pioneering Karma-pa from the 13th century, but also among the ‘Brug-pa and sTag-lung-pa) that carried some risks to the hitherto family-bound inheritance, since it enabled families or circles behind any new elected candidate access to the accumulated wealth commonly held by the chair, and in most cases considerable wealth was at play. It cannot surprise that when some of the most dominant and prestigious family-based seats in Tibet did introduce the same rebirth system, they often kept the number of candidates restricted, and in most cases the rebirth candidate was exclusively identified within the close family itself around the court of the predecessor. But it was also used to incorporate local religious aristocracy, so e.g. the dGe-lugs successfully absorbed a hereditary line of the Shangs-pa bKa’-brgyud-pa at rTa-nag rDo-rje-gdan in gTsang – to strengthen their position in this particular area – by identifying one of their scion as the rebirth of the 1st Dalai Lama, although at that point this candidate “merely” was addressed as the ‘Bras-spungs chos rje.

In our ongoing discussion of the hegemony of Central Tibet in the 16th century, when perusing contemporary literature, it is evident that the ‘Bri-gung-pa with their skilful policy by now almost resembled a family “dynasty” of sorts – by us tentatively and patronymically labelled the “Phuntshogs” dynasty (hinted at also by the line’s chos rgyal titulation) of ‘Bri-gung on account of the circumstance that all protagonists were sharing the name-element “Phun-tshogs.” The father of the ‘Bri-gung candidate, chos rgyal Phun-tshogs bkra-shis – as much committed to the heritage issue as his father – had gone out of his way to have his son recognized as the rebirth of bSod-nams rgya-mtsho; he had fair reasons to be optimistic, since another of his four sons in 1588 or 1589 suddenly, if not surprisingly, had been recognized as the 6th Zhva-dmar dpal ldan Gar-dbang

231 A number of key sources are still not available that might cast light on the sentiments nourished in leading dGe-lugs circles. Deplorably still absent are the biographies of the 3rd and 4th Dalai Lama by mKhar-nag lo tsā ha and the writings by drung yug ‘Jam-sras and Bya-dar sprul sku ’Phrang-kha-pa (i.e. dpal ldan Blo-gros bzang-po (ca. 1510–1575); cf. dGa’ ldan chos ’byung I 35b2f.

232 See G. Smith, Among Tibetan Texts 123.
Chos kyi dbang-phyug (1584–1630) at Yangs-pa-can, long-term allies of the 'Bri-gung-pa – in the very same year. His sister sMon-lam Phun-lshogs (ca. 1550–1602 A.D.) – also carrying the Phun-tshogs name-element – as we have seen earlier had wedded the powerful Ga-zi \textit{mi dbang in lHun-grub rdzong}, a marriage alliance that ensured overly harmonious relations with sTag-lung.\textsuperscript{233} All in all, they constituted a formidable family alliance which would have propelled it – had the 'Bras-spungs chos rje candidacy also been fruitful – into the role as the decisive polity-makers in Central Tibet. In this scenario, the entire ensuing conflict in Central Tibet and indeed the history of Tibet would have taken another course. We are unfortunately still left in the dark whether behind these intrigues a direct connection prevailed between the rejection of his younger son's candidacy in the dGe-lugs circles and his second eldest son's recognition as the 6\textsuperscript{th} Zhva-dmar.\textsuperscript{234} If the reincarnation issue had been settled or treated independently of one another which seems to be the case, and speculating further – if the candidacy had been successful, it is easy to imagine the central role that Phun-tshogs bkra-shis and the 'Bri-gung administration suddenly would be holding at the prospect that he emerged as father of in total four sons, among which his oldest and youngest sons became future successors on the local 'Bri-gung throne, and his remaining sons simultaneously were recognized as the presiding Zhva-dmar and Dalai Lama hierarchs. The 6\textsuperscript{th} Zhva-dmar, even in opposition to the dGe-lugs-pa, attempted to revenge his rejected younger brother.\textsuperscript{235}

Unprecedented in the history of Tibet, the sKyu-ra family of 'Bri-gung would in that case be holding a number of the most prominent hierarchs – all brothers by blood – in their hands. It would

\textsuperscript{233} In 1609, the prolific \textit{Ngag-dbang mam-rgyal} – to whom we owe most of the important sTag-lung histories – wrote a brief biographic prayer-text dedicated to his grandfather Rin-chen phun-tshogs. His Collected Writings, aside from the volumes that have recently surfaced, are said to have survived and may one day be available. Cf. \textit{sTag lung chos 'byung l1 734}.

\textsuperscript{234} The choice of the son of Phun-tshogs bkra-shis as the new embodiment of the 5\textsuperscript{th} Zhva-dmar dKon-mchog yan-lag (1525–1583 A.D.) may by no means surprise us – strong religious \textit{chos 'brel} bonds had long prevailed between the sPro-lung line within 'Bri-gung represented by Rin-chen phun-tshogs with both the 4\textsuperscript{th} and 5\textsuperscript{th} Zhva-dmar; later the 5\textsuperscript{th} Zhva-dmar considered Phun-tshogs bkra-shis a great \textit{siddha}. It may not surprise then that it was the written admonition of the 5\textsuperscript{th} Zhva-dmar that initiated the search for his rebirth within the sKyu-ra family. Our suspicion is strengthened that a religio-political choice had been made, a choice that proved mutually beneficial.

Both the 4\textsuperscript{th} and the 5\textsuperscript{th} Zhva-dmar hierarchs served as root-teacher to the 'Bri-gung masters. Not insignificantly, carrying the name Gar-dbang (i.e. Gar gyi dbang-po/phyug) \textit{[Chos kyi dbang-phyug]} would also suggest that he was considered a rebirth of Gar gyi dbang-po Zhiq-po gling-pa – the teacher of Phun-tshogs bkra-shis who had passed away the year before (1583). The 6\textsuperscript{th} Zhva-dmar was abbot of gDan-sa-mtshil 1590 until his death.

\textsuperscript{235} Cf. \textit{DL5 IV} (= Ahmad 223–24, 228).
have been a last opportunity from the side of the 'Bri-gung-pa – a belated but genial attempt to settle the on-going warring dispute and indeed the fortune in Central Tibet, and this circumstance – more than anything else – may also account for the sympathy in some dGe-lugs circles, weary of warfare, for the 'Bri-gung candidate? Needless to say, the 'Bri-gung-pa could count on the backing of the “Kings of gTsang” as well as the Karma-pa – at the prospect with peaceful means to turn the battle for Central Tibet in their favour. It is also in this light perhaps that we shall evaluate the origin of the 10th Karma-pa Chos-dbyings rdo-rje (1604–74): He too stemmed from the Kyu-ra line of the 'Bri-gung-pa through his mother Lady Kyu-ra-gza’ A-mtsho. He was strongly supported by the gTsong-rulers, but later forced to seek exile in Yunnan where he disseminated the Karma-pa teachings and successfully established a number of seats. All in all, and with the eyes of hindsight, we shall propose that the foray constituted an ill-veiled “coup-like” attempt from the side of the united 'Bri-gung – Karma-pa front, received with enthusiasm in some but finally with more fear in other corners of the dGe-lugs administration, to settle the conflict and there is also reason to argue that the manoeuvre nearly had been crowned with success.

In dGe-lugs-pa circles, the 'Bri-gung-pa optimism initially was not quite unfounded: The 3rd Dalai Lama was about to manifest himself not only as a scion of Altan Qan in form of Yon-tan rgya-mtsho, but as most 'Bri-gung and dGe-lugs sources would appear to agree, also to manifest himself through an infant from 'Bri-gung. To the 'Bri-gung-pa in particular, they remained sanguine that their candidate indeed was a manifestation of Lokesvara in form of the 3rd Dalai Lama, as enthusiastically endorsed in 'Bri-gung sources, even centuries later. Two uncompromising factions existed within the dGe-lugs administration at this point, each endorsing their candidate. dGe-lugs sources (e.g. DL4 4a2–20a1; DL5 IV [= Ahmad 221]; Vaidurya ser po 127) roundly admit to this too: at the crucial point of searching for the recognition in 1590 or 1591 both infants were being mooted as prospective candidates. The head of the recognition committee, the immensely powerful 'Bras-spungs treasurer (phyag mdzod) guoshi rin po che dPal-ladan rgya-mtsho – a close associate of bSod-nams rgya-mtsho, so his verdict carried a strong, decisive note – went to 'Bri-gung to conduct a proper investigation, the outcome of which however in the end proved less promising, since he in the wake of a facial confrontation with the 'Bri-gung infant entertained some misgivings whether the 'Bri-gung candidate had recognized him properly, or whether he was a suitable re-embodiment at all.236 At this point, the matter was left undecided. The gNas-chung-lcog oracle, backed by the prediction issuing from chos skyong medium Tshangs-pa Dung-thor, however, in their prophecies

236 The 'Bri-gung candidate – all sources agree – had during the examination correctly addressed dPal-ladan rgya-mtsho by his alternative name Seng-ge, but the latter rejoined – politically motivated? – by stating that the former hierarchy (i.e. bSod-nams rgya-mtsho) never used this name in their communication. However, dGe-lugs sources seem to confirm that indeed this was an alternative name of the Major Domo (Se ra chos 'byung 135). Still, it reveals special knowledge on the side of the 'Bri-gung-pa. Despite being a failure, whetting the appetite for the establishment of an incarnate system at 'Bri-gung, the rejection of their candidate led – by way of compensation – to the decision of similarly introducing at 'Bri-gung a incarnate system, and he eventually emerged as the 1st Che-tshang incarnation (“older brother”) and his “younger brother” Chos kyi grags-pa (1595–1659) as the prospective 1st Chung-tshang incarnation. It was a period when in Tibet the number of incarnations inflated dramatically, replacing the former family-bound yah sras/pha bu or khu dbon as model for abbatial ascent and succession.

Curiously enough, both behind the patriline of the 3rd Dalai Lama (on his father’s side, former rulers of rGya-ma khri-khang) and behind the 'Bri-gung candidate with his mother’s equally rGya-ma khi-khang aristocratic background, it would appear that both could claim genuine links to the Srong-btsan sgam-po legacy in the old Mal-gro territory. When the 4th Dalai Lama arrived in Tibet 1603, he was still addressed 'Bras-spungs sprul sku. Cf. stTag lung chos 'byung 1577.
opted for the Mongol-born candidate. A letter from gsol dpun Tshul-khrims rgya-mtsho and nang so mDzo-mo mkhar-pa who at this point camped among the Mongols delivered decisive details about the infant from Köke Kota (mkhar sngon) who had proved utmost promising, a rapport which eventually dashed the hopes of the 'Bri-gung chiefs and their supports in the dGe-lugs camp. To be on the safe side, the prospects that bSod-nams rgya-mtsho actually had assumed more than one body were argued by pointing to the plausibility of the simultaneous occurrence of more than one manifestation (dus gcig la du mar sprul pa) and by conveniently referring to the reassuring circumstance that Buddhhas of the three times here were working for the sake of living beings (cf. 'Bri gung gdan rabs III 240–41). On the other hand, although repeatedly targeting Rin-chen phun-tsogs as an antagonist, the occasionally polemic biography also recognizes the religious role he (incl. his scions Phun-tsogs bkra-shis and bKra-shis phun-tsogs) played in providing teachings for and becoming root teachers to some of the 5th Dalai Lama family members (cf. DL5 I 18b1f.).

Notwithstanding the choice of the Mongol candidate, the situation in Central Tibet remained dramatic and politically unsettled. The 4th Dalai Lama – who spent the first 12 years of his life in his remote homeland – finally arrived – long awaited – in Tibet in 1603 A.D. Prior to his formal welcome reception in lhHa-sa (at dGa'-ldan khang-gsar, the mansion of 'Bras-spungs' strongest lay supporters, the sKyid-shod-pa), en route he met a number of leading dignitaries, hierarchs and his most loyal patrons in Central Tibet – all essential for his own political survival – foremost among them, as said, sKyid-shod sde-pa sa skyyong g.Yul-rgyal, the powerful and learned ruler and the most ardent supporter of the dGe-lugs-pa in this crucial phase (see e.g. dGa' ldan chos 'byung I 36b6f.). The conflict that raged in Central Tibet had steadily been built up, the 'Bri-gung-pa, after their “defeat” in providing the 4th Dalai Lama candidate, had mustered their troops and were assisted by the gTsang forces along with conscripts from Zho-dkar and -nag (i.e. the Zho-rong district of 'Bri-gung gTsang-po) and by that of the Phag-mo-gru-pa. By joint efforts, they defeated the sKyid-shod-pa army in 1605 in a battle fought in 'Phan-yul and eliminated many of the latter’s troops (cf. DL4 41a3f.). Shortly after, in 1607, the influential sKyid-shod sde pa g.Yul-rgyal passed away. The latter’s estates in La-mo district (of gYga-ma in Mal-gro) at that point were looted and some dGe-lugs monasteries and sKyid-shod estates, especially in the 'Bri-gung area, were either destroyed or confiscated. Most dramatically, in the wake of the father’s demise and the ensuing estate confiscation, the two sons of g.Yul-rgyal, viz. Yid-bzhin nor-bu (fatefully named *Cintāmanī; b. 1589–after 1647) and his brother mGon-po rab-brtan were taken hostage (bu gte),238 as a human

235 sKyid shod chos rje rnam thar 185 purports that in the wake of g.Yul-rgyal’s demise, a large army dispatched from the old foes of ‘Bri-gung and Phag-gru made their arrival, taking advantage of sKyid-shod-pa’s temporary weakened position. The relationship between the Phag-gru sde srid as former rulers of Central Tibet and the dGe-lugs institution, which from the time of bTsong-ka-pa had been harmonious, turned to the worse after the demise of the 13th Phag-gru sde srid in 1604. The young 4th Dalai Lama that year attended his funeral rites in sNe’u-gdong; cf. DL4 32b5–33a2.

236 The term bu gte or “son hostage” suggests the Chinese zhi zi, i.e. “hostage son” or just zhi ren, “hostage.” Hostage taking or human pawns was a common military stratagem (almost a ritual act) and, as it turned out, an effective means of warfare in Central Tibet at least from the 13th century (indeed a tradition gaining momentum from the time of the Mongols),* but with old roots. The brother of the “sKyid-shod-pa family pawn” or “hostages,” the sKyid-shod chos rje bStTan‘-dzin blo-bzang, while visiting the 1st Pan-chen bla-ma in bKra-shis lhun-po in gZhis-ka-rtses, was allowed to see his brothers as well as his mother who were kept in custody at bSam-grub-rtses early in 1617. The gTsang rulers even accepted that for a period of eight months the latter served as hostage stand-in (dod) for his brother Yid-bzhin, and during this phase of confinement, it is reported that he meditated exclusively on Aksobhya; cf. sKyid shod chos rje rnam thar 195; Pan chen chos rgyal rnam thar 100–01.
shield by the gTsang rulers as bargain in the ensuing war negotiation and hence were destined to be kept in custody for the next 15 years in gTsang. It thus was a period marked by a considerably weakened dGe-lugs-pa, now bereft of the strong backing from the sKyid-shod-pa supporters, and their humiliation culminated with the erection in lHa-sa on Mt. Po-ta-la of a pho brang residence raised by the gTsang-rulers jointly with their ally, the Yar-rgyab sde pa in 1608.239 Ironically, it was the sKyu-ra family-born 6th Zhwa-dmar-pa who that year was invited to lHa-sa to inaugurate the site on the mythic hill in the heart of lHa-sa. A few years later, during the hostilities that have gone down in history as the so-called “Rat-Ox Year Warfare” (byi glang sde gzar) of 1612–13 A.D. – one of the last successful attempts from the united gTsang forces and their strong hierarch supporters of ’Bri-gung and Karma-pa to eliminate their opponents and become sovereign rulers of Central Tibet – their forces now were headed by the 3rd gTsang sde srid Karma bsTan-srung dbang-po and Karma Phun-tshogs mam-rgyal. They took full control of ’Phan-po (i.e. the old sKyid-shod-pa heartland) followed by the seizure of the estate of sNe’u rdzong at the threshold to lHa-sa, resembling thereby the foray made over a century before by Ring-spungs-pa Don-yod Don-rje into the same district. They raided lHa-sa city and the nearby large colleges of Se-ra and ’Bras-spungs.

1618 saw new skirmishes built up with a dangerous escalation of the conflict: the ever-shadowy 4th Dalai Lama had shortly before – quite untimely and partly under mysterious circumstances – passed away (on 15th day of the 12th lunar month of 1616) – arguably meeting an unnatural death, and probably the outcome of anti-Mongol sentiments that ruled the day in certain circles; it had been the culmination of an utmost strained and contentious relationship with the rulers of gTsang.240 Adding contempt to the ills, the gTsang rulers, successful on the battle-field and sanguine about an early triumph over their foes in dBus, eventually soon withheld their recognition of the new incarnation, thereby creating an increasingly intolerable situation. The conflict between dBus and gTsang, and the quest for supremacy in Tibet had reached its intolerable climax. The prolonged warfare that now reigned has gone down in the relevant literature as the “Earth-Horse Year Warfare” (sa rta’i sde gzar). The same year, through the mediation of the sKyid-shod-pa and the able and crafty ’Bras-spungs nang so bSod-nams rab-brtan, the dGe-lugs again would seek help from their old allies to the North-east, and before long Mongol troops headed among others by Sechen Da’i-ching (Sechen Dayi’ching) of the Tümed, Khun-du-le Chos-khur (i.e. Sümbûr Sechen Cöögûr/Cûggûr of the Qalqa)...

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* Human pawn or hostage-taking as strategy for anticipating or ensuring loyalty from a vassal ruler (or indeed a priori to provoke his submission) was a standard practise from the time of the pre-Christian-era Han dynasty as already recorded in the Chinese Classics (e.g. Zuo Zhan; see e.g. Legge. The Chinese Classics 5.17): Eventually, it covered both so-called “exchanged hostages” a status quo hostage-taking to ensure friendly relations or, more commonly, so-called “unilateral hostages” to guarantee allegiance and loyalty. See e.g. Yang 1952.

The Mongols too (so The Secret History of the Mongols § 253) had long acquainted themselves with this practise, usually by demanding the presence of a vassal’s son(s) or brother(s) as pawn at court (often called day-guard; M. turay) – this policy was codified by them in the 1230’s as part of their state agenda. Qubilai Qan (see YS 209) required the vassal rulers personally to seek audience at court or stipulated vassal princes to be sent to court as hostages. This practise no doubt also extended to the compulsory presence and the prolonged stay at court of religious leaders and teachers such as that of Phags-pa Bla-ma. Cf. e.g. T.T. Ailsen 1987: 73–76.

The topic in a Tibetan context requires further research, but sources such as Rlangs are quite instructive in unravelling how such hostage taking works as part of a comprehensive set of ritual acts of deditio. 239 Dung-dkar. Tshig mdzod chen mo 2329. The source for this information is unclear.

240 The Tümed hierarch lha bsun chung pa also fell ill – arguably a victim of poisoning? too, and had to convalesce for over a month at Rva-sgrem; cf. Pan chen chos rgyal rnam thar 101–02. He seized the opportunity to conduct a renovation of Rva-sgrem; cf. dGa’ idan chos ’byung I 54a6, 97a4–5. In 1624, Pan-chen and the sog po lha bsun met here to enter a mchod yon relationship in Rva-sgrem.
along with the two influential ruling monk-hierarchs in Mongolia, i.e. Lha-btsun che-chung (or rgan-gzhon), i.e. lha btsun hgres po bsTan-skyong Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (d. 1631) and the younger lha btsun chung pa Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin rgya-mtsho, both of noble Tumed (i.e. Qutu'ytai; thu med rgyal rgyud) blood and both pupils of the 1st Pan-chen bla ma. They should join hands with the Tibetan lay armies of the sde pa sKyid-shod-pa headed by bSod-nams mam-rgyal (the elder brother of the hostages that were held in custody as pawn in GTsang, a circumstance forcing the sKyid-shod-pa to be precautionary) and assisted by his younger brother, the sKyid-shod zhabs drung bsTan-'dzin blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (evidently with the backing of his guru, the concerned Pan-chen bla ma -- who himself commanded tremendous popularity in Mongolia). The fascinating history how the Mongols finally were inveigled into dispatching troops that eventually turned the luck in favour of the joint pro--dGe-lugs faction is intimately connected to the story of the temporary transfer of the statue of the 'Phags-pa Lokesvara to Mongolia,241 considered the national icon of Tibet, addressed in such praiseful terms as Bod kha ba can kyi lha skal or “the fated or hereditary icon par excellence of Tibet” and commonly designated the thugs dam gyi rten or the “innermost tutelary image of spiritual commitment” of Srong-btsan sgam-po.

One of the last Karma-pa to challenge the slow but irreversible ascent of the dGe-lugs-pa was the 9th Karma-pa dBang-phuy rdo-rje (1556-1602/03) -- his personal names Nam-mkha' rgyal-po and dKon-mchog-'bangs incidentally indicated his challenging stance in representing the Avalokiteśvara cult and its legacy -- and the means chosen resembled that of his predecessor, the 7th Karma-pa almost a century earlier. Also this time the attack was ideological rather than physical and consisted in the rendition of a Tārā prophecy that apparently targeted the old Atiśa seat in sNye-thang. The prophecy -- like the Maitreya prophecy referred to by the 7th Karma-pa almost a century earlier -- attempted to bespeak that the fecundity of the sNye-thang area and its closest surroundings were seriously endangered. The full implication behind the allusion still remains unknown, but it clearly aimed at undermining the authority of the dGe-lugs institutions and their overwhelming or dominant presence in the area. Whatever its deeper impact, it prompted the dGe-lugs-pa to erect a special storehouse chapel (ze'u [= ze'u 'bru or ke'u tshang?] lha khang) in the area in order to ensure that the prosperity of the area enhanced (yul khams la phan; cf. DL5 II 274b4-275a1).

With the examples quoted here, we doubtless have only covered a fraction of the episodes characterized not least by the exchange of libel-like prophecies, almost invariably anonymous and containing a message that aimed at harming or politically ridiculing any opponent, in the first place by way of undermining and eventually render invalid or illegal the rights and prerogatives held or enjoyed by the latter.

The list of flooding episodes in lHa-sa and the list of protagonists involved in the coming period in fact could easily be made much longer since sK'yiid-chu -- opulent sKyiid-chu, dreadful sKyiid-chu, like so many other rivers in Tibet -- overflowed almost every year. Or, conversely, a list comprising the far too numerous episodes of dreaded drought that parched entire districts could be made.242

241 It was in fact a spectacular case of “sacred theft” (furta sacra). Cf. P.K. Sørensen 2007a.
242 At least from the period of the dGa'-ldan pho-brang regime, propitiatory and supplicative rituals against flood and drought were regularly conducted at the three lakes in lHa-sa: Klu-sbug, lHa-sa [sic], and gSang-yib mtschas* of Dog-sde dist. as well as at the many chu mig wells in the area in order to ensure -- during prolonged bouts of droughts -- that water was readily available; so e.g. in 1674, when a severe dry period visited lHa-sa; cf. DL5 II 248b4-5.
During the rule of the 5th Dalai Lama, the systematic protection of the IHa-sa area assumed more concrete and sustainable forms. For instance in 1677, a permanent institution was set up to ensure the prosperity of the Tibetan population (bod 'bangs shis thabs) - here an euphemism for the protection of IHa-sa as we shall see - consisting of twenty-five officiating mantrika who for this very purpose were to take up seat at Yer-pa. Beginning on the 10th day of the 7th lunar month (i.e. during monsoon), they conducted water-abating rituals along the southern and northern shore-line of sKyid-chu that covered the most vulnerable stretch between Rag and Ge-re.241

The water-reductive incidents worth quoting on that score are therefore legion, but here we shall finally moot a last telling remark: After the appropriation of power by the dGe-lugs in the 17th century and notably following the reign of the 7th Dalai Lama, the consolidation and not least the protective measures now gradually transcended sectarian diffidence and discord, surely because by now the dGe-lugs-led dGa'-ldan pho-brang government since long had a firm grip on power and could allow themselves to be liberal. A flooding episode in 1725 also resulted in the accusation that the Capuchin missionaries were responsible.244 And when the monster of flooding was on the rise, the question of emergency always played a vital role. It prompted recourse to requesting help from whoever proved capable of providing it. So for instance we have reports how on one occasion, in the year 1786 during the reign of the 8th Dalai Lama 'Jam-dpal rgya-mtsho, still another serious flood hit IHa-sa. This time too, it entailed that coracles were needed to cross the central Bar-skor square in the heart of IHa-sa and the narrow circumambulation circuit around the temple (called Byang-chub byon-lam or Byang-chub rgyu-lam) in fact only could be reached and passed in a coracle. This appears to be no exaggeration since we know from numerous sources that the entire IHa-sa area was regularly flooded.245 The lower part of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang temple was reportedly submerged in water – with its submersion on the verge of becoming part of the subterranean realm of the nāga (klu yul) wherefrom it once was born – including the throne of the main-icon Jo-bo Rin-po-che, regarded and lauded as the ston pa'i zhal skynin or the representative of the historic Teacher Buddha Śākyamuni. None of the bla ma or gods of Tibet apparently were able to avert the flood, so at least the Karmapa biographies maintain. As last-ditch effort and measure, so it is recounted, the gNas-chung oracle was consulted (as in most cases of state emergency and natural disasters). According to its sibylline prediction and its prophetic message obtained from inquiring and consulting a prophecy-cycle known as sPyi lung 'Od kyi dra ba can or Universal Prophecies: Mesh of Light,250

* Aside from a thermal bath (Part I, fn. 421), gSang-yib also accommodated a small smallpox hospital, so according to the Smallpox edict of 1794; cf. H. Richardson 1961. 
243 DLS III 38a1–2: rāg yan ge re man gvi skyid chu iho byang gi sngags pa nyi shu rtsa lngas yer par lo ltar sprel zla'i tshes bcu chag med rgyun bzhugs. 
244 Cf. I. Engelhardt 2005. 
245 The story is only conveyed in partisan Karmapa histories and may at first glance possibly be taken cum grano salis. Cf. mtShur phu dgon kyi dkar chag 30–31, 572–74, 579–81; Karma pa bDud 'dul rdo rje'i rnam thar Sā1–4 [= 9.1–4]; Douglas and White 96. 
250 But Tāranātha – and surely many other visitors to IHa-sa – confirms a similar episode in 1583/5, where the entire core part of IHa-sa had succumbed to water. 
250 The Prophecy-collection either should be identified as the Lung bstan 'od dra commonly known in dGe-lugs circles for being notoriously pro-bKa'-bgvyud-pa or anti-dGe-lugs-pa; cf. DLS1 259b4–260b3; DLS II 2b4–5. The latter stemmed from the gter chos (commonly labelled “deceitful teaching” or zog chos by the 5th Dalai Lama) of an earlier namesake, the sPo-bo gter ston 'Dud-'dul rdo-rje (1615–1672 A.D.) of Kañ-thog, who entertained close ties e.g. to the 10th Karma-pa Chos-dbyings rdo-rje.
the government, so it is detailed in Karma-pa sources, felt compelled to invite the 13th Karma-pa bDud-'dul rdo-rje (1733/4–1797/8 A.D.) to conduct water-averting rituals, following here in the trail of the 11th Zhva-dmar-pa Gar-dbang rgya-tsho who reportedly earlier had conducted similar activities. The former at that point sojourned in Sha-brag monastery in the remote gNam-ru rdzong of Byang district, north of lHa-sa. The Karma-pa hierarch – to whom extraordinary and unusual faculties were ascribed247 – initially proved unable to come to lHa-sa due to the impassable roads hither, wherefore he provisionally forwarded a sealed letter addressed to the holy image in lHa-sa. Prior to his arrival, in a vision the 8th Dalai Lama is said to have beheld how the Four-armed sPyan-ras-gzigs ‘Gro-'dul – in his form of converting (or safeguarding) the sentient beings – would arrive riding on a horse along the road leading to Zhol rDo-ring. Finally, the Karma-pa hierarch met with the 8th Dalai Lama in the Potala. In front of the statue of ‘Phags-pa Vati,248 to whom he presented a scarf and offered his prayers, he experienced how the statue changed its mudrā-gesture – into that of bestowing protection (abhayamudrā, skyabs sbyin). Accepting the scarf, it suddenly spoke approvingly to the Karma-pa hierarch, an incident that for the latter evidently served as a sign of the conferral of authority and approval. As a result, the water around the submerged golden throne of the Jo-bo Statue in Jo-khang began to recede. As a token of their boundless gratitude for this true miracle, the 8th Dalai Lama on behalf of the government donated the sNa-mkhar monastic estate of bSam-grub mThong-smon249 to the Karma-pa hierarch, a donation that served as an endowment fund and source of income for the mTshur-phu mother seat.

A century later – here recorded in order to provide yet another telling example of the sheer endless flow of deluge and flooding that kept on visiting lHa-sa: when the search committee for the identification of the re-birth of the 12th Dalai Lama in 1876 set out from lHa-sa bound for Glang-mdun of Dvags-po district, they were seriously impeded from making headway since rain had been pouring down for a long time and sKyid-chu’s current instantly had stepped way beyond its normal boundaries, gushing forth with great speed, halting and inhibiting any progress; adding to the ills, at Klong-la Pass snow blizzard prevented further progress, with snow blinding most members of the traveling party. Cutting a path through the heaps of snow, by leaving pack animals and loads behind and guided by their protective guardians, the key members falteringly made some headway (DL13 20). On the return, when the 13th Dalai Lama finally approached lHa-sa, he received the official naming-ceremony in Gung-thang gtseg lag khang in the first month of 1878, whereupon

However, it seems unlikely that the dGa’-ldan pho-brang officials should have consulted this cycle, if at all – recalling that it is merely quoted in full in Karma-pa sources – in order to invite the Karma-pa hierarch; more likely therefore is the possibility that it stemmed from a similar-named but later collection (and at least overly non- polemic) known as ‘Phags pa spyan ras gzigs bcu gcig zhal gyi sgrub thabs brsung bar gnas pa dang ’hrel ba’i cho ga gZhan phan ’od kyi dra ha written by ’Gyur-med Tshe-dbang mchog-grub (1761–1829 A.D.) who actually met the 8th Dalai Lama in lHa-sa too.

247 Regarded as a gter ston himself, he is said to have mastered the language of animals too; cf. Richardson 1998: 355.

248 The original site of this statue in Tibet was sKyid-grong in the gTsang province. Sometime before the 17th century, it had been transferred to lHa-sa by the dGe-lugs-pa (clearly out of fear, similar to the fate of the Aryan Lokeshvara statue lest it fell into the hands of antagonists) and was set up in the Potala Palace alongside with the statue of its ‘brother’ Aryan Lokeshvara; it remained there until it was transferred back to sKyid-gron and in its stead a replica was set up in Potala. Cf. also the visit in the mid-1650’s by A-myes-zhabs; cf. A myes zhabs rnam thar 98.1-3 and in particular Ehrhard 2004 for the background.

249 Formerly (during the dGa’-ldan gzhung period), it was part of the lower (smad) brGya-tsho, of the Tshal-bdc estate district in sTod-lung: today located in sNa-mkhar/dkar xiang in sTod-lung bDe-chchen county (xian) (29°44’N 90°40’E; cf. Xizang Dimingchi 197b); cf. also lCags stag zhib gzhung 186; mTshur phu dkar chag 579–80; HSLG Vol. 3: 114.
the infant Hierarch would cover the last leg of his journey being paddled and roped to the northern bank in a skin-boat when crossing the torrential current of sKyid-chu (ibid. 37).

Summing up, it thus were imperative issues related to natural disasters and its appropriate ritual and practical overcoming, combined with the ideological focus and the cultic representation – the true bone of contention – behind the heritage and legacy issue of the holy site that constituted the guiding motives – the primum movens – that governed the prolonged dispute for winning hegemony over lHa-sa in pre-Dalai Lama Tibet. Without an appreciation of these issues, the subsequent political and ideological reconstruction that led to the first proper post-imperial nation-building in Tibet initiated under the reign of the 5th Dalai Lama cannot be adequately understood. The prevailing hegemonic conflict over the physical and ideological control of the site had, as we have already seen, considerable ideological presuppositions and political implications. From the very outset it had been principally rooted in the basic issues and strategies related to questions such as the symbolic ideology, the legitimacy of representation and the executive rights in upholding it not least in handling the vital environmental issues and in interpreting and staging territorial concepts rather than merely referring to profane exigencies and objectives. As can be gathered from the conflict delineated above, the question of legitimacy was in the first place therefore less linked to any delicate issue concerning the claim for primacy in terms of representation, rather the conflict assumed the form of articulating accusations or framing charges (themselves anonymously garbed in the format of incontestable prophecies) against the ways and means of upholding the hereditary rights namely by targeting mismanagement or any improper or unworthy handling of the legacy and of the spiritual heritage itself, simply by attempting to undermine the authority of the opponent. Levelling such accusations against any prospective candidate who ventured to uphold the heritage or parts of it were neither infeasible politically not strategically dangerous, in fact it was a wholly legitimate strategy in the dispute but, as it turned out, also the only feasible approach short of military conflict. These issues remained fundamental determinants of legitimacy and prestige and it was upon this spiritual and divine fundament that the subsequent Dalai Lama institution rested and seek much of its justification. More important than the physical control of an area thus often was the winning and appropriation of a spiritual-genealogical legitimacy that would underpin and justify – in the eyes of others – their claim or long-held prerogatives.

It is not without irony that it not least was the ritual charter associated with Guru Rinpoche as detailed above – questions centered around how to ensure the perpetuation of the lHa-sa site, its mythic background and the underlying “testamentary” literature (of Srong-btsan sgam-po) providing the rationale behind the myth – which would become decisive issues behind the state formation and nation building in the 17th century. These issues were integrated into the ritual calendar and national charter invented and elaborated by the 5th Dalai Lama and his successive masterminds in this national project, namely sde srid bSod-nams rab-brtan and Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. It reflected their joint attempts at implementing a political master-plan and a grand ideological scheme for nation-building that not least stressed the close national and ideological ties to the civilizational beginnings of Tibet, to the old Tibetan empire and, inevitably, to the pioneering role of Guru Rinpoche. The formative role of the latter in introducing and safeguarding the Buddhist religion accounts for a good part of the worship and devotion accorded to his figure in leading dGe-lugs circles and the central role

250 The majority of essays in the recent publication in Pommaret (ed.) 2003 – largely a calque of Pommaret 1997 – dealing with lHa-sa’s history is surprisingly silent on these key issues. However without addressing these topics, the history of lHa-sa area cannot be properly understood.
occupied by Pehar as national protector and the gNas-chung site held by the latter in protecting the state that was called into life by the above dGe-lugs statesmen. The national heritage perceived accordingly to some extent also accounts for the pronounced prediliction, aside from any personal interest, behind the 5th Dalai Lama’s overly broad and non-partisan dGe-lugs curricula and his open inclusivist or eclectic approach to other school’s esoteric teachings not least related to or derived from Guru Rinpoche and as well as rNying-ma-pa teachings and cycles, a stance which triggered considerable tension with leading dGe-lugs hierarchs within the broader dGe-lugs establishment, who altogether advocated a more partisan and restrictive purist dGe-lugs approach, a tension and conflict that has not found an end and that has been broaching into most recent times. This did not mean that the 5th Dalai Lama occasionally was not at odds with rNying-ma-pa masters who ventured to claim to be exclusive and authoritative upholders of specific Guru Rinpoche teachings, especially when these were combined with too obvious political ambitions.

3. WELFARE AND PROSPERITY PROGRAMME FOR TIBET: State Rituals (sku rim) Staged for Nation and People

The history of the take-over and subsequent state formation in Central Tibet by the 5th Dalai Lama headed by his chief administrator and later first regent bSod-nams chos-'phel (alias bSod-nams rab-brtan) in the mid-17th century and implemented under the patronage and military support of the QoSot rulers is now commonly known and shall not be addressed here. The solidification of their power had been initiated in the wake of the final battle in the early 1640’s, where any future opposition was nullified through not least the confiscation of all property and wealth of the gTsang nobles and their affluent hierarchs. In a number of ways the ascendancy of the dGe-lugs school and the new dGa’-ldan pho-brang gzhung heralded the dawn of a new era in a number of areas: politically as much as in the field of scholasticism but particularly through a reformation of ritualism. The formerly scattered and battered country now enjoyed an entirely new administrative and governmental structure that changed the country for ever. It is outside the scope of the present essay to trace the complex foundation behind the ideological and cultic structure of the Dalai Lama institution, but the same presuppositions wielded a strong impact on the founding agenda of the state formation. The constitutive or prescriptive charter alone behind the subsequent establishment of the government (gzhung) – often also simply addressed as the “Precious Government” (gzhung sa rin po che) to underline the sacred origin and nature of the rule – carried obvious nationalistic overtones and to an appreciable extent should forcefully emulate bygone attempts at inchoate state-building and statecraft in Tibet’s chequered past. Underpinning the independent and autonomous character of the coming state formation, it largely was a revival attempt that highlighted the glorious past of Tibet during the dynastic time and the independent-minded attempt by the Phagmo-gru-pa in the 14th century that also explains why dGe-lugs sources persistently emphasized that the hegemony of the Phag-gru and the ensuing dGe-lugs rule indeed was to be conceived of as being identical in nature (srog gcig). The continuation was important for the dGe-lugs chiefs to legitimise their new identity. The new dGe-lugs-based government was deemed to constitute a natural political and ideological continuity of the Zhang hegemony established in the 1Ha-sa area

251 Cf. the illustrative discussion in G. Dreyfuss 1998.
in the 13th century as well as of the subsequent Phag-gru hegemony a century later. Confronted with the unusual and formidable task of creating a nation and government, the focus soon centered around issues of providing means and ways of safeguarding or protecting the country which in this context meant its underlying fundament, the Buddhist religion.

Large-scale ceremonies for peace and for material as well as spiritual prosperity are well documented from many Buddhist countries, initially from ancient Buddhist India, but as such also from more recent examples such as the paritta ceremonies of Sri Lanka or from Thailand to this very day. The paritta ceremonies consist of lengthy recitation either of extracts from the Buddhist Canon, or of apotropaic, prophylactic, protective and benedictory incantations made in public. Its objectives were – and still are – to ward off dangers of various sorts and to ensure the protection of living beings, the country and nation as well as to bless the patrons. Albeit in no way so diverse as the latter, in Tibet too such public or national rituals had long prevailed in the past, and often were conducted on a common basis. During the state formation in the 17th century, these scattered or former disorganized ceremonies for the welfare of the nation and the religion received renewed attention. These may neither be considered “welfare” nor do they constitute “programs” strictu sensu, but rather reflected a set of unified ritual, recitative or pre-emptive measures taken by central institutions and supported by many hierarchs and individuals staged in order to bring about an idealized state of “happiness” or “betterment” for the country, materially as much as spiritually. This topic is both fascinating and complex and shall only be briefly broached here.

31. Bod kham sde thabs rite conducted in the dKyi-l Phyag-brugs sdings courtyard or Inner Hall of Jo-khang presided over by the Dalai Lama

Photo: Detail from Thangka

Among the many descriptions or many scenes of mishaps and portents foretold in prophetic *gter ma* writings—containing omens of a social, natural, religious or political order—that visit Tibet and its populations in degenerate times or in times of war or of impending hazards, the overall question of the absence of happiness and prosperity in Tibet—and in particular the reverse scenario: the ideal presence of happiness played a prominent role. In fact, providing answers and solutions, whether long-term or pre-emptive, to these questions constituted the rationale and motive behind much of the prophetic writings of this genre (cf. e.g. Childs 1999). We can retrace many of these topics and issues related to national prosperity (*bde skyid*) in the writings and prophecies related to *gTer-ston bZang-po* grags-pa and to rGod-ladem (1337–1409 A.D.) and their prophetic and religious service to underpin and legitimate the Mang-yul Gung-thang royal house.

Such portraits and inquiries were on the agenda as detailed in *gter ma* writings and were permanently raised in the writings and foretellings of almost any *gter ston* down through history, right from the oldest of the sort such as those contained in the 12th-century *Ma ni bka’ bum.* Recalling that *IHa-sa* euphemistically was coined the “root and branches of benefit and happiness in Tibet,” it cannot surprise that these protective endeavours in the long run became part and parcel of regularly staged, institutionalized “welfare rites or welfare projects for Tibet and the Tibetan populace” later also comprising “rites for the state and religion” (*bod ’bangs bde thabs rim gro, bod khams bde thabs, bod ’bangs bde thabs, bstan srid spyi rim*). It was in this vein that means and ways of suppressing “border armies that intended to rob the happiness of Tibet” (*bod kyi bde skyid ‘phrog pa’i mtha’ dmag gnon lugs*) perpetually were invented and executed. It is here noteworthy to remark that “happiness” and “prosperity” often was phrased or defined in an inordinately defensive way or by negative terms, i.e. that happiness prevailed with the absence of its antithesis, i.e. sorrow, war, hunger, deluge, sickness, plague and famine, etc.

We understand with little difficulty that this sort of concept of overall happiness, prosperity or felicity in Tibet too found its earliest mentioning, perhaps even had its origin in the early post-dynastic narratives on the perpetuation and fate of Buddhism, formulated and conceptually linked up with the pre-emptive and provident concealment of treasuries in former imperial times as described in the *gter ma* sources related to the origin and survival of the first temples in Tibet (cf. e.g. *rGyal rabs gsal* Chap. XVI; TBH Sørensen 307–11).

Soon after the appropriation of power in *IHa-sa* in the mid-17th century, the dGe-lugs-pa, once their governmental administration had been fully established and properly consolidated, were compelled to provide ample revenue and funds for the preservation of the Jo-khang. Reports are available how, over the ensuing years, the different governmental agencies and resources such as the rTse-shod phyag-mdzod and the municipal *IHa-sa* gNyer-tshang, but also the different districts (*rdzong khag*)

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253 Such expressions and wishes found expression in numerous rituals and prophecies and it had a general character and meaning. More specifically, Thang-stong rgyal-po (*rnam thar* 99.18, 102.2) and mChog-ldan (*rnam thar* 403.2–404.1; 418.3) to mention a few, refer to a list of potential mishaps that could befall Tibet.

254 In most 14–15th-cent. rNyin-ma master biographies such as that of rDo-rje gling-pa, Padma gling-pa, his thugs sras Zla-ba rgyal-mtshan and of mChog-Ildan mgon-po, etc. such activities were incessantly implemented or endorsed, so also in the biography of Rin-chen phun-tshogs — during his flood protection measure in *IHa-sa* in 1546, the argumentative phrase *bod khams bde thabs* for his endeavour is also used.

255 Expressions like *dus ma bde pa* connote much the same as English “unrest” or “war.”
in the country levied special taxes or established special endowment funds to meet the expenses of maintaining the Jo-khang national sanctuary and to fund the grand annual sMon lam festival.

Among the numerous steps initiated by the new rule in Tibet was the implementation of annual state programs within the frame-work of a ritual state calendar (cf. H. Richardson, 1993). In nuce, it involved wholesale offerings in numerous selected monasteries throughout Tibet. The appropriate offerings and sacrifices orchestrated in such imperial temples and sanctuaries, as said, indeed became part and parcel of an overall annual state-based ritual program of offerings and supplications instituted by the government and propped by hierarchs and saints and conducted for the general well-being as well as the longevity of the Tibetan nation and people (bod 'bangs bde thabs rim grol). It incorporated extensive specific offerings, often lasting over more days, not only at the three key dharmacakra temples, but at all twelve (or more) prestigious “supine suppressing monasteries” (ru gnon, mtha’ ’dul, yang mtha’ ’dul), some times 31 temples of the Dharmarāja are listed but also to sites associated with Guru Rinpoche (cf. TF Sorensen and Hazod 2005: App. 1). It also included propitiatory offerings and prayers to a number of telluric, terrestrial and protective deities (zhing skyong) such as gNyen-chen thang-lha and the twelve brTan-ma (cf. e.g. Sie lung rnam thar 1983: 5, et passim). Decisive for the expansive consolidation of his power had been the extensive implementation of the cults related to an array of important protective deities – these vision-based propitiations in some cases going all the way back to the 1st Dalai Lama and his successors, involving protectors that gradually were incorporated into the dGe-lugs pantheon or were considered personal protector deities of the respective Dalai Lamas. Finally, it involved the running consultation of the key oracular media or chos skyongs in Tibet, the gNas-chung, La-mo, dGa’-ba-gdong, bSam-yas and Khra’-brug (sometimes also listing g.Ya’-bzang). Noteworthy again is to reiterate that welfare or happiness in the first place meant to generate a status quo characterized by the absence of threats towards the harmony of the country and people and the elimination of destructive forces.

We shall here restrict ourselves to one such case (out of many) of an external impetus that triggered these precautions. We refer to incidents like the menacing floods threats (already dealt with in great detail in the previous chapter) in 1659 and again 1680 and 1681, when the lHa-sa dikes again were on the brink of being carried away (lha sa'i chu rags 'chor la khad byung). It necessitated the enactment of brtan bzhugs or longevity and perpetuity prayer rituals for the protection of the Jo-bo rin-po-che once made by Sangs-rgyas gling-pa (see also the latter’s Pho brang Ra sa dang bsam yas gso tshul me chu bye ma'i bzlog thabs). The path between 'Bras-spungs and Se-ra was blocked due to the heightened flood crest. That very year the 5th Dalai Lama, through visions (dag snang)

256 Commonly called jo sāg rnam gnyis kyi mchod rgyun, lha ldan cho 'phral smon lam chen mo'i mchod thebs.
258 Following the establishment of the dGa'-ldan pho-brang gehung, it not only was the central government who implemented such prayer and offerings for the “well-being of Tibet,” but also a host of hierarchs and monks who clearly served under the auspices of the government; so e.g. by the son of A-myos-zhas, bSod-nams dbang-phyug during a visit to Khra’-brug.
259 A 11 fols. Ms of his gSung 'bum (a copy kept in the Potala Palace Collection) – yet not seen. To quote another incident: in 1755 A.D. large sections of the lHa-sa area again were flooded and extensive protective measures were implemented. The 7th Dalai Lama inspected the considerable damages (chu skyon) from the uppermost roof of Pho-brang dmar-po, and it is reported how water-reducing Mahākārūnika-related precepts from Sangs-rgyas gling-pa and precepts delineated in the basic tantra of Cakrasamvara proved most efficient to halt the water. The same episode was witnessed by the 33rd Ngok mkhan-chen who registers how during the 7th month the river had overflowed the gates of the dike (rags
of Thang-stong rgyal-po subsequently initiated the erection of a number of nature-containing stone
statues (rdo lha) and other reliquaries according to a spiritual or ritual project which became known
as sa gnad gso thabs, or “key (topomantic) site restoration or remediation.” The “terrestrial healing”
role and the remedial crusade (also aptly labeled bstan ‘gro phan bde’i sman yon) implemented
by Thang-stong greatly influenced and inspired the court surrounding the 5th Dalai Lama. More
concretely, it appears that the flooding incident in 1659 may have prompted the 5th Dalai Lama and
his regent to launch the program (cf. also Karmay 1988: 44f., 192–193). Faced with the damages
and perplexed as to what to do, the excessive water and flooding that year even led to speculations
whether it was the personal (i.e. natal) astrological element of the 5th Dalai Lama (me khams, “fire
element” – enemy of the “water element”) that may have triggered the floods.

The gNas-chung chos skyong at that particular occasion urged the hierarch to go into retreat and
in front of the statue of Lokesvara, the object in Potala in front of which traditionally prayers were
directed, to reflect over ways and means of providing happiness for the Tibetan subjects (bod
‘bangs bde thabs). In a vision (during the 4th month of 1659), the high hierarch visually encountered
Thang-stong rgyal-po (see above) who delivered him prophetic instructions on sa gnad gso thabs
or a territorial healing scheme. It appears to have been embedded within the cognitive context
of a large-scale ritual project, as it seems, that aimed at erecting or restoring previously existing
(i.e. formerly erected by the siddha Thang-stong) “nature-containing” statues and reliquaries. The
following years such nature-containing relics and images were regularly erected, renewed or
repaired throughout Tibet by the government. An wholesale attempt was again made in 1697 (cf.
The sanctuaries set up at different places in Tibet were evidently carved into rocks or erected along
banks, made from clay or earth set up as landmark in the territories erected as a sort of natural
sanctuaries to barricade or halt the destructive forces of nature. Often the statues replaced former
images that had fallen victim to the ravages of time (earlier flooding). These restitutive means
initially aimed at pacifying and redressing natural imbalances (commonly known as sa dgra)
identified by way of specific hallmarks or configurations in the landscape the negative properties
of which were considered to be the source and cause of illness, famine, war, earth-quake and
deluge, etc. The basic scheme appears in part to have been inspired from or to have been emulated
from the former topomantic depiction of Tibet as a supine demoness.

Natural disaster and contingencies remained major impediments towards the fulfillment of
national happiness, and not least catastrophic floods haunted Tibet as much as it should haunt
numerous other countries and civilizations. They laid bare the perpetual vulnerability of empires
and societies. In Tibet throughout all times, it remained a negative and deficient scenario, where the
Tibetans rarely succeeded – so it would seem – to come to terms with the ever-recurring flooding
episodes. It should not be forgotten that flooding had recurred to ravage the riverlands of Tibet
for many thousand of years, and it was only with the emergence of the first traces of civilization

sgr] and encroached upon the city, the alleys were blocked and only by horse could the low-lying areas be negotiated.
Cf. DL5 III 195 a3–b4, 241b2–3; dPal ldan chos skyong rnam thar III 351; ’Bri gung chos byung 527.
Another example: In 1627, the 15th Ngor-mkhan Kun-dga’ bSod-nams hun-grub, blessed the local chu rags, once the area
of Thang-sag close to the Sa-skya seat of Nalendra in ’Phan-yul was flooded; cf. Sa skya gdung rabs (kha skong) 86.
260 In addition to this, the 5th Dalai Lama received many similar cycles containing precepts on how to avoid dangers
and threats of elemental nature, etc. cf. DL5 gSam vig II 233a1 f.
Appendix II: Control over the IHa-sa Mandala Zone

The sites south of the gTsang-po from West to East:

- In the mountains north of dPal-khud Chos-sdungs-dgon (i.e. the Bo-dong monastery of sPo-rong dPal-mo chos-sdungs east of Phad-khud-mtsho; core area of the nomadic principality of sPo-rong) > a stone-statue.
  - At rGyal gyi sRi dgon-pa of La-stod [Ho] > a statue of [the wrathful king] Mahâbâla (sTobs-po-che).
  - Between g.Yas-ru and Ru-lag, at IHa-rtsê rdzong (VS at the border of Ru-lag Grom-pa rGyang) > statues of the Rigs-gsum mgon-po.
  - At Gyer-mdâ of IHa-rtsê area (location uncertain) > a rock-carved man-sized statue.
  - At dGa'-ba-gdong in sTod-lung on the northern bank of sKyid-chu > statues of Avalokiteśvara with a retinue of two along with a chapel erected to avert any deluge or peril from water. etc.; at Shun gyi Brag-dmar gTe'u-gdng and 'Bras-spungs kyi mDa'-'ste (two places known from the IHa-sa Mandala; cf. Graph 1 of App. IV) > two stone-carved sKu-gsum statues (on Shun gyi Brag-rtsê in addition a statue of Munindra bDud-'dul); at IHa-gdông Shan-kha'i rgyab-ri (it refers to the Bum-pa-ri or rDzong-tsas gi ri of Grib) > a statue of Gaganarâja
  - In sKyid-shod, at bDe-chên Kha-rab rgyab-ri (probably referring to bDe-chên-rtsê) > a statue of Cittavîśrâmaṇa
  - In sKyid-shod, at the border between Upper and Lower dBu-ru, at mTha'-rgyas > a bDud-'dul mchod-rten.
  - In sKyid-shod dGa'-Idan rgyab-ri > a statue of Mahâkârûnikâ (VS adds the erection of a Byang-chub mchod-rten at the Phag-mo'-brog gi sPus-ri of dBu-ru-stod, a mountain resembling a wrathful Mongolian)
  - At Rva-sgreng Sum-mdo, a statue of the wrathful Vajrapâni (VS: statues of Rigs-gsum mgon po and sTobs-po-che) [VS: in Khra'-brug and the other dynastic Border-Suppressing Temples > restoration of various statues].

(Based on DL6 423-28 and Vaidûrya ser po (VS) 427.10-23; cf. also VS 455.5-15; places which are only listed in VS are given in brackets)

Map 5. The sites of the Sa gnad gso thabs in dBus and gTsang
and with settlements less than fifteen hundred years ago, did it become a matter of human concern and preoccupation. This naturally also held true for the neighbouring countries. Entire districts, townships and sanctuaries in numerous countries were regularly visited by the capers of nature. Tibet’s neighbours India and China too abound in stories of natural and apocalyptic catastrophes, and up to the present day flood and drought management has remained on the political agenda. A telling case of some relevance for the Tibetan world may be the parallels encountered in China.

The beginnings of water conservancy and incipient irrigation works in China are recorded to go over two millennia back in time. The engineering (and indeed pioneering) official Li Bing – China’s counterpart to Tibet’s Nam-mkha’-dpal – as early as 256 B.C. had initiated a water irrigation and flood control project by taming the Min River (a tributary to the Yellow River); his dams, dikes and canals, with some modifications, are still intact to this very day. In commemoration of this true marvel of yore, a “Dragon-Taming Temple” was raised in Dujiangyuan (present-day Sichuan). Throughout Chinese history, like later in Tibet, emperors too usually sought every means available to reduce disasters that were caused by floods. In China, the dragon or water spirit (shuishen), master and genetrix of the rivers, had to be controlled or pacified through appropriate propitiation, and just like in Tibet where the subterranean Nāga was considered, this spirit was suspected to cause havoc. But the experience won by the Tibetans in dealing with flood disasters occasionally found its way to China too. This may best be exemplified by an incident in 1782, when a flood again wiped out entire villages along the Yellow River (rMa-chu; as it regularly does even today). IÇang-skya Rol-pa’i rdo-rje was consulted. The emperor was of the firm believe that Heshen, the river-god, held sway over the waters wherefore it was worshipped and propitiated. According to Chinese lore, the lord of Huanghe River, Heshen was considered capable of transforming itself into a dragon. Chu-bzang Qutuytu (the brother of IÇang-skya) was requested to make sacrifices at the river’s source. Rol-pa’i rdo-rje accordingly wrote a memorial to the emperor in which he stated that the source of the river was located in the direction of the glacier mountain of rMa-chen, wherefore it was suggested that the “Lord of the Soil” (gzhi bdag) of rMa-chen was to be propitiated in a proper manner in order to control the waters. An edict was issued to the effect that this gzhi bdag in a pre-emptive attempt was to be worshipped on an annual basis to be implemented upon a state endowment. Devastating floods (Ch. shuihai; Hin. bārh) that still haunt large areas of main-

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261 Its importance is indicated by the circumstance that it today counts as a Unesco World Heritage Site. China throughout two millennia of dynastic rule around their larger ripian settlements and cities usually accommodated a Directorate of Waterways (dushuijian), sometimes also a dike supervisors or receve (jiandaoguan), responsible for dike-repair, etc.; they also had a river conservancy commission (hedishi). For a informative survey of floods and droughts registered in China over the last two millennia (206 B.C.–1911 A.D.), see the encyclopaedic Tushu jicheng (Sect. IV: jicheng 86–92; 124–130) and the Qingshi Gao (Chapt. 40, 43) as discussed in Yao Shanyu (1942), HJAS 6: 273–312.

262 This is based upon Wang 1995: 135–36; ICang skya rnam thar 602–03. For the vexing problems, see now also R. A. Dodgen, Controlling the Dragon: Confucian Engineers and the Yellow River in Late Imperial China (Honolulu 2001). Further reading: for the training of this important waterway in China, see also Klaus Flessel, Der Huang Ho und die historische Hydrotechnik in China unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der nördlichen Sung-Zeit (Tübingen 1974); Amelung 2000; for Heywanzhi (“Treatise on the Sources of Huanghe”), c.g. reporting about the 1281 Sino-Mongol exploration conducted under the auspices of Qubilai Qan, see Franke 1994a: 401–416.


land China and the Indian Continent bear witness to a sheer never-ending battle with nature. In both countries hydrological studies focussing on the environmental dramas – flooding and drought – abound and hydropolitics even today are both of pertinent and essential relevance.

We possess no information whether ICang-skya similarly was involved in lHa-sa too, but throughout the last several hundred years under the dGa’-ldan pho-brang, gzhung, the number, the size and the form of the lHa-sa embankment or dikes altered just like the form and content of the means to avoid flooding did.\(^{265}\) It can safely be assumed that the means of protection became increasingly sophisticated. A brief perusal of the lCags stag zhib gzhung (1830 A.D. Tax Survey) among others provides a vivid picture of the extent of destruction caused by rain-driven soil-erosion where fields and loose topsoil are carried away by water. During the later spell of the dGa’-ldan pho-brang rule, the running repair of the Jo-rags, incidentally, was normally executed by special corvée labour people (jo rags rgyag mi) who served in the estates located along the most vulnerable stretches, in the western and eastern outskirts of lHa-sa area such as Dan-’bag and Rags-kha, etc. Their main task consisted in conducting general dike-repair, to protect the low-lying rural fields from being overflowed or be carried away and to reclaim land for eroded stretches when the flood had receded (sa zhing chus ’khyer sa tshab).\(^{266}\) almost a yearly recurring incident. Throughout the last centuries, however, the overall municipal management in charge of the dikes in lHa-sa and its prophylactic maintenance (chu skyon sngon ’gog) was administered by the office of sNang-rtses-shag headed by its mayor (mi dpon) who in turn reported to the bKa’-shag the general state of the dikes or major

\(^{265}\) Informative material also from the dGa’-ldan pho-brang period on flooding and its destruction (*chu skyon*), and other natural hazards have been listed in the recent publ. Rang byung gnod ’tshe or Natural Hazard series (lHa-sa 1987): cf. the data presented in the *Chu skyon skor* volume.

\(^{266}\) Cf. Part I: fn. 574 and Yeh 2003: 225f.
flooding emergencies, and for instance appointing *rags gnyer pa* or “dike reeve or inspectors” to supervise the most vulnerable stretches during spring and summer.\(^{267}\)

This small essay probably covers no more than the tip of the iceberg in terms of recording individuals and ascetics pre-occupied with managing flood control and with training the river, the incidents that necessitated or required such endeavours however remained sheer endless. We have seen that there were no facile solutions to the dilemma of flood, requiring a repertoire of answers and responses. The aphorism cited at the beginning of this essay informs us of the dire lessons to be learned in Tibet when dikes had not been erected in due time, and the deeper wisdom of the saying is stipulated in the supplementary part of the same aphorism which purports that before misfortune or problems occur preventive action must be taken.\(^{268}\) Natural disaster management (*rang byung gnod ’tshe bdag gnyer hyed lugs*) on a more systematic scale today continues to hold high priority because of the regular incidents stemming from seismic disturbances (*sa yom*), from flooding (*chu skyon, shva ’od*), but also of destruction caused by hail and snow blizzards. Down through history, flooding however remained the main culprit and the main cause for the largest amount of destruction on that score and although by now large stretches along *sKyid-chu* river today have turned into urban and industrial zones, and the shallow land has become tamed, flooding still wreak havoc and causes the *lHa-sa* magistrate or municipality considerable problems. It is no exaggeration to claim that *lHa-sa* has a diluvian history. Today, the *sKyid-chu* dikes are regularly repaired and expanded, and although dike building in Tibet never, like in so many other fields, constituted any pioneering feats in terms of water or hydraulic technology or in terms of management, the water monster of inundation nevertheless remained – so much we should understand – a century-long curse, compelling Tibetans to the incessant and weary preoccupation – whether ritually or pragmatically – with its training and control; it was a topic that shaped society, the local communities, and governed its politics and thus kept determining the lives of many people.

\(^{267}\) Cf. the details in dKon-mchog *lha-skyabs* 1998: 197–98; *Lhasa Interviews 2* (see now Tsering Gyalbo 2005: 421–23). The establishment in the 1990’s of the Grand Central Canal (*zhoggan, dkyil gyi yar chen*), called the “3357” drainage canal that largely replaces the old sand diversion canal (see above fn. 139) and constructed to divert and absorb the water of the M/Nyang-bran and Dog-sde river-arms (*chu lag*) is playing a major role for the adjacent *lHa-klu* wetland eco-system, the huge inland meadow moor stretching to the north-west of Mt. Potala in the ‘Dam-ra area; for details, see Nor-bu *tsho-ring* and Chos-bzang 1992: rDo-rje *tsho-ring* 2004; Yeh 2003.

\(^{268}\) Tib. *rkyen ma byung gong nas bzlog thabs*. This would roughly correspond to our idiom “prevention is better than cure.” To reflect this in common parlance – a telling saying encapsulating the experiences in dealing with flooding in *lHa-sa* as elsewhere, postponement and especially belated repentance often in Tibet was likened to “[building] a dike after the water had overflowed” (*de las ’gyung na chu shor zin pa i rags dang ’dra*); so e.g. employed by Thang-stong *rgyal-po* – an ascetic with a life-long commitment to the spiritual and physical “remediation” or “healing” of nature’s perils and damage; cf. the biography written by Mon-pa bDe-ba bzung-po, *Thang stong rnam thar* 340.

In Vinaya hermeneutic literature in Tibet, the preventive or edifying example accruing from erecting a dike is emphasized by means of equations like *chu rags kvis chu’i gnod pa spong ha or phyi spong bya spong ba la chu rags hrtgsigs pa dang ’dra ha*. Still, on a purely theoretical level and couched in a philosophical vein, the Tibetans – markedly unsuccessful in handling the whims of nature as we have seen, also treasured sayings – occasionally quoted in religious literature – that at least evince a modicum of pragmatic humour, so for example when expressing something superfluous or self-evident, the answer usually could be: “[Against] a mirage, [the construction of] a dike is not needed” (*smig rgyu la chu rags mi dgos*).
APPENDIX III
I. The seal imprint of the Ta'i situ Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan
III. THE TSHAL-PA MYRIARCHY
Territory, Appanage Grants and Mongol Patronage

Per K. Sørensen and Guntram Hazod

1. THE MONGOL CONQUEST:
Tibet as Vassal under the Great Mongol Empire (yeke mongyol ulus)

The numerically relative small Mongol people, pastoral nomads and hunter-gatherers, conquered with sweeping success and in shortest possible time in the mid-13th century more territories and ruled larger stretches than any power in human history. A clue to their remarkable success can be traced to their capability to bring under their sway other people, by mustering and hence winning for their cause large segments of the nomadic and sedentary populations not least in the heartland of Northern China, but also gradually of subdued people in the vast territories held by them. Their extraordinary military and tactical excellence marked out much of their astounding battlefield triumphs. To this came a truly lucky hand in administrating and organizing the huge logistic resources needed to hold sway over the scattered tribes and vassal peoples, a mobile administration which was based upon the inclusion of multi-ethnic collaboration. At the point of death of Čingis Qan in 1227, the quriltai was to follow his injunction and install Ögödei as new Grand Qan of the emerging Yeke mongyol ulus or the Great Mongol Empire. The latter faithfully executed the grand political and national schemes of his father to set up an empire. It was Ögödei Qayan who carried through a census that served as basis for the distribution of appanages. In 1236, he ordered the granting of appanages to imperial relatives and household princes in the newly conquered heartland of Northern China.

During the reign of Ögödei and Mongke all subdued or surrendering states (il irgen) were forced to accept the following terms to avoid all-out destruction. The terms included:

I. The local ruler (the coming vassal ruler) was obliged to come personally to the Mongol court in order to accept Mongol sovereignty.
II. Close relatives or sons of the ruler were to be offered as hostages, to be kept by the Mongols.
III. Census registration of the subdued or vassal population and households to be conducted.
IV. Taxes to be levied.
V. Military units to be conscribed and mustered.
VI. Postal relay stations or jam to be erected throughout the territories.
VII. A Mongol appointed residential daruyací (Ch. daluwaachi), a resident judge and inspector to be permanent staffed in the conquered area to ensure proper monitoring.\(^1\)

\(^1\) See the argumentation in Allsen 1987: 5-7.

\(^2\) The absence of regional judges and overseers (daruyací) in the homeland of the Mongols suggest that the office was intended to control conquered vassals only. Much literature on the administration of non-Mongol population has been written. See YS 209; Endicott-West 1989: 16ff.; Allsen 1981: 50f.; Farquhar 1990; A. Moestart and F. W. Cleaves, *HJAS* 15: 485-95.
Prior to their confrontations with conquered territories, the Mongols tenaciously followed a strategy of issuing orders or injunction of treaties which demanded the unconditional submission of the addressee/foreign people (qari irgen), to be brought under their hove. A significant example is the letter of Güyük to Pope Innocent IV in 1246. Normally such Mongol order (farliy) wisely stipulated the physical survival and the perpetuation of the institutions of the submitted people (il irgen) in return for acknowledging the formal suzerainty of the Mongols. For Tibet, there can be room for little doubt that Köden’s famous letter of invitation to the Tibetans was an ill-concealed request of surrender, and the summon of a Tibetan church-leader to Mongolia in the 1240’s, whatever its historicity, must be seen on this background. The aging Sa-skya Pandita, and his replacement ’Phags-pa, with their year-long confinement as priests at the tents and palaces of the Mongols must be regarded as a case of hostage taking, at least initially, of a vassal, as stipulated by the above terms. As a dependency of the Mongols, it was expected that the submitted ruler, hierarch or his subordinate personally arrived at court to receive or renew their investiture. In the time to come, this rule accounts for the numerous missions of the presiding khri skor to the Yüan court.

As in most cases, the Mongols had divided the subdued sedentary population into administrative units of ten, hundred, thousand and ten-thousand. The administration of Central Tibet, i.e. the dBus gTsang districts in the Yüan-Sa-skya period, in other words the organization of the so-called thirteen myriarchies or tümen/wanhu (khri skor) had their immediate precursor in the establishment in Mongolia of the traditional hereditary and personal prince appanage (akin to a apanagium or share during the Roman Empire in early European history) and apportionment system (lit. “share [of a hunter’s loot],” = [Ch. fendi:] M. olja-yin qubi, qubi; Tib. bgo bsha ‘; i.e. bgos bshas byas pa ‘i gtogs lugs) in Tibet that followed the reform measures initiated from 1251 under the reign of Möngke (1209–59; rl. 1251–59 A.D.) – a property division system of granting private appanage or land apportioning among the imperial princes had started already in the mid-1230’s. Enormous stretches of annexed territories and the revenue and levies needed for the still expanding clan

4 Allsen 1987: 64–65; Voegelin 1941 for the illustrative wording of letters to the Pope requiring submission.
5 For the letter, probably a later fraudery?, from Köden, see Schuh 1977: 31–36, 41.
6 The decimal system in organizing society was known among peoples and tribes of Inner Asia long before the Mongols. Still, it was Činggis Qan who in 1203 thoroughly introduced the system of decimal organization (10, 100, 1000 – later 10,000 was added) of male adults both inside and outside his bodyguards and each headed by a noyan or chief. It helped providing a hierarchical order and it formed the workable basis not only of militia and armies but also of the social organization of the entire population. Militia myriarchies (wanhu) (first establ. 1277) and militia chilarchies (qianhuos) – the latter often each consisted of ten so-called centurions. See Hsiao, Military Establishments, Chap. 1: 9, 22-23; Secret History 224: YS 98 ; Un Code des Yuan 1: xi.

For matter of convenience, we here list common terms for these units:

- The ten-thousand-unit or myriarchy: Ch. wanhu, Mong. tümen, Tib. khri skor.
- Head of a myriarchy or a myriarch: Ch. wanfuzhang; Mong. tümen-ü noyan; Tib. khri dpon.
- The thousand-unit or chilarchy: qianhu, qianfu; Mong. mingyuan / mingquan; Tib. stong skor and the chilarch: Ch. qianfuzhang; Mong. mingyuan-u noyan; Tib. stong dpon.
- The hundred-unit or centuries: Ch. baihuso, bohu; Mong. jayun; Tib. brgya skor.
- Head of centurion: Ch. baihuzhang; Mong. jayun-u noyan; Tib. brgya dpon.
- The ten-unit or decurion: Ch. shihu, paizitou, paitou; Mong. harban; Tib. bçu skor.
- Head of a decurion: Mong. harban-u noyan, Tib. bçu dpon.

7 The most authoritative study of Möngke’s rule and his policies is Allsen 1987. See also Allsen 2001.
families and enfeoffed nobility⁸ meant that allotted territories in the environs of the residences or main seats of the leading Tibetan clergy were divided and distributed as grants among the princes of the Mongol ruling or imperial princes, in the first place, to the Toluid line. Möngke’s reform aimed at curtailing the excesses or misuse of exacting goods for personal use. It initially did not affect Tibet because this remote area only late was included into the Mongol empire. The 1251 jarly issued by Möngke placed considerable restriction on the acquisition of appanage (fendi) by imperial princes.⁹ In the new appanage allotment, the distribution to individual Toluid princes and their kin reflected a prior predilection to individual teachers and their specific teaching traditions that had been given to these prince households, although we still lack detailed information. Mongol tradition generally exerted a principle which stipulated that conquered territories were the joint property of the entire imperial house (altan oruy), a common pool of wealth and resources, and merely granted distinct princes and local Qanates specific rights, tax revenues collections or the lordship over segments of the entire territory and its population consisting of tenant families or tax households. Although some measure of information exists for the economics of princely appanages in northern China proper, our knowledge is meagre for the appanages outside this imperial heartland.¹⁰

We still possess far too little detailed information as to how and on what conditions this new distributive appanage or fief system for imperial relatives and prince lines was enacted in concreto, in particularly so what concerns Tibet as vassal and to what extent the implementation of the strict Mongol law was actually effectuated (hor khrims chags).¹¹ Signally, already in 1251, Möngke had placed his brother prince Qubilai in charge of the vast territories of Tibet. The direct influence of Qubilai and his descendants on Tibet should never diminish and in fact remained tangible until the end of Mongol rule in Tibet. We know that in dBus the overlordship of 'Bri-gung-pa and their territories had been allotted to Möngke (and Ariq Böke) and came under his patronage (with his passing and the rule of Qubilai, the 'Bri-gung — Mongol relations eventually turned ominous), Saska-pa came under Godan’s patronage, the Tshal-pa under prince Qubilai’s patronage, the Stag-lung-pa under the tutelage of the later hapless Ariq Böke (d. 1266), and the Phag-mo gru-pa, the g.Ya’-bzang-pa and the Thang-po-che-ba (i.e. the g.Ya’ Phag Thang gsum in mKhas pa’i dga’ ston 1416) under the patronage of prince Hülegü; yet also minor districts were apparently distributed to members of the princes such the three districts of Rab-bsun, Gru-gsang and Kha-rag that as territorial appanage were allotted to the influential prince Böcheg, half brother of Möngke, whereas IHa-sa (= IHa-pa) ’Brug-pa (incl. La-stod Thang-chung in gTsang) came another branch and confidant of Möngke, namely prince Möke’s formal jurisdiction, if only nominally.¹² None of these princes and rulers ever set their foot in Tibet.

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⁸ A key person behind the complicated distribution of appanages was the loyal Širi Qutuqu (ca. 1180–1260), who had been appointed Judge (jargunci) of North China followed by Buṣir (Ch. Buzhi). The appointment was initiated during the reign of Ögödei made in the wake of the first population census in 1234–35. Recipient were princes of imperial blood (chuwung), princesses (gongzhu), imperial son-in-laws (juma) as well as dignitaries and enfeoffed (fief-holding) nobility (touxia guanyuan). See P. Ratchnevsky 1966, 1993: 86; Holmgren 1987; P. Jackson 1999. ⁹ Ratchnevsky 1972: Vol. 2: 72–73. ¹⁰ See Allsen 1987: 85–88. ¹¹ In Tibetan sources, one usually distinguishes between the period prior to and after the implementation of the Mongol law in Tibet or its absence. The only comparative material how these imperial appanages were administered is given in Endicott-West 1989: 89-124; cf. also Biran 1997: 7–14. It is not fully clear to what extent the subjugated areas in Tibet were administered in the same way as on the mainland or in other conquered territories for that matter. For the economic structure of the Mongol dynasty; see Schurmann 1967.
It certainly was no coincidence that a Tshal-pa teacher who initially had served the Mi-nyag rulers (cf. App. 1), later was invited from Central Tibet to the Mongol camp where he became the personal tutor to most of the above-mentioned princes that stemmed from the all-dominant Tolui line in particular by becoming teacher to their mother, the powerful Tolui-widow Sorqoqtani Beki (cf. GT 30b; Part I: fn. 388). His name was Yar-lung-pa (alias Gung-thang-pa) Grags-pa seng-ge and the activities and the crucial presence of his at the tent of the Mongol rulers – during his second sojourn in the Eastern borderlands that possibly covered the period from 1235 to 1240 – no doubt smoothed the way for the remarkable goodwill among the Mongols that the Tshal-pa enjoyed and thus account for the later inclusion of some of the above-mentioned territories into the Tshal myriarchy. During the tenure of the secular Tshal-pa rulers of dGa'-bde-dpal and sMon-lam rdo-rje of the ruling mGar clan (and who at the imperial court doubtlessly were seen as a parallel to the role of their ancestor figure Minister mGar at the T'ang court some 600 years earlier) enjoyed amicable relations to Qubilai and his princely scions. The comparatively extensive Tshal-pa myriarchy would suggest that the mGar-family as a family domain indeed had received the myriarchy as hereditary lords.

The Tibetan fief-holders or appanage grant-holders in Central Tibet enjoyed a modicum of discretionary or local executive power independent of the local daruqaçi or of the imperial court. Tibetan sources during this early spell occasionally refer to the wanhu or khri skor administrative system (so Rlangs 110.6), evidently here a retrospective attribution. The actual establishment of this key organization within the Yüan-Sa-skyaya administration most probably should be situated to ca. 1260/1264 A.D., following the accession and election of Qubilai as the rightful Cinggisid ruler or paragon Great Qan and more readily as first Yuan emperor when a comprehensive administrative reorganization of the Tibetan districts was implemented. It replaced the former princely appanage system outlined above. It has been claimed that the date of the basic census (1268) was the point when the final organization of “the thirteen khri skor of Tibet” was enacted (Petech 1990b: 58). This statement is however not in all cases tenable; so g.Ya'-bzang for instance appears to have officially received the khri skor diploma in the early 1290's only (CFS Gyalbo et al. 97) and the same holds true for the Yar-'brog district. The individual (agriculturally based) household units (hor dud; Ch. hu) constituted, as is well-known, the smallest administrative unit and the distinct number of hor dud served as basis for the assessment and imposition of the tax revenue ensured from the khri skor districts (in the sources often contracted as dmag khral las gsum: military tax (= indicating the man-power and cost for upholding military emergency forces on standby), the revenue and tax tribute of agricultural products (usually a tithes or 10% levy) and various labour services (to

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12 Cf. e.g. Rlangs 110–11 where it is mentioned that the distinct khri skor were the private property (sgos bdag) of the four Mongol prince lines; Grags pa byung gnas don chen 449–50 = Rlangs Po ti bse ru 386.3–387.3; mKhas pa'i dga'ston 893.3f., 1416.11–13. Prince Böcheg (Tib.: sBo-Icog) and prince Môke (Ch. Muge; the eighth son of Tolui) – both half-brothers to Möngke and Qubilai – mentioned in some sources, were generally unknown to Tibetan history and their appanages and holdings in the remote area of Tibet are unusual and if reflecting historical fact, it may basically have been nominal. La-stod Thang-chung area and the monastery of Thang-chung was located in present-day gNya'-lam (also written sNye-nang) district, in the Tshong-'dus xiang (cf. Xizang Dimingzhi 1473).

In fact, we are only at the beginning of appreciating the numerous (and partly still unknown) bonds to different Mongol princes established by the Central Tibetan hierarchs. So, for instance, the Thog rdugs spring yig consists of letters (possibly prior to 1250) to different Mongol princes issued by the 4th gDan-sa-mthil throne-holder (rl. 1235–67), such as to Prince Hulahu (Hulegù), Cho-ma-khar (Chormaqai), Mo-mgo (Möngke) – all devotedly addressed as bodhisattva.
ensure a workable infrastructure and an intact communication system). Both management and leadership of the myriarchies were conferred upon already existing religious-hegemonic centres (with the temporal ruler carrying the administrative responsibility as *khri dpon*); in Central Tibet it included the above-mentioned Tshal-pa, the *Bri-gung-pa*, the *sTag-lung-pa* and the three centres under the Hülegü appanage (i.e. *g.Ya*’ *Phag Thang*), in addition to the *rGya-ma-pa*, the *Bya-yul-pa* and the ruling house of *sNa-dkar-rtse* in *Yar-*brog, whereas the aforementioned *sTag-lung-pa* – according the *Deb dmar gsar* – did not hold the official *khri skor* diploma; questionable too is the myriarchic status of Thang-po-che (see for more details, Petech 1990).

2. THE TSHAL-PA MYRIARCHY

Among the thirteen myriarchies recorded for Central Tibet proper (and three *khri skor* for Khams), our knowledge of the Tshal-pa *khri skor* currently appears to be best documented. It was *dpon chen Rin-rgyal-ba* (i.e. *Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan*), who 1254 or 1255 A.D. was appointed to the secular throne and who later became the first Tshal-pa Myriarch or *khri dpon* (*M.* *tümén-ü noyan*; Ch. *wanfu Zhang*). He apparently (albeit not firmly corroborated, a later Tshal-pa embellishment?) participated in the military expeditions of Qubilai in 1259 and arguably – if the sources can be trusted – distinguished himself as a strategist, wherefore he was richly rewarded. If for no other reason, it strengthened the good name and well-earned repute that Tshal already enjoyed at the Mongol court through the former service of Yar-lung-pa Grags-pa seng-ge. *Rin-rgyal-ba* should return to Tshal Gung-thang in 1261, showered with imperial presents including what in the chronicle of the Fifth Dalai Lama is designated as the Tshal-pa *khri skor gyi ’ja’ sa* or imperial decree or diploma, which proclaimed that a certain number of village districts (*yul grong*) in Central Tibet as *mi sde*, that is as lay tax-yielding communities (in the sense of a *gzhi[s]* *kha*, or estate) administratively adhered to the Tshal-pa. The list in *GT* counts over 40 such “*mi sde units*” (= 01–44 of Map 1, Part I); *sMon lam rdo rje rnam thar* 6a1–2 speaks about 41 *mi sde* together known as *Tshal pa’i mi sde chen mo*.

The figures cannot in all cases be fixed more precisely, inasmuch as the number of the names of these occasionally also can be read as two (neighbouring) districts or communities (like for instance *Lo Byang-ji*, *sKul ’Ching-ru*, *IHa ’Brug*, etc.). The majority of these is situated in the above delimited area of *sKyid-shod* and *Ngam-shod* (Introduction; Chap. 4), the remaining ones refer to districts in *’Phan-yul*, *Byang*, *sTod-lung* and the western and eastern *IHo-kha*. A few of the remaining toponyms are mentioned in the Chronicle of the Fifth Dalai Lama (*Bod kyi deb ther* 107), where it is said that the distribution of the territories by the imperial decree was linked with the obligation of renovating dilapidated temples in the areas.

With the list in *GT* we nevertheless are dealing with an unique document that allows us, equipped with more precise geographical knowledge and with a broad history of the individual areas, rare glimpses into the genesis and structure of a myriarchic territory in medieval Tibet. We shall argue that the information provided nevertheless fill an important gap concerning the question of a rough distributive extent of the structure and environment of the Central Tibetan territories in the 13–14th century. Still it must be adduced that our attempt constitutes a reconstruction, we are bereft of detailed and precise information as to the exact distribution and extent of the Tshal *mi sde* – even

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more we still lack details as to the nature and economical relationship of these individual units throughout this period. Regarding Tshal, comparable data are only available concerning the Phag-mo gru-pa *khri skor* (with the 12 *gzhis kha* forming the core Phag-gru myriarchy, mainly locatable in and around the Yar-lung area), and in part we also possess stray data concerning the g.Ya’- bzang-pa, both myriarchies, as already pointed out, that were administrative zones attached to the former Hülegü appanage.  

From the description of the administrative organization in *rGya bod yig tshang* (hereafter *GY*), we can conclude that the management of the Tibetan districts under the Yüan-Sa-skya regime was not covered by the myriarchies alone, it also included minor independent hegemonies. The list enumerates the following administrative units of dBus:

[1] 'Bri-gung bod-'brog gnyis (the agricultural and pastoral areas of 'Bri-gung, registered with 3630 *rtsa* [ba 'i hor] dud)

[2] 'Tshal-pa (3700/3702)

[3] Phag-mo gru-pa (2438)

[4] g.Ya’-bzang-pa (3000)


[6] sTag-lung-pa (500)

[7] Upper and Lower bSam-yas (registered with merely 62 [hor dud]).

[8] 'Ching-phu-ba (merely 8 [hor dud]).

[9] Upper and Lower rDo (the valley east of bSam-yas, 70 [hor dud]).

[10] dGung-dkar-ba (= Gong-dkar) incl. 'Phrang-pa (70 *rtsa* ba 'i dud chen; fundamental great [hor] dud; 1 dud chen = 25 households, which with 70 dud chen would yield an unrealistic number; the entry is therefore most probable to be read as 70 households)


[16] Thang-po-che (150) (*GY* 300.9–301.5; to be attached to dBus is also the Ya’-brog leb ni bcu-drug, = Yar’-brog [17] (750 hor dud) mentioned at another place in *GY*).


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14 According to the description in *Rlangs* 110.11f., the territory of the Hülegü appanage in the lHo-kha region (there were also some estates in mNga’-ris) included Mon Lug-mgo-steng (in present-day mTsho-na) and the neighbouring districts of sNyal stod smad (= Upper and Lower gNyal), Gyu-shul (= Gru/Gro-shul), Lo-ro dkar-nag and g.Ye-chung-ba in g.Ye-che-ba (sic) (usually g.Ye-chung denotes the northern (smaller) part of g.Ye-yul, g.Ye-che refers to the part south of lHa-rgya-ri); further, in the western and central lHo-kha region the districts (ru ba) around Yar’-brog gnam-gsum and the Yar-lla Sham-po (the first is listed in *GT* as *Tshal-pa mi sde*), the districts around Khrab Ye gangs-leb (in Yar’-brog area?), mChod-ten-gling (in Yar’-brog area), sTod-tshan (?) and lCags-rtsi Gri-gu (i.e. the district around the Gri-gu lake). Further: Thang-po-che (in 'Phyong-po), 'Phyong-rgyas, 'Phyos (in lower 'Phyong-po), Mon-mkhar (and?) Phyin
As indicated earlier, among the districts listed here alongside with areas generally known as proper *khri skor* (nos. 1-6, 17), we encounter some that we usually find registered in the edict of the Tshal-pa, namely the IHa-pa and 'Brug-pa (= IHa 'Brug in *GT*), 'Phrang-pa (= 'Phrang-po'go), Kha-rag-pa, Rab-btsun-pa and 'Ching-phu-ba (? – probably (sKul) [']Ching-ru in the list of *GT*). Most of these names we have already met as territories belonging to the distinct appanages of the Mongol princes. The above toponyms refer to districts or territories in sKyid-smad and in the eastern and western part of Yar-'brog (below Map 1).

Worthy of mention under these separate territories are in particular the estates of IHa and 'Brug, which largely refer to parts of present-day Chu-shul county in sKyid-smad. 'Brug stands for the gTsang-pa rGya-ras foundation of 'Brug-dgon in gNam, IHa stands for the ruling house of the IHa-pa issuing from the (Kha-rag) gNyos clan, which in the 13th century formed one of the most powerful domains in Central Tibet (cf. App. II for details). Behind each of these foundations originally stood the powerful rGya and the gNyos clan. The main residence of the gNyos clan was Bur in sNy-e-thang of Chu-shur district and in the Gye-re valley, where the once-imposing Gye-re Iha-khang was established by rGyal-ba IHa-nang-pa and his nephew. A contentious neighbourhood should long reign between the IHa-pa and 'Brug-pa in the late 12th until at least mid-13th century, triggering occasional warfare between them, whereas Bla-ma Zhang, just like the 'Bri-gung founder 'Jig-rten mgon-po, entertained amicable relations to either seats. IHa and 'Brug initially had been part of the appanage of prince Möke, the half-brother of Qubilai and this may account for the subsequent donation of these *mi sde* territories to Tshal, once Qubilai became the sovereign ruler of all Mongols (from 1260). The precise background for the inclusion of these important local hegemonies into one single administrative district, however, is still not entirely clear. Prior to the inclusion or fusion of these areas into a *mi sde* under Tshal, we are informed that the Tshal-pa and 'Brug-pa were enmeshed in armed warfare in the mid-1240's (e.g. *gNyos rabs* 47.1) and the same 'Brug-pa in turn are reported involved in warring skirmishes with the neighbouring IHa-pa in the mid-1250's. In the wake of their post-1260 appropriation of the 'Brug *mi sde* territory of sKyid-smad sanctioned by the Mongols, the relationship between the Rva-lung main seat and the Tshal Gung-thang again developed and close spiritual and economical bonds prevailed between the seats (it should be recalled that the relationship between both founders gTsang-pa rgya-ras and Bla-ma

(=?) Bying, east of Mon-mkhar rNam-sras-gling), mKhar-ltag (stag Do-bo (?), sPrags te (= sPrags and rTe'u-ra in gNyal; see Czaja 2006), 'Ol[-kha?]=sNa-nam Zha-lnga (elsewhere 'On sNa-nam Zha-lnga), sGo-gdong, east of bSam-yas, Shong-bhe (=sde), east of IHo-brag, and the agricultural and pastoral areas (bod 'brog) of Ba-shi (?).

The 12 gzhis kha of the Phag-gru khri skor established by the khri dpon rDo-rje-dpal (Rlangs 122.11) were located in Zangs-ri (= the gzhis kha Pho-brang-sgang), in 'On (= gzhis kha [Tshong-'dus] Brag-dkar), in Rong, at the entrance to g.Ye-yul (= gzhis kha Chad-dkar), in Yar-lung (i.e. the estates of sNe'u-gdong, Ha-la-sgang and sNa-mo), in 'Phyong-po (the estates of Thang-po-che gling-smad, 'Phyos gzhis kha and (?) Mon-mkhar bKra-shis-gdong [exact loc. uncertain]) and in the area south and east of Yar-lung (ICags-rtse Gri-gu and mChod-rten-gling, see above). The location of the gzhis kha rGya-thang remains unknown. For details on the establishment of the Phag-gru khri skor, see now Czaja 2006. On the g.Ya'-bhang khri skor (with its core territory in Yar-stod), see CFS Gyalbo et al., passim.

15 In the rendition of the khri skor bcu gsum listed in gNas rnying skyes bu rnams kyi rnam thar (early 16th cent.), which constitutes an interesting supplement to the *GY* (cf. Vitali 2002), the IHa-pa (erronously written IHa-sa) are registered as a khri skor of dBus in an unusual way. After listing the myriarchies of mTshal, Phag-gru, rGya-ma-pa and 'Bri-gung-pa, the text incongruously adds: "Bya-yul-pa and sTag-lung-pa together with IHa-sa (read: IHa-pa), these three constitute two khri skor [sic]." (tr. Vitali 2002: 103, fn. 22).
Zhang had been close). The 5th until the 7th throne-holder of Rva-lung (ca. 1270’s until 1347 A.D.; cf. Part I: fn.. 465–468) served provisionally as stewards at Gung-thang and, arguably to be seen as a form of ‘Brug revenue delivered to the powerful Tshal polity, where they proffered substantial food distributions and charity in form of large quantities of butter-lamps to the local gtsug lag khang and to the Tshal monk body.

With some reservation, sTag-lung-pa (no. 6)th too may be counted as an administrative part of Tsal-pa; here, however, it must be stipulated that the above figures for sTag-lung refers to the minor district direct under the jurisdiction of the ruling Ga-zin family and their monastic mother seat in Upper ‘Phan-yul. The core part of this monastic center in the Byang district is in the sources (such as the informative sTag lung chos ‘byung) alluded to with the three districts of sPras, Dar-yul, and Rong (all part of later lHun-grub county) that traditionally were counted as the heartland of the sTag-lung patrons and where they had their secular mansions; among these, two districts namely sPras and Dar-yul, are in particular registered in GTas Tshal-pa mi sde. Noteworthy, the relationship between the respective founding figures Bla-ma Zhang and bKa-shis-dpal had remained quite amicable – as relationships mostly were in the pioneering bKal-brgyud-pa founding epoch – and the latter is recorded as a donor of rich presents to the Tshal seat in around 1198 A.D. However, later – and prior to the Yuän-time distribution of the mi sde territories – we also find reference to military incursions from the side of the Tshal-pa towards the sTag-lung-pa, so in the lawless and unruly 1250’s, which must be assessed on the above background (cf. e.g. sTag lung chos ‘byung 292, 297). Conversely, Tshal-pa’s loss of the areas of Dar-yul and sPras to the sTag-lung-pa may have taken place in the 1370’s (after the break-down of the Yuän empire), and following the defeat of Tshal to the new rulers, the Phag-gru, during the tenancy of the 9th sTag-lung throne-holder (cf. lHo rong chos ‘byung 570). It can be generally assumed that the Tshal-pa rulers throughout most of the 13th century were regularly engaged in warfare either in order to defend prior appropriated mi sde territories under their sway or, conversely, in order to stake ownership of or to capture new land. The sTag-lung-pa – located on the northern periphery of Central Tibet – in the coming centuries wisely refrained from nourishing overly hegemonic aspirations for the Tibetan heartland around lHa-sa, contrary to the aspirations nourished by the ambitious ‘Bri-gung-pa (see App. II above). The ‘Bri-gung-pa, initially under the stout support of Möngke, should become a major inner-Tibetan opponent to Sa-skya in the late 13th century.

We still do not possess any firm knowledge as to the background why precisely most of these specific mi sde areas were included under Tshal, or why some territories indeed were extensive in size, others relative small (in fact merely covering one or more village-settlements). One clue surely rests with the circumstance that a number of the Tshal-pa khri skor mi sde earlier were held by different Mongol princes as princely appanage allotted to them, so e.g. aside from the core part of Tshal mi sde under Qubilai’s patronage, the mi sde Rab-/tsun, Kha-rag, the lHa[-pa] and ‘Brug as said were held by Böccheg and Möke (both Qubilai’s half-brothers), and Qubilai surely had taken over these territories by 1260 or 1264 A.D., since it was he who in 1251 as prince had been given the province of Tibet as overall fiefship. This may also account for the transfer of the sTag-lung appanage to Tshal. It is likely that most of these appanages eventually was donated and included under the Tshal-pa jurisdiction in the famous and much-coveted edict granted to Rin-rgyal. On the other hand, some mi sde clearly reflect territories which had either submitted themselves, had

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16 So e.g. gNyag ston gdung rabs 98 lists the sTag-lung khri skor.
been appropriated forcefully or had sworn patronage on a *mchod yon* basis to the Tshal-pa prior to 1250 A.D. The nature of the submission of territories clearly requires further research, but individual cases like the destruction of the Sle'u-chung dgon-pa through the mKhar-chu-pa (both subsequently registered as *mi sde* under Tshal; see below) seem to suggest that the submission may have been anticipated by military activities that entailed the concomitant destruction of local religious institutions. This circumstance may have served as a prerequisite for the subsequent inclusion of a given territory.

It can be assumed that the data given, like those offered in *GY*, refer to the period prior to 1300 A.D., and hence reflect the status quo of a specific period, wherefore they may carry no firm validity for the entire phase of the Yüan-Sa-skya regime. It was in the wake of this dissolution that Tshal – who made no triumphant figure during the political and military skirmishes in this later Yüan period (see Petech 1990) – commenced losing most of their revenue-generating *mi sde* territories. We know that the data in numerous concrete cases contradict the Tshal-pa edict of ca. 1261, in which it, so e.g. in *GT*, is related that the edict during all the succeeding *dpon chen* each time and in this very form was re-confirmed by the imperial court. This no doubt was a matter of formal confirmation, and by no means did it necessarily reflect historical facts. In accordance with the same list, the number of Tshal-pa *hor dud* is said to amount to 3702, a figure which must be upwards corrected, provided the following estates listed in *GY* (i.e. no. 8, 10, 11, 13–15) are included. According to this calculation, Tshal (including sPras and Dar-yul) comprised over 5000 (agricultural) *hor dud* units. Taking into account the total number of 44 *mi sde* units, it in average amounts to ca. 120 households per unit. To compare: According to local informants, the Grib valley (formerly a Tshal *mi sde*) due south of 1Ha-sa originally comprised 60 families, which were divided into three *grong tsho* (village communities): it thus represented one of the minor Tshal-pa areas (= no. 44). The size of the individual estates was fluctuating, between eight and up to several hundred *hor dud*, as may be gathered from the list in *GY*.

It remains unclear how we should estimate those Tshal-pa *mi sde* units that refer to entire regions, all the more so since the name of some of those also are listed in connection with other myriarchies. So for instance the estates of g.Ye-gNyal-Dvags gsum, three regions that in particular were associated not only with g.Ya'-bzang-pa, but also with 'Bri-gung-pa and with Bya-yul, or the (complex unit of) *mi sde* known as Yar-'brog-sgang-gsum, which is listed as part of the Hülegü appanage (fn. 14) and which arguably was located within the (later) Yar-'brog *khri skor*. It may be surmised that here distinct or individual settlements within the large regions carrying the same name were meant (we may refer to the example of Dvags-po; see Part I: fn. 424).

One of the larger Tshal-pa estates was the “*sTod-lung phu mda’*,” an area which not least was and still is associated with the Karma-pa (seats at mTshur-phu), yet according to our present knowledge, the historically important monastic estate was in the Yüan-Sa-skya period not vested with any official district administration and it may be surmised that these monastic estates were under the Tshal administration. It most obviously already at that point was under the jurisdiction of the Tshal-pa *khri skor*, as alluded to in *sMon lam rdo rje rnam thar* 15a4–6, where the 3rd Karma-pa Rang-byung rdo-rje on behalf of Tshal-pa Kun-dga’ rdo-rje received title and diploma in 1332 (see also Petech 1990: 86–87). For the verification of these critical Tshal-pa estates, we deplorably lack adequate comparative material and data from the neighbouring hegemonies and polities. As
with most other mi sde, for sTod-lung too, detailed information on minor areas within the mi sde occasionally can be registered, so e.g. sKyor-mo-lung of sTod-lung comprised landed estates (in total covering 100 hor dud) distributed with Ram-pa (30 hor dud), gZhong-pa [lHa-chu] (24 phu dud) and Beng [= Brang]-gzhong (46 hor dud); see Table V. 8.2 and sKyor lung chos 'byung 44f.

Less known appears the history of rGya-ma and the similar-named khri skor with its seat in the fortified complex of rGya-ma khri-khang (see Table V.10, Fig. 29). The rGya-ma valley is in the sources also known as [Yar] sNon or rGya-ma sNon (~ gNon). sNon also surfaces as one of the Tshal-pa mi sde; the latter sNon, however, appears to refer to the sNon (also sMon), the small valley due south of gSang-phu, -mda' in sKyid-smad. Some information on the territorial extent of rGya-ma can be gleaned from the distribution of the dependencies adhering to the Rin-chen-sgang main seat (see Part II: App. V, Table 10).

Informants from Mal-gro mention the height of La-mo as the approximate border to the Tshal-pa of sKyid-shod and the Mal-gro gTsang-po river once constituted the border between the rGya-ma-ma-pa and the 'Bri-gung-pa, a circumstance that on its side led to a contentious relationship between these polities. The relationship between the 'Bri-gung founder and Zhang had been amicable, but throughout the 13th century 'Bri-gung had been less successful, contrary to Tshal, in forging bonds to the Mongol court and especially to Qubilai. A major reason rested with 'Bri-gung's strenuous connections to Sa-skya. The rGya-ma-ma-kept claiming, at least until 'Bri-gung's temporary downfall in 1290 (at a point when the Tshal-pa and rGya-ma-ma-pa acted as allied to Sa-skya) that the districts of Bya-yul (and in fact more districts in lHo-kha, including Kong-po; cf. Part I: fn. 424) adhered to them. The rGya-ma-ma with their spiritual center or mother seat at Rin-chen-sgang (Sangs rgyas dpon ston gyi rnam thar; Hor-khang 1994) entertained traditionally close relations with Bya-yul, and according to GY it is not surprising that Bya-yul is listed in connection with rGya-ma (above no. 5). The relatively large number of hor dud (5850) allow us to conclude that with these figures the larger areas of the lHo-kha district in question (e.g. Byar, Dvags, gNyal) evidently were counted as part of the Bya-yul / rGya-ma administration, and not to the 'Bri-gung-pa, Tshal-pa or to the g.Ya'-bzang-pa, whereto these areas occasionally are also associated. These districts in toto formerly adhered, at least formally, to the Hulegu appanage (fn. 14), of which the Phag-gru saw themselves as rightful inheritor, at least this is what may be concluded from the description given by ta'i si tu Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan (so Si tu bka' chems in Rlang). The energetic Phag-gru khri dpon of the 14th century found themselves incessantly challenged and entangled in conflicts with the neighbouring myriarchies, in particular with the g.Ya'-bzang-pa (and the Thang-po-che-ba), but also with the Tshal-pa, who demonstrated their presence in the very heart-land of the Phag-gru with their mi sde of 'Phyong-po and rGyas-sman (Part I: fn. 425).

Disregarding these somewhat imprecise data as to a number of mi sde, it is to some extent feasible to gain a clear picture of the myriarchic territory of the Tshal-pa. A glance at the Map (below Map 3 and Map 1 of Part I) demonstrates that in the district of sKyid-shod (stretching out between La-mo and Chu-shul and in particular in the environs of lHa-sa) through a juxtaposition of mi sde to a large extent formed a coherent area, which altogether allow us justifiably to designate the Tshal-pa as "the Lords of sKyid-shod." With some reservations this also applies to the neighbouring Ngam-shod area. Beyond that, the territorial division reflects a veritable "patchwork territory,"
Appendix

The Tshal-pa Myriarchy

111: According to which the additional mi sde are spread out over different areas and districts and, as we may see, occasionally well within the core area of other myriarchies. A major cause for the lack of an effective administration of these areas and certainly an incentive for incessant conflicts with neighbouring hegemonies – aside from the general corruption and inefficiency prevailing – were the archipelagic structure behind the territorial distribution of these gzhi ka or mi sde. The outcome was sheer endless military and court disputes so emblematic of medieval Tibetan politics. Lacking an extensive network of alliances and legal agreements, conflicts were pre-destined to take place, exhausting all parties involved.

Looking for the origins of these territories, it soon becomes clear that the borders of the myriarchy only to a minor extent overlap with the expansion and dissemination of the Tshal-pa as religious school (i.e. the Bar Tshal, sTod Tshal, etc.). Neither from the missionary presence of the Tshal-pa in East-Tibet, nor from West-Tibet can any notable territorial claim be observed; the Tshal-affiliated monasteries and hermitages here far more became integrated into the local political context, surviving there at the mercy of local patrons and rulers. These areas merely constituted “Tshal-pa land” as long as the transfer of presents and donations kept flowing from these branch monasteries and dependencies (and not least from their local patrons) to the monastic mother seat in sKyid-shod. This sort of revenue was not based upon any sound economical or fiscal basis, but merely reflected the given supraregional, ideal conditions, a circumstance that also had some bearings on the highest patron and authority – the imperial court. In Central Tibet too, to which the myriarchic territories were limited, no causal connection between the existence and the location of the mi sde territories and the expansion of the Tshal-pa bKa'-'brgyud-pa can be drawn. Additional districts in which a number of Bar Tshal monasteries can be localized (like Kong-po and Mal-gro) were situated outside the proper myriarchic borders. On the other hand, not all mi sde districts included the presence of a Tshal-pa branch institution. Still, territories naturally were based upon the processes behind the expansion of a religious throne, and it had been, so it appears, closely linked up with the activities of the founding figure.

In hindsight, we can conclude that the affiliation of the majority of mi sde territories to the monastic centre can be dated back to the time of Bla-ma Zhang and his personal pupils. A number of mi sde territories can be seen as a war trophy, the outcome of the achievements of the (in part violent) expansion – garbed as 'dul ba or “conversion” actions – of the Tshal-pa pioneers in the 1170–80’s. A number of mi sde districts are mentioned in connection with Bla-ma Zhang’s fightings in Central Tibet (like in Grva, Dol, 'Phrang-po, Sle’u-chung, mKhar-chu) and finally a part of the mi sde surely represents donations to Tshal of former appanage districts. The sources do mention other war-scenes like gDos-pa (in sKyid-shod), lCang-rgyab (i.e. lCang/lJang of sKyid-smad) or 'Ol-kha, which however should later not surface as Tshal-pa estates. Did these areas constitute battlefields where Tshal-pa was defeated? Representatives of local ruling houses from areas of Central Tibet, in particular Grib, from Kha-rag, 'Phrang-po and bSam-yas were war companions – or brothers in arms – to Zhang and his lieutenant Dar-ma gzhon-nu. With the exception of bSam-yas (see above) they were registered as Tshal-pa mi sde districts and it can be surmised that we in a narrow sense are here dealing with districts that originally constituted the homelands of Zhang’s dAnapati.

Closely linked up with the process of the pacification and conversion of the land we should mention the measures (for the first time chronologically mentioned by Bla-ma Zhang) for the ritual sealing
of the territory (ri rgya klung rgva; lam rgva; cf. mKhas pa'i dga' ston 808; Deb sngon 836). It originally describes a physical barrier or delimitation drawn along Buddhist-ethical criteria set up in order to protect animals and living beings (mostly in form of a hunting ban), but both formed and served, at the same time, as a political mechanism to delimit the religious sphere of influence and allow access to resources (see also most recently the example of the g.Ya'-bzang lam rgva, which were defined by way of the connection to eight former phyi dar temples in g.Yo-ru; CFS Gyalbo et al. 78–80, 221–225). We are deplorably bereft of the distinct names of the Tshal-pa lam rgva, yet it may be surmised that they – similar to the case of the g.Ya'-bzang-pa – refer to strategically significant areas and / or spiritual sites of the master himself; accordingly they were located in the district of Zhang's sgrub gnas (foremost in Tshal and the SGrags area; Part I: fn. 62) or in the border areas of the "IHa-sa Mandala Zone" (sTod-lung-mda’, Dog-sde, Nyang-bran, Ba-lam, Grib), districts that later surfaced as Tshal-pa mi sde (Part I: Map 1). As already indicated, the activities of Bla-ma Zhang and his group must be seen in connection with the pacification of and mediation in the warring conflicts between the different phyi dar groups in the 12th century. It is certainly no surprise to see that in numerous Tshal mi sde we encounter the presence of former phyi dar temples and communities of the 11th century.

In the depiction concerning the appropriation of Tshal mi sde, one should not rule out the circumstance that a number of temples and religious and landed estates often were vacant in this period and the tradition of donating vacant seats and territories to a reputed master was common-place, tendered with a view to the hope that the religious center and its surrounding area would thereby witness a revitalization. We have already mentioned areas where the Tshal-pa presence or relationship is less evident, like for instance g.Ye, gNyal, Dvags or the districts of Ya[r]-'brog. Unclear is also the history of the Tshal-pa mi sde estates in Phyong-po or rGya[s]-sman. In question of the mi sde of Grva, Dol and gZhung (three districts, commonly treated as a geographical unity, in northern lHo-kha regularly frequented by Zhang and his group), age-old clan connections to Zhang sNa-nam (i.e. Bla-ma Zhang’s family lineage) may have played a role; the sNa-nam clan had been awarded with the three areas as appanage in late dynastic time according to later sources (Part I: fns. 11, 15, 423), the original sNa-nam clan territories in Central Tibet were located in sTod-lung-mda’.

Territorial gains secured by the Tshal-pa that probably fell in post-Bla-ma Zhang times took place under the 3rd dbon i dpon sa Ye-shes 'byung-gnas (tenure ca. 1227–1230), when “many settlements” (yul grong) of sKyid-smad were conquered. These areas are defined or referred to by way of the still nebulous toponymic or hegemonic concept of srid ma hzhi hu hrigyad i.e. “Dominion of the Four Mothers and Eight Sons.” It remains unclear to which Tshal-pa domain this conquest or annexation refers, but arguably the above-mentioned IHa 'Brug of sKyid-smad.

We can conclude that the borders of the later myriarchy refer back to the founding phase of the monastic residence. The edict issued in their favour thus roughly [re-)confirmed a territorial or manorial estate structure already prevailing prior to its issue. The particular structure is to an appreciable extent nothing but the footprint once set down by the early Tshal-pa and by their charismatic founder, visible traces that had been left behind in their search for land and resources to fulfil their ambitious and zestful religious ideal of erecting a polity.
Once the *khri skor* was established, the actual extended division of each myriarchy into minor units of chiliarchies and centurions etc., we can adduce from numerous decrees and edicts, albeit only a fraction of these have come down to us. A large number doubtless will be available once hitherto sealed archives in Tibet will be opened. We can adduce that a flurry of correspondence (kept in archives in character as so-called *gham* or local rescript) which admonished a number of transgressors to refrain from misappropriating access to land, water and grassing (*sa chu rtsva gsum*) and to refrain from misusing rights adhering to the territories of Lo-phu dgon-pa (i.e. the territory of ancient Nyen-kar in present-day sTag-rtse county; cf. Introduction, fn. 7; Part I: fn. 411) under the jurisdiction of Tshal. The rescripts stipulate the consequences to be meted out to those who continue violating the privileges and rights of the monasteries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tshal-pa Rescript of 1337 A.D.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>rGyal po'i lungs gis</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>smon lam rdo rje'i gham</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>mtshal pa la gtogs pa'i chen po dbon rgyud</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>dpon skya yul gyi gzhis kha ba tha sdu'd</em></td>
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<td><em>'grim 'drul byed mi</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>mdzo rta gsan pa</em></td>
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<td><em>lha sde</em></td>
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<td><em>mgo'a lung pa</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>mi sde rnam la zlo ba</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>lo phu dgon pa ba</em></td>
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<td><em>'di pa lugs dang mthun par sdo pa la</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>khong dang snagar nas dbang pa'i sa chu rtsva gsum ci dang</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>ci 'phrog ma'i then</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>snagar btags pa'i bzhi</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>yi ge la log pa byed na khrim lugs bzhi rtsa</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ra byed pa gseb tshangs la sogs khrim dang</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>gal ba'i bha ma bi byed</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>glang lo zla ha lnga ba'i tshes bco bryad la Yung bu mdar bris.</em></td>
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<th>Tshal-pa Rescript of 1338 A.D.</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>rGyal po'i lungs gis</em></td>
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<td><em>kun dga' rdo rje'i gham</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>mtshal pa la gtogs pa'i chen po dbon rgyud</em></td>
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<td>*dpon skya sa yul gyi gzhis kha ba</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>'grim 'drul byed mi</em></td>
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<td><em>mdzo rta bsdan pa lha sde</em></td>
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<td><em>mgo lung pa</em></td>
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<td><em>mi sde rnam la zlo ba</em></td>
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<td><em>lo phu dgon pa ba</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>'di pa lugs dang 'thun par bsdod pa la</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>khong rang dang snagar nas dbang pa'i sa chu rtsva ga de ci</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>dang ci ma 'phrog ma'i then</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>sdad btags pa'i 'dod mchu</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>sling kho dang</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>phyug lug la khyu 'dzin skyi</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>'khrul brdal po spus sgyur ma byed</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>snagar nas med pa'i khrul dang rtsva shing</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>'ug lag ma len</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dbang che dang shi mong ma brtson par bde'a</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>bar bsdod du bcug</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>di skad zlas bzhin vig ge log pa byed na rtsva ra byed pa yin</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>'di pas kyang rang la btogs pa'i bzhani gseb tshangs la sogs</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>khrim dang</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>gal ba ma byed</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>stag lo zla ba buc gcig pa'i tshes bco bzhi la gung thang nas.</em></td>
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17 For the technical terms and their use in Tibeto-Mongol diplomacy, see Everding 2006.
Sigla and Abbreviations:

- = districts and estates in GY
- = the Tshal-pa mi sde in GT (see also Sat-Map 1)
- = Tshal-pa mi sde which in GY are listed as unrelated districts
- G = Tshal Gung-thang
- B = 'Bri-gung (centre of the 'Bri-gung khri skor = 'Bri-kung bod-'brog gnyis in GY)
- S = sTag-lung (monastery and district [GY])
- T = Thang-po-che (GY; also listed as khri skor or -stong-skor)
- N = sNa-dkar-rtse (centre of the Yar-'brog khri skor; GY: Ya[r]-'brog leb ni bcu drug)

P = gDan-sa-mthil (spiritual centre of the Phag-mo gru-pa)
- K = 'Tshur-phu (centre of the Karma-pa)
- BG = Byang sGal-sde tsho-nga
- D = Dar-yul
- L = IHa-pa and
- P = sPras
- T = the Tshal-pa mi sde of sTod-lung
- K = Kha-rag-pa (in GT and GY)
- N = sNa-dkar-rtse (centre of the Yar-'brog khri skor; GY: Ya[r]-'brog leb ni bcu drug)
- G = dGung-dkar (i.e. Gong-dkar; GY)
- Y? = Yar-gtogs-pa'i Gru-gu-sgang (GY; exact location unknown)
- C? = sKul ['Ching-ru (Tshal-pa mi sde in GT [='Ching-phu-pa of GY?]; exact location unknown)
- PH = 'Phyong-rgyas (i.e. 'Phyong-po in 'Chong-po [and?] rGyas-sman of GT; see Part 1, fn. 426)
- YG = Yar-'brog sGa[ng]'dra (= part of the Yar-'brog sgang-mam-gsum of GT?)

- = the eastern Tshal-pa estates of gNyal Dvags (in E gNyal Dags of GT); not inserted on the map

Map 1. The administrative districts (and district centres) of dBus during the Yuan-Sa-skya period as listed in GY and the Tshal pa mi sde of GT (see also Part I: Map 1)
3. Qubilai Qan, the first Yuan Emperor and a patron of Tshal Gung-thang

4. The seal of a Tibetan myriarch. The example of the 'Bri-gung khri skor seal

6. The Phag-gru khri dpon and later sovereign of Tibet Ta'i si tu Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan. The statue made of 'medicinal clay' is kept in the Potala
APPENDIX IV
1. 'Phrin-las rgyal-po alias Pehar in his monkey manifestation (see below fn. 116)

   The stone-head (H = ca. 22cm) is kept in Lo dgon-pa, Upper sKyid-shod (2007)
IV. IN THE GARDEN OF THE WHITE MARE
Encounters with History and Cult in Tshal Gung-thang

Guntram Hazod

1. INTRODUCTION

In Tshal Gung-thang it is claimed that the rgyal po Pehar (Pe-har), the protector from Tshal, advised Bla-ma Zhang to build his monastery (Tshal Yang-dgon) on a mountain. Zhang ignored this and "built it near the sKyid-chu, in the same [topographical] position as the Jo-khang." This decision, which was intended to signify a conceptual comparison with the IHa-sa shrine is considered in the local tradition to be one of the "three mistakes" of Bla-ma Zhang (below fn. 86). At the same time, the episode indicates a basic conflict between the Tshal-pa founder and the protector Pehar, whom we also encounter in later contexts of the Tshal-pa history. Here one has to be aware that in the local accounts the name Gung-thang Bla-ma Zhang often stands for the Tshal-pa community as a whole, as if the fate of the history of the monastic centre is embodied in the figure of the founder. A conflict between "Zhang" and Pehar is also supposed to be the background to the Gung-thang fire of 1546, which allegedly was perpetrated by Pehar as an act of revenge.

How are such accounts to be read? What role does Pehar play, who here apparently withdraws himself from his protective function with regard to the monastic centre? Such questions are simultaneously basic issues related to the meaning and function of the "cultic tradition," in the area of which such accounts should be categorized. In a condensed form, they convey a construction of history whose details the bearers of the oral history often do not know (at least not any longer). Like a myth, they form a coded memory of history and a document that often can be understood only through a knowledge of the broader historical context. There are several such forms of recollection and traces of memory in the accounts on Tshal Gung-thang that indicate particular turning points in the religious and political history of the monastic centre. The story of the setting fire to Gung-thang is one of them.

The following chapters deal with various aspects of the cultic history of Tshal Gung-thang, which are to be found in the traditions of the protector gods and other forms of symbolic representation around the founding figures of Tshal Gung-thang. Several elements of a cult specific to Tshal-pa have survived into the present day (and are to some extent still observable on site) inasmuch as they

1 Traditions such as that of the Pehar account are part of an "oral literature" that does not necessarily come from the field of an oral tradition in the narrower sense. The chronicles and historiographical literature are full of oral accounts that they quote and occasionally the authors themselves in their own descriptions follow the methods of oral literature, which is characterized by condensation and quasi-mythologization (on the meaning of the term oral literature, see e.g. ESCA 404). Conversely, local oral traditions reproduce descriptions (and interpretations) of events that originated at the writing desk of a historiographer. In this case, they convey the interests of a superior institution and power that at some time in history intervened in a particular (cultic) account and dominated it. Historical analysis of local stories of this type therefore necessarily always lead to a question, the answer to which is usually not to be found in these stories themselves: whose voice is talking in these (or better, through these) accounts?
were continued after the incorporation of the monastic centre into the lHa-sa central government (17th cent.), even if in a modified form and enriched with elements from the later (lHa-sa) history such as can be seen in the important annual festival of the Gung-thang Flower Offering. This also includes some significant references to the older lHa-sa and an adaptation of certain elements from the royal period, so that in such traditions we ultimately also find the connection to a much "broader history."

Linked to a discussion of these interconnections between history and cult are questions of the religious geography of the lHa-sa valley and questions related to the older historical context of this part of sKyid-shod as well as of the Tshal-pa districts in a narrow sense. Thus, it will be revealing to follow here the history of the old (partly now obsolete) toponyms of Tshal, such as the place names of Tsha-ba-gru, Ngan-lam, rTa-mo-ra or of Tshal itself, which we here shall call the "Garden of the White Mare." It relates to the mount of the Bla-ma Zhang disciple Dar-ma gzhon-nu, warrior and co-founder of Tshal Gung-thang and the first in the line of the secular rulers of Tshal.

The first point we turn our attention to is Grib – as we know, the country of the Tshal-pa dpon chen of mGar – who followed the ruling lineage of Dar-ma gzhon-nu in the 13th century.

2. The Grib valley in the evening sun as seen from lHa-sa (2002)
2. Grib and the Lha-sa Mandala Zone

Grib, the valley due south of IHa-sa, is the home of the local god and powerful IHa-sa protector Grib rDzong-btsan. His mountain residence is the sKyid-shod Grib rDzong-btsan gi ri, a foothill of the holy Bum-pa-ri, one of the cardinal mountains of the IHa-sa valley (fn. 11). The locals say that it was once the custom if one approached IHa-sa from the west to dismount from one’s horse at rKyang-thang, a plain to the west of the city, and salute the god of Grib. As a sign of respect, the bells were also removed from horses and pack-animals. A later Dalai Lama is supposed to have ignored this rule, as a result of which his horse threw him from the saddle at rKyang-thang. It was then decided to bring the wrathful Grib rDzong-btsan down from his mountain seat. A temple that was no longer visible from IHa-sa was built for him, and since then the god has lived here in his peaceful form. The story relates to the time of the Eighth Dalai Lama, who came from gTsang and had his soul temple in sKyid-rtsi (also called tshal) klu-sdings, adjacent to rKyang-thang.2 In 1790, in Grib, he founded the Tshe-mchog-gling (the monastery built for his tutor Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan, later classified as one of the IHa-sa ‘i Gling-bzhis; cf. Smith 2001: 174f., 312). Apparently this was associated with a particular pacification of the wrathful god of Grib, connected with the building of a separate temple.

The present-day Grib rDzong-btsan Iha-khang (also called rDzong-btsan sku mkhar) is a new building that has been built higher up on the eastern side of the valley. The ritual custodianship of this temple is traditionally taken over by the bla ma from the neighbouring Tshe-mchog-gling.3 For the inhabitants of the valley, Grib rDzong-btsan is the yul lha (territorial god) of their land, the settlements of which were originally divided into three – today four – grong tsho (village communities) across which the households are distributed (originally 60 families it is said). Each grong tsho has its own yul lha, whose places are identified with one of the mountains on the western side of the valley.4 Alongside the common yul lha rDzong-btsan, there is also a central klu (water spirit), the Pho-rog lci-med, from whose residence it is said all water comes and to whom all the family klu are subject.5 The residence relates to the large irrigation pond in the middle of the old orchard of Pho-rog gling-kha (see below).

Grib rDzong-btsan is under the specific care of 12 men, the sku tshab, who act as assistants or acolytes to the god during the annual festivals, in particular the Gung-thang Me tog mchod pa (below Chap. II.1). The position has long been passed down through the same twelve families, who like the others among the 60 families trace their roots back to the time of Srong-btsan sgam-po. This was also the time when their god came to Grib. It is said that rDzong-btsan was a present

2 Cf. Richardson 1993: 91, 97. Also sKyid-tshal klu-sdings. The temple houses the Dalai Lama’s birth god (khrungs lha), which is Li-byin Ha-ra, a divinity who appears both in connection with Pehar as well as with Tshangs-pa dkar-po. Incidentally, in post-16th-century period, sKyid-tshal klu-sding (in rKyang-thang) was both the location where arriving guests were received and parting guests were seen off by their official lHa-sa hosts. Cf. also sMin-skyid bSod-nams stobs-rgyas 1991: 15.

3 The monastery does not contain an image of the god, however there is supposed to be an image of the (old?) wrathful form of Grib rDzong-btsan in the Tshe-mchog-gling monastery of Dharamsala.

4 A-ma-la (= yul lha of the first and fourth grong tsho), Kyi-gling lad-ma (second yul lha) and Zhang-lha rgyal-po. The grong tsho (and yul lha sub-units) are under the three rgan po (elders) who elect the Grib spyi can, the chief or head-man of Grib, every six years.

5 The name may derive from pho rog nor bu (hya rog nor bu, identical with pa vag risa pa), a form of the Aquilaria agallocha Roxb medicinal plants (a ga ru or lci med); cf. TMM 142a, 157a, b, 126a, 299b.
from the Chinese princess Wen-cheng (Mun-chan Kong-co/jo), who was brought to Tibet by the great councillor mGar sTong-btsan yul-zungs (d. 667) as a bride for the Tibetan emperor.  After his arrival the god is then supposed to have settled on the “IHa-sa’i Grib kyi rDzong-ri,” after which the deity is named.

The rDzong-btsan-ri rises on the eastern side of the valley above the sKyid-chu. Behind it lies Bumpa-ri. According to the locals the name comes from the the fact that Kong-jo hid a bum pa (vase, one of the aśtāmangala, Eight Auspicious Signs), or, as the textual tradition purports, because the mountain resembles a vase. This refers to the well-known story of the geomantic classification of the IHa-sa landscape initially designed by Kong-jo, in which, among other things, the aśtāmangala

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6 In 641 A.D. She died in 680 A.D.; according to a local account of sKyems-stong of Dvags-po, she is said to be entombed in one of the bang so of the grave field of Slob in sKyems-stong (see also fn. 70).

7 For a representation of the Grib story, see also Tsering Gyalbo 2005: 350f.; cf. also Grib btsan rdo rje mchog gtor chog (GTs 6a–b). In this prayer text, rDzong-btsan is described as a divinity of the btsan or klu btsan type, who in his function as a Buddhist protector has the title of Das gsum rgyal ba’i btsan bsrgun chen po srid gsum srog bdag rDzong btsan dgra lha’i rgyal po. “rDzong-btsan, the King of the Warrior Gods who functions as Great Protector of the Doctrine of the Jina of the Three Times and who is a Master of Life in the Sphere of the Three Worlds;” GTs 2b1; cf. also Tshangs pa mchod bstod 73af. In the same prayer text he is also addressed as Grib-btsan, a divinity known from the lists of the btsan rgyod ’bar ba spun dbun. Another list mentions the sKyid-shod rDzong-btsan. Cf. Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1975: 171–74.

A Grib-btsan is, among others, in the circle of the protectors of the gNam-mtsho area, with its home on the srib (shadow) side of the lake (i.e. the Sibs/Grib-la gdong-can shore side, which lies in the shadow of gNyan-chen Thang-la; Bellezza 1997: 63, 120). Grib also occupies the north-facing, shadow side (grib, srib) in the IHa-sa valley. Under the name sKyid-shod rDzong-btsan Zangs-khrab-can (the “rDzong btsan of sKyid-shod with the Copper Harness”), he appears in the group of the “gzi bdag of the four great forests” (Shing-chen-bzhi’i gzi-bdag) (cf. Nebesky-Wojkowitz, op. cit., 265f.). Within sKyid-shod the deity appears among other things in connection with the Phag-mo gru-pa outpost of Bye-ri sTag-rtse-rdzong (Part I: fn. 542), which is given in DL6 424.8 as rDzong-btsan-po Byi (= Bye)-ri sTag-rtse. The account of the bringing of the rDzong-btsan from China is related to the story of the Chinese protector god Guanyu (a manifestation of the legendary General Guandi; d. 219 A.D.) whose practice and worship is said to have entered Tibet in the 7th century. In this context, rDzong-btsan is addressed as Zhang-blon rDo-rje bDud’-dul, a deity who is described as the Tibetan form of Guanyu (cf. TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 167).

Grib represents only one of several places associated with the story of the deity’s arrival in Central Tibet. The other seats include Yar-lung Shel gyi brag-phug (i.e. the Shel-brag-ri), ‘Phyes kyi IHa-lung btsan-mkhar (perhaps referring to Phyos in lower ‘Phyong-po), Kong-po Bu-chu lHa-khang, sPug-ri Phug-mo-che-lung (in eastern Ya-lung) and rTse-chen-brag (i.e rTse-chen in Myang-stod?). In Yar-lung, the deity belongs to the protector gods of Khra’-brug (led by the divine couple Tshangs-pa dkar-po and dMag-zor rgyal-mo) and, with his seat on Mount Shel-brag, it holds at the same time a significant position in the religious landscape of the lower Yar-lung valley. See TF Sørensen and Hazod, op. cit., 167, 268ff. In Bu-chung] (like Khra’-brug, one of the the supporting temples of the IHa-sa Jo-khang, which were built according to the geomantic guidelines of the Kong-jo), rDzong-btsan is one of the temple srung ma, * and entrusted with guard of the temple treasure (accordingly the deity is here depicted with the key of the gter kha). In this western part of central Kong-po (i.e. the right side of the lower Nyang-chu, where Bu-chu is located), two further places associated with rDzong-btsan are to be found: according to the locals, he resides on a mountain in Upper rDzong-btsan, a small valley to the north of Bu-chu (in the lower part of this valley a modern cemetery is located, where rich Chinese people from Ba-yi (the capital of the sNying-khari Prefecture) used to be buried, a possible reference to rDzong-btsan in his manifestation of Guanyu). Further to the east, in Jo-mo rDzong (opposite Ba-yi), the Jo-mo yul lha called A-pho gDong-btsan is identified by the locals as Grib rDzong-btsan (see also below fn. 21).

* I.e. Dam-can rDo-rje legs-pa, Kong-btsan De-mo, ma mo Ekajati, gZa’ Khyab’-jug (Rahula), rDzong-btsan (Zhang-blon rDo-rje bdud’-dul), bTsan-ma bcu-gnyis.

* Kong-jo’s role as the wise woman and nag rtsis geomancer is an invention of the later Srong-btsan sgam-po vita
areconfiguratively associated with several prominent parts of the landscape on the four sides of the valley. Grib represents the southern horizon of this "IHa-sa Mandala" Zone, which is marked by four protective mountains. In the earliest model, alongside the mountain of Grib, Shun gyi brag to the west (rock of Shun; a foothill of the dGe-'phel-ri behind 'Bras-spungs). Dog-ste IHa-ri to the north (between Nyang-bran Pha-bong-kha and Dog-bde) and a mountain to the east, variously referred to as Ba-lam Grum-pa-ri, Ngan-lam Gron-pa-ri or Grog-po-ri. This eastern demarcation of the field or zone is less precisely identifiable. The name Ba-lam, however, makes it clear that the fourfold field stretches as far as the core area of the middle of the sKyid-chu riverland and also includes the area of Tshal Gung-thang. A number of other toponyms are mentioned in connection with Kong-jo's instructions for the pacification of the area, which by and large can all be located in the vicinity of these mountains (Graph 1; Map 1).

Appendix IV: In the Garden of the White Mare

literature and the position rather apply to the second Kong-jo, i.e. Kim-sheng Kong-co, the alleged consort of Mes Ag-tshoms and presumably actual founder of the Ra-mo-che temple, who arrived in IHa-sa (at the place "Deer Park of Ra-sa") in 710 A.D. See most recently TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 172f.

There is no evidence in the literature of the term IHa-sa Mandala as a synonym for the IHa-sa valley but in the geomantic classification it is exactly this design that is meant. It represents something like the (concentric) extension of the IHa-sa'i dkyil khor mhit/steng, the latter a designation for the inner courtyard of the Ra-sa' Phrul-snang. In the literature, one occasionally finds the form IHa-sa da dpyad also used in the sense of a geographical term relating to the greater IHa-sa district (cf. App. II: fn. 93; Hazod 2004: fn. 3).

On the Shun cave complex, namely Shel-dkar sgrub-phug, an important pilgrimage site in the Newar Buddhist tradition of Kathmandu, see Akester 2000; see also App. II and Table V.7 in this volume.

The details of the various places vary in the sources. With regard to this tradition one can distinguish between two versions: the related versions of the Mani bka 'bum (MK 215b2-222a5), Ka khol ma (KK 213.2-215.11) and Nyang ral chos 'byang (NC 234.5-235.9), and the largely identical details in the rGyal rabs gsal (GS 132.3-133.14) and mKhas pa'i dga' ston (KK 221.2-222.7), on which the Fifth Dalai Lama orients himself in his Bod kyi deb ther (BD 38.20-39.23); cf. also his IHa ldan dkar chag (HD 2002 ed., 5.20-6.12; Akester, in Alexander 2005: 286f.). In addition, see the somewhat less detailed account in mKhas pa'i lde'u chos 'byung 277f., 281. The classical description can be summarized in four sections, on which the list of toponyms in Graph 1 is based.

A The establishment of the area as centre and periphery (= the hills of IHa-sa and the place of the Jo-khang and Ra-mo-che in the centre, plus the four mountains on the sides; according to Kong-jo's sa dpyad examination the whole area is occupied by hostile powers (sa dgra) embodied in various types of Iha srin sde brgbad, which converge here. The neutralization of these sites by means of placing particular symbols – caitya, jewels, lotus, phallus, stone lion, i.a.) changed them into auspicious sites (the appropriate emblems are displayed on the Jo-khang pagoda roof; cf. Richardson 1998: 235).

B The geographical allocation of the astamangala

C The identification of the four astrological animals of the Chinese tradition (as is known, the IHa-sa sa dpyad (Ls) does not follow here the Chinese model (Cm) of the four cardinal animals; Ls: grey tiger (E), turquoise dragon (S = g. Yu-'brug sngon-mo = sKyid-chu [alas Kyi-chu sngon-mo, KK 313.8]), red bird (W), black turtle (N); Cm: spring dragon (E), summer bird (S), autumn tiger (W), winter turtle [N]).

D The naming of the four ore-mountains around IHa-sa.

The listing of Graph I follows the description in GS (and KG), the details of the other versions are given in brackets. It should be noted in this connection that the different names within one geomantic group do not necessarily also respectively mean the same place. One example of these inconsistencies concerns group B of the eastern toponyms where we have the names Mal-grong gi rgyab ri (identified by Akester (in Alexander 2005: 293) with the mountain of the Re-chung/phyung-ri nunnery north-east of IHa-sa), Brag-dkar[-brag] (= presumably the site of Brag-dkar-zhol; see Part I: fn. 542), gDos-pa'i brag (location unknown, but see Part I: fn. 124) and Ra-ka' i brag; the latter is the northern ore-mountain and hence wrongly placed here. On the particular places, see the numerous references in TBH Sørensen 253-261; see...
NYANG BRAN/DOG-SDE

SHUN/STOD-LUNG MDA'

LHASA

GRIB

BA-LAM (NGAN-LAM)

S

TSHAL GUNG-THANG

EAST
A  a) Ba-lam Grum-pa-ri (var.: Ngan-lam Gron-pa-ri; Grog-po-ri) = place of hostile forces (sa dgra) resembling an upright water demon (> it should be countered by a conch shell)
b) Bye-ma-lung-stod(-ri) (var.: Byang-stod Se-ng]-phug; Sros-pa'i n), in the [S]E = genitals of a (black) srin mo (> it should be countered with/opposed by a linga of Mahesvara)
c) Ban-khos Gung-bu-ri(-Bang-ba-ri, Bun-ba-ri [loc. in Shing-tshang]) = mountain resembl. a caitya
B  Mal-grong gi [rgyab]-ri (var. gDos-pa'i brag: Brag-dkar na'i brag [sic]; Ra-ka'i brag) = [eyes of the] golden fish (gers nyan; *suvarnamatya [= eye of Buddha; the tongue (= lotus) is placed by the sources in the western or southern places; exception NC: shar rTibs kyi ri)
D  Jo-mo Ze[-ze] (var.: Dog-te sGo-phu [= the norther toponym Dog-te, hence wrongly placed here]) > iron

SOUTH
A  a) Grib-mda' (var. [sKar-chung]) g.Yug-ma-ri = black scorpion (> opp. by a Garuda Ke-ru [stupa]; the Ke-ru ([b]Se-ru, Ka-ru) stupa is also ass. with the North or with the place of dGa`-ldan g.yi tshal/mtsho; MK; KK; cf. note 42 of App. II)
b) Grib kyi rgyab ri (back mountain of Grib) = heap of jewels
c) Gla-ba-tshal (of [S/SW]) = assembly of the 'dre (and the 'u rtags)
B  a) Grib kyi 'khyag-khrom (var. Grib Se-sgrom; Grib kyi 'Khyugs-rum; 'Phan-dar-ri; sPyan-ri; lDong-btsan-ri) = [sound giving] conch (dung; *sikhala)
b) Grib rDzong-btsan-ri (i.e. a part of Mount Bum-pa-ri) = vase (bum pa; *kalaśā)
c) rDzong-btsan-ri = lotus (padma; the latter also associated with other directions)
d) [g.Yug-ma-ri (of sKar-chung or Grib-mda'] = a mountain dude west of Grib = knot (be'u; *vatsa)
C  [sKyid-lchu (var. gTsang-chu/chab)] = turquoise-blue dragon (g.yu 'brug sngon mo)
D  lCags-kha-ri > gold

WEST
A  a) Shun gyi brag (var. Shun gyi brag Te'[u]-rte) = black demon on the guard (> opposed by a stone caitya) (var. = [mountain in the west] = black frog and black demon on the guard > mchod reten Se-ru/Ke-ru)
b) sTod-lung Brang-phu'i ri = bowl (dung phor)
B  a) [sTod-lung-mda'] Bran[g]-phu'i spang (var. 'Phan-dkar (sic); HD: rMog-lcog brag ri [acc. to Akester, it refers to the mGon-po-ri mountain in sNye-thang]) = victory banner (rgyal mtshan; *dvaja)
b) sTod-lung-mda' Brang-phu'i spang = wheel (khor lo; *ekra)
c) mDangs-mkhar gyi brag (var. Denga/-gDomg)-mkhar/dkar giy/brag) = tongue of the fish/lotus
C  Shun gyi brag [te'u] (Shun gyi brag-dmar rt'e'u-gdong; gDong-mkhar gyi brag) = red cock (hya dmar po)
D  La-gdong-ri (-brag) (var. Shug-pa-gdong; lHo-stengs; La-stod(-rto); Da-dong) > silver

NORTH
A  a) Mountain between Nyang-bran and Dogs-[-s]te (-[b]/s/ste) = elefant in battle (> opp. by a stone lion)
b) dGe-te (-Dogs-te) lHa-phu'i ri (var. Dogs-ste lHa-ri) = disclosing lotus (padma kha phyre ha)
B  Nyang-bran 'Phan-dkar giy ri (behind Se-ra monastery) = umbrella (gdu; *chattrā)
C  [Nyang-bran] Pha-bong-kha = black tortoise (rus shal nag po)
D  Dog-sde Ra-ga'i brag (i.e. the site of the Ra-kha-brag hermitage in Dog-sde) = copper

CENTRE ('O-thang the lake = heart blood of the srim mo gan rkyal etc.)

Graph 1. The toponyms of the lHa-sa Mandala Zone
also Chab-spel 1989: 197; HSLG Vol. 6, passim; on the sa dpyad system, see the anthology Sa dpyad phyogs sgrigs 1996. For a discussion of the eastern toponyms, see most recently Hazod 2004.

The descriptions of the IHa-sa sa dpyad chronologically precede the account of the srin mo gun rkyal border-suppressing temples, which in their classical form of twelve plus one temple are to be seen as it were as an extension of the IHa-sa mandala. These accounts certainly essentially form a product of the early post-imperial period, even if there may also be older models whose beginnings, however, are rather to be connected with the early 8th cent. and the history of the second Kong-jo (Kim-sheng Kong-co) than with the founder phase of the 7th cent. (cf. TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 171ff.). The (post-dynastic) authors of the IHa-sa sa dpyad are not known, but they are all apparently to be assigned to the circle of representatives of the Avalokitesvara (and Snong-bsan sgam-po) cult, which established itself in IHa-sa in connection with the re-occupation of the central temple. Here, the group of the IHa-sa sde bzhi, a term that relates to four religious communities and/or institutions around the central IHa-sa temples and, according to its name, itself reflects an early representation form of the quadripartite model of the IHa-sa sa dpyad. Occasionally, IHa-sa sde-bzhi also appears as a synonym for IHa-sa or the IHa-sa Mandala zone (cf. the form Dog-te sGo-phu (a toponym of the northern cardinal area) of IHa-sa sde-bzhi; see App. II: Chap. 1 of the present volume and Sørensen 2003). The IHa-sa sde bzhi repeatedly appear in the sources in connection with the political events immediately before the foundation of the Tshal-pa, among others also in allusion to their connection with the Avalokitesvara practice. As a place of spiritual practice, Grib evidently played a prime role, as did Grib rdZong-bsan who (together with dPal-ldan iha-mo) functioned as one of the primary IHa-sa protector in this period (see fn. 26).*

As far as the four cardinal territories of the IHa-sa sa dpyad are concerned, there is apparently a connection here with the local political structures of the IHa-sa valley. In the 11th cent., Ba-lam (or Gla(g[s] Ba-lam), in the imperial period the leading district in this section of the sKyid[d]-shod, formed a settlement of the Yum-brtan brgyud, likewise in Grib, before a branch of the mGar from lower sTod-lung occupied the land (see below; above and beyond this, the lower sTod-lung is considered to be an ancient territory of the sNa-nam (later Zhang's paternal lineage), namely Brang (also known as sNa-nam Brang) and gZong (cf. the dbang ris list in KG 187), although nothing more precise is known about the local political role of the clan in the 11th and 12th centuries). Shun, the cardinal mountain in the west, is considered to be the ancestral mountain of the gNyas, the lineage behind the gNyas hegemony in lower sKyid-shod (see App. II.; Table V. 7). No similar political connection is known for the north (Dog-sde/Nyang-bran) in this period. It is worth mentioning, however, that the Jo-mo Ze (Zi-ze) mountain east of Dog-sde, which is geographically positioned to the north as well as to the east, is evidently identical with the Iha (territorial god and ancestral deity) of the old pre-historic principality of sTod[-lung]-ro (see below fn. 61, 62). The geomantic selection of the IHa-sa Mandala toponyms here perhaps follows the tracks of an older political history of the country (see Hazod 2004).

A later classification speaks of the IHa-sa'ri R'i-chen-bzhis (or dBu kyi R'i-chen-bzhis, also 'Phags-pa'i R'i-bzhi) which to some extent refer to other mountains that serve the same function, namely the marking of an external protective zone around IHa-sa and its temples. These are sMin-drug rdza-ri (south east of Grib; it is seen as a manifestation of the Pleiades; cf. e.g. Karsten 1995: 124), Chos-rgyal Bla-ri (or Bum-pa-ri, in the south west), mount Jo-mo Zi-Zi in the east (opposite Gung-thang) and the above-mentioned dGe-'phel-ri (another tradition has Jo-mo Zi-Zi [E], sMin-drug rdza-ri [S], dGe-'phel dBu-rte (W), IHa-sa dBu-rte (N) (i.e. Dog IHa-ri of Graph 1); cf. e.g. HSLG Vol. 4: 1; dMangs srol 585; Hazod 2004: fn. 13). The border mountains are bla ri (chos rgyal bla ri or also "bla ri of the Tibetan people," see Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1975: 483) and considered the abbot of bTsan-ma goddesses (companions of the Ha-sa protectress dPal-ldan iha-mo), whose leaders (rDo-rje Grags-mo rgyal and rDo-rje g.Yu-sgron-ma) were associated with the institution of the bsTan-ma oracle with its residence next to 'Bras-spungs; see Havnevik 2002 and below fn. 101). This categorization of the four outer mountains finds its concentric continuation, so to say, in a range of toponographical and architectural groups of four in the immediate and external surroundings of Jo-khang, such as the

- "Four plains of IHa-sa' ([IHa-sa'] thang bzhi) (i.e. 'O-brgyal-thang [S], sKu-'bum-thang [E]), Tshes-gsum-thang (N), rKyang-thang na-kha [W])
- "Four Ridges of IHa-sa' (IHa-sa's sgang bzhi) (Thal-spungs-sgang, g.Yul-kha-, Sa-sbog and rJe-'bum-sgang): for the latter see Alexander 2005: 259–270
- "Four Springs" (chu mig bzhi) (gTun-khun chu-mig, 'Ja'-tshon chu-mig [N], Khang-dkar- and Drang-srong chu-
One comes across an early indication for this geographical classification of the 11–12th century in two well-known stories: The story of the arrival in lHa-sa of the princess (and “wise woman” Kong-jo), who appeared from the four points of the compass like a tetra-goddess, and the story of lHa-lung dPal-gyi rdo-rje, who after the assassination of King Glang-dar-ma magically disappeared or vanished towards the four points of the compass simultaneously. In these stories, the toponyms of the coming and of the flight are largely in the area of the external zone of the lHa-sa Mandala. They refer to the four “gates” through which one enters the holy field and can leave it again.

One of the western toponyms that is mentioned with the arrival story of Kong-jo is the plain of Dan-'bag (Dan-'bag-thang; Mani bka’ 'bum 215.2ff.; it refers to the area around gNas-chung and is identical with the place where Pehar (alias rDo-rje grags-ladan, sent from Tshal, later appeared (cf. Part I: fn. 574). The above-mentioned “salutation place” rKyang-thang belongs to Dan-'bag (cf. the form Dan-'bag rKyang-thang-sgang; Part I: sub-note of 574); it also represents one of

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* Cf. here the story of the Shangs-pa bKa' 'brgyud-pa sKyer-sgag-pa Chos kyi seng-ge (1154–1217 A.D.)’ in Deh sgon 863.13ff. and Shangs pa bla rabs 123ff.; in the search for Avalokitesvara instructions, he comes to lHa-sa and to the lHa-sa sde bzhis (in the 1170’s), who refer him to ‘Phags-pa lCe-sgom [Shes-rab seng-ge], a master of the Thugs-rje che-po practise and active in Grib. His seat there was a “small hut” (spyil chung), that sKyer-sgang-pa could see from Brag-lha Klu-phug gi thang (the latter possibly does not refer to the well-known cave temple in lHa-sa, but here stands for Klu-sbug, a position south-west of Jo-khang, which is mentioned in another context with a visible perception of Grib (Dzong-btsan, see below). The small hut is possibly a forerunner of the above mentioned Grib (Dzong-btsan temple; or perhaps more precisely it refers to the ancient Grib-ma’ lha-khang mentioned as the site where a Khasarpani statue commissioned by Klu-mes was kept before it was later brought to the gTsang-khang lho-ma aliis (Byams-pa mched-bzhis lha-khang), i.e. the southern principal chapel of the lHa-sa gtsug-lha-khang. See lHa ldan dkar chag 28.7–12 (2002 ed.). The same chapel houses the Ra-ma gi sa image (see below).

1 He is named after the monastery of sKyer-sgang which was the residence (and foundation?) of his uncle 'Bal Tshad-ma-pa, where later Chos- kyi seng-ge served as the 2nd abbot (cf. TF Sorensen and Hazod 2005: 163). The monastery is identified with the place of the later nunnery of Rva-skor-dgon in Upper sTod-lung. See Chos-’phel 2004: 112.

2 On the various versions of these stories, see TBH Sorensen 243, 431–435 and below fns. 15, 17.
the IHa-sa’i thang-bzhi (i.e. the western plain rKyang-thang na-kha; fn. 11) and thus should be listed among the groups of entrance toponyms. The southern approach area of the emanational Kong-jo was Grib,13 the northern was the ‘Phan-po sGo-la pass (in Dog-ste). The eastern toponym, however, is less precisely identifiable.14

Of dPal gyi rdo-rje’s four escape routes, the sources unanimously give Grib as the “real” place where the hero – disguised as a black demon – disappeared.15 In Grib-mtsho (i.e. the pond of Phorog gling-kha?), he is then supposed to have removed the black dye so that horse and rider appeared in white again. The name rTa-dkar-la, “White Horse Pass,” at the end of the valley is supposed to refer to the appearance of the white horse.16 As we know, the pursuers later found dPal gyi rdo-rje again in Brag Yer-pa, his meditation site north-east of IHa-sa, where the whole story started. It would be more likely that the escape route went through a northern or an eastern “gate” and not in the opposite (i.e. southern) direction. But here the route apparently follows a mythical geography in which Grib is ascribed to the underside and darkness, whose protection the killer of the sinful king (Glang-dar-ma) was seeking.” The two manifestations of the white and black heroes are the Iha gNam-thel dkar-po and the bdud Ya-zher-nag-po; behind these stands the bSam-yas protector Pehar,18 whom IHa-lung dPal-gyi rdo-rje, the abbot of bSam-yas,19 brought along, as it were, for his enterprise. We will return to this Pehar presence in sKyid-shod later.

13 Or bSe’i sgron-ma which corresponds to Grib Se-sgron of Graph 1.

14 The toponyms Mal-dro’i Zur-phug, rGya-rab-kha (rGya-mo-rab) and mKhar-sna’i-gdong are mentioned in this connection. Zur-phug is the gZi-sbug valley in eastern Mal-gro (cf. Hazod 2003); rGya-mo-rab perhaps means the site of bTsun-mo-tshal (see fn. 28); mKhar-sna-gdong is mentioned in rGyal rabs gsal as the place where the mKhar-brag lha-khang is located, a temple ascribed to Srong-btsan sgam-po’s wife Mong-bza’ Khri-lcam and a site which is also closely associated with King Mes Ag-tshorns and his period: its exact location in the IHa-sa valley remains uncertain; see TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 18; 199; on mKhar-brag. see also TBH Sørensen 243, 592–594.

15 Also Grib bSe-sgron gyi phu (fn. 13); see also HLSG Vol 6: 48–50; the other sites are given as dGa’-mo-gdong (E), Shun (W) and mDongs-mkhar-gdong (N) (the latter appears to refer to gDong-mkhar in lower sTod-lung, hence wrongly placed here; it is usually ’Phan-po sGo-la which represents the northern zone). See Map 1. There exists also the tradition which only speaks of three locations: Drang-srong Srin-po-ri’i sna, Grib bSe-sgron gyi phu-ru/phur, and the not closer identified Than/Thal-mo rdo-ling. See Hazod 2004: fn. 49. A site related to the dPal gyi rdo-rje legend in the IHa-sa valley is the IHa-lung ri-khrod behind gNas-chung-ri (see Chos’-phel 2004: 56f.). As already noted by Sørensen (in TBH 433), the various names of the black and white manifestations of IHa-lung mentioned in the sources refer to Pehar, the protector of IHa-lung dPal gyi rdo-rje’s monastery (i.e. bSam-yas).

16 According to the local popular etymology, the name Grib also comes from this story, from disappearance into the twilight (hrih hrib).

17 Here perhaps geographic circumstances are mixed with the mythographical conception of a light-dark dichotomy. A (visualized) mandala forms the framework of the tale that significantly has its origin in Yer-pa. As the life-pole (yashti) of the Ra-sa’i ‘Phrul-snang, it is the ideal place for the spiritual entry into the IHa-sa mandala; as argued elsewhere (Hazod 2004), the latter should also be read as a “Glang-dar-ma mandala,” supported by the fact that in the vicinity of at least three of the four refuges there are Glang-ma places (i.e. Glang-so in Brang-phu, the site rGyal-po Glang-dar-ma in lDan-ma (below fn. 90) and the Glang-dar-ma hill in lower Nyang-bran; Fig. 4a, b; App. V: Fig. 50) that may be connected to this story. This may be the background behind the fourfold appearance of the hero, who kills the chos rgyal in the centre (i.e. in front of the Jo-khang), briefly appears on the four sides, to disappear again “unseen in the darkness” as the locals of the four areas tell the pursuers (the version in lDe’u 2 368 mentions the “old woman“ (rgan mo) here, behind whom we can suppose there is a manifestation of the (tetra-) Iha mo). See Hazos 2004: 36f.

18 Cf. TBH Sørensen 432, 434; Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1975: 97–98.

19 TBH Sørensen 431.
On the return journey to Tibet, the minister mGar sTong-btsan yul-zungs and the young princess arc supposed to have fallen in love. In Grib it is said that the jealous king then banned his minister to Grib for three years. The place where the minister stayed relates to a remarkable old ruin in the village above Tshe-mchog-gling. The locals call it mGar-tshang (the mGar house; below, Fig. 5). Next to it (to the west) there was a second ruin, which has now disappeared. The two buildings were the summer and winter palaces of the minister’s family. In the period of his banishment, a black bird regularly appeared bringing the minister gtrot ma as food, which were put down on the roof of the Jo-khang. The still current custom of the inhabitants of Grib buying specially prepared gtrot-ma at the Jo-khang every year, which they then take home to eat, must be seen in this context. They do this because “this is a meal blessed by bloh po mGar.” They are thereby expressing their bond to the great minister of the king, a bond considered by them to be just as close as that with their yul lha Grib rDzong-btsan.

On this legend, see TBH Sorensen 242.
To our knowledge there is no reference in the sources of a relationship of the great councilor’s family with Grib, and probably these associations have their origin in the post-dynastic history of the country.21 At the beginning of the 12th century, a branch of the mGar lineage that goes back to

21 In his function as chief administrator of Tibet proper, sTong-rtse-sgrungs (sTong-bsam yul-bzungs), a descendant of the central Tibetan branch of the mGar (App. V: Table 1.2), is mentioned in connection with various dynastic places; in the region of dBus-ru these include inter alia places in and around sNying-drung (sNying-grong in ‘Dam-gzung county), in Mong of Upper sTod-lung, the place ‘Gor-ti (location unknown; perhaps identical with the Sho-ma-ra of dBus-ru-lung, see Introduction), or Ris-pu where the minister died (the latter probably refers to the Ris-phu opposite the dynastic residence place of Mer-k[he] in dBus-ru-lung); see Hazod, ‘King Mer-khe’). For the period of his sons, Bya-tshal of sGregs (sGrags) is mentioned as the birthplace of the mGar, presumably one of several settlements of the clan in the imperial period (cf. Richardson 1998: 34). The Blon po bka’i thang yig 436.17 gives Ba-gor [of sNye-mo] as the home of the lineage of the “five mGar ministers” [of the imperial period]; it is also mentioned in the mGar gdung brgyud representation in sMon lam rdo rje rnam thar as the seat of a mGar of the 8th cent. who occupied here the post of a yul dpön (see App. V: Table 1.2). One tradition has sTod-lung Ram-pa (west of sKyor-mo-lung, Part I: fn. 369, Fig. 70a) as the birthplace and family seat of the sTong-rtsang yul-zungs, presumably a projection of later circumstances. According to GT, Ram-pa is the place where the brother line of rGyal-le settled in the 12th century. The mGar clan is first mentioned in the sources in connection with the principality of Ngas-po (later ‘Phan-yul), where a minister came from this lineage. The village mGar-yul in the Ra-ma valley of Upper ‘Phan-yul where ruins described by the locals as the residence and birthplace of blon po mGar perhaps go back to this ancient mGar presence in ‘Phan-yul (Fig. 7). This mGar-yul is also locally described as the place where the minister started his mission to invite the Chinese Princess to the Tibetan Court (at that time Srong-btsan sgam-po had his residence at the neighbouring place of the later Ra[g]-ma Byams-khang; the area corresponds to the ancient Za-gad district where the ‘Phan-yul Za-mo-sgang (Za-mo-ra) is to be located, the latter known as the place where Srong-btsan sgam-po passed away; see Part I: fn. 670; Hazod, ‘King Mer-khe’, fn. 18). There is a range of mGar places in the local tradition of Central Tibet (m’Gar-grong, mGar-yul, mGar-lung). Some of them are described as the birthplace and/or residence of the minister, as in ‘Phan-yul, or they are described as former workshops of the smith (mgar) sTong-bsam.
5. 6. 7. 8. Four "mGar sites" of Central Tibet which are associated with blon chen mGar and his lineage:
5: The mGar tshang of Grib (2000)
6: mGar khang village in eastern Mal-gro
7: mGar-yul in 'Phan-yul (with the ruins of the mGar palace on the mountain)
8: mGar-tshang in upper sTod-lung (close to lDing-kha dgon, blon chen mGar’s summer residence)
sTong-btsan yul-zungs settled in Grib. This was during the time of the descendant rGyal-le, the father of mGar rGyal-ba 'byung-gnas, who had his seat in Grib gSer-khang. He became one of the fellows and "sons" of Bla-ma Zhang and one of his principal patrons. It is said that he called the master to Grib gSer-khang in order to carry out a ritual for his wife in order to help in the birth of an heir. This is mGar Sangs-rgyas dngos-grub (b. ca. 1185), later the fourth Tshal-pa dpon chen and the first from the mGar lineage (App. V: Table 1).

The internal political structure of the early Tshal-pa has clear parallels to the circumstances prevailing in the 7th century: we have a founder figure, Bla-ma Zhang, who is an incarnation of Srong-btsan sgam-po and with the take-over of IHa-sa to a certain extent also entered into the inheritance of the Chos-rgyal, and we have the clan of mGar, which assumed a ministerial position in relation to the religious throne that led to the office of a secular ruler of Tshal. It seems that Grib’s living association with the old mGar family of the 7th century reflects later circumstances.

area (previously described as mGar-lung) around the present-day mGar village in lower sTod-lung is associated with the minister clan (close to this mGar village the remains of an ancient burial ground are to be found; Knut Kaiser, personal communication.)

* In eastern Mal-gro (in Dvags-pa xiang sit. in the Mal-gro gTsang-po valley east of Mal-gro Gung-dkar) is the village of mGar-khang, where two families live who say that they are descended from mGar, who had his smithy here. At the hill Rin-chen nor-bu behind the village there are the remains of a former castle or dwelling that according to the locals belongs to the history of the ancient mGar-khang (Fig. 6). The historical significance of this place is also underlined by its immediate proximity to Mal-gro Ba-rab, known as one of the dBu-ru bon po 'du gnas, which is to be identified with the village of Ba-rab; it lies west of Grib-so (Srib-zur in XD I 35/2), the village behind the "mGar-khang ruins" (Ba-rab became a branch settlement of the early rGya-ma-pa of the dGyer line; it is inter alia known as the birthplace of Sangs-rgyas dBon-ston; see App. V: Table 10).

* One tradition speaks of the mGar-tshang chen-po gsum (Three great mGar houses/settlements [of Central Tibet]) which in IHa-pa chos-'phel 1989: 48f. are described as major seats of the mGar lineage in the period when the mGar served as minister of the ruling house of Ngas-po [Phra-sum]. The three houses are the mGar-tshang/khang of Upper sTod-lung, the Mal-gro mGar-tshang and the bSam-yas mGar-tshang in bSam-yas. The same article mentions the ruins of a mGar gyi pho brang in 'Phan-yul.

'Phan-yul, sTod-lung and Mal-gro form three of the classical entry areas to central sKyid-shod and the IHa-sa valley and in the history of these mGar places one must also bear in mind that, similar to the case of Grib, there is a closer connection with the story of the legendary arrival of the Chinese Princess, even more so as "Kong-jo places" are also reputed to be in the surroundings of these sites (in the case of 'Phan-po, this relates to a place north of mGar-yul, in the case of Mal-gro a place in eastern gZi-sbug, the valley south-east of Ba-rab). According to our surveys there are further eastern Kong-jo places in the areas of Zho-kha rdzong (Brag-gsum-mdos area of rGya-mda’ county) and indirectly also in Jo-mo-rdzong of Kong-po, where Grib rDzong-btsan resides; here he is linked with the A-mo Jo-mo, after whom the valley is named and who, as in the IHa-sa valley, belongs to a sister group of three lha mo (see below). The name of the Gar monastery (sGar grva-tshang alias Jo-mo-dgon) situated close to the ruins of Jo-mo rdzong is understood by the locals in the sense of a tent (sgar); possibly, however, it is evidence of a no longer known local variant of a mGar - rDzong-btsan story, which also exists among others in Yar-lung; cf. TF Sercnsen and Hazod 2005: 271f.; above fn. 7. There are a number of Kong-jo (and mGar) places in eastern Tibet that are linked in the narrow sense with the legendary Tibet journey (in Dar-mdo county, in Nags-shod or sPo-bo; cf. Ri-dbang bstan-'dzin 2002; dMangs-srol 579; TF Sercnsen and Hazod 2005: 53).

22 The motif in which the religious master helps his patron to ensure the continuation of his line with the aid of a ritual is also found among other early local rulers. See the example of the Bug-pa-can-pa in Upper Yar-lung (CFS Gyalbo et al. 193).
2.1 Grib rDzong-btsan marries the Gung-thang Iha-mo --
The Gung-thang Flower Offering

The alliance between Grib and Tshal has its particular expression in the Flower Offering (Me tog mchod pa) held on the sa ga zla ba (middle of the fourth Tibetan lunar month), which supposedly goes back to Bla-ma Zhang. The ceremonial union of the god of Grib with the protective goddess of Gung-thang, dPal-lidan Iha-mo 'Dod-khams dbang-phyug-ma, forms the central part of the Gung-thang Me tog mchod pa. Here is a summary of an observation of the three-day festival in May 2001:

1st day:
Morning: The big rDzong-btsan statue is festively dressed in the Grib rDzong-btsan lha-khang (equipped with a helmet decorated with flags, weapons, horse, horse armour, etc.). The twelve sku tshab, who function as assistants and bearers of the god during the festival, are responsible for this. Months before they had sworn an oath to adhere to particular fasting and purity rules, which are in force until the end of the festival. This is necessary “in order to be able to carry the god.”

Afternoon: The arrival of the four bla ma from Tshe-mchog-gling; one Iha bsangs is set fire to on the verandah and after a ritual cleansing of the men (washing of hands and drying over the embers of the Iha bsangs; Fig. 13, 14), the statue is carried out to the noise of large trumpets. A device inside the horse makes it possible to carry the heavy statue and get it moving. Accompanied by drums and cymbals, a brief dance of the divinity begins before which the twelve men prostrate themselves one after another and show their reverence (Fig. 15).

The statue is later placed under the roof on the north side next to the entrance, in front of which there is a small altar where a beer sacrifice was made calling on the 'jig rten gyi lha (Fig. 16).

2nd day:
In the early morning the route out of the temple is decorated as a “dkar thag,” i.e. two stripes drawn on the ground with white chalk and partly decorated with flower motifs (Fig. 22). The route is additionally marked by bundles of juniper which are later set on fire.

Bla ma from Tshe-mchog-gling recite prayers inside the Grib lha-khang. Outside, on the verandah, the lha bsangs smokes; next to it, the big gtor ma of the Grib rDzong-btsan is set up. The twelve men, now in their festival dress (Fig. 12), are served with beer by the women of the village.

After a beer offering in front of the statue, the god is taken out of the temple courtyard to the sounding of the great trumpets and begins its way down to the first stopping point. As with each of the total of four major stops on the way to Gung-thang, each time a brief ceremony is performed by the bla-ma as well as a dance of the god and vast amounts of beer brought by the locals are spilt over a transportable altar. On the first stop the great gtor ma is divided by a bla ma and distributed among the twelve men. The stations en route are each surrounded by villagers, who come along in order to bring dkar thag for the god and his custodians as well as beer.

21 It is supposed to have been introduced based on the tradition of the Sutra Basket Offering, one of the “Three Basket Offerings” of the dynastic period, which were distributed over the three primary temples of IHa-sa, bSam-yas and Khra-'brug (see Part I: fn. 519 and TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 290). bsTan-pa mkhyen-rab (1995: 43) dates the introduction of the Gung thang Me tog mchod pa only in the 14th cent. In GT it is first mentioned in the mid-14th cent. It was later incorporated in the ritual calendar of the IHa-sa Central Government. There is a brief description of the festival in Richardson’s Ceremonies of the Lhasa Year (1993) and in bsTan-pa mkhyen-rab’s article “Gung thang me tog mchod pa’i gar ‘cham sgyu rtsal” (1995).
offerings. The leader of the twelve deputies is responsible for the beer offerings. His attribute is a large *mda’ dar* arrow (Fig. 18).

The “ride” to the third stopping place, near the lower village of Grib. Here a truck is waiting, onto which, after the usual prayers and offerings, the divinity is loaded (together with the twelve men, drums, etc.).

The route (accompanied by drumming) leads down to the sKyd-chu past the lHa-gdong Shan-kha bridge to the road to Gung-thang. The road is lined by locals and pilgrims from lHa-sa who are walking to Gung-thang. The truck repeatedly stops so that the men can accept the numerous *dkar thag* that are handed to them (Fig. 23). In return, they hand out blessed white ribbons.

There are then two longer stops in the villages of Shan-kha and lCags-grong, which belong to the immediate district of Tshal Gung-thang (see below). As with the previous stations, vast amounts of beer are spilt. [The new Pehar temple is in lCags-grong; the old one was in Tshal. Previously on this day the gNas-chung oracle priest and a delegation from 'Bras-spungs and lHa-sa came to the Pehar temple, which served as their quarters until the 16th day].

From lCags-grong the track goes on to Gung-thang, where in the meantime the village streets are full of crowds of onlookers. In the Gung-thang temple the Gung-thang lHa-mo has already been festively decorated the day before and brought out from its place in the mGon-khang and set up on the eastern side of the ’Du-khang in front of an altar [previously its place during the festival was in the now destroyed Byams-pa-khang (in the eastern annex) in front of the great Maitreya statue].

While the Grib rDzong-btsan and its following is drawn along an intersecting road in the direction of the temple, the lHa-mo is taken out of the temple. They meet at the crossroads to the temple street. There is a dance of the two divinities, which in these days hold something like a holy wedding (Fig. 24). The Gung-thang lHa-mo then leads the “groom” into the temple, where the two divinities, after their dance in the courtyard (and in the ’Du-khang) are taken to their respective places, the lHa-mo in the east, her partner in the west of the ’Du-khang (previously he was housed in the Zhal lHa-khang in the western annex).

3rd day:

The culmination of the *sa ga zla ba* used to be a masked dance in the dGe-lugs-pa tradition of lHa-sa and Tshal Gung-thang, which nowadays, however, is no longer staged. Instead, the monks stage the famous Padma ’od-’bar opera, which goes on into the afternoon (Fig. 27). A

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24 The delegation consisted of one representative and one general manager from ’Bras-spungs, the head discipline officer from bDe-yangs grva-tshang and one leading hcad of the dGa’-ldan pho-brang – a total of 30. Cf. bsTan-pa mkhyen-rab 1995.

25 bsTan-pa mkhyen-rab 1995 gives a list of the masks of the traditional gar ’cham, which fall into eleven groups:

2. Khro-bo bcu-gcig (The Eleven Wrathful Ones).
3. Shva-ba-bzhi (The Four Stags).
7. sGo [srung-]ma-bzhi (The Four Door-Protectors).
9. rGyal-po sku-Inga ’khor-tshogs-bcu (The rGyal-po sku-Inga and Followers, altogether ten = the five rgyal po [emanations of Pehar] plus rDo-rje drags-ldan [Pehar’s chief minister], gnad shyin Tse’u dmar-pa, sgo srung
chain of devotees with offerings (primarily butter, canisters of beer, and the dkar thag-s) streams into the temple, where there is a great crush in front of the two statues, and where homage is paid to each of them. On the previous evening, on the western side, another, separate altar with gtor ma was set up, representing the protective deities relevant to Grib and Tshal Gung-thang, with the three, Chos-rgyal (= chos rgyal Pehar), lHa-mo and Grib rDzong-btsan at the centre. Following the direction of the skor ra (circuit route), the route taken by the pilgrims first goes to the Grib divinity and the altar in the west, where the 12 men are gathered, and then to the Gung-thang lha-mo, where the elders of Gung-thang, dressed in their festival clothes, have been grouped since the morning.

In the morning, during a theatre interval as well as at the end of the opera, the statues are taken into the courtyard, where the divinities dance together (this time for longer and to a complex choreography – a dance where the two figures alternately move towards and away from each other, in the process walking through all four compass points in a circular movement). This time the Grib divinity leads the lHa-mo into the temple. [Richardson writes that the 'cham traditionally ended with the symbolic sacrifice of a linga image and the statues are then brought in front of the large appliqué tangka (gos sku) (a work from the 14th cent., GT 38a). The appearance of the gNas-chung oracle possessed by Pehar then began, who at the end of his dance performance led the statues in a procession around the gos sku].

4th day:
The Gung-thang lha-mo is brought into the mGon-khang and Grib rDzong-btsan is led out of the Gung-thang to the wailing of the village women and taken back to Grib in the truck. The last station is Pho-rog gling-kha, the above-mentioned grove with the central irrigation pond in the central Grib valley, in which the above-mentioned nāga Pho-rog lci-med lives. After a brief sacrificial ceremony, the statue is taken home to the Grib lha-khang.

The festival displays several significant characteristics of a Tibetan wedding celebration. The 12 men are here reminiscent of the delegation of “clan brothers” who lead the groom to the bride’s house. The sku tshab chief’s arrow symbolizes the male side in the Tibetan wedding ritual and is the instrument with which the bride is transferred to the patrilocal residence. At this point it should be remembered that the minister mGar journeyed to China equipped with an arrow and appeared before Kong-jo with it (cf. TBH Sørensen 227–28). The dkar thag drawn on the earth symbolizes the marital bond uniting the divine couple. At the same time, this marriage concerns the joining of two places, Grib in the west and Tshal Gung-thang in the east.

Thog-btsan and the two A-tsa-ra acolytes of Pehar).
10 lHa-mo 'khor-tshogs bco-lnga (The Goddess and the Retinue, altogether Fifteen = lHa-mo dMag-zor rgyal-mo plus the bsTan-ma bcu-gnyis and the two Mahákāla assistants (las mkhan) Chu-srin and Sen-ge gdong-can).
11 mGon-po 'khor-tshogs-bcu (The Lord [Mahákāla] and the Retinue, altogether ten = The Raven-faced Mahákāla plus [his animal-faced] acolytes).

The dancers were traditionally monks from Tshal Yang-dgon. One month later the group used to appear in gNas-chung, in connection with the 5th Month festival 'Dzam-gling spyi-bsangs. See the description in Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1976: 28–29; cf. also Richardson 1993: 94–95.
9. The Gung-thang lha-mo
'Dod-khams dbang-phyug-ma

10, 11. Grib rDzong-btsan lha-khang, the residence of rDzong-btsan chen-po (11), the deity of the mGar land of Grib
12. Preparation of the ceremonial dress of rDzong-btsan by a member the sku tshab bcu gsum (12 representatives of Grib and its yul lha Grib rDzong-btsan during the Me tog mchod pa)
13, 14. Ritual cleansing before the deity is carried out from its residence
15. Prostration of the statue-bearer before the statue
16. Chang offering in the evening (first day of the 2001 festival)
17. The 12 sku tshab of Grib on the veranda of the Grib lha-khang in the morning of the 2nd day.

18, 19. The head of the sku tshab group escorting the deity to Gung-thang (2nd day).
20, 21. Prayers and offering ceremonies at the stop-overs on the way to Gung-thang.

22. Flower decorations of the route to Gung-thang (2nd day).

23. The deity and its convoy on a track is welcomed by the local people lining the streets.
24. In Gung-thang: The Gung-thang lha-mo festively dressed meets her "groom" outside the temple

25, 26. The statues are taken into to the main hall of the temple where they will remain the following two days
27. Scene of the Padma 'od-'bar opera (3rd day).

28. Dance of the divine couple (Gung-thang lHamo and rDzong-btsan)

Map 2. From Grib to Gung-thang (based on Corona Satellite 1970)
2.2 The IHa-mo Sisters

The fate of the Gung-thang protectress, who only sees her husband for a brief period is associated with the history of the three dPal-lha sisters of IHa-sa. It is said that the mother, dMag-zor-ma (i.e. dPal-ldan lha-mo dMag-zor rgyal-mo), once wanted to have her daughters married and urged them to find a husband. The mother’s favourite child, the peaceful dPal-ldan lha-mo (who is sometimes the elder and sometimes the younger of the sisters in different versions) wanted a matrimonial union with Jo-bo, whereas the other two sisters both fell in love with Grib-rDzong-btsan and chose him as their husband. One of the two is the wrathful dPal-lha-mo, who lives together with the first sister in the dPal-ldan lha-mo chapel in the south-eastern corner on the first floor of the Jo-khang (above this, in the roof chapel, is the seat of the mother; cf. Richardson, “The Jo-khang” 253–259).26 The third is the fierce dPal-lha-mo ’Dod-khams dbang-phyug-ma of Gung-thang. As she cannot see her husband from her place (in contrast to her sister, whose location in IHa-sa is within view of Grib) Grib rDzong-btsan is brought to her once a year.27

In the local tradition the daughters of dMag-zor-ma include another, fourth Iha mo alongside the three dPal-lha sisters; she is the youngest, who was supposedly treated in a stepmotherly way by the mother and came away empty-handed in her search for a husband. This is Ra-ma rGya-mo, an embodiment of the divine goat[s] who according to legend transported the soil from ‘Phan-yul for the drainage of the IHa-sa Lake.28 The four Iha mo should be regarded as a unit – more precisely as a splitting of the one dPal-ldan lha-mo, who is embodied not least in the “fourfold manifestation” of Kong-jo (see above).

26 The dPal lha-mo and Grib rDzong-btsan function jointly as the invitors of Dvags-po sGom-tshul to IHa-sa (approx. mid-1150’s). See App. II: fn. 31. A possible earlier evidence is the mention of the two in Rva lo rnam thar 262.7–8.
27 It is also maintained that because of her thoroughly fierce nature, she was locked up indoor the whole year by her parents. Only on sa ga zla ba does she drop her wrathful mien, which allows her to meet her chosen one. This metamorphosis relates to the opening of the veil over the face of the statue on the 14th day of the month, and its veiling again on the 16th. bsTan-pa mkhyen-rab (op. cit., 44) speaks of three meetings of the two deities within one year.
28 Cf. e.g. Ka khol ma 269.17–18; see also TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 55f. Ra-ma rGya-mo (also Dung-rtsa Ra-ma rGya-mo or Ra-ma rGyal-mo, Goat Queen) has her place of worship at the south-east corner of the Jo-khang, where in the sa ga zla ba month in particular, queues of pilgrims form every day to prostrate themselves and to make prayers (Fig. 29b). A clay figure of the goat is in the gTsang-khang lho-ma (or Byams-pa mched-bzhi lha-khang (south side, ground-floor; Fig. 29a). The name rGya-mo (= the spelling in IHa ldan dkar chags) perhaps relates to the eastern place of the advent of Kong-jo (i.e. rGya-mo-rab, ford of rGya-mo), possibly identical with bTsun-mo-tshal which according to the locals is to be read as rGya-mo bTsun-mo-tshal, “Garden of the Chinese Queen,” who stopped here on her way to IHa-sa (cf. Hazod 2002); a similar Kong-jo site is related to the village rGya-mo situated in lower Ram-pa, the mGar place at the western entrance zone to IHa-sa (see Part I: fn. 369 and above fn. 21).
The relationship of rDzong-btsan with the lHa-sa lHa-mo (the second sister) is alluded to in another festival, the dPal-lha'i ri-khrod, held in the 10th Tibetan month (see Richardson 1993: 100–113; dMangs srol 303f.). It starts on the 14th day of the month with a presentation of dPal-lha-mo on the roof of the Jo-khang, accompanied inter alia by a specific gtor rgyag ceremony (scattering of dough cakes, here stylized as mdos thread crosses) and a performance of the dPal gsol-ma (group of ladies who praise the lHa-mo). Later the image of the goddess is taken to the main temple of the ground floor, where it spent the night in front of the Jo-bo chapel, facing the Jo-bo Rin-po-che. The next morning – interrupted by several halts – the statue is taken around the Jo-khang by monks from the rMe-ru temple.\(^{24}\) At the north-eastern of the four large flagpoles of the Bar-skor, the Karma-shag oracle previously joined in with a special trance performance.\(^{30}\) After a half circuit, the route leads to Klu-sbug south of the Jo-khang,\(^{31}\) from where the statue is finally carried back into the temple. The halt at Klu-sbug allowed the Grib rDzong-btsan, who according to Richardson’s description was previously always taken out of his temple at this point, to see his beloved.\(^{32}\)

The sacrificial cakes scattered in this connection, perhaps relate to the above-mentioned story according to which a raven brought gtor ma from the Jo-khang as sustenance for the blon po mGar. Behind the raven one may see a manifestation of the (raven-headed) Mahākāla, whose followers include the dPal-ldan lha-mo. A Mahākāla image is embroidered on the front on the broad cape of the lHa-mo statue (Richardson, op. cit. plate on p. 112). It is said that the original stone image of the wrathful dPal-ldan lha-mo is a gter ma discovery of Bla-ma Zhang,\(^{33}\) who had his place of meditation in the Jo-khang (in the Chos-rgyal sgrub-phug) (i.e. one of his seven sgrub gnas; Part I: fn. 62).

This union between Grib and lHa-sa is presumably an older (pre-Tshal-pa) story (see fn. 26); but Bla-ma Zhang’s presence here is evidence of the general restructuring of the cultic relationship of

\(^{24}\) i.e. rMe-ru rnying-pa, one of the rGyal-po sku-innga temples of lHa-sa and seat of the gNas-chung Pehar-lgog oracle during the latter’s stay in lHa-sa. On this site, see most recently Alexander 2005: 103–24; see also HSLG Vol. 6: 69; Chos-'phel 2004: 26f.; Tsering Gyalbo 2005: 395f., and Part I: fn. 459.

\(^{30}\) The deity of the Karma-shag oracle priest is Bya-khri spyan (-mig)-geg, “minister” of the sku'i rgyal po Mon-bu-putra, the eastern representative of the rGyal-po sku-innga group (see below fn 104). He has his own chamber in the Jo-khang. On Karma-shag bTsan-khang, see Alexander 2005: 183–90; Richardson, op. cit., 256.

\(^{31}\) One of the lHa-sa'i sbug-bzhi (above fn. 11). On Klu-sbug[-thang], see Karsten 1995: 122. fn. 35; Richardson 1993, s.v. index; see also the sub-note of fn. 11 and Yeh 2003: 553f. It is known as the point from which the Glud-gong rgyal-po (the human substitute sacrifice in the sMon-lam festival) traditionally left lHa-sa (by boat over the river and then through Ra-ma-gang towards bSam-yas). Cf. e.g. HSLG Vol. 6: 129.

\(^{32}\) Richardson 1993: 111. Here he mentions the Tshe-mchog-gling temple, which the locals of Grib do not confirm, however.

\(^{33}\) Cf. Richardson, op. cit., 110; dMangs srol 303. In Zhang rnam thar zin bris 56b6–57ab there is mention of the installation of a dPal-ldan lha-mo (image) in Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang by Bla-ma Zhang in the 12th cent., perhaps a reference to the dPal lha-mo stone image.
the IHa-sa area, which followed the foundation of the new monastic centre. The removal of the dPal-lha sister to Gung-thang and the annual visit of the place by Grib rDzong-btsan (whenever this event may have been institutionalized) are an expression of this. It has its counterpart in the political marriage which was once established between the patrons of mGar from Grib and the religious throne of Tshal.

3. TSHAL AND GUNG-THANG

3.1 The Tshal Gung-thang District:
A Brief Description

Tshal and Gung-thang are the names of two settlements in present-day Tshal Gung-thang district (xiang; Tib. shang), with the administration office in Gung-thang village. This IHa-sa sub-district also includes the out-of-the-way settlement area of Grib, which shows that the modern rural administration has apparently taken over the ancient historical connection.34

Bla-ma Zhang’s birthplace in Tsha-ba-gru, which the locals call his mother’s house,35 is marked today by a small cairn in a field near the settlement of ICags-grong (Fig. 31; Map 2), a union of what was originally two villages, ICags-ri shar-ba and Grong-lcags byang-ma. The old road to IHa-sa (more precisely to IHa-gdong) Shan-kha, the old ferry station for crossing the sKyid-chu to IHa-sa) ran behind the fields of this birthplace house. (The name of the present-day Shan-kha

31. Tsha-ba-gru situated at the foot of Mount Tsan-dan-ri

34 See HSLG Vol. 6: 172; Xizang Dimingzhi l: 13–14. The territorial unit of the two districts, Grib and Tshal, is also spoken of in a local oral account from Tshal. It says that the area between Tshal and Grib was once covered by a huge snake with its head lying in Grib, which was overcome by the Tshal-pa founder. Bla-ma Zhang beat the monster “by means of the Jo-bo [i.e. Buddha] statue from the Grib temple and divided it into a northern and southern part.” The northern half is said to represent the area north of the Tsan-dan-ri (Fig. 30) (= the area of Tshal Gung-thang), the southern half the area south of the mountain, i.e. the zone of Zhal, sKam-pa-lung (fn. 36) etc. including Grib. Zhang did the taming form the “Grib temple” (see sub-note of fn. 11), a fact which makes it reasonable to see the ritual related to the deity of Grib, in other words to see the snake as a form of rDzong-btsan and the land it represents as the land of the mGar, Zhang’s patrons.

35 Not seldom with religious foundation figures one finds that the birthplace and place where the future hero grew up are described as the house of the mother (see for example the case of g.Ya’-bsangs-pa, where there is mention of a house (and village) of the mother and the village of the father, CFS Gyalpo et. al. 203). One may see here a reference to a form of uxorilocal residence rule in the generation of the parents. In the case of Bla-ma Zhang, it also suggests that Tsha-ba-gru was a settlement area of the (paternal) lineage of his mother, which one source gives as Shud-phu, known as one of the leading lineages in the IHo-kha Region (see Part I: fn. 15).
village derives from this site of the ferry station, where Thang-stong rgyal-po erected the lHa-gdong Shan-kha iron bridge in the 1430's or 1440's; see Part I: fn. 685). Beyond rise the mountain chains of the Tsan-dan-ri and the lICags-rdo-ri, which close off the valley plain in the south.16 On a rock next to the old lHa-sa road at the foot of Tsan-ladan-ri, the young Dar-ma-grags (Zhang's birthname) is supposed to have waited for his mother (previously a nun) whenever she was on a pilgrimage to lHa-sa. The stone with the imprints of the boy's foot and knee is today in front of the new rGyal-khang (Pehar house) in lICags-grong village. The simple temple contains images of Klu-btsan, Pehar, Guru Rinpoche and rDo-rje g.Yu-sgron-ma. The last of these functions alongside Pehar as the yul lha of Tshal Gung-thang.

Equally, there are images of these two in Yang-dgon, with the dMag-zor rgyal-mo additionally being placed at g.Yu-sgron-ma's side. The chief s Hung ma of Yang-dgon is Ts[h]e-dmar-pa (rTs'i'u dmar-po), of whom it is said that he was fished out of the sKyid-chu immediately behind Tshal.17 The monastery lies in the northern part of the present-day Tshal village. Immediately to the north east, the ruins of the one-time Pehar lha-khang is found. To the left of this was the hermitage of Tshal-sgang Chos-spyil (of which there is today no trace). Likewise in Tshal village derives from this site of the ferry station, where Thang-stong rgyal-po erected the lHa-gdong Shan-kha iron bridge in the 1430's or 1440's; see Part I: fn. 685). Beyond rise the mountain chains of the Tsan-dan-ri and the lICags-rdo-ri, which close off the valley plain in the south.16 On a rock next to the old lHa-sa road at the foot of Tsan-ladan-ri, the young Dar-ma-grags (Zhang's birthname) is supposed to have waited for his mother (previously a nun) whenever she was on a pilgrimage to lHa-sa. The stone with the imprints of the boy's foot and knee is today in front of the new rGyal-khang (Pehar house) in lICags-grong village. The simple temple contains images of Klu-btsan, Pehar, Guru Rinpoche and rDo-rje g.Yu-sgron-ma. The last of these functions alongside Pehar as the yul lha of Tshal Gung-thang.

A few kilometres east of lICags-grong the Gung-thang village is located. It is the location of the once powerful gTsug-lag-khang, of which only the central building is still to some extent preserved, the large annexes (glo 'bur) are empty or dilapidated. The present-day walls are the remainder of later building phases that followed the devastating fire of 1546 (below Chap. 5). The rooms are limited to the 'Du-khang (with the central altar of Rigs-gsum mgon-po), the Pho-brang (with a central statue and new images of Zhang and Dar-ma gzhon-nu) and the mGon-khang. The last of these contains the statues of the two chief protectors, mGon-

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16 In the mountains behind, in the area of the brTan-ma lha-mo dBu-skra-ri ("mountain resembling the hair of the brTan-ma lha-mo") there is supposed to be one of Bla-ma Zhang's meditation caves, not more precisely given in the texts. Here, too, lies the important quarry of sKam-po-yung (sKam-po/pa-lung), a small valley east of Grib where probably the Bla-ma Zhang foundation of sKam-dgon is to be located. Cf. Part I: fn. 522.

17 The statue is flanked on the left by an image of Phyag-rdor. To the right of this are images of Zhang, Sakyamuni, Gu-ru sNang-srid zil-gnon, Pehar, dMag-zor rgyal-mo and rDo-rje g.Yu-sgron-ma. The semi-derelict monastery (like dBus-gling) is no longer in permanent operation and is closed most of the time. The rest of the old images include, among others, paintings of the Fifth Dalai Lama (flanked by the two Tárâ and with rDo-rje grags-ldan (Pehar's chief minister) and dPal-lidan lha-mo in the foreground), of Gung-thang Bla-ma Zhang (in the middle of bKa'-brgyud masters) and murrals of rDo-rje g.Yu-sgron-ma and the s Hung ma dPal-ri (Pha-ri) Thog-btsan-pa to the left and right of the entrance. On Thog-btsan-pa (also rTa-rnpo (horse-headed) Thog-btsan), one of Pehar's acolytes, who like other protective deities of Tshal appears in the Gung-thang cham (note 24), see Nebesky-Wojkowitz 123, 132, 453. Monks from rMe-rnu mying-pa call him a minister of rDo-rje grags-ldan (= Pehar) and s Hung ma of lHa-lung dPal gyi rdo-rje. Nebesky-Wojkowitz (op. cit., ibid) notes, that this deity (and minister of the sKu-linga group) also was occasionally consulted by the gNas-chung Pehar-lcog oracle.

18 The rubble comes from a stüpa that was built on the site of the earlier "Khri-dpon khang" (see Part I: Fig. 36).
po phyag-bzhi-pa and Gung-thang Iha-mo with entourage, including the powerful chief acolyte Bya-rog gdong-can and Kong-htsun De-mo. Compared with the religious site of Tshal, Gung-thang was the larger complex with the site of the Sku-'bum chen-mo and numerous other largely vanished stūpa, as well as the important colleges of sGom-sde gZims-khang-shar, Chos-khris-leg (or grva-tshang) and Chos-khor-gling. Only from the last of these a few wall remains (in the garden of a private house; see Part I: Fig. 29–30).

Not far to the south east is Zhal village, at the exit from a valley enclosed by the mountains Changulhari (sPyang-khu lha-ri?) and Ri-sgo to the west, and to the east by the Byang-kha mountain range. Towards the end of the valley rises the sMin-drug rdza-ri, the southerly of the lHa-sa'i Ri-chen-bzhi, which approximately forms the southern boundary of the traditional Tshal-pa district too. Not far to the south of Zhal village, a rock known as the “stone umbrella” of Zhang marks the traditional route that leads from here past sMin-drug dza-ri to sGrags (Fig. 32). In this area, in particular in Upper sGrags and in the surroundings of the Byang-mkhar mountain, lie most of Bla-ma Zhang’s mountain retreats (Part I: fn. 62); one of the most important of them is the Byang-mkhar ri-khrod, which the local ghzi bdag mo by the name of Jo-mo sMan gcig-ma once gave to Zhang and his companion Dar-ma gzhon-nu. High up on the southern side of Byang-mkhar-ri, the monastery, later developed as a permanent monastic settlement, is now abandoned. In Zhal village there is a new Byang-mkhar ri-khrod of a later date, which is looked after by nuns. It contains images of the “Three Jewels of Tibet” (Tsong-kha-pa, Phag-mo gru-pa and Bla-ma Zhang), of rGva-lo, Zhang and Dar-ma gzhon-nu, and a statue of the srung ma Thog-btsan-pa (fn. 25, 37, 106). A goddess called the Badzra (*Vajra, *rDo-rje) Iha-mo functions as the yul lhva of Zhal, behind whom presumably the [rDo-rje] sMan-gcig-ma stands.

On the Gung-thang temple, see the descriptions of GT and Part I: Graph 2. There are traces of older paintings in the one-time Mani Iha-khang (not mentioned in GT). An older mural of rGva-lo, Zhang and Dar-ma gzhon-nu is found in an eastern niche above the altar of the Rig-gsum mgon-po (below Fig. 39).

The Ri-sgo at the entrance to Zhal (see Map 2) is also simply referred to as the “small mountain” (ri bo chung) and thus could be identical with the Ri’u-chung mentioned in GT 21a as the site where the Zhang disciple Kha-rag-pa ’Dul-ba-’od was ordained (in the presence of Bla-ma Zhang). The site is probably identical with the otherwise not more closely identified Zhal gyi Re’u-chung-dgon mentioned in Zhang’s autobiographical writings, which again appears to be identical with the site of Nga-n lam Ri-chu[n]g ring-mo (Nga-n lam gyi Re-chung ring-mo) mentioned in other sources (cf. Ho rong chos byung 641.11; sNa phu rnam thar 17a1-2 [= 33.1-2]). On Nga-n lam, see below.

Byang-mkhar, chronologically the first of Zhang’s seven retreats (sgrub gnas bdun), is the setting for the story of the footprint of Zhabs-rgie ‘Gro-don-ma, a kind of foundation stone of the Tshal-pa tradition, with footprints of the enthusiastically dancing Bla-ma Zhang and his then still young assistant Dar-ma gzhon-nu; the dance was an expression of the triumph over the attacks by the local ghzi bdag from IHa-sa and Grib who had gathered here along with the mGon-po Beng.

39 On the Gung-thang temple, see the descriptions of GT and Part I: Graph 2. There are traces of older paintings in the one-time Mani Iha-khang (not mentioned in GT). An older mural of rGva-lo, Zhang and Dar-ma gzhon-nu is found in an eastern niche above the altar of the Rig-gsum mgon-po (below Fig. 39).

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41 Xizang Dimingzhi l. 14a: 29°33’N 91°11’E.

42 Byang-mkhar, chronologically the first of Zhang’s seven retreats (sgrub gnas bdun), is the setting for the story of the footprint of Zhabs-rgie ‘Gro-don-ma, a kind of foundation stone of the Tshal-pa tradition, with footprints of the enthusiastically dancing Bla-ma Zhang and his then still young assistant Dar-ma gzhon-nu; the dance was an expression of the triumph over the attacks by the local ghzi bdag from IHa-sa and Grib who had gathered here along with the mGon-po Beng.

43 Bod Nor-bu rnam-gsum; cf. e.g. BA Roerich 711; App. I.
The Byang-mkhar mountain divides Zhal from the Kri (also dKri) valley to the east, which corresponds to the Sri in earlier sources. It is often mentioned in compound with the neighbouring Zhal valley, i.e. the Sri Zhal of Ngan-lam (see below), where inter alia several temples of the 'Bring tsho have been located. At the eastern entrance of Kri, the Srin-mo brag-phug mountain towers, whose north-western side according to the locals resembles the vulva of a srin mo. It appears to be identical with the Byang-stod Se[ng]-phug, one of the eastern toponyms of the IIHa-sa Maṇḍala, which is described as having the same external characteristics (Graph I; Map 1 and Map 3). The mountain is locally also known as dPal-chen rGva-lo brag-phug, named after rGva-lo brag-dgon, a temple or retreat site of Bla-ma Zhang’s yogic teacher (rGva-lo gZhon-nu-dpal), which was located at the foot of the mountain. The settlement of dPal-lding (the main village of Kri, to which the Srin-mo brag-phug belongs) is traditionally considered to be the eastern boundary of the Tshal Gung-thang district.

33. The Byang-mkhar mountain between Sri and Zhal as seen from rTen-dkar in lower Sri. In the background the sMin-drug rdza-ri

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44 Such as the Sri ‘i rGya-phibs, where Atiśa is reported to have sojourned for two weeks on his way from bSam-yas to IllHa-sa, see App. V: Table 6.

45 It is the Seng-ri brag-klug (= phug) in the Xizang Dinanzhi I: 14a: 29°34'N 91°14'E.

46 Some traces of ruins close to Denkhar (rTen-mkhar in Xizang Dinanzhi I 14a; geograph. position: 29°31'N 91°14'E), the village due south-east of dPal-lding, are identified as the spot of the former rGva-lo temple. As mentioned (Part I: fn. 259), a Sri-Zhal is given in the sources as the place where the Seng-ge-rgyab is located, the retreat closely associated with the rDzogs-chen master 'Khrul-zhig Seng-ge rgyab-pa (fl. first half of 13th cent.). It can possibly be identified with the Srin-mo brag-phug (alias Seng-phug). On Sri and Zhal, see for more details the references in Ins. 413, 414 of Part I.
3.2 Traces of Yore: Old Names of Tshal Gung-thang

3.2.1 'Bum-thang, Tshal-thang Bye-ma-can, Tsha-ba-gru [of bTsan-'bangs-sa] and rTa-mo-ra

The name Gung-thang originates with Mi-la ras-pa, so the locals believe. What is meant is an allusion to the land of Mi-la’s birth and the place of his activity in West Tibetan Mang-yul Gung-thang, the area of the later sTod Tshal school. Originally the area was called 'Bum-thang, and it is said that a vase containing holy ingredients was once buried here. The place possibly corresponds to lhA-sa’i ’Bum-thang, which is mentioned as one of the early Bon-po gter ma sites. The name Tshal is also supposed to derive from the history of ’Bum-thang. It is said that in connection with this ritual Bla-ma Zhang threw down his coat from a place on the mountain behind as an offering; a small piece (tshal pa’bu) of the coat came away and was carried by a gust of wind to the present-day Tshal, hence the name.48

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47 Cf. Dondrub Lhargyal 2000: 434. This 'Bum-thang of Tshal is not identical with the sKu-'bum-thang from the group of the lhA-sa’i thang bzhis. Nang rиг 272; sMin-skyid bSod-nams stobs-rgyas 1991: 16.

48 There are also other (local) traditions concerning the origin of the name, such as the one where it is related to bza’i tshal (greens or vegetable seeds) which fell from heaven during Bla-ma Zhang’s sojourn in the retreat of Phur-bu-lcog in Dog-bde, or it is read as short for Lum-bi’i tshal (Lumbini, Buddha’s birthplace). Cf. Chos-'phel 2004: 78f.
In the sources, Tshal is occasionally also written mTshal (= vermilion). Often the spellings (mTshal, 'Tshal, Tshal) interchange within one and the same text. Tshal in the sense of “grove” or “garden” very frequently appears as a component of old place names (with the evident significance of a cultivated and settled district (differeniated from the wilderness). One of the numerous imperial “Ts[h]al toponyms” registered in the Annals is Ngan-lam Tsal sar-pa which could be the origin of this “garden/grove” territory east of IHa-sa (see below). In any case, certain is that the place name existed before the foundation of the monastery. Several references in the sources make it clear that Tshal was a larger area and included the present-day Gung-thang. Tshal Gung-thang (in the sense of Gung-thang of Tshal) is one of the early forms of reference to the Gung-thang vihāra (Mar lung pa rnam thar 80a1). The Jo-bo Byang-chub chen-po pho-brang of the Gung-thang temple was built on the Tshal-thang Bye-ma-can (Sandy Plain of Tshal) (in fulfillment of the prophecy in the gDams ngag 'bogs pa; GT 57a, Part I: fn. 737). In Gung-thang, Bye-thang chen-mo denotes the place of the colleges (Chos-khor-gling and Chos-khrig grva-tshang), once surrounded by trees, southwest of the temple, where formerly the inauguration ceremony of the Tshal dpon po was held (Part I: fn. 475). Bye-ma-lung is one of the eastern IHa-sa Mandala zone toponyms, however, that cannot be more precisely defined geographically. 

Alternative toponymic terms for the place of Tshal Yang-dgon, according to the bKa'rgya ma (one of our earliest records), are Tshal rTa-mo-ra and Tsha-ba-gru, both toponyms which probably were known in sKyid-shod long before the Tshal-pa. According to GT (43b), the monastery was built “in the north-eastern section of Tsha-ba-gru” (GT 43b), which also means that Tsha-ba-gru originally described a larger area extending beyond the place now marked as Tsha-ba-gru (= the house of Zhang’s birth). The same is true of the rTa-mo-ra place name, a toponym that, as it seems, fell out of use soon after the foundation of Tshal Gung-thang. It is repeatedly mentioned in the biography of Mar-lung Byang-chub seng-ge (alias Mar-sgom) and the rNam thar phyi ma (the Zhang biography composed by Mar-sgom). From the early 1170’s, Mar-sgom was a pupil of Zhang and a witness to the foundation of Yang-dgon. It seems, fell out of use soon after the foundation of Tshal Gung-thang. It is repeatedly mentioned in the biography of Mar-lung Byang-chub seng-ge (alias Mar-sgom) and the rNam thar phyi ma (the Zhang biography composed by Mar-sgom). From the early 1170’s, Mar-sgom was a pupil of Zhang and a witness to the foundation of Yang-dgon (1175) and the Gung-thang temple erected twelve years later. The place of the Yang-dgon monastery is given in Mar lung pa rnam thar as rTa-mo-ra mTshal, or also as ‘Tshal rTa-mo-ra or rTa-mo-ra'i dgon pa. The Jo-bo Byang-chub chen-po statue (alias IHa-chen dpal-bar dbang-phyug), the principal support (rten) of the Gung-thang temple, is here called mTshal rTa-mo-ra'i IHa-chen dpal-bar [dbang-phyug]. rTa-mo-ra, the “corral of the mare,” thereby provides an area corresponding at least to an extension of the present-day Tshal plus Gung-thang.

It represents a variant form of Byang-stod Se[ng]-phug, which we have identified as the Srin-mo/Se-ri brag-phug, the eastern border mountain of Tshal Gung-thang. Further “sand-” toponyms associated with places east of IHa-sa are inter alia to be found in the forms of Bye-ma gNam-mthong-ri (a mountain in the area of sMin-drug rda-ri (in Tshe-brtan dge-legs 1994: 17, it is mentioned in the compound of three mountains east of sKar-chung and Grib: sKam-pa Shar-ri, sPang-sgang-ri and Bye-ma gNam-thong), or the castle mountain of Bye-ri sTag-rtsed-rdzong (at the entrance to Zhogs on the right bank of the sKyid-chu; App. V: Fig. 62–63).

Both are “horse toponyms.” rTa-mo-ra = “corral of the mare.” Tsha-ba-gru is explained in a story related to events of the 8th cent. as the “corner where the king’s horse became hot” (see Chap. III.3 below). rTa-ra (rTa-mo-ra, rTi'u-ra) as a place name is to be found in different areas of Central Tibet and appears inter alia also as a term in the bSam-yas sa dpvad. A related form is rTa mchog tshal (“garden of the best horse”) which is connected with the mythography of the river or the gTsang-po/Brahmaputra, respectively (see below, Chap. IV.2, and fn. 108).

On this source, see Table V.4: note 2.

Mar lung pa rnam thar 70b2–3, 75a5, 79b1; cf. also rNam thar phyi ma (ZhK III (KA) 231b.3).
The dba’ bzhed (3a) speaks of a residence (pho brag) lHan-dkar rTa-mo-ra. Srong-btsan sgam-po is supposed to have had his residence here, while his Chinese wife had her seat in lHa-sa Ra-mo-che. To our knowledge, this entry is not found in this form in any of the other sources. Usually in this connection, the lHa-sa Jo-khang (Ra-sa ’Phrul-snang) or the residence on the dMar-po-ri is given as the king’s seat. Pho brag lHan-dkar (in the later literature also lDan-dkar/mkhar) is one well-known residence in Yar-lung, which here, however, can probably be excluded as the Srong-btsan sgam-po place.53 Provided this pho brag refers to a place in the lHa-sa valley, it may relate to the above-mentioned place of rTen-mkhar (fn. 46), which belongs to [Tshal] rTa-mo-ra. On the other hand, the connection between Ra-mo-che and Kong-jo rather points to the story of the second Kong-jo (above fn. 8), and here (as in other cases) Srong-btsan sgam-po assumes the position of Mes Ag-tshoms, who resided in Yar-lung lDan-mkhar, while Kim-sheng Kong-co/jo regularly came to Ra-mo-che (to her temple).54

Alternative references for Zhang’s place of birth are Tsha-ba-gru of lHa-sa, Tsha-ba-gru of Gung-thang, of dBu-ru, of sKyid-shod, of Ngam-shod (on this, see Introduction), of dGos,55 Tsha-ba-gru of Ngan-lam, or – according to the rGya blon ma, one of the oldest reference – Tsha-ba-gru of bTsan-bangs-sa. The latter evidently points to the existence of a former royal site (i.e. “[meeting-]place of emperor and subjects”) in this area, unless this description relates in a more general sense to the old lHa-sa or is an allusion to the future Bla-ma Zhang, who is also titled as brtsad po in the sources (see Part I: fn. 12). A toponym of particular historical-geographical significance is Ngan-lam.

3.2.2 Wandering Toponyms: Ngan-lam [Ral-gsum] in ’Phan-yul and sKyid-shod and the rdo ring of [Ngan-lam] Sri

Ngan-lam is an old clan-name56 and it is known as a place in ’Phan-yul as well as in sKyid-shod, where, however, (in contrast to ’Phan-yul; see below) today no traces of this name can be found anymore.57 In the lHa-sa sa dpyad, Ngan-lam represents a variant form of Ba-lam (cf. Ngan-lam

53 Post-dynastic sources give lHan-dkar (lDan-dkar) (of Yar-lung) as the birthplace of Khri-lde gtsug-brtan (b. 704). The local tradition does not confirm this, but speaks of the king having built this palace (CFS Gyalbo et al. 90). According to the Dunhuang Annals, rGyal-gtsug-ru (the birthname of the king) was born in Kho-brang-ts[h]al, which is possibly to be located in sTod-lung (GT, Part I: fn. 258).

54 See TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 18. One important lHa-sa residence (and temple) of the Mes Ag-tshoms period was the still not more precisely identified lHa-sa mKhar-brag, which according to one of the sources was situated to the east of lHa-sa (above fn. 14).

55 In ZhK (KA) 245b4 Bla-ma Zhang gives his yul as dus bu kyis dbu ru chu bzang / dgos kyi tsha ba gru, i.e. Tsha-ba-gru of dBu-ru situated in the Region of dBu-ru Chu-bzang of Central Tibet. Chu-bzang perhaps is here to be read as an epithet of the sKyid-chu, or it refers to the old Chu-bzang hermitage situated in the Byang-mkhar mountain region (Part I: fn. 62); dGos remains unclear in this context (or dgos kyi is to be read as sgos kyi? – “specifically,” [it is called] Tsha-ba-gru). The name appears inter alia in the context of the neighbouring ruling house and Tshal-pa branch of Ro-skam-pa in Glags (or Glangs Ba-la). GT 20b; Part I: fn. 207; App. V: Table 3.

56 The clan is registered as one of the seven / nine ma sangs rgyud (a list of original clans of Tibet), in the form of gnyan ma sangs Ngan-lam rTsang-skyes (var.: Gle Ngan-lam Tsang-skyes, i.e. the Ngan-lam who originated in gTsang and who constituted a branch of the Gle clan? – the latter (var. spell. Sle) had its main settlement in the area of gYas-ru (in Shangs and Mus); Hazod, fortceng h), lDe’u2 225.3; KG 152. Elsewhere the Ngan-lam is counted among the eight lineages of the rMu (one of the four original ras). See Smith 2001: 218. Richardson (1985: 23) reads Ngan as Sogdian.

57 The place name appears also in connection with Grva, where a ruler of Ngan-lam called ’Od kyi dkyil-khor-can is
Grum-pa-ri _alias_ Ba-lam Grum-pa-ri; Graph 1), which perhaps means that the name once denoted a larger territory within this section of sKyid-shod. The centre of this Ngan-lam of sKyid-shod was in any case located in the Tshal Gung-thang area. In this connection, Uebach (1989: 510) refers to an _ab eventu_ prophecy in the _Padma bka' thang_, where it says that incarnations of the Sthavira Subhūti will appear in Ngan-lam-[m]thil (the centre of Ngan-lam), [above all] [Bla-ma] Zhang and

registered (see _Nyingma School II_ 575); but it could also be a misspelling of Ngam[-shod], the geographical designation of the central g.Yo-ru or iHo-kha region.

In the lists of the districts (yal [apon] _tshan_, yul _gru_ of dBu-ru (a classification of the 8th cent.) both Ba-lam as well as Ngan-lam occur, which rather suggests that the Ngan-lam of 'Phan-yul is meant here. Cf. _mKhas pa IDe'u chos 'byung (IDe'u 2) 15.15–18; Chap-spel 1989: 109; Uebach 1997b: 1002; Hazod 2003. The 16 (actually 17) _yal dpon tshan_ according to _IDe'u_ 2 are:

1  sTod-lung (see Part I: fn. 418)
2  'Phags-rgyal (KD: Phar-yang?; a 'Phags is in 'Phan-yul; cf. the form 'Phags kyi Brag-rgyab, also known as Brag-rgyab of sPras (in Phan-yul; see App. V: Table 6/A.1IA); or it refers to the 'Phags-chu valley of Byang: Part I: Map: 4)
3  Klung-yul (it included _inter alia_ the imperial sites of Ro-skam and ICh'i'u-lung; see Part I: Map 7a, b)
4  Mal-gro (the district may also have covered the eastern part of later sTag-rtsce county; see Part I: fn. 411)
5  'Dam-shod (i.e. the later 'Dam-gzhung district)
6  Za-gad (it corresponds to the area between present-day Za-dam and Gad-po in western 'Phan-yul; fn. 21; Map 4b below)
7  Ragṣa (KD: Rag-nas; perhaps related to the Rag east of iHa-sa)
8  Ba-lam (see Part I: Map 1b.3)
9  Ngan-lam (in 'Phan-yul? below Map 4b)
10 Brang-yul (in lower sTod-lung; see Graph 1: Brang[-phu]; in KD the toponyms 'Breng (= Brang-yul or 'Phrang-po [no. 13]) and g.Yu-khung (?) are listed as the 9th and 10th _yal _gru_)
11 dBu-lde (KD: dBu-sa-skor (dBu-skor in Uebach 1997: 1002); dBu-lde is most probably identical with the present-day 'Bud-bde, south of sGang-mda' in sKyid-smad; cf. the form dBu-sde; App. V: Table 6; Part I: Map 1a)
12 gZad Chu-shul (in present-day Chu-shul county; App. II: fn. 21; App. V: Table 6; Part I: Map 1a and Map 2)
13  Phrang-po (Part I: fn. 428; Map 1a)
14 gNon-lung-pa (probably the sNon in sKyid-smad is meant here; see Part I: fn. 433, Map 1a)
15 sGang[-phu, -smd] (due north of sNon in sKyid-smad; Part I: Map 1a)
16 Brag-rum (the place is known from the _dang ri_ list as a territory of the Tshe-spong; KG 187; see also App. II: fn. 30)
17 'Phan-yul (= no. 14 of the _yal sde_ list in KD; Part I: Map 4).

The names of the districts nos. 12–16 are not registered in the list of dBu-ru'i _yal gru chu drug_ of KD, which mentions here the toponyms of gZhol [12], sKungs [13], Rong-shod [15] and Bra-mams [16] (= Bra[ng-yul] and rNamz [of sKyid-smad]?).

As demonstrated by Uebach (1997b), the term _tshan_ in _yal dpon tshan_ is not to be confused with the administrative unit of _tshan_ known from Central Asian documents (1 _tshan_ = 50 households) and also to be found in the description of the state organisation in _IDe'u_ 2 in the form of the "ten _tshan_" of the _yal dpon tshan chu drug_ territories of the four horns. _Yal dpon tshan_ is rather to be read as the [territorial] section _tshan_ headed by a district chief _yal [sde] dpon_, a title which appears to correspond to the Great [Head] of 500 (Inga brgya chen po) registered in the _Annals_. Uebach concludes that the _yal dpon tshan_ designate units of five-hundred-districts with the ten _tshan_ (= 500 households) as the "constituents of each of the sixteen districts of a horn" (Uebach 1997b: 1000). The units thus correspond to half the size of a _stong sde_ or Thousand Districts of the (usually) eight regular _stong sde_ of each of the _ru bzhis_ (ten together with the "body-guard thousand-district" and the "small thousand districts"). Similarly to the _mi sde_ organisation of the later Tshal-pa territory, we find here in the list of the imperial _yal sde_ the somewhat contradicting description where greater territories (Mal-gro, sTod-lung, 'Phan-yul, 'Dam-gzhung) are listed as individual units and at the same time constitute the area where smaller units are located, such as in the case of the 'Phan-yul district (no. 17), where the district of Za-gad (and perhaps also Ngan-lam) is to be located. For a discussion of the sub-units of the imperial horn administration, see also Uebach 1992; Uray 1982; Takeuchi 1994. See also Hazod, _forthcoming b._
Dar-ma [gzhon-nu], sMon-lam [rdo-rje] and Kun-dga’ [rdo-rje], under whom the Teaching will be widely disseminated. In his writings, Bla-ma Zhang calls himself occasionally also the “beggar of Ngan-lam-pa” (ngan lam pa sprang po), also the self-designation “Zhang-sgom of Ngan-lam Sri [alias Kri]” (elsewhere Ngan-lam Si’i (= Sri) Zhang-ston) is to be found (see Part I: fns. 2, 413).

Ngan-lam often appears in connection with Ral-gsum. Thus, in the Mar lung pa rnam thar 67a2–4 the position of the retreat site of Byan[g]-mkhar is described as ngan lam ral gsum gyi dhus sri zhal gnyis kyi so mtshams b[yl]ang mkhar brag (i.e. “the rocky [mountain of] Byang-mkhar on the border of the two districts of Sri and Zhal in the heart of Ngan-lamRal-gsum”). This is an apt description of the geographical position of the Byang-mkhar-ri mountain of Tshal Gung-thang (see above). Ngan-lam Ral-gsum (Ngan-lam, Ngan-lam Ral-[gsum]) is well known as one of the thirteen Bon-po assembly places (’du gnas) of dBu-ru.59 The form crops up in the medieval literature in various other contexts,60 although (as with Ngan-lam on its own) it is not always clear which Ngan-lam is meant. The toponym Ral-gsum (“three manes/hairs”) is also to be found in other areas, such as in Kong-po the Kong-lung-pa Ral-gsum (var.: Kong-po Ral-gsum), in ’Dam and the Snying-grong area the Thang-ro Ral-gsum, or in Kong-po the Kong-lung lung-pa Ral-gsum (var.: Kong-po Ral-gsum), in ’Dam and the Snying-grong area the Thang-ro Ral-gsum, or in sTod-lung the sTod-lung Ral-gsum.61 The latter is mentioned as the region of the old territorial god sTod lha Ze-ze and seems to be identical with sTod-ro Lung-gsum, one of the pre-imperial principalities, whose lha has the same name.62 sTod-ro[s] Lung-gsum (var.: sTod Ral-ga Lung-gsum) is likewise mentioned as one of the Bon-po ’du

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59 Cf. Uebach 1999; Karmay 1972: 40; Nam-mkha’i nor-bu (Zhang bod kyi lo rgyus) 1996: 200; g. Yung drung bon gyi rgyud ’bum 10b6–11a3. The 13 places according to the latter text are:

1 Ngan-lam Ral-gsum
2 ’Dam-shod sNar-mo (see Bellezza 1997: 43, 50, 76, 269; Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1975: 206)
3 ’Phan-yul ’Dram-dkar (probably identical with the Bon-po site of ’Phan-yul ’Gram-ngar phug-mo [34a.6]; in other lists the ’du gnas is given as ’Phan-yul Brag-dkar)
4 Mal-gro Ba-rab (it refers to the Ba-rab in eastern Mal-gro; see above fn. 21; Table V.10: fn.4; Part I: Map 1b)
5 Shun gyi Brag-dmar (cf. Graph 1; other lists have mChims gyi Brag-dmar)
6 Has-po phri (= khri/ri)-thang (i.e. the Has-po-ri of Brag-dmar bSam-yas; less likely: the Has-po-ri [gdong] at the eastern shore of the gNam-ntsho; on this site, see Bellezza 1997: 109 et passim)
7 lHa-sa Yer-pa (i.e. the Brag Yer-pa caves in Upper Yer-pa valley of sKyid-shod)
8 Nam gyi Ra-gdong (elsewhere gNam gyi Re-gong; it is probably identical with the sNam known from the story of Padmasambhava’s arrival in Central Tibet (dBa’ byphed 11a1 [= P. Wangdu and Dieremberger 2000: 53]). According to the context – he travelled from sNyi-mo Thod-dkar (= sNye-mo) via sNam to Gal-ta-la (= Gal-te) and sNying-drung – it may refer to the Gnam of Yangs-pa-can (and not to the gNam/rNams of Skyid-smad). See Part I: fns. 405, 415, 420.
9 gNam-ntsho [r]Do-ring (see Bellezza 1997, s.v. index)
10 sTod Ral-ga Lung-gsum (var.: sTod-ro[s] Lung-gsum; in [lower?] sTod-lung)
11 sKyid-shod Lung-nag (not identified; but see Uebach 1999: 265)
12 Re-rgya Ngan-lam (var.: Re-rkyang [sha-‘thab] in Ngan-lam of ’Phan-yul; see below)
13 mTho-gon rGyal-mo-kha[ng] (also mChog-gon/dkon rGyal-mo-khang [= rGyal lha-khang in ’Phan-yul?]).
60 Cf. e.g. bk’a’ thang sde lnga: 290.4, 290.22: Ngan-lam Ral-yul (~Ral-gsum), mentioned in connection with the activities of dPal-dbyangs (rBa Ratna); Gu bkra chos ’byung 189.5–16: dBu-ru Ngan-lam Ral-gsum, the origin place of the rNyimg-ma master Ngan-lam-pa Byang-chub rGyal-mtshan, see also Nying ma School II, s.v. index.
61 The latter two are known from the lists of the “lha dgu territories.” See Karmay 1996: 72 (according to the lHa rgyud gnyan gyi ’byung rabs); Lalou 1965.
62 Lalou 1965: 203, according to PT 1060. The name of the divinity apparently relates to the above-mentioned mount Jo-mo Zi-zhi (~ Ze-ze) opposite Gung-thang. From the position of the mountain, one can conclude that sTod-ro Lung-gsum also included the lHa-sa valley.
gnas of dBu-ru (fn. 59). The forms ral gsum, lung [pa] gsum and lung pa ral gsum are apparently identical geographical terms and refer to an area of three valleys, or (similar to sum mdo) relate to an estuary area, i.e. the confluence of two rivers, which empty into a third. In the case of sTod-ro Ral-gsum, the area of lower sTod-lung could be meant, where the sTod-lung-chu flows into the sKyi-d-chu.\(^63\) In the case of Ngan-lam Ral-gsum -- which in the foundation legend of Tshal-pa describes the narrower Tshal-pa territory (GT 43a; Introduction: Chap. 4.1) in the compound of Ngan-lam lung-pa Ral-gsum Grib (or also just Ngan-lam lung-pa Ral-gsum) -- it is unclear which three valleys or districts are meant here. It is conceivable that the form Ngan-lam Ral-gsum was taken over by the Ngan-lam [Ral-gsum] of ’Phan-yul. This under the precondition that the former concerns the original Ngan-lam, i.e. the land of origin of the Ngan-lam clan. This emerges indirectly from the inscription of the Zhol rdo-ring, where it says that nobody should assume the position of stong dpon of the body-guard [chiliarchy] of ’Phan-yul (sku srungs ’phan yul pa’i stong dpon) other than descendents of gSas-slebs; that is, the grandfather of the general and later chief minister Ngan-lam sTag-sgra klu-khong, to whom the inscription is dedicated.\(^64\) Such declarations usually confirm old territorial circumstances, here Ngan-lam as ancient clan territory that may well also have formed the core of the body-guard district.

This Ngan-lam of ’Phan-yul is the territory of the lower Dar-phu-chu (or Dar-yul-chu), the river that comes from the Dar-yul higher up (for Dar dist. see Part I: fn. 404). A right side arm, not more than a small tributary, is the Ngan-chu, which flows into the Dar-phu river near the present-day village of Len-po.\(^65\) From this point it is called the Ngan-chu, which lower down joins the ’Phan-po-chu (coming from the rGyal valley) and forms the central river of ’Phan-yul, this is the ’Phan-po Ngan-chu (Fig. 35), a term we also know from the textual sources (cf. e.g. Eimer 1979: 295). River names in particular are usually of a great age (and permanence) and the naming here is an indication of the one-time historical significance of Ngan-lam within ’Phan-yul (the earlier Ngas-po).\(^66\) The area around the confluence could be the ancient Ngan-lam Ral-gsum. The name

\(^{63}\) This confluence area is today called gNas-chung, a toponym perhaps related to the name of the later gNas-chung Pehar-lcog.

\(^{64}\) Richardson 1985: 21–23; Li and Coblin 1987: 138ff.; Kho-shul Grags-pa ’byung-gnas 2001: 12–21; Khu-byug 2003. Ngan-lam sTag-sgra Klu-khong (also Ngam sTag-ra klu-gong, Ngan Ta-ra klu-gong) succeeded rGyal-gzigs shu-theng (fn. 70) as chief minister, a post which he occupied ca. 779–783. One account calls him a speaker for the Bon-po in the bSam-yas debate, who was then sent into exile, an anachronistic account inasmuch as he is also given in the inscription as a protector of the doctrine (see P. Wangdu and H. Diemberger 2000: 61; fn. 194). In the Vairocana exile story (see next chapter), he is a leader under the ministers who intrigued against the religious master. It was also an intrigue that accelerated his political career (i.e. the appointment as internal minister as stated in the South Inscription of the Zhol pillar). Ngan-lam rGyal-ba mchog-dbyangs (one of the first seven monks of bSam-yas), who was born in Ngan-lam of ’Phan-yul, was either a close or distant relative of Ngan-lam sTag-sgra Klu-khong. Cf. HLSG Vol. 4: 88.

\(^{65}\) It belongs to the Byang-kha district of lHun-grub county; Xizang Dimching: I 52b: 29°58’N 91°08’E.

\(^{66}\) A relationship between the two names Ngas-po and Ngan-lam/po is rather to be ruled out (besides, the core area of Ngas-po was situated further east, in the Yung-ba valley of lower ’Phan-yul). The historical-geographical significance of Ngan-lam presumably derives from the sku srungs chiliarchy, which we locate here. It should be differentiated from the ’Phan-yul stong sde, which in the dbang ris list is mentioned as land transferred to the sGro and rMa clans (the latter is known as a leading lineage in the mkHar-rtsa area; see Part I: Map 4). The same clans are mentioned in the context of the kheng log rebellion of the 10th cent. as the leading clans of the regional principality (rje’i dpon tshan) of Za-gad, which, as mentioned (fn. 21) – relates to the area around present-day Za-dam and Gad-po (east of Ngan-lam). It is not clear if it is identical with the old Za-gad gshen yul and the area(s) of “Zha (= Za)-Gad-sDe gsum” that are mentioned in the dbang ris,
in this form is no longer known here, but on the other hand Ngan-po is spoken of, which according to older informants is the earlier name of the village of Len-po. The great complex of ruins behind the village is the remains of the one-time Sa-skya monastery of Ngan-po-dgon (see App. II: fn. 6), which – it appears – is a successor institution to the 11th cent. Ngan-lam dByi-mo-dgon, the foundation of the phyi dar master 'Bring Ye-shes yon-tan, which is situated in Ngan-lam of 'Phan-yul (cf. Deb dmor 400, n. 432). Opposite Ngan-po-dgon, on a rock outcrop of the dPal-nag mountain, is the ruin of “Dzong Rekhang” (rdzong Re-khang/rkyang?), according to locals “a very old sngags pa site” (Fig. 34b). Here, in our view, it concerns the old Bon-po 'du gnas of Re-rkyang (or Re-rkyang sha'-thab), which in the version of the gYung drung bon gyi rgyud 'bum 11a2 is given as Re-rgya Ngan-lam (see fn. 59). If we assume that there were not two 'du gnas within Ngan-lam of 'Phan-yul, then it appears that the above-mentioned assembly site of Ngan-lam Ral-gsum was in sKyid-shod. In the Bon-po sources the bon po 'du gnas is ascribed a great age, but (at least in the classified form as it is handed down), they are rather a product of the 8th cent., a period in which at the latest the Ngan-lam of sKyid-shod was also known.

One indication for the presence of Ngan-lam (and of the Ngan-lam lineage) in the Tshal-pa area of the imperial period is provided to us by the story of the Zhol rdo rings. As already noted by Richardson, in the rGya bod yig tshang the talk is of an inscription on a “sri'i rdo ring,” which according to the part of the inscription that is cited in this context is indisputably to be identified as Zhol rdo-ring. It says:

The report on the destruction of the external enemy and the conquest of the Chinese bKra-shis khri-sgo by [the generals] Zhang-rje rGyal-gzigs [i.e. mChims-rgyal rGyal-zigs shu-theng] and sTag-sgra klu-gong [i.e the military campaigns in the 750's and early 760's, which led to the conquest of the Chinese capital in 763], is written on the sri'i rdo ring.69

both specified as territories of the dBas clan (or of the blon po sBas). Without doubt, this territory between Ngan-lam (E), the Seng-ge valley (a.k.a. Pad-ma-thang) (S) and the two main valleys of 'Phan-yul-stod, the valleys of the Ra-ma-chu and 'Phan-po-chu (alias sTag-mgo-chu = rGyal valley) (W) have been a central area within this region north of IHa-sa since the early imperial period. The narrower area of Za-dam – Gad-po is described in a song in the local tradition as one of the four protection zones marked by mythical animals (marked by two tiger heads [= the sTag-mgo rocks at the entrance to the rGyal-valley], lion and dragon); the king (Srong-btsan sgam-po) resided at the centre (seat in Ra-ma Byams-khang; fn. 21). The bodyguard of the chiliarchy is in the immediate neighbourhood of this royal zone (see Map 3).

67 After a long stay in Ngan-lam dByi-mo he came to the sKyid-chung, took over the old imperial temple of sKar-chung and founded the temple in Zhal, as well as the branch temples of Sri and rGya-gar (var.: rGyang-'khar/mkhar; the latter is perhaps to be identified with a site in sNe'u (due west of sKar-chung: Part I: fn. 435), but see App. II: fn. 7 where it is argued that the site may refer to the rGyang-mkhar of the Pa-snam district in Myang). These first foundations of the 'Bring tsho are among the group of the Upper 'Bring Community ('Bring-tscho-stod), in contrast to the foundations of the Lower 'Bring tscho situated in sTod-lung and sKyi-smad (App. V: Table 6). The Upper 'Bring also called themselves Ngan-lam-pa'i 'Bring-tscho (cf. rGya bod yig tshang 461.14-18). A number of the 'Bring tscho foundations later (from the 1180's) became important teaching centers of the rNgog tradition of gSang-phu sNe'u-thog. The Ngan-lam-dgon is said to have counted 10.000 rNgog students. See for more details App. II: Chap. 1.

68 A group of four generals are mentioned in the corresponding entry of the Annals (DTTH 60, 66; Dotson, forthcoming), on the parallels of these events in Chinese historical records, see e.g. Li Fang Kuei (1983).

69 Richardson 1985: 2; sri'i rdo ring is the form in the original of the Densapa manuscript (THI Martin, no. 115). The book edition (GY. Chengdu 1985: 198) has phyi'i rdo ring (the rdo ring outside [of the Potala]), apparently a "correction" by the publisher. It corresponds to the later classification of the Zhol rdo-ring as rdo ring phyi ma ("outer rdo ring"), in contrast to the rdo ring dang ma, a pillar inside the Potala palace, which similarly is designated as a pillar from Sri (or Kri respectively, see below fn. 71).
Map 4a. Two Ngan-lam of Central Tibet: the Ngan-ma [Ral-gsum] of 'Phan-yul and sKyid-shod
Photo 4a,b: Corona Satellite 1970

Map 4b. The area of ancient Ngan-lam and Za-gad in 'Phan-yul
34a, 34b. The area of ancient Ngan-lam in 'Phan-yul. To the right the black rocks of dPal-nag-ri with the ruins of Re-khang (34b) (2003)

Sri'i rdo ring is in our view to be read as the rdo ring of Sri (and not a mispelling of srid, as Richardson believes).\(^69\) The entry in the rGya bod yig tshang relates to the core content of the south inscription, while the east inscription notes the appointment of Ngan-lam Klu-khong as nang blon chen po and the south inscription details the imperial confirmation of the ancient and new privileges of the Ngan-lam clan. Li and Coblin (1987: 138), write that sTag-sgra Klu-khong erected the pillar; to our knowledge, however, it does not say this anywhere explicitly, but the language of the whole inscription is that of a (royally confirmed) individual composition and individual initiative by Klu-khong and his clan milieu. Similarly, Richardson, who in this context also notes that the “royal” position of this pillar (in front of the dMar-po-ri), seems rather surprising. The reason may be that the rdo ring was not originally erected in IHa-sa but in Sri, which – as we have heard above – once lay in the heart of Ngan-lam. In other words, the pillar was consistently erected in the land of the clan to whose leading representatives the inscription is dedicated.\(^70\) At the time of the writing of the rGya bod yig tshang (1434 A.D.), the famous Zhol rdo ring, which with the exception of GY appears not to be mentioned in the old history books, was apparently still standing in the out-of-the-way Sri, from where it was later moved to IHa-sa.\(^71\)

\(^{69}\) Another possible explanation for “sri'i rdo ring” has been suggested by Brandon Dotson, where it could be a corruption of gtsig kyi rdo ring, in the sense of “pillar with the edict (gtsig)” (cf. parallel the old phrase gtsig kyi yige; Li and Coblin 1987: 441), and he argues that the original term gtsig perhaps was no more understood and therefore discarded in favour of sri (Dotson, pers. communication).

\(^{70}\) A similar form of dedication and declaration is found in the name of the rGyal-gzigs shu-theng, the (historically even more important) chief general (and later Chief Minister) from the mChims-rgyal lineage. The home of this lineage was in mChims-yul, which is the later sKyems-stong valley in eastern Dvags-po, where the burial site of the impressive “Lishan-tombs” (or tombs of Sleb) from the imperial period is located. In the middle of the grave field there is the stone base of a former (inscription?) column, perhaps the vanished evidence of a written, clan-specific confirmation.

\(^{71}\) The author, ["Phyong-rgyas-pa?"] dPal-byor bzung-po, either had personal, in situ knowledge of the inscriptions or he is quoting an older, unknown version. The reason why the Zhol rdo-ring is not otherwise mentioned in medieval literature is perhaps that it was the monolith that for most of the time was not in the land of the clan to whose leading representatives the inscription is dedicated. (inasmuch as we may be correct here and that such a move actually took place) is seen also from fn. 69a).

The author of the Gung thang dkar chag (GT 40b) tells the story of the transportation of an “excellent rdo ring” from Upper Sri to IHa-sa in the time of the last Tshal-pa ruler, Grags-pa Tshe-dbang rab-brtan, a period which is to be dated at the end of the 17th century. In GT, the data on Grags-pa Tshe-dbang rab-brtan, the last of the Tshal-pa dpon pa, are contradictory. The year of his death is given as the 11th rab byung chu bya, 1633, in other places 44 years after the death of the last Tshal Yang-dgon spyan snga skal-ldan rgya-mtsho, who according to statements in Zur chen rnam thar died in 1649 (Part I: fn. 176). This corresponds to the chu bya year of 1693. On the occasion of the commemorative funeral ceremony (dgongs rdzogs) for the Fifth Dalai Lama (d. 1682), the excellent rdo ring from Sri was brought to IHa-sa and set up in front of the Zhabs-brtan IHa-khang, or in front of the “Pho-brang chen-po,” as it says elsewhere (GT 40b), an event that is consequently to be dated to the late 1680’s or early 1690’s (according to Tibetan accounts the death of the Great Fifth had not even been made public). The story of the difficult transport of the monolith is on a mural in the Bar-khyams gallery of the Potala (Fig. 36), on which a textual note says that, under the direction of the Tshal-pa sde pa Grags-pa the Kri'i rdo ring chung ba was carried across the sKyid-chu by ferrymen [to IHa-sa] (kri'i rdo ring chung ba tshal sde pa grags pas do dam mdzad pa skyid chur bshon gvis 'dren pa; kri'i rdo ring chung ba is perhaps not to be read as small monolith but as “the long stone and the smaller stones from Kri (= Sri);” the illustration shows a large rdo ring on the boat; according to GT additional stones came with this monolith transport from the neighbouring (and often-used) quarry of sKam-po-yung (above fn. 36), which is also noted in the illustration [skam yung nas rdo gsog 'dren]). The same Tshal-pa sde pa had also previously ordered the construction of a one-storey high image of the Fifth Dalai Lama, which as it were was transported in the reverse direction: from a IHa-sa workshop (?) to the hermitage of Byang-mkhar in Sri
However that may be, it seems that Ngan-lam Sri was the narrow homeland of the sTag-sgra Klu-khong and the Ngan-lam of sKyid-shod did then represent an older (branch) territory of this line of 'Phan-yul. Possibly this goes back to the period of the foundation of lHa-sa, according to which, similar to 'Phan-yul, a clan of the bodyguard chilliarchy was to have settled in the immediate neighbourhood of the royal residence (here the symbolic residence of Jo-khang). The imperial site of Ngan-lam Ts[h]al-[g]sar-pa, registered in the Annals for 701 A.D., may relate to this branch settlement. The “New Garden of Ngan-lam” (and of the Ngan-lam clan), then, forms the pattern for the geographical name for the “Garden” (tsal-) territory east of lHa-sa, which, after the foundation of the monastic centre by the “beggar monk of Ngan-lam” Gung-thang Bla-ma Zhang, gradually displaced the older local name.

36. The transport of the lKrî'i rdo-ring to lHa-sa
Detail of a mural in the Potala

37. The rdo ring nang ma inside the Potala

Zhal (see GT ibid.). This lKrî'i lKrî'i rdo-ring evidently refers to the so-called rdo ring nang ma, a pillar without inscription inside the Potala (Fig. 37), which elsewhere is described as the pillar that commemorates the completion of the construction of the Red Palace (pho brang dmar po) in the chu bya year 1693 (21st day of the 4th month). It was installed during the festivities held on that occasion (cf. Ming-dmar rgyal-mtshan (ed.) 1987: 16). The “lKrî'i rdo-ring” outside the Potala (i.e. the “Zhol pillar” which today is situated outside the walls of Zhol village) is accordingly called the rdo ring phyi ma. One can assume that this classification of the two monoliths goes back to the time of the rdo ring nang ma installation. In this connection, it cannot entirely be excluded that the ancient rdo ring from Ngan-lam Sri also came to lHa-sa during the same period. A depiction of the Zhol rdo ring in the Wise Collection is (erroneously?!) labelled as rdo ring nang ma.

32 Mentioned as the seat of the mother Khri-ma-lod. The council of the same year was held in Glag, the area on the sKyid-chen not far to the cast of Tshal Gung-thang (Hazod 2004). For the years 708–710, the place mKhri[s]-pa (-t]hjang, -tsha) is registered several times as the location of the assembly: possibly the lKrî (Sri) of Ngan-lam, or perhaps it refers to the not closer identified ancient yul of Sribs alius Khris-sna (DTII 80.16 17; Hazod, forthcoming b).
3.3 Khri-srong lde-btsan Seeks Vairocana and Arrives at Tsha-ba-gru

Tsha-ba-gru – the birthplace of Bla-ma Zhang – forms one station in the well-known exile story of Ba-gor Bai-ro-tsa-na (Vairocana), namely according to the version of the bTsun mo bka’ thang (TK Chap. 7–13).

The master Vairocana, driven from the court of Khri-srong Ied-btsan and from bSam-yas, according to this version did not turn to Tsha-ba-rong in the east (= the standard version),13 but to the north, where he found protection in the woods of Yer-pa (Chap. 9).14 Behind the departure was an intrigue on the part of queen dMar-rgyan, who was unhappily in love with Vairocana (Chap. 7);15 the king soon regretted his decision and went in search of the master. Initially, he sought him in Brag-dmar g.Ya’-ma-lung, then in Ha-re (?). Then he returned home and set off again, this time over the rGod-dkar-la and the Ba-lam valley to the sKyid-chu (250.11f.). On the bank of the river [at Tshal Gung-thang], he saw Vairocana disappearing into the mountains on the other side of the river [towards Yer-pa]. As the king’s horse (rTa-pho Shugs-Ildan) was completely worn out and overheated, he had to spend the night at this place in Tsha-ba-gru; wherefrom the name of the place derives, “the corner where the horse became hot” (252.4–5). The next morning, he set off again in search of Vairocana; a ferryman coming down the river took the horse [and the king] cross the river, where the two of them were unable to find any trace of the master, however. Thus they returned by the same route to bSam-yas (Chap. 11, 253.5–254.1; note: frequently, the horse alone is referred to as the actual actor in the narration). On this route taken by Vairocana and the king (described in Chaps. 9 and 10) there is respectively a meeting with a smith husband and wife living in [Glag] Ba-lam, the area behind the rGod-dkar-la. The king’s son Mu-tig btsan-po later takes the same route. (Padmasambhava, who in the meantime had been called to the court from Yar-klungs Shel-brag, had informed Mu-tig btsan-po of the place where Vairocana was staying (Chap. 12, 257.14f.); the background for his coming was the queen’s incurable klu illness (i.e. klu nad mdze, leprosy), which Vairocana had sent from Yer-pa as a punishment for the slander (Chap. 11, 254.19–256.9). On the advice of the fortune-teller Kun-shes Things-po – a figure behind which is the dPal-Ildan Iha-mo who comes from Yer-pa to the queen’s place, i.e. bSam-yas Mal-gong sGang-sngon rtse-dgu16 – Padmasambhava comes and proposes inviting the master of U-rgyan for the required expiation ritual:

13 Be ro’i rnam thar, Chap. 11; Padma bka’ thang, Chap. 75, 76, 83; cf. Karmay 1988b: 26–27, Tsha-ba-rong (Tsha-ba-tsha-shod or Tsha-ba-yul in the older dBa’ bzhed) refers to rGyal-mo Tsha-ba-rong (or rGyal-rong), the region in the far eastern part of cultural Tibet (now included in the rNga-pa district of northern Szechuan province) which was traditionally organized into 18 principalities (see e.g. Gyurme Dorje 1998: 6262f.; Nyingma School II. Map 10). The area is considered a shas yul and gter gnas of the Bon-po who regard Vairocana, the “non-differentiator between Bon and Buddhism” (bon chos khyad med), as the spiritual father of the Bon gsar-ma or New Bon (see Karmay 1988b: 35f.). The sites associated with the master are especially to be found in the area of the holy mountain rGyal-mo rMu-rdo which also served as point of reference for the revival of the Bon tradition in this area in the first half of the 18th century. See Karmay 1998 (‘The Cult of Mount rMu-rdo’) and most recently Karmay 2005. Yamaguchi 1992 identifies ancient rGyal-morong as the core territory of the Eastern Nü-Kuo (Eastern Kingdom of Women) and the home of important clans which were affinally related to the early Yar-lung house. On rGyal-rong, see also Martin 2001, s.v. index.

14 i.e. Yer-pa gTsug-ri spungs-pa’i nags (Chap. 11: 254.19), also Yer-pa gtsug-rum ’bar-ba or lHa-lung dPal gyi rdo-rje brag-phug (sic) (Chap. 13, 262.4, et passim).

15 The jealousy story of dMar-rgyan (Tshe spong-bza’ dMar-rgyal/b Me-tog sgron alias rMa-rgyal lDong-skar) is only hinted at in other versions or is completely absent; the actual intriguers are the ministers, whose leader, Ngan sTag-sgra klu-gong, even demanded the execution of the master (see Karmay, op. cit., 27 (fn. 36, 37), 34).

16 Elsewhere mKhars ’bar Mal-gong sGang-sngon rtse-dgu (Chap. 7, 245.16); i.e Brag-dmar Ma-gong; cf. dBa’ bzhed 25b (= P. Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 91); see also TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 18, fn. 4.
The legend, as is well known, has word-for-word parallels to Chapter VI of the *mdo gzer mig,* which in some experts’ opinions also provides the basic pattern for the *Thang yig.* In his analysis, Kvaerne found several “alien” literary motifs, which come from early (Indian) translation literature and perhaps already had been part of popular literature for some time before they were incorporated into the narrative framework (Kvaerne 1980). Regardless of their eclectic nature, the legend naturally contains historical elements, alone through the description of historical routes, which is here integrated into a specific context of the tradition – e.g. in the account of Padmasambhava’s disciple Vairocana, who is credited with the introduction of the *rDzogs-chen* Teaching and who because of this is highly regarded by both the *rNyin-ma-pa* and the *Bon-po* (fn. 73). In the *Thang yig,* Tsha-ba-gru corresponds to the (east-Tibetan) *rGyal-mo* Tsha-ba-rong of the standard (but perhaps later?) version of the Vairocana exile story, where the Teaching of Vairocana was spread by the disciple g.Yu-sgar snying-po.80

In the *bTsun mo hka’ thang,* g.Yu-sgar snying-po is the disciple to whom the master gives his black horse. The horse is, as it were, Vairocana’s *alter ego* (i.e. *bdag gi ngo ‘dra ba’i rta nag ‘di,* “this black horse resembling my countenance;” 242.21). It stands symbolically for the further dissemination of Vairocana’s Teaching,81 which according to the *Thang yig* version led over the well-known route from bSam-yas through Ba-lam to the sKyid-chu (Map 4). It is a murky story in which after the pass, in the region of Ba-lam (= “trail of the [dead] cow”),82 the protagonists enter, as

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79 Klu-chen dGa’bo and Klu-nag ’Dam’dzin are mentioned in this context.
80 See also Laufer 1911: 142-177.
81 The versions essentially differ in the various names of the protagonists (sTon-pa gShen-rab instead of Padmasambhava etc.) and the places of the story, which in the Bon-po version of the *gzer mig* are in the land of Hos-mo gling-drug. Some place names, however, are the same, such as Ha-re = Ha-re; *Yer-pa gTsug-rum* ‘bar-ba (on the other side of the sKyid-chu) is Ri’bar-ba gTsug-rum in the *gzer mig* (on the other side of the river Scng-ga nag-po); the fortress *mKhar-bar Mal-gong sGang-sngon rtse-dgu* is mKhar-bar-ba rtse-dgu. In both versions, the king’s horse is *rTa-po Shugs-ladan* (strong stallion); in the *gzer mig,* Mu-tig btsan po’s black horse (and Vairocana’s) corresponds to the *Brug-rta sngon-po,* the mount of g.Yu-lo and of the court priest Yid kyi khye’u-chung.
82 The same horse is regarded as Padmasambhava’s express messenger (*hang chen,* spreading the Teaching in all directions. According to Vairocana’s prophetic words, in the course of the dissemination, it would later be reborn in Don-yod of ’Phan-yul (?). *bKa’ thang sde lnga* 243. 6-8).
83 Cf. *bKa’ thang sde lnga* 249. 6; also the name Gla[t], which is often mentioned together with that of Ba-lam, is apparently derived from this (i.e. the place where the cow perished; 250.7). Both are secondary etymologies of the name of an area, which was closely connected with the bDa’s (dBa’, sBa’, *Ba’) clan. Ba-lam Gla[t] was among others the native land of sBa gSal-sngang. He founded two temples in Gla[t] (see Part I: fn. 410) and is said to have urged his clan brothers to practise Buddhism instead of *Bon* (*dBa’ bshed* 15a). Ba in Ba-lam relates to this clan whose principal homeland apparently was the Bami (sBa-mi) territory in Lo (alias Nyen-kar; see Introduction: fn. 7). The closer area of Gla[t] refers to the
it were, a world beyond. It is symbolized by the gate of the smith, in which first Vairocana and then the king and his exhausted [rTa-pho] Shugs-idam appear. The smith-story is a story in itself and an artificially incorporated narrative fragment. But its appearance at this point is thoroughly consistent. Ba-lam represents the eastern horizon of the IHa-sa Mandala Zone, which, so to say, can be entered at this “smith point.”\(^8\) Yer-pa, the srog shing of the Ra-sa’i ’Phrul-snang, stands for the centre of IHa-sa. Tsha-ba-gru apparently represents a similarly significant station in the early religious geography of sKyid-shod. In our view, behind the exile story a history of the dissemination of the teaching of the Padmasambhava from bSam-yas is hidden, more precisely of the guardian entrusted with the protection of this teaching (and its first container, i.e. bSam-yas) rgyal po Pehar. The protagonists’ divine horses which were transferred to the sKyid-chu are the master’s “express messengers;” the places of their arrival are sites where they are “reborn” (fn. 81). As we know, the tradition gives Tshal Gung-thang as one of Pehar’s stop-overs on his way from IHa-sa (’Bras-spungs/ gNas-chung), although only the last section of this transfer story is known in more detail. This is the abandonment and exile story of the deity, which has its starting point at the birthplace of Pehar in Tshal (see below Chap. V). The place corresponds with the arrival of the royal horse in Tsha-ba-gru, a toponym that – as we heard – once described a larger area in the Tshal district, similar to the other “horse toponym,” rTa-mo-ra, to which it probably has a close relationship. Both names stand for a pre-Tshal religious history of the district, in which the Pehar tradition is mixed with other teaching and protective deity traditions known from the generation of the teaching of Bla-ma Zhang, which we later encounter in the foundation of Tshal and Gung-thang.\(^8\)

\(^{8}\) An early evidence of Tsha-ba-gru is to be found in the Ra lo rnam thar (309.10f.), which speaks of a certain ‘Od-zer ’bum-me from sKyid-shod Tsha-ba-gru who was an incarnation of the yun rDo-rje Ro-lang-ma (*Vajra Vetâlî), the latter known as the consort of *Jigs-byed (Vajrabhaivara) (Wilson and Brauen 2000: 420; see also Ra lo rnam thar 223). It may be a reference to an early local connection to the Yamantaka cult (or Vajrabhaivara, the terrifying form of Yamantaka), which was disseminated in Tibet by Rva lo tsâ bu in the 11th century. In his last years he was particularly active in sKyid-shod, with the main residence in IDa-ma (fDa-IHa-[l]-lung), due east of Ba-lam, where the master also died (see Hazod 2004: Chap. 5.3; IDa (the later Tshal pa mi sde) is counted among the territories which are mentioned in connection with bellicose enterprises, here with the pulling-down of a siâpa, an event which shows clear parallels to a later story, when Rva-lo’s relics were taken from IDa to ’Bras-spungs in the early 15th century; see Hazod. op. cit. ibid.). The rDo-rje Ro-lang-ma is also associated with other traditions. She is considered to be the sakti of Mon-bu pu-tra, one of the rGyal-po sku-lnga emanations of Pehar (i.e. the sKu’i rgyal-po Mon-bu-putra who occupies the eastern side in the sKu-lha mandala; his minister is the above-mentioned Bya-khi mig-geig-po, the god of the Karma-shag oracle of IHa-sa). Ro-lang-ma also occurs in the entourage of Gur mGon (cf. Wilson and Brauen 2000: 313, 348 et passim), a central figure in the founding story of Tshal (the Gur mGon tradition was transmitted to Bla-ma Zhang by his teacher rNgog mDo-sde, who counts among the circle of disciples of Rva lo tsâ ba; *IHo rong chos bzung 53). There is probably also a relationship with rDo-rje Ro-lang-ma from the group of the 18 Ging (led by Ging-ka-ra), the companion of Pehar, or with the goddess Ro-lang-ma who functions as consort of gTsod-rva-can, the snying ma of dGa’-Idam chos-‘khor-gling (Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1975: 109–112; 279; 165). The early presence of the Pehar tradition in Tshal is evidenced by the report of the consecration of the rTa-mo-ra’i IHa-chen dPal-ba dbang-phug statue in the Gung-thang temple, in which the divinity named rgyal po sPe-dkar, rgyal po Shing-bya-can or rgyal po bSam-yas-pa is mentioned (*Mar lung pa rnam thar 79b2f.). In the oral tradition, Pehar was present in Tshal before the foundation of Zhang’s monastery (see below fn. 86; Chap. V.1).
Map 5. From bSam-yas to [Nga-n-lam] Tsha-ba-gru – The route of the King’s horse
Photo: Corona Satellite 1970
4. DIVINE PATRONS

4.1 Dar-ma gzhon-nu and the "Gung-thang Project"

Bla-ma Zhang is supposed to have been invited to Tshal by a certain dpon rGyal-tsha[s] A-ma lhagcig, at a place where there was a seminary (mtshan nyid grv[a]) of the dge bshes gZad-pa. This seminary was then pulled down (rGya blon ma 150.6; ZhK III (Cha) 259b2f.). This presumably relates to the time when Zhang and his group in Tshal established the hermitage of Tshal-sgang Chos-spyil, one of Zhang’s seven main retreats (sgrub gnas bdun). It was already functioning as a kind of precursor of the later monastic residence of Tshal Yang-dgon (founded in 1175 A.D.), as it is said that even by the late 1160’s and early 1170’s, Zhang disciples were being ordained in Tshal (= Tshal-sgang Chos-spyil). In other Zhang retreats, too, there had long been smaller settlements of Tshal-pa communities, such as in g.Yu-brag of sGrags, where Zhang established a meditation school (sgom grva), or in in Re’u-chung-dgon of Zhla.85 In Tshal, a possible or suitable location for the monastery was already existing.86 The building followed, as we know, on the instructions of his bKa’ brgyud teacher Dvags-po sGom-tshul. In the mid-1160’s, the teacher had left IHa-sa and transferred the responsibility for the care of the holy temples and its main supports (i.e. the IHa-ladan Jo-bo-gnyis) to his disciple.87 The monastery of Tshal formed a basis for this mission, which at the same time was both of a religious and political nature. It included finding a solution to the political situation in IHa-sa and sKyid-shod, which had been marked by tension between the IHa-sa sde bzhi communities (fn. 11). The dpon po rGyal-tsha[s] should presumably be included in the group of local aristocratic patrons, specifically those who had their estates in the vicinity of IHa-sa. Possibly he was a member of the family of the yon bdag mGar rGyal-ba ’byung-gnas from Grib.

The years up to the founding of Gung-thang (in 1187 A.D.) were marked by incessant mobility on the part of Zhang and his group, who were active in various regions of central Tibet and often used violent means (khor tshul) if it was a matter of pacifying an area and winning local lords for their religious work. This unusually offensive and aggressive implementation of the ’dul ba (through the means of “fighting others” and the establishment of “way sealings” (lam rgya) and protective zones against brigands, etc.)88 also created the material conditions to realize the vision of the completion of their own monastic residence.

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85 As mentioned above (fn. 40), the place-name (in this form only known from the bKa’ thor bu) is probably identical with the site of Ri’tu-chung where Kha-rag-pa chen-po was ordained, according to the calculation in Ming mdzod in ca. 1170 A.D. In around 1180, sNa-phu-pa (alias Gling-ras-pa) was invited to the place Ngan-lam Ri-chu[ng] ring-mo (~ Re-chung ring-mo); see sNa phu rnam thar 17a1–2; Part I: fn. 217.

86 With regard to the choice of location of the Yang-dgon monastery, the local tradition speaks of one of the “three offences” (or presumptions) made by Bla-ma Zhang: the immediate vicinity of the river is reserved only for the Jo-khang (the other two offences: “Zhang made the khor ra not on foot but with the snow lion (apart from which he never made a pilgrimage to rTsai-ri (sic))”; and “he only allowed bla ma from IHa-sa (meaning Central Tibet) to be abbot of his religious site”). In the local account of Pehar’s transfer to IHa-sa it is said that Pehar advised Zhang to build his monastery on the mountain, “but Bla-ma Zhang always did the opposite.” The conflict here serves as one explanation for the revolt that the srong ma later instigated (above Chap. 1; Part I: fn. 576).

87 According to the Kha rag gNyos kyi gdung rabs, the lineage account of the powerful gNyos hegemony in sKyid-smad, it was gNyos Grags-pa-dpal whom Dvags-po sGom-tshul first entrusted with the care of the Ra-sa ‘Phrul-snang. See Part I: fn.47; App. II: Chap. 1.2f.

88 See Deb sgon 836; Introduction: Chap. 5.
At the heart of this was the plan for the building of the Gung-thang temple and the erection of the great Byang-chub chen-po statue:

"Materials for the construction of the temple and its images were provided without limit by the [local spirits such as the] lha, klu, gnod shiyin; …through multifarious peaceful and wrathful means he assembled the materials for the erection [of the temple]." (GT 10b).

Acting alongside Bla-ma Zhang was the disciple aide-de-camp (nye gnas) Dar-ma gzhon-nu, the later bdag po of Gung-thang and first dpon of Tshal, who from approximately the mid 1150’s appeared as Zhang’s constant companion and closest confidant. Aside from Zhang, he was without doubt the most important figure in the foundation phase of Tshal-pa. With the Yang-dgon gdan sa ba Śākya-‘od, after Zhang’s death he founded the union of the religious and secular throne and apparently, long after his office as dpon po (21 years), which he passed on to his nephew in 1215, he continued to determine the political destiny in Tshal (see Part I: fn. 373; Introduction: Chap. 7, and ZhK III (Cha) 256af.). His death, at the high age of 88, also signalled the end of the foundation phase of Tshal-pa, which continued politically through the mGar of Grib (starting with the 4th dpon chen Sangs-rgyas dngos-grub) and led into a new era of hegemonic power. Dar-ma gzhon-nu’s clan name is not known; his family came from the nearby Ban-khos, a toponym which is known from the IHa-sa sa dpyad (Graph 1) and is to be located in the present-day Shing-tshang area (see HSLG Vol 1: 64; Part I: fn. 359). It is part of the Glag Ba-lam territory, which, as has been mentioned, is associated with the homland of the dBa’ clan (above fn. 81), perhaps the lineage of the Dar-ma gzhon-nu.\footnote{The Glag Ba-lam area was a stronghold of the Bar Tshal school, represented by the monasteries of Ro-skam and IHa-phug-n-mkhur, the latter being the most important Tshal-pa monastery alongside the mother seat of Tshal Yang-dgon in the period of the Dar-ma gzhon-nu (see Introduction; Hazod 2004). Several of the early Tshal-pa therefore came from Ba-lam, some namely from the dBa’ clan. Lo-mi was the most important lineage of Ro-skam, which was situated in Phur-lung of Upper Glags. Phur-lung is in Upper Shing-tshang (see Hazod 2004). The monastery was evidently not far from Ban-khos, which to our knowledge is no longer in use as a place name. Inasmuch as the throne of Dar-ma gzhon-nu is described in GT as the dbon sa, the interendant’s relationship to Zhang is not to be excluded (dbon sa in the sense of “seat of the nephew [of Zhang],” perhaps a relationship that ran through the line of the mother, i.e. the Shud-phu branch, which settled in Tsha-ba-gru); but this is rather unlikely and dbon sa here should simply be read as an alternative form of dpon [pa ‘i sa], i.e. throne of the secular ruler, whose first three generations were respectively nephews (dbon) of the predecessor.} From his function as von bdag in connection with the Gung-thang project (see below), one may also conclude that his family had estates in this part of the Tshal district.

Dar-ma gzhon-nu ranked as the first in the group of the 'Phrin-las sgub-pa bu-chen, i.e. the great sons who fulfilled [Zhang’s] karmic activity [of peace, increase, power and violence/force or caturkarman], a division that presumably refers to the leading representatives of Zhang’s hordes of disciples ready to resort to violence. The list in the Deb dmar covers 26 disciples, but the group...
was somewhat larger. For several Zhang disciples there are biographical entries that they had at some time stood alongside the master in local battles. Secular objectives mixed with religious ones, inasmuch as fighting at the front was seen as a means of immediately experiencing Mahāmudrā. The group included various types of adherents – disciples in the narrow sense, such as the later founder of the Ro-skam-pa monastery, some not more precisely identifiable yogis, the sculptor Mar-pa lha-dkar, a carpenter, the (later) caretaker (dkon gyner) of Gung-thang as well as a number of local rulers, among them those from bSam-yas, 'Phrang-po, Kha-rag and Grib, the last of these was represented by the above-mentioned mGar rGyal-ba 'byung-gnas.

The tradition identifies Dar-ma gzhon-nu as the actual founder of the Gung-thang temple, the history of which is directly connected with spiritual experiences on the battle field:

During the mahāmudric insight that he had won on the battlefield, he had a vision of bDe-mchog (Samvāra) and in this connection he saw the future place of the bDe-mchog pho-brang (i.e. Byang-chub pho-brang, the central part of the Gung-thang temple with the Jo-bo Byang-chub chen-po). The ground was full of tadpoles, and he pulled a tree trunk tied to his shoulders with two ropes repeatedly over the field until it was a muddy red. Cf. mKhas pa'i dga'ston 808.13. Here, apparently, he was carrying out the ritual of purifying the ground, a part of the sa dpyad, which precedes the foundation of the temple. GT reports how Dar-ma gzhon-nu rode on a wild white mare (rta rgod dkar mo) in the search of a suitable place for the temple. It suddenly came to the intendant’s mind that they – he and the master – did not have enough material to carry out the project. At the same moment, the horse tore off with its rider, and in the shortest time covered the distance of half a day’s ride (GT 10a).

The divine animal was obviously making it plain that all the conditions for realizing their project would be provided. The two images (coming from different sources) should be seen in relation to each other and relate to the specific situation before the Gung-thang foundation: the procurement

* Cf. Introduction: Chap. 6.2. It is not completely clear how we should conceive of what is being described in the sources as the battles, battlefield, soldiers and army leaders (cf. e.g. Mar lung pa rnam thar 88a2f.). In the Tibetan chronicles an army (damg) can mean 1,000 people or only 20 (cf. e.g. CFS Gyalbo et al. 200). In one of the battles (i.e. the battle against the gDos-pa), Zhang called on his comrade in arms Ti-shri ras-pa to throw stones at the enemy, an indication of an inadequately armed crowd of players, whose actions nevertheless led to killing. Ti-shri ras-pa also had his doubts in this connection, when he remarked that he had actually come to Zhang for the sake of the Dharma, not to kill people (GT 16a). The warlike activities were usually circumscribed in the context of dal ba actions (with Mahākāla figures as the main actors; see here the descriptions in connection with the erection of the Sri-gnon mchod rten in Gung-thang; GT 63a-b). Occasionally the talk is more realistically of the destruction or demolition of local religious establishments (temple, monastery, mchod rten). The local tradition of lDan-ma (of sKyid-shod) includes a violent appearance of the Gung-thang Bla-ma Zhang, who at one point here, known as rGyal-po Glang-dar-ma, once tore down a stūpa in order to use it for the building of his vihāra in Gung-thang (above Fig. 4a) As mentioned elsewhere (Hazod 2004), here it presumably concerns a relic shrine of Rva lo tsā ba (who died in lDan) and the violent appearance presumably here signals the taking over of a specific tradition (here of Yamāntaka), which is to be underpinned by the possession of the relics. Such actions were also usual in the later traditions, even if the connections with territorial-political objectives were perhaps not so extreme or obvious as in the case of the “wars” of Bla-ma Zhang and his group. It has already been mentioned (App. III), that several battlefields mentioned by name (such as those of ’Phrang, Zur-mkhar, Grva, Dol, lCang, sGrags and lDan i.a.) correspond with the territories of the later Tshal mi sde.

* The ’Phrin-las sgrub-pa bu-chen group partly corresponds to the probably older list of the “Thirteen Great Lions” of the Mar lung pa rnam thar (App. V: Table 4).

* Cf. e.g. Lessing and Wayman 1988: 281 et passim.
of material for building the shrine, a programme that was realized in the period of the Tshal-pa “crusades.” The battlefield on which the founder experienced the vision of the temple and the (blood-)red earth that the white mare led him to are analogous images of the soil and foundation on which the future shrine will be erected.

The building of the temple took place on the instruction of dPal rGva-lo chen-po, who had functioned as Zhang’s principal yogic teacher since approximately the 1150’s. Bla-ma Zhang is indebted to him for the Heruka instructions and the transmission of the teaching cycles of mGon-po Phyag-bzhi-pa (the four-armed Mahākāla), of the later (male) chief protector of Gung-thang under whose protection (and that of his powerful attendants) Zhang’s enterprises came. A significant representation for the Tshal-pa tradition is the triad of rGva-lo – Zhang and Dar-ma gzhon-nu; it reflects the relationship of the three chief protagonists of the founding of Gung-thang, with rGva-lo the paternal teacher on the one side and the attendant entrusted with the implementation of the project on the other. Zhang is the central figure, which has its divine image in the statue of lHa-chen dpal-'bar, the “lord of the seven places” (a reference to Zhang’s sgrub gnas bdun). Its erection and consecration (according to the Mar lung pa rnam thar 1189 A.D.) formed the crowning conclusion of the “Gung-thang Project.”

The triad of rGva-lo, Zhang and Dar-ma gzhon-nu covers three generations of masters and disciples (a – c of Graph 2) and here at the same time reflects an archetypical arrangement of several hierarchical positions (A – D of Graph 2): father and son, “king” and “successor to the throne” or also “king” and “minister,” the latter being an oppositional pair, whom (following the cliché of a patrilineal order) we can symbolically assign to the zones of centre and periphery, above and below (heaven and earth [represented by lha and klu etc.] or male and female and other derivations. Dar-ma gzhon-nu represents both: as the founder of Gung-thang, he assumes the
central position; as the one responsible for procurement of the (building) material, he represents the (“ministerial” and “giving”) side of the yon ḥdag, which covers both the divine patrons and the real local lords and their subjects, who are answerable to him or participate in the project.

The position of the assistant at Bla-ma Zhang’s side led to the establishment of the secular throne of Tshal (ca. 1193). The history of its emergence is a branching off from the spiritual lineage created by Zhang. Both Dar-ma gzhon-nu and the yon ḥdag rGyal-ba ’byung-gnas, whose line from 1231 A.D. onwards supplied the Tshal-pa rulers, were “sons” of Zhang. Religious and secular thrones form two sides of a ruling throne that are filled with the same spiritual power. It is no accident that the later khri dpon palace was built at Pehar’s birthplace (cf. above Chap. 3.1). Possibly Dar-ma gzhon-nu already had his seat here. In the Tshal-pa tradition, the rider on the white mare is considered to be an incarnation of the “Hundred Giver” (i.e. the King of the Gods (lha’i rgyal po) brGya-byin, i.e. Indra), a categorization that relates to the Pehar and rGyal-po sku-Inga tradition.

40. A rider on a white horse and scenes of fighting – Detail from a biographical thangka of Bla-ma Zhang (Intro.: Fig. 5)

4.2 The White Mare

The divine mount of the assistant is also mentioned in connection with gTsang-pa rgya-ras, the founder of the ’Brug-pa bKa’-brgyud-pa school. It is said that immediately after his ordination in Tshal (under Bla-ma Zhang, 1193 A.D.), he rode a white mare, which began to gallop at the moment when the rider proclaimed himself to be of equal rank with Guru Naropa (GT 14a). Behind this phenomenon, apparently, is a protective goddess who, similar to the stallion in the Vairocana story, functions as the bearer and disseminator of the doctrine, and who is not restricted to Tshal alone.93 She is not named, but in this connection the link with Dar-ma gzhon-nu alias brGya-byin gives us an indication. She is apparently to be found in the circle of the Lord of the Gods, or better, in the milieu of Tibetan territorial gods with which brGya-byin is associated. He is considered to be

93 A “white mare story” is also to be found in connection with dGyer-sgom Zhig-po (alias dGye-sgom Tshul-khrims seng-ge (1144–1204), the founder of Shug-gseb dgon-pa in sKyid-smad). He was practising with his mudrā in Yul-stod of the Tsa-ri area and it is reported how he was expelled from this site by a group of religious colleagues (representatives of the ’Brug-pa, Tshal-pa, [Phag-gru] gDan-sa-mthil-pa and ’Bri-gung-pa) who saw it “improper that this power place was occupied by a yogin with a female partner.” dGyer-sgom rode off on a white mare after which the rTa-dkar-la (the White Horse Pass at the western entrance to the Tsa-ri mountain sanctuary) is named (see Huber 1999: 69, 91, 95. based on Padma dkar-po’s guide to Tsa-ri). As mentioned above (Chap. 2), a rTa-dkar-la is also in Grib-phu where the pass (of lHa-lung dPal gyi rdo-rje’s horse) marks the southern entry zone of the lHa-sa Mandala.
the father of gNam-mtsho rgyal-mo (i.e. the brGya-byin sras-mo gNam-mtsho [rgyal-mo (~phyug-mo)]), the goddess of the lake of the same name. She is the consort of Thang-lha as well as of Zur-phud Inga-pa, the deity addressed as gandharva king (and also nāga king), who is considered to be the manifestation form of the mountain god (usually depicted as a rider of a white horse; cf. Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1975: 206–208).

The powerful territorial god of the north and earlier “body god” (sku lha / bla) of King Khri Srong Le-dbang-po-brtsan forms an important link with regard to the establishment of the Buddhist protector gods and the religious geography of the post-bSam-yas period. Not least, this concerns the establishment of the chos skyong Pehar, who supposedly was proposed to Padmasambhava by Zur-phud-lnga-pa as the guardian of the treasures for the king’s thugs dam temple (see here TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 276). Among other places, Thang-lha had a seat at the dMar-po-ri of IHa-sa and at the Has-po Khas-po-ri, the foundation mountain of the bSam-yas Maṇḍāla. The divinity’s field of power is defined not least by the water courses, whose sources are associated with the mountain of the same name – above all the skYid-chu and the great gNam-mtsho lake. Correspondingly, he also appears in the sources as the Lord of the Waters, or the nāga king (klu'i rgyal po), alongside Zur-phud-lnga-pa also under the name Ne'u-le thod-dkar or klu Tshangs-pa (Brahmā). In the older IHa-sa history, there is also the form Gung-thang gNyan-chen Thang-la, a name under which the deity appeared in connection with the skYid-chu dike-buiding in the 1190’s or the beginning of 13th century. We assume that Gung-thang refers to Tshal Gung-thang, which then already claimed a leading position in the IHa-sa valley. It is reasonable to see the white mare of Gung-thang in connection with the Thang-lha family or with a manifestation that – in the classificatory sense – embodies the female side of the sacral geography of Thang-lha, namely with gNam-mtsho or a deity related to her, which we also encounter in Tshal.

One of the manifestations of gNam-mtsho is the brtan ma goddess rDo-rje Kun-grags-ma. She heads the group of the four great bdud mo, one of the three quartets of goddesses which form the class of the 12 brTan-ma (~ bsTan-ma). These are the four great bdud mo, four great gnod shyin mo

44 Cf. e.g. Dzam gling rgyan gvcig 89; dBar’ bzhes 16 (= P. Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 66).

45 The geographical link between the skYid-chu and Thang-lha is indirectly referred to in the taming story. The first subjugation by Padmasambhava took place in sNying-drung, at the place of sNying-ri: this is the “heart” of Thang-la and source of the IHa-chu, which later becomes the skYid-chu. See Introduction: Chap. 4.

46 There is a detailed description of Thang-la and gNam-mtsho and their various manifestations etc. in Bellezza 1997, Chaps. 1–5. On Ne'u-le thod-dkar and klu Tshangs-pa, see TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005, s.v. index; see also Part I, fn.192.

47 It relates to the Jo-rays project of the chu rays pa Nam-mkha’-dpal for the protection of the IHa-sa sanctuary, who was supported in this by Gung-thang gNyan-chen Thang-lha. The latter encouraged the master to win the brTan-ma from IHa-sa, as well as more outlying territorial gods from the environs of the old lha dgu, for the enterprise, which began with the subjugation of the local lha 'dre. See App. II, Chap. 2.4 of this volume.
and four great sman mo, each assigned to one of the four points of the compass, with the leaders of the three groups in the east.98

The account of the bsTan-ma lists is not consistent and the sources give various goddesses as the leader of the twelve – rDo-rje Kun-grags-ma, rDo-rje Grags-mo-rgyal or rDo-rje g.Yu-sgron-ma; the latter favoured by the Fifth Dalai Lama, who puts her on the same footing as gNam-mtsho phygug-mo.99 The bsTan-ma are omnipresent in Tshal and in the IHa-sa valley. We have already mentioned some of them: The bsTan-ma protectress of the eastern and southern cardinal mountains (Jo-mo Zi-zi (Sil-sil) and Bum-pa-ri); g.Yu-sgron-ma (the protectress and yul lha mo of Tshal);100 rDo-je grags-mo-rgyal (with her seat at the western Ri-bo dGe-'phel);101 the bsTan-ma of the bsTan-ma lha-mo dBu-skra mountain (behind lCags-dkar-ri in the south); Kong-btsun De-mo (rDo-rje Bod-khams-skyong alias rDo-rje dPal-mo-mo-che) of Gung-thang (Fig. 46), and not least Jo-mo sMan-geg-ma of Byang-mkhar (above fn. 40), who we assume is identical with rDo-rje sMan-geg-ma from the sub-group of the sMan-mo chen-bzhi.102 The leader of this group is Kong-btsun De-mo, who together with the Sha-med Gangs-dkar-ma (fn. 96) is listed by name in the afore-mentioned IHa-sa chu rags project. The texts identify her among others as a manifestation of the white horse, an association which is also to be found with other bsTan-ma deities.103 As mentioned above, in the MGon-khang of the gTsug-lag-khang she is next to the Gung-thang lha-mo 'Dod-khams dbyang-phyug-ma.104 The latter (under the name of 'Dod-khams bdag-mo) also counts among

98 Cf. the example of the g.Yu-sgron mandala in Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1975: 191–92 (according to the prayer text IHa mo rdo rje g.yu sgron ma gtor tshogs 2af.). According to a common classification, the three leaders are: gNam-mtsho phygug-mo rDo-rje Kun-grags-ma (bdud mo group), Gongs-dkar sha-med rDo-rje spyan-geg-ma (gnod shyn group) and Kong-btsun De-mo Bod-khams-skyong alias rDo-rje dPal-mo-mo-che. See Sle-lung’s bsTan srgun gi rnam thar (bsTan srgun [B] 167–198). The Gongs-dkar sha-med (also Sha-med Gongs-dkar-ma) is also to be found as second name of the g.Yu-sgron-ma (also Sha-med g.Yu-sgron-ma) or the rDo-rje g.Yu-bun-ma. See also Kalsang 1996: 57–76; 117f.
99 Cf. Bellezza 1997: 107, 128; see also bsTan srgun ([B] 189 where rDo-rje g.Yu-sgron-ma is identified with the mtsho sman of the gNam-mtsho phygug-mo [lake] and specified as the consort of Thang-lha.
100 The texts give dBu-rtsu Ka-tshal (i.e. the Stong-btsan sgam-po foundation and later 'Bri-gung-pa monastery in Malgro) as a chief residence of the g.Yu-sgron-ma region. It evidently represents a main seat of bsTan-ma tradition of the central sKyid-chu region. The same site is also mentioned as one of the seats of g.Yu’s drl bu rDo-rje Zugs-legs-ma, the bsTan-ma from Yar-lung (and sister of Yar-lha Sham-po) usually listed as the fourth in the group of the sman bzhi group. Cf. bsTan srgun 188–89. The place in Ka-tshal appears to be related to the site of the protectress locally known as Yangkar tsima, which is on or on the mountain behind the monastery (cf. TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 50).
101 She is also entitled a yul lha mo. She is one of the three deities that speak through the female oracle of bsTan-ma-lcog (i.e. Drags-mo-rgyal, the bstan ma g.Yu-sgron-ma and the srgun ma dPa’-bo). The latter is considered the spirit of the landlord of dPa’-bo rdzong (Nam-mkha’ dngos-gzi-rdzong) who was one of the patrons during the building of 'Bras-spunigs. The (original) bsTan-ma-lcog temple was situated behind the monastery, on the slopes of the dGe’-phel dBu-rtsa (see Havnevik 2002; Byang-ngos-pa Tshe-g.yang 2002). To a certain extent this concerns a parallel institution to the gNas-chung chos rje state oracle, with which she appeared jointly on particular occasions. There was a second female oracle lineage within the narrower IHa-sa valley, which was closely related with Se-ra (in particular with the monk soldiers (bdab bdob) of this monastery). The home of this oracle family was in Klpo, a village close to dGa’-ldan-pa in Upper Nyang-bran (see App. V: Fig. 50).
102 The texts mention a tshugs kyi pho nya mo (or g.yog mo) (message/maid-servant of the mind) lHa-mo Shel-gza’ sMan-geg-ma as an emanation of rDo-rje Grags-mo-rgyal; a g.Yu’i sMan-geg-ma is called the mother of Pehar in a rgyal mdos instruction text. Cf. Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1975: 99, 194, 195.
103 So e.g. with rDo-rje Grags-mo-rgyal or with the sMan-geg-ma who among other things is described as having a cape made of the skins of a thousand white horses (cf. Nebesky-Wojkowitz, op. cit., 31, 194).
104 The bsTan-ma Kong-btsun De-mo is identical with the synonymous leading territorial goddess of Kong-po, who is
the manifestations of gNam-mtsho phyug-mo, although 'Dod-khams bdag-mo can also mean the “mother” lha mo, i.e. dMag-zor-rgyal, who in the esoteric tradition is likewise titled as a Lord Queen of the Desire Realm (i.e. dpal ldan lha mo 'dod kham kyi dbang phyug dmag zor ma). This connection is not surprising as the bsTan-ma belong to the retinue of the lha-mo (i.e. dMag-zor-rgyal), who in Tshal had their place in the Pehar lha-khang (situated next to the g.Yu-sgron-ma, above fn. 37). Pehar ultimately represents the link between the above mentioned association of Thang-la and brGya-byin. This is the dBus-phyogs Thugs-kyi rgyal-po brGya-byin from the group of the rDzong-po sku-lnga, in which the chos skyong Pehar opens up. The King of Mind (thugs kyi rgyal po; *cittarjā) is at the centre of the sku lnga mandala, which is occupied by five kings, emanations of the five aspects of the god.

We assume that the cultic representation of the Zhang intendant relates to this position of the dBus-phyogs, even if another mount is usually referred to for Thugs kyi rgyal-po. The white mare that the early Tshal-pa tradition intended as a mount for Dar-ma gzhon-nu embodies a protectress of Tshal, we think a deity related to gNam-mtsho, in any case one whose story is evidently connected

addressed in the Kong-po inscription (8th cent.) as sku bia De-mo, a name that relates to the De-mo district and De-mo-r (due east of Kong-po Bon-ri). The later traditions classify her as the sister of the ancestral figure and first Kong-po ruler Kong-rgyue dkar-po (cf. bsTan srung 182). The Lady of Kong-po is also present everywhere in the monasteries (both Bon-po and Buddhist) as srung ma – thus also in Bu-chu lha-khang (Fig. 47), where she acts alongside the gter bdag rDzong-btsan (alias Zhang-blon rDo-rgyue bdud-rul, the local off-shoot of the Grib rDzong-btsan from the lHa-sa valley, fn. 21). There is a statue and a mask of the srung ma in the mGon-khang next to the statue of rDzong-btsan (below Fig. 47). The two do not form a pair, as the Gung-thang lha mo and Grib Dzong-btsan do in Tshal Gung-thang, but nevertheless there may here be a closer connection to the situation in Gung-thang, with the presence of the rDzong-btsan as the connecting element of the two goddesses.

106 I.e. the five rgyal po of sku, gsung, thugs, yon tan, 'phrin las, with the last of these, the aspect of karmic activity, being represented by the rgyal po Pehar himself. There are also sku lnga representations with 'Phrin-las rgyal-po (Pehar) in the centre and Thugs kyi rgyal-po brGya-byin accordingly situated at the periphery (cf. e.g. Figs. 78, 79 in Kelényi 2003: 91). The leading oracle temples of lHa-sa are dedicated to them (i.e. gNas-chung Pehar-kgog, rMe-ru mying-pa, Karma-shag and dGa’-ba-gdong [in Lower sTodlung]). Other divinities, who are often spoken of as ministers or attendants, stand at the side of the rGyal-po sku-lnga. These are also mainly the divinities who possess the rGyal-po / Pehar oracle. rDo-rgyue Grags-ldan, the minister of gsung gi rgyal-po dGri-lha sKyes-gcig-bu (the protector of rMe-ru mying-ba) is at the same time the chief minister within this group and often assumes the role of Pehar himself (cf. Nebesky-Wojkowitz, op. cit., Chap. 7; Kalsang 1996: 77–84). In the appearance of the sKu-lnga group in the Gung-thang Me tog mchod pa he represents the five ministers (above fn. 24). The rGyal-po sku-lnga also exist in the tradition of chos skyong Tshangs-pa dkar-po (Tshangs pa gsal bstod 1144 fl). The latter’s main residence in lHa-sa is the Tshangs-pa-kgog of the rMe-ru grva-tshang monastery (Chos’ phel 2004: 22; Alexander 2005: 125fl).

At the side of the sku lnga one often finds the goddess Nyi-ma gzhon-nu (known as protectress of the rDzong-chen teaching tradition); so in Me-ru mying-ma where she appears as a representative of the sakti of the rGyal po sKu-lnga deities. She is also said to have been the srung ma (together with the Pehar acolyte Thog-btsan-pa, see fn. 35) of lHa-lung dPal gyi rdo-rje.

107 I.e. the white elephant (Fig. 43).
to the Thang-la family, brGya-byin and the Pehar tradition. Possibly the divine manifestation was present in sKyid-shod long before the Tshal-pa and in this connection one has to take into account whether there is a relationship between this divine animal and the old toponym of Tshal rTa-mo-ra (i.e. the garden with the fold of the mare), whose story coincides with that of Tsha-ba-gru, the place where the royal horse stopped and where the *rgyal po* Pehar was “born.” \(^{108}\)

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\(^{108}\) There is a rTa-ra at gNam-mtsho and also elsewhere. *rTa ra* is a term from the bSam-yas *sa dpuyad*, according to which in the run-up to the foundation of the temple a horse paddock was built on the instructions from [K]has-po-ri hill (in the sense of an enclosure of the waters?), which formed the outline for the later external wall of the temple (*dBa’ gcig* 15a. P. Wangdu and H. Diemberger 2000: 64). In the *rNam thar phyi ma* (*ZhK III* (KA) 229b.1–3) and *Mar lung pa rnam thar* 87b.4-5 the position of various sites in and around bSam-yas (here referring to the sites of the *mchod rten* Glang-ru, Brag-dmar ’Grin-bzang (close to bSam-yas) and g.Yu-brag gaer-khang in the neighbouring sGrags valley) is described as the “garden of the best horse. on the bank of the rTa-ma-la river in the snow-covered mountain country” (*kha ba cu n gyi ri rgyud du chu bo rTa ma la’i ’gram / rta mchog tshal*). This is evidently a description of the geographical situation of gTsang-po alias rTa-mchog kha- ’bab, with which (in the literature of the post-bSam-yas era) not least the sKyd-chu, the river with Thang-la as the source, is also identified. See Introduction, Chap. 4.2.
44, 45. *The bsTan-ma rDo-rje drag-mo-rgyal (44) and rDo-rje gYu-sgron-ma*

Photo: From a thangka kept in the private rooms of Blo-bzang Tshe-sgrom, the last bsTan-ma-lcog Oracle (2002)

46, 47. *The bsTan-ma Kong-btsun De-mo in Gung-thang (46) and in Kong-po Bu-chu lha-khang (2001, 2005)*
4.3 The klu family

We find a similar metaphor for the power and dynamics illustrated by the mount of the founder of the Gung-thang temple in the klu story that Zhang tells in his autobiographical writing, the Ngar phug ma (80f.; GT 42b.f.). Here again is an overview of the essential points:

Shortly before the foundation of the Tshal Yang-dgon, Zhang and Dar-ma gzhon-nu stopped in Ngar-phug (in Upper sGrags), where the local klu mo and the intendant posed the master the same question one after the other, whether he already knew where he would have his religious seat (= Yang-dgon) established. Zhang explained that this had been clear to him since his early studies under the master rNgog-ston, in the course of which lHa dPal-'bar dbang-phyug (Mahēśvara) had appeared. In the “inquiries” he had then made of the visions, he saw that a white dog ran from a tent by the gTsang-chab river to Zhang’s house, and Zhang knew that his family house will be transformed into a temple filled with all the precious stones (such as the dBang gi rgyal-po jewel, ratnendra-rāja), from the realm of the klu rgyal of the gTsang-chab river. The klu mo of Ngar-phug then let Zhang know that she was a member of this klu family and assured him that being his von bdag she [and the others] would fulfill all his wishes. Thus the whole Tibetan realm was at his feet, filled with the treasures of the klu (here represented by the rgyal srid rin chen sna bdun, the symbol of the universal monarch; cakravartin) and brimful with water, which spread over the (later) Tshal territory. Beginning at the gTsang-chab river, unending fountains gradually filled the territories and regions of Ngan-lam lung-pa ral-gsum Grib, of sKyi[d]-shod Ngam-shod and from dBus gtsang Ru-bzhi as far as the region of Mi-nyag in eastern Tibet. Dar-ma gzhon-nu confirmed Zhang’s visions of the Tshal-pa universe when at the end he saw the splendour of the future Yang-dgon and the gTsug-lag-khang rise, as it were, out of the ocean.

The story is to be seen against the background of specific esoteric traditions of his yogi teachers, of whom only rNgog-ston (rNgog mDo-sde) – chronologically Zhang’s first of his six root master – is mentioned here. From him, Bla-ma Zhang in his youth heard the teaching cycles of Hevajra, Gur and the Mahāmāyā (cf. Deb sngon 833). Apparently these visions of the principal deity, the jewel palace, the tent and the dog relate to this. Gur stands for Gur gyi mgon-po, Mahākāla of the Tent (Pañjara Mahākāla), of which there is also the version “according to the tradition of rNgog” (based on the Vajrapañjara tantra).109 The dog, on the other hand, may relate to mGon Khyi (i.e. mGon Khyi ’Brong-zhur), who is mentioned once in the sources representing Zhang’s victorious battles against the local lords (i.e. those of lCang and [g]Dol) and to whom a stūpa in Gung-thang is dedicated (GT 63a; Part I: Graph 3, Fig. 4). He is a manifestation of the powerful Bya-rog gdong-can, for his part, chief of the numerous attendants of Phyag-bzhi, i.e. four-armed Mahākāla from the tradition of dPal rGva-lo.110 The dog’s residence in gTsang-chab finally corresponds with the realm of the nāgarāja and his family, who possess the dbang gi rgyal po jewel111 and the rgyal srid rin chen sna bdun, the precious insignia of the universal monarch.

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110 Mahākāla is the deity with whom the later dpon chen of mGar is associated; namely dGa’-bde-dpal who was considered an incarnation of mGon-po Bya-rog gdong-can (GT 32a).
111 The jewel is among other things known as the emblem of Manidhāra, the attendant of the Ārya-Avalokītī, and is obviously linked with the Mahākāla form mGon-dmar dBang gi rgyal-po (cf. GT 43a; Part I: fn. 588).
The family consists of the father, klu rgyal gTsug-na rin-chen (nāgarāja Mañicūda), the son, mKhar-nag Klu-btsan, and his three sisters, the gTsang-chab klu mo, the sMin-drug-mtsho klu mo and the Ngar-phug klu mo, i.e. the youngest. With some qualification, the names can be assigned to their respective particular sites in Tshal and the surrounding area (Graph 3). Ngar-phug is Ngar-phug of Upper sGrags; sMin-drug-mtsho presumably relates to one of the mountain lakes behind sMin-drug rdza-ri which the locals speak of; mKhar-nag possibly to the klu residence of mKhar-nag-mtsho (in sNye-thang district of sKyid-smad), and gTsang-chab here stands for the sKyid-chu. It is the principal source of the Tshal-pa territory and the endless source of the lords of sKyid-shod:

"... whenever I take a gulp of water from gTsang-chab (sKyid-chu), I will become endowed with wealth." (GT 43b)

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112 The powerful nāga from the mKhar-nag lake is repeatedly mentioned in the sources, inter alia in connection with a shipping accident on the sKyid-chu at IHa-sa (see Thang ston rnam thar I 207f.; App. II: fn. 254). The lake is said to be located on the not further identified mKhar-nag-thang in the area of the sNye-thang district.

The taming of a klu btsan of rDzong-lung (in Grib ?) is reported in the [Zhang] rNam thar mdor bsdu's lung ston zhig po ma (in ZhK III (KA) 249a5), an event which according to the context is to be placed in the founding phase of Tshal.

113 Cf. Introduction 4.1; Part I: fn. 586.

114 The four successive "flood zones" that characterise the Tshal-pa dominion (i.e. Ngan-lam plus Grib - sKyid-shod [and] Ngam-shod - dBus-gTsang and Myi-nyag yul) refer to the later boundaries of the Bar-, sTod- and sMad Tshal in the 13th century, which also means that the autobiographical records in the Ngar phug ma go back to disciples of Zhang or represent a later revision.
In terms of classification, the realm of the nüga family is a female area and counterpart to the protective zone of the bsTan-ma and yul lha mo of Tshal. We understand the peculiar formulation at the beginning of Zhang’s autobiographical story, according to which both the klu mo of Ngarphung and the intendant Dar-ma gzhon-nu, as it were, address the same question to the master: where he wants to establish his religious seat. The rider of the white mare of Tshal is an image of the divine donor who gives the mother country to the master.

5. THE FIRE OF GUNG-THANG

5.1 Pehar and the Decline of Tshal-pa

In February 1529 the god Pehar entered the body of the Tshal-pa ruler known as khri dpon Don-yod rdo-rje. A prophecy told the lord that he would soon die, but that the rebellious god could be driven out with the aid of an exorcism ritual. The latter was thrown into the sKyid-chu river, where he washed up further down the stream at Dan-'bag (west of rHa-sa) and was taken in by members of the nearby 'Bras-spungs community as the srung ma of the monastery. What the banished god left behind in Tshal was a devastating turmoil with the disastrous destruction of the almost completely burnt out temple of Gung-thang, which had caught fire shortly after the khri dpon had become possessed by the god. Another version of the same story claims that rDo-rje grags-ladan (= Pehar) came out of a painting in the form of a monkey and set light to the devastating fire. This was supposed to be the god’s act of revenge in his conflict with Zhang (= the community of Tshal).

The god was then banished to a box which was thrown into the river. After it was opened, the god flew out of the box in the form of a pigeon and manifested itself in a nearby tree (Fig. 48), around which the Pehar-lcog of gNas-chung was later built.

48. The “Pehar tree” in gNas-chung (2002)

115 GT 41b. according to the rnam thar of lCog-pa Byang-chub dpal-lidan (b. 1464), the founder of the bDe-yangs college in 'Bras-spungs (Fig. 48). The box more precisely stranded at dMar-ser-can dgon-pa of Dan-'bag, one of the four satellite temples of bDe-yangs, where the deity was picked up by two [rise] drung (monk officials) (lCog pa Byang chub dpal ldan rnam thar 10a–b). According to a local account, it was the cook of the monastery who by order of the abbot of 'Bras-spungs [bDe-yangs] fished out the deity from the river. Cf. here also the version cited in Dung dkar tshig mdzod 2972b–2073a. On bDe-yangs, see also above fn. 24.

116 The act of revenge relates to the rejectionist attitude of Zhang to Pehar in connection with the building of the Gung-thang vihāra: he gave the painters the order that the murals should not contain any image of the deity. In the form of a young assistant, Pehar convinced the painters to depict a monkey with a burning incense stick in its hand. In the night, this monkey* then set the temple on fire (see Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1975: 104f.). A local variant of this story gives “khri dpon and Bha-ma Zhang” as the painters, who are outwitted by a child (= Pehar) (see Part I: fn. 576). The reasons for Zhang’s discardable attitude are not mentioned, but neither is the Tshal-pa founder meant, as “Zhang” here stands for the later Tshal community. The narrative here mixes two different historical contexts of a “Zhang-Pehar conflict,” which is first mentioned in the foundation of Tshal Yang-dgon (above fn. 85; Chap. 1).

* The monkey manifestation of the deity (see above, Fig. 1) is already mentioned in connection with the story of the transfer of Pehar (alias Shing-hya-can) from Bhata Hor to bSam-yas. See Nyang ral chos ’byung 344.10.
This account, of which there are several variations, includes the story of the installation of Pehar as the chief protector of the future rulers of the dGa'-ldan pho-brang, a procedure which took place in two stages: The establishment of Pehar as srung ma of 'Bras-spungs in the time of the Second Dalai Lama (the date 1529 relates to this) and the building of the oracle temple of gNas-chung at the end of the 17th century under sde srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, which was followed by further oracle temples of Pehar emanations in IHa-sa. The story of the transfer of the divinity is at the same time a story of the downfall of the Tshal-pa as an independent political and religious institution, an event that for its part took place in several stages: The political end of the Tshal-pa dpon chen (and khri dpon) with the confiscation of the territories in sKyid-shod in the period of the Phag-mo gru-pa Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan; then the successive incorporation of the Tshal-pa bkA'-bgyud-pa school into the dGe-lugs-pa order from the 15th century (i.e. the affiliation of the individual Tshal-pa colleges as seminars and dependencies to various dGe-lugs institutions, Se-ra, 'Bras-spungs, dGa'-ldan), and finally the complete incorporation into the IHa-sa central government in the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama and the sde srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. In between came the rule of the Rin-spungs; at the end of the 15th/ beginning of 16th century under sa skyon Don-yod rdo-rje, the latter was able briefly to occupy the previous Tshal-pa areas of sKyid-shod, which had until then been controlled by the Phag-mo gru-pa (cf. Introduction, Chap. 9). The hegemony was accompanied by an increased presence of the Karma-pa (the religious allies of the gTsang-ruler) in the IHa-sa valley, which also led to a short-term take-over of Tshal Gung-thang. The sources speak of a handing over of Tshal Gung-thang (or a part of the monastic centre, namely dBus-gling) to the Karma-pa on the initiative of the Don-yod rdo-rje in 1503 (Part I: fn. 663). This alliance did not last long. One of the sources (Kam tshang bgrgyud pa II 22bf.) connects the ending of it to the fire of Gung-thang. It is said that the “gNas-chung rgyal po” (i.e. Pehar) caused the fire after he had previously incited 'Bras-spungs-pa to bar the Karma-pa from access to the Jo-bo of IHa-sa (exemplified in the denial of access to Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang for Karma-pa Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje), an allusion to the (successful) counter-offensive by the dGe-lugs-pa and their allies (above all the sKyid-shod-pa) against the hegemony of the lords of gTsang (see Introduction). It appears that the name of the Rin-spungs ruler, who, so to speak, here assumed the position of the last Tshal-pa ruler and lord of sKyid-shod, lies behind the “Tshal-pa khri dpon Don-yod rdo-rje,” to whom there is no reference anywhere else.

The fire of Gung-thang, which the (later) gNas-chung rgyal po allegedly started, is dated to the me rta 1546 – more precisely the 15th day of the fourth month of that year. This exact date may be a “corrected statement” of the later account, which situates this event on the most important day of the year in the Tibetan ritual calendar, when in Gung-thang the central sa ga zla ba festival
of Me tog mchod pa is held. The year given, 1546 is to some extent also contradictory. At least the immediate linking of this date with the event of the installation of Pehar in 'Bras-spung does not agree chronologically; the latter (according to Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho) took place under the Second Dalai Lama, who died in 1542. However, the intention was obviously to consciously link the two historic events of the Gung-thang me 'bar and the departure of the god.\textsuperscript{117}

As we have seen, the god sought a medium and a container (rten) where he could act, namely the body of the khri dpon. The account is perhaps thereby seeking to tell us the "true" culprit. In the old Pehar Iha-khang of Tshal a special relic, the "hand of a khri dpon" was supposedly kept (Part I: fn. 576). We assume that it refers to the hand that started the fire. One of the variants in the local accounts says that the possessed Tshal-pa rose out of the box as a flame (cf. Waddell 1993 (repr.): 479). The Gung-thang fire, or rather flame, is apparently manifested itself as holy as the hand that sparked it off. This hand of the Tshal-pa ruler, one must conclude, is nothing other than the tool of the protector of Tshal, who not only acts against the enemy (Karma-pa/Rin-spungs-pa), but also against his own institution, and therefore must go.

The whole story comes within the larger framework of the local cultic tradition. Naturally, Pehar had never really left Tshal. As we know, today as then, the rgyal po Pe-har-khang is there, and the god functions, among other things, as the yul lha of the Tshal district. Dan-'bag, the place where the god was fished out of the water (and the "coffin"), can be seen as one of the birthplaces of the divinity, which relate to places where the original bSam-yas protector appeared, historically speaking, in exceptional ways. One of these is Tshal,\textsuperscript{118} which in this respect forms an intermediate stage and a bridge to the new cultic re-organization of the Dalai Lama period. Significantly, the Pehar birthplace of Tshal is immediately next to the (former) residence of the Tshal-pa dpon chen (see above Chap. 2.1). The motive for the abandoning of the divinity thus symbolizes less its departure than the circumstance of the dissemination and new installation in a new historical context. The more precise historical background is evidently formed by the expulsion of the Karma-pa from Tshal and IHa-sa, which goes hand in hand with the erection of the dGa'-ldan pho-brang in 'Bras-spungs, the new power base of the dGe-lugs-pa, who were to take up the political inheritance of the one-time Tshal-pa dpon chen. At the same time the story tells of the origin of the Tibetan oracle. In this form, it has many parallels in Tibetan history, with the common feature that the spirit of a high-ranking line manifests itself in the container and medium – it is usually the line of a secular ruler who assumes the position of a minister at the side of the chief deity.\textsuperscript{119}

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\textsuperscript{117} Some sources have 1547 as the date of the me 'bar. It should be noted that a devastating fire of sTag-lung is also registered for the same year. Cf. Kam tshang brgyud pa II (op. cit.) speaks of the "fire of Tshal sTag" (Tshal [Gung-thang] [and] sTag[-lung]) in the [me] rta year 1546. One may assume that there exists a connection between the two fire events, even if the precise (political) background in the case of Byang sTag-lung is not so well documented.

\textsuperscript{118} As mentioned, the arrival of Pehar in Tshal is not explicitly described anywhere to our knowledge. It may be addressed in the Vairocana exile story (Chap. III.3). A deity who came via the water to Tshal is the bSam-yas protector rTsi'u dmar-po (above Chap. III.1), who so to speak followed the path of Pehar.

\textsuperscript{119} Cf. here e.g. the story of the installation of the Tshangs-pa/bSe-sku oracle of Khra-'brug (TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 279ff.). In the iconography and cult of Pehar and his numerous parallel manifestations, one always finds minister at the side of the god (see e.g. fns. 30, 104) and often it is the minister or an additional adjutant with whom the medium preferentially communicates. More precisely, the strange name "Tshal-pa khri dpon Don-yod rdo-je" conceals the history of two lines: the Tshal-pa khri dpon (= the line of the mGar) and the Rin-spungs-pa, that is the line of the dGyer clan, who like the mGar provided a minister at the time of the Srong-btsan sgam-po, namely the nang blon called dGyer/sGer
Since the 15th century (i.e. since the entry of the Phag-mo gru-pa rdzong families to sKyid-shod) the Tshal-pa were politically de facto out of the game. But up until the 17th century there were at least nominally rulers of the Tshal-pa from the line of mGar, who continued to provide the gdan sa ba of Yang-dgon and the dpon po. According to the account in GT, the end of this line is the actual end of the Tshal-pa. Zhabs drung Grags-pa Tshe-dbang rab-brtan, who has already been mentioned above in connection with the transportation of the Snti'i rdo ring, is considered to be the last Tshal-pa ruler. During his tenure (or shortly afterwards) the governmental confiscation (gzhung bzhes) of the monastic estates of Tshal-pa took place. According to GT, he died on the day of the Gung-thang Flower Offering of the year 1633. Apart from the fact that the year is to be placed one rab byung (60-year cycle) later (with 1693 as the correct year of death; see fn. 70), here, similar to the case of the Gung thang me 'bar, the day seems to have been consciously chosen in order to underline a historical turning point. Several events that were decisive for the fate of the monastic centre appear in the reflections of the later sources often to have been chronologically manipulated or are accompanied by peculiar and apparently irrational events, as in the case of the “withdrawal” of Pehar. Such observations are no rarity in historiography and in themselves form a document to the extent that they make it possible to recognise particular interests from the time of the author. The last spyan snga of Tshal Yang-dgon (i.e. sKal-ldan rgya-mtsho), who is considered to be the last representative from the glorious lineage of mGar (in the case of Tshal-pa Grags-pa, membership of this lineage is only assumed by the author of the GT),120 died some decades before Tshal-pa Grags-pa. He had worked together with Zur-chen, who in the 1640’s, moved into Tshal on the order of the Fifth Dalai Lama and as it were prepared the takeover of the monastic centre. sKal-ldan rgya-mtsho then died suddenly (from an illness), which – as it is said – was brought here by the malevolence ('khu ldog) of rDo-rje grags-ldan (Pehar’s chief minister). More precise details about the circumstances are not given, however (GT 18b). The god here was evidently acting as a revenge spirit. But revenge for what? The placing of rDo-rje grags-ldan alias Pehar at this point in Tshal-pa history may be an addition by later historiography, which inserted a scapegoat to legitimate historical developments that it supports. The latter is a god and demon simultaneously, whose fate is drawn by the poles of banishment and sanctification (in a new group). The local tradition sees such revenge actions by the Tshal protector as the result of the ignorant behaviour of Bla-ma Zhang with regard to Pehar (in connection with particular instructions by the Tshal protector; see above fn. 85), or of other “offences” of the master, which as a whole fit into the historical image of the arrogant Bla-ma Zhang and, as it were, lie like a shadow over the history of the monastic centre. It includes a view that the historical fate of the downfall of Tshal-pa was, as it were, its own fault.

Ral-pa-'dzin, who played a significant role in the Khra-'brug foundation story. In the comparative literature the name is little known, but not so the heirloom that he left behind, a turquoise treasure or specific, decorated (royal insignia-like) turquoise ornament, which passed on to the later Rin-spungs-pa before, in the 17th century, it fell into the hands of the lHa-sa central government. (The showpiece of this dgyer heirloom is the extensively turquoise-studded ear-ornament (rnu rgyang), which was worn by the “Rin-chen rgyan-pa” aristocrats on the occasion of particular lHa-sa festivals; cf. TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 27–28, 142, passim).

120 As suggested in the Introduction (Chap. 9.3.1) the Tshal-pa Grags-pa is rather to identify as the last of the sde pa Tshal-pa from the house of dGa-ldan sKyid-shod-pa. The lineage behind this ruling house too was mGar, but not the mGar branch of Grib where the dpon chen hailed from.
5.2 The Gung-thang me-shor

A similar interpretation can also be seen in the gesture of the Gung-thang me-shor, the statue in Jo-khang that commemorates the fire of Gung-thang. The model is an an image of Nyi-ma-'dzin that refers iconographically to the mahāsiddha Virūpa in his “common” position or pose (thun mong ba) characterized by the raised left arm, an allusion to the legendary account according to which the master once stopped the course of the sun (cf. e.g. App. II: Fig. 28). The statue is situated at the northern wall of the ground floor of the gTsug-lag-kang so that the outstretched arm points towards Tshal Gung-thang in the east, a gesture that is interpreted as “Gung-thang is on Fire!” (gung thang me shor). We do not know the precise background as to why Virūpa was drawn on as the model for Gung-thang me-shor. One may see a parallel in the object of the threat gesture that stops the sun in the Virūpa account, and in the Gung-thang story perhaps means the stopping/quenching of the disastrous fire (perhaps, too, more generally: “stopping” the history of Tshal). But the statue is not called “Gung-thang will be quenched” but “Gung-thang is burning.”

The mahāsiddha Virūpa is the father and first transmitter of the Lam ’bras Teaching, the foundation of the Sa-skya school, whose leading intellectual representative, Sa-skya Pandita, was a critic of Bla-ma Zhang. This concerned particular doctrinaire (Great Seal specific) interpretations and in particular the unusually violent method of spiritual practice that Zhang propagated (cf. Introduction: 121 The statue (a modern replica of an older (originally 17th cent.?) depiction) here is part of a group of four historic saints (Phag-mo gru-pa rDo-rje rgyal-po, Thang-stong rgyal-po, Mar-pa and Virūpa; see Fig. 51), although it is not clear whether the grouping together has any close relationship to the event that Gung-thang me-shor signals. There were also similar images in other temples of the dynastic period, such as for example in Khra-’brug, where Virūpa also forms the model for a “me shor statue” (TF Sorensen and Hazod 2005: 70–71). In Jo-khang, some monks also ascribe the name to the Khro-bo rMe-brtsegs image, the famous guardian statue with the outstretched right arm, which is situated next to the entrance of the Jo-bo chapel (ground-floor) (Fig. 52). It is perhaps worthy of mention that the statue of Gung-thang Bla-ma Zhang with its place in the area in front of the Tshong-kha-pa chapel (= room no. 22 of the plan of Richardson 1998: 247) is, so to speak, between the two “Gung-thang me-shor” images (Fig. 53).
Chap. 6.2). As abbot and lineage-holder (from 1216) Sa-skya Pandita also personally took the responsibility for the commissioning or the consecration of illustrations of the Great Lord of Yoga (Virūpa).\textsuperscript{122} Here it is worthy of note that precisely the Indian mahāsiddha Virūpa was known for an aggressive approach, which an earlier author, himself a well-known grub thob, stated is only comparable in Tibet with that of Zhang Rin-po-che.\textsuperscript{123} One may see a contradiction in this, but perhaps precisely these parallels of a similar temperament formed the background for the modelling of the Gung-thang me-shor image, which here goes hand in hand with a Tshal-pa-critical attitude of an older Sa-skya tradition. According to this, the arm of Gung-thang me-shor is, more accurately, a (threatening) gesture by Virūpa, pointing in the direction of Bla-ma Zhang: a reminder to the master, his school and the politics it provoked and which is now culminating in the fire of Gung-thang. Nobody is here more suitable as a bearer of the memory, one could say, than a blunt alter ego of the Tshal-pa founder. As has been mentioned (fn. 121), not far right (= east) of the Virūpa alias Gung-thang me-shor, is the statue of Zhang, so that one here in fact has the impression that the arm of the “Gung-thang is burning” is pointing at the founder of Tshal. Perhaps we should here see a far more comprehensive, divine gesture, seeking to link the end of an epoch causally with its author.

He himself, however, had long been classified by history as a “Jewel of Tibet” (Introduction, Chap. 9), so that his image in the Jo-khang is at the same time put in a light that to a certain extent releases him from the Tshal-pa history. The “sun,” which the mahāsiddha symbolically stops, so to say moved on again, namely into the heaven as one of the pre-existences of the Fifth Dalai Lama.

\textsuperscript{122} See e.g. Plate 35 in The Kronos Collections (at www.asianart.com).
\textsuperscript{123} It refers to a statement by grub thob O-rgyan-pa Seng-ge-dpal (1230–1309) quoted by dPa’-bo (mKhas pa’i dga’ ston 810). See Jackson 1994: 63. See also Introduction: Chap. 6.2.
APPENDIX V

Tables 1–13
I. Fisherman at the sKyid-chu (1995)
V.1 The Two Thrones of Tshal-pa:
The Religious Throne of the Yang-dgon *gdan sa* and
the *dbon/dpon sa-*Throne of the Secular Rulers (*srid skyong*, [*khri*] *dpon*)

based on *Gung thang dkar chag* (GT) and *Deb dmar* (DM)

Complementary data:
*Deb sngon* (DN); *Vaidārya ser po* (VS); *Bod kyi deh ther* (BD); *dPag bsam ljon bzang* (PS);
*Chos 'byung bstan pa'i nvi ma* (CN); *Thang ston rnam thar* (TN)

Secondary Sources:
*Ming mdzod* (MZ), *Mi sna* (MN)

gdan sa:

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<td><strong>1. Śākya ye-shes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenure:</td>
<td>1147–1207</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>DS, CN:</em></td>
<td>rl. 1194–1207</td>
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<tr>
<td>Installation of a</td>
<td>mchod yon relationship with Dar-ma gzhon-nu</td>
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II. Byang-chub ye-shes
Paternal relative of no. 1
Tenure: 1207/8–1210

III. IHa-phyug mkar-ba
1145–1215
Tenure: 5 years, 1210–1214

IV. Sangs-rgyas-'bum
rl. 5 years, 1214–1219
*DS:* rl. 18 years until 1231
Expelled from the chair in 1231;
he was followed by no. VI

V. Ti-shri (~ shi) Ras-pa
Clan (i.e. rJe'[u]) of no. IV ?
1164–1236; Tenure: 1231–1232

[VS: V. sGom-pa Ye-shes-ladan (= no. VI?)]

VI. Sangs-rgyas snying-po
Tenure: 1232–1237
*MZ:* rl. ab 1231; *DS:* rl. 1231–1237
*CN:* VI. [sGom-pa] Ye-shes-ladan]

VII. Sangs-rgyas gzhon-nu
Brother of no. VI
Tenure: 1238–1260
*CN:* rl. five years

VIII. Kun-dga' rgyal-mthshan
Brother of nos. VI and VII
1228–1290/91; *DS:* 1232–1292
Tenure: 1248–1280; *PS:* rl. 38 or 39 years
*DS:* rl. *ca.* 1260–1292

*dbon/ dpon sa:*

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<td><strong>1. Dar-ma gzhon-nu</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenure:</td>
<td>1145–1232/33</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Attendant</em> (<em>nye gnas</em>) of Bla-ma Zhang and appointed Lord (<em>bdag po</em>) of Tshal Gung-thang</td>
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<td>Tenure:</td>
<td>1193–1214/15</td>
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<td><strong>2. 'Byung-gnas btson-'grus</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nephew of no. 1</td>
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<td>Tenure:</td>
<td>ab 1217</td>
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<td><strong>3. Ye-shes 'byung-gnas</strong></td>
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<td>Nephew of no. 2</td>
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<td>Tenure:</td>
<td>1227–1230</td>
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<td>Conquest of sKyid-smad</td>
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<td><strong>4. Sangs-rgyas dNgos-grub</strong></td>
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<td>Change to the mGar lineage</td>
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<td>Tenure: <em>ca.</em> 1231–1254/55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beginning of the relationship with the Mongols initiated by gTsang-pa Dung-khur-ba and Bla-ma Gung-thang-pa</td>
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<td><strong>5. dPon-chen Rin rgyal-ba</strong></td>
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<td>Son of no. 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1233–1289</td>
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<td>Tenure: 1254/55–1265</td>
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<td><em>Est.</em> of the Tshal-pa khri skor; mchod yon relation with Sangs-rgyas-'bum (no. IV)</td>
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<td><strong>6. Nyi-ma shes-rab</strong></td>
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<td>Son of no. 5</td>
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<td>1253–1279</td>
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<td>Tenure: 1269–1279</td>
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IX. Sangs-rgyas rin-chen
Nephew of no. VIII
Tenure: 1280–1290; DS: 1247–1301 A.D.

X. Śākyā-'bum
Ca. 1267–1310
Grandson of no. II
Tenure: 1290–1298
DS: 1301–1310

XI. Byang-chub bzang-po
Maternal relative of Yang-dgon-pa (no. X ?)
1298–1358
Tenure: 1310–1358
DS, MZ: 1281–1356
Tenure: 1310–1356

XII. Grags-pa bshes-gnyen (= no 11)
Son of no. 9
1322–1381
Tenure: 1354–1381
DS, CN: rl. 24 years, 1357–1381

XIII. Legs-pa rgyal-mtshan
Son of no. 12 and brother of Nos. 13 and 14
b. 1366
Tenure: 1378–1399

XIV. dNgos-grub rgyal-mtshan (= no. 16)
1387–1417
Tenure: 1399–1416/17

V. Grags-pa Don-grub
Tenure: 1417–?

XVI. bSod-nams rin-chen
Tenure: [shing] stag 1434 ?

XVII. Nam-mkha’ bzang-po

XVIII. Chos-rje Rin-chen

XIX. bSod-nams rgya-mtsho
Son of no. XIV

XX. Grags-pa rgya-mtsho

7. dGa’-bde-dpal-ba
Son of no. 5
1254–1310

8. Rin-chen seng-ge
Son of no. 7
Tenure: 1310–1314

9. sMon-lam rdo-rje
Son of no. 7; father of no. XII
1284–1346/47
Tenure: ca. 1304–36?
(joint tenure with no. 8 [1304–10] and no. 10 [1323])

10. Kun-dga’ rdo-rje
Son of no. 9
1309–1364
Tenure: 1323–50/51

11. Grags-pa bshes-gnyan
Younger brother of no. 9
rl. 6 years, ca. 1351–56

12. dGe-legs bzang-po
Son of no. 10
1342–1390/91
Tenure: ca. 1355–70/7

13. dPal-’byor bzang-po
Son of no. 12
1361–1390
Tenure: 1370–1390

14. Legs-ladan bzang-po
Son of no. 12
b. 1367; Tenure: ca. 1390–96

15. dGa’-bde bzang-po
(DM: Grags-pa bzang-po)
Son of no. 13
1386–1409/10
Tenure: ca. 1396–1409/10

16. dNgos-grub rgyal-mtshan
Phag-mo gru-pa appropriation of Tshal Gung-thang and the Tshal territories ([.shirig] lug 1415?); gnery pa dGyes-rgyal mkhan-po]

4 or 5 generations of dpon sa ba
not mentioned by name
(TN: ‘Tshal-pa dpon po rNam-rgyal bzang-po, reg. for the late
1440’s)

1529:
“khri dpon Don-yod rdo-rje”
## Appendix V: Tables 1-3

### XXI. Ngag-dbang rgya-mtsho
flourit mid-16th century

### XXII. bSod-nams rab-brtan

### XXIII. sKal-ldan rgya-mtsho
Last gdan sa ba of the “Tshal-lineage”

*(GT: d. 1589 A.D.;
Zur chen rnam thar: d. 1649)*

### V.1.1 The Clan Affiliations of the Abbots of Tshal Yang-dgon

[Sigla: A, B, C, D, E = individual clans; 1, 2, etc. = succession of abbots;
x = brother, y = son; ? = clan affiliation unknown; \(-\) = lateral relation]

(A = lineage of Śākya Ye-shes) >

| A1 | ————x——— |
| A2 |

(B = gZi) >

| B3 |

(C = rJe [rJe’u]) >

| C4 | [— C5 ?] |

(D = line of Sangs-rgyas snying-po) >

| D6 — D7 — D8 — Dx |
| D9 |

A10 (= grandson of A2)

(maternal relative of Nr. 10?) >

| ?11 |

(E = mGar) >

| Ex — E12 |
| Ey — Ex — Ex |
| E13 —Ey |

Ey — E14

?15 until ?18

?20 until E23

1546: Gung-thang Fire >
sKyid-shod zhabs drung Don-
grub rab-brtan dpal-bzang-po –
Tshal became part of sKyid-
shod dGa'-ldan-pa

Zhabs drung Grags-pa Tshe-dbang
rab-brtan

*(GT: d. 1633 A.D.; more
correctly: 1693 A.D.)
Incorporation into the lHa-sa
Government*
V.1.2 The Lineages of the dpon sa and the Relation to the Yang-dgon gdun sa

**Lineage of mGar***

Tshe-nam Tsha-'brug 1 Δ = ○ g.Yu-bza' Bod-dkar

Δ

mGar Thing-na-rje

Khri-sgra 'Jings-smug

sTong-mes Khri-icags

sTong-btshan Yul-bzungs (*blon chen* mGar, 7<sup>th</sup> c.)

**Lineage of**

*Dur-mu gZhotl-nu*

(a) mGar btsan-po Dred-po (b) bTsan-gnyan Gung-ston

Khri-zangs Dong-bu (~Dum-bu)

Khri-gnyen Khri-icags

sTong-mes Khri-snang

Khri-[s]to-re/ro sTag-gzung

Khri-btshan 'Phan-gzigs

*blon chen* Chas-pa sgo-drug

rDo-rje-gzung

Khri-gzung-btshan [3 – 4 generations]

mGar Thog-yang-rgyal

rDo-rje sems-dpa' Mang-skyid

**Lineage of**

*Zhang sNa-nam*

(b) *Phan-ne*<sup>4</sup>

Δ

mGar rGyal-ba 'byung-gnas

Sangs-rgyas dNgos-grub [4]

**Lineage of**

*Dar-ma gZhon-nu*

[1]

m-y (a) Dar-ma gZhon-nu [1] (b)

[II]

(a) [2] (b) [3]

[IV]

m-y

[VI]

[VI] (a)[6] (b)[7] (c) Rin-chen dBang-phyug seng-ge

[IX]

[IX] (a)[10] (b)[11]

[X]

[XI]

[XII] (= 11)

[XIII]

[XIV] (= 16)

[XV] (= 16)

Δ = ○

Bla-ma Zhang

---

1 Based on sMon lam rdo rje rnam thar (MD 4b3f); Bod kyi deb ther 106–107; Gung thang dkar chag; see Part I: fn. 373

Sigla: [1] [2] etc. = succession of the Tshal-pa dpon po [I] [II] etc. = succession of the Yang-dgon gdun sa ba

(a) (b) etc. = brothers  m-y = mchod yon relationship

1 Descendence from heaven.

2 He functioned as yul dpon of the sNye-mo district (MD 5a5–6).

3 He settled down in Grib.

4 His lineage settled in sTod-lung Ram-pa (see App. IV: fn. 21).
V.2 The Main Branches of the Tshal-pa School Established in the 12th and 13th Century

Bla-ma Zhang
and
Dar-ma gZhon-nu

- g.Yu-brag. Bya-mkhar
- Re’u-chung. sKam-dgon etc.
- [plus later 13th cent. monasteries est. from Tshal: Glang-lung. IHa-sdings i.a.]

Bla-ma Zhang

- LHA-PHYUG-MKHAR
- LHA-RI-KHA
- Ye-shes Blo-gros: rDzam-dgon
- sNang-sgom ras-pa
- rTag-chen: rI-tsho-ba
- Nam-mkha’ dbang-phyug: Bal-yul Gangs-ra
- Nam-mkha’ seng-ge: sNa-phu Gangs-ra
- Kha-rag-pa: ‘13 monasteries’ in Kong-po
- Seng-ge brton-grus: Sa-dgon etc.
- Sang-srgyas-bum: sGom-sde gZims-khang-shar
- Ro-skam-pa
- LHa-ri-pa
- Kha-rag-pa
- Ha-sdings
- Ro-SKAM
- KHA-RAG
- Ru-thog-pa
- LHa-phug mkhar-pa
- Ru-thog: sGang-bu
- MTshal-pa
- mDzes-pa
- Dar-bsod (”3 rtogs ldan”)}

- Ru-thog-pa
- ‘Ju-bu
- MThalam-pa
- LHa-Ri-Kha
- Monastries in Kong-po
- Ye-shes Blo-gros: rDzam-dgon
- sNang-sgom ras-pa
- Nyag ’Bri-ra-ba
- sNa-phu: Gongs-ra
- rTag-chen: rI-tsho-ba
- ZA-LUNG
- Dge-tho-ba: Ko-ba-brag
- Tsa-ri-ba: llun-grub-sdings
- Nyi-zla etc.: Gangs-khrod
- rTag-chen: rI-tsho-ba
- "13 monasteries” in Kong-po
- dPal-ba Me-tse
- Phyis-can
- dPal-ba Me-tse
- Bla-shod (in Glo-bo)
- > in Nepal
- Yungs-pa-ba
- Tshul-dar-ba
- Shes-rab ’phel-ba
- Sangs-rgyas ’od-zer
- Bla-ri-pa
- Ser-spangs mkhan-pa
- > in Pu-rangs, Guge:
- gSer
- gZhi-sde
- Chos-lung etc.

BAR-TSHAL

STOD-TSHAL

Sigla: - = founding of a (branch-) monastery / dependency of a religious site
- = direct disciple
V.2.1 The *gdan sa ba* Lineages of the Main Branches of the Tshal-pa School¹

### A IHa-phyug-mkhar dgon-pa (in Ba-lam [shar])

- **Δ = = =**

- **I** IHa-phyug-mkhar-pa Nyi-zla-'od (1145–1215) = *gdan sa ba* of IHa-phyug-mkhar (found. 1193 A.D.)
- **II** Bla-ma sPyan-snga-ba (rl. 7 years, *ca.* 1215–1221)
- **III** Rin-po-che sTon-nam (rl. 3 years; in 1224 throne was vacant)
- **IV** Bla-ma Ba-lam-pa (sojourn in Mi-nyag in 1224)
- **V** Jang-rgyas Jo-sras
- **VI** Jang-rgyas sTon-pa
- **VII** Bla-ma Za-lung-pa bSod-nams dbang-phyug (*ab ca.* 1257)
- **VIII** Za-lung-pa Bla-ma mJos-pa bzang-po
- **IX** Ru-thog-pa Saky-a rgyal-mtshan
- **X** Bla-ma 'Ju-phu-ba Shes-rab-'phel (*fl. 1*" half of 14*" cent; the latter three were also active in (or served as abbots of) the Bar Tshal institutions of Za-lung, Ru-thog and 'Ju-phu, respectively)

### B Kha-rag dgon-pa (in Kha-rag)

- **Δ = = =**

- **I** bSod-nams bla-ma bZod-ldan bla-ma Kha-rag-pa chen-po 'Dul-ba-’od (*aliases rtags ldan Nyag-po-seng-ge, dge slong dNgos-grub bla-ma*) = *gdan sa ba* of Kha-rag dgon (found. in 1193?)
- **II** slob dpon Jo-sras *dbon po* Seng-ge brtson-'grus
- **III** chos rje rGyal-[ba] gZhon-[nu],
- **IV** mKhas-pa Grags[-pa] rgyal[-po/mtshan]
- **V** bla ma sGang-kha-ba Blo-gros bzang-po
- **VI** dBu-rtse-ba Grags-pa rdo-rje
- **VII** 'Jam-dbyangs Shes-rab bzang-po
- **VIII** dGe bshes Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan
- **IX** 'Od-zer IHa-tho-ba
- **X** bla ma gZhon-nu rgyal-mtshan (registered for the period of the 9th Tshal-pa dpon po sMon-lam rdo-rje [*fl. ca.* 1304–1336]; *Tshal rnam* 47a)

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¹ Based on *Deh dmarg, Gung thang dkar chag, Deb sngon*, VS. *IHo rong chos sbyung, Yon tan 'brug sgra, Chos legs rnam thar*, etc.; see Part I: Chap. II.1.2.2; II.1.2.3. A – F refer to the main institutions of the Bar Tshal.
C Ru-thog dgon-pa (in eastern Mal-gro)

Ru-thog-pa chen-po (*aliases rtogs ldan bDe-ba gzhon-nu, Zhig-po sTon-bde*)
(of the mDzo-ri/ro clan in Grva) =
I  *gdan sa ba* of Ru-thog dgon-pa (found. ca. 1200 A.D.)
II *spyan snga* gZhon-nu rgyal-mtshan
III *spyan snga* Chos Blo-gros
IV *gcung* Rin-po-che 'Jigs-med seng-ge

D Za-lung dgon-pa (in sKyid-shod)

Mal-gros-pa/dgos-pa mGon Δ
(from Za-'og [in Mang-yul Gung-thang?] =
[Δy Δ] y = g. Yung-drung Byin-brtan
[Δa Δb Δc]

a = *rtogs ldan mDzes-pa [snying-po] (from the *rtogs ldan gsum* disciple group of Ru-thog-pa chen-po) =
I  abbot of Za-lung (founded in 1215 A.D.; rl. 30 years; d. 1244)
b = II [Za-lung-pa] bSod-nams dbang-phyug (rl. 14 years) (= A-VII)
c = III Yos-lo-pa gZhon-nu rdo-rje (rl. 19 years; 1257-1275)
IV *Slob dpon* rNam-rgyal-mdzes (disciple of no. III:
  rl. 15 years: 1275-1289)
V  *Slob dpon* gZhon-nu-mdzes (younger brother of IV): rl. 1289-?)

E lHa-ri-kha dgon-pa (lHa-ri sPang-gshong, in lHa-ri?)

Gru-gu-tsa Δ = O Thang-gro-ma
(from mDzad-paJad-pa of Grva) =

lHa-ri-pa chen-po Nam-mkha'-*od (*aliases* Sangs-rgyas ras-chen.
Sangs-rgyas-*od*) =
I  *gdan sa ba* of lHa-ri-kha dgon (found. in 1168 A.D.)
II. *dbon po* (= nephew of no. I?) [Sangs-rgyas] lHa dGe-bshes
III *dbon po* dBon Rin-po-che (nephew of no. II)
IV lHa gZhon-nu (Devakumára)
   > not mentioned in *Deb dmar* which lists the succession of
   [IV] sTod-lung sPang-‘dab-pa
   [V] Chos kyi mgon-po (of Khya dkar-mo-pa [= Khyag-pa dkar-mo? cf. BA Roerich 694])
   [VI] Dol Yol-mo-ba bla ma rDo-rje mgon-po
   [VII] Nam-mkha’ rgyal-mtshan (son of sTod-lung-pa bSod-nams mgon-po; i.e. the abbot of today = mid-14th cent.;
the list is apparently to be completed and some generations appear to be missing)
The Lo-mi Lineage and the Succession of Abbots of **Ro-skam dgon-pa** (in Glags Phur-lung)

Phyug-po bKra-shis seng-ge (of the Lo-mi clan in Phur-lung Myang/Byang-khang of Glags)

von bdag 'Bum-mo/me  
Sho-mi dGos-pa-'bum  
rGya-tsha Rin-po-che

I  
II  
III  
IV  
V  
VI

**I**  
Ro-skam-pa chen-po (Ro-skam-pa [Lo-sgom] Nyi-ma shes-rab; 1139–1208) =  

gdan sa ba of Ro-skam dgon pa (found in 1183 A.D.; rl. 25 years)

**II**  
Rin-po-che Sang-rdor (rl. 20 years; 1208–1226)

**III**  
Bla-ma gZhon-nu (a.k.a. rin po che Tshe-dpag-med; rl. 33 years:
1226–1258 | Sho-mi (=Lo-mi?) dGos-pa-'bum is registered as the father
of no. III; the latter studied under his uncle (khu = no. II); thus it can
be assumed that Sho-mi actually was the (elder?) brother of no. II)

**IV**  
Bla-ma 'Jam-dbyangs-pa (i.e. the eldest of the 7 sons of rGyal-tsha
Rin-po-che, himself the paternal cousin of no. III; rl. 22 years: ~1279)

**V**  
Bla-ma Yon-tan rin-chen (rl. 28 years: 1279–1306)

**VI**  
Nam-mkha' seng-ge (rl. during the tenure of dpon Kun-dga' rdo-rje)

---

**G rTa-sga dgon** (in sNubs-ris)

sNang-sgom ras-pa (alias Sangs-rgyas Tshal-pa, Sangs-rgyas-'od) =  
I  
II  
III  
IV  
V  
VI  
VII

**I**  
gdan sa ba of rTa-sga monastery (found. ca. 1200 A.D.)

arrival of Jo-sras, Tshang 'Dur-ba chen-po, bSam-gtan rdzong-ba and rtogs ldan Dar-bsod (one of
the three rtogs ldan disciple of Ru-thog-pa (see D-I) in rTa-sga; acc. to context Jo-sras (a relative of
no. I) was sent to sTod to take over the throne, but he died before his appointment as 2nd rTa-sga-ba]

**II**  
rtogs ldan Dar-bsod (Dar-ma bsod-narms)

**III**  
bla ma gZhon-nu

**IV**  
bla ma gCung-po

**V**  
slob dpon Sangs-rgyas bla-ma

**VI**  
bla ma Shes-rab bla-ma

**VII**  
bla ma dKon-mchog gZhon-nu

---

Notes to Map 1, 2:

**Map 1**

P, K, L, M, N = The presence of the sTod Tshal in Pu-rang (P), at Ti-se / Kailäsa (K), Glo-bo (L), Myang-yul
Gung-thang (in Nub-ris (with the main seat of rTa-sga), Mar-lung, sKyid-grong, etc.) (M) and in Nepal
(Kathmandu valley) (N)

G, X = The sMad Tshal in Tsong-kha (T) (found. of Go-ra etc.), Mongolia and Mi-nyag (i.e. Xia state) (X)

**Map 2**

The main monasteries of the Bar Tshal: K = Kha-rag; B? = Bal-yul Gangs-ra (identification uncertain);
S = sTod-lung Ko-ba-brag; Z = Za-lung; R = Ro-skam, L = lHa-phyug-mkhar; Ru = Ru-thog;
J? = 'Ju-phu (in sPras of 'Phan-yul?); ? = sGang-bu (in Mal-gro, exact location unknown);
La? = lHa-ri-kha (lHa-ri sPang-gshong; localization uncertain); Ko = branches in Kong-po (exact
locations unknown); D = lHa-sa-steng (of rDzam in western Dvags-po); Ta = rTag-can/spyan (in Grva-phyi)
T = Tshal Gung-thang
2. The old Zhi-sde lha khang of Pu-rang (P). It became one of the branch seats of the sTod Tshal School

TG 2004
A sGom-sde gZims-khang shar-ba
(Found. 1242 [= 1262?] in the time of Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan (5th dpon chen) and Sangs-rgyas-’bum
(i.e. the IVth Yang-dgon gdan sa ba; see Table 1)

I sPrul sku Sangs-rgyas ’bum
II dhon Rin-po-che (nephew of no. I; rl. 24 years)
III Sang-’bum phyi-ma (the “later” Sangs-rgyas-’bum; rl. 2 years)
IV Bła-ma gZhung-pa (rl. 2 years)
V rgyal sras Šākya rgyal-mtshan (rl. 25 years)
VI Tshul-khrims gzhon-nu (rl. 40 years [ca. 1293–1332?]; see Part I: fn. 620)

[Except no. II and IV the gdan sa ba belonged to the dhon brgyud of Sangs-rgyas-’bum,
i.e the rJe’u clan of Grva = C of Table 1.1]

17th Cent.:
mGon po bSod-nams mchog-ldan (1603–1659/60)
Zur-chen Chos-dbyings rang-grol (1604–1657/69)

B Chos-’khor-gling
(Found. by ‘Jam-dbyangs Šākya gzhon-nu (from gSang-phu) in the time of dpon chen dGa’-bde-dpal)

I ‘Jam-dbangs Šākya gZhon-nu (rl. 6 yeras)
II Chos je Don-grub-dpal (rl. 41 years: 1314–1354)
III Dam-pa Kun-mkhyen Shes-rab rgyal-mtshan (rl. 14 years: 1354–67)
IV mKhas-btsun Blo-bzang (rl. 11 years: 1367–78)
V bSod-nams dpal-ba (rl. 10 years: 1378–1388)
VI Slob dpon chen po Kun-bzang-pa (rl. 22 years: 1388–1410/11)
VII rGyal sras bDe’-byung-ba (disciple of Tsong-kha-pa; identical with Gung-thang chos rje rGyal-sras
alias Gung-thang-pa mDzes-pa dpal-ldan? (rl. 18 years: 1400/10?–1428); see Part I: fn. 649

VIII Chos je Chos kyi Shes-rab
IX bShes-gnyen dpal-ba
X Rin Šākya-ba

[Later the institution merged with the college of Chos-khri lho-lcog, GT 53a–54a; VS 154]

C dBus-gling
(Found. by dGe bshes chen po Don-grub dpal-lidan in the time of dpon chen dGa’-bde-dpal)

I Don-grub dpal-lidan
II Rin-chen dpal-bzang
III Shes-rab bzang-po
IV Sangs-rgyas rgyal-mtshan
V Chos rje Sangs-rgyas-dpal
VI Drung Slob-dpon (= the son of the 12th dpon chen Si tu dGe-legs bzang-po; rl. 23 years)
VII Blo ma Nam-mkha’ shes-rab (rl. 13 years)
VIII mKhas-pa Byang-chub bzang-po (rl. 3 years)
IX mKhan rin po che Blo-mchog (rl. 6 years)

[Change into a dGe-lugs-pa institution; 15th cent.]

| Yer-pa Byams-pa yongs-grags, etc. (see VS 153)

dPon slob dPal-bzang-po (alias Blo bzang lhun-grub, late 17th cent.)
### V.4 Bla-ma Zhang’s Teachers

Based on primary sources:

- dGos 'dod re skong ma'i 'grel ba (GD);
- bKa' 'thor bu (KT);
- Zhang rnam thar zin bris (ZB);
- Gung thang dkar chag (GT);
- Deb dmar (DM);
- lHo rong chos 'byung (HR);
- Deb sngon (DN = BA [Roerich]);
- Gu bkra chos 'byung (GK)

#### I. The Early Teachers in the Period until Zhang’s Ordination in 1148 A.D.

(No. 1–4 and 6–35 represents the list as given in GD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ma-jo Dar-ma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Slob dpon rNgog-ston (rNgog sTod-lungs-pa chen-po) (KT; Bla-ma rNgog-pa); rNgog-ston (GT); BA: rNgog mDo-sde (1078–1154 / 1090–1166 A.D.); HR 183.16: <em>slob dpon rNgog</em> alias Jo-bo Thogs-med grags-pa (1120–1156 A.D.), according to DN the son of rNgog mDo-sde (BA Roerich 412–13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>[b]Sam-bu (~ bhu) lo tsā ba</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Slob dpon rJe'u-ston-pa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Slob dpon gShen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Slob dpon mChims Jo-sras</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Slob dpon Nyang-bran Chos-ye-s[hes] (ZB 30a5: <em>dge bshes</em> Nyang-rang; he met Zhang in Zlum-po ca. 1155)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Slob dpon Grva-thang sGom-tshul</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Slob dpon 'Od-mchog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Slob dpon Bo-(Svo-) ston Chos-grags</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Slob dpon bsTan (= br'Tan) ye-s[hes])</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Slob dpon Jo-sras Grags[-pa] seng[-ge]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Slob dpon sTon-pa rDo-je-grags</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Slob dpon Padma</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Slob dpon Bal-po Lo-ka</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Slob dpon <em>dge bshes</em> g.Yo[r]-dga’ [sKyid-dpal]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Slob dpon Tshul-khrims-rgyal[-mtshan]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Slob dpon sGom-nag sKyid-dpal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mo-ja sgron-ne (= 1.1?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Slob dpon Gung-thang dPal-le-grags</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Slob dpon Ru-ston</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Slob dpon Glang-ston (Blo bstan (GT), Blang-ston (KT), Rlang ston)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Slob dpon Blang-ladan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Slob dpon Shes-rab-dpal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Slob dpon rGya-ston</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Slob dpon Cog-ro Jo-sras</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Slob dpon sBa Chos kyi 'od-zer</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Slob dpon sGom-chen phyi-sgom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Slob dpon 'Phags-pa Jo-ston</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Slob dpon sKar (~ dKar)-chung Ring-mo (HR 618)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Slob dpon Tshul-she (= Tshul-khrims shes-rab)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Slob dpon Rang-'dral lo tsā ba</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>mKhar-'og-ba (KT: rGya-ston mKhar-s/mgo-ba; he acted as <em>upādhyāya</em> at Zhang’s ordination; (= l.25?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Grab-mkhar-ba (Drab/ Dra/ba/ Grags-mkhar-pa (KT; HR); he functioned as ācārya at Bla-ma Zhang’s ordination)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Zu lJang-mdo-pa (gZu lDang mdo-pa (HR), gZung lJang mdo-ba (DS), 'Jang-mdo-ba of gZu (GT); he acted as secret preceptor at Zhang’s ordination)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. The Teachers in the Period following Zhang’s Ordination

II. 1 The List of the rtsa ba’i bla ma drug (six root teachers)

1. dpal-l丹 rG[va]-lo (dpal rGa-lo chen-po, rGa lo tsā ha gZhon-nu-dpal (1110/14–1198/1202 A.D.); KT 360.3–392.7; DM: the one by whom Zhang was directly instructed)

2. yer-pa-ba (Mal yer-pa sMon-lam-btsan (1105–1170 A.D.); KT 393.1–426.4; DM: the one through whom the demonic obstacles were removed)

3. 'Ol-ka-ba ('Ol-dga'' Rin-[chen]-brtson[-'grus], 'Ol-kha-ba Grol-sgom chos-g.yung (1103–1199); DM: the one through whom the relative bodhicitta was enhanced)

4. bla-ma Bai-ro (Grub thob Be-ro-tsa-na, dNgul-chu Be-ro-ba [*Vairocana-vartula]; GD 546.1–6; etc.)

5. ngam-shod gShen-pa (Ngam-shod gShen-pa rDo-rje seng-ge; gShen-dgon (~ sgom) dkar-ba, rDo-rje dbang-phyug (DN 664.3, 665.14–16); Bla-ma gShen (BA Roerich 900) (= 1.5?)

6. sGom-pa Tshul-khrims snying-po (1116–1169 A.D.; DM: the one through whom Zhang realized the ultimate bodhicitta)

II. 2 Further Teachers

(Gathered selectively from lists found e.g. in Zhang’s writings, etc.)

[1] rJe btsun Phug-po che-ba (KT)
[2] sGam-po-pa
[3] Phag-mo gru-pa rDo-rje rgyal-po
[5] Phya-ba Chos kyi seng-ge (1109–69) (YL 129.9–11; BA Roerich 333; KD 162)
[6] dGe bshes sGom-pa She[s]-r[ab] gzhon-nu
[7] sMon-lam 'od-zer
[8] dGe bshes sGom-pa gSAl-byang
[9] Rin po che dBu-se (Kham-pa rin po che dBu-se; ZB 58a1–2)
[10] Slob dpun sGom-pa rNam-grags
[12] Slob dpun rGyal-'byung
[13] Slob dpun sBas Chos kyi 'od-zer
[14] Slob dpun Ii/Dzi-ston (= 1.4?)
[16] Slob dpun sGros-snyon Mi-zan (sic)
[17] Slob dpun sGom-chos
[18] Pa-tshab sgom-nag (b. 1077–1158; cf. Pha dam pa rnam thar 205–08)
V.5 The Groups of Bla-ma Zhang Disciples

Based on Primary Sources:
Mar lung pa rnam thar (ML); Gung thang dkar chag (GT); Deb dmar (DM);
Deb sngon (DN = BA [Roench]); Chos legs rnam thar (CL); Yon tan 'brug sgra (YT);
Gu bkra chos 'byung (KG); dGa’ ldan chos 'byung (GD); rNyin ma’i chos 'byung (NCH);
mKhas pa’i dga’ ston (KG); IHO rong chos 'byung (HR); Chos 'byung bstan pa’i nying ma (CN);
bKa’ brgyud chos 'byung l (KC); dGos ‘dod re skong ma’i ‘grel ba (ZhK); bKa’ rgya ma (KR);
Zhang rnam thar zin bris (ZB); Vaidurya ser po (VS) DL5 gSan yig (SY)

Secondary Sources:
Ming mdzod (MZ); Mi sna (MN)

Disparate lists of Zhang’s discipleship and circle of followers have circulated and the lists, the redactional work of later historians, that have come down to us and partly have been reproduced here display a fairly homogenous picture, less in the names and numbers of the individual pupils as much as in their groupings. It is nevertheless easy to detect a direct correspondence, as for instance between 11 and 111, which may not surprise when we recall that they were compiled by the same author, Tshal-pa Kun-dga’ rdo-rje. The lists clearly were intended to reflect the number and groups of Bla-ma Zhang’s direct pupils albeit, as we shall see, they occasionally contain names of disciples who lived after Zhang’s demise. Further, it appears that the list of some of the Zhang-pupils was also produced simply by recording the names of the disciples that were recipients of his esoteric teachings and precepts as delineated in his writings.

I. The list of the 24 Zhang Disciples in ML (82a3–84a3)²

A The Thirteen Great “Lionv[-named] [Sons] Superior to the Father [i.e. Bla-ma Zhang]
(Bu phas lhaq pa’i seng [ge] chen bcu gsum);³

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Zhang sNa-nam-pa brTson-'grus seng-ge (i.e. Bla-ma Zhang of sNa-nam Zhang Clan)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>sTod Zad-lung-pa IHan-po seng-ge (IHan-po seng-ge of Zad-lung [= mkhan po bZad-pa (HR 197.20), or sTod Zad-lung = Za-lung of sTod[-lung]?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>gTsang gyi[r]-phu[b] Padma seng-ge (Padma seng-ge from Upper gTsang)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>dBus kyi shod-pa 'Bum-chung seng-ge ('Bum-chung of dBus kyi shod; perhaps identical with IHa-btsun dBung-seng[-ge] of 'Phreng-po [located in the low tract of dBus]; II.C.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Khams gTsong-ka-pa gZhon[-nu] seng-ge (gZhon-nu seng-ge from gTsong-ka [= bTsong-kha] in Khams)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Thon Mar-lung-pa Byang-chub seng-ge (aliases Mar-sgom, sGom-pa Mar, Mar-pa IHa-dkar, Mar-pa IHa-dga’ (HR 197.20) from the Thon-mi clan (see ML 34b–6, 59b4f., 86b1; HR 204.11; KT 288.1; DM 128.19; founder of the Mar-lung monastery in Western Tibet [Everding 2000, s.v. index]). Mar-pa sgom-pa Šākya seng-ge (= a combination of 1.A.6 and 1.A.8 ?); cf. ZhK II 571.3; he may also have been pupil of sTag-lung thang-pa; HR 473. it should be recalled that his mother was sTag-lung-ma or dbon mo Khri-'tshang mgo-sdong)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Iho bSam-yas-pa bSam-gtan seng-ge (bSam-gtan seng-ge, the One from bSam-yas to the South [of Tshal] perhaps an alternative name of Khri-rts'e, prince of bSam-yas; II.E.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>bCung Las-stod-pa Šākya seng-ge (i.e. La-stod bCung-ba’i dgon-pa;¹ i.e. sgom pa Šākya seng-ge; HR 197.21; KT 460.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>mTshal Gung-thang-pa rGyal-ba seng-ge (= either Gung-thang-pa Grags-pa seng-ge [= II.A.4?], founder of Go-ra-gdong (GT), or [less likely] the yon bdag mGar rGyal-ba 'byung-gnas [= I.C.13])</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>sTon-sgom chen-po Yon-tan seng-ge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11 Byang Ngar-phug-pa dGe-'dun seng-ge (dGe-'dun seng-ge, the one from Ngar-phug in the Byang area of Grags; i.e. Sloh dpon Ngar-phug-pa (DM 133.19); probably identical with dGe-seng of bZang-yul (Mon-gdond); the latter is part of Byang Ngar-phug; II.C.4)

12 Rong-kha Yag-sde-ba Seng-ge rgyal-mtshan (from g.Yag-sde of Rong-kha (in gTsang, Part I: Map 9) = dpon Pho-rrog Seng-ge rgyal[-mtshan]? (KR 27.2), or 'Bum-yag [II.C.16]?)

13 gnas rtsan (= brian) chen po Seng-ge grags-pa (= II.E.5)

B The Three [Clear] “Light”[-named] [Disciples] Nobler than the Father (Pha las bzang ba'i od gsal gsum; ['od bzhin in KG *)

1 mkHan po Nam-mkha'-'od (= lHa-rig-pa chen-po, a.k.a. Gra-'Jed-pa (~'Jad-pa) Nam-mkha'-'od, a.k.a. Sangsrgyas ras-chen or Sangsrgyas-'od; est. lHa-rig sPang-gshong (lHa-rig-kha) monastery, = ? dge slong Nam-mkha'-'od, pupil of Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa, MN 253-4)7

2 lHa-phyug-pa Nyi-zla-'od (founder of lHa-phyug-mkhar; see Table 2.1-A)

3 Sloh dpon Dri-med-'od (= Dri-ra-pa (~'Bri-ra-ba) Sakyapa-'od = Nyag 'Bri-ra-ba; est. a monastery in Byang [DS] = [Byang] Zhol-bu? GT)

KG adds:
[4] Kha-rag-pa 'Dul-ba-'od (alias rtogs ldan Nyag-po seng-ge (= Kha-rag sKyi-ston ?); founder of Kha-rag-dgon; see Table 2.1-B)*

C The Two “Youth”[-named] [Disciples] more Pious than the Father (Pha las btsun pa'i gzhon [nu] gnyis)

1 mTshal gvi mkhan po Dar-ma gzhon-nu (= nye gnas Dar-ma gzhon-nu, the 1st dcon sa of Tshal)

2 Sloh dpon chen po Byang-chub gZhon[-nu]

D The Six Cotton-clad Ascetic-Teachers (Ras sgom ston pa cha drug)

1 'Gro mgon gTsang-pa rgya[l]-[s]ras (= 'Gro-mgon Ye-shes rDo-rje alias gTsang-pa rgya-ras; founder of the 'Brug-pa bKa';brgyud) (GT, DM 128.8; KC 69a1, etc.)

2 Slog kyi gTsang-pa Ras-chung (= rTsang-pa Ras-chung (HR 197.20); Slog = Klog[s] in g.Ye-che ?)

3 rGya-sgom Zhig-po rnal-'byor (= 1V.5 ? see BA Roerich 445, 480)

4 sGrva-pa Kha-rag sgom-chung (from [s]Grva, = 1.B.4)7

5Ral-nag bsTon-pa (= sTon-pa) lHa-rig

6 gTsang-ston Hrul-mo (= gTsang-sgom Hrul-mo/le or dkon gnyer Hrul-mo, HR 203.19f.; BA 139, GK 282.5)10

II. The List of Disciples according to DM (128.6-129.11)

A The Spiritual Sons (thugs kyi sras) [considered on a par with Zhang] (DM 128.6-13)

[1] Gling Ras-pa Padma-rdo-rje (GT, etc.)

[2] 'Gro mgon gTsang-pa rgya-ras (= 1.D.1)

[3] Grub thob Ti-shi ras-pa (alias Sangsrgyas ras-chen; GT, HR)


[5] mDo[-ba] ras-pa (BA Roerich 518; i.e. bla ma Do-ba? GT; from mDo-bo of mTshur-phu? cf. ZhK)

[6] Zhig-po bdud-rtsi (HHR 205.15; BA Roerich 139; G K 280.17-283.15; ZhK 565.5)11

[7] 'Brug gi sPa-ri-ba (sPa/Pa-ri-ba of 'Brug [in sKyiid-smad]; established the sPa-ri Byang-chub-gling monastery: BA Roerich 670, KC 70a7-b1. Also known as rJe mkhyen-pa'i mnga'-bdag)
Appendix V: Tables 4-5

[8] gTsang-pa Jo-btsun
[9] Bla-ma bSe-phrang-pa (ZhK 565.6)
[10] Khams-ston rDo-rje blo-gros (~Blo-gros rdo-rje)
[13] Khams-pa mGon-ston
[14] dge bshes Dvags-po
[15] gZhon-ras


1 Chos kyi rgyal-tshab mNyam-med Säkya ye-shes (the 1st Yang-dgon gdan sa ba) (GT, etc.)
2 mKhan-chen bSod-pa (~ gZad-pa)

C The Four Great Sons (bu chen bzhi) (DM 128.15–18)

1 Kha-rag gi grva pa Rin-po-che 'Dul-ba-'od (= I.B.4; I.C.4)
2 dPal-lidan lHa-phyug-mkhar-pa Nyi-zla-'od (= I.C.2)
3 lHa-ri-pa chen-po Nam-mkha'-’od (= I.B.1; see Table 2.1, E–I)
4 Ro-skam-pa Lo-sgom Nyi-ma shes-rab (see Table 2.1, F–I)

D The Disciples that were Ascetics and Yogi (rtogs ldan bya btang gi rnal ’byor pa)  
(DM 128.18–21)

[1] Mar-sgom (HR 204.11; = I.A.6; II.C.18 ?)
[2] Ri-sgom (HR 204.18; ZhK 460.10)
[3] rTogs-lidan sPra [= sBra?]–sgom (HR 202.9; BA Roerich 716)
[4] gTsang-ston Blo-lidan
[6] Shang[s]-pa Rol-pa’i rdo-rje (Rol-pa’i rdo-rje, the One from Shangs [in gTsang])
[7] Byang-chub-shing gdan-’dren Mi Bya-’dzin

E The Great Sons Executing [karmic Enlightening] Activity (’Phrin las grub pa’i bu chen)  
(DM 128.22–129.11)

[1] Dar-ma gzhon-nu (= I.C.1)
[3] Khri-rtsse, Prince (btsun po) of bSam-yas (= I.A.7?); also called Brag-dmar bSam-yas rgyal-po)
[6] rDor [i.e. rDo-rje] dBang, the nephew of the King of Kha-rag
[7] gNas brtan Grub-thob of sGa-’dra (= Yar-’brog sGa[nɡ]-’dra)
[8] sgom pa dKon-mchog seng-ge
[9] gNas brtan of mTsho-sna in Mon (also called sPungs-pa)
[10] gNas brtan of ’Brug-mdo
[11] gNas brtan mGon-po
[12] Dar-bsod (= rtogs ldan Dar-bsod?; see Table 2.1, G–II)
B The Three [Clear] “Light”[-named] [Disciples] Nobler than the Father
(Pha las bzang ba 'i od gsal gsam; ['od bzhi in KG 6])

1 mKhan po Nam-mKha'-od (= lHa-ri-pa chen-po, a.k.a. Gra-'Jed-pa (= 'Jad-pa) Nam-mKha'-od, a.k.a. Sangs-rgyas ras-chen or Sangs-rgyas-'od; est. IHa-ri sPang-gshong (IHa-ri-kha) monastery, = 7 sge slong Nam-mKha'-od, pupil of Dus-gsam mKhyen-pa, MN 253-4)7
2 lHa-phyug-pa Nyi-zla-'od (founder of lHa-phug-mkhar; see Table 2.1-A)
3 Slob dpon Dri-med-'od (= Dri-ra-pa (= 'Bri-ra-ba) Sakya-'od = Nyag 'Bri-ra-ba; est. a monastery in Byang [DS] = [Byang] Zhol-bu? GT)

KG adds:
[4] Kha-rag-pa 'Dul-ba-'od (alias rtogs ldan Nyag-po seng-ge (= Kha-rag sKyi-ston ?; founder of Kha-rag-dgon; see Table 2.1-B)8

C The Two “Youth”[-named] [Disciples] more Pious than the Father (Pha las btsun pa'i ghzon [nu] gnyis)

1 mTshal gyi mkhan po Dar-ma ghzon-nu (= nye gnas Dar-ma ghzon-nu, the 1st dgon sa of Tshal)
2 Slob dpon chen po Byang-chub gZhon-nu

D The Six Cotton-clad Ascetic-Teachers (Ras sgom ston pa cha drug)

1 'Gro mgon gTsang-pa rgya[s]ras (= 'Gro-mgon Ye-shes rDo-rje alias gTsang-pa rgya-ras; founder of the 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud) (GT, DM 128.8; KC 69a1, etc.)
2 Slog kyi gTsang-pa Ras-chung (= rTsang-pa Ras-chung (HR 197.20); Slog = Klog[s] [in g.Ye-che] ?)
3 rGya-sgom Zhig-po mal-'byor (= IV.5 ? see BA Roerich 445, 480)
4 sGrva-pa Kha-rag sgom-chung (from sGrva, = I.B.4)9
5 Ral-nag bSTon-pa (= sTon-pa) lHa-rje
6 gTsang-ston Hrul-mo (= gTsang-sgom Hrul-mo/le or dkon gnyer Hrul-mo, HR 203.19f.; BA 139; GK 282.5)10

II. The List of Disciples according to DM (128.6–129.11)

A The Spiritual Sons (thugs kyi sras) [considered on a par with Zhang] (DM 128.6–13)

[1] Gling Ras-pa Padma-rdo-rje (GT, etc.)
[2] 'Gro mgon gTsang-pa rgya-ras (= I.D.1)
[3] Grub thob Ti-shi ras-pa (alias Sangs-rgyas ras-chen; GT, HR)
[5] mDo[-ba] ras-pa (BA Roerich 518; i.e. bla ma Do-ba? GT; from mDo-bo of mTshur-phu? cf. ZhK)
[6] Zhig-po bdud-rtsi (HR 205.15; BA Roerich 139; GK 280.17–283.15; ZhK 565.5)11
[7] 'Brug gi sPa-ri-ba (sPa/PA-ri-ba of 'Brug [in sKyid-smad]; established the sPa-ri Byang-chub-gling monastery; BA Roerich 670; KC 70a7–b1. Also known as rJe mKhyen-pa'i mnga'-bdag)
Appendix V: Tables 4-5

[8] gTsang-pa Jo-btsun
[9] Bla-ma bSe-phrang-pa (ZhK 565.6)
[10] Kham-ston rDo-rje blo-gros ( ~ Blo-gros rdo-rje)
[13] Kham-pa mGon-ston
[14] dge bshes Dvags-po
[15] gZhon-ras


1 Chos kyi rgyal-tshab mNyam-med Śākya ye-shes (the 1st Yang-dgon gdan sa ba) (GT, etc.)
2 mKhan-chen bSod-pa ( ~ gZad-pa)

C The Four Great Sons (bu chen bzhi) (DM 128.15–18)

1 Kha-rag gi grva pa Rin-po-che 'Dul-ba-'od (= I.B.4; I.C.4)
2 dPal-ldan lHa-phug-mkhar-pa Nyi-zla-'od (= I.C.2)
3 lHa-ri-pa chen-po Nam-mkha-'od (= I.B.1; see Table 2.1, E–I)
4 Ro-skam-pa Lo-sgom Nyi-ma shes-rab (see Table 2.1, F–I)

D The Disciples that were Ascetics and Yogi (rtogs ldan bya btang gi rnal ’byor pa)

( DM 128.18–21)

[1] Mar-sgom (HR 204.11; = I.A.6; II.C.18 ?)
[2] Ri-sgom (HR 204.18, ZhK 460.10)
[3] rTogs-ldan sPra [= sBra?]-sgorn (HR 202.9; BA Roerich 716)
[4] gTsang-ston Blo-ldan
[6] Shang[s]-pa Rol-pa’i rdo-rgje (Rol-pa’i rdo-rje, the One from Shangs [in gTsang])
[7] Byang-chub-shing gdan-’dren Mi Bya-’dzin

E The Great Sons Executing [karmic Enlightening] Activity (’Phrin las grub pa’i bu chen)

( DM 128.22–129.11)

[1] Dar-ma gzhon-nu (= I.C.1)
where ’Phreng-po is located; dBung-seng)
[3] Khri-rtsse, Prince (btsan po) of bSamb-yas (= I.A.7?); also called Brag-dmar bSamb-yas rgyal-po)
[6] rDor [i.e. rDo-rje] dBang, the nephew of the King of Kha-rag
[7] gNas brtan Grub-thob of sGa-’dra (= Yar’-brog sGa[ng]-’dra)
[8] sgom pa dKon-mchog seng-ge
[9] gNas brtan of mTsho-sna in Mon (also called sPungs-pa)
[10] gNas brtan of ’Brug-mdol
[11] gNas brtan mGon-po
[12] Dar-bsod (= rtogs ldan Dar-bsod?; see Table 2.1, G–II)
III. The List of Disciples according to *dGos 'dod re skong ma'i 'grel ba* (ZhK 564.1–568.4)

A  Principal Sons (*sras kyi thu bo*) (ZhK 564.1–566.1)

1. Grub thob Gling-chen Ras-pa
2. Chos rje gTsang-pa ras-pa
3. Grub thob Ti-shri ras-pa
4. Bla ma rGya Yar-lung-pa (= II.A.4)
5. Bla ma mDo-lo ras-pa Shes-rab seng-ge (= II.A.5 or IV.4?)
6. Bla ma Zhig-po bdud-rtsi (= II.A.6)
7. Se-brag gNyos-ston (= V.8?)
8. lHa-sa (= pa) Rin-chen rgyal-po
9. Bla ma Sc-'phrang (= II.A.9)
10. Khams-ston Blo-gros rdo-rje (= II.A.10)
11. Sum-ston rDo-rje snying-po (= II.A.11)
12. Mal dBu-dkar (= II.A.12)
13. Khams-pa mGon-ston (= II.A.13)
14. dGe bshes Dvags-po (= II.A.14)

B  The All-Peerless Sons who established a Foundation* (ZhK 566.1–2; corresponding with list II.B in DM)

1. Chos kyi rgyal tshab mNyam-med rin po che Säkya ye-shes (= II.B.1)
2. sDe snod 'dzin pa chen po mKhan-chen bzang-pa (= II.B.2)

C  The Four Great Sons (ZhK 566.2–3)

1. Kha-rag gi Grva-pa rin po che 'Dul-ba-'od
2. dPal lHa-phyug-mkhar-pa Nyi-zla-'od
3. lHa-ri-pa chen-po Nam-mkha-`od
4. Ro-skam-pa Lo-sgom Nyi-ma shes-rab
D The Disciples that were Ascetic Yogi (rtogs ldan bya btang gi rnal ’byor pa) (ZhK 566.3–4)

[1] rTogs ldan bya btang gi rnal ’byor pa rGyal-ba Lo-zhig (ZB 67a1–2)
[3] Ri-sgom (HR 204)
[4] gTsang-ston Blo-Ildan
[5] rTogs ldan sPre [= sBra]
[6] ’Ja’-sgom Byang-chub snying-po
[7] Shangs-pa Rol-pa’i rdo-rje
[8] Byang-chub kyi shing gdan-'dren-mi bya btang rGya-gar-ba
[9] Ral-sgom
[10] rTag-sgom (¬ sTag-sgom)
[11] rGya-sgom (= rGya-ston; HR 204)
[12] dBang-brtson
[13] gZhon-nu-dpal (HR 205)
[14] gZhon-nu shes-rab (HR 204)

E Minor Disciples (bu phran) (ZhK 566.4–567.5)

[1] Zhang Nyag ’Bri-ra-ba of Gra-tshal gyi Ding-ma (i.e. Tshal gyi Ding-ma of Gr[v]a?)
[5] Tha’i gnas Gor-ta Mi-mnyam rdo-rje
[6] Grva-phu’i Sa-sTon Khri-dga¹⁶
[7] Nya-steng gi grva pa Mig-dmar
[8] dGe lshes Sha-mi (= Sha-mi sMon-lam’bar?)¹⁷
[9] dGon-rtse’i Khu-sgom chen-po
[12] mGar-sgom
[14] Thod-lo-ba chen-po
[15] rGyal-ba-ston
[16] Blu ma Pha-da¹⁸
[17] dGe lshes Sher-’byung (= Shes-rab ’byung-gnas = dbon of the ’Bri-gung founder ’Jig-rten mgon-po?)
[18] gTsang-pa Ya-so
[19] dGe lshes lHun-po (also pupil of Zhig-po)
[20] Yon-tan seng-ge
[21] Blu ma gTsang-pa Dung-khur-ba (= V.1)
[23] Yar-’brog Brag-nag-pa chen-po
[24] gYa’-bzang gi sNubs ’dul ba ’dzin pa (= Chos kyi smon-lam, the founder of g.Ya’-bzang dgon)
[25] Pho-rog mDo-sde-mgon
[26] Chos rje rGyal-ba Yang-dgon-pa
F The Great Sons Executing [karmic Enlightening] Activity (\'phrin las sgrub pa'i bu chen)
(ZhK 567.5–568.4; corresponding roughly with list II.E in DM above)

[1] Dar-ma gZhon-nu
[2] 'Phrang-po'i lHas-btsun dBang-seng
[3] bSam-yas kyi brtsad po Khri-rtsi
[6] Kha-rag gi rgyal-po rDor-dbang
[7] sGa-'dra'i gnas brtan grub thob sgom pa dKon-mchog seng-ge
[8] Mon mTsho-sna'i gnas brtan
[9] 'Brug-mdo'i gnas brtan
[10] gNas brtan mGon-po
[12] mGar rGyal-ba 'byung gnas
[13] Chag Khri-mchog
[14] Nag-mo dpon-ston of Kun-dga' ra-ba
[15] Dam-pa Srabs-sman of gZhung (= II.E.16)
[16] 'Bul-yags of sGra-mkhar
[17] Hral-chung, the Gung-thang dkon gnyer
[18] IHa-bzo-dpon Phog-ro
[19] Shing mkhan Phag-lha-bzo
[20] IHa Nyi-ma shes-rab
[21] Phyag dpe ba Na-mo rje btsun
[22] dKon gnyer Hral-mo
[23] sGom pa bZod-ldan
[24] gNas brtan mChog-lha

IV. The Zhang Disciples as listed in HR (131, 197–207)

[1] Rin po che Sangs-rgyas-'bum (the 4th Yang-dgon gdan sa ba) (GT, etc.)
[2] rTogs ldan sPra-sgom (or: sBra-sgom, teacher of Brag-dkar-ba; HR 202.9, = II.B.10)
[3] rTogs ldan Ru-thog-pa (also rTogs ldan bDe-ba gzhon-nu, Zhig-po sTon-bde (MZ 1617), founder of Ru-thog monastery; see Table 2.1, C–1)
[4] ICe-sgom Shes-rab seng-ge (ZB 58a2–4; HR 204.2; Mal Yer pa ba rnam thar 9a2–3)
[5] rGya-ston (= 1.D.3; HR 204.8 = ? dGe bshes rGya in Myang chos 'byung 69–70)
[6] Shangs-ston gZhon-nu shes-rab (HR 204.21)
[7] Jo-sras gZhon-nu-dpal (HR 205.2)
[8] Me-sgom (HR 205.12; Mal Yer pa ba rnam thar 13b9)
[9] Zhig-po bbdud-rtsi (HR 205.15; = II.A.6)
[10] Dharaṣṭī
V. Further Disciples
(mentioned in GT, DM, DS, GK and in Zhang’s writings, etc., and not included in one of the lists above)

[1] gTsang-pa Dung-khur-ba dBang-phyug bka’-shis (= 2.C.8?)
[2] Brag-dkar She-yes [i.e. Shes-rab ye-shes] (BA Roerich 715)
[3] bSod-nams bla-ma (elder brother of I.B.4)
[4] bZod-ldan bla-ma (GT)
[5] Nam-mkha’-od (probably not identical with I.B.1; BA Roerich 522; see fn. 6)
[6] Zhang lo tsā ba Phur-pa-skyabs (aliases Ras-pa Byang-chub, Grub-pa-dpal (1177–1237 A.D.); Zhang lo tsā ba rnam thar, 1b3, 2a4, 3a1–2; BA Roerich 445)
[7] Sum-ston ras-pa (aliases Byams-pa, bSod-nams shes-rab or Dharmavajra; BA Roerich 990–991)
[8] dGe bshes mKha’-ru-ba
[9] sGom chen Jo-sras Dar-ma seng-ge
[10] Khro-phu lo tsā ba Byams-pa-dpal (BA Roerich 1065f.)
[12] Brom-mdā’ ras-pa (recipient of a Mahākāla-cycle from Zhang; cf. Bu ston gsan yig 16a3)
[13] dGe slong bSod-nams-grags (mentioned in Zhang’s writings)
[14] sPrang po Nyang-khol
[15] Bla-ma lCags-ri-pa
[16] Śākya’i dge tshul Bla-ma Ye-shes
[17] dGe bshes g.Yar (or dByar-sgom)
[18] sGom pa Khyung-sgom of ’Bras-khud
[19] dGe slong Shes-rab grub-pa (biographer and scribe of Bla-ma Zhang)
[20] gNas brtan Dar-ma bsdod-nams of lHa-sa rGya-grong
[21] Bla ma Pa-ta
[22] gNas brtan dGa’-dra [= sGa’-dra]
[23] Nyi’-’bum (BA Roerich 194)
[24] Zhang-ston skar-mdā’ (ZB 69a6, passim)
[25] g. Yu-brag rdo-rje (zhal slob of Bla-ma Zhang; cf. Las ’phro gling rnam thar 134a6–b1)
[26] Sras Nyi-ma’-’bum (in the A-ro transmission, GK 205–06 = V. 25?)
[27] Ye-shes blo-gros (GD 75b1–2; VS 202; he founded the lHa-sa-stengs/stengs seat of rDzam in Dvags-po)
[28] Rab’-byamschos-rje (the founder of the Ne-chung(= phyung)-ri hermitage north-east of lHa-sa is mentioned in HSLG Vol. 6: 65 as a disciple of Zhang g.Yu-brag-pa (cf. also Chos’-phel 2004: 77); he is perhaps identical with the Ne-chung ri-pa registered in lHa ldan dkar chag (2002 ed.) 15).
[29] sPa-ri-pa (listed as Zhang’s gtor gshom pa or “Votive Cake Preparer”)

Notes to Table V. 5

1 The following – admittedly inchoate – list merely attempts to register so-called direct or personal disciples (dngos slob) of Bla-ma Zhang, the plethora of second- and third-generation students and pupils (yang slob and nying slob) has not been registered. Yet it cannot be excluded that the lists of first generation disciples do contain, unwittingly, names of second-generation pupils.

2 ML designates the disciples of the Father (i.e. pha g.Yu-brag mTshal-pa = Bla-ma Zhang) as white heels (lu [= lu gu / lu?] i.e. of a lamb) ring dkar that follow in the trail of the Father. Zhang himself is also listed as a disciple (I.A.1), a circumstance possibly indicative of the many inconsistencies in ML. The text also speaks, among his pupils, of the six bTsan-po (Kings [sic]) of Upper [m]Tshal, six Great Ones of Lower [m]Tshal and the six Great Ones of Middle [m]Tshal. The so-called six sTod-Tshal bsTan po are also discussed further ahead in ML 174a4–5 (see Vitali 1996: 397 fn. 648):

sTod: Chos-lung and Gon (Chos-dzom) gnyis
Bar: [Yang-]Brag and bSam[-gtan-rdzong] gnyis [= Glo-bo] 
sMad: Mar[-lung] and rTa[-sga] gnyis. Cf. also Y 17 10b2–3 (where the text speaks of the rTa-sga-pa being the sTod 
Tshal gyi dpon). Thus, as discussed by Vitali, the Upper district comprises Byang and Pra-dum district, the Middle 
district constitutes Mustang and the Lower area comprises the easternmost area towards Mang-yul Gung-thang. These 
six btsan po evidently thus refer to the six major sTod-Tshal monastic establishments in gTsang of Western Tibet, 
wherefore we, rather than expecting that they constitute petty kingdoms, shall expect that the scribe of ML falsely 
wrote btsan po for btsun pa. We should similarly assume that behind the six Great Ones of Bar-sTshal (referring to the 
foundations of the so-called 'Od-disciples plus Ro-skam and Ru-thog) and sMad-Tshal, foundations and establishments 
of Tshal in Central and Eastern Tibet respectively are referred to.

The ML is an unusual, yet quite authentic (although at places distorted) source, with some parts redactionally 
fabricated, having been compiled, evidently, from different biographical sketches. Being corrupt, the most salient 
problem on that score is the dating of the 1st person in the biography, the Zhang-disciple Mar-lung Byang-chub seng-ge 
alias bla ma Mar-sgom (I.A.6). His creed was a merging of rNying-ma (rdo/skye chen) (transmitted through his father) 
and bKa’-brgyud (phyag chen) teachings (transmitted from Bla-ma Zhang but also from rNgog). For the chronological 
problems, see the discussions already delivered by Vitali 1996: 291–93 and Everding 2000: 213–216. His dates (with an 
age of 89) as presented by Vitali, i.e. 1153–1241 A.D. are rejected by Everding who suggests that the me mo glang, the 
year of his demise, should be situated to 1277 (born ca. 1189). Now, ML 89a2-4 suggests that Mar-sgom passed away 
48 years after Zhang (1193+48 = 1241 A.D.). The dates of Mar-lung are still not conclusively clarified. ZhK 354–59 
reports on the lHa sa ma i dbang bshi of Zhang written down by Mar-sgom in an male Earth-Dragon year (i.e. 1208?).

It cannot be excluded that under the name Mar-sgom reported in ML, we possibly must see biographical data of Mar-
lung’s father too, i.e. Mar-lung Se-bo, mixed with data from the eventful life of the 1st person narrator. According to ML 
(59b2–6), the latter (prob. referring to the son) in around 1171 met Zhang (just before the person (father?) had folled 
for two years dge bshes Bya-yul-ba [gZhon-nu-’od, 1075–1138]). Finally, in a prophecy (in ZhK 231a5) Bla-ma Zhang 
states that Mar-sgom will pass away seven or eight years after Zhang’s passing into Nirvāṇa, i.e. ca. 1200 A.D. Until 
Zhang’s death, Mar-sgom adhered to the inner circles of the master, before he finally withdrew to western Tibet and est. 
a monastery in his own homeland. Whatever the true identity of Mar-sgom, he appears to be identical with the Zhang-
disciple Mar-sgom mentioned in rGyal blon ma as well as identical with the Mar-sgom of other lists, which acc. to HR 
204 may be none other than the famous sculpture-maker Mar-pa lHa-dkar (= also Mar-pa lHa-dga’, HR 197.20, the dpon 
Mar-pa lHa-dkar in GT). He was in charge of manufacturing images of (and indeed for) Bla-ma Zhang, inclusive the key 
statue lHa-chan dpal-’bar alias Jo-bo Byang-chub chen-po, the principal support (rten gtso) of the Gung-thang temple 
erected in 1189 A.D. acc. to ML (808b2f). In this capacity, he appears in the ‘Phrin-las grub-pa’i bu-chen list (= II C), a 
decisively important group which executed the hegemonic objectives of Zhang, using belligerent, wrathful means (khrö 
sku) (under the protection of Mahākāla forms like Pho-ro (gdon-can) and thus attempted to fulfill Zhang’s quest for 
’dul ba; i.e. the active conversion of proselytes (cf. ML 89a2f). Confusingly, ML also reports Mar-sgom in another group 
(II.B.8), and hence also differentiates the two names.

Notwithstanding such discrepancies, a comparison of the lists allow us to conclude that the names in the ML to an 
appreciable extent correspond with other sources. Irrespective of the shaky identification of Mar-sgom and the protagonist 
of ML, the data in the biography as a whole must be deemed authentic. It cannot, however, be excluded that the inclusion 
of Zhang’s name in the list is also authentic, in which case the depicted father (“surpassed” by his disciples incl. Bla-ma 
Zhang) may accordingly refer to a paramount master, the position of which had been occupied by Zhang. Here we must 
call into mind dpal rGya-lo, the principal yogic teacher of Zhang g.Yu-brag-pa and his group.

The discipleship division listed here in A/B/C groups in ML is most unusual and the full implication of this remarkable 
enumeration remains somewhat puzzling. The three slob-ma-groups, resp. those being more “superior” (li brag), more 
“noble” (btsan) and more “venerable/pious” (btsun) than Bla-ma Zhang is uncommon to say the least, yet may carry 
some reminiscence of the triple division known already from the 12th century in Tibet: mkhas btsun bzang gsum, the 
three hallmarks of a learned scholar: erudition, piousness and nobleness; a classification initially popular in Sa-skya 
circles; see Sangs rgyas chos gzhung 78. If the list merely represents a variation of this division, it would imply that the 
pupils of group A were meant to surpass the master in the field of erudition. That we are dealing with a corruption of the 
well-known mkhas btsun bzang gsum-frame may be underscored further by another group in ML, namely the three ‘od-
Disciples (I.B.1-3) where the ML-compilers, singularly, designates the group ‘od gsal, which would seem to be another
attempt to emulate another cherished concept, here the yogic technical term prabhāsvara. These “designations” thus may allow us to assume that they are artificially coined labels, constructed by the ML compilers.

4 bCung/gCung[-pa] (also Cung-ba-sa) of La-stod (divided into byang and lho from the 14th cent. with their own prince lineages and ruling seats; i.e. La-stod Byang and La-stod lHo covering a large part of gTsang). It is to be differentiated from Thang-cung, also of La-stod in gTsang (see below). Cung-ba[-sa] was located in the area where later Thang-stong rgyal-po erected the gCung Ri-po-che Stūpa (of La-stod Byang, completed between 1449–56 where the workers of Cung-ba actively assisted in erecting the sanctuary). It is an ancient toponym repeatedly mentioned in medieval literature and famous as a site and as a hub of activities of sunyāry masters, such as ‘Brog-mi (b. 993), Rva-lo and Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa, etc. La-stod bCung-pa is mentioned already in Padma bka’ thang, Canto 92: 559. It was the birth-place of one of his leading disciples dKon-mchog seng-ge, and of Zangs-ri ras-pa dBang-phyug rdo-rje, a pupil of Ras-chung, etc.; cf. Rva lo rnam thar 56, 90; Ras chung rnam thar 362–64, 558; Gu bkra chos ‘byung 501; gTer ston lo rgyus 102a1–2. A site Drl-chen of La-stod gCung-pa is mentioned.

Also rle Sum-pa, a pupil of Ras-chung, descended from the lower part of La-stod Cung-pa; cf. dKar brgyud chos ‘byung 350.4–5; BA Roerich 440. Even earlier, in this area, a branch of the (Kha-rag or mKha’-reg) gNyos clan settled down (i.e. the La-stod [g]Cung gNyos line), wherefore the site was also associated with the 10–11th cent. gNyos lo tsā ba Yong-tan-grags and his activities, whose son rDo-rje bla-ma (1008–86?) was born here; cf. Kha rag gnyos gding raqs 4f. 10, 17.3. From here also originated rGya-ston Zhang-khrom rDo-rje ‘od-bar; cf. gTer ston lo rgyus 38a–5; GK 366–67. O-rgyan Seng-ge-dpal (1230–1309) refers to a Drod-lung dgon-pa; cf. U rgyan rnam thar 1222–23. For the site, see also DN 227; and especially Everding 2000: 86–88 and Tafel 5. For an ode to rle Sākya seng-ge of the local La-stod Cung-pa’s dgon-pa, see Bla-ma Zhang’s Phag mo ra lungs rgyud pa’i gsol ’debs in his writings and ZhK II (KA) 22.1. Cf. also ‘Bri gung gling pa rnam thar 21a3.

The area of Thang-chung monastery of La-stod evidently was located in the area of sNye-lam or sNye-[g]nang (present-day sNye-lam). A student of the sTag-lung founder was Rin-po-che dBus-pa alas dGe bshes Thang-chung-pa; cf. Mangga la sri’i rnam thar 284–88; sTag lung chos ‘byung I 244; lHo rong chos ‘byung 479. During the Mongol rule in Tibet, La-stod Thang-cung later came under the patronage of prince Mönke – Qubilai’s half-brother.

One option is grub thob Seng-ge grags-pa, pupil of ‘Bri-gung-pa (1143–1217), but also of dBon Rin-po-ma (1211–1279); cf. HR 409, 413–14. Therefore a better option is, as indicated in the writings of Bla-ma Zhang, one gnas bri ran Grags-pa seng-ge, the metathesis here possibly due to the fact that he is confounded with the rGya Yar-lungs-pa or Gung-thang-pa Grags-pa seng-ge who sojournered over many years in the Eastern borderland (Mi-nyag and in Mongolia) or he was confounded with lHa-rje Srabs-sman Grags-seng (see II.F.15) to whom Bla-ma Zhang gave teachings; see his Zhang bka’ ‘bum II, IV.

Also Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa had four ‘od-named nye gnas; cf. e.g. Karma sku phreng l, 24b5–6; mTshur phu dkar chag 717–21.

He may or may not be identical with the namesake, a pupil of Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa; cf. e.g. Karma sku phreng l 24b5; KG 872; MN 253–54, although Nam-mkha’-od (1133–99, also known as Gra ‘Jad-pa Sangs-rgyas ras-pa) in the line of Tshul-khrims-dpal (1096–1132) who similarly received teachings from Bla-ma Zhang, allegedly was born in the vicinity of Ru-mtshams. In 1168 A.D. Nam-mkha’-od, as said, est. lHa-ri sPan-gshong (or lHa-ri-kha) monastery (bk’a’ rgya ma I 164.6–7) which we assume is to be located in the lHa-ri county. See Part I: fn. 267; see also Table 2).

He cannot naturally be identified with the celebrated Kha-rag sgom-chung alius dBang-phyug blo-gros of Dung-zhur in gTsang whose dates are approx. 1040/45–1115/20 A.D. Cf. Sørensen, A 11th century Ascetic. More likely, it is a lapsus calami made by the ML biographers, and due to the celebrity of Kha-rag sgom-chung, they listed his name instead of Kha-rag-pa ’Dul-ba’-od (= I.B.4, II.B.4).

6 See previous note.

8 He introduced Zhig-po bdud-rtsi (see next note) to Bla-ma Zhang (NCH). It is reported that he arrived at Zhig-po’s residence in Chos-sding on his way to the Ti-se (Kailāśa) (ca. 1180; cf. GK 282; BA Roerich 139). He is probably identical with gTsang-ston Hral-chung mentioned in ‘Bri gung gling pa rnam thar 43.4. For the practise at Mt Ti-se in the context of the early bKa’-brgyud-pa, see Part I: fn. 271; for an even earlier (i.e. pre-12th cent.) context of the practise of Buddhist pilgrimage to Ti-se, see e.g. Kapstein 2006b: 10–12.

9 This extraordinary ascetic was born in lHa-gdung of gZad (gZad Chul-shul), born to the nNyin-ma-pa Sangs-rgyas Dvags-chung (named after the teacher Dvags-po rGya-ras) and Jo-mo dBang-mo; the latter possibly a daughter from...
one of the local ruling houses of gZad who are chronicled to have invited Dvags-chung from his residence in lHo-brag (i.e. Phur-mong-sgang) to gZad where they offered him lHa-gdongs. 'Ug-skad and other hermitages in gZad. 'Ug-skad also became a chief residence of the son gZhiig-po bDud-rtsi (1149–99), one of the most influential rNying-ma masters of 12th century Central Tibet. His bonds with Bla-ma Zhang (the latter replacing here lHa-khang-pa Yon-tan-gzungs, gZhiig-po’s former teacher) are to be set in ca. 1180 A.D. Among his chief activities, he e.g. worked for the repair of the stone-dikes protecting the Jo-bo temple in lHa-sa (see App. II above). Zhig-po died in rGya-ra Gang-logs of gSang-phu, his remains have been enshrined in Thang-skya in lower gZad (see Table 6). For details, see the biographical accounts in Gy ba'i chos 'byung 280.17–283.15 and Deb sngon (BA Roerich 131–141); see also Nyingma School II 653–656.

Chos kyi rgyal-tshab as epithet “the Dharma-representative,” indicates a successor, Sākya ye-shes was representative or successor of Bla-ma Zhang. This is corroborated since also Dvags-po sGom-tshul was designated Chos kyi rgyal-tshab; cf. dGos ‘dod re skong ma'i 'grel ba 548.3–4. In the same vein, Bla-ma Zhang was designated rGyal-tshab, i.e. successor of sGom-tshul in lHa-sa when he was charged with the care of Ra-sa ’Phur-snang.

If he is identical with lHa [= lHa-pa] Rin-chen rgyal-po (1201–1270 A.D.) (cf. App. II and Tables V.7 below), he evidently cannot have been a direct (or first-generation) disciple of Bla-ma Zhang, merely a second-generation. This is actually the best option, but see however also Deb sngon = BA Roerich 413.

dGos ‘dod re skong ma'i 'grel ba (ZhK 566.1) appears to say: “the sons who resided [in] the residence/foundation established by gTsang-pa Tho-btsun (= tRe-btsun) sku mched gZho-to (sic)” (gtsang pa mtho btsun sku mched gzhi la bzhugs pa'i sras). This enigmatic sentence (DM merely reads: gzhi la) is evidently corrupt and hence in need of further clarification. The gTsang-pa tRe/Jo-btsun sku-mched evidently were pupils of Bla-ma Zhang from whom they received teachings such as gNad kyi man ngag; cf. Zhang bka' 'bum II (GA) 57.6–62.1. Here we are informed that the two brothers, otherwise unknown, were active in gTsang province such as at sTag-ris of La-stod.

If he is identical with lHa [= lHa-pa] Rin-chen rgyal-po (1201–1270 A.D.) (cf. App. II and Tables V.7 below), he evidently cannot have been a direct (or first-generation) disciple of Bla-ma Zhang, merely a second-generation. This is actually the best option, but see however also Deb sngon = BA Roerich 413.

To him at Gra-thang-nang Bla-ma Zhang delivered discourses on samādhi as contained in Bla-ma Zhang’s writings. SY II 916 reads Grva-phul Pa-ston Khri-kha (sic).

Sha-mi ‘dal ‘dzin also called sgom sMon (the hermit sMon[-lam-'bar] 1084–1171 A.D.) hardly should be counted as the pupil of Bla-ma Zhang. He counts among the chief disciples of rGya ‘dal ‘dzin dBang-phyug Tshul-khrims-'bar (1047–1131) of the Vinaya school of Klu-mes. Cf. Part I: fn. 102.

In the esoteric writings of Zhang, this enigmatic disciple is also called bla ma Pha-ti, who were to receive teachings delivered at the g Y-Brug hermitage.

The 4th throne-holder of the abbatial see at Tshal Yang-dgon. dGos ‘dod re skong ma'i 'grel ba purports that Sangs-rgyas-'bum never met Bla-ma Zhang. GT 15b–16a, conversely, confirms that the former came to Bla-ma Zhang, when he was 5 years of age.

Two of Bla-ma Zhang’s root-teachers: Ngam-shod gShen-pa rDo-rje seng-ge (4a) and Grub-chen dNgul-chu Be-ro-tsa-na (siddha Vairocana-vartula)

Miniature Drawing from a gSer ’phreng Ms

It either refers to lHa-ri pa chen-po Nam-mkha’-’od (alias Sangs-rgyas ras-chen) or – more likely – to Ti-shri ras-pa alias Sangs-rgyas ras-pa/chen

Miniature Drawing from a gSer ’phreng Ms
5. Dvags-po sGom-tshul (right) and Bla-ma Zhang 
(the latter captioned in this thangka as Zhang 
Tshal-pa chen-po) 
Detail from a bKa’-brgyud Lineage thangka

6. Zhang’s root-lama rGva lo tsā ba 
gZhon-nu-dpal 
Detail from a Four-armed Mahākāla 
Father-Mother thangka

7–10. Miniature drawings of four masters closely related to 
Gung-thang Bla-ma Zhang: The Zhang teacher ’Ol-kha-ba 
Rin-chen brtson-’grus (7) and the disciples Kha-rag-pa 
’Dul-ba-’od (8), IHa-ri-pa chen-po Nam-mkha’-’od (9) and 
[Nyag] ’Bri-ra-ba Śākya-’od

8

9

10
V.6 Religious Settlements of the Early phyi dar Communities in dBus

Based upon Primary Sources:

Nel-pa’s chronicle [= MTP Uebach 137f.]; mkhas pa'i dga' ston (KG 473f.); Bu ston chos ‘byung (BC) [Szerb 1990: 59f.]; Yar lung chos ‘byung (YL); sDe pa i gyes mdo (DG 297f.); rGya bod chos ‘byung (GB); rGya bod yig tshang (GY); Deh sngon (DN = BA [Roerich]); ‘Dul ba’i chos ‘byung I-II (DC-I; DC-II); hKa’ gdambs chos ‘byung (KD)-I-IV; Ngor chos ‘byung (NGC); Nyang ral chos ‘byung (NC 40f.); Myang chos ‘byung (MY 128f.); Vaidûrya ser po (VS)

Secondary Sources:

Dung dkar tshig mdzod (DK)

Sigla: l, II, etc. = generations of mkhan hu (abbots and [“sons”] or disciples); T = taking over a former temple; F = founding a new temple

The succession in this enumeration of foundations of the four/five communities (tsho, sde ba, skor) and their sub-groups are in accordance with the chronology regarding the arrival of the key persons that at the beginning of the 11th century returned from Eastern Tibet (cf. most recently Stoddard 2004). Their activities in Central Tibet initiated with a visit or a sojourn in bSam-yas. The Central Tibetan foundations (primarily in Iha-kha), which go back to the members of the gTsang communities, are not listed individually here. In question of the identification and the localization of the distinct sites and toponyms, see in particular Uebach (1987). See also Dung-dkar 1991: 32ff.

A The Religious Settlements and Dependencies of the Klu-mes Groups

(1a) Klu-mes Tshul-khrims shes-rab (a.k.a. Glags Ba-lam-pa):

Kva-chu (T)

gTsang-thang (T) (DC-I 25; bTsan-thang in Yar-lung?; VS 216; rTses-thang lha-khang (F) in Yar-lung)

La-mo (F; 1009 A.D.) (Chag-de'u; Phya-re'u (NGC); sGyel (DN; KG 474.2–3 speaks of two La-mo sites: La-mo Chag-de'u (cf. TDD 211.4) and ‘Gyel in La-mo erected in sa bva 1009 [sa bva la mor ‘gyel brtisigs])

Tsher-seb (F) (see e.g. IHa sa’i dgon tho 110; sit. in the upper La-mo valley)

Grib-mda’ lha-khang (in lower Grib; see IHa ldan dkar chag (2002 ed.) 28)

Yer-pa Ba-rang (~rreg/rrng) (T/F) (BA: in 1011; GY, BC, DCH-I: est. by rNgog Byang-chub ‘byung-gnas)

Ba-lam Sha-tsha (~za) (F) (found. together with his younger brother, Klu-mes ’Brom[-chung]; in Ba-lam)

dBas kyi g.Yu-sgro lha-khang dmar-po (in Ba-lam?: DN, GY, BC: est. by Sum-pa [together with rNgog])

Tshong-’dus-gnas (east of Grva)

[Residence in] Se-ra-phug in Tshe-spong (Tshe-spong in Yar-stod?; he died on the way [from Tshe-spong] to Thang[po-che]; BA Roerich 75: NC 453: on the way to India)

Thang-skya [of Mal-gro] (T) (VS 169: it was originally erected by Srong-btsan sgam-po as mTha’-‘dul temple and later renovated by Klu-mes; it became a Jo-nang seat and was later a dGe-lugs-pa monastery from the time of Sems-dpa’ Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan; cf. dGa’ ldan chos ‘byung I 52b3f.

(1b) Sum-pa Ye-shes blo-gros:

rMe-ru (F) of ‘Bre (~ ‘Bro) Sa-thang

g.Yu-sgro khang-dmar [of dBas] (F) (BA, GY, BC (64): in sKyid-shod; see above)

(1la) rNgog Byang-chub ‘byung-gnas (mkhan bu of Klu-mes, i.e. one of the ka ba bchi):

Ba-rang of Yer-pa (F) (see above)

Brag-rgyab (F) (in Phan-yul; var.: [‘Phags kyi] Brag-rgyab, i.e. Brag-rgyab of sPras. Part I: fn. 405. Here under rNgog, Po-to-ba was ordained; Pa to ba rnam thar I 4b5–6, II 2b2–3)

Rlung-shod ‘Phan-yul (DC-I 26; i.e. sites in Klung-shod [and] ‘Phan-yul?; see also BA Roerich 61)

Ihing-pa’i gnas (F) (of bZad = b/gZad in Chu-shul (cf. the yul dpon tshan of gZad Chu-shul); GY 460: bZad gi ihing-ba; BA Roerich 75: Ihing-pa of gZad); followed by the establishments of
dBu[s]-sde IT0-gong (sPu-sde/sBus-sde sHy-ong, also sDe-gong; BC 63; sBus-te IT0-gong; NGC; dBu-sde refers to the imperial district of dBu-sde in sKyid-smad (see App. IV); also given as sBud-de of gZad)

Kha-rag Labs-so (in Kha-rag); KG 474 lists: Lab-so [of Kha-rag], Grol-ma-thang [of Kha-rag?], Kha-rag So-cig [cf. also BC 64]); from here:

Tsha-chung-'gur
gYag-sde'i Sog-po dgon-pa (in Shangs or sNye-mo; MTP fn. 840)
rGyags-mdas' lha-khang
Chu-shul Na-bo (~ sNa'o) (BC 63; KG 474); succeeding foundations:
Gru-gu-sgang
La-mo Ze-sna
Yol-thang
Chags Ra-sgang (var.: Cha Ra-sga)

dBus-sde gNas-gsar (on dBus-sde, see above)
Tsha-rags Gong-po-kha (var.: Tsha-brag Gong-po'i lha-khang)
Rog-dom (in Upper bZad)

Further foundations belonging to the IDing-pa school:
Ne'u'i gnas (= bZad Ne'u-kha? BA Roerich 956) = sKyid-smad Ne'u [DC-I 55]?
Byang-thang Val-gnas
Rab-htsun-gnas (probably identical with the later Tshal-pa mi sde of Rab-htsun-pa)
Gan-pa'i She-htsun-gnas
gZhug-gnas of gTsang
'Bre (BA 75: 'Bre in south-western lHa-mdo belonged to the school of rNgog; located in Myang-stod; cf. Part I: fn. 142; MY 37, 90, 105)
Kun-dga' ra-ba (F) (gZU of sNye-mo; found. by rNgog; KG 474; DC [BA Roerich 76])
Tsh[a] (-m/'Tshal)-miig (F) (BC 64; GY 460; DCH-I 26; VS 229; KG: Tshe-mig). It formed the basis of a number of establishments and dependencies in the area of sNye-mo and neighbouring 'O-yug; a 'Brung Kun-dga' ra-ba counts among the gTsang tsho ba; BC 72

(IIIa) Ra-mangs Shes-rab rgyal-mtshan (mkhan bu of rNgog):
Foundations in lHo-brag and lTam-shul ([in lHo-brag there are also foundations of the "gTsang communities" which go back to Lo-ston rDo-rje dbang-phyug; MTP 135, etc.]

(IIIb) Zhang-ston bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan:
   sTe-dkyus of bsNyur (~ sDur) (T) (in gTsam-shul?)
   Gyang-ra lha-khang (F) (in gTsam-shul); from here
   Shol-mo'i gnas (F) (var.: Rol-mo lha-khang)

(IVa) Nya-ston Khams-gsum (Nyang-ston Khams-'bum) (mkhan bu of Zhang-ston):
   Srd-thang-gnas (F) (in Yar-brog sTag-lung)

(IVc) ['']Be-so Ker-ba (Bhe-po skor-ba; the Abhidharma cycle transmission) (mkhan bu of rNgog):
   Khra-rna'i gNyan-po-gnas (F)
   Gral-ma-thang of Nyang-khol (F) (in N/Myang of gTsang; BC 64; MY 37–38)

(IVb) Gr[v]a-pa mNgon-shes (student of 'Be-so and Yam-shud rgyal-ba-'od; IIc):
   Grva-thang vihāra (F) (KG 476 4: erected between the sNa[t]-nam and Shud[phu] [territories])
Further foundations / residences: sKyid/dKyil-ru temple (in Upper Grva) (F), sPyan-g-yas (F), Ma-bkod (F), Phug-po-che (T), etc. (on the latter sites, see TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005)

(Va) mkhan bu of Grva-pa:
   Foundation of 'Chad-mangs (in Nyang-stod); La-yag Mon-mdas' (MY 38; MTP fn. 870); Cha-mdas' of sTag-lung (in Yar-brog); sNar-mdas' of Rong (in gTsang); [r]Do'i 'Chims-mdas' (MTP fn. 873); sNa-gor of Gr[v]a; sGa-'dra (Part I: fn. 422); Chog-phug of Mar-ma (in Dol); ICe-t'i'i sTong-bu; Ka-gsum of sGro-yul; Yur-'go of Lower Zhur; sGre-mkhar (in gZhung, west of Dol)
sNa-nam rDo-rje dbang-phyug (mkhan bu of Klu-mes, i.e. one of the ka bu bzhi):

Ra-tshag of Yab (F) (KG 474; BA Roerich 88: at eighteen (993) sNa-nam was ordained in the presence of Klu-mes at Ra-ba zum-po (?) after that, he first erected the Chag gi gtsug-lag-khang (i.e. the La-mo Chag-de'u?, above la). Ra-tshag is in the Yab-valley of lower sTod-lung (acc. to the locals, the original name of the valley is sPang-khung; sPang-khung rgyal-po is the representative yul lha). The Ra-tshag inscription lists Rva han de Yong-tan rgyal-po as the founder of the temple (see Richardson 1998: 286f.; Chos-'phel 2004: 99 mentions Rva la tsa ha [rDo-rje-grags] (b. 1016) as the original founder of Ra-tshag-dgon). A Ra-tshag Jo-mo is regularly mentioned in the 14th cent. in 'Bri-gung and sTag-lung materials)

rGyal lha-khang (a.k.a. rGyal-lug-lhas) (F) (in 'Phan-yul; est. 1012 A.D. BA Roerich 75; 87. 93)

Gung-gsum (F) (in Srad = sPrad / sPras in 'Phan-yul)

sPyan-legs Byams-khang (F; acc. to the local tradition) (situated in upper rGyal, western 'Phan-yul; see Part I: fn. 670. sNa-nam is also ascribed the foundation of the Se-smug-dgon, the Na-mo-dgon and still other sites located in the same area, i.e. the rGyal valley, today part of mTsho-stod. xiang of Illun-grub county (HSLG Vol. 4: 51–52). The sites are related to the history the Three Maitreya Brothers of 'Phan-yul ('Phan-yul Byams-pa spun-gsum); see Chos-'phel 2004: 178f.)

Ra-ma (i.e. the Ra[rl]-ma[sm] Byams-khang (in the Ra-ma valley of western 'Phan-yul), one of the 'Phan-yul Byams-pa spun-gsum shrines)

Brang gi Chu-bskor-gnas (F) (in lower sTod-lung)

Succeeding foundations:
The 4 Sites of Upper sTod-lung:

Zho-brang
dKar-sna
rDzing-stag
Tsha-t[h]og (Cha-thog; see below)

The two Sites of Central sTod-lung:

Nyan-rdzing-skam (perhaps identical with the later sNyan-dgon; cf. Chos-'phel 2004: 108)

Man-lung chu-nu (~-chung)

The six Sites of Lower sTod-lung:

dMar-sgang (in present-day dMar xiang)
Sa-la- tshugs
La-chung Ke-ku (MTP fn. 896)
Tsa-sdong (var.: Tsag-rong)
gNam-khang (perhaps referring to the later gNam gi gSer-khang monastery, south of Ra-ma-sgang in sKyid-smad)
IHa-zhing gNas-gsar

(Klan (~ R/Glan) Ye-shes shes-rab (mkhan bu of Klu-mes, i.e one of the ka ba bzhi):

rGya-sar-sgang (var.: rGyal/s-gser/gsar-sgang, and other spellings; BC 64: T; BA Roerich 319; in Yar-lung (north of 'Phang-thang); associated with the dynastic sanctuaries of bTsan-thang g.Yu'i Iha-khang, sTag-can 'bum-pa (both in Yar-lung). Rong-skams (= Rol-sgang (~-khang) in 'Phyong-po rGyas-sman; later connected with sPyan-g.yas; see TF Sorensen and Hazod 2005, s.v. index)

Glag[s]-mda' lha-khang (T) (GY 460/461; referring to the 8th cent. temple of sBus gSal-sgang; it is probably to be located in upper Shing-tshang; see Part I: fn. 410)

mTshal-chu[ng] (T) (GY 461; DN (= BA Roerich 79); KG 475.1; in 'Brom-stod; also associated with NYos Tshul-khrims rgyal-mtshan; BA Roerich 74)

(IId) Gru[m]-mer Tshul-khrims [chos kyi] 'byung-gnas (mkhan bu of Klu-mes, i.e one of the ka ba bzhi):

Mong-mkhar Bras-pa (F ?) (in sTod-lung? invitation of Klu-mes in 1013 A.D.)

Sol-nag Thang-po-che (F) (in Lower 'Phyong-po; found. 1017)

Branch temples:

Thang-chung (in Yar-lung; founded 1017 A.D.; see TF Sorensen and Hazod 2005: s.v. index)
Ba-shi (in lHo-brag; found. by Shud-bu gZhon-nu grags-pa; BA Roerich 76)
Cha-khro (in Gru-shul)
De-kha-rga[ng]
So-kha (i.e. Yar-lung So-kha? in g.Ya’-bzang valley, Yar-stod)
Bye-ma-[lung] (?)(it became later a branch of Grva-thang; BA Roerich 75f.; MY 74–75 indicates that Gru Tshul-khrims erected the lHa-khang dmar-po in Myang-stod).

(Ila) sKyogs Shes-rab ‘byung-gnas (one of the three chief disciple of Grum-mer Tshul-khrims ‘byung-gnas); [sKyogs] Gad-pa-stengs (F) (of Yar-lung; DN = BA Roerich 77)

(Ilb) gZus rDo-rje rgyal-mtshan (one of the three chief disciple of Grum-mer Tshul-khrims ‘byung-gnas, i.e. one of the phyam bco brgyad)
Ro-skm (T) (it refers to Ro[ng]-skam (Rol-khang) in the rGyas-sman valley in ‘Phyong-po; a temple founded by Nang-tshul-ma in the late 8th cent.; see TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005, s.v. index)

(Ilc) ‘Phang dBang-phug rgyal-mtshan (a), Kyi-dan Ye-shes g.yung-drung (b), Shud-pu/bu gZhon-nugrags (BA Roerich 76: representing the “half” of the “seven and half” co-founders of Thang-po-che) (e), ‘Or-brgyad Shes-rab ‘byung-gnas (d), Sha-mi bTson-seng (e), Khu-ston bTson-’grus g.yung-drung (f) (four of the phyam bco brgyad):
a: ‘Phang-thang (T) (in Yar-lungs, northern Yar-stod)
b: Gra’i nda’ (var.: Byams-rings of Grva) (F ?)
c: Gro-sa (F ?) (in ‘Phan-yul; MTP fn. 929)
‘Ju-ma (KG 475; DN = BA Roerich 76: situated at the border between Thang[-po-che] and Tshe[-spong] (in Yar-stod); it refers to ‘Ju-bu village of lower ‘Phyong-po)
Ba-shi (in lHo-brag; BA Roerich 76)
Bar-yul (BA 76: in Yar-stod; it may refer to Bar-thang of Upper Yar; TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 321)
d: sTong-mtshan
e: Phu-thang gSer-gdings (probably to be located in rGyas-sman; cf. Phu-thang sPyan-g.yas, BA Roerich 98; cf. also TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 106)
f: lHa-gdings (i.e. ‘Dren gyi lHa-sdings (‘Dren perhaps is to be read as ‘Dreng (~’Gren, Grang-mo), situated in upper ‘Phyong-po (Hazod 2007); in the Yar-lung area related to lHa-sdings and / or Thang-po-che was Ra-rtsigs-pa’i-khang (in Yar-lung) found. by the Khu-ston disciple Ra-khrig-bzang; Eimer 1979: 298)

(Iva) Glen Tshul-khrims byang-chub (a) and sBo-chung Tsul-khrims ‘byung-gnas (b) (disciples of gZus; also listed among the phyam bco brgyad, i.e. IIth generation)
a: rGyal (of Phan-yul) (T/F) (BA Roerich 78)
b: bTsan-thang [g.Yu’i lha-kang] (in Yar-lung), Rong-skam (in rGyas-sman, see above), Kva-chu (T/F) (BA Roerich 78, 100; TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005, s.v. index)

(Va) rGya ‘Dul’-dzin dBang-phug tshul-khrims (1047–1131; born in Myang-stod rGya Mang-rab; disciple of the “sons” of gZus):
sGa-gdpong[dGa’-[ba]-sdong (F) (of Pa-snam dist. of Myang in gTsang (geograph. position: 29°09’50.1”N 89°31’19.2”E; Part I: Map 9); MY 128f.; BA Roerich 78, 79; DC-I 29–32; 1198a1–3). These establishments such as dGon-pa Tshul-mig-lung, etc. in Myang-stod were erected in the period between 1077 and 1131 A.D. sGa’-gdong here must be considered a key Vinaya center for the subsequent spread of these centres. From here spread the settlements known as 4 pillars (ka ba), 10 beams, g dang ma

(IIc) Yam-shud rGyal-ba’-od (disciple of Klu-mes; discip. of Gru-mer acc. to DCII-I 26)):
g.Yu’-rtse (F)
Phug-po-che (T) (i.e. Ngam-shod Phug-mo-che (of rGyas-sman)? Part I: fn. 425)
Khrab-la-kha of Sa-smad (cf. DC-I 26)
Gad-pa Thog (T) (KG 475; DN = BA Roerich 75)
ICang-tshags (T) (KG 475; DN = BA Roerich 75: ICang-tshags)
Yur-'og (T) (BA Roerich 75)

tSzi-'or (T) (BA Roerich 75: the Thang-pa of gNyal originated from the latter two settlements)

(II) [sKa-ba] Śākya dbang-phyug (disciple of Klu-mes [and of rBa btsun, see group C]):

**Brag Sog-[po]-dgon (F)** (in Upper Cha, east of dGa'-ldan in sKyid-shod; *HSLG* Vol. 1, 46, 52)

### B The Religious Settlements and Dependencies of the 'Bring Community

(I) 'Bring Ye-shes yon-tan:

**Khams-gsum Zangs-khang** of bSam-yas (T)

dByi (~ sPyi)-mo-dgon of Ngan-lam (F) (in 'Phan-yul, centre of the Upper 'Bring tsho; *BC* 66; *GY* 461; Ngan-lam chen-mo, *NGC*; cf. App. II and IV)

**sKar-chung** (T) (*DG* 197: centre of the 'Bring tsho bar [ab early 12th cent.])

From here dependencies:

**bsNams (~ rNams)-khang** of Zhal (F) (probably Zhal south of Gung-thang)

[Later] branches or dependencies:

**rGya-phibs** of Sri (F) (south of Tshal Gung-thang; see App. IV)

**rGya-gar** (F) (var.: rGyang-'khar/mkhar, in 'Dus-byung dist. of Pa-rnam in gTsang, or the rGyal-mkhar in sNe'u; see Part I: fn. 435; App. II: fn. 7)

[r]Gyang-ra dmar-po of Myu-gu-sna (F) (see *MTP* Uebach. fn. 943)

**Srbs-mda’-gnas** of Byang-phyi (F) (var. Byang-byi Siri-mda’, i.e., the temple of Lower Sri in Byang-phyi (cf. Part I: fn. 412), or the 'Phan-yul sPyan-phyi'i lha-khang. *MTP* Uebach: fn. 944)

(IIa) rNgog Legs-pa'i shes-rab (mkhan bu of 'Bring):

**gSang-phu Ne’u-thog** (F) (in sKyid-smad)

(IIb) An Shākya-skyabs (mkhan bu of ’Bring):

**Tshul-chen** (F) (in Zhal, south of Gung-thang; see above)

(IIc) dBya’-btsun [= dBa’s-btsun; of the sBa/dBa’s clan?] dKon-mchog rgyal-ba (a). mTshur-btsun rGyal-ba (b). Mar-btsun rGyal-ba (c) (three mkhan bu of 'Bring):

a: **Zhogs-pa** (F) (in Zhogs of ’Phan-yul)

**Thang-chung** (F) (= sTod-lung Thang-phu? Or, less likely, in La-stod of gTsang (cf. V.5, fn. 4, above)

**Brang Ra-mo-che** (F) (est. as a “intermediate stop” *(lam stege)* to sNye-thang Brag-sna (below) in lower sTod-lung; centre of the Lower ’Bring tsho; *KG* 477; *BC* 66; *GY* 461; cf. Table V.8, s.v. sKyor-mo-lung)

[‘O-yug] Klu-gong [founder uncertain; *BC* 66 and *GY* 461: basis of the Central ’Bring tsho)

b: **sNye-thang Brag-sna** (F) (*GY* 461: T; *DG* 197: centre of the Lower ’Bring tsho [ab early 12th cent.])

Succeeding foundations:

**Zhogs-pa** (? see a-1)
Thang-chung (? (sic) again see a)
Cha-dkar (Cha-dkar of rNams, in sKyid-smad; cf. App. II)
Sha-ngos
rNon gyi lHa-sa mtha'-'og (var. Nyang-bran mtha'-'og; north of lHa-sa ?)
Ram-pa rGyab-ma (—mo) (in sTod-lung; probably identical with Ram-pa lHa-sdangs, Table V 8)
c: lJangs-pa of Bur (Jangs, west of sNye-thang in sKyid-smad); cf. e.g. Rva lo rnam thar 235)

(lld) dMar gSal-ba'i shes-rab (a), Tshes-spong gSal-bar (b) (disciples of 'Bring):
a, b: Khe-[ldir of sKul (F) (in the area between gZhung and Grva; Part I: fn. 421); followed by
Sogs-pa-ri (F) (in gZad in sKyid-smad; cf. App. II above); branches (“four sons”):
gSas-khang (F ?)
rJem gyi gnas (T ?) (perhaps the dynastic place of 'Jen (Byen, ~'Dzen[-thang] of Mal-gro; place of the 'Jen khog-sna rdo'i lha-khang, see TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005, s.v. index)
Thang-skya (T) (in bZad of Chu-shur; or Mal-gro (see B-I); or sTod-lung Thang-skya? cf. App. II)
gNas-gsar (i.e. gNyos) 'Byung-gnas shes-rab also erected the gNas byang-ma of Brang Ra-mo-che; gNyos gdut~g 16.4–5.

(lllb) sNyos (= gNyos) 'Byung[-gnas] shes-rab (mkhan bu of dBya'-btsun dKon-mchog rgyal-ba):
Sil-ma'i gTsang-lug (in Kha-rag, see Table V.7 below)
So-'tshams-gnas
'Gren-gsam-gnas (located in mKha'-reg/Kha-rag; cf. Table V.7)
sKam-bu'i-gnas of gZhung (west of Dol; founded from [sKul] Khe-ldir)
Nya-mo-['gyur/skyur (in gZhung; founding also ascribed to rBa; Nya-mo-gyur is also known from Atisa’s visit in mid-11th cent. (Yongsgrags 163; Eimer 1979: 249; DK 917. It is located close to Khyer-phu of lHo-brag qu.); from here:
'Brog-gzad[-gnas] (F)
Ra-la-sgang (F) (var.: Nu-ma-sgang)
Bye-zhing (F) (var.: dBya-zhing-gnas; i.e. the site of Bye-lung in gZad? see Part I: Map 2)
Sha-zan-gnas (F)
'Byn-gnas shes-rab also erected the gNas byang-ma of Brang Ra-mo-che; gNyos gdung rabs 16.4–5.

(lllc) dMar Pu-rangs-pa (disciple of dMar and Tshes; i.e. II-d):
'Bras-mo lha-khang of 'Ching-ru (F) (not far from sKul; II-b)
Gong-mkhar (F) (in gZhung)
gSer-chung (F) (var. gSar-chung; in Dol?; MTP: the found. of IIIc belong to the Lower 'Bring tsho)

C Religious Settlements and Dependencies of the rBa and Rag-si Groups

(1a) Rag-si Tshul-khrims 'byung-gnas:
Lan-pa'i Pha-la-bu (T) (in lower 'Phan-yul)
sNang-gsal lha-khang (T) (in Zhogs of 'Phan-yul; Part I: fn. 403)
Ra[g]-shi 'Phreng ('Phrang-'og gi lha-khang) (F) (BC 65, GT 461; KG 477, in Rags east of the lHa-sa?)
Ka-tshal (T) (i.e. the dynastic temple of dBu-ru Ka-tshal in Mal-gro)
Zh[v]a (T) (i.e. the dynastic Zhva'i lha-khang in northern Mal-gro?)

(IIa) Tshul-khrims byang-chub (mkhan bu of Rag-si):
['in]Tshar-sna of 'Phan-yul (T)
Thag-ma of sTod-lung (T) (listed also under Mal-sems-dpa’, see below; i.e. sTod-lung lHag-ma; MTP
Uebach: fn. 617, 995; App. II: fn. 69; gNyos rabs 32.5)

(IIIa) Zhang-btsun Shes-rab-'phags (mkhan bu of mTha'-bzhi rGya-'phags (BC 66)
Lan-pa rTa-bres (F) (in lower 'Phan-yul)
Appendix V: Table 6

(IIb) rBa, the younger brother:

Gye-re 'Tshar-sna'i mDa'-grong lha-khang (F) (KG 477: Gye-re'i mda' grong; apparently not the 'Tshar-sna of 'Phan-yul, see above; perhaps relating to the mTshar-snang of lower Gye-re in sKyid-smad)

bZho'i Chad-kha[ng] (bZhe'i Chang-khang (T) (BG 461; BC 65; KG 477)

(IIa) Mal Sems-pa[pa]' shes-rab (mkhan bu of rBa):

Tsha-theg (~ thog) (T) (KG 477: Cha-thog of sTod-lung; listed also as a sNa-nam tsho found; see above)

Thag-ma (T) (in sTod-lung; see above)

Mon-gr[va] (~ 'dra, tra) (T) (MTP Uebach 113)

(IIb) [s]Ka-ba Sakya dbang-phyug (mkhan bu of rBa-btsun):

sNy an-dmar of mTshur (F) (in sTod-lung)

Ba-'angs kyi Ra-gor (var.: Bangs kyi Da-gor)

mTsho-smad (F ?) (in sTod-lung, in mTsho-smad tsho of dMar xiang (located at 29°49'N 90°43'E: described as a Strong-btsan sgam-po time establishment (main statue Vairocana) and [erroneously?] ascribed to Klu-mes (see HSLG Vol. 3: 43; cf. also Tshe-dbang 1989; Dung dkar mdzod 1736a; Chos-phel 2004: 109f.; TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 201); branch institutions and dependencies:

sNyan-btsun-gnas

Mon-'dra (see above)

sGa-ra sGal-po-kha

sPa-ra rTe-dkyus

Brag-rum gNas-gsar (in lower sTod-lung?; cf. the dynastic district of Brag-rum)

(IIc) sPyan-rngog Blo-gros rgyal-bu (mkhan bu of rBa-btsun):

Ice-pa-la'i gnas (F) (in Go-chul of sHo-brag)

Kho lha-khang (T) (i.e. the dynastic found. of Kho-mthing in sHo-brag)

(both settlements count a number of branch institutions established in the area of southern sHo-kha)

(IIIA) Nya-mi Dar-ma dbang-phyug (mkhan bu of Ka-ba):

sPyan-phyi'i lha-khang of 'Phan-yul (T) (i.e. Byang-phyi? see above)

Gra-thang of 'Phan-yul (F) (= sKyi[d]-shod Jo-mo-lung Gra-thang? K.-Paulenz 1993, s.v. index)

(IVA) dBang-phyug rGyal-ba (mkhan bu of Nya-mi):

Thag-ma'i lha-khang of sTod-lung (T) (see above)

D Religious Settlements and Dependencies of the rMa Community

(also called sKyi[d] tsho or rMa tsho'i sde of sKyi-dshod)

(1a) rMa Chos kyi byang-chub

Yer-pa Sog[s]-kha lha-khang (F)

Succeeding settlements:

sNye-thang rGyal-grong (sNye-thang district, in sKyid-smad)

'Phan-yul gNas-khang

sTe-po

Zul-phu (in sKyi[d]-smad, see Table V.8)

rDzing-khang of sNams (rNams/gNam in sKyid-smad)

rDo-ra (in sKyi-smad; MTP Uebach: fn. 1044)
Foundation of Kil-me and his Group (2007, 2008)

The complex of the same name is similarly referred to a
place of the essay upon modern concepts of the

12. Lao-mo-Lo in Upper Shil-k'a Is seen from the

map below (Fig. 1)
14. 15. 16. Three monasteries which go back to foundations ascribed to sNa-nam rDo-rje dbang-phyug of the Klu tsho: Ra-tshag in the Yab (alias sPang-khung) valley of sTod- lung (14); rGyal lha-khang (15) and Ra[g]-ma lha-khang (16), both in 'Phan-yul
Photo of Fig. 16: U. Roesler

15a. The stone statue of Maitreya kept in the rGyal-stod part of the rGyal lha-khang (15) represents a (11th-cent.?) forerunner of the later Maitreya brother idol in the Byams-khang of rGyal-smad
Photo: Pasang Wangdu
17. Ngan-po dgon (2002). The place of the Sa-skya monastery in Ngan-lam of 'Phan-yul corresponds to the site of the Ngan-lam dByi-mo-dgon founded by 'Bring Ye-shes yon-tan. It is classified as the centre of the Upper 'Bring tsho

18 and 19. Brang Ra-mo-che (located in Ra-mo-che village in the ancient Brang district of lower sTod-lung) is classified as the centre of the Lower 'Bring tsho (2002). Fig. 19 is the modern replica of (the original 11th cent.?) image of the Jo-bo Rin-po-che of Ra-mo-che which is said to hold conversation with the Jo-bo of Ha-sa in the east.
20, 21, 22. Two less known religious sites in sKyid-shod which go back to early settlements of the rNgog lugs: sMan-chu-dgon (alias Lo-dgon) (20) and sNon Nyi-ma-thang (21, 22) (2002, 2005)

21 Photo: Google Earth 2006
V.7 The gNyos Clan of Central Tibet and the Abbatial Succession of the Gye-re lha-khang

Based upon Primary Sources:
gNyos rabs (NR); sMyos rabs (MR); IHa nang rnam thar 1–III (HNT I, II, III); gTer bdag gling rnam thar I–II (TDNT I–II); gTer bdag gsan yig (TDGY); Nyang ral chos 'byung (NR); lHo rong chos 'byung (LR); Deb sngon (DN = BA Roerич); Deb dmar (DM); gRga bod chos 'byung (GB); rGya bod yig tshang (GY); bKa' gdam chos 'byung I, III, IV (KD 1, II, III, IV); rMog lcog rnam thar (MC); mKhas pa'i dga' sion (KT); dGu' idan chos 'byung (GD); Vaidūrya ser po (VS); DL6, mkhyen brtse'i dbang po'i rnam thar (KB); dPag bsam lion bzang (PS); Gu bkra chos 'byung (GK); rDoogs chen chos 'byung (DC);
bShad mdzod (SD); sGrubs tsho rgyus (GL); lCags stag zhib gzhung (CT); Mig 'byed 'od stung (MB)

Secondary Sources:
Ming mdzod (MD); Mi sna (MN); IHa sa'i dgon tho (HS); HSLG; Dung dkar tshig mdzod (DK)

[Sigla: | = descends in direct line from; = i.e. married to .... ] Almost only male members of a line are registered

One of the most enduring and influential clans in Central and Southern Tibet throughout the medieval epoch was the gNyos clan. Its long and complex history is commonly known from a number of stray sources. Fortunately, its successful polylinear ramifications can be documented from the 11th century. The spelling in the various sources vacillates even within one text – between the homophonous gNyos / sNyos / mNyos / sMyos. The genealogy or the lineage of the gNyos has been transmitted in a number of sources of which some are no more extant. The gNyos clan was an offspring of the rMug clan (see below fn. 2). The present conspectus thus only reflects a selective, extant segment of these genealogies found embedded in the above sources. The following listing is moreover restricted to the initial generations of the gNyos that were active in Central or Western Tibet (i.e. mainly those settling in sKyi-dsam and Kha-rag of sNa-dkar-rtsa along the border to gTsang). Another spread of the clan is well-documented too, namely the succeeding agnostic sub-lines of gNyos/sMyos in lHo Mon or Bhutan wherefrom e.g. Padma gling-pa and the 6th Dalai Lama should originate (see Aris 1979a; 1988; and especially sMyos rabs, passim). Cf. also App. I and App. II, Chap. 1 above for a detailed discussion of the most illustrious members of the sKyi-dshod gNyos clan and their role in the IHa-sa (known as the IHa-pa) area in the 12th century.

A number of religious personages and hierarchs claim descent from the widely ramified gNyos clan; aside from those main lines detailed below, one may individually mention the prominent bK'a'-gdam-pa masters Po-to-ba Rin-chen-gsal (1027/31–1105) of 'Phan-yul, his favourite pupil and kin gNyos-ston Chos-'bar (1050–1112) and another pupil of his, Pho-brang sding-pa gZhon-nu-'od; also the Kālacakra transmitter gNyos sKye/sGyi-khung-pa (b. 1067), further we register sTod-lung-pa Bya-yul-pa gZhon-nu-'od (1078–1138) as well as a further kin gNyos Bra-gor-pa (var. Bra 'Or-ba) – the latter e.g. erected the highly influential bK'a'-gdam-pa seat of Bra-gor in gNyal; finally gNyos-pa Tshul-khrims-'bar. We should also list the late 11th-century gNyos 'Od and Ye-shes-mchog registered in the Kālacakra transmission, etc. The list below should therefore be regarded as preliminary, to be expanded when new lines and materials on the gNyos surface.

1 The original clan name evidently was and is gNyos, whereas one dominant line from the 18th generation allegedly descending from bDe-mchog alias gNyos-ston 'Khuru-zhih chos rje gradually was changed into [s]Myos ("insane"), as the clan was commonly known in Bhutan. Also the hierarchs of sMin-grol-gling, starting from gTer-bdag gling-pa, were descendants of the gNyos clan, and they too occasionally prefer the spelling sMyos.
7.1 The gNyos Lineage

Generation

I
Bya-thul/Bya-khyung dkar-po = Ding-mo-btsun
also called mgo nag gi rje;
celestial advent on
Mt. Brag-dmar of Shun

gNyos-rje bTsan-po = gDong-bza' dKar-mo-yag

III
Seng-ge Shag/Śākya = dMu-[b]za['] sMan-mo-btsun

IV
bKra/rTa-mkhar-rje
bKra/rTa-rje-'phan
bKra/rTa-yags-rje
bKra/rTa-gur-rje

V
Thug-ge/Thug[s]-rje
Zhang/zheng-nge

VI
'Bring/'Bri-sde

VII
'Bring/'Bri-chung

dPal-yon-tan

IX
slob dpon Tshul[-khrims] yon[-tan] = Jo-mo

X
Gu-ru

XI
| Ha-'phan

XII
mThu-rgyal (alias spang-la mo-shor)

XIII
'Byung-gnas shes-rab sMan-pa Shes-rab
Shes-rab rgyal-mtshan 'Byung-rdo-rje Sha-ba rgyal-mtshan

gNyos lo tsa ba Yon-tan-grags = Ma-jo/Ma-sde = (2nd wife) lHo-mo/lHo Gro-mo
(alias 'Byung-po, b. 973) of La-stod Cung-pa
settled in rGyang-ro Sa[l]-ma/Sa-lu in gTsang

XIV
lHo-tsha rDo-rje mgon-po bZang-tsha rDo-rje 'byung-gnas dPal gyi mgon-po

gTsang-tsha rDo-rje bla-ma = Nag-mo 'bar-chung
(1008–1086) of Ne-rings

XV
dPal-legs/le/lo/mo dPal gyi seng-ge = 'Od-sras/gSal-ma Jo-mo dPal gyi 'byung-gnas
a Yamāntaka siddha
(1054–1120)
a kalyānāmitra

XVI Jo-Srod [= sras]/dGe-se [= re] Jo-bSod gNyos-nag Grags-pa-dpal
(1106–1165/1183)
Appendix V: Tables 7-10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Names and Titles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XVI</td>
<td>NN [Zhang lcam] = gNyet-nag Grags-pa-dpal = Seng-ge Bab-ta-li (d. 1167)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII</td>
<td>slob dpon Byang-chub-dpal gZi-brjod-mgon gZi-brjod-od NN (lcam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lHa-nang-pa gZi-brjod-dpal = lHa-gcig bDe-mchog-ma (1164-1224)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>slob dpon Jo-bo Grags-pa-'bum = sGyu-phrul-ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII</td>
<td>bDe-mchog = lHa Rin-chen rgyal-po = bsTan-pa seng-ge (1179-1265)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dBon Rin-dbang (a.k.a. Jo-dpal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX</td>
<td>Grags-pa rgyal-po Bla-ma Dar-ma rgyal-po = bSod-nams-dar (1245-1277)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX</td>
<td>Rin po che Rin-skyabs dKon-mchog Rin po che (b. 1276)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXI</td>
<td>gZi-brjod rgyal-po = bSod-nams rgyal-po = Shes-rab rgyal-po (1277-1329)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bSod-nams dpal-bzang = dBon-po</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shes-rab bSod-nams = Se-mo bKra-shis-dpal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXII</td>
<td>Nam-mkha' dpal-bzang = bSod-nams gZi-brjod = Chos kyi rgyal-mtshan = Kun-dpal (1328-85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXIII</td>
<td>slob dpon Nam-mkha = Grags-pa bSod-nams = Rin po che Kun-rin = rNam-rgyal rdo-rje (1360-1384)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1362-1386) (1370-1421) (1375-1410)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes to Table 7.1

2 Viewed historically, the first generation may tentatively be dated to ca. 5–6th cent. A parallel could here be drawn to the origin myth of the overall royal progenitor gNy a’khri btsan-po who was similarly married to a lady of the heavenly dMu (clan and land). Noteworthy is that the gNyos clan also was counted as one of the sub-clans of the rMu (see foll. note), wherefrom the gNyos ancestor (like gNy a’khri entitled a ruler of the Black Headed People; mgo nag rje) evidently took his wife. As for the name of the ancestral figure (i.e. Bya-khyung dkar-po or White Garuda) there may be a closer relation to the Khyung-tshang-brag cave of the Shun mountain described in a local account as the nest of a giant khyung bird who once terrorized the surrounding country. See Akester 2000; Hazod 2004: 35.

3 Also called gNyos-rje ‘Tsho-ba. MR 65 maintains that she was the daughter of a gDong-bza’. DL6 107 reads GrO = ‘Bro-bza’. The gDong (var. IDong) clan is regarded as one of the nang gi mi’u rigs bzhi, the four primeval clan peoples, i.e. Se, rMu, IDong, sTong, which were divided into 18 great sub-clans. ‘Bro’ is registered as one of the sub-clans of the IDong. Cf. SD 182.4 (Gene Smith 2001: 218).

4 He crossed gTsang-po and settled in g.Yor-po where they became “lords of the mgo nag,” here an euphemism for “common people or subjects.” See e.g. also MB 46a6 in connection with the Rlangs clan. It could be expected that this sub-line of his in g.Yor-po or southern Central Tibet constituted the gNyos forebear behind those gNyos lines that developed in the 17th generations (see below) and spread further southwards.

5 He went to Khams, a.k.a. gNyos dmg dpur. No information on this eastbound line.

6 From him descended the gNyos line of La-stod of gTsang.

7 The line settled in IHa-sa, known as dG[i][j][y][e][r], i.e. G[i][j][y][e]-re gNyos. NR 25.1 reads dGyer gNyos, otherwise the reading IHa-sa dGe or sGer is also recorded (all close to the homophonous reading Gye-re/ Ge-re (bisyllabic vowel reduplication in the spelling variants -er ~ -e are not uncommon). This identification or equation is also surmised by Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtso; cf. DL6 107. It is thus conceivable that it was bKra-gur-rje (ca. 7th cent.?) and his descendants that settled in the IHa-sa district, in G[i][j][y][e]-re IHa Valley of sKyid-smad. This valley should become the seat of the IHa-pa (arguably contracted from IHa-sa-pa; the anteposition of IHa may, however, conversely refer to their divine origin from ‘ad gsal lha) and remained their estates for the coming almost 12 centuries, in fact the homestead of the IHa-pa gNyos clan (“gNyos of the IHa-sa or of Divine Origin”), a stronghold in the immediate area of IHa-sa (App. II: Map 3a, b) It is small wonder that the IHa-pa in indigenous Tibetans literature commonly are regarded as a house with a very ancient stock.

A still unexplored issue is the possible – but not conclusive – affiliation or relationship that may have existed between the various Gyer sites (dG[i][j][y][e], Gye-re, Ge-re) in sKyid-smad and sKyid-stod and Grva, etc. Gyer-smad in GD 81a6. Cf. TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: App. II. It may well be the case that distinct origins must be ascribed to the Gi[y][e]-re of sKyid-stod and smad and that the Upper Ge-re was related to the sGer/dGyer clan of Yar-lung and later Mal-gro (the same clan was behind the Rin-spungs-pa House, see sGer gi gdung rabs).

8 Settled in gZhung, this elusive sub-line was known as gNyos sBan tsha or scions.

9 He arrived at Zhal gyi Khri-mo/Srin-mo gung/gur-mkhar; subsequently he seized Kha-rag and ‘Grang-sil/ Brang-sil. These areas, still known today, should become a future stronghold of the gNyos. From this line originated the famous Kha-rag-based gNyos line. Kha-rag originally is a side-valley of the southern bank of gTsang-po; today Kha-rag is a xiang in sNa-dkar-rtses county located at 29°15’N 90°24’E (mod. var. spelling: Kha-[db]rag, but occasionally also and commonly: mKha’-reg, “touching the sky,” although this obviously is an attempt at popular etymology so cherished among the Tibetans).

Toponyms denoted or designated Kha-rag are regularly registered. Incidentally, a different toponym is Kha-rags located in rTse-chen xiang of rGyal-rtses khul (located: 28°56’N 89°33’E) of gTsang. Other texts, however, talk about (most confusingly and problematic) IHa-rtses Kha-rag (or mKha’-reg), which immediately is difficult to connect with the two other options. * Bon sources introduces a Kha-rag rTsang-stod (located adjacent to present-day bZang-bzang in La-stod Byang, Ngam-ring county). DL6 107 assists us considerably by saying that the gNyos Kha-reg location is situated in Upper g.Yor. It describes the geographic position of the upper (= western half) of the ancient Left Horn province. Kha-rag in fact constitutes the western border of imperial-time g.Yo-ru (see TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 230). ** Finally, a Kha-rag of sTod-lung is registered; cf. Chos kyiegrags pa rnam thur 394; Nor bu’i do shal 294 (there at Tshe-chu-phug, Zhig-po gling-pa extracted treasuries), possibly referring to Kha-rag-mdg of present-day Chu-bzang xiang at 30°02’N 90°53’E.
Kha-rag as distinct area originally bordered on as well as remained part of later (and present-day) Gong-dkar, sNyemo as well as of Chu-shur districts. Associated with old Kha-rag of g Yo-ru, relevant here for our discussion, is the holy mountain Kha-rag Jo-mo, famous for its many hermitages. In fact, the mountain range of Kha-rag is generally located north, north-west of Yar-'brog. The area is most readily known as a mountain valley area comprising the mountain range and an old and cherished hermitage area that, as said, long served as border between dBur and gTsang. The core area of Kha-rag / mKha'-reg is the side-valley and area south of gTsang-po towards Yar-'brog, but mKha'-reg also covered the area on the northern side of gTsang-po en route between present-day Chu-shul and sNyemo. The two most famous mountain twins are, as said, Kha-rag Jo-bo and Jo-mo (resp. located 29°14'N 90°20'E and 29°16'N 90°20'E), the latter associated with the activities of Ye-shes mthsbo-rgyal; cf. Ricard 1994: 571.

'Brang-sil (of Kha-reg), in fact refers to two places, where at one point gNyos 'Byung-gnas shes-rab established a few 'Bring communities 'Grenq 'Breng-smad-gnas and Sil-ma'i gTsang-lug located respectively on the southern and the northern shore of gTsang-po; cf. Table V.6 (IIIb) above; these sites were also known as 'Bren[g]-mo-che and Sil-ma-la of Kha-rag rtse (= rtsa ba; the heart or central part (rtsa) of Kha-rag area, as it is called; evidently adjacent to present-day Sil-ma-la/Sim-la Pass: 29°12'N 90°25'E).*** the latter e.g. being the birth place of Sangs-rgyas ston-pa brTson-'grus seng-ge (1207–78 A.D.) of the Ya-ngal dkar-po clan that had a branch line (of early Bon-po and grub thob) here in the 13th cent. Sangs rgyas ston pa rnam that 209ff. where his activities in Kha-rag and his meeting with one Jo-sras Sil-ma-ba is mentioned. In the Shangs-pa tradition a sNyeling-gong of Kha-rag is mentioned. In 'Brangq/ 'Breng, chos rje Kun-dga' seng-ge built his temple Chos-khor-sdings and the great hermitage here in the mountain range of Kha-rag is generally taken as it is called; evidently adjacent to present-day Sil-ma-la/Sim-la Pass: 29°12'N 90°25' E).***

However, lHa-rte may be an abbreviation of sKyi-smad lHa-ri-rte; cf. gTer ston lo rgyas 58b3. Or it may indicate the Kha-rag-pa side-line that indeed had settled in lHa-ri-rte dist. Cf. Rva lo rnam that 150.

*** As is commonly known, the older g Yon-ru was later known as g.Yor or g.Yo-ru; cf. Khra tshang riogs briod 11b1.

Above the gTsang Sil-ma-la or Sil-ma Pass, considered a strategic location, five temples were erected in the early 20th cent. in order to ward off the intrusion of foreign (here British) armies; cf. DL-13 278.

MR 67 and TDNT-I 16a5 maintain that sPang-la me-shor was a younger brother of mThu-rgyal.

Elder contemporary of Mar-pa, who similarly went to India. He was born in Kha-rag, according to GL 112b3. Cf. App. I and II above, for more details on this famous lo tsa ba. Through matrimonial affairs, his line should spread out from Kha-rag and settled in La-stod (La-stod Byang dist., at Cung-pa; cf. Table V.4–5, fn.4) and rGyang-ro of Myang-stod. His teachings and esoteric cycles constituted the gNyos spiritual lore and esoteric legacy. Members of the sNyos or gNyos line was related to the transmission of kilaya (GK 333), such as sMyos-ston Nyi-ma rdo-rje active in Nyang-stod area. The latter may have been related to the Kha-rag line. HNT III 56b. slightly at variance with other sources, mentions that he had seven sons.

Ordained in the presence of dBya'-btsun dBon-mchog rgyal-ba of the 'Bring-smad communities; became mkhan po of Brang Ra-mo-che and subsequently ruler of the sKyi-smad 'Bring tsho. HNT III 5a4 lists as his remaining brothers: 'Byug-chung, 'Byung-gnas rdo-rje and Sha-ba rgyal-mtshan.

She came from the Gro-mo (Chumbi) district. Unfortunately we possess no detailed information on the lines that issued from this branch line. For the Upper rGyang-ro/ru district including Sa-lu (Sa-ma) district of present-day rGyalrte area; cf. S.S. Wanggylal, rGyang ru sa ma mda' khul gyi dgon pa lha khang khag gi lo rgyus; see also lCags stag zhib gzhung 469; later these areas were part of the private estate of the Pha-ha nobles.
part ii

hnt iii only lists three sons of gnyos lo tsha ba and further seems to suggest that his sons had different mothers. so rdo-rje mgon-po was son of yon-tan-grags and lho gro-mo, whereas he fathered two or three sons with one ma-jo. the same text purports that rdo-rje mgon-po was the youngest of the three sons. tdnt-ii 16a7f. conversely maintains that yon-tan-grags had four wives and fathered 6 children.

14 well-versed in the gnyos traditions, and himself a famed siddha, later ruler of numerous 'bring tsho communities. his residence (gnas gchi) in kha-rag was located in 'brang; cf. tāranātha rnam thar 7a3–6. a-khun refers in his dpel dkon to a rnam brhad composed by him devoted to the celebrated rgyud gsum of gnyos lo tsha ba yon-tan grags-pa along with samvara and hevajra tantra. lR 425 purports that rdo-rje bla-ma was a nephew (dbon) of gnyos lo tsha ba. hnt iii 6a1–2 calls him jo-dpal and makes his son the younger brother.

15 he evidently settled in bZang = gZad of chu-shur district. he went to india and became a competent lo tsha ba.

16 a vajrabhairava ascetic.

17 well-versed in the gnyos cycles and a great religious master. hnt 3: jo-dpal. he was also a student of sPu-rangs lo-chung gZhon-nu/grags-mchog/’byor shes-rab (fl. early 12th cent., a significant hevajra cycle transmitter) and of phyva-ba chos kyi seng-ge (1109–69). considered one of the latter’s celebrated disciples (among the latter’s dBus-gtshal jo-rnas bzhis or four “noble birth disciples”) called gnyos jo-rnas dPal-le, cf. yL 129.5–6; gSang ‘dus chos byung 6b2–3; BA roercher 332; KD 162.

he was also registered as student of rNgog/rdog nyi-ma seng-ge (alias Mu-ne) who resided in ‘jad of gTsang, a transmitter of guhyasamāja (see app. ii). this may immediately cause some chronological problems since he was born around 1050 A.D. and his teachers active in the early 12th cent.

DL6 112–13 informs that he e.g. composed commentaries on the samvara and hevajra tantra. this must refer to the bdde gyes dang mtskan brjod kyi dka ’grel ascribed to him and listed in a-khun’s dpel dkon. he had many students such as shes-rab-grags of gZhu. he became a master of the Yamāntaka practice. lR 425, on the other hand, registers dPal-mo and dPal gyi seng-ge as nephews of rdo-rje bla-ma, not as sons. his mother stemmed from the ne-ring family, evidently a powerful local house of chu-shur; cf. iCags stag zhib gzhung 174. as to the ne-ring-pa, a zang-zang ne-ring-pa ’chi-med rab-rgyas and ne-ring bdde-legs mgon-po-grub and ne-ring zur-pa dBu-ma-pa Sangs-rgyas-dpal wrote a biography and was pupil of bTsong-kha-pa.

hnt iii 6a3f., contrary to the list presented here, enumerates ten sons and daughters of Grags-pa-dpal in all, fathered with six consorts [sic]: Zhang lcam with whom he fathered sTon ma-tsha rags-ma [sic] and jo-chung. with one dkar-re, he fathered two unnamed daughters, both died in their infancy. with Yong-mo bab-ta, he fathered rJe rin-po-che i.e. lhA-nang-pa and the daughter dKar-bum. with one dpon-don gyi Jo-mo, he fathered slob dpon Jo-grags. with one Ma-jo Ye-shes-skyyid, he fathered slob dpon Byang-chub-dpal. age 66, he finally married one Jo-mo gNyan-mo, with whom he fathered gZi-brjod-mgon and gZi-brjod-’od. the latter two died in their early years.

18 an ascetic of the Yamāntaka cycle. he settled in kha-rag wherefrom the gnyos Sil-ma-ba line developed.

19 conflicting data concerning his dates. MR 79–85 gives his age as 78 and situates him 1106–1183 A.D. we shall preliminarily favour these dates. NR 31.1, 33.5 maintains that Grags-pa-dpal died in a lcags rta year = 1210 but that he reached the age of 61,* which would place his birth in ca. 1150 A.D. this is quite untenable when we consider that he in the 1150’s had already emerged as a leader in central Tibet and subsequently met Dvags-po sGom-tshul. opting more appropriately for an earlier date, it may be argued that the lcags rta is a slip of the hand for lcags stag or 1170, thus situating his dates to 1110–1170 A.D. however, whether reaching 61 or 78 years of age, the dates 1106 until 1182/3 would far more seem to dovetail with the information in his biography where he indeed seems to have passed away in the 1180’s. lR 425 moreover maintains that Grags-pa-dpal merely was a nephew of dPal-seng. the sources differ as to the number of children he produced, some texts only speak of five children altogether.

Grags-pa-dpal’s elder brother was Gye-re Jo-bo bSod[’nam], and as the name indicates he may stem from or be associated with the Gye-re valley.

* also preferred by DL6 114. the age 61 was also the age reached by his son lhA-nang-pa and Phag-mo-gru-pa, wherefore these figures may be questionable. NR, a primary gnyos source, tends to posidate some persons and incidents at least one lo skor later.

20 hnt reads Yong-mo dPags-rika or dPal-ka; MR 86 reads Song-mo Pa-ti as the name of the mother. hnt iii 6b3 reads sPong-mo sPang-ta, also named sPong-zho Hum-grags of Ba-ma in bur district.
Appendix V: Tables 7–10

21 In *TDNT-II* 16a5–6 a half-brother (by different mother) of lHa-nang-pa is listed by the name bKra-shis dbang-phug (unknown from other lists). *HNT III* 6a5–6 reads the two eldest sons of Grags-pa-dpal as sTon Ma-tsha Ma-rags [sic] and Jo-chung. The members of the gNyos clan according to the former text (identically listed up until then) were hitherto known as the phyi rus or “Outer Clan Line.” See also DL6 105. The members of the line following the latter’s son by the name Grags-pa rdo-rje were known as the nang rus or “Inner Clan Line” – the division may have been made along purely geographical criteria where “outer” alludes to the northern (i.e. sKyid-shod) part and western (i.e. Khar-ag) Central Tibetan gNyos lines and “inner” to the gNyos settlements in g.Yor-po in southern Central Tibet (lHo-kha), rather than assuming any exogamous or endogamous distinction. Another temporal reading of the phyi/nang division into phyi (outer, here former or remoter, i.e. generations) vs. nang (inner, more recent generations) seems untenable, since phyi conventionally connotes “later” and not “former.”

In fact, Grags-pa rdo-rje was born in sNye-mda’ (or Lower sNye-mo) of dBu-ru-smad. The linear (or filial) succession:

[XVIII] mThing-ma-pa Grags-pa rdo-rje* (= a.k.a. mThing-ma-pa gNyos-zhig chen-po = gNyos Chu-bo-ri-ba?)

  gNyos-sgom chen-po grub thob Padma rdo-rje**

  gNyos-ston Grags-pa / Ami (sic)-kirti,

  gNyos-ston Grags-pa bkra-shis

[XXII]

  gNyos-ston Grags-pa rin-chen

  gNyos-ston Grags-pa 'od-zer ***

  gNyos Nam-mkha’ blo-gros

  gNyos Nam-mkha’ rgyal-mtshan

  gNyos Nam-mkha’ rin-chen ********

  gNyos bSod-nams dpal-lidan

  gNyos bSod-nams rgya-mtsho

[XXV] gNyos Nam-mkha’ btsan-pa

  gNyos Nam-mkha’ rgyal-mtshan

  gNyos Nam-mkha’ rin-chen

  gNyos bSod-nams dpal-lidan

[XXX] dpon drung Tshe-dbang rdo-rje******** = sPa-gor Tshe-ring Bu-dga’

  Kun-mkhyen mDo-sngags bTan-'dzin bzang-po******** = dGos-dgos-'dzom Na-lung 'Khrul-zhig

  of Yugs-rdzong

  gSang-bdag 'Phrin-las lhun-grub dpal-bzang-po******** = lHa-'dzin dByangs-can sgron-ma

[XXXIII] gTer-bdag gling-pa********

(b. 1624)
All subsequent sMin-grol-glun hierarchs were patrilineal descendants of gTer-bdag gling-pa of the gNyos/sMyos clan until the 19th century. Also the celebrated *ris med* propounder 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse'i dbang-po (1820–92) was gNyos (cf. *ED 12b2f*) where however it is said that the forefather is linked to a Byang-chub gling-pa, one of the thirteen favourite sons of the 'Bri-gung founder, this may be true since he is usually identified with sHa-nang-pa.

* Also called sngags 'chang 'Gro-mgon gNyos-zhih chen-po Grags-pa dpal-bzang (or Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan). The line is also called the mThing-ma-ba; cf. *TDNT I* 164a. In Tibet, mThing-ma-ba gNyos-zhih attended on many contemporary Indian ascetics and Tibetan masters such as his principal mentor Myang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer, Kha-che Pan-chen, Mitrayogi as well as relied on Glan Nya-tshal-pa (a.k.a. Glan rDo-rje-'od or Glan Säkya byang-chub; cf. *DL5* gsMon yig IV 235b3–1) as well as on Ko-brag-pa, etc. One of his pupils was rTa-ston Jo-yes (1169–1230); cf. BA Roerich 142; *KG 283–84*. The ascetic gNyos-zhih in particular became a master of a large range of cycles stemming from Myang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer. Renown as the bka’ babs of the latter’s Las kyi mkha’ ‘gro cycles. Cf. also Khra tshang rtags brjod 11a3–4, 35a5–6; *DL5* II 95b2–96a5; *DL5* gsMon yig II 122a5–6, 275a4–6, 276a5–6, 278a6–5, 306b3–307b3; *TDST* 69b5–70b1, 77b4–5, 266b3ff, *IV* 304a1–3, 306b3; Myang ral rnam thar 136.1, 137.5, etc. This constituted the background for the ascription of the line as holders of the Old Translation School. He erected the temples of rDo-mthing-ma and Yar-khlong Gu-ru Iha-khang. These informations are not without chronological problems for a dating of him and his flourit must be safely situated to early 13th century. The prominent mantradhara Grags-pa rdo-rje or Grags-pa dpal-bzang (and his line) was considered zhal ngo of Gung-rub-a (until Grags-pa 'od-zer). In the late 1670’s, a gNyos Gung-rub-a chos rje dBang-rgyal lhun-grub is registered. The former had four consorts with whom he fathered six children. The most prominent among these was Padma rdo-rje.

** gNyos-sgom was active in the mid-13th century. Among his pupils counts Se-ston Jo-bo rDo-rje khro-bo of rGyang-rgo.

***** It is recorded that Grags-pa 'od-zer received a 'ja’ sa edict from the Mongols as well a citation and title of dnisht. Not to be confused with an earlier namesake, the famous Sa-skya Khang-gsar-pa Grags-pa ‘od-zer; *diskh* 1291–1303; cf. Petech 1990b: 73–76. *TBRC* (PR528) maintains that Klong-chen Dri-med ‘od-zer was father to Grags-pa ‘od-zer and gives his dates 1356–1409. This is untenable.

He became a private guard and preceptor of the Phag-mo-gru-pa rular Gong-ma Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1374–1432; recte: spyan snga Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan, 1293–1360) and a teacher of Kun-mkhyen Klong-chen (1308–64 A.D.), cf. *Klch chen rnam thar* 32, 176; *KG 215* (here is a reference to gNyos mThing-ma-ba (name Sangs-rgyas grags-pa-grags-’od, so acc. to The Nyinmgma School 577; Nor bu’i dsha 247; *KG 215*) = Grags-pa ‘od-zer. He administered the lineage-temples of rDo-mthung-ma, Gu[ng]-ru Iha-khang and later the Khra-tshang in Yar-lung (known as the three tantric seminars (sngags sde) in Yar-lung: Gung-mThing-Khra gsum.**** These sites should become the ancestral family temples of the line. From him descends the gNyos line(s) of Yar-khlongs, being known as gNyos kyi sngags ‘chang (even registered in the 1660’s; in 1676 a gNyos Gung-rub-a chos rje dBang-rgyal lhun-grub is registered cf. *DL5* II 144b2, 277b7–78a1). It would be tempting to see in this family (or a side-line) the rulers of the neighbouring g Ya’-bzang-pa in Yar-stod (cf. Gyalbo et al. 2000: 98). Any connection between the title of a key text in the *Ya’-bzang tradition, the bKa’ chems mTho mthing ma* and the gNyos seat rDo-mthing-ma is thus worth noting, but still speculative.

***** This line issuing from the Grags-pa ‘od-zer-brother line settled down and ruled Khra-tshang, either as a father-son or an uncle-nephew line. The line eventually bifurcated into the chos rje Khra-tshang-ba and the sMan-lung-pa. Cf. Khra tshang rtags brjod, passim; m Gon po rnam thar 55b3f. They similarly were recipients of teaching cycles from Myang-ral. Cf. e.g. *DL5* gsMon yig II 278b1–6; *KG 666*. Under chos rje sMan-lung-pa, rDo-rje gling-pa received religious training; cf. rDo rje gling pa rnam thar II 16–17.

***** He went to Yar-gyab. He had been born in Dol of g Yo-ru and was considered a manifestation of chos rje dPal Don-grub. He became a monk of the Chos-rdzongs gdan-pa (sic = Byae-rdzings/thogs-gdan-pa, one of the four jo gdan seats ascribed to Kha-che Pan-chen) in Grva where he later expanded his temporal powers. It was his line or that of his father who as sku mag married into the line of the Zhang sNa-nam (former rulers of Grva Dol and gZhung) which led to the line of gTer-bdag gling-pa, *KG* 703–04.

******* If he is identical with rJe sMan-chu-ba Nam-mkha’ rin-chen, then his flourit is situated in the early 16th cent.; cf. gTer ston lo rgyus 92a2.

******* Or rDo-rje tshe-dbang, his spouse was also called bsod-nams bu’khrid. He died at Dar-rgyas Chos-gling. *DC I* 138b3–41a4.

******** His spouse also called dGos-dzoms mdzis-ma. He was considered an emanation of Lang-’gro lo tsas bu dKon-mchog ‘byung-gnas; he was invited to Dar-rgyas Chos-gling of Grva-nang (location: 29°13’N 91°19’E). Cf. *DC I* 141a4–44a4.

******** Also called gNyos-ston O’gyan tsher-pel.

********* gTer-bdag gling-pa’s life is foremost retold in his biography *TDNT I* II. He had seven children, three sons and four daughters. For a brief note on his brother bTan-pa’i nying-pa and his sons, Chos-dpal rgya-mtsho, Padma ‘gyur-med rgya-mtsho, Yid-bzhin legs-grub and Rin-chen nam-mr-gal, all with a hapless fate, see *KG* 697 715. For the eventful life of his prominent daughter rJe bsun Mi’-gyur dpal-sgron ‘gyur-med ‘od-gsal (1699–1769), see her vivid biography *Dud pa’i g dang sel*. 

PART II
22 Principal student of the 'Bri-gung founder 'Jig-rten mgon-po. HNT-J 124 suggests that lHa-nang-pa had two brothers and two sisters, contrary to those listed here.
23 Daughter of one bTsan-po Mang-bkra (the clan affiliation of this important 12th-cent. local king in sKyi-dams-pa remains unknown).
24 bDe-mchog alias gNyos-ston 'Khru-zi. This paternal line allegedly went to Mon-yul wherefrom the "Bhutan" sMyos line issued that should include Padma gling-pa, the 6th Dalai Lama but also the present royal family; for details see sMyos rabs, passim and Aris 1988. It should be noted that the entire Bhutanese pedigree legitimacy of gNyos / sMyos is hinged upon the existence of this nebulous figure.
25 Upon his demise in 1270, his nephews Grgs-pa rgyal-pa and Dar-ma rgyal-pa carried out the commemorative service and erected a nang rten. Its consecration was conducted by 'Bri-phyug Rin-chen bzang-po and Bla-ma Ri-gon-pa. A statue of Ras-chen was installed in Gye-re (after 1250); cf. the writings of chos rje sPyil-dkar (1227–1300 A.D.), a pupil of Rin-chen lHa-pa (1201–1270) and gGod-tshang (1189–1258); Chos rje spyil dkar gsung sgrugs 2b2. Dar-ma rgyal-pa wrote a biography on the 3rd 'Bri-gung throne-holder entitled sPyil snga Grgs-pa 'byung gnas kyi rnam than rin po che 'bar ba (non-extant).
26 Cf. NR 51.1f. He seized and occupied areas in 'Brog sNa-dkar-rtse, and other places in Upper gYor-po (cf. fn. 9 above). Before long, however, he was killed in g.Yor-stod by settlers from Kha-rag, i.e. the Gral-ma thad-pa (sic) (still not identified) and the Thang-skya-pa. The latter refers to the dPal Thang-skya-mo establishment, one of the previous establishments of gNyos 'Byung-gnas shes-rab (cf. fn. 12).* The latter groups had had lingering conflicts during the time of his uncle lHa-nang-pa in the latter's biography.
27 NR 53.3–55.2. Studying with his uncle lHa Rin-chen rgyal-pa, he was trained in the profound cycles of bla rdzogs thugs gsum, and with Khams-ston and De-grag-pa he studied the commentaries of the gNyos Tantra Triology incl. Samvara. During his tenure at Ge-re dgon-pa (ca. 1273–81), he was visited by the 'Brug-pa and lHa-pa ascetic sPyil-dkar; cf. Chos rje sPyil dkar rnam than l7a3.
28 Cf. NR 56.5–68.1. The sources provide details on his life. The 5th Ge-re lHa-khang throne-holder Rin po che gZi-brjiv rgyal-pa was born in bSe-khrab (= bSe-khrab?) dgon-pa of 'Khol-ma-phu (i.e. Upper Khol-ma of Chu-shur district, located ca. 29°24'N 90°46'E; see below Fig. 26 and Part I: Map 1a),* a site once established by aburva [Guru Rinpoche]. Age six or seven (ca. 1282), he and his brother bSod-nams rgyal-pa arrived at 'Bri-phyug (the site deplorably still unidentified), where they studied the Paternal gNyos Triology with gNyos Bla-ma Rin-chen bzang-po. 1284 A.D., he was ordained at sKyor-mo-mo in the presence of the 6th sKyor-mo-mo throne-holder 'Byung-rin. Final ordination he took age 20 in 1296 A.D. with dBang-shes acting as secret preceptor. In 1289, he went to Sa-skya, at a point when (the 9th Sa-skya throne-holder) 'Jam-dbyangs Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan (1258–1306; cf. 1286–1303) was residing in bZhi-thog; from him he e.g. requested for and received empowerment of the Hevajra and Tārā cycles. From Bla-ma Shar-pa Kun-dga' seng-ge, he received the cycles of Hevajra and Nairatmya and on Lam 'bras. He sojourned for three years at Sa-skya. He eventually went southwards to Phag-ri where he taught the benefactors of lHo-kha-bzhi religious instructions. He returned to Gye-re only to return again later to Phag-ri where he erected many nang rten reliics, a golden caitya and executed wall-paintings. After one or two years again, he returned to Gye-re.
29 * Khol-ma is an old site already visited by Rva-lo in the 11th cent. (Rva lo nam thar 233–34), much later visited by 'Bras-spungs chos rje bSod-nams rgya-mtsho in 1569 A.D.; cf. DL3 83a4. Its adjacent mgon khang was visited by the 5th Dalai Lama in 1654; cf. DL3 / 230a4–5. As part of old lHa-pa territory, Khol-ma is registered as religious estate of the G[ye]-re gSang-sngags pho-brang in the 1830 Tax Survey (CT 178) remaining so probably up until the mid-20th century.
30 Cf. NR 68.1f. He studied extensively with mkhas pa Byang-chub-dar. He passed away at 'On-dul spyil-dkar of Mon. The commemorative service and reliquaries of his were executed and raised by 'Jam-dbyangs rin po che.
31 He went to Mongolia, serving as tutor at the Yuan court, where he contracted smallpox and died age 26.
32 He passed away age five.
33 Sloh dpon Shes-rab bSod-nams received from lHa Rin-chen rgyal-po teachings in the cycles of gNyos and bKa'-brgyud cycles. Age 12, at the Mongol court he met dishi Kun-dga' bio-gros rgyal-mtshan (1299–1327). He became a specialist in Hevajra.
33 Cf. NR 70.3–86.3. Also known as ‘Jam-dbyangs Nam-mkha’ dpal-bzang. He early received the cycles of the ancestral gNyas lo tsā ba. Age 11, he went to the skYor-mo-lung (1338), where he was ordained in the presence of the 9th throne-holder Shes-rab rdo-rje. Here he also completed his final ordination. At Yol-bu Ri-gong,* he went into the presence of Gu-ru bsTan-tsen (= bSam-gtan) rin-chen. He thereupon went into the presence of spyan snga rDo-rje rgyal-mtshan at 'Bri-gung. He there executed an extensive religious offering feast for the congregation, strengthening again the old skYuru-ga – gNyas bonds. Returning to Gye-re to practice spiritual realization, he later invited the 9th skYor-mo-lung-pa throne-holder to Gye-re. In 1349, warring conflicts broke out between the Sa-skya dpon chen dBang-[phug] btsan-[gr] grus and khris dpon Byang-[chub] rgyal-mtshan. 1350, Ta'i si tu Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan was invited to Gye-re dgon-pa [i.e. Iha-khang]. The latter requested him to ensure happiness in his realm on an universal level, in particular requested him to safeguard and provide service to whose under the Iha-pa political jurisdiction (i.e. srid la rtags (= gtags) pa rnam khyed kyi (= kyis) skyon bran mdzad)** to which he acquiesced. In 1358, he was invited by Yag-sde Pan-chen (1299–1378 A.D.) and slob dpon bDe-legs to the hermitage on Ri-gshogs where they revolved the Wheel of Dharma. At the hermitage of rTse-rgyal, he erected a gezims khang and requested Yag-sde Pan-chen to take up residence. At this point (ca. 1358–64 A.D.), an all-out warfare broke out which entailed warring conflicts between family members and between master and servant (among the hermitage of 1299-1378 A.D.) and slob dpon rNams Ges-ge (1207-78) of the Shangs-pa l'Nags-ma. People of the districts (of gTsang-po with sKyid-chu in Chu-shur) seized the hermitage was est. by one of the master and servant (among the hermitage of 1299-1378 A.D.) and slob dpon Chos-rgyal ruled as secular leader. Other suggests a temporal ruler of skYid-smad such as gNam-lgangs (= Uang or 'Jang of gNam, llang in present-day gNam district: 29°27'N 90°53'E).*** Ha-ra-sa (i.e. Ha-rva-sa of Chu-shur, located: 29°22'N 90°45'E; cf. also CT 178–80) requested for and sought refuge in the temple (of Gye-re).

* The famous Yol-phu ri-gong hermitage e.g. treasured a self-created statue of Mahākāla and the retreat site was situated on the opposite side (i.e. southern bank, in present-day Bye-nub xiang, at 29°20'N 90°34'E) opposite the Gye-re Valley in Chu-shur rdzong; cf. Taranātha rnam thar 127b3-5; CT 174. Seat of Sangs-rgyas gnyan-ston Chos kyi shes-rab (1175–1255) and his pupil Sangs-rgyas ston-pa brTson-'grus seng-ge (1207–78) of the Shangs-pa bka’-brgyud-pa, the latter also called Ya-ngal sgo-m-chen or Ri-gong-pa. See also rJe bsun Kun dga’ grol mchog rnam thar 106. The latter’s patrons of gZad Yol suggests that Yol-bu Ri-gong (abbr. Ri-gong) of Yol-phu was located in gZad district. Cf. Sangs rgyas ston pa rnam thar 257, 264 and Shangs ston rnam thar 280.

** The reading Iha-sa is retained by Petech (1990: 21), but this seems untenable.

*** Dum-bu-ri hermitage was est. by one of the rDo-rje phag-mo incarnates, later it was a Bo-dong seat. Other suggests a different location for the important hermitage of Dum-bu-ri.

**** In 'Jang grong tsho of gNam xiang, a 'Jang-dgon dgon-pa was established by the 15th-cent. 'Jam-dbyangs mNgon-mkhyen-pa. The site had close relationships to the adjacent Gye-re dgon-pa; cf. Bya-rigs-pa 2000a; HSLG Vol. 8: 9–11.

34 He died in his infancy.

35 NR 86.3f. Slob dpon Chos-rgyal ruled as secular leader.

36 Of sNa-dkar-rtsa. She was sister to dpon chen Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan.

37 His birth date is wrongly sitated to sa byi, untenable due to his father’s age and since he passed away age 27 in 1384, his birth year must be situated to lcags byi or 1360. He was trained in the gNyas cycles in the presence of his uncle Nam-mkha’ dpal-bzang.

38 Also known as IHa-sa (=pa) dpon Grags-pa bsod-nams. He became temporal ruler of IHa-sa (= the lHa-pa-pa).

39 NR 87.5-94.1. Full name Rin po che Kun-dga’ rin-chen rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po. Age 12, in the presence of his uncle Nam-mkha’ dpal-bzang he was ordained, wherefrom he also heard the key gNyas cycles. In 1383, he occupied the chair of the Gye-re seat. In 1385, he conducted the commemorative service upon the demise of his uncle. He erected a bkra shis sgo mangs ossuary containing his uncle’s remains. Upon the caitya the deities of the Guhyasamāya tantra were depicted and on the partsa were countless statues of bKa’-brgyud-pa teachers and of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. At
that point (a part of? Gye-re dgon-pa) called sGom-pa Chos-rgyal dgon-pa* was destroyed by fire. In 1388, he erected a nang rten of Rin po che bDe-gshegs-pa installed in the lHa-khang. Thereupon the see was repaired. In the presence of chos rje Kun-bkra, he listened to and received empowerment and upadeśa related to the Sāṃvara and Vajrabhairava cycles, etc. In the presence of Thams-cad mkhyen-pa Blo-bzang grags-pa (i.e. bTsong-kha-pa), he received lam rim and esoteric teachings and with Rin-bzang, teachings on longevity, etc. In the presence of the 10th "Bri-gung skyan snga Chos kyi rgyal-po (1335–1407/19 A.D.), he received the five-fold Mahāmudrā. Later, he received from 'Bri-phyug-pa Śākya bzang-po e.g. the cycle of Vajrabhairava. He remained on the seat for 30 years. He thereupon retired, and erected a gzims khang recluse at Ri-gshogs rTse-rgyal where he practised spiritual attainment related to Guhyasamāyā and Vajrabhairava, etc.

* The name may also refer to a part of the secular residence, later known as Chos-rgyal Nor-bzang pho-brang, cf. App. II: Chap. 1.4. For a different construe of the text, see Akeser 2005.

\textsuperscript{40} "N/R 94.5f. He too should take over secular power.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Map 3. Main stations of the gNyos clan settlement history}
\end{center}
After its completion in 1244/46 by lHa Rin-chen rgyal-po, the initial abbatial (uncle-nephew) lineage included

[I] lHa Rin-chen rgyal-po (1201–70 A.D.; tenure: 1244/46–1270)
[III] Bla-ma Dar-ma rgyal-po (b. 1249 A.D.; tenure: 1273–1281)
[IV] mKhas pa Byang-chub-dar (tenure: 1281–1287)
[V] gZi-brjid rgyal-po (1277–1329 A.D.; tenure: 1287–1329)*
[VIII] dPon po rin-po che bSod-nams dpal-bzang (tenure from 1413)

VS 163 (GY 554–55 at variance; GD 62a6–b2) has:

Deb dmar 126 briefly has as the secular seat:
[1.] Bla-ma Dar-ma rgyal-po [2.] dbon po gZi-brjid rgyal-po.

Deb dmar 126 briefly has as the secular seat:
[1.] Bla-ma Dar-ma rgyal-po [2.] dbon po gZi-brjid rgyal-po.

The religious throne: [1.] dBge-brag-pa Tshul-khrims gZhon-nu**** [2.] ‘Jam-dbyangs gZi-brjid rgyal-po.

It is unclear when the abbatial Gye-re dgon-pa line was discontinued. We possess little or no information on the abbatial successor into the 16th century. It thus was not replaced by the gSangs-sngags pho-brang dgon-pa and its abbatial line. After the old Gye-re dgon-pa went into decay after a fire in the 1380’s, it is reported that it was the 7th throne-holder Gye-re bka’-bzhi-pa Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan – a student of bTsong-kha-pa – who ca. 1388 A.D. renovated the old Gye-re dgon-pa and – in addition – erected the Gye-re gSangs-sngags pho-brang dgon-pa (cf. e.g. KD-II 91b3–4; he was supported by the sNe’u gzhi ka; in the 17th cent., it accommodated ca. 37 monks; KD-IV 66a1–2 maintains that it was established by one slob dpon Dharmaśrī). The monastery of gSangs-sngags pho-brang (now in ruins, below Fig. 24) was located in a side valley of Upper Gye-re in sKyid-smad (App II: Map 3a, b). None of its tenants evidently were of gNyos kin or affiliated. As a dBge-lugs institution, it should replace the original construction and its initial and little-known abbatial succession up until the 17th century is as follows (based upon Vaidūrya ser po 163), but without known tenancies:

* It is unclear who ruled between 1329–1338 or whether the seat was vacant.
** Cf. Blo gros seng ge nman thar 34a5, 46.1, 48.5.
*** Gye-re bKa’-bzhi-pa lHa-pa Sangs-rgyas dbang-phyug was a pupil of Tsong-kha-pa and during his tenure it turned into a dBge-lugs institution. Cf. sKyor lung chos byang 34a; GD 44b4.
**** He is registered as a pupil of lHa-nang-pa. There is reason to believe that the first tenant is identical with dbon Shar-gling-pa; cf. gNyos gdung rabs 37.5, 39.3.
7.3 G[y]e-re gSang-sngags pho-brang

[I] Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan (1370–1421) [= 7th Gye-re dgon-pa throne-holder]

[II] bSam-gtan-mchog (During his tenure? in 1430, 'Gos lo tsâ ha received gNyas-related teachings from a lHa-pa rin po che rDo-rje bla-ma; cf 'Gos lo rnam thar 14b4–5)

[III] Rab 'byams pa Thub-bstan rnam-rgyal

[IV] Chos-grags lHa-dbang

[V] Zhang-mkhar-ba

[VI] gSer-'od-pa

[VII] sTod-lung Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin

[VIII] Gye-re Byang-pa

[IX] Nags-shod dGra-lha

[X] sTod-lung Thang-phu-pa

[XI] 'Phan-po bKra-shis rgya-mtsho

[XII] Zhang-mda' Blo-bzang chos-rgyal

[XIII] 'Phyong-rgyas bKra-shis phun-tshogs

[XIV] Kham-pa Kun-rig (tenure ca. 1690’s).

gSang-sngags dgon-pa was linked with the bDe-yangs, Byes, and Byang-rtse colleges of Se-ra.

23a, b, c. Three leading representatives of the gNyas lineage: gNyas-ston Grags-pa 'od-zer (14th cent.) (23a), gNyas lo tsâ ha (11th cent.) (23b) and gTer-bdag gling-pa (1646–1714)
24. Ruins of the Gye-re gSang-sngags dgon-pa in the upper part of the Gye-re-valley (see also App. II: Map 3b) (2002)

25. Stone engraving of a not closer identified figure to be found in the ruins of Gye-re dgon-pa

26. The ancient site of Khol-ma in sKyid-smad

Photo: Google Earth 2007
V.8 The Abbatial Succession of the Monastic Seats and Seminars of gSang-phu Ne’u-thog and sKyor-mo-lung

Spiritually and organizationally related to Tshal Gung-thang vihāra and its colleges, it may be deemed convenient to offer the abbatial lineage of two minor, but significant centres or colleges of erudition and learning in medieval Tibet, the gSang-phu Ne’u-thog and sKyor-mo-lung (resp. influenced or controlled by the rNgog and the sBal clans): they constituted two out of in all six centers of erudition or the chos grva chen po drug of the dBu’s province (also nyt ma dbus phyogs kyi mtshan nyid chos grva chen po) established in the 11th to the 13th century, the remaining being Zul-phu, dGa’-ba-gdong and bDe-ba-can as well as Gung-thang (i.e. Chos’ khor-gling). These seats exerted signal influence on the formation of the ensuing establishments of the dGe-lugs-pa key monasteries in the 15th century, being later incorporated into their network. The lists are merely meant to facilitate easy access for the readers and their abbot lines should by no means be considered final, being mainly based upon a selected number of primary and secondary sources. The seminars chosen were related to Tshal either through longish spiritual or doctrinal bonds with a long scholarly interaction or through being regarded as dependencies. Most of these seminars and colleges played a role into the 20th century, whereas the importance of others like Zul-phu already faded a number of centuries earlier.

V.8.1. The Abbatial Succession of the gSang-phu Ne’u-thog Seminar

Based upon

Primary Sources:

Deb ther sngon po (DN); Deb ther dmar po (DM); rGya bod chos ’byung (GB); rGya bod yig tshang (GY);
mKhas pa’i dga’ ston (KT); Yar lung chos ’byung (YL); Vaidārya ser po (VS); dPog bsam lion bzang (PS);
Bod kyi deb ther (BD); gSang phu gdan rabs (cf. Onoda 1989, 1990); dGa’ ldan chos ’byung (GD); JCh;
nKa’ gdamgs chos ’byung bKs ’IV (KD bKs ’IV); rKa’ gdamgs gcies buis (CT); rNgog lo bstan hskyangs (NGL);
Bla sprul deb gzhung (BP); Lam rim bla ma brgyud rnam thar (LRNT); Rva smad gdan rabs (RM)

Secondary Sources:

Mng mdzod (MD); Mi sna (MN); lHa sa’i dgon tho (HS); HSLG; Dung dkar tshig mdzod (DK)

The gSang-phu Ne’u-thog monastery was erected 1073 A.D. by rNgog Legs-pa’i shes-rab, a disciple of Atiśa. Initially, the seat comprised 500 pupils. Considered the bod yul bshad grva’i thog ma and successively treated as a rDo-rje-gdan gyvis pa, it developed into the most influential college and center of erudition and hermeneutics in the ensuing centuries, producing a number of the leading scholars in Tibet such as rNgog Blo-lidan shes-rab (1059–1109) and Phyva-ba Chos kyi seng-ge (1109–1169), both founding figures in Tibetan scholasticism. In the first part of the 1100’s, the gSang-phu seat split into two branches, known as Gling-stod and Gling-smad, Upper and Lower Monastery. It is generally argued that Gling-stod was the seat of rNgog Legs-pa’i shes-rab and the Gling-smad that of the Phyva-ba line, in other words what later should be considered Sa-skya and rKa’-gdamgs colleges respectively. The gSang-phu district in sKyid-smad was in the 13th and 14th centuries a mi sde under Tshal (cf. Part I: Map 1). Down through history a cluster of in total 11 grva tshang or colleges, distributed with four colleges to the Upper Monastery and up to seven colleges to the Lower Monastery existed within the precinct dominated by the dGe-lugs and Sa-skya sect. In most recent time prior to its destruction, gSang-phu was attached to and administered by rVa-ba-stod.

The following list is far from exhaustive and is basically hinged upon the succession as presented by Shunzo Onoda (1989, 1990) and van der Kuijip (1987; for the initial throne-holders), to which occasionally variant readings in other lists are added. For further chronological details one may con-veniently refer to the discussions and indexes of each individual abbot given by the above scholars, yet the list of names and tenure of each individual is evidently still open to improvement.
gSang-phu Ne’u-thog mkhan rabs

I  rNgog Legs-pa’i shes-rab¹
II  rNgog Blo-ldan Shes-rab (1059–1109; rl. –1109)⁴
III Zhang Tshes-spong Chos kyi bla-ma (rl. 32 years; 1109–1140)
IV gNyal-ba Ri[l]-lu (rl. 2 years; 1140–1141)
V  rNam-phar-ba (~ rNam-bar-pa; gNas-[g]sar-pa) (rl. 8 years; abbotship starts 1151 [sic])
VI Phya-ba Chos kyi seng-ge (1109–1169; rl. 18 years)
VII rTsags (~ rTsad) dbang-phyug seng-ge (rl. 5 years)
[VIII] gTsang-pa ’Jam-dpal seng-ge (rl. 13 years)⁵

[Division into two Branches:]

Gling-smad

I  gNyal-ba Dad-pa bzang-po (rl. 5 years)
II  ’Jam rTsan-ne (rl. 7 years)
III gZad-pa Dar-ma’-od (rl. 30 years)
IV gZad-pa Don-grub
V  gTsang-pa Jo-nam (rl. 15 years)
VI Rog (rl. 6 months)
VII Slob dpon ’Od-zer mgon-po (rl. 32 (~35) years)

VIII  ’Jam-dbyangs Šäkya gzhon-nu (rl. 27/28 years)
IX rGya-ma bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan (rl. 1293–1301)
X  mNyal-ba Phyogs-las rnam-rgyal (rl. 8 years; 1301–09)
XI Yar-brog-pa gZhon-nu rgyal-mtshan (var. Yong-tan rgyal-mtshan; rl. 1 (~14) months)
XII rGya[s]-sde-pa gZhon-nu seng-ge (rl. 8 years)
XIII gTsang-dkar (rl. 3 years)

XIV Blo-gros seng-ge (rl. 17 years)
XV Dar-dbang (rl. 3 years)
XVI Bła-ma ye-shes (10 years)
XVII Shes-rab rgyal-mtshan (rl. 3 years)
XVIII gZhon-nu blo-ldan (rl. 6 years)
XIX Blo-gros brtan-pa (rl. 3 years)
XX Tshad-ma sngon-po (5 years)
XXI bSod-nams’-phel (rl. 19 years)⁷
XXII Seng-ge rgyal-mtshan (rl. 8 years)
XXIII bSam-gtan bzang-po (7 years)

XXIV Sangs-rgyas rgyal-mtshan (rl. 10 years)⁹
XXV brTson-’grus seng-ge (6 years)

Gling-stod

I  gZhu-ston Hral-mo (rl. 7/9 years)
II  Blo-gros’bar (rl. 5 years)
III gNyal-zhig ’Jam-dpal seng-ge (rl. 8 years)
IV rGya ’Phying-ru-ba Shes-rab dbang-phyug (rl. 18 years)
V  Chu-mig-pa Seng-ge-dpal (rl. 18 years)
VI  IDan-ma Grags-rin (rl. 8 years)
VII  IHo-brag-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan
(Var. Seng-ge; rl. 22 years [in all])

VIII Nyan[g]–stod Ye-shes mgon-po (rl. 7 years)
IX IHo-brag-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan
X  bTsan[g]-dgon-pa gZhon-nu bsam-gtan (rl. 20 years)
XI  Bla-brag-pa Chos-dpal rgyal-mtshan (rl. 6 years; 1320’s)
XII  Chos-grags gnyis-pa gZhon-nu rin-chen (rl. 12 years)
XIII  IHa-ston zhig-pa bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan (rl. 17 years)

XIV Yang-rtsa-ba Tshul-khrims bzang-po (5 years)
XV  IHa-yul-ba Grags-pa bshes-gnyen (13 years)
XVI Bon-ston Shes-rab bzang-po (rl. 7 years)
XVII ’Jam-dbyangs Rin-chen grags-pa (rl. 7 years)
XVIII dKa’-bzhi-ba Yong-tan rgya-mtsho (rl. 14 years)⁶
XIX dKon-mchog tshul-khrims (rl. 7 years)
XX  Rin-chen rnam-rgyal (rl. 22 years)
XXI Sangs-rgyas ’Od-chen-pa (rl. 6 years)
XXII Grags-pa-dpal (5 years)
XXIII dBon-po dge-ba dKon-mchog rgya-mtsho (rl. 17 years)⁸
XXIV Mi-nyag Rin-chen rgya-mtsho / bzang-po
(rl. 7 months)
XXV dPal-ldan seng-ge (rl. 11 years)
XXVI Grva-chung-pa Yon-tan rgya-mtsho
   (rl. 5 years)\(^{10}\)

XXVII gSang-mdla'-ba Sangs-rgyas chos-skyong

XXVIII Gling-smad-pa Shes-rab dpal-ldan
   (rl. 3 years = ca. 1447–49)\(^{11}\)

XXIX gTsang-pa Sangs-rgyas bzang-po

XXX rJe'i dbon Blo-bzang nyi-ma (1439–92)

XXXI Shangs dGe'-phel-ba Phyogs-las 'od-zer
   (1439-1500, rl. 11 years)\(^{12}\)

XXXII gSang-mdla' Chos-rgyal
   (rl. 1 year)

XXXIII sTag-ston Kun-dga' dpal-'byor\(^{13}\)

XXXIV Ra-chung-ba Yon-tan chos-'phel (13 years)

XXXV Tshogs-chen Kun-dga' dbang-phyug
   (rl. 13 years)

XXXVII Gung-ru Rin-chen byang-chub

XXXVIII rTses-thang-pa Nam-mkha'
   brtan-pa

XXXIX Tsal-pa Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan

XXXI gTsang Chos-lung-pa
   bSod-nams legs-mchog

XXXII A-mdo-ba rDo-rje seng-ge

XXXIII gSang-'brog-pa rGyal-ba 'od-zer\(^{14}\)

XXXIV rTa-nag-pa Nam-mkha'
   chos-'phel (rl. 13 years)

XXXV mNga'-ris-pa Legs-pa don-grub\(^{15}\)
   (rl. 4 years; ca. 1549)

XXXVI gZhung-pa Kun-dga' 'od-srung
   (rl. 5 years)

XXXVII Zha-lu-pa sMon-lam-dpal
   (rl. 3 years)

XXXVIII Shes-rab nyi-ma (rl. 1 year)

XXXIX rTses-thang-pa Blo-gros
   'byung-gnas (rl. 17 years)

XXXX Shangs-pa Shes-rab gro-dpal
   (rl. 26 years)

XXXXI mNga'-ris Ratnadhvadza
   (rl. 3 years)

XXXXII mNyes-thang-pa Blo-gros
   rgya-mtsho\(^{16}\)

XXXXIII rTses-thang-pa dPal-ldan
   blo-gros

XXXXIV Zha-lu-pa bsTan-pa rab-rgyas

XXXXV Gung-ru 'Bro-g-khang-pa
   bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan

XXXXVI Byams-pa Kun-dga'
   'byung-gnas

XXXXVII sGrom-lding-pa
   Rin-chen bkra-shis

XXXXVIII mNyes-thang-pa Blo-gros
   rgya-mtsho (second term?)\(^{17}\)

XXXXIX bSam-yas-pa dKon-mchog
   dpal-'byor

L. Gong-dkar Kun-dga' dbang-rgyal

[The last generations of abbots (from the 17th cent. onwards) until the decay and destruction of this college are still unrecorded]
Notes to Table 8.1:

1 This *gdan rabs* used by Onoda is entitled *dPal ldan gSang phu’i gdan rabs gsal ba’i me long* (Otani Catalogue no. 13981) written by Byams-pa Kun-dga’ ’byung-gnas, the 46th Gling-stod abbot who was also responsible for the erection of the Dvags-po college at gSang-phu. Two additional primary sources for the *gdan rabs* history of the gSang-phu seat are still not available: Nyi-thang [sMan-rgyal] Ngag-dbang gzhon-nu bsTan-pa’i n yi-ma’s (considered a sprul sku of Gling-stod Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho) gSang phu’i gdan rabs, as well as zhab sdrung Rin-chen ’byor-ldan’s gSang phu’i gdan rabs as listed by A-khu in his Rare Bibliographical List.

Another source of some relevance for the religious history and seat of gSang-phu is *gSang phu’i chos srung bskang rim* by mkhyen-rab bsTan-pa’i chos’ phel (1840–1908).

The bstan skyong or protector deity *(srung ma)* of gSang-phu spyi so bstan rgyod gnod sbyin bSe-khrab-can. A beautiful thangka of the protector was executed in 1626, and hung up in gSang-phu by Rong-po sKal-ldan rgya-mtsho (1607–77 A.D.) during his apprenticeship there; cf. sKal ldan rgya mtsho rnam thar 8. See also Dam can Chos srung rgya mtsho by the 5th Dalai Lama in his Vol. 11 (Coll. Works).

2 We shall not list here the different colleges such as gSang-phu Nag-rong rgya tshang (later merged with Shar-rte grya tshang in dGa’-ldan); for its mkhan rabs; cf Shar rtshe chos’ byung 714–17. see also RM 64–5.

3 Rightly considered the father of Tibetan scholasticism. For his biography, see CT 147f, CD 47b6f. He descended from Yar-brog Do.

4 He was the son of the lay ruler Chos-skysabs, younger brother of Legs-pa’i shes-rab. Cf. GD 47a5f.

5 YL 130.7–8 registers this pupil of Jam btsan-ne followed by ’Dzin-ston as the first and second Gling-smad abbots. dGe bshes’ Jam-seng may well have been a pupil of ’Jig-rten mgon-po; cf. ’Jig rten mgon po rnam thar II (B) 130.2, 154.5–6.

6 Cf. GD 45b4f. During his tenure Klong-chen rab-byams-pa held debates in the 1350’s at gSang-phu.

7 During his tenure, Re-mda’-ba met both the XXIst Gling-smad and Gling-stod throne-holders.

8 Cf. mkhyen rab rnam thar 3a.

9 Cf. mkhyen rab rnam thar 3a.

10 Under him (rl. ca. mid-1430’s) studied the young mKhas-grub Shar-rab rab’ jam桑s-rgyas seng-ge (1427–70); cf. Sangs rgyas seng ge rnam thar 3a5–b1.

11 Pandita Shes-rab dpal-ldan was the founder of the Sa-skya-pa monastery Rva-ba-smad (located in sKyid-shongs of present-day Gong-dkar county; cf. RM 64f. Go-rams-pa bSod-nams seng-ge (1429–89) met him in lHa-sa ca. 1449; cf. bSod nam seng ge rnam thar 10.1.


13 He was on the throne in 1490; cf. bSod names seng ge rnam thar 77.6.

14 He was on the throne in 1490; cf. bSod names seng ge rnam thar 77.6.

15 During his tenure, the 3rd Bras-spungs chos rje bSod-nams rgya-mtsho took his dge tshul vow; DL3 33a2.


17 Also Blo-gros rgya-mtshan. He was on the throne in 1594. It was during his tenure that dPal’-byor lhun-grub (1561–1637) conducted repairs at Nyi-ma-thang.

18 His dates are 1573–1644 A.D. He held several seats simultaneously: 1618 sKyor-mo-lung, 1619 gSang-phu, 1620 rDzin-phyi, 1621 gSang-sngags-mkhar, and 1625 dGa’-ldan; cf. dKon mchog chos’ phel rnam thar 13a7. He conducted repair work at gSang-phu in 1629.

19 Instead of a second term of the 42nd throne-holder, it may be another namesake, namely the chos rje lHa-rje Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho active in the 1660’s, registered in DL5 338b2–3.
V.8.2 The Abbotial Succession of the sKyor-mo-lung chos sde

Based upon

Primary sources:

sKyor lung chos 'byung (KL); Yar lung chos 'byung (YL); lHa nang pa'i rnam thar (HNT); hKa' gDams
chos 'byung I–IV (KD I–IV); rGya bod chos 'byung (GB); rGya bod yig tshang (GY); Myung chos 'byung (MY);
'Dul ba'i chos 'byung I–II (DCH I–II); dGa' ldan chos 'byung (GD); mkhas pa'i dga' ston (KT);
lHo rong chos 'byung (HR); Vaidûrya ser po (VS); bsTan risis nyin bved (TT); 'Brug chos 'byung (BCh);
Deb ther sngon po (DN); Zul phu mkhan rnam thar (ZK); Klông rdo gShungs 'hum II (KS); JCh;
Tsung khâ pa'i rnam thar (TK); rNgog lo bstan bskyangs (NGL); dBu ma'i byung tshul (BU);
Bod kyi deb ther (BD); DL1, DL2, DL3, DL4, DL5

Secondary Sources:

Ming mzdod (MD); Mi sna (MN); lHa sa'i dgon tho (HS); HSLG; Dung dkar tshig mzdod (DK)

The sKyor-mo-[k]lung chos sde located in present-day sTod-lung bDe-chen rdzong/xian² was a famous Vinaya institution and school associated with the bKa'-gdams-pa tradition, whose abbotial seat over several centuries was occupied by a nephew lineage of the mNga'-ris sBal-ti (~ Val-ti) clan. The following abbotial list is mainly based upon KL (until the 21st abbot) and DCH-I and DCH-II. As a center of erudition, scholasticism and hermeneutics,³ in the period up to the close of the 15th century, it counted among the six main seats (gdan sa, also grva sa) of erudition in Central Tibet, which were reckoned both as a center of hermeneutics (bshad grva) and as a center of spiritual attainment (sgrub grva), which under the triad: dGa' sKyor Zul respectively under the triad: bDe gSang Gung in all comprised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dGa'-ba-gdong⁴</th>
<th>sKyor-mo-lung</th>
<th>Zul-phu⁵</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[sNye-thang] bDe-ba-can⁶</td>
<td>gSang-phu Ne'u-thon</td>
<td>Gung-thang Chos-'khor-gling⁷</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

where Zul-phu and dGa'-ba-gdong thus seem to have been associated with sKyor-mo-lung and may be regarded as branch settlements of the latter. bDe-ba-can and Chos-'khor-gling respectively were erected as dependencies on the initiative of the gSang-phu throne-holders. In the 15th century, sKyor-mo-lung turned into a dGe-lugs institution and thus was incorporated into the latter’s monastic turnus network. sKyor-mo-lung main curricula was Vinaya being considered the ‘dul bstan bye ba’i byung gnas. The sKyor-lung chos skyong or Protector is known as Yon-tan Bya-rgod thang-nag.

Following the end of the sBal-ti clan’s dominance (end of 1520’s), the dpon sa of sKyor-mo-lung was headed by a branch line of Phag-mo-gru-pa ruler of sNe'u-gdong-rtshe Ngag-dbang bKra-shis grags-pa (1488–1564), who was married to Sangs-rgyas dpal-'dzens-ma, the powerful sKyor-mo-lung sa skyong ma from the sNel-pa house (see Table 12.1, fn. 10). It coincided with the control of the seat through the ascent of the celebrated Pan-chen bSod-nams grags-pa as throne-holder and the on-going presence of dGe-lugs-pa at the seat.⁸ In the 17th century sKyor-mo-lung accommodated three colleges: Khyams-pa. Phug-khang-pa and mTshan-nyid-pa set up in accordance with dGe-lugs monastic pattern." During the sweeping changes in recent times, the monastery was destroyed in the wake of the excesses of the Cultural Revolution; in 1989 it underwent a minor renovation. The present monastery can still boast of some well-preserved murals. Formerly (mid-20th cent.), it accommodated ca. 120 monks, today it is reduced to ca. 18. Over long periods of the most recent centuries (starting from the 20th throne-holder), the monastic administrator and patron was the sKyor-mo-lung mNga’-ris sprul sku line, the last embodiment being bsTan-'dzin chos-rgyal (b. 1946) – younger brother of the 14th Dalai Lama.
sKyor-mo-lung mkhan rabs

Father: sBal-ti Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan
Born in Shel-dkar of gZhung,\(^{11}\) he erected the sTod-lung Beng-smad Ra-mo-che monastery,\(^{12}\) raised upon a former 'Bring *tsho smad* pa'i lha-khang in 1168. It was called the Dri-gtsang-khang of Beng (= Brang[gl]) Ra-mo-che and in 1169 A.D., he established the sKyor-mo-lung chos sde in the close vicinity.
He was ordained in the presence of dge bshes rGya Nya-mo Ku-ru, sMar-lung-sgang-pa and sPangs-dgongs-pa. Becoming abbot of both institutions, his tenure as the sKyor-mo-lung abbot lasted 1169–1215 A.D.\(^{13}\) He also practiced at Thag-ma lha-khang in sTod-lung,\(^{14}\) and took over the institution at the Ra-mo-che bZhi-sde in the 12\(^{th}\) century known as Ra-sa sPang-lung dgon-pa; cf. Tables V. 9 below.
The gNys master, rJe lHa-nang-pa a.k.a. gZi-bjid-dpal (1164–1224) studied here and was ordained in the presence of dGra-bcom-pa.\(^ {15}\) In 1202, Sangs-rgyas sgom-pa rDo-rje gzhon-nu (of gZhung) was ordained in his presence.\(^ {16}\) Lo ras-pa dBang-phyug brtson-'grus (similarly descending from gZhung) was ordained in the presence of sBal-ti at sKyor-mo-lung; also 'Gro-mgon *rin po che* Byang-chub-'od / dBang-phyug-'od (1186–1259 A.D.) of the bKa 'gdamgs gzhung drug transmission line in the same year. Among other figures that were ordained under him: Sangs-rgyas dbon-gzhon (1171–1264) of the dGyer clan received his final ordination in sBal-ti’s presence,\(^ {17}\) and Sangs-rgyas sgom-pa rDo-rje gzhon-nu. Finally, Shud-phu mKhan-chen Nam-mkha’ seng-ge was ordained age 13 in the presence of Jo-sras.\(^ {18}\)

II Tshul-khrims brtson-'grus (1172–1232)
Father: sBal-ti lHa-rje Blo-brtan
Tenure: 1215–1232

III Zhig-po Tshul-khrims-'od *alias* Zhig-po Shes-rab seng-ge (1181–1253)
Father: sBal-ti Mon-chung
Tenure: 1232–1253
During his successful tenure in 1244, the Mongols allegedly donated sKyor-mo-lung landed estates (covering 100 *hor dud*) that included (lHa-sdings) Ram-pa, gZhong-pa (lHa-chu) and Beng (= Brang)-gzhon. It may have followed in the wake of the participation of this throne-holder when 'Phags-pa Bla-ma was ordained at neighbouring Zul-phu monastery and who studied under this throne-holder.\(^ {19}\) They were also tendered edicts, tax and corvee exemption. This abbot later established dGa'-ba-gdong around the mid-1240’s.\(^ {20}\) He also established the Phug-khang-pa college at sKyor-mo-lung (*VS*).

IV gZhon-nu brtson-'grus (1213–1281)
Father: sBal-ti Dar-shi
Tenure: 1253–1281

V Thams-cad mkhyen-pa brTson-'grus 'byung-gnas (1248–1284)
Father: sBal-ti Dar-po
Tenure: 1281–1284
During the Chu-mig chos-'khor (in 1276), he received the epithet “Allknowing.” Under him studied 'Jam-dbyangs Šákya gzhon-nu and Chos-'khor gling-pa Don-grub-dpal.

VI Byang-chub-sems Rin-ch'en 'byung-gnas’/Byung-gnas rin-ch'en (1234–1290)
Father: sBal-ti dBang-phyug seng-ge
Tenure: 1284–1290
Appendix V: Tables 7-10

During his tenure at sKyor-mo-lung, the Kun-dga’-ra-ba (or library) was built. The 5th throne-holder of Ge-re dgon-pa gZi-brjed rgyal-po in 1283–84 was ordained in the presence of this throne-holder.

VII bZod-pa dpal-ba (1262–1310)
Father: sBal-ti dBang-phyug seng-ge
Tenure: 1290–1310

VIII dBang-phyug shes-rab (1268–1338)
Father: sBal-ti dNgos-grub-mgon
Tenure: 1310–1335

IX Shes-rab rdo-rje (1294–1372)
Father: sBal-ti Grags-pa
1st Tenure: 1335–1342
During his tenure, around 1337, lHo-brag grub chen Nam-mkha’ rgyal-mtshan (1326–1401) received Vinaya teachings at sKyor-mo-lung in the presence of Sangs-rgyas dbon-ba. During his first tenure, the 6th Gye-re dgon-pa throne-holder Nam-mkha’ dpal-bzang (1328–85) requested for ordination in 1338. Shes-rab rdo-rje inter alia resided in Gye-re dgon-pa between 1342–49. In 1342, he had become an ascetic.
2nd Tenure: 1349–1357
Due to the wish of the 10th throne-holder to become a kun spangs, the 9th resumed the throne in 1349. If this is counted as a separate entry in the abbatial succession then this counts as the 11th abbotship and the rest mutatis mutandis. 1357 A.D. he went to Chos-sdings-dpal ri khrod to practise asceticism. During his tenure, due to the fightings in 1352 between the ’Bri-gung-pa and the Phaggru-pa, the sKyor-mo-lung chos sde was destroyed by the ’Bri-gung army.

X Kun-dga’ ’byung-gnas (1308–1353)
Father: sBal-ti Phur-tsa
Tenure: 1342–1349
After the 10th throne-holder, the 9th Throne-holder Shes-rab rdo-rje again held tenure (see above). This tenureship may therefore count as the 11th abbotship.

XI bKa’-bzhi-pa Blo-gros bzang-po alias Blo-gsal (1326–1409)
Father: sBal-ti bSod-nams rgyal-po
Tenure: 1357–1386
The throne-oldcr considered the greatest Vinaya teacher of his time. During his tenure, bTsong-kha-pa and Rong-ston Šākya rgyal-mtshan (1367/69–1449) studied Vinaya at sKyor-mo-lung. It was from this period that sKyor-mo-lung turned into a dGe-lugs-pa seat. The throne-holder acted as teacher to ‘dul ’dzin Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan and chos rje bKa’-shis dpal-ldan, the founder of ’Bras-spungs. He ascended the throne through the initiative of Ta’i si-tu.

XII dGongs-pa gsal-ba (1346–1406)
Father: sBal-ti bSod-nams rgyal-po
Tenure: 1386–1401

XIII Chos-skyong [Nam-mkha’] bzang-po (1368–1419)
Father: Brother of bKa’-bzhi Blo-gros bzang-po: sBal-ti Don-grub bzang-po. Tenure: 1401–1419. After his tenancy, he took over the see at the dependency Chos-dpal. During this throne-holder, ’Gos lo tsà ba studied with bSam-gtan don-grub at sKyor-mo-lung (’Gos lo 8a$b–b4).

XIV Chos-rgyal dpal-bzang (1400–1483)
Father: sBal-ti Jambhala. Mother: bSod-nams. Also called ’Brog-gnas
Tenure: 1419–1469
A great Vinaya specialist. Considered an incarnation of the 9th/11th throne-holder Shes-rab rdo-rje. Pupil of bTsong-kha-pa (K-I 946-95a2). From 1469 until 1483, he practised asceticism at the sKyor-mo-lung hermitic dependency Chos-sdings-dpal. At the beginning of his tenure, the rGya-ma Rin-chen-sgang sphyin snga Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (1402-70 A.D.) studied siûra. During his period gSer-mdog Sâkya mchog-ldan (1428-1507) studied Vinaya following the writings of the sKyor-mo-lung masters, such as bSod-nams tshul-khrims. During his tenure sKyor-mo-lung became a dGe-legs institution. In 1419, the Beng (= Brang) Ra-mo-che and sKyor-mo-lung vihâra were renovated. Especially the murals of the gSer-khang-shod were redone.

XV Rin-chen dbang-rgyal (1446-1476)
Father: sBal-ti Nor-bzang
Tenure: 1469-1476

XVI Legs-pa bzang-po (1422-1506)
Father: sBal-ti dPal-lidan bzang-po
Tenure: 1477-1502
The last five years he lived an ascetic life (kun spangs).
(VS, GD conversely insert Legs-pa bzang-po, followed by Rin-chen dbang-rgyal).

XVII Nam-mkha' chos-bzang (1475-1514?)
Father: sBal-ti dBang-phyug shes-rab
Tenure: 1502-1514
Sedis vacantia 1515-1517 A.D.

XVIII Phun-tshogs rgyal-mtshan (1458-1527)
Tenure: 1517-1527
This was the last throne-holder stemming from the founding sBal-ti clan. He began manufacturing (1524 A.D.) a silver and gold-written bKa'-'gyur in the sKyor-mo-lung monastery.

XIX Blo-gros seng-ge (alias? Blo-gros dpal-bzang)
(VS, GD list this throne-holder as Khang-mo-che-ba Blo-gros dpal-bzang)
Tenure: 1527-1543
Since 1492, the Phag-gru administration had increased their influence in sKyor-mo-lung. Their local retainers, the sNe'u/sNel-pa ruled over sKyor-mo-lung; cf. Table V.12.1. sKyor-mo-lung was repeatedly visited (1536, 1542) by the 2nd Dalai Lama dGe-'dun rgya-mtsho.

XX Pan-chen bSod-nams grags-pa [rgyal-mtshan] dpal-bzang-po (1478-1554)
Tenure: 1543-1554
Between 1512 and 1524, this famous hierarch was active and held abbotships at rGyud-stod grva tshang; successively at Zho-sna, Nyi-sdongs, 'Bras-spungs Blo-gsal-gling and dGa'-ldan Shar-rtse. From 1529, he had occupied the throne of dGa'-ldan (as its 15th incumbent) and later of Se-ra. Ascent to the throne 1543. The sNe'u ruler leam Sangs-rgyas dpal-dzomz (see Table V.12.1) – married to the sNe'u-gdong ruling house – invited bSod-nams grags-pa to sKyor-mo-lung. The 3rd Dalai Lama was invited to sKyor-mo-lung in 1545, where the present throne-holder examined him for the final recognition (DL3 16a1f., 17a6f.), as well as served as patron. Several times (between 1541-50), sKyor-mo-lung was visited by the 16th 'Bri-gung throne-holder Rin-chen phun-tshogs and by the 8th Zhva-nag Karma-pa.

In 1554 A.D., the warring conflict at the mother seat of Phag-mo-gru-pa led to the invasion and occupation of sKyor-mo-lung by dGa'-ldan sKyid-shod-pa; it was raided the throne-holders were taken captive. The Phag-mo family was released through the mediation of the 17th 'Bri-gung throne-holder. The sKyid-shod-pa appropriated the monastery until 1561. During his tenure, the 30th dGa'-ldan throne-holder sTag-lung brag-pa Blo-gros rgya-mtsho (1546-1616/18) was ordained.
A number of the following throne-holders were recognized as reincarnations of the sprul sku lines, both the 'Bras-spungs gZims-khang gong-ma and sKyor-mo-lung mNga'-ris line, issuing from this hierarch.

XXI Chos rje Blo-bzang E-vam
Tenure: 1554–
In the 1560’s, temporary support to sKyor-mo-lung was given from the 17th 'Bri-gung-pa (see NT 61–62).

XXII? rGyal-khang-rtse-pa dPal-'byor rgya-mtsho (1526–1599)
During his tenure, sKyor-mo-lung in the mid-1570’s was raided by the sKyid-shod-pa. He was also throne-holder at Phag-mo dgon in Lo and at bTsun-mo-tshal.

XXIII? sSprul sku bSod-nams ye-shes dbang-po (1556–1592)
1. Tenure: 1566–
During his tenure, the 30th throne-holder of dGa'-ldan stag-lung brag-pa Blo-gros rgya-mtsho was ordained. In 1576, he followed in the entourage of the 3rd Dalai Lama to Mongolia. He passed away at 'Ol-kha gzhis-mkhar.

XXIV? Chos rje Rin-chen bshes-gnyen (1529–1598)

XXV? bSod-nams ye-shes dbang-po (1556–1592)
2. Tenure: 1592–

XXVI? sTag-lung Brag-pa Blo-gros rgya-mtsho (1546–1618)
Tenure: 1592–1618

XXVII? Gling-smad chos rje dKon-mchog chos-'phel (1573–1644/46)
Tenure: 1618–1644

XXVIII? Gad-kha-sa-pa Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1618/19–1655)
Tenure: 1644–1655

XXIX? bSam-grub sgang-pa Blo-bzang ngag-dbhang (1591–1663)
Tenure: 1655–1663

XXX? Co-ne Blo-bzang dpal-'bar
Tenure: 1663–

XXXI? Zhogs-pa Blo-bzang don-yod (1602–1678)
Tenure: 1678–

XXXII? sGang-mgo Ngag-dbang rgya-mtsho
Tenure: 1678–

XXXIII? Grong-gser-ba Blo-bzang rgyal-mtshan
XXXIV? Tshul-khang-pa Legs-pa don-grub
XXXV? gsang-mda'-ba sngags-pa che-chen sku skye Nam-mkha' dbang-po
XXXVI? 'Phyong-rgyas Ngag-dbhang grags-pa
XXXVII? Klu-'bum Blo-bzang 'jam-dbyangs
Tenure: ca. 1698
The abbatial succession until the 20th century is not listed
Notes to Table 8.2:

1 The sKyor-mo-lung* abbatial succession is well documented. Its secular rulers (dpön sa), on the other hand, not, but the secular chair was likely held by the brother line of the respective abbots in a traditional khu dbon arrangement. Our key source KL (which terminates abruptly with the 20th throne-holder – as if a second section or part is missing – was compiled ca. 1830–31 by dge slong (i.e. Hor-sprul) Blo-bzang rab-brtan rgya-mtsho (fl. early 19th century), basing himself upon a number of sources, foremost among which an abbreviated abbatial succession account of the sKyor-mo-lung lineage written by Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (the 28th throne-holder) and in particular the still non-extant abbatial lineage history written by bsam-sgang-pa (the 29th abbot bsam-grub sgang-pa Blo-bzang ngag-dbang) with the title sKyor lung mkhan rabs rdogs brjod; these must have been based upon the Vinaya History written by the 20th throne-holder Pan-chen bsod-nams grags-pa, see his DCH I, as well as a source like Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho’s VS, Las-chen’s KD and the indispensable DN had been consulted. The record is here to have written a sGo mang chos ’byung and as said the present sKyor lung chos ’byung; cf. TH Martin no. 297.

2 The etymology of sKyor-mo-lung suggests a fence or holder (sbyor) (of water), in connection with an embankment.

3 Both Brang and gZhong-pa lha-chu of sTod-lung are part of the old sNa-nam clan land and both sites linked to the imperial-time Padmasambhava; cf. Myang chos ’byung 282; Thang yig gser ’phreng 187b1–5; Rva lo rnam thar 259–262 (where sKyor-mo-lung is also named; chronology uncertain); DL5 B 4b3–6; Akester 2001. A later gZhong-pa lha-chu monastery adhered to the sNying-ma-pa. gRgyal-ba dKon-mchog-skyabs descended from gZhong-pa-sten. In the area of sTod-lung Brang (or Brang-phu) Ra-mo-te, Bla-ma Zhang practiced asceticism. Cf. Zhang rnam thar zin bbris 674a.

** The initial chair-holders and the abbacy of Ram-pa lha-sdangs-pa (abbr. Ram-sdangs-ma) seems in part identical with that of Zul-phu (see below).

1. Ram-pa lha-sdangs-pa [? = gNam-’phar-pa] V. mkhan chen bKa’-bzhi-pa Grags-pa gzhon-nu (1257–1315)
2. Sangs-rgyas-dbon gZhon-nu ’byung-gnas** VI. Rin po che bsod-nams grags-pa (1273–1345)**
3. Yon-tan-dpal VII. gRgyal-sras Thogs-med-pa (1295–1369).
4. mkhan chen bDe-ba-dpal VIII. Re-md’a-ba gZhon-nu blo-gros (1349–1412)?

The biographies of these sbyo Srong Ram-pa lha-sdangs-pa abbots can be found in a currently non-extant work written by mTshal-min-pa (also gNyang-dgon/-phu) mkhan chen bsod-nams bzang-po (1341–1433 A.D.); cf. KD I 128–29; KD-IV 62a1–4; Part I fn. 423. They entertained close bonds to the early bKa’-gdam-pa seats such as Zul-phu and sPis-lu and to the Bye/Ba-rdzin-pa seat as well as to the seat of rTse-chos sde college of the great Nya-dbon Kun-dga’-dpal (1345–1439), to Thang-po-che in ‘Phyog-rgyas and to ‘Phan-po Nalendra (see e.g. also Ehrrhard 2003c: 39f.; Jackson 2007) for its initial mkhan rabs, cf. MT 93–94. See also the Nor bu ’i phreng ba 457–59 in Pha chos sect. of the bKa’ gdam-pa glegs bsm.

** KD-IV 62b1–4 identifies the founder as rGya sPang-pa thang-pa Nyi-ma dbang-phyug; GB 18b1 lists ’Byung-gnas ro-rje, a pupil of Po-ta-ba. Cf. also Tshal rnam 62b3; rNab-par-ba chen-po.

** He may be identical with the nephew of Sangs-rgyas-dbon-ston, namely Sangs-rgyas-dbon gzhon (1171–1264). He had been ordained in the presence of the sKyor-mo-lung founder; cf. GD 75b5–76b3; Ram lha-sdangs-ma Sangs-rgyas ’byung-gnas ro-rje is known to have written commentaries on Hevajra in the tradition of Ngog-ston chos-sku ro-rje. He was also a transmission-pupil of Po-to-ba related to the transmission of “emptiness” teachings; cf. Ye-shes shes-rab 1989: 80.

*** This mkhan chen later became known as a Jo-gdan mkhan po. See also van der Kuip 2004: 41.

1 Also known as chos grva chen po drug of the dBus province. Cf. e.g. TK 256; Klong rdo rGyur ’bum II 360.6–7; Kaschewsky 139; Bya-rigs-pa 2001b etc.* The seats rose to eminence during and following the period of Tsong-kha-pa. Of these six centres, dGa’-ba’-gdon and gSang-phu were not traditional convent monasteries, but did hold dbyar chos sessions. As centres or seminars of learning, transmitting their own individual teaching cycles, they were later incorporated into the bka’ bzhi’i grva skor tournament; a grva skor, popular in dBu-gsugs circles and curricula, designated monks
who had finished their initial training and studies in different fields within the canonical field of the Tripitaka and who subsequently conducted a row of visits to different colleges testing their skills in debate and scholarly erudition through trials, examination and teaching.

* Other cherished triad classifications include: Lo Bya-yul Rin-chen-sgang gsum (in Mal-gro); Gyal Glang-thang Grol-sa gsum (in Phan-yul), Rwa-sgreng 'Chad-kha, sPhyl-bu gsum; [Bri-gung], Stagt-[lung] and Tshal gsum and Ye gNyal Dvags gsum; cf. JCh 149a5.

* dGa’-ba-gdong of sKyi-dsam (also called sKyi-shod dGa’-ba-gdong) was erected in the mid-1240’s by the 3rd sKyor-mo-lung abbot (see below), and is located in present-day sTo-dlung bDe-chen xian in dGa’-dong village (it is also said that it is located in gDong-dkar grong brdal. Its initial Vinaya teaching line descends from Bya ‘Dul-’dzin bTson-'grus-'bar (1091–1166). YL 185 gives the following dGa’-ba-gdong specific Vinaya transmission line:

I. Bya ‘Dul-’dzin

II. dpal-chen Ye-shes gYung-drung

III. gNyan-ston

It was Bya ‘Dul-’dzin that initially went to Pa-nram dGa’-gdong (in gTsang: in Pa-tsnam xian at 29°12’N 89°10’E), where rGya ‘Dul-’dzin was active. The sTo-dlung dGa’-gdong had derived its name from its gTsang namesake. It was visited 1400 by Tsong-kha-pa, and occasionally by Re-mdla’-pa gZhon-nu-blo-gros (1349–1412) and Rong-ston (1367–1449), cf. TK 257–58 and Re mda’ ba rnam thar, passim. dGa’-ba-gdong ‘Gom-min-gling was destroyed during the 1642 warfare; cf. Pan chen chos rgyal rnam thar 208. Rebuilt, in the mid-18th cent., it accommodated ca. 100 monks; cf. dPa’ldan ldan chos skyong rnam thar 221.1; ‘Jam dbangyang bsZhad pa’i rnam thar 78. Its bstan srong was dGa’-gdong Yon-tan rgyal-po (DL10 110–111). See also Dam can Chos srong rgya mtsho by the 5th Dalai Lama in his Vol. 11 (Coll. Works).

* i.e. Zhig-po Shes-rab seng-ge (the 3rd sKyor-mo-lung throne-holder) is considered the founder.


† The Zul-phu monastery was located in present-day Tshal-sna xiang of Chu-shur county; cf. HSLG Vol. 8: 24, on the left (eastern) bank of sKyi-dud-chu river. In earlier texts, it is generally called Zul-phu of sKyi-dsam. It apparently went into decay already in the late 16th cent. and only its ruins (dgon shul) are found today (albeit mentioned in the 1830 Tax Survey (CTZhZh 20) as monastic estate). See below Figs. 17, 18. Zul-phu’s founding history and abbacy lineage are still deplorably little known. It too was a Vinaya settlement and Vinaya teachings and hermeneutics long remained it stable curricula. Most of the following Zul-phu throne-holders, we retrace in the traditional lineage transmissions of the basic ‘Dul ba mdo rtsa and treatises like Bodhicaryavatāra in Tibet and within dGe-legs-pa (cf. e.g. DL5 Thob yig l 21a6–22b1, 42a6–b6; BCh 256). It owed its establishment and initial activity to one of the “Ten Men of dBus,” namely followers of the teachings transmitted through Bya ‘Dul’ dzin brTson-’grus-’bar (1091–1166), pupil of rMa Chos kyi byang-chub (also called rMa-Bya/’tsho Byang-chub rdo-rje); cf. Uebach 1988: 153. The founder should safeguard his community for nine years. The Zul-phu mkhan rabs (YL [A] 181, 185; DN (= BA Roerich 80); DCH-1 46–55):

I. Sangs-rgyas Bya ‘dul’ dzin brTson-’grus-’bar (1091–1165/66)

Father: Bya rGyal-ba’ od; mother: Rog rDo-rje-lcam; tenure: rl. ab 1130’s?, or 1157–66? Ordained in the presence of Tshe rGyal-ba’ bar of Tshe-dmar (= Ye-dmar) gsug-lag-khang (usually it is maintained that he was ordained at the feet of ‘Bre Shes-rab’ bar; for the latter, see Part I: fn. 142). Studied Vinaya under slob dpon Sog and later in lHa-sa, in the presence of rNgog lostha’s pupil Khyung Rin-chlen-grags, he took his final ordination and in the latter’s presence, he at Myu-gu-sna (one of the seats of the ‘Brang ts’ho in lHa-sa studied Mudhyamaka and Pramāṇa. In ’O-ljang-mdo, he continued his studies in the presence of rMa ts’o, where he also met Rong-pa Phyang-sor-ba (pupil of Nag-tsho Tsul-khrims rgyal-ba, b. 1101),* in whose presence he studied for three years being introduced to key bKa’-gdams-pa teaching systems and bstan rim treatises. He further carried on his studies in ’Phan-yul and at ’O-ljang-mdo, in the presence of sTo-dlung-pa chen-po Rin-chen snying-po, and eventually established a bs할 gvea at Zul-phu. The date for the establishment is unfortunately not clear but may have taken place already in the 1130’s. Later in the presence of Zangs-dkar lostha, he received a number of tantric cycles.

II. Rog Chos kyi dbang-phug (a.k.a. Bla-ma Chos kyi dbang-phug, Byang-chub rin-chen, 1130/40–1210/20?)*

Maternal Nephew (snag dbon) of the founder. Belonged to the Rog clan. Tenure: rl. 1150’s?, or ca. 1169/70–1220?* Age 21, he took his final ordination. He was a maternal nephew of Bya ‘dul’ dzin. He at one point went to rTshib-pa-can in gTsang. He took over the abbacy of Zul-phu three years after the demise of Bya ‘dul’ dzin. See also DCH-1 48–51.

III. Chos kyi Byang-chub (a.k.a. Na-bza’ Phred-gsOl) (ca. 1194/1206–1271/83)

Nephew of the last abbot. Tenure: rl. ab 1220/1225?

Born in Rong of gTsang into the Rog clan. Recipient of the entire Zul-phu-transmitted Vinaya curricula, but also bKa’-gdams-pa precepts and the lam rim graded teaching system. He probably ruled as abbot from ca. 1225. ‘Phags-pa bla-ma (1235–1280) Appendix V: Tables 7-10
and relics were subsequently transferred to Crib Tshe-mchog-gling in the
erected 1205 by
(1)Cog.s
Nas-mying-pa
renovated the site and reconverted it into a
lung-pa throne-holder; cf. YL 154.2-4;
Phags pa’i rnam thar 12b5-13a1. During his tenure, rNgo Rin-chen bzang-po (1231–1307 A.D.) of sPre’u-zhing was ordained in Zul-phu in
1248 and his final ordination in 1263 (cf. LR 61). In addition, the early 13th-cent. abbots of Jo-gdan tshogs-pa, rDo-rje-dpal, Byang-chub-dpal and bDe-ba-dpal (1231–97) were also ordained in his presence. He reached the age of 78.

IV. Chos kyi brtson-grus (ca. 1214/26/38–1285/97/1309?)
Nephew of the last abbot. Tenure: ab 1240?
Born in Rong of gTsang. Ordained at an early age. Received the entire curricula and syllabi of his predecessors. He erected a number of statues. Passed away age 72.

V. Chos-grags [Rin-chen]-dpal (ca. 1235/1247–1296/1308?)
Nephew of the latter abbot. Born in Rong of gTsang into the Rog clan. Tenure: ab 1270?
Pupils included dKa’-bzhi-pa Grags-pa gzhon-nu (1257–1315), abbot of Tshogs-pa and the latter’s disciple Jo-gdan mkhan po bSod-nams grags-pa (1273–1345); see also BA Roerich 80–81 and rGya bod chos ’byung 9b3-4.

VI. Chos kyi dpal (1270–1340)
Nephew of former throne-holder. Father: A-skyid; mother: sras mo Chos-dpal; tenure: rl. until 1337
Born in rDzing-kha of gTsang. Ordained age 11.

VII. Byang-chub Rin-chen-dpal-bzang-po (1316–1390 A.D.)
He was considered a rebirth of the 5th sKyor-mo-lung throne-holder brTsön-grus ’byung-gnas (1248–78). Born in rDzing-kha. Age 20, he was ordained, he assumed the seat of Zul-phu which he held at least until 1376. Studied under a long row of masters. According to DL 5 gSan yig 105b5–6, he and the subsequent throne-holders of Zul-phu received teachings related to the Vaisāraṇa cycle. YL maintains that 1376 this throne-holder was still residing on the see.

Like sKyor-mo-lung, to which it entertained close contacts, Zul-phu was established as a bshad grva. It entertained close teaching and syllabi bonds with gNas-mying in Myang district of gTsang (Part I: Map 9); cf. MY 87 through the abbot mkhan po Rin-chen dpal-bzang-po. Following the establishment of the four Jo-gdan tshogs-pa settlements by Kha-che Pan-chen, a connection with these and with Zul-phu was established in the early 1200’s through the activities not least of Byang-chub-dpal; cf. YL 180.1f.; DCH-I 54–55.; II 101a4f. It was from these abbots (esp. no. VII above) that Bu-ston received many Vinaya teachings; cf. Bu ston gsan yig 29a–30a.

A signal event, Phag-mo-gru-pa rDo-rje rgyal-po took his final ordination in 1134 at Zul-phu in the presence of Bya ’dal ’dzin (’Bri gung gdan rabs III 59, Rlangs 356). The link to gNas-mying is confirmed through the teacher of Phag-gru, gNas-mying-pa or La-stod-pa dKon-mchog mkhar-bar. ’Phags-pa bla-ma (1235–80) here as neophyte took his dge tshul ordination in 1244 en route to China in the presence of Na-bzā ’Phred-gsos (also called Zul-phu-ba) and the 3rd sKyor-mo-lung-pa throne-holder, cf. YL 154.2-4; TT 104; Sa skyg gzung rabs 150–51; ’Phags pa’i rnam thar 12b5–13a1. Zul-phu in 1545 was donated to the Karma-pa and remained so until ca. 1639 A.D. when dKon-mchog chos ’phel (1573–1644) renovated the site and converted it into a dGe-lugs site; dKon-mchogchos chos ’phel rnam thar 17b7; mkhas pa’i dga’ston 1293–4. It is said that its original main-relic was a statue of Šākuyamuni, now kept in Se-ra Byes grva-tshang; other objects and relics were subsequently transferred to Grib Tshe-mchog-gling in the 17th century; TK 316–17. The 1830 Tax Survey (tChas stag zhib gdung 29h) speaks of the religious estate of Zur-phu.

* The four disciples (bu bzhi) of Rong-pa Phyg-sor-ba were Zhu-lhan-pa, Rog ’Ching-phu-ba, Bya’-dul and finally rNam’bar-ba; the latter was the 5th throne-holder of gSang-phu Ne’u-thog.

* Thechos grva chen mo bDe-ba-can refers to the original seminary that later, in the 15th cent. turned into R[v]a-stod bDe-ba-can (at Ra-stod-phu, ca. 29°32’N 90°53’E) situated in mNy ęes-thang xiang of present-day Chu-shur relzsong. It was erected 1205 by rGya m’Ching-ru-ba Shes-rab dbang-phyug, pupil of gNyal/dMyal-zhih ’Jam-dpal seng-ge, resp. the 3rd and 4th Gling-stod abbot of gSang-phu (see above). Cf. BU 15a2–3; GD 45b3f.; YL 130.15–16, 133.5–6; GB 23a4–5 where the initial mkhan rabs is listed:

I. Shes-rab dbang-phyug
II. dBon-po Sangs-rgyas-dpal (the former’s nephew)
III. gNyan (or gNyas) Grags[-pa] Tshul[khrims]
IV. rGya-ston bSod[nams] rin[-chen]
V. dGe-brag-pa
VI. gNye [= sNye]-dhang-pa bKra-shis seng-ge
VII. Slo bA dpOn Blo-rin
VIII. Slo bA dpOn bKra-shis seng-ge (* fl. ca. 1345–75)
IX. ’Jam-rin
X. Sangs-grags (var. Grags-pa (= -seng, -sangs?))
XI. dGe-skongs-pa?
XII. Dar-ma seng-ge
XIII. ? Rong-ston Šākya rgyal-mtshan (1367–1449)**
Appendix V: Tables 7–10

bDe-pa-can's history is otherwise deplorably little known or only fragmentarily reconstructable. As dGe-lugs's seat, it was later designated Rva-ba-stod (to distinguish it from the Rva-smad bDe-ba-can, associ. with Sa-skya). It had close bonds with rGya-ma Rin-chen-sgang and rGyal lha-khang in 'Phan-yul, etc. Cf. e.g. Ga gzi gding rabs 430b2, 431a2–5 for visits there in about 1761–62. Thar-phu was a monastic estate of Rva-stod. During the Cultural Revolution, it was destroyed and 1988 it witnessed a partial renovation. Today it accommodates ca. 60 monks. HS 301–02; Chan 1994: 476.

* He evidently served twice as 6th and 8th throne-holders. Also called Na-thang-pa chen-po; cf. Mi nyag lnga rnam thar 16.

He welcomed Tsong-kha-pa to bDe-ba-can in 1374–75, a site the latter should repeatedly visit. During his stay, he also met the 9th throne-holder (who was a specialist on the Five Treatises on Maitreya). bKra-shis seng-ge was also active at 'Brug monastery, where he met the 7th Rva-lung throne-holder; cf. TK 118–19; GD 62a5; Kun dga' seng ge rnam thar 412.5–413.4.

** Rong-ston may have served for three years ab ca. 1417 in some capacity at bDe-ba-can; Rong ston rnam thar 318.6, 326.

† On gSang-phu Ne'u-thog, see Table 8.1; Gung-thang refers to the college Chos 'khrog-glung; above Table 3.

Other texts refer to sa skyong or dpon sa Sangs-rgyas dpal-bzoms, consort of the Phag-gru Gong ma Ngag-dbang bkra-shis grags-pa. It may have taken place in the mid-1530's. A. D. She was also the one persuading Tsong-kha-pa to and fro the 'Khon control the see at Thar-phu. It is not

The incomplete list of throne-holders of these seminars are given in FS 157–59. The colleges were formerly under the gDong-dkar rdzong (the residence of the Shun zhabs drung in the late 16th cent.) in Shun khul of sTod-lung xian located: 29°35'N 91°06'E, * often listed as Shingdongkar constituting the portal to lHa-sa from the west – throughout the latest centuries, the neighbouring Groong-chang as religious estate was under the sKyor-mo-lung grva tshang, whereas sTod-lung Ra-mo-che was under rTse nRam-rgyal grva tshang (Potala). The former Ra-tshag, Mar-khu spus-kyu of Shun (located on the hill-side of sKyor-mo-lung) and the Tsher-gseb-dgon (all in lower sTod-lung) were affiliated with resp. Khams-pa grva tshang and Phug-khang colleges; FS 160–61, 418. At some point, gDong-mkhar rdzong as private estate served as a station for the Karma-pa to and fro mTshur-phu; cf. mTshur phu dgon dkar chag 597. Other estates during the dGa'-ldan pho-brang period located in the Shun area or rdzong due west of lHa-sa were rGya-yags. Khri-zam-sgang and sGung-mtsho adhering to Kun-bde-gling. In the 14th cent. the 9th Tshal dpon sMon-lam rdo-rje erected a temple at Shun 'phrang; Tshal rnam 2384. The 17th 'Bri-gung throne-holder, assisted by the sKyor-mo-lung-pa, erected a fortress on the Shun gyi brag in 1565 (cf. 'Bri gung gdan rtsis III 211).

* Attached to the Shun rdzong (under the Potala Zhol), we find the communities of bZang-mo, bCo-brgyad mchod gzhis, bCu-bzhi mchod gzhis and gDon-gsar mKhars grong byang-pa. Another list (for the 1680's) includes under Shun: Dan'-bag dgos-pa, sKyor-lung. Ra-ba-stod, 'Brug phyag mdzod, Zhang-ston phu-mda' and lHa-khang-pa; cf. DL5 III 136a1–2. In 1698, we have the foll. settlements: 'Khor-sgang-sgang of Shun, Phug-mo-che, sGang-mkhar grong-stod, Tsher-gseb; cf. DL6 459. The Shun rdzong may refer to the one est. by the 17th 'Bri-gung throne-holder (see prev. note).

†† Ngor mkhan-chen sGrub-khang-pa dpal-dan don-grub's gSan yig even lists his name as Byang-chub shul-khrims; cf. DL5 Thob yig 1 514a–5.

The pedigree of sBal-ti dGra-bcom-pa (also called gYor-po'i sBal-ti dGra-bcom-pa), in brief, as contained in KL is as follows: During the reign of King Mu-khi btsan-po, three sons of the sBal-ti clan, viz. sEng-gye gung-btsan, sTag-gung-btsan and gZig-gung-btsan, known as Gung bstan spun gsum, emerged victorious as military commanders. As reward they received the three areas of App. lung until at least 1531. They were likewise adhering to Kun-bde-gling. In the 1530's, the father of

The SDL gSan yig l 108a1–2 appears to distinguish between sBal-ti dGra-bcom-pa Sem-sda' rgyal-mtshan and brTson-'grus dbang-phuyug. It is not impossible that the latter was an alternative name of the 2nd throne-holder.

At sKyor-mo-lung, a set of chok-pha. (zhal chhang) of the 80 siddha was erected in the 1590's and consecrated by Taranatha; cf. Taranatha rnam thar 93a7–b1.

The SDL gSan yig l 108a1–2 appears to distinguish between sBal-ti dGra-bcom-pa Sem-sda' rgyal-mtshan and brTson-'grus dbang-phuyug. It is not impossible that the latter was an alternative name of the 2nd throne-holder.
HS falsely situates dGra-bcom-pa’s dates to 1129–1256, consequently postdates the tenure of first throne-holders one sexagenary cycle respectively. sBal-ti was ordained in the presence of rGya Nya-mo-skyur-ba as mkhan po, dMar-lung ssgang-pa as las dpon and sPangs-sgom-pa as gsang ston. For the Vinaya lineage of sKyor-mo-lung; cf. DCH-I 35–36.

15 Ra-mo-che in gNas-chung xiang of sTod-lung xian, located: 29°37’N 90°58’E (Dimingzhi / 101a). The Beng (var. Brang)-smad Ra-mo-che (also called Dang-po-lung) monastery was erected 1168 by sBal-ti dGra-bcom-pa, evidently raised upon a former ‘Bring-smad Ra-mo-che establishment. Listed in the early topographical survey of the lHa-sa site; cf. TBH Sørensen: 257. This former ‘Bring-smad establishment was called gNas hyang ma of Brang Ra-mo-che and was established by a younger brother of gNyas lo tsi ba Yo-ton-grags (11th cent.), called gNyas ‘Byung-gnas shes-rab; cf. gNyos gdung rabs 16.4–5. Brang Ra-mo-che had been established as a lam stegs or intermediate station (i.e. dependency; on the way to Ra-sa ‘Phul-snang / Jo-khang) of sNye-thang Brag-sna in sKyid-smad. sBal-ti should pass away there. It was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Until then, it stood under the sKyor-mo-lung monastic administration. It has since then undergone renovation and has survived on a most modest scale accommodating today three monks.

sBal-ti dGra-bcom-pa was also active at the other more famous temple, the lHa-sa Ra-mo-che, i.e. Ra-mo-che sde-bzhi; cf. Table 9 below. It is also reported that he erected the adjacent sTag-lung-brag temple; cf. Chos-'phel 2004c: 93–95.

16 YL 185 mentions that the Vinaya tradition of sKyor-mo-lung descends from the pupils of Lo-ston rDo-rje dbang-phug-yung, one of the “Ten Men of dBu” during the initial phyi dar wave of the spread of Buddhism in Central Tibet: dBa Ye-shes dbang-po and rMa gSal-bal-ba shes-rab that were followed by sBal-ti Jo-sras (= dGra-bcom-pa), also considered a pupil of Sha-mi sMon-lam-bar (1084–1171) and sBal-ti dBon as well as later by Zhig-po Sher-seng, the third incumbent.

17 Cf. DCH-I 33; DCH-II 91b5. Thag-ma lha-khang was one of the Vinaya settlements of the Rag-shi group (cf. Table IV 6.6 above). The first important figure at Thag-ma was ‘dal ‘dzin Thag-ma Ka-ba Dar-[ma] seng-[ge], pupil of sNe’u zur-pa (1042–1118) and of Sha-mi sMon-lam-bar (1084–1171). dGra-bcom-pa was pupil of the latter masters and the ‘dal ‘dzin Thag-ma-ba or dPal-chen rDo-rje gZhon-nu.

19 His final ordination took place in Thag-ma lha-khang (a settlement of the Rag-shi group) of sTod-lung around 1179 A.D. Cf. HNT 18–19, 125; sMyos rabs 87; DL6 115; GY 554, conversely and incongruously, appears to maintain that it was rGyal-ba lHa-nang-pa’s nephew lHa Rin-chen rgyal-po (1201–1270 A.D.) who was ordained in sBal-ti’s presence, but this refers to the latter’s studies under the second incumbent; gNyas gdung rabs 44.4; DCH-I 36; –II 92a5–6.

18 GB 16a4–5.

19 Of the rGya-ma Rin-chen-ssgang tradition, he was related to but different from Sangs-rgyas dbon-ston (1138–1210); GD 75b5–76ab3.

20 Cf. Lo ras pa rnam thar 6a6–7; KD 127–28; DCH-I 36; lHo brag grub chen rnam thar 654.5–6.

21 Many ascetics studied under this throne-holder such as Kong-po shes-rab (1228–1310), a pupil of the 3rd sTag-lung Sangs-rgyas yar-ston; cf. sTag lung chos ‘byung 299.

22 Above. It was famous not least because bTsong-kha-pa, dBu-ma-pa brTson-grus seng-ge and ‘Jam-dpal rgya-mtsho resided there over a long period. It should later accommodate a famous medium which rose to become one of the state clairvoyant officers during the dGa’-ldan pho-brang government. It concerns to the Chos-skjong or bsTan-srung chen-po dGa’-gdon Yon-tan rgyal-po (named after the oracle deity Yon-tan rgyal-po of Pehar rgyal-po sku lnga group). Cf. TK 542 etc. and also HS 247–48.

23 Cf. lHo brag grub chen rnam thar 8.6.

24 Cf. Kha rag gNyas gdung rabs 71.5–72.1.

25 Cf. Kha rag gNyas gdung rabs 75.2–3.

26 Cf. also mkhas pa’i dga’ ston 955.4–7; Rlangs 214f; DCH-I 39; –II 93b1–3; mTshur phu dkar chag 391–2; HSLG 3: 18. The 4th Karma-pa Rol-pa’i rdo-rje should serve as mediator in the warring conflict.

27 Cf. Tsong kha pa rnam thar 126; GD 8a6; Rong ston rnam thar 307, 331; GD 59b2–3.

28 Cf. bKra shis dpal ldan rnam thar 19–20.; For the list of his disciples, see DCH-I 40–41.; –II 93b2-94a2.

29 Cf. rGya ma rnam thar 374.6–7.

30 Cf. Se ra chos ‘byung 51–53. He est. a grva skor turnus with Zul-phu, etc. For his disciples, cf. DCH-I 42–43.

31 He repeatedly visited sKyor-mo-lung to receive training (by rGyud-pa Shes-rab bzang-po) before he ascended the see; hSod nams grags pa rnam thar 20, 43 (other ed. 3b2–3, 12a6–b1). Celebrated dGe-lugs master who held, not uncommon, more chairs simultaneously. He was both recognized as the 1st sKyor-mo-lung mNga’ris sprul sku (after his demise) and as the first ‘Bras-spungs gZims-khang gong-ma incarnation whose incarnation lineage should play a major role at sKyor-mo-lung following the former sBal-ti clan dominance; cf. MD 986; MN 577; for a different list of the mNga’ris sprul sku line, cf. Bla sprul deh gehung 293. His immediate incarnation was bSod-nams dGe-legs dpal-bzang-po (in whose
presence, the 4th Dalai Lama took his full ordination; cf. DL4 46b1). The former text leaves out e.g. the 3rd incumbent and lists six incarnations until ca. 1820 A.D. Cf. also G. Smith, Among Tibetan Texts 129.

30 Cf. DL3 17a6ff, 33b3. The sKyor-mo-lung-pa had sponsored the dngul gdung or silver ossuary of the 2nd 'Bras-spungs chos rje. Indeed, the sKyor-mo-lung-pa had a great saying behind the recognition of the 'Bras-spungs incumbent. We shall anticipate some relation between the lay dpun sa of sKyor-mo-lung and that of the family of the neighbouring sde pa rNam-rgyal grags-pa (bSod-nams rgya-mtsho’s father), both of sTod-lung-mda’. As said, the 2nd incumbent dGe-dun rgya-mtsho had repeatedly visited, during the last part of his life, Khang-gsar-gong (the 3rd Dalai Lama’s future birthplace) on his way to sKyor-mo-lung. See App. II.

31 As detailed in his biography, Rin chen phun tshogs rnam thar.


33 Born in the vicinity of sKyor-mo-lung. He was the 25th throne-holder of dGa’-ldan, from 1582 to 1589. Cf. GD 21b1-6; MD 783; Kaschewskey 1970: 282.

34 Cf. GD 13b1-3, 17a1-6. He established the Li-thang Thub-bstan chos-khor in 1580 A.D. He was the 2nd gZims-khang gong-ma.

35 1614 he ascended the throne at sTag-lung-brag, subsequently at gSal-khang dgon-pa of ’Phan-yul (1579) and as the 30th throne-holder of dGa’-ldan his tenure started 1618. He wrote an important (currently non-extant) dGa’-ldan gyi gdan rabs. Cf. MD 762.

36 In 1602, he practised in Rva-ba-stod. From 1619, he simultaneously held the see at gSa-ba-ful and between 1626 and 1637, he also held the see at dGa’-ldan as its 35th incumbent. Cf. MD 310. The 1st Pan-chen bla-ma paid a visit and performed ceremonies during his tenure: Pan chen chos rgyal rnam thar 191.

37 He was son of the influential sde pa Gad-kha-sa (located: 29°39’N 90°54’E in sByar-rags xiang of sTod-lung). He initially was one of the most serious candidates for the re-embodiment of the 4th Dalai Lama. As Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho was chosen as the 5th Dalai Lama, as compensation, Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan was identified as the 3rd gZims-khang gong-ma (initiating with Pan-chen bSod-nams grags-pa) and thus also as the 3rd sKyor-mo-lung mNga’-ris sBal-ti sprul sku line, his embodiment(s) should subsequently manage the sKyor-mo-lung monastery. He was also known as Byang-rtsse dPal-lidan bStod-pa rgyal-mtshan, the 40th throne-holder of dGa’-ldan (cf. KS 377). In 1659, the Gad-kha-sa seat in sTod-lung, due to its proximity to Potala, was shifted to lHo-kha. Cf. DL5 I 278a6. From this tenure, the bonds to neighbouring dGa’-bagdong were strengthened; GD 59b5–b1. During his tenure a lCang-lo-can rab byams pa ’Phrin-las rgya-mtsho is listed.

38 Born at sTod-lung-mda’ bSam-grub-svang, he became abbot of sGo-mang gva-tshang. 1650–52 he became the 11th abbot of dGon-lung Byams-pa-gling, and is also listed as abbot of Rva-sgreng. LS 183. Regularly mentioned in the literature; e.g. Taranathā rnam thar 100a6, JCh 320b2-323a3.

39 Born in ’Phan-yul (Zhogs), he also served as 42nd throne-holder of dGa’-ldan (1668–1675); also known as Khri rNam-dag rdo-rje. Cf. MN 651.

40 Reported for 1679; cf. DL5 III 152a3. See also sMon lam chen mo bca’ yig 337.

41 He was also abbot of Glo-bo-dgon in lHo-brag. See 155 214.5.

27 sBal-ti dGra-bcom-pa, the founder of sKyor-mo-lung chos sde
Modern statue kept in the sKyor-mo-lung monastery
28. The monastic complex of gSang-phu Ne'u-thog
Photo: Google Earth 2006
29. gSang-phu Ne'u-thog (2001)

30. The Zul-phu valley in dBu-she/ mTshal-sna district of sKyid-smad, where only ruins of the former Zul-phu monastery and college are to be found (Fig. 15) (2005).

31. The site of Zul-phu dgon-pa
   Photo: Google Earth 2006
Map 4. The Six Seminars (chos grva drug) of sKyi-d-shod: gSang-phu Ne'u-thog (S); Zul-phu (Z); Ra-stod bDe-ba-can (R); sKyor-mo-lung (K); dGa'-ba-gdong (G); Gung-thang Chos-khor-gling (C)

28. The monastic complex of gSang-phu Ne'u-thog
Photo: Google Earth 2006
29. gSang-phu Ne'u-thog (2001)

30. The Zul-phu valley in dBus-bde/ mTshal-sna district of sKyid-smad, where only ruins of the former Zul-phu monastery and college are to be found (Fig. 15) (2005)

31. The site of Zul-phu dgon-pa
Photo: Google Earth 2006
32. sKyor-mo-lung chos sde (2002)

33. bTsong-kha-pa at sKyor-mo-lung
   Detail from a bTsong-kha-pa thangka

34. The monastery of dGa’-ba-gdong (PKS 2006)

35. dGa’-ba-gdong, monastery and village
   Photo: Google Earth 2006
36. Ra-stod bDe-ba-can, Main Temple (2004)

37. Ra-stod, monastery and village
Photo: Google Earth 2006

38a. bSe-khrab-can, the protector of the Six Seminars of sKyid-shod
38a: Mural in Ra-stod bDe-ba-can
38b: Statue kept in gSang-phu sNe'u-thog
V.9 The lHa-sa Ra-mo-che bzhi-sde/sde-bzhi Institution

Based upon Primary Sources:
Vaidūrya ser po 143, 144ff.; dPag bsam ljon bzang 598.10–16; DL7 865, 926; Chos 'byung bstan pa nyi ma 89a2–3; mKhas pa'i dga' ston 1422.10–11; lHa ldan dkar chag 33–34; 7th Dalai Lama, gDong Inga'i sgra dbyangs 78a3–92a4

Secondary Sources:

The Ra-mo-che sde-bzhi/bzhi-sde, in the last phase of its history known as bZhi-sde-pa dGa'-ldan bSam-gtan-gling, originally stems from what in late dynastic times were known as six chapels, other sources again speak of four institutions, erected in the four directions around lHa-sa [Jo-khang], viz. rMe-ru (orig. dMar-ru? or “Red Horn,” which should later developed its own line of abbots), Ke-'ru (orig. dKar-ru? or “White Horn”), dGa'-ba, dGa'-'od, Brang-khang as well as Brang-khang [m]tha[']-ma (cf. also TBH Sørensen 416). It is commonly argued that among these, the convent called dGa'-ba later was transferred to the environs of Ra-mo-che by the Tshal khri-dpon dGa'-bde-dpal where four so-called mchod 'bul bzhi grva were established, i.e. minor convents erected to provide ritual and liturgic service to the two lHa-sa sanctuaries, the Ra-sa and Ra-mo-che. The settlement of these shines around Jo-khang in lHa-sa no doubt had developed in the course of time through the process of synoecism.

At some point they were in the hands of the 'Bri-gung-pa (otherwise not documented). Later it was appropriated by Rva-sgreng monastery as a dependency, and it is reported that it shared until the tenancy of one Tshal-pa Byams-pa (mid 17th century) abbacy with rMe-ru (cf. VS 143), which was discontinued at the end of the 17th century. In 1754 A.D. the 7th Dalai Lama established anew the bZhi-sde dgon-pa in Me-tog lcang-gseb (= ICang-gseb-shar, east of Potala; its present location; now the neighborhood is wholly urbanized; cf. Alexander 2005: 223–40) area of lHa-sa, and the following year an assembly hall was erected anew. The disciple of Tshe-mchog-gling Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan, sMyung-gnas bla ma Ye-shes bzang-po erected the bZhi-sde sMyung-gnas lha-khang.

The institution is one of the oldest and most celebrated in the inner lHa-sa area and appears to have had a versatile history. It was the 7th Dalai Lama who with the composition of a bca' yig for the bZhi-sde grva tshang dGa'-ldan bSam-gtan-gling denoted Don gnyis nor bu'i bang mdzod offers us the hitherto fullest and most detailed history of the bZhi-sde institution. It is an account which had been based upon oral accounts delivered to him from a number of elderly bZhi-sde monks (cf. gDong Inga'i sgra dbyangs 82a3–84a3); paraphrased here:

The roots of bZhi-sde go back to the reign of king Ral-pa-can when an attempt was made to meet the needs of an ever-growing monk body in the lHa-sa area. Therefore the communities of Ke-ru and rMe-ru were raised to the east of Ra-sa 'Phrul-snang, to the south the dGa'-ba and dGa'-ba'i 'od were erected to the east of 'Phrul-snang. Of these it was the dGa'-ba community (sde) that should develop into the later bZhi-sde (“Four Community” or lit. “The Community of the [original] Four” Institution).

Later, the direct pupil of Bla-chen dGongs-pa rab-gsal (b. 832?) called mKhan chen Tshul'[khrims] rdo[rje] re-established it at the so-called Khang-ser-ma located at the foot of Hsa-sa dMar-po-ri, where he conducted a renovation of the dGa'-ba community. Thereafter one Slob dpon bSod-nams-’phel took over the see and greatly expanded the teaching there.
Still later again, one Bla-ma sTon-pa bSod-nams-dpal set up the institution at the location called dG(o)n-gseb shar-nub (also known as?) the lhHa-sa’i khang-gsar. There the practice and the study of the three basic Vinaya rituals (gezi gsum: posadha, vārsika and pravārāna), etc. expanded greatly. mKhan chen bSod-nams shes-rab thereupon safeguarded the see.

Subsequently, it is reported that one direct pupil of Pha Dam-pa sangs-rgyas (d. 1105/1117) called bSod-nams bla-ma [re-]established the institution in [the area of] Dogs-sde (cf. Part I: fn. 417), giving it the name Ra-sa sPang-lung dgon-pa (later a ri khrad was est. there; cf. e.g. lhHa sa’i dgon thö 88). There the study of Prajñāpāramitā etc. expanded greatly. rTogs ldan Shes-rab rdo-rje became the [presiding] bla ma [of the see] and he expanded the teaching and practice of gCod.

At the point when Jo-bo-rje or Atiśa established his immaculate tradition of Buddha’s Teaching [in Tibet], the site was appropriated by sBas-ti (= sBal-ti) dGra-bcom-pa who greatly expanded the practice of Vinaya.2

Then followed many noble personages such as Bla-ma Zhang etc. and on account of the[r] injunction that bespoke the necessity to establish this former tradition [of the dGa’-ba community], the Tshal-pa khri dpon – in order to expand the Teaching of Buddha in general and specifically in order to ensure that the institution of sacristans that rendered service to the lo-bo statues in [the Ra-sa] and Ra-mo-che vihāra were upheld, etc. – they ensured that it was re-established in the Bar-skor district of Ra-mo-che. Its name was altered to bZhi-sde. Many Tshal-pa khri dpon in the lineage of dGa’-bde dpal-bzang-po, himself an incarnation of mGon-po Bya-rog gdong-can (Nātha Mahākāla), took control of the community and produced the following line of [presiding] masters (bla rabs) that disseminated teaching traditions based upon the pure doctrine and philosophical views of the bKa’-gdam-pas, viz.

\[\text{mKhan chen dKon-mchog bla-ma}, \text{thereupon in succession}\]
\[\text{Slob dpon sTon-pa bSod-nams,}\]
\[\text{mKhan chen Kun-bzang-pa,}\]
\[\text{mKhan chen bKra-shis bzang-po, etc.}\]

Later, at the time when the light of the sun of the immaculate tradition of chos kyi rgyal po Tsong-kha-pa chen-po penetrated all places on earth (i.e. Tibet), the Dharmarāja sNe’u-pa (i.e. the sNe’u governor), the Great Patron of the Teaching [of bTsong-kha-pa] took over the control of the community whereupon the direct pupil of rJe [Tsong-kha-pa] named

Byangs sems Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan was elected to the see. He greatly expanded the teachings of the two stages (upapattikrama, nispannakrama), etc.

After many successive masters upholding the institution such as Slob dpon dNges-grub rgya-mtsho, etc. had come,3 during the tenure of the All-knowing Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho (i.e. the 6th Dalai Lama), it was safeguarded by one Tshangs-dbyangs chos-grags adhering to the group of local dge rgar. At that point the institution was transferred to the frontside of Ra-mo-che temple, whereupon the see was safeguarded by one Slob dpon mTha’-yas rgyal-mtshan who spread the Vinaya practice of the three basic rituals (gezi gsum). Then the see was safeguarded by dPon slob Grags-pa blo-gros. In the Iron Rat year (1720 A.D.) [in the wake of the Dzungar invasion] the building collapsed. It was subsequently renovated after the local grva tshang had been included under the Treasury [of the government] and after re-establishing all the statue inventories, the land and property, and the monastery, etc. Repeatedly and successively Bla ma Ngag-dbang mkhas-mchog and dPon slob mTha’-yas rgyal-mtshan were elected to the see. Thereupon it was safeguarded by Grub dbang sens dpal’ chen po Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan who greatly expanded the practice of the two krama, etc. Currently -- so the above text by the 7th Dalai Lama purports – i.e. in the mid-1750’s, the bZhi-sde institution was safeguarded by Bla ma dNges-grub Nyi-ma.
Not addressed by the 7th Dalai Lama, it was in the 17th century attached to the Rva-sgrang monastery as a dependency. Since it constitutes the seat of Rva-sgrang Rin-po-che.

Today 2002 A.D. the temple is in utter decay (see Alexander 2005), the Rva-sgrang mother-monastery however plans to restore the temple.

Notes to Table 9:


2 sBal-ti dGra-bcom-pa brTson-'grus dbang-phyug (1129–1215 A.D.) was the founder of sKyor-mo-lung chos sde in 1169; cf. sKyor lung chos 'byung 11bff. and the Table V.8.2 above. Notably is the discrepancy, the activities of sBal-ti was the 12th century, whereas that of Atisa was the 11th century.

3 It refers to Thang-sag-pa rin po che of 'Phan-yul.

V.10 The Abbatial Succession of rGya-ma Rin-chen-sgang

Based on Primary Sources:

- bKa' gdamgs chos 'byung I (KC-I 246.14–298.20);
- bKa' gdamgs chos 'byung-III (KC-III 155.15–158.13);
- Khu dgon rnam thar (KB 423.1–511.3); Deh ther sngon po (DN = BA Roenchi 314–317);
- rGya ma rnam thar (GM); Bod kyi deh ther (BD); Vaidûrya ser po (VS);
- Pha dam pa rnam thar, dGa' idan chos 'byung (GD);
- Lam rin bla ma brgyud rnam thar (LR);
- lHo rong chos 'byung (HR);
- Si tu bka' chems (SK);

Secondary Sources:

- Ming mdzod; Mi sna; Dung dkar tshig mdzod; lHa sa'i dgon tho; HLSG; Hor-khang 1999: 571ff.; tDo-rje 2006

The temple and monastery of Rin-chen-sgang (situated in sNon-phu of rGya-ma valley; loc. 29°44'N 91°40'E) was founded by dGyer gZhon-nu-grags (1190–1171), a disciple of the bKa'-gdamgs-pa masters sNe'u zur-pa Ye-shes-'bar (1042–1118) and Bya-yul-pa (1075–1138). Found. date 1119 A.D. During the time of his nephew Sangs-rgyas dBon-ston (1138–1210) Rin-chen-sgang developed to become one of the major teaching centers of the bKa'-gdamgs-pa tradition with a number of branch institutions established in Mal-gro, 'Phan-yul and in different parts of the lHo-kha region in the 12th and 13th century (below fn. 3). It counts among the seats visited by the Kha-che Pan-chen in the early 13th cent. dBon-ston who called himself the “Lord of the bKa'-gdamgs doctrine of Northern dBu-rū” (cf. e.g. KC-I 273) was a prominent figure beyond the borders of the bKa'-gdamgs-pa school as it is expressed not least by the fact that he was invited to conduct the consecration ceremony of the “Zhang Tsal-pa’i lHa-chan dpal-pa,” i.e. the main statue and support of the Gung-thang vihāra (KC-I 271; cf. also GT 57a; Part I: fn. 743). In rGya-ma, Rin-chen-sgang represented at the same time the spiritual seat of a local ruling house whose territory later formed the core area of what was known as the rGya-ma khris skor (with its administrative center at rGya-ma Khris-khang; the myriarchy appears to have included also parts of the area or estates related to the various branch institutions of Rin-chen-sgang). In the Phagmo gru-pa period the rGya-ma rulers were among the patrons who helped Tsong-kha-pa to establish the New bKa'-gdamgs-pa school in sKyid-shod (mentioned by name is here the rGya-ma khris dpon Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan). As a teaching center, Rin-chen-sgang had close bonds to the “Six Seminars of sKyid-shod,” especially with gSang-phu Gling-smad, bDe-ba-can and sKyor-mo-lung (Table 8). In the 16th century (in the time of the ‘Bri-gung-pa Rin-chen phun-tshogs), rGya-ma became part of the ‘Bri-gung territory (cf. Table 11.1) before the area later was redistributed by the Fifth Dalai Lama as an estate and fief to the aristocratic family of Hor-khang (from Phod-mdzo in Byang; see Part I: fn. 177).

The following brief overview of the abbatial succession of Rin-chen-sgang is restricted to the period until the end of the 15th century; it follows here mainly the description in KC-I and KB, the latter composed by the (XVIth) Rin-chen-sgang throne-holder spwan snga Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (1402–1470 A.D.), one of the leading representatives of the rGya-ma-pa in the 15th century. As most of his predecessors in Rin-chen-sgang he was of the dGyer, the dominant lineage of the religious and secular house of rGya-ma-pa. The name is also known as the lineage name behind other ruling houses (such as those of Rin-spungs-pa, sKu-rab-pa or sNe'u rdzong) and much earlier it appears in the sources as the lineage closely connected with the Srong-btsan sgam-po temple of Khra'-brug in Yar-lung, from where a branch of the inner (nung) dGyer immigrated to the sKyid-chu Region in the 11th century. (See TF Sorensen and Hazod 2005). With their residence in rGya-ma (alias sNon, Yar-snon), the dGyer-pa occupied the area known as the birthplace of Srong-btsan-sgam-po, a connection of particular symbolic significance which also formed part of the rGya-ma-pa tradition, its prestige and legacy.
rGya-ma Rin-chen-sgang *dan rabs*

**I dGyer-sgom chen-po gZhon-nu grags-pa (1090–1171)**

Father: 'dGyer Shes-rab-skyabs (from Yar-lung from where he immigrated to rGya-ma (alias Yar) sNon; the village dGyer opposite Rin-chen-sgang arguably is related to this first dGyer settlement in rGya-ma)

Mother: g.Yang-mo Klu-lcam (from upper bTsun-mo-tshal, i.e. upper Byen-chen valley)

Clan: dGyer lHa-snang (also Bram-ze dGyer lHa-snang, a side-line of the dGyer of Yar-lung 'Phyong-rgyas)

Birthplace: Rog-sna/sne in lower sNon

Birth name: Khye’u-la-stag (KC-III: Khre-la-stag)

Age 12 he was ordained in the presence of Dharmaratna (*Chos kyi rin-chen*)

Ordination name: gZhon-nu-grags

Foundation of the temple and monastery of Rin-chen-sgang (in sNon-phu) in 1119 A.D.

Tenure: 50 years (until 1169: KC-III)

**II Sangs-rgyas dBon-ston (alias 'Gro-mgon Sangs-rgyas-dbon gZhon-nu 'byung-gnas) (1138–1210)**

Father: yon bdag Bu-mo-stag (also [sGyer/dGyer] Bu-mo Kha-stag)³

Mother: Sha-mo-mdog (var. Sha-mo-rdog [= rNgog])

Birth place: Mal-gro Ba-rab⁴

Age 17 he was ordained (with dBen-thang-pa as mkhan-po and ITe'u sgom as slob dpon; in KB, the mkhan po is sKyid-shod mkhan po Nyang-bran)

Ordination name: gZhon-nu 'byung-gnas

Expansion of rGya-ma Rin-chen-sgang (construction of the dBu-rtse, khjams chert., mgor~khang etc., in 1182)

Foundation of sKam-dgon and bZang-mo dgon⁵

Consecration of the (new) Bya-sa temple and the Byang-chub chen-po in Gung-thang etc.⁶

Glang-thang was entrusted to him (DN)⁷

Tenure: 40 years (1169–1210 [DN: 42 years])

**III Sangs-rgyas yon-tan (Bla-ma Sangs-yon) (1181–1242)**

Father: yon bdag Ya-po (~Ya-so, i.e. the younger brother of no. II)

Erection the glo 'bur nub ma at Rin-chen-sgang

Tenure: 1211–1242

**IV bDe-gshegs chen-po (b. ca. 1201; d. 1266)**

Younger brother of no. III

Tenure: rl. 25 years (1242–[me] stag 1266)

**V dGyer gZhon-nu-'bum (a.k.a. sKam-dgon-pa)**

Father: sMon-lam seng-ge (= the brother of no. II and no. IV)

Tenure. 18 month (1266–1268)

**VI Sangs-rgyas 'od-byung**

Father: dpon Seng-ge-dpal (= the son of sMon-lam seng-ge)

Tenure: 24 years (1268 – ca. 1291)

**VII Sangs-rgyas gZhon-'od (ca. 1268–1326/29)**

Age 24 he came to the chair

Tenure: 40 years (ca. 1291–1329; d. age 60)

**VIII Rin-po-che bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan (a.k.a. chos rje rGya-ma bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan)⁸**

He was active in gSang-phu (where he functioned as (IX⁹) abbot of the Gling-smad college; Table 8.1) and
also in Glang-thang (in 'Phan-yul) before he came to the chair of Rin-chen-sgang age 43 (d. at 62)
Tenure: 19 years (= ca. 1329–1348)

IX sPyan snga Kun-bzang-pa
Father: [Slob] dpon Jo-'phel (= one of the sons of dpon 'Bum-skyabs; KB)
Tenure: 3 years (until ca. 1350/51? [DN: 1 year]; d. age 71)9

X sPyan snga gZhon-nu seng-ge
Tenure: 2 years (ca. −1351/52? [DN: 1 year])
(The following 6 years the chair remained vacant)10

XI sPyan snga bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan
Tenure: 25 years (ca. 1357–1382? [DN: 21 years]; d. age 73; born in a Khyi year = 1310 + 73 = 1382)

XII sPyan snga Sangs-yon-pa
Tenure: 7 years (ca. 1382–1388 [DN: 5 years])

XIII sPyan snga Sangs-rgyas Byang-chub-pa
Tenure: 23 years (ca. 1388–1410 [DN: 21 years]; d. age 56)

XIV sPyan snga Kun-blo-ba (Kun-dga’ Blo-gros-ba)
Tenure: 11 years (ca. 1410–1420; d. age 59)11

XV Rin-po-che gZhon’-od (the second gZhon’-od) ([Icags] rta 1390–1454)
Tenure: 34 years (ca. 1420–1451/52)

XVI sPyan snga Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (1402–1470)
Father: dGyer dbon po Chos-skyabs
Mother: Jo-mo Bla-ma’-bum
Tenure: 34 years (acc. to GM; DN: 24 years, KC-I: 18 month; thereafter he stayed in a retreat in rGya-ma)
Born in IHas (see fn. 5)
Elder brother was Nam-mkha’ bstan-pa’i rgyal-mtshan (abbot of sKam-dgon)
Age seven he was ordained in the presence of his uncle Kun-blo-ba (no. XIV)
Ordination name: Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po
(Study at sKyor-mo-lung with Chos-rgyal dPal bzang-po (the XIVth throne-holder of sKyor-mo-lung; Table 8.2), age 20 he came to rTse-thang, it was followed by sojourns in Mal-gro spang-sa Se-ba-rong (where he met rje btsun ‘Jam-dpal rgya-mtsho),12 in ‘Ol-kha rDzing-phyi and other sites before he came to sKam-dgon where he followed his brother as abbot for six years. Then he followed Rin-po-che gZhon’-od as gdan sa ba of Rin-chen-sgang)13

XVII sPyan snga Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (the second Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan)
Tenure: 3 years; DN: 2 years
born in a sprul year (DN) (= [shing] sprul 1425)
Age 27, in the year [lcags] lug 1451 he came to the throne of Rin-chen-sgang

XVIII sPyan snga Blo-gros ’jigs-med (b. lcags spre’u 1440)
Tenure: 40 years, i.e. 1454 “until today” (= shing stag 1494)14
1454, age 16, he came to the gdan sa
KC-I concludes:
From the birth of dGyer-sgom chen-po (no. I) (= 1090 A.D.) until today (= 1494 A.D.) 405 years have past.
Notes to Table 10:

1 For a description of the monastery and of its extension during the time of the 2nd gsan pa, see KC-1 253, 270. Approx. in the same period bodhisattva bla-ba rgyal-mtshan (a.k.a. sMad) Dum-bu-ri-ba founded the religious seat of Dum-bu-ri in rGya-ma (see e.g. Deb dmDr 64; today in ruins). For an earlier period (2nd half of the 11th cent.) the area is inter alia registered as place of activity of Rva lo st¸ ba. For the rel. sites of rGya-ma, see also rDo-rje 2006.

2 His chief disciples included his younger brother sgom pa Shes-rab-grags, his nephew and thugs bzis rgyal mtshan (a.k.a. [sMad] Durn-bu-ri-ba) founded the reliq'ious seat or in rGya-ma (see e.g. Deb dmDr 64; today in ruins). For an earlier period (2nd half of the 11th cent.) the area is inter alia registered as place of activity of Rva lo st¸ ba.

3 He was a younger brother of dGyer-sgom chen-po and represents the first generation of the fiya ma dpon po. Acc. to the details offered in KB and KC-1, the first 10 generations of the dGyer of rGya-ma (dpon rabs and gsan rabs) can be summarized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>dGyer Shes rab-skynab Δ = O g.Yang-mo klu-lcam (from Yar-lung)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>sDing-po-pa, sKyi-ston (see Part I: h. 212), sDing-po-pa, sKyi-ston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>dGyer-sgom chen-po Δ = O g.阳 -mo klu-lcam (from upper bTsun-mo-tshal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>dBon-ston Δ = O Sha-mo-mdog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>sKam-dgon-pa gZhon-nu-'bum Δ = O sMon-lam seng-ge Δ = O dDe-gshegs chen-po Δ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>sKam-dgon-pa gZhon-nu-'bum Δ = O sMon-lam seng-ge Δ = O dDe-gshegs chen-po Δ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>sKam-dgon-pa gZhon-nu-'bum Δ = O sMon-lam seng-ge Δ = O dDe-gshegs chen-po Δ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>sKam-dgon-pa gZhon-nu-'bum Δ = O sMon-lam seng-ge Δ = O dDe-gshegs chen-po Δ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>sKam-dgon-pa gZhon-nu-'bum Δ = O sMon-lam seng-ge Δ = O dDe-gshegs chen-po Δ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>sKam-dgon-pa gZhon-nu-'bum Δ = O sMon-lam seng-ge Δ = O dDe-gshegs chen-po Δ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>sKam-dgon-pa gZhon-nu-'bum Δ = O sMon-lam seng-ge Δ = O dDe-gshegs chen-po Δ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Sigla: a), b), etc. = brother / sister; Δ = male; O = female; = ( ) married to; names in bold refer to the gsan rabs]
1) Ba-rab is located in eastern Mal-gro (see Part I: Map 1b). It is *inter alia* registered as one of the *hon po* ‘du gnas of dBu-nu (see App. IV: fn. 60). From the sources it appears that aside from rGya-ma valley Ba-rab as well as IHas (see below fn. 5) formed two of the main settlements of the early rGya-ma dGyer-pa lineage.

2) dBon-ston is also assoc. with the foundation of the Khri-khang mChod-khang in rGya-ma. The location of sKam-dgon (sKam-dgon dBa-be-ba-can) remains unknown, but probably in the closer environs of rGya-ma. bZang-mo dgon is elsewhere mentioned as the foundation of rogs ldan bZang-mo-bo alas gZhon-nu seng-ge (1158–1234), a native of mChims-yul in Dvags-po (KC-III: Dvags-po brag lHa-sa; for his biography, see KC-II 280–89). He is classified as one of the [slob ma] mo bzhis, a designation of dBon-ston’s four chief disciples who founded religious sites with the name element “mo”:

1) bZang-mo (loc. in bSam-yas-phu; cf. KC-III 158)

2) Nags-mo (established by slob dpon La-bo-ba in Byen, the latter an ancient toponym known from the Dunhuang Annals (i.e. Mal-tro brDzen-tang) which refers to Byen/Byan-chen and -chung, the two valleys due south of rGya-ma (Part I: Map 1b; Hazod, forthcoming b). At the entrance to Byen-chen the bTsun-mo-tshal monastery is located).

3) Zud-chu-mo (found. by Zud-chu-mo-bo; it is said to be located in lower ‘Phan-yul)

4) Nags-mo (found. by Nags-mo Sangs-yon (loc. unknown) (cf. KC-I 277f.; KC-III 157f.). In addition KC-I offers a list of further students of dBon-ston, through whom and the monasteries they founded the rGya-ma-pa tradition was established in a greater territorial context. Apart from his nephews (slob dpon sTon-pa and his brothers, see fn. 3), this includes:

- dBu-ma-pa Nam-mkha’ shes-rab (he founded a dgon pa in his own country, i.e. IHo-brag. He is evidently identical with the mkhan po U-ma-pa mentioned in lHo brag grab chen rnam thar (in Nor-bu tShe-ring 2004: 16) as teacher of [Shud-phu] Nam-mkha’ rgyal-po, the latter himself listed as student of Sangs-rgyas dBon-ston; see the entry below)

- dge bshes Se-bo sgang-pa

- dge bshes dPon Dar-ma rdo-rje (from Mon-Bod-mtshams, i.e. Tibet-Bhutan border region; he is mentioned *inter alia* in connection with the bringing of timber from Nags-shod for the new constructions conducted in Rin-chen-sgang)

- mKhank-hchen Padma Tshul-khrims (founder of the GGrv[rva] dgon; it is evidently the Grva rNam-khang mentioned in GM as the birth place of sphyan snga Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (= no. XVI of the present list). In KC-II 292.16 the birth place of the latter is given as lHas Grva-dgon gyi ‘dab, which refers to a location in the monastery in lHas, south of dGa’-ldan. Cf. also Hor-khang (1999: 580) where it reads: lHas-lung *chos grva* Grva-dgon gyi zoI Grva rNam-khang. VS 155, 156 lists the lHas-bu dgon founded by the Sangs-rgyas dBon[-ston] disciple Sangs-rgyas Do-je-bstan-pa (= Sangs-rgyas Jo-bstan, see below), the IHas Glang-lung dgon (est. by bshes gnyen Glang-lung-pa [1123–1193]; BA Roerich 297–299) and IHas Brag-dgon registered as foundation of Sangs-rgyas dBon[-ston]. Probably the latter refers to the gZang-mo-bo residence. The abbots of Grva-dgon usually were members of the dGyer lineage of rGya-ma, as it was also the case at sKam-dgon).

- sTon-pa [m]Tshe-ma (from Zhogs in lower ‘Phan-yul)

- Bya-yul Zem-ston

- sTon Nyi (he was in charge of Glang-thang, fn. 7)

- sGom-tshul (= dGyer-sgom Tshul-khrims seng-ge; see fn. 6)

- mKhank-hchen Nam-mkha’ rgyal-po (from eastern IHo-brag; confirmed by the lHo brag grab chen rnam thar (op. cit.), a lineage account of the imperial Shud-phu clan, where the Sangs-rgyas dBon-ston disciple Shud-phu Nam-mkha’ rgyal-po is registered (listed as XIXth generation after Shud-phu dPal gyi seng-ge, the *chos blon* of Khri Srang-lde-btsan). According to the same account, the religious bond with rGya-ma (and rGya-ma Sangs-rgyas dBon-ston, respectively) started with Shud-phu Nam-mkha’ seng-ge (two generations before Nam-mkha’ rgyal-po). Ordained in the presence of dBon-bcom-pa sBai-ti Jo-sras (see Table 8.2) he later came to rGya-ma (cf. Nor-bu Tshe-ring 2004: 14f.). The Shud-phu (often mentioned in tandem with the sNyil-bo lineage) counts among the leading clans in this part of the IHo-kha region, with ITam-shul as its power base (it formed one of the rje ‘i dpon ishan principalities of the kheng log period; see Part I: fn. 15). The monastery of s’Gro-ba (= sBro-ba) in Ban-pa (=Ben-pa) in IHo-brag founded by the Shud-phu descendant dge bshes gnyen chen po Zla-bo rgyal-mtshan (fol. 11*12* cent., identical with Dumbu-r‘i-ba? fn. 1) was a main site for the religious activities of the Shud-phu where also Nam-mkha’ rgyal-po was active (other religious sites in IHo-brag mentioned in connection with Shud-phu members of the 12th cent. include Ban-pa Thig-phyi, bZang-yul, a.o.; sGro-ba dgon later became the chief residence of the Tsong-kha-pa disciple Shud-phu Nam-mkha’ rgyal-mtshan; 1326–1402 A.D.). In one sources (Shangs pa bka’ brgyud 302.12) the strange clan name (gdung rus) Shud dgye is registered (=Shud[-phu] dGyer[r]); the entry is here related to the place Khong-lam rTsva-thang in Shangs of gTsang. The same site is known as the birth place of Khro-phu-ba Byams-pa-dpal (b. 1173) of Shud-phu, perhaps an indication to an early branch settlement of the Shud-phu in this area.

- Bang-rim-pa (he is probably identical with Sangs-rgyas dBon-gzhon (1171–1264) of the dGyer lineage, founder of the Bang-rim chos-sde in Dvags-po; Fig. 43, 44 below. KC-III 157 strangely mentions a Dags-po Bang-rim-pa in
connection with the ordination ceremony of dBon-ston. The monastery is situated on the left (= northern shore) of gTsang-po, in an area called dGyer-smad, lower or eastern dGyer (land), arguably named after the dGyer branch lineage which settled down here in the early 12th cent. (cf. dGu’ ldan chos’ byung 75bf.). Opposite Bang-rim, south of gTsang-po the sKu-rab and La-thog valleys are located whose prominent lineage was dGyer, in the case of La-thog (La-thog Zur-mkhar) called the White [d]Gyer (Gyer-dkar), known as the lineage of the (new) Zur-lugs founder mNyam-nyid rDo-rje, 1439–75 A.D. However, this lineage presence may also go back to an earlier section of the dGyer clan history.

In KC-II 189 there is mention of a number of further founding figures of the early rGya-ma-pa who are listed as disciples of bZang-mo-pa. It includes:

- lHa dGe’-dun sgang-pa (he is known as one of the chief disciples of Se sPyil-bu-po Chos kyi rgyal-mtshan (1121–1189) of the Yar-lung Jo-bo brgyud. The latter founded the Se sPyil-bu dgon in Klung-shod following his studies with Bya’ Chad-kha-ra (1101–1175) in ‘Chad-kha of eastern Mal-gru. dGe’-dun sgang-pa founded in Rag-sha-sgrur the dGe’-dun-sgang monastery (for its location in sKyid-shod, see lHa sa’i dgon tho 118).
- lHa Phrang-po-ba (he founded a monastery in sGrags called Ri-zangs-rdog gi dgon-pa)
- Gad dmar-ba (in Ba-lam) E-pa sGom-rim
- lHa-sas Kiang-pa (he founded the Zong dgon in lower ’Phan-yul)
- Sangs-rgyas Jo-stan (foundation of lHas-phu dgon-gsar; it is the lHas-bu dgon registered in VS, see above)

It should be noted that several of these branch institutions were located in areas which are also mentioned as part of the Tshal-po territory (or as Tshal-po mi sde, respectively), such as Zhogs, E, gNyal, sGrags, a.o. (see also App. III).

6 On the ancient Bya-sa lha-khang which was rebuilt and expanded under the Bya-sa ruler Jo-bo lHa-chen-po, see TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 262ff., 316. dBon-ston is also mentioned in connection with the consecration of (one of?) of the three large sa ’bum-pa (earthern stūpa) situated next to the mChod-khang of rGya-ma Khri-khang. They are otherwise described as the reliquary stūpa of dGyer-sgom chen-po, dBon-ston-pa (and) Khu-dbon (i.e. the latter’s nephew[s]?, dBus gtsang gnas yig 377). In Gyurme Dorje 1998: 219 it says that the consecration of the stūpa (or one of them?) was conducted by dGyer-sgom Tshul-khrims seng-ge (1144–1210), the founder of the Shug-gseb bKa’-brygyud center in sNye/sNyi-phu-of sKyid-smad. He was of the same clan as the rGya-ma-pa (the dGyer Be-gu branch of Yar-lung which had close ties to Khra’-brug, see TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 25) and his presence in rGya-ma would suggest here the background of a closer clan historical context.

7 BA Roerich 271. The bKa’-gdams-pa seat in central ’Phan-yul was founded by the Po-to-ba disciple Glang-thang-pa rDo-rje rong-ge (1054–1123) in 1093 A.D. It is said to have once housed 2000 monks. Cf. Roesler and Roesler 2004: 30f. It was captured by the ’Bri-gung army in the 1350’s, the time of the ’Bri-gung – Phag-gru war where also the rGya-ma-pa were strongly involved. Cf. Rlangs 295f.; Czaja 2006. On the presence of the rGya-ma-pa in ’Phan-yul (in Glang-thang and the estate of mkhar-rtses) in the Phag-mo gru-pa period, see also Jackson 2007.

8 Age 11, he was ordained in the presence of no. VII and dGyer Sākyā bKra-shis, the latter one of the sons of dpon ’Bum-skjabs, himself the younger brother of no. VII (see fn. 3). Sākyā bKra-shis was abbot at Grva-dgon [of lHas]. His elder brother (the eldest son of dpon ’Bum-skjabs) was dGyer Sākyā rgyal-mtshan who is reported to have been ordained in the presence of (the bZang-mo-pa seat) lHa dGe’-dun-sgang-pa (age 11). Age 18 he came to the seat of sKam-dgon. Cf. KB 501.6–7.

9 KB mentions that he was abbot at Gye-re dgon (in sKyid-smad; Table 7) before he came to the chair of Rin-chen-sgang. His elder brother sPhyan-snga Kun-rgyal-pa (fn. 3) was abbot at sKam-dgon (KB 503.6f.)

10 In Rlangs, a gZhon-nu seng-ge is registered as rGya-ma khri dpon who was killed by one gZhon-nu rgyal mtshan in around 1351/52 (Rlangs 204, 347; Czaja 2006, Chap. 4). The successor khri dpon dKon-mchog: ’bum (not listed in the dpon rabs of fn. 3) is mentioned in Ta’i Si-tu’s bka’ chems (Rlangs 286.21f.) to have handed over the stag mgo (i.e. khri skor seal) to the Sa-skya dpon chen rGya-ba bZang-po (ca. 1356). For details, see Czaja, op. cit.

11 Uncle of (and teacher to) no. XVI. KB: he served as abbot at Grva-dgon; in rGya-ma he erected a rgya phibs for the rGya-ma’i gtsug-lag-khang (i.e. Rin-chen-sgang).

12 sPang-sa Se-ba-rong refers to the sPang-sa monastery known as the residence of the Tsong-kha-pa disciple rtags ldan ’Jam-dpal rgya-mtsho. It belongs to present-day bKra-shis-sgang xiang of Mal-gru county. Cf. lHa sa’i dgon tho 174. It is the sPang-zang in Kxang Dimzingi 1/37b; geographical position: 29°46’N91°57’E.

13 For his biography, see rGya ma rnam thar (= rNam thar Dad pa’i sgo’ byed), in Vol. II of his Coll. Works, 371.1–375); KC-I 1292–96; see also Hor-khang 1999: 580–82.

14 He still held office in 1405; cf. DL2 366, 374 about the 2nd Dalai Lama’s visit of rGya-ma in 1499 and 1504.
40. The ruined complex of the monastic seat of rGya-ma Rin-chen-sgang (2007)

41a, b. dGyer-sgom chen-po (left) and his nephew Sangs-rgyas dBon-ston

Courtesy Serindia Publ. and Oliver Hoare
42. rGya-ma Khri-khang
   Photo: H. Richardson

43. Bang-rim chos-sde.
The monastery founded by
Sangs-rgyas dBon-gzhon
is situated in dGyer-smad
of Dvags-po (2005)

44. Sangs-rgyas dBon-gzhon alias Bang-rim
dGyer-sgom-pa
   Modern statue kept in Bang-rim chos-sde
45a–c. Glang-thang dgon in central 'Phan-yul represented one of the major outposts of the rGya-ma-pa

45a, b: Photo Google Earth 2006; 45c: Photo H. Richardson
The following annotated tables offer a brief overview of the abbatial succession or throne-holders (mkhan rabs, gdan rabs, bla rabs) of two major and influential Central Tibetan monastic seats. For matter of convenience, we have decided to offer the abbatial succession of the immensely influential 'Bri-gung mother seat and the equally significant and affluent sTag-lung mother seat, each ruled by two powerful family lineages – the sKyu-ra and the Ga-zi respectively. Either seat played a significant role, regionally as much as supraregionally in the religious as well as in the political field down through history. Their seats remained important melting-pots of bKa'-brgyud-pa teachings with considerable spiritual cross-pollination, not least at 'Bri-gung. Although located along the periphery of Central Tibet (dBus), their polities were major centers of power and influence. Less in the case of 'Bri-gung, far more in the case of the sTag-lung seat, due to their relatively isolated location to the north of lHa-sa, the seats gradually rose to become materially rich, propped by a stable number of patrons and linked up in the latter case with its strong branch seat in Khams (Ri-bo-che). Their abbatial successions in both cases followed a conventional uncle-nephew rule (occasionally or irregularly replaced by a hereditary-like father-son succession) where the consecutive brother lines regularly served as dānapati to the throne. It was in the 16th century only that both family- or clan-based seats gradually shifted to the prevalent incarnate system (sku phreng) on the seat, having in this case taken as model – although already practiced by the Karma-pa – the politically influential 'Bras-spungs chos rje throne, subsequently known as the Dalai Lama seat.

The data offered here for the numerous throne-holders, especially the more recent throne-holders and the length of their tenancy are not always reliable, requiring further collation and minute inquiries. The information given must therefore be taken cum grano salis, to be adjusted in a number of cases. The reason for this is not only the contradictory information that are occasionally found within the primary sources themselves, but also the complex political and hegemonic circumstances and the vicissitude that reigned at the major seats with increasing political interference in local affairs leading to irregular and shift replacements – confusing even informed historians. Moreover, the information presented in this survey and the often detailed annotations attached are mostly selective and arbitrary, leaving out other important details. It certainly remains a desideratum and an exciting research task for any dedicated and intrepid scholar to provide the readership with a full-fledged study of these powerful seats, delineating their rich and compelling political, religious, scholastic and artistic history.
V.11.1 The Abbatical Succession of 'Bri-gung dgon-pa

Based upon Primary Sources:

Deb ther sngon po (DN; BA Roechi 596–601); Deb ther dmar po (DM); rGya hod chos 'byung; (GB); rGya hod yig tshang (GT); Bod kyi deb ther (BD); 'Bri gung chos 'byung (BCh); Kun spangs rnam thar (KP); 'Bri gung gdan rabs I–IV (BG I–IV); 'Bri gung lo rgyus (BL); Gu bkra chos 'byung (GK); 'Bri gung khu dbon rnam thar (KB); Deb dmar gsar (DMS); Kun dga' rin chen rnam thar (KR); bKa' gdams chos 'byung I–IV (KD I–IV); dGa' ldan chos 'byung (GD); Ibo rong chos 'byung (HR); Rin chen phun tshogs rnam thar (RP); Vaidāryā ser po (VS); Mar lung rnam thar (ML); Phun tshog bkra shis rnam thar I–II (PTS I–II); bKa' brgyud chos 'byung I–II (KG I–II); mkhas pa'i dga' ston (KT); Brug pa'i chos 'byung (BCh); Rlang kyi Po ti bse ru (RL); Mig 'byed 'od stong (MB); Si tu bka' chems (ST); Bla sprod deb gzhung (BP); lCags stag zhib gzhung (CT); 'Bri gung chos mdzod (BGCh); JCh

Secondary Sources:

Ming mdzad (MD); Mi sna (MN); Dung dkar tshig mdzod (DK); TPS Tucci; IHa sa'i dgon tho (HS); HSLG; 'Bri gung thel dgon rags bs dus (RD); 'Bri mthil lo rgyus (BTh = dKon-mchog 'phel-rgyal 1987)

'Bri-gung-mthil 'Og-min Byang-chub-gling (located in Mal-gro gung-dkar rdzong; formerly Upper dBu-ru (i.e. dBur-stod gZho-rong phu) district, present-day assigned to Reb-mdos-sgang county (xiang), at 30°06'N 92°12'E) is a major polity-based religious seat that exerted political influence over the centuries. Its establishment in 1179/1180 by sKyob-pa 'Jig-rten mgon-po, who stemmed from the founding clan of sKyu-ra (orig. Kyu-ra, in full: 'Gru-rgyal sKhKyura original of the IDan-ma district of Kham), represented one of the eight minor schools ramifying from the Dvag-po bKa'-brgyud movement. The name of the site 'Bri or 'Bri-lung, aside from being a local name of the side valley in which the temple was located may stem from the clan name of the old imperial minister 'Bri Se-ru gung-ston. The changing fortunes of the major seat down through history was to be determined by this powerful family lineage with its abbatical succession being held by a traditional uncle-nephew line that was supported in the secular field by a sKyu-ra administrator (sgom pa, usually the nephew of the throne-holder, set up from the mid-13th century partly in mimicry of the contemporary Sa-skyva dpon chen position). The throne-holder addressed themselves chos rgyal or "Dharma rulers." The seat followed a traditional khu dbon (dbon brgyud) or uncle-nephew lineage – emblematic of Tibetan monastic rule – that occasionally alternated – on account of internal family wrangling – with attempts at introducing a hereditary father-son or successive brother-line succession on the see. The seat finally adopted the increasingly popular incarnate lineage system, initially headed by the brother hierarch lineages known as Che-tshang and Chung-tshang rin po che. In most recent time up to 1959, with the increasing prestige invested in these incarnate lines, a number of additional bla brang or "monk’s residences" and at least eight incarnate lineages were listed to be associated with 'Bri-gung.\(^1\)

The following throne-holders were gdan sa ba of the see at the Theg-chen chos khrim throne of Byang-chub-gling. 'Bri-gung sources usually count 39 throne-holders (40 if including the founder himself). The sources however occasionally are at considerable variance what concerns their succession, their personal dates and the length of the tenureship of the distinct throne-holders.\(^4\) Our knowledge of 'Bri-gung and its long and eventful history into most recent times is well documented and our depiction indeed has been greatly improved by a number of readable articles and books that have been written concerning the 'Bri-gung-pa, their monastic mother seat, its numerous branch establishments as well as their rich spiritual and cultural lore.\(^5\) Our knowledge of the 'Bri-gung art-history (the 'bri legs style, etc.),\(^6\) including its rich sculptural and religious inventories formerly kept in their monasteries and our knowledge of its ritual and cultic history are still in its infancy. It remains a desideratum for future research to document these still existing legacies.

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1 According to the recent political administrative reorganization of the territories (srid 'dzin gyi sa khongs) of Tibet, it is now part of Mal-gro rdzong.
'Bri-gung-mthil gdan rabs
('Og-min Byang-chub-gling)


Tenure: 1179/80-1214/17

Born in mDo-smad rTs-a-ra-stod. 'Jig-rten mgon-po became a prominent pupil of Phag-mo-gru-pa rDo-rje rgyal-po. Fully ordained in 1177 in 'On (with [Bl-a-ma] Zhang [g]Sum-thog-pa (the founder of Se-gseb in 'On; Part 1: fn. 813) as mkhan po, 'On rTsi-lung-pa as las kyi slok don and gNyal-ba 'Dul-dzin as gyang ston). For three years he safeguarded the seat of his teacher Phag-mo-gru-pa. Age 37, in 1179-1180, he founded the 'Bri-gung-theil/mthil [Se-ba] Byang-chub-gling of gZho-stod of Mal-gro (raised upon a hermitage est. shortly before by rtsogs ldan Mi-nyag sgom-rin-rin - other sources therefore maintain that the latter was the actual founder of the site). Its establishment was a proto-typical foundation story, allegedly involving the participation of the local telluric deity Mal-gro gZi-can. He mediated successfully over many years in a local conflict in the area of Ngam-shod (BG-III 82), winning many followers. He carried out renovation at sSam-yas 1192-93.

At the close of his life, he had a large gathering of disciples. Numerous statues and relics of him or related to him had been manufactured. His tenancy is sometimes included, sometimes excluded from the proper abbatial succession.

2 The area constituted the estate land of this minister. For 'Bri Se-ru, see TBH Sørensen 181, 228, 234, 304. Cf. the readable RD 9-10. See also bShad mzdod for the 'Bri clan behind the site.

3 BCh 720-21 lists the most important incarnation lineage (or Rin-po-che) associated with 'Bri-gung: mGar-chen (the present is the 7th mGar-chen Rin-po-che, b. 1936), sGrub-brgyud, lHo-chen, Ba-log, Zhog-pa, brGyad-ra, 'Brong-sprul, rGyal-sras, Chos-mdzad, War-thang, Rang-grol, g.Yu-sgra. Dzam-dlar, Ban-grong and dPa'-chung rin-po-che.

4 See also Sato 1962/63. dKon-mchog rgya-mtsho in his detailed BCh numbers the throne-holders differently (the present being the 40th throne-holder).

5 See e.g., BL passim, dKon-mchog 'phel-rgyal 1987, 'Phrin-las rgyal-mtshan 1988; and in particular the many recent and valuable publications and surveys written by Ra-se dKon-mchog rgya-mtsho 1999, 2003 and 2004. A large part of original documents and still non-extant texts related to 'Bri-gung are surmised to be still locked up in 'Bras-spungs.

6 The 'Bri lugs ('bri bris) painting tradition is little known. Cf. Jackson 1998: 338, 364; Jackson 2002, Luczansitz 2003, 2006; Stoddard 2003. It rose to prominence not least in the 18th cent. The famous 'Bri-gung lha bris mkhas pa Ga-lidg, dBu-chung dbang-rgyal, e.g., executed his style is reported to have been a hybrid style that mixed prevailing mkhyen bris and sGar bris styles. Cf. also BCh 543-44, 561. For 'Bri-gung documentation, see also Binczék and Fischer 2002.

7 BCh 415: rDo-rje. HR 403f. says that the founder's (fore)father stemmed from the ancestral Kuya-ra s'Tag-se gNam-ru (of the ancestral 'Bri clan) and his spouse Zhang sNa-nam-pa-bza' Chos kyi sgrol-ma. In Ra-se dKon-mchog rgya-mtsho 2003b: 48-49, it is said that the latter was daughter of Jo-bo-dpal (another earlier Jo-bo-dpal born ca. 1020 in gZho-smad of dBur-stod). The founder appears to have sNa-nam-pa roots similar to Bl-a-ma Zhang. After two generations, the founder is said to have emerged in this line. For another pedigree of sKyob-pa rin po che, see Kun spangs rnam thar 3a2f.

8 ST 4-5; HR 340; KB 6.2; BCh 298; Rlangs 205. The original patrons for the 'Bri-gung settlement (aside from the gNyos / lHa-pa clan controlled areas; cf. Table 7 above) stemmed from the sparsely populated Byang Nam-ra, Nag[s]-shod, rGya-mtsho bar-pa and Zhang-drung area. In the founder's hKu 'hum, we occasionally find references to these important benefactors and patrons. For a readable survey of the vihara and its numerous buildings, see dKon-mchog 'phel-rgyas 1987: 33f. The founder was also known in early texts as sKyur [= sKyur-ra]-sgom; ML 79a1.

9 As a major cultic figure in Tibet, the erection of sSam-yas similarly had involved the active participation and the ensuing sanctification of Mal-gro gZi-can, considered the chu bdag of Tibet par excellence. In the gSer-khang at 'Bri-gung, the guardian of which incidentally is Mal-gro gZi-can, a bzhugs khris and a set of bowls are still kept, allegedly being donated by this figure to the founder as a token of approval.

10 The extensive disciple-list is recorded in numerous sources. Among the most prominent count gNyos lHa-nang-pa and mGar dam-pa Chos-sdigs-pa (1180-1240). For a survey of the biographical materials related to the founder of which most are non-extant, see BCh 304-05, 311f. The successful teaching tradition disseminating from mGar Chos-sdigs-pa (even up to the present day) through the latter's discipleship in many areas of Eastern Tibet contributed to the fast spread of 'Bri-gung lore there.

11 Among the numerous statuary representations of him mention should be made: mGar Chos-sdigs-pa erected (or rather
mKhan-chen Gu-ra-ba Tshul-khrims rdo-rje (1154–1220/1222 A.D.)
Father: Sum-pa rDo-rje-dpal. Mother: Se'u Gangs-dkar-mo.
Tenure: 1217–1220
Received his full ordination at Thag-ma lha-khang in sTod-lung.13 He est. the Gu-ra seat in dBu-stod (in Kluong-shod), became its first abbot for many years and in 1199 for the first time met 'Jig-rten mgon-po, for whom he for many years functioned as substitute mkhan po. It appears that he initially served for three years as (unofficial) throne-holder upon the demise of the founder, it was planned that either the founder’s nephew dbon bSod-nams grags-pa or Shes-rab byung-gnas (1187–1241 A.D.; also known as 'Bri-gung gling-pa, a s/sgnag dbon or maternal relative to the founder [i.e. mother-brother [= founder-son]) took over the see, but since the former was bound by a retreat-oath of remaining in silence (sgra bcad) – emblematic of 'Bri-gung asceticism – for further four years and the latter also refused, Gu-ra-ba (again?) served as intermediate throne-holder. Since unrelated to 'Jig-rten mgon-po and to the sKyu-ra clan in official 'Bri-gung sources, he should normally not be counted as official throne-holder. Among his pupils count e.g. Zhig-po Rin-chen shes-rab (1171–1245) – the latter’s elder brother being Rog Shes-rab-’od; further Chos-rje sGang-pa (1165–1249), grub chen Bar-’brog-pa, rGya-ba thams cad mkhyen pa, bSam-gling-pa (1189–1260), the latter in particular was to disseminate 'Bri-gung lore in lHo-brag and lHo Mon.

dBon-ston bSod-nams grags-pa (1187–1234/35 A.D.)
Nephew of 'Jig-rten mgon-po. Father: A-nye A-grags of sGa-yul.14
Tenure: 1220/121–1234
Age eleven, he came to 'Bri-gung. He remained in retreat during lengthy spells. Age 35, he ascended the throne. He erected a sGo-mangs caitya in 1224. Previous throne-holder at the see of Phag-mo-gru-pa. During his and the next throne-holder’s tenancy, the compilation of the writings of the founder sKyob-pa 'Jig-rten mgon-po was initiated. During his tenure, of the throne-holder’s nephew line, sgom pa rDo-rje seng-ge served as administrator, evidently the first sgom pa. Among bSod-nams grags-pa’s pupils counts one Bla-ma bTsang-'phrang-ba of Sum-pa.

sPyan snga rin po che Grags-pa 'byung-gnas (1175–1255 A.D.)
Tenure: 1234/35–1255
Ordained in 'On in the presence of Zhang Sum-thog-pa and lHa 'Bri-sgang-pa. Age 18 (some sources say in 1189, others, 1192), he met 'Jig-rten mgon-po, remaining at his feet for another 18 years. Took over the see of Phag-gru at the age of 40 (arriving there 1208, but throne-holder from 1214 which he held until 1234) whereafter he ascended commissioned the manufacture of a number of statues (sku ‘dra) of chos rje sKyo-pa 'Jig-rten mgon-po, known as Hor sku (Hor sku Tshems rjes ma), executed by Chinese artists (ryga lha bzu) but patronized by the Mongols, manuf. ca. 1230), at least one of these is kept in the gSer-khang (formerly being the gZims-khang of 'Jig-rten mgon-po) of 'Bri-gung-mhil. He also had a 12th-cent. man-sized statue of the founder called Chos rje lhwa ma manufactured known as “My likeness” (Nga-’dra-ma), kept in the same gSer-khang (installed above a seat known as the “little maroon throne” (bzhugs khris smag chung). Hence known as gSer khang chos rje (which during the Gling-log of 1290 had been temporarily kept at Bye-gshongs), an icon known to have spoken “seven times,” it was regarded as the main statue of the gSer-khang. Visited by mDo mkhyen-brte Ye-shes rdo-rje (1800–59) in 1809.

In the gSer-khang too an early 13th-cent. statue of the founder known as sKyo-pa 'Dre-du-lul-ma or the “Demon-Tamer” was installed, erected by the patron Drug-tsha and allegedly consecrated by 'Jig-rten mgon-po personally. Similarly, a 14th-cent. statue of the founder is kept as principal statue in Ka-tshal dgon-pa. Ti-shri ras-pa erected a cubit-high statue of the founder MB 29a2. The three-storied ossuary of the founder, a Byang-chub caitya (incl. many precious and personal relics, such as a “touch relic” stone with his foot-print, etc.) is today installed in the 'Dzam-gling-rgyan gtsug lag khang. Here is also found the statue of him known as rGya nag ma. In addition, in his meditation hermitage, a number of statues and foot-prints of the founder are kept. Cf. BG-III 91, BTh 63–64, 67–70. For the destruction of some statues of the founder during the Cultural Revolution, see BL 340f. dKon-mchog rgya-mtsho provides a convenient list of statues and images, see BCh 305–06.

12 PTh-II 602 has 1154–1220; TPS has 1174–1221, clearly a printing mistake.
13 For this important 'Bri-gung affiliated seat in sTod-lung, see App. II above. Gu-ra-ba was considered a manifestation of Ratnasambhava as prophesied by 'Jig-rten mgon-po.
14 He was son of dKon-mchog rin-chen, a brother to the father of sKyob-pa 'Jig-rten mgon-po.
15 The father had two consorts: 'Bro-ldog-bza” Khu-byug-sman and De-gu-ma with whom he begot three sons: sPyan snga (the 3rd throne-holder), Sangs-rgyas-skyabs, and Shes-rab rgyal-mtshan. See MD 29b4–31a4.
the 'Bri-gung throne in 1234. During his tenure, the Mongols arrived in Central Tibet, destroyed and ransacked the main temple of 'Bri-gung (1240 and again 1251). During the first Mongol incursion, the powerful secular ruler or administrator at 'Bri-gung was captured and subsequently released – evidently the second? sgom pa of its kind, arguably being identified with sgom pa Šākya rin-chen.14 The 'Bri-gung monk community during his tenure amounted to 18,000. Upon his passing, during cremation, a self-originated statue of Avalokita emerged from among his ribs.15 His nang rten of Munendra, made from old Bod li ma alloy is today kept at 'Bri-gung. In the 'Dzam-gling-rgyan gtseg lag khang at 'Bri-gung, the stone-made ossuary of the throne-holder is installed (BTh 67, 69). His writings allegedly included a brief biography of Tilopā, and e.g. a refusal of Sa-pa’s sDom gsum rab dbye.

His pupils included Rin po che Grags-pa bsod-pa, sGo-mang-pa, rGyalt-sa Yang-dgon-pa, spyan sngag 'Dzam-gling mgon-po, sNye-mdö-ba thams cad mkhyen pa bsam-gtan-dpal (1216–77), A-ku ston-pa; Phag-gru rGyal-ba rin po che and spyan sngag Dar-ma tshul-khrims. A still non extant biography was executed by dge slong Dar-ma rgyal-po (of the gNyas clan, 1249–81) entitled spyan sngag Grags pa byung gnas kyi rnam thar rin po che 'bar ba.

IV spyan sngag gCung rin po che rDo-rje grags-pa (alt. Grags-pa rin-chen) (1210/11–1279/1280)

Nephew of 'Jig-rten mgon-po. Father: A-nye A-grags of sGa-yul.16

Tenure: 1255–1278

He was considered an embodiment of Lo Ras-pa. In 1230, he went into retreat for 13 years at rTa-ra Yon-tan steng-kha mTshe-rmThshe'u-kha, keeping an oath of non-communication. In 1234, he was expected to assume the throne before the seat, the 3rd throne-holder, but bound by a retreat-oath, the take-over was postponed. Due to his magical feats, he was considered a manifestation of Tilopā. Age 46, he ascended the throne. Made extensive refurbishments at 'Bri-gung main seat and est. many buildings. He ruled at one point over large territories of Byar, Dvags-po and Kong-po. Areas of 'Ol-kha, sNa-nam and sNa-dkar-rtses were held by 'Bri-gung. The secular administrator during his tenure was sgom pa Šākya rin-chen who also became the first 'Bri-gung khris dpon.17 Among the throne-holder’s pupils count: 'Bag-chung,18 Shangs-pa Tshul-khrims-dpal, grub thob Seng-ge-grags, and grub chen dBang-phyug dpal-dan, Ri-pa nag-po, etc.

V Thog-kha-pa Rin-chen seng-ge (1226/7–1284/1285)

Father: sgom pa rDo-rje seng-ge (b. ca. 1205), brother of the previous throne-holder20

Tenure: 1278–1284

Age nine, he was ordained. He erected the Thog-kha sTshangs-pa gTshang-pa, keeping a non-communication. He too remained in retreat for many years. Recorded for having been national preceptor chaplain (guoshi) to Qublai Qan. During his tenancy, the 'Bri-gung khris skor was established, the myriarchy ruling over large districts including Byar and Dvags districts.21 The father rDo-rje seng-ge, until he passed away, evidently served as sgom pa or administrator during his sons’ tenure, both the present and subsequent throne-holder.22

14 For his important tenure and role at gDan-sa-mthil, see most recently Czaja 2006.

16 See App. II: 82–83. This sgom pa intervened in some dispute related to conflicts in Kha-ra. See Table 7 above.

17 Cf. HR 365f.; DLS II 280a5–6. Akin to gTshangs-pa rgya-ras during cremation. The statue was kept at gSung-rab-gling of Dol at least until the 1670’s.

18 He father stemmed from sGa-yul. rDo-rje grags-pa was the last son of three. The other brothers were dbon bSod-nams-grags (=? bSod-nams-dpal; later 'Bri-gung “Domestic Administrator” (nang ’gags) of ‘Dan in Khams (cf. HR 444: K P 3a–b)) and rDo-rje seng-ge, the sgom pa and secular ruler and father of two successive 'Bri-gung throne-holders.

19 BG III 123, ST 7–8f. ascribing the appropriation of these areas during the tenure of the 3rd throne-holder. The allotment and occupation of sNa-dkar-rtses khris skor by the 'Bri-gung may also be related to the former gNyas-controlled areas in mKha’-reg or Kha-rag and Yar’-brog. It was during his tenure that the sKyyu-ra-based sgom pa position of civil administrators was properly established at 'Bri-gung, initially known as Nang’-gags-pa or the “Domestic Protectors.” This title and position “Domestic Protectors or Guards” should continue for some years in Khams, see prev. note.

20 Of the royal Yar-lung Jo-bo line of sPil-pa; cf. TF Sorensen and Hazod 2005: 318.

21 They had five children: the eldest was the presiding throne-holder, then followed bSod-nams rDo-rje. A-nu-rgyal, followed by the next throne-holder mThshams-bcad-pa and finally dKon-mchog-brtsegs-pa.

22 The history of the 'Bri-gung connections with the southern territories in lHo-kha, esp. Byar, Lo-ro gNyel etc. from the 13th cent., still needs to be carefully examined, not least the relation to the Bya-ba khris skor, e.g. Kham gsum Chos kyi rgyal po rnam thar 318.2–5 (in Rva lung dkar brgyud rgya phreng Vol Ill: Palampur 1978); Rlangs. passim.

23 Sperling 1987a: 34 rightly mentions, by comparing and following different sources, that rDo-rje seng-ge in fact was the first administrator of 'Bri-gung, followed by Šākya rin-chen. It was the powerful nephew-lineage, in line with Tibetan customs.
VI spyan snga mTshams-bead-pa Grags-pa bsod-nams (1238–1286)
Younger brother to former throne-holder. Father: rDo-rje seng-ge, brother to the 4th throne-holder.
Tenure: 1284–1286
Disciple of the former throne-holder. After his demise, possibly a sedis vacantia for two years

Of the sNubs clan.
Tenure: 1287–1290 or 1293
An ill-fated throne-holder. During his tenancy, the catastrophic destruction of Bri-gung (known as [Byang-chub]-gling leg; of all major institutions there) took place (1290).23 Most of the territories lost were appropriated by Sa-skya. This throne-holder – not belonging to the sKyu-ra clan – was an intermediate candidate, only chosen because the next throne-holder was too young in 1286. The sgom pa or civil administrator was rDo-rje-dpal.24 The throne-holder finally passed away in Kong-po. Often excluded from the official list.

VIII bcu-gnyis-pa rin po che rDo-rje rin-chen rgyal-po (1278–1314/15/1340)
Father: rDo-rje rgyal-mtshan.25
Tenure: 1293/96–1314
Different data as to his occupation of the see, either 1293 or 1296. Through the mediation of Khang-gsar-pa dishi Grags-pa 'od-zer (rl. 1293–1303), the Mongol emperor granted the permission to restore 'Bri-gung-mthil. Probably a sedis vacantia for three/six years on the throne. Arriving from exile in Kong-po, he erected on mThe'u-kha-thang, the bDe-lidan pho brang. He erected anew a bKra-shis 'od-bar silver ossuary as well as restored (1295) many formerly destroyed establishments, such as Thog-kha gSer-khang and the bla g.yel chen mo or the large assembly square. Many of the statues and reliquaries were re-gilded, such as the statue of the founder known as gSer-khang chos-rgyal-po, also relics kept in Bye-gshongs during the raid were brought back and reinstalled. During his tenure, sgom pa Ye-shes-dpal (reigned for 25 years) and rDo-rje-dpal – brothers by blood – served as successive administrators.26 The four-storied bKra-shis sgo-mang caitya erected by this throne-holder is kept in the main-building at 'Bri-gung (BTh 66). In 1305, he went on a pilgrim tour.

IX Nyer-brgyad-pa rin po che rDo-rje rgyal-po (1284–1350/1351)
Younger brother of the former throne-holder. Father: rDo-rje rgyal-mtshan.
Tenure: 1314/1315–1350 or 1340–1350
Expanded and refurbished the see. He erected the bKra-shis-ljong gtsug lag khang in 1333 and later (1339) at g.Ya'-ma-ri in gZhu-smad, he est. a mGon-khang and a sgrub sde. His father at some point served as secular ruler. The sgom pa Ye-shes-dpal and Kun-dga' rin-chen (later khri dpon, son of sgom pa rDo-rje-dpal) is registered as civil and military administrator who challenged the increasingly strong Phag-mo-gru-pa myriarchy.27 That appropriated the secular power behind the seat. rDo-rje seng-ge throughout the early 13th cent. no doubt was the redoubtable figure behind the rise of 'Bri-gung. He also entertained close bonds to the gNyos clan.

23 Cf. BG III 123–24. The imperial retaliatory army consisting of contingents from China and mDo-khams were headed by four army chiefs: A-ye Šākya rgyal-mtshan, 'Gru-mthar-pa rgyal-mtshan, Glio-'jo Bla-ma rgyal-mtshan, and Gling bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan. The full background behind the conflict with Sa-skya that led to the destruction of 'Bri-gung still needs to be written in greater details. See Petech 1990b: 30f.; Zur chen ram thar 33b1–4.

24 He had called in assistance from the sTod Hor or Upper Western Hor, i.e. the Çagatai ruler Tuyłuq Temür. Cf. Ur gyvan pa'i ram thar 1160 (in this text to be dated to ca. 1289/90); Petech 1990b: 21–22, 30. En route rDo-rje-dpal passed away. The 'Bri-gung seat was subsequently destroyed.

25 He (father to the 8th and 9th throne-holders) and his elder brothers bSod-nams rdo-rje and dKon-mchog brtsegs-pa were sons of one A-nu/br-rgyal, a younger brother of Thog-kha-pa (himself son of the first dpon sgom rDo-rje seng-ge, who descended from the sKyu-ra line of 'Dan-stod, a brother-line of the founder) who in turn settled in 'Jon-ma of gZhu-smad (close to 'Bri-gung).

26 They were formerly designated nang 'gag pa, the family hereditarily received an imperial 'ja' sa and seal with tiger-botton and served as sgom pa. Also known as sgom chen and sgom chung, i.e. senior and junior sgom pa.

27 Up to the decisive 1350's, at the height of the Central Tibetan skirmishes, the 'Bri-gung sgom chen reportedly had been Rin-chhen rdo-rje (d. 1350) and Kun-dga' rin-chen (1317–1352 A.D.) acted as sgom chung; cf. Rlangs 207 13, 227; KP 4a1–2.
holder invited Klong-chen Rab-'byams-pa to 'Bri-gung where he delivered teachings (GK 219–20) and received the hermitage of Grog O-rgyan giy dgon. Klong-chen renovated the neighbouring Zhva’i lha-khang (1349).

Until his tenure, the relations between 'Bri-gung and gDan-sa-mtihil (of Phag-gru) had been close, yet due to the animosity between this sgom pa and Ta’i Si tu – the visit of Klong-chen to 'Bri-gung was conducive to deteriorate the relationship – the bonds were broken. The former’s repute, however, should remain negative. He passed away at bKra-shis-ljongs. The sgo mangs caitva erected in his commemoration is installed at 'Bri-gung (BTh 66).


Tenure: 1351–1395/1401

Considered a manifestation of the throne-holder’s parents counted the Shangs-pa bla ma, chos rje La-phyi-ba Nam-mkha’ rgyal-mtshan (1372–1437).30 1375, he commissioned the manufacturing of a gold-written bKa’-gyur. In the mid-14th cent., during and in the aftermath of the dBus conflict between Sa-skya and Phag-mo-gru-pa, the junior and senior administrators (sgom pa, khri dpon) were Sākyā bzang-po (1328–64)31 and the latter’s elder brother Kun-dga’ rin-chen, followed by the former’s son, situ Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan (khri dpon, rl. ca. 1364/1370–76), and followed in this seat by the latter’s younger brother Kun-dga’ rgyal-mtshan (d. 1376) and his (?] half-brother mGon-po rgyal-mtshan (ruled ab 1377). They invited the rNyin-pa-pa master Grags-pa ‘od-zer to ‘Bri-gung where he delivered teachings (GK 230–31). At some later point, in around 1380, due to a strained relationship between the ‘Bri-gung khri dpon and the Phag-gru, the latter’s army attacked ‘Phan-yul, but was turned back by a re-enforced ‘Bri-gung army. The throne-holder’s mediation in the conflict proved successful. In 1395, he stepped down. At the close of his life, the sgom pa who received the rank and honour as rdzong byijii (this title and rank along with that of tre hos already given to mGon-po rgyal-mtshan) was bSod-nams rin-chen (see below). The latter manufactured two sets of bKa’-gyur and graciously sponsored other items. The throne-holder himself commissioned the manufacturing of statues and murals depicting Samvara Ekavira (esp. a statue known as lHun-po). In 1400, the Ming

27 The line of Kun-dga’ rgyal-mtshan had settled in ‘Jon-ma of Lower gZhu in Upper Central Tibet. He was younger brother of the throne-holders bCu-gnyis-pa and Nyer-brgyad-pa. The parents begot two sons: Rin po che Nyer-gnyis-pa and dKon-mchog rgyal-mtshan (the latter of the coming throne-holder).

28 Cf. ST 125ff.; Petech 1990a: 110–12. The sKyor-po-lung chos sde was destroyed during these fightings. The relationship turned to the better in the later part of his tenure between this throne-holder and the 3rd Phag-gru sde srid bSod-nams grags-pa (1359–1408). The meditation communities of both gDan-sa-mtihil and ‘Bri-gung established hermitages in La-phyi area (Huber 1997: 242–43; Ehrhard 2002c: 52; Everding and Dzonphugpa 2006: 70f.); the bonds deteriorated again in the mid-14th’s.

29 A statue donated by the ‘Bri-gung throne-holder to bTsong-kha-pa on the occasion of their meeting is kept in the Byang-rtse gzims-khang of gGa’-ldan; cf. Grva sa chan bzhis chags thsitl [B] 25; GD 8a2, 53a2–4. The dGe-lugs founder re-visited the site in 1401. Moviated by Chos-sgo-ba bKra-shis rin-chen, bTsong-kha-pa should compose a stora lauding this throne-holder. He duly listed these ‘Bri-gung masters among his teachers. Conversely, the throne-holder’s nephew and successor on the ‘Bri-gung see as well as Chos-sgo-ba ’Jam-dbyangs kha-che [alius bSod-nams-dpal; he wrote a biography of Phag-mo-gru-pa; see Bibliography: Phag mo gru pa rnam thar I I] and Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan should become disciples of the dGe-lugs master. In fact, a one-storey-high gilded statue of Maitreya-nātha known as “dGa’-ldan rten-phud” donated to spyan snga rin po che is presently kept in the ‘Du-khang at ‘Bri-gung, BTh 65.

30 Tsong kha pa rnam thar 116–17, 261; VS 178; HR 304–5; Shangs pa bka’ brgyud bla rabs 480–86. Cf. also Thang stong rnam thar l 184. See below.

31 He was hereditarily titled mI dpon and ta’i situ. He was a formidable lay ruler and was married to three consorts (jo mo): The senior wife of Mongol descent, dpon mo A-thas, then dpon mo Ga’-zi-bza’, and a dpon mo Mi-nyang-bza’, called sTag-bstan-bza’. With the latter, he begot two sons and one daughter (later nun). The eldest son was ta’i situ Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan (1353–1401) who after Sākyā bzang-po’s demise became ‘Bri-gung khri dpon, prob. 1364, in 1370 he received from the newly installed Ming emperor, the citation and rank of ta’i situ. 1377, Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan, who remained celibate, decided to be fully ordained in the presence of Y. Yag-sde Pan-chen. Cf. BCh 388–90; and esp. KP 4a2f. The biography of Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan written by Jo-sgom dpal-bzang, Kun spangs rin po che ye shes rgyal mtshan kyi rnam thar Kun tu bzang po i rol ba bstan pa’i rgyas (= KP) is one
emperor conferred upon him the title *guoshi*. He left behind numerous writings (most of which are still non-extant). The sources are at variance as to when he passed away.

A biography of the throne-holder was written by *chos rje mtshungs med* sMan-sgom-pa chen-po 'Od-zer seng-ge, his most prominent pupil. A pupil of sMan-sgom-pa and of the throne-holder was the *chos rje Nam-mkha' rgyal-mtshan*, and Ngom-pa *bya bral* Nam-mkha' rgyal-mtshan (1370–1433). Other pupils incl. dKon-mchog blo-gros, Tshul-khrims mgon-po, 'dul 'dzin Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1374/5–1434/6), 'Bri-gung lho tas ha Nor-bu dpal gyi ye-shes (1349–1423), mGon-po ye-shes (1336–1393), and *kun spangs* Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan (1353–1401).

**XI Chos rje bShes gnyen or Guoshi chos rje Don-grub rgyal-po (1369–1427)**


Tenure: 1395/1401–1427

During the early part of his rule (and the last part of the former throne-holder's), the *sgom pa*, as said, was reported to have been the Nags-shod-pa commander (*rdzong ji*) bSod-nams rin-chen followed by his uncle Tshul-rgyal, both serving as 'Bri-gung *sgom pa*. During the later part of his tenure, the administrator was Sākya bzang-po (chronology doubtful). He received from the Ming emperor Yongle (1402–24) the diploma and title of *guoshi* upon his ascent on the throne. 'Bri-gung rin po che is reported to have been a one-time pupil of bTsong-kha-pa (KD-II 944a–6), which heralded good relationships with dGe-lugs-pa. He travelled widely during his tenure, and e.g. sojourned repeatedly in Kong-po where he e.g. performed flood-reducing activities. Still politically and administratively his tenure heralded the decline at 'Bri-gung, since he broke with the traditional form of rule and introduced his son as successor at the see. It is said that the teaching tradition at 'Bri-gung declined dramatically under the following throne-holders. A four-storied high bKra-shis sgo-mangs *caitya* erected by this throne-holder is presently kept in 'Bri-gung (*BTh* 66).

Among his students counted Mi-nyag *ritogs ldan* Grags-pa rin-chen, and Lo-chen bSod-nams rgya-mtsho.

**XII bDag-po Wang Rin-chen dBang gyi rgyal-po (1393/13–1435)**

Father: *chos rje Don-grub rgyal-po*. Mother: sMin-legs-ma dPal-'dren (ennobled from common origin).

Tenure: 1427–1428

Until the preceeding and present throne-holder, throne-holders were celibate and the succession followed the traditional *khu dpon* lineage. Due to family wrangling over succession, and due to the violent passing of both *sgom pa* (the sources speak about the extinction of the hereditary *nang 'gag pa* and *sgom pa* lineage), this position as civil administrator was now abolished or rather taken over by the throne-holder. The following tenants became dual clerical-secular rulers (*bla* of the most important late 14th-cent. sources on the internal 'Bri-gung affairs. He was born close to sMan-thang givug lag khang, one of the 'Bri-gung estates of Sākya bzang-po in mNga'-ris. It not least was he and his pupils, and Nam-mkha' bsam-grub rgyal-mtshan (1408–62) as well as *'dul 'dzin* Ngag-dbang rgyal-mtshan who during the 15th century should uphold the *bka' brgyud pa* and its core teachings of the 'Bri-gung-pa both at 'Bri-gung and in the La-phyi hermitic area.

He should play a role in the unstable political situation at 'Bri-gung. Nam-mkha' rgyal-mtshan early (i.e. late 1380's) should attend on his uncle, the Military Commander dKon-mchog bzang-po. Nam-mkha' rgyal-mtshan under the auspices of the presiding throne-holder eventually rose to become *dpon skyu* of 'Bri-gung as well as *gzims dpon* of the 'Bri-gung *sgom pa*, the 'Bri-gung *sde bdag rdzong ji* bSod-nams rin-chen. He early married a daughter of Rag-si dBang-seng of the *mi dbang* Rag-si rGyul-ba bzang-po house and ruled as a lay ruler in the Nags-shod area. In 1396, he decided to turn his back to secular life and its machinations and to become ordained in the presence of the 10th 'Bri-gung throne-holder.

The *ras* of the Shangs-pa bK'a--brgyud-pa master Nam-mkha' rgyal-mtshan was the lDong clan and since the 13th century this family line was hereditary holders of the position as "Military Commander" (a 3rd rank with "Tiger-button" citation) within the Yuan administration and later Ming, albeit at it this point was purely nominal, being divested of any real power. Cf. *BCh* 382–83; *la phyi ba'i rnuu thar*, 438f; *HR* 304–5.

He served the throne-holder as *gzims dpon*, cf. *GD* 61b4; Shen Weirong 2002: 156. He erected a temple in bTsung-mo-bsal where he passed away.

*34* Cf. *HR* 444–49. Initially called bSod-nams grags-pa.

*35* Major discrepancies as to the age and tenure of him; some sources suggest 1393, 1395, 1401, 1407 or even 1414 for the ascent. 1401 or 1407 to be preferred.

*36* During the war-torn reign of *sde bdag chen po rdzong ji* hyi* bSod-nams rin-chen (chos rje Nam-mkha' rgyal-mtshan for three years served as his *gzims dpon*; cf. Shangs pa bka' brgyud bla rabs 442, 482). bSod-nams rin-chen in fact was a powerful secular ruler and eventually a *sgom pa* at 'Bri-gung who was a great patron and mentor for the manufacture of art-objects and scriptures. Urged by the sTag-lung-pa, who formerly had monopolized the all-out clear-felling of forests in the Nags-shod area
dpom) and the uncle-nephew line now in part was replaced by a direct hereditary father-son succession. The take-over was tantamount to an internal coup. Prior to his ascent to the throne, he evidently married his mother and served as ruler and also headed the local army. He enjoyed a bad administrative reputation just like his father due to his parochial looks. His ascent, albeit brief, heralded a period of political decline for the coming decades. Abbot for less than one month (others: one year and three months; others again maintain that his influence lasted until his passing in 1435) and fled to China (Wutaishan). Following his passing, for a short period the secular seat (sgom pa) at 'Bri-gung (ca. 1428–35) was taken over by du dchen sha (duyanshuat) rGyal-ba bzang-po (BD II/145–46).

A statue erected by him of Zas-gtsang-ma, the father of the historic Buddha, and an istadevatâ of the throne-holder are presently kept in the 'Du-khang at 'Bri-gung (BTh 66). Among his pupils count sGam-po Chos kyi dbang-phyug (1371–1423; see Sørensen 2007b) and Rin-chens rdo-rje.

### XIII Chos rgyal Rin-chen dpal-bzang-po (1421–1467/1469)


Assumed either the see 1427 or 1435 (if then a sedis vacanta possibly for seven years). He came to Thog-kha gser-khang in 1435, and without being ordained, he ascended the throne. His tenancy led to many 'Bri-gung-pa areas in La-phyi, and the Phag-po gru-rulers flared up over hermitage areas in La-phyi, and the Phag-po-ruestablished Chu-dbar. Six ministers are registered during his tenancy: Rom-po and Nyag-che, gZhi-sgom and Byes-sgom, and Khri-khang and rDzong-dpon (DMS Tucci 1972: 198).

### XIV Rin-chen Chos kyi rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po, alias Chos rje bCo-Inga-pa (1449–1484)


(bSod-nams rin-chen's homeland), he was persuaded to intensify this trade. He successfully suppressed the nomadic Khyung-po, the Rong-po tribes and other ru sde of the North in the same area. He later destroyed the dGe-lugs-pa seat of Lo dgon-po and killed a number of its monks. He and his uncle (sku zhang Tshul[khrims] rgyal-po) shortly after lost their lives in the battle against the armies of sNe'u-gdgon, headed by one local Da-ra kha-che (gloss called dGung-mkhar-ba) (*i.e. Darzurcaï*, the latter was granted asylum by the sNe'-gdong gong ma. Cf. also DMS (Tucci 1971: 196–97).

Another influential rdzong ji was Grags-pa rin-chen (into the Phag-gru Kun-bzang-rsce line of his, the mother of the 3rd Dalai Lama was born) as well as rGyal-mtshan bzang-po (he had financed the sNe'u-gdlong council of 1373 (DMS Tucci 1971: 212–15) and in 1393 invited Rong-ston (1367–1449); cf. Rong ston nam thur 308). Later. ca. 1435 one mKhar dge stong assumed the office of zonggi.

* The title rdzong jihiyi or (Ch. zonggi; either “platoon commander” or “general ensign” (with the dragon-button seal) was a Ming epoch rank tantamount to a minister lord (dpon chen), a post also known at Phag-mo-gru-pa; cf. van der Kuijp 1991: 297; 2001: 60f.; Ehhrard 2002c: 54–55. In 1357–58, rdO-rje gling-pa, barely twelve years old, resided for short at sNe'u-gdlong in the presence of a local vig mkhan of a local rdzong hiyi. Cf. rDo rje gling pa nam thur 17.2.

57 Rin-chen Chos kyi rgyal-pa of the 14th century also maintained that his influence lasted until his passing in 1435 (BTh 1117; DMS Tucci 1971: 198f.).

* His elder half-brother was chos rje dbang (= Wang or Prince) Rin-chen Chos kyi rgyal-po alias Wang rin po che or mKhar-thog-pa (1448–1504). Father: Chos rgyal Rin-chen dpal-bzang, mother: Chos-rgyal bzang-mo, daughter of a Ladakhi king and bSod-nams sgrol-ma of mGar-lung. See DMS (Tucci 1971: 198f.).

It seems that he had taken his vows as a celibate. It had been expected that he occupied the see in 1484 upon his younger brother's demise, but denied (evidently weary of politics) choosing to live as an ascetic without much involvement in worldly affairs; his parochial outlook eventually led to the appropriation or misuse of his property. He established the bKra-shis chos-lung dgon-pa.

His rnam thur maintains that Wang Rin-chen Chos kyi rgyal-po was born in pho brang mKhar-thog, the landed family estate (i.e. a traditional brother-line paragium or latitudium; which contradicts the statement in DMS 62a that he received it as gsol skal) – a site which included within its premises a so-called Chos kyi mdgon-par mtho-ba'i gtsug lag khang. It was located in the 'Bri-gung heart-land of gZhu-smad – in 1532, it served as the meeting-place of the Hor ruler Thar-pa-'bum and the 16th throne-holder thus suggesting that mKhar-thog at this point had been appropriated by or was associated with the sPro-lung line.
Tenure: 1469–1484\(^{39}\)
He was a lay-man until age 20. Ordained 1469. dbang (i.e. Wang) rin po che (the throne-holder’s elder brother) was offered the see but rejected.\(^{40}\) He eventually held both religious and civil authority. Pupil e.g. of the 7th Zhvannag. During his tenancy the religious chair remained weak, contrary to the secular chief that eventually was headed by the throne-holder’s wife and the next throne-holder’s mother (rl. between 1484–1505) and by dpal-grags (d. 1491) of the Khang-gsar nang-so line. Contact to the stTag-lung was initiated by Wang rin po che when he met the 12th stTag-lung throne-holder in Thang-‘brog. The repute of this stTag-lung master for upholding and perpetuating the ‘Bri-gung lore and doctrine was considerable. The 7th Karma-pa Chos-grats rgya-mtsho in particular actively assisted the ‘Bri-gung-pa in restoring their lore (bstan pa gso).\(^{41}\)

A statue of Muni (Thub-pa Phyogs-las mram-rgyal) erected or commissioned by this throne-holder in commemoration of his father is presently kept in the ’Du-khang at ’Bri-gung (BTh 66).


Father: Rin-chen Chos kyi rgyal-mtshan (1449–1484). Mother: Rin-chen dpal-mo (d. ca. 1505), daughter of sTag-rtshe rdzong dpun bSam-grub of mGar-lung-pa.\(^{42}\)

Tenure: 1484–1527\(^{43}\)

Born in bKra-shis steng-khang. Ordained age 17 at Chos-lung (est. by his uncle Wang mkhar-thog-pa). Kun-dga’ rin-chen is regarded as one of the most learned masters of ‘Bri-gung and the last major purist master of the idiosyncratic ‘Bri-gung teachings, before rNyin-ma elements entered their lore. The temporal affairs were during the initial part of his tenure in the hands of dbang Rin-chen Chos kyi rgyal-po, then for a brief period by the throne-holder’s younger brother drung chen Chos kyi rgyal-po and later again, ‘Bri-gung’s secular responsibility

\(^{39}\) Other sources mention a tenure of ten years; PTs-II 603.

\(^{40}\) He is nevertheless occasionally counted as throne-holder; cf. BCh 412.

\(^{41}\) Cf. Kam tshang bka’ brgyud 281b2–4.

\(^{42}\) Cf. BD III 156–57: mGar-lung-pa (of ’Ol-kha or Bye-ri sTag-rtshe?) was under the ‘Bri-gung rule. The mother (compared to the Princess Sitā) was also denoted sgom ma. She was the most powerful female ruler at ‘Bri-gung (see e.g. BT-III 171), in fact the only female ruling candidate in its history (Fig. 54a). Other sources claim that she was called Rin-chen sgron-ma. After her retirement as sgom ma, she appropriated the estate of Klung-shod-rtse. Cf. also Ra-se dKon-mchog rgya-mtsho 2003b: 106–07.

The parents had three sons and one daughter. The eldest was sgom pa Rin-chen mam[-par]-rgyal (b. 1472; who in 1491 as sgom pa went to revitalize the Phag-mo-rtse line after the former ruler, sgom pa dpal-grags (var. Grags-dpal) had passed away there – see below; uncle to the 17th throne-holder), then followed as second son, the presiding throne-holder Kun-dga’ rin-chen (b. 1475) and finally drung chen Chos kyi rgyal-po bStan-pa’i rgyal-mtshan (b. 1478; father to the 16th throne-holder; he erected the dpal-lung pdan pho brang of sPro-lung residence and est. his own ruling line) and finally is registered a sister ’Gro-ba’i sgrol-ma (b. 1478–79), who married into the Ga-zī family of sTag-lung, thus initiating blood bonds between the two powerful families. Cf. also DMS (Tucci 1971: 199–201, 232–233; passage misconstrued by Tucci).

Phag-mo in these texts repeatedly refers to the inner-‘Bri-gung Phag-mo-rtse line, wherefore both Tucci and Sperling (1987a 41–42f.; along with the latter’s lengthy speculation offered) have misconstrued the reference to Phag-mo: it alludes to the powerful ‘Bri-gung estate-based Phag-mo-rtse (abbr. Phag-rtse) house and line and has nothing to do with the ruling gong ma or Phag-mo-gru-pa of sNe’u-dlong. At ’Bri-gung, the brother-line quarrel led to the simultaneous establishment of two armed power-centers that regularly fought one another. A long-standing conflict thus ensued that lead to an insurmountable schism within ’Bri-gung between the two khu dhon lines:

The Phag-mo-rtse line went back to the family of the 12th throne-holder who resided at sTag-sna gzhis ka (estate) in their residence called rNam-sras-glung pho brang. sTag-sna was located in present-day Grog-nang of Thang-skya xiang in Mal-gro gung-dkar xian. Its rulers were designated the Phag-mo-rtse nang so or Khang-gsar nang so (in full: Phag-mo khang-gsar nang so; – it also held estates in Glang-thang khul; cf. CTZhZh 154–56.). Members of this line should keep struggling against the sPro-lung (or Yang-ri-sgang-sgar) branch within the main Thog-kha line (this ’Bri-gung main line was called the Thog-kha nang so line; albeit both disputing branches had issued and originated from the 4th and 5th throne-holder, called accordingly after the Thog-kha gSer-khang mansion at ’Bri-gung; incidentally) within ’Bri-gung for control over the see. The Phag-mo line had died out at some point and the elder brother of the 15th throne-holder, sgom pa Rin-chen mram-rgyal (1472: 92f.; cf. BT-III 166) went to Phag-mo to revive it and to set up its residence (kha’ha) and then to settle as local sgom pa of Phag-mo. The sTag-sna gzhis ka is reported to have entertained bonds to the 7th Zhvannag Karma-pa. See in particular the details in App. II: fns. 190, 228.

\(^{41}\) Other sources suggest a lengthy tenure 1494–1527 or 33 years.
was held by the mother, Rin-chen dpal-mo who ruled adroitly, autocratic and cunningly after her three sons, now each with an estate, were ruling their own houses. After passing away (1505), mGon-po rgyal-mtshan was elected as secular ruler (or by way of a coup) or mi dbang (i.e. sde pa or dbon po; but also sgom pa chen po) mGon-po rgyal-mtshan,44 whose ambitions should cast a strong shadow on the inner politics at 'Bri-gung.

In around 1500, the 'Bri-gung-pa occupied the hermitage area of 'Tsher-leb and La-phyi.5 During this period, the throne-holder entertained patron-client bonds to the Hor king Kun-dga' bkra-shis and he entertained close bonds both to the Karma-pa and the sTag-lung hierarch: E.g. to the 7th Zhva-nag Chos-grags rgya-mtsho and the 4th Zhva-dmar Chos-grags ye-shes. He met the former already in 1486 at bKra-shis-thang of Klungs-shod, whom he in 1488 invited to 'Bri-gung to resuscitate the feeble 'Bri-gung lore there and where he established the Khra/Phra-ba-kha dgon-pa (1479). 1492, he was ordained in the presence of Kun-dga' blo-gros, Blo-gros brtan-pa, and Legs-pa rin-chen. He also entertained relations to the contemporary 14th sTag-lung throne-holder bSod-nams ye-shes dpal-bzang-po.45 He attended on the rNyin-ma-pa ascetic dkar-po-ba Kun-dga'-'grags, where the former carried through the inauguration of bSams-yas after the latter's renovation in 1509-10.46 A number of clashes between 'Bri-gung-pa and dGe-lugs-pa over territories during his tenancy. The first official gold-written version of the bk'as 'bum of the 'Bri-gung founder was executed (1495, resp. 1523-25 A.D.). He also ext. the gSer-mgo gtsug lag khang (i.e. Dar-rgyas-rtse), known as the eastern 'Du-khang of the local sgrub grva. In 1502-03, the 4th Zhva-dmar was invited to 'Bri-gung and initially resided at mTshe'u-kha, being welcomed by mKhar-thog-pa later at 'Bri-gung-thel. They later met in 1519.

He had innumerable pupils, e.g. Chos kyi dbang-phya-yug, mkhann chen Kun-dga' rgya-mtsha, Nub 'Jam-dbyangs rin-chen, Chos-sgo-ba dpal-'byor brtags-pa, Rin-chen rgya-mtsho, dbon po rdDo-rje rgyal-mtshan, 'Jam-pa blo-gros and sDe-ma Kun-dga' 'grags-pa, lha bisun Rin-chen mjam-rgyal.47

44 Some confusion prevails in 'Bri-gung sources as to mGon-po rgyal-mtshan (or the sources display chronological distortions). The khri dpon or sgom chen / sde pa mGon-po rgyal-mtshan was born ca. 1360 and was youngest son of the great administrator sgom pa Saky-a bzang-po (ca 1330-1370); the former's elder brothers were Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan (1353-1401 A.D.) and Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan; cf. PTs-1160; BCH 387-429.

Another personage was sgom pa mGon-po rgyal-mtshan (ca. 1475/80–1545); Fig. 54b. His paternal line is still unclear (he is registered as a nephew of the throne-holder's pupil Nub slob dpon 'Jam-dbyangs rin-chen who stemmed from the imperial [s]Nub[s] clan (another source links him to the Rva-sgreng mtshu-chen lineage, i.e. the 'Brom clan?). mGon-po rgyal-mtshan was far more powerful than the first namesake. He was considered (a manifestation of) Ye-shes mgon-po (i.e. Mahákála), an emanation employed to reflect his powerful position, image and role as protector of the Faith. After assuming power at 'Bri-gung, his belligerent attitude in part was a main reason for the hostile relationship to and skirmishes with the dGe-lugs-pa (at least until 1525 when the Phag-rtse faction sided with the dGe-lugs-pa). Years earlier, he had invaded and appropriated territories in 'Phan-yul. At this point there were three power centers at 'Bri-gung held by three brother lines: At the main seat 'Bri-gung-mthil itself, then at Phag-mo and, evidently as the smallest, at sPro-lung. The respective administrative chiefs wielded secular power right from the time of the early Sa-skya-Yiian period and it had been roughly equipollent to the position of the dpon chen at Sa-skya. He should successfully command the 'Bri-gung army in a row of battles in the early 16th cent. For the 'Bri-gung seat, he conquered large territories in 'Phan-yul. Cf. e.g. BG-III 170f.

Most infamous was mGon-po rgyal-mtshan's later orchestrated campaign which consisted in sowing doubts about the legitimacy and patriarchy of the coming 16th throne-holder Rin-chen phun-tshogs - surely in an attempt to promote a Phag-mo-rtse candidate as coming incumbent on the main-see and he succeeded, in the early 1510's, to exile him to Yar-lung. He also succeeded in driving out the presiding throne-holder's maternal uncle (sku zhang) of ['Ol-kha'] sTag-rtse rdzong, wherefrom he himself may have stemmed. The complexity of the conflict may also have been rooted in the circumstance that the Phag-mo line, despite occasional military clashes, around 1525 should prove sympathetic to (or even side with) the dGe-lugs-pa in their lingering dispute with the Zhva-dmar-pa. It was rumoured that the passing of Kun-dga' rin-chen had been due to the magic attacks from the side of the dGe-lugs-pa.

mGon-po rgyal-mtshan later entreated the 8th Zhva-nag Mi-bskyod rdo-rje to compose the treatise 'Bri gung khu dbon rnam thar (KB) during the reign of the 17th throne-holder in 1538–39. mGon-po rgyal-mtshan passed away in the early 1540's.

45 Cf. Rin chen rnam rgyal rnam mgur 105b3-6. These areas had been in the control of the 'Bri-gung since the time of the founder 'Jig-rten mgon-po.

46 sTag lung chos 'byung 1496-97.

47 The bSams-yas renovation had been carried through by dKar-po-ba Kun-dga'-'grags. In 1520, the latter carried through a renovation of Khra-'brug which was attended by the young Rin-chen phun-tshogs. See TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005, Intro.

48 He met Rin-chen mnam-rgyal in sNye-thang in around 1488, being invited by sde pa sGar-pa (i.e. Rin-spungs Don-yod
Among numerous statues executed of him, one is kept in the gSer-khang gtsug lag khang of 'Bri-gung where his gdung rten ossuary, a Byang-chub mchod-rten is installed too, as well as a huge caitva erected by him (BTh 63, 66).

XVI Chos kyi rgyal-po rGyal-dbang Rin-chen phun-tshogs, rJe Ratna (1509–1557)

Father: drung chen (or sgom pa) Chos kyi rgyal-po b스Tan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan (b. 1478), younger brother of the former throne-holder. Mother: bSod-nams sgrol-ma [daughter of the sKyid-shod Brag-dkar house?] (d. 1542).

Tenure: 1527–1534

Born at dKon-gnyer-sgang or "the Sacrastin Hill" of gZhu. He was a great master and later gter ston mystic (name: gNam-lcags me-bar), in fact the most illustrious figure of the 'Bri-gung-pa. Considered a manifestation of lhwa sras Mu-tig btsan-po and a Second O-rgyam-pa, etc. Age eight (1516), he was ordained at rTse-dbang in the presence of spyan snga rin po che Chos kyi grags-pa. During this period in the mid-1510’s, he was dispatched to Yar-lung due to a hostile attitude towards him from the side of the sgom pa MGon-po rgyal-mtshan. In 1527, he received his full ordination and simultaneously ascended the throne. Following his brief tenure (until 1534), he settled down in sPro-lung, but already 1532 he had received title and citation from the Ming court. A number of military clashes took place during his rule. In 1534, he established the Yungs-ri-sgar hermitage including a monk convent which cemented the schism within the 'Bri-gung administration, following his untimely and evidently enforced departure from the 'Bri-gung see that very year. He was responsible for the nomination of the heads (vajradhara) of the hermitage seats of rTsa-ri, La-phyi and Ti-se. From that point on, he was also denoted 'Bri-gung zur-pa or the "Ex Throne-Holder." He was a pupil of leading Karma-pa hierarchs (foremost at Yangs-pa-can, esp. to the 4th Zhva-dmar, later the 5th Zhva-dmar, but also the 8th Zhva-nag Mi-bskyod rdo-rje) and he attended on numerous teachers. In 1535, he toured Grva dist. and bSam-ya with Pan-chen mNgag-'ris where he also met thugs sras Zla-ba rgyal-mtshan. In 1538, he visited his patrons, the rNang so Hor-khang-pa in Phod-mdo (now part of lHun-grub) rdzong. In the 1540's, active in sNye-mo and sKyor-mo-ling as well as throughout sKyid-shod. In
1543, he at one point (as nagrang) served the Phag-mo-gru-pa at Yar-klungs bKa'-shis rtsa-pa.44 In 1544, he
renovated the imperial dBu-ru Ka-tshal vihāra.37 1545 he was invited by the Hor rgyal-po Thar-pa'-bum and his
son mThu-bo Karma-dpal to their nomadic settlements who camped in Nags-shod. Here he reconfirmed a union
that lasted for the next 12 years.45 Sojourned for a long time in rGYa-ma dist.46 where his only male heir was born;47
later at dBu-ru Ka-tshal, he in the ruins of an old bKa'-gdams-pa monastic seat established a convenent in addition

thus dovetailed neatly with Rin-chen phun-tshogs' identification as a Second Padmasambhava. The biography claims that the
political trouble involved in this affair and the liaison was due to bad karman accruing form the latter's infamous
role in exiling Vairocana). In the year 1540, he resided at Phun-tshogs rab-brtan in sNy-e-mo (for his visions there, cf. sNy-e mor
gsal snyang byung tshul lb1–4a3; Vol. CHA of his Coll. Works). His engagement in sNy-e-mo at one point aroused the envy
and attention of the Rin-spungs-za who initially had invited Rin-chen phun-tshogs to Rin-spungs. Rejecting the offer, the latter
inflicted damage on Phun-tshogs rab-brtan and in its throes, gSer-khang-ma was imprisoned. In response, Rin-chen phun-tshogs
applied – voodoo-like – magic means as military stratagem which allegedly entailed that an inner conflict flared up at Rin-spungs.
The 'Bri-gung master's antagonist (or possibly secret allied?) at Rin-spungs may have been sde pa Nga-dbang mam-rgyal – son
of sa skyong mTsho-skyes rdo-rje (1462–1510) – since the former purportedly also invited him to Rin-spungs, cf. BG-III 195–96;
BCH 431–32; HSLG Vol. 9: 42; much later the Shag-ram temple as estate land became part of the IHa-klu noble family.

Another patroness (of his?) in sNy-e-mo was called Dar-rgyas chos mdzad ma mentioned in his biography. In sNy-e-mo
district, he occasionally resided in Glang-ma-ling (loc. at 29°22'N 89°52'E).

For sSkyor-mo-ling the identification of his patron(s) is crucial. The sources are not unequivocally clear: It was Sangs-rgyas
dpal-'dzoms-ma, the sNe'u female ruler, who held jurisdiction over sSkyor-mo-ling: cf. Table V. 12 I below; other sources also
speak about a local dpon mo in sSkyor-mo-ling (see e.g. vol. NGA of his gSung 'bum in the NGMPP Archive).

* The 'Bri-gung religious estate later became part of IHa-klu noble house: CT 417. Later under Yangs-pa-can, cf. CT 195.
45 It aroused the opposition of most of the

situated in Tibet; cf.

area for three generations turned into a wrecked land resembling that of the

sPungs rab-brtan and in its throes, gSer-khang-ma was imprisoned. In response, Rin-chen phun-tshogs
applied – voodoo-like – magic means as military stratagem which allegedly entailed that an inner conflict flared up at Rin-spungs.
The 'Bri-gung master's antagonist (or possibly secret allied?) at Rin-spungs may have been sde pa Nga-dbang mam-rgyal – son
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* The 'Bri-gung religious estate later became part of IHa-klu noble house: CT 417. Later under Yangs-pa-can, cf. CT 195.
45 It aroused the opposition of most of the
to many other hermitage and meditation retreat centres. Famous for introducing many rNying-ma teachings into 'Bri-gung lore, he and his descendants henceforth were counted as famous ascetics in rNying-ma-pa circles. He passed away in rGya-ma and his bodily remains – considered precious relics – were duly distributed between his own dBu-du-ru Ka-tshal seat and 'Bri-gung.

He had numerous pupils, *inter alia*, his successor on the 'Bri-gung throne as well as his father, but also 'Dzam-gling nam-rgyal grags-pa, gTsang-pa Ngag-dbang don-grub, Lo-pa sphyi snga Grags-pa rgal-mtshan dpal-bzang, rGya-ston *chos rje Nam-mkha’* legs-pa’i rgyal-mtshan, rGya-ston *chos rje Nam-mkha’* rdo-rje, sNgags-gsal-ba bKra-shis rgya-mtsho, 'Bri-gung mKhan-chun Kun-dga’ rgya-mtsho, etc. In particular, the list included Rin-jchen-dpal, lHo-pa Phun-tshogs mam-rgyal, Chos-skyong Rin-chen, *rogs Idan Kun-bzang rDo-rje dpal-bar* (1484-1553; ~1525-95?), Kun-dga’ shes-rab, Lo-pa Grags-pa tshul-khrims, Phun-tshogs rab-yangs, Shes-rab ‘od-gsal (see e.g. *BCh* 436-41).

**XVII Rin-jchen nam-rgyal Chos kyi grags-pa rgal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po (1519-1576)**

**Father: drung chen Byams-pa Chos kyi rgal-mtshan Legs-lidan rin-jchen dpal-bzang-po.**

**Tenure:** 1534-1565

He belonged to the Phag-mo-rtsé (also known as Khang-gsas *nang so*) line of 'Bri-gung, born at rNam-sras-gling *pho brang* (of IHa-bo-stod). Ordained age ten (as dge tshul, 1528, fully ordained 1536), in the presence of the Chos-lung tshogs-pa abbot Grags-pa rgal-mtshan. His teachers included his uncle, the 16th 'Bri-gung throne-holder, but also the 8th Karma-pa Mi-bskyod rdo-rje, the 5th Zhva-dmar dKon-mchog yan-lag and Zhig-po gling-pa, etc. During his tenure, the 8th Karma-pa (along with dPa’i-bo gTsug-lag) sojourned at 'Bri-gung from ca. 1536.

The administrator or sgom pa of 'Bri-gung during these earlier years of his tenure was the formidable mGon-po rgyal-mtshan, who was eventually replaced by sgoem pa mGon-po dpal-byar. He conducted renovation and

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64 It is usually maintained that until at least the 17th cent., it had been Rin-jchen phun-tshogs and Khrims-khang *lo tsā ba bSod-nams rgya-mtsho* (1424-82) that foremost merged dKar-brgyud and rNying-ma lore. Prior to his passing at Gro-bo-lung, a small seat and hermitage located behind or adjacent to rGya-ma Khri-khang, he fell ill, and was nursed by Zhig-po gling-pa – but to no avail. He succeeded in issuing a number of testamentary injunctions. Cf. *BCh* 434-35. A *gsar gdung* with relics of him was inserted into a dome in Ka-tshal known “to suppress the local Mal-gro gZi-can,” the latter being the paramount telluric lord of Mal-dro district and in a cultic sense of the entire Tibet; cf. *PT* 1 541.1-3. According to his own will the deceased wanted this bodily remains to remain in rGya-ma, but the mother seat should urge that his relics be brought to 'Bri-gung, where his bodily remains were inserted into a Chos-’khor *caytu* in the Khang-gsas Yang-dgon (alias dB德-lidan-khang), richly adorned with the iconic representation from the Cakrasamvara cycle; cf. dKon-mchog *rgya-mtsho* 2003a: 32, 42. Later it was moved to 'Dzam-gling-rgyan.

65 Son of sgoem pa Rin-jchen nam-rgyal who had married into the line of the Phag-mo-rtsé. He contracted a throat disease and passed away.

66 Cf. *GD* 60b2-3. An essential question remains whether the mother of the 16th throne-holder, bSod-nams sgrol-ma is identical or not with the mother of the next two throne-holders. Considering the conflict raging at 'Bri-gung between the two lines – as detailed in these notes – it would appear highly improbable. If it nevertheless is the case, we many assume – this polyandric arrangement is commonly seen – that it would add quite an intriguing element to the conflict.

The sKyid-shod Brag-dkar-pa ruler Sria-chod in around 1500 A.D. had turned his loyalty towards the 'Bri-gung-pa (his root teacher being its 15th throne-holder, among others). It cannot be excluded that one of his two recorded daughters were wedded into the present secular 'Bri-gung family. The moribund Brag-dkar house should later be absorbed by the sKyid-shod-pa.

68 Other speak of 28 years on the throne. Mi-bskyod rdo-rje persistently counts this throne-holder as the 15th throne-holder which clearly reflects an alternative way of numbering the 'Bri-gung throne-holders.

69 See prev. note. Cf. *KT* 1322.9-10. The ruling administrator or sgoem pa of 'Bri-gung during his earlier tenancy evidently was mGon-po rgyal-mtshan (see above). He in the mid 1530’s plundered and converted a number of dGe-lugs monasteries into his fold, yet the 16th dGa’-lidan throne-holder Chos-skyong rgya-mtsho (1473-1539) rebutted with magical means.

70 See the gsér *phyang me bya’i lo dũng lo sum cu pa la dhus gtsang gi phyogs sa chibs kyi kha lo nam par bskyod pa las smin drug gi zla bu’i phyogs phyi ma la gdan sa ‘ bri gung gdan phibs tshun gyi mgu phams 303-48* (In Vol. II of his Coll. Works).

He there composed the *KB*. He also wrote long annotated commentaries to the central 'Bri-gung *summa* of the 'Bri-gung founder, *Damchos dga’ngs gcig* (Vols. 4-6 of the Coll. Works) in the 1540’s possibly in order to bolster the 'Bri-gung doctrinal lore. Yet, the position of the 8th Karma-pa in the lingering conflict at 'Bri-gung is still unclear. He might eventually have been non-partisan in his attitude and his stay at the see after Rin-jchen phun-tshogs had been ousted might not carry political weight.
re-building of many 'Bri-gung establishments (1540). During his tenure in the 1540’s, many warring skirmishes. Around 1548, Bye-ri stTag-rtsa was offered to him by the sKu-rab[s] sde pa of (eastern) Dvags-po, but he refused. 
Recipient of citations, titles and donation from Ming court. Initiated the manufacture in 1551 of bKa’-gyur and bsTan’-gyur blocks as well as the writings of the 8th Karma-pa (still kept at 'Bri-gung; cf. BTh 67) as well a host of religious artefacts. Again, repeated warfare during his tenancy in the early 1560’s. He was actively supported by the sKyor-mo-lung-pa but opposed by the dGa’-ldan-pa, erected a fortress on the Shun gyi brag in 1565 (cf. BG III 211). He stepped down in 1565, to make room for his brother and left for Mang-yul, where he became court chaplain for the Mang-yul Gung-thang kings. He passed away at mTshe’u-kha hermitage seat. His silver-made ossuary, a Byang-chub caitya was installed in 'Bri-gung (BTh 66). A medicinal clay statue of the throne-holder is currently installed in the 'Du-khang of the local sgrub sde Thar-pa’i gru-chen in 'Bri-gung.

Tenure: 1556–1570
He belonged to the Phag-mo-rtsa line of 'Bri-gung, born at rNam-sras-gling pho brang. Age seven, he received his dge tshul or novice ordination in the presence of Rin-chen phun-tshogs. Attended on many teachers. Between 1559 and 1563, he remained in retreat. He became 1563 dbu mdzad at Phag-mo-rtsa. In 1569/70 he renovated many seats at 'Bri-gung, the same year he fell sick and retired, going into retreat at mTshe’u-kha. Among the numerous statues of this throne-holder, one is kept in gSer-khang gisugs lag khang of 'Bri-gung (BTh 83).

XIX Rin-chen Phyogs-las rnam-rgyal (1550/51–1582)
Father: Phag-mo gCung rin po che (b. 1521),46 second brother of no. XVII. Mother: Hor-bza’ ‘Bum-skyid.’
Tenure: 1570–1582
He held the seat as dual secular and ecclesiastical ruler. His son was Mi-pham chos-rgyal (b. ca. 1570’s).70

XX mTshungs med Chos-rgyal Phun-tshogs bkra-shis [Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan] dpal-bzang-po, alias [Ha yi] Nor-bu (1547–1602)71
Father: Chos rgyal Rin-chen phun-tshogs (1509–1557). Mother: Rig ’dzin rGya-mtsho Bu’khrid (d. 1559/60) of rGya-ma khris-khang72
Tenure: 1573/82–1602
Considered a manifestation of imperial-time kings and great Treasure-finders. Attended on many teachers such as sloh dpun Kun-dga’ bkra-shis. Age six he came to sPro-lung and age seven to rGya-ma. In 1562, he est. a sgrub sde in Ka-tshal. Mid-1560’s, he entered teacher-pupil bonds with the 5th Zhva-dmar. In 1580, he conducted the gisugs phud ritual on Byang-bdag Ngag gi dbang-po (1580–1639). Ardent anti-dGe-lugs. cf. JCh 267b2f.

At the point of his tenure, the Phag-mo-rtsa brother line (of 17th–19th throne-holders) attempted to ensure the

46 gCung Rin po che held the position as administrator as Phag-mo.

47 They had two sons: The 19th throne-holder and one Karma Mi-pham dbang-rgyal.

50 Also known as Phag-mo zhabs drung. The eldest son of Mi-pham should later establish the line of the sKyid-phug chos rje, a rather minor branch house within 'Bri-gung. Cf. BG-II 530; BG-III 278. He had two sons: Mi-pham’s first son, born 1596, was ordained 1612 in the presence of sTag-lung Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal, receiving the ord. name (in full) Ngag-dbang rin-chen dpal-grub bKa’-bgyud rnam-par rgyal-pa’i sde. Another son passed away age five.

sKyid-phug-pa’s son, born 1629, known as dBang-gsum-bruk bkra-shis later went to ‘Jang (Yunnan) where his line prospered; it is said that he there fathered (in casu age 75!, or was he the grandfather of?) the 25th ‘Bri-gung throne-holder dGa’-ba’i dbang-po (1704–54 A.D.). Cf. sTag-lung chos byang J 741, 770; BCh 451–52.

71 Often also counted as the 18th throne-holder when excluding former non-Kyu-ra clan members on the throne and sometimes counted as the 22th throne-holder when adding others. Born in first or second month of 1546 accord. to AP 355.3–4. Aside from his later principal consort g.Yang-khug, he in 1570 also had an ill-fated and short-termed karmanudrā liaison with one Nor-bu sgrol-ma of Long-lung in Kong-po.

72 She adhered to the lineage of Sangs-rgyas dBon-ston (1138–1210) of rGya-ma. Cf. BG-I 506.3; PTs-I 529.1ff. 

The couple had four sons: bKra-shis phun-tshogs, dKor-mchog rin-chen, Chos kyi grags-pa, all three ‘Bri-gung throne-holders. The fourth son was Bla-ma Sangs-rgyas rin-chen. He at some point was throne-holder at Yangs-ri-sgar and the grandfather's seat of Shag-ram. He later became dbu bla' for his presiding brothers. He reached the age of 80.
former throne-holder’s son Mi-pham on the throne as the 20th throne-holder. Following this conflict, an inner 'Bri-gung warring dispute or schism (nang gyes) flared up. Still, the main sPro-lung line of Rin-chen phun-tshogs and his son prevailed and ensured that the next three throne-holders were sons of this throne-holder. He earned a great name as taumaturge. His ossuary, made from gold and silver, denoted a “schism-reconciling” caitya was installed in Khang-gsar Yang-dgon of ‘Bri-gung (BTH 72). In 1580, he had attended the funeral service of the ‘Phyong-rgyas sde pa Hor bSod-nams dar-rgyas and he became teacher of the latter’s son bSod-nams stobs-rgyal (d. 1594). In 1582, at sPro-lung, he met iHa-rtshe-ba (1546–1615). His pupils: rJe rNam-'joms phun-tshogs (b. 1544), bsTan-'dzin phun-tshogs, Nags-shod bla-ma Saky rin-chen, rNgod bla-ma sPangs-mda'-'ba bKra-shis dar-rgyas, rGar bsTan-'dzin phun-tshogs (b. 1578); see e.g. BCH 462–5.

XXI bKra-shis phun-tshogs Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po (1574–1628)  
Tenure: 1602/03–1615  
Considered a 2nd Nāropa. He delivered teachings e.g. to Zur-chen Chos-dbyings rang-grol ca. 1619. His ossuary, made from gold and silver, denoted a rNam-rgyal caitya was installed in Khang-gsar Yang-dgon of ‘Bri-gung (BTH 72). He strengthened the monastic code of the ‘Bri-gung seat. He in the late 1590’s married into the mKhar-rtsê ruling family (consort, the female ruler dNgos-grub rgyal-mo) and settled down. During his tenure (starting from 1603), he erected at ‘Bri-gung a new residence (pho brang): rDzong-gsar bKra-shis-tshug, The ‘Bri-gung dpun Kun-dga’ rin-chen joined forces with that of the gTsang-pa sde srid and attacked the dGe-lugs seats in 1605. In 1603, the dpun chen of ‘Bri-gung is denoted dDings-pa (iHa rtshe ba rnam thar 92a6-b1). He was teacher to the ‘Phyong-rgyas sde pa Ngag-dbang bSod-nams gras-pa (d. 1615). During the tumultuous warfare in the 1610’s, between dBus-gTsang, he and other leading ‘Bri-gung hierarchs were taken captive and exiled for five years to Mongolia.

XXII dKon-mchog rin-chen rnam-par rgyal-ba’i sde, alias Chos kyi ‘byung-gnas ‘Phrin-las rnam-rgyal (1590/91–1654)  
Tenure: 1615–1626  
Recognized as a contender for the candidacy as re-embodiment of the 3rd Dalai Lama. Subsequently – by way of compensation – recognized as the 1st ‘Bri-gung Che-tshang incarnation. Ordained 1605. Henceforth, the ‘Bri-gung seat was jointly headed by two incarnation lines issuing from him and the following throne-holder known as the two brother lines (che tshang and chung tshang). In 1624, he established the rNam-rgyal chos-rdzong after parts of the ‘Bri-gung monastery had been destroyed during the warfare. In 1626, he stepped down and toured

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71 The Phag-mo-rtsê line went back to the family of the 12th throne-holder. Cf. above.
74 Cf. BG-III 225–26; PTs-I 567–80; sTag lung chos ‘byung I 560. Cf. App. II above. In this conflict the sPro-lung front was mainly supported by the sKyiid-shod-pa, as well as by another influential rNyin-ma-pa ascetic Byang-bdag bKra-shis stobs-rgyal among others united (srid shrel) against the Phag-mo front.
79 Cf. iHa rtshe ba rnam thar 29a6-b2.
80 His younger brother was recognized as the 6th Zhwa-dmar-pa. He was, like his other brothers, born in sPro-lung. He erected in sNye-mo district the ‘Bri-gung temples of O-rgyan dgon-pa and rTa’u-ra dgon-pa (loc. ca. 29°35’N 90°03’E); cf. HSLG Vol. 9: 44–45.
81 Nga-phod is commonly regarded as an imperial-time family and later ruling noble house that held large estates in Kong-po. In the area of Thang-brag ‘Od-gsal-rtse of Kong-po ruled by the ‘Bri-gung sKyu-ra family, rDzogs-chen bSod-nams dbang-po (1547/50–1625) was born at Tsha-zhugs of rKyen of Upper Kong-po; cf. the latter’s biography written by rTse-le sNa-tshogs rang-grol (b. 1608). See also sGam po khris rab 97b5–99b6.
82 Their common son was bsTan-pa’i nor-bu (1601–24). He passed away aged 24, while on pilgrimage tour to Tsa-ri.
83 PTs-II 609f. suggests that he was born in 1591. He was also known from rNyin-ma sources as drung chen Nāropa; cf. Gu bka-shis ‘byung 716.
84 Cf. BG-III 240–41; DL4 4a2–20a1. Indirectly and by extension also identified as an embodiment of ‘Brom-ston. In fact, he rose to become something of a “king-maker” in this crucial period of Tibetan history: the 20th throne-holder was father to the 6th Zhwa-dmar Chos kyi dbang-phug (1584–1630). Another son of his (dKon-mchog rin-chen, the later 22nd throne-holder) candidated – almost successfully – as the rebirth to the 3rd Dalai Lama. The same son, following the rejection of this candidacy,
north-eastern Tibet, followed by Tsa-riri, etc. His ossuary, a lhA-bab caitya was installed in mNgon-dga’ gtsug lag khang at ‘Bri-gung (8Th 74).

XXIII Rig ’dzin chen po Chos kyi grags-pa, aliases ’Bri-gung Zhab-drung rin po che dKon-mchog phun-tshogs, ’Phrin-las thams-cad mam-par rgyal-ba’i sde, dBur-smyon (1595-1659/1660)91

Tenure: 1626-1659

Born in sPro-lung. Considered a manifestation of his grandfather. The 1st ’Bri-gung Chhang-tshang incarnation. The last ’Bri-gung sKyu-ra clan descendant and throne-holder (BG-III 289). He was ordained age 15, in the presence of Chos-lung Byams-pa Chos kyi rgyal-mtshan. A prolific and versatile author in numerous fields such as medicine and in the esoteric rNying-ma lore like his grandfather (among his pupils e.g. counted Karma Chags-med). Considered a “treasure-finder.” In 1645, during his tenure, many ’Bri-gung estates and territories were confiscated by the new government. He met the 5th Dalai Lama several times in the 1650’s. Upon his demise, a putative sedis vacantia for two years. For his peregrinating life, cf. GK 629-30, 716-21. To the right of his grandfather’s ossuary, this throne-holder’s ossuary is installed, a lhA-bab caitya erected by the next throne-holder and set up in Yang-ri-[ri]-dgon. Often numbered as the 25th throne-holder.

He had numerous pupils, inter alia: The 3rd lhO-pa dKon-mchog ’phrin-las mam-rgyal (1625-1691), mNga’-bdag bkra-shis phun-tshogs, dKon-mchog lhun-grub, dKon-mchog ’gro-phan dbang-po (b. 1631), sTag-lung Ma-thang Ngag-dbang bkra-shis dpal-grub (b. 1600).

XXIV rJe btsun dKon-mchog ’phrin-las bzang-po alias Ngag-dbang chos-grags phun-tshogs (1656-1718)

Tenure: 1661-1718

Age three, he was invited to ’Bri-gung to be installed on the throne. Considered a manifestation of Phag-mo-grupa rDo-rje rgyal-po. He did not adhere to the sKyu-ra clan.92 1660, he took his novice ordination in the presence of the 5th Dalai Lama in lhA-sa. In 1678, he was ordained in lhA-sa in the presence of the 5th Dalai Lama. Considered the 2nd ’Bri-gung Chhang-tshang incarnation. In 1711, he met sTag-lung ’Od-jo Ngag-dbang ’phrin-las bstan-'dzin mam-rgyal.93 Sometimes counted as the 25th or 26th throne-holder.

He had numerous pupils, i.a.: The 4th lhO-pa Chos kyi rgya-mtsho, sGrub-brgyud Chos kyi rnyi-ma (b. 1638), rJe dKon-mchog tshul-khrims, sTag-lung chos rje bStan-'dzin mam-rgyal, dPon-tshang ye-shes, etc.: Cf. BCh 506-11.

XXV Don-grub Chos kyi rgyal-po aliases ’Jam-dbyangs Chos kyi rgyal-po ’Phrin-las don-kun grub-pa dpal gyi sde, dKon-mchog don-grub rin-chen, dGa’-ba’i dbang-po (1704-1754)94
Father: ’Bras-se (~’Bras-se) dNgos-grub bkra-shis (of Glu-phi lung-pa in ’Jangs, Yunnan). Mother: rNam-’joms-ma.

Tenure: 1718-1747

1717, he took his novice ordination. Regarded as the 2nd ’Bri-gung Chhang-tshang incarnation. With him a restoration of a side-line of the sKyu-ra clan emerged on the throne again.95 In 1739, he est. in Yang-ri the Thub-bstan sde-bzhi Rab-rgyas-gling, erected upon the former pho brang established there by the father of the 16th throne-holder. He had numerous pupils, inter alia: Ngag gi dbang-phyug, Chos kyi dbang-sgyur-mchog, dKon-mchog bstan-skyyong dbang-po, dKon-mchog grags-idan, etc. (Cf. e.g. BCh 521-23).

was recognized as sKyaibs-mgon Che-tshang and his younger brother as sKyaibs-mgon Chung-tshang, thus initiating a ruling incarnate system at ’Bri-gung. Cf. App. II above.

91 He passed away 1660, according to DL5 I 287b6-288a1.

92 Cf. DL I 291b6-292h2 seems to maintain that he was born 1660 in Nyang-ro, but this may refer to his name-giving. GK 721-22. ’Phrin-las rgyal-mtshan (1988: 29-30) makes him the 25th throne-holder and the 1st Che-tshang throne-holder. He later became a famous painter who e.g. daily executed a thangka of each of the former throne-holders, works that subsequently were known as ngyi thang ma or “Daily Thangka,” amounting in total to 35 items.

93 sKyaibs-mgon rin po che was a prominent master and hierarch from the ’Od-jo seat who in the first part of the 18th cent. played an important role at both sTag-lung seats. See below under sTag-lung.

94 Considered a rebirth of the 23rd throne-holder. Cf. GK 722-23. For his huge and highly informative biography known as sGron me tshogs gnyis rgya mtsho (see BGCh vol. Nyo).

95 He was a scion of the Phag-mo line of the sKyu-ra patriline which e.g. included the 19th throne-holder. He allegedly wrote
XXVI  Chos rje rin po che dKon-mchog bstan-'dzin 'gro-dul *alias* dPal-ldan Chos kyi nyi-ma 'Phrin-las phyogs-las rmam-par rgyal-ba bsang-po'i sde, Kun-bsang dKon-mchog nyi-ma (1724–66)*


Tenure: 1747–1766

Age three, he was identified as the 3rd 'Bri-gung Che-tshang incarnation. In 1730, he took his novice ordination. Often counted as the 28th throne-holder.

Among his pupils counted e.g. lHo Rin-po-che Chos kyi rgyal-mtshan (1747–1800), rJe Don-grub skal-bsang (1734–1787), grub dbang Rab-'byor, dKar-yol Ye-shes, Ka-tshal Bla-zur Nya'-ltag-pa dKon-mchog bstan-'phel, rGyal-sras Nor-bu.

XXVII dKon-mchog bstan-'dzin Chos kyi nyi-ma (1755–1792)*

Father: bSod-nams Tshe-brtan (of the Sa-tham royal line in Yunnan; close to Lijiang). Mother: Tshe-ring bzang/dbang-mo (d. 1777).

Tenure: 1766–1788

His identification was conducted in Yunnan by Si-tu Chos kyi byung-gnas. Identified as the 3rd 'Bri-gung Chung-tshang incarnation. In 1772, he visited sTag-lung where he met Ngag-dbang bstan-'dzin phun-tshogs. He erected the 'Khor-chen chu-'khor Iha-khang in 1787. Sometimes counted as the 28th, resp. 29th throne-holder.

Among his pupils counted e.g., the next throne-holder, dge slong Yon-tshang Chos-ladan, Phur-dga' bKra-shis, sPu-dar dGe-'phel.

XXVIII bsTan-'dzin Padma'i rgyal-mtshan, *aliases* Jigs-med 'phrin-las rmam-par rgyal-ba'i sde, dKon-mchog bstan-'dzin 'phrin-las rmam-rgyal, Tshangs-dbyangs Klong-grol rdo-rje (1770–1826)

Father: sngags 'chang Karma Viryadhāra also mThu-chen Krati or 'Phrin-las rdo-rje (d. 1793), into the family and clan of Myang, sBas-yul lJon-pa-lung of Kong-po. Mother: bDe-skyid 'dzoms-pa.

Tenure: 1788–1819

The 4th 'Bri-gung Che-tshang incarnation. He took his novice ordination in 1784, and his ordinary ordination in 1791. A prolific author often counted as the 29th resp. 30th throne-holder.

Among his pupils counted inter alia the next throne-holder, grub dbang rGyal-byung bsam-grub, dge slong Chos-bsang rin po che, grub dbang rNam-grol (1774–1845), grub dbang rDud-'dul dKon-mchog kun-dga', Me-long bu-chung, dKon-mchog bstan-'dzin Chos-grags, Khams sKyo-khris-pa Don-grub chos-dbang, Ngag-dbang blo-gros mchog-lidan (b. 1794).

XXIX sKyabs rje dKon-mchog bsTan-'dzin Chos kyi rgyal-mtshan, *aliases* Chos kyi rgyal-mtshan 'Phrin-las rmam-par rgyal-ba'i sde, 'Jam-dbyangs Chos kyi rgyal-mtshan dpal-bsang-po, 'Jam-dbyangs bstan-'dzin Chos kyi nyi-ma, rGyal-mtshan bstan-'pa'i rgyal-mtshan (1793–1827)*

Father: rig 'dzin 'Jigs-med gling-pa mKhyen-brtse 'od-zet (1729/30–98) of Tshe-ring-ljong of the 'Phyongs-rgyas. Mother: rig 'dzin dPal-mtsho (father, the Phu-shud sde pa) (d. 1820).

Tenure: 1819–1826

He was considered the 4th 'Bri-gung Chung-tshang incarnation. In 1809, he took his novice ordination vows. In 1814, he was properly ordained. Sometimes counted as the 30th, resp. 31st throne-holder.

Among his pupils count inter alia: A-grags chos-'phel, rJe-dhon Rin-chen mchog-lidan, dKon-mchog yon-tan byung-gnas (d. 1840), sGrub-brgyud sku-phreng Inga-pa (b. 1814).

a still deplorably non-extant bKa' bsgrub-gnyud 'Bru gung ba'i gdan rabs dang rtsa bsgrub-kla ma'i rnam thar Shel dkar phreng ba on the 'Bri-gung seat. Cf. TH Martin no. 254.

* A possible candidate as rebirth of the 2nd Che-tshang had been born in dGa'-ba-lung of sPo-bo dist. 1720, as son to gter ston Chos-rje gling-pa, but he died after a few months; cf. BCH 523. GK 723. His elder brother was 'Brug-pa thams cad mKhyen pa bKa'-'bsgrub 'Phrin-las-shing-rta.

* A major biography on him exists (see Vol. E of dPal 'Bru gung bka' bsgrub kyi chos mthod che mo) written by the 28th throne-holder rJe-bsatn bstan-'dzin Padma rgyal-mtshan, rGyal dbang dkon-mchog bstan-'dzin 'gro 'dul gyi rnam par thar pa Nyon monges gtung sel bsdus rtsi'i chu rgyan 1b1-61b6 (* 1–129) and one by his close pupil rJe Don-grub skal-bsang, Dud pa'i mdzes (~ gtsug) rgyan. See BGCh vol. Co; BCH 529.
XXX [IHo-sprul] dKon-mchog bst-an-'dzin Chos kyi blo-gros dpal-bzang-po (1801–1859)
Father: Säkya dar-rgyas-tshang of mDo-khams. Mother:
Tenure: 1826–1832/1854
89
He was a rebirth of kun gcigs lHo-pa Chos kyi rygal-mtshan. He received his final ordination in 1820. Sometimes counted as the 32nd throne-holder.
Among his pupils count inter alia: grub dbang No-no dKon-mchog bst-an-pa (1781–1862). Che 'Brom-pa Ti-ti, sDe-dge dKon-mchog bsam-gtan, dKon-mchog dam-chos Chos kyi nyi-ma.

Father: lHa-grub bKra-shis of sMad-zangs ri-rtse of g.Yor dist. Mother: lHa-'dzom/sgron.
Tenure: 1832-54
1836, he took his novice ordination. Considered the 5th 'Bri-gung Chung-tshang incarnation. Sometimes counted as the 33rd throne-holder.

Father: Ab-shar bSam-dkar of gNam-ru of Byang. Mother: Ga-bza'-'ma.
Tenure: 1854–1872
He took his vows as ordained monk 1839. Considered the 5th 'Bri-gung sKyabs-mgon Che-tshang incarnation. Often counted as the 34th throne-holder.

XXXIII dKon-mchog bst-an-'dzin Chos kyi blo-gros 'Phrin-las rnam-par rygal-ba'i sde, alias Blo-bzang bst-an-'dzin 'gyur-med mam-rygal Chos kyi nyi-ma (1868–1906)
Tenure: 1872–1906
His identification as 6th ‘Bri-gung Chung-tshang incarnation confirmed through the “golden urn” procedure conducted 1870 in lHa-sa, a selection procedure for the first time applied for holders of the ‘Bri-gung seat.

XXXIV dKon-mchog bst-an-'dzin Thub-bstan gsal-byed Zhi-ba'i blo-gros dpal-bzang-po, alises Thub-bstan gsal-byed 'phrin-las rnam-par rygal-ba'i sde, Ngag-dbang thub-bstan Chos kyi dbang-phyug or Kun-bzang Thub-bstan chos kyi nyi-ma (1886–1943)
1. Tenure: 1906–1935
2. Tenure: 1940–1943
After his identification, he was brought to ‘Bri-gung age seven in 1892. In 1898, he was ordained, fully ordained 1905. In 1909, he visited La-dvags and Western Tibet. Considered the 6th ‘Bri-gung Che-tshang incarnation. In 1923, he erected the Nyi-ICang chos sde bShad-sgrub Rab-rgyas-gling, etc. Sometimes counted as the 35th or 36th throne-holder. In 1935, he stepped down. His pupils included inter alia: The next throne-holder, mGar-chung Khris-du sprul sku, dKon-mchog Tshe-brtan, A-mgon-mchog (1913–1945), rDo-rje lHo-dkar (1872–1947), grub dbang Rab-bzang, sGo-lcog sprul sku dKon-mchog Nges-don bst-an-'dzin dbang-po (1887–1940). Sog-ru 'Jigs-med Chos kyi blo-gros (1890–1953). Cf. BCh 640–49.

89 A major biography on him was entitled 'Jam mgon bla ma chos kyi rygal mtshan gvi dgung lo so gcig par gyi rnam par thar pa skal bzang dad pa'i shing ria, written by his gZims-dpon dKon-mchog yon-tan 'byung-gnas. Its continuation or second part (sma cha) is called sKal bzang dad pa'i shing ria Nyong mong Yid kyi gdung sel. Some details of his life is offered in the biography of mDo mKhyen-brte Ye-shes rdo-rje, the rebirth of the throne-holder’s father.
90 The tenureship of the successive ‘Bri-gung throne-holders starting from the 30th tenant is often unclear, due not least to the interd plains among the members of the ‘Bri-gung administration and due to the interference from the dGa'-ldan pho-brang government which occasionally banned a number of the throne-holders from residing at ‘Bri-gung.
XXXV  dKon-mchog bsTan-'dzin Chos kyi byung-gnas 'jigs-med rnam-par rgyal-ba'i sde dpal-bzang-po, alias  Blo-bzang 'Jam-dpal thub-bstan 'jigs-med Chos kyi dbang-phyug (1909–1940)
Father: dmag dpon (mda' dpon) Chos-dbhang / Chos-g.yang of Rog-mdo. Mother: Padma lha-sgron (alt. rNam-rgyal sgrol-ma).
Tenure: 1935–1940
Identified 1914. Considered the 7th 'Bri-gung Chung-tshang. Sometimes considered the 37th throne-holder.

XXXVI  brGyad-ra mChog-sprul dKon-mchog bsTan-'dzin Thub-bstan dbang-po (1924–1979)
Sometimes considered the (intermediate) 38th throne-holder. In the early 1960's, he lived in lHa-sa where he married A-nor. During the Cultural Revolution he worked in Potala and Jo-khang compiling and restoring the library.

XXXVII  Rin-chen bsTan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan dKon-mchog bsTan-'dzin Chos kyi snang-ba mTha'-yas dpal-bzang-po, alias Blo-bzang byams-pa (b. 1942)

XXXVIII  dKon-mchog bsTan-'dzin Kun-bzang 'Phrin-las lhun-grub phyogs-las rnam-par rgyal-ba'i sde (b. 1946)\(^\text{a}\)
Father: Tsha-rong dGra-'dul nam-rgyal. Mother: dByangs-can sGrol-dkar / sKal-bzang of Phreng-ring (Taring).\(^\text{b}\)
Tenure: 1954–
Identified 1950 and brought to 'Bri-gung. Considered the 7th 'Bri-gung Che-tshang incarnation. Occasionally reckoned as the 40th (alt. 37th) throne-holder. After persecution during the Cultural Revolution, he in 1975 fled to India. Travelled widely since then as head of the 'Bri-gung seat in India (seat at Drigung Kagyu Institute in Dehra Dun).
Among his pupils count: dKon-mchog rgyal-mtshan, mGar-chen dKon-mchog rgyal-mtshan (b. 1937), dKon-mchog bsTan-'dzin Chos kyi rgyal-mtshan (b. 1948), Nags-shod dBu-mdzad dKon-mchog chos-bzang (b. 1929), dKon-mchog rnam-rgyal (b. 1937), 'Jang Yong-tan sprul sku, Chos-grags, dKon-mchog gsam-gtan (b. 1921), etc. Cf. BCh 707–18.

\(^\text{a}\) A biography on him was written by 'Bri-gung mdZod-zur dKon-mchog bsSam-gtan (b. 2011); see Bl.
\(^\text{b}\) For a photo of the parents and the young Che-'tshang rin po che, see H. Harrer, Tibet (1991): 92–94.
47. 'Bri-gung mThil
Photo: H. Richardson

48. The Founder 'Jig-riten mgon-po
Statue: Private Collection (PKS 2004)

49. Thog-kha-pa Rin-chen seng-ge, the 5th throne-holder of 'Bri-gung
Statue kept in lHa-sa (PKS 2004)
50. The Bla-dbyi-thang at 'Bri-gung (PKS 2004)

52. 'Bri-gung Chos kyi grags-pa, the 23rd throne-holder and last of the 'Bri-gung sKyu-ra line
(Photo after Rhie and Thurman 1999)

53. lHa-mo A-phyi, the protrecess of 'Bri-gung-pa
Statue kept in Ka-tshal-dgon (1999)

54a. sGom ma Rin-chen dpal-mo, the only female ruler of 'Bri-gung-pa

54b. Khri dpon mGon-po rgyal-mtshan
V.11.2. The Abbatial Succession of the sTag-lung dgon-pa

Based upon
Primary Sources:
Deb ther sngon po (DN); Deb ther dmar po (DM); rGyal rabs chos ’byung (GRCh); Deb dmar gser (DMS);
dGa’ ldan chos ’byung (GD); rGya bod chos ’byung (GB); sTag lung bka’ srung (KS); Bod kyi deb ther (BD);
sTag lung chos ’byung I–III (TL I–III); bKa’ brgyud chos ’byung I–II (KG I–II); Mangala sri dnam thar (MSh);
Gu bka’ chos ’byung (GK); Sangs rgyas yar dnam thar (YB); Ngag dbang rnam rgyal bka’ shis rnam thar (KSh);
bKa’ gdoms chos ’byung I–IV (KD I–IV); lhHo rgyong chos ’byung (HR); ’Brug pa’i chos ’byung (BCh); Rva sgren
dkar chag (RG); mKhas pa’i dga’ ston (KT); Bia sprul deb gzhun (BP)
Secondary Sources:
Ming mdzod (MD); Mi sna (MN); Dung dkar tshig mdzod (DK); TPS Tucci (TPS); lHA sa’i dgon tho (HS); HSLG

The Byang sTag-lung dgon-pa seat in present-day lHun-grub county (rdzong or xian)\(^{1}\) of northern Central Tibet is one of the oldest and most prestigious in Tibet. Like a number of other religious chairs, it too mushroomed in the wave of the proliferation and the ramification issuing from sGam-po-pa and Phag-mo-gru-pa in the 12th century – tradition talks about four large and eight minor schools, albeit it was many, many more – the institution and establishment erected by sTag-lung chen-po in 1180 A.D. proved to be one of the most stable and autarkic religious polities to survive into modern times. Like a number of other family-based monastic seats in Tibet, behind the rise of sTag-lung stood an all-dominating clan, namely the East-Tibetan Ga-zi line.\(^{2}\) Their Central Tibetan power basis was situated in the districts of Byang, ’Phan-yul and ’Dam-gzhung, due north of lHa-sa strongly backed by nomadic settlements. The relatively numerous sources on sTag-lung carry ample witness of the founder’s and his successors’ capability to garner support from a large number of local and regional patrons, propped by its relatively strong family and clan structure behind the ruling Ga-zi family in addition to its geographically relatively marginal location on the periphery of Central Tibet, all in all was conducive to make the seat prosper extraordinarily. The ruling line of abbots at sTag-lung was represented by a khus dgon line occasionally replaced in case of emergency (such as lack of eligible candidate) or due to personal hegemonical pursuits by a hereditary father-brother line. The ruler on the see moreover held the traditional dual rule of power (lugs gnyis). The throne-holders were traditionally denoted sTag-lung-pa chen-po’i bstan-pa’i bdag-po, “Master of the Teachings of the Great One from the Birch / Tiger Valley,” i.e. bKra-shis-dpal. The source materials for the sTag-lung-history is relatively rich.

 Barely one hundred years after its foundation, the first major conflict flared up: 1272 heralded a dispute in the succession to the see, grounded in a traditional nephew discord or dissent which in this case resulted in the schism into the “Upper Plain” (Ya-thang) and the “Lower Plain” (Ma-thang) seats (which was erected in the homeland of the Ga-zi family in Kham).\(^{3}\) sTag-lung Sangs-rgyas dbon-po (1251–1296), who later was stigmatized as the gyes mdzad [pa] or the “schismer” fled Central Tibet and established his own successful seat. During the coming five hundred years, both branch seats prospered and occasionally played a decisive political role, less in the overall Central Tibet politics than in the regional history, in the interaction with other major seats as well as in their patronage politics.

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\(^{1}\) Located at 30°09’N 91°13’E in present-day sTag-lung xiang of lHun-grub rdzong. For the etymology of the name sTag-lung different explanations prevail: sTag as “tiger” or “birch tree” (stag shing pa). See Part 1: fn. 405. It was thoroughly destroyed during the Cultural Revolution; its renovation followed 1985, initiated and headed by rTsc-sprul rin po che.

\(^{2}\) The Ga-zi family (of which evidently three branches existed, here the intermediate) descended from the proto-clan dBra issuing from the Se and Khyung peoples. They may have been originally associated with the Mi-nyag (Xixia) territory. In fact, monk-communities and followers attached to the sTag-lung founder that stemmed from the areas of Mi-nyag Xia comprised up to 500 monks (see App. I above). For details as to the initial Ga-zi pedigree, see MS45 46; HR 454.

\(^{3}\) Aside from the basic primary sTag-lung sources, this survey has benefitted from the readable and excellent synoptic articles
In the early 17th century, sTag-lung too altered its ruling politics in the abbatial succession from the inchoate, intern Ga-zi kh u dbon or yab s ras successor to an incarnate line succession (sku 'phreng) – not necessarily included a Ga-zi clan candidate – set up in line with other seats in Tibet. In 1678, due again to family wrangling at the see, the Central Tibetan sTag-lung main seat and its estates were confiscated by the government. The mkhan po and sprul sku were henceforth elected by the lhA-sa dGa'-ldan phi-brang state who approved each incarnation. The three Ga-zi incarnate lines at this point included the Sum-'phreng, g.Yag-[g]r ong and the (Ga-zi or) sTag-lung zhabs drung. After 1721, the right to fill in the lineage returned to the Ga-zi family, only the family at this point had few eligible candidates, and the government was often asked to intervene. In Khams Ri-bo-che i.e. sTag-lung-Ma-thang, a number of lines, both hereditary within the Ga-zi family as well as incarnate abbot lines existed. From the 16th century, the throne was occupied by the rJe drung sprul sku line alternating with the 'Phags-mchog sprul sku line. A third seat within sTag-lung, originally initiated within the Ga-zi family was the rTse zhabs drung sprul sku line which reigned a separate Bla-brang seat in Khams. Summing up, the ruling incarnate lines of sTag-lung from the late 16th century thus included the sTag-lung Zhabs-drung sprul sku (at Ya-thang), the Ma sprul sku (at Ma-thang) and finally rTse sprul sku at rTse Bla-brang. Today a total six main incarnation lines at the Ya-thang and Ma-thang seats, namely at sTag-lung Ya-thang: Zhabs-drung rin-po-chen (still held by the Ga-zi line), rTse-sprul rin-po-chen and Ma-sprul rin-po-chen (in short called the sTag-lung skyabs-mgon Ma-Zhabs-rTse gsum) and at sTag-lung Ma-thang: the rJe-drung rin-po-chen, 'Phags-mchog rin-po-chen and Zhabs-drung rin-po-chen (in short, rJe-'Phags-Zhabs gsum). Like in other schools, the rebirth succession lineage soon inflated dramatically at sTag-lung, leading to a large number of existing lines all regulated through rebirths.

Indeed, the relevant sources documenting the sTag-lung lineage occupying the main seat from the late 17th century until the present is both sparse, inchoate and partly unreliable. The present three leading incarnation lineages mentioned above – i.e. sTag-lung skyabs-mgon Ma-Zhabs-rTse gsum – maintain that the present incumbent at the main Ya-thang see is the 32nd in succession. The list offered in this paper follows this preliminary yet still not conclusive list. The present list below is incomplete and requires further elaborations and corrections.

The sTag-lung seats throughout their history were regarded as overly rich and affluent. The precious inventories of innumerable major and minor religious art objects (sku rten, sku gdung, phyi rten, nang rten, etc.) which they kept manufacturing and erecting in order to refurbish and decorate their main seats and their many affiliated establishments indeed were uniformly famous throughout Tibet – objects and artifacts that had to a large extent been manufactured by Nepalese artists who lived at both seats over many centuries. The main seats themselves occasionally fell victim of destruction or fire, such as in 1547 when the Ya-thang seat was destroyed. An overall destruction visited both main seats in the throes of the disastrous Cultural Revolution when many of these priceless 13–16th-century objects were looted or removed from the original seats – a deplorable fate they shared by almost all institutions of yore in Tibet. At Ri-bo-che Ma-thang gtsug lag khang, a number of these valuable objects have disappeared, not least sculptures that had been executed and manufactured in situ in the period 1283–88 by Nepalese artists, but also later in particular during the tenure of the 6th Ma-thang throne-holderchos rje Mi-g yo mgon-po. Some of these have been returned and are now securely kept in the Top-floor chapel (dKar-rje-ma), yet a large part is said still be held by the villagers whereas other early master-pieces have already been smuggled out of the area to enter the international art-market.
sTag-lung Ya-thang gdan rabs  
dPal rDo-rje-gdan sTag-lung dgon-pa

I sTag-lung thang-pa bKra-shis-dpal (1142–1210 A.D.)

Tenure: 1180–1203*

He stemmed from the Ga-zi family of g.Yang-shod Bong-ra-stod (originally of sMar-khams). His father was an affluent figure in the area. Age 18, the young founder went to the local Thang-skya monastery7 where he was ordained (1159 A.D.) in the presence of dBra Ga-ston Iha-khang-pa (var. Bla-gang-pa) Shes-rab rdo-rje. After his ordination, he resolved to proceed to India, only to reach Western Tibet. 1165, he proceeded towards dBus but returned home soon after. Seeking Phag-mo-gru-pa, he again proceeded towards Central Tibet where he arrived in Klung-shod and Phod-mdo, then at Tsha-ba-rong of ’On. There he was to follow rDo-rje rgyal-po, his root teacher for a long period. Later he went into retreat at sMo-dro. In 1170, he met the bKa’-gdam-pa master ‘Chad-kha-pa in Mal-gro. He again proceeded to Phod-mdo where he stayed in the local Iha-khang and in Thang-’go dgon-pa. A local patron, dge bshes Zhang Khang-chen-pa suggested to bKa’-shis-dpal to erect a hermitage on the rock of Sing/Seng-gling-brag. In 1171 (HR: 1172), he received his final ordination in Sho-ma-ra of dBu-lung (in the presence of Zhang Khang-chen-pa and Zhang Sh0-ma ra-ba). He then made retreat sessions at the Sing-gling-brag hermitage for seven years. Renowned for his ascetic life, never indulging in meat or alcohol. The number of his followers steadily growing, a new and larger seat was sought. A local patron named mGon-lung proffered the hilly area of sTag-lung Valley, famed as former residence of the bKa’-gdam-pa master Po-to-ba Rin-chen-gsal. After his followers were being harassed by local brigands in Phod-mdo, he decided to transfer his seat to Se-ba-lung (bSe-lung) for three years. In 1180/81, he was invited back to the districts of sPra, Dar-yul and Rong (see Part I: fns. 404, 405), where his followers and the local people of the latter two districts were soon enmeshed in a warring dispute. He mediated successfully and as a token of gratitude, he was proffered the area as religious estate. He erected the main seat at sTag-lung, where he eventually gathered over 5000 followers. Increasingly affluent, he generously proffered extensive donations to all major bKa’-brygyud-pa seats in dBus.

A pupil of the sTag-lung founder, named Mu-tho-pa9 had a life-size (sku tshad) thangka of the founder manufactured or commissioned ca. 1209.11

II sKu-yal-ba Rin-chen mgon-po (1190/1191–1236)

Father: Yon-bdag mGo[n]-yag (younger half-brother to no. 1). Mother: Dzo/Jo-zi-bza’ bKra-shis-mtsho.12
Tenure: 1210–1236

He was born in Grong-’phrar-sgang. Possibly a sedis vacantia for seven years. Age 11, in 1201 he was ordained at Thang-skya rGod-thar dgon-pa (just like his predecessor). He was fully ordained in 1208. After ascending the throne, he erected an ossuary called bKra-shis-dpal’s bar for the founder. Around 1224, he expanded and completed evidently executed in the popular shar bris ma style is now scattered throughout the West; some of these have been described (in a number of art production) so e.g. by J. Casey Singer – much more details however can be said about these early paintings; see Jackson 2005; some of the thangka resemble or parallel murals still intact at Ma-thang and the paintings deserves a thorough comparative study). See also Luczanits in Lirothe ed. 2006. It is most deplorable that these objects are now lost for the imposing Ma-thang, one of the true monastic pearls of Khams – the objects rightfully belong re-installed at the beautiful eastern sTag-lung seat.

The parents had only one son, bKra-shis-dpal; after his mother’s passing, bKra-shis-dpal’s father remarried and had three more sons, bKra-shis-dpal’s half-brothers: sgom pa Zha’-od, mGo[n]-yag (father of the no. 1) and one mGo[n]-rgyal. Cf. HR 454.10

The founder of Thang-skya rGod-thar Iha-khang was dBra Ga (dGa’-), or rGva-ston Phya-bu. It possibly refers to Mnyag Gha (= Xia). He had met Jo-bo-rje in Central Tibet after having visiting India, whereupon he returned to Khams where he establ. the Thang-skya monastery. The succeeding abbots included one Khams Ra-chen, then Tshul-khrims bla-ma followed by Ga-ston (bKra-shis-dpal’s abbot), and dBlon-ston Ratna-natha, etc.; see MSh 52–53, 64-65; HR 455.

For the older history of Sho-ma-ra and other sites in the dBu-ru-lung district, see recently Hazod, ‘King Mer-khe.’

For a list of his numerous disciples and patrons, cf. MSh 255f.; HR 470f.

11 TL-1 241–43. One of the founder’s four thugs sras or intimate disciples. He had visions of the founder. He executed painting of his visions and executed a thangka of Mahâkâla. Another pupil was Ma-jo sgom-nag who resided in Vajrásana and who erected a statue of the founder. In the 17th cent., it was still installed in the Li-ma Iha-khang as principal image.

12 They had four sons.
the grand and affluent gTsug-lag-khang supervised by an Indian artist. During his tenure, the influence of the seat was further cemented, new territories were conquered, esp. to the north, sPrag-lung and in sNyin-drung of 'Dam. Conflicts with the neighbouring bKa'-gdams-pa establishments. During his tenure, ca. 5000 monks and ca. 500 retreatants gathered at the see.

The row of patrons of the sTag-lung seat included: the Phod-mdo-pa, and among these especially Zhang A-stag and his family as well as the Rong-pa.

III Sangs-rgyas Yar-byon Shes-rab bla-ma (1203–1272)

Father: Yong-chen mGo[r]-rgyal . Mother: Brab-shi [ = Rag-shi] bza' lHa-mo gSal-sgron.
Tenure: 1236–1272
Age 16, he was ordained at Thang-skya rGod-dkar-dgon (1222, fully ordained) at the feet of Ga-ston bla-ma and lHa-khang rTag-pa. Age 34, he arrived in Central Tibet. Age 34, he ascended the throne. He greatly and profusely expanded the see and the artistic inventory in the monastery; he introduced a very strict 39-point law and moral conduct code at the see. He erected a man-sized silvery statue of the founder (TL-I 276–77).

[III] Sangs-rgyas dbon-po Grags-pa dpal-'od (1251–1296)

Tenure: 1272–1273
Upon the demise of the 2nd throne-holder, a dispute over the succession flared up, between two nephews, not least over the immediate succession but also over precious sTag-lung relics (so e.g. a tooth of Mi-la ras-pa) and the riches were eventually divided between the two candidates. He only reigned for one year and in 1273, bKra-shis bla-ma, following a coup, ascended the throne. Sangs-rgyas dbon-po, after a short detour, left for Kham to become the founder of the Ma-thang seat of sTag-lung. Yang-dgon temple of dPal Ri-bo-che, erected in 1276. Usually not counted as throne-holder. If included, he is the 4th the following throne-holders should be renumbered, mutatis mutandis. See below.

IV dBon Mangala Gu-ru, alias bKra-shis bla-ma (1231–1297)

Tenure: 1273–1292/97
Age 16, in 1246 he was ordained at Thang-skya chos grva. Age 25, he arrived in Central Tibet. He remained in retreat for 16 years. Prior to his tenancy, a schism between Central Tibet and Kham flared up concerning the sTag-lung teachings. Still, the throne-holder had the backing of the local monks and citizens of sTag-lung to ascend the throne. As as result the Ya-thang and the Ma-thang seats were established, the latter erected by Sangs-rgyas dbon-po who had left Central Tibet. bKra-shis bla-ma erected a statue of De-bzhin-gshegs-pa known as lHa-chent sTong-gsum zil-gnon. Qubilai Qan allegedly donated gold to the refurbishment of statues at sTag-lung, as well as many relics of Tathagata, the tooth of Mi-la ras-pa, etc. In 1292, U-rgyan-pa Seng-ge-dpal (1230–1309) en route to the Yuan court visited sTag-lung.

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13 For a description of the site and its refurbishment, see HR 481–2. Wood was purchased from Nag-shod, which led to clashes with the 'Bri-gung-pa.

14 The most comprehensive biography on him was written by Ra-skyel-brag-pa (non-extant). Considered himself an embodiment of the bKa'-gdams-pa jnaputra Po-to-ba. It should be recalled that sTag-lung to a large extent was built and spread out on the territory that was considered the homeland of this 11th cent. bKa'-gdams-pa master.

He had two elder brothers yon bdag Ye-shes mgon-po and yon bdag rDo-rje rin-ch'en. The three sons of the first were:

* Rin-'bum bKra-shis-mgon, Grags-pa (he settled in dMu-ru-dgon) and Sangs-rgyas-skyabs.

* The latter’s sons were dbon Yong-rgyal and A-lag.

* The latter’s sons again were dbon po Rin-ch'en rgyal-mtshan and Mang-'phan-'od.

The latter married one bTsad-bza'Jo-dar (daughter of Jo-bo A-mchog). Children: first lcam Rin-ch'en mishi-mo, then dKon-mchog-sras alias Sangs-rgyas dbon-po Grags-pa dpal-'od. His third child (with diff. mother) was bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan.

15 They were called chos rje'i rnam thar bcu gsum, gling gi 'dul khrims bcu gsum and stshags kyi bca' ba bcu gsum. They were renewed and revised during the 10th throne-holder; for details see TL-I 273f., 402; YB 4a2f.; HR 496–98; Thub-bstan go-ch'a 1991: 50–51.

15a A detailed autobio. titled Chos rje'i Sangs rgyas dbon po'i rnam par thar pa' exists; cf. Drepon Catalogue II: 017331.

16 They had five sons: slob dpon Gling-pa, bKra-shis bla-ma, Zhang-skyabs, Thub-pa and Lod-po.
Father: yon bdag Zhang-skyabs (younger brother of no. IV). Mother: gYga-gar lcarn.17
Tenure: 1297–1309
Possibly a sedis vacantia for five years at the see when he ascended. Age 16, he arrived in Central Tibet. During this period a Phod-mdö sTag-lung dpon sPyang-khu Don[-grub] rin[-chen] is registered for ca. 1290’s.18

VI Ratnaguru, alias Rin-chen bla-ma (1288–1339)
Father: yon bdag Thugs-rje-skyabs. Mother: mChog-gzungs lcarn.19
Tenure: 1310–1339
Age 19, he arrived in Central Tibet. Received religious training at Sa-skya and Jo-nang. 1310, upon which he ascended the see at sTag-lung.

VII Rin-chen 'byung-gnas alias Ratnâkara (1300–1361)
Father: yon bdag Thugs-rje-skyabs. Mother: mChog-gzungs lcarn.
Tenure: 1339–1361
Younger brother of former throne-holder. Upon his ordination, he was trained at Sa-skya.

VIII Rin-po-che kun spangs Nam-mkha’ dpal-dbyangs, alias Nam-mkha’ rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po, dPal-idan 'Jam-dbyangs bzang-po (1333–1379)20
Father: yon bdag Ye-shes rin-chen. Mother: Phyug-mo dPal-le.21
Tenure: 1361–1375/76
He was the first throne-holder actually born in Central Tibet. He was ordained in lHa-sa in front of the Jo-bo statue, age 27. Attended on a number of major teachers. He held dual rule (secular and clerical) just like his successors. He erected a number of statues. Seeking active proselytism, he visited the northern districts up to seven times. In 1376, he turned ascetic (his istadveṭā Cakrasamvara). He settled at the hermitage of Brag-skya rdo-rje’i rdzong of Seng-gling.

IX 'Jig-rten dbang-phyug bKra-shis dpal-'bar-brtsegs Nyi-ma’i dbang-po bsrung-ba’i go-cha
(1359–1424/1425)
Father: Ga-zi yon bdag Kun-dga’ ye-shes. Mother: 'Jam-dpal-skyid.22
Tenure: 1364–1424/1425
Born at the sTag-lung main residence of Dar-yul Bye-ma sTeng-khang. Age 17, he was ordained (his full ordination took place age 20 in lHa-sa). During his tenancy, in the 1380–90’s, a major war raged in Central Tibet (however, largely unrelated to sTag-lung), yet he successfully mediated in a conflict in 'Phan-yul. He travelled extensively. He erected a human-size statue of the sTag-lung founder. Both pacified and converted successfully a large number of nomadic communities to the north (e.g. in Nags-shod) and in return was showered with presents and donations.23 The pastoralist Mon-zhang nomad communities were converted in the early 15th cent. in particular through the present throne-holder. The 9th month of 1411 experienced a devastating earthquake in Central Tibet, however it

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17 With his “Indian” [= Nepalese] consort, he had four children: Sangs-rgyas-dpal, Thugs-rje-skyabs, gYung-drung-skyabs and Ye-shes bla-ma respectively. The latter passed away in Nepal. It may well be that most of the celebrated Ma-thang throne-holder thangka paintings were executed by Nepalese/Indian artists during his tenancy.
19 He had two sons: Ratnaguru and Ratnâkara.
20 His two younger brothers: dBon Ka-drug-pa and yon bdag Kun-dga’ ye-shes.
21 Son of gYung-drung-skyabs. He was secular ruler (sde pa, mi dBang) of the new residence or estate of the sTag-lung chiefs. He settled in Bye-ma of Dar-yul (of 'Phan-yul). The parents had three son: the oldest was the throne-holder, then followed Ka-drug-pa and Kun-dga’ ye-shes (b ca. 1339; father to the 9th throne-holder).
22 They had two sons, the eldest was the 9th throne-holder and the youngest was Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan (b. ca. 1363), influential father of the three subsequent throne-holders.
23 The Nags-shod-pa rdzong spytig bSod-nams rin-chen (sgom pa or civil administrator during the 11th throne-holder of 'Brigungs, see above) was involved in these forays: Reported, he almost singlehandedly, i.e. without paying heed to the warnings of this throne-holder, conquered the nomadic groups; cf. DMS (Tucci 1972: 196–97).
reportedly caused only minor damage to sTag-lung. During his tenure, Bo-dong Phyogs-las mam-rgyal visited sTag-lung where he also met the translator Sākya bzang-po. Manufactured a very large number of images and cātya. Author of numerous writings.

**X Byang-chub rgya-mtsho dpal-bzang-po (1403–1448/50)**


He was considered a manifestation of rtogs ldan mKha’-spyod dbang-po, the 2nd Zhva-dmar (1350–1405). He was ordained 1412. He held the see for eight years only, following an earnest wish to turn ascetic and to embark upon an extensive peregrinating pilgrimage tour. In 1440, he met ‘Gos lo tsa ba in sNe’u-gdong of Yar-lung. He passed away in bTsong-kha.

**XI Chos rje bKra-shis dpal-'od bzang-po, alias dpal-'od kyi rgya-mtsho (1408–1460)**

Father: Ga-zI mi dbang Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan. Mother: Mi-nyag-bza’ Bu-'dren. Tenure: 1430–1460

Ordained in 1418. He resided in the sTag-lung residences known as Hor-khang and Ka-drug. He ruled for 30 years and visited the sTag-lung Ma-thang seat of Ri-bo-che (1443). He is registered as a pupil of rje bTsong-kha-pa (KD-II 94a6-b2) and at some point took over the position as bla spyi of Rva-sgrem (GD 54b1). During his tenure, the Rva-lung throne-holder Kun-dga’ dpal-'byor (1428–76) visited sTag-lung (see the latter’s biography 149.6–8). He erected the Rin-chen-brag dgon-gras. He manufactured and erected a large number of religious objects and sanctuaries.

**XII Thams cad mkhyen pa Ngag-dbang grags-pa dpal-bzang-po, aliases Nam-mkha’ bKra-shis Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan, Ka-drug-pa (1418–1496)**

Father: Ga-zI mi dbang Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan. Mother: Mi-nyag-bza’ Bu-'dren. Tenure: 1461–1476/77

Born in the Ga-zI main-residence of Bya-ma gzhis ka of Dar-yul in ’Phan-yul. He was linked to the Ka-drug residence (hence later known as Ka-drug-pa). Considered a rebirth of the 7th throne-holder and further back considered an incarnation of Phag-mo-gru-pa (and indeed of Acala). Age 14, he was ordained. He made an extensive trip to gTsang in the early 1440’s where he e.g. became pupil of Bo-dong. In 1466, he commissioned the erection of a huge Thub-chen g.Yul-rgyal dpal-'bar statue executed by Nepalese master artists, a thugs dam statue of Mar-pa, an exquisite Hevajra thangka and an embroidered thangka of Dvags-po sGam-po-pa. He conducted extensive repair and renewal of buildings at sTag-lung. He also erected a statue of Mañjuvajra. In 1462, he invited ’Gos lo tsa ba to sTag-lung, where the latter taught the Kalacakra cycle, the following year, he followed an invitation to Yar-lung from the latter. In 1476, he erected the dGe-'phel Chos-rdzong site at Thang-'brog. In 1477, he wanted to pursue an ascetic life and stepped down from the sec. He probably was the greatest 15th-cent. master of the many differently transmitted Dvags-po bKa’-bgruy-pa lineages of Mahāmudrā, a most powerful bKa’-bgruy master and hierarch in the mid-15th. and within sTag-lung only surpassed by the later Ngag-dbang mam-rgyal. From the 1440’s, he is registered as pupil of the eminent Bo-dong Phyogs-las mam-rgyal (1376–1451). Ngag-dbang grags-pa revived central bKa’-bgruy-pa related teachings such as those belonging to the feebly ’Bri-gung. He had

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24 The bonds between Bo-dong and the sTag-lung throne-holders go back to Bo-dong’s uncle dPa-gn lo tsa ba (1246–1342) and dPa-lldan Byang-chub rtsi-mo, cf. Phyogs las rnam rgyal 93–4, 143. The cycles taught included Do ha skor gsun.

25 He was father to the next three throne-holders. He had in all six children. One of these was Hor-khang Tshe-dbang grags-pa (d. 1499); cf. e.g. DMS (Tucci 1972: 201–02). With his Mi-nyag consort, he had five sons.

26 The sTag-lung bonds to Mi-nyag Gha (Xia) – the old homestead of the Tanguts until the destruction in 1227 – developed during the reign of the 9th throne-holder. In the 1380’s, he mediated in conflicts involving the Mi-nyag and donated presents to a lha khang in Mi-nyag and later in ’Phan-yul, he convened a Mi-nyag gi ’don ma, here evidently corresponding to a peace settlement of sorts (a similar was held in 1446 by the 6th Ma-thang throne-holder in Khams) since the communities in Mi-nyag often were at variance with another; cf. TL-I 371, 386, 651. The 6th and 7th Zhva-nag pa similarly are reported to have mediated in the warfare between the nomadic settlements of Rong-po and Mi-nyag.

27 The hierarchs of Zhva-dmar starting with the 4th Chos kyi grags-pa ye-shes were said to be rebirths of this throne-holder. He still seems registered for 1450 A.D., see Kam tshang bka’ bgruy 225b2.

On the sites in Ga-zi had a long list zer mGon-po-dpal 5b64a6, XIV [XIIla]

One of his pupils CT. Other
Among his

The Rin-spungs ruler visited him 1481 at po-ba cutting ceremony of the prospective 5" Zhva-dmar-pa at Tenure: 1501-1520 (for Fully ordained in 1493, he was ordained in the presence of the 12th and 13th throne-holders as well as the 4th Zhva-dmar who remained root-teachers to the throne-holder. In 1491, the 3rd 'Brug-chen (1478-1523) visited sTag-lung. In 1497, the silver ossuary of the 12th throne-holder was completed. Erected a large number of images, executed by Nepalese artists. He renovated and renewed the hermitage of Seng-gling Brag-skya rdo-rje. In 1501, he went into retreat. 1510-13, he had a gold- and silver-written bkA'-gyur manufactured. In the 1520’s after his younger brother had passed away, he resumed the seat and the same year, a Mongol army arrived and occupied sTag-lung’s extensive northern districts. He renovated and refurbished the sTag-lung main seat and its precinct. In return, the sTag-lung chos rje should in 1529 conduct ceremonial hair-cutting ceremony of the prospective 5th Zhva-dmar-pa at sTag-lung who served as his root-teacher.

XIII Chos rje rin po che rNam-rgyal-grags-pa dpal-bzang-po, alaises Tshe-dbang bKra-shis, Khams-gsum Chos kyi rgyal-po (1469-1530)


2. Tenure: 1520-1530

Born in sPras-sgag of ‘Phan-yul. He reworked and improved the stem curricula or the sTag-lung moral or monastic code (bca’ yig), earlier codified and implemented by the 3rd throne-holder. In 1493, he was ordained in the presence of the 12th and 13th throne-holders as well as the 4th Zhva-dmar who remained root-teachers to the throne-holder. In 1491, the 3rd ‘Brug-chen (1478-1523) visited sTag-lung. In 1497, the silver ossuary of the 12th throne-holder was completed. Erected a large number of images, executed by Nepalese artists. He renovated and renewed the hermitage of Seng-gling Brag-skya rdo-rje. In 1501, he went into retreat. 1510-13, he had a gold- and silver-written bkA’-gyur manufactured. In the 1520’s after his younger brother had passed away, he resumed the seat and the same year, a Mongol army arrived and occupied sTag-lung’s extensive northern districts. He renovated and refurbished the sTag-lung main seat and its precinct. In return, the sTag-lung chos rje should in 1529 conduct ceremonial hair-cutting ceremony of the prospective 5th Zhva-dmar-pa at sTag-lung who served as his root-teacher.

XIV Chos rje rin po che bSod-nams ye-shes dpal-bzang-po (1472-1520)


Fully ordained in 1491, in the presence of rje bKra-shis-dpal and the 4th Zhva-dmar. In 1501, he took over the secular and ecclesiastic seat at sTag-lung. He entertained relations to the 15th ‘Bri-gung throne-holder and to dKar-po-ba Kun-dga’-grags.

29 One of his pupils mkhas-bsun Sha-ra rab’-byams-pa Sangs-rgyas ye-shes (1427-70); cf. Sangs rgyas seng ge rnam thar Sb6-6a6, 8b3-6, 15a4-5. See also Ehrhard 2004b: 587-89.
30 The Rin-spungs ruler visited him 1481 at sTag-lung. A full-fledged biography of Ngag-dbang grags-pa was written by his pupil Mi-nyag rab’-byams pa Grags-pa rdo-rje (deplorably still non-extant); another contemporary Mi-nyag rab’-byams-pa mGon-po-dpal was pupil of the 4th Zhva-dmar (see e.g. K.G 1158-1159) and a Mi-nyag rab’-byams-pa Chos kyi grags-pa (see Ehrhard 2002c: 92-93); listed are rTogs ldan Mi-nyag Blo-gros rin-chen (b. 1386) and Grags-pa rin-chen; cf. Kam tshang bka’ brgyed 255b2f.; the latter also had bonds to the 23rd Sa-skyi khri-chen; cf. Sa skya gdung rabs 381. They had three sons, the 14th throne-holder being the intermediate one. This was the first attempt from the side of the Ga-zi to marry into the rGya-ma khri-khang house. Similar attempts during the same and subsequent period was conducted by the ‘Bri-gung-pa (see above) and even the 3rd Dalai Lama’s family had bonds to the rGya-ma seat in Mal-gro.
31 Other famous and oft-frequented sTag-lung hermitage sites included sTag-lung-phu, Bri’u-lung [= Dre’u-lung; see ‘Odzer go-cha 1992], Seng-gling rtses-zhol, Thang’-brog, and DBu-ru-lung. Cf. e.g. rTse-sprul Thub-bstan rgyal-mtshan 2003: 50f. On the sites in DBu-ru-lung and the closer sTag-lung-pa area, see also Hazod, ‘King Mer-khe’; cf. also Part I: Map 4.
32 Among his writings were also biographical sketches and an inventory of the sTag-lung gsugs lag khang (non-extant). He had a long list of pupils; cf. TL-I 485-86.
33 Cf. Zhva dmar lnga pa rnam thar 10a3-6.
XV Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal bkra-shis grags-pa rgyal-mdshan dpal-bzang-po, alias Chos-skyong bkra-shis (1524–1563)35
Father: bkra-shis rgya-mtsho'i dpal.36 Mother: 'Ol-kha-bza' bDe-skyid bu-'dren rgyal-mo.
1. Tenure: 1530–1550
Tenure: 1550–52 intermittently held by his younger brother 'Gro-mgon Ras-pa chen-po, alias rnam-rgyal phuntsogs (1532–1603 A.D.)
2. Tenure: 1552–55
Born in Rin-chen-brag dgon-pa. Age seven, he occupied the dual throne of sTag-lung. 1531, he took his dge tshul vows. Fully ordained 1542 at the feet of Sa-skya-pa chen-po 'Jam-dbyang Ngag gi dbang-phug. Remained repeatedly in retreat in Seng-gling rDo-rje-rdzong, for the first time 1539. In 1536, the 16th 'Bri-gung throne-holder was invited to Phod-mdo by a local dpon mo Hor-mo whereupon he continued to the sTag-lung throne. Erected a large number of images and icons (statues and thangka). Large parts of the sTag-lung temple complex burned down in 1547.37 In 1550 he went into retreat for two years. After leaving the see permanently, he went into retreat.

XVI Kun-dga' bkra-shis, aliases Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal legs-grub bkra-shis rgyal-mdshan dpal-bzang-po, Khams-gsum Chos kyi rgyal-po (1536–1599/1605)38
Tenure: 1555–1579/1585
Born in lHun-grub rdzong. Fully ordained 1555, the same year he ascended the throne. His dual rule proved administratively and politically a major setback for the sTag-lung-pa, with the loss of much of the monastic income but also military loss of territories. During his and the predecessor's tenure, the secular affairs had been led by their autocratic fathers. He went to dPal Ri-bo-che in Khams, i.e. sTag-lung Ma-thang. Later he refurbished and renewed the main seat. In 1570, a local war broke out between 'Bri-gung and sTag-lung. 1573, the Chos-rdzong rNam-rgyal rab-brtan was erected. In the 1577, the 1st Cog-grva sDings-mo-che-ba Rin-chen dpal-bzang (1537–1609/17) arrived at the seat where he met the sTag-lung Zhabs-drung rTse-ba and Grog-kha-pa.39 In 1578–80, he set out on a missionary tour to the Mongol nomadic settlements in the North that lasted for almost a decade – somewhat independent of and contemporary with the 3rd Dalai Lama’s missionary errand. In 1592, he returned to sTag-lung, where a major renovation was conducted. Relation to 'Bri-gung and 'Brug-pa was good, due to the intermarriage between the heads of the seats.40

XVII riJe btsun dbon rin po che (or Zhabs drung) Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal Kun-dga’ rin-chen dpal-bzang-po, aliases dpal ldan Ngag-dbang Chos kyi nyi-ma 'Jigs-med bBrungs thams-cad las rnam-par rgyal-bal'i sde, Sangs-rgyas Ngag gi dbang-po (1571–1626)
Tenure: 1585–1615
Born into both the Ga-zi and sKyu-ra family – two of the most prestigious ruling monastic families in Tibet. Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal rose to become the most illustrious scholar-saint of the sTag-lung-pa. His maternal uncle was the 20th ‘Bri-gung throne-holder Phun-tshogs bkra-shis (shang po), heralding amiable and henceforth durable

35 His biography KSh was written by Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal.
36 Considered a manifestation of Heruka. Son of mi dbang bSod-nams grags-pa, ruler of lHun-grub rdzong. They had five sons and two daughters. The 15th throne-holder was the youngest.
37 For details on the devastating destruction, cf. TL-1/5 512f.; KSh 7a6f. Most of the relics, bodily remains, ossuaries and priceless objects fell victim to the fire. A remarkable parallel to the fire at Gung-thang in the same or preceeding year. Already 1548, a large-scale restoration was initiated. It was brought to an end in 1551. It was followed by the re-building or re-manufacturing of many objects, such as a gold-made statue of the founder of Phag-mo-gru-pa (called ‘Dzam-gling-rgyan).
38 A biography on him (41 fols.) entitled rGya mdbo mtha’ yus was written by the 18th throne-holder Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal. Another biography was composed by Taranatha; see his Coll. Works Vol. WA 1b1–45a.4.
39 ‘Rin chen dpal bzang rnam thar 20a1–5.
40 Cf. e.g. dPag bmaw dbang po rnam thar 52a4–5.
41 She was daughter of the ‘Bri-gung sngags ‘chang Chos-rgyal Rin-chen phun-tshogs (1509–1557) and rig ‘dzin Bu-khrid of the ruling rGya-ma khrn-khang family. The couple had at least two sons, the 17th throne-holder and the father, called Tshe-dbang rdo-rje, of the 18th throne-holder. Cf. also Ra-se dKon-mchog rgya-mtsho 2003b: 111.
relationships between the seats. In 1586, around 500 households formerly held by Khv-sgrub fell into the hands of sTag-lung. Ordained 1589. He developed religious bonds to the 21st 'Bri-gung throne-holder. Wrote a number of major works and biographies 1608–10. He invited lHa-rtsa-ba to sTag-lung in 1605. In 1610, he left most of the affairs at sTag-lung to phyag mdzod Ngag-dbang rab-brtan, setting out on a lengthy pilgrimage mission. Close relations between 'Bri-gung and sTag-lung during this crucial period. Old parts of sTag-lung temple complex were refurbished (e.g. the wood-work replaced) in 1614. He had numerous disciples.

[XVII]  Phyag mdzod Ngag-dbang rab-brtan
Tenure: 1610–1612
Occasionally not included in the list of abbot holders.

XVIII  dBon rin po che Ngag-dbang bKra-shis dpal-grub Nges-don chos kyi nyi-ma rnam-grol mc hog gi sde, alias Ma-ch'en zhabs drung (1600–1671)
Nephew of the 17th throne-holder. Father: mi dbang Tshe-brtan rdo-rje.72 Mother: 'Bri-gung sKy-ru-ba Bu-khirid rgyal-mo.43
1. Tenure: 1612/15?–1638?
Interregnum: 1638–1640. See the 21st throne-holder
2. Tenure: 1640/41?–1657?
Born in lHa-grub rdzong. His parent's marriage had further cemented the Ga-zi – sKy-ru family bonds. He was considered a rebirth of the 5th Ya-thang throne-holder. Ordained 1612. He was enthroned the same year. In 1617, extensive repair and renovation were carried out at sTag-lung. He received his full ordination in 1625. He in vain tried to invited the 5th Dalai Lama to sTag-lung in 1632. Continuous changes at the seat. The secular affairs at the sTag-lung see during the period ca. 1612–1640 in the hands of the resp. fathers of the subsequent throne-holders, mi dbang dGe-legs rgya-mtsho and bsTan-srung. In 1643, he arrived in lHa-sa to offer a mdun chings between dKar-brgyud-pa and dGe-legs-pa. He was author of several books44 and had many teachers, incl. Taranatha. Visited lHa-sa again in 1655. Ab 1642, he had gone to Ri-bo-che several times in part to renovate the seat, and we have reports of governmental petitions for its restoration supervised by him in 1663. He attended on the funeral rites of the 22nd 'Bri-gung throne-holder and entertained bonds to the 23rd throne-holder in 1654. During these years of peregrination, he was also known as Kun-sangs-pa.

42 According to an available gsung 'bum list, his Coll. Works comprised seven po ti. Therein are included (Vols. Kha and Ga) biographies of him: a brief (versified) autobiography (9 fols.) entitled Dad pa'i mdzu 'bshes; a prose autobiography entitled bsKal bzang kyi shing rta (125 fols.) and a biography (92 fols.) entitled bsKal bzang Yid kyi shing rta'i yang rgyan rdo rje chen po Vaidyura'i phreng ba written by his nephew, the 20th throne-holder bKra-shis dpal-grub.
43 lHa rtse ba rnam thar 99b5–100a4.
44 Ngag-dbang rab-brtan passed away 1614, to be replaced by his brother lHa-grub until 1618, whereupon Ngag-dbang nor-bzang was elected. The latter subsequently passed away ca. 1626, to be replaced by Ngag-dbang bSang-sbyin. These chiefs or administrators were evidently responsible for the secular affairs at sTag-lung.
45 Among a host of disciples, we can mention for instance: aside from the 20th throne-holder, 'Bri-gung Ngag-dbang rin-chen dpal-grub, and chos rje Glang-thang sphyan mnga`; etc. Among his principal patrons count the gTsan sde srin, Rin-spungs Chos-rgyal Zla-ba bsang-po, Mongol chiefs, cf. TL-I 770f.
46 Cf. DLS II 111a3–5, 124bb. An auto-biography covering his first 32 years is contained in vol. Ka of the Mss gsung 'bum of Ngag-dbang mam-rgyal (non-extant). An extensive biography of him exists, dDe dkon 29. His collected works covered 20 volumes (pod nying ba); cf. TL-I [A] 1513.
47 He was the younger brother of the 17th throne-holder Ngag-dbang mam-rgyal, and his i.e. another brother? was sde pa or mi dbang bSgTan-srung of lHa-grub rdzong. He had two sons: The 22nd throne-holder and Mi-rje bSgTan-srung. bSgTan-srung should serve the dGa'-ldan pho-brang gzhung. He was known for his bravery and was engaged as dmar dpon in the campaign towards Bhutan in 1654. In 1661, sde pa Phon-do-ba bSgTan-srung requested for another name and was henceforth called Blo-bzang Tshe'i dbang-po; cf. DLS I 305b2–3.
48 She is not identical with the mother of the 17th throne-holder, but may well be a niece of the latter.
49 So a large collection of rhes gnang to the 43 superior deities of the sTag-lung trad. called dpal stag lung pa'i lha gnang pa'i lha ston (ed. Arunchal Pradesh 1973).
XIX Ngag gi dbang-phyug Chos kyi ngyi-ma bKra-shis phrin-las 'Od-brgya 'bar-ba, i.e. 1st rTse sprul zhabs drung (1625–1722)


Elder nephew of the former throne-holder

Tenure: 1638–40

He descended from the Chos-rgdzon-rtsa rnAm-rgyal rab-brtan, the branch seat or palace of one of the ruling Ga-zi lines in Phod-mdo rdzong.50 After a brief tenancy, he went to Kham to bo-che where he ascended the Ma-thang see for four years. Due to some purported misdemeanour, he left the see and established the bKra-shis rab-brtan bla brang of the rTse pho brang, the so-called rTse Bla-brang zur see. He married the daughter of a rGyal-rong dpon tshang. Phun-tshogs dbang-’dzoms and their common son was the 2nd rTse zhabs drung bKra-shis chos-skyong (1660–1689), who on his side later fathered the 13th Ma-thang throne-holder (see below). Ngag gi dbang-phyug is initiator of the Bla-brang Zur-pa rTse zhabs drung lineage.51 In 1648, he offered presents to the 5th Dalai Lama. Often counted as the 21st sTag-lung throne-holder.

Intermediate? Vacant Tenure: 1640/41–1657? the seat was vacant, possibly due to a ban from the side of the emergent dGa’-ldan pho-brang gzhung? who interfered in the succession regulation of the throne.

XX dBon rin po che rje btsun Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal legs-grub gsung-rab kun gyi ngyi-ma bKra-shis dpal-dbyangs mchog-tu grags-pa’i sde, alias rDzongs zhabs drung (b. 1639/40)52

Father: mi dbang bKra-shis bsTan-srung. Mother:

The throne-holder was the younger nephew of the 19th throne-holder

Tenure: 1657-ca. 1677/68

He suddenly left the see after a dispute flared up, and he initially settled at Chos-rgdzon; hence the subsequent name rDzong zhabs drung. It is said that the throne-holder became obsessed by a demon (went insane?). He afterwards became an ascetic. Occasionally listed as the 22nd or 23rd throne-holder in some sources.

[XX] rJe bsTan-’dzin rnam-rgyal

Tenure: 1668-1669?

Possibly brief intermediate tenancy through him and often officially not listed, wherefore the next throne-holder occasionally counts as the 23rd throne-holder and hence mutatis mutandis.

50 This branch residence of the Ga-zi line was established in the early 17th cent. In 1615, it donated the following territories to the sTag-lung monk body to serve as religious estate: sNa-dmar rtsa-zhol (loc. 29°56'N 91°14'E), Gling-ong, Tshong-’dus rtsa-zhol (loc. 29°59'N 91°14'E), dGon-sbug. Khang lHo-nub-pa (loc. 29°57'N 91°15'E), Nyan-sna mGar-gsong and ’Phan-sna, all of sPun-phrungs xiang in lHun-grub xian. Cf. TL-I 1751.

51 rTse zhabs drung incarnates (initially hereditary, then also rTse zhabs drung sprul sku after the 4th incumbent) line of rTse Bla-brang Zur (or Ri-bo-che rTse) seat in Khams, a monastic branch bla brang estate initially headed by a Ga-zi lineage included the foll. abbots. 

2. rTse zhabs drung Ngag-dbang bKra-shis chos-skyong (1660–1689?), son of the latter.
3. rTse zhabs drung O’rgyan bKra-shis rnam-rgyal (1694–1728), son of nr. 2 and his wife sDong-pa-bza’.
4. rTse zhabs drung bKra-shis dpal-mchog/grags (b. ca. 1745) son of mDo-mkhar zhabs drung bKa’-blon Tshe-ring dbang-rgyal (1697–1763 A.D.). He wedded lHa-mtsho, daughter of a sGom-chen Nang-chen (in A-mdo) and went to dBu. The Ga-zi hereditary claim on the succession of the see was abolished and an incarnate system chosen.
6. rTse zhabs drung Ngag-dbang Chos kyi grags-pa (1759–1811). Younger brother to the mDo-mkhar zhabs drung bSod-nams dbang-rgyal (1756–1788). He was an intermediate candidate, again breaking the incarnation line.
7. rTse zhabs drung Ngag-dbang snyan-grags (1813–1865 A.D.).
8. rTse zhabs drung Ngag-dbang blo-bzang tshul-khrims (1866–1918 A.D.).
10. [?


51 His dates are still uncertain, some texts suggest that he reached an age of 60 years: ca. 1640–1699.
XXI Ngag-dbang bKra-shis Chos kyi rgyal-po, *alias* Kun-dga’ bsod-nams mchog-grub (1660–1689), i.e. 1st Phod-mdo zhabs drung

Father: *sde pa mi dbang* bKra-shis bstan-srung. Mother: *skYid-shod-bza’.*

Tenure: 1669–1679

Born in lHun-grub rdzong. He was paternal nephew of the 22nd throne-holder. Ordained in 1669, he embarked upon a pilgrimage and placed as deputy throne-holder *zhabs drung* rNam-rgyal rab-brtan. Upon the return of a pilgrimage to Tsav-rin, a coup had been attempted at sTag-lang. He was forced to flee to lHa-sa and seek refuge. The 5th Dalai Lama was compelled to intervene. In 1678, due to the conflict, the seat and the estate was confiscated by the dGa’-ldan pho-brang government. The conflict may be seen in connection with the passing of the powerful sTag-lang phyag mdzod Blo-bzang ngag-dbang who had passed away the year before (*DLS III 40b4*). It was decided to let the monk-body choose their throne-holder, and bKra-shis Chos-rgyal was chosen. In 1678–79, he went to ‘Od-jo ‘Og-min chos-mdzod to est. the abbot line there. Fully ordained in the presence of the 5th Dalai Lama. He died from contracting small-pox.

Intermediate Tenancy: 1679–1719 / 1720, the see was administered by Se-ra monastery.


Father: *dpon* bKra-shis. Mother: bKra-shis-lha (d. 1691).

Tenure: 1714–1720

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53 Often also identified or listed as the 23rd or 24th throne-holder. Also listed as ‘O-jo Zhabs-drung. He was eldest among three sons born to the ruler of lHun-grub rdzong. His father was brother to the father of the 22nd throne-holder. His foremost pupil was tle [bKra-shis] ‘Jam-dpal rgya-mtsho (1672–1706 A.D.), an embodiment of the 19th throne-holder.

54 The confiscation by the dGa’-ldan pho-brang government in 1678 meant that the see and its branch establishments should remain in the hands of Se-ra (headed by monks of Se-ra Byes grva thang') until 1720, when it again was administered by the Rag-shag (mDo- mkhar) family as line beneficiary estate, a later secular branch of the *sde dpon* Ga-zi. Later, by imperial decree in 1781, this noble family, beyond their own estates (in lHun-grub rdzong), received the areas of Grom-ma-bar, Rin-sgang (= Rin-chens-sgang, loc. 29°58’N 91°09’E of Byang-kha), Sha-[ra-]’bum (30°04’N 91°17’E), gYag-[g]'rung (29°54’N 91°13’E of present-day dGa’-ldan chos-‘khor), Sum-’phreng, Khang-lho-ga as well as dBu-[ru]-nang. Cf. Thub-bstan go-cha (1991: 81).

55 The later sTag-lang seat of ‘Od-jo ‘Og-min (‘Og-min drung) the present-day ‘Od-jo ‘Og-min nang (loc. at 30°10’N 91°16’E, *HSLG* Vol. 4: 25) originally goes back to sTibs-ka-la Dar-ma-grags (1103–1174 A.D.), a bKa’-gdam-pa master and pupil of Shar-ba-pa (1070–1141) and Dol-pa Shes-rab rgya-mtsho who est. a seat there. A abbot of Rva-sgrangs was known as Zhang ‘Od-jo ‘Og-min bka’-pa (1660–1689), *KDI III 108; RG 88,* probably Rva-sgrangs abbot for 16 (var. 20) years in the 1140–50’s. The ‘Od-jo area was located in Upper sTag-lang area, possibly part of Rva-sgrangs dgon-pa, where it was located in a ru ha or nomadic settlement district, hence also called Rva-sgrangs ‘Od-jo and the proper sTag-lang appropriation of the area in question may probably go back to the 50 households which in 1586 had been seized by the sTag-lang-pa from the hands of Rva-sgrangs monastic chieftains. A proper ‘Od-jo see was established in 1678 as an alternative seat in the wake of the governmental confiscation of sTag-lang proper, and at least for some years served as seat of sTag-lang. This line should later become known as ‘Od-jo zhabs drung – its (still inchoate) mkhan rabs:*  

2. Se-ra dbu-mdzad,
3. gNam-byung-gnas,
4. sKyor-mo-lung-pa
5. Rong-po chos rje

* The first reference to ‘Od-jo as said goes back to a Zhang ‘Od-jo’ cf. *KDI III 108.* Later, *TL-I A* 1482, 1514 speaks of the influential sKyaibs-mgon rin po che ‘Od-jo Ngag-dbang ‘phrin-las bstan-dzin rnam-rgyal. A brief text dedicated to a still unknown, early mid-16th cent. gSal sa ba Shes-rab nyi-ma of Rva-sgrangs ‘Od-jo is included in Part VA of Vol. II of the *gSung bum* of ‘Brjung Rin-chens phun-tshogs. A close relationship prevails between Rva-sgrangs and the ‘Od-jo’ seats, e.g. *Roa sgrangs bkra shag 104–05,* where additional ‘Od-jo’ seat-holders are listed. The area of ‘Od-jo’ also included hermitages such as Seng-glenge ‘Od-jo’ which originally may have been a former retreat site of rJe Sangs-rgyas dbon[-ston’?].

Two important sources were: *Ra kha shag gi gdung rabs* [= *TL-I III*] by sTag-lang ‘Od-jo-pa Ngag-dbang bstan-pa’i nyi-ma. Secondly, a non-extant *gdung rabs* written by sTag-lang ‘Od-jo-pa Ngag-dbang Chos kyi dpal-’byor; see *dPe dkon* 15.

56 He was the youngest of four brothers and sisters.
Born in dBu-ma; rGya-grong of 'Phan-yul. Recognized as a rebirth of the 21st sTag-lung Phod-mdo zhabs drung by the La-mo chos skyong. The infant’s name was altered to Blo-gsal dpal-'byor. Later, in 1697, in the presence of gTer-bdag gling-pa, he was renamed O-rgyan bstan-'dzin don-grub. 1699, he was ordained at Chos-rdzong. In lHa-sa in the presence of the 6th Dalai Lama, another tonsure ceremony gave him a new name: Rin-chen mgon-po. Proved a many-talented person. Fully ordained in 1711, receiving the name Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i nyi-ma dpal-ldan blo-gros and Grags-pa bkra-shis nges-don phun-tshogs. Often identified or listed as the 24th or 25th throne-holder.

XXIII Yid-bzhin 'phrin-las mchog-grub, aliases Ngag-dbang bKra-shis kun-dga’ don-grub, Mi-pham Ngag-dbang bKra-shis dpal-ldan legs-grub Chos kyi nyi-ma (1709–1731)

Tenure: 1720–1729?

XXIV bKra-shis Chos kyi nyi-ma, aliases sKal-bzang Ngag-dbang mam-rgyal dpal-grub, bKra-shis grags-pa ye-shes ’gyur-med ’phrin-las phyogs-las mam-rgyal, 3rd Phod-mdo sTag-lung zhabs drung (1744–1787 A.D.)

Father: sding don of Rong-po-sgar of 'Phan-yul.

Tenure: 1749–?

In 1756, he met the 7th Dalai Lama and was ordained in his presence. In his presence, the 6th rTse zhabs drung took his ordination. Cf. TL-I [A] 1523f.

XXV


A famous historian. He met the 28th 'Bri-gung-pa in 1804. He was fully ordained in 1806, in the presence of the latter.

XXVII dBon chos rje Ngag-dbang bsTan-pa'i nyi-ma, aliases Ngag-dbang bKra-shis Chos kyi rgyal-mtshan Grags-pa mam-rgyal dpal-bzang-po, sTag-lung sprul sku, 4th Phod-mdo sTag-lung zhabs drung (1788–1857 A.D.)

Tenure: ?1804–1857?

Tenure: 1884–1915
He was repeatedly mentioned in rJe bsun Lo chen rnam thar 196–97, et passim.

XXX Ngag-dbang dpal-ldan (1891–1942)

Tenure: 1915–1934


Father: g.Yu-lha. Mother: Phun-tshogs dbang-mo

Ngag-dhang blo-bzang bstan-'dzin rgyal-mtshan, rTse-sprul rin po che (b. 1944).

Father: g.Yu-lha. Mother: Phun-tshogs dbang-mo

XXXII Ngag-dhang blo-bzang bstan-'dzin chos kyi nyi-ma dpal-bzang-po, aliases bSod-nams don-grub, Padma 'Gro-don Chos kyi nyi-ma, [the 23rd sTag-lung] Zhabs drung rin po che (b. 1997).


Tenure: 2001–

dBu-ma is located at 30°00′N 91°16′E of Sum-'phreng xiang in lHun-grub rdzong.
sTag-lung Ma-thang *gdan rabs*
(dPal Ri-bo-che)

I  rJe bsun Sangs-rgyas dbon-po Grags-pa dpal-'od-zer bzang-po, *alias* Ye-shes rdo-rje (1251–1296)*

Father: *yon bdag* rDo-rje rin-chen. Mother: bTsad-bza’ Jo-dar (daughter of Jo-bo A-mchog) of gYang-shod Bong-ra-steng in Kham.

Tenure: 1276–1296

In 1262, he was ordained in sTag-lung (ord. name Ye-shes rdo-rje) and received his full ordination 1270. In 1276, he erected the dPal Ri-bo-che vihāra in bByi-shod of Kham, the main seat of the sTag-lung Ma-thang branch (called Yang-dgon Chos kyi pho-brang). During 1283–88, Nepalese artists there erected a large number of receptacles and statues. After him, the throne may have been occupied by the founder’s influential and trusted sKu zhang rin po che Kun-dga’-dpal for a few years (not listed as *gdan sa ba*). He was also registered as gTer-ston.*


Father: Ga-zi bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan ‘Jag-ma-mgo (half-brother to former throne-holder). Mother: Jo-bsun dbon-mo Sangs-rgyas’-bum.

Tenure: 1304–1366

Born in Sha[r]-ra Thang-stod of ‘Phan-yul. Considered a manifestation of Guru Rinpoche. Age three, he went to Kham. Ordained 1302/04 in Sha-ba-gling. In 1320, the building of the great Tsuglag-khang called bKra-shis lhun-po/grub ‘Dzam-gling-rgyan was begun, inaugurated 1326. Affluently furnished with images. In 1328, the thugs dam of Sangs-rgyas dbon-po, a statue of Buddha Thub-dbang Ihun-po and an image of Sangs-rgyas yar-byon called ‘Dzam-gling-rgyan, with throne and backcloth a.o. were brought to completion and installed. A number of images of him kept in Ma-thang, and a number of 14th cent. statues executed by Nepalese artists.

III  Kun spangs pa Rin-chens mgon-po, *alias* Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po (1344–1401)*

Father: *yon bdag* Ga-zi Chos kyi mgon-po (younger brother of the former throne-holder). Mother: gSer-yig sGom-bza’ (or: Mang-rje-bza’) Padma-sgron.

Tenure: 1366–1384

He received teachings from sKu-zhang IHa Kun-dga’-dpal (but this is chronologically problematic). Ordained 1353 and final ordination 1365. During his tenancy, Karma-pa Rol-pa’i rdo-rje visited Ri-bo-che and he expanded the seat greatly. Left the see to become ascetic (*kun spangs*).

IV  mNyam med Ratnākara, *alias* Rin-chens Shes-rab dbang-phyug dpal-bzang-po (1362–1418)*

Father: *yon bdag* Ga-zi Rin-chens rdo-rje (second son of the former throne-holder’s father). Mother: lDong/lHong-bza’ dKon-mchog-rgyan/rgyal.

Tenure: 1384–1416

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*Among his most prominent and loyal students counted sKu-zhang rin po che IHa *alias* Kun-dga’-dpal (b. 1251; *alias* bSod-nams-dpal, bSod-nams bKra-shis; of noble birth (*lha*); youngest son of A-mchog, registered as local *brsad po* or “king”) of Sho-ma-ra-sa [= Sho-ma-ra of dBu-ru-lung; see Introduction]. He had followed the Ma-thang founder to Kham. From these families and their uncle and nephew relatives different lines developed that should successfully disseminate the sTag-lung teachings in Eastern Tibet. Cf. *TL-I* 619. 20. Other pupils included Gongs-chung ras-pa Tshul-khrims rgyal-mtshan, Ras-pa Ti-se-ba, Ras-pa Kho-yo rgyal-mtshan and lCags-mo ras-pa, etc.

*Located at 31°22′N 96°30′E in present-day Ri-bo-che (Ch. Leiwuqi) rlpszong or xian of Chah-mdo district. Located in the ‘Dzri Valley (formerly dBiyi-shod). The imposing gtsug lag khang towering majestically in the middle of the beautiful valley consists of three storeys. The ground-floor is called bKra-khyil-ma, which accommodates the assembly hall furnished with huge columns, statues and roof-high book-shelves. The second storey now is partly refurbished (dedicated to rNying-ma-pa) is called dMar-rje-ma and the top-floor dKar-rje-ma (temporarly accommodating the large number of samples of the most precious objects formerly kept at Ma-thang). For a readable introduction to the see, see Gruschke 2004: 49–54.

* Cf. e.g. Kong-sprul, gTer ston lo rgyus 104b4–105a4.

*His younger brothers were Chos kyi mgon-po, lHa-brag mgon-po (also called Kl-u dpal, died as infant). His principal students included: sPyan snga Yong-tan rgyal-mtshan (youngest son of Ye-shes mgon-po, eldest son of Sangs-rgyas yar-byon’s youngest brother (or father?) *yon bdag* mGon-rgyal.

*His two elder brothers incl. Grags-pa rin-chens dpal-bzang-po (b. 1330) and mDzo-ra-ba Rin-chens seng-ge (1339–1416).
Considered a rebirth of the 7th sTag-lung Ya-thang throne-holder. In the earlier years, he mainly remained in retreat. He too developed and refurbished the see. During this and the successive throne-holder approximately 3600 monks adhered to the Ma-thang seat.

V Rin po che Brag-kha-pa Grags-pa-dpal bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po (1376–1421)


Age 12, 1387 he was ordained (final ord. 1398) in dpal Ri-bo-che gtsug lag khang. Like his predecessors he expanded the seat and its inventory and mediated in different conflicts such as among the Mi-nyag sGo-idong people. He protected the civil and monastic law. Able to establish bonds with the Khyung-po nomadic settlements, often stigmatized as brigands and formerly fiendish towards the seat, a nomadic people attacking the traffic and communication (often euphemized as “the golden bridge”) between Ming China and the religious seats in Central Tibet.

VI Chos rje Mi-g.yo mgon-po Rin-chen (shes-rab) dpal-bzang-po (1409–1454)


He was ordained 1417. He had a vision of a precious statue of the Blue Acala (accor. to the jo bo lugs) wherefore he was called *Acala-nātha. He had wall paintings remade e.g. with bKa’-brgyud bla-ma, the twelve deeds of Buddha, etc. executed by the famous artist Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan. A large number of statues were executed/ordered by dpon mo che Padma rgyal-mtshan. In 1424, he ascended the throne (which may have been vacant for three years), the same year, the 10th Ya-thang throne-holder visited the Ma-thang seat. In 1443, the 11th Ya-thang throne-holder visited Khams. In 1449, he erected a gilded statue of Sangs-rgyas dbon-po in addition to a host of other images and thangka-s. He erected a sgrub sde. In 1452, he mediated in the conflict between Mi-nyag and Ko-ra.


In 1445, he was ordained. In Ye-phug of lC District (a local hermitage dependency) in Khams, he initially held the see until 1454. Age 25, he took his full ordination. In 1462, he renounced the see to become an ascetic. He visited different hermitages and was invited to rTa-tshag by mi dbang Tshe-dbang rgyal (author of the IHo rong chos ’byung and nang so Kun-dga’ rgyal-mtshan* and received as fiefship, territories and mi sde districts in rDzong-mkhar rNgu-shod, incl. its temples. He went on a lengthy itinerary in 1468.

VIII Chos rje ’Jig-rten dbang-phyug, alias bSod-nams rin-chen rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po (1454–1523/31)


In 1462, he was ordained. Carried out extensive repair and refurbishment at the see and manufactured and erected numerous images and books. He erected sanctuaries, built bridges, etc. In 1515 (rather than 1523), he wrote the (still most regrettably non-extant) treatise Ma thang bka’ brgyud kyi chos ’byung Mu tig ’phreng ba.

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63 Rin-chen rdo-rje also fathered dpon po Seng-ge, dpon po Thil-khang-pa (1372–1409) as well as rin po che Brag-kha-pa – the latter became the 5th throne-holder. Cf. HR 542.

64 An elder brother of the same parents was dpon po Grags-pa bKra-shis dpal-bzang-po, alias slob dpon Ri-tse-ba (1372–1409).

65 The “golden bridge” evidently refers to the “imperial (= golden) messengers (gser yig pa)’ who carried correspondence, costly donations and possibly goods between the imperial court and the religious hierarchs in Central Tibet. For the equation between “golden” and “imperial”: see Serruys 1962.

66 They had four (other sources: two) children. The eldest was dpon tshang bSod-nams rin-chen (1401–1437), followed by Mi-g.yo mgon-po.

67 They had five children. mGon-po Ye-shes was the second.
IX Chos rje Padma rgyal-mtshan shes-rab dpal-bzang-po

Father (brother to the former throne-holder): chos rje or Rig-'dzin Ga-zi mKhar drung-pa bSod-nams bkra-shis.
Tenure: 1531–
Born at Rin-chen-sgang, the seat of the secular rulers of the Ga-zi family at dPal Ri-bo-che.

X Chos rje mTsho-skyes rdo-rje, alias Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po, 1st rJe-drung sprul sku (1530–1590/1591)

Father (brother to the 8th throne-holder): chos rje or Rig-'dzin Ga-zi mKhar drung-pa bSod-nams bkra-shis.
His younger brother sde pa dBang-drags rdo-rje safeguarded the secular affairs. Younger brother to the no. IX. Between him and the 17th (and 18th) Ya-thang throne-holder, a first doctrinal rapprochement took place.

XI Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan, aliases tNam-rgyal grags-pa dpal-bzang-po, Karma Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan

Phyogs thams-cad las mam-par rgyal-ba'i sde, 2nd rJe-drung sprul sku (1591–1642)

Father: Ga-zi mi dbang mGon-po rdo-rje (only son of sde pa dBang-drags rdo-rje). Mother: sTong-dpon-bza' Padma-'tshe
Tenure: 1605–1642?
Considered a rebirth of the former throne-holder. He was in charge of the dual rule of secular and religious affairs. During his tenure, evidently, a gling log or revolt took place in 1633 and the throne-holder went to Central Tibet. He met the 20th Ya-thang throne-holder. Peregrination tour in the 1630's, esp. throughout Central Tibet.
After his passing, the 20th Ya-thang throne-holder Ngag-dbang bKra-shis dpal-grub visited the seat repeatedly and conducted extensive renovation at Ri-bo-che. His passing heralded a period of decay.

XII Grags-dpal legs-grub, in full Ngag-dbang grags-dpal legs-grub rin-chen 'od-zer shes-rab dpal-bzang, 3rd rJe-drung sprul sku (1646–1711)

Tenure: 1666–
Ordained 1654. For his eventful life, see TL-I [A] 1431–1471.

XIII Ngag-dbhang-skyabs, aliases zhabs drung 'Phags-mchog bKra-sis dbang-rgyal Ngag-dbhang grags-pa 'phrin-las dam-chos phun-tshogs, Yid-bzhin dbang-rgyal Ngag-dbhang grags-pa dam-chos 'phrin-las phun-tshogs, 1st 'Phags-mchog sprul sku (1688–1722/1723)

Father: Ga-zi and 2nd rTse zhabz drung bKra-shis chos-skyong (1660–89?). Mother: Kun-bzang sgrol-ma or dpon mo dGa'.
Tenure: ab 1710–1723
The first seven years he resided in rTse Klud-ling, the seat of the mChog-sprul incarnates. Apprenticeship at the feet of the former throne-holder. Ordained 1700.


Born into the Ga-zi dpon tshang family. Considered a rebirth of the 12th Ma-thang throne-holder.
Tenure: 1738–1743

XV Ngag-dbhang bKra-shis grags-pa rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po, alias 'Phags-pa'i legs-grub, 2nd 'Phags-mchog sprul sku (1724–1785)

Father: sDe-bdag sP'o[r]-yo/sPor-ye dpon tshang Gu-ru 'bum (of sMug-po). Mother: Brag-dmar-bza' rNam-rgyal/ Ngag-dbhang sgrol-ma.

84 He met the 3rd Zhva-dmar in 1449; Kam tshang bka' hrgyud 249b2.
85 Two biographies of him (47 fols. and a 11 fols.) were written by the 18th Ya-thang throne-holder Ngag-dbhang nam-rgyal (contained in the latter's extant but still unseen bkra' burn).
86 The parents had three sons: The eldest is Khro-bo rgyal-mtshan, the intermediate was rJe Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan and the youngest was Rin-chen rgyal-mtshan.
87 Cf. dPa' bsam dbang po rnam rtse 195a2–3; TL-I [A] 1389ff.
88 bKra-shis chos-skyong's father was the 21st Ma-thang throne-holder Ngag gi dbang-phug (i.e. 1st rTse zhabz drung)
Tenure: 1743–1757/1785
An important hierarch. Considered a manifestation of the 13th throne-holder. In 1726, he visited the bKra-shis lhun-grub 'Dzam-gling-rgyan est. by the 2nd Ma-thang throne-holder. In 1731, in the presence of the 25th Ma-thang co-throne-holder Mi-pham Ngag-dbang bKra-shis dpal-ldan legs-grub (1709–31) and others, he received his dge tshul ordination. He visited Central Tibet later in the 1730’s and early 1740. In 1742, he returned to Khams Ri-bo-che. In 1743, he ascended the throne. In 1751, he went on pilgrimage e.g. to rTsa-ri and Rong-btsan.

XVI Rin-chen legs-grub 'phrin-las, 5th rJe-drung sprul sku (1745–1828/30)
Born in dPa'-shod-brag gru-kha
Tenure: 1757/1785–ca. 1815?
He was elected to the throne by lot.

XVII Chos-dbyings lhun-grub, 3rd 'Phags-mchog sprul sku (1786–1829)
Father: Gru-pa dpon tshang
Tenure: ca. 1815–1829
Elected to the see as Nominhan by way of lot in lHa-sa.

XVIII Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan, Rin-chen 'od-'bar, 6th rJe-drung sprul sku (1831–ca. 1875?)
Tenure:

XIX Rin-chen lhun-grub Grags-pa kun-gsal Ye-shes kyi nyi-ma, Rin-chen 'od-'bar, 4th 'Phags-mchog sprul sku (1830–1890)
Born in Ron-ko of Chab-mdo
Tenure:

XX Ngag-dbang grags-pa 'phrin-las Byams-pa 'byung-gnas, 7th rJe-drung sprul sku (1875–1923)
Tenure:

XXI? Ngag-dbang kun-dga' rnam-rgyal, 5th 'Phags-mchog sprul sku (1886?–ca. 1910?)
Father: sngags 'chang lHa-rgyal of the Khyung-po clan. Mother: ICan-g-bza' Bo-rdis.
Tenure:

XXII? Ngag-dbang 'Jigs-med grags-pa thub-bstan rnam-rgyal, 6th 'Phags-mchog sprul sku (1913–79)
Father: Bla-ma Rig-'dzin of the Khyung-po clan. Mother: sKyA-su-bza' dGa'-bal.
Tenure:

Tenure: 1929–
He commissioned the printing of a large number of books at the printery of sDe-dge.

XXIV? bsTan-'dzin 'jigs-med grags-pa, 7th 'Phags-mchog sprul sku (1981–)
Father: Mi-'gyur bDe-ba'i rdo-rje. Mother: bDe-chen dpal-sgron.

and the mother allegedly stemmed from the line of the 'Ba'-rom ascetic, 'Gro-mgon Ti-shri ras-pa (1164–1236 A.D.), a daughter of a Nang-chen Dharmaṣa. Cf. TL-I [A] 1472.

71 He was born into a local Ga-zi line, in the Sum-pa district called Sum-pa-glang, one of the eight banners of Shod-chen.

72 The parents had five children: the oldest was dpon Tshe-ring rGyan-mrag, then followed Ngag-dbang rin-chen (a rebirth of Bla-ma Zhag-gcud-pa), then followed dge srong 'Phags-don (who settled in dKyil-mkhar-dgon), and finally the 2nd mChog-sprul.

55. The monastery of Byang sTag-lung (2002)

56. The ruins of the sTag-lung gTsug-lag-khang situated in the upper part of the monastic complex (PKS 2005)

57. The sTag-lung-pa branch seat of Ma-thang Ri-bo-che in Khams (PKS 2004)
58. The wealth of sTag-lung was so immense that, as a Tibetan proverb runs, "one was unable to rival even a dog of sTag-lung." (Blue Annals 626) (PKS 2006)

59. sTag-lung-pa bKra-shis-dpal
   Photo: Zangchuan fojiao jintong 2000

60. Sangs-rgyas Yar-dhon

61. The 12th sTag-lung-pa Ngag-dbang grags-pa
    Private Collection, PKS 2004
V.12 The Governor Seats (sde pa) and rdzong of the Phag-mo gru-pa Rule:  
The sNe-lpa (~ sNe'u rdzong), Brag-dkar and dGa'-ldan sKyid-shod sde pa

Based upon Primary Sources:

Bod kyi deb ther (BD); mKhas pa'i dga' ston (KhG); lHo rong chos 'byung (LH); Yar lung chos 'byung (YL); rGya bod chos 'byung (GB); rGya bod yig tshang (GY); Deh sgon; Deh damar gsar (DMS); bSam yas dkar chag (SY); Vaidary saer po (VS); dPag bsam ljon bzang (PS); 'Dul ba'i chos 'byung I (DS-I); Gung thang dkar chag (GT); sKyid shod sde pa'i skor (KSh); sKyor mo lung chos 'byung (KLCh); dGa' ldan chos 'byung I (GD-I); Rlangs kyi po ti bse ru (Rlangs); Kam tshang bgyud pa (KTsh); Klong rdol gsung 'bum (KL); bTsong kha pa'i rnam thar (TsKh); Thang stong rnam thar I (TS-I); lHa ldan dkar chag (LD); DL 5 I-II; Zul phu mkhan rabs (Zkh); JCh

Secondary Sources:

Dung dkar tshig mdzod (DT); Ming mdzod (MD); TPS Tucci; HSLG

The following Tables 12.1–3 offer a genealogical scheme of the ruling lords of three central rdzong or governor seats, defined as estates (gths ka), and each headed by local feudatories, governors or regional officials (variously addressed sde pa, nang so, sde dpon, rdzong dpon or blon po). They were all located in the central and upper sKyid-shod region. Throughout the 14th-century era of the dominant Phag-mo-gru-pa regime in Central Tibet, these secular retainers or governors became the new effective regional rulers not least of the former extensive Tshal-pa domains, and should remain so almost up the rise of the dGa'-ldan pho-brang rule in the mid-17th century:

- The sNe-lpa / sNe'u ruling seat (with the main seat in sNe'u rdzong).1
- The Brag-dkar ruling seat (named after the original residence at Brag-dkar in Upper sKyid-shod).2
- The Nyang-bran dGa'-ldan-pa ruling seat – initially an offshoot of the sNe-lpa, later known as the ruling house of the dGa'-ldan sKyid-shod sde-pa.3

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1 Located in present-day sNe'u district of sTod-lung county. The rdzong is no more extant. In the last century, the building submerged and vanished into the ever-meandering and greedy sKyid-chu river. Geograph. position of the site not far to the west of Ra-ma-sgang village: 29°37'15.7"N 91°03'34.5"E. In 15th century sources, the seat of the ruling house is given as sNe'u Brag-thog (see e.g. TBH Surenzen 36, 483). However, there have been two rdzong in the history of the sNe'u district and it is not entirely clear which rdzong is meant by the name of Brag-thog. It is reported that the original rdzong initially was located on a neighbouring hill where some remains of ruins still are to be found, a site locally known as Gekhar, i.e. the dGe-bo-mkhar of the written sources. Cf. KTsh 278a6; see below Fig. 63-65. The sources variously render the aristocratic house's name sNe'u-pa, sNe-pa or sNel-pa. The latter clearly seems to be a later development.

2 The rdzong of Brag-dkar (Brag-dkar-po/mo in Rlangs 296, 338, 340, 352) is situated in present-day Brag-dkar-zhol (loc. 29°41'N 91°25'E; A'D 188a-89). The full territorial extent of the old estate is not fully clear; its heartland nevertheless was situated in present-day Dar-rgyas zhing (29°45'N 91°25'; Part I: fn. 542, Map 1b). In Rlangs 296, Brag-dkar is first registered for the year 1357, mentioned in the context of the 'Bri-gung – Phag-mo gru-pa fightings of the 1350's where it is said that Brag-dkar-po was seized by the Phag-gru under the command of dpa' shi Tshul-bzang. KLCh 29a gives the year 1356 for its confiscation by the Ta'i Si-tu. It suggests that there existed already an estate of Brag-dkar prior to the installation of this new Phag-gru rdzong in sKyid-shod (for details, see Czaja 2006: Chap. 4). At the apex of their power (late 14th and early 15th cent.), their influence in northern sKyid-shod and in the lHa-sa area was considerable. They not least were listed as key patrons for the establishment of the sMon lam chen mo of 1409 in lHa-sa (cf. TsKh 315). Cf. also Part I: fn. 408. Linked to the governorship "White Cliff" was
The list roughly follows the details offered in the Fifth Dalai Lama's chronicle Bod kyi deb ther (BD 171–175; 182–185); GD 1; supplementary data are to be found in Deb dmor gsar (DMS; Tucci 1972) and in SY 75ff.; and stray notes offered in VS and in particular in Dung-dkar Rin-po-che’s Tshig mdzod (DT); see also Part I: fn. 542, passim and App. II. passim. As tradition dictates, all seats were carrying their manorial names.

The three Skyid-shod district rdzong, with their ruling heads who were propped by their clan and families, merely represent a small, yet important section of a highly complex network of local ruling houses within the new political administration and organization that in the main was made up of in total thirteen rdzong established by Ta'i Si-tu Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan in 1350's and 1360's. These local or regional seats, as hereditary estates (gzhis ka) subordinate to the Phag-gru regime, not only entered a number of political and family alliances with one another, but also with other ruling lineages in Central Tibet (both in dBus and gTsang), usually headed by aristocratic clans of ancient stock. A dominant trait of the fragile political and social texture of medieval Tibet, in a period lacking unified state structures, was the existence of a large number of petty ruling houses like the present ones in Skyid-shod. It not least was the delicate and highly ritualized equilibrium in terms of their relative military and economic strength between these competing or rivalling powers that prompted the forging of a network of politically motivated alliances between them. To avoid or reduce the occurrence of incessant skirmishes and warfare, matrimonial bonds therefore proved a valid and successful instrument. These prestigious families kept holding high positions and thus kept playing important roles in the political landscape both prior to and during the centenary-long Phag-mo grupa regime. In the case of the ruling houses of Skyid-shod (Upper Central dBus) district, a long row of dominant lineages had prevailed, and in the case of the Phag-gru estates discussed here, they were descended from sub-lines of the dGyer and Myang clans originally stemming from the Yar-lung area. The inclusion of a number of powerful aristocratic families and houses into the new political administration – replacing the centenary-old khri skor structure – was ensured by conferring a number of hereditary estate-lands to loyal officials and underlings. It was accompanied by the coferral of appropriate edicts, title, citation, rank and prerogatives.

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the seat of bDe-chen Brag-dkar. The fortress or hillfort in present-day bDe-chen (i.e. present-day sTag-rtse county center) was located at the entrance to the valley of Ba-lam (-shar, -nub) and Shing-tshang. It is given as Brag-dkar gSangs-sngags bDe-chen rdzong, a name which combines originally two different establishments, at the foot of which Tsong-kha-pa founded the gSangs-sngag-mkhar monastery (Part I: fn. 547). The rdzong of Brag-dkar remained their original seat and it appears that bDe-chen-rtsa, “Citadel of bDe-chen,” only formed a kind of outpost of the early Brag-dkar rulers. bDe-chen pho brang ot mkhar in the 1520's still was in the hands of the “Brag-dkar-ba yun sras”, but it seems that already in about 1534 A.D. and more readily in 1555 was appropriated (after the Brag-dkar line became extinct) by the powerful Skyid-shod-pa; cf. DL2 381, 587; DL3 464a5–6.

1 Their original seat was in the area of Nyang-bran, now a northern suburb of IHa-sa township (loc. ca. 29°42'N 91°06'E); in fact a site till this day is known as dGa'-'ldan-pa (loc. ca. 29°43'N 91°04'E), still registered in the suburb of IHa-sa. Cf. Xizang Dimingzhi 1 12b. After the rise of the house, they moved their head-quarter to Bye-ri sTag-rtse (loc. ca. 29°50'N 91°29'E) probably in 1525, thereupon to bDe-chen-rtsa in 1555, but kept retaining a number of seats or residences in the territory under their sway, such as, in the first place, their IHa-sa-based head-quarter dGa'-'ldan khang-gsar, and Zur-khang in Tshal Gung-thang (see Part I: fn. 697). After the establishment of the dGa'-'ldan pho-brang rule in IHa-sa, the Skyid-shod-pa was forced by the new strongman of Tibet, bSod-nams rab-brtan (i.e. the 1st gen's bSod-nams chos-'phel), to relinquish the Brag-dkar seat only to be compensated with the strategically less crucial mKhar-rtsa estate of 'Phan-yul; cf. e.g. DL3 127a5–6, 89b3–5.

In his presentation of the Skyid-shod sde pa, Dung-dkar (DT, passim) quotes and refers to the lineage or clan house account dGa'-'ldan sKyid shod pa'i gdung rabs (or sKyid shod dGa'-'ldan pa'i gdung rabs), an immensely important source deplorable still not accessible to us (but at least one copy is supposedly still available in IHa-sa). The text – composed by the highly significant political figure of the Skyid-shod-pa, mi dhang bKra-shis rab-brtan (1531–89 A.D.) – is also mentioned in the Gung thang dkar chag (GT) and inter alia was both known to and quoted by the Fifth Dalai Lama (cf. DL4 23b 26a). Yon-tan rgya-mtsho, KSh has dedicated a study to this house. For further source references, see Part I: fn. 697.

12.1 The Governors of sNel-pa / sNe’u

> dGyer lineage of Yar-lung

| chen po Rin-chen bzang-po⁴ | = | O | lcam bDe-skyid | = | O | lcam Khams-mo | = | dpon mo dPal-ldan-'bum |

a) chen po rGyal-ba Rin-chen⁴ b) [II] Nam-mkha’ bzang-po⁴ = Rin-chen sgrol-ma d) dPal-ldan chos-skyong⁵ c) bSod-nams bzang-po

[II] dPon Grags-pa bzang-po¹ = Tshal-pa dpon mo

[III?] Nam-mkha’ dpal-'byor⁸ = O

[V] Grags-pa dpal-bzang⁷ = lcam sKal-ldan Rin-chen bzang-mo

[V] drung chen dPal-'byor rgyal-po⁶ = O Bu-khrid dpal-'dzoms = O (NN) Rin-chen lHun-po

a) Ngag-dbang rgyal-mo (alias dpon sa lHo-ngo-ma) b) O (= VII) c) O

[V] Ngag-dbang bSod-nams lHun-po⁵ = O

[VII?] lcam Sangs-rgyas dpal 'dzoms-ma¹⁰ = Δ

[VII?] gong ma Ngag gi dbang-phyug bKra-shis grags-pa rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po (1488–1564)

Notes to sNel-pa/sNe’u rdzong (12.1):

¹ Chen po Rin-chen bzang-po stemmed from the dGyer/sGer clan in Yar-lung. Klong-rdol (KL II: 448–49), unwittingly, assumes that he stemmed from the Rlang clan, clearly confounding the Phag-gru and dGyer house. He originally was in the service as local military commander for Ta’i si-tu Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan and was rewarded with the high position as dpon tshab, or representative of Ta’i Si-tu and as successful local military leader of the Phag-gru army, he led its army against the Sa-skya-pa in the 1350’s (see e.g. Petech 1990: 118, 123, 127). He later erected, as estate, a private residence (sger gehis) at sKam-po-grong (in sKyid-shod?, see Part I: fn. 521, 522). His senior consort – out of in all three lady consorts or lcam – was bDe-skyid (her clan affiliation remains uncertain), daughter of his foremost patron Blo-bde. See e.g. BD 173: 50b4–6, HSLG 3: 18–19.

² Drung chen dPon Grags-pa (BD 173: Shag-pa*) evidently a misprint served the Phag-mo gru-pa spany snga Grags-pa Byang-chub (rl. 1371–86) and the Phag-gru administrator zongi (rdzong byi’i) rGyal-mtshan bzang-po who decided to elect him as the 1st rdzong dpon of sNe’u rdzong, following his successful service as military commander for the Gong ma in lHo-kha. For his services he was rewarded with a private estate of sMon-mkhar erected to suppress the district of gNya’i-grang. He married a Tshal-pa dpon mo, which also accounts for his engagement in Tshal Gung-thang. In lHa-sa he is recorded for having not only renewed the pavement of Ra-sa ‘Phrul-snang, but also carrying out substantial renovations of the Khyams-ra, of Bar-skor,
etc. He sponsored the ritual endowment for the statue of Maitreya Dharmaakra or Byams-pa Chos-'khor (brought along by the Nepalese princess) and he est. a number of sangye grva centres at Chos-rdzens, bKra-shis-sgang, Brag-nag and at dBus-gling (of Tshal) in commemoration of the Ta'i Si-tu (d. 1364). He provided for the annual endowment at Dung-mtsho and the endowment financing the liturgical recitation of the Medicine Buddha in front of the two Jo-bo Brothers in Iha-sa conducted for the atonement of sins accumulated by his parents and his half-brother rGyal-ba rin-chen. He also sponsored restorations and refurbishment at sGang-phyu Ne'u-thog. His flourit to be situated ca. 1365–1405. Cf. BD 174; LH 570 (reg. for ca. 1376 A.D.).

* Shag-pa, if no other candidate is considered here, may falsely refer to a ruler of 'Ol-kha sTag-rtses.

1 Drung chen Nam-mkha' bzung-po was elected as the 2nd rdzong dpon of sNe'u by order of the 5th Gong ma (i.e. mi dbang Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan). Reign ca. 1400–30. He is foremost known for the great patronage of bTsong-kha-pa and esp. his sponsorship behind the erection of 'Bras-sprungs by bestowing monastic estate at Dan'bang (cf. Part I: fn. 574), the site of 'Bras-sprungs, by inviting mkhas-grub dPal-lidan seng-ge and by renovating the Iha-sa main temples as well as by providing ample endowment for the sMon lam chen mo. He was sponsor of the 5th rGyal-pa, donating him Mt. rTse Po-ta-la as monastic estate (KKh 1002–15). He is also mentioned as the person who was responsible for the transfer of Rva lo tsa ba's relics from rDan-mto to 'Bras-sprungs (see Hazod 2004: 36; App. IV: fns. 84, 90). Nam-mkha' bzung-po's consort was Rin-chen sgrol-ma (GD 130b2). They were patrons to rong-ston Shes-bya kun-rig (1367–1449) and invited him to Iha-sa; cf. rong ston rnam thar 322–23. As sponsor for skYor-mo-lingu seat, they invited and enthroned its 13th and 14th throne-holders there. Table 8.2 above; KLCh 34a–36b.

2 tShKh (see Part I: fn. 529) lists one sNe'u dpon lIhun-grub rgyal-mtshan—generally unknown from other lists and if so possibly a (half-)brother to Nam-mkha' bzung-po – a ruler who similarly assisted bTsong-kha-pa in setting up and sponsoring the sMon lam chen mo. He apparently was rdzong dpon in office either before or after Nam-mkha' bzung-po, yet as such not listed here.

3 dPal-lidan Chos-skYong (fl. ca. 1410–60) became rdzong dpon of bSam-grub-rtses in Lower Myang. His daughter, the lady dPal-mchog mtsho-mo, was married to Nam-mkha'-'mchog-grags from the noble house of [rGya-ma] mKhar-rtses-ba of Phan-yul, who functioned as chief sponsor for Nalendra, the foundation of sTag-sna, the register of rong-ston Shes-bya kun-rig (1367–1449). Their son was Glang-thang sPyan-snga Kun-dga'-rdo-rje (b. 1424), registered as 5th abbot of Nalendra. See Jackson, forthcoming.

4 Drung chen Nam-mkha' dpal-'byor or Nam-mkha' rgyal-pa was (most probably) the 3rd sNe'u ruler evidently appointed by the 5th Gong ma, and like most minor leaders in Central Tibet carried the nominal title of “Military Commander” (dbyangs-hu). Among a host of scholars, the Rva-lung minor leader Kun-dga' dpal-'byor (1428–76) was invited to Iha-sa by him in 1439 (cf. tShKh 316, 329; JCh 157f.). Kun-dga' Chos kyi rgya-mtsho (1312–1505) of sNan/gNam dist. served from 1440 as drung 'khor under this ruler.

5 Grags-pa dpal-bzang also called nang so Grags-pa dbang-phyug (abbr. Grags-dbang); cf. e.g. GD 1 50b. He served the 6th Gong ma Grags-pa ‘byung-gnas (fl. 1433–1445), in the capacity as military commander of sTag-sna, as judge (khrims dpon), and as gsum dpon. He served as dPal-lidan dKsal-bzang-ma, also called dPal-lidan Rin-chren-bzang-mo (d. 1445?); prayers for her swift rebirth was enacted by Thang-stong rgyal-po, a daughter of the ruler of rGyal-mkhar-rtses. He later was ordained; again later, it is chronicled, he assumed Mongol dress – i.e. assumed the duties imposed upon him by the Mongol (recte Ming court?) and became “Military Commander” (dbyangs-hu), a purely nominal title. He served as dpon of Byang sBrags-tha. It is uncertain to what extent he officially served as sNe'u rdzong dpon. Yet this is likely as may be adduced from the sources. He served as yon bdag of Thang-stong rgyal-po, one of his root-teachers. Cf. TS I 193–99, 207, 215–19, 243–45. He renovated Zul-phu; see ZKh 14a3.

6 Sa skyong, nang so and drung chen (also chos rgyal) Ngag-dbang dPal-'byor rgyal-po (= ? 'Phan-po) dPal-'byor rgyal-po, d. 1490; see DMS Tucci 221, 226–27) and his senior consort Bu-khrid dpal-'dzoms were in particular known as affluent sponsors for the main sanctuaries of Iha-sa, in particular the many dGe-lugs institutions in the nearest vicinity; he sponsored the manufacture of a long row of statues and book prints (e.g. the 1478 lIha-sa ed. of rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long; for other prints, see also Jackson 1989). A ruler of supraregional importance, the district he controlled spanned eastwards from 'Bri-gung rDo-tham, until Kha-rag rDo Bug-pa-can (towards gTsang) until Khira-brug of Yar-lung to the south. To travel or pass through these districts required his travel permission. See also TBI Sersen 36–37. He was elected as the 5th? sNe'u rDzon dpon by the 6th and 7th Gong ma Grags-pa ‘byung-gnas (1414–45) and his younger brother Kun-dga' legs-pa (1433–82), who was Phag-gru ruler on the secular throne (fl. 1448–81). dPal-'byor rgyal-po hosted a large number of masters, such as e.g. gTsang-smyon Heruka 1474 A.D.; see gTsang smyon rnam thar 43–45. He also sponsored the 15th and 16th throne-holders of skYor-mo-lingu, KLCh 40b–41a. His brother was Rin-chren lhun-po, who may, as often was the case, have served as assistant rDzon dpon. The 5th Dalai Lama mentions another brother, dBang-grags ‘byung-ba (not listed here); BD 175. His main seat was the dPal-'byor lhun-po estate (cf. App. II: fn. 167). The Se-ra Byes Grva-ghsang was founded with the assistance of dPal-'byor rgyal-po and dpon sa Bu-khrid dpal-'dzoms as well as by the khris rab phag-teg-grus of Se-ra, dPal-'byor lhun-grub (1427–1514). dPal-'byor rgyal-po had two consorts (other sources speak of three bdag mo): the first and senior lady being Bu-khrid dpal-'dzoms (also called Chus kyi dpal-'dzoms?), she was daughter of the ruler of either Brag-dkar (see below) or the Rlangs (cf. KL II 448) line and the junior consort (name unknown) of his was the daughter of the 'Ol-kha sTag-rtses house (Dung-dkar suggests she was the senior consort) and with her, he fathered the daughter Ngag-dbang rgyal-mo, alias dpon sa lhun-po-ma (cf. LD 44, see also M. Akester in Alexander 2005: 292 94). lhun-po-ma arguably refers to her estate in Dog-sde lhun-ngos (“Southern Spur”). She married into the dGri-ladan khang-gsar house (see below) – her
son was evidently dGa'-ldan-pa bSod-nams rgyal-po, alias Ra-nu IHa-bsungs (1506-46), also known aschos rje A-bson. She too provided ample endowments for the Ra-mo-che institution and its sMon lam chen mo (also Ra che sman lam) in 1538, See DT 1883; DMS Tucci 242. During dPal-'byor rgyal-po’s reign, in 1467, the father of ’Brug-pa Kun-legs was assassinated by the sNel-pa.

Sa skyong or nang so Ngag-dbang bSod-nams lhun-po (fl. ca. 1470-1500) and his younger brother sa skyong Ngag-dbang mam-rgyal evidently ruled conjointly, resp. as the 6th (and 7th) sNe’u rtsung dpon. The younger brother is also registered as nang so rNam-rgyal; he hosted the (future) 2nd Dalai Lama 1486/87 (cf. DL2 363). Their older brother Ngag-dbang bSod-nams rgyal-po had died in his infancy. In the earlier years of his reign, they were registered as stout supporters of the dGe-lugs-pa and Tshai Gung-thang— in fact of a major number of religious institutions in the IHa-sa area — but following the first raid by the Rin-spungs-pa in 1480-81 (in the wake of repeated warfare in dBu-gTsang where the sNe’u chiefs were directly involved), their commitment and patronage turned towards the temporary new rulers of Central Tibet, the Rin-spungs and the Karma-pa. The “new” root-teachers of the sNel-pa were to become the 4th Zhwa-dmar and 12th sTag-lung-pa. See KTsH [B] 729: 1497/98; DL2 363; Ngag dbang chos rgyal rnam thar 552.4; Table V.11.2. bSod-nams lhun-po and Ngag-dbang mam-rgyal opened their treasury and soothen the Rin-spungs-pa and the Karma-pa after the sNe’u estate was repeatedly (1480, 1498) attacked, confiscated or looted by the Rin-spungs army. These military incursions and the loss of sNe’u, evidently was a long-awaited response to the assassination of a close ally and supporters of the Karma-pa, a member of ’Brug-pa hierarch at Rva-lung and ’Brug-pa, as well as sNang-rtse sde pa of sTod-lung perpetrated by the sNe’u-pa. Cf. App. II above for details and GD I 50b. The result was a strategic and denominational reorientation of the sNe’u towards the Karma-pa. The subsequent early 16th cent. volle face of the sNe’u away from supporting (exclusively) the dGe-lugs-pa seats in IHa-sa, led to considerable frustration among the latter. The sNe’u seat should play no independent political role hereafter (ab 1500), and the seat was during the 16th cent. in part controlled by the Phag-gru rulers who simultaneously controlled the sKyor-mo-lung-pa (cf. Table V.8.2); see also BD 184; further sTag lung chos ‘byang I 481; KTsh 308b2–6; Klong-rdo l(Sung ‘bum II 448); KhG 1073, 1142. The two brothers should be the last regular rulers of sNe’u after the loss of the power (srid) to Rin-spungs, and they never regained their power or played any role.

10 The redoubtable ruler (dpon sa, bdag mo, lcam, sa skyong ma) (b. ca. 1485) Sangs-rgyas-dpal’-dzoms-ma was an extremely influential ruler of sNe’u (r. ca. 1520–50), evidently being the second daughter of dPal-’byor rgyal-po with his second wife, albeit the sources occasionally are at variance. Losing its independence, sNe’u was now ruled by Phag-gru. She was married (bstan ma) to the powerful Phag-gru gong ma chos rgyal chen po Ngag gi dbang-phug bkra-shis grags-pa rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po (1488–1564), who together with his sNe’u consort ruled sNe’u rtsong from 1517/18 until the mid 1550’s and hence ensured the powerful presence of the Phag-gru rulers in the heart-land of IHa-sa by settling in sKyor-mo-lung — the other strong outpost and gradually competing branch seat of the Phag-gru being the Gong[n]-[ril]-dkar-[po] seat occupied during this period by another Phag-gru branch-line headed by the (pang ma’s son) ’Gro-ba’i mgon-po (1508–48) and his consort Bu-khrid rgyal-mo. For the conflict between the Phag-gru branches, see O. Czaja 2006. Whereas the gong ma, for the most part (permanently?) resided in rTsels-thang, she certainly resided in sKyor-mo-lung in their local residence lNam-snas [lHa]-rte. They (and notably she) were affluent patrons for all major seats and monasteries in the narrow IHa-sa area, in fact ruling IHa-sa and not least its major dGe-lugs seats. Being the main shyn bdag of the ’Bras-spungs chos rje, i.e. the prospective 2nd Dalai Lama, she e.g. sponsored the dGe-lugs-reinstitution of the sMon lam chen mo festival in IHa-sa (after the Karma-pa had lost control of IHa-sa in 1517/18), sponsored the erection of the dGa’-ldan pho-brang in ’Bras-spungs, and funded the refurbishment, manufacture and the erection of countless edifices, statues and prints in this period. She repeatedly hosted dGe’-dun rgya-mtsho from 1517 until his passing in 1542. Especially at the close of his life, the Dalai Lama in sNe’u professed that there was “no Dharma-patron comparable to this dpon sa (dpon sa ‘di bstan pa’i shyn bdag ge zhun dang mi’dra ba).” In fact, it was this patroness who had orchestrated the ascent of the immensely influential Phag-gru-born Pan-chen bSod-nams grags-pa — the most powerful dGe-lugs Hierarch in the early 16th cent. — to the sKyor-mo-lung see (his rnam thar 12a, and doubtlessly to other key dGe-lugs thrones as well. Nursing the ailing Dalai Lama in 1542, she choreographed, here actively assisted by the same Pan-chen bSod-nams grags-pa — this can be gleaned from the biography of the 2nd Dalai Lama — the finding of the re-birth of the latter, and conveniently identified a new-born son in a neighbouring noble estate as the new ’Bras-spungs chos rje (alias the 3rd Dalai Lama) — who on his mother’s side, incidentally, also stemmed from the Phag-mo-gru-pa house. Her influence on the early years of the prospective 3rd Dalai Lama must have been dramatic, too, albeit the prevailing biography of the 3rd Dalai Lama inexplicably refrains from mentioning her name after 1543 at sKyor-mo-lung, and instead mentions bSod-nams grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1532–66), the son of ’Gro-ba’i mgon-po whose Gong-dkar line temporarily must have been installed or were present at sKyor-mo-lung from mid-1540’s. Galvanizing the bonds to dGe-lugs-pa at a crucial junction in their fragile history, she nevertheless influenced the course of Tibetan political history, when the latter school needed it most for its survival. It was the above-mentioned mi dbang (or zhabs drung) bSod-nams grags-pa rgyal-mtshan who in 1553 A.D. (and until 1558/61) was kept captive as hostage (in sKyor-mo-lung, later in dGa’-ldan pho-brang in ’Bras-spungs), when the dGa’-ldan-pa raged and occupied sKyor-mo-lung. It was through the mediation of bSod-nams rgya-mtsho (another source lists ‘Brug-rin chen phun-tshogs instead) that the hostage(s) were released and peace resumed. In sum, she was one of the most powerful and fascinating female rulers in Tibet. Cf. Table V.8.2, KLC8 87–90, 98; DL2 394–96, 402–03, 550–53, 600–03, 617–29; DL3 passim; JCh 357b2–88b1; Mullin 2005: 95f.
12.2 The Governors of Brag-dkar

M/Nyang Ting-nge-'dzin¹

\[ \text{drung chen Myang Grags-pa bzang-po}^2 = O \]

\( (fl. \text{ca. 1340-60}) \)

a) bTsang-thang sGom-grags = bKra-shis sKyid-mo  
b) sGom-she \[
\text{[~ shes-rab]}
\]

\[ \text{a) [I] drung Shes-rab bKra-shis}^3 = O \]

\( (fl. \text{ca. 1340-70}) \)

b) Kun-grags-pa  
c) Kun-dbang-pa

\[ \text{[II] a) drung chen Rin-chen-dPal}^4 = \text{Jo-mo Sangs-rgyas-ma} \]

\( (fl. \text{ca. 1360-1420}) \)

b) (monk)

\[ \text{a) [III] drung chen Rin-chen lHun-po}^5 = O \]

\( (fl. \text{ca. 1430-60}) \)

b) lHun-grub  
c) Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan  
d) Ngos-grub  
\( \text{(alias dKon-mchog don-grub)} \)

lHa-mo chos-skyong

\[ \text{a) nang so dKon-mchog-pa} \]

\[ \text{b) [V] drung chen Sri-chod rgyal-po}^6 = \text{Bu-khrid} \]

\( (fl. \text{ca. 1460-1510}) \)

lcam bSod-nams rgyal-po

\[ \text{[VI?] Tshe-brtan rdo-rje} \]

\( (fl. \text{ca. 1530-50}) \)

Notes to Brag-dkar rdzong (12.2):

¹ The original ruling house of the family behind the Brag-dkar estate and of Grags-pa bzang-po was the Myang (var. Nyang) clan, and esp. the patriline that issued from through Myang bande Ting-nge-'dzin bzang-po (*Samadhibhadra; and his brother Myang Sha-mi go-cha - the latter allegedly erected the imperial rMe-ru mying temple in lHa-sa): the former served as monk-minister or religious minister (chos blon) under Khri 'De'u srong-btsan Sad-na-legs (764-814 A.D.) and under Khri Ral-pa-can; cf. TBH Serensen: 416. Grags-pa bzang-po thus in fact stemmed from one of the most influential imperial-era clans who inter alia had estates in Yar-lung, 'Phyong-po and other parts of the lHo-kha area. From Rlangs 230 we are informed that Grags-bzang was a 'Phyos-pa, stemming from a key valley of the 'Phyong-po district, known as the home of a number of masters from the Myang lineage (e.g. Nyang Dharmasimha or sMan-lung-pa Sakya-'od (grandson of Nyang-ston chen-po and founder of the 13th cent. Bang-so dmar-po lha-khang; also the lineage of the chos rje (oracle) of Khra-'brug, the central sanctuary of Yar-lung, was Myang; see TF Serensen and Hazod 2005: 103, 289, et passim). Already one of the leading ministers of gNam-ri slong/srong-btsan, was one Myang Tseng-sku and for his military service against the former's foe Zing-po-rje, he was to receive both estate-land and slaves; it is e.g. not unlikely that the area in northern lHa-sa, Nyang-bran (orig. *Myang-bran) may refer to this. Later, one Myang Mang-po-rje Zhang-snang served under Srong-btsan sgam-po and under Mang-srong mang-btsan. Other 9th-10th-cent. Myang ministers included Myang Khri-bzang legs-'dus and Myang rGyal-rgan legs-btsan. In the post-imperial epoch, a number of clan members of the widely ramified Myang, not least Myang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zet (1136-1204) and his lineage, played a central role in the transmission of key myang lugs esoteric cycles not least in the rNying-ma-pa circles.
2 Grags-pa bzang-po was born in the old and prestigious imperial seat of bTsan-thang in lower Yar-lung. It is located south of dGon-gsar/ mKhar-thog where the ruling lineage of Rlangs Phag-mo-gru had one of its main residences (cf. TF Sorensen and Hazod 2005: 56f., 102f.). Serving the Ta’i Si-tu Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan, Grags-pa bzang-po was appointed rdzong dpon of ’Ol-kha sTtag-rtses; see e.g. Rlangs 229, 352; for the ’Ol-kha sde dpon governor seat – also of the Myang clan – see DMS Tucci 235; BD 177–178). His two sons were both born in bTsan-thang and they evidently were – polygamously and hence customarily – both married to one bkra-shis sKyid-mo, daughter of a local Yar-klungs mGo-nag rular (it tentatively may refer to the site of mGo-nag; cf. CFS Gyalbo et al. 32).

3 Pakshi Shes-rab bkra-shis served the Ta’i Si-tu in different capacities. 1361, he was dispatched to the imperial court to counter the allegations launched by the Sa-skya-pa towards Ta’i Si-tu who had been depicted as a rebel. Negotiating successfully, he was allowed an audience with the last Yuan emperor Toren Temur. Back in Central Tibet, Shes-rab bkra-shis was rewarded with the appointment as the 1st rdzong dpon of Brag-dkar, donated him as a hereditary estate along with a ’ja’ sa. Cf. Petech 1990: 134. His two younger brothers, Kun-grags and Kun-dbang resp. became the 2nd rdzong dpon of ’Ol-kha sTag-rtses estate after his father and the youngest son was student at rTses-thang chos sde.

4 Rin-chen-dpal was appointed 2nd rdzong dpon, officially elected by the [5th] Phag-gru gong ma. He proved to be a key sponsor for the many seats and establishments initiated or est. by bTsong-kha-pa in the early 15th cent. He provided the financial means and support for the erection of dGa’-ldan monastery and the gSang-sngags-mkhar at the foot of Mt. bDe-chen-rtses. Cf. TsKh 315f.; JCh 140b6. Kaschewsky 1971: 202–03. He married a lady Jo-mo Sangs-rgyas-ma of a ’Phyong-rgyas aristocratic house. DMS Tucci 217 seems to suggest that Shes-rab bkra-shis and Rin-chen-dpal were uncle and nephew (khru’ dbon).

5 Rin-chen lhun-po was elected as the 3rd rdzong dpon of the Brag-dkar estate or governorship, appointed by the 5th or the 6th Gong ma. He too was the major patron, yon bdag or sbyin bdag of dGa’-ldan located within the Brag-dkar vicinity. His younger brother bRun-grub (’i alias dKon-mchog don-grub; cf. DMS Tucci 224) appropriately had served as gsol dpon for the utmost powerful 5th Gong ma, mi dbang Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan and a third Brag-dkar brother, Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (a namesake[sic]) is registered as being well-versed in the Buddhist scriptures; he allegedly became throne-holder of Se-ra gSang-gyas-mkhar. However, he – under this name – is not listed in the VS, nor in Se ra chos ‘byung – would suggest a lapsus by the scribe of the BR. The name of this brother is here arguably wrongly transmitted. The penultimate brother dNgos-grub became gsol dpon of the Phag-gru che sa Sangs-rgyas rgyal-mtshan from Yar-lung dGon-gsar (fn. 2) (1389–1457), the redoubtable brother of the 5th Phag-gru Gong ma; for the latter’s infamous role politically at sNe’u’ gdong and gDan-sa-the1 in the mid-15th cent. that eventually led to the collapse of Phag-gru regime; cf. App. I, fn. 1. The last Brag-dkar brother finally was elected as the 4th rdzong dpon, appointed by the 7th Gong ma Kun-dga’ legs-pa (1433–82/83), who ruled on the secular throne 1448–81: the latter’s father che sa Sangs-rgyas rgyal-mtshan may have been instrumental in securing the younger brother of his gsol dpon on the Brag-dkar seat. The eldest and youngest brothers, i.e. the 3rd and 4th Brag-dkar rulers (along with their brothers?) in this case polygamously since as we may adduce from DMS Tucci 223–24 – possibly they ruled conjointly or as a family affair) married a daughter from the powerful Rin-spungs house by the name IHa-mo Chos-skyng, a liaison probably engineered by the influential and unsrupulous che sa. In the early 1450’s, lady IHa-mo of Brag-dkar hosted rJe-btsun Chos kyi sgron-ma (1422–1456) at IHa-sa; see Chos kyi sgron ma rnam thar 1311b. In about 1456, the spyan snga of gDan-sa-the1, Nga-gi dbang-po (1439–91) temporarily took up residence (or was exiled) at Brag-dkar, where he stayed for almost 16 years (DMS Tucci 224).

6 Mi dbang Srij-gcod rgyal-po (rl. ca. 1460–1510) ascended the throne as the 6th Brag-dkar ruler, being appointed either by the 6th Gong-ma, 7th Gong-ma Kun-dga’ legs-pa (1448–80) rather than his successor Tshes-gnyis Rin-po-che Nga-gi dbang-po (1439–91). His elder brother nang so dKon-mchog indeed may temporarily have been administrative rular of Brag-dkar too, but soon requested for ordination and turned monk. During the rule of Srij-gcod, the Rin-spungs ruler Don-yod rdo-rje reportedly restored order in Brag-dkar. The Second Dalai Lama was invited by rgyal po Srij-gcod rgyal-po in 1500 and again in 1511 to Brag-dkar, where he met Brag-dkar-ba yam sras (see DL2 366, 486, 526). Srij-chod was married to one lady Bu-khrig of the neighbouring rGya-ma ruling house (i.e. dGyur clan; cf. Table 8 above). He reportedly studied with gNas-myung-pa Kun-dga’ bDe-legs rin-chen, the 8th dGa’-ldan throne-holder sMon-lam-dpal (1414–91) as well as with the 15th ’Bri-gung throne-holder Kun-dga’ rin-chen (1475–1527), who may have been his root-teacher. Cf. ’Bri gung gdan rabs III 168–169.

7 Jam-dpal tshe-ring [rgyal-po] and his son Tshe-brtan rdo-rje – arguably the 6th and 7th sde dpon of Brag-dkar – were the last generations of Brag-dkar rulers. Cf. also BD 155. In the mid-16th century – as some sources suggest – the line died out, which would imply that Tshe-brtan rdo-rje probably remained without issue. At that point the Brag-dkar-pa played no notable political role anymore. The rdzong and was appropriated by the dGa’-ldan sKyid-shod-pa around 1555 A.D.; see Table 12.3 below.

8 One of the unnamed lcarn or noble sisters indeed may be identified with bSod-nams sgrol-ma (b. ca. 1500)?, mother of the 17th and 18th throne-holder of ’Bri-gung. Cf. Table 11.1 above.

9 Registered is a passing of one Brag-dkar lcarn Rin-chen rgyal-mo in 1578 A.D. Cf. DT 256.
12.3 The dGa'-ldan sKyid-shod-pa

Mi-chung Don-rgyal (Don-grub rgyal-mtshan/po)\(^1\) = O
(fl. ca. 1380–1420)

\[\begin{align*}
\text{a) } & \text{bSod-nams rgyal-po}^2 = O \\
\text{(dByi-nag bSod-rgyal)}
\end{align*}\]

nang so Nam-mkha' rgyal-po\(^3\) = O
(fl. ca. 1450–90)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) Tshe-brtan rgyal-po</th>
<th>b) [dGa'-ldan-pa] bSod-nams(^4) = O (= ? Ngag-dbang rgyal-mo of sNe'u)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(fl. ca. 1490–1520)</td>
<td>(fl. b. ca. 1527; d. 1568) (ca. 1528–68)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ra-nu lHa-bsrung alias bSod-nams rgyal-po\(^5\) = O rDo-rje bstan-skyong rgyal-mo
(fl. 1506–46)

\[\begin{align*}
\text{a) } & \text{ Tshe-dbang rgyal-mo}^6 \\
\text{d) } & \text{Dung-dkar-ma}^7 \\
\text{e) } & \text{nang so Don-grub rgyal-po}^8 \\
\text{f) } & \text{sde pa bKra-shis rab-brtan}^9 = O \\
\text{(1531–89)} & \\
\text{(ca. 1550–1607/08)} &
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{a) } & \text{sde pa g. Yul-rgyal}^{10} = O \\
\text{(1586–1636)} & \\
\text{b) } & \text{lcam bSod-nams-dpal kyi Bu-khrid}^{11} \\
\text{c) } & \text{NN} \\
\text{Zhol-bza' Byang-sems dgos-dgos} &
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{a) } & \text{nang so bSod-nams-rgyal}^{12} = O \\
\text{(ca. 1550–1607/08)} & \\
\text{b) } & \text{chos rje Yid-bzhin nor-bu}^{13} \\
\text{c) } & \text{Rab-brtan} \\
\text{d) } & \text{chos rje bsTan-'dzin blo-bzang rgya-mtsho}^{14} \\
\text{(1593–1638)} &
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{a) } & \text{nang so mGon-po Rab-brtan} \\
\text{(fl. ca. 1620–50)} & \\
\text{b) } & \text{nang so rDo-rje mGon-po} \\
\text{(fl. ca. 1630–60)} & \\
\text{e) } & \text{chos rje mTsho-skyes rdo-rje} \\
\end{align*}\]

Notes to sKyid-shod-pa (12.3):

\(^1\) Mi-chung Don-rgyal originally was foot-man or soldier in the service of the 15th Tshal-pa khri dpon dGa'-bde bzang-po (1384/86–1409/10); cf. GT.4ia; Part I: fn. 561. He stemmed from the mGar clan (in the line of mGar po of sTag-rtses rdo-rje in the 16th cent. should be the leading governorships in the sKyid-shod area.

\(^2\) The estate of Nyang-bran dGa'-ldan-pa (sKyid-shod-pa) was loacated in present-day dGa'-ldan-pa village in upper Nyang-bran; in the memory of the local tradition it is referred to as the former residence of one "dmag dpon chen po" (Loc.: 29°43'28.7"N 91°04'06.2"E). In the same area, the Gar-ni (place of the Gar-ni dpon, Part I: fn. 416) is to be found, which perhaps is to be read as [mGar and related to the history of a mGar branch settling here. It would suggest that the Yar phyogs-gling, the original residence of the mGar Mi-chung Don-rgyal, was in the area of upper Nyang-bran. See below Fig. 62.

\(^3\) bSod-nams rgyal-po, alias dByi-nag bSod-rgyal. He (as also his brothers) were in the service of the influential sNe'u rdzong dpon dPal-'byor bzang-po (see Table 12.1 above). The territory he was entrusted included the area of Lo sTag-rtses rdo-rje.
so of Tshal Yang-dgon. His flourit to be situated ca. 1420-50. His two younger brothers dBang-dar (alias dBang-phyug dar-rgyas?) became dbag po of Bon-grong (loc. 29º27’N 90º54’E – adjacent to llang) of gNam’sNam district (of present-day Chu-shur rdzong) – in skYid-smad. The last brother rNam-thos-lras was residing at Ri-lang of ‘Brong-rtsa (in gTsang?). Later he resided in Tshal where he was occupied with residential constructions. It is likely that all the brothers polygamous were married to a still unknown lady.

3 Nang so Nam-mkha’ rgyal-po temporarily appropriated [the position as rdzong dpon of] lIun-po-rte of Chu-shur dist. in skYid-smad. However, at a point when a conflict with the sNel-pa governors culminated, the Rin-spungs army arrived in sNye-thang (and lHa-sa in 1480; cf. App. II above), he relinquished his position and surrendered Chu-shur. Not much is otherwise known of this governor.

4 The elder brother of dGa’I-dan-pa bSod-nams [rgyal-po] (who carried the same name as his grandfather), Tshe-btran rgyal-po was ordained as monk, whereas bSod-nams rgyal-po himself, at a point when the Rin-spungs ruler Don-yod rdo-rje with his army in 1480 invaded the skYid-shod area during an enduring conflict with the sNel-pa estate, sided with Rin-spungs-pa with the result that the latter occupied sNe’u and Po-ta-la (= dMar-po-ri) = lHa-sa, sites that were held by the Rin-spungs-pa until the late 1510’s. For his assistance to the Rin-spungs army during this foray against the sNel-pa, he received an edict allowing him to rule an area spanning from rNying-khung (= sNying-drung of ’Dam-gzhung?) until Chu-ka in the Valley of sNye-mo. Shortly after, at a point when the Gong ma Ngag-dbang bKra-shis grags-pa (1480/88–1564) arrived in Po-ra [sic] of gZhung, the rebellious Yar-rgyal dpon had to reach an agreement with the Phag-gru through the mediation of bSod-nams rgyal-po which meant that the dGa’I-dan-pa and Shag-pa [i.e. the Yar-rgyal rulers?] sided with and became supporters of the Phag-gru gong ma. Shag-pa received sKyor-mo-lung and became ru dpon of skYid-shod gYas-ru, whereas dGa’l-dan-pa [bSod-nams rgyal-po] eventually was appointed new District Judge (i.e. Local Inspector and Arbitrator; khriims dpon = m. jaryi; Ch. tuanshiqguan). The area he ruled – after the influence of sNel-pa had diminished dramatically – included skYid-shod lIho-byang (i.e. the territory foremost along the southern and northern bank of skYid-chu), plus Dechen-rte, and the Ra-sa ‘Phul-snang itself (for details, see BD 183; see also Part I: fns. 563–68; elsewhere he is registered as dBam dpon of sKyi g.yor ‘phan (i.e. of skYid-shod, g.Yor-po and ‘Phan-yul). In the relevant literature, the reign of bSod-nams rgyal-po, his wife and their scions (yab sras, yab yum sras) can be dated to the first quarter of the 16th century (ca. 1490–1535); they eventually served as patrons of the dGe-lugs-pa and were designated as bsTan pa’i skyin-bdag dGe-ltan-pa (see Chos grva chos ‘byang 642). This is confirmed by ‘Bri-gung sources, the dGa’I-dan-pa eventually – filling the vacuum left behind by the sNel-pa and Brag-dkar-pa in these vast territories – was ruler of skYid-shod, ‘Phan-yul and g.Yor districts; cf. Kun dga’ rin chen rnam rue III 178–182; 580.4. He may also have been known as nang so chos rje A bsdod (or it refers to his son?) = Ra-nu lHa-brsung; see below; cf. DL 621:11. Ngag dbang chos rgyal rnam rthar 555.6–7. For 1508 and 1512, the sde pa dGa’I-dan-pa nang so chos rje is mentioned who invited to lHa-sa and Tshal, the ‘Brug-pa Ngag-dbang Chos kyi rgyal-po (1465–1540); cf. the latter’s bio. 253.7–254.1.

5 See previous note. Ra-nu lHa-brsung (1506–46) was addressed bSod-nams rgyal-po too (obviously in token deference to his father and great grandfather), in fact was appointed dmag dpon of skYid-shod by the Gong ma Ngag-dbang bKra-shis grags-pa – due to his service rendered to the Phag-gru’s against the Rin-spungs-pa; cf. BD 184. After the lineagement of Bye-ni sTag-rte (loc. 29º50’S 91º29’E; cf. Part I: fn. 542, passed) had died out being until then ruled by Shag-pa dpon dDrung Tshe-dbang mam-rgyal [of the Yar-rgyal-pa ‘Ol-kha sTag-rte?], he in 1525 married the surviving Bye-ni sTag-rte bride (mma ma) by the name rDo-rje bstan-skyong rgyal-mo (who had married Ol-kha sTag-rte hegemons), a union ensuring that the Bye-ni sTag-rte territories merged with that of the dGa’I-dan-pa. See DT 254–56, quoting the indispensable dGa’I ldan skYid shod pa’i gdungs rabs – there he is listed as the elder brother of Don-grub (see below) – only direct access to the latter source shall clarify this. In 1539–40, bSod-nams rgyal-po reportedly invited the 2nd Dalai Lama to bDechen-rte; see DL 607, 611.

6 rCama Tshe-dbang rgyal-mo was married into the ’Phyong-rgyas [seat at ’Phying-ba sTag-rte] Hor bSod-nams dar-rgyas; see BD 169. They had three sons: Hor bSod-nams sTobs-kyi rgyal-po, Tshe-dbang bSod-nams bstan’-dzin and Karma Ngag-dbang grags-pa. It was in this family line that the Great Fifth Dalai Lama was born.

7 rCama Dung-dkar-[ma] (b. 1526?–d. 1568) was married to the 12th’ Phag-gru sde srid ‘Gro-ba’i mgon-po (1508–48), ruler of the dGong-dkar branch seat of the skYid-chu, he was also known rNam-rgyal rab-brtan (1538–68?). For the latter, see rJe bsun Kun dga’ gro mchog rnam rue 252.

8 Nang so Don-grub rgyal-po, aliaases sde pa or sa skyong Don-grub rab-brtan, Don-grub mgon-po. Seated in their new residence at Bye-ni sTag-rte strategically overlooking the north-east-bound part of the skYid-chu river, he was elected rdzong dpon by the 11th’ Phag-gru Gong ma (i.e. Ngag-dbang bKra-shis grags-pa). His active flourit to be situated ca. 1520/25–1568 A.D., confirmed by sources such as the biography of Zhig-po gling-pa (1524–1583 A.D.) and a host of other sources. He was the figure who later rebelled against the Phag-gru mother-house by disobeying the sNe’u-gdong Gong ma, the same Ngag-dbang bKra-shis grags-pa (1488–1564). The warfare of skYid-shod (of 1553–54) thus began during his warring conflict. He occupied sKyor-mo-lung for seven years until 1561. To him is also ascribed the erection or rather refurbishment of the dGa’I-dan khang-gsar mansion in lHa-sa (the later famous residence in Tibetan political history, Fig. 68 below), erected or rather renovated by him in 1549
A.D. Together with his younger brother sde pa bKra-shis rab-brtan, he was involved in the restoration work in the immediate aftermath of the 1546 Gung-thang fire. The patronizing assistance, above all, made them the new “rulers” of Gung-thang, their branch residence there was known as Zur-khang. He made forays into sTod-lung and ’Phan-yul where he conquered many seats and territories. He dispatched troops to IHo-kha late in around 1567, and shortly after he passed away. He met a violent death being feared and hated in wide circles heralding his imminent assassination (as detailed in contemporary sources).

*Nang so, i.e. skYid-shod sa skyong / zhab s drug (also mi’i rje, mi dbang or sde pa) dGa’-ldan-pa bKra-shis rabs-brtan (1531–89) — commonly also merely [a] khu (or khu dbon when listed along with his successor in the seat and nephew (dbon) g.Yul-rgyal nor-bu (see below) with whom he ruled conjointly) was the most powerful political figure in central northern Tibet in the later part of the 16th cent. He took over the efficient rule after the demise of his elder brother in 1568 and ruled until his death. He was born 1531 in the residence of Bye-ri sTag-rtspe. Earning a great repute due to his military and administrative service rendered to the Phag-mo-gru-pa Gong ma in his early years, so in 1555 as the Yar-rgyab-pa of Gong-dkar revolted against the Phag-gru sDe-srid, he conquered the lHan-grub-gling of Grva-phyi and the armies of Yar-rgyab. He eventually became rdzong dpon of the nearby Brag-dkar estate or fiefship obviously in 1555 when the Brag-dkar estate and seat (cf. Table V.12.2 above) had ceased to exist. He proved militarily successful, in IHo-kha, ’ Phyong-rgyas, in the remote gNyel, Byar and Lo of IHo-brag. In Dvags-po, Kong-po as well as in sTod-lung, where he overcame his military opponents. Benefitting from the increasing weakness of the Phag-gru mother-house, and he his house rose to become the most powerful ruling house in dBus. He conducted renunciation and acted as an affluent and liberal patron (replacing here the rulers of sNe’u-pa and Brag-dkar-pa in that capacity) for a large number of religious seats in and around IHa-sa and sKyd-shod (such as Jo-khang, dGa’-ldan, sTe-ra and ’Bras-spungs, Gung-thang, Rin-chen-sgang, etc.). He financed the expansion of the dGa’-ldan pho-brang complex in ’Bras-spungs initiated by the ’Bras-spungs phyag mthos. Held in high esteem as a very successful, in the words of his biographer, the sTag-rtse’i rdzong (contained in the bio. of the 3rd Dalai Lama). Among his teachers count e.g. lha bsun dBod-nams dpal-bzhang, and Shar-pa Nam-mkha’ rgyal-mtshan (1532–92). Registered as patron also for the great 13th Zha-la abbot Tshar-chen Blo-gsal rgya-mtsha, yet he should in particular entertain a patron-priest relationship with the ’Bras-spungschos rje (i.e. 3rd Dalai Lama in sTod-lung) dBod-nams rgya-mtsha from 1570 A.D. Repeatedly mentioned in his biography, and often eulogized for his unfailing support to the gGe-lugs-pa sect. The 3rd Dalai Lama — in the words of his biographer, the 5th Dalai Lama — extolled him by comparing him to Hanuman, the monkey champion, the abusing sangvira and companion of Rama, epitome of an unfailing patron and helper. He was an elder contemporary and patron of the 2nd ’Ol-kha zhab s drug bsTan-pa rgya-mtsha (1557–1621) and of the 24th throne-holder dGa’-ldan Chos-rje Byams-pa rgya-mtsha (ca. 1575–1582 A.D.). Cf. DT 256; JCh 218–19; Part I: fn. 699 for further details.

sKyd-shod sde pa (or mi’i dbang po) g.Yul-rgyal (~ g. Yul mam-par rgya-mu) nor-bu (ca. 1550?–1607 A.D.) was nephew (another tradition emphatically lists him as son (sras), as given in BD 185.13–16 [Nor-brang 1993: 445], but “son” may here possibly refer to being a heir on the seat) of bKra-shis rab-brtan (see above) with whom he over some years ruled conjointly. In our conceptus we have listed him as bKra-shis rab-brtan’s son, although this point is not clarified completely. His effective floruit as ruler to be situated 1589–1607 A.D. He was active in both fields of lugs gnais, being considered an author in religious and secular matters. He was pupil of ’Khon-ston dpal’byor lhan-grub (1561–1637), and is e.g. known to have repeatedly urged, just like his uncle/father nang so bKra-shis rab-brtan, Pan-chen Blo-bzhang chos kyi rgyal-mtshan (1570–1662) to compose treatises (cf. e.g. de Rossi Filibeck 1994: 119, 121). He therefore was commonly known as sde pa Rin-po-che g.Yul-rgyal nor-bu, indicating his dual position and his religious status or commitment. He passed away in 1607, arguably falling victim to a smallpox epidemic raging that year.

He should win some ill-repute because he prompted that the famous autogenous ’Phags-pa Lokesvara statue (the Potala ’Phags-pa Lokesvara — one of the renown four autogenous Brother (rang byon mchad bzhi) statues of Avalokitesvara — which until then and indeed later again had been installed in IHa-sa), was temporarily moved during his tenure to his Brag-dkar estate; later, this famous statue was used by his son to inveigle the Zur-khang, indicating his dual position and his religious status or commitment. The statue’s inscription and its biography are extant. For this discussion the celebrated statue’s ensuing vicissitudes, cf. Per K. Sørensen 2007a.

The four sons with his wife Zhol-bza’ (var. Zhogs-bza’); in ’Phan-yul Byang-sems dgos-dgos included sde pa sTod-lung gNam-rgyal (see below), and sKyd-shod sde pa Yid-bzhin nor-bu, Rab-brtan and finally the hierarch sKyd-shod zhab s drug chos rje bsTan-dzin Blo-bzhang rgya-mtsha.

Another lady (different from Zhogs-bza’? ) was sTag-lung-ma or A-ne dngos-bzang dKon-mchog Tshe-dbang dpal-mo; cf. sTag-lung chos ’byung 572. See also the note in Czaja 2006.  

iCam sBod-nams dpal kyi bu-khris. She was married to ’Brug-chi Mi-pham bsTan-pa’i nyo-ma (1567–1619), and was mother of zhab s drug Ngag-dbang mam-rgyal (1593–1651), the founder of the State of Bhutan. He was born in MiGar-grong (later a religious estate of ’Bras-spungs), located in gNam district of Chu-shul county. Initially a religious estate of gNam Byang-chub-gling of the ’Brug-pa. Cf. e.g. lHo’i chos ’byung 14a3–5.
12 Nang so bSod-nams mam-rgyal (–rgyal-mishan; also known as sKyid-shod A-dpal; 1586–1636). He played a crucial role in the Tibeto-Mongol political interaction in the 1620–40’s. bSod-nams mam-rgyal’s sons again were mGion-po Rab-brtan, rDo-rje rgyal-po (–rgyal) and chos rje mTsho-skyes rdo-rje, who, like his father, again played a major role in the political machinations of the mid-1700’s. For his infamous role in confiscating the ’Phags-pa Lokesvara Statue, bringing it to Brag-dkar and subsequently to Mongolia; cf. Per K. Sørensen 2007a.

13 sKyid-shod sde pa (alias zhabs drung) Yid-bzhin nor-bu (1589–after 1647). Yid-bzhin nor-bu (cf. DT 255–56) along with his elder brother should follow his father as secular ruler of sKyid-shod in 1607 A.D. But the former was taken hostage (bu gte) along with his mother, by the gTsang antagonists in 1605 and was kept in custody until 1621.

14 Zhabs drung chos rje bsTan-'dzin blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1593–1638 A.D.). He was considered the 1st Gung-ru sKyid-shod zhabs drung rin po che. For his utmost prolific religious career, see sKyid-shod chos rje rnam thar 180–81, et passim; further Ming mdzod 125; Mi sna 644–45; DT 254–55; DL5 I 139b2–3.

62. The district of Nyang-bran north of IHa-sa with the old sNe’u estate of dGa’ldan-pa.

From the local sde pa line of this sub-district later the sKyid-shod dGa’ldan-pa emerged

Photo: Google Earth 2007
63. The closer sNe’u district south of lHa-sa. The figures 1 and 2 refer to the sites of the former sNe’u rdzong (today no more extant). S = the ruins of the great sNe’u stūpa (see Part I: Fig. 67)  

Photo: Google Earth 2006

64. The hill of dGe-bo-mkhar where the original fortress of sNe’u was located (= no. 1 of Fig. 63) (2005)

65. The old sTod-lung bridge in a photograph from 1904. The building in the background to the left must be the later sNe’u rdzong which in the last century was destroyed by the flood waters of the sKyid-chu (= no. 2 of Fig. 63)
66 a, b. The seats of Bye-ri sTag-rtse rdzong (54) and bDe-chen rdzong in sKyid-shod

Photo: Section from a Drawing; 19th cent; Wise Collection British Library
67. The site of Brag-dkar rdzong in sKyd-shod (2001)

68. The dGa’-ldan khang-gsar in lhA-sa, one-time residence of the sKyd-shod-pa
   Photo: G.T. Tsybikov (ca. 1900)

69. The seal of bKra-shis rab-brtan
   From a document issued in 1584
70. The ruins of the rdzong of Ba-lam bDe-chen-rtse (2001)

71. The 15th-century monastery and Tantric College of gSang-sngags-mkhar situated at the foot of bDe-chen-rtse (2001)

72. The twin hills of bDe-chen-rtse from north-east (PKS 2006)

73. The stamp of the sKyor-mo-lung bdag po
74. The ruins of old Bye-ri sTag-rtse (2007)

75. sTag-rtse village and fortress at the eastern entrance to Zhogs. The smaller rectangular marks the site of the later sTag-rtse mansion
Photo: Google Earth 2006

76. The mural from La-mo dgon (opposite Bye-ri sTag-rtse) is said to represent the sTag-rtse mi dbang lHa-rgyal rab-brtan during the reception of a foreign delegation. He was from the sKyid-shod sTag-rtse-ba, the successor house of the dGa'-ldan sKyid-shod-pa (1997)
V.13 A Short Chronology of the History of Tshal Gung-thang

1175 Establishment of the ri khorod of Bya[ng]-mkhar, Tshal-sgang chos-spyil etc. and of the sgom grva of gYu-brag in sGrags.

1160’s Dvags-po Tshal-khriims snying-po entrusts the two temples of lHa-sa to Bla-ma Zhang.

1168 Foundation of lHa-ri-kha (lHa-ri sPang-gshong) by the Zhang disciple Nam-mkha’-'od.

1175 Foundation of the Monastery of Tshal Yang-dgon.

1175-1187 Phase of extension of the sphere of religious influence of the Tshal-pa in Central Tibet.

1181? Founding of Kha-rag monastery in Kha-rag by the Zhang disciple Kha-rag-pa 'Dul-ba-'od.

1183 Founding of Ro-skam monastery (in Ba-lam area) by the Zhang disciple Ro-skam-pa chen-po.

1187 Foundation of the Gung-thang gTsug-lag-khang and the sKu-‘bum chen-mo of Gung-thang.

1189 Consecration of the Jo-bo Byang-chub chen-po statue (a.k.a. lHa-chen dPal-‘bar dbang-phug) in Gung-thang (Zhang retires; Dar-ma gzhon-nu and Säkyä-ye-shes become the first holders of the religious and secular throne of Tshal Gung-thang. Beginning of the post-Zhang era of the Tshal-pa hegemony).

1193 Ordination of gTsang-pa rgya-ras in Tshal. Death of Bla-ma Zhang.

1190’s Founding of lHa-phug-mkhar monastery in eastern Ba-lam by the Zhang disciple lHa-phug-mkhar Nyi-zla-’od, consolidating the presence of Tshal schools in Central Tibet (Bar-tshal).

1200 Founding of rTa-sga, the key institution of the sTod Tshal school by the lHa-phug-mkhar disciple sNang-sgom ras-pa alias Sangs-rgyas Tshal-pa, thus heralding a westward spread of the school (sTod Tshal).

1209/10 Arrival of the Zhang disciple gTsang-pa Dung-khur-ba and his group in Eastern Tibet and Mongolia. Alleged contacts with Chingsis Qan; activities in Mi-nyag/Xia. Yar-lung-pa Grags-pa seng-ge est. the Go-ra monastery in Tsong-kha (date uncertain); in the 1230’s he becomes teacher of the Tolui widow mother Sayin-eka and the princes Mönke and Qubilai.

1225-30 Conquest of the area of “Srid Ma-bzhi bu-brgyad” in sKyi-dsam under the 3rd Tshal-pa dpon chen Ye-shes ‘byung-gnas (d. 1230). The latter date marks the end of the first phase of the post-Zhang-era of Tshal-pa dominated by the ruling lineage of Dar-ma gzhon-nu. Within this period the greater part of the Tshal-pa territory (and later khris skor) as well as the key institutes of the Tshal-pa school (sTod Tshal, Bar Tshal) have been established. It is called the period of the introduction of the [Tshal-pa] doctrine (bstan pa’i dbu brnyes pa).

1230/31 mGar Sangs-rgyas dngos-grub is appointed dpon chen. Beginning of the period of the mGar rule in Tshal. Exile of the 4th Yang-dgon gdan sa ba Sangs-rgyas-‘bum.

1232 Inthronisation of the 6th Yang-dgon abbot Sangs-rgyas snying-po. (His lineage provided also the following two gdan sa ba; the candidates of the religious throne from now on use to come on the formal invitation of the dpon chen).

1232/33 Death of Dar-ma gzhon-nu.

1242 Found. of the sčog-sde gZims-khang shar-ba in Gung-thang by the former Yang-dgon gdan sa ba Sangs-rgyas-‘bum. mChod-yon union with the 5th dpon chen Rin-rgyal-ba.

ca. 1260 Emperor Qubilai granted dpon chen Rin-rgyal-ba the edict confirming the Tshal-pa mi sde settlements in Central Tibet as a myriarchy (khris skor) within the Yüan/Sa-skya state.

1261 First greater extension of the building complex of Gung-thang after dpon chen Rin-rgyal-ba’s return from China (The extension later continued especially under dpon chen dGa’-bde-dpal).

1267 dGa’-bde-dpal became dpon chen (ril. 47 years; seven journeys to China. Official endorsement of the Tshal-pa as representatives of the lHa-sa sanctuaries, etc.).

1291 Execution of dGa’-bde-dpal’s “rival” Sang-go (Zam-kha).

1308 Invitation of ‘Jam-dpal-dbyangs Säkyä gzhon-nu from gSang-phu Ne’u-thog who established the Chos-khor-gling College in Gung-thang and the dBu-gling Mantra College and Monastery in Tshal. Invitation of Do-pa Don-grub dpal-lidan from the Sa-skya shar-ba school.
1310 Inthronisation of the 11th Yang-dgon gdan sa ba Byang-chub bzang-po (r.l. until 1354/56). During his tenure: foundation of the Chos-khi Iha-khang in Gung-thang.

ca. 1304–36 Tenure of the Tshal dpön chen sMon-lam rdo-rje.

1347–51 At Tshal a compilation of the bKa’-gyur is completed.

1323–1351 Tenure of Kun-dga’ rdo-rje (alias dGe-ba’i blo-gros). Ordination in dBus-gling in 1350/51. Invitation of Bu-ston Rin-po-che, Kar-ma-pa Rol-ba’i rdo-rje, etc.; initial compilation of the Zhang Writings etc. (the “heydays of Tshal”).

post 1355 dpön Ten Ta’i si-tu dGe-legs bzang-po: re-confirmation of the Tshal-pa territory (and khri skor) by emperor Toyan Temür.

1371 According to GT, this date heralds the end of the “Tshal supremacy” in dBus-gTsang (= 140 years after the appointment of the first sMi Gar ruler in 1230/31; it corresponds to the installation of the Phag-mo gru-pa rule in Central Tibet. The Phag-gru rdzong in the area of sKyid-shod: sNe’u rdzong, Chu-shul 1Hun-grub-rtse, Brag-dkar, dBus-chen-rtse Bye-ri sTag-rtse.

1373 Tsong-kha-pa sojourns at Tshal Gung-thang (further visits: between 1381 and 1385).

ca. 1415 The 16th dpön chen dNgos-grub rgyal-mtshan compelled to hand over the Tshal-pa territory to the Phag-mo gru-pa ruler Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan. (In the 15th cent. sKyid-shod is mainly governed from the Phag-gru outpost of sNe’u-rdzong, i.e. the “heydays of sNe’u-s.”)

post 1415 The monastic residence of Tshal dBus-gling becomes a dGe-lugs institution; connected with the Ser-Byes College of Se-ra.

ca. 1433 Issue of investiture confirming the 6th sde srin of Phag-gru Grags-pa ‘byung-gnas as ruler of Tshal. Confirmed by the Kesi Tapestry of Bla-ma Zhang.

1503–18 Parts of Tshal Gung-thang under Karma-pa and Rin-spungs control (the latter invaded several times sKyid-shod)

1529 Transfer of Pehar from Tshal to ‘Bras-spungs (tenure of the 2nd Dalai Lama with the sKyid-mo-lung bdag mo Sangs-rgyas-dpal-‘dzoms-ma from the sNe’u house (r.l. ca. 1520–1553) and the sKyid-shod-pa as his chief patrons in the IHa-sa valley).

mid-1500’s The dGa’-ldan sKyid-shod-pa established his residence in the area of Tshal Gung-thang, called Tshal Zur-khang.

1546 Fire of Gung-thang. Renovation of the temple under the sKyid-shod zhabs drung.

1550’s– 1630 Tshal Gung-thang controlled by successive dGa’-ldan sKyid-shod-pa rulers (zhabs drung Don-’grub rab-brtan dpal-bzang-po, mi dbang bKra-shis rab-brtan and zhabs drung g.Yul-rgyal-ba – Period of the Third and Fourth Dalai Lama).

1633–50 Zur-chen Chos-dbyings rang-grol (tantric teacher of the Fifth Dalai Lama) arrives in Gung-thang (1633 A.D.); Tshal Gung-thang fell under the jurisdiction of the dGa’-ldan pho-brang and IHa-sa government. Specific religious traditions such as the Me tog mchod pa were incorporated into the “IHa-sa State Rituals.”

ca. 1715 The management of the “Gung-thang bla-brang” as mchod gzhis is entrusted to the 50th throne-holder of dGa’-ldan dGe-‘dun phun-tshogs, presented to him by the Qo’so rulerr IHa-bzang Qan.

ca. 1729/35 sNgags-rams-pa bSam-gtan rgyal-mtshan (d. 1740), the maternal uncle of the 7th Dalai Lama becomes abbot of Gung-thang bla-brang as monastic estate.

1738 The latter’s nephew Dar han mkhan po bsKal-bzang yon-tan inherited the monastic estate.

ca. 1764 Gung-thang bla-brang became the latter’s private estate. It remains in the hand of the 7th Dalai Lama’s zhag tshan family up until mid-20th century.

1782 Completion of the Gung thang dkar chag by Ngag-dbang bstan-‘dzin ‘phrin-las rnam-rgyal.

1890’ies A family bond is est. between the Khe-smad (or Kun-bzang-rtse) aristocratic house and the Gung-thang bla-brang estate-holders.


[bold refers to the key events in the Tshal-pa history]
APPENDIX VI

Gung thang dkar chag

and

sMon lam rdo rje rnam thar
I. The procession of the dPal-lgan lha-mo at the Bar-'khor in lHa-sa during the dPa-tha'i ri-khrod festival (cf. App. IV: Chap. 2.2)

Photo after H. Harrer, *Meine Tihethilder*
VI.1 The Gung thang dkar chag (1b–76b)
VI.2 The *sMon lam rdo rje rnam thar* (1b1–69a6)
13a

14a

15a

14b

15b
31a, b

32a, b

33a, b
55a.b

56a.b

57a.b
VI.2.1 The Collected Works of Tshal-dpon sMon-lam rdo-rje (1284–1347)

The list of books and treatises written or compiled by the influential Tshal ruler and erudite sMon-lam rdo-rje is found in his biography ibid. 40b5–41b3

1. Zhang 'Tshal pa'i bka' brgyud rin po che la gsol 'debs pa byin brlbs kyi rgyun 'bebs
2. bKa' brgyud kyi lha gsol 'debs rgyun chags
3. rNgog lugs brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs
4. 'Tshams spyod [= gcod] dang po'i gsol 'debs
5. Blo bde ring mo'i mgur
6. mNyam med rin po che Säkya ve shes kyi rnam thar
7. De phyin chad kyi brgyud pa'i rnam thar tho yig
8. Bla ma rin po che'i rnam par thar pa Dri ma med par gsal ba
9. rJe bsun Ri bo pa'i rnam thar gsal ba'i sgron me
10. gSan yig nor bu'i phreng ba
11. sMin byed dbang gi rim pa ma
12. Zhang 'Tshal pa'i lugs kyi bde mchog gi ting nge 'dzin gya dbang bskur rgyas pa'i cho ga Rin chen phreng ba
13. dbang bskur cho ga spyi'i mtshams spyod [= gcod] gnad kyi sgron me
14. Sa lugs kyi bde mchog gi lus kyi dkyil 'khor du dbang bskur 'gag 'jug la ltos pa'i cho ga'i tho yig Theg chen chos kyi sgo 'byed
15. 'Tshal pa'i lugs kyi bde mchog lha dgu bcu rtsa gnyis (?) kyi dkyil 'khor du dbag nyid 'jug pa Rin po che'i them skas
16. rJe bsun ma'i byin brlbs lag len bdud rtsi'i chu rgyun
17. Grol byed bskyed rdzogs kyi rim pa ma
18. 'Khor lo bde mchog gi mgon rtogs pa rab tu mi 'khrugs pa rnam par bskod pa'i rgyan
19. mNgon par rtogs pa'i rim gnyis yan lag bdun ldan
20. rJe bisun rDo rje rnal 'byor ma'i mgon par rtogs pa
21. rDo rje sgrol ma'i dkyil 'khor gya bkra shis
22. rGya chen thabs kyi spyod pa
23. Zhang 'Tshal pa'i lugs kyi sems bskyed mo byang chub lam gyi gru gzingSems bskyed pa'i cho ga bar pa
24. Sems bskyed pa'i cho ga bs dus pa
25. Zab mo don gya nges pa
26. Zhang 'Tshaldpa'i lugs kyi khrid lugs chen mo
27. De'i rgyab chos
28. Dvang po'i chos bzhis pa
29. Bya byed chos sphyod kyi lag len
30. bSam yis kyi byang chub chen po la na bza' phul ba'i tshigs bcad
31. Jam dpal la bstd pa dPal gya snying po
32. 'Tshaldpa'i phyag len rab gnas mdo lugs
33. De'i zhal gdamS
34. Tsha tsha 'debs pa'i cho ga gSal ba'i sgron me rgyas bs dus gsum
35. Jo ho lugs kyi tsha tsha dgu pa
36. dPal ye shes kyi mgon po phyag bzhis sgreb cing mchod pa'i cho ga rim pa gsal ba
37. 'Jig rten mig bsgyur gya mkha' 'gro ma lhun sgrub cing gzhana don bya ba'i tshald
38. Nor bu'i 'od zer sku mtshams la 'jug dus kyi zhal bskos la sogs
39. Thams cad tshig bs dus la don rgyas pa
40. gNad zabs la go sla ba
41. Zhang rin po che'i chos [xxx] mi chad pa
42. 'Tshaldpa'i lugs kyi lag len rnam par dag pa la phan bar 'gyur
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BA Roerich  Roerich, G. N. 1995 (1949), Blue Annals
BJ  Bod ljongs nang bsttan
Bod Map  Bod kyi sa ming dpyad gzhi i yig rigs bs dus bsgrigs. lHa-sa 1989
BP  See Bla sprul deb gzhung
BST von Schroeder  Von Schroeder, U. 2001
Buddhist Iconography  Chandra, L. 1991
Buston chos byung Szerb  Szerb, J. 1990
CFS Gyalbo et al.  Gyalbo, Tsering et al., 2000
CTZhZh  lCags stag zhig gzhung (The Governmental Iron-Tiger [Year] [1830 A.D.] Land and Tax Survey); ed. Beijing 1989
brDa dkrol  bTsas-lha 1997, brDa dkrol gser gyi me long
DMB  Goodrich and Fang, Dictionary of Ming Biography. 1976
DKTshDz  lHag-pa phun-tshogs (ed.), Dung dkar tshig mdzod chen mo
lDe’u-1  lDe’u Jo sras chos byung
lDe’u-2  mKhas pa lDe’u chos byung
DL1  rJe dGe 'dun grub rnam thar
DL2  rJe dGe 'dun rgya mtsho rnam thar
DL3  bSod nams rgya mtsho rnam thar
DL4  Yon tan rgya mtsho rnam thar
DL5  Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho rnam thar: DL5-A: DL5 I, II, III; [DL5 IV: see Ahmad 1999]; DL5-B
DL6  Tshangz dbyangs rgya mtsho rnam thar
DL7  sKal bzang rgya mtsho rnam thar
DL8  'Jam dpal rgya mtsho rnam thar
DL9  Lung rtogs rgya mtsho rnam thar
DL10  Tshul khrims rgya mtsho rnam thar
DL11  mKhas grub rgya mtsho rnam thar
DL12  'Phrin las rgya mtsho rnam thar
DL13  Thub bstsan rgya mtsho rnam thar
DTH  Bacot, J. et al. 1940
ESCA  Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology, see A. Barnard and J. Spencer (ed.)
Gengshen  Gengshen waishi. See H. Schulte-Uffelage 1963
GT  Gung thang dkar chag [translated in the present volume]
GY  rGya bod yig tshang
mGar rtse  Tshul-blo et al., mGar rtse tsho bco dpyad yki lo rgyus
HJAS  Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies
JCh  See gShin rje gshed chos byung II
JIABS  
Journal of International Association of Buddhist Studies

JNRC  
Journal of the Nepal Research Centre

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Zhang rin po che'i bka’ thor bu

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LTWA  
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Vaidūrya ser po  
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VS  
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WSTB  
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YS  

Zangzu dacidian  
See Zhu Bian et al. 1998

ZhK I / II / III  
See Zhang bka’ ‘hum I, II or III


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Karma sku phreng II


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Kun dga’ rdo rje rnam thar


Kun dga’ rnam rgyal rnam thar


Kun dga’ rnam rgyal gsan yig


Kun dga’ dpal ’byor rnam thar I


Kun dga’ dpal ’byor rnam thar II

Kun dga' rin chen rnam thar I

Kun dga' rin chen rnam thar II

Kun dga' rin chen rnam thar III

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Klong chen rnam thar
dKar brgyud chos 'byung

dKar brgyud gser 'phreng

dKon mchog chos 'phel

bKa’ rgya ma

bKa’ brgyud chos 'byung I
Sangs-rgyas Dar-po dpal-bzang, bDe gshegs bstan pa’i gsal byed bka’ brgyud chos kyi ‘byung gnas rin po che spungs pa Mun sel ’od stong ‘khyil la. Xyl. 1b1–87a6. Old Gung-thang Print. NGMPP L. 392/14–393.1 [TH Martin no. 167].

bKa’ brgyud chos 'byung II
dGe-slong Saky a lha-dbang, Zhal snga bka’ brgyud kyi thun mong ma yin pa’i chos ‘byung. 1–207. Gangs can rig mdzod 35. lHa-sa: Bod-ljongs bod yig dpe snying dpe-skrun-khang.

bKa’ brgyud chos mdzod

bKa’ brgyud gdan rabs rnam thar

bKa’ brgyud rnam thar chen mo

bKa’ brgyud yid bzhin nor bu’i ‘phreng bu

bKa’ thang sde lnga
gTer-ston O-rgyan gling-pa (b. 1323), bKa’ thang sde lnga, 5 books: lHa ‘dre bka’i thang yig 1–84,

bKa’ gdamgschos ‘byung I

bKa’ gdamgschos ‘byung II

bKa’ gdamgschos ‘byung III

bKa’ gdamgschos ‘byung IV
Sākyā’i s dog slong bSod-nams lHa’i dbang-po (1423–1496), bKa’ gdamgs rin po che’i chos ‘byung rnam thar Nying mor byed pa’i od stong. Ms. 1b1–93a4 = 206–393. N. pl. n.d.

bKa’ blon rtags brjod

sKal bzang rgya mtshe rnam thar

sKyid shod sde pa skor

sKyid shod chos rje rnam thar

sKyor lung chos ‘byung
Hor-sprul Blo-bzang rab-brtan rgya-mtsho, sKyor lung chos ‘byung mkhan rabs rtags brjod ngs mtsar nor ’phreng. First Part: Handwritten copy 1–104 [based upon a Ms 1b1–51a]. lHa-sa. [Colophon is missing but it may be identical with the sKyor lung chos ‘byung written by Hor sprul sku Rab-brtan rgya-mtsho (1697–1763) [= TH Martin no. 297; for an edition of the text, see Sørensen 2007b].

Kha rag gNyos kyi gdung rabs
Kham stod lo rgyus

Khu dbon rnam thar

Khra 'brug gi gnas bshad
dPal mi 'gyur lhun gyi grub pa'i gandhola gsum gyi nang tshan g.yo ru khra 'brug gtsug lag khang gi gnas bshad Dad pa'i sgo byed. Ms 1b1–33b4. [See TF Sørensen and Hazod 2005]

Khra tshang rtogs brjod

Khir byang rnam thar

mKhar nag chos 'byung
mKhar-nag lo tsā ba, mKhar nag chos 'byung. Comprising excerpt on Tshal skor from Zhang bka' bhum II: 592.3–594.2.

mKhas grub rgya mtsho rnam thar

mKhas pa'i dga' ston
dPa'-bo gTsug-lag-phreng-ba (1504–1566), Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston. 2 Vols. Beijing: Mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang 1986 [TH Martin no. 168].

mKhas pa iDe'u chos 'byung
mKhas-pa iDe'u, rGya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa. lHa-sa: Bod-ljongs mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang 1987 [TH Martin no. 54].

'Khon gyi gdung rabs I

'Khon gyi gdung rabs II
sTag-tshang lo tsā ba Shes-rab rin-chen, dPal ldan Sa skya'i gdung rabs 'dod dgu'i rgya mtsho. MS 1b1–33a5.

'Khor lo sdom pa chos 'byung
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mKhyen rab rnam thar

Chos smra btsun pa Blo-bzang Chos kyi rgyal-mtshan, mKhyen rab dBang phyug grags pa bzang po'i rnam thar mdor bs dus. 1b1–7a1.

*’Khrungs rabs*


*’Khrungs rabs deb ther nor bu'i phreng ba*

*Phags pa ’jig rten dbang phyug gi rnam sprul rim byon gyi ’khrungs rabs Deb ther nor bu'i 'phreng ba*. Vols. 1–IV. Dharamsala 1984 [Containing all abbrev. Dalai Lama Biographies].

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sTag-lung Rig-'dzin Ngag-dbang bstan-pa'i nyi-ma (b. 1788), *dPal stag lung ga zi'i gdung rabs zam ma chad pa byon pa'i rnam thar Ngo mtshar nor bu'i do shal skye dgu'i yid 'phrog*. Ms 1b1–424b6. Roma: Tucci Tibetan Fund, Library of IsMEO. [TH Martin no. 371].

Gang shar dag snang dgon dkar chag


Gu bkra chos ’byung

Gu-ru bKra-shis, *Gu bkra'i chos ’byung* (alias bsTan pa'i snying po gsang chen snga ’gyur nges don zab mo'i chos kyi ’byung ba gsal bar byed pa'i legs bs had mKhas pa dga' byed Ngo mtshar gtim gyi rol mtsho). Beijing: Krung-go'i bod-kyi shes-rig dpe-skrun-khang 1990. [TH Martin no. 359].

Gu ru Chos dbang rnam thar


Gung thang dkar chag

Ngag-dbang bstan-'dzin 'phrin-las rnam-rgyal, *Gung thang dpal gyi gsug lag khang hyung rabs dang bcas pa'i dkar chag* ’Gro mgon zhal lung bdud rtshi'i chu rgyun. Translated in the present work.

Gung thang rgyal rabs


Gung thang rnam thar

dPal-mang Pandita (1764–1853), *rGyal ba'i ring lugs pa chen po 'jam dbyangs bla ma dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me dpal bzang po'i rnam par thar pa gTam du brjod pa dad pa'i padmo bzhad pa'i nyin byed*. 1–397. Lanzhou: Kan-su'u mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang 1987.

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Anom.. *sPhyan snga grags pa ’byung gnas kyi sku tshe’i ring hyung ba’i don chen ‘ga’i lo tshig*. Ms. Re-edited text in Appendix in *Rlangs* 445–450.
Grib btsan rdo rje mchog gtor chog
Šākya dge-slong Blo-bzang dpal-lcan-pa bstan-pa'i nnyi-ma. *Dus gsam rgyal ba'i bstan bshungs rgyud gsum skye 'gro'i srog bdag mthu stobs yongs gi bdag po* Kong ma Grib btsan rdo rje mchog rgyud rtsal gvi gtor chog cha tshang phrin las rnam bzhis'i rin chen 'dren pa'i shing rta. Reprint of Ms 1b1–39b3 [= 1–78].

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Anon., *Grvva ba mNgon shes can dang dpal lnga ldan gra thang gi hyung ba brjod pa rnam dkar dgo ba'i sa zhing.* Ms (dbu can) 1b1–23b2. [lHa-sa]

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dGa' ldan ngag sgros thor bu

*dGa' ldan chos 'byung I*
Mkhar-nag lo tsā ba dPal- 'byor rgya-mtsho, *dGa' ldan chos 'byung dPag sdam sdon po mkhas pa dgyes byed, alias mKhar nag chos 'byung.* Ms 1b1–102b6. lHa-sa Copy.

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*dGe 'dun chos rgyal dbang phyug rnam thar*
Pan-chen Blo-bzang ye-shes, *rJe drung sprul pa'i dge 'dun chos rgyal dbang phyug gi rnam par thar*

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rGas po’i lo rgyus

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dPal-'byor bzung-po, rgya bod yig tshang chen mo. Chengdu: Si-khron mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang 1985 [TH Martin no. 115].

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rgyal rtse chos rgyal rnam thar
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Ngag gi dbang po rnam thar

Ngag dbang rnam rgyal bkra shis rnam thar

Ngag dbang chos rgyal rnam thar

Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho rnam thar = DL5-A
sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, Za hor gyi ban de ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i 'di snang 'khrul pa'i rol brtsed rtogs brjod kyi tshul du bkod pa du kū la'i gos bzang. 3. vols [1 = CA, 2 = CHA, 3 = JA] of gSung 'bum. lHa-sa print.

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lCags stag zhib gzhung

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sSe-rdri Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, lCog pa byang chub dpal ldan pa'i rnam thar rags bs dus chos skyong rgyal po chen po'i 'byung khungs bDe yangs grva tshang pa'i bsnyen gsol rgyun gtsug pa rags bs dus dang bcas pa. MS 1b1–18a3 [IHa-sa].

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Rig-'dzin Chos kyi grags-pa. Rang gi tshul gyi rtags pa brjod pa'i gtam rang bzhin brjod pa'i rgyun...

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Chos mgon rnam thar

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Chos sdings pa'i rnam thar II
Grub-thob O-rgyan-pa Rin-chen-dpal, rJe btsun mGar gyi dbon gyi rnam thar, alias rGyal ba thams cad 'dus pa'i ngo ham bla ma rin po che'i rnam par thar pa. 1b1–43a5 [= 473–557]. In: dPal 'Bri gung bka' brgyud kyi chos mdzod che mo. Vol. Mi.

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Chos 'byung bstan pa'i ngyi ma
mChog ldan mgon po'i rnam thar

Jo nang chos 'byung I

Jo nang chos 'byung II
Ngag-dbang yon-tan bzung-po, Jo nang chos 'byung dang rgyu 'bras theg pa mchog g ignas lugs zab mo'i don rje jo nang pa chen po'i ring lugs 'jigs med gdong lnga'i nga ro. 1–404. Beijing: Mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang.

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