

Pehar: A Historical Survey

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The Tibetan state oracle of gNas chung has undoubtedly played a central role in the political history of Tibet since the seventeenth century. In séances, the gNas chung oracle conveyed messages from Pehar and from Pehar's deputy, which have usually been taken into consideration in the decision-making by the Dalai Lamas and Tibetan government officials.¹ Questions typically being posed to Pehar include guidance in seeking the new Dalai Lama, administrative policies of the Tibetan government, health conditions of the high-ranking government officials, judgments of lawsuits,² etc. Pehar's prophecies and advice have played a relatively important role in the history of Tibet.³ Pehar's counsels have been significant enough to have influenced Tibetan politics, in which Buddhist monks are central figures.

According to the Tibetan tradition, Pehar resided originally in bSam yas, the first Tibetan Buddhist temple. During the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama (Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, 1617-1682) Pehar moved to gNas chung, a small temple not far from 'Bras spungs monastery and became the state guardian deity of Tibet. The spirit medium of gNas chung henceforth began to pass messages from Pehar and became the state oracle of Tibet.⁴ In 1959 when the fourteenth Dalai Lama (bsTan 'dzin rgya mtsho, 1935-) took refuge in India, the twelfth gNas chung oracle (Blo bzang 'jigs med, 1930-1984) followed him to Dharamsala, and later continued his duty in India until 1984. His successor Thub bstan dngos drub (1958-) serves as the spirit medium of Pehar and Pehar's deputy today in India.

The activities of the gNas chung oracle and the cult of Pehar demonstrate particularly well that various religious beliefs have been amalgamated harmoniously in Tibet. The communication between supernatural beings and human beings by spirit mediums in séance is commonly regarded as

¹ In Tibetan literature "Pehar" is also written as "dPe kar, Pe dkar, sPe dkar, dPe dkar, Be dkar, dPe har ra, Pe ha ra", etc. ; see René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet, The Cult and Iconography of the Tibetan Protective Deities* (Gravenhage: Mouton, 1956), p. 96. It is said that because Pehar's energy is too strong for the spirit medium to bear, normally Pehar's ministers—rDo rje grags ldan and Shing bya can—act in séance as Pehar's representatives; see John F. Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows* (New York: Vintage Books, 1986), pp. 197, 202.

² Rebecca Redwood French, *The Golden Yoke, The Legal Cosmology of Buddhist Tibet* (Ithaca, Boulder: Snow Lion Publications, 2002), pp. 48, 296.

³ For examples, see John F. Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows*, p. 201; Rinpoche Lama Chime Radha, "Tibet", in *Divination and Oracles*, ed. by Michael Loewe and Carmen Blacker (London; Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1981), pp. 33-37; Rebecca Redwood French, *The Golden Yoke*, p. 130.

⁴ René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, p. 449. For the prophecies to the Tibetan political affairs passed by the oracles since the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama, see René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, "Das tibetische Staatsorakel", *Archiv für Völkerkunde*, 3 (1948), pp. 147-149; René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, pp. 449-454. There are at least five allegations concerning the reason and process of Pehar's moving from bSam yas to gNas chung; see René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, pp. 104-107.

belonging to practices of sorcery. Instead of being considered as heresy, this obviously non-Buddhist practice is acknowledged and valued in Tibet by the government and social summit, the hard-core of which are Buddhist monks. The recognition of the cult of Pehar and its application in the state politics by the Tibetan Buddhist monks might seem very perplexing, yet the séance of the gNas chung oracle is anyhow the most fascinating scene to the common spectators. So far, most scholars have focused their attention on the activities of the gNas chung oracle, which has been repeatedly described in detail in many field study reports.⁵ Scanty studies have examined the descriptions pertaining to Pehar in the Tibetan literature. For an in depth understanding of the historical background to this notable religious phenomenon, it is necessary to rely upon writings. On the basis of the Tibetan historical and religious literature, this article will analyze the accounts pertaining to Pehar that are currently available to the author and investigate the changing role of Pehar in the history of Tibet.

Depictions in earlier literature

According to the Tibetan tradition, Pehar became the state guardian deity at the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama. The time when Pehar was recruited as one of the Buddhist deities was undoubtedly earlier. It was generally interpreted in the tradition that Pehar, having been tamed by Padmasambhava, was bound by oath to protect the Dharma. The emergence of this legend will be discussed below in more detail. Some might be curious about the identity of Pehar before Pehar was included in the Buddhist pantheon. Narrations regarding Pehar's previous disposition can be found in the Tibetan literature as early as the eleventh century. It is stated in the biography of the great translator Rin chen bzang po (958-1055) that when Rin chen bzang po went to Pu rang, he saw a monk meditating on a straw seat, who was worshipped by local inhabitants. Having examined the monk for a while, the master knew that the monk was a manifestation of Pehar. After a month of meditation Rin chen bzang po came to the monk again and pointed to him with his finger. The head of the monk fell on the ground and his body disappeared. Since then, the great translator was honored by the local people. The aim of this account was to provide a picture of the religious practices of Rin chen bzang po and his ability and experience related to exorcisms. The Pehar illustrated in the biography manifested himself as a misleading monk, and belonged apparently to the category of demons and spirits.⁶

⁵ See, for examples, Manuel Bauer, "Tibetisches Staatsorakel", in *Orakel, Der Blick in die Zukunft* (Zürich: Museum Rietberg Zürich, 1999), p. 113; John F. Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows*, pp. 193-198, 200-202, 210-212; W. Geoffrey Arnott, "Nechung: A Modern Parallel to the Delphic Oracle?" *Greece & Rome* 36: 2 (October, 1989), pp. 152-155; René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, pp. 449, 451; René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, "Das tibetische Staatsorakel", pp. 152-153. For the psychological and physical changes of Lobsang Jigme (1930-1984) to become the twelfth state oracle, see John F. Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows*, pp. 203-212. For the personal statement of the thirteenth state oracle Thubten Ngodup (1958-) about his becoming a spirit medium, see Lotsawa Tsepa Rinzin und Tsering Tashi, "Ein Gespräch mit dem tibetischen Nechung-Staatsorakel", in *Orakel, Der Blick in die Zukunft*, pp. 123-127.

⁶ This biography was possibly completed in 1060. For related accounts on Pehar in the

Descriptions of Pehar are found also in some later literature. For example, the abbot of 'Bri gung monastery dBon po Shes rab 'byung gnas (1187-1241) mentioned in his work *dGongs gcig yig cha* (1235) the stories of "Four Children of Pehar" (*pe har bu bzhi*), in which four people had their own distinctive philosophical view, are depicted. Meanwhile, Pehar played a significant role in the development of their views. The first was a woman who was in sorrow from losing her husband. After she had wept bitterly for a long time, Pehar appeared in the sky and explained to her the view "thoughts and external objects are not interconnected," along with the fact that grief and yearning can not bring her husband back. Having reflected upon it for a period of time, the woman accepted this view and preached it to others. Several people became her followers afterward. In the second case, Pehar appeared in front of a female practitioner as a bird, which pecked a snake to death. A leave fell upon the corpse of the snake, which then disappeared. Owing to this manifestation, the thought: "that which is slain is by nature nonexistent" arose in the mind of the female practitioner. Later on she had many followers as well. The views of the last two of the "four Children of Pehar" are: "results do not come from causes" and "attaining the celestial life means understanding that there is no virtue or sin". Taking these four stories as examples, Shes rab 'byung gnas warned the readers of the "impure lineages".⁷ These four views were in fact already mentioned earlier in *Chos 'byung me tog snying po sbrang rtsi'i bcud*, a work composed at the end of the twelfth century by the rNying ma pa treasure discoverer (*gter ston*) Nyang ral Nyi ma 'od zer (1136-1204). Nyi ma 'od zer introduced in his *Chos 'byung* the "Six Dark Yogis" (*rnal 'byor nag po drug*), in which the four groups of people described above were included. Having described all of them, Nyi ma 'od zer pointed out that these "Six Dark Yogis" were regarded by followers of the New Translations as "popular beliefs" (*rdol chos*).⁸ It is noticeable that in *Nyang ral chos 'byung* the "Six dark Yogis" were not associated with Pehar or any other spirits.

While explaining unorthodox traditions, *dGongs gcig yig cha* included one more story: a Buddhist monk regularly attended the group teaching of a master. Pehar descended from the sky, stopped the monk and requested the monk to listen to his teaching while claiming that in this way the monk could be led up to the sky. Later on, Pehar was subdued by the master.⁹

The above cited stories echo the historical background of the time in which they were told. The literatures in which the stories are included were completed at the beginning of the time when Buddhism regained its foothold in Tibet since the eleventh century. During this initial period there were not only diverse teachings inside of Buddhism from various traditions,

Biography, see Dan Martin, "The Star King and the Four Children of Pehar: Popular Religious Movements of 11th- to 12th-Century Tibet", *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hung.* XLIX: 1-2 (1996), pp. 177-178.

⁷ Dan Martin, "The Star King and the Four Children of Pehar: Popular Religious Movements of 11th- to 12th-Century Tibet", pp. 185-187.

⁸ Dan Martin, "The Star King and the Four Children of Pehar: Popular Religious Movements of 11th- to 12th-Century Tibet", p. 187. Martin translated "*rdol chos*" to "Pop[ular] Buddhism". Since "*chos*" does not necessarily signify Buddhism, I did not follow Martin's translation.

⁹ Dan Martin, "The Star King and the Four Children of Pehar: Popular Religious Movements of 11th- to 12th-Century Tibet", p. 179.

but also other lineages of popular beliefs outside of Buddhism. Pehar's roles in the above cited stories are various: Pehar appeared as a monk, descended from the sky, transformed into a bird, and inspired the person of interest by way of talking directly to her/him, or performing singular acts. The people and events in the stories might not be real, but the effect of the narratives is to intensify the mystery of Pehar's identity as a spirit/supernatural being. Pehar seemingly represents a certain supernatural power which is capable of transforming itself and misleading practitioners. Pehar in these stories has become a symbol of "impure lineages", "unorthodox traditions", "popular beliefs", and even "non-Buddhist mystic powers". The "non-Buddhist mystic powers" were precisely the objects that Buddhist scholars at that time, who were engaged in establishing the firm foothold of Buddhism, must distinguish, identify and eventually refute.

Around the same period of time another trend of dealing with existing "heretical" beliefs appeared unobtrusively in the Tibetan Buddhist treasure literature (*gter ma*). In the *Life Story of Padmasambhava* (*sLob dpon padma 'byung gnas kyi skyes rabs chos 'byung nor bu'i phreng ba*, also called *Gu ru' bka' thang zangs gling ma le'u zhe gcig pa*), a text revealed by Nyang ral Nyi ma 'od zer (1136-1204), Pehar was portrayed in a very different way. In the twentieth chapter of this work, King Khri srong lde brtsan asked Padmasambhava about who would be the Dharma protector to guard the temple bSam yas. Padmasambhava's reply and the king's response to the master's answer are:

"Alas, great king,
The times will get worse and worse ...,
At such a time, the warrior spirit King Pekar
is needed as the guardian of the temples.
He now resides in the land of Hor,¹⁰
Your Majesty, give the decree for war
and conquer the Gomdra district of Bhata Hor.¹¹
He will come here, giving chase to the valuables.
Then I shall appoint him as temple guardian."

King Trisong Deutsen then prepared for war and defeated the district of Bha ta Hor.¹² After that, the one known as King Shingja Chen, as Düpo Yabje Nagpo, and as King Pekar of the warrior spirits arrived, chasing after the valuables. His right brigade was one hundred warriors dressed in tiger skins. His left brigade was one hundred arhat monks. ... Master Padma then gave his command and bound King Pekar under oath. At Pekar Temple, he established a shrine and appointed Pekar as the temple guardian of glorious Samye and of the whole temple complex.¹³

This text, *Zangs gling ma*, is the earliest work that I could find in which Pehar was associated with the first Tibetan Buddhist temple bSam yas and had become a guardian of Buddhism. In *Zangs gling ma* Pehar was the king of the warrior spirits, came from Bha ta Hor and was bound by Padmasambhava

¹⁰ Kunsang translated "Hor" to "Mongolia". I shall discuss the location of "Hor" later.

¹¹ "Bha ta Hor" was translated by Kunsang as "Bhata Mongolia".

¹² See the previous note.

¹³ Yeshe Tsogyal, *The Lotus-Born: the Life Story of Padmasambhava*, translated by Erik Pema Kunsang (Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, 1993), pp. 131-132.

under oath. Pehar was bestowed with a Buddhist identity which, as we shall see later, was afterward adopted by many Tibetan authors in formulating their own works.

This new aspect of Pehar was also found in *Padma bka' thang*, which was excavated by Ö rgyan gling pa (1323-?) in 1352.¹⁴ This famous *gter ma* text belongs to the many *gter ma* texts that portray the life story and deeds of Padmasambhava. Pehar appeared in *Padma bka' thang* at least twice; one is in the sixty third chapter, in which the background of Pehar's becoming the guardian of the temple bSam yas was explicated. When King Khri srong lde brtsan discussed with Śāntarakīita and Padmasambhava who would be a suitable guardian of bSam yas, it is stated that:

The great acharya Padma said:

"The royal [house] will have an emanation with an evil face [in the future].

The fight between Yum brtan and 'Od srungs,

which makes in the mind all kinds of evil wishes and hostilities, will appear.

The demonic emanation at that time, after he had caused harm will,

when time had passed over one hundred and ten generations,

become King gNam the'u dkar po at the land of Hor.

All Tibet will be under the power of Hor.

The tutelary deities (*pho lha*) of Hor are enlightened heaven gods.

As for [their] king Shing bya can, if we, after we have invited him [to Tibet],

entrust [the temple bSam yas] to him, the temple will not be destroyed.

If the meditation center of Bha ta Hor is conquered,

Pehar will follow behind the property [of the meditation center] to come.

I will build a receptacle (*rten*) [for Pehar] in Pe kar sanctuary."

Thence [the king] makes war against Bha ta [Hor] and its meditation center was destroyed.

Following much food and wealth, [Pehar] has come [to Tibet].

Owing to [Pehar's arrival], some became insane, others fell down in a fit.

Thence Padmasambhava of Uḍḍiyāna built a receptacle (*rten*) of the king [Pehar] in Pe kar sanctuary.¹⁵

The narration is in essence similar to that of *Zangs gling ma*. However, compared with *Zangs gling ma*, *Padma bka' thang* explains more intelligibly about Pehar's background, Pehar's connection with Hor, and the reason why Pehar, also called "Shing bya can", is suitable to become the guardian deity of bSam yas. The "emanation with an evil face" suggests apparently the last

¹⁴ Dan Martin, *Tibetan Histories: a Bibliography of Tibetan-Language Historical Works* (London: Serindia Publications, 1997), p. 56.

¹⁵ *slob dpon chen po padma'i zhal snga nas/ rje la zhal ngo bdud kyi sprul pa 'byung/ thugs la gdon gsol mi 'tsham sna tshogs byed/ yum brtan 'od srungs zhes bya 'khrug pa 'byung/ de tshe 'dre yi sprul pas glags rnyed nas/ gdung rabs brgya dang bcu lhang song tsa na/ hor yul gnam the'u dkar po'i rgyal po 'ong/ bod khams thams cad hor gyi mnga' 'og 'jug/ hor gyi pho lha gnam lha byang chub yin/ rgyal po shing bya can ni spyen drangs nas/ de la gtad na gtsug lag khang mi 'jig/ bha ta hor gyi sgom gra bcom pa na/ pe har ka ca'i phyi la 'brangs nas 'ong/ nga yis pe kar gling du rten 'dzugs gsungs/ de nas bha tar dmag brgyab sgom gra bcom/ zas nor mang po drangs nas 'ongs pa las/ la la smyor bcug la la 'bog tu bcug/ de nas u rgyan pad ma 'byung gnas kyis/ pe kar gling du rgyal po'i rten btsugs tel.* See U rgyan gling pa, *Padma bka' thang* (Si khron: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1987), pp. 384-385. For Chinese translation, see Ujian Linba 烏堅林巴, *Lianhuasheng Dashi Bensheng Zhuan* 蓮花生大師本生傳, trans. by Luozhu Jiacao Edong Wala 洛珠加措·俄東瓦拉 (Chinghai 青海: Chinghai Renmin Chuban She 青海人民出版社, 1994), pp. 421-422.

king of the Tibetan empire Glang dar ma (803-842), who was regarded as a harmful, evil being to Tibet. His rebirth in the land Bha ta Hor provides a proper explanation for the tension between Tibet and Bha ta Hor in the narration.

The 104th chapter of *Padma bka' thang* gives further details about how Pehar was subdued by Padmasambhava. It is depicted that Pehar, who intended to test Padmasambhava, dressed himself as a layman, and went to the master's room with a big retinue. They dropped a big stone on the head of the master, who subsequently fell unconscious for a while. After Padmasambhava regained consciousness, he caught Pehar in meditative absorption (*ting nge 'dzin*). Padmasambhava asked the layman who he was. Pehar replied that he was the "son of mara" (*bdud kyi bu*) and requested an alliance with Padmasambhava. The master asked Pehar in return whether he dared protect Buddhism. Pehar answered: "In the future, if the temples and shrines of all Tibet were entrusted to me, I will dare protect the Buddhist teaching. If they were not entrusted to me, I will make harm, I will transgress against the rules, and I will reverse."¹⁶ Thence Padmasambhava entrusted the temples and shrines which would be built by future generations and the "receptacles" (*rten*) of body, speech and mind to Pehar. Pehar accepted this obligation. The master recited 108 subjugating *mantras* and asked Pehar: "If you transgress against the rules, what will happen? If you make harm and if you reverse, what will happen?" The reply of the great layman reveals Pehar's evil nature. In short, when Pehar makes harm, a practitioner will come across all kinds of problems with regard to his wife, children, land, house, livestock, property, friends, relatives, servants, and benefactors; when Pehar transgresses against the rules, a practitioner will encounter diversified mental hindrances while practicing deity yoga, sinking in meditative absorption, reciting *mantras*, performing approaching practices, etc.; when Pehar reverses, he will let everything develop to the contrary as expected concerning the body, life force, merit, fortune, family, possessions, food, friends and relatives, retinue, favorable conditions, and achievement of a practitioner.¹⁷ One is able to capture the original disposition of Pehar from a sketch of the potential disasters which could happen, if Pehar were offended. Even though he had agreed to act as a guardian of Buddhist teaching, Pehar still retains his potential for annoying living beings in every respect. The dreadful, original traits of the "Buddhist" Pehar are definitely dissimilar to the characteristics of the transforming and misleading abilities of Pehar as described in the earlier text like *dGongs gcig yig cha*, although both can be deemed "negative". Pehar has become a Buddhist deity of marked individuality in *Padma bka' thang*.

About two hundred years after *Padma bka' thang* was excavated, delineations on Pehar analogous to that in the Biography of Rin chen bzang po can still be found. While introducing Bya 'Dul 'dzin (1091-1166) in *'Brug pa'i chos 'byung*, Padma dkar po (1527-1592) wrote that Bya 'Dul 'dzin

¹⁶ *pe kar na re ma 'ongs bod khams kun/ lha khang mchod rten nga la gtad pa na/ bstan pa bsrung nus ma gtad gnod pa byed/ nga ni 'khu zhing dam 'da' ldog par 'gyur/*. See U rgyan gling pa, *Padma bka' thang*, pp. 648-649.

¹⁷ U rgyan gling pa, *Padma bka' thang*, pp. 649-655. For Tibetan text, see U rgyan gling pa, *Padma bka' thang*, pp. 649-655; see also F. Sierksma, *Tibet's Terrifying Deities* (Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1966), pp. 164-165.

established a monastery in Zul phu. In the monastery, Pehar transformed into a young monk who violated discipline when there was an opportunity. Yet every time that he acted against regulations, other people saw nothing but a robe decorated with fur.¹⁸ Pehar appears in this story in the form of a monk and plays the role of confusing and misleading people. This image of Pehar, although having certain connections with Buddhism, is far different from that of being a Buddhist guardian.

In summary, already in the second half of the eleventh century, Pehar had appeared in Tibetan literature and was connected with popular beliefs in which descriptions about his dispositions were nearly all negative. In some literature between the second half of the eleventh and the middle of the thirteenth centuries Pehar was portrayed as having the power of transformation, often applied to either mislead other people or cover his behavior in violating discipline. The various roles of Pehar depicted in these earlier literatures have somehow close connections with practitioners or monks. Pehar almost became a representation of "impure lineages", "unorthodox traditions", "popular beliefs", and even "non-Buddhist mystic powers". No later than the early thirteenth century, Pehar was associated with Buddhism as a Buddhist guardian. In the Buddhist *gter ma* literature before the middle of the fourteenth century Pehar had acquired fairly distinctive traits. Compared with the other literature which merely contains negative descriptions of Pehar, *Padma bka' thang* bestowed a double-sided character upon Pehar: a harmful, evil "son of *mara*" who has the virtue of a Buddhist patron.

Depictions by the scholars before the Fifth Dalai Lama

Before being recruited in the Buddhist pantheon, Pehar appeared, as discussed above, in some literature as a representative of "unorthodox traditions". Pehar acquired his Buddhist identity very likely in the Buddhist *gter ma* literature no later than the early thirteenth century. Has this identity changed since then and how did it develop in later on? According to the tradition, Pehar was promoted as a state guardian deity at the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama. Before exploring the attitude of Tibetan scholars toward Pehar, let's first look at the descriptions of Pehar in the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Annals of Tibet* (*rGyal rabs dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs*, 1643):

The Abbot [Shantarakshita], the Master [Padmasambhava], and the Dharma [King Khri srong lde brtsan] discussed [the candidate of] the guardian of the [bSam yas] temple. To Pehar, who had appeared following the properties from the meditation center of Bha ta Hor that was destroyed by the military of the [Dharma] King, was entrusted [the duty of] protecting the properties [of bSam yas temple].¹⁹

¹⁸ Dan Martin, "The Star King and the Four Children of Pehar: Popular Religious Movements of 11th- to 12th-Century Tibet", p. 179.

¹⁹ */de nas gtsug lag khang gi srung mar mkhan slob chos gsum bka' bgros te/ rgyal po'i dmag gis bha ta hor gyi sgom grwa bcom pa'i ka ca'i rjes su dpe har 'brangs te byung bar dkor srung bcol/*. See Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, *rGyal rabs dPyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs* (The Tibetan & Himalayan Digital Library, http://old.thdl.org/xml/showEssay.php?xml=/collections/history/texts/5th_dl_history_text.xml&m=all). My understanding of this

The statement of this passage is basically consistent with the narrations in the above mentioned *gter ma* texts: Pehar was appointed at the time of the Tibetan king Khri srong lde brtsan (742-797) as the guardian of the first Tibetan temple bSam yas. Nevertheless, only very few Tibetan historians who were active before the Fifth Dalai Lama referred to the name "Pehar" while depicting the construction work of bSam yas temple in their writings. The majority of the well-known Tibetan historical texts composed before the Fifth Dalai Lama, including *dBa' bzhed*²⁰, *sNgon gyi gtam me tog phreng ba* (1283)²¹, *Bu ston chos 'byung* (1322/1347)²², *Deb ther dmar po* (1346)²³, *rGya bod yig tshang chen mo* (1434)²⁴, *Deb ther sngon po* (1478)²⁵, and *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* (1538)²⁶, did not mention the appointment of Pehar as the guardian of bSam yas at all in the paragraphs concerning the erection of the bSam yas temple. This fact, though truly a bit unexpected, seems to imply that before the seventeenth century Pehar had not yet become an important figure in Tibetan Buddhism, so that most of the authors of the historical literature did not pay serious attention to him in any way.

Nonetheless, certain depictions in two of the works cited above, *sNgon gyi gtam me tog phreng ba* and *rGya bod yig tshang chen mo*, may relate to Pehar. The paragraph illustrating the construction work of bSam yas temple in *sNgon gyi gtam me tog phreng ba* cited each name of the twelve sections of the temple, among which the last one was called "rin chen dbyig 'jin spe dkar gling" (Precious treasure enmeshed sPe dkar sanctuary). It is stated that this section was built particularly for the purpose of storing treasury. The designation "spe dkar" in its name may correspond to Pehar. However, the related paragraph did not refer to Pehar as a Dharma protector. In *rGya bod yig tshang chen mo* it is stated that one of the northern sections of the four directions of bSam yas temple is called "dpe dkar skor²⁷ mdzod gling" (dPe

paragraph deviated slightly from the Chinese translation of Liu Liqian 劉立千, compare Wushi Dalai Lama 五世達賴喇嘛, *Xizang Wang Chen Ji* 西藏王臣記, trans. by Liu Liqian 劉立千 (Beijing 北京: Minzu Chubanshe 民族出版社, 2001), p. 44.

²⁰ Pasang Wangdu and Hildegard Diemberger trans., *dBa' bzhed, The Royal Narrative Concerning the Bringing of the Buddha's Doctrine to Tibet* (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000), pp. 64-73.

²¹ Helga Uebach, *Nel-pa Panditas Chronik Me-tog Phren-ba* (München: Kommission für Zentralasiatische Studien, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1987), pp. 98-101.

²² Budun Dashi 布頓大師, *Fuojiao Shi Da Baozang Lun* 佛教史大寶藏論, trans. by Guo Heching 郭和卿 (Beijing 北京: Minzu Chubanshe 民族出版社, 1986), pp. 173-175.

²³ Caiba Gongge Duoji 蔡巴貢噶多吉, *Hongshi* 紅史, trans. by Chen Chingying 陳慶英 & Zhou Runnian 周潤年 (Taipei 台北: Quanfu Wenhua Shiye Youxian Gongsi 全佛文化事業有限公司, 2004), p. 138.

²⁴ dPal 'byor bzang po, *rGya bod yig tshang chen mo* (Si khron: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrung khang, 1985), pp. 181-182; Dacang Zongba Banjue Sangbu 達倉宗巴·班覺桑布, *Hanzang Shiji* 漢藏史集, trans. by Chen Chingying 陳慶英譯 (Lasa 拉薩: Xizang Renmin Chubanshe 西藏人民出版社, 1986), pp. 109-110.

²⁵ George N. Roerich trans., *The Blue Annals* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1976, reprint 1995), pp. 43-44.; Kuonuo Xunlubo 廓諾·迅魯伯, *Chingshi* 青史, trans. by Guo Heching 郭和卿 (Lasa 拉薩: Xizang Renmin Chubanshe 西藏人民出版社, 1985), p. 29.

²⁶ Giuseppe Tucci, *Deb T'er Dmar Po Gsar Ma, Tibetan Chronicles by bSod names grags pa* (Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1971), p. 154.

²⁷ Read "dkor".

dkar sanctuary, Chest for temple property). The "dPe dkar" here may also correspond to Pehar. Nonetheless, Pehar was not noted as a guardian in the related paragraph, either. Beside these two works, none of the other works cited above bothered to describe details of the sections of bSam yas temple. No textual supports are found indicating a relationship between bSam yas temple and the guardian deity Pehar.

Among the abovementioned texts, the narration in *dBa' bzhed* is worth mentioning. In its earliest version, to the best of our knowledge, no description of Pehar could be found in the text passage describing the construction of the bSam yas temple.²⁸ Nevertheless, the account in a later version which is acknowledged to have been finished in the fourteenth century, i.e. *sBa bzhed*, is very different. This version, while introducing bSam yas temple, includes a detailed description of the internal arrangement and the designation of each section. The last section of the three north-locating sections is called "dkor mdzod dpe har gling" (Chest for temple property, dPe har sanctuary) and the Dharma protector of this section is "chos skyong dpe har".²⁹ The different treatments between both versions indicate that the association of Pehar and bSam yas temple was in all probability a later development.³⁰

Aside from the above mentioned known historical literatures, two other texts, *lDe'u chos 'byung* (*Chos 'byung chen mo bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan*, ca. 1230-1240) and *rGya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa* (later than 1261),³¹ contain narrations about Pehar similar to the fourteenth-century-*sBa bzhed*. lDe'u Jo Sras wrote in his work *lDe'u chos 'byung* that one section in bSam yas temple was called "dbyig mdzod dpe kar gling" (Treasure-chest, dPe kar sanctuary), the function of which was to collect temple property (skor³² bsags). The chief protector dPe hār was assigned to look after the treasury gathered in this section.³³ mKhas pa lDe'u stated in his work *rGya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa* that one section of the bSam yas temple is called "dkor mdzod dpe

²⁸ Namely the version translated by Pasang Wangdu and Hildegard Diemberger in 2000. The earliest possible date of this version is around the eleventh century, see Pasang Wangdu and Hildegard Diemberger trans., *dBa' bzhed, The Royal Narrative Concerning the Bringing of the Buddha's Doctrine to Tibet*, p. XIV.

²⁹ R. A. Stein, *Une Chronique Ancienne de bSam-yas: sBa-bžed* (Paris: Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1961), p. 41.

³⁰ Samten Karmay argued that the cult of Pehar, very similar to that of nowadays, was appeared already around 1000. See Samten G. Karmay, "The Man and the Ox: a Ritual for Offering the glud", in *The Arrow and the Spindle* (Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 1998), p. 360. On the basis of the dates of both versions mentioned here (see Pasang Wangdu and Hildegard Diemberger trans., *dBa' bzhed, The Royal Narrative Concerning the Bringing of the Buddha's Doctrine to Tibet*, p. 1), Karmay's argument is unlikely to be testified.

³¹ For a discussion on the dates of both books, see Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp, "A Recent Contribution on the History of the Tibetan Empire", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 111.1 (Jan.-Mar., 1991), p. 96; Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp, "Dating the Two lDe'u Chronicles of Buddhism in India and Tibet", *Asiatische Studien* XLVI.1(1992), pp. 484-485, 489; Samten G. Karmay, "The Origin Myths of the First King of Tibet as Revealed in the *Can lnga*", in *The Arrow and the Spindle*, pp. 291-292; Per K. Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography: The Mirror Illuminating the Royal Genealogies: an Annotated Translation of the XIVth Century Tibetan Chronicle: rGyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1994), pp. 635-636; Dan Martin, *Tibetan Histories: a Bibliography of Tibetan-Language Historical Works*, pp. 43-44.

³² Read "dkor".

³³ lDe'u Jo Sras, *Chos 'byung chen mo bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan lde'u jo sras kyi mdzad pa* (lHa sa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrung khang, 1987), pp. 123, 129.

dkar gling" (Chest for temple property, dPe dkar sanctuary), the protector of which is "dpe dkar".³⁴ Both *lDe'u chos 'byung* and *rGya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa* affirmed that Pehar was the protector of the section where the treasury was accumulated in the bSam yas temple. The similarity of the allegations regarding Pehar in both texts, which is very different from that in the most other historical literature, implies a possible related textual tradition, with which *sBa bzhed* could have a connection. Nevertheless, from the fact that both *lDe'u chos 'byung* and *rGya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa* were not included in well-known literatures by recognized Tibetan scholars,³⁵ one can assume that this textual tradition was not regarded as "mainstream" in the Tibetan historical literature.

In addition to all of the abovementioned texts, the historical writings finished before the Fifth Dalai Lama that mentioned the guardian Pehar and his origins, include *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (1368) and *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* (1545-1564). In *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* where the construction of the bSam yas temple was depicted, the name of the last section of the north-locating three sections was referred to as "pe dkar dkor mdzod gling" (Pe dkar sanctuary, Chest for temple property). Moreover, the character of Pehar was delineated as follows:

As Protector of the [Buddhist] Teaching for the entire [bSam-yas] temple [-complex], the Teacher [Padmasambhava] commissioned the Great Master of Life, Pehar, the Great Devotee of the Gods [coming from] Za hor, the Great General of the Demons controlling [all] the Eight Classes of Spirits pertaining to the visible World of Phenomena [a figure so terrifying that he is capable of] taking [away] the breath of all the living ones. A receptacle [of Pehar] was installed in the Pe-dkar [=Pe-har]-gling.³⁶

The description in *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* shares the same basis with the abovementioned *lDe'u chos 'byung*, *rGya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa*, and *sBa bzhed*. They all started off with the arrangement of the temple, providing information on the designation, interior equipment and the name of the guardian deities of each section. Yet there are still differences between *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* and the other three writings. *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* not only referred to the name Pehar, but also described Pehar's position and distinctive features in more details.

As for *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, having described the construction work and the arrangement of bSam yas temple, dPa' bo gtsug lag 'phreng ba

³⁴ mKhas pa lDe'u, *rGya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa* (Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1987), pp. 353-354.

³⁵ Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp, "Dating the Two Lde'u Chronicles of Buddhism in India and Tibet", pp. 469-471.

³⁶ Per K. Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, p. 385. See also Sakyapa Sonam Gyaltzen, *The Clear Mirror, A Traditional Account of Tibet's Golden Age*, trans. by McComas Taylor and Lama Choedak Yuthok (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1996), pp. 239-240. Liu Liqian's translation differs from my understanding, compare Suonan Jianzan 索南堅贊, *Xizang Wangtong Ji* 西藏王統記, trans. by Liu Liqian 劉立千 (Beijing 北京: Minzu Chubanshe 民族出版社, 2002), p. 125. The Tibetan text reads: *slob dpon gyis za hor gyi yul nas/ lha'i dge snyen chen po// bdud kyi dmag dpon chen po// snang srid kyi lha ma sring sde brgyad la dbang byed cing/ skye 'gro thams cad kyi dbugs len/ srog bdag chen po pe har la gtad cing pe dkar gyi gling du rten gtsugs so//* B. I. Kuznetsov, *Rgyal Rabs Gsal Ba'i Me Long, The Clear Mirror of Royal Genealogies* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966), p. 173.

(1504-1564/1566) wrote:

When it was discussed who is suitable to be the chief guardian of Buddha's teaching (*spyi yi bka' srung*),
 The second Buddha Padma[sambhava] said:
 "The royal [house] will have an emanation with an evil face [in the future].
 The holy Dharma will be caused to perish. As a result, the imperial rules will collapse.
 At that time the Hor [land ruled] by the emanation of gNam the dkar po will govern Tibet and cause sufferings.
 So if the tutelary deity (*pho lha*) of Hor, Shing bya can, an enlightened heaven god, was entrusted as a guardian, none will be able to destroy [bSam yas]. Therefore, we shall summon him."
 In the Bi har sanctuary a receptacle (*rten*) of the king [Shing bya can] was built. The troops of [the minister] Ta ra klu gong and others destroyed the meditation center of Hor and carried away many receptacles (*rten*). The Great [Master of] Uddiyāna manifested bodily as Vajrapani. After he has been employed as a servant of the great king Vaishravana, he invoked all the troops of the Yaksha spirits to summon King Bi har—
 a lay devotee of heavenly beings, a great commander of *mara*-demons, who governs the eight classes of gods and spirits and who can take away the breath of living beings—together with his servants.
 [Padmasambhava] bound him under oath and entrusted him with the wheel of Dharma.³⁷

mKhas pa'i dga' ston portrayed Pehar with very similar wordings to *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* as "a lay devotee of heavenly beings, a great commander of *mara*-demons, who governs the eight classes of gods and spirits and who can take away the breath of living beings". Compared to all of the abovementioned historical works in which Pehar is included, *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* provides much more detailed accounts on this Dharma protector, especially on how he had come to Tibet and became a Dharma protector. It is worth mentioning that its framework of the description on Pehar is basically consistent with that in the abovementioned Buddhist *gter ma* literature.

The delineations of *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* on Pehar are noticeably different from those of many traditional writings contributing to the history of the development of Buddhism in Tibet,

³⁷ *spyi yi bka' srung gang 'thad bgros pa na/ sangs rgyas gnyis pa padma'i zhal snga nas/ rje la zhal ngo bdud kyi sprul pa 'byung/ dam chos bsnubs pa'i dbang gis rgyal khrims 'jig/ de tshe gnam the dkar po'i sprul pa yi/ hor gyis bod khams dbang byed sdug sngal 'god/ de bas hor gyi pho lha shing bya can/ gnam lha byang chub srung mar bskos pa na/ 'jig mi nus pas de nyid dgug go gsung/ bi har gling du rgyal po'i rten bcas te/ ta ra klu gong la sogs dmag dpung gis/ hor gyi sgom gra bcom nas rten rnam khyer/ o rgyan chen po phiyag rdor dngos su bzhengs/ rgyal chen rnam sras bran du bkol nas nil/ de yis gnod sbyin dmag dpung kun bskul ste/ lha yi dge bsnyen bdud kyi dmag dpon che/ sde brgyad dbang byed skye 'gro'i dbugs len pa/ bi har rgyal po las mkhan bcas pa bkug/ dam la btags te chos 'khor gnyer du btad/. See dPa' bo gtsug lag 'phreng ba, *Chos byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* (Delhi: Karmapae Chodhey Gyalwae Sungrab Partun Khang, 1980) vol. Ja, 89r6-89v4. For an interpretation of Giuseppe Tucci, see *The Tombs of the Tibetan Kings* (Roma: Is. M. E. O., 1950), pp. 56-57. Liu Liqian 劉立千 mentioned very roughly in his translation of *rGyal rabs dPyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs* the contents of the related paragraph in *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (*Zhizhe Xiyuan* 智者喜筵), see Wushi Dalai Lama 五世達賴喇嘛, *Xizang Wang Chen Ji* 西藏王臣記, p. 197, n. 382.*

including those "mainstream" historical literatures. The differences possibly resulted from both authors' ways of approaching the materials that were available at their times of composition. The sources utilized by *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* were said to have contained the writings dealing with early history of Tibet that have already been discovered at the author's time, including *gter ma* texts, and oral traditions.³⁸ *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* is well-known for making use of sources that were not available to our time.³⁹ The peculiarity of *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* suggests that accounts on Pehar may be preserved in sources not belonging to the "mainstream" tradition and might to some extent also involve oral tradition and folklore.

The above depictions of Pehar clearly show that Padmasambhava played a crucial role on Pehar being appointed as the guardian of bSam yas temple. Both *Zangs gling ma* and *Padma bka' thang* belong to *gter ma* literature portraying the life story of Padmasambhava, have related Pehar to Padmasambhava. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston*'s descriptions on Pehar follow similar pattern to those in *Zangs gling ma* and *Padma bka' thang*. Since the excavations of both *gter ma* texts were earlier, it is not impossible that dPa' bo gtsug lag 'phreng ba took the narrations concerning Pehar in *gter ma* texts into account. The Tibetan *gter ma* texts, the authenticity of which has always been a controversial subject among Tibetan scholars,⁴⁰ frequently include narrations that are not found in the ordinary Tibetan literature. That accounts on Pehar are found in the *gter ma* texts and appear only in the historical writings that possibly have a connection with *gter ma* texts can support the assumption that a Buddhist identity was bestowed upon Pehar by the Buddhist *gter ma* literature. Moreover, before having become one of the most important Dharma protectors of Tibetan Buddhism, Pehar was actually overlooked by most of the authors of the common Tibetan historical literature.

Zangs gling ma, *Padma bka' thang*, *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long*, and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* are in agreement regarding categorizing Pehar among spirits of foreign origin. While *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* claimed that Pehar came from Za hor, *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* stated that Pehar was from Hor. According to *Zangs gling ma* and *Padma bka' thang*, the "Hor" denotes very likely "Bha ta Hor". The origin of Pehar will be discussed below in more detail. Based on the descriptions of the construction of bSam yas temple in the literatures cited above, a conclusion can be drawn up to this point: although no later than the early thirteenth century did the idea of correlating Pehar with Buddhism become visible, the identity of Pehar as a Dharma protector of Buddhism was not generally recognized before the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama, namely before the seventeenth century. Only a small number of Tibetan literatures has certified Pehar's crucial role in the first Tibetan Buddhist temple bSam yas and his relationship with Tibetan Buddhism. These descriptions of Pehar differed from that demonstrated in the earlier

³⁸ Suonan Jianzan 索南堅贊, *Xizang Wangtong Ji* 西藏王統記, p. 2.

³⁹ Hugh Richardson, "The First Tibetan Chos-'byung", in Hugh Richardson, *High Peaks, Pure Earth, Collected Writings on Tibetan History and Culture* (London: Serindia Publications, 1998), p. 89.

⁴⁰ Janet B. Gyatso, "Drawn from the Tibetan Treasury: The gTer ma Literature", in *Tibetan Literature, Studies in Genre*, ed. by José Ignacio Cabezón and Roger R. Jackson (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1996), p. 148.

literatures, in which Pehar was frequently regarded as a representation of "impure tradition", "popular belief", or even "non-Buddhist mystic power". It is reasonable to presume that, before being exalted as a Buddhist guardian, Pehar could not have been a mere cipher among the many Tibetan demons and spirits.

Depictions by the Fifth Dalai Lama and the scholars after him

Before the Fifth Dalai Lama, some texts have depicted Pehar as a Dharma protector of bSam yas temple. However they were not the majority and most often outside of "mainstream" historical literature. From the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama there was a discernible change of Pehar's position in Tibetan Buddhism. It was already mentioned above that the Fifth Dalai Lama referred to Pehar in the *Annals* written by him, that Pehar was invited to Tibet at the time of the Tibetan king Khri srong lde brtsan to become the guardian of the first Tibetan temple in bSam yas. This statement was nothing new, since it had already appeared in some texts, as discussed before. In addition to this account, the Fifth Dalai Lama put forth his personal opinions on Pehar's background:

The Abbot [Shantarakshita], the Master [Padmasambhava], and the Dharma [King Khri srong lde brtsan] discussed about [the candidate of] the guardian of the [bSam yas] temple. To Pehar, who had appeared following the properties from the meditation center of Bha ta Hor that was destroyed by the military of the [Dharma] King, was entrusted [the duty of] protecting the properties [of bSam yas temple]. Some said that in accordance with the [invitation by] sending messengers and letters by the three [personages]: the Abbot, the Master, and the Dharma King, a Buddha [statue] made of turquoise, a mask made of tanned leather, and the princely descent of Za hor Dharmapala have taken a lead. Following them, dPe har arrived [at Tibet]. This statement can cause disastrous great harm to the living beings by making them crazy and lose their senses and so on. With regard to this statement, it appears to correspond in sequence to [another] statement that [dPe har] fled to the land of Bha ta Hor because the Master pushed him to the breaking point.⁴¹

Three statements regarding Pehar's coming to/escaping from Tibet are included in this paragraph. The Fifth Dalai Lama considered the second statement to be seriously harmful to the mind of all sentient beings, which suggests that he strongly rejected this statement. The main difference between the first and the second statements concerns how and from where Pehar had come to Tibet. Since the Fifth Dalai Lama supported the first

⁴¹ /de nas gtsug lag khang gi srung mar mkhan slob chos gsum bka' bgros te/ rgyal po'i dmag gis bha ta hor gyi sgom grwa bcom pa'i ka ca'i rjes su dpe har 'brangs te byung bar dkor srung bcol/ 'ga' zhig tu mkhan slob chos gsum gyis pho nya 'phrin yig mngags pa ltar/ g.yu'i thub pa/ bse 'bag za hor rgyal rigs dharma pa la rnams kyis sna drangs pa'i rjes la dpe har byon par bshad pa 'di skye 'gro rnams la smyo 'bog sogs 'tshé ba che drags par/ slob dpon gyis ar la gtad pas bha ta hor gyi yul du bros par bshad pa dang go rim 'grig par mngon no/. See Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, *rGyal rabs dPyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs* (The Tibetan & Himalayan Digital Library, http://old.thdl.org/xml/showEssay.php?xml=/collections/history/texts/5th_dl_history_text.xml&m=all). My understanding is not totally in agreement with Liu Liqian's; compare Wushi Dalai Lama 五世達賴喇嘛, *Xizang Wang Chen Ji* 西藏王臣記, p. 44.

statement, this means that he held that Pehar had come chasing after the valuables from Bha ta Hor instead of following Dharmapāla, the princely descent of Za hor. The Fifth Dalai Lama's allegation is consistent with those illustrated in *Zangs gling ma* and *Padma bka' thang*; in other words, it agreed with what was passed on in the *gter ma* tradition, but not in agreement with the viewpoint presented by *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long*, that Pehar came from Za hor. As for the third statement regarding Pehar's escaping from Tibet, the Fifth Dalai Lama merely asserted that the sequence of the events claimed in the second and the third statements seemed to be acceptable. The biography of the Fifth Dalai Lama helps to clarify this vague argument. In this work the statement that Pe kar came to Tibet from Za hor of India was clearly rejected: "If one admits that the hermitage of Pekar was in India, one would contradict the story of the image of rNam thos sras in the country of lJang." Then the story about Vaishravana, the God of Wealth (rNam thos sras) was told, and Pehar and Dharmapāla were included in the story:

Then the great ācārya evoked rNam thos sras with his eight horsemen and actually showed them to the king and the ministers and gave him orders With such a numberless army he (the prince Mu rugs btsan po) plundered China, Hor and Gru gu. The king Pe kar was afraid and fled away changing his body into that of a vulture. But a gNod sbyin hit him with an arrow on his wing; so he fell down and was caught by rNam thos sras and led to bSam yas. ... Since Pe kar caused by magic madness and epidemics, the great ācārya compelled him to fly away ... Be it as it may, the Abbot, the ācārya and the king agreed in sending a messenger in order to invite Dharmapāla of the royal lineage of Za hor, so that he might come from his hermitage of Hor. Pe kar was very affectionate to him: he therefore took a self-made image of the ascetic made of turquoise, a mask called *se 'bag* and a lion of rock crystal and said: "You are invited as a guardian of bSam yas; I as a god will go with you, a man." So he went to bSam yas riding a wooden bird.⁴²

Although some points in it contradict the narrations in the *Annals*, this paragraph, which is full of legendary atmosphere, clarifies the sequence problem mentioned above. Pehar was previously summoned to Tibet. However, due to his tremendous viciousness, Padmasambhava compelled him to leave. Later he accompanied Dharmapāla of Za hor to arrive at Tibet again. Pehar's twice arriving at Tibet was narrated in another place of the *Annals* where Pehar was brought up a second time as the guardian of the bSam yas temple:

Pe dkar has been summoned by the great Master in meditative absorption and came to Tibet once. But he appeared as excessively ferocious. Later the three [personages]: the Abbot, the Master and the Dharma [King], sent a messenger to Za hor. The king Dharmapāla, together with a naturally formed Buddha [statue] of turquoise, a face image [namely] a mask made of tanned leather, a mount [namely] a crystal lion, has taken the lead, Pe kar also rode on a wooden bird adorned with jewels. Thus the god and the man arrived at Tibet. The great Master placed a *vajra* at the crown of [Pehar's] head and proclaimed the oaths.⁴³

⁴² Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (Kyoto: Rinsen Book Co., reprint 1980), pp. 734-735.

⁴³ *slob dpon chen pos ting nge 'dzin gyis pe dkar bkug nas lan cig bod du 'ongs kyang ha cang gdug rtsub che bar byung zhiing / slar mkhan slob chos gsum gyis za hor du pho nya mngags nas/ rgyal po dharma pa la/ g.yu'i thub pa rang byon/ zhal brnyan bse 'bag chibs shel gyi seng ge dang bcas te*

According to this paragraph, Pehar was originally an evil spirit and came to Tibet once, before accompanying the Za hor king Dharmapāla to Tibet later. It is thus comprehensible that the key point of the Fifth Dalai Lama's abovementioned rejection in the second statement is on the argument of Pehar's accompanying Dharmapāla from Za hor. In his perspective, Pehar was from Bha ta Hor and before being converted to become a protector of Buddhist teaching, Pehar had been subjugated by Padmasambhava.⁴⁴

Tibetan scholars' opinions on the question about from where Pehar had come are observable in two lines, either from Za hor or from Bha ta Hor. Where are Za hor and Bha ta Hor actually located? Tibetan scholars generally hold that Za hor is located in India. However, scholars from different religious traditions have inconsistent views regarding its exact location. The dGe lugs pa scholars believe that Za hor is the birth place of Atīśa (982-1054), about the district of Vikrampur in eastern Bengal. The Fifth Dalai Lama placed Za hor in Bengal in the east of Bodhgaya. The rNying ma pa and bKa' brgyud pa scholars on the other hand deem that the location of Za hor is in the vicinity of Uḍḍiyāna, the place where Padmasambhava originated, in the north.⁴⁵ Regardless where in India Za hor was exactly locates, the Fifth Dalai Lama refuted that Pehar came from India in the south, but rather declared that Pehar came from Bha ta Hor. Some Tibetans were of the opinion that Bha ta Hor was in a corner region of China.⁴⁶ Modern western scholars have pointed out that Bha ta Hor refers to some nomadic tribe located near Lake Baikal,⁴⁷ which is in the Siberia region to the north of Tibet.

About 100 years after the Fifth Dalai Lama, the famous dGe lugs pa scholar and reincarnated Lama Sum pa mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor (1704-1788) wrote in his work *'Phags yul rgya nag chen po bod dang sog yul du dam pa'i chos 'byung tshul dpag bsam ljon bzang* (1748) about the construction of the bSam yas temple and stated that after the construction work was completed, in "dkor mdzod dpe har gling" (Chest for temple property, dPe har sacturary) treasures were placed and Pehar was entrusted as a "nor bdag" (custodian of riches). In addition, Ye shes dpal 'byor mentioned a statement concerning Dharmapāla and Pe dkar. There were two Dharmapālas according to this statement. The first one was in the direct line of the family lineage of the Za hor king Dza'i bu: they were in sequence Indrabhuti,

sna drangs pas pe kar yang rin po ches spras pa'i shing bya la zhon nas lha mi rnams bod du byon/ slob dpon chen pos spyi bor rdo rje bzhag ste dam tshig bsgrags/. See Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, *rGyal rabs dPyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs* (The Tibetan & Himalayan Digital Library, http://old.thdl.org/xml/showEssay.php?xml=/collections/history/texts/5th_dl_history_text.xml&m=all). See also Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, p. 643. For Chinese translation, see Wushi Dalai Lama 五世達賴喇嘛, *Xizang Wang Chen Ji* 西藏王臣記, p. 107.

⁴⁴ The argument that Pehar originated from Bha ta Hor was confirmed by the regent of the Fifth Dalai Lama, see Sangs-rGyas rGya-mTSHo, *Life of the Fifth Dalai Lama*, trans. by Zahiruddin Ahmad (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture and Aditya Prakashan, 1999), p. 253.

⁴⁵ Western scholars' opinions to this question are also very diverse. Some regard Za hor as Mandi, others equate Za hor with Sabhar in eastern Bengal. For related discussion, see Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, p. 734.

⁴⁶ See note 48.

⁴⁷ Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, p. 736.

Shakraprate, gTsug lag khang 'dzin, Dharmarāja, and Dharmapāla. This Dharmapāla moved from Bengal to China and stayed in the meditation center of Bha ta Hor, which is in the corner region of China. The second Dharmapāla originated from this emigrant lineage. A man who brought a naturally appeared Buddha statue of turquoise, three masks made of tanned leather and three crystal lions and King Pe dkar who came following valuables and riding on a wooden bird were also from this lineage. Ye shes dpal 'byor commented that this statement is doubtful.⁴⁸ This interesting statement, indicating the location of Bha ta Hor as inside of China, demonstrated the expanding contents of the story about the connection between Dharmapāla and Pehar. Regarding the question about where Pehar had come from, Ye shes dpal 'byor claimed that Pehar was from Yu gur:

Some said that the Abbot, the Master, and the King have sent a messenger and requested from Bha ta [Hor] a Buddha [statue] of turquoise and so on. Afterwards one of the kings of ghosts—white, black, yellow and the rest—of Yu gur came to Tibet and was entrusted as the custodian of religious property. Concerning this statement, it is true. This [king of ghosts] is renowned as "Pehar"—the corrupted words of Bi hā ra—or "Pe dkar".⁴⁹

This passage has an additional statement which refers to the place where the Tibetan messenger has gone being Bha ta Hor instead of Za hor, a great difference from the statements in the *Annals* of the Fifth Dalai Lama. In addition, this statement has brought up new notions concerning from where and how Pehar had come to Tibet, and these were validated by Ye shes dpal 'byor. Although Ye shes dpal 'byor agreed that Pehar was commissioned as a foreign protector to be the custodian of the treasury of bSam yas temple, he held that Pehar was not from Bha ta Hor, but rather from Yu gur in central Asia. His point of view had something in common with that of the Fifth Dalai Lama. They both held that Pehar came from the north, not from the south, a seeming differentiation between Pehar's origin and the origin of Buddhism, which might suggest that although having become an important protector of Buddhist teaching, Pehar originally had in fact nothing to do with India, the place of origin of Buddhism.

⁴⁸ *de yang kha cig gis thog mar slob dpon pad mas klu rgyal zur phud lnga pa dkar bdag du bskos tshe klu des dmya rigs klu tsha rgyal po hu zhes pa hor yul du yod pa de bskos zhus pas rgyal po la slob dpon gyis nam sras gnang ba phyar dar la bris te de bzung nas dmag bcas hor mi nyag gis yul du song nas sngon gyi za hor rgyal po dza'i bu rgyud kyi rigs rim par in dra bhu ti dang shakra pra te dang gtsug lag khang 'dzin dang dha rma rā dza dang dha rma pa la zhes pa byung ba'i phyi ma de bhang ga la nas rgya nag tu byon te nag gru phyogs kyi bha ta hor gyi sgom grwar bzhugs pa las brgyud pa'i dha rma pa la phyi ma zhig dang g.yu'i thub pa rang byon bse gsum shel seng gsum khyer 'ong ba'i mi dang nor rdzas kyis rjes su 'brangs nas shing bya zhon 'ongs pa'i rgyal po pe dkar yin la/ dharmā pā la de'i brgyud deng sang yar klungs 'khyod rkyar yod zer yang de som nyi'i gzhi yin zhing/. See Sumpa Khan-po Yeçe Pal Jor, *Pag Sam Jon Zang*. 2 vols. Part II History of Tibet from Early Times to 1745 A.D., ed. by Sarat Chandra Das (Calcutta: Presidency Jail Press, 1908), p. 172. For Chinese translation, see Songba Kanbu Yixi Banjue 松巴堪布·益希班覺, *Ruyi Baoshu Shi* 如意寶樹史, trans. by Pu Wencheng & Cairang 蒲文成、才讓 (Lanzhou 蘭州: Gansu Minzu Chubanshe 甘肅民族出版社, 1994), p. 292.*

⁴⁹ 'ga' zhig gis mkhan slob rgyal gsum gyis pho nya btang ste bha ta nas g.yu'i thub sogs gdan drangs pa'i rjes su yu gur gyi 'dre rgyal dkar nag ser sogs yod pa'i nang gi gcig bod du 'ong ba de dkar bdag la bskos zer ba ni bden zhing de la bi hā ra zur chag pe har ram pe dkar zhes grags so/. See Sumpa Khan-po Yeçe Pal Jor, *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, p. 172. For Chinese translation, see Songba Kanbu Yixi Banjue 松巴堪布·益希班覺, *Ruyi Baoshu Shi* 如意寶樹史, p. 293.

After the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama, from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, scholars continuously composed writings about Pehar. The contents of these writings are mostly related to rituals. Apart from some rNying ma pa authors, most of the works were completed by dGe lugs pa scholars, including regents, reincarnated lamas, and abbots etc; most of them were eminent and influential personages in Tibetan politics and society.⁵⁰ Their identities and writings revealed the special relationship between Pehar and the dGe lugs pa government, which indicated at the same time that Pehar's having become a popular object of worship in Tibet has a strong connection with the support of the dGe lugs pas.

The Fifth Dalai Lama, Ye shes dpal 'byor, and most of the scholars who composed rituals related to Pehar belonged to the dGe lugs pa school. Their descriptions regarding Pehar are alike: Pehar was a protector of Buddhist teaching who was commissioned to be the guardian of bSam yas temple at the time when King Khri srong lde brtsan constructed the first Buddhist temple in Tibet. These statements clearly diverged from the accounts in earlier literature discussed above; however; it spread widely later and became known to the majority of the Tibetan people.⁵¹

Concluding Remarks

Since Tibet was under the rule of the Fifth Dalai Lama around the seventeenth century, the guardian deity Pehar has occupied a particular position in the Tibetan politics. Pehar's prophecies have influenced important policies of the Tibetan government as well as the development of Tibetan history. However, according to the descriptions in the Tibetan literature, this guardian deity who has played a significant role in the reins of the dGe lugs pa government had originally no relationship with Tibetan Buddhism.

Narrations about Pehar were found in the Tibetan literature as early as the second half of the eleventh century. This date is about the same time as the Tibetan Dun-huang documents, the earliest (thus far) datable Tibetan

⁵⁰ The database of TBRC (The Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center) includes several Tibetan literatures that are related to Pehar. They are listed in chronological order with author's name and title as follows: Padma 'phrin las (1641-1717, important scholar of rNying ma pa school, student of the Fifth Dalai Lama): *Pe har gyi dkor mdos zin bris*; Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653-1705, regent and student of the Fifth Dalai Lama): *gNas chung pe har lcoq gi dkar chag sa gsum g.yo ba'i nga ro*; lCang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje (1717-1786, the third lCang skya Ho thog thu): *Pe har sku lnga'i gtor 'bul*; Ngag dbang chos 'phel (1760-1839; dGa' ldan khri 1822-1828): *Pe har gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa kha skong*; bsTan pa'i mgon po (1760-1810, student of Rol pa'i rdo rje and Ngag dbang chos 'phel, important dGe lugs pa incarnation and the first rTa tshag regent of Tibet): *Pe har sogs sku lnga'i gsol mchod*; Ngag dbang dpal ldan (1797-?, important dGe lugs pa teacher): *Pe har chos skyong la gser skyems 'bul ba'i cho ga*; 'Jam dbyangs 'phrin las (beginning of the 19th century -?): *Pe har sku lnga'i gsol mchod*; 'Jam dpal bstan pa'i dngos grub (1876-1922, the fourth Gar dbang incarnation): *Pe har sku lnga'i gtor bzlog gi bca' bsgrigs zin bris*; Ngag dbang dpal bzang (1879-1941, lineage holder of the Ka thog tradition of rNying ma pa): *Pe har gyi gsol mchod*; Ngag dbang blo bzang don grub (birth 19th cent.): *Pe har gyi sgo nas gtor bzlog bya tshul*; Ngag dbang ye shes thub bstan (birth 19 cent.): *Pe har sku lnga'i thugs rten*.

⁵¹ For a discussion on the Tibetan folklore about Pehar, see Lin Shenyu 林純瑜, "Guardian Deity Pehar and Tibetan Politics 貝哈護法神與西藏政治", *Taiwan Journal of Religious Studies* 臺灣宗教研究 8.1 (2009): 119-123.

literature.⁵² Accounts of Pehar in earlier literature have demonstrated a completely different picture of Pehar from that which was drawn in later writings composed by Buddhist historians. Between the second half of the eleventh and the middle of the thirteenth centuries, Pehar was portrayed in some literature as having the power of transformation and playing the role of misleading people, especially practitioners, so that Pehar can be regarded as a representation of "impure lineages", "unorthodox traditions", "popular beliefs", and even "non-Buddhist mystic powers". Around the same time or maybe sometime later, Pehar acquired a new image in the Tibetan *gter ma* literature. *Zangs gling ma* has associated Pehar with the first Tibetan Buddhist temple bSam yas. Pehar was bound under oath by Padmasambhava to be the temple guardian. *Padma bka' thang* gives more details about Pehar's temperament and relationship with Buddhism. Pehar has an instinct to harm living beings. Owing to the magic power of Padmasambhava, Pehar was converted into a guardian of the first Tibetan Buddhist temple bSam yas and was bound under oath to protect Buddhist teachings. Although having become a Buddhist guardian, this spirit with an evil nature could cause terrible harm when being offended. Pehar's evil characteristics are also described in the religious literature called "*rgyal mdos*", in which Pehar is regarded as the leader of the *rgyal po*-demons.⁵³ Pehar could bring epidemics, cause insanity and other illness as retaliation to the imposed insult. When this happens, a ritual object named "*rgyal mdos*" must be made and certain rituals must be executed in order to pacify Pehar and thereby eliminate disasters.⁵⁴

Before the Fifth Dalai Lama's rule in the seventeenth century, Pehar was actually not acknowledged by the Tibetan intellectuals as an important protector of Tibetan Buddhism. Not many historical writings have depicted Pehar as a guardian deity of bSam yas. The small number of historical literatures that have referred to Pehar while delineating the construction of the first Tibetan Buddhist temple bSam yas either belonged outside the "mainstream" tradition or are renowned for utilizing special sources as reference materials. With the Fifth Dalai Lama's coming to power, Pehar's role changed significantly. In his writings the Fifth Dalai Lama not only affirmed Pehar's identity as a protective deity of Buddhism, but also remarked on how Pehar had come to Tibet. At the same time, the state oracle gNas chung had begun to convey messages from Pehar. After the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama, many important figures who played key roles in the political and social fields of Tibet successively composed various ritual-texts for praising Pehar as a Buddhist protector, while Pehar has repeatedly given crucial advice to the questions raised by the Dalai Lamas or the government officials. The fact that Pehar had become an object of popular worship in Tibet apparently has a close connection with the promotion and support of the dGe lugs pa school. From being described as a representative of unorthodox, non-Buddhist, popular beliefs and completely repudiated by Buddhist scholars, to becoming the most important guardian deity of Tibetan Buddhism with frequent influence on the decision-making of the

⁵² Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp, "Tibetan Historiography", in *Tibetan Literature, Studies in Genre*, edited by José Ignacio Cabezón and Roger R. Jackson, pp. 39-40.

⁵³ René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*, p. 96.

⁵⁴ Samten Karmay, "The Man and the Ox: a Ritual for Offering the glud", pp. 359, 362.

Tibetan government, Pehar has played an extraordinary role in the Tibetan literature as well as in the history of Tibet. The processes of Pehar's role-change manifest the flexibility and adaptation of Tibetan Buddhism in accepting folk beliefs in spirits. It is exactly this inclusiveness developed during the dissemination of Buddhist teaching that has allowed Buddhism to demonstrate its versatility in the Tibetan culture.

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