High Peaks, Pure Earth

Collected Writings on Tibetan History and Culture

Hugh Richardson
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Collected Writings on Tibetan History and Culture

Hugh Richardson

Edited with an Introduction by Michael Aris

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Editor's Introduction

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THE ROYAL PERIOD AND LATER LEGENDS

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Every attempt has been made to contact the original publishers of these articles and obtain permission to reprint them. Our thanks to all those who replied quickly and positively. To those who have failed to respond I can only say that we tried.

I am indebted to many friends and colleagues for the encouragement they gave me to take on this task, none more so than David Seyfort Ruegg and Gene Smith. Averil Cameron and George Richardson, present and former Wardens of Keble College, Oxford, the author's alma mater, also gave me their moral support. My brother Anthony, proprietor of Serindia, balanced and quickly defeated with his usual enthusiasm the initial trepidation he felt on taking on such a large volume.

Paddy Booz, who has long experience in handling photographic material from Tibet, made the first selection of pictures from the author's huge archive, and he also prepared the material for our cartographer, John Hunt. Peter Hamilton devoted many hours of careful work in his darkroom to obtain the best possible prints from the old negatives. Toby Matthews took on, with great patience and good humour, the very large task of computer scanning and formatting all texts and photographs, and he helped me with the index too. Martin Boord shared with me the work of standardizing the rendering of all Tibetan names, terms and quotations. Guilaine Mala and Elliot Sperling kindly assisted with some of the Chinese names, and Michael Walter did likewise in regard to bibliographical details. Anna McMahon and Chloe Dobree gave invaluable secretarial assistance.

To all who became involved in the project in these different ways we are much beholden for their care and hard work.

Michael Aris
independence that ended with the Chinese invasion of 1950 and our own days that have witnessed the Tibetan diaspora becoming so much a part of the world we live in. His life and activities both as a maker and writer of history have spanned practically the whole of the twentieth century. As we approach the millennium it seems fitting to pull some of the strands together and in particular to assemble in one volume what Tibetans would call his "scattered writings" (gsung thor-bu).

A very brief account of his life needs to be given in order to place his prolific output in its context. However, I am conscious of the danger that such a sketch may look like necrologie. The Grand Old Man of Tibetan Studies is still very much with us today. Many look forward to the wine flowing on his hundredth birthday in the year 2005.

Hugh Edward Richardson was born at St Andrew's, Fife, on 22 December 1905, the second of three children, two boys and a girl, of Colonel Hugh Richardson DSO MD and his wife Elizabeth (née McClean). The lowland Scottish family of the Richardsons had produced in the nineteenth century numerous members with close Indian connections, though in his generation he is the only one to have followed them. His older brother Frank (1904–96) was to take up their father's profession in military medicine, rising to the rank of major-general, and he also achieved distinction both as a military historian and as an exponent of the art of the piobaireachd, the classical music of the Scottish bagpipe. Both sons were educated at Trinity College, Glenalmond, Frank going on to Edinburgh University to study medicine while Hugh won a scholarship to Oxford to read classics ("Greats") at Keble College.

After graduating in 1928 he returned to teach at his old school for a year. He then passed the Indian Civil Service exam and so came back to Oxford for the probationary year of study required of new recruits. He recalls today how Indian history was at that time taught in a stultifying manner by the former administrator Sir Verney Lovett, Bengali most ably by a native speaker, and Sanskrit by the austere Victorian figure of F.W. Thomas, the Boden Professor. Although Thomas is today remembered less for his Sanskrit and more for his Tibetan, which he pronounced with all the

has surpassed even Sir Charles Bell in his identification with and understanding of Tibetans and Tibetan affairs.

obsolete consonants intact, he did nothing to stimulate his student along the path he was later to make his own. (Years later Thomas made his way to India hoping to travel to Tibet, but when Richardson came down to Darjeeling to help him he found the ageing professor, frock-coated and stiff-collared, too ill to make the journey.) By contrast the grounding he received in Bengali at Oxford enabled him later to converse in that language with Rabindranath Tagore, and he still reads and speaks it today with fluency.

It was during his first posting in 1932–4 as Sub-Divisional Officer at Tamluk in present-day Bangladesh that he first came into contact with the Tibetan world. Twice he was able to escape the heat and the heavy burden of his work to go walking with friends in the kingdom of Sikkim during the fortnight of the Bengali puja holidays. On one of these trips he crossed into Tibetan territory as far as Phari, and he recruited as his devoted servant a young Tibetan, Pema, who stayed with him for many years. But the decisive move to Tibet came as the result of his next posting in 1934–5. This took him to the other side of the subcontinent as Assistant Political Agent at Loralai in Baluchistan in present-day Pakistan, his first job on transferring to the Foreign and Political Service of the Government of India. Whereas in Bengal the administrative and legal business had left little room for other activities, at Loralai there was almost nothing to do except indulge his love of gardening. But while there he came close to B.J. (later Sir Basil) Gould (1883–1956), then Revenue Commissioner in Baluchistan, who had earlier served as Political Officer at Gangtok in Sikkim. Richardson had from his youth heard stories told of the legendary Lieutenant-Colonel F.M. (Eric) Bailey (1882–1967), a family friend who had held the same post in Gangtok and whom he later came to know. However, it was the senior colleague Gould rather than the family friend Bailey who took him on as his protégé, securing him a position on the mission he led to Lhasa in 1936. Gould had in turn been recruited to serve on the Himalayan frontiers and in Tibet by Sir Charles Bell (1870–1945), the British officer with longest experience of Tibetan affairs. All three members of this “apostolic succession” came to master the Tibetan language and later wrote works on Tibetan life and traditions, though none with such dedication and scholarship as the last in their line. It is no accident that the three of them had studied classics in the Oxford Greats School.4

The ostensible purpose of the 1936 mission was to mediate the return of the exiled Panchen Lama, but it was Gould’s firm intention also to try

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and establish a permanent British presence at Lhasa to match the one set up by the Chinese. He succeeded in this aim by leaving Richardson behind with the dual post of Trade Agent at Gyantse and Officer-in-Charge of the British Mission at Lhasa. It is a measure of the total trust he engendered on all sides — British, Tibetan and Indian — that Richardson was able to live in Tibet for a total of eight years, six of them as Head of Mission at Lhasa, representing first the British government in 1936-40 and 1946-7 and then the independent government of India in 1947-50. For six months in 1937 he relieved Gould as Political Officer, Gangtok. In the five-year interval he spent away from Tibet during the war years he first served atCharsadda in the North-West Frontier Province (now part of Pakistan) as Assistant Commissioner and then Deputy Commissioner (1940-2), followed by a posting to Chungking as First Secretary at the Indian Agency-General in China (1942-3), and then to Delhi as Joint Secretary to the Government of India, External Affairs Department (1944-5).

The mere catalogue of these official appointments carries no hint of what came to be his quiet but abiding passion, namely the exploration of all aspects of the distinctive Tibetan heritage. Although his main interest has focussed on history it extends also to the natural world and in this respect he stands at the end of a long line best represented for the Himalayanists by the pioneering polymath and diplomat Brian Houghton Hodgson (1800-94). Richardson’s amateur pursuit of botany, ornithology, entomology and topography was conducted not as a specialist but rather as an omnicompetent generalist interested in all aspects of life. The only trace of this in the present collection comes in his loving memory of Tibetan birdlife (Ch. 59), but the notes and specimens he gathered in Tibet were forwarded to the Natural History Museum in London, the Zoological Survey of India and the Geographical Section of the General Staff in New Delhi.

By his own admission Richardson’s official task of upholding British prestige and interests had to be conducted at a slow and ceremonial pace, one that allowed plenty of time for cultivating the finer arts of friendship, exploration and scholarship. Many of the articles collected here owe much to the help and encouragement of the good friends he made at that time. Among these he recalls the particular kindness of Bde-chen Chos-khor Rinpo-che, a lama of the ‘Brug-pa Bka’-brgyud school, and the sixteenth Rgyal-dbang Karma-pa, his generous host on two visits to the monastery of Mtshur-phu. It was also in this period that he first came into contact with the brilliant Italian scholar Giuseppe Tucci who was laying the foundations for the modern study of Tibet and who, many years later, received him with great warmth in Rome.

The witnessing of internal Tibetan politics occupied him as much as scholarship. His cool but very evocative style of reporting comes alive
particularly in his description of the Reting (Rwa-sgreng) conspiracy of 1947 (Ch. 60), but many other examples can be found in his official reports preserved in the British Library and the Public Record Office. They make it clear how scrupulously he avoided any entanglement in Tibetan domestic politics and rivalries. The records give no support to the accusations against him as arch-imperialist and “vicious aggressor” made in some Chinese Communist works. Melvyn Goldstein has made a start in uncovering the role he played in this period, but there is ample opportunity for further research.

After representing independent India at Lhasa for three more years, he left Tibet for the last time in September 1950, just a few months before the Communists arrived. He then retired from the Indian Civil Service, returned to the United Kingdom and settled at his birthplace in St Andrews. The following year he married Huldah (née Walker), the widow of Major-General T.G. Rennie who had died in action in 1945. Huldah, a lady of great beauty, intelligence and kindness, brought him two step-children, David and Elizabeth. He shared many years of happiness with Huldah until her death, after a long illness, in 1995.

The twenty years of service in Asia has been followed by nearly fifty years as an independent scholar, honoured and exploited by academics everywhere, though he never sought to become one himself. The help and wisdom he has given to generations of students is proverbial. Great numbers have corresponded with him and many have also enjoyed hospitality at his home and his club, The Royal and Ancient, mecca of all golfing pilgrims, where he now seems part of the stonework. But few remember him with more gratitude than the Tibetans themselves. He has been their greatest friend and defender.

No matter how objective history seeks to be, it always reflects the writer’s agenda and purpose. For Richardson history is pursued for its own sake and as a guide to the present, but it serves ultimately as the triumphant vindication of Tibetan independence, the power of Tibet to manage its own affairs in the past, matched by the total specificity of its life and language. We can see that his attitude was first formed in part by the need

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5. See in particular Ya Hanzhang, The Biographies of the Dalai Lamas, trans. Wang Wenjiong (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1991), p. 418: “Richardson was an ‘old Tibet hand’ and a vicious aggressor; he masterminded the ‘Hans, go home’ and all other incidents. That explains why the British imperialists and the Indian authorities decided to prolong his stay in Tibet”.

to uphold the British policy of encouraging a strong and reformed Tibet to stand firmly as an autonomous buffer between British India and China, an aim made difficult by the constricting effect of monastic conservatism and the factionalism of the Tibetan aristocracy. The British aim was further weakened and qualified by the necessary acceptance of China’s role under the Ch’ing as the “suzerain” power. But everything Richardson has found in Tibetan life and history, both before and after the years he spent there, has gone to support the notion of Tibetan “autonomy”. The political argument then as now turns fiercely on the definition and practical application of this term. Any future political settlement will have to take into account the many historical arguments he has adduced for the right of Tibetans to rule themselves. Yet it is my impression that the qualities of humanity and scholarship exemplified in his writings will in the end count for even more than their political legacy.

* * *

It would be as well to make clear what has been deliberately omitted from a collection that can otherwise claim to be nearly complete. Of the books and monographs which Hugh Richardson has authored or co-authored, only one is included here as Part 4. All book reviews except one (Ch. 11) and all encyclopaedia articles have been left out, along with various minor ephemera listed elsewhere. Nor did it seem useful to include any of the articles containing editions and translations of the Tibetan pillar inscriptions that have been superseded by the appearance of his major Corpus in

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8. See the bibliography, more or less complete to 1980, in Aris and Aung San Suu Kyi (eds.), Tibetan Studies in Honour of Hugh Richardson, pp. xii-xv; cf. the entries
1985. Of his other writings that have not found a place here mention should be made of work still in progress and his voluminous correspondence — official, semi-official and private — that lies scattered on four continents.

The sixty-five papers contained here are grouped into five parts devoted to broad themes that constantly overlap. These parts follow each other more or less according to Tibetan chronology, but within each part the sequence of chapters is determined by the order in which they first appeared in print. This seemed the most sensible structure to give the collection, but the reader will notice I have had to make some arbitrary decisions: several pieces could have appeared at different places since they address more than one of the major themes.

Inevitably there is a degree of repetition as certain historical incidents or insights recur through several pieces, but I could find no convenient way of avoiding this. In the end I decided that to attempt to reduce the number of repetitions would inflict severe damage on the internal logic of each piece, which must be allowed to stand on its own legs.

It quickly became apparent that there would be no point in bringing all these writings together in a single volume unless the various methods of transliterating Tibetan used by the author or imposed on him by editors or publishers in the past were now standardized. Assisted in this very ably by Martin Boord, I have also tried to bring order to the hyphenation and capitalization of Tibetan names and expressions. For example, it was decided to give capitals to first letters rather than to "root" letters to allow all names to be indexed in English rather than Tibetan alphabetical order, thus enabling the index to be used by non-specialists. The result is by no means perfect and I must ask readers, and above all the author, to forgive me for inconsistencies that remain.

In every other respect these writings have only been lightly edited. Corrections marked by the author on his offprints have been incorporated and, according to his own wish, I have put things right that were obviously wrong. Some matters of style and form have been made uniform, but the various methods of citation and referencing, which vary considerably from piece to piece, have been left as they first appeared. To have attempted to introduce a standard or unified system might have delayed the volume well into the next millennium.

Every attempt has been made to locate and use the original illustrations that accompanied the first printing of these articles, but a few could not be found. The remainder of those selected from the author's personal collection were chosen to illustrate a single, hitherto unpublished paper (Part 3, Ch. 36).

in Hallvard Kåre Kuloy and Yoshiro Imaeda, Bibliography of Tibetan Studies (Narita: Naritasan Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1986), pp. 508-10. The bibliography provided in Richardson Paper [sic], see note 7 above, must be used with caution.
Those photographs represent only a fraction of the total collection, a unique historical archive standing in urgent need of professional conservation and thorough documentation. The four maps that we have prepared are also intended primarily to locate the place names appearing in that single paper and do not include all those occurring elsewhere in the volume.

Thirty-four papers, representing more than half of the total, are focussed on the earliest period of true history, from the seventh to the ninth centuries, when Tibet was a great expansionary power in Central Asia under its own kings of the Yar-lung dynasty, who gradually introduced late Indian Buddhism as the country’s state religion. Richardson’s abiding preoccupation with origins and his great skill in revealing the early development of the Tibetan state form his most lasting contribution to the field of Tibetan studies, one that will certainly stand the test of time. Very rarely have his findings or arguments been challenged or disproved. (But in Ch. 8 the reader will notice that he no longer holds a particular viewpoint that he once defended.) With hindsight we can see how fortunate it was that the great literary trove of Tun-huang containing authentic Tibetan texts from this early period had been brought to light a generation earlier. Explored in part already by others, they awaited the talents of one who could link their evidence firmly to the testimony contained in later records and to traces that survived in Tibetan life and tradition.

The twenty-seven chapters contained in Part 1, “The Royal Period and Later Legends”, explore these early, very difficult sources and measure their significance against the heavy piety and historical fantasy of the later chronicles. By thus “properly demarcating the frontiers of truth and falsity” (bden-rdzun sa-mtshams legs-par bkod)9 Richardson can be said to have laid a firm basis for all future work on this crucial period of state formation. Despite the explosion of historical rediscovery affecting later periods that we have witnessed in recent years, the prospect of the foundations he has established being rocked by the appearance of fresh and important sources for this early period seems very remote.

In Part 2, “Historical Sites and Inscriptions”, the focus shifts to the monuments and particularly to the lithographs of the royal period to which Richardson has reverted so often in his career as an independent scholar. (I could find no better place than here, among other material remains, to place the brief excursus on phallic symbols, Ch. 29.) Again it should be stressed that his major work on the lithographs is found elsewhere, in his Ch’ing Dynasty Inscriptions at Lhasa (1974) and A Corpus of Early Tibetan Inscriptions (1985). Here, in three articles (Chs. 31-2, 34), preliminary notice is given of fresh discoveries made by others, bringing to the task his unique skills in deciphering

the often fragmentary, always crucial messages encoded in stone. The long years spent in adjusting and readjusting tired eyes to the fluid orthography of early Tibetan scribbled in a great variety of hands on mutilated scraps of paper or incized on stone weathered and damaged by the passage of centuries have yielded supreme rewards to all who work in this field. With hindsight we can see, again, how very fortunate it was that Richardson took on the pillar inscriptions as his *magnum opus* at the time when he did, for the pillars themselves have all suffered terrible damage in recent years. The painstaking record he made of their evidence will long outlast their physical destruction. In the final paper (Ch. 36) in Part 2 some notice is given of the sad fortune visited upon so many other historical sites during the Cultural Revolution. The account he provides, illustrated with his own unique photographs, is a sort of last journey of farewell to the major and minor sites he personally visited all over the plateau in the years between 1936 and 1950. Although fuller descriptions can be found of a few of these buildings which have now vanished, some to be partly restored or rebuilt, the present account has much more than sentimental value as a record of how they once stood and the cultural life they enclosed. It was really the need to publish this important contribution together with maps and illustrations — too long for a journal and too short for a monograph of its own — that encouraged me to gather all his other writings and place it among them.

Part 3, "Later History and External Contacts", brings together a miscellany of topics that range far and wide over the historical map both inside and outside Tibet, from the twelfth to the twentieth centuries, some addressed to specialists, others to the general reader. Two articles (Chs. 40 and 43) consider specific incidents in the Tibetan relationship with China, and five articles (Chs. 41, 46–9) provide valuable insights on the long but thin line of Europeans and Armenians who travelled to Tibet, written from the privileged perspective of the outsider who lived there longer than any of them save one, a Capuchin missionary of the eighteenth century. Here the narrative resonates across the cultural divide, reducing it to a human level, less exotic and mysterious than some would have us believe. The possibility of crossing right over that divide and back again is seen in the attractive figure of the first British arrival, George Bogle, in 1774–5. Richardson has long entertained strong feelings of affection and empathy for this fellow Scot, which led him to a long hunt in Scotland for the descendants of his union with a Tibetan lady (Ch. 47). Several other topics seem also to have suggested themselves as much for reasons of human sympathy as the demands of scholarship, and this is notably so in the treatment given to the Bka’-brgyud-pa school that resulted from his friendship with the sixteenth Rgyal-dbang Karma-pa (Chs. 37, 50 and 63).

Part 4 reproduces the text of the author’s *Tibetan Precis* (Printed by the Manager, Government of India Press, Calcutta [“Secret. For Official Use
only”], 1945; 8vo., pp. vi, 136). So rare and unknown except to a very few specialists is this work that some details of its publication history may be given here. Of the fifty copies of the book that are said to have been printed I am aware of only three that have survived: one in the Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library (L/P&S/20/D222), a second copy in the private collection of the author, and a third sold in London in 1991 whose presents whereabouts is unknown (see below). For present purposes the author’s copy was computer scanned to retain the original pagination and thus avoid disturbing the index. However, the five folding maps in the rear pocket have been omitted here because of the difficulty of reproducing them. Three of these relating to the 1914 Simla Convention can be conveniently found reprinted in Amar Kaur Jasbir Singh’s Himalayan Triangle.10 The other two maps (“Sketch Map of Eastern and Central Tibet” and “The MacMahon Area, 1946”) can be consulted at the British Library. Also omitted from the present edition are the numerous bracketed numbers embedded in the text: these were intended as references to sources contained in the files of the Political Officer in Sikkim and the External Affairs Department of the Government of India in New Delhi. Although the sources were listed in a second or companion volume of the Tibetan Precis, no copy has come to light and it may be doubted whether it was ever in fact printed. For this reason the bracketed figures are quite obsolete and I have therefore had no qualms in removing them. The publication history of the book is rendered even more obscure by the possibility of a second edition that may have appeared in New Delhi in 1948 with 151 pages. The London antiquarian bookseller Bernard Quaritch sold a copy described as such in 1991 (see his Catalogue no. 1131, item 36, “Fishing the Clouded Waters”, pp. 39-41), but it now lies beyond reach and no other copy of that “ghost” edition survives in any collection known to me. Nor can there be found any allusion to it or to the missing companion volume in the file dealing with the work preserved in the India Office records: L/P&S/12/3983/6A.

The importance of Richardson’s Tibetan Precis has been made clear by Alastair Lamb:11

This is a detailed summary of British relations with Tibet up to the end of World War II, designed to provide a factual basis for the determination of subsequent British policy towards Tibet on the eve of the British departure from India. It contains a mass of information

11. Lamb, Tibet, China and India, p. 264 n. 489.
Based upon the records of the Government of India. Many of the papers referred to and capable of identification were never sent back to the India Office. There are gaps in the files preserved in the India Office Library and Records in London which can only be filled by means of a judicious use of Tibetan Precis.

The work is the only example provided in the present collection of Hugh Richardson’s official writings, but many others survive in the files preserved in London. Of special interest to historians, for example, are the various editions of *Who’s Who in Tibet* and in particular the many annotations to the 1949 edition (L/P&S/20/D220/2) for which Richardson was chiefly responsible. The meticulous care in uncovering historical fact and the powers of human judgement and literary expression that are so evident in his later scholarship can easily be traced back in these records dating from his earlier incarnation as a civil servant and diplomat. The lines of continuity are transparent.

Finally I have assembled in Part Five, “Testimonies and Recollections”, those papers which reveal the author in his most personal mode as a human witness to the old order in Tibet and its eventual collapse under the impact of Chinese occupation. The somewhat reticent and self-effacing style of these writings does not in the end conceal the powerful emotions of sympathy and outrage felt by the author at the fate of Tibet. It is perhaps only in the beautiful account of how he received a visitation by the kind and encouraging spirit of the eighth-century monk Excellent Meditation (Myang Ting-nge-’dzin bzang-po) in “The Chapel of the Hat” (Ch. 61) that he allows us a very personal and uncharacteristic glimpse of the man within. Although he looks on the incident as unique and never again repeated, reading that essay one can only be sad that he never attempted more in that vein. Yet to have done so would have been completely out of character, so far removed from the excess of maudlin self-revelation of other writers. Who would ever regret that his energies have gone instead to revealing, with such long patience and critical acumen, the historical and cultural legacies of the land he came to love so much?

Many have been the times in the last twenty years when Hugh Richardson has announced to me that an article that had just appeared was the last he would ever write. Yet today at the age of ninety-three he continues to devote energy to yet further plans for publication. The present effort to bring most of his scattered writings together can therefore only have a temporary and relative claim to completeness.

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St Antony’s College, Oxford,
March 1998
PART ONE

The Royal Period and Later Legends
How Old Was Srong-brtsan Sgam-po?

The tradition perpetuated by Tibetan religious historians from Sakya Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan onwards, that Srong-brtsan Sgam-po died at the age of eighty-two, is probably not now accepted by any western scholar. It is explained by George Roerich in his introduction to The Blue Annals as due to the interpretation of the Mañjuśrimulatantra as a reference to Srong-brtsan. Other explanations might be suggested but it is my intention here only to outline broadly the salient points in the evidence before the thirteenth century — and the age of the religious historians — which militate against the traditional view of Srong-brtsan’s age.

The date of Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s death is clearly determined. The Tibetan Tun-huang Annals and the Chinese T’ang Annals agree in putting it in a year which by western calculations is 650 A.D. The argument of Hisashi Sato in favour of 649 is not conclusive and, in any event, it makes small difference whether the death occurred at the end of 649 or the beginning of 650 (the date which I prefer). The point is that, given this clear date for the king’s death, it would, on the traditional view, be necessary to put his birth c. 568. Against that, Roerich, following Schmidt, favours the year 617 which is derived from an interpretation of Sanang Setsen; but Sanang himself depends on traditional sources and if 617 should prove so nearly right it would be more of an inspired guess than a calculation substantiated by early evidence.

The key date for Tibetan history of the time is contained in the T’ang Annals which record that in the eighth year of Chen-kuan, which corresponds with 634 A.D., the Tsan-p’u K’i-lung-tsan — who must be Srong-brtsan Sgam-po — sent envoys to the emperor. Lung-tsan is said to have been a minor when he came to the throne. The emperor returned his embassy and in a further Tibetan mission the king asked for a Chinese princess in marriage. When this was refused, the Tibetan king attacked first the named tribes on the Chinese border and then China itself, with the result

that in 640 a Chinese princess was granted as his bride. This date agrees with the earliest Tibetan record, the Tun-huang Annals. If the traditional story is to be accepted, it would mean that when Srông-brtsan conducted his campaign against China and acquired his Chinese bride he was between sixty-six and seventy. This does not appear very probable and there is a hint in the later tradition that this was not so; for some of the accounts imply that the minister Mgar was acting on behalf of a young king when he conducted the marriage negotiations at the Chinese court.

There is at the beginning of the manuscript of the Tun-huang Annals a damaged passage which the editors of the transcription and translation in Documents de Touen-houang relatifs à l'histoire du Tibet have not reproduced. I intend to deal with this passage in detail elsewhere [see ch. 2 below] and all that need be said here is that the manuscript, of which through the kindness of the Bibliothèque Nationale of France I have secured a photocopy, carries the dating contained in the Annals quite clearly back to the year 634 and beyond. The passage of the Annals with which the published edition opens contains a summary of events before 650 from which date the record provides a short account of the events of each year. The summary as published refers briefly to two groups of events, three and six years respectively before 650. The division into multiples of three appears to be significant and systematic. The summary shows that six years before the death of Srông-brtsan Sgam-po, i.e., c. 644, there was a revolt of Zhang-zhung; and that three years before that, there was trouble in Nepal and the Chinese princess arrived in Lhasa — viz, 641. From here the unpublished passage, which is continuous with what follows it, takes the historical summary back for a further considerable period. It shows that an uncertain number of years before the arrival of the princess in 641 (the part of the manuscript which contained the exact figure is damaged) a younger brother of Srông-brtsan Sgam-po died in suspicious circumstances. If a three-year period was used, the date would be c. 639. Then another uncertain number of years earlier it is recorded that Srông-brtsan Sgam-po undertook a military expedition against China. This must be the campaign which led to the grant of a princess: and from the Chinese record it can be dated c. 635/636 — another three-year interval. Then, a further uncertain period earlier came the disgrace and death of the minister Myang Mang-po-rje Zhang-snang. Allowing for another three-year interval this would be c. 632/633. There is a reference to these events in a different part of the Tun-huang documents also, where they are put after the expedition. The more careful version of the Annals is to be preferred; but in any case, it is clear that the death of Myang was comparatively close in time to the expedition. One further paragraph — the first of the damaged passage — appears to relate to the deeds of Myang when he was acting as minister on behalf of the young king after his accession. In this case an interval of three years appears too
How Old Was Srong-brtsan Sgam-po?

short. From both Tibetan and Chinese records it is seen that Srong-brtsan was a minor when he came to the throne; it is not suggested that he was an infant. It is known that on his death he was succeeded by an infant grandson and so it is necessary in calculating the date of his accession to make reasonable allowance for two generations. Taking a further three-year interval before 632/633, giving c. 629 for his accession, and assuming his age then to have been say between thirteen and sixteen would not give enough time for the birth of a son and grandson. If a six-year interval is assumed, on the analogy of the later part of the summary, we should have the year c. 627 for his accession. If the later tradition were to be accepted, the accession of the king (at the conjectural age of between thirteen and sixteen) would have to be put c. 583/586. This would mean that the interval between the paragraph about Myang which can be dated c. 632 and the paragraph dealing with events after the accession would cover a period of nearly fifty years. On the analogy of the rest of the summary, which be it noted is continuous and homogeneous, that is not acceptable.

The impossibility of the traditional story is underlined by what is known about the minister Myang Zhang-snang. Other parts of the Tun-huang documents in chronicle-form show that Myang was active during the reign of Srong-brtsan’s father. He was clearly older than Srong-brtsan and, as he died c. 632 at the earliest, he would have been, on the traditional theory, at least seventy-five when the expedition took place. Similar evidence applies also to another famous minister, Khyung-po Zu-tse, who was responsible for the fall of Myang; he, too, served Srong-brtsan’s father. It is hardly possible that Chinese sources would not have remarked on this regime of an old king and ancient ministers; on the contrary, the clear impression is given that when Srong-brtsan first came in contact with the Chinese court c. 634 he was a young man. But the exact age at which he came to the throne and the exact date of his birth remain uncertain.

The traditional year of Srong-brtsan’s birth is an Ox year (traditions which attribute an animal + element dating at this period of Tibetan history can not be treated as realistic); and it is on the basis of an Ox year that Schmidt calculates the date of the king’s birth as 617. Since he died in 650 this would mean that Srong-brtsan fathered a son when he was only 16 years old and that his son did the same. This is certainly not usual in present-day Tibet and cannot be regarded as probable. There is no evidence before the thirteenth century that Srong-brtsan was born in an Ox year but if the tradition be considered acceptable, the Ox year 605 would seem more reasonable. From the earliest records — both Chinese and Tibetan — this seems a little too early, and a date which would make the king somewhat younger at the time of his first contact with China seems preferable. It is not improbable that the dismissal of the hitherto dominant minister Myang
and the expedition against China were the first acts of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po after he had reached years of maturity and decision; and my own preference is to treat the exact year of his birth as still debatable, with the probability lying somewhere between the years 609 and 613, which would make him about twenty-four to twenty-eight at the time of his campaign against China and thirty-seven to forty-one when he died in 650.
A Fragment from Tun-huang

My article “How Old Was Srong-brtsan Sgam-po?” [Ch. 1 above] refers to a damaged passage at the beginning of the manuscript of the Tun-huang Annals. The present article publishes a transliteration of the text of that passage together with a suggested reconstruction and a translation. The importance of this fragment and the light it throws on Tibetan chronology have been examined in my earlier article.

The chronology of the early Tibetan kingdom depends to a great extent on the annals from Tun-huang published in 1946 by J. Bacot, F. W. Thomas and C. Toussaint in *Documents de Touen-houang relatifs à l’histoire du Tibet* (THD). There are two manuscripts containing these Annals; the longer is in two parts of which the first — and smaller — is in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, with the number Pelliot Tibétain 1288 (formerly Pelliot 252); the larger second part is in the India Office Library, London, with the number 730 (formerly Stein Tun-huang 103, 19, viii, i). Another manuscript in the British Museum — Or 8218, 187 — overlaps the former record at the year 743 and runs to the year 763 with a lacuna of seven years between 747 and 754. This is a quite separate compilation; it is not just a copy of the manuscript which is divided between Paris and London.

The Paris manuscript provides an explicit starting point for the year-by-year record of events which it contains. This is the dog year following the death of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. That event is mentioned in the Chinese T’ang Annals under the first year of Yung-hui which corresponds to 650 A.D. The Tibetan bird year, preceding the dog year, would run from about February/March 649 to February/March 650. Internal evidence in the T’ang Annals suggests that Srong-brtsan Sgam-po died towards the end of that period — between January and March 650. From the dog year beginning in 650 down to the pig year 747 the manuscript contains a short comment on the events of each year. Before the first of those entries — that for 650 — there is a passage in which the events of the preceding nine years

are summarised, thus taking the record back to 641 when the Chinese princess Mun-cheng arrived in Tibet as bride to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. This date accords with the account in the T'ang Annals.

On p. 10 of THD the editors state “La relation commence six années plus tôt”, i.e. six years before 650; this should, in fact, be nine years as stated above. At p. 9 they also comment on the manuscript as follows: “Sa partie supérieure est lacérée sur le côté gauche. On peut constater cependant qu’il ne manque pas nécessairement une partie supérieure. Les premiers alinéas, dont les têtes manquent, ne se terminent pas comme les alinéas des années”. Examination of a photographic copy of the manuscript, kindly made available by the Bibliothèque Nationale, shows that this comment refers to a number of fragmentary lines preceding the passage with which the published version of the manuscript opens. I offer here a transcription of the unpublished portion, followed by a suggested reconstruction, and a translation. Both the text and its interpretation are greatly clarified by two passages in the Chronicle section of THD which relate to the events mentioned in the unpublished annals fragment and which contain very similar wording. The Chronicle makes little or no attempt at precise dating but gives in some instances a fuller and more popular presentation of certain events which are summarised more systematically in the unpublished fragment which is the subject of this essay.

Transcription'

1. ......................... 'khus nas / snying drung
2. ......................... um pa'a / mtha' dag gyang
3. .........................
4. ......................... snang glo ba rings nas / kho na'i bran
    pa tsab gyim po /
5. ......................... bkyon phab nas bkumo / mkhar sngur ba bshig
    go/
6. ................ / btsan po khri srong rtsan gyis/shuld byang lam
    du byung ste / 'a zha dang rgya la'a
7. ............... dang 'a zha gnyis dpya' gcalo /
8. ............... na'a / btsan po gcen srong rtsan dang / gcung btsan srong
    gyis nold nas / gcung
9. ............... lta mkha's sregs 'khuste / mnyal gyi gzen tu / gcung
    btsan srong / zhugsu
10. ............ so /

* For possible variant readings the reader may consult Yoshiro Imaeda and
Tsuguhito Takeuchi, Choix de documents tibétains conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale
(Paris, 1978-90), iii, Corpus syllabique, p. 40, P 1288, 0001-0009. (Ed.)
Notes

The number of letters probably contained in the missing part of each line, calculated by measurement, is indicated by the number of dots, which run from 30 in the first two lines to 7 in the last. The lines have been numbered for ease of reference.

1. Only part of the a bo is visible but cf 'khuste in l. 9.
2. Indications of a zhabs kyu and the lower part of ma can be seen. After pa is what I take to be a bo followed by a shad. Above the letter is a mark which might be the trace of a reversed ki gu but is probably only a smear or the intrusion of part of a letter from the line above. The reading is, therefore, not absolutely certain; but cf the Chronicle, THD p. 111: sum pa mtha' dag dmagis gdab myi dgos par...
3. The space between line 2 and the next surviving line shows that a short line has been completely lost owing to damage to the manuscript.
4. Only part of the superscribed s is visible but the context and comparison with THD p. 111 makes snang certain.
5. In other passages of THD where this name occurs there is doubt whether it is sngur ba or sdur ba. Here sngur looks more probable.
10. s is not complete: mo would be a possible reading but the traces are more like so.

Reconstruction of the Text

Words and letters which have been supplied are underlined.

1. .................. 'khus nas / snying drung
2. ................ myang mang po rje zhang snang gis sum pa mtha' dag gyang
3. rnal mar bkug go /
4. de nas lo x x na' / myang mang po rje zhang snang glo ba rings nas / kho na'i bran pa tsab gyim po
5. 'khuste / myang zhang snang la bkyon phab nas bkumo / mkhar sngur ba bshig go /
6. de nas lo x x na' / btsan po khri srong rtsan gyis / shuld byang lam du byung ste / 'a zha dang rgya la'
7. dmag drangste / rgya dang 'a zha gnyis dpya' gcalto /
8. de nas lo gsum na' / btsan po gcen srong rtsan dang / gcung btsan srong gyis nold nas / gcung
9. btsan srong gi zhal ta mkha's sregs 'khuste / mnyal gyi gzen tu / gcung btsan srong / zhugsu
10. dgung du gshegsö /

Notes

1. The line is too fragmentary for anything but guesswork. The reference may have been to events related in THD p. 111 beginning: btsan po srong brtsan sgam po'i ring la // yab 'bangs ni 'khus. In that passage the death by poisoning of the father of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po and the revolt of his subjects are mentioned. Snying-drung is a place name: see THD p. 31. The Padma bka'-thang puts it in Snye-mo.

2. and 3. cf THD p. 111 lines 1–7: ung gi 'og du myang mang po rje zhang gis / sum pa mtha' dag dmagis gdab myi dgos par / . . . . . rnal mar bkug go. Another reference to the same events is in THD p. 101: myang mang po rje zhang snang gis/sum khams tham 'shad' bangs su dgug par bka' stsal to / /

The annals fragment seems to be closer to the former passage and I have, therefore, taken my reconstruction from there; but bangsu bkug (or dgug) go would be a possible alternative.

4. and 5. cf THD p. 111 lines 13 et seq. and specially lines 22–7: 'ung nas zhang snang gi bran pa tshab gyim po hu ste / zhang snang bkum ste / /

6. The formula de nas lo x x na is found at the beginning of each section of the chronological summary with which the published text in THD opens. For the later part of the line see THD p. 111 lines 10–11: 'ung gi 'og du btsan po zhabs kyis btsugs ste/byang lam du ma byung ma drangs par // rgya dang 'a zhas dpya' gcal lo / It may be noticed that the king's name is given throughout this fragment as Srong-rtsan. The form Srong-brtsan is used in other parts of THD and also in several inscriptions of the eighth century. It is accepted by later Tibetan writers and I use it in the body of this paper.

7. dmag drangste is a speculative reconstruction. Some such phrase seems certain. dra ma drangste, a possible alternative, seems to be used more of an attack on a specific place rather than of the launching of a general campaign. On the analogy of THD p. 111 lines 10–11 the phrase might have been dmag ma drangs par, suggesting that the enemy gave in without the need for a fight, a flattering historical inaccuracy which might not, perhaps, be expected in the annals portion of THD.

8. lo gsum is suggested after comparing the small remnant of the letter which precedes na' with other possible endings: gnyis would be the only other possibility but in other sections of the summary the time interval is either three or six years.

9. mkha's sregs must, I think, be a personal name; and it is no more than a coincidence that it should contain the syllable sregs (burn) when
Btsan-srong died by fire. *Khua* appears in several other names but I know no other appearance of *mkha’s; sregs* is found in, e.g., Rgyal-sum-sregs (THD p. 35) and Lho-’dus-sregs (THD p. 41). No surviving Tibetan clan name ends -ltä; there is a personal name Rgyal-ta (THD p. 63) but on the analogy of the bran (subject) Pa-tsab in line 5, zhal ta (servant) seems the best suggestion here.

10. The activity described as ‘khus, implying disaffection and treachery, is regularly followed by the death of the victim and there can be little doubt that Btsan-srong, of whom no more is heard, died by fire as a result of some such treachery. *dgung du gshegso* would fit the gap exactly; but if the expression “went to heaven by fire” seems strange, the alternative *tshigs nas bkrongso* (or *gum mo*) would be possible. I prefer *dgung du gshegso* which is the regular usage for the death of royalty.

**Translation**

Passages based on reconstruction of the text are underlined.

. . . turning treacherous; at Snying-drung . . . . . . . Myang Mang-po-rje Zhang brought about the submission of all the Sum-pa also.

Then after x years when Myang Zhang-snang became disloyal, his subject Pa-tsab betrayed him so that Zhang-snang was accused and put to death. Mkhar Sngur-ba was destroyed.

Then after x years the Btsan-po Khri Srong-rtsan set out on the north road and made war on the 'A-zha and China. Both China and the 'A-zha offered tribute.

Then after three years, when the Btsan-po, the elder brother Srong-rtsan, and the younger brother Btsan-srong were in contention, Mkha’s-sregs, the servant of the younger brother Btsan-srong, betrayed him and the younger brother died in his bed by fire at Gzen of Mnyal.

**Addendum**

The author wishes to make it clear that he has changed his view on the meaning of the fragment presented here, but nevertheless agreed to its inclusion in this collection (letters to the editor dated 9, 16 Nov. 1997).
Names and Titles in Early Tibetan Records

The most valuable sources of information about Tibetan names and titles in the eighth to ninth centuries are:

The first and third of the three bka' tshigs (edicts) quoted in the sixteenth-century Chos 'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba (Pell. T.), which can be accepted as copies of genuinely ancient documents. The edicts have been translated and transcribed by Tucci in TTK.

The names of Tibetan officials are recorded in a variety of forms. They can be written in extenso or abbreviated in different ways. In either case they usually contain elements the significance of which is quite well documented. One source of such documentation is the Lhasa Treaty Inscription of 821–2 which has the particular value of being bilingual. On that important occasion the appellations of the Tibetan ministers who witnessed the treaty were given in their fullest form; and it was stated at the beginning of the list that it contains the thabs dang mying rus of the witnesses.

Taking those terms in reverse order:

(1) *rus* signifies the clan or patrilineal family name. Many of these *rus* are frequently recorded, e.g., Khu; Mgar; Mgos; Ngan-lam; Rngegs; Cog-ro; Mchims; Gnubs; Sna-nam; Pho-yong; Bran-ka; Dba’s; 'Bring-yas; 'Bro; 'Brom; Myang; Tshes-pong. I reserve for a later occasion a study of the original location of the various *rus* and their individual part in Tibetan politics; but it appears that one group of families of central Tibetan origin, headed by the Dba’s, were in constant competition with families, of which 'Bro was the most prominent, who came from the border regions or beyond and who acquired influence in Tibet through the marriage of ladies of their clan to a Tibetan king.

(2) *mying* (ming) is the current word for a personal name. A list of *mying* in early use, with some comments on them, is given later.

(3) *thabs*, although unknown with that meaning in current Tibetan, clearly relates to rank or official title. It is found, rather obscurely, in TLTD II 361 and 370; and in REV, quite clearly, in the form *gral thabs*. The meaning is confirmed by the Chinese version of the Lhasa Treaty Inscription where, as Li has shown in TP XLIV, *thabs* is the equivalent of the Chinese *wei*, “position, rank, title”.

The *thabs* include a number of official posts whose function is reasonably clear and others more open to speculation. The general word for a minister is *blon*. The Chief Minister was known as *blon che*; and he had as colleagues several Great Ministers or *blon chen po* who are described in the Lhasa Treaty Inscription as *bka’ chen po la gtoogs pa* which I have translated as “privy to the great command”, and by Li as “participating in the deliberations of important state affairs”. Below these was a body of ordinary or lesser (*phal or phra*) ministers, described as *bka’ la gtoogs pa*; and at least one instance (TLTD II 47) is found of the term *bka’ blon*, which is still used in Tibet as a title of the *zhabz pad* or members of the *bka’ shag*.

Within those broad categories of greater and lesser, some ministers held titles describing their specific duties. In the higher rank are found a *ban de chen po*, Great Monk Minister (this post only appears in the later years of the royal period), and a *dmag dpon chen po*, Commander-in-Chief. In the lower grade some ministers are described as *nang blon* and others as *phyi blon*, probably referring to their duties respectively within Tibet at the king’s court and outside it on the frontiers or in occupied territory; of these the *nang blon* took precedence over the *phyi blon*.

Important posts, apparently connected with district administration, were those of the *brung pa* and the *mngan dpon*. The *brung pa*, whose history has been examined in detail by G. Uray in *Acta Orientalia Hungarica*, 1962, were closely linked with the organisation of Tibetan territory into *ru*. They cease to appear in the records after 745.

The *mngan dpon* appear to have been the administrative officers of districts, and the Lhasa Treaty Inscription indicates that they were connected
with other officers known as *khab so* whose duties may have been similar to those of the modern *rdzong dpon*. The *khud pa chen po* appears from the one surviving mention (THA p. 23) of this post to have been concerned with the receipt of property. Perhaps *khud pa*, explained by S.C. Das at p. 148 of his *Dictionary* as "anything sent; ... an article presented", is relevant. Another post appearing more frequently is that of *snam phyi pa* (Treaty Inscription; THD 106; TTK 103). This ranked third in the list of ordinary officials and preceded the military officers and officers of the Exterior. A group of fifteen *snam phyi pa* witnessed the third *bka' tshigs* quoted in TTK; their duties, therefore, seem to have been important and extensive. *Snam phyi* with the meaning "latrine" does not seem appropriate, for it is improbable that in seventh-century Tibet menial service around royal persons would have acquired the status of a formal privilege, as it did in the court of Louis XIV. The number of such officials also militates against any such interpretation.

Further posts which are frequently recorded are: the *bka' phrin blon* (Treaty Inscription; TLTD; LINV; REV) whose duties were perhaps similar to those of the present day *mgron gnyer* which include making known the orders of the ruler; the *rtsis pa* (Treaty Inscription; TLTD; REV) who can be assumed to have been the equivalent of the modern *rtsis dpon*, an officer responsible for the assessment of revenue and the keeping of revenue records; the *zhal ce pa* (Treaty Inscription; LINV; TLTD) who were judicial officers the name of whose post survives in the title of the code of laws attributed to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po — the *Zhal ce bcu gsum*. Another judicial officer, named only in the Zhol inscription and in the sixteenth-century *Chos 'byung* of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag, was the *yo 'gal 'chos pa*. According to reliable Tibetan informants the term implies mediation and reconciliation ('chos) of conflicting parties ('gal).

REV contains a long list of official posts in the Sha-cu (Tun-huang) region most of which do not appear in documents relating to central Tibet. Several of them — e.g. *ru dpon, khri dpon, stong dpon* — are based on the organisation by "horns", ten thousands and thousands, combining perhaps civil and military functions.

A general term for officers connected with military duties was *dgra blon* or *dmag dpon*; another seemingly military rank — *chibs dpon* — master of horse — survives as that of an officer of the Dalai Lama's retinue; the term *dbang po* also seems to have a military significance; and F. W. Thomas sees army rank in the word *stag*; but many of the instances he quotes are doubtful, although *stag so* in TLTD II 211 does appear to support his contention.

Official posts were divided into grades each with its special insignia consisting of ornaments and diplomas of different precious substances. In general the highest was turquoise, followed by gold, *'phra men*, silver, brass and copper (LINV 1071); but in THA p. 60 there is mention of *ke ke ru* as...
the insignia of an award of special merit, apparently higher even than turquoise. *Ke ke ru* is described in Jäschke's *Dictionary* as "a precious white stone"; perhaps it was jade or some hard stone. During recent road-making work near Rgya-mda' an ancient tomb was uncovered in which the remains of the dead were decorated with a circular medallion of turquoise; and a similar ornament is said to have been found much earlier in a tomb near Nag-chu-kha.

Some information about the grading and ornaments of Tibetan ministers is also found in the T'ang Annals (Hsin T'ang-shu). The Chief Minister is there called *lun ch'e* and his assistant *lun ch'e hu mang*. These two are further described as great and little *lun*. There is a Commander-in-Chief called *hsi pien ch'e pu*; a chief minister of the interior called *nang lun ch'e pu* or *lun mang jo*; an assistant called *nang lun mi ling pu* and a lesser one called *nang lun ch'ung*; a chief consulting minister — *yu han ch'e po* with assistants also designated *mi ling* and *ch'ung*. All the ministers taken together are described as *shang lun ch'e po t'u chu*. Their ceremonial ornaments are, in descending importance, of *se se*, gold, gilded silver and copper; they hang in large and small strings from the shoulder.

The above information can be generally reconciled with that from Tibetan sources; but the post of *lun ch'e hu mang* is not easily identified. 'Or-mang is the personal name of a Chief Minister who held office from 727 to c. 750; there may be confusion with that, or with the term *'og dpon* which is applied in THD 102 to an assistant under training with the Chief Minister. The words *mi ling* and *ch'ung* stand for 'bring and *chung*, "middle" and "small". *Hsi pien* is an unidentifiable term for a military officer. It might represent *srid dpon* (otherwise unknown) or, as suggested by Li Fang-kuei, it may stand for *spyan*, a title appearing in REV. *T'u chu*, as suggested by Li, may represent Tibetan *dgu* which may have either a plural force or its intrinsic meaning of "nine"; and it may be significant that in the Treaty Inscription the list of senior ministers contains exactly nine names, as does that in the Edict of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan — that of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan lists eight senior ministers. The Chinese records may, therefore, have preserved a trace of a Board of Nine Senior Ministers of which no mention has survived in Tibetan documents. From the list of ornaments, it would appear that *phra men* was gilded silver; but the Chinese list is shorter than the Tibetan and, on the analogy of *mu men*, a precious stone, I still have doubts whether *phra men* might not have been a variegated hard stone such as agate or onyx which has long been highly prized in Tibet.

I do not propose to examine the rather scanty evidence about the personal names of the Tibetan royal family or the regnal titles of the kings, which fall into a pattern of their own; but some other terms applied to important personages, and not designating specific official functions, may be mentioned. *Chen po*, "Great One", is sometimes used as a sort of title
(TLTD 97-8, 339); but this is rare and probably provincial. Rje blas, a term used of officials in high position, has caused some speculation. Thomas, although translating it in TLTD II as “Your Excellency”, later, and more satisfactorily, concluded that it means “succession, or successor in a post”.3

The title zhang, in certain clearly definable circumstances, signifies that the person so described or a member of his family was at some time in the relationship of maternal uncle to a king of Tibet. Families with this distinction, which figure prominently in early records, are Mchims,4 Sna-nam, 'Bro and Tshes-pong. From this title must be distinguished the term zhang lon (sic), which seems to be used as a general designation of ministers of all ranks and may therefore be the equivalent of the Chinese shang, as in shang shu, “head of an office”.5

Another zhang relationship was that described as zhang dbon, “uncle and nephew”, which existed between the emperor of China and the king of Tibet as the result of the marriage of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, and later of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan, to Chinese princesses. There was a similar relationship between Tibetan kings, as zhang, and the ‘A-zha chiefs, as dbon, through the marriage in 689 of the Tibetan princess Khri-bangs to the ‘A-zha ruler. Other Tibetan princesses also married neighbouring rulers — in 671 a Zhang-zhung prince; in 736 a Khagan of the Dur-gyis (Turgesh); and in 740 the Bru-zha-rje. None of those rulers is specifically mentioned as dbon, nor are they recorded as rgyal phran — “vassals”, although at some times Bru-zha and parts of Zhang-zhung may well have been claimed as tributary. The king of Nanchao, at times a powerful ally, at others a formidable enemy of the Tibetans, was accorded the title of Btsan-po-gcung6 — the Younger Brother King; and it is possible that when Nepal was under Tibetan domination their king held the title of Btsan-po-po-gcen7 — the Elder Brother King. But by the time of the edicts of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan and Khri Lde-srong-brtsan the only princes to be mentioned as rgyal phran are the Dbon 'A-zha-rje whose name is given as Dud-kyi-bul Zi-khud Bor-ma-ga Tho-yo-gon Kha-gan,8 the Rkong-dkar-po Mang-po-rje, the head of a princely family of Rkong-po who were ancient congeners of the Tibetan royal family;9 and the Myang-btsun Khri-bo, the head of a Myang principality, which may have been the heritage of the great minister Myang Mang-po-rje Zhang-snang who was all-powerful in the early days of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po and was disgraced and executed in about 636.10

Other personages who may have been included among the rgyal phran can be seen in documents in TLTD and LINV relating to the administration of the border regions. The term rtse rje appears frequently, sometimes with a territorial label, e.g. the rtse rje of Sha-cu (Tun-huang); of Ka-dag; of Nob-chen (Greater Lob-nor); of Nob-chung; others are known by names, e.g. rtse rje Khrom-bzher Bzang-khong; rtse rje Ju-cug; and one is described as to dog rtse rje. That title to dog, which also appears frequently and is found
in THD, is related by Thomas to the Turkic tu tuq; another title co bo (jo bo; zho co; jo cho, etc.) is related to the Kharoshti cojho; and a ma ca, a title used in Khotan, is identified as representing the Sanskrit amatyā. The title ra sang rje is also found in connection with distinctly non-Tibetan, possibly Zhang-zhung, names — Rid-stag-rhya and Spung-rhye-rhya; and the title nang rje po, although similar in appearance to the well-documented Tibetan rank of nang blon, may have had a special local significance. There is scope for further study of the distribution of these non-Tibetan forms.

Returning to the mying: it has been surmised that some frequently recurring elements in Tibetan names, apart from those identifiable as thabs and rus, signify some sort of rank or title. Bacot, etc., have translated the names of Khri-sum-rje Rtsan-bzher and ‘Bal Skye-zang Ldong-tshab as “le bzher Khri Sum Rje Rtsang de Dba’s” and “Bal Skye Zang, le Tshab de Ldong”; and it is noted there that bzher means “haut fonctionnaire”. This is apparently mere guesswork; and a key to the significance of such syllables is found in three early documents — LINV 1240, 1415, and TLTD II p. 370 B — which seem to have been overlooked. Taking the first and last as examples, they read:

(1) rus ni ‘brom / mkhan ni mdo bzher / mying ni ‘jong bu / rus ni ‘brung yas / mkhan ni rgyal gzigs / (quotation left incomplete).

(2) rus ni schu myes / mkhan ni brgyal gzigs / mying ni nya slebs / rus ni ‘gra had / mkhan ni lang skyes / mying ni don rtse / rus ni ‘bre / mkhan ni . . . (document damaged).

The important element in each case is the word mkhan, which seems to signify some sort of title by which the person was known. Mkhān with that specific meaning is not current in Tibetan today but is familiar as a suffix (like the Hindi wala) indicating a man’s skill or profession — what he knows, and also what he is doing, e.g. shing mkhan, a carpenter; mdza mkhan, a potter; ‘gro mkhan, one who is going; bsad mkhan, one who has killed. Jāschke, in his Dictionary — followed as usual by Das — states that this suffix can also be used in a passive sense, e.g. sad khan ni lug, “the sheep which was killed”. Such a use would be in line with the suggestion that ntkhari in the old documents could mean how a man was known; but well-educated Tibetans have denied that such a form is permissible in Tibetan today and I cannot recall any instances in classical Tibetan. Jāschke’s example is attributed to western Tibet; and even if the practice is not now known in central Tibet, the step between the two forms is perhaps not a very long one.

At all events, it is possible in the light of the two passages quoted above to analyse official names and titles even further, in terms of thabs, rus and mying. For example: (1) Dba’s Khri-sum-rje Rtsan-bzher. His rus is Dba’s; his mkhan Khri-sum-rje; his mying Rtsan-bzher. (2) ‘Bal Skye-zang Ldong-tshab: his rus is ‘Bal; his mkhan Skye-zang; his mying Ldong-tshab. (3) Taking a
name from the Treaty Inscription, Nang-blon Mchims-zhang Rgyal-bzher Kho-ne-brtsan. His thabs is Nang-blon; his rus, Mchims; he is zhang through relationship with the royal family; his mkhan is Rgyal-bzher; his mying, Kho-ne-brtsan. (4) A name from THD, Blon-che Dba’s Stag-sgra Khong-lod. His thabs is Blon-che; his rus, Dba’s; his mkhan, Stag-sgra; his mying, Khong-lod.

Abbreviations of the names of officials take different forms in different documents but generally in each document a consistent practice is adopted. In THD two systems are used. For example: (1) the full name and title of Blon-che Dba’s Khri-gzigs Zhang-nyen is abbreviated to Blon-che Khri-gzigs — i.e. thabs + mkhan; and (2) when a rus is mentioned the mying is used and not the mkhan, e.g. Mgar Stong-rtsan Yul-zung, Dba’s Mang-po-rje Putshab and Cog-ro Snya Zing-kong appear as Mgar Yul-zung, Dba’s Pu-tshab, and Cog-ro Zing-kong respectively. These systems are followed in the majority of the documents in TLTD and LINV but two other systems also are found there, although in fewer instances than (1) and (2) above. They are: (3) some officials are described by their thabs, mkhan and mying but their rus is omitted. There is also an example of this in the Zhwa’i Lhakhang inscriptions where a member of the Myang rus is described as Blon Snang-bzang ’Dus-khong. In system (4) both thabs and rus are omitted and we find such names as Rgyal-bzher Legs-tshan — mkhan and mying only. Yet a further two systems appear in the edicts from Pell. T. which, it may be remembered, are not original documents. In the third edict there are a few instances of system (2), e.g. Cog-ro Khyi-btsan and Khu Mye-gzigs. These are rus + mying; but the greater number of the abbreviations are in the form (5) rus + thabs + mying, e.g. Cog-ro Blon Gung-kong. Persons who are zhang are described in a different manner from that used in the Treaty inscription. There the practice is Mchims-zhang, etc., etc.; in the edict the form is Zhang-mchims, etc., etc. The first edict produces system (6) using the thabs and the mying only, e.g. Blon Ngan-lam Stag-sgra Klu-gong is abbreviated to Blon Klu-gong; and in this edict zhang are also described by their mying only, e.g. Zhang Legs-’dus. This usage may perhaps also be found in THD where the names Zhang Rgya-sto and Zhang Tre-gong look more like mying than mkhan; but there is also an instance there of the name Zhang Btsan-to-re which is an established mkhan.

The forms of abbreviation are, therefore, numerous; but on the available evidence the most common system is (1), i.e. thabs + mkhan. The existence of a rus + mying abbreviation, however, makes it impossible to say with certainty whether all nobles possessed a mkhan: but as there are examples where the names of persons known to have possessed a mkhan are abbreviated to rus + ming, and as a very large number of mkhan existed — lists are given below — it seems probable that all nobles who attained ministerial rank were known by a mkhan. It seems equally probable that ordinary people did not have a mkhan. LINV 2169, for example, refers to
persons only by their *rus* and *mying*; and many documents in TLTD and LINV relate to persons who can be seen from the context to have been farmers, soldiers, workmen and ordinary citizens. The names usually consist of two syllables only, and many of them can be shown from established examples to be *mying*; the form of others differs from the usual mould of a *mkhan*, as can be seen from the lists which follow. Many of the names are prefixed by a *rus*, usually differing from the well-established *rus* of the Tibetan nobility and in many cases of non-Tibetan appearance. This is not surprising as the documents originate in the border regions and the *rus* fall into distinctive groups in the different regions. From Sha-cu (Tun-huang) there are such family, clan or racial names as 'Im; Hong; Le; Le'u; K'eu. The usual prefix for names from Khotan is Li and from the T'uyūhun, 'A-zha. The *rus* Ngan does not appear often but may perhaps refer to people of Sogdian origin. Similarly the personal names fall into distinctive groups. From Sha-cu are found, for example: Le-shing; P'eu-p'eu; Hyan-ce; 'Im-'bye Le'u; Wang-kun-tse. From Nob (Lop-nor): Spong-rang-slong; Nga-srong; Lbeg-ma; Nung-zul; Nir-sto. From Li (Khotan): Ku-zu; Ye-ye; Shi-nir; Gu-dod; Bu-du. Lists of such names have been collected by Thomas and can be seen in TLTD II.

Although it is not intended to examine in any detail names other than those of lay officials, it may be noted that the Tibetan monastic names which make their appearance towards the end of this period follow their own line, drawing on the Buddhist religious vocabulary, e.g. Ting-nge-'dzin bzang-po; Dga'-ldan byang-chub; Rdo-je rgyal-po; Dpal-gyi shes-rab; Byang-chub bkra-shis; Don-grub; Ye-shes; etc.

To conclude this study I have extracted lists to show the nature of the *mkhan* and *mying*. The lists, which are not intended to be a full catalogue, are in two parts; the first [A] contains examples established by their appearance in names given in extenso, the second [B] contains *mkhan* and *mying* which are found in close association with established examples and show a similar character. They may, therefore, be assumed to be respectively *mkhan* or *mying*.

**Mkhan**

[A] Klu-bzher; Klu-bzang; Skye-(Skyes)-bzang; Khri-gang; Khri-snya; Khri-snyan; Khri-mnyen; Khri-mnyyes; Khri-do-re; Khri-'bring; Khri-btsan; Khri-gzu; Khri-gzigs; Khri-bzang; Khri-sum-rje; Khri-sum-bzher; Khrom-bzher; Glu-bzang; Dge-bzher; Rgyal-sgra; Rgyal-nyen; Rgal-ta; Rgyal-to-re; Rgyal-stong; Rgyal-tsha; Rgyal-tshang; Rgyal-bzher; Rgyal-gzigs, Rgyal-bzang; Rgyal-legs; Chung-bzang; Snya-do-re; Snya-brtsan; Snya-bzher; Snyan-to-re; Stag-gu; Stag-sgra; Stag-rma; Stag-bzher;
Stag-gzigs; Ston-nya; Ston-re; Ston-rtsan; Brtan-sgra; Brtan-bzher; Mdo-bzher; Ldon-bzang; Snang-to-re; Snang-bzher; Snang-bzang; Dpal-bzher; 'Bring-to-re; 'Bring-po; 'Bring-rtsan; Mang-rtse; Mang-nyen; Mang-po-rtse; Mang-bzher; Mang-rtsan; Mang-zham; Smo-to-re; Btsan-sgra; Btsan-to-re; Brtsan-nyen; Brtsan-bzher; Zha-nga; G.yu-legs; Legs-snyan; Legs-to-re; Legs-bzher; Legs-sum-rtse; Lha-bzher; Lha-bzang.

[B] Klu-sgra; Klu-mnyen; Klu-gzigs; Khi-dog-rtse; Khi-bzher; Glu-bzher; Dge-bzhang; Rgyal-sgra; Rgyal-tshan; Stag-po-rtse; Stag-bzang; Stag-sum-rtse; Stag-sum-bzher; Brtan-bzher; Mdo-sgra; Mdo-bzang; Dpal-bzang; Dpal-sum-rtse; 'Phan-po-rtse; 'Phan-bzher; Byang-bzher; Mang-po-brtsan; Mang-zigs; Rma-sgra; Rma-bzher; Gtsug-btsan; Gtsug-bzher; Btsan-bzher; Btsan-zigs; Btsan-bzang; Rtsang-bzher; Mtshan-bzher; Mtsho-bzher; Zhang-brtan; Zhang-bzang; Zla-bzher; Zla-bzang; Gzu-sgra; G.yu-sgra; G.yu-rmang; G.yu-bzher; Legs-sgra; Legs-bzang; Lha-dpal.

Mying

[A] Klu-gong; Klu-dpal; Skar-kong; Skyi-zung; Kha-ce; Khar-tsi; Khong-ge; Khong-sto; Khong-zung; Khong-lod; Khyi-chung; Khyi-ma; Re-dod; Khrigong; Khrig-da; Khrig-slebs; Gung-rtong; Dge-tshugs; Rgan-kol; Rgya-gong; Rgyal-kong; Rgyal-sum-gzigs; Rgyal-slebs; Sngo-btsan; Rje-gol; Rje-chung; Rje-tshang; Nya-sto; Mnyen-lod; Stag-skyes; Stag-snyan; Stag-brtsan; Stag-tshab; Stag-lod; Brtan-kong; Brtan-sgra; Mdo-bzang; Mdo-lod; 'Dam-kong; 'Dus-kong; 'Dus-dpal; Rdog-rtse; Ldon-tshab; Ldon-zhi; Ldom-bu; Ne-stang; Ne-brtsan; Ne-shags; Gnak-kong; Dpal-'dus; Spe-brtsan; Speg-lha; Spo-skyes; Phes-po; 'Phan-gang; Byin-byin; Sbur-cung; Sbeg-chung; Mon-chung; Mon-tshan; Myes-sngag; Myes-rma; Rman-chung; Smon-bzang; Smon-rtse; Btsan-kong; Btsan-'brod; Zhang-snang; Zhang-yen; Bzhi-brtsan; Zu-brtsan; Zin-kong; Zla-gong; Bzang-kong; 'Or-mang; Ya-sto; Yab-lag; G.yu-gong; G.yu-bzang; Ram-shags; Ri-tshab; Ri-zung; Le-gong; Legs-'dus; Legs-po; Legs-tshan; Legs-gzigs; Shu-steng; Sum-sgrang; Gsas-mthong; Lha-sgra; Lha-mthong; Lha-bo-bzang; Lha-zung; Lha-lod; Lhas-byin; Lho-gong; Hab-ken.

[B] Klu-rtong; Klu-rma; Klu-brtsan; Khyi-bu; Khiy-ma-re; Khi-legs; Stag-chung; Stag-legs; Dge-legs; Tre-gong; Thom-po; 'Dus-dpal; 'Dus-rma; 'Dus-tshan; Ldon-gang; Dpal-stong; Spe-rma; Gtsug-legs; Btsan-zig; Rtsang-brtan; Btsan-legs; Gsas-sto; Gsas-bzang; Gsas-slebs; Lha-skyes; Lha-gong; Lha-'bring-brtsan; Lha-'brug-brtsan; Lha-legs.

The general appearance of the mkhan and mying can be seen from the above lists. Although most of the components are common to both, certain syllables occur far more frequently — though not exclusively — in one
group or another. In the examples I have collected *bzher* is almost exclusive to the *mkhan*; while *slebs*, *legs* and *kong*, as final syllables, are exclusive to the *mying*. The instances where one pair of syllables appears to be used as either a *mkhan* or a *mying* are not a large proportion of the available material. Uncertainty on this point is increased by the apparently indiscriminate use of either a *mkhan* or a *mying* after the title *zhang*; and perhaps also personages of border clans — e.g. those described as *jo co* — may not always have possessed a *mkhan*. Ordinary people on the border may have taken as personal names forms used in Tibet itself only as *mkhan*. In general one can detect a characteristic pattern in both *mkhan* and *mying*; and further research might remove doubt about the equivocal examples.

The same *mkhan* occurs in more than one family; and although some components appear rather frequently in certain *rus* — e.g. many Dba’s names contain the syllable *bzher* — none is exclusive to any particular *rus*. More obviously, many people shared the same *mying*. Here, too, some syllables recur in particular noble families, e.g. many Cog-ro names end in *kong*. That syllable is not exclusive to Cog-ro, nor is it found in all their names; but it does seem to be a frequent part of names from *rus* connected with the border regions and this may be significant.

Some *mkhan* and *mying* can be translated after a fashion: Stag-sgra, ‘Tiger Voice’; Stag-gzigs, “Tiger Look”; Khri-sum-rje, “Lord of Three Thrones”; Lha-bzang, “Excellent Deity”; Stag-tshab, “As Good As a Tiger”; Smob-dtsan, “Powerful Prayer”; Lhas-byin, “Blessed by God”; and so on. The translation of other syllables — e.g. the frequent *bzher* — is not clear; but it is not my intention to speculate on their meaning here. Generally the *mkhan* appear more grandiose and complimentary than the *mying*. The existence of so large a number of *mkhan* excludes the probability that they were systematic titles (though an exception might be made for Mang-po-rje), and the conclusion is that *mkhan* was a sort of sobriquet or name of honour conferred on persons of noble birth or high rank.

**Notes**


2. There are three instances in THD of the proclamation of the name of a king: Khri ’Dus-rong in 685 at the age of nine; Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan in 712 at the age of eight, and Khri Srong-lde-brtsan in 756 at the age of thirteen. Of these the original name of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan is recorded — viz. Rgyal Gtsug-ru.

3. See Zhol Inscription S. Lines 3 and 4; TLTD 22-5, 59, 302, 339, 404. Of these TLTD 22–5 is the most illuminating: *bdag cag pha tshan spyi'i gnang ba'i rje blas ni ma lags / bdag gi pha ma ko can sgos zha sha phul ba'i rje blas 'dir bdag cag led kong gi bu tsha rngo thog las bsko bar . . .* “That rje blas (right to office) which our father’s family
regularly enjoyed, does not (now) exist. The *rje blas* earned by the performance of services especially by our father Ma-ko-can ... let one from the descendants of our Led-kong who is capable be appointed to that *rje blas*.

4. A branch of Mchims seems to have been known as Mchims-rgyal; see the well attested Mchims-rgyal Rgyal-gzigs Shu-steng (Zhol and THD), also in the third edict in TTK: Mchims-rgyal Btsan-bzher Legs-gzigs; Mchims-rgyal Srong-snya Mon-btsan; Mchims-rgyal Stag-bzher. Rgyal-gzigs, Btshan-bzher and Stag-bzher, without a prefixed Rgyal, are known *mkhan*. That prefix does not appear in the names of other *zhang* who are identified as belonging to the Mchims *rus*.

5. See TTK, p. 58. Tucci does not, however, notice the unexplained spelling *lon* which is most frequent in this term. *Zhang blon* does appear in LINV 1166: Zhang-blon chen-po Zhang Khri-sum-rje; in TLTD II 222 Zhang-blon Khri-bzher; also in LINV 981 and TLTD II 148. But for *zhang lon* see LINV 113, 1155, 1083; REV passim; TLTD II 9, 21, 137, and a dozen other instances. To these can be added ten instances of the form *zhang lon* chen po and some significant examples, e.g. 139 and 153, where a distinction is made between *lon* and *blon*, viz., Zhang-lon chen-po Blon Dge-bzang. The *zhang lon* che phra; and chabs srid kyi blon po rnam dang *zhang lon che phra* are recorded as witnesses to a decree in the Zhwa'i Lha-khang inscription. In the Zhol inscription it seems that a person not related to the royal family by marriage could be given the rank of *zhang lon*. It may also be noted that no examples are found of, e.g., *lon che, nang lon, phyi lon*, etc.

6. THD records relations between Tibet and 'Jang (Nanchao) as early as 703 in the reign of 'Dus-srong. In the next reign Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan, who had a wife from 'Jang, received an envoy from the Mywa — a part of the Nanchao kingdom. He is described in THD as having given the title *btsan po gcung* to the Nanchao ruler, who is named Kag-la-bong (KO Lo Feng c. 768-79). This passage has been mistranslated by the editors on p. 150. Collation of information on Nanchao from Tibetan and Chinese sources needs to be undertaken. For the latter, see W. Stott in TP 1963, where earlier works both in French, English and Chinese are cited.

7. See THD p. 19(46) relating to the year 707: pong lag rang du *btsan po gcen lha bal pho rgyal sa nas phab* / A rebellion in Nepal about this time is recorded in the T'ang Annals; and if the reading is *lho bal* (as the editors seem to have taken it in their translation at pp. 40-1), it seems that the Nepalese king was described as *btsan po gcen*, "the elder brother king."

8. The 'A-zha were conquered by the Tibetans in the time of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po; his son Gung-srong married an 'A-zha princess. When the 'A-zha later tried to defect to China the Tibetans in fury totally defeated them (670). Some, under a family called Mou-jong, fled east and were settled by the Chinese around Liang-chou. The rest remained as vassals of Tibet. The marriage of princess Khri-bangs to the 'A-zha chief in 689 established the *zhang dbon* relationship which is referred to in THD p. 48: *bon 'a zha rje dang / zhang dbon gdan chom*. The editors, reading *dpun*, quite miss the mark by translating "Bon chef de 'A Zha fut nommé zhang dpon gdan tshom". Thomas, TLTD II pt. 6, reading *dbon*, gets nearer: "The 'Bon 'A-zha chief and the uncle (nephew?) resigned (exchanged?) their posts."; but the point is that on the king's visit, which was expressly to assert his authority, he and the 'A-zha chief were established in their proper places as Uncle and Nephew.

The matter is complicated by frequent references to the 'Bon 'A-zha (which must be distinguished from *blon*), who seem to have been a tribe or section of
the 'A-zha. Perhaps the 'A-zha chief was both a 'Bon 'A-zha as well as being dbon
to the Tibetan king; but the existence of such similar words may have caused con-
fusion even in early days. There is no mention of 'Bon 'A-zha in Tibetan records
until the 'Bon Da-rgyal in 675. This name is represented in the T'ang Annals as P'en-
ta-yen, and the holder was a valiant ally of the Tibetans. Da-rgyal seems to be a
princely title and other Da-rgyal, not described as 'Bon, are mentioned before 675.
E. H. Parker in A Thousand Years of the Tartars, p. 110, says that the T'uyiihun who
fled to China (670) became known as Hwun. Perhaps Sinologists can find a key
there, or in the name Mou-jong.

10. In JRAS 1952 (Zhwa'i Lha-khang) I suggested placing Myang in the Rgyal-
rtse Nyang(Myang-)chu region; but I now think it far more probable that the home
of the Myang family was in and to the west of the headwaters of the Myang-chu
of Rkong-po — now known as the Rgya-mda’ or Kam-chu. The legend of Dri-gum
Btsan-po, although claimed in recent times for the Rgyal-rtse valley, is properly con-
nected — as I am assured by several learned Tibetans — with the lower course of
the Rkong-po Myang-chu. The site of Zhwa'i Lha-khang, where a leading member
of the Myang family built a chapel, also points towards Rkong-po.

11. The character which is most naturally represented in Tibetan, as in French, as
ngan, is one of several names indicating Sogdian origin. There were colonies of
Sogdians in Eastern Central Asia from Hami and Lop-nor to the Ordos: see J. R.
Hamilton, Les Oughoures; Li Fang-kuei, "Sog", Central Asiatic Journal, 1957; E.
Pulleyblank, TP, xli, 1952. Perhaps the origin of Ngan-lam Stag-sgra Klukhong may
be sought there. The Zhol Inscription suggests that his family had newly come to
prominence in Tibet. Might he have been not only a contemporary but also a fel-
low countryman of An Lu-shan whose Sogdian origin and whose name, Rokshan,
have been established by Pulleyblank in "The Background to the Rebellion of An
Lu Shan"?

12. I note examples I have detected; there may well be several more.

(1) Klubzer is found in REV as apparently a nkhan — Blon Klubzer Sngo-
btsan; but in TTK third edict, where many other names are quoted with an
established mying, it appears as Le'u-blon Klubzer; and in TLTD II the name ap-
pears without any title and therefore looks like a mying.

(2) Legs-bzang I.NV 1230 and TLTD II 138 have Blon Legs-bzang — a usual
nkhan form. TLTD II 20 has Zhang Legs-bzang which is equivocal; but in LINV 1094,
1127 and 1175 it appears to be a mying.

(3) Khri-sgra is an established nkhan in THD pp. 65, 66; also in TTK third edict
but in TLTD II 50 it seems to be a mying.

(4) Stag-bzang is quoted by Thomas in TLTD III from a Miran document in the
name Stag-bzang Khri-dpal; there are several instances in TLTD II of Blon Stag-bzang
— the usual nkhan form; but in LINV 540 it is found with what looks like a non-
Tibetan rul name — 'Bi Stag-bzang — apparently as a mying.

(5) Mdo-bzher, described as a nkhan in LINV 1240, appears in LINV 1078 ap-
parently as a mying — Shag Mdo-bzher.

13. Rkong-dkar-po Mang-po-rje is an attested rgyal phran (JRAS 1954 and TTK
third edict). The Da-rgyal Mang-po-rje appears to have been an 'A-zha prince. The
third edict mentions a Myang rgyal phran; the great minister of Srong-brtsan Sgam-
po, whose father led the movement which put Srong-brtsan's grand-father in power,
is called Myang Mang-po-rje Zhang-snang. His family may have been awarded the status of *rgyal phran* for this service. Mang-po-rje is also found as part of the names of persons of special distinction from the Mgar, Khu, Dba’s and Cog-ro *rus*; but evidence is not conclusive.
Chis is not found in the dictionaries of Csoma de Körös, Jäschke, Das, Desgodins, Chos-grags or L. S. Dagyab (Brag-g.yab Rin-po-che). Its occurrence in a manuscript from Tun-huang is examined by Michel Soymié in a note at p. 321 of his article in Journal Asiatique, ccxlii (1954) entitled “L’entretien de Confucius et de Hiang-T’o”. Soymié shows that where one manuscript reads ‘bangs gi chis myi byed another has ‘bangs gi khod myi snyoms, which he interprets as referring to the removal of inequalities (cf. Jäschke, p. 56, ‘khod). In a Chinese version of the story the equivalent phrase means “looking after the affairs of the subjects”. Soymié cites one more instance of chis in a document from Tun-huang, No. 1078b in Marcelle Lalou’s Inventaire des manuscrits tibétains de Touen-houang conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale (LINV), which has the phrase ‘bangs gyi chis byyi.

The word is not uncommon in early documents and in the following examples, of which my translation is tentative, it appears to describe the treatment of subjects by those in authority. It is found twice at least in LINV 1283: chis ma khyab pa myed par bya ba’i rigso, “it is the way of doing away with the failure to extend proper attention to public affairs”; and chis ’jams zhing legs pa ma yin gyi / ’khrug pa yin no, “when there is no well-being owing to a mild administration of affairs, there is a state of disturbance”. A similar expression is seen in Documents de Touen-houang relatifs à l’histoire du Tibet by Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint, p. 113: rjed gshin chis ’jamste / myi yongs kyis skyid do, “The reverence (of the people for the ruler) being excellent and the administration (of the affairs of the people) being mild, all men were happy”. Other instances may await discovery in unpublished documents in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris.

Chis appears, without doubt, in two ninth-century inscriptions on stone pillars: the Skar-cung pillar at Ra-ma-sgang has khyin yig gi ngo nang las ’byung ba bzhin du chis mdzad do, “let due attention be given in accordance

with the principal clause of the list of households”; and the Lcang-bu pillar at Mtshur-phu has chis kyang / bla nas mdzad par / bka’s gnang, “it was ordered that due attention also should be given by the superior authority”.

Another example of chis is, perhaps, to be found in l.10 of the inscription on the east face of the Treaty Pillar at Lhasa. Li Fangkuei, in his edition in T’oung Pao 1955, reads nang gi tshis sbyard. H. Sato in his Kyoto edition of 1949 and I, in my Ancient Historical Edicts at Lhasa (Royal Asiatic Society Prize Publication 1952), prefer chis. Li may have been influenced by the absence of chis from dictionaries and the frequent occurrence of tshis in historical works after the Phyil dar — the restoration of religion in the tenth century. Had the occurrence in the Treaty Inscription been unique, the argument for tshis would have appeared stronger; but while the examples quoted above show chis to have been far from rare, I have not so far traced tshis in any document of the eighth and ninth centuries.

On the other hand, dictionaries and the works of later historians contain many instances of tshis but none of chis. Looking first at dictionaries: Jäschke, p. 448, referring to the Mi la’i mgur ‘bum and the Thar rgyan, reasonably sees tshis as a secondary form of rtsis which has shades of meaning from “numeration” through “calculation” to “estimation” (p. 439). Desgodins, p. 807, has a similar finding but gives no references. Das, p. 1027, quotes Jäschke’s opinion and in his example tshis su = grogs su, “in friendship”, he apparently picks up the meaning of rtsis as “estimation, regard”. He also cites tshis = so nam gyi las but his later entry at p. 1282, so tshis or so tshigs ... “husbandry”, suggests that he may be putting the cart before the horse in equating tshis, by itself, with “farming”.

Chos-grags, although having no separate entry for tshis, records so tshis which he equates with ‘tsho tshis and ‘tsho thabs (attention to livelihood, means of livelihood). Similarly Dagyab, who explains tshis: gra sgrigs ’dun ma / spyi tshis (concerned with making arrangements: public affairs?), records so tshis or so tshigs = ‘tsho thabs kyi bya spyi’i ming dang so nam la’ang (a general term for means of livelihood; also husbandry). He also has ‘tsho tshis = ‘tsho thabs. According to an oral communication from Zurkhang Shappé, Tibetan officials on appointment are formally instructed to look after the ‘tsho tshis of their subjects.

There are frequent instances of tshis in Tibetan historical works. The Blon po bka’ thang (fourteenth century) follows sections on chos khrims and rgyal khrims — religious law and royal law — with a parallel passage (fo. 12) on spyi tshis which is equated with yul khrims — the law of the country, popular law — and which amounts to a summary of the habits and failings to which the common man is prone and advice to officials to treat them with benevolent justice. In Sba bzhed, which contains much early material, tshis appears several times: see the edition by Professor R. A. Stein in Publications de l’Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, Paris 1961, pp. 66, 68, 69,
74, 77. Two of those passages which illustrate the meaning well are: p. 68, rgyal bu sku nar ma son te 'bangs gyi tshis mi 'ong bas, “because there is no attention to the affairs of the people owing to the prince being a minor”; and p. 69, rgyal bu dbang skur la ... 'bangs gyi tshis bgyi bar gsol bas, “having petitioned that power be given to the prince and the affairs of the people be attended to”. The sixteenth-century Chos 'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba, vol. Ja fo. 21b has nang gi tshis mdzad 'bangs 'khor skyong, “attend to the affairs of the interior and protect the people”; fo. 22b, ... phyi nang gi / tshis dang so nam yal bar 'chor, “foreign and domestic affairs and husbandry go to the bad”; and fo. 78a, 'bangs bde ba'i tshis ... dang sbyar na, “attending to matters concerning the happiness of the people”. That last example recalls nang gi chis (tshis) sbyard quoted above from the ninth-century Treaty Inscription at Lhasa.

The context in all those passages is the proper management of the affairs of the subjects by those in authority; and the general similarity in meaning of tshis and chis suggests an etymological connection between them. A difficulty there has been explained to me by Walter Simon, whose generous advice I have had in preparing this note. Accepting tshis as a later, aspirated variation of rtsis, chis could be seen only as a derivation, still later, from tshis through palatalization. The literary evidence recorded above points in the opposite direction and suggests that chis was in use earlier than tshis and that it may have become unfamiliar or obsolete and been replaced by tshis in the development of an historical literature. If that is so, the origin of chis must be sought elsewhere.

Note

Further Fragments from Tun-huang

In "A Fragment from Tun-huang" (ch. 2 above) I examined a passage omitted from the end of the Annals section of *Documents de Touen-houang relatifs à l'histoire du Tibet*, by Baco, Thomas and Toussaint, 1946 (THD). The passages to which I now draw attention come from the beginning of the short section on Ancient Principalities, etc. (pp. 80–2) and from the end of the Chronicle (p. 122). These fragments provoke more questions than they answer; but the historical and semi-historical documents from Tun-huang are of such rare value that every available sentence deserves to be studied.

The editors of THD state that the five lines which they omit from the beginning of the Principalities section are much damaged and are separated from the main body of the text by a considerable interval. Marcelle Lalou transliterated three of the lines in no. 1286 of her *Inventaire des manuscrits tibétains de Touen-houang conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale* (LINV) and quoted them at p. 161 of an article in *Journal Asiatique* 1959 (JA). As I have no photographic or other copy of the manuscript, I can refer at present to those three lines only. The Tibetan text as given by Lalou is as follows; the attempted translation is mine.

(1) // gna gnyen mtha’ bzhi’i rabs la // lde’i gangs bar na / lde za’ gang rag ma / skyi la mda’ na / skyi za’i ‘d . . . (2) . . . // dags kyi bshen mkhar na / dags za’i gyim pang ma’// mchims yul gyi dngul khur na / mchims . . . (3) sha tshang ma’ // gnyen ni mtha’ bzhi / / chab ni

"As for the lineage of those who of old were associates on the four borders; in the midst of the snows of the Lde, the Lde lady Gang-rag-ma; in the valley of Skyi, the Skyi lady ‘D...; in Bshen-mkhar of Dags, the Dags lady Gyim-pang-ma; in Dngul-khur of the Mchims

country, the Mchims lady Sha-tshang-ma. As for the associates on the four borders, their dominion ..."

The several different versions of the lists of principalities bordering on the territory of the Tibetan kings have been analysed by Lalou among her many memorable contributions to the study of the Tun-huang documents (JA 1965); I am concerned here only with some of the problems which this small fragment adds to an already complicated subject.

In some of the lists the princes, their capitals, consorts and ministers are variously named. This fragment, which perhaps has no direct connection with the remainder of the manuscript reproduced at pp. 80-2 of THD, mentions only the consorts and their residences. The form za'i, rather than za, may strictly mean "in the capacity of consort", but I have translated it simply as though it were za.

Lde is one of the dynastic names of the kings of Tibet whose seat was in the Yar-lung valley. The lady Gang-rag-ma does not figure in any of Lalou's lists but a Lde-za Gag-kar is named in LINV 1039 and a lord of Ga-gar-ltangs in Yar-lung is named in LINV 1285 which Lalou has edited in JA 1959.

The lady of Skyi, whose name is effaced here, appears in other lists simply as skyi bdag gi btsun mo — the queen of the master of Skyi. The Mchims lady Sha-tshang-ma is named in LIN, 1039, but the place Dngul-khur (Load of Silver), which recalls Dngul-mkhar in Zhang-zhung, is not mentioned elsewhere.

Dags has been left for special mention. Bshen-mkhar appears to be a place name; but in other lists the capital of Dags is called Shing-nad, Shing-nag or Gru-bzhi. The name of the lady, here given as Gyim-pang, appears in other lists as Khung-phangs. The reading Gyim turns one's thoughts to two documents in Ancient Folk-Literature from North-Eastern Tibet by F.W. Thomas (AFL, pp. 16-19, 40-1) in which there are lengthy but obscure stories about a Gyim-po family. Where they lived is not clear but since names in the documents are given both in "the language of Spu-rgyal Tibet" and in "the language of Nam-pa" the Gyim-po must have had close connection with those two regions. Nam, which Thomas placed to the south-east of the Kokonor region, has also been identified with the Nan-chao kingdom (R.A. Stein, "Deux Notules," JA 1963, note p. 335). That is a long way from Dags-po; but the ruler may well have been supposed to have taken his consort from some other country. Gyim-po is also mentioned in a fragmentary inscription on the remains of a stone pillar from a site near Zhwa'i Lha-khang which was the territory of the Myang clan (JRAS April 1953 pp. 10–11). There it is associated with ancestral tribal names connected with Eastern Tibet — Cho-phyi; Mda'; Tse; and Phyug-po (see AFL pp. 6, 30, 40; and R.A. Stein, Les tribus anciennes des marches sino-tibétains, Paris 1959, pp. 5, 12, 16, 57).
Although the lists of principalities contain at least one name — viz. Lig Snya-shur — which it appears possible to place approximately in the early seventh century, other names go back to the legendary past and there is no way of fixing the lists in any particular period. That applies to the lady Gyim-pang in the fragment; but the syllable Gyim appears also in the names of persons who can be assigned to a historical setting. For example, Spug Gyim-tang Rmang-bu was a vassal of Nag-seng of Tshes-pong, one of the nobles who combined to establish the grand-father and father of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po in power. Spug Gyim-tang killed his wife for fear that she might betray the conspiracy in which he was engaged (THD pp. 104, 105, 136). Those events can be put c. 580 A.D. Later, one Spug Gyim-rtsan Rmachten is recorded in the Tun-huang Annals as being sent in 653 to take charge of the administration of Zhang-zhung (THD pp. 13, 31). He is presumably the same as Spug Gyim-rtsang Rmang-cung who went to help the sister of the Tibetan king who had been married to Lig Myi-rhya, ruler of Zhang-zhung, and was badly treated by him. The visit ended in the subjugation of Zhang-zhung (THD pp. 115–17, 155–8). Although the rulers’ names do not agree exactly, that event is probably to be placed c. 645, about which time as the Annals record “Lig Snya-shur was destroyed and all Zhang-zhung subjected” (THD pp. 13, 29). A later subjugation of Zhang-zhung in 677–8 (THD p. 15) will not fit because the affair took place during the lifetime of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. If that is so, Spug Gyim-rtsan’s experience in the affair of the princess may have been rewarded later by the appointment as governor. The name Spug, which has a non-Tibetan ring, appears in the lists of principalities as that of a minister of Skyi (whose ruler’s name was Rmang-po). The capital of Skyi is given as Ljang, a name associated with Nan-chao (Nam). Spug also appears in the name of a monk apparently of non-Tibetan origin in the time of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan (LINV 996). The name may derive from some branch — perhaps an eastern one — of the widespread complex of peoples known as Zhang-zhung, whose western extension was in the kingdom of Lig-snya-shur in the neighbourhood of Lake Manasarowar. There would be nothing unusual in the use of such a person for dealing with others of similar racial origin.

Another example can be seen in the activities of the cunning minister Spung-sad Zu-tse who took part in the subjection of some Zhang-zhung peoples to Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s father (TLTD II pp. 54 and THD p. 139). The description of him as Khyung-po identifies him as belonging to a Zhang-zhung tribe; and the syllable Spung appears in other Zhang-zhung names, e.g., Ra-sang-rje Spung-rhye-ryung (THD p. 34) and cf. Snya-shur Spu-nga's Rye-ryug (THD p. 33). Spung-sad Zu-tse was responsible for the fall of the great Minister Zhang-snang of Myang, whom he supplanted c. 632 A.D. Associated with him in that coup was a man named Pa-tshab Gyim-po who was a vassal of Myang. The reason for Pa-tshab’s hostility to his
overlord can be seen in the events leading to the establishment of the Yarlung dynasty. The father of Myang Zhang-snang, a minister of a local prince probably in the upper valley of the Lhasa river, found himself on the losing side in warfare with the prince of Ngas-po and was subjected to the overlordship of one of the ministers of his conqueror. The minister, Mnyan Ji-zung, was married to a lady of Pa-tshab who proceeded to humiliate the new vassal. Mang, therefore, organised a conspiracy against his new masters and in favour of the ruler of Yar-lung. The venture was successful. The prince of Ngas-po was signally defeated; and Mnyan and his lady were made subjects of their one-time vassal Myang. A Pa-tshab was, therefore, ready for revenge when an opportunity presented itself to help in the destruction of Myang Zhang-snang.

Mention of a person with the possibly eastern name of Gyim-po who was also a member of the Pa-tshab clan brings us to the second fragment which is printed at the end of the Tun-huang Chronicle (THD p. 122) but has not been translated there owing to its damaged condition. It is a typical example of the Chronicle style, a historical incident being illustrated by songs which are packed with allusion and aphorisms in language very similar to much of AFL. The transcription which follows has been revised slightly on the basis of a photostat of the manuscript which is fairly clear for the first half; for the rest I have generally accepted the version in THD although some of its readings are dubious. I have underlined a few conjectural readings for which there seems adequate basis; and I have attempted a translation of those parts of the fragment which can be put into a historical setting or which are long enough to provide some meaning.

(1) mgar mang po rje stag rtsan dang pa tshab rgyal to re rgya la bres pa'i tshe // pa tshab rgyal to res klu blangs pa' / (2) . . . na las // sman sha ni la' da's kyang/sha bkra' ni slad lus/na ning (3) . . . gres bu ni spad bzangs nas/ma srin ni sslug gis bskyel / tsong ka ni che su (4) . . . / rje'i ni skal pog pa rgya rje ni bsam lang zhig/pur myi ni skal pa ru rgya . . . (5) . . . chag pa // mgar mang po rje stag rtsan kyi mchis brang cog ro za khoyo dang ldan chig rgya la (6) . . . mchid blangs pa' // nyen kar ni stag rtse nas / lcags kyi ni khyim. zhig rgya ni na lo dra nas (7) . . . dud brda btang / meg le ni glang mar nas/ gser gyi ni sha la' drongs / / . . . 'bogs so ni (8) . . . 'da's so ni hab chen gong / 'drims so ni so go rtsa / brkyang so ni / / yang dang steng (9) . . . ning snga / jo pho ni stag rtsan dang / rgya rje ni bsam long gnyis / bstod . . . ni do re (10) . . . ni sang lta na / 'brong bu ni rkos brag te / na rtsi ni bgor . . . la . . . (11) sgrol //

When Mgar Mang-po-rje Stag-rtsan and Pa-tshab Rgyal-to-re fled to China, Pa-tshab sang this song: "... Even if medicine has been put
on the flesh, leprosy remains ever after. When they are old, even if their men folk are wise, mother and daughter are pursued by sorrow. In great Tsong-ka ... The one whose lot it is to be ruler is Emperor of China. As for the man of Tibet [pur myi = spur myi? referring to Spu-rgyal Bod], in his lot, China ... is broken." The wife of Mgar Mang-po-rje Stag-rtsan, the lady of Cog-ro ... to China, spoke like this: "From Nyen-kar Stag-rtse, a dwelling of iron [or, in Lcags?] In China itself ... from the net. ... sent smoke signals [or, sent signs of submission?] ... From Meg-le Glang-mar ... [about one and half lines omitted]. The lord Stag-rtsan and the Chinese Emperor Bsam-lang, these two, praised ...". [The remainder is too obscure to attempt.]

In spite of the damaged nature of the passage it can be seen to refer to the fall of the Mgar family in 698/9 after some fifty years as effective rulers of Tibet. The Chief Minister at the time was Mgar Khri-bring Btsan-brod, son of Srong-brtsan sgam-po's great minister, Stong-rtsan Yul-zung. In the Tibetan Annals Khri-bring alone is named as involved in the disaster to his family (THD p. 39), but from the T'ang Annals it is learnt that when his troops would not fight against the Tibetan king, Khri-bring committed suicide together with many of his entourage. Other members of the family fled to China, among them a brother of Khri-bring named Tsan-p'o, and Mang-pu-chich, the son of his elder brother. This can hardly be anyone but the Mgar Mang-po-rje Stag-rtsan of the fragment. In "Deux Notules," referred to above, Stein in a note which deserves to be developed into an essay, quotes the T'ang Annals as recording the great honours given to a son of Khri-bring, named Lun Kung-jen, who submitted to China in 699 bringing with him 7000 tents of the 'A-zha. This too must be the Mang-po-rje of the fragment. The influence of Khri-bring in the 'A-zha country is seen in many entries in THD, and there is ...ention of other members of the Mgar in that region including one Mgar Mang-nyen; but the family, or clan, was too extensive to attempt to identify him with Mang-po-rje.

The name of the Chinese emperor Bsam-lang appears also in line 26 of the East face of the Lhasa Treaty Inscription (rgya rje sam lang) where it certainly refers to the Emperor Hsüan-tsung (713–56), though how the name came to be applied to him is not clear. Nor is it clear why that name is mentioned in connection with the flight of Mgar Mang-po-rje which took place fourteen years before his accession, during the reign of the usurping empress Wu. Although her activities are known to the author of the Blue Annals, they have made no impression on contemporary Tibetan records, or it may be that by the time the song came to be recorded, the memory of the emperor who had sent the Chinese princess Mun-sheng as bride to Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan had effaced most others.
The association of the Pa-tshab clan with the Mgar is seen in THD p. 37, which records joint operations in 690 by Mgar 'Brin-brtse Stang-ston and Pa-tshab Rgyal-stan Thom-po. A common interest may have existed for some time. Pa-tshab, as has been seen, were associated with a minister of Ngas-po who was hostile to Myang. The lists of principalities show that Mgar were also ministers of Ngas-po and although there is no evidence that Mgar took an active part in opposing Myang and his protégé the ruler of Yar-lung, they were not among his supporters. Later, although there is nothing to suggest that Mgar joined with Pa-tshab and Zu-tse in the plot against Myang-snang, they were waiting in the wings; and as soon as the alien Zu-tse, who seems to have had no clan to support him, was removed from the scene, Mgar Stong-brtse was ready to take up a position similar to that formerly enjoyed by the Myang.

Returning to Mang-po-rje Brtse-brtse: it emerges from the fragment that his wife was from Cog-ro. That clan first appears in Tibetan history as sharing in the fall of Myang Zhang-snang, and therefore on the other side from Pa-tshab. It is not named in the lists of principalities nor among the legendary ministers of early Tibet and may, therefore, have been of very remote or of humble origin. On the fall of the Mgar a lady of Cog-ro became the wife or mistress of the Tibetan king 'Dus-brtse. Although allusions to that union in the Chronicle are obscure, it appears to have been distasteful to one Khe-brtse Mdo-snang who, after the death of 'Dus-brtse, took part unsuccessfully in what must have been strife about the succession (THD pp. 165-7, 40). Later histories state that a Cog-ro minister escorted the body of 'Dus-brtse back to central Tibet from the east. Thereafter, the clan appears as active in 'A-zha country and perhaps as being allied in marriage to the ruler of the 'A-zha (TLTD II pp. 8-10). It continued to take a prominent part in Tibetan affairs down to the death of Ral-pa-can, who married a lady of that clan and among whose murderers was one Cog-ro Lha-lhod. The original home of the clan is uncertain but their association with the 'A-zha and the description of the lady of Cog-ro as 'Dam', Cog-ro-za suggests an eastern home, perhaps connected with the Tshwa'i-'dam marshes. It is unfortunate that the fragment lacks the one word which would have shown whether the lady of Cog-ro did (as one might expect) or did not accompany him on his flight to China. As she and the lady associated with 'Dus-brtse at about the same time are both described simply as Cog-ro-za it is possible that they are one and the same and the wife of Mgar Brtse-brtse was either captured by the king or joined him willingly. The tone of Khe-brtse's song — calling her a "widow" and apparently abusive of her — suggests the latter. At all events, the fragment makes it appear that re-examination of the connected songs in THD might be fruitful. The translators have missed the point that Khri-gda's (THD p. 921) is the name of a noble of the 'Bro clan who was associated with the Cog-ro at the
'A-zha court about the years 706 to 710 in connection with the arrival of the Chinese princess as bride to the Tibetan king. One further speculation about the Cog-ro lady of the fragment is suggested by the name of the Chinese king who reigned from 713 to 756. The two songs may relate to two different occasions and it might be that the lady of Cog-ro became the wife of Mgar Mang-po-rje after the death of 'Dus-srong; but this seems to be an improbable strain on the construction.

The allusion to Nyen-kar raises another crop of speculations. A place of that name was almost continuously the residence of the Tibetan king 'Dus-srong from the first year of his life (in 677) until his sixteenth year (693), during which time the power of the Mgar was supreme. Nyen-kar had been the residence of an earlier king, Mang-srong, in several years of his minority when Mgar Stong-rtsan Yul-zung was in power. In the case of 'Dus-srong, hints of a movement against the authority of the Mgar, which culminated in their overthrow in 698, can be seen almost as soon as the king ceased to reside at Nyen-kar. Although the home of the Mgar appears from the Chronicle (THL p. 163–5) to have been Bya-pu, and it was in Byatshal of Sregs that 'Dus-srong took possession of the property of Khri-'bring after his fall, the power of the family at its peak must have extended over much of Tibet, and Nyen-kar may have been a Mgar stronghold in which the young king lived under their care. There were probably several places of that name but the Chronicle shows that Nyen-kar Rnying-pa was in Ngas-po and it was of that principality that Mgar were originally ministers.

Of other names mentioned in the song of Cog-ro-za, if lcags does not mean "iron" it could refer to the fortress of Lcag-rtse on the Szechwan border. Meg-le is mentioned several times in LINV in a context — the copying of religious books — which seems to place it on the eastern borders.

The overthrow of the Mgar in 698/699 virtually eliminated them from Tibet. From Chinese records the slaughter of the clan and its associates seems to have been extensive. Others, as has been seen, took refuge in China where they became honoured and valuable officials. Stein in his note referred to above identified members of the exiled Mgar family in China of the borderlands in 793 and as late as 929; but in the records of the Tibetan kingdom the name does not figure again except for one appearance of a Mgar Brtan-kong as a minor official (bka'i yi-ge-pa) in LINV no. 1959. There are no more Mgar ministers in the Annals, nor among the witnesses to the bka'-tshigs of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan or to the Lhasa treaty of 822. Later histories, it is true, sometimes mention Mgar in connection with the consecration of Bsam-yas, but this is not convincing without any contemporary support. Sbn bzed does not mention the name at all, while the reference in Rgyal po bka' thang (fo. 36) is cursory; and no Mgar figures in the description of the military organization of Tibet in the Blon po bka' thang.
From the eleventh century onwards religious personages with the name Mgar, or more usually 'Gar, are not infrequent. Noble families also claimed descent from that clan, in particular the Tshal-pa, the Rlangs — from whom the Phag-mo-gru dynasty originated — and the princes of Sde-dge. Those genealogies, which are full of obvious legend, do not refer to Ngas-po but assign to the Mgar a divine or heroic origin usually of indeterminate location, but in the case of the Sde-dge legend apparently in the region of Tachenlu.

It is often assumed that Mgar and 'Gar are simply alternative spellings. If so, the form 'Gar, which is more frequent in later works, may have been adopted to avoid confusion with the despised caste of blacksmiths (mgar-ba); but might not Mgar indicate that the clan did have a remote ancestral connection with that craft? Stein tends to dismiss this because the claim is not made by Tibetan writers, who love that sort of etymology. Nevertheless, the possibility may be allowed to remain open. In the earliest documents the name is invariably written Mgar. The occurrence of 'Gar' in the Annals of Khotan, quoted by Stein with reference to TLTD, is not from a Tun-huang manuscript but from a late xylograph and the recent edition by R.E. Emmerick shows that two out of four of the available xylograph versions read Mgar. Although the early Tibetans certainly had the services of skilled metal workers, there is no suggestion that smiths were then regarded either with the aversion which became their lot later in Tibet or with the awe that in some other countries surrounded the worker in metal. Nor, for that matter, is there any hint of special treatment of those other occupations which later appear as outcaste in Tibet — butchers, potters, cutters-up of dead bodies. But the existence of a superior attitude towards smiths in Central Asia is seen in the special reputation of the Turks as blacksmiths and their subjection in that capacity to their Juan-juan overlords (E. Chavannes, Documents sur les Tou-kiue (Turcs) occidentaux, St. Petersburg 1903, p. 222). And it may be noted, for what it is worth, that when the ruler of Ngas-po, who was the overlord of the Mgar, was defeated his son fled to the Turks.

Even though the Mgar family ceased to count for anything in the affairs of the early kingdom the well merited fame of their former greatness and achievements has never been forgotten. Mgar Stong-rtsan Yul-zung is still the favourite hero of story drama. It is remarkable how much space and what favourable treatment are given to the Mgar in the Tun-huang Chronicle, which is principally a eulogy of the Tibetan kings whose authority the Mgar overrode for a period. Two rather dubious members of the family are introduced into the lists of early ministers (THD p. 130); Stong-rtsan Yul-zung is suitably honoured (pp. 159–60), but it is Khri-'hring Btsan-brod who gets the most praise. It is true that the chastisement of the disloyal minister is mentioned (p. 149), and 'Dus-srong's long song of
triumph after he had overthrown Khri-bring is given full value; but the
voice of the critic Khe-rjad is also heard even if indirectly (pp. 161–7), and
one long section (pp. 167–9) is devoted to the skill and courage of Khri-
bring in debate and in war. The Tibetans of that day appear to have
enjoyed, without partisan feelings, the achievements of any great man. In
later histories there is no mention of the fall of the Mgar; only the good is
remembered.

In comparison with the great men of Mgar, the Pa-tshab were of small
stature; and in spite of the connection of one of them with the Mgar, they
survived in Tibet as junior ministers connected with the external adminis-
tration and with military duties (Giuseppe Tucci, *The Tombs of the Tibetan
Kings*, Rome 1950, p. 55). The name Pa-tshab occurs also in later religious
histories and in recent times it has been held that the clan was connected
with Pa-snam between Rgyal-rtse (Gyantse) and Gzhis-ka-rtse (Shigatse).
That would not necessarily hold good for ancient times; and F.W. Thomas
identifies them with the Pang-tshab clan, which he locates in eastern Ti-
et. Whatever their origin they do not figure as ministers in the early lists
of principalities, nor are they named in that later *Almanac de Gotha* of Ti-
et, the *Bka' thang sde Inga*. Whether the combination of the names Pa-tshab
and Gyim-po, mentioned above, points to an eastern origin or not, the early
legend and the Tun-huang Annals indicate clearly the extent to which the
peoples and affairs of the eastern and north-eastern borders bulked in the
story of the Tibetan kingdom. The persistence with which folk memory pre-
served that tradition is shown by the determination with which any family
that later attained to greatness traced its origin and ancestry to that
direction.

Notes

1. For possible variant readings the reader may consult Yoshiro Imaeda and
Tsuguhito Takeuchi, *Choix de documents tibétains conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale*
Ming-hsi-lieh and the Fish-bag

Many characteristics of the Tibetans in the seventh to ninth centuries, as seen through the eyes of Chinese historians, are recognizable in their descendants of the present day. For example, the T'ang Annals\(^1\) describe how in A.D. 702 a Tibetan envoy to Ch'ang-an explained his open delight at hearing Chinese music as due to his rustic origin in a remote border country. In recent times I found such professions of simplicity or ignorance by Tibetan officials used sometimes as a disarming gambit when they wanted to turn aside troublesome or contentious business. Neither party took such statements seriously. Nor perhaps did the Chinese in the T'ang dynasty, for in 730 when the Tibetans asked for some of the Chinese classics a minister of the imperial court warned against granting the request because it might increase the warlike abilities of the Tibetans who were not only aggressive but were endowed with energy and perseverance and were intelligent, sharp and untiring in their love of study.

So much by way of introduction to the story of the fish-bag. In A.D. 730 there were discussions about a treaty between the Tibetans and the Chinese, who had been at war almost continuously since 670. The leader of the Tibetan delegation to Ch'ang-an was Ming-hsi-lieh who is stated in the T'ang Annals to have known some Chinese and to have been on a mission to China before, in order to escort the princess of Chin-ch'eng to Tibet. A banquet was given in his honour after which the emperor conversed with him and gave him various presents including what Bushell translates as a “fish-bag” and Pelliot as a “bourse au poisson”. Ming-hsi-lieh accepted the other presents but politely declined the fish-bag, saying that such ornaments were not used in his country and he did not dare to accept so rare a gift. In the New T'ang Annals the present which Ming-hsi-lieh declined is described as a golden fish.

Neither Bushell nor Pelliot throw any light on this incident, but the key is to be found in that fascinating assemblage of miscellaneous exotic

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learning, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand* by Edward Schafer. He writes (p. 26) that a fish in bronze or, rather, half such a fish was carried as a token by the envoy of each country that maintained diplomatic relations with China. On arrival, the envoy produced his half which was compared with the other half, kept at the imperial court; and he would then be given appropriate facilities according to the protocol. The fish token was carried in a handsome purse attached to the girdle of a ceremonial robe which would also be presented by the emperor. Accepting such a gift, even if it were got up in a specially valuable guise, would smack of the acknowledgement of “tributary” status. That was something the Tibetans would not endure. In *Le Concile de Lhasa* Paul Demiéville states (p. 180) that the Tibetan had precedence at the Chinese court over all other “barbarians”. And it is recorded in the T’ang Annals that in 780 the Tibetan king rejected a letter from the emperor because it was not phrased in terms of equality. The wording had to be altered to omit the offending expressions. Ming-si-lie’s refusal of the “fish-bag” was, therefore, the act of an adroit diplomatist.

A rather similar Chinese manoeuvre was attempted in 1935 when General Huang Mu-sung visited Lhasa to condole on the death of the thirteenth Dalai Lama. He offered the Tibetan Government a golden seal in honour of the Dalai Lama. It is most unlikely that the Dalai Lama himself would have accepted such a gift from that source, but the Chinese may have hoped to find the interim government not yet quite sure of itself. Nevertheless, the offer was at first refused because, “as the Dalai Lama was temporarily absent from the body, there could be no use for a seal”. I believe that it was eventually decided to be innocuous and was accepted as a contribution to the expenses of the late Dalai Lama’s tomb.

It is sad that such diplomatic skirmishes in Sino-Tibetan affairs were replaced in 1950 by the naked use of force.

**Note**

The Growth of a Legend

Abbreviations

GBY  Rgya bod yig tshang
GSM  Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long
HD   Hu lan deb ther
JA   Journal Asiaticque
JRAS  Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
Karma pa rnam thar  Chos rje karma pa sku 'phreng rim byon gyi rnam thar mdo rtsus dpag bsam khri zhing by Sman-sdiong Mtshams-pan Karma Nges-don bstang-rgyas (1891)
Pell. T.  Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag phreng-ba (1545-64)
TPS  G. Tucci, Tibetan Painted Scrolls, 3 vols (Rome 1949)
TTK  G. Tucci The Tombs of the Tibetan Kings (Rome 1950)

Many Tibetan histories record that soon after the death of Srong-btsan Sgam-po (A.D. 650) a Chinese army invaded Tibet and reached as far as Lhasa. No such event is mentioned either in the histories of the T'ang dynasty, which would hardly have suppressed so great a success, or in the Tibetan Annals from Tun-huang; it cannot, therefore, be regarded as fact.

Although there may be a vague allusion to it in the Lha 'dre bka' thang (fo. 44), the earliest surviving version is that in the Hu lan deb ther — the Red Annals — by Tshal-pa Kun-dga' rdo-rje, ascribed to the year 1346. In the edition published by the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology at Gangtok in 1961 (HD) there is the brief statement at fo. 5b that "in the male iron-

horse year, because the Tibetans had taken all the Yu-gur country in the rear of the T'ang empire, the minister Sye-bzhin-gu, sent by the Emperor with 100,000 men, reached Lhasa” (lcags pho rta'i lo la bod kyi dmag mis thang gi rgyal khams la rgyab yu gur gyi yul thams cad blangs pas / rgya'i rgyal pos blo n po sye bzhin gu dmag khris tsho bcu dang bca pa btag nas lha sa bar du sreb pa). The writer goes on to say that the Mgar minister completely defeated the Chinese.

The next version comes about 40 years later in the Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long by the Sa-skya-pa monk Bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan, which may reasonably be dated to 1368. At fo. 77a in the edition by B. I. Kuznetso published in 1966 by E. J. Brill, Leiden, it is said that “In the time of Mang-srong Mang-btsan, the Chinese emperor, knowing that Srong-btsan Sgam-po was no longer alive and remembering the devastation wrought in China by ‘Gar, sent an army of 500,000 men to conquer Tibet and carry off the [image of] Jo-bo Sakya. In the alarm caused by this news the Jo-bo was brought from the Ra-mo-che to Lhasa and placed in the southern gateway called Me-long-can (Adorned with Mirrors). The entrance was plastered over and [an image of] ‘Jam-dbyangs was put there.” Further on, at fo. 91a is the statement that “In the time of Mang-srong Mang-btsan a Chinese army came to Tibet and conquered it but the minister ‘Gar was made commander-in-chief and taking an army of 200,000 men he defeated the Chinese”. A note which precedes that passage, but clearly refers to it, states: “The story how a Chinese army came to Lhasa and burnt the Potala but when they could not find the Jo-bo Rin-po-che they took away the [image of] Mi-bskyod rdo-rje to the distance of a morning’s march (snga gro [for dro] gcig); all that is to be found in Chinese records (rgya'i deb ther na)”.

The incident is mentioned in the Rgya bod yig tshang of Śribhūtibhadra written c.1434 (see Ariane Macdonald, “Preambule à la lecture d’un rGya-bod yig-chañ”, JA, ccli, 1963). At fo. 65 of a MS in the University of Washington, Seattle, of which I have a copy, it is stated, much on the lines of HD, that: “In the time of Mang-srong, king of Tibet, there was sometimes agreement between China and Tibet but on many other occasions there was rivalry in war. The Chinese minister Dpya-bzhin-dgu'i, being appointed to command 100,000 men, came as far as Lhasa.” This is followed by an account of the destruction of the Chinese army by the eldest son of Mgar.

Over a century later, in the Chos ‘byung of Dpa’bo Gtsug-lag ‘phreng-ba (completed 1564) the story has acquired picturesque accretions. It is the author’s practice to gather together several accounts of the same event from different sources. In Vol. 1a he tells the story twice. On fo. 75a in a passage in verse — in which he writes the main outline of his history — he relates how, at a time apparently just after the accession of Mang-srong at the age of thirteen, “on hearing that a Chinese army was coming to Tibet, the image of the Buddha at the age of twelve was put in the southern gateway of
Ra-sa, called Me-long-can; the door was plastered over and an image of "Jam-dbyangs painted over it". There follow a few sentences about Mang-srong's reign and death; then the verse resumes: "in his time a Chinese army came to Lhasa. The Fierce King Rme-brtsegs opened his breast and sending forth a phantom army he turned back the Chinese." The account continues in prose, which the author uses for his commentaries on the story he has told in verse: "It was Mgar's firm intention to destroy China, so as soon as Srong-btsan was dead a great army was prepared and Mgar acting as commander-in-chief inflicted frequent defeats on the enemy. Later the minister died in battle. When the king Mang-srong died a Chinese army of 500,000 came to Tibet. They burnt the palace of Khri-rtse Dmar-po. They could not at first find the Jo-bo Sākya and later, although they came to know where it was, they could not destroy the painted figure of 'Jam-dbyangs. So they carried off the Jo-bo Mi-bskyod rdo-rje. At that time the Rme-brtsegs of Ra-sa, that is set up there with his two clenched fists held close together in the gesture of dispelling pollution, opened his breast with his clenched fists and a great phantom army came out, whereupon the Chinese army scattered in terror. The Jo-bo Mi-bskyod rdo-rje was left for a week on the plain of Ngo-ma to the east of Lhasa, hence it is called 'The place where the Jo-bo grew weary' (jo bo 'o bṛgyal thang). It is written in Chinese records how the eldest son of the minister Mgar was made commander-in-chief and defeated the Chinese so that for them he seemed to be a manifestation of the spirit of war." In Vol. Ma, fo. 11b the story is told yet again, starting this time in exactly the same words as the Hu lan deb ther but going on to say that after the Chinese army came to Lhasa "they burnt the Potala and the palace of Khri-rtse Dmar-po. Though they searched for the Jo-bo Rinpo-che they could not find it so they took Jo-bo Mi-bskyod rdo-rje a distance of a morning's journey." The story of Mgar's retaliation follows.

In contrast with the discursiveness of Pell. T., the nearly contemporary Chos 'byung of Padma dkar-po (1526–92) gives an account so compressed as to be almost unintelligible without knowledge of the story from other sources. It refers to the moving of the Jo-bo and its concealment beneath painted images of 'Jam-dbyangs on the side and on top of it; and so, when the Chinese came, although they knew (where the image was), they did not dare to destroy the 'Jam-dbyangs.

The last version I shall mention is that of the Chronicle of the fifth Dalai Lama (1643) which, at fo. 30a combines material from GSM and Pell. T. as follows: "At the time of Mang-srong when the Chinese knew that the miraculous king [Srong-btsan] was no longer alive, their army came to the 'Phrul-snang [the Jo-khang of Lhasa], but when a phantom army came from the body of Rme-brtsegs they fled back. In retaliation Mgar took a Tibetan army of 100,000 men and conquered China, but Mgar himself was killed in the battle. Then once more, when there was a great rumour that a Chinese
army was again coming, the Jo-bo was put in the southern gateway called Me-long-can. The door was plastered over and an image of 'Jam-dbyangs painted on it. Not long after, the Chinese army came and burnt the palace of Potala. Not being able to carry off the Jo-bo Śākyamuni they took the Mi-bskyod rdo-rje to a place a morning’s march distant."

Thus, by the seventeenth century the terse comment in HD has grown into a story of two Chinese attacks on Lhasa within the space of a few years. We may look back to see how this happened.

II

There is plenty of evidence that Tibetan historians had access to early Chinese records. HD, from which most subsequent Tibetan histories including the Deb ther sngon po — the well-known Blue Annals of ‘Gos Gzhon-nu-dpal — derive their information on Chinese affairs, clearly states its prime sources. There, at fo. 12a, the account of relations between China and Tibet is ascribed to the record composed in the time of T'ai-tsung by Su-khyi which was continued by Hang-si hu-tsha and was translated in the wood-bird year at Shing-kun (on the Tibet/China border south of Lan-chou) by the Chinese translator Hu-gyang-ju and printed in Tibetan by the Gu-shri Rin-chen grags-pa in the wood-ox year. The dates cited appear to be 1285 and 1325 respectively. The author also refers to the Thang-shu thu-han and the Thang-shu shu-hwen (fos. 8b, 12a) and further notes (fos. 8b, 12b) that he was given oral information about Chinese and Mongolian affairs by Jam-bha-la Sto-shri-mgon, who told him that according to Chinese records seen at the Jo-khang, 700 years had passed since the Chinese princess brought the Jo-bo to Lhasa (fo. 8b). Jam-bha-la Sto-shri was one of the Mongolian envoys who came to Tibet in 1344 to invite Bu-ston Rin-po-che to China (see D. S. Ruegg, The Life of Bu-ston Rin-po-che, Rome 1966, p. 122). One of the envoys who escorted the Third Karma-pa Zhwa-nag lama on his visit to China in 1331 had a similar name, or title: Zam-bha-'0 (Karma pa rnam thar, fo. 67a). The information about the date of the Chinese princess could have been discovered from the bilingual treaty inscription of A.D. 822 which stands outside the west gate of the Jo-khang at Lhasa.

Still further light is thrown on the Chinese sources of HD by a passage in GSM, fo. 12a, which records that Tsen-tshe slob-dpon Shes-rab ye-shes who was well versed in the records of China and Mongolia translated them at Gung-thang (the centre of the Tshal-pa school) and that Dge-ba'i blo-gros (another name of Kun-dga' rdo-rje) made use of them in his history.

So far as earlier Tibetan history is concerned Kun-dga' rdo-rje refers indirectly, through one Dpa’-thog Rin-rdor, to the Dpag bsam ljon shing, a lost work, composed apparently in 1286 by Byang-ji Ston-pa Shes-rab-’bum.
But early Tibetan sources may be dismissed as a possible origin of the story of the capture of Lhasa not only because there is no trace of it in the Tun-huang MSS but because it is specifically attributed in HD to Chinese records; and a look at the T'ang Annals provides the answer. (I refer to the translations by S. W. Bushell in JRAS, 1880, p. 448, and Paul Pelliot in Histoire ancienne du Tibet, Paris 1961, pp. 7 and 86.)

Under the year that corresponds to the Tibetan wood-horse year and to A.D. 670 it appears that in response to Tibetan aggression against the T'uyühun and following their seizure of important garrison towns on the silk route across central Asia, the emperor appointed Sie Jen-kou as general of a "Lo-so" (Lhasa) army. That expression is explained in the New T'ang Annals as meaning an army to operate on the road to Lhasa. In fact the great force got no farther than Tafeichuan near the Kokonor where it was signally defeated by the Tibetan general K'in-ling, that is Mgar Khri-'bring (Pelliot, op. cit., p. 7, l. 18).

The story of the capture of Lhasa must be based on the misconception that because an army was directed towards Lhasa it actually got there. It cannot be known with certainty whether the misconception began with the original translators or with Kun-dga' rdo-'rje. It may be significant that it is not mentioned by Bu-ston Rin-po-che in his Chos 'byung written in 1322 some twenty-four years before HD.

III

It is interesting to examine how the story developed from its very simple beginning in HD. Already in the GSM it has been fancifully linked with the great figures of Srong-btsan Sgam-po and his minister Mgar Stong-btsan Yul-zung by putting it back to a time just after Srong-btsan's death; but by describing it as retaliation for destruction caused in China by Mgar, it makes nonsense of history for from both Tibetan and Chinese records it is clear that there was no Tibetan invasion of Chinese territory until much later and that the great Mgar died in 667 after maintaining continuously friendly relations with China. It was only in 670 that the Tibetans attacked Chinese interests and did so well outside China's own borders. Further, Khri-'bring, son of the great Mgar, who was responsible for the defeat of the Chinese did not die in that battle but by his own hand twenty-eight years later.

GSM also introduces the subsidiary story of the concealment of the Jo-bo and its subsequent discovery, the development of which will be examined later.

The note at fo. 91a which mentions for the first time the burning of the Potala and the inability of the Chinese to find the Jo-bo is surely fanciful in attributing those incidents to Chinese sources. That is the more surprising
because the writer not only knew of the work of Kun-dga’ rdo-rje (fo. 12a) but may himself have consulted the translation by Rin-chen grags-pa, for at fo. 91b he writes: “This record of the history of China and Tibet which was composed in the time of the T’ai-tsung emperor by Su-khyi-han was put into continuous form and later translated into Tibetan by the Chinese translator ‘U-gyang-ju at Shing-kun Sde-chen. Because some dates did not agree and because names of that period seemed unreliably represented, the Lama Gu-shri Rin-chen-grags, when he was living in China, collated the details of the connexion between China and Tibet and had the work printed, at full length, at Shing-kun Sde-chen in the female wood-bird year. Because the present account is merely an abridgement, if you want to know in detail about the relations between China and Tibet and the history of the Uncle and Nephew, you should look at the printed book”. That suggests that Bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan himself drew on the work of Rin-chen grags-pa and his remark about the latter “living in China” may imply special knowledge. It is quite probable that Rin-chen grags-pa is the person who became Ti-shri in 1330 (see Tucci, TPS, p. 15). When he was living in China with the rank of Gu-shri he may have been an official in the office of the then Ti-shri. The attribution to him of the wood-bird year (1285), which HD attributes to Hu-gyang-ju, seems to be due to a confusion. The wood-ox year (1325) cited in HD would be more appropriate.

IV

The story of the concealment of the Jo-bo, which will now be examined, is the necessary prelude to the connected story of its rediscovery some forty years later by the second Chinese princess who came to Tibet as bride of the king — Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan, which is told on fo. 78b of GSM.

The first appearance of that story to which a date can be given is in the Chos ‘byung of Bu-ston Rin-po-che. There (fo. 125a) although the concealment is put at the time of the death of Srong-btsan Sgam-po, it is not connected with a Chinese attack on Lhasa. Bu-ston says: “At that same time, the Kong-co gave orders saying ‘Bring the image of Śākyamuni from the Ra-mo-che, hide it in the projecting turret of the Phrul-snang, cover over the doorway with plaster (zhal zhal gyis) and draw an image of Jam-dbyangs there’. Then together with Khri-btsun all three merged, or passed away, into the image of Thugs-rje chen-po. The ministers, therefore, changed over the two images according to that last instruction (bka ’chems).”

On the same folio the rediscovery is told with extreme brevity in connexion with the marriage of the second princess to Mes Ag-tshom (Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan). “The princess searched out the image of Śākyamuni and made offerings to it (mchod pa byas so).”
The next version is probably that in *Sba bzhed*, a short chronicle from Bsam-yas which may be read in the edition by R. A. Stein, Paris, 1961. The work certainly embodies early material but, although George Roerich considered that it might date from the eleventh or twelfth centuries, Tibetan opinion I have consulted is that it was composed in its present form in the fifth or sixth *rab byung* — i.e. the second part of the fourteenth century — by a Karma-pa monk who drew on the ancient records at Bsam-yas.

It seems that Tibetans, after the resurgence of Buddhism, had some difficulty in understanding how the Jo-bo Rin-po-che, which they believed to have been first established in the Ra-mo-che, came to be found in the Jo-khang. (It would be possible to speculate that the Ra-mo-che was not, in fact, earlier than or contemporary with the Jo-khang but was built at the time of the second Chinese princess; but that is for another occasion.) Bu-ston's account may not quite have satisfied later historians and one is left rather in the air about the "changing over" of the two images, which is not really covered by what he has said before. There was probably a large body of verbal legend, based on fragments of history and misheard passages from books, that continued to circulate and change until parts of it found their way into some written history. There is much more colour in the story in *Sba bzhed* although it cannot be said for certain that it is later than that of Bu-ston.

*Sba bzhed*, as we have it, begins only with the reign of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtson, so there is nothing about the Chinese invasion of Lhasa or the concealment of the Jo-bo. A new legend is introduced — that the Chinese princess was originally betrothed to the handsome young prince of Tibet but that he died and she was therefore married to his elderly father. That story calls for examination at another time. As for the Jo-bo, *Sba bzhed* recounts (p. 3): "Later Ong-jo [Kong-co] said 'Let me see the face of the golden image of *sambhava* which was the object of worship of my aunt Kong-co'. As the image was not in the Ra-mo-che which the Clunese had founded (*rgyal stag*; *rgya brtag* elsewhere) she searched for it by making offerings in every chapel but still she did not find it. When she made offerings in the *lha klzang* of Ra-sa [the Jo-khang] there was a chapel that had been planned with a series of five doors (or 'called the Chapel with Five Doors') but, as there were only four doors, she knew that one was concealed. When she knocked on the covering of the projecting turret a crack appeared and, by digging it out, the door was opened up. And when she saw the golden image of Śākyamuni hidden there, saying 'Let us perform a ceremony of showing the face for the image brought by my aunt', she inaugurated that service of offerings." One may wonder whether the emphasis on *zhal* "face" here and in another version may not have been sparked off by the word *zhal* or *zhal zhal* — the "plaster" — with which the image was covered.
In GSM the story goes thus (fo. 78b): “When she came to Tibet the princess said, ‘Let me see my aunt’s chapel’, so she went to the Ra-mo-che; but as the Jo-bo was not there she went to the ’Phrul-snang and, discovering that the Jo-bo was placed in the south doorway called Me-long-can, she opened up the doorway and revealing the Jo-bo she established it in the central chapel and instituted the service of seeing the face of the image. For the Jo-bo who had been sitting in obscurity for three generations the Chinese princess instituted that offering ceremony.”

V

Returning to the capture of Lhasa: the story in GBY — which does not mention the Jo-bo at all — is clearly derived, as are its other passages about Chinese and Tibetan relations, directly from HD, although without acknowledgement to its source, which it sometimes garbles. There is no need to substantiate that statement here with specific quotations and we may pass to the elaborate stories in Pell. T..

The evidence provided by Pell. T. has to be examined with discrimination. He makes a contribution of unique value in the reproduction of ninth-century documents (TTK, pp. 43, 44 etc.) to which he probably had direct access at Bsam-yas, where he composed his history. In R.A. Stein, Les tribus anciennes des marches sino-tibétaines, Paris 1959, and in Géza Uray, “Traces of a Narrative of the Old Tibetan Chronicle in the Mkhas-pa’i dga’-ston”, Monuments Serica, xxvi (1967) it has been shown that Pell. T. had acquaintance — whether direct or indirect — with parts of the old Tibetan Chronicle of Tun-huang. The echoes are not very extensive and it may be that not so much of that material survived at Bsam-yas as was found at Tun-huang. There are many good stories in the latter — admittedly not connected with Buddhism — that might have been expected to attract the jackdaw eye of Pell. T. for the picturesque. Or it may be that he derived his references from such works as the Bsam yas kyi dkar chag chen mo which he cites as one of his sources. There is, also, no satisfactory evidence — no direct quotation — to show that Pell. T. knew of any such document as the Annals of Tun-huang. And for Chinese history he relies on Kun-dga’ rdo-rje.

In the wide range of PT’s quotations there are, in addition to rare and valuable material, instances of misquotation from ancient documents — e.g. the garbled statement at fo. 132a about the contents of the treaty pillar of A.D. 822 at Lhasa. Pell. T. cannot have seen the pillar himself and his reference may derive from the similar passage in GSM, fo. 92a.

With regard to the capture of Lhasa he provides two irreconcilable accounts without any apparent awareness of the discrepancy, the first
putting it “as soon as Srong-btsan was dead”, i.e. 650; and the other dating it “after the death of Mang-srong”, i.e. 670. It may be that although he does not explain it, Pell. T. or one of his sources had realized that the iron-horse year to which HD ascribes the incident could only correspond to the later date.

As for some details: perhaps the mention in GSM that the Potala was burnt (*me la sregs*) set off somewhere the train of thought that brought in the Rme-brtsegs story. From the Potala it would be an easy transition to Rtsi-dmar-po; but why Khri-rtse? A place of that name is mentioned in the Tun-huang Annals in connexion with the campaigns of ’Dus-srong in 701 and 702; and the Skar-cung inscription attributes to ’Dus-srong the building of a chapel at Gling-khri-rtse; but there is no connexion there with the events of 670. Perhaps the words *khri tsho* — “tens of thousands” — applied to the numbers of the Chinese army set off that echo.

The rediscovery of the Jo-bo is told as it appears in GSM with only slight verbal alterations.

In the Chronicle of the fifth Dalai Lama, to which we come back at last, the rediscovery story again echoes the last sentences of the account in GSM: “The Jo-bo who had dwelt in obscurity for three generations was brought out from the southern doorway and established in the central chapel; and a service of offerings was instituted.”

As for the capture of Lhasa, the Dalai Lama seems to have made an attempt to bring order into the earlier stories. Again there are echoes of GSM; but he also appears to borrow heavily from Pell. T.. There is no acknowledgement because the Dalai Lama did not approve of Pell. T., who belonged to the Karma-pa sect which led the opposition to the Dge-lugs-pa and had been finally overcome just about the time the Dalai Lama was completing his Chronicle. He mentions Pell. T. several times, usually with disparagement; but in this instance, by following Pell. T. or improving on him, the Dalai Lama has overreached himself and has converted one unsubstantiated legend into two.
Who Was Yum-brtan?

A well-known tradition, repeated by Tsepon Shakabpa in his *Tibet: A Political History*, Yale 1967, is that after the death of Glang-dar-ma (842) the succession was contested on behalf of two infant princes, the elder of whom was adopted by the senior queen of the late king and put forward as her son — hence his name Yum-brtan, “Relying on Mother” — while the other, legitimately but posthumously born to the junior queen, had to be guarded by his mother who always kept a light burning — hence his name 'Od-srung, “Protected by Light”.

In JRAS 1957 I discussed this story on the assumption that the Chos 'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba (1565) in which it appears at some length, embodies a reasonably well-founded tradition. Further reflection, particularly on the earlier records, has led me to doubt the accepted view and to question whether there ever was such a person as Yum-brtan.

Little help is found in the Tun-huang Chronicles (Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint, *Documents de Touen-houang relatifs à l'histoire du Tibet*, Paris 1946). There (p. 82) the royal genealogy is interrupted after mention of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s sons, Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan (Ral-pa-can) and 'U'i-dum-brtan who is better known as Glang-dar-ma. For the earliest account of events from the death of Glang-dar-ma down to the year 872 we must turn to the *Hsin T'ang-shu*, compiled in the eleventh century on the basis of earlier material. I have adapted below the translation by S.W. Bushell in JRAS 1880 in the light of that by Paul Pelliot in *Histoire ancienne du Tibet*, Paris 1961.

“He [Dar-ma] had no sons and Ch’i-li-hu, a son of Shang Yen-li, the elder brother of his wife, whose name was Ch’en, succeeded. He was only three years old and the wife governed the kingdom. The chief minister, Chie-tu-na, when he had audience of Ch’i-li-hu, refused to do homage, saying ‘There are many collateral descendants of the btsan-po; why should a son of the

family of Ch'en be appointed?' and he went out weeping. The adherents of the new regime killed him'.

The story goes on to tell how a frontier governor named Shang K'ung-jo, of the family of Mo, attacked neighbouring governors who favoured the new régime, the chief of whom was Shang Pi-pi of Mo-lou. Shang K'ung-jo raised local support by claiming that certain ministers had killed the king and that it was his duty to take vengeance on the rebels. The fight between these two champions lasted with varying success until 850 when Shang Pi-pi withdrew from the fray. Shang K'ung-jo arrogated the title of btsan-po and continued an independent existence as an embattled frontier lord until 866 when he was defeated and killed by a Uighur general who had come to the help of the dying T'ang dynasty.

The struggle between Shang K'ung-jo and Shang Pi-pi can be seen as the last round in the long competition for power between the Central Tibetan nobles, led by the Dba's family (Mo) and the 'Bro (Mo-lou) who headed the clans and families from the frontier regions who had acquired an interest in Tibet, and the title zhang — Maternal Uncle — through marriage with the royal family.

Rivalry between princes born to different queens of a deceased king of Tibet was nothing new to Chinese historians; indeed, they sometimes relate such happenings when Tibetan annals suggest nothing of the sort. It is, therefore, significant that events after the death of Glang-dar-ma are described in the T'ang Annals simply as the illegal election of a king adopted from outside the royal line and the widespread discontent and opposition which that caused. There is no mention of any rival, claiming to be legitimate. Confusion in Tibet could have distorted the information which found its way to China; nevertheless, the T'ang Annals provide the earliest and apparently unbiased account.

If there was only one claimant to the throne, who was he? There are some pointers in Tibetan documents from Tun-huang. Yum-btgan is not mentioned there at all; and the name, except as a nickname, has a rather improbable appearance. On the other hand, Ch'li-hu looks like an approximation to Khri 'Od; and 'Od-srung is a Buddhist name which is found in some of the documents contained in Marcelle Lalou's invaluable Inventaire des manuscrits tibétains de Touen-houang conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale (INV). In n° 131 and again in n° 999, which Lalou edited in "Tun-huang Tibetan Documents on a Dharmadana", IHQ, xvi (1940), there is reference to jo mo btsan mo 'phan gyi pho brang 'od srung and to jo mo btsan mo 'phan gyi yum sras gyi pho brang 'od srung gi sku yon du. Pho brang, which Giuseppe Tucci identifies as the title of the second son of a ruling family (Preliminary Report on Two Scientific Expeditions in Nepal, Rome 1956, p. 52. n. 1), does not appear elsewhere in the Tun-huang documents with that meaning and its use here, rather than lha-sras, may indicate that the person,
though regarded as heir presumptive, was not a prince of the royal blood. The mention of the queen before the name of 'Od-srung may confirm the statement that she acted as regent in his infancy. Another reference, in INV 230 to lha sras khri 'od srung btsan yum ... suggests that 'Od-srung was by then enthroned (khri) and so would use the royal title lha sras. Unfortunately this fragment does not give the name of the mother.

It would be interesting to identify more precisely Jo-mo Btsan-mo ‘phan who is described as the mother of 'Od-srung but who would, if the T’ang Annals are correct, have been in fact his aunt. The name Ch’en, attributed there to the queen-regent, is taken by Pelliot to stand for Mchims. But in the Lhasa Treaty Inscription of 822 Mchims is represented by a different character from that used in the T’ang Annals; and it may be that Ch’en stands for chen-ma — the senior queen — an expression used in later Tibetan histories when writing of these events, e.g. fo. 132 of Bu-ston’s Chos-byung. This is elaborated some two and a half centuries later in Pell. T. Ja fo. 139 where names are given to the two queens: the senior (chen-ma) is called Sna-nam-bza’ and is recorded as adopting Yum-brtan, while the junior (chung ma), called Tshe-spong-bza’ ‘Phan, was the mother of 'Od-srung. If we are to accept the Chinese version that there was one prince only and that one adopted, it may be assumed that Pell. T. has drawn somewhat imaginatively on names handed down by tradition in order to add verisimilitude to a legend which, as will be seen later, was by his time already well established.

Another Tun-huang document, INV 2053, mentions gshin ("the late") 'Bro Lha-mo-‘phan. The syllable ‘phan does not appear in the names of queens before the time of Glang-dar-ma and it would seem not impossible that this lady is the same as Jo-mo Btsan-mo-‘phan. The emergence of ‘Bro here would fit nicely into the ancient pattern of hostility between Db’a’s and ‘Bro; but as Glang-dar-ma’s mother was from ‘Bro (THD 82) it is unlikely that his wife would have been from that clan. Moreover, if the claimant prince had been from ‘Bro it might be expected that the T’ang Annals would make the point that he was a kinsman of Shang Pi-pi; and the rather enigmatic document edited by Joseph Hackin as Formulaire sanscrit-tibétain du Xe siècle, Paris 1924, which was written by a ‘Bro, does not mention 'Od-srung at all.

The queen appears to have had the support of those responsible for the murder of Glang-dar-ma, traditionally infamous as the enemy of Buddhism. ‘Bro certainly fell into the pro-Buddhist camp and so, to a lesser degree, did Sna-nam and Tshe-spong. Bu-ston, it is true, describes Sna-nam Rgyalt-sha Khri-sum as a minister hostile to Buddhism in the reign of Ral-pa-can; but the name seems to be a confused amalgam of Rgyal-tshan Lha-snang of Sna-nam, a minister of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan, and Khri-sum-rje of ‘Bro, a famous minister of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan. This does not engender much confidence in the reliability of Bu-ston for the period and better evidence may be found in the Edict of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan edited by Giuseppe
Tucci in The Tombs of the Tibetan Kings, Rome 1950, p. 55. The name Zhang Gnyen-lood of Sna-nam, appearing there, resembles “Shang-yeh-li”, the father of the child adopted by the queen Ch’en in the T’ang Annals version. Mchims had a reputation for enmity to Buddhism; but that was not necessarily a permanent characteristic nor would religious loyalties be likely to stand in the way when power was a stake. In my "A Tibetan Inscription from Rgyal Lha-khang", JRAS 1957, I suggested that the chief minister, Chie-tu-na, who opposed the succession, might be Mchims Rgyal-stong Snya-brtsan. That would be ruled out if it is argued that the queen and her adopted son were from Mchims; and there is perhaps a better candidate in Dba’s Rgyal-to-re Stag-snya, who is traditionally associated with the murder of Ral-pa-can and who is named in THD 102 as the last in a list of chief ministers. In spite of this, and of earlier indications too, it is seen from the eminence attained by Dba’s Ye-she dbang-po and Dba’s Dpal-dbyangs as disciples of Sántarakṣita (TLTD II 86) that the family was not permanently opposed to Buddhism; but it is probable — as is reflected in Sba-bzhd — that their interest was primarily in the political possibilities; and when, in the reign of the religious devotee Ral-pa-can, power came once more into the hands of their old rivals the ‘Bro, the opposition by the Dba’s would certainly be seen by later tradition as being anti-Buddhist.

At all events, whichever family provided the successor to Glang-dar-ma, the Dba’s were in opposition on the eastern frontier with the ‘Bro as their principal enemy and it may be accepted that there was a similar confrontation in central Tibet. A confused memory of that hostility is preserved in Pell. T. Ja fo. 140a in a passage beginning de nas dbu rur ’bro sbas ’khrugs pa la, “Then when there was a disturbance between ’Bro and Sbas in Dbu-ru”.

So far discussion has centred on the earliest records; now we may turn to the historians who wrote after the revival of Buddhism in the tenth century and enquire how their accounts can be related to the version in the T’ang Annals.

The earliest mention of ‘Od-srung and Yum-brtan may be that in the Ruam-thar of Atśa in Bka’-γdams glegs-bum, Pha-chos, Kla fo. 36b, attributed to his disciple ‘Brom-ston (1005–66). They are described as sons of Dar-ma. The work, which has probably been revised later, gives only a bare summary of the line of descent from the early kings to Ye-shes’od who invited Atśa to Tibet. Its information about the descendants of ‘Od-srung does not wholly agree with the tradition in most other works; but that is another problem.

Rather more detail is given in the Rgyal-rabs by Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan of Sa-skya (1146–1216) and in that of ’Phags-pa (1235–80), for both of which I rely on the translation in Giuseppe Tucci’s article, “The Validity of Tibetan Historical Tradition”, in India Antiqua, 1947.

Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan describes both ‘Od-srung and Yum-brtan as “sons” of Glang-dar-ma and states that ‘Od-srung succeeded immediately
on his father’s death and reigned for sixty-three years. 'Od-srung was posthumously born but there is no indication of the date or circumstances of Yum-brtan’s birth; nor is there any suggestion that he was a rival for the throne. He is said to have died at the age of thirty-six. No descendants are attributed to him, and the only other reference to him is that the time of these two princes was the beginning of troubles for Tibet, involving loss of authority on the frontiers and dissension at home. Thags-pa does not even mention Yum-brtan. Both he and Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan agree that 'Od-srung was succeeded by his son Dpal-'khor who reigned for eighteen years and died in what by their calculations must have been 923. He was an active patron of Buddhism. Some time after his death there was a rebellion (khyen-log); and about 929 the country was divided between his two sons, Bkra-shis brtsegs-bsan and Khri Kyi-lding. The descendants of the elder were later established in many places throughout the Lhasa valley, Yar-lung and Gtsang; the descendants of the younger became rulers in western Tibet, whence, as we are told elsewhere, the faith eventually flowed back to central Tibet.

To Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan, both ‘Od-srung and Dpal-’khor were Religious Kings and the rebellion of 929 was a second interruption in the progress of Buddhism, some eighty years after the persecution by Glang-dar-ma. Later historians put the khyen-log much earlier, in the time of 'Od-srung and Yum-brtan. They have nothing to say of a second disaster to Buddhism after the death of Dpal-’khor-bsan, and that perhaps explains how they have come to lose track of a whole sixty-year cycle in calculating the time which elapsed between the death of Glang-dar-ma and the restoration of Buddhism in 978.

The Sba-bzhed zhabs-btags-ma, which may be even earlier than Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan, ignores all dynastic events between Glang-dar-ma and the year 978. If it is true that this work was written by or for the Dba’s (Sbas) family, the omission might be explained by their opposition to what they regarded as an irregular succession.

The Chos-byung of Bu-ston (1322) agrees with Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan about the ages of ‘Od-srung and Dpal-’khor-bsan. It confers a little more personality on the hitherto shadowy figure of Yum-brtan, who is described as having been secretly adopted by the senior queen; but it is not questioned that ‘Od-srung succeeded to the throne and there is no mention of rivalry or of the division of the kingdom. Bu-ston, in fact, seems to agree with Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan that the migration of one branch of the royal family to the west was due to trouble between the grandsons of ‘Od-srung and was no concern of the line of descendants which he ascribes to Yum-brtan — and which will be discussed later.

The Bka'-thang sde-lang, discovered in 1347 but not printed until the sixteenth century, embodies ancient material interwoven with later
additions. The relevant passages in each of the five parts are in typically allusive language and add up to no more than the existence in the fourteenth century of the tradition of religious persecution by Glang-darma followed by disagreement between his "sons", 'Od-srung and Yum-brtan, and the decay of Tibetan prosperity. The Blon-po bka'-thang preserves also the tradition that 'Od-srung and Dpal-'khor-btsan were patrons of Buddhism.

The Deb-ther sngon-po of 'Gos Gzhon-nu-dpal (1478), famous for its careful chronology and drawing on early material including translations of Chinese records, does not mention Yum-brtan at all and regards 'Od-srung as the unquestioned successor to Glang-dar-ma.

The story of rivalry between two princelings makes its appearance in the Hu-lan deb-ther ascribed to the year 1346; but the colourful details are seen first in the Rgyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long, written perhaps in 1388 but not printed until 1478. There (fo. 95) it is told that on the death of Glang-dar-ma the junior queen was found to be pregnant. The senior queen, fearing to lose power, pretended to be pregnant too and, in due time, bought a child from a beggar. As their supporters could not agree, 'Od-srung, the legitimate son, was established in G.yos-ru (Yar-lung etc.) while Yum-brtan acquired Dbu-ru (Lhasa etc.). Dissension increased and in the earth-ox year a rebellion took place. 'Od-srung's son Dpal-'khor-btsan had two sons but they were deprived of their kingdom by the sons of Yum-brtan, whereupon the elder migrated to the west where his descendants established themselves as rulers of new kingdoms. A circumstantial list is given of the descendants of both 'Od-srung and Yum-brtan, mentioning the territories occupied by each.

Similar but not identical stories are found in the fifteenth-century Rgya-bod yig-tshang, the Chos-'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag (Pell. T. 1565) and the Chronicle of the fifth Dalai Lama (1643).

From the various accounts two lines of tradition emerge. The earlier, that of the Sa-skya historians followed also by the Blue Annals, agrees with the Chinese story that there was only one successor to Glang-dar-ma; and it names him 'Od-srung. It disagrees with the T'ang Annals in regarding him as the legitimate son and heir. The appearance of Yum-brtan, though only as a vague and unimportant figure, suggests that some memory of a story of adoption had survived; but since it would be repugnant to Buddhist minds to admit a break in the sacred royal line from which sprung Lha-bla-ma Ye-shes-'od and Byang-chub-'od, who fostered the revival of faith by bringing the padma Atisa to Tibet, the adoption had to be attributed to someone other than 'Od-srung. There is no need to suspect deliberate falsification. Facts must have been blurred by the passage of three uneasy centuries and the unusual name 'U'i-dum-brtan almost demanded to be corrected to "Yum-brtan" and provided with a suitable aetiological explanation.
The second line of tradition, appearing about a century later, also maintained the legitimacy of 'Od-srung but devoted growing attention to the adoption story. Several of its exponents, e.g. Bu-ston — in whose Chos-'byung it first appears — the Hu-lan deb-ther and Rgya-bod yig-tshang have an inkling of something special about Yum-brtan, the child who was adopted. They describe him as the “elder brother” and some record that he was enthroned as a parallel king whose sons eventually ousted that of 'Od-srung in Tibet itself, but they, too, cannot even consider that the line of the Religious Kings could have been carried on by an adopted son.

Gradually writers in search of the picturesque attributed to Yum-brtan elements from other traditions, giving him something of the aura of wickedness which surrounded the name of Glang-dar-ma ('U'i-dum-brtan) and placing in the time of his alleged rivalry with 'Od-srung the division of the kingdom which may rightly have been blamed on the grandsons of 'Od-srung.

The line of descendants ascribed to Yum-brtan is short compared with that of 'Od-srung and can be accounted for with no great difficulty. There must have been, in the fourteenth century and later, noble families genuinely claiming descent from the kings but, in view of the confusion after the death of Glang-dar-ma, it can hardly be supposed that they had preserved completely accurate genealogical details. The early stages of the family trees of 'Od-srung and Yum-brtan show a suspicious overlapping. To each of them two grandsons are attributed and one of these in each line bore the name Nyima-mgon. The name Rig-pa-mgon, generally given as that of the other grandson of Yum-brtan, is applied by Bu-ston to one of 'Od-srung's great-grandsons as well; and it is to Rig-pa-mgon alone of Yum-brtan's lineage that a detailed succession of descendants is ascribed. If one sets out the genealogies in tabular form, it can be seen that the six great-grandsons of 'Od-srung, together with their numerous progeny, are quite enough to account for all the names recorded on both sides by the later historians.

Hackin's *Formulaire*, referred to above, calls for special mention because it appears to be one of the latest Tibetan documents found in the Tun-huang caves and to date from about A.D. 1000. Although it names some of the Tibetan kings after the time of Ral-pa-can, it does not contain a systematic genealogy but only picks out some individuals as noteworthy supporters of Buddhism. Strangely, it seems to regard Ral-pa-can as a different person from Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan. Neither 'Od-srung nor Yum-brtan is mentioned; but no more is Khri Lde-srong-brtsan. Dpal-'khor-btsan is also omitted but his son, whom most later writers call Skyid-lde Nyi-ma-mgon, is named there as Khri Kyi-ling, which is similar to the form in which it is given by Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan, viz. Khri Skyid-lding. The document raises many problems, but its relevance here is that it does not give any support to the existence of Yum-brtan.
In short, Yum-brtan is required only as a sort of scapegoat for the unacceptable fact that the direct line of kings was interrupted after Glng-dar-ma by an adoption. The name can be explained away by confusion with the unfamiliar “U'i-dum-brtan”.

Whether that view be accepted or not, the period remains rather a dark age. Both Chinese and Tibetan sources indicate that even if 'Od-srung and Dpal-'khor-btsan maintained some sort of royal position and practised some sort of Buddhism for sixty years or more, they were beset by the enmity of nobles who resented the new regime. Finally, a popular upheaval or the rise of a rival family, combined with dissension between the two sons of Dpal-'khor-btsan, ended the diminished and troubled kingdom and drove one branch as migrants to the west. In the disorder of the times Buddhism in Central Tibet once more suffered either persecution or, equally fatal, neglect.

Abbreviations

Blue Annals  Deb-ther sngon-po of 'Gos Gzon-nu-dpal (1478).
IHQ  Indian Historical Quarterly
Pell. T.  Chos-'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag phreng-ba (1566).
THD  J. Bacot, F.W. Thomas and C. Toussaint, Documents de Touen-houang relatifs à l'histoire du Tibet, Paris 1946.

Note

The author now believes, on the basis of later reading, that the theory advanced in this article is mistaken. Nevertheless it seems proper to include it (letters to the editor, 9, 16 Nov. 1997).
Ministers of the Tibetan Kingdom

The explosion of Tibetan military strength throughout Central Asia in the seventh to ninth centuries was set off when discontented vassals of a neighbouring ruler transferred their allegiance to Stag-bu Snya-gzigs, a prince whose capital was in the Yar-lung valley. Their choice as leader of a man who seems to have been neither very powerful nor enterprising was perhaps influenced by some special sanctity inherent in him as Spu-rgyal Btsan-po, by which title he was known to those nobles who combined to support him. Certainly in later times the aura of the heavenly origin of the royal line was carefully cultivated; and fealty to the btsan-po as a semi-divine figure, descended from the god 'O-lde Spu-rgyal, may explain how the wide-ranging activities of a kingdom based originally on a small valley south of the Gtsang-po were sustained with such vigour for two centuries. The prowess — and the rivalries — of the ministers who maintained and aggrandized that kingdom are evident in the early Tibetan records; and it was dissension among them that destroyed its greatness when the direct succession to the royal line came to an end with the death of Glang-dar-ma, c. A.D. 846.

It is on the ministers that this article concentrates to the virtual exclusion of the kings whose succession, doings and personalities are usually the central theme of a study of the Tibetan kingdom. A full discussion is beyond my scope; nor is there space to examine the many chronological problems of the period. All that is intended is a look at some aspects of the origins and interrelationships of the powerful statesmen whose support was the mainstay of royal authority. I rely almost entirely on the earliest available sources: the manuscripts from Tun-huang, especially the Annals and Chronicle translated by Professors Bacot, Thomas, and Toussaint; Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents by Thomas; and the inscriptions on stone pillars of the eighth and ninth centuries. In later histories famous ministers such as Mgar Stong-btsan Yul-srung and Mgos Khri-bzang Yab-lag figure.

prominently, and in the *Blon-po bka’-thang* there is a long list of ministerial names; but so much of those accounts savours of imaginative construction on a slender basis of written or oral tradition that they inspire little confidence as history unless they are backed by evidence from the time of the kingdom itself. There is one striking exception in the three *bka’-tsigs* — two edicts of Khri Srong-lde-btsan and one of Khri Lde-srong-btsan — contained in volume *Ja* of the *Chos’byung* of Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag ’phreng-ba (1564) which appear to have been copied from original documents preserved in the archives at Bsam-yas. Even the Tun-huang manuscripts need to be carefully scrutinized. Although they cover an amazingly wide field, they can only represent a small fraction of the sacred and secular literature, correspondence, and official records produced at that time. And they are a scrappy collection, appearing for the most part to be incomplete copies discarded as faulty, rough drafts, writing exercises, and casual scribbles, all preserved through the scruple against destroying the written word, and deserving Sir Aurel Stein’s description of them as “a hoard of sacred waste”. Further, what has survived dates from the eighth century; and, although the Annals, which are a bare and seemingly objective abstract, are unlikely to have suffered much from tampering, the Chronicle, written in a more picturesque vein, may well have added a romantic colouring to events of some centuries earlier. In particular, a list of Chief Ministers, embodied in it, appears fanciful and unreliable where it relates to personages before the seventh century.

With such cautions about the nature of the evidence, it may be observed that, as the Tibetan kingdom expanded, many of the ministers and generals on whom the rulers came to depend were from allied or subject peoples on the borders from whose leading families the kings chose their brides. For convenience I describe such clans as “foreign” in contrast to those from the Tibetan heartland, whom I call “Tibetan”. Just when the name Bod came into use and to what area and what peoples it originally applied is uncertain. In inscriptions of the late eighth century onwards the Tibetan kingdom is known as Bod or Bod chen-po; but, although the kings of that time claimed that it was over Bod that their divine first ancestor came to rule, it is not explicitly stated in the Chronicle that Spu-rgyal Btsan-po whom the discontented ministers of other princes combined to make their leader was, in fact ruler of Bod; nor is it known whether those neighbouring rulers regarded themselves also as part of Bod-yul.

Lists of principalities surrounding the kingdom of Yar-lung, at a period before the sixth century, include some which the Tibetans regarded as foreign — e.g. Zhang-zhung, Sum-yul, and Dwags — but the others were perhaps different sections of the Ch’iang people (of which the Bod-pa were a part) and of associated people, migrating westward and southward at different times and settling in different parts of the country which, after its
subjugation by the successors of Stag-bu Snya-gzigs, became known as Bod. The use of the name T’u-fan in the Sui and T’ang Annals suggests that some form of the word Bod was known when the Chinese first came into contact with Tibet but that may be an a posteriori inference at the time when the Annals came to be compiled. There are in the Tun-huang Annals and the T’ang Annals varying accounts of the origin of the Tibetan royal line. It does not necessarily follow that the princes of Yar-lung or of other regions were from exactly the same tribe as the people they ruled; but whatever the origin of the Tibetan royal family — whether in the east or, as some later accounts have it, in India or Nepal — and whatever the earliest application of the name Bod, the power of the descendants of Stag-bu Snya-gzigs was soon to extend over all that we know as Tibet, and much further.

The discontented nobles who combined to support Stag-bu Snya-gzigs were led by members of the Myang and Dba’s clans and included some from Mnon and Tse-spong. Those names, except for Mnon, continue to figure in the records of the kingdom with the Dba’s whom I see as leaders of the “Tibetan” clans, being particularly influential till the very end. Detailed discussion of the origin of those clans is not possible here; but it may be noted that Myang were ministers of the prince of Klurn-ro, an ally of the prince of ‘O-yul who may be identified with Zing-po-rje Stag-skya-bo with his capital at Nyen-kar Rnying-pa. One of the lists of the principalities shows the capital of ‘O-yul as Sngang-kar, which may be confused with Nyen-kar. Nyen-kar Rnying-pa is not necessarily the same as Nyen-kar frequently mentioned in the Annals, which seems to have been in Stod-lung. ‘O-yul and also the domain of Myang were conquered by Zing-po-rje Khri-pangs-sum, prince of Ngas-po with his capital at Yu-sna of Sdur-ba, somewhere north of the Gtsang-po; and Myang was made subject to one of Khri-pangs-sum’s allies. When, as a result of the combination under Stag-bu Snya-gzigs, Khri-pangs-sum was overthrown Myang acquired, as his prize, the castle of Dur-pa. Inscriptions of the early ninth century show that the area of Zhwa’i Lha-khang was at that time in the possession of the Myang clan. The stream by which the chapel stands is now called Mang-ra-chu (or Myang-ra-chu), and the east side of the watershed in which it rises is the source of the Myang-chu which flows through Rgya-mda’ and Kong-po. That appears to have a bearing on the local origin of the clan; while, on the opposite side of the stream from Zhwa’i Lha-khang there are remains of old buildings not unlike those of the royal castle at Pho-brang in the Yar-lung valley, but on a smaller scale. A fragment of an ancient inscribed pillar was found there. The ruins are a possible site of Dur-pa; but there is also, not far away on the north bank of the Skyid-chu opposite the point where it is entered by the Mang-ra-chu, a dgon-pa named G.yu-sna.

The Dba’s had been ministers of the prince of ‘O-yul and as their reward for the defeat of the usurping Khri-pangs-sum they obtained Mal-dro, which may be the modern Mal-gro, downstream from G.yu-sna, where the
Mal-gro-chu joins the Skyid-chu, and on the north side of a pass that leads down to 'O-yul.

Tse-spong, who appear to have been allies or vassals of the prince of Yar-lung, Stag-bu Snya-gzigs, were granted estates in 'On, a valley to the west of 'O-yul. Two centuries later they are found with property also in the Stod-lung valley north-west of Lhasa.

Stag-bu Snya-gzigs, to whom the discontented ministers had given their allegiance, soon died and the nobles then took their oath to his two young sons and proceeded with the destruction of Khri-pangs-sum. Apart from the possibility that Tse-spong had been an ally of the btsan-po there is no mention of any of his ministers; but the suspect list of Chief Ministers in the Chronicle records one Mong Khri-do Re-snang in about the right chronological setting, and that name appears in the fourteenth-century Rgya-bod-yig-tsang as minister of Stag-bu Snya-gzigs. The Chronicle also recounts that a Mong minister was dismissed during the reign of Stag-bu Snya-gzigs's son Gnam-ri. Srong-btsan sgam-po's wife also came from Mong. Thereafter the clan does not figure in Tibetan history.

The first person to appear as an active and powerful Chief Minister was Myang Mang-po-rje Zhang-snang, son of that Myang who had been the principal supporter of Stag-bu Snya-gzigs. Zhang-snang became minister of Gnam-ri on the fall of Mong and he presumably led the campaigns of that king against outlying peoples of Ch'iang stock who were brought into subjection. When Gnam-ri was murdered they and other recent vassals took the opportunity to rebel and, as the new king, Srong-btsan Sgam-po was a minor, it was Myang Zhang-snang who restored order and even extended Tibetan power still further.

Not long after, probably when the king was old enough to strike out for himself, Myang became the victim of intrigue by one Khyung-po Spung-sad Zu-tse who had already been instrumental in the disgrace of Mong. His name suggests that he belonged to a section of the loose confederation of peoples, known as Zhang-zhung, whose areas of migration and settlement were along the northern borders of Tibet from east to west. They were regarded as foreigners by the Tibetans and Spung-sad Zu-tse is the first example of a principal minister of a Tibetan king drawn from outside Central Tibet. He attained that position by his services to King Gnam-ri in bringing under Tibetan control another section of the Zhang-zhung living perhaps north and west of what is now Shigatse. If there is a basis for later accounts that one of Srong-btsan sgam-po’s wives was from Zhang-zhung, Spung-sad Zu-tse, who was in the confidence of Gnam-ri, might have acted as intermediary. From the Chronicle he appears to have been a Machiavellian intriguer but his ascendancy ended when he himself, at an advanced age, was accused of treason and committed suicide.
The accuser was Mgar Stong-btsan Yul-srung, the first of a great family which dominated the government of Tibet for over half a century. Among his achievements which have been celebrated in later histories with much picturesque detail, was the winning of a Chinese princess for his king, Srong-btsan Sgam-po. That was in A.D. 641, but it is not certain that he was Chief Minister at that time for, although later editions of the Chinese Tang Annals describe him as such, the Tibetan Annals in their brief mention of the event refer to him simply by name; and the early edition of the Tang Annals calls him only “minister”. The fall of Spung-sad Zu-tse, after which Mgar succeeded, may have been connected with a Zhang-zhung rebellion, c. 644/5. Stong-btsan Yul-srung was Chief Minister until his death in 658 after which his sons dominated the affairs of Tibet for a further forty years.

Sir Harold Bailey has identified the Mgar (also: ‘Gar, Sgar) as a branch of the Yüeh-chih people who were driven out of their homeland north of the Kokonor by the Hsiung-nu about B.C. 190. Most of them migrated to the west of Central Asia and became forebears of the Kushan, but a small group moved south of the lake and were amalgamated with the Ch’iang whose language they adopted. If that was the remote origin of the Tibetan Mgar, by the time of the Tun-huang Chronicle they figure as ministers of the ruler of Ngas-po who was defeated by Stag-bu Snya-gzigs’s supporters. They are not mentioned in that story and may be assumed to have stood aloof. Ngas-po is identified by R.A. Stein as Ngam-sho, i.e. Lho-kha. But the identification of old place names with those of the present day is hazardous. The domains of the ruler of Ngas-po seem to have been mainly north of the Gtsang-po. They were extended by conquest as far as Kong-po; but that is separated from Lho-kha by the river and by the principality of Dwags-po. Moreover, a connection between Bya and Sregs-yul is indicated; and Sregs may be the Sgrags of later times, in the neighbourhood of Bsam-yas. At all events, the Mgar — for that is their regular name in the early manuscripts and neither ‘Gar nor Sgar is found there — can be seen as a “Tibetan” clan.

There are indications that after the death of Stong-btsan Yul-srung the power of the Mgar family, though still very active, was not quite unchallenged; and its dramatic termination in a spirited coup by the young king 'Dus-srong must have needed the help of rival clans and families. The fall of the Mgar ended a century during which, with the exception of Khyung-po Spung-sad Zu-tse, the Chief Ministers had been of central Tibetan stock. There followed the emergence of a new pattern in which a prominent part was regularly played by families which I believe to have been foreign, from which the Tibetan kings chose their principal wives. An example of such a marriage is that of Srong-btsan sgam-po’s son Gungsrong to Mang-po-rje Khri-skar who is described as khong-co, the title by which Chinese princesses were known to the Tibetans. But she was not
Chinese and appears to have been a princess of the 'A-zha (T'uyühun) vassal state. Although Gung-srong died young, his widow was an influential figure and might have contributed towards checking the power of the Mgar; and prominent military leaders with the title 'Bon-dar-rgyal were probably her kinsmen.

But the clan which can more clearly be inferred to have had a hand in the downfall of the Mgar is that of 'Dus-srong's mother — the 'Bro. By origin they were, as is learnt from the T'ang Annals, Yang-tung, a people of uncertain racial composition and distribution, possibly connected with the Zhang-zhung, a part of whom were situated in historic times on the north-east frontier between Tibet and China. Although the Chinese describe them as a somewhat uncouth nomadic people, that seems to be a stock formula for barbarians, and to relate to an earlier stage of their existence; and by the eighth century those on the China border had attained a much more civilised way of life and, probably owing to their proximity to China, their leading families appear to have been more convinced followers of Buddhism than were the Tibetans at that time. With them there developed a characteristic feature of the Tibetan polity — the zhang, or maternal uncles of the king, although there were, no doubt, maternal uncles before the 'Bro. Indeed, the Tse-spong had provided the mother of Srong-btsan Sgam-po and a member of that clan was a councillor of the king though he is not specifically described as zhang. The first instance of that title is seen in the Annals for A.D. 701 with Zhang Btsan-to-re, who must have been of 'Bro.

I have shown elsewhere that a distinction has to be drawn between the zhang who were true maternal uncles and a group of officials known as zhang-lon (very rarely: zhang-blon), drawn from clans that were not related to the king and to whose number promotion could be made even from outside the established nobility. Later sources ascribing the origin of the zhang-lon to a remote legendary age cannot be regarded as historic; but there is in the Tun-huang Chronicle a reference to a body of zhang-lon in the time of Srong-btsan Sgam-po; and the first authentic evidence of promotion to their ranks is found in the inscription on the Zhol rdo-ring, c. A.D. 765. Those who were zhang by right of relationship viz. the Tse-spong, 'Bro, Mchims (or Mchims-rgyal) and the Sna-nam, were usually described in the form of Rlon-zhang 'Bro Stag-bzher; and the title once acquired by a family continued in it even after the royal nephew had been succeeded by a new king with a new batch of true maternal uncles.

The importance of the zhang was that so many of the kings died young leaving as heir a minor who needed support and protection against rivals from his mother and her kinsmen, or from his grandmother and hers. There must have been the possibility of competition in that matter among different clans of zhang but there is no evidence of friction as their common aim
would be the establishment of the young king. Certainly 'Bro Khri-ma-lod, the mother of 'Dus-srong, was a person of consequence who made her influence felt in the reign of her grandson Khri Lde-gtsug-btsan also, down to her death in A.D. 712; and her kinsman — perhaps her brother — Zhang Btsan-to-re Lhas-sbyin also figures prominently in the two reigns until his death in 721.

From the fall of the Mgar to the death of 'Dus-srong in 705 at the early age of twenty-nine, no one is named as having been appointed Chief Minister. The foreign origin of the 'Bro may have prevented them from aspiring to that position which, in fact, was not assumed by a member of the clan until A.D. 727. Or, perhaps, the Mgar shogunate had been seen as a warning against the appointment of anyone to such a high office. The king, presumably, had the support of Tibetan ministers who had not been wholehearted supporters of the Mgar. Those named are the Seng-go clan who held minor office under Gnam-ri and later attained the important post of brung-pa. Others were Mang-btsan Ldong-zhi, who may have been of Gnubs, and Khru Mang-po-rje Lha-zhung. Although later sources identify Khu as a clan name, it may in some instances refer to a paternal uncle of the king. Some half-brothers and step-uncles produced by royal polygamy must surely have survived the perils of their position; but clear references to older or younger brothers of the kings are noticeably few and enigmatic.

When 'Dus-srong died in A.D. 705 the heir apparent, Rgyal-gtsug-ru — later known as Khri Lde-gtsug-btsan — was an infant. His mother was from Ch'iu, which may have been in the eastern part of Kong-po and Spo-bo. The maternal uncles of the clan do not seem to have taken an important part in affairs at once; and, as there was no Chief Minister, the grandmother, Khri-ma-lod of 'Bro, took charge of the young king whose succession was complicated by what appears in the Chinese Annals to have been a prolonged struggle between several sons of 'Dus-srong. References in the Tun-huang Annals to these troubles are not easy to interpret. They record a rebellion by Ldeg-ren-pa Mnon Snang-grags and Khe-rgad Mdo-snang. Mnon was a clan that originally supported Gnam-ri, and Ldeg-ren-pa, which appears nowhere else, may be some official title. Khe-rgad figures in the Chronicle, singing a lampoon against 'Dus-srong’s mistress who belonged to the Cog-ro clan. In the same year we read that: “At Pong-lag-rang the prince, the elder brother, Lha-bal-pho, was deposed”. Pong-lag-rang appears to have been in Nan-chao where 'Dus-srong had been campaigning for some time and the prince who was deposed may have been his son by his wife or mistress of Cog-ro. At the same time there was a revolt by Se-rib, which may relate to the Mustang region of Nepal where the name Se-rib is found today.

In that troubled year Khu Mang-po-rje Lha-zhung, mentioned above, was appointed Chief Minister — the first such appointment to be recorded
since A.D. 698 — but in a very short time he was dismissed and probably executed. He was succeeded by Dba’s Khri-gzigs Zhang-nyen with whom a “Tibetan” clan and one of the original supporters of the royal family secured the office which its members were to hold at various times for some forty-five years out of a century and a half that remained to the Tibetan kingdom. The Dba’s had fallen under suspicion in the reign of Srong-btsan Sgam-po because of their association with the Myang clan and, although they took a great oath of loyalty, denying complicity with the fallen Myang Zhang-snang, they do not appear to have been given an active part in affairs during the dominance of the Mgar. After their emergence and rise to the highest authority under the king their principal competitors were to be the ‘Bro who held the post for between sixty and seventy years; but in the time of trouble the support of the Dba’s must have been vital to the ‘Bro in vindicating the claim of their candidate for the throne. The child was proclaimed king in 712 with the name Khri Lde-gtsug-btsan and Dba’s Khri-gzigs Zhang-nyen continued as Chief Minister until his death in 721 in which year there also died the great zhang ‘Bro Btsan-to-re and another zhang, Khri-bzang Stag-tsab. After Dba’s Khri-gzigs two more members of the clan held the office until 728, with an interval of two years when it was held by a Chief Minister of the Rngegs, a clan associated with the royal family in its early days. Other ministers associated with the administration under the Dba’s were Zhang Rgya-sto, possibly of Tse-spong, in the names of which clan Sto was frequently favoured as the final syllable; Stag-gu Ri-tsab, whose name suggests he was associated with Khotan; and Cog-ro Khri-gzigs Snang-khong; another member of the Cog-ro was, however, disloyal.

In A.D. 728, when the king was of mature years, the Dba’s Chief Minister was dismissed and replaced by a member of the ‘Bro clan, Cung-bzang ‘Or-mang, who remained in office for at least twenty years. He is not specifically described as zhang which might imply that he was a clansman rather than a kinsman of the king but there seems to have been some latitude in the use of the title: for example Khri-gzu Ram-shags of ‘Bro, who became Chief Minister at a later date, is not entitled zhang in the Tun-huang documents but appears as zhang in the list of witnesses to the Edict of Khri Lde-srong-btsan; and, still later, ‘Bro Khri-sum-rgyud Stag-snang who is not described as zhang in the Chronicle, is given that title in other manuscripts from Tun-huang and in the list of witnesses to the treaty of A.D. 822.

The list that follows shows the clan of the Chief Ministers in each reign from ‘Dus-srong onwards and also the clan of the king’s mother which provided the true zhang kinsmen at that time. Many of the dates from the end of the sixth century are debatable but that does not affect the general pattern of the swing of ministerial power.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>King</th>
<th>Mother's Clan</th>
<th>Chief Minister</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'Dus-srong</td>
<td>'Bro</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 676 aged c. 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khri Lde-gtsug-btsan</td>
<td>Mchims</td>
<td>Khu Mang-po-rje Lha-zhong 705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 705 aged 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dba's Khri-gzigs Zhang-nyen 705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dba's Khri-sum-rje 721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rngegs Mang-zam 725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dba's Stag-sgra Khong-lod 727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* 'Bro Cung-bzang 'Or-mang 727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'Bal Skyes-bzang Ldong-tsab c. 748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khri Srong-lde-btsan</td>
<td>Sna-nam</td>
<td>Dba's Snang-bzher Zu-btsan c. 755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 755 aged 13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mgos Khri-bzang Yab-lag ? 763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mchims Rgyal-gzigs Shu-theng ? 768</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ngan-lam Stag-sgra Kluk-khod 783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Sna-nam Rgyal-mtshan Lha-snang 783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* 'Bro Khri-gzu Ram-shags 796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mu-ne btsan-po</td>
<td>Tse-spong</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. A.D. 799 aged 25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khri Lde-srong-btsan</td>
<td>Tse-spong</td>
<td>'Bro Khri-gzu Ram-shags ? 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?A.D. 800 aged 24</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dba's Mang-rje Lha-lod ? 810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khri Gtsug-lde-btsan</td>
<td>'Bro</td>
<td>* 'Bro Khri-sum-rje Stag-snang c. 815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. A.D. 815 aged 20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glang-dar-ma 'U-dum-btsan</td>
<td>'Bro</td>
<td>Dba's Rgyal-to-re Stag-snya c. 838</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Ministers with the title *zhang*

From the above it is seen that, although the post of Chief Minister was held by different *zhang* for about 110 years out of 150, the true maternal uncle did not automatically attain power on the accession of his nephew. Questions of personality and the circumstances of the day must have been governing factors. In fact, on two important instances of the succession of young kings in troubled conditions authority came into the hands of the unrelated Dba's clan. It was not for over half a century after the relationship
of zhang had been established that the 'Bro and the Mchims achieved the office of Chief Minister while the Tse-spong never did so.

After the 'Bro had displaced the Dba's in that post in 728 there is no identifiable reference to any Dba's as active in affairs of state under the Chief Minister 'Bro Cung-bzang. But, on later showing, it is probable that at least one of them was included in the group of Great Ministers, a sort of Council of which there are traces from the time of Srong-btsan Sgam-po. According to the T'ang Annals it appears to have consisted of nine ministers; and that is borne out by the lists of witnesses to the edicts of Khri Srong-lde-btsan and Khri Lde-srong-btsan and to the treaty of 822. Those lists show, also, that both the higher and the lower official posts were widely distributed between a considerable number of clans. The Chief Minister, as President of the Council and presumably closest adviser to the king, clearly exercised great authority but several of the highest ministers commanding large bodies of troops on distant frontiers must have enjoyed a large degree of independence. It is, indeed, remarkable how the cohesion of the kingdom and a unity of purpose were maintained for so long in spite of the competition for power between different clans each with its special interest. The key, as I have suggested, was probably devotion to the divine character of the king; and it was the undermining of his sacred authority by the influence of Buddhism that brought about its dissolution.

The description of most of the zhang clans as "foreign" is largely a label of convenience and it may be supposed that those who came to settle in Tibet and acquired estates there were fairly rapidly assimilated. No hard and fast conclusions can be drawn that "foreign" or "Tibetan" clans were more or less likely to favour war or peace with China; but some difference in their respective attitudes towards religion may be detected.

Buddhism was, of course, a foreign introduction; but at the time of Srong-btsan Sgam-po it probably did not spread far outside the royal circle where it was favoured by his queens from China and Nepal. There is no indication that the Mgar shogunate paid any special attention to it; but the Skar-cung inscription of the early ninth century records the establishment of a chapel each by 'Dus-srong and Khri Lde-gtsug-btsan in both of whose reigns the 'Bro clan were prominent. It was they who arranged the marriage of Khri Lde-gtsug-btsan to a Chinese princess who, according to tradition which appears acceptable, was a zealous Buddhist; and members of the 'Bro clan were, later, strong supporters of Buddhism. How the early religious foundations were served is not known, but as Srong-btsan sgam-po's Chinese bride, Wen-ch'eng, lived until 683 and the princess Chin-ch'eng, who arrived in 710, lived until 739, it is possible that priests from their entourage tended those small chapels.

The first suggestion of hostility towards Buddhism appears in the Annals of Li-yul, which draw on an early source. It is said, in the form of a
prophecy, that after the death of the princess, Buddhist monks were expelled from Tibet. Certainly, the *bka'-tsigs* (edict) of Khri Srông-ldge-bsan relates that when his father died (c. A.D. 755) some ministers combined to put an end to the faith. Later histories include among those enemies of religion members of the Sna-nam clan — true maternal uncles of the king — as well as the Dba’s. The Zhol inscriptions further recount that Khri Lde-gtsug-bsan was assassinated by his Chief Minister, ’Bal Skyes-bsang Ldong-tsab, and Lang Nyes-gzigs. The minister Ngan-lam Stag-sgra Klukhong, who set up the splendid inscribed pillar in front of the Potala, claims that he then killed the assassins and won royal favour. Ngan-lam appears as a new clan on the Tibetan scene; for, while Klu-khong himself enjoyed some official rank at the end of Khri Lde-gtsug-bsans’s reign and went on to be a successful general and later Chief Minister for a short time, his father was of a lower status and was promoted in the wake of his son’s achievements. From the name it is possible that the family originated in Sogdia where Ngan or An was a common form. In later tradition, both Buddhist and Bon-po, Stag-sgra Klukhong is known as a leading opponent of Buddhism; but for all the proud claims in his inscription it was one of the Dba’s, Snang-bsher Zu-bsan — who succeeded to the post of Chief Minister and it was during his regime that the suppression of Buddhism must have taken place.

Nothing in the Annals or Chronicle explains the action of his predecessor ’Bal Skyes-bsang Ldong-tsab who killed the king and endangered the life of his heir. Later histories do not mention the affair although it is recorded openly on the Zhol pillar. The ’Bal clan does not figure elsewhere in the Tun-huang documents but was perhaps from the east, for, in a list of principalities, the ruler of Sum-yul is called ’Bal Rje-mang Ru-ti. ’Bal Skyes-bsang Ldong-tsab was an active colleague of ’Bro Cung-bsang whom he succeeded as Chief Minister some time after 747. There is unfortunately a gap in the Tun-huang Annals between 747 and 755, so the exact year is uncertain. The Bsam-yas history of Sba-bzhed relates that two ministers who favoured Buddhism, Mang and ’Bal, were banished; and it might be that the king had turned against Buddhism and was murdered by the two ministers for that reason. But whatever the reason for the crime — whether it was religious or simply political — there is no doubt that the practice of Buddhism was forbidden until after Khri Srông-ldge-bsan had reached the age of twenty in A.D. 762. In the following year, Dba’s Snang-bsher Zu-bsan, who had been Chief Minister during that period, was apparently retired with honour and replaced by one of his former colleagues, Mgos Khri-bsang Yab-lag; and soon Tibetan Buddhism burst into flower with the foundation of the great monastery of Bsam-yas where Tibetans could for the first time be trained and ordained as monks and priests. Later tradition glorifies Mgos — presumably with reason — for his part in the restoration of the faith;
and the name, whose origin Tucci places in the Gyantse area, figures prominently in later religious history. But no other minister of that clan is mentioned in the Tun-huang manuscripts. It is suggested in later histories that there were two persons — Old Mgos (Mgos-rgan) and his son Khri-bzang Yab-lag, but there is no evidence for that in the early documents and it seems that the Khri-bzang mentioned first in 758 is the Khri-bzang Yab-lag who was appointed Chief Minister in A.D. 763.

His successor was Rgyal-gzigs Shu-theng of Mchims-rgyal. The latter appears to be the full and proper form of the name and may suggest that the clan were originally princes of Mchims. Rgyal-gzigs Shu-theng was the first of his clan to attain the post and did so at a time when the king was the grandson of a Mchims lady. The T'ang Annals relate that "Shang Hsieh-chieh" (Zhang Rgyal-gzigs) was succeeded in 782 by "Shang Chieh-tsan" — Zhang Rgyal-mtshan Lha-snang of Sna-nam; but the year of his appointment is less certain. The T'ang Annals show that Shang Hsieh-chieh retired from military command on the frontier about A.D. 768. The date of his subsequent appointment as Chief Minister is linked in a way with that of the foundation of Bsam-yas for he was holding the post when the edict of Khri Srong-lde-btsan was promulgated, by which time there was an established religious community at Bsam-yas. There are two main traditions about the date of Bsam-yas, one in Bu-ston and the Sba-bzhed — which looks suspiciously formal — that it was founded in a hare year and completed in the next hare year twelve years later; the other account, in the Bka'i thang-yig, is that it was founded in a tiger year and completed after five years in a horse year and consecrated in the following sheep year. The nearest contemporary evidence — the edict of Khri Srong-lde-btsan — states: lug gi lo la dpyid zla ba'i tses bcu bdun la rten btsugs pa'i tses, "[from] the date of its rten-btsugs on the seventeenth day of the spring month of the sheep year". I understand rten-btsugs to be the consecration on the installation of the rten, the holy objects — i.e. the rab-gnas rather than the foundation, rmang-'ding. It may be noticed that the tradition favouring a cycle of twelve years also records an important event in the following sheep year — the ordination of Tibetan monks. Accepting the sheep year as that of the consecration of the monastery, there is a choice of two possible years, 767 and 779. The former allows too short a time after the change of regime in 763 for the invitation of religious teachers from outside Tibet, the revival of religious enthusiasm, the choice and preparation of a site and the work of construction. A.D. 779 is, therefore, the probable date.

If Mgos Khri-bzang Yab-lag was Chief Minister in 779, the tenure of office by Zhang Rgyal-gzigs must have been short for he was succeeded in 782 by Zhang Rgyal-mtshan and, in addition, some time must be found for Ngan-lam Stag-sgra Klu-khong who appears between those two in the list of Chief Ministers in the Chronicle. If indeed he held the office it must
have been for a very short spell, or perhaps as deputy. The connection of Mgchos Khri-bzang with Bsam-yas might, therefore, have been with its preparation and foundation and he might have been succeeded by Zhang Ragyal-gzigs some time after A.D. 768. He could, also, have been present at the consecration, for later histories describe him as Chos-blon or Dgung-blon, which may imply the status of a sort of Chief Minister emeritus.

In the tally of ministers Mgchos may be seen as "Tibetan", as may Mchhims whose origin was, perhaps, on the border of Kong-po and Po-bo. As for Ngan-lam, whom I regarded as "foreign", in spite of his later reputation as an arch-enemy of Buddhism and stories of his execution or banishment for his crime, he appears as a witness to Khri Srong-lde-btsan's edict in favour of that faith; and later he was briefly Chief Minister. Religious differences must have been less violent than later tradition would have us believe; and there is, further, a good deal of confusion in that tradition which includes Mchims as well as Dba's in the enemies of religion and identifies the other arch-enemy, Ma-zhang Khrom-pa-skyes, as a member of the Sna-nam clan — that of the king's mother.

The appointment as Chief Minister of Zhang Ragyal-mtshan Lha-snang was the first occasion on which a true maternal uncle held that office in the reign of his nephew. The clan makes no acceptable appearance in Tibetan history before this time and there is no good reason why the later identification of Sna-nam as Samarkand should not point to its origin in one of the peoples of distant Yüeh-chih stock who were being displaced once more by the conquering Arabs. R.A. Stein's identification of the term chab-srid as referring in some instances to royal marriages may give relevance in the matrimonial affairs of Khri Lde-gtshug-btsan to a passage in the Tun-huang Annals for the year A.D. 738 when the king went for that purpose to the un-Tibetan sounding "Beg". His son Khri Srong-lde-btsan was born four years later.

Ragyal-mtshan Lha-snang was clearly an able and powerful minister and found particular favour with the Chinese with whom he concluded a treaty of peace, but there is no reason to accept the view of Erik Haarh that his name implies that he was rgyal-tshab — regent — or that of F.W. Thomas that the name was rgyal-tsa, meaning "of Chinese descent"; Ragyal-mtshan is simply the part of his name known as the mkhan and although its precise value is uncertain, there is no evidence that it related to any official function. As for his religious leanings, it appears that one of his sisters, perhaps the queen-mother herself, was attracted to Buddhism.

In A.D. 796 Ragyal-mtshan Lha-snang was succeeded as Chief Minister by Khri-gzu Ram-shags of 'Bro. One of that clan was among the wives of Khri Srong-lde-btsan, the reigning btsan-po. An important event in his time was the capture of Sha-cu (Tun-huang) by Khri-sum-rje Sbeg-lha of Rlang, a clan with Sum-pa connections, who is not to be confused with Khri-sum-rje Stag-snang
of 'Bro, one of the ministers responsible for the treaty of A.D. 822. Sha-cu was the last of the Chinese strongholds on the Silk Route through Central Asia which the Tibetans had dominated since about A.D. 746. It is probable that the Tibetans had had control over the cave-temples, some eleven miles from the city and fortress of Sha-cu for some time before they captured the stronghold itself. At all events, they were there and in other captured Chinese towns along the Great Wall, in close contact with Chinese Buddhism and in particular with an active centre of Ch’an teachings whose influence rapidly spread to Central Tibet where it proved a strong competitor for the doctrine of the masters from India. So much bitterness was engendered that a great debate between the two schools was held in about A.D. 799. Demiéville and Tucci have examined in detail the remarkable survivals of dossiers from either side; but what is relevant to my present theme is the evidence that the Chinese teachings were supported by members of the 'Bro whereas the Dba’s supported the Indian school. And so, the circumstances of the debate and its result in a triumph, in practice if not in dialectic, for the Indian side embraced a wide range of domestic rivalries and international politics as well as religious doctrinal differences.

And yet, even though the verdict went to the “Tibetan” side, the office of Chief Minister remained in the hands of 'Bro Khri-gzhu Ram-shags who survived, also, the strife and dissension at the end of the reign of Khri Srong-lde-btsan and the troubled interregnum of Mu-ne btsan-po to appear still — or once again — as Chief Minister of the new king, Khri Lde-srong-btsan. In that capacity he witnessed the edict of that king renewing his father’s pledge to maintain Buddhism. Tucci has shown that, although in the great debate the Indian doctrine won the field, the influence of the Chinese school continued in many aspects of religion in Tibet. In the edict of Khri Lde-srong-btsan there is no specific reference to doctrinal differences; but the emphasis on las and dbang — religious works and obligations — echoes the Indian rather than the Chinese view.

A great deal of valuable evidence emerges from that edict. We see that at the end of Khri Srong-lde-btsan’s reign Buddhism had suffered yet another setback but had come out of it with enhanced authority for, unlike the edict of Khri Srong-lde-btsan, in that of his son the name of the lay Chief Minister, Khri-gzu Ram-shags, is preceded by those of two ban-sde bka’ chen-po-la gtags-pa — monks invested with highest authority. They were Bran-ka Dpal-gyi yon-tan and Myang Ting-nge-'dzin bzang-po. Thus the precedence accorded to monk-ministers in the reign of Khri Gtsug-lde-btsan Ral-pa can had already been established in that of his father.

The foremost of the great monk-ministers, Bran-ka Dpal-gyi yon-tan, was well-known to the Chinese as a person of influence and received letters from the poet Po Chü-i, who was then an official, in the name of the emperor Hsien-tsung. He continued in power during the reign of Khri Lde-srong-btsan’s son
and successor Khri Gtsug-lde-btsan and was principal witness to the treaty of A.D. 822. He was later assassinated and what purports to be part of the remains of his body is preserved in the guise of a chos-skyong, known as the Dpa'bo Blon-chen, in a small chapel at Snye-thang. Tibetan records throw no light on his origin. The name Bran-ka does not appear before him but may be connected with the region known as Bran, some eight miles west of Lhasa and not far from Snye-thang where his remains are supposed to be. Too much should not be made of the fact that a name has not appeared in the Tun-huang manuscripts. They are fragmentary and are mainly concerned with the more important ministers and generals, beneath which level there must have grown up during the centuries a large substratum of lesser nobles. Thanks to the edict of Khri Lde-srong-btsan there have been preserved the names not only of feudatory princes or rgyal-phran and high officials, but also of many clans some of which are otherwise unknown, for example, the Chinese-looking Le'-u, the apparently Sum-pa clan of Tong, Rtsang-rje, 'Bring-yas, Snya-shur, Khar-pa-rje, Nyi-ba, Mang-sgra, Gnang and Sbrang. There are also names which may designate some religious or official position, for instance 'Ong-ka (which appears also in Khri Srong-lde-btsan’s edict) and Zha-snga, neither of which is described as lon. These names deserve fuller study than can be given them here.

The second great monk-minister, Ting-nge-'dzin, was from the ancient Tibetan clan of Myang, kingmakers at the time of Stag-bu Snya-gzigs. The inscriptions at Zhwa'i Lha-khang, which he founded, show that he was a minister of state and guardian of the young king-to-be, Khri Lde-srong-btsan, in the troubled times after the death of Khri Srong-lde-btsan. They show, too, that a link had continued between the Myang and their associates from the time of Stag-bu Snya-gzigs — the Dba’s. Since their fall in the reign of Srong-btsan Sgam-po the Myang did not again achieve the highest office; but they had kept a footing in the administration, and the grandfather of the ban-sde was Myang Snang-bzang 'Dus-khong who was brung-pa in A.D. 745. Other members of the clan are among the witnesses to the edict of Khri Lde-srong-btsan.

How long Khri-gzu Ram-shags of 'Bro remained Chief Minister does not appear from early records. The list in the Chronicle shows that his successor was from the rival Dba’s — Mang-rje Lha-lod, who might be the general captured by the Chinese in A.D. 802 and presumably returned with other prisoners in A.D. 806. The former hostility of the Dba’s towards Buddhism suggests that he would not last long in a regime headed by Buddhist monks; but some, at least, of the Dba’s had seen the political opportunities of religious office, and the great Indian teacher Bodhisattva Śāntarakṣita was followed as head abbot in Tibet by Dba’s Dpal-dbyangs. Mang-rje Lha-lod may have continued in office until the reign of Khri Gtsug-lde-btsan when his successor was a member of the ‘Bro clan, which
again took office in the person of the famous general Khri-sum-rje Stag-snang, who is eulogised in the prayers celebrating the foundation of a chapel near the frontier in commemoration of the treaty of A.D. 821/822, which he signed as principal witness. He was probably quite young when he was acting as commander on the Chinese frontier in A.D. 819 (I assume he is the 'Bro Stag-snang named among the lesser ministers in the edict of Khri Lde-srong-btsan which was, perhaps, promulgated in c. A.D. 812); but he may have been Chief Minister, also, at that time for, although formerly Chief Ministers probably did not go far from Central Tibet, the emergence of monk-ministers at the head of the administration may have made it desirable for a lay Chief Minister to operate in more distant regions.

Lay resentment of ecclesiastical dominance in state affairs and the large grants of land to monks and religious establishments soon led to the break-up of the kingdom and the end of the snga-dar — the first diffusion of Buddhism in Central Tibet. Knowledge of those events depends on later tradition which tells that towards the end of Khri Gtsug-lde-btsan Ral-pa-can’s reign, the ban-sde Bran-ka Dpal-gyi yon-tan was falsely accused of an intrigue with the queen and was put to death. The king, too, was assassinated soon after. Nothing is known of the fate of the Chief Minister, 'Bro Khri-sum-rje Stag-snang, beyond a hint in later histories that he died young. The coup was carried out by Dba’s Rgyal-to-re Stag-snya with help from a minister of the Cog-ro clan which had been active in affairs of state since the time of Srong-btsan Sgam-po when they were associated with Myang Zhang-snang; and they continued to figure as colleagues at different times of the 'Bro and the Dba’s. 'Dus-srong took a wife from Cog-ro which is described at that time by the epithet 'dam-gyi, suggesting a connection with some marshy region.  'Dam, near Nagchukha, was well-known in later times, but as F.W. Thomas locates the clan in north-east Tibet, one should perhaps look as far afield as the Tsaidam. The Cog-ro were closely involved in the events of the later years of the Tibetan kingdom. One of Khri Lde-srong-btsan’s wives was from that clan; and Ral-pa-can’s queen with whom ban-sde Bran-ka Dpal-yon was said to have had an intrigue was, also, of Cog-ro.

Dba’s Rgyal-to-re Stag-snya became Chief Minister of the next btsan-po, Glang-dar-ma ‘U’i-dum-brtan, known to tradition as the arch-persecutor of Buddhism. Although the king was assassinated, in his turn, by the dedicated monk Lha-lung Dpal-gyi rdo-rje the faith went into eclipse in Central Tibet and the country suffered a long spell of political disruption.

In spite of claims that the royal line was continued through a posthumous son of one of Glang-dar-ma’s queens and an adopted son of the other, the Chinese Annals make it more probable that none of the blood of Srong-btsan Sgam-po flowed in the veins of Ch’i-li-hu (’Od-srung), whom they describe, according to Pelliot’s translation, as “son of Shang Yen-li, the
elder brother of the wife of the dead *btsan-po* who was of the family of Ch'en*. Pelliot identifies Ch'en with Mchims; but there are difficulties about that interpretation. The only Mchims queen of the period was one of the secondary wives of Khri Lde-srong-btsan — a step-mother of Glang-darma. His own wives, by later accounts, were from Sna-nam and Tse-spong. The character Ch'en in the T'ang Annals is not the same as that unmistakably used for Mchims in the treaty inscription of A.D. 822. Pelliot's translation expands a much condensed Chinese text and it may be that Ch'en is not a clan name but represents *chen* — "the senior queen", i.e. Sna-nam. And among the witnesses to the edict of Khri Lde-srong-btsan is a Sna-nam Zhang Gnyan-lod, which is quite near to Shang Yen-li. It would be confusing to introduce speculation about further possibilities; but scholars of Chinese might usefully examine the text again, including the history of Ssu-ma Kuang which does not appear to have been studied in this connection.

In an article in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for 1957 I suggested that the Chief Minister Chie-tu-na, who the T'ang Annals say was killed for protesting against the succession, might be the Zhang Mchims-rgyal Stong-nyrsa Smo-btsan of the edict; but there is no evidence beyond the similarity of selected parts of the name and, as a Mchims minister should be described as *zhang* (Shang), I prefer to identify him, in accordance with all the probabilities, as Dba's Rgyal-to-re Stag-nya, the last in the Chronicle's list of Chief Ministers.

Whatever the parentage of the new king, open war broke out on the China border between the Dba's and the 'Bro. The former were led by Dba's Khrom-bzher who appears in Chinese records as Shang K'ung-jo or, more properly Lun K'ung-jo, for he had no right to the title *zhang*. The 'Bro leader was Shang Pi-pi, whose personal name was "Tsan-hsin-ya", perhaps Btsan-bzang. He was a scholar, apparently favoured by the Chinese, who had reluctantly agreed to be appointed minister. His support included other *zhang*, presumably of his clan, and troops raised from tribes on the border such as his native Yang-tung. But Dba's Khrom-bzher was able to make successful play with propaganda that the 'Bro were supporting an illegitimate usurper and that their relations had killed the rightful king. By A.D. 849 after much indecisive fighting Shang Pi-pi withdrew to Kan-chou leaving Shang K'ung-jo (Khrom-bzher), who was by then claiming the title of *btsan-po* for himself, to ravage the more easterly border regions for his own aggrandizement. He met strong opposition, principally from the Uighurs who for their own ends were supporting the Chinese; and, at last, in A.D. 886 after a long and tempestuous career, he was defeated and killed.

So a member of the Dba's clan, which had been one of the founders of the great Tibetan kingdom in the sixth century, was actively engaged in the events that saw its fall and the end of a chapter in Tibetan history. And
involved opposite them were the 'Bro who since the early eighth century had been their chief rivals in the competition for political power. But the break-up of the kingdom cannot be ascribed simply to rivalry between ministers. If religious regard for the btsan-po as a numinous figure-head had survived, there should have been the possibility of finding among collateral branches of the royal family a king acceptable to most of the clans. But Buddhism had imported new causes of contention and, more important, it had undermined old ideas; and although the later “religious kings” tried to reconcile their role as protectors of the Buddhist faith with the aura of a semi-divine ruler living on, mysteriously, after death in a great tumulus tomb, the contradiction was too great. And the kings contributed further to their own downfall by appointing monks as great ministers over the heads of the lay nobility, so straining the bonds of loyalty, especially on the part of the old Tibetan clans, to breaking point.

The internecine warfare on the frontier and the death of Dba’s Khrom-bzher did not, however, mean the end of Tibetan activity in that region. Chiefs and princelings, some of whom claimed kinship with the royal line and were supported, according to Du Halde by descendants of the 'Bro, maintained their small domains in the neighbourhood of the Kokonor down until the Mongol conquest. Meanwhile in Central Tibet continued dissension eventually drove the successors of 'Od-srung to migrate to the west where they founded a new kingdom from which, as well as from the east, the Buddhist faith later flowed back to the heartland of Tibet.

Select Bibliography

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"The Dharma that Came Down from Heaven"
A Tun-huang Fragment

An eighth-century document relating to Tibetan Buddhism that seems to have gone unremarked is No. 370 (5) in the *Catalogue of Tibetan Manuscripts from Tun-huang in the India Office Library.* It is the last part of a scroll 366 cm x 27 cm in size on which there are four other miscellaneous Tibetan religious works written on the back of a Chinese manuscript. It is obviously incomplete, amounting only to some twenty-six *slokas* whereas a *bam-po*, as it is described, should contain 300 *slokas* of two to four lines each. The handwriting is clumsy and there is much dubious orthography and many mistakes some of which have been corrected while others have not. The impression it leaves is that it was a copying exercise abandoned unrevised when it had been spoiled by so many errors. The fragment therefore bears out the description "sacred waste" given by Sir Aurel Stein to the cache of manuscripts in Chinese, Tibetan and other Central Asian languages which he discovered in 1906 in a cave-temple at Ch’ien-fö-tung some 12 miles south of the oasis and town of Tun-huang. Fujieda Akira has suggested convincingly how the documents probably came to be walled up during improvements to the cave-temple in the eleventh century to get them out of the way rather than to conceal them from predatory hands.

Although the majority of the manuscripts are copies of religious works, there are also many lay documents which, in the Tibetan collection, include letters, petitions, contracts, veterinary works, divination manuals, hunting laws, translations of extracts from the *Rāmāyana*, stories about Confucius and — best known and most valued — the historical annals and chronicle

which have been edited and translated by Bacot, Thomas, and Toussaint. All these must have owed their survival, in company with the religious works, to the sanctity attached to the written word in any form.

It is not clear how the Chinese manuscripts, some of which date from as early as the fifth century and come from remote places, found their way to the cave; but those in Tibetan seem to be the debris of a clerical centre which employed local scribes and was probably modelled or superimposed on a pre-existing Chinese copying office. As many of the manuscripts are fragmentary or even mere scribbling on the back or between the lines of Chinese documents, it seems probable that they originated near the place where they were found; for it is unlikely that anyone would trouble to carry such waste the twelve miles from the city simply to store it.

The provenance of the original documents will be considered later. First a transcription of the fragment is given, with a list of scribal errors provided in a footnote, and this is followed by my translation.

India Office Library No. 370 (5)

(1) gnam babs kyi dar ma bam po gcig go / / / myi mgon lha sras rgyal mchog ste / / 'phrul gyi rgyal po (2) srong brtsan dang / / btsan po khrig srong lde brtsan gnyis / / 'dzam gling myi yul bod kham su / / 'gro ba (3) kun la phan mdzad pa'i / / u dum 'ba' ra'i men tog ltar / / shin du bzang dkon sman gi mchog / / (4) dus bde gshegs yum gyur pa / / shes rab pa rol phyin pa'i chos / / de bzhin nyid la mnyam ba ste / / (5) yod dang myed pa'i phyogs 'jig pa'i / / bla myed theg chen rab sgrags pa / / 'ge'u tam shag kya'i bstan pa (6) bslabs / / dang du blangs nas thugs dam bzhes / / 'gro ba kun la rgyas par spel / / btsan ba'i gzungs su rdo rings la / / (7) rje 'bangs nams kyi gtsigs su bris / / gtsug lag 'di ltar rgya mtsho la / / rje 'bangs spyod pa lhun bo'i (8) ris / / 'di mdzad gzhung btsugs ring lon te / / mnga' ris mtha' skyes bod kham bde / / lo legs myi nad (9) phyugs nad dkon / / 'bangs kyab chab gang lugs che ste / / lha chos myi chos 'dzem bas na / / bkur zhing (10) gzung su cher bzung nas / / slob spon pha ma phu nu gnyen / / rgyan zhing gong ma mtho ba la / / 'jam des sri zhu (11) tshul myi nor / / kun la nga' byams pa'i sens yod pas / / gzhan la rku 'phrog myi byed te / / brdzun dang (12) 'phyon ma ngo tsha 'dzem / / ba / drang btsan dpa' rtul chu gang che / / myi lus thob kyang lha'i lugs / / rgyal (13) khams gzhan dang myi gzhan la / / sngon yang myi srid phyis myi 'byung / / de bzhin lha la dkon ba yin / / rgyal po (14) yab nongs sras chungs pas / / chos bzang gtsug lag rnying nub mod / / bden ba'i lam mchog dge ba'i chos / / (15) 'dul ba'i dge bcu srung ba dang / / myi mgon rgyal po'i rgyal khrims dang / / pha myes 'dzangs pa'i stan ngag gzhung / / (16) bod kyi lugs ltar ga la byed / / 'jig
A Volume on the Dharma that Came Down from Heaven

The lords of men, sons of the gods, the excellent ruler Srong-brtsan the king divinely manifested and the btsan-po Khri Srong-lde-brtsan, these two who brought benefit to all beings in the world of men in this land of Tibet, learned the doctrine of Gautama Sakya that most excellent medicine like the flower of the Udambara, the dharma of the Perfection of Wisdom that became the Mother of those who have attained final bliss in the Three Ages, famed as the unsurpassed Great Vehicle the very essence of suchness which destroys the extremes of being and not-being. They received that doctrine and devoted themselves to it and caused it to spread among all creatures. For its enduring maintenance an inscription was written on a stone pillar as a compact between ruler and subjects.

Such wise teachings are the Ocean in which the deeds of ruler and subjects are as Mount Sumeru. The tradition of such actions being long established, the bounds of the dominion increased and the land of Tibet was happy. Harvests were good, diseases of men and cattle rare. The sound qualities and right behavior of the people increased; and, far from shunning the rites of gods and men, they revered them and, clinging even more strongly to those principles, they did not fail in proper respect and affection towards teachers and parents, brothers, sisters and kinsmen, and to those who through age are in a position of honour. And since there was a feeling of love towards all, no one committed theft or robbery against anyone else; shameful acts such as lying and fornication were shunned; honesty and good qualities increased. Although they [the kings] had the bodies of men, their ways were those of the gods. In other kingdoms and among other men that has not happened before, and it is not likely in the future. Even among the gods such a thing is rare.

When the king the father died, because the son was young the good religion and old learning were, indeed, eclipsed. How then is it that the excellent way of truth, the virtuous religion, adherence to the ten rules of religious discipline, the royal laws of the king the lord of men, and obedience to the instructions of wise parents continue according to the customs of Tibet?

Because of the nature of the world from its beginning, from the nirvāṇa of Sakya until the coming of Byams-pa Mu-tri (Maitreya), many self-originating Buddhas come into being suddenly and unannounced by prophesy. Religious texts, the
This text contains several points of historical interest. It adds to the evidence of the Tun-huang Chronicle and the Skar-cung inscription that Tibetans in the eighth and ninth centuries regarded Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, who lived some 200 years earlier, as the first patron of Buddhism in their country.

The "vow of king and people inscribed on a rdo-rings" refers to the pillar at Bsam-yas. It can be dated between 779 A.D., when the monastery was completed, and 782 A.D., the last year in office of Zhang Rgyal-gzigs Shu-theng, who was Chief Minister when a bka'-tshigs (edict) embodying such a vow was promulgated by Khri Srong-lde-brtsan.

The allusion to the eclipse of religion when the king was young echoes what is said in a second edict of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan about the suppression of Buddhism when he was young and its restoration by him when he came of age. That is repeated in an edict by his son Khri Lde-srong-brtsan which, together with the two edicts of his father, is recorded in the Chos-'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba (1565). The brief comment in our fragment is, as far as I know, the only original evidence actually from the time of the kings about those events which later historians embellished with much pious and picturesque detail. Together with the passage about the vow of the king and people it adds further confirmation of the authenticity of the three edicts which Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag appears to have copied from originals in the archives at Bsam-yas.

It should be noted that the edict of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan shows that there was also some resistance to Buddhism when he came to the throne, and that he too reasserted royal support of the faith, joining his ministers and people in a vow to that effect as his father had done. That seems to have escaped later historians who, for the most part, are confused about the identity of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan. But it is improbable that the eclipse of religion "when the king died, because the son was young" could refer to his reign. He was not the immediate successor of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan who died c. 797–800 A.D. but was established on the throne after the death of his elder brother Mu-ne Btsan-po and a period of disputed succession around 805 A.D. He cannot have been young when his father died, for at his own death in 815 A.D. he was succeeded by a grown son. If he had been on the throne when the document was written, his name might have been expected to appear at the beginning. It must have been written after the capture of Tun-huang by the Tibetans, which Demiéville dates to 787 A.D.
and Fujieda to 782 A.D.16

Even before that event, whenever it was, the narrow valley where the caves of Ch’ien-fo-tung are situated had probably been in the hands of the Tibetans for some time. They had taken Su-chou and Kan-chou as early as 766 A.D.; and in 767 they captured the strategic city of Kua-chou dominating the junction of the northern and southern routes across Central Asia. Sha-chou (Tun-huang), some seventy-five miles to the southeast — the only surviving stronghold on the fortified limes — had been bypassed and surrounded by the Tibetans for several years before its fall;17 but it is unlikely that there would have been any literary activity until the establishment at Sha-chou itself of a Tibetan administration as one of the five ngtong-khyab khri-sde under the overall jurisdiction of the bde-blon whose headquarters were to the northeast of Lan-chou. So a date for the document after 782 A.D. and before 805 may be accepted.

Whether the text was composed locally or is a copy of an original brought from Central Tibet is largely speculation. Some of the manuscripts from the cave have a connection with Central Tibet, for example many of the religious texts translated from Sanskrit, and the historical chronicles and annals of which echoes are found in histories such as that of Dpa’-bo Gsugs-lag (who of course could not have seen the Tun-huang manuscripts).19 Others such as administrative documents, petitions and the prayers at the foundation of the De-ga G.yu-tshal chapel are clearly of local origin. The language of those prayers, which F. W. Thomas describes as magniloquent,20 suggests that the similarly enthusiastic language and spirit of our fragment may be the product of a colonial frontier régime. By comparison, eulogies of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan in the commemorative inscription at the burial ground at ’Phyong-rgyas and in the Tun-huang Chronicle are spare and formal.

Assuming a local origin for the document, it may be inquired whether any influence specifically from the China border is traceable in its religious content. For it was at Sha-chou and other cities of the frontier captured by the Tibetans that their previously rather tentative practice of Buddhism, which had just received an injection of new life through the visits of Padmasambhava and Šantaraksita, came into contact with a society in which the faith had flourished for over four centuries and where, under the T’ang dynasty, Chinese teachers had recently developed a school of dhyāna philosophy tinged with Taoism.23 And it was from Sha-chou, probably soon after its capture by the Tibetans, that the leading figure in that school — the Master Mahāyāna — was invited to the Tibetan court. There his doctrine of immediate enlightenment through complete quietism — known to the Tibetans as ston-min — quickly won a following that threatened the supremacy of the Indian teachers of Šantaraksita’s school, who expounded the way of gradual enlightenment through the
accumulation of knowledge and merit, and of Padmasambhava’s, whose followers sought special powers through strenuous forms of mystical training.24

The Master Mahāyāna was supported by the ‘Bro clan, originally from the Yang-tung people, whose territory appears to have been to the southeast of Tun-huang. They may have become vassals in Tibet under Srong-brtsan Sgam-po,25 and for over a century had been allied by marriage to the Tibetan royal family. There are signs that, at least from the early eighth century, they had leanings toward the culture of China. The influential Queen Khri-ma-lod, Khri Srong-lde-brtsan’s grandmother, was of ‘Bro; and one of his own queens, a devout Buddhist and patroness of the Chinese master, was also from that clan.

By the time of Mahāyāna’s visit the Buddhist revival in Central Tibet had rapidly secured a footing in affairs of state. The Tibetan nobility soon saw the political potential of high rank in the Buddhist church. Before the end of the eighth century a monk of the noble family of Myang acted as guardian to the young Khri Lde-srong-brtsan;26 and the first successor of the Indian Master Sāntarakṣita as principal abbot in Tibet was a member of the Central Tibetan family of Dba’s,27 which had a long record of political rivalry with the ‘Bro.

There were therefore other controversial elements associated with doctrinal differences, one in the field of Tibetan domestic politics and another in the wider sphere of international relations. At that time India was no threat to Tibetan power, while with China there was a long-standing and active hostility.

The religious controversy became so bitter that the king arranged a public debate. There are many signs of the effectiveness of the arguments of the Chinese teacher and of their lasting influence; but internal and foreign considerations were, perhaps, responsible for the official rejection of his doctrines.28 The Master Mahāyāna returned to Sha-chou, where he continued to be an important figure both in religion and politics.29

We should hardly expect to find evidence of that doctrinal debate in a popular eulogy of the sort with which we are dealing; but the emphasis, in the fragment that survives, on the active pursuit of good works, and the appreciative mention of the Vajrayāna, appear to follow the official line.

In the brief account it gives of the origins of Buddhism there are several peculiarities to which D. L. Snellgrove has kindly drawn my attention. The separation of chos (dharma) and Vajrayāna is unusual. It is not clear how the Seven Buddhas are intended to fit into the pattern or precisely what the three categories are which do not coincide. They appear to be (1) Śākyamuni’s Dharma, (2) texts relating to the Seven Buddhas, and (3) the Vajrayāna. That classification agrees with no known arrangement of Buddhism. The three are usually Śrāvakayāna (the early disciples’ way), Pratyekabuddhayāna and
Bodhisattvayāna; or, alternatively, Early Buddhism, Perfection of Wisdom, and Mind-Only (Vijñānavāda). The fragment perhaps represents an early stage of Tibetan religious thinking when they had not yet clarified their views on the various stages in the development of Buddhism.

Notes


6. The beginning of each of the 18 lines, which measure about 27×27 cms, is numbered in the transcription. Some of the errors that make the document look like a rather inexpert writing exercise are noted below:

At the beginning of L. 4 the metre requires another syllable which should, presumably, have been gsun. In L. 6 la has had to be inserted below the line. L. 7 the ba of 'bangs is badly botched. L. 12 an irrelevant letter ba has been isolated by an extra shad but has not been deleted. L. 14 the na of bden has been added below the line; and an unwanted letter ma has been partly deleted. L. 17 a sentence has been inserted below the line; and further on, an unwanted ga has been isolated by an extra shad and deleted. L. 18 the ka of gsun-ka has had to be rewritten; and, after the next sentence, the writer seems to have given up.

The text cannot have been revised or some corrections might have been made and obscurities cleared up, e.g.: L. 5 and 16 shag-ka read sha'-ka. L. 10 slob pon read slob-dpon. L. 11 where there is one more syllable than the metre requires, the copyist may have transformed kun-la'-ang into kun-la-nga. The doubtful reading zhu in L. 17 might have been clarified (see note 6.); and perhaps ris at the beginning of L. 8. ought to be ri. Revision might have imposed consistency on such forms as pa'i and po'i where in some instances the 'a-chung bearing the vowel sign has been separated by a tshag. The use of ba and pa and tu and du might also have been made consistent; but in early manuscripts liberty in such forms is not uncommon.

7. The reading zhu appears to be faulty. It might possibly refer to the work of revising translations of religious texts, but that seems out of context. The copyist wrote but deleted the letter 'g'. I have arbitrarily guessed that gzhung was intended.

8. DTH, p. 118.
12. TTK, p. 46.
13. *Mkhas-pa'i dga'-ston*, vol. 1a (Pell. T.), fos. 110a, 128b; TTK, p. 47.
14. Pell. T., fo. 129a; Tucci, TTK, p. 52; Richardson, “sKar chung Inscription.”
18. DTH, p. 115.
22. DTH, pp. 118, 160-1.
27. TLTD, ii, pp. 85-6; Pell. T., fos 113a-114b.
28. MBT, ii, pp. 64-5, 151, 154.
Dge-'dun chos-'phel's "Unfinished"


Dge-'dun chos-'phel was renowned in Tibet as a scholar of wide experience and learning with independent, almost radical, views on religion, history and, less happily, on politics. The *Deb-ther dkar-po* was the result of his discovery during travels abroad that western scholars possessed evidence about the early history of Tibet which was unknown to his contemporaries and that they had made considerable contributions in that field. In particular, he found inspiration in the manuscripts of the eighth and ninth centuries from the cave temple at Tun-huang which had been edited from 1927 onwards by F. W. Thomas, Jacques Bacot and Charles Toussaint. He was able to see, as he says, some of the original documents and to consult copies of many more. The other most fruitful source of information were T’ang historical records. He is nowhere explicit in detail as to where and how he saw the various sources he used. He could have seen the translation of the T’ang Annals by S. W. Bushell in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for 1880, but it appears that he had some knowledge of other T’ang records as well and he states that he had the help of bilingual scholars. Other works with which he had some acquaintance appear to include Athanasius Kircher’s *China Illustrata* in which there is an illustration, from Grueber’s drawing, of the Potala in the seventeenth century; or he could have seen reproductions of that picture in the book of Father C. Wessels or Clement Markham’s edition of George Bogle’s journal. He may have known Levi’s *Nepal* and certainly had access to some histories of India and he refers to the Persian *Hudud al-Alam* (which was translated by Minorsky). In consulting such works he presumably relied on the help of friends. Perhaps his time with George Roerich, working

on the invaluable translation of the Deb-ther sngon-po, The Blue Annals, gave him access to a good library. At all events his questing mind sought out whatever was on record about early Tibetan history and allowed him a wider and more critical approach to it than was possible for his contemporaries. He is said to have planned and perhaps even drafted a full length work but all that has survived are the twelve sections, taking the story down to the accession of 'Dus-srong, which Mr. Samten Norboo has translated in the work under review.

The chapters were completed at the Hor-khang house in Lhasa in 1946 and were first published by the Freedom Press, Darjeeling, in a sort of cyclostyled manuscript edition in 92 pages; it bears no date but a copy came into my possession around 1960. The reproduction is indistinct and it was reprinted in 1964 by the Freedom Press in clear Tibetan letters but with a very large number of errors only some of which have been included in a list of errata. It is that edition which Mr. Norboo has used.

It must be said at once that the translation is far from satisfactory. Mr. Norboo has not paid attention to all of the errata and has imported many more mistakes which should have been removed in proof reading. The rendering of place names and other Tibetan words varies between transcription and phonetic representation, and where transcription is attempted Mr. Norboo has introduced his own variations into an already too numerous variety of systems, nor does he adhere strictly to any rule; for example the author’s name appears in four different forms — Gedun Choephel, Gedun Chos-’phel, dGe-’dun Chos-’phel and (correctly) dGe-’dun-Chos-’phel. These are small matters. More serious is the use of a florid, journalistic English quite inappropriate for rendering the straightforward style and language of Dge-’dun chos-’phel, who allows himself a flourish only in the verses of his introduction and at the end of each section. Mr. Norboo uses many fine words which he has not understood. I need only give a few examples: p. 28 “[The king] used to cater to a red head-dress”; p. 49 “This custom prevaricates today”; p. 68 “he re-oriented his encounter with the princess”. Some passages in the original text are omitted; others are paraphrased rather than translated; in others, some of which will be cited below, the author’s meaning is misrepresented. Journalistic padding is unnecessarily introduced: e.g. when the text has “not long after, Stag-bu Snya-gzigs died”, the translator has “Unfortunately for the conspirators Stag-bu passed away”. Some of the author’s notes in the text have been incorporated without comment in the “Translator’s Notes” at the end.

In spite of the shortcomings of the translation, the merits and interest of the original work can be appreciated. The first seven chapters are of a general nature giving information about names, definitions, customs and way of life, and the extent of Tibet’s influence in its early days. Dge-’dun chos-’phel also describes his sources and the system of chronology he uses.
Many valuable ideas and comments are put forward. His view on the origin of the name Tibet (Ch. 2), which is rather obscured by the translation, leaves it open whether any meaning can actually be ascribed to the word, and whether “Bod” was called after “Bon” or vice versa. His comment on the meaning of Bod chen-po does not add much to what is said in the ’Dzam-gling rgyas-bshad and he does not note that in its earliest appearance in the Lhasa Treaty Inscription, the term is simply a complimentary epithet parallel to Rgya-chen-po, Great China.

In describing the neighbours to Tibet he seems to identify Tazik as Persia at the time of the last Sassanian kings, without distinguishing the part played by its Arab conquerors c. 660 A.D. or the wazirs of Persian origin who governed Khorasan from about 759 A.D. as agents of the Arab Caliph. His view of Li-yul (Ch. 4) is too wide, describing Tun-huang, the Chinese frontier fortress, as on the borders of Li-yul, and ignoring the Turks and Uighurs who dominated most of Chinese Turkestan at different times. In fact, he mistakenly identifies the ’A-zha (T’uyu hun) as the Dru-gu.

As for Nepal, it is clear, as he says, that Tibet was dominant there for a time; perhaps it was even longer than the year 705 A.D., which is often supposed to have marked a finally successful rebellion against Tibetan rule. Unfortunately Dge-’dun chos-’phel’s account does not extend as far as that year. It is certain also that Tibetan armies penetrated the plains of India and were active as far afield as Gilgit but that does not imply that what Dge-’dun chos-’phel describes as Tibetan domination amounted to anything like an administration or anything more than occasional inroads and the exaction of tribute. His tentative suggestion that the Tibetans might have been responsible for the iron pillar at Mehrauli near Delhi (p. 39) can hardly be seriously meant.

For his system of dating he goes back to the nirvāṇa of the Buddha for which, after discussing the alternatives and dismissing many as fanciful, he prudently adopts what he calls the gnas-brtan (sthavira) dating which puts that event in 544 B.C. He rejects the Tibetan rab-byung, sixty-year cycle of element and animal years, which did not come into use until 1207, but he is not consistent in this respect. The Tibetans in the seventh century had a twelve-year cycle of animal names and at least by 821 A.D. they were aware of a Chinese system using element + animal in a sixty year cycle; and Dge-’dun chos-’phel in the later part of his work calculates backwards from 1207 A.D. to describe dates from the seventh century onwards in terms of a sixty-year cycle.

Among the historical sources he uses are Sba-bzhed, the Thang-yig and the Deb-sngon. With regard to the last named he realizes that a whole sixty-year cycle has gone astray in dating events between the end of the Chos-rgyal and the beginning of the phyi-dar, the later diffusion of the faith; and he accordingly rejects the account in later histories that Srong-brtsan
Sgam-po lived to the age of eighty-two. According to Dge-'dun chos-'phel the king was born in an ox year corresponding to 617 A.D. and died in 649/50. The last date is certain. In an article in Bulletin of Tibetology, 1965 [chapter 1 above], I also examined the problem and in spite of the consensus of later histories that he was born in an ox year, it seemed to me that since Srong-brtsan was succeeded by his grandson Mang-srong in 659 that would mean that both he and his son Gung-srong would have had to become fathers at the age of sixteen. The preceding ox year 605 A.D. seems too early and I suggested some year in between; but 617 is just possible.

From Chapter 7 onwards Dge-'dun chos-'phel bases his account on T'ang records and on the Tun-huang manuscripts. In Chapter 7, from T'ang sources, he describes the character and customs of the early Tibetans. He omits the less flattering passages but interestingly interprets several points in a different sense from Bushell and Pelliot. For example, where they translated that the Tibetans used plates of felt Dge-'dun chos-'phel's version is that they ate off the floor, covered with a felt carpet, and he supports this by reference to the surviving custom at certain state functions (p. 48). He adds the comment, perhaps from some other source, that they used cups of wood encased in leather. With regard to substitutes for writing, where Bushell and Pelliot translate (in addition to knotted string) "knotched sticks" — i.e. tally sticks, khram shing — Dge-'dun chos-'phel has shing bu la rtags 'debs pa — marks on a wooden board, which is less convincing. In an earlier chapter he has suggested that the dress of local deities may point to that of early days. In Ch. 7 he describes the dress of a Tibetan queen (p. 51) but it seems that the reference there is actually to a lady of the Nuku people of the Tibetan borderland.

Chapters 8 and 9 extract from the Tun-huang Chronicle the romantic account of the founding of the Tibetan kingdom by Gnam-ri Slon-mtshan and in the early years of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. Dge-'dun chos-'phel is probably the first Tibetan historian to appreciate how, with the help of powerful nobles from neighbouring areas, Gnam-ri, starting from a small estate in the Yar-lung valley, laid the foundations of a powerful kingdom which his son Srong-brtsan and his descendants were to extend still further. Compared with the brief factual record of the years 650 to 679, which he derives from the Tun-huang Annals, the story in the Chronicles contains many lively details illustrating the manners of the time; and Dge-'dun chos-'phel adds interesting comments from his personal knowledge, such as that the name of Seng-go Myi-chen, one of Gnam-ri's ministers, was still known in Dwags-po which he is said to have conquered in those distant days.

Chapters 11 and 12 combine material from the T'ang Annals and the Tun-huang Annals to give an account of the reigns of Srong-brtsan, Mang-srong and 'Dus-srong. One important event to which a separate chapter (Ch. 10) is assigned is the introduction of writing. After careful discussion,
Dge-'dun chos-'phel concludes that Thon-mi Sambhoṭa adopted a Gupta model and he refers to inscriptions on copper plates in India. Mr Norboo regrets that Dge-'dun chos-'phel did not specify which type of Gupta script Dge-'dun chos-'phel favoured. That is a question on which scholars still appear to differ. I do not think an exact counterpart of Tibetan letters has been found in any inscription from India or Nepal. “Gupta” could cover a large extent of time if one extends it to the reduced later Gupta kingdom of the sixth century; and examples such as the sixth-century inscriptions from Nālandā or the Gopālpur bricks could provide a model from a part of India with which the Tibetans were familiar in their incursions into that country. Dge-'dun chos-'phel’s derivation of the dang-kyog sign from Indian forms of the letter OM is convincing, but his suggestion that the stroke which separates syllables in present day writing comes from running together the two dots of a double tsheg which was used in early manuscripts is dubious. The early inscriptions from Tibet and also early manuscripts show that the double tsheg was replaced by a single tsheg at least by the ninth century; the present sign is simply a matter of convenience.

Some other points may be picked out where the translation is misleading or where Dge-'dun chos-'phel’s own opinion deserves further examination:

p. 45, l. 34 bsdus is wrongly translated “subjugated”; it refers to convening an assembly.

p. 48, l. 12 There is no mention of “women”. The statement is that “Tibetans” put red colouring on their faces.

p. 49, l. 27 “at the onset of battle a golden arrow was shot in the air” mistranslates “for summoning troops a gold arrow was sent round in advance”.

p. 50, l. 25 “cultivation of plants would ensue”. The meaning is simply “trees were planted.”

p. 58, l. 27 “Khon-ne” (kho na’i) is not a personal name; it means “the same person’s”.

p. 64, ll. 2–3 The translation “Kong-jo survived Srong-btstan by a mere three years” is wrong. The text means that she lived with him for only three years. In fact, she survived him by over thirty years.

p. 67, l. 17 It was not by diplomacy but by war that the Zhang-zhung were subdued. Dge-'dun chos-'phel has arbitrarily changed ‘thab in the original to thabs.

p. 73, l. 30 The statement attributed to Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag (which I cannot trace) that the Lhasa temple was modelled on Vikramāsila would put it into the eighth century as Vikramasila was founded by an early Pāla king, perhaps about 760–780 AD.

p. 77, l. 38 The story of Srong-btstan’s younger brother has to be reconstructed from a damaged passage at the beginning of the Tun-huang
Annals. I took it to mean that the brother died in a fire (zhugs su), but Dge-'dun chos-'phel understands it that he was banished.

p. 80, l. 7 The idea that Srong-brtsan’s death was kept secret depends on the words mkhyud and btol which Dge-'dun chos-'phel interprets as “conceal” and “reveal”. But there is abundant evidence in the Annals that the bodies of royal persons were kept in a ring-khang (? mortuary chamber) for one or two years before the final burial ceremony called mdad. The word btol, perhaps referring to the taking out of the body after some process of preservation, is found as part of a general funeral ceremony in another Tun-huang manuscript and was also used in connection with the funeral ceremonies of ordinary soldiers, in which connection there can have been no question of keeping the deaths secret. The subject deserves further study.

p. 82, year 1194: “shroud” is a mistranslation for “corpse”.

p. 83, year 1197: the Tun-huang text refers to a yak hunt not a meat tax.

p. 84, year 1203 (659 A.D.): “80,000 Chinese fought against great odds to overcome 1000 Tibetans” is obviously a mistake; but perhaps both Dge-'dun chos-'phel and Bacot interpret this passage wrongly as referring to a battle between Chinese and Tibetans. The Chinese Annals show that in this year the 'A-zha made an agreement with the Chinese (? nol thabs) and that in revenge the Tibetans virtually annihilated the 'A-zha. The da-rgyal was apparently an 'A-zha noble who had earlier co-operated with the Tibetans. After this defeat of the 'A-zha other nobles with the title da-rgyal were in the Tibetan service.

p. 87, year 1217: the translation of 'brog-nkhos as an “agricultural show” is improbable. In the Tun-huang documents nkhos appears to refer to the organisation or assessment of a district.

p. 87, year 1218: “military camp” is a mistranslation of dmag ru, a military formation.

p. 88, year 1223: Mr Norboo reads mdangs whereas Dge-'dun chos-'phel’s text has mdang; that, too, is a change from the original text which has mdad. That form appears regularly in the earliest texts and if Dge-'dun chos-'phel considered it needed correction it is strange he did not choose the form 'dad which appears in Das’ Dictionary as “a funeral repast” and in Dagyab’s dictionary as gshin-pa’i ched-du dge-ba sgrub-pa.

The above is a selection from the many questionable points of detail in the translation and in the original work itself. A general criticism of Dge-'dun chos-'phel’s method, from a western viewpoint, is that where he makes use of the Tun-huang manuscripts he sometimes quotes them directly, sometimes he intersperses the original text with wording of his own; he has often altered, without explanation, the orthography of the original and sometimes arbitrarily changes words in a way that changes also the meaning. Although it is true that many of the Tun-huang manuscripts are incomplete and may contain some orthographic errors, it would be better
if Tibetan readers were provided with the exact text of the original and not an amended version. Although he usefully interprets some of the archaic terms which have puzzled western scholars, he leaves many others unexplained and he avoids tackling some of the difficult passages, which Bacot and his colleagues courageously attempted; and he does not appear to have taken into account the appearance of some of the obscure words in other parts of the Tun-huang manuscripts. Nevertheless, from what has been said above it should be clear that Dge-'dun chos-'phel's work, incomplete though it is, is thoughtful, constructive and interesting and is a very different approach to the study of Tibetan history from that of any of his predecessors. For Tibetans it can serve as an introduction to the riches of the Tun-huang material; while western students will look for those special insights into customs and traditions and the meaning of obscure words which can come from a scholarly and inquiring Tibetan mind with the readiness to take account of what others have written. But the first requirement for Tibetan readers is an accurate edition of Dge-'dun chos-'phel's text; for others a new translation is needed, preferably by someone with a better knowledge of English and some acquaintance with early Tibetan documents.
The First Tibetan Chos-'byung

The Chos-'byung mkhas-pa'i dga'-ston of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba (Pell. T.), completed in 1564, has unique value among Tibetan histories in recording what are generally accepted as copies of original documents from the time of the early kings which had been preserved at Bsam-yas. They are:

(1) an Edict, bka'-gtsigs, by Khri Srong-lde-brtsan that the Buddhist religion should be practised for ever in Tibet; (2) a complementary document, referred to as a bka'-mchid, giving an account of the coming of that religion; (3) a copy of the inscription on the rdo-ring at Bsam-yas summarising very briefly the purport of the Edict; and (4) a bka'-gtsigs by Khri Lde-srong-brtsan renewing the vow made by his father. A summary of the Edict is inscribed on the Skar-cung rdo-ring near Lhasa.

Comparison with the Bsam-yas rdo-ring shows that PT's copy is accurate apart from minor orthographical differences; and it may be assumed that similar errors have crept in to the other documents and perhaps also that some difficult passages have been distorted. Further, although PT's copies preserve many archaisms such as the da-drag and some of the ya-btags in such words as myi, myes, the reversed ki-gu does not appear and more ya-btags have probably been omitted than retained. Some names have also been adjusted to modern spelling, e.g. Khri Srong-lde-brtsan for -brtsan; but it can confidently be accepted that the copies are generally accurate representations of eighth- and ninth-century documents.

They have been published and translated by Tucci in The Tombs of the Tibetan Kings (Rome 1950), but that work may not be easily available to Tibetan readers; and Tucci's transliteration, apparently from an indistinct xylograph, contains many errors and omissions. As these documents are the earliest evidence for the practice of Buddhism in Tibet and as their importance seems mostly to have been overlooked by Tibetan scholars, perhaps on account of some undeserved criticism of Pell. T.'s work in the

Chronicles of the Fifth Dalai Lama, an accurate transcription may be helpful; I have added a new translation and some historical comment.

In this article I study only nos. 1 and 2. The former is the bka'-'gtsigs — sworn edict — of Khri Srong-Lde-brtsan re-establishing the practice of Buddhism, which had been prohibited after the death of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan, and decreeing that it should continue for ever. After the principal provisions of the Edict and again at the end after a list of witnesses, there is the statement: “The text of a bka’-'mchid, also, showing how the religious law came to the land of Tibet both in earlier and later times has been deposited together [with the Edict]. Shi’-'la-varma wrote it”.

This second document is introduced by Pell. T. with a passage of his own, explaining that “The second bka’-'gtsigs was written from a copy deposited in the treasury at Dpal Bsam-yas of the text of the history of the coming of the religious law deposited together with the Edict, written in the reign of the btsan-po Khri Srong-Lde-brtsan in letters of phra-men and consigned to a golden casket”.

The document, as stated in the first bka’-'gtsigs and as it makes clear itself, is not a bka’-'gtsigs — a sworn edict — but a bka’-'mchid — an authoritative exposition. A difference in status may be indicated in that the bka’-'mchid was written in letters of phra-men as against the gold letters of the bka’-'gtsigs. The reference to Shi’-'la-varma appears to mean that he wrote the bka’-'mchid rather than that he was the scribe for both texts. At all events, the bka’-'mchid must have had the full authority of the btsan-po. It further explains itself as a lo-drun (sgrung), a historical account; and while the Bsam-yas rdo-ring is the earliest original document to mention Buddhism in Tibet, the bka’-'mchid together with the bka’-'gtsigs provide the first evidence in any detail about the history and practice of the faith there. Its introduction is firmly attributed to Khri Srong-brtsan (Srongs-brtsan Sgam-po) who founded the bi-har (vihara) of Ra-sa; there is no mention of Lha Tho-tho-ri.

The date of the documents must be between the completion of the gtsug-lag-khang of Bsam-yas and the year 782 A.D. in which, as can be seen from the T’ang Annals, Mchims Zhang Rgyal-gzigs Shu-theng who was Chief Minister at the time of the Edict, was dismissed from that office. The period can be greatly narrowed if 779 A.D. be accepted as the year in which the temple of Bsam-yas was completed. The Edict shows that some months after Khri Srong-Lde-brtsan, who was born according to the Tibetan Annals from Tun-huang in 742 A.D., attained the age of twenty, steps were taken to re-establish the practice of Buddhism. The Annals also show that there was a considerable reorganization of the government in 763. The bka’-'mchid relates that the gtsug-lag-khang of Bsam-yas was consecrated for use (rten-btsugs) in the spring of a sheep year. The first such year after 762 was 767 A.D.; but it is probable that a much longer time would be needed to consolidate the restored religion, invite teachers from outside Tibet, choose and
prepare the site and complete the great building. The year 779 A.D. is therefore more likely.

The number of religious institutions to which copies of the edicts were sent, not only in Lhasa and at Bsam-yas but from Gilgit to the China border, shows a widespread practice of Buddhism throughout the Tibetan empire by 782 A.D. — well before the great debate between rival champions of Indian and Chinese doctrines, which probably took place about 792 A.D. (see P. Demiéville, Le concile de Lhasa, Paris 1952, and G. Tucci, Minor Buddhist Texts, ii, Rome 1958).

In the Edict the btsan-po binds by his oath not only himself and his son but also the mother of the son (or sons). From the Tibetan Annals it is seen that a son was born to Khri Srong-lde-brtsan in 760 A.D. This was probably the eldest son Mu-khri who according to Pell. T. Ja fo. 126a was the first of four and who died young. I suggest he was the son of queen Rgyal-mo-brtsan of 'Bro who together with her son dedicated the great bell at Bsam-yas in honour of her husband and who later became a nun with the name Jo-mo Byang-chub, perhaps because of the death of her only son. She was, also, a patron of the Chinese teacher Mahāyāna in the great religious debate; and she dedicated another bell, at Khra-brug, in the reign of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan. The other sons of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan who eventually succeeded him were born to another queen, the lady of Tshes-pong, beginning with Mu-ne, probably in 774 A.D. It is not certain whether sras and yum in the Edict refer specifically to one son and one mother or to sons and mothers.

Apart from historical information the documents also embody in simple terms what were accepted in the eighth century as the essential elements of Buddhist practice; and it is interesting that Nepal (Lho-bal) is described as the immediate source of that practice.

The following is a translation from the Chos-'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag, vol. Ja fos 108b–111b of which a transcription is appended.

Formerly Ma-zhang Gron-pa-skye and others took pains to destroy the religious law; and so that such a thing might not happen in future it was prohibited by a solemn oath and by an edict that no Tibetan should destroy the religious law. Two edicts were made to that effect. This is the first:

This is written as a copy from the text deposited in the treasury of the temple of Bsam-yas Lhun-gyis-grub-pa written in the reign of the btsan-po Khri Srong-lde-brtsan and consigned to a golden casket.

A copy of the edict in the casket made so that the Three Jewels should never be abandoned and never destroyed. In accordance with the principal intention of the command of the Buddha (Tathāgata) if one does not comprehend the truth in one's mind, the Three Worlds even become a place of misery. There is no one who has not been born before. Having been born he acts with purpose or without. Then he
dies. And having died he is born again in a good or a bad situation. Further, the one who teaches the good is the Buddha. That which perceives clearly is the text of the religious law. That which shows the way to virtue is the community of monks. These are a sure refuge and as good as an island. When by the increasing blessing of the Three Jewels in the time of my ancestors heretofore, they acted in each generation according to the custom, there really were temples both new and old. After the btsan-po, my father, went to heaven, as there were precedents for removing dissension, the text was recorded of an edict sworn solemnly on oath by the btsan-po father and son, the mother of the son, and the ministers of the exterior and interior both great and small, that since the time when the gtsug-lag-khang of Bsam-yas Lhun-gyis-grub was consecrated on the seventh day of the spring month of the sheep year, from then onwards in Tibet the practice of the religious law of the Buddha together with the shrines of the Three Jewels should never be abandoned and never destroyed.

There being the 'Phrul-snang temple of Ra-sa, the temple of the Rgya-brtags Ra-mo-che, Bsam-yas Lhun-gyis-grub temple of Brag-dmar and the temple of Khams-sum Mi-lod-sgrol and so on, let the people of Tibet from the highest downwards establish shrines of the Three Jewels and entering on deliverance from their deeds, act so that this practice of the religious law of the Buddha shall never be abandoned and never destroyed. Let them enter on deliverance from their deeds. And let them act so that property designated for providing requisites for the worship of the Three Jewels shall never be diminished and never decreased. From henceforward in every generation let the btsan-po, father and son in person swear an oath in this way and let the chief ministers also take the oath. And invoking as witnesses to the oath thus made all the Buddhas of the ten directions, all of the holy law, all the community of the enlightened, the Self-perfected Buddhas, the disciples, whatever order of gods there are in heaven and earth, the personal gods of Tibet, all the nine gods, and all the nāgas, demons and spirits, let it be made known that this edict is unalterable. Further, if anyone does not act in accordance with the edict and subverts the Three Jewels or violates the oath, let him be born as a creature in hell. But if anyone acts in accordance with it, let him become manifestly a Buddha in truly perfected enlightenment than which there is nothing higher.

Also, the text of an authoritative account of how the religion of the Buddha came to Tibet both in earlier and later times has been deposited together with the edict.

Thirteen copies like this have been written. One has been placed in the archives. Two have been sealed and one each deposited with the religious communities of the 'Phrul-snang temple of Ra-sa and the Bsam-yas Lhun-gyis-grub temple of Brag-dmar. Ten copies have been sealed at the end and one each has been given to the 'Phrul-snang temple of Ra-sa, the temple of Bsam-yas Lhun-gyis-grub, the temple of Bkra-shis-lha-yul of Khra-'brug, the religious community of the palace, to the Rgya-brtags Ra-mo-che of Ra-sa, Khams-sum Myi-lod-sgrol of Brag-dmar, to the
country of Bru-sha, the country of Zhang-zhung, to Mdo-smad and to the jurisdiction of sde-blon, to be held by the religious community of their temples.

Those who swore the oath were: The Dbon7 'A-zha-rje, the great ministers of the council, the great minister Zhang Rgyal-gzig8 Shu-theng,9 Blon Stag-sgra Klu-gong, Zhang Rgyal-tshang Lha-snang etc.

(Fifty-one persons in all including groups of inner ministers, outer ministers the governors (sa-la-dbang-po) of Mdo-smad and generals.)

The text of the authoritative account of how the religious law came to Tibet both in early and later times has also been deposited together. Brang-ti Shi‘-la-varma wrote this'.

So it was written. As for the second bka‘-gtsigs, it is written as a copy from the text of the history of the coming of the religious law kept together with the edict. In the reign of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan it was written in phra-men and having been consigned to a golden casket was deposited in the treasury of Dpal Bsanz-yas.

A copy of the text of the history of the practice of the religion of the Buddha together with the shrines of the three jewels in Tibet from early times until the present which is kept in the casket.

From the time when the religion of the Buddha was first practised with the building of the bi-harlo10 of Ra-sa in the reign of the fourth ancestor Khri Srong-brtsan down to the practice of the religion of the Buddha with the building of the temple at Kwa-chu in Brag-dmar in the reign of the father, Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan five generations have passed.

After the btsan-po the father went to heaven some of the ministers actively conspiring together destroyed the practice of the religion of the Buddha which had been continuous from the time of the ancestors. Then they vilified it, saying that the gods and the religion of Nepal were not right and further, they wrote a lazu that from then onwards no one should practise it.

After that when the present btsan-po attained the age of twenty, at first there were bad prognostications and some evil omens; and because whatever rituals were performed to interpret them, the bad prognostications and evil omens continued for many months, there was therefore rejection of the law against the practice of the religion of the Buddha and it was not obeyed; and when it was said that worship should be made to the Three Jewels immediately everything turned to good.

Then with the help of teachers of virtue the religious law was heard and texts were also brought forth to be seen; and there was deliberation how the religion of the Buddha should be practised increasingly. At that time some people following the bad practices of the old religion of Tibet were addicted to all sorts of bad actions such as worshipping the personal gods11 and using improper rites. Some were addicted to colouring their bodies red, some to casting spells12 upon the government, some to causing diseases of men and cattle and some to causing famine to break out.

Looking into the religious law itself: if the effects of the religious law did not exist in the worldly sphere, countless numbers of living creatures would be born
into the four kinds of existence and would transmigrate in whichever cycle they were involved, without beginning and without end. Existence is according to one's former deeds. Whatever one does well in body, speech or mind becomes virtue; whatever evil one does becomes sin; whatever is neither good nor bad is indeterminate. The fruit of what one does to others ripens for oneself. Birth as god in the spheres of heaven, as a man on earth, a lha-ma-yin, or a yi-dvags, or as an animal in hell below the earth, whichever of these six states in which one is born comes from one's past actions. Those who have transcended the world and have become victorious Buddhas, the spiritually enlightened Bodhisattvas, those who win enlightenment for themselves, and the disciples who attain perfection gradually, all those have attained that state by amassing for themselves an accumulation of merit and knowledge. That is how it is explained. If it be asked what is virtue, it is the ten virtuous actions and so on. If it be asked what is not virtue, it is the ten unvirtuous actions and so on. If it be asked what is an indeterminate action, it is the four ways of behaviour and so on. If it be asked what are the accumulations of world-transcending merit and knowledge, they are, in addition to the ten virtues, the four truths, the twelve elements that arise from the accumulation of causes, the thirty-seven principles leading to enlightenment and the ten surpassing perfections and so on. The fruits that come from these are the four kinds of absence from fear, the four true forms of knowing, the ten powers, the eighteen unmixed attributes, and the thirty-two compassions and so on. The detailed explanation is found in the writings of the religious law.

If all these precepts arising from the religious law are followed, some persons, by immediate discrimination between the good and the harmful, realize it clearly. Some who do not realize it immediately, by taking the measure of the nature of those who have passed beyond them become able to grasp it with certainty and by applying themselves to these scriptures will in every way come to know whether this religious law should be cast aside or should be practised.

The minor princes under our dominion, the 'A-zha ruler and so on, and the ministers of the exterior and the interior have been consulted and a counsel was held and they considered in brief these things together, first that trust should be put in the commandments of the Buddha, secondly that the example of the father and ancestors should be followed; and thirdly that help should be given by the power of the teachers of virtue. So increasing counsel was taken over and above the advice that those addicted to what is not virtuous and not good should not act in that way; and when it was asked how the purpose for good might not be changed and how it might be increased, an excellent summary of the religious law was made. Further it was said that in three ways great importance should be attached to not harming it: first, since it is the realization of the highest purpose, no harm must be done to the full extent of its good; secondly, looking to this infinite advantage for everyone, it is not right to destroy the need for it by some sensory standards; and thirdly since our ancestors have practised it for many generations it cannot be anything but good. By such counsels men were converted to its practice. In view
of this, with regard to the practice of the religion of the Buddha, first, everyone was devoted to it as the good; and secondly, being made suspicious by former instances of its destruction, a solemn oath never to destroy it was recorded in writing, and action was taken so that henceforward in each generation, also, the vow should be made and it should be sworn to by all from the ministers downwards. Thus it was said. And these documents in full were deposited in the treasury; and the text of the edict inscribed in short on the rdö-ring at Bsam-yas is as follows: 

Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston, Ja fo. 108b.

sngon ma zhang grom pa skyes la sohs paschos bshig pa thugs bcags nas phyin chad de lta bu mi byung ba’i phyir bod sus kyang chos mi bshig pa’i bka’ gtsigs bcas / dbu snyung bzhes mna’ bsgags te de ‘dra ba lan gnyis mdzad pa’i bka’ gtsigs dang po ni / / btsan po khris srong lde btsan gyi sku ring la / shog bu thing ga la gser gyis bris nas / gser gyi sgrom bur btsal pa’i bka’ gtsigs kyi yi ge bsam yas lhun gyis grub pa’i gtsug lag khang gi dkor mdzod tu bzhag pa las dpe’ bygis te bris pa / / dkond cog gsum nam du yang mi btang ma zhig par dgyi ba’i gtsigs sgrom bu nang na mchis pa’i dpe’ / de bzhin gshugs pa’i bka’ las ‘byung ba don thog du sbyar na / yang dag pa nyid khong du ma chud pas kham’sum yang sdug sngal gyi gnas su gyur / thams cad kyang gna’ nas ma skyes pa med / skyes nas ni don dang don med par spyod / de nas kyang shi bar ‘gyur / shi nas kyang gnas bzang ngan du phyir skye / de la legs su ston pa ni sangs rgyas / mngon par dmigs pa ni chos kyi yi ge / dge bar mtshon pa ni dge ‘dun rnam-ts te / gtan gyi skyabs dang gling du bzang ngo / / dkond cog gsum ni byin du ched che ste / yab mes snga ma kun gyi ring la yang gdung rabs re re zhing lugs su mdzad ste / gtsug lag khang gsr rnying dngos yod pa yin / btsan po yab dgung du gshugs pa’i phyi nas / pan pun khyer pa’i dpe tshul yod pa nas / gtsug lag khang lhun gyis grub tu / lug gi lo la dpyid zla ra ba’i tshes bchu bdun la rten btsugs pa’i tshe / da bas phan chad / bod yul du dkond cog gsum rten bcas te / sangs rgyas kyi chos mdzad pa mi gzhig par (109a) / / btsan po yab sras dang sras kyi yum gyis dbu snyung bzang zhing yi dam bcas pa dang / phyi nang gi blon po che phra mtha’ dag bro stsal ba’i gtsigs kyi yi ger bris pa’o / /

/ ra sa’i ’phrul snang gtsug lag khang dang rgya btags ra mo che’i gtsug lag khang dang / brag dmar gyi bsam yas lhun gyis grub kyi gtsug lag khang dang kham’sum mi ldog sgrol gyi gtsugs lag khang la stsgogs te / bod kyi rigs su bla nas / dkond cog gsum gyi rten btsugs te / bod las kyang thar par gzud cing / sangs rgyas kyi chos mdzad pa ‘di nam du yang / mi gtang mna zhig par dgyi’o bod las thard par gzud to / / / gtsug lag khang de rnam su dkond mchog gsum gyi yo byad sbyor ba’i rkyend kyang ran
pa 'os par dpags te bla nas phul ba las / nam zhar kyang mi dbri mi bskyung bar bgyis so / da phyin chad gdung rabs re re yang / btsan po yab sras 'di bzhin du yi dam bca' zhung zhal gysis bzhes par bgyi'o / blon po thog thog kyang bro stsal bar bgyi'o / 'di ltar yi dam bcas pa / phyogs bcu'i sangs rgyas thams cad dang dam pa'ichos thams cad dang / byang chub sems dpa'i dge 'dun thams cad dang / rang sangs rgyas dang nyan thos thams cad dang / gnam sa'i rim pa lha'o cog dang / bod yul gyi shu lha dang / lha dgu thams cad dang / klu dang / gnods byin dang mi ma yin pa thams cad dpang du gsub ste / gtsigs di las mi 'gyur bar mkyen par bgyis so / de la gtsigs ltar ma bgyis te / dkon d cog gsum gyi sku bslus sam mna' kha dbud bgyis na / sems can dmyal bar skyes shig / 'di bzhin du mdzad cing bgyis na / thams cad kyang bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu mgon par sangs rgyas par shog cig / (109b) / sangs rgyas kyi chos bod yul du / snga phyir ji ltar byung ba'i bka' mchid kyi yi ge gcig kyang zla la bzhag go / /

dpe 'di 'dra ba bcu gsum bris te / gcig ni phyag sbral na bzhag go gnyis ni phyag rgyas btab ste / ra sa'i' phrul snang gtseg lag khang dang brag dmar gyi bsam yas lhun gyi grub kyi dge 'dun la re re bzhag go / bcu ni mthar phyag rgyas btab ste / ra sa'i' phrul snang gtseg lag khang dang / bsam yas lhun gysi grub kyi gtseg lag khang dang / khra 'brug gi bka shis lha yul gtseg lag khang dang / pho brang 'khor gyi dge 'dun dang / ra sa'i rgya btags ra mo che dang / brag dmar gyi khams sum mi ldog sgrol dang / bru sha yul dang / zhang zhung yul dang / mdo smad dang / sde blon ris dang / di mams kyi gtseg lag khang gi dge 'dun la dpe re re 'chang du stsal to / /

/bro stsal pa la / / dbon a zha rje / / zhang blon chen po bka'la gtags pa la / / blon chen po zhang rgyal gtags shu theng blon stag sgra klu gong / / zhang rgyal tshan lha snang / ... [etc. etc.]

(110a line 2)chos bod yul du snga phyir ji ltar byung ba'i bka' mchid kyi yi ge gcig kyang zla la bzhag go / brag ti sh'i la warmas bris / zhes byung noo / / bka' gtsigs gnyis pa ni / btsan po khri srong lde btsan gyi sku ring la / chos 'byung ba'i lo drung gi yi ge zla la bzhag pa / phra men gyas bris te gser gyi sgrom bur stsal nas / dpal bsam yas kyi dkor mdzod tu bzhag pa las dpe' bgyis nas bris pa / /

/gna' da 'chad bod yul du dkon d cog gsum gyi rten bcas te / sangs rgyas kyi chos mdzad pa'i lo drung gi yi ge bris pa / sgrom bu'i nang na mchis pa'i dpe'/ /

/ btsan po bzhi mes khri srong btsan gyi ring la / ra sa'i bi har brtsigs te sangs rgyas kyi chos thog ma mdzad tshun chad / btsan po yab khri lde gtseg btsan gyi ring la / brag dmar gyi kwa chur gtseg lag khang brtsigs te sangs rgyas kyi chos mdzad phand chad gdung rabs inga lon no / / / btsan po yab dgung du gshegs kyi 'og du zhang blon kha cig gis hur 'dums kyi blo zhig phyung ste / yab mes kyi ring tshun chad / sags
rgyas kyi chos mdzad mdzad pa yang bshig go / de nas yang snyed ni lho bal gyi lha dang chos bod yul du bgyi ba'i myi rigs shes / gzhan yang phyind chad bgyid tu mi gnang bar bka' khrims bris so / / de nas btsan po zha snga nas lo nyi shu bzhes pa na / thog ma ni phyag spring dang ltas shig ngan te / cho ga ci mdzad pas bshad kyang / dgung zla du mar phyag spring (110b) dang ltas ngan nas / sangs rgyas kyi chos bgyid du mi gnang ba'i bka' khrims kyang khrims su mi bgyi bar dor / dkond cog gsum gyi mchod pa yang bgyi zhes bgyis na gzod bzang por gyurd to / / de nas dge ba'i bshes gnyen gyis bstangs te chos kyang gsan / yi ge yang spyan sngar brims nas / sangs rgyas kyi chos dpel zhing mdzad par sgroms so / / de na bod kyi chos rnying pa ma lags la / sku lha gsol ba dang cho ga myi mthun pas / kun kyang ma legs su dogs te / la la ni sku la dmar yang dogs / la la ni chab srid gong gis kyang dogs / la la ni mi nad phyugs nad byung gis kyang dogs / la la ni mu ge langs bab kyis kyang dogs so / / / chos nyid kyi nang du brtsags na / chos las 'byung ba ni 'jig rten gyi kham su myed pa na / sens can gyi kham su grangs med pa / skye ba mam bzhi'i nang du skye zhing 'khor ba la gtogs so cog / dang po'i thog ma med pa nas / tha ma'i mtha' myed pa'i bar du / rang gi la kyi de bzhin du srid pa las / lus dang ngag dang yid gsum nas legs gi la kyi de bzhin du srid pa las / lus dang ngag dang yid gsum nas legs par spyad to cog ni dge bar 'gyur / nyes pa spayed to cog ni sdig par 'gyur / legs nyes med pa ni lung du myi ston par 'gyur / gzhan la phar byas pa'i 'bras bu ni bdag la smind te / gnam gyi rim pa'i lhar skye ba dang / sa'i steng gi mi dang / lha ma yin dang / yi dags dang / byol song dang / sa'i 'og gi sms can dmyal ba dang / 'di drug du skye 'o cog kyang rang gi las kyi 'gyur ro / / 'jig rten las 'das te sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das su 'gyur ba dang / byang chub sms dpa' dang rang byang chub dang / nyan lhos kyis rim par 'grub pa kun kyang bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs rang gis brtsogs pa las 'gyur ro zhes 'byung ngo / / dge ba gang zhe na dge ba bcu la bstsogs pa'o / myi dge ba gang zhe na / mi dge bcu la bstsogs pa'o / / lung du mi ston pa gang zhe na / spyod lam bzhi la btsogs pa'o / / 'jig rten las 'das pa'i bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs gang zhe na / dge ba bcu'i steng du bden pa bzhis dang / rkyen dang 'du ba tshogs ste byung ba'i yan lag bcu gnyis dang / byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos sum bcu rtsa bdun dang pha rold tu phyind pa bcu la bstsogs pa'o / / de'i 'bras bu ni mi 'jigs pa bzhis dang / so so yang dag par shes pa bzhis dang / stobs bcu dang / ma 'dres pa'i chos bco brgyad dang / thugs sje chen po sum bcu rtsa gnyis la bstsogs par 'gyur te / gltan tshigs zhib tu ni chos kyi yi ge'i nang na mchis so / / / chos kyi nang nas byung ba 'di rnam jres bcdn na / kha cig ni legs nongs kyi dmyigs 'phral du mgon pa yang mchis / kha cig 'phral du mi
mngon pa yang mngon par gda' ba rams kyi tshul las dpags na / nges par gzung du rung ba yang mchis te / mdo de rams dang sbyar na / chos 'di gtang ngam mdzad dam ci rigs shes / 'bangs su mnga' ba rgyal phran 'a zha tje la btsogs pa dang phyi nang gi blon po rams la bka's rmas / bka' gros su mdzad nas / gcig tu na sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi bka' lung la bsten / gnyis su na ya bmes kyi dpe lugs la 'tshal / gsum du na dge ba'i bshes gnyen gyi mthus bstangs pa dang yang sbyar nas mdor bgtags na / myi dge ma legs par dogs pa'i rams kyang de ltar myi 'gyur gyi steng du / ched che bar bka' gros mdzad to / de lam legs par ni ji ltar myi 'gyur ched ni ji ltar che zhe na / chos kyi mdo ni legs su bygi bas / bla na med pa'i don bsgrub pa lags te / legs pa'i mtha' nongs par myi 'gyur gytis gcig / thams cad la yun du dpen pa 'di lta'o / / tsor dpags tsm gytis dgos pa gzhig du myi rung gis gnyis / yab mes gdung rabs du ma'i bar du mdzad kyang / ma legs pa ma byung ba dang gsum gytis da yang nongs par myi 'gyur la ched che'o zhes / / mdzad par bka' gros bute mdzad to / / de lta bas na sngos rgyas kyi chos mdzad pa yang / gcig du na yong gis bzang la gces / gnyis su na sngon bshig pa'i dpe' byung bas thugs yid dogs te btan du mi gzhig par dbu snyung bro mna' bor ba yang yi ger bris so / / phyind cad kyang gdung rabs gcig cing / yi dam mdzad pa dang blon po man cad kyang bar stsal bar bygis so / / zhes byung ngo 'di dag ni rgyas pa dkor mdzod du bzhag pa yin la / mdor bs dus bsam yas kyi rdo ring la brkor pa'i gtsigs yig ni …

Notes

1. The passage is somewhat obscure. Tucci appears to take pan pun as phan tshun; but phun phun is found in the Zhwa'i Lha-khang inscription and elsewhere with the meaning "dissension, disagreement".
2. I take rten btsugs, "establishing the rten" as similar to rab gnas.
3. rten, "support, container" covers images, books and other religious objects. "Shrine" may not be strictly accurate but it is difficult to find a single satisfactory word.
4. The Rgya-btags Ra-mo-che (belonging to the Chinese?) was most probably founded by Chin-ch'eng, the Chinese bride of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan who came to Tibet in 710 (see the eighth/ninth-century Li-yul chos-kyi lo-rgyus 1.58; Emmerick, Tibetan Texts Concerning Khotan, Oxford 1967.
5. The Khams-sum Mi-ldog-sgral temple at Bsam-yas is attributed to Khri Srong-lde-brtsan's queen, Tshes-pong Rma-rgyal Ldong-skar.
6. sde-blon is probably an error for bde-blon, a high official established in the reign of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan to control several districts (mthong-khyab) in the China border region.
7. Although there was a formal dpon-zhang relationship between the 'A-zha ruler and the Tibetan btsan-po in virtue of the marriage of a Tibetan princess to the 'A-zha-rgje in 689, it is probable that the reading should be Bon which is much more
commonly used in Tun-huang manuscripts and perhaps is a tribal name. E. H. Parker in *A Thousand Years of the Tartars* (rev. edn 1969) cites a Hwun section of the Tuyuñun ('A-zha).

8. The name in early orthography is Rgyal-zigs.
9. In the Zhol inscriptions etc. the name is Stag-sgra Klu-khong.
10. *bi-har* = viharā. In PT’s copy of the Edict of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan (fo. 128b) it appears as Dpe-har.
12. *gong* here should perhaps read ‘gong.
Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan’s Illness

A damaged manuscript of the ninth century from Tun-huang (Pelliot Tibétain 130 in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris) records the dedication by unnamed persons of extracts from the Prajñāparamita and, perhaps, also an image, on behalf of the Tibetan btsan-po, Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan (Ral-pa-can). It ends with prayers for his good health and long life, as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sku la snyun myi mnga’ zhi} & \text{ngja’ tshe} \quad \text{ring} \\
\text{gza’} & \text{la stobs pa’i gnod pa} \\
\text{thams cad} & \text{zhi nas} \quad \text{gro} \text{thar te} \\
\text{mthar bla na myed pa’i sangs rgyas su} & \text{grub nas} \quad \text{chos rgyal chen po mdzad par gyur cig} \\
\text{sems can thams cad} & \text{kyang bla na myed pa’i sangs rgyas su} \text{grub par smond to}
\end{align*}
\]

It is prayed that he may not suffer illness and with the cessation of all harm caused by the planets (gza’ etc.) he may safely achieve long life and, attaining the highest Buddhahood, may become a Great Religious King (dharmarāja); and that all creatures too may attain the highest Buddhahood.

I have not seen a similar reference to the baneful influence of the planets in such prayers and, although it may here be no more than a general intercession, the word zhi seems to imply an actual state of affairs from which relief is sought rather than a potential hazard.

In its wider context the bad influence of the planets was the cause of troubles in the state; but for the individual, its effect was seen in attacks of epilepsy.

There is another dedication on behalf of Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan in Pelliot Tibétain 1083, in which it is prayed that in this present body (da ltar bzhugs pa’i sku ‘di la) evil omens may be averted and obstacles to his good health may be prevented. Although that seems quite specific, it may again be merely

a formal prayer. The uncertain state of the king's health is recorded in the T'ang Annals (Hsin T'ang-shu) where it is stated that the btsan-po was ill and unable to attend to public affairs.

Both the Chinese Annals and the later Deb-ther sgon-po (The Blue Annals) describe a series of evil omens and natural calamities which might well have been attributed to planetary influences; but as they appear to have occurred after the king's death they cannot be the subject of prayers during his life, and, therefore, gza' may be a specific reference to the king's health and indicate that he suffered from epilepsy.

Notes

2. Ibid.
In current Tibetan Nepal is Bal-po, Bal-po'i-yul or Bal-yul. Bal-yul is found in early manuscripts from Tun-huang; in Choix de documents tibétains conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale, 3 vols, Paris 1978–90, i, Pelliot Tibétain (Pell. T.) no. 44 mentions Padmasambhava in Bal-yul which may reasonably be seen as Nepal; Bal-yul is named also in Pell. T. 1040 and 1285 in an apparently mythical setting. Bal-po meaning Nepal appears in the Tibetan Annals in Documents de Touen-houang relatifs à l'histoire du Tibet by Bacot, Thomas and Toussaint (DTH), p. 13 l.2, and also, in my opinion, on p. 19 l.23. But in other instances, of which there are fourteen between the years A.D. 600 and 723, Giuseppe Tucci considers the identification untenable because of the improbability that Tibetans, who liked to spend the summer and to hunt in high cool places, would choose to spend that time of year in Nepal (Minor Buddhist Texts, ii, Rome 1958, pp. 34–5). That argument assumes that Bal-po implied only the valley of Kathmandu, but Hsüan-tsang, travelling about A.D. 630, attributed a much larger area — 4,000 li — to Nepal and one specific place name in Bal-po — 'Bri-'u-tang — mentioned in the years 699 and 725 appears to have been in reach of Zhang-zhung, which is generally held to be in western Tibet around Lake Manasarowar. The possibility that all references to Bal-po are to Nepal cannot, therefore, be dismissed too readily.

The reference in p. 19, l.23 of the Tibetan Annals, mentioned above, has not been satisfactorily explained. Events leading up to it were, briefly: in 703 the Tibetan btsan-po 'Dus-srong conquered 'Jang, one of the principedoms (chao) which later made up the kingdom of Nanchao. Its territory was around Likiang on the upper waters of the Yangtse. In the winter of the following year, continuing his campaign, the btsan-po went to impose his authority on the Mywa but died or was killed there. The Mywa are described in the Tibetan Chronicle (DTH, p. 113) as part of 'Jang, or rather

the 'White' section of them were, for the Mywa were divided into Black and White. The name resembles Miao, and it is possible that the Mywa of the eighth century were ancestors of the rather insignificant Miao people now found near the western borders of Szechwan and Yunnan. But little is known about the origin, early movements and even the precise names of the complex of tribal peoples in the gorges and mountains of the upper Yangtse, Mekong and Salween — Lutzu, Black and White Lissu, Moso or Nakhi, Boa, Black and White Lolo, etc. Miao may not be a genuine tribal name but a description applied to a subject people. The problem is too involved to discuss here.

The Chinese T’ang Annals describing what happened in the year 704 state that the tributary states on the south of Tibet, Nepal, P’o-lo-men, etc., revolted and that the Tibetan king went to chastise them but died in the campaign. The Mywa, in whose territory he died, clearly have nothing to do with Nepal; but if they are to be identified with P’o-lo-men, a new problem arises. There are references to two separate P’o-lo-men regions: Ta-ch’in P’o-lo-men, which has been variously located by Pelliot and A. Christie in Manipur and Kāmarūpa, and Hsiao P’o-lo-men which, in a very sketchy map in an article by W. Stott in T’oung Pao, i, 1953, is shown to the northwest of Likiang and might be placed in an area covering the northernmost border of what is now Burma, the far-east border of Assam, and the south border of Tibet near to the northernmost point of Yunnan.

But whether Mywa was connected with P’o-lo-men or not, ‘Dus-srong died in 704 in the upper Yangtse, Mekong, Salween area. The following year, A.D. 705, the Tibetan Annals record that Ldeg-ren-pa’ Mnon Snang-grags, Khe-rgad Mdo-snang and others who had rebelled were put to death and that, as I understand it, at Bon-mo Pong-lag-rang the btsan-po, the elder brother Lha, was deposed from the throne of Nepal (pong lag rang du btsan po gcen lha bal phyag rgyal sa nas phab). At this period the names of kings of Nepal ended in the syllable Deva (Lha) and it is recorded by D. R. Regmi in Medieval Nepal, i, Calcutta 1965, that joint kingship was not uncommon at the time. It has sometimes been supposed that the rebellion of 704 ended Tibetan authority over Nepal, but this passage seems to imply that Tibetan rule was reimposed in 705. Perhaps this was the occasion of the Bhutarāja after the reign of Vasantadeva (Regmi, pp. 67–8; L. Petech, Medieval History of Nepal, Rome 1958, p. 29); but the subject needs further examination.

Turning to lho-bal which appears in line 19 of the east face of the Sino-Tibetan treaty inscription of A.D. 821/3 at Lhasa and in some early documents from Tun-huang: at first sight it appears to refer to Nepal and has been taken in that way by myself and others; but R. A. Stein in note 51 to his important article “Saint et divin”, Journal Asiatique, 1981, cites Chinese texts where it is the equivalent of jong-yi, ‘barbarians’. In the Chinese version of the Li’i-yul lung-bstan-pa, jong-yi is the description of wandering
monks whom the Tibetan calls *lho-bal.* F.W. Thomas, who has translated the Tibetan in *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents,* i, pp. 76–87, notes on p. 83 that the Chinese renders *lho-bal* as *Po-peng jung-i.* In the Tun-huang manuscript Pell. T. 986, a Tibetan version of a Chinese history, described as *Zhang-shu bam-po drug-pa,* relating the foundation of the Chou dynasty at the beginning of the twelfth century b.c., where the Tibetan has *lho-bal* the Chinese refers, according to Legge’s translation in his *Chinese Classics,* iii/1, p. 313, to “wild tribes of the south and north”.

Stein comments also that in a Chinese inscription at Tun-huang the Tibetan ruler is described as king of the barbarians — see Demiéville, *Le Concile de Lhasa,* pp. 235–6. So, as Stein observes, in the Lhasa treaty inscription the Tibetans are paying the Chinese in their own coin.

The identification of *lho-bal* with barbarians — or perhaps foreigners in general — throws light on its appearance in other manuscripts from Tun-huang. Pell. T. 1085 is a petition to the Tibetan authorities from some people of Sha-cu (Tun-huang) who describe themselves as *bloag cag lho bal,* “we *lho-bal*” (see also Pell. T. 1077, l. 134). There are several references to *lho-bal* in Pell. T. 1089, which concerns administrative appointments in the northeast frontier regions where any mention of Nepal seems out of place, and that is underlined by the attribution to an officer of *lho-bal* of the Turkish title *to-dog.* It makes better sense to see *lho-bal* here as frontier people — non-Chinese, for a distinction is drawn between *rgya sha-cu-pa* and *lho-bal,* and in Pell. T. 1085 the petitioners describe themselves as subjects of the Chinese of Sha-cu. In Pell. T. 1071 and 1072, where the penalties for manslaughter and hurt are detailed according to the rank and status of the victim, the *lho-bal* — *lho bal gyi btson* (“*lho-bal* prisoners”) — come last together with the *g.yiing* who were people of the lowest order, virtually outside the pale of Tibetan society. Another relevant document is the second edict of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan recorded in the *Chos-'byung* of *Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag,* vol. ja, fo. 110, which is generally accepted as a copy of an authentic early original. There anti-Buddhist ministers are said to have objected to *lho bal gyi lha dung chos,* “foreign gods and religion”.

In later histories *lho-bal* occurs infrequently. In some instances the writer appears to identify it with Nepal — e.g. *Sba-bzhed* (p. 4) and *Rgyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long* (fo. 33b): but in others there are clear indications of a different meaning — e.g. *Sba-bzhed* (p. 16) where, as in Khri Srong-lde-brtsan’s edict, anti-Buddhist ministers condemn the magical practices of the people of Lho-bal; and two passages in *Rgya-bod yig-tshang* are even more significant. There, on fo. 10a, *Bal-po'i yul* and *Lho-bal* are separately listed as among Tibet’s neighbours; while on fo. 58 the monks who were evicted from Tibet c. A.D. 739 are described as *lho bal gyi dge 'dun,* “monks of Lho-bal”, whereas it has been explicitly stated on the same folio that they came from Li-yul (Khotan). This is also quite clear from the ninth-century *Li-yul chos-kyi*
Possibly the confusion here between Li-yul and Lho-bal is partly responsible for the attribution by some Tibetan writers of the name Li to Nepal.

Stein has noted that the Chinese sometimes called the Tibetans “barbarians of the south”, and perhaps the name Lho-pa by which Tibetans know the tribal peoples of their southern border may be comparable.
The Succession to Glang-dar-ma

It is a tradition well known in Tibet that on the death of Glang-dar-ma two infants were put forward as possible heirs to the throne: one, 'Od-srung, generally described as a posthumous son born to his younger queen; the other, Yum-btstan, surreptitiously adopted by the senior queen who was childless but pretended the infant was hers. Supporters of the two did not agree and the kingdom was divided between them.

The earliest historians of the phyi-dar, the revival of religion — 'Bromston in the eleventh century, Sa-skya Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan in the twelfth, Ne'u Paṇḍita in the thirteenth (?), and Bu-ston in the mid-fourteenth century — name the two princes but devote their attention exclusively to 'Od-srung whom they see as the legitimate king. 'Phags-pa in the thirteenth century does not even mention Yum-btstan nor does the Deb-ther sngon-po of 'Gos Lo-tṣā-ba in the fifteenth century.

The first appearance of the story about the different parentage of the two princes and the explanation of their names seems to be in the Hu-lan deb-ther c. 1346 and it is repeated in much the same form in later histories, e.g. the Rgya-bod yig-thang c. 1434, the Deb-ther dmar-po gsar-ma and Rgyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long, both sixteenth century; the Chos-'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag (1564) adds some picturesque details.

In the earliest Tibetan manuscripts, those from Tun-huang, which will be examined later, 'Od-srung and his mother, the queen 'Phan, are named but no surviving document from there mentions Yum-btstan.

In a previous article I asked “Who was Yum-btstan?” (chapter 8 above) and concluded that there was no such person and that the introduction of a second claimant to the throne was to conceal the fact that the direct line from Srong-btstan Sgam-po had become extinct and that 'Od-srung was adopted.

Here, the question is “Who was 'Od-srung?”' Of his existence the Tun-huang documents leave no doubt, but his identity and the whole course of

events after the death of Glang-dar-ma are far from clear. Fortunately Chinese histories throw some light on the matter. The story related in the New Tang-shu, dating from the middle of the tenth century, as translated by S. W. Bushell in JRAS 1880, is that Ta-mo (Dar-ma) had no sons and Ch’i-li-hu (Khri ‘Od?) a son of Shang Yen-li the elder brother of his wife, whose name was Lin, was made btsan-po. He was only three years old at the time and the wife was regent of the kingdom. The account then describes the trouble this caused. In Le concile de Lhasa, p. 26, P. Demiéville cites the Tzu-chih t’ung-chien (A.D. 1085) to the effect that Ch’i-li-hu was considered illegitimate as not being of the royal line but in fact a nephew of one of the wives of Dar-ma, the lady Ch’en, who governed the kingdom with favourites of the late king, because Ch’i-li-hu was only three years old. Demiéville here follows Pelliot’s reading of the queen’s name in Histoire ancienne du Tibet rather than “Lin” which is that of Bushell and Chang Kun. These early histories may depend on reports from Li-ching, the last T’ang envoy to Tibet in 843; and although the Tzu-chih t’ung-chien appears to imply that Dar-ma had more than one queen, there is agreement that Ch’i-li-hu was three years old and was adopted from the family of the queen, who then governed the kingdom; there is no mention of a rival infant prince.

The first appearance in later Tibetan histories of a name that can be attributed to a wife of Glang-dar-ma is on fo. 25b of the Chos-bguns of Ne’u Pandita, probably of the later thirteenth century, where in a list of religious foundations it is said that a temple at ‘Phags-bsam Lhang-bu was founded by Tshes-pong-bza’ Yum-rje Btsan-mo, whom a gloss calls ‘Phan. Yum-rje Btsan-mo may be translated “the royal queen-mother”. It is not specifically stated that she was the wife of Glang-dar-ma; and the list is chronologically strange since she is followed by ‘Ol-rgod-gza’ Bro-gar Stong-btsun who was the grandmother of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po; but the identification is possible from fo. 123b of the Rgya-bod yig-tshang (c. 1324), which seems to derive from a similar source to that of Ne’u. There a temple of Yar-lung Dpag-bsam-ljon-shing is attributed to Dar-ma’s queen, btsun-mo Rtsan-mo ‘Phan. The list continues with foundations by mkhas btsun sngags pa dang btsun chen rnams, “learned exorcist priests and holy monks”.

The Chos-bguns of Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag vol Ja fo. 139 a names the mother of ‘Od-srung as btsun-mo chun-ma Tshe-spong-bza’ Btsan-mo ‘Phan. It is also the only history, so far as I can discover, to name the senior queen — chen-ma Sna-nam-bza’. Sna-nam was a well-known clan from which Khri Lde-gtseg-brtsan took a bride but it may be wondered whether Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag, whose work reveals considerable acquaintance with early records at Bsam-yas, might have assumed — rightly or wrongly — that btsun-chen-rnams in Rgya-bod yig-tshang or some similar work was in error for btsun-mo chen-mo sna-nam.
At all events there is general agreement in three histories between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries that 'Od-srung's mother was from the Tshe-spong (properly Tshes-pong) clan and that her name was 'Phan.

The name 'Phan as that of 'Od-srung's mother is confirmed by contemporary evidence in two manuscripts from Tun-huang which can be dated between the death of Glang-dar-ma in 842 and the loss of Tun-huang in 850. Another mentions 'Od-srung and his queen-mother without naming her. The most important of these documents is Pelliot Tibétain (Pell. T.) 999 because a specific date can be attached to it. It was edited — with some errors in copying — by Marcelle Lalou and has recently been reproduced photographically in the invaluable Choix de documents de Touen-houang, 3 vols, Paris 1978–90, ii. It may be noted in passing that in the first line, where Lalou has sun lha sras, the reading should be sngun lha sras. The document records a dedication in a mouse year on behalf of jo mo btsan mo 'phan gyi yum sras gyi pho brang 'od srung. The first gyi is perhaps pleonastic and the meaning appears to be "the lady queen 'Phan and her son the pho-brang 'Od-srung". The date can only be A.D. 844 because by the next mouse year 856 Tun-huang was again under Chinese control. Incidentally it rebuts the suggestion put forward by some Japanese scholars that Glang-dar-ma died in 846.

The title pho-brang is repeated in Pell. T. 131 which is a prayer to the Buddhas and many deities to protect the kingdom and maintain the faith practised in the time of the previous Tibetan kings; with it are associated bod yongs gyi (rgyal) pho chen po lha bal dum na bzhugs pa jo mo 'phan gyi pho brang 'od srung rjes 'bangs 'khor dang bcas pa, "the great king of all Tibet, dwelling at Lha-bal-dum, 'Od-srung the pho-brang of the lady, queen 'Phan, with their retinue of followers and subjects".

Pell. T. 230, another prayer, of which unfortunately the right half of the document is missing, also names in 1.7 lha sras khri 'od srung btsan yum, "the son of god, the enthroned 'Od-srung, the btsan-po and his mother". In 1.20 there is a reference to jo mo btsan mo yum gyi thugs rje, "the kindness of the queen mother". It is possible that 'Od-srung was also named in the preceding line which is lost. In 1.24 btsan yum sras, "the btsan-po, mother and son" can be read. There are fragments of prayers that disloyal subjects may be brought to justice and lasting peace restored. Another manuscript from Tun-huang, no. 752 in the India Office Library, also prays for the cessation of disturbances in the kingdom.

These documents leave no doubt that in Tun-huang 'Od-srung, though still a minor, was regarded at some time before A.D. 850 as the enthroned king; that the queen 'Phan was a person in authority; and that the régime had troubled times to face.

The description of 'Od-srung as pho-brang suggests some unusual relationship. The title is found elsewhere only in connection with Zhi-ba-'od,
a monk-prince of western Tibet instrumental in the revival of Buddhism in the mid-eleventh century. In his Preliminary Report on Two Scientific Missions to Nepal, p. 52, Giuseppe Tucci states that it is borne by the second son of a ruling family. There does not appear to be any other evidence of this; and in the case of 'Od-srung it seems more likely to mean that he was of the pho-brang — the palace or family of Btsan-mo 'Phan, the queen dowager, from which, if the disinterested Chinese accounts be accepted, he was adopted. The formal description of him as sras, "son," is what might be expected.

It has been seen that later Tibetan histories give the queen's family name as Tshes-pong. That conflicts with Pelliot's reading of the character in the T'ang Annals as "Ch'en", which he identifies with the Tibetan "Mchims". But the character there differs from that used for Mchims in the bilingual treaty inscription of 821/2 at Lhasa, which has the authority of a state document. Further, Pelliot's translation shows that the Chinese simply reads "the lady Ch'en" and that it is only an assumption that this is a family or clan name. The Tun-huang documents refer to the lady by her personal name, 'Phan, a syllable which features in the names of many personages in the Tun-huang manuscripts and might be connected with the extensive region of 'Phan in north-east Tibet. It is probable that the Chinese would have known her by that name; and as there is some doubt about the reading of the character, sinologists might be able to study it again and find something like 'Phan in it.

A search in early documents for a clue to the clan of the queen's brother Shangyenli reveals only one similar name — Zhang Gnyan-lod of Sna-nam who was a witness to the edict by Khri Lde-srung-brtsan of c. 812, recorded in Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag vol 1a fos 128b-130b; at the lowest estimate he would be about forty-eight in A.D. 842. Sna-nam was the clan of the senior queen according to Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag. When he wrote, historians since the fourteenth century, and probably earlier, were aware of a story about adoption and were determined to avert such a stigma from 'Od-srung and to claim him and his descendants, who were patrons of Atiśa, the great figure in the revival of Buddhism, as in the direct line from Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, its founder in Tibet. If Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag, who had access to the archives at Bsam-yas, did actually find the names Tshes-pong and Sna-nam in early records, he might have transposed them in view of the tradition attributing the adoption to the senior queen.

That is highly speculative; but in the absence of any evidence in Tibetan sources, early or late, to link 'Od-srung's mother with Mchims, the identification of the lady Ch'en is not conclusive. At all events, to whatever clan queen 'Phan belonged, both Chinese and early Tibetan documents point to the fact that she adopted 'Od-srung from outside the royal line.

Although the prayers from Tun-huang, mentioned above, hint at troubles surrounding the accession of 'Od-srung it is the T'ang Annals that
provide a connected account and lively details of the events. They relate how the Chief Minister Chie-tu-na (Db"a’s Rgyal-to-re Stag-snya) was killed when he protested at the appointment of Shang Yen-li’s son as btsan-po; and very soon the whole country was in a state of revolt. That rather meagre intelligence about affairs in central Tibet might have been communicated by the last T’ang envoy who had gone to Lhasa in 843 to condole on the death of Glang-dar-ma. The Chinese are far better informed about the inter-necine warfare between Tibetan ministers in the border regions in which they were marginally involved and which soon led to the recovery of many towns and districts which the Tibetans had held for some eighty years. Shang K’ung-je of Mo, who can be identified with Db"a’s Khrom-bzher mentioned in Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s edict, military governor of Lo-men-chuan, well within Shensi, denounced the ministers who had murdered Glang-dar-ma; and, claiming to be divinely commanded to chastise the rebels and traitors, attacked the senior border governors, including his immediate superior Shang Pi-pi of Mou whose personal name was Tsan-hsin-ya (Btsan-bzang of ‘Br?) . After seven years of fighting with varying success Shang Pi-pi gave up the struggle and retired to the neighbourhood of Tun-huang. Shang K’ung-je having failed in an attempt to secure Chinese patronage, continued his career of indiscriminate rapine and slaughter over a wide area from Turfan to Ling-chou; but he was increasingly isolated as the Tibetan colonial empire collapsed around him. From 849 onwards Chinese generals recaptured their western districts and the fortress cities of the silk route through Kansu. In 866 Shang K’ung-je, who must by then have been over seventy years old, was defeated and killed by the Uighur general P’u-ku-chun, at that time in alliance with the Chinese.

In these events it is evident that Shang K’ung-je was out for his own ends, arrogating first the title of Chief Minister and later even that of btsan-po. His attack on Shang Pi-pi may have been directed against him as a supporter of the new regime or because of the long competition, from at least A.D. 705, between the Db"a’s and ‘Br clan for power in Tibet. The latter suggestion is supported by a statement in Du Halde’s History of China that when “Champipi” gave up the right he told his followers that since there was no legitimate btsan-po they might as well offer their allegiance to China; from which it seems he was not primarily a champion of ‘Od-srung. The greater part of the fighting men on both sides being drawn from peoples of the border regions, his advice would be readily accepted.

Later Tibetan historians, preoccupied with the eclipse of Buddhism under Glang-dar-ma and its eventual restoration, seem to know nothing of the well-organized and successful colonial administration which dominated the silk route and extensive tracts of territory in China’s western districts for nearly three generations; and they are no better informed about the fighting on the frontier after the death of Glang-dar-ma or the principal
personages involved. Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag (vol. 1a fo. 140a) states that when
the two princes were twenty-three — i.e. 865/6 by his calculations — there
was a popular uprising and that Dba’s Khrom-bzher Legs-stang was re-
ponsible for spreading it to Mdo-khams. In fact that was just the year when
Dba’s Khrom-bzher met his end after twenty-four years of warfare and
raiding. There is also vague mention of fighting between 'Bro and Sbas
(Dba’s) in Dbu-ru. There is what seems to be a hazy reference to the death
of Khrom-bzher on fo. 92a of the Rgyal-rabs gsal-ba’i me-long where it is said
that a Sog-po general came to Tibet and killed the minister Khyung-zhags.

Much more is known about the personalities by the Chinese, whose ac-
counts show a sympathetic interest in Shang Pi-pi whom they regard, in
comparison with the violent and brutal Shang k’ung-je, as a man of cul-
ture. The 'Bro clan had been familiar to them for a long time as part of the
Yang-tung. A remnant of that people which remained on the borders of
north-west China when the main body migrated to the west was in touch
with the Chinese court up to 647, after which they came under Tibetan
domination; but their earlier contact led to the continuation of some sort
of relationship. The lady Khri-ma-lod of 'Bro, the queen of Mang-slong
Mang-btsan, was an influential figure in Tibetan politics. She survived her
husband, who died in 676, for a long time but it was not until after the elimi-
nation of the dominant Mgar clan by her son 'Dus-srong in 698 that she
was able to exert her influence, and she is mentioned in the Tun-huang
annals every year after that until her death in 712. She took the lead in se-
curing a Chinese princess as bride for her grandson Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan.
In 677 she had perhaps been behind an attempt to obtain princess T’ai-p’ing,
dughter of the Empress Wu in marriage for her son 'Dus-srong. Later, Khri
Srong-lde-brtsan also took a wife from 'Bro — the lady Rgyal-mo-brtsan
who became a nun with the name Byang-chub and was a devoted follower
of the Chinese religious teacher the Master Mahayana during his stay in
Tibet. Khri Lde-srong-brtsan, Khri Srong-lde-brtsan’s son by another queen,
also married a 'Bro lady. The 'Bro appear to have had a close connection
with Tun-huang and it is probably not mere chance that the general who
conquered it for Tibet was 'Bro Khri-sum-rje and that another 'Bro Khri-
sum-rje with the name Stag-snang dominated the frontier administration
in conjunction with Lha-bzang Klu-bal of Tshes-pong some twenty-five
years later. A eulogy of Zhang Khri-sum-rje by a Chinese of Tun-huang,
quoted by Derniéville (op. cit., pp. 287–8) shows knowledge of his forbears
back to his great-grandfather.

The T’ang dynasty disintegrated about the same time as the rule of the
Chos-rgyal of Tibet. Chinese annals have no information about events in
central Tibet after the return of their last ambassador in 843; by 873 im-
perial orders no longer reached the frontier generals; in 889 the capital was
moved eastwards to Lo-yang; and in 929, according to Ma Tuan-lin there
was no one who could read a letter in Tibetan. But the succeeding Sung dynasty had some knowledge of the Tibetan peoples still living in the border regions. A passage in Du Halde's history, based on Sung records, states that when Lun K'ung-jo (Shang K'ung-je) was in the ascendancy some princes of the royal blood retired to distant places in Szechwan while others fortified themselves in the mountains. Most remained in their patrimonies in the region governed by Chang Pi-pi, and later there emerged from among them, c. A.D. 951, P'an-lo-chi, prince of Lou-chou — the Liang-chou district — who had been protected by the sons of Chang Pi-pi. Who these princes of the royal blood may have been is uncertain. Although the direct descent from Srong-brtsan Sgam-po through a senior queen was extinct it can hardly be supposed that no children by some of the many lesser royal wives did not survive; and it seems probable that the Bro would support someone connected with their own clan.

P'an-lo-chi, who is said to have been a rival of the king of Hsi-hsia, died c. 1008 and was followed as principal leader of the Tibetan tribes of Mdo-khams by a youth, Ku-ssu-lo who was eventually established at Tsong-ka, south-east of the Kokonor. The argument about his origin is too involved to pursue here but it appears that envoys had been sent to the west to find a descendant of 'Od-srung to rule them and the boy they chose may have been a grandson of 'Od-srung's grandson Bkra-shis rtsegs-pa-dpal. Chinese histories follow the fortunes of the Tsong-ka princes down to the thirteenth century when their rule was ended by Chingiz Khan.

Tibetan histories know nothing of these events apart from the bare mention that some princes went to Mdo-khams and Tsong-ka; and their accounts of affairs in central Tibet for about a century and a half after Glang-dar-ma are obscure and confused. The best outline of the chronology is probably that in the histories of Sa-skya Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan and 'Phags-pa which are regarded as of special value by Giuseppe Tucci in his "Validity of the Tibetan Historical Tradition", India Antiqua, 1947. By those accounts 'Od-srung was elected king immediately on the death of Glang-dar-ma and died at the age of sixty-three (A.D. 903). His son Dpal-'khor-btsan was born c. 892 and died aged thirty-one (923). There followed a popular rebellion (khyen-log) in the earth-ox year 929; and in 941 the royal tombs were violated. The sons of Dpal-'khor-btsan divided the kingdom and some of his grandsons set out to found new kingdoms in the west. That can be put speculatively in the middle of the tenth century. The kings of Ladakh and the Lha-rgya-ri family in E-yul near Dwags-po are held to be descended from those western rulers.

The fate of religion in central Tibet before the migration to the west shares in the same general obscurity. The Sa-skya historians relate that Glang-dar-ma ruled righteously at first for six months; and this may be reflected in Pell. T. 134 which is a long prayer dedicated to him, under his
name 'U'i-dum-brtan, as a devotee who will build temples and maintain the faith. It may be noted that, apart from the change of names, this is a verbatim copy of Pell. T. 132 which is dedicated to his murdered predecessor and brother Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan (Ral-pa-can) and seems to be the sort of stereotyped compliment the subject people of Tun-huang turned out for the ruler of the day. According to the Sa-skya histories the subsequent persecution of religion by Glang-dar-ma was confined to the remaining six and a half months before his assassination; but they appear to have gone astray in assigning to him a reign of only a year and half a month, for the Tsen tche t'ong kien states definitely that the Tibetan king Yi-tai — which was the name of Ral-pa-can’s regnal era — died in the third year of K’ai-ch’eng (838), and was succeeded by his brother Ta-mo. But whether Glang-dar-ma reigned for a year and half a month or for four years the persecution, which has left so strong a mark on Tibetan history, seems to have been aimed principally at the monks, probably because of the political influence they had acquired in the preceding reign. The principal temples and images were not destroyed and the scriptures were still venerated in the houses of laymen. Both 'Od-srung and Dpal-'khor-btsan were regarded as pious kings and the latter is credited with the founding of many temples. I have seen the one at Bya-sa near Yar-lung. It is similar in design to the earlier royal foundations at Khra-'brug and G.yu Lha-khang but simpler and more austere. As a temple with no one to perform offerings is improbable, some monks must have survived; but while political dissension may have made it economically impossible for the religious body to be supported by Glang-dar-ma’s immediate successors on the same scale as in former times, the most severe blow to the practice of Buddhism in central Tibet was probably the rebellion of A.D. 929 followed by the dispersal of the descendants of Dpal-'khor-btsan and half a century of neglect until the arrival from the east of Klu-mes Tshul-khrims shes-rab in A.D. 978 marked the beginning of the phyi-dar. Among his disciples was a member of the old nobility, Sna-nam Rdo-je dbang-phyug, but in Tibetan minds the phyi-dar is dominated by coming of Atiśa; and the part played in bringing that about by 'Od-srung’s descendants, the western Tibetan kings Ye-shes-'od and Byang-chub-'od, has quite obscured the fact that the blood of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po no longer ran in the royal veins.
The Mgar Family in Seventh-Century Tibet

One of the great folk heroes of Tibetan history is blon-po Mgar, whose resourcefulness in securing a Chinese princess as bride for his master Srong-brtsan Sgam-po is recounted at length in later histories and is represented in the favourite A-lce Lha-mo drama Rgya-bza’ bal-bza’, which enacts the curious tests he had to solve before he could win the princess whom he then escorted to Tibet with the image of the Jo-bo Rin-po-che, for centuries the most venerated object in the gtsug-lag-klzan of Lhasa. There is also a popular story that Mgar took so long on the journey from China with the princess that he had a child by her on the way.

It may seem churlish to point out that such stories are the stuff of legend in other countries too. In an exhibition of Japanese treasures at the time of the 1964 Olympic Games there was a thirteenth-century painted scroll showing a Japanese envoy to the T’ang court successfully overcoming similar tests of his astuteness; and Edward Schafer in his Vermillion Bird (Berkeley 1967) has an eighth-century story from south China about a minister who conducted a princess as bride to a neighbouring kinglet, taking a year on the journey and fathering a child on the way.

The real story may be less romantic; but Mgar Stong-rtsan Yul-zung did conduct successful negotiations for a Chinese princess in 638 A.D. and he did conduct the lady, Princess Wen-ch’eng — Mun-chang Kong-co — to Tibet in 641. There is even a contemporary Chinese painting by the famous artist Yen Li-pen showing Mgar being received in audience by the Emperor T’ai-tsung. Chinese pride and protocol of course showed the “barbarian” envoy as a rather insignificant figure but their records, which barely conceal that the princess had to be granted under threat of a Tibetan invasion, recognize Mgar Stong-rtsan as a statesman of outstanding energy and

He made so strong an impression on the emperor that he was offered a noble Chinese lady as bride for himself and, in spite of protesting that he was already married and so could not accept a bride before his ruler, he was overpersuaded. That may lie at the root of the story that he had a child by the princess on their journey to Tibet.

In contrast with the high opinion expressed by the Chinese, the earliest Tibetan records appear to treat the career and achievements of Mgar Stong-rtsan Yul-zung with comparative coolness. He became chief minister some time before the death of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, having succeeded the flamboyant figure of Khyung-po Spung-sad Zu-tse in whose downfall he played a considerable part, but the question just when that happened and whether he was chief minister already in 638 cannot be examined here. Whereas in the Tibetan Chronicle from Tun-huang the skill and wisdom of Khyung-po Spung-sad Zu-tse and all ministers before him are highly praised, the only sort of encomium of Mgar Stong-rtsan Yul-zung is in an exchange of songs in which he pledged his loyalty to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. He is described there, briefly, as a wise minister.

It is, nevertheless, clear from Chinese records and from the bare statement of facts in the Tun-huang Annals that he was a personage of the highest ability, energy and accomplishment, and that by a skilful blend of diplomacy and military strength he succeeded, without creating an open breach with China, in laying the foundations of a great Tibetan empire and in establishing the dominance of his family in which he was followed after his death by two powerful sons.

On the death of the btsan-po Srong-brtsan Sgam-po in 649, Mgar Stong-rtsan apparently resigned or was dismissed from the post of chief minister. The alleged reason was that he was old — which in Tibetan terms might mean sixty years of age; but perhaps such a step was expected on the death of a ruler, or — as appears later — the predominance of one family was resented by ministers of the old-established clans and even by the common folk. But it was not long before he regained the post in conditions which gave him almost unfettered authority. The new btsan-po was an infant whose mother was probably a lady from the T'uyuhun ('A-zha) people against whom the Tibetans had conducted and were to continue to conduct destructive campaigns. There was, therefore, no competition from the maternal kinsmen who were the traditional protectors of a young king. Stong-rtsan Yul-zung continued as Chief Minister until his death in 667 from extreme old age. His years in office had, nevertheless, shown no sign of weakening powers but were a period of extensive and successful military activity on the borders of the country and of much administrative organisation in Tibet itself and in territories recently conquered in the reign of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. Men were called up (bkug) presumably for service either as soldiers (rgod) or in civilian tasks (g.yung); operations described as mkho
(mkhos), rtsis mgo and phyin-ril relating to the establishment of governmental institutions and the assessment of revenue have been discussed by Géza Uray, V.A. Bogoslovskij and Luciano Petech. But the most interesting of Stong-rtsan Yul-zung’s measures was the writing of a code of law — bk’-grims-gyi yi-ge — in 655. Later tradition ascribes such a code to Srong-brtson Sgam-po as the founder of law in Tibet, and there is early authority for that tradition in the Tun-huang Chronicle where, in a eulogy of the king, it is said that he established a great code of law — bk’-grims-ched-po. It maybe that the principles were agreed upon during his reign but were not formally inscribed until 655, after his death. Probably at that time no more than the penalties for basic crimes — murder, rape, theft and falsehood — were laid down, further clauses and provisions about procedure, etc., being added later. The terse entries in the Tun-huang Annals, while recording those domestic activities, are almost entirely silent about Stong-rtsan Yul-zung’s vigorous expansionist policy; and one must turn to Chinese histories for information. His principal target was the T’uyūhun (‘A-zha) kingdom. An attack in 634 had driven out one section of the people, who took refuge near Kokonor. They and the heart of the kingdom around the sources of the Yellow River continued to be harassed by the Tibetans who also reduced to subjection some tribes of the Ch’iang, which had hitherto escaped their attention, including the Pailan who were formerly the vassals of the T’uyūhun. The T’uyūhun appealed to China for help but that only brought on them a punitive expedition by the Tibetans followed by a series of demands for a settlement, complaints, and protests to the Chinese who remained studiously aloof. Eventually the Tibetans, taking advantage of treachery by a defecting T’uyūhun minister, launched an attack which drove the ruler, whose queen was a Chinese princess, and many of his followers to flee to China. The emperor, greatly concerned at the fate of his former vassals, continued nevertheless — perhaps in hope rather than from conviction — to regard Stong-rtsan Yul-zung as a loyal friend; but he took the precaution of sending troops to protect the T’uyūhun from further attacks, and he issued a strong rebuke to the Tibetans for their aggression.

Stong-rtsan Yul-zung, undeterred, continued to press for a settlement on his terms and asked for a large stretch of territory near the upper reaches of the Yellow River as grazing ground for his horses. This was indignantly refused; but domination over T’uyūhun territory in that region, already secured by the Tibetans, gave easy access to the trade routes north and south of the Tarim Basin. The effects began to be felt when Tibetan armies showed they could make trouble not only near the Chinese border but also in the far west of central Asia where Chinese control of the merchant cities through their mastery of the Four Garrisons — Kashgar, Khotan, Kucha and Karashahr — had safeguarded their trade with the west. The Tibetans had been probing there for some time, taking advantage of internal rivalries
among the Turkic tribes to gain useful allies. In 663 and 665, they joined in attacks on Kashgar and Khotan but avoided battle with Chinese forces which came to the rescue. Nevertheless, an open breach was clearly not far off; but before it occurred Stong-rtsan Yul-zung died in 667 having to the end of his days succeeded in avoiding war with his great neighbour with whom he had enjoyed a love-hate relationship for nearly thirty years. He appears to have been active to the last, hunting in 656 and spending most of his time in the 'A-zha country. Assuming that he was born around the end of the sixth century he would have been over seventy-five at the time of his death.

As chief minister Stong-rtsan Yul-zung had been supported by his able sons, Bstan-snya, Khri-'bring, Stag-ru and Gung-rtom. On his death there was a challenge to the position of the Mgar family when the lesser ministers and the ordinary people proposed as his successor Dba's Sum-snang, a son of the famous minister Dba's Dbyi-tshab who was one of those responsible for establishing Srong-brtsan sgam-po's father as ruler of a powerful Tibetan kingdom. This suggests that, for all their energy and ability, the Mgar, who were comparative latecomers on the Tibetan scene and had stood aloof while Dba's and his colleagues were fighting for the btsan-po, were not wholly popular with the old-established central Tibetan families and the common people. But the influence of the Mgar prevailed with the young king, then about fifteen years old, and after secret discussions Mgar Btsan-snya Ldom-bu was appointed chief minister with Dba's Sum-snang as his assistant. Later when Sum-snang died, Mgar Btsan-snya held the office on his own. It appears that the arrangement took some time to settle down. For five years after the death of Stong-rtsan Yul-zung no one is named even as minister in the Tun-huang Annals. Then in 673 it is recorded that Mgar Btsan-snya Ldom-bu and Khri-'bring Btsan-brod convened the council; but they are not described by any title, not even blon, "minister." In 675, Btsan-snya is referred to as blon but it is not until 680 that he is entitled blon-che, chief minister. Perhaps there is no great significance in these notices, but they may suggest that there were obstacles to the assumption of the title by Btsan-snya until after the death of Dba's Sum-snang — who, incidentally, is nowhere named in the Annals.

Even if there was some internal tension, the policy of military expansion, in which the Mgar family continued to take the lead, was carried on with increased vigour. Stong-rtsan Yul-zung's sons probably did not feel that special regard for the T'ang Dynasty which their father had acquired — together with a Chinese wife — in the great days of Srong-brtsan Sgamp-po and T'ang T'ai-tsung. Although his action against the T'u-yü-hun had embittered relations, there had been no armed conflict with China during Stong-rtsan Yul-zung's regime, but after his death there was a rapid deterioration. The Tibetans continued with their absorption of the unattached Ch'iang tribes on the Chinese border but it was in the west that they struck
the most damaging blow to Chinese pride — and trade — by capturing the famous Four Garrisons. This stirred the emperor to action and in 670 he appointed a “commander-in-chief of the Lhasa region and Lhasa army” to chastise the Tibetans and restore the T'uyühun to their former territories in which they had protected the approaches to the western trade routes. That reference to a Lhasa army is the origin of a quite unsubstantiated legend that the Chinese took the opportunity of the death of Stong-rtsan Yul-zung to invade Tibet and capture Lhasa. The story presumably originates from a distortion of the T'ang Annals of which the Tibetans had translations made at the beginning of the fourteenth century. In fact the “Lhasa army” got no further than Tafeichuan, about 125 miles south of Hsing, where it was annihilated by the Tibetans under Mgar Khri-'bring. Nothing could now save the remnants of the T'uyühun. Their territory was completely occupied by the Tibetans who went on, year after year, to ravage the Chinese borderland from Liang-chou to Kua-chou and to inflict severe defeats, relieved by occasional reverses, upon the forces sent to repel them.

The death of the btsan-po Mang-slon Mang-rtsan in 676 had little immediate effect on the authority of the Mgar. Although his place of residence had been recorded each year he does not appear to have had any influence on the conduct of affairs. There is no eulogy of him in the Tun-huang Chronicle and later histories have nothing to say of him. The only contemporary comment is in the T'ang Annals where a Tibetan envoy to the Chinese court in 670 answered an enquiry about the btsan-po by saying, rather patronisingly, that he was a diligent ruler but could not compare with his grandfather, Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. The succession of his infant son, 'Dus-srong, left power in the hands of the ministers. It is treated as automatic in the Tibetan Annals but Chinese records suggest that there was some difficulty. According to Chang Kun, T'ung-chien relates that a paternal uncle (khlr-snya?) supported 'Dus-srong, while a younger brother aged six who was under the care of Khri-'bring was favoured by the people for fear of Khri-'bring, but that he accepted the claim of 'Dus-srong. Since the Tibetan Annals show that 'Dus-srong was posthumously born he cannot have had a younger brother aged six; and there is no record of any brother of Mang-slon, who also succeeded as an infant, to act as “paternal uncle” (khu). Although the story appears to be garbled and raises other problems which need not be examined here, there may well have been another claimant put forward and a dispute involving the Mgar brothers. It may be significant that it was not until 685, when Mgar Khri-'bring became chief minister on the death of Btsan-snya Ldom-bu, that 'Dus-srong, who was by then eight years old, was formally named as btsan-po. Whatever may have happened inside Tibet brought no relief to the Chinese. Tibetan aggression continued and the T'ang Annals record that the Tibetan kingdom
extended so widely in all directions that since the days of the Han and Wei there was no nation in the west so powerful.

The death of Btsan-snya Ldom-bu in 685 is described as follows in the Tibetan Annals:

\[
\text{blon chen po btsan snya dang mang nyen stag tsab gnyis / dme' byung /}
\text{shangs gyi sum chu bor / blon chen po btsan snya gum /}
\]

The chief minister Btsan-snya and Mang-nyen Stag-tsab were affected by dme'. The chief minister died at Sum-chu-bo of Shangs.

One meaning of dme' is "defilement, pollution", and Btsan-snya, who had been active in a region, apparently Shangs, where there was a serious outbreak of cattle disease, might have been infected by something like anthrax. On the other hand, dme' can mean "murder," with the suggestion in Dgyab's Dictionary of "murder by one's own kinsmen". Only one of those suffering dme' is specifically stated to have died, but a hint of foul play may lie in the last sentence of the entry for the year 685 to the effect that the Snom-bu-pa seized many poisoners and executed them.

At all events, on the death of Btsan-snya, Mgar Khri-'bring Btsan-brod was immediately appointed chief minister. He seems to have been more forceful than his brother and ever since the death of Stong-rtsan Yul-zung the Chinese had regarded him rather than Btsan-snya as the principal minister. At home, more measures of administrative reorganisation were carried out; and abroad, military activity went on as before. But a few chinks in the armour of the Mgar dynasty began to appear. The first was the recovery by the Chinese in 694 of the important Four Garrisons as a result of which Mgar Gung-rton was disgraced and executed. Another member of the clan was captured by the Sogdians, probably near their settlement at Lop-nor.

Against these reverses Mgar Khri-'bring could set a resounding victory over the famous general Wang Hsiao-chieh who had earlier recaptured the Four Garrisons from the Tibetans. The battle took place at Su-lo-han-shan which from the Chinese name might appear to be in the Kashgar region but which the Tibetans, who call the site of the battle Stag-la Rgya-dur, the "graveyard of the Chinese at Tiger Pass," describe as being in 'A-zha country. The Tun-huang Chronicle celebrates the victory in a lively account of a supposed repartee before the battle between Khri-'bring and the Chinese general in which the latter derided the Tibetans' hope of success with so small an army; and Khri-'bring retorted with apothegms instancing the strength of small things against great. Gnomic verses of the same period are found with the title Sum-pa ma-shags chen-po in F. W. Thomas, Ancient Historical Literature from North-eastern Tibet (Berlin 1957) and in Pelliot
The tradition survived in a contest in which people of neighbouring villages might meet at their common boundary and exchange wise maxims or jesting verses in challenge and response, known as shags 'gyed-pa; similar exchanges might serve as entertainment at a party.

Soon after his victory Khri-'bring sent a mission to the T'ang court proposing a treaty of peace; but his terms, which included the abandonment by the Chinese of the Four Garrisons, were too stiff for them. Moreover, they seem to have suspected that there was a new mood and a general readiness for peace among the Tibetan people. So they temporized and with typical statecraft sought to undermine Khri-'bring's position by spreading the suggestion that he was the main obstacle to a settlement. It is highly probable that the Chinese had some regular contact with the Tibetan court. The princess Wen-ch'eng who died in 680 must have been acquainted with and may well have influenced 'Dus-srong's mother, Queen Khri-ma-lod of 'Bro, a lady of the Yang-tung people, who, as later events were to show, had close rapport with the Chinese. Although she may have had to lie low during the ascendancy of the Mgar, her son 'Dus-srong, who was to prove a vigorous ruler, had by now come of age. Khri-ma-lod herself was soon to figure in both Tibetan and Chinese records as an active and influential personage in affairs of state, and her clan, the 'Bro, were to play a leading part in Tibetan politics until the end of the kingdom.

There must have been a hint of something in the wind when in the winter of 696 the queen called up a large number of men. In 698 the blow fell. When summer came, 'Dus-srong announced that he was going on a hunting expedition and set out for the north with a large band of warriors. Khri-'bring in the meantime was conducting a campaign in Tsong-ka near the Kokonor. 'Dus-srong managed to seize over two thousand of Khri-'bring's kinsmen and followers and put them to death. He then summoned Khri-'bring and his brother Btsan-po to his presence. Khri-'bring refused and prepared to fight, but when 'Dus-srong led an army against him his troops deserted. Perhaps the ground had been prepared by intrigue; or perhaps, when Srong-brtsan sgam-po's great grandson was seen to display something of the ancestral spirit, Mgar's soldiery were moved by ingrained feelings of awe and reverence for the sacred person of Spu-rgyal Btsan-po. Khri-'bring and many of his kinsmen committed suicide while his brother Btsan-po and others, including a son of Khri-'bring known to the Chinese as Kung-jen, fled to China taking with them a considerable number of followers including many T'uyûhun over whom they had been exercising jurisdiction. They were warmly received and given titles, rewards and official posts. Btsan-po was appointed to take part in the war against the Tibetans but he died soon after. Kung-jen lived until 723 when a memorial tablet was set up in his honour (P. Demiéville, Le concile de Lhasa, Paris 1952, p. 380).
These events are reflected in a badly damaged passage at the end of the Tun-huang Chronicle. It can be seen that Pa-tshab Rgyal-to-re, who accompanied Mgar Mang-po-rje Stag-rtsan on his flight to China, sang a song surviving fragments of which mention the sorrow felt by mothers and sisters, Tsong-ka (which is where Khri-'bring met his fate), and a share or reward (skal-ba) from the Chinese ruler. Mang-po-rje Stag-rtsan is not named elsewhere in the Annals or Chronicles but an association between the Mgar and Pa-tshab clans is seen in the entry of the Tibetan Annals for the year 690; perhaps Mang-po-rje Stag-rtsan is the Kung-jen of the T'ang Annals. To Pa-tshab’s song Mang-po-rje’s wife Cog-ro-za replied. There is an unfortunate lacuna which conceals the vital point whether she did or did not accompany her husband into exile. The indications are that she did not. She mentions Nyen-kar Stag-rtse, which was a castle of the btsan-po, and appears to describe it as a prison — lcags-khyim; and later she refers to her lord Stag-rtsan and the Chinese emperor as being on friendly terms. Fortunately there are two other songs in an earlier part of the Tun-huang Chronicle with a bearing on the question. In the first, one Khe-rгад Rgyal-to-re Mdo-snang derides Cog-ro-za at a time when, as the Chronicle says, she and 'Dus-srong were living together. She replies, briefly, in what seems like a spirit of resigned acceptance. It is outside the scope of this article to attempt a detailed interpretation of these obscure and allusive songs but they appear to confirm that, whether reluctantly or not, Cog-ro-za became 'Dus-srong’s mistress as the spoils of war.

In another of those splendid, allusive songs 'Dus-srong celebrated, arrogantly and contemptuously, the elimination of the Mgar family and the release of the royal family from the shackles of a virtual shogunate lasting nearly fifty years. After their fall nothing more was heard of the Mgar in early Tibetan records. Although it receives no more than bare mention, their achievement in domestic administration and the institution of a code of law cannot be concealed, but with the two exceptions noted above they are denied the praise they deserve. The Chinese, on the other hand, leave no doubt that they were responsible for building a great and powerful Tibetan kingdom; and it appears that descendants of the great Stong-rtsan Yul-zung may have survived for over a century in China, from where they perhaps found their way back into the borderlands of Tibet. The rulers of Sde-dge claimed the Mgar as their ancestors and similar, though less probable, claims were made by other Tibetan families (R.A. Stein, “Deux notules d’histoire ancienne du Tibet”, Journal asiatique, ccli/3–4, 1963).

The origins of this remarkable family are uncertain. The clan first appears, in the Tibetan Chronicle, together with the Mnyan, as ministers of the ruler of Ngas-po. When he was overthrown by his Mnyan ministers and the neighbouring ruler of ‘O-yul, the Mgar appear to have survived unscathed. They did so again when the prince of ‘O-yul and the Mnyan
were overthrown by Spu-rgyal Btsan-po, Gnam-ri Slon-mlshan, the ruler of Yar-lung; and it was not long before a Mgar minister appeared in the service of the Yar-lung dynasty, which they proceeded to dominate for half a century.

Mgar-ba is Tibetan for “smith, metal worker.” In Chinese the name is represented by characters variously read as Chiu, Sie and Nie. In his erudite article mentioned above, Stein, while reconciling the Chinese forms with the name Mgar, dismisses the possibility that the name means “smith,” arguing that in later records it appears regularly as ‘Gar and that the Tibetans, who love etymological explanations, do not seem to have interpreted it in that way. On the other hand, by the time the name appears in those later, Buddhist, records the aura of mystery and special magical powers that surround the blacksmith’s craft had become something ill-omened through the association of iron with lethal weapons. Blacksmiths became a caste whose members were not permitted to enter religious orders and with whom it was undesirable to marry or even to eat. Most of those named ‘Gar in later records are monks and it would have been unsuitable for them and their kinsmen to bear the inauspicious name Mgar. Similarly, leading noble families which liked to trace their descent back to Srong-btsan sgam-po’s great minister Mgar Stong-rtsan Yul-zung would also seek to avoid the slur on their supposed ancestor and themselves by changing the name to ‘Gar. Mgar, which is without exception the form in surviving early documents, would not be the only name to undergo a change in later years.

As early as the sixth century Tibetans were renowned as metal-workers and armourers. Whether or not any social stigma attached to them at that time it appears that among the neighbouring Turks blacksmiths were honoured as well as being held in superstitious awe. According to Tucci, there was even a relationship between royalty and the blacksmith’s craft; and there are some pointers to a connection between the Mgar and the Turks. When their former master, the ruler of Ngas-po, was killed it was to the Turks that his son fled. In Tibetan operations in western central Asia in the seventh century there was so close a rapport between generals of the Mgar family and the Turkish tribes that when the Ten Tribes were left without a leader, two sections gave their allegiance to the Tibetan commander. A further hint of Turkic sympathy with the Mgar may be seen in the name Khe-rkad Rgyal-to-re who had harsh words to say of Mgar Mang-po-ri’s wife Cog-ro-za when she was living with the btsan-po and who later led a rebellion against ‘Dus-srong. The Khe-rkad were a Turkic people — the Kirghiz? — living to the north of the Ten Tribes of the Western Turks. Finally, in his song of triumph over the Mgar, ‘Dus-srong, scorning their ambitions, says mgar bu ni rje ru re, which may mean “no son of the Mgar shall be king” or “no blacksmith boy shall be king”. ‘Dus-srong’s bitter
contempt and the coolness of early Tibetan records towards the really remarkable achievements of the Mgar family in building the greatness of the Tibetan kingdom may suggest that their offence in arrogating the authority and power of Spu-rgyal Btsan-po was aggravated by what, in Tibetan eyes, was their lowly origin.
The Origin of the Tibetan Kingdom

In the Tun-huang Chronicle there is a list of forty-two kings down to 'U'i-dum-brtan, Glang-dar-ma, who died c. 842 A.D. Most are little more than shadows; some are clearly mythical; others legendary; some, perhaps, real persons of whom oral tradition has preserved little but their names; only of the last eleven has history anything definite to say.

The early part of the genealogy is seen by Luciano Petech as representing Bon cosmology and the first seven names seem to fall into that category. The list begins with Yab-bla Bdag-drug who dwelt above high heaven and had six sons, with one more, Khri'i Bdun-tshigs making seven. Although those names might appear to mean Six High Father Lords and the Line of Seven Enthroned Ones, they only account for two persons in the list, and it is a point of little consequence since they are clearly denizens of the outer world. With Nyag-khri Btsan-po divinity descends briefly to earth. In the poetic language of the Chronicle: "He came like a shower of rain to this sheltered place, as lord of the hidden land, to become ruler of Tibet of the six divisions; after which he went to heaven". In a ninth-century inscription from Rkong-po his name appears as Nya-gri and his line is said to have dwelt for seven generations at Phying-ba Stag-rtse, which is identified with the ruined castle near the ancient royal burial ground at 'Phyong-rgyas. Later tradition, without any basis in early documents, changes the name to Gnyal-khri and elaborates a legend that he was carried on the necks (gnya') of his new subjects.

According to the Chronicle Nyag-khri was succeeded by five kings with the syllable khri in their names, of whom it is said that when the son was old enough to ride a horse the father withdrew to heaven, suggesting a ritual — and violent — termination of these early reigns. Later tradition recounts how the kings returned to heaven on a magic rope. Although that myth is not found in surviving early manuscripts, that does not necessarily imply that it was not current in the early centuries.

After the seven Khri kings, who had special links with heaven, comes a line headed by Gri-gum Btsan-po who, although a son of the last heavenly Khri, was involved in earthly conflict and death. In an obscure story he challenged one Lo-ngam Rta-rdzii who succeeded in neutralizing the magic powers with which Dri-gum was protected and so was able to kill him. The encounter took place at Lo-ngam’s capital Myang-ro Sham-po. Although there is mention of Dri-gum’s protecting deity Lde-bla Gung-rgyal — the mountain god ‘O-lde Gung-rgyal? — being driven in defeat to the snows of Gangs Ti-se it is unlikely that it was so far in the west. Later tradition sees the site as being in the valley of the Nyang-chu near Gyantse; while the pandit Nain Singh of the Indian Survey found a similar story current near the Dang-ra G.yu-mtsho, a lake sacred to the Bon-po; but many indications point to the valley of the Rkong-po Nyang-chu. The two sons of Gri-gum who had been taken into banishment in Rkong-po eventually avenged their father by killing Lo-ngam in his palace of Myang-ro Sham-po. According to the Chronicle, the younger Nya-khyi became ruler of Rkong-po while the elder Sha-khyi betook himself to Phying-ba — that is the capital of the Tibetan kings. The story is adumbrated in a ninth-century inscription from Rkong-po with the difference that Nya-khyi is described as the elder and Sha-khyi, who became Lha-btsan-po, ruler of Tibet, as the younger. That may reflect an earlier tradition about their common ancestry which the Tibetans sought to reverse in order to claim seniority after they had reduced the rulers of Rkong-po to the position of rgyal-phran, feudatory princes. A hint of an earlier tradition may also be seen in the Btsun-mo bka’-thang where the mountain on which the legendary founder of the Tibetan royal line descended — usually held to be in Yarlung — is described as Rkong-po Lha-ri Rgyang-do. That might be identified with the sacred Lha-ri east of the A-rtsa lake and pass seen by the Abbé Huc and Gabet and by pandit Nain Singh. The story may be an amalgam of hazy memories from different groups or tribes of people of Tibetan stock from the east coming into conflict with other such immigrants already settled in the country.

In the Chronicle Sha-khyi, Spu-lde Gung-rgyal, is succeeded by seven kings with the syllable leg or legs in their name, followed after one generation by a line of kings whose names mostly included the syllable lde — regarded later as the royal patronymic — and also brtsan which was part of the names of almost all the kings down to ‘U’i-dum-brtan.

Into this seemingly coherent genealogical tree must somehow be fitted a name of prime importance which is not included there. In the inscription on the pillar at the tomb of Khri Lde-strong-brtsan and in that on the Sino-Tibetan treaty pillar at the Lhasa Jo-khang it is ‘O-lde Spu-rgyal who appears as the founding ancestor who came from being a god to rule over men. He is similarly described in a document from Tun-huang recording a
prayer at the foundation of a temple on the frontier in celebration of the establishment of peace. The Lhasa inscription also quotes a sort of poem, using words like those in the Chronicle about Nyag-khri, describing Tibet as the centre of high mountains, the source of great rivers, a high country, a pure land. From that it might appear that the two were one and the same, and in the fifteenth century they were so identified by 'Gos Lo-tsa-ba in his Deb-sngon where he quotes the Lhasa treaty inscription as saying that the kings held sway since the divine 'Od-lde Spu-rgyal (sic) founded the kingdom; and he goes on to comment that since Gnya'-khri Btsan-po 'Od-lde (sic) there were forty-two kings.

The use of similar language about different personages — especially divine beings — does not necessarily mean that they were identical. Both Gnya-khri Btsan-po and Spu-lde Gung-rgyal are described as coming like rain upon the earth; and Spu-lde Gung-rgyal — who was also Sha-khyi and Grang-mo Gnam-gser-brtsg — was eighth in descent from Nya-khyi and clearly not the same person. His divine powers seem, moreover, to have been compromised when his father who had the power to return bodily to heaven, was defeated and killed and his body thrown into the river, while his sons were bound and exiled. But one should not look too critically into the language and doings of mystical divinity; and the Tibetan kings down to 'U'i-dum-brtan were always referred to as sons of god.

In addition to his appearance in the two royal inscriptions and the prayer, 'O-lde Spu-rgyal is mentioned in the Chronicle at the end of a passage enumerating the rival principalities by which Tibet was surrounded. Apart from other lists of principalities, some clearly mythical relating to kingdoms of gods and demons and princesses skilled in poisons and cures, those in the Chronicle and in Pelliot Tibetain 1290 deal with real places which came to form part of the Tibetan kingdom and whose rulers have an appearance of verisimilitude. Of them it is said that by internal feuding they destroyed one another and in the end were not a match for 'O-lde Spu-rgyal. This would seem to bring 'O-lde down virtually to historical times, for some of the places named — e.g. Ngas-po, Klum-ro and Skyi-ro — were conquered by Gnam-ri Slon-btsan, while Dags-po, Nyang-po and Rkong-po were finally subjugated in the time of his son Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, and Zhang-zhung not until much later. Perhaps by the ninth century a haze of legend had come to attribute the conquest of the neighbouring principalities to 'O-lde Spu-rgyal as a symbol or personification of Spu-rgyal Tibet, much as John Bull stands for Britain and Uncle Sam for the U.S.A., without any exact idea of chronology.

In this context there is a lively contribution from Chinese historians who are known for their habitual and rational recording of events and for their interest in the doings of peoples beyond the frontier who might disturb their peace. In the earlier of two versions of the T'ang Annals it is related that
the origin of the Tibetans is uncertain but some say they are descended from Tu'-fa Li-lu-ku of the Southern Liang. He had a son, Fan-ni, who was quite young when his father died in 414 A.D. and, after various misfortunes, fled westward across the Huang-ho and founded an extensive state among the Ch’iang who followed him enthusiastically. He changed his name to Supu-yeh and called his dynasty T’o-pa which became corrupted into T’u-fan. The later version starts with an ancestor among the Ch’iang who was called Hu-t’i Pu-hsi-yeh. It goes on to repeat the alternative story about Fan-ni; and then records the names of seven successors of the first prince (Hou-ti Pou-sou-ye) as follows: Chia-hsi-tung-mo; T’o-t’u-tu; Chie-li-shih-jo; Pulung-jo; chu-su-jo; Lun-tsan-su; Ch’i-tsung-lung-tsan also called Ch’i-su-nung whose clan was Fu-yeh. Among these names ‘O-lde Spu-rgyal, Tho-do Snya-brtsan, Slon-btsan and Srong-brtsan can be recognized; they and the others, must have been provided by a Tibetan informant about the middle of the tenth century; while the Fan-ni story seems to have come from Chinese sources.

There is nothing improbable in a Ch’iang tribe accepting the leadership of a dynamic prince from some other people. In the kaleidoscopic pattern of dynasties of short or long duration and of greater or lesser territorial extent created by the medley of peoples in north China and neighbouring central Asia during the fourth and fifth centuries there was, as W. Eberhard has pointed out, no real national unity, and tribes or groups of one people might readily join or be absorbed by another. The Southern Liang, whose territory was in eastern Kansu, were Hsien-pi, a basically Mongol people containing Han and Turkic elements. Before the Southern Liang there had been a powerful kingdom, described by Eberhard as Tibetan, spreading from Tun-huang to Chengtu where they were neighbours and rivals of the Hsien-pi; and it is just when the Tibetan kingdom broke up that Fan-ni is supposed to have created his kingdom among them. It is noticeable that the names of ‘O-lde Spu-rgyal’s successors in the T’ang Annals number only six before Srong-brtsan Sgam-po who was born c. 610 A.D. That would go back to Khri-thog-brtsan in the Tibetan Chronicle’s list and to a possible date around 410–20, the supposed time of Fan-ni. If it is intended that Hu-t’i Pu-hsi-yeh, Fan-ni, immediately preceded Chia-hsi-tung-mo, that would make him the seventh predecessor of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po and contemporaneous or identical with Khri-sgra Sbung-brtsan of the Chronicle.

It is noticeable also that Khri-sgra Sbung-brtsan is the first king to whom is attributed a queen from a historically recorded clan; and that practice is followed regularly after him. From his time the genealogical tree may have some more substance — though tenuous — than what has gone before. Five generations or so is no great stretch of time for oral tradition in a society without written records to preserve a reasonably consistent family memory.
Khri-thog-brtsan’s successor Lha-tho-do Snya-brtsan has a special place in later literature, perhaps because of the syllable “Lha” in his name. It is said that the first trace of Buddhism reached Tibet in his reign when volumes of scripture fell on the roof of his palace but no one was able to read them. He is said also to have lived to the age of one hundred. Recent calculations of his date, shown on the Tibetan coinage, put his birth at the year 173 according to W. D. Shakabpa and at 254 according to Zurkhang Shappe. That is to stretch the longevity of Srong-brtsan’s predecessors beyond the bounds of credulity, and a more reasonable estimate would be c. 460 A.D.

Nothing in these diverse traditions clarifies the relationship between Nyag-khri Btsan-po and ‘0-lde Spu-rgyal. It emerges only that for the Buddhist chos-rgyal the divine first ancestor was ‘O-lde Spu-rgyal while Nyag-khri Btsan-po holds that place for the rulers of Rkong-po — of whose religious persuasion there is no certainty. A prince of Rkong-po witnessed the edict of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan to maintain the Buddhist faith but that might have been a political as much as a religious act; and in later days Rkong-po together with Dwags-po and Nyang-po had a bad reputation as “poisonous countries”, which might imply some religious shortcomings. At last, with the reign of Stag-bu Snya-gzigs, Lha-tho-do’s great-grandson and Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s grandfather, wilder speculations can be left behind and it is possible to trace some history in the legend; and the story as told in the Chronicle is so lively that it is surprising it has made virtually no impact on later histories.

The king, Stag-bu Snya-gzigs, third in succession from Lha-tho-do Snya-brtsan, had his capital at Phying-ba Stag-rtse. His neighbour at Nyen-kar Rnying-pa was Zing-po-rje Stag-skya-bo, prince of Ngas-po in the Skyi-chu and ‘Phan-po valleys, who was an arrogant and tyrannical ruler. When one of his ministers — leaders of great clans or families — Mnyan ‘Dzi-sung Nag-po warned him of the disastrous consequences of such behaviour, he deposed him and ignored his advice. ‘Dzi-zung in disgust took refuge with another prince, Zing-po-rje Khris-pangs-sum of ‘O-yul whose capital was at Yu-sna of Sngur-ba. With his support ‘Dzi-zung killed Stag-skya-bo whose territory of Klum and Yel fell to Khris-pangs-sum. As his reward ‘Dzi-zung received the castle of Sngur-ba and lands in the lower part of Klum. Among the subordinate landholders or bondsmen (bran) in those estates who became his subjects were two leading members of the Myang clan, Nam-to-re khru-gu and his son Smon-to-re Tseng-sku, who also had formerly been ministers of the defeated Zing-po-rje of Ngas-po. Mnyan ‘Dzi-sung’s wife, the lady of Pa-tsab, so grievously insulted and humiliated her new subjects that they complained to Khris-pangs-sum, the overlord of Mnyan ‘Dzi-zung, but he ignored their complaint. Not long after, one of Khris-pangs-sum’s own ministers, Dba’s Bshos-to-re Khu-gu was killed in a duel with the prince’s Bon-po priest, Gshen Khris-bzher ‘Dron-kong.
Bsho-to-re's elder brother Phangs-to-re Dbyi-tshab, appealed to the prince for blood-money but was rudely rebuffed. He got in touch with Myang Tseng-sku, who was equally resentful of the ill-treatment he had suffered. The two of them, with Tseng-sku taking the lead, decided to offer their allegiance to Btsan-po Spu-rgyal, that is to say Stag-bu Snya-gzigs, whom they described in a short allusive song as a son of man who is indeed a son of god, a true lord whom it would be good to serve. They swore an oath of enmity to Zing-po-rje and loyalty to Btsan-po Spu-rgyal. Dba's Dbyi-tshab then recruited into the conspiracy his uncle Bzang-to-re of Mnon, and when the uncle died his son took his place. Myang Tseng-sku similarly took into his confidence Nag-seng of Tshes-pong, a follower of Stag-bu Snya-gzigs, who became the go-between through whom Myang and Dba's communicated their purpose to the king. Stag-bu Snya-gzigs was at first hesitant to take part in the feud because his sister was married to Zing-po-rje; also his wife appears to have been a kinswoman of Zing-po-rje for her name was Stong-cung 'Bro-ga of 'Ol-god ("Ol = 'O-yul ?), but he agreed to go along with them.

The conspirators made their way secretly to Phying-ba to take an oath of loyalty to Stag-bu Snya-gzigs in person. Their movements aroused suspicion among the men of Yar who attempted to seize them; and before action could be taken against Zing-po-rje, Stag-bu Snya-gzigs was dead. The brief mention in the Chronicle discloses none of the circumstances, but Géza Uray in an important article in *Acta Hungarica* 1972 cites Pelliot Tibetain 1144, an unpublished fragment, in which a few scattered words tell that the king Stag-bu was captured by 'Ol-god, Lord of Yar-'brog and was handed over to Klu-dur, lung of Lho-brag, who imprisoned him. There is also a fragmentary mention of his wife.

A more detailed account of the fate of Stag-bu Snya-gzigs is found in the *Rgyal-rabs bon-gyi 'byung-gnas*, showing that Bon histories often have some special acquaintance with early traditions. It is related how Stag-gu Gnyan-gzig (sic) subdued the twelve rgyal-phran, feudatory principalities, and then made war on Phan-ra-rje, king of Lho-brag, but was defeated and imprisoned. Stag-gu Snya-gzigs's Bon-po priest, the Sku-gshen Khri-ne-khod, rescued him by his magical powers. In gratitude the king made over the kingdom to him. This is a rather different version from that of the Chronicle. It implies that Stag-bu gnyan-gzigs was the aggressor whereas the Chronicle says he died before action could be taken against Zing-po-rje Khri-pangs-sum — Phan-ra-rje in the Bon story is clearly a variant of that name. The implication of 'Ol-god of Yar-'brog suggests that the conspiracy which the men of Yar appear to have detected gave an excuse for their ruler 'Ol-god, who was a vassal of Khri-pangs-sum, to take action against Stag-bu Snya-gzigs on behalf of his lord. Yar and Yar-'brog do not necessarily imply the country round the Yar-'brog-mtsho but may just as well be the upland grazing lands near the Gri-gu-mtsho at the head of the
Yar-lung valley. There is no mention in the Chronicle of Lho-brag or Khur-dur but it appears from its brief comment that Stag-bu Snya-gzigs did not survive whatever incident may have occurred.

An obscure tail-piece in the Chronicle story after referring to the death of Stag-bu Snya-gzigs seems to suggest that the conspiracy was somehow disclosed by one Spug Gyim-tang Rmang-bu, a follower of Tshes-pong Nag-seng the man who acted as go-between to the king. Spug Gyim-tang at first would not share his bed with his wife for fear of betraying the plot in his sleep; but after wandering nightly in the hills he eventually returned to sleep with her. For some reason they quarrelled and he bit out her tongue so that she died. He also died without issue before an attack was made on Zing-po-rje. Other members of the clan, however, continued to be active in Tibetan affairs and one Spug Gyim-rtseang Rma-chung was sent in 651 to govern Zhang-zhung.

The conspirators evidently came out of the affair unscathed. They added three more to their number, and undeterred by the death of Stag-bu Snya-gzigs, took an oath of allegiance to his two sons, Slon-mtshan and Slon-kol. This seems to have been done at the request of the princes, who had the duty of avenging their father. The words of the oath are recorded at some length in archaic language passed down, perhaps, in the family tradition of the noble ministers who swore it. A number of other members of the Myang, Tshes-pong and Dbas’s clans also joined in the oath.

Why, it may be asked, were they so ready to give their loyalty to Stag-bu Snya-gzigs and later to his two young sons. Their domain seems to have been quite small and was threatened on the north by more powerful rulers in Ngas-po and ‘O-yul and on the south from Yar-brog. The answer must lie in the name Spu-rgyal, which has an aura of special sacral and mystic qualities. It was to btsan-po Spu-rgyal that loyalty was pledged, not to any king or prince by name. For Myang and Dba’s, Btsan-po Spu-rgyal though a man was also a son of god. One of his ancestors Tho-do Snya-brtsan had the name “Lha”. The Rkong-po inscription relates how one of Gri-gum Btsan-po’s two sons became Lha-btsan-po, the divine btsan-po, and went to rule at Phying-ba Stag-rtse; and even when the influence of Buddhism was well established, the kings, with the title of Lha-sras or Lha-btsan-po, harked back in their inscriptions to their descent from ‘O-lde Spu-rgyal. The essence of that sacral quality is nowhere spelled out; but if spu-rgyal means “hairy king” it might point to the monkey ancestor revered in the primitive beliefs of the Ch’iang people in their ancestral home on the north-west borders of China, a myth later to be adopted rather laboriously into the hagiology of Tibetan Buddhism. But whatever its source, it was that sanctity that held together in reality a kingdom depending greatly on ministers from different parts of the kingdom, often rivals of one another and sometimes more powerful than the btsan-po himself.
After the oath-taking a plan of campaign was made and Slon-mtshan set out at the head of an army of ten thousand men while his younger brother stayed with the queen-mother. The princes were quite young and the phrase zhabs-kyis gtsugs describing the start of Slon-mtshan’s expedition may imply that this was the first venture of his majority. Similar expressions are used of a child’s first steps and a young man setting up an independent household for the first time; and it is applied also later to Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s first military expedition.

The campaign against Zing-po-rje, here described as Dgu-gri, a title probably annexed from Dgu-gri Zing-po-rje of Ngas-po whom he had conquered, is recorded very briefly. Its climax was the capture of the castle of Yu-sna by damming a river in Klum so that the defence works were flooded. Zing-po-rje was in this way destroyed. His territory as far as Bre-sna in Rkong-po (west of the Nyang-chu) was annexed by the btsan-po, who proclaimed that the country of Ngas-po should be known as ‘Phan-yul. His ministers and subjects greeted him by the title of btsan-po; he took the name Gnam-ri Slon-mtshan and he rewarded suitably all those ministers who had delivered Zing-po-rje’s domains into his hands. Myang Tseng-sku received the castle of Sngur-ba which had belonged to ‘Dzi-zung who had insulted him; Dba’s Dbyi-tshab got those of the Gshen who had killed his brother; all received numbers of bondsmen (bran). Myang, Dba’s, Mnon and Tshes pong became councillors of the king.

The authority of the btsan-po and his ministers at this time was established in a comparatively small stretch of country in the valleys of the Skyi-chu and the Gtsang-po from Yar-lung and on to the borders of Rkong-po. But the rising star of Btsan-po Spu-rgyal soon attracted adherents from further afield.

Outstanding among these was Khyung-po Spung-sad Zu-tse, a vigorous, ambitious, arrogant and unscrupulous figure who was active in Tibetan affairs for many years. He comes on the scene in the reign of Slon-mtshan, claiming to have shown his allegiance by decapitating Mar-run ruler of Rtsang-bod and giving twenty thousand households to the btsan-po, who forthwith returned them to him as a reward. The location of Rtsang-bod is debatable but it might be north of the Gtsang-po around and north-west of Shangs and Shigatse. The prompt return of the subjects suggests that it was not seen at that time as suitable for direct rule.

The next show of loyalty by Zu-tse was in denouncing the minister Mong Sngon-po as guilty of treachery and encompassing his death. Mong is shown in a list of ministers in an earlier section of the Chronicle as having had some connection with the fall of Mar-run; but he does not appear to have taken any part in the confederacy to support Stag-bu Snya-gzigs or Slon-mtshan. It is, however, claimed for Zu-tse, as another proof of loyalty, that he somehow supported the campaign against Zing-po-rje. This
seems out of chronological order, for the campaign took place before the supremacy of Slon-mtshan was established, while in the Mar-mun incident he is described as btsan-po. If there is anything in the claim it may mean only that Zu-tse approved of what had been done.

He next appears in the record when a campaign was being planned against Dags-po, which is described as having rebelled — perhaps it was part of Zing-po-rje’s territory which had been taken over by Slon-mtshan. When one Seng-go Myi-chen volunteered to undertake the task, Zu-tse insulted and humiliated him. Seng-go was, nonetheless, successful. Then Myang Zhang-snang, the son of Myang Tseng-sku was appointed to the royal service and a banquet was held at which Spung-sad Zu-tse vaunted his own achievements. He dwells on his conquest of Rtsang-bod and his suppression of Mong Sngon-po. He does not mention Zing-po-rje; but Myang Zhang-snang, having been urged to reply, praised the great deeds of his father and Dbâ’s Phangs-to-re in the defeat of Zing-po-rje. That throws doubt on the claim that Zu-tse was involved in that affair; and the proud reply by Zhang-snang and his promotion to high office seems to have aroused enmity and envy on the part of Zu-tse.

In the list of ministers one Mgar Khri-sgra ‘Dzi-rmun is shown as succeeding Mong Sngon-po before Myang Zhang-snang was appointed chief minister with the title mang-po-rje. Myang became an all-powerful figure after the death of Gnam-ri Slon-mtshan, while Srong-brtsan was too young to take effective action, and suppressed a widespread rebellion that followed Gnam-ri’s death. Some time after that Spung-sad Zu-tse falsely accused him of disloyalty and brought about his dismissal and execution.

Myang Mang-po-rje Zhang-snang is said to have been succeeded by another minister of the Mgar clan who also fell under an accusation and committed suicide. Spung-sad Zu-tse then became chief minister, a post he had probably coveted for some time. In it he won a great reputation for wisdom and boldness; and he conquered all the northern Zhang-zhung for the btsan-po. He was succeeded by Mgar Stong-rtsan Yul-zung. There is no information about when or why this took place; but in the end Zu-tse fell victim to the same accusations and suffered the same fate which, in that world of intrigue and rivalry, he had brought on others. In his retirement in old age he is said to have invited Khri Srong-brtsan to his palace with treacherous intent and that this was detected by Mgar Yul-zung, whereupon Zu-tse committed suicide. But much was to happen before that.

According to a damaged passage at the beginning of the Annals, some time after the fall of Myang Mang-po-rje Zhang-snang the btsan-po set out on expedition against the ‘A-zha (T’uyühun) and China. The Chronicle puts that event before the fall of Myang but it might be expected that the evidence of the Annals is the more acceptable.
Although the haphazard arrangement of the Chronicle, as we have it, leaves much to be conjectured, an incident recorded there may well be placed soon after the fall of Myang. In his old age Dba's Phangs-to-re Dbyi-tshab, who had been a partner of Myang Mang-po-rje's father in allegiance to Stag-bu Snya-gzigs and in establishing Khri Slon-mtshan as btsan-po, besought and was granted a visit at his own house from Khri Srong-brtsan in order that he and his family could take an oath of loyalty to the btsan-po in person. Perhaps the Dba's had been suspected of sympathising with their former colleagues the Myang, and Phangs-to-re was eager to dispel that idea by openly condemning the disloyalty of Myang Mang-po-rje Zhang-snas. The btsan-po himself first took an oath, praising the loyalty of the Dba's and vowing to protect them and their estates so long as they remained in fealty. He promised also to build a tomb for the Dbyi-tshab and to sacrifice a hundred horses there; and he sang one of those allusive songs which enrich and enliven the Chronicle. Dba's Dbyi-tshab replied in kind. Then he and his six sons took the oath of loyalty on a white stone which the btsan-po afterwards set up as the foundation of the tomb to be built for the Dbyi-tshab. The impressive words of the king's vow and that of the Dba's are recorded at length in archaic language which must have been transmitted in the Dba's family from generation to generation together with the insignia of the golden letter bestowed upon them.

Although in neither the Chronicle nor the Annals is there a clear sequence of chronology for these events, a fixed point is provided by the invaluable Chinese historians. Already in the period 581–600 of the Sui dynasty there was some knowledge of a Tibetan ruler Lun-tsan So-lung-tsan, who must have been Gnam-ri Slon-mtshan, with an army of 100,000 men and a kingdom extending to the borders of India, but it is the T'ang Annals in which the first firm date is found when they record the arrival in 634 of the first mission from Tibet. The Chinese responded with a return mission in the wake of which the Tibetans sent another. They had heard that the Turks and the T’uyühun had been given princesses in marriage to their rulers and they requested one for their btsan-po. When this was refused the btsan-po set out on a punitive expedition against the T’uyühun (‘A-zha), as recorded in the Tibetan Chronicle, whom they held responsible for the refusal. Having defeated and scattered them he besieged the Chinese border town of Sung-chou and renewed the demand for a princess in threatening terms. He defeated one Chinese force sent against him, but when a larger army arrived he withdrew with some losses. The Chinese, nevertheless, realizing that they had underrated the Tibetans and had a new power to face, granted a princess. In 641 Mgar Stong-rtsan was sent with lavish presents to receive her and escort her to Tibet. That momentous event is recorded also in the Tibetan Annals and forms virtually the starting point for a continuous Tibetan history.
Before that another remarkable but otherwise unknown incident is related in a damaged passage in the Annals. There was enmity between the btsan-po, the elder brother Srong-rtsan and the younger brother Btsan-srong. As the result of treachery by a servant, Btsan-srong died by burning.

Although no precise dates are given in the Annals after the arrival of the Chinese princess until the dog year, 650 A.D., from when events are recorded annually, it is said that after three years Lig Snya-shur was destroyed and all the Zhang-zhung were brought under subjection. There may be some question whether this event c. 644 relates to Spung-sad Zu-tse's claim to have conquered all the northern Zhang-zhung. The name of the Zhang-zhung ruler said to have been conquered by Zu-tse, according to a divination document from Tun-huang — Pelliot Tibétain 1047 — is Lig Myi-rhya. And it is victory over Lig Myi-rhya that is celebrated in the Chronicle as the achievement of Khri Srong-brtsan and his minister Stong-rtsan in another of those splendid exchanges of song. The relation between Lig Myi-rhya and Lig Snya-shur is not clear. The latter appears in several of the lists of principalities and according to F.W. Thomas it figures also in Bon writing. If the conquest of Zhang-zhung in 644 was effected by Spung-sad Zu-tse it would mean that his career in Tibetan affairs extended for almost half a century.

Sadly there is nothing in the Annals about the achievements of the last six years of Srong-brtsan's life; it is said only that he lived with the Chinese princess for three years. She survived Srong-brtsan by twenty-two years. That suggests that she was very young when she came to Tibet and dispels the aura attached to her name as the founder of the Jo-khang. A little more can be gleaned from the eulogy in the Chronicle, which relates in general terms that he was responsible for organising the internal administration of the state, agricultural systems, the laws, etc., and for introducing texts of the religious law. Inscriptions of his successors also attribute to him the foundation of the Jo-khang. But it is to the T'ang Annals that one must turn for factual information. There it is recorded that in 646 Srong-brtsan sent Mgar Stong-brtsan (Lu Tung-tsan) to congratulate the emperor on his victory over Korea with a flowery message and the present of a jar, in the shape of a goose, made of solid gold, seven feet high. In 648 when a Chinese envoy was plundered in India Srong-brtsan sent an army to chastise the offending Indian leader; and the evidence that the two Chinese emperors with whom he was contemporary — T'ai-tsung and Kao-tsung — treated him with admiration and respect as a powerful and independent ruler and ally enhances the unquestioned greatness of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po as the real founder of a great Tibetan kingdom.
Early Tibetan Law Concerning Dog-Bite

The Tibetan Chronicle from Tun-huang shows that by the eighth or ninth century Srong-brtsan Sgam-po was regarded as having established "a great code of supreme law" — gtsug-lag bka'-grims ched-po (p. 118); and the Annals record that six years after Srong-brtsan's death the Chief Minister Mgar Stong-btsan Yul-zung wrote the text of the laws — bka'-grims-gyi yi-ge bris [p 13 (6)]. There is no contemporary evidence about their content but in later tradition the sixteen laws attributed to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po are no more than a series of moral precepts. However, documents from Tun-huang reveal the existence of several specific legal codes and regulations. One long document in the India Office Library collection of the Stein manuscripts (I.O. no. 740) gives details of the proper decision, according to a new set of regulations, in cases concerning such matters as loans, taxation, marital disputes and so on. Many other Tun-huang documents refer to the law regarding contracts, sales, taxes, land-holding, etc. and often mention the judge, zhal-ce-pa, who decides the cases. Another document in the Stein collection (I.O. no. 753) deals with the law of theft, and Pelliot Tibétain (Pell. T.) 1075 is a fragmentary copy of part of a similar manuscript. Other matters regarded as criminal, are the subject of Pell. T. 1071 which records at length the penalties, graded according to the status of the victim and the offender, for causing death or injury in the hunting field by an arrow aimed at a wild animal and also in cases where someone fails to rescue another who has fallen under a yak or 'bri. Although in such accidents there is no suggestion of the deliberate causing of death, they are dealt with under the law of homicide and in several cases the death penalty is imposed. It may even be inflicted on the highest ranking ministers if they falsely deny responsibility for an accident or fail to pay blood money imposed on them. Death is the penalty also in some instances of failure to rescue the victim of a yak, and a further — and peculiarly Tibetan — punishment may be imposed by hanging a fox's tail.

signifying cowardice, on to the offender. This is described in the T'ang An-
nals where it is said that it was deemed so shameful that death was held
be preferable and that bystanders would kill the wretched coward. I have
prepared an edition of that document as a contribution to a memorial vol-
ume for the late Tsipon Shakabpa but it is unlikely to be published for some
time (see Ch. 20 above). Meanwhile, I have studied another document (Pel.
T. 1073) setting out the law where someone sets a dog on to another and
death or injury results from the attack. Here too the death penalty may be
imposed, which is not surprising any more than it is for major thefts—it
continued for even quite small thefts in Great Britain into the nineteenth
century; but for those offences in the hunting field it illustrates the very
stem demands of honour and discipline in a rugged, warlike society.

Pelliot Tibétain 1073 is a fragment of 28 lines in rather crude calligra-
phy; the punctuation is occasionally by double tshegs instead of the usual
single; there are a few instances of the da-drag. These are possibly but not
necessarily signs of a comparatively early date. As in Pell. T. 1071 there are
many obscure words and phrases and it is probable that some readings are
suspect. Below, I have attempted a translation and notes, the number and
length of the latter indicate how many difficulties I have been unable to
solve; and it is hoped that others may provide more satisfactory answers.

\textbf{Pelliot Tibétain 1073}

... if the g.yar,\textsuperscript{1} or whatever, he is riding shies and he is thrown whether
he is killed or not, on account of the wounds, if there is someone who set
on the dog he will be punished\textsuperscript{2} by banishment for a term (ring res gcig)
and as penalty a good 'og-rta\textsuperscript{3} and dressings\textsuperscript{4} for the wounds according to
their number shall be imposed. If the offender is a woman, the fine is a
quantity of good foodstuffs\textsuperscript{5} and dressings in proportion, to be given to
the complainant. If a rngul-gyi yi-ge-pa (holder of a silver letter)\textsuperscript{6} down to
a zangs-gyi yi-ge-pa (holder of a copper letter) himself or his equal for the
purpose of compensation sets a dog on to a zhang-long phra-men-gyi yi-ge-
pa (a minister\textsuperscript{7} who holds a silver-gilt letter) or his equal\textsuperscript{8} and he is bitten
and dies; or if by setting on a dog, the g.yar he is riding shies and he is
thrown and dies whatever excuse\textsuperscript{9} the man who set on the dog may give,
if the victim is killed and if someone set on the dog he himself shall suffer
the 'bra-shig\textsuperscript{10} death penalty, his family\textsuperscript{11} shall be banished and whatever
treasure and cattle\textsuperscript{12} they have shall be given as compensation for the kill-
ning; as for the landed property (khol-yul)\textsuperscript{13} if there is a son living in a
separate family\textsuperscript{14} it shall be given\textsuperscript{15} to him; if there is no such son it shall
be given to the father; if there is no father, even if there is a close clan re-
lation (phu-nu-bo drung)\textsuperscript{16} it shall not be given to him but shall be shared
among those who are the subjects and bondsmen ('bangs and bran) of the person executed. If there is no separate household and the one who set on the dog has been executed, whatever treasure and cattle the father and sons (spad spun) possess that has not been divided up, shall be divided and the whole share of the treasure and cattle that would have gone to the one who has been executed shall be given as compensation for the killing. If a married woman sets on a dog and causes death, whatever was given as dowry by the original paternal family of that woman shall be given as compensation for the killing. If an unmarried sister sets on a dog and causes death her bondsmen and cattle and spun yarn (kud for skud?) shall be given as compensation for the killing. If by setting on a dog the g.yar he is riding shies and he is thrown, whether he is killed or not the one who set on the dog shall be banished and a quarter of his treasure and cattle shall be given as compensation for the wounded. If it is a woman, in addition to banishment for her, half of the treasure and cattle whatever she has shall be given as penalty for the wounded. If someone from gtsang-chen21 to dmangs mtha-ma22 sets a dog on to a zhang-lon phra-myin-gyi yi-ge-pa upwards, himself or an equal, and if by setting on the dog the person is bitten and dies, or if the g.yar he is riding shies and he is thrown and killed, whatever excuse the one who set on the dog may make, if the person is killed, for the offence of setting a dog on to a zhang-lon or dge-ba23 the offender and the sons24 who live with him downwards, shall be put to death; if there are no sons living with him his womenfolk (sr~d) shall be banished and his treasure and cattle shall all be given as compensation for the dead zhang-lon. If someone in an undivided household has been executed for setting on a dog all the treasure and cattle that has not been divided between father and sons shall be divided....

Notes

1. g.yar: also in Pell. T. 1071 ll. 322, 400, 401. Dictionaries give no specific help towards its meaning, yar-ma, in Das and Dagyab, referring to some sort of cow is inapposite. g.yar-ba, “borrow, hire” also seems inappropriate because persons concerned in ll. 7, 17 and 24 are high-ranking ministers who would be presumed to own their riding animals. Thomas, TLTD, ii, p. 273, an incomplete passage reading ... tshal ba'i g.yar 'og rta ... ma byor ma may introduce the idea of a comparison between g.yar and 'og — the better quality and the less good quality horse: 'og rta appears frequently in Pell. T. 1071 as well as in ll. 2. here. In view of the uncertainty I leave both words untranslated.
2. 'dkos: for god, “punishment”?
3. 'ig-rta: see note 1. See Pell. T. where it appears in several contexts.
4. yas-bnings: something attached on top; bandage?
5. gi or go za ma: the reading is not clear? “useful?”
6. Official ranks were distinguished by insignia of different precious substances — turquoise gold, phra-men (silver-gilt), silver, copper and brass. The Chinese Tang Annals describe them as strings of beads hanging from the shoulder. Perhaps the letter, yi-ge, was a diploma on a metal plate entitling the holder to wear the appropriate decoration.

7. zhang-lon: the general body of ministers; to be distinguished from zhang-bloll, blon-zhang; see my “Names and Titles in Early Tibetan Records” (Ch. 3 above).

8. stong mnyam-pa: of equal status in matters of compensation, penalties and so on. I have abbreviated it to “equal”.

9. lan 'don gyis cis. lan-ldon: I take this “to give a reply” rather than to making retribution.

10. 'bra-shig bkum, of which the etymology is uncertain, is seen from Pell. T. 1071 to be a death penalty in which unlike the harsher sgor rabs gcad the offender’s sons did not also suffer execution.

11. bu-smad: In its appearance in Pell. T. 1071 this seems to mean “family”, “children” (Jaeschke and Das) rather than “mother and daughter” (Dagyab and Goldstein).

12. bang-za dang nor-phyugs: “treasure store and cattle wealth” are the personal property of the offender and his family.

13. khol-yul: Land with its complement of bondsmen and subjects (bros and 'bangs) granted by the btsan-po to a family. It was heritable but could be resumed for disloyalty or misdemeanour.

14. sdum-pa bub-pa, cf. khyim-phub: of a son who has set up a separate household.

15. In this document and in 1071 stsal is not preceded by a particle such as la or tu.

16. phu-nu-bo drung: A. Rona Tas in “Social Terms ... in the Tun-huang Chronicle”, Acta Orientalia Hungarica, 1955, concludes that this term covers a clan, specifically the progenies of the male line. The meaning of drung here is uncertain. In Pell. T. 1071 it is contrasted with gang 'dur-pa (bdur-pa mdur-ba) which applies to persons who may receive the property in default of closer relatives of the deceased.

17. I have hesitated for a long time before accepting that this passage means that the bondsmen and subjects may share the khol-yul. If my interpretation is correct here and in Pell. T. 1071 it represents a surprising departure from what appears to be the principle that khol-yul to which the bondsmen and subjects are attached is held by persons of rank; but I can see no easy interpretation to indicate that the khol-yul and bros and 'bangs in this case should be assigned to anyone else. It may be noted that in the early days of the kingdom persons of high rank who had been conquered by some rival could become bros (Tibetan Chronicle, pp. 103, 120-4) but that would not appear to apply to later centuries.

18. brtsangs: for brdzangs.

19. I am doubtful about the reading kud-pa, gud-pa: “what she has privately” might be an alternative.

20. The text is probably corrupt and bros should be bang-za as in other cases; it may also be that mention of banishment, as in 1. 21., has been omitted.

21. gtsang-chen: an official of lower rank than those who held letters of various degree.

22. dmangs mthu-nga: “the lower commoners”. It is not clear who might be covered by this description. From Pell. T. 1071 it is seen that the dmangs, who ranked below the gtsang-chen and above the soldiery (rgod), could hold khol-yul and so had
23. dge-ba: appears to have no religious connotation. It is contrasted in Pell. T. 1071 1 260 with ngan-pa, “the good and the bad”. In a Tun-huang manuscript, I.O. no. 506 quoted by R.A. Stein in “Tibetica Antiqua,” II, p. 268, ngan-pa is equated with rkun-ma, “thief”. From its occurrence several times in Pell. T. 1071 dge-ba seems to be an honorific epithet of very high-ranking officials, perhaps similar to ya-rabs.

24. bu-smongs: an obscure word perhaps for mong as in thun-mong “together, jointly”.

25. smad: here seems to mean “wife, womenfolk” as the sons have been accounted for in the previous sentence.

Abbreviations

Das Sarat Chandra Das, Tibetan English Dictionary, 1902.
Great Monk Ministers of the Tibetan Kingdom

Although tradition enlivens the account of the propagation of Buddhism in Tibet at the time of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan with tales of the forceful evangelism and magical powers of Padmasambhava and the scholarly influence of his contemporary Śāntarakṣita there is disappointingly little in early sources about the two great saints.

In the Tun-huang manuscript Pelliot Tibetan 44 which relates how Padmasambhava obtained the teaching of the phur-bu from Nalanda and instructed several disciples in it, perhaps less than fifty years after the founding of the great monastery of Bsam-yas c. 779, he is already seen as endowed with magical powers. Among his disciples was one Lde-smān Rgyal-mtshan whom I overlooked when writing about the discovery of inscriptions in Lho-brag concerning the Lde-smān family who, I believe, were experts in medicine and divination attached to the royal court (Tibet Journal, xii, no. 2, 1987). The only other document apparently relating to Padmasambhava is Pell. T. 49, edited and translated by Joseph Hackin as Formulaire sanskrit–tibétain du Xᵉ siècle, 1924. The document may actually be later for it mentions kings of Tibet who migrated to the west. In it there is the story of Devaputra, the son of the Indian king, who visited Tibet, consecrated the kings, meditated near Kailash, went to Bsam-yas where he became head of the religious community, went to China and on his return to India stayed a while at Sug-cu (Su-chou). The story is too confused to be readily reconciled with the general tradition about Padmasambhava.

Śāntarakṣita fares rather better, being mention in Pell. T. 814 as a teacher of the Mahāyāna; and in Thomas, Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents, ii, p. 85, he figures as the Indian abbot Bo-de-swa-dwa (Bodhisattva), followed by the names of the twelve of his successors headed by Dpal-dbyangs and

This essay was intended for a volume in honour of Burmiak Athing that does not seem to have been published
Ye-shes dbang-po of Dbas who were teachers of religion in Bsam-yas and the 'Phrul-snang — the Gtsug-lag-khang of Lhasa. In the same document there are lists of the succession of teachers in religious schools in Mdo-gams, Kam-cu and So-cu; and other manuscripts from Tun-huang show an active religious life in the frontier region, with many monasteries and a busy copying centre of religious texts, patronised by the Tibetan rulers and nobles.

The Tun-huang documents are only a survival from what must have been a much larger collection of records in the border cities. Similar archives must have existed at Bsam-yas, Lhasa and other places in central Tibet; but although no original manuscripts survive, the Bka'-thang sde-nga, Bu-ston, Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag and others clearly drew on earlier material from some such sources. Of particular value is the preservation in the Chos-'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag of what are generally accepted as authentic copies of decrees by Khri Srong-lde-brtson and Khri Lde-srong-brtson enjoining the observation and protection of Buddhism. Another edict of Khri Srong-lde-brtson contains the btsan-po's view of the tenets of the faith.

Although there may have been early manuscripts, the superb temple of Bsam-yas, many stately stone pillars inscribed with royal edicts, and votive bells in honour of the kings testify to the powerful surge of Buddhism from the time of Khri Srong-lde-brtson.

Religion could inspire controversy as well as worship; there is evidence from early Chinese and Tibetan sources, as well as tradition, of a debate between the champions of rival Chinese and Indian doctrines, the former holding that enlightenment could be achieved in a sudden flash of insight while the latter argued that it was a result of a long process of purification by works and meditation. Foreign scholars nowadays question whether there was a face-to-face confrontation between the rival teachers, as tradition has it, and believe rather that there was a continuing series of argument and discussion. The tradition that the result was the rout of the Chinese doctrine and its banning from Tibet is even more open to question, for the elements of the Chinese doctrine continue in such teaching as the Rdzogs-chchen and the Snying-thig, alongside the Indian doctrines.

It is probable that this flowering of intellectual and devotional activity was mainly confined to the aristocracy. To what extent adherence to the Buddhist faith was a matter of conviction and to what extent a prudent following of the royal lead is a matter for conjecture; but there are signs that the noble families quickly perceived the advantage of securing a foothold in leading positions in the new faith. Many of those named as religious teachers were members of one or other of the prominent clans, and the long-standing rivalry for political power between their leaders was reflected in the religious field. In the competition between the Indian and the Chinese doctrines the Indian masters, headed by Kamalaśila, were supported by the Dbas' clan one of whom named Gsai-snang, later known as Ye-shes dbang-
po, is said to have been the person who invited Padmasambhava and Śāntarakṣīta to Tibet. He and other members of the clan were teachers in succession to Śāntarakṣīta as mentioned above. On the other hand, the Chinese doctrine, championed by a great scholar, the Master Mahāyāna, were strongly favoured by one of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan’s queens, Byang-chub of ‘Bro, and by many noble ladies. The Dba’s could regard themselves as true-blue Tibetans. Together with another great clan, the Myang, they had established Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s father, Gnam-ri Slon-mtshan, as ruler of a great and expanding kingdom. The ‘Bro, on the other hand, were a clan from the north-east who came on the political scene through the marriage of the btsan-po Mang-slön Mang-ṛtsan to the lady Khri-ma-lod c. 670 and had emerged as an effective power largely through her character. Coming as a young bride from the distant Yang-tung territory, possibly speaking some Chinese, she may have been befriended and influenced by Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s Chinese princess Mun-chang Kong-co who survived him. On the death of her husband in 670 she and her infant son ‘Dus-srong had to endure the virtual shogunate of the Mgar family until it was overthrown in 689 by a coup in which Khri-ma-lod clearly had a hand. Thereafter she is seen as a redoubtable personage whose residence was recorded every year in the Annals. Soon after the death of her son ‘Dus-srong she established a special relationship for her clan with the Chinese by negotiating with the Empress Wu for the marriage of her grandson Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan to a Chinese princess. Her object was achieved in 710 and she died two years later. In the next generation Khri Srong-lde-brtsan married, among other queens, Khri Rgyal-mo with the name Byang-chub; and it is she who is seen in Chinese records to have supported the master Mahāyāna. After the fall of the Mgar, the ‘Bro gradually challenged the Dba’s for the office of chief minister, which they secured in 728 and held for thirty years until a Dba’s noble regained it. The rivalry, it may be remarked, continued to the very end of the kingdom when ministers from the ‘Bro and Dba’s struggled for power in the confusion following the death of Glang-dar-ma.

Although several members of the Dba’s are named as religious teachers and some from the ‘Bro sponsored the copying of sacred books, no monk from either clan is recorded as having held office as a minister of state. That distinction goes to two remarkable monks, Myang Ting-nge-dzin bzang-po and Bran-ka Dpal-gyi yon-tan.

The Myang clan had taken the lead in supporting Gnam-ri Slon-mtshan and its chief, Myang Mang-po-ṛje Zhang-snang, was appointed as his chief minister. On Gnam-ri’s death Myang Mang-po-ṛje was virtually ruler of Tibet as regent for the young Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, but when the prince came of age Myang was accused of disloyalty and was executed. There is little doubt that the Dba’s clan had much to do with his fall for although the Tibetan Chronicle shows that the arch conspirator against Mang-po-ṛje
was an extraordinary adventurer, Khyung-po Spung-sad Zu-tse, there is a long account of a visit by Srong-brtsan Sgam-po to the house of the aged head of the Dba’s clan when much stress was laid on the disloyalty of Myang and the loyalty of Dba’s. Special privileges were granted to the Dba’s including the building of a family tomb by the btsan-po himself. Another instance of such a signal honour in a later generation has recently come to light in the inscription for the Lde-sman in Lho-brag mentioned above.

In Sba-bzhed, the oldest of the later histories, there is evidence of hostility and rivalry between the two clans. Myang Ting-nges-dzin is shown as opposing the lavish distribution of property to monks by Dba’s Ye-shes dbang-po; and in the religious debate Myang monks took the Chinese side while Dba’s championed the Indian. Ting-nges-dzin himself is described in the Deb-ther sngon-po as an important teacher of the Snying-thig and Rdzogs-chen which have a close affinity to Chinese Ch’an doctrine. But above all there is the contemporary evidence in the inscriptions, ordained by Khri Lde-srong-brtsan, on two stone pillars at Ting-nges-dzin’s chapel, Zhwa’i Lha-khang. They have a uniquely human appeal. The btsan-po, using the personal pronoun and speaking as it were with his own voice, expresses his gratitude to a subject. He relates how Myang Ban-de Ting-nges-dzin was appointed his guardian and brought him up from childhood with great affection and how he reconciled family dissensions and, in his office as Great Minister of State, strove for the public good in every way. The btsan-po wanted to give him a suitable reward but the ban-de humbly declined saying it was not proper for a monk to receive such a favour. The btsan-po, nevertheless, made a decree protecting the ban-de’s personal position and granting privileges to the descendants of his grandfather Myang Snang-bzang ’Dus-kong who, it may be remarked, is the first member of the Myang clan since the fall of Myang Mang-po-rje to be recorded as holding, in 745, an official post — that of brung-pa, important but not among the highest. In an addendum, the btsan-po conferred further privileges on the family of Ting-nges-dzin’s paternal grand-uncle on the grounds that the favours granted to the Myang were too small in comparison with those granted to the Dba’s. Here we may see not only an echo of the reported criticism by Ting-nges-dzin of the lavish grants to monks by Dba’s Ye-shes dbang-po and also signs of a long-standing rivalry between the clans.

In the second inscription, which can be dated to 812, the btsan-po records the continuing services to the state by Myang Ban-de Ting-nges-dzin and states that he intended to increase the grant he had made because it was too small but the ban-de submitted that it was sufficient. However, he and his ministers had decided to confer privileges. Both decrees were solemnly sworn by the btsan-po and witnessed by all the greatest in the land — the btsan-po’s brother (in the first decree), the queens, feudatory princes and
the great ministers of state; cavities at the base of the pillars show where the royal seal was affixed.

In addition to these remarkable decrees ban-de Myang Ting-nga-'dzin is named as a witness to Khri Srong-lde-brtsan’s decree, recorded in Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag, next after the chief minister ban-de Bran-ka Yon-tan and before all the lay great ministers. He is also recorded in the Mahāvyutpatti as participating in the translation of the Sanskrit into Tibetan in presence of the btsan-po Khri Lde-srong-brtsan in a horse year, which was probably 814.

Nothing more is heard of him in contemporary sources and later histories have conflicting stories about his death. Some say that he was killed at the time of the persecution by Glang-dar-ma c. 836, but ‘Gos Lo-tsa-ba in the Deb-sngon states that he died at the age of fifty-five leaving no trace of his mortal remains.

The accounts are irreconcilable for Khri Lde-srong-brtsan was born c. 776 and if Ting-nga-'dzin died in 836 at the age of fifty-five he would have been younger than his ward. As ‘Gos was a follower of the Snying-thig his version seems preferable, and one may suppose that Ting-nga-'dzin was about twenty years old when he became the guardian of the young prince, then perhaps about five, and that he died a few years after the death of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan, which was c. 816.

I would like to believe that his end was miraculous and peaceful for I can never think of him without recalling my first visit to his little temple of Zhwa’i Lha-khang. I had gone there to look for inscribed stone pillars about which I had been told by my friend Bde-chen Chos-khor Rin-po-che. At the chapel, nestling on its own in a quiet valley, I was welcomed by three friendly monks who seemed to combine care of their cattle with that of the chapel. The pillars had been daubed with red wash which the monks readily cleaned off; but it was getting late before I could copy the inscriptions. I did so mechanically, not so as to understand the meaning, and put my notes aside to check next morning. Later after supper I settled down with a book; but I was soon conscious of an invisible presence quietly but insistently urging me to read what I had written. Almost against my inclination I picked up the copy and so began to learn something about that great and good man. While I was reading, the senior monk who had kindly lent me his cell, came in to light the altar lamp. I asked him who was this Myang Ting-nga-'dzin. He told me “He laid his hand on this place. He founded it; he lived here”. The next morning I was shown the small mchod-rten in which was preserved the miraculous hat into which a guardian deity poured a continuous stream of hail which turned into grain, enough to pay for the building of the chapel. On the frescoed wall of the tiny cloister leading to the sanctum I saw a portrait of Myang Ting-nga-'dzin sitting easily beside his teacher Vimalamitra, grey-headed, smiling benevolently and holding out his right hand in the gesture of giving. I would like to think that I had spent the night in his very room but it is more likely
that he lived in the family mansion of which the remains could be seen on
the bank of a nearby stream.

Ban-de Bran-ka Yon-tan, the other and more famous Great Monk Min-
ister of State, ban-de bka’ chen-po-la gtopics-pa, appears suddenly on the Tibetan
scene heading the list of ministers who witnessed Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s
decree to maintain religion. He must have earned his appointment, as did
Myang Ting-ngé’dzin, by supporting the young btsan-po in the dissension
and difficulties which the Zhwa’i inscription shows to have delayed his ac-
cession. But there is no contemporary inscription or other evidence of what
he did, nor any explanation why he was given precedence over Myang
Ting-ngé’dzin who had a long association with Khri Lde-srông-brtsan and
had perhaps been a minister even before his accession.

Bran-ka Dpal-gyi yon-tan was apparently a newcomer on the social and
political scene. No official of the Bran-ka family or clan is mentioned in the
Annals or Chronicles and it is only in Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s edict that
two lay ministers of that name figure among the witnesses. Sba-bzhed
names three monks, at various times, with the family name Bran-ka but
there is no tradition that Dpal-gyi yon-tan took part in the religious debate
nor is any Buddhist foundation attributed to him. He is known to later
histories only as a great religious minister who was falsely accused of an
intrigue with one of Ral-pa-can’s queens and was put to death by a Dba’s
minister before the assassination of Ral-pa-can.

The name Bran-ka suggests that he might have started life as the bran
of some great noble. It is not certain what that implied but a bran was clearly
the subject of his overlord. His status was superior to that of a khol-po for
he could hold land; but he could also be transferred to another lord or be
taken under the control of the btsan-po. A bran could be on confidential terms
with his lord; and latterly some could become monks while continuing to
use the family or clan name — e.g. Myang-bran Dpal-gyi ye-shes rgyal-
mtshan (Tucci, Minor Buddhist Texts, ii, p. 96). Bran-ka Yon-tan may have
been an exceptionally brilliant and favoured subject who took advantage
of the opportunities offered by the liberalising air of Buddhism and was,
as it were, manumitted by his lord. That would require the approval of the
btsan-po and the active support of the overlord. The reason for his appoint-
ment with precedence over Myang Ting-ngé’dzin must have been the
influence of some even greater family. One need look no further than the
‘Bro. Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s stepmother was queen Byang-chub of ‘Bro;
he married a ‘Bro lady; and his chief lay minister at the time of his reli-
gious edict was ‘Bro Khri-gzhu Ram-shags who was followed in that office
after a brief interlude when a Dba’s was chief minister, by the famous ‘Bro
Khri-sum-rje Stag-snang.

The pre-eminence of Bran-ka Dpal-gyi yon-tan in religious and politi-
cal affairs during the reigns of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan and his son Khri
Gtsug-lde-brtsan Ral-pa-can is beyond question. He was chief of those who took part in reconciling Sanskrit and Tibetan religious terminology. But his more noteworthy achievements were in the political relations between Tibet and China. Paul Demiéville in his invaluable work *Le concile de Lhasa* quotes a letter from the T'ang Emperor Hsüan-tsung to Dpal chen-po asking for his help in returning to China several prefectures which the Tibetans had occupied, also in releasing Chinese prisoners. Dpal-gyi yon-tan was principally responsible for the treaty between Tibet and China achieved in 821. He heads the list of witnesses to it in the inscription on the pillar near the Jo-khang; and in the ceremony at Lhasa at which it was solemnized he played the leading part.

It is hardly surprising that the lay nobles — apart from the Bro — were outraged at being deprived of the positions of power they had formerly enjoyed; nor is it surprising that Dpal-gyi yon-tan and his sovereign were murdered by a Da's minister and his associates.

His death has acquired a legendary aspect in the *Chos-'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag la* fos 134b–135a which I attempt to translate below; but it may be observed that it was not only Tibetan monks who took part in the business of Tibetan government. In their administration of occupied land the Tibetans employed leading local personages. One such was the famous Chinese teacher the master Mahāyāna who popularized the Ch' an doctrine in Tibet and so precipitated the debate with champions of the Indian school.

Some time after visiting Tibet he returned to Tun-huang; with the help of a Chinese lay colleague he succeeded in restoring order after a rebellion in which the Tibetan governor was killed.

Returning to the later tradition about the fate of Bran-ka Dpal-gyi yon-tan, it is said that he had incurred the enmity of an unpleasant boy of the Da's family by making fun of him on a chance encounter. Later the boy became a minister with the name of Da's Stag-rna-can and plotted against the btsan-po's brother Gtsang-ma, his queen Ngang-tshul-ma and Ban-de chen-po. The story is told in the passage of the *Chos-'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag* cited above:

Then the Sna-nam queen spread a slanderous story that queen Ngang-tshul-ma and Bran-ka Dpal-yon were lovers and when it was said they should be put on trial queen Ngang-tshul-ma in deep sorrow committed suicide. The great minister Bran-ka Dpal-yon, fearing that if they killed him they would then assassinate the btsan-po, fled to the north and in an underground place performed the rite of making his life-source into iron (*lcags-kyi srog-pa rtsa bsgrubs*); but when he had accomplished this except for the breadth of four fingers on the top of his head a blind man and his guide came in that direction. When the blind man asked “Who is there in this place?”, the
guide answered "The place is empty." But the blind man smelt smoke and was certain that someone was there. He said "Let us search" and having sniffed along the ground he said "He is here"; and the guide looking there saw a crack with traces of smoke on it. The blind man, following the scent, found the entrance and begged for food and drink. Bran-ka gave each of them a garment as a bribe to keep quiet. But the blind man perceiving his garment to be rough, gave information; and Dba’s Stag-rna-can and others seized the great minister; but whatever weapons they thrust at him could not pierce him. After enduring great torment for a long time he said “Kill me by thrusting a needle into the uncompleted span of four fingers on the top of my head.” So they did as he said and, twisting his head back, he died. They took off his skin as a scapegoat (blud bur) and stretched it out on a frame. His kinsmen gathered the remains of his corpse and when they burned it at Yer-pa, out of the smoke a white light about the size of a pot rose up higher and higher into the sky. One of his sisters, weeping, called out “Great Minister, where have you gone?” A reply came: “Since my enemies have killed me without cause shall I wreak vengeance?”. Thereupon the light grew very red, a great whirlwind arose, and the earth, stones, mountains and rocks shook; and immediately he became a great and terrifying demon (snod sbyin). Later, the Jo-bo-rje (Atiśa) subdued him and made him the guardian deity of Yer-pa Rdzi-khang and the stuffed skin was set up as a figure on a wooden frame in Snye-thang Rgya-rong and was made the deity of that place (yul-lha).

That was the form in which I knew the great Bran-ka Dpal-gyi yon-tan, a figure dressed in the robes of an oracle priest with a black, grinning mask; beneath the robes was the upper part of a stout body covered in dried human skin, supported on a wooden frame. It was said that inside the mask was part of a skull. At the foot of the image on either side was the figure of a boy praying. The image was known locally as the Dpa’-bo Blon-chen — perhaps originally Dpal Blon-chen. The story told by the guardian was that the body of the minister was sawn in two and thrown into the Skiyid-chu; the upper part was recovered at Snye-thang by the two boys while the lower half, of which no trace seems to survive, was found near Rtsa-thang on the Gtsang-po.

Before the conversion by pandit Atiśa of the angry snod-sbyin into the local protector, he was responsible, according to Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag, for a succession of troubles including a popular revolt in Tibet some years after the succession of ‘Od-srung and Yum-brtan. He was eventually won over by the mediation of other local deities and the intercession of the lamas; and assumed a kindly reincarnation devoted to reconciling the ruler and his people.
Unlike Myang Ting-nge-'dzin, Bran-ka Dpal-yon has left no mark on the doctrinal heritage of any religious school and, sadly, his strange memorial at Snye-thang failed to escape the excesses of the so-called Cultural Revolution by the Chinese in Tibet. The little chapel of his colleague Myang Ting-nge-'dzin is, I am told, roofless and desecrated, but it seems the pillars survived and the west one at least is standing, though damaged.

But I hope this small tribute will help to keep alive the memory of two remarkable precursors of the political priests and the bKa'-blon Lamas of later Tibet.
Hunting, especially of the yak, was a favourite sport of the Tibetans in the days of the early kingdom. The great minister Mgar Stong-rtsan Yul-zung went to hunt yaks in 653 A.D., and it was the pretext of a hunting expedition by the btsan-po Khri 'Dus-srong in 698 that enabled him to take the Mgar family by surprise and end their domination over the Tibetan state. The T'ang Annals relate that yaks were among the animals sent as presents by Tibetan rulers to the Chinese emperors; and when a foreign ambassador visited the Tibetan court a yak was brought for him to kill, rather like the stage-managed tiger shoot arranged by Indian princes for a visiting viceroy. As well as being the hunter's most exciting quarry the yak had a mystical quality in non-Buddhist rites as one of the guides conducting the dead to the afterworld.

The principal method of hunting was to round up the game in a ring of hunters, and it can be imagined that in the final mêlée arrows would fly in all directions to the danger of the participants. To kill, with arrows only, a wild yak, immensely strong and protected by thick shaggy hair, can have been no easy matter. A wounded and infuriated yak could bring down a rider, and to finish it off a close encounter with a sharp weapon may often have been needed.

Accidents in the hunting field were a serious concern, as is seen in two manuscripts from Tun-huang — Pelliot Tibétain (Pell. T.) 1071 and 1072. Both are clearly from the same original: 1071 in 468 lines is virtually complete, while 1072 is a fragment of only 189 lines but is useful for comparing doubtful readings. Like all early documents, especially on social and administrative matters, Pell. T. 1071 and 1072 contain words which are unfamiliar in modern Tibetan. Much of my attempt to interpret them may be wide of the mark; and in many instances I have simply stated the problem in the hope that others may be able to find the answer.

The first 328 lines of Pell. T. 1071 prescribe in considerable detail the penalties, graded according to the social status of those involved, for causing death or injury by an arrow shot at a wild animal. Lines 378 to 435 set out the penalties for failing to rescue someone who has fallen under a yak or 'bri — the female yak. A few subsidiary provisions relating to wild animals account for the remaining lines.

A complete translation of the document, which is full of repetitions, would be tediously long; and I offer only a fairly close abstract of selected clauses, to show something of the character of the whole, and have summarized the purport of the rest.

Several of the clauses are preceded by a rubric describing their scope. The first, which concerns the highest officials, is stated to deal with cases where a zhang-lon chen-po or his grandfather or father hit one another with an arrow aimed at a wild animal or where such zhang-lon are hit by an arrow shot at a wild animal by someone from the rank of zhang-lon g.yu'i yi-ge-pa (holder of a turquoise letter) down to a dmangs mtha'-ma (person of lowest status among the commoners). It goes on to particularize, citing the case where a blon chen-po (Chief Minister), nang-blon chen-po (Great Minister of the Interior), btsan-po'i zhang-drung chub-srid-la dbang-ba (Confidential Minister of the btsan-po, having authority in the state), blon chen-po'i 'og-por (Assistant Minister to the blon chen-po), these four great zhang-blon themselves or their grandfather or father — these persons are of equal status as regards compensation (stong mnyamo) — if any of these who are of equal status hit one another with an arrow shot at a wild animal, or if such zhang-lon are hit by an arrow from someone from g.yu'i yi-ge-pa down to phra-men-kyi yi-ge-pa (holder of a silver-gilt letter) who are of equal status, whether death results or not, where enmity is caused (mkhon mchis-te) and it is said that penalties should not be excused (chad-kar 'phangs re zhes), twelve gtsang-dkar (independent interrogating officers) and the offender himself, thirteen persons in all, shall be put on oath and the case shall be decided according to the various regulations under the law of homicide (thong-myi khrims). It shall not be permitted to pay compensation (privately?) (stong 'jal-du-yang myi-gnango). If the offence is held to be proved and the victim has died, blood money (myi-stong) of ten thousand sum shall be imposed and the complainant (yus-bdag) and the associate claimant ('dam-po) shall receive half each. If there is no associate, the complainant shall receive the whole ten thousand srang. When someone is hit by an arrow and the person charged says "It was not my arrow", if his denial is not accepted, whether the person hit is killed or not, the law of homicide shall apply. If his denial is accepted he shall be cleared of blame according to the law regarding acquittal from a charge of homicide.

All the twenty-three succeeding clauses follow the same formula as clause 1 in all its lengthy details. I give only an abstract except where there
is some unusual phraseology. The rubrics have been omitted. The rank of the victim is stated first followed by that of the offender. yan-cad man-cad "below or above such and such a rank" is usually simplified to "or". "Killed" means hit by an arrow shot at a wild animals where death results. The penalty for causing death is shown as (1); and where the victim survives as (2). It is to be understood that blood money, property etc. are made over to the yus-bdag and 'dam-po if any, as in clause I. Notes are added where necessary.

The next clause introduces new penalties and some obscure words which recur later, so I have given a rather longer summary.

* * *

Cl. II, l. 15. Where a zhang-lon chen-po himself, or a chen-po or someone of equal status is hit by a zhang-lon dngul-gyi yi-ge-pa (holder of a silver letter) or a zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa (holder of a copper letter) who are of equal status, if after interrogation the charge is proved and the victim has been killed, the offender shall suffer the sgor-rabs-gcad1 death penalty and his khol-yul (estates), bang-za (treasure store) and phyug-nor (cattle) shall be given to the complainant and associate. As for the daughter and mother, after the sgor-rabs-gcad, if there is a father, they shall be handed over to him, if there is no father they shall be handed over to the male kinsman (phu-nu-bo) who ever is nearest (gag 'dur-pa). If the one who is hit by the arrow is not killed, compensation for survival of five thousand srang shall be paid and the complainant and associate shall receive half; and if there is no associate, the complainant shall receive the whole. The provision regarding denial of responsibility for the arrow is as in clause I but here the death penalty for false denial is clearly stated.

Cl. III, l. 28. If a zhang-lon chen-po himself, or a zhang-lon chen-po of equal status, is killed by a gtsang-chen14 or dmangs mtha'-ma: (1) sgor-rabs-gcad with loss of property and treatment of female relations as in Cl. II; (2) no penalty is mentioned in case the victim survives.

Cl. IV, l. 38. If a zhang-lon g.yu’i yi-ge-pa himself (khong-ta ngo-bo) or the grandfather or father of a g.yu’i yi-ge-pa, or the sons and their children (phu-bo spad) of the four great zhang-lon down to the members of the father’s clan (phu-spun-spad) and their children, who hold no official letter, the mother and stepmother (ma yar-mo), bride (bna'-ma), secondary wife? (khyo-mo) or unmarried sister (bu-srung khyo-ma-mchis-pa), if any of these, being of equal status, is killed by a zhang-lon chen-po himself or equal, or a phra-men-kyi yi-ge-pa or equal: (1) blood money of 6000 srang; if not one srang is paid, the penalty is death; (2) in case of survival, compensation of 3000 srang.
Cl. V, l. 51. (There are some minor scribal errors in this clause). If a zhang-lon g.yu'i yi-ge-pa or the equal of a g.yu'i yi-ge-pa or a dngul-gyi yi-ge-pa or equal, downwards, is killed by a zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa or equal or upwards:

(1) 'bras shig bkum’ death penalty and loss of half his property (khol-yul, bang-za) and phyug-nor; the other half to go to the son if there is one, failing whom to the father and failing both, the mother and daughter and half the treasure and cattle to go to the phu-nu-bo (male clansman) whoever is nearest. When the person who shot the arrow has been executed the half of his khol-yul to be given to be shared by his bran and 'bangs whoever he might be. (2) If the victim survives, compensation of 3000 srang.

Cl. VI, l. 65. If a zhang-lon g.yu'i yi-ge-pa or the equal of a g.yu'i yi-ge-pa is killed by someone from a gtsang-chen down to a dmangs mtha'-ma; (1) sgo-rabs-gcad death penalty and loss of all property as in Cl. V and also his womenfolk to the complainant. (2) If the victim survives, the 'bra-shig death penalty shall be imposed; after the execution, half the cattle and treasure store to go to the son, if no son, to go to the father, if there is no father also, the womenfolk and half the cattle and treasure store to go to the phu-nu-bo whoever is nearest and the khol-yul to the bran and 'bangs as in Cl. V.

Cl. VII, l. 81. If a zhang-lon gser-gyi yi-ge-pa (holder of a gold letter) or the grandfather of a gser-gyi yi-ge-pa, or the phu-bo-spad down to thepha-spun-spad of a zhang-lon g.yu'i yi-ge-pa who hold no official letter or one of their female relations as in Cl. IV is killed by a zhang-lon chen-po or equal down to a zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa or equal: (1) blood money 5000 srang; (2) in case of survival, 2500 srang.

Cl. VIII, l. 97. If a zhang-lon gser-gyi yi-ge-pa or equal is killed by a gtsang-chen down to dmangs mtha'-ma: (1) the 'bra-shig death penalty; and his bu-smad to be banished to a desert place, and all his property (khol-yul, bang-za and phyug-nor) to go to complainant. (2) In a case where the victim survives, the 'bra-shig penalty shall still be inflicted and all his cattle and treasure store to go to the complainant; no mention of the khol-yul in this case.

Cl. IX, l. 107. If a zhang-lon phra-men-gyi yi-ge-pa, or the grandfather, or father of a phra-men-gyi yi-ge-pa or the relations of a zhang-lon gser-gyi yi-ge-pa as in Cl. IV are killed by a zhang-lon chen-po or equal or by a zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa or equal: (1) blood money 4000 srang; (2) 1000 srang (scribal error for 2000?).

Cl. X, l. 119. If a zhang-lon phra-men-gyi yi-ge-pa, or the equal of phra-men-gyi yi-ge-pa is killed by a gtsang-chen or dmangs mtha'-ma: (1) 'bra-shig bkum;
and bu-mo smad\textsuperscript{22} to be banished to a desert place: all property to go to complainant. (2) If victim survives, still the 'bra-shig penalty and loss of treasure-store and cattle but the khol-yul to go to the bu-smad who shall remain in the family home (mal-na dgod\textsuperscript{23}). If there is no son, the khol-yul to go to the father; if there is no father it shall not be given to any phu-nu-bo drung\textsuperscript{24} there may be, but the mother and daughter shall go to whichever of the phu-nu-bo is nearest (su 'dur-pa). As for the khol-yul it shall be granted to the 'bangs and bran of the offender whoever he may be.

Cl. XI, l. 137. If a zhang-lon dngul-gyi yi-ge-pa himself, or the grandfather or father of a dngul-gyi yi-ge-pa, or the relations of a zhang-lon phra-men-gyi yi-ge-pa, as in Cl. IV, are hit by an arrow — such persons are of equal status;\textsuperscript{25} and if such persons of equal status with each other are killed by a zhang-lon chen-po or equal, down to a zangs-kiyi yi-ge-pa or equal: (1) blood money of 3000 srang; (2) 1500 srang. If not one srang is paid, the penalty is death even for a dge-ba\textsuperscript{26}.

Cl. XII, l. 154. If a zhang-lon dngul-gyi yi-ge-pa is killed by a gtsang-chen or down to a dmangs mtha'-ma: (1) 'bra-shig bkum with loss of half property; the other half of the khol-yul and cattle to go to the bu-smad who shall remain in the family home. If there is no son, it is to go to the father; if there is no father the half of the khol-yul shall not go to the phu-nu-bo drung even if there is one, but the womenfolk and half the cattle shall go to the nearest phu-nu-bo (su 'dur-ba) and the half of the khol-yul to be granted to the 'bangs and bran of whomsoever it may be.\textsuperscript{27}

Cl. XIII, l. 181. If a zhang-lon ra-gun-pa'i yi-ge-pa (holder of a brass letter) himself, or the grandfather or father of a ra-gan yi-ge-pa, or the relations of a zhang-lon dngul-gyi yi-ge-pa, as in Cl. IV, are killed by a zhang-lon chen-po or down to a zangs-kiyi yi-ge-pa or equals: (1) blood money of 2000 srang; (2) 1000 srang. Death penalty for non-payment, even if a dge-ba.

Cl. XIV, l. 196. If a zhang-lon ra-gan-gyi yi-ge-pa or equal of a ra-gan-gyi yi-ge-pa is killed by a gtsang-chen or down to a dmangs mtha'-ma: (1) 'bras shig bkum; and half his khol-yul and cattle and all his treasure store to go to the complainant; the other half of the khol-yul and cattle to be disposed of as in Cl. X. (2) If the victim survives, half the khol-yul and cattle (treasure omitted by mistake?) to go to the complainant; the other half of khol-yul, treasure and cattle to go to the man himself (kho-na bdag) who shall stay in his home (mal-na mchis-su bas-so).

Cl. XV, l. 217. If a zhang-lon zangs-kiyi yi-ge-pa himself or the grandfather or father of a zangs-kiyi yi-ge-pa or the relations of a zhang-lon ra-gan-pa, as in
Cl. IV, who are all of equal status, if these people of equal status are killed by a zhang-lon chen-po or equal, or a zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa or equal: (1) blood money of 1000 srang; (2) 500 srang; death penalty for non-payment, even if a dge-ba.

Cl. XVI, l. 232. If a zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa or equal is killed by a gtsang-chen or a dmangs mtha'-ma: (1) 'bras-shig bkum with loss of half of the khol-yul and cattle and treasure; the other half to go to the bu-smad, failing whom to other relations as in Cl. IX and X. (2) Loss of half property; the offender to retain the other half.

Cl. XVII, l. 248. If a gtsang-chen himself or the relations of a zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa, as in Cl. IV, or any rgyal-'bangs rgod28 (soldier who is a royal subject), or the bran rkya-la gtogs-pa29 (bran attached to the crop land) of a zhang-lon or a dmangs, or a mngan-kyi mngan-lag (assistant to a mngan), any of these pho-smos30 (that is to say, males) is killed by a zhang-lon chen-po or equal down to a zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa or equal: (1) blood money 300 srang; (2) 150 srang. Death penalty for non-payment, even if a dge-ba.

Cl. XVIII, l. 263. If a gtsang-chen himself or relations of a zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa, as in Cl. IV, or any rgyal-'bangs rgod, or rkya-bran31 of a zhang-lon or a dmangs, or the assistant to a mngan, or any of these, being pho-smos, is killed by32: (1) blood money 150 srang, 30 srang for medicine and food (rman zan). The death penalty for non-payment whoever it may be (su-yang rung).

Cl. XIX, l. 276. If a gtsang-chen or any rgyal-'bangs rgod or equal is killed by any g.yung33 or by a lho-bal btson34 (barbarian captive): (1) blood money of 150 srang; (2) 30 srang for medicine and food. Death penalty for non-payment, whoever it may be.

Cl. XX, l. 287. If any rgyal-'bangs g.yung or rkya bran of a zhang-lon or dmangs, or a lho-bal-gyi btson upwards is killed by a zhang-lon zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa, or equal, downwards: (1) blood money 200 srang; (2) 100 srang. Death penalty for non-payment, even if a zhang-lon.

Cl. XXI, l. 299. If any rgyal-'bangs g.yung or rkya-bran of a zhang-lon or dmangs, or lho-bal kyi btson upwards, or any (ordinary) g.yung35 is killed by someone from gtsang-chen down to any rgod or equal: (1) blood money 100 srang; (2) 20 srang for medicine and food. Death penalty for non-payment, whoever it may be.36

Cl. XXII, l. 311. If any rgyal-'bangs g.yung or rkya-bran of a zhang-lon or dmangs, or any g.yung or lho-bal kyi btson is killed by an equal: (1) blood money, 20 srang; (2) 10 srang. Death penalty for non-payment.37
Cl. XXIII, l. 322. If someone kills a g.yar its owner shall receive the value in srang. If he says "That price is not right", it shall go to oath and compensation of the value shall be given. If the g.yar is not killed, the meat of a sheep shall be given for the cost of medicine and food.

Cl. XXIV, l. 331. This clause deals with accidents where any phu-nu-bo kills a kinsman from zhang-lon chen-po down to dmangs mtha'-ma. The regulations of dmer-brtsi and myi-brtsi shall apply, and the case shall be decided according to the code of law regarding dmer-brtsi and myi-brtsi.

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Such is the picture of the Tibetan hunting scene with anyone from the highest nobles and their ladies down to "barbarian" captives as potential victims of a stray arrow. Perhaps ladies did not take an active part in the chase but were at risk as spectators when the game was encircled in an ever-closing ring of hunters. The penalties illustrate the great difference in social status. The highest ministers above the holders of a silver letter were not subject to the death penalty except for falsely disowning a lethal arrow or failure to pay blood money imposed on them. But even wounding one of those great nobles by someone four ranks lower in the scale was punished by death. There is no provision for the killing or wounding of high officials by anyone of the lowest orders from royal rgod downwards. So heinous an offence might have been met by summary execution. The range of blood money from ten thousand to fifty srang is further evidence of the value of human life in different social strata. It appears that at least nine classes of society could hold estates and be masters of bondsmen and subjects; and the elaborate provisions for the disposition of lands and possessions of a person executed or banished underline the importance attached to property.

A different insight into Tibetan life is given by the next one hundred lines which deal with penalties for failing to rescue someone who has fallen under yak or 'bri — the female of the yak — and the rewards for a successful rescue. Most such incidents were presumably in the hunting field but one clause deals with the case where a yak is being led or driven. Ladies, including grandmothers, are again potential victims.

There are some striking contrasts with the first part, and several more obscure phrases. Fines when imposed are not described as myi-stong, blood money, and are almost paltry, five hundred srang being the highest. But there are many different penalties; the most surprising is that the death penalty — bkum-ba (dgum-ba) stsaldo — may be inflicted on the highest officials for failing to rescue someone who falls under a yak and is killed. Ministers of that status were exempt from the death penalty if they killed someone with an arrow in the hunting field, and my initial reaction was to
seek some other explanation. But the alternative penalty, if the victim survived, involved danger to life by being made to escape from under a yak; and as the highest officials could face the death penalty for falsely denying responsibility for a lethal arrow or for contumaciously refusing to pay the blood money imposed on them, the words must be taken at their face value. The reason for the severity of the penalty and for the wording may be found in another punishment imposed in several instances — the fixing on the offender of “the coward’s fox-tassel” (sdar-ma ‘o-dom). The T’ang Annals tell that a fox’s tail was hung on the head of anyone who showed cowardice in battle; and Pelliot’s translation adds that people would gather and put the man to death, dgum-ba stsaldo, in distinction from the simpler expression dgumo: bkumo in the first part, may therefore mean “given over to be put to death”; or perhaps to commit suicide, and that is supported by the parallel words in the case of lesser persons — bkum tu baso.

The greater reprehensibility attached to failing, through cowardice, to rescue someone than to causing death by an arrow in the hunting field reflects the stern standard of honour in a warlike society. No memory of the sdar-ma ’o-dom seems to have survived, for present day Tibetans, especially the men of Khams, the bravest of the brave, often wear a hat of fox fur with the tail dangling down the side.

As an example of the whole, I translate the first clause of this part with a few abbreviations; and give short abstracts of the remainder.

* * *

Cl. XXV, l. 320. The general law where those from zhang-lon chen-po down to phra-men kyi-yi-ge-pa fall under a yak and either rescue one another or fail to do so.

If persons from blon-che etc., the four zhang-lon, down to phra-men-kyi yi-ge-pa, such zhang-lon themselves or their grandfather, father, grandmother, mother, sons and their children down to father’s kin and their children, who are persons holding no official letter, or their step-mother, bride, secondary wife, or unmarried sister, if any of these who are of equal status falls under a yak and someone nearby does not rescue the victim and he (or she) is killed by the yak, as a penalty for not rescuing him, a fine of 500 srang shall be imposed and the offender shall be condemned to death (dkuln-ba stsaldo). If the victim is not killed but is not rescued, a fine of 250 srang shall be imposed and the offender shall be made to escape from under a yak (g.yagi ’og-nas thar-pa stsaldo). As a reward for making a rescue, a daughter shall be given; and if there is no daughter or sister or there is objection to give one, 200 srang shall be paid.

That formula is followed generally in the succeeding clauses of which I give abstracts. There are differences in the penalties and some in the
disposition of an offender's property. As in part I, rubrics are usually omitted and similar abbreviations are used. The penalty for failing to rescue a victim who is killed is shown as (1) and where the victim survives as (2). The rewards of a daughter or sister or an alternative sum of money are generally similar and have been omitted apart from some exceptional cases.

Cl. XXVI, l. 343. If one of the four zhang-lon chen-po or equal, down to a phra-men-kyi ge-pa or equal, is not rescued by a dngul-kyi yi-ge-pa or equal, down to zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa or equal, and is killed: (1) 500 srang fine and dgum ba stsaldo; in addition to the fine, snar-gis 'o-dom⁴¹ gdagso. If victim survives: (2) sdar-ma 'o-dom gdagsu baso (the coward’s fox-tassel).

Cl. XXVII, l. 353. zhang-lon dngul-kyi yi-ge-pa down to zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa and their relations as in cl. I. not rescued by one another: (1) fine of 300 srang (1072 adds bkum-ba stsald-do); (2) fine of 150 srang and made to escape from under a yak.

Cl. XXVIII, l. 363. zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa downwards, and equals, not rescued by gtsang-chen down to dmangs mtha'-ma: (1) 'o-dom bdagste sdar-ma bkum-tu baso; his bu-smad⁴² (family?) to retain bang-za, phyug-nor and khol-yul and remain in their place of residence, mal-na dgodo; if no son (bu-pho) it goes to bu-mo smad (daughter and children?); if no father, it goes to whichever phu nu bo is nearest;⁴³ if there is a phu-nu-bo drung it shall not go to him. The bran and 'bangs of the one executed for cowardice shall be shared. (2) If the zhang-lon is not killed, as the penalty for cowardice the 'o-dom shall be hung on the offender; he shall be allowed his treasure and cattle and he shall be exiled along with his undivided family. The estate of the exile shall go to the father; if no father it shall not go to the phu-nu-bo drung if any. The 'bangs and bran⁴⁴ of the exile shall share the estate (khol-yul).

Cl. XXIX, l. 375. If a gtsang-chen or down to a dmangs mtha'-ma is not rescued by a zhang-lon zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa or equal: (1) fine of 100 srang and dgum-ba stsaldo; (2) fine of 50 srang and made to escape from under a yak.

Cl. XXX, l. 380. From gtsang-chen down to dmangs mtha'-ma if a myi dge-ba is not rescued by a myi ngan-pa:⁴⁵ (1) the 'o-dom punishment; the offender is allowed to retain treasure and cattle but is exiled together with the sons of an undivided family (khyim na phub); the khol-yul of the exile to go to a son of a separate household if there is one, if not, to the father; if no father, the 'bangs and bran to share it; (2) 'o-dom, and to be made to rescue an ogti⁴⁶ from under a yak.

Cl. XXXI, l. 387. If there are two persons of equal rank (or two people together) and one falls under a yak and the other does not rescue him: (1)
sdar-ma 'o-dom; and 'og-rta bkum-ba stsaldo;\(^7\) (2) 'o-dom; no other penalty mentioned. The alternative reward to a daughter is an 'og-rta.

Cl. XXXII, l. 390. If a myi ngan-pa is not rescued by a myi dge-ba: (1) 'od-dom punishment; and 'og-rta bkum-ba stsaldo. (2) 'og-rta g.yagi 'og-nas thar-po stsaldo.\(^8\)

Cl. XXXIII, l. 395. The law when someone falls under a yak and someone goes to the rescue and where both the one who fell and the rescuer are either killed or survive.

When someone falls under a yak and is killed and the rescuer also is killed, when the two are killed, as a return on behalf of the one who first fell under the yak, a g.yar should be given to carry the corpse of the rescuer.\(^9\) If the rescuer is killed and the one who fell under the yak is not killed owing to the good deed\(^50\) of the rescuer, the one who is rescued should have to give a number of srang for conveying the corpse of the rescuer because of his escape from the yak. If the rescuer’s g.yar is killed, the one who escaped shall have to replace the g.yar in addition to the payment of the money.

Cl. XXXIV, l. 402. The law when someone falls under a yak and is killed if the yak is being led or not.

If a zhang-lon or even a dmangs falls under a yak which is being led, whether it is hobbled (phyings for chings?) or led by a rope or being driven (gzhus?) or however it is being led, if the man is holding it and striking it and it goes out of control and the victim is killed, the offender shall be put to death. If he is not actually there, there is no penalty.\(^51\)

Cl. XXXV, l. 409. The law when many people rescue someone who has fallen under a yak. However many people take part in rescuing someone from under a yak the money prescribed by law shall be paid.

Cl. XXXVI, l. 412. The law where someone from zhang-lon to dmangs mthoa'-ma falls under a 'bri whether he is rescued or not.

If someone falls under a 'bri and is killed whether it is a zhang-lon or dmangs the law is the same as if they were killed by a yak. If having fallen under a 'bri and not being killed, persons from zhang-lon zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa downwards do not rescue one another: (1) 'og-rtas gcade; and made to escape from under a 'bri. As reward for a rescue he shall be given an 'og-rta.

Cl. XXXVII, l. 418. If persons from gtsang-chen down to dmangs mthoa'-ma fall under a 'bri and are not killed, and do not rescue one another, penalty:
"og-rtas gcad and made to escape from under a 'bri. Reward for rescue, rta gzhi52 gcig.

Cl. XXXVIII, I. 421. If a gtsang-chen does not rescue a zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa who is not killed, penalty: 'o-dom and ring res gcig53-gis gcado. Reward, a gnag-grus, a three-year-old yak.


Cl. XL, I. 426. The law about hanging the coward's fox-tail on whomsoever is standing near and does not rescue someone who has fallen under a yak or 'bri.

If someone from zhang-lon down to dmangs mtha'-ma falls under a 'bri54 and a companion or servant or bran who is nearby does not rescue him or does not give assistance, those whoever are near, whether from outside or within, shall be brought to justice, and whoever is a coward, to him the law of applying the fox-tassel shall apply, and the fox-tassel shall be applied. As for others, if the fox-tassel is not applied whatever fine there may be shall be paid.

Cl. XLI, I. 432. The law relating to the distinctions according to the letters held when the male descendants or collaterals of persons from zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa upward are hit by an arrow or fall under a yak or 'bri.

Regarding sons and their children down to father's kin55 and their children who do not hold letters, who are hit by an arrow or fall under a yak or 'bri, if it is applicable, action shall be taken according to the law relating to whatever letter applies. According to the distinction by letters, although there may be a son it shall not apply to the father56; and though there may be phu-nu-bo drung it shall not apply to anyone of them.

There follow six clauses of a miscellaneous and supplementary nature.

Cl. XLII, I. 436. lays down the manner in which the carcass of a wild animal shall be shared when hit by several arrows. If a yak is hit by six arrows, the owner of the first arrow gets part of the hide, the ribs of one side, the tail, heart, chest, tongue, half the blood and sinews. Every other part of the rest is apportioned between the other five with the last receiving only the lag-sla, the marrow of the forelegs (?). Similar arrangements are prescribed when a 'bri is hit by three arrows, and a stag or a rkyang by two. The names of the various parts, some of which may be corrupt, need separate study.
Cl. XLIII, l. 449. Deals with someone who claims to have shot an arrow but it is not agreed that he did so. If no one has seen it or vouches for it, it will be judged that it was not the claimant’s.

Cl. XLIV, l. 452. Where someone steals an arrow which has hit an animal by taking it out, he shall be fined two arrows; where he finds an arrow in the ground, there is no fine and the owner who recognizes it shall get it back.

Cl. XLV, l. 455. Where wild animals are allowed to escape from the hunting encirclement there are different penalties for different animals. If a yak escapes, forty strokes; for a ‘bri, twenty strokes; for a rkyang, forty, for a ma-ba smyan or an antelope, eight; and for a gazelle, six. The huntsmen and the brgye’u-rje, ten in all, shall suffer the appropriate punishment and it shall be inflicted immediately. If the meat of an animal of a kind that is hunted is stolen, the penalty is a year’s imprisonment and whoever arrests or lays complaint against the offender shall receive an ’og-rta. If someone steals the meat of an animal that has been killed in the hunt, the penalty is three rkud; if anyone lays complaint, or fights the offender he shall receive 30 rkud.

Cl. XLVI, l. 462. This appears to deal with offences by a butcher (zhes ra-pha = bshan-ra-pa?) who gives short measure or fails to supply households and claims falsely to have done so. If he misappropriates their ration (tshal-ma?) both his eyes shall be put out.

Cl. XLVII, l. 467. An obscure clause about someone who does not supply phyi-sha. The penalty phyi-sha bgyid is equally obscure. An ’og-rta is the reward for catching the offender.

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This long and elaborately detailed document gives an unusual view of Tibetan life and manners. Scholars such as Rolf Stein, the doyen of Tibetan studies, have shown the extent to which early Tibetan thought and practice in literature, religion and the vocabulary of royal ceremonial were subject to Chinese influences but these codes of law, especially the shameful punishment of the fox’s tail, seem to be purely Tibetan in character. Although in this essay many questions have been unanswered and the answers to others may be of questionable value, it may provide material for students of Tibetan to elucidate.
Abbreviations

AOH
Dagayb
Das
Goldstein
Inscriptions
JA
Jäschke
Pell. T.
T'ang Annals
Thomas
TLTD
Tun-huang Annals and Chronicle

Acta Orientalia Hungarica.
Journal Asiatique.

Notes

1. According to the T’ang Annals the rank of Tibetan ministers was distinguished by insignia of different precious substances — sê-sê (aquamarine being the first, followed by gold, silver-gilt, silver and finally copper — which hung from the shoulder in strings of different-sized beads of the appropriate material. In Tibetan manuscripts the highest rank is generally seen to be g.yu (turchoise), near enough in colour to the Chinese “aquamarine”, though what appears to be an exceptional higher award of a ke-ke-ru letter, perhaps white jade or chalcedony, was given in 763 to a retiring chief minister (Tun-huang Annals, p. 60). After turquoise came gold, then phra-men, which must be silver-gilt not a precious stone as I formerly supposed, then silver, brass and copper. The description of those receiving such honours as yi-ge-pa, “letter holders”, perhaps relates to a diploma conferring the right to wear the insignia.

2. Dnang ntha’-ma: the dnangs do not appear to be the lowest order in Tibetan society, for it seems that they could hold estates and bondsmen (ll. 251, 261, etc). Perhaps they included petty officials and attendants.

3. The distinction between zhang-lon, the whole body of ministers, and zhang-blon, those of highest rank, may be noted.

4. Gtsang dbar: I understand gtsang-bkar, “honest (independent) interrogators”. Similarly in the phrase dbar-kis changs, “proved by interrogation”. Chang, tshang, tshangs appearing in the same context in other clauses are apparently scribal variations.
5. 'dam-po: F.W. Thomas in "A Law of Theft from Chinese Kansu" translates as "claimant" which I accept rather than "adviser". I have added "associate" to differentiate between the two persons.

6. In all subsequent clauses the penalty for falsely denying responsibility is death, and it is presumably to be understood here for although the highest officials were generally exempt from the death penalty, they were subject to it also, as will be seen later, for failure to pay blood money.

7. skur-pa zan: skur-pa is consistent, not skur-ba. Unless this is some sort of idiom for "swallowing the blame (skur-ba)", I can only suggest that zan is for zad.

8. chen-po, "Great One": cf. Thomas TLTD, ii, p. 96, chen-po zhang Lha-bzang. His precise position in the noble hierarchy is not clear.

9. sgor-rabs-gcad appears to mean the extinction of the personal line of succession. As there is no mention of the sons they were presumably executed with the father, or were banished.

10. khol-yul: estates with a complement of bran and 'bangs (bondsmen and subjects). They could be resumed by the bisan-po (blar bzhes-pa): see Zhol Inscription N II. 29, 30; and Lcang-bu inscription l. 37; but as seen here, they could be transferred.

11. phyug-nor, elsewhere nor-phyug: "cattle wealth, wealth in cattle".

12. phu-nu-bo: A. Rona Tas has examined this relationship in "Social Terms in the List of Grants of the Tibetan Tunhuang Chronicle", AOH, 1955, and concludes that it shows the attributes of a clan, specifically the progenies of the male line.

13. gag 'dur-pa, a scribal error for gang 'dur-pa: cf. in other clauses gang bdur-pa; su 'dur-pa; sus 'dur-pa; also gag mdur ba in Pell. T. 1073. For the meaning "near", cf. Zhol inscription N l. 30, phu-nu-bo nye-ba.

14. The gtsang-chen ranks after the "holders of letters", the lowest of whom is the brass (ra-gan) letter holder. He does not hold an official letter (yi-ge) and his function is not known but the post was of some importance: see Pell. T. 1089 II. 8, 25, 26.

15. In current use ma-yar means "step-mother", but unless the mother is covered also by this phrase, she would seem to be omitted altogether. The family relationships mentioned through this document need more thorough study.

16. 'bra-shig bkum ('bra-shig; 'bra-cig): a less severe penalty than sgor-rabs-gcad leaving the sons to succeed. The etymology is obscure? sbra-cig, a single tent?

17. khol-yul-gyi byed-ni su'i bran su'i 'bangs sor-sor bzhes 'tshol-zhig: I have much hesitation about this interpretation which, if correct, implies a surprising departure from what I have understood as the established practice that bran and 'bangs (bondsmen and subjects) were appendages of the khol-yul rather than persons who might themselves hold landed property. The translation appears to be supported by l. 169: su'i 'bangs su'i (su'i) bran bas so-sor bzhes 'tshol.

The only alternative I can suggest is "whoever has bran and bangs shall be allowed to receive the khol-yul", but that is so vague as to be virtually meaningless. In the early days of the kingdom persons of high status might become bran when they were subjected to some rival (see Tun-huang Chronicle, p. 103, II. 20-2). That might not be expected to occur in the eighth and ninth centuries; but it is seen that the dwangs mtha'-ma who ranked low in the social order, could hold khol-yul and bran. The question remains for further study.

18. This appears a very severe sentence. Text reading bu-smad-la is perhaps corrupt.
19. *bu-smad* here appears to be the equivalent of *bu-mo smad* (l. 73), but in some instances it appears to refer to the family (as in Das’s *Dictionary*) rather than to mother and daughter (Dagayab).

20. Unless *bu-smad* here means “family” there is no mention of the sons who usually appear to be allowed to survive in cases of the ‘bra-shig penalty; but cf Cl. X where it is the *bu-mo smad* who are banished.

21. *sgre-bo, sgren-mo*, basic meaning “naked”; but Das gives three forms of *sgren-mo* relating to a bleak valley without water (cf. *sa-rjen* a barren land); a country without a protector; and a woman without a husband. I know no evidence that these meanings were in use in early Tibetan, and it may be that humiliation by being driven out naked is intended; in other instances *spyuggo* is used without any mention of a destination.

22. *bu-smad* here (also ll. 165, 166) seems to mean “family” for there is later mention of the sons.


24. I cannot understand the distinction between the two sorts of *phu-nu-bo drung* and *su ‘dur-pa* which is repeated in later clauses.

25. The preamble about equality of status seems unnecessarily complicated but I may have missed the point.

26. *dge-ba* probably does not have a religious connotation here. In l. 380 it is the opposite of *ngan-pa* — “the good and the bad”. In Tun-huang manuscript I.O. 506 quoted by R.S. Stein in *Tibetica Antiqua* II, p. 268 (BEFEO 1984) *ngan-pa* is equated with “thief”, *rkun-ma*. Perhaps the word applied generally to “the lower classes”. In three other instances here (ll. 193, 229, 259) where the death penalty is imposed “even for a *dge-ba*” who fails to pay the blood money the principal offenders are very important personages — *zhang-lon chen-po*. In l. 296 where the offender is a *zhang-lon zangs-kyi yi-ge-pa* — a much lower rank — the penalty applies “even if he be a *zhang-lon*”; and in l. 308 for a *gtsang-chen* it is imposed “whoever he may be”. It might be inferred from that that *dge-ba* is an honorific designation of those of highest rank. But in l. 380 even a *gtsang-chen* or a *dmangs mtha’-ma* may be a *dge-ba*. If a religious meaning is to be ruled out, the term may be something like *ya-rabs*, persons of good birth.

27. Some minor differences in the disposition of the property, e.g. omission of the treasure store (bang-za) in the half that goes to the family of the person executed, also the spellings *si’i bran*, are probably scribal errors.

28. *rgod*: a subject with military duties: see R.A. Stein “Deux notules d’histoire ancienne du Tibet”, *JA* 1963. They are contrasted with the *gyung*, subjects with civilian duties — farming, labouring etc.

29. *bran rkya-la gliogs-pa*: The possibility that *rkya* is an error for *rgya*, Chinese, which occurs occasionally, may be dismissed; *rkya* is consistent in five entries in Pell. T. 1071 and also 1072 and is found many times in other Tun-huang manuscripts — e.g. Pell. T. 1111, a crop assessment, *stshan-rtsis*, of dues from each *rkya*; similarly Pell. T. 1120 and TLTD, ii, 117, p. 30. In TLTD, ii, 107, p. 304 I take *dge-legs-kyi rkya-la rje-blas bgyis-pa* to mean “service done on the *rkya* of Dge-legs”, though it is possible that *rkya-lo* may be for *skya-la*, “in place of”. TLTD, ii, 16, p. 29 refers to ‘A-zha experienced in *rkya* work. There are many references to *rkya-zhing* — e.g. Pell. T. 1078 (bis). TLTD, ii, 60, p. 162 refers to ploughing *rkya-zhing*; and in TLTD, ii, 33m, p. 351 it appears to be terraced fields, *slong bu*. TLTD, ii, 47 and 48, p. 261–365.
show it to be a type of land, some of which was irrigated, chu-ma; other types being shug-zhing, juniper forest, and phong-zhing, poor land (Thomas), or “fallow land” (?). tshal-zhing, “grove, plantation” appears in Pell. T. 1078 (bis). In TLTD, ii, 60, p. 162 rhya, which alternates with skya, therefore appears an early form of the latter — skya, “crop”, Das p. 96, which is rare in surviving Tun-huang manuscripts. It can be taken to mean “land under crop, corn fields”. TLTD, ii, 23, p. 122 shows that some bran worked on the rhya, crops; and in TLTD, ii, 47, p. 362 and 48 p. 365, bran-gyi rhya-zhing may mean corn fields on which bran worked or fields held by them in some capacity, a possibility which this manuscript shows might exist; see Cl. V note 17; but in this document the bran rhya-la gtogs-pa are subjects of a zhang-lon.

30. pho-smos: meaning uncertain. If it refers to males only, it presumably excludes those categories of relations of zhang-lon which mention ladies.

31. I abbreviate bran rhya-la gtogs-pa to rhya-bran.

32. The offender is not specified. The reading in l. 267, mda’s mgul-pa / pa la stogs-pa seems to indicate the omission of some words.

33. g.yung ngo ‘tshald: any ordinary g.yung as distinct from a rgyal-bangs g.yung, a subject of the btsan-po.

34. lho-bal btson (elsewhere lho-bal-kyi btson): mo-bal is identified by R.A. Stein as equivalent to the Chinese jong-yi, “barbarian” (“Saint et divin”, JA 1981, p. 251, n. 51); btson, “prisoner”, apparently at liberty since able to take part in hunting. lho-bal btson could be liable to fines, though perhaps persons in their position might have to suffer death in default of payment.

35. In this clause the ordinary g.yung seems to be of lower status than the lho-bal kyi btson; but the position is reversed in the next clause.

36. In the parallel clause in Pell T.1072. and in parallel clauses to Cl. XVII, XVIII, XX and XII the reading is bran rhya-la ma-gtogs-pa — the opposite of Pell. T. 1071. The reason for this difference is not clear.

37. In all the foregoing clauses there is provision for the death penalty if the offender falsely disclaims responsibility for the arrow.

38. g.yar: see also ll. 400, 401 where if a g.yar is killed another shall be given in its place. Pell. T. (ll. 7, 17, 24) shows that it refers to a riding animal — g.yar las-stogs-pa zhon zhon-pa zhiig. Dictionaries give no direct help and yar-ma, “a young cow” (Das and Dagyab), can be ruled out. Thomas in TLTD, iii, p. 75, commenting on a damaged passage in TLTD, ii, p. 273 — ‘tsha-ba’i g.yar ‘og-rla — suggests the antithesis g.yar ‘og, “high and low”; cf. bla ‘og; but the one example he cites where g.yar is said to mean “above” — TLTD, iii,. Index p. 180, g.yar-nas, “from above”, is not conclusive and appears in its context — TLTD, ii, p. 159 — to mean “from your presence”. ‘og-rla is found several times later in this document: see note 46 to Cl. XXX. In view of the uncertainty I leave g.yar untranslated.

39. dmer is the killing of a person of one’s own rus (Dagyab). I wonder whether this may explain the deaths of two Mgar ministers in 685 (dmye ’byung): Tun-huang Annals, p. 16.

40. myi-brtsi, thong myi-khrin as above passim: the law of manslaughter?

41. snar-gis ’o-dom: sdar-ma ’o-dom: several such variants occur in Pell. T. 1071 but in 1072 sdar is consistently and correctly used; btags is also more general there than gdags; there are two instances, ll. 90 and 95 of lwa-dom (the form in current use), suggesting that ’o was pronounced something like woh.
In these complicated arrangements bu-smad appears to mean “family, children” (Jäschke and Das) rather than “mother and daughter” (Dagayab and Goldstein): see note 18 to Cl. VI; and bu-mo-smad to cover the female relations who are to be made over to the male kinsmen together with the bang-za, cattle, and khol-yul.

sdum-pa phub: cf. khyim-phub, a separate household set up by a son.

si’i ‘bangs si’i bran: Pell. T. 1072 reads su’i ‘bangs si’i bran; 1071 l. 384 has si’i ‘bangs si’i bran. If these variants are other than scribal errors, the significance is obscure.

“The good man and the bad man”: see Cl. XI note 26.

’og-rtas: Thomas TLTD, iii, p. 75 suggests the antithesis g.yer (yar) ‘og, “above and below”; cf. bla-’og; but this is not substantiated, see Cl. XXIII note 38. He also draws attention to a special signification “side-horse” or “subsidiary horse” or “trace horse” TLTD, iii, p. 177. Pell. T. 997 l. 36 mentions six shing-rtas among the property of a monastery in the Sha-cu region, which I take to mean farm wagons. It is also possible but not certain that the Tibetans used baggage wagons in their campaigns on the China frontier; but there is no evidence that they used chariots for battle or hunting. From Thomas, Ancient Folk Literature, p. 125 (98) it appears that for war and the chase a good ’og-rtas was needed, which suggests a riding horse. There might be a connection with ’og-can, “uncastrated, entire”, the opposite of ’og-med; but in view of the uncertainty I leave the word untranslated.

‘og-rtas bkum-bo: To kill a horse seems an improbable penalty. I wonder whether this signifies some sort of execution — being dragged or trampled by a horse.

For (2) Pell. T. 1072 has ’og-rtas bcade g.yari ’og-nas thar-pa sisaibo. This penalty appears in Cl. XXXVI and Cl. XXXVII as ’og-rtas gcade. bcad occurs also in Cl. XXXVIII — ring-res gcigis bcado; gcad, bcad (dcad also in 1072) is presumably a form of chad, “penalty, fine, punishment”. Cf. chad-pas gcad-pa, “to punish”.

Presumably to burial.

The rescuer is seen as the yon-bdag, the benefactor to whom it was the regular necessity to make a return — lan.

The last sentence seems a non-sequitur.

I can think of no meaning for rta-gzlzi.


Pell. T. 1072 has yak or ‘bri, which is clearly better.

ya-lag = ? yan-lag, “branch”.

Pell. T. 1071 reads that it shall apply to the father but Pell. T. 1072 has the opposite.

I have provisionally translated dkur dbabo as “fined”, though I can find no example of this. To “have two arrows stuck in his side” seems improbable.

It is not clear whether ma-ba snyan means one animal or two. ma is the blue sheep, or burrhel; snyan I take to be gnyan, the ovis ammon. The words may mean “blue sheep or ovis ammon”, or “the wild sheep i.e. the gnyan”. I do not think ba-snyan can stand for ba-men, “the mithun, wild ox”, which is an animal of the forests.

The brgyue’u-rje was a minor official with miscellaneous civil duties: see Uray “Notes on the Thousand-Districts of the Tibetan Empire in the First Half of the Ninth Century”, AOH 1982. Here he seems to have been in charge of the huntsmen.
rkud: Thomas, “Law of Theft”, understands this as a “fine”; but its meaning here is obscure. The distinction between lings-kyi ri-dags and ri-dags-kyi lings blabs-pa is not quite clear; my interpretation is speculative.
The Province of the Bde-blon of the Tibetan Empire, Eighth to Ninth Centuries

The brief eulogy of the reign of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan in the Chronicle from Tun-huang,1 fo. 115, relates the drive by Tibetan armies as far as Mkhar-tsan (Liang-chou), the capture of eight fortified cities, and the subjugation of the Dor-po; and it goes on to record how the kingdom was enlarged and administration assumed as far as the Long-shan range (some 150 miles west of Ch’ang-an); five fortresses and ten-thousand districts were established and a great province under the bde-blon was newly instituted (mthong-khyab khri-sde lnga btsugs bde-blon khams chen-po gsar-du bskyed-do).

This campaign is reflected in the Tun-huang Annals2 for the years 758 and 759 which state that two generals led an invasion in the direction of Mkhar-tsan Leng-cu and campaigned against the ‘A-zha (T’uyühun) and Tsong-ka; also in the account of the achievements of Stag-sgra Klu-khong on the north face of the Zhöl rdo-ring at Lhasa3 which tells how he led a drive towards Mkhar-tsan, subdued the ‘A-zha who were subject to China, and conducted operations at Dbyar-mo-thang and Tsong-ka. The Chinese T’ang Annals4 confirm that as a result of An Lu-shan’s rebellion the Tibetans were able in 758/9 to invade Ho-hsi and Ling-wu and gradually occupy all territory west of Feng-hsiang and north of Pin-chou.

If the administration of the bde-blon was set up in this first surge of invasion, the great territorial expansion that followed would soon have rendered it inadequate. There is no indication where the five mthong-khyab and khri-sde were located. Perhaps the number five had a formal significance and echoed an earlier organisation described in a damaged passage at the end of the Chronicle (fo. 122) stating that Mgar Khri-’bring after

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inflicting a crushing defeat on the Chinese in 695 and conquering territory up to Rnga-rab (camel ford on the Yellow River?) and many regions including the Dor-po, set up five districts under frontier ministers (so-blon sde-nga btsugs-so). Khri-bring's campaigns were mainly directed against the 'A-za in their homeland near the upper waters of the Yellow River and the Kokonor region (Annals, p. 38), which indicates the whereabouts of the Dor-po; but his five districts must have been quite remote from the five khri-sde of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan.

Following up their early successes the Tibetans drove for and captured the T'ang capital Ch'ang-an. They held it for only a short time but retained mastery of many cities within the Chinese border, such as Lin, Lan, Yuan and Chin, thus hemming in the disorganized Chinese armies and enabling themselves to turn their attention towards the north-west and the route to Central Asia. In 764 they took Liang-chou which, after Ch'ang-an, must have seemed the richest prize. Liang-chou was a wealthy market city, an active centre of Buddhism, and legendary in T'ang times for its luxury and exotic manners. It was not unknown to the Tibetans for Hsüan-tsang recorded their presence there as regular traders in 629. From Liang-chou the way lay open to the fortress cities of the silk route which were seized one by one, with Sha-chou (Tun-huang) being the last to fall c. 787, though its suburbs and surrounding country had probably been in Tibetan hands since the capture of Kwa-chou in 776. And that was only one sphere of Tibetan aggression which continued year after year, extending from the great loop of the Yellow River in the north to cities inside the frontier of the Chinese provinces of Lung-yu and Chien-nan in the south.

Among many valuable articles on aspects of the organization of the early Tibetan Kingdom by Géza Uray, that on "Khrom: Administrative Units of the Tibetan Empire in the 7th-9th Centuries" identifies a number of centres of authority known as khrom, which he describes as military governments under the command of a dmag-dpon — a general.

Two of the khrom named by Uray existed before the campaigns of the mid-eighth century. Khri-bshos khrom mentioned in the Tun-huang Annals in 676 must have been in the Kokonor region; and Rma-grom is said to have been situated on the upper Yellow River and to be mentioned in the years 705 and 755. It appears also in Pelliot Tibetain (Pell. T.) 1082 where it is described as a khri-sde; and Rma-grom-pa is mentioned in Pell. T. 1089, an important document edited and translated by the late Marcelle Lalou in a pioneering work of outstanding value (Journal Asiatique, 243, 1955). I am doubtful of the exact status of Rma-grom even if it was, as a khri-sde, a place of military importance. Grom has a strange look especially as khrom was in general use; and I am not convinced that the passage in 1.7 of Pell. T. 1089 — slungs rma-grom-pa-thang-la brgal-ba'i lan-la — refers to the "suppression" of Rma-grom. References in documents from Mazar Tagh to a 'grom-pa'i or
gram-pa'i sde (Thomas, Literary Texts and Documents, TLTD, ii, pp. 171, 173, 435, 460) imply a Grom-pa people; and, in the passage above, brgal, deriving from rgol-ba, appears to mean that the Rma-grom-pa people were disputing about their status (thang).

The remaining khrom listed by Uray are described as khrom chen-po and seem to have come into existence as part of the organization of the territories occupied by the Tibetans from the middle of the eighth century. Each had jurisdiction over a number of cities of which the chief official was the rtsa-rje, rendered by Uray as “Town Prefect”.

Dbyar-mo-thang khrom chen-po (Pell. T. 16, fo. 33a, 34b) was perhaps established after the conquest of the Kokonor region mentioned in l. 33 of the inscription on the south face of the Lhasa Zhol rdo-ring in place of Khri-bshos khrom of which there is no further mention in surviving documents. Tsong-ka named in l. 34 of the Zhol inscription and as a place of assembly in Pell. T. 1217 was most probably within the jurisdiction of Dbyar-mo-thang. Mkhar-tsan khrom chen-po can be identified with Liang-chou by the entry in the Annals for 758 — mkhar-tsan lengo-cu yan-chad drang-ma drang. Its military importance is underlined by the presence there of a ru-dpon as well as a khri-dpon.

Kwa-cu khrom-chen-po is named in TLTD, ii, p. 96, and Kwa-cu khrom in TLTD, ii, pp. 21 and 73, as well as in Pell. T. 1348 and 1088 where its assembly is stated to have been held at Sug-cu (Su-chou), showing that the latter was under its jurisdiction; and it is seen in Pell. T. 1089 ll. 45, 46, that the dnzag-dpon of Kwa-cu and a colleague had the authority to issue orders to Sha-cu, which was also subordinate to that khrom chen-po.

I have not been able to locate Long-cu, a place of assembly of some importance. Pell. T. 1089 l. 52 mentions a zhang-lon chen-po’s assembly on the frontier held at Long-cu — zhang-lon chen-po so-la mchis-pa'i 'dun-tsa long-cur blab-pa. In every surviving instance it is linked with a high-ranking official often in direct communication with the bde-blon. In Pell. T. 113, 1089 and 1113 it is a zhang-lon chen-po; and in Pell. T. 1083 a blon chen-po who issues a document bearing the seal khrom chen-po-nas bla-rtags bkye. The khrom chen-po is not named; but as in every case there is some reference to the affairs of Sha-cu it might be assumed that Long-cu, like Sha-cu, was under the jurisdiction of Kwa-cu. But in Pell. T. 1552 there is apparently a reference to Do-gams and So-gams, which raises the question whether, like Mdo-gams, there was a separate district, even a hitherto unidentified khrom chen-po, or whether it was linked in some way with Kwa-cu khrom chen-po.

Uray reasonably supposes that there was a khrom chen-po in the Lopnor region. Its site was probably at Tshal-byi where documents from Miran show that high officials were stationed — a mngan, a dnzag-dpon and, even more important, a ru-dpon. Assemblies in the region were held at Nob-cung, which is described as a khrom in TLTD, ii, pp. 143, 144, where it probably
means only a market town; another was at Gtso-mo-gling (TLTD, ii, p. 141); and there were four cities each governed by a rtse-rje — Cer-cen (TLTD, ii, p. 131) Ka-dag (TLTD, ii, p. 138) Nob-cung and Nob-chen (TLTD, ii, p. 153).

Uray also includes khrorn chen-po in Khotan and Bru-sha territory but these did not fall within the jurisdiction of the bde-blon.

The official hierarchy of a khrorn chen-po is uniquely illustrated in Pell. T. 1089, which lists the posts of forty office-bearers headed by a rtse-rje. It is not clear whether the ru-dpon of Mkhar-tsan and that at Tshal-byi were part of the traditional military organization of the Tibetan kingdom into ru, horns, of which there were originally three, increasing as the need grew to four and later five (Uray, “The Four Horns of Tibet”9). The Tshal-byi ru might have been connected with the Sum-pa’i ru and that at Mkhar-tsan with the latest to be created, the ru-lag; but the matter needs further examination.

The whole provincial organization was certainly of a military nature, but the Tibetan practice of administration by councils of ministers and the existence of assemblies — ’dun-tsa — suggest the khrorn chen-po had some such councils headed by the senior military officer. Documents from Tun-huang and Miran name many ministers with various ranks and denominations — zhang-lon chen-po, nang-rje-po, blon-chen-po, blon, rtse-rje blon etc., and although a number of those named can be identified as bde-blon, the highest level in the administration, others may have been part of the official body of the khrorn chen-po and the city administration.

There is no such complete a record of the hierarchy of a subordinate city administration as there is for Mkhar-tsan khrorn chen-po, but Pell. T. 1089 gives the titles of a number of officials. After the rtse-rje the highest posts were those of khri-dpon and khri spyan, the commander and inspector of a khri-sde. Unlike Mkhar-tsan, at Sha-cu many officials were Chinese or in charge of sections of Chinese — for example a rgya’i khri-dpon and a rgya’i spyan; others “appointed from among the Chinese” — rgya-las bskos-pa — were perhaps known as rgya sha-cu-pa (Pell. T. 1294, 1111 etc.); and in two sde, probably the two rgya-sde mentioned in Pell. T. 1083 and TLTD, ii, p. 339, all the officials bear Chinese names. Officials of the Lho-bal are also mentioned. R.A. Stein has shown that the name does not refer to Nepal but is the Tibetan equivalent of the Chinese word Jong-yi, “barbarians”, which probably covered people of non-Chinese and non-Tibetan race who were regarded as of lowly status (Stein, “Saint et divin”, JA, cclxix n. 31; and my “gal-PO and Lho-bal”, BSOAS, 1963).

Below the khri-dpon, commander of a ten-thousand district, were the stong-dpon, presumably ten in number, commanders of thousand districts. A stong-sde was perhaps the district from which a stong-dpon had to levy a thousand soldiers for his principal duty as a military officer. That function is confirmed in Pell. T. 986, a translation from a Chinese work, where
stong-dpon is the equivalent of the Chinese term for a commander of a thousand men. The post was highly prized and often hereditary (Zhol rdo-ring, N II, 41–2, 45–6; Zhwa’i E I, 37). The rtse-rje was, therefore, not only a town prefect but had authority, through the khri-dpon and stong-dpon, over a number of sde. In TLTD, ii, pp. 19, 250, 335, and Pell. T. 111 and 1205 there is mention of a sde-rje, and in Zhwa’i W 10 l. 42 of a sde’i dpon-po, but there is no light on their relationship to the stong-dpon who figures not only as a military commander but also as the principal officer for the basic stratum of the provincial administration. The fourteenth-century Rgyal-po bka’-thang fo. 66 states that the stong-sde was the vehicle for enforcing the royal law; and in documents from Tun-huang — e.g. Pell. T. 1077, 1081 and 1087 — a stong-dpon is seen taking part in civil disputes; other manuscripts show that among their duties was the collection of grain from surplus areas for distribution to less favoured districts. In addition to such civil duties Tibetan officials were concerned to some extent with religious affairs. There were many monasteries and temples some enjoying royal patronage, e.g. TLTD, ii, p. 109; a leading Chinese abbot took part in the administration of Sha-cu; and all officials from different centres of government contributed to the prayers at the dedication of a Buddhist temple established by the commanding generals to celebrate peace on the frontier.

All in all there is the impression of a well-ordered government in which the rights of the subject peoples were given fair consideration. It was also much more extensive than the original mthong-khyab khri-sde lnga of the Tun-huang Chronicle; and although the surviving documents give no complete account of the number of khri-sde, stong sde and mthong-khyab, it appears that several of them came to be absorbed in the jurisdiction of the khrom chen-po which superseded them as administrative centres. Mkhar-tsan Khrom-chen-po acquired a new khri-sde for the ‘A-zha (Pell. T. 1222) under a khri-dpon in addition to the one mentioned in the list of officials in Pell. T. 1089. There was also a mthong-khyab connected with the ‘A-zha under the command of a stong-dpon (Pell. T. 1089). These posts were probably necessitated by the capture in 758 of the district of An-lo in Ling-chou created for the ‘A-zha royal clan and their followers who had fled ever eastward before the waves of Tibetan conquest beginning in 670. Other tribes of ‘A-zha remained in occupied territory south of Sha-chou and Kan-chou.

Under Sha-cu, a subordinate city of Kwa-cu Khrom-chen-po, there were two khri-dpon and two mthong-khyab — Rgod-sar Stong-sde and Se-thong-pa — each commanded by a stong-dpon, which suggests that was the regular practice. There is no information about the official hierarchy of Kwa-cu itself or of its other subordinate city, Sug-cu, or of Long-cu, but it is most likely that there were other khri-dpon and mthong-khyab there.

In the jurisdiction of Tshal-byi there was a new khri-sde associated with a mthong-khyab at Car-chen (TLTD, ii, pp. 121, 122); and another
mthong-khyab at Ka-dag (TLTD, ii, p. 133); and a mthong-khyab of the Drug-cung (TLTD, ii, p. 274) may also have been under Tshal-byi.

There is no information about the official hierarchy of Dbyar-mo-thang.

As for the stong-sde the names of over fifty are found in surviving manuscripts, mostly from Mazar Tagh, and it is interesting to compare these with several accounts in later histories which clearly reflect access to early sources, where descriptions are given of the military organization of the early kingdom into ru each consisting of a number of stong sde. In all of them some names appear which are identifiable with those in the Mazar Tagh documents, but there are wide differences not only in the matter of names but also in that of numbers. The fourteenth-century Blon-po bka'-thang fo. 8a translated by Thomas in TLTD, i, pp. 276–81 reckons forty-two stong-sde but names only thirty-six. The Rgyal-po bka'-thang fo. 65, extending its scope beyond the five ru, to which it assigns seventy-seven stong sde with an additional number from Zhang-zhung and the royal domain. The Chos-'byung of Ne'u Pandita (late thirteenth century?), which mentions earlier works, has a list of forty-seven; and the sixteenth-century Chos-'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag, vol. 1 fos iga-z~b, edited by G. Tucci in Preliminary Report on Two Scientific Expeditions in Nepal, 1956, gives a long account of sixty-one stong-sde, with details of their commanders, equipment etc. perhaps collated and elaborated from a variety of sources.

It might be interesting to attempt a concordance of the names and numbers in the several histories, but more substantial problems arise in relating their accounts to the province of the bde-blon. On the assumption that a khri-sde contained ten stong-sde, if there were only five khri-sde the number of stong-sde in the province would exceed the total in some of the later histories for the whole of the kingdom.

The Blon-po bka'-thang adds a further difficulty by calculating the total strength of the whole military organization of Tibet at 2,860,000 men, with that of individual stong-sde as between 50,000 and 90,000. Tibetan armies on the frontier of 60,000 to 250,000 are mentioned in the T'ang Annals and, allowing for exaggeration, the number must still have been considerable. But even if the figures in the Blon-po bka'-thang are exaggerated five times, they might be related more readily to a khri-sde rather than a stong-sde.

A generalization in the T'ang Annals that Tibetan armies carried no provision of grain but lived on plunder might have held good for swift incursions, but it is evident that the military occupation of a great province lasting for nearly a century could not have operated without permanent bases and an efficient commissariat. The campaigning season was generally confined to autumn and winter and the Tibetans doubtless followed the Chinese practice of establishing military colonies where soldiers' families could live and grain could be grown. The T'ang Annals show that the Tibetans built some towns of their own but principally they must have
occupied the hundreds of cities, villages and encampments which the Annals state were lost to China in the eighth and ninth centuries. In some instances the inhabitants are said to have fled; but there can have been no secure refuge and most were pressed into tasks of all sorts, including agriculture and the herding of livestock as well as forced military service. In great cities the gentry became part of the local bureaucracy and life went on under a Tibetan colonial domination. High Tibetan officials took over estates for themselves, which were cultivated for them by subject peoples or by their own followers who, as the T'ang Annals record, accompanied their masters on foreign campaign. These were known to the Chinese as Wun-mo (Tibetan mun-dmag) and many remained behind when the Tibetan kingdom collapsed after 846.

That was also the end of the province of the bde-blon, the extent of which before that time is nowhere clearly defined. The Tibetan Chronicle fo. 115 states that when it was established it extended as far as the Long-shan range — some 150 miles west of Ch'ang-an. It clearly included Tshal-byi Khromchen-po in the west where the authority of the bde-blon is seen in TLTD, ii, p. 124, as well as Kwa-cu and Mkhar-tsan; and by 787 the Tibetans were capturing cities such as Yun-chou and Hsia-chou well beyond the Ho-lan-shan and Long-shan ranges to which the responsibility of the bde-blon probably extended even if the territory was not held permanently.

Further south, by 783, the Tibetans were in possession of many cities in Lung-yu and Chien-nan such as Lan, Wei, Yuan, Hui and Chang-chou, and also dominated the country as far west as Nan-chao. These districts and also Dbyar-mo-thang probably fell within the jurisdiction of the bde-blon, though there is no evidence where the boundary fell between Bde-gams and Mdo-smad which had been a sphere of military activity since 633. The nineteenth-century Dzam-gling rgyas-bshad fo. 8ob includes Dbyar-mo-thang in Mdo-khams — A-mdo sa'i khongs-gtogs mdo-khams g.yar-mo-thang; but since it was part of the territories captured in the Tibetan conquests of the mid-eighth century it may reasonably be assigned to Bde-gams at that time.

In a note on Stag-sgra Klu-khong contributed to the Proceedings of the Csoma de Körös Symposium at Velm Vienna in 1981 Li Fang-kuei makes the interesting point that the Tibetan “Bde-gams” corresponds to An-lo, “peaceful and happy”, the Chinese name for the special district in Ling-chou established for the refugee ‘A-zha ruler and his clan — perhaps the Rgya'i khans-su gtogs-pa'i 'a-zha of the Zhol inscription S 1. 30.

It seems unusual for the Tibetans to translate Chinese place names rather than adapt them phonetically; and An-lo was only an outlying corner of the extensive Tibetan frontier province. Nevertheless, the idea of regarding their officers as “Pacification Ministers” might have led the Tibetans to name their new province, or perhaps one part of it, from one of their early conquests.
Although An-lo appears an unlikely place for the headquarters of the bde-blon it is not certain where that might have been. Pell. T. 1089, the important document about the precedence of officials, was issued by the bde-blon from an unnamed palace (pho-brang). It bears its seal showing an authoritative figure sitting on a cushioned seat, holding what might be a goblet but perhaps it is the seal itself; a petitioner or clerk kneels before him in a reverential attitude. The inscription reads bde-blon-gyi rtsis-gyi phyag-rgya, "the seal of the chancellery of the bde-blon". A pho-brang is usually seen as a royal palace but perhaps high officials might occupy one when not occupied by royalty. No other communication from the bde-blon is specifically identified as coming from a pho-brang, but Pell. T. 1111, the place of origin of which is missing, bears the same seal as that on Pell. T. 1089.

A number of other documents refer to an assembly of the bde-blon at a place or district called Zha. TLTD, ii, p. 19 emanates from the 'dun-tsa zha'i bde-sum-tshal, "the assembly at Bde-sum-tshal of Zha". It bears a seal different from and less impressive than that in Pell. T. 1089 and 1111 — a garuda figure with the inscription bde-blon 'dun-tsa-nas bkye, "sent from the bde-blon assembly". Other documents mention the assembly at Zha'i Bde-sum-tshal (Pell. T. 1093, 1113, 2134) or Zha'i 'dun-tsa (Pell. T. 1542, 3123). Yet others refer to the assembly of the Bde-blon of Bde-gams or to the assembly of Bde-gams (Pell. T. 1603, 1168, 1622m 1678, 1863).

In an article in Acta Orientalia Hungarica,¹² 1962, Marcelle Lalou identified Zha with 'A-zha, which would focus attention once more on An-lo; but I do not think that is acceptable. Pell. T. 2124 and 2125 mention a Zha-pa'i sde which points to a Zha-pa people or district, but there is no indication where that might be. The military character of the Tibetan frontier administration and the example of the khrom chen-po at Mkhar-tsan and Tshal-byi make it likely that the bde-blon would be associated with a military colleague of high rank, commanding the whole province. The two leading generals were 'Bro Zhang Khri-sum-rje, the commander-in-chief, and general Lha-bzang, whose role as patrons of the temple at De-ga G.yu-tshal in Dbyar-mo-thang, founded to celebrate peace on the frontier, has been mentioned above. The Chinese envoy Liu Yuan-ting who visited Lhasa to negotiate the treaty of 821 A.D. was twice received in that year by Khri-sum-rje.¹³ On his journey to Tibet he met the general at Ho-chou and on his return a great military display — doubtless to impress him with Tibetan power — was held in his honour in the Ta-hsia valley not far south of Ho-chou. In that strategic position the Tibetan armies commanded the main route from Ch'ang-an to the west. Perhaps it is in Ta-hsia rather than 'A-zha that the Zha'i 'dun-tsa is to be sought.

If the bde-blon had their headquarters somewhere near those of the military commanders it might have been the site of the great present-day
monastery of Bla-brang Bkra-shis-'khyil. There is a strong tradition of Tibetan presence in that region, and a story in later histories tells how Tibetan armies on the frontier were commanded to keep their positions until they were ordered to return. The order never came so they stayed on and became known as the bka’-ma-log, “Not to return without orders”.

Chinese and Tibetan scholars are now showing an interest in the early history of Tibet and have recently discovered inscriptions of the eighth and ninth centuries in Khams. A search in the neighbourhood of Bla-brang Bkra-shis-'khyil and Chos-gnas might be rewarding.

The internecine struggle for power on the eastern frontier between the leaders of the Dba’s and ’Bro clans following the death of Glang-dar-ma c. 842 and the break-up of the Tibetan kingdom beginning with the recapture of Sha-chou in 849 enabled the Chinese to recover all their lost territories and cities. A number of Tibetan tribes remained in Mdo-smad, and an active princedom under a succession of Tibetan rulers continued in the neighbourhood of Liang-chou and the Kokonor until it was overrun by Chingiz Khan in the thirteenth century; but apart from faint echoes such as in Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag Ja fo. 18b — bod bde-ba blon-po r名义s kyi byas — the name of Bde-gams and the achievements of the bde-blon vanished completely from the memory and the later histories of the Tibetans.

Notes

2. Ibid.
10. H.E. Richardson, Corpus of Early Tibetan Inscriptions, p. 50.
13. Pell. T. 996 tells how a Bde-blon Zhang Khri-sum-rje Mar-bu received the dhyāna teacher Man Hwa-shang who lived near Tsong-ka and showed concern about the continuation of the doctrine when the master carried out his intention of leaving for China. It is doubtful whether that Khri-sum-rje can be identified with the commander-in-chief who appears from the Tibetan Chronicle p. 102 to have been called 'Bro Khri-sum-rje Stag-snang. Cf. New T'ang Annals, Shang Ta-tsang, but the title zhang shows he belonged to a family related to the royal house.
The Cult of Vairocana in Early Tibet

A lasting impression from my visits to the earliest temples in Tibet outside Lhasa is the number of splendid images of Rnam-par snang-mdzad (Vairocana) in various forms which are honoured as the principal deity. The most impressive is at Lho-brag Mkho-mthing Lha-khang traditionally attributed to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po as one of his “border-subduing temples”. It is an inconspicuous, rambling, building roofed mostly in shingles and surmounted by a low wooden rgya-phibs. One enters through an ancient wooden door to be confronted by a huge, four-fold figure of Rnam-par snang-mdzad, on a high pedestal. Facing it, at some distance, from the four corners are somewhat smaller but still impressively large figures of the other four deities of the pentad of Buddhas: Mi-bskyod-pa (Aksobhya), Rin-chen ‘byung-gnas (Ratnasambhava), Snang-ba mtha’-yas (Amitabha) and Don-yod ’grub-pa (Amoghasiddhi). Apart from these great figures there is little else to attract attention in the spacious, dark hall, and the air of numinous and majestic mystery makes it easy to understand why later tradition saw the image as a repository of gter-ma (hidden religious texts). A.M. Blondeau has mentioned this in her article “Le découvreur du Mani-bka’-bum: était-il Bon-po?” in Tibetan and Buddhist Studies Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Alexander Csoma de Körös, Budapest, 1984.

At Khra-’brug in Yar-lung, another royal foundation attributed to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, there is a fine single image of Rnam-par snang-mdzad on the main altar with figures of Bodhisattvas on either side. The temple is so crowded with a great assemblage of precious and venerated images and rich offerings that the effect there is of magnificence rather than mystery. The temple, which had been raided by the Dzungars in the eighteenth century and repaired by the thirteenth Dalai Lama, was held to be of such

sanctity that the Tibetan government used to make a daily offering of 1,000 butter lamps, similar to that in the Lhasa Jo-khang.

Also in the Yar-lung valley is the temple of Bya-sa attributed to Dal-khor-btsan, the son of 'Od-srung. There too is a fine image of Rnam-par snang-mdzad. A curious custom here was a ceremony performed each spring by an official from Lhasa who was sent to burn butter lamps and offer a quantity of grain to welcome the return of the cuckoo, the sacred bird of the Bon-pos.

Not far away in the famous monastery of Bsam-yas, founded c. 779 A.D., the main image in the central hall is of Rnam-par snang-mdzad. His is also the principal image in much simpler temples. At the little chapel of Zhwa, founded at the beginning of the ninth century by the monk Ting-nge-'dzin bzang-po of Myang, who was a minister of both Khri Srong-lde-brtsan and his son Khri Lde-srong-brtsan, a small cloister on either side of a courtyard completely filled by a large white mchod-rtan leads to a temple through the open door of which the image is seen almost within reach. And at Gnas-gsar in the Myang-chu valley there is a group of three small and rather neglected temples attributed respectively to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, Khri Srong-lde-brtsan and Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan Ral-pa-can. Two of them are rather unusually constructed of mud walls round a wooden framework. All have small tile-covered rgya-phibs. In each of them the principal deity is Rnam-par snang-mdzad. That in the Ru-gnon temple, which is the oldest, is in the form described as 'Og-min and holds a round golden ornament; the Nye-sras brgyad stand on either side of the central deity. In the Yumchen-mo temple there is a fourfold Rnam-par snang-mdzad in the Kun-rig form which is said originally to have been a single figure but took its present form when it was consecrated by Padmasambhava. On the altar at the back is a Jo-bo Ma-chags Padma and the Yum chen-mo, the mother of a thousand Buddhas; and ranged round the wall are the Buddhas of the ten directions. In the Rta-mgrin Lha-khang, latterly tended by the Sa-skya-pa sect, is a single Rnam-par snang-mdzad with figures of the other deities of the pentad round the wall in an arrangement described as rdo-rje dbyings. Similar groups centred round the image of Rnam-par snang-mdzad are found in later temples such as Sa-ma-mda' and Gyantse. It may be that not all the images in the former temples are contemporary with the buildings, but it is probable that, even if new images were made, the antiquity of the foundation would have preserved its original dedication.

It appears, therefore, that the chos-rgyal, the Religious Kings of Tibet, held Rnam-par snang-mdzad in special reverence. It is not certain when the cult made its appearance in India but it seems to have been current in Magadha at least in the seventh century. It is said to have been brought to China by the Indian pandit Vajrabuddhi about 722 A.D. From there it was transmitted to Japan when the founder of the Khogon sect went in 736 to acquire
the *tantras*; and in 752 the great Vairocana image in the Todaiji of Nara was dedicated by the emperor Shomu. There is no clear indication when it became popular in Nepal, but the pentad figures on a *caitya* in the Licchavi style at Lalitpur, similar to those at Cha Bahl, Patan and Dvaka-bahal, the last of which is ascribed to the seventh century. It is doubtful whether it reached Tibet in the time of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, and in the foundations ascribed to him such as Lho-brag Mkho-mthimg and Khra-’brug the cult may have been developed and the images of Rnam-par snang-mdzad installed only at the time of the flowering of Buddhism in the reign of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan over a century later. Its popularity at that time is shown by a number of documents from the cave temple at Tun-huang which include several hymns in praise of Rnam-par snang-mdzad, a *tantra* in his name, and description of the iconography of the deity, apparently of Indian origin.

The only temple attributed to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po which appeared to have been virtually untouched was that at Ka-tshal. It is very small and narrow, rather similar in design to a temple at Taxila, with a little enclosed ambulatory round the back of the altar. The principal deity there is not Rnam-par snang-mdzad, but a beautiful image of Byams-pa (Maitreya). It is significant also that in the Jo-khang of Lhasa the only images of Rnam-par snang-mdzad are not in the oldest part of the building but in a side chapel off an outer ambulatory passage known as the *nang-bskor*; and the probability that the cult was introduced after the time of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po may help to explain the confused traditions about the building and early days of the Jo-khang.

The edict of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan in Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag’s *Chos-’byung* and the Skar-cung pillar inscription leave no doubt that the ‘Phrul-snang of Ra-sa (Jo-khang) was founded by Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, who reigned c. 630-49.

On top of these bare facts later generations have heaped a mass of pious legends beneath which it is difficult to detect what other historical facts may lie. With a few small differences in detail historians from the fourteenth century onwards agree that Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, regarded as an incarnation of Spyan-ras-gzigs (Avalokiteśvara), married first a Nepalese princess, who brought with her images of Mi-bskyod rdo-rje, Byams-pa and Sgrol-ma; and secondly that he married a Chinese princess, who brought the image of the Jo-bo, the Buddha as a young prince. There is agreement among them that the ‘Phrul-snang was founded by the Nepalese princess for her image of Mi-bskyod rdo-rje but that this was made possible only by the geomantic skills of the Chinese princess who later founded the Ramo-che for the image of the Jo-bo.

Giuseppe Tucci, who critically examined the tradition of the Nepalese princess, found no early evidence for her existence, and discovered that her supposed father, the Nepalese ruler Aṃśuvarman, was not a Buddhist but
a devout Hindu. He links the story with the tradition of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po as an incarnation of Spyan-ras-gzigs, which required the formal association of the two goddesses as his *paredra*. Nevertheless it is not improbable that in his vigorous expansionist activities Srong-brtsan Sgam-po was in touch with Nepal and could have made some sort of matrimonial alliance. Comparison of the carved doorways in the innermost and oldest part of the Jo-khang with Licchavi work of the seventh century illustrated in Pratapaditya Pal’s *Art of Nepal*, i, pp. 13–16, indicates strongly that Nepalese craftsmen were employed on the building.

As for the Chinese princess, although her existence is beyond question, Paul Demiéville has pointed out that while she is reported to have helped Chinese pilgrims passing through Tibet she was not necessarily a follower of Buddhism herself. Certainly her kinsman and sponsor the emperor T'ai-tsung was originally hostile to Buddhism, though he did change later. The princess was perhaps very young when she came to Tibet, for it seems from the Tun-huang Annals that the king did not live with her until she had been six years in Tibet. In any event it is unlikely that a foreign princess at that time, even if influencing the religious beliefs of the king, would have had any effective part in the foundation of a temple.

To explain how the Jo-bo came to be in the 'Phrul-snang, Bu-ston in his history states that it was walled up by order of the Chinese princess in a turret of the temple on the death of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, while she and the Nepalese princess merged with their late husband into an image of Spyan-ras-gzigs. The ministers obeying her orders changed the places of the images. The princess, in fact, survived Srong-brtsan Sgam-po by thirty years.

Other histories recount an elaborate legend that after the death of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po a Chinese army invaded Tibet and captured Lhasa. To protect the Jo-bo it was walled up in a turret of the 'Phrul-snang, and as the invaders could not find it they carried off the Mi-bskyod rdo-rje to the distance of a day’s journey where it remained for a week. Nothing is said about where it was put on its return and it is only in Bu-ston’s history that “the changing of the places” of the two images is specifically mentioned. The Jo-bo itself remained hidden for 110 years until a second Chinese princess came as bride to Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s great-great-grandson, Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan. She is said to have discovered it and set it up in the Jo-khang where it remained thereafter — with perhaps one other involuntary eviction when, as a muddled tradition says, it was carried off to Skyid-grong at the beginning of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan’s reign.

In my article “The Growth of a Legend” (chapter 7 above) I have shown that the story of a Chinese invasion is due to a misunderstanding of an early Tibetan translation of the T’ang Annals. In fact a Chinese army under the commander of the “Lo-so region” was despatched in 670 A.D. to invade Tibet, but it got no further than Ta-fei-chuan, some 220 miles south of the
Chinese border town of Hsingning, where it was annihilated by the Tibetans. There was no invasion of Tibet, no capture of Lhasa, and consequently no occasion for the Jo-bo to be hidden or the Mi-bskyod rdo-rje to be carried off.

The attribution to the second Chinese princess of the part played in establishing the Jo-bo in the 'Phrul-snang may provide an explanation for the story. There are in Lhasa only two ancient royal temples, the Jo-khang and the Ra-mo-che. The former is unquestionably attributable to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. Although the Rgya-btags Ra-mo-che (“associated with the Chinese”, or “called Chinese”?) is mentioned in Khri Srong-lde brtsan’s edict, it is not attributed there to the time of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. The answer may be found in the Li-yul lo-rgyus from Tun-huang which states that at a time which can only be the reign of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan, the father of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan, the Tibetan btsan-po, who favoured the Buddhist religion, married a Chinese princess. She built a great gtsug-lag-khang in Tibet where fugitive monks from Khotan were given refuge. (See R.E. Emmerick, Tibetan Texts Concerning Khotan, OUP 1967, p. 85.) The Ra-mo-che is the only great temple in Tibet attributed to a Chinese princess, so it is probable that it was built by or for the second princess sometime after 710 A.D. and that the image of Mi-bskyod rdo-rje, its principal deity, was installed at that time. There was also, in a chapel known as the Tshe-dpag Lha-khang, an image of Rnam-par snang-mdzad.

The tradition that the Jo-bo Rin-po-che was first established in the Ra-mo-che is probably an attempt by later historians, who are unaware of the foundation of a temple by the second Chinese princess, to attach the genuine Chinese connection of the Ra-mo-che to the great name of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. If one may judge from the example of China, where the Buddha and Maitreya are cult images of a stage in religious iconography earlier than that of the Vairocana pentad, it may well be that the image of the Jo-bo, from whatever source it was received, was established in the 'Phrul-snang at the time of its foundation, and that the worship of Rnam-par snang-mdzad, including that of Mi-bskyod-pa, did not reach Tibet until the eighth century.
An Early Judicial Document from Tibet

Several of the manuscripts from Tun-huang in the invaluable *Choix de documents tibétains conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris 1978-9) record cases of civil litigation and administrative or judicial decisions on them in some instances. Fewer deal with criminal matters. Although students of Tibetan have referred to such documents in books and articles, published translations of any of them appear to be rare. In *Journal Asiatique*, 1955, Marcelle Lalou, a pioneer in studies of the Tun-huang material, translated Fonds Pelliot Tibétain (Pell. T.) 1089 concerning the appointment of a wide range of officials in the border region. The translation of orders on two short petitions from citizens of Sha-cu is included in Tsipon Shakabpa’s *Tibet: A Political History* (1967). F. W. Thomas translated the “Law of Theft in Chinese Kansu: 9th-10th Century Fragment from Tun-Huang”, in *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*, 1, 3 (1936). I have myself published a translation of Pell. T. 1073, which cites the penalties for death or injury caused by dog bite (chapter 18 above); and a much longer and more important document, Pell. T. 1071, on penalties for death or injury caused by arrows in the hunting field (chapter 20 above). I have also translated the inventory of the property of a border-country gtsug-lag-khang, Pell. T. 997 (chapter 33 below). A long document, no. 260 in the Stein collection in the India Office Library, dealing with a wide range of civil matters including loans, debt, taxes, and marital disputes appears to have escaped notice so far. I have attempted to translate it, but it contains so many difficulties that progress is slow.

The picture emerging from these, usually fragmentary, documents — only a tithe of what once existed — is of a well-organised administration which had regard to the rights of subject people in the extensive territory on the Sino-Tibetan border which the Tibetans gradually wrested from Chinese control from the middle of the eighth century. Pelliot Tibétain 1079 which I translate below is an example of the careful and elaborate procedure

in a civil case, which concerns a claim to overlordship of a number of bondswomen. The claimants are a nun and some monks with non-Tibetan names, who are presumably Chinese inhabitants of the Sha-cu region from before the Tibetan occupation. The process involved five different administrative or judicial bodies and a large number of high-ranking Tibetan officials and religious dignitaries, most of the latter being Chinese.

Buddhism had been established in the Sha-cu region long before the Tibetan occupation and the new masters were at pains not to offend religious authority in matters where Chinese monks were concerned. But in the present case the interests of the Tibetan state also were affected because a transfer of landed property was involved. All land theoretically vested in the btsan-po, the Tibetan ruler, and grants by him to his nobles could not be transferred without his permission. That applied equally to grants, with the title of lha-ris, made to monastic institutions, which were held to be done under the patronage of the btsan-po and for his spiritual benefit. That can be seen in the inscriptions on stone pillars at Zhwa'i Lha-khang and Lcang-bu published in my *A Corpus of Early Tibetan Inscriptions* (London 1985).

In the final tribunal, while the interests of the administration were represented by the inclusion of the chief revenue officials, the majority was composed of Chinese religious personages. The nationality of those claimed as bondswomen is not certain, except that they have non-Tibetan names. They might be poor Chinese or local non-Chinese inhabitants.

The Chinese of Sha-cu were an important and active part of the official and social life of the district. Laymen held administrative posts, though usually under a Tibetan superior. Even monks could take an active part in politics, the most notable example being the famous Hwa-shang Mahayana who, after playing a leading role in the great religious debate at Bsam-yas in the reign of Khri Srông-lde-brtsan, returned to Tun-huang (Sha-cu), where he appears to have given valuable help to the Tibetans when there was a rising against them (P. Demiéville, *Le concile de Lhasa*, 1952, pp. 261-4). One of the monks who took part in the final decision of this case, the ban-de Hong-ben, was evidently a leader of the Chinese community. In other documents he is described as mkhan-po, abbot, and is the recipient of petitions from members of the public. On the collapse of the Tibetan administration he hastened to send envoys to the T'ang Emperor with whose court he had probably been in communication before — for the Chinese community were obviously a potential fifth column — offering allegiance on behalf of the religious body. His action was rewarded by two letters from the emperor Hsian-tsung which are quoted by Demiéville (*op. cit.*, pp. 250-1). One to the whole body of monks praises their loyalty, stating that their ancestors had been of Chinese origin but had fallen under a strange people. They had maintained their Buddhist faith and had civilised their barbarian masters — a claim that contains a good deal of truth. The other to Hong-pien
himself in similar terms also encourages him to follow the advice given to Chang I-ch‘ao, the Chinese general who had recaptured Sha-cu.

As usual in documents from Tun-huang, there are obscurities in vocabulary and construction. I am not sure that I have correctly interpreted the sequence of events but the conclusion is almost clear, being only slightly marred by a fold in the paper.

Pelliot Tibétain 1079

//: sngon dge slong bam kim keng la / bran mo shig za ‘bye’u tse mo reng gcig / mu mo yam yam dang / bu mo lu lu dang / hva za tshe’i byin dang / spyr mo (2) reng bzhi zhig mchis pa las / rjo bo kim keng gis / dge slong ma bam za meng shun la stsal / / slad gyis gum kar ‘bye’u tse dang / yam yam dang / lu (3) lu gsum ni / lha risu phul te / khyim yig la yang bris nas / so sor ‘khol zhing mchis pa las / lug gi lo la / bde blon zhang btsan bzang dang / blon g.yu sgra dang (4) zhang khr1 dog rjes / ‘dun sa zhar btab / zhang legs sum btsan dang / blon rgyal bzang dang / zhang legs bzang gis / / kva cu khrom kyi ‘dun sa / tsheg pe’ur bsdu (5) pa’i lan gyi dgun / bde gams gyi lha ris khab so bzlug cing thang gdab par chad nas / / sha cu man cad / ring lugs ban de dpal (6) gnas dang / slob dpon ban de’i lha’i dbyangs / dang / sha cu’i rtse rje blon rgyal khr1 dang / blon lho bzang dang / shud pu blon rgyal sgra legs zigs dang / rtsis pa (7) lci sa klu brtan las stogs pa mchis pa’i tshe / / lu lu zhes ma brgyi’sba ma gumste / mying brjes nas / / tshe byin dngos lu lu lags shes mchi’ ba dang / (8) tshe’i byin gyi bu mo zhe’u yam dang ke’u man lags / / yam yam kyi bu mo ‘bi tse dang / hva nyang dang / kim karg langs shes mchi’ ba / dge slong ‘gi (9) dzven dang hva’i kem dang / dge slong ma meng shun rnams gsol ba las / phyag sbal las rma ba yang ma de / / lu lu ni gum / tshe byin lta bu / bdag cagi khu x x gum / (10) ba’i sngon x la rgya sde gsum dang lha ris dbye bsal ma bgyis pa’i tshe / / sring mo meng shun stsal te / bu mo ke’u man dang zhe’u yam btsas / 1 bi tshe dang / (11) hva nyang dang / bu pho kim kang ni thog ma nas kyang / yam yam dag dang dzir yang myi mchiste / bdag cag spin gyl bran lags par / dge ‘dun rgan rabs (12) dang / gnas brtan gsar rnying dang / mngan bla za ‘og kyang glo bar nud na / phyag sbl dang yang g tung cing bdag cagi bran bu so na bzhag par gsol zhes (13) mchi’ nas / ma ring lugs g.yar sngar / / gnas brtan ban de shing in dang / ban de hve’i ce’u dang / ban de hwe’i ing dang / mngan sha myi snyil po dang / (14) cang lyang wen dang ye’u sin han dang / an lha ‘dus dang / che bzhi gnas brtan dang ‘dul ba ‘dzin d’ing / ban de chang ‘sun hwe dang / ban de mha’ yas (15) dang / ban de shong in dang / ban de phab ken dang / ban de
Formerly the gde-slong (monk) Bam Kim-keng owned the bran-mo\(^3\) (bondswoman) Shig-za 'Bye'u-tse, an unmarried\(^2\) woman, her younger sister (mu-mo?) Yam-yam, her daughter Lu-lu, and Hva-za Tshe'i-byin,\(^5\) all four being unmarried. Of these Hva-za Tshe'i-byin was given to the gde-slong-ma (nun) Bam-za Meng-shun by her elder brother Kim-keng. Afterwards, when he died 'Bye'u-tse, Yam-yam and Lu-lu, these three, were presented to the lha-ris (monastic estate) and were recorded in the list of households. As for the 'khol-zhing\(^4\) (service tenure lands) of each, the Bde-blon\(^6\) Zhang\(^8\) Btsan-bzang, blon (minister) G.yu-sgra, and Zhang Khri-dog-rje held an assembly at Zha in the sheep year; and on the occasion of the winter assembly of Kva-cu khrom\(^7\) being convened at Tseg-pe'u by Zhang Legs-sum-brtsan, blon Rgyal-bzang and Zhang Legs-bzang, information was sent to the khab-so\(^8\) (revenue officer) of the lha-ris of Bde-gams and it was decided to enter it (the 'khol-zhing) in the register. At the time when Dpal-gnas and the slob-dpon ban-de (teacher monk) Lha-dbyangs, the rtse-rje
(governor) of Sha-cu blon Lho-bzang, the Shud-pu blon Rgyal-sgra-legs, and the rtsis-pa (finance officer) Lci-sa Klu-brtan were the ring-lugs (commissioners) from Sha-cu to Sug-cu, the mother called Lu-lu died and Tshe'i-byin changed her real name and became known as Lu-lu. There were also Tshe'i-byin's daughters Zhe'u-yam and Ke'u-man and Yam-yam's daughters 'Bi-tse, and Hwa-nyang and (a son) Kim-kang. The dge-slon-ma Meng-shun petitioned that it is clear in the phyag-sbal (archives) that Lu-lu has died and as for Tshe'i-byin, before the death of our uncle, at the time when no clear division had been made between the three Rgya-sde and the lha-ris, she was given to the sister Meng-shun and the daughters Ke'u-man and Zhe'u-yam were born to her. As for 'Bi-tse, Hwa-nyang and their brother Kim-kang as they were not originally employed together with Yam-yam and the others they should be the branch of us brothers and the sister; and if it is acceptable to the senior clergy, the Elders both old and new, and the senior and junior mngan (chief revenue officers) our petition is that they should be included in the archives with the status of our branch. That petition having been made, in the presence of the ring-lugs, the Elder the ban-de Shing-in, ban-de Hwe'i-ce'u, ban-de Hwe'i-ing, the mngan Sha-myi Snyil-po, Lcang-lyang-wen, Ye'u-min-han, An-lha-'dus, the four Great Elders, 'Dul-ba-'dzin-d'ing, ban-de Cang-'bun-hwe, ban-de Mtha'-yas, ban-de Shong-in, ban-de Phab-ken, ban-de Lweng-ce'u, ban-de Hong-ben, clergy of high rank ban-de Tong-byi, Je'u-phab-yon, Li-phan and so forth, after administering the oath, enquiry was held; and although 'Bye'u-tse, Yam-yam and Lu-lu and her family, these three, are entered in the list of households of the lha-ris; Lu-lu has died; as for Tshe'i-byin and her family, though she is of 'Bye'u-tse's lineage, at the time of her undoubted master she was given to his sister Meng-shun so there is no mention in the list of households of the lha-ris. Further, as to 'Bi-tse, Hwa-nyang and Kim-kang, it is found on enquiry and clearly decided that they were not the branch of Kim-kang but are the branch of the brothers 'Gi-dzven and Hwe'i-kem. According to the entries in the list of households of the lha-ris Shig-za 'Bye'u-tse, Yam-yam and Lu-lu, these three, are included but Tshe'i-byin was not originally included in the list of households of the lha-ris. The Elder, the senior and junior mngan and the four great officers having agreed with this decision, the result for the brother ban-de 'Ge-dzven and the dge-slon-ma Meng-shun on making their claim is that for the future 'Bye'u-tse and Yam-yam shall be awarded according to the provisions of the archives. As for Tshe'i-byin, 'Bi-tse, Hwa-nyang and Kim-kang, the brother 'Gi-dzven and the dge-slon-ma Meng-shun (have accepted this judgement) and the judicial seal of the ring-lugs has been affixed and the hand-seals of the gnas-brtan and the senior and junior mngan have also been affixed.

Twenty-seven seals are to be seen at the bottom of the document. Among the few that can be read, the names of some of the religious leaders named above appear, also some of persons whose names are not found in the text.
Notes

1. bran, bran-mo. Male and female bondservants attached to an estate who could be employed as cultivators, servants or craftsmen. They could be transferred together with the estate to another owner or lent individually: F. W. Thomas, Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents, TLTD, ii, pp. 143-4, 222-3. In early times Tibetan nobles conquered by more powerful neighbours could be made bran: J. Bacot, F. W. Thomas, C. Toussaint, Documents de Touen-houang relatifs à l'histoire du Tibet, p. 105, ll. 21-4; but in the manuscripts from Tun-huang the names of bran are non-Tibetan. In certain circumstances it seems possible that bran could be given possession of land: Pell. T. 1071 and TLTD, ii, p. 362.

2. mo-reng, unmarried woman. Here apparently without a regular husband, for some of those named had children.

3. The relationship of these women is not clear. nu-mo appears to be some sort of kinship — unrecorded, unless it is an error for nu-mo and I have taken it tentatively to mean younger sister. Lu-lu appears to be the daughter of 'Bye'u-tse. Tshe'i-byin is said later to be of 'Bye'u-tse's lineage (rgyud) but not specifically her daughter. There is a possibility below that she was Lu-lu's daughter.

4. 'khol-zhing. Lands with a complement of bran granted to nobles by the btsan-po the ruler, whose permission was required for its transfer to anyone else.

5. bde-blon. Principal ministers of the border region part of which was known as Bde-gams: H. E. Richardson, “The province of the Bde-blon of the Tibetan Empire, 8th to 9th Centuries”, Indo-Sino-Tibetica, Studi in onore di Luciano Petech, Rome, 1990 (see chapter 21 above).

6. zhang maternal uncle. Title of noblemen whose family was related to the btsan-po by marriage. They could be called blon-zhang; zhang-lon was a different term covering the general body of ministers.


8. khab-so. Revenue officers in different spheres; here in charge of monastic property. For other contexts see Lhasa Zhol inscription E. l. 10: H. E. Richardson, A Corpus of Early Tibetan Inscriptions London, 1985, and the Rkong-po Inscription, I. 10 (ibid.). Their head was the mngal: Lhasa Treaty Inscription. M. 133, ibid.


10. ring-lugs. Designates, in a religious context, abbots who maintain and transmit the doctrine; and in a secular context a body with judicial functions, the maintainers and interpreters of established laws and traditions. I have translated, rather unsatisfactorily, as “commissioners” or “registrars”. The term survives, but rarely, in a religious context only.

11. lu-lu zhes brgyi-ba ma gumste. I think this must mean that Lu-lu was Tshe'i-byin’s mother.

12. phyag-sbal Copies of royal edicts at Zhwa’i Lha-khang and the Lhasa Treaty Inscription were deposited in the phyag-sbal, which I have translated as “archives”. The office could also be used as a prison (Pell. T. 986, 1146) and that was understood to be its meaning by a Lama informant.

13. The last four words are damaged, the middle two being illegible. I reconstruct them as klu-bo ma gum. If that is correct, I take it that the brothers 'Gi-dzven and
Hwe'i-kem were nephews of the dge-long Kim-keng and that the dge-long-ma Meng-shun was his sister.


15. dzir-yang myi-mchiste. The reading and meaning are uncertain. I very doubtfully connect it with rdzi to be subjected. Jäschke also has dpe-rdzi, index, register. And there is the possibility of an error perhaps for rjer.

16. dge-'dun rgan-rabs, the older monks.

17. gnas-brtan, the sthavira: Elders.

18. mngan za 'og. za for zla, assistant colleague.

19. 'dul-ba 'dzin-d'ing. As there is no shad before the next name this appears to be a title “Master of Discipline” but d'ing is obscure. It might be a name and the shad might have been omitted inadvertently.

20. smad. “With family” as in bu-smad?

21. rje bden mchis pa'i-tshe. The exact meaning is not clear.

22. It is not clear whether gnas-brtan here signifies one representative Elder or the whole body mentioned above.

23. che-bzhi. Elsewhere chen-po bzhi, the four great ones. Pell. T. 1071 has zhang-lon bzhi. There is no indication what specific posts they may have held.

24. i.e. they shall remain as subjects of the lha-ris.

25. The text is damaged and the translation in brackets is speculative.


27. sug-rgya. Personal seal.
Mention of Tibetan Kings in Some Documents from Tun-huang

Compared with the fundamental contribution to the early history of Tibet in the Annals and Chronicles from Tun-huang the other manuscripts, of which a large number are included in the invaluable Choix de documents tibétains edited by A. Spanien (Macdonald) and Y. Imaeda, although having much of social and administrative important, disclose little about the doings of the btsan-po except in a formal religious context.

There is, however, a strange little fragment Pelliot Tibétain (Pell. T.) 1144 relating to the ill-fated Stag-bu Snya-gzigs, grandfather of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. And in F.W. Thomas, Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents (TLTD), ii, p. 53, the story is told of the rise and fall of the dynamic arriviste and intriguer Khyung-po Zu-tse, who was accused of plotting against Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. Srong-brtsan is also named in a religious context together with his descendent Khri Srong-lde-brtsan in no. 370 (5) of the collection of Tibetan documents in the India Office Library as having brought the Buddhist doctrine to Tibet.

Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan is mentioned by implication in TLTD, ii, p. 9, a damaged and incomplete account of events in the vassal ‘A-zha state, where a Tibetan princess had married the ruler in 689, as the ruler who married a Chinese princess in 710. He is also referred to though not by name in the Li-yul chos-kyi lo-rgyus as the religiously minded Tibetan ruler who married a Chinese princess and gave shelter in Tibet to monks from Khotan.

Khri Srong-lde-brtsan is named, as mentioned above, in the India Office Library document no. 370 (5), “A volume of the Dharma that came down from Heaven”. (See chapter 10 above.) He is presumably also the ruler in Pell. T. 1091, a fragmentary text which I understand to concern the rising against the Tibetans at Sha-cu in about 797.

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Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan (Ral-pa-can) is the btsan-po most frequently named in Tun-huang documents. Pell. T. 100, although not all legible, appears to be the dedication to him of some religious works by a monk of a temple at Sha-cu, in which he is eulogized in the mystic language of kingship invoking the ancestral Spu-rgyal. In Pell. T. 130 he is the beneficiary of a prayer which mentions his religious acts such as making images and founding temples. One of the dangers from which it is prayed he may be delivered — gza’ — may mean epilepsy, as I suggested in a note in BSOAS 1961 (see chapter 13 above). It is known from Chinese sources that he suffered continually from illness.

Pell. T. 132 is a long prayer in which his name appears, almost casually, near the end.

In TLTD, ii, pp. 93, 96, 98 he is associated with the building of a temple in the border region by his generals to celebrate the establishment of peace there.

Pell. T. 735 and 1088, which are not in Choix de Documents, name him, in the first, as having religious texts copied for his benefit, and in the second, which is a small fragment, in association with one of his ministers, Brgya-byin.

Pell. T. 1123 is another long prayer for his benefit. Pell. T. 1290 is a rather confused document which has been examined by Ariane Spanien (Macdonald) in Études tibétaines, p. 317. It seems to me to be an exercise, copying passages from a number of different documents. In it there is a song by the great monk minister Yon-tan (Bran-ka Dpal-gyi yon-tan) on the occasion when the king’s name was changed from Mu-tsu to Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan. A dragon year of the skyid rtag era, which Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan took for his reign following a Chinese model, is mentioned. That should be 824, as 812 would be too early according to the view that he succeeded to the throne in 816. The problem cannot be discussed here.

No. 637 in the India Office Library collection mentioning a dpal lha-btsan-po probably refers to him. He is seen as ordering the translation of religious texts by the pandits Jñanagarbha and Cog-ro Klu’i rgyal-mtshan. The latter is assigned by later histories to the reign of Ral-pa-can. Finally Pell. T. 999 names him together with ‘Od-srung as receiving the dedication of copies of religious texts from religious leaders of Sha-cu who also gave a banquet in his honour.

Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan’s successor and reputed assassin, Khri ‘U’i-dum-brtan is the beneficiary of a long prayer in Pell. T. 134, and I take it that he is also the ‘U-rum-dpal in Pell. T. 83 in Marcelle Lalou’s Inventaire de manuscrits tibétains de Tunen-houng. It is not reproduced in Choix de documents so I have not been able to check whether ‘U-rum is perhaps ‘U-dum. The btsan-po’s name in the Tun-huang Chronicle is given as ‘U’i-dum-brtan. These prayers may seem surprising in view of the later reputation of
Glang-dar-ma ('U'i-dum-brtan) as the ruthless persecutor of Buddhism and as having connived at the assassination of Ral-pa-can. Although the tradition is often confused, there is general agreement that for part of the reign — six months according to most, but two years in the history of Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag — Dar-ma ruled righteously, after which wicked ministers brought about the suppression of the faith. In only one of the documents from Tun-huang — no. 752 in the India Office collection — is there a possible reference to that: a fragment praying that disturbances may cease ends with the hope that the enemy (or enemies) of the rdo-rje theg-pa, the Vajrayāna, may be frustrated.

On the other hand Pell. T. 840, which is edited by Samten Karmay in a contribution to *Tantric Studies in Honour of R. A. Stein*, Louvain 1981, states that the holy religion (dam-chos) flourished in the time of the lha-sras Dar-ma and his nephew (dbon-sras) 'Od-srung. Perhaps in central Tibet there was hostility to the practitioners of a particular form of doctrine and it is probable that an end was put to the extensive privileges and donations granted to monasteries by Ral-pa-can and to the political activities of monks, including elevation to the highest offices of state, which had offended the conservative nobility.

But whatever may have happened there, it is evident that Buddhism not only survived in the north-eastern provinces of the Tibetan kingdom but also had the protection of the administration, regardless of its persecution in neighbouring China between 842 and 848.

All this time the country was wracked by violent fighting between rival ministers. Shang K’ung-je of Dba’s was out for himself, while Shang Pi-pi of 'Bro whose family had long connections with the Tibetan royal house and whose origin was in the neighbourhood of Sha-cu, can be seen as supporting Dar-ma’s successor 'Od-srung for whom and for his mother the lady 'Phan prayers continued to be offered.

In Pell. T. 999, as mentioned above, 'Od-srung’s name is linked with that of Khri Gtsug-lde-brtson. The religious dignitary principally responsible for the offering was the abbot Hong-ben (Hong-pien), who later led the return of the Chinese of Sha-cu to allegiance to the Chinese emperor on the collapse of the Tibetan authority in 850.

Pell. T. 131 is a long, florid, prayer for 'Od-srung and his mother. As it is complete I have translated it below to show the way such things were written. There is also what may be an interesting point near the end in the mention of a brother.

Pell. T. 230 is a fragmentary prayer also for them. Enough survives to identify it as alluding to the troubles of the time and it seems worthwhile to attempt a translation as I have done below.

***
Offered as a prayer. To the Tathāgatas dwelling in the three ages, and all the Buddhas who have subdued their enemies and are fully perfected in the boundless regions of the world of ten directions, reverence. To those purified by the essence of the doctrine, who are separated from all action, to those excellent beings who possess the good fortune of natural knowledge and have turned to the way of the highest knowledge, reverence. To the saintly clergy of unchanging nature, the field of merit of all gods and men, to all those spiritual sons who represent the lineage of the Tathāgata wherever they may be, to them also reverence. To Tshangs-pa the lord of all who endure suffering, and to Brgya-byin powerful among the gods who protect the faith of the three ages and maintain the abode of the departed Buddhas wherever they may be, and to those who act as chief of the kings of the gods, reverence. To the four great kings etcetera, the ten protectors of the world who guard the four continents in trust and have promised by their might and magic power over the gods and nagas, the demons and spirits who act to disturb the world, to prevent them from causing confusion and, in order to keep them under control, to maintain and protect the kingdom by their powers, to those generals of the gods, chiefs of the world, to them also reverence. With concentration in our minds presenting to those holy ones offerings, garlands of pure flowers, cymbals, scented incense powder, butter lamps, gifts, dainties, grain riches, horses etcetera, the wealth of gods and men, with whatever errors there may be proceeding from our body, speech or mind being purified by the saints, with honour and respect and further with increasing agreement with the religious edicts in the time of the ancestors of the lha-sras which dispel hostility towards the Three Jewels, we all high and low, with humble submission saddened by our desires, further confused by the shame of our thoughts, repenting with all our heart and making confession with all the saints as witnesses and praying that we may not act so in future, we have made this vow. We rejoice in all that tends to increase the two-fold accumulation of virtue and pray that all the saints who have achieved deliverance from action by their good deeds may by the power of their compassion not abandon the world and, realising in their mind the infinity of the universe, will remain for the sake of sentient beings. And we beg that all those saints who dwell in their appointed abodes will swiftly turn the wheel of the Dharma and guarding all Tibet will give orders for its protection. May 'Phags-pa Rnam-thos-sras, the Lord of the Lcang-lo palace, revealing the manner of his dwelling in the centre of Ri-rab, also come to the world outside and by his power perform the task of destroying by his frown the gnod-sbyin hordes, and may he take a vow to protect and guard the doctrine of the Buddhas of the three ages wherever it may be found. And may Atya Jambhala, being our support, promise to bestow wealth in the highest perfection on those who seek enjoyment in the world according to their wishes, and from time to time may appear and establish virtue in the world, and according to his promise may perform good deeds in addition to those listed. And for the great king of all Tibet
who dwells at Lha-dum-bal, 'Od-srung of the house of the lady queen 'Phan, together with his subjects and court, we uttering his name and further supporting him by offering our bodies and lives, making this prayer that he may be endowed with all good, pray especially for his protection. If it does not turn out well according to our hopes dedicating it to the brother as we have promised, and giving into your hands the life and dominion of the btsan-po lha-sras, the mother and son, their subjects and our life and existence also, we pray that by your power you will promise to uphold and maintain them and just as we pray, will bestow on them the gift of the wish-fulfilling tree.

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Pelliot Tibetain No. 230 measuring 14 x 22 cms is the left part of a manuscript which, judging by examples of complete documents, may have been twice as wide. I have translated what is possible of the surviving half-lines. Where there are isolated words, unintelligible out of context, I have usually transcribed the Tibetan. The lines, apart from the first, are of virtually equal length.

In spite of the fragmentary nature of the document there is enough to allow some not unreasonable speculation about the contents of the whole. The first six lines are a general prayer. In line 7 'Od-srung and his mother, for whose benefit the document is presumably dedicated, are named. The following eleven lines record the religious deeds done by or on behalf of the ruler. Lines 19 onwards contain several references to disloyal subjects; and the document concludes with prayers for loyalty among subjects and peace and prosperity for the ruler and all Tibet.

This can be seen as referring to the disorder which followed the murder of Glang-dar-ma and the troubled accession of 'Od-srung leading, as recorded in the New T'ang Annals, to fierce fighting in the border regions between Shang K'ung-je of Mo (Dba's?) and Shang Pi-pi of Mu-lu or Mo-lo ('Bro?), respectively opponent and supporter of the new regime. That continued until 849 when Shang Pi-pi, whose resources were exhausted, retired to the west of the Kan-chou prefecture.

These are the only references to the Tibetan kings I have been able to find.

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Pelliot Tibetain No. 230

1. being purified from all ...
2. and the merit of all the virtuous deeds of various men ...
3. chad la / exhortation to turn the wheel of the dharma to the highest degree ...
4. to those who desire / for the benefit of many beings / in the world you
5. by the firm power from those who protect the doctrine of the holy one guarding ...  
6. by all / abiding in the excellent way / of many beings ...  
7. will be made firm / in this way the lha sras Khri ‘Od-srungs, the ruler and
   his mother (brtsan yum for btsan yum?) ...
8. rejoicing as the result of confessing sins/giving encouragement prayer ...
9. many mandalas from the centre and outer regions according to the mantra ...
10. merit and / guiding many men to deliverance and / of the saints ...
11. the merit of setting up images and opening their eyes, and ...
12. offering a banquet / the merit of offering many religious donations
13. also / the great minister who raises up the dominion of the ruler and people
   of Tibet (rjes ’bangs for rje ’bangs?)
14. escorted by many clergy / by the single minded thought of many
15. the ‘Bum etc. / and many sutras and mantras kl (klog?)
16. and / and acting according to the Hom mantra of the fierce deities / the dkyil-
   ’khor (?) of the planets ...
17. and / the chief of those who have passed from the world / power and vows ...
18. the merit of etc. / others also / subjects ...
19. zhing / actions contrary to orders and the law / great punishment ...
20. giving an edict by the power of the compassion of the lady mother ...
21. po by those who know the means / stern repression ...
22. uniting the internal administration / disloyal subjects punishment and
   (byor?) ...
23. from above / causing the subjects to be reconciled / establishing happiness in
   tranquillity ...
24. in the presence of the mighty (brtsan for btsan?) mother and son / enjoying
   long life (maintaining?) the kingdom ...
25. rule over the subjects with increasing glory for ever / ‘bangs (?)
26. harmful spells of etcetera / demons that attack the body/evil omens la-stogs-
   pa? ...
27. ni / increasing its firmness for ever / petition for spreading it by good ...
28. In the manner of a (chos-skyong) ba’i religion protecting king / religion
   to all the world ...
29. by changing their minds / those who turn to the disloyal path ...
30. giving up uncertainty? (g.yo bor-nas) / in future according to the manner
   of subjects (rjes-’bangs, perhaps for rje-’bangs, ruler and subjects) ...
31. praying for continual blessings (mtud for btud) / the lha-sras and his ancestors ...
32. by seeking the loyalty of the subjects / watching over the person and dominion
   of the ruler ...
33. sgo-nas (?) sgo-nas) having discussed, or by the door/receiving happiness
   in their minds / agreeing with one thought ...
34. not harming by evil spells etc. and / method ...
35. accomplishing / the whole land of Tibet peace and / (freedom from) illness ...

Notes

1. *dkar-cax*, "list", is unusual in this context; it is seen elsewhere in early documents as meaning a list of crop payments.

2. This strange statement, if I understand it rightly, seems to imply that some danger threatened 'Od-srung and shows also that he had a brother. It is possible that a brother is implied in Pell. T. 1132 — *yum-sras mched 'phrul-gyi snga-nas* and *yum-sras mched dgung dang 'dra-ba'i zha-snga-nas*. This might underlie the later tradition of rivalry by two claimants by different mothers — 'Od-srung and Yum-brtan. I have questioned the existence of the latter in my article "Who was Yum-brtan?" (chapter 8 above).
Political Aspects of the Snga-dar, the First Diffusion of Buddhism in Tibet

Tibetans see their history solely in terms of their religion. They divide it into two periods, the snga-dar and the phyi-dar, the former and later diffusions of the faith. The former is the age of the so-called Religious Kings, the Chos-rgyal, and is coloured by tradition with a wealth of pious legend. The latter, after a short dark age, started in the tenth century.

I want to try to discover the reality underlying the traditional view of the snga-dar. The massive literature of the phyi-dar is little help, for although alongside the numerous doctrinal works and the rnam-thar, which record the lives of holy men in their progress towards deliverance, there are several chos-'byung describing the origins of the faith and rgyal-rabs containing the lineages of the kings, these works are viewed only as manifestations of their devotion to the Buddhist faith. Passages echoing the language of early documents and inscriptions on stone pillars show that later historians had access to some early sources; and the great Karma-pa historian Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag uniquely reproduces verbatim, authentic royal inscriptions from the eighth and ninth centuries. But there was no interest in the bearing of such documents on the social and political affairs of the kingdom.

For that one turns to the cache of invaluable but often fragmentary manuscripts from the sealed cave temple at Tun-huang and to the Annals of the T'ang empire; for the Chinese always recorded descriptions of their neighbours.

Although the early Tibetan documents embody a tradition of their royal line stretching far back into the mists of legend and mythology, Chinese sources make it more likely that the Tibetan line of kings arrived in central Tibet from the complex of tribal peoples in the far north-east early in the
fifth century. They amounted then to only one — and a comparatively unimportant one — among many rival princelings. But it seems that their leader had a special sacral quality which attracted allegiance from several neighbours to Spu-rgyal Btsan-po (The Mighty Hairy One?), as he was called. It is possible to speculate — but without much enthusiasm — that the name may have a connection with the later tradition of the origin of the Tibetans from the union of a monkey and a she-demon. At all events the accession of support exploded into a vigorous burst of aggressive energy, and the creation of the Tibetan Kingdom.

The Chinese describe the Tibetans at that time as rather primitive. They preferred to live in tents rather than houses; but they were highly organised for war and had a hierarchy of ministers loyal to the btsan-po to whom they took an oath of allegiance every year. They were highly skilled in metal work, making elaborate gold and silver vessels and ornaments, also armour. Their art which shows some Central Asian, Sassanian type models, is thought to have influenced T‘ang craftsmen.

In the young Tibetan king, Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, the Chinese found a powerful adversary whose alliance they sought by their customary diplomatic device of granting him a Chinese princess in marriage. By tradition, she and another of his queens, a Nepalese princess, were responsible for the introduction of Buddhism by him so that he built the famous Jo-khang of Lhasa and sent a Tibetan to India to look for a form of writing and to collect religious books. This was in 642 A.D.

Some of the tradition is clearly myth. It records that Srong-brtsan Sgam-po died at a great age and ended in his apotheosis when he merged together with his two queens into an image of Avalokiteśvara. In fact, the king died quite young — about forty; and his Chinese queen survived him by thirty years.

That sort of legend has led some scholars to doubt the whole tradition about his introduction of Buddhism and his marriage to a Nepalese princess. As for the second point: there is evidence that Tibet had close relations with Nepal at that time and it would be quite usual for the btsan-po to take a bride from the court of an important neighbour as well as ladies from his own kingdom. The more important point can be confirmed from early sources. In an edict by his fifth successor, Khri Srong-lde-brtsan, it is clearly stated that Srong-brtsan founded the temple of Ra-sa — the old name of Lhasa — and that is repeated by the next btsan-po in an inscription on a stone pillar. It would be merely captious to question that an accurate memory of events of some one hundred and twenty years earlier should survive especially in a society where oral tradition was strong; and there is no sensible reason for Srong-brtsan’s successors to invent a tradition.

And there is visual confirmation. The Jo-khang has certainly been enlarged over the centuries but it is equally certain that the central core
survives; and in the carving of the capitals of pillars and the lintels of some doorways there is evidence of Nepalese, Newar, workmanship that can be dated to the seventh century. There is another possible, but less convincing, hint. By tradition the Jo-khang could not be consecrated until ritual apotropaic objects — a stone phallus, conch, stūpa, lion and garuḍa — had been placed under the eaves of the golden pagoda roof to avert the evil influence of a she-demon living in a mountain to the east of the city from where she displayed her private parts towards the temple. I was surprised to find these things in position, though the Tibetans professed to know nothing about them; and recently a French scholar found most of them on the ground at the foot of the building.

Buddhism as practised in those early days was probably confined to the royal courts and perhaps a few noble families, and consisted for them, at most, in learning the basic principles — the Eightfold Path and making ritual offerings to the Trinity — the Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṅgha, the dkon-mchog gsum. There were no Tibetan priests and no religious texts in Tibetan. These were provided from India and Nepal. So, by and large, Buddhism was practised for the kings rather than by them.

And the new religion did not drive out the old. Far from it. Until the end of the kingdom the Buddhist Chos-rgyal, the Religious Kings, were at one and the same time the Lha btsan-po, the Divine Rulers of the old beliefs. They are seen in their inscriptions as patrons of Buddhism and also as protectors of the religion of heaven, the great order of the world. They annually worshipped a holy mountain in which their bla, their life force, resided. They were buried with non-Buddhist rites. They consulted omens, and a diviner was attached to their court. There is indeed one to this day in the State Oracle of Gnas-chung. An annual ceremony of oath-taking was marked by animal sacrifice and the smearing of the lips with blood. The people, of course, continued to worship and propitiate spirits of trees, mountains, lakes, the hearth and so on, as they still did and perhaps still do.

Alongside all those old ways the practice of Buddhism continued quietly under the first three successors of Srong-brtsan but in the reign of the fourth, Khri Lde-gtse-brtsan, something happened to bring out latent opposition to Buddhism. Srong-brtsan’s grandson had married a strongminded lady of the ‘Bro family whose origins were in the north-east near Tun-huang. There they had long been in contact with China and some spoke Chinese. The great lady Khri-ma-lod lived in Tibet for many years as queen, queen mother and queen grandmother, dominating Tibetan politics. She was in communication with the Chinese empress Wu and, through her, arranged the marriage of a Chinese princess to her grandson Khri Lde-gtse-brtsan. The princess brought to Tibet her Chinese entourage and a Chinese priest who taught Chinese religious doctrine to the royal ladies. In this way some substance seems to have been given to what was probably
a rather shadowy practice of Buddhism. That, no doubt, caused displeasure among the priests of the religion. And they had strong support for political reasons from some conservative nobles. Tibet and China had been continuously at war since the death of Srong-brtsan and those who had been playing a leading part in it disliked any influence coming from China. They assassinated the btsan-po and replaced a pro-Buddhist minister by a conservative who suppressed the practice of Buddhism.

The commonplace view is that there was a continuous struggle between Buddhism and something called Bon. It is, I think, now generally agreed that there was at that time nothing like an organised Bon religion. There were priests of different sorts presiding over burial rites, divination and so on. Some of them were called bon and others gshen. But, as I have suggested, the influence of conservative nobles was at least as strong in the opposition to Buddhism.

That first suppression of Buddhism did not last long and was followed by the brilliant flowering of the faith under the new king Khri Srong-lde-brtsan with the support of new Buddhist ministers. He founded the splendid temple-complex of Bsam-yas in about 779. It was in the form of a cosmic mandala with a four-storied temple in the middle representing Mount Meru. There were different deities on each floor, where the decoration was traditionally said to be in different styles, Indian, Tibetan and Chinese, with a tiny temple under the golden canopy on the summit dedicated to the tantric deity Bde-mchog. The temple was surrounded, at some distance, by a circular wall representing the ocean, with smaller temples for continents and subcontinents at cardinal points. At each corner was a great mchod-rten in the colour proper to its position — white on the south-east, red on the south-west, black on the north-west and blue or green on the north-east. It was an inspiring and impressive achievement which must have astonished the Tibetans of the day. Khri Srong-lde-brtsan also arranged for the ordination of seven Tibetan priests from noble families, the first Tibetans to become monks. This was the high point of the snga-dar. He also built other temples and recorded a solemn vow that he and his successors would maintain the religion of the Buddha.

In this revival the principal influence came from India by way of Nepal with the invitation of the famous scholar Śāntarakṣita and the great mystic wonder-worker Padmasambhava. He is the great figure of the day for the Tibetans, deified as founder of the Rnying-ma-pa sect, and his image is on the altar of countless temples. By contrast, Śāntarakṣita is figured mainly in wall paintings and thangkas. But his skull was preserved in the main hall of Bsam-yas, where I saw it.

There were Chinese influences too. The doctrines which came with the Chinese princess survived and increased in popularity, especially among royal and noble ladies, and there were Chinese influences in art as well.
Chinese artists and craftsmen are said to have worked at Bsam-yas, but frequent fires there have destroyed any clear evidence of that. A Chinese monk supervised the casting of at least one great bronze bell in the T'ang style. This competition greatly disturbed teachers of the Indian doctrine, and disagreement led eventually to a great debate prolonged over several sessions. Briefly it was a question of whether enlightenment could be won in a flash of mystic realization as the Chinese taught, or whether it needed long study, learning and meditation according to the Indian position. The btsan-po, who was the arbiter, effected a sort of compromise. Both sides claimed the victory but the Tibetans won on points, for Indian doctrine certainly formed, then as now, the undoubted basis of Tibetan Buddhism. But traces of the Chinese view survive in the Rnying-ma-pa Rdzogs-chen school.

A political aspect of the debate is seen in the presence of monks from noble families in each of the opposing teams.

This was a time when many of the fundamental religious texts were translated into Tibetan by Indian and Tibetan scholars and when the proper equivalents of Sanskrit religious terms were established once and for all. And in the border regions Chinese scholars also translated religious texts probably from Tibetan versions.

There is also from this period a rather moving brief statement by Khri Srong-lde-brtsan of what he saw as the essentials of his faith: that one's existence is according to one's former actions; that what one does well is virtue and what is done evil is sin. The virtuous actions should be followed. Bad practices of the old religions are to be condemned - worship of personal gods, casting spells, causing disease or famine, and painting the body red. I have described this as the first chos-'byung, history of the faith.

In spite of the king's devotion and his royal vow, there was a resurgence of hostility to Buddhism when he died. But it was soon suppressed by his successor Khri Lde-srong-brtsan who renewed his father's vow to maintain the faith and showed his devotion to religion by founding temples and by appointing priests of noble family not only as his chaplains but also as ministers of state. That process was carried still further by his successor Ral-pa-can, who gave large estates for the support of monks and temples and even appointed a lama as chief minister, a post that had always been the monopoly of the great noble families. Inevitably there was a backlash. Ral-pa-can was assassinated in 836, and his successor Glang-dar-ma is said by tradition to have abolished Buddhism.

Before considering that, I want to look at events outside central Tibet. The outburst of religion with the building of monasteries, the ordination of Tibetan monks and the translation of religious texts, did nothing to abate the military ardour of the Tibetans. Their armies were steadily conquering a wide expanse of Chinese territory in the north-east right up to and including the fortress-cities of the Silk Road and well into the border
Provinces of China itself. There they established a well-organized, efficient colonial government with administrative centres in strategic places complete with a large hierarchy of military and civil officials, including some local Chinese. There was a careful legal system with civil and criminal codes and courts of justice which had due regard to the rights of the mainly non-Tibetan population. And there Tibetans came in contact with the practice of Buddhism and with temples long pre-dating their own conversion. They could see the wealth of images and wall-paintings in the wonderful cave temples of Tun-huang. They also founded their own temples which had the support and patronage of the administration. All these new contacts had a powerful effect on Tibetan art and culture.

Returning to what Tibetans see as the end of the snga-dar in the alleged persecution by Glang-dar-ma in 836, the Tun-huang manuscripts and the T'ang Annals throw a little light on the story and allow some speculation. Perhaps the persecution did not amount to the ending of the practice of Buddhism but rather to the abolition of the great privileges and donations given to monks and temples by his predecessors. Even later tradition says Glang-dar-ma ruled righteously for up to a year; but it may be accepted that for whatever he did he was assassinated by a monk in 842. There was no legitimate successor and a child, called ‘Od-srung, from the family of one of Glang-dar-ma’s queens was put forward in his place. Dissent and civil strife followed. Some noble ministers probably returned to their ancestral estates so that for lack of support temples and monasteries in central Tibet gradually declined. On the China border civil war broke out between the ‘Bro minister Shang Pi-pi whose territorial base was in the west, around Sha-chou, and the Dba’s minister Shang K’ung-je who held the eastern region. He claimed the throne for himself while ‘Bro supported the child ‘Od-srung who had perhaps been moved to a palace in Khams or A-mdo. In spite of the warfare the Tibetan administration of the greater part of the north-eastern province and the life of the monasteries seem to have gone on for a time without much disturbance. Prayers had been said there for Ral-pa-can. They continued to be said for Glang-dar-ma under his proper name ‘U’i-dum-brtan, which suggests he was not so bad as he was painted. And more prayers were offered for ‘Od-srung and his mother.

The struggle between the rival ministers ended in 849 when Shang Pi-pi withdrew from the fray and retired to his homeland beyond Sha-chou. The Chinese then were able to recapture Sha-chou and in 850 sent a delegation of civil and religious dignitaries to resume their allegiance to the Chinese emperor. That may perhaps be seen as the formal end of the snga-dar. But Dba’s Shang K’ung-je continued to ravage the frontier until 866 when he was killed by Uighur allies of the Chinese, thus ending any pretensions to a Tibetan kingdom. But Tibetan influence remained strong in the cities of the Silk Road where officers and their followers chose to make
their homes; and others probably settled in independent estates throughout what are now A-mdo and Khams. More important for Tibet was the survival there of temples and monasteries; and it was from them that the teaching of the faith gradually found its way back to central Tibet where it stirred into flame the embers which tradition says had lived on in private houses, thus beginning the phyi-dar. In the later diffusion of Buddhism, unlike the former, there was no opposition to the faith which was soon to give birth to the great monasteries of the Sa-skya-pa and Bka’-brgyud-pa and later the Dge-lugs-pa sects — all now sadly devastated by Chinese Culture.

I wonder what the Tibetans will some day call this period in their religious history.
Political Rivalry and the Great Debate at Bsam-yas

The great religious debate at Bsam-yas in the reign of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan is seen in later tradition as an important stage in the early course of Buddhism in Tibet. A good deal of pious legend has no doubt grown up around it in later days. The contest was between the gradualist approach of Indian doctrine in which, to put it simplistically, deliverance depended on works, and the Chinese Dhyāna school according to which enlightenment might come in a flash.

The champions of the gradualist view were the Indian pandit Kamalāśīla who was invited to Tibet on the death of Śāntarakṣita the first abbot of Bsam-yas. Associated with him were Ye-shes dbang-po who had been appointed ring-lugs, abbot, in succession to Śāntarakṣita, other monks of the Sba clan, Sba Sang-shi and ‘Ba’ Dpal-dbyangs, also one Vairocana. The Chinese school was led by the Hwa-shang Mahāyāna accompanied by a few Chinese monks and the Tibetan Myang Ting-nges-dzin; it had the support of a large number of royal and noble ladies headed by one of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan’s queens, ‘Bro Byang-chub, who had become a nun after the death of her son, and including one of the btsan-po’s aunts from the Sna-nam clan.

It was the growing popularity in high places of the teaching of Hwa-shang Mahāyāna, who had been invited to Tibet by the btsan-po that led conservative Indian-inspired elements to challenge the new doctrine.

There was clearly a strong political rivalry underlying the affair. The principal Tibetan supporters of the Indian school were from the Sba (‘Ba’) clan which can be identified with the Dba’s of the Tun-huang documents because ‘Ba’ Dpal-dbyangs can be identified with the Dba’ Dpal-dbyangs in F.W. Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents*, ii, p. 86. The Dba’s or Dba’ were one of the original Tibetan clans which combined to establish

Hitherto unpublished.
Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s father Gnam-ri as btsan-po and which held the post of chief minister on many occasions from the early eighth century onwards.

On the other side, the ‘Bro were more recent arrivals from the eastern borders, probably around Tun-huang, in the wake of a great lady ‘Bro Khri-ma-lod who married the btsan-po Mang-slon and was the mother of his son Khri ‘Dus-srong. The death of Mang-slon in 676 was followed by the long ascendancy of the Mgar clan, and it was only after their fall in 698 that the queen mother Khri-ma-lod, who probably had a hand in that matter, was able to assert her personality. Thereafter she was mentioned prominently each year in the Tibetan Annals and at times received presents of silk from the Chinese emperor almost as large as those given to the btsan-po. There are indications that she had been in communication with the Chinese court for some time, facilitated perhaps by her origin near the China border. Overtures for a new marriage alliance with China from as early as 658 had probably been stifled by the strongly anti-Chinese Mgar clan; but in 702 Khri-ma-lod began to negotiate actively with the empress Wu on behalf of her son ‘Dus-srong. He died in 704 before that matter could be finalized, but soon after her death a marriage was arranged with a Chinese princess for his young son Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan, and in 710 a member of the ‘Bro clan was sent to escort the princess Chin-ch’eng to Tibet. The family had been active in Tibetan affairs since at least 702, and in about 750 one of them, ‘Bro Cung-‘bzang ‘Or-mang, attained the post of chief minister, displacing the Dba’s who had formerly had a near monopoly of that position.

Associated, in the debate, with the Chinese party was the Tibetan monk Myang Ting-nge-‘dzin. The Myang had been colleagues of the Dba’s in establishing Gnam-ri as btsan-po, and their leader Myang Zhang-snang had enjoyed great power in the state until he fell early in the reign of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po through the intrigue of an incomer from the west, Khyung-po Zu-tse. After his fall the Myang disappeared from the political scene until the emergence of Ting-nge-‘dzin, who was appointed guardian to the young heir-apparent Khri Lde-srong-brtsan and later became one of the two great monk-ministers of the kingdom. His great qualities and the warm affection in which he was held by Khri Lde-srong-brtsan are celebrated in two inscriptions on stone pillars at his chapel of Zhwa’i Lha-khang. Although there is no reason to doubt that his religious convictions, as a result of his teaching by the pandit Vimalamitra, were opposite from those held by the religious leaders of the Dba’s clan, he may have been inclined also to join the pro-Chinese party by an ancient grudge of the Myang against their former colleagues the Dba’s, who appear to have failed to support Myang Zhang-snang at the time of his fall and had saved their own skins by taking an oath of allegiance to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po.

That then was the political alignment at the time of the debate — conservative Dba’s versus progressive Chinese elements favoured by ‘Bro and Myang.
The Japanese scholar Yoshiro Imaeda questions whether there was an actual confrontation between the rival parties or whether there was a series of discussions at Lhasa. It is true that as Paul Demiéville pointed out in his erudite work *Le concile de Lhasa*, Paris 1952, that the introduction to a Chinese document from Tun-huang containing the dossier of the debate states that thirty Indian monks and three Chinese were invited to “la ville pure”, which appears to mean Lhasa, to debate there. But it is also said that the discussions went on for many months, even a year; and it appears from a letter addressed to the *btsan-po* by Mahāyāna that he was sent at different times to different places (Demiéville, *op. cit.*, pp. 154, 155). It is difficult to dismiss the strong, and early, Tibetan tradition of a debate at Bsam-yas, and the Chinese document does not preclude that it could have happened as part of the continuing discussions. Although Mahāyāna states that he had frequent interviews with the *btsan-po* it is not probable that Khri Srong-lde-brtsan was present throughout the debate at Bsam-yas, which is said to have been held in the Byang-chub-gling (Byang-chub-sems-bskyed-gling), a small but important temple on the north side of the precinct.

Both sides claimed to have won the debate. The introduction to the Chinese dossier, written in language of violent condemnation of the opposition, says that a decree was written, perhaps in 794, confirming the victory of the Chinese arguments. The Tibetan tradition is that their case prevailed and it was ordered that the teaching of Nāgārjuna and the practice of the Six Perfections should be followed. Also that Mahāyāna was banished, leading to suicides among his followers. That is to some extent supported by the Chinese version which also tells of suicides, but apparently at an earlier stage, in protest at the denigration of their views. And Mahāyāna did leave central Tibet for Tun-huang where, so far from being disgraced, he became a pillar of the Tibetan administration as described by Demiéville, pp. 253, 254 etc.

In terms of doctrine the results were mixed. The brief statement of the tenets of the Buddhist faith in a decree by Khri Srong-lde-brtsan, which I have described as the first Tibetan *chos-'byung* (Tibet Journal, 5, 1980), certainly prescribes a course of righteous actions as leading to enlightenment; but in the *chos-'byung* of Nyang-ral Nyi-ma ’od-zer it is recounted that Khri Srong-lde-brtsan sought some sort of reconciliation between the parties, stating that in the matter of *dhharma* their aims were the same though their methods differed. Nyang-ral, who lived in the twelfth century, probably claimed descent from the Myang clan and he wanted to put the best face on the affair; but at all events the Dhyāna doctrine survives in the Tibetan Rdzogs-chen school, a vindication perhaps of the symbolic gesture attributed to Mahāyāna of leaving one of his shoes behind when he left Bsam-yas. And the reputed condemnation of the Chinese teachings had no adverse effect on the career of one of its most prominent supporters, the monk
Miang Ting-nge-'dzin. Khri Strong-lde-brtsan’s edicts at Zhwa’i Lha-khang show him to have been strongly in the royal favour first as guardian and teacher of the btsan-po when he was heir-apparent and later as continuing to do great service as a minister of the kingdom, for which the btsan-po wanted to give him a large grant to bring his estates on to equal terms with those of the rival Dba’s. Ting-nge-’dzin courteously declined the offer, pleading the principles of a monk; but in the political sphere he outshone the Dba’s by his elevation, together with his even more powerful colleague Bran-ka Dpal-yon, to the post of great minister. This arrogation by monks of the positions formerly enjoyed by the lay nobility and the large donations of property they made to religious communities led to the conservative reaction, headed by the Dba’s, and the murder of the btsan-po Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan Ral-pa-can whose piety and weakness had allowed those things, and also of his chief minister Bran-ka Dpal-yon. Some accounts say that Miang Ting-nge-’dzin also suffered that fate, but others imply that he had died some time before those violent scenes.

The new btsan-po, the anti-Buddhist Glang-dar-ma, was assassinated in turn, and a disputed succession with no obvious claimant in sight broke out into fierce and prolonged warfare in the eastern border regions between a ’Bro minister, Shang Pi-pi, described by the Chinese as a civilized person, and Dba’s Khrom-bzher whom they accuse of ruthless cruelty.

After some years Shang Pi-pi had enough and retired to his estates, perhaps near Tun-huang. Khrom-bzher continued to ravage the border lands until 866 when he was defeated and executed by Uighur allies of the Chinese; and with him vanished the last trace of that old political rivalry and of the old Tibetan kingdom.
Two Chinese Princesses in Tibet
Mun-sheng Kong-co and
Kim-sheng Kong-co

It was an instrument of Chinese statecraft to grant a princess in marriage to the ruler of a neighbouring people with the aim of exploiting the carefully nurtured aura of power and of ancient cultural and intellectual superiority in order to instil a sense of respect and obligation on the recipient; and although it did not always have the desired effect it was regarded as an honour by the foreign prince, who assumed the status of Son-in-Law, which became hereditary.

In 634 the young btsan-po Srong-btsan Sgam-po, who had succeeded his father Gnam-ri Slon-brtsan as ruler of a newly united kingdom in central Tibet, sent a mission to the Chinese court. He had come to the notice of the Chinese as a bellicose and able military leader, so they quickly sent a return mission, which was warmly welcomed. The Tibetans, who then heard that the rulers of the Tou-chueh (Turks) and T’uyühun (whom the Tibetans knew as the ‘A-zha) had been given Chinese princesses as brides, hastened to send a further mission to accompany the returning Chinese envoy, with lavish gifts and a request for a princess for the btsan-po. The award was at first promised but was later withdrawn owing to interference by the T’uyühun ruler who happened to be at the imperial court. Srong-btsan in a fury launched a devastating attack on the T’uyühun who fled in panic, and also on other peoples near the Chinese border. He then marched on the Chinese frontier at Sungchou from where he had further presents sent to the emperor with the message that he had come for his princess, and, apparently without waiting, he attacked the city. A Chinese army sent to repel him was roundly defeated, but when a stronger force was dispatched

he prudently withdrew. He continued campaigning in the borderlands until about 640 when he sent a further mission to the imperial court, which the Chinese represented as one of apology, again demanding a marriage alliance. The Chinese had learnt their lesson, and the T'ang Annals and the Tibetan Annals from Tun-huang record that in 641 the princess Wen-ch'eng (Mun-sheng Kong-co), a member of the imperial family but not a daughter of the emperor, was named as bride for the btsan-po, and the Tibetan minister Mgar Stong-rtsan Yul-zung was sent to escort her to Lhasa. The T'ang Annals relate that Mgar, too, was awarded a noble Chinese bride in spite of his protests that he already had a wife and that he could not accept the lady until his ruler had seen his own bride.

The Tibetan Annals state that the princess lived with Srong-btsan for only three years before his death in 650 which suggests that she was quite young, perhaps about twelve or thirteen years of age when she arrived in Tibet.

The T'ang Annals claim with considerable plausibility that the influence of the princess had a civilising effect on the Tibetans by persuading her husband to make the Tibetans give up the practice of painting their faces red and wearing rough clothes of felt and skins, and to send children of the nobility for education. Chinese scholars were also invited to compose letters from the btsan-po to the emperor. Srong-btsan himself sought practical means of improvement by asking for silk worms' eggs, wine presses, and workmen to make paper and ink. Certainly the btsan-po and nobles received such generous gifts of silk that they would have had no difficulty in adopting a new style of dress; but little or nothing could have affected the ordinary people, and to the Khotanese the Tibetans, down to the eighth century, were described as "red faces." As for language, the soldiery probably picked up a limited vocabulary from their enemies on the China border; and Srong-btsan must have been able to converse with his princess, though perhaps in the manner of Henry Vth and his French queen; but soon, Tibetan ministers were able to impress the imperial court by their knowledge of the Chinese language and classics.

On the political front Srong-btsan fully honoured the marriage alliance and his status as Son-in-Law. He was a helpful and co-operative ally of the emperor and instituted a period of peace between Tibet and China which lasted for ten years after his death.

By contrast the Tibetan Annals have nothing to say about the princess either before or after the death of Srong-btsan until her own in 680. She had her own court and must have been able to communicate with the imperial court; and she may have had the companionship of the lady Khri-ma-lod, the wife of Srong-btsan's successor, his grandson Mang-slon Mang-rtsan; she came from the great 'Bro family whose territory was on the Chinese border near Tun-huang and who were regarded by their neighbours as civilised in comparison with the rest of the Tibetans.
Although history has so little to say about Mun-sheng Kong-co, later Tibetan writers have woven an extensive and colourful web of legend around her. It is visually presented in the popular A-lce lha-mo folk opera Rgya-bza’ Bal-bza’, “The Chinese and Nepalese Princesses”. In a day-long performance it shows how the famous minister Mgar Stong-rtṣan Yul-zung was sent to Nepal to win a bride for his royal master Srong-btsan Sgam-po and after that on a similar errand to China. There he met with competition from several foreign princes but succeeded triumphantly in being the only one to solve all the tests and puzzles that were set before the princess could be granted. He then escorted her to Lhasa, bringing the sacred Jo-bo Rin-po-che in a golden sedan chair.

One tradition says that the journey took so long that the princess had a child by Mgar. That can be dismissed out of hand. The princess was too young; Mgar had a Chinese bride who had been thrust upon him by the emperor; and the princess was met near the Kokonor by Srong-btsan himself.

Later histories give long accounts of the two wooings shown in the A-lce lha-mo drama. They go on with a detailed description of the building of the Jo-khang by the Nepalese princess Khri-btsun and the supernatural obstacles from demons and the like that had to be overcome with geomantic help from the Chinese princess before the plan could be achieved and the image of the Mi-bskyod rdo-rje, which Khri-btsun had brought, could be installed. The Ra-mo-che by contrast gets surprisingly less lengthy treatment.6

The final act in the legend is Srong-btsan’s death at a great age, whereupon the two princesses merged with him in an image of Spyan-ras-gzigs and so vanished from the earth.7 That is patently pious fiction. The Tibetan writers could have learned from the T’ang Annals, of which they had a translation made in the thirteenth century, that Srong-btsan died in 650 and Mun-sheng Kong-co thirty years later in 680.

Giuseppe Tucci has questioned whether there was such a person as Khri-btsun, seeing her as a sort of religious balance for the Chinese princess.8 Certainly there is no historical evidence for her existence, but it is possible that Srong-btsan took wives from the ruling families of the peoples he had subjugated, such as the T’uyūhun (‘A-zha) and Zhang-zhung, in order to create closer relations with those people; and there was at Srong-btsan’s court the exiled ruler of Nepal, Narendradeva,9 with his entourage from amongst whom Srong-btsan could have chosen a wife. But whether the princess Khri-btsun existed or not the carving of the lintels and the capitals of the massive pillars in the sanctuary of the Jo-khang are strong indications of Indo-Nepalese craftsmanship.

That might lead to the conclusion that Srong-btsan was persuaded by the exiled Nepalese court to patronise or at least to permit the practice of
Buddhism. Certainly, in spite of the tradition that sees her as largely responsible for the introduction of Buddhism, the Chinese princess, a young girl from the T'ang court where at that time Buddhism was more often persecuted than favoured, is an unlikely candidate for that honour.

In Nepal, Hinduism and Buddhism existed side by side, much as they did in the later Gupta kingdom. In spite of Hsiian-tsang's hearsay description of the king as a Licchavi Buddhist, the rulers were generally Hindus who showed reverence towards Buddhism. This eclecticism seems to be echoed in the carvings of the Jo-khang: the illustrations of Jataka stories on the door lintels are Buddhist while the lion-headed beam ends and the flying figures and foliage on the capitals of the great pillars in the sanctuary derive from Hindu art. So while it is possible that Narendradeva provided the inspiration for the introduction of Buddhism, consideration might also be given to the Tibetan scholar Thon-mi Sambhota, who by tradition went to Kashmir, passing through the normal route by way of Nepal, in order to devise a form of writing for Tibet. He brought back some religious books which he translated with the help of pandits from several countries.10

In the end, the Jo-khang, attributed by his successors to Srong-btsan, is a fact. The rest is speculation.

In contrast with the paucity of information about Mun-sheng Kong-co, contemporary history has much to say about the next Chinese princess, Kim-sheng (Chin-ch'eng) Kong-co, who came to Tibet in 710 as bride for the btsan-po Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan. Her story is also embellished with colourful legend in later histories such as the Rgyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long and the Chos-'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba.

To begin with one of the legends: it tells that the princess was betrothed to a handsome young prince, but he died while she was on her way to Lhasa and she arrived to find herself married to his father Mes 'Ag-tshoms, "The Old Man with a Beard". That is the exact opposite of the truth.

Negotiations for a Chinese bride for Mang-slon Mang-rtsan began not long after Srong-btsan's death in 650 and well before that of Mun-sheng Kong-co in 680 and continued at intervals for many years. They are cited from the sometimes confused entries in the T'ang Annals by the French scholar Paul Demiéville in his Le concile de Lhasa.12 I attempt to summarise them with additional comments of my own.

The first request for a princess was made in 658, probably on the initiative of the chief minister Mgar Stong-rtsean Yul-zung, who had been largely responsible for securing Mun-sheng Kong-co for Srong-btsan and who had maintained peaceful and friendly relations with China until his death in 667. The request appears to have been ignored, as was a further approach in 675. Mang-slon died in 676 and when a Tibetan mission went to the imperial court in 679 to announce the succession of his son 'Dus-srong, a specific request, supported by Mun-sheng Kong-co, was made for the princess
T'ai-p'ing, a daughter of the empress Wu, as his bride. The Chinese had been suffering heavy losses and considerable difficulties from continuous Tibetan invasions of their borders, so the empress was ready to accept the idea of a further matrimonial alliance in the hope of some respite; but no daughter of an emperor had ever been granted to a foreign ruler and the empress could not agree to part with her daughter. Instead she earmarked eventually to receive that dubious honour one of her nieces, the princess Chin-ch’eng (Kim-sheng Kong-co to the Tibetans) on whom she conferred imperial status and privileges. No formal announcement was made until 703 when another Tibetan mission arrived with rich presents, and a matrimonial alliance was agreed in principle. Soon after, the btsan-po ’Dus-srong died in battle with the Mywa tribes in Nanchao. His death was formally announced to the imperial court in 707 to renew negotiations, and the princess Chin-ch’eng was officially designated as bride for the new btsan-po. At last, in 710 a Tibetan delegation headed by a high-ranking minister came to escort her to Lhasa. The emperor Chung-tsung himself accompanied the princess on the early stages of her journey and on parting made a great display of grief and solicitude, no doubt to impress on the Tibetans the value of the treasure that they were receiving. The princess, who can hardly have been less than sixteen years old and was probably more, arrived at Lhasa to find herself married not to an old man with a beard but to a boy of six years old, who was to be enthroned in 713 with the royal name of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan.

In all negotiations after 658 the moving force was Mang-slon’s queen, ’Bro Khri-ma-lod, a powerful and ambitious lady who as queen mother and grandmother dominated Tibetan politics until her death in 713. She corresponded directly with the empress and emperor, and it was one of her kinsmen, Zhang Btsan-to-re Lhas-sbyin, who headed the mission to receive the princess.

The marriage got off to an inauspicious start. The Tibetans demanded and received a rich stretch of grazing land south-east of the Kokonor lake, from where they immediately invaded the adjacent border as far as Lanchou. In 713 a Chinese envoy came to console the princess. In fact she proved herself a strong-minded lady, taking part in correspondence with the Chinese court. In about 721 she wrote to the emperor recommending the acceptance of a Tibetan proposal for a frontier treaty, but the emperor rejected this. Nevertheless, her life at Lhasa must have been very difficult and unsatisfactory; and in 724, by when Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan must have been well able to fulfil his marital duty, she decided to try to escape and planned to take refuge in Kashmir; but the attempt came to nothing.

After that disappointment she settled down to her diplomatic role and in 729 both she and the btsan-po received a Chinese envoy to discuss a treaty of peace. There followed an exchange of missions for seven years. The most
interesting, as reported in the T'ang Annals, was that in 730 headed by the Tibetan minister Ming-hsi-lieh ('Bro Lhas-sbyin) who delighted the Chinese court by his eloquence and scholarship. He was lavishly entertained by the emperor and rewarded with rich presents including a "fish bag" — a silk purse containing a fish token — which he had the presence of mind to refuse politely; acceptance would have been an acknowledgement of tributary status. He also presented a request from the princess for copies of some Chinese classics. A minister protested that they would enable the Tibetans to discover secrets of the Chinese art of war. His protest was ignored.

At some time during these years the princess was involved in an episode of considerable importance to the course of Buddhism in Tibet. The Li-yul chos-kyi lo-rgyus (Religious Annals of Khotan) relates that a community of monks who had been driven out of Khotan eventually found refuge in Tibet where they were given shelter and food in a temple built by the Chinese princess, who is thus seen as a devout supporter of Buddhism. After a number of years, which the Li-yul chos-kyi lo-rgyus gives as twelve but another Khotan document gives as three or four, there was an epidemic of smallpox or a similar disease. The princess caught the infection and died. The monks were blamed for the epidemic and were evicted from Tibet. Perhaps this action was taken against only limited communities, or has been post-dated to round off the story, for Khri Srong-lde-brtsan in his second edict states that it was after the death of his father Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan, who was assassinated in 755, probably in some dissension about the faith, that Buddhism was banned for twenty years.

The Li-yul chos-kyi lo-rgyus leaves it uncertain whether the temple was built for the monks or was already in existence, but other Khotan documents state that there were temples in Tibet before the monks from Khotan arrived. The difference in the several sources about the date of the arrival of the monks in Tibet and their expulsion allows a similar latitude in the possible date for the foundation of a temple by the princess; but the important fact is that a temple is attributed to her. In my opinion that must be the Ra-mo-che in Lhasa, where she had her palace, and which is the only temple described as rgya-btags, "connected with China". In spite of tradition there is no comparison between the case for Mun-sheng Kong-co, a dim figure who was probably not more than eighteen when Srong-btsan Sgam-po died, who made no mark on either Tibetan or Chinese history in the remaining thirty years of her life, and whose religious affiliation is uncertain, and that for Kim-sheng Kong-co, a mature young woman, strong-minded, active in affairs of state and a known supporter of Buddhism.

Roberto Vitali, in a wide-ranging scholarly study, proposes that the princess' temple is Ke-ru in 'On, which he identifies with Kwa-chu in Brag-dmar attributed in the inscription on the stone pillar at Skar-cun to her husband Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan. There are many objections to that view.
I cannot here do justice to all of Vitali's arguments, but I may mention some difficulties briefly. The identification of the two names is far from obvious and is made nowhere else; there is a small temple of Kwa-chu attributed to the time of the kings on a hillside south-east of Bsam-yas; it is not certain that Brag-dmar included 'On in that age, it did not in recent times; Ke-ru is certainly old, but Mkhyen-brtse Rin-po-che in his Guide to the Holy Places of Central Tibet attributes it to Khri Srong-lde-brtson, and that is what I was told on a visit there in 1949; there is no evidence that it was ever said to be connected with China or the princess; and it is improbable that she would have founded a temple some one hundred miles from her residence at Lhasa, either by river or across a high mountain pass.

Contemporary evidence about Kim-sheng Kong-co comes to an end with her death in 739 and her internment in the royal burial ground at 'Phyong-rgyas, but later religious histories contain a strange legend about her life. It tells how a Chinese army captured Lhasa some time after the death of Srong-btsan Sgam-po and when its arrival was imminent the Jo-bo Rin-po-che was hidden in a wall of the Jo-khang and a picture of 'Jam-dpal-dbyangs was painted on the plaster. The Chinese searched for it but not being able to find it they carried off the image of Mi-bskyod rdo-rje for some miles out of Lhasa. Many years later when Kim-sheng Kong-co came to Tibet she wanted to see the Jo-bo Šákyamuni brought by her “aunt”. After a long search in the Jo-khang she found its hiding place and, having uncovered the face, instituted a ceremony of “Viewing the Face”. The Jo-bo was then set up in the central chapel of the Jo-khang and the Mi-bskyod rdo-rje was presumably taken to the Ra-mo-che. This ingenious story, aimed at explaining how the Jo-bo came to be where it is, falls to the ground when it is realised that the Chinese capture of Lhasa never happened and that Tibetan historians have misunderstood a passage in the Tang Annals which had been translated into Tibetan in the thirteenth century. There it is stated that in 670 the emperor ordered a Lo-so (Lhasa) army of 100,000 men to go to chastise the Tibetans. It got no further than Ta-fei-chuan, about a hundred miles south-west of Hsining, where it was annihilated by the Tibetans under Mgar Khri-'bring. So there was no occasion to move or hide the Jo-bo Rin-po-che.

That was not the end of the legendary troubles of the Jo-bo. It is said that after the death of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtson the wicked ministers wanted to send the “Ra-mo-che Jo-bo Šákyamuni” back to China, but supernatural intervention made it so difficult to move that it could only be taken as far as Mang-yul, where it was buried in the sand under the guardianship of a minister of the Rba clan. There it remained until Khri Srong-lde-brtson attained his majority, when he brought it back to Lhasa and placed it in the Jo-khang. The story, which appears to echo the earlier legend, is perhaps intended to establish a close relationship between the chos-rgyal Khri
Srong-lde-brtsan and the Jo-bo Rin-po-che. It is outside that of the two princesses and I shall not discuss here the inconsistencies in the various legends. Nevertheless they allow an iconoclastic look at the sacrosanct tradition that it was Mun-sheng Kong-co who brought the Jo-bo to Lhasa. Going back to the story that it was Kim-sheng Kong-co who discovered its hiding place and set it up in the central chapel of the Jo-khang leads to the suggestion that it was she who originally brought the precious image to Lhasa.

Notes


2. TA, p. 447.
3. THA, p. 29.
6. Rgyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long (GSM), fos 36a-61a.
7. GSM, fo. 76b.
9. TA, p. 529; THA, p. 29.
11. GSM, fo. 78A; Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag ‘phreng-ba, Chos-'byung (Pell. T.), Ja, fo. 72a.
13. THA, p. 40.
15. TA, p. 458.
17. THA, p. 42.
19. Ibid., p. 460.
23. Pell. T., Ja, fo. 110a.
24. Thomas, op. cit., pt 1, p. 79.
27. Alfonsa Ferrari, mk’yen brtse’s Guide to the Holy Places of Central Tibet, Serie Orientale Roma, xvi, Rome 1958, fo. 8b (pp. 9, 47 and 119 n. 188).
28. THA, p. 51.
29. Pell. T., fo. 70a
30. GSM, fo. 78b; Pell. T., fo. 72a.
31. TA, p. 448.
32. Pell. T., fo. 73b.
PART TWO

Historical Sights and Inscriptions
Early Burial Grounds in Tibet and Tibetan Decorative Art of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries

The most impressive survival from the time of the chos-rgyal — the Religious Kings of Tibet — is the royal burial ground at 'Phyong-rgyas. Although Francis Kingdon Ward passed that way in 1923, he did not realize what he was seeing, and the first eye-witness description by a western scholar is that published by Giuseppe Tucci in 1950 in The Tombs of the Tibetan Kings (TTK). About the same time an account of the tombs, from historical sources only, appeared in an article by Helmut Hoffmann entitled “Die Gräber der Tibetischen Könige im Distrikt 'Phyoṅs-rgyas”. Both these works contain much valuable information, but the illustrations in Tucci’s book give no more than a poor idea of the appearance of the site; and Hoffman, naturally, provides only a tentative sketch of the position of the mounds. I think that the plates reproduced here should give a better understanding of that remarkable place.

The spelling “'Phyongs-rgyas” which Hoffmann uses was apparently taken by him from the guide-book compiled by Mkhyen-brtse in the nineteenth century. It may also have been “officially” adopted by the Tibetan Government as it appears in a recent list of rdzong, of which I obtained a copy. But the spelling “‘Phyong” is found in such earlier sources as the Padma bka’-thang, Deb-ther sngon-po and Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag (which both have ‘Phyong-po) and also in the chronicle of the fifth Dalai Lama, who was born there. I have, therefore, accepted that form.

'Phyong-rgyas is some sixty-five miles south-east of Lhasa, near the head of a tributary of the Yar-lung Chu which flows south into the Gtsang-po near Rtse-thang. There, in brooding and majestic solitude, rise the burial mounds of the kings (plates 1 and 2). Not far away to the north, at the foot

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of the hills which enclose the valley, is the village of 'Phyong-rgyas dominated by its rdzong; and on a sheltered hillside above the village there is the Dge-lugs-pa monastery of Ri-bo bde-chen (plate 2). Higher up the steep ridge on which the rdzong stands are the ruins of what is traditionally identified with Phying-ba'i Stag rtse, the ancient stronghold of the Tibetan kings. Stories about its foundation differ — for example the Rgya-bod yig-tshang attributes it to Spu-lde Gung-rgyal — but the earliest documentary evidence is contained in a ninth-century inscription from Rkong-po which I have published in JRAS for 1954. There it is stated that it was the seat of seven generations of the royal line up to the time of Dri-gum Btsan-po — the father of Spu-lde Gung-rgyal (dri-gum btsan-po phan-chad / gdung-rabs bdun-gyi bar-du ...). Although by tradition King Lha Tho-tho-ri (Lha To-do Snya-brtsan) — fifth in line before Srong-rtsan Sgam-po — built a new palace at Yum-bu Bla-mkhar (Yum-bu Bla-sgang), Pying-ba Stag rtse is recorded in the chronicle section of the Tun-huang Documents (Documents de Touenhouang relatifs à l'histoire du Tibet by Bacot, Thomas, and Toussaint, [TH]) as the residence of Srong-rtsan Sgam-po’s grandfather Stag bu Snya-gzigs
and Srong-rtsan Sgam-po himself seems to have been living there at the time of the fall of Khyung-po Spung-sad Zu-tse (TH 112/148). Thereafter, the expansion of Tibet’s territory, which followed the consolidation of the kingship early in the seventh century, appears to have led to the establishment throughout the country of palaces where the king could stay on the expeditions and progresses by which the royal authority was asserted and maintained. Phying-ba, in its secluded valley, is no longer mentioned as a royal residence but only as the site of royal tombs. The tradition that Tibetan kings were buried there goes back to Dri-gum Btsan-po, for it is recorded in the Rgyal-rabs gsal-ba’i me-long and the chronicle of the fifth Dalai Lama that this was the first bang-so (burial mound) to be made and that it was erected in Phying-yul. Although the association of Dri-gum with that region has an air of verisimilitude, the account of the burials of his successors for some sixteen generations — “between scree and meadow”; or “in the middle of rivers, like snow on a lake” — has a fanciful and legendary appearance; and it is only with the approach of historic times that, after Lha Tho-tho-ri, we find Phying-yul firmly established in tradition as the burial place of the kings.¹

It will be noticed that in the Annals section of the Tun-huang documents the name of the district where the royal palace and burial ground are situated is consistently written as Phying-ba; and the same spelling is found in the Rkong-po inscription referred to above. But in the chronicle section the spelling is invariably Pying-ba. These orthographic differences need cause no surprise in documents of that period; but on the first appearance of the name in the Annals (TH 13/30) Bacot imports some confusion by his note which reads “phyin pa’i ring khang, chambre pour la durée de la réduction. Il faut, semble-t-il, corriger phying en ‘byin. Le ‘byin khang est le lieu d’attente avant les funérailles. etc …”. (I have adjusted all transcriptions of Tibetan to agree with that in use at the University of Washington).

In the index of the same work we read “phying-khang = ‘bying khang, pourrissoir” (TH 199). Bacot provides no reference to any passage where the term ‘bying-khang appears and, if the usage exists, I have yet to see it. In subsequent occurrences in the Annals of the word phying-bar Bacot translates “lieu de sépulture” (TH 13/30 and 21/43) or “lieu de crémation” (TH 19/41). This last is particularly questionable as there appears to be no reference to the use of cremation in Tibetan royal burials. Tucci appears to follow Bacot when in TTK, p. 10 he writes: “Pending this burial, the body was kept in some provisory shelter and sometimes in a temple”; and in noting on this — p. 76 note 25 — he reads: “Phying pa’i ring khang cf. TH and Pell. T.”. Perhaps the prefixed ‘a-chung and the reading pa’i are merely errors; but, as it stands, his explanation is not clear.

The matter should be plain enough from a straightforward reading of the passages at TH 13, which have also been checked from a recently ac-
quired photographic copy of the document. btsan-po myes khri srong-rtsan-gyi spur phyn-ba'i ring-khang-na ring-mkhyud-ching bzhugs-ste ... and a little later under the heading relating to the following year: btsan-po nyen-kar-na bzhugs-shing / phying-bar / btsan-po myes khri srong-btsan-gyi mda'd btang-ba lo-gcig / . The meaning is that the body was kept for a year in the ring-khang of Phying-na; and in the following year the funeral ceremonies were performed (mda'd btang-ba) at Phying-na (Phying-bar). Later, in connection with the death of 'Dus-srong, it is said that the body was kept in the ring-khang of Mer-ke (Mer-khe), which is probably the Merge of modern maps, west-south-west of Sungpan, and that after about a year, in the winter of 706, the funeral ceremonies were performed at Phying-na (phying-bar btsan-po yab-gyi mda'd btang, TH 19). A similar expression is used about the funeral of Queen Khri Ma-lod in 713 (TH 21).

One might speculate — but not, I think, very convincingly — whether the name Phying-na could have been derived originally, at some time before recorded Tibetan history, from a root such as 'bying with the meaning of preparing a corpse for burial. Here Bacot's first suggestion, although apparently based on a misreading of the text, is the more attractive, for 'byin-pa has the meaning "to draw out" and this might be applied to the removal of the entrails of the body. However that may be, it is clear that when Phying-na (or Pying-na) first appears in historical records it is unmistakably a place name; and in the phrase Phying-b'ai ring-khang, therefore, only ring-khang carries the meaning of “chambre d’attente”, “mortuary”.

I visited 'Phyong-rgyas not long after Tucci, and as my notes and photographs do not tally with the sketch of the position of some of the burial mounds (bang-so) at p. 33 of TTK, I append a plan for comparison with that and also with Hoffmann's sketch in his above-mentioned article. It will be noticed that Tucci shows only five mounds whereas ten actually survive; he wrongly shows Srong-rtsan Sgam-po's mound as circular in shape and, in my view, misplaces that of Mu-tig Btsan-po and wrongly describes it, too, as circular. Hoffmann's sketch, based only on Tibetan literary sources, corresponds more closely with what my examination makes me think is the actual position of the tombs; but as could only be expected, there are also points of difference. Tucci describes the mounds as having been adapted from natural hillocks, but it appeared to me that they were artificial constructions; and that would also agree with the evidence in the T'ang Annals which state that the mounds were piled upon previously constructed funeral buildings (Bushell, JRAS 1880, p. 9). Perhaps what Tucci took as indications of the adaptation of natural features are, in fact, marks of the excavation of the mounds by looters, which is known to have occurred on two occasions, once towards the end of the ninth century and again, at the hands of the Dzungars, in the eighteenth century. The circular depression caused by digging into the tombs can be seen in plate 1.
My plan shows ten surviving mounds and the attributions there depend partly on an interpretation of literary sources and partly on oral information from a monk of Ri-bo bde-chen Dgon-pa who was in charge of the chapel on Srong-tsan's tomb and who acted as my guide. The fixed point from which to start is the great mound — over 200 feet across and 50 feet high — attributed to Srong-tsan Sgam-po, on which there is now a small chapel. This is known to the local people as Srong-tsan bang-so or Bang-so damar-po; and there seems no reason to question the traditional attribution. Proceeding from there, the greater part of the other mounds fall quite readily into position. Gung-srong's tomb, which appears in Tucci's plan, was not identifiable on the ground. Hoffmann, following the literary sources, places it in another, and earlier, row apparently behind (i.e. to the west) of the row containing the tomb of Srong-tsan. It might be supposed that the tomb of a young prince who, in spite of later traditions, does not appear ever to have come to the throne, and who certainly predeceased his mighty father, would have been of comparatively modest proportions, and later usage gives some support to that conjecture. We are on firmer ground with the tomb of Mang-srong which is described as being to the left of that of his grandfather; and with the tombs of 'Dus-srong to the left of that; and of Mes Ag-tshoms (Khri Lde-gtugs-brtsetan) to the left of that again. The tomb of the prince Ljang-tsha Lhas-bon is described as being in front of that of "Mes". The Rgya-bod Yig-tshang (fo. 109) supports the interpretation that this refers to his father Mes Ag-tshoms and not to his grandfather 'Dus-srong. The tomb of Khri Srong-lde-brtsetan, about which I shall have more to say, is placed behind and to the right of that of his father; Mu-ne Btsan-po's to the right and in front of that of Mes Ag-tshoms; and the tomb of Mu-rub (Mu-rug) — rather doubtfully — in front of that of 'Dus-srong and by the side of that of "the younger brother Sad-na-legs". The doubt is probably due to the failure of many Tibetan historians to realize that Sad-na-legs, Khri Lde-srong-brtsetan and Mu-tig Btsan-po were different names of the same king. So, the guide book of Rang-byung rdo-rje, which is Tucci's principal source in TTK, allots separate tombs to Sad-na-legs and Khri Lde-srong-brtsetan; and other histories have their own variations based on the same misunderstanding. The position of the tomb of Khri Lde-srong-brtsetan (Sad-na-legs; Mu-tig Btsan-po) is, in fact, strongly indicated by Rang-byung rdo-rje's statement that a pillar describing the events of his reign stands in front of the tomb of Khri Lde-srong-brtsetan.

The pillar survives, half-buried in the ground, on the east side of a level piece of cultivated land (plates 3 and 4). It is at some distance from the nearest surviving mound, which is now traditionally ascribed to Sad-na-legs (Khri Lde-srong-brtsetan), and I was surprised to find it further away than one would expect, even allowing that it may have been at the outer limit of an extensive enclosure. It seems possible that the mound has, in fact,
disappeared. The cultivated field which may be its site can be seen in plate 2 and I have marked it in broken lines on my plan. If the true burial mound of Khri Lde-srong-brtstan has been levelled, that which is now attributed to him would have to be attributed to some other king, possibly Glang-dar-ma; but before continuing that speculation, the site of the tomb of Ral-pa-can, to the left of that of Mes Ag-tshoms, may be mentioned, thus completing the list of the surviving mounds.

Returning to the question of Glang-dar-ma: it is stated in the Rgya-bod yig-tshang and in the chronicle of the fifth Dalai Lama that the bang-so of Glang-dar-ma is at the royal burial ground, apparently between that of 'Dus-srong and Khri Lde-srong-brtstan. No mound was shown to me by my guide as that of Glang-dar-ma and it is possible that in the popular and orthodox view it would be unseemly to believe that the heretic king could be buried in the company of his religious ancestors. Indeed, there is a tradition that his tomb is high up on the west slope of the mountains overlooking Ra-ma-sgang, about three miles south-west of Lhasa. A mass of tumbled boulders which may or may not be artificial can be seen through binoculars; but I did not succeed in visiting the place. Another popular tradition, which is repeated by Tsybikov but which is laughed at by educated circles in Lhasa, is that, because Glang-dar-ma’s tomb is built on those mountains, the whole range is gradually and enviously forcing its way nearer and nearer to the city of Lhasa and it is with the object of keeping the mountain in its place that one of the ceremonies which conclude the Smor-lam chen-po — the Great Prayer Festival at Lhasa — is to fire cannon shots at the hillside opposite the city. Nevertheless, in view of the antiquity of the 'Phyong-rgyas site and the fact that so much of the ceremonial of burial was, and apparently continued to be, according Bon-po usage, it seems much more likely that Glang-dar-ma was buried there as stated by the authorities I have mentioned. A similar statement is contained in an extract from the gnas-bshad (guide book) of the tombs which I had copied there and which seems to be identical with Tucci’s principal source — Rang-byung rdo-rje; but the passage is not reproduced in TTK. Another passage, apparently omitted there, states that 'Od-srung also was buried with his ancestors but that after him the practice of making bang-so was abandoned. 'Od-srung’s tomb is said to be behind that of 'Phrul-rgyal ('Dus-srongs), but no mound was pointed out to me as his and it may be assumed that in the strife and decadence amidst which the Tibetan kingdom disintegrated after the death of Glang-dar-ma little care or money would be expended on erecting royal funeral monuments.

Turning again to the tomb of Khri Srong-lde-brtstan: I have, unfortunately, no photograph of what I have identified as this mound. Its position can be seen in the bottom left-hand corner of plate 1, where a small portion of its side is visible. The identification is confirmed by Kazi Sonam...
Tobgye of Sikkim who was with me on my visit to the tombs. My recollection is that it was more eroded than the other large mounds. According to the literary sources there was formerly a stone pillar there which had become entirely buried in the ground. The only pillar now visible in any part of the burial ground is that, already mentioned, recording the events of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s reign in an inscription which has been edited and translated by Tucci in TTK. But there is also, near the village of ‘Phyong-rgyas, and at some distance from the tombs, a fine stone pillar (plate 5) bearing faint traces of lettering of which the only legible part — when I saw it — was the name Khri Srong-lde-brtsan. Recently, by a remarkable chance, a copy has come to light of what purports to be the original text of that inscription and which seems to have been made not less than 200 and quite probably as much as 500 years ago. I have obtained a photograph of that document through the kindness of Rai Bahadur T.D. Densapa and I hope to publish it shortly. What the pillar is doing in its present position is not clear. The place where it stands is level ground with no suggestion that there was ever a mound anywhere near it nor does it appear probable that an important tomb would be built at such a distance from the main burial ground. Perhaps the pillar was moved at some time from a position near the burial mound or perhaps it was a special memorial. The inscription, purporting to come from it, does not throw much light on the question. It is a brief eulogy of the king in general terms; but it does emphasise his Buddhist faith and may, therefore, have been deemed unsuitable for, or unworthy of, a place in a precinct where Bon rites appear to have prevailed. Kingdom Ward gives a photograph of the pillar in an article in the Geographical Journal of 1926 where he also describes it as “bearing an inscription in Chinese which looked fairly modern”. Either his observation or his memory must have played him false.

With regard to the tombs of the father, grandfather and great-great-grandfather of Srong-rtsan Sgam-po, Hoffmann’s interpretation of the literary sources is that they, together with the mound of Gung-srong, were in a separate row from that containing Srong-rtsan’s tomb. That would imply that they were to the west of it, for the area to the east is mostly occupied with tombs which are acceptably of later date. I have no notes about those earlier burials, nor do I remember to have noticed any traces of mounds to the west of the main burials. This is not surprising. The photographs show that some of the surviving mounds are larger than others. The smaller mounds are those attributed to Ljang-tsha Lhas-bon, Mu-rug and Mu-ne Btsan-po. Neither of the first two was enthroned as king and the fact that what I take to be Mu-ne’s mound is in the same group and of the same comparatively small size may perhaps be regarded as support for the suggestion I put forward in JRAS 1952, p. 143, that Mu-ne, who is nowhere described as “Khri Mu-ne”, may not actually have been enthroned as king.
It will be seen, also, that the smaller mounds have suffered from the weather and human depredation to a much greater extent than the older and larger mounds. The exception of the mound of 'Dus-srong must be noted and also the possibility, mentioned above, that the mound of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan has been completely obliterated. It was suggested to me by Lama 'Chi-med rig-'dzin that the older mounds may have been destroyed in a flood which he believes occurred about 100 years ago. Such an explanation might account for some damage — perhaps that to 'Dus-srong's tomb — but it is hardly likely that a flood could have made a clean sweep of a whole line of mounds in the area which now appears as a fairly level stretch of cultivated land, without also greatly damaging the large mounds which survive. It is reasonable to assume that before the Tibetan kingdom blossomed out as a great power at the time of Srong-rtsan Sgam-po, the burial mounds of his comparatively insignificant predecessors would have been on a much less grandiose scale than the massive tumuli of himself and his successors. It may also be noticed that the Tun-huang Annals contain mention of the funeral ceremonies of several ladies of the royal family: The Chinese princess Mun-can in 683; the grandmother Mang-pangs in 707; the princess Ga-tun in 708; the grandmother Khri Ma-lod in 713; the queen mother Btsan-ma-thag in 723; the lady Lhas-pangs in 732; the Chinese princess Kim-sheng — together with the prince Ljang-tsha Lhas-bon — in 741; and the lady Khri-btsun in 745. Of these it is specifically stated that Khri Ma-lod was buried at Phying-ba, and the joint mention in 741 of Kim-sheng and Lhas-bon suggests that, as the tomb of the latter is located at Phying-ba, the princess, too, was buried there. It may be assumed that the burials of those royal ladies were on a lesser scale than those of Srong-rtsan and his successors; and no trace survives of any funeral mound attributed to them. There is clearly scope for much more field work at the site, which is extensive and has been visited briefly only by Tucci and myself. It may be that careful search would reveal, even now, inconspicuous traces above ground of many more burials than can immediately be seen; while, if excavation ever becomes possible there, it can be expected that much would come to light both from the surviving mounds and from the area as a whole.

On one point, in particular, excavation ought to provide evidence. The literary account of the tombs was written at a time when the early kings had acquired the halo of patrons of Buddhism. It may, therefore, have been careful to suppress references to pagan practices at their burial. With regard to the tomb of Srong-rtsan's grandfather, who lived well before the introduction of Buddhism, it is stated that living men were buried with the king; but there is in later Tibetan histories no hint of such practices after that time. Nevertheless, the T'ang Annals describe the custom that chosen companions of the Tibetan king killed themselves at his death and were buried along with him; and there is mention in the history of Nan-chao, as
late as the year 800, of an adopted son of the Tibetan king Ch’i-li-ts\-san who surrendered to the Chinese to escape the duty of being buried along with his deceased lord.

Although evidence on that and other matters may lie hidden, there has survived one small but precious relic from the days of the chos-rgyal. On top of the mound attributed to Ral-pa-can I found the stone figure of a lion which can be seen in plates 6 and 7. The identification of the mound depends primarily on the statement of my monk guide, but it agrees generally with the literary description of the tomb as being to the left side of Don-mkhar-mda’, which is also specifically identified with Mu-ra-ri, a hill slope on which are the mounds of Mes Ag-tshoms, Khri Srong-lde-brtsan and Mu-ne Btsan-po. In the Rgyal-rabs gsal-ba’i me-long, quoted by Tucci and Hoffmann, the tomb of ’Phrul-rgyal (’Dus-srong) is said to have been known as Sen-ge brtsigs — “the lion-built, or lion decorated”. That mound is considerably to the north of the place where the stone lion now stands, but it is not improbable that several tombs would have had similar ornaments. It must also be remembered that the literary descriptions were written long after the place had ceased to be used as a burial site and when even the names of some of the kings had become subject to doubt. At all events, the lion now stands on the mound claimed to be that of Ral-pa-can, which is furthest to the south of the whole group of tombs and is situated higher up the hillside than the others — perhaps further evidence of its comparative lateness in date. While I was in Tibet few people used to visit the royal tombs and fewer still would climb the barren slope to the tomb of Ral-pa-can. None of the Tibetans of Lhasa — lamas, nobles, ordinary monks and laymen — to whom I mentioned the stone lion had ever seen or even heard of it. So the figure survived, remote and forgotten, protected from the sling-shot of some thoughtless shepherd only by the awe and sanctity of the place. The damage to the right foreleg, visible in plate 6, may have been caused by grave-looters and it is possible that there were originally other similar figures on the mound, for I saw there a few slabs of stone like the base on which the lion stands.

There appears no reason to doubt that the lion dates from the time when the site was used for royal burials; and by associating it with Ral-pa-can, who died c. 842, it is placed near the end of that period. Of its artistic interest I am not qualified to judge, but to me there is in it little suggestion of either Chinese or direct Indian influence; and I should be inclined to look for its ancestry in Persian models modified by transit through Central Asia.

Sculpture in the round, of any period, is rarely seen in Tibet, but old records indicate that in early times the carving of stone figures was not uncommon. According to Bushell’s version of the T’ang Annals, Srong-rtsan Sgam-po had a stone image of himself made to be placed at the tomb of the Emperor T’ai-tsung, but a translation by Chang Kun suggests that this
is a mistake and that the image was actually carved in China. It is, how-
ever, stated in Mk’yen brtse’s Guide to the Holy Places of Central Tibet that a
stone image of Srong-rtsan was set up at his tomb. (I do not know why the
expression ‘dra-brnyan is translated by Ferrari as “an image in low relief”.)
Some images of deities are also said to have been made of stone — e.g. the
Rigs-gsum mgon-po at Lhasa and the Rgyal-ba rigs-nga at Khra-brug,
which are attributed by Mkhyen-brtse to Srong-rtsan Sgam-po. I was told
also that the processional image of Dpal-lidan Lha-mo at Lhasa is made of
stone. The three heads of the Rigs-gsum mgon-po at Pha-bong-kha, which
is one of the series at Lhasa attributed to Srong-rtsan Sgam-po, are carved
in high relief round a central rock pillar; the images at Khra-brug have not
been described by any western traveller; and the image of Dpal-lidan lha-
mo at Lhasa is so heavily draped that the material and workmanship cannot
be seen. Although the evidence of the early practice of stone carving is,
therefore, scanty, there is frequent mention of modelling in other media —
especially of animals. Srong-rtsan Sgam-po presented to the Emperor T’ai-
tsung a large golden wine-jar in the shape of a wild goose, and later, a
miniature city decorated with golden lions, elephants and other animals,
also with men on horseback. Golden figures of dragons, lizards, tigers and
leopards adorned the camp of Ral-pa-can (Bushell, op. cit.).

There is — or was — also in the Jo-khang at Lhasa, near the image of
Khri Srong-lde-brtsan, a round-bellied silver wine jar with a long neck sur-
mounted by a stylized horse’s head. The jar bears a recent date — in the
sixteenth rab-byung so far as I remember — but I was told that a protective
silver covering in replica was then put on to an original reputed to go back
to the times of the chos-rgyal.

There appears, therefore, to have been an established artistic tradition
of stone sculpture and animal modelling at an early date. It may be that,
even then, Tibetan art was under the influence of Nepal where skill in metal
working was already attested by Chinese writers. The Tibetans attribute
the introduction of the painting of thang-ka to the Nepalese, and for many
centuries Nepalese have worked in Tibet as craftsmen in precious metal
and in wood-carving. The artistic influence of Nepal on the design of reli-
gious images is also apparent. On the other hand, Chinese records indicate
that the Tibetans themselves were competent craftsmen in metal at an early
date, especially in the manufacture of armour, including decorative gold
armour. This suggests a development going back before their domination
of Nepal which took place at the beginning of the seventh century. At all
events, the lion at ‘Phyong-rgyas, which I assign to c. 840 and which is a
rare if not unique survival, does not, in my opinion, bear any obvious mark
of Nepalese influence.

Although the lion at ‘Phyong-rgyas is the only known object of its kind,
there are, in the ornamental motifs on inscribed stone pillars, other though
less remarkable survivals of Tibetan decorative art of the eighth and ninth centuries which appear to have gone unnoticed. The pillar of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan near the village of ‘Phyong-rgyas (c. 800, plate 5) bears on its south face the outline of a lion, incised in low relief. The carving is so faint that the figure cannot be detected in the photograph. Its head is towards the top left corner of the pillar and its two forefeet can be seen a little lower down. Below it are traces of a dragon in the Chinese manner. The free drawing of the lion and the stylized representation of the dragon are an interesting contrast. The stone finial of the pillar may be compared with those in the photographs of other pillars. It is not unlike that at Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s tomb (c. 815, plate 3) but less well-preserved and less shapely. That at Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s tomb represents a lotus bud; the other may be similar or it may be a flaming jewel such as appears on other pillars. The tomb pillar also has other decoration. In plate 4 can be seen two circles lightly carved with rays representing the sun and moon. Something comparable is found on pillars in Nepal recorded by Tucci in his Preliminary Report on Two Scientific Expeditions to Nepal; and the decoration recalls the sun and moon which are painted at the top left and right side of most Tibetan thang-ka. The underside of the canopy surmounting the pillar is finely carved with a pattern of foliage, reminiscent of designs from ancient sites in Central Asia.

The other early pillars which I have seen all have some sort of ornamentation. The Zhol rdo-ring at Lhasa (c. 764), which is the oldest and also the tallest and most graceful of them all, has on top of its neat stone canopy (plate 8) a finial in the shape of a flaming jewel in the Indian tradition. Another example, although not so well-proportioned, is on the pillar in the courtyard of the monastery at Mtshur-phu recording the foundation of Lcang-bu Lha-khang (c. 830, plate 9). The edges of the canopy have decorative motifs of Chinese inspiration but recalling also some of the designs from the Buddhist remains at Lou-lan in Chinese Turkestan. This is yet another example of artistic eclecticism and the blending of different styles which can be seen on several of the pillars. A further jewel finial is on the treaty pillar of 821/2 near the Jo-khang at Lhasa (plate 10).

Different patterns of finial are found on the Bsam-yas pillar (c. 779, plate 11) and the Skar-cung pillar (c. 810). The former stands on an oval, lotus-shaped base like that of many Buddhist images. Its plain but shapely canopy is surmounted by a crescent and disc topped by a small knob. The ornament is in such good condition that it may have been restored. It is the usual finial on a Tibetan mchod-rten, symbolising air and ether; and a somewhat similar design, a crescent and star, surmounts an uninscribed pillar at Hu-shang — traditionally ‘U-shang-rdo — near Lhasa, which probably dates from the ninth century. The Skar-cung finial is shaped rather like a snail, but I was told it represents a precious stone. The upper surface of
the canopy is finely fluted (plate 12) and the base on which the pillar rests is deeply carved with a bold design of mountains, apparently of Chinese origin (plate 13).

Only at Zhwa’i Lha-khang (c. 805–12) have the pillars severe and undecorated canopies; but their bases are carved with a swastika and thunderbolt (plates 14 and 15).

The lettering of inscriptions of the eighth and ninth centuries displays assured craftsmanship and individuality. Examples from the Zhol rdo-ring, from Bsam-yas, from Khri Lde-srung-brtsan’s tomb, and from the Skar-cung pillar can be seen in plates 16, 11, 4, and 17 respectively. And a further minor expression of early Tibetan art is to be seen in the seals on some of the letters among the documents found at Tun-huang. They include figures of horsemen, winged lions, eagles and so on, sketchily but effectively drawn. One example — though faint — can be seen in plate VII of F. W. Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents*, part III. Objects found at ancient Central Asian sites from Khotan to Tun-huang include seals carved in hard stone bearing similar designs but of a higher degree of craftsmanship.

Returning to the subject of burial grounds from which the above disquisition on decorative art has wandered, mention should be made of early burials other than those of royal persons. It is recorded in the T’ang Annals that the country to the south-west of the Yellow River was studded with the burial mounds of Tibetan nobles who had distinguished themselves in battle. The mounds were on top of wooded hills and had buildings beside them, plastered with red earth, on which were painted white tigers. (Bushell, p. 87). It might be expected, therefore, that traces of early burials should be frequent throughout central Tibet. The royal tombs at ‘Phyong-rgyas are known, at least by hearsay, to all educated Tibetans; but there are other ancient burial grounds which appear to go unrecognised by them. One of these is in a valley some eight miles west of Lhasa near Stag-brag Dgon-pa (Stag-lung-brag). It is said that where the monastery now stands there was formerly an ancient btsan-khang, known as Yid-bzhin mgon-po, which is believed to have been built by Srong-rtsan Sgam-po at the same time as the chapels known as Mtha’-’dul Yang-’dul Lha-khang. Three images of the chos-rgyal, said to have come from that btsan-khang, were preserved in the room of the Stag-brag Rin-po-che. They were made of clay but so heavily gilded that it was impossible to judge their age. Opposite the monastery, and stretching higher up the narrow valley, are seven mounds similar to those at ‘Phyong-rgyas but, for the most part, a little smaller (plate 18). They are not recognised as burial mounds, but there can be little doubt that that is what they are. The explanation according to local tradition is that the place is the site of a palace of Glang-dar-ma called Khang-yangs (spelling uncertain). Ordinary monks of Stag-brag told me that the whole area was called Glang-so. That suggests a confusion between
“Glang-dar-ma” and bang-so. I did not see anything like the ruins of an ancient building; but I was later told that when a bridge was being built over the Stod-lung Chu, about forty years ago, large quantities of stone and earth were taken from that area and that some objects including a gilded image were uncovered and buried again near the same place.

The mounds in the Stag-brag valley are so massive that they must have been the tombs of important personages. They are larger than the mounds at Phyong-rgyas attributed to lesser royalty such as Ljang-tsha Lhas-bon and Mu-rug Btsan-po; and it may be conjectured that they are the graves of powerful members of some of the great Tibetan clans. The area near Lhasa seems to have been within the territorial domain of the Dba’s clan and this may be their burial ground. There is also in the immediate neighbourhood of Stag-brag some indication of the influence of the Bran-ka clan, for a neighbouring valley is called Bran-phu and not far away, near the confluence of the Stod-lung Chu and the Skyid Chu, is an old chapel known as the Bran-ka Ra-mo-che. It was founded at the time of the Bka’-gdams-pa religious reformation and contains an image of the Jo-bo Rin-po-che which faces towards the Jo-bo of Lhasa, with which it is believed to hold conversations. The Bran-ka family, however, does not appear to have come into prominence at an early date and with the exception of the great monk-minister Bran-ka Dpal-chen-po yon-tan no members of it of any great distinction are known in surviving records. It seems improbable that so comparatively unimportant a clan would have had such grandiose burials. One other clan which appears to have had power in the Lhasa area is that of Ngan-lam; but we know little of its members except for Ngan-lam Stag-sgra Klu-gong in whose honour was raised the rdo-ring at the Zhob.

There is also what appeared to be quite an extensive burial ground about two miles to the west of Lhun-grub Rdzong in the valley of a tributary of the ‘Phan-po-chu about thirty miles north of Lhasa. The mounds, which are grass-covered, are very much smaller and more numerous than those at Phyong-rgyas or at Stag-brag. No Tibetan whom I asked had ever associated them with burial mounds, but the ‘Phan-po region was important from the earliest days of the Tibetan kingdom, and its acquisition from Zing-po-je Khri-pangs-sum was a major step in the consolidation of the power of the royal family. ‘Phan-po seems to have become the property of the kings; but it appears that the Dba’s clan also had territorial claims there (TH 132–8).

Finally, I have heard of, but have not seen, tumuli in ‘Dam about seventy-five miles north-west of Lhasa on the road to Nag-chu-kha. There, at a place called La-rkan-mdo — so I am told — are many mounds under which are reputed to be buried the soldiers of a Mongol army which was sent to invade Tibet but was overwhelmed by snow. Much of the armour used at the annual parade known as Khra-bgzhi Chib-shag is said to be the
spoil of that army, and on some of the helmets there is arabic lettering. It is also said that a gold tent-peg from the tent of the commander is in the treasure house of the Jo-khang. My informants were vague about the period of this disaster, but they claimed that it was long before the Dzungar invasion in the eighteenth century. 'Dam was the favourite residence and hunting ground of the Oelot kings of Tibet from Gusri Khan (1640) onwards. Long before that it is mentioned as the home of the Cog-ro clan in the time of the chos-rgyal; and it is likely that somewhere in that neighbourhood was the place, mentioned in a T'ang itinerary, where the Tibetan kings worshipped the gods near the T'ang-lo-yeh-yi mountains (? Gnyan-chen Thang-lha).

It is probable that ancient burial grounds exist in many places throughout the country and, if excavation should ever be undertaken, tumuli in various parts of Tibet should yield a wide range of valuable information.

**Notes**

1. The tomb of Lha Tho-tho-ri himself is said in Rgyal-po bka'-thang, fos 43b-44, to have been on the ridge above his palace at Yum-bu Bla-mkhar; but the description seems fanciful.
2. The hill is known as Glang-mgo-ri.
3. The bang-so of the seventh-century minister Thon-mi Sam-bho-ta is said to be at Pe-ra, some fifty miles up the Gtsang-po from the Lcags-zam ferry.

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Phallic symbols are by no means an obtrusive feature in the Tibetan scene. They are not connected with a cult such as the Saivite Hindu worship of the *linga* but are part of ancient geomantic practices, influenced perhaps by those of China.

Although anthropologists might see phallic undertones in the white stone set up by farmers at the centre of each cultivated field in honour of the *sa-bdag* — “the lord of the land” — or in the tall pillars erected at the royal tombs, these have no such overt association in Tibetan minds but are magical “navel stones” or “earth pegs” (see R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, 1972, p. 203).

Overt phallic signs were the realistic representation of the male organs, often painted red and surrounded by a bush of yak-hair, set over the main door of some farm houses in Tibet and Bhutan. These, I was told, were intended to avert bad influences in the immediate neighbourhood. A.H. Francke saw objects of the same sort in Ladakh (*Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, Calcutta, 1914, i, p. 61); and the red painted pillars in front of houses there, recorded by William Moorcroft in 1822, may have had similar associations (*Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and the Panjab*, 1841).

A rather surprising example existed on the roof of the Jo-khang, the Cathedral of Lhasa. Its presence and purpose are explained by a story in several Tibetan histories including the *Rgyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long* (fourteenth century), the *Chos-'byung* of Dpa’bo Gtsug-lag  phreng-ba (sixteenth century) and the chronicle of the fifth Dalai Lama (seventeenth century). It relates that when the Nepalese queen of Srong-britsang Sgam-po wanted to build the ‘Phrul-snang (the Jo-khang) at Lhasa and was looking for a suitable site, she consulted Srong-britsang’s Chinese queen who had already built the Ra-mo-che. The latter had recourse to occult divination (*spor-thang*) to ascertain the geomantic auspices. It was revealed that Tibet was like a female demon lying on her back and that chapels — known as the mTha’-'dul

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Yang-'dul Lha-khang — should be built at vital points on the extremities and the limbs of the demon in order to keep her in subjection. The 'Phrul-snang itself was to be built on the 'O-ma-thang, over the demon’s heart. Eight specific topographic features around the site harboured hostile influences that had to be countered in different ways. While some which were the haunts of ’dre, bdud and btsan spirits could be controlled by building a chapel or a mchod-rten, the evil omen emanating from a cave on a hillside to the east, which resembled the private parts of the she-demon, had to be opposed by setting up a phallus — dbang-phyug chen-po or dbang-phyug-mtshan — pointing in that direction. I was told that that sign, together with different apotropaic objects — a conch shell, a garuda image, a stone mchod-rten and a stone lion — prescribed to repel dangerous influences from other sources, was placed in semi-concealment under the gilded pagoda rooflet (rgya-phibs) on the east side of the Jo-khang roof.

The story of the bad omens and the magic to neutralize them is familiar to readers of Tibetan historical works but it may not be so well known that the symbols were actually placed on the Jo-khang itself and survived there until very recent times.

Following that example phallic signs were placed, unobtrusively and always on the east side, on several of the great houses of Lhasa; and there is one of stone, rudimentary but unmistakable, on the east side of the perimeter wall of the Dalai Lama’s summer palace of Nor-bu gling-ka, built in the nineteenth century.

Other manifestations, perhaps of the same nature, are the strange wooden figures, some nine feet high, standing usually in pairs, one male and one female, at the entrance to some villages in Spo-yul and Rkong-po. A photograph of one such pair can be seen in The Riddle of the Tsangpo Gorges by F. Kingdon Ward (1926); and a male figure is illustrated in A Cultural History of Tibet by D.L. Snellgrove and H.E. Richardson (1968). From those photographs it appears that the images were neglected and in a damaged state but it is evident that they were originally ithyphallic.

Pairs of similar crude wooden figures occur in many primitive cultures. For example, forked tree trunks shaped into male and female figures have been dug up from a bog in Sweden (Country Life, 19 April 1968); more relevant geographically is a pair of wooden village guardians in the Nepal Terai, reduced to symbols, illustrated in “Deux fêtes chez les Tharu de Dang” by A.W. Macdonald in Objets et mondes (1969); while from a part of Nepal much closer to the Himalayas D.L. Snellgrove in his Himalayan Pilgrimage (1961) has a photograph of a pair of wooden images on the roof of a low-caste Hindu house at Tibrikot where, he states, there is a large number of such figures; and, again, in the Geographical Magazine for December 1956 Verrier Elwin illustrates tall figures of bamboo and straw erected in the tribal areas of Assam to avert disease.
Although in the examples from Tibet the male figure looks something like one of the fierce deities of Vajrayana Buddhism, the resemblance is probably superficial, for Spo-bo and upper Rkong-po are regions where old practices were slow to die. The local name for the images is rendered phonetically by western travellers as “Tombe” or “Tembe”. The Tibetan orthography does not seem to be known; but I wonder whether it may be connected with ldem, ldem-po, “statue, image, idol (standing upright)”: see Das’ dictionary, p. 712. Tibetan scholars at the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology or elsewhere may care to throw light on that and on other matters mentioned above.

Note

On a recent visit to Lhasa the French scholar Madame Anne Chayet found some of the apotropaic symbols still on the roof of the Jo-khang. Their purpose has perhaps been forgotten. (H.E.R. 1992)
The Jo-khang “Cathedral” of Lhasa

Unlike the Potala, which presents a spectacle of towering majesty, the Jo-khang is so closely surrounded by a seemingly random accretion of buildings that it is impossible to get an overall idea of its outward appearance. From street level one can see the massive wooden pillars of the entrance portico, the gilded ornaments on the west wall and parapets, and glimpses of the gleaming golden pagoda roofs with their surmounting gañjira — little spires like slender stupas. Inside, too, the profusion of pillars, images, offerings, dark passages and lattice screens makes it difficult to form an orderly picture of the whole; while, in the heyday of Lhasa before the occupation by the Chinese communists, the watchfulness of the dkon-gnyer (sacristans) as well as the numinous atmosphere inhibited much curious inspection, let alone haphazard photography. And so, of the foreign visitors since about the beginning of this century none has left a full description of that most sacred of Tibetan holy places, said to have been founded in A.D. 642 by king Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. Sir Charles Bell, surprisingly, has contributed nothing significant. I myself have unforgettable memories of visits, especially at the New Year when the dim passages were crowded with pilgrims, many from distant places, able to move only slowly, wrapt in devotion — and an overpowering smell of sheepskins — silent but for heavy breathing and the murmur of om mani padme hum; and when the chapels opening on to the darkness glowed with the light and heat of innumerable butter lamps into which the pilgrims ladled their offering from pots they carried with them. But my notes on details of the building and its contents are sadly few. So it is to earlier visitors that we must be grateful for what they have to tell us — Sarat Chandra Das in his Journey to Lhasa and Central Tibet; Tsybikov, part of whose diary is published in the Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution for 1903; Landon in his Lhasa; Waddell in Lhasa and its Mysteries; and Walsh in articles in JRAS for 1915 and 1946.

Waddell has, moreover, left a ground plan in which he corrects Georgi’s imaginative effort which he reproduced in his *Lamaism, the Buddhism of Tibet*; Walsh (1946) also has a plan apparently derived from the same original as Waddell’s but containing some small improvements.

From Tibetan sources there is the *Dkar-chag shel-dkar me-long*, a guide to the Jo-khang composed by the fifth Dalai Lama, which Grünwedel has transcribed and translated into German in his “Die Tempel von Lhasa” (1915), and of which Waddell published a partial and not very accurate translation in JASB, 1895. Since that authoritative account was composed many additions and changes have taken place. I understand there is, also, a *dkar-chag* by Pho-žha Mi-dbang, who was responsible for considerable repair work in the eighteenth century, but I have not had an opportunity of seeing it.

A recent and valuable contribution is the photographic record of several images and architectural features in the Jo-khang made by two Czech travellers, V. Siš and J. Vaniš, between 1953 and 1955 when, in the comparative calm of the first stage of their occupation of Tibet, the Chinese admitted a few sympathetic visitors and when the Tibetans had to make concessions to foreign curiosity.

To envisage the lay-out of the Jo-khang as described by the fifth Dalai Lama and to see the photographic records in their proper setting requires some sort of ground plan; and so, in 1966 when I enjoyed many discussions with the scholarly and widely experienced former minister of the Tibetan Government, Zurkhang Shappe who was then at the University of Washington, Seattle, I suggested he might attempt a plan of the Jo-khang while his memory was still fresh. The skill and care he devoted to the task have made this article possible. The only changes I have made in plans 3 to 6 below, showing the four storeys of the Gtsug-lag-khang, have been to transcribe the names from his Tibetan script, to adjust the numbering of the chapels, and to add some further details gleaned from other sources.

To put those plans into a wider frame I have included two other sketch maps: no. 1 is of the central block of the city from a survey made by Peter Aufschnaiter and Heinrich Harrer during their stay at Lhasa between 1946 and 1950; and no. 2 showing the forecourt, western portico and assembly hall (*du-khang* or *khyams-ra*) which are not covered by Zurkhang’s plans: this is based on Waddell and Walsh and on information from Tibetan friends who have generously helped me with their recollection of details. I am particularly grateful to Kalon Jigme Taring who was formerly a treasurer of the Jo-khang (*bla-brang phyang-mdzod*), Ngawang Thondup Narkyid, one of the last officials to hold the post of *gnyer-tshang-ba* in which he was responsible for the maintenance of the Jo-khang buildings, Gonsar Rinpoche, and Khedrup Lama of the Tibet-Institut at Rikon, Tshenshap Rinpoche of Zürich, Rakra Rimpoche of the Pestalozzi Kinderdorf at Trogen — all learned
Lamas from the great monasteries of Lhasa — and Tashi Khedrup now in the U.K. who attended the Smon-lam chen-mo, "The Great Prayer", as an ordinary monk, on several occasions. I am indebted, also, to Yoshiro Imaeda of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris, for sharing with me the results of his enquiries from learned Tibetans about details of the Jo-khang. I am grateful, also, to the lamas Thubten Sangye and Chokten Ta Lama from whom Ariane Macdonald kindly obtained information on my behalf. Inevitably after so long a time, the memories of different informants do not always agree exactly: and the resulting picture, substantial though by no means complete, may be corrected in some points and filled in with further details by other Tibetans in exile to whose notice it may come. The need for a full description of the Tibetan Holy of Holies, as it used to be, is underlined by uncertainty about its present condition. There were reports that during the Cultural Revolution in 1966 it was stripped of many of its original sacred contents; but recently there are Chinese claims that it is in, or has been restored to, its former state.

* * *

After each plan there is a commentary, in which the following abbreviations are used:

Art
Bell, Portrait
Bell, Religion
Bernard
Chapman
Das
DLV
DLXIV
Harrer
JASB
JRAS
Landon
Lieou
Taring
Thomas

Sir Charles Bell, Portrait of the Dalai Lama, 1946.
Sir Charles Bell The Religion of Tibet, 1931.
F.S. Chapman, Lhasa the Holy City, 1936.
Sarat Chandra Das, Journey to Lhasa and Central Tibet, 1902.
H. Harrer, Meine Tibet-bilder, 1953.
Journal of the Asiatic Society, Bengal.
Perceval Landon, Lhasa, 2 vols, 1905.
Lieou Yi-ssu, Si-tsang Fo-kiao yi-chou, Peking, 1957.
Lowell Thomas Jr., Out of this World, 1950.
Tsybikov

Tucci

Waddell

Walsh

Weg
V. Siš and J. Vaniš, Der Weg nach Lhasa, 1956.

Younghusband

Z
Zurkhang Shappé, Dbang-phyug dge-legs.

**No. 1 — Lhasa City**

1. The Jo-bo'i dbu-skra
2. The Rdo-ring
3. Dpal-'byor rab-brtan
4. Nang-rtse-shag
5. Ka-ni sgo-bzhi
6. Khrom-gzigs-sgang
7. Rme-ru Rnying-pa
8. Zur-khang
9. Bla-brang Rnying-pa
10. Bsam-grub Pho-brang
11. Gsung-chos-ra-ba
12. Rag-kha-shar
13. Rdo-ring Gzim-shag
14. Bka'-shag
Plan No. 1

The sketch map, based on a plan made by Peter Aufschnaiter and Heinrich Harrer, shows the central block of Lhasa city with the approximate position of the Jo-khang. Other sketch maps showing this area in relation to the rest of the city and to the Potala may be seen in Waddell, p. 331 and my Ch'ing Dynasty Inscriptions at Lhasa, Serie Orientale Roma, xlvi, 1975.

1. An ancient willow tree north of which is the Smallpox Edict of 1794 and a low wall with inscriptions dated 1793. See photographs in Landon, ii, pp. 293, 295, 305.

2. The stone pillar with the treaty inscription of A.D. 822. Photograph in H.E. Richardson, Ancient Historical Edicts at Lhasa etc. Royal Asiatic Soc., 1952, p. 35.

4. The office of the City Magistrates, the Mi-dpon.

5. A large mchod-rt'en (stūpa); see E. Schaefer, Der Weisser Schleier, 1950, opposite p. 65; it is popularly said to contain the skull of the legendary Tshong-dpon Nor-bu bzang-po.

6. This block of buildings, said to have been used by former Dalai Lamas for watching ceremonies, may be seen in the photograph in Schaefer referred to above.

7. This monastery which is the Lhasa residence of the Gnas-chung chos-skyong, may be seen to the right of the photo in Harrer, pl. 39.

8, 9, 10, 12 and 13 are the houses of noble families.

11. The open space facing a throne from which the Dalai Lama preached at the Smon-lam chen-mo, the Great Prayer Ceremony at the New Year. See Harrer, fig. 1.

14. The office of the Shappés, the Tibetan Cabinet.

Plan No. 2

This shows the main entrance and the pillared hall — the 'du-khang or khyams-ra — where the monks assembled for prayers at the Smon-lam chen-mo. I have tried to keep in proportion to Zurkhang's plans which are not on a stated scale but appear to be that of about 1 in. = 12 ft. That agrees well enough with Tsybikov's estimate of the dimensions of the main temple — the Jo-khang or Gtsug-lag-khang — as 140 ft. square.

The 'du-khang is not regarded with the same veneration as the Jo-khang and was presumably built specially for the Great Prayer, which was instituted by Tsong-kha-pa in A.D. 1409. The entrance portico (fig. 2), known as the khyams-ra'i sgo-mchor, has six large fluted wooden pillars, four fronting the street and two behind them. Between the pillars and in the courtyard in front of them, where pilgrims had prostrated themselves continually for
many centuries, deep grooves were worn in the stone paving (Photographs: Harrer, p. 45; Bell, Portrait, pl. 33; Chapman, p. 176; Landon, pp. 290, 298,
A narrow verandah runs round part of the wall on either side of the main, double, door set in a carved framework — the sgo-'byor (B on the plan). The verandah wall is decorated with frescoes of the Rgyal-chen sde-bzhi, the Four Great Kings of the Quarters, and the Mthun-pa spun-bzhi, the Four Friends, elephant, hare, monkey and parrot; and a large painting of the pious monkey whose union with a female demon was the legendary origin of the Tibetan race. In JRAS, 1891, p. 263, Rockhill quotes a Chinese source where it is said “on the front wall of the verandah is painted the Master Yuan-chuang of the T'ang period and three of his disciples searching for the sacred books”; but it does not appear that such a painting has survived. At the south corner of the verandah is a small door D, the Glud-'gong gsang-sgo, used by the Scapegoat at the glud-'gong ceremony; it leads also to the upper storey and a large room known as Nang-srid, said to be used by the srid-blon (Prime Minister) on his visits to the Jo-khang.

Above the entrance is a balcony hung with curtains of yak-hair, from which the ministers of the bka'-shag used to watch ceremonies in the court below. On either side of the façade above the balcony is a large golden emblem of the rnam-bcu dbang-ldan, “The ten syllables of power”; and on a raised part of the parapet stands a great golden Wheel of the Dharma, chos-kyi 'khor-lo, supported on either side by a deer, the ri-dvags pho-mo (Photos: Tucci, pl. 24; Weg, pl. 162; Art, pl. 10). This feature is absent in the photographs by Landon and Bell, as are the massive cylindrical gilded “umbrellas”, rin-chen gzung-skyob, to the right and left of the parapet. All those ornaments are said to have been presented by a wealthy Mongolian Ta Lama of Se-ra in about 1927 as an offering when, at his invitation and expense, the late Dalai Lama attended the Smon-lam chen-mo. Older ornaments at several places on the roof all round the building include smaller umbrellas, either gilded or covered in coloured cloth, and trident-topped rgyal-mtshan, banners of victory, hung with yak-hair cords. On the roof, behind the gzung-skyob on the south side of the façade, is a heap of juniper branches said, by one informant, to be renewed each New Year by a Bon-po priest.

Between 1944 and 1946 some alterations were made to the approaches. A small lean-to roof covering a bench near the north side of the entrance portico where the zhal-i~go, the monastic proctors, sat at ceremonies was removed as were some inscribed tablets on the wall behind the seat and others which were formerly ranged round the verandah. These were — at least for the most part — the text of an inscription of 1808 (see my Ch’ing Dynasty Inscriptions at Lhasa, pp. 64–86); but David Macdonald in Twenty Years in Tibet, 1932, p. 241, mentions two stone plaques, in the outer porch, recording the marriage of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po to a Chinese princess. I have been unable to verify this. The lean-to roof can be seen in the illustra-
tions from Chapman and Taring mentioned above (cf. fig. 2); while the same place after its removal is shown in Harrer, and in my *Tibet and its History*. A large prayer-wheel also appears to have been removed from the northern corner of the verandah.

Above the seat of the zhal-nngo is a window from which the Dalai Lama watched ceremonies in the court below (A on the plan). There was a set of rooms there, including a reception hall. The building is known as bla-brang-steng and its lower floor was used to store provisions for distribution at the Smon-lam.

Through the main, western, door (B) — sgo-byor — consisting of two heavy red-painted panels with gilded fittings, a short passage (C), lit by a skylight and containing images of the Four Kings of the Quarters, leads to an inner door opening on to the pillared hall — the 'du-khang whose central area — the khyams-ra — is open to the sky. Near the door, on the north side, is a large prayer cylinder which was continually propelled by a nun. The walls of the 'du-khang are decorated with large frescoes including one, on the north wall, of Gusri Khan, with the fifth Dalai Lama and first Pan-chen, who is said to have asked the artist to paint him standing up and holding a scarf so that he would not have to get up when the Dalai Lama entered the hall, and also that the Pan-chen should be added to keep him company. Other frescoes depict the three great monasteries of Lhasa and scenes from the life of the Buddha.

The Dalai Lama's throne, in the middle of the north wall, is a simple masonry structure on which cushioned seats were placed when he was present at the prayers. A slightly lower throne was placed opposite for the Khri Rin-po-che of Dga'-ldan who used to preside over the ceremony. The abbots of the great monasteries sat along the wall on either side of the Dalai Lama; incarnate lamas were seated in front of them; the monks of Se-ra on the north side of the hall; 'Bras-spungs in the centre and Dga'-ldan on the south side.

The "Offering Tables" (rnchod-khri) are a series of shelves on which butter lamps were lit and other offerings arranged when services were performed for private donors. They were removed during the Smon-lam to make room for the monks and were stored near by in the mchod-khri-khang (Photographs: *Art*, pl. 18; Weg, pls. 154, 155; Walsh).

The open central area could be sheltered by yak-hair curtains drawn over a wooden framework. At the east end of the hall is the gzhung-sgo (E) giving access through a short passage to the Gtsug-lag-khang proper. On the north and south of the hall are side entrances from surrounding buildings. A private door on the north communicated with the Dalai Lama's rooms on the floor above. There is also a small door, known as Se-ra'i ltag-sgo ("The Se-ra backdoor"), near the Sgrol-ma Lha-khang (see below); another entrance to the north of Rme-ru Rnying-pa monastery (Plan no. 1,
item 7) also appears to lead to the ltag-sgo. Two of the entrances on the south side are by way of small doors respectively to the south of Rme-ru Rnying-pa and the east of the gsung-chos-ra (Plan no. 1, item 11); another is through a larger gateway, the shing-ra'i-sgo, which opens off the bar-bskor some way south of the main entrance.

Leading off the hall from its north-east and south-east corners are approaches to the nang-bskor, an enclosed circumambulation passage around the outer wall of the Gtsug-lag-khang. It is open to the sky except for eaves projecting over the beam-ends of the neighbouring buildings which give some protection to the frescoes on the passage walls. The inner side of the circuit is lined with prayer-wheels (Weg, pl. 153); and at intervals there are mchod-rten (stūpas) and images in low relief. Many of the frescoes are in gold outline on a red background (Art, pl. 26, 27, 37) and there are occasional ventilation openings for the Gtsug-lag-khang (Art, pl. 27).

A Sgrol-ma Lha-khang (chapel of Sgrol-ma) opens off the north-east approach to the nang-bskor.

I have not attempted a plan of the roof area which is on different levels and is complicated by a patchwork of surrounding buildings; but I have indicated in brackets on plan no. 2 the approximate position of some of the features on the upper level.

A terrace runs round the central open well of the 'du-khang from which one could see the monks assembled below. On the west and south of the terrace are colonnades of pillars supporting a flat roof and leading to various single-storey buildings behind them. On the north side there are substantial two-storeyed buildings, one of which is the office of the bla-brang phyag-mdzod (Weg, pl. 160), while the most important contains the rooms where the Dalai Lama lives when he visits the Jo-khang. It has a large window from which he can look down into the khyams-ra; and over the window is a massive richly gilded canopy, known as the dbu-gyab, ornamented with two gañjira, a pair of human-headed bird figures (bya shang-shang) and writhing dragon finials (Weg, pl. 161; and Tucci, pl. 23, in left background). The roof with dragon finials and grotesque human figures illustrated in DLXIV, pl. 10 as one of those at the Jo-khang is, I think, actually a roof at Bkra-shis-lhun-po.

Important buildings in the block to the south-east and south-west of the upper level of the 'du-khang include the bka'-shag and the phyi-rgyal las-khungs (Foreign Office). At the east end, where there is no colonnade, one sees the western façade of the Gtsug-lag-khang with its profusion of gilded roofs, spires, pinnacles and figures. Although the immediate impression is of bewildering richness and variety, all the details of the ornamentation on several different levels are in strict and orderly balance.

The façade is not on a single plane; the central part at the west and east ends projects somewhat from the rest, but the north and south facades run
in an unbroken line. The lowest part one sees from the ‘du-khang roof is a
dazzlingly white wall decorated at regular intervals with painted stucco
images in low relief. On a projection at each corner is a gilded figure, in
the round, of a seated lion. Above this band of decoration, which runs re-

gularly all round the building, is a sort of apron roof of heavily gilded copper,
divided into panels by raised ribs and curving slightly upwards at the pro-
jecting corners, each of which ends in the head of a sea monster (chu-srin:
makara). The roof slopes up to a gilded parapet decorated with a continu-
ous line of deities in high relief against a background of swags and strings
of beads. There must be more than 300 such images in all, perhaps 2 ft in
height. Over their heads is a gilded frieze of the six-syllable mantra in
lanydza lettering, repeated all the way round. Above that is a coping cov-
ered with lead or similar metal, surmounted by a gilded railing. At each
corner stands a human-headed bird figure (shang-shang); and in the centre
of each side is a wheel of the law with its deer supporters, similar to but
smaller than that over the west entrance. Beyond the railing rise the golden
rgya-phiibs roofs and the square corner towers with gilded ganjira and ban-
ner and umbrella ornaments; and round the top, a deep band of
close-packed brushwood painted dark red (spen-bad) decorated with gilded
emblems. Some aspects of this splendid, glowing, ornamentation can be
seen in the photographs by Bell and Younghusband mentioned above, and
in Lieou, pl. 1 and Tucci, pls. 23, 48.

Plan No. 3: The Ground Floor of the Jo-khang

The fifth Dalai Lama’s description begins near the entrance through the
seng-lden-sgo at the western end of this plan and it gives pride of place to
the image of Thugs-rje chen-po in chapel no. 20 in the middle of the north
side; but I have found it easier to relate that account to Zurkhang’s plan
by taking his starting point at the image of the Jo-bo Rin-po-che at the east
end and proceeding clockwise from there.

1. The best photographs of the Jo-bo are in Art, pl. 66, and Weg, pl. 135.
Although the original features are so thickly coated with pious applications
of gold paint that they have a heavy and lifeless appearance, Waddell’s re-
pulsion at the whole scene (pp. 369-70) is extravagantly prejudiced.
According to DLV, p. 39, there are images of Byams-pa and ‘Jam-dbyangs
on either side of the Jo-bo with the image of the Buddha Mar-me-mdzad
(Dipaśikara) known as Mi-’gro gsung-byon — “The one that said ‘I will not
go’” — behind it and, behind that, Thub-pa Gangs-chen ‘tsho-rgyal with
twelve Sems-dpa’ and Sems-ma to the right and left of it. Das, p. 152, states
that there is an image of Byams-pa on one side and one of Mar-me-mdzad
on the other; and behind that the Buddha Gang-chan wogyal (sic) and the
1. Jo-bo Rin-po-che
2. Byams-pa mgon-po
3. Spyan-ras-gzigs Sengge-sgra
4. Bar-khang-du 'gro-lam
5. Padma-'byung-gnas
6. Sman-bla mched-brgyad
7. Byams-pa mched-bzhi
8. Jo-bo sbas-pa'i Lha-khang
9. Sangs-rgyas rab-bdun
10. Tshe-dpag lha-dgu
11. Thon-mi dang Blon-po Mgar
12. Klu dang Gnod-sbyin
twelve disciples to right and left. As I remember it, behind the Jo-bo there was a high gilded copper screen, decorated with figures, on the back of which was a dedicatory inscription which I never got an opportunity to copy; perhaps it relates to the donation by Yon-tan rgya-mtsho when he renewed the back of the throne, as mentioned in DLV, p. 60. The screen was, perhaps, the work of the famous Nepalese artist and craftsman, Aniko who worked also in China in the latter half of the thirteenth century (DLV, p. 56; Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, p. 277; Heather Karmay, *Early Sino-Tibetan Art*, p. 21). Behind it in a rather dark cela I have noted a small image of Mar-me-mdzad and a large one of Thub-pa together with the twelve disciples. Tibetan informants identify the large image as Rnam-par snang-mdzad. Some of the twelve attendant figures are illustrated in Harrer, p. 69 (fig. 3), and Weg, pl. 130, where the fierce deities are respectively Rdo-rgyal and Mi-g.yo-ba. Das, loc. cit., also mentions the dragon pillars supporting the canopy over the Jo-bo, one of which is shown in Weg, pl. 134. DLV, p. 20 mentions other images in the khyams (open passage) just outside the chapel of the Jo-bo, including one of Atiśa and one of Sgrol-ma which is said to have asked 'Phags-pa Rin-po-che for a scarf (Sgrol-ma dar-len-ma). These are outside chapels nos. 2 and 3 in the plan.

2. Byams-pa mgon-po. DLV, p. 41, describes this image by its epithet Mi-pham mgon-po. Das, p. 157 says the image is of red bell metal (li-dmar in DLV, loc. cit.) and is in a small *mchod-rten* in the chapel. There is said to be, also, an image of the yi-dam Kri-kri (or Kri-ki) at whose expense, according to DLV, the principal image was made; and there is a big fire-pot, once belonging to Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s Chinese princess, in which are ashes of which pilgrims try to secure a portion.


5. In this small chapel is a large image of Padma 'byung-gnas hung about with many scarves.

passage appear to be the images of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po and his two wives at no. 28 in the plan. For photographs see Art, pl. 60 (fig. 4), and Weg, pl. 133.

7. The importance of the image of Byams-pa (Byams-pa bzhiangs-bzhugs) in this chapel is marked by the gilded rgya-phibs on the roof above it. This image, which according to DLV, p. 43, was made from some magically discovered silver, is carried in procession round the bar-bskor on the 25th day of the 1st month in the Byams-pa gdan-'dren ceremony by which the Buddha-to-come is invited to hasten his arrival.

8. Jo-bo sbas-pa' i Lha-khang. The place where the image of the Jo-bo is said to have been concealed in the seventh century when an attack by the Chinese was threatened (see my "The Growth of a Legend", Asia Major, 1971 [Chapter 7 above]). There appears to have been a doorway called Melong-can inside which the image was walled up. On the plaster covering was painted a fresco of 'Jam-dbyangs known as Kho-yon, meaning perhaps "let me have a share". This is no. 29 in the plan and pl. 136 in Weg. It is generally known as 'Jam-dbyangs A-ra-pa-tsa-na from a mantra associated with the deity. Inside the chapel are images of the line of Sa-skya Lamas (DLV, p. 44) and at the back, behind a wooden railing, alongside an image of the Guru Rin-po-che and others, is the clay figure of the goat that carried earth to fill up the lake on which the Jo-khang was built. It is called Ra-ma rgya-mo and is believed to grow bigger each year.

Going on from this chapel, DLV, p. 45 records there are frescoes of the Potala and Lcags-po-ri and of a festival held by the Tibetans. Similar scenes in frescoes from the Potala are illustrated in Art, pls. 32–34.

9. The Sangs-rgyas rab-bdun are situated by DLV, p. 46, in the central chapel on the west side of the floor above (bar-khang); but there are several representations of the same deities in different parts of the Jo-khang. Tibetan informants say there is an image of Mi-'khrugs-pa, or Rdo-rje mi-'khrugs-pa, in this chapel.

10. The Tshe-dpag lha-dgu chapel is not mentioned by DLV.

11. In the chapel of Thon-mi and Mgar there are also images of the Chinese and Nepalese queens of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po and a Spyhan-ras-gzigs.

12, 13, 15–16. Z shows one chapel of the klu and gnod-sbyin and one of the Dri-za Zur-phud Inga-pa on each side of the entrance passage. DLV, p. 45, refers only to a klu-khang on each side, but among the deities in them he mentions, in addition to the king of the klu, both gnod-sbyin and Dri-za Zur-phud Inga-pa; and on p. 46 he cites images on either side of the passage leading from the sandalwood door — seng-ldeing-sgo — including Drag-shed and Phyag-rdor on the north and Drel-zong and Rta-mgrin on the south. Inside the passage is a loose stone called rdo sbud-pa-can because it is shaped like a bellows. On their way out of the Jo-khang pilgrims stand on it believing that by doing so the prayers they have offered in all the
chapels they have visited will be fulfilled. The stone is mentioned by David Macdonald in *Twenty Years in Tibet*, p. 242 and in Chapman, p. 154. Informants mention a Smon-lam Lha-khang in this neighbourhood which is, perhaps, an altar near the stone.

The seng-ldeng-sgo, sandalwood door, is mentioned in two other passages of DLV, pp. 27 and 49, but the name was not familiar to my Tibetan informants. One of the most interesting illustrations in Lieou is pl. no. 3 showing a fine doorway with carved door-frames, lintel and architrave, elegant pilasters, and a lion rampant on each side of the upper part. There is a chain curtain; and in the passage beyond can be seen, dimly, several images behind a wooden railing. Although apparently described by Lieou as "Jo-khang eastern old Chinese gate", the style is clearly Tibetan of an early period under Kashmiri or Nepalese influence. Comparable work can be seen on another doorway — that of the chapel of the Jo-bo Rin-po-che (*Art*, pl. 61) which is perhaps the shar-gyi glo-'bur, "the eastern projection", described in DLV, p. 55, as having been extended by Zangs-dkar Lo-tsā-ba who lived in the eleventh century and who visited Ladakh, Kashmir and Nepal (Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, pp. 70, 354 etc.). When I asked Tibetan helpers whether the subject of Lieou’s pl. 3, might be at the east end of the passage leading from the ‘du-khang by way of the gzhung-sgo or seng-ldeng-sgo into the Gtsug-lag-khang although they rejected that suggestion, no one was able to locate the doorway.

14. Ye-shu’i cong-ch'en-po, "The great bell of Jesus", is from the Capuchin chapel at Lhasa which was destroyed in 1745. It hangs at the door from the ‘du-khang — the gzhung-sgo — and bears the inscription *Te Deum Laudamus*. The photograph in *Weg*, pl. 156, shows part of the line of lion figures forming the beam ends above the doorway. There is also a peng — a decorative panel inscribed in Chinese — presented by a Chinese emperor. From the roof of the passage hang other bells of Tibetan and Chinese manufacture.

17. This chapel of the Rje Rin-po-che does not appear to be mentioned by DLV. Tibetan informants identify *Art*, pl. 58, as the principal image and *Weg*, pl. 131, as taken in the same chapel.

It is near this point that DLV begins his description (p. 21). He first enumerates the rten of sku, gsung and thugs — body, speech and mind — of which the first is a fresco of the Rgyal-ba rigs-Ing, the five Dhyāni Buddhas, which is not located by Z. Next comes the six-syllable mantra — om mani padme hum — alleged to date from the time of Srong-brtson Sgam-po, which is inscribed on a stone slab in the courtyard (No. 25 on the plan). The symbol of mind is the mchod-rten made by the Sa-skya Pandita which enshrines a phyag-tsha bearing the image of Srong-brtson Sgam-po and containing some relic (DLV, p. 22, and no. 30 in the plan; see also illustration in *Weg*, pl. 152).
19. Z does not identify this chapel but it is said to contain an image of Sman-bla.

20. The eleven-headed Thugs-rje chen-po, which was traditionally the first to be consecrated in the Gtsug-lag-khang, is treated in DLV, p. 23, as of prime importance. The great image (Art, pl. 65; fig. 5) was destroyed at the Cultural Revolution in 1966 but part of the head was somehow rescued by the Tibetans and conveyed to India in 1967. A picture of the shattered remnant was published in the Newsletter issued by the Dalai Lama’s Information Office, Dharamsala, in February 1967.

21. The image of Byams-pa khrus-mdzad with a small figure of ‘Jam-dbyangs on its knee is shown in Art, pl. 62. Other images in the chapel are listed in DLV, pp. 26, 27. Outside is a stone slab, carved with lotus flowers, which is described as the bathing platform for Srong-brtsan Sgam-po and his queens. The image of Byams-pa is said to have been made from the earth soaked by the water from the slab, hence the name khrus-mdzad, “made by washing”.

22. The image of Tsong-kha-pa behind an iron screen is mentioned by DLV, p. 29. To the left, he says, are eight Sa-skya-pa Lamas. Other images in the chapel are described at p. 30; and many more have been added since, including one of the fifth Dalai Lama himself. The principal image, that of Tsong-kha-pa, is known as nga-‘dra-ma because he said of the statue “It is like me”. My recollection is that the face is much rounder than the usual representation.

Also in the chapel of Tsong-kha-pa, as mentioned by Das, p. 153, is the image of Phyag-na rdo-rje which Glang-dar-ma ordered to be pulled out of the Gtsug-lag-khang but when the rope was put round its neck those who tried to drag it away were seized with madness and the effusion of blood (see also DLV, p. 31).

23. The ‘O-thang-gi-mtsho is supposed to be the remnant of the lake that had to be filled in before the Jo-khang could be built. A stone slab in the dark chapel is said to give access to the water below. The chapel was kept closed and was visited by principal officials of the Tibetan Government only once a year when they threw offerings into the water.

24. The chapel of ‘Od-dpag-med is described by DLV, p. 32, under the epithet of Sangs-rgyas Snang-ba mtha’-yas. Outside the chapel DLV places the image of Khro-bo Rme-bo btsegs-pa reputed to have put to flight an army from China that invaded Tibet after the death of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po (see “The Growth of a Legend” cited above). Das, p. 153, also mentions this image. Nowadays it appears to be known popularly as Gung-thang me-shor — “Gung-thang is on fire!” — because it is pointing a finger in that direction.

Beyond this point, near the north side of the gtsang-khang, the “great chapel” of the Jo-bo, DLV, p. 33, mentions the images of the Rgyal-chen-
bzhi (sometimes known as Rgyal-chen rigs-bzhis) made from a symbolic offering of earth (sa-phud) from the foundation of Dpal Zangs-yangs lugs-zang mi-'gyur lhun-gyis grub-pa — i.e. the monastery of Bsam-yas; and also two pillars made from a similar offering of wood. The Four Great Kings can be identified with the figures illustrated in Lieou, pl. 56 (fig. 6), 57 and 58, and in Art, pl. 61, which have a strongly archaic appearance. They have none of the attributes of the traditional Rgyal-chen sde-bzhis and are quite unlike them. At Lhasa I was told that these images represented early Tibetan kings; but Tibetan informants now tend to doubt that identification. In Art, pl. 61, can be seen, also, what appears to be part of a carved doorway framing the entrance to the chapel of the Jo-bo. It bears a clear similarity in style to the doorway in Lieou pl. 3 as mentioned above.

25. The stone inscribed with om mani padme hum has been mentioned at note 17 above. A group of images of Atiśa, Sgrol-ma and Tsong-kha-pa, illustrated in Art, pl. 59, has recently been set up in the passage just behind it.

26. This great image of Byams-pa, over 20 ft. tall, faces westwards into the central open space known as dkyil-'khor-mthil: Art, pl. 76; Harrer, p. 50.

27. A smaller Byams-pa, a little way behind the other image, faces north from a small lattice enclosure known as the Mi-dbang Lha-khang.

Although there was some uncertainty about the correct names of the two images, I have accepted Zurkhang's description of no. 26 as Bar-zhi Byams-pa and no. 27 as Mi-dbang Byams-pa. It appears that additional images have recently been placed to the north of the Bar-zhi Byams-pa, in the same line; I am told that one is of the Slob-dpon Rin-po-che and it is suggested, but without absolute confidence, that another is the Byams-pa illustrated in Weg, pl. 145.

Nos. 28, 29 and 30 in the plan have been mentioned respectively in notes 6, 8 and 17 above.

The ka-ba ring-po and ka-ba thung-thung, the long and short pillars. The long pillars, which are attributed to the Tshal-pa Khri-dpon Dga’-bde bzang-po who lived in the fourteenth century (DLV, p. 56), support the skylight at the east end: see Lieou, pl. 4, which shows, also, the upper part of the Bar-zhi Byams-pa and what may be a small image of the Slob-dpon Rin-po-che. Some of the other pillars are seen in Art, pl. 17, and Weg, pl. 157. Lieou, pl. 6 (fig. 7), illustrates one of the ancient inner pillars, at the northeast corner.

On a pillar at the south side of the dkyil-'khor-mthil there is a metal tablet recording the presentation by an emperor of the Ming dynasty, described as “The son of Fa-wang, the righteous king”, of rich offerings including golden statues and golden bowls. DLV, pp. 56, 57, mentions a donation by a Ming emperor.

The striking figures of Thon-mi, Srong-brtsan Sgam-po (fig. 8) and his queens in Art, pls. 54–7, are said to be found in underground cells not seen
by any foreigner until 1953. Tibetan informants, who were well acquainted with the Jo-khang, had no knowledge of such cells but some thought it possible there might be a door leading downwards near the chapel of the Jo-bo Rin-po-che. *Art.*, pl. 58, showing an image of Tsong-kha-pa is also said by the authors to be in those underground cells. Tibetans identified it as the image in chapel no. 17; but may be mistaken. The existence of underground cells is supported by information I was given at Lhasa that the armour of Ge-sar is stored in a room beneath the floor of the Jo-khang and that there were chests of other ancient relics there.

No. 4
Plan No. 4: The First Floor

The chapels on this floor open on to a corridor running round the central area. There is an iron grille across its north-east end so that visitors must retrace their steps from chapel no. 9. A similar grille is sometimes placed across the south east side, also, to prevent visitors from walking too closely over the head of the Jo-bo Rin-po-che.

1. The chapel of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po is one of the four principal shrines which are surmounted by golden rgya-phibs roofs. DLV begins his account of this floor (the bar-khang) with the Sangs-rgyas rab-bdun made by the chos-rgyal and goes on to mention the images of Srong-brtsan and his queens, Tshong-kha-pa, and other images in the chapel (pp. 46–7).

2. The chang-snod rta-'go-can, or dngul-dam rta-mgo-ma (DLV, p. 59) is a round-bellied silver jar with a long neck surmounted by a horse’s head. DLV states that it was discovered by Tshong-kha-pa in a hidden treasure. The jar, as seen in recent years, bore the date of the fire-dog year of the 16th rab-byung — i.e. 1946 — a new covering in exact replica having been put over the original jar for its protection. The skill of Tibetans in the sixth and seventh centuries in making animal figures of precious metal is attested in several passages in the T'ang Annals (see my “Early Burial Grounds in Tibet”, [Ch. 28 above]).

Another reputed relic of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po is an earthenware beaker, now protected by a silver case, which is taken ceremonially to the bkal-shag and to the houses of the old noble families early in the sixth month.

After describing the chapel of Srong-brtsan, DLV, p. 47, mentions many images in the corridors and sgo-khang — niches over doors — including Sgrol-dkar on the south and Rta-mgrin on the west.

3. Here, where there is access from the ground floor and, upwards, to the second floor, my informants say there are images of Thub-pa Legs-grub and Gyap-ras-gzigs.

4. Z gives no information but I am told that there are images of the Bstan-pa gtag-rgas, the first seven Buddhist hierarchs in succession to
Gautama Buddha (see Das, Dictionary, p. 520). There are also two large prayer cylinders.

Chapels 5, 6, 7 and 8 are not identified by Z and are said to be rarely visited and to contain many books, small images, frescoes and thang-kas. These are, perhaps, the chapels which Landon was told were maintained by Buddhists of special races — e.g. the Nepalese (Landon, ii, p. 313).

9. Described by Z as the meditation cell of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po; it has an entrance shaped like a cave. DLV, p. 48, appears to place the meditation cell of Lama Zhang in the same neighbourhood; perhaps it is identical with Srong-brtsan’s cave. There is an image of ‘Jigs-byed in this chapel.

10. This is an empty space above the chapel of the Jo-bo Rin-po-che.

11. Gu-ru mtshan-brgyad. This is the principal chapel of Padmasambhava; its entrance is shaped like a cave, and it contains many images. On leaving it, one was offered chang, described as bdud-rtsi — nectar — in place of the usual holy water.

12. The lay-out of this corner is rather complicated. It appears that the stairway to the second floor leads from the chapel of Bde-mchog into chapel no. 13 which Z apparently places on this floor. Other informants say that Dpal-lidan Lha-mo is on the second floor. My own recollection, which is supported by Landon, is that the chapel is up a few steps leading from the first floor — i.e. between the two floors — and is itself on different levels, one containing the peaceful image and the other, the wrathful. The painting of Dpal-lidan Lha-mo drawn in blood from Srong-brtsan’s nose (read shangs-mtshal for zhang-sa-mtshal in DLV, p. 49; cf Das, p. 159) is, I think, on the wall of the passage leading to the chapel.

The two images of Dpal-lidan Lha-mo, especially the veiled figure of her fierce manifestation, have always attracted the special attention of foreign visitors, who also mention the horde of tame mice that haunt the chapel and scramble over the images. Tsybikov relates that the dead mice were sold as charms or medicine. Landon records a popular story of his day that Queen Victoria was a reincarnation of Dpal-lidan Lha-mo. DLV’s mention of Dpal Lha-mo is not easy to place in context. On p. 48 he mentions a painting in the be-dbang shug — an obscure phrase. Waddell reads bed-bar; and the term may relate to an inner passage. On p. 49 DLV appears to refer to an image modelled on that painting, and situated in the south-east corner turret.

14. I am told that in this chapel of Rta-mgrin there was formerly an image of the Slob-dpon Rin-po-che but it was removed early in this century by Bshad-zur Theiji who replaced it with an image of the Rje Rin-po-che (Tsong-kha-pa).

15. In what Z describes as the Chos-rgyal Gzin-chung — the chos-rgyal’s private room — there are said to be images of Ston-pa and the Nye-sras brgyad — the Buddha and his eight principal spiritual emanations.
16. Bya-khri Chos-skyong is a spirit that possesses the Karma-shar oracle who is a principal protector of the Jo-khang (see Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, p. 122).

17. The Sku-Lnga are another group of protecting deities, Pe-har and his retinue.

The triangular symbols round the central area indicate the lion-headed beam ends projecting from the roof over the corridor. They appear to be very early work (see Lieou, pl. 5; fig. 9). There are said to be a hundred such figures of which one (shown in Lieou loc. cit.) has a man’s head. As the Tibetan saying has it: seng-ge brgya-la mi-mgo gcig, “One human head to a hundred lion heads”. Tradition says they were carved by a Nepalese at the time of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po.

**Plan No. 5: The Second Floor**

1. Living quarters of the sacristans. The images of the Rgyal-ba rigs-Lnga mentioned by DLV, p. 49, are situated in the verandah of this room.

2. The Assembly Hall of Dpal-lidan Lha-mo reached by the stairway from the floor below. It contains many old weapons and pieces of armour. Services for the deity are held here.

3. This chapel contains many dkyil-khor, mandala.

4. DLV, p. 49, mentions this chapel of the Gnas-brtan bcu-drug as being over the sandalwood door and says it should properly be known as the Bkra-shis Khris-sgo, “The door of the auspicious throne”. Other images and paintings in the chapel are described. The images of the Gnas-brtan are attributed to the era of Sa-skya’s ascendancy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Good examples of similar images from that period can be seen in Tucci, *Indo-Tibetica*, iv pt 3, pls. 19 and 20 from Kyang-phu and pl. 50 from I-wang.

5. I am told there are many dkyil-khor here.

7. This is said to be a new chapel of Rta-mgrin.

8. The bridge, zam-pa, known as the Sprin-zam, “Cloud bridge”, leads to outer buildings including the offices of the rtsis-dpon and the bsher-dpang, and to the latrines.

9. Monks of Rme-ru used to stay here during the Smon-lam.

10. This was the residence of monks of Rnam-rgyal Grwa-tshang during the Smon-lam. There is a large skylight in the flat roof and several ladders lead up to the highest roof level. East of the skylight is a platform on which stood a big metal pot filled with prayer flags on slender sticks (dar-lcog) with an incense burner next to it. On the 15th of the 10th month when the fierce
The image of Dpal-'ldan Lha-mo was taken in procession round the bar-bskor a service was conducted in the tshogs-khang (no. 2 on the plan) by the monks.
of Rme-ru, after which the image was brought on to the roof and a glor-rgyag ceremony was held at which the dar-lcog were scattered among the large crowd that used to assemble for the occasion; the dar-lcog were then renewed. The orthography of the name of the ceremony is uncertain: one version is Dpal-lha'i rigs-grol; another is Dpal-lha'i ri-gra.

No. 6

[Diagram of a building with labeled rooms 1 to 8, and a label indicating 'ROOF' at the top right corner.]
Plan No. 6: The Roof

The ornamentation of the gilded *rgya-phibs* and of the four turrets shows slight differences in detail, some of which can be seen in the photographs listed below. Each turret has an entrance at roof level.


2. The turret chapel of Dmag-zor-ma, said to be the mother of the three Dpal-lha sisters. The first sister is a wrathful form whose image is kept at Tshal Gung-thang of which she is protectress. Her spouse, Grib Rdzong-btsan, is the *srong-ma* of Tshe-mchog-gling in Grib on the south bank of the Skyid-chu, opposite Lhasa, where he was established in a chapel of his own. On account of the fierce nature of the *lha-mo* the two were allowed to meet only once a year at a ceremony known as Gung-thang me-tog mchod-pa on the 15th day of the fourth month when the image of Grib Rdzong-btsan was brought to Gung-thang. After a ritual dance (*'cham*) and the symbolic sacrifice of a *linga* a large silk hanging decorated with figures of the Buddha and attendant deities in appliqué work (*gos-sku*) was hoisted on to a stand in front of the monastery. The image of Dpal-ldan Lha-mo was brought out of the *mgon-khang*, where it was normally kept, and the two images were set up face to face in front of the *gos-sku* and in the presence of the Gnas-chung *chos-skyong* who had come in procession on the previous day from Gnas-chung to his chapel in Tshal Yang-dgon. The *chos-skyong* in a state of possession preceded the two images in a circuit of the *gos-sku* after which they were returned to their respective chapels; and the *chos-skyong*, the god having left his body, was carried back to the Yang-dgon chapel whence on the following day he returned to Gnas-chung. The ceremony was attended by many people from Lhasa who also went back on the morning of the 16th for a day of picnics and merry making in the riverside parks. The second sister, the fiercest of the three, is represented by the veiled wrathful image in chapel 13 of plan no. 4, which is taken in procession round the *bar-bskor* as mentioned in the notes on plan no. 5. The image is said to be of stone and to be made even more heavy by being
weighted down with a number of appendages. The third sister is the peaceful form of Dpal-ladan Lha-mo whose image is also in chapel no. 13, directly below this turret. The turret is decorated with more rgyal-mdzhan ornaments than the others and they are often seen with rows of prayer flags strung between them.

4. The Tshe-ring mched-lnga are a group of goddesses among whose functions is to act as attendants on Dpal-ladan Lha-mo (Nebesky-Wojkowitz, op. cit., p. 177).

6. This is a treasury of the Bla-brang phyag-mdzod in which the best quality paper for government use was stored.

7. The gser-thog over the image of Thugs-rje chen-po was the gift of Pratima-la (Prthvimalla), a member of a later dynasty of Ya-rtse kings who ruled between 1338 and 1376, together with his minister Dpal-ladan-grags (see references in note 1 above).

On a ledge just over the parapet under the north-eastern projection of the rgya-phibs of the Jo-bo Rin-po-che (no. 1) are a stone phallus, a stone lion, and other magical objects designed to ward off adverse geomantic influences (see my “Phallic Symbols in Tibet”, Bulletin of Tibetology, 9, 2, 1972 [Chapter 29 above]). There is a variety of roof levels on this topmost part of the Gtsug-lag-khang. The highest is a narrow walk running round the roof inside the gilded railing which can be seen in Art, pl. 12, and Thomas, p. 105.

At a lower level is the main roof with skylights (Thomas, p. 113).

Other aspects can be seen in the following photographs: Waddell, p. 362 shows all four rgya-phibs and all four turrets from the south-east. Bell, Religion, p. 163, shows rgya-phibs no. 1 and other features in a general view from the east; Lieou, pl. 1, Tucci, pl. 48 and Harrer, p. 140, all appear to be taken from the south; Harrer shows also the gsung-chos-ra where the Dalai Lama preaches at the New Year (see plan no. 1, item 11); Younghusband, p. 181 and Bell, Portrait, p. 289 show rgya-phibs nos. 5 and 7 and turrets 4 and 6 from the roof of the 'du-khang; Thomas, p. 113, shows rgya-phibs no. 1 and turret no. 2 (Dpal-lha'i yum), and at p. 103 the east side of rgya-phibs no. 3; Tucci has an interesting detail of rgya-phibs no. 5 and the gilded parapet below. Art, pl. 12, is a view from beneath rgya-phibs no. 7 and a glimpse of turret no. 6.
Inscriptions on stone from the eighth and ninth centuries are among the best sources of information about the early history, social conditions and religion of the Tibetans and also about the state of the language at that time. Not long after I had completed an edition of all those I was able to collect in central Tibet, two hitherto unrecorded inscriptions and additional material on one other have come to light. One of the new discoveries was made by Geshe Pema Tshering of Bonn on a visit to his homeland in east Tibet. On a free-standing pinnacle of rock, known as Brag Lha-mo, in the district of Ldan-khog he discovered a short inscription of obvious antiquity with a group of Buddhist images in low relief alongside it. He has referred to his discovery briefly in Zentralasiatische Studien of the University of Bonn, vol. 16, where there is also an illustration of the rock; and in collaboration with Helmut Eimer he is preparing a full analysis and description which it is to be hoped will soon be published. In the meantime he has very kindly sent me a photograph of the inscription and valuable information about the site and has generously allowed me to mention it in advance of his detailed study.

From the photograph it can be seen that the inscription, though badly damaged, is of considerable interest not only for its contents but also as showing that such documents are still to be found. Tibetan writers in the past did not generally attach sufficient importance to these relics of their past to record them in full. Exceptions were the Karma-pa historian Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba (1504–66) and the great Kah-thog scholar Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu (1696–1755). The discovery of this inscription by Geshe Pema Tshering and of those at Lho-brag, to be mentioned later, shows that a new generation of Tibetan scholars is aware of the value of such docu-

merits; and it is to be hoped that the greater freedom of travel in Tibet may lead to further discoveries.

Previously known inscriptions from central Tibet are carved on stately pillars of dressed stone, but this one at Ldan-khog, like that from Rkong-po, is on a natural rock face, perhaps implying either an absence of suitable stone or a less affluent milieu; and owing to the nature of the surface the lettering lacks the precision and regularity of that on the stone pillars and tends more to the character of some of the eighth- and ninth-century manuscripts from Tun-huang.

What has survived places the inscription in the reign of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan (755–c.800) and most probably within its last ten or fifteen years. It is remarkable for its strong emphasis on the devotion of the btsan-po to Buddhism. Other inscribed pillars of his time and the Chronicle from Tun-huang certainly record his acceptance of the faith, his vow to maintain it, and the foundation by him of the great temple of Bsam-yas; but in the commemorative inscription near the royal burial mounds at ‘Phyongs-rgyas he figures as combining devotion to Buddhism with responsibility and regard for the old religious practices. In the first part of that inscription he is described as maintaining the wisdom of the gods — lha’i gtsug-lag — and acting in accordance with the religion of sky and earth — gnam-sa’i chos — after the customs of his ancestors; at the end he is seen as a convert to Buddhism — ’jig-rten-las ’das-pa’i chos bzang-po brnyes-nas. But even in that last paragraph the title accorded to him — ’phrul-gyi lha byang-chub chen-po, “Great enlightened supernaturally wise divinity” — brings together elements from both the old faith and the new.

By contrast, in the Brag Lha-mo inscription Khri Srong-lde-brtsan is known from the start by the purely Buddhist epithet, byang-chub-sems-dpa’, “one of perfect spiritual enlightenment”, bodhisattva. In the damaged line that follows, it seems possible to detect references to the traditional qualities of royalty reflecting his glory, byin, and military might, dbu-rmog brtsan; but there does not seem to be any mention of the old religion; and the inscription is unique in referring to the correct translation of Mahāyāna sūtras — (theg-pa chen-po mdo) sde mang-mo zhiṅ gtan la bab par bsgyur to. The text seems to go on to state that by that merit, the chos-rgyal — a title by which Khri Srong-lde-brtsan is designated in the ‘Phyongs-rgyas inscription — and many hundreds of thousands of others entered into deliverance. He is credited also with the extensive foundation of temples. Certainty these readings and interpretations must, however, await the result of Geshe Pema Tshering’s study.

More substance is added to these significant passages by the edicts of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan preserved in vol. ja of the Chos-‘byung of Dpa’bo Gtsug-lag which I have described elsewhere (Chapter 12 above) as embodying the first Tibetan Chos-‘byung and which can be dated between 779 and 782 A.D. They show that even at that time, generally regarded as the early years of the
flowering of Buddhism in Tibet, there were centres of Buddhist practice not only at Lhasa, Bsam-yas and Khra-brug but also in Bru-zha (Gilgit), Zhangzhung territory in the north-west, and Mdo-smad in east Tibet.

The inscription and group of Buddhist carvings at Brag Lha-mo suggest that there was an early religious foundation in the vicinity. Teichman who visited "Dengko" in 1918 mentions "the celebrated Drolma Lhakhang" which had been seen earlier by A.K., that redoubtable pandit of the Survey of India. The temple is said to have contained a famous image of Drolma (Sgrol-ma) which is supposed to have flown there from Peking. Helmut Eimer has pointed out that the Sgrol-ma Lha-khang of Ldan-khog, not far from Brag Lha-mo is claimed — in spite of differences in the orthography in several writers — to be one of the temples founded by Srong-brtsan Sgam-po to dominate the frontiers. The name might reflect some tradition about his Chinese bride who was deemed to be a goddess; but it cannot be overlooked that there is a possible later connection with A-phyi Chos-kyi sgrol-ma, the protecting deity of the 'Bri-khung sect whose founder came from the Skyu-ra Dru-rgyal family which was all powerful in that region.

Whatever may be made of these confused traditions, the inscription clearly shows the influence of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan in that region. Whether the Buddhist carvings are contemporary with the inscription is a matter for consideration. The bodhisattva figure, the only one of which I have seen a photograph, appears to be the supporter on the left side of a central figure within a circular aureole in a group which Pema Tshering has identified as Amitayus, Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāni. It recalls drawings in manuscripts of the eighth or ninth century from Tun-huang and some paintings in cave temples there of which the style seems to show more Central Asian than Chinese characteristics. Eimer has pointed out that an adjustment to the end of the first line of the text shows that the inscription was made after the carving; but the impression, to me, is that both are part of a single devotional exercise.

It would be tempting to see the carving as a rare example of early Tibetan art. Ldan-khog was former territory of the Sum-pa or Mi-nyag which was conquered by the Tibetans in stages between the seventh and early eighth centuries, and there is no suggestion that the Chinese had any presence or influence there during the T'ang dynasty. But especially after the Tibetan conquest of the border cities of China's north-west there was a good deal of coming and going between the two countries. Chinese religious teachers visited central Tibet, and a Chinese craftsman cast the great bell of Bsam-yas. Chinese workmen and artists are traditionally, and credibly, said to have taken part in the building of Bsam-yas; and it is possible that the carvings at Brag Lha-mo were the work of the Chinese or of the non-Chinese people who, as documents from Tun-huang show, were employed in many capacities in that region.
Helmut Eimer has informed me of a short Chinese inscription at Ldan-khog which might have a bearing on the matter; it appears to refer to a "heavenly woman" or "women", but neither its meaning nor date is clear.

It may be remembered that Ldan-khog was among the many border territories conquered by Chao Erh-feng in 1908. He planned to establish a district headquarters there and, although his death and subsequent Tibetan successes frustrated that design, Teichman found a Chinese yamen there in 1918 and it continued side by side with a Tibetan official until at least 1932.

Elucidation of that and many other questions awaits Geshe Pema Tshering's forthcoming work. In the meantime I am grateful that he has permitted me to bring his important discovery and some of its problems and implications to the notice of students of Tibetan epigraphy and history.

* * *

The second discovery is described in Bod-ljongs zhib-'jug, 2 (1982) in two articles by Pa-sangs dbang-'dus, one in Tibetan, the other in Chinese. For an understanding of the latter I am greatly indebted to Professor South Coblin of the University of Iowa who has translated relevant passages and given me valuable advice.

It appears that there are two inscriptions, similar in meaning, on rock faces in Lho-brag near the headquarters town of Do-ba Rdzong (Towa), now known as La-cha. There is some confusion about the exact sites as the position of one of them is given in the Tibetan text as near the village of 'Dus-byung, 50 le-bar to the west (chu-lha'i phyogs) of the district town of Lho-brag Hsien, while the Chinese version indicates that the distance is 5 kilometres north-west of the same place. The position of the other is more easily determined, being to the north-east (dbang phyogs) of the same place, at the junction of the Lho-brag Nub-chu and the Sman-thang-chu. The Chinese version agrees generally except that it gives the direction as east of the country seat of Lo-cha. The Sman-thang Chu can be identified with the Mandong Chu of the Survey of India map, 1925, which though approximate in that area, shows it a short distance to the east of Towa. If the two inscriptions are similar and relate to the estates and privileges of the same family it seems probable that they would not be very far apart and the distance of 5 kilometres for the 'Dus-byung site is the more acceptable. In the Tibetan text 50, lnga-bcu, may be an error for bco-lnga.

The Tibetan article (T.) states that out of more than 150 tshig-rkang only eighteen or nineteen survive in an obscure condition (gsal-la mi-gsal). Each article contains a copy of what can be read at one of the sites — it is not specified which. In each the number of syllables is about 140. According to Tibetan dictionaries tshig-rkang means sloka, gatha; but in the Chinese article (C.) it is rendered as "syllable or word" — i.e., a single Chinese character. In classical Tibetan usage, as I am informed by Ngawang Thondup Narkyid,
a scholar with a special interest in Tibetan linguistics, tshig-'bru is a syllable and tshig a complete word — e.g. btsan and po are tshig-'bru and btsan-po is a tshig; so it appears that Pa-sangs dbang-'dus has treated tshig-rkang as the equivalent of tshig-'bru. The number of lacunae is marked in T. as 18; in C. it is apparently 34. C. may have tried to show single effaced letters, while in T. the same author may have estimated missing words.

Such differences and many other points could be elucidated if there were a photographic record, but it appears there is none; and it must be assumed that both copies come from field-notes of an eye-copy or eye-copies by the same person from the same original. It is, therefore, surprising that there are so many differences between the two versions and perhaps more surprising that in most instances the roman transcription in C. is preferable to the Tibetan text in T. Some of the differences are in presentation: T. shows the reversed ki-gu and writes dang — rather badly — with the d above the ng. In C. a number of words are improbably run together, e.g., nyenye, skudang and so on; and there is no punctuation, which is indicated in a few — probably by no means all — instances in T. These are of less significance than fifteen differences in the readings. In nine of these C. is clearly preferable; and it is unacceptable in only two but there are also two omissions and one printer’s error. One difference is debatable, as will be mentioned later. In the last line of both T. and C. comparison with other inscriptions shows that sgren-gu is an error for sgrom.

Out of this careless confusion I have collated the following text: I have not inserted additional punctuation.

btsan po lha sras gyi zha sngar lde sman lde’u cung / glo ba nye nye sku’-dang chab srid la dphen pha’i rje blas dka’ ba bked byed nas bka’ s gnan g lde’u cung gi pha’ lo sngang gi hu tu phel grgyud nam zhar srid g.yung drung dang mtshungs pha dang khol yul las stogs pha myi dbri myi snyung ba dang / lde’u cung gi mchad gyi/ rim gro bla nas mdzad de nam cig dbon sras gang gi ring la ral yang / bla nas stong sdes brtsig phar gnan g lde’u cung gi pha2 lo sngang gi hu tu phel grgyud x phu nu x x cig yang bka’ gyod x gtsigs shan x x x x x x x dbu snyung gnan g dang rkong kar po lha btsan x x sa x x x x x blon po dang bu bzhi zhang lon gi bro bor ba’i gtsigs gyi sgrom3 bu ni phyag sba’l du bzung ngo.

Notes

1. T. reads kha lo sngang; this is discussed later.
2. C. omits kha lo sngang gi.
3. T. and C. read sgren.
A provisional translation follows:

Whereas Lde-sm-a Lde-'u-cung has been very loyal to the btsan-po, the divine son, and has continuously taken trouble in performing the duty of rje-blas to the benefit of our person and the state, it has been granted by order, that the status in perpetuity, the service tenure lands and so on, of the line of male descendants of Lo-snang the father of Lde-'u-cung shall never be decreased and never diminished, and that the rites for the tomb shall be performed by the higher authority and, for ever, in the time of all our descendants damage to it shall be repaired by the higher authority, the stong-sde. And if older or younger brothers of the line of male descendants of Lo-snang the father of Lde-'u-cung are involved in an accusation, for one occasion a decree dismissing the imputation shall be given. This has been granted on oath and the casket containing the edict which has been sworn, as witnesses, by Rkong-kar-po Lha-btsan . . . and the minister and the four zhang-lon sons has been deposited in the archives.

The language regarding the grant of status and privileges is generally similar to that in the edicts on the north face of the Zhol rdo-rings and those at Zhwa'i Lha-khang and De-mo in Rkong-po. The terms rje-blas, khol-yul, dbon-sras, phu-nu, etc., have been studied by several scholars to whose work reference is made in my Corpus of Early Tibetan Inscriptions, Royal Asiatic Society, 1985. The passage about overlooking an accusation on one occasion is supplied on the basis of the west inscription at Zhwa'i Lha-khang, l. 40, and the supposition that the lacuna after shun would contain some such word as brtegs implying an imputation against someone's character. As in other inscriptions leading persons in the state took part in the royal vow. The first named here is the feudatory ruler - rgyal-phran - of Rkong-po or a member of his family; other names are lost in the effaced passage and the last - bu-bzhi zhang-lon - which I have taken to refer to four brothers, perhaps local, holding the rank of zhang-lon, which covered the main body of officials, might perhaps be understood as the Bu-bzhi minister although there is no instance of a family holding that name.

The most unusual part of the inscription relates to the provision that the burial rites of Lde-'u-cung should be attended to by the stong-sde, the Governor of the Thousand District, presumably of Lho-brag. The only other record of such a favour is the presentation by Srong-brtsan Sgarn-po of a stone, on which an oath had been sworn, to be the foundation of the tomb (mchad) of a noble minister of the Dba's clan (Tun-huang Chronicle, fo. 109).

The recipient of so signal a distinction must have been of very high standing; but there is no mention of Lde-sm-a Lde-'u-cung or any similar name in the manuscripts from Tun-huang or in the lists of witnesses to the edicts of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan and Khri Lde-srong-brtsan or to the Sino-Tibetan treaty
of 821/2; nor is there any trace in later works which show some knowledge of early records, such as the Bka'-thang sde-nga and the Chos-'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag. The question may, therefore, be asked whether the name is that of an office or function and denotes the Sman of the royal family, whose patronymic was Lde. Lde'u-cung might imply a cadet member of that family.

Sman immediately suggests a physician and it may be significant that one of the memorials to Lde-sman Lde'u-cung is near Sman-thang — the plain of medicinal plants (?). There is an extensive later tradition about the introduction of medical science to Tibet which has been examined fully by Christopher Beckwith in JAOS (1979). The account in Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag, vol. tsa, tells how after a basic medical treatise was brought to Tibet in the seventh century by the Chinese bride of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, physicians were invited from India, China and Khrom of Stag-gzigs — “Persian Rome” (Byzantium?). A century later more physicians came from other neighbouring countries — Kashmir, the Turkic lands and Zhang-zhung; and Tibetan physicians were trained, beginning with the famous G.yu-thog Yon-tan mgon-po. The association of the name of Galenos, the second-century Greek physician, with the first group of visitors shows that the tradition is overlaid with legend but that is not to deny that it has some historical basis; and there is evidence of the practice of medicine in the time of the Tibetan kingdom in at least three manuscripts from Tun-huang. In one of them, Pelliot Tibétain 1044, the method is attributed to India and is linked with the name of the Lha'i Drang-srong 'Phrul-can Ha-ta-na-byé-thag; another, Pell. T. 1057, is in similar language; and in another, Pell. T. 127, there are references to medical knowledge from Ta-zig, Dru-gu (the Turks) and Zhang-zhung; but there is not definite mention of a Sman-pa in this connection unless perhaps in l. 160 of Pell. T. 127 — sman-ba'i [sman-pa'i] yon-tan.

On the other hand there are numerous references, principally in works on divination, to sman of another sort — supramundane beings, many of them female such as the mu-sman and mtsho-sman; others were sman of the earth, sky, water, mountains and so on. They have survived in the demonology of Tibetan Buddhism and of Bon as protectors of the faith. In the early times they were associated with other godlings and were especially concerned with the fortunes of the royal family and noble ministers, about whose well-being or the opposite they made prognostications. Many instances, described as chu-sman-gyi mchid, mu-sman-gyi zhal-nas etc., can be seen in manuscripts from Tun-huang, e.g. Pell. T. 1043 and IOL 740.

In order to communicate such messages a medium was needed. Ariane Macdonald (Spanien) who has made a profound study of those divination manuscripts in Études Tibétaines, 1971, notes that the mu-sman spoke through the mouth of an old woman. Perhaps the persons stated in F.W. Thomas,
Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents, ii, pp. 394, 395, to have been appointed to serve, or petition (gsol), various local deities had a similar function. Ariane Macdonald also suggests that some of the beings connected with divination may have been part human and part divine; and it may be possible to see the Lde-smān Lde‘u-cung’ as a forerunner of such present-day spirit mediums as the State Oracle of Gnas-chung, who in ordinary life is a human being but when possessed by his patron deity becomes a sort of god.

The reference to the performance of rje-blas implies that the Lde-smān had some official status. Certainly, the art of astrology, closely allied to divination, had official recognition in the rtsis-pa chen-po who is named among the ministers who witnessed the Sino-Tibetan treaty; and the inscription at Skar-cung shows that there were persons who advised the ruler about dreams and omens. The second edict of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan in the Chos-'byung of Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag also refers to interpreters of signs and portents who exerted influence on the royal court.

The debatable reading where the Tibetan text of the inscription has kha-lo snang and the Chinese has pha la’o (lo) snang might have a bearing on the matter. The Tibetan version would be quite out of keeping with normal usage by which either a personal or family name follows that of the clan or family without the particle gi, gyi or kyï; so, if it is correct, there must be something unusual. Kha-lo means “guidance” and kha-lo-snang might mean a person who gave guidance, perhaps an interpreter of the sayings of a sman. But too many problems follow from the speculation, and the general reliability of the version in the Chinese article makes the reading Pha Lo-snang the more probable.

Whether Lde Smān Lde‘u-cung was a physician or a spirit medium (or, indeed, neither) his services to the btsan-po were such that the privileges granted to him were extended to future generations of his family. Seemingly he had no son, so the grant is made to the other male descendants of his father. Similar grants are seen in the north inscription on the Zhol rdo-ring, where it is made not only for the direct descendants of Stag-sgra Klu-khong himself but also to other male descendants of his father; and in the Zhwa’i Lha-khang inscriptions where since Myang Ting-nejé-'dzin was a celibate monk, his father receives the favour.

The name of the btsan-po who proclaimed the edict for Lde Smān Lde‘u-cung has not survived, so the regnal period of the inscription cannot be definitely determined. There is no evidence that the title Btsan-po Lha-sras was used in the time of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan, but it is applied to Khri Srong-lde-brtsan, Khri Lde-srong-brtsan and Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan Ral-pa-can alike.

Orthography may provide the significant clue. The da-drag, which is found in the Lho-brag inscription, appears in all other surviving inscriptions in varying numbers; but in its extensive use of the archaic pha for po,
that at Lho-brag is comparable only with those on the Zhol rdo-rings which are the earliest known and can be dated c. 764. In later inscriptions that usage is very rare. Another point in common between the Lho-brag and Zhol inscriptions is that in neither is there any trace of Buddhist influence. It is arguable that the latter date from a time when the revival of Buddhism in the twentieth year of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan — i.e., c. 762 A.D. — was in its very early stages. The possibility that the Lho-brag inscription reflects popular non-Buddhist religion is not necessarily convincing evidence that it antedates the Buddhist revival, for their memorial inscriptions show that both Khri Srong-lde-brtsan and Khri Lde-srong-brtsan combined respect for the old religion of the gods and worship of earth and heaven with their acceptance of Buddhism; but it certainly does not run counter to the early date suggested by the orthography and allows the Lho-brag inscription to be tentatively assigned to the early years of the reign of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan.

It is to be hoped that Pa-sangs dbang-'dus who has made this valuable discovery, can provide further information which might throw light on the many uncertainties, in particular details of the second inscription and, if possible, photographs or at least a sketch of the lay-out of the texts.

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The third subject is some important new information about the inscription at the bang-so — the tumulus tomb — of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan at 'Phyongs-rgyas. When Giuseppe Tucci and I visited the place in 1949 only the upper part of the pillar could be seen above ground; the rest was buried in a field-bank which had been built up over the centuries. Some twenty-two lines of the text were immediately visible but, with the help of the monk guardian, a local woman and boy were engaged to dig a narrow trench which allowed a further twenty-five lines to be seen with considerable difficulty and discomfort. Of most of these only fragmentary, and sometimes doubtful, readings could be recorded. My findings were published in JRAS 1969.

Now the Chinese authorities have had the whole pillar excavated and enclosed in a small building. Tamara Hill of San Francisco, who was able to photograph the pillar, very kindly sent me some colour slides showing that it rests on a stone tortoise and has a carved decoration of snakes and dragons on its east face. It proves to be a monument of even more imposing dimensions than I had surmised.

Subsequently through the kindness of South Coblin I have seen an article in Chinese by Bsod-nams dbang-'dus and Chang Chien-lin in Wen-mlr, 9 (1985) of which Roderick Whitfield, Professor of Chinese and East Asian Art at the University of London, has generously given me a summary. The article, which describes the excavated pillar, is illustrated with rather poorly reproduced photographs and drawings of the remarkable reliefs on the side
of the pillar and on the underside of the small stone canopy, also of the stone tortoise which is carved from the upper part of a block of dressed stone over one metre high. The pillar itself is said to be 5.6 metres in height and the monument overall from base to finial to be 7.18 metres.

The article includes twelve lines of the inscription in Tibetan letters with a transcription in roman. They are said to be the last of a total of fifty-nine lines and therefore appear to join up with the fragmentary readings in my article mentioned above. The text is too badly damaged to allow a continuous translation and some of the readings are dubious. For example snga has been read three times for what must be dang written with the letter ng subscribed under the d as is frequently seen in other inscriptions. Srim in l. 10 is highly improbable and zhongs in l. 11 is doubtful. Nevertheless enough survives to show that there are echoes of some passages in the first part of the inscription eulogizing the traditional attributes of royalty — thugs-sgam bka’-brtsan (l. 4) — and the martial prowess of the btsan-po in commanding the allegiance of neighbouring rulers (ll. 7, 9), but what is important is the clear reference to the Buddhist faith which has not been mentioned earlier. That is not really surprising for Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s devotion to Buddhism is attested in his Skar-cung inscription and the related edict preserved in the history of Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag, also in the Sgra-sbyor of which fragmentary manuscripts from Tun-huang survive. Although much damaged, the closing lines on the pillar appear to mention the death of the btsan-po and end by ascribing to his bang-so the name Rgyal-chen’-phrul, by which it is known also to later historians.

The final burial rites of a btsan-po customarily took place about two years after his death in a tomb which had probably been prepared while he was still alive. The pillar can therefore be dated between 815, the year in which Khri Lde-srong-brtsan died, and 817 by when the burial would have taken place.

The decoration on the pillar, about which and connected matters I have had much valuable advice from Roderick Whitfield and Waldimir Zwalf of the British Museum, combines Indian and Chinese motifs with the latter strongly predominating. On the east and west faces elongated dragons appear to pursue each other in a scattering of Chinese “cloud-heads” above a group of writhing serpents. The cloud design also appears on the underside of the canopy together with flying apsaras or vidyadhara figures at each corner and the sun in the centre of the east side and the moon on the west. The sun and moon are also carved at the head of the inscription on the pillar itself.

The whole is a substantial example of the progress of glyptic art in Tibet, the earliest survivals of which appear to be two carved doorways in the Jo-khang of Lhasa which was founded in the seventh century (see Liu l-ssu, Hsi-tsang fo-chiao i-shu, pl. 3., and Siś and Vanis, Der Weg nach Lhasa pl. 32). These resemble Licchavi work ascribed to the seventh century
illustrated in Pratapaditya Pal, *The Arts of Nepal*, 1974, i, pls. 13–15. Their Indian lineage may be seen in many examples from the elaborate fifth-century doorway at Deogarh (B. Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India*, 1967, pl. 77b) to Bodh Gaya in the early Pāla period (Asher, *The Art of Eastern India*, pls. 11, 119). There are also in the Jo-khang massive wooden pillars, probably of the same period, with carved capitals showing scrolling and flying figures (Liu I-ssu, *op. cit.*, pl. 6, and Jisl, Siś and Vaniś, *Tibetan Art*, pl. 17). The antecedents of such work can be seen in carving at Cha Bāhīl in Nepal and Nālandā (Pal, *op. cit.*, pls. 79 and 157). The carved lions and grotesque human head on beam-ends in the Jo-khang (Liu I-ssu, *op. cit.*, pl. 5) may also be from the seventh century, but while there are similar figures of a later date — e.g., at Samada c. twelfth century (Tucci, *Transhimalaya*, 1973, pl. 126) — there is a lack of earlier examples.

The next survivals are the rock carvings at Brag Lha-mo. From the small part I have seen the iconography appears to be of Indian origin — perhaps modified by passage through Central Asia and executed by Chinese trained craftsmen, as I have suggested above. When a photograph of the whole group is available it may be possible to draw comparisons with groups of a central Buddha accompanied by supporting *bodhisattvas* on either side, from Swat to Tun-huang.

Of the same reign are the dragon and lion figures on Khri Srong-lde-brtsan’s commemorative pillar at ’Phyongs-rgyas (Richardson, “Early Burial Grounds in Tibet and Tibetan Decorative Art of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries”, CAJ, 1963, pl. 15 [Chapter 28 above]). The carving is badly effaced but the appearance of the quite freely drawn lion on the upper part of the pillar is generally similar to that of the lion supporting Mañjuśrī in paintings from Tun-huang, while the traces of dragon figures on the lower part resemble the stylized carvings on the pillar of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan which are in a tradition that can be traced back to the Han dynasty. I have seen nothing closely comparable to the serpent design on the same pillar; it may be inspired by Indian mythology (see e.g. Pal, *op. cit.*, pls. 90, 252). Sun and moon symbols like those on the Khri Lde-srong-brtsan pillar appear on a painting from Tun-huang of Ākāśagarbha with an inscription in Tibetan (BM Stein 168). The tortoise base is a Chinese symbol of longevity.

Other examples from the reign of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan are the rdo-rje thunderbolt and swastika carved on the bases of the Zhwa’i Lha-khang pillars; the former is rather elaborate and not unlike the designs in the paintings from Tun-huang. Of the same reign is the base of the Skar-cung pillar with a bold pattern of mountains in Chinese style; the fluted canopy and elaborate finial also show Chinese influence.

The most notable survival from the reign of Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan Ral-pa-can is the rather battered stone lion on the tumulus at ’Phyongs-rgyas. The treatment of the mane and the concealed ears resembles that of the hair
of a *garudā* image in Nepal (Pal, *op. cit.*, pl. 100), but there is also a Chinese feature in the depiction of a muscle on the foreleg rather like that in a well-known T'ang marble lion (L. Sickman and A. Soper, *Art and Architecture of China*, p. 1, 61b); but the attitude of the latter is quite different. A pair of lion figures of the eighth century from Nepal are rather nearer (Pal, *op. cit.*, pl. 163), but the closest similarity is a lion from Tumshuq illustrated in *Von le Coq, Von Land und Leuten in Ost Turkestan*, so the artistic origin of the figure is uncertain.

Another recent article in *Wenwu* shows that excavation of the base of the Sino-Tibetan Treaty pillar at the Jo-khang of Lhasa reveals that the pillar rests on a stone tortoise. Further, at 'U-shang ('On-cang-do), where Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan founded a temple, there is an eighteen-foot tall pillar of well dressed stone with an elegant stone capital, but uninscribed, which also stands on a stone tortoise. In the courtyard of the chapel, which was said to have been completely restored by the late Dalai Lama, there is another pillar of reddish stone with a rather heavy capital; it is decorated on its sides with the *bka'-ris *rigs-brgyad* and other religious symbols. Although the pillar looks old, the carvings are in such good condition that I was doubtful whether they could be original; nevertheless these symbols are found in drawings from Tun-huang (e.g. *The Silk Route and Diamond Path*, UCLA Art Council, 1982, p. 148).

Conclusions from a limited body of evidence are necessarily speculative. It is known from Chinese records that the Tibetans were highly skilled in fine metalwork and also that they decorated the tombs of their warriors by painting white tigers on them; but nothing of that survives, and from the examples considered above it appears that after the initial influence of Indian models, probably by way of Nepal, Chinese influence prevailed. That is not really surprising for after the brief honeymoon period during the reigns of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po and T'ai-tsung hostilities, which were almost continuous, brought Tibetans into close contact with Chinese frontier towns. Moreover, there was rarely a complete interruption of diplomatic relations. Envoys from each side regularly visited the court of the other and for forty years from 641 to 681 and a further twenty-nine years from 710 to 739 a Chinese princess with her own ministers and retinue lived at the Tibetan capital. But a new closeness of relationship came with the establishment from the decade 776 to 786 of a Tibetan colonial regime in the Chinese fortress cities of the north-west on the approaches to the Silk Route. There the Tibetans employed Chinese gentry as officials and other local people as translators, scribes and so on; and there they were in contact with Chinese teachers of Buddhism in a tradition which preceded their own conversion. Recent scholarship, notably that of Yoshiro Imaeda and R.A. Stein, has shown the extent to which Tibetan official thought and language were influenced by those of the Chinese classics. Chinese teachers and craftsmen made their appearance in central Tibet in the
later part of the reign of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan, and the tradition that Chinese artists as well as Indian and Nepalese took part in the decoration of Bsam-yas c. 779 is not impossible to accept.

Lesser examples of monumental art in the capitals and finials of several inscribed pillars may support that trend. The earliest on the rdo-rings at Lhasa Zhol which dates from c. 764 before the main influx of Chinese visitors, is small, simple and slightly upcurved; it is surmounted by two stone steps on which rests a small stone dome not unlike the drum of stupa, crowned by a well-carved finial consisting of three circular ornaments enclosed in a scrolled border. Tibetan observers regarded it as the yid-bzhin nor-bu, the cintāmaṇi; in this case perhaps three in one. The canopies of two other pillars of the same reign — that at Bsam-yas dating from c. 779-782 and the memorial of the btsan-po about twenty years later — are also plain; the former is surmounted by a gilded ornament symbolizing the sun resting on an upturned quarter moon and topped by a small knob; it can hardly be original and is not an integral part of the pillar. The other supports a dome-shaped stone, like that at Zhol, with a badly weathered cone-shaped finial, possibly a lotus.

Several of the capitals of the next reign beginning c. 800 have a more marked Chinese appearance. The canopy of the Skar-cung pillar is handsomely fluted and is topped by an elaborate object which, again, Tibetans described as the cintāmaṇi.

The capitals at Zhwa’i Lha-khang are absolutely plain and lack finials, having apparently been damaged when the pillars fell down some time after the tenth century. The carving on the underside of the canopy on the pillar at Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s tomb has already been described; there is also a small scroll decoration round its edge; and the comparatively flat canopy is surmounted by a round lotus bud supported by a beaded collet. From a recent photograph there appears to be some cement at its base suggesting it had been knocked off and replaced since I saw it in 1949.

Of the pillars from the reign of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan (815–c.838) that at Lcang-bu has sharply upturned corners and the sides are decorated with a Chinese pattern of clouds. The canopy on the treaty pillar near the Jo-khang is simple and has a decoration of clouds. That on the uninscribed pillar at ’U-shang is slightly upturned and has a simple decoration on its side. Those three and the small pillar in the courtyard at ’U-shang all have conical cintāmaṇi finials in slightly different forms and in varying states of preservation. That on the Treaty Pillar is similar to the finials at Skar-cung.

* * *

The valuable contributions to the study of early Tibetan art as well as history, social conditions, and language in the three articles examined above
give hope that the interest in such matters by Tibetan and Chinese scholars is only the beginning of a continuous search for survivals of Tibet's past. Apart from further possibilities in less well-known parts of central and south-east Tibet, it is probable that the Tibetan empire which extended from Hunza to the north-western frontier of China has left more traces than those discovered by Sir Aurel Stein and Paul Pelliot. Wilhelm Filchner has mentioned in A Scientist in Tartary, 1939, p. 144, the finding of small lion figures of heavy stone and many other relics at the site of a Tibetan burial at Tsagan Usu, some ninety miles south-west of the Kokonor. The Tibetan scholar Dge-'dun chos-'phel notes in The Blue Annals, trans. Roerich, i, p. 63, that there was near Hsining an inscribed stone pillar mentioning the "Three Learned Men of Tibet" in the late ninth century; and Mildred Cable recorded an old Tibetan temple in a thinly populated area near Tun-huang. The former fortress towns of the Chinese border from Liangzhou to Anhsi where there were Tibetan administrative centres in the eighth and ninth centuries might be worth investigating; and so might Bla-brang Bkra-shis-'khyil. Further, there are throughout Tibet large numbers of ancient burial mounds, often not recognized as such, and although Tibetan susceptibilities might be offended by the excavation of hallowed places like the bang-so of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, scientific exploration of lesser sites could yield much evidence of the past. There is a series of great conical mounds some 500 feet in circumference seen by the pandit A.K. near the monastery of Jador north of the Gnam-mtsho (Tengri Nor). In one of them there are open passages, and nearby there is a large gateway in the rock through which the god Gnyan-chen Thang-lha, the protecting deity of the Tibetan Kings, is said to pass.

Many remains may have been destroyed by time and by man but there is still a chance of some significant discoveries; and it is important that anyone fortunate enough to find some unknown monument, document or artefact should not fail to record it photographically.

Addenda

Since completing the article I have seen in Giuseppe Tucci, The Religions of Tibet, pp. 232, 238, reference to the lde'u as a group of diviner-priests possessing a sacred character as protectors of society.

Michael Aris has drawn my attention to a tradition from Ngang in Bhutan that Khri Srong-lde-brtsan had a "beloved natural son" (thugs nye-ba'i sras zur-pa) called Lde-chung Don-grub upon whom he conferred the province of Lho-brag (Michael Aris, Bhutan, p. 138). Even though the tradition seems to be distorted it shows that the name of Lde-chung survived in the memories of the Bhutanese who had long connections with Lho-brag.
The family appears to have survived in the mkhas-pa Lde'u, author of the Lde'u chos-'byung attributed to the twelfth century.
Tibetan scholars in occupied Tibet and their Chinese colleagues have recently shown an active interest in searching for evidence relating to the early history of the country. Their researches have produced several valuable additions to the number of inscriptions of the eighth and ninth centuries already on record. The lower part of the pillar at the tomb (bang-so) of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan has been excavated, revealing the hitherto concealed part of the inscription and carved decoration on the sides of the pillar; and new inscriptions from Lho-brag have been recorded. I have discussed these discoveries in an article in the *Tibet Journal*, xiii no. 2, 1987 (Chapter 31 above). Now, in a recent issue of *Bod-ljongs zhib-'jug* the discovery is reported and discussed at length by Chab-spel Tshe-brtan phun-tshogs of two inscriptions on a rock face at Ldan-ma Brag-rtsa near the village of Ri-mda’ in the district of ‘Byams-mdun (Brag-g.yab) under the jurisdiction of Chamdo. There is a Chinese version of the article as well as the one in Tibetan. Both record the texts of the inscriptions, the Chinese in Roman transcription, the Tibetan in Tibetan letters. There are several small differences between the two versions and in all such instances that in the Chinese version seems the better. Unfortunately there is no photograph of the inscriptions or the site, but it is stated that some readings may be in doubt owing to the difficulty of copying the text from the steep cliff. Nevertheless, the texts are coherent and the inscriptions are of considerable importance.

There is a carving on the rock face of Rnam-par snang-mdzad accompanied by the Eight Spiritual Sons of the Buddha and below them is the figure of the *klu* Mi-mgon dkar-po, who is identified by Nebesky-Wojkowitz as the chief of the *sa-bdag* — Lords of the Earth — of Mar-khams. The two inscriptions are a brief summary of the tenets of the Buddhist faith relating to the consequences of different actions, which is identified by the author as from the *'Phags-pa bzang-po spyod-pa’i smon-lam*, and the other records

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the occasion for the making of this religious memorial and the particulars of the persons connected with the offering of the carving and the prayer. The inscription relates how in the reign of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan, many great nobles, the queen Mchims-za Legs-mo-brtsan and many others were brought to deliverance by eminent monks. Its donors were (Ba?!) Gar Ye-shes-dbyangs and other monks; and the occasion was the opening of negotiations for a treaty of peace with China by the famous monk-minister Bran-ka Yon-tan, the chief minister ‘Bro Khri-gzhu Ram-shags, the nang-blon Khri-sum-bzher and others. Finally the names of the supervisor of the work, the stone-carvers and other workmen are recorded. The inscription is dated in a monkey year which can only be 804 A.D.1

Many of the persons named are known from early documents. The Jomo Legs-mo-brtsan appears together with her two “sister queens”, ‘Bro Khri-mo-legs and Cog-ro Brtsan-rgyal, as taking part in the vow of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan to preserve the Buddhist faith which is recorded in the Chos-byung of Dpa-bo Gtsug-lag ‘phreng-ba, vol. ja, fos 128–30. The dge-sleng Bran-ka Yon-tan is the famous ban-de chen-po Bran-ka Dpal-chen-po yon-tan who became chief minister of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s successor Khri Gtsug-Lde-brtsanRal-pa-can and who was the principal Tibetan witness to the treaty with China achieved in 821 and recorded on the pillar outside the Jo-khang of Lhasa. That inscription shows that negotiations had begun in the reign of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan but had come to nothing at that time. The “great minister” Zhang ‘Bro Khri-gzhu Ram-shags was the general who subdued the ‘Jang (Nan-chao) in the reign of Khri Srong-Lde-brtsan and became chief minister about 796. He too was a participant in the religious vow of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan, as was the minister Dba’s Khri-sum-bzher Mdo-brtsan. I have not been able to identify the donor monks or the supervisors, who all bear Tibetan names; other foremen, stone carvers and workmen have apparently non-Tibetan names and some are described as Chinese.

These inscriptions and carvings from the Chamdo area, which indicate the existence of a religious community in the vicinity of Ri-mdā’, are further evidence of the spread of the Buddhist faith through all of Tibet after its revival by Khri Srong-Lde-brtsan about the middle of the eighth century. When his son, Khri Lde-srong-brtsan, recorded his vow to maintain the faith he directed that copies be sent not only to temples and monasteries in central Tibet but also to Bru-zha (Gilgit) and Zhang-zhung in the west and to Mdo-smad and the governors of the occupied frontier territories of the borders of China in the east. Documents from Tun-huang give lists of many monasteries in the neighbourhood and of religious teachers of the monastic centre of Mdo-gam, Kan-chou and Go-chu as well as in central Tibet.

Evidence of another religious community in Mdo-smad, earlier than that at Ri-mdā’, was found at Brag Lha-mo in Ldan-khog some 150 miles to the
north by Geshe Pema Tshering of Bonn, who recorded and photographed inscriptions and carvings of Buddhist deities on a rock face there. These have been briefly discussed in my article mentioned above. It would be of great value if photographs of the inscriptions and carvings near Ri-mda’ could be made available to allow comparison of the orthography and to throw light on the development of religious art in Tibet.

The foregoing is only a preliminary note based on first impressions of an article which deserves much fuller examination.

Addendum

I should like to make a correction to this article. On p. XXX above I wrote that the monkey year in which the inscription was made “can only be 804 A.D.” I had assumed that Khri Lde-srong-brtsan died in 815 — a year before the monkey year 816; that date is given also in Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa’s Tibet. But Sa-skya Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan in his Bod-gyi rgyal-rabs states that Khri Lde-srong-brtsan died in a bird year; and in the T’ang Annals his death is stated to have been reported in China in 817. That was Tibetan bird year. It is most likely that the monkey year of the inscription is 816, by which time negotiations for a treaty had been going on since 810 when the Chinese emperor sent a letter on the subject to the great monk-minister Bran-ka Dpal-gyi yon-tan (see Pelliot, Histoire ancienne du Tibet, p. 125; and Demiéville, Le concile de Lhasa, p. 224).
The Inventory of Yu-lim Gtsug-lag-khang

Pelliot Tibétain (Pell. T.) no. 997 in Choix de documents tibétains, ii, (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris 1979), plates 305–6, concerns the inventory of the property of Yu-lim Gtsug-lag-khang in the Kva-cu district on Tibet's north-east frontier with China. It is in two parts. The first gives instructions for the revising of the existing inventory which had apparently suffered from some laxity in the past; the second is the fragmentary and somewhat damaged list of the subjects, cattle, crops and movable property, domestic and agricultural, of the lha-ris — the monastic estate. Sadly, it does not include the images, religious vessels, ornaments, etc. of the chapel.

There is a drawing of an early gtsug-lag-khang in the Tibetan border regions in Pell. T. 933 reproduced in Paola Mortari Vergara and Gilles Béguin (eds.), Dimore umane, santuari divini (Rome 1987), p. 89, representing what is described as a bshad-khang — a teaching house — and living rooms for the monks. It is a rectangular structure on level ground consisting of a walled courtyard entered by a doorway under a canopy; on the far side are the monks' cells and, in the centre, a small chapel with a pagoda-type roof; there is what may be a store room on one side and what are perhaps stables on the other. The buildings face south and beyond the enclosure to the north is a walled garden with fruit trees, and in a meadow outside, bounded by a road and a river, are several mchod-rten of different shapes, more trees, and grazing cattle. The lay-out is similar to that of early temples in central Tibet. From its quite extensive contents, Yu-lim seems to have been on a larger scale than the bshad-khang shown in Pell. T. 933.

The grant of estates for the support — rkyen — of such religious foundations required the sanction of a high authority, perhaps the btsan-po, the ruler of Tibet himself, for whose spiritual benefit — sku-yon — they are nominally dedicated. There are examples in l. 31 of the east inscription at

Zhwa'i Lha-khang, l. 30 of the Skar-cung inscription, and ll. 28, 30 of the Lcang-bu inscription (H.E. Richardson, *A Corpus of Early Tibetan Inscriptions*, Royal Asiatic Society, 1985). With regard to Yu-lim, Pell. T. 2122 describes it as *lha-sras-kyi sku-yon bla-skyes* — an offering for the benefit of the divine son. More such dedications are seen in Pell. T. 1111 and F. W. Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents* (TLTD), ii, p. 109. There were other *lha-ris* in the Kva-cu district, and Pell. T. 997 implies that they were under the jurisdiction of a *mngan-chen*, a great *mngan*, while a *sgo-mngan*, a special *mngan*, was responsible for that of Yu-lim. The number of *gtsug-lag-khang* in that frontier region must have been considerable. TLTD, ii, pp. 88–91 gives a list, still only fragmentary, of seventy-two, arranged in groups of up to ten with the same basic name of what may be a sort of mother monastery e.g. Rnam-dag Dga'-ldan *gtsug-lag-khang*, Rnam-dag Dga'-ba *gtsug-lag-khang*, followed by seven more with the same prefix. Each had a lay *yon-bdag* — patron, donor — who contributed grain for its support. These foundations were probably quite small and there is no mention of any *lha-ris*, though they may have come under the general supervision of the *mngan*.

Pell. T. 997 is only one of several documents from Tun-huang showing the well-organized administrative arrangements in social and political matters in the Tibetan frontier districts. In it the importance attached to the proper administration of the *lha-ris* is seen in the first part in which many high officials are concerned about the revision of the inventory. The construction is not always easy to follow and the chain of authority in the second paragraph may be open to other interpretations. There are also several unfamiliar words and expressions and my guesses at their meaning may be wide of the mark. But the attempt to solve such problems is part of the fascination of studying these early documents.

**Pelliot Tibétain no. 997, fo. 1**

*kva cu lha ris gyi mngan chen gu rib legs brrtan dang / shi bzhes kyi yi ge pa lvang stag tshab dan / / yu lim gtsug (2) lag khang gi sgo mngan phyug mtshams btsan la snang dpon g.yog la / / yu lim gtsug lag khang gi rkyen gyi 'bangs dang / (3) dkor rkang 'gros dang stsang nas 'bras dang khab r dzas la stogs pa gtad pa'i thang yig du dris pa ni / / byi ba lo'i dp yid (4) pho brang na bzhugs / / chos kyi gzhi 'dzin ban de mchog gi dbang po dang / a rgya / dang d ma g pon dang / (5) spyan / blon rtsang bzer dang / zhang legs sum brrtan dang / blon khri sum rjes / 'dun sa hva shang du bt ab pa'i yan la' / / (6) lha ris thang rtsis mdzad pa'i ring lugs spyi la mchis pa / / ban de 'bre gzhon nu blo gros dang / ru dpon rongs po lha 'dus (7) kyi g.yar sngar / / 'bangs dang dkor stsang ring lugs /
With regard to what is written in the inventory of the subjects, property in cattle, crops of barley and rice, household goods, etc. of the rkyen (means of support) of Yu-lim Gtsug-lag-khang entrusted to the mngan-chen² of the lha-ris (monastic estates) of Kva-cu, Gu-rib legs-brtan, the Secretary of Shi-bzhes3 Lvang Stag-tshab, and the sgo-mngan of Yu-lim Gtsug-lag-khang, Phyug-mtshams Btsan-la-snang, officers and servants.

In the presence of the ban-de⁴ 'Bre Gzhon-nu blo-gros and the ru-dpon⁵ Rongs-po Lha-'dus who were the chief ring-lugs⁶ (registrars) for making the accounts of the lha-ris before the holder of the seat of the doctrine,⁷ the ban-de Mchod-gi dbang-po, the A-rgya,⁸ the General, the Inspector,⁹ the minister Rtsang-bzher, Zhang¹⁰ Legs-sum-brtisan, and the minister Khri-dog-rje, residing at the Palace¹¹ in the spring of the mouse year, summoned the hwa-shang assembly;¹² it was ordered to the court¹³ of the ring-lugs for making the record of subjects and property in crops, the nang-khor¹⁴ Gshen Rma-sbyin, the ru-'theb¹⁵ Ta-ne-cung, the stong-pon¹⁶ Ro-bye Stng-slebs, Lo Stag-legs, Lde-mye Sman-legs, and Gnyan Rgyal-bzang, etc., that since from the time when the khab-so¹⁷ of the lha-
ris of Kva-cu the former abbot ban-de Man-'ju-shi-rí made the record, for many years after, because the various officials joined in a friendly understanding there was no scrutiny18 of the record of the subjects, property in crops, etc., the record shall be scrutinized and a new letter of stewardship written; and thereafter, every seven years a report shall be made and this record shall be scrutinized. An order directing that it should be done accordingly issued from the Palace in accordance with a written missive of the ring-lugs of the Buddha (Bcom-ldan-'das).19 First, the mngan Meg-lde bzhag-lde having been asked to take charge of the subjects, property in crops, household goods, etc. entrusted in the record, also the donations, taxes and the fines imposed separately by higher authority whatever they may be, was requested to present a written report in the winter of the sheep year; and when it had been scrutinized under each head of account and he had discharged his duties in the presence of the ban-de the abbot, and the General, and the Inspector, an inventory was recorded of the subjects, property in cattle, crops of barley and rice, household goods, etc. entrusted to the mngan-chen Gu-rib legs-brtan, the Secretary of Shi-bzhes Lvang Stag-tshab, and the sgo-mngan of Yu-lim Gtsug-lag-khang, Phyug-mtshams Btsan-la-snang, officers and servants. Four copies of this have been written. One has been presented to the Palace; one has been deposited in the assembly hall of the abbot; one has been deposited as superior copy for the region;20 and one has been given as the subordinate copy to the various officials.

* * *

Pelliot Tibétain no. 997 fo. 2.

The inventory which follows is incomplete and some parts are illegible. It contains a great many unfamiliar words at whose meaning I have been able only to hazard a guess. Here also the reversed ki-gu are in the majority — twenty-seven to nine.

yu lim gtsug lag khang gi 'bangs kyi sdom la' / rgya khyim nyi shu / pho reng sum cu rtsa gcig / pho dgog (2) gcig / / mo reng nyi shu rtsa drug / / mo dgog lnga / / bran pho reng gnyis / / bran mo gcig / /
dkor rkang 'gros la' / gnag sding bcu / / ba shad bzhì / / sha bzam dang pho snyid mo (2) snyid bgya sum cu rtsa dgu / / thong tsher brgyad cu rtsa brgyad / / lu gu pho mo dgu bcu rtsa gnyis / / ra skyes dang (3) ra pho snyid mo snyid nyi shu rtsa bzhi / / ra thong gcig / / re'u mo bdun / /

stsang dang mar dang yu mar kyi sdom la' / / gro nas dang khre chi phyed mkhal nyis bgya lnga bcu rtsa (2) gnyis dang bre bdun dang phul do / / mar kar pha lam gnyis / / yu mar pha lan gsum dang srang gsum (3) cu / /

zung cha lcags zangs dang gdan dang gdan ma dang gzhong la / /
zangs skyegs zung gcig / / (2) zangs gzhong gnyis / / ther po gcig / / lcags tog gcig / / lcags zangs gcig / / khva zangs gcig / / (3) khro chu’i slang nga gcig / / lcags kyi tho ba gcig / / tshe’u gcig / / sog le gcig / / gzhong gcig / / sta ri (4) gcig / / mdo ris gcig / / dbyam bkra gcig / / dbyam po phyé dang do tshad bzhi bcu rtsa dgu / / fur myig bzhi (5) bcu ma’i yogs phyéng gcig / / zhal zhal gyi lcags gcig / / gso g gcig / / dre’u rmgog gcig / / shog (6) shog yug lnga brgya lnga bcu / / an pan drug / / dril gzhong gnyis / / phor pa nyis brgya brgyad cu rtsa bdun / / (7) leb tse brgya dgu cu rtsa gsum / / lu cey lnga bcu rtsa gnyis / / nang gzhong gnyis / / gzhong pa gnyis / / gnyis brgyag cu rtsa bdun / / (8) shing rta drug / / chu sgor dar tshags dang bcas pa gcig / / bong skor rkang tun dang bcas pa gnyis / / ko ba bubs gcig / /
great mngan, is seen here to be responsible for the lha-ris of Kva-cu district as a whole while the sgo-mngan, the special mngan, was in charge of the affairs of Yu-lim Gtsug-lag-khang. Elsewhere (Pell. T. 1089) there is mention of a chu-mngan, water mngan.

4. ban-de. Sanskrit vandya, reverend, Buddhist monk.
5. ru-dpon. A high-ranking military officer.
6. ring-lugs. In general this denotes a court or similar body for ensuring compliance with established precedents and practice. In a religious context it means an abbot or monastic body responsible for the maintenance and transmission of the Buddhist doctrine, etc. I have translated it elsewhere, rather unsatisfactorily, as "registrars, commissioners".
7. chos-kyi gzhi-'dzin. The abbot in charge of the chos-gzhi, the seat of the doctrine, the monastery.
8. I can find no other instance of a-rgya which I take to be for Sanskrit aya, Tibetan phags-pa, "noble", "glorious", signifying here an Indian monk.
9. spyan. 'The eye', inspector.
10. zhang. A relation by marriage of the royal family.
11. pho-brang. The name of the palace is omitted although a space is left for it in the document. A similar gap is seen in Pell. T. 1089 where the Bde-blon issue orders from an unnamed palace. Other documents give the names of Pho-brang Lhan-kar, Pho-brang Brag-mar, and 'On-cang-do.
12. Hwa-shang is not found as a place name. It is the title of Chinese Buddhist priests and is particularly applied to the Hwa-shang Mahâyâna, the opponent of Kamalatila in the great religious debate at Bsam-yas and who later became a supporter of the Tibetan régime at Tun-huang (Demièville, La concile de Lhasa, index, p. 589). Perhaps the reference is to an assembly promoted by him.
14. nang-khor. Khor, 'khor usually means "retinue". It appears to refer here only to Gshen Rrna-sbyin, perhaps with the meaning of "private attendant". A gshen was a Bon priest but the syllable appears rarely to be a family name.
15. ru-'theb. Assistant or additional ru-dpon.
16. stong-pon (-dpon). Military governor of a stung-sde, "thousand-district".
17. khab-so. Earlier suggestions that these were some sort of palace or household guards are not tenable. The Lhasa Treaty Inscription V, l. 33 shows them as being under the control of the mngan and cf. Tun-huang Annals, p. 23 (77). mngan-gyi khab-so. They were therefore financial officials as is seen in the same passage — khab-so khalrd-pa bskos-pa. Even a monk could be a khab-so, perhaps similar to the present-day spyi-so, administrator of a monastery.
18. brgal. Rgol, attack, dispute. I render "scrutinize".
21. dgog. For go?; usually applied to ruinous buildings. Crippled, old?
22. The bran though bound to the estate on which they served seem to be of a higher status than the other subjects ('bangs).
23. gnag-sding. Thomas, TLTD, ii, p. 98 cites g.yag-sding, "extra yaks". gnag may mean cattle in general but here it may be accepted that yaks are intended although they do not figure much in Tun-huang documents.
24. ba-shad. Das, Dictionary, p. 1230 has shad-yar meaning a yak calf one year old;
so here it may mean cows of that age, heifers.

25. *sha-zan*. Meat for eating (?), store cattle (?)

26. *snyid*. Denotes the relationship between brothers- and sisters-in-law and cannot apply strictly here. It does not appear to be in error for *nyid* as it occurs again below. Perhaps a mixed herd of cows and bullocks.


28. *ra-thong*. Jäschke has “a he-goat of two years”: Das, *thong-pa*, “a ram two years old”. Both have the alternative of “a castrated he goat”. I prefer the former for there must surely have been some male for breeding purposes. Dictionary entries for these words about flocks and herds are very confusing and uncertain.

29. *nhkal*. For *khal*, a bushel.

30. *phyped*. For *phye* (?).


32. *zung-cha*. Things to hold (?), utensils, implements.

33. The writing is very faint. I read tentatively *gdan dang gdan-ma* and suppose the latter to mean floor coverings.

34. *ther-po*. In this context *ther-ma*, woollen cloth, is improbable. Perhaps there is a connexion with *mt-he'u*, a small hammer.

35. *khov-zang*. A covered pot or kettle (?).

36. *tshe'u*. Tibetan-English dictionaries have *ste-po*, axe; and in an English-Tibetan dictionary by T. G. Dhongthog (1972) I find “adze”, *stve'u*.


38. *dbyam-byam, phebs-byam*, a palanquin, carrying chair; *bkra*, brightly coloured (?), or of good quality (?).

39. *dbyam-po phye*. An open palanquin: but the addition of a large number of *do-tshad* is obscure.

40. *gur-myig*. “Tent-eye”. Circular wooden or metal frames for the smoke hole of a tent (?).

41. *dre'u-rngog*. Literally “mule’s mane”; but Dagyab has *grum-rte'i gdan lta-bu*, i.e. a sort of woollen rug or carpet.

42. *an-pan*. Cf. *song-pan*, abacus (?).

43. *phor-pa*. Small, shallow wooden bowls sometimes lined with silver, for tea, tsampa, etc.

44. *lu-cc. Lud* (?), phlegm, spittoons (?).

45. *nang-gzhong*. Bowl for domestic use (?).

46. *bong-skor rkang-tun dang-beas-pa*. A crushing mill pulled round by a donkey. Das, p. 523 has *gtun* ... “nether millstone”; *rkang-tun* may therefore refer to the millstones and not harness for the legs which is perhaps an improbable arrangement.
The Inscription at Ra-tshag Dgon-pa

In *Tibetan Studies*, Peking, 1990, there was an article on an early inscription on a stone pillar at Ra-grwa Dgon-pa in the Stod-lung valley west of Lhasa. Unfortunately I have mislaid it apart from a copy of the inscription which, as the authors say, contains words that are difficult to read and others which are completely illegible. In addition, as in all eye-copies, I found dubious readings; also there appeared to be a lack of punctuation signs, and the text was shown continuously, not divided into lines. It was, therefore, desirable to obtain a photographic record and this has been generously supplied by Anthony Aris who visited the place in 1992. His assistant also made an eye-copy of the text.

In the Peking article the monastery is called Rwa-grwa but Mr Aris was told that its name is Ra-tshag. It is situated on a hillside in the lower part of the Stod-lung valley opposite the famous twelfth-century monastery of Skyor-mo-lung. In 1948 I attempted to visit it but found it closed. Everyone, including the sacristan, was away at the harvest. I regret not having gone there again because it was severely vandalized at the Cultural Revolution. It has recently been rebuilt, but with two storeys instead of the former three. Some of the frescoes have been garishly repainted but fragments of earlier work remain. The stone pillar was thrown down and slightly damaged. It now stands at a corner of the main building on a makeshift foundation, clearly not in its original condition.

The text which follows is based principally on the photographs by Mr Aris, but the two eye-copies have also been taken into account.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Transcription</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sngon dkon mchog gsum gyi</td>
<td>rten zhan cing dam pa'i chos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE INSCRIPTION AT RA-TSHAG DGON-PA

bka'- ma dar ba'i dus su   zhang se 'go 'bri'u brtsan mon
chung lta zhig gis mar chung bse'i   khang dmar la rdon re'i bca' brtsud
nas mnga' thang rgyal dang mnyam   zhiung / chab srid rgung bas mtho'
ste / 'bangs la bka' drin gyi   dus kyis zhig pa'i² gnas skabs
dbyig chen po gnang ngo / / de nas   su / bla dkon mchog la rdo rings
dang them skas su³ phul lo /   snga rabs kyi rje blon 'phruld kyi
rjes su da ltar yul yab du
rva ban de yon tan rgyal pos   gtsug lag khang brtsigs shing /
dkon mchog gsum gyi rten btsugs   pa 'di / / da phyin chad gyang / rva
ban de yon tan rgyal po'i bu tsha'   rgyud kyis gzhi bzung nas
se' 'go gnam lcags pa'i   rje 'bangs yongs gyis /
Some readings are still doubtful owing to the rough surface of the pillar and some damage to the stone; and line 14 is wholly illegible.

L. 6. The copyists read rdong ri and rdod ri respectively, but the photographs favour rdon re’i; the two vowels are clearly visible.

Ll. 37-38 present problems. In l. 37 both copyists read ... de dag la but photographs show a ki-gu above dag followed by what appears to be d. There is no tsheg after la; the stone is damaged and there is space for further letters and trace of what may be s. In l. 38 the first copyist reads nyes byas kyi mchod pa nyi; Aris’s copyist reads las / byas kyi mchod pa / myod most of which is unacceptable; mchod pa which is read by both copyists must be a
mistake for chad pa which is what the sense requires, and there is no trace of the final downstroke of the letter m, and n is more likely. The readings are uncertain but I have suggested l. 37 ... de dagi las dang / l. 38. nyes byas kyin chad pa / myi. There are grammatical difficulties in either but the general meaning is clear.

There are a few scribal errors: l. 2 zhan which is unintelligible must be a mistake for bzhengs. In l. 8 rgung is for dgung. In l. 25 sgyud is for rgyud; and in l. 26 phyel presumably for 'phal. Apart from myi for mi and one instance of the da drag there are no archaisms.

The text ends abruptly compared with the style and form of inscriptions from the time of the kingdom on which the pillar and inscription appear to be modelled. There is space for further lines at the end and what seem to be traces of a few letters.

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Translation

Formerly, at the time of the spreading of the tradition of the holy religion by building shrines of the Three Precious Ones, Zhang Se-'go 'Bri'u-brtsan Mon-chung and the like having begun to build¹ Rdon-re in Khang-dmar of Mar-chung-bse established their authority by making their power equal to that of a king and by raising their dominions as high as heaven conferred the great wealth of their kindness upon their subjects.

After that, at a period of decay² through the passage of time they offered to the supreme Deity a rdo-ring on a pedestal.³

[One whole line illegible.]

Following the supernaturally wise rulers and ministers of former generations, now in the region of Yab, Rwa ban-de Yon-tan rgyal-po by building a gtsug-lag-khang established this shrine of the Three Precious Ones. Thereafter, when the family of Rwa ban-de Yon-tan rgyal-po had taken possession of the place, the lord and subjects of Gnam-lcags-pa, all together, having solemnly sworn an oath, taking to witness the gods who have left the world, the gods of the world and all non-humans, prayed that it shall never⁴ cease to be honoured, never cease to be worshipped, shall never be abandoned, never neglected, that the lineage shall never be evicted and that its authority shall not in any way be diminished.

The commission of sins whether from without or from within or from wheresoever it may be, such as doing away with the entrance to the community of the monkhood or acting wickedly by thought or deed or by continuing in such offences shall instantly be punished by all humans and non-humans.

***
The inscription is at odds with literary tradition. The foundation of Ra-tshag by Sna-nam Rdo-rje dbang-phyug is agreed by Nel-pa Pandita (thirteenth century), Bu-ston (1322) and ’Gos Lo-tsä-ba (1476). Nel-pa describes it as in Stod-lungs Yab, and ’Gos also names Yab. Bu-ston gives Rdo-rje dbang-phyug the title zhang, signifying Uncle-to-Royalty, which he held by descent from a great noble family allied to the ruling house through the marriage of a Sna-nam lady to the btsan-po Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan to whom she bore Khri Srong-lde-brtsan. He was a disciple of Klu-mes Tshul-khrims shes-rab, one of the men of Dbus and Gtsang who went to Khams to seek ordination from those monks who had fled from the persecution of religion by Glang-dar-ma. They returned to central Tibet to initiate the phyi-dar, the later diffusion of the faith.

The position of Ra-tshag can, therefore, be established with certainty, but in the inscription at the dgon-pa there is no mention of Sna-nam Rdo-rje dbang-phyug. The building of a gtsug-lag-khang there is attributed to Rwa ban-de Yon-tan rgyal-po who enjoyed the patronage of the noble family of Se’-go. I am unable to trace Yon-tan rgyal-po in the Deb-ther sgong-po of ’Gos Lo-tsä-ba or in any other source I have seen; and nothing is known to connect him with the school of the famous Rwa Lo-tsä-ba Rdo-rje-grags (c. 1000–80). The Se’-go family can be identified with the Seng-go of the royal period who first figure in the reign of Gnam-ri Slon-mtshan as volunteering to put down a rebellion in Dwags-po where, I am told by the Tibetan scholar Samten Karmay, the name of Seng-go was still known in recent times. Members of the family held office as ministers during the reigns of Dus-srong and Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan after which they do not appear in surviving records except, perhaps, for the name Se’-go in a fragmentary documentary from Tun-huang. The name of one member of the family, Seng’go ‘Bring-brtsan Mon-chung in 725, is echoed in the Ra-tshag inscription. The family did not enjoy the honorific title zhang but in latter usage zhang-blon (or lon) was applied to all ministers. In the inscription the greatness of the family has been piously exaggerated by their distant descendants.

Their family seat is described as Khang-dmar of Mar-chung-bse. There is a well known Khang-dmar in the Nyang-chu valley some thirty miles south of Gyantse. Near it is the old monastery of Zho-nang where I saw a painted board—a lab-shing—on which were figures of a lama in yellow robes wearing a large round yellow hat and also a noble lady donor laden with jewels, in a white robe with a wide collar similar to that depicted at Alchi (A-lci) and Tsaparang (Rtsa-brang). There are many ruined buildings of a considerable size in the neighbourhood but the names Mar-chung-bse’ Rdon-re and Gnam-lcags are not traceable. Khang-dmar in Gtsang may seem rather remote from Ra-tshag but the family might have had estates in the Stod-lung region. At all events, the inscription shows that there was
in the neighbourhood a family claiming ancient descent with the status and interest to act as patrons of a religious foundation.

Assuming that the dgon-pa at Rta-shag is the original foundation, the question of its date arises. Bu-ston and 'Gos state that after founding Rta-shag, Sna-nam Rdo-rje dbang-phyug founded Rgyal Lha-khang. Nel-pa seems to attribute it to Rdo-rje dbang-phyug’s son. 'Gos Lo-tsa-ba fixes the date of Rgyal Lha-khang, by several calculations, as 1012. The date 1036 given in the Vaidurya ser-po for Rta-shag may therefore be rejected. Rta-shag may therefore be somewhere between 1000 and 1012 A.D. It is interesting that there is at Rgyal Lha-khang an inscription on better quality stone than that at Rta-shag. The text is badly damaged but there survives a reference to the degenerate times into which the observance of religion had fallen, which echoes the mention in the Rta-shag inscription of a period of decadence.

What, then, is to be made of all this? Even though there is only one archaism — a single da-drag — the language of the inscription resembles that of the royal period; the pillar itself has the appearance of genuine antiquity but compared with the finely dressed stone of the pillar at Rgyal Lha-khang, even allowing for damage at the Cultural Revolution, its finish is undistinguished, which may suggest that relatively modest means were at the disposal of the donor. By contrast, Rgyal Lha-khang (Rgyal-lug-lhas, “The Royal Sheepfold”) is said by ‘Gos to have been famous for its riches. That would accord with the patronage of a great and wealthy family such as Sna-nam.

Even if it were suggested that Rwa-tshag might have been rebuilt by ban-de Yon-tan rgyal-po after a period of neglect it is difficult to imagine that the name of the original founder would have been omitted from the inscription. Perhaps, therefore, Nel-pa, Bu-ston and ‘Gos were mistaken and that only Rgyal Lha-khang was founded by Sna-nam. The question awaits a conclusive answer.

Notes

1. bca’-brtsud is obscure. Perhaps cha’-’dzud, “began to build, settled”.

2. zhig-pa is commonly used of ruined buildings, but I take it to refer here to the decay in religious practice following the suppression of the faith attributed to Glang-dar-ma.

3. rdo-rings dang them-skas-su; the construction is strange. Them-skas usually means a stairway; here it seems to be the pedestal of the pillar in a series of steps as at Lcang-bu (A Corpus of Early Tibetan Inscriptions, pp. 1–12).

4. re as a sort of negative exhortation is seen in the edict of Khri Lde-strong-brtsan recorded in the Chos-byung of Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag, Ja, fo. 128, and in Documents de Touen-houang, p. 110.
Monuments of the Yar-lung Dynasty

The Tibetan royal family emerged from the mists of legend at the end of the fourth century A.D. and established itself as an aggressive military power about two centuries later. There was a royal residence at Phying-ba'i Stag-rte overlooking the state burial ground at 'Phyong-rgyas, but the famous palace was at Yum-bu Bla-mkhar in Yar-lung. Like so many treasured buildings it was severely damaged during the Cultural Revolution. The little palace with a tall tower, such as those in east Tibet, stood on a rocky pinnacle. A narrow doorway opened on to a steep stair leading to a central hall containing images of the kings and ministers, also many relics. Beyond it, in two small, dusty chapels were more images.

The age of the palace is difficult to judge; but the earliest building to which a date can be assigned is the famous Jo-khang of Lhasa (plates 1 and 2) founded circa 642–50 by Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, the maker of the Tibetan kingdom, eventually to house the precious image of the youthful Buddha, the Jo-bo Rin-po-che, which is said to have been brought by his Chinese bride Mun-chang Kong-co. The original plan was probably a plain, rectangular, two-storied building in a walled enclosure. It has been greatly enlarged over the centuries and is now surrounded by a complex of religious and secular buildings known as the Gtsug-lag-khang; but the central core retains evidence of its antiquity. The capitals of the massive wooden pillars in the sanctuary are carved with figures of apsarasas and floral designs; the door jambs of important chapels are decorated with religious images and the lintels are carved with scenes from the jātakas, stories of the Buddha's former births. The workmanship, which reflects Indian models of the fifth and sixth centuries, was probably due to Newar craftsmen from Nepal.

The influence of Indian culture at that time is underlined by the Tibetan written character, based on an early north Indian script, traditionally brought by Minister Thon-mi Sambhota. Although the many fine and

precious images including the golden Jo-bo Rin-po-che itself and those of Manjuśri, Maitreya, Avalokiteśvara, and countless others, were destroyed or vandalized during the Cultural Revolution and could not in any case be accurately dated, one object which may date from the seventh century has survived. A great silver wine jar in Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s meditation chapel is decorated with repoussé figures of drinking scenes — inappropriate in a holy place — which show Central Asian Sassanian influence. It was recently covered with an exact replica (plate 3).

A smaller temple of similar design to the Jo-khang but far less wealthy and revered, was the Ra-mo-che, attributed to Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s Chinese queen but possibly a century later. It housed a large image of Mi-bskyod-pa (Aksobhya) and others, including Rnam-par snang-mdzad (Vairocana), as well as offerings and relics. A gilded bronze repoussé altar-front may date from the eighth or ninth century. Behind the altar was a small ambulatory and just outside was a small temple of Tshe-dpag-med (Amitāyus). Only ruins now remain.

At least twelve more temples attributed to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po were said to have been founded in a combination of religion and geomancy, to ward off dangers to the Jo-khang. The greatest of these is Khra-'brug in Lho-brag which is on a plan similar to the Jo-khang (plate 4). It contained a glittering profusion of golden images, reliquaries and offerings. The principal image was Rnam-par snang-mdzad which, I believe, indicates a date in the eighth century. Behind the altar the whole wall was covered with a riot of stucco figures of deities, saints, demons and animals. Tall figures of bodhisattvas in the Khotanese style stood on either side of the altar. There were images of kings and ministers including Thon-mi Sambhota. On the upper floor was a large collection of painted clay images of the mahāsiddhas (mystic masters). At the entrance doorway hung a large bronze bell inscribed by the queen mother for the enlightenment of her son Khri Lde-srong-brtson (r. 804–16), perhaps suggesting that he restored the temple, which is known to have existed before his reign.

Another such temple was the Mkho-mthing Lha-khang in Lho-brag on the border of Bhutan. It was a rambling complex of almost inconspicuous chapels with a roof of wooden shingles. A massive wooden door opened on to a large, dark hall with an unusual sense of space and mystery. In the centre was a huge fourfold image of Rnam-par snang-mdzad and facing it from each corner at some distance were large images of the component deities of the pentad. Further away, round the wall, were images of bodhisattvas and guardian deities. It is no surprise that in this impressive shrine secret texts were said to have been deposited. In another chapel where there were many reliquary _chod-rten_ and images, an ancient peach tree had been allowed to grow through the roof. On a small hill nearby is the temple of Mkar-chu attributed to Padmasambhava.
One of Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s reputed foundations which has a genuine appearance of antiquity was the tiny Thugs-dam Gtsug-lag-khang of Ka-tshal at Mal-gro Gong-dkar (plate 5). It was barely thirteen metres long, and one had to squeeze around the ambulatory behind the altar. On the altar was a small and delicate golden image of Maitreya and a silver prayer wheel said to have belonged to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po. A little mgon-khang (chapel of protector deities) at the entrance housed nāga (snake) deities whose pool was said to be below the main aisle. Nearby was a large and wealthy temple founded by Padmasambhava.

The building famous beyond all others in Western eyes is the Potala which dominates the Lhasa scene. The Red Hill, as it is called, is an obvious place for a fortress and Srong-brtsan Sgam-po is said to have built a palace there. Whatever existed was obliterated by the massive palace built by the fifth Dalai Lama and his regent Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho between 1646 and 1694. The only possible survivals are two small chapels one above the other at the north-west end where a point of living rock has been left to be seen. The lower room, Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s meditation cave, contained, among many other images, those of the king and his three queens. These are considered, by Marylin Rhie in a learned article, to date probably from the eighth to ninth century. In spite of their archaic appearance it is difficult to accept a representation of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po as a divine incarnation with a Buddha image on his head-dress at so early a date.

The last monument of Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s reign is his massive tumulus at the royal burial ground at ‘Phyong-rgyas (plate 6) where the funeral rites were performed according to Bon rather than Buddhist practice.

After his death in 650 the cult of Buddhism, which had probably been confined to a small royal circle, suffered a decline. It revived rather tenuously in the reign of his great-grandson Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan (704–55), probably through the influence of his Chinese bride Kim-sheng Kong-co. In the inscription at Skar-cung of about 816 he is credited with the foundation of temples at Kwa-cu and Mchims-phu in Brag-dmar. Roberto Vitali in a learned study identified Kwa-cu with the little temple of Ke-ru in ‘On, and attributes it to the Chinese princess who is known from the ninth-century “Religious Chronicle of Khotan” to have established a well-endowed temple as a refuge for a community of monks who had fled from Khotan. Vitali illustrates the singularly beautiful Ākāśamuni in the old Lha-khang flanked by bodhisattvas and guardian deities in an archaic style (plate 7), which he attributes respectively to the eighth and ninth centuries. He says that two of the bodhisattva figures were locally identified with Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan and his Chinese bride. The dating of the images may be left to the decision of experts, but I may summarize some objections to the identification of Kwa-cu with Ke-ru. ‘On is not in Brag-dmar and there was an
old temple in Brag-dmar called Ka-cu or Kha-cu. ‘On Ke-ru was known by that name and no other in the fifteenth century and I can find no literary source identifying it with Kwa-cu or attributing it to the Chinese princess. Both Giuseppe Tucci and I were informed on separate visits that Ke-ru was founded by Khri Srong-lde-btsan (r. 755–c. 798?).

Only one temple in Tibet is specifically connected with China — the Ramo-che at Lhasa known as rgya-brtags, “belonging to or called after China”. Although later tradition associates it with Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s Chinese princess, there is no such attribution in eighth or ninth century records. That princess was very young when she arrived in Tibet in 640 and Srong-brtsan sgam-po lived with her for only three years. She survived him by thirty years during which time, apart from her death, she is not mentioned in either Chinese or Tibetan records. By contrast, Kim-sheng Kong-co had been destined for a Tibetan marriage for at least ten years before she arrived in Tibet in 710 to find herself married to a boy of six. She was a devout Buddhist, a strong character who took an active part in relations between Tibet and China in an attempt to stop the constant warfare. I think she is the more likely founder of the Ra-mo-che in the capital, where she lived, as a refuge for the Khotanese monks, rather than picking on a remote valley many miles from Lhasa with which she had no known connection.

The princess died of smallpox in 739 and the Khotanese monks were blamed for bringing the infection — perhaps further evidence that they lived in close proximity to the capital. They were driven out and Buddhism went into eclipse for about thirty-five years. Khri Lde-gtseg-brtsan was assassinated in 755. When his son, Khri Srong-lde-btsan, attained years of discretion c. 763, Buddhism re-emerged as a vigorous, dominant, state religion and has left a great legacy of temples and religious inscriptions. However, there is one conspicuous monument of the days before that renaissance. By the side of the road at the foot of the Potala still stands a tall, stately, stone pillar inscribed with an account of the achievements of a great general, Ngan-lam Stag-sgra Klu-khong (plate 8). He describes how he brought to justice the murderers of Khri Lde-gtseg-brtsan and saved the life of his son Khri Srong-lde-btsan. Next, he recounts his successful campaigns against China from 758 to 763, which culminated in the capture of the Chinese capital at Ch’ang-an; and finally he records the honours granted by Khri Srong-lde-btsan to himself and his family. There is no mention of religion but at about the same time the Pandit Śāntarakṣita and the tantric master Padmasambhava were invited from India and under their influence there was completed and dedicated in about 779 a great monastic temple at Bsam-yas (plate 9), the most venerated of Tibetan holy places after the Jo-khang.

Bsam-yas is in essence an extensive cosmic mandala. The circular wall representing the ocean surrounds a large precinct. At cardinal points around
the wall are temples of different forms symbolic of the continents and sub-
continents; and in the centre rises the massive square temple, the dbu-rtses, "the highest summit", the symbol of Mount Meru. It had three main sto-
reys in different styles — Tibetan, Chinese and Indian — with a further
small chapel of Bde-mchog, representing the highest spiritual realization,
underneath the golden roof. Near each corner stood a large mchod-rtens in
the appropriate geomantic colour — white at the south-east, red at the
south-west, black at the north-east, and green at the north-west. Outside
the precinct were three temples dedicated by Khri Srong-lde-btsan's queens,
two to the west in a style similar to the main temple, the third to the east
on a simpler traditional model.

The splendid building with its treasure of fine gold and gilded images,
rich offerings and relics, including the skull of Sântarakṣita, was virtually
destroyed and completely looted during the Cultural Revolution. It had
suffered over the centuries from neglect, earthquakes and fire but the walls
of the ground floor may be the original structure.

Recently the Chinese, perhaps with a sense of guilt combined with a
desire to attract tourists, have rebuilt the main temple and replaced many
of the images with replicas.

Two precious survivals are an ancient bell at the entrance doorway with
an inscription by one of Khri Srong-lde-btsan’s queens praying for his en-
litement and, outside the east wall, a fine stone pillar inscribed with a
vow by the ruler binding his royal successors to the maintenance of the
Buddhist faith (plate 10). Two stone elephants at the gate may also be
original.

Other religious foundations attributed to Khri Srong-lde-btsan include
the Btsan-thang G.yu'i Lha-khang in Yar-lung, a smaller version of the great
temple of Khra-brug but not comparable with it in prestige or wealth. The
chief image was Rnam-par snang-mdzad as in the majority of temples at
this period. Nearby were a small chapel of Avalokitesvara with a thousand
arms and a thousand eyes, and the Tshes-chu bum-pa, a large white mchod-
rtens — the Vase of Eternal Life — built to contain a crystal image from India
given to Padmasambhava. It is said that water pours from it on the fifteenth
day of each month.

Just off the Myang-chu valley north of Gyantse is a group of three small
temples. The Ru-gnon Lha-khang nesting on the side of a hill is attributed
to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po but that is improbable. It is not in the usual lists
of his foundations and the principal image, a fine 'Og-min Rnam-par snang-
mdzad, suggests a later date. There are also some early images of bodhisattvas. The largest temple, the Yum chen-mo Lha-khang, is attrib-
uted to Khri Srong-lde-btsan. It is a square building with earth walls
supported on a wooden framework. In addition to the image of the Yum
chen-mo (Prajñāpāramitā) and the goddess Ma-chags Padma on the main
altar, there was a fourfold Kun-rig Rnam-par snang-mdzad like that at Lho-brag Mkho-mthing Lha-khang, surrounded by the Buddhas of the Ten Directions. The third chapel, the Rta-mgrin Lha-khang, was similar to the Yum chen-mo Lha-khang but smaller. It too contained an image of Rnam-par-snang-mdzad in the form known as Rdo-rje-dbyings, with the other deities of the pentad round it. The Rta-mgrin (Hayagriva) image was on the main altar.

Another memorial of the reign which is of considerable significance for the history of Tibetan art was recently discovered by Geshe Pema Tshering of Bonn on a rocky pinnacle at Brag Lha-mo, in the district of Ldan-khog about a hundred miles north of Chab-mdo. His photographs show three bodhisattva figures carved in low relief and comparable in style to the iconography of Tun-huang. Near them is an inscription naming Khri Srong-lde-btsan and celebrating his religious achievements as well as his material power. Another inscription on a rockface near Do-ba Rdzong was found recently by Katia Buffetrille, a French scholar. Although it is not specifically dated by reference to a reign, I have tentatively assigned it to that of Khri Srong-lde-btsan. It recounts the remarkable privileges granted to a family called Lde-sman, including the signal favour of having their tombs cared for by royal authority. The only other recorded instance of such a favour is the vow of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po to build the tomb of his faithful minister Dba’s Phang-to-re. I have guessed that the family may have been, by tradition, physicians and diviners to the kings.

The last monument of the reign is the memorial inscription on a stone pillar near the burial ground at ’Phyong-rgyas. In my Corpus of Early Tibetan Inscriptions I described how the inscription was recovered. It declares that Khri Srong-lde-btsan acted in accordance with the customs of his ancestors and did not impair the religion of heaven and earth. It goes on to record his martial achievements and ends by describing him as having attained spiritual enlightenment. It is clear from this that the Religious Kings combined respect for the old beliefs, “the religion of the people”, as well as the new. On the other side of the pillar a lion and a dragon are carved in a somewhat free style.

Khri Srong-lde-btsan’s son and successor, Khri Lde-srong-brtsan, was equally devout but owing to the similarity of their names his achievements are often confused with those of his father. He is popularly known as Sdana-legs. The little Rta-mgrin temple at Gnas-gsar is attributed to him, but his great religious foundation was the temple of Skar-cung Rdo-rje-dbyings. Its extensive site is marked, as at Bsam-yas, by four large mchod-rten. From its name, the great temple, of which nothing remains, was dedicated to Rnam-par snang-mdzad. A small temple had been built in the centre of the site and was inhabited by nuns. Outside the wall I found a great stone pillar half-buried in the sand (plate 11). On it were inscribed the names of the religious
foundations by Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s ancestors from Srobrtsan Sgam-po downward, and his vow to maintain the Buddhist faith with brief instructions about carrying it out. The base of the pillar which I excavated together with the lower half had a stylized design of mountains.

Of other inscriptions of his reign there are two at the small, secluded temple of Zhwa on stone pillars. They are a moving and affectionate tribute by the king to the famous monk-minister who had been his guardian during his childhood. These are the only truly personal documents I know and are quite unlike the formal nature of the other, official, inscriptions. The little temple was perhaps untouched since its foundation. The principal image is Rnam-par snang-mdzad. A small cloister had later frescos, perhaps of the twelfth century. Outside was a mchod-rten containing the lama’s hat to which miraculous powers were ascribed.

One more inscription which I have not seen was on a rockface on the main road in Rkong-po. It relates that an edict was granted by Khri Srong-lde-btsan to the vassal princes of Rkong-po conferring certain privileges upon them but that they were being eroded by Tibetan officials. The princes asked for them to be confirmed by Khri Srong-lde-btsan and that, presumably, was done. It is an important insight into the relations between the btsan-po (the ruler) and his feudatory princes. As mentioned above, the bell at Khra-%rug dates from this reign. It is interesting that it was cast by a Chinese craftsman.

A number of very important religious images and inscriptions carved on rockfaces in Khams and Amdo have recently come to light. At Ldan-ma-brag near Chab-mdo there is a seated image of Rnam-par snang-mdzad surrounded by the Eight Spiritual Sons of the Buddha which is still an object of veneration. Near it is an inscription of a monkey year of the reign of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan, which I believe to have been 816 rather than 804 which is favoured by Amy Heller in an article on the subject. The inscription which was commissioned by the abbot Mgar Ye-shes-dbyangs and two other monks commemorates negotiations for a treaty of peace with China conducted by Tibetan ministers. The treaty which was eventually signed in 821 will be mentioned later. The names of the craftsmen are also mentioned in the inscription. Further rock carvings have been found in Amdo by Chinese and Tibetan archaeologists. I have yet to obtain any photographs of these discoveries but from the description in Tibetan in China Tibetology 1988 it is seen that at ‘Bis-mdo, some twenty-four kilometres south-east of Jyekundo, among several carvings and minor religious inscriptions on rockfaces, there is in a small chapel attributed to a Chinese princess, an image of Rnam-par snang-mdzad surrounded by eight bodhisatavas as at Ldan-ma-brag. Outside is an inscription stating that the images were carved in a dog year (probably 804) for the benefit of the btsan-po Khri Lde-srong-brtsan with the Great dge-slong Ye-shes-dbyangs as donor — presumably the same person as at Ldan-ma-brag.
At another site called Leb-khog, some eighty kilometres northwards on the road to Hsining, there are many Buddhist images, inscriptions, and monuments including an enormous heap of stones carved with the mantra Om mani padme hum. This has been mentioned by several travellers. There are also mchod-rtens but more important are two groups of rock carved images, one consisting of figures of bodhisattvas surrounded by a large assortment of animals and the other a group of Rnam-par snang-mdzad and two bodhisattvas made in a horse year, which is perhaps 814. There are also long citations from religious texts in Sanskrit and Tibetan. It is evident that the region is ripe for detailed research and illustration. I have suggested that the lama Ye-shes-dbyangs, whose influence seems to have been extensive in A-rmo and Khams, was a teacher from the long established Dhyāna school in Khri-kha (Kuei-te), some ninety-six kilometres south of Hsining in a district which became the base of those Tibetan priests who returned to central Tibet to establish the Second Diffusion of the faith in the tenth century. It is surprising that in spite of the popularity of the cult of Rnam-par snang-mdzad in Tibet itself in the eighth and ninth centuries, no traces of this apparently Tun-huang-inspired practice of religious carving on rockfaces is found there.

The last monument of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan’s reign is the fine stone pillar bearing his memorial inscription at his tumulus at 'Phyong-rgyas. When I first saw it in 1949 it was more than half buried in a field embankment. I copied and published as much of the inscription as was visible but had neither the means nor the permission to excavate it. The whole pillar has recently been excavated and set up in a covered building. It is seen to be standing on a stone tortoise, a symbol of longevity. Its sides are finely carved with stylized dragons, and there are apsaras figures and floral designs on the underside of the canopy. While the upper part of the inscription contains an account of the worldly power of the btsan-po, the recovered lower part, though damaged, refers to his devotion to religion.

His successor Khri Gtsug-lde-btsan, better known as Ral-pa-can, was the last of the Religious Kings. He carried his devotion to Buddhism to disastrous extremes by giving extraordinary privileges to monks and by making a monk his chief minister over the heads of powerful lay nobles who had always held that post — which led to his eventual assassination. His great religious foundation was the temple of 'On-cang-rdo, said to have been nine storeys high. All that remains is the site, some twenty-five kilometres downstream from Lhasa and not far from that of his father’s temple of Skar-cung. Like that, it was surrounded by four large mchod-rtens at the corners and several other mchod-rtens stand elsewhere. In the centre was a small later temple in the courtyard of which is a pillar of reddish stone, decorated with eight lucky signs, which may have been original. Outside at a little distance was a small enclosure in which stood a tall pillar of the usual grey stone. It
was uninscribed and may have been intended for the memorial inscription of the btsan-po which was never achieved. The reign did, however, produce two inscriptions, one of minor interest and one of outstanding historical importance. The former was on a stone pillar in the courtyard of the twelfth-century Karma-pa monastery of Mtshur-phu. It described the building of the temple of Lcang-bu by the noble Tshes-pong family for the spiritual benefit of the btsan-po. A short subsidiary inscription on the back records that the text was deposited in the state archives.

The second inscription is the famous bilingual treaty of 821–2 between Tibet and China. It is on four sides of a stone pillar outside the Jo-khang of Lhasa (plate 12). It contains on the east side a short account of relations between the two countries leading to the conclusion of a treaty of lasting peace; on the west side are the terms of the treaty and on the other two sides are lists of the ministers of each of the contracting parties.

Ral-pa-can’s tumulus is at ‘Phyong-rgyas and on it stood two archaic stone lions.

In addition to these monuments to which dates can be attached, there was in the lovely secluded hermitage of Brag Yer-pa, where there were meditation caves associated with the whole succession of Religious Kings and many holy men, a very large bronze bell in a separate chapel. On it was inscribed the ye dharmāḥ hetu prabhavahāḥ formula in Tibetan and in an early north Indian script. Near Gtsang-grong, south of the Gtsang-po, were two stone pillars photographed by Sir Charles Bell. One has an image of Avalokiteśvara and some syllables of the ye dharmāḥ formula in Tibetan. The other, which stands on a stone tortoise, is uninscribed but has a massive finial in the form of a stepped mchod-ṛten.

Finally, at Bya-sa near the mouth of the Yar-lung River, was a temple in an enclosed courtyard with two small chapels, one on either side. Over the entrance were carved figures of animals and flowers. It was attributed to Dpal-’khor-btsan, the last ruler of the royal line to rule in central Tibet before the dispersal of the remnant to the west. The principal image was Rnam-par snang-mdzad. Bya-sa means “place of birds” and on a journey in Yar-lung I met a Tibetan official with a small retinue who told me he was on his way to Bya-sa to offer butter-lamps welcoming the return of the cuckoo, a bird associated with the founder of the Bon religion. So it appeared that the patronage by the great Religious Kings of “the religion of men” as well as the Buddhist faith has its echoes in the present century.

Notes

1. The rulers of the Yar-lung dynasty referred to in his article are: Srong-btsan Sgam-po (d. 650); Khri Lde-gtsug-btsan (r. 704–55); Khri Srong-lde-btsan
Khri Lde-srong-brtsan, popularly known as Sad-na-legs (r. 804–16); Khri Gsug-lde-btsan, popularly known as Ral-pa-can (r. 815–36); and Dpal-'khor-btsan (circa 865–98).


Some Monasteries, Temples and Fortresses in Tibet before 1950

In the excesses of the Chinese Cultural Revolution of 1966–9, and both preceding and following that cataclysm, many of the monasteries and temples of Tibet were vandalised and some completely destroyed. My memories of a number of these sites as they existed before 1950, together with a few comments on their later fate, and the reproduction of photographs taken on my various journeys may therefore be welcome as a record of the past.

The most famous of Lhasa’s holy places, the Jo-khang (1936–9, 1944, 1946–50), today survives structurally intact; the ancient wooden pillars with carved capitals, the jataka carvings on lintels, and some old wall paintings are undamaged. Although many of the religious images and precious artefacts were damaged or looted, they have since been restored or replaced. The Jo-khang therefore looks much as it did internally, but its ancient seclusion has been violated by the destruction of neighbouring buildings in the old Tibetan style and the opening of a piazza in front of it.

The more spectacular Potala (1936–9, 1944, 1946–50) is to all appearances unchanged but many of its chapels were looted; some have now been restored and are open to visitors.

The Ra-mo-che (1936, 1948, 1950) was badly vandalised, losing its upper storeys and its precious contents. It is now being restored and is once again the home to a body of monks. It is traditionally said to have been founded in the seventh century by the Chinese wife of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, but in my opinion is really attributable to the Chinese wife of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan a century later.

Rgyud-smad (1936, 1944, 1948), formerly a Tantric college founded in the fifteenth century for specially selected monks who lived an ascetic life, has been only partially restored. Religious studies have been resumed there.

Hitherto unpublished.
but the number of monks depends on the changing policy of the Chinese authorities.

Rme-ru, which I did not visit, is sometimes known as Rme-ru Gsar-pa ("The New Rme-ru") to distinguish it from the Rme-ru temple to the east of the Jo-khang. It is attributed to Ral-pa-can in the mid-ninth century, but the present building is recent. The extensive quarters for monks are now occupied by civilian families. Beyond them is the Rje-'bum-sgang (1948) which contained a hundred thousand images of Tsong-kha-pa. It is now dismantled and its lower floors used as storerooms.

Dar-po-gling (1937–9, 1947–8) stands north-east of the Jo-khang. Now used as dwelling houses, it was formerly the temple of one of the minor oracle priests, others being Spro-bde Khang-gsar (1947–8), which survives to the south of the Jo-khang, and Karma-shar to the east.

The monastery of Kun-bde-gling (1936–9, 1944, 1946–50) was built by the Chinese in 1794 for their protégé, the Regent Rta-tshag Ye-shes mgon-po, in celebration of their victory over the Gurkhas. It was very generously endowed. A stone stele recording the foundation, inscribed in Tibetan and Chinese, stood at the entrance to the monastery.

Further north on a rocky hillock known as Ba-ma-ri (or Ba-mo-ri) stood a little temple of the Chinese war god Kuanti, known to the Tibetans as Ge-sar. The Gesar Lha-khang (1936, 1947) was erected in 1742 by General Fu-k'ang-an who led the victorious Chinese army against the Gurkhas. In its open front facing west stood two mounted figures in armour. In the temple beyond were other armed figures in front of an altar bearing a heavily bearded image of Kuan-ti; the figures of his two sons stood nearby. At the back of the chapel was an image of the bodhisattva Jam-dpal-dbyangs (MafijuSri), of whom the emperor was held to be an embodiment. The Gesar Lha-khang was popular with Tibetan pilgrims for the reading of fortunes from bamboo slips chosen at random from a tall vase.

The Klu-khang (1936–7, 1946–50), temple of the nāga deities, is an attractive small square building standing among willow and poplar trees on an islet in the lake to the north of the Potala. It contains images of nāga deities as well as the usual Buddhist icons, and the walls are covered in fresh and lively paintings. It was built as a retreat for the sixth Dalai Lama.

Beyond the Rgyud-smad the roofs of Tsho-smon-gling (1947) monastery can be seen in the trees. It was founded by the Nominhan Ngag-dbang tshul-khrims, regent at intervals between 1777 and 1791. He was a respected chaplain of the Chinese emperor. It was well endowed by the Chinese and had a close connection with Se-ra.

The Sman-rtsis-khang (1936, 1948) on the summit of Lcags-po-ri, part of the grandiose architectural tradition of the late seventeenth century that created the Potala, has been completely destroyed and replaced by a tall radio mast. It consisted of a massive rectangular base of red painted masonry with
victory (*rnam-rgyal*) banners at each corner. On top of it rose a large round turret, yellow below and white above, surmounted by a heavy band of red. It had all the appearance of a fortress and, indeed, served as such in skirmishes during the Cultural Revolution. Inside, the principal image was a great Medicine Buddha (Sman-bla); images of Tibetan physicians, such as G.yu-thog Yon-tan mgon-po, were on either side. A Śākyamuni was on the altar and figures of the eight Sman-bla emanations in the upper storey. According to Mkhyen-brtse, treasures of the temple included images of coral, mother of pearl and turquoise. The Sman-rtsis-khang was solely a temple; medical practice and the compounding of herbs took place in a building near Bstan-rgyas-gling (1936) monastery.

West of the main city lies the summer residence of the Dalai Lamas at the “Jewel Park” of Nor-bu-gling-ka (1936–50). The park covers a large area containing four palace complexes, an opera ground and some government buildings. First established by the seventh Dalai Lama in the mid-eighteenth century, the initial site was greatly augmented by the eighth and thirteenth incumbents. The present Dalai Lama added his own palace as recently as 1954–6.

Of the “Three Great Seats” (*gdan-sa-gsum*) of the Dge-lugs-pa church, Dga’-ldan (1937, 1944), the oldest and most revered, was razed to the ground in the cultural revolution. The beautiful and precious *mchod-rten* shrine to Tsong-kha-pa’s relics, with its encircling tent of golden silk, was completely destroyed. Before long, devoted Tibetans ventured to attempt the rebuilding of the massive central temple and the shrine of Tsong-kha-pa. Subsequently the work was continued and extended with Chinese support in some sort of retribution for the vandalism of the Cultural Revolution; and now part of the monastery has been restored.

‘Bras-spungs (1936, 1944, 1946 etc) and Se-ra escaped comparatively lightly. Judging from the guide books, all the great *tshogs-chen* (assembly halls) have survived with little structural damage, but many of the monks’ quarters have been destroyed. This is of little moment as only few monks have been allowed to remain. Some vandalism of the contents occurred, but the main treasures, such as the silver *mchod-rten* tombs of the second, third and fourth Dalai Lamas in the Dga’-ldan Pho-brang, appear to be undamaged.

Gnas-chung (1936, 1944, 1946 and later), the temple and monastery of the State Oracle, is in a grove of fine old trees some way below ‘Bras-spungs to the south-east. It stands in a spacious courtyard. Its decorations and contents were appropriately macabre, the heavy red door being covered with representations of human skin. Inside, the wall paintings were dark and sinister and the pillars were hung with weapons. In a recess at the back of the main hall stood the throne of the oracle on which rested his heavy robes and his massive, feather-crowned, silver helmet, together with his sacred breastplate, bow and sword. In a small room to its left were the
remains of a sacred tree where the spirit which possesses him came to perch in the form of a dove.

At Se-ra (1936, 1944, 1946, 1948, 1950) it appears from current guidebooks that the main assembly hall and the three colleges, Sngags-pa, Smad and Byes, survive with many of their images and treasures. The sacred phur-pu dagger has also been preserved.

In the valley to the west of Se-ra, the temple and small monastery of Pha-bong-ha (1947, 1950) stands on top of a great boulder on the hillside. It was traditionally a meditation place of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po and later of the first monks at the time of the phyi-dar, the later diffusion of the faith. In the main chapel is an image of Kharsapa Avalokiteśvara which looks to be of ancient manufacture. It is said to have been brought from Srong-brtsan’s birthplace at Rgya-ma (see below). Also there are figures of the Rigs-gsum mgon-po carved into the rock face and a stone with the om mani padme hūṃ formula, said to have been written for the king by Thon-mi Sambhoṭa. Pha-bong-ka has seen a series of twenty-five reincarnate lamas, known as Lha-btsun Rin-po-che; the first is said to have been Lha Byang-chub-od. Some bits of gilded roofing, said to have been looted from Smin-grol-gling by the Dzungars, are kept there; they are marked Smin.

Ke’u-tshang (1936) hermitage clings to the hillside in a valley east of Se-ra. Four miles east of Lhasa itself stands the little monastery of Ri-skya, and beyond it the foundation of Brag Yer-pa (1937, 1948, 1950), lying at the head of an unexpectedly green and pleasant valley about twelve miles north-east of Lhasa. The sheer cliff face is honeycombed with caves to which monks from the city came for meditation. It is a place of ancient sanctity and has been inhabited reputedly since the time of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, whose cave with his image and those of his wives is high up on the cliff, reached only by a ladder.

Among the more famous caves is that of Lha-lung Dpal-gyi rdo-rje, who assassinated Glang-dar-ma. In it is the base of a pillar on which is inscribed his name and those of others. There are caves of Padmasambhava and Atiśa and in another, entered by a small door, a great image of Byams-pa (Maitreya) towers surprisingly some forty feet into the darkness. The little temple of the gnas-brtan bceu-drug, the Sixteen Early Evangelists of Buddhism, was founded by Klu-mes in the eleventh century. The principal figure is of Atiśa and his preaching throne is also in the main hall. There are many images from all periods including one of Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s Nepalese queen, which is in a quite un-Tibetan style, more like a western figure of the Virgin Mary. The frescoes show the lives of the Bka’-gdams-pa hierarchs. An image of the Regent Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho shows more recent Dge-lugs-pa influence.

Near the foot of the hill in a small stone building was a large bronze bell in the T’ang style bearing in early north Indian characters the Buddhist
formula ye dharma hetuprabhavā etc and another śloka in Tibetan. It appears that obsessive Chinese vandalism has swept it away together with the little temple, as well as causing damage in many of the caves.

**Tshal Gung-thang** (1939, 1948), some fifteen miles east of Lhasa on the south side of the Skyid-chu, was founded in the twelfth century by lama Zhang of the Bka'-brgyud-pa school. It encompassed a range of lofty, massive buildings built at different periods, including four gtsug-lag-khang temples between which there was some rivalry. Originally patronised and enriched by the Mongols, it contained many rich hangings and precious images, the greatest of which was a large Śākyamuni in the original temple. In the extensive mgon-khang was an image of the fierce form of Dpal-lidan Lha-mo which was always kept veiled. There was also a strange mounted figure of a demonic protector, Grib Rdzong-btsan. The Gnas-chung oracle priest had a chapel here, and there was a story that his possessor spirit first came to Tshal. Nearby was a very large mchod-rten built by Lama Zhang.

At the mouth of the 'Phan-po-chu were four mchod-rten which had to be built before the construction of Dga'-ldan could be undertaken. They are known as the 'Dgyer (sp?) mchod-rten (1937).

The **La-mo** (1939, 1949) monastery, further upstream and beyond Dga'-ldan, was founded in the eleventh century by Klū-mes Tshul-khrims shes-rab, one of the principal figures of the later diffusion of the faith. The monastery was patronised and enriched by the eighteenth-century noble Stag-rtse Mi-dbang, who treacherously colluded with the Dzungars. His armour and weapons are kept in the mgon-khang. La-mo is the seat of an oracle-priest whose robes and helmet are on a throne in a side chapel. Some of the wall paintings showed Bka'-gdams-pa hierarchs but the monastery was latterly Dge-lugs-pa.

Further up the river in a wide valley stands **Rgya-ma Khri-khang** (1949), the former administrative centre of a khri (“Thousand District”) under the Mongols. It is surrounded by a square enclosure of trees and a low wall. Inside are three large mchod-rten, one of which is that of 'Gro-mgon sangs-rgyas who founded or restored the monastery of Rin-chen-sgang higher up the valley; his image stands in one of two rather neglected chapels on the upper storey of the Khri-khang building. Before reaching the Khri-khang, one passes on the hillside a small stone tower reputed to mark the birthplace of Srong-brtson Sgam-po and containing a fine image of him.

Still higher up, near the mouth of a wide valley where the tributary stream of the Mal-gro Ma-chu joins the Skyid-chu, there is **Dbu-ru Ka-tshal** (1948–9), a temple in miniature founded by Srong-brtson Sgam-po as one of those intended to suppress the demoness threatening Tibet. A low, narrow aisle leads to the higher-roofed sanctuary. On the altar there was a silver Śākyamuni, a silver prayer-wheel said, improbably, to be that of
Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, and images of the king and his two queens. Behind the altar is a narrow skor-ra, a circumambulatory passage with just room to squeeze through. It seems credible that this was an authentic building from the seventh century.

Nearby is a small monastery of solid stone structure also known as Katshal Dgon-pa (1948, 1949). It is attributed to Padmasambhava and said to contain a famous image of him, but I could not gain access as the monastery was closed for investigation of a suspected theft.

Still further up river in the open valley of the Mang-ra-chu, facing the point where the Skyid-chu, flowing from the north, turns sharply westwards, is the little Zhwa'i Lha-khang (1948, 1949), the "Temple of the Hat". It is approached through a courtyard where the three resident monks kept their cattle. At either side of the entrance to the temple is a stone pillar, now damaged, bearing inscriptions by Khri Lde-srong-brtsan in honour of the founder, the famous monk-minister Myang Ting-nge-'dzin bzang-po, whose ward and pupil he had been in his minority. A door opens onto a little enclosure with a white mchod-rten in the centre, beyond which could be seen through the open door of the temple the image of Rnam-par snang-mdzad (Vairocana) on the altar with the Eight Disciples of the Buddha on either side. To the east is a chapel of Tshe-dpag-med (Amitāyus) and in a chapel on the west leading into a cloister is Padmasambhava. The cloister itself, which leads back to the entrance, had beautiful, rather faded frescoes of Vimalamitra, Atiśa and Myang Ting-nge-'dzin himself. A ladder gave access to an upper storey, above the main door, in which were the living quarters of the three resident monks. A cell with a small altar was said to be that of Myang Ting-nge-'dzin, in which I was allowed to sleep. After years of neglect the temple was repaired by the famous Rnying-ma-pa lama Klong-chen-pa in the early fourteenth century. He is said to have caused fallen pillars to rise up by his magical powers. Apart from such repairs the basic structure of the temple appeared to have survived unchanged since the early years of the ninth century. A little way from the building is a white mchod-rten containing the miraculous hat of Myang Ting-nge-'dzin. The legend tells how he had been promised as much grain as would fill his hat: putting his hat, which had a hole in it, over the granary, the grain poured through to provide the wherewithall to build his temple.

Opposite the valley of the Mang-ra-chu, on a rocky spur at the point where the Skyid-chu in its course from the north turns sharply west, is 'Bri-gung Rdzong-gsar (1948), a sixteenth-century monastery looking like a fortress. It was the administrative headquarters of a district owned by the 'Bri-gung-pa sect of the Bka'-brgyud-pa school. There was a large chapel inside with the usual images of the sect. On a hill on the other side of the Skyid-chu was G.yu-sna monastery, reached by an iron chain suspension bridge attributed to Thang-stong rgyal-po. I did not visit it.
About five miles up the Skyid-chu is **Rtsa Pho-brang** (1948), a strongly built "palace" headquarters of an administrative office of Rdzong-gsar. It appeared almost deserted except for a steward and a monk who tended the chapel of Rdo-rgyal-bdzin in a turret at the back of the building.

On the south side of the rock spur the tributary stream of the Sho-rong-chu joins the Skyid-chu. Four miles up its valley stood the great 'Bri-gung-pa monastery of **Yang-ri Dgon** (1948) dating from the fifteenth century. The massive red painted *lha-khang chen-po*, topped by a band of white masonry, with one of crimson brushwood above it, was entered past a line of *mchod-rten*, through a gateway in the west side of a long rectangular single-storeyed white wall, pierced by the windows of monks' cells and storerooms, which surrounded the whole monastery. On its south side rose a tall, broad, white tower used for the display of the *gos-sku*, a ceremonial religious banner. Inside that outer wall was a rectangular, two-storeyed block with rooms for senior monks and monastic officials. It enclosed a courtyard on to which the *lha-khang* backed. Entering the *lha-khang chen-po*, one was struck by the size and height of the halls and chapels. On their red wooden pillars hung beautiful *thang-kas* painted in gold on a red background. In the main temple were many images of gold and silver and many religious vessels of gold. The wall paintings depicted scenes from the lives of Bka'-brgyud-pa hierarchs in general and the 'Bri-gung-pa in particular. In another lofty hall were many *mchod-rten* of departed incarnate lamas, in bronze or silver, all lavishly decorated with gold. A large and ornate *mgon-khang* enshrined the famous image of 'Bri-gung A-phyi, the protectress deity of the sect. In 1966 this great and wealthy monastery was looted by the Chinese and then razed to the ground.

Twelve miles further up the valley, after passing the extensive Gter-sgrom nunnery, one comes to **'Bri-gung Mthil** (1948), the mother-monastery of the 'Bri-gung Bka’-brgyud-pa sect founded in 1179 by 'Bri-gung Chos-rje. It is a scatter of temples, chapels and monastic residences spread widely over a steep hillside overlooking a small patch of cultivated ground by the Sho-rong-chu. The buildings are connected by walkways and ladders along the hill. The *gtsug-lag-khang* and assembly hall is built on a solid stone rampart about sixty feet high. It is reached down a ladder at the foot of which was the red painted preaching throne of the Chos-rje Rin-po-che. Inside, as well as the central hall and main altar with images of the founder and other Bka’-brgyud-pa and 'Bri-gung-pa lamas, were several chapels, some containing reliquary *mchod-rten* and old *thang-ka*. Further west was a temple containing the painted clay reliquary *mchod-rten* of the Chos-rje Rin-po-che and some way above it on the hillside a large *mchod-rten* made by him. To the east in a large hall were many *manḍala* (*dkyil-'khor*) of gilded bronze. Another hall contained similar *mchod-rten* of the founder's brother and two noble ladies. In the same area was a large, ornate *mgon-khang*, with
the usual terrifying objects, presided over by 'Bri-gung A-phyi. High up on the hillside was a long, well-lit hall almost devoid of decoration in which sat a row of meditating lamas (mtshams-mkhan) in white robes, with their long hair coiled round their heads. Some were sitting in silence, others reading silently, which was the 'Bri-gung custom ('bri-klog). There was an atmosphere of total, quiet devotion. At some distance was a stone said to have been brought from India in the claws of a vulture. The monastery was a rather bewildering collection of widely separated buildings; it was difficult to get a single view of it. Although obviously wealthy, there was no such profusion of gold as at Yang-ri Dgon.

Eight miles west of Rdzong-gsar on the north bank of the Skyid-chu is the small rural monastery of Thang-skya (1948), its courtyard full of the monks’ cattle. Originally founded by Srong-brtsan Sgam-po as a temple higher up the hillside, it was moved to its present position by the Bka’-gdams-pa lama Klu-mes. The principal image is, surprisingly, Padmasambhava but there is a small image of Atiśa in a glass case at the side of the altar. The images of the Three Religious Kings brought from the original temple are prominently displayed on a side altar, and in the hall are several large bronze mchod-rten in the Indian style, which is characteristic of the Bka’-gdams-pa tradition.

Near the head of the 'Phan-po valley is the temple of Rgyal (1949), founded in 1012 by Zhang Sna-nam Rdo-rje dbang-phyug, whose family was related by marriage to the Tibetan kings. In front of the temple is a tall stone pillar with a partly damaged inscription of no real historical interest. The temple, formerly famed for its wealth, was looted and damaged by fire by the invading Mongols in 1280. There are two large chapels with wall paintings of Bka’-gdams-pa hierarchs, images of the sect and many large bronze mchod-rten in the Bka’-gdams-pa tradition. The original name of the temple was Rgyal Lug-lhas, "The Sheepfold".

Some miles east of Rgyal was a group of large mchod-rten called Dgonbu Mchod-pa (1949) attributed to a thirteenth-century abbot of Rgyal. The neighbouring Za (sp?) monastery was locked up, the monks having gone for the harvest.

About six miles further downstream, on the south bank, is Glang-thang (1939, 1949, 1950) monastery, a Bka’-gdams-pa foundation of the eleventh century which formerly housed a large community of monks. A solidly built gtsug-lag-khang and a large bla-brang survive in a rather neglected condition. The temple contained many images, including a large Śākyamuni Buddha and a Śgrol-ma said to have spoken; there were also images of Bka’-gdams-pa and Sa-skya-pa hierarchs and remains of early wall paintings, possibly fourteenth century. Sir Charles Bell, on a visit in 1921, saw the mummified body of the famous yogic teacher Dam-pa sangs-rgyas protruding from the wall. It was later entombed in a mchod-rten outside the
*lha-khang* where there is also one of the founder, Glang-ri-thang-pa Rdo-rje seng-ge.

Opposite Glang-thang on the north side of the *Phan-po-chu* a wide valley leads to *Lhun-grub Rdzong* (1939, 1950) and beyond. A little way northwest of the *rdzong* is *Shar-ra Bum-pa*, a large *mchod-rt'en* built by the scholar and teacher Sha-ra-ba, a contemporary of Glang-ri-thang-pa. There are several smaller *mchod-rt'en* and a nunnery there.

The road goes northwards across the Lcags-la some twenty-five miles to the great monastery of *Stag-lung* (1939, 1950) sheltered in a grassy fold of the *Phags-chu* valley. It was founded in 1180 by Stag-lung-thang-pa Bkra-shis-dpal who initiated the Stag-lung branch of the *Bka'-brgyud-pa* school. The monastery is dominated by the massive, rectangular, almost windowless block of the *lha-khang chen-po*, three storeys high, painted red with a broad white band on top. It was built in the early thirteenth century. Within, the mysterious darkness of the great temple is enhanced by a forest of mighty red pillars supporting the upper floor. Among the many precious images and religious vessels is a great golden *hkyarnuni*, the silver reliquary *mchod-rt'en* of Stag-lung-thang-pa, his silver image and one of *'Gro-mgon Phag-mo-gru-pa*, also a Sgrol-ma reputed to have spoken.

The upper storey was a wide gallery looking down onto the main chapel. There were side chapels with altars and images and it was covered by a skylight. A ladder led to the roof on the north side of which was a small chapel surmounted by a fine gold *rgya-phibs* canopy. Inside was an image of *'Brom-ston*, Atiśa's principal disciple, and a reliquary containing his hair. To one side is a large and oppressively dark *mgon-khang* in which is the fierce image of the protector deity of the temple and many other menacing figures: stuffed yaks, bears and leopards.

To the west of the *lha-khang chen-po* was a large assembly hall, and behind it was the extensive, three-storeyed *bla-brang* of the Zhabs-drung Rin-po-che, the principal incarnation of the monastery who was always found in the noble family of Ra-kha-shar, into which the founder Stag-lung-thang-pa was born. In addition to the rooms and private chapel of the Zhabs-drung there are many halls and temples in one of which were the reliquary *mchod-rt'en* of former Zhabs-drungs and also of members, including ladies, of the Ra-kha-shar family who were accorded a special religious status.

To the south of the *lha-khang chen-po* was an extensive grassy enclosure, dotted with widely spaced residences of monks and also two large temples with gilded canopies; they were the *bla-brang* of two other important incarnate lamas of the sect, the Rtse-sprul Rin-po-che and Ma-sprul Rin-po-che. They contained images of their predecessors and other precious objects. The altar in Ma-sprul's chapel was surprisingly decorated with numerous clocks of all sorts, none of them in working order.
From Stag-lung a track lined with wild rose bushes runs down the valley of the 'Phags-chu, past a large mchod-rten facing the hermitage of Si-li (or Gser-gling) Rgod-tshang high up on the hillside, to the chain bridge across the Skyid-chu at Phu-mdo, and on, up the stony valley of the Rwa-sgreng Rong-chu to the famous Rwa-sgreng (1950) monastery, set delightfully in a forest of tall juniper trees, a rare sight in this part of Tibet. It was founded as the first monastery of the Bka'-gdams-pa school by Atiśa's principal disciple 'Brom-ston, who brought with him relics of the master which were treasured in the main temple.

Unlike Stag-lung, Rwa-sgreng's many temples, halls and monastic residences are grouped closely together on the hillside, dominated by the small red tower and gilded canopy standing over the main altar in the gtsug-lag-khang and assembly hall. The chief treasure of the monastery is a small gold image of 'Jam-pa'i rdo-rje (Mañjuvajra), revered as one of the 'dzam-gling-rgyan, "Ornaments of the World". But there are many other much prized images of Atiśa, 'Brom-ston, Saraha, Stag-lung-thang-pa and more, as well as a profusion of gold butter lamps and vessels. By the side of the 'Jam-pa'i rdo-rje was a large pile of palm-leaf books and, not far away, a leather package containing books which had belonged to Atiśa and Saraha. It had been sealed by the late Dalai Lama and my request to see the books was politely refused as it could only be opened by the new Dalai Lama when he came of age.

Among other buildings were the tall bla-brang of the Rwa-sgreng Rinpo-che, with large windows on the upper storey, well-built residences for the five hundred monks, and other halls and chapels. In the valley below the monastery was a stone circle, the palace of the mkha'-gro-ma deities. At the time of my visit in 1950 the monks had not fully recovered from the trauma of 1947 when the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che had been arrested in his bla-brang by Tibetan troops on the charge of conspiracy to displace his successor as Regent, the Stag-brag Rin-po-che. He was taken to Lhasa where he died in prison. The troops also looted his bla-brang.

Turning to the sites west of Lhasa, about six miles west of the city in the wide valley where the Stod-lung-chu enters the Skyid-chu there is an enclosure surrounding a small temple and two pools of clear spring-fed water known as Gzhong-pa Lha-chu (1939, 1946). They are said to have been formed by a blow from Padmasambhava's staff, which is preserved in the temple. The pools are pleasantly surrounded by willows.

Nearby is the Bran Ra-mo-che (1946), a small temple built in the twelfth century by Balti Rin-po-che. It contained a Jo-bo image looking towards the Lhasa Jo-bo. Balti later founded Skyor-mo-lung monastery, once an active teaching centre of the Bka'-gdams-pa school but latterly rather neglected. There were three large temples with impressive images.

A lady, Bsod-nams Phun-khang, was associated with the foundation of Bran Ra-mo-che. The large assembly hall was partly open to the sky. At
the back was a two-storey image of Tshe-dpag-med (Amitāyus) whose vase of life-giving water was given by Atisā. There were also fine images of Śākyamuni, Rnam-par snang-mdzad (Vairocana), the Eight Disciples of the Buddha, and a Bstan-ma, guardian deity of the monastery.

Eighteen miles northward up the Stod-lung valley the 'Gro-bo-lung-chu flows in from the west. Six miles up the valley on a hillside to the north is Gnas-nang (1946), founded in the twelfth century by the first Zhwa-dmar ("Red Hat") Karma-pa. It was later the residence of the historian Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag ‘phreng-ba.

Ten miles further on is Mtshur-phu (1946, 1950), the principal seat of the Karma Bka’-brygyud school and residence of the Zhwa-nag ("Black Hat") incarnation. Mtshur-phu was founded in 1187 by Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa, the first Zhwa-nag lama, and was much enlarged by his successor, the charismatic Karma Pakshi. Its many buildings are closely grouped in a high enclosed wall overlooking the 'Gro-bo-lung-chu. The entrance on the west side is by way of a courtyard in which stands an inscribed pillar dating from the ninth century which has no obvious connection with the monastery; beyond it a steep stone stair leads to a monastic college, and further on is the large assembly hall (tshogs-khang) in which the many red wooden pillars are hung with fine old thang-kas, and on the altar are the images of the hierarchs of the sect from Mar-pa, Mi-la-ras-pa and Sgam-po-pa onwards. Its walls are decorated with scenes from the life of the Buddha. A large gilded rgya-phibs adorns the roof.

Behind it is the lha-khang chen-po, a series of large chapels and halls and side chapels. In the lofty gtsug-lag-khang there was a great bronze Śākyamuni reputedly sixty feet (‘dom-bcu) tall, a great technological achievement; it was said to contain relics of the Buddha and was known as one of the "Ornaments of the World". The wooden pillars here were exceptionally large and tall. The fine wall paintings depicted the lives of the hierarchs. A side chapel treated with special reverence was the meditation chamber of Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa. In one large hall there were the numerous reliquary mchod-rten of lamas of both the Black Hat and Red Hat lineages, the Rgyal-tshab and Dpa’-bo incarnations and others. That of Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa was of simple clay with gold painted decorations and its base was surrounded by ritual vases. Karma Pag-shi’s was completely plain, but those of other lamas were painted black; they were of unusually rounded shape.

There were also images in the hall including a hauntingly gaunt Mi-la-ras-pa said to be "self-created" (rang-'byung), and one of the ninth Zhwa-nag incarnation Dbang-phyug rdo-rje, said always to radiate with warmth. Another hall contained a library of many books. The rgya-phibs, which was rather discoloured, was said to have been originally over the Indian monastery of Nalanda and to have been carried off by raiding Mongols who
abandoned it in two pieces near a river in east Tibet, where it was retrieved by Karma Pakshi; a Bka'-gyur, written in gold, which was given to him by the emperor Se-chen (Khubilai Khan), is greatly treasured.

The bla-brang of the Rgyal-tshab Rin-po-che was a large red building higher up the hill, while that of the Zhwa-nag Rin-po-che was in front of the tshogs-khang. Here he entertained me and through his friendship I was able to see many treasured possessions, including figures of Mar-pa, Mi-la-ras-pa and others carved in ivory by the artistic tenth Zhwa-nag lama, several palm leaf books, a carved ivory panel presented by a Ming Emperor, a great gold seal with a dragon handle given to Karma Pakshi by the Emperor Se-chen, and a series of fine images of the preceding Zhwa-nag lamas.

Opposite the monastery on the south bank of the river is a stepped tower for displaying religious banners; and further downstream the Zhwa-nag lama had a pleasant summer house in which he kept several large cages of singing birds; behind it in a large garden were a tame deer and two peacocks.

Across the Mtshur-phu-la to the north is the Snye-mo valley which is unmarked on the Survey of India map. Its northern part, Snye-mo Gzhu, is rather barren and rocky; the Lho-rong-chu flows north through it to Yangs-pa-can, the monastery of the Zhwa-dmar Karma-pa (which I did not visit), then on to join the Stod-lung-chu. There are many hot springs and geysers in the valley. About twenty miles south of the Mtshur-phu-la there is a low watershed from which the Lho-rong-chu flows northwards, and the Snye-mo-rong-chu also flows north by west through a small gorge into the fertile lower Snye-mo valley, where it turns south into the Gtsang-po. North of that turning point is Snye-mo Bya-sgo, the estate of the Bshad-sgra family. Opposite their towering mansion is the monastery of Bya-sgo (1946), sheltered in trees above the Snye-mo river. On the altar was a Spyan-ras-gzigs (Avalokiteśvara) and many gold butter lamps and other vessels given by the Bshad-sgra family.

Returning to the Lhasa area: on the west bank of the Skyid-chu just below the point where it is joined by the Stod-lung-chu, in a narrow valley is the monastery of Stag-brag (1950), a Dge-lugs-pa foundation built on the site of an ancient btsan-khang attributed to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po and preserving images of the Religious Kings said to have come from the old building. Further up the valley were seven large burial mounds, probably those of some noble family, perhaps the Bran-ka, which are evidence of the antiquity of the site. Near Ra-ma-sgang on the south side of the Skyid-chu, four miles from Lhasa, is a small nunnery in quite a large enclosure in front of which is an inscribed pillar of the ninth century; and at a considerable distance at each corner is a large mchod-rten, one of which had remains of glazed tiles in the appropriate colour for its geographic position. These were the remains of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan's great temple of Skar-cung (1949).
Six miles further downstream at Gsang-mdä', the mouth of the valley leads to the ancient monastery-retreat of Gsang-phu. In a small enclosure is the reliquary chapel (sku-'bum) of Blo-lidan shes-rab, a great scholar and translator of the eleventh century.

Three miles further on is another extensive precinct, similar to that at Skar-cung, marked by great mchod-rten. In the centre is a small temple with a small ornamental pillar in front and with images of the Religious Kings on the altar. This and the remains of other buildings and uninscribed stone pillars are all that survive of Ral-pa-can’s great nine-storeyed temple and palace of 'On-cang-do (1949).

On the other side of the Skyid-chu is the famous Snye-thang Sgrol-ma Lha-khang (1936 and later). It was here that Atiśa lived for the last years of his life. In addition to fine images of the twenty-one forms of Sgrol-ma (Tārā), the temple preserves many precious relics of Atiśa: a small early figure of him, a reliquary vessel holding some of his physical remains, another in which his robe is kept. Another mchod-rten contains the robe of his disciple 'Brom-ston. There are many other chapels with precious images, and in one is Atiśa’s throne. In a little chapel some distance to the east are two large simple clay mchod-rten, one containing the bodily relics of Atiśa, the other those of Sa-skya-pa Bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan. The mchod-rten are lightly decorated with paintings of vases and flowers.

Not far away, in a small stone building, is a strange figure about four feet tall with a large, grinning, black mask; it wears the dress of an oracle priest — a red brocade hat with eyes embroidered on it, and a robe of fine brocade with a mystic mirror (me-long) on its chest. The figures of two boys kneel beside the figure, and on its right side is a large drum. Underneath the robe is the stuffed skin of a human torso supported on a wooden trestle. All the figures are decorated in fresh white scarves which, together with the good condition of the robes, suggests regular devotion is paid. The tradition is that the figure, known as the Dpa'-bo Blon-chen, is the upper half of the body of the great monk minister Bran-ka Dpal-yon, who was murdered by Glang-darma; it was sawn in half and thrown into the Skyid-chu. Half was washed up at Snye-thang and was recovered by two boys; the other half was swept down to Rtse-thang, but its fate is unrecorded. The figure at Snye-thang is revered as a yul-lha, a protector deity of the locality. Tsepon Shakabpa states that he saw the head of Bran-ka Dpal-yon at the Rgya-grong village in the Snye-thang district, implying that he was murdered there. The history of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag has a long story about his fate. In a chapel to the north were the figures of the Sixteen Principal Disciples of the Buddha.

The road southward to the Gtsang-po by the west bank of the Skyid-chu passes the fourteenth-century chapel of 'Tshal-pa-nang (1944, 1948) set in a grove of ancient willow trees. It was a foundation associated with Gong-dkar monastery and all three schools of the Sa-skya-pa, Bka'-brgyud-pa and
Rnying-ma-pa were represented there. The upper storey was derelict but the lower contained a fine Jo-bo and images of the Sa-skya and Bka'-brgyud-pa traditions, as well as a reliquary mchod-rten of the founder, Tshal-pa lama.

About four miles up the Gtsang-po from the point where the Skyid-chu joins it was Chos-'khor Yang-rtse in which was a large Šakyathub-pa. It was originally Rnying-ma-pa.

On the opposite side of the river was the monastery of Lcags-zam Chu-bo-ri built on a rocky spur overlooking the ferry station and the remains of an iron-chain suspension bridge over the Gtsang-po. It was built in the early fifteenth century by the famous bridge builder Thang-stong rgyal-po who also founded the monastery. In the assembly hall and numerous chapels were images of the Rnying-ma-pa sect and also the Dge-lugs-pa. That of Thang-stong himself was in a special chapel and his meditation cell was in a tower at the top of the building. The hill is famous for its many springs.

Further downstream on a bluff overlooking the river were Gong-dkar Rdzong and the fifteenth-century Sa-skya-pa monastery of Gong-dkar Rdo-rje-gdan, which I did not visit. It was very extensive and included several separate colleges. There was a large assembly hall comparable in size to those of the colleges in 'Bras-spungs or Se-ra. The lha-khang chen-po was large and lofty, containing among its many images those of the Sa-skya hierarchs and the lineage of the lama Rdo-rje gdan-pa. There were numerous rich chapels and a large mgon-khang. In one chapel were kept the stuffed skins of three ministers of state who were executed in the civil war of 1727 from which Pho-lha emerged triumphant. The monastery was famous for the beauty of the wall paintings in all the temples and chapels, some of which, I believe, survive.

About twenty-six miles downstream on the north bank is Bsam-yas "Beyond Imagining", the oldest, most famous, most beautiful and most numinous of Tibetan monasteries. Founded in 779 by Padmasambhava and the Indian paññita Šántaraksita under the patronage of the king Khri Srong-Ide-brtsan, it was conceived as the realization of an ideal universe in the form of a mandala. The spacious precinct is surrounded by a high wall representing the ocean, with a differently shaped temple at each of the cardinal points for continents and smaller island temples on either side. Some way inside the wall are four large mchod-rten, each in the colour appropriate to its geographical position — red at the south-west, black at the north-west, blue at the north-east, and white at the south-east. At the centre, enclosed in a high white wall pierced by doors on the east, south, north and west, stands, foursquare, the great dbu-rtse or gtsug-lag-khang, the symbol of Mount Me-ru, the centre of the universe. It is once again four storeys tall, having been vandalised and half destroyed by the
Chinese in 1966. The lower two storeys are of massive white dressed stone, the upper two of fine timber, the topmost being of smaller dimensions than the other three, giving a rather pyramidal appearance. A circumambulation passage runs all round inside the enclosure wall. On the wall to the south side of the entrance gate stands an inscribed stone pillar recording a vow by Khri Srong-lde-brtsan that the Buddhist faith is to be maintained by his successors. Over the gateway hangs a large bronze bell inscribed with a prayer by the queen mother for the welfare of the king. On either side is a stone elephant.

Inside is the assembly hall ('dus-khang), in effect a large temple containing a veritable pantheon of images of all religious schools. There is more than one large Buddha, and of course Padmasambhava and Sàntaraksita; Mar-pa, Mi-la-ras-pa, Sa-skya Pañ-chen, Atiśa, Tsong-kha-pa, the Three Religious Kings, and many more. There is a separate chapel for Spyan-ras-gzigs (Avalokiteśvara), and also a large mgon-khang full of fierce images, including the demon spirits which possess the oracle priests, especially Pe-har and Tsi’u-dmar. There is also the usual display of weapons and stuffed animals in a general atmosphere of musty gloom.

The assembly hall is left through three large arches and up a flight of stairs to the innermost sanctuary, the Jo-khang. The approach is guarded by protector godlings. The throne used by Sàntaraksita and succeeding hierarchs is on one side and at the back of the chapel on a high gilded and arcaded altar is the precious Jo-bo Byang-chub-chen-po, in a blaze of butter lamps and with tall figures of the Eight Disciples. The skull of Sàntaraksita, with one surviving tooth, was in a glass case near the altar. A circumambulation passage runs round the chapel, which is of massive masonry.

The upper storeys are also well furnished with precious images. The second floor consists of an enclosed lhakhang with its own circumambulation passage and a decorative ceiling. In the centre is a large image of Padmasambhava surrounded by Buddha figures and religious teachers.

The third floor is more open and its central image is a large fourfold Rnam-par snang-mdzad (Vairocana). The much smaller chapel on the topmost level is dominated by a many-armed figure of Bde-mchog, the Supreme Bliss.

Many of the wall paintings depicting the lives of Padmasambhava, the building of Bsam-yas, jātaka stories and so on are in remarkably good condition or skilfully restored; they are mostly of fine quality.

To the north of the dbu-rtse is the temple of Pe-har with all the macabre accoutrements of an oracle deity and protector of the faith, including his iron greaves. The last breath of the dying was supposed to find its way here through a small hole in the wall. To the south and west were two of the temples built by the three queens of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan. They were like the dbu-rtse in design but smaller. Each had its assembly hall and Jo-khang.
By 1949 they had suffered neglect and were restored by the regent. The third temple, in a little tree-shaded courtyard to the northeast of the *dbu-rtse*, is much less pretentious and is built on the usual design of a Tibetan *lha-khang*.

On the south side of the monastery is the Has-po-ri hill with a little temple on top. On the east side of the hill is the small white temple of *Has-po-rgyab* (1949), "The Back of Has-po-ri", and some miles further east on a small hillock overlooking a little pool was *Kwa-cu* (1949), a similar, single-storey white temple, possibly eighth or ninth century, with images of the Religious Kings in it.

About twenty miles downstream where the secluded and beautiful 'On valley joins the Gtsang-po, *Mnga'-ris Grwa-tshang* (1949) stands proudly on a rocky pinnacle. It was founded in the mid-sixteenth century by the second Dalai Lama to be a college for monks from west Tibet. It has a large Byams-pa (Maitreya) and several small west Tibetan bronze figures. The monks follow the western custom of pronouncing every letter of a word when reading.

Some eight miles up the 'On valley is the ancient temple of *Ke-ru* (1949). It has a small assembly hall and at the back of it a red-painted door in roughly carved pillars opens onto the ancient chapel in which is a superb Śākyamuni Buddha, perhaps the most beautiful in Tibet. Ranged on either side of the Buddha are ten bodhisattva and guardian deity figures in an early style described by the sacristan as Li (Khotanese) but reminiscent of the features of Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s queens in the Potala. There is also a chapel of Atiśa with a *mchod-rten* in the Indian style. Both Giuseppe Tucci and I were told that the original *lha-khang* was founded by Khri Srong-Idg-brtsan; but Roberto Vitali, in a detailed and learned examination of the temple and its history, seeks to identify it with Khri Lde-gtshug-brtsan’s temple of Kwa-chu and to connect it with his Chinese princess Kim-sheng Kong-co. There are many difficulties in this. I may mention only that when Atiśa stayed there in the eleventh century it was known as *Ke-ru* and the name Kwa-chu has never been applied to it, nor is there any historical evidence to associate it with the Chinese princess. Its genuine antiquity is, however, beyond doubt.

Four miles upstream from the 'On valley a ferry crosses to Rtse-thang on the south bank. It passes two rocky islets with ruined masonry towers which formerly supported one of Thang-stong rgyal-po’s famous iron-chain bridges.

*Rtse-thang* stands at the mouth of the Yarlung valley, the heartland of the old Tibetan kingdom and rich in traces of that age and many monasteries of later periods. At Rtse-thang itself is *Dga'-Idan Chos-'khor-gling* (1949) of the Phag-mo-gru-pa; it was later much enlarged and embellished with images of the Dge-lugs-pa church.

Just west of Rtse-thang stands the little temple of *Bya-sa* (1949), a famous foundation of the ninth century attributed to Dpal-'khor-btsan, grandson
of king Glang-dar-ma. Later reconstructed, it came into the hands of the Sa-skya-pa school. Today all that is said to remain is a small temple rebuilt in the 1980s.

On the hillside at Sne’u-gdong (1949) a little further south is the derelict palace of the Phag-mo-gru-pa princes, and next to it Ban-tshag (sp?) monastery, housing images of Phag-mo-gru, Karma Pag-shi, Sa-skya Pan-chen and Padmasambhava, whose hat is a precious treasure of the monastery; also several bronze mchod-rten.

On the far slope of the hill is Rtse-tshogs-pa (1949), founded by Kha-che Pan-chen Sākyā-śri in the twelfth century. During my visit the large community of monks was intent on its prayers in the assembly hall. The principal image was a large and beautiful Byams-pa (Maitreya) over which was a canopy of fine brocade with pictures of figures in Ming court dress. A mchod-rten held the bones of Sākyā-śri whose portrait was on one of the walls — a benevolent, ascetic old man in a close-fitting yellow cap.

Further south is what is probably the oldest religious building in Yarlung, the much revered Khra-’bbrug (1949) temple. It is attributed to Srong-brtsan Sgam-po and is mentioned in an edict by Khri Srong-lde-brtsan but may well have undergone enlargement or restoration at different times. It is an echo of what the Lhasa Jo-khang may originally have looked like. The temple stands in a courtyard surrounded by a high, solidly built, red-topped white wall and a large gatehouse in which is a small chapel. Inside is a large courtyard. Over the temple doorway hangs a heavy bronze bell which suffered some damage. It is inscribed with a prayer by the dowager queen Byang-chub for the benefit of king Khri Lde-srong-brtsan, who perhaps sponsored some repairs to the temple. Its previous existence is proved by mention of it in an edict of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan, the father of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan.

Inside is a many-pilled assembly hall with large images of protecting deities at the entrance. Opening off the back and sides are many brightly lit chapels. The principal one in the centre is the Sgrol-ma Lha-khang with a famous image of Sgrol-ma (Tārā) which is said to speak and to have eaten food. The wall behind is covered with lively, painted stucco figures of men, gods, animals, flowers and arabesques. To one side is an open chapel with images of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, his queens and his ministers Mgar and Thon-mi; nearby is a chapel of Spyan-ras-gzigs and on the other side are chapels of Padmasambhava, Tsong-kha-pa, and Atiśa. Everywhere there is a profusion of images of all periods, silk hangings and gold ritual vessels. In the hall at the side of the Sgrol-ma Lha-khang stand ancient stone images of the deities of the Vairocana pentad. The altars are brilliantly illuminated by glowing butter lamps. The Tibetan government alone supplies the butter for one thousand lamps each day and worshipers offer many more. On the upper floor are well modelled, painted clay
figures of the eighty four mahāsiddhas. There is an impressive air of wealth and magnificence, but it lacks the numinous wonder of the Lhasa Jo-khang.

Further south is **Yum-bu Bla-mkhar** (1949), the ancient palace of the Tibetan kings, prominent on a rocky hill. It is a narrow rectangular building with a slender white tower topped by a gilded *rgya-phibs* canopy. By tradition it was founded by the mythical king Nya-khri Btsan-po and it is associated, rather more possibly, with king Tho-tho-ri who may be placed tentatively in the middle of the fifth century. Legend has it that in his reign the first Buddhist books fell from heaven onto the roof of the palace, though they could not be understood at the time. The story gives sanctity to the building, which is approached by a narrow path up a steep hill and entered through a low door beyond which a steep ladder leads to the first floor. Whatever the original purpose may have been, it is now a mixture of a chapel and museum. At the back a Jo-bo image has Nya-khri Btsan-po and Srong-brtsan Sgam-po on either side and round the hall are figures of the Religious Kings from Tho-tho-ri toRal-pa-can, queens and ministers, including a lively one of Mgar Stong-rtsan with bright, sparkling eyes. The upper floor is a more genuine chapel with images of Byams-pa (Maitreya) and ‘Od-dpag-med (Amitabha). Above is a terrace with a door to the tower.

Not far distant is **Lha-ru** (1949), famed for its images of the Eight Medicine Buddhas. It is also the home of an oracle priest.

In a side valley further south are the extensive ruins of Khri Lde-gtsug-brtsan’s palace, known as **Yar-klung Pho-brang** (1949). Relics from the site — a gold-lettered book, a silver *mchod-rten* and a *rdo-rje* — are kept in a house in the village.

Nearby is **Rtag-spyan Bum-pa** (1949) built in the twelfth century by lama Skor of the Bka’-gdams-pa school.

A conspicuous *mchod-rten* is the stately white **Tshes-bcu Bum-pa** (1949) in the Btsan-thang region to the west of Sne’u-gdong, which is where the mythical king Nya-khri Btsan-po is said to have descended from heaven. The Bum-pa was built for Khri Srong-lde-brtsan to contain a crystal vase given to him by his minister Cog-ro. Water is said to flow from it at the full moon.

Nearby is the little **Btsan-thang G.yu’i Lha-khang** (1949), which owes its name to its rooflet covered with turquoise-blue tiles. Its foundation is attributed to one of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan’s queens. It has some resemblance to the Ra-mo-che in design, though much smaller. There were images of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po and Padmasambhava as well as a small Jo-bo. The roof was supported by a wooden lantern construction like that of the top storey of the Bsam-yas dbu-rtse.

The Bka’-brgyud-pa monastery of **Ras-chung-phug** (1949) clings, at different levels, to the hillside which separates the Yarlung and ‘Phyong-rgyas valleys. It is built above the meditation cave of Ras-chung-pa, a close personal disciple of Mi-la-ras-pa. The cave was a rather shallow recess with
images of Mi-la-ras-pa and Ras-chung-pa on the altar and a small *mchod-rten* in front. In the main temple above the principal images were the Buddha and his Eight Disciples. In another chapel was Rdo-rje-'chang (Vajradhara) as the main figure and images of Mar-pa, Mi-la-ras-pa, Sgam-po-pa and Ras-chung-pa. A many-armed Bde-mchog (Śamvara) presided in the *dgon-khang*.

A short way up the 'Phyong-rgyas valley, on the east side, is the eleventh-century Bka’-gdams-pa monastery of Sol-nag Thang-po-che (1949) where Atiśa and his disciple Khu-ston Brtson-'grus stayed. It was later taken over by the Dge-lugs-pa. There was an image of Spyan-ras-gzigs and one of Atiśa. In his meditation cell there was a wall painting of him. Many bronze *mchod-rten* were in the assembly hall. The monastery was also home to an oracle-priest. It was visited also by Tsong-kha-pa. About twelve miles up the valley and visible from a considerable distance are the brooding forms of the great rectangular burial *tumuli* (bang-so) (1949) of the Tibetan kings. The burials were conducted with Bon-po rites, and there is little visible of a Buddhist connection except for a small Rnying-ma-pa temple on the top of the bang-so of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po, known as Bang-so dmar-po (“The Red Tomb”). In it are images of the king and his wives and ministers, also of the Padmasambhava and protecting deities. There is also in the inscription on a fine *rdo-ring* (stele) at the bang-so of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan fragmentary mention of *dam-pa’i chos*, “the pure faith”.

Spread over the hillside overlooking the burial mounds from the north is the Dge-lugs-pa monastery of Ri-bo bde-chen (1949), near to the ancient fortress of Phying-ba’i Stag-rtse (1949) where the fifth Dalai Lama was born. The monastery was founded in the fifteenth century and greatly enlarged by Bskal-bzang rgya-mtsho, the seventh Dalai Lama, in the eighteenth century. It housed a large community of monks and had several large halls and chapels in the principal of which was a *śakamuni* with Eight Disciples; and in another a fine Byams-pa (Maitreya). Rdo-rje ’jigs-byed (Vajrabhairava) presided over the *mgon-khang*.

About forty miles upriver from Rtse-thang is Lce-bde-zhol Rdzong (1950), a thriving small town producing woven materials. There is a small Bka’-brgyud-pa temple near the rdzong, and south of the town the large Sa-skya-pa monastery of Gdung-phud Chos-khor (1950). In its great main chapel is a jewelled image of Sgrol-ma (Tara) with attendant deities. Elsewhere were portrait images of the Sa-skya-pa hierarchs. The protecting deity is Gur-mgon Mahākāla.

The valley climbs southwards, passing the Dge-lugs-pa monastery of Su-ru-gling and Ston Rnam-rgyal-gling Rdzong (1950) by a little used track across the Grib La pass down to the eastern end of the Yar-'brog lake. It continues south-westwards, through extensive grazing grounds, to the Rdza-ring La pass between the snow ranges of 'Phrin-las rgyal-po and
Kangnyung (sp?), and on to the valley of the Chaparchu (sp?) in Lho-brag. Near the foot of the pass is the temple of Ris-med (1950) in a walled enclosure on a low red hillock sheltered by wild rose bushes. This little known temple was founded in the fourteenth century by Bo-gdong Phyogs-las mam-rgyal. As its name implies, it was open to all sects. There was a Buddha image, and many fine bronze mchod-rten, including one reputed to be the reliquary of the mahāsiddha Pha-dam-pa.

On the hillside above Ris-med Lha-khang is Smra-bo lcogs-pa (1950). Originally founded in the time of the kings, it became the home of the famous gter-ston, “discoverer of hidden religious texts”, Myang-ral Nyi-ma ’od-zer. In front of the temple are two large mchod-rten which are much visited by pilgrims. Inside are images of the Rigs-gsum mgon-po. In a wooden enclosure at one side are figures of the Religious Kings. There are also images of Mnga’-bdag Myang, as he is known, who was born here, and of another famous gter-ston, Guru Chos-dbang.

In the valley below the monastery is a large mchod-rten made by Mnga’-bdag Myang; and near the point where the Chaparchu joins the larger Lho-brag Btsan-'gro-chu there is another, white, mchod-rten (visible in the photograph of Gnas-gzhi).

Gnas-gzhi (1950), an important Rnying-ma-pa monastery, is situated a little way down the valley on the west side. It was founded in the thirteenth century by Guru Chos-dbang, who was born here and whose image has a place on the main altar. His dmar-gdung — a gilded mchod-rten containing his mummified body — is in a separate chapel together with those of his descendants. The principal image is of Dus-gsum Sangs-rgyas, the Buddhas of the Three Ages, and large images of the Sixteen Disciples stand on either side in the hall. Many of the images are unusually large. An image of Sangs-rgyas Ras-chen-pa is also there, next to that of Guru Chos-dbang. In a large dark hall there are huge images of fierce protector deities including Heruka, Bde-mchog (Śamvara), Rta-mgrin (Hayagriva), Gshin-rje (Yama), and many others.

The road runs south-west down the valley across a low pass and, by way of Dar-ma Rdzong, some thirty-five miles to Lha-khang Rdzong (1950) on a small plateau not far from the border with Bhutan.

Here is the ancient but little known temple of Mkho-mthing (1950), founded by Srong-brtsan Sgam-po as one of his twelve (some say 108) temples to bind down the limbs of a female demon menacing his kingdom and to give spiritual protection to his borders. Half hidden by a buckthorn hedge, it is a little, self-effacing, white-walled building with a roof of wooden shingles and a small, flat, slate-covered rgya-phibs topped by an insignificant gilded finial. An unpretentious door off a little, unkempt courtyard opens onto a short passage to the assembly hall in which are images of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po and other royal figures and a large white-
washed _mchod-rten_ of Tsa-ri Rin-chen, the nephew of Lo-ras-pa. A few steps lead to an iron grille opening onto the _gtsug-lag-khang_. The simplicity of the approach leaves one unprepared for what one sees.

In the centre of a dimly lit spacious hall is a huge fourfold Rnam-par snang-mdzad (Vairocana) on a high pedestal looking down impassively through half-hooded eyes, its hand in the gesture of fearlessness. At every corner on similarly high pedestals, looking towards the central image from a little distance, are the four other deities who make up the pentad — to the east Rdo-rje sms-dpa’ (Vajrasattva), to the south Rin-chen ‘byung-gnas (Ratnasambhava), to the west Snang-ba mtha’-yas (Amitabha), and to the north Don-yod sgrub-pa (Amoghasiddhi). The impact of these great silent figures is overwhelming. It is no surprise that the Vairocana was the chosen repository of sacred texts for later ages to discover. One hardly notices the altar at the back of the hall with a Buddha image and the tall figures of the Eight Disciples in front of it. In a chapel off the _gtsug-lag-khang_ is a large _mchod-rten_ of Bstan-'dzin dbang-po, which is an epithet of the Buddha; I have not been able to trace a lama of that name. The chapel’s roof is partly open to allow an ancient half-withered peach tree to struggle through. It is the tree of the female _klu_, a serpent-like deity of lakes, rivers and springs.

In another large chapel whose walls and pillars are painted red is a big _mchod-rten_ — a _dmar-gdung_ containing the bodily remains of the ascetic, mystic, thirteenth-century lama Lo-ras-pa. In front of it is a miniature shrine complete with pillars and a door, dedicated to Tshong-dpon Nor-bu bzang-po, a Tibetan Robin Hood. There are traces of gilding and arabesque paintings.

In contrast to this secretive little temple, the slightly later _Mkhar-chu_ (1950) monastery, about four miles to the south, prominent on a hillside overlooking the gorge of the Lho-brag river, was a favourite place of pilgrimage. It was built by Padmasambhava and contained a large image of him together with an equally large Mi-'khrugs-pa (Aksobhya). At my visit both images were being rebuilt and in the process of being filled with religious texts, _mantras_ and various relics. There were also images of Mar-pa and Mi-la-ras-pa.

From Lha-khang Rdzong a path descends steeply to a bridge over the Lho-brag-chu, then climbs through the gorge to a precipitous path high above the river. It winds its way some twenty-five miles to _Sras Dgu-thog_ (1950) in the northwest — a spectacular nine-storey white stone tower built by Mi-la-ras-pa for Mar-pa’s son. It has a large gold _rgya-phibs_ beneath which is a broad band of gilding decorated with seated Buddha figures. A chain round the top allows pilgrims to clamber round it. There are embra-sures in the tower, suggesting an original defensive purpose, but inside it is purely a place of religious pilgrimage. Each floor contains relics connected with Mar-pa, Mi-la-ras-pa and other lamas. Mar-pa’s chapel is halfway up the tower; in it are images of himself, his wife and son, and Mi-la-ras-pa.
There are also part of his wife's skull and his own teeth. In another chapel is a fine ivory plaque with an image of Mi-la-ras-pa; in another are the shoes of the Karma-pa historian Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag. In another is a carving of Naropa with inscriptions in Chinese, Manchu and Mongol. There are lively murals depicting the lives of Mar-pa and Mi-la-ras-pa, and at the summit stands a mchod-rten for the protection of the whole.

At the foot of the tower is a large complex of temples and monastery buildings. The principal image is a bronze Buddha in the attitude of preaching; it is polished to a very high patina. There are also images of Karma-pa lamas, including a very attractive portrait image of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag with a high brow, broad nose and long upper lip. Other relics are kept there too, including the rosary of Klong-rdol.

About twelve miles northwest of Se, in the heart of the Sku-lha Gangs-ri mountains, is the sacred Padma-gling lake. On its north bank is the tiny shingle-roofed monastery of Padma-gling (1950) founded by Padmasambhava. It was the home of one old Rnying-ma-pa lama and a novice monk. In the little chapel there was a surprising number of fine images — a Phyag-na rdo-rje (Vajrapāṇi), Padmasambhava, the first Karma-pa Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa, Padma-gling-pa, Phag-mo-gru-pa and Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag, who seems an ever-present figure in Lho-brak. The resident lama, who had many stories of mystic visions and harmonious sounds in the lake, wrote the temple's name for me as Ta-na-kṣo. The pandit Ugyen Gyatso recorded the name of the lake as Tongtsho (Sgrub-mtsho). In the hills above is a meditation cave of Padmasambhava.

Some twelve miles to the north, across the sinister pass of the Sbrum-la, which climbs over a flank of the Sku-lha Gangs-ri range in the upper waters of the Lho-brag-chu, is the ancient monastery of Lha-lung (1950). Its situation resembles that of a prosperous country mansion but its religious character is at once apparent in the massive enclosing wall topped by a row of mchod-rten, several of which, including that through which the entrance lies, being of considerable size. A verandah supported by slender red wooden pillars shelters the doorway inside which stand protector deities looking inward. The temple was originally founded by Srong-brtse-san Sgam-po, and to one side of the assembly hall, which has splendid wooden pillars with unusual branched capitals, is an open chapel containing the Sangs-rgyas rab-bdun, the Seven Previous Buddhas, established by Srong-brtse-san Sgam-po. The temple was restored and enlarged by the first Karma-pa lama Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa and remained in Karma-pa control until it was taken over by the fifth Dalai Lama. Consequently, many of the images are of Karma-pa and Bka'-brgyud-pa hierarchs: Naropa, Mar-pa, Mi-la-ras-pa, Sgam-po-pa, Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa and his successors. There is also a prominent image of Padmasambhava. All of these figures are also depicted in well-preserved mural paintings.
In another chapel is what is claimed to be the *dmar-gdung* of Mar-pa, although it is generally believed that his remains are in a temple near Sras. In a sort of *mgon-khang* off the main hall is an image of the god Sku-lha Gangs-ri. In the upper storey, which is very well lit by a wide balcony with nicely carved wooden window frames, there are many relics of the Bka'-brgyud-pa hierarchs, also the skull of the Rnying-ma-pa scholar Klong-chen-pa; and there is a pleasing portrait image of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag, who had a special connection with Lha-lung and built the extensive monastic residence (*grwa-tshang*), which was latterly home to a mere handful of monks. The wood blocks of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag's famous religious history (*Chos-'byung*) were rediscovered here by my friend the 'Brug-pa Bkal-brgyud-pa lama, Bde-chen Chos-'khor Rin-po-che, and the work was thus made available to many western scholars.

Not far to the west is the distinctive little square tower of **Gu-ru Lha-khang** (1950), properly known as Bsam-grub Bde-chen. Originally founded by Padmasambhava as instructed by Khri Srong-lde-brtsan, it was taken over and rebuilt by Guru Chos-dbang in the thirteenth century. It was recently almost completely rebuilt. However, the original chapel containing Guru Chos-dbang's *dmar-gdung* (Gnas-gzhi Dgon-pa also claims part of his remains) and a faded portrait of him on the wall with an inscription about the history of the temple have been retained. Gu-ru Lha-khang was patronised by Karma-pa, Phag-mo-gru-pa and Sa-skya-pa lamas, and images of the various schools are on the altars, together with those of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan and Padmasambhava. The principal image is Rdo-rje-'chang (Vajradhara).

Across the Smon-mda' La out of upper Lho-brag is the Phu-ma-mtsho (or Pho-mo-mtsho) lake with the little **Thag** (1950) monastery at its northeast end. From there a pass leads down to **Gling Grwa-tshang** (1950), a Bo-gdond-pa monastery founded by 'Jigs-med grags-pa. Monks and nuns lived together there, and in its chapel was a fine image of Rdo-rje-'chang (Vajradhara) with the Sixteen Disciples in front; also images of Bo-gdongs Phyogs-las rnam-rgyal and Kha-che Pan-chen Śākyamuni. There were also many fine early *thang-kas* on the pillars.

Further north on a rocky spur near the south end of the Yar-'brog-mtsho is the 'Brug-pa Bka'-brgyud-pa monastery of **Chos-'khor-sgang** (1950), an offshoot of Ra-lung monastery. It seemed gloomy and neglected but had a fine image of Tshe-dpag-med (Amitāyus) and one of Gling-ras-pa Padma rdo-rje, a founder of the sect.

Ten miles to the north on an isolated hillock is **Rta-lung Rdzong** (1950) and near its foot the ancient temple of **Thar-pa-gling** founded by Srong-brtsan Sgam-po as one of those to bind the limbs of the demoness. It contains a wealth of precious images including a jewelled Sgrol-ma (Tārā) behind an iron mesh curtain, old images of the Dus-gsum Sangs-rgyas (Buddhas of the Three Eras), Sman-lha (Buddha of Healing), images of
Bka'-'brgyud-pa lamas from Mar-pa and Mi-la-ras-pa onwards, Sa-skya Kun-dga' snying-po, Sa-skya Pañ-chen, Shes-rab rgyal-mtshan, and a small one of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po.

Twelve miles to the north on a rocky hillock near the small Bbud-mo lake is Bsam-lding (1950) monastery, built in the fourteenth century by Bo-gdong Phyogs-las mam-rgyal. It is the seat of the female incarnation Rdo-rje phag-mo. A courtyard surrounded by high buildings leads to a steep stone stairway up to a succession of temples. The principal image is Śakyamuni Buddha supported by the Eight Disciples. In another large chapel are several great silver reliquary mchod-rten of previous incarnations of Rdo-rje phag-mo.

Four miles west is Sna-dkar-rtse Rdzong (1950) on the route between Gyantse (Rgyal-rtse) and Lhasa by the north bank of the Yar'-brog-mtsho. It was the birthplace of the fifth Dalai Lama's mother; images of her and of himself are in the Mon-mkhar Chos-sde (1948) temple at the top of the rdzong. This, too, is attributed to Bo-gdong Phyogs-las rnam-rgyal. A larger monastery is Lhun-grub on a hill nearby, also attributed to him, which had images of the Buddhas of the Three Ages, and some reliquary mchod-rten.

On the north-western bank of the Yar'-brog lake stand the ruins of the imposing fortress of Dpal-sde Rdzong (1950).

The road to Gyantse runs south-west across the Kha-ru La, past the great snow peak of Gnod-sbyin Gangs-bzang to a side valley where there stands Ra-lung (1936), one of the first 'Brug-pa Bka'-brgyud-pa foundations. Monks and nuns live there together. It has a massive fortress-like temple.

A long day's march brings one to the thriving town of Gyantse (Rgyal-rtse) (1936–50), well-placed for trade with both Shigatse (Gzhis-ka-rtse) and Lhasa and on the route to India. It is rich in art and architecture of the fifteenth century created by the Gtsang prince, Rab-brtan kun-bzang 'phags-pa. He enlarged and embellished the temple founded by his father near the rdzong which crowns the summit of the great rock overhanging the town. But his greatest achievements were the enlargement or virtual reconstruction of the Dpal-'khor Chos-sde temple and the building of the magnificent Sku-'bum mchod-rten (1936–50). The former is the heart of a community of monastic college residences spread over an extensive hillside enclosed by a fortified wall. Although the Sa-skya-pa school originally predominated, all other religious schools were represented here.

The temple, though not very large, has a number of halls and chapels with fine wall paintings in the Nepalese manner and with many fine images including a large gilded Buddha and an Avalokiteśvara and also many well-sculpted images of painted clay with a fine patination. Among them are those of the Religious Kings and of the masters of the several doctrinal schools; and the wall paintings include a series of mystic maṇḍalas. It is a quietly impressive temple.
Quite different is the spectacular Sku-'bum just outside the Dpal-'khor Chos-sde — a vision of white, red and gold. It is surrounded by a wall which follows the many-angled pattern of the first four terraces, which decrease in size as they ascend. Above them is a massive white dome and on top of it a square structure supporting a great golden cone of thirteen rings, a golden umbrella and a final spire. The whole mchod-rten is a symbol of ascent from a lower level of spirituality to the highest, illustrated in its nearly seventy chapels by a virtual pantheon of the Tibetan religious tradition, with well-sculpted clay images as well as many of gilded bronze, and fine wall paintings of deities, kings, saints and teachers rising to the image of Rdo-rje-'chang (Vajradhara) in the topmost sanctuary of the golden cone.

**Rtse-chên** (1950) monastery on a rocky summit on the west side of the Myang-chu river to the north of Gyantse was built by the Gyantse princes, perhaps on an existing temple site. It was used as a fortress by Tibetan troops during the Younghusband Expedition in 1904 and was severely damaged then by gunfire. It retained some images in the style of those in the Dpal-'khor Chos-sde.

**'Brong-rtsê** (1950), some way further downriver, is a Dge-lugs-pa monastery founded by 'Brong-rtsê Lha-btsun Rin-chen rgya-mtsho. It has three separate temples on the hillside; in the main assembly hall is an image of Śākyamuni Buddha and in the upper temple are images of Sgrol-ma (Tārā) and Spyan-ras-gzigs (Avalokiteśvara), and also the reliquary mchod-rten of Sde-srid 'Brong-rtsê-pa. Outside the temple are many slate slabs carved with images of deities.

Not far north in a quiet valley nearly opposite Pa-snām Rdzong is Rtsis Gnas-gsar (1950), a group of three early temples. The first, on the side of a hill, is the Ru-gnon temple, a small single-storeyed white building with a rgya-phibs covered in tiles of a Nepalese pattern. Inside is a fine Rnam-par snang-mdzad (Vairocana) holding a large round gold ornament. On either side, along the wall, are the Eight Disciples and on the altar a large ritual dagger (phur-bu) with a four-headed handle, said to be a gter-ma, a hidden treasure, from the cave at Mchims-phu near Bsam-yas. The temple is claimed as one of Srong-brtsan sgam-po’s foundations to dominate his frontiers.

Standing on level ground nearby is the largest temple, the Yum chen-mo. It is a square, wooden-framed building of two storeys with a small turret supported by a lantern frame and crowned by a slate rgya-phibs. It is attributed to king Ral-pa-can but is probably earlier as the construction is said to have been performed by Padmasambhava, whose nose blood was used to paint an image, no longer visible, on one wall; it is more likely connected with Khri Srong-lde-brtsan. The upper storey is supported by many-branched wooden pillars. The central image is a huge fourfold (bzhi-gdong) Rnam-par
snang-mdzad (Vairocana). Around the sides are the Buddhas of the Ten Directions. At the back is a Jo-bo Ma-chags Padma with a fine Sgrol-ma (Tārā) on one side and the Yum chen-mo (Prajñāpāramitā) on the other.

Opposite it is the temple of Rta-mgrin attributed to Ral-pa-can. It contains a single Rnam-par snang-mdzad (Vairocana) surrounded, at each corner along the wall, by the component deities of the pentad, as at Lho-brag Lha-khang, but on a smaller scale. There is a fierce red figure of Rta-mgrin (Hayagriva), the Horse-headed; and in the mgon-khang is a crude four-armed Mgon-po (Mahākāla) said to be a self-created object (rang-'byung) and to be growing in size.

In the eleventh century monks of the the later diffusion of the faith (phyi-dar) established themselves at Gnas-gsar, which later came under the control of Sa-skya; portraits of the Sa-skya-pa hierarchs including Kun-dga’ snying-po adorned the verandah of the Rta-mgrin Lha-khang.

Not far from Gnas-gsar, on the right bank of the Myang-chu, is the fortress of Pa-snam Rdzong and at its foot is a monastery founded by the Gyantse princes. Further downstream is the ancient monastery of Sga-gdong (1938) on a low hillock, founded in the tenth century and later taken over by the Dge-lugs-pa, and some further ten miles north-west to a point above the junction of the Myang-chu with the Gtsang-po where it is crossed by a fine stone bridge leading to Gzhis-ka-rtse (Shigatse) Rdzong on the left bank; and beyond, westwards to the great Dge-lugs-pa monastery of Bkra-shis-lhun-po (Tashilhunpo) (1938), founded in 1447 by Dge-'dun-grub, the first Dalai Lama.

Bkra-shis lhun-po is a monastic city spread out in the shelter of a hill. Five tomb-towers of departed Pan-chen Lamas pierce its skyline — three tall and massive, two rather smaller. Inside are great golden mchod-rten containing the remains of the Pan-chen Lamas and in the small chapels attached is a wealth of offerings — gold butter lamps, ritual vessels, precious stones and glass baubles. In the main temple which adjoins the tomb of the first Pan-chen are precious images, including a fine Tshe-dpag-med (Amitāyus), a Byams-pa (Maitreya), and a portrait image of Dge-'dun-grub. At the western end of the monastery is a tall red painted tower in which is an image of Byams-pa about eight storeys tall; galleries at several levels allow a sight of different parts of the great image. It was built by the late Pan-chen Lama in 1914.

Travelling down the south bank of the Gtsang-po one passes the Karma-pa monastery of E-wam (1938), founded in the fourteenth century. Opposite the ferry of Thag-gru-kha is the great Bon monastery of G.yung-drung-gling, which I did not visit.

From there the valley of the Rin-spungs Rong leads south towards the Yar-brog lake. Beyond the ruined castle of the Rin-spungs princes known as Rin-spungs Rdzong and before the village of Bde-skyid-gling stands the
large monastery of **Rong Byams-chen** (1938) founded by the princes in the fourteenth century. The principal feature in its many chapels is a great image of Byams-pa (Maitreya). Formerly a very large monastery, it used to house about four hundred monks. The road eventually reaches Yar-'brog-mtsho, not far from Dpal-sde.

There are many interesting monasteries between Gyantse and Gro-mo (or Yatung, Sna-gdong). Some six miles up the Myang-chu, on the west bank, is the ancient monastery of **Gnas-nying** (1936–50, frequently, also the remaining sites discussed below). Originally a twelfth-century Rnying-ma-pa foundation, it had monks of all religious schools. It is remarkable for its massive outside wall and the equally massive construction of the temple building. It was damaged in 1904 when it was a centre of vigorous resistance to the Younghusband Expedition, but no signs were visible later. The main images were a large Šākyamuni, and figures of the Padmasambhava, Atiśa and Tsong-kha-pa.

About twenty-five miles further on, at Khang-dmar on the east bank, is the monastery of **Gzho-nang** (sp?), claimed as one of Srong-brtsan sgam-po's “limb-binding” temples. It is probably from the twelfth or perhaps eleventh century. The main image is Šākya thub-pa and next to it is a good Spyan-ras-gzigs (Avalokiteśvara). In the assembly hall are stone slabs said to have been used for cutting up the bodies of the dead. I was shown a painted wooden board, described as a **bslab-shing**, with well-painted figures including a lama called Zhang-zhung Gya-lu (sp?) in a rather flat yellow cap, and a noble lady named Jo-mo Sgrol-ma wearing a long open coat with wide lapels similar to those in paintings from A-lci in Ladakh. Sa-skya formerly controlled the monastery.

Some thirty miles further at Sa-ma-mda’, beside the road, is another ancient temple named **Spe-rkya** (sp?). It has a small tawny coloured tower. The little temple, which appeared very old and rather neglected, had a small Jo-bo image on the altar. A rickety ladder led to an upper floor chapel in which were beautifully carved wooden images of lamas.

In the same neighbourhood there are other small eleventh-century temples: **Rkyang-phu**, **Rgya-gnas** and **I-wang** (or G.ye-dmar). All have fine, well-decorated clay images, those at I-wang being especially noteworthy; some are actually described by inscriptions as being in the Indian style, others in the style of Li (Khotan). The latter wear robes ornamented with round medallions. Both at I-wang and Rkyang-phu are stucco figures on the walls depicting the temptation of the Buddha by Mara.

In a wild, rocky and inhospitable region at the south-east end of the Ram-mtsho lake stands the isolated little monastery of **Me-long Brag-bdun** (1938). Between Sa-ma-mda’ and the Sikkim border there are the Rnying-ma-pa monastery of **Bsam-grub-gling** at Phag-ri, the attractive Dge-legs-pa monastery of **Gdung-dkar** on a little hill overlooking the grassy plain of
Gling-ma-thang, some Bon-po settlements on the west side of the Chumbi valley before reaching Sna-gdong (Yatung), and the Bka'-brgyud Dgon-pa, much visited by tourists before 1950, at the foot of the Sna-thod-la (Natula) Pass.

Notes

†. The figures contained in the margins of this article refer to the accompanying plates.
1. The years when I visited these sites have been entered within brackets after their names. For information about the present state of the religious buildings of Lhasa, all of which were vandalised and extensively damaged in the Cultural Revolution, I rely on Stephen Batchelor, The Tibet Guide (London: Wisdom, 1987) and Victor Chan, Tibet Handbook (Chico, Cal.: Moon, 1994), and on communications from friends in Lhasa.
3. See my Ceremonies of the Lhasa Year (London: Serindia, 1993), p. 88, which also gives a glimpse of the massive masonry.
10. See Records of the Survey of India (Dehra Dun, 1915–22), viii, p. 344.
Plate 1. The author at Yatung (left) and with friends at Lhasa (right).
Plate 2. Tombs of the Tibetan kings at 'Phyong-rgyas looking north from the tomb of Ral-pa-can. The furthest mound is that of Srong-rtsan sgam-po, surmounted by a chapel; then those of Mang-srong, 'Dus-srong and Mes Ag-tshoms.
Plate 3. From same point as Plate 2. The largest mound is attributed to Sad-na-legs. Smaller mounds are those of Mu-ne, Mu-rug and Ljang-tsha Lhas-bon. A pillar can be seen near the right side of the largest mound. Phyong-rgyas village and Rdzong, site of Phying-ba Stag-rtse, and Ri-bo Bde-chen monastery in the distance.
Plate 4. Pillar near mound attributed to Sad-na-legs (Khri Lde-srong-brtsan) which is seen in left background. Pillar is half buried. Head of man digging on far side indicates the original height of the pillar. The south face, seen here, is not inscribed.

Plate 5. North side of the pillar (Plate 4). Sun and moon symbols are incised beneath the decorated canopy.
Plate 6. Pillar of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan at 'Phyong-rgyas village with lion and dragon carvings. 'Phyong-rgyas Rdzong in the background.

Plate 7. Stone lion at Ral-pa-can’s tomb.
Plate 8. Upper part of south face of Zhol rdo-ring at Lhasa.

Plate 10. Treaty pillar of 821–2 in front of Jo-khang at Lhasa. See also Plate 24.

Plate 11. Inscribed pillar at Bsam-yas monastery.
Plate 12. The Skar-cung pillar at Ra-ma-sgang near Lhasa.

Plate 14. East pillar at Zhwa'i Lha-khang.

Plate 15. West pillar at Zhwa'i Lha-khang.
Plate 16. Detail of inscription on east face of Zhol rdo-ring.

Plate 17. Detail of Skar-cung inscription.
Plate 18. Courtyard of the Jo-khang, Lhasa.

Plate 20. Khra-'brug.
Plate 21. Dbu-ru Ka-tshal (see also Plate 44).

Plate 22. Zhol rdo-ring, Lhasa.
Plate 24. Pillar outside the Jo-khang, Lhasa with text of Sino-Tibetan treaty of 821–2. See also Plate 10.
Plate 25. Potala.

Plate 26. Rgyud-smad in foreground, with the roofs of Tsho-smon-gling (left) and Ra-mo-che (right) behind.
Plate 27. Dar-po-gling.

Plate 29. Klu-khang.
Plate 30. Sman-rtsis-khang on the summit of Lcags-po-ri.

Plate 32. Dga’-ldan.
Plate 33. 'Bras-spungs.

Plate 34. Se-ra (Photo: H. Harrer).
Plate 35. Gnas-chung.

Plate 36. Pha-bong-kha.
Plate 38. Ri-skya.

Plate 40. Tshal Gung-thang.

Plate 41. T'gyer.
Plate 42. La-mo.
Plate 43. Rgya-ma Khri-khang.

Plate 44. Dbu-ru Ka-tshal (see also Plate 21).
Plate 45. Zhwa’i Lha-khang.

Plate 46. ’Bri-gung Rdzong-gsar.

Plate 49. Yang-ri Dgon.
Plate 31. 'Bri-gung Mthil.
Plate 51. Rgyal.

Plate 52. Glang-thang.
Plate 53. Lhun-grub Rdzong.

Plate 62. Shar-ra Bum-pa.
Plate 55. Stag-lung.

Plate 56. Rwa-sgreng.
Plate 57. Mtshur-phu.
Plate 58. Bya-sgo.

Plate 59. 'On-cang-do.
Plate 61. Lcags-zam Chu-bo-ri.

Plate 62. Gong-dkar Rdzong.
Plate 63. Bsam-yas.

Plate 64. Has-po-rgyab.
Plate 65. Kwa-cu.

Plate 66. Bya-sa.
Plate 67. Yum-bu bla-mkhar.

Plate 68. Tshes-bcu Bum-pa.
Plate 69. Ras-chung-phug.

Plate 70. Lce-bde-zhol Rdzong.
Plate 71. Smra-bo lcogs-pa.

Plate 72. Mchod-rten below Smra-bo lcogs-pa attributed to Mnga'-bdag Myang.
Plate 73. Gnas-gzhi.

Plate 74. Mkho-mthing.
Plate 75. Mkhar-chu.

Plate 76. Sras Dgu-thog.
Plate 77. Padma-gling.

Plate 78. Lha-lung.
Plate 79. Gu-ru Lha-khang (Bsam-grub Bde-chen).

Plate 80. Rta-lung Rdzong.
Plate 81. Bsam-Iding (Photo: Sonam Tobgye).

Plate 82. Sna-dkar-rtse Rdzong.
Plate 83. Dpal-sde Rdzong.

Plate 84. Rgyal-rtse Rdzong.
Plate 85. Rgyal-rtse Sku-'bum (Photo: A. de Rheincourt).
Plate 86. Pa-snam Rdzong.

Plate 87. Rtsis Gnas-gsar.
Plate 88. Sga-gdong.
Plate 91. Me-long Brag-bdun.

Plate 92. The Great Scroll, Mtshur-phu.
Plate 93. The Great Scroll, Mtshur-phu.
Plate 94. The Great Scroll, Mtshur-phu.
Plate 95. The XVIth Rgyal-dbang Karma-pa.
Plate 97. Tibetan text from the letter from Wu-tsung to the Xth Zhwa-nag-pa.
Plate 99. Decree of the Vth Dalai Lama appointing Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho a regent (Photo: E. Krause).
Plate 100. Detail from the decree (Plate 99) showing the Vth Dalai Lama's handprints.
Plate 101. George Bogle's tomb, South Park Street Cemetery, Calcutta (Photo: B.M. Bhattacharjea).
Map
Central Tibet
CENTRAL LHASA

- Ra-mo-che
- Tsho-smon-gling
- Rje-'bum-sgang
- Rgyud-smad
- Rme-ru
- Dar-po-gling
- Jo-khang
- Karma-shar
- Spro-bde Khang-gsar

Map A
Central Lhasa
Map B
Lhasa Area
Map C
Yar-klung and ’Phyong-rgyas Valleys
PART THREE

Later History and External Contexts
The Karma-pa Sect
A Historical Note

The Karma-pa sect, an important offshoot of the Bka’-brgyud-pa, derives from Dpal Chos-kyi grags-pa, generally known as Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa, who was born in A.D. 1110 at Tre-shod in east Tibet. He was, by some accounts, the first lama to originate a continuous line of reincarnations lasting to the present day — a claim which is contested by the lamas of ’Bri-khung. At the age of thirty Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa became the principal disciple of Sgam-po-pa, himself the chief disciple of rje-btsun Mi-la-ras-pa, and so entered the direct doctrinal succession from Mar-pa, the founder of the Bka’-brgyud-pa sect. A pious explanation of the name Karma-pa is that an assembly of gods (lha) and dākini bestowed on Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa, in his sixteenth year, knowledge of the past, present and future — together with a magical black mitre woven from the hair of a million mkha’-gro-ma (dākini, angels or fairies). That story is found in vol. Pa of the Chos-‘byung of Dpa’-bo Gtsg-lag; but however early the name Karma-pa came into existence its perpetuation was probably due to the association of Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa with the monastery of Karma Gdan-sa, or Lho Karma’i sgar, which he founded in 1147 to the east of the Ngom-chu, somewhere between Ri-bo-che and Sde-dge. A few years before his death in 1193 he returned to central Tibet and in 1189 he founded Mtshur-phu in the Stod-lung valley some fifty miles west of Lhasa. This became the principal monastery of the sect and the home of its chief incarnate lama, who is known as the Rgyal-dbang Karma-pa or the Zhwa-nag-pa.

In the main courtyard of Mtshur-phu monastery there is an inscribed stone pillar recording the establishment during the reign of Khri Gtsg-lde-brtsan (Ral-pa-can, A.D. 815–841) of the "gtsug-lag-khang of Lcang-bu as a dependency of the great gtsug-lag-khang of ‘On-cang-rdo”. The inscription

has been edited by me in JRASB., 1949, and by Giuseppe Tucci in *The Tombs of the Tibetan Kings*, Rome, 1950. In my article I suggested that the pillar might have come from an older religious foundation on or near the site of Mtshur-phu monastery; but on two visits I could find no trace in that neighbourhood of a place called Lcang-bu or of any ancient remains. The name appears several times in the Tun-huang Annals (J. Bacot, F.W. Thomas and C. Toussaint, *Documents de Touen-houang*, Paris, 1940): Nyen-kar Lcang-bu, p. 18; Stod-gyi Lcang-bu, pp. 57, 58; Byar-gyi Lcang-bu, pp. 58, 59, 60. At first sight the case for Stod-gyi Lcang-bu looks attractive because Mtshur-phu is in the Stod-lung valley. But stod — "the upper country, the upper part of a valley" — is a place-name of quite wide application. Moreover, all the references to Lcang-bu in the Tun-huang Annals are to a place of winter residence. That does not accord well with the Stod-lung valley, which is cold in winter. Of the other places mentioned, Nyen-kar seems to be not far from Brag-dmar; and Byar, according to Giuseppe Tucci (*Preliminary Report on Two Scientific Expeditions in Nepal*, Rome, 1956, p. 82), is east of Yar-lha Sham-po and north of Lho-kha. The name Byar, Byar-mo, Dbyar-mo appears also in east Tibet, where F.W. Thomas connects it with the Pailan people (F.W. Thomas, *Nam*, O.U.P., 1946, pp. 34–5); but that identification does not seem relevant here. The valleys south of the Gtsang-po in the Yar-lung and Lho-kha areas would generally provide much better winter quarters than Stod-lung; and, to narrow the choice more closely, attention may be directed to the proximity of Nyen-kar to the Yar-lung valley, the royal burial ground at 'Phyong-rgyas, and the castle of Phying-ba'i Stag-rtse (*Tun-huang Annals*, pp. 34–5; Tucci, *Tombs*, pp. 30–1). In the Blon-po bka'-thang (fo. 9) the neighbourhood of "Yar-lungs and Phyilungs" ("Phying-lungs" in the *Tun-huang Annals*, p. 154) is ascribed to the Gnyags and Tshe-spong (Tshes-pong) families. A member of the Tshes-pong family was responsible for the erection of the inscribed pillar now at Mtshur-phu and it seems not unreasonable to locate Lcang-bu of that inscription in the Tshes-pong country round about Yar-lung and to suppose that the 8-foot stone pillar was removed from there to Mtshur-phu — a troublesome task for porters but quite feasible.

Nevertheless it must be admitted that other possibilities remain open. Lcang-bu seems to have been a common name perhaps signifying a place where willows (lcang-ma) grew (cf. the name Lcang-lo; Lcang-lo-can, which is fairly widespread at the present time). There may formerly have been a Lcang-bu in Stod-lung of which the name has now vanished; or it may be, as was related to me by the phyag-mdzod (treasurer) of Mtshur-phu, that the pillar was brought all the way from east Tibet by one of the early lamas. This information was offered without great conviction and no literary evidence could be produced to support it. The monks of Mtshur-phu seem to take little interest in the pillar nowadays, nor could I find mention of it.
in any of the three accounts of the Karma-pa sect which I have followed in writing this article, viz. the Deb-ther sngon-po of 'Gos Gzhon-nu-dpal (1478); the Chos-byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba, himself a Karma-pa lama (1564); and a short rnam-thar of the Rgyal-dbang Karma-pa lamas² down to the fourteenth incarnation, who was born in 1797. (Hereafter I shall refer to these sources as DT, Pell. T., and NT respectively.) These works all draw on original records at Mtshur-phu and a detailed study of those records might discover confirmation of the phyag-mdzod's story, but I am inclined to see in it no more than a vague echo of the close connection between Mtshur-phu and east Tibet which began with Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa and continues to this day — most of the sixteen Zhwa-nag incarnations, including the present one, having been born in east Tibet. If it is necessary to speculate who might have moved the pillar from Yar-lung to Mtshur-phu, the second incarnation, Karma Pakshi (1206-1283), to whom the rnam-thar attributes descent from the kings of Tibet, appears a probable person to have brought that royal relic to the monastery which, by tradition, he did much to adorn.

In addition to the original line of Zhwa-nag — Black Hat — Karma-pa lamas there came into being at an early date a second branch known as the Zhwa-dmar or Red Hat. Its first lama, Grags-pa seng-ge, was contemporary with the third Zhwa-nag incarnation, Rang-byung rdo-rje. Some accounts, e.g. that of Klong-rdol bla-ma, mentioned by Giuseppe Tucci on p. 682 of his monumental and invaluable work Tibetan Painted Scrolls, 3 vols, Rome, 1949 (hereafter TPS), assign a more extended spiritual lineage to both the Black and Red Hat lamas, the former going back through Po-to-ba to five earlier incarnations and the latter, through four incarnations, to Tilopa; but when numbering the incarnate lamas of the two lines the Karma-pas themselves invariably begin with Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa and Grags-pa seng-ge respectively. At first the Red Hat lamas were closely connected with the monasteries of Lha-lung, in Lho-brag, and Gnas-nang, near Mtshur-phu, but later, in 1489, the monastery of Yangs-pa-can, about twenty miles north of Mtshur-phu, was founded and became their chief seat. The line of Zhwa-dmar-pa incarnations was officially terminated in 1792, as will be recounted in the proper place, because of the part taken by the ninth lama in the Nepalese invasion of Tibet.

There are also many lesser incarnate lamas of the Karma-pa sect, such as the Rgyal-tshab Sprul-sku of Mtshur-phu, the Karma Si-tu Rin-po-che of Dpal-spungs in Sde-dge, and the Dpa'-bo lama. The last-named line included, as its second incarnation, the historian Gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba (1503-1566); its seat was formerly at Lha-lung, in Lho-brag, which had been founded by Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa in 1154 on what appears to have been the site of an older chapel, but this monastery was taken from the Karma-pa by the fifth Dalai Lama and the present Dpa'-bo lama lives at Gnas-nang, near Mtshur-phu.
It is not my intention to attempt here a comprehensive history of the Karma-pa sect and all its branches but rather to examine some incidents in the relations of its principal lamas, especially the Zhwa-nag-pa, with Mongolia and China. The connection began with the second Zhwa-nag-pa, Karma Pakshi, who is, after Padmasambhava, probably the most famous miracle-worker in Tibetan religious history and is known by the epithet *grub-chen* (*mahāsiddha*).

Association between the Tibetan church and the Mongols was established by the Sa-skya-pa sect in 1244 when the Sa-skya Pan-chen, taking with him his nephews 'Phags-pa, aged about ten, and Phyag-na, aged about six, accepted the invitation — or obeyed the command — to visit Godan Khan, governor of the Kansu region, and was shortly afterwards appointed by Godan as the Mongols’ vice-regent in Tibet. At that time supreme authority in the Mongol dominions was nominally held by Godan’s mother, who acted as regent during the long rivalry for the office of Khagan which followed the death in 1241 of her husband Ögedei, the third son of Chingiz Khan. The vacancy was filled in 1246 by the election of Godan’s elder brother, Ögedei’s first son, Kuyuk; but he died in 1248 and the struggle for power among the grandsons of Chingiz began all over again. It ended in 1252 when Möngke (Mangu), the eldest son of Chingiz’s fourth son, Tului, was chosen as Khagan and thus ousted from the succession the line of Ögedei which had patronized the Sa-skya lamas. In 1251, shortly before this dynastic change, the Sa-skya Pan-chen had died; and in 1253 his nephew ’Phags-pa, making a politic transference of loyalty to the new ruling family, was received by Möngke’s youngest brother, Khubilai Khan, who was then governor of the territories conquered by the Mongols on the north and east borders of the Sung empire. Continuance of Sa-skya-pa influence was thus ensured; but other sects also had attracted the notice of the Mongols, whose generals had been conducting occasional raids into Tibet, and in 1255 Khubilai sent for Karma Pakshi, who was then at Mtshur-phu. The lama, then in his fiftieth year, obeyed the summons and joined Khubilai at Rong-yul Gser-stod, which is perhaps somewhere in the neighbourhood of Tachienlu. Sa-skya tradition shows that Karma Pakshi was a serious rival to ’Phags-pa, who had to prove himself an equally good miracle-worker (Tucci, *TPS*, p. 627); but the position of the newcomer cannot have been easy and Karma Pakshi declined a request by Khubilai that he should stay permanently at his court. He set out northwards on a journey in the course of which he founded ’Phrul-snang Sprul-pa’i Lha-khang, on the Hor Mi-nyag border, and visited Ling-chou (or perhaps Liang-chou), where he met with some Zin-shing (Hsien-seng: Taoists), whom he confounded by his magical powers, and Xan-chow, where people from China, Hor, Sog and Mi-nyag flocked to see him. In 1256 he decided to return to Tibet but, on being summoned by the Khagan Möngke, he went to the Great Palace of
Zi-ra 'Ur-rdo in 'On-ge'i Yul, i.e. Sira Ordo, on the Ongin, not far south of Möngke's headquarters at Karakorum. There he won the favour of the Khagan and became his personal chaplain. Karma-pa records also say that he took part in a debate there with Taoists and other religious sects. His arrival at Möngke's court was long after the departure, in 1254, of the Franciscan missionary William of Rubruck, who had triumphed over Buddhists and others in a religious debate organized by Möngke. There was another debate in 1255 in which the Buddhists, led by Fou-yu, abbot of Shao-lin, overcame their Taoist rivals; but from Karma-pa sources it is clear that the occasion on which Karma Pakshi is said to have taken part was in the dragon year, 1256. According to E. Chavannes, "Inscriptions et pièces de chancellerie chinoises de l'époque Mongole", T'oung Pao, 2nd ser., v, p. 381, there was an assembly of Buddhists at Sira Ordo in 1256, but none of the Taoists dared to confront them there. This was taken as a confession of defeat and Möngke issued an edict in favour of the Buddhists. It is perhaps this meeting which has been slightly misrepresented by Karma-pa historians as the occasion of a debating victory by Karma Pakshi. The next debate was in 1258. It took place, under the presidency of Khubilai, at Shang-tu and it appears that 'Phags-pa was present.

It is not possible to trace Karma Pakshi among the Buddhist leaders named in the Mongol documents quoted by Chavannes. He cannot be the same as Na-mo for the latter was appointed as Master of the Buddhists in 1252, before Karma Pakshi had left Tibet; nor can he be readily identified with the abbot of Shao-lin (a monastery, according to Chavannes, loc. cit., p. 374, north of Shang-tu). The only other person mentioned in Chavannes' selection is an unnamed monk from Ta-li. Examination of the complete list of persons present at the debates might discover the name of Karma Pakshi; there is even a faint possibility that a reference to 'Phags-pa may be a mistake for Pa ka si pa because Chavannes notes that the characters used for the name in the record of the debate in 1258 are different from those used elsewhere; but there is no suggestion from Karma-pa sources that Karma Pakshi returned to Khubilai's court after joining Möngke until a much later date.

The apparent silence of Mongol documents about Karma Pakshi need not be thought to throw doubt on the veracity of Karma-pa historians. It may signify no more than that Karma Pakshi's powers, as can clearly be seen from the rnam-thar and from Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag, were those of a magician rather than a dialectician; but there may also be some possibility that 'Phags-pa was able to suppress references to his rival.

In some Tibetan histories, including vol. Ma of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag, it is suggested that Karma Pakshi was in Mongolia before 'Phags-pa. This seems to be a misunderstanding due to the fact that Karma Pakshi's patron Möngke preceded 'Phags-pa's patron Khubilai as Khagan. The careful chronology in vol. Pa where Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag, himself a Karma-pa, gives
detailed attention to the history of his sect puts the sequence of events beyond serious doubt. Although 'Phags-pa preceded Karma Pakshi in Tibet, the Karma-pa were the first Tibetan sect to establish influence with a ruling Khan. But their ascendency was short-lived. Möngke died in 1260 and his death was followed by a bitter struggle, with Khubilai, who had declared himself Khagan, in opposition to his younger brother Ariq-böke, who by Mongol custom had some grounds for claiming to be the legitimate successor. When Khubilai was victorious in 1261 Karma Pakshi found himself in difficulties. He had earlier offended Khubilai by refusing to stay at his court and now, whether rightly or wrongly, he was suspected of having sided with Ariq-böke. Moreover it is probable that 'Phags-pa and his followers did what they could to add to the troubles of their rival. Karma Pakshi was persecuted by Khubilai and eventually banished to Ke'u-chu, a hot and unhealthy place "on the shore of the ocean". Some of his disciples were put to death (DT, vol. Nya, fo. 51). Karma-pa records claim that eventually, by a display of his magic and spiritual powers, Karma Pakshi won restoration to favour and converted Khubilai to his own religious views. He left Mongolia about 1264 and took eight years on his journey back to Mtshur-phu, where he died in 1283.

The monks of Mtshur-phu tell many stories of Karma Pakshi's feats in Mongolia — how he could not be confined in any prison or hurt by any torture and how when he was finally loaded with costly presents but had no means of transporting them to Tibet he threw them into a spring near Shang-tu from where, by his magic powers, they soon reappeared in a pool near Mtshur-phu. To support this story they point to the discoloured gold roof of one of the temples which, they say, shows the effects of its underground journey from China. Of the same roof, which covers a great image of Sakyamuni made by Karma Pakshi, it is also said that it had once belonged to the monastery of Nalanda, whence it had been carried off in a Mongol raid on India.

Karma Pakshi's fame as a magician recalls those lamas who, according to Marco Polo, could make the Khan's cup move from the table to his lips without visible human agency. Karma Pakshi could not, of course, have met Marco Polo because he left the Mongol court before Marco's arrival in 1275; but he might have met Nicolo and Maffeo Polo on their earlier visit between 1260 and 1263.

After the rather chequered introduction of the Karma-pas to the Mongol court the next Zhwa-nag lama, Rang-byung rdo-rje (1284–1339), paid a visit to China on an easier footing when he was invited in 1331 by the emperor Toq Temür. Although by then the Yuan dynasty had sunk into luxury and into that extravagant adulation of Buddhism which so speedily enervated and degraded the Mongol character, the emperor was still the unquestioned overlord of Tibet and his letter of invitation has the ring of
authority. It is addressed as a command (lung) to "Rang-byung rdo-rje" without the addition of any honorific titles. The letter is quoted in the rnam-thar (fos. 65-6) and has the appearance of being authentic. In rambling and involved Tibetan (which can be seen in the transcription included in Appendix B) the emperor writes of the devotion to Buddhism shown by the kings of the North (in Mongolia) and by his ancestor Se-chen (Khubilai) in China; and he declares that he, too, desires to be the protector and servant of the faith. Having heard the reputation of the lama for learning and holiness he has sent his envoy Mgon-po and others to conduct him to China. The letter continues, in a rather minatory tone, that if the lama disregards the command he will be responsible for all manner of harm to the practice of the faith in China and will also displease the emperor; but, as it cannot be thought that he could bring himself to cause such a calamity, he will surely come quickly for the benefit of all creatures from the emperor downwards. If he does so, everything will be done for the faith according to his wishes. To accompany the letter, the emperor sent a gold seal which had been given by Môngke to Karma Pakshi. Rang-byung rdo-rje let it be known that he would go to China and he set about rather dilatory and hesitant preparations for the journey. In the following year he received a further letter expressing the emperor’s satisfaction that his command was being obeyed and exhorting the lama not to delay. In this letter, which also is quoted (NT, fo. 67), the lama is addressed as dge-ba’i bshes-gnyen (kālayānamitra).

Rang-byung rdo-rje entered China in 1332 but before he could reach Peking the emperor died. The new emperor, Rin-chens-dpal, urged him to continue his journey and he went on to the capital; but soon after his arrival Rin-chens-dpal, too, died. Rang-byung rdo-rje stayed on in Peking and, in the disturbed conditions of intrigue and faction then prevailing, he assisted in the succession and enthronement of the new emperor, Toghon Temür (Pell. T., Pa, f. 44). In 1334 he left for Tibet after promising to return in two years; and early in 1336 he received a letter from Toghon Temür reminding him of that promise. This letter also is quoted in the rnam-thar (fo. 69). Although employing a similar formula to that of Toghon Temür’s letter — expressing fears that, if the lama does not come, much harm will be done to the faith — the tone is less authoritative and the language more respectful. Moreover, the emperor offered the lama the same exalted honours and facilities for his journey as those enjoyed by the ti-shri chen-po, the imperial viceregent for Tibet. Rang-byung rdo-rje returned to China in 1338 and died there in the same year after a brief further exercise of his mediating and religious authority in the troubled conditions of the decadent Yuan court.

Toghon Temür’s devotion to the Karma-pas continued; and in 1386 he invited the fourth Zhwa-nag lama, Rol-pa’i rdo-rje (1340-83), to visit China.
By then Mongol supremacy over Tibet had been reduced to a formality by the vigorous nationalism of Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan, but the emperor was still titular overlord. His letter to Rol-pa’i rdo-rje is still described as a “command”; but the wording shows an increase in politeness and reverence and the Tibetan, an increase in lucidity and elegance (see Appendix B, no. 4). It is therefore rather strange that the emperor attributes his continued good fortune not to the “Three Jewels” \( (dkon-mchog-gsum) \), as was done in all the previously mentioned imperial letters, but to the “protection of everlasting Heaven” \( (tshe-ring gnam-gyi she-mong) \), which seems to be a reversion to the formula of the old Mongol religion. The letter refers to the degeneration of the times and exhorts the lama, who is addressed as Great Teacher \( (blo-dpon chen-po) \), not to confine his loving-kindness to Tibet but to lead back to the faith creatures who have erred and strayed from the right path.

Rol-pa’i rdo-rje went to China in 1359 and stayed there until 1363. At that time the Yuan dynasty was tottering to its fall; and in the last stages of its dissolution Rol-pa’i rdo-rje seems to have established himself as a revered and influential figure. From the accounts in my three sources (DT, Nya, ff. 40–5; NT, f 76–99; Pell. T., Pa, fo. 49–59) he was clearly an exceptional visionary and miracle-worker; and he is famed as one of the early teachers of the Rje Rin-po-che Blo-bzang grags-pa (Tsong-kha-pa).

On his way back to Tibet Rol-pa’i rdo-rje received an invitation to visit the “king of Stod-hor” (Mogholistan), the Jagatid Mongol, Toghlag Temür, but not surprisingly he did not accept for Toghlag Temür had some years earlier been converted to Islam. In 1368, after the change of dynasty in China, the first Ming emperor, T’ai-tsu, sent the envoy Hsu Yun-te with letters inviting the principal lamas to visit him (Tucci, TPS, p. 685; and Li Tieh-tseng, The Historical Status of Tibet, 1956, p. 95). Rol-pa’i rdo-rje was one of the persons invited (NT, fo. 95). He did not revisit China himself but he sent messengers to the emperor in 1374 and thereafter at regular intervals until his death.

His successor, De-bzhin gshegs-pa (1384–1415), was an even more famous wonder-worker. In 1407, when he was twenty-three, he accepted an invitation to go to China and perform memorial services for the parents of the emperor Ch’eng-tsu (Yung-lo). The letter is preserved in Pell. T., Pa, fo. 77, and a transcription may be seen in Appendix B. It makes an interesting contrast with the letters of the Yuan emperors. If Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag’s quotation is complete, there is no suggestion of a “command” nor is there any overt claim to authority, but behind the courteous and respectful language there are tentative hints of some sort of superior connection. The emperor states that before he was established in his high position he had heard of the lama’s fame; and he refers to the peace prevailing in the kingdom of Dbus \( (yul dbus rgyal-khams) \). Later he remarks that the former king (his predecessor?) had been careful to maintain the peace of the kingdom of
Dbus. For the rest, the letter is made up of polite and complimentary requests to the lama to confer on the emperor the benefit of his presence.

The events of the ensuing visit are described at length in a remarkable imperial decree which was shown to me at Mtshur-phu in 1949. It is contained in a silk-backed scroll some 50 feet long by 2.5 feet high composed of sections of text beautifully written in five scripts—Chinese, Tibetan, Arabic, Mongol and Uighur—alternating with panels painted in the meticulously elegant Ming style. The inscriptions record the miracles performed by the lama on twenty-two different days and the paintings illustrate those occurrences, day by day. On my visit to Mtshur-phu I could not attempt to copy more than a few passages of the inscription and, as my special camera was unfortunately damaged on the journey, I was unable to take satisfactory photographs; but the present Rgyal-dbang Karma-pa kindly provided me later with a complete copy of the Tibetan text. It is written in the 'barn-yig script and appears to be a translation, passage by passage, of the Chinese original, but there are so many deviations from normal grammar and usage that it can hardly be the work of a Tibetan any more than the above-mentioned letters of the Yuan emperors appear to be. A Tibetan language school for diplomatic purposes was established at Peking in the seventh year of the Yung-lo era, i.e. about two years after De-bzhin gshegs-pa's visit to China, but the earlier employment of Chinese or Mongol translators of Tibetan is indicated by the style of the Yuan dynasty letters and, at that period, multilingual inscriptions which included Tibetan were quite common (Travels of Marco Polo, ed. Yule and Cordier, 1902, pp. 28–9). Although De-bzhin gshegs-pa's visit and its extraordinary occurrences are well documented in Tibetan and Chinese sources (NT, fos 108–11; Pell. T., Pa, fos 77–82; DT, Nya, fos 45–7; Ming-shih, trs. Tucci in TPS, p. 682), the imperial confirmation of a series of miracles warrants quotation in full; but some details of the phenomena are rather repetitious and I have, therefore, relegated the translation, together with a transcription, of the Tibetan text to the Appendix.

Tibetan records claim that, among other successes of his visit, De-bzhin gshegs-pa dissuaded the emperor from a plan to invade Tibet in order to establish his authority there, as had been done by the Mongols (NT, fo. 111; Pell. T., Pa, fos 82–3). This is of interest in assessing the nature of the relationship between China and Tibet during the Ming dynasty, especially in view of the evidence of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag, who wrote before that relationship had been affected by the imperial designs of the Ch'ing dynasty.

From Nanking, which was at that time still the effective capital of China, De-bzhin gshegs-pa went to Omei Shan to conduct further requiem services for the emperor’s parents and from there he returned to Tibet, where he died of smallpox at the age of thirty-one. His successor, Mthong-ba donldan (1416–1453), was also invited to the Chinese court. He did not go there;
but eight times between 1436 and 1450 he sent missions which the Ming-shih describes as "tribute". Representatives of a lama who made no claim to exercise temporal dominion over Tibet cannot have brought tribute in the strict sense of the word. In fact, the arrangement was a source of profit to the Tibetans and other neighbours of China, who secured disproportionately large return presents from the emperor and also Chinese goods, especially tea, on favourable terms. So much so that by 1453 these missions had become such a burden that they had to be restricted by imperial decree (Li, op. cit., p. 26). Nevertheless, the nuisance continued and in 1499 an attempt to send a mission twice in one year had to be firmly rejected (Tucci, TPS, p. 683); and in 1569 another decree was promulgated limiting the frequency of such missions and the number of their members (Li, op. cit., n. p. 232). By the time of Father Matteo Ricci's stay in China (1578-1610) these "foreign embassies", which Ricci's informants appear to have attributed originally to the vainglory of the emperor Yung-lo, had become a public scandal and a commercial racket between foreign merchants and the all-powerful court eunuch (V. Cronin, The Wise Man from the West, 1955, p. 185).

The seventh Zhwa-nag lama, Thams-cad mkhyen-pa Chos-grags rgya-mtsho, was born in 1454. There was no contact with the Chinese court in the early years of his life, by which time the emperor Ying-tsung (T'ien-shun), in the second part of his interrupted reign, had turned against Buddhism. In 1465 the succession of Hsien-tsung (Ch'eng-hua), a fervent Buddhist, brought an immediate resumption of correspondence and an exchange of presents. The rnam-thar records that when "Ching-hwa" died his successor (Hsiao-tsung) sent to ask for the Karma-pa's blessing. This was presumably an act of policy for during the greater part of his reign the new emperor was disposed to treat Tibetan lamas with disapproving severity. Chos-grags rgya-mtsho also had correspondence with the mahāpaṇḍita of Bodh Gaya, who invited him to visit India. The letter in Sanskrit is said to be reproduced in the original rnam-thar at Mtshur-phu. Of greater interest is the statement that in about 1465 presents were received from a Mongol king in the direct succession from Chingiz Khan (NT, fo. 127b). This must have been Mandaghol Khan, the twenty-seventh successor of Chingiz, who died in 1467. There is little on record about the attitude of the Mongols towards Buddhism in the years immediately following the eviction from China of the lama-ridden relics of the Yuan dynasty. At that time, Buddhist influences do not seem to have penetrated much beyond the Khans themselves and their family circle and in the bracing air of their homeland the leaders probably returned to their ancestral shamanism; but the overture from Mandaghol shows that the connection with Tibet was not entirely severed. For all that, it cannot have been seen at its true value as a political weapon and there is no hint that Dayan Khan,
Mandaghol's successor who restored much of the lost greatness of his line, made any effort to use Tibetan religious influence in his rivalry with the Chinese empire. Nor did the Karma-pa lamas have sufficient prescience to make the most of this opportunity to strengthen their own position. The fourth Zhwa-dmar-pa, Chos-grags ye-shes, did, it is true, visit Mongolia in 1470 (NT, fo. 127b), but he was then only seventeen and no important results seem to have flowed from his visit. Similar friendly exchanges continued from time to time but nearly a hundred years later the first evangelists of the Dge-lugs-pa sect found Mongolia an almost untouched missionary field.

Before returning to the succession of Zhwa-nag lamas something should be said about the emergence of the Zhwa-dmar lamas as a vigorous and ambitious force in Tibetan affairs. The fourth incarnation, Chos-grags ye-shes, almost the exact contemporary of the seventh Zhwa-nag lama, turned with energy to politics and worldly interests. He acted as a sort of "cardinal-counsellor" to the princes of Rin-spungs, who in 1481 effectively usurped in central Tibet the authority of the Phag-mo-gru-pa rulers which they had been undermining since about 1435. He joined in the struggle against the rivals of Rin-spungs, including the rising power of the Dge-lugs-pa sect and its lay supporters. From 1498 to 1518 the Karma-pas excluded the monks of 'Bras-spungs and Se-ra from the Great Prayer ceremony which had been initiated by Tsong-kha-pa; they also founded monasteries of the Zhwa-nag and Zhwa-dmar schools near Lhasa in order to overawe 'Bras-spungs and Se-ra — that near 'Bras-spungs was called Yam-mdal-phur Thub-dbang Legs-bshad-gling; and they exacted respectful salutes from any Dge-lugs-pa who met a Karma-pa. Chos-grags ye-shes took the lead in these matters and the same militant spirit was shown by his successors, Dkon-mchog yan-lag (1525-83) and Chos-kyi dbang-phyug (1584-1638). They allied themselves with the kings of Gtsang (Gtsang Sde-srid; Gtsang Sde-pa), who superseded the Rin-spungs princes, and also, as suited their purpose, with the Phag-mo-gru-pa, whose influence was renewed about 1517, and with the powerful lamas of 'Bri-khung. This temporal activity of the Zhwa-dmar-pas may be partly explained by the fact that most of them, unlike the Zhwa-nag-pas, were born in or near central Tibet. At all events, the Zhwa-dmar lamas were so prominently the leaders in the rivalry with the Dge-lugs-pa that for some western writers the name "Red Hat" has become the synonym of all the old sects in a way unrecognized in Tibet. This has to some extent affected the reputation of the Karma-pa sect as a whole and of its principal lamas, the Zhwa-nag-pa, who in fact largely succeeded in presenting their character as teachers of religion, with special proficiency in its magical and mystic aspects; they also acted at times as mediators and moderating influences in political dissensions.
Turning again to relations between the Zhwa-nag lamas and the Chinese court we come to a curious incident which seems to have been misunderstood by both Western and Chinese scholars. The eighth Zhwa-nag-pa was Mi-bskyod rdo-rje and in the year of his birth there succeeded to the Chinese throne the emperor Wu-tsong (Cheng-te, 1506–21) who, after a hostile start, gradually became devoted to Buddhism and very indulgent towards Tibetan lamas. He gave himself a title “equivalent to dharmaraja” and he sent a mission to Tibet to invite to his court a man who, he was told, was a Living Buddha. The party was attacked and robbed en route and failed to achieve its object. That, in brief, is the story from Chinese sources as presented by Li Tieh-tseng (op. cit., p. 27). Both Li and Tucci (TPS, p. 255, n. 97) assume that the emperor’s mission was aimed at the second Dalai Lama, Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho (1475–1543), and this is supported by Lion Wieger (Textes historiques, 1922–3, ii, pp. 1760–1); but the Karma-pa rnam-thar and Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag's history leave no doubt that it was actually sent to invite the eighth Zhwa-nag lama. Moreover, the original letter of invitation in Chinese and Tibetan has survived at Mtshur-phu and I was allowed to study and photograph it (see App. A2, B7, pls. 96–8).

The incident proves to have been even more strange than has hitherto been thought. The rnam-thar (fo. 152) and Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag (vol. Pa, fo. 205) show that the Tibetans believed that the emperor considered himself to be in some way an incarnation of the seventh Zhwa-nag lama and that this caused them so much concern that they postponed the enthronement of Mi-bskyod rdo-rje. Apart from the difficulty that the emperor was born a long time before the death of the seventh Zhwa-nag-pa his claim could be covered by the practice, prevalent especially in the Bkaf-brgyud-pa sect, of a deceased lama reincarnating in at least two successors at the same time, one representing his gsung or speech and the other his thugs or intellect. What the emperor had in mind is shown to some extent in the letter of invitation. He gives himself the title “Fa-wang”, which is the equivalent of dharmaraja or chos-rje — in which form it was borne by several high-ranking Tibetan lamas. He also takes the name Rin-chen dpal-ldan. His language is almost fulsomely respectful and he refers to the lama’s visit to China in a previous incarnation. There is no hint of a challenge to the position of Mi-bskyod rdo-rje as the rightful eighth Zhwa-nag incarnation; all the emperor appears to claim is that the coincidence of the dates of his own accession to the throne and the birth of the lama constitute a link in their destiny.

The letter, which was entrusted to the eunuch Liu Yün, was written in the ninth month of the eleventh year of Cheng-te, i.e. 1516. This disagrees with the information in Wieger’s Textes historiques, where the invitation is attributed to 1515, but H. H. Frankel, of the University of California, Berkeley, has kindly informed me, after reference to the Ming-shih, that the
event may be placed later than 1515. The Karma-pa rnam-thar states that the invitation was declined on account of inauspicious omens foreboding the death of the emperor, which occurred shortly afterwards. It is known that the emperor died late in 1521 and so the party appear to have taken several years to make their preparations and to reach their destination — which was not central Tibet but the lama’s monastery in Khams. Although the emperor’s invitation may have been inspired only by a somewhat eccentric devotion and although his intentions may have been misunderstood, the ostentatious size, luxury and military strength of the mission, which are described by Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag (Pa, fos. 205–6), must have increased Tibetan anxieties. At all events, no risks were taken; a polite refusal was communicated and the young lama was hurriedly removed to central Tibet. Tibetan and Chinese sources disagree about what happened next. The Tibetans say that the envoys withdrew in anger, taking with them the presents they had brought for the lama and, on the way back, the presents were looted “by others” (NT, fo. 152). In Dpa’-bo Gtsug-lag the suggestion is that members of the Chinese mission themselves appropriated the valuables. The story in the Ming-shih (Tucci, TPS, p. 255) is that the Living Buddha took alarm and went into hiding, whereupon the Chinese officials were angry and tried to get hold of him by force. The “barbarians” attacked by night, killing a hundred Chinese and wounding more. The leader of the mission, Yun, escaped and later sent a false report which arrived after the emperor had died. It seems, therefore, that the Chinese account may contain some confusion and prevarication and the Tibetan some reticence.

When Wu-tsung was succeeded by his cousin Shih-tsung, a violent opponent of Buddhism, the Karma-pa lamas were spared the embarrassment of further invitations to Peking. The so-called “tribute missions” continued but, as already mentioned, these were little more than commercial ventures.

The eighth Zhwa-nag-pa, Mi-bskyod rdo-rje, had some contact with Mongolia, where the principal figure was then Dayan Khan (1465–1543), but it seems to have been only formal (Pell. T., Pa, fo. 208). Like his predecessors, he travelled widely in Tibet and there is an interesting story in the rnam-thar (fo. 155) that, on a visit to Rva-sgreng he studied books belonging to Sha-ra-ba which are described as being kept in leather covers with metal fastenings. When I was at Rva-sgreng in 1950 I saw a large collection of books similarly wrapped and fastened with chains. I was told they had belonged to pandit Atiśa. Unfortunately it was not possible to examine them because they had been sealed by the thirteenth Dalai Lama and could not be opened until his successor came of age. Perhaps the attribution of the books to Atiśa was mistaken but part of his remains are said to have been taken to Rva-sgreng soon after its foundation in 1056; and Sha-ra-ba was a pupil of Atiśa’s personal disciple, Po-to-ba, so the library at Rva-sgreng may well contain books of exceptional importance.
One contemporary of the eighth Zhwa-nag-pa was the historian Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba, who was slightly older and lived some ten years longer. Another was the fifth Zhwa-dmar-pa, Dkon-mchog yan-lag, over twenty years younger but very early active in political affairs; he allied himself in 1537 with the Gtsang Sde-srid and the 'Bri-khung hierarchy in an attempt to suppress the Dga'-ldan princes, who were the strongest lay champions of the Dge-lugs-pa.

The successor to Mi-bskyod rdo-rje, who died in 1554, was Dbang-phyug rdo-rje (1556–1603). Presents were exchanged by him with the emperor Shen-tsung (Wan-li, 1573–1619) and with an unidentified Mongol chief (NT, fo. 164). The old-standing relationship with the king of 'Jang Sa-tham (Likiang) was further cultivated. But these friendly connections were of little account when compared with the strong tide of Dge-lugs-pa influence, which began to flow through Mongolia in the lifetime of this incarnation and which was to sweep away the Karma-pa supremacy in the time of his successor.

It may be convenient to recall that about 1435 hegemony among the Mongols fell into the hands of the Oirats, a confederacy of tribes unconnected with the original ruling line of Chingiz and consisting of four main sections — the Torgut; the Choros (later better known as the "Dzungar" invaders of Tibet); the Dörbot; and the Qoshot. After some fifty years Dayan Khan, the twenty-ninth successor of Chingiz and a direct descendant of Khubilai, succeeded in overcoming the fissiparous tendency of the Mongol system and in reunifying under his leadership the several tribes of Chingizid descent. He was thus able to recover supremacy from the Oirats and to drive them westward out of the territories on which they had encroached. On Dayan's death in 1543 the unity imposed by his forceful character dissolved and once more the Chingizid tribes went their different ways. These tribes consisted of the Chahar, the tribe of the legitimate successor of Chingiz; the Kharachin; Ordos; Tumed; and the Khalkha confederacy made up of five sub-tribes each led by a descendant of Geresandza, one of Dayan's sons. On the death of Dayan the most powerful were the Ördos and the Tumed.

Although the Dge-lugs-pa may first have gained a footing in Mongolia when the Ordos Khan, Khutuktai Sechen Kong Taiji, captured some of their monks in the course of a raid into north-east Tibet in 1566, it was the exceptional ability and missionary zeal of lama Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho that effectively laid the foundations of their greatness. In 1577 he converted the Tumed ruler Altan Khan, at that time the most vigorous of Dayan's descendants. Altan bestowed on Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho the title "Dalai Lama" and gave active support to the Dge-lugs-pa faith. The connection was further enhanced by the discovery of Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho's reincarnation in the person of Yon-tan rgya-mtsho, a child born to Altan's own
son and successor, Senge Dugurun. With these favourable auspices the Dgelugs-pa teaching spread rapidly and its converts soon included the Chahar chief, Tumen Sasaktu, and the leaders of most of the five Khalkha tribes; it also found its way to the Khans of the Oirat confederacy — the Torgut Khu Orluk; the Dörbot Karakulla; and to the Qoshot Khan Boibegui and his brother Gusri who, in 1642, was to conquer Tibet for the Dgelugs-pa cause.

The Karma-pa had little to set against that accession of strength by the Dgelugs-pa and they had no leader to compare with Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho. The tenth Zhwa-nag-pa, Rgyal-mchog Chos-dbyings rdo-rje, who was born in 1604, received an invitation in 1610 to visit “king Kho-lo-ji”, who appears to have been a Mongol chief of the Kokonor country (Tucci, TPS, p. 51) and a grand-nephew of Altan Khan (E. H. Parker, “Mongolia after the Chingizides”, JRAS (China), xliv, 1913, p. 97). The guardians of the young lama feared that he might be kidnapped and they refused the invitation (NT, fo. 169); but in 1614, on another invitation, the lama went to Mongolia, where he converted “king Da’i-ching” (Daicing). In 1620 there is mention of presents being sent by the Chahar and Khalkha Khans — presumably Legdan and Altan (NT, fo. 174). Legdan seems to have been for a time a Dgelugs-pa supporter but his later history shows that he was unreliable.

It appears, therefore, that the Karma-pa lamas did not neglect nor were neglected by the Mongols but they lacked the missionary fervour of their rivals; moreover their influence and energy were impaired at this time by various internal dissensions. The Zhwa-nag-pa Rgyal-mchog Chos-dbyings rdo-rje, who was born in ‘Gu-log [sic] country, came from his childhood under the control of the two Lcags-mo lamas, who displayed open enmity towards the Zhwa-dmar-pa Chos-kyi dbang-phyug and the Gtsang Sde-srid Phun-tshogs rnam-rgyal (NT, fos 168, 171). The latter succeeded in breaking the power of the Lcags-mo lamas about 1620 but his relations with the Zhwa-nag-pa continued to be strained and almost hostile (NT, fos 173–4). This rupture was still apparent more than twenty years later at the time of Gusri’s invasion when, in spite of the common danger, the Zhwa-nag-pa expressed disapproval of the misdeeds of the then sde-srid, Karma bstan-skyong. It may also be noticed that in 1640, when representations were made by various parties in Tibet to the newly-risen power of the Manchus, the Gtsang ruler commended to their favour only the Zhwa-dmar-pa and made no mention of the Zhwa-nag-pa.

These disagreements weakened the moral authority of the Karma-pa to the advantage of the Dgelugs-pa and also made inroads on their material position, which depended on the ability of the Gtsang Sde-srid to maintain his hold over the greater part of Tibet. That hold had for some time been subject to attrition. The Dgelugs-pa connection brought many Mongol supporters into central Tibet. There was some sort of armed incursion
in 1621 and further threatening gestures in 1625 (Tucci, TPS, pp. 58–9). Dge-
lugs-pa writers gloss over the fact that their eventual triumph was secured
by a foreign invasion; but too much should not be made of any claim that
the opposite side were nationalists defending Tibetan independence, for the
Karma-pa would have used the Mongol troops of Arslan Khan against their
enemies if they could. The story is rather obscure. Arslan’s father Chogtu
(Dzasaktu?), a Khalkha khan of the Kokonor, was a supporter of the Zhwa-
dmar-pa. It is possible that he sent his son to help the Karma-pa to maintain
their position; or Arslan may have set out on a private adventure; but what-
ever prompted his invasion of Tibet, Arslan proved himself an
unscrupulous opportunist with an eye only for loot. The Karma-pa were
his first victims. It appears that Arslan killed the sixth Zhwa-dmar-pa in
an engagement near 'Dam in 1635 and that the Zhwa-nag-pa had to flee
from Mtshur-phu. That is what I take to be the meaning of the references
to Karma chung-ba and Karma che-ba in fo. 79 of vol. ja of the fifth Dalai
Lama’s rnam-thar which Giuseppe Tucci kindly allowed me to consult in
his fine private library at Rome. The Karma-pa rnam-thar, although mention-
ing that the Zhwa-dmar-pa died about this time, conceals the circumstances.
After this disaster the Karma-pa succeeded in directing Arslan’s violence
against the Dge-lugs-pa. The Dge-lugs-pa, after suffering some damage,
were able to play the same game. They won over Arslan, who again turned
his hostility against Karma-pa possessions. The late Zhwa-dmar-pa’s prin-
cipal official, known as Zhwa-dmar Rab-byams-pa, sent a hurried protest
to Chogtu who, seemingly without compunction, arranged for the execu-
tion of his own son Arslan.

About the same time Legdan, Khan of the Chahar, was won over by
Chogtu to the Karma-pa side and set out for the Kokonor area to do battle
for them but was killed there by the Qoshot Gusri Khan, who was then
beginning his career as a Dge-lugs-pa champion. The Karma-pa were thus
deprived of their effective allies among the Mongols and Gusri, after clear-
ing up opposition in Kokonor and Khams, proceeded in 1642 to the invasion
of Tibet, the defeat and execution of the Gtsang Sde-srid, and the estab-
lishment of the supremacy of the Dge-lugs-pa church.

The problem of tiding over this reversal of power fell to the lot of the
tenth Zhwa-nag-pa, whose uneasy relations with the Gtsang kings have
been mentioned earlier. When he was eight and again some six or seven
years later there had been an exchange of formal messages with the em-
peror Shen-tsung (Wan-li), but there is no further record of correspondence
between the Karma-pa and the Chinese court until 1640, when rival par-
ties in Tibet sent letters to the newly-established Ch’ing emperor seeking
to win his support. It was on this occasion that the Gtsang Sde-srid spe-
cially commended the Zhwa-dmar-pa to the emperor. It appears that in
reply the emperor addressed a letter to the Zhwa-dmar-pa (W. W. Rockhill,
The Dalai Lamas of Lhasa, 1910, p. 12), but perhaps this is a misinterpreta-
tion. The sixth Zhwa-dmar-pa, as mentioned above, died or was killed about 1635; and there was some delay in finding his successor. I wonder, therefore, whether the emperor's letter may have been intended for the Zhwa-nag-pa and whether the latter also had addressed the emperor. At all events, before the imperial letters were received the issue in Tibet had been decided in favour of the Dge-lugs-pa.

Rgyal-mchog Chos-dbyings rdo-rje was a quietist in the tradition of many of his predecessors and he does not appear in Dge-lugs-pa records as a figure of any personal importance in their estimation. Through the mediation of the Panchen Lama he quickly reached an agreement with the Dalai Lama by which the Karma-pa, in return for acknowledging the supremacy of the Dalai Lama, were to be left undisturbed in their doctrine and in possession of most of their monasteries (NT, fo. 177). But this settlement was soon upset by "ill-disposed persons" and the Zhwa-nag-pa became involved, perhaps almost accidentally, in the rebellion by the Sgar-pa against the new regime. The Sgar-pa were an east Tibetan clan, perhaps originating in the neighbourhood of Karma Gdan-sa, from which sprang the line of Rin-spungs princes. Before their rise to power in Gtsang they had been in close relations with the Karma-pa through that sect's monasteries in Khams. It was inevitable that the Zhwa-nag-pa should fall under suspicion, although the rnam-thar suggests that this was a mistake (fo. 179). He was besieged in Sgar-chen by Skyi-shod and Mongol troops. It is not clear what place is meant here by Sgar-chen, a term apparently used with the general meaning of "headquarters" or "principal seat". It might refer to the Karma-pa's own monastery of Mtshur-phu, or to the Sgar-pa's castle at Rin-spung or even to some stronghold in Rkong-po, in which area the Sgar-pa's rebellion was finally crushed (Tucci, TPS, p. 67). The lama escaped with difficulty from scenes of slaughter and destruction and eventually found refuge with the king of Sa-tham, whose family had long been devout supporters of the Karma-pa lamas. He soon became dissatisfied with the bustle and luxury of the Sa-tham court. First he withdrew to a quiet monastery and then, displaying his unusual character, he set out into the dangerous 'Gu-log country, entirely alone and taking the barest necessities, declaring that he intended to visit the new reincarnation of the Zhwa-dmar lama. He fell among thieves and was robbed of his horse and all the rest of his possessions; but he went on barefooted and in rags, imperturbably begging food and shelter until search parties of his own followers and those of the Zhwa-dmar-pa succeeded in rescuing him (NT, fo. 182).

In spite of the reduction in his position the Zhwa-nag-pa was still considered of sufficient importance to be invited to China by the emperor in 1653, the year in which the Dalai Lama returned from a visit there. He did not accept; but from Sa-tham, where he had settled once more after his
solitary adventure, he kept up a correspondence with the imperial court. In 1659 he appears to have sent a mission to the emperor (Rockhill, JRAS., 1891, p. 204) and in 1660 this was followed up by the emperor "Shun-rtsi" (Shun-chih: Shih-tsu, 1644–62), who may have welcomed an opportunity of extending his own influence among the Tibetans in order to offset the power of the Qoshot Mongols. Shun-chih sent a letter and offered to the lama a seal, referring to the precedent of the Ming dynasty and seeking to establish himself as the successor to their relations with the Tibetan church. The lama was not to be led into any bargaining with temporal powers and returned the typically Tibetan answer that "no change appeared necessary" (NT, fo. 184).

While Rgyal-mchog Chos-dbyings rdo-rje was in virtual exile at Sa-tham, Karma-pa interests in central Tibet and Gtsang were in the hands of a young and able deputy, the Rgyal-tshab chen-po Grags-pa mchog-dbyangs (1617–58). Accompanied by the Zhabs-drung Rin-po-che of Stag-lung, who frequently acted as intermediary between the Dalai Lama and the old sects, he visited Lhasa in 1653 to plead for the return of Karma-pa monasteries sequestered after the Sgar-pa’s rebellion. He succeeded in recovering most of them but not all, for at Lha-lung and Smra-bo-mchog-pa, in Lho-brag, I was told that those monasteries had formerly been Karma-pa but were taken over by the fifth Dalai Lama. Some degree of Dge-lugs-pa control was retained even at Mtsur-phu and there is still a permanent official of the yig-tshang (ecclesiastical court) stationed there, although his duties now appear to be nominal.

Before his death in 1674 the tenth Zhwa-nag-pa visited Lhasa and made his peace with the Dalai Lama. Ngag-dbang blo-bzang Rgya-mtsho, "The Great Fifth" Dalai Lama, was born in a Rnying-ma-pa family and is widely believed in Tibet to have been for all his life a secret supporter of the unreformed sects. This reputation perhaps reflects the moderation and tact with which he assumed authority over his religious rivals; and it is one good reason for his title "The Great" that in his dealings with other sects he was free from bigotry and iconoclasm, such as marked the activities of the Dzungars during their brief domination of Tibet in 1717 or such as the Chinese sought to impose in 1726.

The eleventh Zhwa-nag-pa, Ye-shes rdo-rje (1676–1702), had a short and uneventful life. A visit to Mtsur-phu by the famous regent Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho in 1686 suggests a growing rapprochement between Lhasa and the Karma-pas after the death of the fifth Dalai Lama.

The twelfth incarnation, Byang-chub rdo-rje (1703–32), also died quite young but the rnam-thar has more to record about him. In 1718 he was taken to Lhasa, where he met the Dzungar leader Tshe-ring don-grub. He was present later when the seventh Dalai Lama, Bskal-bzang rgya-mtsho, arrived at Lhasa in 1720 and he met all the leading men of the day — the
Sde-srid Stag-rtse-pa; Bkra-shis-rtse-pa; Mongol and Chinese generals; the minister Khang-chen and Pho-lha Mi-dbang. The last-named was a friend worth having for he became one of the best rulers Tibet has known; and, although he was a sincere follower of the Dge-lugs-pa, he is still spoken of with affection by adherents of the older sects for his noble and enlightened defence of their freedom against the Chinese imperial edict enjoining persecution of the unreformed church (Luciano Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early Eighteenth Century*, Leiden, 1950, p. 94). The *rnam-thar* records that Pho-la sent presents to the Zhwa-nag-pa on several occasions. The Karma-pa lama was also one of those who mediated a settlement when Pho-la invaded Bhutan in 1730 (Petech, *op. cit.*, p. 146). In 1728 the lama had accepted an invitation to visit the emperor, but before going to China he, together with the Zhwa-dmar-pa, the Si-tu Rin-po-che, and other Karma-pa lamas, went on a pilgrimage to Nepal and India. In 1731 the Zhwa-nag and Zhwa-dmar lamas proceeded to Peking. It was an ill-starred visit. Both the lamas, who had been close friends and companions for most of their life, died there in 1732 within a month of one another.

The thirteenth incarnation, Bdud-'dul rdo-rje (1733–97), is reputed to have been a famous *gter-ston* and to have understood the language of animals. Most of the space assigned to him in the *rnam-thar* is devoted to his conversations with beasts and birds. There is nothing of any political significance: no reference to important lay officials or to relations with China. From this account it would seem that the sect was settling into a staid and venerable respectability; but that assumption would be premature for the *rnam-thar*, with excessive caution, suppresses all mention of the one notorious and disturbing Karma-pa of the day — the last Zhwa-dmar-pa.

The ninth incarnation of that line, who was born about 1734, was an elder brother of the third Panchen Lama, Blo-bzang dpal-ldan ye-shes (1738–80).4 I have not yet been able to discover his personal name.5 The eldest brother in the family was the Panchen Lama’s phyag-mdzod or treasurer — the “Chanzo Cusho” whom Bogle knew well at Shigatse in 1775 and Turner in 1783. He also was an incarnate lama and is mentioned in the *rnam-thar* of the third Panchen Lama, which I have seen by the kindness of Giuseppe Tucci, as *Phyag-mdzod chen-mo Drung-pa Hu-tuk-tu Blo-bzang sbyin-pa*. In Chinese sources he is called Chungpa Hutuktu (S. Cammann, *Trade Through the Himalayas*, Princeton, 1951, p. 73, n. 81). Bogle says that the Chanzo Cusho was a half-brother of the Panchen Lama, being a son of the same mother by a different father. The mother was a member of the royal family of Ladakh (Bogle and Manning, Clements Markham (ed.), *Narratives of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet and of the Journey of Thomas Manning to Lhasa*, London, 1859, pp. 139, 84). It is possible that the Zhwa-dmar-pa, too, was a half-brother. The Panchen Lama’s nephews, whom Bogle calls the “Pyn [Spun] Cushos”, were, so he says, the
sons of another brother who also was a lama. One of this lama’s daughters, by another wife, was the incarnation of Rdo-rje phag-mo (Markham, op. cit., pp. 108–9). According to Bogle, this brother died before 1775. As he had two acknowledged wives he may have been a monk of one of the unreformed sects; perhaps he was, in fact, the Zhwa-dmar-pa whom Bogle may have been mistaken in understanding to be dead.

The discovery of so many important incarnations in the same well-connected family helps to explain the Chinese imperial edict of 1793 which sought to regulate the selection of incarnate lamas (Rockhill, Dalai Lamas, p. 55). In this instance it is particularly surprising to find one family providing at the same time important figures in both the reformed and unreformed sects.

The death of the third Panchen Lama at Peking in 1780 set off a train of incidents. According to a report written at Kathmandu in 1792 by a Muslim agent of the East India Company the Zhwa-dmar-pa immediately fled to Nepal, taking much treasure with him (W. Kirkpatrick, An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal, 1811, App. 2). It is suggested that he had reason to fear the Chinese and suspicions were voiced that the Panchen Lama had been poisoned because the emperor disliked his great authority in Tibet, his independent attitude towards his Chinese suzerain, and his relations with the British in India. The invitation to Peking may have been intended to remove him temporarily from Tibet and to let him understand what the emperor thought of his activities. The Chinese official account of his death, which is accepted in the lama’s rnam-thar and in a letter from his brother the phyag-mdzod to Warren Hastings, is that he died of smallpox. There is no reason to doubt that. This is not the place for a discussion whether the Panchen Lama might have been deliberately infected with the disease, for even if he had been murdered — which is improbable — there is no clear reason why the Zhwa-dmar-pa should consider himself endangered.

Chinese sources explain the Zhwa-dmar-pa’s flight as due to a quarrel with his elder brother when the latter returned from China and treated him unfairly by withholding his just share of the late Panchen Lama’s wealth and by persecuting him on account of his position as a lama of the unreformed church. Some such motive is indicated by the vindictive hatred directed by the Zhwa-dmar-pa against Bkra-shis-lhun-po; and when distributing punishments later the Chinese clearly held the phyag-mdzod to be largely responsible, for they took him captive to China and confiscated his property as well as that of the Zhwa-dmar-pa. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the Chinese had other reasons for disliking the phyag-mdzod, who had taken the leading part in the negotiations with Bogle.

The origin and course of the whole affair are well examined by S. Cammann in his work already mentioned; and as all the principal references are given there I shall not quote them here.
In Nepal the Zhwa-dmar-pa was welcomed by the Raja, into whose ear he poured incitement against Tibet, recounting in particular the wealth of Bkra-shis-lhun-po. The Raja was not unwilling to be incited. Relations between Tibet and Nepal had been strained since the seizure of power by the Gorkhas in 1769; and so, in 1788, on the pretext that the Tibetan Government was behaving improperly in matters of currency and frontier dues, a Nepalese army was sent into Tibet. It occupied Shel-dkar Rdzong and the frontier districts of Skyid-grong, Nye-lam, and Rdzong-kha. Tibetan and Chinese officials negotiated an agreement by which the Nepalese were bought off with the promise of a yearly tribute. The Zhwa-dmar-pa appeared at these negotiations as a representative of Nepal; and on the Lhasa side the representatives included lamas from Sa-skya and Bkra-shis-lhun-po as well as the Minister Bstan-'dzin dpal-'byor, of the Dga'-bzhi family, who was married to a niece of the Zhwa-dmar-pa (Rockhill, Dalai Lamas, p. 56). The agreement, reached in 1789, broke down when the Tibetans failed to pay more than one instalment of the tribute; and in 1791 the Nepalese launched a fresh invasion. The Dga'-bzhi minister, who was sent to protest, was taken prisoner and a Chinese envoy at Kathmandu, who demanded reparation, was treated with contempt. The Chinese government, by now aware of the mishandling of affairs by local authorities, dispatched a strong force preceded by renewed demands for reparation and for the surrender of the Zhwa-dmar-pa. To this last the Raja replied that "the lama was the same as himself". Later, when the Chinese had routed the Nepalese and had thrown their country into alarm and confusion, the Raja decided that he would have to give up the lama, but the latter took his own life by poison. That is the story reported from Kathmandu while the invasion was still in progress (Kirkpatrick, loc. cit.). Chinese sources raise a doubt whether the Zhwa-dmar-pa's death was due to poison or to natural causes (Li Tieh-tseng, op. cit., p. 244, n. 153); but there is no good reason to question the account written from Kathmandu at the time. At all events, the Zhwa-dmar-pa escaped the vengeance of his enemies; but his dead body and his followers were handed over to the Chinese. Cammann also says (op. cit., p. 131) that the Zhwa-dmar-pa's Tibetan wife was handed over. Camille Imbault Huart, quoting from the same sources in "Histoire de la conquête du Népal par les Chinois", Journal Asiatique, xii, 1878, does not mention this.

After the Zhwa-dmar-pa’s death the Chinese brought a curious charge against him in the edict of 1793 already mentioned, where it is said: "Quite recently Dza-marpa (Hutuketu) took advantage of the internal condition of Tibet to conspire to seize the office of Panchen Lama and he stirred up the Gorkhas to take by force of arms Tashilhunpo ..." (Rockhill, Dalai Lamas, p. 56). If Rockhill’s translation is correct, this improbable allegation casts some doubt on other Chinese statements about the affair. But whatever
the causes of his action, the Zhwa-dmar-pa was clearly guilty of treasonable behaviour against Tibet and it is not surprising that the Dalai Lama forbade any further reincarnation of that line\(^6\) and also confiscated the Zhwa-dmar-pa’s property, including the monastery of Yangs-pa-can, which was conveyed to the Dge-lugs-pa monastery of Kun-bde-gling. I understand that the memory of the Zhwa-dmar-pa is kept alive by a distinguished family at Kathmandu which looks on him as a generous benefactor and recounts the tradition that he disappeared from earth leaving behind him only one leg, the bones of which, together with his boot, are preserved as relics in their house.

It is not entirely inappropriate that the Zhwa-dmar-pa hierarchy should end in a blaze of violence. In contrast, the Zhwa-nag-pa lamas, after they had been displaced from their eminent position by the victorious Dge-lugs-pa, continued to live a succession of quiet and gentle lives remote from politics and devoted only to matters of religion. Their reputation and moral influence are still high in Khams, Sikkim, Bhutan, Nepal and Ladakh, as well as among the nomads of the Byang-thang. The sixteenth incarnation, Rang-byung rig-pa’i rdo-rje, was born in Khams about 1927. He exemplifies the religious calm and the love of wild animals common to many of his predecessors; and he is held in veneration for his powers as a gter-ston, by which he discovered a store of silver hidden by a former incarnation and which he used to build a new chapel. In addition to his kindness in entertaining me and showing me the treasures of his monastery of Mtshur-phu, he conducted for my benefit the ceremony of wearing the magical black hat of Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa, which confers “Deliverance on Sight”. The lama seated himself on his throne and the hat was brought in a silk-covered box. Two monks took it out, holding it firmly all the time, for they say that if it is let go it will fly away by itself. They placed it on the lama’s head and he grasped it with one hand and held it for the time it took to count the beads of his rosary as he recited the special prayer for the occasion. When the hat was restored to its box the ceremony ended with a blessing from the lama.

Mention of the black mitre woven for Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa from the hair of the mkha’-gro-ma some eight hundred years ago serves to link the present day with the origin of the Karma-pa sect and provides a suitable conclusion for these notes.

Notes

1. *bla ma*. I use the popular spelling “lama” throughout.

3. Strictly speaking, the first Dalai Lama was Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho, on whom the title was conferred in 1677 by Altan Khan, but it is the accepted practice in Tibet to attribute the title retrospectively to his two previous incarnations, thus treating Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho as the third Dalai Lama. At the time of the incident in question the Karma-pa hierarch was a figure of greater importance than the Dge-lugs-pa and therefore more likely to attract the emperor’s attention.

4. Often described by western and Chinese writers as the sixth Panchen Lama. There is no question, even at Bkra-shis-lhun-po, that he was actually third in succession from Blo-bzang chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan (1569–1602) whom his pupil, the fifth Dalai Lama pronounced to have been an incarnation of 'Od-dpag-med. The ascription to the Panchen Lamas of an extended spiritual lineage, including Indian teachers and the pandita of the Sa-skya sect, is simply a subsequent attempt to enhance their prestige vis-a-vis the Dalai Lamas for political ends.

5. Giuseppe Tucci has informed me that there is a religious work, written apparently in the eighteenth century, by a “Zhwa-dmar Dge-'dun bstan-'dzin rgya-mtsho”; but it has not yet been possible to establish that this was the name of the ninth Zhwa-dmar-pa incarnation.

6. Although there is now no Zhwa-dmar-pa lama, Karma-pas like to believe that he continues to reincarnate in the person of the Si-tu Rin-po-che of Dpal-spungs.

Appendix A

Translation of the Tibetan text of the scroll referred to on p. 345 above. The Tibetan is in Appendix B, no. 6. Passages in small capitals are in red in the original. See also Plates 92–4.

The Wonderful Decree “Deliverance at Sight”

By the Great Ming Emperor the Karma-pa Gzhu’u la'i ta'i ba'u hva wang ta'i shing rtsi tsa'i hu'o was invited and was made chief of all the ban-de (Buddhist monks) in the empire. At Ling-gu-swi-sde (temple) he performed a great service of prayers for the Great Imperial Father, Tha'i Ju, and the loving Queen-mother in order to deliver all creatures in the world from the round of transmigration and from hell. The service began on the fifth day of the second month of the fifth year of Yun-lo. On the first day there appeared an iridescent cloud of five colours, beautiful to see, expanding and contracting in various ways, in brilliance like the Wish-granting Gem. Also, above the mchod-rten (stupa) of relics a ray of light, like the full moon, shone out unblemished and flickering a little. Also, two bands of golden rays rose above the dwelling place of the Precious Essence of all Bygone Buddhas, the Religious King, Powerful through Great Compassion, the Karma-pa Gzhu'i la'i ta'i ba'u hva wang zi then ta'i shin tsi tsa'i hu'o,1 the place where he performed the ceremony after having made the dkyil-'khor2 (manḍala).

On the sixth day of the month there was seen a large number of iridescent clouds, shaped like begging-bowls, which filled the whole sky. And on the clouds
in the south-west many figures of the gnas-brtan (sthavira) appeared, each followed by a large retinue. Some of them could be very clearly discerned and others not so clearly. For a short time flowers fell from the sky, some fully blown, others in bud; their stems and upper parts were all like crystal and they floated everywhere, both high up and low down. After that, a five-coloured rainbow shone above the chapel containing the dkyil-'khor made by De-bzhin gshegs-pa. Then after a time there appeared in the rainbow more than ten gnas-brtan carrying begging-bowls and pilgrim staffs; some were wearing hats, others held yak-tail fans in their hands and they moved about among the clouds.

On the seventh day of the month there dropped from the sky sweet-flavoured, sweet-scented nectar that looked red and white in colour. Also, after a time, in a cloud of many colours there appeared very clearly a tree seemingly of gold and on its branches were flowers like glass, radiating light.

On the eighth day of the month many-coloured rays of light streamed from the south-west quarter to the north-east and flowers floated and danced in the sky. Five-coloured rays shone over the upper room 3 of De-bzhin gshegs-pa Rin-po-che and then vanished into space.

On the ninth day of the month there was a shower of heavenly flowers and nectar; and in the upper air were seen many canopies, banners of victory, silken streamers, and so on. Also, a rainbow-hued light of five colours rose from the roof of De-bzhin gshegs-pa's upper room and vanished into the sky.

On the tenth day of the month there fell nectar as sweet as honey both to smell and to taste. A five-coloured ray of light flashed to the opposite ends of the sky; and over the mchod-rten there rose three sacred relics like, for example, the moonlight gleaming on a jewel or the sun's rays on the waves of the sea. Those three bright globes moved up and down the mchod-rten and the circling light spread its radiance over all the ten directions. And again, after many men had seen innumerable dgra-bcom-pa (arhats) moving in the sky, there appeared more than ten ban-de with bundles on their heads and staffs in their hands, who were seen approaching the street. On being questioned they said: "We are going to Ling-gu-swi-sde to take breakfast." The men in the street, seeing that they had long eyebrows and broad foreheads and were very handsome, began to wonder and followed them to inquire who they were; but on reaching the great main gate of Ling-gu-swi-sde they could not discover where the ban-de had gone.

On the eleventh day of the month an iridescent cloud of five colours arose and heavenly flowers fell from all aides. Nectar also fell; and on a juniper tree blossomed a flower like a golden lotus with a thousand petals, compactly shaped and of surpassing natural beauty. From De-bzhin gshegs-pa's dkyil-'khor a five-coloured ray shone out.

On the twelfth day of the month heavenly flowers, each as big as a dong-rtse (coin) filled the sky above the chapel in every direction and began to fall all around. On that night there could be seen above the head of the (image of the) deity a ray of red light like a rainbow, compact and very bright, illuminating everything.
Also, a five-coloured ray of light shone above De-bzhin gshegs-pa’s dkyil-’khor; and over the mchod-rten a single relic rose as brightly as the sun, shining everywhere both above and below, so that the grass and trees were all seen clearly in its light. After this brightness appeared again.

On the thirteenth day of the month two Lamps of Perfect Intellect appeared. One came to rest on the tomb and one on the Palace. Also a circular light of five colours moved around the chapel where the dkyil-’khor was and shone above the upper room where De-bzhin gshegs-pa was staying. At the same time there was a shower of flowers which circled round the emperor’s apartments as they fell. At midday (when the sun was warm) there was a snowfall of good omen. On that night a brilliance like a jewel appeared above the building where the mchod-rten was and in its light the shape of the mchod-rten was clearly visible. A barefooted ban-de, in appearance quite unlike any other, was seen wearing a ragged woollen robe the skirts of which he held in his left hand and his shoes in his right hand. As he went along he seemed to fly. People followed him to inquire who he might be and, although they were watching him, when he reached the front of the chapel they could not see where he had gone. Even though they searched they could not find him; but after a little they saw him sitting in a cloud.

On the fourteenth day of the month a blue khyung (garuda) and a white crane were seen to fly up into the sky and dance around in it. A five-coloured rainbow cloud encircled the sun; and after a time another rainbow cloud split off from it and encircled the chapel, moving round it. Various phantom shapes, also circular lights, surrounded the upper room of De-bzhin gshegs-pa Rin-po-che. Then after a little while a golden ray appeared and vanished to the opposite end of the sky. Then a crimson ray shone out. It did not fade for a long time. And on that night, in a ray of five-coloured light, there was seen the form of a dkyil-’khor, while more than ten images of bodhisattva (byang-chub sms-dpa’) appeared, crossing from east to west as they came and went. Golden light shone from the four decorated prayer-masts (phan-shing).

On the fifteenth day of the month a five-coloured ray of light shone over the chapel of De-bzhin shags-pa (the Buddha) and also over the upper room of the living incarnation, the De-bzhin gshegs-pa Rin-po-che. After a time it separated into pieces shaped like lotus flowers and became very bright; then after a considerable time it again reformed and shone as a five-coloured ray. In an auspicious cloud there was seen a hermit-saint (drang-srong) of golden complexion. A white crane flew up into the sky and circled round dancing. After a while a white ray of light shone from the roof of De-bzhin-gshegs-pa’s upper room and disappeared into the east. That night over the mchod-rten, the chapel, and the dwelling of the emperor a rainbow shone; also two circular rays of light each illuminating the other.

On the sixteenth day of the month over the chapel of the mchod-rten and De-bzhin gshegs-pa Rin-po-che’s upper room a five-coloured ray of light and a rainbow appeared. A shower of heavenly flowers filled the sky and fell on the royal tomb and the palace.
On the seventeenth day of the month innumerable rays of five-coloured light glowed over the Precious mcchod-rten and spread out so as to reach the roof of the chapel. On that night two men were seen standing on top of the prayer-masts; and after that in the south-west many auspicious rainbow-hued clouds appeared on top of which were seen two ban-de, high above the ground, with their hands joined in the attitude of reverence; and on another small cloud one ban-de with his hands joined was seen following after the other two. They all moved in the direction of the chapel and there they descended. Then they ascended again and, on the instant, vanished. Also, on the south-west horizon there appeared three five-coloured rays of light which travelled in a north-easterly direction towards the chapel of the mcchod-rten. Opposite them in the east a white ray shone and five-coloured rays shone over De-bzhin gshegs-pa Rin-po-che’s upper room.

On the eighteenth day of the month, on which the ceremony was concluded, came flocks of blue khyung and white cranes which danced as they flew. There was a shower of flowers; and in all directions there appeared iridescent clouds of many colours shaped like innumerable auspicious signs of good omen; pearl-like drops of nectar fell and there were breezes of good omen. Many assemblies of innumerable deities of this world were clearly seen. Rainbow clouds formed in the shape of dragons, khyung, lions, elephants, and of precious mcchod-rtens. That night, on the tall prayer-masts which stood outside the main door, there appeared two heavenly lamps, of very intense red, and other lights, too, of different kinds which lit up the ten directions and by that light could be seen in the brilliant upper sky, even from a great distance, gods adorned with precious jewels riding on blue lions and white elephants. After some time there shone over the mcchod-rten a globe of light of intense brightness with the form of a sacred relic. It merged into the heavenly lamps and an even more brilliant light flashed forth. Heavenly music of many sorts of stringed instruments caused the foundations of the house and of the dkyil-‘khor to tremble. Those who were in the house of the dkyil-‘khor and who heard it thought that the sound was in the sky. It continued a long time in the upper air; and after a little the whole of the dkyil-‘khor appeared to have been transformed into a golden paradise (zhing-khams).

On the third day of the third month took place the presentation of the laudatory title Gzhu’u la’i ta’i ba’u hva wang zin then ta’i shin tsi tsa’i hu’o. On that day more than 2,000 ban-de of the kingdom were bidden to a midday repast at which time a five-coloured rainbow ray arose to the west of Ling-gu-swi-sde and travelled towards the east. The light was like a bridge, extending the length of the sky. Then a five-coloured iridescent cloud, of intense brightness, arose and changed fleetingly into different miraculous appearances. Heavenly flowers fell one after another. Then rosy clouds with rainbow tints spread over the mcchod-rten and over De-bzhin gshegs-pa Rin-po-che’s upper room; over the upper room shone three bands of five-coloured rays and while they were still visible a single ray of white light and three bands of golden rays shone forth.
On the fourth day of the month De-bzhin gshegs-pa went to the Palace, to the Skyl-ngin (Lake?). On that day a rainbow of blue and white colour in five bands appeared and five-coloured rays of light covered De-bzhin gshegs-pa’s upper room and from the rin-po-che’s upper room two white rays of light shone. Also a ray of five-coloured light glowed above the chapel of the mchod-rten and two white cranes flew up from the roof and danced in the sky.

On the fifth day of the month the emperor’s retinue went to Ling-gu-sde for a banquet. On that day there shone a ray of five-coloured light, iridescent clouds of five-colours and a ray of golden light. Below the sun there was a very bright radiance. Above De-bzhin gshegs-pa Rin-po-che’s upper room five rays of light shone, also a golden ray. On that night a ray of crimson light rose in the south and glowed on the chapel, illuminating it very brightly.

On the thirteenth day of the month, the day when De-bzhin gshegs-pa set out for Ri-bo-rtse-nga on a pilgrimage to ‘jam-dbyangs’ holy place, as he took his departure from Ling-gu-sde a five-coloured ray of light rose in the north-west and a crimson ray shone on the upper room of De-bzhin gshegs-pa Rin-po-che. On the pinnacle of the mchod-rten flashed a single ray of light, in colour like gold; also three bands of five-coloured light flashed above the roof of the chapel.

On the fifteenth day of the month all the ban-de performed the ceremony of purification and offered their prayers to De-bzhin gshegs-pa. On that day a five-coloured iridescent cloud appeared and flowers fell, filling all the sky. Two white cranes flew into the sky and danced and a jewel of many coloured light flashed. That night the sound of cymbals rang out first on one side then on the other. This lasted for a considerable time and then ceased.

On the sixteenth day of the month the semblance of two mchod-rten, one large and one small, appeared in the western chapel. The larger had five stories and measured two ‘dom-pa (fathoms) and one hand’s breadth up to the top of the finial spire. The smaller phantom mchod-rten had five stories. In height it was rather more than five hand’s breadths between the base and the pinnacle. There was a very bright light and a golden ray which changed shape and moved about. Nectar dropped from the top of a Zo-lo incense tree and rays of light suffused everything.

On the seventeenth day of the month eight bands of five-coloured light rays shone; then a single ray each of blue, white, and red light which rose in the north-east. A golden light glowed over the chapel of the mchod-rten and a rainbow of five colours shone upon the roof of De-bzhin gshegs-pa Rin-po-che’s upper room.

On the eighteenth day of the month a ray of blue light shone from the south-west; and a golden ray shone over De-bzhin gshegs-pa Rin-po-che’s upper room; then a rainbow brilliance and iridescent clouds just like gold.

* * *

2. Translation of Tibetan text of the letter of invitation from the emperor Wu-tsung to Zhwa-nag-pa Mi-bskyod rdo-rje referred to on p. 348 above.
The Tibetan is in Appendix B, no. 7 (see also Plates 96–8). Many points have been clarified by translations of the Chinese text generously made for me by V. V. Gokhale, Ferguson College, Poona, and D. C. Lau, of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

The letter consists of a silk-wrapped scroll some 5 feet broad by 2 feet high. The Tibetan is on the right, the Chinese on the left and the date in both languages, together with the imperial seal, are on the left of the Chinese text. The Tibetan is in the 'bam-yig script. The text in transliteration and some textual notes will be found in Appendix B. It is apparently the work of a Chinese translator. There are so many inaccuracies in spelling and the construction is so ambiguous that without the invaluable guidance of the translations from the Chinese text by Professor Gokhale and Mr. Lau the meaning of the Tibetan would be obscure. Even with that help some passages still present difficulties. The footnotes do not attempt to cover every error and obscurity but deal only with the more interesting of them.

Ta'i Hwa Wang⁶ Rin-chen dpal-lidan, with single-minded devotion and after washing in scented water, offers this petition.

A humble request to the present Lord of Religion come, self-born, from the West to guide the world.

The fullness of your excellent nature like the all-knowing Heaven is wholly perfected by the experience of countless former lives. Unlimited in the impartial bestowing of divine benefits and blessing,⁷ great in compassionate affection, diffusing religion to all quarters, you have now appeared to the world in bodily form.

In the reign of my ancestor you conferred a boon even to the present time through the teaching of the mystic religion in this eastern country when you came at his invitation to this realm.⁸

My mind has long been humbly devoted to this doctrine and in my thoughts the holy scriptures are of great profundity. In the winter of last year the venerable monk whom you sent, Kwon Ting Ta'i Gvo Sri Bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po, honoured me by presenting gifts, coming here to the palace.

Since your compassionate kindness, Lord of Religion, has ordained that you should be reborn in bodily form I rejoice at the auspicious conjunction that links your destiny and mine. I have now provided presents of gold, silver, sacred images, and ritual vessels, with a principal offering of pearls and monastic robes; and having recently promoted the venerable monk Bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po to the rank of Great Son⁹ (of the Buddha) I send him together with my envoy from here, the eunuch Le'u Yun (Liu Yün) of the zi'-che'-kyen,¹⁰ at the head of some lesser officials;¹¹ also principal officers of this place with their servants;¹² and monks with the rank of gvo-sri, chen-sri, gyo'i, du-gang, and so on,¹³ bearing presents from this distant land with dutiful and pious affection to invite you here
desiring this only, Precious Lord of Religion, that you will show affectionate compassion and for the benefit of living creatures will speedily exert your miraculous powers and travel over the long journey, the hills and the valleys, taking no account of great rivers and the like. Come here I beseech you.

When you are come here it will be like a draught of water when I am thirsty. Be pleased to perform that infinitely miraculous transformation. Do not hesitate but come here and fulfil my wish.

I cannot write in detail of all that is in my mind.15

The fifteenth day of the ninth month of the eleventh year of Ta'i Ming Cing De.

Notes

1. The rnam-thar (fo. 110) quotes the title Gzhu'u-la'i, etc., in a slightly different spelling and apparently from a different source. It translates the title into Tibetan as follows: De-bzhin gshegs-pa rin-po-che chos-kyi rgyal-po nub-phyogs-kyi byams-pa chen-po zhi-ba dbang-phyug-gi sangs-rgyas — "Precious Tathāgata, Religious King, Great Loving One from the West, Buddha of Imperturbable Power." Pell. T., fo. 81, has a similar translation. This shows that the epithets "Precious Essence", etc., here are intended to be a translation of the title. From the Tibetan Grammar of S. C. Das it appears that the title was borne by the Zhwa-nag-pa lamas at least down to the time of the fourteenth incarnation, Rgyal-dbang Theg-mchog rdo-rje (1797–1845). I understand it is not applied to the present (sixteenth) incarnation. Perhaps it ceased to be used after the end of the Chinese empire.

2. It might seem from the Tibetan text that only one dkyil-'khor was made but the rnam-thar mentions at least nine.

3. gnam khang, which is found frequently in the text, is perhaps the translation of a Chinese word. It does not seem to be common in Tibetan but I am told it means "a room for meditation, an upper room".

4. gzim-ther, meaning not clear. Jäschke gives gzim-ter, "lamp", but the reference here seems to be part of the imperial palace.


6. The Chinese has Ta Ch'ing fa-wang, translated as Greatly Rejoicing, or Greatly Blessed, Prince of the Law. This is the religious title assumed by the emperor. The Karma-pa lamas bore the title Ta-pao fa-wang, Very Precious Prince of the Law.

7. The Chinese has here something about expounding the Law in heavenly assemblies. This seems to have dropped out of the Tibetan or the translator had gone astray.

8. The earlier visit must be that of De-bzhin gshegs-pa in 1407, as is shown by mention in the Chinese of the Southern Capital. The emperor Ch'eng-tsu transferred the capital from Nanking to Peking, but this was not done until 1414–20. Wieger (op. cit., p. 1751) states that the monk Ha li ma (Karma-pa) was received at Ling-ku-ssu (Ling-gu-swi), in Nanking.

9. The Tibetan has the obscure phrase 'jal-phrad ka-bas, but the Chinese confirms my translation. ka-bas must stand for dga'-bas, or less probably bkra-bas.
10. The Tibetan is *rgya-sras*. The Chinese has Son of the Buddha, which is a title given to high-ranking monks.

11. *zi’-che’-kyen* represents the office *Ssu-she chien* in the Chinese. The eunuch Liu Yün is named in the *Ming-shih* as leader of the expedition.

12. The Tibetan is *bra-kyi bgo’-byas*, which might conceivably refer to some sort of official dress (*bra* = marmot, *bgo’* = wear). The Chinese gives no help here, but I take the phrase to be a mistake for *phra-kyi mgo’-byas* (*phra* = ordinary *mgo’* = head, leader), which occurs elsewhere in the letter.

13. The Chinese is translated: “together with officials of the capital and retainers.”

14. The words *guo-sri*, etc., represent the monastic titles *Kuo-shih*, *Ch’an-shih*, *Chüeh-i*, and *Tu-kang*.

15. A more literal translation of the closing sentence could be “I have not finished writing all the circumstances in detail”, but the Chinese, as translated by Mr. Lao, reads more graciously — “Faced with the task of writing this letter I am unable to say all I want to say and I hope you will give me your indulgence”.

**Appendix B**

Transliterations of letters, etc., in Tibetan from Chinese emperors to Karma-pa lamas.


   dkon mchog gsum byi byin rlabs kyis bsod nams chen po’i dpal la brten nas rgyal po nyed kyi lung rang-byung rdo rje la gsol ba / bde bar gshegs pa’i bstan pa byang phyogs kyi rgyal po rnams la dar ba ’gyur ba lung bstan pa’i stobs kyis sangs rgyas kyi chos lugs kyang ci rigs pa rtogs par yod ’dug / de rjes nas se chen rgyal pos kyang bla ma dge ba’i bshes gnyur rab tu mang po brten zhing bkur bas sags rgyas kyi bstan pa sa cha ’dir dar byar byas ’dug pa kun la gsal mod / nged kyis kyang bstan pa’i skyong bran legs par byed pa’i ’dod pa dang khyed thos pa mang po dang yon tan khyad par du ’phags shing bzang po du ma dang yang Idan zher ba thos pas mgon po la sogs pa’i gser yig pa rnams khyed len du btang pa yin / gal te khyed snyad gzhan byas nas mi yong bar gyur na / dad pa can gyi sms sun ’byin pa’i nyes pa dang rnal ’byor pa rang gi yul spong ma thub pa’i bag chags sa bon dri nga ba dang gzhon don phyogs med du byed par ’dod pa’i lhag bsam ’jig par ’gyur pa’i skyon dang / bstan pa la ma bsam par ’gyur ba’i sdig pa dang / sms can rnams kyi dka’ thub sdeg bsnal la ji mi snyam pa’i sgrib pa dang nged kyi khrims lugs chen po’i ’jwa’ sa la log pa byas pa’i
sgyo nas nged kyi sems ma rangs par byas pa'i stobs kyis bstan pa byin po la gnod pa byas par mi 'gyur ba e yin debs na nged kyis mgo byas byas sems can thams cad kyi don la bsams nas mgyogs par byon / 'dir phebs nas bstan pa'i bya ba khyed kyi'dod pa dang mthun par sgrub pa yin / lug lo dbyid zla tha chung gi tshes bcu gsum la ta'i tu na yod dus bris /

2. Letter from Toq Temür to Rang-byung rdo-rje dated 1332, quoted in NT, fo. 67. See p. 343 above.

rgyal po'i lung gi / dge ba'i bshes gnyen rang byung rdo rje la gsol ba / nged kyis mgon po mngags nas khyed len du btang ba yin pa la / nged kyi lung la log pa ma byas par yong gi yod zher ba thos pa'i don la / ra dza ta tshe dben dang zam bh'o gnyis mngags nas yi ge rten dang bcas pa bkur yod / sing kun tu ma bzhugs par zla ba gnyis pa'i tshes ni su'i khons su pho brang du slebs par byon / spre'u lo zla ba dang po'i tshes gnyis kyi nyin ta'i tu na yod dus bris /

3. Letter from Toghon Temür to Rang-byung rdo-rje dated 1336, quoted in NT, fo. 69. See p. 343 above.

dkon mchog gsum gyi byin rlabs la brten nas / tha'i hor tha'i tsu nged kyi e ji / chos rje rin po che karma pa'i drung du / na ning bla ma yar byon dus thugs dgongs bzang po'i sgo nas rang re la phan pa'i bya ba bzang po sgrubs nas myur du phyir 'byon par zhal gyis bzes shing / bla ma byon nas lo gnyis song ba la / bla ma gsungs pa'i chos dran cing / bla ma la mos gus dang dad pa yod pa'i don la / sgur yang gdan 'dren gyi gser yig pa btang na 'an / de bar du 'dir nam chags phebs kyi tshigs gsal ma thos pa'i don la / yang bla ma gdan 'dren pa la dge bshes don rin gyi mgo byas gser yig pa mams btang yod pas / ran re la bsams nas bstan pa'i zhabs thog la dgongs te myur du 'byon pa bla ma mkhyen / gal te myur du ma byon par gsun thog tu ma phebs na / dad pa dang ldan pa'i bu slob mams kyi yi chad pa dang / gzhan yangchos la log pa mams kyis thos nas / khong lta bu gsung thog tu ma phebs na gzhan mams gang na bden zer cing bstan pa la gnod pas / gser yig 'di mams sleb pa dang nged la bsams nas bstan pa'i zhabs thog dang sems can gyi don la dgongs nas myur du 'byon pa bla ma mkhyen / yi ge gzhigs pa'i rten / nam bza' cha tshan ma gcig / gser bre chen gcig / mchod pa'i chas bskur bdog / byi lo zla ba dang po'i tshes bcu'i nyin ta'i tu nas bris /
4. Letter from Toghon Temür to Rol-pa’i rdo-rje dated 1356, quoted in NT, fo. 88. See p. 344 above.

tshe ring gnam gyi she mong la bsod nams chen po’i dpal la brten nas rgyal po ned kyi lun / rol pa’i rdo rje la gsol ba / nged kyi mgo byas gdul bya mang po la dgongs te / khyed bod phyogs su skye ba bzhes nas mtshur phu’i dgon par bzhugs zhes thos / de’i don la snar gyi yon tan dang phrin las la bsam nas / sms can man po’i don la ting ju dang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan gyis mgo byas gser yig pa rnamgs gdan ’dren du btang yod pas / da lta snyigs ma’i dus ’dir sdu bnsngal gyis gzir ba’i sms can la dgongs te / ’di phyogs kyi skal pa dang ldan pa’i gdul bya rnamgs la chos kyi bdud rtsis tshim par mdzad pa dang / lam gol lam stor pa’i sms can rnamgs kyi ’dren pa mdzad pa’i don la / rang yul spangs nas sku lus kyi tshigs la mi lta bar myur du ’byon par zhu zhin / yang thub pas gzhlan don du dgongs nas sdu bnsngal dan du bhangs te yul khamgs pa dad du sms can gyi don mdzad pa thugs la gsal mod / sku khamgs kyi ’tsho skyong / chos kyi bshad nyan / bod phyogs rkyang pa la zhen par ma mdzad par / ’di nas mngags pa’i gser yig par der srib pa’i ’thad du nged la bsam nas / ’di phyogs su mjal dus sngas rgyas kyi bstan pa rgya cher ci nus su dar bar byed cing sms can mang po thar lam la ’god pa la dgongs la snyad mi mdzad pa myur du ’byon pa slob dpon chen po rol pa’i rdo rje mkhyen / mchod pa’i chas dan ’jwa’ sa’i rten la gser bre gcig / dngul bre gsum / gos phyin nang dgu tshan gnyis yod / sprel lo zla ba bcu pa’i tshes bcu’i nynin la ta’i tu nas bris pa’i ’jwa’ sa bkra shis par gyur cig /

5. Letter from the emperor Ch’eng-ts’u (Yung-lo) to De-bzhin gshegs-pa quoted in Pell. T., fo. 77. See p. 344 above.

bla ma khyed kyis / de bzhin gshegs pa’i chos zab mo mkhyen pa’i don la nub phyogs kyi sms can thams cad kyi don byed pa kun gyis skyabs su ’gro pa dang gus par sans rgyas ’jig rten du byon pa lta bu’i / khyed thabs shes rab yon tan phrin las mchog gi dngos grub ma thob na de bzhin du sms can thams cad la phan pa rgya chen po ga la ’byung / nged sngar byang phyogs su yod pa’i dus su khyed kyi mtshan bzang po thos nas lan gcig mjal bsam pa’i sms bzhin da lta go sa chen po la bzhugs / yul dbus kyi rgyal khamgs kun bde bar ’dug / yun ring du bsams pa la mun pa bsal ba lta bu drin mnyam pa nyid phan yon thun mong du mdzad dgos / sngar sha’ kya thub pas thugs rjes bzun nas sms can thams cad kyi don byed / thub pa’i chos kyi dngos grub zab mo thob pa’i don la khyed thub pa’i thugs dang gnyis su med par ’dug pas yul dbus ’dir byon
I do not understand the date in the last line. Perhaps something has gone wrong in the copying by Dpa’bo Gtsug-lag. The date of the letter is probably not later than the fourth year of Yung-lo — 1406 — as the visit of De-bzhin gshegs-pa took place at the beginning of the fifth year.

6. The great scroll presented by the emperor Ch’eng-tsu to De-bzhin gshegs-pa. See p. 345 above and Appendix A, no. 1 and Plates 92-4.

The text below is divided into sections, each dealing with one day, which in the original are separated by paintings illustrating the events described. In the copy which the Zhwa-nag lama had made for me the phrases are marked off by a single, double, or triple shad. From photographs it appears that on the scroll itself punctuation signs are very few and that phrases are separated almost entirely by spacing. In the transliteration I have attempted to follow that model and have not used shad to divide the phrases as in the other transliterations. The copy also has several phrases written in red. I cannot recall whether this was so in the original but that seems probable, and I have shown those phrases in italics. There are numerous mistakes in spelling which will be sufficiently obvious without comment. As I have not been able to check them all with the original it is possible that some may be due to the modern copyist; but the work was done under the supervision of the lama himself and, where I have been able to check it, the copying is accurate. It is improbable that copying mistakes are frequent.
ngo mtshar 'ja' sa mthong grol chen mo bzhugs so
ta'i ming rgyal pos gzh'u la'i ta'i ba'u hwa wang ta'i shin tsi tsa'i hu'o dkar ma pa gdan dren rgyal kham gyi ban dhe thams cad kyi gtso bo mdzad nas ling gu swi sde nas cho ga chen po mdzad ya(b) tha'ju rgyal po chen po byams pa'i yum btsun mo
‘jig rten gyi sems can thams cad ‘khor ba ngan song la sgrol ba'i don la yun lo snga pa zla ba gnyis pa'i tshes lnga'i nyin cho ga dbu btsug pa la zhag dang po la sprin ‘ja' kha tog sna lnga bltas na mdzes pa spro bsdu'i rnam pa sna tshogs yid bzhin nor bu'i 'od dang 'dra ba byung yang ring srel mchod rten gyi steng gu 'od zer phro ba zla ba nya gang ba dang 'dra zhing dri ma med pa cung zad g.yo ba byung yang gser gyi'od zer rim pa gnyis shar de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi ngo bo rin po che chos kyi rgyal po byams pa chen po'i dbang phyug kar ma pa'i gzim khang gzh'u la'i ta'i ba'u hwa wang zi then ta'i shin tsi tsa'i hu'o dkyil 'khor bzhengs nas cho ga bsgrub pa'i gnas /
tshes drug gi nyin ‘ja’ sprin lhung bzo gyi rnam pa lta bu nam mkha' gang ba byung yang lho nub phyogs kyi sprin steng du gnsa brtan gyi sku mang po byon re re la yang 'khor mang po rjes su 'bran ba la la ni shin tu gsal ba'i rnam pa la la ni cung zad mi gsal ba byung nas re zhig bar la me tog bab nas la la gang la la ma gang pa yu ba rten pa thams cad shel dkar po 'dra ba steng 'og thams cad la 'phur ba byung yang de'i rjes su ‘ja' kha tog sna de bzhin gshegs pas mdzad pa'i dkyil 'khor lha khang steng du shar de nas re zhig tsam na sprin gyi nang na gnsa brtan bcu lhag tsam lhung bzod dang mkhal sil bsnam pa la la zha gon pa lag na rnga yab 'dzin pa
sprin gyi nang na 'gro 'ong mdzad pa byung /
tshes bdun gi nyin nam mkha' la bdud rtsi kha tog mar dkar lta bu dri zim pa ro mnar ba bab yang re sig rtsam na kha tog sna tshogs pa'i sprin gyi nang du gser gyi ldong po lta bu'i yal ga la me tog shel lta bu 'od zer 'phro ba dang bcas pa shin tu gsal ba byung /
tshes brgyad kyi nyin kha tog lnga'i 'od zer lho nub kyi mtshams nas byang sar 'tshams su slebs pa me tog namkha' la 'phur nas gar byed phyogs kun tu bdud rtsi bab de bzhin gshegs pa rin po che'i gnam khang steng du 'od zer kha tog lnga shar bar snang la stong du son /
tshes dg'u'i nyin yang lha'i me tog dang bdud rtsi bab yang nam mkha bar snang la bya bres dang rgyal mtshan dang 'phan la swogs pa du ma snang ba yang 'ja' 'od kha tog sna lnga de
bzhiṅ gshegs pa'i gnam khang steng nas shad nas nam mkha' la song /

_tshes bcu'i nyin_ bdud rtsi'i char bab dri zim pa ro mngar ba sbranch rtsi 'dra yang 'od zer kha tog lnga nam mkha' la thad sor stong du song mchod rten gyi steng du ring srel gsum shar ba la zla ba'i 'od zer kyi rin po che la 'phros pa lta bu dper na ngyi ma'i 'od zer rgya mšho'i rlab la 'phros pa dang 'dra 'od kyi gong bu gsum mchod rten gyi steng dang 'og tu gyo zhing 'khor ba 'od zer 'phros pa phyogs bcu kun tu khyab cing yang dgra bcom pa dpag tu med pa nam mkha'la byon pa mi mang pos mthong ba'i rjes la ban dhe bcu lhag tsam mgho la 'bog char khrar lag na mkhar sil bzung nas srang la 'gro ba mthong mi mams kyi dris pa _nged ling gu svi sde la_ gro zar 'gro zer srang gi mis mthong ba smin ma ring dpral ba yangs pa shin tu mdzes pa the tsom skyes ste ci 'dra yin brtag pa'i ched du phyi nas 'brangs nas song sgo mo cher slebs pa dang gar song ma mthong /

_bcu geig gi nyin_ sprin 'ja' kha tog sna lnga shar zhing lha'i me tog kyang 'khor nas ba bdu'd rtshelf me tog shags pa'i sdong po la gser gyi me tog pad ma 'dab stong 'dra bar 'bril pa rang bzhin gyi sin tu mdzes pa de bzhin gshegs pa dkyil 'khor gyi steng ngas 'od zer kha tog sna lnga 'phro ba /

_bcu gnyis kyi nyin_ lha'i me tog che chung dong rtshelf tsam lha khang gi steng na nam mkha' gang ba khyab cing 'khor nas bab de'i nub mo lha'i dбу'i steng na 'od zer dmar po 'ja' ltar 'bril pa shin tu gsal shing kun du khyab pa yang 'od zer kha tog lnga de bzhin gshegs pa dkyil 'khor gyi steng du shar ba mchod rten gyes steng na ring srel rdog po cigm nyi ma shar ba dang 'dra steng 'og kun du 'phro zhing rtsa shing thams cad de'i 'od kyi gsal byung re sig na yang de dra gsal ba byung /

_bcu gsum nyin_ shes rab kyi 'od zer gnyis byung cig bang so la zug cig pho brang la zug yang 'od kor sna lnga yang dkyil 'khor gyi lha khang la 'khor ba yang de bzhin gshegs pa bzhugs pa'i rin po che'i gnam khang la shar ba dali dus mnyam du me tog gi char yang bab cing gong ma'i gzim ther la bskor nas bab ngyi ma dros ka la dge ltas kyi lha kha byung de'i nub mo rin po che'i 'od mchod rten gyi khang pa'i steng du 'phros pa'i 'od kyi nang na mchod rten gyi gzugs shin tu gsal ba cig byung ban dhe rkang rjen pa skye gzugs gzhan dang mi 'dra ba bin po hrul po gon pa lag pa g.yon pa ben po'i mthu ba bzung ba g.yas pas lham bzung ba 'gro na 'phur ba dang 'dra ci 'dra yin brtag pa'i ched du phyi bzhin 'brangs nas btašs kyang lha khang gi mdun du slebs pa dang gar song ma shes gar btsal kyang ma rnyed re shig tsam la sprin gyi nang na bzhugs pa mthong /
bcu bzhi nyin  khyung sngon po dang bas ho’o nam mkha’ la 'phur nas 'khor gin gar byed  kha tog sna Inga sprin 'ja' nyi ma la bskor ba re shig tsam na yang sprin 'ja' gyes shing 'khor gin lha khang la bskor ba yang re shig tsam na gser gyi 'od zer cig shar nas tha sor nam mkha’ la song yang 'od zer dmar po cig 'phros nas yun ring bar la ma yal de'i nub mo yang 'od zer kha tog sna Inga'i nang na dkyil 'khor gyi mam pa shar yang byang chub sms dpa'i gzug brnyen bcu lhag tsam shar nub la 'gro on byed pa mthong 'phan shing bzhi'i rtse la gser gyi 'od shar /

bcu Inga'i nyin  kha tog sna Inga'i 'od zer de bzhin gshogs pa'i lha khang steng du shar yang de bzhin gshogs pa bzhugs pa'i rin po che gnam khang steng du yang shar re shig tsam na me tog pad ma bzhin du dum bu dum bu shin tu gsal ba byung yun ring cig lon pa dang yang 'od zer kha tog sna Inga 'gyur zhung shar yang bkra shis kyi sprin gyi nang na drang srong gser mdog can cig yang bas ho’o nam mkha' la 'phur zhung 'khor nas gar byed re shig tsam na de bzhin gshogs pa'i rin po che gnam khang steng na 'od zer dkar po cig shar nas shar phyogs su song de'i nub mo mchod rten dang lha khang steng du rgyal chen gyi khang pa'i steng du thams cad la 'ja' 'od shar yang 'od kor gnyis gcig la cig 'phros pa byung /

bcu drug gi nyin  mchod rten gyi lha khang dang de bzhin gshogs pa bzhugs pa'i rin po che gnam khang dang gnyis kyi steng du 'od zer kha tog sna Inga shar yang sprin 'ja' shar lha'i me tog nam mkha' gang ba bab bang so dang pho brang gang ba bab /

bcu bdun gi nyin  rin po che mchod rten gyi steng du 'od zer kha tog sna Inga dpag med 'phros nas dkyil 'khor gyi lha khang steng tshun chad du khyab par byung de'i nub mo 'phan shing gi steng du mi gnyis langs pa mthong ba'i rjes la yang lho nub na bkra shes pa'i sprin 'ja' mang po byung ba'i steng na ban dhe gnyis langs steg gus pas thal mo sbyar ba mthong yang sprin chung ba cig gi steng na ban dhe cig thal mo sbyar nas gnyis po'i rjes su song ba mthong thams cad lha khang gi phyogs su 'ongs te mar babs nas phyir yar song skad cig la ma mthong yang lho nub kyi 'tshams su 'od zer kha tog sna Inga gsum byung nas dkyil 'khor gyi lha khang gi steng du byang shar nas song yang 'od zer dkar po cig shar gyi thad sor shar de bzhin gshogs pa bzhugs pa'i rin po che gnam khang steng du yang 'od zer kha tog sna Inga shar /

bcu bryad cho ga rdzogs pa'i nyin  khyung sngon po bas ho’o tshan pa tshan pa 'phur nas gar byed pa dang me tog gi char bab pa byung phyogs thams cad nas sprin 'ja' kha tog sna tshogs
pa dge ltas kyi rten 'bril mang po mu tig gi rdog po lta bu'i bdud rtsi mang po bab rten 'bril bzang po'i rlung 'jig rten pa'i lha dpag med 'tshogs pa mang po mthong ba rnam byung sprin 'ja' 'brug 'dra ba khyung 'dra ba seng ge 'dra ba glang po che 'dra ba rin po che mchod rten 'dra ba de'i nub mo sgo'i phyi log na yod pa'i 'phan shing ring po'i steng na lha'i mar me gnyis shin tu dmar ba 'od gzhan dang mi 'dra ba phyogs bcur gsal ba'i nang na seng ge sngon po dang glang po che dkar po la bcibs pa'i lha rin po che rgyan dang ldan pa 'od kyi bar snang thag ring sor bltas pa'i gsal ba mthong de nas re shig na mchod rten gyi steng du reng srel lta bu'i 'od kyi gong bu shin tu gsal ba shar ba byung lha'i mar me dang 'dres slar yang 'od chen por gyur lha'i rol mo sgra snyan sna tshogs pa khang pa dang dkyil 'khor gyi sa gzi gyo ba tsam byung dkyil 'khor gyi khang pa'i nang du yod pa rnam kyi nyan pa sgra de yang nam mkha' la yod pa tshor bar snang la yang ring du byung ba sogs yun ring po ma lon par dkyil 'khor thams cad gser gyi zhing kham su 'gyur ro /

zla ba gsum pa'i tshes gsum gi nyin bstad cing mtshan gsol ba gzh'u la'i ta'i ba'u hwa wang zin then ta'i shen tsi tsa'i hu'o de'i nyin par 'jig rten gyi ban dhe khri tsho gnyis lhag tsam la dro drangs ling gu sde nas 'ja' 'od zer kha tog sna lnga nub phyogs su byung nas shar phyogs su slebs 'od zer zam pa dang 'dra ring ba gnam dang 'dra yang kha tog lnga'i sprin 'ja' shar 'od rab tu gsal ba sprul pa rigs mi 'dra ba 'gul ba lha'i me tog rim pa bab yang sprin dmar gyi 'ja' 'od mchod rten bkab de bzhin gshegs pa'i rin po che'i gnam khang bkab nam khang gi steng na 'od zer kha tog sna lnga rim pa gsum shar bzhugs na 'od zer dkar po cig shar gser gyi 'od rim pa gsum shar /

tshe bzhi'i nyin de bzhin gshegs pa pho brang nang byon nas skyil nging la de'i nyin par 'ja' 'od sngon po dkar po rim pa lnga shar yang 'od zer kha tog lnga de bzhin gshegs pa'i gnam khang g-yogs rin po che'i gnam khang steng na 'od zer dkar po gnyis shar yang 'od zer kha tog lnga mchod rten gyi lha khang la 'phros yang bas ho'o gnyis steng nas 'phur gin gar byed /

tshes lnga'i nyin gong ma'i rgyal bcas ling gu sde la dro 'dren pa 'gro ba dang de'i nyin par 'od zer kha tog sna lnga shar yang sprin 'ja' kha tog sna lnga'i 'od zer shar gser gyi 'od zer shar nyi ma'i 'og na 'phros pa shin tu gsal de bzhin gshegs pa'i rin po che'i gnam khang steng na 'od zer lnga shar lha khang la 'phros pa shin tu gsal ba /

tshes bcu gsum gi nyin de bzhin gshegs pa ri bo rtse lnga la 'jam dbyangs gi gnas bskor ba 'byon pa'i nyin leng gu sde nas
The scroll is mentioned in the history of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag (vol. Pa, fos 77-82) and in the Karma-pa rnam-thar. In the former there is a long account of De-bzhin gshegs-pa’s visit complete with details of his reception by the emperor, the ceremonial, entertainments, presents, and so on; there is also a summary of the miracles. Much of the information is additional to that contained in the scroll and is presumably drawn from the Rnam-thar chen-mo at Mtshur-phu. The passages are too long to quote and I shall only transliterate, below, a few sentences from each work which relate to the scroll itself.

Pell. T., fo. 81b:

... ngo mtshar mtha’ yas pa byung ba mams nyin so so’i ling tse bkod /
... bod rgya yu gur sogs yig rigs du ma’i zhal yig dang bcas pa dar yug chen po gcig gi dkyus tsam pa’i ngo mtshar ‘ja’ sa zhes gsi thang yug dril du ma da lta yod par lta /
From the last sentence it appears that there was a copy of the scroll at Sgar-chen. For this name see p. 353 above. It is unlikely that more than one copy would be made of so large and elaborate a document and the reference here is probably to Mtshur-phu.

ta'i ming cing de'i lo bcu cig zla dgu bca' lnga nyin /

There are many straightforward misspellings to which I need do no more than draw attention, e.g. 'jigs-brtan for 'jig-rten; rnying-rje for snying-rje; lug for lugs; rgun for dgun; pho-rang for pho-brang; sled for sleb; zhab-srtog; sngag for mngag; sdu-'phrul for rdzu-'phrul.

The rnam-thar (fo. 151b) has a short paraphrase of this letter as follows:

tha'i can gser yig pa gdan 'dren du byun / 'jwa' shar / nyi ma nub phyogs na lha ran byon chos rje'i drun du lus spos chus bkrus / pus mos la btsugs nas zhu ba / nged karma pa snin nas 'dod pa la skom pa chu 'dod pa ltar / khyed dang nga las 'phro yod pas / la chen chu chen rnam 'ju 'prul gyis byon shog /

This inadequate paraphrase need not throw doubt on the general accuracy of the other letters quoted in the rnam-thar, which are mostly of greater length and include the date of writing. They have, I think, the appearance of genuine copies.

Some points have been mentioned in notes on the translation in Appendix A and a few more may be noted here.

Notes

1. The Tibetan would appear to mean that the monks' robes were ornamented with pearls (mo-dig + mu-tig), but that is manifestly improbable and the Chinese text shows that the pearls and the robes were separate offerings.
2. brtse-cig is probably a mistake for rtsi-cig.
3. cig-kyang is perhaps a mistake for cis-kyang, meaning "somehow or other"; but in the absence of clear guidance from the Chinese I have translated what is written.
4. min-mdze-pa may be a mistake for min-(pa)-'dzin-pa or min-mdzad-pa. The meaning "taking no account of" appears from the Chinese text.
5. rgyun-ntshan I take to be a mistake for rgyu-ntshan.

Appendix C

Four Incarnation Lineages of the Karma Bka'-brgyud

Note: The lists have kindly been emended by Mr E. Gene Smith in the light of sources discovered since this article first appeared. Where sources disagree he has chosen those dates that appeared more reliable. Some stand at variance with those supplied in Nik Douglas and Meryl White, Karmapa: The Black Hat Lama of Tibet (London: Luzac, 1976). However, we have relied on this work for details on the later Zhwa-dmar incarnations. Dates for several of the Gnas-nang Dpa'-bo incarnations remain problematic. (Ed.)
(A) Zhwa-nag Karma-pa

1. Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa  1110–1193
2. Karma Pakshi          1206–1283
3. Rang-byung rdo-rje   1284–1339
4. Rol-pa’i rdo-rje     1340–1383
5. De-bzhin gshegs-pa   1384–1415
6. Mthong-ba don-ltan   1416–1453
7. Chos-grags rgya-mtsho 1454–1506
8. Mi-bskyod rdo-rje    1507–1554
9. Dbang-phyug rdo-rje  1556–1603
10. Chos-dbyings rdo-rje 1604–1674
11. Ye-shes rdo-rje     1675–1702
12. Byang-chub rdo-rje  1703–1732
13. Bdud-’dul rdo-rje   1734–1798
14. Theg-mchog rdo-rje  1799–1869
15. Mkha’-khyab rdo-rje 1871–1922
17. Disputed

(B) Zhwa-dmar Karma-pa

1. Grags-pa seng-ge      1283–1349
2. Mkha’-spyod dbang-po  1350–1405
3. Chos-dpal ye-shes     1406–1452
4. Chos-grags ye-shes    1453–1524
5. Dkon-mchog yan-lag    1525–1583
   alias Dkon-mchog-’bangs
6. Chos-kyi dbang-phyug   1584–1630
7. Ye-shes snying-po     1631–1694
8. Dpal-chen chos-kyi don-grub 1695–1732
9. Dkon-mchog dge-ba’i ’byung-gnas 1733–1740
10. Chos-grub rgya-mtsho 1741–1791
   interval of 101 years
12. ’Phrin-las kun-khyab  1948–1950
13. Chos-kyi blo-gros     1952–

(C) Si-tu (or Ta’i-si-tu)

1. Chos-kyi rgyal-mtshanI  1377–1448
2. Bkra-shis rnam-rgyal   1450–1497
3. Bkra-shis dpal-’byor    1498–1541
4. Mi-’khrugs chos-kyi go-cha 1542–1585
5. Chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan II 1586–1632
   interval of 26 years
6. Mi-pham phrin-las rab-brtan 1658–1682
7. Legs-bshad smra-ba’i nyi-ma 1683–1698
8. Chos-kyi ’byung-gnas 1699/1700–1774
9. Padma nyin-byed dbang-po 1775–1854
10. Padma kun-bzang 1854–1885
11. Padma dbang-mchog rgyal-po 1886–1953
12. Padma don-yod nyin-byed 1954–

(D) Gnas-nang Dpa’-bo

1. Chos-dbang lhun-grub 1440–1503
2. Gtsug-lag ’phreng-ba 1504–1566
3. Gtsug-lag rgya-mtsho 1568–1630
4. Kun-tu bzang-po 1633–?
5. ’Phrin-las rgya-mtsho 1650–1699
6. Gtsug-lag chos-kyi don-grub 1701–?1718
7. Gtsug-lag dga’-ba 1718–1781
8. Gtsug-lag chos-rgyal ?–?
9. Gtsug-lag nyin-byed ?–
10. Gtsug-lag smra-ba’i dbang-phyug 1912–?
A Tibetan Antiquarian in the Eighteenth Century

It is a commonplace that Tibetan historians after the re-establishment of Buddhism in central Tibet in the tenth century gave little space to events before that time which did not have an obvious religious significance. Nevertheless, several of them can be seen to have had some acquaintance with the early inscriptions, which existed in front of their eyes, and with records in monastery archives. For example, 'Gos Lo-tsâ-ba, the author of the careful and invaluable Blue Annals, quotes the fifth and sixth lines of the inscription on the east face of the Lhasa Treaty pillar of 821/2 (vol. nya, fo. 108a). He also states (vol. ga, fo. 40b) that he has seen a letter on blue silk recording the grant of property to Myang Ting-ngo-'dzin bzang-po, but he makes no mention of two inscriptions on stone pillars at Zhwa'i Lha-khang which still survive as witness of the fact.

The Lhasa Treaty Inscription was also known to the author of the Rgyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long who picks out words and phrases as though from a hazy and inaccurate recollection of its contents (fo. 92a) and recommends his readers to study the inscription if they want fuller information.

The comparatively recent discovery in the Chos-'byung of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba (1565) of an exception to this sketchy approach to ancient documents was, therefore, a welcome event. A manuscript copy of this work was lent to me at Lhasa in 1947; and it appears that Giuseppe Tucci saw a printed copy on his visit to Tibet at about the same time. After widespread enquiry I succeeded in locating the blocks at the Lha-lung monastery in Lho-brag and it was possible to arrange for a number of copies to be printed, some of which were sent to scholars in Europe. At that time the book was known to few Tibetans at Lhasa, probably because it had been mentioned unfavourably by the fifth Dalai Lama, who may have been

inspired in part by the fact that the Karma-pa school, to which Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag belonged, had been his principal opponents when, with the support of Gusri Khan, he had invaded Tibet and defeated the Gtsang king in 1642. In fact, where he criticizes Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag, it is the Dalai Lama who appears to be mistaken; but his disapproval was enough to remove the work from the libraries of the Lhasa intelligentsia.

In that history is found, for the first time, the careful quotation of a complete eighth-century inscription — that at Bsam-yas. The author mentions the inscribed pillars at Zhwa'i Lha-khang (fo. 108). There is also a passing reference to the Lhasa Treaty pillar and short quotations from its east face (ja, fo. 132). In addition to this evidence of familiarity with ancient inscriptions there is the unique contribution of what appears to be verbatim quotation from the archives of some monastery, probably Bsam-yas, of two edicts of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan and one of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan. These remarkable documents are authenticated by the survival on a stone pillar near Lhasa of an inscription recording an edict which is clearly the counterpart of the edict of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan. The inscription published by me in JRASB 1949 has been examined more fully by Giuseppe Tucci in his edition of it in Tombs of the Tibetan Kings, Rome, 1950.

Much of the other material in this history has the appearance of being drawn from ancient sources but it cannot be so clearly linked to its originals as can be the passage mentioned above.

From the foregoing examples it can be seen that Tibetan scholars had acquaintance, in differing degrees, with ancient documents, although the fact that detailed references rarely found their way into the surviving histories suggests that such documents were not regarded as of prime importance. It was, therefore, an unexpected thrill to be presented not long ago, through the kindness of Athing Densapa of Barmiak, with a photograph of a collection of copies of early inscriptions which had recently come into his possession. These were stated to be the personal papers of the Kah-thog lama, Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu, who lived in the eighteenth century, and they show that at the time of the Age of Reason in Europe and the scholarly researches of Sir William Jones in India, there was a lama in Tibet who had taken pains to collect and to annotate the text of many important inscriptions of the eighth and ninth centuries.

One of these inscriptions was hitherto unknown because the lettering on the pillar which contained it had become illegible through time. It dates from the reign of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan and has now been edited by me in JRAS 1964. The other inscriptions are: that at the tomb of Khri Lde-srong-brtsan at 'Phyong-rgyas, which has been published by Tucci in Tombs of the Tibetan Kings; the inscription from Rkong-po published by me in JRAS 1954; the so-called Skar-cung inscription published by me in JRASB 1949 and by Tucci in Tombs of the Tibetan Kings; and two of the four inscriptions on the
Lhasa Treaty Pillar which are known from the editions of Li Fang-kuei, Hisashi Sato and myself.

Missing are what is probably the oldest of such documents — that from the Zhol rdo-rings at Lhasa (c. 764), which does not appear to be mentioned by any historian, although the conquest of the Chinese capital which is described there is known to them. Perhaps the tradition that this pillar was erected by a lay minister who was hostile to Buddhism led to it being ignored. Other inscriptions missing from the collection are those at Zhwa'i Lha-khang and at Mtshur-phu, both of which relate to Buddhist foundations.

What is in the collection is, nevertheless, of great importance especially when it is seen that some of the material which the lama acquired in the eighteenth century may have been either originals or, more likely, copies made as much as 250 years before his lifetime. This appears from a note at the end of his copy of the Lhasa Treaty Inscriptions to the effect that the copy was made in a water-tiger year 599 years after the water-hare year in which the pillar was set up. That is known to have been 823. It may be necessary to allow for a confusion in Tibetan chronology which has affected much of their dating from that period by the apparent omission of a cycle of sixty years; but, even so, the date of the copies is put firmly in the fifteenth century. Further, a note, perhaps made by the lama himself, on the copy of the Rkong-po inscription indicates that when the text was checked on the spot with the original, about six and a half lines of the inscription were buried under sand. His copy was, therefore, taken some time before it came into his possession.

I am gradually making new editions of the inscriptions in the light of the lama’s texts. Although comparison with photographs, etc., showing the state of the inscriptions as they were some twenty years ago, discloses many inaccuracies in the lama’s copies, these are largely orthographic and his contribution provides much new information of real value. It is not my intention to discuss that aspect here; but I should like to attempt a short sketch of the lama’s life in the hope that others with better sources at their disposal may be inclined to enlarge upon it. In a recent article “Nouveaux documents tibétains sur le Mi-ñag/Si-hia” in Mélanges de sinologie offerts à Paul Demiéville, Paris, 1966, R.A. Stein mentions two biographies of Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu which he saw at Gangtok. I have not had access to those works and have drawn only on the Rin-chen gter-mdzod and on verbal and written information from the present Kah-thog Dbon Sprul-sku and the Saka-pa lama, Sde-gzhung Rin-po-che.

Tshe-dbang nor-bu was born in 1698 in the Sa-ngan region of east Tibet and was soon recognized as the reincarnation of one Grub-dbang Padma nor-bu who carried on the spiritual line of Gnubs Nam-mkha’i snying-po, a teacher at the time of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan. The boy was ordained by the
Rgyal-sras Rin-po-che of Kah-thog, the famous Rnying-ma-pa monastery some forty miles south-east of Sde-dge, founded in 1099 by Bla-ma dam-pa De-gshegs and which takes its name from a hill, on the slopes of which the monastery lies, bearing near its summit marks resembling the letter kah. Tshe-dbang nor-bu studied with the leading Rnying-ma-pa teachers and also with those of the Karma-pa with whom Kah-thog had a close connection. One of his contemporaries and friends was Karma-pa Si-tu Chos-kyi byung-gnas, a famous eighteenth-century scholar; and, later, Tshe-dbang nor-bu became the tutor of the thirteenth Karma-pa Zhwa-nag incarnation, Bdud-'dul rdo-rje.

From Khams he went to central Tibet where he received instruction in the Jo-nang-pa doctrines. Among the skills he developed was that of gter-ston, discoverer of religious texts and objects believed to have been concealed in the remote past. He travelled widely and his activities included the founding or repairing of monasteries in western Tibet and in Sikkim, and the repair of mchod-rten (stūpas) in Nepal. He was greatly revered by the Pho-lha Bsod-nams stobs-rgyas, the ruler of Tibet; and in 1751/2 when trouble arose between the princes of upper and lower Ladakh and there was danger of interference by the Dzungar masters of Kashgaria, Pho-lha and the seventh Dalai Lama commissioned him to restore peace. That incident was referred to recently by the Chinese government in their frontier dispute with India as evidence that Ladakh was at that time under the authority of Lhasa. In spite of complimentary remarks in Tibetan sources, it seems that his efforts did not bear lasting fruit. From Ladakh he went to Nepal and not long after, in about 1755, he died at Skyid-grong, where there is a mchod-rten containing his relics.

The lama is brought vividly to life by a passage in the biography of the 'Brug-pa lama Yon-tan mtha'-yas which shows his active personal interest in verifying his antiquarian material. Yon-tan mtha'-yas describes how when he was at Lhasa about 1744 he met Kah-thog Rig-'dzin chen-po Tshe-dbang nor-bu sitting by the rdo-ring outside the gtsug-lag-khang and reading the inscription on it. A copy of that inscription is, as mentioned above, included in the collection now in Athing Densapa of Barmiak's possession and it may well be that the notes and correction on it were being made at that very time by the lama himself.
The Dalai Lamas

From the sixteenth century onwards a handful of foreign missionaries, travellers and scholars acquired some knowledge of the life and religion of Tibet, but it was the Younghusband expedition of 1904 which presented the British public with the idea of the Dalai Lama as the mysterious god-king of Tibet, embodying a line of spiritual predecessors vaguely envisaged as stretching back into the mists of history.

In fact, rule by Dalai Lamas, although the outcome of many centuries of interplay between religion and politics, came about only in 1642. The vicissitudes of the lamas and their school of religious teaching both before and after that date illustrate the Tibetan genius for acceptance and adaptation.

The origin of the Dalai Lamas is linked with the growth of the Dge-lugs-pa religious school whose founder Blo-bzang grags-pa, known as Tsong-kha-pa, lived from 1357 to 1419. Like Padmasambhava, the eighth-century originator of the older doctrines known as Rnying-ma-pa, Tsong-kha-pa is regarded as a second Buddha and is not believed to take direct reincarnation in this world. The fervour and depth of his religious teaching and his insistence on a return to strict monastic discipline, coming as a breath of new life in a world where political rivalry between the already existing great monastic sects must have wearied and distressed many ordinary laymen, attracted large numbers of disciples and lay supporters especially in the region near Lhasa.

Tsong-kha-pa himself founded a secluded monastery at Dga’-ldan about thirty miles up river from Lhasa; and in his lifetime two of his disciples, ’Jam-dbyangs chos-rje and Byams-chen chos-rje, founded, respectively, the monasteries of ’Bras-spungs (1416) and Se-ra (1419) near Lhasa.

Shortly before his death in 1419 Tsong-kha-pa entrusted the care of his monastery of Dga’-ldan to his senior disciple, the Rgyal-tshab rin-po-che Dar-ma rin-chen, who was then fifty-five years old, and when Dar-ma rin-chen

died in 1432 he was succeeded by another of Tsong-kha-pa’s favourite disciples, Mkhas-grub-rje, after whose death in 1438 there followed a long line of elderly monks, chosen for their learning, who continued as Khri-thog-pa — holders of the throne of Tsong-kha-pa — down to the present day.

The Khri-thog-pa enjoyed the prestige of heirs to the master’s monastery and teachings but in those early days they were primus inter pares among the surviving disciples of Tsong-kha-pa, and the abbots of ‘Bras-spungs and Se-ra were also great figures in their own right. Byams-chen chos-rje of Se-ra had been closely associated with the master by whom he had been sent, as his representative, to the court of China. He visited the emperor once more after the master’s death, and died about 1427 on his way back to Tibet. He was succeeded by another monk, once a disciple of Tsong-kha-pa, who lived until 1447. The founder of ‘Bras-spungs lived on as its abbot until 1450.

Although there was a common feeling of unity between these several centres, no one for some time after the death of Mkhas-grub-rje appears to have been regarded as the head and spokesman for the whole body of the followers of Tsong-kha-pa, who became known as the Ri-bo Dga’-Idan-pa, Bka’-gdams Gsar-pa or Dge-lugs-pa. Eventually, as the senior disciples died or grew old a younger one came to the front and, by his energy, set the sect on the path to influence and power. This was Dge-‘dun-grub, whose family came originally from the same eastern land as Tsong-kha-pa. He was born in Gtsang in 1391 and became a monk at the monastery of Snar-thang, a foundation of the Bka’-gdams-pa school which had greatly influenced Tsong-kha-pa. In 1410 he went at the age of eighteen to central Tibet where he was received by Tsong-kha-pa. Thereafter the next twenty years of his life were spent mostly in central Tibet, with shorter periods in Gtsang, studying with many famous religious teachers of the day. In 1447 he went back to Gtsang and, having won the support of a local noble, he founded his own monastery at Bkra-shis-lhun-po on the borders of the lords of Rin-spungs who adhered to the powerful Karma-pa sect. As yet the Rin-spungs princes had not acquired the dominance which they attained later, and the extension of the Dge-lugs-pa activity does not appear to have been opposed.

The eminent position of Dge-‘dun grub in the Dge-lugs-pa church is attested by the invitation to him to assume the throne of Dga’-Idan on the death of the Khri-thog-pa from Zha-lu in 1450. He declined this honour and remained to complete his own monastery, which took until 1453. The most vigorous of the surviving disciples of Tsong-kha-pa, he was accepted as the spokesman and leading scholar among the Dge-lugs-pa until his death at the age of eighty-four in 1475.

Soon after that a child, also of a family originating in the A-mdo region of north-east Tibet, was born near Bkra-shis-lhun-po who was later given the name Dge-‘dun rgya-mtsho and came to be regarded as the reincarnation of Dge-‘dun-grub.
It has been suggested by some writers that the idea of having a succession of reincarnating lamas as head of a religious sect was the creation of the Dge-lugs-pa. This is mistaken and gives a misleading picture of the conditions in which the new sects came into being. The country was already under the influence of well-established religious schools in which the system of a reincarnating hierarchy in different forms had been accepted. There was a variety of experiments in the administration and perpetuation of religious sects for the Dge-lugs-pa to study. Although they had adopted much of the Bka’-gdams-pa doctrine, they could see the lesson that the Bka’-gdams-pa, without either powerful lay patrons or one single lama who could be regarded as a focus for the loyalty of their supporters, had failed to attract a great following or to achieve worldly success. On the other hand, the Sa-skya-pa, who had won the greatest possible patrons in the Mongol emperors of China, had based the continuity of their hierarchy on descent by birth. All descendants of the ruling lama were held to be reincarnations of some holy predecessor; and the complications of this system had already become obvious in the internal rivalry resulting from the production of more holy personages than there were sees for them to fill. Then there were the Bka’-brgyud-pa sects with several distinct forms of succession. In the Phag-mo-gru-pa, headship was transmitted from uncle to nephew, the child of a lay brother of the ruling lama being the new supreme lama-designate. Here too family dissensions were a source of weakness. In other branches, notably the Karma-pa, the principle had been established for some two centuries that the reincarnation of their great lamas was discovered in a child born soon after the death of the predecessor. When the Dge-lugs-pa were building up their church it was the Karma-pa who were the most successful and dominant religious body in Tibet and it is possible that the lesson was noted by Dge-'dun-grub and his associates for adoption at a suitable moment.

Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho was not immediately recognised as the re-embodiment of Dge-'dun-grub. It was not until he was twelve that he was received into Bkra-shis-lhun-po and took his preliminary vows. The name, Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho, which was then given to him may suggest that he was being identified with Dge-'dun-grub but he does not seem to have been readily accepted as head of the latter’s monastery, for at the age of eighteen he went to 'Bras-spungs. According to the Grub-mtha' shel-gyi me-long this was due to the jealousy of the then abbot of Bkra-shis-lhun-po. He arrived in central Tibet at a time when the growing hostility of the older sects against the progress of the Dge-lugs-pa and their lay patrons made 'Bras-spungs an uneasy residence for an active man. In 1489 the Dge-lugs-pa had even been excluded by force from the celebration of the Great Prayer Ceremony which their founder had initiated. It is also recorded that the Karma-pa built monasteries of their own just opposite 'Bras-spungs and Se-ra in order to
overawe them. Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho soon set out to learn and to teach in less troubled places, and in 1506 he founded a monastery at Chos-'khor-rgyal in Rkong-po. Here, too, religious rivals — this time the 'Bri-khung-pa — made trouble, which sent him on his travels again, including a visit to Gtsang where in 1512 he was enthroned as abbot of Bkra-shis-lhun-po. In 1517 a reversal of fortune enabled him to return to 'Bras-spungs and to be enthroned as abbot there with the support of the head of the Phag-mo-gru-pa — the titular but not effective ruler of Tibet — which also enabled him to restore the participation of the Dge-lugs-pa in the Great Prayer Ceremony. In 1525 he was installed as abbot of Se-ra also, thus demonstrating clearly that he was regarded as leader of the whole Dge-lugs-pa body.

Whether or not Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho was recognised in his lifetime as the reincarnation of Dge-'dun-grub, pious historians attribute to him the promise, towards the end of his life, that he would return in the body of a young monk. The way was thus prepared for the next step in the growth of the hierarchy. A child born not long after the death of Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho was speedily recognised as his reincarnation, accepted as a monk in 'Bras-spungs, and given the name Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho. At the age of nine, having taken ordination, he was installed on the throne of 'Bras-spungs. From then on the practice of finding an infant reincarnation of the Dge-lugs-pa hierarch was firmly established. Practical considerations made it desirable not only to provide followers of the new church with a rallying point for their devotion but also — at least in those early days — to discover the child in circumstances where influential support against its rivals could be expected. At all events, the reincarnation of Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho was found in the family of a noble and official of Stod-lung not far from 'Bras-spungs. In his earliest years the child won the interest of a neighbouring lama, Drung-gnas Gsung-rab rgya-mtsho, and soon the abbot of 'Bras-spungs, Bsod-nams grags-pa, became his teacher and champion.

The child was enthroned at 'Bras-spungs and a little later, at the age of thirteen, he was formally installed at Se-ra also, but the bitter hostility of rival sects made it necessary for him to spend much of his time at Chos-'khor-rgyal whence, like its founder, his predecessor Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho, he travelled widely in places where the favourable influence of the Phag-mo-gru-pa prevailed. In this way he spread the renown of the Dge-lugs-pa sect whose teaching of moral reform and monastic discipline was still inspired by a refreshing earnestness.

If in adopting the practice of a reincarnating hierarch the Dge-lugs-pa had taken a leaf out of the book of the successful Karma-pa, their next step forward revived the example of the Sa-skya-pa whose alliance with the Mongol emperors of China had made them for some eighty years virtually rulers of Tibet. The Dge-lugs-pa, too, found foreign support and found it in Mongolia. The fame of the young lama had reached even into that
country and, after careful preparation of the ground by his religious associates, Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho accepted an invitation from the leading Tumed Mongol prince, Altan Khan, and in 1578 went to visit him at his capital near the Kokonor. There in a spectacular demonstration of religious enthusiasm, the Khan loaded the young lama with presents and bestowed on him the title *Dalai Lama Vajradhara* ("Ocean-like Lama, Holder of the Thunderbolt"). In return, Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho named the Khan *Chos-kyi rgyal-po lha'i tshangs-pa* ("King of religion, Brahma among Gods"). This was the beginning of the line of Dalai Lamas, although pious retrospection conferred the title on the two predecessors of Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho, who had been known by the title 'Bras-spungs chos-rje, so that Dge-'dun grub became the first and Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho the second Dalai Lama. More important than titles was the practical support of a powerful prince. It is true that Altan was not an emperor of China but only the chief among the tribal princes of Mongolia. Nevertheless, he could offer the lama a virtually untouched and enthusiastically receptive mission field where he could win with little opposition a great number of followers and, incidentally, a great deal of wealth. The Khan may also have been seen by the Dge-lugs-pa as a possible champion against their rivals in Tibet, but although Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho kept up contact with his monasteries in central Tibet, to which he sent much of his wealth, he never returned there. His fame reached China and he was contemplating a visit to the emperor when he died in 1588 at the age of forty-five.

Whether or not the lama saw a potential political ally in the Mongols, it would be naive to suppose that Altan expected nothing but spiritual advantages from his alliance with the Dge-lugs-pa church. In reviving the old relationship of "patron and priest" the Mongols could hardly forget that the Sa-skya-pa had ruled Tibet, and had done so as viceroy of a Mongol overlord. Such ideas were still in the realm of daydreams when Altan died in 1585. His son, though lacking something of his father's vigour and prestige, continued his father's zeal for the Dge-lugs-pa and his interest in the affairs of Tibet. That interest was given very obvious form by the discovery of the successor to Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho in one of the Mongol Khan's sons, who was recognised as Dalai Lama and given the name Yon-tan rgya-mtsho. The Tumed Mongols thus acquired a proprietary right in the Dge-lugs-pa church and it was, perhaps, disconcerting to many of the Dge-lugs-pa as well as alarming to their opponents when the Mongols proceeded to exercise that right by intervention in Tibet itself.

Even if, by a simplification of the position, the Dge-lugs-pa can be regarded as hitherto struggling for the right to propagate their own teaching, they now found themselves deeply involved in politics when their new Mongol Dalai Lama was brought to Lhasa by his relations and their fierce armed guards. The princes of Gtsang had now succeeded to those of
Rin-spungs as rulers of Tibet; and they and their religious allies, the Karma-pa, were at the height of their wealth and influence. It was not long before violence broke out between them and the dangerous newcomers; and they soon found themselves under serious pressure. On one occasion the Gtsang forces were saved only by the intervention of the abbot of Bkra-shis-lhun-po, the Pan-chen Chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan (who later came to be regarded as the first of a line of reincarnating Panchen Lamas similar to the line of Dalai Lamas).

Perhaps some of the Dge-lugs-pa leaders and their lay supporters remembered the history of earlier inroads by Mongol armies and the civil strife that followed. They may have felt reservations about their Mongol champions; but the process could not now be halted. The fourth Dalai Lama, it is true, died young. He may have been poisoned in order to remove an embarrassing foreign connection, as was suggested by the Russian Buriat explorer Tsybikov at the beginning of this century. His successor Blo-bzang bskal-bzang rgya-mtsho was prudently discovered at 'Phyong-rgyas in central Tibet, in a family which must have been of considerable local importance for the child was sought by the Karma-pa also as one of their incarnate lamas. The spearhead of Mongol interest was thus removed and the collapse of Tumed authority in the endemic fratricidal rivalries of the Mongol tribes appeared still further to have averted danger. Hegemony in Mongolia was wrested from the Tumed by a Qoshot leader, Gusri Khan, and leadership thus passed from the direct line of Chingiz Khan to that of comparative outsiders. The new leader, nevertheless, was far from giving up the interest of his predecessors in Tibet. Gusri Khan was able, energetic and pious. The Qoshots had been devoted followers of the Dge-lugs-pa since their conversion by emissaries of the third Dalai Lama. Gusri himself is said to have visited and been impressed by the young fifth Dalai Lama in his own youth, and having assumed the leadership of the Tumed he saw himself also as heir to their religious link with the Dge-lugs-pa hierarch. His sympathy was stimulated by an active and ambitious adviser of the Dalai Lama.

In the minority of several Dalai Lamas there have been some persons of influence who acted as tutors and who made policy in the name and with the prestige of the sacred child. Some of these are unknown to us, but Bsod-nams chos-'phel, the éminence grise of the fifth Dalai Lama, is a figure of considerable stature in Tibetan records and traditions. Ambitious and domineering, he concerted with Gusri the invasion of Tibet and the attack on the Gtsang king. The Dalai Lama himself and his elderly religious instructor, the Pan-chen Chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan, are said to have hesitated and to have advised restraint, but that is perhaps, a later, pious gloss to excuse the introduction of foreign troops into the affairs of Tibetan religion.
Gusri had some difficulty in defeating the Gtsang king and later faced continued resistance from the supporters of the Karma-pa sect in Rkong-po; but when calm was restored he established the Dalai Lama as spiritual ruler of Tibet with Bsod-nams chos-'phel as regent to conduct the day-to-day tasks of administration, and himself in the background as titular "King of Tibet and Protector of the Faith". The mystique of patron and priest, originating between the Mongols and the Sa-skya-pa and revived between Altan Khan and the Dalai Lama Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho, was once more called into being. Gusri, although a formidable soldier, could not bring to the position of patron either the prestige or power of the Yuan emperors of China or the Genghizide Khan, Altan, but with him the patron became resident in Tibet rather than merely being represented there. Gusri remained head of the Qosot tribes of Kokonor but appears to have established himself in Tibet, spending the summer in the hunting grounds of the north and the winter in Lhasa.

In Gusri the Tibetans acquired a foreign king who was, surprisingly, willing to help rather than eager to dominate them. It is a matter for speculation how much this is to be attributed to the diplomatic skill of the Tibetans, how much to the national tastes of the Mongols who still preferred the nomadic to the settled life, and how much to the character of Gusri himself. The man whose energy and leadership had won him a kingdom and made him the predominant figure in the border regions between Tibet and China is hardly to be seen as the rather simple puppet of persuasive Tibetan lamas, and it seems impossible to question that his behaviour was influenced by a remarkable intensity of pious altruism. Had the Tumed relations of the fourth Dalai Lama found themselves masters of Tibet they would probably not have refrained from active interference in all aspects of Tibetan affairs. As it was, Gusri's troops and advice were at hand, until his death in 1655, to ensure in collaboration with Bsod-nams chos-'phel that the authority of the Dalai Lama was effectively extended over a wider and more unified Tibetan kingdom than had been enjoyed by any of his predecessors since the ninth century.

Although his early years were, to some extent, overshadowed by the ability of Gusri and of Bsod-nams chos-'phel (who retired in 1660), the Dalai Lama Blo-bzang bskal-bzang rgya-mtsho emerges as a personality genuinely deserving the epithet of "The Great Fifth" by which he came to be known. The assertion of his supremacy, though pressing rather hard at first on the Karma-pa who had been his most stubborn opponents, was not carried to vindictive lengths and came to be accepted before long. His sympathy with the Rnying-ma-pa school, to which his family had adhered, is still remembered; and the Sa-skya-pa suffered little in the new dispensation. A systematic organisation of both religious and civil administration greatly strengthened the authority of the central government and reduced
the influence of the lay nobility. A vigorous, though not always successful, policy towards neighbouring states further increased the prestige of the government at Lhasa, which was enhanced by measures to demonstrate the continuity of the new regime with the religious rule of the great kings of the seventh to ninth centuries. Court ceremonial and pageantry, the building of the magnificent palace on the Potala hill underlined that theme; and the cult of the Dalai Lama as the embodiment of 'Phags-pa Spyan-ras-gzigs (Avalokiteśvara) was, perhaps, developed at this time.

When Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho died in 1680 the Dge-lugs-pa church had become in effect the government of Tibet and it was faced with one of its recurring problems — how to tide over the long minority of a ruling lama. This first test came at a crucial moment in the internal and external affairs of the country. Already a new regent, Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, had established a position of authority as the Dalai Lama who trusted him implicitly grew old. His determination to maintain the new greatness and influence of Tibet led him into conflict with the emperor K'ang-hsi, one of the great figures of the Ch'ing dynasty whose Asian policy was aimed at asserting a dominant position over the neighbouring Mongol tribes. Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, rather incautiously, looked for friends among the remnant of Ming opposition to the Manchu dynasty in Yunnan, and, more dangerously among the Dzungar Mongols whose vigorous and impetuous leader, Galdan Khan, was K'ang-hsi's principal rival in Asia. In order to preclude any outside power from taking advantage of the interregnum, he concealed the death of the Dalai Lama and while pretending that the lama was in religious retreat, he discovered the new incarnation with the help of the Panchen Lama and had him educated secretly for his future duties. It was not strictly incumbent on the regent to inform the Chinese emperor of the death of a Dalai Lama — there was no relationship of subordinacy at this time — but it was a diplomatic discourtesy and perhaps unnecessarily secretive. It was certainly interpreted as an insult by the emperor when he came to hear of it in 1697, just when he had defeated Galdan and had been led to believe that Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho had been actively in collusion with his enemies. The new Dalai Lama, Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho, was now publicly enthroned and the immediate crisis passed. But another danger nearer home soon made itself known. Since the death of Gusri his successors had hitherto taken virtually no interest in Tibetan affairs, but in 1697 the office of King was seized by the Qoshot Lha-bzang Khan who was determined to assert his position as an effective force in the government of Tibet. His natural rival was Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho; and as the Dzungar Mongols were traditional enemies of the Qoshot, Lha-bzang equally naturally looked to the emperor for help.

By a great mischance, the child chosen by Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho turned out to be quite unsuitable for the post he was to fill — brilliant and
lively but more interested in worldly than spiritual pursuits. He was, in short, a lover and a poet; and his behaviour played into the hands of Lha-bzang. Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho chose to surrender his religious vows and to live as a lay ruler. This, surprisingly, did nothing to lose him the devotion of the mass of his monk and lay followers. The system had already taken such deep root that the Dalai Lama could do no wrong. How Lha-bzang succeeded in ousting and killing Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho can be read elsewhere. Next, not fully appreciating the depth of Tibetan conviction and nationalism in such matters, he proceeded, with the support of the emperor, to depose Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho, arrest him and despatch him to China. The monks of 'Bras-spungs and Se-ra rose furiously in his defence and rescued him from Lha-bzang’s troops. In this crisis the young lama showed courage and strength by giving himself up and accepting exile in order to avoid a hopeless battle and the massacre of his monks. On the way to the borders of China he died (1706). Susicion, of course, pointed at the Chinese but the death was probably natural, though the emperor did not enhance his reputation by ordering the dead body to be dishonoured.

Lha-bzang had, no doubt, been moved by some degree of pious indignation at the young Dalai Lama’s behaviour and, having removed him, he arranged for a monk born at about the right time to be discovered as the rightful reincarnation and enthroned as the sixth Dalai Lama in place of Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho, who was treated as having been chosen in error. The Tibetans instantly and indignantly repudiated this new lama and soon were excited by news of the discovery in eastern Tibet of the reincarnation of Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho, which confirmed a prophecy by the lama himself in one of his charming songs: “White crane, lend me your wings. / I shall not go far, / Only a visit to Li-thang, / Then I’ll come back again.”

Lha-bzang’s position, already made difficult by popular feeling against him, was suddenly threatened by the intervention of the Dzungars with whom disgruntled clerics in Lhasa had been intriguing. The Dzungar Khan, professing to act for the Tibetan faith and the new Dalai Lama, sent a swift raiding party across the great distances to the Kokonor in an attempt to get possession of the child. But the emperor who had been watching events from the sidelines had moved even more swiftly and secured the prize for himself. Another Dzungar party rushed on Lhasa where Lha-bzang, now ageing and dissolute but still courageous, was overwhelmed by a mixture of treachery and surprise. His defeat and death were no sorrow to the mass of Tibetans but they were disappointed that the Dzungars had not brought the new Dalai Lama with them. Disappointment turned to horror and disgust when their deliverers set about a narrow and harsh religious purge combined with entirely irreligious violence and pillage. Eyes turned to
China where the emperor, fearing the acquisition of influence at Lhasa and so in the Buddhist world of Central Asia by his principal enemies, rapidly decided on a military campaign under the colour of avenging Lha-bzang, protecting the Tibetans and restoring the Dalai Lama. After an initial defeat the Manchu troops reached Lhasa in 1720. The Dzungars had fled, avoiding a further engagement, and the emperor’s troops were received with joy because they brought with them the longed-for Dalai Lama. The child, Bskal-bzang rgya-mtsho, was duly enthroned. The Chinese professed to regard him as the sixth Dalai Lama, ignoring both Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho and Lha-bzang’s insignificant puppet, but to the Tibetans he is the seventh, and in due course the Chinese slipped into acceptance of this numeration. K’ang-hsi, with shrewd opportunism, converted the welcome acceptance of his expedition to Lhasa into a protectorate over Tibet, thus establishing Chinese supremacy there, with resident representatives, known as ambans, for the first time in history.

The dominant authority of the Dalai Lama which had been established by the Great Fifth and, to some extent, that of the Dge-lugs-pa church now suffered an eclipse, not so much from the shadow of the emperor as from the revival of the influence of the lay nobles who had taken a leading part in the struggle against the Dzungars. There seems, also, to have been no outstanding churchman at this period and the position of the young Dalai Lama was compromised by the crude political intrigues of his father. Interference by relations of a young Dalai Lama in internal affairs had been adumbrated in the time of the fourth Dalai Lama and was to appear in different degrees at different times. The system of “chance-discovered” reincarnations was a safeguard against the rise of a ruling dynasty in Tibet and it was reinforced by a convention that, while granting property, honours and titles to the family of a Dalai Lama, excluded them tacitly from administrative posts during the lama’s lifetime. Nevertheless, a determined person could now and then make a considerable nuisance of himself. Bskal-bzang rgya-mtsho’s father was a man of enormous stature with an equal gusto for life and for power and intrigue; but he met his match in the great lay noble Pho-lha Bsod-nams stobs-rgyas who, having emerged triumphantly from the years of intrigue and civil war which followed the establishment of the Chinese protectorate, ruled Tibet calmly and wisely for nearly twenty years. He accepted the inevitability of Chinese interest in Tibet and discovered how to use it to the best advantage of his country.

The breach between Pho-lha and the Dalai Lama’s father led to the latter and his son being banished for more than ten years. In spite of his responsibility for that action, Pho-lha by sheer strength of character, ability and calm diplomatic skill, succeeded in keeping the support, if not the enthusiastic confidence of the Dge-lugs-pa church. In 1741 the peace of Tibet was so well assured that it was possible to allow the Dalai Lama to return;
but he remained in the background and came forward to take personal
control of affairs only in 1750 in the tumult that followed the murder of
Pho-lha's wild and tyrannical son and successor, 'Gyur-med rnam-rgyal,
and the killing of the Chinese envoys who had perpetrated the murder. For
the last seven years of his life Bskal-bzang rgya-mtsho proved a compe-
tent ruler, thus vindicating the system by which reincarnations were chosen
and the training bestowed on its chosen vessel.

The excesses of Pho-lha's son had discredited the idea of lay rule and
had swung the balance finally back to the church, which now grasped
firmly the responsibilities and rewards of government. That did not mean
a revival of the active authority of the Dalai Lama. For about a century and
a half and during the lifetimes of five Dalai Lamas a series of regents drawn
from the Dge-lugs-pa church dominated the administration. Of the five
Dalai Lamas only the eighth, 'Jam-dpal rgya-mtsho, lived for more than
twenty years and, although he was invested with ruling powers, his retir-
ing nature led him to avoid active participation in public affairs. When he
did take part — during the Gurkha war of 1792 — he was not impressive;
and he too had relations — two brothers — whose meddling in politics was
troublesome and disreputable. Of the remaining four — Lung-rto gs rgya-
mtsho (1806-1815), Tshul-khrims rgya-mtsho (1816-1837), Mkhas-grub
rgya-mtsho (1838-1856) and 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho (1865-1878) — the last
two were formally invested with ruling powers which they held briefly and
inconspicuously. For the rest, it lay with the regents to conduct the admin-
istration and regulate relations between Tibet and the Chinese.

The duties of the ambans — the Chinese representatives at Lhasa —
was to keep watch on Tibetan affairs and seek to guide them along chan-
nels favourable to Chinese interests. Their actual influence was, with a few
brief exceptions, much less than the imperial court made it out to be. Pho-
lha in his long reign had politely dominated them; the regents were
generally men of learning, devotion and ability — though sometimes also
ambitious and fond of power, and they usually found little difficulty in
having their way. The ambans were often of indifferent quality, having been
posted to Lhasa as a punishment for corruption or incompetence. After
1792, when the emperor suspected that much of the trouble leading to the
Gurkha war had been caused by the discovery of reincarnating lamas in
influential families, it became theoretically one of the tasks of the ambans
to see that the names of suitable candidates should be drawn haphazard
from a golden vase which the emperor presented for the purpose. In prac-
tice that arrangement was rarely followed and when it was, the
circumstances suggest that the Tibetans had taken care to ensure that the
name on which they had already decided came first out of the vase. In
the make-believe world surrounding much of the relationship of the Ch'ing
dynasty with its "tributaries", face would be adequately preserved if the
vase were merely seen or if it were mentioned in the despatches of the ambans. So long as there was no open conflict with Chinese interests, power inside Tibet lay with the regents.

Although in the period of rule by regents, the Dalai Lamas were little more than names, they continued to enjoy the fervent devotion of the Tibetan people, and in their short lives, if one can judge from the occasional evidence of foreign travellers, they responded to the demands of their position with a calm, assured and unselfconscious air of sanctity and authority and with a kindly dignity far beyond their years. The encounters between European visitors and grand lamas of Tibet are fascinating reading. Unfortunately d'Orville and Grueber, who might have given us an eye-witness account of the Great Fifth declined to seek an audience because, as Christian priests, they were unwilling to conform to the necessary ceremonial of obeisance to this Buddhist "deity". The Jesuit and Capuchin missionaries at Lhasa in the early eighteenth century were received quite often by the seventh Dalai Lama, and although they have left no detailed descriptions of his person, his behaviour and the devotion showered on him by his people moved the scholarly and sympathetic Father Desideri to conclude that these remarkable and impressive phenomena were not the result of fraud and so the devil must be responsible for this rather disconcerting manifestation of sanctity and faith. The tender mystery surrounding these child lamas is seen first through the eyes of Captain Samuel Turner, the Indian government's envoy to the Panchen Lama in 1783. He was undisturbed by the theological problem which puzzled Desideri, and his account of his reception by the infant fourth Panchen Lama, then less than two years old, is worth quoting:

The little creature looked steadfastly towards me, with the appearance of much attention while I spoke, and nodded with repeated but slow movements of the head, as though he understood and approved every word, but could not utter a reply. ... His whole attention was directed to us, he was silent and sedate never once looking towards his parents, as if under their influence at the time, and with whatsoever pains, his manners may have been so correctly formed, I must own that his behaviour, on this occasion, appeared perfectly natural and spontaneous, and not directed by any external action, or sign of authority. ... Teshoo [Panchen] Lama was at this time eighteen months old. Though he was unable to speak a word, he made the most expressive signs, and conducted himself with astonishing dignity and decorum.

More emotional was the effect on the eccentric traveller Thomas Manning who reached Lhasa in 1812 and was received by the ninth Dalai Lama, Lung-rtogs rgya-mtsho. He writes:
The lama’s beautiful and interesting face engrossed almost all my attention. He was at that time about seven years old, had the simple unaffected manners of a well-educated princely child. His face was, I thought, affectingly beautiful. He was of a gay and cheerful disposition; his beautiful mouth perpetually unbending into a graceful smile which illuminated his whole countenance. ... I was extremely affected by this interview with the lama. I could have wept through strangeness of sensation.

And in a note elsewhere: “This day I saluted the Grand Lama! Beautiful youth. Face poetically affecting; could have wept. Very happy to have seen him and his blessed smile. Hope often to see him again.”

In recent times, Sir Basil Gould writing of the present Dalai Lama and his enthronement at the age of five, writes:

Again a main impression produced was the extraordinary interest of the child in the proceedings, his presence, and his infallible skill in doing the right thing to the right person at the right time. He was perhaps the only person amongst many hundreds who never fidgeted and whose attention never wavered.

The sense of reverent wonder, to which I too can testify, is evident in those accounts; and it may seem surprising that in spite of that mystique, which affects all Tibetans even more profoundly, there should have been rumours that the ninth and tenth and perhaps also the eighth Dalai Lamas were removed by acts of murder. The story is relayed by the abbé Huc who had it from Chinese sources during his visit to Lhasa in 1845. There is no doubt that in the previous year the regent had been deposed on charges of oppressive behaviour. It appears, also, that the commission which enquired into his behaviour led the Chinese emperor to consider that the very suspicious circumstances in which the tenth Dalai Lama died made the complicity of the regent highly probable. But the additional accusation, in abbé Huc’s account, that the regent was responsible for the deaths of two other Dalai Lamas is quite untenable. He was only about twelve years old when the eighth Dalai Lama died and did not take office until four years after the death of the ninth. The report that he was guilty of the death of the tenth Dalai Lama does not appear to be mentioned in Tibetan records and is not referred to in the recent history by Tsepon Shakabpa. Nevertheless, it may be suspected that there was some fire to account for the smoke, and the circumstances in which the thirteenth Dalai Lama succeeded in surviving alleged conspiracy against his life suggest that it was not impossible that a regent should seek to prolong his authority by unscrupulous means.
The eleventh and twelfth Dalai Lamas made little or no mark. Both were sickly, and the enclosed life and exhausting training which great lamas have to undergo may have hastened their end.

The thirteenth Dalai Lama, Thub-bstan rgya-mtsho, who was born in 1875, was invested with ruling powers at the age of twenty. The delay in this ceremony, which ought to have taken place when the lama was eighteen, raises some suspicion against the regent, the De-mo Rin-po-che, who then had to retire from active life but arranged to leave his brother in the post of chief minister. In 1899 both of them and other members of their family were accused of plotting against the life of the Dalai Lama and were subjected to various severe punishments. Having overcome this crisis, the Dalai Lama proved himself a forceful, autocratic and somewhat quick-tempered personality. He found himself involved, quite young and lacking experience, in the fringes of Anglo-Russian rivalry and suspicion in Central Asia. The Young-husband expedition of 1904 drove him into reluctant and uneasy refuge in China; and subsequent Chinese revival in Tibet sent him into exile once more — this time in India where he found hospitality and friendly treatment, especially from Sir Charles Bell, the officer responsible for looking after him. In his travels outside Tibet he imbibed many new ideas and on his longed-for return to Lhasa in 1913, when the Chinese revolution rid Tibet of foreign domination, he sought to introduce some of them into his country. He did not lack courage, determination and a basically well-intentioned commonsense, but with all respect to the assessment of his character and qualities by his friend Sir Charles Bell in his Portrait of the Dalai Lama, he cannot be held to have shown consistently sound judgement despite certain elements of greatness. In a sense he fell between two stools. It was not his fault that at a critical time in the fortunes of his country the government of India failed to fulfil his hopes of help in building up the independence of Tibet in some sort of secure relationship with the outside world. On the other hand, his attempts at innovation in internal affairs came up against the suspicion of change of any sort which is deeply rooted in the Tibetan monastic mind. He made himself master of the church and the whole people to a degree not equalled by any predecessor since the Great Fifth, but he came to learn that a Dalai Lama, although leader, is also the creation of the Dge-lugs-pa church and that he cannot safely progress faster than the heavy drag of its conservatism will allow. Although he succeeded to some extent in widening the outlook of his government upon the rest of the world, frustration of his larger hopes in both external and internal policies led him in later years to resign himself to the Tibetan tempo, and his autocratic isolation from his government at large caused him to rely, rather uncritically, on one favourite adviser at a time.

Even if he did not succeed in all his aims, the thirteenth Dalai Lama decisively reversed the balance of power which had lain so long with the regents; and the effect of his awe-inspiring autocracy was discernible for
many years after his death in 1933 when spokesmen of the Tibetan government, faced with decisions, preferred to temporise rather than risk being called to account by the future reincarnation for some action contrary to his policy in his previous life.

The fourteenth Dalai Lama, Bstan-'dzin rgya-mtsho, born in 1935 not far from the birthplace of Tsong-kha-pa, grew up into a world of trouble. From the day of his arrival at Lhasa in 1940 his unaffected self-possession, dignity and intelligence were impressively evident. He developed rapidly a breadth of learning, an intellectual curiosity and an air of quiet authority which suggested that, had he been allowed to rule, he would have brought about a great advance in the affairs of Tibet. There was some trouble over the regency during his minority, but that was a manifestation of the endemic family rivalries in ruling circles and in no way affected the position of the Dalai Lama. Indeed, when the whirlwind of the Chinese communist invasion fell on Tibet in 1950 he was hastily invested with ruling powers although he was then only fifteen. In dealing with the Chinese occupiers of his country between 1951 and 1959 he showed an undemonstrative but determined resolution and when after the violent uprising at Lhasa in 1959, which he did his best to avert, he came as a refugee to India with many tens of thousands of his people he immediately impressed those who met him by his penetrating intellect and his complete lack of anger against his enemies, whom he regards with Buddhist compassion as misguided victims of wrong ideas. Since then he has met many foreigners who can testify to his easy friendly manner which, nevertheless, does not invite familiarity, by his penetrating thoughtfulness and by the calm, poised awareness which the Tibetan lama cultivates until it becomes second nature. Recently he has been able to leave the seclusion of the Indian Himalayas for visits to Buddhist countries of Asia which have no doubt given him a still wider and more practical outlook on world affairs.

It is not easy to speculate on the future of the system of Dalai Lamas. The present lama is young and in good health; and there is a considerable Tibetan population in India which could in due course — which it may be hoped will not be for a very long time — produce a reincarnation. It is, however, a little disconcerting for the western reader to see in the Dalai Lama’s own book the suggestion that in a future constitution for Tibet the Dalai Lama might be subject to deprivation of his powers by due judicial process. The Tibetan mind has a genius for adapting itself to changing circumstances but it would seem to a non-Tibetan that if a Dalai Lama is to be dependent in any degree on men’s judgement rather than their faith, the idea of reincarnation might just as well be eliminated and Tibetans could substitute any monk or lama for their ruler. That is a new idea, running counter to history, which has not been touched upon in this study. It may suffice to say for the moment that whenever there have been suggestions
of treating a Panchen Lama as a substitute for the Dalai Lama they have met with rejection by the mass of the Tibetan people. That, however, is a subject for a separate study. The present contribution has, perhaps, outlined the very varied circumstances in which the idea of a Dalai Lama was put into effect and how, although all were accepted as endowed with charisma, greatness depended on the character and personality of a few.
A Ch’ing Missive to Tibet

The document reproduced below was given me at Lhasa in 1946. It is a letter in Tibetan, dated the 21st year of Chia-ch’ing (1816), from the Chinese Grand Council to the ambans at Lhasa for communication to the Tibetan authorities and is concerned principally with a complicated passage in relations between Nepal and the British in India.

The letter is written on a sheet of fine paper some 34 inches in length by eight and a half inches wide, coloured yellow on the front and reinforced at the top and bottom by four-inch strips of yellow silk with a pattern of five-clawed dragons and clouds, between which it folds to fit into an envelope of the same silk-covered paper. The letter bears no official seal but the envelope seems to have been fastened originally with some sort of adhesive sealing. The outer fold of the letter and the envelope are both inscribed bka’-yig.

The writing is a neat variety of dbu-med with hints of the decorative-ness of ‘bru-tsa. This script and the form of the letter differ from those of Tibetan official correspondence, which is written on a comparatively small central area of a large sheet of paper, some two and a half feet square, in a characteristic “secretariat” calligraphy distinguished by long, beautifully flowing, down strokes and vowel signs.

I. Text

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ողջունում ձեռքիների համար ամբողջության մեջ ներկայացված տարբեր մետակառուցական ու տեխնիկական տեղեկատվություն կարևոր է հաճախ կարող են լինել միայն մարդկային գործընթացների համար: Այս դեպքերում կարժանան մարդկային բազմազանության համար ուշադրություն են առաջարկներ: Նախապատրաստված է դասակարգված և խմբավորված է մի քանի բոլոր կարևորությունների համար: Այս ժամանակաշրջանում անբաժանելի է կարևոր դասակարգվածությունը և խմբավորվածությունը, որոնք կարևոր են լինում մարդկային բազմազանության համար.
II. Transcription

cun ci blon chen nas bod sdod blon chen shis ko gnyis la yi ge btang don bca' chin (2) khri bzhugs nyer gcig pa'i zla 7 tshes 21 nyin bka' spyi phebs su zal 'phrung a can nas (3) gser snyan sgron don du pan chen er ti ni dang de mo ho thog thu can nas gor sha dang phe (4) reng bzlos1 gzhi 'jam chags byung bar dga' tshor skyes pa'i bkrin gsab phyir bkris pa'i kha (5) btags re dang 'sku brnyan rmying ma re bcas 'bul brgyud2 yod pa zhes zhu don dngos po rams (6) rtsis len bgyis pa dang shis ming dang ko hri khad can nas pan chen er ti ni dang (7) de mo ho thog thu bcas la bka' bsgyur gton rgyu'i don rdor3 gor sha dang phe reng gnyis (8) sa mtshams phyi'i mi rigs bzlos brtsod la stod phyogs la gzing shigs byung dogs nged (9) nas lcang 'jun blon chen dpon dmag dang bcas sa mtshams bsrumgs bsdems3 su mnags (10) sjon5 bgyis par song gshis kha po yul gru gnyis nas 'jigs gzir ma thegs pa'i nyes (11) pa ngos blangs zhus pa 'di thad gong ma yab mes ka'u tsung zhun hong til' sku dus bal bu dang (12) gor sha brtsod skabs kyang gzi6 ma thegs 'dug pa ma zad nged nas kyang dpon dmag (13) mnags sjon bgyis par kha pa can 'jigs skrag skyes de bka' bzhin zhus pa bcas des (14) na de dag rams gong ma yab re de nyid kyi thugs rje kha na bcas bkrin gsab phyir du ser mo (15) ba rams nas yul gru kun bde 'jags yong ba'i chos spyod la 'bad brtson bgyis dgos (16) pa dang zur du kha btags che ba gcig sbe a shis ser po'i bzlaz 'phreng gcig g.yangti'i (17) dkar po'i sna dam gcig g.yangti sprin ris kyi yol go gcig rgya khug sbod sjar7 ser pos (18) byas pa che ba cha gcig dang chung ba cha bzhin bcas bskur yod pa pan chen er ti nir rtsis (19) sprod dgos pa dang yang kha btags che ba gcig bu rdi rtsi'i bzlaz 'phreng gcig g.yangti (20) dkar po'i sna dam gcig g.yangti sprin ris y ol go gcig rgya khug sbod sjar ser pos (21) byas pa che ba cha gcig dang chung ba cha bzhin bcas bskur yod pa de mo ho thog thur sprod (22) dgos pa dang de mtshungs rje btns dam pa ho thog thu'i sprul skur dogs gnas yod pa (23) da lta khyi'u8 gnyis rtsas9 yod 'dug pa snar lam chos 'don thog ming byang bum nang du dkrugs (24) pa'i gtan 'khel byung btns gser snyan su sgron dgos rgyur nges pa gwis zhes spyi phebs (25) byung ba bka' don bzhin gnas tshul du bskur.
III. Translation

The subject of this letter from the great minister of the Grand Council to Shis and Ko, the great ministers resident in Tibet:

According to the supreme order dated the 21st day of the seventh month of the 21st year of the reign of Bca-chin (Chia-ch’ing) with reference to the report to the throne by Zal-phrung-a and his colleague, acknowledgement is made of the submission to the effect that the Pan-chen Er-ti-ni and the De-mo Ho-thog-thu each offers a scarf of felicitation and an antique image in gratitude for their pleasure at the pacification of the strife between the Gor-ṣa and the Phe-reng. The purport of the orders to be communicated by Shis-ming and Ko-hri-khad to the Pan-chen Er-ti-ni and the De-mo Hutuktu is, in short:

“Apprehending that there might be strife and disturbance in the region of Stod on account of hostility between the Gor-ṣa and the Phe-reng, both being people from beyond the frontier, I commissioned a great general together with officers and an army to protect and secure the frontier. In consequence, the people of both countries, being unable to endure their acute fear, made submission acknowledging their offence. In just the same way, in the time of my late father the emperor Ka’u-tsung Zhun Hong-til’ when the Bal-buzo and Gor-ṣa made war they were unable to endure their terror; even so when I too despatched a general and an army the people could not bear our splendour and they submitted to our commands. And so, since all was entirely due to the grace of my late father, in order to show gratitude for such kindness the lamas should make a particular effort in the performance of religious services for the peace and prosperity of their country.

“And I have sent separately a large scarf, a string of prayer-beads of yellow sbe-a-shis, a white jade snuff bottle, a cloud-patterned jade cup, a large pair of Chinese bags with yellow tassels and four smaller pairs, to be respectfully presented to the Pan-chen Er-ti-ni; and a large scarf, a string of bu-dhi-rtsi prayer-beads, a white jade snuff bottle, a cloud-patterned jade cup, a large pair of Chinese bags with yellow tassels, and four smaller pairs, to be presented to the De-mo Ho-thog-thu.

“And further, now that two boys have been born who are thought possibly to be the reincarnation of the Rje-btsun dam-pa Ho-thog-thu, you must make sure that after customary prayers, slips bearing the names shall be shaken in the vase and the precise result reported in a petition to the throne.”

This instruction is sent in accordance with the terms of the supreme order.

IV

The events with which the Grand Council’s despatch is principally concerned are mentioned by Alistair Lamb in Britain and Chinese Central Asia,
London, 1960 (pp. 39-48) and by J. Pemble in *The Invasion of Nepal*, Oxford, 1971 (pp. 342-4). Still more recently, in *Nepal, a Strategy for Survival*, Berkeley, California, 1971 (pp. 75-95), it has been examined by Leo Rose, whose lucid and authoritative account throws fresh light on the affair by drawing extensively on Nepalese sources. For the summary that follows I have consulted the above-named works and also the East India Company’s records in the India Office Library.

The Chinese established a connexion with Nepal in 1792 when the famous expedition of Fu-k’ang-an, by way of Tibet and across the Himalaya to within a few miles of Kathmandu, inflicted punishment on the Gorkha for their rapacious incursions as far as Shigatse.

The British in India were drawn marginally into those events. Since 1760 they had been more or less warily seeking to resolve the conflict between the expansion northwards of the ambitions and influence of the East India Company and the southward drive of the ebullient Gorkha kingdom. The threat from Fu-k’ang-an’s army scared the Gorkhas into appealing for help to the British whom they had previously kept at arm’s length. The governor-general, Lord Cornwallis, to whom the Tibetans had also appealed, took the opportunity to conclude a commercial treaty with Nepal; but anxiety to avoid Chinese hostility and consideration for the recent, tenuous relationship between the Company and Tibet restricted his intervention to an offer of mediation, which came too late to be of any use. So, the Gorkhas, after a humiliating reverse, had to acknowledge themselves as tributaries of the Chinese emperor. In practice that meant little beyond sending a mission to their distant suzerain every five years and avoiding any further trouble with Tibet. It did not prevent them following up the agreement of 1792 with the British by another treaty in 1801. That was merely an expedient forced on them by a domestic dilemma. It did nothing to remove the underlying hostility and was never fully honoured. After its termination in 1804 increasingly bitter competition for disputed border areas culminated in 1814 in a British invasion of Nepal.

The Nepalese promptly and repeatedly appealed to China, representing the British threat to themselves as aimed ultimately at Tibet. Leo Rose’s account shows that the Chinese had no intention of being drawn into the quarrels of their nominal vassal and made it clear that they did not even care if the Nepalese submitted to British rule provided there was no foreign intrusion into Tibet. The governor-general, Lord Moira, who had no inkling of so unsympathetic an attitude on the part of the Chinese, was apprehensive that they would be seriously disturbed by the fate of their tributary. He, therefore, made arrangements, late in 1815, to inform the ambans at Lhasa of his intentions towards Nepal. Before any answer was received the treaty of Segauli in March 1816 ended a year and a half of muddled and incompetent campaigning in Nepal.
Soon after that a vague communication from the ambans suggested that they were indifferent to what the British might do in Nepal and that it was not worth bringing to the notice of the emperor. Nevertheless, the emperor had been informed and, although determined not to be led into a dangerous and expensive adventure on behalf of the Nepalese, he was sufficiently concerned to send a general with a small force into Tibet to find out what was going on across the border. The general was Sai-ch'ung-a, the Zal’phrung-a of our document, who was, as Luciano Petech has kindly informed me, a well-known Manchu official of the day.

En route to Tibet Sai-ch’ung-a learned that the war between the Nepalese and the British was over; but when he reached Lhasa, in May 1816, he wrote to the governor-general enquiring about his actions which, he thought, must have been misrepresented by the Nepalese. A suitable reply was sent from India in due course.

To the Nepalese Sai-ch’ung-a sent a stern reprimand, threatening them with severe punishment if they had lied, assuring them that they would get no help from China, and summoning them to send a delegation to offer an apology and to resume payment of tribute.

The Nepalese, smarting under the imposition of a British representative at Kathmandu by the treaty of Segauli, did their utmost to turn events to their advantage and to secure his removal. Their tactics were to mislead the Chinese about British intentions and the British about those of the Chinese who, they said, were indignant at the British invasion of Nepal and were about to assert their authority by themselves sending troops there. To the Chinese they kept up their allegations that the British were aiming at Tibet.

Although the recently arrived British representative at Kathmandu, Colonel Gardner, was not wholly taken in, reports of the presence not far from the border of the Chinese general Shee Chan Choon — as he is called in British records — with a force variously estimated at between 10,000 and a more probable 2,000 did appear a serious danger. The governor-general, anxious to avoid trouble with China, had given orders that Gardner was to return to India if it came to fighting between the Nepalese and Chinese; but British anxiety was relieved and Nepalese intrigues suffered a setback when the former received a friendly communication from Sai-ch’ung-a and the latter a peremptory and threatening summons to appear before him at Shigatse.

The Nepalese probably did not feel nearly so much apprehension about Chinese intentions as they had pretended to the British but there was now nothing they could do except send a delegation to pacify the Chinese and at the same time to continue to press their case against the British.

The interview took place late in September 1816 and there is a fascinating eye-witness report to Colonel Gardner from a Ladakhi Muslim merchant...
who was at Shigatse. In formal and public audience the Nepalese were soundly scolded and told they were rascals who had brought trouble on their own heads. One of the delegates was trembling the whole time but another appeared quite unabashed; and the party had no hesitation in asking for a letter to make the British withdraw their representative from Kathmandu. Although in public Sai-ch’ung-a refused to listen to their requests he later gave them a present of 10,000 silver coins and did, in fact, write to the British explaining that the Gorkhas had apologized and asking that, in the interests of friendly relations, the mission at Kathmandu might be withdrawn.

In reply Lord Moira, while assuring the Chinese that his representative would not interfere in Nepalese internal affairs, agreed to withdraw the mission provided the Chinese were themselves ready to appoint an officer at Kathmandu to control the Nepalese. That suggestion seems to have been earlier in the air for it is mentioned in the eye-witness account of the interview at Shigatse. The faint embarrassment underlying the rather haughty rejection by the Chinese of that offer was not caused intentionally and was perhaps not even perceived by the governor-general. British policy then and for some years to come was influenced by fear of the damage to their trade in China that might result from annoying Peking and by an out-of-date and exaggerated estimate of the ability of the Chinese to exercise again in Central Asia the power and prestige they had formerly displayed there.

Even after the successful campaign in 1792 Chinese representation at Kathmandu — let alone direct administration of Nepal — had been dismissed as impracticable. Things in China under Chia-ch’ing were not what they had been under his father the emperor Ch’ien-lung; and Sai-ch’ung-a was neither authorized nor adequately equipped to invade Nepal. Even his most threatening communications to the Nepalese speak of his readiness to withdraw his army as soon as he received an adequate apology. It must have given the Nepalese some amusement that the approach of their delegation to Shigatse caused near panic among the Chinese force when a soldier raised the alarm that an army of 30,000 was bearing down on them.

Sai-ch’ung-a and his troops returned home in 1817 and that was the end of an affair which seems to have left little impression on the minds of the Tibetans who were probably well aware of the extent to which each side was play-acting. Luciano Petech, whose knowledge of Tibetan and Chinese sources for the period is unrivalled, informs me that in the biography of the fourth Panchen Lama there is a reference to zal cang-cun — “general Sai”: but the incident is not mentioned in the excellent history of Tibet by W. D. Shakabpa.

The date of the despatch from the Grand Council is the equivalent of 12 September 1816. As it took not less than a month for messages between Lhasa and Peking, the letter from Sai-ch’ung-a to which the despatch refers, must therefore have been written in August while he was still uttering
threats to the Nepalese and well before he had secured their submission. His expedition had, of course, no part in ending the war between the British and Nepalese, which was over long before he reached Tibet; and to compare it with the achievements of the great Fu-k'ang-an is a rather ridiculous example of the fustian grandeur in public pronouncements at which the Chinese excelled.

Although the Chinese appear to have been better informed about British intentions than the British were about theirs, their attitude may have been based on broad general assumptions rather than precise knowledge; and one may ask whether they clearly identified the Phe-rence, to whom reference is made in the Grand Council’s letter, with the British whom they knew in Canton. A report by Fu-k’ang-an and Sun Shih-i after the Gorkha war of 1792, quoted by S. Cammann in Trade Through the Himalayas, Princeton, 1951, pp. 140–1, suggests that at that time little was known about the various races of European and nothing at all about “the Calcutta tribe” who had shown interest in Nepal. But Hu-t’u-li, the amban whom Thomas Manning met at Lhasa in 1811, appears to have had a specific knowledge and dislike of the English with whom he had been unpleasantly involved during his earlier service at Canton — perhaps in connexion with the activities of Admiral Drury in 1806. There is also mention in W. C. Boulger’s History of China (1894) of an edict of c. 1807 in which English, French, and Portuguese are differentiated. Ignorance of the distinctions among “outer barbarians” was, perhaps, to some extent a bureaucratic pose which it was feasible to maintain at least until 1842; but it is possible that there was genuine uncertainty about the identity of those foreigners who were active along the southern borders of Nepal.

The last part of the letter from the Grand Council refers to the appointment of a successor to the fourth incarnation of the Rje-btsun dam-pa Hutuktu, the principal lama of the Dge-lugs-pa sect in Mongolia, who had died in 1811. The emperor was anxious to enforce the procedure laid down by Ch’ien-lung, after the Gorkha war of 1792, for determining the reincarnation of high lamas by ceremonially drawing the name of one of several candidates out of a golden vase which he had presented. The order had been ignored by the Tibetans, at the first opportunity, when discovering the ninth Dalai Lama in 1808 and it was important for the Chinese to make sure that it was observed in this instance.

According to Egor Timkowski in his Travels (1827) the new Rje-btsun dam-pa, then aged about seven, arrived at Urga in 1819 from Tibet. His name, as is known from other sources, was Blo-bzang tshul-khrims ‘jigs-med. Timkowski’s remark that the Chinese emperor had taken the Dalai Lama’s prerogative of choosing candidates for the succession, although a misunderstanding of the way in which imperial influence was exercised, suggests that the emperor had had his way and that use had been made of
his golden vase. The Tibetans, nevertheless, when in 1822 it came to finding a successor to the ninth Dalai Lama who had died in 1815, saw to it that, despite Chinese manoeuvring, they got the child of their own choice.

Although the letter as a whole has no striking historical importance, it is interesting as a rare example of an original missive from the Chinese court to the Tibetan government.

Notes

Numbers in brackets refer to the relevant line of the Tibetan text. A few orthographic irregularities are noted below:

1. (4) bzlos for bsdos (and again in line 8).
2. (5) bgyud for rgyu.
3. (7) rdor for mdor.
4. (9) bsdoms for bsdoms or bsdoms.
5. (10) sjong for rdzong (and again in line 13).
6. (12) gzil for zil.
7. (17) sjar for dbyar (and again in line 20).
8. (23) khyi’u for khye’u.
9. (23) rtsas for btsas.
10. (1) cun-ci blon-chen: the “Grand Minister of State” (Chün-chi ta-ch’en).
11. (1) Hsi-ming (was amban at Lhasa 1814–17. K’o-shih-k’e (Ko-hri-khad) was his assistant.
12. (2) 12 September 1816.
13. (2) Zal-’phrung-a-can. can, “together with”. Cf. the next line where it is used as the equivalent of dang-bcas; also khad(khyad?)-can-nas in line 6 of the text: “by you both” and line 13 kho-pa-can “they both”. No one is specifically named as the colleague of Zal-’phrung-a (Sai-ch’ung-a); the reference may be to the senior ambassador.
15. (3) Blo-bzang ‘jigs-med rgya-mtsho, the second De-mo Rin-po-che to hold the office of regent which he did from 1811 to 1819. Ho-thog-thu: Mongol qutuqtu “holy” = Tibetan ’phags-pa.
16. (3) Ch’ien-lung’s inscription on the Gorkha war of 1792 has Gor-kha; but Gorda appears in another inscription at Lhasa dated 1794.
17. (7) Phe-reng, Phe-rang, “Feringhi, Frank, foreigner”, appears at least as early as 1793, probably having reached Tibet via Nepal. The other name applied to foreigners, e.g. the Capuchin missionaries in documents of 1724, was mgo-dkar, “white-head”. phe-reng seems later to have given way to phyi-gling “foreign country (man)”, the usual Lhasa pronunciation of which — “p’i-ling” rather than “chi-ling” — suggests a popular etymology of the older word.
18. (11) Kao-tsung Ch’un: the dynastic name of the emperor Ch’ien-lung.
19. (11) Hong-til’ is Chinese Huang-ti, “emperor” (til’ is perhaps in error for ti’).
20. (11) Bal-bu, Bal-po. If this is intended to refer to Nepalese other than the Gorkhas, i.e. the Newars, it is misleading; the Newars took no part in the fighting in 1792.

21. (16) sbe-a-shis, elsewhere sbi'-ya'-shi, is explained as a precious stone of “blue-green cloud-colour”; perhaps here it is some variegated hard-stone.
Foreigners in Tibet

The Age of Tolerance: The Fourteenth to Eighteenth Centuries

The foreigners, apart from Indians and Chinese, who are recorded as having visited Tibet between 1300 and 1800 A.D. could be comfortably accommodated in a single railway coach. The groups needing most room would be Christian missionaries and merchants, while travellers for travel’s sake and officially accredited representatives could all get into one compartment.

There might be some doubt whether Odoric of Pordenone (1286–1331) should be allowed to take the first seat. He claims to have crossed Tibet (Tibek, Riboch or Ryboth according to some manuscripts) on his return journey from China some time after 1324 by a route that took him via Prester John’s country and Kinsan (Sian-fu?) eventually to Afghanistan and the Caspian, but there is a total lack of topographical detail. The “chief and capital city” of Tibet is named in only one manuscript where it appears as “Gota”. Odoric describes it as built with walls of black and white, and all its streets paved. It was the dwelling place of Lo Abassi (?Bakshi), the head of all idolaters and was a holy place where no one dared kill because of a certain idol worshipped there. He also mentions features which, though distorted by fantasy and exaggeration, are recognisably Tibetan — the women’s hair style and ornaments and the method of disposing of the dead. The description of the capital city could pass for an idealised vision of Lhasa, and Yule accepts that Odoric was there. He realises that Abassi could not be the Dalai Lama — there was no such person for another two and a half centuries — but he does not appreciate that Lhasa could hardly be described in the fourteenth century as a capital city or the home of the head of the idolaters. The only place that might claim such distinction in Odoric’s day would be Sa-skya, but the description does not seem appropriate and by 1322, after the death of the last great hierarchy, Bzang-po-dpal, the ruling

family had split into a number of rival houses so that there was probably no one readily identifiable as “pope of all the idolaters”. It looks as though Odoric was recounting what he had heard from others, and later hands may have interpolated other matter into his story. But even if he did not see Lhasa and perhaps only touched the fringe of Tibet (could Gota be Khotan?), it would be unfair to refuse him admission.

After Odoric there is a gap of nearly three hundred years before the Portuguese Diego d’Almeida (c. 1600), the next person who may be admitted to the company for, even though he makes no claim to have been further than Leh in Ladakh, his stories of a supposedly Christian community surviving beyond the Himalaya sparked off the Jesuit Mission which saw in 1624 the arduous journey of Father Antonio d’Andrade to Tsaparang (Rtsa-brang). Andrade was well received by the king of Guge and, after a short stay, left to return the next year with his fellow Portuguese, the fathers Manoel Marques and Gonzales de Souza, with whose help he founded the first Christian mission in Tibet. It fell into difficulties in 1631 not through any hostility on the part of the king of Guge but in the wake of his defeat by his neighbour and rival, the king of Ladakh. After that, the mission could only struggle sporadically and hopelessly against various forms of persecution and obstruction until its end in 1641. With it, at different times, were associated the names of the fathers dos Anjus, Oliveira, Godhino, Da Fonseca, Pereira, de Azevedo, Coresma, Bonate and Malpichi.

Following up information gained by d’Andrade on his first visit, two Portuguese Jesuits, the fathers Estevão Cacella and João Cabral travelled through Bhutan to Shigatse where they arrived in 1628 and where they, too, found a welcome from the king — then Karma bstan-skhyung of the Gtsang dynasty. But a promising start was frustrated by the death of Cacella at Shigatse in 1630. Cabral returned in the following year but was unable to carry on alone and left for India in 1632.

On his way back he might have seen or heard of another party of his fellow countrymen who are mentioned in the Lho’i chos-’byung as envoys of the king of Pur-du-kha (Portugal), men of strange appearance and behaviour who presented the Bhutanese ruler with guns, cannon and telescopes and also offered armed assistance against any enemy with whom he might be involved. No mention of this mission appears to be made in contemporary western records and its exact date is uncertain. If it was after the middle of 1632 when Shah Jahan overwhelmed the Portuguese settlement at Hugli they would have had no firm base in Bengal. They may simply have been adventurers like Rebello and Pires who took service with the “King of Magh” and with whom, in 1634, Father Sebastian Manrique travelled on his second visit to Arakan. The offer of arms to Bhutan would not have pleased Cabral and the Jesuits if they knew of it; for they relied upon the
support of the Gtsang king of Tibet with whom the Bhutanese had been on bad terms for some time.

Although that Portuguese mission left only a passing impact on Bhutanese historical records and did not actually reach Tibet, it is worth mentioning as an illustration of active foreign interest in the Himalayan regions.

Two more Jesuits are the next to join the company — the Austrian Father Johannes Grueber and the Belgian Father Albert d'Orville. In 1661, under orders to return from Peking to Rome, they were compelled by the Dutch blockade of Chinese ports to attempt an overland journey and successfully found a route by way of Lhasa which they were the first Europeans to see and where they stayed two months.

Grueber and d'Orville had not been seeking a mission field but the Jesuits may well have felt aggrieved in 1702 when Tibet was assigned by the pope to the Capuchins. It is not surprising if there was some confusion at Rome about what constituted Tibet. The Tsaparang mission had collected information about the many divisions that made up "Potente" or Tibet; to Grueber and d'Orville Tibet was the kingdom of "Barantola", and Potente seems to have been Bhutan, as it was for Cabral and Cacella who passed through it on their way to Ütsang (Dbus-gtsang); there was also talk of a division of Tibet into three parts — Little Tibet, which was Baltistan; Second Tibet or Ladakh; with Third Tibet being all that lay to the east. At all events in 1707 the Capuchin Fathers Giuseppe d'Ascoli and François Marie de Tours, starting from their base in Nepal, made their way to Lhasa where they were joined in 1709 by Father Domenico da Fano; but being inadequately supplied with funds and support, they had to return Nepal in 1711.

Nothing had been said to prevent the Jesuits from resuming their activities in Tsaparang, and it was with that aim that the great Ippolito Desideri set out from Delhi in 1714 with Father Emanuel Freyre. When they reached Leh in the following year after a difficult journey, Father Freyre's health made it desirable for him to go back to India, but finding it impossible to return by the same route, they decided — for reasons into which it is not necessary to enter in detail — to press on to further Tibet. In March 1716 they arrived in Lhasa, whence Father Freyre returned almost at once to India. Desideri, left by himself, set about establishing his position, and with tact and ability he secured permission to preach his faith so that when the Capuchin Father da Fano returned to Lhasa in October of that year bringing with him Fathers Orazio della Penna and Francesco Fossombrone, Desideri was already on such good terms with the Tibetan authorities that the Capuchins, whose earlier activities had been rather tentative, were able to take advantage of his success. But, having been assigned Tibet as their mission field, they were quick to protest to Rome at Desideri's presence
and ask for his withdrawal. Luciano Petech has brilliantly presented the affairs and vicissitudes of the two missions, using original documents, in *Missionari italiani nel Tibet e nel Nepal*, 7 vols, Rome, 1952–6, and it is not my intention to recount that fascinating story here. Desideri’s mission sadly ended in 1721 when orders arrived from Rome confirming the Capuchins’ claim. The latter continued with varying fortunes and interruptions, always struggling with inadequate funds, until 1745 when they incurred the active displeasure of their hosts by the rather inept conversion of a few Tibetans — the first in nearly forty years — and soon found it impossible to stay any longer or to secure permission to return once they had left.

In the list of those who took part in the Capuchin mission at Lhasa the most distinguished names are Fathers Domenico da Fano and Orazio della Penna; others who visited Tibet for varying terms of service were, in addition to those already mentioned, Giovanni da Fano, Giuseppe Felice da Morro, Felice da Montecchio, Gargano, Gioacchino da San Anatolia, Cassiano Beligatti, Angelo of Brescia, Costantino da Loro, and one layman, Paolo di Firenze.

From the records of the Capuchins we hear of two other laymen who visited Lhasa. One, an unnamed Frenchman, stayed with them briefly in 1717. Since he came from Patna, the main Indian market for trade with Tibet at that time, he was most probably a merchant. The other was Samuel Van der Putte, an educated Netherlander of good family who, having been disappointed of a diplomatic appointment which he felt he deserved, set out to see the world. He reached India in 1742 and after some years found his way to Lhasa where he appears to have stayed some time with the Capuchins before going on to China. Returning again by way of Lhasa he spent another year there before going on to India. To the Capuchins he appeared as an accomplished linguist and an agreeable person for one who seemed to have no religion. On his travels he kept a journal, drew maps and made notes, apparently in some sort of cipher. On his death in 1745 at the age of fifty-five he left instructions that his papers should be destroyed, and a conscientious and unimaginative executor, alas, carried out his orders, thus depriving the world of some valuable information.

It will have been seen that there was no systematic obstruction of foreigners wanting to enter Tibet. The Capuchins eventually brought down a ban on themselves for what the Tibetans saw as anti-social behaviour; but there was no official policy of excluding foreigners as a class. Indeed the Capuchins on their arrival found two small trading communities at Lhasa, one of Russians and the other of Armenians. The latter are the more interesting; and it appears that the first Capuchin missionaries would have been lost without the help of the Armenians in finding accommodation, arranging introductions, learning Tibetan and even in the translation of religious works into that language.
The Armenians had long been familiar with Central Asia and the Far East, much of whose trade with Europe passed through their markets. The unending invasions of Seljuk Turks, Mongols, Ottoman Turks and Persians scattered many of them at different times from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries through Europe and Asia to centres where they continued to exercise their flair for commerce. Although the Seljuks occupied most of their territory in the eleventh century, the Armenians retained a strong position in Cilicia, including the port of Layas on the Gulf of Alexandretta through which Marco Polo and his kinsmen passed on their way back from China. Heythum I, king of Armenia from 1226 to 1270, had formed a sort of subordinate partnership with the Mongols when they invaded the west, and he sent his brother Sempad in 1246 to the court of Kuyuk at Karakorum to cement the alliance. Heythum himself undertook the arduous journey to Karakorum in 1253 after Möngke’s succession as Khaghan; and when William of Rubruck arrived there in the same year he found an Armenian monk, Sergius, who had perhaps gone in the train of either Sempad or Heythum, enjoying a position of some influence and behaving with an exhibitionism and roguery quite untypical of his race. About a century later we hear of a church at Zaitun (Chin-chou) in China built by the charity of an Armenian lady. During the Ottoman domination in the fifteenth century the Armenians, carrying on their ancient tradition, acted as the principal bankers and caravan leaders on the routes through Central Asia and won a reputation for endurance, reliability, unobtrusive initiative, honesty and charity. In 1620 Shah Abbas of Persia transported many thousands of them to a new settlement near Ispahan which their energy and ability soon transformed into a thriving town. They acquired positions of authority under the Shah and were awarded titles such as Khwaja and Mirza which, in spite of their Islamic flavour, we find being borne by Christian Armenians in several parts of Asia. They reached India before the end of the fifteenth century, and when European merchants arrived there they found Armenians in the main trading centres from Surat to Dacca. The best known family was that of Mirza Sikander of Aleppo who went to India in the reign of Akbar. His sons became favourites of the Emperor Jahangir, especially the younger, Melchior, known as Mirza Zulkarnain (born 1595), who was given a large estate and, although he temporarily displeased the emperor by refusing to abandon his faith and accept Islam, he continued in his service in Bengal and Kashmir and eventually retired to Delhi where, in peaceful prosperity, he died in 1660.

When these redoubtable and ubiquitous merchants first entered Tibet is not certain. Patna was the main centre for trade with Tibet, and in 1632 Peter Mundy met Armenians there but he does not mention either Tibet or the trade in musk which attracted the interest of several European traders. In 1665 Tavernier met four Armenians at Patna who had been in “Bhoutan”
— a three-month journey — which from their description is clearly Tibet. They had taken figures of amber to sell to the king and so, presumably, they had been at Lhasa. About the same time Armenians are reported as trading in Hsining on the eastern border of Tibet. John Marshall, who was English factor at Patna between 1667 and 1771, met there an Armenian, Johan de Batista, who had been in “Lossa”; and a passport issued at Lhasa in 1688, which is transcribed by Csoma de Körös in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1883, appears to have been given to an Armenian from Persia named Khwaja John.

As for the group at Lhasa, according to the Capuchins’ information they had been there since about 1670. Their business, together with that of the Russians, appears to have been destroyed when the Dzungars sacked Lhasa in 1717, and they left, presumably for India. Individuals seem to have undertaken occasional private ventures, for Manning mentions meeting an Armenian at Lhasa in 1811. How many there may have been in all during the fifty years of their stay is not known. The community is described as small. Only a few names, in addition to that of their leader Khawja Dawith, survive but perhaps there may have been a dozen or so. Of the Russian traders nothing is known apart from their existence and a few names.

Neither the merchants nor the missionaries have left a significant mark in Tibetan records. There are a few references to Mgo-dkar (white heads) or Phe-rang being received in general audience, including one phe-rang am-chi sman-pa, presumably a Capuchin, several of whom practised medicine. The term Mgo-dkar, which is used indiscriminately of Muslims, Armenians and Christian fathers, is supposed to have referred originally to the white turbans of the Muslims; but it may be that it was inspired rather by the shaven heads under the turbans and the tonsures of Christian envoys first seen by the Tibetans at the court of the Mongol Khans. Phe-rang, which took the place of Mgo-dkar in references to Europeans, is derived from “Feringhi”, the name applied to Europeans in India and known even longer in different forms in various parts of Asia. Its origin appears to be “Frankish”.

After the Capuchins left Lhasa there was a gap of some thirty years before the arrival at Shigatse in 1774 of George Bogle, who was sent by Warren Hastings as his envoy to the third Panchen Lama. Bogle, who was accompanied by Dr Alexander Hamilton, was the first British visitor to Tibet and the first officially accredited western diplomat. Although he won the friendship of the Panchen Lama — and, indeed, married one of his family — Bogle’s visit foreshadowed a new kind of relationship with the outside world which was viewed at Lhasa with justifiable suspicion. The connection that Hastings had established was kept up, after Bogle’s untimely death, by a visit to Shigatse in 1783 by Captain Samuel Turner and Dr.
Robert Saunders. The third member of the party, Lieut. Samuel Davis, was not allowed to go beyond Bhutan. This mission, like that of Bogle, was a personal rather than a political success. It was also the last occasion for nearly a hundred and fifty years when foreigners were able to visit Tibet in the old spirit of tolerance; for the whole atmosphere was changed by the Gurkha invasion of 1792, which was followed by a deliberate policy of excluding foreigners.

The Closing of Tibet

Up to 1792 European visitors had, in general, been politely received. Although there might be obstruction of individuals to whom objection was taken for some special reason, there was no automatic xenophobia; and those who succeeded in reaching Lhasa or Shigatse were able to meet the intelligentsia and nobility of the country on easy and friendly terms. There were, it is true, bigoted views on both sides; for example Grueber’s description of the Dalai Lama as a devilish god-the-father who puts to death those who refuse to adore him; and Costantino da Loro’s ungracious sneer that Pho-pha’s politeness was only a mask; while on the Tibetan side, some monks tried to blame the Christians for a severe flood that damaged Lhasa in 1725. Against that are to be set many acts of generosity, perhaps even more by the Tibetans than the Christians: Desideri and da Fano were allowed to celebrate mass inside Se-ra Monastery. Incarnate Lamas listened politely in the Cathedral of Lhasa while a Capuchin “proved” that the Sakya Lama was neither god nor saint; but others of the missionaries expressed their admiration of the moral teachings of the Lam-rim (a class of texts dealing with the gradual path to enlightenment); and Bogle’s respect and affection for the third Panchen Lama have the ring of sincerity. No such friendly exchanges and opportunities of comparing ideas were possible after 1792.

The new policy of exclusion was inspired by the Chinese, but it must have met with a ready response from the Tibetans or it would not have been so successful. Indeed it took such strong root that when, a century later, the Chinese government was prevailed upon to admit a British expedition to Tibet, Tibetan opposition prevented it from starting. There were several reasons for the change of mind. The immediate spur was almost certainly Chinese insinuations that the British in India had instigated the Gurkha invasion of Tibet, which might have confirmed the lingering suspicions created at Lhasa by the visits of Bogle and Turner. Another important factor was the consolidation of power in the hands of the Yellow Hat church after the fall of 'Gyur-med rnam-rgyal in 1750. It had been the lay nobles in general who had encouraged and protected foreign visitors; and
the virtual elimination of lay authority and lay competition gave free rein to the ingrained conservatism of a powerful body of monks ready to see a threat to their position in any new thing.

The knowledge that Tibet was "forbidden" and "mysterious" was an immediate challenge to adventurous explorers, intelligence officers and missionaries. Most of them now made their entry surreptitiously, often in disguise, through some remote, thinly populated part of the frontier where they either evaded or sought to override the opposition from unfortunate villagers or nomads of the uplands upon whom would fall the penalty for failing to prevent strangers from entering the country. Foreign views of Tibetan life and character were now mainly based on encounters with the poorest, least educated inhabitants in circumstances of mutual suspicion and deception; and while most travellers enjoyed the gaiety and humour of the people their general estimate of Tibetan moral qualities was unfavourable. The travellers perhaps failed to consider the effect of their own behaviour on the Tibetans, who were driven to counter the bluff, bluster and subterfuge of unwelcome visitors by every resource of cunning, obstruction and misinformation. They might now and then put up a show of armed opposition, but it was their natural inclination to avoid a fight with visitors who were usually much better armed; and they probably had instructions from Lhasa not to create embarrassment by killing any foreigner. And so, although there were dangers enough in the rigour of the country and the shortage of supplies, there was little risk to life from Tibetan hostility. In fact, between 1792 and 1904 only one foreign explorer was killed and that was in a region beyond the administrative control of Lhasa.

The first visitor to Tibet after its closing was, as it happened, of a rather different sort from most of those who came after. In 1811, under the kindly star that protects eccentrics, Thomas Manning travelled up the main route to Lhasa without hindrance. Although he thought that the British government was foolish not to take advantage of his enterprise, he was moved simply by curiosity and the urge to travel. His account of his reception by the Dalai Lama is well known. It is, perhaps, not so well known that in 1817 his travels took him to St. Helena where he was received by a potentate of a different sort, Napoleon Bonaparte.

Then came William Moorcroft’s travels in western Tibet in 1820. He was a government servant and fancied his political flair, but his principal concern was with buying horses and fine wool. The dubious story that he later lived for many years at Lhasa disguised as a Ladakhi Muslim is found in the account of Abbé Huc who with Gabet took up the challenge of Tibet on behalf of the Catholic church and conducted a courageous religious reconnaissance from China by way of Mongolia and north Tibet to Lhasa, and back through east Tibet to China. Although Huc and Gabet found no
prospect of a mission field in central Tibet, other French priests based on Tachienlu began their long struggle to establish missions in eastern Tibet from which they hoped some day to penetrate Tibet proper. Unlike the travelling under the jurisdiction of Lhasa their lives among the quick-tempered, feuding Khampa tribes were in constant danger, and in the course of nearly a century at least eight names from their number were added to the roll of martyrs.

Missionaries on both the eastern border and the Indian frontier saw that the best hope for their "royal banners" to go forward into Tibet would be in the wake of a more worldly flag; and having persuaded themselves, they sought to persuade others of the questionable proposition that the Tibetans hated their monk leaders almost as much as they hated the Chinese and would welcome deliverance by a foreign power. Indeed, from the 1840s onwards one is inclined to suppose that every foreigner in or around Tibet had an eye on some sort of international political interest.

Although the Great Game with Russia did not warm up until rather later, the journeys of Richard and Henry Strachey to Lake Manasarowar in 1845 and 1846 for the purposes of geographical survey were, of course, coloured by the desire to know what was going on on the other side of their closed frontier. Among the earliest and most remarkable journeys of that sort were those of the pandits of the Survey of India, but although they were efficient and immensely courageous in their own particular job, the limited nature of their training and the circumstances of their journeys restricted the value of their observations to topographical facts.

Only the dauntless Annie Taylor in 1893 and the American diplomat W.W. Rockhill, for whom Tibet was a hobby, can be acquitted of any but an academic interest in the international complications of Tibet. The Frenchmen Gabriel Bonvalot and Jules-Léon Dutreuil de Rhins were reasonably suspected of something more than a scientific interest, and with even better reason the Russians Prievalsky, Roborovski and Kozlov, from 1876 onwards, were believed to have a variety of ulterior motives. Mention of Dutreuil du Rhins, the one foreign explorer of that period to be killed, prompts a look at the reasons for the tragedy. It happened in a village where jurisdiction was contested between Lhasa and a local Amdowa monastery, and where there was a small and ineffective Chinese outpost. It was in the borderland between the gentler central Tibetans and the fiery easterners, and from the account of Fernand Grenard seems to have been precipitated by impatience and rather high-handed actions by the explorers, who seized a horse from the village because one of theirs had been stolen. It is interesting that the attack by the villagers lasted only so long as the strangers were within their boundaries, and stopped the moment they had been crossed. And it is reassuring to read that both sympathy and help were given to the survivors by other Tibetans, including some monks; and that
the Tibetan women did not fail to show their natural and characteristic kindness to anyone in trouble.

I am not going to attempt a catalogue of all the foreigners who entered Tibet between 1792 and 1904. The following names, in addition to those already mentioned, will remind followers of travel literature of the courageous and well recorded explorations of that age: Bower, the Littledales, Wellby, Deasy — all British travellers in the northern parts of the country; T. Cooper in the east; the Russian Tsybikov and the Japanese Ekai Kawaguchi, who both reached Lhasa; the wide-ranging Sven Hedin whose journeys cannot be labelled in one sentence; and in a special compartment of his own, the Buriat Dorjief, the bogey-man of the Great Game.

It may not be out of place to make once more the point that the closed frontier also meant a closing of minds, and that hardly any of the foreign visitors had an inkling of what went on inside those of the Tibetans any more than the Tibetans understood the ideas of the foreigners. Exception must be made for Dorjief who was not only a Buddhist but from a similar racial background to the Tibetans; Kawaguchi, rather fastidious and disapproving; and for Sarat Chandra Das. None of the other travellers was able to communicate with Tibetans in their own language.

**The Younghusband Expedition and the Re-opening of Tibet**

Although the Younghusband Expedition broke down the total seclusion of Tibet and began a new era of Tibetan travel it certainly did not create a wide-open door. The Tibetans, when they succeeded in evicting the Chinese in 1913, continued to restrict the entry of foreigners so that there was still scope for the adventurous; but even those who broke in without explicit permission found a much easier reception. The events of 1904 and, still more, the Dalai Lama’s stay in India from 1910 to 1913 had done much to re-open closed minds; and on the British side such men as O’Connor and Bell were able to talk with sympathy and understanding to educated Tibetans. That did not mean, as is suggested in a recent book, the end of either the mystery of Lhasa or of the age of Tibetan exploration. To disprove that, one need only remember the names of Bailey and Morshead, Kingdon Ward, David-Neel, Tucci, Ludlow and Sherriff, Harrer and Aufschnaiter, Tolstoy and Dolan.

**The End of Tibetan Exploration**

Finally and sadly must be recorded the last closing of Tibet by the communist occupation in 1951. At first a few Russian technicians were
welcomed into the country; but that did not last and they have left no record. In 1955 a handful of communist journalists were admitted; and three years after the fateful rising by the Tibetans against their communist masters a few more fellow-travelling writers were invited to Lhasa. But since 1962 no foreigner, however sympathetic to Peking, has been inside Tibet and if any should be admitted in future what they see will not be Tibetan civilisation; the last overt signs of that were destroyed by the Red Guards in the excesses of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 to 1967.
The Political Role of the Four Sects in Tibetan History

From the earliest days religion was in some way involved in politics. The marriage of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po to a Chinese princess in A.D. 642 was an example of the methods by which the Chinese sought to pacify and civilize tiresome neighbouring peoples from whom they were under pressure. For a century after that union, which introduced the practice of Buddhism into Tibet, there is no sign of any organized religious body exercising political influence there; and the first clear example of religious differences as a factor in both internal and foreign politics was the great debate about A.D. 794, following the foundation of the first Tibetan monastery at Bsam-yas, between champions of Chinese doctrines and those of the Indian masters who had been primarily responsible for the advance of Buddhism in Tibet. Some leading nobles, including maternal relations of the king Khri Srong-lde-brtsan favoured the Chinese while others supported the Indian teachers. The latter were, according to later tradition, decreed to be victorious in what was perhaps a politic decision directed by international considerations and a preference for the innocuous Indian neighbour to the rival military power of China. But in the dialectical field the victory was by no means complete and the influence of the Chinese teachings continued in several Tibetan philosophic schools. The emergence of powerful Tibetan monks as principal ministers of state soon after that debate showed how strong and how rapid had been the impact of religion; but the development was premature and clerical interference in the administration led to a violent reaction from the conservative nobility, to the fall of the kingship and the temporary eclipse of Buddhism in central Tibet.

After the disappearance of the unifying rule of the chos-rgyal — the Religious Kings — seeds of future monastic centres survived in scattered enclaves dominated by lay nobles, some descended from the former

ministers of state and some from collateral branches of the royal line, in whose families religious teachers gradually emerged as figures of local prestige. So that when the Indian pandit Atiśa was invited to central Tibet in A.D. 1042 the number and prosperity of the monastic communities there was already such as to surprise him and it was there that his unequalled learning and inspiring spiritual presence found the material for a great upsurge of faith. It was the religious ferment engendered by his visit that brought into being most of the Tibetan sects. His own dedicated followers formed the Bka'-gdam-pa school; but the austerity of his doctrine and the strict discipline required in the practice were too exacting for many Tibetans, and those teachers who preferred their old tradition became known as Rnying-ma-pa while others, profiting by the new enthusiasm but drawing on the doctrinal heritage of other Indian teachers, established monastic communities with varying traditions and customs. Of these the Sa-skya-pa and several schools of Bka'-brgyud-pa teaching were the most successful. Growing up from within or with the support of an influential landed family such monasteries gradually consolidated their authority in a widening orbit around them; but at first there was no obvious territorial rivalry between the newly formed sects.

What turned the thoughts of religious dignitaries towards a wider political sphere was foreign intervention. In 1227 the Tibetans by hastening to offer submission to the world-conquering Chingiz Khan succeeded in keeping him at arm’s length; but some twenty years later, having failed to make due payment of tribute to his successors, they were faced with the danger of violent retribution. The civil and religious leaders in Tibet more or less pushed the lama of Sa-skya into the unenviable mission of appeasing the Mongols. It is well known how in his meetings with Godan Khan he established so effective a spiritual dominance over the martial Mongols that the conqueror was converted into a “patron and his priest”, the Sa-skya Lama, was appointed viceroy for Tibet through whom the orders of the effective rulers were executed. Although this implied surrender by the Tibetans of part of their independence, the remarkable relationship of yon-mchod — Patron and Priest — which was to be of lasting significance in the relations between Tibet and China, gave them much of a free hand in their own affairs.

But the new relationship was a mixed blessing. It offered the prospect of a unified government for Tibet once again; but it also introduced into the Tibetan religious world a regrettable spirit of violence. The dominance of Sa-skya was not readily accepted by all other sects. In particular the Bka'-brgyud-pa monastery of 'Bri-gung which controlled several of the khri-skor — the administrative districts into which the country was now organized — was a bitter opponent. Differences inside Tibet were intensified by the innate rivalries of the lesser Mongol Khans, each of whom assumed the
patronage of a different monastery and each of whom had some troops at his disposal. This period of Tibetan history is marred not only by cruel warfare between Sa-skya and ‘Bri-gung but also by unedifying factions in Sa-skya itself. That era ended with the fall of Sa-skya’s patrons the Mongol emperors of China, marked also the end of Sa-skya’s eighty years as master of Tibet. It was succeeded by the Phag-mo-gru-pa branch of the Bka’-brgyud-pa school in the person of Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan, formerly a district governor under the Sa-skya regime who had been treated so unjustly that he was driven to fight and, after a long struggle, defeat his overlords. The monastic dynasty of which he was the founder, held power for about a century from 1358.

Geographically, Sa-skya was not a suitable centre for a Tibetan government; its rule had never been effective throughout the whole country and its dependence on a foreign power was distasteful to many Tibetans. And so Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan, having mastered Sa-skya, broke the link with the Chinese court, where the decadent Yuan dynasty was soon to be succeeded by the native Ming, and by abolishing foreign customs in dress and manners and reviving the spirit and ceremonial of the former kings was able to appear as the restorer of a truly Tibetan government. He made his capital at Sne’u-gdong in the Yarlung valley, the principal seat of the former kings, and he revised the district organization by replacing the khri-skor by rdzongs whose governors were responsible to him for local administration and the collection of revenue. Succession in the dynasty was secured through the nearest male kinsman of the celibate lama who headed it.

The rule of the first two Phag-mo-gru hierarchs is seen as a golden age of peace, religious tolerance, and freedom from foreign interference. The supremacy of the gong-ma — as the ruler was known — in the political and spiritual realms was acknowledged from east Tibet to the borders of Ladakh, but a good deal of independence was enjoyed in practice by the lamas of other sects and by the local nobility. Sa-skya, of course, was deprived of its wider political horizon, but although it had for a time to accept a Phag-mo-gru-pa administrator in its great temple, there was no doctrinal interference and its lamas continued to enjoy considerable spiritual prestige and material prosperity. Its principal troubles were internal factions arising in its complex and ever-increasing family system. Its geographical position made it a natural ally of the princes of Rgyal-mkhar-rtse (Gyantse) and although together they were the nucleus of a potential power bloc in the province of Gtsang, Sa-skya rarely showed any further political ambitions. ‘Bri-gung, although also a branch of the Bka’-brgyud-pa, had an old rivalry with the Phag-mo-gru-pa and liked their dominance no more than that of Sa-skya but, for a time, were not in a position to attempt open opposition. Other branches of the Bka’-brgyud-pa continued to extend their influence and prosperity. The most successful were the
Karma-pa, who were on good terms with Phag-mo-gru. Their activities were largely directed to Rkong-po and eastern Tibet and to their connexion with China. Even under the Mongol emperors when Sa-skya-pa lamas usually held the office of ti-shri — viceroy for Tibet — the third and fourth Zhwa-nag — Black Hat — Karma-pa lamas had established through personal visits a strong spiritual hold over the later Yuan emperors, and they were able to continue and even reinforce that influence with the Yung-lo emperor of the succeeding Ming dynasty. Leading lamas of other sects, too, took advantage of the eagerness of some Ming emperors to court them in order to enhance their prestige by accepting honorific titles, and their wealth through lavish presents and privileged trade missions to China. Chinese historians chose to regard such ventures as “tribute missions”, but the relationship between China and Tibet had radically changed and the emperor, who had no representative in Tibet, was simply the benefactor of lamas of every sect, none of whom could claim to represent the government of Tibet.

The golden age of Phag-mo-gru was ideal for the emergence of a new religious leader and reformer, Tsong-kha-pa. He studied at first with the leading teachers of the day including the Karma-pa and Bo-dong-pa; and by winning the support of the Phag-mo-gru-pa gong-ma and his local representative in Skyid-shod he was able in 1409 to found a monastery at Dga’-ldan and to establish the annual Great Prayer ceremony at Lhasa, which greatly increased the importance of that holy city which had been somewhat neglected. The learning, sincerity and saintly purity of Tsong-kha-pa stirred enthusiasm and faith among nobles and ordinary folk throughout Tibet. After his death in 1419 his followers gradually formed an organized sect, regarding themselves as successors of Atiśa’s Bka’-gdams-pa and becoming known as Dga’-ldan-pa or Dge-lugs-pa. In the favourable atmosphere at Lhasa they were able to found two more monasteries at ‘Bras-spungs and Se-ra. But even before the death of Tsong-kha-pa the gilt had begun to wear off the golden age of the Phag-mo-gru-pa in internal disputes about the succession which seem to be endemic in monastic families of that sort.

With the weakening of central authority, although the subordinate governors of districts continued to acknowledge the formal supremacy of the gong-ma and to reverence his spiritual authority, their own differences came more into the open. The princes of Rgyal-mkhar-rtse were the first to show their independence, and the old rivalry between Gtsang and Dbus. Originally adherents of Sa-skya, they had good relations also with the Karma-pa and Dge-lugs-pa. They had been ready at first to support the Phag-mo-gru-pa, but being received somewhat suspiciously they had no great regard for the successors of Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan, and in 1434 they undertook an armed expedition into central Tibet which brought them into conflict with the gong-ma’s forces at Ne’u-gdong. Their strength is a reminder that,
although during the ascendancy of Sa-skya and the Phag-mo-gru-pa the leading figures were monks, lay nobles had an important part as ministers of state and financial backers of the lamas to whom many of them were related. And the next swing of the pendulum showed that the right of churchmen to hold the highest office had not yet been accepted as an absolute monopoly. It was not, however, the princes of Rgyal-mkhar-rtse who emerged as the most powerful force in the country but a lay noble of Rin-spungs, also in Gtsang, a minister and kinsman by marriage of the gong-ma, who broke away from his loyalty and succeeded in dominating much of the territory once subject to his master. In spite of this usurpation of political power the Rin-spungs princes continued to do lip service to the gong-ma. They appear to have been opportunist adventurers, aggrandizing themselves at the expense of their rival neighbours, including the princes of Rgyal-mkhar-rtse with whom they had a long-standing feud, and exercising a hegemony over those who joined their rising star against those who disliked their pretensions. They never controlled all of Gtsang or all of Dbus and were apparently unknown to the Chinese; but their regime lasted for 130 years from 1435 to 1565, so their reputation may have suffered for want of their own records. In religious matters they had originally been followers of Sa-skya, but the link between Rgyal-mkhar-rtse and Sa-skya led them to confer their principal patronage on and look for support from the Karma-pas. In terms of religious primacy the next 150 years could be described as the age of the Karma-pa; but their position was quite different from that of the Sa-skya-pa and Phag-mo-gru-pa. They did not control a political administration. It was simply that they enjoyed the patronage of those lay nobles who were the most powerful factor in Tibet and who derived some advantage from the religious influence of the lamas. The association does not appear to have been established immediately on the seizure of power by Rin-spungs. The Karma-pa lamas continued to visit the Phag-mo-gru-pa gong-ma quite frequently; and for long periods in the Karma-pa biographies there is no mention of Rin-spungs. But about 1480 the foundation of a Karma-pa monastery at Lhasa with the encouragement of the Rin-spungs leader brought them together in active hostility to the Dge-lugs-pa. The intention was probably to secure a share in the growing importance of Lhasa as the religious centre of Tibet. The Karma-pa had hitherto been on reasonably good terms with the Dge-lugs-pa, but this adventure was swiftly frustrated by the latter with the support of the official, loyal to the gong-ma, who governed the Lhasa district. The Rin-spungs-pa and Karma-pa did not press the matter to an open breach but the seeds of bitterness were sown and a stronger bond was created between the Rin-spungs leader, Don-yod rdo-rje, and the Karma-pa lamas, especially Chos-grags ye-shes the fourth Red Hat incarnation — second only in importance to the Black Hat incarnation — for whom, in 1490, Don-yod rdo-rje founded a great
monastery at Yangs-pa-can. The Red Hat Lama was more active in central Tibet while the Black Hat, who seems to have been a quietist like several of his line, spent much of his time travelling in Rkong-po, Tsa-ri and Khams.

The relationship between Rin-spungs and the Karma-pa did not inhibit Don-yod rdo-rje from seizing parts of the gong-ma's territory including Lhasa itself, where from 1498 to 1517 the Dge-lugs-pa monks were excluded from the Great Prayer ceremony which their founder Tsong-kha-pa had instituted. The Karma-pa, who then took control of the ceremony, also built another monastery of their own near Lhasa. Although their records claim that Don-yod rdo-rje and they themselves showed consideration for the Phag-mo-gru-pa and Dge-lugs-pa and that Karma-pa lamas were well received at Dge-lugs-pa monasteries, it is clear from Dge-lugs-pa accounts that these were hard times; and it is said that their monks in self-protection even took to wearing Karma-pa dress. The Karma-pa kept up much more friendly relations with the Rnying-ma-pa, Sa-skya-pa, Ngor-pa and Jo-nang-pa sects as well as with other Bka'-brgyud-pa foundations such as the 'Brug-pa monasteries in Bhutan, Stag-lung and 'Bri-gung, which resumed its old militancy with raids on Phag-mo-gru-pa territory.

By 1517 the former Phag-mo-gru-pa governor of Lhasa was able to regain power there and restore the Dge-lugs-pa to their rightful place. Rin-spungs, nevertheless, remained powerful elsewhere for another fifty years and more. During that time although the Karma-pa maintained contact with their patron, they took a less active part in politics and continued their visits to potential rivals of Rin-spungs. So when about 1575 the Rin-spungs-pa were supplanted by one of their ministers, Tshes-brtan rdo-rje of Gtsang, in much the same way as they had supplanted the Phag-mo-gru-pa, the Karma-pa hierarchs had no difficulty in accepting the patronage of the new regime.

While the power of Rin-spungs was declining and that of the Gtsang prince was rising, there had been born, in 1543, a child whom the Dge-lugs-pa recognized as the reincarnation of their former principal lama Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho, thereby adopting the system of choosing their hierarchs which had been so successful among the Karma-pa and which avoided the complications of a ruling family. The child, Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho, grew into a remarkable scholar and impressive personality. Since 1517 Dge-lugs-pa monks had been able to study at Lhasa undisturbed; and some recovery in the influence of the gong-ma made it easier for them to increase their popularity by travelling widely and by founding new monasteries or restoring old ones. Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho, who was greatly favoured by the gong-ma of the day, added fresh impetus to these activities and acquired a reputation that allowed him to mediate in disputes even with the Karma-pa. His fame became known to the chief of the Tumed Mongols, Altan Khan, who, although not the hereditary leader in the direct succession to Chingiz
Khan, was at the time the most powerful figure in the Mongol world of fluctuating tribal fortunes and internal rivalries. After the fall of the Yuan dynasty, in spite of Ming policy to discourage them from the practice of Buddhism, the Mongols had not quite lost touch with Tibetan lamas. The Karma-pa and other sects had occasional contacts with Mongolia but had certainly neglected their opportunity of building up effective influence there. And so when in 1577 Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho accepted an invitation from the Khan, the meeting of two great men produced a phenomenal transformation in the worlds of both religion and politics. The powerful spiritual influence of the lama over the Khan brought all the Tumed Mongols and many allied tribes into the Dge-lugs-pa fold. In an exchange of honorific titles Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho received that of Dalai Lama, which was retrospectively applied to his two predecessors, while the Khan was awarded that of chos-kyi gyal-po (dharmarāja). With wider political implications the two deliberately renewed the link between Mongolia and Tibet by reviving the relationship of Patron and Priest, seeing each other as reincarnations respectively of Khubilai Khan and the Sa-skya lama 'Phags-pa. That dynamic beginning was abruptly checked by the death of Altan in 1580, and two years later by that of Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho who had been visiting Khams and founding Dge-lugs-pa monasteries in that Bka'-brgyud-pa stronghold.

It was hardly fortuitous that the reincarnation of Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho as Dalai Lama was found in a great-grandson of Altan Khan, who was given the name Yon-tan rgya-mtsho. The Dge-lugs-pa had all of a sudden acquired political power but at the cost of the acquisition by their Mongol patrons of a vested interest in Tibet. In 1601, as soon as the new Dalai Lama was old enough to enter into his heritage he was escorted to Lhasa by a body of Mongol horsemen whose martial presence caused anxiety not only to the rivals of the Dge-lugs-pa but also to some of their supporters.

While these momentous events were taking place in Mongolia, the Gtsang princes who had succeeded the Rin-spungs-pa had been building up their strength in Tibet. They too, suffer from the lack of an impartial record but their rule seems to have been more urbane as well as more extensive than that of Rin-spungs. There is a brief but quite favourable description of their court by the Portuguese missionary Cabral who visited it at Gzhis-ka-rtse in 1628 and 1630. He saw evidence of hostility between the monks favoured by the Gtsang ruler and those of a rival monastery (the Dge-lugs-pa) within two cannon shots of the royal palace. Those strained relations had developed soon after the arrival of the fourth Dalai Lama at Lhasa. The Karma-pa and the Gtsang ruler had sought a modus vivendi but were rebuffed in a way that prompted a vigorous counter-offensive. The Mongol horsemen were driven out of Tibet; and when the Dalai Lama died in 1616 at the age of twenty-six the Gtsang ruler took the op-
portunity to capture Lhasa in a bloody battle with the monks of 'Bras-spungs and Se-ra. To overawe them, a Karma-pa monastery was built near each; and once more the Dge-lugs-pa monks had to lie low, some even taking refuge in the more peacefully disposed Bka'-brgyud-pa monastery of Stag-lung. But the Mongols had not given up their proprietary interest in the Dalai Lama’s see and Mongol soldiery began to filter back into Tibet where they were welcomed by the monks of 'Bras-spungs and Se-ra, who saw them as champions of their cause. Their difficulties were lessened by disagreements between the Gtsang ruler Phun-tshogs rnam-rgyal and the Karma-pas, and also between the Red Hat and Black Hat hierarchs. In 1620 the Mongol troops were able to capture Lhasa from the Gtsang forces; and soon after that it was safe for the Dge-lugs-pa to reveal the discovery of their new Dalai Lama, Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho, whose birth in 1617 had been kept secret. On the other hand, after the death of Altan Khan his Tumed Mongols had been losing their influence in Mongolia. But by a stroke of fortune the Dge-lugs-pa found a new and vigorous champion in Gusri Khan, leader of the Koshot tribe of the Oirats — an entirely different and rival branch of the Mongols. The exact course of events in Tibet and Mongolia is obscure but the Karma-pa, who had restored relations with Gtsang after the death of Phun-tshog rnam-rgyal, were jointly in touch with another Mongol tribe, the Khalkha, with whom they and the Gtsang princes had established contact as a counter to Dge-lugs-pa influence. Whether or not on their invitation, the Khalkha leader, Chogtu, despatched his son Arslan ostensibly in support of the Karma-pas. But soon after his arrival he was won over by the Dge-lugs-pa and turned against the Karma-pa. He was killed by the Gtsang troops; but in Mongolia, Gusri then attacked and defeated Chogtu and his Khalkha tribe and then turned on the other — rather surprising — ally of the Karma-pa, the Bon-po king of Be-ri. After eliminating all Karma-pa supporters in the east he marched into Tibet, apparently at the request of the Dalai Lama’s principal minister, Bsod-nams chos-'phel. In this confused situation all parties appealed to the Manchus, the rising power in east Asia who were on the eve of taking over the imperial throne of China. The Manchus temporized, giving good advice to all, and in the meantime, after a fierce struggle, Gusri defeated the Gtsang ruler and installed the Dalai Lama as ruler of Tibet. He himself took the title of king but was content to act virtually as commander-in-chief ready to protect the new regime, while the Dalai Lama’s principal minister was, as regent, responsible for the conduct of secular business.

The Karma-pa’s supporters did not at once accept defeat and they kept up the fight in their stronghold of Rkong-po. The Red Hat incarnation was a child at the time; and the Black Hat, who seems to have been a contemplative and indecisive figure, escaped from the siege of his camp to wander, at times in the disguise of a beggar, in eastern Tibet. His supporters were
eventually defeated and that was the end of the Karma-pa as a political force. A methodical reorganization by the brilliant trio, the "Great Fifth" Dalai Lama, Bsod-nams chos-phel and Gusri Khan, followed the Dge-lugs-pa triumph. District administration was manned largely by nominees of the Dalai Lama. Some enclaves of what amounted virtually to local self-government had to be left untouched, such as the great monastery of Sa-skya and the estates of a few great nobles e.g. Lha-rgya-ri; but whatever rights they exercised there, the seat of ultimate authority was in no doubt. In the religious sphere, a complete survey of monasteries was gradually completed; a number were taken over either, in the case of the Karma-pa, as a punishment or because they had been neglected. The important Karma-pa foundations were restored to their former owners after some twenty years. Everywhere the Dalai Lama took care to appoint abbots on whom he could rely, and new monasteries were founded in areas where the Dge-lugs-pa had not been well represented. In all this they had the unchallengeable physical backing of Gusri Khan; and from now onwards they were clearly the "established church" and never had to face political competition from any other sect. Their troubles over the next two centuries stemmed from their association with the Mongols by which they had mortgaged some part of the independence of Tibet. But they got off to a good start thanks to extraordinary religious devotion and altruism of Gusri Khan. Having become an expatriate without a territorial base in Mongolia, he might have been tempted to use his armed strength, on which the government of Tibet mainly relied, to make himself active master of the country but he was content to support them in running their own affairs.

It was not for some sixty years, when Gusri's grandson, Lajang Khan, showed the ambition of being king in fact, that the Tibetans felt the strain of their relationships outside their own borders. Deliverance from Lajang was won at the high cost of calling in the Dzungar Mongols whose presence they soon regretted bitterly. Not only did the fanatical and hypocritical puritanism of the Dzungars lead them to persecute Rnying-ma-pa monasteries but also to commit outrages on many Dge-lugs-pa foundations as well. And, what was to prove a greater problem for the next two hundred years, it brought about the intervention and eventually the establishment of a protectorate by the Manchu emperors of China who were haunted by the fear of a hostile Mongolia, united by Tibetan religious influence.

Although it was always with the Dge-lugs-pa church that whoever sought to control Tibet had to deal, its political role underwent some significant changes. For two centuries after the death of the "Great Fifth" no Dalai Lama really ruled Tibet; and during the regime of Pho-lha Mi-dbang from 1728 to 1747 the Dge-lugs-pa church even had to forgo to a lay noble the exercise of supreme authority. With calm and sagacious statesmanship Pho-lha not only reached a *modus vivendi* with the powerful prelates whose
Dalai Lama he effectively kept in exile but he also inspired such confidence at the Chinese court that the position of the emperor as patron and protector came to be little more than a formality. Pho-lha, himself a sincere believer in the Dge-lugs-pa doctrines, had earlier shown courage and magnanimity in resisting an imperial instruction to suppress the Rnying-ma-pa sect, a proposal that was as repugnant to the general religious tolerance of the Tibetans as had been the harrying of the Rnying-ma-pa by the Dzungars. Indeed, the idea of persecuting any sect because it held different religious doctrines came almost exclusively from foreign proselytes. An exception is the fifth Dalai Lama’s proscription of some of the teaching of the Jo-nang-pa which perhaps explains a reference in Chinese records to what could be seen as much wider intolerance — an imperial edict banning at the Dalai Lama’s request the “tantras of Padmasambhava Bakshi” from being recited in China.

After the death of Pho-lha Mi-dbang the demented ambition of his son ’Gyur-med rnam-rgyal revived active Chinese interference in Tibet and spoilt the end of lay rule there. The nobility had earlier been weakened by the disappearance in the civil war of 1727–8 of most of the great families that had remained as enclaves of power after the fifth Dalai Lama’s reorganizations. Lay nobles continued to play an important part in the Tibetan government but they did so under the aegis of the ruling church. Although the Chinese had helped to restore the primacy of that church in affairs of state, they sought to limit it in their favour from inside its own ranks by building up the authority of the Panchen Lama as a check on the power of the Dalai Lama. That power was, in fact, exercised for the next century and a half not by Dalai Lama in person but by a series of regents all of whom were monks — with the exception of the brief regime of the regent Bshad-sgra from 1862 to 1864.

As for the other sects: the great lamas of Sa-skya, the Bka’-brgyud-pa and Rnying-ma-pa, no longer concerned in the competition for political power or the conduct of affairs of state, settled down to the management of their own monasteries and the development of their own doctrinal traditions. There was no exclusiveness and learned men of all sects could study with famous teachers of any other. Perhaps that was more frequent with the older sects among which there were many inspiring and original scholars. There were, of course, fine scholars, mystics and contemplatives among the Dge-lugs-pa too; but it seems to the western observer that the mental rigidity that accompanies the long exercise of worldly power led to a large extent to concentration on rather arid dialectical commentaries and debates. Some of their eighteenth century scholars criticized aspects of the older doctrines, but the lamas of Sa-skya, the Karma-pa and others were received at Lhasa and Bkra-shis-lhun-po with due ceremony and respect; and some of the Dalai and Panchen Lamas were born into families that followed the
older traditions or had close friendly relations with lamas of other sects. In the wealthy monasteries of 'Bras-spungs and Se-ra, with their huge population of monks of varying degrees of piety and discipline, the less well-educated no doubt regarded themselves as superior to other sects; but the violence and unruliness to which they sometimes resorted were generally directed at other monasteries or colleges of the same persuasion. Any idea that there was continuous or active hostility between “Red Hats” and “Yellow Hats” seems to be a misconception due perhaps to the events of the decades before 1640. The Chinese fell victim to it at the time of the Gurkha war of 1788-92 because the part played by the Red Hat Karma-pa lama, and perhaps his title, led them to see what was a selfish personal vendetta as a subversive plot of “Red” against “Yellow”. They were also suspicious of the “Red Hatted” Sa-skya-pas who, for obvious reasons of self-protection, had given supplies to the Nepalese raiders. There is no likelihood that there ever was such a threat or that non-Dge-lugs-pa sects ever attempted to organize themselves into a united “Red Hat” church.

For the ordinary villager doctrinal difference meant nothing; what mattered was to have access to a monastery of whatever colour as a spiritual refuge and a place where monks were available for the needful ceremonies of the village or family. It may be that the local nobility in districts that were long established homes of the older sects felt a sort of family loyalty to their special lamas, but that was in no way a sectarian anti-government feeling. The political supremacy of the Dge-lugs-pa was unquestioned. Its popular base was the widespread devotion to the Dalai Lama. In affairs of state it held a monopoly of official appointments, both clerical and secular, with the added safeguard that in all important offices lay officials had a monk colleague who enjoyed precedence over them. Another powerful support of the established church were the great monasteries housing a large number of monks, especially 'Bras-spungs and Se-ra in whose overshadowing presence — very conservative, unduly powerful, and not averse from occasional violence — the Tibetan government lived and carried on its affairs. Whatever possibilities of development one may think were missed through the dead weight of that adamant resistance to change, it was no small achievement that the Dge-lugs-pa church was able to maintain a genuinely Tibetan government, with its unique customs and traditions, with a minimum of foreign interference.
General Huang Mu-sung at Lhasa, 1934

It seems timely to follow up Nirmal Sinha’s interesting article “The Simla Convention 1914: A Chinese Puzzle” in the Bulletin of Tibetology, new ser., 1 (1977) with the story of an occasion when the Chinese were unwillingly reminded of the continuing effect of that document on Tibetan political thinking.

The Chinese government was quick to take advantage of the death of the thirteenth Dalai Lama by sending a mission to Lhasa under general Huang Mu-sung, a high ranking official, on the pretext of offering condolences. Present at Lhasa during that visit was Rai Bahadur Norbhu Dhondub, Assistant Political Officer in Sikkim, to whom the Indian government owes much gratitude for the influence of his advice to the Tibetans and for the detailed information about the events of those six months which he was able to obtain through his long friendship with leading Tibetan officials. The negotiations which took place between the Chinese and the Tibetans have been summarized in my Tibet and its History, pp. 141-3, and in Tibet, a Political History by W.D. Shakabpa, pp. 276-7. Li Tieh-tseng in The Historical Status of Tibet, pp. 168-177 gives a longer account, but it rearranges the sequence of events to some extent and uses terminology of a more technical western character than can be readily encompassed by the Tibetan vocabulary. It may be of interest, therefore, to put on record a fuller account of the exchanges derived from Tibetan sources.

The first problem to face the new and untried Tibetan administration still deeply in the throes of internal intrigues, was the arrival of a radio set sent ahead of the general. Objections by the bka’-shag to its installation were ignored, but the Tibetans did not make an issue of this.

When the mission arrived on 25th April Huang, who had sent in advance a proclamation that he was coming solely for religious purposes, was received with exceptional honours. He himself made a good impression by tireless and courteous diplomacy, by a display of reverence and piety in

holy places and by lavish gifts and entertainments. His retinue proved less popular and offended Tibetan susceptibilities in many ways. They rode furiously through the streets of Lhasa, brawled among themselves and, surprisingly to the Tibetans, failed to show proper respect to their leader. They also complained about the playing of "British music" — probably including God Save the King! — by Tibetan military bands. The monks showed obvious dislike of the visitors and mocked and jostled Huang's escort so much that they had to be restrained by a special order.

Huang's first move was to offer a seal and a memorial tablet for the late Dalai Lama. The Tibetan government at first refused on the ground that as the Dalai Lama was dead there was no need for a seal; but, under pressure and finding there was nothing compromising on the gifts, the bka'-shag after consulting the National Assembly agreed to accept them. Huang then asked that all the high officials should go to his headquarters to receive the objects; but eventually he went himself to the Potala to make the presentation.

No one believed that Huang had come without any political purpose, but although he had private discussions with the regent and high officials he shrewdly refrained from making any formal overture. So after some time a meeting of the National Assembly was held at which it was decided to broach the question of the frontier, making it clear that "while Tibet and China should be considered as two eyes", Tibet must remain independent. The bka'-shag accordingly raised the matter with Huang and also referred to their difficulties over the Panchen Lama. Huang told them that he had met the Panchen and was certain he had no intention of trying to return to Tibet by force. As for political matters he pretended that he had come solely on religious business and had no authority to enter any sort of negotiations. The bka'-shag pointed out that he had been described as second only to Chiang Kai-shek and must surely have some power.

Huang then unfolded his brief. The Tibetan government should declare themselves part of China as one of the Five Races and should set up a republic. They should obey the instructions of the central government and in return they would be protected against all outsiders.

The National Assembly, which was consulted on all matters during Huang's visit, debated these proposals for two days and replied that Tibet had been ruled by thirteen Dalai Lamas and would never become a part of the Chinese Republic. They would defend their independence to the last man against any invader.

When the bka'-shag reported this to general Huang his urbanity was somewhat ruffled and he tried the effect of scarcely veiled threats. The Panchen Lama, he said, had joined the Chinese Republic and if he tried to return to Tibet by force the Chinese government would do nothing to stop him. The bka'-shag were not impressed and reminded Huang of what he had told them a few days before. Nevertheless, the matter was again
referred to the National Assembly which re-affirmed its stand and signed a paper to that effect.

Huang, obviously disappointed, telegraphed to Nanking for instructions and, although he was advised to return, he did not give up at once. In another meeting he watered down his demands, saying that membership of the Five Races did not necessarily mean adopting a republican government. The important thing was that Tibet should rely on China. He said that Great Britain in a treaty with Japan had acknowledged that Tibet was subject to China. The Tibetans replied that they knew of no such treaty and, if there were one, it would not affect them. As for China’s ability to help, they asked what the Chinese had done for Mongolia and Manchuria. The National Assembly was consulted again. They bluntly rejected all Huang’s proposals and stressed their friendship with the British government whose treatment of them even after 1904 they described as fair. China was the only enemy they had to fear.

Huang, determined to persist but not willing to risk the further loss of face then handed over the negotiations to Wu Min-yuan a member of his staff who had been born in Lhasa to a Tibetan mother. Wu visited the bka’-shag and explained that Huang was too severely disappointed to do any more but that he himself had some informal suggestions to make. It was believed in Lhasa that before Wu’s approach large presents had been given to leading officials and it was expected that the bka’-shag might give way but that the National Assembly would stand firm. Wu’s proposals, which were made in writing, were debated for several days both by the bka’-shag and the National Assembly. The points raised and the opinion of each body on them are detailed below:

1. “Relations between the Central Government and the Tibetan Government should be those of Benefactor and Lama.”

The bka’-shag accepted this on condition that “Chinese Government” should be substituted for “Central Government”. The National Assembly agreed.


3. “Tibet has religion, men, and complete administrative arrangements; therefore China should consider Tibet to be independent and should not interfere in its internal administration”. Agreed.

4. “No Chinese troops should be kept on Tibet’s frontiers”. Agreed.

5. “Five thousand troops should be selected from the Tibetan army as Frontier Guards. They should be posted on the various frontiers and China should pay, arm, and train the troops”.

The bka’-shag said troops could be posted on the frontiers but there was no need for a specially named force; and no pay or arms were wanted from the Chinese government. The Assembly said it was not necessary to post troops on the frontiers unless an emergency arose.
6. “A Chinese Officer should be posted at Lhasa to advise the Tibetan Government. He should be given an escort out of the Frontier Force and should control the movements of the whole force.”

The bka'-shag preferred that no Chinese officer should be posted at Lhasa. If one were appointed he should have nothing to do with the Tibetan army but he might have a small escort. The Simla agreement specified three hundred men. The Assembly said that twenty-five servants should suffice for an escort and any Chinese officer should strictly observe the condition of non-interference in Tibetan internal affairs.

7. “The Tibetan Government should consult the Chinese Government before corresponding with other nations about external affairs.”

The bka'-shag said that Tibet was independent and would deal with its external affairs without consulting the Chinese. The Assembly agreed, adding that the Tibetan government would correspond with all nations, “headed by the British”, whenever they wanted.

8. “The Chinese Government should be consulted about the appointment of officers of the rank of Shappé and above.”

The bka'-shag refused but said that the Chinese government could be informed after such appointments had been made. The Assembly agreed.

9. “China should recognize the boundary existing at the time of the Emperor Kuang-hsü”. That apparently meant the frontier before the invasion by Chao Erh-feng in 1908–10.

Both the bka'-shag and Assembly accepted that as favourable but demanded additional territory including Nyag-rong, Ba-thang, Li-thang and the Mgo-log country.

10. “China should fight or else mediate with any nations that try to invade Tibet”.

The bka'-shag and Assembly replied that as Tibet is a religious country no one is likely to attack her. If anyone does, Tibet will deal with them without Chinese help. The question of mutual help could be considered if it arose.

11. “China should be informed when the incarnation of a Dalai Lama is discovered so that the Chinese Government can offer him a seal and a title”.

The bka'-shag agreed. The National Assembly said that China should be informed only after the installation had taken place in order to avoid trouble such as was created in the case of the sixth and seventh Dalai Lamas.

12. “The Tibetan Government should invite the Panchen Lama to return at once, should restore to him his former powers, estates and property, and should guarantee that no harm should fall on him or his followers. If that were done the Chinese Government would take away his arms and munitions”.

The bka'-shag and Assembly replied that the Panchen Lama being a religious person required no arms or ammunition; they would welcome him
back and guarantee his personal safety if the Chinese took away his arms. They added that he should be asked to return via India in accordance with the wishes of the late Dalai Lama.

13. “All Tibetan officers in China should receive salaries from the Chinese Government”.

The bka'-shag agreed. The Assembly said it was a matter of indifference to them but only officials appointed by the Tibetan government should attend meetings.

14. “All half-Chinese in Tibet should be under the sole jurisdiction of the Chinese officer at Lhasa”.

The bka'-shag and Assembly replied that when the Chinese were turned out of Tibet in 1912 the Tibetan government asked all Chinese to return to China. Those born in Tibet sought permission to remain and signed an agreement to pay taxes and submit to Tibetan jurisdiction. This article was, therefore, unacceptable.

On receiving these replies Huang wrote to the bka'-shag asking that all of Wu Min-yuan’s proposals should be accepted and laying particular stress on three demands: 1. that Tibet should admit subordination to China; 2. that all direct correspondence with outside nations should cease or, 3. failing that, China should be consulted before appointments were made to the post of Shapé or higher ranks.

After long deliberation the National Assembly decided 1. that Tibet might be considered subordinate to China to the extent and on the terms laid down in the Simla treaty; 2. that Tibet would correspond with all nations, headed by the British, and would not consult the Chinese government on the subject; 3. in view of religious ties, Tibet would inform China after the appointment of officers of the rank of Shapé and above.

The National Assembly expressly desired that the British government should be a party to any agreement reached between Tibet and China. Huang refused bluntly to consider this last proposal but referred the other replies to Nanking. He was then ordered to return to China for consultation and he left Lhasa towards the end of October.

I believe that to be a generally accurate record of events between April and October 1934, and it is largely confirmed by the account of Li Tiehtseng who admits in conclusion that the Tibetan authorities were not yet ready to place their trust and reliance on the Chinese government of the day. The best success he can claim is that the Tibetans were willing in principle to resume full relationship once the overall differences were settled. The magnitude of those differences shown by repeated Tibetan assertions of their independence is something Li does not stress; and when in 1935 F.W. Williamson asked the Tibetan government about their views on Chinese suzerainty they stated that the Simla Convention in exchange for territorial concessions from the Chinese they had definitely not
accepted even the nominal suzerainty of China in their talks with General Huang.

Although, in the event, it was shown that the conditions of the Simla Convention remained the guiding principle of the Tibetan government, the British government realized that by consenting in 1933 to the Tibetans attempting to reach a direct agreement with China provided it did not prejudice their obligations to the British government, they had allowed a departure from the Simla Convention which might have led to an agreement being reached from which they were excluded. The earliest opportunity was, therefore, taken of letting the Tibetan government know that the British government would expect to be represented at any further such negotiations.

The Chinese, moreover, had succeeded in making a small hole in the Simla agreements by leaving a small liaison mission at Lhasa; but by so doing they attracted a countervailing British Mission which continued in existence after August 1947 as the Indian Mission and in 1954 was converted into a Consulate-General.
In 1946, while I was at Lhasa, when Tibetan guests were looking with me at illustrations in various books on Tibet we came across the photograph in Younghusband’s *India and Tibet* (1910) of “the Shigatse Abbot” who visited him at Gam-pa Rdzong in 1903. He was identified by my guests as the Skyabs-dbyings, the highest-ranking monastic official of Bkra-shis-lhun-po and the equivalent of the Spyi-khyab mkhan-po of the Lhasa administration. Someone remarked that he had been dismissed from his post after his visit to Younghusband; and supposing that to have been due to the failure of his mission, I thought no more of it until, many years later, I came across the inside story in the papers of Sir Charles Bell, now in the India Office Records, where he relates the account given him in 1914 by the famous Blon-chen Bshad-sgra of a notorious scandal at Bkra-shis-lhun-po early in the present century. With the permission of the Director of the India Office Library and Records I have used that note as the basis of this article.

Some time before the British Mission to Lhasa it was reported to the Dalai Lama’s government that the Panchen Lama’s father had been murdered and that the Skyabs-dbyings was engaged in sorcery against the Lhasa administration and was also trying to usurp the authority of the Panchen Lama. The Panchen on being asked about this replied that he wanted a thorough enquiry to be made; and accordingly a party of officials headed by Gsar-byung Zhabs-pad was sent from Lhasa for that purpose. It was discovered that the Panchen Lama’s father had had an affair with the wife of another prominent Bkra-shis-lhun-po official, the Gnyer-tshang chen-po. The woman attempted to poison the Panchen Lama’s mother who, as David Macdonald records in *Twenty Years in Tibet*, was a deaf mute so that she could marry the father. But the plot miscarried and it was the Panchen’s father and some of his servants who ate the poisoned food. They were saved only by the skill of a doctor known as Ba-du Am-chi who, as I learnt

somewhere (perhaps in another note by Bell) had accompanied the *Skyabs-dbyings* on his visit to Younghusband at Gam-pa Rdzong. A dog which ate some of the poisoned food was less fortunate. It died. The *Gnyer-tshang chen-po*’s wife tried to put the blame on her daughter but was found guilty and was banished and heavily fined. The record does not say so but she was probably flogged as well. The Panchen’s father, who must at least have been innocent of the poisoning attempt, was fined and imprisoned in Phun-tshogs-gling Rdzong. These proceedings were presumably carried out by the Panchen Lama’s ministers headed by the *Skyabs-dbyings*; but the *Gnyer-tshang chen-po*, who was even more influential than the *Skyabs-dbyings*, wanted further vengeance and persuaded the *Skyabs-dbyings* to send orders to the Phun-tshogs-gling *rdzong-dpon* to have the Panchen Lama’s father killed, which was done by clubbing him to death. In addition to this grave offence of which he was found guilty by Gsar-byung Zhabs-pad and his colleagues the *Skyabs-dbyings* was shown to have sought to bring the Dalai Lama’s government under his influence by means of written magical charms which he kept beneath his seat and also of attempting to usurp the authority of the Panchen Lama. He and the *Gnyer-tshang chen-po* were heavily fined and degraded. There were probably other lesser figures who received similar punishment. All the fines were made over to the Panchen Lama.

The official enquiry must have taken place sometime between November 1903 and July 1904. The “Shigatse Abbot’s” visit to Younghusband lasted from July to October 1903. Younghusband, to whom the Tibetan mind and Tibetan ways were a new experience, describes him as courteous, kindly, innocent-minded and lacking in intellect. That judgement seems to underestimate the Tibetan ability to conceal shrewdness and strength of mind beneath a genuine calm and self-control and an assumed air of simplicity. Incidentally, W.D. Shakabpa states in his *Tibet* that the Gzhis-ka-rtse delegation’s visit to Younghusband was made on the instruction of the Lhasa government. Shakabpa’s history also shows that Gsar-byung Tshe-brtan dbang-phyug rdo-rje was appointed *Zhabs-pad* towards the end of 1903. In July 1904 he left Lhasa with the Dalai Lama in flight to Mongolia and, later, China. There is no indication how long before the enquiry the various crimes had taken place.

A possible sequel to those events may be seen in Macdonald’s *Twenty Years in Tibet* where he mentions two dismissed officials of the Panchen Lama who took service under the Lhasa government and were responsible for a great deal of the trouble between the Dalai and Panchen Lamas.

So far as I know, Bell’s is the only account of the affair, but examination of Chinese records might find some trace of it.
Bibliography

The Fifth Dalai Lama’s Decree
Appointing Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho as Regent

In 1679 the fifth Dalai Lama issued a decree appointing Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho to conduct the administration of secular affairs on his behalf in the post usually known as that of regent. The decree, sealed with the imprint of the Dalai Lama’s hands, is inscribed in the Potala on a wall opposite the steep triple stair leading down to the great eastern courtyard called Bde-yangs-shar. It is referred to in the third volume of the autobiography of the Dalai Lama (Du-ku-la, iii, fo. 128a) and in the Vaiḍūrya ser-po composed by Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho in 1698 (VSP, p. 360); but the complete text does not appear to have been published in any Tibetan or western work. The copy transcribed below is derived mainly from a photograph kindly given me by Ernst Krause who accompanied Ernst Schaefer to Lhasa in 1939. As can be seen in the reproduction in plates 99 and 100 the last two lines are obscured by a wooden frame protecting the Dalai Lama’s hand-prints, and for that passage I am indebted to the Tibetan scholar and author, rtsis-dpon W. D. Shakabpa.

The edict is in 24 lines, the first five of which are devoted to the title conferred on the Dalai Lama by the emperor Shun-chih in 1653. The first line is in Sanskrit in an ornamental form of Devanāgari differing from the Lan-tsha as illustrated by Csoma de Körös in his grammar of the Tibetan language and Sarat Chandra Das in JASB (1888) only in the absence of the points at the feet of the letters; it most nearly resembles the so-called sha-chen letters in plate V of Das’s article. The second line is the identical text in the Wa-rtu script; the third is a transcription of the same into Tibetan characters as follows:

The syllables syā, sthā etc. above are written with a subscribed a-bo; š represents the reversed letter sha. The text, in which there are some apparent errors, may be reconstructed as:

uttarārena sureṇdramukhasya agamena paścimasya deva-
sthānātiśubhasukhatā-dhīṣṭhasya buddhajñāgama gaganādhvasya
jata-gamanasarvaśāsanaikibhavad akṣaravajradharasamudrāgurāv
abhi-śecanasyākhyātām

The fourth line transcribes the Chinese original of the title into Tibetan. The words are spaced out widely to fill the whole line beneath the one above:

chen khra’o hong de’i khri wu’i zi then ta zhan tsi tse’i pho
bro wu’i then zha bti kro’u yi thung de phyi kying gang de’i
khe’i brang zi tsi yin / /

This represents:

ch’ing ch’ao hong ti chi ling hsi t’ien ta shan tzu tsai fo so ling
t’ien hsia shih chiao p’u t’ung ta ch’i chin kang ta lai
lama chi yen

The fifth line is the Tibetan translation of the above:

*gong ma hong de’i lung gis zhes nub kyi lha gnas ches dge
ba bde bar gnas pa’i sangs rgyas bka’ lung gnam ’og gi skye ’gro
thams cad bstan pa gcig tu gyur pa ’gyur med rdo rje ’chang rgya
mtsho’i bla mar dbang bskur ba’i gtam / /

The edict proper begins in the sixth line:

dzambu brikshas mngon par mtshan pa’i nor ’dzin gyi gzhir ’khod
pa’i nyi ’og gi skye rgu spyi dang bye brag gdan sa chen po ser ’bras
dge gsum (7) gam du ’khod pa’i rnam par rgyal ba’i phan bde legs
bshad gling pa sog s ris med kyi khrims ldan ’dus pa’i sde gsang
sngags ’chang ba g.yung drung bon sog s lha sder gtogs so cog
dang sog po tsho chen bzhi bcu o rod tsho pa bzhi mtsho khri
shor rgyal mo'i gram du gnas pa'i rgyal po rgyal rigs ju
nang tha'ji dpon che chung tha bu nang ja'i sang mi (8)
bzang sde dmangs dang bcas pa skor gsum ru bzhig sgang
drug ces bod chen po'i rgyal kham su 'khod pa'i dpon chen dpon
skya rdzong sdod nang rnam rta drung gnyer kha las 'dzin
sogs mdor na mchog dman bar ma mtha' dag la springs pa tshe
ring gnam gyi she mong gis yangs pa'i sa kun la dbang bsgyur ba
bstan 'dzin chos kyi rgyal po'i lhag bsam dang snying stobs btsan
po'i (9) mthu's rgyal dbang tsong kha pa chen po'i bstan pa bla
nas blar 'degs par mdzad skabs chu rta pho brang chen po bsam
'grub rtses gtsos pa'i mnga' 'bangs dang rgyal po nyid kyi rigs
bgyud dang bcas pa mtha' dag gtan pa med pa'i mchod sbyin du
sbyor 'jags mdzad pa'i tse' chos nyis 'dzin nged rang nas ma
lcosgs pas 'jig rten srid skyong gi 'khur len sde pa bsod (10) nams
rab brtan gyis mdzad pa'i ries su gdung gcig pa'i mi ngo rdzogs par
brten sde pa 'phrin las rgya mtsho sog's 'khur len rim par bkod cing
grmond pa sngags rgyas rgya mtsho 'di pa sa skyong 'phrin las
rgya mtsho'i rus tsha yin pa ma zad gter gsar rgya can sogs lung
bstan 'ga' zhig tu bod kyi rje bor 'os pa lung gis zin pa nas shing
yos la 'khur (11) len byed dgos tshul rgyu mtshan mtha' gsdan nan
chags byas kyang zhu na ches pas 'khrol cha byed dgos
shar gzhana ma'i 'os tho mang ba ha cang gi brtag par ma babs
shing gra tshang gnyer pa blo bzang sbyin pa sngags rgyam pa'i
'og gi brtag pa ngo dkar ba yod gshis rgyu mtshan smos pas shes
'dod ni med bka' gyen ldog mi nus 'on kyang brtag (12) pa bskyar
nas brlting cha dgos tshul byung ba lo gsum gyi bar 'tshubs cha
med cing bzang bas slar bgegs zhi na na mun thud byed long yong
rtsis kyi lo grangs kyi brda' 'grems dang bcas khri bkod pa rang
'dod chung zhing btsan srid lar rgya'i sar 'khur bsam che ba
dang khtrad par 'di ga'i ngag bkod las cung zad kyang mi g.yo ba
sogs thams cad mkhyen pa dge (13) 'dun rgya mtshos nye gnas
gsung rab par gnang ba'i tshigs bcad kyi brjod don dang mtshungs
par mu mthud thub la re byung ba sde pa rang yang lo grangs
thengs nas 'tshubs 'dra' byung nyen gyis nan zhus che zhing brtag
pa lan gnyis gsum bskyar ba dang tshangs pa dung thod can la
dri ba zhus pa sogs kyang mtshungs pa nas gsar bkod kyi sog do
par gzhana pa 'os dkon zhing sngar gyi brtag (14) pa lung btsan
sogs gang sa nas grong smad pa sngags rgyam pa rang la nan tan du
lab par yal yol sogs thabs sna tshogs las dang len zhig mi 'dug
rung dung dkar dang chu srin gyi dpe bzhin dgongs pa gtan nas
ma 'khrol phyin phyis skor blo sna 'gyur ba'i chos la dung sms
che ba zhig yod kyang sde srid 'di gas mu mthud gnang na smos
ma dgos de (15) min khri 'don zhig grub pa'i sgo ma dod gong la
zhus na mi dmangs kyis de lam du lus pa yin da cha bsnyen rdzogs zhig byas pa'i lo gnyis kyi bar bka' ma bcag par zhus de nas 'khur yang byas chog pa dgos tshul zer ba dngos gzhi rab tu byung na legs pa'i char 'dug rung thams cd mkyen pa dge 'dun rgya mtsho (16) yan bka' gdams kyi rnam thar kho na lhur bzhes la dper ma mtshon dga' ldan pho brang lugs gnyis kyi mnga' thang je 'phel gyi 'og zug pa'i phyag mdzod rgya seng gnyis nas bzung da lta phan sde pa blo bzang sbyin pa tsam ma gtogs tshangs spyod la gnas pa ma byung zhung lhag par dpal phag mo grub pa dang sde srid gtsang pa'i stobs 'byor las brgel ba shar (17) dar rtse mdo yan gyi bdag por gyur pa'i dmag dang khrims sog drag po'i rtsub spyod kyang sna tshogs dgos par tshangs spyod gcig pos rab byung du 'gro ba'ang dka' zhi ng sam pa'i 'gyur khyad drag zhan kun la gtan mi chags pa zhig yong gshis da lta'i blo 'di gar sdod pa'i nges pa kyang med lhag tu dge 'dun dang ngang pa khyus 'tsho dgos par gnas grogs sog gsang sa nas (18) lhus thing dka' bar ma zad sde chen po'i rigs la blon brgyud sog sdro m'hor drag pa rnam s'hkor ba dong sprugs lta bu'i blo sna bstung pa rten 'brel la yang mi legs bla brang du bdag mo bsten pas mtshon sger gzhung mnyam bsres gzhana blor mi chud pa ni ga la byed de phyin sger gzhis kyi 'dzin skyong kyang blos ma bor ba byas na phugs yul gzhung gi zhabs tog tu (19) 'gyur ba rgya le sku mdun rin po che'i dpe dang bcas mol ba ltar yid 'jog byed rgyu yin cing go sa 'dis bod kyi sde dpon gzhana dang ma dra ba'i rgya bod hor gsum tshang ma'i sne len stabs brel ba rgyun mi chad lta bu'i khag sbyong che bar la lar nyams 'char rtsed mo'i gu sngos kyi gzhung las la 'thus shor dang mi rnam kyi kyang 'phya gleng sna tshogs yong 'dug pa da cha (20) nyams len gyi snying po 'di ga'i ngag bkod la dang len ngos tshul 'chos bag ldan gya por bkab med pa'i kho rang gi blo mthun dang nya stong brgyad gsum la yan lag brgyad pa'i khrims len pa'am dge sbyor zol sdod gu sngos lta bu gang byed kyang zla rer nyin gsum res las kar le shor mi yong bas 'khrol cha byas shing lo grangs ma dgos zer ba de bzhin byas tshe tshang ma khag bsun dang (21) gzhung rang 'gos sgo che ba las mi 'dug gshis nam lcogs bar 'khur len byed rgyun bar phyag mdzod bsko.bzhag bgyis pa 'di ga nas mi chos kyi 'khur len ma lcogs pa'i bgo tshabs yin gshis 'di pas gang byas * nged rang nas byas pa dang khyad med pa'i 'then 'khyer gyi gleng brjod med par kun gys bkod pa g.yo med dang * nged dang sde pa'i sel 'jug sogs byas tshe gzhung don lar rgyar (22) 'chugs tshabs che bas bden med bdrdzun bsgregs kyi g.yo 'phrul byas chog rgyu min na tshod sogs nas mi lcogs pa'i 'khur len 'jog pa shar tshe nam yin la bzhag pa'i
zur pa spyi 'gre bzhin nyan lugs blo dang sbyar chog rgyu yin pa sogs tshig don rams la skya ser drag zhan sus kyang tshul bzhin bsgrubs par rjes 'dzin dang log par 'khu bar tshar good (23) pas mtshon pa'i legs nyes kyi bstangs 'dzin 'dod khams kyi dbang phyug dmag zor rgyal mo dang chos skyong mo tse lcam dral sogs bstan srung rams kyis 'phrin las rnam bzhi bsgrub pa'i grogs dang g.yel ba med pa mdzad du gsol 'phags pa'i yul du siddartha 'phyogs 'dir don grub tu grags shing 'jam dbyangs * gong ma'i rgyal khab tu gyi yi zhes pa dbang thang dang bstun pa sa mo lug gi lo (24) hor zla lnga pa'i dkar cha'i rgyal ba gnyis pa'i tshes la sde bzhi'i sgo 'phar rnam par phye ba pho brang chen po po ta la nas bris pa ja yan tu / /

Translation

By order of the emperor Hong-de the following title1 was bestowed on me: “The Buddha dwelling in the great goodness and happiness of the Western Heaven whose injunctions have become the sole doctrine of all creatures under Heaven, the holder of the immutable rdo-rje, the Ocean-wide”.

To all creatures in general beneath the sun who live on the surface of the wealth-bearing earth clearly distinguished by the wish-granting tree and in particular to the three great seats of Se-ra, 'Bras-spungs and Dge-ladan, to those of the neighbouring Rnam-par rgyal-ba'i Phan-bde legs-bshad-gling2 and to the whole congregation of religious establishments which keep the monastic rule of non-attachment, to the masters of mysticism, to the Bon of the Swastika, and to whomsoever is dependent on a religious community; also to the forty great tribes of the Mongols, the four tribes of the Oirats, the king who lives by the shores of lake Khri-shor rgyal-mo,3 to the royal clan, the Ju-nang, Tha'i-ji, officers great and small, the Tha-bu-nang, Ja'i-sang and nobles, together with the communities of common folk, to the great officers of the kingdom of Great Tibet4 known as the three Skor, the four Ru and the six Sgang; to the lay officials, governors of districts, household officers, couriers, and to those who hold any kind of responsible post; in short, to everyone high, low, and middling, it is proclaimed:

By virtue of the high purpose and strong determination of Bstan-'dzin chos-rgyal,5 who by the grace of eternal heaven6 rules over all the wide earth, the doctrine of rgyal-ba Tsong-kha-pa was raised from height to height. At that time, in the water-horse year, when all people, especially the subjects of the palace of Bsam-'grub-rtse and also the king’s own lineage, were set under me by a religious offering of selfless generosity, since I was unable by myself to undertake the government in both the religious and the temporal sphere, after the sde-pa Bsdod-nams rab-briam had carried out the task of regent for secular affairs as all members of his family had died I appointed Sde-pa 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho and others in succession to
bear that responsibility. Now, as this Grong-smad-pa Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho is not only the nephew of the Sde-pa 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho but in several prophecies, such as the recently discovered Rgya-can,7 is marked out by predictions as being fit to rule over Tibet, in the wood-hare year the reasons why he ought to accept that responsibility were urged upon him in detail. But because of his earnest pleading I had to excuse him. Consequently, without holding a test of the many other suitable persons, since the Gra-tshang gnyer-pa8 Blo-bzang sbyin-pa had been shown to be the favoured candidate after Sangs-rgyam-pa (Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho) the circumstances were explained to him. Although he was unwilling to accept he was not able to resist my order. Nevertheless, on a repetition of the test by lot the result was that the choice must be confirmed. He was then appointed on the express agreement that if everything went well for three years without disturbance and if then all obstacles had subsided and it was likely this would continue, that would be the term of his office. Since he is without personal ambition and his foremost care was to bring about the advancement of the religious government; and especially because he has not departed in the least from my instructions I had hoped, just as the all-knowing Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho expressed it in his verses for his disciple Gsung-rab-pa,9 that he might be able to continue. But the Sde-pa himself pressingly asked to be excused on account of the risk that there might be some confusion if his term of office were to be extended. So when the occasion arose for making a new appointment in accordance with several repetitions of the test by lot and after consulting Tshangs-pa of the White Conch-shell Headress,10 since there were so few others suitable, the matter was put forcefully to Sangs-rgyam-pa in every way, on the grounds of the former tests by lot and the predictions and so on. Although for all sorts of hesitations and arguments he was unwilling to accept, he said that as I, following the example of the white conch and the sea monster11 would by no means excuse him, even though on account of the uncertainties of the future he was one who is greatly devoted to religion, if the present sde-srid were able to carry on,12 it would not be necessary to say anything but since that is not so, in case he were to ask to be excused before there had been an opportunity to conclude a new appointment all sorts of doubts might occur to the people at large and the matter might fall by the way, so now he requests that without disobeying my orders he may keep his religious vows for two years and in that way he may be allowed to undertake the task. Although to enter religious orders is certainly a source of excellence, of those ministers who progressively increased the power of the Dga-'ldan Pho-brang in its two spheres, from the two phyag-mdzod Rgya and Seng13 down to the present time, none except for the sde-pa Blo-bzang sbyin-pa has followed the example of fully dedicated acceptance of the Bka'-gdams-pa way of deliverance, shown by the all-knowing Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho and his predecessors, and has maintained a life of celibate purity. Especially, since it has been necessary to perform many kinds of severe and strict administrative acts of justice and warfare in bringing under control a kingdom extending in the east as far as Dar-rtse-mdo14 and exceeding in wealth those of the Phag-mo-grub-pa15 and
the Gtsang-pa sde-srid, it was difficult for them to enter monastic orders and keep solely to a celibate life. The changeable nature of their minds causes impermanence in high and low alike so that there is no certainty that they will continue in their present opinions. Furthermore, as monks and geese have to live in flocks not only is it difficult to be discriminating about one's place of residence and one's friends; but also the body of ministers in the highest administrative rank restrict their outlook to the world of transient appearances in the same way as the lay nobility, which is unpropitious for their future. Of course he would not set the example of keeping a mistress in the bla-brang, confusing private with public behaviour and paying no heed to the opinion of others. But apart from that, without giving up care for the maintenance of his private estates he will give the fullest attention to his activity in the service of the government according to example of Rgya-le Sku-mdun Rin-po-che already mentioned. In this office, when he is carrying out an increasingly heavy task unlike that of former governors of Tibet such as the never-ending business of the hospitable reception of guests from China, Tibet and Mongolia, some people may get the idea that the relaxation of such entertainments is detrimental to his official duties, and men may criticize him in different ways. But now the essence of his practice is his acceptance of my instructions and his opinions are agreeable as those of one whose good qualities are not to be concealed. And whatever he may do by way of relaxation whether by observing the rule of the Eightfold Path or in the form of religious exercises, that shall not exceed three days in each month. While granting that amount of leave I have said it is unnecessary to fix a term of office for in that way trouble would be avoided on each occasion and government expenditure would be saved. So I have appointed him phyag-mdzod for so long as he can bear the responsibility. Since he will be acting as my representative for the secular administration which I am unable to undertake, everyone shall accept orders without hesitation and without any suggestions of disagreement that whatever is done by him shall be the same as if it were done by me. And it shall not be allowed to anyone, by causing dissension between myself and the Sde-pa, to injure the interests of the government and maliciously to concoct unfounded falsehoods. If it should happen that on account of old age and the like he cannot continue to bear the burden imposed on him, following the practice of those who have formerly retired because of old age he shall be allowed to act in accordance with his wishes.

Praying that Dmag-zor rgyal-mo who has power over the world of desires, the chos-skyong Beg-tse lcam-dral and other guardians of the faith may continually give the assistance of the four orders of ritual by protecting all those, monk or lay, high or low, who duly carry out the terms of this edict and by cutting off completely those who entertain evil designs against it, dealing with them for good or ill according to their deserts. Written on the Rgyal-ba gnyis-pa day of the bright half of the fifth Hor month of the earth-female-sheep year according to the dbang-thang and which is known in the sacred land of India as Siddhārtha, in this country as Don-grub, and in the kingdom of the emperor 'Jam-dbyangs as
Gi Yi, at the great palace of Potala which fully opens the gateway to the four kinds of attainment. Jayantu.

* * *

Some comment on the office of regent and on Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho’s predecessors may help to put the decree into its historical setting and explain several of the allusions in it.

The first regent of the Dge-lugs-pa regime was Bsod-nams rab-brtan, also known as Bsod-nams chos-’phel. The vital part he played in the triumph of his sect has been largely overlooked by western writers but something of it can be read in Tibet: A Political History by W. D. Shakabpa (hereafter abbreviated as S I) and in his later and more detailed work on the same subject in Tibetan (S II). The Re’u-mig in the Dpa-gsams ljor-bzang of Sum-pa Mkhan-po shows that Bsod-nams chos-’phel or rab-brtan was born in 1595. I can find no reference to his birthplace or parentage except that S I describes him as Bod-pa — Tibetan. He became the principal attendant of the fourth Dalai Lama, Yon-tan rgya-mtsho (S I, p. 101) which must have been at an early age for he was only twenty-one when the Dalai Lama died in 1616. At that time Bsod-nams rab-brtan was described as mdzod-pa, treasurer (VSP, p. 113). He had some responsibility for initiating the search which led in 1619 to the recognition of Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho as the fifth Dalai Lama (S I, p. 101). In 1620, in face of active hostility from the Gtsang sde-srid who was then the ruling power in Tibet, he fled to Mongolia, returning in 1621 to live in the Dga’-ldan Pho-brang, since 1516 the residence of the Dalai Lamas at ‘Bra-s-pungs. At that time he was generally referred to as the zhal-ngo of Dga’-ldan Pho-brang. In 1634 when the Gtsang ruler sought to stir up trouble for the Dalai Lama’s followers in Mongolia, Bsod-nams rab-brtan went there to enlist the support of the Qoshot leader Gusri Khan who favoured the Dge-lugs-pa. Having received encouragement from the Khan he returned to Tibet where, according to The Annals of Kokonor by Sum-pa Mkhan-po (fo. 4b), he and his companions, in an act of duplicity, joined the court of the Gtsang ruler and from there continued their efforts for the Dge-lugs-pa cause by secretly soliciting the help of lamas and nobles of central Tibet. In 1638 Gusri Khan, having defeated the enemies of the Dge-lugs-pa in eastern Tibet, came to Lhasa ostensibly on pilgrimage. He was received by the Dalai Lama and honoured with the title of Bstan-’dzin chos-kyi rgyal-po. At the same time Bsod-nams rab-brtan was given the rank of Dalai phyag-mdzod and another leading member of the Dalai Lama’s entourage, ’Phrin-las rgya-mtsho of Grong-smad, received the title of Jaisang sde-pa (S II, p. 412). Perhaps the name Bsod-nams chos-’phel was also given to Bsod-nams rab-brtan then, but as he is always called by the latter name in the fifth Dalai Lama’s autobiography that is how I shall refer to him.
Shakabpa's works show the determined diplomacy and daring — to the point of rashness — by which Bsod-nams rab-brtan brought Gusri Khan to undertake and carry through in spite of vigorous opposition a campaign against the Gtsang Sde-srid which culminated in the victory of 1642. In that year, with what appears extraordinary self-denying religious devotion, Gusri conferred on the Dalai Lama the sovereignty of Tibet, including territory he had conquered in the east of the country. For himself he retained the title of king and the duty of providing armed support for the Dalai Lama. He assumed no active part in the administration but sought to institute a constitutional convention by which the Dalai Lama should confine himself principally to religious matters while to conduct civil affairs there should be a minister-regent appointed by the king. His nominee as first holder of that office was Bsod-nams rab-brtan whom he had appointed even before he offered the sovereignty to the Dalai Lama (Petech, "Dalai-Lamas and Regents", p. 378). Giuseppe Tucci (TPS, p. 70) sees this as a determination to keep actual control of Tibet through his protégé, so setting the stage for a struggle for power between Gusri and a "crafty and ambitious Dalai Lama". He describes Bsod-nams rab-brtan as an insignificant character whom the Dalai Lama had no difficulty in dominating. That is not how he is regarded by present-day Tibetans, who see him rather as an éminence grise; and it is difficult to reconcile his unremitting, almost domineering, activity on behalf of the Dge-lugs-pa before 1642 with a lapse into nonentity after that year. Indeed, during his term of office the supremacy of the Dge-lugs-pa sect had been firmly established while the beginning of the superb Potala palace, on the hill where the early kings of Tibet traditionally had a residence, marked not only the power of the new regime but also its claim to continuity with that of the great religious kings of the past. Relations had been established with the neighbouring countries of China, India, Nepal and Ladakh; but with Bhutan, a stronghold of non-Dge-lugs-pa sects, there was continuing hostility.

In references to the period between 1638 and 1642 Bsod-nams rab-brtan is generally known as Zhal-ngo rather than Dalai phyag-mdzod. As for the title he and his successors enjoyed after 1642, Shakabpa states that they were designated Sde-srid (SI, p. 111). That was the term by which the Phag-mo-gru-pa and Gtsang-pa rulers had been known and which, according to Shakabpa, came to imply the holding of office during the rule of an adult Dalai Lama as distinct from the title Rgyal-tshab which was used of later regents when a Dalai Lama was a minor.

Certainly, Tibetan writers after the death of the fifth Dalai Lama refer to the early regents often, but not exclusively, as Sde-srid and that is the title known to the Capuchin missionary Orazio della Penna who was at Lhasa at intervals between 1719 and 1745; but it is not so certain that it was in use during the fifth Dalai Lama's lifetime. I have not been able to consult
the whole of his autobiography — of which only the first three volumes are attributed to him personally — but from fairly extensive reading of the first two volumes and scattered notes from the third, I doubt whether the Dalai Lama used it at all in describing his chief minister. It does appear as a title of personages who were not regents, e.g., the Yar-brog Sde-srid Rib-bo-brag-pa (Du-ku-la, ii, fo. 1); but when writing of his regents the Dalai Lama describes them usually as Sde-pa or Sa-skyong. Neither of these titles is exclusive to the post and each is applied to high-ranking district and provincial governors. Similarly, in the decree appointing Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho it is seen that the previous regents are described as Sde-pa. The word sde-srid is found only once there, possibly but not certainly referring to the regent Blo-bzang sbyin-pa (see note 12 below). Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho himself is described as Sde-pa and is said to have been appointed Phyag-mdzod. Referring to him after his appointment the Dalai Lama calls him Sa-skyong (Du-ku-la, iii, fo. 132b).

The only contemporary evidence from western sources is that of the Jesuit Johannes Grueber who was at Lhasa in 1661 and who knew the regent as “Deva” (Sde-pa). The Chinese emperor and his officials also refer to Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho as “Tieh-pa” (Ahmad, pp. 42, 330: also the Dzungar Inscription at Lhasa: Richardson, Ch’ing Dynasty Inscriptions, p. 13). Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho himself in the volumes of the Dalai Lama’s rnam-thar attributed to him and in his Vaidurya ser-po does not refer to his predecessors or to himself uniformly as Sde-srid. He twice uses that title for Bsod-nams rab-brtan (VSP, pp. 300-1); but the first instance is anachronistic as it relates to the year 1662 when he was still Zhal-ngo. The title Sa-skyong is applied to him five times. The regent ’Phrin-las rgya-mtsho (1660-1668) is called Sde-srid once, Srid-skyong twice and Sa-skyong twice. Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho’s immediate predecessor, Blo-bzang sbyin-pa, on his retirement was given the fief of Sne’u-sdong from which he then became known as Sne’u-sdong Sde-srid, but that was the established title of a provincial governor with no specific reference to the office of regent. I cannot find any record of the regent Blo-bzang mthu-stobs (1669-1675) with any title but that of Sde-pa.

The above list is not exhaustive but is enough to suggest that the designation of the early regents, prescriptively, as Sde-srid was not in use during the lifetime of the fifth Dalai Lama for whom it may have had too strong overtones of independent authority. It seems only to have become popular when the office had virtually ceased to exist; and even the Stag-rtse-pa regent Lha-rgyal rab-brtan, who is described by Shakabpa and others as the last of the Sde-srid, was appointed in 1706 with the title only of Sa-skyong (Petech, China and Tibet, pp. 53, 241).

The first regent, Bsod-nams rab-brtan, died in 1658 after sixteen years in office. His death was not made public for over a year. He had lived a
strenuous life and at sixty-three was old by Tibetan standards. For the last few years before his death it seems from the Dalai Lama’s rnam-thar that he devoted himself more to religion than to politics. His influence must have suffered from the death in 1665 of his great patron Gusri Khan, who had been succeeded jointly by two of his many sons — the oldest Bstan’dzin rdo-rje and the youngest Bkra-shis ba-dur. Concern with their territories and rivalries in the Kokonor region prevented them from taking an immediate or continuous interest in Tibet although they were ready to fulfil their military responsibilities when needed. Perhaps, too, Bsod-nams rab-brtan’s prestige had suffered from the equivocal behaviour of his nephew the Sde-pa Nor-bu of Gzhis-ka-rtse in one of those frequent and unrewarding campaigns the Dge-lugs-pa regime thought it necessary to undertake against Bhutan as the bastion of the older sects.

The regent’s death was known to his entourage and relations, and to the kings; but prayers for his health continued to be offered as though he were alive. At first the Dalai Lama and his other ministers had no great problems to face but there must have been an undercurrent of discontent among the kinsmen and associates of the late regent when their hopes of succeeding to his authority and his property were disappointed. When his death was revealed a rebellion broke out with Gzhis-ka-rtse as its centre. In addition to Sde-pa Nor-bu, who appears to have been relieved of his official position there, the Sgo-sna-shag-pa and Bkra-shis-sgang families were involved. One of the rebels is described as Sras-po but I cannot discover whether that might mean that he was a son of Bsod-nams rab-brtan. Any disturbance in Gtsang, the former stronghold of the rivals of the Dge-lugs-pa, was bound to cause alarm but the malcontents could not rally any influential support and within a year they were crushed with the help of the Qoshot king’s forces.

When calm was restored the kings urged the need to appoint a new regent and for that post they favoured ‘Phrin-las rgya-mtsho of Grong-smad on whom their father had conferred the Mongol title of Jaisang sde-pa in 1637. He had been appointed personal assistant (lag-g.yog) of the Dalai Lama in 1632 in place of Byang-ngos Chos-mdzad whose conduct had displeased Bsod-nams rab-brtan. He had been active in the administration after Bsod-nams rab-brtan’s death but he might not have been the choice of the Dalai Lama who appears to have relied on the Mgron-gnyer Drung-pa as his right hand man in the interim. When the kings pressed for an early decision the Dalai Lama argued the need to get the assent of his own officials and apparently suggested that other candidates might be Sde-pa Nor-bu and Sras-po. After their rebellion it scarcely seems that this could be serious, if indeed those persons were still alive. Perhaps the Dalai Lama wanted to assert his right to be consulted or, perhaps, to ensure the formal elimination of the claims of any kinsman of the late regent. That there was some
such consideration is implied in the decree for Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho where it is stated that 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho was appointed because there was no one of Bsod-nams rab-brtan's line surviving. At all events, in the seventh month of the iron year (1660) 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho was formally installed as Sde-pa or Sa-skyong in the presence of the two kings who, at the same time, divided their rights so that Bstan-'dzin rdo-rje became sole king with the new title of Bstan-'dzin Dayan Khan (Du-ku-la, i, fos. 297a-b).

The estate of Grong-smad from which 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho took his family name lies to the north of Lhasa near the monastery of Se-ra. The family claimed descent from the Bka'-brgyud-pa teacher Mthshur-ston Dbang-nge (VSP, p. 415). A leading member of it was Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho's grandfather, Dgos-pa bkra-shis, who fought for the Dalai Lama against the Gtsang Sde-srid and who died in 1642 (Du-ku-la, i, fos. 102, 113). Of his two sons one was 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho, and the other (whose name I owe to information from W. D. Shakabpa), A-sug, was the father of Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. At some time, probably after the appointment of 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho as regent, the family seem to have acquired the wider fief of Nyang-bran, which includes the village of Grong-smad; so 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho is referred to as Jaisang Sde-pa, Sde-pa Grong-smad-pa, or Nyang-bran Sde-pa.

In 1661, early in his period of office, the Jesuits Albert d’Orville and Johannes Grueber entered Lhasa. They were the first Europeans definitely known to have done so; for the claim that Odoric of Pordenone was there in about 1328 is very dubious. The two Jesuits stayed nearly two months at Lhasa which they knew as Barantola, the capital of the kingdom of that name which was part of “Tangut” — a description covering at that time all the country from the Kokonor to the sources of the Ganges (Wessels, p. 188). Sadly, only a short account survives in Kircher’s China Illustrata and another in Astley’s Voyages which can be seen in the Appendix to Markham’s edition of the journals of Bogle and Manning. It appears that although religious scruples prevented the fathers from seeking an interview with the Dalai Lama — “that God the Father who puts to death such as refuse to adore him” — they were kindly treated by the people and by the “King” who, apparently by some misunderstanding, is described as a brother of the “God the Father”. That must refer to the regent, for Grueber states that the king, who is styled Deva or Teva, is descended from an ancient race of Tangut Tatars and resides at Butala, a castle built on a high mountain, after the European fashion, where he has a numerous court. It is he who carries on the government. Such a description cannot refer to the Qoshot king, Dayan Khan who spent most of his time in the grazing and hunting grounds of 'Dam, some eighty miles north of Lhasa, and cannot be said to have carried on the government. The residence of the kings,
moreover, was at Dga’-ldan Khang-gsar. But the clearest identification of the Deva as the regent — sde-pa — is found in the plates in Kircher’s *China Illustrata* (1667) which were made from Grueber’s drawings, although not entirely to his satisfaction (Wessels, p. 168). These include one of the “Deva Rex Tangut” as well as those of the Dalai Lama and the late Gusri Khan. The Deva is depicted as shaven-headed and in monk’s robes which clearly rules out the Qoshot king; and it is especially interesting that this portrait, unlike the others, was drawn from life at the Deva’s own command (Kircher, p. 69).

‘Phrin-las rgya-mtsho died early in 1668 and the death of the king, Bstan-’dzin Dayan Khan followed within a few months. The Dalai Lama again took control of the civil administration which he conducted until the autumn of 1669 when he despatched envoys to the Kokonor to enquire about the succession to the Qoshot kingship and to consult about the appointment of a new regent. On this occasion the choice was clearly his and he was simply seeking formal agreement to his nomination; and within a month he installed as regent a senior monk official of his entourage, Blo-bzang mthu-stobs, who had served as mchod-dpon since 1654. The new king, Bstan-’dzin Dalai Khan, was not enthroned in Tibet until 1671.

It is significant that with this weakening of the influence of the Mongol king, Blo-bzang mthu-stobs is credited with emphasizing the Tibetan character of the government by reviving the use on ceremonial occasions of the traditional dress and ornaments of the former Tibetan kings (Du-ku-la, ii, fo. 127b). Mongol titles and the Mongol style of official correspondence in vogue in the time of Bsod-nams rab-brtan were also discouraged. The order of precedence and the exact height of each person’s seat at court ceremonies were regulated by decree (Du-ku-la, ii, fo. 141a-b). Blo-bzang mthu-stobs also undertook such pious works as repairing holy places and printing religious books customary for a person in his position. But his private life did not befit a monk regent. He had an association with a noble lady of Sne’u-gdong which eventually led to his dismissal by the Dalai Lama. It is first hinted at in the revelation by the Bsam-yas oracle that presents given by the Sne’u-gdong Bdag-mo to the regent on his appointment had been bewitched by an evil spirit. A more explicit reference (Du-ku-la, ii, fo. 110a) is an allusion by the Bsam-yas oracle (who seems to have taken a particular interest in the affair) to gossip about the taking of the Sne’u-gdong Bdag-mo into the protection of the Sde-pa (sde-pa’i srid-’dzin du ’bod-pa). The lady was specifically mentioned in the official order of precedence in 1672; but the liaison did not blow up into a public scandal until 1673 when the Rdo-rje btsun-mo Lha-gzigs rigs-kyi sras-mo Bkra-shis-lags, as she is there called, accompanied the Sa-skya Khri-chen Ngag-dbang bsod-nams dbang-phug grags-pa rgyal-mtshan and his son the Khri-thog Ngag-dbang kun-dga’ bkra-shis on a state visit to Lhasa (Du-ku-la, ii, fos.
In a later reference to this event she is called Btsun-ma Lcam Bkra-shis-lags from which it appears that she was of the noble house of Phag-mo-gru whose appellation was Lha-gzigs, and that she was the wife (lcam) — or one of the wives — of the Sa-skya Khri-chen. When he and his son left Lhasa the lady stayed behind openly as the mistress of the regent, which caused such offence to ordinary monk and lay opinion that the Dalai Lama had to relieve him of his office. But he had so much influence and so many friends in high places that the event was more of a retirement full of honours and distinction rather than a dismissal in disgrace. In addition to intervention by the Sa-skya nobility to avert criticism of their leading family, the officials of many great monasteries interceded for the regent. He was received by the Dalai Lama and granted the position of zur-pa with a large estate in Zangs-ri — from which he is known as Zangs-ri Sde-pa — and officials were sent from Lhasa to arrange the transfer of the property. A settlement was also made on Sras-po Tshe-dbang, presumably the son of Blo-bzang mthu-stobs by the Sne'u-sdong Bdag-mo. The regent was showered with rich presents amounting to almost 500,000 mule loads; and before he left Lhasa, which he did at his own convenience, he was entertained by and gave entertainments to his friends, including the Qoshot king in whose palace of Dga'-ldan Khang-gsar he stayed for a time (Du-ku-la, ii, fos. 223, 224, 230, 237, 270). In this affair the Dalai Lama seemed more concerned by the scandal than by the offence. He wrote in his rnam-thar that if Blo-bzang mthu-stobs had gone off to Zangs-ri after making an act of contrition, it would not have been necessary to mention the matter (Du-ku-la, ii, fo. 241a). Nothing was done to expedite his departure which did not take place until 1676 (Du-ku-la, ii, fo. 278b), but in the meantime the Dalai Lama took steps to appoint a new regent. After the formality of a test by lot and after consulting the La-mo oracle and discussion with leading officials, he accepted their recommendation and sent representatives to sound out his young protégé Sags-rgyas rgya-mtsho of Grong-smad, the nephew of the former regent, ‘Phrin-las rgya-mtsho. In Du-ku-la, i, fo. 295b it is recorded that in 1660 — the year when ‘Phrin-las rgya-mtsho became regent but even before his formal appointment — Grong-smad Sags-rgyas rgya-mtsho had come (to the Potala) and his education had begun. There are references also to religious instruction being given to him later. In Du-ku-la, iii, fo. 125b–126a, the Dalai Lama recalls that he had treated him with great kindness from his childhood up; and Sags-rgyas rgya-mtsho himself says in VSP (p. 415) that from the age of eight he was in the presence of the Dalai Lama (zhal dkyil mjal). He also repeats an expression used by the Dalai Lama himself (Du-ku-la, i, fo. 82) that he had looked after him like a sri’u (in VSP it is se’u). According to Tibetan dictionaries, sri’u is a miscarriage, still-birth, or abortion caused by a malicious spirit, the chung-sri (see also Nebesky, pp. 216, 302). Only the Chos-grags dictionary explains it as “a child that
survives after many others born before it have died”. At all events the Dalai Lama cannot have used the word in an ill-omened sense and presumably means that he cared for Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho as though he were an only surviving child. He himself gave Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho his name, it having originally been Dkon-cog don-grub (VSP, p. 416). As early as 1666 Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho was given additional estates in reward for his services (Du-ku-la, ii, fo. 24b). In 1669 when the Dalai Lama was suffering from one of his frequent attacks of rheumatic pain and chills Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho and the mchod-dpon acted as his personal servants and it was remarked that although he was only seventeen he was able to keep watch all night (Du-ku-la, ii, fos. 72, 74a). From about that time he is often referred to as Sde-pa ’A-bar or ’A-bar Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. Tibetans have told me that ’A-bar is an adaptation of the Chinese Wa-wa meaning an infant so it is, perhaps, a nickname “the young sde-pa”. The term is used of other persons besides Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho e.g. ’A-bar Tshe-thabs and ’A-bar Tshe-dbang dar-rgyas (Du-ku-la, i, fos. 59–60). The description of Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho as Sde-pa at that early period, before his appointment as regent, suggests that he had succeeded to the territorial status of his uncle ’Phrin-las rgya-mtsho who died in 1668. Not long after that Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho was given the seal of a dar-mkhan (dar-han) conferring exemption of his estates from certain duties and taxes (Du-ku-la, i, fo. 82a). Again, in 1672 he attended on the Dalai Lama when he was ill, this time with smallpox (Du-ku-la, ii, fo. 133a).

Such marks of favour and intimacy almost inevitably led to rumours that Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho was the natural son of the Dalai Lama. The story which was first recorded by Csoma de Körös in 1834 is denied by W.D. Shakabpa (S I, p. 125) and, as Petech remarks, no Chinese or Tibetan text and not even the contemporary accounts of the Italian missionaries, so full of gossip, know anything about it. But several Tibetan laymen in private did not entirely dismiss the possibility and referred to the description by Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho of the Dalai Lama as his “father in two ways”. That is apparently their interpretation of VSP, p. 311: rje bla-na chen po ’di nyid kyi chos srid gnyis ka’i rgyun ’dzin sras kyi thu bo kho bo ... and 369: ’phags chen phyag na padma sdom brtson rgyal po’i tshul bzung bdag gi bla ma yab rje ...; but those descriptions are in spiritual context meaning that Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho was foremost among the Dalai Lama’s disciples. Other oral traditions regarded as significant were that when Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho was born the Dalai Lama presented his mother with a precious rosary which had been the gift to him of the Panchen Lama; and that the Grong-smad estates were held by Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho’s mother rather than his father. Another point mentioned was that according to the Re’u-mig of Sum-pa Mkhan-po for the year 1677, the Dalai Lama had to renew his vinaya vows — slar stod ’dul lugs kyi so thar sdom rgyun
bzhes dgos byung ngo. That is slightly expanded in Sum-pa Mkhan-po's 'Chos-byung (fo. 220) where it is linked with the Dalai Lama's studies in tantric practices: gsang sngags gsar rnying kun dang khyad par rnying ma'i gdam pa'i gting la thug gi bar du nyams len kyang mdang nas re gcig steng slar stod 'dul ltar gyi dge tshul slong gi sdom pa bzhes skyor gnang dgos byung. That may imply that he had earlier taken the vows according to the Smad-'dul practice of Khams and was now renewing them according to the Stod-'dul as introduced by Śākyaśri; but, in view of what looks like readiness to condone in his regents laxity about their vows so long as they were discreet, the statements call for expert elucidation. Against the rumour there appears strong evidence in that the passages in Sum-pa relate to a time when Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho was already twenty-four years old; and that at the time of his birth in the late autumn of 1653 the Dalai Lama had been absent in Mongolia and China for well over a year. W.D. Shakabpa has kindly informed me of an account in 'Dzam-gling rgyan-gcig-gi dkar-chag, a work by Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho himself where it is said that his mother Bu-'khrid rgyal-mo had lived with his father A-sug without a regular marriage (bza'-tshang), which displeased 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho who sent the lady to Rgya-la-sa. A-sug then married a lady of Rtsed-thang. About that time Bu-'khrid rgyal-mo's uncle Dgon-shar Chos-mdzad consulted the La-mo oracle about her and received the prediction that she was destined for good fortune. Shortly after, A-sug's wife from Rtsed-thang died and Bu-'khrid rgyal-mo was allowed to return from Rgya-la-sa to Grong-smad, where about September 1653 Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho was born. On the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet from Peking towards the end of 1653, when he was encamped at Lung-dkar-mo of 'Dam he received a petition for his blessing on the birth of the child (skyes pa'i skyabs zhu'i snyan zhu 'byor 'dug). Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho's father died when the child was four years old.

Bu-'khrid rgyal-mo lived on, at least until 1681, as a lady of dignity and importance. She is referred to as Dpon-sa. She appears to have had two other children and it is perhaps one of them who is referred to several times in the Dalai Lama's nram-thar as Grong-smad-nas.

To return to the year 1675: the Dalai Lama was clearly anxious that Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho should become regent, but the young man asked to be excused pleading that he wanted to take religious orders and avoid worldly distractions. The Dalai Lama's spokesmen argued all day in an attempt to overcome his objections, citing the example of former regents — to which the Dalai Lama himself frequently referred on other occasions — and suggesting that even if he did take religious vows there need be no difficulty so long as he did not keep a mistress in the bla-brang. Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho stood firm and another party of emissaries in the next month did nothing to change his mind. The Dalai Lama then accepted the situation and offered the post to the person who had come second in the test
by lot, the administrator of the Rnam-rgyal gra-tshang, Blo-bzang sbyin-pa. He too professed unwillingness to accept but had to bow to the Dalai Lama’s wishes though he did so on condition that he should be allowed to retire after three years. No prior consultation with the king, Bstan-'dzin Dalai Khan, seems to have taken place but as he had been in Lhasa earlier in the year he may have been informed; and he came from 'Dam to be present at the installation of the new regent in the late autumn of 1675 (Du-ku-la, ii, fo. 261a-b).

By the middle of 1679 after a fairly uneventful tenure of office Blo-bzang sbyin-pa declared himself unable to carry on any longer and was allowed to retire. He had been ill for some time and Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho had been acting as intermediary between him and the Dalai Lama. Once again the Dalai Lama turned to Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. The La-mo oracle when consulted pronounced that there was no need to put the matter again to the test by lot; but once again Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho expressed reluctance pleading his religious aspirations and his wish to remain in the personal service of the Dalai Lama. This time the Dalai Lama was not to be denied. He told the young man through his spokesman that the former exemption was not intended to be permanent and he emphasized that Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho was marked out for the post by his relationship to 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho, by the former test by lot, and by a number of predictions in revealed texts (gter-ma) which showed him to be destined to govern Tibet as the spiritual heir of the former king of Tibet, Mu-ne Btsan-po (who is also described as a forebear of Altan Khan) through a series of incarnations from the time of the eleventh-century teacher Rngog Legs-pa’i shes-rab (cf. VSP, p. 126). Those predictions had been cited before, in 1665, when the post was earlier offered to Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. The Dalai Lama now reminded him of the special favour he had enjoyed since his childhood which it was his duty to repay now by obedience; and again, the example of the former ministers known as Rgya and Seng, who had served the third Dalai Lama, was trotted out. Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho records in VSP, p. 360, that the order he received this time was too weighty to withstand (zlog tu med pa’i bka’ lci ba) and so, in the summer of 1679 he was installed as regent with great ceremony. The Dalai Lama also did him the unique honour of recording the appointment on the wall of the Potala in the decree transcribed and translated above, and shown in plates 99 and 100. There is no mention of any previous consultation with king Bstan-‘dzin Dalai Khan but he was present at the installation (Du-ku-la, iii, fo. 133a). Blo-bzang sbyin-pa was entertained to a banquet and retired to Sne’u-sdong where he had been granted an estate.

Guiseppe Tucci considers that the succession of Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho had been pre-arranged, so that his reluctance was merely a show (TPS, p. 74). There is no doubt that the Dalai Lama intended that he should be
regent and, equally, no doubt that Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho was well aware of that. But it is not improbable that he did not want the post so soon. When it was first offered he was only twenty-two and even four years later the appointment might seem premature. Further, his scholarly bent had been evident from an early age; when he was eighteen he had prepared an almanac for the Dalai Lama (*Du-ku-la*, ii, fo. 106a) and his later works show high literary and scientific qualities the opportunity to exercise which was to be found, as in medieval Europe, almost exclusively in the church.

It is beyond the scope of this article to describe the career of Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho as regent during the remainder of the Dalai Lama’s life and those later years from 1682 to 1703 when he governed on his own after concealing the death of his master. As for his expressed hope of a religious career, that did not survive the worldly distractions of high office any more than did those of earlier regents. Orazio della Penna tells that the Tisri (Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho) was expected to wear monastic dress on state occasions, implying that he usually lived and dressed as a layman. As Orazio doubtless knew, and as W.D. Shakabpa has informed me, he had two wives from the ‘Chi-med dga’-tshal and Dpal-rab Khang-gsar families respectively. The former was mother of Ngag-dbang rin-chen who succeeded Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho briefly when he retired in 1703. There were other children too, for *The Annals of Kokonor* record that Ngag-dbang rin-chen and his younger brother were taken under arrest to China in 1706 together with the sixth Dalai Lama; and there is a reference to the reception of two younger brothers by the seventh Dalai Lama in 1717 (*Petech, China and Tibet*, 17).

Oral tradition credits Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho with also having several mistresses. I was told a story that he and Lajang Khan were rivals for the favours of a lady Tshe-ring bkra-shis for whom they played at chess; and Lajang won. That story may throw light on a statement in *The Annals of Kokonor* (p. 438) that in 1705 *Rgyal-mo* Tshe-ring bkra-shis was sent to join Lajang Khan with orders that they should go to Kokonor. The obscure reason — in the possibly corrupt phrase *spun ma yin bzhin* — may imply some slight or insult which could have led to the vengeful spirit in which the lady took the field at the head of one of Lajang’s armies against Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, whom she contrived to have seized and executed after his defeat. A large *mchod-rten* at Nang-rtse in the Stod-lung valley north-west of Lhasa is said to enshrine parts of his body.

It would be wrong to end on a note of failure and tragedy and not to recall the achievements, talents and popularity in a long and active career of one who is remembered in Tibet as great above all other regents.
Notes

1. On his visit to the Chinese court at Peking in 1653 the Dalai Lama was given a golden letter conferring a title on him and a gold seal inscribed with the same title in Chinese, Mongolian and Tibetan (Du-ku-la, i, fo. 209a). The Chinese version is rendered by Ahmad (p. 185) as “The Great Good Self-existent Buddha of the Western Heaven, He who Rules over the Buddhist Faith in the Empire, the All-pervading Vajradhara Dalai Lama”. The Dalai Lama did not approve of the Tibetan translation made originally by a Mongolian lama and had it done again by a learned Chinese (Du-ku-la, loc. cit.); but there remain differences in the Sanskrit and Tibetan version from the Chinese original; they have no equivalent for “self-existent”, an epithet used also in titles bestowed much earlier by Emperors of the Yuan and Ming dynasties on Karma-pa lamas where it appears as rang-byon. The use of glm (Sk. akhyatam) “word”, “account”, for “title” is unusual; las-ka is found in the Dalai Lama’s rnam-thar with that meaning and also in Karma-pa rnam-thars; in other instances mtshan is used. The Tibetan transcription of the Chinese de’i khe’i brang zi in line 5 meaning “Dalai Lama” is inexplicable.

2. Rnam-par rgyal-ba’i Phan-bde legs-bshad-gling, popularly known as the Rnam-rgyal gra-tshang, in the western wing of the Potala, was founded in 1583 by the third Dalai Lama, Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho (VSP, p. 107) and an image was established there as an intention for the long life of Altan Khan who had already been in communication with the Dalai Lama, although their meeting in Mongolia did not take place until nine years later. In 1574 it was taken over by the Rnying-ma-pa sect (Re’u mig, p. 61) but was presumably restored to Dge-lugs-pa control by the fifth Dalai Lama after 1642. When he visited the Dmar-po-ri in 1645 to conduct the foundation ceremony of his new palace of Potala he was met by the monks of Phan-bde legs-bshad-gling. Their monastery, enlarged and beautified, was embodied in the huge new complex of the Potala building which Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho completed in 1695. Its monks were expected to be of good family. Their duties were solely concerned with ritual and they had to be trained in Rnying-ma-pa ceremonial as well as that of the Dge-lugs-pa.


4. Great Tibet: a term discussed at some length by the author of ’Dzam-gling rgyas-bshad (Wylie, p. 64) here appears to cover all of Tibet comprising the three skor of Mngas’-ris (west Tibet), the four ru of Dbus and Gtsang, and the six sgang of Mdo-khams (east Tibet). In the same context VSP (p. 308) distinguishes between Bod and Bod chen-po.


6. tshe-ring gnam-gyi she-mong; a non-Buddhist phrase describing the divine source of the authority of the Mongol Khans from the Yuan dynasty onwards.

7. Rgya-can. There are many references to the prophetic work Rgya-can or Gsang rgya-can in VSP (e.g. pp. 310, 311, 352) and in the later volumes of the biography of the fifth Dalai Lama which were composed by Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. It seems to be a gter-ma discovered by the Dalai Lama himself (VSP, p. 362).

8. Gra-tshang gnyer-pa. According to Petech (p. 379) he belonged to ’Phyongs-rgyas Gzims-khang (’Phyongs-rgyas was the Dalai Lama’s birthplace) and was steward of the Rnam-rgyal gra-tshang.

10. Tshangs-pa of the White Conch-shell Headdress was the principle deity inspiring the oracle-priest of La-mo, a small ancient monastery near Dga’-ldan (Nebesky, pp. 97–9, 153). The oracle was frequently consulted down to the eighteenth century but appears to have lost importance later. There is a story that the medium became disturbed by the dangerous spirit of Mkhan-po Dpal-ldan don-grub whose eventful career from 1860 to 1871 ended in suicide near La-mo (S I, pp. 185–9).

11. The allegory of the conch shell and the sea monster is explained in Du-ku-la, iii, fo. 126a. The conch tamed the sea monster by feeding it with milk, the moral being that one should repay kindness by doing what is asked.

12. I would like to take this as referring to the Dalai Lama himself who frequently describes himself as ‘di ga and who seems to avoid calling his regents sde-srid (see pp. 336f). In that case the translation would be “if I were to carry on the administration”; but Tibetan helpers prefer the more obvious explanation as a reference to the regent Blo-bzang sbyin-pa. The use of sde-srid may be due to the attribution of the statement to Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho.

13. Rgya and Seng were treasurers of the third Dalai Lama at the time of his death. Rgya is the Rgya-le Sku-mdun Rin-po-che of line 19 and is called Rgya-le Chos-mdzad in VSP (p. 109). Seng, who appears to have been the more important personage, is the Phyag-mdzod chen-po Dpal-ldan rgya-mtsho, known as Seng-ge (VSP, pp. 110, 193) or as Rgya-sang-gi seng-ge (VSP, p. 195). He was one of those who went to Mongolia to recognize the fourth Dalai Lama. The example of Rgya and Seng had been quoted earlier when the post of regent was offered to Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho in 1661 (see p. 23).


15. Phag-mo-grub-pa: either a scribal error or an idiosyncratic variant for Phag-mo-gru-pa.

16. The reference is to Blo-bzang mthu-stobs. The bla-brang, par excellence, is the complex of buildings surrounding the Jo-khang but here it may simply refer to a monk’s household.

17. The appointment specifically as Phyag-mdzod is mentioned also in vol. iv of the Dalai Lama’s rnam-thar, fo. 219, where Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho writes nged phyag mdzod srid kyi ’dzin du bsko bzhag gnang ba. Elsewhere he is described as Sde-pa or Sa-skyong.

18. nyla stong brgyad gsum: the day of the full moon, the “empty” moon and the eighth of the month, particularly reserved for religious duties.

19. Dmag-zor rgyal-mo: a form of Dpal-ldan Lha-mo, one of the principal guardian deities of the Dge-lugs-pa, especially honoured in the Jo-khang of Lhasa.

20. Beg-tse lcam-dral, or lcam-sring, is a btsan deity acting as a fierce defender of the Buddhist faith (TPS, p. 595, and Nebesky, pp. 88–93 etc.). Shakabpa, on whose copy I rely for this passage, writes Sbeg-rtse, but as that form does not appear elsewhere I have changed it to the usual orthography.


22. rgyal-ba gnyis-pa is the eighth day of the month. The reference in Du-ku-la, iii, fos. 127–8 to the twentieth day of the fifth month presumably gives the date in which the decree was inscribed on the wall of the Potala.

23. dbang-thang the element attribute of a year in nag-ritsis calculations.
24. Gi Yi: the Chinese Chi-wei, the earth-sheep year.

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Armenians in India and Tibet

An article which is probably not so well known as it deserves to be is "The Ledger of the Merchant Hovhannes Joughayetsi" by Levon Khachikian of Soviet Armenia, communicated by Suniti Kumar Chatterji in the Journal of the Asiatic Society (Bengal), vii, 1966.

Hovhannes was an Armenian merchant of Jougha (Julfa), a suburb of Isfahan, who in 1682 entered into partnership with a leading Armenian company in India trading in the Levant, China and many other parts of the world. They had a branch in Lhasa and the article contains extracts from the ledger dealing with Tibet, Nepal and India. Publication of the complete ledger with a comprehensive analysis is foreshadowed in the article but I do not know whether it has yet been achieved.

Hovhannes joined the firm's branch at Lhasa in 1686 and his journal gives meticulous details of his merchandise and its prices, his borrowings and transmission of funds and so on. He describes the route by which he travelled by way of Nepal, Kuti and Gzhis-ka-rtse (Shigatse). The goods he took with him were of many kinds including pearls, amber and piece goods. At Lhasa, where he stayed for nearly six years, he found Armenian employees of his principals already well established with their families, apparently for some years, and accustomed to trade as far afield as Hsining. Hovhannes had many business dealings — and some disputes — with his fellow countrymen and with Newars and Kashmiris as well as Tibetans, including lamas, nobles and traders. During his stay he learnt Tibetan and when he left in June 1692 he took a large consignment of musk.

There is in the Journal of the Asiatic Society, Bengal, 1833 an article by Csoma de Körös about a Tibetan passport recorded in Hyde's Historia Religionis Veterum Persarum (1760), as having been granted by the governor of Lhasa to an Armenian Joannes (the name in Tibetan is represented as I-wang-na) on his departure from the city; but as the year is 1688 it cannot relate to Hovhannes of the ledger. (See chapter 48 below.)

The extracts from that ledger tell little about the social and political life of Tibet; perhaps publication of the complete document will shed more light on such matters. But the insights Hovhannes gives on the business world draw attention to the important part the Armenians played in Asian trade.

This is not the place to follow all the vicissitudes of their history, which goes back to the seventh century B.C. and includes a probable trading connection with China as early as the fifth century A.D. We may take as a starting point for their connection with India and Central Asia the establishment of the new kingdom of Cilicia at the beginning of the twelfth century. Its king Heythum formed an alliance with the Mongols and went himself to visit Ögedei at Karakorum in the then fashionable hope of finding in Asia a champion to deliver the Holy Land from the infidel. Armenians, both monk and lay, were met at the court of Ögedei’s successor Kuyuk by the Franciscan friar William of Rubruck.

The Armenians in Cilicia controlled the great entrepot port of Ayas (Lajazzo) on the gulf of Alexandretta which had long been a channel of trade between the east and west and which under them throve greatly and developed links all over Europe, especially through Venice. The Polo family passed through Ayas on their way to the Far East. Armenian merchants had probably preceded them along the trade routes through Central Asia. But what set on foot a great commercial diaspora throughout the whole known world was a series of conquests of Cilician Armenia by one neighbouring power after another — Egyptian, Ottoman Turk, and Persian. Armenians emigrated to many parts of Europe and to China, where as early as the thirteenth century an Armenian lady had built a church at Zaitun, and to India where they are reported by 1497. A great commercial centre was established in Persia when in 1602 the ruler Shah Abbas, having lost control of Cilicia to the Ottomans, transferred 50,000 Armenians to a new city he made for them at Julfa, a suburb of Isfahan. From there their trade branched out even more strongly. They became international bankers and money was transferred through their branches all over Asia and Europe.

In India they rapidly settled in the more important business centres where they became known as courageous, honest and charitable and won the reputation of the hardiest and most reliable masters of caravans through Central Asia. Bento de Goes on his great journey in 1603 from Agra to China travelled in disguise as an Armenian and was accompanied by a faithful and resolute Armenian servant Ishaq. Some Armenians in their wide-ranging activities found employment early in the sixteenth century as bodyguards to the king of Martaban.

Their status in India was greatly enhanced when Akbar married an Armenian Christian lady whose influence won for her community permission
to build a church at Agra. Other churches with their accompanying graveyards duly followed at other Armenian settlements at Surat, Delhi, Patna, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Akbar’s esteem for the Armenians led him to appoint as chief judge Khwaja Abdul Hai, who was then converted to Islam. But the most famous was Mirza Zulkarnain. The titles Khwaja, Mirza, Beg, and Mukhtear borne by distinguished Armenians reflect their Persian connection. Zulkarnain’s father Mirza Sikander who arrived in India in 1590 found favour with Akbar. He married Juliana, a daughter of the chief judge Abdul Hai; she retained her Christian faith and was apparently related to Akbar’s Christian wife Mariam. By her Mirza Sikander had two sons, Sikander and Zulkarnain born in 1592 and 1595 respectively. Later, on Juliana’s death, he married her sister and had two more sons.

Juliana’s sons were brought up by Akbar’s wife Mariam in the imperial harem and there Zulkarnain became a favourite of the prince Jahangir. In 1606, after he had become emperor, Jahangir, who had given Zulkamain a huge jagir, had the boy circumcised and tried to persuade him to embrace Islam; but Zulkarnain steadfastly refused to give up his faith. Although Jahangir was displeased he did not withdraw his favour and continued to employ Zulkarnain in his service. But when Shah Jahan succeeded to the throne in 1627 his fervid commitment to Islam led him to persecute Zulkarnain, even though the two had been close boyhood friends, and to mulct him of his great wealth. In face of threats Zulkarnain’s two half-brothers were converted but he, although reduced almost to poverty, stood firm in his faith and continued to protect so far as he could the interests of his community and of the Portuguese Jesuit missionaries. In 1640 he was restored to favour and was appointed to a succession of important posts in Bengal and Kashmir until he retired to Delhi in 1654 where he was granted a pension of Rs. 100/- a day. Contemporary Jesuit records describe him as a great and devoted champion and benefactor of the faith. Among his acts was the founding of a college at Agra and it appears that he had ideas of establishing another in west Tibet, presumably as a result of the mission there of the Jesuits Antonio d’Andrade and Francis of Azevedo.

Another Armenian who made a mark was Sikander Beg who served, somewhat equivocally, as surgeon of the ill-fated Sulaiman Shikoh, son of the equally ill-fated Dara Shikoh. Yet another member of the community was helped by the Venetian adventurer Nicolao Manucci to rescue a Hindu girl from being burnt alive as a suttee. The Armenian converted her to Christianity and married her.

The generally discreet influence and the reliability of these leading Armenians was such that in 1690 Khoja Isral Sarhat was invited from Delhi to negotiate the purchase of three villages which eventually became Calcutta. There had been Armenians in that part of Bengal long before Job
Charnock, as memorials in their cemetery dating from 1630 make clear; and they had a dock and gardens on the Howrah bank of the Hugli. Not long after the building of Fort William at Calcutta, Armenians were being recruited there to the East India Company's army.

From this enterprising people several westerners in India and also in China came to learn something about Tibet. Ralph Fitch (1580) and Peter Mundy (1630) both met Armenians in India and the former made enquiries about the trade in silk and musk from Tibet of which he saw evidence in Bihar. Armenians gave information about Tibet to Manucci who also had long talks about the country with the Jesuits Grueber and d'Orville after their great journey from China to India in 1661–2. When they passed through Lhasa there must have been Armenians there but their account, which Father Hosten sadly records is "arid as the Himalayan uplands", makes no mention of them. Manucci reports the good treatment of the few merchants who found their way to Tibet in search of trade in gold, perfect musk, and rubies. Among Tibetan customs he mentions are the cutting up of the bodies of the dead and the keeping in small boxes of the dried excrement of lamas which was a prized medicine. That information perhaps came from Grueber who includes it in his account.

A systematic investigator of Tibetan trade was John Marshall, the English agent at Patna from 1667 to 1671, who heard about the country from an Armenian, Batista de Johan, who had been in "Lossa" and also from Mukhtear Ishaq who had had three times to Hsining. He recounts a lot of sound information about Tibet and its customs, and details of the trade. The French doctor and philosopher Baron Jean Baptiste Tavernier, writing about the same time, mentions Armenian merchants at Patna who had brought amber images to take to "Bootan", which his description clearly identifies as Tibet. At Patna he actually saw Tibetan traders wearing boxes containing "the dried ordure of their king".

News of Tibet was relayed from China by Father Verbiest who reports what was told to a Persian Jesuit in 1688 by an Armenian at Hsining. His information about the government of the country is generally accurate, though slight; but he indulges in the fancy that the Grand Lama was certainly Prester John; and the statement that there were statues of Adam and Eve in a temple at Lhasa is well wide of the mark.

The great attraction of the Tibetan trade was musk. This substance, secreted by a gland in the belly of the male of a species of deer — a jaunty little creature with ugly long canine tusks and harsh hair useful for stuffing cushions — which is found from the Tibetan Himalaya to eastern Siberia, Szechwan, Yunnan and Korea in scrub and thin forest at elevations of about 9,000 to 11,000 feet, was in great demand in ancient Greece, Rome and China as a valuable base for perfumes. During the T'ang era it was an important item of tribute from the Hsining region; and it would
be no surprise if the Chinese were the first to discover its valuable properties. As mentioned earlier, it was the main item of merchandise taken from Tibet by the Armenian Hovhannes on his return to India. The demand continued in India and Nepal, at least up to 1950.

With the considerable information available to them in Patna, which was their starting point, the Capuchin missionaries to Tibet in 1707 must have expected to find Armenians at Lhasa and, indeed, they relied greatly on Khwaja Dawith, a favorite merchant of the king, as interpreter and banker. It might, however, have been a surprise to them to discover a number of Russian Christians there, for contemporary accounts in India do not appear to mention them although Tavernier heard of a Russian embassy passing through Tibet on the way to China. This was, perhaps, a confused echo of Bayakov's mission in 1655–6. The Jesuit Father Ippolito Desideri also mentions Armenians at Lhasa, and doubtless enjoyed their help. But the looting and devastation caused by the Dzungar occupation of the city in 1717 seem to have seen the end of regular Armenian and Russian settlement at Lhasa, and the new Chinese influence in Tibet after 1720 and the Gorkha domination of Nepal may have militated against its restoration. Nevertheless some connection continued, for in 1811 Thomas Manning met an Armenian at Lhasa who wanted to accompany him on his return to India.

I can find no reference to Armenian trade with Tibet after that time but an Armenian community continues in Calcutta although its numbers are decreasing. There is an Armenian church, college and girls school; and the community is about 300 strong. There are small numbers of Armenians in Bombay and Madras but I understand that since 1947 many of the less prosperous have emigrated to the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia. The old connection with Tibet and its trade is now only a distant memory.

Bibliography

J.B. Tavernier, Travels in India, London 1684.
Note

The Armenian text of the Ledger of Hovhannes has been critically edited, with a glossary that includes Tibetan terms: Hovhannes Ter Davt’yan Haşvetumar, ed. L. Kachikian H.D. P’ap’azyan (Metenadaran: Erevan, 1984). (We owe this reference to the kindness of Prof. Robert Thomson. Ed.)
George Bogle and his Children

George Bogle, the first British visitor to Tibet, was born in 1746 the third son and youngest of nine children of George Bogle of Daldowie (b. 1700) and Anne daughter of Sir John Sinclair of Stevenson. The estate of Daldowie on the Clyde near Uddingston in Lanarkshire had been bought by Robert Bogle, father of George senior, a prosperous Glasgow merchant and member of a large family whose origins were in and around Bothwell and Uddingston.

After education in Glasgow and at Edinburgh University and the foreign travel usual for a gentleman of his day George the younger secured an appointment in the East India Company. Reaching India in 1770 he served in various official posts in Calcutta, where he attracted the notice and friendship of Warren Hastings, who chose him in 1774 for a special mission to the Panchen Lama at Bkra-shis-lhun-po (Tashihunpo). He returned to India in 1775 and died at the early age of thirty-four in 1781. He is buried, not far from the graves of Sir William Jones and the beautiful Rose Aylmer, in the historic South Park Street Cemetery of Calcutta, beneath a massive monument in the form of a sarcophagus with the inscription “In Sincere Attachment to the Memory of Mr. George Bogle Late Ambassador to Tibet who died the 3rd of April, 1781. This Monument was erected by his most Affectionate Friends David Anderson and Claud Alexander” (See plate 101). After a decade of neglect and misuse the cemetery has been restored to its former peace and dignity by the British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia; and a photograph of George Bogle’s monument, kindly taken for me by my friend Major General B. M. Bhattacharjea, PVSM, MVC, Indian Army (Retired), shows that it is in good condition.

Some preliminary remarks on Bogle’s mission to Tibet appeared in 1777 in a paper contained in the Royal Society’s Philosophical Transactions, lxvii, pt. 2 (1777), to which it was read by Mr. John Stewart FRS, who drew on

letters and papers from Bogle. But Bogle's own lively and fascinating account was not published until 1885 when it was edited with a valuable biographical introduction by Clements Markham together with the diary of Thomas Manning's visit to Lhasa in 1811.

A delightful picture of George Bogle being received by the Panchen Lama, painted in Calcutta in 1775 by the English artist Tilly Kettle and now in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen, has been reproduced in *India and British Portraiture, 1720–1825* (1979) by Mildred Archer. It shows him with deceptively juvenile features, standing bare-legged and dressed in what appears to be Bhutanese garments while a Tibetan presents a ceremonial scarf to the lama and other figures in Tibetan or Bhutanese dress sit or stand around. Through a window is a view of a monastery, tiny but realistic enough to convince me that it was based on a drawing of Bkra-shis-lhun-po by someone who had seen it. Many of the details are recognizably Tibetan and Bhutanese, but the painting as a whole must be a fanciful scene rather than an attempt to depict any actual event; and for George Bogle to have himself shown bare-legged and in Bhutanese dress seems to have been an unaccountable whim, since nothing in his narrative suggests that he acted in so inappropriate a way.

In my *Tibet and its History* (1960) I wrote that George Bogle married a Tibetan lady, described as a sister of the Panchen Lama, by whom he had two daughters who were brought to his home in Scotland for education, and that each of them married a Scottish husband. When George Woodcock was writing his book *Into Tibet* (1971) I gave him what information I had at that time; but in his book Woodcock regards it as improbable that Bogle married a Tibetan, and even expressed doubts whether he had any daughters. As I do not agree with several of his arguments and as he is plainly mistaken in the matter of Bogle's daughters, I have continued to enquire about the matter in a rather desultory manner, and although no certain conclusions can be drawn, perhaps this account will meet the eye of someone who can throw more light on it.

Markham in his introduction to Bogle's Narrative (p. cliv) writes: "George Bogle left two daughters to mourn his loss, named Martha and Mary, who were sent to Scotland under the guardianship of Mr. Claud Alexander of Ballochmyle and Mr. David Anderson. Martha was married in 1807, to Mr. William Brown and had a daughter, married to Mr. John Sturrock of Kilmarnock. Mary was the wife first of Mr. Josias Fairley of Glasgow whom she married in 1808; and, secondly, of a Mr. Hamilton. Robert Bogle, George's eldest brother, eventually succeeded his father at Daldowie, but all the brothers and sisters died unmarried except the eldest, Martha, who married Mr. Thomas Brown of Langside".

That should have dispelled Woodcock's doubts about the Bogle daughters; but Markham does not mention their unmarried mother.
Shortly before his death George had directed that all his letters should be sealed up and sent to David Anderson, one of the persons responsible for sending the two girls to Scotland. The papers were transmitted to Daldowie, where George’s brother Robert considered publishing the diary but died before doing so. They must then have come to his elder sister Martha and from her eldest surviving son Thomas to her grand-daughter Miss Martha Brown of Lanfine, through whose kindness Markham saw the Bogle family papers which had been “judiciously sorted and arranged” by Mr. Gairdner of Kilmarnock. Miss Martha was the last Brown of Lanfine, but the line of her grandparents, Thomas and Martha (née Bogle) Brown, was carried on through her paternal uncle John Brown and his wife Katherine McCall whose family, incidentally, bought the former Bogle estate of Daldowie from George Brown, another son of Thomas and Martha, who acquired it after the death in 1808 of George Bogle’s eldest brother, Robert. The descendants of John and Katherine (McCall) Brown included such notable figures as Sir James Frazer, author of The Golden Bough, Sir Ian Hamilton, and Professor J.E.A. Steggall. It was the Steggall branch that inherited the Bogle papers, which were presented to the Mitchell Library in Glasgow by Miss Frances Steggall. I am grateful to the Viscountess Long of Wraxhall, herself a Frazer by birth, for information about the line of descent from George Bogle senior of Daldowie, which is well charted.

As for the illegitimate line of George Bogle junior nothing more than Markham’s brief comment might have come to light had it not been for a letter in the Sunday Times in 1948 from Mrs. Nora Heathcote expressing indignation at an article in that paper which had described George Bogle as “an Englishman”, and claiming descent from him through his Tibetan wife who, she said, was a sister of the Teshoo (Panchen) Lama. It must be admitted that Bogle himself generally disregarded those distinctions that present-day Scots expect; for he regularly wrote “England” and “English” rather than “Britain” and “British”. But we may be grateful to Mrs. Heathcote’s national susceptibilities for the new aspect of Bogle’s life which she brought to public notice.

Before leaving Tibet in 1950 I questioned many friends, especially those in Gzhis-ka-rtsé (Shigatse) about that intriguing story, but none had heard of it: no one had even heard of George Bogle; and it was not until 1959, when I was writing my Tibet and its History, that I sought further information from Mrs. Heathcote. There followed a delightful correspondence until 1962, not long before her death at an advanced age. She had no doubt about the authenticity of her family’s tradition regarding George Bogle’s Tibetan marriage from which she and many others were descended. Nor did she doubt that the union was not blessed by the church, and she thought that the family had concealed it at first because George had not been legally married.
Mrs. Heathcote knew of the tradition in part from her father Edwin Willsone Browne, but much more from his two older cousins, Miss Amelia and Miss Matilda Sturrock, granddaughters of George Bogle’s daughter Martha.

It would be as well to sort out here the confusing number of Browns and particularly Martha Browns in this story. They are: (1) George Bogle’s sister Martha, who married Thomas Brown of Langside in 1769; (2) their granddaughter Miss Martha Brown of Lanfine, who inherited the Bogle papers and showed them to Markham; and (3) George Bogle’s daughter Martha, who married in 1807 William Brown, the forbear of Mrs. Heathcote. William Brown was not related to the Browns of Langside and Lanfine; and at some time his descendants added an “e” to their name.

Mrs. Heathcote, who was born in 1876, often used to stay as a young girl with her two elderly cousins in Ayr. They were older contemporaries of her father and must have been born about 1849-50, not more than sixty-five years after George Bogle’s daughters had been brought to Daldowie. Although they used to tell her about her Tibetan great-great-grandmother she did not take much interest until after her marriage, in the early years of this century, when she asked her cousin Millie (Amelia) to write down something about the family. What follows is an extract from her resulting letter:

George Bogle’s two daughters were sent home to Daldowie to be educated. I always understood that they were quite young then and somehow had the impression that the mother had died and the father sent them home expecting, of course, to follow but died out there. I’ll try to put the rest into a continuous narrative, but of course you understand that it is compiled from old tales we loved to hear from mother [Matilda Sturrock]. The two girls had quite a happy life with their uncle and aunts at Daldowie and were brought up in good style and had their own maid, governess, and carriage to drive them to Glasgow. Grandmother [Martha Brown] used to tell mother how in play hours they used to rummage in big boxes in the attic and dress up in old-fashioned silks and brocade dresses. The family had a quarrel with the family of a neighbouring estate but — Romeo and Juliet — Martha struck up a friendship with the son and they became engaged but kept it a secret knowing the families would oppose. It was decided that the young man was to go abroad and the two arranged to meet in the grounds to say goodbye: but the day fixed was a perfect hurricane of wind and rain. Poor Martha was always going to the window to see if the storm would clear. “Dear me, Martha”, said her aunt, “it is often difficult to persuade you to go out on a fine day. Why are you so keen to walk in the rain?”
Stories of that sort might have been told in many families of the period; and there is no explicit mention that the girls' mother was Tibetan. But Mrs. Heathcote made it clear that that was taken as a matter of course. Cousin Millie also gave her a family tree clearly showing that George Bogle married “Tichan, sister of the Teshoo Lama” and tracing their descent through his daughter Martha and Mr. William Brown. It gives much more detail than can be found in Markham. The John Sturrock to whom Martha and William Brown’s daughter Matilda was married was a prominent Writer to the Signet in Kilmarnock. Moreover, Matilda had four brothers one of whom, Josias Fairley Brown, named apparently after his uncle the husband of Martha’s sister Mary, was the father of Edwin Willsone Browne — as the name had come to be written — the father of Mrs. Nora Heathcote, her one sister and four brothers.

Because Mrs. Heathcote was the only one of her generation to take an interest in family history, the cousins left her a miniature on copper of George Bogle, which may from her description be later than that in Younghusband’s India and Tibet, and also one of her great-grandfather William Brown, whom she described as “an ugly looking old man”. Mrs. Heathcote had no children, but three of her four brothers had several sons and daughters whose descendants are living for the most part in South America and South Africa. She said that no trace of Tibetan ancestry seems to have survived in the appearance of members of the family except for the almond eyes and high cheek bones of one of her nieces whose photograph she showed me. None of the family take any interest in the matter; but her letter to the Sunday Times led to correspondence with several people claiming a connection with the Bogle family, perhaps through brothers or other relations of George Bogle’s father. There was, for example, a branch living at Hamilton, not far from Daldowie, and another at Shettleston; and a John Bogle, who was Clerk to the Signet in Edinburgh in 1713, had a daughter with the unusual name of Charles Martha who married John Sinclair Lockhart of Castlehill, a brother of George Bogle’s mother Ann Sinclair. Their daughter Isabella married William Morehead of Herbertshire, whose son, the Revd. Robert Morehead is the subject of the “Memorials” mentioned by Markham on p. cxliii, note 3. Robert Morehead used to visit Daldowie, where he met George Bogle’s sisters. One of Mrs. Heathcote’s correspondents, whose wife was a Bogle, knew a romantic story of a Tibetan lady wading a river to follow George when he left Tibet. Another letter was from a descendant of Alexander Hamilton, the doctor who accompanied Bogle on his visit to Tibet. In that family, too, the tradition of George Bogle’s Tibetan wife was still current.

That tradition is, therefore, persistent and extends beyond the direct descendants of George Bogle; but it is not without its problems. Since Bogle’s fame rested on his Tibetan mission and since he had daughters whose
mother was apparently an Asian, it would not be surprising for his posterity to make her out a Tibetan and, for good measure, a sister of his friend the Panchen Lama. That last supposition as I explained to Mrs. Heathcote, must, regretfully, be regarded as unacceptable. Bogle's Narrative, which has much to say about the Lama's relations, has no mention of a sister. Dr. Woodcock is mistaken in describing the female incarnation, Rdo-rje phag-mo, as the Panchen Lama's half-sister; it is clear that she was his niece, the daughter of his brother.

Incidentally, Dr. Woodcock, perhaps unresponsive to the language and manners of the eighteenth century, takes a strangely sour view of the personality of George Bogle, whom he sees as self-centred, callous and hypocritical. This is no place for detailed debate. Markham's introduction shows him as a man of warm and devoted friendships; and I shall quote from only one letter in support of my opinion that he was open-hearted, cheerful and sincere. In the freedom of correspondence with his brother Robert, George wrote some time after he had left Tibet: "I shall regret the absence of my friend the Teshu Lama for whom I have a hearty liking and should be happy again to have his fat hand on my head". That the blessing he used to receive from the lama was foremost in his memory does not seem hypocritical to anyone who has experienced life in Tibet.

Even if the Panchen Lama had a sister, she would not have been a possible wife to George Bogle. The lama would surely have discourteced such a union from political rather than social considerations; and Bogle would hardly have risked his career and his mission by displeasing the Lama. Rdo-rje phag-mo is certainly ruled out as a possible wife as is also the "Chum Kusho" (Icam sku-gzhogs), the lama's sister-in-law, a cheerful widow of forty-five with a grown family. But there are her two merry, good-humoured daughters of about twenty-seven and eighteen years old, the last of whom Bogle singled out as remarkably fair and ruddy and who is specially mentioned in a letter to his favourite sister, Mary. Dr. Woodcock eliminated them too because Bogle relates that he saw the girls departing for their nunnery before he left Bkra-shis-lhun-po and, in his opinion, it is hardly likely that one of them could have broken away to follow Bogle or that he would have remained persona grata if he had seduced a nun relation of the Panchen Lama. Although there is some force in those arguments, in practice a great deal of licence was allowed to nuns in Tibet, especially those of noble family whose vows were often a matter of convenience or convention. Among many examples that could be cited is that of a seventeenth-century monk-regent of Tibet who had an affair with a Sa-skya nun; and in more recent times, the notorious Nga-phod Zhabs-pa'd, the principal puppet of the Chinese in Tibet, is the son, by a monk, of a nun of noble family. Tibetan women are independent and determined; and one of the nieces might have managed to run after George, which could be the origin
of that story of a Tibetan woman wading a river to follow him. An errant
niece would have been of less concern to the lama; but if the pretty nun,
too, must be ruled out, there would remain the possibility that some more
remote relative or some member of the Chum Kusho’s household could
have been Bogle’s choice. Many of the highest lamas came from quite hum-
ble families, and although their parents were enriched and ennobled and
the family acquired considerable advantages, neither the wealth nor the
social status extended indefinitely and lesser relations continued their
former way of life, some even acting as senior servants in the lama’s house-
hold. The same happened in lay families of much longer established no-
bility than those of high lamas.

Certainly, it is not necessary to take seriously Bogle’s light-hearted let-
ter to his friend Willy Richardson, saying: “I live the life of a monk and
have nothing to reconcile me to it but the Lama’s good humour”. The cheer-
ful hunting expeditions he had with the Panchen Lama’s nephews and their
ladies were far from ascetic; and it may be that the prescription by Dr. Ham-
ilton when Bogle was on his way back from Tibet, advising an abstemious
diet and a small quantity of mercurial ointment, hints at a less than mon-
astic life.

What gave rise to some of Dr. Woodcock’s doubts about the Tibetan
marriage was the discovery in the Bogle papers in the Mitchell Library of
a “Bebee Bogle” who received after George’s death a pension of Rs. 20/-
per month. She apparently lived in Calcutta and survived him for fifty-
seven years. Bebee (Bibi), which properly designated Muslim ladies, was
also the name given to the European wives of the British in India until it
was replaced towards the end of the nineteenth century by “Memsahib”. It
was used, too, of the Indian women, generally Muslim, with whom many
Europeans in the eighteenth century established what was virtually a mar-
riage bond. But it was not unusual for a European to keep, in addition to
his Bibi, a zenana amounting according to the patron’s means to one or more
unions of a less formal nature. The Bebee Bogle was clearly George’s mis-
tress en titre; but was she the mother of the two girls sent to Daldowie, and
was she a Tibetan?

Dr. Woodcock, who regards Rs. 20/- per month as an incredibly cheap
rate for a relative of the Panchen Lama, exaggerates the difficulty by de-
scribing Bogle’s supposed wife as a “Tibetan princess” — a grossly inflated
title even for a sister of a high lama; and, if lesser relatives were concerned,
Rs. 20/-, which in the early decades of the present century went quite a long
way in an Indian family, would not have been an insignificant sum, to
which would be added the jewellery and such things which would have
been given to a Bebee. Although Dr. Woodcock dismisses the possibility
that Bogle married a Tibetan on his visit to Tibet, he postulates, on quite
inadequate evidence, that his dislike for Bengalis was so strong that he
could not have formed an association with one of them and he, therefore, might have acquired a Tibetan or Bhutanese mistress — presumably after his return to India. Dr. Woodcock does not seem to have considered the difficulty of finding such a person in Calcutta, where Bogle spent the first four years after his return in the personal employment of Warren Hastings but without any official post. There is no suggestion that he was in North Bengal, where Tibetans and Bhutanese could have been met, until his appointment in the late autumn of 1779 as Collector of Rangpore (Rangpur), where there was an annual fair frequented by those peoples. He held that post for only fifteen months, until January 1781 when he was chosen for an important post in Calcutta, where he died in April the same year. So, if it was in Rangpore that he found a Tibetan wife by whom he had two daughters, one of them would presumably have been posthumous and too young to be sent to Scotland at the end of 1783 or beginning of 1784. That is nowhere implied either by Markham or in information that has recently come to light in the Mitchell Library and elsewhere. That information shows that the two girls sent to Daldowie, and whose descendants claim a Tibetan ancestress, were not George Bogle’s only children and that he had at least one other daughter and two, perhaps three, sons.

Successive librarians of the Mitchell Library — W.A.G. Allison, C.W. Black and R. Gillespie — have kindly allowed me to have copies of many relevant documents and I am particularly indebted to Hamish Whyte of the Library staff, who has classified the Bogle papers and discovered the new evidence, for generous help and advice.

The earliest of the new documents is a letter to George Bogle from Mrs. Stewart, who writes from London on 27 August 1780 thanking him for his help in settling the affairs of her late husband — probably the John Stewart FRS who read the paper about Tibet to the Royal Society in 1777. Mrs. Stewart adds:

The present you sent me home is a fine creature. I shall regret my inability if I cannot educate her in the manner I should wish. What is in my power I will do for her with the most heartfelt satisfaction for the sake of him she belongs to. She often mentions you and whenever anything is not quite to her wishes, she says she will go back to Bengal to her Papa Bogle.

An endorsement in another hand reads: “Mary Bogle from Bengal”.

So here in 1780 is a Bogle daughter, a “fine creature” of educable age and well able to make her wishes known sent home in Bogle’s lifetime, not to his family at Daldowie where his father was still alive, but to a friend in London. The voyage from India might take anything from four or five months to nearly a year; about seven or eight months seem to have been normal, so it
looks as if the arrangements were made when Bogle was posted to Rangpore in September 1779. The girl could hardly have been less than four years old — about six was the age at which British children born in India were usually sent home — and although she might have been born after Bogle's return from Tibet in June 1775, it seems probable that she was born or at least conceived before he went there. Nothing more is known about her; and the point arises that, if the endorsement is correct, George Bogle must have given the same name to two of his daughters; for there is no doubt about the name of the Mary Bogle who, as will be seen, was sent to Daldowie four years later and for whom family traditions claims a Tibetan mother. This may suggest that Bogle maintained two separate families.

The next information about George Bogle's family was kindly communicated to me by Boyd Alexander, whose forebear Claud Alexander was Bogle's close friend. In a letter dated 3 May 1782 to David Anderson, a fellow executor for Bogle's affairs, Claud Alexander writes that he has 35,000 sicca rupees for the Bogle children. He hears that the eldest boy died suddenly on the last day of April and that several black people also died. "Consider what we are to do with the money in case they should all die." In another letter to Anderson dated 2 August 1782 he says: "If I did go home before you I shall certainly carry James [Anderson's son] and all Bogle children with me".

That means that George Bogle had, in addition to Mary already sent to England in 1780 and Martha and Mary later to go to Daldowie, at least two sons or three, if Claud Alexander was precise in using the work "eldest". Perhaps he was not, for an entry in the Bengal Ecclesiastical Register, for which I have to thank Mildred Archer, records the baptism on 10 February 1784 of George, Martha and Mary, the "natural children of the late Mr. George Bogle". Perhaps the baptism was in preparation for the despatch of the children to Britain.

What happened to young George is not known; but two letters from the Mitchell Library make it clear that the two girls were sent to Daldowie. The first, from George's brother Robert in London to his cousin William Scott in Glasgow, dated 7 June 1785, includes the following: "I have received advice that two of poor George's children is on board the Southampton. Captain Lenox which ship is arrived at St. Helena and is hourly expected so that I shall await their arrival in order to get them settled". The Southampton was due to sail from Calcutta on 10 December 1784. It is not known who accompanied the girls. David Anderson, one of their guardians, did not retire officially from the service of the East India Company until January 1785 but he might have been allowed to leave earlier. Claud Alexander, the other guardian, did not leave India until 1786.

At all events, the two girls arrived at Daldowie, four years after their father's death and five years after "Mary Bogle from Bengal" reached
London. The next news of them is in a letter from Anne Bogle, George's favourite sister, at Daldowie to her brother Robert in London, dated 22 March 1788: "Our little girls are in good health and doing well (they beg their duty to you and their love to Mr. and Mrs. Jones) Jenny Lawson has reely been very attentive to them, and also to Molly ...". Molly was George's sister Mary.

There is no definite evidence about the age of the girls when they reached Daldowie. The Register of Glasgow High Church shows that Mary Bogle was married on 2 February 1808 to Josias Fairley, Manufacturer in Glasgow. The minister was John Fairley, presumably a relation of the bridegroom. Unfortunately there is no mention of Mary's age and so far no record has been found of Martha's marriage in 1807 or of the deaths of the two girls. They must have been born after George's return from Tibet, but it is possible only to conjecture that the years were between 1777 and 1780.

It appears that the Bogle family and, later, Miss Martha Brown who succeeded to the family papers, knew more about George's affairs than was disclosed to Markham in the records "judiciously sorted" by Mr. Gairdner. Perhaps reticence was imposed by Miss Brown, the principal figure among the legitimate descendants of the Bogles of Daldowie; and some papers were probably destroyed, for it is hard to believe that in all George Bogle's letters entrusted to David Anderson for transmission to Daldowie there would have been no mention of the mother of his children. Nevertheless, the Mitchell Library collection shows that the family knew of the existence of a "female pensioner" for whom George, who incidentally died intestate, had set aside funds; and his sister Anne was asked about the disposal of a sum in excess of what was needed for the pension payments. That was eventually paid to her nephew Robert Brown, who also received a further sum in 1820. It was reported in the same year that the pensioner was "an active healthy woman likely to live for many years to come"; but it is not certain that the family ever saw a reference to her as "Bebee Bogle", a name that first appears in the surviving papers in 1855, by which time all the Bogles of Daldowie were dead and their effects in the hands of the descendants of George's sister, Martha. Bebee Bogle in fact outlived all the Bogles of Daldowie and died in 1838, when she may have been over eighty years of age.

Although there is no documentary proof that George did have a Tibetan wife, it is difficult to dismiss a story which has survived with such strength and persistence not only among those who are undoubtedly descended from George Bogle but also in collateral branches of the Bogle family and in that of George's companion Dr. Alexander Hamilton. And there is a further point which inclines me strongly to believe it. The name "Tichan, sister of the Teshoo Lama" is not Indian, but can be readily identified with the Tibetan name Dechen (Bde-can or Bde-chen). Miss Millie Sturrock, who
passed it on to Mrs. Heathcote, must have heard it from her mother Matilda. Tichan’s granddaughter, for it is hardly to be supposed that a lady born in the middle of the nineteenth century and living at a time when little was known or written about Tibet could have invented such a name. The other part of the tradition, that Tichan was a sister of the Panchen Lama, cannot be accepted, but, it is possible that she was a relation or dependant.

I would like to think that the redoubtable Bebee Bogle who withstood the climate of Calcutta for so long was a Tibetan. The possibility cannot be ignored that George Bogle had a liaison, before his visit to Tibet, with a girl in Calcutta which resulted in the birth of “Mary Bogle from Bengal”, who, as mentioned above, was sent to London in 1780. If there were such a person, whether she was the Bebee and Tichan the mother of the other Mary and her sister Martha was the mistress or vice-versa is a matter for speculation. It might be supposed that life in the heat of Calcutta would be difficult for a Tibetan woman after the death of her husband and separation from the children. She could have returned to the tolerant society of Tibet with no stigma on her character; but the position of a Bibi, even as a widow, was of some consequence. Tibetan refugees in India have recently shown resilience and adaptability and initiative in finding openings for trade, an activity which seems to come naturally to all of them, men and women, monk and lay, noble and peasant. Foreign travellers record Tibetans visiting India for trade and pilgrimage from the sixteenth century onwards, and in Bogle’s time they had a resting place near Calcutta in the small Buddhist monastery across the river at Ghusari, for which Warren Hastings had arranged a grant of land to the Panchen Lama and to Purangir Gosain; so a Tibetan woman in Calcutta would not have been quite without contact with her own people. It is not impossible that the long-lived Bebee Bogle was the Tibetan Tichan.

* * *

Since writing this article I have been in touch with Dr. Eva Robertson, a descendant of George’s granddaughter Matilda Sturrock née Brown. She has kindly given me information about other descendants of John and Matilda Sturrock, who are numerous. She also knew well the Misses Maggie and Millie (or Milly) Sturrock who told Mrs. Heathcote about George Bogle’s daughters at Daldowie; but although she knows the tradition that George married a Tibetan “princess”, she can add no significant details and it seem unlikely that any others of George’s line can add any more. Dr. Robertson also let me see another letter from her aunt Millie Sturrock which gives details not included in her letter to Mrs. Heathcote which I have quoted above. It appears that Martha Bogle’s secret engagement to her neighbour was eventually recognized, but that the young man died on his way home to
marry her. Martha was for long inconsolable and wore widow’s weeds but later became engaged, to the disapproval of her family, to William Brown, a clerk in her uncle Robert Bogle’s office. He was a widower with two young sons. The marriage was happy and Martha, who outlived her husband, spent her later years at first with her step-son Robert, who had settled in Liverpool after a prosperous career as a merchant in the West Indies, and later with her daughter Matilda after her marriage to John Sturrock. She died probably about 1945–6. There is also a story about a missing will by which George’s eldest brother Robert intended to leave valuable property to his two nieces Martha and Mary.

I have also corresponded with Brigadier Bruce Bogle who is a descendant of Robert Bogle of Shettleston, a cousin of George Bogle senior and so an uncle of Robert Bogle of Daldowie and of George junior. The brigadier, too, knows of the tradition of George Bogle’s Tibetan marriage; and he has shown me an extensive history of the many ramifications of the Bogle family.

Other families where the tradition may be known are Scotts of Glasgow and Gairdners from Kilmarnock; and it is just possible that this story might stir memories of Mary Bogle from Bengal, the protégé of Mrs. Stewart in London. But perhaps something better than a vague tradition might still be found in the family archives of friends of George Bogle such as Claud Alexander whose letter is mentioned above, or David Anderson who retired to St. Germains near Tranent in East Lothian, or Alexander Colvin of the Calcutta legal firm of Colvin Bazett and, above all, in the family of George’s dearest friend Alexander Elliot, brother of Sir Gilbert Elliot first Earl of Minto, from whom he had no secrets.
Reflections on a Tibetan Passport

When Csoma de Körös, "the founder of Tibetan studies in Europe", was working as librarian at the Asiatic Society in Calcutta, which he had reached on foot from Kanam in 1831, his attention must have been drawn to plate 27 in Thomas Hyde's Historia religionis veterum Persarum (Oxford, 1700; 2nd edn. 1760), reproducing a passport granted in 1688 to an Armenian merchant, Chogja Ouannes. As a result he published an article in the Journal of the Asiatic Society (Bengal), ii, 1833, in which he transcribed and translated the Tibetan text "of which at the time of its publication, no European was able to decipher the characters".

Dr. Thomas Hyde (1636–1703), himself a notable pioneer in Asian studies, particularly in the field of Persian and Arabic, brought out the first edition of his Historia in 1700; and, although it is possible that earlier Tibetan documents exist in the archives of the Society of Jesus — e.g. the letter from the king of Tsaparang (Rtsa-brang) to Fr. Antonio Andrade in 1624 — the passport to Chogja Ouannes (Joannes) appears to be the first example of Tibetan writing to be published in the west.

The reproduction of the passport in Hyde's work was engraved at Oxford by M. Burghers and, considering that he cannot have known the language, is commendably accurate; but a few letters are not quite clear and Csoma has misread some of them and has therefore misunderstood parts of the document.

In line 2 of his transcription lhahi mi-rje should read lha-sde mi-sde, "monastic and lay communities".

In line 6 the reading i-t'hang-na-chan for i-wang-na-chan, which leads to the failure to identify Ouannes, is strange for the letter wa is formed exactly as it appears at p. 4 in the small characters of the syllabic scheme in Csoma's own Grammar of the Tibetan Language (Calcutta, 1834).

In line 7 where he reads *stahur-gyi mtshon* with the suggestion that it is an error for *lahur-gyi mtshon*, “Lahori weapons”, the words are *rta’ur-gyi mtshon* “provision of corvée horse transport”.

In lines 8 and 9 *nyan* should probably be corrected to *rtan* (for *tan* or *brtan*). Here again his own syllabic scheme might have helped him.

Although these misreadings affect the translation to some extent, the general meaning of the document as a passport instructing the various officials on the route to India to provide facilities and not to obstruct the bearer is clear enough. Csoma could have seen similar official language in some of the letters granted in 1724 and 1729 to the Capuchin missionaries at Lhasa regarding their house and chapel there, which are reproduced in Appendix II of Agostino Antonio Giorgi’s *Alphabetum Tibetanum* (1762), of which a copy had been given to him by William Moorcroft in Ladakh in 1822. The Tibetan characters in the *Alphabetum* would, however, have been no help to him for they are in *dbu-can* presumably from those brought to Rome by Fr. Orazio della Penna, the only member of the Capuchin mission reputed to be literate in Tibetan, and cut in 1738 by Antonio Fontarita. But Csoma’s failure to follow up Hyde’s information that the passport was granted to an Armenian and his misinterpretation of the term *mgo-dkar i-t’hang-na-chan* as “Mohammedans of I-t’hang-na” have obscured its special and historical interest.

Although Csoma knew that *mgo-dkar* “white-head” was used of foreigners and could have seen it applied to the Capuchin missionaries in those letters in *Alphabetum Tibetanum*, he does not explain why he chose to take it as referring to Mohammedans. Perhaps he was misled by the rather Islamic appearance of the name Chogja Ouannes. *Chogja* (Khoja) is a Persian title given to distinguished merchants and, together with *Mirza*, *Agha* and *Mukhtear*, was used of Armenians owing to their connection with that country. Certainly some Armenians in India were converted to Islam in the reigns of Akbar and Shah Jahan but the great majority were staunchly Christian.

Armenians had been travelling and trading in most of the known world at least since the consolidation of their New Kingdom in Cilicia in the twelfth century, and probably long before that. Their port of Ayas (Lajazzo) on the gulf of Alexandretta — through which the Polo family passed on their travels — became the entrepôt for trade between the east and the west. From there, enterprising firms established links throughout Europe, mainly by way of Venice. They acquired a reputation as reliable merchants and bankers; and in Central Asia they were the most trusted, hardy and efficient caravan leaders. Their international activities were stimulated by repeated invasion and occupation of their country by one foreign power after another — Egyptian, Ottoman Turk, and Persian — which drove them to emigrate widely; and in 1605 the Persian ruler Shah Abbas, after losing control of most of Cilicia to the Ottomans, transferred 50,000 Armenians.
from Nakhchevan and Julfa to a city called New Julfa which he had made for them in a suburb of Isfahan, from where their far-reaching commerce prospered greatly.

Armenians had been reported in China as early as the thirteenth century and in India by the fifteenth and from both those bases they extended their business activities in Tibet. They probably did not establish themselves at Lhasa until after 1642 when the fifth Dalai Lama made it the permanent capital, but their trade with Tibet from India, especially in silk and musk, before that time is mentioned by the British travellers Ralph Fitch (1580) and Peter Mundy (1630). Later the Venetian adventurer Nicolao Manucci enquired carefully about Tibet and its trade from Armenians in India and was able to extract more information from the Jesuit Fathers Johannes Grueber and Albert d'Orville who passed through Lhasa from China in 1661. John Marshall, the British agent at Patna from 1667 to 1671, also took special interest in trading matters and learnt about Tibet from Armenian merchants who had been to Lhasa several times and on from there to Hsining. Another foreigner who reported about this trade at about the same time was the French doctor, philosopher and traveller Baron Jean Baptiste Tavernier, who not only met Armenian merchants engaged in the Tibetan trade from Patna but also saw Tibetans who had come there for the same purpose.

Recently a wealth of fascinating detail about Armenian business in Lhasa — the route followed by the merchants, the nature and value of the goods they bought and sold, their dealings with other Armenians, and with Tibetans and Kashmiris, and so on — has been published in The Ledger Account of the Merchant Hovhannes by Levon Khachikian of Soviet Armenia, communicated by Professor Suniti Kumar Chatterji to the Journal of the Asiatic Society (Bengal), viii no. 3 (1966). This Hovhannes, son of David, a merchant from Jougha (Julfa) was at Lhasa from 1686 to 1692. It has been tentatively proposed to identify him with Khoja Ouannes (Joha~es) to whom the passport of 1688 was issued but, for several reasons, this is impossible. Hovhan, Hovhannes, Joannes was a common name among Armenians. The ledger of Hovhannes shows that he did business at Lhasa with another Hovhan, son of Sarkis. Further, although he was employed by an important and powerful firm of Khojas, he himself was not distinguished with that title and was, as he makes clear, simply a humble employee of his agha or master. But the most conclusive evidence is that the dates do not fit, for Hovhannes of the ledger did not complete his business and leave Lhasa until 1692. A Tibetan travel document, lam-yig, unlike a western passport valid for a number of years, was issued for immediate use on a specific journey and could not be held over for a later year. Chogla Ouannes to whom the passport was granted in 1688 must therefore have been a different person.
Nearly twenty years after Khoja Ouannes' departure another Khoja, named Dawith, gave generous assistance to the Capuchin missionaries when they reached Lhasa in 1707 by acting as interpreter and arranging accommodation for them. The missionaries struggled on until 1745 but the Armenians never recovered from the devastation of their business when the Dzungars captured and looted Lhasa in 1717. They left the city and never re-established their commercial firms there although a few individual Armenian traders made their way to Lhasa at least up to the early years of the nineteenth century.

Returning, in conclusion, to Csoma's article: although its defects suggest that it was a fugitive piece on a subject of minor interest compared with his favourite studies in language and literature, it has had a special value for me in directing my attention to the activities in Tibet of those remarkable Armenian merchants.

Note

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Sources


The quiet competence with which many Tibetan exiles from their own land have found success in a new life in India, Europe and America is a fine example of their national resilience and initiative, allied to a natural friendly charm and good manners.

That is no surprise to those who knew them in Tibet and I remember when David Snellgrove and I went in 1960 to discuss the future of the Tibetan refugees with the United Nations High Commission and were faced by a generally gloomy view that they would find it very difficult to adapt themselves to strange conditions, we vigorously maintained that, given a helping start, the Tibetans would rapidly do very well in their new surroundings.

Now among the many successful and popular figures in a variety of activities, there are many learned lamas. Some have established teaching and meditation centres where they inspire their disciples by their dedicated sincerity and conviction. The most notable of the lamas is, of course, the Dalai Lama.

On 17 March 1959, after two shells from Chinese batteries had fallen in the grounds of his summer palace when the hope of finding a peaceful outcome for the growing tension and hostility between Tibetans and Chinese had broken in violence, His Holiness left his capital secretly at night to seek refuge in India. A month later, after a journey full of danger and hardship, he arrived at Tezpur in Assam. Instead of the careworn exile some may have expected, the assembled pressmen saw a serene figure of great dignity and presence. He might have been a ruler secure in his throne paying a ceremonial visit; but behind the ease of manner and unfeigned friendliness many could perceive the spiritual depth which without affectation set the Dalai Lama apart from familiarity and made him effortlessly master of his surroundings.

There is beyond doubt something about a high lama that is outside the ordinary experience of our western civilization. Even among the lesser

lmas, of whom there were many, I found as well as calmness, benevolence, dignity and humour, the unfeigned certainty — so much part of the man that it would never occur to him to analyse or explain it — that he was not only the person we see but the same who had lived in the bodies of many predecessors. He is as sure of that as that he is himself. I shall not speculate how that comes about now His Holiness the fourteenth Dalai Lama has become an international figure, the friend of religious and political leaders all over the world but also accessible with direct simplicity to many thousands of ordinary people whom he influences by his teaching of peace, mutual understanding and goodwill. I am not going to attempt the impossible task of explaining him: charisma is not something to be put into words, only to be experienced in personal contact. What I set out to do is to recall how some earlier lamas, who were never seen outside Asia, appeared to the eyes of the rare western visitors who chanced to see them in the seven centuries or so preceding this.

The first foreigners to meet Tibetans were Franciscan friars in the thirteenth century, braving the arduous journey to the court of the Mongol Khans who took pleasure in assembling round them representatives of every available religion, whose blessings they accepted, indeed demanded, indiscriminately. They also enjoyed hearing debates between champions of the different faiths. In 1254 William of Rubruck met at that court a red-robed Tibetan priest with whom he had a long conversation — in what language it is not specified — and from whom he acquired some ill-digested information. He also saw a ten-year-old child-monk said to be a reincarnation of two predecessors. He took part in a debate with the Buddhists in which he claims to have triumphed. If the Tibetans were his opponents they probably enjoyed debating then as much as they do today and, in the end, it was they who won the Khan’s favour. William brought to the west the first version of the six letter prayer which he represents as “Om Mani Baccam”. About half a century later another Franciscan, John of Montecorvino, was at the Mongol capital in Peking where he met a red-hatted “Tibetan” pope — the “Grand Trutius” — (perhaps the sde-srid who was at that time the Sa-skya lama Ye-shes rin-chen), but he has nothing significant to say about him.

Then and for many years to come, foreigners who came in touch with Tibetans were mainly missionaries, and so professional critics and rivals of Buddhism. Furthermore, lack of a common language stood in the way of mutual understanding. An exception, at least to the extent that he was a layman, was Marco Polo who was in China and Mongolia some years before Montecorvino. It is not clear whether he actually spoke to a Tibetan but he has a good deal to say about the priesthood whom he describes in general as “idolaters” and “Bakshi”. He never uses the word lama but mentions some idolaters as leading an ascetic life in great monasteries
where the monks were of a superior kind. Marco's chief interest was in the more spectacular activities of the Bakshis who were able to control the weather and to perform miracles such as raising the Khan's drinking cup from one place to appear on the table in front of him. These persons whom he describes as generally dirty and unkempt, resembling perhaps some types of modern sngags-pa, were also credited with good deeds such as persuading the Khan to make charitable donations to the poor.

After the fourteenth century there was a long interval before a further meeting between foreign missionaries and Tibetans; and the scene moved from the east to the western spheres of Tibetan influence when the Jesuit Antonio d'Andrade paid a short visit in 1624 to the kingdom of Tsaparang (Rtsa-brang). His mission had been sparked off by a report from a Portuguese merchant Diego d'Almeida who claimed to have lived two years in Tibet, perhaps Ladakh, and affirmed that there were traces of Christian practices in that country, among them a bishop called Lama. That appears to be the first mention of the word in the western vocabulary. Andrade won favour with the lay ruler of Tsaparang who pressed him to return, describing him in a letter as his lama. Andrade did go back the following year and met many lamas with whom he could communicate after a fashion through one of them who spoke Hindi. But close relations or any real study of Tibetan religion were not possible because his patron, the king, was on very bad terms with his priesthood, who before long brought about his fall; and with it the Christian mission too came to an end.

A nearly simultaneous Jesuit mission reached central Tibet by way of Bhutan under fathers Estevão Cacella and João Cabral. In Bhutan they saw the great reverence in which the dharmarāja — the Zhabs-drung Rin-po-che — was held and the great state in which he lived but they were still seeking for traces of Christian practice and did not get the least idea of Tibetan religious beliefs. When they went on to Shigatse (Gzhis-ka-rtse) they became, like the Jesuits in Tsaparang, involved in rivalry between their protector the lay king and the lamas of differing sects, and learnt little more about lamas and their ways except that they gradually perceived that they were not relics of past Christianity. Moreover they did not display the bigotry of another pair of Jesuits, Johannes Grueber and Albert d'Orville, travelling from China to India, who were the first foreigners to see Lhasa. They declined to seek a meeting with the Dalai Lama, Grueber describing him as "that devilish god the father who puts to death those who refuse to adore him". Doubtless he kept that ungracious thought to himself at that time for he admits that they were treated with great kindness by the Dalai Lama’s own brother.

At last, in the early years of the eighteenth century there came to Lhasa the first foreigner to acquire a sound knowledge of Tibetan and an insight into Tibetan thought and learning. It is difficult to exaggerate the greatness
of Ippolito Desideri and impossible in a few words to summarize his achievement. On his arrival at Lhasa in 1716 he was graciously received by the actual ruler, Lajang Khan. Within nine months he had learned enough Tibetan to write, in traditional verse form, an exposition of Christian doctrine which he presented to the king and which created a great stir of interest. The king arranged for him to continue his studies first in Ramo-che and later in Se-ra where he was allowed to celebrate mass for himself. His command of Tibetan led to many discussions with learned lamas and he was engaged in composing a refutation of Buddhism when his studies were interrupted by the Dzungar invasion. The work was completed just before he had to leave Tibet in 1721. Later he wrote a careful account of Tibet, its people, customs, administration and, of course, its religion. In general he shows a respect for the institutions and conduct of the lamas and monks; and he found, as has been agreed many times since, that there is much in common in the moral principles and aims of both faiths; but his Christian beliefs made him denounce some aspects of Tibetan Buddhism as idolatrous and abominable. The sticking points then as later were Tibetan denial of a God and their doctrine of transmigration. Although he knew many lamas and had one special favourite who taught him Tibetan, he paints no picture of the character and personality of any of them; it is only of his patron Lajang Khan, to whom he was much indebted and whom he obviously liked, that he gives any personal description.

He records the amazing veneration accorded to the Dalai Lama and to other lamas too: “Would to God”, he says, “that Christian Catholics showed one-hundredth part of such sentiments to ... Religious of our Holy Church”. And having seen the devotion of the common people to “Urgyen” (Padmasambhava) which made them ready to sacrifice everything they had rather than give up their faith in him Desideri comments “I confess I blamed myself and was ashamed to have a heart so hard that I did not honour, love and serve Jesus, sole Master, sole and true Redeemer, as this people did a traitor and deceiver”.

Desideri’s view of reincarnating lamas carried Christian logic to a conclusion which modern readers may find an excess of dogma. He was impressed by the recognition of past possessions and associates and by the claims by newly discovered lamas to remember past existences and he rejects the idea that this is simply due to deceit and collusion; so, since it cannot be the work of God, it must be that of the Devil. But his careful examination of other Tibetan religious doctrines is generally impartial and acute.

The Capuchin missionaries who briefly preceded Desideri and continued after his departure until 1745, like him, enjoyed the protection and friendship especially of the lay chief administrator, Pho-lha Mi-dbang, and also of the Dalai Lama and other monks. But they had no one of the calibre
of Desideri among them and although several of them must have acquired the rudiments of Tibetan, only one, the gentle, devout Orazio della Penna is said to have been fully proficient in the language. They had many close acquaintances among the lamas with whom they held lengthy discussions; and they met the seventh Dalai Lama on several occasions. They seem to have been more concerned with preaching their own beliefs than with attempting to understand those of the Tibetans and some of their letters show an amusing naivety. They claim to have proved in argument with learned lamas that the Buddha was neither a deity nor a saint, that it was no sin to kill animals, and that the lamas with whom they were debating could not possibly be reincarnations. The lamas listened attentively. Orazio himself presented the Dalai Lama with a copy of his work refuting Buddhism. The Lama accepted it with interest and politely advised Orazio not to condemn the religion of other people. Nevertheless, one of the Capuchins reported that the Dalai Lama was teetering on the verge of conversion. All such optimism came to an abrupt end when a handful of lowly Tibetans whom they had converted were persuaded to disown their loyalty to the Dalai Lama. After being given every opportunity to recant, they received a comparatively mild flogging of twenty strokes and the fathers who tried to intercede were told by their patron Pho-lha Mi-dbang that they should not interfere with the faith of other people, adding “We do not do so”. After a short time when Pho-lha and the Dalai Lama declined to receive them, they were once more granted audience and were treated with the customary kindness, but it was made clear that their actions were, in Tibetan eyes, an unworthy and discourteous return for years of tolerant hospitality. That was in effect the end for the Capuchin fathers and for a permanent Christian mission in central Tibet. Dispirited and out of funds, the good Orazio Della Penna, who had been for twenty-two years in Tibet, left Lhasa in April 1745 only to die of weariness and sorrow at the age of sixty-five soon after his arrival in Nepal.

Nearly thirty years later there was a mission of quite a different sort when Warren Hastings despatched George Bogle as his envoy to Tashilhunpo (Bkra-shis-lhun-po) with the aim of encouraging friendship and commerce between India and Tibet. Bogle, an intelligent, observant and cheerfully sociable Scot, was singularly fortunate to meet in the person of the third Panchen Lama the most powerful and popular figure in Tibet at the time and he has left the first lively description of a great lama as a warm human personality as well as a charismatic leader.

On his first reception at Tashi Rabgye (Bkra-shis rab-rgyas), Bogle was charmed by the engaging manner of the lama and thereafter for the best part of five months was frequently in his company and in that of his hospitable, light-hearted family. The lama clearly enjoyed Bogle’s presence and treated him with the greatest consideration, sending dress and food to make
his stay more comfortable. Bogle attended the lama on his journey to Tashilhunpo, at formal reception and at religious ceremonies; and, more important, he had about thirty private meetings when the lama who had a fair knowledge of Hindi, received him with friendly informality, spoke freely about all aspects of the political situation and approved of Bogle's hopes of closer relations between India and Tibet. Bogle was regularly invited to religious services and, from courtesy and in the interest of occupying his time, he always attended. He has described well enough what he saw of temples, services and so on but shows no real interest in the meaning of it all and on the one occasion when the Panchen initiated a conversation about religion Bogle seems to have absorbed little of his explanation of Buddhist doctrines and, on his part, made it clear that he was no missionary with an evangelistic axe to grind, and was politely vague and non-committal in his interpretation of Christian tenets. They came to the usual agreement that the moral aims of their faiths were similar.

His close acquaintance with his host moved Bogle to admiration, respect and affection. He wrote:

His disposition is open, candid, and generous. He is extremely merry and entertaining in conversation and tells a pleasant story with a great deal of humour and action. I endeavoured to find out, in his character, those defects which are inseparable from humanity, but he is so universally beloved that I had no success and not a man could find in his heart to speak ill of him.

He has much more to say about his gentleness, his preference for conciliation, his diplomatic sagacity, and of the profound veneration and devotion in which he was held; and in general he says: "I never knew a man for whom on so short acquaintance I had half the heart's liking".

No foreigner has lived on terms of closer confidence and intimacy with a great lama; and Bogle parted from the Panchen, his family, Tibet and its people, with genuine sadness. Later, writing to his sister, he regrets the absence of his friend the “Teshu [Panchen] Lama for whom I have a hearty liking and could be happy again to have his fat hand on my head”.

Bogle may not have achieved any great practical success but he had paved the way for future friendly relations, and Hastings determined to follow this up by another mission. Sadly the Panchen and Bogle were not to meet again; the former died in China in 1780 and Bogle a year later in Calcutta.

So, the next envoy to Tashilhunpo, in 1783, was Captain Samuel Turner, an English officer in the East India Company's army. Hastings was good at choosing men, and Turner like Bogle was able, observant and intelligent. Also he was patient and able to get on well with Tibetans, but from the
rather formal language of his account he seems to have lacked Bogle's warm spontaneity and sense of fun, and he did not have Bogle's advantage in meeting any figure comparable to the third Panchen Lama for at his visit the new reincarnation was only eighteen months old; but he has left, in the rather staid language of the eighteenth century, an enchanting account of his reception by the child:

The Lama's eyes were scarcely ever turned from us and when our cups of tea were empty he appeared uneasy, throwing back his head and contracting the skin of his brow, and continued to make a noise, for he could not speak, until they were filled again. He took some sugar out of a golden cup ... and stretching out his arm made a motion to his attendants to give it to me.

Turner then addressed the child briefly for "it was hinted that notwithstanding he is unable to reply, it is not to be inferred that he cannot understand". During Turner's speech:

The little creature turned, looking steadfastly towards me, with the appearance of much attention while I spoke, and nodded with repeated but slow movements of his head, as though he understood and appreciated every word but could not utter a reply. His parents who stood by all the time eyed their son with a look of affection and a smile expressive of heartfelt joy at the propriety of the young Lama's conduct. His whole attention was directed toward us; he was silent and sedate, never once looking towards his parents, as if under their influence at any time; and with whatsoever pains, his manners may have been so correctly formed, I must own that his behaviour, on this occasion appeared perfectly natural and spontaneous, and not directed by any external action, or sign of authority.

The child, Bstan-pa'i nyi-ma, grew up to be a personage of almost equal importance to his predecessor, Bogle's friend, and lived to the age of seventy-three.

The promising start to relations between India and Tibet was stultified by the closing of the country after the Gorkha invasion in 1792, and it was left to Thomas Manning, a sensitive, intellectual, English eccentric to find his own way to Lhasa in 1811, apparently without serious obstruction. Manning was a friend of Charles Lamb who was fascinated by his "incomparable genius, congenial nature, sparkling eccentricity and addiction to occasional levity"; he was also a considerable linguist who became specially attracted to China, and having mastered the language and manners wanted to travel in remote parts. He arrived at Calcutta in Chinese dress,
which did little to disguise his nationality, and with a Chinese servant and the help of Chinese living in Tibet, he found his way through Bhutan to Lhasa. His fragmentary diary, though containing several significant observations, is largely given up to the discomforts of the journey. At Lhasa he paid his respects to the Chinese amban and seems to have received official hospitality from the Tibetans, apparently in his role as a foreign physician. He had no difficulty in securing audience of the ninth Dalai Lama, Lung-rtogs rgya-mtsho. At his reception Manning prostrated himself three times and offered a scarf and presents. His account is another classic:

The Lama’s beautiful and interesting face engrossed almost all my attention. He was at the time about seven years old [actually, he was just six]; had the simple, unaffected manners of a well educated princely child. His face was, I thought, poetically and affectingly beautiful. He was of a gay and cheerful disposition; his beautiful mouth perpetually unbending into a graceful smile, which illuminated his whole countenance. Sometimes, particularly when he had looked at me, his smile almost approached to a gentle laugh. No doubt my grim beard and spectacles somewhat excited his risibility.

There was an exchange of formal questions and compliments before Manning withdrew. He says: “I was extremely affected by this interview with the Lama. I could have wept through strangeness of sensation. I was absorbed in reflections when I got home”. He paid five more visits to the lama but has left no detailed comment on those occasions.

In 1845–6 missionaries appeared once more at Lhasa. The Lazarist fathers Evariste Huc and Joseph Gabet had set out in 1844 from the borders of China, north of Peking, on instructions from the Pope to survey the mission field in Mongolia. A long journey brought them at the end of 1845, by way of Nag-chu-kha to Lhasa where they were received kindly by the Tibetans but with suspicious hostility by the Chinese amban, who evicted them after about three months and compelled them to return eastwards through Tibet instead of proceeding by the short journey to India. During their stay, like all missionaries before them, they received the patronage of the lay authority, in this case the senior minister Bshad-sgra, whom they wrongly describe as the regent. They were allowed to make a chapel and preach their faith and they had the usual anodyne discussions about religion with Bshad-sgra and a few monks. Owing to a smallpox scare they were unable to meet the Dalai Lama, Mkhas-grub rgya-mtsho, who was then about eight years old, and have little to say about him as a person. But they were much impressed by what they heard of the Panchen Lama, the same whom Turner had met in 1784, now sixty-five years old, a figure
of majestic presence with a great reputation for sanctity and learning. He had also acted as regent for eight months from September 1844 to May 1845. Petech appears to state that he remained at Lhasa until about September 1846 but this seems improbable, for the missionaries evidently did not meet him but were advised to go to Tashilhunpo to do so, which they were unable to do.

After the Lazarists the age of explorers and adventurers in the competition to be first into Lhasa set in. The arrogant bullying and not infrequent deceit by some of these travellers did nothing to enhance the reputation of foreigners in Tibetan eyes. They met few Tibetans of any standing, had no common language and were generally more interested in the topography than the people.

It was not until the mould of exclusion was broken by the rough wooing of the Younghusband Expedition that a great lama was seen again by foreigners. The thirteenth Dalai Lama after his enforced flight to China was met by the American diplomat W.W. Rockhill, who spent a week with him at Wu-tai-shan. He comments on the lama’s undoubted intelligence and ability, great natural dignity, quick temper but kindly cheerfulness; his thoughtfulness and courtesy as a host. He also describes his personal appearance in considerable detail. The Vicomte d’Ollonne also met the Dalai Lama at Wu-tai-shan for a short rather formal visit from which he got an impression of the lama as a statesman and man of action. Later, the friend of longest standing and closest intimacy was Sir Charles Bell, who looked after the Dalai Lama when he took refuge in India in 1910 and was in constant contact with him when he was invited to Lhasa in 1921. Bell has written about the Dalai Lama with deep affection and respect in his Portrait of the Dalai Lama, which I cannot attempt to summarize: enough to quote him that the Dalai Lama and he were “men of like minds”. From Bell’s account the powerful personality of the lama emerges clearly, but it is as a strong-minded man of action and administrative ability and political interests rather than of deep spirituality and that is the impression conveyed not only by Rockhill and d’Ollonne but also by the Japanese Ekai Kawaguchi and by Political Officers who visited Lhasa after Bell until the death of the Dalai Lama in 1933. He was nevertheless profoundly learned in Buddhist doctrine but apparently in an intellectual way and he was eager in his position as head of the church to see that the standard of teaching and achievement in religious studies was improved.

By contrast, his contemporary the sixth Panchen Lama impressed all who met him by his gentleness and spirituality. Sir Frederick O’Connor, who was fluent in Tibetan, enjoyed a warm friendship with him beginning with visits to Tashilhunpo in 1904 and 1905; he later accompanied the lama on his visit to India. O’Connor tells a pleasant story that on their first meeting, the Panchen Lama, referring, without the need of explanation, to the
visits of Bogle and Turner to two of his predecessors, expressed his pleasure at meeting British officers “again” and recalling the happy relations he had with them. He also showed O’Connor a number of presents — watches, china, silver and so on — received on those early occasions. O’Connor writes with affection of the gentle and saintly character of the lama and the love and reverence of his people towards him. Unfortunately he was drawn innocently into a short-lived plan in which O’Connor, perhaps carried away by his admiration for the lama, sought to set him up as a substitute for the absent Dalai Lama. This had tragic consequences for the Panchen Lama, who was to end his life in exile, and for the peace of Tibet. Sir Charles Bell wrote of him:

Truly the Tashi [Panchen] Lama has a wonderful personality. Somewhat short in stature, with a fair and healthy complexion, the smile with which he regards you is touched with the quiet saintliness of one who prays and works for all mankind, but it is at the same time the smile of a friend who takes a personal and sympathetic interest in your own concerns. It is not surprising that he should be loved by his people. It is good that there is such a man in Tibet; it is good that there are such men in the world”.

The great explorer Sven Hedin described him in even more enthusiastic terms: “Wonderful, never to be forgotten, incomparable Tashi Lama”, and related the deep impression made by his calm, dignity and courtesy and his wide humanity: “Extraordinary, unique, incomparable!”.

The participation of the Panchen Lama, whether willingly or not, in political matters beginning with the plans of Frederick O’Connor and continuing through his enmeshment in Chinese designs on Tibet since his flight from Tibet in 1926 until his death in 1937 are a sadly uncharacteristic story. And the involvement of the two great lamas in international politics to some extent robbed them of their remote mystery, but although there remained an aura of spirituality it made them more credible human beings.

Today the balance has changed. The present Panchen Lama is something of an enigma. In the early days of the Tibetan tragedy he appeared as the political creature and puppet of the Chinese; and contentious and offensive words were put into his mouth. But people who have met him lately emphasize that when he is able to speak for himself he is a true Tibetan and Buddhist.

The Dalai Lama — cho-srid gnyis-ldan, Master of Religion and State — is inevitably and deeply concerned with the politics of his country and when he speaks of them, which he does mainly on special occasions and when he is specifically asked about them, he makes his views and meaning clear but in balanced and temperate language. In his daily life and in
his public utterances politics are subordinated to his deep, innate feeling for religion and the good of all beings. His radiant, generous spirituality in all he says has restored the mystique of the incarnate lama underlying his warm humanity and approachability.

As I have said charisma is not to be described. I make no further attempt to do so and will only add my twentieth-century work-a-day account of a child lama to the incomparable descriptions by Turner and Manning.

On 6 October 1939 the whole population of Lhasa, so it seemed, had congregated in bright cool autumn weather on the plain below Rigya (Rigs-kyi) monastery some two miles from Lhasa, where a great canopy, ornamented with auspicious designs in blue, sheltered the tent proper, the roof of which was even more splendidly decorated with religious symbols in gold, red and blue and with golden peacock figures perched on the roof pole. The front was open, showing the inner walls lined with splendid gold, red and blue brocade hangings and with bright banners hanging from the supporting poles. In the centre stood the tall throne of the Dalai Lama, covered in patterned gold and red brocade. There was a lower throne at one side for the regent. The crowd waited in tense excitement which was heightened when the band of the Dalai Lama's bodyguard, which had gone out to meet him, was heard in the distance; and soon in a cloud of dust and of incense smoke from burners all along the route, the first banners of the procession came in sight. Long trumpets sounded from the monastery above and the crowd pressed forward eagerly. A small troop of Chinese soldiers in dusty quilted clothes came first at a quick pace and then a long line of mounted men, carriers of banners and symbols, and then the whole body of Tibetan officials in ascending importance in magnificent brocades and white or crimson topped hats. At last in the centre of the cavalcade we saw a small carrying chair draped in yellow silk, and through the glass window the face of the little Dalai Lama could be seen looking calmly but curiously at the mass of people prostrating themselves by the roadside, many weeping with joy. The procession moved at a rapid pace up the hill to the monastery where the child was to have a short rest and change his clothes. Soon he was carried down the winding path in the large gilded state palanquin with eight bearers in yellow silk and red tasselled hats. The whole official body accompanied him into the camp to the Peacock Tent where he was lifted on to the throne by his Lord Chamberlain. Everyone then took their proper places in the enclosure, and we members of the British Mission and those of the Nepalese and Chinese were led to our seats. Ours were just in front of the Dalai Lama's father, mother and family. The regent opened proceedings by prostrating three times before the Dalai Lama and then offering him a scarf; after which the officials began to file past to offer white scarves and receive the blessing. The child, wearing yellow brocade and a yellow, peaked hat with a fur brim sat quietly and with great
dignity, completely at ease in these strange surroundings, giving the proper blessing to each person, with both hands or one, or with a tassel on the end of a rod, according to their rank. He looked often in our direction, partly because we were so near to his parents but also, it seemed, fascinated by our unfamiliar appearance; and when our turn came to offer our scarves he was smiling broadly and as I bent down for his blessing he took a pull at my hair. But a greater centre of amusement and interest were the rosy face and fair hair of Reginald Fox, the mission radio officer; the Dalai Lama felt his hair for quite a long time. After us the stream of worshippers continued to flow for over an hour until at last tea in a golden tea-pot studded with turquoise was brought in; the tea was first tasted formally by a high official, then poured into a jade cup and offered to the Dalai Lama. He was then lifted down and carried back in state up to the monastery.

Although not surprisingly he seemed a little tired at the end of the long day his behaviour through the whole ceremony was movingly impressive. He maintained a calm and interested appearance and a look of happy benevolence. The rapt devotion of the Tibetan crowd could almost be felt and all of us like Manning experienced “the strangeness of sensation”.

Later, Sir Basil Gould came to Lhasa for the installation ceremony. By then I had left Lhasa but Gould has left a very full account of the story of the discovery and recognition of the child as well as of the enthronement. He tells of his receptions by the Dalai Lama, describing his steady gaze and absorption in what was going on, and using the language of Isaiah: “Unto us a child is born”.

When I returned to Lhasa in 1944 and on many later occasions I was formally received by the Dalai Lama and never failed to be impressed, as he grew up, by his composure, his self-possession and his look of kindly interest. As he was a minor all my time in Tibet and state affairs were conducted by the regent, I never had an opportunity to meet and talk to him privately. During much of that time my friend Heinrich Harrer was frequently in contact with the Dalai Lama, whose curiosity about the outside world and things mechanical he was able to satisfy in many ways. Harrer has told his remarkable story in Seven Years in Tibet. I was fortunate in being able to exchange, through him, messages with the Dalai Lama, to whom I used to send cinema films, illustrated magazines and books, and flowers from our garden. But it was only after he had reached safety in India that I was able to meet him personally on several occasions, first at Mussoorie in 1960 and then at Dharamsala in 1961 when I was privileged to enjoy his hospitality at delightfully informal family lunch and dinner parties. At those meetings I could feel the immediate impact of his personality. Behind the simple often humorous friendliness of manner shone a transparent goodness, an inner peace devoid of hatred and a wide compassion not only for the pressing needs of his own people but for the wider troubles and cares.
of all humanity. That feeling perhaps developed even greater intensity in the travels he was later to undertake all over the world and in his meetings with leading religious and political figures in many countries.

For me, my experience in those meetings in India showed that "His Holiness" was not merely a title but a reality.
Two books on lamas of the Karma-pa tradition have been published recently: *Karmapa, the Black Hat Lama of Tibet* by Nik Douglas and Meryl White (London, 1976) and *The History of the Sixteen Karmapas of Tibet* by Karma Thinley (Boulder, Co., 1980). The former contains short accounts of the lives not only of the Black Hat (Zhwa-nag) but also of the Red Hat (Zhwa-dmar) incarnations and of several other great lamas of the Karma Bka'-brgyud sect. The second concerns only the sixteen Black Hat lamas.

The accounts in both books are collated from a number of sources but neither author refers to the *rnam-thar chen-mo* of each great lama, mentioned in such works as vol. *pa* of the *Chos-'byung* of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag ’phreng-ba, which are presumably the “official” versions. If any of these have survived in India it would be valuable to have them published in accessible form.

The existence of the two books mentioned above may seem to make it unnecessary to attempt any more biographies of the Karma-pa lamas; but neither of them is actually a translation from any of the sources. There are, in fact, few full translations of Tibetan *rnam-thar* in western languages. The *Padma bka'-thang* is in a category of its own; but we have the magnificent hagiography of the lives of Mar-pa by Jacques Bacot and of Mi-la-ras-pa by Evans-Wentz, the more straightforward biography of the great scholar Bu-ston by David Seyfort Ruegg, and the lives of four simple lamas of Dolpo by David Snellgrove. The Karma-pas were for some five centuries not only religious leaders but were actively involved in the politics of Tibet and I would like to convey the original flavour of Karma-pa biography by translating the *rnam-thar* of at least one of their famous statesman-lamas.

The lives I find of particular interest are those of the fifth Black Hat, De-bzhin gshogs-pa, who established a close connection with the Ming emperor Yung-lo; the fourth Red Hat, Chos-grags ye-shes, who in alliance with the Rin-spungs princes was the most influential figure in Tibet after the eclipse of Phag-mo-gru about 1492; and the tenth Black Hat, Chos-dbyings rdo-rje, in whose time the power of the Karma-pa was supplanted by that of the Dge-lugs-pa through the might of the Oirat Mongol armies of Gusi Khan. As an experiment I have started with the last, which is the shortest of those to which I have access because I can use only one source — the series of brief lives in Chos-rje karma-pa sku-'phreng rin-byon-gyi rnam-thar mdor-bsdus dpag-bsam khri-shing, composed by Sman-sdog mtshams-pa Karma nges-don bstan-rgyas and dated 1891.

The text is rather staccato and elliptical here and there. Some obscure points have kindly been clarified by the Tibetan scholar Samten Karmay but there are probably passages, especially relating to religious practices, which I have mis-interpreted. Nevertheless, I hope that the course of events and the style of the biography have in general been fairly represented.

Several of the incidents appear in a different light from that in the two works mentioned above. The “invitation” to the court of the 'Go-log ruler Lcags-mo-ba is seen to have been virtually the kidnapping of the child by two Lcags-mo lamas for the sake of gain. There is no hint in the other biographies of the difficulty the Zhwa-dmar had in obtaining care of the child, or of various other unpleasant intrigues. The part said to have been played by Chos-dbyings rdo-rje in averting a Mongol invasion in 1635 is here, more probably, attributed to the Rgyal-tshab Rin-po-che. The lama’s suffering and hardship during his flight from the Mongol army are related in more vivid and moving language than in the other works, as is the devotion of his personal attendant, the rim-gro-pa, who served him faithfully in adversity for over thirty years. And the relationship of the Karma-pa with the fifth Dalai Lama, though touched on only briefly, seems more realistic than the account in Thinley’s work.

There is a strange discrepancy from the chronology in Dge-lugs-pa histories in the attribution of the attack on the Karma-pa’s camp to the year 1644 rather than 1642.

The stories are, of course, written from one point of view and to get a balanced picture of the period other sources such as the history by W.D. Shakabpa could be consulted. But the rnam-thar is not to be read as history but as the progress through earthly vicissitudes of a lama whose character is well depicted, in the closing pages, as gentle, compassionate, retiring, unworlly, indifferent to misfortune, contemplative, artistic, a lover of animals, and essentially good.

In the translation which follows, suggested readings for the few passages where the text is illegible, are shown in brackets.
Translation

A short \textit{nam-thar} of the tenth incarnation, \textit{Rgyal-mchog Chos-dbyings rdo-rje}

As was foretold in a detailed communication by the late lama, at the time of his death, to Gar-dbang Thams-cad mkhyen-pa\textsuperscript{1} about the place where the next holy incarnation would appear, in the lowest gorge of the eighteen great gorges of Mdo-khams, a country nowadays known as 'Gu-log,\textsuperscript{2} a father named Dhi-tsha Khyi-ku-thar and a mother named A-mtsho had three sons, the eldest Nam-mkha', the middle one A-'bum, and the youngest this present lord born on the 28th day of the first month of the wood-dragon year [1604] at sunrise, without any difficulty to his mother. While he was still in the womb his mother had seen in a dream the form of Guru Padma[sambhava], all radiant with light, enter her body; and she had other such wonderful dreams. She therefore called him O-rgyan-skyabs. As soon as he was born he sat up on his haunches. He took a pace in each direction and uttered the essence of the six-letter formula and the Rdo-rje gcod-pa. When he was one year old his mother asked for an initiation from a certain lama but the child would not hear it. When they said "He is the Khyi-thul incarnation of the Guru", the child said "He is not Khyi-thul, he is Rang-byung dga'-rab rdo-rje"; and he did reverence to him and received the initiation and blessing.

The late lama in his lifetime was not greatly skilled as an artist but when his attendant the Lha-bris sprul-sku Phan-bde laughed about that the child said "Later, I shall make you ashamed"; and accordingly, while he was still quite small, he painted pictures of deities and made rosary beads of many coloured wools. He made \textit{[a little seat]} of straw from a bundle he was carrying on his back saying "Good fortune!"; and he said "I am the Karma-pa, sound the rgya-gling well".

Having taken rebirth as one full of compassion, he said at the time of sheep-shearing "Do not harm the creatures in this way", and he wept. Loving all sentient creatures as dear friends and sacred beings, he said "Whenever I see flocks of sheep and cattle I regard them as myself and it pleases my mind". One day when his father was carrying him on his lap on horseback he said "Give me the whip and the reins", and when they were given to him he said "This creature by its nature goes where it pleases, but if one instructs it regularly it becomes easy to govern, one should so instruct living creatures everywhere and direct them straight to deliverance and peace". Again, when he washed in a flowing stream or in rainwater he said "Water cleans the body; the whole flowing river of the scriptures cleans away the impurities of the mind". When it was time to eat and drink he told his rosary and repeated the six-letter formula.

At that time when it was widely reported that the Karma-pa incarnation had been born in 'Gu-log country, the Lcags-mo lamas, uncle and nephew, devised a
wicked trick and giving many presents to the 'Gu-log governor Padma and to the father and mother, they constrained the incarnation together with his father and mother to be presented to Zla-ma3 of Lcags-mo and installed him there. When he was five years old, being covetous of wealth, they took him towards the Rma-chu. Rma-sbom-ra4 escorted him and there was a shower of rainbow light and flowers. Many wild animals accompanied him. The Lcags-mo uncle and nephew grabbed the many presents that were offered to him.

At one time when a rumour arose that the reincarnation of the Karma-pa had been born at 'Bri-khung, the Lcags-mo-pa said “Wherever this boy under our roof, the father and son, may go, let us go too”, and they also went to Dbus. The all-knowing Zhwa-dmar who was staying at that time at Rtsa-ri Mtsho-dkar, sent his gzim-dpon Mngon-dga’ secretly together with servants, and gave the child the name Chos-dbyings rdo-rje as ordained by the adamantine word of O-rgyan chen-po, and he offered services of confirmation and a letter expressing his respect. Offerings of tea, and homage in large measure came from the king of 'Jang Satha-n and from Dbus and Gtsang. When he was seven years old the Yang-ri5 Drung-pa, who was known as Shag-rog-pa, in the guise of a monk offering flowers, invited him to the assembly tent and made a pretence of offering a service of good fortune. Then on the 14th day of the twelfth month more than three thousand monks of the Great Camp6 of the all-knowing Zhwa-dmar and of Zur-log and Nyin-byed came there. On the 15th day, at Rgyal-phur-'prod, the Father and Son met together. On the 23rd day of the first month of the lo-gsar the all-knowing Gar-dbang, with incense in his hand, invited him to the Great Camp and performed the enthronement on the lion throne and the ceremony of good fortune. He gave into his care the black hat7 with the gold frontlet, the seal, the umbrella and so on; and he made the great offering of lamps and incense. All the religious communities separately paid homage to him; and he put on the hat and performed the prayer of dedication. The all-knowing Zhwa-dmar said that the incarnation with his father and mother should be entrusted to him but the Yang-ri Drung-pa and the Lcags-mo-ba did not agree and fearing that if they made over the child to the Zhwa-dmar they would not be able to get possession of his wealth they were not willing to give him up. Then the Si-tu Rin-po-che also came but the Yang-ri-ba and Lcags-mo-ba would not allow him to make a peaceful settlement.

The Sog-po king Kho-lo-ji8 invited the Father and Son but, fearing that the Sog-po and the Sgar-pa might carry off the child, Yang and Lcags took him to another place as a means of evasion. At that time by severing the connection with the hundreds of blessings of long life resulting from the meeting of Father and Son, all the ways to good fortune were thwarted and it was widely said to have caused great damage to the Karma-pa faith.

One day when a stone, the size of a man’s head, by the side of a river was broken open and many green worms came out, in pity for creatures in hell he uttered “Om mani padme hum” and as soon as he cast his eyes on them they effected transmigration. At the age of eight he showed skill in the mystic dances expounded in
the tantras. The many images, both painted and carved, which he made were really a delight to the eye. He received great gifts from the emperor Wan-li — fifty rgya-ma of white sandal wood, two hundred lengths of silk for outer and inner garments, and so on. Also many gatherings of the faithful from other places offered great gifts when he gave them audience. An invitation was received from the king of 'Jang Sa-tham.

In those days, treasuring dearly the rosary given him by the all-knowing Zhwa-dmar, the wishes of his heart were set only on prayers for a speedy meeting. Taking as his model the best petitions from Dbus and Gtsang and by exercising his artistic skill, he became without an equal in writing and reading. At 'Bum-nyag he left the imprint of his foot on a stone. Accompanied by the deity Kam-po Rdo-rje dpal-brtsegs he came to Gnas-nang, Kong-po, Ri-chab and other places and made offerings. He settled quarrels and disputes.

At this time, thinking mostly how the needs of the future might be met, when the king of 'Jang and the Sog-po king once again invited him, he went to Sog-yul. He imposed vows against taking life upon king Da'i-ching and all others, monk and lay. When a fire broke out on a mountain he quenched it by laying on his hands. At the age of eleven he went to Dbus. At Pha-bong Zhabs-chen two of his footprints appeared. At the invitation of Tsher-lung Drung-chen and the Gar-dbang he went to Zur-mang, and then proceeded to Tshog-dbu of Bde-mchog. On the occasions when he performed the ceremony of wearing the hat at those places, because the Karma-pa and Zur-mang-pas took the side of the Zhwa-dmar, the Yang-ri-ba and Lcags-mo-ba were afraid that he might be abducted and they increased their precautions.

At Spam-gzhung a deer pursued by a hunter's hound came to the door of his tent to seek refuge. He blessed it by the rite of g.yung-drung nor-bu and, tying a knotted scarf round its neck, he gave it absolution. The deer and the hound became like mother and son. He paid the price to the hunter who made a vow not to take life. And on all beings on the way by which he went by bestowing religious teachings and presents he imposed the rule of the ten virtues and so on, and gave them the purpose of severing the chain of cause and effect. When the god Gnyen-chhen thang-lha himself came to welcome him everyone saw a fair-complexioned youth with his hair in five braids, carrying a crystal censer in his hand. The lama's living tent was filled with rainbow-coloured rays and a shower of flowers fell. With an ever-increasing array of escorts he came to Yangs-pa-can and Mtshur-phu. He was installed on the great lion throne. The whole region of Mtshur-phu and Gnas-nang was bathed in rainbow light and so on, just like the sort of wonderful magical manifestations there were on the occasion when De-bzhir-gslic-pa went to the Chinese imperial palace.

When he was twelve the lama Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag rgya-mtsho performed the rite of offering his hair-lock and ordained him dge-bsnyen in front of the gandho-la shrine. He gave him the name Dpal-ldan 'jig-rten-gsum gyi 'dren-pa sku-bzhi lhun-grub chos-dbyings kun-tu-khyab-pa'i 'phrin-las rtag-pa'i
rdo-rje 'gyur-med yid-bzhin snying-po rgyas-pa zla-med mgon-par mtho-
ba'i dpal ("The glorious leader of the three worlds, the self-originated four-fold
body, the glory of the changeless essence of all wishes, the peerless manifestly ex-
alted thunderbolt who perpetuates the good deeds and doctrine of all-covering
heaven"). Guided by his firmness and the encouragement of Sgro-dkar, with re-
gard to the precious bka'-'gyur of the Buddha, the tantras, oral doctrines,
commentaries and explanations of commentaries, the granting of initiation, the col-
lected works of the late Karma-pas and so on he received, beyond measure,
initiations, empowerments and instruction of great profundity. That is all set out
in the greater mam-thar.

The Chos-rje addressed his teacher the Dpa'-bo Rin-po-che and asked "How
long will you live?". He replied "Since I have not the gift of foreknowledge and
the like, I do not know". The Chos-rje answered "I assure you, you will live to be
sixty-three". He meditated unceasingly on a selection of the sūtras. Having been
invited by the Gtsang Sde-pa, on the way, at Na-ga-ring Lake when he had
thrown in the proper offerings, at that moment music was heard from within the
lake and the sky was filled with rainbow light. At Zab-phu-lung he had a vision of
O-rgyan Rin-po-che with his retinue. Received on a grand scale by the Gtsang
Sde-pa Phun-tshogs rnam-rgyal; he pitched camp at Rnam-gling Klu-sding. Great
offerings were made. At Gsung-rab-gling when he saw a fresco painted by the ninth
Lama he said "This is strangely unlike the work of a mere maker of images".

When Yang and Lcags were constantly making demands on the Lho-brag sgar-
pa the Lama himself issued an order not to do so in future. At Pa-nam a boy of
turquoise-blue colour came and bowed before him. The lord Dpa'-bo said that be-
cause of three klu demon brothers whom the lord Rang-byung-pa had formerly
bound by an oath of subjection, there was turquoise colour everywhere.

With the Gtsang Sde-pa escorting him on grand scale he came to Bsam-rtses
Klu-sding. He performed the ceremony of wearing the hat. Great offerings were
made: hats for regular wear, robes, a gold seal and so on were presented. The prince
Karma bstan-skyong dbang-po made the great offering (incense, lamps, flowers and
so on) when he was received in audience.

At that time he heard an interpretation of the picture of Ka-la-pa (Sambhala).
As for poetry no sooner did he hear the mnemonic verses of lord dbon Nam-mkha'
than he knew them. He was unrivalled in his knowledge of the substances and mea-
urements of the three symbolic offerings (sku, gsung, thugs); and he was especially
fond of Ladakhi bronze.

Yang and Lcags together slandered the father and mother and two nephews to
the Gtsang Sde-pa and caused them to be evicted from the camp. The Byang Bdag-
po and others came for audience, with presents. A golden letter arrived from the
Chinese emperor Da Ming Wan-li with great presents of eighty lengths of silk for
outer and inner garments, and so on. In Lho-brag the lord Dpa'-bo gave great
presents. When going to the Rong-po Rdza-la he left imprints of his feet. The Sa-
skyong ruler together with his court officials and ministers having provided a
great escort, he came to Sne'u-gdong-rtse. At the time there arrived a golden letter and many especially valuable gifts from China and 'Jang presented by the Sa-tham king.

He went towards Tsa-ri. At Dga' Ma-mo he set up 16,400 images of the sixteen arhat disciples. In general, wherever he went, he satisfied the converts with the three blessings. When anyone offered to take the vows of a hermit he gave him an image of the lord Mi-la; and to those who took the vow to repeat continually the six-letter prayer he gave a picture of 'Phags-paSpyan-ras-gzigs drawn by himself. To the householders in general he administered the vow not to take life and not to accept banquets of meat and chang nor to provide these for others. If they wanted long life, let them not take life. If they wanted good fortune, not only should they utter their worship to the Precious Ones but also they should refrain from offering worship to demons by the repetition of Bon spells.

In Kong-po, Rig-'dzin 'Ja'-mtshon snying-po came to meet him. In accordance with secret instructions in the Chos-bdag (?) he presented a group of images of the Precious Ones, a horse and a pig, hidden treasures he had discovered. Smyung-gnas Ras-chen, seated on a litter because he was of ripe old age, surrounded by a retinue of several hundred snyung-gnas-pa came to meet him and gave many presents of robes and so on. When the lord Dpa'-bo fell ill, the Chos-rje himself performed religious ceremonies and even acted as attendant on the sick man who was thus relieved of his illness.

Although he had continuously listened to sermons for many years he did not himself pronounce any.

When the lord Dpa'-bo caused the evil deeds of Yang and Lcags to be revealed, the Sku-rab-pa and the Gtsang Sde-pa took counsel together and made each of them go into retirement separately. The other Lcags-mo-ba were banished to their own country and the obstacles troubling the Great Camp were removed afar. After that, at the instigation of Sde-pa Spel-dmar, the Gtsang Sde-pa put Yang and Lcags in prison. Although the Zhwa-dmar Rin-po-che made an appeal to him, accompanied by presents, the Gtsang Sde-pa disregarded this and made war on the Sku-rab-pa. The Chos-rje sent to enquire from the Zhwa-dmar Rin-po-che about an auspicious day for an urgent meeting and asked that protection should be given to the Sku-rab governor and his people who had committed no offence. The all-knowing Zhwa-dmar came, and there were excellent results from the meeting of Father and Son. The Zhwa-dmar and Zhwa-nag together with Dpa'-bo and Tre-ho, and the father and mother and two nephews of the Chos-rje also entered the Camp. Although the Father and Son together gave instructions restraining the Gtsang Sde-pa and Sku-rab, the Gtsang Sde-pa would not listen. Because the Gtsang Sde-pa seeming to be victorious at that time, disobeyed the orders of the lama it happened to him according to the saying that the fate of one who regards only his present action is as different as it is from thinking of a field and possessing one; and on his way up the Gtsang Sde-pa died of smallpox. Although the Father and Son were invited to Gtsang they did not go there; and the representatives
abused them greatly. It was well known that Shag-ram-pa, the Yang-ri Drung-pa, had given the impression that in future he would control both religious and temporal affairs and because of great hatred for the Zhwa-dmar Rin-po-che who was responsible for that former wish not being fulfilled, he became a great obstacle to the good of the Father and Son.

At that time gifts sent by the Cha-gar king and the Khar-kha king, from among the Yu-gur people, were received. The Zhwa-dmar Rin-po-che gave to the Rgyal-ba’i dbang-po all his possessions, his camp, his estates and his monk attendants. The reincarnation of the Rgyal-tshab Rin-po-che was recognized. After that, the Gtsang Sde-pa having invited them they went together. Great gifts were offered.

In his twenty-first year, with the Zhwa-dmar Rin-po-che acting as mkhan-po, Dpal Gtsug-lag rgya-mtsho as slob-dpon and Si-tu chos-rje Chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan as gsang-ston he was fully ordained in the presence of the assembled monks. By way of Lhasa and the Gnam-mtsho he came to Mtshur-phu. The Zhwa-dmar and Zhwa-nag together made the vases to be buried for the subjection of the earth when the precinct wall was being built. From the lord Gar-gyi dbang-po he heard much religious doctrine and from the lord Dpa’bo he heard an abundance of sermons. The Chos-rje offered many images of the deities painted by himself.

On the further invitation from the Gtsang Sde-pa they went there. With a mounted escort and a procession of monks they came to Rgyal-mkhar-rtse (Gyantse). Great offerings were made and all prisoners were released. From then they went gradually to Sa-skya and there was a meeting between the Bdag-chen and the Chos-rje. On the Rtsib-ri he had a vision of the siddhas. At Ding-ri Gling-khor he meditated extensively and he had a vision of Dam-pa kun-dga’. With the deity Tshe-ring-ma escorting him he came to Chu-dbar. He had a vision of rje-btsun Mi-la wearing monk’s robe and smiling at him. Father and Son both carried stones on their backs for building a chapel. When fire broke out on a hill he quenched it by reciting the bden-tshig. Then the Zhwa-dmar Rin-po-che went on pilgrimage to Nepal and Chos-rje went on pilgrimage to Gangs Ti-se. There occurred many remarkable signs such as visions. He saved the lives of all the animals offered to him by the ‘Brog-pa herdsmen. When he went to Skyi-grong the news came that the all-knowing Zhwa-dmar was going to India; he was very sad and shed tears. Having asked advice from the lord dbon Nam-mkha’ how to prevent this he sent a letter to the Zhwa-dmar Rin-po-che with a present of gold.

At Ding-ri Gling-khor Dpal-mo-thang an assembly of monastic patrons petitioned him saying “Why should you travel without a fixed abode rather than stay here as priest for the king?” He answered each of them with a verse. Going to Chu-dbar he painted many thang-kas. When he went to welcome the all-knowing Zhwa-dmar, the Father and Son met at Spro-bde Bkra-shis-sgang. He offered a jar of precious water from Mtsho Ma-pham and they washed in it. The lord Zhwa-dmar gave him many special gifts from India and Nepal. Carrying on his back the lord Zhwa-dmar’s religious books and ritual ornaments the Chos-rje went to
CHOS-DBYINGS RDO-RJE, THE TENTH BLACK HAT KARMA-PA

Chu-dbar. When a letter arrived from Lho-brag that the Dpa'-bo Rin-po-che had died the Chos-rje was greatly grieved; and soon after, the Zhwa-dmar Rin-po-che, having given a promise about the place where his reincarnation would appear, manifested the signs of passing into the void. Tre-ho Rin-po-che then became the personal attendant of the Chos-rje. The precious body was brought to Mtshur-phu with religious ceremonies every day. The 'jang king presented two hundred srang of silver and many pearl rosaries. Many of the faithful gave their personal possessions and the memorial ceremony was performed on a grand scale. The Chos-rje himself laid the foundation of the precious mchod-rten for the Rin-po-che's remains and carried stones on his back for building its chapel. He painted many images for the memorial ceremony and fetched water on his back for tea and thug-pa for the assembly of monks.

He sent one hundred and eight mystic adepts to Chu-dbar after enquiring about their religious devotion. Perceiving that there was a change of faith in Dbus and Gtsang he formed the wish to go to Mdo-khams; and he sang many songs of sorrow and repentance. The Umbrella-holding Mongol kings Ar-pa-lang and Chog-thu and others asked for a meeting but it was not granted. Saying that the Be-ri king who refused to let the Mongols pass, although a Bon-po seemed to be a true Karma-pa, he pardoned him for having previously blocked the road. Then the Chos-rje went on foot on pilgrimage to Tsa-ri. Then he returned to Lho-brag and performed a hundred thousand circumambulations, outside and inside, round the images of each Lo-bo Sakya. He offered to the Jo-bo Rin-po-che three silk scarves tied with ribbon; and the next day he received round his neck from the Jo-bo Rin-po-che a scarf with three knots. He caused the faithful to have greatly increased faith in the two forms of Jo-bo Sakya and so to perform virtuous acts such as prostrating themselves on the circuit around the images.

An invitation from the Sa-tham king arrived and the lord and his attendants went there gradually. He invited the Rgyal-tshab chen-po Grags-pa mchog-dbyangs and took part in meditation [(? rjes-sgrub mdzad) secured his help?].

The O-rod Bstan-'dzin chos-rgyal launched an attack on Gtsang. Before this when a Mongol army had come, the Rgyal-tshab chen-po Grags-pa mchog-dbyangs, at the request of the Gtsang Sde-pa, was able to turn it back but this time, although the Father and Son gave orders to stop, they were not able to turn them back. Through the Pan-chen Rin-po-che they appealed to the Great Fifth. The Panchen gave a reply to the Rgyal-ba'i dbang-po to this effect: “I guarantee that in relations between the Dge-lugs-pa and Karma-pa there is no disagreement and I know nothing of such deeds concerning the Karma-pa faith”. But although the Karma-pa received a written order granting their independence, malicious persons caused disturbances and because a great war broke out the Chos-rje went to Lho-brag. He recognized Kun-tu bzang-po as the Dpa'-bo incarnation.

To his attendant Kun-tu bzang-po he gave a bowlful of curds, a bell in a case, five pens, and a thousand rolls of paper, telling him he was needed as his personal disciple. The evil deeds of the Gtsang Sde-pa once again caused the Chos-rje great
concern. Although some of the ministers, because of the disgrace brought on the court, explained that they did not agree with the Gtsang Sde-pa his purpose did not change; and when a Kong-po army arrived the Chos-je said “This has happened because you would not keep still before. Now go back and contrive to keep quiet. But if you do not obey, you yourself must bear responsibility to the Karma-pa doctrine of which Mtshur-phu is head. I am going to submit to the Great Fifth”. It was generally said that because a demon was sitting in the hearts of those leaders of the Karma-pa way so that they relied on the Gtsang-pa and abandoned their responsibility to the Karma-pa faith, the Great Fifth, therefore, disregarded his order that the Karma-pa faith should be independent.

The Chos-je saw that the condition of ruler is like honey mixed with poison since the Karma-pa and the Gtsang-pa sought to combine religious rule with affairs of state and so brought about the evil deed of war, and that a wound that strikes this way into the centre of the faith of one’s heart is in accordance with the repeated pronouncements of O-rgyan Chen-po that by the fortunes of men nothing can be achieved. After that, Father and Son went into religious retreat at Lho-brag for a short time. He made many pictures of deities and he began to distribute all his wealth to the poor. He went to Mtshur-phu, Gnas-nang and Gtsang Nyin-byed. An inauspicious conjunction of stars prevented the Chos-je and Rim-gro-pa from going to Khams. On the New Year day of the water-sheep year [1643] he conferred full ordination, upon the Rgyal-tshab Chen-po and the Rding-tsha incarnations and first vows upon the Dpa’-bo Sprul-sku. In the monkey year [1644] Stag-lung Bkra-shis dpal-grub came to meet him.19

An order came from the Priest and Patron of the government [the Dalai Lama and Gusri Khan] that the Karma-pa should take an oath not to subvert the interests of the Dge-lugs-pa. To which the Chos-je replied “It is not necessary to do so. I formerly took an oath that I would never subvert or cause dissension between the Karma-pa and the Dge-lugs-pa.” And because at the time of the Gtsang Sde-pa Phun-tshogs rnam-rgyal he disobeyed orders in the matter of the Sku-rab-pa the Chos-je had been greatly troubled and it was undoubted that the purposes of the Gtsang-pa and the Great Camp were quite different, he therefore thought he should be allowed to take an oath that, let alone any question that he might cause subversion, he had never done so in the past. But the Priest and Patron misinterpreted his meaning and became angry. The Skyi-shod-pa and the Mongol army surrounded the Great Camp. The Chos-je and the Rim-gro-pa escaped from the camp and went to Mkhan-pa-ljongs. Some of the soldiers saw him as a deer; some saw him as a vulture, and although they pursued him they could not catch him. The armies destroyed the Great Camp. Some monks were wounded some killed. During the time of his flight there were many different reports; that the Chos-je with four disciples had been seen to come to Bsam-yas; that he had been seen to come to Lhasa; that he had been seen to come to Kong-po Rgod-tshang. The soldiers sought but could not find him. For twelve days between the monkey year and the bird year (1644–1645) the Chos-je and his disciple, those two lacked food
and clothing but O-rgyan Rin-po-che gave them nectar and they suffered neither hunger not cold.

For three years from this time the Rim-gro-pa Kun-tu bzang-po never loosened his waist band, and for thirty years he continued untiringly in the service of the lama. After that time the Chos-rje shared his seat with him and by giving him many of the three symbols (rten) and consecrating them and in other ways, he showed his great regard for him.

Then they went to Tsa-ri. Offerings were made to them of the necessities for making the upper circuit. When they went to the seven Klo-pa houses they were offered many gifts of honey and so on. When he was offered the choice between a roll of red brocade and one of soft woollen cloth, he compared the thickness and choose the woolly cloth saying “This is real Klo-pa stuff”. A musk deer which they gave him followed close behind him. About a hundred monkeys came to meet him and gave a display of their gambolling. He went to Mtsho-dkar and saw many visions. In the fire-dog year [1646] he came to Ka-nam Se-ba-sgang at the time of lo-gsar. The gifts that were showered on him like rain he immediately gave for religious offerings. Knowing that the Zhwa-dmar reincarnation had been born he sent Karma snying-rje and Karma don-grub to perform religious ceremonies and to present nectar, a white carpet and a rosary, together with a letter and a gold srang for the father and mother.

In the pig year [1647] an invitation came from the Sa-tham king. He went to Kha-ba dkar-po. Escorted on a grand scale by the Sa-tham king’s chief minister Karma stobs-ldan and others, he came to Rgyal-thang. The king ‘Chi-med lha-dbang, the father with his son and queen together offered a great ceremony at the lo-gsar of the wood-mouse year. There were boundless gifts. He performed the ceremony of wearing the black hat, and preached virtue. There was display of fireworks after which the Chos-rje, seated in a tent of white cotton at the summit of a hill-pass, offered prayers for all blessings. As special presents at their first meeting, the king gave a golden Wheel of the Dharma, a white conch shell with a golden fin and so on. Putting his head on the lama’s feet he asked for prayers of compassion for his late father Mi-pham tshe-dbang. On the next day, for about three rgyang-grags [about five miles] along the road on the right and left many thousands of people, kneeling, set out holy water, incense and flowers on a table in front of each of them. Accompanied by religious ceremonies, with the sound of many kinds of musical instruments, the camp was pitched by them in the Bha-she pleasure park. Then when the palace had been splendidly decorated both outside and within, he was invited by a great welcoming party of some five ministers and took his seat on a golden throne. Great gifts were presented: the eight lucky signs in pure gold, the seven jewels of monarchy, a bre [about 1 lb.] of gold and one of silver, silk stuffs, and so on. He performed the ceremony of wearing the hat and gave initiations in the recitation of the yig-ge drug-pa. He expounded the merits of ‘Phags-pa Spyan-ras-gzigs according to the words of Dam-chos pad-kar and he gave extensive religious instruction about causes and effects with regard to the prince more
than all other, and about the necessity following therefrom of praying to that tutelary deity and repeating the yig-ge drug-pa. Then the nine great ministers each invited him separately and did him reverence. He caused them to understand the meaning of cause and effect in everything; and to the accumulation like a great cloud by way of presents and wealth offered as a religious duty from below, he gave blessing from above.

Up to the time of the seventh Karma-pa, the 'Jang king had been one who worshipped heaven and offered living sacrifices, but when the all-knowing Mi-bskyod-zhab visited that country the elephants saluted him and when he wished to ride they knelt down to the ground; so the king, thinking he must be a god, obeyed whatever he said and followed his command to accept the ten virtues. And until the present time the kings have been converts to the Karma-pa doctrine. It is said that in that country there are more than one hundred and twenty households.

Then the king distributed to the Rim-gro-pa and all the other teachers great quantities of possessions and made a complimentary speech in excellent style on his success in inviting so holy a saint. One hundred zho of gold were given for the funeral rites of his father and the Chos-rije made a prediction that he would attain the body of a god. Although the king asked him to stay there forever, he did not like the bustle and noise and went towards Rgyal-thang. At Bya-rdog Dgon many people of Spo, 'Bor, Sga and 'Dan came to meet him and he satisfied all with religious teaching and material goods. Then, intending to meet the Zhwa-dmar reincarnation, he gave all his possessions to the Rim-gro-pa; and the Chos-rije himself, dressed as a beggar, having loaded all his necessities on one horse, went alone into 'Gu-log country. His horse and clothes and whatever he had were looted by robbers and as he went begging, barefooted, both his feet suffered sores from the frost and cold. When he had neither food nor clothing someone gave him a bowl that had been broken into five pieces and joined together with thread; someone else gave him a felt cloak, and he enjoyed comfort in these. When the wounds on his feet would not heal, a householder brought him medicines. One day when he was scouring the inside of his broken bowl with ashes he drew a picture of the bodhisattva Stag-mo lus-sbyin and did reverence to it. Then as he went on his way some people recognized him and many came to meet him. About one hundred horses from the 'Brog-pa tribes and many other offerings were made to him.

When the Zhwa-dmar came to know of it, one of his relatives arrived to escort him. Then the Sprul-sku himself came to welcome him and doing great reverence, presented a pearl rosary. The Chos-rije gave the sprul-pa'i-sku gold, silver and so on, all objects to give him every pleasure; and he also satisfied his kinsmen with riches. When he went to his birth place he saw his house destroyed and the country devastated, all signs of the transitory nature of the world. In a pleasure garden he composed a eulogy of the twelve deeds of the Buddha and sent it together with news of his condition to the Rim-gro-pa. From all directions many people came to meet him. The horse that had been stolen by robbers was returned to him. And the rim-gro-pa not wanting to stay in Li-yul came from there. The Father and Son
together preached sermons of all sorts. He recognized the reincarnation of the lord Dpa'-bo. He took the hair-lock of the Zhwa-dmar incarnation, and he gave final ordination to several monks. The sixth Gar-dbang and the lord himself repeatedly performed acts of penitence. When he was fifty years of age an invitation was received from China but he did not go. Again great presents were sent. In the same year, the Great Fifth who had gone to China in the water-dragon year [1652] returned from there.

In the wood-sheep year [1655], the Chos-rje acting as mkhan-po and the Rim-gro-pa as slob-dpon, together with others, gave final ordination to the Si-tu incarnation, Chos-rgyal Mi-pham 'phrin-las rab-brtan; and in the same year he gave monastic vows and final ordination to about a thousand monks of 'jang-yul. Then having been invited by the Sa-tham king, priest and patron took part in many initiations and religious instructions. At this time, from Mtshur-phu, the Rgyal-tshab chen-po, thinking he was about to die, sent word that his reincarnation would appear in that region. At the time of merriment at the iron-mouse New Year (1660), the Rim-gro-pa gave a New Year feast to the Chos-rje Karma-pa, the Zhwa-dmar, Si-tu, Dpa'-bo, Phag-mo Zhabs-drung, Zhwa-sgom and other incarnations. The Sa-tham king also offered a New Year entertainment. A messenger arrived with a letter from the emperor Shun-rtsi. The Chos-rje gave detailed instruction to the Zhwa-dmar and many others in the mudras of the rdo-rje and dril-bu and in the realization of the Six Principles of the Doctrine and so on. Again presents were received from the emperor Shun-rtsi, his queen, sons, and ministers. The emperor requested that the seal should be changed and recognition accorded in the manner in which it had been done during the reign of the Ta-Ming. He replied “I have no desire to receive a new seal which is a worldly matter”. Although his attendants urged him, he said “Nothing of the sort is necessary. You simply seem to want the presents of silk. By my foreknowledge I see many parts of China engulfed in a sea of blood”. The Si-tu incarnation especially, finding it difficult to bear the great deterioration of the Karma-pa doctrine, requested that he might be reborn as a prince of China and so restore the religion. But the Chos-rje prevented him, saying “Nowadays even if you were to do that, the doctrine would not become perfect. There is no need for mere simulacra of the faith. If you hold that idea, it will be an obstacle to you meeting me regularly”.

He recognized the reincarnation of the Rgyal-tshab Rin-po-che. Formerly when Mongol troops captured the Great Camp and all the Karma-pa monasteries were seized, the Rgyal-tshab chen-po Grags-pa mchog-dbyangs and the lord Ngag-dbang bkra-shis dpal-grub composed a very able petition and so some twenty-one houses of religion, above all Mtshur-phu, Yangs-pa-can, Nyin-byed-gling; Legs-bshad-gling, and 'Od-zer-gling were granted to them. in gratitude for that all the Karma-pa monasteries caused him to take charge of Mtshur-phu and appointed him as head of each of the religious communities; and the embers of the faith were kept alive. He went to Lhasa with a suitable welcoming party from the capital. The Priest and Patron of the government did him great honour. When the
Chos-rje himself was staying for the time at Mtshur-phu or in Lho-brag a letter from the fifth Dalai Lama was sent through the Stag-lung Zhabs-drung Bka-shis dpal-grub that if he [the Karma-pa?] would act in the same way as the Rgyal-tshab Rin-po-che had been doing he would become a welcome chaplain. But by reason of the destiny of sentient beings that would not be beneficial. When there were recriminations between the Stag-lung Zhabs-drung and the monastic communities because of that, the lord [Rgyal-tshab] himself went to Lhasa and explained the situation. An oath had to be obtained from the Zhabs-drung. After that he went to Lhasa to explain how some persons had sought to cause dissension with the Priest and Patron of the government. He had audience with the Great Fifth, the Priest, and the Patron and as well as convincing them he gave great presents. Presents of recognition were received from the Gtsang Sde-pa and the Oirat queen. When the Great Fifth arrived back from China the Rgyal-tshab went to Lhasa and accompanied by a simple escort from Rtse and Shod (monk and lay officials) he was received by the ruler and they had much cordial conversation. The Mkhan Hu-thug-thu of the Oirat royal lineage sought audience and initiation from him and prayed that later he might take rebirth in his retinue. This lama's successful achievements for the Karma-pa doctrine were very great and the Stag-lung Zhabs-drung was his equal. In the earth dog year [1658] at the age of forty-two he passed away in the Zhal-ras chapel at Mtshur-phu. Having acquired freedom to choose his own reincarnation, by the power of his perfect vow, he was born as the son of a householder in 'Jang-yul where the great Karma-pa was living. And because he would have to control the monastic seat of Mtshur-phu until the next most excellent incarnation of the Chos-rje should appear, he had promised to become a son of the Lama's Lineage. From his birth, before he was grown up, he remembered his past residence and told many tales of Mtshur-phu. He was installed at the age of three and at the age of eight he took the dge-bsnyen vows. He was given the name Dpal Nor-bu bzang-po 'gro-'dul kun-tu dga'-ba'i rgya-mtsho rnam-par rol-po dgos-'dod char-du 'bebs-pa bzang-po dpal.

The Chos-rje gave to the Zhwa-dmar, the Si-tu and the Rgyal-tshab head-dresses of red and gold which he himself had made. To the Zhwa-dmar, the Si-tu, Rgyal-tshab, Dpa'-bo, Phag-mo Karma rin-chen, Sprul-sku Chos-skyong bzang-po, Sprul-sku Bskal-bzang snying-po and many others, he gave verbal instruction in the precious Bka'-gyur. When Rig-'dzin Mi-gyur rdo-rje met him for the first time, he presented a self-formed golden crescent moon, a hidden treasure which he himself had discovered. The Chos-rje recognised him as a genuine gter-ston. He made very extensively all those offerings of valuables prescribed in the Vinaya. Then, since it was necessary to install the Zhwa-dmar, the Rgyal-tshab and the Dpa'-bo incarnations, he gradually processed towards Dbus, he satisfied with preaching and with material gifts all the communities of monks and laymen on the way. At Spro-lung he met the Zhabs-drung and they had extensive and pleasant conversation. He went to the Potala and met the Great Fifth who enquired at length about his travels and his religious practices. Since the Chos-rje was
advanced in years and hard of hearing the conversation was conducted through the Rim-gro-pa. A banquet and excellent presents were provided. When he visited the Jo-bo at Lhasa visions without number were seen. The Chos-rje himself seemed to become Srong-brtson Sgam-po of old and to merge into the heart of the Jo-bo. When the Dalai Lama gave permission, he left; and not long after, his illusory outward appearance contracted and at the age of seventy-one, on the fifteenth day of the eleventh month of the wood tiger year [1674], at dawn, he passed peacefully into the infinite. About that time his whole room was filled with a white radiance and there were other such wonderful portents which it is not necessary to detail. His precious body was brought to Mtshur-phu and the incarnation lamas who were his spiritual sons, with the Rim-gro-pa and others, took part in the perfect performance of the funeral rites, offering lamps, building the silver tomb, carrying out religious ceremonies and offerings, and consecrating the tomb.

Briefly, the progress to perfection of this late most excellent lama was that by his compassion, so far from harming any creature even an ant, he loved them all as one loves an only son. He specially loved dogs and beggars, all the poor and needy and afflicted, and satisfied them all lavishly with gifts from his own hand. So far from ever doing harm, in return for harm he would lovingly confer benefits. Being perfectly accomplished in his understanding of the Phyag-rgya chen-po, he perceived the visible world as illusion, and through the vicissitudes of prosperity and adversity he was never affected by feelings of happiness or sorrow. By his nature devoted to intensely calm concentration in progressive meditation on his personal deity the Compassionate One, he constantly repeated the six letter prayer. Fierce spells and magical practices had no place in his mind. Meat and chang never touched his tongue. He never failed to make confession twice a month. He passed his time in the creation of the three precious symbols and in making offerings; and the religious paintings he completed were without number. He himself said “In poetry and painting there is no one in Tibet better than I am”. Saying also “I am one who delights in Spyan-ras-gzigs”, the works of his hand were like nectar for the eyes.

The band of disciples of that lama were: the Zhwa-dmar Ye-shes snying-po who became the guide of the next most excellent incarnation the continuier of the lineage of possessors of wisdom; the Rgyal-tshab chen-po Grags-mchog unparalleled in good deeds for the Karma-pa doctrine; and his equal, the Zhabs-drung Bkra-shis dpal-grub; the Rim-gro-pa Kun-tu bzang-po, without peer in his service to the person of the lama; Si-tu Chos-rgyal mi-pham; Dpa’-bo Kun-tu bzang-po; and his reincarnation ‘Phrin-las rgya-mtsho; Rgyal-tshab Sprul-sku Nor-bu bzang-po; Mkhas-grub Ra’-ga-asya; Mkha-reg Karma bstan-srung; Khyab-bdag Grub-dbang; Phag-mo Zhabs-drung; Zhwa-sprul Bskal-bzang snying-po; Sprul-sku Karma chos-skyong; Sa-tham Lha-bsun Karma rin-chen; Rgyal-sras Kar-phun; Karma bstan-skyong; Karma bsam-grub; Karma chos-phags; Karma don-grub; ‘Bam-chen dbon; Jo-stan Mkhan-po; Ri-bo-che’i Chos-rje; Rdi-tsha Sprul-sku; Ne-ring chos-rje; Yol-mo Sprul-sku; Zur-mang Gar-sprul Rin-snying;
Rtogs-lidan Blo-gros; those who have shown renunciation of worldly affairs (bya-btang-bstan-rnams); Che-tshang Sprul-sku; Rtse-le Sprul-sku; Tsher-lung Drung-pa; Rgod-tsang Sprul-sku; Nor-bu rgyan-pa; Rig-'dzin 'ja'-mtshon snying-po; Zhab-drung Dkon-mchog; Gong-ra Lo-chen; with other personal disciples in general from among those holy beings and several whose minds were united by the bond of the holy religion.

"Lord of all beings at a time when the age was full of dissension. By the power of his compassion like a banquet of pure food. When the heart of the doctrine was assaulted by foreign troops; when the great expanse of the earth was crowded with corpses; when through the destruction of the three precious symbols all beings were in misery; he then by the power of his compassion was lord of beings who had no lord. Who but he was the second ruler of the Sa-skya?" Thus it was said.

Notes

2. 'Gu-log, 'Go-log, Mgo-log, Ngo-log: a fierce nomadic tribe living near the Rma-chu, the upper waters of the Yellow River and the A-myes Rma-chen range, much given to brigandage.
5. Yang-ri: a great monastery of the 'Bri-khung Bka'-brgyud-pa about 65 miles north-east of Lhasa.
6. The Great Camp: the Zhwa-nag and Zhwa-dmar lamas spent much of the year travelling between their many monasteries and the headquarters of their lay patrons, and maintained what was virtually a tented monastery with a regular retinue of officials and servants known as sgar-pa.
7. The black hat is a mystic treasure of the Karma-pa, said to be made from the hair of a hundred thousand mkha'-gro-ma and given by the Chinese emperor Yung-lo to the fifth Karma-pa, De-bzhin gshegs-pa. It is worn ritually at a special ceremony by the Zhwa-nag lama.
9. Three beautiful images carved from rhinoceros horn by Chos-dbyings rdo-rje, now in Rumtek monastery, are illustrated in Nik Douglas' book.
11. Da'i-ching (Daicing): a title of Kho-lo-ji (n. 8).
14. The Gtsang Sde-pa: Phun-tshogs rnam-rgyal, ruler of the greater part of central Tibet at that time.
15. Sa-skyong: representative of the enfeebled former ruling family of Phag-mogr u.
Sku-rab-pa: governor of a region in Dwags-po.

Ar-pa-lang (Ar-sa-lang) and Chog-thu: for the curious history of their intervention in Tibet, see W.D. Shakabpa, *Tibet*, pp. 103-4.

Bstan-'dzin chos-rgyal: Gusri Khan.

The account of chronology and events following Gusri’s attack on Gtsang is sketchy and difficult to reconcile with other sources. The final defeat of Karma-pa resistance was in 1642 or early 1643 at latest, not 1644. Its centre was Rdzing-phyi north of ‘Ol-kha. It is not clear whether Chos-dbyings rdo-rje was there or in one of the other centres, perhaps Lho-brag. The Mkhan-po-ljongs where he took refuge is probably the semi-legendary secret valley in north Bhutan, which would agree with the story of Douglas’ version that he was miraculously transported to Kurtod (Skur-stod) in northern Bhutan. At all events he made his escape and is next recorded in Tsa-ri.
PART FOUR

Tibetan Precis
For Official Use only.

TIBETAN PRECIS

BY

H. E. RICHARDSON,
Indian Political Service.
Note

The following pages have been set in such a way as to retain the original pagination. The page references contained in the table of contents and the index refer to those found in square brackets at the top of each page.

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For the maps accompanying the Tibetan Precis, see the Introduction, p. xii above.

The following abbreviations are used in references to authorities cited in the Appendices:

A.P.O. Assistant Political Officer
B.T.A. British Trade Agent
D.O. Demi-Official
E.A.D. External Affairs Department, Government of India
F. and P. Foreign and Political Service, Government of India
F.D. Foreign Department, Government of India
F.O. Foreign Office, London
G. of I. Government of India
H.M.A. His Majesty's Ambassador
H.M.M. His Majesty's Minister
P.O.S. Political Officer, Sikkim
S. of S. Secretary of State
Tibetan Precis

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Chapter I — History Down to the Close of the XIXth Century

1. Early History

The history of relations between Tibet and India before the arrival of the East India Company is sketchy and obscure. Up to the Seventh and Eighth Centuries A.D. Tibet was a great military power, waging with varying success a constant warfare against the neighbouring Chinese, suffering at least once Chinese penetration as far as Lhasa, but able for long periods to maintain some degree of control over Gilgit, Baltistan, Kashgar, Nepal and Bhutan, and to carry terror and conquest even into the capital of China.

Northern India, although largely protected by its climate, did not escape Tibetan invasion and, after the death of Harsha, a Tibetan force harried the kingdom of Magadha. Tibetan inscriptions up to the end of the Eighth Century continue to claim some sort of domination over "India".

From the Seventh Century A.D. a strong religious connection between the two countries came into being. In fact, Tibetan Buddhism was founded by the Indian Tantric priest Padma Sambhava and was reformed some four centuries later by another Indian pandit, Atisha. Many other distinguished Buddhist teachers went from India to Tibet; and Tibetan scholars and pilgrims visited India. Great libraries of Indian religious books, both in original and in translations, accumulated in Tibetan monasteries; and there was a constant exchange of pilgrims, which still continues although probably on a smaller scale, between Mt. Kailas in Tibet, and the holy places of Buddhism in India. But by the time British influence first struck root in India the rise of Muslim power and the decline of Buddhism had reduced the former extensive intercourse to the pilgrim traffic and the small but constant trade exchanges between the hill states of the Himalaya, and Tibet.

2. First British Contact

As British territorial possessions increased, the duty of protecting ever-growing boundaries brought about the inevitable contact with the Himalayan kingdoms. The occasion was provided by the Bhutanese, whose incursions into the plains and harrying of Cooch Behar appeared to Warren Hastings, then Governor of Bengal, as a threat to his Presidency. A force was sent to expel the raiders and drive them back to the hills. The Bhutanese seem to have appealed to the Tashi Lama who wrote to Warren Hastings, the first example on our records of the stately and picturesque Tibetan official correspondence; asking as a favour that hostilities against Bhutan should cease. Hastings, with far-sighted genius, replied offering a treaty of friendship between Bengal and Tibet and asking for a passport for an officer to negotiate with the Tibetans. About the same time (April 1774) he concluded a treaty with Bhutan, and shortly afterwards, George Bogle set out on his mission to Tibet.

Bogle's account of his visit to Shigatse is full of interest, but it must suffice to say here that, although he established relations of intimate friendship with the Tashi Lama, his success was limited by that obstacle which, in different forms, has ever since overshadowed British intercourse with Tibet, the influence of China.

3. China and Tibet

Even before the height of Tibetan military power in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries A.D. the Tibetans had from time to time raided China. The earliest record is of an obscure period several centuries B.C.; again in the Fourth Century A.D. Tibetan tribes contributed to the downfall of the Tsin dynasty. After the Eighth Century, the destinies of China and Tibet continued to be interwoven, but it was the foreign conquerors of China, themselves greatly influenced by Buddhism, who exerted the most active influence on Tibet. By the Thirteenth Century the military spirit of the Tibetans seems to have become softened, perhaps by the influence of Buddhism, which took hold in Tibet in the Seventh Century A.D.; and the conquests of Ghengiz Khan, even if he did not actually invade Tibet, reduced Tibetan influence which had suffered from the breaking up of what had been a strong unified kingdom, into a
number of small principalities. But Khublai Khan, the grandson of Ghengiz, and the first Mongol Emperor of China, was converted to Lamaism, and some time towards the end of the Thirteenth Century he established the High Priest of Sakya as ruler of Central Tibet. Thereafter, when the Mongol Yuen dynasty had been evicted by the Chinese Ming, Mongol chieftains continued to act as king-makers in Tibet by their support of one or other of the rival hierarchies of Lamas. The most decisive intervention was that of Altan Khan, the scourge of the declining power of the Ming Emperors, who established the High Priest of Drepung monastery as Dalai Lama, and ruler of Central Tibet, in the place of the successors of the Sakya dynasty whose power had dwindled. The new line of rulers was confirmed and still further empowered in 1645 by the Mongol Gusri Khan who, offended by an appeal by the Regent of Tibet to the newly established Manchu dynasty of China for help against the Mongols, made a clean sweep of the petty Tibetan princelings, and then set up the Dalai Lama as an independent ruler; and it was not until the time of the Emperor Kang Hsi that dissension and fighting between Tibetans and Mongols about the succession to the office of Dalai Lama, and a consequent invasion of Lhasa by Dzungarian Tatars, gave the Chinese the opportunity of active intervention in Tibetan affairs. A Chinese army eventually established the Seventh Dalai Lama in 1720, and along with him introduced effective Chinese rule at Lhasa.

The events of these years may be read in the contemporary accounts of the Jesuit Father Ippolito Desideri, and the Capuchin, Orazio Della Penna.

From that time until the Chinese Revolution of 1911 the Ch'ing dynasty maintained its officers and military force in Lhasa but the gradual decline of Manchu vitality allowed the spirit of Tibetan independence to emerge again; and it appears that the last two Dalai Lamas under the Manchu regime were sufficiently powerful to refuse new seals of office from the Emperor.

The above account is intended to bring out that the purely Chinese dynasty of the Ming, although it did issue formal acknowledgement of such Tibetan rulers as the Si Tu successors of the Sakya Lama and also of the Dalai Lamas who were supported by the Mongols, never controlled the country; and that it was the foreign Manchu dynasty, taking advantage of the Mongol religious tie with Tibet which the Manchus shared in a lesser degree, that first brought Tibet within the Chinese Empire.

4. Hastings and Tibet

To return to the situation at the time of Warren Hastings' attempt to establish friendly relations with Tibet, it may be observed from Bogle's account of his mission that, although a Tibetan of the standing of the Tashi Lama was able to enter independently into negotiations with a foreigner, it was not possible for him to conclude any agreement without reference to Lhasa and Peking. Although Bogle noticed signs that the Tibetans disliked the Chinese, the Lhasa deputies who came to talk to him had to admit that they were subject to the Emperor of China. Bogle's request for the right of trade between India and Tibet was never answered but the foundations of friendly intercourse had been laid, and although both Bogle and his friend the Third Tashi Lama died soon after their meeting, Hastings sent further missions to Bhutan in 1775 and 1777, and in 1782 despatched Captain Samuel Turner to congratulate the Regent of Tibet on the re-incarnation of the Tashi Lama. Turner did not reach Lhasa but he obtained from the Regent of Tashi Lhunpo a promise of "encouragement to all merchants, natives of India, that may be sent to traffic in Tibet on behalf of the Government of Bengal". He reported subsequently (1786) that many natives of Bengal were trading at Shigatse without obstruction. Turner also noted the power of the Chinese, but he found the Tibetans unwilling to acknowledge their dependence on the Chinese Emperor. It is also interesting to read that Russia under the Czarina Catherine was said to have been making overtures at this time for trade in Tibet.

The promising seed of British friendship with Tibet sown by these missions was brought to nothing shortly after Hastings had left India by a Nepalese invasion of Tibet in 1792. Suspicion arose in Lhasa that this attack had been encouraged by the British, and the immediate result was a complete ban on traders and visitors, including even Indian pilgrims, from India to Tibet.

The period from 1792 to 1904 is perhaps the real dark age of Tibet when it won the reputation of a closed country hostile to foreigners.
5. Fresh Efforts to Establish Relations

In the period of obscurantism after 1792 travellers to Tibet included Manning, who visited Lhasa in 1811, Huc and Gabet, Moorcroft, the Stracheys, and the earliest of the courageous Pundits of the Survey of India; but no official attempt was made to improve the position until 1873 when the Bengal Government, believing that the policy of exclusion was imposed by the Chinese and that an effort should be made to secure a fair and regulated trade with Tibet, urged the Government of India to press the Chinese for an order of admittance to Tibet and a renewal of the friendly relations which existed in the days of Bogle and Turner. It was hoped to secure admission to Tibet for Indian tea, on which there was an absolute embargo.

The only result of this approach was the conclusion of an agreement with China in 1876, at Chefoo, by which the Chinese undertook, what later events showed they could not perform, namely to protect any mission that might be sent to Tibet. This was the first example of the mistake of making agreements about Tibet without consulting the Tibetans; but in view of our lack of information about the country there was some excuse.

The Bengal Government also began to improve the road to the Tibetan frontier in the hope of attracting trade.

6. Proposed Expedition of Colman Macaulay. 1885

The value of the agreement with China was tested in 1885 when, on the enthusiastic and vigorous initiative of Mr. Colman Macaulay of the Bengal Government, a proposal to send a mission to Lhasa was approved by His Majesty's Government, and the agreement of the Chinese Government was secured. All was ready when the mission was abandoned by order of the Government of India on account of "international considerations". It appears that the Chinese, after giving the necessary permission, received protests from the Tibetan authorities.

7. Tibetan Invasion of Sikkim. 1886

Tibetan objections to the mission seem to be confirmed by what followed. The abandonment of the proposal was apparently taken as a sign of weakness, and almost immediately, at the end of 1886, a Tibetan force crossed the Jelap La into Sikkim, which had been "again admitted into friendship and alliance" by the Treaty of 1861. No immediate military action was taken against the Tibetans. The matter was referred to the Chinese Government who were asked to compel the Tibetans to withdraw, and were given an ample time limit of one year for the purpose. The Chinese, whose power in Tibet seems by this time to have waned, probably neither could nor would do anything, and in the winter of 1887 an ultimatum was sent to the Tibetan commander. As neither this nor a letter to the Dalai Lama produced any effect, a British force was sent to the Sikkim frontier in March 1888. The Tibetans withdrew but later attacked, and were driven out of Sikkim. No Tibetan territory was occupied and no indemnity was sought.

It may be observed that the first act of aggression in our relations with Tibet came from the Tibetans. It may also be noted that most of the factors governing events in the succeeding few years can be seen in this incident: Chinese inability to control Tibet, and anxiety to intervene when Tibetan action provoked reprisals — it was Chinese intervention that caused the immediate withdrawal of the British force from the Chumbi Valley — the Tibetan readiness to take conciliation for weakness, and their habit of ignoring official communications.

8. Anglo-Chinese Treaty of 1890 and Tibet Trade Regulations of 1893

Chinese intervention to effect a settlement led to protracted negotiations of a pattern to be repeated in later years. Eventually a treaty was signed at Calcutta in 1890 by which the boundaries of Sikkim were laid down, and provision was made for the subsequent discussion of questions of trade, pasturage, and the method of official communications. These discussions led slowly up to the signature of the Trade Regulations of December 1893. No Tibetan official signed either the Treaty or the Regulations, although Lonchen Shatra was present at the negotiation of the latter.

The Trade Regulations provided for the establishment of a trade centre and a British Trade Agent at Yatung (a small village where the roads from the Nathu and Jelap passes reach the Chumbi Valley) where trade was to be conducted without vexatious restrictions;
goods, with some specified exceptions, were to be exempt from duty for five years; Indian tea might be imported into Tibet at a rate of duty not exceeding that at which Chinese tea was imported into England, but this was not to apply during the five years when other goods were exempt; trade disputes arising in Tibet between British and Chinese or Tibetan subjects were to be settled by the Political Officer in Sikkim and the Chinese Frontier Officer.

9. Working of the Trade Regulations of 1893

Active obstruction by the Tibetans nullified the work of five years. Mr. White, then Political Officer in Sikkim, who visited Yatung in May 1894 to supervise the opening of the Trade Mart, reported that the Tibetans were determined to render the treaty abortive and the local Chinese officials were powerless to coerce them. The Chinese were suzerain in name only, while the Tibetans sheltered behind them and played them off against us. The site was unsuitable, and accommodation inadequate; and free trade was effectually hampered by the existence of a 10 per cent. duty on all goods passing through Phari.

The government of Bengal considered this duty a breach of the treaty; but the Government of India raised the question whether it was newly imposed or of old standing; and, in view of the short time since the Mart was opened, and the need for "the utmost patience in dealing with the Tibetans", declined to take up the matter with the Chinese Government at that stage.

Mr. Nolan, then commissioner of Darjeeling, who visited Yatung in 1895 reported on the failure to carry out the Regulations. He found that the valley beyond Yatung had been barricaded, and that Tibetan traders were prohibited from coming to the Mart. The 10 per cent. duty he reported to be of old standing, but held that it was inconsistent with the provision that trade with India should be exempt from taxation. In his opinion, the Chinese were anxious to see the Convention carried out but the Tibetans definitely repudiated the treaty.

Again the Government of Bengal recommended diplomatic representations to the Chinese Government. Again the Government of India declined. They drew attention to the increase in trade which had taken place in 1894–1895, and stressed that the point to which they attached the most importance was the development of trade. A conciliatory policy towards the Tibetans was recommended in regard to the negotiations for the demarcation of the Sikkim–Tibet frontier which had been proceeding desultorily in the face of Tibetan opposition and Chinese procrastination.

This patient and forbearing policy, and mild attempts to secure our interests through the local Chinese officers, had no reward; and by 1898, when the Trade Regulations were due for revision, the frontier was still undemarcated and the Trade Regulations still inoperative.

The arrival of Lord Curzon as Viceroy produced a somewhat firmer attitude towards the Chinese Amban, and the suggestion that, if trade conditions were improved and if British subjects were given access to Phari, a concession might be made over the boundary settlement; but no progress was made.

Chapter II — Lhasa Expedition and 1904 Convention

10. Attempt to Approach the Tibetans Directly. 1899

His Majesty’s Government now decided that, as China’s authority in Tibet seemed to be merely nominal and as we might hope for some progress by making a concession to the Tibetans on the frontier question, attempts should be made to open direct communications between the Government of India and the Tibetan authorities. Accordingly, in the autumn of 1899, two letters addressed by Lord Curzon to the Dalai Lama were sent through Ugyen Kazi of Bhutan and Captain Kennion, Assistant Commissioner, Leh, respectively. No reply was received to either letter and, in fact, that sent through Captain Kennion was not transmitted by the Tibetan officers in Western Tibet.

11. The Russian Scare. 1901–1902

And now there thrust itself into the picture a new element which roused grave doubts whether the ways of diplomatic conciliation, could be followed indefinitely. News was received that
the Dalai Lama — who had treated approaches from the Viceroy with discourtesy — had sent an envoy to the Czar of Russia. This was Dorjieff, a Buriat Russian who had lived for some twenty years in Tibet. Enquiries from the Russian Foreign Minister, Count Lamsdorf, produced the reply that this was in no sense a diplomatic mission and had no official character; but Russian official newspapers continued to refer to Dorjieff as "Envoy Extraordinary". In view of the misgivings of the Government of India our Ambassador at St. Petersburg was instructed to inform the Russian Foreign Minister that we had received his assurances with satisfaction as His Majesty's Government would naturally not regard with indifference any proceedings that might have a tendency to alter or disturb the existing status in Tibet (September 1901). Count Lamsdorf in reply repeated the assurance that the mission was chiefly concerned with religious matters and had no political or diplomatic object or character.

In the meantime, ineffective attempts to secure our rights under the Treaty of 1890, including the demarcation of the boundary, went on. When direct contact was established with the Tibetans on the north border of Sikkim, the Chinese Amban intervened and imported fresh delays and frustration; but a suggestion by Mr. White that, as a means of bringing pressure to bear, the Chumbi Valley should be occupied was not looked on with favour by the Government of India.

Still more serious concern was caused to the Government of India in the summer of 1902 when our Ambassador in Russia informed the Foreign Office of strong rumours of a secret agreement between Russia and China about Tibet.

12. Government of India Proposes a Mission to Lhasa. 1903

Although the possibility of a Russian invasion of India may not have been taken very seriously in high places Russian activities were proceeding vigorously in Central Asia and Manchuria and the prospect of Russian influence in the capital of an unfriendly Tibet, where we ourselves had no representation, was sufficiently unpleasant. The Government of India accordingly proposed in January 1903 that a mission with an armed escort should be sent to Lhasa to settle our future relations with Tibet and to establish a British representative there. In the hope of putting an end to the stultifying procedure by which the Tibetans and Chinese were able to play off one against the other in their dealings with us, but recognising the need for regarding Chinese susceptibilities about the fiction of their suzerainty, they proposed that if a treaty should be signed it should be signed by a Tibetan representative as well as by a Chinese. It was to be made clear that there was no political or territorial object in the proposed mission but that it was exclusively for commercial purposes and for establishing friendly relations between neighbours.

His Majesty's Government were at this time engaged on negotiations with Russia about our interest in Tibet, which led to the denial by the Russian Government of any secret agreement with China about Tibet; but the Russian Government contended that Tibet was a part of the Chinese Empire in the integrity of which they took an interest; they disclaimed any intention to interfere in Tibet but hinted that, if there were any alteration of the status there, they might have to take measures elsewhere.

During these negotiations His Majesty's Government could come to no decision, but they made it clear to the Government of India that a stage had been reached when it was necessary to consider not only questions of trade and boundaries, but the whole problem of our future relations with Tibet. They acknowledged the urgency of putting those relations on a secure basis in view of Russian interest in that country, and of the disturbance which would result to Nepal from any alteration of the balance in Tibet. We had no desire to declare a protectorate or occupy any part of the country, which still had to be regarded as a province of China, but if we were committed to armed intervention some such measures might become inevitable. They required more justification before taking any action which might appear as an attack on the integrity of the Chinese Empire; and His Majesty's Government therefore preferred to continue negotiations with China and Tibet.

13. Mission to Khampa Dzong. 1903

The Chinese had recently agreed that if Yatung was considered unsuitable for negotiations they were willing to negotiate at any place acceptable to us. The Government of India proposed Khampa Dzong, on the Tibetan side of the north border of Sikkim, as the meeting place, and
recommended that our representative should have an armed escort of 200 men while reserves should be kept ready in Sikkim. His Majesty’s Government agreed to these proposals, but did not accept a suggestion from the Government of India that, if the Chinese and Tibetan delegates did not appear at Khampa Dzong, the British party should go on to Shigatse or Gyantse.

With regard to the terms of the negotiations the Government of India recommended that as the Trade Regulations had been stultified, and as Yatung was unsuitable for a trade centre, a Trade Mart and a British Agent should be established at Gyantse. They held that the appointment of a British representative at Lhasa would be the best security for our interests, but as they did not believe that His Majesty’s Government would favour that idea they proposed Gyantse instead. His Majesty’s Government demurred, and asked what alternatives there were to advancing into Tibet. The Government of India replied that (a) a costly and ineffective blockade of the trade routes could be undertaken, or (b) the Chumbi Valley could be occupied.

Eventually, His Majesty’s Government decided on a procedure by which both Chinese and Tibetans would be bound by the action of their representatives but that negotiations should be confined to questions of trade relations, the frontier and grazing rights, and that no proposal should be made for the establishment of a British Trade Agent at Gyantse. (May 1903.)

After several more months of correspondence with the Chinese, it appeared reasonably certain that both Chinese and Tibetan delegates would present themselves at Khampa Dzong; and accordingly in June 1903 the British Expedition led by Colonel Younghusband as Commissioner and including Captain O’Connor and Mr. White, set out for the meeting.

A memorial from the Amban to the Chinese Emperor quoted by Younghusband in his book “India and Tibet” page 89 shows that the Amban made a real effort to bring the Tibetans to a reasonable frame of mind; but little attention was paid to his advice, and when Younghusband reached Giagong (within the Sikkim boundary, but claimed and encroached on by the Tibetans) the Tibetan delegates tried to dissuade him from proceeding. Nevertheless, he went on to Khampa Dzong which he reached in July 1903.

14. Negotiations at Khampa Dzong

Every kind of evasion and obstruction was encountered. The Tibetan officials, who proved to be of inadequate rank to negotiate, refused to discuss anything except at Giagong and, although they claimed to have full powers, they took cover when it suited them under the plea that by an agreement with China all matters relating to Tibet had to be addressed to the Amban. The Chinese delegate was also lacking in authority, and for five months the British Mission remained at Khampa Dzong hoping for the arrival of a new Chinese Amban who had been specially appointed for these negotiations.

Younghusband was approached by a deputation from the Tashi Lama which sought to persuade him to withdraw. In the meantime Tibetan troops were gathering between Phari and Shigatse; winter was coming on; the Tibetans were obstructing the movements of Chinese officials; and no progress was being made.

The only favourable developments were the decided support of the Government of Nepal, which addressed letters to the Dalai Lama and Council advising them in most reasonable terms to negotiate with the British Mission; and the good relations which the open and friendly behaviour of the British officers enabled them to establish with individual Tibetan officials from Shigatse.

15. Move to Gyantse Sanctioned

The Government of India recounted these obstructions to His Majesty’s Government and proposed an advance to Gyantse. At last, in November 1903, His Majesty’s Government sanctioned this move. The advance was to be solely for the purpose of obtaining satisfaction and was not to be allowed to lead to occupation or permanent intervention in Tibetan affairs in any form. As soon as reparation had been effected the expedition should withdraw, and no permanent mission was to be established. Questions of enforcing trade facilities should be considered in the light of these instructions.

When this decision became known, protests were received from the Chinese who were easy to answer and from the Russians who had been immediately informed and had been assured that there was no intention to annex Tibetan territory. These objections were disposed
of suitably and the Expedition set out. It developed into a military operation necessitating an advance to Lhasa itself before negotiations could be undertaken.

16. The Expedition of 1903–1904

Reasoning without effect all along the march, fighting sixteen engagements of varying importance including a siege of some two months at Gyantse, suffering 202 casualties, inflicting perhaps 5,000, gathering reinforcements, overcoming difficulties of transport and climate, the expedition reached Lhasa on August 3rd 1904, eight months after it had left India. The Dalai Lama fled from Lhasa before the arrival of the expedition, and made his way to China.

The details are mainly military history, and it is enough here to record a few points.

No formal declaration of our intention to advance and no declaration of war was made to the Tibetans or Chinese. The move was treated as the sequel to a letter from the Viceroy to the Amban on October 1st 1903, stating that as negotiations at Khampa Dzong had failed there was no alternative but to transfer them to some suitable spot where it was hoped that they might be resumed; and that, as it was understood that the Tibetan passes were guarded by Tibetan troops, the Viceroy had been compelled to take measures for the safety of the Commissioners.

Eyewitnesses speak of the old hostility of the monks, which they compare with the less uncompromising attitude of some lay officials, and the readiness of the peasants to be friendly when they saw themselves overpowered, and when they found the invading force generous in payment for supplies and humane in their treatment of the wounded.

The Chinese Amban, although taking an active part in the negotiation of the Treaty at Lhasa, and showing a genuine desire to help, was clearly not in a position to exercise authority.

The Nepalese and Bhutanese Governments gave valuable help. The Nepalese Minister sought by a letter in June 1904 to dissuade the Dalai Lama, whom he believed to have been kept in ignorance of the true facts, from fighting against the British; and the Nepalese officer at Lhasa was an intermediary in the negotiations.

The Tongsa Penlop, afterwards Maharaja of Bhutan, accompanied the Expedition from Phari onwards, and made several attempts to bring the Tibetans to negotiate; he also acted as an intermediary at Lhasa.

17. Anglo-Tibetan Convention of 1904

For military reasons negotiations had to be concluded by September 1904. The terms proposed by the Government of India for the approval of His Majesty’s Government while the expedition was still on its way were: —

1. The establishment of a Resident at Lhasa or, failing that, a representative at Gyantse who should have the right to proceed to Lhasa.
3. The demand of an indemnity.
4. The occupation of the Chumbi Valley as security for the indemnity.
5. The establishment of Trade Marts at Gyantse and Shigatse as well as at Yatung and Gartok.
6. The settlement of the Sikkim and Garhwal boundaries, and of customs duties and Trade Regulations.

His Majesty’s Government found these terms excessive. They turned down the proposal for a Resident at Lhasa; agreed to an indemnity, leaving it to Younghusband’s discretion to propose a sum which would be within the power of the Tibetans to pay within three years; agreed to the provision for exclusive political influence, to the establishment of Trade Marts at Yatung, Gyantse and Gartok, to the right of a British agent to have access to the Gyantse Mart, to the occupation of the Chumbi Valley as security for the indemnity, and to other minor points.

It was explained that international and imperial considerations made it necessary to avoid a policy in Tibet that might throw any additional burden on the British Empire. There was also the situation vis-à-vis Russia to be considered. The Russian Government had given us satisfactory assurances regarding Tibet, and His Majesty’s Government had made it plain to
Russia that we had no territorial ambitions in Tibet. The duties of the British Agent must therefore be kept exclusively commercial and it was undesirable for him to have the right to proceed to Lhasa as that would inevitably give his functions a political character.

In the early stages of negotiation Younghusband found himself opposed by arrogance, futile stupidity, and unwillingness to face the facts. The Tibetans sought to delay a conclusion, but Younghusband, in spite of the pressure of time, succeeded by patience and firmness and with the help of the Chinese, Nepalese and Bhutanese representatives, in bringing the Regent to an agreement.

The amount of the indemnity produced most argument. This issue, as Younghusband pointed out, was the only one that cost the Tibetans anything; the other terms were potentially to their advantage. Eventually, at his own discretion, Younghusband accepted a proposal that the indemnity which he fixed at seventy-five lakhs of rupees should be paid in instalments, and that we should have the right to occupy the Chumbi Valley as security. This condition was included in the Treaty as signed on 7th September 1904, as was a separate note that the British Agent at Gyantse should have the right to proceed to Lhasa.

The inclusion of these terms which did not accord with the instructions of His Majesty's Government was due to the shortness of time which did not allow a reference to London before the last date fixed by the military authorities for their stay in Lhasa. Younghusband with courage and independence refused to let slip an opportunity of securing what seemed best for our interests, although it might appear to be more than had been authorised.

The Government of India strongly supported his action, but in order to meet the wishes of His Majesty's Government they recommended a reduction of the indemnity to twenty-five lakhs, and the termination of the British occupation of the Chumbi Valley after three instalments had been paid.

His Majesty's Government accepted this modification, but were unable to agree to the inclusion of the right of the Trade Agent to visit Lhasa. The treaty as ultimately ratified therefore, consisted of:

I. Settlement of the Sikkim-Tibet frontier.

II. Opening of Trade Marts at Gyantse and Gartok in addition to Yatung under the Regulations of 1893 subject to subsequent modification. Undertaking to place no restriction on trade by existing routes, and to consider the opening of fresh trade marts if conditions required it.

III. Appointment by the Tibetan Government of representatives to amend the Trade Regulations of 1893.

IV. No dues to be levied by the Tibetan Government other than those to be provided for in a tariff to be mutually agreed.

V. Roads to the Trade Marts to be kept in repair, and a Tibetan Agent to be established at the Marts to deal with the British Agent.

VI. Indemnity of seventy-five lakhs to be paid in annual instalments.

VII. Chumbi Valley to be occupied until the indemnity had been paid, and until the marts had been effectively opened, whichever might be the latest.

VIII. Removal of fortifications.

IX. Provision for exclusive British political influence.

By a declaration attached to the ratified convention Clauses VI and VII were modified to an indemnity of twenty-five lakhs, and to the occupation of the Chumbi Valley until three instalments had been paid provided that the Trade Marts had been effectively opened for three years.

18. The Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1906

Although the Amban Yu Tai had been sent specifically to take part in the negotiations, the Lhasa Treaty was signed only by the Tibetans and it was not until 1906 that Chinese admission was secured. The convention of 1906, as will be seen later, had the opposite effect from that which had been intended.

It contained the following provisions:

I. The Anglo-Tibetan Treaty of 1904 was confirmed.

II. Great Britain engaged not to annex Tibetan territory nor to interfere in the administration of Tibet. China engaged not to permit any other foreign power to interfere in the territory or administration of Tibet.
III. Made it clear that China was not a foreign power for the purposes of Article IX — exclusive political influence — of the Anglo-Tibetan Treaty; and allowed the construction of a British telegraph line to the Trade Marts.

IV. Confirmed the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890, and the Trade Regulations of 1893.

19. Results of the Treaties of 1904 and 1906

By the treaty of 1904 we established direct and friendly intercourse with Tibet and terms which, if they had been carried out, would have led to the opening of trade; but the Convention with China in 1906 had the unfortunate result of nullifying the advantages we had gained at Lhasa. China was given the opportunity of reaffirming her influence which had almost reached the vanishing point.

We had broken down Tibetan exclusion and stubbornness, and had encouraged the deposition of the Dalai Lama by the Chinese, only to withdraw from Lhasa and later, without consulting the Tibetans, to sign terms which acknowledged China’s right to preserve the integrity of Tibet, without seeking to limit Chinese interference in Tibetan internal affairs to the suzerainty she had enjoyed before 1904. We ourselves were bound not to interfere in Tibetan internal administration; and the Tibetan Government, without a proper head and with shaken morale, continued to refer all questions to the Dalai Lama, deposed and an exile in China.

The Chinese were quick to take advantage of the situation and embarked on active measures to restore their influence in Tibet.

Chapter III — Revival of Chinese Influence Upset by Chinese Revolution

20. Revival of Chinese Influence. 1906

Mr. Chang Yin-tang, who was appointed High Commissioner for Tibet in 1906, soon made it clear that he interpreted the 1906 Convention as the recognition of Chinese sovereignty over Tibet, and that he intended to nullify the Anglo-Tibetan Treaty by insisting that in all relations between Tibetans and British a Chinese officer should be the intermediary.

He also sought to detach Nepal and Bhutan from British influence.

British Trade Agents in Tibet suffered many pin-pricks of Chinese arrogance and obstructiveness; local Chinese officials interfered with their relations with Tibetan officials in every possible way, and eventually stopped all intercourse.

Other signs of Chinese intentions were the reported degradation of Amban Yu Tai, who had assisted in the negotiation of the 1904 Treaty, and the dismissal of Tibetan officials who had taken part in the negotiations. These provocations led to a telegram from His Majesty’s Government to our Minister in Peking saying that, as we desired to have matters put right not by separate action in Tibet but through the Chinese Government, it was necessary to bring Mr. Chang’s action to the notice of the Chinese Government and to point out that the recognition by China of the Lhasa Treaty was not consistent with the punishment of officials for being concerned with it.

Later His Majesty’s Government had to ask for instructions to be sent to Mr. Chang that the right of the British Trade Agent to direct communication with the Tibetans should be respected; and again, it became necessary to ask for the withdrawal of Mr. Gow a particularly troublesome Chinese officer in Gyantse.

The part played by British Officers of the China Customs Service in supporting Chinese pretensions may be observed.

It became necessary for the Government of India to report to His Majesty’s Government in July 1907 that the treaty was not being carried out. His Majesty’s Government however declined to take any further action at that stage and preferred to wait for the negotiation of the Trade Regulations.

21. The Indemnity and Evacuation of Chumbi Valley. 1906–1908

In the matter of the indemnity, too, the Chinese asserted their influence and gained an important point. In 1906 they announced their intention, both to our Minister in Peking and
the Tibetan public, of paying the whole indemnity in three instalments. This was accepted, and the Chinese then set about attempting to exclude the Tibetans from any direct share in the transaction. Although the first and third instalments were paid through a Tibetan official the Chinese succeeded in making payment at a place and in a manner other than that which we had intended.

As soon as the payment had been completed, the question of evacuating the Chumbi Valley was raised. The Government of India pointed out that the other conditions of evacuation had not been carried out, namely that the Trade Marts should have been effectively opened for three years, and the other terms of the treaty complied with; British subjects, they reported, were not able to rent accommodation at the Marts except at extortionate rents; unauthorised restrictions were imposed by Tibetans on trade across the North Sikkim border; there was obstruction to the postal arrangements with Gartok; and since Mr. Chang's visit to Tibet there had been serious interruption to our telegraph line. The Government of India hoped that it would be possible during the negotiation of the Trade Regulations to retain, at least, the possibility of warning the Chinese and Tibetans that our evacuation of the Chumbi Valley depended on a satisfactory settlement of matters connected with the Trade Marts.

His Majesty's Government, however, for reasons which can scarcely have satisfied the Government of India, declined to postpone the evacuation — which accordingly took place early in 1908 — and contented themselves by pointing out to the Chinese Government that in return for the evacuation His Majesty's Government would expect that their wishes would be met in regard to the Trade Regulations then under discussion at Calcutta.

22. Trade Regulations of 1908

Thus, we were embarked on the negotiation of Trade Regulations with the treaty under which this action was taken already to a great extent stultified; with the prestige of our forbearing victory in 1904 waning; with the good relations established with the Tibetans reduced by Chinese intervention, and by Chinese misrepresentation that the 1906 Convention superseded the 1904 Treaty; with a conciliatory government in London, and a revived and insistent Chinese Government facing us at Simla in the person of the forceful and ambitious Mr. Chang.

The intention of the 1904 Treaty had been that we should negotiate the Regulations with the Tibetans; but we did not insist on that, and accepted the association of a Chinese representative with the Tibetan delegate. In fact Mr. Chang conducted the negotiations and Tsarong Shape, the Tibetan delegate, evaded or was unable to take any independent action, and merely signed the Regulations, which were concluded on April 20th 1908.

Their main terms were as follows: —

The boundaries of Gyantse Trade Mart were fixed. British subjects were allowed to lease land at Trade Marts for building houses and godowns. Tibetan officers, under Chinese supervision, were to administer the Marts.

Joint hearing of trade cases between Chinese or Tibetan and British subjects. British subjects accused of criminal offences in Tibet to be tried by a British Trade Agent. Extraterritorial rights to be relinquished when the state of Tibetan Laws might warrant such a step. Resthouses and the telegraph line built by the British to be transferred to Chinese control.

The Chinese were not to prevent British officers from personal intercourse with Tibetan officers and people.

British officers and subjects must adhere to trade routes, and not proceed beyond the marts without permission; but existing usage was to continue in regard to British Indians who had formerly traded beyond the marts; in this case they would be subject to local jurisdiction.

British subjects were to be at liberty to buy and sell from and to whom they pleased.

China was to provide effective police protection, and when this was done British guards would be withdrawn.

It may be observed that the trade mart at Yatung had been removed during our occupation of the Chumbi Valley to a better site at Shasima, now known as Yatung.

23. Effect of the Trade Regulations

These Regulations would have been advantageous, in view of the situation before their conclusion, if they had been carried out; but in fact they led to no better conditions than
before. They admitted a greater degree of Chinese authority than would have been thought possible in 1904; but they were in accord with the spirit of conciliation or complaisance which underlay the 1906 Treaty, and the Treaty concluded with Russia in 1907. By the latter we recognised the suzerain right of China in Tibet; agreed that, saving the right of the British agent to direct intercourse with the Tibetans, neither power would negotiate with Tibet excepting through China; engaged mutually not to send representatives to Lhasa; or to seek concessions for railways, mines, etc., in Tibet, or to accept the assignment of any part of the revenues of Tibet. They were also in accord with the expressed policy of His Majesty's Government that our interest in Tibet was purely commercial. It is not surprising that our progressive withdrawal from the vantage point of 1904 was followed by a rapid Chinese advance.


Forceful diplomacy was soon followed by military activity. Early in 1908 Chao Erh-feng, acting Viceroy in Szechuan, was appointed Resident in Tibet, with large powers, and instructions to develop the resources of the country, to increase the number of Chinese officials, and to reform the administration. Chao had displayed vigour, ability and ruthlessness in Eastern Tibet since 1905 when he had been appointed to deal with that turbulent area, remote from the control of Lhasa, and peopled by violent feud-loving Tibetan clans. At that time Eastern Tibet was in insurrection against the Chinese, and in the disturbances several foreign missionaries were murdered. Chao, after fierce fighting and harsh reprisals, subdued the Tibetan kingdoms of Batang and Derge which he brought under direct Chinese administration in 1907. He also appointed Chinese officers in the place of the Tibetan rulers of Tachienlu, Litang and other small principalities. In these operations he had taken severe measures to reduce the power of the Lamas in whom he saw the greatest force for unified opposition. So, by the time of his appointment as Resident in Tibet, he was already a hated figure to Tibetans. After his appointment anti-British articles began to appear in a newspaper published at Lhasa and circulated throughout Tibet. The "shame" of 1904 was recalled, and the Tibetans were urged to unite with the Nepalese and Bhutanese to resist foreigners.

The next move by the Chinese Government was the reinstatement of the Dalai Lama by an Imperial Decree in November 1908, in which he was described in terms which left no doubt that he was to be considered as the dependent of a sovereign China.

Chao Erh-feng, having consolidated his position in Derge and Batang, made ready in the autumn of 1909 to march on Chiamdo, at that time a principality in close relations with Lhasa; and it was rumoured that he intended to proceed to Lhasa. These reports reached the Dalai Lama, who had taken nearly a year on his journey, even before he reached Lhasa; and in October 1909 he despatched messages from Nagchuka to the British Trade Agent at Gyantse asking for telegrams invoking help to be sent to the British Government and "all Ministers of Europe". He also sent messengers to the Foreign Ambassadors in Peking with similar appeals and shortly afterwards he despatched an official to explain the situation personally to the British Trade Agent at Gyantse.

After the Dalai Lama arrived at Lhasa in December 1909 attempts were made to dissuade the Chinese from sending troops, but Chao was pushing on almost unperturbed. He occupied Chiamdo early in 1910, and by February 12th his advance guards had reached Lhasa.

25. Chinese Troops at Lhasa. 1910

When news of this invasion was received, our Minister at Peking was instructed to protest, and to claim that an effective Tibetan Government must be maintained with which we could treat in the manner provided by the treaties of 1904 and 1906; our interest in Nepal and other neighbouring countries was also to be stressed; but, before this communication could be delivered, the Dalai Lama had again been forced to leave Lhasa, this time for the protection of the British, to whom he immediately appealed to intervene.

The Chinese Government replied that their troops were only intended for the effective policing of Tibet as provided in the Treaty; they did not desire any modification in the status quo or any alteration in the internal administration; it had not been their intention to deprive the Dalai Lama of his power, but it had become necessary to depose him and to make arrangements for a successor, after which they contemplated no aggressive action in Tibet. This was followed by a decree deposing the Dalai Lama.
26. British Reactions

When the views of the Government of India on these developments were sought the Viceroy reported that it appeared that all power in Tibet had been assumed by the Chinese who were not allowing direct intercourse between the Tibetans and British officials; he believed that the Tibetans would not accept the deposition of the Dalai Lama and that, although there was no reason why we should support him, his restoration would make for peace on the frontier. The Viceroy stated that Tibetan Ministers denied the suzerainty of China, but that some compromise might be possible. He drew attention to the number of Chinese troops reported to be in Tibet (some 4,900), and the disturbance caused to Nepal and Bhutan by Chinese actions. He detailed the definite breaches of treaty caused by the Chinese assumption of authority, and their annexation of part of Eastern Tibet. He suggested that assurances should be sought from the Chinese on these points.

The Secretary of State, Lord Morley, in forwarding these views to the Foreign Office, remarked that the Chinese were deliberately making their suzerainty over Tibet effective, and the result could be a strong internal administration. It seemed to him that Chinese assurances that they would fulfil treaty obligations affecting Tibet met the case for the present, and that it should be made clear that we expected this to be done. If China subsequently failed to carry out those obligations a precise protest could be made, but in the meantime it might be desirable to urge the Chinese Government to send orders to their officials in Tibet to co-operate with our officials there, and also to impress on them the inadvisability of posting troops near the frontiers of India. With regard to Nepal and Bhutan he recommended that it should be emphasised that we were prepared to preserve the integrity of those countries.

Nothing was said this time about maintaining an effective Tibetan Government.

27. The Dalai Lama in India

In India the Dalai Lama made repeated appeals for active help and even sought an alliance of mutual assistance, or at least the despatch of British officers to Lhasa. In May 1910 he was informed that the British Government could not intervene between Tibet and China, and that we could only recognise the de facto government.

The Dalai Lama and his Ministers and also the National Assembly at Lhasa continued to represent their case, but without effect. They repeated their denials of Chinese suzerainty, and detailed breaches by the Chinese of the 1904 and 1906 treaties, and protested against the implications of the latter treaty; but eventually, in reply to an appeal to His Majesty the King, it was stated that His Majesty regretted that he was “unable to interfere between the Lama and his suzerain”.

In spite of efforts by the Chinese and Tibetans to persuade the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet, and of a later attempt by the Chinese to take him to Peking, he remained in India.

It is difficult not to agree with Sir Charles Bell’s brief summing up of the results of the six years after 1904: “The status quo, and the promises of China went by the board. The Tibetans were abandoned to Chinese aggression, an aggression for which the British Military Expedition to Lhasa, and subsequent withdrawal, were primarily responsible”.

But in spite of the disappointment caused by our failure to give active assistance against the Chinese, the consideration and hospitality shown by the Government of India to the Dalai Lama, and the friendship which he established with Sir Charles Bell, had a profound effect on our relations with Tibet. We won the gratitude, respect and confidence of the man, who was for more than twenty years to dominate the affairs of his country.

28. 1910 to 1911

The Chinese, flushed with success, continued their efforts to expand their influence by detaching Bhutan, with whom we had just concluded a new treaty giving us control of her external relations (January 1910) and also Nepal, from the British orbit. In June 1910 they claimed both these states as Chinese vassals. They were told that these claims could not be recognised, and that His Majesty’s Government would be bound to resist any attempt by the Chinese Government to impose authority on, or interfere in any way with either of those two States.
In Tibet, Chinese officials made an open display of sovereignty and, in spite of Chinese assertions that they would respect our treaty rights, the position of our Trade Agents was in no way improved. Communication between British officials and Tibetans was cut off; the Chinese were established astride of the Trade Route, and there were various interferences with the working of the Trade Regulations.

Consolidation of Chinese influence in Eastern Tibet went on; signs were observed of Chinese interest in the people of the Assam tribal area south of Rima; and Chinese military posts were established as far West and South as Tsona Dzong. But all was not well. Tibet was reported to be seething with discontent at Chinese rule, and to be awaiting only the return of the Dalai Lama, to rise. It was feared that the failure of His Majesty’s Government to intervene might lead to violence against British as well as Chinese officials in Tibet. This led to the despatch of British troops to Gnatong on the Sikkim border.

An uprising by the Tibetans of Po-me, near the Brahmaputra bend, caused the withdrawal of Chinese troops from other parts of Tibet; and very soon the decadence of the Chinese Imperial system was to give all Tibet the chance to the independent again.

29. The Chinese Revolution. 1911-1912

The revolutionary outbreak which started in China in October 1911 reached Lhasa in November of that year. The Chinese troops rose against their officers and began to make preparations to return to China. Excesses committed by them against the people of Lhasa led to a general attack in which the monks of Sera and Ganden took the lead; but the monks of Drepung and some others at first supported the Chinese. There were suggestions that we should mediate, as both parties appeared to want a settlement, but our treaty obligations made it impossible for His Majesty’s Government to agree to such a course. Asylum was offered to fugitive Chinese by British officers in Tibet; and in May 1912 advice was given to the Dalai Lama that fighting should be stopped and the Chinese sent out of Tibet.

By June 1912 the Chinese power had been broken, and it was possible for the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet, although he did not enter Lhasa until January 1913. An agreement with the Chinese followed by which they were given safe conduct to India on the surrender of their arms. The Amban and the main body of the Chinese troops were evacuated from Lhasa in September; but a small body under General Chung remained at Lhasa where sporadic fighting took place until December 1913. Further attempts by both parties to secure British mediation were refused on the grounds of our obligations under the existing treaties, and eventually a second agreement between the Chinese and Tibetans was negotiated, with the help of the Nepalese, in consequence of which the remaining Chinese troops left for India. They were later shipped back to China.

The strict observance by the Tibetans of the safe conduct, and the absence of any recrimination against the British for helping the Chinese whereas they had done little for the Tibetans in 1910, may be noticed.

Chapter IV — Simla Convention and Frontier Agreements, 1914

30. Status of Tibet Under the New Chinese Republic

The collapse of Chinese authority in Tibet led to a reconsideration of our policy and the question was reopened by an enquiry from the Foreign Office whether the Viceroy considered that we were justified by our treaty rights in opposing the inclusion of Tibet in China proper, and whether such opposition would be in the best interests of Britain. The Viceroy, after consulting the Political Officer in Sikkim, replied in March 1912 that Tibet had always been regarded as an autonomous state under the suzerainty of China, and the fact that, in Tibet, Chinese treaties with foreign powers were not valid supported this view; that opposition to the inclusion of Tibet in China would be in British interests which demanded the political isolation of the country; but that, as military opinion deprecated the use of local military action to enforce that opposition, their best course seemed to be that a satisfactory settlement of the question should be made a condition of the recognition of the new Chinese Government.
The Chinese Republic was showing signs that its imperialistic ambitions were at least as great as those of the defunct Chinese Empire. In April 1912, President Yuan Shih-kai issued an order that Tibet, along with Mongolia and Chinese Turkestan, was to be considered to be on the same footing as the Provinces of China and, later, news was received of a proposed military expedition against the Tibetans. Representations in China produced assurances that there was no intention of incorporating Tibet in the Chinese Empire, but also evasive comments about the right to send troops into the country.

His Majesty's Government sanctioned a degree of pressure against the Chinese by refusing passage through Sikkim to Chinese officials wanting to enter Tibet. The Chinese Government sought to win the Tibetans by reinstating the Dalai Lama in October 1912, and also attempted unsuccessfully to send a mission to Lhasa.

31. Statement of British Policy. 1912

In the meantime His Majesty's Government had come to an important decision on their policy with regard to Tibet, which is summarised as follows:

While they had formally recognised the suzerain rights of China in Tibet, they were not prepared to recognise the right of China to intervene actively in the internal administration of Tibet, which should be carried on as was contemplated in the existing treaties.

They did not deny the right of China to station a representative at Lhasa with a suitable escort and with authority to advise the Tibetans on their external relations; but were not prepared to acquiesce in an unlimited number of troops. Except for its failure to include a definite denial of Chinese sovereignty in Tibet, this statement met the wishes of the Government of India; but it will be observed that the hand of the 1906 Convention was still heavy upon us, and that we were prepared to accept for the Tibetans, without consulting them, more than they themselves would have admitted.

A Memorandum on the above lines was presented on August 17th 1912 to the Chinese Government suggesting the conclusion of a written agreement.

A verbal reply from an official of the Chinese Foreign Office claimed that Article II of the 1906 Convention gave the Chinese Government the right to intervene in the internal administration of Tibet; they were ready to renew the pledge not to incorporate Tibet in China proper; the number of troops was not unreasonable; and in view of existing treaties there was no need for a new one. Sir John Jordan, our Minister at Peking, refuted these claims verbally, but a Chinese memorandum of 3rd December was equally unsatisfactory, and the Chinese Government were informed that we were not prepared to discuss it, but were still willing to negotiate on the lines of our memorandum of August 17th.

32. Russo-Mongolian Relations. 1912–1913

While we were upholding the autonomy of Tibet, the Russians were equally interested in Mongolia, and in November 1912 they signed an agreement with that country, in which it was stated the old relations between China and Mongolia had come to an end. The treaty gave Russia a strong economic and political hold on Mongolia. This treaty was confirmed by a Russo-Chinese agreement in November 1913, by which Russia recognised the suzerainty of China over Mongolia, and China agreed to preserve the autonomy of Mongolia. The possible dangers of Russian influence in Mongolia were seen when it became known that in January 1913 a treaty had been concluded between Mongolia and Tibet. Dorjieff, who had joined the Dalai Lama on his return to Tibet, was instrumental in negotiating this agreement which raised the fear that if we could not do something to retain our influence with Tibet she might follow Mongolia in to the Russian fold. The Dalai Lama, however, showed great willingness to remain in close relations with the Government of India, and denied that there had been any regular treaty with Mongolia, or anything more than an exchange of friendly assurances.

33. Affairs in Tibet 1912 to 1914

In Central Tibet there was some tension between the Dalai Lama and the Tashi Lama, both of whom expressed the wish for British mediation. The Tashi Lama, although he does not seem to have co-operated with the Chinese, had maintained a difficult neutrality which had been disapproved of by the Dalai Lama. A meeting between the two Lamas at Ralung
in July 1912 resulted in a slight improvement of their relations, but distrust, probably fomented by their followers, was never wholly suppressed, and was eventually to cause a threat to the peace of the country.

In Eastern Tibet, news of the defeat of the Chinese at Lhasa was followed by successful uprisings which drove the Chinese back from some of the more distant points reached by Chao Erh-feng's advance. (Chao himself was killed in the Revolution.)

Po-me and Rima were recovered; but the Chinese held on to Chiamdo, and their expedition in 1912 restored the position in their favour. It was even feared that they might advance still nearer to Lhasa, for in May 1913 President Yuan Shih-kai issued an order claiming that the Chinese frontier extended to Giamda, 175 miles East of Lhasa. This claim was later withdrawn with a not very convincing explanation that the scribe had made a mistake and that Enta, 75 miles West of Chiamdo, had been meant. The Tibetan Government began to take more interest in resisting Chinese activities in Eastern Tibet and sent an army under the Kalon Lama which checked the Chinese at a line along the Salween-Mekong divide, where the front remained more or less stable until 1917.

34. Prelude to the Simla Conference of 1913–1914

In January 1913 the Chinese Government, disturbed by the elimination of their influence at Lhasa, fear of direct British negotiation with Tibet, and the success of Russia in Mongolia, offered to negotiate on the basis of the British memorandum of August 17th 1912. But they were informed that, in the changed conditions that memorandum could only serve as a basis for discussion and might require further elaboration, including an agreement about the boundaries of Tibet. Sir John Jordan, our Minister at Peking, suggested a tripartite agreement to be negotiated in India, and pointed out that if this failed we would be in a better position to negotiate directly with the Tibetans. His Majesty's Government disapproved of this idea as involving too much responsibility for the fulfilment of any agreement that might be reached, and the Government of India concurred in this view. Sir John Jordan stressed the dangers of such a policy of aloofness; and eventually His Majesty's Government agreed to his proposal.

The Chinese Government demurred for some time to a tripartite conference at which the Tibetans would be on an equal footing with themselves. They had earlier suggested that they should send a delegate to negotiate directly with His Majesty's Government about Tibet. But the firmness of Sir John Jordan prevailed, and on June 5th President Yuan Shih-kai agreed to tripartite negotiations.

Mr. Ivan Chen was named as Chinese representative; an invitation to the Dalai Lama (who had previously sought mediation from us and had wanted to include the Russian Government in a settlement with China) was answered by the appointment of Lonchen Shatra; and Sir Henry McMahon was appointed on behalf of the British Government.

A succession of Chinese prevarications and evasions followed. Chen was appointed with the designation of "Pacificator in Tibet"; attempts were made to reproduce the conditions in which the Trade Regulations of 1908 had been negotiated; local Chinese officials in Eastern Tibet continued hostilities, and attempted to make a direct agreement with the Tibetan Government.

These obstacles were gradually surmounted. The difficulty of Chen's title was cleared up, and President Yuan Shih-kai issued orders for a cessation of hostilities in Eastern Tibet, which nevertheless authorised, implicitly, the Chinese troops to remain in position as far as Enta 75 miles West of Chiamdo; but the Chinese continued to harp on the status of their delegates long after the other parties were ready, and it was not until His Majesty's Government warned the Chinese Government that, unless their representative reached Simla by the 6th October, ready to negotiate, we would treat with the Tibetans alone, that Mr. Chen set out.

35. Aims of the Parties at the Simla Conference

The Chinese entered the conference in the hope of recovering as much as possible of their former position in Tibet. Their Minister of Foreign Affairs had made it clear that Chinese influence in Tibet might eventually have to be restored by the use of force. Chinese activities and pretensions in Eastern Tibet have been noted above. Their manoeuvres to exclude or
subordinate the Tibetan representatives and a last minute attempt to reserve the right to discuss at a later stage the status of the Chinese representative, show their great reluctance to give up their claim to sovereignty.

Our Minister at Peking had no doubts of these intentions and was convinced that the Chinese would take advantage of any weakness shown by His Majesty's Government.

The Tibetans sought the recognition of their country's independence, and the establishment of their frontiers to include all people of Tibetan race. The formal statement of their claims included refusal of a Chinese Amban or other officials, demands for a vast indemnity, and for the recognition of the Dalai Lama as head of the Buddhist monasteries in Mongolia and China, and repudiation of the 1906 Convention between China and Britain.

The previous relations between the Manchu Emperor and the Dalai Lama are described as those of disciple and teacher. The Emperor is said to have assumed the duty of protecting the Dalai Lama solely in order to earn merit. This typically Tibetan thought is relevant, at least in Tibetan eyes, to the present relations between the two countries, now that there is no Emperor, with whom there can be a personal relationship, and now that China has ceased to show much regard for the Buddhist faith.

Britain sought to secure a buffer state in political isolation by restoring peace between China and Tibet, if possible, on the old basis of suzerainty, and by establishing a stable Tibetan Government, free from outside interference. The fear of having to assume additional responsibilities, and a regard perhaps over-scrupulous, for the historic claims of China, led the Government of India to consider the Tibetan claim to independence as "of course, not to be supported", but they did not object to such claims being made as the basis for a bargain.

36. Negotiation of the Simla Convention

At the start of negotiations the Chinese replied to the Tibetan statement. They rested their claim to sovereignty on the alleged conquest of Tibet by Genghiz Khan and recounted the number of occasions on which they had protected Tibet from her enemies at great cost in money and lives. They alleged that the Tibetans had asked for Chinese Ambans in the time of the Manchu Emperor Kang Hsi. The blame for recent events was laid on the Dalai Lama. They claimed Tibet as an integral part of the Chinese Republic, and demanded that all Chinese rights there must be respected by Tibet and Britain. In return they would undertake not to convert Tibet into a Chinese province. They claimed the right to appoint an Amban who would control Tibetan foreign and military affairs; and that no foreign power should have any dealings with Tibet except through China — saving the right of British Trade Agents to direct relations.

The Tibetans, finding that the British proposals included the appointment of an Amban, gave way on this point; but the provision for advice on Tibetan foreign affairs by such an official was omitted. The Tibetans had been anxious for a British representative at Lhasa to offset Chinese influence, and the Government of India had also been in favour of this suggestion as the only means of securing a position by which we could fulfil our treaty obligations. But our relations with Russia led His Majesty's Government to accept no more than the right of the British Trade Agent at Gyantse, to visit Lhasa. On other points there was give and take; but the frontier question was approached by the Chinese and Tibetans each with so large claims, and from so widely divergent points of view, that agreement appeared impossible. The Tibetans, who were much better prepared with evidence than were the Chinese, claimed a boundary running through Tachienlu and Sining — the racial boundary. The Chinese claimed all that Chao Erh-feng had conquered — which would have brought their boundary to Giamda, a few days' march from Lhasa.

The British plenipotentiary proposed a compromise by which Tibet would be divided into Outer and Inner Tibet; the former to be autonomous, and the latter to be a zone in which the Chinese might establish such control as would safeguard their historical position there; or, as Lonchen Shatra said, in which the best man could win. This was almost the boundary established by the Manchu conquest in the eighteenth century. After further discussion the boundary between the two Tibets was modified in favour of China; the Tibetan representative, with much misgiving, agreed to give up the valuable districts of Nyarong and Derge — and a convention and map were drawn up and initialled by all parties.
The main points of the Convention were as follows:

I. Conventions of 1890, 1904 and 1906 to stand except so far as they might be inconsistent with the present convention.

II. Chinese suzerainty over Tibet recognised; autonomy of Outer Tibet recognised; China not to interfere in internal administration of Outer Tibet; China not to convert Tibet into a province; Britain not to annex any part of Tibet.

III. China not to send troops or station officials in Outer Tibet, except for an Amban and his escort. (By implication she could do so in Inner Tibet.) Britain similarly bound except for the British Trade Agents and their escorts.

IV. Amban with escort of 300 men could be posted at Lhasa.

V. China and Tibet not to negotiate about Tibet with any power except as provided in the 1904 and 1906 Treaties.

VI. Article III of the 1906 Treaty, which gave China a monopoly of concessions, to be cancelled and China not to be a foreign power for the purposes of concessions under Article IX of the 1904 Treaty.

VII. New Trade Regulations to be negotiated between Tibet and Britain.

VIII. Right of British Trade Agent, Gyantse, to visit Lhasa in connection with carrying out of the 1904 Treaty.

IX. Inner and Outer Tibet defined in a map. Tibetan Government to retain rights in monasteries in Inner Tibet.

X. Disputes arising from the convention, between China and Tibet, to be referred to British Government. Notes were also exchanged providing, among other points, for the recognition of Tibet as part of Chinese territory; that Outer Tibet should not be represented in any Chinese Parliament; and that the British escorts in Tibet should not exceed 75 per cent. of the Amban's escort.

37. Chinese Refusal to Sign

In spite of the initialling of this agreement, the Chinese Government took what appears to be an unprecedented step. They repudiated the action of their plenipotentiary and refused to proceed to full signature. It was made clear that the boundary question was the sole obstacle, and efforts were made by the Chinese Government to secure further concessions on this point. Sir Henry McMahon urged that the Convention should be signed with Tibet alone, but His Majesty's Government did not approve of this suggestion. It was hoped that, if it was made clear to the Chinese Government that the final concession had been reached, they would decide to sign; and accordingly a memorandum was presented to them to the effect that the Convention as initialled was the only possible basis of a tripartite agreement; that His Majesty's Government proposed to modify Article X to remove any suggestion of British tutelage (this was in deference to Russian wishes which will be summarised later); that His Majesty's Government and the Tibetan Government regarded the convention as concluded by the act of initialling, and that unless the Chinese plenipotentiary was prepared to sign, we would sign with the Tibetans a text modified to meet the requirements of a dual arrangement; if this were done China would be debarred from the privileges contemplated in the convention.

The Chinese Government reiterated that the boundary question was the only stumbling block, and hoped that His Majesty's Government would continue to act as mediator. Sir Henry McMahon reported the Tibetan objections to these prevarications, and his own estimate of the dangers of delay. He was reminded by Lonchen Shatra that they were dealing with actual conditions and that the historical case was no longer of paramount importance. The Lonchen had agreed to the re-establishment of Chinese suzerainty, to the re-instatement of an Amban at Lhasa, and to the cession of the rich districts of Derge and Nyarong; all that was promised in return was the evacuation of Chiamdo by the Chinese. He refused categorically to make any more concessions without some corresponding advantage; and declared that Tibet would rather continue to fight. His Majesty's Government finally directed that, if the Chinese refused to sign, the negotiations should be terminated; the initialled convention should be declared to represent the settled views of His Majesty's Government with regard to the boundaries and status of Tibet; and that the Tibetan plenipotentiary should be assured
privately of the diplomatic support of His Majesty’s Government and of their assistance in the form of munitions in case of Chinese aggression.

38. Conclusion of Convention with Tibet

At the final meeting of the Conference on 3rd July 1914, Mr. Chen declared that he was unable to sign. Sir Henry McMahon explained the action which he had been empowered to take. Mr. Chen formally declared that the Chinese Government would not recognise any document now signed by the British and Tibetan representatives. He then withdrew, and Sir Henry, and Lonchen Shatra initialled a convention similar to that initialled in April by all parties, except for the modification of Article X; they also signed a declaration acknowledging the initialled Convention to be binding on the Governments of Britain and Tibet, and agreeing that, so long as the Government of China withheld signature, she would be debarred from the enjoyment of all privileges accruing therefrom.

Before the meeting was concluded Mr. Chen rejoined, and was informed that, if the Chinese Government should be in a position to sign, the plenipotentiaries would reassemble on July 6th. Although the Chinese delegate was informed of the general line of action taken, he was in ignorance of the exact character of the document signed, and the Chinese Government while formally declaring itself unable to recognise the convention signed by Britain and Tibet, continued to seek a settlement. But as there was no sign that they had anything new to offer His Majesty’s Government declined to reopen negotiations.

39. Indo-Tibetan Frontier Agreement. 1914

Early in the proceedings at Simla a settlement of the frontier between India and Tibet was negotiated with Lonchen Shatra by Sir Henry McMahon and Mr. Bell. The aggressions of Chao Erh-feng, and Chinese infiltration into the border regions on the North and North East of India, had made it desirable to secure a definite boundary with Tibet; and as a result of the negotiations an agreed line was defined in a map, fixing the boundary for a distance of some 850 miles from Bhutan to the Irawaddy–Salween divide. It included in British territory, in addition to large tracts of country inhabited by various Mongoloid tribes, the district of Tawang which had been administered by Tibetan officials for a long time. The cession of this Tibetan territory gave what seemed to be a short route to Lhasa from Assam, and what seemed to be a convenient frontier. In his Final Memorandum, Sir Henry McMahon recommended that, as a first step, a British officer should be sent to Tawang to examine conditions. Lonchen Shatra also suggested that the Tawang district should be taken over quickly and tactfully. With regard to the tribal area as a whole Sir Henry McMahon hoped that it might be possible to leave the tribes very largely to their own devices, and simply to exercise enough control to prevent any danger of foreign absorption.

In the event, the outbreak of war caused this question to be put aside, and it was not until over twenty years later that consideration was given to making the frontier a reality.

40. Trade Regulations of 1914

New Trade Regulations were signed on 3rd July 1914 to take the place of the Trade Regulations of 1893 and 1908 which were cancelled, and to give effect to Articles II, IV and V of the Convention of 1904. They were believed to be simple and provided for: —

I. Area of Trade Marts. Right of British subjects to lease land for building at the marts, and also to rent buildings outside the marts for dwelling and storage.

II. Administration of the marts to be with the Tibetans, except for Trade Agency sites which were to be under the British Trade Agents.

III. Disputes between British subjects and other nationals to be enquired into jointly by Tibetan and British officials. Cases between British subjects to be decided by British authorities.

IV. Government of India may maintain a telegraph line to the marts. The Tibetan Government must protect it.

V. British Trade Agents may make arrangements for carriage of their mails.

VI. No monopolies shall be granted. Existing monopolies may run their course.
VII. British subjects may deal with whom they please without vexatious restrictions. Right of personal intercourse between British Trade Agents and British subjects with Tibetans.

Tibetans to Police the Marts and Routes

VIII. Import of military stores, liquor and drugs may be prohibited or permitted on conditions at the option of either government.

IX. Provision for revision and continuance of the Regulations.

41. Effects of the New Trade Regulations

Our gains were summarised by Sir Charles Bell as follows: —

A number of restrictions on trade and on British activities in Tibet, which had existed in the previous Regulations, were cancelled by the Trade Regulations of 1914. We gained the right to export Indian tea to Tibet free of duty instead of under a prohibitive tariff of 5 as. per lb. The area of the Trade Marts was enlarged, and the site in the Chumbi valley was confirmed at Shasima (New Yatung) instead of at Old Yatung which had proved quite unsuitable.

The procedure for leasing land by British subjects was simplified. Complete control of British Trade Agency sites was obtained. The provision for handing over Posts and Telegraphs, and rest houses, to the Chinese was cancelled. We were under no obligation to withdraw either our escorts or our right of extraterritoriality at some future date. Restrictions on British subjects from travelling in Tibet were withdrawn. Monopolies were abolished. The provision that Tibetan subjects in India should receive the same advantage as British subjects in Tibet, was withdrawn. This might have been a source of embarrassment.

There was no mention of a tariff; and it was held on a later occasion that, as the Regulations were framed to give effect (among others) to Article IV of the Convention of 1904 which provided for the fixing of a tariff, this question could only be raised when the Regulations became liable to revision i.e., after a term of in the first place ten years, and subsequently after every five years.

42. Russia and the Simla Convention

Since the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 the status quo in Tibet had changed to our detriment; this was partly due to Russian action in Mongolia. Provisions of the new convention which affected our treaty relations with Russia were principally the cancellation of the Chinese monopoly in the matter of concessions in Tibet, and the right of the British Trade Agent to visit Lhasa. Under Article 4 of the Anglo-Russian Convention the two governments had bound themselves not to seek concessions in Tibet, and if this clause was to stand they would, under the new treaty, be at a disadvantage with other powers. By Article 3 the two Governments bound themselves not to send representatives to Lhasa. It was also thought that the provision in Article X of the draft 1914 Convention initialled by the three parties, that disputes between China and Tibet should be referred to Britain, would be objected to by the Russian Government.

After the Convention was initialled, the Russian Government was informed of its provisions, and agreed to them on the understanding that Article X should be modified and notes, both public and secret, should be exchanged making the asking of concessions in Tibet, and the sending of a British Trade Agent to Lhasa, subject to mutual agreement. This was done in June 1914. In July the Russian Government was informed of the separate action with Tibet. The effect of the refusal of the Chinese to sign, so far as it affected our relations with Russia, was stated by the Government of India to be that, as the Russian Government was cognisant of the Convention as an initialled and accepted document, it would never be possible entirely to destroy its tripartite status, and that, even if it remained only initialled, our own position vis-a-vis Russia would not be prejudiced. With regard to putting into effect the provisions about concessions and visits of the British Agent to Lhasa, it was held that nothing could be done without some further understanding with Russia.

The Chinese Government refused to take cognisance of the Anglo-Russian exchange of views.
43. Advantages of the 1914 Convention

Although we had failed to secure the settled conditions that might have been expected to follow from the establishment of peace and a frontier between the Tibetans and Chinese, we obtained several advantages of great potential value.

We gained freedom of direct negotiation with the Tibetans and, by the right to send a representative to Lhasa, the means of off-setting foreign influences; the settlement of our mutual boundary, with the addition of an important district; and freedom of commercial and industrial enterprise.

Sir Henry McMahon, in his Final Memorandum, touched on the possibilities and laid stress on the opportunity of opening new trade routes in the North Eastern areas.

Looking ahead a little, it may be said that we have developed the first of these advantages, we have done little about the other two, and indeed, forgot for a long period that Tawang was ours to develop.

Tibet gained the recognition by Britain of her autonomy, and promises of diplomatic and material help.

China gained nothing, but retained, in her own opinion, the right to settle with Tibet in her own way, and in her own time.


44. Legal Effects of the 1914 Convention

Estimation of the legal effects of the new Convention is a subject for detailed examination, and a note by Sir Basil Gould, Political Officer in Sikkim, attached to his report on his Mission to Lhasa in 1936–37, may be studied.

Certain aspects must, however, be noted here.

The British attitude immediately after the Negotiations of 1911 was that China, by creating a state of war, had rendered previous treaties of no effect. This was specifically included in the powers given to Sir Henry McMahon. It was decided that previous treaties should be ignored and not denounced. The 1907 Treaty with Russia appears to have become for the most part a dead letter by the Russian acceptance of the 1914 Convention; and in 1920 His Majesty's Government decided in view of subsequent events that the Treaty with Russia was no longer valid.

It may therefore be said that the only valid treaties about Tibet now extant are the 1914 Convention in its operation between the British and Tibetan Governments; the Trade Regulations of 1914; the Indo-Tibetan boundary agreement of 1914; and the Anglo-Tibetan Treaty of 1904 so far as its provisions are not repugnant to the terms of the 1914 Convention. The Tibetans were not signatories either to the Treaty of 1890 or to the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1906.

It therefore appears that, in the British view, the Chinese Government cannot now claim any of the following advantages.

The operation in her favour of the 1890, 1904, 1906 Treaties.
Recognition of suzerainty.
The right to appoint an Amban at Lhasa.
Admission that China is not a foreign power.
Any recognition of the conception of Outer and Inner Tibet.
Admission that Tibet forms part of Chinese territory.
Any concern in the appointment of a Dalai Lama.
Any limitation of the strength of British escorts in Tibet.

Sir Basil Gould notes instances of the Chinese tendency to ignore the 1914 Convention which are in agreement with their formal declaration in 1914; and on the other hand he notes an instance in 1921 when the Chinese were reminded by His Majesty's Government of their agreement to the major part of the 1914 Convention, and a subsequent reaffirmation of that position in 1919.
Chapter V — First Great War Period

45. 1914 to 1916

The outbreak of war with Germany in 1914 diverted the attention and energies of His Majesty's Government and of the Government of India from following up the advantages gained by the Simla Convention; but, fortunately, the weakness of China prevented her from profiting by our preoccupation.

Even during the truce for the negotiations of 1913–1914 there were minor skirmishes between Tibetan and Chinese troops in Eastern Tibet; and these skirmishes, with rumours of greater operations in the making, continued throughout 1915. Internal dissension in the border provinces of China and the end of Yuan Shih-k'ai's regime lessened the Chinese capacity for aggression during 1916 and the early part of 1917.

Along with minor fighting there was constant pressure by the Chinese to bring the Tibetans to a separate settlement. Shortly after the signature of the 1914 agreement there was news that a Chinese delegation was trying to negotiate with the Tibetans; and rumours of discussions between Tibetan and Chinese officials in Eastern Tibet continued to be heard during 1916. The Government of India, while urging the cessation of hostilities in East Tibet, advised the Tibetan Government against taking any action inconsistent with their obligations to us. On their part, the Tibetan Government resolutely refused Chinese overtures and replied to them with the proposal that the Chinese should sign the 1914 Convention; they also continued to press the Government of India to secure Chinese agreement to the Convention, and to remind us of our promise to supply them with arms which they pleaded were essential on account of Chinese aggression in East Tibet. They suggested that, if we could not supply them, they would approach the Japanese Government.

There is no doubt that the Tibetan Government were feeling the strain of maintaining an army in East Tibet, and that a number of officials, who did not put much trust in the intentions of His Majesty's Government to assist them, were in favour of a direct settlement with the Chinese; but the influence and friendship of the Dalai Lama kept the government loyal to its engagements to us.

The help that we were able to give cannot have seemed to Tibet a very adequate fulfilment of our promises and their expectations. In 1914 His Majesty's Government sanctioned the presentation of 5,000 rifles and 500,000 rounds of ammunition; and later allowed the purchase of a further 200,000 rounds. But even in this matter a bargain was struck, and the presentation of the rifles was delayed until the Tibetan Government had abolished monopolies. Help was also given by training some Tibetan troops at Gyantse, and permission was granted for the imposition of a tax on wool and yak hair by the Tibetan Government in order to raise some revenue (to meet their growing expenses). Encouragement was given in another sphere by contributing towards the cost of sending four Tibetan boys for education in England; and later for further technical training in India. But on account of our commitments to Russia we refused to help in the construction of a telegraph line to Lhasa; and persistent requests for more arms, particularly machine guns, were refused as repeatedly as they were made. The Tibetan Government were bidden to wait until after the war and were refused facilities for the import of foreign arms through India.

Diplomatic pressure was also applied in Peking, and produced, in 1914, and again in 1915, an assurance from the Chinese Government that they contemplated neither aggression nor direct negotiation so far as Tibet was concerned. Later, the secession of Yunnan and Szechuan from the Central Government nullified the promises of the Chinese, but also produced a state of chaos which precluded the provincial governments from any active measures towards Tibet for some time. But in spite of its weakness, the Chinese Government was sufficiently interested in Tibetan affairs to continue its efforts to find a settlement of the Tibetan question and to elect a "representative of Tibet" to its new Parliament. This action evoked a protest from His Majesty's Government.

In central Tibet trade went on satisfactorily under the new Regulations; monopolies were ordered to be abolished; an Indian company produced some Tibetan tea which found a market in Tibet. Relations between the Dalai Lama and Tashi Lama, or rather between their respective governments, showed signs of strain when the Lhasa government tried to levy taxes in Shigatse province, towards the cost of Tibetan troops in Kham. There had been
noticeable friction since the return of the Dalai Lama, but Lhasa cannot have been pleased by a proposal from the Tashi Lama that he should send a delegate to the Simla Conference. In Western Tibet, not for the first time nor for the last, we came up against long standing exactions by local officials, safe from supervision by the Central Government at Lhasa.

The Dalai Lama, on the outbreak of the European war, offered to His Majesty's Government all the prayers and all the resources of Tibet; and throughout the war prayers were said in Lhasa and in Tashilhunpo for the success of British arms.

46. Fresh Proposals for Negotiations. Hostilities Break Out in Kham. 1917

The weakness of the Chinese Government at the end of Yuan Shih-kai's regime appeared to His Majesty's Minister in Peking to offer the chance of a settlement of the Sino-Tibetan question. It was considered that the Chinese had only been restrained from aggression by the firmness of Sir John Jordan and Yuan Shih-kai, and that trouble might follow when they had settled their internal problems. The obstacle to agreement had been the creation of Inner Tibet, and it was suggested that the time had come for new proposals in modification of the 1914 Convention. The most important of these suggestions were the abolition of Inner Tibet by fixing as the frontier of Autonomous Tibet what had been the proposed boundary between Outer and Inner Tibet; and the posting of Chinese and British Agents at the existing Trade Marts and at Chiamdo.

The Government of India considered that political conditions in China would make the acceptance or continuance of any new agreement doubtful, and that the Tibetans would be disturbed if they were asked to make concessions. In Sir Charles Bell's opinion, the Tibetans were likely to agree to the territorial adjustment, but we should not consider allowing Chinese officers at the Trade Marts.

In the meantime there was Chinese aggression near Riwoche; the Tibetans retaliated and captured the town. In view of the disturbed conditions, the Government of India, His Majesty's Government and His Majesty's Minister agreed that the moment was unpropitious for negotiations; and the Government of India decided to present 500,000 rounds of ammunition to the Tibetan Government for their self-defence. Diplomatic representations were also made at Peking and the Tibetan Government were urged to keep the peace. But this time representations were of no avail. The Szechuanese Commander in East Tibet, uttering most truculent threats that he would leave neither man nor dog alive, launched fresh attacks. The Tibetans, in alarm, redoubled their appeals for arms and ammunitions; but the Government of India did not share the fears of the Tibetans, whom they considered to be in a stronger position than the Chinese; and, anxious to avoid encouraging Tibetan aggression, they refused any further munitions. They also hinted that the Chinese Government might be willing to come to terms. His Majesty's Minister, on the other hand, did not believe that the Chinese Government was genuinely willing for a settlement or that it could control the Szechuanese officials. It was decided that His Majesty's Minister should sound the Chinese Government informally, and that Mr. Teichman of the China Consular Service should try to negotiate a truce on the basis of the status quo.

47. The Chiamdo Agreement and Truce of Rongbatsa. 1918

By the time Mr. Teichman reached the front, towards the end of May 1918, the Tibetans had recaptured Chiamdo (where they took a number of prisoners whom they later, to the embarrassment of the Government of India, despatched to India); had occupied nearly all the country west of the Yangtse; and were threatening Batang. It was reported that the Dalai Lama had ordered the capture of all territory up to Tachienlu, but that the Kalon Lama, who was in command of the Tibetan troops, preferred to establish the line of the upper Yangtse as a temporary frontier.

The Tibetan Government were urged by the Government of India to empower the Kalon Lama to act on their behalf, to accept the Yangtse line, and to treat their prisoners humanely. They put into practice the first and the last of these suggestions. The Chinese Government on their part had to confess their inability to control the Szechuanese officials, and did not appear eager for a settlement. In these unsatisfactory conditions, with no guarantee that what was done would be accepted by the Chinese Government, an agreement was reached.
at Chiamdo on 19th August for a provisional frontier to consist roughly of the Yangtse river; the Tibetans, who had occupied Derge and part of Nyarong in the interval before the discussions, were to retain Derge, Teko and some other districts east of the river, but were to withdraw from Nyarong. The delay, and uncertainty about the intentions of the Chinese Government naturally roused the suspicions of the Kalon Lama; and, in order to separate the opposing forces, Mr. Teichman succeeded in negotiating a supplementary agreement, on 20th September, under which there was to be truce for one year, and a withdrawal of troops pending a settlement between the two governments. The Tibetans accordingly withdrew to the east border of Derge, and the Chinese to Kanze.

The Government of India considered that the Chiamdo agreement was unduly favourable to the Tibetans and would never be accepted by the Chinese Government; they hoped by the exercise of a moderating influence to bring the Chinese Government to a frame of mind in which they would be ready to submit the whole question to arbitration, possibly of America, after the war. His Majesty’s Government did not approve of the suggestion about America, but agreed that it should be impressed upon the Tibetans that the Chiamdo agreement was made without the authority of the Chinese Government and in no way prejudiced a final settlement. In the meantime, the Tibetans would be wise to accept the Yangtse line in view of the danger from China, once her internal troubles were settled. It was decided that unless the Tibetans were attacked they should be given no further assistance that might encourage them to aggression.

The Tibetan success was ascribed by Mr. Teichman principally to the British rifles with which they had been supplied, and to the fact that the Szechuanese commander had to face both ways and be prepared for trouble in his rear. It was Mr. Teichman’s opinion that but for our intervention the Tibetans would have captured Batang, and probably all the territory up to Tachienlu; but he was convinced that even the advance that the Tibetans had made was injudicious, and that in due course an inevitable Chinese recovery would lead to the discomfiture of the Tibetans if they went too far. It may have seemed to officials in Lhasa that they were being deprived of the full fruits of their success, and of the chance of securing solid bargaining counters for future negotiations with the Chinese; but, although they retained control of Derge and some areas East of the Yangtse, the prudence of the Dalai Lama and his regard for our advice restrained them from further advances.

Mr. Teichman’s reiteration that the fighting was due to General Peng’s ambitions and aggression may be noted, and also his frequent testimony to the courtesy, reasonableness, and humanity of the Kalon Lama.

48. Chinese Proposals for a Settlement and their Failure. 1919

After the truce of Rongbatsa the Tibetan Government pressed the Government of India to arrange a final settlement with the Chinese. Although the Szechuan generals, whose influence in East Tibet was decreasing and whose internal feuds were increasing, seemed anxious that peace with Tibet should be preserved, His Majesty’s Minister at Peking had earlier reported that the Chinese Government were not anxious to join in serious negotiations for peace. At that time the Minister considered that the best way of creating favourable conditions for negotiations was that “that Dalai Lama who is a most unscrupulous and dangerous person, and an arch-intriguer”, should be refused further assistance and warned to drop his ambitious schemes of conquest. In April the Minister again reported that the confusion and disintegration of Chinese affairs precluded the possibility of negotiations on a national basis. Nevertheless, in May 1919, the Chinese Government put forward written proposals for a settlement based on the 1914 Treaty, providing for the inclusion of parts of Inner Tibet in Szechuan, and the cession to Outer Tibet of Gonjo district and the abandonment of Chinese claim to Chiamdo, Draya and Markham for Inner Tibet. Proposals were also made for the posting of Chinese officers at the Trade Marts, and that the recognition by autonomous Tibet of Chinese suzerainty should be included in the treaty proper. The Government of India, as before, objected to the posting of more Chinese officers in Tibet, and disliked the proposal of His Majesty’s Minister that there should be a permanent British representative at Lhasa as a counterbalance. His Majesty’s Government considered that we should secure the right to appoint such a representative, even if we did not mean to exercise it immediately. The Tibetan Government disliked the proposals as a whole, and they were
rejected by a special meeting of the National Assembly. The course of negotiations at Peking was impeded by a malicious press campaign inspired by the Japanese, by the opposition of the Chinese militarists, and by the shadow of the Shantung question and eventually the Chinese Foreign Minister had to confess in a confused and unconvincing stream of bluster and explanation, that public opinion had turned against the negotiations, and was now opposed to British "Interference" in Tibet.

It is probable that, in addition to the other influences working against a settlement, the recent Chinese success in abolishing the autonomy of Mongolia had raised hopes that a little more patience would give them their opportunity in Tibet. Nevertheless, His Majesty's Minister observed that China felt herself deeply committed by her acceptance of the Simla Treaty in principle, and even more by the recent memorandum of 30th May 1919, which had confirmed that acceptance.

For Tibet the year had followed a too familiar pattern, and disappointment at the failure to bring the Chinese to terms was made the more bitter by our repeated refusal to provide the Tibetan Government with arms, or to allow them to import any through India. The Government of India had been anxious to sell the Tibetan Government two machine guns, and one and a quarter million rounds of rifle ammunition, but it was decided by His Majesty's Government that the new Arms Traffic Regulations made this impossible. There had been the usual rumours of Chinese aggression, this time from Kansu; and the usual overtures for a separate peace. These developed into "The Kansu Mission" which found its way to Lhasa in 1920 to sound the Dalai Lama on the possibilities of an agreement. The Chinese Government denied aggressive intention on the part of the Kansu authorities, and disavowed the peace mission. The Tibetan Government, on their part, returned the usual answer that they wanted the British Government to be a party to any agreement.

And so the Rongbatsa Truce, which the Chinese Government had never recognised, expired; but its effects continued for some time to come, and there was no immediate resumption of hostilities. Both sides in fact seemed willing to treat it as having been continued indefinitely, by a local exchange of assurances, in September 1919, that there would be no hostilities while the Peking negotiations were proceeding.

Chapter VI — Sir Charles Bell’s Visit to Lhasa

49. Decision to Send Sir Charles Bell to Lhasa

The abrupt suspension of the Peking negotiations caused such displeasure to His Majesty's Government that they recalled Sir John Jordan from Peking; but the doors of argument were not yet closed. In response to a British proposal of tripartite negotiations at Lhasa, a tentative Chinese suggestion that a separate settlement between the Chinese and Tibetan Governments might be reached at Lhasa, and that His Majesty's Government might witness it, produced fresh diplomatic activity. The Kansu Mission had led the Tibetan Government to ask that a British officer should be sent to Lhasa to help in finding a settlement; but the Chinese Government disavowed the Kansu Mission, so that idea was abandoned. We also advised the Tibetan Government against sending a representative to China with the returning Mission. The new approach petered out in Peking; Chinese ideas were still in flux, and the militaristic and imperialistic outlook was gathering strength with each delay.

Fresh rumours of Chinese preparation for aggression in Kansu and Yunnan further aggravated the situation and the usual denials were of little assurance. Our international obligations still prevented us from supplying arms to the Tibetans; and there was growing evidence that our prestige in Tibet was on the wane.

In these circumstances His Majesty's Minister at Peking proposed in April 1920 that a British officer should be sent to Lhasa in order to encourage the Tibetans and to let the Chinese see that we were in earnest. Sir Charles Bell, whose views were supported by the Government of India, argued that unless we could give some hope of a settlement with Chinese, or unless we could promise material support, such a mission might be of little use. His Majesty's Minister developed a strong case for the supply of arms, and propounded a new policy for our relations with Tibet. He suggested that we might treat Tibet as standing
in the same relation to China as the self-governing Dominions stood towards Great Britain; he suggested permanent representation at Lhasa and the ending of a policy of sterilisation.

The Government of India were opposed to permanent representation at Lhasa, but considered that there would be advantage in sending a mission to Lhasa even if no definite promises could be made. New conditions had ruled out the necessity of considering Russian feelings, and it was held by His Majesty's Government that the Anglo-Russian treaty of 1907 was no longer valid. It was therefore decided that Sir Charles Bell should go to Lhasa as special representative of His Excellency the Viceroy; while, in China, efforts would be made to secure an assurance from the Chinese Government that they would not attack Tibet.

50. Sir Charles Bell’s Mission to Lhasa, November 1920 to October 1921

This Mission marks a turning point in British policy towards Tibet, and it is therefore dealt with at some length.

A — Instructions and Early Activities

Bell’s instructions were to treat requests for assistance in a sympathetic manner but to make it plain that he had no authority to promise arms or ammunition. He was to explain the efforts which had been made to settle the Tibetan question and the difficulty of making any progress at present on account of the disunity of China. He was to urge the Tibetan Government to avoid hostilities; to find out about the Kansu Mission, and the reported mission of one Liu Tsan Ting; and whether in case of the failure of China to resume tripartite negotiations there was danger of a separate settlement between Tibet and China. He was to telegraph his opinion about the length of his stay, which should be governed by considerations of public interest, and his own health.

The party included Major Kennedy, I.M.S. and Mr. Fairley of the Posts and Telegraphs Department who was to examine the possibilities of a telegraph line to Lhasa.

Shortly after his arrival, Bell was received by the Dalai Lama to whom he presented a kharita from the Viceroy, and conveyed the communication authorised by the Government of India, and a request for permission for an expedition to Mount Everest. He then prepared to leave. The Dalai Lama, the National Assembly, and all high officials pressed him to stay until April or May, and he agreed to do so. The Government of India, obsessed by the danger of being pressed to establish a permanent representative at Lhasa, and fearing that the resumption of negotiations with China might be prejudiced by a long stay, urged Bell to leave as soon as possible. When the strong contention of our Minister at Peking, that Bell’s stay would have a beneficial effect, failed to remove the Government of India’s fears, Bell also replied with similar views about the possibility of negotiations, and stressing the opportunity for strengthening our friendship with Tibetan officials and for obtaining information. He did not think it would be difficult to deal firmly with the question of permanent representation if it arose; and he pointed out the severity of the climatic conditions. Eventually the Government of India agreed principally on account of the climatic conditions; but in doing so they expressed their continuing apprehension of a request for permanent representation.

B — Bell Gets Down to Work

What would have been the results of premature withdrawal is a matter for speculation; the effect of staying on was a revision and enlivenment of our policy towards Tibet.

The Dalai Lama in replying to Bell’s communication made requests for pressure to be put on the Chinese Government for a settlement; for arms and ammunition, and further military training; for facilities for engaging mining prospectors and for buying mining equipment.

Bell forwarded these requests to the Government of India with his recommendations, and after a further month’s observation he submitted a closely reasoned, warmly worded, review of our relations with Tibet. After a brief historical survey, he declared that since 1913 we had encouraged the Tibetans to trust us; we had promised them diplomatic assistance and a reasonable supply of arms. They had been given 5,000 rifles, and had been allowed to purchase some ammunition, but for the last four years they had been barred absolutely from
obtaining munitions. During the war they were promised machine guns; but two years after
the end of the war they had received none. We were breaking the promises made in the name
of His Majesty's Government, undermining the hard won freedom of Tibet, and jeopardising
the security of the North East Frontier of India.

We had won the friendship of the Dalai Lama but his life was uncertain, and if he were
to die, we could not say how far Tibet would remain on our side. Bell went on to recount
the advantage we had gained by the Simla Convention and the new Trade Regulations; and to
emphasise what a barrier against Bolshevism we had in Tibet. But Tibet was weary, and there
had been, and still were, in Lhasa persons interested in inducing her to make a separate peace
with China. Our refusal to let the Tibetan Government purchase arms was keenly felt, and
the pro-Chinese faction in Lhasa, which was only kept in check by the pro-British influence
of the Dalai Lama, was increasing with the delay in settling the Tibetan question. Admiration
for the Japanese was growing; and Russian and Japanese rifles were finding their way in from
Mongolia. It would surely be better for Tibet to get her needs from us.

An assurance from China would not mean anything to Tibet who would still have to maintain
her frontier troops with the present insufficiency of arms and ammunition.

Bell went on to condemn our policy of aloofness as calculated to make the Tibetans turn
to China, which was what the Chinese were waiting for. Japan and China together would
gain power in Tibet to the jeopardy of our North East Frontier; and we would be regarded as
 betrayers.

We should not wait any longer for China to negotiate, but should recognise the merits of
the Tibetan administration, their desire not to fall again under Chinese misrule, and the bur-
den of maintaining their army in East Tibet for ten years. We should also recognise India's
vital interest in the problem, and the dangers of our present inaction.

He recommended for the Tibetans. 1. Permission to import arms from India up to speci-
ified maxima. 2. Help in training Tibetan troops. 3. Help in engaging British mechanics to teach
the manufacture of gunpowder and rifles. 4. Help in engaging good mining prospectors. 5.
Help in importing machinery for their mines and their mint.

This assistance would cost us nothing, and its results would make China come to terms.

Bell discounted the analogy of the unsuccessful Anglo-Persian Agreement, and described
our aim as to see Tibet enjoying internal autonomy under the lightest possible form of Chi-
nese suzerainty, a barrier for the Northern Frontier of India, free to develop on her own lines.
We might in time draw direct help from Tibet in the form of recruits, and perhaps in such
precious metals as might be discovered.

He concluded that we could no longer continue to profess friendship for Tibet and go on
treating her as we were doing. We must establish our influence, and take the present oppor-
tunity to do so.

The Government of India compared this serious advice with proposals put forward by
His Majesty's Minister at Peking in June 1920 when the question of a Mission to Lhasa was
under consideration. The Minister had warned of the same dangers, and had urged the need
of a new policy of closer relations with Tibet, while continuing to offer China a settlement on
the lines of the 1914 Convention, or by international or American arbitration. He recommended
permanent representation at Lhasa, and perhaps also at Chiamo.

We must avoid the reproach of sterilising the country, and must contemplate its eventual
opening to foreign residence and trade. But we must establish a position which would en-
able us to control the entry of foreigners into Tibet. The geographical position was in our
favour; and the opening of the Indian route to Tibet would mean the abandonment of the
China route. If we took a strong line in Tibet we should be prepared to make every possible
concession to Chinese public opinion e.g., in such matters as the representation of Tibet in
the Chinese Parliament, which would be make-believe, but what China would like.

He summed up our past policy as one of keeping ourselves, and everyone else except
the Chinese, out of Tibet. This had played into China's hands. We had a chance in 1912-13 to
put things right, but made the mistake of trying to exclude Chinese officials. We could not
risk any longer the danger of the Chinese regaining control over Tibet again. We must there-
fore choose between continuing on our present lines, thereby running that risk, and adopting
a new and liberal policy towards Tibet, which would entail opening the country and devel-
oping its resources under our auspices.
Bell agreed with the general thesis of a new and liberal policy, but did not think the time was yet ripe for permanent representation at Lhasa, unless a Chinese Amban was posted there. He deprecated allowing others to go to Lhasa if we were not represented there, but advocated the opening of the Trade Route as far as Gyantse to British and foreign visitors.

C — The Government of India Formulate their Policy

After considering these weighty views, the Government of India submitted their proposals to His Majesty’s Government.

They considered that Bell’s mission had accomplished their main objects by deepening his friendship with the Dalai Lama, and putting new life into the Tibetan Government’s waning belief in our goodwill. They agreed that something more than protestations of friendship, or even a written assurance from China, was wanted by Tibet, who expected either China’s acceptance of the Tripartite Convention, or help to strengthen herself enough to be able to keep China at arm’s length. The first seemed impossible as there was no sign of a disposition on China’s part to reopen negotiations. They therefore advised the adoption of Bell’s constructive policy. They questioned further refusal of arms to Tibet as being based on the assumption that Tibet was a province of China, and they recommended the supply of the arms recommended by Bell, on a strict guarantee that they would be used only in self-defence. They also recommended assistance for the self-development of Tibet but pointed out the danger of friction in sending up experts insensitive to the atmosphere of Tibet, and the lack of the most elementary technical knowledge on the part of the Tibetans.

They said that the policy of sterilisation was not theirs, but the traditional policy of Tibet, and doubted whether we should attempt to force Tibet’s doors so long as she wished to keep them shut; that might jeopardise our influence. They thought that Tibet wanted a British representative at Lhasa as an insurance against Chinese aggression, but if we strengthened Tibet enough to enable her to keep China at arm’s length, she would be able to do without one. The Government of India did not desire a more ambitious policy, or any new commitments.

If Bell’s “admirably restrained policy” were adopted we should have to consider whether the time had come to take a firm line towards China. They recommended that the Chinese Government should be informed that we definitely recognised the autonomy of Tibet; that we were allowing her to import arms for self-defence; and that we were prepared to give her such facilities as were necessary to preserve her autonomy. They were ready to try to persuade Tibet to modify the 1914 agreement on the lines of China’s written proposals of May 1919.

In another telegram they agreed with Bell’s proposals for freer admission of visitors, with the exception of sportsmen and missionaries.

D — Memorandum of August 1921 to Chinese Government and Assurance to Tibet

The form of our communication to China and our assurance to Tibet were carefully considered. His Majesty’s Minister, Peking, hesitated to recommend what amounted to an ultimatum, because Chinese prestige had suffered a blow by the reversal of the situation in Mongolia; the Chinese were also anxious about the possibility of renewal of the Anglo-Japanese alliance; they had failed to get any satisfaction over the Shantung question. If an ultimatum were presented the Chinese Government would probably enlist the sympathy of America. The Government of India were in favour of a clear pronouncement regarding the autonomy of Tibet; but their main requirement was that Bell should be able to give the Tibetan Government a definite assurance that they would be allowed to import arms unless China reopened negotiations within a stated period.

Eventually, on 26th August 1921, a memorandum was presented to the Chinese Minister in London, inviting the Chinese Government to resume negotiations without delay either in London or Peking. “In view of commitments of His Majesty’s Government to the Tibetan Government arising out of the tripartite negotiations of 1914 and in view of that fact that, with the exception of the boundary clause, the draft Convention of 1914 providing for Tibetan autonomy under Chinese suzerainty was accepted by the Chinese Government who in their offer of 1919 formally reaffirmed their attitude in this, His Majesty’s Government, failing a
resumption of negotiations in the immediate future, do not feel justified in withholding
any longer their recognition of the status of Tibet as an autonomous state under the suzerainty of China and intend dealing with Tibet in future on this basis. The memorandum ended with an offer to try to persuade the Tibetan Government to modify the 1914 Convention in accordance with the Chinese offer of 1919, if the Chinese Government were to resume negotiation.

A verbal explanation which accompanied the memorandum expressed regret that the differences between Tibet and China had not been settled. The Minister was informed that if negotiations were not resumed within one month we should regard ourselves as having a free hand to deal with Tibet as an autonomous state, if necessary without further reference to China, to enter into closer relations, to open up intercourse between Tibetan and Indian trade marts, to send an officer to Lhasa from time to time whenever the British and Tibetan Governments consider it desirable, and to give reasonable assistance to the Tibetans for the protection and development of their country. It was also said that the Chinese proposal to appoint Consuls in India would be favourably considered after a settlement of the Tibetan question had been reached.

A similar communication was made at Peking and produced immediate excuses that the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs was too much preoccupied with preparations for the Washington Conference; and also contemptuous enquiries whether we really thought that Tibet was capable of self-government. These excuses were reinforced later by the plea of the chaotic state of China, and the precarious situation of the Government, but the offer was made to reopen negotiations as soon as possible after the conclusion of the Washington Conference. This situation was accepted by His Majesty's Government and the assurance to the Tibetan Government was slightly modified. Accordingly, on 11th October 1921 a written communication was made by Bell to the Dalai Lama, stating that, owing to the Washington Conference, the Chinese Government were unable to reopen negotiations at once but had expressed their willingness to do so after the Conference. His Majesty's Government were prepared to help Tibet to protect and develop herself, and would permit the import of arms in reasonable quantities provided the Tibetan Government would give a written guarantee that they would be used only for self-defence and internal police work. His Majesty's Government relied on Tibet to maintain the status quo and refrain from provocative or aggressive action pending the fulfilment of the Chinese assurance to resume negotiations. The quantity of arms to be allowed was specified. This was acknowledged in writing by the Dalai Lama who gave an assurance that the Tibetan Government would abstain from aggression. The Chinese Government were again informed of the seriousness of His Majesty's Government's intentions, but their protestations about the difficulties inherent in negotiations did not promise well for the future. It may be noted that the Tibetan Government were not consulted about the reference to Chinese suzerainty in His Majesty's Government's memorandum to the Chinese Government nor were they informed about it in the written communication by Sir Charles Bell.

E — Summary of the Results of the Mission

Cordial relations with the Tibetan Government and people had been established; and the confidence of the Tibetan Government in us had been thoroughly restored.

We had adopted a new and liberal policy of helping Tibet to protect and develop itself. The chief forms of assistance that we contemplated were the supply of a definite number of mountain guns, machine guns, rifles and ammunitions; the training of the Tibetan forces to a limited extent; technical help in constructing a telegraph line from Lhasa to Gyantse; help, if wanted, in the manufacture of munitions, the development of mineral resources, and the opening of a school at Gyantse or Lhasa. It had also been decided that a British officer should visit Lhasa whenever the British and Tibetan Governments so desired.

The question of allowing freer travel on the Trade Routes was also under consideration. This new policy was outlined to the Dalai Lama by Bell shortly before he left for India.

In Bell's view the probability of China negotiating a tripartite treaty had been increased and the Tibetan question had been settled for a number of years.
51. Implementing the New Policy

Immediate steps were taken to fulfil our promise of assistance to Tibet. Supply of the arms and ammunition, which they wanted so badly, was begun in 1922, and by 1933 the Tibetan Government had received and paid for the quantities recommended by Sir Charles Bell, viz., ten mountain guns, twenty Lewis guns, ten thousand rifles, and adequate ammunition. Further instruction in various military activities was arranged for officers and men of the Tibetan Army. Between 1922 and 1926 four officers and some 350 non-commissioned officers and men received infantry training at Gyantse; four officers and 20 men were trained in the use of mountain guns, and 12 men as armourers, at Quetta; some of the officers received additional training in gunnery, infantry, and cavalry work, at Quetta and Shillong; and some of the men at Gyantse were taught signalling and heliography.

Technical assistance was given in the construction and working of the telegraph line between Lhasa and Gyantse; and some Tibetan youths were trained as telegraphists.

Sir Henry Hayden made a geological survey of parts of Tibet; and Sardar Bahadur Laden La of the Darjeeling Police was sent to the Tibetan Government for two years in order to organise a police force.

Help was given in securing machinery for a hydroelectric plant for Lhasa; but its establishment took some time.

An English school was opened at Gyantse in 1924; but it lasted only until 1926.

The cost of all these modern activities was paid for by the Tibetan Government.

The proposed opening of part of Tibet to travellers also took effect. New conditions for the issue of passes under the existing Frontier Crossing Regulations were laid down. It was decided that for journeys on the Trade Route it was not necessary to consult the Tibetan Government beforehand unless there was reason to believe that any particular visitor might be regarded with disfavour. A number of visitors began to find their way to Yatung and Gyantse; and permission was obtained from the Tibetan Government in 1922 for General Pereira to travel to Lhasa from China, and in 1923 for a journey by Captain Kingdon Ward in the Brahmaputra Valley. Such permission was given rather grudgingly, and other travellers who did not have official backing were turned back from Tibet, e.g., Mr. Sorenson, a business man, or refused permission to enter, e.g., Mr. Sorenson, a missionary. But in 1923 Dr. MacGovern broke the terms of his frontier pass and made his way to Lhasa and in 1924 Madame David Neel travelled in disguise from China to Lhasa. Discrimination against missionaries caused some discontent on the China border where there was a considerable number of missionary workers of many nationalities and His Majesty’s Minister in China reported that the local Tibetan officials, on their part, tried to put the blame for refusing entry into Tibet on to orders received from the British or Indian Governments.

A further manifestation of the new policy in Tibet was a visit to Lhasa in 1924 by Colonel Bailey, Political Officer in Sikkim, which will be described in a later paragraph.

52. Tripartite Negotiations not Resumed

In contrast with the prompt action to put our new policy into effect, was the delay in the matter of negotiations with China.

The Chinese representative at the Washington Conference had claimed that the principle of territorial integrity should be extended to all the territories of the Chinese Republic; some distinction was drawn between China proper and the outlying territories, but the Tibetan question was not discussed.

After the Washington Conference His Majesty’s Government, intending to invite China to fulfil her promise, enquired whether the Government of India would agree to reopen negotiations on the basis of the Chinese offer of 1919. The Political Officer, Sikkim, considered that, in view of the uncompromising refusal by the Tibetan Government of that offer, it would be better to start on the basis of the 1914 Convention, and later to bring up the proposal to divide part of Inner Tibet between China and Tibet so that the former would get Nyarong and the latter Derge. Negotiations should be in Tibet or India, not Peking. The Government of India accepted the view that the 1914 Convention would be the most suitable basis, and that the formula of our Memorandum of 1921 could not be bettered. They deprecated any suggestion of partitioning Inner Tibet, and advised that the Tibetan Government should be
consulted before making any alteration to the Simla Treaty. They suggested London as the
scene of the talks, and considered that, if China agreed to negotiate, the Tibetan Government
should he invited to send a delegate, and should be warned that the only chance of terminat-
ing her present dangerous uncertainty lay in making some material concession to China. It
was hoped that Sir Charles Bell’s advice might weigh with the Tibetans.

His Majesty’s Minister, Peking, reported that the political situation in China was more
complex than ever, the country still disunited, the prestige of the Central Government at its
lowest ebb, but a chauvinistic spirit on the increase. He deprecated any attempt to reopen
tripartite negotiations, and put forward as a solution that we should profess to regard the
problem as settled by China’s acceptance of the 1914 Convention, except for the boundary
clause, and her reaffirmation of that attitude in 1919. We should try to get the Chinese to con-
firm that attitude again, and then, in the capacity of intermediary, to persuade the Tibetan
Government to accept a modified boundary. He feared that, in fact, there would be a long
postponement, because the Chinese Government would shrink from any action which might
incur criticism from their opponents; but he considered that, having provided Tibet with the
means of withstanding China, we could afford to tell the Tibetan Government openly that
there was no chance of coming to an agreement with China for the time being, and to con-
solidate our relations with Tibet independently of China.

In face of this gloomy report further pressure was put on the Chinese Government. The
Tibetan Government had written personally to Bell in 1923 to ask him to help in bringing
about a settlement, but no communication was made to them until 1924 when Colonel Bailey
visited Lhasa. He then told the Kashag verbally that the Chinese were too disunited for any
agreement with them to be reached. The Tibetan asked whether a separate treaty with the
Szechuan Government would be possible, but Bailey replied that it could be easily repudi-
ated by the Central Government. He advised them to refrain from aggression, in spite of
temptations; and to concentrate on organising their defence and popularising their govern-
ment in East Tibet, as being most likely to cause the Chinese to come to terms.

Before Bailey left Lhasa, the Tibetan Government gave him a written communication ex-
pressing the difficulty of keeping a standing army on the Eastern front, and their fears that
the Chinese might use the Tashi Lama as a cause for aggression. They asked if His Majesty’s
Government could effect a settlement with China.

A written reply was sent, saying that the importance of obtaining a settlement had not
been lost to sight, but regretting that nothing could be done at the present. It may be noted
that as a result of the Washington Conference the Japanese Government made enquiries
whether we were withdrawing our Post Officers from Tibet (presumably because they had
had to withdraw theirs from Manchuria); they were informed that we would not withdraw
our post offices; and it appears that the occasion was taken to decide that the Washington
Resolutions could not apply to Tibet without her agreement. Thereafter nothing official ap-
pears to have been heard about the Sino-Tibetan question until 1928, by which time the Chinese
Government had conveniently forgotten much of what had gone before.

Chapter VII — Lean Years

53. Tibetan Internal Affairs. 1921–1924

A — Flight of the Tashi Lama

There were signs of impending trouble between the Tashi Lama and the Lhasa Government
in 1922 when the Lama appealed for British mediation on the grounds that he could not pay
the contribution demanded by Lhasa for the upkeep of the army. Friction between the two
administrations had led to the imprisonment at Lhasa of some of the Tashi Lhunpo officials.
In spite of the friendly personal relations existing between the Tashi Lama and British offi-
cials it was not possible to intervene. The tension increased, and at the end of 1923 the Tashi
Lama, after writing a sorrowful protest against the evil-minded people who had misled the
Dalai Lama, fled secretly from Shigatse. He declared that he was leaving only for a short time,
in order to find someone to mediate between himself and the Dalai Lama, and to raise con-
tributions from faithful Buddhists in Kham and Mongolia.
The Lhasa Government despatched troops and officials to overtake him, but he succeeded in making his way to Mongolia and thence to Peking. The Tibetan Government's fears of the Tashi Lama's tendency to sinize were obvious. An official letter was sent to the Political Officer, Sikkim, asking for any news of the Tashi Lama's arrival in China or Mongolia; and the Dalai Lama published, in reply to the Tashi Lama's own letter, a stern rebuke, justifying his own actions, and asking why the Tashi Lama had not brought his grievances personally to his Father and Teacher (the Dalai Lama), instead "of wandering away into uninhabited places, to his great peril, like a moth attracted by the lamplight". The dangers of visiting China and Mongolia were expounded. The Tashi Lama was charged with thinking only of himself and being unworthy of his predecessors, and was exhorted to turn back from the wrong path. In conclusion, overriding the Tashi Lama's instructions to his own officials, the Dalai Lama appointed a Commissioner to administer the affairs of Tashi Lhunpo.

The effect on Tibet was profound. The sanctity and gentleness of the Tashi Lama had made him loved and revered all over the country; and it was a grave ill-omen that one of the two holiest beings should leave the country. Oracular pronouncements appeared, rebuking the evil counsellors of the Dalai Lama, and modern influences at Lhasa; the memory of old injustices by Lhasa towards Tashi Lhunpo was revived. The Lhasa party, on their side, depreciated the Tashi Lama, stressed his subordination to the Dalai Lama, and recalled his previous connection with the Chinese. Rumours multiplied; and in China there were dark hints of British designs on Tibet.

B — Trouble Between Tibet and Nepal

Relations between Tibet and Nepal were rarely amicable. In the early militaristic periods Tibet had been in the dominant position. Later, the Buddhist influence, much of which had come from Nepal, decreased the warlike spirit of Tibet. A Nepalese invasion of Tibet in 1732, which was only repelled with Chinese assistance, also caused the interruption of early relations between the British in India and Tibet. Again in 1855 the Nepalese invaded Tibet on the plea of ill-treatment by the Tibetan Government of Nepalese subjects at Lhasa. This expedition led to a treaty between the two countries under which Tibet had to pay Rs. 10,000 per annum, and to admit a Nepalese representative at Lhasa. Free trade and extra-territorial rights were also conceded. In return the Nepalese Government undertook to assist Tibet if she were attacked.

There were frequent causes of friction in the treatment of Nepalese half breeds, and the untactful behaviour of some of the Nepalese officers at Lhasa; and in 1923 the Prime Minister of Nepal expressed his apprehension about relations between the two countries. He alleged growing pride and insolence on the part of the Tibetan Government; and the Tibetans in reply claimed that the Nepalese officials sheltered criminals. They also resented the retention of Nepalese officials at other places than Lhasa.

The trouble in 1923 was probably due to a bad officer at Lhasa, but it brought out the dislike of Tibet for Nepal, fostered possibly by the fact that the Nepalese had given us assistance in 1904, and the jealousy of Nepal of our dealings with Tibet. The Prime Minister of Nepal made a bitter comment that we were supplying Tibet with 15,000 rifles, but had allowed Nepal only 10,000.

C — Boundary Disputes, with Kashmir and Tehri

Closer relations with Tibet naturally brought to light a number of cases in which one or other party sought to redress old grievances.

When Sir Charles Bell was at Lhasa a complaint was made by the Kashmir Durbar about the abduction of a Ladakhi by some Tibetans. The existence of a treaty between Kashmir and Tibet was discovered, and various aspects of Kashmir—Tibetan relations came under discussion. The Tibetan Government raised counter-complaints that some of their subjects were detained in Ladakh; they alleged an illegal embargo on the export of grain from Ladakh; and laid claim to an area known as Dokpo Karpo.

With regard to the return of Tibetan subjects from British territory the Tibetan Government were informed, that this could not be done where no heinous offence was alleged. A meeting was arranged between Kashmir and Tibetan representatives to discuss outstanding problems including the boundary, and the exchange of subjects. It produced plenty of delays
and arguments, and the decision that, although the Tibetan claim seemed the better, there was, as in most grazing countries, no fixed boundary and it would be better to forget about the case.

A similar dispute arose about the boundary between Tehri and Tibet, with a similar result.

D — Western Tibet

Western Tibet produced a situation which was to recur often. The British Trade Agent, Gartok, complained against the independent and grasping behaviour of the local Tibetan officials, and claimed for British subjects, on his own interpretation of the Trade Regulations, rights of rather dubious validity. The Tibetan Government proved to be shrewd guardians of their own rights, and in reply to an argument based on the Trade Regulations of 1908, they pointed out that those Regulations had been cancelled, and we were now bound by the Regulations of 1914.

If the Government of India were in doubt about the Treaty position in 1921, it is not surprising that even in 1924 the Political Officer in Sikkim was not aware of the terms of the 1914 Trade Regulations, or whether they were deemed to be valid, such secrecy had been maintained in regard to the 1914 Convention. This appeared when the Tibetan Government made a proposal for the renewal of the Regulations; and it was eventually decided by His Majesty's Government that the Regulations of 1914 were to be considered as in force.

E — British Escorts in Tibet

It was suggested in 1922, by the military authorities, that the escorts of the British Trade Agents might be withdrawn as it was administratively inconvenient to have them away from their units. The arguments in favour of maintaining our position vis-à-vis the Chinese were, however, too strong to be disregarded.

54. Colonel Bailey's Visit to Lhasa. 1924

In view of these developments in Tibet, and of the desirability of strengthening personal relations between the Political Officer and Tibetan officials, which had decreased in intimacy since the retirement of Sir Charles Bell, the Government of India, while still shrinking from the idea of permanent representation at Lhasa, recommended that Colonel Bailey should pay a visit there for one month. They hoped that his advice would be useful on such subjects as the exclusion from Tibet of Bolshevist and anti-British propagandists, such as Mahendra Pratap who was supposed to have designs of visiting Lhasa, that he would be able to gauge the extent of Japanese influence in Tibet, to help in improving relations between Tibet and Nepal (with whom we had just concluded a new treaty), and perhaps to use his good offices to smooth the differences between the Dalai Lama and Tashi Lama. He might also advise and encourage the Tibetan Government in their difficulties over the modernisations, particularly the hydroelectric scheme.

His Majesty's Government approved, with the rider that, in view of our recent recognition of the Soviet Republic, nothing should be said or done to offend Russian opinion.

An invitation from the Tibetan Government was readily forthcoming, and Colonel Bailey reached Lhasa on 16th July 1924.

He found the Tibetan Government perturbed, in his view, unduly, by the flight of the Tashi Lama. They were anxious for his return, and Bailey considered that, although the Tashi Lama was unlikely to be long welcome in China and the people in Tibet were getting used to his absence, it would be desirable if it could be brought about. If too much persuasion were used the Tashi Lama would enhance his demands; but he was not likely to trust much to promises from Lhasa, unless we were to guarantee them.

Difficulties of finance were also weighing upon the Tibetan Government who expressed their desire to levy import and export duties in order to raise money for their increased expenditure. This had been in their minds for some time, and had been discussed in 1914 and again in 1917. The principal obstacle was that the Government of India were not willing to give up their right to most favoured nation treatment; and their consent to a customs tariff for Tibet would be contingent on a similar tariff being imposed on goods entering Tibet from
other quarters. But Tibet had agreements with China, Nepal, Ladakh, and other states which precluded them from levying such duties. Colonel Bailey held out no hopes on this score, but the question was raised later, in writing, by the Tibetan Government and has continued to be raised at intervals.

The Chinese situation was, of course, discussed, and Colonel Bailey's advice to the Tibetan Government has been described in an earlier paragraph. Other proposals of the Tibetan Government were for the entry of Tibet into the Postal Union, and for an extradition treaty.

The difficulties of the former were pointed out, and the matter was subsequently allowed to drop. With regard to the latter it appeared that the Tibetan Government were principally anxious to secure the return of their runaway subjects whether or not they had committed any offence. The Government of India declined to consider a formal treaty but would treat each case on its merits. Other subjects were also discussed.

The Government of India, on receipt of Colonel Bailey's report, considered that the main object of his visit had been achieved by the establishment of friendly relations with the Dalai Lama and his officials. They did not like the suggestion that the Government of India should guarantee the conditions of the return of the Tashi Lama, nor did they approve of any idea for developing Tibet which would look like exploitation, such as the appointment of a financial adviser.

55. Eastern Tibet. 1920–1925

The assurance of non-aggression which had been contemplated at the time of Sir Charles Bell's Mission to Lhasa was never secured from the Chinese. The internal situation in China grew progressively worse, and the border provinces were given up to the feuds of rival generals, which encouraged the increase of brigandage and disorder.

The Chinese Government were informed of Bell's arrival at Lhasa, and this visit aroused a good deal of suspicious comment. In the weak state of the Chinese Government fears of Tibetan aggression began to assume large proportions, and these fears may have been increased by Chinese views on Bell's probable intentions. Reports of Tibetan violation of the provisional frontier were received in 1921 and were supported by Mr. King, Consular Officer at Tachienlu. They were hotly denied by the Tibetan Government and by Sir Charles Bell. The verdict seems to lie with the latter; but the Chinese secured their object in that British influence was applied to prevent the Tibetans from taking advantage of China's weakness.

In 1923 a state of civil war existed in West China; and our Consular officers on the border had no doubt that if the Tibetans had chosen they could have overrun the country as far as Tachienlu. But regard for the extinct truce of Rongbatsa still continued; and the Tibetans received fresh warnings from the Government of India. Eastern Tibetan tribesmen, and local lamas, profited by the disturbances to indulge in raids in the Batang area, but the Tibetan forces, in spite of alarmist stories from Chinese officials, did not take the offensive. Tibetan influence penetrated slowly into the Chinese area, and there were reports in 1923 that they were collecting taxes in Chinese territory.

The Tibetans had had no worries since a threatened expedition against the Goloks in 1921 by the well-organised Kansu Muslims — the only border Chinese to preserve any semblance of order at this time. But as the Golok country was not within Inner Tibet no representations were made to the Chinese Government.

Reports by foreign travellers make it appear that Tibetans living in the Kokonor area were contented with the government of the Muslims, and that the latter actively sought to win over the border Tibetans by good treatment and education.

In 1924 a minor storm blew up over a tactless article by General Bruce on our new policy in Tibet. American, Russian and Chinese papers took up the cry of "British domination and exploitation of Tibet," and it was suspected that this publicity campaign was subsidised by the Chinese Government. The publication of our Memorandum of 1921, as a counterblast, was considered, but it was decided not to do so, in order to avoid raising the Tibetan question at an unpropitious moment. By the end of 1925 there was a lull in the civil war, and a state of comparative peace in the frontier areas. A new Border Commissioner, Liu-I-chiu, inaugurated a new incarnation of the province of Sikang, and proposed to deal with the Tibetan problem by peaceful penetration.
The Thirteenth Dalai Lama was an autocrat; but he was apt to be swayed by favourite advisers. His zeal for modernisation may be ascribed largely to the influence of Sir Charles Bell and to that of Tsarong Shape, a trusted officer who had accompanied the Dalai Lama on his flight to India in 1910, and who was ardently pro-British and progressive. But the power of the clerical party has long been a dominant factor in Tibet. This party is by nature conservative and obscurantist; and its influence on Lhasa opinion, through the 20,000 monks living in the great monasteries near the capital, is very great. At the time of the Chinese Revolutionary movement in 1911–1912 the monks of Sera took a leading part in the attack on the Chinese but the return of the Dalai Lama, and the weakening of Chinese pressure on Tibet, lessened the national unity which danger had fostered. It does not seem that the monasteries were pro-Chinese, for there was a story that in 1924 a "Chinese Amban" from Sining had come to Lhasa with offers of peace; he was sent away, but later despatched messengers with presents of gold and needles (the latter implying a threat) for the three great monasteries of Lhasa; the presents were refused. But the monks were ever resentful of anything that seemed to infringe on their authority, and there was a constant rivalry between them and the military.

The Dalai Lama — then 54, and ageing by Tibetan standards — was constantly surrounded by Lama officials including a domineering and ambitious Lord Chamberlain. There was also a lay official, Lungshar, of volatile and self-seeking mind who in 1921 had been involved in an attempt to divert to China the four Tibetan boys whom he was accompanying on their way to England for education; and who, while in London, had been in frequent touch with the Chinese Minister there.

Personalities play a great part in the mediaeval conditions of Tibet, and the ascendancy of these two new counsellors of the Dalai Lama had unfortunate results. Their influence appears to have been largely responsible for the breach with the Tashi Lama, and in 1925 they rapidly reduced the military party to ineffectiveness by the removal from their posts of those officers who had been trained in India, and other Tibetan military officers including Tsarong Shape, then Commander-in-Chief. A little later the newly organised police force, whose activities were disliked by the monks, was treated in a similar way. Charges of abuse of power were made against some of the officers, and there may have been foundation for such charges; but other complaints, which showed the conservative nature of the opposition, were that the officers had cut their hair short and wore foreign uniform.

It is possible that there had been a military plot against the Lord Chamberlain, or even against the Dalai Lama; but, whatever the reason, the results of the recent training and organisation were swept away, and a feeling of suspicion and unrest was created at Lhasa.

Rai Bahadur Norbhu was sent to Lhasa to find out what was happening, and to advise the Dalai Lama against undoing the good of the past few years. He reported that there was no anti-British spirit as such, but rather a strong reaction against the progressive party; the monks seemed to think that the mere possession of modern arms was enough, and that it was not necessary to know too much about their use. Nevertheless shortly after Rai Bahadur Norbhu's visit another small party of officers was sent by the Tibetan Government for military training in India, — perhaps a conciliatory gesture by the Dalai Lama.

The Government of India were naturally apprehensive that, in the mind of the ordinary Tibetan, we must be to some extent associated with the policy that was then suffering a setback; and the Political Officer was concerned at the probable ill-effects on Tibetan military efficiency, and at the loss of influence of a number of those whom we counted our friends. But, on viewing the matter two years later, he summed it up in what appears to be its true light — that the Tibetans, although no less friendly to us, were less dependent on us than formerly.

The Russian Press took delight in publishing exaggerated reports of the "crash of British influence in Tibet" and it must be admitted that much of our influence was lost. Nevertheless, it should not be overlooked that the change in Tibet took place not because we had been pushing things too fast — we had only given the Tibetan Government what it had asked for — but because the progressive party at Lhasa had been going too fast.
51. Lean Years. 1926–1930

In 1926 the Lord Chamberlain died; but Lungshar, assisted by Kunphel La, a new monk favourite, continued to have the ear of the Dalai Lama. In the assertion of Tibetan independence of others, and of the traditional conservatism, military training was gradually discontinued; the drill, discipline, and general condition of the Tibetan troops was allowed to deteriorate; the recently trained officers, although gradually restored to office, were not given military appointments except in rare instances; and the police force was allowed to decay.

The English school at Gyantse was closed in 1926 after achieving remarkable results in a short time. Factors which had worked against it were the current reaction against modernisation, the dislike of Tibetan parents of sending their children away from home, and their anxiety lest their Tibetan education should suffer; and want of faith in Western education which was confirmed in Tibetan eyes by the fact that none of the boys who had been sent to school in England had been given any special promotion. These sentiments were so strong that, although the Dalai Lama had wanted to send to England boys from the noble families, he met with such objections from their parents that he had to be contented with sending boys of the middle class.

A further manifestation of the monastic ascendancy was the imposition of a ban on the import of tobacco.

The stopping of a motor mail service introduced by the British Trade Agent, between Phari and Gyantse, might not have occurred if the progressive party had remained in power, but it was not necessarily a calculated act of unfriendliness. As a result of the new service the villagers on the Trade Route and local Tibetan officials would have lost the profits of supplying fodder to our pony mail service, and would have incurred the trouble of having to maintain the road in good condition. The villagers also feared the loss of the carrying business.

There was not a total hatred of foreign things; vaccination continued to be in demand, and electric light was installed in the Dalai Lama's palace in 1927 but work on the main hydroelectric station went very slowly. This, however, was largely due to expense which may have been a considerable factor in the general reaction against modernisation.

There was, nevertheless, a gradual decline in the former cordiality; and rumours of real or imaginary grievances were sometimes heard.

The regime of the favourites, which was unsatisfactory to us and to the progressive party in Tibet, was no more pleasing to many of the high officials who remained in office but whose advice and authority were persistently ignored. Even the advice of so old a friend as Tsarong Shape was unpalatable to the Dalai Lama, and, although Tsarong established a modus vivendi with Lungshar in 1927, he was degraded in 1930 on account of his independent views. This period saw a plentiful crop of difficulties, of which a management of affairs, arbitrary in manner and uncertain of direction, if not wholly the cause was at least an aggravation.

58. A Soviet Mission to Lhasa. 1927

It was not long before interested parties began to fish in the clouding waters. In the Spring of 1927 there arrived at Lhasa a party of Mongolians whose behaviour soon revealed them as Soviet propaganda agents. Their arrival was reported to the Political Officer by the Prime Minister of Tibet who asked for advice. A verbal message was sent to him and to the Dalai Lama that it would be advisable to send the party away immediately. It appeared that although the officials and people of Lhasa were perturbed by this visit, the Tibetan Government was likely to hesitate to turn the party out of Lhasa. The Political Officer, therefore, despatched Rai Bahadur Norbhu to Lhasa to press the Dalai Lama to get rid of the emissaries. Norbhu found the Dalai Lama reluctant to take decisive action, apparently for fear that Tibetans in Mongolia might be ill-treated. The general feeling at Lhasa was strongly against the Soviet; and there were rumours that the party was seeking to play on the old relationship between Tibet and Mongolia and to arrange for the exchange of representatives. It appeared on further enquiry that they had actually asked for a learned Lama to be sent to Mongolia; but this might have been followed up later by a request for a Mongolian official to be received at Lhasa. The party had a letter of commendation from Dorjieff, but it was understood that Dorjieff had also written privately to the Dalai Lama.
advising him to have nothing to do with these people. At last, after about five months, the party were summoned to audience with the Dalai Lama, and after a further interval they left Lhasa in December 1927.

About the same time, but probably without any connection, there was an attempt to reach Lhasa by Dr. Roerich who had travelled from Kashmir to Mongolia. This party was sidetracked from Nagchuka and eventually reached Sikkim.

There was also another expedition from China led by an American, Mr. Plymire, which was suspected of being Bolshevist, and was made to travel from Nagchuka to Ladakh instead of being allowed to come through Lhasa and Sikkim.

The Dalai Lama was perturbed by all this activity. He expressed his intention of keeping Mongolians out of Tibet, and asked to be informed whenever we received news of Bolshevist parties intending to visit Tibet.

But Lhasa was not to be free of Soviet emissaries for some time. In 1928 another visitor, believed to be a high military official of the Soviet, arrived at Lhasa where he lived in considerable style for over a year. This mysterious figure, a large red-faced man, possibly a Buriat, whose name was Po-lo-te, is said to have been on intimate terms with many high officials at Lhasa, and to have been received by the Dalai Lama. In March 1930 he was reported to be travelling to India, but he disappeared, in the direction of Nagchuka.

59. Revolt in Po-me. 1927–1928

In the autumn of 1927 a demand by the Lhasa Government that the people of Po-me, a semi-independent district N. E. of the Brahmaputra bend, should pay them taxes, led to a rebellious outbreak. The people of Po-me killed a Lhasa official who was sent to collect the taxes and a minor war developed which caused a good deal of concern to the Tibetan Government. They were compelled to re-appoint one of the British trained officers who had been degraded, and he eventually restored order and brought the Po country under the administration of Lhasa.

This rebellion was represented in the Press as an agrarian uprising, but it appears to have been rather the struggle of a semi-independent prince to avoid absorption by the Central Government of Tibet. There were conflicting rumours that the people of Po intended to appeal to the British or to the Chinese for help. When the revolt was crushed it was reported that the King of Po had fled to Tachienlu, but it later appeared that he had taken refuge at Sadiya whither he was pursued by Tibetan officials asking for his surrender. In pursuance of our policy of non-intervention in Tibetan affairs neither this request nor the appeal of the King of Po for assistance to regain his country could be entertained. The King was given sanctuary and support in Assam, but was kept under surveillance. In 1931 he escaped, but died shortly afterwards while attempting to return to Po-me.

60. Sino-Tibetan Affairs. 1926–1930

The Chinese gradually began to take advantage of the new situation in Tibet. At first their own internal affairs absorbed most of their attention. In 1926 there had been another mild bout of fighting between rival generals in the border area; while in Central China the war between North and South gave no one any time to attend to Tibet. Nevertheless, a Buddhist Mission, well provided with funds and with influential support, established itself at Tachienlu awaiting a chance to visit Lhasa.

In 1928 it was rumoured that Ma Chi, the Muslim governor of Sining, was in communication again with the Dalai Lama and was proposing to send an agent to Lhasa. But by the end of the year the encroachment of General Feng Yu-hsiang’s troops, and the outbreak of a Tungan revolt in Kansu, seem to have put a stop to this plain. Szechuan, being somewhat aloof from the struggle in Central China, still had time to dabble in Tibetan affairs, and in 1928 news was received of a “Save Tibet” Society at Chungking, which was indulging in lurid anti-British propaganda.

The Rongbatsa truce continued — the Tibetans having been repeatedly warned by us against aggression — and the familiar peace overtures were received by the Tibetan general from his opposite number in the Szechuanese forces.

By the end of 1928 a comparatively stable National Government was established at Nanjing and soon encouraged a revival of official interest in Tibet. A Committee for Mongolian
and Tibetan Affairs was appointed and set about publishing a magazine aimed at winning back the Mongols and Tibetans. Recommendations were made that the Dalai Lama and Tashi Lama should be made members of the National Government; and there were reports that the Tashi Lama had been summoned to Nanking, and had been promised help in his return to Tibet.

The new Government, ignoring the 1914 Convention, and the offers of its predecessor, and referring back to the Convention of 1906, proposed a new treaty, concerning Tibet, between China and Britain. This overture went unanswered.

In the North, the Communist general Feng Yu-hsiang published a threatening manifesto about his intentions to create a new province in Kokonor. Feng later fell into difficulties and proposed to travel to India through Tibet, but nothing came of this. The Nanking Government sent, as special emissary to the Dalai Lama, the Yungon Dzasa, a Tibetan official who had been living in Peking. He reached Lhasa early in 1930 and was received with extraordinary honour. He and his associate, a Chinese woman called Liu Man-chin, appear to have applied great persuasion to the Dalai Lama and officials at Lhasa. The Dzaza is reported to have offered help on behalf of China in case of Bolshevist aggression, and he urged a return to friendship and membership of the Five Nations of the Chinese Empire. He also took an interest in the Tibet-Nepal dispute which had aroused comment in China, and he sent a telegram to China asking for the instructions of the Chinese Government. Laden La, who was in Lhasa at the time, was struck by the increase in Chinese influence and the extent to which the proposals of the Yungon Dzaza appeared to have appealed to the Dalai Lama. It is probable that our prolonged failure to bring the Chinese to a tripartite agreement and the fear that, unless he settled with China, the Chinese Government would send back the Tashi Lama by force, were weighing heavily with the Dalai Lama.

Among other manifestations of Chinese designs on Tibet were the activities of Tsa-Ser-Khang, an official of the Tashi Lama, who persuaded a number of Tibetan and half-Chinese boys to go from Darjeeling and Kalimpong to China, where they were to be educated. It was proposed that they should return to Tibet with the Tashi Lama. Arrangements were made for Tibetan boys to be educated at Nanking; there were reports that the Dalai Lama and the Tashi Lama had agreed to co-operate in the government of Tibet; and the Yungon Dzaza on his return to China was reported to have brought renewed pledges of Tibet's loyalty to the Central Government of China. Later in 1930 a dispute between the monasteries of Targye and Pehru, both on the Chinese side of the Rongbatsa line, led to a telegraphic correspondence between the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Committee and the Dalai Lama.

61. The Tashi Lama. 1926–1930

Fears of the Tashi Lama's return with Chinese backing were ever present in the Dalai Lama's mind, and no doubt Lungshar, who was instrumental in causing the breach between the two Lamas, was equally apprehensive. In many parts of Tibet there was strong sympathy for the Tashi Lama which must have added to the anxiety of the Lhasa clique.

The Tashi Lama was eager to return, and the Government of India were as eager to see him do so for the safety of Tibet; but the risk of incurring blame for any unfortunate results of a return in which we had a part discouraged the Government of India from altering their policy of non-intervention.

Means of bringing about the desired event were constantly being examined; and the Tashi Lama himself, who had been impressed by the friendly interest in his welfare displayed by Prince George (the late Duke of Kent) when he met the Lama at Peking in 1926, made repeated approaches to the Government of India and His Majesty's Minister at Peking by letter and through emissaries. Mr. Williamson, British Trade Agent, Gyantse, who visited the Tashi Lama privately at Mukden early in 1927, found him anxious to return but apparently not willing to make any great effort. The Tashi Lama's representatives took a more active interest, and in 1927 suggested a conference between representatives of the Dalai Lama, Tashi Lama, and the Government of India.

To all these overtures friendly but non-committal answers were given, but at last, in view of a definite request for mediation received through an emissary at Peking, it was decided that the Political Officer in Sikkim should write to the Dalai Lama offering his services in bringing about a reconciliation. The letter unfortunately arrived just after very harsh action
had been taken against a nephew and other followers of the Tashi Lama who tried to escape from Shigatse. The Dalai Lama in reply referred coldly to the unreasonable nature of the Tashi Lama's flight and to the obligation of the Government of India not to interfere in the internal affairs of Tibet. The hand of Lungshar may he discerned in this lack of cordiality. The Political Officer then proposed that, to remove the potential danger caused by the Tashi Lama remaining in Chinese hands, he might be offered asylum in India; but the Government of India considered that such a step would involve too great a risk of rousing the Dalai Lama's resentment. The Political Officer suggested that if personal correspondence between the two Lamas could be resumed some progress might be made, and also that personal discussion between the Political Officer and the Dalai Lama might clear the air. The Government of India agreed to this last suggestion and Rai Bahadur Norbhu was sent to Lhasa to arrange for the Political Officer's visit. He found the Dalai Lama and Tibetan Government disturbed by the desire of foreigners to visit Tibet, and by the activities of the Communist General Feng on the North China border. They were unwilling to issue an invitation; and although this was disappointing, it is probable that they were genuinely afraid that if the Political Officer were allowed to go to Lhasa they would be deluged with similar requests from Chinese and Soviet emissaries.

The Tashi Lama, who had spent some two years in Peking and North China, moved in 1927 to Inner Mongolia where he was supported by Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang, and also received a contribution from the National Government. In spite of frequent rumours of his impending return with Mongolian or Chinese assistance there were no definite developments; but the interest shown by Chinese officials must have raised the ambitions, if not of the Tashi Lama, at least of his adherents. A private hint by the Political Officer to Tsa-Ser-Khang the Tashi Lama's representative in India, that the Lama might travel to India of his own accord, was not welcomed. On the other hand, Tsa Ser-Khang suggested that the Government of India might supply the Tashi Lama with arms by which he might effect his return. The suggestion was repeated in 1930, in the form of a verbal message from the Tashi Lama who mentioned offers of assistance he had received from the Chinese and "a few foreign nations" and explained that it was necessary for his security that he should be accompanied by an army on his return to Tibet.

62. Tibet–Nepal Crisis. 1929–1930

In the autumn of 1929 one Gyalpo Sherpa, who had been arrested and imprisoned by the Tibetan Government some 18 months earlier, escaped from prison and took refuge in the Nepalese Legation at Lhasa, claiming to be a Nepalese subject. This man seems to have been born in Tibet but to have been brought up in Nepal. He had acquired wealth by trading and was used as a confidential informant by the Nepalese Officer at Lhasa. He seems to have used his claim to Nepalese nationality and the protection of the Nepalese Officer to indulge in the sale of tobacco and in other activities to which the Tibetan authorities took objection. His arrest was due to information being given that he was, in fact, a Tibetan subject. When it was known that he was in the Nepalese Legation the Tibetan Government demanded that he should be handed over; this was apparently refused; and a party of Tibetan soldiers under the command of Lungshar broke into the Legation and seized Gyalpo by force. The Maharaja of Nepal protested strongly to the Prime Minister of Tibet and asked for an apology, and for the return of Gyalpo. The Tibetan Prime Minister in reply justified the action taken. The matter was aggravated by the death of Gyalpo who had been severely beaten after his rearrest. The incident was taken as a grave insult to Nepalese honour and the existing tension in Tibetan–Nepalese relations was increased almost to breaking point. The matter was reported by the Nepal Government to the Government of India in accordance with Article III of the new Treaty, by which each Government undertook to inform the other of serious friction with neighbouring states. The Government of India addressed the Tibetan Government urging them to adopt a conciliatory attitude but the Tibetan Government in reply claimed that they had been acting within their rights. In the meantime a firm telegram was addressed to the Dalai Lama by the Maharaja of Nepal, requesting the Dalai Lama to use his influence to avert a serious danger to the relations between the two states, giving a statement of the Nepal Government's view of the case; and asking for a public apology
and the punishment of the offenders. The Dalai Lama replied that the case would be investigated; but this did not satisfy the Maharaja who telegraphed again asking for an apology. The Dalai Lama then sent a message justifying what had been done, but saying that he had directed the Kashag to send an apology. The Government of India also addressed the Dalai Lama advising him to acknowledge a mistake if one had been committed; but this produced a similar answer. The letter from the Kashag to the Maharaja, purporting to be an apology, was in fact a defence of their action, and a letter in similar terms was sent by the Dalai Lama. The Tibetan Government then appeared to consider that the matter was closed, but the Nepal Government were far from satisfied and continued to demand an apology although they were prepared to accept it in a private manner and not publicly as had originally been asked. In the meantime preparations for war were being made by both sides.

The crisis caused great anxiety to His Majesty's Government and the Government of India, and strenuous efforts were made to find a solution. The case turned largely on the nationality of Gyalpo. If he were a Nepalese the action of the Tibetans would have been unjustifiable; but if he were in fact a Tibetan and if the Nepalese Officer had refused to hand him over, there would have been something to be said for the Tibetan Government although, even in those circumstances, their action was provocative. Reference was made to International Law; the British Envoy at Katmandu tentatively suggested arbitration by the League of Nations; and His Majesty's Government recalled the rescue, by their authority, of Sun Yat-sen from the Chinese legation in London in 1896. Preparations for war continued in both countries and the Government of India were in the unenviable position of being pledged to supply arms to each of the rivals. The request of the Tibetan Government for an instalment of the supply of arms, promised at the time of Sir Charles Bell's Mission to Lhasa, was held up on account of their delay in paying for the previous consignment, and in view of the tension with Nepal; but the Government of India considered that we were obliged by the new treaty with Nepal to supply that Government with its needs. His Majesty's Government replied that, in view of our leading part in world disarmament, we could not afford by the new treaty with Nepal to supply that Government with its needs. His Majesty's Government of Nepal were far from satisfied and continued to demand an apology although they did not satisfy the Maharaja who telegraphed again asking for another stern telegram from the Maharaja.

Laden La found the Dalai Lama friendly, and appreciative of our efforts to bring about a peaceful settlement, but apparently not fully aware of the seriousness of the situation. After long discussions the Dalai Lama was persuaded to have an apology sent by the Kashag in a formula suggested by the Government of India. The apology was accepted; gratification was expressed all round; and the crisis ended to the relief of all concerned.

Before Laden La left Lhasa he was instructed to give to the Dalai Lama an assurance from the Government of India of their unaltered friendship and their fixed determination to avoid interference in the internal affairs of Tibet.

It may be noted that China took some interest in the dispute. An emissary from the Nanking Government who arrived at Lhasa early in 1930 sent a telegram to China in which it was reported that the Nepalese were marching on Tibet, and the Chinese Government was asked to wire instructions. There was also an impassioned manifesto published by some Chinese students in Peking accusing the British imperialists of backing Nepal, and urging the despatch of reinforcements to save Tibet. There seems little doubt that the influence of Lungshar, who was personally implicated, was mainly responsible for the obstinate attitude that nearly brought Tibet to war; but it must be recognised that the Tibetan Government seemed genuinely convinced of Gyalpo's Tibetan nationality, and that no one can be more stubborn than a Tibetan in sticking up for what he conceives to be his rights. Tibetan obstinacy asserted itself again in 1930 in the arrest and maltreatment of another person claimed by Nepal as their subject;
but the nerves of both parties had been sufficiently strained by the recent crisis; and, in spite of some ill-feeling, discussions were conducted in a more moderate spirit.

The Chinese, having got an opportunity of interfering in Nepalese affairs, continued to intrude. Chinese envoys were sent to Nepal where they offered the services of their government in settling any troubles with Tibet. This claim to interfere was repudiated by the Maharaja. The Chinese Consul-General in Calcutta also sent a letter from the President of the Chinese Republic to the Maharaja of Nepal on the same subject. After consideration, it was decided not to take up this action with the Chinese Government. Chinese interest in Nepal continued for some time after.

Chapter VIII — Col. Weir in Lhasa. Death of Thirteenth Dalai Lama

63. Colonel Weir is Invited to Visit Lhasa. 1930

Laden La’s visit and the Government of India’s assurance of their continued friendship, combined with the removal of the acute tension between Nepal and Tibet, appear to have gratified the Dalai Lama, who invited Colonel Weir, Political Officer in Sikkim, to visit Lhasa. It was thus possible to renew personal relations which had been weakened during the past five years, and which only the invaluable work of Sardar Bahadur Laden La and Rai Bahadur Norbhu had kept alive. This was also an opportunity to effect a change in the Tibetan attitude which, if not anti-British, was certainly not in our favour. In addition to seeking a way of reconciling the Dalai Lama and the Tashi Lama, which had been the object of the proposed visit to Lhasa in 1929, Laden La’s visit had made it clear that something had to be done to counteract the growing Chinese influence in Tibet. There were also many lesser questions which had arisen during the period of aloofness, and which it had not been possible to settle by correspondence. The Tibetan Government wanted more arms and ammunition which had been withheld on account of their slowness in paying for those already supplied, and on account of the crisis with Nepal; they wanted to import silver from India; they hoped that it would be possible to arrange for the imposition of a customs tariff; and, in their financial difficulties, they had granted what amounted to a monopoly in wool, contrary to the terms of the Trade Regulations, by ordering the sale of 2/3rds of the wool crop to their official agent; they hoped that their action, which they maintained did not amount to the creation of a monopoly, would be approved.

On our side there were a number of questions relating to Western Tibet where the independent spirit of the Lhasa Government had been reflected in exaggerated form. Relations between the Garpons and the British Trade Agent, Gartok, had been strained largely on account of an order by the latter that Ladakhi British subjects should not pay a 2 per cent. tax recently imposed by the Garpons, until it had been sanctioned by the Government of India. This tax had been an offshoot of the disputes between Tibet and Ladakh mentioned in an earlier paragraph. The Garpons also had their own views on the interpretation of the Trade Regulations with regard to the trial of joint cases. The result was that the Garpons refused to hear any cases pending in the joint court at Gartok until they had received orders from Lhasa about the 2 per cent. tax. Their attitude was haughty and uncompromising, and their reception of Mr. Wakefield, I.C.S., who visited Western Tibet in 1929 to examine trade conditions there, was little short of insolence. The Tehri boundary dispute, which it had been hoped might be forgotten, had been revived by the Tehri Darbar’s assertion of its supposed rights in the disputed area.

64. Colonel Weir at Lhasa. 1930

Colonel Weir, who was accompanied by Mrs. Weir and Captain Sinclair, I.M.S., reached Lhasa on August 4th 1930. The Dalai Lama and his favourites received him cordially, but many other officials, who might have been expected to call on the Political Officer, hesitated to do so, perhaps on account of dissatisfaction over the Tehri affair and apprehension that the latest incident over the arrest of a Nepalese subject might cause a new crisis, but more probably owing to
reflection on the treatment by the Dalai Lama of Tsarong Shape and others who had favoured modern ideas. This uneasy situation improved before the end of the visit.

The principal matters discussed by Colonel Weir during his stay of nearly two months are summarised below: —

The Tashi Lama — In two long talks on this subject the Dalai Lama reiterated his former attitude towards the Tashi Lama who, he complained, had not answered letters sent some months before. He ascribed the trouble not to the Tashi Lama himself but to his entourage, and was concerned about the ill-effects of exile on the Tashi Lama’s health, and by the dissatisfaction which his absence caused in Tibet. He was anxious for the Tashi Lama’s return, but appeared to hesitate to make overtures for fear of a rebuff.

Relations with China — Colonel Weir observed a feeling in Lhasa that Tibet could not long retain her independence and that a rapprochement with China would be necessary before long. This confirmed Laden La’s report on the success of the Chinese emissaries; but Colonel Weir got no chance of sounding the Dalai Lama on this delicate topic. The Dalai Lama hoped for the eventual acceptance by China of the 1914 Convention but did not consider that the time was propitious for fresh negotiations.

Soviet Activities — The Dalai Lama fully appreciated the danger of Bolshevist pressure, particularly from the direction of Mongolia.

Relations with Nepal — The Dalai Lama stressed his intention of preserving peace.

Material Help for Tibet — The danger of war between Tibet and Nepal being past, the Government of India were ready to fulfil their promise of a supply of munitions, and to release another consignment. The Tibetan Government, on their part, promised to make early payment of their dues.

Help in Securing Hydro-electric Equipment was also offered.

Wool Monopoly — The Tibetan Government were informed that their action was contrary to the Trade Regulations but that, as a mark of friendship, the Government of India would allow their arrangements to continue until April 1933.

As another mark of friendship the Government of India would sell fine silver to the Tibetan Government considerably below market prices and free of duty.

Customs Tariff — After Colonel Bailey’s visit the Tibetan Government had reverted to this favourite question and had stated that they were actually levying duty on some goods coming from China. They had professed not to understand the meaning of most-favoured nation treatment, and had pressed for a tariff. The difficulties of asking the Tibetan Government for a guarantee which they would probably be unable to carry out, and of arrangements with other countries enjoying free trade agreements with Tibet, were still the main obstacles; but in 1929 the Government of India decided to permit the Tibetan Government to impose a tariff on the Indo-Tibetan frontier. Conditions to be observed were: —

(a) Rates not to exceed a maximum of 5 per cent. ad valorem. (b) at least equal rates of duty to be imposed on goods coming from China overland. (c) recognition of the right of the Government of India to impose a tariff on their side of the Indian frontier at the same rate as their sea customs. It was also to be explained that the Tariff must be mutually agreed upon as stipulated by the 1904 Treaty; that British commerce should receive not less favourable treatment than the commerce of China or the most favoured nation; and that the Government of India, in addition to the right of imposing equal duties on the land frontier, had the right to levy customs duties at ports on goods transiting India, for Tibet. After discussion with Colonel Weir, the Dalai Lama decided that a tariff would be a hardship for the Tibetan people and that they would not proceed with the matter.

Entry of Foreigners into India from Tibet — The Tibetan Government were asked, in writing, to provide foreigners travelling from Tibet to India, especially Russians, Chinese and Mongolians, with letters of identity. Tibetans, Nepalese and British subjects were excepted.

This arrangement has never been worked.

Tehri Boundary Dispute — The Commissioners who had enquired into this case in 1923 found widely divergent claims, and the Tibetans stubbornly adhered to a boundary well within limits in which the Tehri Darbar appeared to have exercised authority for a long time. The British Commissioner suggested a boundary along the watershed; and the Government of India proposed a compromise along another natural line further south, which would have divided the disputed area between the two claimants.
In the discussion at Lhasa, the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government treated the matter as of great importance and produced maps, published in England, which supported their claim. They were willing to make concessions in parts of the line, but would not relax their claim to most of the disputed area. No decision was reached.

Western Tibetan Affairs — The Tibetan Government promised an improvement in the attitude of the Garpons; they agreed to call for reports about other disputed matters; they did not consider that another Trade Mart at Taklakot was necessary but promised to consider the case. It is not recorded that anything was said to the Tibetan Government about the sanction of the Government of India to the imposition of a 2 per cent. tax by the Garpons; and although this was communicated by Mr. Wakefield to the Garpons it does not necessarily follow that they informed the Tibetan Government.

Income Tax on Tibetan Traders in India — The Tibetan Government were informed that, as a mark of friendship, the Government of India would not collect income tax from Tibetan traders who had no fixed place of business in India.

The Government of India and His Majesty's Government agreed that, although there were no very tangible or immediate results in questions of major importance, the visit was justified by the restoration of mutual understanding and improved cordiality.

65. Fighting in Kham. 1931–1932

Tibetan Reverses

The dispute between the monasteries of Targye and Pehru in Chinese controlled territory developed into a general outbreak of hostilities, with unfortunate results for the Tibetans. In 1931 the Tibetan Government unwisely sent some troops to support Targye — Pehru, which was said to favour the Tashi Lama, appealed for help from the Chinese. Some Chinese troops arrived (whether regular or not makes little difference), and attacked the Tibetans. In retaliation, the Tibetan troops drove the Chinese far Eastwards, capturing Kanze and Nyarong, and penetrating to within a few days' march of Tachienlu. Negotiations for an armistice were begun, and the main body of Tibetan troops gradually withdrew to Rongbatsa. A delegate of the Nanking Government, one Tang K'o-san, was deputed from the Chinese side, but there was some delay in reaching a settlement. In September 1931 a treaty or, as the British Minister in China described it, "a modus vivendi," was drawn up, providing for the settlement of the Targye-Pehru dispute by the Tibetan general on behalf of the Lhasa ecclesiastical authorities; for the maintenance by both sides of small garrisons in Drangu, Kanze and Nyarong; and other minor points.

During this period of Tibetan successes there were violent anti-British articles in the Chinese press, alleging that the British had instigated the Tibetans; that British officers were leading the Tibetan troops; and that the British had established themselves at Chimado. The peace was short-lived. It had been suspected from the first that the Chinese only wanted a breathing space, and intended to postpone their revenge until matters elsewhere were settled. The local press had attacked the settlement and suggested that it should be disavowed; local students had assaulted its maker, Tang K'o-san. But it is not necessary to make too much of this alleged deception by the Chinese, for the Tibetans too were in need of a breathing space, and were short of ammunition. In April 1932 the Chinese attacked the Tibetans and drove out their advanced troops from Kanze and Nyarong. The Tibetan main forces withdrew rapidly to the line of the Yangtse which was reached in August. In this disengagement there were not very heavy losses but in attempting unsuccessfully to hold the left bank of the Yangtse the Tibetans seem to have suffered considerably. Their position was made more dangerous by a combined move against them from Sining. It seems that another monastic quarrel in the Nangchen district of Jyekundo had tempted the Tibetans to interfere in that area, where they scored early successes against the Sining troops, but later had to retreat on account of their reverses at the hands of the Szechuan troops. There was a third, but independent, outbreaking of fighting in the Bating district where a half-Tibetan called Kesang Tsering appeared with a claim to have a mandate from the Nanking Government to establish Chinese administration from Batang to Giamda. He was not well received by the Szechuan warlord, Liu Wen-hui, and accordingly leagued himself with the Gongka Lama, a Tibetan freebooter-priest. These
two defeated the Szechuanese, but later fell out. Gongka Lama was at first overwhelmed by Kesang Tsering, but later secured the help of the Tibetan governor of Markham and drove Kesang Tsering out of the country.

Early in August 1932 the situation seemed so bad that the Dalai Lama telegraphed to the Political Officer, Sikkim, reporting the unauthorised conclusion of an armistice and the half-heartedly fighting of his troops, asking for immediate pressure on the Chinese to cease hostilities, and offering a secret treaty with us. In another telegram of a few days later he asked the Political Officer to visit Lhasa in order to discuss matters concerning China and the Tashi Lama. It appears that he connected the Tashi Lama, who was believed to be in Kokonor, with the Chinese activities. The Dalai Lama was informed in reply that the Government of India were sorry to hear of the Tibetan reverses, but they could not conclude any further treaties with Tibet which would involve intervention in the frontier dispute; they had urged His Majesty’s Government to make representations to the Chinese Government; and they had instructed Colonel Weir to go to Lhasa.

The British Charge d’Affaires in China was doubtful whether the Chinese Government could control the frontier forces, and was afraid that Chinese amour propre would make negotiations difficult. He mentioned that there had already been protests against our supplying the Tibetans with arms. He did not think it necessary to inform the Chinese Government of Colonel Weir’s visit. His Majesty’s Government decided that the Chinese Government should be informed that arms were being supplied to the Tibetan Government only for self-defence; that representations should be made for the immediate cessation of hostilities, avoiding if possible any discussion of Tibet’s status; and that it should be stated that Colonel Weir was going to Lhasa to assist in the restoration of peace.

66. Colonel Weir at Lhasa. 1932

Colonel Weir arrived at Lhasa early in September 1932. Lungshar had fallen from favour in 1931, and Kunphel La, was now all-in-all. His influence was more salutary. He had combined with Tsarong Shape to pursue a progressive policy, and he had the support of the rank and file in the monasteries. Colonel Weir found that only the inner circle knew the real state of affairs in Kham; in the rest of Lhasa there was an undercurrent of panic, and it was said that not only were the Tibetan troops being defeated, but many were surrendering because they believed the Tashi Lama to be with their opponents. Reports from China did not confirm this story; there it appeared that the morale of the Tibetan troops was good, in spite of their reverses. The Tibetan Government rushed all the men it could raise, including bodies of warlike monks, to the Eastern front.

The Dalai Lama and Cabinet were bitter against the Chinese whom they accused of making a treacherous attack while negotiations were in progress. They were told by Colonel Weir that their invasion of Chinese territory, almost as far as Tachienlu, was not in accordance with the 1914 Convention or the Rongbatsa agreement of 1918, and that by using, for that purpose, arms supplied by us specifically for their self-defence they had caused complaints against us.

After a meeting of the National Assembly, the Tibetan Government put forward proposals for a settlement with China on the basis of the 1914 Convention. They had to accept an Amban at Lhasa, but hoped that it might be possible to limit the size of his escort to less than the 300 stipulated in the Convention. With regard to the boundary they made claims which, in view of their difficulties, were ridiculously large, but were probably intended for bargaining. They emphasised their dependence on British mediation. Colonel Weir suggested that it might be possible to agree on a boundary which gave Nyarong and Derge to the Tibetans, on condition that these districts were demilitarised for the immediate present he proposed that the Tibetan troops should remain on the right bank of the Yangtse and the Chinese should be withdrawn to the Batang-Tachienlu line. The Tibetan Government were ready to accept that proposal but the Chinese Government were in no mood for negotiations, and Tibetan anxieties were increased by news of fresh disasters in the northern sector and the advance of the Sining troops in the direction of Chiamdo. Unnerved by their reverses, and disappointed at our inability to give them reassuring news of the cessation of hostilities, the Tibetan Government made enquiries about the possibility of securing help from the League of Nations, the U.S. or Japan.
Fortunately for Tibet the situation was eased by the outbreak of civil war in Szechuan between Liu Wen-hui and his nephew Liu Hsiang, in October 1932. Anticipation of this event had probably restrained Liu Wen-hui from crossing the Yangtse when things were going well for him. At last, the efforts of our Charge d'Affaires in China bore fruit, and an order was issued by the Chinese Government for the cessation of hostilities. But there were still rumours of an advance by the Sining troops, and the Dalai Lama telegraphed a protest to the Chinese Government through his officials in China. In reply he received a message from Chiang Kai-Shek that the Kokonor (Sining) troops were being withdrawn and that he knew that Liu Wen-hui could not spare troops for any aggressive action. He said that it was easy to see who was responsible for the trouble, and urged that differences between China and Tibet should be settled without outside interference. To call in British mediation would be like dismembering one's own body. Our Charge d'Affaires also renewed his requests to the Chinese Government and it was possible for Colonel Weir to leave Lhasa at the end of November in a more peaceful atmosphere. The parting request of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan Government was for early resumption of negotiations with China, in which it was essential that we should act as mediators. Letters to the same effect were also sent shortly after Colonel Weir's departure.

67. Diplomatic Activity in China. 1932

Discussions in China had been conducted by Mr. Ingram, His Majesty's Charge d'Affaires in Peking, and by Mr. Holman, his representative at Nanking. From the first Mr. Ingram had feared that the Chinese would resent our intervention, and had doubted whether it was wise to tell them of Colonel Weir's visit to Lhasa. Mr Holman's first interview with Hsu Mo, Chinese Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, was not a success. Mr. Hsu seems to have made the running with repeated protests against the supply of British arms to Tibet; he claimed that if this was stopped the Tibetans would soon give up the struggle. Mr. Holman did not venture to tell Mr. Hsu about Colonel Weir's visit to Lhasa for fear of an outburst, and Mr. Hsu considered that the whole question was too delicate for him to refer to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Our diplomatic representatives were anxious to avoid being drawn into deep waters over this affair; and the Government of India considered that, as our good offices had been refused, there was no use in pursuing that line any further nor in giving any formal intimation of Colonel Weir's presence at Lhasa, but that we should make clear to the Chinese our interest in preserving the autonomy of Outer Tibet. His Majesty's Government accordingly instructed Mr. Ingram that the larger question of mediation for a settlement was under consideration, and that he should make representations as soon as possible with a view to securing cessation of hostilities. Our interest in the integrity of Tibet and the maintenance of a stable Tibetan Government was to be emphasised, and the Chinese Government was to be given to understand that, if China should endanger these by an advance on Chiamdo or otherwise, His Majesty's Government would take a very serious view of the matter. News of fresh Chinese advances caused His Majesty's Government to follow up this message with another, instructing Mr. Ingram to point out to the Chinese Government that the recent movements threatened to violate the territory of Outer Tibet; and to press for urgent orders to the Chinese troops to advance no further, to withdraw from Outer Tibet if they had entered it, and to desist from hostilities pending negotiations for a settlement of the dispute. Mention was also to be made of the readiness of His Majesty's Government to employ their good offices towards a permanent settlement of the Tibetan question.

The firmness and personality of a Minister such as Sir John Jordan were sadly missed at this time. After an inconclusive talk with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ingram was fobbed off for some days with a Head of Department who clearly knew nothing about the business. Nevertheless, instructions to cease hostilities were issued, although the Chinese were at pains to make it clear that this was done independently and had no connection with Mr. Ingram's representations, and a separate visit was paid to inform Mr. Ingram that the Chinese Government could not avail itself of His Majesty's Government's kind offices, as the matter was a domestic issue. At his next meeting with the Foreign Minister Mr. Ingram succeeded in impressing upon him the serious view which His Majesty's Government took of the situation. The Minister, who confessed his ignorance of the subject, promised to discuss it with Chiang Kai-Shek, and to put before him Mr. Ingram's suggestion for a mutual agreement.
for troops not to cross the Yangtse while negotiations were going on. After visiting Chiang
Kai-Shek, the Minister for foreign Affairs was able to say that strict orders had been issued
that there should be no more fighting, but he refused to discuss the question of an armistice,
and tried to head off Mr. Ingram's assertion of our interest in Tibet by indicating that the
question was one of internal politics. In these circumstances it was decided that no further
formal representations should be made to the Chinese Government but that it should be made
clear at every suitable opportunity that His Majesty's Government did not acquiesce in the
Chinese contention that the dispute was a purely domestic issue.

These exchanges made it evident that, whatever their internal difficulties might be, the
Chinese Government had worked up a nationalistic spirit about Tibet which was not easily
to be shaken. Tibetan successes had stirred up anti-British propaganda; Chinese successes in-
creased the planning activities of the Chinese Government. A special committee discussed
ways and means for recovering Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, the definition of the Sino-Ti-
betan frontier, and other kindred matters. Tibetan representatives were asked to attend the
National Assembly at Nanking, and the Tibetan Government sent four officials whom they
intended to be diplomatic officers rather than representatives in a Chinese parliament. This
caus ed delay in their recognition by the Chinese Government. Formation of the province of
Sikang went on, at least on paper, but the influence of Liu Wen-hui prevented the Central
Government from getting a footing there.

It is worth noticing that, at the time when this irredentist spirit was hardening, Chiang
Kai-Shek was personally dealing with Tibetan problems.

68. The Tashi Lama. 1932

The Tashi Lama's return was discussed during Colonel Weir's visit to Lhasa. It is doubtful
whether the Tashi Lama was connected with the Chinese aggression to the extent which the
Tibetan Government suspected, but it is probable that his followers were ready to take ad-
vantage of any opportunity that offered. The Dalai Lama, whose anxiety for the Tashi Lama's
return was increased by the fear that he might be used by the Chinese as an excuse for fur-
ther aggression, remembered the advice given by Colonel Weir on his former visit and wrote
again to the Tashi Lama. The letter was in friendly terms and expressed the Dalai Lama's wish
for the return of the Tashi Lama. At the same time relations of the Tashi Lama were released
from imprisonment.

A translation of the letter was telegraphed to Mr. Ingram who, at an interview in Novem-
ber 1932, informed the Tashi Lama of its terms. The Tashi Lama was pleased, but decided to
wait for the original letter before sending any message to the Dalai Lama. Mr. Ingram ex-
pressed doubt whether we were wise to encourage the Tashi Lama to return to Tibet. He feared
that the Lama might be a pro-Chinese influence, and he believed that the Chinese did not
take him seriously and regarded him as a nuisance.

The Political Officer, Sikkim, on the other hand stressed the danger of internal trouble in
Tibet if the Tashi Lama remained in China, and urged that we should not miss this opportu-
nity of bringing about what both Lamas and the whole of the Tibetan people desired, when
the atmosphere was more favourable than for a long time. The Dalai Lama's letter was deliv-
ered to the Tashi Lama in January 1933, and the latter despatched a friendly reply and a party
of representatives who reached Lhasa in June 1933 prepared to discuss details of the Tashi
Lama's return.

In the meantime the Chinese continued to make the most of the Tashi Lama for propaga-
da purposes. He was appointed Commissioner for the Pacification of the Western Border,
and statements by him were published in which he was alleged to have expressed his hope
that Tibet would return to the Central Government fold. The Chinese standard of veracity in
such matters is not such that great importance should be attached to these statements.

There is one point of doubt in a reference in the Dalai Lama's letter of 9th October 1932
to the fact that he had written two letters to the Tashi Lama, one in 1924 and one in 1926, but
had had no answer. It appears that on October 15th 1932 he sent to the Political Officer, Sikkim,
a copy of a letter from the Tashi Lama dated July 1924, acknowledging the Dalai Lama's let-
ter of January 1924. It can only be assumed that this letter arrived, eight years late, after the
Dalai Lama had despatched his letter of October 9th 1932.
Sino-Tibetan relations overshadowed other events of these years, and were also observed with interest in Russia and Japan where anti-British articles appeared in the press. Chinese interest in Nepal continued, and reference was made in the Chinese press to “tribute” from Nepal. The Tibetan Government were supplied with ammunition, and with silver. One officer and twenty five other ranks of the Tibetan Army were trained at Gyantse.

Mr. Williamson I.C.S. visited Western Tibet and Tehri without any immediate results, but he brought back valuable information on trade conditions in West Tibet, and a fresh opinion on the merits of the Tehri frontier dispute.

70. Sino-Tibetan Affairs. 1933

The Question of Direct Negotiations

Civil war in Szechuan had led to an armistice on the Hsikang sector in November 1932 and by February 1933 the Sining general, who seems to have run short of military supplies; was also ready for a truce. This was later confirmed in a written armistice under which the Tibetans recovered all the territory which had been occupied by the Sining troops, and both sides undertook to refrain from aggression pending ratification of the agreement by their respective governments. The situation was so far improved that in February 1933 the Dalai Lama telegraphed to the Political Officer referring to the repeated requests of his government that we should mediate in a settlement with China, and to the Chinese refusal to accept our intervention. He enquired whether it would compromise His Majesty’s Government if he attempted to regain, either peacefully or by armed action, the territory which had been lost in the Chinese advance, particularly Derge. He was advised not to take any aggressive action. A kharita from the Viceroy was also sent to the Dalai Lama, assuring him the Government of India would not fail to impress on His Majesty’s Government the importance of doing every thing possible to assist in securing a peaceful and permanent solution of the disputes which had recently disturbed the Eastern Frontier of Tibet.

Previous requests for mediation had been referred to the Government of India who had also been informed of Chiang Kai-Shek’s correspondence with the Dalai Lama and his proposal to send a delegate to Lhasa. As it appeared that hostilities had ceased, His Majesty’s Government urged His Majesty’s Minister at Peking, Sir Miles Lampson, to tackle the frontier settlement without delay. It was proposed that, even if it was not possible to press for our mediation in the dispute, the Chinese Government should be kept to their promise to settle the matter. When Lampson first raised the question he was advised by the Minister of Foreign Affairs that to press it would be playing into the hands of the Japanese. Nevertheless he reverted to the matter informally on a later occasion and gave a firm and definite warning that we could not tolerate anything likely to cause disturbance or lead to trouble on the Tibetan frontier. The Chinese attitude, with which Lampson appeared to be in sympathy, was that they would never agree to our mediation, and that Tibet was a naughty child who would one day return to the fold either as a result of parental chastisement or of its own accord. He did not consider that our present policy was leading us anywhere except to a loss of face with China, when she was strong enough to impose her will on Tibet; and, although he was ready to make representations if the Chinese were guilty of aggression, he would advise the Tibetans to come to terms with the Chinese.

This view did not satisfy the Government of India who reminded the Secretary of State that their objective was to secure a friendly Tibet free from external influence; that for twenty years they had been trying to reach that objective by supporting the Dalai Lama in his claim to the integrity of Outer Tibet; and that, as a result, there was in Lhasa a pro-British government whose stability and friendship largely depended on our continued support against Chinese aggression. They considered that if we were to advise the Dalai Lama to make the best terms he could with the Chinese, we should probably lose our influence, while Tibet would be forced to admit Chinese authority, or perhaps to seek help from the Soviets. They urged careful consideration before His Majesty’s Government decided on a radical change in
policy. They proposed that the Dalai Lama should be advised that if the Chinese sought to negotiate, a direct settlement of the frontier question he should decide for himself what course of action to pursue, but he might be assured of the interest of the British Government in the solution of his difficulties.

The Secretary of State for India wrote to the Foreign Office and recalled that attempts to mediate between China and Tibet had been temporarily abandoned in 1921 when we had decided to treat Tibet as an autonomous state and to help the Tibetan Government to develop and protect their country. He presumed that their could be no going back on that policy. The present question was whether we should or should not encourage the Dalai Lama, to accept Chinese overtures for direct negotiations on the isolated matter of the frontiers. The Secretary of State considered that we ought not to take the responsibility of advising the Dalai Lama to refuse such an offer, and that it should be made clear that he could count on our advice and diplomatic support in that connection. A draft reply to the Dalai Lama was proposed for the consideration of the Foreign Office. It was also suggested that the Chinese Government should be asked whether any steps had been taken towards a settlement with Tibet, and that the possibility should be considered of sending a British observer to any conference that might take place between the Chinese and Tibetans. Mr. Ingram’s proposal of a mutual withdrawal might also be examined.

The Foreign Office agreed with the terms of the communication to the Dalai Lama, and decided that as it appeared that the Chinese were pressing the Tibetans to negotiate directly and as it was the Tibetans who were holding back, there was no question of enquiring from the Chinese Government about the direct negotiations. Ingram’s suggestion had been superseded by the recent armistices which were reported to be valid for three years. It was not likely that the Chinese would agree to a British observer at any conference between themselves and the Tibetans, but there was no objection to consulting Sir Miles Lampson on that point.

A telegram was accordingly sent to the Dalai Lama in March 1933 reminding him that, as a result of our representations, fighting had ceased and there appeared to be no immediate reason for anxiety. Our interest in securing a permanent settlement was reiterated, but it was explained that, owing to the political situation in China the time was not opportune for pressing the Chinese Government for a general agreement on the basis of the Simla Convention, and that the Chinese were at present willing to agree to British mediation. If the Dalai Lama should decide to accept an offer of direct negotiations the British Government would follow the discussions with interest and would give their advice in the negotiations or their diplomatic assistance in arriving at a settlement whenever required.

This message was gratefully acknowledged by the Dalai Lama who said that, although his representatives had been sent to China for negotiations, no opportunity had yet been found.

The Secretary of State for India did not press for enquiries from the Chinese Government about the negotiations, or about Ingram’s proposal, but asked that the authenticity of the alleged armistices should be examined. He also asked that Sir Miles Lampson should not be allowed to misconstrue the communication to the Dalai Lama as implying that His Majesty’s Government were prepared to depart from their accepted policy of dealing with Tibet as an autonomous state, or to think that there was any question of discontinuing our official relations with the Tibetan Government. Both these requests were put into effect, the first officially, and the second semi-officially.

Towards the end of 1933 there was anxiety in China about threatened Tibetan aggression. The Kokonor armistice seems to have been holding good, although no reports of its authenticity were received; but the Szechuan troops must have been weakened by the civil war, and the Dalai Lama was clearly anxious to restore the Tibetan position in that area. The rumours proved to be groundless, and probably derived from diplomatic attempts by the Tibetan commander to come to some agreement like that by which lost territory in the north had been peacefully recovered.

71. Mr. Williamson Visits Lhasa. 1933

Progress of Negotiations for the Return of the Tashi Lama

Mr. Williamson, who succeeded Colonel Weir as Political Officer in Sikkim, was invited by the Dalai Lama to visit Lhasa. The Government of India agreed and Mr. Williamson reached
Lhasa in August and stayed until October 1933. He was given a very friendly reception and had several discussions with the Dalai Lama. The most important subject was the return of the Tashi Lama. It appeared that negotiations between the Tashi Lama’s representatives and the Tibetan Government were not making much progress. The Tashi Lama asked for the return to himself and his followers, of all the property that had been confiscated; for what amounted to complete control over Tsang Province including its troops and its revenues; and for a guarantee by some foreign power of any agreement that might be reached between himself and the Dalai Lama. There demands were thought to be pitched far too high and their acceptance would have meant the establishment of quite a new relation between Lhasa and Tashi Lhunpo. The Dalai Lama was prepared to make only a few concessions, and he was definitely opposed to the return of some of the Tashi Lama’s officials, and insisted that the Tashi Lama should return by sea and not overland. The Tashi Lama’s representatives prepared to go back to China with their report, at the end of 1933, when the whole situation was changed by the death of the Dalai Lama on December 17th 1933.

72. The Death of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. 1933

Events which followed the death of the Dalai Lama showed up the mediaeval texture of Tibetan life. There were tales of a miraculous revival of the Dalai Lama for one day; of mistaken remedies prescribed by the State Oracle; and of the suicide of the Lord Chamberlain by eating broken glass. A struggle for power began, of which Kunphel La was the first victim. It was reported that his party, which proved to consist of a few lay officials and a large body of ordinary monks, had petitioned the Kashag for Kunphel La to be made joint Prime Minister, and that Kunphel La had himself proposed this shortly before the death of the Dalai Lama. Neither of the two main parties that emerged liked Kunphel La, who was promptly arrested on the charge of having been privy to the death of the Dalai Lama. This was almost certainly untrue although it seems that he had concealed the fact of the Dalai Lama’s illness for several days. His chief enemy, Lungshar, sought to inflict death or mutilation on him, but the sympathy of the mass of ordinary monks saved him from this, and he was soon released from imprisonment and exiled to a monastery in Kongbo (whence he escaped to India in 1937). His principal supporters were imprisoned for short periods. In theory the government lay with the young, newly appointed, Regent, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet; but it was Lungshar who dominated the scene. He allied himself with the leading figures in the National Assembly, the Abbots of the great Monasteries, and sought to use the Assembly to strengthen the influence of the monastic party with whose support he aspired to supreme power. His aim was generally reported to be the establishment of a republic, and his policy was strongly anti-Chinese. Talk of a republic was probably a cloak for oligarchic rule by the Assembly under his domination; but his anti-Chinese views were confirmed by a letter which he sent to the Political Officer informing him that the Chinese had been pressing strongly for the reception of a Chinese representative at Lhasa to conduct negotiations. He said that this would almost certainly be accepted; and he advised the British Government to pay attention to the matter. More evidence of anti-Chinese feeling was seen in a telegram sent to Chiang Kai-Shek and the Chinese Government shortly after the Dalai Lama’s death. In this it was stated that the Prime Minister and Kashag were conducting State business, and that all matters in China might be referred to the Tibetan representatives there. The Chinese Government were advised that, if anything were done through the influence of persons who wanted to create trouble between the two countries, such action would never be tolerated even if Tibet were reduced to the last man.

In view of Lungshar’s past history, this attitude may appear surprising, but Political Officers on their visits to Lhasa had found him very friendly, and it is probable that, to him, Chinese influence meant the return of the Tashi Lama, whom he had reason to fear. The Kashag’s party had no leader so forceful as Lungshar. Their principal figure was Trimon Shape, an elderly Conservative, much hated by Lungshar. Tsarong Shape remained away from Lhasa, determined to take no part in politics. For some months Lungshar and the National Assembly continued their efforts to strengthen their position at the expense of the Kashag; but, although Lungshar’s ambitions were increasing, doubts began to appear whether
he was in fact dominating the Assembly or was being used by the leaders of the Monastic party as a stalking horse.

On the 10th May events moved to a crisis. The National Assembly met and framed a number of demands designed to increase their power. Trimen who had warning of impending trouble fled from Lhasa and took shelter in Drepung monastery, but, on finding that the monks in the Assembly refused to take any action on Lungshar’s complaints against him, he returned the same day and prepared a counterblow. The Kashag summoned Lungshar to the Potala in the afternoon of the same day. He came with some armed servants, and was immediately seized and charged with attempts to subvert the government and introduce a Bolshevist regime. In his struggles to reach for a revolver from his servants his arm was broken by one of the giant monk attendants of the Kashag. His official dress was torn off him as a sign of degradation. When his boots were removed some pieces of paper fell out. One of these Lungshar seized and swallowed but the other was secured, and was found to contain the name of Trimen Shape. This was black magic to harm one’s enemy by treading on his name; and it was suspected that the other paper contained the names of the Regent and Prime Minister.

The arrest was followed by secret meetings of Lungshar’s lay supporters who also called on the monasteries for help. A deputation of senior monks visited the Regent and Prime Minister to ask for Lungshar’s release, but, on hearing of his criminal designs against his enemies, they agreed that such a man was not worthy of support. With this reassurance, the Kashag proceeded to break up Lungshar’s party. Arrests were made and confessions extorted. It was disclosed that Lungshar was to have been made colleague of the Regent, and perhaps King of Tibet, that several senior lay officials were to have been murdered, and that debts to government, which were owed by many of Lungshar’s supporters, were to be cancelled. A few days later Lungshar’s eyes were put out and he was confined in a dungeon. His pride, and the toughness of his fibre, kept him alive in these horrible conditions, and he was eventually released in 1938. The Kashag, perhaps fearing to try too far the remaining dissident elements in Lhasa, used their success with moderation, and only a few sentences of banishment and fine were inflicted on Lungshar’s followers.

From this brief and exciting period of confusion emerged an unimpressive, stable, cautious, government which has continued, although not wholly united, without any substantial change until the present day, not flaunting its claim to independence, but hoping quietly to preserve it by remaining on good terms both with Britain and with China.

Chapter IX — Huang Mu-Sung in Lhasa and Williamson

73. Chinese Mission to Lhasa. 1934

Huang Mu-Sung

The first test of the new Tibetan Government was its handling of a determined attempt by the Chinese to re-establish their position in Tibet. The death of the Dalai Lama provided an excuse for sending a mission of condolence; but neither the Chinese nor the Tibetans can have imagined that its only purpose was to mourn. The Chinese hoped that the removal from the scene of their resolute opponent, the Dalai Lama, would make things easier for their diplomacy. The Tibetans had concluded from our message to the Dalai Lama on the subject of direct negotiations that they might see what they could do for themselves as we appeared unable to help.

The Tibetan Government agreed to accept a mission; and the Chinese Government appointed General Huang Mu-Sung, then a member of the National Military Council, as Special Commissioner for Ceremonial Offerings to the late Dalai Lama. They also conferred posthumous titles on the late Dalai Lama by special Mandate.

A small advance party travelled to Lhasa by India to make arrangements for the main body, consisting of Huang with a large number of minor officials and a bodyguard, which was to travel overland. From our side, Rai Bahadur Norbhu was sent to Lhasa to watch proceedings and it is due to his skill and devotion that we have a detailed knowledge of events during Hang’s mission and also of the happenings after the death of the Dalai Lama.
Norbhu, who before the arrival of Huang had been actively reminding friendly Tibetan officials about their independence, had some apprehensions about the result of negotiations between the Chinese and Tibetans. He found that, although the Tibetan Government professed to object to the establishment of a wireless set which the Chinese had sent in advance, in fact they allowed it to be installed without protest. They also allowed themselves to be persuaded into receiving Huang with far greater honours than had ever been accorded to a British representative at Lhasa.

The Chinese were clearly out to make a good impression. Huang himself worked indefatigably, visiting the great monasteries with lavish presents, making a great show of reverence in the holy places, and chanting prayers in a doleful voice. Presents were given to everyone of consequence, and entertainments were on a grand scale. But his republican retinue was not so well trained. They offended Tibetan susceptibilities in many ways; by ill-manners; protests against the playing of British music by Tibetan military hands; riding furiously through the streets; drunkenness and quarrelling; and not least by their lack of respect for their own leader. The monks showed obvious signs of dislike for the Chinese and had to be restrained by special order from jostling and harassing Huang's bodyguard, who on their part did all they could to avoid the monks.

In matters of business Huang did not force the pace. Shortly before his arrival he had issued a proclamation that he was coming to perform religious ceremonies for the late Dalai Lama. The only bit of propaganda in it was a reference to the unity of the Five Races. The next move was the offering of a seal and memorial tablet for the late Dalai Lama. This was at first refused on the grounds that the Dalai Lama was dead and so a seal was no use; but, on finding that there were no compromising inscriptions on the objects, the Tibetan Government yielded to pressure, and accepted. In this and in all matters connected with the Mission the National Assembly was consulted. Huang then proposed that all Tibetan officials should go to him to receive the seal and escort it to the Potala. This was cut down to a ceremony at the Potala attended by all high officials.

Huang very tactfully left it to the Tibetans to open diplomatic conversations; and where this was seen to be the case a meeting of the National Assembly was held. It was decided that the frontier question should be broached, but that it should be made clear that, although Tibet and China should be considered as "like the two eyes", Tibet must remain independent.

The Kashag then raised the question with Huang. He replied that he had come only on religious business and had no power to decide anything. The Kashag pointed out that Huang had been given out to be second only to Chiang Kai-Shek and must surely have some power. He then asked for their suggestions, whereupon they decided to consult the National Assembly again. The Kashag also mentioned the return of the Tashi Lama and their objections to his return with an armed escort. Huang replied that he had met the Tashi Lama and could assure them that he had no intention of resorting to force.

Gradually Huang put his cards on the table. He asked the Tibetan Government to declare themselves one of the Five Races of China, and a republic. Chinese support against all comers was to be the reward for this. The National Assembly, after a meeting lasting two days, replied that Tibet had been ruled by thirteen Dalai Lamas, and would never declare a republic. They would fight any invader to the last man. When the Kashag reported this decision Huang tried threats; he said that the Tashi Lama had joined the Republic and would probably come back to Tibet by force of arms. The Chinese Government would not try to stop him. The Kashag did not think this was likely and reminded Huang of what he had previously said about the Tashi Lama's intentions. The matter was again put to the National Assembly which reaffirmed its previous decision and signed a paper to that effect.

Huang, greatly disappointed, telegraphed to Nanking for instructions and was advised to return without deciding anything. Nevertheless he did not give up his efforts and at another meeting with the Kashag, he diplomatically watered down the implication of membership of the Five Races, and said that it would not be necessary for Tibet to adopt a republican form of government. The important point was that Tibet should rely on China. He also said that in a treaty between Japan and Great Britain, Tibet was acknowledged to be subordinate to China. The Kashag replied that as Tibet was not a party to such a treaty it could
not affect her status. Huang pressed for an admission of subordination and provided help in return. The Kashag asked him what sort of help China had been able to give to Mongolia and Manchuria.

Again the matter was referred to the National Assembly who returned a flat refusal of Huang's proposals. In doing so they stressed their friendship with the British Government whose treatment of them, even in 1904, they praised as fair. The only enemy they had to fear was China.

74. Final Proposals by the Chinese Mission

After these repeated rebuffs Huang passed the ball to Wu Min Yuan, an elderly member of his Mission, who had been born at Lhasa. He visited the Kashag with a proposed agreement in fourteen articles. He professed that Huang was too severely disappointed to do any more and that these proposals were his own idea. Norbhu reported that the Kashag, and especially Trimon, were said to have been bribed on a large scale, and that people in Lhasa expected them soon to give way to the Chinese demands, but that there would be strong opposition from the National Assembly.

The proposals, which were in writing, were debated for several days by the Kashag and Assembly and a detailed examination of them and of the Tibetan replies is given below:

1. "The relations between the Central Government and the Tibetan Government should be those of benefactor and lama."

The Kashag accepted, provided "Chinese Government" was substituted for "Central Government" which was a new term. The Assembly agreed.

2. "The Chinese Government should always consider Tibet a holy and religious country."

Agreed.

3. "Tibet has religion, men, and complete administrative arrangements. Therefore China should consider Tibet to be independent (?) autonomous and should not interfere in its internal administration."

Agreed.

4. "No Chinese troops should be kept on any of the frontiers of Tibet."

Agreed.

5. "Five thousand troops should be selected from the Tibetan army and called Frontier Guards. They should be posted on the various frontiers. China should pay, arm, equip, and train the troops."

The Kashag said that troops might be posted on the frontiers but there was no need to call them by any special name. They did not want pay or arms from the Chinese. The Assembly added that it was not necessary to post troops on the frontiers until an emergency arose.

6. "A Chinese Officer should be posted at Lhasa to advise the Tibetan Government. He should be given an escort out of the Frontier Guards and should control the movements of the whole force."

The Kashag said they would prefer no Chinese officer to be posted at Lhasa. If one were appointed he should have nothing to do with the Tibetan army, but he might have a small Chinese escort. The Simla Treaty had said 300.

The Assembly said that 25 servants would do as an escort, and that the Chinese officer should strictly observe the provision for non-interference in Tibetan internal affairs.

7. "The Tibetan Government should consult the Chinese Government before corresponding with other nations about external affairs."

The Kashag said that Tibet is independent and would deal with external affairs without insulting the Chinese. The Assembly agreed and added that the Tibet Government would correspond with all nations, "headed by the British Government", whenever they wished.

8. "The Chinese Government should be consulted about the appointment of officers of the rank of Shape and above."

The Kashag refused, but offered to inform the Chinese Government after the appointments had been made. The Assembly agreed.

9. "China should recognise the boundary existing at the time of the Emperor Kuang Hsu". (This appears to mean the boundary under the Manchu Empire, before Chao Erh-feng's aggression.)

This was considered favourable; but demands were made for additional territory including Nyarong, Batang, Litang, and the Golok country.
10. “China should fight with or mediate with any nations who try to invade Tibet.”

The Kashag and Assembly both said that as Tibet is a religious country no one is likely to
attack her. If they do she will deal with them herself without Chinese help. The question of
mutual help could be considered if it arose.

11. “China should be informed when the incarnation of the Dalai Lama is discovered so
that she can offer him a seal and title.”

The Kashag agreed. The National Assembly said that China should be informed only after
the installation had taken place to avoid trouble such as was created in the case of sixth
and seventh Dalai Lamas.

(That trouble led to the imposition of Manchu rule at Lhasa.)

12. “The Tibetan Government should invite the Tashi Lama to return at once, should re-
store to him his former powers, estates and property, and should guarantee that no harm
should befall him or his followers. If this were done the Chinese Government would take away
his munitions.”

The Kashag and Assembly replied that the Tashi Lama being a religious person required
no arms and ammunition; they would welcome him back and guarantee his personal safety
if the Chinese took away his arms. They added that he should be asked to return via India in
accordance with the wishes of the late Dalai Lama.

13. “All Tibetan officers in China should receive salaries from the Chinese Government.”

The Kashag agreed. The Assembly said that it was a matter of indifference to them but
that only officials appointed by the Tibetan Government should attend meetings.

14. “All half-Chinese in Tibet should be under the sole jurisdiction of the Chinese officer
at Lhasa.”

The Kashag and Assembly replied that when the Chinese were turned out of Tibet in 1912
the Tibetan Government asked all Chinese to return to China. Those born in Tibet asked for
permission to remain, and signed an agreement to pay taxes and submit to Tibetan jurisdic-
tion. This article was therefore unacceptable.

On receiving these replies Huang wrote to the Kashag asking that all of Wu Min-yuan’s
proposals should be accepted and laying particular stress on three demands. That Tibet should
admit subordination to China; that all direct correspondence with outside nations should cease,
or failing that, China should be consulted before the Tibetan Government replied to any com-
munication with outside nations; that China should be consulted before appointments were
made to the post of Shape or higher officers.

After long deliberation the National Assembly decided:

1. That Tibet might be considered subordinate to China to the extent laid down in the
Simla Treaty. (i.e. recognition of Chinese suzerainty). 2. That Tibet would correspond with all
nations direct “headed by the British”, and would not consult China on the subject. 3. In view
of religious ties, Tibet would inform China after the appointment of officers above the rank
of Shape.

The National Assembly desired that the British Government should be a party to any
agreement reached between Tibet and China. But Huang refused to consider this proposal at
all.

The result of the negotiations was reported by Huang to Nanking, and he was ordered to
return to China for further discussions.

These direct negotiations have been described at length because our record of them is
unique, and because they shed a clear light on the Tibetan approach to diplomacy and the
characteristic attitudes of the Kashag and the National Assembly of the day.

More important still, they show in its full context the Tibetan offer to admit Chinese su-
zerainty. This was not an isolated, unqualified admission but was clearly conditional on the
acceptance by the Chinese of the other Tibetan terms of settlement. Huang made it known
before he left that he was going to put the Tibetan Government’s answers before the Chinese
Government and that if they agreed, a formal settlement would be drawn up. His farewell
letter to the Kashag is eloquent of failure and makes no mention of any Tibetan admission.

Moreover, it was made quite plain in the following year by Trimon Shape, who was consid-
ered to lean towards the Chinese side, that the Tibetan Government had offered to admit
Chinese suzerainty provided the Chinese would surrender to them certain territory and would
leave them to manage their own internal affairs. The Tibetan Government did not acknowledge even the nominal suzerainty of China because their demands for an agreement about the frontier had not been accepted.

75. Results of Huang’s Mission

The Chinese Mission succeeded in establishing a wireless set at Lhasa and in leaving behind them two officials, who were later described as a branch of the Executive Yuan. The senior of these men died shortly after Huang left Lhasa, and the junior remained, with the wireless staff. An officer from Sining who came to Lhasa independently of Huang’s mission also stayed for a time. Statements by members of the mission sought to conceal that there had been no great success by explaining that the mission had no political objectives, and even going so far as to say that China wanted the Tibetans to rule themselves. The intimate relations between China and Tibet, and Tibetan loyalty to Nanking, were, of course, mentioned; but even the make-believe was not carried too far.

In a telegram from Lhasa, Huang reported that Tibet was pledged to whole-hearted support of the Chinese Government; but on his return to China he made very mild statements indicating that everything in Tibet was all right, and denying that Britain had any special influence there, and adding that British activities were “strictly in accordance with agreements”. The hopes in which the mission set out may be reflected in a newspaper article forecasting the restoration of an Amban at Lhasa, the demarcation of the Tibetan boundary provided that Tibet recognised Chinese suzerainty, and the discussion with the British Government of the Indo-Tibetan frontier. After the return of the mission a semi-official Chinese magazine was stung by British press comment on Huang’s activities into extravagant words about Chinese sovereignty in Tibet.

On the whole, it may be said that the great effort and expenditure by the Chinese did not secure a proportionate result; but direct contact at Lhasa had been re-established, and the seeds of future advance sown.

On our part there was at first a tendency to misinterpret and overrate the Tibetan written offer to admit Chinese suzerainty. Even if it were an isolated document it would have represented quite a good bargain for Tibet, as freedom in internal administration was claimed in return for the recognition of suzerainty. When the offer is seen in its proper place in the negotiations described above it has a very different appearance. The real danger of the whole affair was that the Chinese had succeeded in making gaps in the 1914 Convention. Under Article 5 Tibet was bound not to negotiate with China and, under the terms of our agreement with Tibet, China was not to enjoy any advantages under the 1914 Convention until she signed it. Now direct negotiations had been undertaken, and China looked like securing a recognition of her suzerainty, and a permanent resident at Lhasa, and she had secured the right to establish a wireless station, all of which were advantages from which she should have been debarred until she signed the tripartite convention. It was thus realised that in not discouraging the Dalai Lama from direct negotiation on the question of the frontier, and by giving the impression that we could not do much to help, we had made possible the evasion of the 1914 Convention both by China and Tibet.

At this time there was some uncertainty about our treaty relations with Tibet, for both the Government of India and His Majesty’s Government showed a tendency to talk about our acceptance of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet as an established fact, forgetting that it was one of the advantages to be gained by China when she signed the 1914 Treaty, and that our declaration of 1921 had been made to China without consulting or informing the Tibetan Government.

The Tibetan Government had displayed unexpected unity and resolution in face of strong pressure and probably a good deal of bribery. They had managed to stave off any immediate threat; but they did not in fact make any strong protest about the retention of Chinese officers at Lhasa although they professed to treat them as connected only with the wireless station which they found useful for their business transactions with East Tibet.

It is probable that Norbhu’s presence at Lhasa and his tireless reasoning with Tibetan officials contributed not a little to Huang’s failure.
The Tibetan Government attitude to the return of the Tashi Lama in their discussions with Huang had been described above. Their objection to an armed escort was evident. Reports from China and from the Tashi Lama’s representatives in India made it equally clear that the Tashi Lama was not satisfied with the Tibetan Government’s reply to his proposals, and that he was not sufficiently reassured about his reception in Tibet to come without an escort, or possibly a guarantee from the British Government. Although efforts were made by our Legation in China to persuade the Lama to return via India, we were not prepared to consider giving any guarantee for his security.

After the death of the Dalai Lama, the Chinese took more interest in the Tashi Lama. They issued a commendatory decree about his work as Cultural Commissioner for the Western Borders. His intention to return to Tibet was publicised and there were press reports of statements by him on the need for unity between China and Tibet. Evidence of his dependence on the Chinese was seen in his own remark to the British Minister, that he was waiting for “instructions” from the Chinese Government, and the statement of a Chinese official that the Central Government would determine the Tashi Lama’s movements, and that the purpose of his return was purely for the sake of cementing relations between China and Tibet. Nevertheless the Tashi Lama continued to cultivate the friendship of the British Minister in Peking, and to write to the Political Officer in Sikkim.

Perhaps he hoped that after the removal of Lungshar, the Tibetan Government would be more accommodating; but it was not easy to ascertain his real thoughts which were usually interpreted to us by his followers. Signs were seen of the existence of two parties in his entourage, one of which was in favour of returning by land with an escort, and the other declaring that the Tashi Lama did not want temporal power and would prefer to return to India by sea, if the Chinese would let him.

In spite of rumours of trouble, peace was preserved in Eastern Tibet and a new armistice with Szechuan was concluded. Four Tibetan boys were sent down to India for training in electrical engineering.

The Tibetan Government were helped to obtain gold at a concession price, for the adornment of the Dalai Lama’s tomb. Interference with the wool trade at Phari, which had been troublesome for about a year, was removed after the matter had been represented to the Tibetan Government by Norbhu on his visit to Lhasa.

The Chinese continued their interest in Nepal. Their special agent in Calcutta visited Kathmandu in May 1934, and Huang Mu-sung also went there after his visit to Lhasa.

The imposition of a Land Customs Regime on the frontiers of India had been under consideration since 1932. Its objects were to safeguard revenue, and to enable the Government of India to answer embarrassing questions, when a commercial treaty was under consideration, about the absence of a customs tariff of the main land frontiers. The political objections so far as Tibet was concerned were recounted by the Political Officer, and similar considerations in other parts on the frontier led the Government of India to propose a limited customs regime applicable to certain articles only. In 1934 this was agreed upon; but the land customs line was to be only theoretical so far as Tibet and Bhutan were concerned because the list of dutiable articles did not contain any which were produced in those countries.

Towards the end of 1935 it was considered advisable for the Political Officer to go again to Lhasa to examine the results of Huang’s mission, to counteract the growth of Chinese influence, and to do what might be possible to secure the return of the Tashi Lama.

The occasion was taken for a review of our policy towards Tibet. The Government of India realised that we could not look for any strong diplomatic action at Peking, but that it was particularly important to maintain British influence in a friendly Tibet, at a time when new political forces were at work in Eastern and Central Asia.

The danger of Chinese influence spreading to Nepal and Bhutan was recalled, and also the interest of Japan from whose government there had lately been an offer to supply arms to Tibet.
The Government of India were satisfied that Tibet was genuinely friendly, and that whatever had been yielded to the Chinese had been yielded through fear, and through doubt of our willingness to give effective support. The death of the Dalai Lama had given the Chinese an opportunity, and their mission had had some success.

In drawing up instructions for Mr. Williamson the first consideration was the return of the Tashi Lama. There were signs that the Chinese might be preparing to restore him by force of arms and the Tashi Lama himself was reported to be issuing threats of war. Mr. Williamson was to make efforts to secure a peaceful return.

It was desirable to examine on the spot the necessity of posting at Lhasa an officer equivalent in rank to any officer whom the Chinese might manage to establish permanently.

The Government of India assumed that there was no question of maintaining Tibetan integrity by force of arms, and it was decided that, if this question was raised, Williamson should make it clear to the Tibetan Government that in the event of trouble with China, Tibet would have only our diplomatic support so far as was justified by the merits of the case, and that in the meantime His Majesty’s Government would use all their diplomatic influence to prevent the development by China of an aggressive policy. The question of assistance against any other aggression i.e. from the Chinese communists who were then a possible danger in Eastern Tibet — should be considered as and when it arose.

The Tibetan Government were to be given three specific assurances.

1. That His Majesty’s Government, while prepared to admit the theoretical suzerainty of China, would adhere to their present policy of treating Tibet as an autonomous country in practice.
2. That His Majesty’s Government were anxious to maintain their traditional friendship with the Tibetans and to continue to deal with them direct as in the past.
3. That His Majesty’s Government were prepared, in so far as the merits of the case justified, to give Tibet their fullest diplomatic support at Nanking should she become involved in any trouble with China. The misconception about our attitude towards direct negotiations between China and Tibet was to be cleared up, and it was to be explained that His Majesty’s Government would like to be represented at any general negotiations between those two countries.

If the Tibetans were doubtful of our intentions, they were to be assured that we would not enter into negotiations with China about Tibet without their participation or knowledge.

If they were in any doubt as to the implications of the 1935 Government of India Act, it was to be explained that the basis of relations between Great Britain and Tibet would remain unchanged.

Mr. Williamson reached Lhasa on 26th August 1935; shortly afterwards he fell ill, and he died at Lhasa on 17th November.

He had nevertheless concluded most of the business with which he had been entrusted, and the results of his mission are summarised below.

The Tashi Lama — The outstanding points of difference between the Tibetan Government and the Tashi Lama were the control of the army in Tsang, the control of three of the principal districts in that province, and the Tashi Lama’s wish to bring a Chinese escort. When Mr. Williamson arrived at Lhasa he found that neither side showed any willingness to make concessions. The question of the escort was the principal anxiety of the Tibetan Government. Whether the Tashi Lama himself wanted such an escort, and whether the alleged threats of war were his doing or that of his followers, is uncertain; but it was clear that the Chinese Government intended to send an escort with the Tashi Lama, and Mr. Williamson was informed that in July 1935 the Tibetan Government had telegraphed to the Chinese Government to protest.

Mr. Williamson exchanged friendly but infructuous telegrams with the Tashi Lama who denied that he wanted to bring Chinese officials or troops to Tibet. At the same time representations were made to the Chinese Government who were to be informed that the despatch of Chinese troops and officials with the Tashi Lama was contrary to the wishes of the Tibetan Government. This was done, and the Chinese in reply made what appears to be a false statement that when Huang Mu-sung had mentioned to the Tibetan Government that the Tashi Lama would be accompanied by a bodyguard they raised no objection. They also denied that the bodyguard would be “troops”. Our Minister rather incautiously referred to the Simla Convention and received the obvious retort that the Chinese did not recognise it.
Mr. Williamson at first believed that the Tibetan Government were so much in fear of the Chinese that they would withdraw their opposition to the escort if they had any doubt of receiving effective support from His Majesty's Government. Nevertheless, even when they had asked for military assistance and had been told that they could expect nothing beyond diplomatic support, they stood firm, and the National Assembly decided to oppose by force the entry of Chinese troops into Tibet. In spite of the unsatisfactory reception of the representations made by the British Minister, His Majesty's Government insisted that the Chinese Government should be left in no doubt about the Tibetan attitude towards the despatch of an escort and Chinese officials with the Tashi Lama, and a firmly worded aide memoire was handed to the Chinese Government.

Representation — The Tibetan Government professed not to consider the officials left behind by Huang's mission to be permanent representatives, and they did not want a permanent British representative at Lhasa unless they had to accept an Amban. The behaviour of the two Chinese officers at Lhasa was overbearing and unpopular, and the Tibetan Government, when consulted, asked us to prevent the British Legation in China from issuing passports to two more officials whom the Chinese Government wanted to send to reinforce or replace the existing officers.

79. Assurances. Tibetan Views on Suzerainty

The assurances and explanations which had been authorised by His Majesty's Government were conveyed to the Tibetan Government who took the opportunity of clarifying their own attitude towards the Chinese claim to suzerainty. The Kashag stated definitely that they did not recognise even the nominal suzerainty of China. They had been prepared to do so, to the extent which had been provided in the Simla Convention, in exchange for territorial concessions from the Chinese. There had in fact been no concessions, and accordingly the Tibetan Government had not formally recognised Chinese suzerainty.

Chapter X

80. Events Leading up to Sir Basil Gould's Visit to Lhasa. 1936

Mr. Williamson's death interrupted the development of our efforts to bring about the peaceful return of the Tashi Lama.

The Tibetan Government continued to be anxious, and to repeat their request for diplomatic representations in China. The Chinese Government had professed to be disappointedly our insistence on this matter at a time when they were facing difficulties in other quarters; but their subsequent blank denial that they had received any protest from the Tibetan Government appeared to indicate that they intended to do what they liked about the Tashi Lama's escort. His Majesty's Government took an increasingly serious view of the Chinese attitude and urgent representations were again made by our Ambassador in China, who was able to confute Chinese denials by exact reference to the dates on which Tibetan protests had been sent.

The Tibetan Government reaffirmed their intention to oppose the escort by force, but were clearly apprehensive of what might follow. The movements of the Chinese Communists on the Tibetan border were the cause of more anxiety. These troops had been evicted from Hunan in 1935 by the Nanking Government forces and, breaking up into several bodies, had been harried through Kweichow, Yunnan, Szechuan, and Kansu to the borders of Tibet, bringing terror and destruction wherever they went. Driven from place to place, but winning some remarkable successes against the Nanking and provincial troops, they had swept back from the North West in May 1936 and occupied most of Kham as far as the Yangtse to the alarm of the Tibetan Government. It was reported that the Chinese had suggested joint action against the Communists, and it seems that the Tibetan Government, although not willing to go so far as giving military help, did assist the Kansu authorities to get supplies. By July 1936 the Communists had been driven north again, and Tibetan fears decreased. This interlude had various results. On the one hand the disturbance delayed the Tashi Lama's move towards Tibet and distracted Chinese attention from his return; on the other hand the pursuit of the
Communists enabled the Nanking Government to acquire more influence in Szechuan and Sikang, and to insinuate their own troops there. Another result was the diversion of much of the Chinese trade with Tibet from the overland route to the sea route and India. Sikang itself was reduced to a state of poverty and disorder.

81. Instructions

In May 1936 it appeared to the Government of India that the situation justified another effort to help in the solution of the differences between the Tashi Lama and the Tibetan Government and an examination of possible ways of strengthening the general position of Tibet in furtherance of our policy of keeping that country autonomous and friendly. With the approval of His Majesty’s Government it was decided that Norbhu should go again to Lhasa to inform the Tibetan Government of our diplomatic efforts in China, and to obtain from them a written repetition of their objection to the Tashi Lama’s Chinese escort, with which to refute Chinese denials that such objections existed. He was also to ascertain whether the Tibetan Government agreed to the issue of a letter from Sir Basil Gould, who had succeeded Mr. Williamson as Political Officer, to the Tashi Lama offering to mediate between him and the Tibetan Government and to export him to Tashilhunpo if he would forego his Chinese escort. This would involve more active intervention than His Majesty’s Government had been willing to contemplate before, and also some responsibility for seeing that any agreement which the two parties might reach would be carried out. It was suggested that the offer of help by way of customs concessions and military training, or perhaps a hint that existing facilities might be withdrawn, might make the Tibetan Government willing to be conciliatory. The British Embassy in China were also in favour of more active intervention in the dispute. Norbhu found on his arrival at Lhasa that the Kashag were not anxious for our mediation at the moment, but the National Assembly were in favour of the proposal. A few days later it was finally decided by the Tibetan Government to invite Sir Basil Gould to visit Lhasa, and to send a protest to the Chinese Government, through the Government of India, against the despatch of an escort with the Tashi Lama. The Tibetan Government were grateful for the offer of mediation but stated that they had almost reached a settlement with the Tashi Lama and therefore did not need our help at the moment. They referred to our policy of non-intervention in Tibetan internal affairs. Possibly the removal of danger from the Communists had something to do with their decision, or possibly it was affected by the discovery of bombs in the advance baggage of the Tashi Lama; but it is just as probable that the reason they gave was genuine and that they hoped that concessions which they had made to the Tashi Lama would bring about a solution without any outside intervention.

In spite of the somewhat altered circumstances it was decided that Gould should go to Lhasa. His instructions were revised to meet the new conditions. He was to explore the situation generally, to advise the Tibetan Government against over-optimism, and to impress on them the need for strengthening their own position by making peace with the Tashi Lama and reorganising their army and finances. To these ends we were prepared to help them with instructions for their fighting forces, if they wanted it, and with customs concessions. There was now no immediate question of sending a message to the Tashi Lama.

82. Sir Basil Gould’s Mission to Lhasa. 1936

Sir Basil Gould reached Lhasa in August 1936. He was accompanied by a larger party of British officers than had visited Lhasa since the 1904 Expedition. They included Brigadier Neame of Eastern Command who was prepared to advise the Tibetan Government on military affairs, and two officers of the Royal Signals who were in charge of a wireless transmitter which was being taken on such a mission for the first time.

This mission has proved to be comparable in importance in our relations with Tibet only to that of Sir Charles Bell. Its immediate effect was to restore the confidence of the Tibetan Government to whom the presence of a Political Officer has always appeared to act as a tonic. But its wider effect was to put our relations with the Tibetan Government on a new footing by establishing close and unbroken contact, such as had not existed before, but without committing the Government of India to permanent representation. Although Sir Basil Gould left Lhasa in February 1937 the mission has remained there, in charge of a succession of junior officers, until the present.
The question of our representation at Lhasa was examined when the Mission had lasted for about five months, and it became necessary to consider how much longer it should stay. The Government of India and His Majesty’s Government appreciated the value of keeping in close touch with Lhasa, particularly at a time when in the midst of rapidly changing events, the presence of a British Mission would tend to consolidate the ground we had gained, and to confirm the more resolute spirit which its arrival had engendered in the Tibetan Government. There was still a Chinese officer at Lhasa, and that was another reason for maintaining a representative of the Government of India there. But it was not yet certain that the Chinese was considered to be a permanent official, and the Tibetan Government did not appear to have given up hope of getting him withdrawn. The time did not, therefore, seem ripe for the formal discussion of permanent British representation at Lhasa. It was decided that Sir Basil Gould, who had important duties and responsibilities in Sikkim and Bhutan, should leave with the main body of the Mission, and that Mr. Richardson, British Trade Agent, Gyantse, should remain at Lhasa, to be relieved later by Rai Bahadur Norbhu, without any suggestion that the temporary status of the mission was being changed. That is the basis on which, after many changes of personnel, and after a further visit by Sir Basil Gould for the Installation of the Dalai Lama in 1940, the Mission still exists. The staff has always included a wireless officer and a sub-assistant surgeon. Financial problems in connection with the Mission were set at rest by the sanctioning in 1940 of a contract budget grant for which the funds were originally found from savings effected by changing the mail service between Gangtok and Phari from runners to mules.

Lhasa is the only place in Tibet where it is possible to get reasonably prompt and accurate information, and it is the only place where the slow tempo of Tibetan business can be accelerated a little. When information was needed, or action had to be taken, about any event of importance in Tibet it had formerly been necessary to send Norbhu or Laden La to Lhasa; and, if it was desired that the Political Officer should go there, slow preliminaries had to be gone through. In the intervals between visits, we had to rely on such news and rumour as filtered through to Gyantse or Gangtok, and we might miss information about important developments. Now, with an officer always at Lhasa, we are in constant touch with Tibetan affairs; the Political Officer in Sikkim can arrange to visit Lhasa without any delay; and, although the conduct of business may at times appear to drag, it is certainly quicker and more effective than anything that could be done by correspondence.

By the time Sir Basil Gould left Lhasa in February 1937 the Tibetan Government had been reassured and encouraged by news of our diplomatic support, by the provision of arms and ammunition, by help offered in other directions, and by the general air of friendliness and calm with which the Mission had conducted its work. Cordial and friendly relations had been established between the members of the Mission and a very wide circle of Tibetan officials. The length of the stay, the size of the party, and the absence of the restraining influence of a Dalai Lama, had enabled an unusually large number of contacts to be made and a wide insight into Tibetan life and ideas to be gained.

With the passage of time, the Mission has become in Tibetan eyes a familiar, accepted, and almost necessary institution. At no time has there been any suggestion that its continued presence is unwelcome even to the conservative monks.

The following sections deal with questions arising both during Gould’s stay, and after.

83. The Tashi Lama. Last Stages. 1936–1937

In September 1936 the Kashag made it clear that although they did not want our mediation at the moment, they hoped that we should still be prepared to give it if their attempts to reach a direct settlement with the Tashi Lama were to fail. They repeated this statement in October. It was learnt that in July 1936 letters had been sent to the Tashi Lama protesting against the discovery of war-like stores in his baggage, and refusing to admit “even one Chinese official or soldier” into Tibet. The Tibetan Government had offered to send a Tibetan escort to meet the Tashi Lama at the frontier, and the great monasteries had offered to guarantee his safety and that of his followers. They continued to communicate with the Tashi Lama, but received no replies, and although they reiterated to Gould their intention to oppose the escort by force, they were clearly apprehensive that such action might bring them into conflict with much larger bodies of the Chinese army. It was considered whether we should advise them not to
oppose the escort by force, but the decision was against such advice, it would certainly have become known and would have played into the hands of the Chinese.

The Tashi Lama's representative in China continued his discussions with the British Embassy and his representative in Lhasa, Ngagchen Rimpoche, was in touch with Sir Basil Gould and was well aware of our efforts on behalf of the Tashi Lama. It was apparent that the two parties in the Tashi Lama's suite were not on good terms. Ngagchen Rimpoche considered that the Tashi Lama was little less than a prisoner in Chinese hands, and that his other officials were all in Chinese pay. When Ngagchen left Lhasa early in 1937, to report on developments at Lhasa, he was dismissed by the Tashi Lama for having done so without orders.

Our Ambassador in China sought to deliver the Tibetan Government's letter of protest to the Chinese Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs but the latter refused to accept it, saying it should go through the Committee for Tibetan and Mongolian Affairs. He continued to deny knowledge of any protest from the Tibetan Government or of any indication that the Tashi Lama himself did not want a Chinese escort. The letter was eventually handed to an official of the Committee for Tibetan and Mongolian Affairs, in November 1936.

This was followed in December by a note from His Majesty's Ambassador expressing His Majesty's Government's concern lest Chinese policy in the matter might endanger the quiet of the Indo-Tibetan border. The Chinese reply emphasised their intention to avoid any danger to the peace, but maintained that the despatch of an escort was a 'suitable administrative step', for the dignity and the protection of the Tashi Lama.

The Tashi Lama arrived at Jyekundo in the autumn of 1936 and remained there while preparations for his return went on. The Tibetan Government's attitude to the question of the escort under-went a number of changes in 1937. At first they reiterated their intention to resist and asked for further representations to the Chinese Government. At the request of the Government of India they sent another letter to that effect, which was to be used as the basis for further action by His Majesty's Ambassador in China, and was forwarded to the Chinese Government in May 1937 with an accompanying note from the Ambassador. A further protest was made in July 1937 when it was known that the Chinese were making preparations for the escort to enter Tibet. In the meantime meetings were going on in Kham between the Tibetan Commissioner there and representatives of the Tashi Lama, at which the latter proposed that the Tashi Lama and his escort should proceed direct to Shigatse from where the escort should return via India. The Tibetan Government replied that they would only accept such a proposal if the agreement were witnessed by the British Government. This attitude was repeated in July at a meeting of the National Assembly but no approach on the subject of a guarantee was made to us until August when the Kashag asked that the situation should be reported to the Government of India for their consideration. They did not make any specific suggestion or request, and it was decided that, in view of the improbability of the Tashi Lama being allowed by his Chinese advisers to accept British witnesses of his guarantee, the Tibetan Government should be informed that His Majesty's Government could not do more than continue their diplomatic efforts. In September, Tibetan fears were roused by reports that the Tashi Lama had left Jyekundo for Tibet. The National Assembly decided to mobilise troops to oppose the escort; and shortly afterwards the Kashag asked the Government of India to approach the Tashi Lama with the request that he should not bring Chinese soldiers with him. About the same time rumours began to reach Lhasa that the Chinese Government had advised the Tashi Lama not to return to Tibet for the present; and, before a decision could be reached on the request that we should approach the Tashi Lama, the Tibetan Government offered to allow him to bring his escort on the guarantee, which would be witnessed by the great monasteries; that it should be sent back from Shigatse within five months of its arrival. It will be remembered that war between China and Japan had broken out in June 1937, and, although this does not appear at first to have affected the Chinese Government's intentions with regard to Tibet, the signs of weakening which reached Lhasa in September may have seemed to the Tibetan Government an opportunity for securing the return of the Tashi Lama even with a Chinese escort which they hoped to be able to deal with, if it refused to leave, at a time when China was too much pre-occupied for a major adventure in Tibet. But the Tashi Lama was not a free agent. In answer to the Tibetan Government's offer he telegraphed that he was not returning to Tibet that year; and shortly afterwards the Chinese Government
informed our Ambassador in reply to his representations (which had been renewed in Sep-
tember along with a statement that we regarded Tibet as autonomous although under the
suzerainty of China) that the escort would not enter Tibet that year and decisions about it
would be taken later.

On receiving the Tashi Lama's reply the National Assembly held a meeting which lasted
four days. Two parties held opposing views. The monasteries, who had been asked to wit-
tness the Tashi Lama's guarantee, argued that he should be encouraged to return even with
the escort; the other party remained resolutely opposed to a Chinese escort on any terms. The
Assembly was unable to come to a decision, although the matter seems already to have been
decided for them by the Chinese Government, and they referred the question to the Kashag,
who sent a telegram to their representative with the Tashi Lama, enquiring why the Lama
was returning to Chinese territory. All these tangled and complicated questions were finally
resolved by the death of the Tashi Lama at Jyekundo on 1st December 1937.

It seems fair to say that the encouragement provided by the presence of a British Mission
at Lhasa, and our constant diplomatic pressure at Nanking aided by the internal difficulties
of China, which included Japanese encroachments and the Sian revolt against Chiang Kai-
Shek, succeeded in staving off the considerable increase of Chinese influence in Tibet that
would have followed the return of the Tashi Lama. The disunity in the Tibetan Government
on the subject of his return did not seem to indicate any serious growth in the pro-Chinese
faction, but it is very probable that the Chinese would have been able to turn the re-estab-
ishment of the Tashi Lama in Tibet to their own advantage.

84. The Question of Direct Negotiations

Sir Basil Gould discovered during his visit that the Tibetan Government were almost completely
ignorant of their treaty obligations to us. In particular they do not appear to have understood
Mr. Williamson's communication about His Majesty's Government's desire to be represented
at any discussion of a general settlement between China and Tibet. As the possibility of direct
negotiations was still in the thoughts of the Tibetan Government and there was talk of sending
a delegate to China for that purpose, the attitude to be adopted by His Majesty's Government
in such an eventuality had to be considered. It was decided that Article V of the 1914 Conven-
tion barred the Tibetan Government from direct negotiations with China but that, although it
would be unwise to encourage them to enter direct negotiations, we should not enforce our
strict rights if they decided to do so spontaneously. If we did waive our right in this matter it
would be on the conditions that the Tibetan Government should instruct any representative they
might send to Nanking to keep in touch with the British Embassy there; and that they should
keep the Political Officer in Sikkim informed of the progress of negotiations. In fact no move
in that direction was made by either the Tibetan or Chinese Government.

It may be noted that the Regent of Tibet sent a personal representative to China early in
1936. The Regent was inexperienced and self-seeking, and was believed to have pro-Chinese
leanings, of which there was some evidence in his acceptance of a seal of office from the Chi-
inese Government without the knowledge of the Kashag; but this emissary does not appear
to have had any instructions to open the question of negotiations.

85. Chinese Influence at Lhasa. 1936

Mr. Tsiang, who had been left at Lhasa, by Huang Nu-sung, was found to have more influ-
ence than had estimated at the time of Mr. Williamson's mission. He was, in fact, acting as a
representative of the Chinese Government and had access to the Kashag. His control of a
wireless set, both for receiving and disseminating news and for sending messages for the Ti-
betan Government gave him an advantageous position. When he found that Gould was
bringing a wireless set he visited the Kashag and made an angry and tearful protest, which
met the obvious answer that if he had a set why should not the British have one too. Later he
put forward a proposal that he and a Shape should go to Eastern Tibet in order to assist in
the settlement with the Tashi Lama. It seems to have been intended that he would be relieved
by an officer who was accompanying the Tashi Lama but, as this fell through Tsiang left Lhasa
at the end of 1937 without awaiting the arrival of a relief. The Chinese wireless operator car-
ried on in his place.
The introduction of a British wireless set into Lhasa broke the Chinese monopoly. Although the Tibetan Government found the Chinese wireless useful, they realised the influence which its possession gave to the Chinese at Lhasa. It was understood that they had made several attempts to have the set withdrawn and there was a suggestion that they would make another attempt by asking us to remove our set or to present it to them, in order to have a lever by which to move the Chinese to take similar action. We offered to present our set, but the difficulties of its operation by the Tibetans were too great, and the Chinese showed no signs of willingness to remove theirs, so the situation remained unchanged.

Brigadier Neame’s advice was readily sought by the Tibetan Government and he was given every opportunity of studying the Tibetan military system. His estimate of the efficiency of their army was not encouraging, and he criticised previous efforts to help in training and equipment as having been not wholly suited to the material which Tibet had to offer or the conditions in which it would be used. He made detailed recommendations for training and re-organisation and also examined the Tibetan Government’s request for a further supply of arms and ammunition.

To carry out Neame’s recommendations would have involved a radical change in the Tibetan attitude to military affairs, and also an increase in the willingness of the Government of India to intervene in Tibetan domestic issues. Even the powerful Dalai Lama had been unable to effect much improvement in Tibetan ideas on military re-organisation, and it was not to be expected that the existing government would embark on such an adventure. Nor were the Government of India prepared to undertake more than the training of a small number of Tibetan officers and non-commissioned officers in India, and a further supply of arms and ammunition. The Tibetan Government were very grateful for the latter but, while appreciating the offer of training, regretted that their preoccupations in East Tibet made it necessary to postpone its acceptance.

Sir Charles Bell’s policy of opening the trade route to visitors had led to an increasing flow of holiday-makers travelling as far as Gyantse. Sir Basil Gould’s visit to Lhasa with a large British staff, and the routine changes and visits which followed, did much to habituate the Tibetans still further to foreign visitors. In spite of the irritation caused by the unauthorised entry into East Tibet of Mr. Kingdom Ward and Messrs. Kaulback and Hanbury Tracy in 1935 and 1936, permission was secured for another Everest Expedition in 1938 and for a visit to Eastern Tibet by Messrs. Ludlow and Sherriff whose discretion and suitability was known to the Tibetans. Visits to Lhasa by Mr. and Mrs. Cutting, Mr. Bernard (Americans), and Captains Jack and Shepherd (British) and to Tashi Lhunpo by Professor Tucci (Italian) were also allowed in 1937–38. A German expedition under Dr. Schaefer received permission to travel extensively in Tibet and to visit Lhasa and Shigatse in 1938 and 1939. The behaviour of this party was not very well adapted to the circumstances of Tibet, but it did at least give the Tibetans an insight into the differences in the various races of Europe, and pointed the contrast between their conduct and that of British visitors to the great advantage of our prestige. Nevertheless, in granting permission for such visits the Tibetan Government always sought to make it clear that they were rather reluctantly granting a favour; and in 1939 they asked that the Government of India should do all that it could to prevent such applications from reaching Tibet.
Lhasa on a more permanent footing. Ever since 1936 there has been a Sub-Assistant Surgeon with the Mission, and the Civil Surgeon, Gyantse, has paid frequent visits. The Tibetan Government have come to appreciate this work more and more, with the result that in 1940 they voluntarily constructed a new hospital at the British Mission, and in 1942 added further ward accommodation, thus removing the difficulties which our doctors had previously endured on account of inadequate and unsuitable hospital buildings.

90. Other Forms of Assistance

Progress was made in drawing the China–Tibet trade from the over-land route to the sea route and India by granting free transit to goods for the Tibetan Government and high officials. This concession was made for a trial consignment of brick tea from China, and for silks and other goods for Tibetan officials. Arrangements were also made for the import to Tibet by officials, of silver at concession rates. The effect on Tibetan Government finances was not very great, although the profits of some consignments were used for official expenses, such as those of the New Year Ceremonies, and the expenses incurred for the return of the Dalai Lama; but the gains in friendship and feelings of obligation on the part of the recipients were considerable.

Chapter XI — The North-East Tribal Frontier

91. Tawang. 1935–1944

It came to light, by chance, in 1935 that one of the advantages which we secured in 1914 had been overlooked. The inclusion of Tawang within the Indian frontier had been obtained by the boundary agreement with Tibet; but the outbreak of war prevented any action being taken on Sir Henry McMahon’s advice for the administration of that area, and Lonchen Shatra’s recommendation that it should be taken over without delay; and it does not appear that any instructions on the subject were sent to the Assam Government. At all events, it was discovered in 1936 that the latter were not aware of the position of the Indo-Tibetan boundary, and that the administration of the Tawang area was actually being carried on by Tibetan officials who extended their activities as far as Kalaktang, nearly fifty miles to the south of Tawang. It was decided that Sir Basil Gould should try to secure from the Tibetan Government a reaffirmation of the McMahon Line. An opportunity was provided when the Kashag raised the question of the Tehri boundary, (which was eventually shelved), but Sir Basil found them far from willing to acknowledge that Tawang was in British territory. Our position was verbally reaffirmed, and it was decided to take active measures to make our control of the Tawang area a reality. Financial considerations prevented a large-scale effort being made, but in 1938 an exploratory visit was paid to Tawang by the Political Officer, Balipara, and even that cost over Rs. 33,000. The Tibetan Government were not informed beforehand as it was desirable that the visit should not appear to need any justification. When they came to know of the visit they asked why it had been made without informing them. Norbhu, who was at Lhasa, explained the position to the Kashag but found them suspicious. They seemed to think that our claim to Tawang was something new; and they continued to discuss the matter among themselves without coming to a decision.

Information about the Tibetan administration of the Tawang area, which was gathered at the time of the exploratory visit, appeared to the Governor of Assam to reveal serious and inhuman oppression and to make it more pressing still that British responsibilities in that area should be fulfilled. This estimate of the situation does not agree entirely with the finding of other travellers in that area. In spite of the recommendation of the Governor of Assam, financial stringency came in the way of further action, and the outbreak of war in 1939 added to the difficulties. But evidence of Tibetan administrative activity in other parts of the Assam Tribal area, far south of the McMahon Line, kept the problem from being forgotten and showed that it extended not only to Tawang but to a great stretch of country of some 30,000 square miles. When the McMahon Line was fixed in 1914 lack of exact geographical knowledge led to the choice of a frontier running for the most part along the crest of the main Himalayan range and designed to provide a mountain barrier between
Tibet and British territory; but the range is pierced by the great rivers, Subansiri, Brahmaputra and Lohit; and the McMahon Line is crossed in other places by the head waters of lesser rivers and by a number of mountain passes. The northern parts of our territory south of the McMahon Line in fact appear to be more accessible from Tibet than from Assam, for example Tawang is cut off from the south for several months in the year by the snows of the Se La, whereas the road from Tibet is always open. The area is populated by a great variety of tribes and peoples many of them of Tibetan stock — Abors, Miris, Mishmis, Akas, Daflas, Bhutias, Nonbas, Lopas, Popas and true Tibetans. It exhibits wide differences in culture and organisation of which the highest probably exists in the Tawang district where Tibetan officials have carried on their administration for centuries, and in which, when negotiations for its cession were carried out in 1914, we agreed to respect existing rights of property owners and of monasteries.

Exploration in this vast territory by officers of the Assam tribal administration has been slight and intermittent, and has been conducted rather on the lines of a military expedition than of political penetration. Only a fraction of the area has been visited. Detailed knowledge is still so scanty that it is not yet possible to realise the full extent of what we took under our protection in 1914 and forgot until 1936, or how far we are capable of exerting real authority in that area.

The underlying consideration was not so much the need to check Tibetan activities as the knowledge that behind Tibet, and ready to absorb it at the first opportunity, lay the covetous power of China which in the expansionist days before the Revolution had established posts at several places within what is now our North East frontier, including the neighbourhood of Tawang in the West and Menilkrai in the East. The problem was examined, among others, in a note by Mr. Caroe, the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, which dealt with the whole of the "Mongolian Fringe" on the northern border of India. It was also discussed by the Political Officer in Sikkim in a note on Factors in Tibetan Policy, and in conference with the Governor of Assam.

By 1943 it was possible to look ahead to post-war developments, and the need for action to forestall possible Chinese designs on the borderlands of the North East Frontier again assume importance. Moreover the Tibetan Government had shown signs of an increased interest in Tawang and had sent a high official with some troops who set about collecting taxes from villages far south of Tawang. It was decided to take immediate steps to prevent a deterioration of the position, and a note was addressed to the Tibetan Government reminding them of the boundary agreed on in 1914 and informing them that there was no excuse for exercise of their authority south of that line. They were also told that they should avoid direct reference to the Government of Bhutan whose external affairs were under the control of the Government of India. This was necessary because in 1938 they had pressed the Bhutan Government for a direct settlement of the Tawang-Bhutan boundary and were now demanding the return of Tibetan subjects who had migrated from Tawang to Bhutan. In reply they acknowledged the Red Line of the McMahon map to be the frontier, and said that if certain places mentioned in our note were in British territory they would instruct their officers to refrain from interference there. They deliberately avoided mentioning Tawang which had been specifically mentioned in our note.

His Majesty's Government agreed with the Government of India that action should be taken to confirm our authority in the North East Frontier area, but considered that the lapse of time in taking up our claim might mean that we should have to make some concessions to the Tibetan Government and not necessarily seek to assert our rights in full.

A preliminary air reconnaissance and a detailed examination of the problem as it affected the whole North East Frontier and the special area of Tawang was conducted by the Political Officer in Sikkim who also took part in discussions with the Government of Assam.

He recommended the appointment of a Resident for the McMahon Line area, with an adequate staff to enable our scanty knowledge of that country to be increased. With regard to Tawang, there would be no great danger in leaving it to the Tibetans were it not for the possibility of Chinese infiltration.

If we were to exert our authority there we would have a more effective barrier against Chinese forward movements, and would be able to fulfil our obligations to the Monbas; but
if we meant to take action there it must be thorough and effective. He suggested that the influence of the Maharaja of Bhutan might be used to our benefit in that area, and that possible road alignments should be studied. In any case the question of Tawang should wait until the main problem had been tackled.

After full consideration with the Assam Government and the General Staff, the Government of India recommended that the Tawang question should be postponed, but nothing should be said or done to compromise our claim. The frontier as a whole should be stabilised by the progressive occupation of forward posts beginning from the East — nearest to China — and moving the West. The organisation should be in the hands of the Governor of Assam aided by an Adviser, because that government had experience of the tribal peoples of the frontier. Action was to be taken quietly and without saying anything more to the Tibetan Government.

These decisions are now being put into effect and special officers are touring in the little visited Subansiri and Lohit valleys and in other parts of the Assam tribal area.

Chapter XII — The Fourteenth Dalai Lama

92. Affairs in Eastern Tibet. 1936

In the Autumn of 1936, after the Communist influx had receded, Tibetan troops crossed the Yangtse and occupied parts of Derge and other districts. This led to a protest from Chiang Kai-Shek to the Kashag, who denied that they had authorised the advance; and the Tibetan troops were withdrawn to the West of the Yangtse without any fighting. Their excursion may have been intended to strengthen their position against a possible return of the Communists but were probably an attempt to outflank the Tashi Lama’s escort and to be ready for trouble in the event of hostilities. Apart from this incident, relations between the Tibetans and Chinese were unusually placid. They were even reported as being amicable; and no attempt was made by the Tibetans to take advantage of the Chinese difficulties when the Communists captured Lanchow, or when Chiang Kai-Shek was imprisoned by Chang Hsueh-liang.

The Chinese were reported to be adopting a more conciliatory attitude in Sikang, influenced perhaps by the desire to restore the flow of trade.

The Chinese Government took such opportunities as arose of repeating its claim to sovereignty over Tibet. In applying to His Majesty’s Government through His Majesty’s Ambassador at Peking for free transit for goods of Chinese origin passing between China and Tibet via. India, the Chinese Government referred to “Tibet and the other provinces of China.” His Majesty’s Ambassador was instructed to remind them of our memorandum of 1921, and to say that if an agreement on the subject of free transit was necessary it should be made directly with the Tibetan Government.

Again in 1936 our attitude towards Tibet was clarified to the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs in reply to enquiries whether we were supplying arms to the Tibetans and installing a wireless set at Lhasa. Our intention to deal with Tibet as an autonomous country, under suzerainty, was restated in writing.

93. Tibetan Agitation against Marwari Traders in Tibet. 1937

In 1937 there was an agitation at Lhasa for the removal from Tibet of all Marwari traders. This had its origins in the activities of the Kalimpong firm of Sriram which had for some years kept an agent at Phari, and had recently begun to send men to buy wool at Shigatse and other places off the Trade Route.

It is probable that high Tibetan of officials who were themselves interested in the wool trade resented these incursions by Marwari firms penetrating further and further into Tibet in an effort to secure the wool before their rivals.

The Tibetan Government issued an order prohibiting Tibetan subjects to work for Sriram, and the latter was unable to obtain transport at Phari for the wool he had bought. In this action the Tibetan Government contravened Articles II and VII of the 1914 Trade Regulations. The order was eventually withdrawn after a strong protest by Norbhu who was at Lhasa. But the Tibetan Government, with considerable heat, continued to press for the removal of
Marwaris from Tibet. They were told that, as Marwaris were entitled to the advantages of the Trade Regulations to the same extent as other British subjects, no such order could be given, but that their specific allegations against Sriram would be investigated. The case was submitted to the Government of India who held that while Article I of the Trade Regulations allowed a British subject to rent a house at Phari for his accommodation and for the storage of goods it did not allow trading there. Sriram was to be severely warned not to trade beyond the Trade Marts.

The Tibetan Government and local Tibetans at Phari and Yatung kept up an agitation against Sriram and Marwaris in general, and it was eventually arranged in 1939 that Sriram should withdraw his agent from Phari without the necessity of a formal order from the Political Officer. Tibetan feelings about Marwaris seem now to have cooled down.

94. Reincarnation of the Dalai Lama. 1937–1939

The Chinese had been robbed by the death of the Tashi Lama of a valuable instrument in their policy towards Tibet. They continued to make desultory suggestions that his body might be sent back to Tibet with an escort. The Tibetan Government objected and the Chinese did not press the matter. Apart from this the Tibetan Government took little interest in the Tashi Lama’s remains, and even appear to have neglected the usual ceremonies in his memory.

Chinese interest in a dead Tashi Lama soon gave way to the more promising prospect of a live Dalai Lama. The search for the reincarnation of the latter had been going on for some time, and by the beginning of 1938 there were strong rumours that a most likely candidate had been discovered in the Amdo district of Sining (the Chinese province of Chinghai). There were some doubts about the part the Chinese might have played in this matter and some suspicion that the Regent might have been influenced to assist in the discovery of the reincarnation in Chinese territory. The Tibetan Government maintained strict secrecy and made efforts to bring the child quietly to Lhasa. But this move was frustrated by the Governor of Chinghai who detained the party and sought to extract a large sum of money, ostensibly for the expenses of an escort, before he would let the child go to Tibet. In February 1939 the Tibetan Government approached the Chinese Government through the Tibetan representative in Chung-king, and asked for their help in sending the child to Lhasa. In reply the Chinese Government advised that a Tibetan representative should he sent to settle the matter direct with the Governor of Chinghai whom they instructed not to delay the child’s journey to Tibet. It seems that the Chinese Government had little say in the disposal of the child, and that the Governor of China was playing for his own hand. The Chinese Government were also greatly preoccupied by the war with Japan; but they were clearly being informed of what was going on, and in April 1939 the Chinese Embassy in London asked His Majesty’s Government for facilities for Mr. Wu Chung Hsin, President of the Committee for Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs, to travel to Lhasa through India for the ceremony of electing the new Dalai Lama. The Tibetan Government, who were consulted, did not think Mr. Wu’s presence was necessary and facilities were refused. (It will be remembered that one of Muang Mu-sung’s demands in 1934 was that the Chinese Government should be informed of the discovery of the Dalai Lama and that the National Assembly would only agree to informing them after the installation had taken place, in order to avoid Chinese interference in Tibetan internal affairs.)

The Tibetan Government also made another direct approach to the Chinese Government asking for the journey of the candidate from Amdo to be expedited, and saying that they would consider on his arrival at Lhasa whether the presence of a Chinese representative was necessary. Thereupon the Chinese Government demanded that the Tibetan Government should decide at once which of the existing candidates was the true Dalai Lama; and if the choice fell on the Amdo candidate they would cause the question of payment for his release to be dropped, and would send him with an escort.

The Tibetan Government refused this demand and sent a party of high officials to Sining for further negotiations. This party eventually paid the Governor of Chinghai 400,000 Chinese dollars for the release of the child. The money was well spent, for it seems that they avoided having to accept more than a small escort of Chinese soldiers, and that the Chung-king Government had little or no hand in the matter.
The party left for Tibet in July 1939 with only 20 Chinese soldiers for a bodyguard, and a few minor Chinese officials. Towards the end of August the facts became known to the Tibetan Government and, when the child was safely inside Tibetan territory, a meeting was held at the Potala and he was declared the true incarnation. A Shape went to meet him at Nagchuda and after acknowledging him as Dalai Lama, escorted him to Lhasa, which was reached on the 8th October 1939.

It was learnt much later that the high officials of the Tibetan Government had decided long before, that the child was the true incarnation, but had concealed this and had ostensibly treated him as only one of several candidates, in order to avoid having a Chinese escort sent with him. In fact they were helped by the preoccupation of the Chinese Government and the independent action of the Chinghai Governor who was more interested in money than in long-term politics, and there is no doubt that the Tibetan Government got the best of the bargain. The Chinese, making the best of a bad job, announced in the press, as soon as the child left Sining, that he had been declared Dalai Lama with the approval of the Chinese and Tibetan authorities.

The Government of India had a small share in helping to bring about the return of the Dalai Lama by allowing the Tibetan Government to sell on advantageous terms some silver which had been sent from Tibet to India where it had been confiscated on the suspicion that it had originally been imported into Tibet without payment of duty.

95(A). The Installation of the 14th Dalai Lama. 1940

Having had their way over the declaration of the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan Government allowed the Chinese Government to send Mr. Wu Chung-hsin to Lhasa for the Installation Ceremony. Sir Basil Gould also visited Lhasa on this occasion with ceremonial presents from the Government of India. The Chinese press made tendentious claims about the part played by Mr. Wu. It was alleged that he had escorted the Dalai Lama to his throne and had announced his installation; that the Dalai Lama had returned thanks and had prostrated himself in the direction of the Imperial Abode. This report which had been prepared and issued before the event may have represented what the Chinese intended to take place, but in fact Mr. Wu was allowed only a passive part in the ceremony and did no more than present a scarf. There was also a Chinese Press report that the Dalai Lama had been "permitted to succeed", by a Chinese Government Mandate of 5th February 1940. It was also claimed that the Regent had accepted a letter of appointment from the Chinese Government. These announcements are evidence of the Chinese addiction to make-believe, and their tendency to treat events that have happened despite of them as having happened through their agency. The effectiveness of such an attitude in Tibetan affairs is that the Chinese have the ear of the world, through the press, and their falsehoods go undenied. They can later refer to press records of past events and convince themselves, and perhaps others, of a wholly fallacious view of history.

(B) Results of Mr. Wu's Visit

Mr. Wu's behaviour reflected the traditional Chinese attitude towards Tibet. He looked upon the Tibetans as an inferior race, and Tibet as an integral part of China. He harped on the expense which China had incurred on Tibet in the past. He offended Tibetan susceptibilities by lack of respect for the Dalai Lama which he showed among other ways by demanding an immediate interview on his arrival at Lhasa.

In comparison with Huang Mu-sung, Wu was clumsy and tactless but his retinue was far better behaved than that of Huang. Wu does not appear to have made any serious efforts to enter into any sort of negotiations with the Tibetan Government and he confined himself to general expressions of benevolence, and of the readiness of the Chinese Government to help in the development of Tibet, and an offer to repay the sum of 400,000 dollars which the Tibetan Government had had to pay to the Governor of Chinghai. It appears that the Tibetan Government politely refused his overtures but had no objection to accepting the money as a "pious offering" from the Chinese Government.

From the Chinese point of view conditions were not favourable for any great progress at Lhasa; and the presence of the Political Officer at Lhasa acted, as always as an encouragement to the Tibetan Government. But they too proceeded, with caution, and the Regent made
it clear that uncertainty about the extent of our support in an emergency made it necessary for them to be conciliatory to the Chinese. The single point of importance gained by Wu’s mission was the establishment at Lhasa of a Chinese official of higher standing than the stop-gap who had been representing Chinese interests at Lhasa since the departure of Mr. Tsiang. This was Dr. Kung, who was one of Wu’s party, and remained at Lhasa when Wu left.

During his four years stay at Lhasa, Kung, who is now (1944) about to be relieved, has not been able to overcome his feeling of superiority to the Tibetans, and his behaviour has at times brought him into conflict with the Tibetan Government. But he has strengthened the position of the Chinese officer at Lhasa as, de facto, a permanent representative of his Government. The Tibetans, nevertheless continue to treat the Chinese officer as a special Delegate to discuss a settlement.

Chapter XIII — The Second Great War Period

96. A New Declaration to the Tibetan Government. 1940

While Mr. Wu was at Lhasa the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs informed His Majesty’s Ambassador in China at an interview on March 6th 1940 that the object of Wu’s visit was to dispel the impression that China had designs on Tibet. They wished to undo the bad tradition which had been established by Chinese Amban under the Empire. Mr. Wu’s task was to persuade the Tibetans that, although China would at all times be ready to help Tibet if desired to do so, she promised not to interfere in the development of Tibet along her own lines.

The Government of India considered this statement an advance on anything the Chinese had said before, and that it should be accepted as a solemn declaration by a responsible Chinese Minister. His Majesty’s Government agreed that the statement should be communicated to the Tibetan Government with the assurance that, if there were any tendency on the part of the Chinese to go back on it, His Majesty’s Government and the Government of India would certainly give the Tibetan Government the support which had always been forthcoming since the time of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama in maintaining their practical autonomy.

The communication was made verbally by Sir Basil Gould to the Kashag who received it with gratitude.

Latterly there has been a tendency in the British Embassy Chungking to consider that too much weight has been attached to what was actually an obiter dictum; but it may be remarked that before the communication was made to the Tibetan Government His Majesty’s Ambassador was consulted, and raised no such objection. Nevertheless it must also be noted that as a practical weapon against the Chinese the statement which was never reduced to writing is unlikely to be of any great effect.

97. General Situation in Tibet. 1939–1942

The European war in its early years affected Tibet but little. Prices of all commodities rose considerably, but the all-important wool trade went on satisfactorily on account of an increased demand by America for Tibetan wool to take the place of Australian supplies which had been cut off by British block purchase.

In contrast to the definite and generous support offered by the Dalai Lama in 1914, the present Government maintained its cautious avoidance of commitments and, although promising its prayers, confined itself at first to strictly neutral aspirations for the restoration of peace. But in 1942 they sent a less restrained message of congratulation on the British victory in North Africa.

There had been a growth of Tibetan sympathy for China since the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war; and, as hostilities kept the Chinese occupied, and as evidence of Japanese methods made it clear to the Tibetans that there were potential dangers of greater menace than the Chinese, they could afford to offer prayers for China. But they did not make any conditions, and refrained from opening their doors to visitors from China. In 1938 they had evaded allowing a successor to Mr. Tsiang, the Chinese officer at Lhasa, to enter
Tibet although this result was due to independent action by their Commissioner in Kham who was not aware that the Tibetan Government had given permission for the officer to come to Tibet. They had refused Mr. Wu Chung-hsin's first application for permission to visit Lhasa for the election of the Dalai Lama. At Lhasa Dr. Kung proved himself a more vigorous officer than his predecessors. But he was unable to bring himself to treat the Tibetans with the equality and sincerity which might have brought him success, and he became involved in a number of minor disputes with the Tibetan Government in which he usually came off worst. By this time the activities of the Chinese school at Lhasa, which had been started after Huang Hunsung's visit, were on quite a considerable scale.

In Eastern Tibet consolidation of Chinese influence in the new province of Sikang went on comparatively fast. It had begun with tendentious talk of the extent of Chinese influence in those parts, and with rumours of intentions to deport the Tibetan inhabitants, and paper schemes of industrialisation. The withdrawal of the Chinese Government to Chungking had brought a closer and more effective interest on the part of the Central Government, and although the actual control of Sikang, as of Chunghai and Yunan, remained in the hands of the provincial governors who wanted only to run their provinces in their own way and for their own profit, some development of agriculture, education and lesser local industries took place.

There was also considerable activity in the building of roads, designed eventually to open up both the central and northern routes to Tibet, and in the construction of air fields near the Tibetan frontier. But nothing happened to disturb the peace of the border.

Signs of the old-ambitions of China were seen in a suggestion from the Chinese Government that some Tibetan and Bhutanese boys might be sent to China to be educated at the expense of the Central Government.

In Lhasa the Regent — Reting Rimpochhe — retired. He had become generally unpopular on account of his grasping and high-handed behaviour, and was believed to incline towards the Chinese who appear to have spent a good deal of money on him. His successor was an old and pious Lama who at once set himself to reform the corrupt and unreliable administration of his predecessor.

The Tibetan Government had some trouble with the father and mother of the Dalai Lama who were forever demanding new easements and estates and even indulged in rustic abuse of the Kashag. The lady went so far as to invade the Kashag Chamber and abuse the Kashag in its own sanctum where no woman had ever before been admitted.

98. A New Foreign Office at Lhasa. 1942

In 1942 a new "Office of Foreign Affairs" was opened at Lhasa for the discussion of all matters arising between foreign representatives and the Tibetan Government. The officer in charge of the British Mission was thus precluded from discussions with the Kashag except in matters of unusual importance. This is a step towards improving the status of the Tibetan Government for it is not usual that foreign representatives in any country should have access to the Cabinet or Executive Council.

Nor is the change likely to affect the work of the British Mission. Meetings with the Kashag used to be infrequent, cautious, solemn affairs, and were usually the occasion for a formal statement of matters that had been examined earlier at more open and unofficial informal meetings with individual Shapes. Inside information could rarely be expected at the formal meetings. It has to be collected in the course of those many social contacts that take up so much time of an officer at Lhasa. A communication from the new Foreign Office is just as much a communication from the Tibetan Government as if it came direct from the Kashag, and it has gone through the same degree of preparation. Moreover it is possible to have much more frequent access to the Foreign Office than used to be possible with the Kashag; but it is desirable that when the Political Officer visits Lhasa he should retain his right of dealing direct with the Kashag.

The Chinese officer at Lhasa refused, on orders from his Government, to have any dealings with the new office, and has found himself in a difficult and isolated position. It is not clear how he maintains contact with the Tibetan Government at present. It is probable that
he sends messages through his official guide occasionally, but that most of the Chinese correspondence with the Tibetan Government is carried on by telegrams between the Chinese Government to the Kashag, thus by-passing the Chinese officer at Lhasa.

The Nepalese officer also continues to deal with the Tibetan Government through special officer, known as Gorships and not through the Foreign Office. Thus, it is only the British Mission at Lhasa that has regular dealings with the Tibetan Foreign Office.

99. Tehri Boundary Dispute

The Tehri boundary case, which had been delayed in 1935 by a subsidiary dispute between Tehri and Bahshar, made no progress although Tibetan officials continued their incursions into the debated area. The war, and the examination of the whole Indo-Tibetan boundary situation, made the time unpropitious for reopening the matter, and all that was done was to remind the Kashag in 1940 of our interest in an eventual settlement, and to urge them to avoid action likely to cause a disturbance during the war.

100. The Kazak Migration. 1936–1942

In 1941 there came to light an unhappy, anachronistic, successor to those waves of migration that had formerly swept over central Asia. The Kirei Kazaks from north of Hami, in the north-east corner of Sinkiang, found themselves unable to endure the political and religious persecution of the Sinkiang officials who had come under Soviet influence and were trying to break up the old nomadic way of life of these Muslim herdsmen tribes. In 1936 a party of about 18,000 of these Kazaks left their old haunts and, pushing past all attempts to stop them, came to the borders of Kansu province. Here the majority of them settled down; but after some two years about a third of them, who claim to have been harassed by the Tungans of Kansu, decided to move on, and travelled south to the Kokonor region. The difficulty of finding a living led them to robbery and violence and they seem to have come into conflict with the Chinese soldiery, so that after about a year they could stay no longer in Kokonor. When in Kansu they had heard of India and Calcutta and, with some strange hope, they decided to make for those places by way of Lhasa.

In 1941 they reached Nagchuka with their dromedaries, horses and sheep, and soon reports of their arrival and their robberies reached Lhasa. A Tibetan force, which was sent to drive them off, seems to have advised them to go to Ladakh. They pushed on to the west and, before long, alarming stories of pillage and violence poured into Lhasa, Kashmir and Bashahr. The Tibetan Government sent troops against them, and the Government of India took measures to prevent an irruption into India.

There was a skirmish between the Tibetan troops and the Kazaks who made off towards Kashmir. On the Kashmir border near Demchok they came in contact with the State forces who fired on them, killing several men. The Kazaks laid down their arms and appear to have been allowed to proceed to Kashmir, on their way to British India. They struggled over the Zoji La into Kashmir in the winter of 1941, and one party had to endure conditions of great hardship from snow and blizzard in which they lost many men and animals. On their arrival they were rounded up along with their flocks and herds and were interned in ill-run and insanitary camps where disease carried off many more, and the exactions of the Kashmiris reduced their remaining property in cash and in kind.

It seems that they had already lost much of their loot, some to the Tibetans and much more to the Kashmiri authorities in Ladakh.

The Government of India when presented with the problem of looking after these unfortunate and destitute people were justifiably annoyed. They expressed their great disappointment that the Tibetan Government had not been able to prevent the Kazaks from entering India. And the Kashmir Durbar; who were even more to blame, also came in for rebuke. But the Government of India had to take the responsibility, and eventually arranged for the transfer of the Kazaks to the North-West Frontier Province whence it is believed that most of them have since been moved to other parts of India, including Hyderabad.

The affair attracted attention in the Indian press, particularly the Muslim press, and hard things were said about the Kashmir Durbar. Claims were made by the Tibetan Government and by Tibetan and British subjects for the return of looted property taken by the
Kazaks into Kashmir. But most of this had disappeared, and most of the claims were rejected on the grounds that there was no evidence that the property had been taken out of Tibet. The Tibetan Government recovered 15 stolen rifles, and a Johari trader, Sher Singh, who saw his property being sold in the presence of Kashmir officials, appears to have been awarded compensation.

It seems that there are other parties of Kazaks at large in North Tibet. In 1942 a small party found their way down to India \textit{via} Lhasa and Sikkim; and in 1944 reports were received of the arrival in west Tibet of another batch of unidentified Chinese Muslims who will probably turn out to be Kazaks. There is also the main body of the migration presumably still in Kansu where it is to be hoped they will remain.

101. Land Customs Regime

The imposition of a Land Customs Line between India and Tibet hung fire. The decision of the Government of India in 1938 to take this step had been followed by a number of cases of seizure by the Customs Officers in Calcutta of consignments of silver from Tibet on which no duty had been paid. It was, however, decided in the Courts that no action could be taken against the importers until the Land Customs regime had been made effective on the frontiers. An examination of the position with a view to establishing Customs Posts on the Tibet or Sikkim frontier was undertaken by Mr. Greenfield, Director of Inspection, Customs and Excises. He made detailed recommendations for a Line and for Prescribed Routes, but it was decided by the Government of India in 1941 that the time was not opportune for such action, and that the scheme should be held in abeyance.

At the same time Mr. Greenfield had proposed a system of transit trade to Tibet under exemption from British India Customs duty. With regard to this scheme the Government of India decided that, as war conditions had practically extinguished the traffic to which it was intended to apply, the introduction of the procedure should be postponed.

It may be noted that in 1941 the Government of India exempted from duty Chinese brick tea when imported at Calcutta from Burma. Although the effect of this was later nullified by the loss of Burma, it represented a further stage in the policy of drawing the China-Tibet trade away from the overland route.

The Tibetan Government reverted in 1941 to their proposal to levy duty on all goods imported into Tibet from India, but they met with no encouragement in view of the known difficulties, and the matter was dropped.

102. Roads to China. 1940–1942

The cutting of China’s supply routes by Japanese action made it inevitable that attention should be drawn to the possibilities of new routes from India to supplement the Burma Road; and tentative discussions about road alignments through Tibet were conducted by His Majesty’s Ambassador Chungking with the Chinese Government. In February 1941 His Majesty’s Ambassador was informed that Chiang Kai-Shek had given orders for the construction of a new highway from South-West Szechuan through Rima (in Tibetan territory) to the Assam border. It appeared that the Chinese intention was to treat the political obstacles as nonexistent, and to deal with any opposition from the local populations in their own way. His Majesty’s Ambassador recommended that in this matter we should not allow outmoded political conceptions to stand in the way of progress. The Government of India had doubts of the nature of the progress aimed at by the Chinese, and were unwilling to agree to any proposal for making roads through Tibetan territory without the consent of the Tibetan Government.

His Majesty’s Government supported this view but wished to return as friendly as possible an answer to the Chinese Government. At the same time they considered that the opening up of the Sadiya–Rima route would be of considerable benefit to Indo-Tibetan trade. It was decided to sound the Tibetan Government and inform the Chinese Government that Tibetan assent was necessary before we could co-operate in their plan. It was suggested that a preliminary air survey was necessary, and that an alternative route via the Chaukan Pass and Fort Hertz in Burma should also be considered. This route would avoid Tibetan territory. When our communication was made to the Tibetan Government it was to be emphasised that we
were not going back on our undertakings to them. The Tibetan reaction to our approach was to agree to an aerial survey over the proposed route, but to request that no roads should be made through their territory.

Suspicions about Chinese intentions were increased by the intervention of the Chinese officer at Lhasa, who informed the Tibetan Government that the British and Chinese Governments had decided to make a road from China to Assam through Tibetan territory, and that a survey party had left China sometime ago for that purpose. The Chinese Government also showed that they were determined to go their own way; and it was accordingly necessary to inform both the Chinese and Tibetan Governments that we would take no responsibility for co-operating in a ground survey without the agreement of the Tibetan Government. A meeting of the Tibetan National Assembly decided that the Chinese should not be allowed to build any roads in Tibetan territory, and the survey party was turned back from the Tibetan border. A Chinese Muhammadan official from Sining who visited Lhasa about this time, also made efforts to persuade the Tibetan Government to fall in with the wishes of the Chinese, but without success. In spite of Tibetan objections Chiang Kai-Shek stuck to his determination to make the road through Rima. His Majesty's Government thought it probable that his officials had not ventured to explain the position to Chiang; and the Government of India continued to urge the possibility of the southern route. There was further evidence of Chinese persistence in their claims to control Tibet when, in connection with the establishment of an air route from China to India, they refused to discuss what was or was not Tibetan territory. Nevertheless they did in fact make arrangements to avoid flying over it.

At a time when the diametrically opposed claims of the Chinese and Tibetans appeared to be leading to trouble, the outbreak of war with Japan created a new relationship between ourselves and China, and the rush of Japanese successes created a new urgency, not without a hint of panic in it, to conciliate Chinese opinion which had been shocked and alarmed by our collapse in the Far East.

103. Trans-Tibet Transport. 1942

Our new allies considered that the Government of India were luke-warm in aiding their ambitious schemes, and the new military situation made it necessary to conciliate them, if only for reasons of maintaining morale and good-will. The first step was taken during the visit of Chiang Kai-Shek to India in February 1942 when there was a meeting attended by the Foreign Secretary, Commander-in-Chief and the outgoing and incoming Ambassador to China. As a result the Government of India were impressed by the importance of opening as many roads from India to China as possible in the earliest possible time. Chiang Kai-Shek gave up for the time being his proposal for a road through Rima but the Government of India felt that an initiative by them to open up a route through Tibet would be very well received by the Chinese. They proposed to examine at once the possibilities of pack transport through Tibet which had been suggested by Sir Basil Gould. At the same time survey work on the Chaukan pass route was to go on. The best method of approach to the Tibetan Government was examined and detailed consideration was given to the connected problems of road improvement, transport for the route, and the Tibetan wool trade on which the supply of pack animals was mainly dependent. In March 1942 Norbhu, who was at Lhasa, was instructed to approach the Kashag and seek to obtain the consent in principle to the despatch of supplies from India to China through Tibet. He did not find the atmosphere very promising and had reason to fear opposition from the monastic party. In spite of strong hints of the possible consequences of refusal Norbhu's fears were justified and the Kashag, after consulting the National Assembly, replied that they could not accede to the request, for fear that other powers might take advantage of the situation to the detriment of the peace of Tibet.

The Government of India were greatly disappointed by this decision, and the question of what steps could be taken to secure our objectives was further considered. It appeared that the Chinese, who knew about our approach to the Tibetan Government, might wish to take a hand in the matter and that it would be desirable to induce the Tibetan Government to agree before such a development took place. A fresh approach was then made to the Kashag by Mr. Ludlow who had joined Norbhu at Lhasa; but again without success.
The Government of India declined to accept this result. His Majesty's Ambassador Chung-king reported a growing impatience on the part of the Chinese who showed signs of wanting to join us in the approach to the Tibetan Government, and warned of the danger of independent action on their part unless early progress was made. The Government of India, while pointing out that they had never sought to exclude the Chinese from co-operation in this matter, agreed that it was necessary to dispel Chinese and American suspicions by joint pressure at Lhasa, even at the expense of the collapse of our valuable Tibetan policy. They made it clear that while the practical importance of the route was small (the Chinese estimate was 3,000 tons a year and its actual maximum capacity was probably about half that)—the psychological factor made action necessary. It was assumed that there was no question of a military adventure in order to gain the desired result; and either possible "sanctions" of a political and economic nature were examined. In the former category it was suggested that His Majesty's Government's guarantee of Tibetan autonomy might be withdrawn; and in the latter, in which Chinese co-operation would be necessary, it was suggested that the export of Chinese brick tea might be prevented, and a blockade imposed on Tibetan wool. It was proposed that Sir Basil Gould should go to Lhasa to concert action with the Chinese representative there. It did not appear to the Political Officer that the political approach offered much advantage, and it was decided that Ludlow should keep up pressure on the Tibetan Government, using appeals to their friendship and threats of economic sanctions. His Majesty's Government, realising that Tibetan obstinacy was dictated by fear not only that they might be involved in war but also by fear of Chinese encroachment on their independence which we were committed to support, considered that, while we were prepared in the last resort to apply pressure to the Tibetan Government, we were entitled to ask the Chinese first to do everything possible to win Tibetan co-operation by clarifying their attitude to that country. They suggested the possibility of a public declaration of the intention of the Chinese Government on the lines of the Chinese Foreign Minister's oral declaration of 1940, that they would respect Tibet's autonomy and, refrain from interference in its internal administration. Chinese willingness to give such an assurance would be a text of the importance they attached to the opening of the proposed route. Overtures on these lines produced no immediate reply; and in the meantime Ludlow had secured the agreement of the Kashag to the passage through Tibet of non-military supplies for China.

The limitation to non-military supplies was due to a misunderstanding. It had been suggested that if the Chinese Government agreed to such a suggestion it might be easier to win Tibetan consent to the proposal. Chinese agreement had not, in fact, been asked, and it had not been the intention that a definite proposal for such limitation should yet be made at Lhasa. It seems that even to secure consent to the passage of non-military supplies independent action by the Regent of Tibet was necessary. He knew that the National Assembly would again refuse the request, but took the matter in his own hands and gave consent without consulting the Assembly.

In the event, the limitation proved to be for the best. It is improbable that the Regent would have ventured on an independent decision about military stores, and it is almost certain that the National Assembly would have refused permission. We would then have had to jeopardise our good relations with Tibet by putting sanctions into effect. In fact, it would have been possible to give a wide interpretation to the meaning of non-military stores; but events have proved that Chinese Government interest in the route slackened as soon as the possibility of using it for political penetration had vanished.

Once Tibetan agreement to the passage of stores had been obtained the Chinese Government naturally evaded any public declaration about Tibetan autonomy. It was said that it would be "rather difficult" for Chiang Kai-Shek to take any such steps and it is doubtful whether the proposal was ever submitted to him. But verbal assurances were given by the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs that the Chinese Government had decided to drop the question of new roads through Tibet, and that they had no intention of becoming involved in hostilities with the Tibetans. This latter assurance was in reply to enquiries about rumours then prevalent that there were threatening Chinese troop movements in Chinghai. It is interesting to note in connection with events in 1943 that an incursion of Chinghai troops into Tibet did actually occur in 1942; but its connection with the Tibetan decision to allow the passage of supplies, and the responsibility of the Chinese Government for the movement, are, in the
present state of information, problematical. The United States Government and the United States Ambassador at Chungking were kept in touch with developments, and the latter was informed by the Chinese Government that they were unwilling to give a declaration of their intention not to intervene in the internal affairs of Tibet. At the same time they explained that, while they considered Tibet as part of China, they had no intention of altering the present state of affairs by which Tibet enjoyed autonomy in its internal administration.

It remained to put the plan into execution. There is no doubt that our intervention was solely responsible for the advance that had been made. The Chinese promptly sought to profit by it, and informed His Majesty's Ambassador Chungking that they had decided to station officials at various points along the route to organise the service in co-operation with the Tibetan authorities. As a sop to Tibetan opinion — and ours — these officials would be strictly instructed to confine themselves to their transport duties.

In order to make it clear to the Tibetan Government that we did not necessarily support this demand, their opinion was sought on the Chinese proposals. They refused to allow the posting of Chinese officials on the route.

Discussion followed about details of working and financing the route and the possibility of using part of the proposed British loan to China for this purpose was examined. But the longer discussion went on the clearer it became that the Chinese Government sought only to use the advantage which we had secured for them in order to come to an agreement with the Tibetans to the exclusion of the Government of India. They also sought to use the Tibetan Government's concession as the thin end of the wedge, and insistently revived the proposal to open not only the northern route through Tibet, but also the central route, and the road through Rima.

Efforts were made to eliminate political implications and to deal with the transport question on a commercial basis, but it was assumed throughout that the Tibetan Government would expect us to participate in any arrangements for working the route, and that we could not afford to disinterest ourselves entirely in the matter.

In November 1942 a situation was reached when the Government of India, whose help in any event would be essential to the despatch of supplies from India, was prepared to withdraw almost entirely into the background. Their attitude was described as follows:

"The Government of India's purpose has throughout been to arrange for the establishment of a supply route for the benefit of their ally the Government of Free China in their resistance against Japan. Apart from this they had no direct object. They undertook certain discussions with the Tibetan Government in the course of which the latter laid down terms and conditions on which they would agree to supplies being passed through Tibet to China. The Government of India accepted the conditions on which Tibetan ascent was given and note that it has been proposed that direct negotiations should be undertaken between representatives of the Stage Transport Administration of the Chinese Ministry of Communications and the Tibetan carrying firms. The Government of India have it in mind to confine themselves to using their good offices with a view to facilitating such an agreement within the terms laid down by the Tibetan Government."

The Tibetan Government in reply to this communication made it plain that the presence of the Government of India as guarantor of any agreements with the Chinese was absolutely essential; and they reiterated their refusal to allow Chinese experts into Tibet. Tibetan traders when approached by an official of the Chinese Ministry of Communications refused to deal with him unless authorised to do so by the Tibetan Government. A direct approach to the Tibetan Government by the Chinese Government produced a similar reply to that given to the Government of India.

In this way nearly nine months passed since the Tibetan Government gave its assent to the passage of goods for China, without any progress being made.

104. The Chinese Lose Patience. Fears of Direct Action. 1943

While discussions were going on, some private consignments of goods were finding their way to China across Tibet through the agency of Tibetan contractors, but in March 1943 the Tibetan Government issued orders that all goods for the Chinese Government should be held up until a settlement of the transport question had been reached between the three governments. The order in fact operated against all goods for China. This action seemed
unwise to the Government of India and caused resentment on the part of the Chinese Government.

In April 1943 the Tibetan Government became alarmed by reports of Chinese troop movements from Chinghai towards the Tibetan border. A meeting of the National Assembly decided to fight if Tibet were invaded, and Tibetan troops were sent to Nagchuka. On our advice a less provocative attitude was adopted with regard to goods for China, but tension increased and the Tibetan Government appealed to us for help. In China at the same time there were rumours of Tibetan preparations for aggression; these were possibly intended to provide an excuse or Chinese troop movements.

It appears from information from several sources that at one time the Chinese Government, irritated by Tibetan obstruction, had contemplated the use of force against Tibet, and that early in 1943 Chiang Kai-Shek directed the Governors of Chinghai and Sikang, possibly also the Governor of Yuan, to move troops to the Tibetan border. It is presumed that these orders were primarily intended to overawe the obstinate Tibetans but there may also have been the underlying hope that, if the border Governors obeyed the order and became embroiled with the Tibetans, there might be an opportunity for the Central Government to follow up any success won by the provincial governors, or to send troops into the border provinces ostensibly as reinforcements.

Liu Wen-hui, Governor of Sikang, whose troops were not in a good state of equipment or efficiency and whose personal interests lay in preserving peace and trade with the Tibetans, refused to comply with Chiang Kai-Shek’s order. Lung Yun, Governor of Yunan, who had good troops which he did not want to waste on such an adventure, seems to have done the same. Ma Pu-feng, Governor of Chinghai, answered that he was willing to take action if he were provided with arms and ammunition. He moved troops to Jyekundo and beyond, and sent men to Chungking to fetch the promised supplies, of which he seems to have secured fourteen truck-loads. But it is doubtful whether Ma ever intended to take serious action against Tibet, for he too was interested in maintaining his independence, and he may have seized the opportunity of obtaining, in return for a gesture of obedience, military supplies which could be put to more useful purposes than war against Tibet. It was decided that His Majesty’s Ambassador should ask the Chinese Government for an assurance that rumours of troop movements against Tibet were without foundation; that Sheriff, who had succeeded Ludlow at Lhasa, should obtain from the Tibetan Government a denial of aggressive intentions on their part; and that the United States Government should be informed of the situation which contained the possibility that weapons supplied by the United States of America through India for China’s war effort might be used against Tibet; and that their support in deterring the Chinese from aggressive action should be sought. His Majesty’s Ambassador’s approach to the Chinese Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs produced the reply that there was no information about troop movements, and a doctrinaire statement on the thesis that Tibet is part of China. Later informal talks with a confidential go-between made it clear that no lesser official dared to mention the matter to Chiang Kai-Shek who was notoriously sensitive on the subject of China irredenta. We had to content ourselves at Chungking with private assurances that although the Chinese Government did not intend to resort to force they were not prepared to give any formal assurance to that effect, on account of their determination to regard Tibetan politics as Chinese internal affairs. It may not be out of place to note that the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs appears to be maintained principally as a buffer to prevent unwelcome enquiries and unwelcome facts from reaching the notice of the Generalissimo. It is little respected, has little influence, and statements by its officials rarely have a note of authority.

The Tibetan Government gave a denial of aggressive intentions on their part. The State Department of the United States of America enquired from their Charge d’Affaires at Chungking about the facts. It appears that the latter, on it is not known what information or intuition, discounted the stories of Chinese troop concentrations as exaggerated; and that the State Department decided to keep clear of complications by replying that they had no reason to look on Tibet as other than part of the Chinese Republic. But it is possible that a word of warning was given, for when Mr. Churchill met Dr. T. V. Soong the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs (who spends most of his time in the United States of America)
at Washington in May 1943, Dr. Soong said that there neither was, nor would be, any concentration of Chinese troops against Tibet although he claimed that Tibet was part of China. By the end of 1943 tension had decreased, and although no progress had been made in the sphere of ideology, and although the detente may have been mainly due to unwillingness of the border governors to co-operate in Chiang Kai-Shek's imperialistic schemes, we had again made it clear to the Chinese — and the United States of America — that we had an interest in preserving the integrity of Tibet.

105. Some Results of Trans-Tibet Transport

Although Tibet had been threatened and persuaded into concessions, the obstinate adherence of the National Assembly to its idea of neutrality and independence had never been overcome. It had to be side tracked by the Regent and Kashag.

The attention of the United States of America had been drawn to Tibetan affairs, although cursorily and without very satisfactory results. But at least it may be hoped that the State Department has taken notice of Chinese irredentism, Tibetan aspirations for the recognition of the independence which they are actually enjoying, and the nature of British interest in Tibet. In this connection it may be noted that two American officers, Captain Tolstoy and Lieut. Dolan, visited Lhasa as bearers of a letter from President Roosevelt to the Dalai Lama. Permission for their journey, which had been refused when application was made through the Chinese Government, was obtained through the Government of India. When at Lhasa, these officers made the suggestion to the Tibetan Government that Tibet should be represented at the Peace Conference. The Tibetan Government welcomed the idea and it is understood that Captain Tolstoy reported his discussions to the United States Government. In reply to President Roosevelt's letter the Tibetan Government took the opportunity of referring, in well chosen words, to American advocacy of the rights of small nations, and their own desire to remain independent. From Lhasa, Tolstoy and Dolan went to China, and on their journey they received some confirmation of Chinese troop movements in the Jyekundo area, which they are believed to have reported to their Government. In spite of the letter from President Roosevelt their visit seems to have been of rather a free-lance character and too much importance can not be attached to their doings and sayings. Their principal object appears to have been to examine the possibility of constructing a motor road from India to China, but this was not disclosed to the Tibetan Government.

Looking back on the question of Trans-Tibet Transport it is hard to resist the conclusion that its political implications were the chief attraction for the Chinese Government. If they had been solely interested in securing all possible supplies, the most promising approach would have been to ask the Government of India to arrange the carriage of goods through Tibet on their behalf. But this would have been an admission of British influence in Tibet, and the nearest they came to a direct request for help was a vague approach by the Generalissimo's Private Secretary. Their activities were in fact aimed at using us to break the ice and then excluding us from the business. The inevitable result was Tibetan obstruction which produced unfortunate results. The state of calm which had existed on the border since the Communist irruption was brought to an end; and we had once more to resort to protests against Chinese aggressive intentions at a time when our relationship as allies made it difficult and unpleasant to do so. The timely concession by the Regent of Tibet averted the necessity of proceeding to stern measures which might have had a damaging effect on our friendly relations with Tibet.

The traffic across Tibet is now of little practical value to the Chinese Government but is being used by Chinese business firms, under cover of Tibetan contractors, for the export to China of whatever goods they can secure on the Indian market. These goods, if they escape the rapacity of the frontier officials in China, are sold at fantastic profits; and it is not impossible that, along with Chinese political interest in Trans-Tibet Transport, went the interest of commercial firms which hoped to find in it scope for the selfish profiteering of which they had been deprived by the loss of the Burma Road.

In connection with arrangements for traffic across Tibet the Chinese authorities obtained permission to open at Kalimpong a branch of the Bank of China, which had previously established itself at Calcutta. There was also talk of opening branches at Lhasa and at Kanze in Sikang.
Work on the road from Sikang to Chinghai continues, and there seems little doubt that it is intended for political purposes. The Chinese Government have also succeeded in pushing through, by the Rima route, a rather dubious survey party, in spite of previous objections by the Tibetans.

On the Indian side considerable improvements were made on the pack road from Gangtok to the Tibet frontier at the Nathu La.

106. Re-examination of our Attitude Towards Chinese Suzerainty over Tibet.

Another result of the Chinese attitude towards Tibet and towards ourselves in Tibetan affairs was the reconsideration of our views on China's suzerainty over Tibet.

This subject will be treated more fully in an appendix.

Put as briefly as possible the position is that, at least from the middle of the 19th century until 1912, Tibet was for all practical purposes independent in spite of the presence of a Chinese Amban at Lhasa. The treaty between Tibet and Nepal in 1856 was concluded without Chinese participation; and at our invasion of Tibet in 1904 we concluded a treaty directly with the Tibetan Government. We recognised a special relationship between China and Tibet by confirming that treaty in a subsequent agreement with China in 1906.

During this period the Tibetans refused to recognise the treaties of 1890 and 1906 to which they were not parties, and denied both Chinese sovereignty and suzerainty.

The Revolution of 1911-1912 put an end to the brief attempt by the Chinese to establish complete control in Tibet in which they had taken advantage of the confusion following our invasion of Tibet and subsequent withdrawal. Chinese authority vanished from Tibet, and since then Tibet has continued to conduct external relations with the Government of India and with Nepal without any reference to China.

On our side we have since 1912 acknowledged Chinese suzerainty over Tibet on several occasions, but have made it clear that we do not recognise the right of China to interfere in the internal affairs of Tibet. Since 1921 we have openly recognised Tibet as autonomous in all respects and have dealt with her without reference to China.

The Tibetan Government were neither informed nor consulted about any of our statements on the subject of China's suzerainty, and has continued to claim full independence and to deny Chinese suzerainty. The existence of a special relationship was admitted — that of Lama and disciple — and Tibet was willing to convert this into a formal recognition of suzerainty in exchange for a formal recognition of her autonomy, and a fixed boundary.

Between 1912 and 1919 the Chinese were willing to acknowledge Tibetan autonomy in exchange for the recognition of Chinese suzerainty, but disagreement on the frontier question prevented any settlement being reached. Since 1919 the growth of nationalist ideas under Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-Shek has led to a hardening of opinion; and now the official Chinese view is that Tibet is a part of China which has temporarily broken away from control. Any attempts by us to discuss Tibetan affairs are resented on the ground that they are a Chinese domestic concern; and, although the Chinese Government have expressed the intention not to alter the existing state of affairs by which Tibet deals with its own internal affairs, they are not prepared to give any formal assurance to that effect.

Thus, the relation which we have professed to recognise between China and Tibet is not recognised by either of these countries.

Although Mr. Churchill had told Dr. Soong at the Pacific Conference at Washington in 1943 that "no one contested Chinese suzerainty over Tibet", the Chinese attitude to Tibet which had become apparent in the discussion of Trans-Tibet Transport caused His Majesty's Government to review the situation and to take up a new position. It was decided to withdraw our acceptance of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet and to make it clear that we were only prepared to accord that recognition on the understanding that Tibet was regarded as autonomous. A memorandum to that effect, which was given by Mr. Eden to Dr. Soong in August 1943, also contained an offer of help in arriving at a settlement between China and Tibet on those lines.

Nothing was said to the Tibetan Government about these exchanges.
Greater attention was paid to affairs in Western Tibet, which was visited in 1942 by Capt. Saker, British Trade Agent, Gyantse and in 1943 by Rai Sahib Sonam Tobden, who was specially appointed British Trade Agent, Gartok.

Western Tibet is a long way from Lhasa and Tibetan officials there are very independent. Our interest has formerly been in the hands of British Trade Agents who have toured the country only in the summer months, and who have not been of a status to command very great attention either in Tibet or in India. In their interpretation of the complex Trade Regulations they have on the whole been apt to claim for British subjects greater rights than a close reading of the Regulations might warrant, and have been unable to put their claims into force. And so, from West Tibet has come a long series of complaints about despotic behaviour and illegal exactions on the part of the local Tibetan officials.

These have from time to time been taken up with the Tibetan Government who have regularly answered that they will instruct their officials not to introduce any new system.

There is a number of interesting reports by British Officers who have visited West Tibet. These reports, which will be summarised in a special appendix, show the persistence of conditions which probably go back to a time long before there was any British contact with Lhasa. Every year some 12,000 British subjects, including 2,400 traders, from various hill communities of the border visit West Tibet by a number of different routes. Different sections trade by long established usage at different markets in Tibet, and jealously exclude other persons from their own preserve. These markets are not Trade Marts. Only Gartok is a Trade Mart within the meaning of the Trade Regulations, and hardly any trade is carried on there.

Interpretation of the Trade Regulations in their application to the conditions of West Tibet is a complicated problem.

British subjects have a right of access only to the Trade Mart at Gartok. When disputes arise or offences are committed at the Trade Marts or on the routes to the Trade Marts they can claim the protection of the Trade Regulations in the matter of the trial of such cases.

There is specific protection of trade by routes existing before 1904; and there is no specific bar against trading at other places such as was contained in the Trade Regulations of 1908. But it is not clear what distinction is implied between trade "by routes" and trade at markets. Nor is it clear whether traders who have never gone to Gartok, and never intend to go to Gartok, can claim to be on the route to a Trade Mart, on the assumption that "all roads lead to Gartok".

The provision in the Trade Regulations that trade shall be carried on without vexatious restrictions seems to be of general application both to places where trade is carried on of right, and where it is carried on by permission. But it is doubtful to what extent long standing taxes and miscellaneous dues levied by local officials at markets in West Tibet can be regarded as vexatious or illegal exactions.

These and other problems have been submitted to the Government of India by Sir Basil Gould, for interpretation.

Whatever may be the answer it is improbable that any rapid change in the existing system is likely to be effected by representations at Lhasa; and, if we were to attempt to force upon the Tibetan Government an interpretation of the Regulations that differed greatly from theirs, the consequences might be more damaging to trade and to good relations than the continuance of the existing practice which has not deterred British subjects from carrying on their trade in West Tibet or from excluding other British subjects from their lawful share in it.

If it is decided that the Trade Regulations confer extra-territorial rights upon all the British subjects who now visit the many markets of West Tibet it will be necessary to consider whether without a great increase of staff and administrative arrangements we would be able effectively to supersede the present system by which a large number of disputes between British and Tibetan traders are decided in the first instance by local Tibetan officials. It would also be necessary to consider to what extent it might be advisable to insist on the full assumption of a right which inevitably bears in it the seeds of resentment by the people of the country where it is exercised, and which in other parts of the world is coming to be regarded as an outmoded relic of Imperialism.
Our Position in West Tibet is Potentially Very Strong

West Tibet depends for its wheat supplies almost entirely on the India traders who on their part buy, or take in exchange, wool, salt and borax. The trade therefore seems to be more important for Tibet than for India, and it is possible that questions of extra-territoriality could be minimised, and business regularised and developed, perhaps in different hands from those that now conduct it, by an attempt to draw the centre of gravity from Tibet to India, and to make the Tibetans bring their goods to an Indian market. In this connection Gould has suggested the improvement of the road to Garbyang which lies in British territory less than 30 miles from Taklakot, the most important market in West Tibet, from which it is separated by a pass described by Cassels in 1906 as “ridiculously easy”.

108. Tibetan Wool

Central and Eastern Tibet

Raw wool constitutes some 90 per cent. of the export trade from Central and Eastern Tibet to India. It is a somewhat harsh wool, with a very low percentage of grease. The wool is cleaned by hand, sorted, and baled at Kalimpong. There are no records of the amount actually brought down year by year but there are exact records of the amounts put on rail at Kalimpong. These have varied between 25,000 maunds in 1930–31 and 155,000 maunds in 1939–40. Prices fluctuate greatly and rapidly, minima and maxima in recent years having per pound, C. & F. U.S.A., 5 to $1, pence per pound in 1934–35 and as much as 15 pence per pound on six occasions since 1926–27.

Mules which have brought wool to the market carry back necessities and trade goods to Tibet. When prices are low most of the wool is stored in Tibet until conditions improve, but if transport is cheap, considerable quantities are brought down for storage at Kalimpong.

During the war of 1914–1918 the Government of India at first imposed an embargo on the export of wool. Later they established Government buyers at Kalimpong with the sole right to buy all the wool coming out of Tibet, at a fixed price. The Government of India thought this might be held to be a breach of the Trade Regulations but it caused no protest because the control price was higher than the prices which had prevailed for the past few years. The system worked well.

Again in 1939, on the outbreak of war, an embargo was imposed, and it was proposed to allow exports only on license. It was pointed out by the Political Officer in Sikkim that most of the wool normally went to the U.S.A.; that, if a quota were to be granted to shippers irrespective of place of origin, other wool might take the place of Tibetan wool in actual shipments; that, if the quota permissible for shipment were less than the amount offering, producers and merchants in Tibet would be at the mercy of quota holders; and that if, as was suggested, only a percentage of the probable value were to be paid at the time of despatch and the balance after estimation of value at port of destination, the balance would not reach the pockets of the producers and merchants in Tibet. Wool prices at Kalimpong rose very sharply at the end of 1939 owing to heavy purchases by a Dutch buyer, apparently for the U.S.A. It was considered whether all restrictions on the export of Tibet wool should be removed, or whether His Majesty’s Government should purchase the whole clip. Arguments against the latter course were the prevailing high prices which would have made the fixing of a control price difficult and the fact that Indian mills had not been using Tibetan wool for about ten years, and had hopes of getting an adequate supply of Australian wool. The Government of India also remembered their treaty obligations to Tibet. It was decided to allow unrestricted export of Tibetan wool, to neutral countries. This was later qualified by requiring that all exports of Tibet wool should go from Calcutta in order to prevent Indian wool from being exported in the guise of Tibetan wool.

From 1939 until the end of 1941 large quantities of wool were exported to the U.S.A. and high prices were obtained. The maximum quantity exported was 155,000 maunds, and the highest price was Rs. 60 per maund for raw wool on arrival at Kalimpong. The entry of Japan into the war stopped exports to the U.S.A. and imports of Australian wool into India. The stocks of Indian mills ran low and the Government of India’s interest in Tibetan wool was renewed. They decided to buy up to 40,000 maunds of wool at once at a price which would include a political element for the purpose of retaining Tibetan good-will. It appeared
at that time that the whole of the Tibetan wool clip would be needed for the duration of the war.

This decision coincided with difficulties over Chinese anxiety to open roads through Tibet, and the Political Officer in Sikkim recommended that precipitate buying should be avoided so that we might retain a valuable economic weapon for removing Tibetan objections. But the need was apparently so great that about 30,000 maunds were purchased by May 1942. More was required but the purchase was delayed until the autumn; and when buying was undertaken the Indian merchants proved obstructive; and, although 80,000 maunds were needed, it was only possible to contract for half that amount, by direct purchase from the Tibetans.

These were not Government purchases, as in the last war, but were purchases by private buyers. The Government was interested in controlling the price and in providing rail transport.

By the end of 1942 it began to appear that the Indian demand for Tibetan wool might not be so great as had been anticipated. The military authorities who took most of the output of the mills did not approve of the quality of cloth in which there was a mixture of Tibetan wool, and agreed to this admixture only as a temporary expedient. It seemed probable that supplies of Australian wool would be renewed.

There were difficulties about the export of wool to the U.S.A. on account of a shipping shortage, and the prospect of a steady demand and a steady price for Tibetan wool did not look good. The Political Officer in Sikkim proposed that for political reasons the Government of India should appoint agents to buy the whole Tibetan clip for the rest of the war and so ensure stable conditions in the Tibetan market. The wool could be used as a strategic reserve.

In 1943 the anticipated slackening in the Indian demand for Tibetan wool became a fact. There was less need for items of military clothing in which this wool was used, and in addition there were complaints from the mills that the wool was hard on needles. Indian mills were not anxious to lay up a reserve of Tibetan wool which they would not want to use after the war, and which they might not be able to sell at the prices they had paid. Nor were the Government of India disposed to buy the whole clip, for fear of introducing inflationary tendencies.

A suggestion that the U.S.S.R. might need Tibetan wool was examined but came to nothing.

The Tibetan sellers delivered 45,000 maunds of wool against their 1942 contracts. It is understood that, apart from the fact that the wool was inevitably inferior to Australian cross-bred, the mills found the wool to be fully up to specification and that not a single objection was raised by them on account of uneven quality. But it appeared that rising costs of transport might make it necessary to pay higher prices for any future purchases, except for wool already stored at Kalimpong.

Towards the end of the year, news that wool was being exported to the U.S.A. from Bombay and Karachi made it appear possible that an outlet might again be found from Calcutta for Tibetan wool. The Political Officer in Sikkim asked that shipping facilities should be made available; and recent requests from Tibetan sellers for hoop iron for baling make it probable that export is being resumed.

Small-scale experiments in the introduction of near-Merino blood have resulted in the production of a small quantity of wool which has been classed by the Cawnpore Woollen Mills as Super Cross-bred. In view of the fact that good wool is more readily saleable than coarse wool; and of the high cost of animal transport in Tibet, it will be worthwhile to experiment further on these lines.

Western Tibetan Wool

From Western Tibet also wool is the principle article of export. It is difficult to estimate the amount which is exported owing to the facts that it is exported by many routes, that a considerable portion of it is consumed in areas adjacent to the Tibetan Frontier, and that, being of somewhat better quality than the wool of Central Tibet, it is often bought by various woollen mills in India. Part of it is possibly exported from India as East Indian wool.
109. Exports to Tibet. 1930–1944

Wartime legislation forbids the export to Tibet without license of goods of which the export from India has been controlled. But, for a variety of reasons, including the absence of adequate machinery, the Export Regulations have not been enforced for goods destined for Tibet, and no license is in fact required for such goods.

In order to prevent the pretext of Tibetan trade from being used for the passage of unlicensed goods to China, consignments are liable to examination at Kalimpong, where the customs staff have discretion to detain anything that appears to them to be in excess of Tibet’s normal requirements.

Difficulties of purchasing what Tibet normally needs for internal consumption, such as iron, steel, copper, metalware, broadcloth, sugar, etc., have reduced the possibilities of export; but in order to keep up the flow of trade, whatever can be purchased in India is being exported. High prices offered by the Chinese, both in Lhasa and in China, make it probable that even such goods as might be considered to be Tibet’s normal requirements will be drawn to China.

It is arguable that such things as khaki drill in large quantities are not normal requirements of Tibet; and it is on such arguments and on information provided by “intercepts” that the Customs staff at Kalimpong is proceeding. Such messages often show that consignments for China are being booked as for Tibet. In a few such cases consignments have been detained; but the Customs have inadequate staff and machinery for any detailed preventive work, and are unable to prevent goods leaving Kalimpong at night, or in small consignments.

There is no evidence that the Tibet route to China is being used on any large scale for the export of valuable goods of foreign origin which it is particularly desirable to retain in India such as medicine, dyes, watches, etc. The bulk of the demand seems to be for cotton yarn and piecegoods.

In May 1944 the Government of India agreed, as an experimental measure, to remove customs restrictions at Kalimpong and to permit free export to Tibet of about 3,500 tons of goods a year.

110. Gunnery Training and Supply of Ammunition for Tibet. 1943

In 1943 fear of trouble with China led the Tibetan Government to ask that some of their troops might be trained in the use of 2.75 Mountain Guns of which they had bought four from the Government of India in 1937. A little later they asked for the supply of some arms and ammunition.

The Government of India agreed that gunnery training might be given at Gyantse, and a detachment of eighteen men including two officers and some N.C.O.s. was sent down in the autumn of 1943. This party was reported to have worked very well and with great keenness.

In December 1943 G.H.Q. allowed an ordinance expert to visit Tibet in order to examine the mountain guns and see whether they were fit to fire. He reached Lhasa early in 1944 and found that the guns, which had never been unpacked since their receipt in 1937, were in good order owing to the dry climate of Tibet. He overhauled the guns, and a demonstration of firing took place at which many Tibetan officials and the Chinese officers at Lhasa attended. The results were better than might have been expected, and the target was well hit.

It is an old Tibetan shortcoming that, when there is no imminent danger, they let military affairs slide and seem to derive confidence from the mere possession of weapons. There is also reluctance to make proper use of officers who have military experience, with the result that any official, picked at random, may be turned into an officer. But when the authorities allow their troops to receive training it is seen that the Tibetan soldier is keen and intelligent and can be made a good marksman.

The importance of regular maintenance has not yet been appreciated, nor is there available in Tibet the technical knowledge or equipment to maintain complicated weapons.

The Tibetan Government’s request for munitions included Bren guns, Lewis guns or machine guns in addition to a supply of ammunition. The Political Officer in Sikkim provided a list of supplies already made which showed that the quantity of ammunition sold to the
Tibetan Government fell short of the maximum which the Government of India had promised in 1921. The Tibetan Government had paid for all that they had received. The Political Officer in Sikkim recommended a reasonable supply of munitions.

The Government of India informed His Majesty's Government that it would be possible to supply five million rounds of Mark VII small arms munition and some obsolete gun ammunition that would be suitable for the mountain guns. They considered that, in order to avoid the charge that material was being diverted from the war effort for possible use against China, it would be preferable to wait until after the war, when a considerable supply might be made to Tibet.

In the meantime the Tibetan Government reported that their existing supplies of ammunition were almost exhausted.

His Majesty's Government decided that no new arms could be supplied but that a reasonable quantity of ammunition should be made available. They were prepared to meet any Chinese objections by referring to the established practice of supplying Tibet with its needs for self-defence and police work. On hearing of this decision the Tibetan Government, who appear not to have great hopes of getting any supplies, were unmistakably pleased and grateful. The ammunition reached Sikkim at the end of December 1943, and is now on its way up to Tibet.

111. Wireless Equipment for the Tibetan Government

At the time of Sir Basil Gould's Mission to Lhasa in 1936 the possibility was considered of supplying the Tibetan Government with wireless equipment to enable them to establish speedy communication with their outlying officials, but nothing came of it.

When tension between Tibet and China over the question of Trans-Tibet transport increased, the question assumed a new importance, especially when it was known that in 1942 Chinese troops from Sining penetrated into Tibet almost as far as Nagchuka before the Tibetan Government received any news of their movements.

When Captain Tolstoy and Lieutenant Dolan, envoys from the President of the United States of America, were at Lhasa in 1942 they discussed with the Tibetan Government the supply of wireless sets for the establishment of stations at Lhasa, Chiamdo, Gartok, Nagchuka, Tsona and Rima, and they recommended to their government that equipment should be provided as a gift from United States of America. In sending on the correspondence about these conversations to the Government of India, Sir Basil Gould suggested that we should not leave the matter entirely to the Americans. The Government of India agreed to supply on payment, two training sets with charging machines. These reached Sikkim in January 1944.

The United States Government has made a present of 3 transmitting and 5 receiving sets to the Tibetan Government and these arrived in February 1944.

In the meantime, the Government of India had agreed that arrangements to train wireless operators might be made by the British Mission at Lhasa. Some young Tibetan officials are attending daily at the Mission for instruction in wireless telegraphy and in the maintenance of wireless sets. The Tibetan Government have shown great eagerness to get the equipment as soon as possible, but it is probable that they do not fully appreciate the difficulties there will be in setting up an efficient wireless network. The officials who are undergoing training are reported to be very keen, but they are few in number and have no technical background, and the very small number of Tibetans who know any English limits the choice of suitable people to train.

112. Education

Since the closing of the English school at Gyantse in 1926 Tibetans took little interest in English education. Tsarong Shape, always progressive and an admirer of British institutions, sent his children to school at Darjeeling, and a very few officials followed his example. No attempt was made to force on the Tibetans anything that they did not want, but one effect of the continued presence of a British mission at Lhasa was a greater interest in English.

Some officials asked members of the Mission staff to teach their children English; and in 1938 the Regent asked for a few boys to be taught enough English and Hindustani for them
to be useful to him in his trading ventures in India. A small school was set up but it was attended only by boys of the trading community.

In 1942, at the time of its difficulties with China, the Tibetan Government wanted to establish its own wireless communications with East Tibet, and asked for the supply of equipment.

The need for English in this and in other matters where they came into contact with the outside world seems to have convinced the Tibetan Government that something had to be done and in January 1944 they informed Sherriff that they intended to open an English school at Lhasa, and asked for help in finding a suitable headmaster.

This is now under consideration. The military authorities have been asked to explore the possibility of finding a suitable person in their educational service; and it is possible that a scheme of education for Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan may be co-ordinated.

The prospects for an English school at Lhasa are much brighter than were those of the school at Gyantse. Tibetan officials, who are accustomed to keeping their children with them, will not need to send their sons away from home, and they will be able to see that in addition to learning English the boys do not neglect their Tibetan studies. The school will probably be only for sons of officials, and there may still be a necessity for maintaining another school for the traders; but that is a question for the future.

113. British Propaganda in Tibet

The broad aims of British policy in Tibet are to help Tibet to remain independent, and to preserve and improve the existing good relations.

Towards the former end, we supply Tibet so far as is possible with the material help for which we are asked. Very little is done to suggest to the Tibetans things that we consider might be good for them. Experience has shown that the Tibetan public is apt to be suspicious even of those innovations which their own government may introduce. We recognise and foster unostentatiously Tibet's de facto independence by dealing directly with the Tibetan Government to whom we refer all attempts by the Chinese Government to deal with us to the exclusion of the Tibetans.

It has recently been suggested that Tibet's status might be improved in the eyes of the world by the appointment of a Tibetan representative in India. His Majesty's Government did not wholly approve of the idea which might lead to trouble if China were later to absorb Tibet. But hints were dropped at Lhasa and were well received. It would be necessary to avoid according diplomatic status to a Tibetan representative in India. There has been a suggestion that Pangdatshang, the Tibetan Trade Agent, Yatung, might be selected, but he is too much concerned in his big trading business to be a suitable choice from our point of view. As yet there have been no formal proposals from the Tibetan Government, so no details have been considered. Such developments as President Roosevelt's letter to the Dalai Lama are steps towards the recognition by other powers of the autonomy of Tibet. There was a similar act of recognition when an American Army aeroplane crashed in Tibet toward the end of 1943. The Head of the United States Mission in India sent a message of thanks to the Tibetan Government for the help which they had given in rescuing the airmen. It was also stated that American aviators had been ordered to avoid flying over Tibetan territory.

In order to carry out the second main line of policy, and maintain friendly relations, we do not need to try to make any radical change in Tibetan opinion. The good will is there. We need to retain and expand it.

Our activities in this field which, for want of a better word, may be called propaganda are confined to the provision of straightforward news about the war, out resources, successes, and certainty of victory. This is done in conversation, by circulating summaries of the B.B.C. broadcasts, by a Tibetan newspaper published at Kalimpong with a small subsidy, and by news films.

The Chinese have recently increased their broadcasts in Tibetan in which they seek to make the Tibetans feel that they belong to China. We have not yet succeeded in arranging broadcasts in Tibetan from India in answer to this, and if we were to do so our object would be not so much to controvert Chinese claims by direct argument, as to divert attention from their programmes by providing a superior counter-attraction, and to show that the Chinese have not a monopoly of the air.
The fact that there are only a few radio receiving sets in Lhasa should not be allowed to obscure the importance of this activity. News travels fast in Lhasa, and the possessors of sets are persons likely to influence opinion.

The quality of the men we send to Tibet for political, medical, military and educational work, and the quality of whatever material and equipment we may supply to Tibet will always have an important effect on Tibetan opinion.

The special value of medical work in improving our relations with the Tibetans has been shown by experience. The Tibetans are all keen traders, and anything that we can do to improve conditions of the wool trade, on which much of their prosperity depends, is likely to have a return in good-will.

114. Chinese Propaganda in Tibet

China’s aim is to establish control over Tibet. In so far as she seeks to do this by propaganda, the problem is to effect a radical change in the Tibetan attitude. The method is largely to present Chinese hopes as accomplished facts, and to keep on assuring the Tibetans that they are members of the Chinese state. Other more practical activities are the education of border Tibetans and their employment as Chinese officials; teaching Chinese Buddhists Tibetan with the view to using them as missionaries in Tibet; the use of discontented and exiled Tibetans as propaganda agents; presents to Tibetan monasteries and officials, and, possibly, attempts to buy over some officials; the establishment of a school and a wireless transmitter at Lhasa.

Much of Chinese propaganda, treating hopes as facts, is directed at the foreign press. Here the Chinese have the field to themselves and they have taken advantage of Tibetan inarticulateness to present to the world a stream of tendentious wish-projections in the guise of facts.

Their publications speak of Tibetan affairs as a Chinese domestic concern, and claim a control over events in Tibet which is quite at variance with the truth. They also seek to represent Tibet as a supporter and well-wisher of China. The old slogan of the Unity of the Five Races is now being replaced by a new theory. It is claimed that there is only one Chinese race, of which Tibetans, Mongols, Manchus and Tungans are tribes. This is obviously planned to avoid any talk of self-determination for Tibet and the rest of them, to which the old theory might seem to commit Chinese politicians who have voiced their approval of the Atlantic Charter.

So-called representatives of Tibet have been appointed to this Chinese Peoples Political Council and every opportunity is taken of publicising expressions of loyalty from Tibetans living in the Chinese provinces of Chinghai and Sikang as expressions of loyalty from all Tibet. In this matter the Tibetan Government, in addition to being inarticulate, is ill served. The Tibetan representative in Chunking appears to be very much in the pocket of the Chinese, and lately he provided the Chinese with some useful material in a message, which purported to come from the Tibetan Government, congratulating Chiang Kai-Shek on his inauguration as President of the Chinese Republic.

The message which referred to Chiang as “President of Our Republic and leader of our armed forces” seems to have been composed by the Tibetan representative without detailed reference to the Tibetan Government who had only instructed him to send a congratulatory message. In matters of this sort the Tibetan Government do not appear to be aware of the importance of world opinion, or the power of the press, and they do not appear at once to have realised the possible effects of the message.

For a long time the Chinese have had their own way in presenting a tendentious picture through their maps of China. Not only do Chinese maps show Tibet as a part of China, and the boundary between Sikang and Tibet as falling far west of the de facto frontier, but they also show the boundary of China with India in Assam as running only a short distance north of the Brahmaputra. Although we cannot share the Tibetans’ excuse of ignorance we have even helped in this misrepresentation by permitting British cartographers to show similar boundaries; and a distinguished offender is the map painted on the wall of the Council Chamber of His Excellency the Viceroy. This matter which had been raised once in 1938 was again discussed in 1943 and guidance was given to British cartographers with regard to the position of the Indo-Tibetan frontier; they were also advised to show the boundaries between Chinese provinces and Tibet in a different manner from that in which inter-provincial boundaries were shown. For the boundary between Sikang and Tibet; the line of the Chinese offer of 1919, appears to have been accepted by the Government of India. This differs slightly from
the de facto position in that the Tibetans are in occupation of all territory on the west bank of
the upper Yangtse from a short way north of Batang to a short way south of Jyekundo, and
are also in possession of Yakkalo on the Mekong. No decision appears to have been reached
as to where the boundary between Chinghai and Tibet should be shown.

115. Chinese Representative at Lhasa

The unsatisfactory relations between Dr. Kung, the Chinese representative at Lhasa, and the
Tibetan Government have been mentioned in paras. 95 and 98.

The Chinese Government have recently decided to send a new official in place of Dr. Kung
and have chosen Mr. Shen Tsung-lien who was a member of a Chinese Educational Mission
which visited India in February 1943.

It is understood that the Chinese Government have asked the Tibetan Government to make
transport arrangements for Mr. Shen who proposes to travel via India, but that the Tibetan
Government have replied that they would like an assurance that the new representative will
not make any trouble before they agree to receive him. They probably mean that they expect
the new man to deal with the Tibetan Foreign Office, which Kung refused to do.

The Government of India agree to arrange facilities for Mr. Shen’s journey from Calcutta
to the Indo-Tibetan border, and informed the Tibetan Government that this was done in ac-
cordance with international practice.

Mr. Shen seems to be a quiet scholarly individual, far superior in intellect to Dr. Kung
and therefore potentially more dangerous. He appears likely to be rather out of his element
at Lhasa, but the Chinese abroad are different from the Chinese at home. Witness, Mr. Wu
Chung-Hsin, who is a very inconspicuous figure at Chungking, but who assumed much of
the state of the old Ambans when he visited Lhasa for the Installation of the Dalai Lama.

116. Reincarnation of the Tashi Lama

In accordance with Tibetan practice, search parties went out some time after the death of the
Tashi Lama to look for his reincarnation. By 1942, ten candidates had been found, but none
of them appeared to be satisfactory, and a further search was ordered. It seemed that the Ti-
betan Government was determined that the child should be discovered in Tibetan territory;
but nothing definite was heard until April 1943 when it was reported from Chungking that
the reincarnation had been found at Litang in Sikang. This was denied by an official of Tashi
Lhunpo, from whom it was learnt that there were three promising candidates, from Litang,
Amdo, and Nagchuka. The first two places are in the Chinese provinces of Sikang and
Chinghai respectively. No doubt, the Governors of these provinces (Liu Wen-hui and Ma
Pu-feng), who understood the possibilities of acquiring influence in Tibet through a connection
with the Tashi Lama and his family, were exerting themselves to effect the desired result. The
Central Government, too, took an interest in the matter. It seems that in 1940 or 1941 they
had asked the Tibetan Government to inform them about the choice of the Tashi Lama’s rein-
carnation, and it was reported in 1943 that the Chinese representative at Lhasa suggested
to the Tibetan Government that they should discuss the matter with him. When this was known,
the Political Officer in Sikkim proposed to the Government of India that, as the choice
of a Tashi Lama seemed to be analogous to the choice of a Dalai Lama, it should be considered
whether we should hint to the Tibetan Government that this should be treated as a Tibetan
domestic matter and Chinese interference should be excluded in accordance with Art. II of
the 1914 Convention. No decision seems to have been reached on this suggestion, and in Feb-
uary 1944 it was announced from Chungking that the new Tashi Lama — presumably the
Litang candidate — had been acknowledged and enthroned on February 8th.

Details are lacking, but it appears that the ceremony was performed by Lobsang Gyantsen,
a Member of the Chinese Central Executive Committee, who was an official of the late Tashi
Lama. It may therefore be assumed that the ceremony took place in Chinese territory. The
Tibetan Government have not yet given us any information about this development.

It is possible that the Chinese Government or the provincial Governor has persuaded the
Tibetan Government of the claims of one of their candidates, and that the Tibetan Govern-
ment may have hoped to keep the matter secret and, as they did in the case of the Dalai Lama,
to get the child away from Chinese hands before making any formal acknowledgement.
On the other hand it is possible that this discovery has been arranged by the Chinese Government in collusion with the discontented members of the Tashi Lama’s staff who were formerly willing to bring this late Tashi Lama back to Tibet with a Chinese bodyguard.

If that is so, the Chinese Government may be prepared to make an attempt to force their candidate on the Tibetan Government, and even to set him up as a pretender to temporal power in Tibet. The Chinese Year Book, 1943, an officially sponsored publication, contains propaganda designed to prepare the ground for such a policy by suggesting that the Tashi Lama has a right to be considered as a possible ruler of Tibet. But, whatever is the case, the thorny problem of a Chinese escort seems likely to arise again.

On the whole, the most probable theory is that the Tibetan Government are prepared to accept the Chinese candidate, and that the Chinese have outmanoeuvred them. If that proves to be true, the Tibetan Government will try to postpone the issue, because this year (1944) is reckoned unlucky and is wholly inauspicious for such an event as the installation of a high Lama.

Chapter XIV — The Problem in Retrospect and Prospect

117. Tibetans and Chinese

Chiang Kai-Shek’s recent special pleading that the Tibetans, along with the Mongols, Manchus and Tungans, are tribes of a single Chinese Race compares ill with the former Chinese theory that these were Five Races, united by some spiritual bond. Racial theories nowadays have political objects, and Chiang’s new theory seems to be no exception.

It is not proposed to examine here the differences in social structure, customs, or language between the Chinese and Tibetans, or the extent to which Chinese culture has influenced Tibetan life, but only to bring together some examples of differences and resemblances in Chinese and Tibetan behaviour which appear from reading the history of the years under review, and from a short acquaintance with Tibet and a shorter with China.

The Tibetans are fundamentally religious. Their country and their faith are inextricably mingled in their thoughts. They may be dominated by a mediaeval and superstitious hierarchic system, but that has kept them united. The Chinese have never fought for religion and have never been united by religion. They have accepted it in many forms with a philosophic tolerance, and now, for the most part, appear to disregard it.

But the Chinese tolerance of religious ideas has not extended to tolerance of foreigners. The xenophobia of the Chinese Empire was inherited by Sun Yat-sen and has its manifestations to-day.

The Chinese never seem quite able to get over their “5,000 years of culture” on which they harp persistently and which seems to have brought them to view the ways of foreigners as inferior without exception. Tibetan exclusion of strangers is probably due to fears for their religion. They have a comfortable feeling of superiority in that respect, but in other matters although they are, by Western standards, grossly ignorant, and although they have a consecutive love of their own ways, they are open-minded and prepared to see the good in other people’s customs and ideas. In their dealings with strangers the Tibetans can be as deliberate, obstinate, secretive and irrelevant as any Chinese; but they have a great regard for the truth. They prefer to procrastinate or to keep quiet rather than to tell a lie. Chinese standards appear to be more flexible. They have no objection to a useful lie, and their flights of imagination make it difficult to define the border between wish and fact. This tendency is wholly absent from the Tibetan mind.

Tibetans can be callous and brutal on occasion. But records of the fighting in East Tibet in 1917–1918 make it appear that they never indulged in the indiscriminate savagery to prisoners or civilians of which the Chinese were guilty. Both in 1912 and in 1918 their prisoners received better treatment than Tibetan prisoners could have hoped for at Chinese hands.

The Tibetan mind does not seem to compare in quickness, ingenuity and versatility with the Chinese mind. But Tibetans can be sound and thorough thinkers as was proved by Lonchen Shatra’s advocacy of the Tibetan case at Simla in 1913–1914. In practical matters they are quick to learn and competent in execution. The Chinese appear to treat the granting of one favour
as only a step towards asking another. The Tibetans are perhaps inclined to adopt the same attitude in personal matters; but they have a national memory of things for which they are grateful — and of things they cannot forgive. The behaviour of the British Expedition to Lhasa in 1904 is still remembered with approval, and the treatment of the Dalai Lama during his exile in India established a strong bond of sentiment and friendship between Britain and Tibet. On the other hand the memory of Chao Erh-feng's destruction of monasteries in East Tibet, and of the Chinese soldiers who made boot soles out of sacred books, has not yet died. These feelings have their source in the fountainhead of religion which fills the bulk of Tibetan thought.

The Tibetans remain mediaeval, feudal and backward. Their hesitation to bring themselves up to date, and to make any serious attempt to put their limited resources to the best use, or to organise themselves in a way which might enable them to meet modern dangers on a more equal footing, and their delays and deliberation, may all be irritating in a rapidly moving world.

The Chinese are now in the process of modernising themselves, and they make a glib use of the vocabulary of western liberal ideas; but in their dealings with the Tibetans their attitude does not appear to have changed. Under the Empire, the Tibetans were described and treated as barbarians, and even to-day that attitude of superiority persists. Mr. Wu left no doubts about his view of Tibetan inferiority, and it is known that a similar attitude prevails in Chinese schools where Tibetans are admitted. This attitude is a great obstacle to good relations between Tibetans and Chinese, and it appears that if the Chinese could bring themselves to treat the Tibetans with more equality and friendship they would be able to make some progress in winning over the Tibetans by peaceful methods. But their superiority and their imperial longings seem to go hand in hand, and they cannot give up one without giving up the other.

This brief comparison is based on a very slight acquaintance with the Chinese to whom it is probably unfair. It is intended rather to show some of the mental factors that underlie our dealings with the Tibetans, and to bring out that they are, on the whole, quite reasonable neighbours. What follows is an attempt to see the situation more from the Chinese point of view.

The Chinese more, perhaps, than any other people have a mystic reverence for the past which leads them to cling with tenacity to their historic claims over any territory that has at any time formed part of their dominions and, with the fervour of faith, to believe that any people that have once been united to them must in fact still desire that unity, whatever the appearances may be. The proved power of China to absorb its conquerors has strengthened that belief.

In the relations of China with Tibet there is plenty of food for such mysticism. Claims based on the conquests of Genghiz Khan appear ill-founded; and the link between China and Tibet began with the establishment of priest-kings in Tibet by Khublai Khan, the Mongol conqueror of China. The connection of Tibet with China during the Mongol Yuen Dynasty was close and, after the Ming Dynasty had driven out the Yuen, a formal relationship continued, although the power of the evicted Mongols prevented the Chinese Emperors from taking an active part in Tibetan affairs. Still, it was advisable for the rulers of Tibet to placate the Chinese Emperor with gifts and courtesies which might easily be interpreted as tribute.

The internal dissensions of Tibet in the Eighteenth Century laid the country open to invasion by Dzungarian Tatars; and it was in the guise of protectors of religion that a Chinese army gained a footing in Lhasa. It is a Chinese claim that the Tibetans asked for the appointment of Ambans at Lhasa, and one of the factions at Lhasa did very probably ask for this support against its rivals. To convert such a position into the establishment of a Province was an easy step for a power which was provided with a large army. Moreover there was assistance in the religious theory by which the Manchu Emperor, with all the divine trappings of the Son of Heaven, figured as protector and, in Tibetan eyes, as disciple of the God-King of Tibet.

In the early days of the Manchu Empire Chinese protection of Tibet was a reality. Chinese armies routed the upstart Gorkha conquerors of Nepal when they sought to dominate Tibet in 1792. And in 1841-1842 Chinese armies again saved Tibet by driving out the invading force sent by Maharaja Gulab Singh of Kashmir under his general, Zorawar Shah.
Manchu rule in Tibet was light, and although it was never popular with the caste which had been accustomed to govern Tibet, there were suggestions, at the time of the Revolution, that the common people of Tibet would miss the protection from oppression be the aristocracy which the Ambans had provided.

So long as appearances were preserved and the tribute came in, it mattered little to Peking what happened in so distant a province as Tibet. But when British intrusion made it public that Chinese influence at Lhasa had become a fiction, and showed that the former conditions could not be continued, it became necessary for the Chinese Emperor to take forceful steps to preserve the unity of the Empire. Chao Erh-feng's vigorous campaigns came very near to transforming Chinese authority in Tibet from a hazy immanence into an undoubted domination; but they also sowed a bitterness which is not yet purged from Tibetan relations with China.

The Revolution and its consequences in Tibet appear in Chinese eyes as a small and transitory incident. The Chinese claim over Tibet was never allowed to lapse, although internal troubles prevented it from being enforced and dictated a somewhat conciliatory attitude. The Chinese case in 1913-1914 rested largely on the recent conquests which provided an excuse for demanding to recover all that Chao had seized although most of that had been recaptured by the Tibetans. But there was also a harking back to the imperial connection of the past to which the new Republic sought to become the heir. The reality of their historic rights was enhanced in Chinese eyes by the willingness of Tibet for a settlement which acknowledged China's suzerainty, even if the Tibetan terms were high, and by His Majesty's Government's readiness to recognize that suzerainty.

In 1928 the emergence of a Nationalistic China, which had converted the old mysticism from religious to political channels, led to strong feelings about national unity and a forgetfulness about the immediate past. The suzerainty over Tibet, which the world appeared to recognize, began to be interpreted as the right to forget the weakness of a few years which had made it expedient to be willing to admit Tibetan autonomy. The heritage of Sun Yat-sen also includes the acceptance of democratic ideas or, at least, of democratic ideas as transmuted by the processes of the Chinese mind. There is a recognition, somewhat unwilling and imperfect, that the ways of the Empire, which treated Tibetans and the like as barbarians who should be grateful for good government, are neither modern nor profitable, and efforts are being made to improve relations.

The certainty that what has been China is still China has made it necessary to revise the theory of Sun Yat-sen about the unity of the Five Races which constitute China. That theory made it appear that the cohesion was due to a voluntary act; and on that basis any one of the Five Races might seek to take advantage of the Atlantic Charter and claim the right to govern itself in its own way. The mysticism of Chiang Kai-Shek now substitutes the doctrine that there is only one race which consists of the Chinese, Mongols, Manchus and Muslims, and that any temporary aberration on the part of any one of those members of the family, or any imagining that it is not Chinese, is a delusion which the superior knowledge of the Chinese Government should justly discipline.

An inseparable element in the Chinese character is unquestioning certainty of the superiority of the Chinese over all other people, and that the outer races ought to be glad to pay reverential tribute to China. A classic example is the Mandate of the Emperor Chien Lung to the Mission of Lord Macartney, who was sent to China in 1793 by George III. The Emperor spoke graciously of the respectful and humble spirit in which this tribute-bearing mission had been despatched, but was calmly uninterested in the affairs and manufactures of the West. The isolation of early foreign commercial settlements is another example of the same feeling which had nothing of deliberate arrogance in it but only a sublime self-satisfaction.

Another deeply seated tendency of the Chinese mind is to believe, without regarding what other people would call facts, that things are as Chinese theory decrees that they ought to be. The reiteration that the Chinese are treating the Tibetans with every consideration and benevolence, and that the Tibetans really want only to be united to China means to the great majority of Chinese that those are the facts.

Mental habits of so long a duration cannot be eradicated by only a few decades of closer contact with the West.
With such a background, it must appear to the Chinese that the relations of His Majesty's Government with Tibet are an unpardonable interference in Chinese domestic affairs and an attempt to encourage the defection of part of a mystic whole, by taking advantage of a transient moment in five thousand years of history and culture.

118. Retrospect

In the pattern of the foregoing history certain persistent lines can be traced. From the interweaving of Chinese, Tibetan and Mongolian relations there had emerged, by the time British interest lighted upon Tibet, a texture of events in which Chinese and Tibetan affairs had been closely connected by the establishment of Manchu rule at Lhasa. But, after the initial act of conquest, the Chinese Empire gradually ceased to take an active interest in its distant dependency and was content, so long as no other power intruded, to allow the influence of its Ambans to fade into a mere formality. The first tenuous thread of British interest in trans-Himalaya made contact with the Tibetans through the Bhutanese. Although the impetus came from the need to protect the plains of Bengal from hostile irruptions by the hillmen, the principal object was to establish trade. This suggestion of opening the doors of Tibet was tolerated at first by the Tibetans whom Turner found in 1782 unwilling to admit dependence on the Chinese Empire. But a reaction, perhaps fostered by Chinese warnings of the possible effects of contact with the West, led in 1792 to a policy of exclusion. After nearly a century of aloofness and obscurantism on the part of Tibet, new and timid attempts to open up relations found the Tibetans truculent, and resentful of the approach of British influence to their borders. Perhaps this was because the approach was made through the Chinese. At all events our retreat was taken for weakness and was followed by Tibetan aggression and obstruction which the Chinese were powerless to check.

Trade was still the attraction, and the British reaction to the Tibetan attitude was not fear for the safety of the Indian frontiers but a gradual determination, by a show of force, to reduce the Tibetans to a state of friendliness in which trade could be carried on. Whether by accident or design this proved to be good psychology. The 1904 Expedition won respect and, very shortly, friendship from the Tibetans. But a result we had not foreseen was Chinese resentment at foreign intrusion into territory where they exercised even the shadow of control. Our invasion of Tibet disrupted its life, and our withdrawal left it a prey to the first comer. The Chinese quickly seized the opportunity of turning the shadow into the substance, and only the collapse of the Empire prevented the consolidation of Chinese authority in, and possibly the gradual exclusion of British influence from, Tibet.

The Chinese Revolution is another turning point in Tibetan history. The Chinese were swept out of Tibet; and from 1912 onwards there has been a gradual drawing together of British and Tibetan interests and a gradual increase of Chinese determination to reassert authority in Tibet.

In 1914 we laid the foundations of a new relationship with Tibet but war intervened, and it was not until 1921 that, under the wise persuasion of Sir Charles Bell, the Government of India realised the value of their new friend, and took practical steps to make the new relationship a reality. It took more than trade interests to shake the British reluctance to incur political commitments in Tibet. Trade has in fact proved of more advantage to Tibet than to India. Wool, the principal export of Tibet, is little used in India and contributed to Indian prosperity only through the incidental benefits to middlemen and the railways. India has not been able to supply the great Tibetan demand for good broadcloth, which used to come from Italy and Germany, nor have there been any strenuous efforts to find in Tibet a market for Indian tea of which there were formerly great hopes. It was the evidence of Chinese military advance, their insinuation of military posts along the north border of India, and their covetous glances at Nepal and Bhutan that made it seem desirable to keep Tibet in our orbit as a friendly buffer state strong enough to preserve her own independence. From our former anticipations of a profitable trade for India we have now come to do all that we can to support the Tibetan economy by helping Tibetan wool to find a market and, with the political object of binding Tibet more closely to India, to draw Tibetan imports from the overland route to the sea route and India.

Our need for Tibet as a friendly buffer state has suited the Tibetans. There is no question that they value their independence, and want only to live their own life. Since 1904 they have
had no fears of British designs on their country, and they have had no doubts about Chinese intentions. Their besetting uncertainty has been, and still is, the extent to which we shall be willing and able to help them in an emergency. Their greatest hope has been for a fixed boundary with China and a recognition of their right to manage their own affairs without interferences in exchange for this they would be willing to make a gesture of allegiance to China. In this hope, which was nearly realised in 1914, they have continued to press for our help in bringing about a settlement and have themselves dabbled in direct negotiations with the Chinese. From 1914 to 1919 China was willing to bargain an acknowledgement of Tibetan autonomy for a recognition by Tibet of Chinese suzerainty, but disagreement about the frontier was insurmountable. Since that time Chinese nationalist ambitions have increased and they demand a control over Tibet greater than Tibet is willing to concede, they also resent the intrusion of any third party between themselves and Tibet. These divergent views and Tibetan mistrust of China which had led them to depend on British guarantee of any agreement that might be reached with China — a conception which China cannot now tolerate — have prevented any peaceful solution.

There have been ups and downs in this history. The Tibetans had their successes in 1912 and 1918, but since then there have mostly been downs. There were moments of danger in the Chinese aggression of 1932, which the Tibetans brought on their own heads by advancing into Chinese territory; in 1937 when the Tashi Lama seemed likely to enter Tibet with a Chinese bodyguard. In these crises and at other times of Chinese pressure the Tibetans seemed to derive confidence from the presence at Lhasa of a British officer. Only once, in 1926, during the period of reaction against progressive ideas, did the Tibetan Government refuse to invite a Political Officer to Lhasa. Now, by a new advance in our policy towards Tibet, we have maintained unbroken contact with Lhasa since Sir Basil Gould’s Mission in 1936.

In the feudal conditions of Tibet the influence of personalities is paramount. The close friendship between Sir Charles Bell and Thirteenth Dalai Lama had a vital effect on our relations with Tibet. Other Tibetan names that occur to the mind are Lonchen Shatra, Lungshar and Tsarong. On our side the Tibetan dislike of change has been recognised, and Political Officers have been left for long periods to win the friendship and confidence of Tibetan officials. In the sixty years that cover our relations with Tibet there have been only eight Political Officers, and the combined tenures of Mr. Claude White, Sir Charles Bell and Sir Basil Gould account for more than half that time. Tibet’s greatest danger was perhaps in 1942 when, by a momentary change in the pattern, the Tibetans found both the Chinese and ourselves pressing upon them a demand to open their country for the transport of goods to China. Up to the present they have preserved their delicate balance. In this they have been helped principally by disunity in China. Their own efforts, apart from maintaining a stubborn resistance to Chinese overtures, have been from our point of view rather disappointing by their failure to take advantage of their opportunities, small though they are, of organising their army and finances on better lines. They would certainly not underrate the value of our diplomatic support in China, and they have reason to be grateful to a succession of His Majesty’s representatives there who although often disliking the task and doubting of its ultimate effects have, for the most part, firmly and decisively restrained the Chinese from aggression. But there are signs of growing unity, growing ambition and growing military power in China, while Tibet remains in its mediaeval backwardness, and the Tibetans are probably wondering, as we too may wonder, for how long diplomacy and a bold front will stave off the Chinese.

119. Prospect

The question of the near future is how far China will be able to fulfil her ambitions in Tibet. She is more united than for a long time, and may be harbouring a Young Pretender in the child who has recently been acclaimed in China as the reincarnation of the Tashi Lama.

Chinese disunity has saved Tibet in the past, and it is possible that the compulsion of danger, which brought a number of rival warlords to sink their differences and submit to the leadership of Chiang Kai-Shek, may be losing its force. Although Chiang’s personal popularity seems unimpaired there are signs that his regime is not entirely popular.

The border provinces have not yet succumbed to the centripetal attraction of Chungking, but the Kuomintang is gradually pushing its feelers into Yunnan and Szechuan. The settling of accounts with Wang Ching-wei and his puppet troops may cause trouble. And there are
the Communists as yet unreconciled and unliquidated. Foreign reporters speak of the honesty, unity and fighting spirit of the Communists and if, after the war Russia were to supply them with arms or to put effective restraint on the Central Government by other means, they may remain a serious problem for Chiang. China will also have to devote much attention to reconstruction in the Eastern and Northern Provinces. But whatever dissensions and preoccupations there may be, it must be remembered that even in the early chaotic days of the Republic the idea of reabsorbing Tibet was never forgotten for long. Now, the establishment of the Chinese Government near the borders of Tibet has quickened interest in that country.

Roads and airfields are being built which are possibly aimed at Tibet, and the disparity in strength and equipment between Chinese and Tibetan forces is greater than ever before. A determined Chinese attack on Tibet would be successful. It is impossible to count on the chances of internal troubles distracting Chinese attention from Tibet. So long as Chiang Kai-Shek is in power the danger of early action against Tibet will remain. China’s Tibetan policy is peculiarly his, and he has now devised a new racial theory to evade the application to Tibet of those liberal ideas of self-determination proclaimed by the United Nations, and to which China has paid lip service.

China expects much material help after the war, and looks first to the United States of America and then to Britain. The press of the United States of America appears to have swallowed a good deal of Chinese propaganda, but many Americans have seen the reality in China and it is improbable that the United States Government is deceived. American terms for help to China will presumably be economic advantages in return, but if the State Department can be interested in the application of the principles of the Atlantic Charter to Tibet they might also exert pressure to prevent Chinese aggression.

Between Britain and China there remains the sore point of Hong Kong. The Chinese confidently expect that this will be returned to them, and Chiang Kai-Shek does not think that anyone will want to make trouble about this bit of land “the size of a bullet”. If Hong Kong is to be retained, that may denote the existence of a readiness to take a firm line also about our interest in Tibetan integrity.

If the possibility of tripartite negotiations arises again it may be remembered that Mr. Wellington Koo, who is now Chinese Ambassador in London, was closely associated with the period of Chinese diplomacy in 1914 and 1915 when the Chinese were ready to acknowledge Tibetan autonomy in return for the recognition of their suzerainty.

In our relations with Tibet it has always appeared that the Tibetan Government looks rather to Britain than to India for support, and it is not easy to foresee what may be the results of a new constitution in India. Indian public opinion takes little interest in what goes on north of the Himalayas and would be unlikely to approve of the possibility, hinted at in Sir Olaf Caroe’s note on the Mongolian Fringe, that it might in certain circumstances be necessary to send troops to Lhasa. If India neglects her northern neighbours, Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan might be able to find security by alliance with Nepal, but the old antipathy between Nepal and Tibet does not make it very probable that Tibet would look for help there.

The establishment in India of Dominion Status, or of whatever constitution the future may hold, is likely to take time, and in that interval it will remain a British responsibility to preserve for India a stable northern frontier. It is also a relevant consideration that by far the greater part of India’s frontier with Tibet consists of the territories of the Indian States of Kashmir, Bashahr, Tehri Garhwal and Sikkim, and the Assam Tribal areas, while the frontier of British India with Tibet covers only a small stretch in the United Provinces. From this aspect it appears that British assistance in preserving the security of the Indian Marches may be required for a considerable time.

There have been suggestions from the British Embassy in China that Tibet is bound eventually to be absorbed by China and that we should therefore seek to slide out of our political commitments in order to avoid loss of face, and should rely only on our geographical advantages to keep Tibet in the India orbit.

But Tibet does not want to be absorbed by China, and the advantage of India lies in the independence of Tibet. The surest way to hasten Chinese action would be to let it be seen that we have given up our policy of supporting Tibet. His Majesty’s Government in their latest decision on their attitude towards Chinese claims to suzerainty over Tibet have made
it appear that they are prepared to intensify rather than relax their interest in Tibetan autonomy.

It is therefore still in our interests that Tibet should be as strong as possible and, if it eventually becomes impossible to stave off Chinese aggression any longer, Tibet is likely to get better terms if she is strong. It is to be regretted that the Tibetan Government have never been willing to make any great effort to meet the dangers that confront them. Although lately they have taken more interest in developing the means of self-defence, they have neither the resources to maintain a modern army nor has Tibetan mentality changed sufficiently to allow them to make the most of the means at their disposal.

It appears that the Government of India are prepared to supply considerable quantities of arms to the Tibetan Government after the war, and the time seems to have come for an effort to persuade the Tibetan Government to accept training for a picked body of men in commando methods and guerrilla warfare. This would be a considerable reinforcement to our diplomatic pressure on China in which, it is hoped, we may seek to associate the United States of America as the proclaimed champions of self-determination for small nations.

The work of consolidating our position in the McMahon area which has just begun will demand the construction of roads that will serve both to open up the country to British influence and to more trade between Tibet and India.

The existing trade can best be encouraged and Tibet drawn more closely into the Indian orbit by improving the main trade routes from Kalimpong and Gangtok to the Chumbi valley, and roads from the United Provinces to the border of West Tibet.

What might follow the assertion of Chinese control in Tibet would depend largely on what sort of government there might be in India. The presence of Indian subjects in Tibet would warrant the retention of consular officers in Tibet. The fate of Bhutan and Nepal, the extent to which the Chinese might invade Indian business and trade, and the effects on India's economy of such development, are open to various speculation.

Appendix I

Tibet and its Government

Most of the territory surrounding Tibet is under the control of either Britain or China. The mountainous boundary of Tibet with British territory runs for some 1,300 miles from Kashmir to the Isu Razi Pass on the north of Burma, with a section of about 650 miles in the middle where Nepal and Bhutan intervene. North of Tibet lies Chinese Turkestan, and to the east, China.

Tibetan-speaking people, variously estimated to number between one and three millions inhabit an area not far short of one million square miles. There are different strains of Tibetan people and different dialects of the language, but the Tibetan stock is homogenous and distinct from its neighbours.

Not all the area which is geographically Tibet is under Tibetan rule. Political Tibet extends very roughly from the 78th to the 99th degree of east longitude, and from the 27th to the 36th degree of north latitude. Boundaries, particularly in the northern tracts, and figures are notoriously vague. Northern and Western Tibet, nearly two-thirds of the whole, consist of high mountain and plateau country at an altitude of well over 10,000 ft., inhabited by a sparse population living a primitive nomadic way of life. The remainder falls into two natural divisions. First, the tracts containing the upper valleys of the Indus, Sutlej and Brahmaputra. This area slopes gradually from west to east, and the lower parts are more populous and more cultivated. The country is dry and produces barley and wheat where irrigation is possible. The valley of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries contains the three largest towns of Tibet: Lhasa (about 50,000), Shigatse (about 20,000) and Gyantse (about 10,000). The other division is the system of mountains and rivers of East Tibet. The northern parts of this area are dry like the rest of Tibet, but in the southern parts there is a greater rainfall. There, the country is well wooded, and rice is grown. This part of Tibet is the most thickly populated.
The desert and mountain barriers which isolate Tibet from its neighbours have preserved there an unique character and way of life. Infiltrations of Chinese and Indian influence have been adapted to, and absorbed in, the tougher and more primitive nature of Tibet. For example the Mahayana Buddhism which Tibet borrowed mainly from India about the Seventh Century A.D. has assumed a form unknown outside Central Asia.

Amongst the most striking characteristics of Tibetan life are the rule of a reincamate priest-king, the influence of religion on administration and daily life, and the preservation of an archaic feudal system.

The Dalai Lama — The Dalai Lama is the supreme civil and religions ruler of Tibet. He is regarded as the incarnation of Chenrezii (Avalokiteswara). In the matter of reincarnation the Dalai Lama, being divine, is not bound by the rules which cause ordinary beings normally to be reincarnated within forty nine days of their death: he and other Boddhisattwas can choose their time. The incarnation is sought for in accordance with indications left by the Dalai Lama before his death, or following signs and visions seen by the State Oracle or the Regent. The child is usually found in a humble family, and the risk of the establishment of a dynasty is thereby lessened. An obvious objection to an early discovery is that the Incarnation when found is taken away from the care of his family.

In the exercise of power a Dalai Lama enjoys a real divine right and unlimited prestige. It was therefore convenient for the Chinese, in their period of authority in Tibet, to see that the Dalai Lama did not attain his majority. The survival of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama was one among many signs of the decrease of Chinese power in Tibet towards the end of the Nineteenth Century.

Although, in theory, the Dalai Lama’s power is unlimited certain checks on it operate in practice. All state business comes to the Dalai Lama through a series of advisers who can conceal inconvenient facts. The National Assembly, which will be described later, represents to a large extent the opinion of the great monasteries. Its recommendations naturally weigh with a prudent ruler. The selection of the Dalai Lama from a humble family, and the exclusion of his relatives from public office acts to some extent as a check.

The Regent (Gyaltschap, Po Gyalpo, Sikyong Rimpochhe) — In the absence and minority of a Dalai Lama a Regent is appointed by the National Assembly. Under the Ambans of the Chhing dynasty, the choice was traditionally restricted to the Incarnate Lamas of four small monasteries near Lhasa known as the Langs, or if none of them was suitable, to the Ganden Tri Rimpochhe who is the most learned Divine in Tibet, but is not usually an incarnation. But, in earlier and present practice, any incarnation lama or any lama of exceptional learning may be chosen. On one occasion a layman has been appointed Regent.

Regents lack the prestige of a Dalai Lama, and are likely to be influenced by the National Assembly, which appoints them and can remove them.

The Regent is often called Po Gyalpo — the King of Tibet — but the title Sikyong Rimpochhe — Precious Protector of the State — is more commonly used.

The Kashag — This is the Council or Cabinet of Tibet. It consists of four councillors, known as Shapes, of whom three are laymen and one a monk. The monk is usually treated as the senior member although in a recent Kashag a lay member was given precedence. No individual holds any special portfolio. The Kashag exercises a general control over the civil administration of Tibet in all matters — political, revenue and judicial. In foreign affairs its functions are largely advisory to the Dalai Lama, and in important issues the National Assembly is also consulted.

Shapes are appointed by the Dalai Lama and, in the absence or minority of the Dalai Lama, by the Regent. A list of suitable candidates is submitted by the Kashag, but the Dalai Lama can appoint any one he pleases, whether or not the name is on the list. There is much canvassing and bribery by officials who want to be included in the Kashag’s list.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Chingye Le-khung) — A recent innovation is the institution of a Ministry of Foreign Affairs which discusses business with foreign representatives in Lhasa and then refers to the Kashag.

The National Assembly (Tsong Du) — In its widest form this is a gathering of all officials of the government both lay and monk except for the highest officers (the Shapes and the Chikyap Khenpo) who do not usually attend. In addition, the three great monasteries of
Drepung, Sera and Gaden are represented by their abbots of whom each monastery usually has three.

A full Assembly is only summoned for matters of supreme importance; for lesser business then is a Committee of the Assembly. Business is referred to the Assembly by the Kashag, to whom the report of the Assembly is made, and who then transmit it to the Dalai Lama with their own advice.

**Prime Minister (Lonchhen; Silon)** — At various times there have been one or more Lonchens or Prime Ministers acting as a step between the Kashag and the Dalai Lama. But they do not seem to be an essential part of the system, and there is none at present.

**Ecclesiastical Council (Yiktsang)** — This body of four monk officials is the ecclesiastical counterpart of the Kashag. It deals with the appointment of monk officials, and with the general administration of monasteries throughout Tibet, excluding apparently, the three great monasteries. The intermediary between the Ecclesiastical Council and the Dalai Lama is sort of Archbishop called the Chikyap Khenpo.

**Other Officials** — Lhasa is the centre of Tibetan life and the majority of Tibetan officials is to be found there. Working under the Kashag are numerous officers for every branch of the service — magistracy, judiciary, Treasury, municipal administration, etc. These are fully described in Sir Charles Bell's "Report on the Government of Tibet", written in 1906 and still the *locus classicus* on Tibetan administration. It is the practice for each important department to be managed by a board of officers including at least one monk.

**District Administration** — Broadly speaking, Tibet is divided administratively into five parts.

1. Central Tibet, consisting of the provinces of U, where Lhasa is situated and Tsang with its capital at Shigatse.
2. Western Tibet (Ngari Khorsum) with its headquarters at Gartok.
3. Eastern Tibet (Kham) with its headquarters at Chiamdo.
4. Northern Tibet (Chang) with its headquarters at Nagchukha.
5. Southern Tibet (Lhokha) with headquarters at Lho Dzong.

The officers in charge of these five divisions are commissioners (Chikyap). The most important is the Commissioner in Kham (Do-me Chikyap or Do-chi) to which office one of the Shapes is often appointed. This official commands the army in East Tibet, as well as being in general charge of the administration. Another important official in Kham is the Governor of Markham (Markham Theiji).

In Central Tibet the principal officers of the district administration are the Dzasa Lama of Tashilhunpo, an official appointed by the Lhasa Government to manage the affairs which had formerly been in the hands of the Tashi Lama. There are also two Governors of Shigatse, which has always been under the direct administration of Lhasa, even when there has been a Tashi Lama resident at Tashilhunpo. The Tibetan Trade Agents (Tsong chi) of Gyantse and Yatung are also senior administrative officials.

In Western Tibet the two Garpons are the senior officers.

In Northern Tibet the two Chang chis (formerly known as Hor chi) are the senior officers.

In Southern Tibet the Lho chi is Commissioner of some 24 districts.

Subordinate to these Commissioners are numerous district officers (Dzongpons). There are usually two in each district, one a monk and the other a layman, following the basic principle of Tibetan administration that every official should have a colleague to watch him.

The functions of the Dzongpons are to keep order, and to return to the Treasury a fixed amount of revenue. Whatever they can collect over that amount is their gain. The remoteness of many of these districts and the absence of speedy communications, coupled with the system of revenue farming and feudal authority, allows these officers a very free hand; and information at Lhasa about conditions in distant parts of the country is often very slight.

**The Government Service** — The provision of a certain number of members of their family for government service is a condition on which the landlords of Tibet hold their estates from the Tibetan Government. Government officials, except for Dzongpons, who are in a sense revenue contractors, receive a small fixed pay. The pay of the highest post is about Rs. 600 per
at present rates of exchange, and the lowest about Rs. 100 per annum. Bribes and other perquisites make up most of the income of a Tibetan government servant.

Appointments of lay and monk officials are made by the Kashag and Yiktsang respectively, subject to confirmation by the Dalai Lama, lay officials are trained in a special school and monk officials in another school. The way of advancement for an intelligent youth of humble family lies in becoming a monk and securing entrance into the official school. Monks of noble family also enter this school.

Officials of outlying districts often send deputies to do their work for them, and may never visit their charge. This is more common when an official holds more than one post, one of which may be in Lhasa and the other in some distant part of Tibet.

Landlords (Gyerpa) — The great landlords who hold their estates on a service tenure, as described above, also have to pay revenue. In their estates they have considerable administrative powers over their tenants. A landlord may be deprived of his estates if he fails to fulfil his responsibilities, or is guilty of misuse of his official powers. The incidence of taxation on tenants is described by Bell, and is reported to be higher than in India. The basis of taxation is the amount of seed required for sowing the peasant’s land.

The Tashi Lama and Tashilhunpo — The Tashi Lama, or Panchen Rimpochhe, is a religious dignitary second in importance only to the Dalai Lama. His headquarters are at Tashilhunpo (Shigatse) and by tradition he is purely a religious being and not concerned with temporal matters apart from the administration of the large estates in the Tsang province of Central Tibet which have been allotted for the support of his monasteries.

On the strength of this theoretical abstinence from worldly things it is sometimes asserted that the Tashi Lama is a purer vehicle of the religion than the Dalai Lama, and when the Tashi Lama is the elder of the two, he is looked upon as the spiritual teacher of the Dalai Lama. But apart from this fine shade of interpretation, the Tibetan view is definitely that the Dalai Lama is supreme in things spiritual as well as temporal.

The Tashilhunpo administration is similar to that of the Central Government, but on a smaller scale. Tashilhunpo officials hold no rank at Lhasa unless it is specially conferred.

The relations between Tashilhunpo and Lhasa were the cause of the breach between the late Tashi Lama and the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. It appears that certain revenue, or contributions, were paid by Tashilhunpo to the Central Government, and also that in the Tsang Province of which Tashilhunpo is the capital, certain important Dzongs (districts), including Shigatse itself, remained under the control of the Central Government.

Increased demands by the Central Government for contributions towards the upkeep of the Tibetan army in Eastern Tibet were resented by the Tashilhunpo officials, and in the tension that followed and during the exile of the Tashi Lama a separatist tendency became more pronounced. The Tashi Lama demanded what amounted to complete control over the whole of Tsang Province which appears to have been a break with former traditions.

At present the Tashilhunpo administration is conducted by a Commissioner appointed by the Central Government.

Feudal Principalities — There was formerly a number of these extending from West Tibet to the China border. The Western Tibetan kingdoms were absorbed in the seventeenth century, and the majority of the Eastern Kingdoms fell before Chao Erh-feng between 1905 and 1910.

Most of these lay on the east of the Yangtse. The only one that seems to have survived under Tibetan influence is Hlato, which is west of the Yangtse. There were also a number of semi-independent monastic states such as Chiamdo which were also overrun by Chao Erh-feng. When those on the west of the Yangtse were recovered in 1912 a form of direct administration was introduced.

The Kingdom of Po was conquered and brought under direct administration in 1927. The Power of the Monasteries — It is generally assumed that the government of Tibet is priest-ridden, and there can be no doubt that the influence of the monasteries has a profound effect on Tibetan politics, but the existence of a large body of influential lay officials with great power in internal affairs must not be overlooked.

In foreign affairs the power of the National Assembly is an important factor, and its conservative, nationalistic tone is largely dictated by the monastic representatives, but it is
possible also for a capable lay official to make his influence felt in the Assembly, and the Kashag has an opportunity of expressing its own opinion to the Dalai Lama about foreign affairs.

In short, although lay officials naturally have to be careful to avoid upsetting the monasteries, they are not entirely under religious domination.

Appendix II

Treaties

Tibet-Bashahr Treaty. (39 C. 1908. p. 47–49.)

A vague expression of friendly relations.


Between representative of the Sikh Raja of Kashmir and of the Tibetan Government with mention of the Emperor of China. Government of India held that it was between the Sikh Government and the Emperor of China, and was determined with the downfall of the Sikh Empire. Its terms are vague. (F. and P. to Resident in Kashmir. Letter 536/53 Ext. of 22-5-1922. 7 C. 1922. p. 16.)


1876 — Chefoo Convention, between H.M.G. and Government of China.

This guaranteed protection of a British Mission to be sent to Tibet. Never effective. (Aitchison, Vol. XIV, Tibet Introduction, Summary paras. 5 and 6.)

1890 — Convention between Great Britain and China relating to Sikkim and Tibet. To settle boundary of Sikkim and Tibet.

Convention repudiated and nullified by Tibetans; but accepted by them in 1904 (see below) and again in 1914 in so far as its provisions do not confer an advantage on the Chinese. It is valid with regard to Tibetan acceptance of the Tibet-Sikkim frontier, and acceptance of British control over external relations of Sikkim. (Aitchison, Vol. XII, Summary paras. 7 to 17.)

1893 — Trade Regulations negotiated under the Treaty of 1890. Signed by British and Chinese only. Repudiated by the Tibetans but accepted subject to necessary amendment in 1904. Continued in Trade Regulations of 1908; but cancelled in 1914.

1904 — Anglo-Tibetan Treaty.

Continued by Convention of 1914 in so far as not inconsistent with that treaty.

Most important clauses are II providing for continuance of “trade by existing routes” and the establishment of new Trade Marts if the development of trade requires it.

IV. Governing, in conjunction with the Trade regulations of 1914, the imposition of dues.

IX. Provision for British political influence. Art. IX (c) may be noted. If our present policy with regard to Chinese suzerainty implies that China is a foreign power, this clause has been disregarded. See Appendix on Suzerainty.


Arts. II and III made clear China’s special interest in Tibet.

The Treaty was not recognised by Tibet because the Tibetan Government did not sign it (see Appendix on Suzerainty) but the Tibetan Government were prepared to accept it in 1914 as part of the Simla Convention. But in view of the failure of China to sign and of the Anglo-Tibetan Declaration, China cannot claim the advantages of this Treaty. (Summary para. 44.)

1907 — Anglo-Russian Convention about Tibet. (Aitchison, Vol. XIII.)

Recognised Chinese suzerainty over Tibet. Both parties agreed not to send representative to Lhasa.

Tibet was not consulted.

The effects of the treaty were modified by Russian acceptance of the 1914 Convention, and was later held by H.M.G. to be invalid. (Summary paras. 42 and 44.)

1908 — Trade Regulations framed under Treaty of 1904.

Signed by Britain, China and Tibet.


1913 — Alleged Treaty between Mongolia and Tibet.
Stated to have been negotiated by Dorjieff. Tibetan Government later denied that there had been a formal treaty. (Bell, "Tibet Past and Present", Appendix XIV, Summary para. 32.)

1914 — Simla Convention. Initialled by all parties, but denounced by Chinese Government.

Anglo-Tibetan declaration that the Convention is binding on them, and that China is excluded from benefits.

1914 Agreement about Indo-Tibetan boundary. Signed with Tibet only.

1914 Trade Regulations. Signed with Tibet only.

Present Position — Between Britain and Tibet the following treaties are valid:

1914 Convention in so far as it confers no benefits on China. This continues the Treaties of 1890, 1904 and 1906 in so far as they are not modified by or repugnant to it. That is to say: the provisions of the Treaty of 1890 about British relations with Sikkim, and the boundary between Tibet and Sikkim, are valid.

The Treaty of 1904 is valid; but Arts. II, IV, and V must be read with Art. 7 of the 1914 Convention by which new Trade Regulations were to be negotiated to put these clauses into effect. Thus, questions of opening new Trade Marts, if instituting a tariff, can strictly be raised only at one of the five yearly periods when the Trade Regulations of 1914 become liable to revision.

Art. IX of the 1904 Treaty must be read with Art. III of the Anglo-Chinese Treaty of 1906 and the Anglo-Tibetan Declaration of 1904, and the interpretation seems to be that, as Art. III of the 1906 Treaty would be an advantage to China, and is therefore inoperative by the terms of the Declaration of 1914, China is to be treated as a foreign country for the purposes of Art. IX of the 1904 Treaty. The 1906 Treaty appears to he invalid, as it conveys advantages on China, and was consistently repudiated by the Tibetans.

1914 Anglo-Tibetan declaration.

1914 Trade Regulations.

1914 Boundary Agreement.

Between Britain and China there are no valid treaties about Tibet. The powers of the British plenipotentiary, which were communicated to the other plenipotentiaries, stated that the existing state of war between China and Tibet had rendered former treaties of no effect. Chinese signature of the 1914 Convention would have restored the effect of the treaties of 1890 and 1906 with China in so far as they were not modified by or repugnant to the 1914 Convention. Her failure to sign appears to render those treaties still ineffective so far as British relations with China are concerned. After the failure of the 1914 Conference it was decided not to denounce previous treaties, but to ignore them. (Summary para. 44.) It may be noted that it was only in 1925 that a definite pronouncement was made by H.M.G. about the validity of the 1914 Convention between Britain and Tibet and of the 1914 Trade Regulations. (Summary para. 53 D.)

The Chinese attitude in 1914 was to decline to recognise any agreement between Britain and Tibet reached at Simla. In 1928 they harked back to the 1890 Treaty which they appeared to consider as valid between Britain and China. Their overtures were ignored. (Summary para. 60.)

It is difficult to assess the effect of British acknowledgments of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet which were made between 1921 and 1937. The Chinese might claim that so long as we recognised their suzerainty our agreements with Tibet were invalid. The Tibetans might claim that the recognition of Chinese suzerainty was an advantage under the 1914 Convention which should not accrue to the Chinese until they signed it. The only practical limit which we appeared to set on our recognition of Tibetan autonomy was a disinclination to regard China as a "foreign power" in Tibet.

The recent policy of H.M.G. to withhold unconditional recognition of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet clears up the situation so far as Britain and Tibet and Britain and China are concerned, and appears to put our 1914 agreements with Tibet on a better footing. (Summary para. 106.) It also appears that we have allowed three breaches in our agreement with Tibet; (a) The establishment of a Chinese representative at Lhasa.
(b) The establishment of wireless at Lhasa. (Art. IX (c) and (d) of 1904.) These on the assumption that until China signs the 1914 Convention she is a foreign power in Tibet and (c) Direct negotiations between China and Tibet. (Art. V of 1914) (Summary paras. 73-75 and Appendix on Suzerainty.)

Appendix III — Suzerainty

“Nominal sovereignty over a semi-independent or internally autonomous state”, Fowler.

The word suzerainty has been used for some years to describe the British view of the relationship between China and Tibet. It has never been defined and, indeed, appears to be incapable of absolute definition and to take its colour from the particular circumstances of each case. It is not surprising that this chameleon word has caused confusion. This note attempts to show two main lines (1) Official declarations on the subject of suzerainty; and (2) what have been the circumstances conditioning the interpretation of the word as various times.

By the end of the Nineteenth Century when the Government of India sought, after nearly 100 years of separation, to resume contact with Tibet, the power of China in that country, which had been waning at the time of our first contacts in the Eighteenth Century, had declined to a mere shadow. Our knowledge of conditions in Tibet was so slight that we proceeded on the assumption that China could exert authority there. The Chefoo Convention of 1856 and the Treaty and Trade Regulations of 1890 and 1893 on the subject of Tibet were concluded with China without the participation of any Tibetan representative. The Tibetans repudiated and stultified those agreements and so demonstrated—that China’s control was only nominal. It was the refusal of Tibet to recognise the validity of agreements concluded with China that led the British Government to take steps to secure its rights under those agreements. This fact is recorded in the preamble of the 1906 Convention between Britain and China. The steps taken were the invasion of Tibet and the conclusion of a treaty with Tibet, which was signed and ratified without Chinese participation, although the Chinese Amban was present at the negotiations. A special relationship between China and Tibet was recognised, and it was described in official correspondence as “suzerainty” although the word does not appear in either the 1904 Treaty or that of 1906. Our action had to be brought into line with this relationship; and we had to take note of international opinion. Not only was Russia interested in Tibet, but the U.S.A. also let it be known that they assumed we had no intention to alter the status of Tibet as part of the Chinese dominions. Chinese concurrence was secured by the adhesion agreement of 1906. The terms of this convention show the interpretation then placed on Chinese suzerainty to include a degree of control over the external affairs of Tibet.

Chinese control over Tibetan affairs had in fact been non-existent during the past twenty or thirty years as was proved not only by our own experiences over the Treaty of 1890 and the Trade Regulations of 1893 but also by the fact that the Tibetan and Nepalese Governments had executed a treaty in 1856, without Chinese participation, and by the experience of Rockhill Bonvalot and other travellers who found that in order to enter Tibet they had to make their terms with the Tibetans and not the Chinese.

The Tibetans were not consulted about the terms of the 1906 Convention with China, and they subsequently repudiated it.

It was probably assumed that Chinese control over Tibet would remain as nominal as we found it to be in 1904, and no effort was made in the 1906 Treaty to limit the extent of Chinese interference in Tibetan affairs. But our intrusion into Tibet roused the Chinese Government to an effort to establish real sovereignty there; and our withdrawal after throwing the affairs of Tibet into confusion, provided the opportunity which the Chinese needed.

Between 1905 and 1911 they established in Tibet an authority which was strong enough to exclude British officials from direct communication with Tibetan officials.

The Dalai Lama and his ministers who fled to India in 1910 strenuously denied Chinese suzerainty, and claimed independence, but in reply to an appeal from the Dalai Lama to His Majesty the King it was stated that His Majesty “could not interfere between the Dalai Lama and his suzerain”. At this time the word suzerainty could rightly be interpreted, in its
application to the relations between China and Tibet, as including control over external relations, and also internal affairs.

In 1911 and 1912 the Chinese were evicted from almost all of Tibet, and for over twenty years they had no representative in territories under the control of Lhasa. From that time until the present, Tibet has enjoyed independence as complete as that now enjoyed by Eire, and without even a formal link with China comparable to that by which the Governor General connects Eire with the United Kingdom.

Nevertheless, His Majesty’s Government continued to recognise the suzerainty of China over Tibet, and in 1912 a memorandum to the Chinese Government stated that while His Majesty’s Government had formally recognised the suzerain right of China in Tibet they were not prepared to recognise the right of China to intervene actively in the internal administration of the country, which should be carried on in accordance with the existing treaties.

This statement contemplated Chinese control over or advice on Tibetan external affairs, and although it did not accord with the facts of 1912, it was then quite possible that the Chinese would take active steps to reassert their sway in Tibet. In fact the Chinese Government, so far from acquiescing in their defeat, issued a proclamation incorporating Tibet among the provinces of China, and made preparations to send an army into the country. In reply to the British memorandum they claimed the right to intervene in Tibetan internal affairs.

But later events made the Chinese Government willing to negotiate on the lines of the British Memorandum of 1912, and this willingness led to the Simla Conference of 1914.

The use of the word suzerainty in the unratiﬁed Convention of 1914 has coloured British views on the relations between China and Tibet for many years.

In the Convention as initialled, Tibet agreed to our recognition of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, but that clause was only part of a whole agreement in which the Chinese agreed among other things to Tibetan autonomy and to a deﬁnite frontier.

The treaty was never concluded, and instead, we signed with Tibet a declaration that the terms of the initialled convention were binding between Tibet and Britain, and excluding China from the beneﬁts of the convention until they should sign it. Among those beneﬁts were the recognition of suzerainty, and the acknowledgment of the Anglo-Chinese treaty of 1906 which Tibet had never recognised.

From 1914 to 1919 the Chinese were still prepared to negotiate with us and with Tibet on the lines of the 1914 Convention; but by 1921 their attitude had changed and, as no progress was being made towards completing an agreement, a memorandum was presented to the Chinese Government, to the effect that, in view of their attitude in 1914 and in 1919 (when they had been prepared to recognise Tibetan autonomy) we no longer felt justified in withholding recognition of Tibet as an autonomous state under Chinese suzerainty, and intended to deal with her as such in future.

Our interpretation of the extent of Chinese suzerainty was made clear in a verbal explanation that, if necessary, we would deal directly with Tibet without reference to China. The intention of this memorandum seems to have been to hasten negotiations. In the event, negotiations were not resumed, and we had, without consulting or informing the Tibetans, given China a formal, although qualiﬁed, acknowledgment of her suzerainty over Tibet, and had not secured in return any formal recognition of Tibetan autonomy.

The Chinese Government soon made it clear that they no longer were prepared to recognise Tibetan autonomy. In 1928 they proposed to negotiate a treaty about Tibet direct with His Majesty’s Government. This should have made it evident that the conditions on which we had recognised their suzerainty over Tibet were not being fulﬁlled; and our attitude might well have been reconsidered. But in 1930 the Government of India were still entertaining hopes that a settlement between China and Tibet might still be accomplished, and did not want to give Tibet the idea that they would encourage her to throw off Chinese suzerainty.

In 1932, when Chinese aggression appeared as a menace to Tibet, His Majesty’s Government again reminded the Chinese Government of the British Memorandum of 1921 and made it clear that their interest in Tibet was the maintenance of the autonomy and integrity of Outer Tibet. In 1934 during the negotiations with Lhasa with Huang Mu-sung the Tibetan Government reiterated their adherence to the proposals of the 1914 Convention and were willing to acknowledge Chinese suzerainty if the Chinese would recognise Tibetan autonomy and agree on a boundary. This statement, which was not fully understood at the time, was taken by the
Government of India as an unqualified recognition of Chinese suzerainty; but the Tibetan Government strongly denied this, and contended that they had not recognised Chinese suzerainty, did not recognise it and would not recognise it unless the Chinese fulfilled their part of the bargain.

Nevertheless, in 1936 on two occasions the Chinese Government was informed that we recognised Tibet as autonomous under the suzerainty of China. Throughout these years, while we were making pronouncements about our recognition of a suzerainty which the Tibetans did not acknowledge, we were dealing with Tibet as autonomous and without reference to China in such matters as the supply of arms, in arrangements for customs exemption on goods for Tibet, and in cases of Chinese visitors who wanted to enter Tibet. And in 1934 we told the Tibetan Government that we were "prepared to admit the theoretic suzerainty of China" not that we had done so. It is hard to see exactly what interpretation could be put on our use of the word suzerainty; it certainly did not follow the dictionary meaning quoted at the beginning of this note, for we were recognising Tibetan control over their own external affairs as well as their internal affairs.

In this matter each of the three parties had different views. The Chinese claimed that Tibetan affairs were a domestic concern of the Chinese Government, but expressed informally their intention not to upset the existing arrangement by which Tibet managed her own internal affairs, and had no reason to think that His Majesty's Government considered them other than independent. The Tibetans claimed independence. His Majesty's Government recognised a loose bond between China and Tibet which was far from satisfying Chinese pretensions, but the very existence of which was denied by the Tibetans.

This anomalous situation has been remedied in 1943 by a revision of our policy and by a decision to make it clear that our former recognition of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet was always conditional on Chinese willingness to treat Tibet as autonomous, and that our position is that we are prepared to recognise Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, but only on the understanding that Tibet is considered as autonomous.

One advantage of withdrawing our unconditional acknowledgment of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet is that we remove an argument by which the validity of our direct agreements with Tibet might be challenged. Of these agreements, that with most practical present day importance is probably the 1914 agreement about the Indo-Tibetan frontier.

In the interval, when our acceptance of Chinese suzerainty was being treated as final, we have permitted without protest what would, under His Majesty's Government's latest stand on the subject of suzerainty, seem to be a breach of our agreements with Tibet. The Chinese have established a representative and also a wireless station at Lhasa, both of which could under the treaties of 1904 and 1914 with Tibet, be allowed only on the assumption that China is not a foreign power in Tibet.

Leading References to Suzerainty; and its Interpretation in Practice

1904 — China presses for direct arrangements about Tibet. Government of India presses for China to sign an adhesion agreement at Lhasa, and points out that their proceedings (directly with Tibet) have been necessitated by the reach of the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890. The arrangement proposed was held to breconise fully China's suzerainty. (Viceroy to Secretary of State. Telm. 3121-E.B. of 20-9-1904.)

Suggestion that adhesion agreement might be negotiated in Peking and include a clause acknowledging China's suzerainty. (S. of S. to Viceroy. Telm. of 1-10-1904.)

United States Government's assumption that we still regarded Tibet as part of China's Dominions stated to be correct. (Marquis of Lansdowne to Sir M. Durand. Despatch 126 A. of 20-6-1904.)

Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1906. Preamble stated that Tibet's refusal to recognise 1890 Treaty made it necessary for British Government to take steps to secure its rights.

By Art. I China's responsibility for securing the due fulfilment of the Anglo-Tibetan Treaty of 1904 was recognised.

By Art. II China engaged not to allow any other foreign state to interfere with the territory or internal administration of Tibet.

1907 — Anglo-Russian Convention recognised the suzerain rights of China in Tibet.
1908 — Relationship between the Dalai Lama and Chinese Emperor during Dalai Lama's stay in Peking. Dalai Lama showed considerable independence but had to submit to Chinese Decrees expressing sovereignty. (Washington despatch to Foreign Office. No. 347 of 17-12-1908.)

1910 — His Majesty's Minister in China instructed to demand that an effective Tibetan Government should be maintained with which we could treat in the manner provided by the treaties of 1904 and 1906. (S. of S. to Viceroy. Telm. p. of 3-3-1910.)

1910 — Dalai Lama after his flight to India claims right to direct dealings with British Government, asks to be restored to the independent position enjoyed by the Fifth Dalai Lama, and repudiates treaties of 1890 and 1906 to which Tibet was not a party. (Note of Interview between Dalai Lama and Viceroy, sent with F.D. letter of 19-3-1910.)

Chinese claim sovereign rights in Tibet, but offer scrupulously to observe treaties relating to Tibet. (Prince Ching to Mr. Max Muller. Letter of 18-4-1910. Sent to P.O.S. with Foreign Dept. Memo. 1330-E.B. of 29-6-1910.)

Viceroy's suggestion that specific assurances should be sought from the Chinese Government considered by His Majesty's Government as going too far towards questioning China's admitted suzerainty over Tibet, which it appeared she was making effective. (Viceroy to S. of S. Telm. S164 of 12-3-1910. Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Max Muller. Telm. of 8-4-1910.)


1911 — His Majesty the King Emperor "regrets that he is unable to interfere between the Dalai Lama and his suzerain". (Govt. of India F.D. to P.O.S. Letter 113-E.B. of 19-11-1911.) (See also Summary paras. 16 to 28 for 1904 to 1911.)

1912 — His Majesty's Government examine policy.

Viceroy contends that Tibet has always been autonomous under Chinese suzerainty, and argues that Tibet is not part of China proper, as in Tibet Chinese treaties with foreign powers are not valid. (Viceroy to S. of S. Telm. p. of 23-3-1912.)

Chinese Decree incorporates Tibet in China Proper. (H.M. Minister, China to Foreign Office. Despatch 196 of 27-4-1912. F.D. Memo. 1293-E.B. of 15-6-1912.)

His Majesty's Government's Memorandum of 1 August 1912. Recognition of suzerain rights of China in Tibet admitted, but refusal to recognise right to interfere in Tibetan internal affairs. His Majesty's Government refuse to accept definition of Tibet's status as being on equal footing with Provinces of China. His Majesty's Government do not dispute right of China to appoint an official at Lhasa to advise the Tibetans on their foreign policy. (India Office to Foreign Office. Letter P. 2607 of 11-7-1912. S of S to Viceroy. Telm. of 17-8-1912. Chunking despatch 349 of 17-8-1912 sent with F.D. Memo. 2264-E.B. of 26-9-1912.)

Foreign Office instructs His Majesty's Minister to make clear to the Chinese Government the difference between suzerainty and sovereignty. But on further consideration attempt to define "suzerainty" is deferred.


1913 — Chinese Government willing to negotiate on lines of His Majesty's Government's Memo. of 17-8-1912. They dislike the word suzerainty.

(H.M. Minister to Foreign Office. Telm. of 31-1-1913. Summary para. 34.)

1913-1914 — Simla Convention.

Powers of Sir H. McMahon stated that the existing state of war between Tibet and China had rendered previous treaties of no effect. (Tibet Series, October 1914, No. 6.)

The Tibetan Government claimed that the relation between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Emperor was a personal relationship of Lama and Disciple. They claimed independence, and repudiated the Anglo-Chinese Treaty of 1906. (Tibet Series, October 1914, No. 6, Annexure IV.

Political status of Tibet discussed, but no definition of suzerainty attempted. (Tibet Conference 1914 Series, passim.)
The Convention initialled by all parties included recognition by His Majesty’s Government and Chinese Government that Tibet is under the suzerainty of China, and also the autonomy of Tibet.

Declaration between His Majesty’s Government and Tibetan Government denied to China all advantages under the Convention until she should sign. (Tibet Series, Nos. 124 and 212, Summary paras. 35-38.)


1920 — His Majesty’s Government decide that 1907 Treaty with Russia is no longer valid. (Summary para. 44.)

1921 — Memorandum presented by His Majesty’s Government to Chinese Government August 1921. His Majesty’s Government “do not feel justified in withholding any longer their recognition of the status of Tibet as an autonomous state under the suzerainty of China and intend dealing with Tibet in future on this basis”. (Foreign to Bell. Telm. 2203-S. of 16-9-1921.)

Tibetan Government not informed of this memorandum; but the new policy entailed supply of arms to Tibet although there had previously been objection to this on account of international agreement of 1919 not to import arms into China. (Bell to Foreign. Telm. 80-S. of 12-10-1921.) (Summary para. 50 D.)

1924 — His Majesty’s Government decides that Washington Agreements cannot apply to Tibet without her consent. (Summary para. 52.)

1928 — Emergence of “Nationalist China”.

His Majesty’s Government ignore Chinese Government proposal to negotiate new Treaty about Tibet with reference to the Treaty of 1890. (F.D. to P.O.S. Telm. 2399-S. of 15-11-1928.) (Summary para. 60.)

1930 — “Tibet’s practical autonomy has been maintained since 1921”. (Viceroy to S. of S. Telm. 2245 S. of 11-7-1930.)

“His Majesty’s Government have consistently recognised Tibetan autonomy as subject to Chinese suzerainty”. Resumption of negotiations at some time is contemplated, until then we do not want to give Tibet the idea that we are anxious to encourage her to throw off Chinese suzerainty. (Foreign to P.O.S. Telm. 2587-S. of 3-8-1930.)

1932 — Chinese advances in East Tibet.

Tibetan Government consider that Simla Convention is the surest basis for an understanding with the Chinese Government. (P.O.S. to Foreign. Telm. No. 10 of 20-9-1932.)

His Majesty’s Government instruct H.M. Charge d’Affairs, Peking, to remind Chinese Government of our Memorandum of 1921 and to make clear the extent of His Majesty’s Government’s interest in Tibet — viz., the preservation of the autonomy and integrity of Outer Tibet. (Foreign to P.O.S. Telm. 2208 of 5-10-1932, para. 2. Foreign to P.O.S. Telm. 2217 of 6-10-1932. India Office to F.O. Letter P.Z. 5636/32 of 21-9-1932.)

Mr. Ingram rejects Chinese claims that Tibet is a domestic matter. (Foreign to P.O.S. Telm. 2283 of 12-10-1932.) (Summary para. 67.)

1933 — His Majesty’s Government reaffirm their policy of dealing with Tibet as an autonomous state (to H.M. Ambassador, Peking). (India Office to Foreign Office. Letter P.Z. 1630/33 of 3-4-1933. F. and P. Memo. F 1 X/33 of 28-4-1933. Summary para. 70.)

1934 — Huang Mu-sung’s Mission to Lhasa.

Tibetan Government prepared to acknowledge Chinese suzerainty to the extent provided in the Simla Convention, as part of a general agreement guaranteeing among other things their autonomy. (P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter 7(8) P/34 of 10-11-1934, para. 4. Summary paras. 73-75.)

1935 — Government of India say that we admitted Chinese suzerainty in 1914 and that the Tibetan Government admitted it in 1934. But in same letter propose an assurance to the Tibetan Government that we are prepared to admit the theoretic suzerainty of China.
but will continue to regard Tibet as autonomous. (Foreign Secy. to Secy. of State for India Letter F 1 X/35 of 28-6-1935, paras. 2 & 6.)

His Majesty's Government doubt whether it would be consistent with our recognition of Chinese suzerainty to give a formal undertaking to Tibet to regard the Chinese official there as a foreign representative. (Foreign to P.O.S. Telm. 2166 of 20-8-1935, para. 5.)

They want to be represented at any general negotiations between Tibet and China for recasting the status of Tibet as an autonomous state under the suzerainty of China. (Ibid., para. 6.)

The assurance that we are prepared to admit China's theoretical suzerainty over Tibet, etc., was given by Mr. Williamson to the Tibetan Government. (P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter 7(7) P/35 of 18-2-1935. Report paras. 19 & 20.)

The Kashag categorically denied having admitted Chinese suzerainty. (Ibid., and P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter 7(5) P/35 of 16-12-1935. Summary para 79.)


1939 — Chinese Government apply to His Majesty's Government for facilities for Mr. Wu to visit Lhasa. Tibetan Government are consulted and refuse. (Foreign to P.O.S. Telm. 625 of 17-4-1939. P.O.S. to Foreign. Telms. 77 and 78 of 27-4-1939. Summary para. 94.)

1942 — Chinese Government refuse to allow their officer in Lhasa to deal with new Tibetan Foreign Office.

(Ludlow to Gould and Foreign Telm. 875 of 15-10-1942. Summary para. 98.)

1943 — His Majesty's Government reconsider their attitude towards China's suzerainty over Tibet. (Interdepartmental correspondence sent to Foreign Secy. with India Office D.O. 2252-43 of 8-5-1943. Viceroy to S. of S. Telm. 4313 of 1-6-1943.)

Prime Minister says at Pacific Council Meeting in Washington that "no one contests Chinese suzerainty". (Foreign Office to Chungking. Telm. 492 of 26-5-1943.)

U.S. Government has never raised questions regarding Chinese claims to suzerainty over Tibet, or to the inclusion of Tibet in the areas constituting the territory of the Chinese Republic. (U.S. State Dept. Aide Memoire to H.M.A., Washington. Dated 15-5-1943.)

His Majesty's Government inform H.M.A., Chungking, of their decision not to give any unconditional admission of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet. (Foreign Office to Chungking. Telm. 656 of 23-7-1943.)

Mr. Eden gives Dr. T.V. Soong an informal memorandum containing the above statement of policy. (Mr. Eden to Dr. Soong. Memo. 4468/43 of 5-8-1943. Summary para. 106.)

Tibetan Government ask for definition of suzerainty. Government of India and His Majesty's Government do not attempt a definition, but Tibetan Government may be told if necessary that suzerainty is a term used to describe the relations, frequently ill-defined and vague, existing between one state and a second which, to a greater or less degree (to be assessed by the special circumstances of each case) is dependent on the first, or better "owes some degree of allegiance to the first". (Gould to Crichton. D.O. 7(3) P/43 of 6-11-1943. Weightman to Gould. D.O. 11585 of 2-12-1943. Peel to Caroe. D.O. Ext. 245/44 of 20-11-1944.)

Mr. Shen, Chinese representative in Lhasa given facilities for travel across India to the Indo-Tibetan border, as a matter of international practice, and without previous reference to the Tibetan Government. (Foreign to P.O.S. Telm. 3187 of 23-3-1944.)
Historical Abstract — c. 890 A.D. — Tibetans establish boundary with China from a point north of Sining, through a point on the bend of the Yellow River east of the Amne Machin Range, to Yachow on the West Border of Szechuan. (See Tibetan statement of Claims at 1914 Simla Conference.)

c. 1650 — The Fifth Dalai Lama makes the principalities and states of East Tibet hereditary. (See Tibetan statement of claims.) (Summary Para. 36.)

1727 — Manchu Conquest of Tibet. Boundary stone set up near Batang. East of that point control lay, in the theory, with China; west, with Tibet under the advice of the Amban at Lhasa. (Teichman. Travels Part I.)


1906-1911 — Chao Erh-feng’s Operations. Occupation of most of Tibet up to Lhasa. (Summary paras. 24, 28. Teichman. Travels Part III.)

1912-1914 — Chinese driven out of Tibet as far as the Mekong. (Summary paras. 33 and 46. Teichman. Travels Part IV.)

1917-1918 — Chinese aggression in East Tibet leads to their eviction from West of the Yangtse and from Derge. (Summary paras. 46 and 47. Teichman. Travels Part V.)

1931-1932 — Tibetans attack and reach Kanze. They are driven back to the West of the Yangtse. (Summary paras. 65, 66, and 70.)

Historical Description — The boundary claimed by Tibet in 1914 (see map 2, China and Negotiations with Tibet) encloses territory in which Tibetan stock predominates. But in that area there are many tribes and divisions, with differing customs, differing dialects and differing degrees of culture. It is probable that most of those tribes which live beyond a radius of about 300 miles to the East of Lhasa were for long periods in their history independent or were to be classed as within the zone of influence rather than under the control of Lhasa or China. Tibetan control up to the racial boundary seems to have been a thing of the distant past, and the Tibetan story that it was the Fifth Dalai Lama who made the local chieftains hereditary is probably due to a tendency to attach events to a great name.

The ties of race and religion and particularly the bonds between branch monasteries with their parent house in Lhasa must have kept alive a feeling of relationship with Tibet which probably reduced to a mere formality the Chinese theory, after the Manchu conquest of Tibet, that certain of the states of East Tibet were under the protection of China and others under the protection of Lhasa. There is little evidence of real Chinese control over the states claimed for that side of the line, but it appears from the account of the travels of Peres Huc and Gabet in 1844-46 that there were small Chinese garrisons in Batang, Litang and other places in East Tibet; but it also appears that there were Chinese troops in Chiamdo which in theory fell within the Lhasa sphere of influence. At all events it was possible in 1860 for a Tibetan army to enter Nyarong and intervene in the administration of that principality with the approval of the Chinese Emperor.

The ruler of Nyarong attacked the neighbouring Hor States and the large Kingdom of Derge. These appealed to both China and to Lhasa, and it was the Lhasa Government that sent an army to depose the troublesome prince of Nyarong and to restore peace. After this, Nyarong was brought under the direct control of Lhasa with the approval of the Chinese. A closer connection was also established between Derge and Lhasa. In 1894 further aggression by the people of Nyarong, this time against Chala, led to reprisals from the Chinese Viceroy of Szechuan who extended his activities also to Derge. His efforts to establish a measure of direct control over these two states were opposed by the Amban at Lhasa, and the Viceroy had to restore the former administration.

The British Expedition to Lhasa in 1904 awoke the Chinese Empire to the necessity of asserting effective control in Tibet. A forward movement in that direction followed quickly with the appointment in 1905 of a Resident in East Tibet. This officer first absorbed the Kingdom of Chala, the nearest to Szechuan, and established a Chinese officer in its capital city.
Tachienlu. He then moved further West, but his efforts to assert authority in Batang led to an uprising of the monks of Batang monastery in which the Resident was killed. There followed a general attack on the Chinese in East Tibet, in which not only many troops and officers were killed but foreign missionaries also were murdered.

The Chinese decided on stern measures, and found in Chao Erh-feng the man for their purpose. From 1906 to 1911, at first as Viceroy of Szechuan and from 1908 as Imperial Commissioner for the Border, he dominated Eastern Tibet. The rebellious monasteries of Batang and Changtreng were destroyed, the rulers of the states of Batang, Litang, Changtreng, and others were deposed and Chinese magistrates appointed in their place. Then Chao proceeded against Derge the leading kingdom of East Tibet. Taking advantage of internal dissension he deposed the King and brought the state under direct control. At the end of 1909, he absorbed with little opposition, the monastic state of Chiamdo which had long been closely connected with Lhasa, and by February 1910 he was in Lhasa itself. Having paralysed the Tibetan Government by this stroke he went on to consolidate Chinese power in the East. Nyarong was taken over from the Tibetan Commissioner, and Chinese troops marched into Zayul, the district which borders on Assam, and into Pome, a semi-independent kingdom to the North and East of the Brahmaputra bend. Chao appears to have proposed to the Emperor that the boundary between China and Tibet should be fixed at Giamdo, and this appears to have been accepted after some protest from the Amban at Lhasa, whose sphere of influence would thus be reduced. It was not to be expected that order could be established over so wide an area within so short a time, and the fierce tribes of Chagtreng continued to give trouble, while the Pome campaign made little progress against the warlike Popas. Chao's ambitions showed themselves in his orders sent through Zayul to the Mishmis of the Assam border that they should make a road wide enough for two horsemen as far as from Tibet to Assam. Chinese troops entered the Assam tribal area as far as Meilkrai, where they set up (boundary marks). They also penetrated the Hkamti Shan district of North Burma.

These ambitious plans were checked by the Revolution of 1911–1912. Chao was one of its earliest victims; and the outlying Chinese troops in Tibet, left to their own devices and infected with the revolutionary spirit, were either taken prisoner as at Lhasa, murdered as in Pome, or driven out with great loss as in Zayul. The main body seems to have retreated to Chiamdo and Batang.

At first the Lhasa Government did not take full advantage of its opportunity and seems to have left the task of driving out the Chinese to the local officials; but in 1912 Chinese preparations for the reconquest of East Tibet made it necessary for a Tibetan army, under the redoubtable Kalon Lama, to be sent to East Tibet. This force held up the Chinese advance at the Mekong, which remained the frontier until 1917. From 1912 onwards the Tibetan Government has had to maintain a standing army on its eastern borders and this has proved a strain on its limited finances. In the interval between 1912 and 1917 the Chinese side of the border had been troubled by a revolt of the irrepressible Changtreng Tibetans, who even raided Tachienlu, and by Civil War between Szechuan and Yunnan. The Chinese troops on the frontier had suffered neglect, while the Tibetan troops had been improved and strengthened. The only set-back to the Tibetans at this time was the extension of Chinese influence by the Muslims of Chinghai over the Kokonor and Nagchen area which had been untouched by Chao Erh-feng's conquests, but where the control of Lhasa never seems to have been effective.

In 1917 hostilities broke out after a foolish attack by the Chinese on the Tibetan troops at Riwoche. The Tibetans drove the Chinese far beyond the Yangtse, occupied Derge and Nyarong, and threatened Batang and Tachienlu. The agreement of Chiamdo and the Truce of Rongbatsa negotiated by Mr. Teichman, stabilised the position and left the Tibetans in possession of Derge. For some ten years, between 1919 and 1928, the Chinese area was given up to disorder, civil war, and brigandage, but the Tibetan forces did not try to profit from these conditions on any large scale. Tibetan influence spread gradually on the Chinese side of the frontier, and independent risings by Tibetan tribes there caused some anxiety to the Chinese. In 1931 a dispute between two monasteries of Targye and Pehru connected with Lhasa, but both in the Chinese sphere of influence, tempted the Tibetan authorities on the border to intervene. The Tibetans sided with Targye and the Chinese with Pehru. There was fighting in which the Tibetans were successful. They rashly pressed their advantage, and
invaded Chinese territory as far as Kanze, and the neighbourhood of Tachienlu. The Chinese rallied and drove the Tibetans back across the Yangtse. The situation was made more dangerous by a concerted move by the Chinghai troops who invaded Tibetan territory in the neighbourhood of Riwoche. Civil war in Szechuan spared the Tibetans from greater dangers, and truces were negotiated with the armies of Szechuan and of Chinghai. The former boundary with Chinghai was re-established, but Derge was lost to the Szechuan troops, and the Tibetan frontier was pushed back to the West bank of the Yangtse. It appears that about this time the Tibetans occupied Yakalo (Yenching) a salt well centre on the Mekong, which had been in Chinese hands since the days of Chao Erh-feng.

Since then there had been no fighting, although the question of the Tashi Lama’s intention to return to Tibet with a Chinese escort; the Communist invasion in 1935–36 and the alarms of 1942–1943 gave the Tibetan Government some anxious moments.

Ever since 1914 British influence in China and Tibet has been devoted to restraining whichever of the parties appeared the more likely to be aggressive. In 1914 and 1915 assurances of their peaceful intentions were obtained from the Chinese. In 1917 the intervention of Mr. Teichmann saved the Chinese from a worse defeat at the hands of the Tibetans. Again in 1920 representations were made to the Chinese. From 1924 to 1926 the Tibetans were advised to refrain from aggression. In 1932 and from 1935 to 1937 constant pressure on behalf of Tibet was applied in China, and once again in 1934. Between 1914 and 1932 there were frequent Chinese overtures to the Tibetans for some sort of a settlement, but these appear to have been made on the initiative of local officers without any backing from the Chinese Government of the day.

The Present Position — The Governors of the three Chinese provinces bordering on Tibet still retain a considerable degree of independence of the Central Government.

Ma Pu-feng, the Governor of Chinghai is reported to be a progressive administrator with a special delight in planting trees. He is said to be building a motor road connecting Dankow with Yekundo. There are Chinese troops at Yekundo, and probably also at Barmendo near the Tibetan border, where troops were reported to be stationed in 1925. Accurate information about the border areas is lacking, but it appears from the reports of General Pereira and Capt. Spear who travelled in the Kokonor area in 1921 and 1924 that the Tibetans in this area got on well with their Muslim rulers, who were trying to turn the Tibetans into Chinese by the provision of Chinese schools. Relations between Lhasa and Sining in the past have been rather better than relations between Lhasa and Szechuan or Sikang. It is the Tibetans of this Chinghai and of Kansu who figure in Chinese reports of professions of “Tibetan loyalty” to Chiang Kai-shek.

Ma Pu-feng was the man who exacted ransom for the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, and who recently threatened to invade Tibet.

Sikang (a new province carved out of Szechuan and Kham and inaugurated in 1931) is governed by Liu Wen-hui, another old campaigner against Tibet. He appears to be satisfied with the status quo, and to be interested in maintaining the trade with Tibet, which is believed to be more prosperous even than that of Central Tibet with India through Kalimpong, wool, musk, gold, furs, etc., coming out of Tibet in exchange for silk and tea. Tachienlu and Sichang appear to be being developed as centres of local industry and trade. There is also activity in roadmaking. For some years there has been work on a motor road from Chengtu to Tachienlu via Yachow. Difficulties of terrain have held up progress, but it seems that motor traffic can pass to Tachienlu, with difficulty, at certain times of the year. Beyond Tachienlu the road strikes north-west towards Yekundo where the country is open and easy. There seems no reason why a great border highway for trade and strategic purposes should not soon be opened. It does not appear that there is any immediate intention of building a motor road to Batang where the country is more difficult and where it seems there is still brigandage; but there is a branch in that direction which connects with a new airfield at Nashi. There are believed to be other airfields in Sikang.

The Sikang Government is reported to be developing local industries, and to be trying to spread Chinese education. It also appears that attempts are being made to use Chinese trained Khampas as minor officials in the province.
Yunan is governed by Lung Yun, who is interested in trade. The trickle of goods from India through Lhasa and Sadiya mostly finds its way to the Yunan markets of Likiang and Atunse. There has been no hint of any trouble between Yunan and Tibet.

**Note on the principal Tibetan tribes and States North and East of Lhasa.**

Gye-de (Iya-de, Dza-de.) — The high mountain plateau North and North-East of Lhasa, with its administrative centre at Nagchuka. It is inhabited by nomad herdsmen who probably recognise very little control from Lhasa, by whom it is now claimed. In 1891–1892 both Rockhill and Bower describe it as being Chinese territory, but, although they report that the inhabitants denied any connection with Lhasa and claimed to be under the Chinese Amban at Lhasa, neither saw any signs of Chinese authority. Both of them translate Gya-de as meaning the Chinese district, but that name seems to have gone out of use now, and the Nagchuka area is described as Chang Thang, with subdivisions into Nagchuka, Biru, and Khongtse. Rockhill also admits that he could find no mention of Gya-de in any Chinese official record.

It is on Rockhill's report that the Chinese claim to this territory in 1914 was made. (Rockhill "Journey through Mongolia and Tibet" 1891–92. Bower. "Across Tibet" 1894.)

**Takpo and Kongbo** — The districts of the Tsangpo valley from about Tsetang to the great bend. Kongbo is on the north of the river and Takpo on the South. Both also include mountainous country. The Tsangpo valley is fertile and well wooded. (Bailey. "Report on Exploration of N.E. Frontier 1913".)

**Po** — The country around the bend of the Tsangpo. It is river-gorge country with a higher rainfall than most of Tibet, and is well wooded. Cultivation is unirrigated. Good crops of wheat, barley, buckwheat, peaches, walnuts are grown. The inhabitants have a reputation for savagery; their dialect is akin to that spoken further east in Tibet. Po used to be more or less independent of Lhasa. The Chinese invaded this country during the advance of Chao Erh-feng, and killed off most of the leading men, including the King. After the Revolution the Popas took their opportunity and massacred perhaps more than 2,000 Chinese soldiers.

In 1927 the Lhasa Government decided to bring the country under closer control, and sent an officer to collect taxes. He was killed, and a punitive expedition developed into a minor war which ended in the subjection of Po to the direct rule of Lhasa. (Bailey. "Report on Exploration of the N.E. Frontier 1913". Kaulback. "Salween". Summary para. 59.)

**Pemako** — The Tsangpo valley South of Po. Inhabited by Monbas of Bhutanese stock with a few of the aboriginal Abors. Heavily forested, considerable rainfall, grows rice, maize and some cotton. Appears to be a part of Po. (Bailey. "Report on Exploration of N.E. Frontier. 1913". Kaulback. "Salween".)

**Zayul** — East of Pemako and extending to the borders of Yunan. A hot, wet, country of river gorges. Heavily forested; grows rice and wheat. It is accessible from the rest of Tibet, from India and from China only with difficulty. Rima lies at the Southern border. The inhabitants have traces of Mishmi blood and incline to animism. The Chinese invaded this district in 1910, and penetrated south through Bima as far as Menilkrai in the Assam tribal territory, where they set up a boundary stone.

**Chiamdo** — East of Dzade. Chiamdo town lies on the Mekong. This was formerly a monastic state in close connection with Lhasa. It was captured by Chao Erh-feng in 1910; retaken by the Tibetans in 1917, and is now the administrative and military headquarters of the Tibetan Commissioner in East Tibet.

**Riwoche** — North of Chiamdo. A similar state; remained in Tibetan hands during Chao's invasion. Is a garrison town.

**Draya and Markham** — South of Chiamdo. Taken by Chao Erh-feng in 1909 and recaptured in 1917. Markham is the headquarters of a Tibetan official, the Markham Theiji.

**Hlato** — A semi independent principality to the East of Chiamdo.

**Kham** — The above five districts constitute roughly what may be described as Tibetan Kham. Kham is a vague term for the country lying in the Salween, Mekong, Yangtse and Yalong river valleys. It includes, in addition to the five districts mentioned, and other smaller districts in Tibetan hands, the state of Derge, the Hor States, Chala, and Changtreng, which are now in Chinese occupation.

Kham is a country of dry river valleys separated by grassy uplands with pine forests and further north, by snow mountains. Barley and wheat are grown up to about 13,000 ft. and 9,000 ft. respectively. The lower parts of the valleys have more rainfall and are well wooded.
The districts described so far are in Tibetan control; those that follow are in the Chinese sphere of influence.

*Tsidam* — Marshy, upland plateau west of the Kokonor Lake and south of the Altyn Tagh range. Inhabited by nomad Mogol and Tibetan herdsmen. Probably never closely connected with Lhasa. It was recently reported that a Muhammedan general from Chinghai was sent there with an army to colonise the country.

*Kokonor, Golok country, Banakhasum, Amdo* — The country between Kokonor Lake and Jyekundo. Now the Chinese province of Chinghai with its capital at Sining. A nomad grazing country. Here, too, Tibetan control was probably never more than slight, but the religious connection particularly with Amdo was strong. There is a large Tibetan monastery at Kumbum near the Kokonor, and another at Labrang on the Kansu border as well as many lesser monasteries. Tsongapa, the 14th century reformer of Buddhism was born in Amdo, as was the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. The Muslims of Kansu acquired control here in 1915.

General Pereira and Capt. Spear, who visited this country in 1921 and 1924 found the Tibetan inhabitants getting on well with the Muslim rulers. Jyekundo was reported to be the centre of wool weaving industry.

There is evidence of close and quite amicable relations between the Chinese Muslims and Lhasa in the visits to Lhasa of the Kansu Mission in 1920 (Summary para. 48), the “Sining Amban” in 1924 (Summary para. 56) the Sining delegate in 1934 at the time of Huang Musung’s mission (Summary para. 75). Further, in 1933 the Sining leaders made a favourable armistice with the Tibetans (Summary para. 70) and at the time of the Communist invasion of East Tibet in 1935-1936 the Tibetan general helped the Kansu authorities to get supplies (Summary para. 80). The bargain about the release of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama appears to have been quite amicable. (Summary para. 94).

*Nangchen* — A Tibetan principality between Chiamdo and Jyekundo. Now under Chinghai.

*Derge* — Formerly the most important Tibetan Kingdom of Kham. Probably more or less independent for most of its history except for religious ties with Lhasa. Came into closer connection with Lhasa in 1860-1863 after the Tibetan expedition to Nyarong. Captured by Chao Erh-feng in 1908; retaken by the Tibetans in 1917; lost again in 1932. There has recently been a suggestion that a faction of the people of Derge want the heir of their kings to be restored to his throne, while the Chinese support another claimant. The extent of Chinese control there is not clear, but the Sikang Governor seems to have consulted the Tibetans about the succession to the Titular kingship of Derge.

*Nyarong and the Hor States* — The country is pastoral rather than agricultural; it produces gold, musk and furs; the valleys produce wheat, barley and vegetables. Nyarong was brought under direct Tibetan control in 1860-1863 with the approval of the Chinese Emperor after a Tibetan expedition to depose a troublesome ruler of Nyarong who had attacked the neighbouring Hor States and Derge. Nyarong and the Hor States were absorbed by Chao Erh-feng in 1910.

*Gyarong* — Claimed by Tibet in 1914 as falling within the racial boundary. A collection of people of mixed Tibetan stock in the West borders of the Szechuan plain. Probably never had much connection with Lhasa. Their language is of Tibetan stock, but appears to be a different language from Tibetan. (Edgar’s report 1907.)

*Chala* — A Tibetan kingdom, with its capital at Tachienlu. It was absorbed by the Chinese in 1905. Descendants of the former ruler are kept as pensioners of the Chinese (Chungking report 123 of 26th April 1939.)

*Batang, Litang, Chantreng* — Tibetan monastic states, south of Derge. Captured by Chao Erh-feng 1908-1909. Chantreng (Hsiang cheng) appears to be still turbulent and troublesome. In 1921 when it was nominally under Chinese rule, the Dalai Lama wrote to the people of Chantreng ordering them not to cause trouble.

The country between the Salween, Mekong and Yangtse in the extreme north of Yunan (North of Weisi and West of Atuntse) appears to be inhabited by Tibetan tribes over whom there is no Chinese control, but probably no control from Lhasa either. Chinese money does not seem to be generally accepted in Kham.

For Chinghai see General Pereira’s report on his journey from Peking to Lhasa 1921-1922. Copy to P.O.S. with F. and P. Memo 664 X of 2-8-1923.
For East Tibet generally see Teichman's Travels in East Tibet.
Mr. Coale's report. 1917. (F. & P. Memo. 293 E.B. of 24-9-1917.)

E. Tibet. History. Sources.

(1) Teichman "Travels in East Tibet. Part I."
(2) Teichman. op. cit. Parts II and III.
Summary paras. 24, 25, 28.
Secy. to Govt. of Assam to F.D. Letter 231 of 26-5-1910.
Secy. to Govt. of Burma to F.D. Letter 702 C 27 of 3-6-1910.
(3) Teichman. op. cit. Part IV. Summary paras. 29 and 33.
(4) Teichman. op. cit. Part V.
(5) Teichman. op. cit. Part V. Summary paras. 46 and 47.
(6) Summary paras. 48, 55 and 60.
(7) Summary paras. 65, 66, 67 and 70.
(10) Summary paras. 45, 47, 48, 50D, 52, 55, 60, 67, 70, 78, 80, 83, 104.
(11) Summary paras. 45, 48, 60, 66, 70.

Conclusion — The nomad tribes of the uplands appear to be of relatively small potential value in protecting Tibet from Chinese invasion, and their country of relatively small attraction for Chinese settlers. The easiest route for a Chinese army to reach Lhasa seems to be by the Northern route through the nomads, country, and it is the country rather than the people which constitutes a barrier to any but a well organised force. Movement of large caravans by the north route is limited by the amount of grazing available, but this would not impede a mechanised force.
Kham might prove a harder problem for the Chinese. The road through Batang and Chiamdo to Lhasa runs through more difficult country than the northern route, and the people were better organised than the nomads. The Khampas have the reputation of being wilder and more truculent than the Central Tibetans, but they appear to lack any national cohesion, and to be more given to sectional feuds than the people of Central Tibet. They have never united either with Lhasa or amongst themselves to resist the Chinese.
The Tibetans have asserted control over the states on the West of the Yangtse which were mainly monastic districts and probably easier to unify than the semi-independent Kingdoms such as lie on the Chinese side. The present de facto frontier seems as much as the Tibetans could hope to hold.
It has been variously debated whether the Khampas prefer Chinese or Tibetan rule. The answer is probably that they prefer to be left to themselves. We have little evidence of the degree of control now exercised by the Chinese in such places as Derge and Batang, or of the degree of success of Chinese attempts to make the Khampas into good Chinese. It is probable that at present the Chinese are riding them on a loose rein, and that their administration is based on a compromise; a stricter policy might throw them into the arms of the Tibetan Government.
Much of Kham appears to be suitable for Chinese settlement. It used to be said that Chinese who mixed with Tibetans were absorbed by the Tibetans, and it would be interesting to know whether Chinese are in fact acquiring land in Chinese Kham, and with what results. Our knowledge of conditions in the borderland is all too slight.
Appendix V

China and Negotiations With Tibet

1914 — Tripartite Negotiations at Simla.
All parties on an equal footing in spite of efforts by Chinese to keep Tibetan representative in a subordinate position. (Summary para. 34.)

The idea of Outer and Inner Tibet was accepted. In the latter China would exercise as much influence as she was able. China was prepared to recognise the autonomy of Outer Tibet, to refrain from interference in its administration, and to abstain from sending troops there. Tibet was willing to agree to the recognition of Chinese suzerainty and to accept an Amban, with his escort, at Lhasa. The borders of Tibet and the boundary between Inner and Outer Tibet were to be as shown by the Red and Blue lines on Map 1. This map was a compromise. The Tibetans had claimed even more than the territory within the red line; and the Chinese, on the basis of Chao Erh-feng’s conquests in 1910, had claimed a line running only a small distance to the East of Lhasa. (Map 2).

The first proposal for a compromise had given to Outer Tibet the districts of Derge and Nyarong, and Tachienlu and Garong to Inner Tibet; but this had been modified to meet Chinese protests. (Summary para. 36).

The Convention, including the map (Map 1) was initialled by all parties. The Chinese Government disavowed the action of their plenipotentiary, and refused to proceed to signature. They made it clear that the boundary question was the only obstacle (Summary para. 37).

Shortly after the conclusion of negotiations the Chinese Government presented a memorandum containing further proposals for the settlement of the boundary question. These are shown in Map 3. As they did not represent any advance, His Majesty’s Government declined to reopen negotiations. (Summary para. 38.)

1915 — The Chinese made overtures to the Tibetan Government (Summary para. 45) and the Chinese Government gave another memorandum to His Majesty’s Minister in China with proposals for a settlement. (Papers not available in Sikkim. See His Majesty’s Minister’s telegram 179 of June 1915). There were no negotiations. (Summary para. 46.)

1918 — The local agreements between Chinese and Tibetan officials brought about at Chiamdo and Rongbatsa by Mr. Teichman were never accepted by the Chinese Government. (Summary para. 47.)

1919 — The Chinese Government reaffirmed their acceptance of the 1914 Convention except for the boundary clause, and made fresh proposals for the boundary settlement. These are shown on Map 3. Most of what had been proposed in the compromise of 1914 for Inner Tibet was to be absorbed into the Chinese provinces of Szechuan and Yunan; but China was prepared to include in Inner Tibet part of the Kokonor territory to which she had formerly made strong claims. The principal gain was the Chinese agreement to the inclusion in Outer Tibet of the districts of Chiamdo, Draya, Gonjo and Markham. The proposals implied that the Tibetans would have to relax their hold on Derge, which they had occupied in their recent advance. These overtures unfortunately came to nothing. (Summary para. 48).

1920 — British proposal of tripartite negotiation, at Lhasa, Chinese suggest possibility of separate agreement with Tibet, to be witnessed by H.M.G. (No result.) (Summary para. 49.)

1921 — A memorandum was handed to the Chinese Government regarding our intention to deal with Tibet as autonomous under the suzerainty of China. The Chinese expressed their readiness to reopen negotiations after the Washington Conference. (Summary para. 50-D.) Nothing came of this. (Summary para. 52.)

1928 — The Chinese Government refused the good offices of His Majesty’s Government in trying to bring about a settlement with Tibet. This was at a time when the Chinese had won military successes against the Tibetans on the border. (Summary para. 67.)
1933 — The Chinese Government again refused to be drawn into negotiations. (Summary para. 70.) The Government of India informed the Tibetan Government that there was no objection to their trying to arrange a direct settlement with China of the boundary question.

1934 — Huang Mu-sung negotiated direct with the Tibetan Government at Lhasa. These events are described fully in Summary paras. 73 to 75. The Tibetan Government resisted almost all the Chinese demands, but were prepared to acknowledge Chinese suzerainty to the extent contemplated by the 1914 Convention, in return for Chinese recognition of Tibetan autonomy, and for a fixed boundary. The negotiations came to nothing. The Chinese offer on the subject of the boundary would have given Tibet a frontier roughly on the line proposed for Outer Tibet in the Chinese offer of 1919. (See Map 3.)

Appendix VI

The Assam Tribal Area South of the McMahon Line. (Map 5)

This note is designed as a sketch of the tribes living on the Indian side of the McMahon Line, with the particular intention of examining the extent to which Tibetan influence can be traced. It is based only on such evidence as is available in Sikkim; and Assam can doubtless provide much more full and accurate information about the southern aspect, while Burma may be able to throw light on the special problem of the Burma-China border, and of the Nungs. (Summary para. 91.)

Monbas. (Bhutias). "Lowlanders". Tib — These inhabit about 2,000 square miles of country to the east of Bhutan. There are several divisions of these Monbas. Taking them from north to south they are: —

1. Monbas of Tawang — About 10,000 in number, living in the Tawang valley to the south of the Tibetan Border (McMahon Line) and north of the Se La. These people are completely under Tibetan administration and fall within the jurisdiction of the Tsona Dzong. The Tawang monastery also has rights of taxation in this area. Taxes mostly in grain and paper, of an unknown amount, are collected and forced labour is exacted. Tibetan officials try cases and inflict punishments.

The leading officials of Tawang Monastery are Tibetans appointed by the parent monastery of Drepung. The rest of the monks are mostly Monbas. The people are Buddhists.

The language differs from that spoken south of the Se La. Tibetan is generally understood. The country is fertile and produces wheat, barley, some rice, maize, etc. Cows, yaks and sheep are kept.

Coarse paper and red woollen cloth are manufactured.

Their customs appear to be more like those of Bhutan and Sikkim than of Tibet. Many Monbas of Tawang go to Tseang on the Brahmaputra to trade.

Two routes go from Tawang to Tsona; one by the Milakatong La, which is only open for a few months in the year, the other by the Nyamjang Chu which is open all the year. Communication to the south is by the Se La which is open only from July to November.

A posa of Rs. 5,000 per annum is paid to officials of Tawang apparently in their capacity of successors of the Seven Rajas, subordinate to the "Tawang Raja", who were awarded this sum in 1843 as compensation for giving up their claims to exact tribute from the Kuriapara Dur. This money is handed over to the Dirang Dzongpons at Udalgiri, and part of it is sent to Drepung Monastery.

2. Sherchokpa. "Easterners" — A vague designation for Monbas living south of the Se La — It is convenient to apply the name to the inhabitants of the area with Dirang Dzong as its centre.

This is a well-wooded, fertile country, but is sparsely inhabited. It falls under the de facto jurisdiction of the Tsona Dzongpong. Dirang Dzongpons who are appointed by the Tawang monastery, and have no connection with Tsona Dzong also collect taxes here. The people are Buddhists.

The language differs from that of Tawang and also from that of the district to the South. There is a road from Se La to Kalaktang.

The neighbouring Mijis and Akas are reported to oppress these people.
3. Rongnongpas — Inhabit the area to the south of the Sherchokpas. The principal town is Kalaktang. The Tsona Dzong has no jurisdiction here, but Tawang monastery appoints two Dzongpons who collect tributes.

The language differs from that of other Monbas.

The country is fertile, wooded, and has tracts of good grazing. It produces barley, maize, wheat, beans, peas, onions, chillies and other vegetables, and rice grown in terraced and irrigated fields. The plough is used south of the Se La, and the Tibetan hoe in the Tawang area. Cattle and poultry are kept.

The people are quiet and well behaved. They move down to the Amratolla in the cold weather whence they visit the plains for trade, principally in chillies, majita dye, and a few cattle. They take back salt, iron and cotton cloth.

4. Sherdukpen — Live to the north-east of the Rongnongpas and south-east of the Sherchokpas. Their principal villages are Rupa and Shergaon. They are practically independent of Tibetan authority, but pay a small sum to the Tawang monastery through its officials at Kalaktang. They are persecuted by the Akas on their east to whom they pay tribute.

They speak a different language from other Monbas, and although Buddhists and classed as Monbas, they are reported to resemble more closely their more savage neighbours to the east.

The Sherdukpen are more vigorous traders than the rest of the Monbas, and bring down cattle and poultry, skins, dyes and chillies by the Belsiri river route to Assam via Doimara.

Their country and its products are like those of the Rongnongpas. A posa of Rs. 2,526/7/- is paid to the villages of Rupa and Shergaon in compensation for tribute which their Rajas formerly claimed from the plains. Mackenzie reports that this sum was reduced in 1839, but it appears to have been restored as Assam Tribal administration reports show that Rs. 2,526 is paid annually.

They consider themselves British subjects, and are well behaved. In 1942-43 Tibetan officials entered Sherdukpen country and collected taxes; this called forth a protest from the Government of India.

5. Tembang Monbas — These inhabit a village to the east of the Sherchokpas. Formerly connected with the Sherdukpen, but separated from them some time in the 19th century. They receive posa of Rs. 45.

They are reported to be a quiet people and to suffer much at the hands of the Mijis.

6. Monbas of But and Konia — These occupy two villages on the eastern limit of Monba country. The inhabitants are reported to have migrated from Dirang about 100 years ago, but have now degenerated and have lapsed from Buddhism and are a miserable people under the thumb of the neighbouring Mijis, who treat them as serfs.

7. Bhutanese — There are some settlers in the south west corner of the area, who pay taxes to the Dirang Dzongpen.

The Monbas south of the Se La are reported to number only about 4,000.

There are other Monba settlements further to the east which will be described later.

Tibetan Influence — This is supreme in the Tawang area, strong in Mago and in the Sherchokpa country where it extends almost to the administered border of Assam, and Tibetan feelers have recently been put out into the Sherdukpen country.

The Monbas as a whole appear to be related to the Bhutanese (...east Tibetans.) Their languages, houses, and bridges are reported to be similar. They do not go in for slavery.

The country is rich but south of the Se La it is sparsely populated, for which the actions of the Tibetans on the north and the Mijis on the east may be responsible.

It appears that the Monbas would welcome protection although the gloomy estimate of their condition formed by Lightfoot is not confirmed by Kingdon Ward, who considers them cheerful and contented, and that Tibetan rule is by no means oppressive, its principal fault being neglect. But his visit to the area was not extensive.

NOTE — As a result of the establishment of posts of the Assam Rifles at Dirang Dzong and Rupa, the Monbas have been encouraged to stand up for themselves and the activities of Tibetan officials south of the Se La have been considerably restricted, and in particular the Talung Dzongpons appointed by Tawang monastery who used to collect tribute in the Kalaktang area and tolls at Amratulla have been unable to make any collections.
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Report of Capt. Nevill’s expedition to Tawang. 1914. (Sikkim File 15 C 1914.)  
Military report on Bhareli River and Tawang area. 1920.  
Report of Capt. Lightfoot’s expedition to Tawang. 1938. (Sikkim File (3)-P/38.)

**Kingdon Ward**  

**Bailey**  
Annual Reports on Assam Frontier Tribes.

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**Mago** — East of Tawang; north of the Se La; and just south of the McMahon Line lies an isolated valley containing about 200 people (in 1913). They are subjects of the Samdrup Potrang family of Lhasa, and appear to be quite distinct from the Tibetans and more like the Monbas.

Their language is a dialect of Tibetan, but their dress and customs are quite different, and they talk about “going to Tibet” when they cross the mountains. They are Buddhists.

The country is wet and wooded like the rest of Monyul. They grow no crops but keep yaks and exchange the produce for grain and dyes brought by Monbas and Daflas. They barter cheese, butter and planks with the Tibetans for salt and grain.

This little-known people, theoretically within the British sphere of influence, is administered by, or rather pays taxes to, an agent, a Tibetan noble, of Samdrup Potrang, with his headquarters at Kishung in Tibet.

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**Akas** — These people inhabit the valley of the lower Bichom River and its tributary the Tenga. Their neighbours on the west are Monbas; on the east Daflas; on the north Mijis, and Silung Abors; and on the N.E. Miris.

Their name means, in Assamese, “Painted”, and is derived from their custom of smearing their faces with black resin.

They are divided into clans of which the Kutsun (Assamese Hazarikhoa) and Kavatsun (Assamese Kapachor) are the principal. Mackenzie reports that in 1884 these two clans consisted of 260 families. They are reported to be a dying tribe as they and their Sherdukpen neighbours suffer from the ravages of pneumonia. They are held in esteem by their neighbours to whom they are superior in education and industry. They are quiet and well-behaved internally but exact tributes from the Monbas on their west, heavier than that paid by the Monbas to Tawang.

The Kutsun and Kavatsun clans are led by Rajas who are not hereditary; public affairs are conducted by panchayets.

Their language is Tibeto-Burman but the examples given in the Military Report 192 contain very few verbal similarities to Tibetan.

Religion, not clearly described; apparently animist.

Their cultivation is by jhuming and they grow millet, maize, barley, hill rice, chillies, onions, tobacco, etc. The soil is good and water plentiful. There were signs of rough terracing in some areas in 1920. They keep mithun and a few horses.

They trade with Assam, taking grain, skins, chillies, beeswax, musk and dyes down to the plains and buying salt, iron and cotton cloth and Assam silk. They also trade with Sherdukpen from whom they buy silver ware.

The country is easy, and village paths could with little labour be converted into mule tracks.

The Political Officer, Balipara, visits Jamiri, and other villages regularly; and in 1931 a party of Aka girls went to Charduar to dance for His Excellency the Governor of Assam.
Mackenzie reports that they were paid posa of Rs. 6,683 and the Military report says that the Kutsun and Kavatsun chiefs receive posa; but the Assam Tribal Administration reports do not mention this payment.

Their country would bear a much larger population, and they would probably respond to increased interest in their development.

There is no mention of Tibetan influence in this country. From 1829 to 1884 the Akas gave a good deal of trouble, most of which appears to have resulted from misunderstandings. In 1883–1884 there was an Aka expedition. In 1914 there was an Aka Promenade which found the people friendly and peaceful.

There is practically no slavery among the Akas.

**Mijis** — Inhabit the upper Bichom river. They resemble the Akas in dress, manner and customs, but are idle and not so clean as their neighbours.

They have a different language from the Akas.

They have no chiefs but have elected headmen who have in some cases become hereditary. Among themselves they are peaceful, but they lord it over the Monbas of But, Konia and Tembang. From 1937 to 1939 their oppressions went so far as the taking of slaves, and they tried to exact tribute from the Sherdukpen, from which they were deterred by a military patrol.

The Mijis trade mainly with Tibet.

They do not appear to receive posa.

**Miri Akas** — A scattered tribe on the Pachuk river to the North east of the Aka country.

They act as middlemen between the Akas and their hereditary foes the Daflas.

They appear to be a mixed people, but to have a language of their own.

There is little on record about them except that they visit the plains for trade, and are well-behaved.

**Sillung Abors** — A small body of these people of whom the main tribe lies further east is settled to the north of the Akas. They are like the Mijis in appearance but have a different language. They act as middlemen between the Mijis and Daflas.

There is another section of them who are nomadic.

**Authority**

Annual Reports on Assam Tribal Areas.
Mackenzie. Relations with the Hill Tribes of the N.E. Frontier.

**Daflas** — A widely spread populous tribe made up of a number of clans which appear to lack cohesion. They extend roughly from the Bhareli river to the lower reaches of the Subansiri.

They cultivate by jhuming and their villages which for the most part are independent units are constantly shifting.

The land appears to be fertile.

The Daflas are said to be of the same stock as the Miris and Abors and their language is similar.

They are a proud truculent and violent people and their numbers seem to be increasing. They are given to raiding, slavery and murder. The Eastern Daflas (Tagen) are finer men than the Western; (Yonno) there are also Daflas settled in the plains who appear to suffer from raids by their kinsmen in the hills and who require to have Government passes before they are allowed to visit the hills.

They grow rice but barely enough for their own consumption. Many of them come down to the plains to trade.

The Daflas have given plenty of trouble in the past and Mackenzie reports that raids were made by them up to 1875. There were several punitive expeditions but relations with their chiefs remained friendly. In 1914 they opposed the Aka Promenade. They continue raiding in the tribal areas.

The Daflas receive posa of about Rs. 2,000.
Hill Miris — Their name means “middle men” and they include a number of clans lying between the Daflas and Abors who are all of common stocks. They cover a wide stretch of country north of the Daflas and up to and across the Subansiri.

They cultivate by jhuming and grow hill rice, maize and millet. Those that are known to Assam are friendly, lazy and take opium.

Little is known of the tribes up the Subansiri north of the Kamla River and although there is evidence of contact with the Tibetans the Military report states that the Miris are not under Tibetan influence.

The Hill Miris are paid posa which is recorded in one instance as Rs. 370 in another as Rs. 761 and in another as Rs. 890.

They appear to be rarely visited by the Political Officer.

Apa Tanangs or Ankhas — Inhabit a wide upland valley N.W. of the Ranga river and are estimated to number 20,000.

They appear to be something like the Daflas in language but have different customs and do not intermarry with Daflas or Abors. They have feuds with Daflas particularly those of the big villages of Likha and Licha near the junction of the Kiyeng and Panir rivers at whose hands they suffer loss of property and also with the Miris.

The name Ankha comes from their custom of wearing a tail of plaited cane.

They have a good system of village government and are far ahead of Daflas and Abors in agriculture. Irrigated rice is their staple crop. They use ploughs make terraces and keep cattle. They trade in grain with the Daflas and Abors and visit the plains in considerable numbers to work on tea gardens.

They were reported to have some connection with Tibet but the Military report considers that the Tibetan articles which they possess have come through the Daflas and Miris.

They keep serfs whose condition is better than that of the slaves of the Daflas and Abors. They are an isolated and self-sufficient people and in their own country they have no use for money.

NOTE — Recent information indicates that there is a considerable, and previously unknown, settlement of Tibetans in the Khru river valley centering round a large monastery where there is an official who is described as a ‘Raja’.

(Fortnightly reports on Assam Tribal Areas for the first half of January 1945, paragraph 2, and for the first half of February 1945, paragraph 2.)

Lagongwas — Another tribe of Daflas who enter Tibet by the Lha La and trade at Tron and Kap.

Lung Tu Lopas — These live in the Subansiri valley just south of the Tibetan border; they can speak Tibetan, and wear Tibetan clothes, but they appear to have been independent of
Tibetan authority and even to have been paid a sort of danegelt by the Tibetans. Some time before 1913 they were defeated in war by the Tibetans and since then they have paid taxes to the Chayul Dzong. The tribe seems to have been scattered and reduced by the war with Tibet.

**Tingba Lopas** — A Dafla tribe who travel up the Subansiri in November to Lung, in Tibet, where they trade with the Lung Tu Lopas.

**Morangwa Tingba** — These are possibly Miris. They cut their hair like Abors, and live in a valley called Morang, which may be "Mora" mentioned by the Miri Mission of 1911–1912.

They go to Migyitun in Tibet and exchange rice, cane, dyes and skins for woollen cloth. Their journey takes them from six to ten days. The Tibetans bribe them to allow the Tsari pilgrims to pass freely.

The geography of the Upper waters of the Subansiri and its tributaries and of Tsari, is very indefinite; but it appears from Bailey's report that in order to perform the great Tsari pilgrimage Tibetans have to cross the McMahon Line, perhaps for six days march, and that while they are in this country they are in danger from the Lopas, whom they bribe to refrain from attacks on the pilgrims.

Although the Lungtu Lopas, who formerly had a strong footing north of the McMahon Line and claimed taxes from Tsari district, now pay taxes to Chayul Dzong, it seems that Tibetan influence does not extend south of the McMahon Line in this area on account of the warlike nature of the Morangwa Lopas.


**Southern Miris** — These appear to have two main sections each comprising a number of clans. The Abors claimed them as subordinates, and they acted as intermediaries between the Abors and the plains. They inhabit the plains and foothills along the north bank of the Brahmaputra from Lakhimpur district to the Dihang River.

**Abors** — A vague name, meaning according to the Assam Census Report 1881, "independent"; and according to the Military report 1931, "Savages". It covers a number of related but separate akin to the Miris and Daflas, inhabiting the country between the Subansiri and Sisseri rivers, and including the Dihang River valley. The Abors border on tribes more closely akin to Tibetan in the northern part of the Dihang River.

The Abors are the most numerous group in the tribal area between Tibet and Assam. They have a single language which is similar to that of the Miris and Daflas, but which exhibits considerable differences in the eastern and western parts of their territory and in the various tribal divisions.

They are Tibet-Burman stock; but along with the Miris and Daflas are said to avoid the use of milk as "Unclean". This custom is found in Indo-Chinese peoples. They are fierce, uncouth, and arrogant. They keep slaves whom they capture or buy from their neighbours. In 1910 some Tibetans escaped from Abor captivity; it seems that these were some of the Eastern Tibetan immigration into Mipi, and that the Abors bought them from the Mishmis.

Their staple food is rice and they eat meat and fish; they drink a millet beer, and smoke tobacco.

Their agriculture is by jhuming, and is primitive. There are rough attempts at terracing in the north. They keep cattle (mythan) but do not use milk.

Their country is very wet.

**Western Abors** — Little is known; they are vaguely called Galong, and include tribes called Dobang, Tadun, Karko, Memong, Bori and Bokar. The Karko were helpful to the Survey party of 1912; the Memong and Boris opposed it.

**Eastern Abors** — Pasi, Minyong, Padam, Milang, Komkar, Pangi, Karko, Simong, Bomo-Janbo.

Since 1929 there has been intermittent war between the Pangi on one side and the Minyong and Padam on the other.

Minyong and Padam are the largest tribes of the southern section of eastern Abors, and British administration extends some way into their country to the extent that the inhabitants up to a vague line, pay poll tax, and others up to the Yembung river are "under our control". by means of military posts at Pangi, Riga, and Karko. The Minyong village of Kebang appears to fall within this line, but other Minyongs to the North are unadministered. Within the tribes villages are self-governed.
The state of war between Abor tribes appears to be due to the fact that the central Abors do not cultivate enough crops for their own needs and are driven to raid their more developed neighbours to the south. There is also a system of trade blocks by which powerful tribes prevent traders from the south passing through their country, in order that they may enjoy the profits of middlemen. Continual raids by the Abor tribes on each other’s herds of cattle are another cause of trouble. During the evacuation of Burma in 1942, the Abors furnished a Labour Corps of some 2,000 men, which did fine work on the route leading to India through Ledo. One porter of the Padam clan was awarded the Albert Medal for an exceptionally fine piece of rescue work.

It is stated in the Assam tribal administration report for 1928–1929 that the best way to improve conditions would be to encourage the growth of wet rice among the hinterland Abors, and it seems from later reports that encouragement of this sort and by helping in the sale of Abor blankets and other produce is in progress; but it is not clear how far its effects extend.

History of Abor Expeditions may be read in the Military Reports.

**Tibetan Influence** — South of the McMahon Line there is a tribe of Monbas speaking a Tibetan language similar to that of Twang. They appear to have pushed the Abors out of the Tibetan district of Pemako, and to have occupied the valley of the Dihang below where the Abors do not use the route down the Siang valley, through Abor country, to the plains. The Tibetans do not use the route down the Siang valley, through Abor country, to the plains. In the northern area people from south of the McMahon Line cross over into Tibet to trade. Pachakshiri Monbas, Dihang Monbas Dihang Lopas and other Abor tribes seem to cross into the Kongbo district in the Tsangpo valley by a number of passes from the Tungu La to the Doshong La. There are a number of routes leading from the Dihang valley into Tibet.

The Abors do not appear to receive posa although Mackenzie states that they formerly did so, and that the posa was converted into payment in kind.

**Mishmis** — Inhabit from the Sisseri River to the Lohit, and its southern hills.

There are three main clans: Mithu (Chulikata “crop head”) Taroan (Digaru) and Miju. The Mithu inhabit the valleys of the Dibung and its tributaries. They are divided into eight principal sections of which the Mithun are known to the Assamese as “Bebejiya”. There are a large number of sub-divisions into exogamous sects.

The Taroan inhabit the right bank of the Lohit between the Dening river and the Delai-Dou watershed.

The Miju inhabit the Lohit valley south of Walong as far as the Dou confluence.

The last two clans number about 25,000.

They are Mongoloid, of unknown origin. Each clan has a different dialect. By nature they are uncertain, lazy, dirty, but enduring. They keep slaves, usually the descendants of captives, whom they treat quite well.
The Mithu do not smoke opium but the Taroan and Miju do so. Their principal food is rice. They cultivate by jhuming and grow, in addition to maize, millet, rice, beans, peas, chilies, tobacco and in the east some cotton and opium. They keep cattle.

Although there has been and still is a number of feuds between villages and tribes particularly among the Mithu, the Mishmis as a whole appear to be manageable and quiet.

As with the Abors, some of the Mishmis are “administered” and others “unadministered”, but there seems to be some show of exercising control over the whole body of Mishmis. The Military report 1931 considers that the Taroan and Miju “have been peacefully absorbed under the regular administration of the British Empire”. But the Political Officer, Sadiya Frontier Tract reported in 1939-40 that the Miju of the Upper Lohit had been left to themselves for 26 years and were completely independent. Nevertheless, it appears to be possible to visit these people and direct them to mend their ways. And in 1910 when the Chinese were displaying interest in the Mishmi, a Miju headman in the Lohit valley S. of Rima claimed to be a British subject.

None of the Mishmis receive posa.

Tibetan Influence — There is a settlement of Tibetans at Mipi in the valley of the Matun river which rises in the mountains south of the Chimdro Chu and crosses the McMahon Line.

Bailey reports that two waves of Tibetan immigration from Po and from Kham entered the valleys of the Dri Yongyap and Andra rivers at the beginning of this century. The majority were enslaved, killed or driven out by the Mishmis and the remainder settled in the Matun valley where they appear to get small reinforcements from the Chimdro valley from time to time.

Note — Recent information indicates that the remnants of the Tibetan settlement at Mipi were expelled by the Mishmis about 1920–1925. (Fortnightly report on Assam Tribal Areas for the second half of January 1945, paragraph I.)

The character of the colony is probably predominantly Popa by now. It is not clear whether this colony pays taxes to any Tibetan official but the probability is that it does so.

This Tibetan colony seems to check Mishmi trade with the Chimdro valley and the Chulikata Mishmis find their way into the Tibetan province of Zayul on their east by the Kaya and Agui passes. They go mainly for salt for which they barter grain, skins, musk and “tita”.

The Miju Mishmis of the Lohit valley visit Rima in Tibet for trade and a small number live permanently in the neighbourhood of Rima.

South of the McMahon line in the Lohit Valley there is a settlement of Tibetans in the villages of Walong Tinai Pong and Kahao. The Military report states that Walong was formerly a Tibetan penal settlement while Capt. Godfrey reports that in this area runaway Tibetans were settled by the Miju Mishmis three generations ago to look after their herds in the grazing grounds along the Lohit valley. The descendants of these Tibetans appear to be degenerate in comparison with the Tibetans on the Zayul side of the McMahon Line and are apparently little more than serfs of the Mishmis. In addition the Tibetan officials of Zayul claim tribute from them.

Mr. Mainprice’s recent reports confirm what has been said by earlier visitors that the locally recognised boundary between Tibet and Assam is at Menilkrai, where the Chinese set up boundary posts in 1911–1912. Tibetan officials at Rima were apprehensive about British claims to the four Tibetan villages south of the McMahon Line. It may be noted that Miju villages on the Tibetan side of the McMahon Line of which two are reported near Rima do not pay any taxes to the Tibetans.

A considerable number of Tibetans travel by the Lohit valley route to trade in Assam and Bengal. They make use of the mule track constructed by the Sappers and Miners in 1912 up the Lohit valley as far as Minzong and which has probably helped to do away with the obstruction which the Tibetans formerly suffered at the hands of the Mishmis in their attempts to travel to Assam.

Authority


Report by Mr. Godfrey, Political Officer Sadiya Frontier Tract on his tour up the Lohit Valley to Rima.

Copy sent to E. A. D. by Secretary to the Governor of Assam with his D. O. 1623 G. S of 11-4-1940.

Tour Diary of Mr. Mainprice, A.P.O., Lohit Valley from Jan. 11 to Feb. 9, 1944. Copy to E. A. D. with Letter Tr 2/43/36 Ad. of 17-3-1944 from Adviser to Governor of Assam.
East of the Mishmis information becomes even scantier.

Eastwards of the Diphuk La in the jurisdiction of Burma come the Khamti Long. The connection between these and the Khamtis of the Assam tribal area is not clear. But both appear to be of Shan origin and to be Buddhists. How far they extend up to or along the McMahon Line is vague; but the military report of 1931 records that Tibetans cross the Diphuk La to trade in wool with the Khamtis and that the road is easy. But it appears from Kingdon Ward that the inhabitants of the Seingkhu valley and Adung valley are a primitive people called Daru or Hkang (Nung). Apart from Kingdon Ward I can find no other authority on the Adung salient. He records that not far above the junction of the Seingkhu and Adung he found a small settlement of Nungs Lisus and Chinese — this well within the McMahon area. He also met Chinese peddlers who come principally for a medicinal root. Further up the Seingkhu but still within the McMahon Line he came on a settlement of Tibetans.

In the Adung valley he found another settlement of Tibetans at Tahawndam just north of Adung Long; and he reports that many Tibetans cross the Namni La near the head of the Adung river every year to gather medicinal roots. In addition Lisus and Chinese come over and the Nungs cross into Tibet for salt and cloth.

Mr Godfrey was informed in 1940 that there were large numbers of Chinese traders settled in Khampto Long.

The Tibetan influence in these areas does not appear to be great but in 1932 and 1933 there were reports that Tibetan officials from Jite were trying to collect taxes in the Adung Wang (Adung Long) and Seingkhu Wang areas. The Tibetan settlers treat the Nungs as serfs and carry some off into Tibet.

The presence of Lisus from the Salween valley is also noteworthy; and Kingdon Ward considers that there is a southward migration of Tibetans meeting a westward migration of Lisus.

There do not however appear to be signs of any great increase of either of these peoples but the district is largely unknown.

It may also be noted that in 1930 it was decided to exclude from Burma the upper valley of the Taron river which lay outside the McMahon Line.

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It may also be observed that the China–Burma frontier is under dispute and that the Chinese appear to claim a line running from not far north of Myitkina to about the Diphuk La (the S. conjunction of "inner" and "outer" Tibet) while Burma’s claims in the early years of the century extended almost to the Salween at Hpimaw (Pienma), where there was a military post in 1920.

Kingdon Ward  
Article in the Geographical Journal March 1930 on Seingkhu and Delei valleys.

Do.  
Article in Geographical Journal. April 1932 on the Burma-Tibet Frontier.


Foreign to P.O.S. D.O. D.3566 of 20-7-1933. Sikkim File 7(10)-P/33.


Conclusion — There are three considerable wedges of Tibetan influence south of the McMahon Line and at least three small pockets of Tibetan settlement. See also notes at pages 114 and 117.

Tibetan administration is in force in the Towang area and as far south as Kalaktang.

The Pachakshiri Monbas are treated as Tibetan subjects but it does not seem that there are any resident Tibetan officials in that area.

The Monba–Popa mixture on the upper Dihang is strongly under Tibetan influence but it is not certain that there are Tibetan officials in the area although this is probable.

The Matun river pocket of Tibetan settlers is unimportant. See also notes at pages 114 and 117.

The Tibetan settlement south of Rima is of a poor type of Tibetan and does not appear to be increasing. The Tibetan officials of Rima claim taxes from these people.

The Adung Long pocket appears to be attracting more Tibetan official interest than before.
From Gori Chen to the Siyom information is scanty and there may be some Tibetan influence in the Western section although the absence of any known passers from Gori Chen to the Lha La makes this improbable.

From the Lha La to the Siyom Tibetan penetration seems to be effectively checked by the warlike Miris of the upper Subansiri. Across the northern border of the tribal area trade flows freely wherever the nature of the country admits.

Tibetan traders travel to Udalgiri in Assam in the Western area (from Tawang to Gori Chen) and in the Eastern area to Sadiya by the Lohit valley and by the Diphuk La. In the Subansiri they appear to travel only as far as to Simong.

From Gori Chen to the Tungu La and from the Yongyap La to the Lohit it appears that the tribal people cross the McMahon Line into Tibet for trade but that the Tibetans do not cross freely into the tribal country.

Along the southern boundary of the tribal area there is also a free flow of trade except in the central section where the Abor trade-blocks interfere to some extent.

The Abors and Miris thus appear to constitute a zone of obstruction both on the north and the south between their more tractable neighbours on either side.

In its internal aspect the area exhibits a great variety of people none of whom appear to have any tribal cohesion and all of whom even the Abors where they have come under British influence appear to respond to interest taken in them and to efforts to keep the peace. Hostility does not appear to be directed at the administration but against one another. There is plenty of room for an increased population if improved methods of agriculture are introduced.

The obstacle to the spread of administration or influence is lack of communication.

Appendix VII

Relations between Tibet and Nepal

Legend credits the Seventh Century Tibetan King, Srong-tsen Gampo, with having married a Nepalese princess and a Chinese princess. From that time, although there is little evidence, it appears that the religious tie preserved good relations between Tibet and Nepal.

Ralph Fitch, an English traveller in 1573, reported a peaceful and prosperous trade between Tibet and India through Nepal. Orazio Della Penna records in 1730 that after the Manchu conquest of Tibet, Nepal was subjected to Tibet — presumably to the Chinese Amban at Lhasa.

The conquest of Nepal by the martial Gurkhas in 1769 diminished the religious connection with Tibet and introduced an era of Nepalese aggression and Tibetan anxiety. In 1788 the Nepalese invaded Sikkim, then a dependency of Tibet, and were only induced to withdraw by the cession of the Tibetan border district of Kuti. In 1792 the Nepalese attacked Tibet on the pretext that the Tibetans were circulating base coin, but it seems that their real motive was greed for the wealth of Tashi Lhunpo. They reached and plundered this place with great rapidity to the alarm of the Tibetans. The Chinese Government despatched an army alleged to number 70,000 men, which overwhelmed the Gurkhas and pursued them to Katmandu, where a humiliating peace was imposed on them. They had to restore their loot and pay tribute to the Chinese Emperor. It was this Gurkha invasion that caused the closing of Tibet to traffic from India, because it was suspected at Lhasa that the recent treaty between the Government of India and Nepal implied that the British had instigated the attack by the Gorkhas. When the Gorkhas were suffering defeat from the Chinese they appealed to the Government of India for help; Major Kirkpatrick was sent to Katmandu to mediate but arrived too late.

In 1854 war again broke out between Tibet and Nepal. This time the pretext for the attack was alleged Tibetan interference with the Nepalese tribute Mission to China. The charge may have been true as Tibet was beginning to pay less attention to the presence of Chinese Ambans. At all events China gave no help on this occasion, and after two years fighting the Tibetans were defeated and had to conclude a treaty with Nepal. This treaty of 1856, which still governs the relations of Tibet and Nepal, was signed without any reference to China other than a vague acknowledgment of the respect both parties felt for the Emperor. Tibet agreed to pay Rs. 10,000 per annum to Nepal; to cease collecting any dues from Nepalese subjects; to allow a Nepalese trading factory at Lhasa, and to allow extra territorial jurisdiction to be exercised by the Nepalese representative at Lhasa, whose rank was to be raised. Mutual agree-
ments were made for the return of prisoners, for extradition of offenders, and for the restitution of stolen goods of the other nationals. Nepal undertook to help Tibet if she were attacked; and also to restore Tibetan territory, arms, and property, seized during the war. The posting of an official of high rank at Lhasa was also a concession by Nepal; but there was no provision for a Tibetan representative at Katmandu.3

The Tibetans resented their humiliation, and after this treaty relations at Lhasa were strained. Outrages on Nepalese subjects there led to the breaking off of diplomatic relations in 1873. The Tibetans had to apologize, but feelings did not improve, and in 1880 there were fears of a Tibetan attack on Nepal. In 1883 a Tibetan mob looted property worth 9 lakhs of rupees belonging to Nepalese subjects at Lhasa, and it seems that no compensation was paid. It is not surprising therefore that in 1904 the Nepalese offered us their support in the British expedition to Lhasa.

The Nepalese officer at Lhasa acted as mediator in the negotiations between Colonel Younghusband and the Tibetan authorities.4 The revival of Chinese power at Lhasa produced feelings of greater sympathy between Nepal and Tibet, but an appeal by the Tibetan Government for help from Nepal in the terms of their treaty did not produce any result.5 The Nepalese representative found that the Chinese tried to whittle down Nepalese extraterritorial rights,6 and there were efforts by the Chinese Government to claim Nepal as a vassal state. The disturbances at the Revolution in 1912 caused losses of life and property to Nepalese subjects at Lhasa, and gave anxiety to the Nepalese Government who wished for settled conditions at Lhasa for the sake of their trading interests. The Maharaja of Nepal believed that the Chinese were bound to send a large force and overwhelm Tibet, and he advised the Tibetans to make terms with the Chinese Government. It seems also that he was considering the annexation of a small strip of Tibetan territory near Kirong if conditions in Tibet remained disturbed.7

When the Tibetans got the upper hand over the Chinese troops in Lhasa, the Nepalese representative negotiated the settlement between the two.8

When the Chinese had been driven out of Lhasa the growing spirit of Tibetan independence led to renewed resentment at the privileged position enjoyed by Nepalese subjects in Tibet, and their disregard of Tibetan religious scruples. The Tibetans also resented having to compensate the Nepalese subjects who had suffered losses during the disturbance that followed the ejection of the Chinese from Lhasa, particularly as most of the damage was done by Chinese soldiers. Moreover the closer connection between Tibet and the Government of India reduced the importance and prestige which the Nepalese representative at Lhasa had formerly enjoyed in the capacity of intermediary between Tibet and the outside world,9 and the improvement of the road between Kalimpong and Tibet caused a diminution of Tibetan trade with Nepal.

The usual source of friction was the question of Nepalese jurisdiction over half-Nepalese who appear to have been less well-behaved than the true Nepalese and to have used their claim to Nepalese protection to the annoyance of the Tibetan authorities. The Tibetans also alleged that Tibetan subjects who wanted to avoid the penalty for their misdeeds, would claim Nepalese nationality.

The Tibetans also resented the stationing of Nepalese officers at Shigatse and Gyantse, and Kuti although the treaty with Nepal only specified that there should be a Nepalese representative at Lhasa. The other officers seem to have been appointed between 1902 and 1904. The behaviour of individual Nepalese officers was an important factor in relations with Tibet. Major Jit Bahadur who was at Lhasa from 1904 to 1914 was popular and respected, but his immediate successors seem to have adopted an arrogant and overbearing attitude.10 The extensive nature of Nepalese claims can be seen in a demand made in 1916 that Nepalese jurisdiction in Tibet extended to "all non-Tibetans of Mongoloid appearance" including British subjects of Nepalese extraction.11 Nepalese jealousy of their special position in Tibet must have been sharpened by the growth of British influence, and this may have tended to hasten the decline in good relations between Tibet and Nepal. A particular point of resentment after 1921 was the action of the Government of India in supplying more arms to Tibet than had been supplied to Nepal.12

By 1923 there were signs of tension and the Prime Minister of Nepal expressed his fears about the growing truculence to the Tibetan authorities. The Tibetan Government on their side began to address both the Government of India, and the Government of Nepal on the
subject of jurisdiction over half-Nepalese in Tibet. From the letters of the Tibetan Government it appears that they had accepted the practice that the Nepalese officer at Lhasa had jurisdiction over the male issue of Nepalese-Tibetan marriages. In 1925 Tsarong Shape went to Kathmandu to discuss the matter with the Maharaja. It appears that he intended to propose the registration of half-castes, and the imposition of some limit of the number of generations to which the descendants of half-castes could claim Nepalese nationality. He was also going to discuss the right of Nepal to post officers at places other than Lhasa.

Unfortunately, when Tsarong reached Kathmandu he received orders from his government not to discuss those matters, as the Tibetan Government believed (mistakenly) that the question was being taken up with Nepal by the Government of India. In 1926 the Tibetan Government were advised to address a letter to the Government of Nepal on the lines of Tsarong Shape's proposed agenda, but we have no record that this was done.

The reactionary movement against foreign innovations and the irresponsible regime of the favourite, Lungshar, caused a loss of touch between the Government of India and Lhasa, and in this period when British advice was rarely sought, relations between Tibet and Nepal deteriorated rapidly. In 1929 a serious situation developed over the case of Gyalpo Sherpa. This man was arrested by the Tibetans but claimed Nepalese nationality. He escaped from prison and took refuge in the Nepalese representative's house whence he was removed by force by Tibetan police and soldiers. The crisis which nearly led to war, is described in para. 62 of the Summary. The tension of that time caused a renewal of close relations between the Dalai Lama and the Political Officer in Sikkim; and the renewal of that connection, which did much to bring the Tibet-Nepal crisis to a peaceful end, probably also worked towards preventing other subsequent incidents from developing into further crises.

The Chinese took their opportunity of fishing in the troubled waters and renewed their interest in Nepal with which they established contact through their Consul at Calcutta.

The tension gradually subsided, and relations now appear to be amicable, for which much credit must go to the present Nepalese representatives in Tibet. Major Hiranya Bista, the representative at Lhasa is sociable and courteous in his dealings with Tibetan officials, and Capt. Pande who has been at Gyantse for many years is easy going and popular.

Nepal

   D.O. Parsons to Bailey. D.O. 1668 X of 30-6-1925 and enclosure.
   Ditto Letter 193 of 25-12-1909.
   Ditto Letter of 3-1-1909.
   Ditto Letter 148 of 1-4-1910.
   Ditto Letter 96 of 4-7-1910.
   Ditto Letter 128 of 29-11-1911.
   Summary para. 20 and 28.
   Ditto Letter 88 of 7-7-1912.
   F. and P. to P.O.S. D.O. 459 (2)X/ of 23-1-1924 and enclosure para. 8.
   Summary paras. 20 and 28.
   Ditto Letter 88 of 7-7-1912.
   E.A.D. to P.O.S. D.O. of 17-9-1913 and encls.
The early history of Ladakh and Western Tibet may be read in Francke’s History of Western Tibet. For many centuries Ladakh and Western Tibet formed an independent Tibetan Kingdom which underwent a number of changes in dynasty, extent and strength. From the middle of the Seventeenth Century the boundary between the Tibetan kingdom of Ladakh and the territories of the Lhasa Government were roughly what are now the boundaries of Ladakh and Tibet. The Kingdom of Ladakh was conquered by the Raja of Kashmir in 1834-1840, since when there has been some sort of understanding about trade and general relations between the two countries.
In 1918 the Tibetan Governor of Rudok carried off a Kashmiri subject, named Lhagyal, and his flocks, from a grazing ground known as Dokpo Karpo. The Kashmir Durbar protested and from this incident has followed a long series of discussions, mostly inconclusive. The Tibetan Government, after pressure, released Lhagyal but asked that some of their subjects, who appear to have left Tibet to avoid taxation should be returned to them. They also claimed that Dokpo Karpo was in Tibet, and they alleged that the Kashmir officials had imposed an embargo on the export of barley from Kashmir, contrary to a treaty between Kashmir and Tibet, and that there were disagreements about the mutual provision of transport.\(^2\)

It may be observed in passing that Tibetan memories are long, and that as recently as 1937 Shape Lanchungnga referred to the return of Lhagyal as a reason for the return of Tibetan subjects from Kashmir. He ignored, as the Tibetan Government have consistently ignored, the difference between the release of a man held in Tibet against his will, and the return of Tibetan subjects who do not want to leave Kashmir. It was proposed that matters in dispute should be settled at a joint conference which should be attended by a British Commissioner in view of the necessity for ratification by the Government of India of any decision reached by the Kashmir authorities. They also gave their opinion on the treaty of 1842 between Tibet and Kashmir, which they regarded as of doubtful validity, since it was made between the defunct Sikh state and the Emperor of China, and was in any case in vague terms.\(^3\)

The joint meeting took place at Dokpo Karpo (see map 6) in 1924, and its heritage is a series of confused, unsettled, problems.\(^4\)

The main points discussed are detailed below and each is followed briefly to its position at the present time.

1. The Boundary — The area under dispute is high, uninhabited, grazing land. It appears that the boundary, as in most grazing countries, had never been fixed. The claims of both sides, which neither would relax, are shown on the accompanying sketch map. No decision was possible. The Government of India did not think that the Kashmir Durbar’s claim was likely to succeed, and suggested a graceful concession, but the Durbar declined.

In 1929 the government of India decided that the matter, which was of no real practical importance should be allowed to drop, and this hope has so far been fulfilled, although the Tibetan Government did touch on the question in 1937.

A detailed analysis of the evidence, conducted in 1929 by the Surveyor General, led to the conclusion that Tibet’s claim was by far the better.\(^5\)

2. Trade Relations between Kashmir and Tibet — The embargo on the export of barley from Ladakh was explained as a temporary measure due to a local shortage.

In the place of a system of exemption from taxation of certain traders it was proposed that both countries should introduce a 2 per cent. duty on imports. This duty is a complicated question and a full note on it will be found in Sikkim File 7(7)P/41.

The tax obviously needed the approval of the Government of India and the Government of Tibet, but it seems that the Kashmir authorities began to levy it at once without getting ratification from the Government of India. The Tibetan Government, when the proceedings were reported to them, did not approve of the tax but preferred that existing usage should be followed. The Garpons protested against the levy by the Kashmir officials, who told them that they might do the same. The B.T.A. Gartok tried to prevent the Garpons from imposing the tax until the Government of India and the Tibetan Government approved, and his action in ordering British subjects not to pay the tax caused very bad feeling.

In 1930 the Government of India, apparently overlooking the Tibetan Government’s objection to the 2 per cent. duty, informed the Garpons through Mr. Wakefield that they might levy the tax. It appears that Colonel Weir was to have informed the Tibetan Government about this on his visit to Lhasa, but there is no record that he did so, and letters from the Tibetan Government in 1924, 1927, 1931 and 1932 treat the whole of the Dokpo Karpo proceedings as still under discussion. In 1932 Mr. Williamson on his visit to West Tibet found that the Rudok Dzongpon was levying a 2 per cent. duty, but no tax was levied by the Garpons. Again in 1937 when there was another joint conference attended by representatives of Kashmir and Tibet and by the B. T. A. Gartok, it appeared that the Garpons considered this question of a mutual 2 per cent. duty as still under discussion.

The position is unsatisfactory and the 2 per cent. duty seems to have been taken out of its proper place as part of the proceedings at Dokpo Karpo which do not yet appear to have
been ratified by the Government of India or the Tibetan Government. In spite of this the Kashmir Government has been levying the duty, and the Government of India have informed the Garpons, but not the Tibetan Government, that the 2 per cent. duty may be levied. The Rudok Dzongpon appears to be levying the duty, but there is no sign that the Tibetan Government are aware of this. 6

3. Return of Tibetan Subjects from Kashmir — No decision was reached. The Tibetan officials pressed for the unconditional return of their subjects although they were told that this could only be considered where some offence was alleged. The reasons for their insistence on this matter seems to be that in the sparsely populated country of West Tibet the services of all Tibetan subjects in providing forced labour, transport and taxes, are of considerable importance.

This matter dragged on, and as the Tibetan Government received no reply to their reminders, it seems that the local officials decided to take matters into their own hands. They made armed raids into Rupshu and sought to threaten their subjects into returning. The matter was taken up with the Tibetan Government who were asked to order their officials to desist from such unfriendly acts. 7

4. The Return of Ganpo, a Kashmiri Subject Detained in Tibet — The Garpons refused to consider this unless their subjects were returned. The Tibetan Government, when the matter was referred to them, said that the man should be returned, but nothing seems to have been done, for in 1929 the Kashmir Government wrote of it as being apparently still unsettled. 8

5. Concessions for the Lopchak and Choba Missions — The continuance of these missions on amicable terms was agreed upon.

It was agreed that there was no need to appoint a British Aksakal in the Changthang. 9

In 1937 another joint conference was held at which in addition to adding to the confusion about the 2 per cent. tax, other subjects were discussed without much progress. No agreement could be reached on procedure for the trial case in which a Kashmir subject is alleged to have been murdered by Tibetans. The case has been dropped. 10

It will be seen that there are several possible sources of further disputes between Kashmir and Tibet.

6. Ladakhis at Lhasa — Ladakhi traders have been in Lhasa for a long time. Bogle found them there in 1775 and at that time they appeared to be well established.

The pure bred Ladakhis, who have homes and families in Ladakh and who return there at intervals, consider themselves British subjects and look to the Government of India for protection. The offspring of mixed marriages treat themselves as Tibetan subjects. There is some rivalry between these two parties and the Tibetan officials naturally support those who claim to be Tibetan subjects. In the past, the leader of the pure bred Ladakhi community, which numbers about 250, has usually received a title from the Government of India. The principal grievance of these merchants is that they have never had any compensation from the Tibetan Government for the damage they suffered at the Revolution in 1912. From time to time they become involved in disputes with Tibetan officials about taxation and such matters, and if there is a British officer in Lhasa they promptly appeal to him. We have not any claim to extraterritorial jurisdiction in Lhasa, but it is presumed that we have a sort of consular right to protect British subjects from violence or injustice. The Ladakhis have consistently been told that they should conform to the laws of the country in which they have chosen to live. 11

   P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter 519/K of 6-8-1920.
   F. and P. to P.O.S. Memo. 162 E.B. of 3-2-1921.
   P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter 244 L.M. of 23-2-1921.
3. F. and P. to P.O.S. Memo. 25 C. of 3-6-1921.
   F. and P. to P.O.S. Letter 1055 E.B. of 8-8-1921.
   P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter 29 P. of 19-1-1922.
F. and P. to P.O.S. Memo. 53 X of 13-2-1926.

5. Dokpo Karpo report as at No. 5.
F. and P. to P.O.S. Letter 53 X of 17-6-1926.
F. and P. to P.O.S. Memo. D 3731 X/30 of 17-9-1930 and enclosures.
F. and P. to P.O.S. D.O. D 3731 of 17-9-1930 and enclosures 3.
Surveyor General’s report sent with above D.O.
Summary para. 53 C.
(Note of Dokpo Karpo. Sikkim File 7(7)P/41. p. 9.)

6. Dokpo Karpo Report as at No. 5 above.
P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter 527 P. of 6-7-1927.
B.T.A. Gartok to Supt. Hill States. Letter 35 A of 27-10-1926, sent to Govt. of India with
Chief Secy. to Govt. of Punjab’s letter 886 Pol/Gen. of 22-3-1927.
Govt. of India F. and P. to P.O.S. Letter F. 89 X/27 of 18-1-1930 and enclosures.
Acheson to Weir. D.O. F 89 X/27 and enclosure (Acheson to Beazely D.O. of 1-6-1929).
Summary Paras. 63 and 64.
F. and P. to P.O.S. Memo. 89 X of 18-12-1932.
Wakefield’s report. Govt. of Punjab to F. and P.
Letter 2474 S Pol/Gen. of 3-7-1930.
Letter of Tibetan Govt. to P.O.S. of 4-9-1931.
Sikkim File 12(2) P3, p. 97.
Note on Sikkim file 7(7) P/41, para. 22.
Mr. Williamson’s report sent to Govt. of India with P.O.S. Letter 6(35) G/32 of 14-12-1932.
F. and P. to P.O.S. Memo. F 27 X/37 of 1-7-1938 and encls.

7. Dokpo Karpo report. 527 P. of 6-7-1927 and encls.
P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter.
F. and P. to P.O.S. Letter 644/53 Ext. of 16-6-1922.
P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter 536/P of 24-10-1922.
Richardson to Menon. D.O. 7(7) P/36 of 11-6-37.
F. and P. to P.O.S. Letter F 58/X29 of 9-5-1929.

8. Dokpo Karpo report as at No. 5.
P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter 527 P of 6-7-1927 and encls.
F. and P. to P.O.S. Memo. D 3731 X/30 of 17-9-1930 and enclosure from Resident, Kash-

9. Dokpo Karpo report as at item 5 above.

F. and P. to P.O.S. Memo. F 27 X/37 of 10-6-1938 and enclosures.
F. and P. to P.O.S. Letter F 369 X/39 of 17-4-1940.

Report on Lhasa Mission 1938-1939 sent to F. and P. with P.O.S. Letter 4(4)P/39 of 24-
10-1939, para. 11. P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter 117 E.C. of I.G. 1916 and previous
 correspondence.
(Sikkim Files 11(9) P/36 D and 26 C 1913.)

Appendix IX

Tehri–Tibet Boundary Dispute

Map 7, based on that prepared at the time of the Boundary Commission in 1926, shows: —
Red Line The boundary claimed by Tehri.
Yellow Line The boundary claimed by Tibet.
Description of the Disputed Area — The disputed area is a wedge of mountainous territory of which the apex points north, and the sides form the watershed between the Sutlej and the Jadhganga rivers. The eastern side is the Zaskar Range. Most of the country is above the tree level and is typical Tibetan grazing country. There is a brief transition zone of stunted juniper trees. In the S.W. there is pine and deodar forest.

The area contains only two villages, Nilang and Jadang at an elevation of over 12,000 ft. The inhabitants are Jadhs, a transition people between Tibetans and Indians in type and culture. They speak, with equal ease, Hindi and Tibetan, and also a dialect of their own. By religion they are Hindu; but they retain some of the uses of Buddhism and call in Lamas for certain ceremonies.

They pass the winter in their permanent houses at Gangotri and Dhunda, south of the disputed area, and move up to the grazing in the summer. No Tibetans bring down animals to graze in the disputed area from north of the watershed.

There is trade with Tibet principally by a route leading to Tolimg across the Tsang Chok La (Jelukhaga Pass). The people of Nilang and Jadhang pay Rs. 74 to the Tibetans and Rs. 24 to Tehri.

It appears that up to the end of the 19th century Bashahr also exercised some jurisdiction over the Jadhs, and collected dues from them at intervals since then.

**Authorities**

Mr. Ludlow’s Report, 1932.
Mr. Eustace’s Report, 1935.
Mr. R. H. Williamson’s Report.

**Outline of the Case**

1914 — Tibetan official proposes to Tehri Durbar that their boundary should be fixed at Gum Gum Nala. No action taken.¹

1918 — Tehri erects or repairs three pillars on the Tsang Chok La.²

1920 — Settlement operations carried out by Tehri in Nilang and Jadhang.³

1922 — A Tibetan official asks Tehri officials to discuss the boundary question. Tehri replies that this should be raised through the proper channel.

Tehri Durbar complain to Govt. of India that Tibetan officials are collecting taxes in Nilang and Jadhang.⁴

1928 — Boundary Commission under Mr. Acton examines the locality. Mr. Acton recommends the Sutlej-Jadhganga watershed as the obvious natural boundary, but suggests a compromise giving Nilang to Tehri and Jadhang to Tibet, in case the watershed boundary could not be accepted.⁵

1927-1928 — Govt. of India accept the compromise suggestion — roughly the line of Kinney’s survey. The Tehri Durbar are willing to accept the award, but the Tibetan Govt. refuse and cling to their claim to the Gum Gum Nala.

The Govt. of India ask both parties to refrain from administering the disputed area pending a settlement.⁶

1930 — Tehri authorities cut timber in the disputed area. Tibetan Govt. protest.

Col. Weir discusses matter with the Tibetan Govt. at Lhasa. The Tibetan Govt. adhere to their claim to the Gum Gum bridge, and propose that from there the boundary should run eastwards along the line of Herbert’s survey.⁷

1931 — The Govt. of India reject this suggestion and adhere to their first decision.⁸

1932 — Tibetan Govt. continue their demand for boundary at Gum Gum bridge. Govt. of India reaffirm their position.
Mr. Williamson visits the disputed area and recommends adherence to the compromise line.9

1933—Tibetan Govt. repeat their demand. Govt of India stand by their decision, and add that if the compromise is accepted it should be made a condition that the inhabitants of Nilang and Jadhang should not be victimised, and that the Tibetan Govt. should not treat this case as a precedent for reopening other boundary disputes.

Political Officer, Sikkim, objects to making conditions, and suggests that the question may be allowed to lie dormant.

Govt. of India point out that the case has been complicated by a claim to Nilang put in by Bashahr, and direct that Tibetan Govt. should be pressed to accept the compromise line, without prejudice to their claim to Nilang. Tibetan Govt. again decline.10

1934—Tibetan officials graze sheep in the disputed area, and visit Gum Gum Nala. Political Agent, Tehri, suggests that Tibetans and Bashahr are in collusion in the matter of Bashahr's claim to Nilang, for the sake of the trade through the Tsang Chok La. He proposes that Tibet should be pressed to give up its claims in return for trading concessions. Proposal not accepted.11

1935—Tibetan Govt. ask for a decision, but dispute between Tehri and Bashahr is still unsettled.12

1936—Tehri-Bashahr dispute settled. Tehri gets the Nilang basin except for the Ghor Gad, in so far as Tibet does not make good its claim to any part of the area.

This implies that the Tibetan claim to the Chor Gad will have to be settled with Bashahr.13

1938-1939—Tibetan officials active in disputed area, destroy notice boards near Gum Gum; try to impose new taxes in Nilang; and in Chor Gad. Half of the grazing tax from Chor Gad deposited with the Nilang headman as the Durbar's share.14

Govt. of India decide that Tibetan Govt. should be told that Govt. of India do not want to reopen the question first on account of possible complications about the return of the Tashi Lama, and then on account of the question of the boundary between India and Tibet in the Tawang area.15

1940—Govt. of India decide that the Tibetan Govt. should be told that the war makes it inconvenient to reopen the question, and that they should be asked to restrain their officials from action likely to lead to disturbance during the war. This was intended to let the Tibetan Govt. know that Govt. of India had not lost interest in the case, and to prevent any belief that they acquiesced in the Tibetan claim.16

2. Ditto.
3. Ditto.
4. Summary para. 53 C.
   F. and P. to P.O.S. Memo. 1287/663 Ext. of 13-12-1922.
5. Acton's Report. op. cit.
   P.O.S. to Foreign Secy. Letter 159 P. of 7-3-1927.
   F. and P. to P.O.S. Letter 368 X of 8-2-1928.
   P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter 848 P. of 30-8-1928.
   F. and P. to P.O.S. Letter 368 X of 8-2-1928 and enclosure.
7. P.O.S. to Foreign. Telm. 7(17) of 21-7-1930. Summary para. 64.
8. F. and P. to P.O.S. Letter F 261 X/31 of 23-12-1931
   F. and P. to P.O.S. Letter F 261 X/30 of 26-8-1932.
   Summary para. 69.
   P.O.S. to F. and P. Letter 7(3)P/33 of 21-4-1933.
   Foreign to P.O.S. Telm. 2062 of 21-8-1933.
The claims of the Parties — The Tehri case rests on a claim to have exercised administration in the area from 1784.

The Tibetan case rests on a historical claim to have had their boundary on the Gum Gum Nala from ancient times.

In evidence Tehri produced a number of documents relating to the grant of land and timber and to the trial of cases in the disputed area. The Tibetans produced an inconclusive record of taxes in kind having been realised in the seventeenth century; and they cited the payment of Rs. 74 by the people of Nilang.

Some of the Tehri documents related to Gangotri where the Nilang people have houses, and where there is no dispute; others related to the collection of taxes which the Tibetans do not question. Tehri collects Rs. 24 per annum and Tibet collects Rs. 74. In this connection many of the Tehri witnesses before Mr. Acton said that the payment to Tibetan officials was a trade tax not a land tax, but there is reason to believe that the witnesses had been tutored and the Rs. 74 prima facie appears to be on the same footing as the Rs. 24 paid to Tehri.

Evidence of Tehri’s occupation was the building of roads and bungalows in the area. In reaching their decision the Government of India attached most importance to the 19th century surveys and reports.

In 1817 Hodgson and Herbert drew a map showing the boundaries of the territory restored to the Raja of Garhwal after the Gurkha War of 1814. Their line, the blue line on the map, excludes the disputed area.

In 1878 Mr. Kinney surveyed the Jadhganga Valley and the boundary he found is shown by the broken red line on the map. He also reported that the Tehri Durbar had a customs post at Nilang, and mentions a tradition that Tehri claimed the whole of the Nilang Valley, but that in 1815 Mr. Fraser had found it certainly under the Tibetan Government.

It appears that in 1912 the Emerson-Barker Commission described the trijunction between Tibet, Bashahr and Tehri as falling at a point just opposite Nilang. Tibet was not represented at this commission. In 1902 maps of this area were printed by the Survey of India for the Private Secretary to the Maharaja of Tehri, apparently at his request. These showed the Tehri–Tibet boundary as being on Kinney’s line.

There is little doubt that the boundary, as so often in grazing and primitive countries, had never been defined; but the dispute now called for a decision, and the Govt. of India considered that the line of Mr. Kinney’s survey giving Nilang to Tehri and Jadhang to Tibet. This decision needs slight modification because since Mr. Kinney’s time the village of Nilang has been moved to the East Tibetan) side of what he described as the boundary (or
possibly it always was on the East side). Mr. Williamson reports that the Tehri officials consider that whoever gets Jadhang should get Nilang also, and the Bashahr Tehri Commission of 1935 agree with this view.

NOTES — (1) The attached map differs slightly from that prepared at the time of the Boundary Commission. The alleged claim by Tibet to a line south of the Gum Gum bridge was based on a conjecture by Mr. Acton. The Tibetan Govt., in fact, claim that the boundary runs eastwards from the Gum Gum bridge along the line of Herbert’s Survey.

(2) The right of Tehri to impose customs duties, as they appear to have done, needs examination. It does not seem to accord with the spirit of our Trade Regulations with Tibet.

(3) It does not appear that the Tibetan Govt. know that part of the area which they claim, the Chor Gad, has been awarded to Bashahr as against Tehri.

(4) In 1932 the Tehri Durbar mentioned the possibility of giving them compensation if they gave up their claim to the watershed boundary, and the district of Badrinath was tentatively suggested.

Possible Solutions — 1. The Compromise Line — In view of the stubbornness of the Tibetan Govt. they are unlikely to accept this without pressure, especially as it would involve them giving up part of their claim to a third party which has come into the dispute at a late stage and possibly without their knowledge.

2. Acceptance of the Tibetan Government’s Claim — This would involve compensating Tehri and perhaps also Bashahr.

3. Pressure on the Tibetan Govt. to Give Up its Claim, and Accept the Watershed Boundary, in Return for Trading Privileges — This does not appear promising in view of the Tibetan attitude, although it would be a good solution on racial and geographical grounds. One of the items of compensation proposed in 1933 was free trade to which the Tibetans may claim to be entitled under the Trade Regulations.

The compromise boundary appears the best solution, and it would eliminate consideration of Bashahr’s claims. Possibly there may be some chance of bargaining in a general settlement of the Indo-Tibetan boundary in which the question of Tawang will play a large part.

Authorities

Acton’s Report, 1926.
Williamson’s Report, 1932.
F. and P. Letter F 261 X/31 of 23-12-1931.
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Y
PART FIVE

Testimonies and Recollections
New Year in Tibet is a festival of the early spring. On this occasion a member of the British Political Mission was present at the traditional ceremonies in Potala in Lhasa, where the Dalai Lama (as yet an unidentified infant) played host in spirit to the chief dignitaries of the theocratic state.

As a curtain-raiser, dances were performed by armed men, a kind of ancient militia, in old and ruinous mailed armour and helmets. They were joined by others in grotesque demon and animal masks, or made up as ghouls and skeletons. One old man did a knock-about turn with a tiger skin — this being an innovation of the late Dalai Lama, who claimed to have seen it in a vision. The last and longest part of the preliminary ceremony was a dance by “black-hat magicians”, who, with the other dancers, formed a double ring within which a leader performed a hieratic ceremony over the crude representation of a corpse.

Then the host appeared — or, rather, his robes, which were brought in solemn procession and set out on his throne. The regent and all the highest officials prostrated themselves three times before them. Scarves were offered to the throne, and all present bowed to the regent and prime minister, who sat on lower thrones on the right. Then the lord chamberlain went round inquiring, “on behalf of the Dalai Lama”, whether all the guests were well. Tea was brought in a golden tea-pot. A monk tasted it before it was offered, between swinging censers, “to the Dalai Lama”; and then the company were served.

The Dalai Lama’s dancing boys next performed. They had become stalwart, almost stout, young men getting rather clumsy in their movements. It was clearly time for a new troupe to be recruited and for some of the old to be given minor clerical appointments in the Government service.

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Heaps of bread, cakes, sweets, dried fruits, sheep and yak carcasses were piled up in the hall as offerings to the Dalai Lama. After the sweets and dried fruits had been distributed to the distinguished guests, the Potala servants were allowed to scramble for the heap of bread and meat. There was a whirling mass of arms tearing at the carcasses and shovelling the bread into capacious coats and sacks. When the attendants thought this had lasted long enough they beat the throng out of the hall, leaving in the centre a mess of pounded and powdered fragments which was quickly swept up so that the dancers might come on again.

At intervals throughout the ceremony two geshes, one from Drepung and one from Sera, held a heated debate. They swayed their bodies in a kind of golf swing, pounded their palms to mark the scoring of a point, hitched their rosaries over their ears, uttered shrill cries, and generally behaved in a manner which would appear surprising to us if indulged in by, say, the dean of St. Paul’s and the dean of Westminster. One of them, an oldish man with a goatee beard and a broad grin, was an aggressive, not to say acrobatic, debater, and most of the time he threw his cloak from his shoulders to give himself freedom of movement. The other was a quiet and more dignified figure who remained wrapped in his cloak and turned to the audience with a gentle smile at intervals as if asking them to share his rather scornful amusement at his adversary. He interpolated remarks in a low voice, and his answers seemed to please the ranks of listening monks. When he found it necessary to pound his palm or to scream he did so rather apologetically. At any rate, he seemed to have been the more effective, for at the end of the ceremony he was chosen to recite a prayer to the Dalai Lama.

This was the Dalai Lama’s New Year; the King’s New Year was next day. The ceremony was essentially the same, except that the abbots did not attend and there was a different kind of dance. About fourteen officials were selected to wear some very old dresses which were originally worn by the kings of Rimpung, and were presented to the fifth Dalai Lama when that country ceased to be independent. The finest is the king’s dress. It is a brocade robe over which are worn two necklaces, one of immense amber beads and one of fine coral. Another great amber bead is worn at the waist and from it hangs a silk pocket to hold a tea cup. A round charm-box, about 9 inches in diameter and studded with perfect turquoises, is worn on the chest. From the left ear hangs a silver bar about eighteen inches long, set with big turquoises, and from the right ear a conch-shaped earring. These are so heavy that they are not attached to the ear itself but are hung on to the topknot. Strands of artificial hair braided with red silk are also hung on to the head.

The least imposing part of the dress is the hat, which is a small affair of yellow silk shaped like a paper cap in a Christmas cracker. But the official who represents the lord chamberlain has a more imposing headgear. It is a
broad-brimmed witch's hat with a high crown of red silk surmounted by
a plume of peacock's feathers.

The wearers of these dresses could move only slowly, on account of the
weight of amber and coral, and they had to keep a firm hold on their heavy,
dangling earrings. The costumes were handed back with great care; every
stone in the earrings and necklaces was counted.

Afterwards, at the foot of the Potala, the annual pole trick was done. A
tall mast was set up and a man climbed up it to gyrate on his stomach sev-
eral times on an iron spike. By the time the show began a scurry of snow
and dust had set in, and the mast was swaying perilously. But all went well,
and the performer slid safely down a rope to earth.

This performance is a tax on a village somewhere near Mount Everest,
which holds its land free except for this one duty. All the men and boys of
the village keep in constant practice and even enjoy it.
Reports on the Arrival in Lhasa of the New Dalai Lama

Having witnessed and taken part in the ceremonies marking the first arrival of the fourteenth Dalai Lama in Lhasa, the author composed these anonymous reports for despatch to the Associated Press of India and the Times of London. Although the basic information is repeated in each, the detail appears to vary in such a way as to warrant reprinting all of them here (ed.).

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[From a carbon copy headed “Typed draft for approval. Associated Press of India”, corrected in the author’s hand, 4pp.]

On October the 6th [1939] — the 23rd day of the eighth Tibetan month — the boy of four and a half years old who has been recognised as the fourteenth incarnation of the Dalai Lama arrived at the last stage of his journey before entering Lhasa. He was born in Silling [Hsining], Ch’ing-hai, to parents of moderate means who already had two sons and one daughter. After his discovery by an incarnate lama of Lhasa, he was taken to Kumbum monastery near the Kokonor, and from there he started for Lhasa about the middle of July, accompanied by a few Tibetan officials, his family, a small body of Chinese soldiers, and a large party of Chinese Muhammedans who are proceeding on Haj. At Nagchuka, about ten days journey from Lhasa, he was met by a deputation of high officials from Lhasa, led by a cabinet minister. For the arrival of the Dalai Lama at Rigya, about two and a half miles from Lhasa, a large encampment of tents had been prepared, and all officials went out from Lhasa to receive him.

The procession, which was met at some distance from the camp by the Dalai Lama’s bodyguard, was headed by a number of mounted men.

Reprinted from the author’s original manuscripts.
wearing silks of many colours and carrying tall banners and religious pictures. The lay officials accompanying the Dalai Lama were dressed in splendid yellow brocade embroidered with coloured designs. The monk officials wore copes of yellow red and blue over their robes of dark wine colour. The Dalai lama was carried in the midst of the procession in a light sedan chair covered with yellow silk, and could be seen looking out of the window at the quiet, reverent crowd which lined the way.

Before entering the camp the procession climbed up the steep path to Rigya monastery on the face of a rocky spur overlooking the plain. They were greeted by the sound of cornets and long copper trumpets, and were received by the regent.

After the Dalai Lama had rested for some time the procession reformed and wound slowly down the hill. It had now been joined by many more officials including the regent and prime minister. The Dalai Lama was now scarcely to be seen in the depths of the golden state palanquin. At the door of a bright yellow enclosure he was lifted out and led to a throne inside a gaily coloured reception tent, hung with golden brocade.

He was wearing a coat of yellow brocade and a hat with a yellow conical crown. When he had been lifted up on to the throne and his household officers had taken their places round him, all the officials bowed down three times and then went up to the throne to offer white scarves and to receive the Dalai Lama's blessing. The large number of people who filed past, and made their offering, was headed by the regent, and included British, Nepalese and Chinese representatives. There were monk and lay officials of all ranks, palanquin carriers, drummers, and dancers; and a few of the ordinary people of Lhasa also managed to get in.

The composure and placid behaviour of the child were remarkable. Although surrounded by hundreds of people and a great deal of splendour he conducted himself with grave, unsurprised, self-possession, stretching out his small hands to touch the heads of the higher officials or holding a rod with a silk tassel over the heads of lower officials and servants. Such behaviour does not surprise the Tibetans, indeed they expect it, for in their view the Dalai Lama is revisiting scenes of his incarnation and performing long familiar duties.

The ceremony ended with the serving of tea and rice after which the Dalai Lama was led to his private tents where he will spend two nights before entering Lhasa.

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8 October 1939
The Dalai Lama entered his capital early in the morning escorted by all the officials of Lhasa and the outlying districts within two hundred miles. The
streets through which he passed were lined partly by drummers and dancers in gay silk clothes and streamers of coloured ribbons over their shoulders, and partly by monks in deep wine coloured robes and yellow crest-like hats who were holding all kinds of sacred objects. From a window near the west door of the ancient Tsuklakhang — the Cathedral of Lhasa — the procession appeared in a golden aureole with the early morning sun behind it. First a stream of servants in orange silk and large circular red hats hurried ahead to be ready to hold their master’s horses. Then various minor attendants in green, blue and yellow; and then a long line of banners and umbrellas. High lay officials in gold brocade with broad fur edged collars and hats with a crown of red surrounded by a golden band, monk officials in deep red robes and brocade waistcoats, lesser lay officials in black silk skirts and shining brocade jackets with rainbow silk scarves draped over the shoulder and fixed by large ornaments of turquoise, over a hundred in all preceded the sedan chair of royal yellow with gilded top; and more followed after. As the Dalai Lama came near the southern door of the cathedral the State Oracle, in a towering headdress of white plumes, rushed out with his familiar spirit in possession of him. He danced wildly and convulsively forward and thrust his unearthly face into the palanquin so that the protecting spirit of the religion of Tibet, who enters the oracle in his trances, could greet the Dalai Lama. Those who were near said that the child was unmoved by the experience which might have been expected to terrify him. This was yet another witness to Tibetans of the fact that the child is the true reincarnation.

The procession then moved on and entered the western door of the cathedral. After a short time it emerged and began the last stage of the Dalai Lama’s long journey home. Moving below the Potala, which was hung with many coloured flags, it entered the long straight road to the Norbulingka Park and soon passed through the yellow tiled gateway and entered the old palace. The first ceremony here was a prayer service to which only the household monk officers were admitted. When this was over all officials offered scarves to the Dalai Lama on his throne. The reception hall was too small to admit more than the highest officials and the countless worshippers of lower rank had to sit outside when they had received their blessing. Today the Dalai Lama behaved with the same dignity as before but he seemed less solemn and occasionally smiled at his attendants as if he were glad to have reached his old home again. His dancing boys performed several dances; tea and rice were offered and when the Dalai Lama had been conducted to his private rooms the assembly broke up.

It is expected that no further ceremonies will take place for a month, after which will be held the formal cutting of the Dalai Lama’s hair as a sign of his initiation into the church.

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On the 8th October the new Dalai Lama reached the end of his two and a half months journey to Lhasa. For two nights he had rested at Rigya where he was received by a large number of officials from all over Tibet. Early on the morning of the 8th October the glowing procession enclosing the yellow palanquin rode through the streets lined with monks holding banners and auspicious emblems, and with villagers dressed in bright colours as dancers, and musicians. Every window was shut and curtained, for no one should look from above upon the Dalai Lama. A band of officials wearing the dress of the old kings of Tibet were conspicuous by their rich brocade, enormous circular ornaments on their chests, and earrings of turquoise over a foot long. Golden incense burners and silk wrapped bundles of Dalai Lama’s clothing were carried past on horses. Monk and lay officials shone with red and gold, dark crimson, green, blue and yellow in the morning sun. The regent rode behind the palanquin on a richly caparisoned pony. As the centre of the procession reached the south entrance of the cathedral it was met by the oracle of Nechung in a state of possession. A god who acts as guardian of religion is said to enter into him and when he is so possessed he dances with convulsive movements, bending his body fiercely to the ground, forwards and backwards. He wears a high headdress of white plumes over a golden crown, and brandishes a sword and bow. This terrible figure rushed to the Dalai Lama’s palanquin and thrust in his head so that the spirit in him could do reverence to the Dalai Lama. There had been some apprehension that the sight would frighten the child but it is said that to the astonishment of his entourage he was quite unperturbed. When the oracle had withdrawn, the procession went on to the west door of the cathedral by which the Dalai Lama entered to visit this shrine, eleven centuries old, in which is kept the Jowo Rimpoche, an image of Buddha said to have been brought from China by a wife of King Songtsen Gampo who first established Buddhism in Tibet.

After a short time the procession left the city of Lhasa and passing by the foot of the Potala, entered the Norbulingka, a large walled park containing the several summer palaces of the Dalai Lama. In the oldest of these palaces after a private service of prayer a reception ceremony was held at which the customary offering of scarves was made and a short performance of dances was given by the Dalai Lama’s dancing boys. Finally the Dalai Lama withdrew for a well deserved rest after more than six hours of ceremony.

He will probably not have to take part in any further ceremonies for at least a month after which his hair will be cut as a sign of his formal initiation into the Buddhist Church.
His behaviour during the exacting two days of his entry into Lhasa has been a source of wonder and delight to the people of Tibet and has confirmed their trust in the reincarnation. Indeed such calm assurance in so young a child seems to come from something more than mere schooling.

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["Boy God in Lhasa", The Times, 4 Nov. 1939, p. 7, with 5 photographs on p. 10.]

From a Special Correspondent

Lhasa, Oct 8 [1939]

Rigya, over two miles east of Lhasa and within sight of the soaring Potala, was the scene the day before yesterday of the first ceremony on the return of the Dalai Lama to his capital in his fourteenth reincarnation. On a plain below rocky foothills a large encampment had been set out in square formation, three lines deep around a resplendent reception tent standing in a yellow walled enclosure. Its outer cover was bright yellow — a colour used only for tents of the Dalai Lama — and decorated with blue designs; its inner roof was richly embroidered with circular patterns in blue, red and yellow; and on the roof-pole were gilded figures, including peacocks, from which it gets its name of the Peacock Tent. The inner walls had been hung with yellow brocade embroidered with golden dragons, and from the poles scarlet and gold banners were draped. A throne covered with silk and fronted with the double-thunderbolt symbol on white satin had been arranged for the Dalai Lama, and to right and left were seats for officials.

The regent went in procession with the state sedan chair up to Rigya monastery on the hill above the camp, there to await the Dalai Lama. Before long an excited murmur told that "the Presence" was coming, and the crowd on a spur hiding the road to the east stirred expectantly as the band of the bodyguard was heard. Soon, above clouds of dust mingled with the smoke of incense and above the mass of people, tall banners came into sight. Deep trumpets sounded from the monastery in the hill. A reverent, silent crowd of Tibetans pressed forward to see the four-year-old child from the distant Chinese province of Silling [Hsining] in whom their compassionate ruler Chenrezi has again become incarnate. A small troop of Chinese soldiers in dusty, quilted clothes came a little in advance, followed by a body of mounted men in bright silks and tall Mongolian hats holding banners. Behind them rode officials in ascending importance wearing magnificent brocade robes and, preceding the centre of the cavalcade, a sedan chair covered in yellow silk through the glass windows of which the small Dalai
Lama could be seen looking with calm interest at the crowd. Behind rode his father and mother and his two brothers.

After a short rest the Dalai Lama was carried down in the large gilded palanquin over which waved an umbrella of peacocks' feathers and one of yellow silk, to receive homage in the Peacock Tent. There he was seated on the throne. After making three prostrations before him the officials headed by the regent, began to file past, offering white silk scarves and receiving his blessing. The stream, which included British, Nepalese and Chinese representatives and Lhasa Moslems, poured past the throne for almost an hour, while the Dalai Lama, wearing yellow brocade and a yellow peaked fur hat, sat solemnly and with dignity holding out his hands to touch the worshippers. The stately lord chamberlain of his household, standing on a high step beside the throne, watched the proceedings, and in front of the throne a monastic attendant looked after his master with reverent affection, smiling up in encouragement and showing the Dalai Lama whom he should bless with both hands, whom with one, and whom with a silk tassel on a silver rod, and himself holding up the rod when the child grew tired with the long ordeal.

When the offering of scarves was over, tea was brought for the Dalai Lama in a golden tea-pot studded with turquoise. First it was tasted by a household official and then offered in a large jade cup.

The dignity and the self-possession of the child impressed everyone. He looked about calmly, seeming unmoved by the magnificence and as if he were in familiar surroundings. Although appearing to grow tired towards the end of the ceremony he did not lose his composure. He never smiled but maintained a placid, equable gaze. Much of his attention was directed to a calm inspection of members of the British Mission as though he were trying to recall where he had seen such people before.

The Dalai Lama reached the end of his two and a half months' journey to Lhasa this morning, after resting two nights at Rigya. The procession enclosing the yellow palanquin rode through streets lined with monks holding banners and auspicious emblems. The villagers were dressed in bright colours as dancers and musicians. Every window was shut and curtained, for none should look from above upon the Dalai Lama. A band of officials wearing the dress of the old kings of Tibet were conspicuous by their rich brocade, by enormous circular ornaments on their chests, and by their earrings of turquoise over a foot long. Golden incense-burners and silk-wrapped bundles of the Dalai Lama's clothing were carried past on horses. The regent rode beside the palanquin on a richly caparisoned pony.

As the middle of the procession reached the south entrance of the cathedral it was met by the oracle of Nechung in a state of possession. A god who acts as guardian of religion is said to enter into him, and when he is so possessed he dances with convulsive movements, bending his body
fiercely to the ground, forwards and backwards. He wears a high headdress of white plumes over a golden crown and brandishes a sword and a bow. This terrible figure rushed to the Dalai Lama's palanquin and thrust in his head so that the spirit in him could do reverence. There had been some apprehension that the sight would frighten the child, but it is said that he was quite unperturbed.

When the oracle had withdrawn, the procession went into the west door of the cathedral, by which the Dalai Lama entered to visit the shrine, eleven centuries old, in which is kept the Jowo Rimpoche, an image of Buddha said to have been brought from China by a wife of King Songtsen Gampo, who first established Buddhism in Tibet.

After a short time the procession left the city of Lhasa and entered the Norbulingka, a large walled part containing the several summer palaces of the Dalai Lama. In the oldest of these a reception ceremony was held, and a short performance of dances was given by the Dalai Lama's dancing boys. Finally the Dalai Lama withdrew for a well-deserved rest after more than six hours of ceremony.

He will probably not have to take part in any further ceremonies for at least a month, after which his hair will be cut as a sign of his formal initiation into the Buddhist church. His calm assurance during the exacting two days of his entry into Lhasa has been a source of wonder and delight to the people of Tibet and has confirmed their trust in the reincarnation.
It is a great honour to address the members of a Society with so much experience of Asian affairs. An examination of Tibetan political affairs from a Western standpoint is bound to concentrate on the shortcomings of the Tibetan system and to omit the spiritual and material excellences which are quite un-Western. I like the Tibetans and their way of life and have no desire to go on record only as a critic, but there will be no time this evening for me to pursue their elusive charm into the fringes of metaphysics.

The Society heard less than a year ago from Mr. Arthur Hopkinson, formerly Political Officer in Sikkim, an account of the relations between Tibet and China, and I am going to assume that you are all aware that since 1912 Tibet has enjoyed complete de facto independence, and also that you know that the frontier between Tibet and China runs approximately along the upper waters of the Yangtse and not, as Chinese maps have it, about a hundred miles to the east of Lhasa.

Before considering the latest turn of events in Tibet it might be useful to consider, briefly, the nature of the Tibetan government which has got to face this very serious crisis. The organization has changed hardly at all since the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the rule of the Dalai Lamas was established in its present form. At that time the system embodied social and constitutional ideas going back still farther into the dim beginnings of Tibetan history in about the eighth century. It is not possible to draw an exact parallel with English history, though roughly one may compare the Tibetan social system as it is today with England in the fourteenth century.

The Dalai Lama is, of course, absolute ruler in all things spiritual as well as temporal. All kinds of unimportant details are referred to him for a decision, and if he is a strong man not one of his officials will dare to initiate any action or even volunteer advice. The executive that carries out the Dalai

Lama’s orders includes monks and the lay nobility who hold land in return for which they are bound to render service to the government. Not part of the executive government, but exercising a very great influence upon it, are the monasteries headed by the three great pillars of the State, Drepung, Sera and Ganden, all near Lhasa and containing between them about 20,000 monks. These overgrown institutions were originally the support of the Dalai Lama against other sects, but now they have become something of a Frankenstein, because they are fanatically conservative, and it is fear of reaction on their part, which might throw the whole of Tibet into confusion, that acts as a deadweight against the introduction of any new ideas into the country.

The whole of this superstructure — the Dalai Lama, the officials, nobles and monasteries — rests on a feudal society. The land is all parcelled out into estates which are held complete with their cultivators, who have to till the land in return for food and clothing provided by the overlord, and the monasteries are the biggest overlords of all; they hold by far the biggest share of the land. There are a few persons who hold directly under the government, but, in general, the whole of the population is bound to the land.

I do not propose to judge that system on moral grounds. It has worked for centuries and has not produced any extreme hardship. The land produces more than enough food and clothing and the Tibetan is naturally cheerful and easy-going; he is physically strong and resilient. His standard of living is probably higher than that of the Indian villager, and there is certainly no envy of the Indian way of life on the part of any ordinary Tibetans who have been down to India and seen it for themselves.

The Tibetan peasant is accustomed to taking orders all his life, but this has not crushed his self-respect. Still, the chief factor in his acceptance of his lot is, of course, religion: he feels that by taking his humble place in society he is furthering the ends of Pagpa Chenrezi, as he calls the Dalai Lama.

A system such as I have described could only hope to survive for very long in isolation; and Tibet, in addition to geographical isolation, has been isolated by the continuing internal weakness of Chinese governments in the past. The link with the Ch’ing emperors was comparatively light, and was endured quite readily because the emperor was a semi-divine figure and a protector of the faith. After 1912, when the Chinese emperor and the influence of Buddhism were swept away by the revolution and a government without any particular regard for religion came into existence, feeling became a little more bitter on the subject, but over against that the Tibetans had the advantage that in any trouble that arose with China they could now rely on the diplomatic intervention of the British government in accordance with the agreement between the United Kingdom and Tibet which was the outcome of the conference at Simla in 1914.
In their very lengthy survival the Tibetans see justification of their belief in their government, which is a government through and for religion, and since no other country has a government or religion like theirs this strengthens the inclination of the Tibetans to avoid close contacts with other countries. This is not a conscious political device; it is not a deliberate attempt to use religion as an opiate for the masses. It may be superstition, but it is certainly not hypocrisy, because all Tibetans, high and low, have a really deep devotion to their religion. Nevertheless, there have been from time to time Tibetans who have realized that a political system of that sort could not go on indefinitely; so far they have not been able to do anything about it, because the only way to break the circle would be to break the power of the monasteries, and, apart from foreign intervention, the only way of doing that would be the emergence of an almost miraculously strong and resolute Dalai Lama.

The thirteenth Dalai Lama did try to bring some modern ideas into his administration, in which measures he had the advice and the friendship of the late Sir Charles Bell and the assistance of the British government and the government of India. But the monks were too much for him, and in the long run his reforms only intensified their resistance and their suspicion of the executive. When the thirteenth Dalai Lama died, in 1935, there came one of those minorities that are an inherent weakness in the system of rule by Dalai Lamas, and during that period no strong man emerged with the desire or the courage to make innovations. The Tibetan government during this minority had to bring their country through the troublesome and difficult period of the last world war, and they did this without making any very great changes. In fact, their sole concern was to hand over Tibet to a new Dalai Lama in exactly the same condition as they had received it from the late Dalai Lama. There were a few changes. They acquired a little knowledge about ways of dealing with other countries, and the exchange of politenesses, even with the United States government, which seemed a long way away. A good deal of money flowed into Tibet during the war years, but it fell into individual hands and did not do any good to the country. But the changes were entirely superficial, and the Tibetans’ basic ideas were not altered by the last war.

Therefore, when the Tibetans saw the rise of communist power in China, its sweep through that country, and the rapid collapse of Chiang Kai-shek’s regime, they were filled with concern and bestirred themselves to protect their way of life. They acquired some arms and they also considered some social improvement was necessary, so they abolished forced labour, which had been a heavy burden on the peasants for many centuries. In addition, they took the opportunity in the summer of 1949 to evict the Chinese Nationalist government mission from Lhasa; that mission was not in any way concerned with the government of Tibet; it had quasi-diplomatic status. The
Tibetan government packed them all up and sent them politely out of the country, for the very sensible reason that they feared some of the members of the mission would transfer their allegiance to the communists.

At this time, in all their difficulties the Tibetan government knew perfectly well that the only country to which they could look for practical support was India. They had sent missions to the United States and to the United Kingdom a little earlier, and those missions had seen that there was nothing to be expected but kind words and expressions of friendship. Like other people, the Tibetans pinned great hopes on the Moslem governors of Ch‘ing-hai and Kansu to put up resistance to the communist advance, and when the whole of China’s north-west collapsed almost overnight and when the communists began to announce that Tibet was next for “liberation,” there was something very like panic in Lhasa. I believe that if the Chinese had managed to push even the smallest force up to Jyekundo, on the border between Chinghai and Tibet, in the winter of 1949, Lhasa might have collapsed at the sound of the trumpets. But nothing happened and the Tibetans began to recover heart. They were offended and their resistance was stiffened by the creation by the Chinese of a “Provisional Government of Tibet”, which they established just over the border in China.

The Tibetans set about recruiting what was for them a very large number of troops, and they set up a new office which was to collect food and supplies, and transport them to the armies in the east. They also decided to send missions abroad to plead their cause in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, India, Nepal and China. It was not clear what they wanted. They may have wanted arms. They certainly wanted sympathy, and it may have occurred to them at last that if they hoped to stress their independence they must do something about it. However, the whole plan was made in alarm; it was hurried and badly thought out, and the despatch of the missions was announced before the governments in question had agreed to receive them. At this time the Chinese propaganda machine had been grinding out a lot of accusations against the United States and the United Kingdom, charging them with imperialist designs on Tibet. Whether or not that affected the decision I do not know, but, at all events, the United States of America and the United Kingdom replied to the Tibetan government that that was not a suitable moment for receiving such a mission. That, of course, disappointed the Tibetan government a good deal and they turned all their attention to an attempt to get some kind of peaceful settlement with China. They had probably already some contact with the communist authorities in Jyekundo, and early in the spring of 1950 a curious unofficial communist delegation reached Lhasa from Jyekundo. They were not very well indoctrinated, because they began by saying that the new government in China was very kind-hearted and would let the Tibetans manage their own affairs. When a shrewd Tibetan said that
events in China seemed to prove that the government there had other ideas, the blunt men of Ch’ing-hai replied: “Oh, yes, that is what we always have to say at the start; communism will come a little later”.

Nevertheless, in spite of this warning the Tibetan government continued their attempts to negotiate, and they wanted to send a mission to discuss matters, at Hong Kong, with Chinese communist officials. You may have read of accusations in the press that the British government and the government of India prevented the Tibetans from making contact with the Chinese communists. That is a long story, and I cannot go into the details of it now. The trouble was probably due mostly to Tibetan political inexperience and lack of appreciation on their part of the difficulties facing other governments. In spite of the delay in being able to begin negotiations, the Tibetan government were surprisingly optimistic of a settlement during the summer of 1950, and they did not take alarm when there was a frontier fight in July, when they lost two Indian wireless operators. It seems that they still had hopes of a kind of local settlement on that border and they did not believe reports which were circulated that the Chinese were massing men on the borders of Tibet. The blow fell in the beginning of August, when Liu Po-Cheng announced that the invasion of Tibet was imminent. The Tibetans at once appealed to their one good friend, the government of India, and the latter made representations in Peking. After some delay they received what appeared to be a very favourable answer. Mr. Chou En-lai said it was the intention of the Chinese government to settle their differences with Tibet by peaceful means, and he also agreed that the Tibetans might negotiate with the new Chinese ambassador who had just been appointed to India. So that Tibetan fears again settled down for a while. They went on with their training and collection of supplies, but there was nothing of the urgency that one would expect in a country threatened by invasion.

At the end of September 1950 I left Lhasa. That was the season of the annual parties that are held there; everybody was taking it easy, and they had their eyes only on the course of negotiations which had just begun between their representatives and the new Chinese ambassador. At all events, no one was prepared — apparently not even the Chinese ambassador in India — for the invasion of Tibet by Chinese troops about 7 October 1950. This information took rather a long time to find its way through to India, and when it did it was turned into the most alarmist reports; indeed, the press had stories of the capture of place after place in Tibet, culminating in the taking of Lhasa within a few weeks of the original invasion. Almost all of this was entirely untrue. What actually happened was that Chamdo, the capital of eastern Tibet, was taken by a Chinese force which was not, apparently, very large; and a little later a small Chinese force found its way to Gartok, the capital of west Tibet,
probably from Khotan. The exaggerations may have been based on Peking radio broadcasts, and they may have been intended to test Indian and other reactions. If that is so, Peking may have been surprised by the strength of Indian condemnation of their action. The government of India protested strongly, but did not get much verbal satisfaction; they were kept waiting, and insult was added to injury by accusations that India was indulging in imperialist intrigue in Tibet. The Indian press, which had hitherto taken little interest in Tibet, now realized the value of a policy which had preserved for many years over a thousand miles of frontier in complete peace at negligible expense. But probably the greatest blow to Indian opinion was the breach of faith on the part of the Chinese, who had promised the government of India to seek a peaceful settlement with Tibet and then had almost immediately launched an invasion.

In Lhasa the news brought near-panic, and it may be that at that time the monasteries saved the situation. Whatever one may say about them as ultra-conservatives, the monks are certainly full of spirit. They said the Dalai Lama should not leave Lhasa and that they would fight for him to the last man, and they meant it, however unpracticable that might seem. So the Tibetan government remained in Lhasa, and as a measure to improve matters they arranged that the old and rather unpopular regent should retire and that ruling power should be given to the Dalai Lama. He is a boy, still under sixteen, an exceptional child both intellectually and in his conscientiousness and public spirit, but to put such a burden on him at such a moment was asking too much. In any case, it was eventually decided that the government should leave Lhasa, and the Dalai Lama left on 19 December 1950, with almost all his high officials. This time there was no opposition from the monks. So at present the Tibetan government, the Dalai Lama and the majority of his officials are staying in the Chumbi valley, near the Indian border. There are two chief ministers in Lhasa who are carrying out the routine administration. The government of India’s mission in Tibet is still in Lhasa. The Tibetan troops are stationed between Lharugo and Giamda. The monasteries are carrying on as before; trade with India is going on very actively, and the price of wool is higher than ever.

On the Chinese side there has been no advance from Chamdo and Gartok. I understand that the Chinese have reduced their troops in Tibet to a mere handful, and they are administering the east and west districts through captured high officials of the Tibetan government.

One of the latest pieces of information I saw in the press was a report of the failure of negotiations between the Tibetan representatives and the Chinese ambassador in India. But almost at once that was followed by a report of very friendly and peaceful offers made by local Chinese officials in east Tibet in which they promised to preserve the position of the Dalai Lama, to respect freedom of belief, and to maintain monastic property untouched.
Throughout the whole of this business there has been such a variety of action and approach by the Chinese communists that one may wonder whether they have a plan or whether they are acting as opportunists and following whatever line appears promising. I would like to note what they have done recently. They announced that they would liberate Tibet by force, and then they almost at once agreed to a peaceful settlement. That, in turn, was followed almost at once by invasion. The invasion was successful, but it was not pressed. Not very long before that, they had set up a provisional government under supporters of the boy whom they have put forward as the new Panchen Lama, but since they entered Tibet that provisional government has been ignored. Formerly they made numerous broadcast attacks on landlords and monasteries. The latest report is that their offers to these classes were extremely conciliatory. The only point on which the Chinese communists have been completely consistent is their attack on the United States of America and the United Kingdom, and their claim that, in whatever they are doing in Tibet, their object is to save Tibet from the imperialistic designs of those two governments.

Is it possible to believe that the present peaceful offers are more reliable than those obviously false charges which are uttered with the same breath? The Chinese must know now quite well what the position in Tibet is and the quantity and quality of the opposition likely to be put up. They must also know that the departure of the Dalai Lama from Lhasa is likely to have weakened morale and cohesion; and they have also seen that the only country to support the Tibetan appeal to the United Nations was El Salvador. It is possible the Chinese are waiting for warmer weather before lengthening their lines of communication even against such opposition as they expect — and there may yet be a sting in Tibet's tail. It is possible they are still waiting to learn more about India's intentions; and it may be that their accusations against the United States and the United Kingdom are merely intended as a hint that if those countries do not intervene in Tibet, the Chinese may not find it necessary to occupy the country. Whatever may be the reason, the immediate signs are that the Chinese want a peaceful arrangement in Tibet. It is possible to think of many explanations for that. There are the administrative problems in China itself, owing to lack of officials, and there are reports of agrarian unrest there. There are also Chinese military commitments and their relations with Russia, especially in Manchuria and Sinkiang; but these are matters for China experts, and I should like to mention only a few special or mainly Tibetan considerations which might incline the communists to prefer at a start to follow the old policy of the Chinese empire and to try to dominate Tibet through a Tibetan government on traditional lines rather than to try to occupy the country and set up a communist regime.

First, Tibet's resources are very little known; there is certainly no obvious wealth there, and communications are primitive and difficult, so that I
am doubtful whether Tibet would be of great material or strategic value to China — by itself, I mean — without very great expense. Secondly, military occupation could only mean occupation of strategic centres, outside which in the great expanses and thinly scattered population there could remain pockets of opposition which might develop into dangerous resistance. In the third place, the Chinese must know that they are unlikely to get hold of the Dalai Lama without a peaceful settlement. Formerly the Panchen Lama was very useful to the Chinese as a pawn and excuse for interfering in Tibet, but on the Tibetan mind his hold was quite different. The ordinary Tibetan was worried by the absence of the Panchen Lama, because he is one of the chief jewels of the faith who ought not to remain out of the country. So, if a puppet government were to be set up in Tibet under the Panchen Lama and the Dalai Lama were to go into exile the position would be reversed and very much to the disadvantage of the Chinese. In the fourth place, it might suit the Chinese government for a time to maintain a government in Tibet which could maintain the relations with India. A complete occupation of Tibet by the Chinese would mean complete closing of the frontier with India so far as that is possible, and this would cause economic unrest in Tibet and start off a new regime in an atmosphere of discontent. Tibet's biggest trade is wool. The Chinese might want wool, but it is doubtful whether they could take it to China and pay for it at anything like the high prices ruling now in India. Perhaps also they would even prefer to have the foreign exchange which those wool exports bring in. They might, therefore, want to start with remote control rather than direct rule, in order to preserve contact between Tibet and India.

Of course these speculations may be upset at any moment by some new action on the part of the Chinese, but whatever form of government does emerge in Tibet I think it must be clear that the present feudal system is near the end. So many advantages to Tibet could follow from that change that it is sad that it appears it must come about through communists. The Tibetans themselves under a strong and tactful ruler could have done a good deal to improve the system without a direct attack on monastic power, but it must be admitted that beneficial changes would be very much easier with removal of monastic opposition. And despite current Chinese promises it seems certain that they will curtail, if not abolish when they get the chance, the monastic estates which maintain, perhaps, 300,000 sturdy men in idleness. If the numerical strength of the monasteries could be reduced, that would break their stranglehold on the executive, and it would also free a large number of men for work and for breeding, and it would allow the executive to make improvements without hindrance. With a careful choice of innovations and improvements suitable to an agricultural and pastoral people Tibet could support a much higher population with a higher standard of living. If the monasteries could be curbed, without being abolished,
religion could still remain as the master idea to unite the Tibetans as a distinct people.

But I am afraid it is no use looking for a utopia. However, the Chinese have had to allow a great variety in administration even in their own country, and perhaps the changes that will come to Tibet may be gradual and they may occur without destroying the Tibetan national spirit. In fact, there are some changes which might even strengthen that spirit. Of all countries India will watch with particular anxiety to see what emerges from the old easy-going, obscurantist, feudal, priest-ridden Tibet. We may all hope that it is to be a Tibet with its distinctive religion, thought, habits and cheerfulness, and with Tibetan aspirations.
Unknown Tibet

The Chinese invasion of Tibet in October, 1950, lately thrust that country into prominence; but after a short burst of exciting but largely inaccurate press reports “news from Tartary” has again relapsed into rare and scattered notices. Such hints as there are point to considerable eagerness on the part of the Chinese to reach an agreement with the Tibetans that will avoid further military action. Peking demands control of Tibetan foreign policy and defence arrangements, and holds out, as an inducement, the preservation of a traditional form of Tibetan internal government. Such a plan would reduce Tibet from its present independent position to the status of a colony or protectorate, and one may wonder how long traditional Tibetan ideas would be allowed to survive once independence had been lost.

Tibet has been so much shut off from the world that most people may not have a clear picture of the Tibetan way of life and government. In the sphere of government the tradition is the supremacy of religion, which is now represented by the rule of the Dalai Lama and by the influence of the monasteries which preserve the religious teachings and which, although administratively in the background, provide the solid conservative and ultimate support for the custom of rule through a divine king. The social organisation is feudal. The monasteries and the lay nobility hold great estates cultivated for them by peasants who are tied to the farms and receive food and clothing and a small plot of land.

A Tibetan village has an air of solidity and permanence. The houses are squarely made of whitewashed stone; they are two-storied and flat-roofed and stand firmly on the ground, surrounded by a maze of thick stone-walled cattle-pens where cows, yaks and sheep are folded at night. On the roofs you may see fodder and firewood stored, and often grain spread out to ferment for the making of barley beer. In the stable-yard is a pony or two, for it is a very poor Tibetan who has not something to ride. Inside the

house, on the upper storey which alone is used to live in, is a typical peasant array of baskets, pots, rakes and ploughs, hanks of wool, a loom or two, saddles and ornamental trappings for mules or yaks. The rooms are small and dark; the main lighting comes from doors and windows giving on to a central open space. There is one good room kept for visitors or ceremonial occasions, and in it are simple images of Buddhist deities and saints and other religious objects; also a few rugs and some cushion-seats with silk or woven woollen covers. At night the inhabitants just unroll their heavy blankets, take off some or all of their clothes, and settle down on the floors of the rooms, the verandahs or the roof-top. They usually go early to bed, for their lighting from metal or earthenware lamps in which a cotton wick floats in mustard oil is dim and smoky. In the villages they have at hand most of their needs, but must go to a town to buy salt and tea, iron, pottery and such luxuries as they can afford.

Most of the district towns are little more than large villages; but they have a few shops, and they are also the headquarters of the local magistrates. Even Lhasa, the capital, although by far the largest town, is of modest size, with a population of between 20,000 and 25,000. It is in a very special sense the heart of the country, for it is built round the most sacred shrine of Buddhism in Tibet, a temple built over 1,300 years ago, and it is the residence of the Dalai Lama, the divine ruler. The majority of Tibetan officials live in Lhasa; only a few go out to govern the distant provinces and districts. Nearby are three great monasteries housing in all about 20,000 monks. So there are in Lhasa official, religious, business and social activities on a scale far greater than anywhere else in Tibet.

In the streets of Lhasa you will get an idea of the material civilisation of Tibet in its most highly developed form. No Tibetan of position is ever seen walking except when visiting temples or making a pious circumambulation of the holy city; so you will see many horsemen mounted according to their means and social rank on small local ponies or on larger, showy, well-groomed beasts from Mongolia. The ordinary folk go in homespun or broadcloth; the officials, attended by mounted servants, in bright silks; the monks in garnet-red robes. There is no mechanical transport, and indeed practically no wheeled traffic except for a rare cart on the outskirts of the city. In the Dalai Lama’s stables there are two old motor-cars, but they have not been out for nearly twenty years. Some time ago a few young men imported motor-bicycles; but the roads are rough and dangerous, and the noise alarmed the ponies of the more conservative, so the motor-bicycles soon disappeared. An ordinary bicycle may occasionally be seen, usually with a Nepalese trader as rider.

The shops in the city give evidence that Tibet has commercial contacts with India and China, for in addition to local products such as woollen cloth, boots of leather or wool, silverware, copper and earthen pots,
vegetables, incense and the like, you will see silks and brick-tea from China and quantities of cotton cloth, Indian tea, broadcloth, and miscellaneous goods such as aluminium ware, soap, beads and mirrors. Among the shopkeepers are Nepalese, Ladakhis and Chinese. Many of the shops are part of the lower storey of the great town-houses of the nobility. Tibetans prefer to live on the first floor and to keep the ground-floor of the house in part for protection, in part for storage.

Although the upper storeys have windows on to the streets Tibetan houses look inwards on to open courts where there is shelter from the force of the wind. There is less need for this now that glazed windows have replaced the old-fashioned wooden, cotton-covered frames which were in general use until about twenty years ago. And nowadays wealthy Tibetan officials build new houses in parks on the outskirts of Lhasa, using steel girders and concrete, retaining the general lines of Tibetan traditional building, but adding great expanses of glazed window and eliminating the many wooden pillars formerly needed to hold up the roof of a large room. Some twenty years ago a small electric plant was established in Lhasa, but it has ceased to provide efficient light, and is being replaced by a larger hydro-electric plant. In the meantime kerosene pressure-lamps are the favoured lighting in big houses and primitive mustard-oil lamps in the smaller.

Lhasa is in touch with the outer world through a telegraph line to India, constructed about thirty years ago, and connecting with the Indian government telegraph office at Gyantse. Recently a few wireless stations have been established in Tibet for communication between Lhasa and the capital towns of the outlying western, northern and eastern provinces. There are a few wireless receiving sets in the houses of officials or big traders at Lhasa, but, as the number of people who understand English, Hindustani or Chinese is very small, there is little in the programmes which they can pick up either to interest or enlighten them; and as there is no newspaper printed in Tibet, it will be clear that the average Tibetan knows little about happenings outside his own country. Traders, muleteers and a few officials on leave go down to India, but they are mostly interested in trade or in places of religious pilgrimage. This attitude is not due to any natural dullness or stupidity, but rather to the fear of innovations inculcated through religious training by the dominant priesthood.

The Tibetans are, in fact, quick and adaptable, and they are a pleasant, friendly people. Many travellers have written of their kindness, candour and happiness. The villagers are sturdy, self-reliant and cheerful, always ready for laughter, hardly ever quarrelling, following an old code of good manners and tolerance. An over-layer of calm and restraint distinguishes the more polished manners of the official class, but underneath that the same friendliness and ready laughter can be found. Life moves at a leisurely and easy-going pace. There is always time for visits to places of worship;
and at Lhasa in the summer you can see crowds of townspeople going out to picnic all day in the groves of willows and poplars by the riverside. At this time, too, whatever you may have read to the contrary in travellers’ tales, Tibetans spend much time bathing and washing their clothes. They seem able to pass hours just lazing — chatting, drinking a little, singing, playing simple gambling games.

You are unlikely to see any of the holiday-makers reading a book — unless it be some studious monk — for there is no popular literature in Tibet. Almost the only books are the books of the scriptures. Here may be seen one more manifestation of the influence which has, with the help of natural geographical barriers, kept the life and thought of Tibet within closed conservative traditional bounds governed by ideas which it is hard for Western minds to conceive as being the living, all-permeating force that they are. It is religion that dominates everything in Tibet. The ruler is divine; about half of the body of officials are monks; and behind all lies the immense influence of the thousands of monasteries scattered all through the country, the intimate source of education and the moulders of thought.
I have been reading *The Canterbury Tales* and *Piers Plowman* lately, and it struck me time and again how easily a Tibetan of today could fit into the life of the middle ages in England, and how Chaucer's pilgrims would find themselves at home in Lhasa. For there folk still 'long to go on pilgrimages' and manage to combine a sincere intention of acquiring merit at the end of the journey with a determination not to miss the pleasures of a trip to India or to some attractive holy place in Tibet far from the controls and conventions of city life at Lhasa.

On the roads of Tibet you may meet Chaucer's knight in some country Tibetan nobleman, his sporting monk in a gay horse-loving lama, the prioress in an elegant nun of good family, and the wife of Bath may be seen in the merry wife of some well-to-do Tibetan trader. And in talking to these travellers you will find treated as commonplaces certain matters on which our scholars of medieval life make learned commentaries. No Tibetan, for example, would take long to discover differences of rank in small details of the dress of the English of the middle ages; nor would it have to be explained to him that only the lower orders ride mares — as Chaucer’s plowman did. The Tibetan could also tell the scholar in detail which colours and points in a horse are auspicious and which are not. Then, any Lhasa man who has lived in sight of the great prayer masts which protect the four corners of his city could settle down comfortably in the shadow of the giant maypole which stood in Cornhill and gave its name to the Church of St. Andrew Undershaft. The spirit of such tales as the miller’s and reeve’s would be no surprise to a Tibetan, but he would find English manners rather uncouth, for he himself would never tell such stories in the presence of a prioress. He would almost certainly be uneasy about Piers Plowman’s invective against ecclesiastics and I am sure that most Tibetans

would sincerely put forward instances of countervailing good in their religious institutions and would suggest that on his part Langland chose to describe only the abuses of his time.

A comparison of the living medievalism of Tibet with our own middle ages could be carried much further and the slight sketch I have attempted is meant only to suggest a picture of a society in which each person knows and accepts his own place. In Tibet that acceptance is strongly reinforced by religion, which shapes, pervades and dominates the life of every Tibetan. The Tibetan peasant is probably more conservative and docile in such matters than his English counterpart in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and in general he has little complaint against the established order.

Now that old established order and the all-embracing tranquillity of Tibetan feudalism have been brought into contact with the new ideas of communist China. So far the contact has not been very violent. Tibet lacked the unity which a mature and experienced ruler could have provided, for the Dalai Lama was still a minor. So the Tibetan government, when faced with the threat of invasion, vacillated between resistance and conciliation and tried a bit of each. The Tibetan show of resistance was enough to gain some time. It compelled the Chinese to make elaborate preparations for the conquest not so much of the Tibetan army as of Tibetan heights and distances. When the Tibetan borders were invaded and most of the best Tibetan troops were put to flight, a compromise followed. In that way the Chinese gained a hold on the country with smaller forces than they would have needed if they had had to fight their way to Lhasa. Although they are just now proceeding slowly, Tibet, which in the past twenty years moved much closer to India and the outside world, is likely to retire behind one of those curtains which communism draws around its borders.

You may think that Tibet has always been behind a curtain; and it is true that the Tibetans have kept themselves very much to themselves. But that is a matter of history with shades of difference which there is no time to examine now. It must suffice to say that the exclusion of foreigners, as a policy, was part of the design of the Manchu emperors of China who conquered Tibet for the first time in the eighteenth century and sought to keep it attached, however loosely, to their empire. Since the Chinese revolution in 1911 the Tibetans had gradually increased their contact with the outside world, and although they did not find much in it to make them seek for closer ties, they could, if they wanted, make their views known outside their own country. Now they are likely to be pulled back sharply behind a sound-proof curtain and their opinions will be expressed for them by propagandists in Peking.

But the new curtain is not yet completely down. The government of India still have a representative in Lhasa, and I hope that the ostensibly good relations between India and China will allow that arrangement to continue, for so long as there are foreign witnesses the Chinese may hesitate
to proceed to extremes in Tibet. On the other hand, the government of India will want to preserve Chinese good will and is likely therefore not to report anything more than diplomatically selected titbits of news.

For a few months very little about Tibet has appeared in the news; and I want to look briefly at the state of the country before it retires still further into obscurity. Since the Chinese invasion began, less than two years ago, some great changes are obvious. Until the middle of 1951, Tibet was in practice an independent country running its own affairs without any foreign interference. There were close and friendly diplomatic and commercial ties with India, and chilly, distant, and guarded relations with China. Now there is a Chinese army of occupation in the country, and the Tibetan government is controlled by Chinese advisers whose power can be seen in reports of the dismissal of the chief minister and the abolition of his office.

There is also news of Russian interest in Tibet, especially in the matter of road construction and in the provision of technical experts. Although there are still Indian representatives in Tibet, it has been admitted in Delhi that their position has changed; and it is clear that their influence can only be small in face of resident Chinese advisers supported by large armed forces. In commercial affairs, too, the link between Tibet and India has almost been broken. Exports of Tibetan wool to India used to provide supplies of exchange with which Indian textiles, metals, sugar, tobacco and the like were bought. Now it appears that the wool exports and the connected return trade are quickly drying up. This was not primarily due to any action by the Chinese. The United States, which used to buy most of the Tibetan wool through India, cut off those purchases on the ground that Tibet had come under communist domination. This situation played right into the hands of the Chinese, who were able to secure almost complete control of the Tibetan wool market and can now divert Tibetan trade away from India — if they want to do so.

It may be expected that among the important changes in Tibet I should mention the return of the Panchen Rimpoche, the second religious dignitary in Tibet. A good deal used to be heard about him in the press and usually under Chinese inspiration, and his return always loomed large on the Tibetan horizon. But now that it has taken place it has lost most of its importance. It was useful for the Chinese to have in their hands a pretender to authority in Tibet, whom they could use as an excuse for interference in Tibetan affairs. Now that their pretender has been established they have played their card for most of what it was worth. No one ever claimed that the Panchen Rimpoche had any right to rule all Tibet; and if the Chinese now were to try to supplant the Dalai Lama by their protégé they would find that the sympathy which went to the Panchen when he could be represented as being deprived of his rights would now go to the Dalai Lama whose influence is vastly greater.
It is difficult to find out in how many ways the ordinary Tibetan has been affected by the new regime. One thing, however, is clear. The Chinese occupation has upset the economic balance in Tibet and has caused a shortage of food and a steep rise in prices which hit the ordinary landless Tibetan worse than the landowners. This would seem to give communist doctrinaires a good chance of inciting the have-nots against the wealthy ruling class. But this does not seem to have happened yet. When the ordinary people found out that they were worse off under the new regime than they were before, they appealed to their government and asked for the withdrawal of the Chinese troops. It was this that led the Chinese to dismiss the Tibetan chief minister, Lukhang Shappé, who was an elder statesman respected for his incorruptibility, his patriotism and his uncompromising religious devotion. Some relief of the popular distress seems to have been attempted by flying in supplies of rice — presumably to feed the Chinese occupation troops — and there have been ominous reports of large parties of Chinese settlers being sent to Tibet to increase agricultural production. But the old administrative machinery, feudal, aristocratic, hieratic, is still being maintained by the Chinese, and I have lately read reports that parties of important monks and noble officials are being sent to China to see the Chinese way of life.

This may look like an unholy alliance between communism and religious feudalism. No doubt each party has entered into it with the hope of gaining its own ends. The Chinese, on their part, are reported to be making their occupation effective by great road building and construction of air-strips, so that they may move troops quickly to deal with any disturbance. It seems true that they have considerable numbers of troops in Tibet. But the strength of their position is greatly reinforced by their ability to make use of the authority of the established regime. For in Tibet the word of the government is the word of the Dalai Lama, which is in effect the word of God. No one who knows the Tibetan ruling class would blame them seriously for lending themselves to this sort of situation. They are realists. They could not look to anyone for help and they could not have resisted the Chinese by arms for long. If they had been wiped out or dispersed by a last-ditch stand the invaders would have had to set up an entirely new sort of government, and the old traditions and methods would have been swept away. By the present uneasy compromise, the old form of government survives, however precariously. But I wonder how long that sort of alliance can survive, and what, on any western calculation, are the chances of a feudal, medieval, agricultural, and nomadic society against the impact of a vigorous and ruthless communism?

There is an obvious absence of social equality in Tibet and obvious material for the attacks of communist propaganda. But the Chinese are facing their problems in Tibet in a different mental atmosphere from that of China.
They are conquerors in a foreign land among a people who in general dislike them and whom they have hitherto taken little pains to understand. They are in a poor country, a long way from their own supply bases, and separated from them by the lack of any but primitive communications. And, as I have said, the acceptance of social differences is almost a religious duty in Tibet. I have heard it said that communism took hold of the Chinese mind so rapidly because there was a sort of spiritual vacuum and because, since the disappearance of the emperors, the Chinese people have felt the lack of a central superhuman focus for their loyalty. There is no such vacuum in Tibet (On the contrary, it seems to me that to be completely successful the communists would have to try to create one by undermining and removing the Tibetans' devotion to their religion).

There are, I suppose, two principal methods of doing this: the quick way of violence by which the Russians extinguished Buddhism in Mongolia; or the gradual way of educating the people against their religious teachers. The first method would, I think, be expensive. The Tibetans may have seemed supine in their reactions to the Chinese invasion, but if there is anything that would stir up whole-hearted opposition I should think it would be a direct attack on religion that would do it. If there were no ideological complications about the matter, and if the Chinese were examining the resources of Tibet simply as a question of imperial development, I think they would find out very quickly that the present system can neither feed nor pay even a small army of occupation and that it certainly could not afford to construct and maintain the mechanical communications with China, of whose development we keep hearing in the press.

One reads sometimes about the great hidden wealth of Tibet. I suppose there are stores of gold and silver in the vaults of the monasteries and in the government treasuries, but these resources have been looted by invaders from time to time and at best represent the savings of a small agricultural population with a sprinkling of well-to-do landowners and rich traders. I do not think the hidden wealth would seem very great except in relation to a society of that sort. Tibet could find capital for considerable improvement of its agricultural and pastoral production by irrigation works, fertilisers, improved seed, new breeding stock, tree planting, and the like. But even if deposits of gold or of oil were to be discovered, I doubt whether all the hidden capital in its treasuries would go far towards transforming Tibet into an industrial country. Industries need communications, and to establish communications between Tibet and its neighbours means crossing hundreds of miles of mountains, rivers, marshes, deserts and ravines where now only pack animals go. I cannot see Tibet supporting a modern foreign administration and paying its way for some time to come. If the Chinese Nationalists had conquered the country, they would probably have followed the lead of the Manchu emperors
and tried to keep Tibet under their influence and away from contact with other countries, with the minimum of expense, which would have meant the least possible interference.

But it is less easy to speculate about the plans of the communist regime, especially as it is still uncertain to what extent China and Russia are working in harmony there. I am not going to enter the argument whether Chinese communists are different from any other brand. It is enough to look at their uncompromising profession of communism, and many aspects of their behaviour in China itself which follow the regular communist pattern. In China they used the landlords at first. The purges and denunciations came later. If they follow a different line in Tibet it will be because they have chosen to do so for practical reasons. But whatever line they follow, whether they continue a policy of gradual development or whether they change over to smash and grab, I think that in order to maintain a really efficient control over Tibet they will have to dig pretty deeply into their own pockets.

In much of what I have said I have necessarily used the political vocabulary — should I say jargon? — of the western world. I should like to end up by what amounts to another look into the middle ages and by attempting to bring some of those words into relation with things as they are in Tibet. I mentioned the removal of a chief minister and the abolition of his office. Does that call up a picture of a government paralysed and a political party thrown into confusion? In Tibet the administration, for all its appearance of traditional rigidity, is in fact capable of considerable adjustment. At some times there have been four or more chief ministers, at others one, and at others none. The post is just one of several channels by which business reaches the ultimate source of authority — the Dalai Lama.

I spoke of communications, air-strips and the like. In Tibet even the wheel is almost unknown. I mentioned extensive road construction: and the picture which that phrase calls up to my mind out of many similar pictures is of a small group of tousle-headed men, women, and children, with their coarse handwoven dresses stripped to the waist, working some five miles from their little village and perhaps ten miles from the next, shoveling stones off a narrow track on a steep hillside, puffing and grunting, singing and joking. As you ride past they ask you, half laughing, for a tip and politely and humorously accept anything you might give them or turn back to work with a grin if you have nothing for them. As you go up the steep winding track to the mountain pass you might look down and see, 2,000 or 3,000 feet below you, the little party still scraping away at the stones, and you might hear through the clear dry air their snatches of fortissimo song as they work away; knowing that when the special occasion for which they are now clearing a road is past, more stones will be brought down by the feet of passing animals or by winter snow and summer rain.
Indeed, when I think of the number and size of the problems which the invader will have to overcome, I am tempted to believe that the essential Tibet will survive, although it will have to make some large adjustments to new conditions.

If moderation, patience, common sense and good will were applied to the problems, I am sure Tibet would survive. But that is the crux. Can we expect moderation, patience, common sense and good will towards the placid medieval life of Tibet from confirmed communists who have already shown themselves active, ruthless and successful elsewhere? He would be a rash man who could give a favourable answer to that. And, so, hope once more is outweighed by doubt; and yet, even without that good will and all the rest, hope will not entirely be denied; for in addition to the isolation of the country — these mountain barriers and vast bare heights, that hard climate and poor soil — there are some other factors — Tibetan character, and religion, Tibetan national spirit and Tibetan religious faith — which, if they have the weight and value I believe they have, could tip the scale the right way, and combine with the physical obstacles to blunt the edge of raw, new political ideas.
Refugees from Tibet
People Without a Place

Just before the New Year I watched from the window of a Darjeeling hotel a party of about two hundred Tibetan refugees preparing to leave for new and distant homes arranged for them by the Indian Government in Mysore. The men came striding up steep paths with their heavy, swinging gait; women with their own characteristic shuffle and children pattering behind — all making for a gathering place where local administrative officers and a representative of the Dalai Lama were ready to give them instructions for the journey.

They had done their best to put on a brave show for the occasion. Faces and shirts had been washed and any smart clothing still remaining had been put on. A few had good brocaded hats or broad-brimmed felts, stout leather riding-boots, a new-looking chuba (robe); but many had only a shirt or tunic and trousers and canvas shoes.

Those who know the Tibetans would have been proud to see their quiet, orderly, self-reliant behaviour. They carefully avoided trampling on the flower beds surrounding the place of assembly; men spoke gravely and courteously to one another, the less important hitching his cloak over his right shoulder or taking off his hat, as politeness requires.

They gathered without fuss into separate groups to receive their allowance for the journey and listened respectfully to a message from the Dalai Lama read by his representative. But with all their obedient good manners they retained an air of independence and fearlessness; they looked everyone openly in the face with a friendly smile. Such courage and dignity, after all they had endured, were beyond praise.

Many were Khampas from the far east of Tibet. Their wanderings had begun five or six years ago when, to escape the brutal and overwhelming violence of the Chinese communists, they had left their ruined homes and

desecrated holy places. They travelled westward into central Tibet, and after the rising against the Chinese in March 1959 they had fled to refuge in India.

I had visited some of them, not long before this Darjeeling gathering, in a wretched house — its rent many months overdue — where about fifty of them crowded for shelter at night. They had unmistakably been good solid farmers and traders, people of substance and standing in their villages. Now everything of value in their possession had gradually been sold — ornaments, prayer-wheels, knives, blankets, their best clothes — and they were spending their days begging for food. With a mixture of indignation and bewilderment they said: “We are not beggars and it is shameful that you should see us doing this”. They asked nothing of me, but thanked me politely for coming to see them.

Now, when I went down to the gathering place, my eyes were irresistibly drawn upwards, beyond the wooded slopes of Darjeeling, where high over a sea of mist and towering masses of thunder-cloud, Kangchenjunga attended by its lesser peaks soared, brilliant, majestic, withdrawn. Barely fifty miles lay between the Tibetans and that snow-clad summit which marks the frontier of their former home, and to me the thought of the physical and spiritual separation now beginning was deeply moving. But none of the Tibetans there appeared to look with longing or regret in the direction of their country and those I spoke to were glad to be going: all they wanted was somewhere to live and work as self-respecting men.

There are perhaps two thousand Tibetans in Darjeeling. Many are substantial traders, long connected with India, who left Tibet some time before the disastrous rising of March 1959. There is no going back, and they are refugees, as much as any others, but they still have means of their own. A hard core of professional beggars immovably settled in Darjeeling for many years accounts for another hundred or two hundred, while those who fled with or after the Dalai Lama may amount to between six and eight hundred.

There is no official relief organisation in Darjeeling for any of them, and the general impression is that the government wants to discourage refugees from coming there. Relief is therefore in private hands. About one hundred are housed and fed — to the envy of their less fortunate fellows — in a self-help centre, capably run by the wife of a brother of the Dalai Lama, where they also learn native crafts. The rest of the needy — like the Khampas I visited — must keep alive by selling anything they have left and by begging, eked out by private charity in the form of a distribution of milk twice a week and occasionally a dole of flour or rice.

This is done carefully and sympathetically by Christian missionaries, who get their supplies from the central relief organisation in New Delhi, but it can amount to no more than a contribution towards keeping the
refugees alive. Medical treatment for the Tibetans, except on a limited scale at the self-help centre, appears to be non-existent; and although local officials are personally sympathetic — and also find that the assembly of Tibetans at the milk distribution centre is the easiest means of checking the numbers of refugees and so on — higher policy prevents anything effective being done for the refugees.

The official attitude in this matter seems blind and heartless. The flow of refugees is continuing and is likely to continue; and the dispatch of two hundred of them to Mysore goes only a very little way towards easing the problem. Darjeeling has long been a place of resort for Tibetans, and whether help is given them or not, Tibetans will go there. Inevitably they include some bad characters and, in time, necessity and desperation may drive others to thieving or violence for the sake of survival. The local authorities will have more trouble on their hands and the Tibetans will be branded indiscriminately with a bad reputation.

A variety of political considerations unfortunately seem to rule out all question of settling even a few of the refugees in suitable vacant areas which could be found in the high land west of Darjeeling. But it is difficult to believe that there is any insuperable difficulty in finding a site in the neighbourhood, with a suitable climate, where the Tibetans could be housed, fed, given medical treatment and even a little schooling, while they are sorted into groups for eventual resettlement elsewhere.

Something of the kind appears necessary to replace the unpleasant but useful reception centre at Missamari in Assam, which has recently been closed. It may be that money is not readily available for such a purpose, but if the need were made known to other governments or to the United Nations Organisation, I feel sure this difficulty would be overcome.

By contrast with those who remain in those wretched conditions in Darjeeling, the emigrants to Mysore are lucky. Later, I saw them embarking on the midget hill-railway for the first part of their journey. There was no pushing or confusion. Still with admirable good manners, they crowded cheerfully and imperturbably into the little carriages — all resolutely hopeful. If they succeed, they may pave the way for more of their fellow-countrymen.

I found myself wishing passionately that they may not be disappointed, and that neither time nor distance may weaken the bond with their country and their religion which have formed their sturdy character. I left them, insistently repeating to myself a mantram for their enterprise: Tashi Sho! ("May it prosper!") Tashi Sho! Tashi Sho!
The last time I was invited to talk to this society was in 1959, not long after the rising at Lhasa. Just before the date of the meeting I was asked to go to New York at short notice to help the Tibetans prepare their case before the General Assembly of the United Nations. Sir Olaf Caroe with great generosity made it possible for me to go by taking my place here and giving a far better talk than I would have done. Today I want to take up the story where he left off and try to piece together the scraps of news about Tibet since 1959. I am not going to attempt any summary of bygone history; the past will be drawn on mainly to contrast with the present, and will be represented also by a handful of pictures which you will see later as a nostalgic reminder of a life which has almost vanished.

After the Chinese communists invaded Tibet and occupied it in 1950 and 1951 they kept up a constant campaign of interference and subversion against all Tibetan customs, religion and every expression of Tibetan nationality. The rising in 1959 was the culmination of Tibetan resentment at that interference. The Chinese say it was the dying kick of the nobility. That is not true. The nobles did not want an open breach, and it was essentially the act of the Tibetan people. But it was desperate. And in the upshot it allowed, or even compelled, the Chinese to do at one violent blow what they had been trying unsuccessfully to do by eight years of insidious subversion. Resistance was fiercely crushed and the Chinese summarily swept away the whole system of administration, society and religion which had been kept going after a fashion under their own control, and replaced it by a military dictatorship which in effect continues today.

When I was in India in 1960 and 1961 I met Tibetan refugees from that disaster. The Dalai Lama and large numbers of monks and soldiers had escaped to India in 1959, and a steady stream of refugees continued to flow in year by year. I spoke to many of them as they arrived, tired and destitute.

There were women and children with them, and babies were dying because the mothers were too exhausted to feed them. Their story was that after the rising the communists immediately clamped down on all movement in Tibet. They posted troops in strategic places and then gradually extended operations from village to village.

The Chinese make no bones about having abolished the noble class and confiscated their property. The refugees showed that they were also set on the destruction of the whole class of small yeomen farmers. These were smallholders, simple people of humble status, no part of the nobility and without any share in the administration of the country — the backbone of Tibetan agriculture. When the communist teams arrived in each village the farmers were subjected to the travesty of a trial of which we have heard in China. They were publicly accused, assaulted, robbed, imprisoned or sent to forced labour. Their offence was the possession of private property.

The attack extended also to monastic property and the practice of religion. The chapels and small monasteries in each village were desecrated and emptied of their monks, who were ordered to break their vows, marry, and turn farmer. Some were starved into submission, others were killed or committed suicide.

By 1961 landless labourers too were joining the flow of refugees. They had been given the confiscated land with the promise that they would enjoy the whole crop for the first year. But when harvest came they were compelled to offer two-thirds of it to "the People". So they, too, fled from being regimented, cheated and half starved. Their stories confirmed the even worse lot of their former masters.

It is a commonplace of the professionally detached observer that refugees' stories are always exaggerated. Maybe. But I have had some experience of Tibetan life and I took care to cross-examine those I spoke to very closely. Two characteristic things emerged. These men who had been assaulted and stripped of their possessions were far more deeply concerned about the attack on their religion than they were with their personal losses. And none bore ill will against their labourers who had taken part in the attack on them. They said that if the men had not done so they would themselves have been accused. It was therefore distasteful to hear during a debate in the House of Lords an opposition peer stating with an air of authority but without a shred of personal knowledge that only Tibetans who had exploited their fellow countrymen were refugees. That is the sort of talk the communists spread in their publications and by other means; and it finds acceptance by some people who do not stop to ask what reliance can be placed on self-justification by a successful land grabber.

It is noticeable, too, that in the midst of the zeal and haste towards independence by peoples of Africa with nothing to compare with Tibet's thirteen centuries of continuous civilization and national identity, the vocal
critics of colonialism have nothing to say about China's conversion of independent Tibet into a new and strictly controlled colony.

In fact, Chinese propaganda has had a very easy run for its money. In 1950 it represented the seizure of Tibet as the liberation from Anglo-American domination of what had always been a part of China. Our government and the government of India, which had had treaty relations with Tibet and knew that it had enjoyed at least de facto independence since 1912, did nothing to rebut this falsehood. Worse still, we prevented any discussion in United Nations of that Chinese aggression and had the matter hushed up and put on the shelf. So the communists were able to pass quickly to the praises of their benevolent and progressive policy in Tibet. That line suffered a setback in 1956 when they had to admit that Tibetan resistance compelled them to postpone their so-called reforms.

Since the rising in 1959 the new note has been fierce abuse of the old system, which is damned as cruel and oppressive feudalism and religious obscurantism. We may ask why nothing was said or done about this between 1950 and 1959, when the Chinese were in control of Tibet. The charges are supported by evidence which is often ludicrous. A museum of "feudal instruments of torture" displays ritual religious implements, and even luterschen spoons which are described as being used to gouge out the eyes of serfs.

Even without such extravagances it is always easy to attack the past, and Tibetan life was from our point of view rugged and in some ways harsh. But from fourteen years' acquaintance with it I maintain that it was not deliberately cruel or oppressive. It did not need force to maintain itself: there were no police, and there was hardly any army. It had evolved a closely knit society with a balanced economy and higher standard of living with far less distance between rich and poor than obtained, say, in India. There was a regular surplus of grain, and large reserve stocks. No one suffered the degrading conditions of life of which we read in the industrial revolution here or in Ireland. The Tibetans knew that some changes were inevitable and necessary and were prepared to make them themselves. They were no threat to anyone, and there was no need of a foreign conquest to impose change.

It is ironic and tragic that when the communists did impose those foreign changes the combination of natural calamities and the failure of doctrinaire planning in China had nearly wrecked their own agriculture and had brought about a severe shortage of food. So the immediate result of their reforms in Tibet was to involve Tibetan agriculture and self-sufficiency in the same ruin. In a way this made things easier for the Chinese, because they could use their control of the meagre food supplies to enforce obedience. But it brought administrative difficulties, and those must have been increased by the worsening of relations with India. So by about 1961
or 1962 there was some relaxation; some of the imprisoned men and women were released and attempts were made to show Chinese actions in Tibet in a favourable light.

In this spirit the Chinese allowed a British journalist, Mr. Stuart Gelder, and his wife to visit Lhasa last summer for several weeks. A film they made was shown on ITV, and a book is expected soon. Mr. and Mrs. Gelder disclaim communist affiliation, but they have been on good terms with the regime since the days of Yenan and we may wonder whether similar facilities would be given to others without that background. At all events, they relied on the Chinese for transport, accommodation, interpreters, etc.

They say that they had heard charges of genocide, oppression, suppression of religion and so forth — but found none. Instead, they found the development of welfare and progress.

When their book appears, a detailed analysis will be possible. In the meantime it may be noted that the Gelders have no personal knowledge of Tibet before 1959 and no experience of conditions they condemn; certainly none of conditions before 1950. They have therefore no standard of comparison. They do not even mention the aggression by which the Chinese seized Tibet. Much of what is said in praise of the Chinese is lame: the march of progress after twelve years is represented by a small carpet factory and a 200-bed hospital. Much is tendentious. A monastery formerly housing 7,000 monks now has only 700; the rest, we are told, left voluntarily. Anyone who reads statements made to the International Commission of Jurists will know what that means. Then it is false to claim, as they do, that Western medicine was introduced by the communists. There were successful and popular hospitals in Yatung, Gyantse and Lhasa run by British and Indian doctors for many years, and in some forty years of such work smallpox had already been brought under control.

We should remember that the Chinese see themselves as the only exponents of true communist doctrine — and that the object of communism is to communize. The idea of genuine national minorities, national culture or traditions in their fold is anathema. And if any appearance of such things is preserved it is as a temporary pragmatic expedient.

No — the truth is, I fear, that after twelve years of communist pressure and four of direct administration little remains that is recognizable of the old Tibetan way of life, and nothing of any significance has yet taken its place.

It is known that the land has been distributed to farmers at the rate of half an acre per head. These holdings are organized into mutual aid groups which could easily be converted into co-operatives or communes, but misgivings about the results of such arrangements in China have led to the postponement of anything of that sort in Tibet for at least five years. Even so, the land is not producing anything like what is needed, and the Chinese People’s Liberation Army still has to work in the fields.
Constitutional reforms too have been postponed. Chinese publications report the survival of the “vice of local nationalism” among the Tibetans and hint at armed resistance also. Nor are things well with the Chinese workers in Tibet. “Incorrect behaviour” continues, including corruption, idleness and “big-Han chauvinism”.

From the stories of recent refugees — for they are still coming — and from Chinese sources too it can be seen that religion is preserved only as a rare museum piece; education is channelled to one end and is more and more in the Chinese language; dancing and music are organized cultural displays without spontaneity; people go in rags; food supplies are insufficient and strictly controlled; there are queues, permits, shortages and substitutes. The ordinary ration per person per month is twenty-five pounds of adulterated barley flour, half a pound of bad butter, a measure of salt and a small amount of adulterated brick tea. No sugar, no meat, rice once a year, cloth costing over £1 per yard. For anything outside the ration the black market is both impossibly expensive and dangerous. There is forced labour for long hours, constant indoctrination, lecturing and surprise inspection. Although the time of general extreme severity seems to have passed, discipline is strict and punishments severe. There is, in short, no freedom in religion, trade, movement and family life, and of course no political freedom.

Why should this have happened? I do not accept the vague theory that there was something in the Tibetan system which made such a fate inevitable. It was the result of the rise of a new power in Asia determined to use violence. In the Chinese seizure of Tibet I do not believe that anxiety about their defences or the aim of advancing communism came first, but the desire to stand forth as a great nation and empire on the old western model. But for that, even if they completely misunderstood the Indian mind, Tibet could have been left as a terrified buffer inevitably falling more and more under the influence of the stronger neighbour; and the Chinese could have consolidated their position behind that vast inert cushion. Once they had seized Tibet, although that increased their power to threaten, it also increased the problems and cost of defence. I am no strategist, but it seems to me that Tibet might be a good base for a devastating surprise blow or for conventional attack against a half-hearted defence; but against resolute counter-action, or in long-drawn-out sparring, it could be a very expensive commitment.

In this situation communications are vital, and the real issue with India is possession of the roads made by the Chinese through the Aksai Chin desert on the Ladakh frontier of India. This is part of a great circular route from Lan-chow through Tibet and Chinese Turkestan, and back to Lanchow by the Tsaidam marshes and Kansu oil wells. It may be seen as a lifeline for Tibet in case Chinese communications in the east are threatened, as they
were in 1956–7; and as a lifeline for Sinkiang in case communications there should be interrupted. There have lately been many signs of tension between China and Russia in Sinkiang: foreigners are not now allowed to enter Sinkiang; there are allegations by the Chinese of Soviet instigation of disturbances by some of the peoples of Sinkiang, and of border incidents and infringements. So Tibet may seem, at present, more important to the Chinese as a bastion against possible Soviet penetration of Central Asia than as a springboard for adventures towards the south.

The recent Chinese invasion of India was probably intended to scare the Indian government into accepting a bargain which the Chinese have long been dangling before their eyes: exchange of the Aksai Chin territory, which the Chinese appear to need for their security, for a guarantee of the Indian position along the rest of the long frontier. The attempt did not produce that result, and the military success which led the Chinese to embarrassing — perhaps dangerous — lengths was counterbalanced by a political and moral failure. Such warlike adventures, of which we have probably not heard the last, must be an obstacle to peaceful development in Tibet. In orderly conditions, with a large injection of capital and labour, Tibet could be an agricultural and pastoral country supporting perhaps four times its present population. As early as 1952 Mao Tse-tung forecast the sending of 50,000 families there. That process would very likely lead to the swamp- ing of the Tibetan population, which is only about two to two and a half million. But in addition to psychological difficulties about Chinese settlement in Tibet it is probable that heavy military demands on capital, labour, food supplies and communications prevent any large-scale Chinese settlement on the land at present.

Chinese hopes for the control and exploitation of Tibet seems to rest largely on the projected railway from Lan-chou to Lhasa, some 1,000 miles or more through difficult, often desert, country; and they plan an equally long link between Khotan and Tibet. There is no oil production in Tibet and little fuel of any sort, so there is a problem now of building up supplies for road and air transport. Ideas of developing the supposedly great, but as yet unproved, mineral wealth of the country also depend on cheap com- munications. But even the completion of the railways would not necessarily solve all the difficulties. Maintenance would be a big task, and so long as China remains in an isolated and aggressive posture the fear of sabotage in the remote desert areas must be very real. The railway, incidentally, seems still a long way from Lhasa in spite of so much use of forced labour.

In fact, unless there are new and striking developments in technology China’s position in Tibet looks like proving the truth of Owen Lattimore’s dictum that Tibet is a “zone of diminishing returns for imperialism”. But while the Chinese are digesting this lesson the position of the Tibetans goes from bad to worse; and with the children usually separated from their
parents and being skilfully indoctrinated the next generation is likely to be divorced from past ways of thinking and from the merits of the former Tibetan character. One must fear for the survival in Tibet itself of that remarkable devotion to religious faith, of the pattern of family life, even of the Tibetan language and the idea of being Tibetan. Here and there in Tibet there may be reservoirs of the old way of life, probably for the most part among the nomadic population whom the Chinese have not succeeded in pinning down into settled areas. But these are the roughest and most primitive type of Tibetan and, for all their toughness and endurance, not likely to produce an intellectual national revival.

And so it is among the Tibetan refugees in India that there seems a hope of keeping Tibetan characteristics and values alive. Some of the older monks and laymen perhaps think of returning to Tibet and taking over just where they left off; but that is not the view of the Dalai Lama. He worked out the plan of a new sort of constitutional theocracy for Tibet. The details cannot concern us here, but it is evidence that there is no general idea of trying to keep Tibet as an interesting survival in a glass case. The young men both monk and lay, and young women too, are avid for learning of a new sort; and they know quite well that they have got to adjust their lives and their thinking to a new world both now and for the future for which they hope.

But what chances are they getting, and what is their future? There are perhaps 70,000 refugees in India and the border countries. For the shelter and food of most of them the Indian government has taken the costly responsibility, and spends about three-quarters of a million pounds a year. Large sums of money and help in kind have been sent and are still being sent from foreign countries. America, as usual, took the lead, but private organizations in this country are all making considerable and well-thought-out contributions now. I wish there were signs that our government was taking an active and sympathetic interest; but there are none.

There is a good deal of variation in the conditions in which the refugees live, but the great majority live in hardship and discomfort in temporary camps working on roads in remote areas of India's frontiers. When I saw some of them I was moved by the way they had preserved their patience, dignity and helpfulness to one another. But they are living in an unsuitable climate under a new sort of strain and there were signs of something almost unknown in Tibet: nervous breakdowns and neuroses. What they long for is somewhere settled to live where they can earn a living and keep their self-respect. So far, that sort of settlement has been possible only for some 3,000, and they are in south India — too far from their fellow countrymen and the spiritual influence of the Dalai Lama.¹

There are about 8,000 children among the refugees. These are the hope of the future. Life in road camps or as wandering beggars is a poor start for them. The Dalai Lama has tried to collect as many as possible into some
sort of schools or homes, and so far perhaps 2,000 are getting some sort of care. Even that fraction is too great a strain on the resources available. Two years ago I saw at Dharamsala infants crammed in rows on the floors of one of these homes, without proper beds or bedding, with inadequate water and sanitation and the most rudimentary food. It is hardly credible, but I have heard that even more children have now been packed into that inadequate accommodation: nearly 1,000 children in space which in this country would be considered inadequate for even three hundred. It is hard for the Tibetans to turn them away.

A promising development is the Children's Homes at Mussoorie, where groups of twenty children live in good surroundings in separate houses with Tibetan houseparents to look after them. But this only takes care of less than 500 children at present. Much devoted and strenuous work is being done for the refugees by private persons in India including British volunteer workers, and by many Christian missions. But almost everything that is done is mere patchwork, aimed only at keeping the refugees alive.

What is to happen to the children when they leave the homes and schools, and what is to be done about the men and women who have little prospect beyond working on Indian roads, wasting their qualities of adaptability, courage and honesty? It is clear that a long-term plan is needed, and it is important to establish whether the aim of such a plan should be to absorb the refugees piecemeal into Indian life or to settle them in self-supporting Tibetan groups.

The latter seems the only way of preserving anything of the distinctive Tibetan character and living religious faith, but by now, four years after the crisis, it does not appear that such large-scale settlement is feasible in India. It is necessary, therefore, to consider seriously whether India cannot be relieved of the burden and whether the problem ought not to be taken over on an international basis, and a suitable home for the Tibetans sought outside India.

In thinking of the future, those Tibetans who are getting help and training and experience outside India will be important and will be able to help their fellow Tibetans in a new life. Tibetan scholars are being supported at many foreign universities to act as informants for western students of Tibetan religion, history, language, etc. This was an early and far-seeing plan of the Rockefeller Foundation. There are successful experiments in Denmark and Switzerland where young Tibetans learn western skills and techniques, farming, dairying, carpentry, simple engineering and so on. Private persons also support young Tibetans in several foreign countries and give them education. There are children in groups of twenty at the Pestalozzi Villages at Trogen in Switzerland, in Germany, in the French Pyrenees, and at Sedlescombe in Sussex. This is no more than an inadequate sketch of what is being done.
In general, the Tibetans adapt themselves easily to life in western countries. They are friendly, gay and sociable, with no fuss about caste, creed or colour. They are eager to learn and quickly acquire skill in handicrafts. In grasping the intellectual ideas of a world which until now has been closed to them they are less ready: that will be a slow and selective process. As I have said, there is a need for co-ordination and an objective in everything that is being done to help them. But, of course, until some progress is made towards getting them suitably settled, money and help of all sorts will be needed simply to keep them going, to make life tolerable for those in India, to provide decent living conditions and schooling for the children there, and also to help some carefully chosen individuals to get the right sort of training in foreign countries. I am sure I don’t need to apologize for begging in this cause.
Birds in Tibet

Bird life in Tibet was surprisingly rich and, better, it was fearless because it was neither harried nor hunted. Bar-headed geese, inapproachable on the rivers of India, grazed calmly within ten feet; and the brahminy duck, whose noisy wariness elsewhere spoilt many hopes of a shot at wild duck, was almost a household pet in Tibetan villages. Within a hundred yards of our Lhasa house one could see over fifty different species: the white-headed fishing eagle, an occasional osprey, duck of many kinds, cranes, greenshanks, redshanks, sandpipers, terns, rose finches, redstarts, the delicate little tit-warbler, and many more. A mere catalogue is a dull business, and one or two birds stand out specially in my memory.

Foremost is the raven, a ubiquitous, swashbuckling, rather sinister personality—a bird of sorcery and omen to the Tibetans. You might meet one strutting arrogantly in a village street, wearing a wool collar; and tame, so far as such an individualist could be tamed. From my bed at Lhasa I could see a small turret much favoured in the morning sun by a superb specimen, armoured in shining black, puffing out the plumage of his throat, lifting to the sky that palaeolithic hammer of a beak, and uttering an astonishing range of contented gurgles and metallic clucks. Sometimes he brought a hideous snack of offal and tore at it with that powerful beak, looking sideways with a wicked gleam. If that is what was served up to Elijah, I thought, better him than me. There must have been more than a thousand ravens around Lhasa and in the evening they would stream in towards the poplar groves near the city—at least for part of the year. For Lhasa legend has it that they are only allowed to roost in the trees until the arrival of the cuckoo, a bird of even greater magical powers than themselves. Then they must take up night quarters on the warm rocky hillsides. Long before that they have performed their breath-taking aerial courtship, soaring and swooping; chasing and scuffling, turning on their backs for a

free fall of many feet before flipping over and dashing off with challenging cries to some chosen site. I have seen their nests in January but they are not the first. The lammergeier is before them, choosing the depth of winter solstice when the rocks are said to crack. If it should chance to be mild then, they say that the eggs will be addled. I don’t know what there may be in that; Tibetans are not great ornithologists and the lammergeier does not abide our question in its nesting, which it does in the most inaccessible precipices.

One should not be misled by the raven and the lammergeier into false hopes of spring; but there was more encouragement in the return of the first migrants, the black-eared kites that nested almost within reach of our flat roof and spent much of the year wheeling and mewing in the sky all round the city. They might arrive as unconscionably early as the beginning of February and although they were welcome harbingers of change, spring did not begin for me until I heard, some time in March, the thin, silvery cascade of song that announced the arrival of the Indian redstart which nested on a pillar in our verandah. Perhaps a brown-headed gull or a few martins had appeared a few days earlier; and the winter residents including Guldenstadt’s redstart, conspicuous in its black, white and orange-red plumage, had begun to move away from the thorny scrub round our garden; but it was that thread of song which turned the scale. After that, although there was none of the glorious, deafening, dawn chorus one enjoys at home, there were some fine soloists, the willow warbler with its mellow cadence and the delicious fluting of Prince Henry’s laughing thrush, and, of course, the cuckoo, king and master of them all, the turquoise bird of the Bon-po and paraclete of their founder Miwo Shenrab (Mi-bo Gshen-rab). Each year a Tibetan official went in spring to a small chapel near the ancient home of the Tibetan kings in the Yarlung valley to welcome the cuckoo. Butter lamps were lit on the altars and food was laid out in the open courtyard. They say that no bird dares eat before the cuckoo; and if any small bird annoys him he does not hesitate to nip off its head. But there is a gentler side too; and every Tibetan knows the sixth Dalai Lama’s song of which I attempt a rather doggerel translation:

    The cuckoo has come from the south
    The sap runs in the trees
    And I have met my love
    And body and mind are at ease.

Alas that after so ecstatic a start the cuckoo’s charms fade as the year wears on; and by autumn only a few sullen young remain, deserted even before birth and now left in the lurch while their elders seek warmer climates and larger supplies of caterpillars. They have outgrown the endurance of the
tiny foster parents and squawk petulantly in the yellowing trees until they vanish, unregretted, to return with the old magic, fresh as ever, in April.
The Rwa-sgreng Conspiracy of 1947

The attempted coup d'état by the ex-regent of Tibet, the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che, has been mentioned from different points of view by several writers who were in Lhasa at the time. In Seven Years in Tibet Heinrich Harrer has described his experience of the affair; and I have given a short account in my Tibet and its History. Rinchen Dolma Taring in Daughter of Tibet shows considerable sympathy for the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che from whom her husband had received much kindness. W.D. Shakabpa, although to some extent parti pris as an important official and as a kinsman of the Chang-khyim Bka'-blon bla-ma whom the ex-regent had brusquely dismissed from office in 1940, provides well-informed and balanced information. From the Chinese angle Shen and Liu in their Tibet prefer, for reasons that will appear, not to go into the matter too deeply; and Li Tieh-tseng, who was not at Lhasa, is inaccurate on many points in his Historical Status of Tibet.

It would probably be difficult now to secure a complete picture of the political and monastic intrigues and rivalries involved, so it may be worth recording something more of what I saw and heard at the time and of preceding events that had a bearing on the affair. Some of this may seem mere gossip; but what was being said in those days is itself part of history.

Four days after the death of the thirteenth Dalai Lama on 17 December 1933 the Hutuktu of Rwa-sgreng, 'Jam-dpal ye-shes rgyal-mtshan, was appointed regent in a choice by lot between himself and the Khri Rin-po-che of Dga'-ldan. The young man, born about 1913 into a poor family of Rkong-po, and without any political experience, assumed office at a difficult time. The wayward and headstrong Rtsis-dpon Lung-shar had swiftly ousted Kun-'phel-lags, his principal rival among the close advisers of the late Dalai Lama, and was set on a wild pursuit of power. His

main opponent was the shrewd and experienced Khri-smom Zhabs-pad. A plot by Lung-shar to have him assassinated was disclosed to Khri-smom, who fled to 'Bras-spungs and prevailed on the regent to set up a commission of enquiry. Lung-shar was found guilty of treasonable offences and was sentenced to be blinded and imprisoned. The sentence was confirmed by the regent.

My first meeting with the Rwa-sgrong Rin-po-che was in 1936 when I accompanied Sir Basil Gould to Lhasa. He seemed gauche and lacked the poise, the gracious good manners and serene composure of most incarnate lamas; and, above all, he appeared immature. Indeed, I think a streak of immaturity marked him throughout his life. It was already commonly said that he was fond of money and was favourably disposed towards the Chinese from whom he had received lavish presents at the time of Huang Mu-sung's mission to Lhasa. Certainly Li Tieh-tseng describes him as "pro-Chinese" and claims, further, that he asked Chiang Kai-shek for confirmation of his appointment. That is finally denied by all Tibetan officials but it was admitted that the appointment was reported to the Chinese government.

As time went on I saw several instances of the regent's naive and self-centred nature. I will give only one. On a visit to him I was asked if the government of India would like to give him a motor car. Remembering past objections to our own use of motor vehicles in Tibet I declined to recommend such a present but offered to help him acquire a car for himself. He smiled sadly and said that if he could tell his people that the British had given him a car and he, therefore, felt obliged to use it, he could then ask them to make motor roads for him.

A more unpleasant manifestation of immaturity was his vindictiveness towards those he disliked. When the Tibetan government refused him some additional estates which he coveted he soon trumped up a charge of conspiracy against Khyung-ram Theiji, who had led the opposition, and banished him with the utmost humiliation. He also publicly disgraced Kun-bzang-rtse Bla-phag; and he secured the removal of the Srid-blon, with whom he was supposed to collaborate, by charging him with delaying public business and threatening to resign if the Srid-blon was not dismissed.

On a lighter note, at least for western observers of the scene, was the occasion when, with a display of moral rectitude, the regent decreed that all monk officials who had mistresses should get rid of them or resign their posts. The principal victim, whether intended or not, was the aged Spyi-khyab mkhan-po who is reported to have said that he needed to keep warm at night and was too old to change his ways.

I do not think that my opinion of the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che was affected by his reputed leaning towards the Chinese in which it appeared that money mattered more than principle or conviction; and his attitude did not affect the policy of his government in which the strongest voice continued to be that of the National Assembly, which refused to deviate from the
example and instructions of the late Dalai Lama. It must be said that those who were his favourites and close associates — mostly young people, naturally enough — spoke of him personally with respect and affection but I think that most officials were somewhat guarded in their attitude. And here I may draw attention to a factor affecting the career of any regent. He could not, of course, enjoy the special prestige of a Dalai Lama because he was simply a substitute; but his authority also might be restricted by the fact that every regent was associated with one or other of the great monasteries and with a particular college in that monastery so that other monasteries and even other colleges in his own monastery might feel jealous. It was intermonastic rivalry that caused the downfall of the only preceding Rwa-sgreng Hutuktu to hold the office of regent at intervals between 1845 and 1866; and in the present case the regent’s affiliation to the Byes college of Se-ra was to have tragic consequences for both.

At the end of 1940, when the new Dalai Lama had been installed, the Rwa-sgreng regent retired, ostensibly because the portents for his health were bad unless he devoted himself to prayer and meditation. Less charitable rumours were that laxity in his vows of chastity caused him qualms of conscience about taking part in the religious instruction of the young Dalai Lama. That charge was made in posters hung up around Lhasa in which a certain lady was named.

Other criticism expressed in posters and in slogans shouted mainly by monks of 'Bras-spungs was that the regent was too much devoted to trade. Li Tieh-tseng makes the further, unsubstantiated, suggestion that a Young Tibet Group, which existed only in his imagination, also accused the regent of having dictated the choice of Dalai Lama in order to satisfy his personal ambition. It is true that there was some uneasiness in Lhasa that the Dalai Lama had been discovered in territory under Chinese control and that it was reported that he would be brought to Lhasa by Chinese troops. But any anxiety there may have been was dispelled when only a handful of ragged soldiers accompanied the child to Lhasa; and even greater was the relief and joyful emotion of the people of Lhasa when they saw the perfect behaviour and radiant charm of the boy himself.

At all events, the regent retired to Rwa-sgreng and there was appointed in his place the elderly, conservative, Stag-brag Rin-po-che. Later it was said that there had been an understanding or at least an expectation that the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che would resume office after a few years but there does not seem to have been any mention of that at the time. Nevertheless, in 1944 rumours began to circulate that the Stag-brag Rin-po-che would retire and the Rwa-sgreng return. His college of Byes invited him to perform a ceremony there and in December he came to Lhasa and was publicly received with full honours. The rumours thereupon increased greatly. Unfortunately the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che's stay in Se-ra coincided with
serious trouble between the Tibetan government and his college of Byes, some of whose monks killed a civil official in a dispute about tax collection. The college refused to surrender the culprits and eventually the Tibetan government sent troops to enter the monastery by force. Whether he was involved in the affair or not, the Rin-po-che wisely left Lhasa before the worst. But the affair created much unease and intrigue including an unexplained attack on Lha-klu Rtsis-dpon, a son of Lung-shar and therefore no friend of the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che. Rumours persisted but the Stag-brag Rin-po-che showed no sign of retiring.

On 14 April 1947 matters came to a head. The Rva-sgreng’s Lhasa residence was suddenly put under seal and a number of prominent persons were arrested including the Phun-khang Gung whose second son had been the principal favourite of the ex-regent and whose eldest son was the husband of the senior Maharajkumari of Sikkim. He, too, was imprisoned along with his father who had not long before been dismissed from the post of Zhabs-pad. The National Assembly was in emergency session and it was learnt that troops had been sent to Rwa-sgreng to arrest the Rin-po-che. We were told that a parcel, ostensibly from the commissioner in Kham, had been sent to the regent. It lay unopened until an anonymous message charged that a valuable present was being withheld from him. The box was then opened by a servant and found to contain a hand-grenade held down by a sliding lid. The device exploded, fortunately without causing much injury. According to Shakabpa, that had happened some time before and the crisis was precipitated when the Tibetan government received information from their representative in China that the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che had sent a letter to Chiang Kai-shek asking for help in removing the Stag-brag Rin-po-che whom he accused of tyrannous misgovernment.

When news of the arrest of the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che reached Lhasa the monks of Se-ra Byes, who were attending the tshogs-mchod ceremony, abruptly left Lhasa and, hurrying back to their college in riotous mood, murdered their abbot who tried to restrain them. There would clearly be trouble when the ex-regent arrived at Lhasa in custody; so a curfew was imposed. In the event some monks of Se-ra Byes opened fire on the escort party but without effect; and the Rin-po-che was safely lodged in the Potala. That night there was sporadic firing in the city and in the tension and alarm of the next day arms were issued to young monks and lay officials, while most of the nobles and their families changed their silk robes for homespun and took refuge in the Potala, many of them having deposited their larger valuables with the Nepalese representative. On the same day Mkhar-rdo Rin-po-che, a close associate of the ex-regent, was arrested and there was random shooting in and around the city including the neighbourhood of Nor-bu-gling-ka, where three unfortunate monks from some remote place walked innocently into trouble. One was killed by shots from the barracks
of the Dalai Lama’s bodyguard and the others were the first casualties to be brought into the British Mission’s rough-and-ready hospital.

The bka’-shag asked that Reginald Fox, our wireless officer, might visit Gra-phyi (Trapchi) to put their radio sets in working order. He was eager to go and I allowed this on the following day after getting a written guarantee of his safety and having instilled into him the need for discretion. On the same day the Tibetan artillery — two elderly mountain guns — was deployed and a few warning shots were fired towards Se-ra Byes. There followed some days of desultory hostilities and uneasy negotiation in which the Tibetan government claimed to have gone to the limit of conciliation but with no response. In the meantime conditions in Lhasa had become difficult. The Trapchi soldiery created alarm by looting shops; and supplies began to run out because people from outside were afraid to come into the city.

On 27th April, after reinforcements had arrived from Gyantse, a vigorous attack was launched on Byes. By then the trial of the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che and his associates had taken place in the Potala before the National Assembly. He had asked for trial by a small commission but that was refused. He prostrated himself before the court and protested his innocence, but when confronted with incriminating letters he confessed his part, though claiming that the only help he had asked from the Chinese was that they should send aircraft to drop leaflets over Lhasa. Later, his close friend the Mkhar-rdo Rin-po-che broke down under questioning and disclosed a wide-ranging conspiracy including several abortive attempts on the life of the regent and responsibility for the attack on Lha-klu Rtsis-dpon. On the day the full scale attack was made on Se-ra Byes, the bka’-shag sent me a written account of the affair making it plain that the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che had conspired against the life of the regent and had also sought Chinese support against the government.

The Tibetan government could no longer endure the continuing challenge from Byes, which refused all offers of a settlement. It should be understood that it was only a militant body in that college which was in rebellion; other colleges of Se-ra and all of ‘Bras-spungs remained aloof. The steady bombardment by the artillery was met at first by rifle-fire and occasional blasts from a primitive cannon which the monks of Byes loaded with scrap of all kinds and trundled out on a short stretch of rail but by 29th April the militants could not hold out any longer. They are said to have stripped the images of the deities of their robes and exposed them on the college roof in disgust at the failure of divine protection. They themselves took to the hills behind Se-ra where they came under heavy rifle fire from the infantry, which drove them in flight towards Rwa-sgreng and beyond. It is said that about 300 monks were killed and 15 soldiers. For some days after the fight the dead lay exposed on the hillside and people from Lhasa,
especially the wives of the Trapchi soldiery usually disguised in men's clothes, stripped the bodies of such possessions as they had.

A pursuit party was sent to Rwa-sgreng where, after an initial reverse, it occupied the monastery and seized the private property of the Rin-po-che, including much gold secreted in the latrines. There was a good deal of looting of the possessions of other monks also. Se-ra Byes was occupied by the Tibetan government and an enquiry and a search for arms was undertaken.

It remained to sentence the guilty. The Tibetan government consulted the State Oracle of Gnas-chung but he only beat his breast and threw grains of barley into the air. It was said there was talk of putting out the Rwa-sgreng's eyes but that the regent had firmly turned down such a suggestion. Certainly there is no truth in Li Tieh-tseng's statement that the Rin-po-che was blinded. I do not know whether any decision was reached but the dilemma was resolved on 8th May by the death of the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che. Inevitably, there were rumours that he had been murdered, and tales of shrieks from the Potala at night. There was no such thing as an autopsy in Tibet but the body was formally examined by the abbots of the great monasteries and many representative officials who reported no suspicious signs except for some blue marks on the left thigh.

On 12th May I visited the bka'-shag in the Potala at their request. Speaking in sorrow rather than triumph they gave me an account of the affair and said that the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che had signed a full confession which together with the incriminating letters were being made public throughout the city. They gravely informed me that the Rin-po-che had been so overcome with shame and remorse that he had voluntarily departed this life. It appeared that he had had a seizure of some sort a few days before and had been attended by the highly respected abbot of the medical college. It is not impossible that he did die of a heart attack, but there were insistent whispers of poisoning — always suspected in the sudden death of an important person — and of that other traditional bloodless assassination by stuffing a silk scarf down the throat. There is no certainty; but the version most commonly believed was that a person, whom I shall not name, caused the ex-regent's death by crushing his genitals.

Punishment of the other guilty persons was inflicted in the Zhol on 18th May. The Rwa-sgreng's elder brother steadfastly received 250 strokes. Mkhar-rdo Rin-po-che, who was said to be in a state of collapse, received 260, and both were imprisoned in a building specially made in the barracks at Nor-bu-gling-ka. Lesser floggings were handed out to the others; and some monks of Byes were shackled and handed over to various high officials for house custody. I saw some of them later. The private property of the Rwa-sgreng was sold by auction; and, to remove evil influences, a service of exorcism was conducted by the Sa-skya Khri-chen. The shock to public
opinion and the ill-feeling and faction beneath the general appearance of religious distress could not, however, be so readily dispelled. Posters soon appeared in Lhasa describing the regent as the modern Glang-dar-ma; the infamous Ka-shod Zhab-pa as "Drum-head" that is "facing both ways"; Lha-klu Rtsis-pon as Blon-po Khri-gzhu, a wicked minister in the A-lce lha-mo drama; and the senior Drung-yig chen-po as the Raven. Later in 1947 the Dalai Lama visited Se-ra to restore relations with the monastery but the affair had seriously damaged the solidarity of the Tibetan government at a time when coming events demanded unity and resolution.

I may add a few marginal comments. It was rumoured in Lhasa that it was the British who had got wind of the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che's involvement with the Chinese and had informed the Tibetan government. I can claim no such omniscience. We knew nothing until the affair blew up. It was also said that I had fired one of the mountain guns at Se-ra. That was untrue; but I traced the source of the story to the visit of Reginald Fox to Trapchi when, as he confessed later, his experience as a gunner in the First World War had carried him away to such an extent that he laid one of the guns.

My only intervention, in fact, was to transmit an enquiry to the bka'-shag from the Maharaja of Sikkim about their action against the Phun-khang father and son. I was told that they were being treated considerately. The Maharajkumari frequently came to our mission and took favourite dishes, prepared by my cook, to her husband and his father in prison. Phun-khang Sras was soon released as there was no charge against him; and the Gung was later discharged as he had only forwarded a sealed letter from the ex-regent to a famous tantric practitioner in Khams which was found to be a request for ceremonies to bring about a change of regime at Lhasa.

Our mission was, in general, little affected except for receiving some two dozen wounded from either camp who lay meekly side by side in our small hospital under the kindly discipline of Major James Guthrie, the mission doctor.

I was in constant touch with the Foreign Bureau who insisted on sending two soldiers to guard our totally unprotected mission. On their first night one nervously loosed off at a shadow, after which my major domo removed their ammunition and gave them shelter in our courtyard. Our social meetings with the Nepalese and Chinese continued, as did my daily walks in the country, alone with my dog.

The position of the Chinese was more difficult. They had to ask protection for some Chinese monks who were in Se-ra Byes and also to explain why a member of their staff happened to be at Rwa-sgreng when the Rin-po-che was arrested. They also saw the publication of the ex-regent's secret message to Chiang Kai-shek. Although the Chinese would surely have
taken advantage of a successful coup, it is doubtful whether at the time they either would or could have given active help.

One event that caused some amusement centred round Ka-shod Zhabspad who was widely unpopular for his pride and unscrupulousness. He was a known supporter of the ex-regent and strongly suspected of having backed Byes in their dispute with the government. So when people saw baggage being loaded outside his house and his womenfolk in tears around him, there was merriment in the belief that he too was on his way to prison. In fact, the bka’-shag had slyly appointed him to command the attack on Byes and the furious abuse that greeted him there as turncoat and coprophagite went to confirm his former complicity. Somehow his tortuous and dishonourable career lasted a further two years until, in 1949, he was accused of treasonable contacts with the Chinese in Lhasa; and, having bought his way out of a flogging, was sent into exile riding on a bullock, only to turn up again in 1952, like a bad penny, in the wake of the communist occupation.

Of very different stamp was Zur-khang Zhabspad who was deputed to arrest the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che. He told me how he left his military escort outside the monastery and went in alone not knowing what the Rin-po-che’s armed bodyguard might do. He prostrated himself before the Rin-po-che and informed him that he was to be taken to Lhasa under arrest. It was a relief when the Rin-po-che, whom he had never met before, accepted the news with resignation. Nevertheless, some of his men later fired on the government troops. On the way to Lhasa the Rin-po-che seemed greatly alarmed and prattled distractedly — a pathetic rather than a tragic figure. He repeatedly begged pardon for having confiscated a disputed estate to which Zur-khang had a rightful claim. Zur-khang, whose attitude in discussing the matter was generous and humane, thought it probable from what he heard on that journey and from the evidence before the trial court that the Rin-po-che really had been anxious to effect his object without violence. If that is so, it seems a further indication of mental immaturity. For while he may not have been an active party in all the plots of his supporters, the Rwa-sgreng Rin-po-che was shown by the evidence to have been in close and constant touch with them and to have sought foreign help to get his way. It would be naive to think that a shower of leaflets from a Chinese aircraft would itself bring about a change of regime at Lhasa. He willed the end and cannot escape all responsibility for the means.
When I was living at Lhasa as representative of the Indian Government in those far-off days when Tibet was free and happy, a feeling would come over me at times that I must have a change from the sophistication of the capital. It was quiet and simple enough by western standards — over a fortnight’s hard riding to a motor road giving access to the plains of India and the world beyond. Lhasa society was delightfully friendly and hospitable, the routine of diplomacy and office-work was light, and there was a succession of fascinating ceremonies to attend; but the crystal brilliance and fluttering greenness of the sharp spring weather and the golden calm of autumn stirred up a restless longing for the deep peace of the countryside.

Fortunately a reason could always be found in the desirability of getting to know some of the great Buddhist monasteries in other parts of Tibet, exchanging views and learning about their life and their religion which, after all, had its origin in India. The government at Lhasa, once they had got used to the presence of a British officer there, readily approved of such visits; and good friends among the lamas and ministers enjoyed offering advice about places to see on what they regarded as a religious pilgrimage. An absence of about ten days was the most that could be managed, but the planning of a new journey gave occupation and excitement for weeks ahead.

In the autumn of 1948 my goal was the monastery of Drikhung (‘Bri-gung), in a high secluded valley about ninety miles north-east of Lhasa. It had once played an important part in Tibetan history and still had the reputation of producing great scholars and mystics. No foreigner had been there so it seemed a proper place in which to make oneself known.

I had become particularly interested in old historical inscriptions carved on stately stone pillars in various parts of Tibet; and an elderly lama of great learning and great good humour, whom I often consulted, told me

that in a small chapel on the way to Drikhung there was one of these pil-
lars, although he himself had never seen it. That was another good rea-
son for my choice. Late in September I set out from Lhasa. The sky was
the limpid blue of high places and the river, still high after the summer
rains, was beginning to reflect its brilliance. The fields were golden and
poplar trees in the little groves, which marked each scattered village, were
just catching fire with autumn colour. It was warm and still but with an
exhilarating lightness in the air. Wisps of dust and chaff rose slowly from
the village winnowing grounds and farmers, singing lustily at the top of
their voices, plodded alongside donkeys and bullocks laden with the bar-
ley harvest.

Tibetan custom expected an official to travel in some state; and with me
were an assistant officer, my trusty head servant Pema, an orderly in a scar-
let and gold jacket, and a groom in a cloak trimmed with leopard fur. Two
other servants travelled separately with our baggage train of six mules. This
was a modest caravan by Tibetan standards but it provided all the com-
panionship, help and comfort one could ask. I don't suppose that the bliss
of travel in pre-communist Tibet can be recaptured anywhere in the world.
It is something to remember.

We rode easily up the valley of the Lhasa river to spend the first night
in a farm house some twenty-five miles away. The next day was a ride of
much the same distance to a small, old monastery whose hospitable abbot
made us welcome. Already, a bare fifty miles from Lhasa the atmosphere
had changed. The gaiety and politeness were still here but the more tedi-
ous refinements of punctilio were replaced by a smiling simplicity. This was
the deep country, and instead of the assertive young monks of Lhasa, swag-
gering in the consciousness of their authority, there were country boys
turned monk who quietly brought water and fuel and helped to look after
our horses. Later in the evening they became farm boys again and went
off laughing to drive the cattle home to the monastery byre just below my
window.

From here on, the map was enticingly marked "Unsurveyed", but we
understood from our hosts that the Chapel of the Hat, Zhwa'i Lha-khang
— the place of which my lama had told me — was not far away, on the
other side of the river, and could be reached in an hour or two. So, on the
following morning we spent some time visiting the monastery chapel be-
fore riding off to the ferry. That always means a longish interlude in Ti-
betan travel. Either there is a big wooden barge which carries man and
beast, or more often, there are frail-looking hide coracles for the traveller
and his baggage while the horses and mules swim alongside. That takes
time. Boatmen have to be summoned, animals unsaddled and unloaded,
then cajoled or chased into the swirling river. On the other side they must
be rubbed down and saddled again. But no one was ever in a hurry in Tibet.
Our crossing was in coracles; and after a picnic lunch on the far bank, we rode on up river, aiming at a rocky gorge out of which the river burst into the open in a series of wide loops. The chapel was said to be in a valley opposite that point. It looked quite near; but the thin bright air of Tibet is a deceiver and it was further than we supposed. That was no hardship. The banks were brilliant with berberis and with rose bushes covered in scarlet hips; hoopoes fluttered among them and gleaming ravens croaked metallically from the hillside. Swallows sped over the surface of the river and an osprey patrolled from a greater height. Small farms nestled in narrow side valleys, and clear blue shadows from towers of white cloud drifted over the slopes of the hills which began to close in on the river.

Quite late in the afternoon we rounded yet one more rocky spur and came into a broad side valley where a tributary stream flowed into the Lhasa river; and there, not far away, was the chapel sheltered by a fold of the land. Three smiling, ragged, young monks came out to meet us. They took our horses' bridles and led us into a courtyard shaded by poplar trees where the senior monk, dignified and gracious but a little ragged too, received us with the exchange of ceremonial white scarves. He led us to the doorway of a small but solid three-storeyed building, red-washed stone below and white above. My eyes brightened as I saw two fine stone pillars with writing on them, one on each side of the door. But they had to wait; protocol must first be observed.

We were led up a steep ladder and past a dark side-chapel in honour of the Protectors of the Faith — minor deities often represented with glaring animal heads, dark blue or blood red, adorned with skulls, and brandishing weapons — fierce of aspect but necessary, and, if properly treated, well-disposed. Through a small window at the back of the building could be seen a tiny cloister, its centre filled with a large white stūpa, beyond which through the open door of the main chapel was the glint of a golden image lit by butter lamps. We were taken to a little room prepared for me and sat there while the monks brought the favourite buttered tea of Tibet.

The first thing one must learn in Tibet is patience. The day was wearing on and my thoughts turned to the inscriptions, wondering whether I should get a look at them that evening. I asked why the place was called the Chapel of the Hat and was told that the hat of a famous lama was kept in the stūpa outside. I should be able to visit everything and hear about it tomorrow. There was no question of a visit that day; such things may be undertaken only in the auspicious morning hours when the sun is in the ascendant.

At last the leisurely formalities were over and as soon as decorum allowed I went down to look at the pillars. They were thickly splashed with the red-wash which coloured the walls of the building, so that much of the inscription was illegible. A monk who joined me promised to have it
I climbed back up the ladder to find my little room now glowing warmly in the light of a travelling lamp and crowded with my alien paraphernalia. The camp bed was laid out and a wash-basin stood on a stool beside it; more Tibetan mats had been spread on the low hard divan; and on a low table in front of it was the welcoming sight of a bottle of whisky and a box of cigars. I hesitated about drinking and smoking in the cell of an ascetic monk but Pema reassured me. However, I contented myself with some whisky and left the air unpolluted by tobacco smoke. Soon the admirable Pema brought a savoury hot dinner which he contrived to do in any sort of camp with as little fuss as though the kitchens of the Ritz were at his command.

Then to pass the time before an early bed — the custom of the country where mustard-oil lamps were the only lighting — I sat back with a pot of coffee and got out the newspapers — many days old of course — and the books which made these evening hours a pleasant end to a day of travel.

But that night I could not keep my mind on what I was reading. I was relaxed and contented; but it was not sleep that prevented me. A presence seemed to pervade the little room and to be gently but insistently demanding attention. I put down the book and sat, alert but quite peaceful, studying my surroundings — the faded silk canopy overhead, the old worn rugs — their dull reds and blues so much more beautiful than modern products, the dark, smoke-grimed scroll-painting of a many-armed, bull-headed, Protector of the Faith, the gilded, silk-wrapped image on the tiny altar lit by a flickering butter lamp. After some time my eye fell on the notes I had taken from the pillar. Automatically, I stretched out for them, sat back again and began to read.

When taking the copy I had not tried to follow the sense but only to put down correctly what I could see of those passages which the red-wash had spared. I had noticed the name of a famous king of Tibet who had lived about 800 A.D. and I was looking forward to recording the whole thing and studying it at leisure. It hardly seemed worth reading the little I had been able to copy. But now, as I did so, I found repeated several times the name of a monk whose Tibetan name, Ting-ngel-'dzin bzang-po, means Excellent Meditation, and I could make out that the king was writing about him and describing him affectionately as the guardian who had brought him up and had restored harmony in the royal family.

I seemed to be reading this with someone who was determined that I should understand and that I was discovering something it gave him pleasure to reveal. I was full of exaltation and sympathy; and after I had read all I could, I sat back, with a feeling of deep happiness, lapped round by a
sense of approval. I wanted to do nothing but sit in that glow, relaxed but acutely aware.

I don't know how long the spell lasted. It was broken by the appearance of Pema with a shy quiet monk who wanted to tend the altar lamp for the night. I asked him a little about himself and then enquired who was the monk Excellent Meditation. He answered in the pleasing Tibetan idiom: "He laid his hand on this chapel. He founded it and lived here. His picture is on the wall of the cloister. I shall show it to you tomorrow". He arranged the wick of the lamp and went, politely wishing me good night. As Pema was clearing away the coffee things and getting my bed ready I told him I liked the place and that his was a pleasant room. "Yes, it is a holy room", he said in a matter-of-fact voice, "it is filled with holiness".

When I had put out the lamp I was lulled to sleep by the muffled sound of a drum and the tinkle of a bell from the room below where a monk offered the last prayers in the chapel of the Protecting Deities.

Next morning I was shown round the chapel; and there unmistakably was Excellent Meditation, a benevolent elderly figure with a shaven grey head, dressed in a white robe and a yellow cloak, seated on a silk cushion, his right hand outstretched in the gesture of teaching. I was told, too, about his hat. When he wanted to build the chapel he had no money so he prayed to his protecting deity who sent a great shower of hail. The monk filled his hat with it and, through his merit, it turned into a stream of grain, the price of which paid for the chapel.

With the help of my hosts I made complete copies of the inscriptions and later I translated them. I never read them without a warm and friendly feeling for Excellent Meditation. It seems that the spirit of holy men can pervade places they loved and sometimes reach through to touch others. Once in my life I think that happened to me.
Tibet as Observed
Some Four Decades Ago

This pair of photographs of Ganden (Dga’-ldan) monastery, as it used to be and as it now is, illustrates vividly the barbarism of what is called the “Chinese Cultural Revolution.” The story is put about that Tibetans took part in the destruction; and so, it seems, they did but only after the Chinese had removed everything of value and had begun the demolition with explosives. It is hard to believe that the Tibetans who then carried away stones and timber did so willingly and they should not be judged unheard.

Photographs show that the ruins continue to be venerated by the offering of scarves; and it is reported by the Information Office of the Dalai Lama that about a year ago a group of Tibetans began, on their own, the tremendous task of rebuilding the monastery but were continuously obstructed and threatened by the Chinese authorities. In spite of that they managed to carry on their work; and the Chinese, seeing their determination, decided to claim the credit for what they could not prevent. They made a grant of 5 lakhs of yuans and sought to give the impression that they had sponsored the work all along.

It will be interesting to learn what progress is made and how much of the huge complex of building is actually restored. It would seem impractical to attempt to rebuild the extensive colleges and living quarters for some five thousand monks who do not exist and are unlikely to do so again. The main object is presumably the reconstruction of the great temple and the shrine of Tsongkhapa. If, by some wonderful chance, the Chinese have kept the remains of the original shrine and relics in a store room, they could win genuine gratitude by restoring them as an act of atonement.

Ganden is only one of many monasteries to have been demolished. In the latest issue of the Tibet News Review there are photographs of the ruins

of several of the greatest monasteries throughout the country. Only about twenty are said to be intact. The rest have had their religious contents destroyed and are converted to all sorts of secular uses.

The latest Chinese programme of liberal reforms for Tibet does not specify religion, but there is apparently a tacit policy of "controlled religious freedom". What that means in practice at Lhasa is that the Potala is open briefly on stated days. It is, of course, the glory of the Tibetan church and state, a majestic and magnificent palace and place of pilgrimage. But the heart of Tibetan faith is the Jokhang, inconspicuously set in the centre of the city. Like all other temples, it suffered severe damage in the Cultural Revolution, but when the Chinese later came to realize the disgrace and violence of those days they set about repairing some of the damage. Between 1972 and 1976, Tibetan craftsmen were employed in making replicas of sacred images that had been destroyed, and repainting frescoes, and carved woodwork. The building was kept locked until at least 1976. In 1979 it was allowed to be open for two or three mornings each month; in 1980, this was extended to three mornings a week. A photograph taken in 1979 shows an ugly fence barring access to the entrance; it shows also that the great willow tree known as "The Hair of the Lord Buddha", which used to spread its shade over the whole courtyard, is now reduced, whether by man or by nature, to a single gaunt stem. Another photograph taken in 1980 shows that the fence has been removed; and recent visitors report that many Tibetans, including large numbers of young people, flock there in the hours permitted by the occupying power.

How different from my time in Lhasa when at any hour of the day and late into the evening the Jokhang was thronged with worshippers and the devout could be seen prostrating themselves endlessly on the stone pavement in front of the entrance! I used to visit it sometimes after my regular meetings with the Foreign Bureau in their office near the entrance to the temple. An orderly would go ahead to find out whether it was convenient and usually a sacristan would be waiting to show me round; at other times I went unaccompanied except for a Sikkimese member of my staff. Going through the entrance passage, I would sometimes reach up to tap the bell inscribed Te Deum Laudamus, a relic of the Capuchin Mission in the eighteenth century. I wonder if it has survived.

There was always a feeling of sanctity there, but to enter the Jokhang during the month of the Great Prayer was to be struck almost physically by a wave of faith. The passageways were solid with pilgrims — men, women and children — many from remote regions. One was met by a reek of greasy clothes, nomad sheepskins and rancid butter carried in pots to be ladled into the offering lamps at each shrine. But to join that hushed, patient crowd, breathing deeply in awed devotion and gently murmuring the Om mani prayer, was suddenly deeply moving. It needed an effort by
the sacristans to make our privileged way through them as they shuffled slowly along the circuit of chapels and sacred images. There was no complaining and their concentration was so absorbing that they hardly seemed to notice. Inside the rows of cave-like chapels lining the sides of the dim temple hall the glow from an array of butter lamps made pools of warm hazy light. Ahead, at the east end, hundreds of gleaming golden, chalice-like lamps, some of great size, poured a dazzling radiance on the gold-painted face of the Jowo Rimpoche, the bejewelled golden head-dress, earrings and necklaces and the rich brocade robes. The air was heavy with the smell and smoke of incense and melted butter; and the heat from the lamps was intense. This was no time to dally. I bent to touch the foot of the throne, laid a long white silk scarf there, received a scoop of holy water in my cupped hands, drank a little and rubbed the rest over my head. My assistant also offered a scarf and a packet of money for votive lamps; and we made our way by a side door out into the cold fresh air.

That will never happen again for me; but I hope that Tibetans before long once more will be able to worship freely in their holy of holies whenever they like and not only at hours permitted by a godless foreign power.

Note

1. The photographs referred to here have not been traced.
Memories of Tshurphu

The death of His Holiness the Sixteenth Gyalwa Karmapa brought vividly to mind the several occasions when I had the privilege of meeting him and in particular two visits to his great monastery of Tshurphu.

The first was in 1946 on a journey from Lhasa to Gyantse by way of Tölung and Nyemo. I was met some four miles from the monastery by the Chandzo who escorted me to the Rinpoche’s summer house in a pleasant grove of willows a little way from the monastery. A very large and comfortably carpeted tent had been pitched with, in the middle, a massive brass bedstead standing like an island in an ocean. The Yab Kusho, the Rinpoche’s father, entertained me to lunch after which I was received by the Rinpoche himself in his bright, gleaming room looking out on a little flower garden in which stalked a fine peacock. His room was full of clocks of all kinds and was hung with cages of the birds he loved — budgerigars and canaries.

The Rinpoche was then about twenty-three years old, a large, calm young man with a ready smile and sense of humour. We enjoyed a long friendly conversation; and then, as I had to leave early on the following day, there was time for only a short visit to the monastery. On the next day I found that the Rinpoche’s kindness had preceded me and that tents were pitched for my party at the halting place in Kharkha Drok, a wide upland grazing ground scattered with yaks. To the west, not far from my camp, the Lhorong Machu flowed northwards towards the Karmapa Zhamar monastery of Yangpachen about thirty miles distant and too far for a visit. Beyond the river on the far side of the plain, plumes of steam rose from geysers of hot water. The region is now a source of geothermal power for Lhasa.

The grandeur and interest of Tshurphu Gompa, of which I had previously heard little and which had not, I think, been seen by a foreigner before, determined me to visit it again and I was able to do so in 1950 to

say farewell to His Holiness before finally leaving Tibet. After so many years my memory, even with the help of notes made at the time, can only sketch inadequately a few salient features of the great monastery with its stately chapels and halls, wonderful images, frescoes and thangkas, and religious treasures of all kind. I hope that some learned monk from Tshurphu now living at Rumtek may be moved to do for his old monastery what Dzasa Jigme Taring has done for the Jokhang at Lhasa and draw a detailed ground plan locating all the temples, chapels and so on, and listing their contents.

In the meanwhile, let me attempt to describe what I can. Although I have heard no definite news of the fate of Tshurphu in the “Cultural Revolution”, I fear that the past tense must be used. The monastery stood in the shelter of a scrub covered hill on the north side of a high, bare and narrow valley. In front flowed a small tributary stream of the Tölung river. After passing through a narrow gate in the high wall surrounding the monastery one came to a wide paved courtyard with buildings on three sides, the west side being open. In the centre stood a stone pillar dating from the reign of Ralpachen and describing the foundation of a temple at Changbu in Tölung. It is opposite a flight of steep stone steps leading to a doorway, with a chain curtain, into what was perhaps a gonkhang. I wondered whether this was the original site of the early temple but was told later that the pillar was formerly opposite the main assembly hall, farther inside the monastery. No one seemed to know about the Ralpachen’s temple or the name Changbu.

The principal temple, lofty and dark, contained the famous brass image of Śākyamuni, known as the Ornament of the World, made in about 1265 on the instructions of the second Zhanak hierarch, Karma Pakshi. It was about sixty feet high and enshrined relics of the Buddha and of several early religious teachers. I had the impression that its head was rather flat. There is a well-known story that Karma Pakshi found the image was leaning to one side and that he sat in meditation beside it and by inclining his body brought the image to follow his movement back to the perpendicular.

The roof above the head of the image is surmounted by a gilded pagoda-rooflet (rgya-phibs) which is said to be part of a very large such roof looted from India by the Mongols and abandoned by them near the China border. Karma Pakshi found it but could not bring it all; the portion he did manage to bring was adapted to cover the head of the great image. Its rather dark colour was said to be due to its many vicissitudes. In the main temple there is a small chapel of Düsum Khyenpa, the first hierarch and founder of the monastery which is perhaps the oldest part of the whole series of buildings.

Another gilded roof surmounts a great hall in which were many chöten tombs containing the ashes and other relics of former hierarchs and other
Karmapa Lamas. Fourteen of them were tall and massive, perhaps forty feet high. That of Düsum Khyenpa with a simple clay-covered dome decorated lightly with painted figures reminded me of the tomb of Atiśa at Nyethang. Round its base were some ornamental vases. Karma Pakshi's tomb was even more austere and its uncoloured clay dome was without any sort of decoration. The tombs of later hierarchs were rather more elaborate but were mostly of black-painted clay with golden ornamentation, much simpler and more impressive than the lavish golden tombs of, for example, the Drigung Lamas at Yangri Gompa or Drigung Thil. There were also tombs and reliquaries of some Red Hat Karmapas and some of the Pawo incarnations including the great historian Pawo Tsuglag Threngwa.

I was also shown many fine gilded images including one of the ninth Zhamarpa (Red Hat) Lama said always to radiate noticeable warmth: also one of Lama Zhang who at one time created difficulties for the Karmapas but was reconciled to Düsum Khyenpa; and a very gaunt image of Milarepa said to be self-created, very different from the sturdy figure carved in rhinoceros horn by a previous incarnation and kept with other precious images in the Rinpoché’s private rooms.

Wherever I went the monastery was clean and well kept and the monks had an air of quiet discipline and seriousness.

Over the entrance to the principal temple is a wooden tablet painted blue and gold, given by the Chinese emperor Yung-lo and inscribed with his name. The emperor had a special devotion for the fifth incarnation, Deshin Shekpa, as can be seen in the remarkable painted scroll which I have described and translated in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1959 (see chapter 37 above). It is about fifty feet long by two and a half feet in height and has panels of elegant painting illustrating the miracle performed by the lama on each of twenty-two days during his visit to China in 1407; alternating panels in gold lettering describe in five languages the subject of each painting.

There are also treasures from the earlier connection of the Zhanag Lamas with the Mongol Yuan dynasty: porcelain vases, a carved ivory panel in the Rinpoché’s room, bronze images, and a great gold seal inscribed in hor-yig, with a dragon on the handle. This seal is, I believe, safely preserved at Rumtek and examination should discover whether it is that given by Möngke Khaghan to Karma Pakshi and later taken from him by Khubilai and restored to the lama Rangjung Dorje by the emperor Toq Temür in 1331. I was also shown letters from Chinese emperors and many other treasures, including palm-leaf manuscripts.

One lasting memory of my second visit is the graciousness of His Holiness in offering to perform the wearing of the Black Hat for our party. It is now fairly well-known in Europe and America but at that time it was something of a mystery even in Lhasa; and my staff were awed and delighted
by the honour. We were all deeply impressed by the solemn ritual with its bursts of thrilling music and by the grave concentration with which the Rinpoche performed it. At the end, when he gave me a scarf of blessing, which I still have, I was greatly surprised and moved to be greeted by him with the touching of foreheads (dbu-thug). And with that in my mind I join the myur-byon gsol-’debs, the prayer that his reincarnation may speedily appear for the benefit of sentient beings.
among the great ceremonies of the Tibetan year the Shotön (Zho-ston) in late August or September was in many ways the most generally popular. The weather was usually pleasant and it was an occasion that the ordinary people of Lhasa, men and women, could enjoy in a holiday spirit. Several parties of trained dancers from different parts of the country were obliged to come to Lhasa for the official ceremony but before that they might give shorter informal performances in private houses. The origin of the festival is explained in different ways. Some say the dances were instituted by the fifth Dalai Lama when he was staying in the Ganden Phodrang of Drepung in order to distract local demons who might interrupt the studies and devotions of the monks in their long summer retreat. Another explanation is that it was Thangtong Gyalpo who organized such dances to prevent demons from interfering with his great bridge-building activities. As for the Sho, the curds, some said that it was the favourite food of Pandit Atiśa; others that it formed an essential part of a feast at the end of the sixth month when the new Shengos (zhal-ngo) of Drepung took office. None of that seems very convincing but, at all events, curds were always served during the performance and very good they were. But I am not going to explore such explanations or examine the origin and details of the various dance dramas, or assess the nature of the music. Learned experts may look after that. All I want to do here is to recall some unsophisticated, and perhaps not always accurate, memories of the performances we used to see in Tibet. I make no attempt to be consistent in representing Tibetan words and shall use transcription or phonetic versions as seems the more suitable.

The big occasion for us at the British Mission in Lhasa was when we were invited to see the Aché Lhamo on one or more days of the Shotön. Before the discovery of the fourteenth Dalai Lama these took place in the courtyard of the Reting Regent’s monastery of Zhidé, and after the arrival...
of the Dalai Lama in a courtyard to the east of the Kesang Palace at Norbulingka. We would go along quite early accompanied by the Neshenpa (sne-shun-pa), our Tibetan official liaison officer who showed us to our seats in an open tent on the south side of the courtyard. To our left, in the east wall of the palace, we could see a window, curtained with yellow hangings behind which the Dalai Lama might be watching and towards which we made our bows. At the foot of the wall on a terrace bright with pots of flowers sat his tall, burly, monk bodyguards. Opposite us was a long tent for the high officials and great personages, the Silön, the Dalai Lama's father, the Kashag, Dzasas and Theijis. Next to us on our right were tents for lesser officials. At the far end of the courtyard, which was covered by a huge canopy, was a great crowd of the people of Lhasa, including many women of all ranks in their finest and brightest clothes and jewellery. The Dalai Lama's military bodyguard was also positioned there together with its band which included the largest and loudest tuba I have ever seen and heard. At the beginning of the ceremony the band struck up God Save the King, adopted as a salute to the Dalai Lama in the days when Tibetan troops were trained in Gyantse and in India. This produced a flutter of covert looks in our direction from the neighbouring tent, and I learnt that while I was away from Lhasa between 1940 and 1944, some of my successors thinking, perhaps, that this was a compliment to the British Mission or from long conditioning to the tune, jumped to their feet to the surprise and amusement of the audience. I studiously kept my seat and my head down as all around were doing.

Then the show began. A thangka was hung on one of the great tent poles, scarves were offered to it, and a small group of singers intoned an auspicious prayer. The musicians, a drummer and cymbal player, took their place and the principal performers made their entry each with a different dance step to a different drum beat suited to each character — a gentle shuffle for the female characters, a firm step for kings and heroes, a swashbuckling gesture for the wicked minister and so on. Although there were women in some of the dance groups the female parts had to be played by men when they performed at Norbulingka. Wicked ministers, demon queens, hunters, Indian priests and so on wore rudimentary symbolic masks; the good and great and the ladies did not except when in disguise. The play was introduced by a leading performer in rapid fire recitation so fast and in a special language that I do not think anyone could follow it; but most of the audience already knew the story. The recitation ended with a high shout and at once the drum and cymbals struck up with a fast, lively, rhythm and the main body of the dancers — the corps de ballet as it were, representing Kandroma goddesses, courtiers, servants, hunters or whatever might be required — swung into a vigorous whirling dance, the men, in short kilted tunics with long tassels, spinning round like acrobatic tumblers.
For me these spirited dances and the exciting drum beat and clash of cymbals were good entertainment. But to the connoisseurs what mattered were the arias, usually delivered at the top of the voice and with all the power of the lungs, in which rulers and ministers might explain their plans and hopes, heroes resolve to sacrifice their eyes or their lives, wronged ladies lament their misfortunes and so on. To my ear there was little vocal nuance in these solos or duets which were accompanied by formal, usually slow and often graceful stylized gestures. There was no attempt at realism in the scenes of action, any more for that matter than there is in many western operas. A stool served for a throne, a palace tower or a hill top; a horse was a stick covered in cloth with a toy horse’s head; a boat an oblong frame hung with coloured cloth beneath which the passengers’ feet could be seen. In most of the dramas there is a contest between the good and the bad, between religion and irreligion, with a demon queen or wicked minister on one side and, on the other, a pious prince or princess who suffers exile, torments and cruelty at great length throughout the day until good eventually triumphs. Many ladies among our friends admitted that the cruelties and suffering moved them to tears. They had the advantage of knowing all the details of the story and all the favourite songs; but for me and for many of the audience the highlights were the comic interludes; and very funny they were. I shall always remember the Gegen — the leader — of one of the troupes, the Chung Riwochepa I think, a small, slight elderly man with a wispy grey beard. In his formal roles as a king or minister he radiated dignity and authority; but in the interludes he might appear in a ragged chuba and dirty apron, with a forked stick in his hand and a dung basket on his back. One never noticed the beard; he simply was an old village woman with a twinkle in her eye cackling and joking with friends and often teasing a monk. Other comic turns were broader and less subtle, such as clever miming of an oracle priest with rolling head and wild gestures, or some topical caricature greeted with much laughter; one favourite was mockery of Nepalese dancers; another was a remote dig at the British when two girls in a little dance shook hands and sang “Good morning!”; and one company had some lively acrobatic tumblers.

The only people who never appeared to show interest or amusement were the high officials sitting gravely with lowered eyes, remote as befitted their rank. At intervals they would solemnly arise, shake their long sleeves and process out with the slow waddling gait prescribed by custom. This apparent remoteness was, presumably, demanded by the occasion for they were on parade in the presence of the Dalai Lama. The dancers, too, were very much on parade. Their performance was strictly monitored by an official from the Dalai Lama’s treasury and it was said that if they made a mistake or behaved improperly they might even be flogged. I cannot remember whether the treasurers’ office was responsible also for the choice
of the drama but sometimes when the Chinese were expected to be present there might be a somewhat left-handed compliment to them by performing the drama Gyaza Belza, the story of Songtsen Gampo's Chinese and Nepalese brides, for although the Chinese princess was revered for bringing to Tibet the precious image of the Buddha, the Jowo Rimpoché, the principal hero of the play is the famous Tibetan Minister Gar who outwitted all the wiles of the Chinese who tried to set a series of impossible tests before he could win the princess for his master.

Long though the performance was, it was not necessary to remain in one's seat for the whole day. We received a stream of hospitable invitations from friends among the immediate retinue of the Dalai Lama who had rooms in Norbulingka to take tea or lunch, so many that moderation was very necessary as we went from one to another; but the curds were irresistible, some were also served to the official audience, including ourselves, during the performance. Here in Britain surrounded by rushing traffic, people hurrying ceaselessly, and the relentless demands of the clock, programmes and so on, to spend so much time in that leisurely way would provoke an uneasy almost guilty feeling, but in Lhasa free from machines, hurry and noise it was just part of the normal tenor of life, and at the pleasant parties with our friends it was possible to learn not only about the Ache Lhamo but also the general news and gossip of the day.

I was told that after the end of the performance on the last day, the Dalai Lama and his household officials came down to the courtyard and took part in a bsangs-gsol ceremony when a huge pile of fragrant juniper branches and artemisia were burnt; and when I was walking on the sandy plain not far from Norbulingka, on one such day, I saw and smelt a great cloud of sweet smoke from the fire.

Although the ceremony at Norbulingka had a special interest and atmosphere, there was a more relaxed and sociable air about the performance at Drepung. The new Shengos were installed on the last day of the sixth month, and on the first day of the seventh Ache Lhamo dances took place in several of the colleges. We were always invited to the Kongpo Khamtse, which had a historic connection with visitors from India because Sarat Chandra Das had been looked after there on his visit to Lhasa and the tradition once established held good for ever. We were welcomed with warm and thoughtful hospitality and seated on a verandah overlooking the college courtyard and served, of course, with tea and with curds. Everything was cheerful and easy-going compared with the formality of Norbulingka. The dancing ground was surrounded by the mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers of the monks, all in their best clothes. Some would come from quite distant villages for the occasion and it was charming to see the affectionate attention and politeness with which the young monks looked after their families with tea, cakes and rice. It was a relaxed day for the dancers,
too; some of them often took turns at the drum and cymbals so that the players could take a rest and a drink. I remember seeing a small boy dancer being sent off to the amusement of those sitting close to the dance floor because the vigour of the whirling dance revealed that he had omitted to put on his trousers.

Sera also celebrated the Shotön but instead of Aché Lhamo dances there was a special dance by the retinue of the Karmashar oracle priest. Sometimes we went there before going on to Drepung. At Sera two colleges, Ngari and Balti, had a claim to be our hosts, so we had to visit each.

Shigatse also celebrated the Shotön and I was invited one year to a cheerful and sociable performance of Aché Lhamo there. The dances were sometimes staged in one or other of the noble houses at Lhasa and there, too, there was something of a party spirit and it was a matter of prestige for the great families to fit out the dancers in the finest dresses.

It seems inevitable that in the unnatural condition of exile the earthy ingenuousness and something of the ritual character of the ceremony will be lost and that in preserving the tradition the performance may be polished up a bit and adapted to Indian and western tastes; but the devotion of the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts in what they have done and will continue to do to keep this unique Tibetan art form alive deserves high praise.
I am allowed today to indulge in some nostalgia; and as His Holiness the Dalai Lama is now in the United States I would like to revive a memory of his arrival at Lhasa more than half a century ago when as a child of about four and a half years old he was brought from the remote north-eastern border-lands into the dazzling sophisticated capital of his kingdom.

The place was in fact a tented camp on a plain a few miles east of Lhasa where all his officials and a great crowd of the people of Lhasa were waiting to receive him. We saw the child’s face looking out of a small brown two-man carrying chair as he was hurried along in a dusty cavalcade up to a little monastery on the hillside. Soon, to the triumphant booming of silver horns from the monastery roof, he emerged in a great golden palanquin borne by eight bearers in bright green dresses and round red hats, accompanied by the greatest priests and nobles in gorgeous silks and brocades, and preceded by a sea of banners and by monks playing oboes, cymbals and drums, with clouds of incense rising all round, he was carried down the hill to a tall, beautifully decorated tent in the centre of the camp and was seated there on a high throne.

His court officials stood at the foot of the throne and in front, outside the tent, were rows of brightly dressed monk and lay officials. The abbots and principal lay ministers prostrated themselves three times before him, then went to offer scarves and receive his blessing.

The child sat there calmly, with complete self-possession, often smiling gently while people of all ranks then streamed in succession up to the throne to do homage and offers scarves. He blessed them all in the proper form for each as though he was performing a long-acustomed ritual. If there had been any doubts whether he was the true incarnation, they vanished then in a wave of emotion and adoration.

We of the British Mission also went with scarves to receive his blessing. He seemed amused by our unfamiliar appearance and gave a little tug at my hair and a much stronger one at that of the blond, rubicund Reg Fox, our radio officer. And so he sat there, composed and patient for several hours until at last he was taken away for food and rest before his state entry into Lhasa the next day.

The world knows him now as one of the great religious figures of the age, the most saintly of humans and the most human of saints, a teacher radiating goodness, compassion, spontaneous humour and common-sense.

Turning to his country and people as I saw them: the immediate impact on entering Tibet from the humid, forested, southern slopes of the Himalayas was of exhilaration in the fresh thin air under a vibrant blue sky stretching over an infinity of bare rolling country to a distant horizon rimmed with towering white clouds and snow peaks. In the high-altitude clarity you might see two or three houses seemingly quite near but taking three or four hours to reach and proving much smaller than they looked from a distance. There were herds of gazelle and wild asses and innumerable birds, surprising in such apparently barren surroundings.

Of course there were times of bitter cold and fierce, blinding, dust laden wind or showers of driven snow. But whatever the weather, riding for twenty days or so through plains, across high passes, past great blue lakes and towering snow mountains, or along fertile river valleys there was always a feeling of happiness and of wonderful comfort at the end of the day. And however often I made the journey the thrill of seeing the Potala from some ten miles distance soaring above the valley like a great red and white ocean liner and then looming majestically overhead was always new. But I came to see it as a somewhat proud assertion of power and my mind moved beyond it to what lay beyond, almost hidden in the heart of the small city — the Jokhang, the holiest place in Tibet, crowned with four gleaming pagoda roofs and inside glowing with golden images and vessels in the warm light of innumerable butter lamps heavy with incense and crowded with pilgrims rapt in awe-stricken devotion and it must be admitted in strongly smelling sheepskin robes. But above all it breathed the power of over a thousand years of unending prayer and worship.

Passing the great white-walled monastery of Drepung spread out like a city on its sheltered hillside, and passing below the mass of the Potala itself one entered a medieval city of only some 30,000 inhabitants. Except for a wide road round the Jokhang its streets were narrow with solid houses on either side, white-walled and with black window frames tapering slightly upwards, a Tibetan architectural feature designed everywhere to give the appearance of added height. The streets were either deep in mud or dust according to the season. There were no wheeled vehicles. High officials rode through the city in magnificent brocade robes and broad, round,
flat hats with fur brim and red top crowned by a turquoise ornament; they were attended by a large retinue and whenever they left their house they had to appear in such state. The ordinary people dressed in broadcloth or homespun went on foot. There was no drainage, running water, lighting or heating. But this was the holiest place in a country devoted to religion, a place always full of the sights and sounds of worship.

The Jokhang was its heart and at several points around the city were other monasteries and temples. Every morning clouds of incense floated as prayer offerings from the roof tops and from surrounding hills; and streams of devotees carrying prayer wheels or rosaries and sometimes accompanied by a sheep saved from the butcher, would make the five-mile circuit of the city, some prostrating themselves on the ground the whole way.

Throughout the year there was a succession of grand religious ceremonies — religious dances, twenty days of continuous prayer by thousands of monks in the Jokhang, processions, cavalcades of horsemen in ancient armour, and so on. It was all intensely serious, not mere pageantry, and was deemed vital for the good of the faith and the state.

But Tibetans were in no way sanctimonious. They knew how to enjoy themselves too. There were lighter-hearted moments in some ceremonies, and in summer a month given over to picnics. Lhasa was certainly a great place for entertainment and after we had been received by the Dalai Lama and had exchanged calls with a number of leading monk and lay officials came an exchange of parties. And a party at Lhasa could last from ten in the morning to ten at night and could go on for two days. We at the British Mission were allowed to join and leave at some suitable moment but we spent many hours enjoying delicious meals, leisurely games, mahjong and so on or walking in a garden park with a friend. It was all very easy and informal and made more enjoyable by the presence of our hostesses. For women have a high status in Tibet and took their full share in entertaining their guests. We in turn gave parties for virtually every noble official and their wives and children, and also to leading monastic officials and abbots, all of whom came with hosts of attendants and servants who crowded in to see an ever popular cinema show.

At these parties we learned much from our friends who, in their gently humorous way but always with the best of manners, taught us much about themselves and their country and also a good deal about ourselves. Together with their gentle charm and courtesy they had great initiative and practical ability and adaptability. They keep those qualities in exile. The lessons we had to learn were patience, calm and restraint. That was essential in dealing with Tibetan officials for we were there to do a job — to conduct relations between our governments. I would exchange frequent visits with the Tibetan Foreign Office. To go there involved a ride of about
half an hour with a suitably impressive retinue to their office in the pur-
lieus of the Jokhang. First there was tea, the inevitable accompaniment of
any occasion in Tibet, and then casual conversation with the two ministers
— one monk and one lay, according to the Tibetan custom of joint respon-
sibility in every sphere of government. Coming to the business of the day,
everything I said was taken down and read over and discussed at length.
Time was unimportant and what might have been done elsewhere in half
an hour would be a morning’s work. But I soon discovered that my coun-
terparts were highly intelligent, well-informed and experienced negotiators
within the bounds of their political horizon. They were also masters of pro-
crastination and evasion and might assume the cloak of simple people with
no experience of the ways of the outside world. One had to learn to coun-
ter their tactics in kind and to repeat the same point at frequent visits as
though it was something quite new. But even when we disagreed voices
were never raised and good humour prevailed. Over many years they be-
came close friends whose knowledge and ability I greatly respected. And
there could be no doubt that I was dealing with ministers of a government
that was completely independent in both its internal and external affairs.

Official duties were light but time never dragged. There were frequent
calls from friends, visits to monasteries and other holy places and the many
day-long ceremonies to attend. It was a city of colour, cheerfulness and lei-
sure. There was also open country, or groves of sweet-scented poplars where
one could have long walks and enjoy the flowers or watch the many quite
fearless species of birds; and we had a fine garden to look after. For com-
pany there was a doctor in charge of our rough-and-ready but very popular
hospital and there was Reg Fox, our very efficient radio officer sought af-
fer by amateurs all over the world as AC 4 YN; and later there was my good
friend Heinrich Harrer. From May to October the climate was good, and
even in winter in spite of lack of heating the cold was not too hard to bear
because of the dry atmosphere; only the dust pouring in through ill-fitting,
cotton-covered frame windows was a nuisance.

And there was Tibet outside Lhasa — a great deal of it of which I could
only see a little. But I was able to travel on horseback and foot for ten or
twelve days usually twice a year through a land of snow peaks and gla-
ciers, high passes leading to high grazing grounds where yak calves frisked,
or by clear streams in green valleys full of birds and flowers, or lakesides
blazing in autumn colour. It was sheer happiness to escape from the bus-
tle of life in Lhasa into the deep peace and solitude of the country with
hardly another human in sight until one reached a village with men plough-
ing and women sowing or reaping the barley harvest and winnowing the
grain according to the season. I stayed in village houses, old, remote mon-
asteries, temples or tents and everywhere there was a smiling welcome with
the same exquisite courtesy without a hint of obsequiousness just as in the
city. I could see the quiet life of country monasteries, great and small, and the activities and home life of the farmers on whose labour all the luxury and grandeur of the absentee landlords and all the life of the great monasteries depended.

The Tibetan agricultural system has been characterized as serfdom. Certainly the workers were tied to the particular estate on which they worked but they had security of tenure and often owned a few fields of their own. It was an elaborate structure. Some farmers worked large holdings and owned ponies, donkeys and cattle. They employed those of lower status, some on a regular footing, others as casual labour. Taxation was of many sorts according to the land — grain, wool, meat, butter or other produce, or in various forms of service of which the most common and the most unpopular was the provision of free transport for officials and their baggage or goods. Taxation was not unreasonably heavy and additional income could be made by spinning, weaving and hiring out animals when not needed for corvée work. And there might be perquisites of wool, yak-hair and so on.

The landlord, who was usually an absentee, had the right to inflict minor punishments and penalties; but each class of worker had recognized rights and could have recourse to the law courts though that was slow and costly. And the landlord knew that labour was not easily replaceable and that if too hard-pressed, might abscond. Undoubtedly some landlords were more exacting than others; among them the monasteries appeared to have the best reputation among their subjects. The casual visitor like myself saw some comfortable prosperity, some hardship and poverty, but no destitution; for Tibetan compassion saw to it that no one starved. I suppose the greatest hardship was indebtedness. A loan, probably of seed, taken in a bad year would never be repaid and would mount up year by year. It clearly was not an ideal system but in spite of it all I found sturdy, self-reliant cheerfulness everywhere. They certainly were a most hardy people from childhood up, for I often found small boys or girls alone in the wilds, looking after sheep or yaks.

And there might be a scope for trade to which all Tibetans of every rank, men, women, young and old, monk and lay were devoted. If there were more members in a village family than were needed for farming and other services or for recruitment as a novice in a neighbouring monastery, one might set up a small trading venture and go to Kalimpong for such things as needles, thread, cooking pots and trinkets. The prosperous monasteries and great nobles traded on a large scale with agents in India, China, Japan and Hong Kong, buying silk, broadcloth, jewelry and toiletries. In this way some information about affairs in the world outside found its way to Tibet.

In the country, as at Lhasa, there was everywhere evidence of the power of religion. Near every village there would be a monastery or temple. There
were mchod-rten, prayer walls and boulders inscribed with religious incantations. On every house-top were prayer flags, and incense burning every morning. One might find a monk reading the scriptures in a house or a lama in procession, blessing the crops. In every house, however poor, was a chapel room with a small altar and butter lamps burning in front of an image or thangka. My bed was often put in such a room, or in small temples it might be in front of the main altar and during the night someone would step over me to tend the butter lamps. The guest was accepted in this way as a matter of course. There was also evidence of the survival of older ways — places sacred to spirits and deities of mountains, trees, lakes or fields.

In the country, as at Lhasa, it was clear that this was a free and independent country. No foreigners were to be seen except in the few cities — Gyantse, Shigatse, Tsethang — where they might be Ladakhi or Nepalese traders. There was quite certainly no sign of any authority but the Tibetan. So when the Chinese Communists invaded and occupied Tibet in 1950 they were without doubt violating a country that was in every practical way free and independent.

You probably do not need to be reminded in detail about what happened in 1950 and after. Briefly, in 1950 Tibet was invaded by the Chinese Communists and the occupation of the country, especially by the building of military roads, was set on foot.

In 1959 the Tibetans rose against this domination. They were put down with bloody brutality and much loss of life. The old Tibetan Government ceased to exist, military occupation of the country was completed, the practice of religion was banned and all monasteries were closed. Communisation of agriculture was established.

Then in 1966 came the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution; sectarian fighting and the vandalisation and often total destruction of thousands of monasteries and holy places.

Since then, in spite of some superficial liberalization, the Chinese hold on the country has been relentless and complete. There have of course been progressive developments such as road and bridge building, new schools and hospitals and so on. But these have in the main been for the benefit of the Chinese and it has recently been found that the health, sanitation, water supplies and general standard of living of the Tibetans in their villages throughout the country are all in such a bad state that the Chinese have been accepting money and technicians and experts in several fields from France, Switzerland, Britain and other countries to do what, in spite of their boasting, they have neglected to do for Tibetans for thirty years. And in August this year an official Australian delegation found that in effect martial law prevails at Lhasa and all Tibetan life and culture are under threat.
Some of you have been in Tibet recently and have seen that in spite of persecution, suffering and oppression, the longing of the Tibetan people for independence and their devotion to their faith and to the Dalai Lama are intense and ineradicable.

The cause of their tragedy is largely that the Tibetans did nothing to establish their independence in the eyes of the world until it was too late. Their policy was bedeviled — if the paradox may be excused — by the power of religion embodied in the ultra-conservative abbots of the great monasteries who feared that any contact with the outside world would threaten the purity of the faith — or to be cynical — their monopoly of authority. For although they took no part in the administration, the monastic hierarchy dominated policy at occasional meetings of the National Assembly to which important matters were referred. The lay nobles who had to carry on the administration and to formulate policy did not dare to offend the abbots; for impending over them and over the city were the great monasteries of Drepung and Sera with a potentially unruly force of some twenty thousand monks.

The late Dalai Lama had left instructions that Tibet should keep good relations with both its great neighbours, China and India. This was interpreted in practice as having as little to do with them as possible. He also said that Tibet should maintain a well-trained army for its defence. He had built up a small efficient army with western training and had used it once to overawe a rebellious monastery. That was never forgotten by the monastic leaders and so the army was run down and its trained officers transferred to civil duties. All that was done was to secure occasional supplies of arms, but any expert training in their use was rejected.

And so when the crisis came, the Tibetan troops, who lacked nothing in courage and endurance, did not have the trained leadership and means to resist. And when in their turn the monasteries were devastated by the Chinese invaders the core of dedicated scholars, teachers, mystics and priestly recluses who were a small proportion of the tens of thousands of monks suffered in the collapse of the over-blown ultra-conservative political system.

Tibetans may question that view. But there is nothing to be gained by arguing over scapegoats. There is widespread and generous sympathy for the Tibetans among people all over the world. Some governments have so far been less generous and forthcoming in their support. Your own government has perhaps a better record than most in speaking out for Tibet. It is essential that official protests against the violations of human rights in Tibet should be more forceful and should be linked with the denial of economic privileges. And Tibet’s political rights should also be stressed for as I have said many times and in many places Tibet was until 1950 in practice an independent country.
But things are beginning to move. The Chinese government is showing signs of alarm at the collapse of Communism all over the world. I doubt whether the disappearance of the old men at the top will make any immediate difference to Chinese determination to hold on to Tibet. "But Westward, look, the land is bright." From the independent republics of Kazakhstan, Kirghizia and Tajikistan the contagion of freedom and democracy may spread to their unhappy neighbours, the Muslim subjects of the Chinese Central Asian Empire and spark off the end of Communist imperialism and Marxist dictatorship.

May it come soon.
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