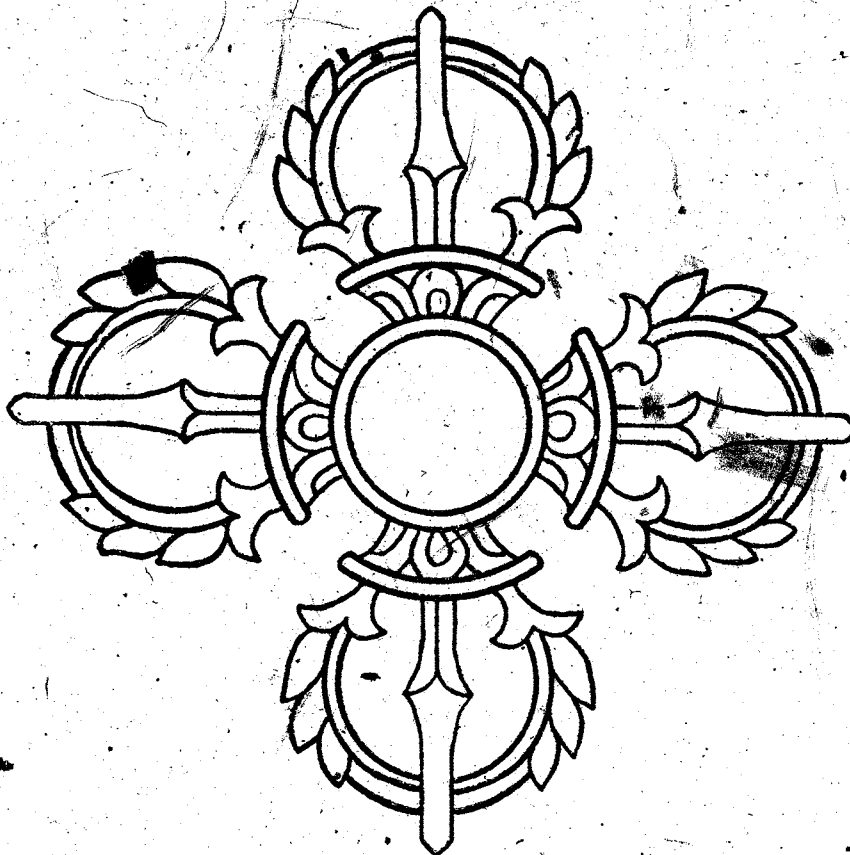


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# CONSONANTAL MUTATION AND TONAL SPLIT IN THE TAMANG SUB-FAMILY OF TIBETO-BURMAN

Martine Mazaudon

*Paris*

Tone is often believed by non-specialists to be a fundamental feature of a language, almost a peculiar turn of mind of its speakers. It is assumed that a language either is tonal or is not, nothing in between, and that tonal languages have always been and will always be tonal. These are all fallacies. The Tibeto-Burman languages of Nepal which we will describe here are what we could call semi-tonal or marginally tonal. They also exemplify how languages can become tonal from being non-tonal, or more precisely in this case, more tonal from being slightly tonal.<sup>1</sup>

## 1. THE TAMANG SUB-FAMILY

1.1 The eight languages or dialects under study all belong to the Gurung Branch of the Bodish Section of the Bodic Division of the Tibeto-Burman Family of Sino-Tibetan languages, according to the classification of Robert Shafer. Shafer's

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1. This is a slightly revised version of a communication presented at the VIIIth International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics, held in Berkeley in October 1975.

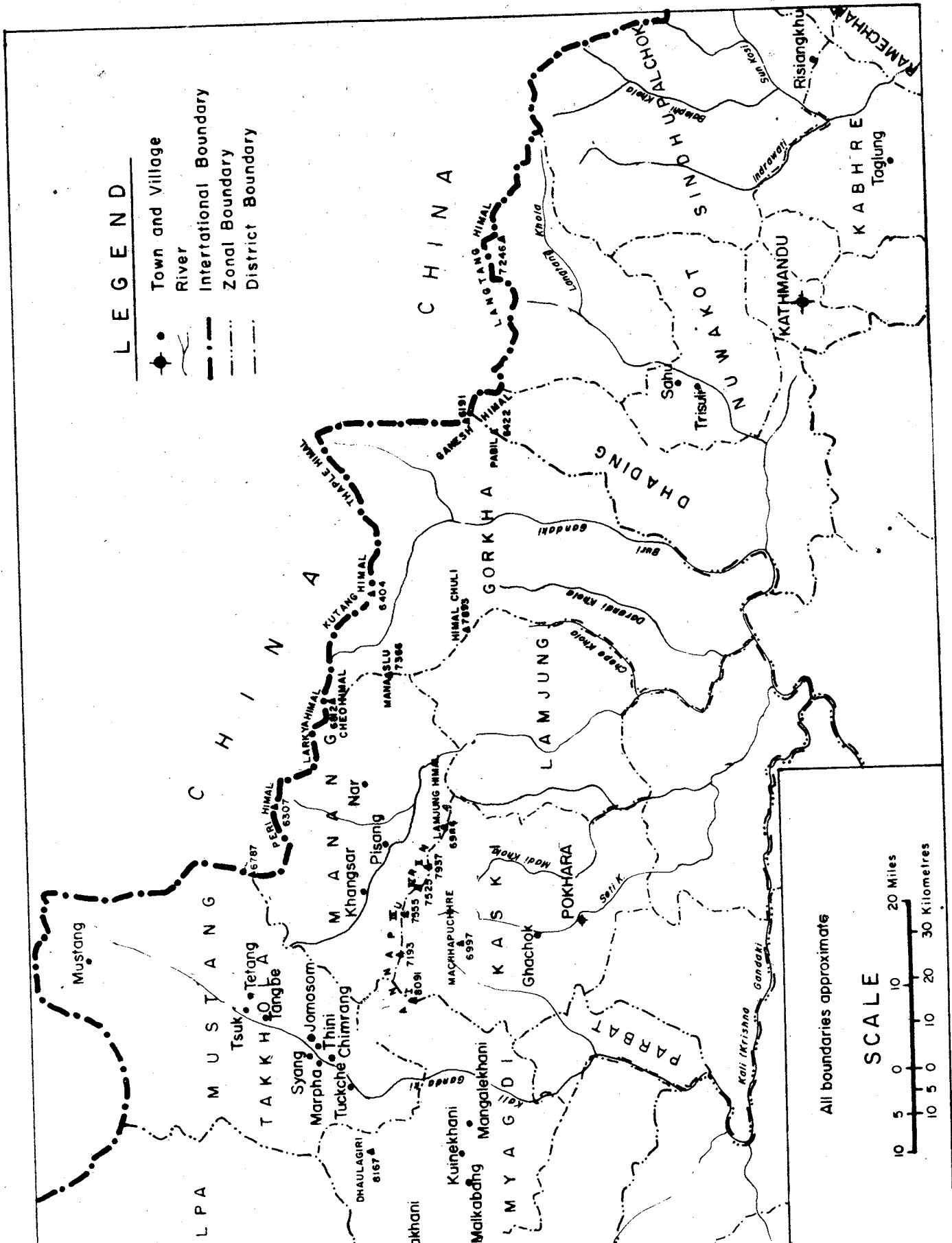
Gurung Branch comprises Tamang, Gurung and Thakali. To these should be added Manangba (also called Nyi-shang), and the language spoken in the Nar valley, North of the Manang valley. These last two forms of speech were not classified by Shafer. They clearly belong together with Tamang, Gurung and Thakali. They must not be classified with the dialects of Mustang and Dolpo as part of Tibetan, as is sometimes assumed on general cultural grounds. The reconstructed ancestor of the whole Tamang sub-family (Shafer's "Gurung Branch" plus Manangba and the Nar language) is designated by the initials TGTM, standing for Tamang-Gurung-Thakali-Manangba (Nar material was not used in this study).<sup>2</sup>

1.2 We will compare eight forms of speech belonging to this group. According to the traditional way of identifying population groups in Nepal, their speakers belong to the four groups mentioned above. Whether these sociological divisions also correspond to linguistic divisions is not clear at this point. We use these ethnic names because, with the addition of a village name, they identify without ambiguity the people from whom language samples were collected, hence their form of speech.

Manangbas are a small group living in a well defined area where communications are easy. Dialectal variation between Manangba villages, from Pisang to Khangsar, is either nul or very limited. Gurung and, even more so, Tamang are spoken over large areas and there is a lot of geographical variation in dialect. With these two groups, forms of speech have to be identified by the name of the village where

---

2. Michael Vinding tells me that the dialects spoken in the villages of Tangbe, Tetang, and Tshuk, north of Tibetan-speaking Kagbeni, are close to, but different from, all dialects of Thakali. Thus they may qualify as new members of the TGTM family. Boyd Michailovsky suggests that the same may apply to the Chantel language spoken in Gurjakhani, Malkabang, Kuinekhani, and Mangalekhani villages of Myagdi District.



they are spoken. Three varieties of Tamang are represented here. Thakalis split into three endogamous subgroups corresponding to three forms of speech. These three subgroups live in different villages but in the same rather small geographical area. The 'Tukche' dialect covers all Southern Thakkhola and Jomosom. The 'Syang' dialect covers Syang, Thini, and Chimang. Marpha is an endogamous village with its own dialect.

## 2. ON THE NATURE OF TONE IN THE TAMANG SUB-FAMILY

2.1 The languages of the Tamang sub-family are all tonal. In these languages the words for 'I' /<sup>1</sup>ŋa/ and for 'drum' /<sup>3</sup>ŋa/ for example are distinguished by pitch and melodic features only. Pronouncing the consonant and vowel properly but failing to produce the proper tonal features will lead to misunderstanding.

Each monosyllabic word, in languages of the TGTM group, can carry one of four tones. The phonetic value (mainly pitch) of these tones varies from place to place (see table §3.12) but the correspondances are regular. Take for example the two words quoted above: the pronoun 'I' and the noun 'drum'. To indicate pitch, we may use Chao Yuen-ren's system, representing pitches from low to high on a scale from 1 to 5. If you pronounce the syllable [ŋa] with a high falling tone [54] ('five-four' i.e. starting very high [5] and descending slightly to [4]) in Risiangku, you have said 'I'. Pronouncing about the same thing in Ngawal, you have said 'drum'. To say 'I' in Ngawal you must use a mid level tone [33], which, in Risiangku, would come close to the pronunciation of 'drum'. The correspondance of tone [54] in

Risiangku to tone [33] in Ngawal is regular. That is, among the words which are shared by the two dialects, all the words which are pronounced with the high falling tone [54] in Risiangku are pronounced with the mid level tone [33] in Ngawal. These words all belong to the same *tone class*, which we call tone-1. In the same way all the words like 'drum' which are pronounced with the low level tone [33] in Risiangku and the high falling tone [54] in Ngawal form another tone class, which we call tone-3, and so on.

2.2 Suffixes, in languages of this group, are always tonally neutral, which means you cannot distinguish one suffix from another suffix by pitch and melodic variations. Rather the pitch and melody of suffixes are conditioned by the lexical item (noun, verb, etc.) which they are added to. Thus the pitch and melody heard on a suffix serve in fact to identify the tone of the root to which it is added. For example the nouns /<sup>1</sup>sa/ 'earth' and /<sup>2</sup>sa/ 'Niger seed (the oilseed *Guizotia abyssinica*)' are differentiated in Risiangku Tamang by the falling tone [54] of 'earth' and the level tone [44] of 'sesame'. This difference is easier to hear if the locative suffix /-ri/ is added. In this case the melody is spread out and emphasized: /<sup>1</sup>sa-ri/ 'on the ground' is pronounced with the pitch pattern [54-44] or [54-33], emphasizing the fall characteristic of tone-1. /<sup>2</sup>sa-ri/ 'in the oilseed' is pronounced [44-44], or [44-55] or [44-54], sometimes emphasizing the non-falling character of tone-2 by a slight rise on the suffix. In extreme cases a string of suffixes spreads out a complex melody, as in Tukche Thakali where tone-4 on a monosyllable is a rising-falling tone [121]. If two suffixes are added, the resulting trisyllabic word will have three more or less level syllables with the following pitches [11-22-11]. The melody is much more easily identified spread out in this way than compressed on the root syllable devoid of suffixes.



2.3 In all dialects for which sufficient data are available (Tukche Thakali, Risiangku and Sahu Tamang, and Ghachok Gurung), it has been observed that disyllabic morphemes show the same melodic patterns as disyllabic words made up of a monosyllabic lexeme and a suffix. So only the same four tone patterns found on monosyllabic morphemes are heard, spread out, on disyllabic morphemes. Not only is the number of classes the same, but the phonetic realization of disyllabic words with and without morpheme boundary is the same, so that e.g. Risiangku informants could not distinguish the morpheme /<sup>2</sup>tari/ 'an axe' from the sequence /<sup>2</sup>ta-ri/ 'horse-locative, on the horse'.

2.3 There are two exceptions to the above statement. First, in Risiangku the high falling tone (tone-1) is pronounced with a smaller fall on a disyllabic word made up of a nominal root and a suffix than on a mono-morphemic disyllabic noun. /<sup>1</sup>kuri/ 'a shovel' is distinguished from /<sup>1</sup>ku-ri/ 'on the chest'. This is only a phonetic peculiarity in the dialect of Risiangku, but it might provide an insight into the historical origin of the second exception.

In Gurung five tone patterns instead of four have been described on disyllabic mono-morphemic nouns. The phonetic description of the five classes is roughly: High-Mid (or High-falling), Mid-High (or High-rising), Mid-Mid (or High-level), Low-Mid (or Low-rising), and Low-Low (or Low-level). The two low classes of Gurung correspond regularly to the two low classes of the other dialects; but the three high classes seem to distribute randomly into the two high classes of the other dialects.

The historical origin of these exceptions, especially the second one is still unclear. A detailed study of tone

on polysyllabic morphemes is out of the scope of this article. We shall concentrate our attention on monosyllabic morphemes.

2.4 In conclusion we see that with four tones on monosyllabic items, the TGTM languages are tonal. They are more tonal than other semi-tonal languages like Danish or Japanese. They are more tonal than most dialects of Tibetan. They are less tonal than many other languages of the same Tibeto-Burman family, like Lahu, spoken in Thailand, which has seven tones. More important than the number of tones is the fact that, unlike fully tonal languages like Vietnamese or Lahu, the languages of the TGTM group do not distinguish four tones on each syllable of a word (which would make 16 melodies for a two-syllable word) but only four tones *per word*.

### 3. THE MUTATION OF INITIAL OCCLUSIVES AND THE MULTIPLICATION OF TONES ON MONOSYLLABLES

It has long been hypothesized about several Southeast Asian languages, Chinese and Vietnamese among them, that the distinction between a series of high tones and a series of low tones originated from a lost distinction between voiced and voiceless initial consonants. That mutation occurred several centuries ago and was not directly observed. The languages of the TGTM group exemplify this development. Their contribution to the general theory of phonological change is thus very important because they show in living languages the different stages of the evolution which progressively replaces an opposition of voiced to voiceless initials by an opposition of low pitch to high pitch, and

how this symmetrical pattern can become concealed by ulterior developments.

3.1 *Risiangku, Sahu, Tukche, Syang, and Ghachok dialects.*

In five dialects out of eight, Risiangku and Sahu Tamang, Tukche and Syang Thakali, and Ghachok Gurung, tone-1 and tone-2 words are high with a clear voice quality; tone-3 and tone-4 are low with a breathy voice quality. The opposition of tone-1 to tone-2, and that of tone-3 to tone-4 rest on a combination of melody and relative pitch which varies with each dialect.

3.11 Let us focus on the main contrast of the system: high-clear vs. low-breathy. This contrast correlates with an important difference in the system of initial consonants: aspirated stops do not occur on the low tones. On the high tones two series of initial stops are found, voiceless unaspirated and voiceless aspirated. (Voicing is nowhere distinctive except very marginally in Gurung, and this possibly under the influence of loan words).

Hence, taking the velar stops as examples of all stops, we can show the co-occurrence of tones and series of initials in the following way:

	high tones		low tones	
	tone-1	tone-2	tone-3	tone-4
kh	yes	yes	no	no
k	yes	yes	yes	yes

Synchronically this means two things:

- (1) you cannot distinguish a /kh/ from a /k/ if the tone is /3/ or /4/,

or reciprocally:

(2) you cannot distinguish a high tone from a low tone if the initial is a /kh/.

In technical terms (1) and (2) can be represented by the formulas (1a) and (2a) or by (1b) and (2b):

(1a) kh → k /# \_\_\_\_\_ LOW

(2a) LOW → HIGH /# kh \_\_\_\_\_

(1b) "The opposition between aspirated and unaspirated stops is neutralized under the low tones in favor of an unaspirated archiphoneme."

(2b) "The opposition between high and low tones is neutralized after aspirated initials in favor of high archiphonemes."

The formulations (1b) and (2b) are preferable to (1a) and (2a), because they are more complete and more explicit. Thus (1b) states not only that (in the generative terms of (1a)) kh 'becomes' k, but also that underlying k remains k; and (2b) states explicitly that underlying high tones remain high. In addition, both give prominence to the fact (and extent) of neutralization; the importance of this is discussed in § 3.22 below.

3.12 Synchronically, (1) (whether (1a) or (1b)) is not quite equivalent to (2) (whether (2a) or (2b)). Let us consider in greater detail the phonetic realization of the four tones in each dialect.<sup>3</sup> Using Chao Yuen-ren's tone letters again, we obtain the following values:

	TAMANG			THAKALI			GURUNG MANANGBA	
	Risiangku	Sahu	Taglung	Tukche	Marpha	Syang	Ghachok	Ngawal
tone-1	54	44	55/44	54	43	43	33	33
tone-2	44	54	43	44/33	45	45	54	45
tone-3	33/22	11	33/22	11	33/22	11	11	54
tone-4	211	32	51	121	51	33/22	12	31

3. Non-specialists may accept the conclusion that (1) is preferable to (2) and skip to §3.14.

In italics are the three aberrant dialects we will consider later. In the five dialects we are considering now, Risiangku, Sahu, Tukche, Syang, and Ghachok, tone-1 and tone-2 are consistently high-clear, and tone-3 and tone-4 are consistently low-breathy. But what is the feature which distinguishes tone-1 from tone-2? In Risiangku /1/ is relatively higher than /2/. In Sahu the relationship is reversed. The relative pitch of tone-3 and tone-4 is not constant either. Neither is the feature level vs. falling: in Risiangku /1/ is falling and /2/ is level; in Sahu the reverse is true.

Even inside one dialect it is difficult to define each tone as the sum of two features. In Risiangku for instance:

tone-1 is higher than tone-2 and falling  
 tone-2 is lower than tone-1 and level  
 tone-3 is higher than tone-4 and level  
 tone-4 is lower than tone-3 and falling

If we retain the feature "relatively higher"/"relatively lower" in our definition of tones, tone-1 and tone-3 share a feature:

	high-clear	low-breathy
relatively high	tone-1	tone-3
relatively low	tone-2	tone-4

If we retain the feature "falling"/"level", tone-1 and tone-4 share a feature:

	high-clear	low-breathy
falling	tone-1	tone-4
level	tone-2	tone-3

3.13 To come back to the relation of aspirated initial stops to tones, if we accept (2) "the opposition between high and low tones is neutralized after aspirated initials in favor of high architonemes", we should be able to break that general rule into its parts and to state either (3) or (4):

(3a) tone-3 → tone-1 / #kh —  
 tone-4 → tone-2 / #kh —

which would read more precisely as (3b)

(3b) "After aspirated initials the opposition between tone-3 and tone-1 is neutralized in favor of their *relatively high* architoneme (pronounced like tone-1) and the opposition between tone-4 and tone-2 is neutralized in favor of their *relatively low* architoneme (pronounced like tone-2)."

(4a) tone-3 → tone-2 / #kh —  
 tone-4 → tone-1 / #kh —

which would read more precisely as (4b)

(4b) "After aspirated initials the opposition between tone-3 and tone-2 is neutralized in favor of their *level* architoneme (pronounced like tone-2) and the opposition between tone-4 and tone-1 is neutralized in favor of their *falling* architoneme (pronounced like tone-1)."

The choice between (3) and (4) would depend on the analysis of the tones in pertinent features. Since it has been shown above that this analysis cannot be done synchronically, it would have to be an arbitrary choice. Thus formulation (2) is unsatisfactory.

On the other hand, statement (1) can easily be developed into its constituents as in (5a):

(5a) kh → k / # — tone-3  
 kh → k / # — tone-4

or more precisely as in (5b)

(5b) "The opposition between aspirated and unaspirated stops is neutralized under tone-3 and tone-4 in favor of an unaspirated archiphoneme."

So synchronically we will retain (1) over (2).

3.14 *How does the synchronic relation between initials and tones point to an older system?* First of all (1) and (2) are not historical rules. As we stated them in words there should be no misunderstanding, since a neutralization is not a process but only a relation. If the arrows of the formalized notation were to be read as "historically became", both (1) and (2) would be false.

3.15 If we look more closely at the phonetic realization of initial stops under the low tones we find that in the four dialects of Risiangku, Sahu, Tukche, and Syang they are often slightly voiced, although too inconsistently for voicing to be retained as phonemic. We would say synchronically that low pitch and breathy voice condition a certain degree of voicing in the initial. Historically, voicing is residual. We can reconstruct the old system as having had three series of initials: aspirated, voiceless, and voiced, and only two tones, which we will call tone-A and tone-B.

\*tone-A : kh k g

\*tone-B : kh k g

When the old voiced initials started to lose their voicing and to merge with the old voiceless unaspirated initials, the voicing opposition was gradually replaced by a register opposition combining pitch and voice quality. By the time the voicing of the old \*g, \*d... had become too weak and inconsistent to maintain the opposition of \*g to \*k, the once conditioned low-breathy variants of tones \*A and \*B had

become phonemic and the tonal split was completed.<sup>4</sup>

			*kh	*k	*g
*tone-A	high variant	tone-1	kh	k	-
	low variant	tone-3	-	-	k
*tone-B	high variant	tone-2	kh	k	-
	low variant	tone-4	-	-	k

Nothing merged with the proto-aspirated initial stops, so there are still only two tones, the old unsplit tones \*A and \*B on words with those initials.

3.16 I have tentatively identified tone-1 and tone-3 as deriving from the same proto-tone \*A and tones /2/ and /4/ as deriving from the same proto-tone \*B rather than pairing /1/ with /4/ and /2/ with /3/ because statistically in the modern languages word families include members in both tones /1/ and /3/ or in both tones /2/ and /4/ more often than they include members in both tones /1/ and /4/ or in both tones /2/ and /3/.

There are no visible traces of what the phonetic value of \*A and \*B might have been. This is not surprising, considering that the \*A vs \*B contrast is much older than the HIGH vs LOW contrast. Even this later contrast has undergone radical phonetic changes in the three dialects which we will now consider.

3.2 *The other three dialects: Marpha, Taglung, and Manang*

3.21 In Marpha Thakali and Taglung Tamang the tonal system could be described as having three high-clear tones and one low-breathy tone. The low-breathy tone is the regular correspondent of tone-3. It is low-level in these two dialects as in the five dialects which we studied before. Tone-1

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4. Asterisks indicate reconstructed forms, phonemes or tones, as opposed to forms, phonemes or tones attested in modern languages.



and tone-2 are similar to what they are elsewhere, i.e. respectively high level and high falling in Taglung, high falling and high rising in Marpha. The surprise comes with tone-4. A low or very low tone in the first five dialects, it is an extra-high falling tone in these two dialects [51].

In Manangba the system is even more different. There is no use of breathy vs. clear voice quality, but rather a normal voice for the two lower tones and a very tense quality for the two high tones. The two higher tones here are not /1/ and /2/ as expected, but /3/ and /2/. Tone-1 is lower-mid level, and tone-4 is a fall from mid to low.

3.22 In Marpha and Taglung, in spite of the dissociation of tone-4 from any breathiness, and in spite of its being the highest tone in the system, no aspirated initials occur under that tone. They do not occur with tone-3 either, but since /3/ is low this is not surprising. Under tones /1/ and /2/ aspirated and unaspirated initial stops are in opposition.

In Manangba, too, aspirated and unaspirated initial stops are in opposition under tones /1/ and /2/, although /1/ is low in this dialect. Under tone-3, although it is a clear high tone, still only unaspirated initials are found. Manangba is the only dialect to have aspirated initials with tone-4; but in Manangba there are no unaspirated stop initials on tone-4 and thus (as in the other dialects) no opposition between aspirate and unaspirate on tone-4.

This analysis demonstrates the misleading nature of generative rule formulations like (1a) or (5a). For Manangba, part of (5a) would have to be reversed to read:

(6a)    kh → k / # — tone-3  
           k  → kh / # — tone-4

thus making it appear that tone-3 and tone-4 had nothing to

do with each other in Manangba, and that the relationship between tone and initials in Manangba was fundamentally different from that in the other dialects. But this is not the case: The important fact is that /k/ and /kh/ are not distinguished -- that the opposition is neutralized, as (1b) and (5b) explicitly state; this holds true for all of the dialects. Which of the two is pronounced phonetically is secondary. Thus for Manang we would state:

(6b) The opposition between aspirated and unaspirated stops is neutralized under tone-3 and tone-4. The archiphoneme is realized as unaspirated under tone-3 and aspirated under tone-4.

The presence of a neutralization of the opposition between aspirated and unaspirated stop initials under tone-3 and tone-4 in Marpha, Taglung and Manang demonstrates that the same consonantal mutation was at the origin of the tonal split in these three dialects as in the other five. The high pitch of tone-3 or tone-4 is the result of a later evolution from a stage similar to that which we still find in the five dialects we studied first.

#### 4. THE TONAL SPLIT AFTER CONTINUANT INITIALS

4.1 In all dialects four tones are in opposition after continuant initials (m, n, ŋ, j, r, l, w, s) as well as after unaspirated initial stops. So we should assume that two series of continuants existed before the tonal split, a voiceless one and a voiced one, and that those series merged at the same time as the voiced and voiceless stops merged. To confirm this hypothesis we would like to find some residual trace, in one dialect or the other, of voicing of the initial sibilant on the low tones, and of

voicelessness of nasals and liquids on the high tones. The traces, if real, are very faint.

A possible trace of the old connection between voicelessness and high tone may be found in Syang dialect laterals. In Syang, it seems that all the voiced laterals on high tones reconstruct, inside the Tamang sub-family itself, to old \*kl clusters. Lateral initials on high tones deriving from simple lateral initials are all voiceless (cf. "feces" vs "snake-god" in the table of cognates). This could mean that the old voiceless laterals became high-toned, while the old voiced laterals became low-toned. Then a new opposition between voiced and voiceless laterals was created on the high tones by the reduction of ancient \*kl clusters. On the low tones, if the following vowel was /i/ (see "snow"), velar + l clusters became confused with the simple laterals. If the vowel was not /i/, the palatalization of \*gl into /lj/ prevented its merger with the \*l initial (see "place"). No new voicing opposition was created there.

It should be noted that in Marpha and Ghachok, the reflexes of \*kl and of \*L (voiceless \*l) are reversed as compared to Syang: \*kl has become hl, and \*L has become l. Probably the Syang \*kl cluster developed through a glottalized initial lateral to a voiced lateral. In Marpha and Ghachok cluster initial \*k must have developed into a strongly fricative velar, which is the way it is pronounced nowadays in Taglung (see "head", and "wheat" in Taglung), whence the fricative + l cluster developed into a fricative voiceless lateral.

5. APPENDIX: TABLE OF COGNATES

*Notes on the table of cognates:*

\*TGTM stands for Proto-Tamang-Gurung-Thakali-Manangba. The reconstructions are only tentative.

Between pointed brackets are irregular correspondences or doubtful cognates.

Raised H before a word indicates high tone, where the data available does not distinguish between tone-1 and tone-2. This is the case for all published data on Tukche. Any word marked tone-1 or tone-2 in the Tukche column is actually based on my own elicitation in Gopang (see map).

Raised L means low tone, where the data available does not distinguish between tone-3 and tone-4.

Initial /h/ in Taglung has the allophones [h], [χ], and [x].

In the reconstructions, M, N, ŋ, J, R, L stand for voiceless m, n, ŋ, j, r, l.

c and ch have been retained in words quoted from Summer Institute of Linguistics publications, where they transcribe IPA [ts] and [tsh].

The rest of the transcription follows the IPA system.

TABLE OF COGNATES

	*TFTM	RISLANGKU SAHU	TAGLUNG	TUKCHE	MARPHA	SYANG	GHACHOK	MANANG
dee	*pho <sup>A</sup>			H <sub>pho</sub>	L <sub>pho</sub>	H <sub>pho</sub>	L <sub>pho</sub>	L <sup>W</sup> <sub>pho</sub>
heart	*tiŋ <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>tiŋ</sub>		H <sub>tin</sub>	H <sub>tin</sub>	H <sub>tin</sub>	L <sub>ti</sub>	L <sub>ti</sub>
fodder	*tʃhi <sup>A</sup>		L <sub>tʃhe</sub>	H <sub>chi</sub>	H <sub>tʃhi</sub>	L <sub>tʃhi</sub>	L <sub>chi</sub>	L <sub>tshi</sub>
daughter in-law	*tʃsaŋ <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>tʃsaŋ</sub>	L <sub>tʃsaŋ</sub>	H <sub>caŋ</sub>	L <sub>tʃsaŋ</sub>	H <sub>tʃsaŋ</sub>	L <sub>cō</sub>	L <sub>tʃsaŋ</sub>
food	*kan <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>kan</sub>		H <sub>kan</sub>	H <sub>kan</sub>	H <sub>kan</sub>	L <sub>kaē</sub>	L <sub>kjē</sub>
chest	*ku <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>ku</sub>	L <sub>ku</sub>	L <sub>ku</sub>	L <sub>ku</sub>	L <sub>ku</sub>	L <sub>ku</sub>	L <sub>ku</sub>
faeces	*kli <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>kli</sub>	L <sub>khli</sub>	H <sub>ki</sub>	L <sub>hli</sub>	L <sub>li</sub>	L <sub>ʃi</sub>	
hair, head	*kra <sup>A, B</sup>	L <sub>kra</sub>	L <sub>hwa</sub>	H <sub>ʃʌ</sub>	L <sub>kjʌ</sub>	L <sub>kja</sub>	L <sub>kra</sub>	L <sub>kra</sub>
cubit	*kru <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>kru</sub>	L <sub>hu</sub>	H <sub>ʃu</sub>	L <sub>ku</sub>	L <sub>ku</sub>	L <sub>kru</sub>	L <sub>kru</sub>
waist	*kre(t) <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>ke</sub>	L <sub>ke</sub>	H <sub>ʃe</sub>	L <sub>kae</sub>	L <sub>kae</sub>	L <sub>kre</sub>	L <sub>kre</sub>
ropeway	*praŋ <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>praŋ</sub>	L <sub>praŋ</sub>	H <sub>praŋ</sub>	H <sub>praŋ</sub>	L <sub>praŋ</sub>	<3 prē>	L <sub>praŋ</sub>
nose	*Na <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>na</sub>	L <sub>na</sub>	L <sub>na</sub>	L <sub>na</sub>	L <sub>na</sub>	L <sub>na</sub>	L <sub>na</sub>
hand	*Ja <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>ja</sub>	L <sub>ja</sub>	L <sub>ja</sub>	L <sub>ja</sub>	L <sub>ja</sub>	L <sub>jo</sub>	L <sub>ja</sub>
fire	*Mje <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>me</sub>	L <sub>me</sub>	H <sub>me</sub>	L <sub>mi</sub>	L <sub>mi</sub>	L <sub>mi</sub>	L <sub>mie</sub>
tail	*Me <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>me</sub>	L <sub>me</sub>	H <sub>me</sub>	L <sub>me</sub>	L <sub>me</sub>	L <sub>mi</sub>	L <sub>me</sub>
goat	*Ra <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>ra</sub>	L <sub>ra</sub>	H <sub>ra</sub>	L <sub>ra</sub>	H <sub>ra</sub>	L <sub>ra</sub>	L <sub>ra</sub>
steam	*(h)Laŋ <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>hlaŋmo</sub>	L <sub>laŋ</sub>	L <sub>hlaŋma</sub>	H <sub>laŋbo</sub>	H <sub>hlaŋma</sub>	H <sub>lōmä</sub>	
snake-god	*Lu <sup>A</sup>	L <sub>lu</sub>	L <sub>lu</sub>	H <sub>lu</sub>	H <sub>lu</sub>	H <sub>hlu</sub>		L <sub>ʃu</sub>

	*TGTM	RISLANGKU SAHU	TAGLUNG	TUKCHE	MARPHA	SYANG	GHACHOK	MANANG
belly	*pho <sup>B</sup>	2 pho	2 pho	H pho	2 pho	2 pho	2 pho	2 <sup>w</sup> pho
horse	*ta <sup>B</sup>	2 tapu	2 ta	H <sup>t</sup> ta	2 <sup>t</sup> ta	2 <sup>t</sup> ta		2 <sup>t</sup> ta
dishes	*taŋ <sup>B</sup>	2 taŋle	2 taŋ	H taŋ	2 taŋ	H taŋ	2 tō	2 taŋ
hoe	*to: / two <sup>B</sup>	2 to:	2 to:	H to	2 to	H to	2 tu	2 to
thread	*trup <sup>B</sup>	1 trup		H hrup	2 hrup	2 hrup	2 ru	2 tu
ten	*tsju <sup>B</sup>	2 ci	2 tsju	H tsju	2 tsju	H <sup>t</sup> tsju	2 cju	2 tsju
chin	*kam <sup>B</sup>	2 kam		2 <sup>kam-sa</sup> 'molar' (khoton)	2 kam	2 kam	2 kã:	? <sup>2</sup> kanta
hole	*khuŋ <sup>B</sup>	2 khuŋ			2 khuŋ	H <sup>k</sup> khū	2 khū	2 hum/huŋ
water	*kju <sup>B</sup>	2 ki	2 kju	H kju	2 kju	H kju	2 kju	2 kju
nine	*ku(:) <sup>B</sup>	2 ku	2 ku(:)	2 ku	2 ku	2 ku(:)	2 ku	2 ku
voice	*kat <sup>B</sup>	2 kat	2 ket	H kai	H kai	2 kae	1 kae	
siblings	?*(h)et <sup>B</sup>	2 thetmai	2 thet	H the	2 the	2 te	2 ti	2 the
saliva	?*(h)au <sup>B</sup>	2 tho		H tho	H tho	H to	2 tu	2 tha
eye	*Mi:(ŋ) <sup>B</sup>	2 mi:	2 mi:	H mi	2 mi	2 mi	2 mi	2 mi
fontanel	*ŋwa <sup>B</sup>	2 wa		H ŋo	2 ŋo	H ŋo		2 ŋo
bird-trap	*ŋwa <sup>(-B)</sup>	2 wa	2 wa	H ŋo	2 ŋo	H ŋo	2 ŋo	2 ŋo
tongue	*Le(:) <sup>B</sup>	2 le:	2 le	H le	2 le	H <sup>hl</sup> l(j)e	2 le	
face	*Li: <sup>B</sup>	2 li:	2 li:	H li	2 li	2 hli	2 li	
louse	*ŋjat <sup>B</sup>	2 ŋjat	2 ŋje:	H sje	2 ŋje	2 ŋje	2 se	2 ŋje

{<sup>2</sup>sjet  
<sup>1</sup>sjaɪ}

	*TGTM	RISIANGKU SAHU	TAGLUNG	TUKCHEE	MARPHA	SYANG	GHACHOK	MANANG
wife	be <sup>A</sup>			3 pe	3 pe	3 pe		3 pie
leaf	ba: <sup>A</sup>	3 pa:	3 pa:	3 pa	3 pa	3 ba	3 po	3 pa
beer-mash	bap <sup>A</sup>	3 pap			3 po	3 po	< <sup>2</sup> pa:>	3 pe
cowshed	bran <sup>A</sup>	3 pran	3 pran	3 pran	3 pran	L pran	3 prō	3 pran
skin	qi <sup>A</sup> , <qwi>	3 ti	3 ti	3 ti	3 ti	3 ti	< <sup>3</sup> tubi>	3 ti
nest	dzan <sup>A</sup>	3 tsan	3 tsan	3 can	3 tsan	3 tsan	3 cō	3 tsan
point	dzo <sup>A</sup>	3 tso		3 co	3 tso	L tso	3 co	3 tsa
lid	gar <sup>A</sup>	3 kap		3 kap	3 ko	3 ko	< <sup>2</sup> ka:>	3 kje
back	go <sup>A</sup>	3 ko	3 ko	3 ko	3 ko	3 ko	3 ko	3 ko- <sup>3</sup> te
hill	gaq <sup>A</sup>	3 kaq	3 gaq	3 kaq	3 kaq	? <sup>1</sup> kaq		3 kān
intestines	grun <sup>A</sup>	3 krun		3 kum	3 kum	3 kum		
man	mi <sup>A</sup>	3 mi:	3 mi	3 mi	3 mi	3 mi	3 mi	3 mi
forehead	nc <sup>A</sup>	3 no	3 no	3 no	3 no	3 no	3 no	
friend	ro (:) <sup>A</sup>	3 ro:	3 ro:	3 ro	3 ro	3 ro		

	*TGTW	RISLANGKU SAHU	TAGLUNG	TUKCHE	MARPHA	SYANG	GHACHOK	MANANG
one	*grik <sup>B</sup>	4 <sup>kik</sup>	4 <sup>ki</sup>	4 <sup>ti</sup>	4 <sup>kvi</sup>	4 <sup>gɛ</sup>	4 <sup>gri</sup>	4 <sup>hfi</sup>
wheat	*grwa <sup>B,A</sup>	3 <sup>wa</sup>	4 <sup>hwa</sup>	3 <sup>tc</sup> 4 <sup>fo-sim</sup>	4 <sup>ko</sup>	4 <sup>ko</sup>		4 <sup>so</sup>
eagle	*grwat <sup>B</sup>	4 <sup>kwat</sup>	2 <sup>wet</sup>	4 <sup>te</sup>	<3 <sup>tɕja</sup> >	<1 <sup>tɕja</sup> >	4 <sup>krwe</sup>	1 <sup>hka</sup>
cf. falcon	?			H <sup>ɕha</sup>	?1 <sup>khja</sup>	?2 <sup>khja</sup>		
lungs	*glwap <sup>B,A</sup>	4 <sup>klop</sup>		4 <sup>kjaw</sup>	3 <sup>ljap</sup>	L <sup>ɕjopɕja</sup>	3 <sup>ɬoba</sup>	?3 <sup>kjo:pa</sup>
place	*gla: <sup>B,A</sup>	4 <sup>kla</sup>	4 <sup>kla:</sup>	3 <sup>kja</sup>	4 <sup>lja</sup>	4 <sup>lja</sup>	3 <sup>ɬo</sup>	4 <sup>khja</sup>
snow	*glin <sup>B</sup>	4 <sup>klin</sup>	4 <sup>klin</sup>	4 <sup>kin</sup>	4 <sup>lin</sup>	lim	?2 <sup>ɬi</sup>	4 <sup>khi</sup>
work	*gjat <sup>B</sup>	4 <sup>kjat</sup>	4 <sup>ke:</sup>	4 <sup>ke</sup>	4 <sup>kje</sup>	4 <sup>ke</sup>	4 <sup>ke</sup>	4 <sup>khje</sup>
road	*gjam <sup>B</sup>	4 <sup>kjam</sup>	4 <sup>kjam</sup>	4 <sup>kjam</sup>	4 <sup>kjam</sup>	4 <sup>kjam</sup>	4 <sup>gã:/4<sup>gja:</sup></sup>	4 <sup>khjẽ</sup>
enemy	*gra <sup>B</sup>			4 <sup>ɕa</sup>	4 <sup>ɕa</sup>	L <sup>ɕa</sup>		4 <sup>hɕa</sup>
tumpline	*ɕa: <sup>B</sup>	4 <sup>ɕa:</sup>	4 <sup>ɕa:</sup>	4 <sup>ɕa</sup>	4 <sup>ɕa</sup>	4 <sup>ɕa</sup>	L <sup>ɕo</sup>	4 <sup>ɕha</sup>
house	*dim <sup>B</sup>	4 <sup>tim</sup>	4 <sup>tim</sup>	4 <sup>tim</sup>	4 <sup>tin</sup>	L <sup>dim</sup>	4 <sup>dĩ</sup>	4 <sup>thĩ</sup>
strength	*baɕ <sup>B</sup>	3 <sup>paɕcen</sup>		4 <sup>paɕ</sup>	4 <sup>paɕ</sup>	4 <sup>paɕ</sup>	4 <sup>bõ</sup>	4 <sup>phaɕ</sup>
load	*dot <sup>B</sup>	4 <sup>tot</sup>	4 <sup>toi</sup>	4 <sup>te</sup>	4 <sup>te</sup>	4 <sup>tɕe</sup>	4 <sup>ti</sup>	
cow	*me <sup>B</sup>	4 <sup>me</sup>	4 <sup>me</sup>	4 <sup>me</sup>	4 <sup>me</sup>	4 <sup>me</sup>	4 <sup>me</sup>	4 <sup>mie</sup>
garlic	*no: <sup>B</sup>	4 <sup>no:</sup>	4 <sup>no:</sup>	4 <sup>no</sup>	4 <sup>no</sup>	4 <sup>no</sup>	4 <sup>nu/?3<sup>nu</sup></sup>	4 <sup>no</sup>
thief	*jo <sup>B</sup>	4 <sup>jo</sup>	4 <sup>jo</sup>	4 <sup>jo</sup>	4 <sup>jo</sup>	4 <sup>jo</sup>	4 <sup>jo</sup>	4 <sup>jo</sup>
fold	*mar <sup>B</sup>	4 <sup>mar</sup>	4 <sup>mar</sup>	4 <sup>mar</sup>	4 <sup>mar</sup>	4 <sup>mar</sup>	4 <sup>ma:ra</sup>	4 <sup>mar</sup>



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# THE LOCAL ORAL TRADITION ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF *THIN GARAB DZONG*

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## INTRODUCTION

David Jackson, in his "Notes on the History of Se-rib and Nearby Places in the Upper Kali Gandaki" in this issue of *Kailash*, (page 195), throws light on the importance of Thin Garab Dzong, now a ruin on a hill-top half a mile southeast of Thini, but once important in the ancient Kingdom of Se-rib in the present Mustang District of Nepal.<sup>1</sup> His study is based primarily on textual material coming from outside the area itself due to the unavailability of local texts.<sup>2</sup> During my stays in Thak Khola I have collected a few notes on the local, oral tradition about the kingdom of Thin Garab Dzong. They are published here with the hope that they can serve as a supplement to David Jackson's article.<sup>3</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup> David P. Jackson, "Notes on the History of Se-rib, and Nearby Places in the Upper Kali Gandaki." Page 189 See also David P. Jackson, "The early History of Lo (Mustang) and Nagari," *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol. 4, no. 1 (1976) for further references to the history of the present Mustang District.
  - <sup>2</sup> The two most important local sources on Thin Garab Dzong which we have been able to copy are two local histories (Tib. *'bem chag*) of Thin Garab Dzong. See D. Jackson, "Notes on the History..." The original *'bem chag* of Thin Garab Dzong on which our two copies are based is said to be in Mharpha. My Thini informants claim, and my Mharpha informants admit, that at the beginning of this century some men from Mharpha took away the box with the village documents from the headman of Thini and brought it to Mharpha. Similarly there should be a *'bem chag* and other historical documents with the headmen of Shyaang, Chero, and Chimang. I have several times requested the headmen of these villages to show me their documents, but without success. It is therefore my hope that those western and Nepalese scholars who are said to have seen and even copied historical texts from Mharpha several years ago, will make them available to other scholars. It would be most interesting to go through the documents belonging to the Thaksatsae headmen council (*Dharma Panchayat*), those belonging to the various patrilineal descent groups among the three Thakaali groups, and finally the historical records (Tib. *dkar chag*) of local temples and monasteries like Smad-kyi-lha-khang of Kobang, Sku-tshab-gter-lnga near Thin Garab Dzong, and the monasteries of Lubra.
  - <sup>3</sup> The oral tradition has been recorded in cooperation with Mr. Krishnalal Thakali who assisted me for more than one year in the field. I am grateful to the Danish Research Council for the Humanities under the Royal Danish Govern-

Anthropologists should not neglect the local, oral tradition of the people they study. The value of the oral tradition for historical studies is obvious in societies without a literary tradition,<sup>4</sup> but the oral tradition is also valuable in societies with a literary tradition. In literary societies the oral tradition will be influenced to a lesser or greater degree by the literary tradition. The oral tradition can contain information which is not found in the textual material. More common, however, is the case in which the oral tradition becomes more or less a re-telling of the textual material. In this case a comparative study of the two traditions should be done in order to find out what the people who created the oral tradition found to be the most important parts of the textual material. Thus the life histories of Guru Rinpoche and Milarepa should not only be translated from the texts but should also be collected as retold by illiterate peasants and nomads.

With such comparisons we enter areas other than the historical in which the anthropologist can find the oral tradition useful. As Nancy Levine notes in her study of a Nyinba clan legend:

Aside from the genealogical material which such stories present, they also offer insight into Nyinba beliefs about the nature of their descent system, the significance of clanship in their society and the former relationship which existed between masters and their slaves. They provide detail about local religious belief, marital customs and myriad other features of daily life. Perhaps most importantly, they offer information about the nature of the relationship between descent groups and territorial units, such as villages and village sections. In addition to their evident importance as items of local folklore, they also serve as keys to the elucidation of Nyinba ideology and social structure.<sup>5</sup>

The local, oral tradition is for the local people more than their history in a restricted sense. Believed to have been handed down from the time of the ancestors the oral tradition serves to legitimate rights and duties of groups of people, between groups of people, and between groups of people and their gods. It creates and supports a static world.

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ment for having sponsored my fieldwork among the Thakaali. I would also like to thank Mr. David Jackson who read and commended an early draft of the present paper.

4 Oral tradition and myths are compared with history in a more western sense in M. Oppitz, "Myths and Facts: Reconsidering some Data concerning the Clan History of the Sherpa," *Kailash*, Vol. II, no. 1-2 (1974).

5 Nancy Levine, "The Origin of *sTod-pa*: a Nyinba Clan Legend", *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol. 4, no. 1 (1976), p. 59-60.

The myth of the Syopen Lawa festival, which was originally celebrated by the Tamhaang of the present Kobang and Tukuche Village Panchayat, tells how the ancestors of the Tamhaang promised the goddess Nari Jhyowa that thirteen virgin boys would dance before her every year.<sup>6</sup> About a decade ago, as a part of their social reforms to cut unnecessary expenditures, the Tamhaang stopped the Syopen Lawa festival during which the dance before the goddess was performed. It is said that the goddess got angry when the dance stopped and killed some yaks and one herdsman. All of this she recounted to a local "lama" in a dream. After hearing this the Tamhaang decided to reintroduce Syopen Lawa and especially the dance, but in a lesser and more inexpensive way.

The oral tradition can also serve to legitimate a past change and the world created by that change. Thus we hear in the following story how badly the last king of Thini treated his people and how they killed him. The myth not only legitimates the killing of the king but especially the transformation from one political system to another.

Finally I shall note that the oral tradition directly or indirectly gives people good advice about life, similar to the advice found in the so-called folk tales. The moral is: do not steal, do not lie, do not be greedy, do not be proud. etc. Thus we hear in the following story how a king gets killed because he is foolish, how a village gets destroyed because the villagers acted badly, and how a son gets honoured because he exposed a plot against his father. Very popular among the Tamhaang is the story about the eighteen grandfathers of Tulachan, how they neglected a warning from an old woman who had bad dreams, how they boasted, "Who can harm us? Whom do we fear?", and how they then got killed.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Surendra Gauchan and Michael Vinding, "The History of the Thakaali according to the Thakaali Tradition," *Kailash*, Vol. V, No. 2 (1977). The Thakaali are divided into three separate, endogamous groups: Tamhaang, Mhaawatan, and Yhulgasummi or Yhulgasumpa. Mhaawatan are those Thakaali whose ancestors originated from Mhasawa or Mhaarphaa, while Yhulgasummi or Yhulgasumpa is the common name for the people of the three villages Thini, Shyaang and Chimang. It shall be noted, that the words Yhulgnasummi and Yhulgasumpa are usually not used in reference.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.

## THE ORAL TRADITION

*Gyal-tang-po-chen and Gyal-punari*

Gyal-tang-po-chen<sup>8</sup> came a long, long time ago to Thini<sup>9</sup> from Kham-sung<sup>10</sup> in Tibet. He came along the way through Lo. Gyal-tang-po-chen had a third eye with which he could destroy everything when he opened that eye.<sup>11</sup>

Gyal-punari, the king of the water, was at that time the king of Thini.<sup>12</sup> When he heard that Gyal-tang-po-chen with his third eye was on his way to Thini then he flew to Omang.<sup>13</sup>

Gyal-tang-po-chen settled in Thini.<sup>14</sup> But Gyal-punari, as the king of water, stopped all the water to Thini.

Gyal-tang-po-chen stood one morning on the roof of his house looking at

8 Gyal-tang-po-chen is said to be the king who established the line of rulers at Garab Dzong. Jackson, in his "Notes on the History..." gives the phonetic spelling as Gyal-Dong-mig-jen, but notices that the written forms of the name vary tremendously in the texts. The king is also known as Gyal-tang-mig-chen. My informants also mention a king named Gyal-tho-kar-chen, whom some informants think is identical with Gyal-tang-po-chen (Gyal-tang-mig-chen), while others state that the former is the son of the latter. As can be seen, my informants all use the name Gyal-tang-po-chen or Gyal-tang-chen when they refer to the king of Thini in their stories.

9 My informants are not consistent where place names are concerned, and it is therefore difficult to find out where the different persons lived. It is especially difficult to place where Gyal-tang-po-chen lived. Most of my informants mention Garab Dzong and some mention Tsho Ghang, which is a place situated southeast of Garab Dzong and where people were living until the beginning of the century. However, there is also a house in the present Thini which is known to have been the house of a king.

10 Kham-sung is unknown to me and my informants.

11 Gyal-tang-po-chen is famous among the local people for his third eye, it is usually the first, and often the only, thing they mention, if they talk about the king. However, one learned monk told me that Gyal-tang-po-chen did not have a third eye but a big fatty tumor on his forehead.

12 According to my informants Gyal-punari was living at Bumja Ghang a little west of, but close to, the present Thini, where ruins of houses are still seen. Jiwa-chin should be the name of the father of Gyal-punari, who himself should have had two sons, Namkha Dorche from whom the members of the present patrilineal unit Jisin *phobe* descend, and Gelok Dorche who as a monk had no sons. One of my informants states that Gyal-punari was a Buddhist and that while staying in Omang (see below) he wrote many Buddhist scriptures.

13 Omang is the name of some forest fields south of the present Thini at the base of Nilgiri Himal. Omang and the other forest fields, according to some of my informants, were at that time inhabited by Gurung and Tamang who, however, fled when Gyal-tangpo-chen came to Thini.

14 It should probably be Garab Dzong here instead of Thini.

the mountainside and wondered why the water did not come. Suddenly he saw smoke at the forest side, and therefore sent his army to the forest to find out about the smoke. The army went to the forest and saw there an old man sweating near the fireplace, eating porridge of bitter buckwheat with a vegetable soup and chilli. The army returned and reported to their king: "An old man is eating the rice of gold with a soup of turquoise, and also eating the red sun. He is weeping."<sup>15</sup>

Gyal-tang-po-chen decided to send his army to the forest side to find out why the old man was crying. Therefore the army went to the old man and asked him why he was crying. The old man told the army that he was sweating, not crying.<sup>16</sup> He also told the army that it was he who had stopped the water to Thini because he had been driven away from his home, but he promised to let the water run again, if Gyal-tang-po-chen would give him "a handful of the soil, and a mirror of the sky."<sup>17</sup>

Gyal-tang-po-chen decided to make an agreement with Gyal-punari, and the two kings did therefore make an agreement. Gyal-tang-po-chen should continue as the king of Thini, but Gyal-punari should also stay there and should get whatever he wanted. Now it happened that at the time of the agreement both their wives were pregnant, so the kings agreed to become affines if possible.<sup>18</sup> Gyal-tang-po-chen

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<sup>15</sup> This sentence and the following quoted ones are remembered word for word by some of my informants. The phrase "rice of gold and soup of turquoise" for (bitter) buckwheat porridge and nettle soup is also found in "*Chyoki Rhab*", cf. Gauchan and Vinding (1977), p. 115.

<sup>16</sup> It is well known that people sweat when they eat much chilli.

<sup>17</sup> The handful of soil refers to land enough for a house, while the mirror of the sky refers to that small part of the sky which can be seen through the hole in the roof where the smoke goes out. My informants use the word "*mu*" for sky. David Jackson (personal communication) notes that the form *mu* for sky is extremely archaic for most Tibetans, but is found in some border dialects.

<sup>18</sup> Gyal-tang-po-chen got a son and Gyal-punari a daughter. They married each other. In Thini, the members of *Ghelki phobe*, that is all those persons who claim to descend patrilineally from Gyal-tang-po-chen, would formerly, once a year in memory of that marriage, bow down in respect to the members of *Jisin phobe*, i. e. all those persons who claim to descend patrilineally from Gyal-punari, just as the wife-takers have to do to the wife-givers among the Thakaali. It should be noted that this status relationship between *Ghelki phobe* and *Jisin phobe* in Thini is not permanent in a prescribed matrilineal cross-cousin marriage system. The Thakaali marriage system is a non-prescribed, bilateral cross-cousin marriage system without permanent status relations between clans. In short, a man must show respect to all the patrilineal relatives of his wife; and all the men who have received a woman patrilineally related to him have to show him respect. The respect depends on the distance of the relationship. However, a person need not show formal respect to the wife-givers of his male patrilineal relatives. The rights and obligations created by a Thakaali marriage are thus not so much between two patrilineal groups or units as such,

said, when they had reached this agreement, "Our promise shall not break as long as the river does not turn back, and as long as the crow does not turn white".<sup>19</sup>

*The sons of Gyal-tang-po-chen*

Gyal-tang-po-chen had no sons. Therefore he prayed to the gods to give him a son. The gods gave him a son, so Gyal-tang-po-chen decided to name his first son Lha-sum-pal because he came as the wish of the gods.<sup>20</sup> Gyal-tang-po-chen wanted another son and wished very much from his heart. He got a second son and named him Dha-sum-pal, because he came after a wish from his heart.<sup>21</sup> Gyal-tang-po-chen was then very happy, and wished for a third son. He got a third son and named him Ki-sum-pal, because he came after a wish in happiness.<sup>22</sup> Gyal-tang-po-chen also got a fourth son named Sya-sum-pal.<sup>23</sup> He was an illegitimate son and therefore had to live near Om Kyu below Thini.<sup>24</sup>

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but between patrilineal groups and units in the role of wife-giver, and single men role of wife-takers. This will be discussed in more detail in my work on Thakali kinship and marriage.

- <sup>19</sup> A similar oath is found in "*Bhurki Rhab*", see Gauchan and Vinding (1977), p. 162. David Jackson (personal communication) notes that the oath is also found in the newest version of the Thini '*bem chag*'.
- <sup>20</sup> Lha-sum-pal is the ancestor of the patrilineal descent group Chyuku *phobe* which is a branch of Ghelki *phobe*. My informants state that Lha-sum-pal means "wishing through/from the gods". David Jackson (personal communication) notes that Lha-sum-pal according to the newest version of the Thini '*bem chag*' is named "*lha gsum dpal*", which can be loosely translated as "glory of the three gods". *Dpal* is the equivalent of *Sri* in Sanskrit.
- <sup>21</sup> Dha-sum-pal is the ancestor of the patrilineal descent group Gyabchan *phobe* which is a branch of Ghelki *phobe*. My informants state that Dha-sum-pal means "wishing through/from the heart". David Jackson (Personal communication) notes that Dha-sum-pal, according to the newest version of the Thini '*bem chag*' is named "dramn gsum dupal", i. e. "glory of the three memories".
- <sup>22</sup> Ki-sum-pal is the ancestor of the patrilineal descent group pal *phobe* which is a branch of Ghelki *phobe*. Ki-sum-pal had, according to my informants, three sons: Su-sin, who is the ancestor of the present *lha sang dorche* lineage of Pal *phobe*; Lha-pal, who is the ancestor of the present *pai sonte* lineage of Pal *phobe*; and Lha-sang-sarki whose descendants have died out. According to my informants, Ki-sum-pal means "wishing through/from happiness." David Jackson (personal communication) notes that ki-sum-pal, according to the newest version of the Thini '*bem chag*', is named *skyid gsum dpal*, i. e. "glory to the three happinesses."
- <sup>23</sup> Sya-sum-pal is also known as Son-cho-pal. He is the ancestor of the patrilineal descent group Dhinchan *phobe* which is a branch of Ghelki *phobe* and only found in Chimang.
- <sup>24</sup> Some of my informants from Dhilchan *phobe* state Sya-sum-pal was not an illegitimate child (Th. *nyelu*).



Once this fourth son saved his father's life. Some people of Thini had decided to kill Gyal-tang-po-chen and the other members of the Ghelki *phobe*. They planned to present beer to Gyal-tang-po-chen and the other members of the Ghelki *phobe*. But Sya-sum-pal came to know about this and warned his father. Gyal-tang-po-chen became very happy and said, "We shall not hate the man who brings us good news". Then Gyal-tang-po-chen sent Sya-sum-pal to the south to establish a border post at Chimang.<sup>25</sup>

### *Sarti, Barti, and Namti Lama*

Gyal-tang-po-chen came from the north together with his personal *chheni*<sup>26</sup> named Namti Lama.<sup>27</sup> Namti Lama was the master of the rain. He settled in Thini. At that time there were two brothers in Thini named Sarti Lama<sup>28</sup> and Barti Lama.<sup>29</sup> They were the sons of Sra-laang-ghum.<sup>30</sup> Sarti Lama was the master of the soil. Barti Lama was the master of natural disasters.

<sup>25</sup> Some of my informants state that Sya-sum-pal established Chimang village; others say that there were people at Chimang when Sya-sum-pal was sent there. Today besides members of Chinchang *phobe* there are only found members of the sub-unit of Kya *phobe* known as Bharti *phobe* (see note 29). Kya *phobe* is the patrilineal unit from which the religious specialists known as *aya-lama* are exclusively recruited. (See note 30.) Kya *phobe* was invited to Chimang by the first settlers of Dhinchang *phobe*, because the latter needed the former to look after their religious ceremonies and sick people.

<sup>26</sup> *Cheni* refers to a religious specialist who performs the religious ceremonies of a special client group, for example, a family or patrilineal descent group.

<sup>27</sup> Namti Lama is the ancestor of Namti *phobe* of Kya *phobe*. There is at present (1978) only one male member of Namti *phobe* left. He has no sons, so Namti *phobe* may die out.

<sup>28</sup> Sarti Lama is the ancestor of Sarti *phobe* of Kya *phobe*. Sarte *phobe* is extinct.

<sup>29</sup> Barti Lama is the ancestor of Barti *phobe*, which at present can be found in Thini and Chimang, but not in Syhyaang.

<sup>30</sup> Sra-laang-ghum, the father of Sarti Lama and Barti Lama is, according to my informants, identical with Nhaaraa Bhunjyung (cf Tib., Na-ro bon chaung), a religious specialist of the so-called Bon religions who failed to defeat Mi-la ras-pa (Tib.; A. D. 1040-1123), when they contested their spiritual power at Mtsho-Mapham and Gangs Ti-se. See Gauchan and Vinding (1977), p. 138. The original religious specialist among the Yhulgsummi is the *aya-lama*, who is recruited exclusively from Kya *phobe*, and who claims to follow the line of Nhaaraa Bhunjyung. The *aya-lama* is closely related to the *dhom* of the Tamhaang, and the *pheyu* of the Gurung. These religious specialists do not enter into trance, and therefore cannot be classified as shamans. It should be investigated whether there is a connection between the *aya-lama* and the religious specialists of the so-called Dur-Bon, which was introduced into the Year-lung dynasty under King Gri-gum-btsan or sPu-de-gun-rgyal. See Erik Haarh, *The Yar-lun Dynasty* (Copenhagen, 1969), p. 99-125.

The work of the three lamas was complementary, so they started to discuss among themselves whose work was the most important. Sarti Lama said that without his work there would be no good soil and therefore no crops, no matter how much the two other used their power. Barti Lama said that without his work there would come natural disasters and therefore no crops, no matter how much the two others used their power. And Namti Lama said that without his work there would be no rain and therefore no crops no matter how much the two others used their power.

In this way they discussed for a long time. Finally when they could not reach an agreement they started to fight among themselves. Sarti Lama only took care of the soil in his own fields. Barti Lama only prevented the natural disasters from his own fields, and Namti Lama only sent rain to his own fields. The crops in the other fields failed and the villagers became unhappy. Barti Lama tried to stop the dispute, but the two others wanted to continue.<sup>31</sup>

#### *Bom-phobe-khe*

Bom-phobe-khe<sup>32</sup> was a high lama who came to Thini from Tibet. He settled outside Thini at the present Chang-pie *chorten*<sup>33</sup> and there did his religious practices.

Gyal-tang-po-chen was one day looking towards the north from his house when suddenly he saw smoke. He ordered his army to go towards the north and find out where the smoke came from. The army went towards the north and came to Bom phobe-khe, whom they saw during one of his religious practices. Then the army returned and told Gyal-tang-pochen that they had seen a very high lama. The king told his army to go to the lama and ask him if he was able to cure sickness. Bom-phobe-khe told the army that he could.

After Gyal-tang-po-chen had heard this he planned to test the lama. Therefore he tied a piece of wood to a very long rope and threw the wood into the fire. Then he told his army to see the lama and tell him that their king was sick and would not be able to come, but that the rope was tied to the wrist of the king. The army went to Bom-phobe-khe, who agreed to feel the pulse of the king via the rope.<sup>34</sup> After a while Bom-phobe-khe told the army that their king was extremely hot.

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<sup>31</sup> Therefore, state my informants, the descendants of Sarti Lama have died out, and the descendants of Namti Lama are in danger of doing so, while the descendants of Barti Lama are numerous.

<sup>32</sup> Bom-phobe-ke is the ancestor of Bom *phobe*, which is found in Thini and Jomsom.

<sup>33</sup> The Chang Pie *chorten* is situated a little northeast of the present Thini. A *chorten* (cf. Tib. *mehod-rten*) is a reliquary and memorial monument of Buddhism being the Tibetan form of the Indian *caitya* or *stupa*.

<sup>34</sup> Medical specialists of the Tibetan culture area usually feel the pulses of sick people in order to determine the sickness and especially the cause of the sickness.

Gyal-tang-po-chen became very surprised when he heard the answer. But again he would try the ability of the lama. Therefore a few days later he tied a big stone to the rope and threw the stone into the cold river. The army again consulted the lama, who after having felt the rope told them that their king was now extremely cold.

Gyal-tang-po-chen now realized that Bom-phobe-khe was a great lama and therefore wanted him to settle in Thini. Bom-phobe-khe, however, did not immediately accept the invitation, but threw some barley grains (Th. *karu*) into the air and said that if this was a good place to settle then in three days there should come forth some small plants of barley (Th. *chang pie*). They did come forth, and the place therefore became known as "Chang-pie". Afterwards Bom-phobe-khe became a member of the village, was included in the marriage system and became the *keawa*.<sup>35</sup> When he died the villagers made a big *chorten* at Chang-pie where he was burned.<sup>36</sup> That *chorten* is therefore known as Chang-pie *chorten*.

#### *The end of the kings of Thini: Version One*

Once there was a very big tree high up in the mountains in the eastern direction which stopped the rays of the morning sun.<sup>37</sup> Gyal tang-po-chen wanted the rays from the morning sun and therefore ordered his people to cut down the tree. The people went high up in the mountain and finally managed to cut the tree down. But they became extremely cold, and in a fit of anger, decided therefore to kill Gyal-tang-po-chen. They told Gyal-tang-po-chen to come up and see the tree, because they needed his advice on how to cut the tree into pieces. The king came and saw the tree. By cunning the people got Gyal-tang-po-chen to place his fingers in a crack in the tree which was held apart with small stop blocks. When the king had his fingers in the crack the people removed the stop blocks, and the king could not move. Then the people rolled the tree with Gyal-tang-chen over, and the king died in this way.<sup>38</sup> Since that time there have been no kings in Thini.

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35 *Keawa* refers to a special religious "post" in Thini. The *kaewa* is said to have been the personal astrologer of the king of Thini. There is only one *kaewa*, and he is always recruited from Bom *phobe*. Usually the son of the *kaewa* succeeds his father. I have copied a list giving the names of thirteen men in the line of *kaewas*.

36 The deceased *kaewas* are still burned near the same *chorten*.

37 The tree should have been situated east of Thini near Meso Khantu pass.

38 In the "*salki Rhab*" we hear that the eighteen grandfathers of Dhocho were killed in the same way; see Gauchan and Vinding (1977), p. 125. It is interesting to note that informants from Mhaarpha state that the villagers of Mhaarpha a long long time ago revolted against and killed a foolish headman who had traded some of the village land to Shyaang for a beautiful coat.

*The end of the kings of Thini: Version Two*

In the eastern direction there was a mountain top which stopped the rays of the morning sun. Gyal-tang-po-chen ordered his people to go up in the mountains and cut off the mountain top because he wanted the rays of the morning sun. The people feared Gyal-tang-po-chen very much and therefore started the work. But the people became very angry with the king, because they soon realized how impossible their task was. One old grandmother decided to kill Gyal-tang-po-chen so that the suffering of the people would come to an end. She made a plan, and told it to the men. Every morning Gyal-tang-po-chen used to stand near a big cliff at Garb Dzong to say good-bye to the people going to the mountain to work. The old grandmother would come there with her little grandchild. Suddenly she would rock the child and when the king looked at her the men would push the king down from the cliff. And so it happened according to the plan, and Gyal-tang-po-chen died. Since that time there have been no kings in Thini.

*The Jewel Cat*

Once a long, long time ago the people of the vilages around Thini<sup>39</sup> possessed a magical cat named "The Jewel Cat". Wherever it stayed it brought prosperity to the

39 We shall see below that the former villages Gungle and Dho-thaang had Gurung populations. My most learned informants say that the original people of the Thini area were *Thin mhaakdu*, which they translate as "the foundations of Thin". The six Thin are according to one of my informants: 1) *Laanglung Thin*, who are supposed to have lived at Laanglung-thang, a small plateau above the present airfield in the northeastern corner of the territory of Shyaang village. Traces of houses can be found at Laanglung-thang. One version of "The Jewel Cat" story mentions that the cat died at Laanglung-thang, but later was placed in Dho-thang, and that Laanglung thang therefore was destroyed by an earthquake. The survivors settled members of the patrilineal descent groups *Syantán phobe*, *Pasin phobe*, and *San phobe* came from Laanglung-thang, while the members of the patrilineal descent group *Saka phobe* and the patrilineal descent unit *Jisim* and *Che phobe* came from Thini or Garab Dzong. 2) *Mha-thaang Thin*, whom the informant says are the present people of Thini. 3) *Chaki Thin*, whom the informant says are the members of *Bom phobe* of Thini and Jomsom. 4) *Om Thin*, whom, according to my informant, the people of Phalak claim to be. I have been told by other informants that the people of Phalak originally came from the Manang side of Thini via Tilichhe and from there went to their present village, that their language was originally similar to that spoken in Thini today (now the language of Phalak is closer to the Tibetan dialect spoken in Kagbeni), and that the people of Phalak together with the people of Khyenkhu among the villages of Kagbeni and Muktinath Panchayats have a relatively low social status. 5) *Dho Thin*, whom the informant identifies as the villagers of Dho-thang. See Note 4. 6) *Srane Thin*, whom my informant cannot identify. It should be stressed that other informants can only give some of the names, and that I have heard Gungle Thin of Gungle (see note 41) mentioned as one of the six *Thin mhaakdu*.

people of that village. The villages therefore made an agreement among themselves that The Jewel Cat should stay for a certain period in each village by turn. Should it happen, however, that the Jewel Cat died in one of the villages, then the people of that particular village would have to pay one *paisa* for each hair on the body of The Jewel Cat as a fine.

Now it happened that The Jewel Cat died while it was living at Dho-Thang<sup>40</sup>. The people of Dho-thang became very afraid, because they knew of the fine. One man from Dho-thang therefore took the dead cat and placed it secretly one night in Gungle.<sup>41</sup>

Soon afterwards all the other villages came to know that The Jewel Cat had died at Gungle. The people of Gungle had to pay the fine and agreed to do so even though they knew that The Jewel Cat had not died in their village. So they agreed to one *paisa* for each of the hairs on the body of the The Jewel Cat, but were finally able to pay for only the hairs on one of the Jewel Cat's ears. In anger the people of Gungle made an oath. They said that in three days the village where The Jewel Cat had died should be destroyed and all its people killed. Three days later an earthquake struck Dho-thang and destroyed the village killing most of the villagers. But the people of Gungle felt sad and a little guilty. They decided therefore not to stay any longer in the valley, and migrated to Ghandrung<sup>42</sup> where their descendants can still be found. Also those people of Cho-thang who had survived the earthquake settled in Ghandrung.

#### *The history of Mhaawa*

The ancestor and ancestress of the Mhaawatan, the people of Mhaawa, were Sheli Raja and Mon-narchya-komo respectively.<sup>43</sup> Sheli Raja was a brother of

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<sup>40</sup> Dho-thang is situated in the eastern corner of Jomsom village in front of the present high school. Ruins can still be seen there.

<sup>41</sup> Gungle is situated a little above the first tributary of the Kali Gandaki when walking on the southerastern side of the river from Jomsom to Kagbeni. Traces of a village can still be found there according to informants.

<sup>42</sup> Ghandrung is a large Gurung village situated northeast of Pokhara. Don Messerschmidt has written several articles on the Gurungs of that area. One of my informants mentions that many years ago an old Gurung woman died at Ghandrung. Before she died she said that her ancestors had come from Dho-thang and that a big pot with gold coins could be found there. Many Gurungs and Thakaalis are said to have tried without success to find the pot.

<sup>43</sup> According to one informant Sheli Raja and Mon-narchya-komo are not mentioned in any written sources. They are, however, mentioned in old, traditional songs.

Hansa Raja<sup>4</sup>. They had come to Thak Khola from Jumla.<sup>45</sup>

Once there was a conflict between the two brothers. Sheli Raja went to Dzong<sup>46</sup> and established his village there. Hansa Raja sent his army to attack Sheli Raja. At that time the people of Dzong were busy threshing the six-rowed barley. The army of Hansa Raja saw the people from a distance and thought that they were all soldiers practising warfare. They saw the *kar kyung*<sup>47</sup> and the sticks with the small flags<sup>48</sup> and thought that they were war-ready soldiers. The army of Hansa Raja therefore became very afraid and fled away to Jumla.

Sheli Raja had a daughter named Jhomo,<sup>49</sup> who was given in marriage to one of the sons of Gyal-tang-mi-chen of Sumbo Garab Dzong.<sup>50</sup> Sheli Raja gave a very big dowry including one full basket of gold.

Jhomo and the son of Gyal-tang-mi-chen had only one daughter. She was given in marriage to a prince of Jumla, because Gyal-tang-mi-chen and the father of the prince of Jumla were good friends. Gyal-tang-mi-chen gave a very big dowry to his son's daughter, including one full *pathi* of gold, one full *pathi* of silver and also twenty-one soldiers for her protection.

44 Hansa Raja is the famous (but legendary?) king or prince who came from Jumla to Thak Khola and from whom many of the Thakaali claim descent. See Gauchan and Vinding (1977). A few new items can be added here. *Pumpar quakpa*, "The line of the king", is a sub-clan of Sherchan and found only in Chhero. Sonam-pumpar is the ancestor, and his story is similar to that of Hansa Raja. He came from Sinjaa near present Jumla to Thak Khola where he married Nhima Rani, a princess from Thini. The king of Thini gave as a dowry all the land from Tea-kyu (near Dumphaa-kyu) in the north, to the Lhaki forest at the foot of the plateau of Chimang in the south. Sonam-pumpar and its descendants had however to pay tax to Thini. My informant adds that the king of Thini also gave as a dowry the goddess Lha Chhuring Gyalmo. That goddess is described in Gauchan and Vinding (1977), p. 112. Lha Chhuring Gyalmo is said to have an elder sister named Tho-rimpoche who still can be found in Thini.

45 According to this information Mhawatan descend from some Jumla people. There are, however, more informants from Mhaarpha who state that they descend from the people of Garab Dzong.

46 Dzong, also known as Tamang, is a relatively big plateau north of the present Mhaarpha. There are more houses there which belong to different patrilineal descent groups.

47 According to my informant *kar-kyung* is the Mhaawatan word for chan (Th.) which is a white stone structure on the roof and believed to be the place where the protecting god of the house resides.

48 Small wooden sticks with small pieces of coloured cloth are placed in the *chan*.

49 *Jhomo* (cf. Tib., *jomo*) is usually used as a term of address for nuns.

50 Sumbo is the Tibetan name for Thini. My informants do not know which one of the sons Jhomo was given in marriage to. Again information which confirms what many different Thakaali have told me, namely, that the present three endogamous

The people of Thaksatsae started to make trouble when Gyal-tang-mi-chen passed away. In order to settle the border trouble seven men of Thini, seven men of Mharpha and seven men of Thaksatsae met near the present border.<sup>51</sup> The men of Thaksatsae were under the supervision of Ngima Rani. The first round of negotiations failed, but an agreement was reached during a second round of negotiations.<sup>52</sup>

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Thakaali groups formerly could marry each other.

- 51 The present border between Yhulnghaa and Thaksatsae is disputed. It should be stressed that the map in Gauchan and Vinding (1977) which gives the border between Thaksatsae (on the map named Thasaang) and Yhulnghaa at Dhon-kyu is based on and represents the views of the people of Thaksatsae. However, the people of Yhulnghaa, that is, Mhaawatan and Yhulgsummi, strongly deny that Dhon-kyu is the border and claim that the border is further south approximately opposite Mhaarshyaang-kyu at a place named Dhocho Khang. I apologize to the people of Yhulnghaa that their view concerning the disputed was not represented in my former paper and stress that all boundaries mentioned in this paper are approximate and thus not authoritative.
- 52 Some informants from Mharpha mention that there exist documents of border agreements from A. D. 1623 (=1680 B. S.) and A. D. 1854 (= 1911 B. S.).

NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF *SE-RIB*, AND NEARBY PLACES  
IN THE UPPER KALI GANDAKI VALLEY

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE THAK KHOLA

Historical studies on the lands in Nepal's upper Kali Gandaki valley, or Thak Khola, are at last beginning to bear fruit. Until recently, only a few scholars had been able to visit the many temples, caves and ruins in the area. And of those past visitors, almost none was able to turn up first-rate historical materials. Hardly any documents seemed to have survived; those that remained were notoriously difficult to find and use. Even now the shortage of local records remains acute for anyone studying the uppermost regions of Thak Khola. For me, the most productive approach so far has been to look for helpful references in textual materials coming from outside the area itself.<sup>1</sup>

For this study I have drawn mainly from Tibetan-language documents, most of which have survived in outlying districts of Nepal and Tibet. Although rather sparse, these sources do allow for some interesting discoveries. Among other things, they tell us that there formerly existed in Upper Thak Khola a distinct land and people called *Se-rib*. Here I would like to present some of my findings on the history of *Se-rib* in particular, and of Upper Thak Khola in general.

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<sup>1</sup> There have been a few exceptions: I have been able to use several documents found in Upper Thak Khola for the following study. A small number of local documents from Thini in Panchagaon, for example, have recently become available. These documents were discovered by the Danish anthropologist, Michael Vinding, through the assistance of Mr. Krishna Lal Thakali (pages 181-93). Mr. Vinding generously entrusted his only copies of those texts to me for several months thus giving me the initial impetus to set down the following historical notes. I and my wife visited ThakKhola in the summer of 1977, and at that time Mr. Vinding and Krishna Lal Thakali assisted us in many ways. Truly, the present study would not have been written without their encouragement.

I would also like to take this opportunity to mention the great help and hospitality extended to me in the summer of 1977 by Ms. Sidney Schuler, an American anthropologist working in the areas near Muktinath. She has also succeeded in turning up some interesting local documents (for example, see below p. 197) and has like Mr. Vinding been recording the oral historical traditions of the area.



Thak Khola, a modern geographical name for one of the main regions of the upper Kali Gandaki, has no exactly equivalent name in the Tibetan-language sources.<sup>2</sup> "Thak Khola" literally designates the river valley inhabited or dominated by the Thak (Thakali) people. Cartographers, however, have also used the name to indicate the whole valley below Mustangbhot, including Baragaon, down to the true Thakali-inhabited areas.

This widened, conventionalized usage of "Thak Khola" has been adopted also by writers describing the area,<sup>3</sup> but it should be remembered that in both cases the name is merely a general designation for a large, heterogeneous area that includes many non-Thakali communities.

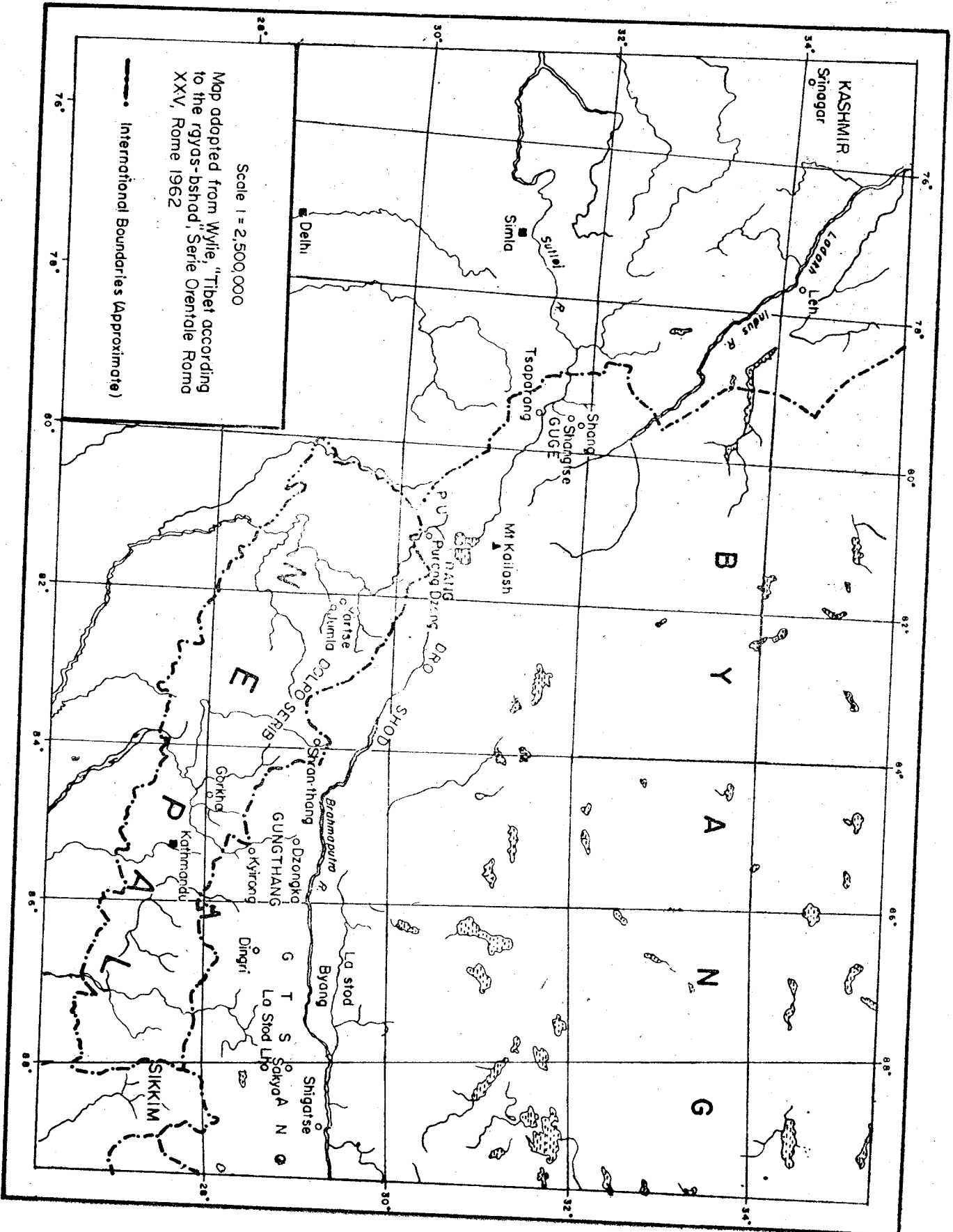
Thak Khola can be divided basically into two parts: to the south are the main Thakali areas, Thaksatsae and Panchagaon, while to the north lies the area of Baragaon.<sup>4</sup> As is the case with the "Thak Khola", so with "Baragaon" there is no exactly equivalent name for its whole area to be found in the Tibetan-language sources. The name Baragaon (the twelve villages) may have been devised to suit some general and administrative end, for the area itself encompasses more than one ethnic group. In fact, the name seems to be a catch-all for whatever lies north of Panchayatgaon, south of Lo (Mustangbhot), east of Dolpo, and west of Nyeshang (Manangbhot).

2 The name "Thak" seems to have derived from the neighboring Tibetan dialects. See D. L. Snellgrove, *Himalayan Pilgrimage* (Oxford: 1961) p. 174, note a. "Thakali" is often used by outsiders to designate all Thakali-language speakers in the Kali Gandaki region, including both Thaksatsae and Panchagaon. But the Thakali of Thak-satsae (or Tamhaang, as they call themselves) deny that the name Thak or Thakali can rightly be applied to anyone but themselves. See M. Vinding and Surendra Gauchan, "The History of the Thakaali according to the Thakaali Tradition", *Kailash*, V (1977), 97.

The name Thak is perhaps very old, but I have not noticed it in the oldest sources. It is met with in the biography of the lama Sangs-rgyas-bzang-po (b. 1715?) found by Prof. G. Tucci ("Preliminary Report on Two Scientific Expeditions in Nepal", *Serie Orientale Roma* (Roma: Is M.E.O., 1956), X, 19). From Prof. Tucci's citation it appears that "Thak phyogs" referred to the district of Thaksatsae. This reference cannot date before the late 1600's or early 1700's because Sangs-rgyas-bzang-po enlarged the monastery of Sku-tshab-gter-lnga after its founding by Orgyan-dpal-bzang, a disciple of Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje (D. Snellgrove, *op. cit.* p. 186). Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje was the discoverer of the five treasures of Sku-tshab-gter-lnga, and was born in 1615. He was a disciple of the well-known Gter-ston, 'Ja'-tshon-snying-po effigies at Samye. (Khetsun another source we learn that he discovered *sku-tshab* (1585-1656), and from another source we learn that he discovered *sku-tshab* effigies at Samye. (Khetsun Sangpo, *Biographical Dictionary of Tibet* (Dharmasala: 1973)-), III, 818-820), Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje passed away in 1672.

3 See, for example, C. von Furer-Haimendorf, *Himalayan Traders* (London, John Murray, 1975) pp. 134, 136

4 *Ibid.* See also Vinding and Gauchan. *op. cit.*, pp. 97-101.



Most of Thak Khola's inhabitants are ethnically set apart from the Bhotias of Lo and Tibet. The Thakalis, for example, speak a language which is not intelligible to speakers of Western Tibetan dialects. The exceptions to this are found in Baragaon, where some villages are found whose inhabitants speak dialects of Tibetan. This heterogeneous makeup of Baragaon indicates the area's status as an ethnic interface, and poses a puzzle for the reconstruction of the region's history. But whereas ethnic differences are found among the communities of Baragaon, the area's culture is much more homogeneous: Thak Khola has for centuries been a part of the Tibetan cultural world. And although the two main Thakali areas to the south have recently managed to shake off a great deal of their heavily Tibetanized cultural past, Baragaon as a whole continues to be dominated by Tibetan culture.

The forerunner of Tibetan culture may have first penetrated Thak Khola during the time of Tibet's political expansion in the 7th century A. D. Political control of the area, however, was probably not very secure, and the main impetus to the establishment of Tibetan culture there was most likely the introduction of Tibetan religious traditions. Buddhism and Bon, as the recognized vehicles for the transmission of learning and high culture became dominating cultural forces throughout Thak Khola. The adoption of these religions opened a way for Tibetan culture to strongly influence the area's non-Bhotias: practice of these religions required the reading of Tibetan texts and hence the learning of Tibetan language. One direct result of this was that literary Tibetan remained until recently the medium for written communication in Thak Khola.

#### EARLY REFERENCES TO SE-RIB

Our sketch of Upper Thak Khola's past begins with a number of references to a principality called Se-rib which formerly existed in the area of Baragaon and, seemingly, in adjoining areas to the south. The earliest such references from Tibetan sources are found in the oldest of Tibetan historical writings, the *Tun-huang Annals*.<sup>5</sup> From the beginning we must be aware that these early references do not give many details about the places and events of which they speak. For that reason alone, some may question whether the Se-rib of the *Tun-huang Annals* can be identified as the land in the Kali Gandaki region called Se-rib by other sources. The nature of our materials precludes any concrete proof, but circumstantial evidence suggests that they both are the same.

The *Tun-huang Annals* record the period of Tibet's early political expansion, the time of the Yarlung Dynasty. During the 7th century, many of the regions that later became parts of Tibet were ethnically distinct tribes or nations. Spreading across

<sup>5</sup> Some Chinese sources, however, appear to be earlier than the Tun Huang Annal's references. See below, n. 8.

most of what is now West Tibet, for example there was an independent kingdom or confederation called Zhang-Zhung, a land with its own language and customs. During the reign of Srong-btsan-sgam-po (d. 649/650) this land, together with other areas on Tibet's western frontiers, was conquered.<sup>6</sup> The conquests of this period also included Lo,<sup>7</sup> and may have also brought the adjoining regions, including a land to the south called Se-rib, under Tibetan rule. Se-rib was a state south-west of Tibet, known to the Chinese as Hsi-li and possessing a climate warmer than that of Tibet.<sup>8</sup> Before its conquest, Se-rib, together with Lo, may have been somehow affiliated with Zhang-zhung; in later Bon-po geography these areas were thought to have been in Lower or Eastern Zhang-zhung (*zhang zhung smad*).<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, in all the sources for Se-rib's early history, Se-rib and Lo are referred to as distinct entities, and there is no mention of any connection with Zhang-zhung.

For a time Se-rib remained under the rule of Tibet, but following the death of the Tibetan king Dus-srong in A. D. 705, Se-rib revolted.<sup>10</sup> In the year 709 its king was captured and it had to resubmit to Tibet.<sup>11</sup> In connection with the above events,

<sup>6</sup> J. Bacot, F. W. Thomas, and Ch. Toussaint, *Documents de Touen-houang relatifs a l'histoire du Tibet* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1940-1946), p. 29.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p. 30 See also A. H. Francke, *Antiquities of Indian Tibet* (N. Delhi: S. Chand, 1972), II, 83.

<sup>8</sup> R. A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972.), p. 60. Paul Pelliot, in p. 42, n. 3 of *Documents de Touen-houang relatifs a l'histoire du Tibet* (by J. Bacot, et al.) suggested that the Se-rib of the early annals is to be identified with the Si-li (*hsi-li*) mentioned in early Chinese sources. Pelliot, in an article entitled "Autour d'une traduction sanscrite du Tao t'ou "king" (*T'oung-Pao*) XIII (1912), 357-358), had already gathered together a number of references to Si-li. Translating from the *Fa yuan tchou lin* he wrote: "Du royaume de T'ou-fan en allant vers le territoire au sud des-monts neigeux: (Himalaya), on arrive aux royaumes de K'iu-lou-to (Kuluta), Si-li, etc." In a footnote on the land of Si-li, Pelliot added the following: "Si-li est trouvé dans le Sin ta'ng chou (ch. 2211, f. 12r.), ou il est dit a d'abord que le royaume de Tchang-k'ieou-pa est au sud-ouest du Si-li, puis que, en 646, le roi de Tchang-k'ieou-pa envoya une ambassade à cause de celle envoyé par le Si-li. Suit enfin une courte notice sur le Si-li, qui est au sud-ouest des T'ou;fan (Tibetains), compte 50000 feux, at dont les villes sont en majeure partie au bord de torrents; les hommes nouent une étoffe sur leur tête; les femmes tressent leur cheveux et portent des jupons courts; les morts sont abandonnés dans la campagne; le deuil se porte en noir, et dure un an; politiquement, le pays dépend des T'ou-fan. Une notice analogue se trouve dans le ch. 190 du *T'ong t'ieu* (f. 16 v. de l'ed de 1747). Si-li represente \* S'it (ou S'ir)-lip (ou lap). Il semble qu'il s'agisse d'un royaume tibétain."

<sup>9</sup> Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims, *zhang bod gangs ri'i lajongsfar g. yung drung bon gyi dgon deb* (found in vol. II of *G. yung drung bon gyi bstan 'byung*) (Dolanji, H. P.: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre, 1972), pp. 568,583.

<sup>10</sup> Bacot et al. *op. cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

Hugh Richardson has surmised that the Se-rib in question was located in the Mustang district of Nepal.<sup>12</sup> I think it is possible to be even more specific, by locating Se-rib in the Kali-Gandaki valley south of Lo.

After the time of the *Tun-huang Annals*, the next period referred to in other documents begins in the 11th century. This was long after the collapse of the Tibetan Empire ruled by the Yarlung kings, and was a period of political consolidation within each region. The general name for west Tibet was now Ngari (*mnga, ris*); both Se-rib and Lo were included within its eastern-most limits. During this and the following century none of the principalities in the west seem to have been dominant for long. Alliances must have constantly shifted to accommodate the rise of new powers and the decline of the old. The times were rife with wars and skirmishes; old royal lines came to an end and new noble houses asserted themselves in their place. Ngari was also feeling pressures from without. In what is now the far-western borderlands of Nepal, for example, the Indo-European Khasa tribes were establishing themselves, and from there extending their influence into Purang and Guge.<sup>13</sup> Other parts of Ngari came into contact with Turkic peoples<sup>14</sup> The widespread political fluctuations and their economic-consequences probably encouraged the movement of people from one place to another, and thus chances for cultural interchange were increased. Some people may have had little choice in their leaving home, while others, notably scholars or men of religion, apparently travelled widely of their own accord

During the 11th and the following centuries many Buddhist and Bon-po religious figures made journeys to Se-rib and Lo. One of the first Buddhists whose visit to Se-rib is recorded in our sources is La-stod Dmar-po, a contemporary of Mar-pa lo-tsa-ba (1012-1099). His biography appears in the well-known 15th-century work, the *Blue Annals*, and was no doubt drawn from an earlier source.<sup>15</sup> The mention there of Se-rib and Lo together, which seems to attribute to them a separate but comparable status likewise reflects a situation antedating the time of the *Blue Annals*' compilation.<sup>16</sup>

#### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BON RELIGION IN SE-RIB

More amply documented are the early visits to Se-rib by Bon-po masters. By the

12 H. E. Richardson, "Ministers of the Tibetan Kingdom", *Tibet Journal* (Dharmasala), II 16.

13 G. Tucci, "Preliminary Report...", p. 108 f.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 105. The Qarluqs are also mentioned in G. N. Roerich, *The Blue Annals* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976), p. 1029.

15 G. N. Roerich, *op. cit.*, p. 1029. I located this reference using T. V. Wylie's "A place-name index to George N. Roerich's translation of the Blue Annals", *Serie Orientale Roma*, XV (1957).

16 The *Blue Annals* i. e., the Deb ther sngon po of 'Gos lo-tsa-ba Gzhon-nu-dpal (1392-1481), was composed between the years 1476 and 1478. During this period

11th and 12th centuries Bon religion had become adapted, both in form and content, to its perennial counterpart, Tibetan Buddhism. From their centers in La-stod, and later in Gtsang proper, Bon-po masters travelled to various parts of Ngari, where they were well received. Perhaps these figures, as representatives of a newly reorganized Bon, were welcomed by the local leaders in Ngari for some of the same reasons that a new breed of Buddhist masters had gained favor. They may have been seen, for example, as an advance over the degeneracy into which the older religious forms are said to have declined.<sup>17</sup> In any case, one of the earliest Bon-po lamas mentioned as having gone to Se-rib was said to have been invited to Ngari by the rulers of Purang, Shangs-pa, and Se-rib. According to a history of the Bru family lineage of Bon-po lamas, the Bru lama, Khyung-gi-rgyal-mtshan (uncle of Bru-rje G. yung-drung-bla-ma, b. 1040) visited Ngari upon just such a multiple invitation.<sup>18</sup>

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Se-rib was dominated by Lo.

- <sup>17</sup> The main figure initiating the transformation of Bon in Gtsang during this period was Gshen-chen Klu-dga' (996 ?-1035?) He was one of the greatest Bonpo "treasure revealers". Through his rediscovered texts and the other teaching lines descending from him, his influence on later Bonpo doctrine and practice was very great. Representing the Buddhists in Ngari during this period of renewal was the great translator, Rin-chen-bzang-po, whose importance is well known. According to later Buddhist tradition, Rin-chen-bzang-po's main adversary was a figure called Sangs-rgyas-skar-rgyal or Klu-skar-rgyal, who some Buddhists identify as being none other than Gshen-chen Klud-ga'. See E. Gene Smith, Introduction to *Kongtrul's Encyclopedia of Indo-Tibetan Culture* (Śatapiṭaka Series, Vol. 80), p. 6, n. 13.

Strangely enough, Sangs-rgyas-skar-rgyal is said by one 17th-century Tibetan scholar to have been active in the "valley of Bse-rib" (*bse rib kyi rong*). This is found in an extract from the *Mgon po chos 'byung* reprinted in *Collected Biographical Material about Lo-chen Rin-chen-bzang-po and his Subsequent Reembodiments* (Rdo rje-tshe-brtan: Delhi, 1977), pp. 227f. This *Mgon po chos 'byung* is almost certainly the work *Dpal rdo rje nag po chen po'i zab mo'i chos skor nams byung ba'i tshul legs par bshad pa bstan bsrung chos kun gsal bai nyin byed*, composed in 1641 by A-mes-zhabs Nga-dbang-kun-dga'-bod-nams (b. 1597). I once briefly examined a 227 folia manuscript of this book in Nepal. Unfortunately, the work has not yet become available through a modern reprint. A-mes-zhabs was the 27th Sakya throne-holder, and was the preceptor of the Lo ruler, Bsam-'grub-rab-brtan. He was thus probably familiar with the land of Se-rib. His use of the spelling bse-rib may have been influenced by his discussion of the Zhang-zhung word 'bse' earlier in the work (p. 204).

A figure whom A-mes-zhabs tentatively identifies as Sangs-rgyas-skar-rgyal is mentioned in the biographies of Rin-chen-bzang-po (*Collected Biographical Material* . . . . .), pp. 86-87, 256.

- <sup>18</sup> Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims, *Sangs rgyas g. yung drung bon gyi bstan pa'i byung ba brjod pa'i legs bshad bskal pa bzang po'i mgrin rgyan*, (abbreviated title: *G. yung drung bon gyi bstan byung?*) (Dolanji, H. P. :Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre, 1972), II (266).

Bon-po sources, furthermore, lead us to believe that prior to this period Bon had not been established in Se-rib. Even though Se-rib had apparently been a significant part of Ngari for centuries, these early Bon-pos considered themselves to be newcomers there. Bon was already established in Lo, but Se-rib was a new area in which to spread their faith. We cannot be sure what forms of religion preceded these Bon-po teachers, but the visit of La-stod Dmar-po, was an instance of contemporary Buddhist influence. It seems likely that Buddhism had reached the area long before. Also, local, "indigenous" beliefs must have been in evidence, although these are not to be confused with the newly restructured Bon mentioned above.

Yet if the spread of Bon into the area is indicative of a wider range of cultural penetrations, perhaps this was the period in which Se-rib became thoroughly immersed in the civilization of Tibet. For probably political and economic reasons, the people of Se-rib began to minimize the differences that existed between them and the Bhotias to the north. There were, after all, major ethnic differences, just as there nowadays continue to be. Even after centuries of Tibetan cultural influence the people of Se-rib have not completely lost their somehow alien identity in the eyes of their Bhotia neighbors.

Unlike many of Tibet's early conquests in the western Tibetan borderlands, Se-rib was not a natural part of ethnic Greater Tibet (*bod chen*). During Tibet's early expansion the ethnic differences from region to region were often great; the strong regional identities that persist even now have descended in part from such early differences. But among the ancestors of modern Tibetans the differences were not so great that political and cultural similarities could not override them and, on the basis of underlying similarities, establish a more inclusive Tibetan national identity. In the case of Se-rib, however, the shared ethnic substratum was almost unrecognizable and Se-rib did not quickly become identified with Tibet. It was the view of a great 15th century Mustangi scholar, for instance, that the people of Se-rib were the progeny of an Indic people. The people of Se-rib, he held, were descendants of the Pandavas, while the other important bordering people (*mon*), the Khasa of West Nepal, were descendants of the Kaurava or Kirata.<sup>19</sup>

The establishment of Bon in Se-rib, according to Bon-po texts that have survived in Dolpo, was the work of the lama Klu-brag-pa Bkra-shis-rgyal-mtshan. He was but one of many members of the Ya-ngal Bon-po family lineage who were important in the upper Kali Gandaki region and adjoining areas. The first lama from this family to visit the general area was Klu-brag-pa's father, Yang-ston (an abbreviation for

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On the Shangs-pa see below, p. 23 A Bonpo temple Survived in Shang-rtse until the recent past. See Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims, *Zhang bod gangs ri'i . . . .*, p. 567.

<sup>19</sup> Bsod-nams-lhun-grob. Glo-bo mkhan-chen (1456-1532), *Mi'i dbang po mgon po rgyal mtshan gyi dri lan*, *Collected Works* (New Delhi: Ngawang Tobgay, 1977), III, 19. For references to the Kirāta see, G. Tucci, *Preliminary Report.*, pp. 74, 103.

him and received teachings from him. Another of Yang-ston's students was Bru-ston Nyi-ma-rgyal-mtshan.

Yang-ston married for the first time at the age of 26 (1103 ?) but for the space of eleven years he had no offspring. After that he took a second wife, who likewise did not give birth for several years. The mother of his sons was ultimately one Gnyag-mo Bkra-shis-lcam seemingly his third wife.<sup>25</sup> Yango-ston passed away in his 65th year, i. e. at age 64 (1141?).<sup>26</sup> Although he is not said to have visited Se-rib or spread Bon there, he did journey to Lo and stay there for a while, thus pointing the way for the activities of his family's following generations.

Of Yang-ston's three children, two were boys. The eldest, Dam-pa 'bum-rje, was (like his father) a main transmitter of the *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud*,<sup>27</sup> but in a history of Se-rib he is definitely eclipsed by his younger brother. This second son of Yang-ston was to become known as Klu-brag-pa (the Man of Klu-brag), the founder of Bon in Se-rib.<sup>28</sup> From his father's dates we can guess that he was born between the years 1117 and 1135. One source reveals the information that he was thirty years old in a serpent year (1149 or 1161),<sup>29</sup> and thus based on his father's life history we can conclude that Klu-brag-pa was born in one of the two hog years 1149 and 1131. If we decide on the latter date he would have been a maximum thirteen or so years Dam-pa 'bum-rje's junior. This seems preferable to the earlier date, 1119, in which case he would have been only a year or two younger than Dam-pa 'bum-rje.<sup>30</sup>

In his youth Klu-brag-pa studied with his father and also with Rma Lcam-me (son of Rma-ston Srol-'dzin). Then, probably following the death of his father (in 1141 ?) he went to G. yas-ru dben-sa-kha in Gtsang to study with the Bru lama, Nyi-ma rgyal-mtshan, one of his father's old disciples. There he also heard instructions from his older brother, receiving the *Rdzogs chen snyan brgyud* from him. There Klu-brag-pa took a wife, who bore him a son called Sngags-pa.<sup>31</sup> Unfortunately, that wife died within three years, and after her death he went to Purang to study medicine for three

25 *Sources ...*, p. 460.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 464.2

27 For brief biographies of Dam-pa-'bum-rje, see *Sources...* p. 464ff. and Dpal-ldan tshul-khrims, *op. cit.*, II 342f.

28 On Klu-brag-pa see D. L. Snellgrove, *The Nine Ways of Bon* (London: 1967), p. 4, n. 4.

Brief biographies of Klu-brag-pa are given in *Sources...*, p. 468 f. and in Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims, *op. cit.* II, 343-345.

29 *Sources ...*, p. 468.8.

30 This date is preferable because later Klu-brag-pa receives religious instructions from his presumably much older brother. See below.

31 According to Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims' version (*op. cit.* II 344.2) he had three children.



years. Then, at age thirty in a serpent year (1161, the iron-serpent year?), he returned to Gtsang where he received monastic ordination from Gshen-ston Nam-mkha'rgyal-mtshan.

The most famous scene of Klu-brag-pa's activities is a place called Klu-brag (Nāga Crag), a small settlement in an eastern side valley of the Kali Gandaki, a few miles south of Kagbeni in southern Baragaon. The two sources available to me conflict concerning whether he went to Klu-brag before or after his ordination.<sup>32</sup> According to a recent work by the late Bon-po historian Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims he went to Klu-brag afterward. There he bound the local demons to oaths and received possession of the nearby land from them. The demons continued to serve him by watering his fields. An older source gives more details about Klu-brag-pa's activities in the area.<sup>33</sup> In nearby Kag (Kagbeni) an old childless couple divided up their possessions and offered them to two local priests. What happened next, according to my understanding of the difficult passage, was that after the old husband gave his land and house to the lama (Klu-brag-pa) and the wife gave her share to a younger priest, the two had a disagreement over the remainder of their property. It was expropriated (?) and turned over for the establishment of a monastic group (?). By sending out hunters throughout the land, and on account of lama Klu-brag-pa's magical efforts, within one year fifty monks were gathered together, and the "lamp of the (Bon-po) doctrine" became established in Se-rib from that time. Our understanding of Klu-brag-pa's career and the above events will probably be much improved when the historical record (*dkar chag*) of Lubra monastery becomes available.

Klu-brag-pa received tantric empowerments from Sman-gong-ba (b. 1123) after his ordination. He also studied with the Bon-po master Gshen-ston Ye-shes-blo-gros, who founded a monastery in 1137.<sup>34</sup> These data, together with the chronology established for Klu-brag-pa's father, support D. Snellgrove's opinion that Klu-brag-pa was studying as a young man in the mid-12th century.<sup>35</sup> Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims went one step further and linked the founding of Lubra monastery (klu brag dgon pa) to Klu-brag-pa himself, something that is not explicitly stated in any older sources available to me.<sup>36</sup> But again, in light of the above dates, his assigning of Lubra monastery's founding to the mid-12th century seems justified, if in fact Klu-brag-pa founded it.

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32 Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims *op. cit.* II, 344. 5 has him going to Klu-brag after being ordained at age thirty in Gtsang. In *Sources...*, p. 468, however the narrative's order is reversed.

33 *Sources...*, p. 468.5.

34 On Gshen-ston Ye-shes-blo gros, see S. G. Karmay, *op. cit.* p. 132. n. 2.

35 D. L. Snellgrove, *Nine Ways of Bon*, p. 4, n. 4.

36 Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims, *Zhang bod gangs ri'i...*, p. 618.

Klu-brag-pa passed away at the age of eighty-four, which according to our earlier calculations would have been in the year 1215. His family line continued, particularly in Dolpo where it was an important line of Bon-po priests.<sup>37</sup>

The last Bon-po master of this period whose life we shall take up is Bru-chen Tshul-khrims-rgyal-mtshan (1239 ?-1302 ?). His dates pose a problem because the two sources on his life available to me do not agree. Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims states that he was born in the earth-hog year of the fourth sixty-year cycle, which would be A. D. 1239.<sup>38</sup> A biography appearing in *Sources for History of Bon*, however, states simply that he was born in a hog year. This second source (p. 452) moreover gives his year of death as the wood-tiger year (1254 or 1314). But Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims tells us that he passed away at age sixty-three which would be another tiger year, the water tiger (1302). This latter date seems preferable in light of other evidence.

Bru-chen Tshul-khrims-rgyal-mtshan's greatest teacher was the famous master, 'Gro-mgon 'A-zha Blo-gros-rgyal mtsgan (1198-1263). Bru-chen received ordination from him at the age of twelve. This would have been possible in the year 1251, but not in the year 1203, which would have been Bru-chen's twelfth year had he been born in the iron-hog year (1191). In his early twenties Bru-chen received many teachings from four eminent masters of Bon who were gathered together: 'Gro-mgon 'A-zha, Bla-ma Dar-ma (=Bru-ston 'Dul-ba-rgyal-mtshan), Rma-ston Shes-rab-sengge, and Dbyil-ston Dpon-gsas Khyung-rgod-rtsal (b. 1175). If we follow the chronology for these figures put forward in the *Sangs rgyas kyi bsatn rtsis ngo mtshar nor bu'i phreng ba* of Nyi-ma-bstan-'dzin,<sup>39</sup> this must have occurred just before 'Gron-mgon 'A-zha passed away, and at a time when Dbyil-ston was almost ninety years old ! Obviously, more work will be needed to sort out the dates of these early Bonpo masters.

At the age of twenty-four, Bru-chen was sent to various districts in the western borderlands of Tibet, including Lo, Dolpo, Se-rin, Purang, Limi, and the northern nomadic grazing lands.<sup>40</sup> He stayed for nine years, residing in such places as Ti-snyug, the seat of Snyel-ston 'Khrul-med-zhig-po (in Lower Lo ?); Gdong-skya, a Bonpo shrine in Lo: Byi-ba-mkhar; and Lubra. He was invited to the last place, Lubra, by one Slob-spon Rgyal-mtshan-'bum who was his first disciple from Se-rib. The working of the passage mentioning this gives the decided impression that Lubra was a part of Se-rib:<sup>41</sup>

37 A brief account of this family lineage is given in Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims, *G. yung drung bon...*, II, 471-474.

38 *Sources...*, p. 439.

39 For a description of this, the fundamental chronological work of the Bonpo tradition, see S. G. Karmay, *op. cit.*, p. xvii, n. 1.

40 Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims, *G. yung drung bon...*, II, 470. 2.

41 *Sources...*, p. 442. 7.

*Klu brag tu spyan drangs nas | se rib tu slob bu la snga ba  
slob dpon rgyal mtshan 'bum gyis dbang byin bka' 'grel zhus|*

“Having been invited to Lubra, his first disciple in Se-rib, the master Rgyal-mtshan-'bum, requested empowerments, blessings, and explanatory teachings”.

Bru-chen went back to G. yas-ru dben-sa-kha in Gtsang when he was thirty-three years old. But he later returned to the Kali Gandaki region and had a great number of disciples in all the surrounding areas. In one place he sums up his accomplishments, and he mentions especially his deeds in Lo, Dolpo, the northern (nomadic) region, and Se-rib.<sup>42</sup> He says about the latter in particular that because in Se-rib there is the foundation of the Doctrine, he established a religious center at Pag-king (pron. Pag ling or Pa ling).<sup>43</sup> A village by this name now exists in the general vicinity of Kagbeni below the village of Phalak, just above the river-bed.<sup>44</sup>

Bru-chen's biography gives some interesting information about the geographical distribution of his disciples: from Lo there were 198; from Se-rib, 246; from Dolpo, 99; and from Purang and the nomadic regions together, there were 133. Thus we see that the greatest number of his disciples was from Se-rib. And if his followings were more or less commensurate to the populations in each region, we could surmise that the populations of Se-rib and Lo were of roughly similar sizes.<sup>45</sup>

\* \* \*

Se-rib was thus the name of a large region encompassing many villages in the Kali Gandaki valley south of Lo. Among its lands were the areas of Lubra and Kagbeni. There are several other villages in modern Baragaon and Panchgaon that are no more than ten miles from Lubra and Kagbeni. Most likely these, too, belonged to Se-rib. Downstream from the Lubra valley, for example, there was a strategic strong-

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 451f.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 452.1.

<sup>44</sup> Ms. Sidney Schuler, personal communication. The village of Sangda is also called Pha-ling. See D. L. Snellgrove, *Himalayan Pilgrimage*, p. 162.

<sup>45</sup> From *Sources...*, p. 455, the following chart is extracted: *blo dol 'brog pa se rib dang bzhi po'i khongs na...*

	Blo-bo	Se-rib	Dol-po	Pu-rang	'Brog-pa
btsun-pa	81	68	27	7	.33
Jo-sgom	69	150	21	24	
gsang-sngags	48	28	51		69
	198	246	99		133

hold near the present village of Thini. Unless it were the last outpost of a separate principality to the south, which seems unlikely, it would have been an important center of political power in Se-rib.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF GA-RAB DZONG NEAR THINI

Indeed there are many local legends concerning the former importance of the the old ruined fortress near Thini. There is little doubt that the fort, called Ga-rab Dzong (*Dga' rab rdzong*), once dominated the whole of Panchgaon. The modern inhabitants of the nearby villages of Thini, Shyang, and Chimtan assert that their ancestors lived together in the fort and that they were the original Thakali-speaking group in the region.<sup>46</sup> In one version of the Thakali myth of origin a princess from this fort marries Hangsa Raja, the progenitor of all Thakalis.<sup>47</sup> A part of this myth is mentioned in the modern retelling of the *Dhimchan Rhab*, a Thakali clan history.<sup>48</sup> Other legends about the old fort and its past rulers are also current. Until recently, however, these legends were only known from their oral recounting; there were no documents available that told of the "history" of Ga-rab Dzong. The older recordings of Thakali clan histories, for instance, do not mention the rulers of the fort, while only the newly reconstructed Sherchan history by Narendra Gauehan does.<sup>49</sup> But last year two versions of the Thini Ga-rab Dzong local history (*bem chag*) were brought to light. Although perhaps only fragmentary remains of an earlier document, or a local attempt at reconstructing a lost document, these texts are nevertheless our only written record so far of Panchgaon's history or legends.

Of the two texts, one is definitely older, being written on a long scroll of paper and stored rolled up in a bamboo tube.<sup>50</sup> It is written in Tibetan characters and basically in a Western Tibetan dialect. It contains many words from local dialects, and that together with the fact that its spelling is very corrupt, makes the text difficult to decipher. The original manuscript remains in the possession of the Thini village headman. The second text is an edited version of the above, and was probably written by a monk since it shows a somewhat higher degree of literacy and Buddhist education.<sup>51</sup> The original of this second text is kept by a local monk. We owe our knowledge of these two texts

46 M. Vinding and S. Gauchan, *op. cit.*, p. 137, n. 14.

47 *Ibid.*, p. 136, n. 13. See also C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, *op. cit.*, p. 139 f.

48 M. Vinding and S. Gauchan, *op. cit.*, p. 136 f.

49 This is the above mentioned *Dhimchan Rhab*, presented by M. Vinding and S. Gauchan, *op. cit.* pp. 133-147.

50 M. Vinding, personal communication.

51 This second, newer text bears the title: *'Thing yul la rgyal gdong mig can gyi lo rgyus*, "The History of King Gyal-dong-mig-cen in the land of Thini".

to the industry and generosity of Michael Vinding and Krishna Lal Thakali.<sup>52</sup>

Neither of these texts can be older than the 17th century since they mention the Dga-'ldan-pho-brang government of Tibet, which was established in 1642. Local tradition states that there was once an even longer and more detailed village history of Thini that was removed to another village some time ago. This would probably be the oldest such local history, and may yet turn up.

The two available texts deal mainly with the legends of the great founding king, Gyal-dong-mig-jen (approximate phonetic spelling, the written forms of which vary tremendously), who established the line of rulers at Ga-rab Dzong. Amidst the tales of legendary origin it is interesting to note that one of the great founding king's acts was to invite Bon-po priests to the area. In addition, towards the end of the older text there is a brief account of the founding of Lubra monastery.<sup>53</sup> It says that Yang-ston, the lama from Dolpo, asked the leader of Ga-rab Dzong and his ministers to give him the area of Lubra, and that they consented to give it. This would imply that the actual monastery at Lubra was founded by someone of the Ya-ngal family who had gone to Dol-po after the time of Klu-brag-pa. But it also could be a garbled reference to Klu-brag-pa, who was also from the Ya-ngal line. Until more details are known, the only observation we can make is that according to this tradition, the rural ruler of Ga-rab Dzong controlled the land around Lubra at the time that its first Bonpo monastery was founded. From that we can tentatively conclude that at an early time Ga-rab Dzong ruled part of Se-rib, since Lubra is clearly indicated elsewhere as being part of Se-rib.

Perhaps, even more interesting is a passage that immediately precedes the above. It is a traditional list of the past tributaries of Ga-rab Dzong, which enumerates what each territory's annual tribute was. Although this passage is too difficult for me to give an exact translation, it is clear that the tributaries mentioned include Marpa, Phalag, Dangkar Dzong, Gyiling, Sangda, and Lubra.<sup>54</sup> It also mentions a Nye-shang, and

<sup>52</sup> See above, n. 1.

<sup>53</sup> This passage with which nothing is found to correspond in the newer text, is as follows: (p. 8)

*'dol pa'i bla ma yang 'don skyis/ gsum pa ga rab dzong kyis dgen pa khor spon  
rnams la/kl 'dra yi sa cha r nang pa zhus gsung pas/ spyi ma gra pa'i bla ma bsam te  
phul pa yin/*

My edited version of this passage:

*dol po'i bla ma yang ston gyis/ sum pa dga 'rab rdzong kyi rgan pa 'khor dpon  
rnams la/ klu brag gi sa cha gnang bar zhu gsungs pas/ phyi mar grwa pa'i bla ma  
(ong) bsams te phul ba yin/*

<sup>54</sup> The transcribed text of this passage (older text. p. 8) reads: *de nas mar pa mtshong  
pon rgyal mo'i/ rgyal po rin po che rtso rdzad pa'i ga' rab dzong gis mi ser rnams la  
gang pa zhus te/lo sha phul sho zer de/ spun dri gro tsugs pa yin/dgar 'rab dzong ma  
yin pas/ span 'dri bu yin pas/ lo sha pa 'khal 12 thod/ pha leg dang 'dang dkar dzong*

possibly the Muktinath area. If the above passages represent genuine traces of a period when the rulers of Ga-rab Dzong ruled over Baragaon and Panchgaon, it would seem that the old ruined fort south-west of Thini was once the political center of Se-rib. The above two texts, however, are not to be thought of as proper historical sources. Their owners admit that they are not the old, original local histories, and we have no way of verifying contents. Nevertheless, the existence of the kingdom of Se-rib and its one-time rule from Ga-rab Dzong may account for the special high status accorded to the residents of Thini in the social order of upper Thak Khola. There persists among the people of Baragaon, for example, the opinion that the people of Thini are the equals of their highest social group.<sup>55</sup> The importance of Ga-rab is specifically mentioned in the oral traditions of the Muktinath area. A master of lore from that place asserts that in the past the main powers in the Kali Gandaki headwaters were Lo and Thini (Ga-rab Dzong). According to local tradition, lesser nobles who ruled fortified villages such as at Dzong, Dangkar Dzong, and Sa-mar had to align themselves with respect to the two great powers.<sup>56</sup> It remains for future research to uncover more textual materials in support of these traditions.

#### CONQUEST OF SE-RIB AND LO BY THE GUNG-THANG PRINCIPALITY

The political power that once existed in Se-rib and Thak Khola seems to have declined in the 13th and 14th centuries, in the face of intensified expansion into the area by adjoining states. Throughout much of the 13th and 14th centuries the main political powers thereabouts were Jumla to the west, and Gung-thang to the north-east. Both of these principalities had their ups and downs, but during the following periods in the area's political history their names appear again and again. In Tibetan sources the name of the early kingdom in the vicinity of modern Jumla was Ya-tshe, a fact we see noted in the biography of the wide-ranging master, Tshe-dbang-nor-bu (1668-1755).<sup>57</sup>

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*yi mi la lo sha ba 'khal dguthob/ 'gyi ling de ba la lo re reng la g.yag ci la dung ma ci thobs/ bsang'ta yul nas lo re re la ra 'dre pho rgyad rgyad thob/ gnye shang chur skyib yul na lo re la ma gyang cob gyad dang/ lham brot hor 'da ma zhi thobs/ (chur skyibs=a corruption of chu-mig ?)*

In the newer text (p 5f):

*de nas mar pa tshong bon rgyal mo mi yis rgyal po rin po che la shad phul zer te/ spun gro tshug pa yin/ ma bu byung lu de yin/ lo sha bo khal bcu gnyis yin/ phen lag gi lo sha bo khal dgu yin/ gyi lung nas lo sha re la sag dung ma 1, 1 thob/ sag mda, nas ra dre bo rgyad bryad thob/ nye shang nas ma rkyang bco bryad thob/ klu grag nas som po'i ri ga nas tag ma (p. 6) stags pa'i legs drus ka gsum dang dzam bu bags dang gang thob/*

55 C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

56 S. Schuler, personal communication.

57 Rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug, Brag-dkar-rta-so sprul-sku, *Dpal rig 'dzin chen po*

Ya-tshe had two great periods of expansion during these centuries: one in the early to mid-13th century and the second in the mid-14th century. In both cases its encroachments into the borderlands of Nagri were beaten back by forces led by Gung-thang.<sup>58</sup>

During the last half of the 13th century the kings of Gung-thang, owing to their close ties to Sakya and hence to the Mongols came to rule from their capital at Dzongka the thirteen hundred-groups (brgya tsho) of Ngari. These thirteen administrative districts were:

The four basic communities:

1. Gung-thang
2. Skyid-rong (Kyirong)
3. Nub-ri
4. Ma-zhang Rgya-tshang-pa

The four districts carved out by the sword:

(*ral gris bcad pa'i sde bzhi*)

5. Glo-stod (Upper Lo)
6. Glo-smad (Lower Lo)
7. Dol gru-bzhi (Dolpo)
8. Bzang-brgyud-pa

The communities which respectfully submitted:

9. Gnyos
10. Dngul
11. Phu-ri-mtsho-'khor
12. Gtsang-so Zang-tsha-ba

The consort's valley:

13. Pha-bzhi-chags<sup>59</sup>

The importance of Gung-thang during this period in the eyes of the Sakya rulers of Tibet is indicated by the fact that when the young Gung-thang king, 'Bum-lde-mgon (1253-1280) returned from Sakya after visiting his uncle 'Phags-pa, he was accompanied to Ngari by an army headed by the famous official, Shākya-bzang-po.<sup>60</sup> Gung-thang's major conquests during this time were no doubt aided by the armies of Sakya, and I think that those conquests, which included "Lower Lo", probably embraced much or all of Se-rib.

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*rdo rje tshe dbang nor bu'i zhabs kyi rnam par thar pa'i cha shas brjod pa ngo mtshar dad pa'i rol mtsho* (ms., Library of the Gangtok Institute of Tibetology), p. 91b.

<sup>58</sup> For a summary of these events see D. P. Jackson, "The Early History of Lo (Mustang) and Ngari", *Congributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol. 4 (1976), no 1.

<sup>59</sup> Tshe-dbang-nor-bu, Kah-thog Rig-'dzin (1698-1755), *Bod rje lha btsad po'i gdung rabs mnga' ris smad mang yul gung thang du ji ltar byung ba'i tshul deb gter dwangs*

It was in this period that Gung-thang rulers founded the Mu-khun-srin Fort in the Muktinath area, which was considered part of Lower Lo. Mention of this is found in Tshe-dbang-nor-bu's history of the Gung-thang kings, where there is presented a list of forts controlled by Gung-thang during the late 13th century. The relevant lines and their translation are as follows

*ta mang se mon kha gnon du/*  
*glo smad mu khun srin rdzong brtsegs/*  
 "For the domination of the Ta-mang Se Mon,  
 The Mu-khun Demon Fort of Lower Lo was built".<sup>61</sup>

The name Mu-khun is almost certainly a reference to Muktinath. Tshe-dbang-nor-bu, the compiler of the above list, writes elsewhere: "I went to 'Hundred-and-some Springs' the renowned holy spot revered by both Hindus and Buddhists, which is called Mu-mu-ni-se-ṭa or Mu-khun-kṣe-ṭa (Tibetan gloss *sgrol ba'i zhing* 'the field of liberation') in the *Hevajra mūlatantra*, and is called Mu-ṭa-ṣaṭa in border dialects.<sup>62</sup> It is a place where a natural fire burns on rock and water, and where dakinis mass together like clouds."<sup>63</sup> A pilgrim's guide to Muktinath gives the Tibetanized Sanskrit

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*shel 'phrul gyi me long* (hereafter referred to as the "Gung thang gdung rabs") ms., library of Dujom Rinpoche), p. 5b. The Tibetan text reads:

*de'ang brgya tsho bcu gsum gyi grangs ni/*  
*gung thang skyid grong nub ri gsum/*  
*ma zhang rgya tshang pa dang bzhi/*  
*rtsa ba'i mi sde rnams bzhi yin/*  
*glo stod glo smad dol gru bzhi/*  
*bzang brgyud pa dang rnam pa bzhi/*  
*ral gris bcad pa'i sde bzhi yin/*  
*gnyos dngul gnyis dang phu ri mtsho 'khor dang/*  
*gtsang so zang tsha ba ste rnam pa bzhi/*  
*gus pas btud pa'i mi sde yin/*  
*pha bzhi chags kyi brgya skor gcig/*  
*lcam gyi ljongs la byung ba ste/*  
*brgya tsho bou gsum de ltar grags/*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5a.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, This passage, together with the full list of forts under Gung-thang, is given in D. P. Jackson, , *op. cit.*, n. 37.

<sup>62</sup> Could *mu ṭa ṣa ṭa* and not *smon thang* have been the origin of the name "Mustang"?

<sup>63</sup> Rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug, Brag-dkar-rta-so sprul-sku, *op. cit.*, p. 90a. On Mu-mu-ni see M. A. Stein, *Kalhana's Rāja-taranginī, A Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir* (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1961), vol. I, P. 98, verse 332, footnote: "... Mummuni is named between the *Tuhkharas* and the *Bhauttas*." Bsod-nams-lhun-grub, the Glo-bo mkhan-chen, discusses the name Mummuni, and says that it is mentioned in the (*Kye rdor rgyud*) *brtag pa gnyis pa*, the *Chos rgyal ma chen mo* (a versified eulogy of Sakya Pandita), and the biography of



equivalent: Mu-gu-ji-tar (my phonetic approximation of *dmu gu byi ltar*).<sup>64</sup> The word Mu-khun seems best linked to the root *muc* of Sanskrit (Tib--*sgrol*) just as the *mukti* of the present name Muktinath is. Thus Mu-khun probably derives from *moksana* by way of *mokhana*.

It may never be ascertainable exactly who the Ta-mang Se Mon people or peoples were, but there is little doubt that they included the non-Bhotias near the southern boundary of Lo. The name "Tamang" (*Tamhaang*) is used even today by some Thakalis when referring to themselves. The word "Se" probably derives from the old name "Se-rib", and it is still the case that non-Tibetan (Se-rib) dialects in Upper Thak Khola are called *se skad* by neighboring Bhotias. "Mon" is a general name used by Tibetans for their southern, non-Bhotia neighbors,<sup>65</sup> although here it may go together with Se, indicating a specific Mon (i. e., the Mon of Se or Se-rib). Taken together, it seems very probable that those names imply the domination of Thak Khola by Gung-thang during the late 13th century.

Before Gung-thang extended its sway over the area, Lo and Se-rib were already part of the Tibetan cultural and religious world. Politically however, the area was for the moment either independent or under the control of a neighbor such as Ya-tshe. Only this would explain the need for Gung-thang to conquer Lo and Dolpo by the sword.<sup>66</sup> Gung-thang's control over its conquests may have been precarious at first. Hence the need to establish strategic and defensible fortresses. If the present population of Baragaon

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Glo-bo lo-tsa-ba Shes rab-rin-chen. Glo-bo mkhan-chen takes the position that Mummuni is a country in S. E. India, and further more cites the *Jam dpal zhal lung gi, grel ba* in support of that (*Collected Works*, III, 18).

*Muktiksetra* is the main name of the shrine according to modern Hindu Sanskrit writings. A work containing references from the Puranas and Tantras in connection with Muktinath and nearby places is mentioned by G. Tucci *Preliminary Report* . . . , p. 11, n. 1

<sup>64</sup> *Gnas chen chu mig brgya rtsa'i dang cong zhi sku tshab gter lnga mu li rin chen gangs gu ru gsang phug sna* (sic) *ris jo bo sogs kyi bka* (sic) *chag dngul dkar me long* (appears as the second of eight *Rare Tibetan Texts from Nepal*), (Dolanji, H. P.: Tashi Dorje, 1976), p. 62f.

<sup>65</sup> Interestingly, the term *mon* is also used by the Thakalis to designate their own southern neighbors. See M. Vinding and S. Gauchan, *op. cit.* p. 100.

<sup>66</sup> See above, p. 18 and n. 59. Ya-tshe's influence in the area is perhaps indicated by a reference stating that the Tibetan Buddhist faction they favored, the 'Bri-gung order, was established in the Muktinath area in the time of Darma-rgyal-mtshan (mid-13th century), a contemporary of the fifth 'Bri-gung abbot, Gcung-rin-po-che Rdo-rje grags-pa (1210-1278). See Dkon-mchog-bstan-'dzin-chos-kyi-blo-gros, *Gangs ri chen po ti se dang mtsho chen ma dros pa bcas kyi sngon byung lo rgyus mdor bsdus su brjod pa'i rab byed shel dkar me long* (ms., ff. 66), p. 31a-31b. Perhaps Ya-tshe, and certainly the 'Bri-gung-pas were driven out of the upper Kali Gandaki basin by the Sakya/Gung-thang alliance.

is an indication of the situation in times past, Kag would have been the lowest and most exposed extension of the Bhotia peoples. It would need to be fortified and garrisoned. But even if non-Tibetan peoples were Kag's main inhabitants at the time because of its strategic value a military outpost stationed with Bhotias may have been established there. During this time Tibetan nobles probably became established as the leaders in Baragaon, if they were not already. They derived their authority from their ties with Gung-thang, and some noble families may have lasted to become local rulers for the kings of Lo. Under Gung-thang's domination perhaps Dzong or Kag became a more important center of local rule, replacing the Thini overlordship.

During the early 1300's the Mongols continued to endorse the Gung-thang king's rule over the thirteen districts of Eastern Ngari. The Mongols and also Sakya, however, were now declining, and this must have caused the influence of their Gung-thang proteges to diminish. Meanwhile, Gung-thang's old rival Ya-tshe was waxing strong. This second period of expansion for Ya-tshe (early Jumla) reached its peak in the middle of the 14th century, and at this time Purang and Guge broke away from Gung-thang, as Upper and Lower Lo also seem to have done. Then, c. 1370, the power of the Malla kings of Ya-tshe rapidly disintegrated, and the vacuum they left was filled by a resurgent Gung-thang.<sup>67</sup>

#### DOMINATION OF SE-RIB BY SHES-RAB-BLA-MA AND HIS DESCENDANTS AT LO

During the last decades of the 14th century a general of Gung-thang named Shes-rab-bla-ma engineered, near the end of his life, the reconquest of Upper and Lower Lo.<sup>68</sup> Perhaps a few years later (late 1380's) his younger of two sons, Chos-skyong-'bum, led the retaking of Purang. As a reward for the latter deed, the Gung-thang king Bsod-nams-lde (1371-1404) gave him the rule over Lo and Dolpo.<sup>69</sup> Under this family the power of Lo, the nominal tributary of Gung-thang, became established in the Kali Gandaki valley and throughout Ngari.

Already at the time of Chos-skyong-'bum's reconquest of Purang, Lo seems to have been the *de facto* possession of that family, because Shes-rab-bla-ma led its reconquest. Although his son Chos-skyong-'bum is mentioned in Tshe-dbang-nor-bu's history of the Gung-thang kings,<sup>70</sup> our knowledge of Shes-rab-bla-ma himself is derived solely from a very terse passage in the *Molla of Tsarang*. It says that the conquest

67 For a summary of these events, see D. P. Jackson, *op. cit.*

68 *Molla of Tsarang* (ms.), pp. 8a-8b. This work will be described in more detail in a future study.

69 Tshe-dbang-nor-bu, Kah-thog Rig-'dzin, *Gung thang gdung rabs* (ms., Dujom Rinpoche), p. 16a.

70 *Ibid.*

of Upper and Lower Lo was accomplished through Shes-rab-bla-ma's cooperation with (a people or country named) Zhang. But it adds that the two allies fought after the conquest of Lo, and Shes-rab-bla-ma emerged the victor.<sup>71</sup> Clearly, in order to understand this period of the area's history we must identify the Zhang.

We know that Shes-rab-bla-ma's family supplied high officials to the court of the Gung-thang king.<sup>72</sup> Known as "the lineage of Jir-ma the Myriarch" (*khri dpon jir mai' rjgs*), they acted as district governors in Ngari, for example, near Mt. Kailash.<sup>73</sup> It would not be surprising if the Zhang were also located in a nearby part of Ngari. In northern Guge, for instance, there is in fact a district still called Shang, and it is possible that this place was the seat of the bygone rulers called "Zhang" in sources from Lo. Nowadays Shang is a small hamlet where there are found two ruined fortresses, one of which is "of enormous size"<sup>74</sup> One day's journey south-east from Shang there is located the village of Shang-tse, formerly the summer residence of the Tsaparang (Guge) district governor. In Shangtse also there are found huge ruins of an old castle, and these ruins are still known as "the king's palace" (*rgyal po'i mkhar*).<sup>75</sup> Shang and Shang-tse were thus formerly major centers of power in Guge, and their kings, in later times at least, were the kings of Guge. The identification of Shang with Zhang, although by no means certain, is thus one possibility. Also, Sarat Chandra Das (*Tibetan-English Dictionary*) apparently identifies Zhang with Shangs, "a district of Tsang situated to the north of Tashilunpo."

Glo-bo mkhan-chen Bsod-nams-lhung-grub (1456-1532) writes in his autobiography that the *zhang-pa* was still quite powerful in the early 15th century, even in Lo. The permission of the *zhang-pa* was required for the appointment of an early Sa-skyapa

71 *Molla of Tsarang*, pp. 8a-8b: *zhung shes rab bla ma zhes bya ba'i bla zhang gnyis kyi phrin las la dbang las la dbang* (8b) *bsgyur/ sku tshe smad la glo bo stod smad kyi sa la dbang bsgyur/ lugs gnyis kyi bka' khrim bcas pa/zhang shes gnyis, knon pa las/ phas rgol shis pa'i g. yul ngo bcom ste dpa'bo'i g. yul las rguyal bar mdzad/*

72 See, for example, G. Tucci, *Deb t'er dmar po gsar ma-Tibetan Chronicles* (Roma: 1971), p. 170. (P. 39a of the Tibetan' text.) See also Bsod-nams-lhun-grub, Glo-bo mkhan-chen, *Rje btsun bla ma'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar rgya mtsho* (ms.), p. 1b.

73 Tshe-dbang-nor-bu, Kah-thog Rig-'dzin, *Gung thang gdung rabs* (ms. Dujom Rinpoche) pp. 14a, 16a. On p. 14a there is told the story of how a great gold nugget was discovered at Drang-lung ring-mo, near the eastern slopes of Mt. Kailash, and how the Lho-lde khri-dpon, Byir-ma (p. 16a spelled *jir-ma*), offered it to the Gung-thang king, Bkra-shis-lde (enthroned 1352)

74 F. A. Peter, "Glossary of Place Names in Western Tibet", *Tibet Journal*, 2 (1977), 26. See also G. Tucci and E. Gherzi, *Chronaca della missione scientifica Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale* (1933) (Roma; 1934), p. 262.

75 F. A. Peter, *op. cit.* p. 26; Tucci and Gherzi, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

abbot in Lo.<sup>76</sup> The kings of Guge, as the rulers elsewhere in Tibet, did take an active interest in local religious affairs. One king of Guge is mentioned in the biography of Ngor-chen as having invited Ngor-chen from Lo to Purang. This king, however, was probably not the *zhang-pa* mentioned above, being perhaps a decade later.<sup>77</sup>

By the 1430's the authority of Zhang was definitely eclipsed in Eastern Ngari, and the rulers of Lo, descendants of Shes-rab-bla ma, became the most powerful rulers. A-ma-dpal, the son of Chos-skyong-bum and nephew of Jir-ma the Myriarch, from his capital Smon-thang in Upper Lo controlled a vast territory in Ngari. His authority extended as far away as Guge and Purang. He and his sons appointed and removed officials to the Kar-dum Fort, a fort designed to dominate Purang and Guge.<sup>78</sup> Indeed,

76 Bsod-nams-lhun-grub, *Glo-bo mkhan-chen, Rje btsun bla ma'i* . . . , p. 6a: At that time (c. 1430?) the Zhang-pa people controlled the old Namgyal monastery in Lo. A-ma-dpal, at Ngor-chen's request, asked the Zhang-pa to allow 'Gig mkhan-po Ratna-Sbri, formerly of Rgyang 'Bum-mo-che, to act as monastic leader there.

77 Sangs-rgyas-phun-tshogs, *Rgyal ba rdo rje 'chang kun dga' bzang po'i rnam par thar pa legs bshad chu blo'i, dus pa'i rgya mtsho yon tan yid bzhin nor bu'i 'byung gnas* (published together with the *Kye rdor rnam bshad* of the Sde-dge Yab-chen) (N. Delhi: Trayang and Jamyang Samten, 1976), p. 23. There we learn the following:

The Bzhi-sde noble monk, Nam-rtse (Nam-mkha'-rtse-mo ?), and the king of Guge, Khri Nam-mkha'i-dbang-po sent Guge mkhan-chen Chos-nyid-seng-ge and his followers to Lo for the purpose of inviting Ngor-chen to Purang. The Guge king later took monastic ordination from Ngor-chen (p. 240). Cf. G. Tucci, *Preliminary Report* . . . , p. 19.

It may have been that sometime prior to Ngor-chen's second visit to Lo (1436) the Guge or Zhang rulers were reluctant to let followers of Ngor-chen become established as head of the old Namgyal monastery, where they traditionally had some influence. Rulers sometimes manipulated such religious appointments to political advantage, as, for example, the Ladakh king Seng-ge-rnam-rgyal did after conquering Guge. (See G. Tucci, "Tibetan Notes", *HJAS*, XII (1949), 486). The Guge kings in general were known as supporters of the new and rising Gelug order. King Blo-bzang-rab-brtan, under the influence of Tsong-kha-pa's student, Ngag-dbang-grags pa, seems to have been a strong supporter of the Gelugpas during this time (*Ibid.*, 483 ff. See also his *Preliminary Report*, p. 19, n. 2.). Curiously, a religious notable by the name of Ngag-dbang-grags-pa is recorded to have advised Ngor-chen against undertaking his first journey to Ngari, after he himself had returned from there (Bsod-nams-lhun-grub *Glo-bo mkhan-chen, Rje btsun bla ma'i* . . . , p. 2a.) By the time of Ngor-chen's second visit, however, A-ma-dpal had rebuilt the Namgyal monastery (Sangs-rgyas-phun-tshogs, *op. cit.*, p. 238.6), and he and his sons were at about the peak of their power. A-ma-dpal and his son A-mgon-bzangpo were extremely devoted to Ngor-chen, and are said to have been somewhat antagonistic toward the Gelugpas (Tucci, *Deb t'er* . . . , p. 170),

78 Bstan-'dzin-ras-pa, *Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug rje btsun bstan 'dzin ras pa'i rnam*

he seems to have been the myriarch (*khri dpon*) of Ngari,<sup>79</sup> which the *Tsarang Molla* asserts.<sup>80</sup> One of the officials thus appointed was Khro-bo-skyabs-pa, an ancestor of the lama, Bstan-dzin-ras-pa. That official's brother was sent to Guge as a local governor, while Khro-bo-skyabs-pa himself was made the fort-commander of Dzong, near Muktinath in Baragaon.<sup>81</sup> We can be quite sure that under A-ma-dpal and his immediate successors, Lo's territories included Se-rib. His son, A-mgon-bazang-po, maintained the preeminent position of Lo, and is said to have ruled over many peoples of different languages and races.<sup>82</sup>

Although the political power of Se-rib was greatly diminished in the new order, the economic and strategic importance of Thak Khola remained. For as long as trade moved regularly between Western Nepal and Tibet, the Kali Gandaki valley would be one of its principal routes.<sup>83</sup> The valley's northern passes leading to Tibet are relatively low, and the lower part of the river valley connects with easy routes through the hills of Nepal to the plains of India. Thak Khola is situated at the half-way point for traffic on this route. Having come that far, the traders would exchange what they had brought for what was available from the opposite direction. It was the highest point that traders from the lowlands were likely to visit; for traders from Tibet and the high borderlands it was the end of their world: the bottom.

For centuries the lower limit of Tibetan culture in Thak Khola has been near Kobang, south of Tukche.<sup>84</sup> There is a temple in that area, aptly named in Tibetan "Temple of the Bottom" (*smad kyi lha khang*) which Tibetan Buddhists still consider the boundary of their own religion and culture. Further south, and lower in the valley, were the lands of hot-land diseases and Hindu "heretics". Many were afraid to go much

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*thar mdzad pa nyun ngu gcig* (xylograph, Dolpo blocks), p. 1b: A-ma-dpal summons one of Bstan-dzin-ras-pa's ancestors from Guge. p. 2a: The Lo ruler appoints a member of the same family to the leadership of the Kar-dum fort at Guge-Purang. This fort was one of Gung-thang's strongholds in the late 13th century. See Jackson, *op. cit.*, n. 37.

<sup>79</sup> According to the *Rgya bod yig tshang* (=Shri-bhūtibhadra, *Rgya bod gyi yig tshang mkhas pa dga' byed chen mo'i dkar chab*) (ms., East Asian Library, U. W.), P. 168b, there was a myriarchy (*khri bskor*) in Ngari that was composed of Lo, Dolpo and Ljongs (=Dzong-ka) ? Ljongs-dga' is the name given by Bla-ma Btsan-po for Dzong-ka. See T. V. Wylie, *The geography of Tibet according to the 'Dzam-gling-rgyas-bshad* (Roma: 1962). (The more usual form of the Gung-thang capital's name is *rdzong--dkar*, "white fort"). This occurrence of Ngari as one of the thirteen myriarchies is mentioned by G. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (Roma: 1949), I, 681.

<sup>80</sup> *Molla of Tsarang*, p. 9a.

<sup>81</sup> Bstan-dzin-ras-pa. *op. cit.*, p. 2a.

<sup>82</sup> *Molla of Tsarang*, p. 10a, "*skad rigs mi gcig pa mang po la dbang bsgyur.*"

<sup>83</sup> See C. von Furer-Haimendorf, *op. cit.* pp. 182—184.

<sup>84</sup> See D. L. Snellgrove, *Himalayan Pilgrimage*, p. 181.

further. A temple has marked the cultural boundary at Kopang since at least the 1400's. A story that has survived from the 15th century suggests that Kopang was the approximate limit of Tibetan culture during Ngor-chen's third visit to Lo (1446-7). At the bottom end of the valley in the "middle joint (?)" (*bar tshigs*) of Lo, there lived a man named Bsam-gtan-'od-zer. Although appearing to be a merchant selling barm for the brewing of local beer, he was actually a "hidden yogin", highly adept in vajrayana meditations. It came to Ngor-chen's attention during his last visit to Lo that this local master continuously practiced a meditation from the Cakrasamvara cycle that he had received from the Newari tantric master, Mahābodhi. Recognizing that this teaching had never been translated and spread in Tibet, Ngor-chen resolved to receive and preserve its teaching line.

Ngor-chen coached Bsam-gtan-'od-zer on the ways of conferring the initiations. On the night before the initiations were to begin, however, the unassuming local meditator lost his nerve and fled. He ran to what was probably the furthest he could go without leaving his cultural area: "the low end of the valley, the 'Bottom Temple', (*rong gting smad lha khang*).<sup>85</sup>

#### DECLINE OF THE POSITION OF LO

That temple at the bottom of Tibetanized Thak Khola probably also marked the main trading spot for caravaners and merchants during the 15th and 16th centuries. We see it mentioned, for example, in the biography of Bsod-nams-blo-gros (1516-1581) ("Merit Intellect" of Snellgrove's *Four Lamas of Dolpo*). In c. 1544, following a time of conflict, the crops of Upper Lo were lost to the *Mon* (Jumla or another bordering state), and there was a great famine. Many of Bsod-nams-blo-gros' relatives had been killed by a rival group in Upper Lo and most of the surviving relations had fled to Dzong, near Muktinath. In order to save his parents from starvation he made plans to plant crops. Then, collecting the gold restitution from the killers of his relatives, he went to the "Bottom Temple". There he spent half of the gold on rice and barley, and the other half on buckwheat.<sup>86</sup> Thus that temple marked the spot for buying both things from the lowlands (rice) and from the higher borderlands.

85 Ngag-dbang-kun-dga'-bsod-nams, A-myes-zhabs, *Dpal ldan sa skya pa'i yab chos kyi snying khu 'khor lo sdom pa'i chos byung ba'i tshul legs par bshad pa bde mchog chos kun gsal ba'i nyin byed* (N. Delhi: Ngawang Tobgay 1974) p. 454f.

86 D. L. Snellgrove, *Four Lamas of Dolpo*, p. 91. For determining the dates of these episodes one must move forward by one sixty-year cycle the dates of the first three "lamas of Dolpo". This is necessitated by various pieces of internal evidence. The lama Bsod-nams-blo-gros ("Merit Intellect") for example studied as a young man with the 10th abbot of Ngor, Dkon-mchog-lhun-grub (1497-1557) (*Four Lamas* . . . . p. 86 n. 1.) and hence could not have been born in 1456.

This last episode, with its turmoil and famine is indicative of the declining position of Lo during the 16th century. Lo's influence in Thak Khola must have also lessened then. During the last decades of the 1500's in particular, both Jumla and Ladakh exercised great influence in the Kali Gandaki region, with Thak Khola coming into Jumla's sphere of influence and Lo being barely kept from total disaster by the power of Ladakh.

In the late 16th century Jumla was poised to completely overpower Lo. The great influence of the Jumla king during these years is illustrated by some events in the life of the lama Chose-skyabs-dpa -bzang (d. 1625). In the 1580's the king of Jumla asked this lama to go and mediate a serious dispute there.<sup>87</sup> Since Jumla was playing such an intimate role in Lo's internal affairs, no doubt its influence also encompassed the economically valuable region of Thak Khola to the south of Lo. Perhaps less than a decade after these last events, Lo was again rocked by violent disturbances. That same lama again set out to settle the fighting, and he seems to have tried to settle property disputes that apparently arose from Lo's being divided into a number of smaller districts. The lama's biography speaks of Lo as having upper, lower and middle districts. Among the places he had to go at this time (c. 1590) were Tsarang, Dga'-mi (Gemi) Dge-lung (Gelung), and Se-rib.<sup>88</sup> Although the picture is not clear, there is no doubt that Jumla had a hand in all of this.

During these same decades, the kings of Ladakh had also established themselves as very powerful rulers in Ngari. Tshe-dbang-rnam-rgyal initiated this period of Ladakhi supremacy through his wide conquests, which are said to have included Lo, Jumla, and Purang.<sup>89</sup> Ladakh's important position seems to have continued during the reigns of 'Jam-dbyangs-rnam-rgyal and his son, Seng-ge-rnam-rgyal (d. 1645). This last king is recorded to have campaigned eastward (i. e. , toward Tibet proper) in 1638. On his way back to Ladakh he stopped to collect "offerings" from the nobles of Upper and Lower Lo.<sup>90</sup> The results of such contacts with Ladakh continued to be felt through the 17th and early 18th centuries. A fuller account of this period may one day be reconstructed with the help of Ladakhi and 'Brug-pa writings, as well as documents from the lowlands of Nepal. For the present, however, it might be useful to review some of the important events mentioned in already accessible sources.

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87 D. L. Snellgrove *op. cit.* p. 153

88 *Ibid.*, p. 166

89 A. H. Francke *Antiquities of Indian Tibet* (N. Delhi: S. Chand, 1972), II, 105.

90 *Ibid.*, II 110: Seng-ge-rnam-rgyal "brought Lho-mo-sdang into his power". This must be a reference to Lo and its capital Smon-thang, and is identified as "Lomanthang in Nepal" in the index (*Ibid.*, II, 298). See also the note on p. 121. See also Bsod-nams-tshe-br'an yo-seb-dge-rgan, *Bla divags rgyal rabs 'chi med gter* (Srinagar: 1976), pp. 375, 389

The biography of Bstan-'dzin-ras-pa (1646-1723), a lama born near Muktinath, contains the sad story of war in Lower Lo (including Se-rib), and of the resulting poverty and ruination. When he was six years old (1652), Bstan-'dzin-ras-pa's father, one of the Skye-skyang-pa ruling family of Dzong, passed away. "At the time there was a fight between the king (of Lo) and his minister (the local official of the Skye-skyang-pa noble family). The ruler of Mustang had the minister beaten at the Kag Fort. In support of the Skye-skyang-pa nobleman, the army of the Jumla king came and killed many men.<sup>91</sup> The outcome of this battle is not stated clearly in this source, but for the family of that lama it was a time of great disaster. The army of Jumla stayed for a long time, and taxes became very heavy. Their family had to furnish supplies for the war, and for that had to borrow at high interests from the Hala'i Mon (a southern Hindu people). After a few years so much interest had accumulated that the lama's widowed mother, once the wife of a wealthy nobleman, lost everything she owned and the whole immediate family was reduced to the worst poverty. Finally the Brahmins from the south who had lent the money demanded repayment. And it was only through the timely help of their paternal uncle that Bstan-'dzin-ras-pa and his brothers were saved from indentured servitude.

It seems that during this round of fighting Lo received help from Ladakh. The great royal minister of Ladakh, Shakya-rgya-mtsho, was active during the reign of the Ladakhi king, Bde-ldan-rnam-rgyal (fl. 1650), assisting the Lo rulers and founding (*rmang 'bebs*) forts in Lo and Kag.<sup>92</sup> An alliance of sorts probably existed between Ladakh and Lo during the reigns of Bde-ldan-rnam-rgyal and that of his son, Bde-legs-rnam-rgyal. The Lo rulers during the last half of the 17th century included a king named Bsam-'grub-dpal-'bar, and his brother, Bstan-pa'i-rdo-rje. Perhaps these brothers led Lo against Tibet during the Ladakh-Tibet war of 1683. The *Molla of Tsarang* does mention a war with Tibet in the time of Bsam-'grub-dpal-'bar, just as it mentions a fight with Jumla.<sup>93</sup> This king is mentioned as a participant in a war against Jumla also by a Ladakhi source, the account from which follows later.<sup>94</sup>

As we have seen in response to the great pressure exerted upon Thak Khola and Lower Lo during the last half of the 17th century, some local officials of Baragaon revolted against the overlordship of Lo, and sided with Jumla. The revolt of the Skye skyang-pa noble, and the Jumla king's coming to his aid, has been remembered by the local lore-masters, and its story, with various embroideries, is still retold.<sup>95</sup>

91 Bstan-'dzin-ras-pa, *op. cit.*, p. 2a-2b.

92 A. H. Francke, *op. cit.*, II, 243.

93 *Molla of Tsarang*, p. 12b.

94 A. H. Francke *op. cit.* II, 234.

95 S. Schuler, personal communication.



That rebellious nobleman's family, however, seems to have continued to rule in the Muktinath valley for many years to come. They may have been the ones mentioned by Tshe-dbang-nor-bu as the "officials known as 'throne holders of Dzong'", who were his patrons in 1729.<sup>96</sup> The continuation of the Skye-skya-sgang-pa family is mentioned in a letter from the Lo ruler, 'Jam-dpal-dgra'-dul, dated water-horse (1822).<sup>97</sup>

The conflict between Lo and its southern neighbors during this time is perhaps also indicated by an event in the life of lama Bsod-nams-dbang-phyug (1660-1731). In the past, monks from various monasteries of Lo and Baragaon used to go for ordination and advanced studies to the monastery of Rta-nag Thub-bstan-rnam-rgyal in Gtsang,<sup>98</sup> which was a Ngor affiliate founded in 1473 by Go-rams-pa Bsod-rams-seng-ge (1429-1489). When Bsod-na-dbang-phyug was studying there as a young man (c. 1682), an argument erupted between a "professor" of Lo and one from Se-rib. A serious fight ensued in which the one from Lo received a head wound from a large metal key. "Thus Lo and Se-rib struggled against each other, and one from a large metal key. "Thus Lo and Se-rib struggled against each other, and one man of Se-rib was wounded."<sup>99</sup> This fighting between regional groups in the monastery may have reflected an antagonistic situation existing between the communities at home.

<sup>96</sup> Rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug, Brag-dkar rta-spo sprul-sku, *op. cit.*, p. 91a. The reference to the Dzar-rdzong throne-holder may be taken two ways. One is that it refers to the rulers or the fort (rdzong) at Dzar; the other is that it denotes the rulers Dzar and Dzong. The latter is quite possible because in references to the region found in the writings of its native son, Bstan-'dzin-ras-pa, the whole district is called "Dzar, Dzong, and Kag, the three" (*rdzar rdzong bkag gsum*) (Bstan-'dzin-ras-pa, *Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug bstan 'dzin ras pa'i zhal gdams mgur du gsungs pa rnams*, p. 21b').

<sup>97</sup> This letter was recently photographed by Ms. Sidney Schuler. It was sent by the Lo ruler 'Jam-dpal-dgra'-dul in the water-horse year (1822) to the nobleman Kun-dga'-rab-brtan of the Chongkor (chos-'khor) line of tantric lamas (Chongkor being a village near Muktinath). The letter states that the earlier Lo ruler, Tshe-dhang-lhun-grub (= Tshe-dbang, husband of the Ladakhi princess), had given the Skye-skya-sgang-pas an official order for their line (some of whom were lamas) to render service for the well-being and long-life of the Lo rulers. Later, however, since the time of the nobleman (*drung*) Bstan-'dzin, they did not act propitiously for the health and longevity of the Lo rulers. "And now (*da cha yang*), on account of the past good relations (*'phrod 'byor*) with the Lo rulers, the nobleman Kun-dga' rab-brtan succored the Lo rulers." Because of that, Kun-dga'-rab-brtan and family were exempted from certain compulsory duties. The connection between the Skye-skya-sgang-pa and Chongkor lines is thus not explicitly stated. Nevertheless, the Skye-skya-sgang-pa line continued until King Tshe-dbang's time (d. late 1720's), and remained in existence at least until the time of their own Drung Bstan-'dzin (= Bstan-'dzin-ras-pa ?).

<sup>98</sup> The traditional connection of the Kagbeni monastic community with Thub-bstan rnam-rgyal monastery in Tibet is indicated in the index of a manuscript obtained by Prof. Tucci in Kagbeni. See *Preliminary Report*, p. 14f.

<sup>99</sup> D. L. Snellgrove, *Four Lamas of Dolpo*, p. 250.

During the early 18th century Lo and Ladakh renewed their links through two marriages. Ladakhi King Nyi-marnam-rgyal's son, Bde-skyong-rnam-rgyal, married the Lo princess, Nyi-zla-'dbang-mo.<sup>100</sup> Perhaps in exchange, Nyi-ma-rnam-rgyal's daughter, Nor-'dzin-bde-legs-dbang-mo, was sent to Lo as the royal consort of Phun-tshogs-gtsug-rgyan-nor-bu *alias* Tshe-dbang.<sup>101</sup> This Lo ruler escorted his bride from Ladakh to Lo, and their party included the Ladakhi general, Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje, who was sent as their escort.

The marriage of this Lo ruler to the Ladakhi princess coincided with resumed efforts by Jumla to take control of Thak Khola and the upper Kali Gandaki. From about this time copper plates from Jumla begin to be inscribed with invocations to Muktinath.<sup>102</sup> And now, c. 1720, the Jumla king seems to have personally led an expedition against Lo. About the time that the Lo ruler and his consort returned to Lo there was a military engagement with Jumla in which Lo lost heavily. The Lo ruler, his Ladakhi consort, and about forty nobles from Lo were imprisoned in the Kag castle by the forces of Jumla.

The Ladakhi general, Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje, hastened to the adjoining Tibetan region to the north, Gro-shod, where he rallied together about one hundred nomadic horsemen (*sog po*) and about seventy Ladakhis. Returning to Lo, he mustered its fighting men and returned to do battle at the Kag fortress. From the fort a number of Jumla's warriors poured out, and when they had drawn near, the fighting began. Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje personally dispatched one of the enemy princes with a shot from his gun, while his men managed to turn back the Jumla attack while killing quite a few of the opposing fighters. Then about one thousand lowland troops arrived, sent by the king of Gru (=Parbat or Doti ?). Together the forces laid seige to the castle at Kag. Finally, after eighteen days, the Jumla king came out to negotiate a peace. He agreed to release the Lo ruler and consort, and also the forty imprisoned noblemen. Furthermore, both sides promised to abide by the terms of non-hostility laid down in the time of the Lo king Bsam-'grub-dpal-'bar and a past ruler of Jumla. An oath to this affect was taken in the Kag fort before the Protector image made of black stone and on the Jumla king's own iron rosary.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>100</sup> A. H. Francke, *op. cit.*, II, 120. In the notes (p. 121) Lho-mon-sdang or Lho-mon-thang is identified thus: "a town situated a few miles north-west of Muktinath of Nepal."

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 233. Francke's translation, "Upon an unfair action by the father, the governor of Lo. . . . whilst smiling, he (nurtured) hatred", should be amended to read: "Upon an unfortunate act by the Lo governor. . . . conflict with Jumla came about". (see Tibetan text, p. 230, line 12)

<sup>102</sup> G. Tucci, *Preliminary Report*, p. 127. See also D. R. Regmi, *Modern Nepal* (Calcutta: 1975), p. 8

<sup>103</sup> A. H. Francke, *op. cit.*, II, 234.

According to the Ladakhi document from which the above was summarized, the battle took place in the water-hare year (1723). But this may be in error since there exists a copper letter of Parbat dated B. S. 1776 (A. D. 1719) that seems to mention this same encounter.<sup>104</sup> It contains a reference to the king of Jumla's having freed the Lo ruler from his imprisonment at Kagbeni. Furthermore, it helps establish the identity of the Gru ruler and army that came to the aid of Lo and the Ladakhi general. According to this copper letter, the Mustang ruler had asked the ruler of Parbat to help Lo shake off the domination of Jumla. Parbat could not defeat Jumla by itself, and therefore it entered into an alliance with Doṭi. Together these two attacked the forces of Jumla (where they were engaged at Kagbeni?) and some five hundred of Jumla's troops, including the one important officer, were killed in the war. Following this victory, the influence of Jumla was driven out of the Thini area in upper Thak Khola.

The amicable relations supposedly established at this time between Lo and Jumla did not last long. We may be able to learn more about the events in the troubled decades that followed if ever the writings of the Ladakhi princess, or those of her daughter, 'Chi-med-dpal-dren-dbang-mo, become available. A short work by Nor-'dzin-bde-legs-dbang-mo, called the "Phyag deb chen mo", is said to contain many anecdotes from the life of her son, Bstan-'dzin-dbang-rgyal, and it probably mentions some of the hardships they had to endure.<sup>105</sup> Her husband Phun-tshogs-gtsug-rgyan-nor-bu (or Tshe-dbang), passed away when Bstan-dzin dbang-rgyal was only eleven years of age.<sup>106</sup> Since the biography of Tshe-dbang-nor-bu mentions that his visit to Lo in 1729 was by the invitation of the Lo ruler, Bstan-'dzin, one can conclude that by that year his father had already passed away.<sup>107</sup> The prince would also have been eleven years old by then, and thus must have been born by 1719.

Soon after his father's death, the youthful Bstan-'dzin-dbang-rgyal was compelled to go to Kag, on account of new disturbances caused by Jumla.<sup>108</sup> During the following six years his mother, a remarkable and able woman, acted as the ruler of Lo. But by that time Ladakh's power to intervene on Lo's behalf was gone, and Jumla seems to have had a free hand. We may be sure that these times were among the lowest ebbs in Lo's history. Its former tributaries, including Thak Khola, were under Jumla's

<sup>104</sup> Tek Bahadur Shrestha, "Parvatakā Kehī Tamrapatrā", *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, 3 (1976), 77f.

<sup>105</sup> Ven. Chogay Trichen, personal communication.

<sup>106</sup> Ven. Chogay Trichen, *Rin chen phra tshoms* (ms.), p. 9. This work will be the subject of a future study.

<sup>107</sup> Rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug, Brag-dkar rta-so sprul-sku, *op. cit.*, p. 90a. Tshe-dbang-nor-bu himself composed a song of advice to the Lo ruler, Bstan-'dzin, entitled *Glo bo rgyal po la gdams pa'i mgur*, which was dated 1749. See *Selected Writings of Kah-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu* (Darjeeling: 1973), p. 575.

<sup>108</sup> Ven. Chogay Trichen, *Rin chen phra tshoms*, p. 10.

sway, and Lo itself had to pay tribute to Jumla. This situation was to remain unchanged until late in the reign of the next king, Dbang-rgyal-rdo-rje when Lo regained a small part of its former position. Lo's recovery was solely due to the Gorkha conquest of Jumla,<sup>109</sup> and Lo's renewed power in the Kali Gandaki region was the result of the Gorkhali leadership's having recognised the Lo ruler as a regional leader. Soon after the fall of Jumla, Thak Khola was officially designated as a tributary of Lo.<sup>110</sup>

The history of parts of Thak Khola after the 18th century is somewhat better known,<sup>111</sup> and since my sources yield little that is new, except specifically concerning the history of Lo, I shall bring the account here to a close. I hope that these references will be found to be useful by those doing field-work in the upper Kali Gandaki region, and by those who are studying the history of West Nepal. I trust, moreover, that other useful materials remain to be found, and that it will be possible to supplement the foregoing account in the future. The present references, nevertheless, are enough to indicate a place named Se-rib as an old political and cultural entity in the upper Kali Gandaki. They also provide a few hints for reconstructing the circumstances in which the area of Se-rib subsequently lost its power, national identity, and until now even the memory of its name. In the future, however, histories of the region should not overlook Se-rib.

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<sup>109</sup> On the conquest of Jumla by the Gorkhals, see, L. F. Stiller, *The Rise of the House of Gorkha* (Patna: 1975), pp. 185-187. The Mustang raja's cooperation at this time may have earned them their later privileges from the Gorkhali ruling house.

<sup>110</sup> D. R. Regmi, *Modern Nepal*, p. 329 f. Nepalese edicts from this period to the Mustang Raja, Wangyal Dorje (Dbang-rgyal-rdo-rje), have been presented by Mahesh C. Regmi (ed.) *Regmi Research Papers* (Lazimpat, Kathmandu), II, (1970), 99; IV (1972), 167; and VI (1974), 134..

<sup>111</sup> See, for example, C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-147.

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### Errata

Page	Line	for	read
195	note 1.1	tones	notes
195	note 1.14	p.197	p.221
196	17	Pancayatgaon	Panchgaon
196	note 2.16	Snellogrove	Snellgrove
196	note 2.18	He was a disciple... Samye	He was a disciple of the well-known Gter-ston, 'ja'-tshon-snying-po (1585-1656), and from another source we learn that he discovered sku-tshab effigies at Samye.
199	note 8.5	sansctite du. . . .	sanscrite du Tao to king" (T'oung-Pao
199	note 8.8	des-monts	des monts
199	note 8.14	T'ou : fan	T'ou-fan
199	note 9.1	lajongsfar	ljongs far
199	note 9.2	bstq <sub>u</sub>	bstan
200	7	mnga, ris	mnga ris
200	17	economic-consequences..	economic consequences probably encouraged
201	4	regorganized	reorganized
201	note 17.8	who some	whom some
201	note 17.25	Sangs-rgyas-skar-rgyalis	Sangs-rgyas-skar-rgyal is
202	note 18	see below...	see below, p.215. A Bonpo temple survived
203	3	Stage-rtse	Stag-rtse
204	6	Yango-ston	Yang-ston