THE GRAVES OF THE CHIEF MINISTERS OF THE TIBETAN EMPIRE
MAPPING CHAPTER TWO OF THE *OLD TIBETAN CHRONICLE* IN THE LIGHT OF THE EVIDENCE OF THE TIBETAN TUMULUS TRADITION

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Introduction[1]

Chapter two of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* (PT 1287: l.63-117; hereafter *OTC.2*)[2] is well known as the short paragraph that lists the succession of Tibet's chief ministers (*blon che*, *blon chen* [*po*]) – alternatively rendered as "prime minister" or "grand chancellor" in the English literature. Altogether 38 such appointments among nineteen families are recorded from the time of the Yar lung king called Lde Pru bo Gnam gzhung rtsan until the end of the Tibetan empire in the mid-ninth century.

This sequence is conveyed in a continuum that does not distinguish between the developments before and after the founding of the empire. Only indirectly is there a line that specifies the first twelve ministers as a separate group – as those who were endowed with

[1] The resarch for this chapter was conducted within the framework of the two projects "The Burial Mounds of Central Tibet", parts I and II (financed by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF); FWF P 25066, P 30393; see fn. 2) and "Materiality and Material Culture in Tibet" (Austrian Academy of Sciences (AAS) project, IF_2015_28) – both based at the Institute for Social Anthropology at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. I wish to thank Joanna Bialek, Per K. Sørensen, and Christian Jahoda for their valuable comments on the drafts of this paper, and J. Bialek especially for her assistance with lingustic issues. Thanks are also due to Hou Haoran for making Chinese sources accessible to me.

[2] In addition to PT 1287 the "Old Tibetan Chronicle" also includes the documents PT 1286 (*TDD* 197-199) plus the (older) *Chronicle* fragments ITJ 1375 and PT 1144 (cf. Dotson 2011a), but in the following *OTC* refers only to PT 1287. The references follow the chapter divisions 1-10 in Bacot *et al*. 1940-46, irrespective of their partly chronological disorder (cf. Uray 1992). There are numerous studies related to this first narrative history of Tibet's past (composed in the mid-ninth century at the earliest) – from Uray to Dotson to mention only two scholars who have made special contributions to identifying the history, structure and nature of this text and its sources (Uray 1972, 1992; Dotson 2007a, 2011, 2016 [in Dotson and Helman-Ważny 2016]). A full translation of PT 1287 is given in Bacot *et al*. 1940-46; largely also in Drikung 2011 (chap. 2-10). A comprehensive study on the *OTC* by Dotson (based on his *Habilitationsschrift*, not seen by the author of the present study) is said to be forthcoming.

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magical power, with the addition that (later) no man was born anymore who could compete with them. This era can be easily identified as the pre-imperial period of the Yar lung principality, while the subsequent seven ministers (nos. 13-19) are to be attributed to the early phase of the empire, before, with Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung (no. 20), the list overlaps with the period of the *Old Tibetan Annal*s (*OTA* – the most important comparative source for the historical period), and the position of chief minister appears for the first time in the entry of 652-53 (Table 1). It seems clear that "chief minister" in this early chiefdom period (nos. 1-12) meant something different compared to the time of the empire, if it is not in itself a back projection of later realities, parallel to the likewise anachronistic form of *btsan po*, Mighty One, i.e. emperor, which is sometimes found in later chronicles but also in *OTC* as a designation of the rulers of this epoch. But also for this second phase (nos. 13-19) it is questionable whether the post of chief minister already existed in the form described in the *OTA*. In fact, during this period there are indications in the sources that point to a juxtaposition of central ministers, who partly shared the responsibility in administrating the core regions in a spatial division before, in the middle of the seventh century, this paramount figure of the *blon chen* can be clearly identified historically.

This "account of those who served as chief ministers" (*blon che brgyis pa'i rabs*; Dotson 2009: 150) is actually a fairly condensed catalogue. Apart from a few anecdotes and the brief statement about disgraced ministers, the text does not include any further comments.[3] So

[3] In its form the *blon che brgyis pa'i rabs* seems to have no parallels in the historical tradition concerning Tibet's ministers. There have evidently been several minister accounts available by the late ninth century, explicitly mentioned as models in the representations in later sources are the records of the Buddhist scribe Ldan ma Rtse rma[ng], i.e. the (lost) "king's catalogue" (*rgyal po'i dkar chag*) *Thang yig chen mo*, said to be composed at the time of Mu tig btsan po (= Khri Lde srong brtsan, d. 815). Cf. Sørensen 1994: 177 (fn. 500), 541-42. This *dkar chag* was reportedly recovered by O rgyan Gling pa, who extensively used it in his accounts of the ministers included in the *Bka' thang sde lnga* (*KT*), notably in the fifth book, the *Blon po bka'i thang* (*BK*; esp. Chap. 3 (the chapter about the origin of the ministers; *KT*: 436-37 – henceforth *BK.3*) and Chap. 19 (about the minister's accomplishments; *KT*: 489-91 – henceforth *BK.19*); see also *Rgyal po bka'i thang*, *KT*: 88. These representations (as well as those in other post-dynastic history books) are important comparative sources but do not include any account of the chief ministers. *BK.3* is a chronologically disordered listing of 61 ministers among 14 families, where the title *blon chen* does not even appear. (There is talk about the "five classes of ministers", starting with *gung blon* ("central" or "high minister", a term also known from the *Chronicle* and edicts yet without being used as equivalent to *blon chen*), followed by *spyi blon*, *dbang blon*, *nang blon*, and *bka' blon*). *BK.19* again provides interesting anecdotes to leading ministers of Khri Srong lde brtsan (cf. Drikung 2011: 100ff.), representing more or less authentic reflections from the time of Ldan ma Rtse rmang in the early ninth century, and in this sense complements *OTC.2*, where, strikingly, no anec-

how are we to speak about the graves of the chief ministers if the main source says nothing about them? Moreover, there are hardly any clear indications in this respect in the other chapters of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* either, nor generally in Old Tibetan documents and the later sources. In contrast to the tombs of the royal family, there was evidently never an account of the tombs of Tibet's chief ministers.

Our source is the database of the "Tibetan Tumulus Tradition" (hereafter TTT) – a list of the burial-mound fields of Central Tibet, which in the meantime comprises more than 550 entries (grave fields nos. 0001-0562, but see Addendum below), based on information from *in situ* surveys, satellite imagery and the additions from Chinese archaeological documentations.[4] The analysis of data related to the geographical position of the burial mound sites and their specific historical contexts etc. has already enabled a more detailed determination of "elite grave mounds", with several notable indications for the identification of lineage-specific cemeteries (Hazod 2018; Hazod, in press). Moreover, the tomb of one chief minister had already been identified much earlier (no. 33), providing important indications for the work at hand as to which particular category of burial mound can be expected.

To map *OTC.2* in connection with the issue of localising the chief ministers' graves methodologically entailed a certain shift compared to earlier TTT studies, as it suggested not starting from the burial-mound sites themselves, but from the text. Here that means first to clarify the information on the individual family histories, and only in a second step to contrast the information with the evidence of elite mounds as they are more or less well documented today. In this way, some plausible approaches can be made. In some cases, not only can we isolate the possible tumulus field, but even, on the basis of certain statistical criteria, point to the grave that in all likelihood should belong to the chief minister in question. However, the issue of identification is not the only point. Even if all the graves concerned were to be surveyed by excavations, – something, which will never happen, – the looted remains would probably not yield concrete evidence con-

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dotes are mentioned for the later ministers of the eighth and ninth centuries. In all, *OTC.2* (combined with the most reliable information from the *Annals*; cf. here Dotson 2009: 150-53) apparently represents the only source with regard to the succession and chronology of Tibet's chief ministers.

[4] See the project website https://www.oeaw.ac.at/tibetantumulustradition for details on the individual sites, the circumstances of their finding, the current state of documentation, etc. This research project, entitled "The Burial Mounds of Central Tibet", started in 2013 (based on previous surveys by the author) and is currently in its second phase, both parts financed by the Austrian Science Fund: FWF P 25066 (2013-17); P 30393 (2017-21).

firming the proposed identification. We see the additional benefit of this study in the many by-products that result from these approaches. In addition to the concretisation of many isolated data from our TTT archive, we are now receiving new information on the spatial distribution of the aristocratic families, their relationship among themselves, and the mechanisms of governance around one of the most dazzling figures from the time of the Tibetan empire.

The present study is divided into three parts. In several introductory chapters the first examines the criteria determining "chief minister tomb". This is followed by the main part – a presentation of the chief ministers of the empire era (= nos. 13-38), which apart from chronological issues focuses on clarifying the individual territorial links of the minister's families, in connection with the overall goal of narrowing down the possible burial-ground candidates from the present TTT list. (Cross-references to individual minister-paragraphs are indicated by ">"; e.g. "> 13"). Part Three consists of two appendices – an annex, which lists in tabular form the major tumulus fields of Central Tibet, and the documentation part with the graphical illustrations of the burial mound sites and their historical settings discussed in this study. This combination of data from historical ethnography, archaeology and text actually goes beyond a mapping of *OTC.2* as it naturally includes information from related sources, foremost from the *OTA* (in Dotson 2009) and the other chapters of PT 1287 (*OTC.1-10*).

PART ONE

Combining *OTC.2* and the TTT data

1. The families of the chief ministers

The succession of chief ministers comprises a history parallel to the *Royal Genealogies* (in PT 1286; above fn. 2), only that it starts with the reign of Lde Pru bo Gnam gzhung btsan, the sixteenth Yar lung king in PT 1286, known from the representation in later chronicles as the first listed in the group of the Eight Lde (kings) (Lde Brgyad; Haarh 1969: 48, *et passim*). Yamaguchi (1992: 70) believes he is identical with Sha khri alias Spu lde Gung rgyal, the actual progenitor of the Yar lung dynasty, whom he places in the sixth generation preceding Srong btsan Sgam po (d. 649). This is not very convincing, as it ignores the previous generations of the royal genealogy, although it is clear that (in the portrayals of the later sources) there are certain correlations between several kings of the early generation.[5]

These early kings actually extend chronologically into a not exactly comprehensible pre-historical period (often described as mythical), before with Lha Tho do Snya brtsan (no. 26 in PT 1286) the account starts to overlap with history in the narrower sense. In the classical chronicles, this ruler forms the bridge between the previous group of the "Five (others have Three) Mighty Ones" (Btsan Lnga) and the successor *rgyal po* Khri Snya zung brtsan. The Btsan lnga are said to have been the first to be buried in grave mounds (*bang so*; *mchad kha*), namely in Upper 'Phyong po, whereas under Khri Snya zung brtsan the grave field next to the Tiger Castle of Phying ba (Phying ba'i Stag rtse), already used for queens of previous rulers, was extended to serve as a necropolis for the royal family until the end of the dynasty (Hazod 2018: App. I). His son and successor, 'Bro Mnyan Lde ru (no. 28), finally represents the first historical reference point in *OTC.2*. The seventh "chief minister" (one of the Mthon family), whose tenure can be dated approximately to the early sixth century (Table 1), served during the reign of this ruler (anachronistically described as *btsan po*).

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[5] This is to be found, for example, in the establishment of the Yar lung centre of "Yar mo sna bzhi" represented by the founding of four s*ku mkhar* (personal castles) in Lower Yar lung ascribed to four of the early kings – Gri gum btsan po, Spu lde Gung rgyal, Lde Pru bo Gnam gzhung btsan and Lha Tho tho ri Gnyan btsan (cf. TF: 228-29). This establishment (of which the castle of Yum bu Bla sgang is the only remaining evidence) may be related to the first considerable extension of the *spu rgyal* dominion, possibly corresponding to the kingdom's affinal links to neighbouring areas (Skyi, Dags, G.ye and Mchims) as expressed in the *gna' gnyen mtha' bzhi rabs* at the beginning of PT 1286 (Hazod 2009: 170).

In contrast to the kings of the "mythical period", the names of their chief ministers are not shrouded in darkness; with the exception of the first minister,[6] they relate to (paternal) families (or lineages, *rus*),[7] which all are well known from later contexts. A number of the families who played a leading role in the empire era was already connected in one way or another with the royal family of Yar lung, such as the Rngegs, Khu, Lho, Gnubs, Mthon, Sna nam, Shud phu, 'O ma lde (mentioned as bride-giver lineage to Yar lung rulers in the period of the "mythical" Lde Brgyad and Btsan Lnga; >19), Mchims, Mgos or 'Bal. For convenience we will describe these as the "southern families", in contrast to the "northern families", who were in the service of the (northern) kingdoms (Klum ro and Ngas po) before they entered the circle of the governmental and military aristocracy following the conquest of these regions (such as Myang, Dba's, Mnon, Tshes pong). For some lines the allocation is not so clear, but in any case they all had very early branch territories in Central Tibet, including those who are at the same time associated with historical contexts outside Central Tibet (such as the Khyung po – associated with the West Tibetan Zhang zhung). Others were already involved in prehistorical period in both areas north and south of the Gtsang po (Myang, Mgar, Pa tshab, 'Bro etc.). Such divisions should not be seen as strict, since southern families were also present in the north, etc., through affinal relations for example, but as a basic orientation it methodically helps us confining the territorial links of the chief ministers' families with regard to the determination of the relevant burial-mound sites.

It is interesting to observe that the genealogy and history of most of these families is to be located in the relatively small geographical

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6 I.e. Stong dang rje, the son of 'Da'r (*'da'r gyi bu stong dang rje*). To my knowledge, this 'Da'r family or lineage is otherwise not attested; what is likely is that it came from Yar lung / 'Phyong po; perhaps the name is related to the legendary Da gelypo, "king of Da (Mda')" (Mdar / 'Da'r?), which the local traditon associates with ruins in Da, a side valley on the upper reaches of the Yar lha Sham chu (not far upstream of G.ya' bzang); CFS: 83, 206. The form 'Dar is known as place name in Gtsang (TF: 282, fn. 104).

7 The *rus* part in the *thabs rus mkhan mying* compound in the naming of Tibetan nobles and officials (cf. Richardson 1998: 12ff.) is usually rendered as "clan" in the literature. For the present context we prefer to speak of family or lineage, with the latter being restricted to the meaning of the wider lineal and collateral complex of the paternal family. This does not exclude the closer clan-specific characteristics (in an anthropological sense) in the *rus* conceptions, such as a common apical ancestor linking the spatially widely ramified family lines; but this is nothing that is explicitly addressed in the sources used for the present study. Cf. recently the observations in Hazod 2018: 17ff. On "clan" in Tibet see most recently the discussions in Samuels 2016, Langelaar 2017; see also Jahoda 2017 (related to the early West Tibetan historical context).

area of Upper (= western) G.yo ru (Left Horn) and Dbu ru (Central Horn), an area, where at the same time we find the highest concentration of tumulus sites. In the case of several chief ministers their origin can in fact be attributed to a narrower genealogical segment of their respective lineages. Thus the Dba's chief ministers and most of the leading *zhang lon* of this lineage were most likely all members of the *bu tsha rgyud* (i.e. linear and collateral descendants) of the famous ally Dba's Dbyi tshab, whose homeland (and homeland of his brother line) is fairly well established (> 24). Similar indications are also to be found in other families, and one realises that it was ultimately a relatively small number of families who shared the highest positions in the area of governmental and military services. (Some acted at the same time as bride-giver (and also bride-taker) to the royal family). Thus the families of the chief ministers, so it seems, had been living in Central Tibet since the beginning of the period covered by *OTC.2* – in an area (largely the modern Dbus Gtsang provinces), which sometime in the seventh century became known internally as the land of Bod.

2. The chief minister and the issue of loyalty and disgrace

The chief minister of the empire era was the highest position of the ministerial aristocracy (*zhang lon*). In documents related to the eighth century, he ranked as the first in the group of the four great *zhang lon* (*zhang blon chen po bzhi*), followed by the great interior minister (2), the mother-brother minister of the *btsan po* endowed with political authority (3), and the deputy to the chief minister (4). A series of further gradation of elites followed, each with a specific insignia, and the groups ranking outside the *zhang lon* class are also defined (military and civil subjects and various classes of bond servants), since they were part of the obligations under the legal system expressed in these documents, which necessarily included all members of society.[8] The ranking system in these documents refers to a specific phase of the empire, and is not readily applicable to situations of the seventh century, at a time when for example the post of the maternal uncle of the *btsan po* in the form of a high-ranking political authority may even not have existed (> 13, 23). In any case, from the very beginning

[8] See Dotson 2009: 60f. for the *zhang lon* rank system and the social strata as delineated in legal documents (most explicitely in PT 1071) and Dotson 2007a (pp. 114-122, 218-226) for a broader discussion of related classifications of the ministerial aristocracy to be found in (imperial and post-imperial) sources. Cf. also Pezhung 2013: 120-184, Lin Guanqun 2015, and Drolma Tsering 2016: 377-425 for more recent Tibetan and Chinese studies on this subject.

of this post's explicit naming in the *OTA* we encounter the chief minister as the undisputed leading figure of the ministerial aristocracy in the period of the empire, although later, with the introduction of the great monk (minister) (*bande chen po*) in the early ninth century, this supremacy became virtually undermined, something that, as we know, caused enormous problems (> 38).

The uniqueness of the *blon chen* position is not least reflected in the fact that none of the *zhang lon* were more exposed to intrigues than the chief minister – frequently with fatal consequences. More than half the chief ministers of the imperial period are recorded as having been accused and reprimanded, i.e. executed, or driven to suicide. The accusation obviously concerned disloyalty, but with few exceptions the actual background is not mentioned at all.

Loyalty to the emperor throne formed the central element in the political architecture of the Tibetan kingdom, and the generous gifts granted by the Tibetan emperor to his sworn allies and their descendants in the form of privileges and territorial rights, much documented in Old Tibetan sources, are to be seen as the crucial means in establishing ties that enables continuity over generations. This form of ensuring authority, which prevents groups from dissolving original alliances, has clear parallels in the various (often only short-lived) post-Xiongnu "Silk Road empires", to whose common Central Asian historical genealogy Tibet also belonged (Beckwith 2009).

The principal task of the chief minister was to summon and preside over the council, the central governmental body – in Bod yul (Central Tibet), sometimes also in Mdo smad – which in his absence would normally have been assumed by the deputy. (The chief minister is also recorded in the *Annals* (twice) as the leader of great hunts, with the hunt having formed a key institition that seems to have been closely connected to the council, at least they shared the same place if we read the numerous assembly sites specified as "*tshal*" (grove, park) as [hunting] park; Dotson 2013a: 70; Hazod 2018: 54ff.) And the chief minister was at the same time, if not primarily, holding a military position closely linked to the idealised concept of a great warrior. In fact, in addition to belonging to one of the *zhang lon* families, a rising military career would apparently have been a prerequisite for moving into the closer circle of chief minister candidates. In some cases, this dual function of official and leading army commander seems to have created a particular degree of power concentration. The troops under the command of a chief minister could comprise entire provinces of military thousand districts: 90,000, 150,000 and even more troops are mentioned, which over the years may have constituted a conspiratorial clique around the army commander – something which was obviously seen as a potential danger to and

questioning of the authority of the throne. The most famous example of such a charismatic warlord plus chief minister was the disgraced Mgar Khri 'bring Btsan brod (> 22). He was apparently loyal to the end, but what was exceptional (and ultimately led to the deployment of the emperor's troops against him) was that he ignored the summons to the emperor' court, where the accusation awaited him. The situations alluded in *OTA* entries where a chief minister was suddenly subject to an accusation after his return from military operations possibly had a similar background, suggesting that accusations of disloyalty were a suitable means of preventing any possible turning away from the authority of the throne.

In the literature one often finds the conclusion that the leading families or "clans" were fighting for the highest offices to increase their influence at the court, and cases in which the chief minister was instrumental in the disgrace of the predecessor, or acted even as his executioner, seem to underline this. In any case, advancing to this post, in which the chances of survival were not too great, can be interpreted as a testimony of loyalty to the Mighty One, in whose sacred body the entire identity of the aristocratic world was believed to have manifested itself. The kingdom's central mythical formula of the divine ancestor as the one "who comes from heaven to earth as the lord of men" (Hill 2013) was indeed all-embracing, as the presence of the *btsan po* guaranteed the maintenance of social convention, the good custom, which undoubtedly included also the practice of the funeral and, correlating to this, the idea of paradise in which society found its heavenly place (Hazod 2018: 54ff.). There is no evidence in the sources that the branding of disloyalty was a moral barrier to participating in the social world of the Great Beyond. We thus also assume that each of the disgraced chief ministers was conventionally buried (in a tumulus). The example of the burial of the disgraced Sna nam Zhang Ma zhang (*Mang zham) Grom pa skyes, a member of the *zhang blon chen po bzhi*, clearly underlines this assumption. Even more, the history of this funeral points to the fact that the graves of the higher *zhang lon* were built during their lifetimes, which is also indicated with other *zhang lon* burials (> 24, 34).

3. The distribution of burial mounds in the Highlands: principal conclusions

As is well known, apart from Central Tibet there is another similar dense, albeit much smaller tumulus landscape located in the former core region of the Tuyuhun ('A zha yul), in present-day Dulan and Ulan counties (SW of Kokonor), with largely the same chronology

and also a similar appearance of (mostly trapezoidal) elite mounds of different sizes, although the graves have certain differences in construction, partly due to different material used in this context (Feiglstorfer 2018).

Tomb findings suggest that along with the local elites around the Tuyuhun dynasty (from the 660s integrated into the Tibetan empire as vassal principality) the cemeteries were also used by Tibetan military officers or officials who were stationed in this eastern border area; but there are no indications either from the surveys of these sites or from textual sources that chief ministers or members of the circle of the high-ranking aristocracy were buried there (> 20). No comparable burial mound sites have been recorded outside the two areas (Central Tibet and 'A zha yul), either in the large administrative zones (Zhang zhung, Sum pa, Mthong khyab etc.), or in the area of the border garrisons, or in the regions where (according to certain sources) the population of Central Tibet formed new colonies. Even though it is clear that our knowledge of the distribution of the burial mounds in the Highlands cannot be complete, the current picture seems to be quite conclusive:

- the situation of the (most likely common) history of tumulus development in Central and Eastern Tibet coexists with a much wider spread of older burial forms, which continued to be practised in different regions of the Highlands during the time of the empire. (Sites with smaller burial mounds have been recorded in Byang thang and other areas outside Central Tibet, but do not seem to have been dominant, and do not include mounds of the elite category either.)
- the members of the Tibetan governmental and military aristocracy, the classical elite burial candidates, were apparently buried nowhere else but in Central Tibet, that is, where their families were also resident.

In this context, the question can be mooted as to where and in what form the Central Tibetan social and military elites who were regularly stationed outside the country for a longer period of time or who died in military operations or otherwise somewhere abroad were buried? The same question holds true for the thousands of ordinary soldiers who were recruited from the districts in Central Tibet and who died on the battlefield. We consider them and their families as the largest group of burial-mound candidates (related to an accordingly lower "mound category", see below).

3.1 Those "who would never return" and the issue of cenotaph burial

A special military organisation was represented by the three "regiments of heroes", which according to the description in the *Section on Law and State* (SLS – in *Lde'u*-2 and *KG*; Dotson 2007a; Drikung 2011: 276-77; Drolma Tsering 2016: 321-22) were established in Stod, Bar and Smad in the late 7th and 8th century – i.e. in the west (in Gu ge and other core districts of former Zhang zhung), in the middle (related to districts in Sum pa (or Sum pa ru), with the central part located in present day 'Bri ru county), and in the east (in the Mthong khyab and 'A zha districts), from where they operated against the external enemies (mentioned by name are Turks, Ljang and Chinese). The "western regiment of heroes" (*stod kyi dpa' sde*) was headed by members of five lineages (*Lde'u-2* actually lists six: 'Bro, Khyung po, 'Gar (Mgar), Snubs (Gnubs), Gnyan 'Dre (= Gnyan and 'Bre)). The middle regiment was headed by (the commander of the) Nags shod thousand district (*stong sde*), which included the "12 Rgyal divisions" (*Lde'u-2* 274.18) or 12 Sbas Rgya sde (*sbas rgya sde bcu gnyis*) in *KG* (189.17), which we think is to be read as the "12 Rgya districts/divisions under the command of Sbas (Dba's)" (cf. also Dotson, *op. cit*., p. 378, fn. 337). The eastern regiment (related to the nine Mthong khyab and six 'A zha thousand districts) was commanded by members of the Phyugs mtshams (or Dor sde (Dor ste/te) and Phyugs mtshams) – two thousand districts of Upper Dbu ru, who from *OTC.8* are known to have been honoured (together with soldiers of another Dbu ru *stong sde*, the Ste 'dzom) for their feats in the 763 military campaign (honoured with the tiger emblem *stag'i thog bu*; PT 1287: l.386; Dotson 2009: 147).

The portrayals of the heroism of this military leadership points to an extreme form of the Tibetan warrior image, of which Chinese contemporary observers (as recorded in the *Tang Annals*) reported that they deemed death in war to be most honourable (Bushell 1880: 442). In a concise language, their unyielding actions against the enemies are described, the latter stylised (similarly to the later Gesar epic) as the lady or consort of the respective enemy lord. The troops encounter the enemies (in the description of the *bar gyi dpa' sde*) in the special outfit of the *tsha slog* [coat] – combined with the vision of no longer returning from the fight. Concerning the Phyugs mtshams it also says in this connection that they left their last will (*bka' chems*) to their relatives and entrusted their children to them (*KG* 190.2-3). This vision of non-return appears like a departure into the hereafter (or its container, the grave): "when eating funerary food as their meals, they wore their *tsha lob* on their backs, and thinking that they would never return, they were heroic, acting with their heroic blades" (Dotson 2007a: 378, see also his analysis of *tsha lob* (*dbon lob*) in the latter use in the funerary context, *ibid*. 383-84). The funerary or grave context is

perhaps also addressed in the mention (in connection with the *stod kyi dpa' sde*) that "they pitched a tiger hut as sign of their heroism" (*dpa' mtshan du stag gi lcil po phub; Lde'u-2* 274.14), which recalls the tiger-decorated buildings attached to the tombs of the "Tibetan nobles who had gained fame in battle" as recorded in the *Xin Tangshu* (Bushell 1880: 521).

The account of this *dpa' sde* institution may refer to a special position within the Tibetan military organisation, but ultimately appears simply as the mythical enhancement of the early Tibetan culture of war. This, again, was nothing new in the world of the Silk Road empires, where precisely this unyielding struggle for the ruler is seen as characteristic. To die for the ruler formed a core element of the "ruler and his *comitatus*" order, which (if we follow the observation by Beckwith 2009) for its part formed a basic characteristic of the (apparently much Indo-European influenced) "Central Eurasian Cultural Complex". And at the same time the image of the hero throws light on the chief minister (or chief minister candidates from the circles of the *rgod zhang lon*), in whose armies the *dpa' sde* were involved (namely in the case of the Phyugs mtshams). The chief ministers were, in fact, the apex of this entourage order, marked by martial ideals, and are correspondingly also drawn in the charismatic appearance of a hero, in exemplary form in the case of the 30th chief minister – the Bya ru can ("the one with bird horns"), who (beside the *ke ke ru*, the highest *zhang lon* insignia) bore the tiger's coat as a sign of his greatness (> 30). As is well known, the tiger (*stag*) (followed by the leopard, *gzigs*) was the Tibetan emblem of heroism (*dpa' rtags*) par excellence (as a sign of rank it marked the military officers above the classes of ordinary soldiers; cf. Dotson 2007a: 284) – and indeed had a radius beyond physical lives as it was observed by Tibet's chief enemy, the Chinese: "when alive they wore the tiger-skin, and it is a sign of their valour when dead" (Bushell 1880: 521).

In our view, the commanders of the three regiments were all members of high-ranking families in Central Tibet, with the Phyugs mtshams (or Phyugs mtshams plus the leaders of Dor te and Ste 'dzom) only later being raised to the position of ennobled military officers. As noted Dor te, Phyugs mtshams, and Ste 'dzom refer to military districts of Upper Dbu ru (Hazod 2009: 200; for Dor te/sde, see also Drikung 2011: 308), and it has been argued that the soldiers of these *stong sde* (plus their families) remained in the peripheral areas following their participation in the war with China in the 760s (Dotson 2007a: 387). This recalls the history of the Tibetan colony of the Bka' ma log in Amdo, which is said to go back to "nine heroes" (*dpa' bo mi dgu*) who "were selected from the army for their ability" and stationed in the border region to protect the frontier. Their re-

quest to return was rejected by the emperor (Khri Srong lde brtsan), it says, hence the naming of their descendants (*bka' ma log*, "not to return by order"; van Schaik and Galambos 2011: 63-64, after *Mdo smad smad chos 'byung* 223; see also *GBY* 198.6-10 where the Bka' ma log origin is mistakenly associated with the activities of the chief minister 'Bro Khri sum rje Stag snang; > 37). This group evidently echoes the heroes of the *smad kyi dpa' sde*, where, however, in the Bka' ma log story the non-return of the heroes of this regiment is given a different (or additional) meaning.

It is uncertain whether the other two regiments (established much earlier, in late seventh or early eighth century) resulted in similar permanent settlements (i.e. in Sum pa and in Stod or the western region); the descriptions make it clear that the warrior-heroes of the 'Bro, Khyung po, Mgar, Gnubs or Dba's had no plan to return from their ventures. The situation that no significant tumulus evidence is to be found in these areas can simply be explained by the fact that other forms of burial were provided for the fallen heroes. Another explanation would be the cenotaph (tumulus) burial (Gr. *kenotáphion*, "empty grave") – a standard observation in archaeology, with graves without human remains also being noted in Chinese archaeological reports on Tibetan burial grounds (Tong Tao 2008: 94). What is meant here are the forms of cenotaph graves that are placed in a traditional burial ground complex, are fully furnished but without any human skeleton (Pearson 2009: 55f.). In the Tibetan context, the transport home of a person who died far away seems to have been the privilege of the *btsan po*, and the cenotaph would thus represent the appropriate burial for people who died outside their homeland. These are thus to be seen as "real burials", where the spirit was ritually brought into the prepared grave from here to enter the journey to the afterlife. One may see an indirect reference to Tibetan cenotaph burial in the practice of making an effigy of the dead, addressed in various funerary contexts related to the imperial period, such as the *gser zhal* ("golden face") mentioned in Bon po funerary texts as a sort of container of the deceased's soul (Bellezza 2014: 98), or the portrait of the deceased recorded in one of the SLS chapters, and indeed in connection with the funerary of the military aristocracy (cf. Dotson 2007a: 260, 267). The making of a golden image is also mentioned in the context of the tumulus burial of a Yar lung *rgyal po* (i.e. the "king's representative made of gold" (*rgyal po'i sku tshab gser las bzhengs*) noted in the description of 'Bro Gnyen Lde ru's burial; *KT* 155.8-9), and if we assume a closer relation to the gold masks recently found in West Tibetan burial contexts, one is referred here to a much older practice in the Highlands, situated long before the tumulus tradition (Bellezza 2014; Tong Tao and Li 2016). The images were formerly part of the

burial objects in regular inhumation burials, but at cenotaphs they may indeed have functioned as substitutes for the deceased.

Whether a cenotaph burial was provided for the thousands of Central Tibetan soldiers who died on the battlefields is rather questionable, but in view of the statistically high number of low category graves it cannot be entirely ruled out. In the case of the chiefs of the regiments of the heroes, it may well be that their families whom the heroes had left their last wills had already started or initiated the construction of the tomb for the later cenotaph burial as soon as the sons had departed, and even more such cenotaphs can be assumed for members of the higher aristocracy and the chief ministers.

4. Central Tibet: criteria for the determination of "chief minister tomb"

4.1 Chronology and principal classifications

Many of the peripheral grave fields (i.e. situated outside the royal necropolis) probably have an older (pre-imperial) history. The joint presence of pre-tumulus types of graves (flat graves marked with stones, indicating certain forms of pit burials) and the various types of smaller and larger grave mounds within one and the same cemetery suggests the direct development from such older forms to tombs marked by a mound (Feiglstorfer 2018). Also sky-burial sites, which are sometimes found in the immediate vicinity of tumulus fields, may have an older history. This points to a development which is indicated in the "*bang so* account" of the early kings (Hazod 2018: App. I), where forms of exposing the corpse apparently preceded the burial in mounds – as mentioned, the latter is associated with the time of the Btsan lnga. Whenever this beginning of the tumulus practice is to be dated (we have suggested ca. 4th cent. CE), our understanding is that the tumulus history in the ancient territories, seat of the later *zhang lon* families, and that of the Yar lung dynasty share a common chronology. The same *bang so* account also implies that the development of larger and architecturally more complex mounds is not to be dated before the seventh century, something that archaeology confirms. All the datings of elite mounds available today fall into the empire period.

The burial places in Central Tibet are located in the vicinity of settlements in areas that were transformed into state districts (*yul sde* and *rgod stong sde*) from the middle of the seventh century, with the Horn divisions (*ru*) as the geographically superordinate units (Hazod 2009: 200-211; Drolma Tsering 2016: 304-338). It appears that the

whole spectrum of high-ranking *zhang lon*, from generals, *ru-* and *stong sde* commanders down to the lower subject categories with the families of the ordinary soldiers, lived in the districts together in one and the same settlement area. The most common type of tumulus field – a mixture of small, apparently mostly oval shaped mounds and various large, trapezoidal walled elite mounds (depending on the size constructed in different complexity) – seems exactly to reflect this social settlement situation. Other appearances of tumulus fields are sites with almost exclusively elite mounds – these can be fields including more than 200 grave mounds – as well as burial grounds with almost exclusively small mounds of the lowest category, which in terms of number are the largest cemeteries (up to 500 mounds). Often, one or more of these types can be found within one and the same district.

What is striking is the imbalance in the distribution of the burial mound sites in the Central Tibetan districts. While the distribution of the districts in the Horn divisions itself is relatively uniform (namely each ca. 10 *rgod stong sde*, and 16 *yul sde*) there is a clear concentration in the districts of Dbu ru and Upper (= western) G.yo ru in terms of the number of grave fields. The districts of the central Skyid chu area and of 'Phan po, geographically a relatively small region, alone account for over 200 sites; this is more than we have recorded altogether for the western provinces of Gtsang (Ru lag and G.yas ru). This asymmetry is even more obvious with respect to the number of elite mounds, as can be seen from the list of major sites given in Appendix I. It has been stated elsewhere that the large gaps in the evidence of tumulus fields in the eastern and western parts of Central Tibet can be explained by the continuation of older burial forms in these regions, which was possibly even practised within groups who should otherwise be classified as candidates for tumulus burial. On the other hand, it is clear that the geographic density of larger elite mounds simply corresponds to the high concentration in these areas of families who had risen to the rank of *zhang lon*. Why these potential "elite mound families" appear in such a number precisely in the central region (Dbu ru and (western) G.yo ru) is a separate question; some suggestions in this respect are given in the discussions in Part Two (> 24).

4.1.1 Principal classifications

For a better understanding of the individual burial-mound site referred to in Part Two, it makes sense to give a brief overview of the principal classifications of TTT data – largely the summary of what has been presented in more detail in Hazod 2018:

• In our classification of mound types (MT) we call the oval types MT-A or MT-B (depending on the basic material, earth or only stones) and the (usually larger) rectangular structures is given as MT-C; the latter are mostly trapezoidal in their layout, and depending on size they are single or multi-chambered structures, bounded by massive walls and filled with tamped earth. A variation of these MT-C mounds are "coffer-shaped" walled monuments, which apparently were not completely covered with soil (Fig. 50a, 50b). Finally the MT-D type includes the various forms of stupa-shaped tombs related to the Buddhist period of the empire (Fig. 51, 60).

The tumulus field types (FT) can be divided according to their position into sites situated in the non-arable zones of the alluvial fans (FT-A, by far the most common type), on the mountain (FT-B) or (less common) in the agricultural zones, as it were within the fields and gardens of the villages.

• Today's situation with the cemeteries being located in the immediate vicinity of the villages is essentially comparable to the settlement pattern in the time of the burial-mound tradition. The specific distribution of the cemeteries within the individual districts points to collective cemeteries used by inhabitants of several settlements. The choice of location seems to simply reflect the pragmatic consideration, according to which the graves should be in a non-arable zone not far from the houses.

As noted above, fields with a mixture of different grave types are the most common, with the elite mounds being usually separated – in an arrangement that possibly reflects closer family relationships of the buried. (As to the question of who, i.e. which kinship member (older/younger brother, half brother, sister, chief and secondary consorts) were buried where, we have argued that noble families (especially the larger, dynastically organised princely families such as the Mchims rgyal) may have followed regulations similar to those observed in the royal family, where only certain members were buried in the necropolis of Phying ba; Hazod 2018: 31ff.).

• As earth mounds, the tombs convey a certain modesty and inconspicuousness; this also applies to the larger structures, which adapt to the natural environment. The trapezoidal structures placed on the slope almost merge with the topography of the mountain, so that a group of dozens of such graves is not easily recognisable from a distance. In some of the FT-B fields the mounds were cut into the mountain in a complex way (0108, 0130, 0325). The fact that almost all grave buildings have gradually been destroyed since the beginning of the grave plundering in the tenth century, as well as the natural factor of erosion, strengthens the impression of their inconspicuousness. But this situation is deceptive, for what we see today are the

lifeless remains of a once colourfully decorated and flagged area, which was presumably, as in the case of the royal tombs, constantly occupied by ritual aftercare and the construction of new tombs, although not accessible to everyone (Hazod 2018: 9ff.).

A number of additional architectural remains are to be found around the tombs, which are much more visible on satellite imagery than on the spot: smaller buildings that might have served as mortuaries, sacrificial pits, or step-like sacrificial trenches (at larger tombs erected on slopes), walls at groups of tombs or also around the whole area. The locals often speak of the burial mound sites as (collapsed) "houses" or "cities", also of *'dre khang*, dwelling-places of demons, which quite aptly describes the situation of a world indeed separated from the living yet at the same time sharing with them the same cosmology, where the mystery of the journey into the hereafter (i.e. the "land of joy") was prepared.

- Not all mounds are abandoned; apart from the fact that many of the (opened) tombs are used by shepherds as campsites or cattle sheds, some of the larger (and well-preserved) grave mounds are marked by a shrine of the local deity – the remainder of a later, manifoldly Buddhist use of the burial mounds, which forms a separate topic of the "Tibetan Tumulus Tradition".
- The graves' orientation is best seen in the trapezoidal structures, where the longer side always faces the valley floor. The fact that the orientations are slightly different in each case obviously results from the individual adaptation to the terrain. This situation also seems to exclude a common reference point in the landscape to which the graves were aligned. On the other hand, a recent archaeo-astronomical study related to the royal tombs (grave fields no. 0029, 0032) revealed that some of the grave mounds of 0032 indeed appear to be topographically oriented (aligned to certain mountains of supra-regional importance situated in the nearer or farther surroundings), indicating a geomantic concept, which cannot be excluded of possibly also being behind the position of peripheral burial mound sites (Romain, forthcoming). Generally, the external orientation must be distinguished from the orientation of the tomb's inner components (positions of the main chamber, the coffin, or the corpse), where the archaeological data concerning Central Tibetan graves is rather poor, however. At least, what we find are indications that point to a different alignment of the burial chamber and the outer trapezium (Hazod 2016b), and the question of whether or not certain heavenly orientations are responsible for this asymmetry is to be part of the second phase of the TTT project.

4.2 The TTT data: comparability and statistical evaluation

As elsewhere in the archaeology of Eurasian burial-mound histories (from the Bronze Age to the Early Middle Ages), we see in Tibet the size of the mound as an initial indication of the social status of the person buried. (This relates to diameter of round tombs, length of rectangular mounds, or length of the front of trapezoidal mounds; in the case of the latter, we find throughout the approximately same angle of 80-85°.) The size corresponds to certain construction criteria as well as the situation of the interior of the tomb – related to the issue of single or multi-chambered graves – but we lack sufficient archaeological data to make more precise gradations in this respect. The limited information from excavations points to a variety in terms of inner grave construction related to mounds of the same size category. Thus smaller elite mounds in the 25-30m category may be single-chambered or be mounds that also have a smaller side chamber in addition to the burial chamber (Feiglstorfer 2018).

We see another factor in the relative number of sacrificial pits and trenches in the immediate vicinities of tombs, which provide information about the number of animals sacrificed at the funeral. (We distinguish between animals placed inside the grave and animals sacrificed outside the mounds and placed in pits / trenches – killings that comprised two different ritual tasks in the funeral complex.) The earliest record in this respect relates to the preparation of the funeral of the ennobled ally Dba's Phangs to re Dbyi tshab (d. late 630s or early 640s) for which 100 horses were brought for sacrifice (evidently related to an "outside" sacrifice; > 24). For comparison, the bones of 87 horses were found in pits in front of the central (65m) mound of the east Tibetan Reshui cemetery, which has recently been dated to the early eighth century (> 20). However, this does not mean that a similar size can be assumed for the (not identified) tomb of the Dbyi tshab (> 24), not even if one considers that similar proportions prevailed in the East Tibetan funeral context, simply because the two burials relate to different periods with different standards of tomb size.

A distinct category of elite mounds relates to the stupa-shaped tombs. These are mentioned in the grave account of the *GYC* for certain Buddhist consorts of the emperor family, but this grave form of the "Buddhist period" was certainly also provided for monks (or monk officials). Here the criterion of size appears to be replaced by the form. Likewise in a Buddhist (and thus later) context we see the grave mound whose outer walls were filled with *tsa tsa*, or the mandala-shaped grave, both of a relatively small size (Feiglstorfer 2018: 112; > 32).

There are indications in the sources that, from a certain point, the organisation of peripheral grave buildings and their subsequent maintenance were a state responsibility or the responsibility of the district administration (Hazod 2018: 24ff.). The extent to which this organisation also included regulations regarding the dimensions of the buildings corresponding to the social status and rank of the deceased is not so clear. In any case, it is not implausible to assume that, together with the bureaucratic definition of social classifications, there were also agreements as to what (ritual and social) dimensions of funeral, grave size, burial equipment etc. would be provided for the respective elite-mound candidate. Such regulations were surely not static but subject to certain changes over the course of time – also in connection with the creation of new posts (Dotson 2009: 57f.). At the same time, a certain degree of regional autonomy in burial organisation must be assumed, at least within the larger families.

Noteworthy are the irregularities in the size of the imperial graves, where it seems as if the choice of the graves' shape and size (and also the location within the two main sections of the Phying ba necropolis; 0029, 0032) would have been re-decided in each generation – on the basis of criteria that we currently do not know. Thus emperor Khri Lde srong brtsan (d. 815) was buried in a 90-95m tomb, and the (similarly trapezoidal) grave of the successor emperor (Khri Gtsug lde brtsan; d. 841) situated some distance away from it measures 50-55m – a size significantly below the largest of the peripheral elite mounds. A similar distinction is to be found between the *bang so* of Mang slon Mang rtsan and Khri 'Dus srong (Hazod 2018: App. I), variations, which, by the way, can also be observed in the central grave fields of the 'A zha ruler (> 20). It is also interesting to note that at the beginning of the imperial period larger graves were built for the *btsan po* (and queen mother) than at the end of the empire. In contrast, for the peripheral elite mounds one recognises a reverse development: as far as we can see, the largest monuments were erected at a later date, which only underlines the fact that any comparison in terms of size has to consider the situation of different development phases in this respect.

A look at the TTT grave field list (0001-0562) provides some interesting details. One recognises a clear graduation in several size categories – tombs of 10-15m, 20-25m, 30-35m, 40-45m, 50-55m, 60-65m, 70-75m and 80-85m. These measurements on the basis of satellite photographs are not exact (see the introductory remark in Appendix I), but the proportions are largely coherent in themselves. The grave monuments for the most part refer to (walled) trapezoidal mounds; tombs below the 10m-category are not recorded here, and naturally only

mounds of the larger category are relevant for the present purpose. Appendix I lists the major sites, referring to the ca. 200 peripheral grave fields that include tombs in the categories of 30m upwards. These sites are:

-- 78 grave fields including tombs in the 30m category – from one to several dozen
-- 34 grave fields with tumuli, including one or more 40m mounds
-- 21 grave fields with up to eight tombs in the 50m category
-- Ten grave fields with mostly only one 60-65m mound
-- Two grave fields with one or two tombs in the 70m category
-- Three grave fields each with one tomb in the largest, 80m category.

(Of the remaining cemeteries, i.e. sites with graves below 30m – by far the majority – only those with an unusually high number of tombs are listed in this appendix).

Behind these gradations it seems plausible to see a social hierarchy that can be narrowed down at least inasmuch as the categories of 40-50m upwards were reserved only for the highest civil and military rank-holders. If we take into account the development that we observe with regard to the correlation of tomb size and status, one must expect that a chief minister of the first half of the seventh century might be buried "only" in a 40m mound, while for the later phase a grave of some greater size can be expected – from the mid 760s, a turning point in governmental organisation and the ministerial order (> 24), namely one of the highest category.

What has to be considered in the above-mentioned situation is that in the case of high-ranking *zhang lon* the construction of the graves had already started during their lifetimes. This means that a chief minister who was only in office for a short time (one year or even less) was buried in a tomb designed at a time when the *blon chen* was possibly not yet in charge of this post and was acting as an interior minister or deputy chief minister. Such a situation appears to have been the case of the identified tomb of Ngan lam Stag ra Klu gong (> 33), for whom a 65m mound was built when he was still minister of the interior, but who was buried as chief minister, as which he served in the last months of his life. If our proposed identification is correct, for his successor, Sna nam Rgyal mtshan Lha snang (> 34), who was in office much longer, an 80m-mound was built. Compared to this, Lde sman Gur bzher Lde chung, a minister (probably interior minister) of the same period, was consistently buried in a 65m mound (This refers to M-1 of the central grave field of Lho brag (0065), whose occupant today we are able to identify as this descendant of Lde

sman; below fn. 21). As stated elsewhere the 65m grave of the tumulus site 0176 (in Stod lung) is most likely to be attributed to the grave of a representative of the Tshes pong zhang, thus a tomb of the *zhang lon chen po bzhi* class, which in this case is to be dated to the second half of the eighth century (Hazod 2018: 59-61). The grave of the famous chief minister Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag was built at about the same time, and, provided the construction started during his office as chief minister, consequently no other monument than one of the highest category can be expected (> 31).

Similar gradations of elite graves can be assumed for the earlier phases, but in smaller proportions of tomb size and perhaps bureaucratically less fixed. Unfortunately, we lack clear indications regarding the size typical for a "chief minister" tomb of the seventh or early eighth century, which also means that precisely for this earlier phase the size can only serve as an indicator in a fairly limited form. The 100 tombs in the 40 to 50m category that we find distributed over roughly 50 grave fields can theoretically include several "chief minister" tombs of the early (imperial era) phase as well as resting places of lower *zhang lon* members of the ninth century. Our division of size development into two phases, before and after the 760s (P1, P2) in this sense only serves as a rough differentiation, and one is dependent on additional factors. In the best case we find these in the context of the individual *blon chen*'s histories, their families, and territorial links as reconstructable more or less accurately from textual sources. If, for example, the discussion on the family of chief minister X clearly leads to district Y, and three grave fields are noted in our TTT archive for this area Y, then this is a quite favourable starting situation. The approach will be all the better if only three elite mounds that meet the categories of a tomb of a higher *zhang lon* member are recorded in the fields of Y for the period Z (P1 or P2). If one of these three candidates is a mound that stands out in a way that corresponds to the category of "chief minister tomb" of Z, then this is an optimal situation for identifying the tomb of X. Such a situation is admittedly the exception, and much remains speculative (and even mysterious, see the case of G.ye yul, Excursus II of Part Two), but the example shows the procedure that helps us to further define the historical complexity of the TTT data.

PART TWO

The chief ministers in *OTC.2* (nos. 13-38): chronology, territorial links and place of burial

The following chapters on the chief ministers of the Tibetan empire covers the tenures of 26 *blon chen* (13-38) in the period of ca. 600 until 843, the year when a *blon chen* is mentioned in the sources for the last time. Strictly speaking 25 chief ministers and 26 appointments are recorded, since, as mentioned above, one chief minister reportedly held the office a second time. Fourteen lineages provided one or more of the 25 *blon chen*, namely Mong (one chief minister), Mgar (6), Myang (1), Khyung po (1), 'O ma lde (1), Khu (1), Dba's (5), Rngegs (1), 'Bro (3), 'Bal (1), Mgos (1), Mchims (1), Ngan lam (1) and Sna nam (1). At the same time four of these families provided heir-bearing queens (Mong, 'Bro, Mchims, Sna nam), where only the latter three are recorded in the sources among the classical four lineages entitled as *zhang* (maternal uncle) in the empire period (i.e. 'Bro, Sna nam, Mchims, Tshes pong). In each case the paragraphs on the individual *blon chen* contain a brief discussion of the respective notes in *OTC.2* and refer to supplementary data on the chief ministers from other sources (mainly *OTC.3-10* and *OTA*) as far as they are relevant to chronological questions. Otherwise the focus is on the respective families, their territorial links and finally the discussion of the relevant burial-mound sites.

The numbering of the chief ministers follows the order given in *OTC.2* (i.e. 01-38), except that the reversed sequence of the chief ministers nos. 22-24, obviously an error by the compiler of *OTC*, has been adjusted and accordingly taken into account in the present numbering (cf. here already Dotson 2009: 150-53; cf. also the table in Drikung 2011: 94-98, which differs however in some points from the present representation). In the heading of the individual chapters, the entry next to the names of the chief ministers indicates the tenure (as far as known or reconstructable), followed by the number(s) of grave fields (as in our TTT list) that are discussed in the respective paragraphs as the candidates for the identification of the cemeteries in question. (The '+' symbol is added to some grave field numbers, indicating that more than one tumulus site is considered relevant for the identification issue.) The tumulus sites discussed are presented in Appendix II in the form of simple graphic illustrations.

[13] Mong Khri to re Snang tshab [0181, 0182]
(1) Mong Khri to re Snang tshab followed Shud pu Rgyal to re Nga myi (= the "chief minister" (elsewhere *gung blon* – "high minister") of

Stag bu Snya gzig; PT 1144: v2; Bialek 2015: 288, fn. 5), who represents the last in the group described as having been endowed with magical power (*'phrul*). In fact, with Mong Khri to re Snang tshab the beginning of a new period is indicated. He was a figure of the actual founding period of the empire, since he is glossed as having defeated the ruler of Rtsang Bod, an event that *OTC.4* attributes to Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse in the time of the founder emperor Gnam ri Slon mtshan (d. 618?). In this context it says that Zu tse accused Mong Sngon po (the "blue Mong po", apparently identical with the Mong minister) of having been disloyal to the *btsan po* and the *btsan po*'s brother, and killed him. It has been argued that these passages in *OTC* were manipulated in favour of Zu tse, who after the elimination of Mong adorned himself with the triumph of the conquest of Rtsang Bod (Bialek 2016: 118). The problem is to explain the territorial link between the Mong family and the distant Rtsang Bod. In Zu tse's family, we find this connection with the west (> 17), whereas with the Mong lineage we know only a relation to the central region, namely the area of Mong of Upper Stod lung. We assume that the latter was also the home of Mong Khri to re Snang tshab, arguably the father or a paternal relative of the heir-bearing queen Mong za Khri mo Mnyen ldong steng, the mother of Gung srong Gung rtsan.

The queen-mother is said to have come from the village of Mkha' rag mdo in Mong stod – information from the local tradition (cf. *LLG-3*, p. 61). Interestingly, the Mong members were not entitled *zhang*, which is perhaps due to the fact that *zhang* was not a specific institution within the *zhang lon* aristocracy before the early eighth century, i.e. not before the occurrence of the first *zhang* in *OTA* (> 28).

(2) In later sources Khri to re Snang tshab appears (in variant spellings) in the list of ministers of Srong btsan Sgam po. One source glossed that he was from Rgyal ba of 'Phan yul (Sørensen 1994: 179). This most likely refers to the area of the later Rgyal lha khang in western 'Phan yul, which can be reached from Mong stod via a pass – perhaps a branch seat of his family. While there are no burial-mound sites in the closer vicinity of Rgyal, there is a grave field with several elite mounds in the lower Mong Valley (0181, opposite G.yu thog Village and the famous Tsha thog chab tshan; RCP: 170). The graves have all been severely damaged, some almost beyond recognition (marked with dotted lines on Fig. 2), which suggests their rather great age. M-1 is of the 30m-category; a still larger mound appears to be the structure marked as M-0. Larger buildings plus a few tomb traces are to be found on the other side of the valley, on the foot of the hill where on top is the Tsha thog chab tshan hot spring (RCP: 170). To our knowledge there are no tombs in Mong stod.

(3) Below the burial mound site 0181, at the meeting point with the side valley of Sdings kha, the valley opens to the larger fertile plain of Chu bzang – an ideal place for the Mong sites recorded in the *OTA*. Mong was used as the residence of the emperor 'Dus srong (in 700-01) and of his mother 'Bro Khri ma lod (701-02), and it is recorded four times for the council (three times held in Mong kar (winter) and once in Mong stod (summer); Hazod 2009: 216). We think the lateral valley of Sdings kha was originally part of the Mong country, where about two km west of 0181 the burial-mound site 0182 extends, divided into two sections situated below the impressive ruins of Sding kha dgon. The latter site situated on a plateau is locally known as the "summer residence of *blon chen* Mgar" whose family is said to have resided in present-day Mgar tshang village at the foot of this mountain slope, not far from the ruins locally known as Rdzong sgo. While there are numerous similar Mgar-related sites to be found throughout the former Dbu ru and G.yo ru area (cf. Hazod 2018: 22f.; RCP: 582f., below > 14), here it evidently has a closer historical connection. We think the site of Sdings kha is actually the Mong pu Sral 'dzong where Mgar Stong btsan Yul zung is recorded as having prepared the *rtsis go* (manual for administration) in 654 (Dotson 2009: 54, 85). This was one year before he wrote the law book at 'Gor ti, a one-day journey from Mong in Dbu ru lung (Hazod, in press). At this time the Mong minister's tenure was already over, and after the death of Srong btsan Sgam po, the actual era of chief ministers began, starting with *blon che* Mgar Stong btsan, who (if we take the local tradition at face value) made this place of Sdings kha one of his residences. (It it is also noteworthy in this connection that the local tradition speaks of the *bla mtsho* ("soul lake") of the minister's family as being located in this area – identified as a lake in Upper Mong; RCP: 582).

In any case, we can assume the original significance of Mong as an imperial site goes back to Mong Khri to re Snang tshab and the time when Mong was bride-giver to the *btsan po*. On this occasion Srong btsan Sgam po may also have stayed here. He is much present in the local tradition, a cave with a spring above Sdings kha dgon is named after him, described as a retreat of the *chos rgyal* Srong btsan Sgam po (RCP: 582).

Similar to 0181, the field of 0182 has severely damaged grave mounds; this refers to dozens of smaller structures, as well as several smaller (20m) elite mounds, including not firmly identifiable remains of buildings in both sections: A half-destroyed mound in Section-1 measures about 35-40m. Still further down, behind Chu mig village, there is another smaller field (0183).

The narrowing down that we can make is that, on the one hand, "Mong people" were certainly buried in 0181, including perhaps the

chief minister; on the other hand 0182 can be considered both as the place of burial of Mong Khri to re Snang tshab as well as of Mgar Stong btsan (> 20).

[14] Mgar Khri sgra 'Dzi rmun [0172 +]
(1) Little is known about this early Mgar member, whose description in the *OTC*.2 seems to signify that he was highly gifted in understanding the language of foreigners (cf. Bialek 2018, vol. II: 128). He is not to be confused with the "mgar 'dzi rmun" mentioned in later contexts, which seems to indicate a title (cf. Bialek 2018, vol. II: 140, fn. 2). He appears to be the Khri Sgra 'jings smug listed in one Mgar genealogical account as the grandfather of Mgar Stong btsan Yul zung (RCP: fn. 372). The birthplace of the latter is given in later histories as the side valley of Ram pa in the lower part of Stod lung, where three tumulus fields are also to be found in the immediate vicinity of this Mgar "birthplace" (0165-0167, with 0166 including two elite mounds of the 30m category). However, this *blon chen* Mgar origin appears rather to be the back projection of a later twelfth-century Mgar history of Ram pa (i.e. the Mgar related to Tshal Gung thang, RCP: 582; in some cases of "Mgar sites" in Central Tibet (above > 13) the *blon chen* Mgar connection appears to be an adaptation from places related to smithies or iron-working; others again echo the many-branched Mgar of later lineage contexts).

Khri sgra 'Dzi rmun is not mentioned in the list of the five imperial Mgar ministers in *Blon po bka'i thang* (*BK.3*); this begins with Mgar Srong btsan Yul zung, whose origin, as well as that of the other four, is associated with Ba gor (*BK.3* 436). This is probably the Ba gor area and village in the west of Snye mo, where no graves are recorded. A Mgar homeland is addressed in the Bya pu in *OTC.9*, where in Khri 'Dus srong's song it says sarcastically of Mgar's (alleged) break-away intentions: "In Upper Bya, at a small place, a subject hopes (to become) a lord, the son of Mgar hopes (to become) a lord" (*bya pu ni lung chungs na // 'bangs shig ni rje ru re / mgar bu ni rje ru re /* (PT 1287: l.462; Bialek 2018, vol. II: 161); cf. also line l.466, l.478). It has been suggested that this Bya pu may refer to the upper Bya yul (Kerihuel 2011: 111); the only Mgar place, in this region known to me is the Mgar Khrungs khang ("Mgar birth house") in Lower (eastern) Gnyal, on the border with Bya yul. The Gnyal and Bya region has two dozen grave fields (see TTT: "maps of G.yo ru"), but none in the vicinity of this Mgar place, and there are no graves in Bya tshal of Sgrags, which Richardson (1998: 34) has suggested as the identity of old Bya pu.

(2) The (misplaced) entry in *OTC.2* related to the chief minister Mgar Mang zham Sum snang (> 16) indicates that the Mgar served as a subject family to the Yar lung *rgyal po* 'Bro Mnyen lde ru, an interesting situation as members of this family are recorded for approximately the same (pre-imperial) period as ministers of the principality of Ngas po. Perhaps we should indeed follow the account in *Blon po bka' thang* (*BK.3*) and see the Ba gor (of Snye mo) as a starting point of the (Central Tibetan) Mgar lineage history, which similar to the Thon family (with its origin in the neighbouring Thon valley of Snye mo county) early on branched from here into northern and southern territorial affiliations.

As to the northern presence of the Mgar, we find the Mgar yul of eastern 'Phan yul, next to Rag ma, locally known as the place of death of emperor Srong btsan Sgam po. There are indeed several burial grounds recorded (0230-0233), but their identification shows some uncertainties and there are apparently no major mounds among them.

The only grave field associated with Mgar is 0172, located in Sgang skyid, on the eastern side of central Stod lung (Fig. 5). The locals call mound M-1 of the 35-40m-category (Fig. 6) the resting place of the "son of minister Mgar". There may indeed be a historical core behind this information, although the kinship details should not necessarily be taken literally. The burial mound M-2 situated higher up is similar in size, surrounded by a dozen smaller elite mounds. Between M-1 and M-2 and in the vicinity of the core groups are further small grave remains or pits, and there are several sacrificial trenches in front of the main group of tombs.

Worth mentioning is also the neighbouring grave field of 0171, situated in the *sa ma 'brog* zone behind Snyan village and monastery (RCP: 661). The cemetery is divided into two sections with altogether 21 mounds; the central mound of section 0171a is of the 50m category with four ca. 40-60m-long sacrificial trenches in front of it. Several building remains (walls and houses) are situated further below (see TTT: 0171). However, for this early phase we actually expect a rather smaller tomb for a "chief minister". One may even also include the elite field of Khri phu (0169), situated not far SE of 0171, in the Mgar lands of Stod lung. In addition, the grave field 0108, at the "minister place" of Blon po sgang in eastern Mal gro, with ca. 20 larger elite mounds, has been suspected as being a Mgar-specific cemetery, because of Mgar khang village, described as the home of the minister, situated nearby. However, it remains unclear of whether this "smith house" has any lineage-specific historical background.

[15] Myang Mang po rje Zhang snang (d. early 630s) [0115 +]
(1) In *OTC.2*, Mang po rje Zhang snang is described as the highly competent chief minister who, after Khri Slon btsan's (violent) death, the son and successor emperor Khri Srong brtsan (Srong btsan Sgam po) entrusted with the command in order to win the Sum pa as subjects (PT 1287: l.83-85; cf. *OTC.6* where this story is placed after the subjugation of the rebellions in eastern Lhokha; PT 1287: l.299-307). *OTC-4* informs us that earlier the emperor (Khri Slon btsan alias Gnam ri Slon mtshan) had appointed Myang Zhang snang as minister (decorated with "the *pug bu chung* (?) of silver"), namely in the context of the victory banquet following the subjugation of the rebellion of Dags po (PT 1287: l.245-246). Previously, he had served as *zha 'bring* (personal attendant) of the *btsan po* (PT 1287: l.219, on *zha 'bring* see > 19). Later chronicles state that Zhang snang was appointed minister for (the areas) above the river, and Snubs (Gnubs) Snya ro Dar tsug blon was minister (for the areas) below the river (*Lde'u-1* 109; Dotson 2007a: 55). The latter was likewise a member of the *zha 'bring*, but of Srong btsan Sgam po, which chronologically seems somewhat inconsistent. We assume the river means the Gtsang po, and the share of jurisdiction mentioned refers to a first territorial-administrative north-south division, which was replaced shortly afterwards by the establishment of the Horns. One of Myang Zhang snang's activities in the "northern half" was the above-mentioned subjugation of the Sum pa, which as noted in the *Annals* happened at Snying drung (in 'Dam gzhung; PT 1288: l.1-3). This ensured the northern extent of the central regions for the young empire – corresponding to what in the Dbu ru geography is represented by the northern border of Prags (north-east of 'Dam gzhung; Hazod 2009: 197). Myang Zhang snang was executed in the early 630s, after having been accused of disloyalty by the later "chief minister" Khyung po Spung sad (> 17).

(2) A large number, if not the majority, of the families who played a decisive role in the founding of the empire and the subsequent two decades came from the northern regions (as seen from Yar lung), or had branch seats there (the Mgar, Mong, Myang, Dba's, Mnon, Pa tshab, Sbrang), namely the areas controlled by the two princes entitled *zing po rje*: Stag skya bo and Khri pang sum. The family of the Myang Zhang snang were in the service of the Zing po rje Stag skya bo, whose domain included the areas called Klum ro Ya sum and Yel rab sde bzhi. Stag skya bo was apparently the heir or successor of the still older Klum ro'i Ya sum recorded in the *rgyal phran* list of PT 1286 (l.14-15) and PT 1290 (r6), with Myang (along with the Sbrang) mentioned as the central ministers of the ruler (*rje*) named Nam pa'i bu

gseng ti (var. Nam pa'i bug seng ti; elsewhere Nam sa Rtsi ti; Hazod 2009: 173).

In her analysis of the Old Tibetan *klum*, Bialek suggested that this term was changed to (Classical Tibetan) *klung* (valley) (Bialek 2018, vol. I: 401, fn. 3), which also makes it likely to see the Klum ro (Klum Ya sum) as the older name for Klung shod. This refers geographically to the section of the upper Skyid chu – namely from Pho mdo downriver to the level of 'Bri gung Rdzong gsar at the entrance to the Zho rong valley, or even beyond as the neighbouring place of Zhva'i lha khang (alternatively to its usual mention as part of Mal gro) is also given as "Klung shod Zhva lha khang" in the sources (Uebach 1987: 111; below fn. 10). In one line in Sad mar kar's song it says "Mal tro is near *klum*" (*mal tro ni klum dang nye*; PT 1287: l.422); although the context suggests that here *klum* should not be read as a place name but topographically (*klum* = dale; Bialek 2018, vol. I: 401), the description fits precisely with this border situation of Mal gro and Klung shod. The *dbang ris bco brgyad*, the catalogue of territorial divisions related to the seventh century, lists the Klung shod Nam po (recalling here the above-mentioned Nam pa of ancient Klum ro), related to an area, which we encounter in the *OTA* as part of Dbu ru shod. Thus the council of 684-85 was held at Re skam of Dbu ru shod, which is in central Klung shod (Hazod 2009: 217) and today marks the border between the Lhun grub and Mal gro counties (Fig. 8). The section below this Re skam can accordingly be roughly identified with the "lower part of Klum ro" mentioned in the *OTC* (see below).

The "four districts of Yel rab" (Yel rab sde bzhi) have still not been firmly identified, but they probably refer to an area adjacent to Klum (Klung shod). In Drikung 2011 (p. 158) it is noted as a part of 'Phan yul, without any further details, however.

It seems that Myang people were resident in Klung shod from very early on. Ten grave fields have been recorded for Klung shod proper, four in the lower, six in the upper part (Fig. 8); they are part of the total of 106 burial-mound sites we have identified so far for Lhun grub and Mal gro county. The graves' poor conditions and some other surface indications point to an older history of several of these tumulus sites, whose origins may date back to prehistoric times. In terms of number of tombs most impressive are the burial-mound sites 0198 in Upper Klung shod, with more than 100 severely damaged tombs – one of the possible candidates as burial ground of early Myang and Sbrang people, or also other people recorded for this area, such as the Phyugs mtshams.

(3) The problem of narrowing down the home and possible burial-mound site of the family of Myang Zhang snam more exactly lies in

the uncertain identification of some places in the much-cited empire-founding story (in *OTC.3-4*; PT 1287: l.118-246; Dotson 2013b; Dondrub 2009: 21-28; 66-78).

At the above-mentioned banquet ([15].1), the gathering solemnly recalled the victory over the rival Zing po rje Khri pangs sum, the ruler of Ngas po (the later 'Phan yul), who had previously annexed the Stag skya bo realm of Klum ro and Yel rab. In his song, Myang Zhang snang addresses the part that the *btsan po*'s main allies (among them Zhang snang's father, Myang Tseng sku Smon to re) played in this victory – a counter-performance to the previous song by the overly ambitious Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse, who (wrongly) emphasised his achievements in this matter (PT 1287: l.220-246).[9] This Khri pang gsum had his main seat at *mkhar* Yu sna (alias Yu sna of Sdur ba), while his former neighbour, Stag skya bo, was resident at the place called Nyen kar rnying ba ("old Nyen kar"). A third stronghold was *mkhar* Sdur ba, which became the residence of the Mnyen 'Dzi zung, formerly a minister of Stag skya bo, who had changed sides and persuaded Khri pang sum to attack Stag skya bo. The annexed territory of the rival is described as Stag skya bo *yul*, Yel rab sde bzhi and Klum ya sum. For his share in this conquest Mnyen 'Dzi zung received the lower part of Klum Ya sum as fief, plus *mkhar* Sdur ba as additional reward (PT 1287: l.135-136; Bialek 2015: 85-87; 2016: 125-26). With this territorial transfer, Mnyen 'Dzi zung became the new lord of the subject families resident in these estates. These included Myang Nam to re Khru gu and his son Smon to re Tseng sku. As is known, this Myang Tseng sku (together with his companions from Dba's, Mnon, Tshes pong) later formed the spearhead in the successful conquest of Khri pang sum, for which they were rewarded by the emperor with estates and households of the subjugated areas. Tseng sku received Mnyen 'Dzi zung's seat, Sdur ba castle

[9] The controversies between the two are at the same time portrayed as controversies between the ethnic groups to which the individual families of the allies belonged; this is described by the well-known pair of names – the Se Khyung (from the west, associated with Zu tse); the Lho Rngegs people (from the south and eastern Central Tibet, of which the Myang formed a part) and the Ldong Tong (or Stong) people, in the central region, which other allies belonged to. (In this Myang song, the Ldong Tong actually seems to represent an even larger group which also includes the Lho Rngegs; cf. Dotson 2007a (p. 80) and 2013a: (64, fn. 8) and his discussion of this classification's possible precursor to the later fabrication of Tibet's "clan" divisions; cf. also Takeuchi 1985: 142.) In fact, from their first appearance in the Highlands, namely in Nyang po (Myang po; see below) and their early presence in various contexts of southern Tibet (such as in Rngegs yul; Hazod 2009: 173), the Myang was a southern lineage. Interestingly, this Lho Rngegs identity was apparently also prevalent among the northern Myang from very early times.

(plus 1500 *bran khyim* or households), which later passed over to Tseng sku's son, the later "chief minister" Myang Mang po rje Zhang snang. Finally, Sdur ba changed its owner again, namely, when the minister Myang Zhang snang was accused of disloyalty to the *btsan po* (Srong btsan Sgam po) (described as an intrigue by the cunning Khyung po Spung sad) and the Pa tshab Gyim po, formerly in the service of Zhang snang, turned away from his lord and destroyed Sdur ba (PT 1287: l.311-314).

This Pa tshab Gyim po was arguably a relative of the Pa tsab Lady, who was the consort of Mnyen 'Dzi zung, and who previously had unsuitably treated the Myang Zhang snang's father, Tseng sku, as her servant – the actual trigger for Tseng sku's turning away from Khri pang gsum (PT 1287: l.138-141). In this example of *mkhar* Sdur ba we see a characteristic social dynamic, where under the circumstances of changing power and ownership situations families addressed as lords changed to the subject status of *bran* (bondservants) and vice versa. We assume that both the family of Pa tsab, who acted as bride-giver to the Mnyen, and Myang Tseng sku's family were resident in the vicinity of Sdur ba. The problem is we do not properly know where this Sdur ba castle was located. It is apparently not identical with the *mkhar* Yu sna of Sdur (cf. Bialek 2016: 124), the latter suggested as being identified as the ruins above Zing ba village in lower 'Phan po – an identification indicated by information from the local tradition (Hazod 2014: fn. 27; cf. also *LLG-4* p. 15).[10] As far as the "old Nyen kar" is concerned, it seems questionable whether it is identical with the Nyen kar of the *Annals*, which was in the Lo valley (east of Zhogs). In *LLG-4* (p. 15), this ancient Stag skya bo seat is identified (without giving any references) with Mkhar gdong in northwestern 'Phan yul. A hill with old ruins on top rises behind the Mkhar gdong village, whose name evidently derived from it (*mkhar gdong* = "in front of the castle"). Interestingly, at Mkhar gdong there is a small district known locally as Pa tshab *yul* (Hazod 2009: 196, 205). Provided that this toponym is related to the old Pa tshab / Myang story, the Nyen kar rnying ba was the older name of the later Pa tshab district, and the place of Mkhar gdong corresponds to the old *mkhar* Sdur ba – in all a rather doubtful identification. In Sad ma kar's song (*OTC.8*; PT 1287: l.421, 422), Sdur ba and Nyen kar, which we think refer to *mkhar* Sdur ba and Nyen kar rnying pa, are clearly two separate sites linked to different topographies ("Sdur ba lies near

[10] Migmar 2005: 67 identifies it as the Ka ba Yul sna (probably the Ka'u due south of Zing ba) known as the birthplace of 'Ba' rom pa (b. 1127). The latter was from the Bran ka lineage, whose territory was the Yung ba of Lower 'Phan yul (Hazod 2009: 195), which corresponds to the area where the places of Zing ba (and Ka ba / Ka'u) are located (cf. TTT: 0245 (Fig. 1); for Yung ba, see also below > 38).

the water (*chab*)", "Nyen kar lies near the soil (*dog*)"; PT 1287: l. 421, 422; Uray 1972: 34; Bialek 2018, vol. II: 573 reads *dog* as "valley"). Apart from this, to the best of our knowledge, there are no clues in the sources to connect the Myang with this north-western part of 'Phan yul (and 'Phan yul in general). Correspondingly, we are sceptical of connecting the grave fields in this area with the Myang, notably the (largely destroyed) graves of the burial-mound site of 0225 directly behind Mkhar gdong (M-1 of 40m; see TTT: 0225).

(3.1) As mentioned above, in addition to Sdur ba, Mnyen 'Dzi kung "inherited" the lower part of Klum Ya sum, i.e. the lower (eastern) Klung shod; probably this is the area, where Myang's fief (Sdur ba and the related *bran khyim*) is to be located. In any case, this Klum Ya sum had been Myang land since the earliest times. With regard to the Myang of the imperial period, Richardson referred to Mang ra, the eastern side valley of the Skyid chu due south of Zho rong. His identification as a Myang place is based on the founding history of the Zhva'i lha khang in Mang ra by the Myang descendant Myang Ting nge 'dzin (Richardson 1998: 58; 1985: 44). As noted above, this famous temple is also known as Klung shod Zhva lha khang, and geographically represents a place at the entrance to Klung shod, the ancient Klum ro.

Although we do not know the closer internal Myang lineage relation between the Myang Zhang snang of the early seventh-century and the later eighth-century family of the Myang Ting nge 'dzin (mentioned in the Zhva'i lha khang inscriptions are the latter's grandfather and paternal uncle; *OTI* (p. 18): l.33; l.55), we assume that the choice of the place for the temple echoes an older Myang presence in this area (see below, sub-chapter 3.2 and fn. 11). In Myang Zhang snang's song it allegorically speaks of [Myang] Tseng sku Smon to re as the one who divided the water [of the Skyid chu] in a dale (*klum*; or in Klum [ro / ya sum]?) (*klum na ni chab gchod pa / tseng sku ni smon to re* / PT 1287: l.235; Bialek 2018, vol. II: 572) – possibly recalling Myang Tseng sku's share in the conquest of Khri pang gsum, where the Myang commanded regiments had entered the enemy country from the "Myang homeland". Earlier in the Chronicle (*OTC.4*; PT 1287: l.180-181) in relation to the same context it says that Myang Tseng sku and Mnon 'Dron po checked the situation (of the enemy forces) from the Stag pa Sha ru la – referring to a pass that is not identified but may be somewhere in north-eastern Lhun grub county. (A second foray under the command of Tseng sku's combatants crossed the Skyid chu further below and entered Ngas po ('Phan yul) from the south; see below > 24.)

This situation leads us to connect the burial mound site 0115 opposite Zhva'i lha khang, on the other side of the Mang ra river, to the

early Myang. The site is known as the place of a fragment of a stele, with only twelve lines of a partially preserved inscription; it describes the origins of various ethnic groups or families (Cho phyi, Mda' myi, Tshe (Tshe myi? or Tshe(s) (pong)?), Phyug po (= Phyugs mtshams?), Gyim po (= Pa tshab Gyim po?)) classified as brothers from the sons of a *lha* of heaven (l.5-7). The stone is chipped on the left below line seven, so that in line nine the beginning of the sentence has disappeared. It reads: *xxxng gi myes po ste/ po ldong tse myag / …* which Richardson (1985: 63) reconstructed as: "the ancestor of [Mya]ng, Po ldong Tse myag".

On my visit to this area in 2010 the stone fragment was lying on the ground beside one of the graves (Fig. 11), and at the initiative of the locals had recently been placed on a stone base (Fig. 12). Interestingly, Richardson, known as a careful observer, did not record the tombs during his visit, but speaks of the "remains of a large stone building, perhaps a former palace of the Myang family" (Richardson 1985: 63). In fact, mound M-1 and M-2 are similar in appearance to old buildings, but they are undoubtedly burial mounds, which is also underlined by the local designation of the place as Cheka (*mchad kha*, "tumulus [site]"). M-3, the tomb with the stele, is a well-preserved, oval-shaped grave building and perhaps of more recent date. The M-1 mound represents the larger structure: the inner, walled part measures approximately 30-35m, while the entire structure with the earth sloping on the sides gives a frontal length of about 45m (Fig. 13). An exact identification of these buildings and their original dimensions can only be provided by a more accurate archaeological survey; this also applies to the other building traces here, including the uncertain structure that we marked as M-0, which seems to indicate a building even larger than M-1 (Fig. 10).

3.2 The nearest burial mound sites with elite tombs are 0114 (a single elite mound in upper Mang ra), 0113 (a smaller group of tombs due south of Mang ra) and 0112, ca. eight km south of Mang ra. The latter represents the largest elite field of northern and central Mal gro, with more than 100, almost exclusively elite mounds of the 10 to 40m category (Fig. 32). However, a relationship with Myang is rather unlikely, simply because 0112 is actually situated outside of Klung shod, and also because no lineage specific tumulus site of such a dimension can be assumed for the Myang. In contrast to the Dba's, for example, after Myang Zhang snang the Myang only came into the position of a *zhang lon*-producing lineage again much later, namely from minister Myang Snang bzang 'Dus khong (recorded in *OTA* as 745/46), to whose family line, as mentioned, Myang Ting nge 'dzin belonged. These later Myang had several territorial links in connection with

different temple foundations (Sørensen 1994: 416; RCP: 764) and also administrative posts; they can largely be summarised as "southern Myang" (especially related to the Lhokha region, 'Phyong po, Gtam shul, but also to Myang ro of modern Rgyal rtse) who share with the "northern Myang" the ancient Lho Rngegs origin (fn. 9). The family is mentioned, for example, for the eighth century as having provided the commander of Upper G.yo ru, i.e. western Lhokha; Hazod 2009: 205); Ting nge 'dzin himself is known inter alia as the Lho pa Ting 'dzin bzang po (TBRC: P3827), which recalls the old Lho Rngegs affiliation, or it simply refers to his origin from the south (or Lhokha). If so, his founding of the Zhva'i lha khang in Mal gro / Klung shod meant something like the sentimental return to the home of the early (northern) Myang, whose eminent, lineage-specific icon was the former ally Myang Zhang snang.[11] In any case, a central grave field encompassing the various Myang people of Central Tibet cannot be expected, whether in Mal gro or anywhere else. In other words, this significant field of 0112 (like any other sites below Mang ra) should not be seen as an appropriate candidate for the identification of a Myang-specific site. We rather see the Myang people higher up, in Klung shod (incl. Zho rong; fn. 11), with the Mchad kha of Mang ra probably being the site where the "chief minister" Myang Zhang snang was buried.

Note: There was an ancestral Myang deity called Myang *lha* Bo mo (= the Po ldong of the inscription?); this refers to the representative *lha* of the ancient principality of Nyang yul (Myang yul) (largely present-day Rgya mda' county; below Excursus II), which reportedly

[11] It should be noted that Ting nge 'dzin's foundation of Zhva'i lha khang is mentioned in tandem with a second establishment called Grog temple. In Nel pa Pandita's chronicle (Uebach 1987: 110), this is given in the form: *klung shod zhva dang grog'i lha khang bzhengs* ("he erected the Klung shod Zhva [temple] and the temple of Grog", or alternatively: "he established the Zhva- and the Grog temple [of] Klung shod." In fact, this Grog'i lha khang most likely refers to the place of the later Grog O rgyan dgon situated not far from 'Bri gung monastery in Zho rong, the valley due north of Mang ra. The site is known from the biography of Klong chen Rab 'byams pa (1308-63), who is said to have received this hermitage from the ninth throne holder of 'Bri gung, in the context of which he also renovated the neighbouring Zhva'i lha khang (*GK* 219-20; RCP: 723). As part of (Lower) Klum ro, the Zho rong valley, probably likewise was populated by Myang people, if it was not their actual home in this upper Skyid chu area. One may see an indication for this in the observance that the dialect spoken in this area is known to be very similar to Nyang po, the old Myang seat further to the east (Hazod 2009: 180; below sub-chapter 4). – It would be worthwhile trying to map the many religious Myang foundations of the later imperial period (altogether nine are recorded, mostly by members of Ting nge 'dzin's family), and to ask which of these places (similar to those of Mang ra / Zhva and Grog) possibly represented reoccupations of earlier Myang sites and which had any other background for the choice of the respective places.

goes back to the arrival of the Myang ancestor from his place of origin in the Himalayan border region of Mon (Hazod 2009: 175, 178ff.). A relationship with the (northern) Myang of Klung shod and Mang ra is very likely (fn. 11) – arguably related to the dominion of the ancient Klum ro *rgyal po*, which later fell to Khri pang sum. With the latter's fall the emperor Gnam ri Slon btsan inherited a territory whose extent is detailed in *OTC* as "from Yung ba sna of Phag down to Rkong Bre sna" (PT 1287: l.183-184), thus evidently having included also the Nyang po region. The only field recorded for Nyang po (0100) is situated in Upper Nyang po, directly opposite the mountain and seat of the *yul lha* Nyang po rgyal po (alias A bo Nyang lha), which can be identified with the Nyang (Myang) *lha* Bo mo (Hazod, *op. cit.*, *ibid.*). The field with severely damaged mounds (max. size 30m) can indeed be seen as a cemetery for Myang people of the early times, yet it should not be favoured as burial ground of the chief minister and his family.

[16] Mgar Mang zham Sum snang [0172 +]
The passage quoted in *OTC.2* to describe the minister's quality reads (in the transl. by Bialek 2018):

> Thereafter, Mgar Mang zham Sum snang performed [the duty of grand councillor]. [One] said that Mang zham Sum snang and Khu Khri sna Dgru zung verified evidence with a sword; in ancient times, during the life of *btsan po* 'Bro Mnyen, Mgar Mang zham Sum snang, having verified with a sword evidence that Mthon myi 'Bring po Rgyal brtsan nu, although performing the duty of grand councillor, became disloyal, put [his] observations into words. Thereafter, when, having seized [him], [one] brought an accusation [against him], Mang zham Sum snang, having acted as executioner, killed [him]. [He], having taken immediately the head, that [he] had cut off, put [it] into [his] breast pocket. Then, [Mthon myi] made five or six steps and fell down. Thus it is related (PT 1287: l.87-93; Bialek 2018, vol. II: 248, with the translit. of personal names adapted by the author; for a discussion of the critical terms in this passage, see Bialek 2015: 288, fn. 4; cf. also Dondrub 2009: 35-36).

This is a spectacular example of how accusations were performed and executed (see for parallels > 17), only that this entry evidently mixes two or more different periods: the time of the Yar lung *rgyal po* 'Bro Mnyen lde ru (in *OTC* incongruously addressed as *btsan po*), the period of the Mgar Mang zham Sum snang and the time of Khu Khri snya Dgru zung, this if the latter is identical with the homonymous Khu minister of the *OTA* entry of 678-79. In other words, as a contemporary of the Mthon myi "chief minister" (ranked as > 07 in

OTC.2) the Mgar Mang zham Sum snang cannot be the chief minister of the early seventh century, and again the Khu Khri sna Dgru zung cannot be the Khu of the same name of the late 670s.

In the entry on Mthon myi 'Bring po Rgyal brtsan nu, it says in *OTC*.2 that he was killed by one not mentioned by name, after this minister had treacherously killed his own sister, Mthon myi za Yar steng, by passing her a poisonous drink (PT 1287: l.69-70). As noted above, Mgar and Thon mi had probably been neighbouring families in earlier times, both in the Snye mo and Gnyal context (> 14), and it could well be that the killing of the sister relates to marriage conflicts between the two families. At least, no example of disloyalty is described in this passage. (According to a popular Tibetan tradition, Thon, the valley next to Snye mo, the ancestral home (?) of the Thon (Mthon myi/mi) family, is considered among the lands in Central Tibet where poisoning was practised (some say still is). But the practice of poisoning was widespread in early times and cannot be reduced to certain regions or families; *inter alia* also the Sna nam, from whose ranks came the successor of Mthon myi 'Bring po Rgyal brtsan nu (i.e. Sna nam 'Bring tog rje, no. 08 in *OTC.2*), are mentioned as experts in this practice; cf. *OTC.1*, PT 1287: l.22).

The identity of this "chief minister" Mgar Mang zham Sum snang thus remains somewhat uncertain. The form "in ancient times" when addressing Thon mi's execution by Mang zham Sum snang suggests that the latter was a forefather (erroneously given by the same name) of the present "chief minister", and this anecdote has been used to explain this chief minister's similar abilities. Otherwise, nothing is known about this figure and the minister's name does not appear in the genealogical Mgar accounts of the later sources. (The Mgar in the generation after Khri Sgra 'jings smug (> 14) is named [Mgar] Stong mes Khri lcags; RCP: 638). For Mgar related tumulus sites, see > 14.

[17] Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse [0330]

(1) Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse's biography we find in three parts in the *Chronicle* (in *OTC.2* and in the Gnam ri Slon btsan and the Srong btsan Sgam po related chapters; *OTC.4*, *OTC.6*) and in addition it is in the focus of the (older) *Chronicle* fragment ITJ 1375 (Uray 1972; Dotson 2011; Dotson and Helman-Ważny 2016: 125f.). According to *OTC.2*, he followed Mang zham Sum snang as chief minister. In *OTC.6* (PT 1287: l.315-318) it says he became Srong btsan Sgam po's most favoured minister after the elimination of Myang Mang po che (> 15), an event, which Uray dates to the early 630s, and his tenure as chief minister started, according to Uray, after the elimination of Mgar Mang zham Sum snang (> 16) at the end of the 630s (Uray 1972: 40-41). Uray's reconstruction of Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse's tenure

(with reference to PT 1144 and PT 1047) is problematic, however. He comes to the contradictory result that Zu tse must still have been alive in around 644/45, and in the function as "chief minister" (p. 41); at the same time, he dates Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung's counsellorship from 641 at latest (the date of Stong rtsan's mention as the Tibetan "minister of state" in the *Tang Annals*; > 19) until the takeover of the post by 'O ma lde "at the end of Khri Srong rtsan's reign" (p. 36). There are some more disagreements, such as the mention of Stong rtsan in *OTC* simply as *blon* for the time when in Uray's assessment he was chief minister. It seems, the solution to all the chronological problems with regard to this phase of chief ministers from nos. 13 to 20 can only be if we leave the idea of a strict sequence of singularly acting "chief ministers". This becomes clearer in the case of 'O ma lde's office (> 19).

(2) Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse's qualities are detailed in *OTC.2*, stating that he was an extremely keen and at the same time cunning person who possessed the "nine [= all] qualities"; among others it specifies that no one could beat him in the *myig mang* ("many eyes") board game – an interesting note, which, unlike other explanations of his ingenuity (borrowed from Indian models), relates to a significant element of the early Tibetan cultural history (below Excursus I).

Although the elimination of the lord of Rtsang Bod, Mar mun, was perhaps the work of the "Blue Mong" (> 13), there is little doubt about the account in *OTC.4*, according to which Gnam ri Slon mtshan granted Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse the Mar mun's territories. It has been argued in this context that the *mkhar* Khri Boms, the residence of Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse, was formerly the seat of Mar Mun or at least was part of Rtsang Bod. It has been further suggested that Zu tse's residence should be identified as the ruins next to the village of Bom ma, west of the Glang mtsho Lake, on the border between present-day Lha rtse and Ngam ring county (Hazod 2009: 189f.).

Similar to Dba's Dbyi tshab (> 24), Zu tse invited the emperor (Srong btsan Sgam po) in his old days to a banquet to Khri Boms (PT 1287: l.94-95; 318-320); but unlike the Dbyi tshab meeting, where the emperor was to confirm the *zhang lon* status for the *bu tsha rgyud* of the old veteran, Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse had a plot in mind – if we believe the descriptions in *OTC* (chap. 2 and 6), which is not always easy to decide. It seems it cannot be pure coincidence that the future chief counsellor, Mgar Stong btsan Yul zung, revealed this plot, meaning the assassination of the emperor planned by Zu tse. Zu tse then committed suicide by beheading himself (*rang gi mgo bchad de gum mo*; PT 1287: l.96). In the version of *OTC.6* it was Zu tse's son

(Ngag Re khyung) who killed his father and cut off his head. This son then took the head to the emperor in Pying ba to demonstrate his loyalty, and also to request that Khyung po's seat of Khri Boms would not be confiscated (1287: l.323-325).

(3) A group of badly damaged tombs is located just south of the original Bom ma village, including several building remains. A separate group of oval mounds is located further south. The inspection of the site by Chinese archaeologists in 1990 (SEA 144f.) recorded a total of 39 tombs (M1-M26 (= 0330 in our list), M27-M39 (= 0331) as well as two approximately equal-sized buildings in the area of 0330. The buildings' wall constructions (layers of ramped earth and gravel) are the same as at the tombs, and, as stated by the authors, both structures were quite certainly from the same period. The buildings are identified as probably the habitations of tomb keepers. The largest (oval?) mound is located in the section of 0330 and measures not more than 20m, which obviously refers to the walled part, with the earth sloping on the sides this comes to an overall dimension of ca. 30m – in other words an elite mound of the rather smaller category. (The Bom ma village (today abandoned) was at the foot of a rock (H: 150m), seat of the local *yul lha* called Bo yul sa (= Boms (Bod?) yul sa); the satellite imagery shows the trace of a larger ruin complex, with the remnants of a 50m-long wall (Fig. 14) – possibly the remains of *mkhar* Khri Boms, but also a large grave of the MT-B type cannot be entirely ruled out.)

It is unclear whether those Khyung po, who later appear in leading positions of the G.yas ru (Right Horn) division were closely related to the family of the Zu tse. It also seems somewhat contradictory that the *stong sde* of Khri Boms is recorded as having been under the leadership of the 'Bro, the leading lineage of the Lha rtse area and the former Gtsang chen, while the Khyung po provided the commanders of Upper G.yas ru, and were also in a leading position in central Right Horn (i.e. Shangs). There are a number of significant elite fields in this section of the central and upper G.yas ru, the most outstanding being 0324 plus the neighbouring single (65m) mound of 0325 (Fig. 15). It can be assumed that the Khyung po of G.yas ru were buried in one of these sites among others, yet in our opinion Zu tse's resting place and that of his son etc. is rather to be located in the ruins of Bom ma.

Excursus I: Which board game did Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse play? *Mig mang* ("many eyes") is commonly considered the Tibetan name of the board game known in Chinese as *weiqi*, in Japanese as *igo* and in the West as Go – a strategic game for two players who try to encircle

the opponent's pieces, or "stones", by placing their own ones at the intersection of the lines. In this way, a previously ownerless "territory" is divided between two contenders with the victor being the one who has captured the most stones and thus gained a larger area. As in the *OTC* context, in China, where *weiqi* is archaeologically attested for the first century CE, in Japan, Korea and other early dissemination areas the mastery of this "encircling game" is seen as symbol of wisdom and strategic ability. The *mig mang* seems to be only one of several board games adopted from China – along with chess (*qi*), for example, mentioned in the *Jiu Tangshu*.[12]

The oldest known evidence of board games in Tibet is the great *mig mang* stone (*mig mang I*) – the playing board found in the ruins of the palace Byams pa Mi 'gyur gling in Rgya ma. (The former (pre-Buddhist) name of this site, popularly known as the birthplace of Srong btsan Sgam po, was probably Khri brtsigs 'Bum gdugs, Hazod 2014). A peasant found the stone in 2000 when rebuilding his farmhouse situated next to the ruins; during our visit to this valley a few weeks later Tsering Gyalpo and I saw the stone leaning against the wall of this house. Tsering later reported this finding to the authorities, who finally took care of its relocation to Lhasa (later installing it in the Lhasa Tibet Museum; Fig. 16). Today, this farmhouse and the whole village have disappeared, giving way to the outsized "Srong btsan Sgam po memorial hall" – an extreme case of the musealisation that is taking place in the Lhasa valley. But at least the remains of the walls of the former palace have been uncovered in this connection, to reveal the finding context that leaves no doubt that the stone dates back to the imperial period and was placed in the courtyard or garden of the originally tower-like building.

A few years later, a second, slightly smaller *mig mang* stone (*mig mang II*) came to light in nearby Rgya ma Khri khang, which is to be identified with the former Gnam ri Slon mtshan residence (or campsite) of Sbra stod tshal (Hazod 2014). Since this site was in permanent use (in contrast to the place of *mig mang I*), lastly from the late seventeenth century as the seat of the Hor khang family, a later (post-imperial) dating is also conceivable, but similarities in external form and the nature of carving etc. point to the same chronology as *mig mang I*. As with *mig mang I*, indentations on either side served for storing the pieces. In both examples the engraved playing field grid has 17x17 lines, a significant deviation from the classic *go* game and the old

[12] Cf. Bushell 1880: 442: "Their (i.e. the Tibetans') games are chess and bowl". The original more precisely reads chess (*qi*) and *liubo* ("six sticks"); on the latter, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liubo; accessed 8/2018). I thank Hou Haoran for this reference to the Chinese original.

weiqi, where the grid has 19x19 lines. (In Hazod 2014, the grids were erroneously given as 16x16 (*mig mang I*) and 17x17 (*mig mang II*) squares. The discussion in Drikung 2011 refers only to *mig mang I*, on p. 244, with the incorrect reference of being located in "Gyama Thrikhang".)

The Rgya ma examples are two of several probably similar old stone *mig mang* in the Highlands, which have since come to light – in Ngari and Kham. In the latter case it refers to a rock engraved with the *mig mang* grid that interestingly marks the traditional border between two nomadic communities (Dralha 2002: 79, cit. in Drikung 2011: 227). In Bon po writings there are also various mentions of *mig mang* related to the time before the arrival of Buddhism (Shotwell 1994). Shotwell 1994 gives a brief overview of the history of the Tibetan *weiqi*, which, apart from the classical *go* variant (known to have been played by the nobility until the twentieth century with slightly different rules and playing terminologies) also has different forms adapted for ritual (or divinatory) applications, and the author points out that in Tibet *mig mang* also refers to other pebble-and-board games with the grid pattern as playing field. In his later supplement "A Form of Tibetan Mig-Mang From the West?" (at www.gosymposium.org; access 8/2017), the author refers to the rather rare variant of the Tibetan *mig mang* played on the same 17x17 grid but without much in common with the classical *weiqi*; as a "custodial capture game" it is related to early western board games like the old Greek "polis" or the Vikings' "hnefatafl" (the latter supposedly played with a 19x19 grid).

All this requires a closer examination, but it seems that earlier assessments about the testimony of the seventh-century *mig mang* game need to be re-considered. Strictly speaking, we do not know whether the seventh-century stones from Rgya ma were actually used for playing *weiqi*, which, as we originally thought (Hazod 2014), had been adopted from China (fn. 12), or whether it was an older Tibetan variant of a pebble-and-board game with a *weiqi*-like grid. In other words, if we take the *OTC* entry on Khyunpo Zu tse at face value, then the "chief minister" was a master of a *mig mang* game, which was probably but not necessarily the same as the one played on the stones in Rgya ma. Either way, we must consider a much older Tibetan history in both *mig mang* references, in Rgya ma and *OTC*, according to which *weiqi*-like *mig mang* games were long used in the Central Tibetan districts of the pre-imperial period as a standard instrument of communication in everyday social and political life. In this sense, they should be seen as testimony to a genealogy of board games with grid pattern originating in whatever Bronze Age context, in which the Tibetan *mig mang* variants and the *weiqi* in China indeed formed related but not direct, causally connected stages.

[18] Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung
Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung served as the minister after Zu tse. When he grew old, 'O ma lde Lod btsan was appointed, but was disgraced and killed. Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung then became chief minister again and served for six years before dying of old age – according to the gloss in *OTC.2* (PT 1287: l.102-04), which contains some chronological problems, however (> 19, > 20).

[19] 'O ma lde [Khri bzang] Lod btsan (d. ca. 651) [0043]
(1) As mentioned above (> 18), 'O ma lde Lod btsan reportedly took over the office of chief minister from Mgar Stong rtsan when he grew old, but Lod btsan was killed soon afterwards, and Mgar became *blon chen* again until his death (in 667 as stated in *OTA*). The death of the chief minister Lod btsan would therefore have been in ca. 661. Here Uray (like Bogslovskij 1972 before him) sees a spelling mistake in *OTC.2* and *lo drug* should be read as *lo* (*bcu*) *drug*, which means: death of 'O ma lde Lod btsan in about 651, and (second) tenure of Mgar Stong rtsan from 652-667.

The later chronicles (namely the SLS chapters in *KG* and *Lde'u-1*, *Lde'u-2*) do not say anything about this interruption of Mgar Stong rtsan's office; rather, for the period in question, several ministers are named, in conjunction with an evidently quite corrupt chronology. In *Lde'u-1* (p. 109) it says (in Dotson's translation):

> Khyung-po Su-sna Zu-tse and Mong Khri-do-re Snang-tshab served as ministers. Mong was disgraced and then 'Gar Stong-btsan Yul-gzungs served for twenty years. Gco Dar-rgyal Mang-po-rje Srong-nam also served for twenty-five years. Myang Mang-po-rje Zhang-snang was appointed as minister to [the lands of] Gtsang upwards. Snubs Snya-ro Dar-tsug blon was appointed as minister to [the lands from the] Gtsang[-po] River inwards. After 'O-ma-lde Khri-bzang Long-btsan was also appointed as minister, 'Gar offered slanders to the [Btsan-po's] ear, and 'O-ma-lde was disgraced (Dotson 2007a: 55).

In this listing there is no mention of a "chief minister", but of a partial joint cooperation of central ministers, all of which are also included in the (somewhat longer) list of Srong btsan Sgam po ministers given in *Bka' chems Ka khol ma* (*KK* 266, 320) and elsewhere. The long tenures of Gco (= Gcog ro; *KK* 266.7) Dar rgyal Mang po rje and Mgar Stong btsan can be explained in this way. Dar rgyal Mang po rje, whoever he was (see Dotson 2007a: 66-67), acted at about the same time as Mgar. It appears that the ranking of "chief minister" for the period before the first mention of this post in the *Annals* (i.e. before 652-53) was an invention of the *OTC* – a re-arrangement of genera-

tions of core ministers who shared the jurisdiction, as mentioned above (> 15), partly connected with a spatial distribution of this function. In other words, there was no single acting "chief minister" before 652-53, the year when "*blon che* Stong rtsan" subjugated the southern and western areas of Glo bo and Rtsang Rhya as delineated in the *OTA* (Dotson 2009: 84). It is quite conceivable that Mgar Stong btsan established this position (for himself) – after the death of Srong btsan Sgam po, and after the eliminating of 'O ma lde Lod btsan, and yet other possible "co-ministers". This would mean 'O ma lde Lod btsan died at about the time of the burial of the emperor. Why this event, which falls within the period of the *OTA*, is not recorded there is only seemingly surprising; it is in the series of other omissions, such as the mention of Gung srong Gung rtsan (cf. Dotson 2007a: 61), and with 'O ma lde there were no such far-reaching actions to record as in the case of Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung (> 20).

(2) 'O ma lde Khri bzang Lod btsan is listed among a group of aristocrats specified as *zha 'bring* (entourage), who witnessed the exchange of oaths between emperor Srong btsan Sgam po and Dba's Phangs to re Dbyi tshab – together with seven lords and ministers (*rje blon bdun*). These *zha 'bring* were: Khu Khri do re Smyang zung, Gnubs Sna do re Gtsug blon, Rngegs Rgyal 'bring Lan ton, Tshes pong Khri btsan khong sto, 'O ma lde Khri bzang Lod btsan, and Khu Smon to re Phangs tshab (PT 1287: l.275-278). In her analysis of the compound *zha 'bring*, Bialek refers to the funeral text PT 1042, where there is the allusion that this particular group of nobles, who were part of the funeral train, eventually followed the ruler into the grave (together with the psychopomp sheep and other items; Bialek 2018, vol. II: 422). Interestingly, it was one of the *zha 'bring*, Rngegs Rgyal 'bring Lan ton, who brought the (oath) stone that later served as foundation stone for the tomb of Dba's Dbyi tshab (> 24) – possibly an indication of a larger radius of oath- and funeral-specific functions of this group. The *zha 'bring* recall the "Tibetan custom" noted in the *Tang Annals*, where five or six chosen friends or "common-fated ones" were buried with the ruler (Bushell 1880: 443). They formed a special component of the Tibetan entourage system, which is also addressed in the group of the *yab 'bangs rus drug*, an establishment from the time of the Yar lung *rgyal po*. It is also interesting in this context that these families all came from the south and were closely connected with the early Spu rgyal history.

Some people in this entourage seem to be addressed in the list of the Srong btsan Sgam po ministers of the later sources, most detailed in the minister list in the *Ka khol ma* (*KK* 266, 320), although here they are entitled *chos blon* and associated with activities that have nothing

to do with the entourage function in the above sense. It seems that the Lam sde Khri bzang Lod btsan of this list is identical with 'O ma lde Khri bzang Lod btsan, as the Gnubs Gnya' Stong re Gtsug snon listed immediately before this Lam sde also evidently corresponds to the Gnubs Sna do re Gtsug blon of the *zha 'bring* group. This Gnubs again is identical with Snubs Snya ro Dar tsug blon, who acted as minister together with Myang Zhang snam (> 15).

It is uncertain whether Lam sde Khri bzang lod btsan is identical with the Lam khri Lde lhag Khri btsan from the parallel Srong btsan Sgam po minister list in *Rgyal rabs gsal*; as glossed in this text he was from Upper Yar lung (Sørensen 1994: 179). If Khri bzang Lod btsan had been a real member of the common-fated ones then we would not have to look for his grave. The same applies to Gnubs Sna do re Gtsug blon. However, it is unlikely that a *zhang lon* who was acting in the position of a high-ranking minister simultaneously exercised the function of the *zha 'bring* in the funeral of the emperor. In the case of Myang Zhang snam, for example, we see a clear differentiation between the two positions: he was *zha 'bring* and after being appointed as "chief minister" he left this group of personal attendants (> 15).

(3) The trisyllabic 'O ma lde is a rather unusual form of family name, with it remaining unclear whether the origin of this compound had any relation to 'O ma as a place name, in the sense of the "Lde (family branch) of 'O ma". There are several 'O ma in the Highlands, and one 'O ma de'u is near Nags chu township (divided into 'O ma gzhung and 'O ma de'u ge (*sic*), cf. *XD*, Vol. II: 368, 381). The activities of Lam sde (= 'O ma lde) Khri bzang Long (Lod) btsan are indeed associated with the north; thus it says in *KK* (*op. cit.*) that he was appointed as *khos blon* of Drug gu spar (?) (Drug gu = Dru gu, Turks) in the north, a situation that is perhaps related to the history of a settlement of this family, whose origin (or at least the oldest known territorial link) was undoubtedly in Yar lung or its immediate surrounding. The family is noted in later chronicles as having served as bride-givers to the early *spu rgyal*: both the (chief) consort of Se snol po lde (from the group of the Eight Lde) and of Rgyal to ri Long btsan (the first in the group of the Btsan Lnga) were ladies of 'O ma lde (Haarh 1969: 49, 50; as noted, the beginning of the tumulus tradition is associated with this latter group, with the mounds located in Upper 'Phyong po, while their consorts were apparently buried in Don mkhar mda' (0029), namely the wife of Lha Tho do Snya brtsan, one from the Gno' (Rno) family; PT 1286: 58; Hazod 2018: App. I).

(3.1) There is an 'O ma village in central 'Phyong po, on the right (eastern) side of the valley, ca. 4km downriver from 'Phyong rgyas rdzong. Immediately behind this village is a group of four elite

mounds in the 20-30m categories (0036; Fig. 17); the locals believe that the farmhouse on the eastern side of the village is built on a mound. On site and on satellite photographs one can only see that the house is built on a circular rise (diameter: ca. 45m), but we did not see any traces of an artificial construction when inspecting this site (2010).

(3.2) If the above-mentioned identification of the minister with Lam khri Lde lhag Khri btsan from Yar stod is correct, the tomb of the minister may be in one of the cemeteries of this neighbouring region due east of 'Phyong po. A total of ten burial mound sites are recorded for Yar stod, which was also the name of a settlement (the place of the later Chos sde Gong, CFS, s.v. index) where there is a single grave of the 30-35m category behind the village (0020).

(3.3) Yet our preferred candidate is another place: from 'Phyong po via the western side valley of 'Phyos (Fig. 20) one reaches the adjacent district of Grva phyi, where the grave field 0043 is located in the upper part near the Smon grub district centre (*xiang*). This includes ca. 50 elite graves, with M-1 representing a rectangular mound of 55 x 44m. A more detailed description of this burial mound site, which has an archaeologically fairly complex surface and was visited by the project team in 2014, is beyond the scope of this paper (see Feiglstorfer 2015 for an analysis of M-1). Attention is drawn to the two toponyms: "lönpo longden gyago ri" and "lönpo gar tongtsen ri" (= *blon po* Mgar Stong btsan ri). These refer to the two mountain ridges flanking the grave field (locally known as Lcags ri) in the north and south (Fig. 18). Unfortunately, we were not able to learn more about the story behind these two minister mountains. In our opinion, *lönpo longden gyago* relates to the minister who was eliminated by *blon chen* Mgar, although the name (perhaps only sloppily noted by us) is only remotely similar: we read "lönpo longden" as *blon po* [Khri bzang] Long btsan, locally known as Longden gyago (Long btsan Rgya khog?). The name of the settlement "Tsomadi" adjacent to the cemetery is also somewhat obscure – Mtsho ma sde = 'O ma lde? Finally, there is a place called 'O ma steng in the neighbouring Upper Grva nang. Our theory of this story is as follows:

-- The "chief minister" 'O ma lde Khri bzang Lod btsan was a descendant of the old bride-giver family of the early Yar lung *rgyal po*, which came from Yar lung or the surrounding area. (Even before the 'Bro, commonly regarded as the first *zhang* family, the family functioned in this mother-brother position, which was only established as a high-ranking institution of the ministerial aristocracy in a later phase of the imperial period.)

-- The 'O ma lde was one of the families who with the departure of the Yar lung *rgyal po* were "taken along" to the north, together with the Khu, Gnubs, Rngegs and others who happened to serve as personal attendants (or *zha 'bring*) of the emperor.
-- The 'O ma ('O ma steng /de) place names of 'Phyong po, Grva and perhaps elsewhere may go back (or be historically related) to branch histories of this family.
-- The two "minister mountains" demarcating the grave field 0043 echoes the history of two simultaneously acting ministers, 'O ma lde Lod btsan and Mgar Stong rtsan, with one having eliminated the other. The eliminated one, *blon po* Long btsan, came from Tshomodi, or had a special connection with this place. He was probably buried there, unless he went as "friend" into the grave of Srong btsan Sgam po. A tomb of the lower category can be expected for ministers of the mid-seventh century, in other words M-1 of 0043 should not be seen as a primary candidate in this respect.
-- The fact that the 'O ma lde later no longer appeared as leading player in imperial policy makes it clear that this extensive elite burial mound field of 0043 was not an 'O ma lde-specific cemetery, but also served as burial ground for members of other families; which one, we do not know, but it may be that they also included other nobles of the *zha 'bring* group who were active before (and partly alongside) the later (the actual first?) chief minister Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung.

[20] Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung (652-667) [0182 +]
(1) In later chronicles it is stated that Mgar Stong rtsan served as a minister for twenty years, i.e. from the mid 640s until his death in 667 (Uray 1972). Yet the *OTA* do not mention a Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung entitled as chief minister or even minister before the Rat year 652-53. As noted above, we suspect that this post of *blon che*, "great minister", was invented by Mgar Stong rtsan himself – in the period immediately following the funeral of Srong btsan Sgam po (651-52) and the minority of the successor emperor. In any case, we take the *Annals* as the point of reference for the dating of Mgar Stong rtsan's tenure as chief minister. In *OTC.5* he is the inspector and envoy of Srong btsan Sgam po, who had sent him to Khri Boms in the run-up to the planned meeting between Khyung po Spung sad Zu tse and the emperor (> 19). This event is generally dated after 640 (Uray 1972: 40), corresponding (according to *OTC.2*) with the beginning of Mgar Stong rtsan's first tenure, which, as already mentioned, we rather see as a joint office with 'O ma lde.

(2) The well-known portrayal in the *Tang Annals* of the events preceding the political marriage with the Chinese princess illustrates the quite realistic picture of the energetic appearance of Srong btsan Sgam po, who, following his invasion of the 'A zha and Dangxiang areas in 638, camped with an army of more than 200,000 men in Sungchou, where he communicated his request to the Chinese emperor for a Chinese princess (intended for prince Gung srong Gung rtsan; Beckwith 1987: 23). Resistance by Chinese troops forced the Tibetan emperor to fall back slightly, but he remained in the border area for a longer period, apparently until the Chinese emperor's consent to this marriage (early 641). The entry (in the *Xin Tangshu*) on Srong btsan Sgam po's stay in this border zone is somewhat enigmatic. It says:

> From the date of his [the *btsan po*'s] invasion he remained several years without returning. His chief ministers begged him to come back to his own country, but he would not listen to them whereupon eight killed themselves (Bushell 1880: 444; STT: 12).

The Tibetan emperor apparently was surrounded by several high-ranking ministers (*da chen*)[13] and while the Tibetan custom of selected "friends" of the emperor committing suicide is noted in the same source – in connection with the death of a Tibetan *btsan po* (Bushell 1880: 443) – the (surely strategically motivated) decision to remain in the east appears to be an enigmatic motive for this act of violence by the eight ministers. Suicide was one of the measures that disloyal officials were expected to take to settle their incrimination, as alternative to execution (cf. above > 17); perhaps it concerned an insurrection among Srong btsan Sgam po's generals and ministers who did not share the emperor's plans. What role Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung played in this event is unclear. He was in any case present. According to the *Jiu Tangshu*, he enters the stage as "minister of state (*da lun*; fn. 13), Lutungtsan", when it says that he was commissioned by the Tibetan emperor as an agent for the meeting with the Chinese ambassador at Pohai (in 'A zha yul). (Bushell 1880: 444; Beckwith 1987: 24f. for chronological details of Mgar's venture in this respect).

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[13] *Da chen* (大臣) evidently describes more generally high ranking officials here (and not "chief minister" in the proper sense); other forms used in the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu* to describe leading (Tibetan) ministers (including the *blon chen* post) are *da xiang* (大相) or *da lun* (大論), the latter only in connection with Mgar Stong rtsan (see below), where it remains unclear if the mention of this term for the 640s in fact echoes the historical situation of Mgar's appointment as *blon ch*e. – I am grateful to Hou Haoran for checking the Chinese original in this respect (information: e-mail Nov. 2017).

Mgar Stong rtsan's regular stays in 'A zha yul began in the years after his efficient administrative activities in Central Tibet, which – according to the later chronicles – he had carried out as the *mkhos dpon* (administrative chief) of Bod with his seat in Skyi Sho ma ra, a place in Dbu ru lung (Hazod, in press). He died in the Hare year 667-68 in Ris pu, after his return from 'A zha yul a year before, where he had met the *btsan po* (Mang Slon Mang rtsan) in his camp in Zrid (in Dbu ru lung; see most recently the map in Hazod, in press).[14] We have suggested identifying this Ris pu with the present-day Ris phu valley opposite Zrid, a place that – like several other "Mgar sites" in Central Tibet (> 14) – is not actually a candidate for this chief minister's grave.

(3) The East Tibetan context: A local tradition identifies the central mound of the Rezhui cemetery (Rezhui-I M-1) as the tomb of *blon chen* Mgar (Shawo Khacham, personal communication); this refers to the trapezoidal monument (65m at the front) of this tumulus site (divided into Reshui I, -II), which forms the largest cemetery complex of the altogether seven burial mound fields in Dulan County (SE of Kokonor; several more are in Ulan County adjacent to the north and around Delingha City; Tong Tao 2008: 90f., 273).

The archaeological surveys, which started in 1982 and have been intensified over the last two decades, have given the earliest dating of the elite mounds in this region as 611 CE (related to M-10 of Reshui II); the latest dating is 784 (Reshui II, M-18). The data are based on (partially unpublished) Chinese excavation reports referred to by Tong Tao in his presentation of the Tuyuhun archaeology (Tong Tao 2008: 148). The dating of M-1 was originally only roughly estimated to the late seventh century / early eighth century on the basis of artefacts unearthed from this tomb (such as Tang dynasty coins, painted wooden blanks etc.); in the meantime, there are precise dendrology-based results on Reshui-I M-1: the tree ring dating of seven discs and eleven increment cores of Qilian juniper from the exposed and fallen beams of the roof of this tomb reveal that this largest east Tibetan burial mound "was completed in late AD 715 or early 716" (Mingqi Li *et al*. 2015: 13). In other words the chief minister Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung cannot be the occupant of this grave mound, and moreover, since this dating does not fit with the dates of any of the succeeding

[14] See Hazod, in press, and the references given there. The suggested identification of Zrid with the side valley of Spra kha in Dbu ru lung has recently been further substantiated by Bialek in her linguistic analysis of Zrid as corresponding to the later spelling of 'Bri, leading to the conclusion that the today's Lower 'Bri ('Bri smad) recorded as place name for the lower part of this valley (*XD*, Vol. I: 134) most likely is the Zrid mda' of the *Annals* (e-mail communication, Sept. 2017).

blon chen of *OTC.2*, this mound M-1 was evidently not built for a Tibetan chief minister.

The occupant of Reshui-I M-1 was most likely a representative of the Tuyuhun ('A zha) dynasty who, in receiving the Tibetan Princess Khri bangs (probably the daughter of Mang slon Mang rtsan) as bride for the (unnamed) 'A zha rje, entered into a nephew / son-in-law relationship (*dbon*) with the Tibetan empire family, a situation which became official in the context of the meeting of the Tibetan emperor (Khri Lde gtsug brtsan) with the 'A zha lord in 727-28 (cf. Dotson 2009: 36, 116; see also below > 27). This 'Bon (= Dbon) 'A zha rje has been proposed as the 'A zha ruler named (or entitled) Ma ga tho gon Kha gan in ITJ 1368 (*Annals of the 'A zha Principality*) who again is seen as the son of the *yum btsan mo* Khri bangs mentioned in the same document. Unfortunately, the fragment of ITJ 1368 covers only a short period and ends with the year 714-15 (Uray 1978). To my knowledge, the date of death of both Khri bangs and her 'A zha rje husband are not attested in any sources, and as long as there is no contrary information it appears obvious to identify M-1 as the resting place of this 'A zha ruler (and /or his consort, the 'A zha queen). The size of the tomb should not be surprising: the 'A zha, although only a "minor king" (*rgyal phran*) in the political universe of the Tibetan empire, was nevertheless a king – inheritor of an equally long yet, before the seventh century, a much greater history of rulership than the Yar lung *rgyal po*, and he was not least a ruler married to the daughter of the Tibetan emperor. As is well known, the Tibetans greatly respected their strategically highly important vassal kings, and whenever the *rgyal phran* appear as oath takers of imperial edicts they are listed even before the chief minister. This proposed identification thus allows us also to consider that for a chief minister of this period of the early eighth century we have to expect burial in a comparatively rather smaller tomb, even more so for this earlier period (P-1).

The multi-chambered trapezoidal M-1 of Reshui I, which faces the Chahan Usu river in the south is the largest and at the same time most complex of the elite tombs of the east Tibetan burial mound landscape. It is situated on a hill, which in Chinese reports is suspected to be part of the tomb structure on which the actual grave mound was erected. (The latter measures 65m front, 55m rear, 58m at the sides; H: 12m; Xu Xinguo 2006; Tong Tao 2008: 86f.). Evidence of an artificial construction of the substructure (L: ca. 100m) is lacking however. (The Chinese geological survey team and the archaeologist M. Aldenderfer, who was consulted for the examination of the unexcavated substructure, state only that it can not be excluded that the substructure is man-made; Xu Xinguo 2006: 5). To my knowledge there is no mention of findings of human bones. There were plenty of

bones of animals (sheep, horses, cattle, deer, dogs) found inside the mound, as well as in the numerous pits (with altogether the bones of 87 complete horses) and inside the five step-like trenches in front of the tomb. Next to it, on either side of M-1 and further up, there are numerous smaller elite mounds (Tong Tao 2008: 90 et passim).

Section II of the Reshui complex (Reshui II) is situated opposite, on the other side of the valley, and comprises a smaller group of elite mounds of the 30 to 45m category. The grave dating of 611 to 784 noted above mainly relates to graves in this section, where findings that provide evidence that officials of the Tibetan empire were buried there were also made. This can mean either representatives of the 'A zha *rgyal phran* (or other people such as Tanguts, domiciled in this border region) in the service of the Tibetan government, or Tibetan officials from Central Tibet who were stationed there or in neighbouring garrisons. The indications refer to fragments of wooden slips with Tibetan inscriptions (also to be found in large number in Reshui I, especially in M10 of this section), or to fragments of "Tibetan costume", such as Tibetan leather shoes etc. (cf. Tong Tao, *op. cit*. p. 99ff.) and not least to the often quoted stone with the inscription *blon* (minister), found in Reshui II-M3 ("99DRNM3" in Tong Tao) as part of the tomb-sealing stones. The latter may indicate that the occupant of this grave was a minister from Central Tibet. This tomb of the 30m category has been dated to 732 CE and located ca. 250m to the east of the central mound of this section, Reshui II M1 ("99DRNM1" in Tong Tao), which measures ca 45m (front). Unfortunately, this tomb has not been dated (at least such a documentation is not known to me). The findings unearthed from this grave include one tally stick with one side inscribed *'dzong zhang skyes* and the other side *mkhar lan zhag*, with the first apparently referring to the name of the grave occupant (Tong Tao 2008: 144).[15]

(3.1) It seems clear from the situation of the Reshui cemetery complex that from a certain point this site (and probably also the other less well-documented East Tibetan tumulus fields) developed to become *politically* "Tibetan" cemeteries in the course of the actual incorpora-

[15] On the photograph of the tally stick (Fig. 7b, 7c of Appendix II) the character *nga* is visible before the name *'dzong zhang skyes*. The line is thus to be read as: "I, 'Dzong Zhang skyes", with 'Dzong referring to the (not very common) family or lineage name. Zhang skyes as personal name is attested in PT 1297.3: 10 (Takeuchi 1995: 155). The tally, broken on one side, has five notches, which are apparently related to the inscription on the rear – *mkhar lan zhag* – "the arranged (*?'jog*) retributions (*lan*) that were separated (*mkhar = 'khar*) (from the deceased)." I wish to thank J. Bialek (e-mail communication, Oct. 2017) for this suggested translation and tally interpretation.

tion of this border region into the realm of the Tibetan empire in the 660s, i.e. from the later period of Mgar Stong rtsan's office as chief minister. The burial of (Central) Tibetan officials in Reshui can be assumed in this context, where, for example, M1 of Reshui II may well be the tomb of a (Central) Tibetan official, but most likely not of a chief minister. As already mentioned, Mgar Stong rtsan died in Central Tibet, the same is true for his son and successor as chief minister (> 21), and it is most unlikely that their bodies would have been brought to the 'A zha country, nor are there any indications that would point to any of the succeeding chief ministers being buried in one of these (culturally "mixed", i.e. Tuyuhun / Tibetan and also Tangut) grave fields of this region.

From these exclusions it seems clear that the famous Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung was buried in Central Tibet, although we do not know where. Among the possibly Mgar-related sites noted above (0182, 0166, 0172, 0171, 0169, 0108; > 14) our preferred candidate is 0182. If the authorities were ever to permit excavations at this Mgar site of Sdings kha in Upper Stod lung (> 13), we should not be surprised if the dating of an imperial period site of the second half of the seventh century would come to light in this place with an archaeologically promising surface.

[21] Mgar Btsan snya Ldom bu (680? – 685-86) [0172 +]
(1) It was time to appreciate the Dba's family, the family of Dba's Phangs to re Dbyi tshab, for its share in the founding of the empire, and accordingly to allocate it the office of chief minister. Thus, one may read the context of the description noted in *OTC.2* as introducing the appointment of the chief minister Mgar Btsan snya Ldom bu. For the services of the Dba's, the emperor Srong btsan Sgam po guaranteed the sons and nephews of the Dbyi tshab the gold insignia of the *zhang lon* rank order. One of Dba's Dbyi tshab's sons was Dba's Snang to re Sum snang (PT 1287: l.296); this is apparently the Dba's Sum snang who according to this note in *OTC.2* was proposed by the minor aristocrats (*zhang lon pra mo*) to follow Mgar Stong rtsan as next chief minister. Yet this proposal was overruled or ignored by the lord and ministers (*rje blon*), who after consultations held in private put forward another candidate, namely Btsan snya Ldom bu, son of Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung. Dba's Sum snang was appointed as his deputy, but he (soon) died (PT 1287: l.104-07) – possibly a violent death with the Mgar "clique" behind it. However, these events (if they ever occurred in this form) cannot be clearly dated. Btsan snya is recorded several times in the *OTA* as *blon* or even without a title – as convener (together with his brother, the succeeding *blon chen*, > 22) and as a leader of military campaigns – the last time in 676-77, before

he is mentioned as chief minister for the first time in 680-81. According to this reliable information, Btsan snya's appointment was some time between 677 and 680. The reason for this long period of vacancy (667-ca. 680) remains somewhat obscure; interestingly the decision to appoint a new chief minister took place only after the passing of the emperor Mang slon Mang rtsan (676-77, in Tshang bang sna – in Lower Shangs; funeral in 679-80), coinciding with the time when the (illegitimate?) heir, Khri 'Dus srong (b. 676-77), was still a minor.

This decision to pass on the highest government post within the Mgar was later continued with the younger brother (> 22), which made the Mgar the most powerful lineage in this phase of the empire. We find a similar situation of family dominance only with the Dba's and 'Bro, and much earlier the Gnubs provided the chief minister over several generations of the Yar lung *rgyal po*, although, as mentioned above, the designation "chief minister" is anachronistic for this period.

(2) The Tibetan kingdom owes a significant territorial extension to Mgar Btsan snya Ldom bu, with control of the main Silk Road centres in the Tarim Basin remaining largely unaffected during the term of this *blon chen* and beyond, until the mid 690s, a time-span during which also other Mgar brothers were gradually employed in leading positions (Beckwith 1987: 42ff.; Garrati 2015). From the time of Btsan snya's appointment his younger brother, Mgar Mang nyen Stag tsab, seems to have acted as his deputy, summoning the (winter) councils of 681 and 682 (together with Gnubs Mang nyen Bzhi brtsan). The entry of the Bird year 685-86 suggests that it was also this younger brother who killed the chief minister at Sum chu bo in Shangs (Dotson 2009: 95; this place is probably in Upper Shangs, the latter known from the catalogue of Horn divisions as the centre of G.yas ru). The internal family dispute had apparently to do with the succession of the chief minister because in the same year the appointment of the brother Khri 'bring Btsan brod as chief minister is recorded – at the not firmly identified place of Bang mo Bang kar. Both events, the killing and the appointment, seem to have taken place in the framework of official meetings and should not be seen as being related to any Mgar-specific sites. Apart from that, the Shangs area has no grave of the chief minister category for this period (P1). (The site 0545 in Lha bu of Upper Shangs, east of Sum chu bo, includes the remains of a not clearly identified structure of ca. 35m). Otherwise, regarding this chief minister's tomb we can only refer to what has been stated about the grave field 0172 in Stod lung, whose central mound is locally explained as "the tomb of the son of *blon chen* Mgar" (> 14).

[22] Mgar Khri 'bring Btsan brod (685-86 – 698-99) [0172 +]
(1) In *OTC.2* Mgar Khri 'bring Btsan brod is erroneously listed after the two chief ministers Khu Mang po rje Lha zung and Dba's Khri gzigs Zhang nyen (> 23, 24). He was the younger brother of Btsan snya Ldom bu, i.e. the second son of *blon chen* Mgar (Garrati 2015: 180), who, as mentioned, was appointed chief minister in 685-86. His radius of civil and military activities is routinely recorded in the *OTA* as also his reputedly rebellious plans, the latter noted with the usual terse statement that "reprimands were brought down upon Mgar" (winter 698-699). The Chinese sources are more detailed about this minister's end, much referred to in the literature (Pelliot 1961; Beckwith 1987: 50; and recently Garatti 2015; Kerihuel 2011; Drikung 2011: 323-25). What is portrayed are intrigues by the Chinese intended to foment divisions among the Tibetan leadership with the aim of eliminating the powerful Mgar, who commanded an enormous number of troops and had many followers among the 'A zha population – a strategy that proved highly successful. By means of a feigned invitation the emperor Khri 'Dus srong lured the Mgar leadership to a communal hunt and massacred over 2000 of them; Khri 'bring Btsan brod, who was stationed elsewhere, refused to come to the emperor's camp; this led to the attack on the chief minister, who eventually committed suicide after his troops had deserted him. A thousand or so fled to China, among them leading members of the Mgar family, including the younger brother of the chief minister (the feared troop leader Zanpo) and Khri 'bring Btsan brod's son, Mangbuzhi (identified with Mgar Mang po rje Stag rtsan in *OTC*; Richardson 1998: 32), and several thousand of the 'A zha fled with them (Beckwith, *op. cit*., p. 61; cf. also Garrati 2015, especially for the Mgar's further career at the Tang court in China).

Mgar Khri 'bring Btsan brod's end was, so it seems, the fate of a recalcitrant commander who evaded his impending condemnation, which is reflected in Khri 'Dus srong's song in the derisive (but not fully representative) phrase about the "Mgar boy [i.e. the chief minister and his lineage] who aimed to be a lord" (*OTC.9*, PT 1287: l.462). In contrast to other examples of disloyalty, the lineage as a whole was condemned, or in any case was henceforth excluded from the circle of leading *zhang lon*. Richardson's assessment, often referred to in the literature, which sees the fall of Khri 'bring Btsan brod as meaning the end of a family who had acted as the effective rulers of Tibet for 50 years (Richardson 1998: 32) is misleading in that it conveys the image of a power acting outside or parallel to the emperor throne, for which, in our opinion, there is actually no real evidence.

(2) As to the chief minister's grave, which we assume was already prepared during his lifetime, we can only state that this (possible cenotaph) mound is most likely not located in 'A zha yul (> 20); otherwise the same uncertainty applies as in the case of the other Mgar, with the Mgar burial mound site of 0172 being the most likely candidate here (> 14).

[23] Khu Mang po rje Lha zung (705-06) [0038, 0390]
(1) Khu Mang po rje Lha zung is listed in *OTC.2* after Mgar Btsan snya Ldom bu, evidently a mistake by the author(s) or compilers of the *OTC* (> 22).

In the *OTA* no *blon chen* is recorded from the death of Mgar Khri 'bring Btsan brod (> 22) until the appointment of Khu Mang po rje Lha zung, i.e. the period of late 699 until 704. Nor is there any record of a council (neither in Bod nor in Mdo smad) for the first two years of this period, a time-span during which the only significant governmental measure recorded in the *OTA* is the confiscation of the "wealth of the disgraced ones" (i.e. the Mgar and their group) (Dotson 2009: 100). This interim period may indicate the critical phase of the immediate post-Mgar period, when the queen-mother 'Bro Khri ma lod is commonly seen as the grey eminence and actual decision-maker. At least at one of the councils of this interim period, the one in 'On can do (in Skyid smad), she acted as the probable convener, while otherwise either no convener is mentioned, or the two figures entitled *zhang* are given as the ones responsible, namely Zhang Btsan to re Lha byin (701-02) and Zhang Khri bzang Stab tsab (704-05). These two are seen as the first representatives of the 'Bro as the heir-producing (*zhang*) lineage, which the queen-mother sought to promote (cf. Dotson 2004: 83). Yet, interestingly, only much later did the 'Bro come into the position of providing a chief minister from their ranks (> 28). The election of 705-06 fell to a different candidate. This was Khu Mang po rje Lha zung, who is mentioned (without title) earlier in the *Annals*, for 702-03, where he convened the Mdo smad council (together with *blon* Mang rtsan Ldong zhi). He may have been a closer relative of the Khu 'Byur lod btsan, who had been killed two years earlier, in 703-04, when no council for Bod is recorded (but see *Annals*, fragment DX 12851 discussed in Iwao 2011: 248) and the queen mother resided in the (unidentified) Rnang pho Dur myig.

Khu Mang po rje Lha zung's tenure apparently lasted only a few months, because in the same year of his appointment accusations were levelled against him (during a meeting at Gling rings tsal, Hazod 2009: 215) and Dba's Khri gzigs Zhang nyen (> 24) was appointed chief minister, confirmed in the brief statement of *OTC.2* that his predecessor chief minister had been disgraced. The *Lde'u* chroni-

cles say that Khu Mang po rje Lha bzung became victim of a slander, only that he – like his successor – is mistakenly placed in the chapter on Khri Lde gtsug btsan's reign (*Lde'u-1* 120.3-4; *Lde'u-2* 300.16-17).
(2) We do not know the more detailed genealogy of the Khu of the seventh century, but a closer lineage relationship with the former Khu members is likely, namely the two Khu listed as members of Srong btsan Sgam po's *zha 'bring* (i.e. Khu Khri do re Smyang zung and Khu Smon to re Phangs tshab; > 19) and the succeeding Khu ministers (Khu Khri snya Dgra zung (*OTA* 678-79, 680-81); Khu 'Dus tsan (684-85), and the above-mentioned Khu 'Byur lod btsan), who had all suffered a similar fate as no. 23, whose property (*nor*) was confiscated (in 707-08). The latter does not mean the withdrawal of the territorial rights of the Khu family, but it is noticeable that in the period after the chief minister the Khu no longer held leading positions.

The Khu came from the south, where the lineage with Khu Lha bo Mgo gar, a "chief minister" of the early Yar lung *rgyal po* (no. 03 in *OTC.2*), becomes visible for the first time. This minister is described in later sources as the son of Ru la skyes, a figure of the Gri gum account, which in these post-dynastic versions merges with the "ransom bearer" Ngar la skyes (Dotson 2011) and acts as king-maker of Spu lde Gung rgyal, in one source described as the latter's paternal uncle (*khu*). This folk-etymological explanation of the "clan name" Khu is probably only historical insofar as it underscores the much-documented early presence of the Khu in Yar lung / 'Phyong po, as this is also indicated in the Khu's appearance in Yar lung's cultic representations (related to Khu bza', Lady of Khu, as consort of Yar lha Sham po; TF: 260; cf. also *BK.3* (436-37), which gives [Khu] Lha yi 'Od dkar (= Lha bo Mgo mkhar) as the son of Yar lha Sham po).

In the early territorial division of the *dbang ris bco brgyad* the Yar lung and 'Phyong po territories are listed as the *yul* of Khu and the Gnyags (Yar lung), and of Mgos und Gnubs (Phying ba). In the district administration (from the eighth century) the Gnyags (Rngegs) und Tshe spong (Tshes pong) are given as the leading lineages of the Yar lung and 'Phyong po thousand districts – perhaps an indication of the Khu's weaker position at this time. Only later, in the early post-imperial period do the Khu appear in dominant positions again, often together with the Gnyags und Tshes pong. Khu, Gnyags and Tshes pong belong to the nine "grave robber lineages", which divided the royal tombs among them (Hazod 2016a); together with (the people of) 'Greng and 'Phyos the Khu received the tomb of emperor Khri 'Dus srong (r. 676-704), under whose mother, 'Bro Khri ma lod, as mentioned, the Khu wealth was confiscated. Members of the Khu, Gnyags and Tshes pong families served as inviters of the founder of

the local rule of Lha Bug pa can in Yar stod (eleventh century), but were certainly also involved in the contemporary establishment of the Yar lung jo bo rule, which had its main seat in 'Bangs mkhar of Lower 'Phyong po, next to a place known locally as Khume (Khu smad; Fig. 21; a number of local toponyms in 'Phyong po appear to be related to this Yar lung jo bo history – Spun bdun, Spun gsum, Spun gnyis, Tsho brgyad, Zhang, 'Bangs mkhar, Btsan po i.a.; TF: 314f.). These two local powers, whose founders are described as descendants of the royal line, replaced the regional principalities (*rje'i dpon tshan*) of the tenth century, which were headed by Khu and Gnyags, and had their main seat in 'Phyos (in the lower 'Phyong po) and in Sna mo (in Yar stod).

From this one may deduce that family branches of both the Khu and Gnyags, but probably also the Tshes pong and the above-mentioned pair of Mgos and Gnubs, were present in Yar lung as well as 'Phyong po. Tshe spong is the name of a settlement (near Sna mo) in the upper Yar lung, and a larger Tshes pong territory is addressed in the form of "Khu and Tshes [pong] [lands]" on the border of which the early *phyi dar* temple of 'Ju ma was founded (*khu tshes gnyis kyi so mtshams su 'ju ma bzhengs*; *Deb sngon-I* 104.16-17; BA: 76; the founder of 'Ju ma, Shud phu Gzhon nu grags (TF: 321), is glossed in one source as a native of Mgo ne; in Tshes pong; Uebach1987: 145). 'Ju ma is situated behind Zhang mda', opposite Thang po che, the famous temple whose early history was closely associated with the Khu family – starting with the Ati÷a disciple Khu ston Brtson 'grus G.yung drung (1011-1075). It appears that there was an ancient "Khu Land" in Lower 'Phyong po due east of 'Ju ma, including the above-mentioned Khume (and perhaps also the area around Zhang mda', west of the 'Phyong po river) as well as parts of the lower 'Phyos, the western side valley, which joined 'Phyong po at Thang po che. Here the place called Khu tsho is located (Fig. 21), a toponym which recalls the Khu-dominated, early *phyi dar* community (*tsho*) of Thang po che, but as a village name it may well be related to a much earlier Khu settlement.

(3) In this "Khu land" there are several grave fields with larger elite burial mounds, marked as red circles on Fig. 21. The tumulus site of 0037 in Zhang mda' village is commonly known as the resting place of the Yar lung *rgyal po* 'Bro Mnyen lde ru, but one source, the *GYC*, locates the king's tomb at the Don mkhar part of the royal necropolis (0029; Hazod 2018: App. I). The field 0035 (not visited) can hardly be reconstructed on the basis of what we see on satellite photographs – a mixture of mostly desolate mounds and building remains. The red marked site 0036 is the field of 'O ma mentioned above (> 19); the

remaining yellow-marked sites refer to groups of smaller graves. The closer circle of favourites as Khu-specific burial grounds include the sites situated in the side valley behind the villages of Lha yul and the neighbouring Khu tsho. These have already been briefly described earlier (Hazod 2009: 185), without having taken into account this possible relation to Khu. In the place name catalogue of *XD* (Vol. 1: 87), this elite grave group is described as Lung khri'i *bang so* (?). 0038 includes two trapezoidal, coffer-shaped mounds on the western side further up the valley, with the larger M-1 (of the 45m category) having a fractured part at the front, which allows an insight into the side chambers. Two mounds are in the lower section (0390); the smaller round-shaped one (D: 30m) is worshipped as the seat of the local *yul lha* (called Lha chen mo), the other (0390, M-1) is a 40-45m earthen grave mound, which externally looks oval shaped, but the satellite photographs indicate a rectangular layout of the inner walled part of this grave. Both mounds are decorated with prayer flags. Several groups of smaller tombs (summarised as 0389) are scattered on the eastern side of the valley and also further up, at Bum thang village. This situation suggests that this valley was used as a district cemetery with its elite grave mounds probably relating to not just one noble family. We also suspect that the form of coffer-shaped mounds as in 0038 is rather a later development (cf. > 32), which leaves the site 0390 behind Khu tsho as a closer candidate for a Khu burial site of the early eighth century, with M-1 of this site possibly being the resting place of the Khu chief minister.

There were also territorial links of the Khu outside of Yar lung / 'Phyong po, whose chronology we do not know exactly; what is known is the Khu lung of Gnubs (in Rong of Gtsang), also a Khu of Snye mo is recorded; Khu families were among others in neighbouring Grva nang, and presumably there were also Khu settlements in northern Central Tibet, where the Khu are recorded as bride-givers to the 'Brom (RCP: 165). Yet the Khu land of 'Phyong po appears to be the better candidate in our confinement of the tumulus site of Khu Mang po rje Lha zung and his family, although burial grounds of the Gnyags and Tshes pong are arguably to be located in the immediate vicinity; of the latter two, the Gnyags (Rngegs) are known to have had a branch seat in 'Phyos, which we will return to later (> 26).

[24] Dba's Khri gzigs Zhang nyen (705-06 – 721-22) [0138 +]
(1) Dba's Khri gzigs Zhang nyen became chief minister in the same year as his predecessor was appointed, whose period of office lasted only a few months (> 23). He acted as convener of the Central Tibetan councils together with 'Bon (Dbon) Da rgyal Btsan zung, who interestingly is mentioned first whenever the two are addressed in tan-

dem in the respective *OTA* entries. (Da rgyal Btsan zung, the chief of the then semi-independent Dags yul, was in a nephew (or bride-taker) relation (*dbon*) to the royal family, and – as suggested by Uebach (1997: 61) – was probably the son of *btsan mo* Khri mo stengs, the daughter of emperor Mang slon Mang rtsan.) Da rgyal Btsan zung and Khri gzigs Zhang nyen both commanded military campaigns, and in the years, when the chief minister stayed in the east (summoning the Mdo smad councils of 715/16-719/20) his successor (and son / paternal nephew?), Dba's Khri sum rje, acted as convener of the Central Tibetan councils.

The chief minister died (in Central Tibet?) in 721-22, like the above-mentioned ['Bro] Zhang Btsan to re [Lhas byin], co-convener of councils, alongside Dba's Khri sum rje, and Zhang Khri bzang Stag tsab, all three possibly under the same, unspecified circumstances. One son of the chief minister was apparently the Dba's Khri bzang Spo skyes mentioned in ITJ 1368: l.38 (*zhang nyen gyi [b]u dba's khri bzang spo skyes*).

There is good reason to suppose that this Dba's chief minister was a close relative of the Dba's Dbyi tshab's son Dba's [Snang to re] Sum chu, who two generations before had been proposed as *blon chen* (> 21), and generally we can assume that all the Dba's nobles of the imperial period either came from the *bu tsha rgyud* of the Dbyi tshab, or otherwise derived their identity from this eminent Dba's ancestor.

(2) The Dba's of Central Tibet appear chronologically for the first time as a minister family of the prehistoric principality of 'O yul, the district to the west of Dags, but by the end of the sixth century they were also active in the Skyid chu area and 'Phan yul, when one Dba's Bshos to re Khru gu served as *mngan* (fiscal governor) of the ruling house of Ngas po. This was at the time the Ngas po ruler, Zing po rje Khri pangs sum, had already subjugated the neighbouring ruler Stag skya bo and Myang Tseng ku was in the service of the Mnyan 'Dzi khung (> 15).

The fate of Dba's actually began at the place called 'Phren ba. At the irrigation pond (*rdzing ka*) of 'Phren ba, there was a fight between Dba's Bshos to re Khru gu and the apparently higher ranking estate administrator and "interior minister" (*khol tshab nang blon*) Gshen Khri bzher 'Dron kong, which ended with the death of Dba's. Bshos to re Khru gu was the younger brother of Dba's Dbyi tshab Pangs to re. As is well known, Khri pang sum's rejection of Dbyi tshab's request for blood money for his brother's death was the trigger for the famous plot by the humiliated Myang Tseng ku and Dba's Dbyi tshab. It was later enlarged by the addition of further relatives and affinals to a group of six conspirators, who led the troops under their

new lord, emperor Khri Slon btsan (Nam ri Slon mtshan), against Khri pang sum.

The arena of 'Phren ba, we think, refers to the present-day Phren pa village situated in the upper part of Ser khang, the western side valley of the entrance area to 'Phan yul (Fig. 22). Ponds for irrigating fields (*lo rdzing*) are usually located in the upper part of the valley, and interestingly even today such a pond is to be found due behind Phren pa village. (*XD*, Vol. 1: 60; however, a Rzing kha is the name of a village next to the entrance to this side valley, and the passage in *OTC.3* (PT 1287: l.144) *'phren ba'i rdzing kar 'thabs*, can alternatively be read as "[they] fought at Rdzing ka of 'Phren ba", with the latter referring to the older name of this section of lower 'Phan yul). We suppose that 'Phren ba was the residence and estate of Bshos to re Khru gu, and at the same time was administratively placed under the higher responsibility of the Gshen Khri bzher 'Dron kong. The latter's actual territory (*yul*) is given as Za gad, which has been suggested as the area of present-day Gad po and Za dam in eastern 'Phan yul (Hazod 2009: 195). As is well known, Dba's Dbyi tshab later received this land plus 1500 households from Mal gro. Za gad is indeed noted in the catalogue of the (seventh-century) *dbang ris* division as land of the Sbas (Dba's), but from the time of the Dbu ru Horn administration the family is most prominently associated with the Skyid chu area, including the central part of Mal gro (Hazod 2009: 200).

There is an interesting passage in the Dbyi tshab account first referred to by Dotson (2007a: 66), where in the run-up of the meeting with Srong btsan Sgam po the emperor recalls that under his father (Gnam ri Slon mtshan) Dbyi tshab and his (younger) brother Dba's 'Bring tho re Sbung brtsan served together as central ministers (*gung blon*), one on either side of the river (*chab pha rol tshu rol*; PT 1287: l.256-57); this most likely refers to the Skyid chu. The meeting took place in La mo, Dbyi tshab's estate or *khol yul*, more precisely in La mo Chag pa prum (PT 1287: l.253); this is the site of the later La mo monastery, which is situated on a platform just above the Skyid chu. If we take this place as a reference point, this means that Dbyi tshab, the elder, managed the areas on the left (south) side of the river and his brother on the right (north) side, where 'Phren ba was located – a reasonable portrayal of the core area of the Dba's, which is also reflected in the army catalogue of the eighth century: the Dba's provided the Horn commanders of Dbu ru smad, the area downstream of Dar rgyas (near Dga' ldan monastery; Fig. 22), but also managed the *stong sde* of Skyid stod, which belonged to Upper Dbu ru (Hazod 2009: 197ff.).

In Myang Zhang snang's song (PT 1287: l.233f.) the shares of Gnam ri Slon btsan's allies in the triumph over Khri pang sum is al-

legorically addressed in the form (in the transl. of Bialek 2015: 388; 2018, vol. II: 572): Dbyi tshab Pangs to re is the one who draws fish from Skyi river (*skyi nas ni nya 'don pa/ dbyi tshab ni pangs to re //*), [Myang] Tseng sku Smon to re is the one who divides waters in a dale (*klum*) – as already mentioned (> 15), we think this refers to the Myang home of (lower) Klum Ya sum (= Klung shod); and [Mnon] Pang sum 'Dron po is the one who by building of a dam [on the Skyid chu] extended the land [located behind it] – the latter perhaps referring to the place where the (southern) foray of the imperial forces into Ngas po ('Phan yul) took place.[16]

Pang sum 'Dron po was Dbyi tshab's maternal nephew, with whom the conspiracy was renewed after the death of his father (i.e. *zhang po* Mnon Bzang to re; PT 1287: l.153-157). The Mnon were formerly also in the service of Khri pang sum, and similarly to the Dba's they presumably had branches on either side of the river. The southern Mnon land was in Rgya ma (alias Mnon, not far north upstream of La mo), where Gnam ri Slon mtshan established his main quarter – the "Garden of the Upper Tent" (Sbra stod tshal) known from the 821/22 treaty inscription (Hazod 2014; above Excursus I). Next to this campsite Srong btsan Sgam po (and arguably also his siblings) were born – to a lady from the Tshes pong family (the fourth ally – represented by Tshes pong Nag seng). Thus Srong btsan Sgam po grew up and resided most of the time in the closest environment of his "northern" allies.

It is said the emperor travelled from his residence in Nyen kar (the later Lo valley) to La mo Chag pa prum to take up Dba's Dbyi tshab's invitation, i.e. to renew the old commitments concerning the Dba's territorial rights by means of a mutual oath. (The conveyor (*prin*) of this invitation was (the *zha 'bring*) [Gnubs] Sna do re Gtsug blon; > 19). The depictions in the *OTC.6* draw an archaic picture of political

[16] In the translation by J. Bialek (*op. cit.*), the last part reads: "The one who, while carrying loads and fences [for] dykes, extends the lands of valleys, Paṅ sum 'dron po" (*khur ra nI rags thogs shing dog gI ni sa skyed pa // pang sum nI 'dron po zhig /*). It can be assumed that this dyke geographically relates to the Skyid chu river, perhaps corresponding to the place of the modern dam of Stag rtse rnying ma, which protects the area of Lower Zhogs and the entrance zone to 'Phan po. Opposite the dam is the place of Rag sha sgur, with the Kha rog *shan ka* (ferry) nearby (see Fig. 22; for the Kha rog ferry, see RCP: 520). On the other hand, in the *OTC* narrative about the Zing po rje conquest (PT 1287: l.180-183) it seems to say that the troops (escorted by Dba's Dbyi tshab and Tshes pong Nag seng) crossed the river somewhere in the central Skyid chu area before they reached the actual enemy land and captured the castle of *mkhar* Yu sna (in Lower 'Phan yul, see > 15). It is unclear whether the place of the dyke in Myang Zhang snang's song and this crossing point of the river refer to one and the same place. (In an earlier note (RCP: 520) it was suggested that this point might be identified as the Rgya mo rab (= Btsun mo tshal?), one of the eastern toponyms of the "Lhasa mandala".)

alliance: the circle of the *btsan po* in the centre of his (six) *zha 'bring* (personal entourage) on the one side, and on the other side the circle of the allies, i.e. Dbyi tshab and his paternal relatives (i.e. Dbyi tshab's sons Bse do re Nya sto, Snang to re Sum snang (> 21), Khri sum rje cung, Mang rje Btsan zung, and his brother-sons (*tsha bo*) Stag po rje Myes snang and Mang po rje Pu tshab; PT 1287: l.296-297). A significant exchange of gifts and pledges took place: Dbyi tshab offered the *btsan po* precious armour and sword sheaths (see Bialek 2015: 279; 2018, vol. II: 215), guaranteed the loyalty of his group, and the emperor in return granted him and his descendants the rank of the gold letter (with the corresponding rights of the Dba's estates), and declared that after the death of Dbyi tshab, 100 horses should be sacrificed in connection with the construction of his tomb (*mchad*). This is chronologically the first mention of a (peripheral) grave building of a noble in the period of the empire, which at the same time sets a certain standard concerning the dimension of an elite funeral. The large number of sacrificial animals explains the extensive arrangements of sacrificial trenches that we often find at larger mounds.

(3) In the invitation letter Dbyi tshab informed the emperor of how old and frail he had already become (PT 1287: l.250-52), and it may well be that at the time of the La mo meeting Dbyi tshab's grave was already under construction, something which seems to have been not uncommon among nobles (> 34). It would only be consistent if this tomb was built in La mo, but no mound graves are recorded here, unless the unidentifiable remains of wall and heap of stones about 1.5 km behind La mo dgon relate to (three or four) larger graves (up to 45m; Fig. 23).

The tumulus site next to La mo is 0137, a smaller group of mounds with M-1 of ca. 35m (Fig. 24); adjacent to it are 0138 and 0139, both situated behind the above-mentioned Rag sha sgur village, three km SW of La mo Chag pa phrum (Fig. 25). The division into two sites is somewhat artificial here, and they can also be grouped into one field; with altogether about 250 tombs it represents the largest field in this part of Skyid shod. Five sections with separate groups of tombs are distinguishable, which presumably also have different chronologies (and also different family relations); all sections represent a mixed situation of smaller and larger mounds, with 138a being the largest section where M-1 of ca. 45m is situated within a group of further elite mounds – all severely eroded and worn down (Fig. 25a).

This site of Rag sha sgur arguably represents only one candidate where Dba's members were buried; in principle this applies to all the grave sites marked in Fig. 22, so definitely for the one or the other site recorded in the Lo valley (the Nyen kar of the *Annals*), which has

already been identified as a land of Dba's people (Hazod 2009: 224ff.; see also > 38), and Dba's-specific cemeteries can be expected even beyond this Dba's heartland, in the areas of Lower and Upper Skyid shod (incl. Mal gro), thus for example in the Ba lam and Shing tshang district (the old Glag), from where the family of the eighth-century Dba's Gsal snang, the key figure of the *Dba's bzhed*, reportedly came (RCP: 162, 612).

To the best of our knowledge the Dba's had no significant territorial links outside of Skyid shod (incl. Mal gro), which also allows us to conclude that from the seventh century most (if not all) of the Dba's nobles were buried in this central and lower Skyid chu area, including the Dba's Khri gzigs Zhang nyen and the later Dba's chief ministers and their families. If we assume that a grave of the 40-50m category was provided for a chief minister of the early eighth century (= phase P1), a further limitation (beyond the site 0739-0139) can be made. For the "Dba's heartland" (Fig. 22) this includes the following sites:

0141 – in Cha, south of Rab sha sgur; M-1 ca. 50m (see TTT: site 0141; Feiglstorfer 2018: 110, 111, 134).
0143 – in Gru bzhi, the old Lhas (M-1 ca. 50m) (Fig. 34, 34a).
0150 – in Chos lung, due east of Lhasa (M-1 ca. 55m) (Fig. 35)
0128 – next to Bami (Dba's mi? – people of Dba's) in the Lo valley (M-1: 50-55m; Fig. 27, 29).
0129 – in the upper part of the Lo valley (M-1: 40m)
0130 – on a mountain ridge, opposite 0128, but identification of M-1 (ca. 65m) uncertain.
0376 – next to 0130, in Lower Lo (M-1: ca. 45m; Fig. 28).
0135 – in Chu mda', the valley to the east of Lo (M-1: 45m; Fig. 30)

Outside the "Dba's heartland":

0112 – in central Mal gro (M-1: ca. 50m); given that 1500 households from Mal gro were granted to Dbyi tshab as taxable estates, in other words a considerable section of this district, this largest elite mound field of Mal gro (Fig. 32) should in fact be considered as candidate for Dba's-specific cemeteries.
0108 – in eastern Mal gro, at the "minister place" of Blon po sgang (M-1: ca. 55; Fig. 36); but see > 14.
0104 – situated next to Chad kha dgon, opposite 0108; M-1: ca. 45m (Hazod 2014).
0257 – in Thang stod, in the upper part of Skyi smad; M-1: ca. 50m (Hazod 2017).

[Not listed is 0157 (in Skyid shod) as this should be identified as the field of another chief minister family, > 33]

Besides the Dba's, a number of other lineages had close links to the Lhasa valley and the Skyid chu area from the founding period of the empire. As we have seen, this includes the Mnon, perhaps also the Tshes pong, and the Spug (associated with Skyid smad; yet in *OTC.3* it is noted that the lineage died out in the early seventh century; PT 1287: l.165-172), the "northern" Sna nam and Shud pu (> 34), and several lineages whose presence in this area has been argued as representing branch seats established in connection with certain tasks in the environment of the emperor. This namely relates to the group of lineages given in later chronicles as *btsan (po'i) 'bangs rus drug* ("six clans of subjects of the emperor"), apparently the later counterpart to the *yab 'bangs rus drug* (perhaps also related to the *btsan po'i zha 'bring* entourage; Hazod 2018: 17). This all would explain the high density of elite burial mound sites in the Skyid chu area, with the central mounds of the sites listed above in bold constituting the best candidates for the resting places of the *zhang lon* families of Dba's, and the Dba's chief ministers of *OTC.2*, respectively.

[25] Dba's Khri sum rje Rtsang bzher (721-22 – 725-26) [0138 +]
Dba's Khri sum rje Rtsang bzher (evidently not identical with Khri sum rje cung, one of Dba's Dbyi tshab's sons) was already active as deputy to chief minister Dba's Khri gzigs Zhang nyen (> 24), where he was responsible for convening the councils in Central Tibet during the absence of the latter in the years from 715-16 until 719-20. In the entry related to the council of Mkhar phrag (in Lhasa) in winter 721-22, he is addressed as *blon*, and in the same year, perhaps within the framework of the same assembly, he was appointed chief minister. Most of the time (and even before, in 711-12) minister Cog ro Khri gzigs Gnang khong acted as the convener of the Mdo smad councils in Khri sum rje's period in office. The chief minister died in summer 725-26, probably in the context of the assembly held in Bri'u thang of Bal po (on the eastern shore of lake Yar 'brog; > 29). We assume his corpse was brought to Skyid shod, and buried there, wherever this exactly was – probably in a ca. 50m grave mound that was already prepared.

[26] Rngegs Mang zham Stag tshab (725-26 – 727-28) [0396 +]
(1) Rngegs Mang zham Stag tshab is first mentioned (without title) in *OTA* for the year 719-20 – in connection with administrative activities in Rtsang chen (an area that later become part of Ru lag stod). After the death of the *blon chen* Khri sum rje Rtsang bzher in 725-26 (> 25), he succeeded as chief minister, but died two years later (727-28) under not further specified circumstances.

We assume that Mang zham Stag tshab was a closer lineage relative of the Rngegs Rgyal 'bring Lan ton from the group of the *zha 'bring* of Srong btsan Sgam po (> 19). One Gnyags (= Rngegs) Khri bzang Yang ston appears in later sources among the ministers of Srong btsan Sgam po (Sørensen 1994: 181) – evidently a back-projection of the Gnyags minister of the same name from the Khri Lde gtsug brtsan era, who reportedly functioned as inviter of the Chinese princess Jincheng (in 710) (*Sba bzhed* 2.20-21) and who also appears in another context, as the one who killed Prince Ljangs tsha Lha dbon (*Lde'u-2* 375; *KG* 295.11-12; Dungkar: 932-33; he killed him in 'Phang thang Dge ra (= Sger lha) of Yar lung). He was thus a contemporary and possibly closer relative of the chief minister Mang zham Stag tshab. In a gloss in *Rgyal rabs gsal* it says that the Gnyags Khri bzang Yang ston was from Ser in Nyang (Sørensen 1994: 181). This is the Ser po valley in Myang stod, an area which otherwise is not known to be connected with the Gnyags. It is therefore also questionable to see the significant elite grave field of Ser po (0281) as a Gnyags-specific cemetery (TTT: 0281).

Similarly, to 'O ma lde, Khu and other members of the seventh-century *btsan po'i zha 'bring*, the Rngegs was a lineage that was closely connected with the Yar lung *rgyal po*. *OTC.2* lists two "chief ministers" of the Rngegs family for the earliest period, and the Rngegs belonged to the *yab 'bangs rus drug* entourage (> 19), whose service of safeguarding the king does not seem to have ended with the latter's departure to heaven. This is explicitly recorded for the burial of *rgyal po* 'Bro Mnyen lde ru, who reportedly followed members (entitled as *blon*) of the Gnyags and Gnubs family into the grave – namely Snyags (Gnyags) Thang ba Yang rje and Snubs (Gnubs) Khri Thog rje Gzung [btsan] (*Lde'u-2* 251). This recalls the names of two early "chief ministers" in *OTC.2*: Rngegs Thang yong Thang rje and Gnubs Khri dog rje Gtsug blon (Table 1).

(2) While in the case of the Khu the Yar lung / 'Phyong po area can be identified as the actual homeland (> 23), the Rngegs apparently had their original territorial link in Rngegs yul. This was an area within Lho Rngegs, a compound that defined the (original) home of several (southern) lineages or lineages of modern-day Lhokha – namely Myang, Lho, Rngegs (> 15). This Rngegs yul is not firmly identified but may have been somewhere close to ancient Dags yul (Dvags po), we think south of Gtsang po, somewhere between Mchims and G.ye (Hazod 2009: 173, 203). The most significant tumulus site in this area is 0089, which includes a dozen of trapezoidal elite mounds, with M-1 ca. 35-40m, but there is no proper information that allows us to associate this site with Gnyags (Rngegs).

Apart from Gnyags, the name Rngegs is alternatively also given as Rngog in later sources, although from the post-imperial period Rngog and Gnyags refer to two different lineages, with the Rngog described as *rus* who originated in Yar 'brog (RCP 175).[17] As to the Rngegs of the imperial period, it is obvious to look for a lineage-specific cemetery – if there was one at all – primarily in Yar lung / 'Phyong po, the area which was allocated to the Rngegs (or Gnyags) together with the Khu in the seventh century. As mentioned above (> 23), 'Phyos, the western side valley in the lower 'Phyong po, apparently had a central Gnyags family seat – in the neighbourhood of the "Khu land". This 'Phyos is recorded as the birthplace of the eighth-/early ninth-century Rdzog chen master Gnyags Jñānakumāra (birth name Rgyal ba'i Blo gros), son of Gnyags Rtag sgra Lha snang and mother Sru bza' Sgron skyid (possibly related to Sru yul sgang (cf. BA: 1011, not identified; or Sru = Sro, cf. Sro za'i Bu (Mung?) mo, in PT 1068: l.61). As with many aristocratic families of the eighth century, the separation between followers of the new religion and its sceptics ran through the family: while the master won his three nephews

[17] This statement (related to the sub-line of the 11th-cent. master Rngog Legs pa'i shes rab as given in *Deb sngo*n 392.5-6 and *GK* 344.6-7) does not include the information in Rngog Bka' brgyud pa specific texts recently studied by Walther 2016 and Ducher 2017, which I noticed only after completion of this study; this refers to the 14th / 15th-cent. *Bla ma rngog pa yab sras rim byon pa'i rnam thar rin po che'i rgyan gyi phreng ba* and the *Rje mar pa nas brgyud rngog gzhung pa yab sras bla ma'i rnam thar nor bu'i phreng ba,* where this Yar 'brog link of Rngog only appears as a later history. The texts mention places in Grva and Dol the Rngog family was granted (together with insignia) by the emperor (Khri Srong lde brtsan): Rngog Btsan gnya (probably identical with the "*blon po* Rngog chen po" given in *Deb sngon* and *GK*, *op. cit*.) reportedly received 100 fields (*zhing dor*; related to 20 subject households, *bran*) in Yid dgu (Yi gur) of Grva, and Rngog Btsan gzigs Snang pa (2nd generation after Btsan gnya) is said to have had 100 fields (provided by 40 subject households) in Lower Dol (Walther 2016: 521; Ducher 2017: 211-214). This same Btsan gzigs Snang pa (married to a lady of the Lde sman family (of Lho brag), below fn. 21) is elsewhere given as a native of Yar 'brog Do (i.e. Yar 'brog Rdo nang), however (cf. *GK* 344.6). It further says that the latter's father, Brtsan pa Rin po che, had land in "lha sa'i grib" (Ducher, *ibid*., p. 375), which may well be a mistake by the copyist and originally referred to the Grib (Drib) of Upper Dol; this Rngog descendant was married to the "daughter of Nyang Zhva rje", i.e. Myang Zhva che bo, registered elsewhere as one of the "nine great ones" (fn. 18), who we think belonged to the "southern Myang", or the Myang who are registered (for the late 8th cent.) in a leading position in G.yo ru stod (Hazod 2009: 205; > 15). There is no mention of the presence of Rngog families in the Grva and Dol area prior to the late 8th / early 9th century. Rngog Dpal khrom, Btsan gnya's father, whom the texts wrongly place in the time of Srong btsan Sgam po, is said to have functioned as the deputy of one *stong dpon* of Mchims. This either refers to the Mchims-dominated area of eastern G.yo ru (G.yo ru smad) or to the Mchims branch of Grva; the latter link seems to have been of a rather later date, however (i.e. from early 9th century; > 34).

as his pupils, his brother, Gnyags Dge ston, was a decisive opponent of the brother's practices, which he condemned as charlatanism. The story of their encounter is set in Yar 'brog sgang, which was apparently a branch seat of the Gnyags (*GK* 242ff., Nyingma: 601-605). It is conceivable that there is a relationship with the reported Rngog place in Yar 'brog (but see fn. 17). (The same area, Yar 'brog, is also given as the origin of the Shud phu lineage, which in the eighth century among others had branch seats in Grva, Yar lung (Yar stod Mgo ne), Gtam shul, but also in Skyid shod.) Similar kinship-based Rngegs (Gnyags) branches can also be assumed for the time of the chief minister. In contrast to the 'Bro and Mchims, where several generations of scattered lineage members were buried in one and the same tumulus field (> 28; > 32), we do not see this form of a central "family cemetery" in the case of the Rngegs (nor for most of the other lineages). The grave fields of 'Phyos should therefore not be seen as the only possible Gnyags-specific tumulus sites.

(3) The outstanding elite burial mounds of 'Phyos are 0038 and 0390 as well as 0396, where we have already described the first two when discussing the Khu (> 23). 0396 is located in the upper part of the 'Phyos valley, behind the village of Dgon byang brag. It includes fourteen elite mounds (with M-1 in the 40-45m category) as well as several extensive step-like sacrificial trenches and other traces of buildings or walls (Fig. 37). We provisionally call this field a Gnyags (Rngegs) cemetery, which presumably includes members of only two generations.

The Gnyags are listed among the "grave-robber lineages" – mostly families from the south (Yar lung / 'Phyong po and neighbouring districts) – who divided the royal tombs (0032, 0029) among themselves in the late ninth or early tenth century (Hazod 2016a). Finally, it was a member of the Gnyags family who killed Dpal 'khor btsan, Khri 'Od srung's son, which sealed the end of the remaining of imperial dominion in southern Central Tibet. The trigger for this was *mnga' bdag* Dpal 'khor btsan's order that Gnyags families should be transferred from Yar lung to Gtsang. This Gnyags presence in Gtsang (namely in La stod Byang) is indeed attested (Hazod 2009: 195), but some of the Gnyags evidently remained in Yar lung / 'Phyong po, where in 'Phyos, this old Gnyags home, a principality was established in the tenth century (Hazod 2016a).

To sum up: While it is clear that from the time of Jñānakumāra at the latest the 'Phyos served as a central power place of the Gnyags family until the end of the empire and beyond, we can only assume that Gnyags (Rngegs) families already had their ancestral home in this area much earlier (with 0396 as the possible burial place of the

chief minister), and other stated Gnyags (and Rngog) connections of the early eigth century, such as the Ser po of Myang stod, still need to be verified.

[27] Dba's Stag sgra Khong lod (727-28 – 728-29) [0138, etc.]
Dba's Stag ra Khong lod first appears in the *Annals* for the year 726-27, where he convened the winter council of Mdo smad; for approximately the same time, winter 727-28, the *Tang Annals* record the raid by Tibetan troops, led by Stag ra Khong lod, on the Dadou Valley and Ganzhou, but the winter, accompanied by successful Chinese counterattacks, forced the Tibetans to retreat to the Kokonor (Beckwith 1987: 100). In the following summer, 727-28, the *btsan po* Khri Lde gtsug brtsan undertook a campaign to 'A zha in order to settle a (further) alliance marriage with the 'A zha ruler ('Bon /Dbon 'A zha rje) (cf. > 20) – held probably in Jor sgong sna, where the court of the *btsan po* resided in the winter of that year. In September, plundering attacks against the Chinese city of Guazhou (in Gansu) took place under the command of Stag sgra Khong lod and Cog ro Mang po rje (as stated in *OTC*.7 (PT 1287: l.338f.), this plundering involved in particular the procurement of Chinese silk; cf. Beckwith 1987: 101). In the late autumn or winter of the same year the predecessor Rngegs Mang zham died, and Stag sgra Khong lod was appointed chief minister (Dotson 2009: 116).

According to the context, Khong lod's appointment took place during the meeting with the 'A zha leadership in Jor sgong sna. Interestingly, the *Annals* mention not the chief minister but his representative, Zhang 'Bring rtsan Khyi bu, as the convener of the winter council in Central Tibet (in Lhas Gangs tshal, in the Grub bzhi valley of Skyid shod, Fig. 22). At the same time the Mdo smad winter council (in 'Bro Lchi'u lung) was convened by minister Cog ro Khri gzigs Gnang khong, which means that the chief minister was en route at this time – presumably on his way back to Central Tibet, since he is not mentioned as a participant in the military campaigns launched by Cog ro Mang po che in that year (in Kucha, etc.; Beckwith 1987: 102ff.). Barely a year later (winter 728-29), Dba's Stag sgra Khong lod was accused of disloyalty and executed. (Slander by a Chinese spy is supposed to have been behind this event; Beckwith 1987: 106.) In the same year, before the convening of the winter councils, both in Bod and Mdo smad, 'Bro Cung bzang 'Or mang was appointed chief minister, the first *blon chen* from the 'Bro family (> 28). Regardless of the fact that he was disgraced, we assume Dba's Stag sgra Khong lod was buried according to tradition – in a grave mound erected for him in the Dba's land of Skyid shod (> 24).

[28] 'Bro Cung bzang 'Or mang (728-29 – 749) [0339, 0340]
(1) 'Bro Cung bzang 'Or mang followed Dba's Stag sgra Khong lod as chief minister in 727-28. His activities as council convener in Central Tibet and as the person in charge of various administrative instructions are well documented in the *Annals*, before in 735-36 he went to 'A zha yul for a longer period. Hardly any councils are listed until he resurfaces in the *OTA* (743-44), and when there are no convener mentioned. He is then listed as chief minister until the *OTA* lacuna (from 747-48), and since all later chronicles agree that 'Or mang served for twenty years (var. 21 years), the date of his tenure can be reconstructed as 728-ca. 749.

He was apparently a descendant in whatever lineal or collateral connection of the ['Bro] Zhang Btsan to re Lhas byin and ['Bro] Zhang Khri bzang Stab tsab (> 23), who appeared in the time of the empress 'Bro Khri ma lod, and seems to represent the first of the nobles of the imperial period entitled *zhang* (mother-brother) (the chronological sequence with regard to the first appearance of such *zhang* in their rotation of ca. every four generations (Dotson 2004) was 'Bro, Mchims, Tshes pong, Sna nam). Yet 'Or mang is oddly not designated as *zhang*. In any case, with this figure the career of the 'Bro zhang as a "chief minister" family started, who, besides the Mgar and the Dba's, provided the most *blon chen*.

After the Mgar were out of the game, the 'Bro and Dba's remained the dominant families. The emblem of the 'Bro is known to have been the (white) lion (Hazod 2014), while for the Dba's the tiger is noted as a symbol in a similar position, namely with the Dba's member, who is listed in the (late eighth-century) catalogues of the "nine great ones" as owner of the "tiger coat" (*stag gi gong thong*). In contrast, the great one of the 'Bro in this list is said to have possessed the white lion coat (**seng ge dkar mo slag*) (for this catalogue, see below fn. 18, > 30). While the tiger was more generally the symbol of the Tibetan hero, the lion signals stability and state dignity, two opposing attributes found in the literature as characteristic of the two rival families – the more civilised 'Bro and the wild Dba's. However, if such a characterisation is at all true it is rather for a much later situation (cf. Beckwith 1987: 169f.). As for the reputed conflicts between the 'Bro and Dba's, these are actually not recognisable in the sources for the eighth century (cf. Dotson 2009: 279).

(2) The lion emblem of the 'Bro was referred to by Pasang Wangdu in his identification of the large burial mound site of Khrom chen (0339), arguing that the white stone lion in front of the large mound of Khrom chen (M-1 of 0339) should be seen as the indication of it being a 'Bro cemetery (P. Wangdu 1994). In the meantime, similar tomb

lions have surfaced in surveys on several of the regional grave fields (in addition to what is discussed in Hazod 2015, we refer here to the last findings related to 0242 and 0157). These attachments should be seen as state honours, and were not manifestations of any family- or lineage-specific emblems. What nevertheless links Khrom chen with the 'Bro is the latter's presence in this area at least from the seventh century where they are listed as the leading lineage of Upper Gtsang, who later provided the Horn commander of Ru lag stod, namely the "lion general" 'Bro Rgyal mtshan Seng ge (Hazod 2009: 193, 207). This area is divided into Khrom phu and -mda' (evidently related to a larger market place, i.e. the present-day Khrom chen village) situated on the left (western) shore of Gtsang po, between Lha rtse and the confluence of the Mdog gzhung river, and was part of the Lha rtse *stong sde*, the Upper Ru lag thousand district, which was likewise headed by 'Bro. Other indications are given by the name part Khrom mda' in the name of one 'Bro (i.e. the Khrom mda' cung pa "with the lion coat"; below > 35; fn. 18).

The 'Bro were perhaps more than any other lineages present in all corners of the empire, from Gu ge of the western regions up to Tsong kha in the east, and within Central Tibet (where they are first recorded as affinal relatives of the Yar lung *rgyal po* during the time of Khri Gnyen gzung btsan). They surely had several branch seats besides Khrom chen, arguably also in other parts of the larger Grom pa / Lha rtse area. Yet it is this specific situation of the Khrom chen grave field, with numerous elite mounds, including several of the "chief minister" category, which makes it most likely that the 'Bro aristocracy of the imperial period was buried here.

The Khrom chen site was first surveyed archaeologically in 1990 (see SEA 105-124; Tsewang 2011: 83-92; Shawo Khacham 2014); altogether it includes ca. 140 tombs, including the somewhat outlying group with about 32 tombs, which we have classified as a separate site (0340). Several groups of small mounds are located at the edge of 0339 and 0340 (Fig. 38). The elite mounds comprise the 10m to 80m categories, most are trapezoidal, several of them (about 15) with an attachment at the rear, which is seen as a ramp-like grave access (SEA 107). Mound M-7 has the rather rare rectangular layout (ca. 50 x 35m); in addition, there are several square and (smaller) oval mounds as well as three stupa mounds, one of which (M-4 of 0340) is well preserved. (The other two, smaller and more damaged, are marked as ST on Fig. 38, in SEA (p. 107-108) given as A and B). In front of several of the larger elite mounds there are typical step-shaped, partly stone-lined sacrificial trenches. The excavations of smaller mounds revealed shaft-like main chambers with remnants of stone sarcophagi, unfortunately without any indication of size or orientation; the

bones in one of the tombs have been attributed to a man and a woman as well as to sacrificial sheep. The grave robbers had hardly left anything behind (an agate necklace, a few shreds of terracotta cups). No dating is mentioned in the reports available to me.

The Khrom chen inscription stele (H: 2,1m, W: 0,46m) was discovered (broken into three parts) to the west of 0339, exactly where is not reported. The text fragments (SEA 110-112; *OTI* 43-47) are from the later Buddhist period (the time of *btsan po* Khri Gtsug lde brtsan) and indicate no direct relation to the tombs or any of the grave's occupants.

The largest tomb measures 80m on the ground, front, 60m at the rear. The two lions placed at the two corners in front of M-1 (L: 1.5m; H: 0,95m) are made of a bright stone (presumably from the immediate surroundings), and are artistically rather poorly fashioned (Hazod 2014; Fig. 39c). The nearest bigger mound is M-5 (about 65m) followed by several tombs of the 50m category (M-2 – M-7); M-2 represents the highest mound (H: 17m).

The remote position of 0340 may indicate a separate history of these groups of tombs. The largest mound measures ca. 50m. A further distinct group can be seen around the stupa mound M-4 (five-layered, with a 14m quadrangular layout) and the neighbouring M-3 (ca. 45m, almost cut in half by the stream). In all, 0340 should either be seen as being related to a separate 'Bro lineage segment or – likewise feasible – to one or more different families associated with this area.

As to the grave lions of 0339, it is currently no more than a theory to see the regional examples of tomb lions as the products of the Buddhist period of the empire, modelled on the situation of the lions installed in front of emperor Khri Srong lde brtsan's tomb in 'Phyong rgyas (Hazod 2014). Following this assessment, the lion tomb of Khrom chen cannot be dated earlier than the beginning of the ninth century, which also means M-1 is not a candidate for the identification of 'Or mang's resting place, but rather is to be attributed to one of the two later 'Bro chief ministers (> 35, 37). This again indicates the situation according to which the first elite mounds of 0339 were built in the lower part, around M-7, immediately behind Khrom chen village, and then the other graves were built by gradually using the place above, with the "lion grave" and the rectangular tomb M-4 being the last buildings chronologically. However, the (likely ninth-century) stupa ST below M-6 is situated in the "earlier section". (The remains of this small structure (like the ST of 0340) is not so clearly identifiable and may also be a later addition.)

In our proposed scale of size development for 'Or mang's tomb of the mid-eighth century (i.e. later phase of P-1), a burial mound of 50-

65m can be expected (cf. above Part One, chap. 4.2). This limitation leaves several remaining candidates – M-7, M-6 (of 0339) or even M-1 of 340. In any case, there is little doubt that the chief minister 'Bro Cung bzang 'Or mang was buried in the 'Bro cemetery of Khrom chen, probably in one of the high-category tombs situated below M-1 of 0339.

[29] 'Bal Skye bzang Ldong tshab (749? – 754) [0063 +]
(1) 'Bal Skye zang Ldong tshab acted as commander of several military campaigns (729-30; 734-35, 737-38), and he is already recorded as co-convener of councils in Central Tibet for 744-45 and 746-47 (in Skyi Sho ma ra (in Dbu ru lung) and in the not firmly identified Skyi Byar ling tsal). Based on the dates of the preceding chief minister, 'Bal Skye zang Ldong tshab's appointment as *blon chen* may have been in ca. 749; his tenure falls in the time of the *OTA* lacuna (747-48 until 755-56), a period in which crucial internal political events were taking place: the rebelliousness of the chief minister, who, along with his companion Lang Myes zigs, initiated a revolt and killed the emperor Khri Lde gtsug brtsan (ca. 754); the rise of the contentious Ma zhang Grom pa skyes, whose enforcement of the ("anti-Buddhist") additional law (*khrims bu chung*), authored by him during the minority of Khri Srong lde brtsan (acc. to *Nyang ral* (273.4-11) in ca. 747), dominated the internal politics until the early 760s (> 31; 34); in keeping with *Dba' bzhed*, it was Ma zhang Grom pa skyes who executed the disgraced 'Bal and Lang, whose confiscation of wealth (*nor*) is the subject of the first entries in the *OTA* after the lacuna (755-56, 756-57).

(2) The murder of the emperor Khri Lde gtsug brtsan by 'Bal and Lang took place in Yar 'brog, at a place called Sbal tshal (Sbal ba, Sbal tshang and other sp.; cf. Sørensen 1994: 362; RCP: 125); this is one of several Sbal, Dpal, Dbal toponyms in the Yar 'brog area, which are commonly seen as being related to the old territory of Bal yul (Bal po). However, the centre of the pre-imperial Bal principality, Bal yul Lang thang, has still not been precisely identified and nor have the Bal po places noted in the *OTA* (Bal po Bri'u tang, Bal po Sha ru mkhar), or the Bal mkhar Dngul phrom in PT 1040 (1. 112, 125). At the same time it has been argued that this Dpal (Bal po) of Yar 'brog is related to the 'Bal lineage, which in later sources is also given as Bal (Dbal), Sbal ti or Dpal (see the Yar 'brog places of Sbal skyes, Dpal (Sbal, 'Bal) ti/de, Dbal sdings). In accounts of later sources related to the early period, the lineage appears chronologically for the first time as the family of the consort of Gri gum btsan po, the ruler who resided in the neighbouring Myang ro (Hazod 2006; 2009: 172, *et passim*).

According to these proposed identifications, the burial place of the 'Bal lineage is assumed to be located in Yar 'brog, an area where thus far relatively few burial mound sites are recorded (altogether five). The most important is the site of Dbal sdings (0063) on the east side of Yar 'brog Lake. This is the area around Dbal sdings village (due south of the homonymous Dbal sdings mountain), which is easily accessible from the Gtsang po valley in the north via the Dol valley and the Grib la or also from Gzhung. Not far north is 'Bri lung, which may well be the Bri'u tang of the *OTA* (Hazod 2009: 215). Dbal sdings, we think, is a good candidate for the identification of the residence place of the *btsan po* given in the *OTA* non-specifically as Bal po. It is mentioned altogether eleven times as summer residence, last 723-24. It is well conceivable that the emperor Khri Lde gtsug brtsan also resided there in the critical year 754-755, the time when he was assassinated by the chief minister and his companion. In other words, the today's Dbal sdings and the Sbal tshal (and the "Bal po" residence) of the written sources probably refer to one and the same place.

(3) The field 0063 includes about 100 graves located not far north-east of Dbal sdings village and the Dbal sdings ri (Fig. 41). The graves are all in a fairly poor condition; several sacrificial pits and trenches are to be found around the tombs (Fig. 41a). The largest grave measures ca. 30m – a rather inappropriate size for a chief minister and deserved army leader of this period (late P-1 phase). On the other hand, as ringleader of a revolt 'Bal Skye zang Ldong tshab perhaps represented a special case of a disgraced official for whom the state authority did not envisage a traditional burial. But this is poor speculation and in general the identification of 0063 as a burial ground related to the chief minister's family is no more than an initial suggestion. Within the Yar 'brog area the site of 0059 (with three elite mounds, one with a trapezoidal enclosure wall of 50m, front, located near Sbal skyes of the Mkhar lung district) and the ruined site of Chu lung (near Stag lung; 0061) should be considered as well, but still need to be examined through closer *in situ* surveys.

[30] Dba's Snang bzher Zla brtsan (755? – 764) [0138 +]
(1) Dba's Snang bzher Zla brtsan was presumably a closer relative of the (Dba's) minister Skye bzang Stag snang, who is noted in the *Annals* for the year 746-47 in the context of the implementation of new administrative regulations. (The same one is recorded as Horn commander of Dbu ru smad (Hazod 2009: 204), and he (as well as his lineage relative Dba's Btsan bzher Mdo lod) is known from *OTC.8* as one of the military officers of the 763 campaign (Dotson 2009: 147)

and later he is still listed among the ministers who swore the Bsam yas edict (Dotson 2009: 1559), thus covering a considerable lifespan). Zla brtsan's appointment as chief minister was arguably in the same year as his predecessor, 'Bal Skye zang Ldong tshab, was disgraced and executed (754-55). However, in the period after the *OTA* lacuna he is only recorded as *blon* (756-57), one year later as *blon chen*, then alternatively as minister and chief minister. Finally, for 764-65 it says, oddly enough, that the chief minister was bestowed the (chief minister-specific) white chrysoberyl insignia and appointed as *blon chen* – evidently a slip of the pen, and this entry stands for the appointment of the successor (> 31) in the same year (Dotson 2009: 133, fn. 367). It may be that these uncertainties in the naming are related to the political situation of the 740s and 50s, which in later sources are described as the time of the anti-Buddhist revolt initiated by Ma zhang (*Mang zham) Grom pa skyes. This *zhang* (mother-brother of Khri Srong lde btsan) was eliminated in about 764 (> 31; 34). The grant of chrysoberyl, the highest of the *zhang lon* insignia, by the emperor shows that Zla brtsan was not on the side of Grom pa skyes. The end of his period in office in ca. 764 was perhaps one of the few cases of "natural" retirement, although the appointment of the successor, Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag, had already become a matter of urgency, coinciding with certain circumstances that emerged exactly at this time (> 31).

(2) The chief minister should probably be identified as the Sbas Che btsan Bya ru can Snang bzher from the "Nine Great Ones (*che dgu*), ten with the *ring* (Buddhist representative)", one of the catalogues from the SLS chapters of the later chronicles (see Dotson 2007a: 117ff. and the group's relation to the "seven *che*" and other variants of these catalogues; and below fn. 18). This highlights outstanding figures of certain lineages, their individual characters and state awards. Sbas (= Dba's) Che btsan Bya ru can ("the mighty great one, the one with bird horns") Snang bzher (also called Sbas Bye can the elder in one parallel list) is ranked first in this catalogue. His greatness is specified by the circumstance of possessing the (chief minister-specific) chrysoberyl. The subsequent names, as far as they are identified, should be attributed to figures of the time after the chief minister, and the catalogue as a whole, it seems, addresses high-ranking civil and military leaders of the period following the political changes as indicated in the *OTA* entry of 764-65 (> 31; the criterion of the selection of the *che dgu* seems not only to highlight individuals, but also takes into account a well-balanced mention of the families who became especially

prominent from this period: Dba's, Mchims, 'Bro, Sna nam, Sbrang, Myang, Cog ro, and Lo).[18]

(3) As noted in Part One (chap. 3.1), the "image" of the deceased was included among the *bang so* and *mchad kha* burial goods (in the case of a cenotaph this may have served as the representative of the deceased). In this connection, one may suspect that in the burial of the present chief minister, his bird horn cap, as well as his tiger or hero emblem, described in the *che dgu* context (fn. 18) as *stag gi gong thong*, may also have accompanied the occupant's image. As to the question of where Dba's Snang bzher Zla brtsan was buried, we find no clues suggesting any place other than the Dba's land of Skyid shod as described above. In our scale of tomb-size development, the date of this chief minister's burial should be placed on the border between Phase-1 (P-1) and P-2, roughly suggesting a mound of 50m upward (see the listing above (> 24) for burial sites that come into question in this respect).

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[18] The *che dgu* or "nine great ones" in *Lde'u-1* 112 (and correspondingly the "seven great ones and chiefs" (*che bdun dpon bdun*) in *Lde'u-2* 265.1-266.2; cf. Dotson 2007a: 118-19; 237f.) are: (1) Sbas Che btsan Bya ru can Snang bzher (= *blon chen* no. 30, although in the corresponding list in *Lde'u-2* 265.13 he is spelled differently: Sbas Bya zhu can Lha btsan); he was great because he possessed the *nor bu ke ke ru* and the *stag gi gong thong*; (2) Mchims Snyal pa *Rgyal gzigs Shud ting (= *blon che*n no. 32); he possessed the **g.yu'i yi ge g.yung drung* and *bran dgu khri,* "ninety thousand *bran* (*khyim*) – households" (cf. *Lde'u-2* 265.15-16); (3) 'Bro Khrom mda' Cung pa ("younger brother of the 'Bro (minister) from Khrom mda'"); he possesed the **seng ge dkar mo'i gong slag* (*Lde'u-2* 265. 17; on this figure, see > 28, 35, 37); (4) Sna nam Rgyal nyer Nya bzangs te (= Sna nam Zhang Nya bzang); he was *chos kyi bla mkhyen* (see below > 34); (5) Sbrang Rgyal ra Legs gzigs; he possessed the **g.yu'i g.yung drung* (turquoise swastika) and the *gser gyi yi ge* (gold insignia) (*Lde'u-2* 265.19; he is identical with the Sbrang Rgyal sgra Legs gzigs, one of the sworn-in ministers of the Bsam yas edict (Dotson 2009: 154), also known from *Dba's bzhed* (7b; Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 44), where he is entitled *zhang blon chen po*, i.e. as a member of the *zhang lon chen po bzhi* class (Part One, chap. 2; one (later) Sbrang-specific burial mound site is to be identified with the elite field 0058); (6) Myang Zha rje; he possessed the *gnam gyi zhwa* (*Lde'u 2* 265: Myang Zhva bo che, with the hat the length of an arrow; he was likely from the family of (if not identical with) *ban de* Myang Ting 'dzin; > 15); (7) Cog ro Stag can Gzigs can; in *Lde'u-2* 265.20 he is characterised as having possessed the *gser yig* and protected the border (*mtha'i so kha*); for the Cog ro grave field in (northern) Dbu ru (0196), see Hazod 2018: 26; (8) Lo Te ku Sna gong; he possessed the *gser gyi* [*yi ge*] (perhaps identical with (or related to) the *blon po* [Lo?] Te khu Ste chung; see below > 35; (9) The (not further specified) minister(s) (*blon po*) who subdued the frontier. – The *che bdun* list in *Lde'u-2* (*op. cit.*) further mentions Cog ro Khong btsan (he is characterised as having posessed 990 subjects) and one not further specified "great one" of the Gnubs family, who possessed "great *dgu 'phangs* (?) stirrups of silver" (*dngul gyi 'ob chen dgu 'phangs*).

[31] Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag (764-65 – ca. 768) [0278, 0033, 0409]
(1) In the constantly fluctuating situation of success and failure (withdrawal) of Tibetan troops in their forays against (or attempts to reconquer) the Chinese-dominated Silk Road bastions, especially in the north-east, the years from 762 were characterised by a series of successful military campaigns. Certainly due to the weakness of Tang China as a result of the gruelling quashing of the An Lushan Rebellion (755-763), in 763, Tibetan troops also briefly succeeded in occupying the Chinese capital (Chang'an; Dotson 2009: 147). The subsequent withdrawal of the Tibetan troops from Changan did not mean a retreat behind earlier borders, but the Tibetans held their military dominance over several years in the areas of the crossroads of the northern and southern Silk Road and partly beyond, with the occupation and "Tibetisation" of Dunhuang (from 786-87 until 848) as the most well-known consequence of these developments (cf. Beckwith 1987: 148ff.). In these years we also find the most important military leaders in the succession of leading ministerial posts, whose tenures went beyond the period covered by the *Annals*, and thus can only be roughly dated: Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag followed in 764-65 as chief minister; he does not appear among the military leaders of the 762-63 campaigns, but was a leading general in the campaigns of 758-760 (in Liangzhou and Little Tsong ka), together with ['Bro?] Zhang rtsan and ['Bro] Btsan ba. It has been suggested that Khri bzang Yab lag may have been followed by Mchims Zhang Rgyal zigs Shu teng (> 32) in around 768 or shortly afterwards (Richardson 1997: 68) – the latter indeed a logical candidate for the chief minister post. He is listed in *OTA* first among the top generals of the 762-64 campaigns, followed by Ngan lam Stag ra Klu khong, ['Bro?] Zhang Stong rtsan and Btsan ba (on the latter see below > 37; some more generals are given in *OTC.8*; Dotson 2009: 147). The meeting of the "great *zhang lon*" in 764-65, where Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag was appointed chief minister, at the same time served to honour the preceding military successes. (*OTC* correspondingly mentions the rewarding of subjects involved in these military campaigns, such as the Dor sde and Phyugs mtshams; above Part One, chap. 3.1). Ngan lam Stag ra Klu khong is not mentioned in this last *OTA* entry of 764-65; the appreciation of him is in the Zhol inscription, which is dated around 764 or a short time later (Richardson 1985: 2). He succeeded as chief minister in about 782 (> 33), which he carried out for a short period together with his successor, Sna nam Zhang Rgyal mtshan Lha snang, who acted alone as chief minister from 783 onwards (Dotson 2009: 153; > 34).

This period of the early 760s at the same time marked a turning point in the ideological orientation, where the preparations for the

establishment of Buddhism as Tibet's religion, as later determined in the Bsam yas edict of 779, were made. As stated in the edict, the emperor Khri Srong lde brtsan was thinking about the introduction of the religion at the age of 20 (ca. 761), which, after some substantive debates, led to the decision to establish (Indian) Buddhism as the legal and moral basis of the state – combined with the well-known measures described in the *Dba' bzhed* of the invitation of Indian masters, the preparations of the Bsam yas foundation, etc. This presupposed the elimination of the followers of the so-called "small (or additional) law" (*khrims bu chung*) or otherwise to bring them on this project's side. The law is mentioned for the first time in the *Dba' bzhed* and mainly meant the prohibition of the *tshe* (death) ritual, essential part of the Chinese Buddhism (*rgya chos*), which had spread among certain noble circles since its promotion by the (second) Chinese princess. The countermeasures started with the elimination of Ma zhang Grom pa skyes from the Sna nam family, who had introduced the *khrims bu chung* in the 740s in his position as *zhang*, mother-brother of the emperor. The events are only alluded to in the edict of 779; according to the *Dba' bzhed*, Ma zhang and his closest followers were executed in a spectacular way. Ma zhang himself was buried alive, described as ransom for the king (*sku glud*). The more detailed descriptions in the later chronicles (mainly based on the *Sba bzhed* versions) mention chief minister Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag as the person responsible for the elimination of the Grom pa skyes: he tricked Ma zhang to his death by successfully persuading him to follow the (invented) prophecies, which demanded a great sacrifice for the king. Ma zhang and Yab lag together entered the grave that had been prepared in Ma zhang's home (> 34). Mgos himself escaped from the dungeon with the help of his accomplices, who then sealed the tomb with Ma zhang inside.

Details on this story are to be found in Hazod, in press, where we concluded that the elimination of this figure Zhang Sna nam Ma zhang (*Mang zham) Grom pa skyes (not recorded in the *OTA*) is to be dated shortly after 764-65, based on Khri bzang Yab lag having already been chief minister at this time, as alluded in the sources. In their portrayals, the later chronicles play with this encounter of the end of the ancient and transition to the new order, embodied in the two protagonists: Ma zhang Grom pa skyes is the archetype of the sinful anti-Buddhist minister, while Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag is the great *chos blon* and heroic promoter of Buddhism. There is also a more realistic description, according to which the chief minister politely refused Khri Srong lde brtsan's endeavour to convert him to Buddhism (*KG* 333.5-8; *Sba bzhed* 35. 4-8), which is probably true for most of the nobles who supported the new project and co-signed the em-

peror's edicts. The attribution of Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag as the reviser of the laws and author of various administrative adaptations (cf. Dotson 2007a: 211ff.), which later led historiographers to add him to the list of the "seven wise men" (*'dzangs pa mi bdun*), is certainly also historic.

(2) The territorial grant of Mgos yul stod gsum, which the chief minister received from the emperor Khri Srong lde brtsan, is relevant to our study. These "three upper parts of Mgos yul" included the lands around the Gnas rnying monastery in Myang stod and stretched south-west to Mon Skye chu lha khang (in north-western Bhutan) and westward to the Skar la mtsho and the area of 'Bring mtshams (cf. Vitali 2002: 83). Vitali's remark in this context that the "Mgos clan" (or parts of it) were transferred somewhere from Dbus to Myang stod (*ibid.*) seems to be incorrect. Apart from the fact that no history of a "clan transfer" is actually described, Mgos families were apparently already in the southern Gyantse (Rgyal rtse) area earlier; members of this family having served there as commanders of the Ru lag military district of Gad sram (in Mgos yul), an establishment from the first half of the eighth century (Hazod 2009: 207). The imperial grants to Khri bzang Yab lag in this sense rather meant the approval or extension of older territorial rights of Mgos families resident in these areas. From the time of the founding of Gnas rnying monastery during Khri Gtsug lde brtsan's reign (r. 815-41), this was apparently connected with territorial reorganisations, according to which long-established lineages such as the 'Bre and Yol lcags, were placed as heads of sub-areas of the Mgos dominion (Vitali 2002: 84-87). Another leading lineage in this area was the Rgya, from which came the founder of Gnas rnying, Rgya 'Jam dpal Gsang ba. He is said to have arrived from Bsam yas to found the monastery under the local patronage of Mgos Khyung rgod rtsal, one of the two sons of Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag (Vitali *op. cit.*, p. 85; 2007: 289). The representative sixteenth-century *Gnas rnying skyes bu rnams kyi rnam thar* says that the chief minister was still alive at the founding of Gnas rnying and adds that the *blon chen po* died at the age of 67 (Vitali 2007: 289). While this chronology is evidently untenable – it would suggest a birth date of the chief minister somewhere in the 750s, a time when he was already active as army leader – on the other hand it sounds realistic when it states that the monastery was established at the seat of the *blon chen* Mgos, who most likely also died there. This does not mean that the chief minister was buried in his (second?) home, but it gives us a first candidate for the identification of his tomb.

(3) In our proposed scale of tumulus development, the chief minister's grave is to be located at the beginning of P-2, which suggests a grave monument of at least the 65m category; but we wish to slightly enlarge the radius of possible Mgos sites by also including fields with maximum mounds below this 65m limit. There are three grave fields that come into consideration: 0278, 0033 and 0409. The first two relate to the presence of the Mgos in Myang stod and in Yar lung / 'Phyong po, and the other to the Mgos of G.yas ru.

(3.1) 0278:
In the side valley behind Gnas rnying monastery there are the remains of obviously artificial mounds, marked as 0506 in our grave list. Some older buildings are in the immediate surroundings. The site, however, is one of the grave fields recorded on the basis of information from satellite imagery, where the identity as grave mound remains somewhat uncertain and can only be clarified through *in situ* investigation. This applies in particular to a larger, rectangular mound-like structure, which, however, is to be excluded as a chief minister's grave owing to its size (L: ca. 35m).

No grave fields with larger elite mounds are recorded for Mgos yul proper and the area of the Gad sram *stong sde*; with one exception, the same applies for the approximately fifteen burial mound sites around Gnas rnying and Rgyal rtse city, fifteen kilometres from Gnas rnying. The exception is grave field 0278, located in the side valley called Yar lung (behind Rtse chen and the village of Sham bu – the Myang ro Sham po of the Gri gum (Dri gum) account). The site was briefly described by the author (Hazod 2009: 187-89), on the basis of a first visit in 2007 but can be better appraised today – after another visit in 2009 and the new comparative situation of the TTT data. Together with the adjacent field of 0279, this Yar lung cemetery represents the largest burial mound complex of the entire Myang stod smad area, which – it seems – served as a central district field and as a collective cemetery for several aristocratic families (Fig. 45). Section 278a includes five larger, severely damaged elite mounds; the largest, M-1, is surrounded by an exterior, approximately 55m (trapezoidal) wall. The completely opened mound M-5 (d: ca. 35-40m) situated in the uppermost part of the field has been dated by C-14 dating of bone finds from the mound as a seventh century construction. The chronology is more accurately: 68.2% probability for dating between 610 and 655 CE, and 95.4% probability for a wider chronology of 575 to 670 CE (see graph 1 in Hazod 2009: 187). In other words, there is a relatively high probability that the mound was built in the early phase of the empire – the earliest dating known to us of an elite mound of the imperial period. The extensive sacrificial trenches in

front of the grave – arranged in a terraced form as it is typical for mounds on slopes – are remarkable. They point to an equally extensive animal sacrifice, as described for the first time in the chronicles for Dba's Dbyi tshab (> 24).

Such a form of grouping of several elite mounds as in 0278a (and similar in 0278b and 0279a) may reflect a lineage situation, in the sense that it comprises the resting places of two or three generations of one noble family. No such situation of a *zhang lon*-producing family is known for the Mgos in the seventh century, in any case not in connection with the rank of a higher minister. Altogether three ministers of the imperial period are mentioned in the minister lists in *BK.3*, with two of them (Yang gong Bla ma und Lha Gro gro) listed after Khri bzang Yab lhag (*KT* 437.3-5). Strangely, this does not include the Mgos Dpal 'bar Gung btsan, who according to *Nyang ral* (410.11-12) was active in the 790s and is possibly identical with the Padma Gung btsan, who is variously given in the sources as son or grandson of the *chos blon* Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag (Hazod, in press). It cannot be entirely excluded that 0278a should be identified as a Mgos-specific burial ground (with M-1 as the grave of the chief minister); but it is much more likely that members of other noble families resident in Myang stod were buried here and in the other elite mound sections, above all the 'Bre, a leading lineage of ancient Myang ro, which is listed (together with the Khyung po) as the lineage that provided the commander of Lower Ru lag (Hazod 2009: 172, 195, 207).

(3.2) 0033:
A fragment of a lineage account included in an eighteenth-century *rnam thar* describes Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag as a descendant of a family in Skyid rong (in Mang yul), of which members also acted in the central regions (Dbus) in the time of the *chos rgyal mes dbon*. Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag is listed as the third of a total of five of these Mgos representatives of Dbus, where they apparently do not form a direct (agnatic) line, but describe five generations of Mgos members who served under different emperors (Vitali 2007: 288). This Skyid rong origin, however, is possibly only an intermediate stage in a longer lineage history that is lost somewhere in the dark of the pre-imperial period. Thus the Mgos appeared in the early (7th-cent.) territorial division of the *dbang ris bco brgyad*, where, in tandem with the Gnubs, the lineage is assigned the area of 'Ching nga 'Ching yul, which apparently relates to Phying ba ('Phyong po) (Hazod 2009: 193). The central Mgos land in this area was probably located in the Rgyas sman valley of Upper 'Phyong po, namely around Rgyas sman Yang po (next to the Spyan rgyas monastery), which is known as the origin place of 'Gos (= Mgos) *lo tsa ba* Gzhon nu dpal, whose ances-

tors (*yab mes*) are described as having arrived here once from Mgos yul 'Bring mtshams (RCP: 177). The period to which this story should be dated is not clear, but we suspect that both the presence of the Mgos in Mgos yul and Yar lung / 'Phyong po have a common history that already goes back to the pre-imperial Yar lung period, when the Mgos, similar to the Gnyags, Khu, Gnubs, Shud phu and other families, were in service of the kings, and in this connection also had branch seats in the immediate environment of the royal residence(s) (Hazod 2018: 21, 45).

The tumulus site 0033 (Fig. 46) is located behind the village of Sa lte, in a side valley due east of Spyan rgyas (and the 9th-cent. temple of Ro /Rong skam, TF: 100). The field includes a dozen severely damaged trapezoidal graves of the smaller 10-20m category plus one larger mound of about 40-45m. There are some more traces of burial grounds further up the Rgyas sman valley.

The Mgos are also recorded in Lower Yar lung (related to a later post-imperial period, namely for Lha ru, birthplace of the Mgos descendant Rgod tshangs pa Sna tshogs rang grol, 1494-1570), and generally the burial mound sites of Lower Yar, the actual heartland of Yar lung / 'Phyong po have to be considered as candidates for cemeteries related to families who had settlements in this area – so also for the Gnubs, the lineage mentioned in the army catalogue in tandem with the Mgos, whose branch seat appears to have been in the upper reaches of Yar stod (Hazod 2018: 21).

(3.3) 0409:
Finally, the Mgos had close links to the area of what became known as the Right Horn (G.yas ru) after the district organisation that started in the second half of the seventh century. (The three Horns, each divided into an "upper" and "lower" half, are mentioned together first in 712, but may have been established earlier, in 684 at latest, the time when the "Central Horn" is first mentioned in the *OTA*). From the army catalogues, the leading lineages of G.yas ru (apart from the Mgos) were the Khyung po, Lang (Rlangs), Pa tshab, and Gle (= Le'u?), whose territorial connection can only be roughly identified – due to the difficulties in identifying the individual civil and military districts. The Khyung po, who provided the commander of the Upper G.yas ru, seem to have had their main settlement in Shangs, the centre of the Right Horn, so also the Gle. The Pa tshab were *inter alia* in Pod kar (the G.yas ru *stong sde* (cf. Takeuchi 1995: 43, 173), which, it has been suggested, should be identified as the later Phu dkar district of 'U yug (= 'O yug); Hazod 2009: 205). The Mgos are listed as the leading lineage of the Yo rabs and Gzong sde *stong sde* (not identified but somewhere in Lower G.yas ru), and also provided the com-

mander of G.yas ru smad and thus most likely had their main seat in this lower section between Shangs and Snye mo. Yet the family is also recorded in the Upper G.yas ru – in Rta nag (west of Shangs), known as the birthplace of the eleventh-century religious master and translator 'Gos *lo tsa ba* Khug pa Lhas btsas (BA: 360); he is listed in the fifth generation after Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag (Vitali 2002: 106), here suggesting a closer transregional family connection between the Mgos of G.yas ru and Myang stod.

This genealogical segment arguably also included the Mgos family, who provided the *ru dpon* of the Lower Right Horn, namely Mgos Khri snyen Gsang mchod (var. Khri gnyen Gsang 'phyos and other sp.; Hazod 2009: 206), who seems to have been a contemporary of the chief minister, perhaps his brother or collateral relative, since the listing of the *ru* commander in the chronicles is to be dated to the lifetime of the chief minister, namely in the years after the administrative reorganisation of 744 (Hazod 2009: 197; Dotson 2007a: 103).

The only grave fields of G.yas ru smad with larger elite mounds of a size adequate for a chief minister are to be found in 'O yug (0409) and in Snye mo (0274), the latter known as a "border district" that was counted as part of Dbu ru before 744. As far as I know, both 'O yug and Snye mo are not explicitly mentioned as a place of the Mgos; the only territorial link we see can be deduced indirectly from the Mgos' listing in tandem with the Gnubs in older catalogues, and indicating that the respective family estates or residences were next to each other (CSF 27). It has been suggested that the Gnubs yul should be identified as the Rong area of later Rin spungs *rdzong*; but this Rong of Gtsang is divided into greater and smaller Rong, with the latter referring to the area opposite the Rin spungs district, alias Rong chen (cf. Akester 2016: 521), where the actual Gnubs yul appears to have been located. This may be the Gnubs yul rong, known from the biography of Gnubs chen Nam kha'i snying po, a native of the Gnubs branch of Sgrags, who in the wake of the turmoils of the (second) *kheng log* (ca. 904; Vitali 1996: 546) escaped to his ancestral Gnubs yul. We think, this corresponds to the Gnubs of 'O yug mentioned in the *OTA* as the place for the winter assembly of 715-16. Whether this area refers to the Gnubs where the Gnubs Khu lung temple is located (due east of the entrance to 'O yug) or to a section in 'O yug proper or to both is not so clear. (The mountain associated with the Gnubs lha, the territorial god of the ancient Gnubs yul, is said to be located between these two sections; Hazod 2009: 172). In addition to the Gnubs and the assumed Mgos presence in 'O yug the Rlangs lineage is also recorded for this area, although the eulogistic story of the "subjugation of 'U yug Yar bcad of Gtsang" given in *Rlangs* 33.21-34.3 is chronologically not so clearly assignable (cf. also *Rlangs* 28.4 on this lineage's

proliferation in "Bod kyi G.yas ru"; note that the Lang (Rlangs) is listed in the army catalogue as the leading lineage of the Nyen kar *stong sde* (Hazod 2009: 205f.); this thousand district is not firmly identified, but was most likely in Snye mo or the area between 'O yug and Snye mo, perhaps related to the toponym Nyin stod, the name of the mountain region between 'O yug and Upper Snye mo).

Grave field 0409 is situated due south of Sog chen in central 'O yug, not far from the Gos sngon lha khang – the (late eighth-century?) "temple of the blue-clothed (Vajrapani)", which *inter alia* includes the skull of Gnubs chen Nam kha'i snying po (b. 844?) among its treasures (Akester 2016: 540). Besides the fields of 0324 (plus 0325) mentioned above in connection with the Khyung po of Upper G.yas ru (> 17), it represents the largest elite burial mound site of the Right Horn region. This site is marked in the archaeological atlas of the TAR (XWD: 88) but without any further description, and our information here is limited to what can be deduced from satellite imagery: about half of the altogether ca. 100 tombs refer to (mostly trapezoidal) elite mounds of the lowest (10-15m) up to the largest category, including several tombs of the 40m category and two outstanding mounds of ca. 65m and 75-80m (M-2 and M-1). The cemetery can be divided into several sections (Fig. 48), which as in similar situations of "district cemeteries" elsewhere may have been used by different families. The two largest mounds, M-1 and M-2, are situated in Section 1, but even within this section the groups of tombs around M-1 and M-2, located ca. 800m from each other, appear to represent separate lineage segments of different periods or even of different families. What is striking is the rather good condition of M-2, and partly also of M-1 and M-4, whereas most of the remaining tombs are in fairly poor condition.

M-1 is indeed of a size that seems to be provided only for a chief minister of this period of the second half of the eighth century; its identification as the tomb of *blon chen* Mgos presupposes that, similar to Yar lung, the Mgos had resided here alongside the Gnubs, this most prominent lineage, whose central burial ground we think was indeed in 'O yug. (Precisely this place may be referred to in the birth story of Gnubs chen Nam mkha'i snying po, where it says that at his birth "a sandalwood tree appeared at the burial ground of his ancestors"; Esler 2014: 8). The Gnubs provided no less than four "chief ministers" in the time of the Yar lung *rgyal po*, and also during the empire era they were among the high-ranking *zhang lon* families; yet whether this included the awarding of a mound of the 70 to 80m category is rather questionable.

To conclude this chapter: The chief minister Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag forms the focal point of an only fragmentarily reconstructable

genealogy that links Mgos lines from different regions – those of Mgos yul and Myang stod, of Skyid rong, Yar lung / 'Phyong po, Rta nag and (lower) G.yas ru, and certainly there were more regional Mgos in Central Tibet of whom we do not know or who may have overlooked. As for the location of the *blon chen*'s burial site, from his biography we can only state that the Myang stod site (and respectively the Gnas rnying site) represent the better candidates, while the only "chief minister" mound we encounter in Mgos-related sites of central Tibet is field 0409 of 'O yug. This is a place where no doubt Mgos were active, but which is not properly attested as the seat of the chief minister Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag.

[32] Mchims Zhang Rgyal zigs Shu teng (ca. 768 – 782) [0092]
(1) The beginning of Mchims Zhang Rgyal zigs Shu teng's office as chief minister can only be roughly dated as ca. 768 (see above > 31), while its end can be dated quite accurately to 782 (Dotson 2009: 152).

The chief minister and outstanding military leader of the 762-64 campaigns (> 31) is listed as the second in the "Nine Great Ones" catalogue – in the form Mchims Snyal pa Rgyal gzigs Shud ting and characterised as the owner of the "great turquoise insignia swastika (?) as well as of ninety-thousand bondservants (*bran dgu khri*)" (above fn. 18). This unrealistic figure of *bran* makes a little more sense if one sees the entry in connection with Zhang Rgyal zigs Shu teng's position as Horn commander of G.yo ru smad (Hazod 2009: 205), in other words relating it to the households of the thousand districts of the eastern Lhokha, from which the soldiers of Shu teng's regiments were recruited. His military position overlaps with his position as the supreme representative of the Mchims dynasty, the latter specified as *rgyal* (princely) since pre-imperial times. In the imperial era this seems to have included a territory beyond Mchims proper, the rather small valley of Skyem stong, east of Dags po.

The Mchims was a "southern lineage", which from the time of the Yar lung *rgyal po* 'Bro Mnyen lde ru at the latest was closely associated with the Spu rgyal house, to whom the family was related as bride-giver; accordingly the Mchims are listed among the Yar lung's "ancient affinal relatives at the four borders" (*gna' gnyen mtha' bzhi*) (together with Lde (= G.ye yul), Skyi and Dags; PT 1286: l.1-5). (The position of *zhang*, heir-bearing lineage, was once again attributed to them in the early eighth century (Khri Lde gtsug brtsan's mother was Mchims), which resulted in the altered name of "Mchims zhang" (also "Zhang Mchims"), an addition that seems to have been common since the 'Bro zhang of the early eighth century; > 28). The Mchims residence is given in PT 1286 as "Dngul khur of Mchims county", which may well be related to the ruins at "Bangye" in

Skyems stong; the site situated below the Mchims lha mountain (Lhagdron 2014: 181) is locally described as the residence of the Mchims *rgyal po* at the time when the Central Tibetan *kheng log* broke out in the early tenth century (Hazod 2016a). It can be assumed that the extensive looting of the Central Tibetan burial mounds started precisely in the wake of this spreading regional rebellion, in the case of Mchims this relates to the famous Slebs ri cemetery (0092, 0093) situated opposite Bangye (and opposite the Mchims lha; Lhagdron *op. cit.*, *ibid.*).

The tomb looting is a separate story, with a quite ambivalent component: the sites were deprived of their treasures, and many continue to be destroyed by the locals or also the authorities even today (in the wake of modern construction, for example). At the same time, many are included in the traditional ritual geography by classifying them, for example, as dwellings of feared *'dr*e demons, or individual (elite) mounds are used as the seat of a local deity or otherwise as veneration objects (including use as "sky burial" sites). In Slebs ri we have the particular case of a "syncretistic field" externally characterised by the presence of stupa mounds or mandala-shaped structures in the midst of classical trapezoidal monuments; archaeological finds (such as walls of traditionally constructed mounds filled with *tsa tsa* etc.) provide further evidence of the juxtaposition or coexistence of older beliefs and Buddhism, a situation which, in our estimation, cannot be dated before the end of the eighth century (cf. Part One, chap. 4.2).

The Slebs ri cemetery (divided into eastern and western *bang so* sites – i.e. 0092 and 0093 in our list) has more than 200 mounds (M-1 – M-212, in Wangdu 2010) and in terms of the number of elite mounds (mostly of the coffer-type) represents Tibet's largest grave field, with categories from 10m to 80m. In archaeological surveys that started in the 1980s some graves have been dated on the basis of bone finds, the oldest of which was estimated at about 700 CE (Wangdu, *op cit.*, p. 45). Nowhere among the peripheral burial mound sites (i.e. outside the royal necropolis) are there more mounds of the higher elite category (from 40m upward) than in 0092. This suggests that a considerable number of the Mchims *zhang lon* of the imperial period are buried there, possibly also including those who were permanently stationed in a remote territory, such as the Mchims who were active as sub-commanders of Ru lag smad, namely Mchims Btsan [b]zher Lha gzigs (fl. 744-764).[19]

[19] In an earlier discussion (Hazod 2018: 28ff.) it was argued that Slebs ri may not have been used exclusively as "family cemetery", perhaps a correct assessment, but the example we referred to in that context is possibly no longer tenable: when discussing the Slebs ri finding of the imperial seal with the inscription "*kha'u zhang gzig*" (Fig. 9 in Hazod 2018), we read it as the seal of an official of the (uni-

(2) The late eighth and early ninth-century edicts and inscriptions (namely the Bsam yas edict (issued ca. 779), the Skar cung edict (ca. 812), and the 821-822 peace-treaty pillar inscription) list the most significant *zhang lon* for this post-*OTA* period as sworn-in ministers in these edicts (summarised in Dotson 2009: 154-160). Unfortunately, for some lineages the *rus* part of the name is missing, which makes identification difficult or impossible. Those who are to be identified as Mchims include (apart from the chief minister) the "minister of the exterior" Zhang Lha gzigs (suggested as identical with the above-mentioned Mchims Btsan zher Lha gzigs; Dotson 2009: 157), who interestingly is not entitled *zhang* in the *stong sde* catalogue related to the pre-Bsam yas period of 744-764); the ministers Zhang Mchims rgyal Btsan bzher Legs gzigs (probably identical with the "great minister of the realm" Mchims Zhang Rgyal Btsan bzher) and Zhang Mchims rgyal Lha bzhir Ne shag (see below), the "minister of the interior" Zhang Mchims rgyal Mdo gzigs, the four "ministers of the exterior" (i.e. Zhang Mchims rgyal Stong snya Smon btsan, Zhang Mchims rgyal Stag bzher Rgyal sleb, Zhang Mchims Rma btsan and Zhang Mchims rgyal Ma rmyin brtse); further the "minister of the interior" (Mchims Zhang Rgyal bzher Khod ne brtsan) and the *snam phyi pa* (attendant) Mchims Zang Btsan bzher Stag tsab (Dotson 2009: 154ff.).

In the edict accompanying the Skar cung inscription (*KG* 410-13) the two above-mentioned Mchims ministers, Zhang Mchims rgyal Btsan bzher Legs gzigs and Zhang Mchims rgyal Lha bzhir Ne shag, are listed among the (six) leading "ministers executing the great royal command pertaining to political affairs" (*chab srid kyi blon bka' chen po*

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dentified) Kha'u family and concluded that the owner was evidently not a member of the Mchims. Yet we find this Kha'u as a toponym closely related to Mchims; it seems to refer to the Mkhar stod, -smad valley in Myang stod, at the entrance of which the Myang stod Stag rtse is located. In the place-name index of TBRC (id: G877) the form Kha'u is given alternatively to Nyang (Myang) stod Stag rtse as the birthplace of the Bka' gdams pa master Nam mkha' grags (1210-1285). This renowned seventh abbot of Snar thang monastery is stated as having descended from the lineage of the Mchims Rdo rje Sprel chung (cf. *Bka' gdams* 503), known as a religious proponent of the Bsam yas founding history (*Dba' bzhed* 16b; Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 67; cf. also *BK.19* 490.10). This Mchims, one may argue, again was a closer relative of the above-mentioned Mchims Btsan [b]zher Lha gzigs, who as sub-commander of Ru lag smad was stationed in Kha'u of Myang stod. So one may consider that Kha'u Zhang gzigs was simply the nickname of this sub-commander – short for Zhang [Btsan bzher Lha] gzig[s] of [the Mchims branch family stationed in] Kha'u. His burial in Slebs ri would thus represent a case of "bringing one back to the lineage's ancestral home." However, it should be noted that such a construction where a place name replaces the family name is rather unusual, at least, no parallels are known from Old Tibetan sources (J. Bialek, personal communication, Dec. 2017).

la gtogs pa; *KG* 412: 3-7); they are listed within this group after the then chief minister Zhang 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shags (> 35), with Mchims rgyal Btsan bzher Legs gzigs as the second in this group, which makes it clear that their rank should be situated next to the chief minister. (See also *Dba' bzhed* 26b (P. Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 96) for Btsan bzher Legs gzigs' position in the funeral ceremony of Khri Srong lde brtsan). The group as a whole is listed after the mention of the three consorts (*jo mo*) of Khri Lde srong brtsan (among them the Mchims rgyal bza' Legs mo brtsan), the minor kings under the emperor's rule and the two "monks executing the great royal command" (*ban de bka' chen po la gtogs pa*; i.e. Ban de Bran ka Yon tan and Ban de Myang Ting 'dzin; *KG* 411.21-412.3) – in all reflecting an order of rank, for the owner of which the highest burial mound category can be assumed. (The *jo mo* here form a certain exception (for their funeral situation, see Hazod 2018: 37); as to the two *ban de*, only for Bran ka Yon tan do we have any information on his resting place, > 38.)

(3) If we now look at 0092 (Fig. 49), at the top of the field we see the two largest mounds situated within a group of six 40-50m-category mounds. M-1 and M-2 (the numbering on Fig. 49 follows Wangdu 2010: 46) are approximately the same size: ca. 65m at the front of the walled part, from outside edge to outside edge, 75-80m if including the earth sloping from the sides. The smaller mound (M-28) with the particularity of a mandala layout (see Wangdu 2010: 46) is located between M-1 and M-8 and should clearly be dated to the later phase of the tumulus history (cf. also Feiglstorfer 2018: 109, 134). There is little doubt that one of the two larger mounds is the tomb of the chief minister Mchims Zhang Rgyal zigs Shu teng. We suspect it is the upper one (M-2), which would mean that the tombs erected gradually below belong to the above-mentioned Mchims ranked in the edict chronologically after the chief minister. Mchims rgyal Btsan bzher Legs gzigs, the highest-ranking Mchims in the generation after Rgyal zigs Shu teng, is the logical candidate for this second large tomb (M-1). The tumulus groups in the more westerly part of 0092 may partly relate to older histories, but also include tombs of the later phase, such as the group around the stupa tomb M-50.

We think the separate *bang so nub* site (0093) situated ca. 1000m NW of 0092 has a post-Bsam yas history, if one dates the sixteen elite mounds roughly to the same time as the stupa mounds in this field, of which two are in reasonably good condition. The locals say that the (first) Chinese princess (Mun chang Kong co, d. 680) is buried in Slebs ri, which is certainly not true (Hazod 2018: App. I), but it may be a memory of the junior queens mentioned in *GYC*, who as con-

verted Buddhists are said to have been buried in stupa mounds, including 'Chims (= Mchims) bza' Rin chen Rgyal ma gtsug (Hazod 2018: App. I); she is not identified but may be identical with the Khri Srong lde brtsan consort Mchims bza' Lha mo btsan, who is likewise described as having become a nun (Sørensen 1994: 374; a 'Chims gza' Yon tan Sgron ma of the same period is known as founder of the Gang bar temple (Uebach 1987: 109), which we think is the Gang 'bar (var. Gangs par) of G.ye yul (cf. BA: 1087; Excursus II). Stupa mounds were certainly also used for monks, and it is likely that one of the "Buddhist tombs" in Slebs ri (including the mandala tomb M-28) belongs to one of the religious proponents from Mchims, such as the translator (occasionally also listed among the *sad mi mi bdun*) Shakya pra bha (son of Mchims A nu), or the above-mentioned (Kha'u descendant?) Mchims Rdo rje Sprel chung (Sørensen 1994, s.v. index; on Sprel chung, see also below > 34).

There are a few memories of Mchims' earlier history in the local tradition (Hazod 2006), and the locals also remember the *rdo ring* at the Slebs ri cemetery. It says, it was removed in the 1960s, at the time of the Cultural Revolution. The tortoise base of the pillar is situated at the western entrance to the 0092 site, and the pillar had an inscription. We have little doubt that this was dedicated to the chief minister Mchims Zhang Rgyal zigs Shu teng, and established in the same context as the famous Zhol stele dedicated to the chief minister's combat in the 663 military campaign: Ngan lam Stag ra Klu khong (> 33).

Excursus II: The Mchims Snyal pa and the local dynasties of eastern Lhokha

(1) The Mchims rgyal dynasty was part of a political landscape of several local dynasties of eastern Lhokha, which are recorded as having been related to the kingdom of Yar lung (from certain points in the pre-imperial period) either collaterally (Rkong po, Myang po) or affinally (Dags, G.ye yul). During the empire era the feudal status of these local rules was different. Rkong po, the land of the ruler entitled Rkong dkar po, was granted a kind of semi-autonomy or special status, as it is addressed in the Rkong po inscription (assumed to be erected during the reign of Khri Srong lde brtsan; Bialek, forthcoming) or also in the mention of Rkong po among the three (vassal) *rgyal phran* in the Skar cung inscription of the same period. Rkong po does not appear in the G.yo ru district catalogue, which points to an autonomy in the administration of their territory, although not necessarily, as Mchims is not exclusively listed as *stong sde* either. A central burial mound site of the Rkong po ruler can be expected, but among the grave fields recorded so far in this area (see also XWD: 83) there is no evidence of a field indicating a larger "family cemetery" of the

Rkong dkar po. (Note that on satellite imagery the search is considerably restricted by the dense tree cover in eastern Lhokha; we have provisionally marked a group of three mounds of 80-100m in the area of Bre sna, the old Rkong po centre as a tumulus site (0098), but we would not wager that these are artificial mounds.)

(2) The position of Myang po (var. Nyang po) in the imperial period is somewhat unclear. (Its dominion, divided into the three areas of Nyang po proper, Nyang dkar po (the area of the lower Nyang po chu) and Brag gsum mtsho, geographically largely corresponding to modern-day Rgya mda' County). While we can assume a relationship between the various Myang families scattered in different territorial links of Central Tibet and the old Myang po (and the Myang described as part of Lho Rngegs; > 15), we find no indications of a central dynastic organisation comparable to Mchims or Rkong po, and it seems that in the imperial period the Myang, who provided the commander of Upper G.yo ru (= the western half of Left Horn) in the time of the Mchims Rgyal gzigs, were somehow detached from this ancient Myang po home. Correspondingly the central cemetery of Myang po / Nyang po (0100) does not have the contours of a larger and continuously used collective Myang burial mound site (> 15). The various district lists of G.yo ru disagree in the allocation of Myang po. It is included in one of the G.yo ru *stong sde* catalogues, so was apparently a part of the realm commanded by Mchims Rgyal gzigs Shud ting (Hazod 2009: 205).

(3) Dags rgyal (and/or Mchims rgyal) are noted as precursors or even models for the preparation of the law book by Mgar Stong rtsan Yul zung (> 20), who contacted the country's leadership in this context (Dotson 2007a: 351f.; Hazod, in press). In the imperial period, the status of Dags po as a semi-autonomous principality is seen to have ended in 718-19, the time when the red tally of Dags po was carried out, indicating the area's full administrative integration into the empire (Dotson 2009: 110). Dags is accordingly recorded (as a compound with neighbouring Nyag nyi) among the districts of G.yo ru smad. No central grave field comparable to Mchims is recorded for this area, whose main seat, the residence of the Dvags rje mang po, is given in a later source as the place of Klu mkhar Zo dkar (Akester 2016: 394). This is to be located east of Dvags lha Sgam po. The field with the largest mound is 0084, situated in the Nga rab district, due north-east of the modern Rgya tshva township (M-1 50m).

(4) The form "Mchims Snyal pa Rgyal gzigs Shud ting" for the chief minister in the list of the "nine great ones" suggests that he was from

Snyal (Gnyal) or otherwise had a close relationship with this district adjacent to the south (in modern-day Lhun rtse county). The leading lineage of Gnyal was the Snyi ba (Rnyi ba), which according to its tradition developed its own local dynasty in the pre-imperial period – the Rnyi ba *btsad po*, which was traditionally affinally related to Mchims (Sherpa 2004: 37f., 294). In the administration of G.yo ru smad, the Dmyal (Gnyal) thousand district is listed in tandem with Lho brag, with Mchims and Snyi ba as the families that provided the *stong dpon* of these districts (Hazod 2009: 205). It is obvious to connect the central burial mound site of Gnyal (0070) to the Snyi ba (M-1 ca. 40m; situated next to Bzang yul in Gnyal smad, a place which we think corresponds to the Gzen known from the *OTA* as the site where Srong btsan Sgam po's younger brother died a violent death; Dotson 2009: 81). From the grave field's dimension this would relate to a cemetery of a rather minor family – not comparable to that of Mchims or of G.ye yul.

(5) This country of G.ye east of Yar lung is not recorded as *stong sde*, but may well have been administered as part of the neighbouring Dags and / or Nyag nyi thousand districts; in the *yul dpon sde* civil districts G.ye is represented by Gangs 'bar, a toponym known from earlier catalogues (PT 1286; see below) and from the Dri gum account (in *OTC.1*) where it is described as a sort of ritual centre of this county. (Note: the suggested identification of Gangs 'bar in an earlier study with a site near Klog in southern G.ye (Hazod 2006, 2009) was probably a mistake; it rather is the Gang ba (Sgang sgang in *XD*, Vol. 1: 239) situated in the Lha 'bab sa district of northern G.ye (known as birthplace of the Ma gcig Lab Sgron ma), simply because as a site near the (right) shore of the Gtsang po it would explain its relevance in the Dri gum account.) The political centre of the G.ye dynasty was situated at the same place where later the post-imperial Lha rgya ri pa had their residence (i.e. the Lha rgya ri *pho brang*, next to the modern Chu gsum township). We find evidence for this in the local tradition (Hazod 2006), and not least in the dense of burial mound sites. No less than eleven grave fields are situated around Lha rgya ri, most of them north of the G.ye river, with 0076 situated in the side valley of Rgyal mkhar thang clearly forming the central burial ground.

This cemetery is divided into five sections, with one of them including three large coffer-shaped trapezoidal mound graves that are described locally as residences (*sic*) of "three princes" (*sras gsum*). These are in the 50, 70 and 80m category; the walled part of the latter (M-1) more precisely measures 70m, 80m at the foot of the mound, both at front. It seems to exceed even the chief minister tomb of Slebs ri (0092), and thus represents one of Tibet's largest elite mounds out-

side the royal necropolis of Phying ba / 'Phyong rgyas. The identification of the three mounds, with at least two of them being of "chief minister" size, remains a mystery. Their connections with three princely brothers in the local tradition possibly confuses the monuments with a situation related to the later Lha rgya ri house (Hazod 2006), but in any case, one has to see them in the context of a powerful local family resident in this area. It is obvious to think first of the G.ye dynasty. This is given in the *rgyal phran* (minor principality) catalogues as Dbye ro yul bzhi (with Dbye rje'i Mkhar pa as the ruler (or the ruler's title), and the Spo and Rngog (= Rngegs) as minister families; Hazod 2009: 173) and evidently corresponds to what in PT 1286 is given as Lde (Lde'i Gangs ['bar) – i.e. one of Yar lung's four affinally related neighbours. (A relationship with the dynastic name of Lde in the Yar lung genealogy (i.e. the Lde brgyad, starting with Lde Pru bo Gnam gzhung rtsan of *OTC.2*) can be assumed (cf. Richardson 1998: 29), although the closer history and chronology behind this relationship is not so clear.) As for the imperial period, to my knowledge there is no continuing G.ye principality recorded in the form as we find it with Dags, Mchims or Rkong. The area of the former G.ye yul dynasty was evidently incorporated into the administrative organisation of Lower G.yo ru, in other words, the local households were part of the "90,000 *bran*" organisation under the Mchims Snyal pa Rgyal gzigs Shud ting.

From the outer appearance and architectural details of the "*sras gsum* tombs", the constructions point to largely the same period, and if our estimate according to which the 80m tombs of peripheral fields were not built before the second half of the eighth century is correct, then these monuments should be seen as a product of the Buddhist period of the empire (P-2). In none of the chief-minister histories of this period are there any indications of a closer connection to G.ye, and among the old noble families of this area, such as the Spo and Rngegs, there are likewise no clues that would allow us to put them into the frame as candidates for the identification of these outstanding graves. For the time being, we are therefore referred to a local burial mound history that cannot be properly placed in our proposed scheme of *zhang lon* graves of the imperial period.

[33] Ngan lam Stag sgra Klu gong (782-83) [0157]
Regarding the identification of the grave of this famous general and chief minister there is hardly any doubt that this relates to the large grave of 0157 in the Sri valley (also known as Ngan lam Sri), some miles to the east of Lhasa. (Fig. 54, 55; the entrance to the valley near Tshal Gung thang has now become part of the expanding city.) The circumstances that led to this identification, and, linked to it, to the

conclusion that the Zhol inscription of Lhasa (dedicated to Ngan lam Stag sgra Klu gong) originally stood at this grave, has been presented in earlier works (Hazod 2010; see also Hazod 2018: 42ff., Hazod, in press; and below Fig. 56a, -b for a new photograph of a wall painting from Potala that explicitly portrays the transport of the Zhol stele from Sri to Lhasa in the late seventeenth century).

The co-commander of the 762-64 military campaigns is not addressed as chief minister in the inscription but as minister (north face), as general and inner minister (south face) and as great interior minister (eastern inscription), which reflects the gradual progress of Klu gong's career. The entries on the *rdo ring* ended before 782, i.e. before the approximate date of the appointment of Stag ra Klu gong as chief minister. Probably the grave was already under construction, and before the death of the chief minister the pillar was placed somewhere near M-1 of 0157 – as a memorial stone, which not only honoured the minister's services but also continued the old guarantees of this family from 'Phan yul as well as the renewal of these guarantees (and their conditions) by the emperor Khri Srong lde brtsan. The traces of a few smaller mounds discovered in 2014, next to Stag sgra Klu gong's grave, should likely be classified as the resting places of closer relatives of the chief minister.

Some parts of the family evidently moved from the Ngan lam of 'Phan yul to the Lhasa valley in the seventh century at latest, as is attested by the place Ngan lam Tshal sar pa ("new garden of Ngan lam") used as assembly site 701-02; this should be located in Ngan lam Sri or the area at the entrance to this valley. It has been argued that the background of the history of this "wandering toponym" may be related to the inclusion of the Ngan lam in the circle of the *btsan 'bangs rus drug*, a group that was responsible for the safeguarding of the emperor during his stay in the Lhasa valley (Hazod 2018: 45f.).

M-1 of 0157 is a massive building with a trapezoidal ground plan measuring 65m at the front. If this was apparently conceived as the tomb of a great interior minister, then this gives us the interesting basis for comparison, according to which we can presume that 65m was the size for mounds of members of the *zhang lon chen po bzhi* for the period in question (phase P-2; cf. Part One, chap. 4.2). Although we always have to consider the criterion of internal family decisions in terms of the dimension of the burial, it seems to be clear that for this period graves beyond this 65m category can only be attributed to a representative of yet higher-ranking aristocrats, i.e. chief minister or also chief of a vassal principality. Interesting is the finding of a stone lion fragment, which recently surfaced in a chamber of the Gung thang vihàra during the reconstruction of this famous temple and monastery situated not far from the entrance to the Sri Valley. Ac-

cording to Shawo Khacham, to whom we owe this information plus photo (Nov. 2016), this refers to the remains of an original pair of stone lions with characteristic similarities to imperial stone lions, which we know from several tumulus contexts (> 28). If so, the conclusion is obvious that these sculptures are from the nearby mound in Ngan lam Sri, from where they were probably moved to this new place at the time of the construction of the Gung thang *vihàra* (1187) – arguably under the authority of the founder Gung thang Bla ma Zhang (1123-93), a later Zhang Sna nam descendant who liked to call himself the "beggar of Ngan lam" (RCP: 604). It would be the earliest example of the Central Tibetan grave lions, namely to be dated before the well-known pair of lions at the grave of Khri Srong lde brtsan. We have hitherto regarded this combination of grave and guardian lions as an establishment from the Buddhist period, where the regional examples quasi copied the situation at Khri Srong lde brtsan's tomb (completed ca. 800) (Hazod 2015). Yet the Gung thang / Ngan lam lions, if they were indeed originally at M-1 of 0157, could well be the product of a later re-adjustment of the grave.

The Sri valley has two more grave fields, 0397 and 0398, which both include a stupa mound (cf. Feiglstorfer 2018: 112, 127, 137, for an initial description); as noted elsewhere, one of these may be the tomb of Ngan lam Rgyal mchog dbyang/skyong (Hazod 2018: 46), the famous *kalyāṇamitra* of Bsam yas and Lhasa 'Phrul snang (ITJ 689(2); Karmay 1988: 78), who in PT 149 is given as the younger brother of Ngan lam Stag ra Klu khong (Van Schaik and Doney 2007: 200). So possibly the making of the lions and their placing at the tomb of the chief minister was part of this new conceptualisation of the burial grounds of Ngan lam Sri, which started with the stupa mound burial of this first and eminent Buddhist member of the Ngan lam family.

[34] Sna nam Zhang Rgyal tshan Lha snang (783 – 796) [0047]
(1) Sna nam Zhang Rgyal tshan Lha snang's mention in the Bsam yas edict on third position of the sworn-in aristocrats, i.e. after the then chief minister Mchims Rgyal zigs Shu teng and the minister Stag ra Klu khong, as it were provides a projection of the chief minister constellation of no. 33 and 34, where, as noted, in 782, Sna nam Zhang Rgyal tshan Lha snang together with Stag ra Klu khong (> 33) apparently jointly held the position of the chief minister before Zhang Rgyal tshan Lha snang became sole *blon chen* (from 783; Dotson 2009: 152-53). During his military operations of 786-87 in the north-eastern border regions recorded in Chinese sources (Beckwith: 1987: 150f.), he was already chief minister. According to the *Xin Tangshu*, he died in 796 (Dotson, *op. cit*., *ibid*.).

Later chronicles mention him as founder of a Buddhist temple in Grva, which arguably either refers to the site of the later Grva thang temple or to the Gtsang grong in adjacent Grva phyi known as the place of a (Buddhist) inscription pillar from the later imperial period (Richardson 1989: 155; *OTI* 50-52). This temple foundation may be related to the account given in several post-imperial sources, according to which the Sna nam became the lords of the three adjacent districts of Grva, Dol, Gzhung upon a grant given by Mu rub btsan po (RCP: 171). This seems to be the Khri Srong lde brtsan son Mu rug brtsan, who according to the reconstruction by Dotson (2007) was emperor from ca. 800-802 (but see below fn. 22). Here one may see some contradiction with the popular account according to which Mu rug (others have Mu tig) was killed by a member of the Sna nam pa in revenge (*ngan lan*) for the assassination of minister Sna nam Zhang Btsan pa Dbu ring (Btsan bzher 'U rings), the son of the chief minister. (Variant versions do not speak of killing, but exile of 'U rings; Sørensen 1994: 407.) According to *Nyang ral* (410. 2-12), the event of the killing of 'U rings still took place in the time of the chief minister Zhang Rgya tsha Lha snang, in whose presence the emperor (Khri Srong lde brtsan) promised to mention the payment of blood money (*stong bcal*) for 'U rings in his testament (see below > 35 for the broader context of this event). Possibly, the territorial grant of the Sna nam pa was part of the *stong bcal* implemented by the new emperor Mu ne btsan po (and not by Mu rub/rug) in fulfilling his father's testament. However, the Sna nam pa were already present in Grva – if our assessment is correct that the Yar rgyang / rkyang, one of the two G.yo ru thousand disticts headed by Myang and Sna nam, is to be located in Grva (Hazod 2009: 205; geographically, this *stong sde* may have covered an area similar to the Yar rgyab territory in Grva-Dol-Gzhung of the 14th / 15th cent.; cf. Fermer 2017: 67, 80). Thus, this grant likely only confirmed (or extended) the former estates of the lineage in the respective area. In other words, the chief minister founded the temple in his own land, where – one may add – he also resided. Against this background it has been argued that the tomb of the chief minister should be identified as the large grave mound of Gser khung Village due west of Grva thang (= M-1 of 0047) – the only "chief minister" grave in this area (Hazod, in press).[20]

(2) The Grva district was only one of several territorial links recorded for the Sna nam lineage. We can differentiate between the "southern" Sna nam, who were in the service of the early Yar lung *rgyal po* (relat-

[20] Gser khung, "goldmine", though not a rare toponym, could be the Gser khung of the *OTA* entry of 746-47 (Dotson 2009: 127).

ed to the family of the eighth chief minister, Sna nam 'Bring tog rje), with Myang stod/smad as one of their homes, but also in Yar lung (CFS: 200-201; Sørensen 1994: 358), and in 'On (Pasang Wangdu 2006), and the "northern" Sna nam, who in the eighth century provided the Horn commander of Upper Dbu ru, and still earlier were granted or confirmed the *yul* of Brang and Gzhong pa in Lower Stod lung in the seventh century. Members of this family were probably buried in all these "Sna nam lands", yet in the various fields we don't find a tomb comparable to M-1 of 0047 anywhere – except one. This is the tomb of Zhang Sna nam Ma zhang (Mang zham) Grom pa skyes, Khri Srong lde brtsan's mother-brother and author of the anti-Buddhist *khrims bu chung* (additional law), who – as already noted (> 29, 30, 31) – was eliminated in the aftermath of Khri Srong lde brtsan's decision to establish Buddhism as Tibet's religion. This tomb represents the only burial mound of a *zhang lon*, the location of which is explicitly given in the sources, namely in Upper Brang of Stod lung, not far east of Lhasa (see Hazod, in press for details of this account). The spectacular execution of Ma zhang and his group given in later sources contains intriguing details about the practice of torture and execution (apparently partially adapted from Tang China). Ma zhang himself is described as having been buried alive in a tumulus in Brang phu, a story, of which we may accept as historical core the information that a grave mound had already been constructed for this *zhang* minister during his lifetime – in the old Sna nam land of Brang / Gzhong pa.

The details of Ma zhang's fate in this grave (arguably based on an oral account) allow the reconstruction of a massive elite mound with a burial shaft several metres long (Hazod *op. cit.*). This refers to the central mound of 0163 (M-1) known in the Lhasa tradition as the "Ma zhang Grom pa skyes kyi dur sa", where reportedly also the remains of human bones were found (cf. *LLG-3*, p. 45; Dungkar: 1589-90; a dating of the bones is not mentioned, however). The grave and its two satellite mounds are located within the compounds of the Brang phu military camp and the site is therefore not accessible (Fig. 61). Satellite photos reveal the image of a complex cemetery of hundreds of graves in Brang and adjacent Gzhong pa valley, divided into several sections (0163a, -b; 0162a-c; 0371, 0372).

The (almost) quadrangular M-1 of 0163a measures ca. 55m; the traces of a still larger (about 65m) structure outside the camp walls, which we have marked as M-0 are uncertain (for comparison, the tomb of one Tshes pong zhang, similarly of the *zhang lon chen po bzhi* of the same period, has been identified as the central mound of 0176 (M-1: ca. 65m), Hazod 2018: 61). Some more, smaller tombs are near

M-1 and its two satellite mounds. A family relationship between these groups of 0163-a is likely.

We find a similar situation in the Gser khung field of Grva (0047): nine tombs are grouped around the central mound M-1 – one of the largest (regional) elite mounds, a massive almost quadrangular monu-ment of about 70m at the front. (Fig. 58, 59; in the literature (Tsewang 2011: 100; Chan 1994: 368) the dimensions are given as 96m (front) by 87m (rear), H: 20 at the front, 7m at the rear, details that evidently include the earth sloping at the sides – earth from the original covering of the walled structure.) Directly on the left (eastern) side of M-1 is a stupa mound (H: 10m; Fig. 60). Besides the Mchims site of Slebs ri (0092, > 32), this grave field 0047 was one of the first archaeologically surveyed burial mound sites of Central Tibet with the special feature of largely intact interiors, uncovered in M-8, with special staircase constructions and grave-chamber details (Tsewang 2011; Wangdu 2010; Chayet 1994; Feiglstorfer 2018: 115, 116, 119, 130). This has been dated to the late eighth / early ninth century (cf. Chayet 1994: 75). Together with the situation of the stupa mound as a monument of the Buddhist period, this fits exactly with the time frame of the chief minister Sna nam Zhang Rgyal tshan Lha snang. This *blon chen* was not a "second-generation *zhang*" as originally proposed (Dotson 2004), but he inherited the status of *zhang* from Ma zhang; he was probably not a direct (linear) descendant, but a wider collateral relative resident in Lhokha, who with the founding of the Grva lha khang opened a new chapter of the Sna nam family history.

Several other grave fields should be classified as possible Sna nam sites, such as 0112 in Mal gro or 0024 in 'On, which can be considered the burial place for the one or the other Sna nam who became prominent from the time of Ma zhang, such as the family of the Sna nam commander of the Upper Dbu ru, or the (altogether five) Sna nam pa who had sworn the Skar cung edict of Khri Lde srong brtsan, including the *nang blon* Zhang Sna nam Lha bzher Spe btsan (Dotson 2009: 157), who was certainly buried in a high-category grave.

One of the contemporaries of Ma zhang was Sna nam Zhang Nya bzang, much quoted in the *Dba' bzhed* etc., *inter alia* in the context of the elimination of Ma zhang Grom pa skyes. He seems to be the Sna nam Rgyal nyer Nya bzangs from the list of the "nine great ones" (above > 32, fn. 18) – characterised as great "because he was a *bla mkhyen* of the religion (*chos kyi bla mkhyen*)" (Dotson 2007a: 118). His kinship relation to Ma zhang is unclear, but in any case the two – Nya bzang and Ma zhang – evidently represented an example of a family split into pro- and anti-Buddhist members, as can be found in other lineages. Nya bzang's son was [Sna nam] Zhang Lha bu, who some sources count among the *sad mi mi bdun*; he represents one can-

didate for the identification of the stupa mound of 0047, others include the early ninth-century religious proponents Sna nam Bse btsan or Sna nam Legs grub.

It should be noted in this context that besides the Sna nam other lineages are also recorded for the Grva-Dol-Gzhung area for approximately the same period, most prominently the Shud phu, Rngog, Sbal ti, and also the Mchims, with whom the Sna nam of Grva are often mentioned in tandem. The Mchims of Grva were descendants of the Mchims Rdo rje Spre(l) chung (> 32), the lineage that Grva pa Mngon shes (1012-1090), the founder of the Grva thang temple (1090), hailed from. Similar to the Sna nam, the Sbal ti (= 'Bal; > 29) are reported to have been granted territories in Grva-Dol-Gzhung by Mu tig btsan po – as a reward for their engagements in the war against China and Mongolia (i.e. Uighur; see Beckwith 1987: 150ff.). The Shud phu are similarly recorded as "rulers of Grva-Dol-Gzhung", from the early 9th century (RCP: 171), and the Rngog reportedly had estates in Grva and Dol in the same period (fn. 17). All these families produced religious proponents in the immediate post-Bsam yas founding period (and thus theoretically count as candidates for the stupa mound of 0047) but no chief minister.

[35] 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shags (802? – 814/15?) [0339]
(1) 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shags is known from *OTC.8* as the army leader who commanded (in the early 790s) the campaigns against the "western regions" (and Khotan, respectively) and later (794) went against the renegade Nanzhao and put his ruler under tribute again (PT 1287: l.391-97; Dotson 2007a: 380-81 and his discussion of the respective dating of these campaigns). He was thus an appropriate candidate for the chief minister post, and not solely because of his origins in the 'Bro zhang, the family who together with 'Bro bza' Lha rgyal Mang mo rje provided the chief consort of Khri Lde srong brtsan and mother of the succeeding emperors Khri Lde Gtsug brtsan and 'U'i Dum brtan. The date of Khri gzu Ram shags' tenure is somewhat problematic. It is connected with the disputes around the succession to the throne after Khri Srong lde brtsan, in which the Sna nam, the family of the previous chief minister (> 34), apparently were heavily involved.

In fact, the Sna nam had been about to occupy a position similar to the Dba's (since the seventh century) and the 'Bro (since the early eighth century). In Nyang ral's detailed account of the elimination of Btsan pa 'U rings, the son of Rgyal tshan Lha snang (> 34), it appears to have been a question of preventing the appointment of 'U rings as the next chief minister. In short it says:

> Approximately two years after the religious debate in Bsam yas, Khri Srong lde btsan decided to retreat from the throne (Karmay 1988: 5); beforehand he had decided to make Mu ne btsan po heir to the throne, and at the same time "he thought about appointing Zhang Bu ri (= 'U rings) as minister." For this purpose he called "*blon po* Zhang Rgya tsha Lha snang (= the chief minister) and (the latter's son) 'U ring Btsan pa" as well as the other ministers to meet in the Drum Hall on the middle floor of the Bsam yas Dbu rtse. [The text does not distinguish between "chief minister" and "minister", but the context seems to suggest that the "minister 'U rings" should become chief minister.] The queen [Tshes spong bza'] Me tog sgron was upset about these plans, and in her fear that "the power would go to the Sna nam pa" she persuaded (Prince) Mu tig btsan po (= Mu rug) to intervene. He assassinated 'U rings on the way to this meeting somewhere in the middle floor, and fled. The event stopped Khri Srong lde btsan's retreat plans and (in a subsequent meeting) he consulted his wise ministers. On the advice of Mgos Dpal 'gar Gung btsan, who (as minister of judges) "ruled according to the law of *blon po* Mgos" (i.e. Khri bzang Yab lag, > 31), it was agreed that Mu ne btsan po should assume responsibility for the realm (*chab srid*). At the same time, Khri Srong lde btsan wrote his testament, which also included the compensation he promised to pay the Sna nam pa for the assassination of 'U rings. Finally, the emperor went for meditation to Zung mkhar (Zur mkhar, the valley due east of Brag dmar Bsam yas) (*Nyang ral* 409. 19-410.14; Drikung 2011: 422-23).

The chronology of these events is quite realistic (regardless of their obvious adjustment – related to the topos of a queen being held responsible for intrigues; see also Me tog sgron's share in the story of Mu ne btsan po's killing, in *Nyang ral* 414.1f.; cf. also *Lde'u-2* 340.17-18): Sna nam Zhang Rgyal tshan Lha snang, who was still present at the failed attempt to make his son the future chief minister, died in 796 (see > 34). A little later Mu ne btsan po was officially appointed as heir to the throne, though he died twelve months later (killed in Yum bu Bla mkhar by his cupbearer *blon po* (Lo?) Te khu Ste chung; *Nyang ral* 414.9, cf. Dotson 2007, for dating the reign of Mu ne btsan po to ca. 797-98). One might think that at the same time of Mu ne's accession to the throne the new chief minister would be appointed – 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shags, who is already noted as *nang blon* in the Bsam yas edict; but this contradicts *Nyang ral* (415.15), according to which the appointment of 'Bro Khri bzung (= Khri gzu Ram shags) took place in the time of Sad na legs (emperor Khri Lde srong brtsan), and all later chronicles agree that he was the minister of Sad na legs (also confirmed in the Skar cung inscription; Dotson 2009: 157). *Lde'u-2* (340.18-20) states that the three – Sna nam Rgyal mtshan Lha snang,

Shud pu Khri 'bring Khong btsan and Lde sman Gur bzher Lde chung – acted as the ministers of Mu ne btsan po, an entry which indeed includes a key information regarding a specific elite mound,[21] yet otherwise is in contrast with Rgyal mtshan Lha snang's date of death (796). Thus, it seems that the post of chief minister was vacant for a period of several years. Noteworthy is also an entry in *Nyang ral* (414.18-415.5) that one may see as an allusion to a slightly different reading of this critical period:

> During a ministerial assembly, it had been considered to entrust the leadership after Mu ne btsan po not to the emperor's brother but to a minister – "one who can implement a *khrims bu chung* (supplementary law)", but some pointed to the bad precedent of the (anti-Buddhist) law introduced during the minority of Mes Ag tshoms (Khri Lde gtsug brtsan) (> 34), and in the end they dropped the plan and appointed the 24-year-old prince (Khri Lde srong brtsan) as the new emperor. (He became popularly known as the one whose ability was tested and found to be good (*sad pa bzhin legs*), hence his nickname Sad na legs, born probably 776, d. 815.)

This may be the allusion to a different story, behind which the actual destiny of the minister 'U rings is concealed: this Sna nam zhang was possibly a minister or would-be ruler who, in the time of Mu ne btsan po and Mu rug btsan po, was involved in the struggles over the succession to the throne, and was finally eliminated – by Mu tig, a name, which, as is known in the later chronicles, can also refer to Mu rug as well as Khri Lde srong brtsan.

Be that as it may, the beginning of the tenure of the chief minister 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shags was apparently not before 802. *Lde'u*-2 359.11-13 lists him as one out of three ministers who acted as *blon po* during the reign of Khri Lde srong brtsan. While he served for eight years, the other two, Mchims Rtsang bzher legs (= Zhang Mchims rgyal Btsan bzher Legs gzigs) and Sba Ma rje Lha lod (= Dba's Mang po rje Lha lod, the future chief minister, > 36), acted for five years and one year respectively. This chronology would indicate a succession of three (chief) minister posts during the reign of Khri Lde srong brtsan, which could not be the case, since 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shags was definitely (the sole) chief minister in 814/15; in fact, the two oth-

[21] In a recent discussion on the central field of Lho brag (0065) and the issue of the identification of its central mound (M-1: 65m) in Hazod 2018: 46ff., we overlooked this entry in the *Lde'u* chronicle about this late eighth-century minister Lde sman Gur bzher Lde chung. He is evidently identical with the Lde sman Lde'u cung of the Lho brag inscription, for whom most likely this central mound was built. From its size it relates to a grave occupant of the higher *zhang lon* class, most likely a minister of the interior in the period around Mu ne btsan po's reign.

ers are ministers, who are ranked in the Skar cung edict in the group of *chab srid kyi blon po* behind chief minister Ram shags. The tenure of the 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shag should therefore be dated from 802 until 814/15, i.e. the date of the appointment of Dba's Mang po rje Lha lod as the next chief minister (see Dotson 2009: 153).

(2) So much for the reconstruction of this critical phase between the two chief ministers nos. 34 and 35.[22] The era of the succeeding emperors, Khri Lde srong brtsan and Khri Gtsug lde btsan, is often described in the literature as Tibet's real heyday – with regard to the realisation of the visions of a Buddhist empire. Among the internal reforms (partly already initiated under Khri Srong lde brtsan) the most significant were the integration of monks and the institution of the religious councils in state affairs. Some later sources call the religious council (*lha chos kyi 'dun sa*) the great one (*'dun sa che ba*) in contrast to the traditional *zhang lon gyi 'dun sa* described as the small one (*'dun sa chung ngu*) (*KG* 327.16-17; Kamay 1988: 4; Hazod 2014: 10) – perhaps a fabrication by later historians; but the fact is that the supremacy of the position of chief minister, the head of the traditional council, had been questioned by the introduction of the monk minister, namely the *ban de chen po* Bran ka Dpal gyi Yon tan and Myang Ting nge 'dzin, which is also expressed in the sequence of naming in the edicts (Skar cung, Ldan ma), a situation which was even more pronounced in the Khri Gtsug lde brtsan era. According to the Ldan ma Inscription II, the highest rank of the monk ministers was the gold insignia (Imaeda 2011). In the case of Bran ka Yon tan, whose career seems to have started in 804 (Imaeda *op. cit.*), his leading position is best documented from the 821/22 treaty ceremony. He is often described in the literature as "chief minister", which to my

[22] Our reconstruction of the events around the appointment of chief minister no. 35 has as its chronological background the succession to the throne after Khri Srong lde brtsan's abdication (ca. 797) as presented by Dotson, which sees the sons Mu ne brtsan and Mu rug brtsan as short-term emperors before the reign of Khri Lde srong brtsan (Dotson 2007; 2009: 143). In a forthcoming paper, which I came across only after completion of the present study, J. Bialek argues, not implausibly in connection with the dating of Old Tibetan inscriptions, that there were no emperors between Khri Srong lde brtsan and Khri Lde srong brtsan, with the latter having directly followed his father in 797 (Bialek, forthcoming: fns. 32 and 42). If one accepts this new chronology then our conclusion that there was possibly a vacancy of the chief minister post before 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shag (no. 35) is redundant. Accordingly, (as the later tradition also uniformly has it, see above) 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shag was the chief minister of Sad na legs (Khri Lde srong brtsan), which means from 797 (and not from 802 as suggested above). Apart from this, the newly proposed chronology would not affect our principal assessment regarding the role of the Sna nam pa (and the story of Btsan pa 'U rings) during this critical period.

knowledge is not attested in the sources, although the political radius of his long career – it comprised the remaining ministers of *OTC.2* – seems to have increasingly occupied the area of responsibility of the chief councillorship. In any case, *OTC.2* makes no mention of a chief minister Dpal gyi Yon tan.

(3) 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shags was one generation after 'Bro Khrom mda' Cung pa, possibly the son or nephew of this representative of the "nine great ones" (above fn. 18), whose nickname seems to refer to a younger brother (*cung pa*) of a 'Bro family from Khrom mda'; the latter again, we think, refers to the Khrom mda' of the 'Bro land of Khrom phu and -mda' where the Khrom chen cemeteries of 0339 and 0440 are situated, behind Khrom chen village (above > 28). It says this Khrom mda' cung pa was great because he possessed the (white) lion coat. As noted above, the lion image was indeed a 'Bro specific emblem, but did not necessarily have any causal relation to this situation with tomb lions in front of M-1 of 0339 (> 28). On the other hand, if we are correct in our conclusion according to which the practice of installing lions in front of graves of high *zhang lon* is to be dated to the post-Khri Srong lde brtsan era, then there is not much room left for any other identification of this 70m "lion grave" as being the resting place of either the *blon chen* 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shags or of Khri sum rje Stag snang, the last of the 'Bro chief ministers (> 37).

[36] Dba'[s] Mang rje Lha lod (ca. 814/15 – 820/21) [0138 +]
(1) The last mention of emperor Khri Lde srong brtsan relates to the Horse year 814-15; this was shortly before his death, at a time when his *pho brang* resided in 'On can do in the lower Skyid chu area. An exchange with foreign envoys took place, with (chief) minister Khri [gzu] Ram shags and [Dba's] Mang rje Lha lod noted as having received much Chinese wealth, and themselves having offered camels, horses and cattle to the (Chinese) emperor. In the same year, rewards were granted to all present, from the *zhang lon* downwards (Drikung 2011: 435, acc. to the *'Phang thang ma*), and it may well be that Mang rje Lha lod's nomination as chief minister also took place on this very same occasion, just confirming later chronicles which list him as the (chief) minister of Khri Gtsug lde brtsan (*Nyang ral* 386; others say he was *blon po* in the last year of Khri Lde srong brtsan and served under Khri Gtsug lde brtsan followed by no. 37; *Lde'u-2* 359.17-18).

We suppose that Mang rje Lha lod was a closer or more distant lineage relative of the contemporary Dba's blon Khri sum bzher Mdo btsan; possibly both belonged to the *bu tsha rgyud* of the minister Btsan bzher Mdo lod (army leader of the 764 campaigns), who is listed in the Bsam yas edict in the group of the great *zhang lon*. Inter-

estingly, the same Dba's blon Khri sum bzher Mdo btsan is mentioned in the Ldan ma inscription as interior minister before the chief minister (Ram shags), while in the (later) Skar cung edict he is ranked behind Mang rje Lha lod, as if he had then slipped backwards in the internal Dba's hierarchy. The Zhang Mchims rgyal Btsan bzher Legs gzigs, who is listed before Lha lod, apparently died after his five-year term as a *blon po* (see above), some time before 814/15, and Mang rje Lha lod was the next candidate as chief minister.

His tenure seems to have ended in around 820/21, since he is not mentioned on the 821/22 treaty inscription and the figure listed in this inscription (north face l.10; after the great monk Dpal chen po Yon tan) is the successor chief minister ['Bro] Zhang Khri gsum rje [Stag snang], who, however, is given in his function as commander in chief of the army (> 37). In the unreadable next line (l.11) it has (…) *blon chen*, *blon -o-* (…) with the latter syllable variously reconstructed as Lho, Lo [bzher] or li (Li and Coblin 1987: 59, 63). From the position of this "*blon chen*" it can hardly mean a chief minister; perhaps a deputy chief minister. He might be the (unidentified) Lho Don dam of the Ldan ma inscription, where he is again strangely mentioned before the then chief minister Khri gzu' Ram shags (Imaeda 2011: 117). One Lo Te ku Sna gong is listed as the last in the "nine great ones" (*che dgu*) catalogue (above fn. 18); he is said to have possessed the gold [insignia]. (He is evidently identical with the Lo Ti gu na in *BK.19* (491.1), the only one in this listing of (altogether 19) ministers of the late eighth and early ninth century who is titled as *blon chen* [*sic*].)

(2) There are no indications against a localisation of Dba'[s] Mang rje Lha lod's tomb in the Dba's land of Skyid shod. However, the problem is that in terms of size we do not find any grave in this proposed Dba's land of Skyid shod and Mal gro that meets the expectations of a "chief minister" tomb for this period of the early ninth century (P-2); i.e., there is no tomb of the 70m-plus category. The simple explanation may be that this mound grave was built at a time when the Mang rje Lha lod was not yet chief minister (see the case of > 33, and Part One, chap. 4.2).

[37] 'Bro Khri sum rje Stag snang (ca. 820/21 – 841) [0339]
(1) 'Bro Khri sum rje Stag snang is known from the *Jiu Tangshu* as the great general who led the campaigns against the Uigurs of 816 and 822 and reportedly commanded 150,000 troops in the military conflicts with China in 819 – events which eventually led to the peace treaties with Uigur of 822/823 and with China 821/823 (Szerb 1991; Yihong Pan 1992; Drikung 2011: 485). Related to these activities is

Khri sum rje's foundation of the east Tibetan De ga g.yu tsal "treaty temple" (founded together with the "*chen po zhang* Lha bzang" (fn. 23) as stated in the *Prayers of De ga gyu tsal* (PT 16 plus ITJ 751; Kapstein 2009; Drikung 2011: 443-471) as well as the mention of him in later sources as the builder of a temple in Central Tibet (Brag dmar Bka' chu (= Kva chu), elsewhere Gling Khri rtse) described as an establishment to purify the sins of doing battle with China. Similarly related to his sojourn in the east is the listing of 'Bro Khri sum rje as one of the four door-openers, namely as the one who opened the eastern door for the silk [trade]. These attributions appear in the various listings of the "eight *khe*" (benefits) that Tibet gained from its great generals and high officials (in SLS, Dotson 2007a: 230ff.). Apart from his registration as one of Khri Gtsug lde brtsan's ministers (cf. e.g. *Lde'u-2* 359.18; *GBY* 202.4) the same (post-imperial) sources mention 'Bro Khri sum rje in the Khri Srong lde brtsan chapter, namely in connection with the fightings with the Chinese, Uigurs and Ljangs (Nanzhao) and the subsequent agreement organised by the Tibetan minister "at Dbyar ma thang" (*sic*); most detailed in *KG* 400.14-401.8; cf. Uebach 1991).

In PT 996 (l.1v7) ['Bro] Zhang Khri sum rje [Stag snang] is titled *bde blon* ("pacification minister" [of the east Tibetan province of Bde Khams]), a post which he evidently held prior to his appointment as *blon chen po*, the title he is addressed with in the context of the De ga g.yu tsal foundation and also in PT 1165. It says in this document that the *blon chen po* Zhang Khri sum rje and the *zhang lon chen po* Zhang Lha bzang (= the above-mentioned *chen po zhang* Lha bzang)[23] convened the east Tibetan council somewhere in Dbyar mo thang in the autumn of the Rat year (either 820-21 or 832-33; Dotson 2009: 142; in the same year, the ministers Btsan bzang and Lha bzher convened the (Central Tibetan) council at Lcags rtse (Hazod 2009: 215), while the emperor (Khri Gtsug lde brtsan) resided in Mal to Spe tshal, the later Mal gro Dpe tshal; Hazod 2014: 8). In the 821/823-treaty text he is, as noted, not mentioned as chief minister but as commander in chief of

[23] He is identified in the literature (Richardson 1998: 11; Szerb 1991: 378) as the general and minister Zhang Tshe spong Lha bzang Klu dpal, one of the sworn-in ministers of the Skar cung edict of ca. 812, whom later sources also list (as *dmag dpon* or even *blon chen dmag dpon*; cf. *BK.19* 88.7; 490.13) under Khri Srong lde brtsan (Sørensen 1994: 396). However, he is not mentioned in the 821/823 Sino-Tibetan treaty inscription (as erroneously stated in Szerb, *op. cit*.), unless he is the person behind the illegible *gung blon chen po dmag dpon* listed in third place after Zhang Khri sum rje (Dotson 2009: 159). One Zhang Lha bzang is mentioned in a contract issued in the Sheep year 827 or 839 (Takeuchi 1995: 155). (Lha bzang Klu dpal is mentioned as founder of a temple in Sbo thong (likely the Bo dong of Gtsang), and it has been argued that the elite field of 0329 (M-1: 65m) should be seen as being associated with his family; Hazod 2018: 61).

the army (> 36). Yet, as argued by Dotson (2009: 153), his position after the great monk Dpal chen po Yon tan, indicates that he already held the post of *blon chen* at that time.

As is well known, the chief minister is described in one tradition (in the form of 'Bro Stag snang Khri sum rje (*sic*), entitled as *bka' blon*) as having been reincarnated as the legendary Bla chen Dgongs pa rab gsal (Dge ba gsal), who was born in Tsong ka Bde khams in *chu byi* (832), one year after the passing of the 'Bro minister age 35 (*Deb sngon* (BA: 63); Smith 2001: 150; Stoddard 2004: 64-65).[24] While this provides an interesting note with respect to the chief minister's residence and possible place of death, the date of his passing (*lcags phag* 831) is rather unlikely. There are no indications of the appointment of the successor *blon chen* in the time of Khri Gtsug lde brtsan's reign (see below > 38). 'Bro Khri sum rje's tenure lasted, we assume, until the death of Khri Gtsug lde brtsan (841), and can thus be dated to ca. 820/21-841.

(2) 'Bro Khri sum rje Stag snang appears to have been a descendant of the 'Bro zhang Khri bzang who in the *Annals of the 'A zha principality* (ITJ 1368: l.22-24) is mentioned together with Zhang Btsan to re and one Cog ro in the delegation that brought the Chinese princess Jincheng to Tibet. It has been suggested that this 'Bro zhang Khri bzang should be identified with the Shang Jilizang of Chinese documents, who is given there as the father of Shang Zanmo (= Zhang Btsan ba) and grandfather of Shang Qixiner (= Zhang Khri gsum rje [Stag snang]; Demiéville 1987 (1952): 290-306). Btsan ba is known from the 763 military campaign, thus the generational distance seems too great for him to have been the father of the chief minister; on the other hand, a close lineage relationship between the 'Bro of the early eighth century and the family of the last chief minister of 'Bro is likely (cf. also Richardson 1998: 111).

(3) Most of the time the chief minister is said to have stayed in the administrative centres in the east. In the event that he died there (in his residence in Bde Khams? see above), the corpse was arguably taken to Khrom chen in Central Tibet (or, more likely, a cenotaph burial took place there). In any case we do not see any other candidate for the identification of the chief minister's burial site as the Khrom chen tumulus field (0339). And here again there is no better option than to identify the "lion tomb" M-1 or one of the adjacent

[24] However, there is a second tradition according to which he was from Central Tibet – born into the *bon po* family of Mu zu Gsal 'bar of 'Phan po Zhogs (Fig. 22); see RCP: 154, 704 for references.

large mounds as the resting place of 'Bro Khri sum rje Stag snang. The lions may be from the time when the small (no longer extant) *gtsug lag khang* of Khrom chen was built, which at the earliest is to be dated to the time of emperor Khri Gtsug lde brtsan as indicated in the inscription (*OTI* 43). The lions would then be a product from the time of the chief minister 'Bro Khri sum rje Stag snang. Of course, an earlier production is also conceivable, yet, as noted, probably not before the time of the *blon chen* 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shags (> 35). In our estimation, the lion grave at the top of the Khrom chen cemetery was built as the resting place of Khri sum rje Stag snang, thus representing as is were the crowning conclusion of the burial history of the 'Bro in the imperial period.

[38] Dba's Rgyal to re Stag snya (841 – 842) [0138 +]
(1) Dba's Rgyal to re Stag snya is listed (in a rather low position) among the officials who swore Khri Lde srong brtsan's Skar cung edict (proposed to be dated to ca. 812). He evidently developed to become a significant speaker of the lay aristocracy, who opposed the way in which Khri Gtsug lde brtsan had favoured the Buddhist clergy and the form of transferring political responsibility to the monk minister, a climate increasingly full of suspense, which even the otherwise rather subjective descriptions of later Buddhist historiography do not ignore. There is a well-known statement in *Nyang ral* (p. 426), quoted in Karmay (2003: 60): "If a lay official salutes the king sixteen times the king simply ignores it; if he sees a religious person even at a distance, he salutes him." (Cf. *Nyang ral* 427.2-15 for further details in this respect.)

In the classical Buddhist chronicles Dba's Rgyal to re Stag snya is known as the wicked minister who was responsible for the reputed anti-Buddhist motivated acts of violence – the slander of Bran ka Yon tan, which led to his execution, the expulsion of the emperor's brother, Prince Gtsang ma, and the killing of Khri Gtsug lde brtsan (probably in 841). He became popularly known under the modified name Stag rna can ("the one with tiger ears"), and depicted as a *the rang* (or *the'u rang 'gong po*) emanation – "the one with the monkey face" (*sprel mgo can*; *KG* 420.5-421.1; fn. 25). The image of the Rgyal to re Stag snya is similarly distorted as that of the "sinful" Glang Dar ma (emperor 'U'i Dum brtan), who, as we know today, was a Buddhist emperor whose apparently greater willingness to comply with the (lay) aristocracy led to his downfall (Karmay 2003). What seems to be a historical fact is that Bran ka Dpal gyi Yon tan was executed (in 'Phan yul G.yung thang (= Yung ba, his native place, where he was also buried; Hazod 2016a) and Khri Gtsug lde brtsan died a violent death; according to one version he was killed in his residence in Mal gro

Zhom pa (situated in the Gzi sbug valley of eastern Mal gro, the Zu spug of the *OTA*); there are also vague indications of a natural death of the (chronically sick?) emperor; see recently Hazod 2014: 44 for ref., and TF: 285 and TTT: 0245-Fig. 1 for the mapping of Bran ka's place). Khri Gtsug lde brtsan was succeeded as *btsan po* by his brother 'U'i Dum brtan, whose reign has been dated to 841-842.

(2) The appointment of Rgyal to re as chief minister is not so easily datable. Karmay's statement that Glang Dar ma's chief ministers "were Wa Gyaltore Tagnya and Dro Trisumje Taknang" (i.e. no. 38 and 37) (Karmay 2003: 58) is to my knowledge not attested in the sources. Dro Trisumje Taknang is evidently confused here with the Glang dar ma minister Rgyal tsha Khri sum rje (alias Rgyal mtshan Khri gsum rje Stag snang) who was of Sna nam.[25] Dba's Rgyal to re's appointment as chief minister seems to correspond to the entry in *Nyang ral* where it says the king appointed him as interior minister and Sna nam Rgyal tsha Khri 'sum rje as minister of the exterior (*Nyang ral* 429.2-3). In the report of the Chinese envoy, who arrived (in Lhasa) in 843 on the occasion of the death of the emperor ('U'i Dum brtan), it is confirmed that Jie Duna, who is identified with Rgyal to re (Petech 1994: 650), was the leading minister (*da xiang*; above fn. 13) at this time. He was reportedly executed shortly afterwards, because he did not respect the new regime that had been installed in Dbu ru following the death of the childless emperor (Bushell 1880: 523). These two or three years, 841 to 843, thus seem to be the realistic dating for the tenure of Tibet's last chief minister.

(3) Rgyal to re is recorded as temple founder in one of the above-mentioned "eight benefits" catalogues (*Lde'u-2* 264.4-265.12; Dotson 2007a: 230-31) where it says: "Sbas Rgyal to re Stag snang built the Khrom sna Lha lung sgo srung to purge the sins of having slandered the innocent Bran ka Dpal gyi Yon tan". In a parallel account (in the list of the "temples raised by the ministers", in the version of Nel pa's chronicle) the Rbas Rgyal po stag sna (*sic*) foundation is called Khra sna'i mgon po (Uebach 1987: 117). As far as identified the Tibetan minister temples – several of them similarly described as atonement

[25] This Sna nam minister is depicted as the "falcon-headed one" in the group of three animal-headed demonic embodiments who are seen as having been responsible for the elimination of the religion, i.e the *seng ge'i mgo can* (Glang dar ma), the *the rang gi sprul pa spre mgo can* (= Rgyal to re), and the *khra'i mgo can* Rgyal mtshan Khri sum rje Stag snang (*Lde'u-2* 365.7-9; elsewhere the minister Cog ro Legs sgra (Lcogs ro Legs pa'i gdong rtsan; *Nyang ral* 428.11; *Lde'u-2* 365.17) is added to form a group of four *yakùa* brothers, a tradition which seems to have its origin in the tenth century; cf. Sørensen 1994: 432).

temples – often seem to be associated with the place of residence of the respective ministers or otherwise with their families and may thus be seen as an indication of their possible place of burial (cf. above > 34; fn. 11). The problem is we do not know what this *sgo srung* [of] Khrom sna Lha lung (or *mgon po* of Khra sna) exactly refers to. There are several Khra sna recorded for Central Tibet in the imperial time – such as the (not firmly identified) Khra sna of the *OTA* (entry 691-92) or the Khra sna related to ancient Ngas po (fn. 26). A Khra sna *lha khang* is associated with Mu tig btsan po (= Mu rug), who is said to have established it in order to atone for the sins of having killed Btsan pa Dbu rings (Uebach, *op. cit*., p. 105; above > 35). This foundation is most likely to be identified with the 'On Ke ru *lha khan*g situated in the central 'On valley (Pasang Wangdu 2006: 48). Perhaps the Dba's Rgyal to re foundation refers to additions to this temple, in the form of a *mgon po* guardian statue or door-keeper(s) (*sgo srung*) created for this site; but this remains speculation, not least because the area of this temple had no associations with Dba's but was a land of the Sna nam, the lineage of Dbu rings (cf. Pasang Wangdu, *op. cit*.; Hazod, in press).[26]

[26] However, this situation of the 'On Khra sna founding story also suggests that in terms of location the atonement temples of this sort were apparently not necessarily associated with the family of the founder but were rather established in the land of the family affected; in the case of Rgyal to re's expiation this concerned the Bran ka. The latter's territory was the Yung ba of lower 'Phan po, where it has been suggested that the area known as Khra nang in the upper part of the Yung ba valley should be identified with the ancient Ngas po Khra sna (var. Ngas po Khra sum; Hazod 2009: 172, 216; note that from Khra phu (upper Khra [sna?]; *XD*, Vol. I: 65) paths lead to Klung shod *alias* Klum ro (see Fig. 8), which makes the listing of Klum *lha* Thugs po as the central *lha* of the Ngas po principality (Hazod *op.cit*, *ibid*.) geographically understandable). Perhaps the Khrom sna Lha lung (Khra sna *lha khang*) relates to a ninth-century precursor of Khams pa lung, the Bka' gdams pa temple (founded by Sgang Shakya Yon tan, a.k.a. *dge bshes* Yung ba pa; 1025-1115) situated in Khra nang (Khra sna) of Yung ba (cf. Chöpel 2004: 164). This is in fact not far from Bran ka Dpal gyi Yon tan's birthplace, next to the entrance to Yung ba (see TTT: site 0245-Fig. 1). Another theory is to see behind the *sgo srung* / *mgon po* the later creation of a protector figure associated with Rgyal to re's popular image as the *the rang* emanation of the Monkey-Faced One. I am thinking here of the impressive stone sculpture of a head with the face of a monkey (H: ca. 22 cm; Fig. 26) kept in the *mgon khang* of the Lo monastery – the originally Bka' gdams pa seat founded by (the Yung ba pa contemporary) Spyan snga ba Tshul khrim 'bar (1038-1103), a descendant of the Dba's of the Lo valley, the ancient Nyen kar (Hazod 2009: 226f.). The local lamas did not know anything about this image during my visit in 2007; it was apparently isolated from the other reliquaries associated with the cultic establishment of this religious seat. My initial assessment was to see it as an image of Pehar in his form as the Monkey-Faced One (cf. RCP: 569), yet in the light of the present context, an association with the Dba's Rgyal to re story is at least feasible. The entry in the catalogue of the "eight *khe*" foundations,

(3) It is questionable whether the last chief minister was entombed traditionally, although a grave may have been prepared – probably in Skyid shod (> 24). The end of the tumulus practice was already indicated with the burial of 'U'i Dum brtan. It says in *GYC* that the building remained uncompleted, and – one may add – perhaps was no longer properly sealed. The following, historically last *bang so* burial of Khri 'Od srung – like Yum brtan probably a case of adaptation, although he is recognised in the Dunhuang documents for the late 840s as the (legitimate) prince – arguably took place only within the circles of the "southern families". The same families (plus 'Bro and Cog ro) shared the royal tombs and their treasures among themselves in the late ninth or early tenth century (Hazod 2016a). This at latest was also the period when the people gradually began looting the regional elite tombs, including the grave monuments of the chief ministers of the Tibetan Empire.

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whose antecedents are to be dated to the late ninth century at the earliest, perhaps reflects a first handling of the popular tradition that developed around this figure of the last minister. Under this assumption Rgyal to re was not the founder but the source for creating this protector of the "Khrom sna Lha lung *sgo srung*" (alias Khra sna'i mgon po), in which the chief minister's fate had manifested itself. If so, the making of this stone head (originally for the temple in Yung ba?) took place in the same early Rnying ma pa and Bka' gdams pa milieu as the well-known transformation of the monk minister Dpal gyi Yon tan's spirit into the powerful religious protector of the same name, the original statue of which is worshipped in a monastery of his homeland in 'Phan po (Hazod 2016a).

Table 1: The chief ministers in *OTC.2*

[I] 12 "chief ministers" endowed with magical power:

OTC.2 "*chief minister*"	*rgyal po of Yar lung*
(01) Stong Dang rje, son of **'Da'r** [1]	Lde Pru bo Gnam gzhung rtsan
(02) **Rngegs** Dud kyi rje	
(03) **Khu** Lha bo Mgo gar	[Btsan lnga – associated with the
(04) **Lho** Thang 'bring Ya stengs	beginning of the *bang so* tradition]
(05) **Rngegs** Thang yong Thang rje	
(06) **Gnubs** Smon to re Spung brtsan	
(07) **Mthon myi** 'Bring po Rgyal btsan nu	'Bro Mnyen lde ru (*fl.* early 6th c.)
(08) **Sna nam** 'Bring tog rje	
(09) **Gnubs** Khri to re Mthong po	
(10) **Gnubs** Khri dog rje Gtsug blon	
(11) **Gnubs** Mnyen to re Ngan snang	
(12) **Shud pu** Rgyal to re Nga myi	Stag bu Snya gzigs (*fl.* 590s)

[II] Seven appointments of "chief ministers" during the first and second emperors:

OTC.2 "*chief minister*"	*emperor*
(13) **Mong** Khri to re Snang tshab	Gnam ri Slon mtshan (d. 618?)
(14) **Mgar** Khri sgra 'Dzi rmun	Gnam ri Slon mtshan
(15) **Myang** Mang po rje Zhang snang	Gnam ri, Khri Srong brtsan
(16) **Mgar** Mang sham Sum snang	Gnam ri, Khri Srong brtsan
(17) **Khyung po** Spung sad Zu tse	Gnam ri, Khri Srong brtsan
(18) **Mgar** Stong rtsan Yul zung ("first appointment")	Khri Srong btsan (Sgam po)
(19) **'O ma lde** Lod btsan	Srong btsan sgam po (d. 649)

[III] 19 *blon chen* in the period of this post's first mention in the *OTA* (652) until 843:

OTC.2 *chief minister*	*tenure*	*emperor*
(20) **Mgar** Stong rtsan Yul zung	652-667	Khri Mang slon Mang rtsan
vacant	668-679[2]	Mang slon Mang rtsan (d. 676)
(21) **Mgar** Btsan snya Ldom bu	680- 685	Khri 'Dus srong
(22) **Mgar** Khri 'bring Btsan brod	685-698	Khri 'Dus srong
vacant	699-704	Khri 'Dus srong, Lha Bal po
(23) **Khu** Mang po rje Lha zung	705-706	'Bro Khri ma lod
(24) **Dba's** Khri gzigs Zhang nyen	706-722	Khri Lde gtsug brtsan
(25) **Dba's** Khri sum rje Rtsang bzher	722-726	Khri Lde gtsug brtsan
(26) **Rngegs** Mang zham Stag tshab	726-728	Khri Lde gtsug brtsan
(27) **Dba's** Stag sgra Khong lod	728-729	Khri Lde gtsug brtsan
(28) **'Bro** Cung bzang 'Or mang	729-749	Khri Lde gtsug brtsan
(29) **'Bal** Skye zang Ldong tshab	749-754	Khri Lde gtsug brtsan
(30) **Dba's** Snang bzher Zla brtsan	755-764	Khri Srong lde brtsan
(31) **Mgos** Khri bzang Yab lag	764-768	Khri Srong lde brtsan
(32) **Mchims** Zhang Rgyal zigs Shu teng	768-782	Khri Srong lde brtsan
(33) **Ngan lam** Stag sgra Klu gong	782-783	Khri Srong lde brtsan
(34) **Sna nam** Zhang Rgyal tshan Lha snang	783-796	Khri Srong lde brtsan
vacant (but see fn. 22)	797-802	Mu ne brtsan, Mu rug brtsan[3]
(35) **'Bro** Khri gzu Ram shags	802-815[4]	Khri Lde srong brtsan
(36) **Dba'[s]** Mang rje Lha lod	815-821	Khri Gtsug lde brtsan
(37) **'Bro** Khri sum rje Stag snang	821-841	Khri Gtsug lde brtsan
(38) **Dba's** Rgyal to re Stag snya	841-843	Khri 'U'i Dum brtan

[1] names in bold = family name

[2] year underlined = reconstructed date

[3] position as emperor disputed (cf. fn. 22)

[4] see fn. 22 for a diff. dating

PART THREE
Appendix

I. The major burial mound sites of Central Tibet

The following list is a slightly modified version of a similar table presented in Hazod 2018 (App. II, pp. 74-86). It highlights 215 of the 562 grave fields recorded by the Tibetan Tumulus project (fn. 4 and Addendum below), namely referring to the major fields with elite tombs from the size of 30m upwards, plus some further sites with notable peculiarities, such as unusual size of the grave field in terms of number of tombs. The details in the present list are restricted to some principal information in the order of: number of site – district (*xiang*) – geographical position / altitude. The counties (*xien*) (and their relation to the former Horn divisions in square brackets) form the outer geographical reference for this listing. Note that the size specifications (mostly based on satellite imagery) relate to the front of the (trapezoid) mounds at ground level, where not the actual walls but the earth sloping at the side of the mounds was taken as the reference point. Here the factor of erosion allows only approximate conclusions.

Sigla:
∗ = grave field with more than 100 tombs
▲ = grave field including stupa-shaped tombs (related to the Buddhist period, late eighth, ninth cent.)
⬆ = grave fields associated with inscriptions (i), or the existence of (former) stone lions (l)
0037 (numbers in bold) = tumulus fields with tombs from the size of 60m upwards
v = visited by the author or members of the project team
? = identification of the structure as tomb (or the tomb's actual dimension) unclear

SNE GDONG COUNTY [formerly part of G.yo ru] (altogether 35 sites)

0001 – Rtse thang district (*xiang*): 29 12 36, 91 47 32 / 3635m (single tomb, ca. 40m) v
0002 – Khra 'brug district: 29 11 32, 91 47 45 / 3800m (M-1: 35m) v
0003 – Rtse thang district: 29 10 21, 91 47 22 / 3790m (M-1: 50m) v
0006 – Khra 'brug district: 29 09 45, 91 47 58/ 3780m ∗ v
0011 – Btsan thang district: 29 12 43, 91 45 07/ 3630m (M-1: 30m) ∗ v
0012 – Mkhar thog district: 29 10 33, 91 44 19 / 3630m (M-1: 30m) v
0015 – Bde zhing district: 29 04 11, 91 53 00/ 3990m (M-1: 35) v
0016 – Bde zhing district: 29 03 23, 91 52 00/ 3800m (single mound, 30m)
0018 – Pho 'brang district: 29 05 31, 91 50 28 / 3740m (M-1: 40m) v
0020 – Chos sde gong district: 28 55 33, 91 54 44/ 4076m (M-1: 35m) v
0024 – Skyer pa district ('On Valley): 29 20 08, 91 49 28 / 3700m (M-1: 50m) v

'PHYONG PO COUNTY [G.yo ru] (altogether 21 sites)

0028 – 'Phyong rgyas district: 28 53 03, 91 42 40 / 4890m (single tomb (?); 50m) v
0029 – 'Phyong rgyas district: 29 01 31, 91 41 50 / 3790m ⬆(i) v (royal family)
0032 – 'Phyong rgyas district: 29 01 10, 91 40 59 / 3785m ⬆(i) (l) v (royal family)
0033 – Spun gsum district: 28 58 59, 91 34 12 / 4050m (M-1: 45m)
0036 – Thang po che district: 29 03 52, 91 43 34/ 3877m (M-1: 25m; M-0: 40m?) v

0037 – Thang po che district: 29 06 47, 91 42 24 / 3675m (single mound in Zhang mda', 60m) v
0038 – Lha yul district: 29 10 08, 91 40 39 / 3800m (M-1: 45m) v
0390 – Lha yul district: 29 10 15, 91 40 59 / 3840m (M-1: 40m)
0396 – Chang khyim district: 29 07 12, 91 35 27 / 3860m (M-1: 45m)

GRVA NANG COUNTY [G.yo ru] (altogether 16 sites)

0040 – Bsam yas district: 29 21 04, 91 31 16 / 3655m (M-1: 40m)
0419 – Bsam yas district: 29 20 13, 91 30 50 / 3710m (M-1: 30m)
0042 – Grva phyi district: 29 14 27, 91 24 34 / 3610m (M-1: 30m) v
0043 – Smon grub district: 29 08 00, 91 26 07 / 3855m (M-1: M-1: 55m) ▲ v
0044 – Grva phyi district: 29 11 37, 91 26 58 / 3875m (M-1: 45m) v
0047 – Grva thang district: 29 14 02, 91 17 58 / 3660m (M-1: 70m) ▲ v
0048 – Grva thang district: 29 14 00, 91 17 25 / 3705m (M-1: 35m) v
0420 – Dkyil ru district: 29 07 08, 91 17 12 / 3875m (M-1: 40m)

GONG DKAR COUNTY [G.yo ru] (altogether six sites)

0053 – Gong dkar district: 29 16 48, 90 53 37 / 3630m (M-1: 35m) v
0055 – Rgya ri district: 29 11 46, 90 55 29 / 3810m (M-1: 35m) v
0057 – Nya sog district: 29 14 33, 90 31 09 / 3660m (single tomb, 35m) v

SNA DKAR RTSE COUNTY [G.yo ru] (altogether seven sites)

0058 – Kha brag district: 29 14 24, 90 27 49 / 3800m (M-1: 30m) v
0059 – Mkhar lung district: 29 06 18, 90 28 27 / 4615m (M-1: 50m?) v
0063 – Gram mda' district: 28 57 01, 91 04 52 / 4615m (M-1 25-30m)

LHO BRAG COUNTY [G.yo ru] (altogether six sites)

0065 – Skyid stod district: 28 22 57, 90 47 53 / 4140m (M-1: 65m) ⬆(i)
0066 – Skyid stod district: 28 23 23, 90 46 05 / 4170m (M-1: 35m)

MTSHO SMAD COUNTY [G.yo ru] (altogether six sites)

0069 – Gtam shul disrict: 28 26 32, 91 26 15 / 4190m (M-1: 40m)
0447– Gtam shul disrict: 28 20 50, 91 22 45 / 4005m (M-1: 30m)

LHUN RTSE COUNTY [G.yo ru] (altogether 28 sites)

0070 – Gsum pa district: 28 24 43, 92 20 51 / 3960m (M-1: 40m) v
0071 – Gsum pa district: 28 24 34, 92 19 52 / 3975m (M-1: 30-35m)
0072 – Gsum pa district: 28 24 47, 92 19 03 / 3990m (M-1: 30m)
0074 – Sho po district: 28 26 04, 92 19 29/ 4055m (single mound (?), 30m)
0075 – Zhing ba district: 28 25 03, 92 30 58 / 3870m (single mound, 30m ?) v
0519 – Zhing ba district: 28 25 53, 92 27 08 / 4040m (M-1: 30m)
0530 – Ri thang district: 28 25 19, 92 13 39 / 4060m (M-1: 30m)
0532 – Ri rong district: 28 31 50, 92 01 05 / 4300m (single mound: 40m)
0540 – Zhing ba district: 28 23 43, 92 27 57 / 3895m (M-1: 35m)

MTSHO SNA COUNTY [G.yo ru] (one site)

0538 – Bkra shis Mthong smon district: 28 14 19, 92 26 58 / 3750m (single tomb (?); 60m)

CHU GSUM COUNTY [G.yo ru] (altogether 16 sites)

0076 – Shag byang district: 29 05 07, 92 12 08 / 3990m (M-1: 75-80m) v
0077 – Shag byang district: 29 04 05, 92 09 39 / 3928m (single mound, 30m)
0434 – Shag lho district: 29 05 49, 92 12 29/ 4145m (M-1: 25-30m)
0438 – Shag byang district: 29 04 22, 92 12 50 / 4025m (M-1: 30m)

ZANGS RI COUNTY [G.yo ru] (altogether 11 sites)

0078 – Lcang district: 29 17 19, 91 53 37 / 3879m ∗
0081 – Lcang district: 29 15 56, 91 58 15 / 3590m (M-1: 50m) v
0082 – Rong district: 29 13 09, 92 00 34 / 3700m (M-1: 40m)

RGYA TSVA COUNTY [G.yo ru] (altogether nine sites)

0084 – Ngar rab district: 29 09 10, 92 35 50 / 3450m (M-1: 50m) ▲
0085 – Ngar rab district: 29 06 41, 92 36 34/ 3340m (M-1: 25-30m) v
0087 – Rgya tshva district: 29 05 55, 92 44 10 / 3700m (M-1: 30-35m)
0089 – Rgya tshva district: 29 05 14, 92 43 00 / 3226m (M-1: 35-40m)
0423 – Rdzi lung district: 29 05 11, 92 50 46 / 3195m (M-1: 30m)

SNANG COUNTY [G.yo ru] (altogether four sites)

0092 – Skyems stong district: 28 59 26, 93 20 23 / 3550m (M-1: 75m) ∗ ⬆(i) v
0093 – Skyems stong district: 28 58 53, 93 21 02 / 3280m (M-1: 30m) ▲ v

SNYING KHRI COUNTY [G.yo ru] (altogether five sites)

0097 – Stag rtse district: 29 27 26, 94 27 43 / 2956m (M-1: 45m)
0098 – Smad ri district: 29 29 24, 94 33 29 / 3000m (three hills (80-100m), identification uncertain)
0099 – Smad ri district: 29 29 38, 94 37 15 / 2985m (M-1: 50m ?)

RGYA MDA' COUNTY [G.yo ru] (two sites)

0100 – Nyang po district: 30 13 43, 93 06 02 / 3860m (M-1: 30m?) v

SPO SMAD COUNTY [G.yo ru] (one site)

0102 – Dgu shang district: 30 09 27, 95 26 10 / 2930m (M-1: 25-30m) v

MAL GRO GONG DKAR COUNTY [Dbu ru] (altogether 32 sites)

0104 – Bya ra mdo district: 29 48 02, 91 53 37 / 4235m (M-1: 45m) v
0105 – Bya ra mdo district: 29 47 42, 91 52 30 / 4200m (M-1: 40m) v
0107 – Bya ra mdo district: 29 48 19, 91 51 41 / 4230m (M-1: 35m)
0108 – Dvags pa district: 29 46 08, 91 50 49 / 3970m (M-1: 55m) ∗ v
0110 – Spang mda' district: 29 52 58, 91 49 09 / 4130m (M-1: 35m) v
(Situated opposite the observatory of Stag phu Nyi thig)
0111 – Spang mda' district: 29 54 36, 91 50 02 / 3965m (M-1: 30m) v
0112 – Spang mda' district: 29 53 49, 91 51 03 / 4030m (M-1: 50m) ∗ v
0113 – Nyi ma lcang rva district: 29 58 01, 91 53 50 / 3990m (M-1: 30m) v
0114 – Nyi ma lcang rva district: 29 56 59, 91 58 00 / 4175m (single tomb, 35m)

0115 – Nyi ma lcang rva district: 29 58 50, 91 55 04 / 3950m (M-1: 40-45m) ⬆(i) v
0116 – Rtsa zhol district: 30 01 20, 91 47 06 / 4150m (M-1: 30m)
0117 – Gad la hor district: 30 04 37, 91 42 57 / 4005m (M-1: 35m) v
0119 – Gad la hor district: 30 04 58, 91 46 47 / 4025m (M-1: 30-35m)
0126 – Gung dkar district: 29 49 09, 91 41 10 / 3835m (single mound, 25-30m) v
0120 – Klong grol sgang district: 30 02 53, 91 41 10 / 4150m (M-1: 30m)
0127 – Dvags pa district: 29 46 01, 91 50 17 / 4030m (M-1: 30m)
0364 – Thang skya district: 29 54 19, 91 45 28 / 3900m (M-1: 30m) v

STAG RTSE COUNTY [Dbu ru] (altogether 38 sites)

0128 – Thang dga' district: 29 51 22, 91 34 27 / 3840m (M-1: 55m) v
0129 – Thang dga' district: 29 52 41, 91 33 32 / 3865m (M-1: 40m) v
0130 – Thang dga' district: 29 51 38, 91 33 30 / 3870m ((M-1: 65m) v
0376 – Thang dga' district: 29 51 33, 91 32 36 / 3845m (M-1: 45) v
0134 – Chu mda' district: 29 50 20, 91 36 33 / 3815m (M-1: 30m) v
0135 – Chu mda' district: 29 52 07, 91 37 17 / 4050m (M-1: 45m) v
0137 – La mo district: 29 47 58, 91 32 34 / 3824m (M-1: 30m) v
0138 – Gtsang tog district: 29 47 01, 91 31 48 / 3950m (M-1: 40m) ✱ v
0141 – Gtsang tog district: 29 45 10, 91 37 37 / 3944m (M-1: 50m) v
0143 – Dar rgyas district: 29 43 54, 91 28 33 / 3859m (M-1: 45m) v
0402 – Bde chen district: 29 37 55, 91 21 09 / 3880m (single mound, 35-40m) v
0403 – La mo district: 29 47 01, 91 36 00 / 3935m (M-1: 25-30m)
0148 – Bde chen district: 29 39 14, 91 20 58 / 3790m (M-1: 25-30m) v
0150 – Bsam grub gling district: 29 38 19, 91 17 01 / 3800m (M-1: 45m) v

LHASA MUNICIPALITY [Dbu ru] (altogether seven sites)

0157 –Tshal Gung thang district: 29 37 00, 91 14 36 / 3820m (M-1: 65m) ⬆(i) (= Zhol stele; plus ⬆ (l) = the recently discovered stone lions of Tshal Gung thang) v
0397 – Tshal Gung thang district: 29 36 43, 91 15 31 / 3910m ▲ v
0398 – Tshal Gung thang district: 29 37 29, 91 15 18 / 3800m ▲ v
0463 – Tshal Gung thang: 29 36 39, 91 12 57 / 3875m (M-1: 30m?) (next to rock carvings of Upper Zhal)

STOD LUNG COUNTY [Dbu ru] (altogether 30 sites)

0162 – Gnas chung disrict: 29 36 15, 90 58 15 / 3720m ✱
0163 – Gnas chung district: 29 36 15, 90 58 15 / 3785m (M-0: 60m)
0165 – Sbyar rags district: 29 39 42, 90 51 41 / 3920m (M-1: 30m)
0169 – Rgu rum district: 29 45 25, 90 48 57 / 4010m (M-1: 30m) v
0171 – Dmar district: 29 48 13, 90 47 27 / 3900m (M-1: 50m) v
0172 – Dmar district: 29 49 45, 90 46 07 / 3980m (M-1: 35-40m) v
0173 – Bde chen district: 29 58 16, 90 44 47 / 4090m (M-1: 30m)
0175 – Bde chen district: 29 58 12, 90 46 08 / 4115m (single tomb (?), 50m)
0176 – Rgu rum district: 29 45 24, 90 45 41 / 4055m (M-1: 65m) v
0180 – Nam mkha' district: 29 54 26, 90 41 49 / 4070m (M-1: 35m) v
0181 – Chu bzang district: 30 00 44, 90 44 29/ 4130m (M-1: 25-30m) v
0182 – Chu bzang district: 30 00 28, 90 43 15/ 4275m (M-1: 40m ?) v

'DAM GZHUNG COUNTY [Dbu ru] (altogether seven sites)

0184 – 'Dam chu kha district: 30 29 40, 91 05 21 / 4300m (M-1: 40m) v

0186 – Dbu ma thang district: 30 34 05, 91 09 33 / 4340m (M-1: 50m)
0187 – Kong thang district: 30 21 09, 91 03 35 / 4275m (M-1: 35m) v

LHUN GRUB COUNTY [Dbu ru] (altogether 74 sites)

0190 – Ngar nang district: 30 06 06, 91 32 03 / 4100m (M-1: 25-30m) ∗
0191 – Lha khang district: 30 03 15, 91 36 14 / 4130m (M-1: 35m)
0192 – Lha khang district: 30 03 43, 91 33 48 / 4035m (M-1: 35-40m) v
0193 – Lha khang district: 30 04 24, 91 29 40 / 4100m (M-1: 30m)
0194 – Thang mgo district: 30 18 39, 91 29 52 / 4250m (M-1: 30m)
0195 – Bcom mdo district: 30 17 36, 91 24 14 / 4160m (M-1: 30m) v
0196 – Bcom mdo district: 30 18 17, 91 24 52 / 4230m (M-1: 40m) v
0198 – Phu mdo district: 30 08 37, 91 25 53 / 4100m (M-1: 35-40m) ∗
0199 – Gsum 'phreng district: 30 03 36, 91 17 13 / 4150m (single mound, 45m) v
0203 – Gsum 'phreng district: 29 59 18, 91 13 14 / 3950m (M-1: 50m) v
0562 – Gsum 'phreng district: 29 59 54, 91 12 42 / 4050m (M-1: 35-40m)
0204 – Gsum 'phreng district: 29 58 18, 91 16 16 / 3900m (M-1: 30m) v
0205 – Gsum 'phreng district: 29 57 37, 91 16 09 / 3945m ∗ v
0206 – Gsum 'phreng district: 29 59 01, 91 16 59 / 3930m (M-1: 30m) v
0207 – Dga' ldan chos skor district: 29 54 55, 91 13 44 / 3810m (single tomb, 35m)
0213 – Lcang ra shar district: 29 54 25, 91 19 06 / 3825m (M-1: 40m) v
0368 – Dga' ldan chos skor district: 29 56 40, 91 16 50 / 3900m (M-1: 55-60m) v
0216 – Byang kha district: 29 58 30, 91 10 48 / 3910m (M-1: 35m)
0217 – Byang kha district: 29 58 42, 91 09 48 / 3927m (M-1: 30m) ∗
0219 – Byang kha district: 29 57 22, 91 08 04 / 3900m (M-1: 30m; ?)
0222 – Byang kha district: 29 56 25, 91 07 05 / 3920m (M-1: 35m; ?)
0225 – Mtsho stod district: 29 57 54, 91 03 54 / 4040m (M-1: 40m)
0227 – Gad po district: 29 53 27, 91 07 54 / 3860m (M-1: 30m)
0228 – Gad po district: 29 52 25, 91 08 49 / 3850m ∗
0229 – Gad po district: 29 52 48, 91 09 25 / 3890m (M-1: 30m) ∗
0230 – Gad po district: 29 53 07, 91 00 06 / 4040m (M-1: 25-30m ?) v
0235 – Mkhar rtse district: 29 52 28, 91 10 35 / 3940m (M-1: 30m) ∗ v
0236 – Mkhar rtse district: 29 53 23, 91 10 49 / 3800m (M-1: 45m) v
0237 – Grub brgya district: 29 52 52, 91 12 12 / 3810m (M-1: 30m)
0240 – Grub brgya distrct: 29 52 08, 91 13 25 / 3850m ∗
0242 – Grub brgya district: 29 51 44, 91 16 39 / 3850m ∗ ⬆ (l)
0244 – Grub brgya district: 29 52 41, 91 15 26 / 3765m (single mound; 35m) v
0245 – Lcang ra district: 29 52 01, 91 22 36 / 3820m (M-1: 25m) v
0246 – Lcang ra district: 29 51 51, 91 23 28 / 3910m (M-1: 35-40m) v
0253 – Dpal 'byor gling district: 29 47 30, 91 24 36 / 3785m (M-1: 30m)

CHU SHUR COUNTY [Dbu ru] (altogether 26 sites)

0257 –Tshal sna district: 29 30 11, 90 58 98 / 3665m (M-1: 50m) v
0266 – Gnam district: 29 23 40, 90 53 07 / 3625m (M-1: 35m) v
0269 – Chu phu district: 29 22 26, 90 44 03 / 3640m (M-1: 30m)
0270 – Rta dkar district: 29 21 40, 90 41 59 / 3670m ∗
0559 – Bye nub district: 29 18 39,90 36 10 / 3855m (M-1: 35m)
0560 – Bye nub district: 29 19 30,90 37 36 / 3825m (M-1: 35m)

SNYE MO COUNTY [G.yas ru / Dbu ru] (altogether 11 sites)

0274 – Phu gsum district: 29 30 02, 90 09 43 / 4080m (M-1: 55m) v
0276 – Snye mo district: 29 23 59, 90 06 26 / 3995m (M-1: 35m) v

RGYAL RTSE COUNTY [Ru lag] (altogether 32 sites)

0278 – Rtse chen district: 28 55 51, 89 30 26 / 4070m (M-1: 55m) ∗ v
0279 – Rtse chen district: 28 56 14, 89 31 16 / 4050m ∗ v
0280 – Lcang ra district: 28 53 22, 89 33 19 / 4045m (M-1: 30m) v
0281 – 'Brong rtse district: 29 00 31, 89 26 54 / 4017m (M-1: 35m; M-0: 45m) v
0282 – Ri nang district: 28 55 16, 89 42 36 / 4190m (M-1: 40m)
0283 – Ra sog district: 29 02 19, 89 28 26 / 3985m (single mound, 30m)
0486 – Mkhar stod district: 29 08 45, 89 34 48 / 4150m ∗
0487 – Mkhar stod district: 29 08 32, 89 34 20 / 4115m (M-1: 30m)
0491 – Mkhar stod district: 29 07 44, 89 38 24 / 4170m (M-1: 25-30m)
0493 – Mkhar stod district: 29 05 38, 89 32 10 / 4035m (M-1: 35m)
0495 – Mkhar stod district: 29 05 27, 89 37 12 / 4190m (M-1: 35m)
0504 – Ri nang district: 28 58 12, 89 45 37 / 4302m (single mound, 30m)
0506 – Gnas rnying district: 28 49 22, 89 38 22 / 4135m (M-1: 30m ?)

PA SNAM COUNTY [Ru lag] (altogether 16 sites)

0284 – Khyung rtse district: 29 07 25, 89 17 38 / 4075m (M-1: 30m)
0286 – Dbang ldan district: 28 56 38, 89 10 00 / 4070m (M-1: 35m)

GZHIS KHA RTSE COUNTY [Ru lag] (altogether 11 sites)

0292 – Lhan district: 29 18 13 89 33 54 / 4100m (M-1: 30m)
0295 – Dung dkar district: 29 23 12, 88 59 05 / 3910m (M-1: 30m)
0465 – Lhan district: 29 18 58, 89 37 52 / 4185m (M-1: 30m)
0467 – Lcags 'dam district: 29 15 34, 89 21 52 / 4045m (M-1: 30m)

KHANG DMAR COUNTY [Ru lag] (two sites)

0298 – Sa ma mda' district: 28 24 35, 89 32 17 / 4470m (next to imperial Rgyang bu lha khang)

RIN SPUNG COUNTY [Ru lag] (altogether 14 sites)

0303 – Smon shang district: 29 17 14, 89 45 20 / 3970m (M-1: 30m)
0477 – Rin spungs district: 29 13 29, 89 50 01 / 4040m (M-1: 40m)
0482 – Khang gzhung district: 29 14 36, 90 04 30 / 4540m (M-1: 30m)
0553 – Bar thang district: 29 17 28, 90 16 16 / 4230m (M-1: 30m, enclosed by a wall of 60m, front-side) ∗

SA SKYA COUNTY [Ru lag] (altogether nine sites)

0308 – Gzhong ma district: 29 02 48, 88 23 31 / 4110m (M-1: 30m) ∗ ▲ v
0313 – Brag mjug district: 29 11 36, 88 26 53 / 3985m (single mound, 35m)

RNAM GLING COUNTY [G.yas ru] (altogether 11 sites)

0315 – Rtse gdong district: 29 23 11, 89 14 39 / 3830m ∗ v
0409 – Stag rtse district: 29 36 44, 89 33 36 / 4420m (M-1: 80m)
0410 – Thob rgyal district: 29 27 38, 89 27 03 / 4070m (single mound; 35m)
0451 – Thob rgyal district: 29 22 50, 89 26 00 / 3945m (M-1: 35m)
0545 – Ra thang (Lha bu) district: 29 44 15, 89 19 38 / 4185m (M-1: 35-40m)

BSHAD MTHONG SMON COUNTY [G.yas ru] (altogether seven sites)

0317 – Mthong smon district: 29 23 04, 88 08 17 / 4080m (M-1: 35m)
0318 – Mthong smon district: 29 24 07, 88 08 46 / 4200m ∗
0319 – Mthong smon district: 29 24 25, 88 10 20 / 4110m (M-1: 50m) ∗

NGAM RING COUNTY [Ru lag / G.yas ru] (altogether 12 sites)

0323 – Chu 'og district: 29 25 04, 87 34 52 / 4125m (M-1: 40m)
0324 – Chu 'og district: 29 23 02, 87 31 05 / 4150m (M-1: 55m) ∗
0325 – Chu 'og district: 29 23 09, 87 30 13 / 4120m (single mound, 65m)
0476 – Rta rgyud: 29 23 34, 87 42 07 / 4155m (single mound, 30m)

LHA RTSE COUNTY [Ru lag] (altogether 22 sites)

0327 – Sle'u district: 29 09 53, 88 10 50/ 4060m ∗
0328 – Bkra shis sgang district: 29 18 43, 88 07 09/ 4030m ∗
0329 – Bkra shis sgang district: 29 15 40, 88 06 41 / 4040m (M-1: 65m)
0330 – Lha rtse district: 29 12 37, 87 26 41 / 4320m (M-1: 30m) v
0331 – Lha rtse district: 29 12 31, 87 26 38 / 4315m ∗ v
0332 – Lha rtse / Chu shar district: 29 06 17, 87 35 50 / 4050m ∗ v
0333 – Lha rtse / Chu shar district: 29 06 16, 87 35 24 / 4050m (M-1: "twin-tomb" 35-50m)
0335 – Mang phu district: 29 00 17, 87 37 48 / 4290m (M-1: 30m)
0336 – Mang phu district: 28 57 45, 87 38 38 / 4325m (M-1: 35m)
0337 – Gzhis chen district: 29 03 36, 87 41 16 / 4120m (M-1: 50m)
0339 – Lha rtse district: 29 21 33, 87 48 42 / 4120m (M-1: 80m) ⬆(i) (l) ▲
0340 – Lha rtse district: 29 21 31, 87 49 16 / 4110m (M-1: 45m)
0459 – Bkra shis sgang district: 28 58 15, 87 54 08 / 4275m (M-1: 30m)

GTING SKYES COUNTY [Ru lag] (two sites)

0341 – Gting skyes district: 28 18 59, 87 46 18 / 4240m (M-1: 35m)

DING RI COUNTY [Ru lag] (altogether 12 sites)

0413 – Gram mtsho district: 28 38 33, 87 30 55 / 4300m (M-1: 25-30m)

The ca. 360 remaining sites not listed here include i) fields with exclusively smaller (round-shaped) burial mounds, ii) fields with a mixed situation of round and (smaller) rectangular structures, and iii) fields with almost exclusively rectangular (trapezoidal) elite tombs of the smaller category (15-25m).

❖

Addendum

In the meantime, after the completion of the present study (Jan. 2018), further grave fields have been identified – in the Lhokha districts of Grva, Dol and Gzhung (0563-0579, 0582-0593), in 'Phan po (0580), in Lower Myang (0581), and in Lha rtse (0594-0605). (The present state (Jan. 2019) of burial mound sites registered in TTT: 0001-0605). Such new findings from satellite

images are part of the everyday life of the TTT project, yet it is rather surprising that major grave fields are also among such new finds, which we have overlooked in previous surveys. This refers notably to the fields 0592 (in Gong dkar) and 0581 in Lower Myang. The former is located opposite Gongkar Airport, on the northern bank of the Gtsang po river (at 29 20 30, 90 54 17; see TTT: 0592). This section belonged to the old district of Lum pa (due west of 'Phrang 'go, i.e. the Dbu ru *yul sde* of 'Phrang po), which apparently was administered as part of Skyi smad (Hazod 2009: 208-09). From its outer appearance, this major field of ca. 20 elite mounds (M-1: ca. 60m) seems to be a rather later history (P-2), related to one (or more?) of the higher *zhang lon* families, probably one of the Lower Skyi administration, but not necessarily the Dba's (for this family and the Skyi districts, see > 24).

The site of 0581, with altogether ca. 25 elite tombs, is due south-west of the famous Zhva lu monastery (halfway to the retreat site of Ri sbug, at 29 06 53, 88 58 46), an area which was evidently once part of the Ru lag smad district of Khri thang (Hazod 2009: 207, 211). The central, trapezoidal mound, so it seems, measures about 70-75m at the front; it is badly damaged, with a robbery opening of about 40m (see TTT: 0581 for a first illustration). Provided this information is correct and can be principally verified on-site, according to our classification this would relate to to a mound of the highest ministerial category of the later phase (P-2), something which is confusing as no chief minister (or otherwise high *zhang lon*) families are known to have had any territorial link with this area in the period in question (late 8th and 9th century). Khri thang (and Ru lag smad in general) is registered as having been under the leadership of the Khyung po family (var. 'Bre family), who, however, provided no *zhang lon* of this "mound category" during this P-2 phase, and neither did other families associated with this area (foremost the Lce and the Dpyal, the two families of Lower Myang who are known to have been dominant in this area especially in the early post-imperial time). For the time being, 0581 remains a not more closely identified elite field, quite similar to the case of 0076 (in G.ye yul) referred to in Excursus II.

II. Illustrations

This appendix includes the graphical and cartographical illustration of the sites discussed in Part Two. The drawings based on the information from satellite photographs plus data from on-site surveys (if available) are limited to the principle surface archaeological and topographical situations. For some sites there exist more complex representations – available on the TTT website, or partly also in publication (Feiglstorfer 2015, Feiglstorfer 2018, with references also to relevant Chinese publications in this respect).

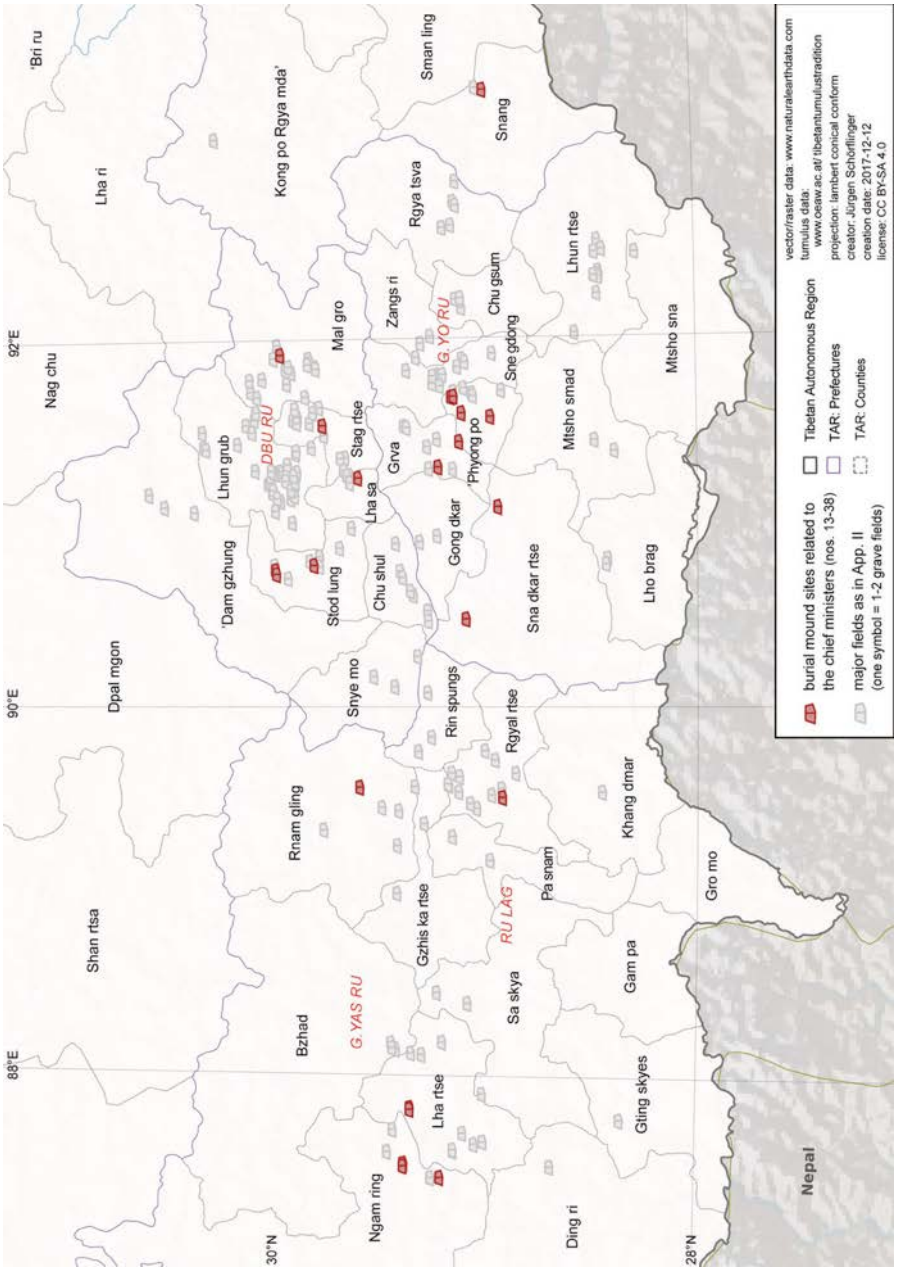


Fig. 1. The major burial mound sites of Central Tibet, including the grave fields related to the chief ministers of the Tibetan empire as discussed in Part II of this paper (no. 13-38).

[13] Mong Khri to re Snang tshab (Fig. 2-4)

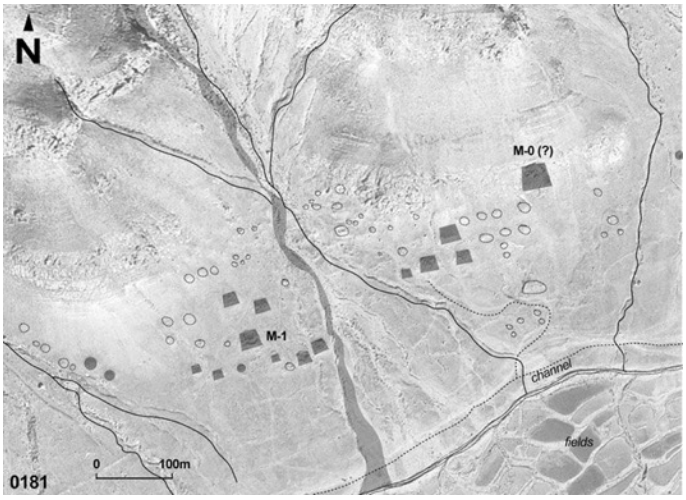


Fig. 2. The grave field of 0181 in Mong of Upper Stod lung. (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.1010)

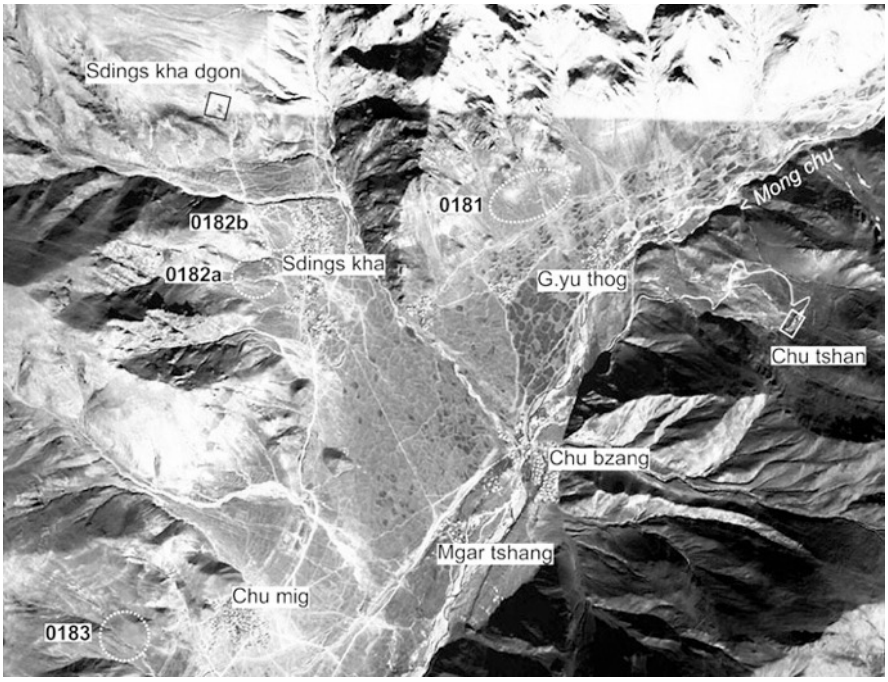


Fig. 3. The grave fields of Lower Mong and Sdings kha. (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.1010)

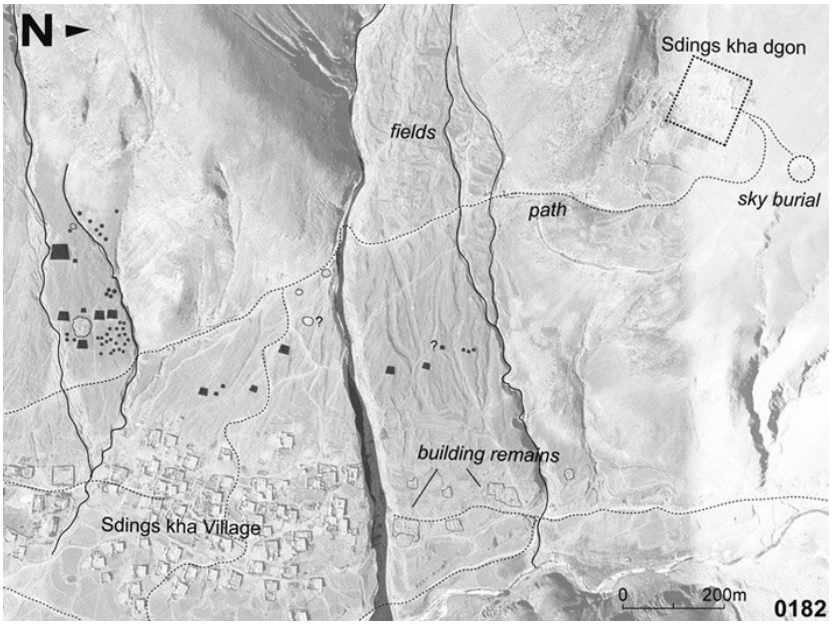


Fig. 4. The graves of Sdings kha (0182) – a site associated with the seat of blon chen Mgar.

The burial mound sites related to Mgar: [14] Khri sgra 'Dzi rmun, [16] Mang sham Sum snang, [20] Stong rtsan Yul zung, [21] Btsan snya Ldom bu, [22] Khri 'bring Btsan brod (Fig. 4-7c)

Fig. 5. The two neighbouring sites of 0172, 0171 in Upper Stod lung. (Sat-photo: 12.2010)

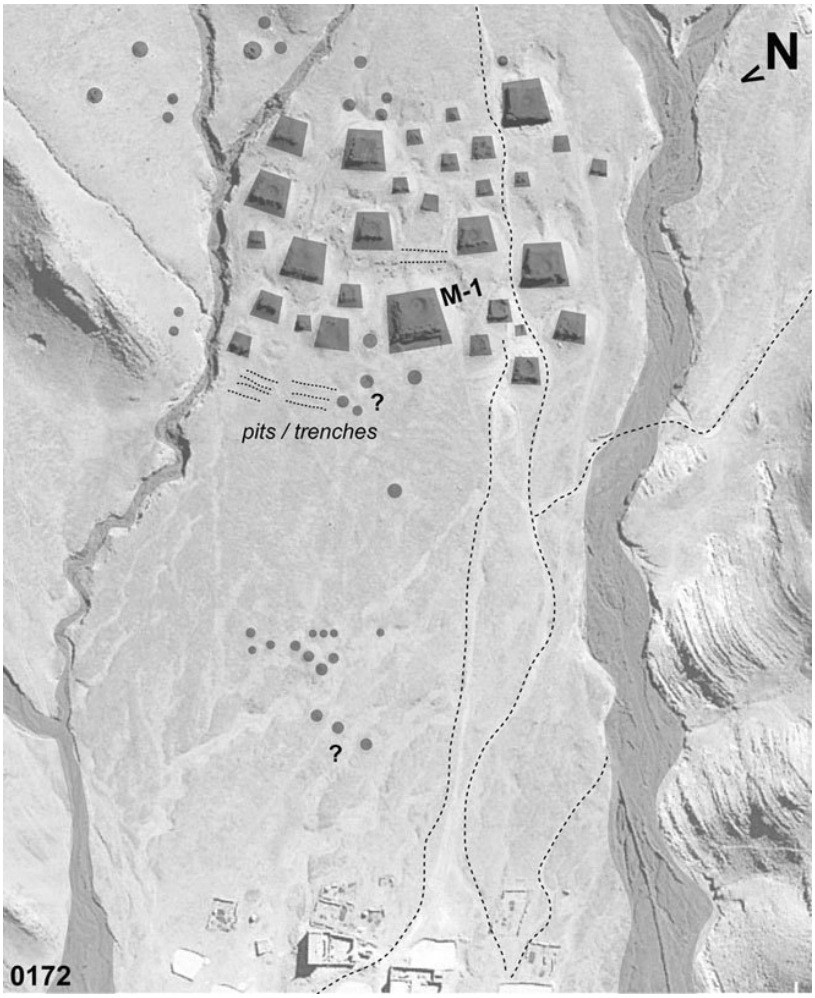


Fig. 5a.
Field 0172.
(Based on sat-photo, Digital Globe 2.2011)

Fig. 6.
M-1 of 0172 – the tomb of the "son of blon chen Mgar".
(Photo: Feiglstorfer 2014)

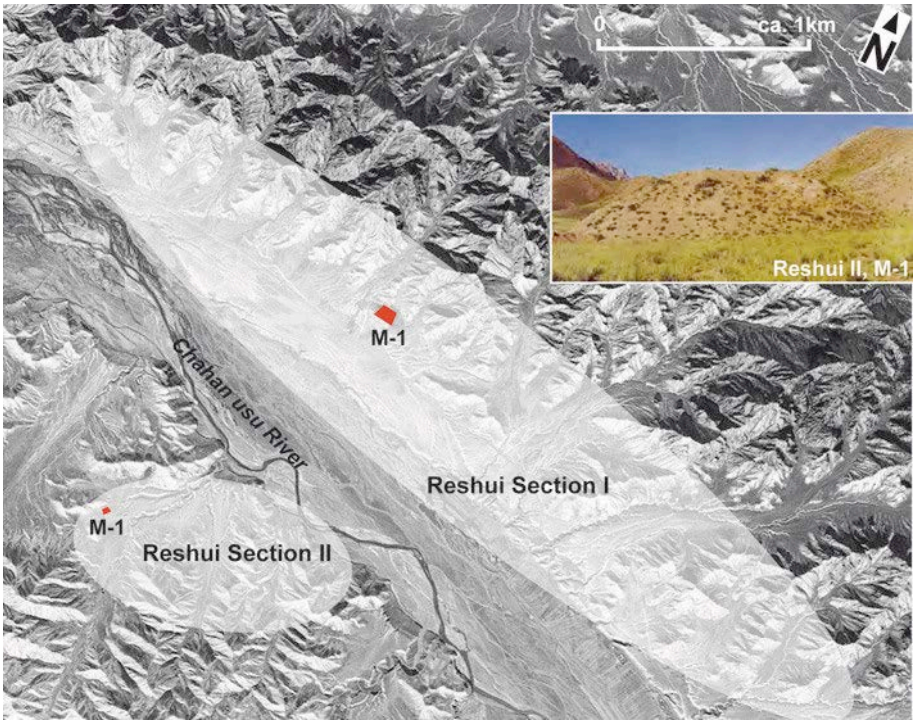


Fig. 7. The grave fields of Reshui I and II of Dulan County. (*Digital Globe 6.2011; Photo: in Tong Tao 2008*)

Fig. 7a. M-1 of Reshui I.
(Sat-photo, Digital Globe 6.2011)

Fig. 7b-c. The tally stick of M-1, Reshui II, front and back side.
(Photo: in Tong Tao 2008: 412)

[15] Myang Zhang Snang (Fig. 8-13)

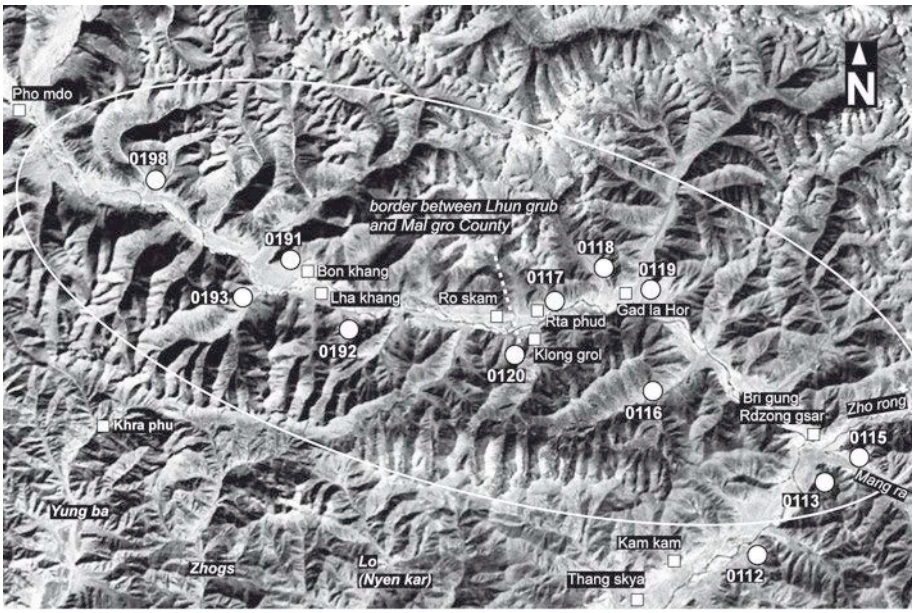


Fig. 8. The area of Klung shod (= the ancient Klum ro?). (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 11.2007)

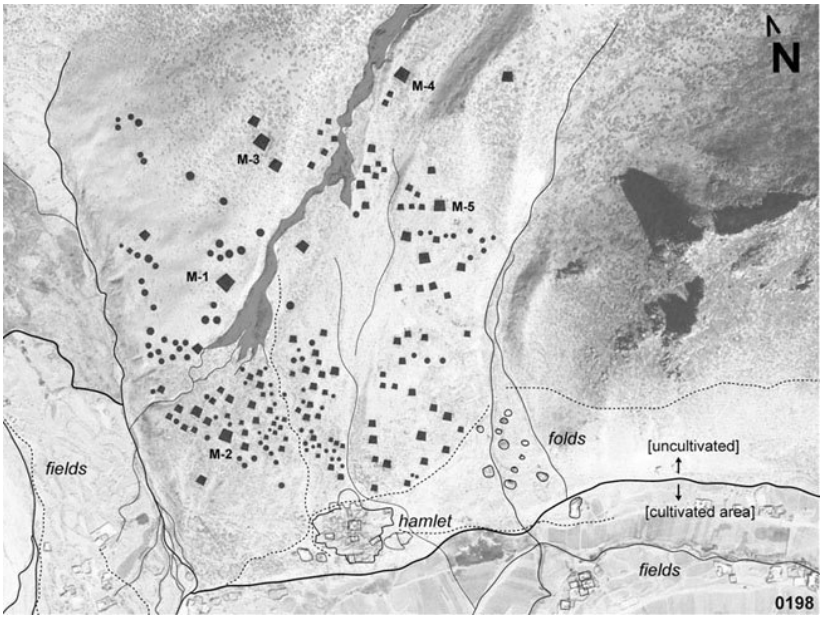


Fig. 9. The grave field of 0198 situated in the upper (western) part of Klung shod (cf. Fig. 8).(Sat-photo, Digital Globe 11.2007)

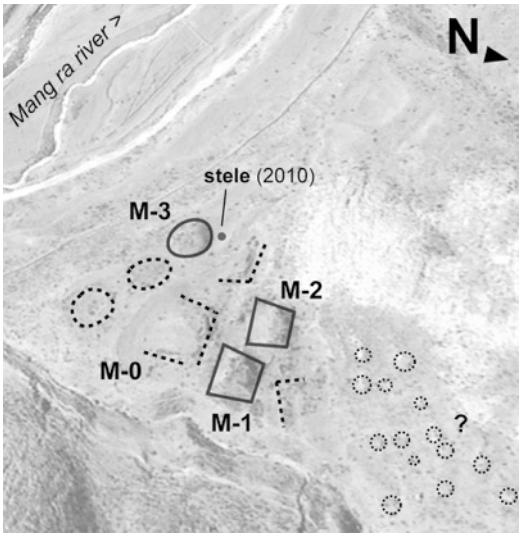


Fig. 10. The burial mounds of 0115 in Mang ra.
(Based on sat-photo, Digital Globe 11.2010)

Fig. 12. The fragment of the inscription stone at the burial mound M-4 of 0115.

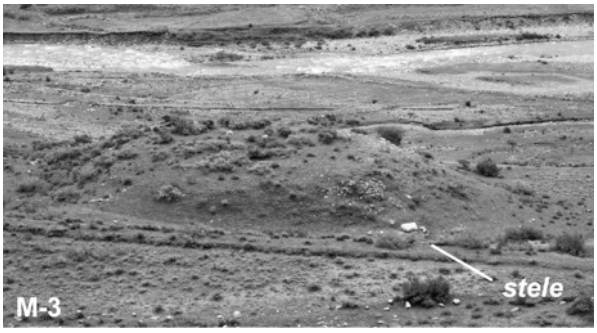


Fig. 11.
The tomb 0115.M-3 with the inscription stone.
(Photo: G. Hazod 2010)

Fig. 13.
The tomb M-1 of 0115.
(Photo: G. Hazod 2010)

(Fig. 13)

[17] Khyung po Zu tse (Fig. 14-16)

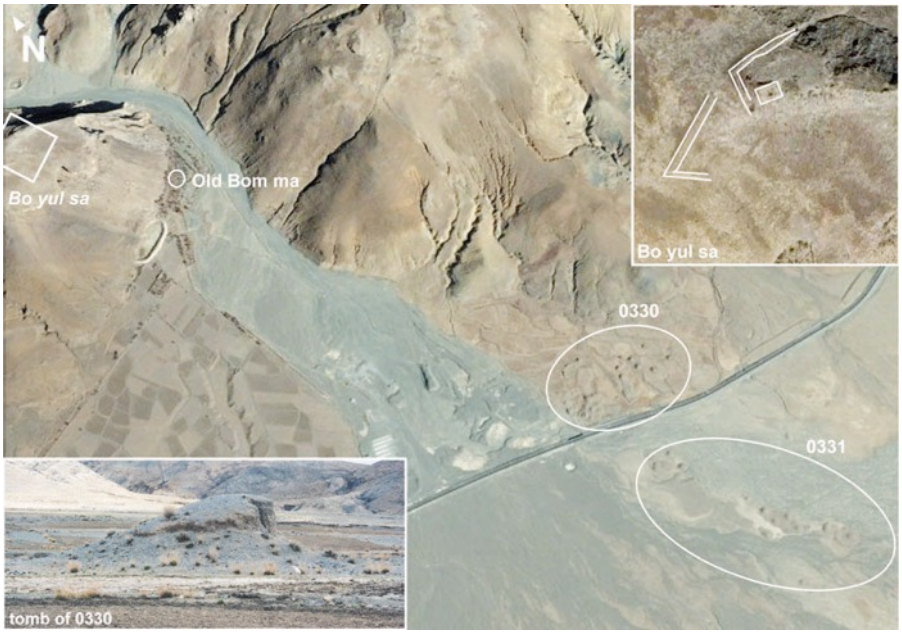


Fig. 14. In Bo ma. (Based on Sat-photo, Digital Globe 5.2015; Photo: G. Hazod 2008)

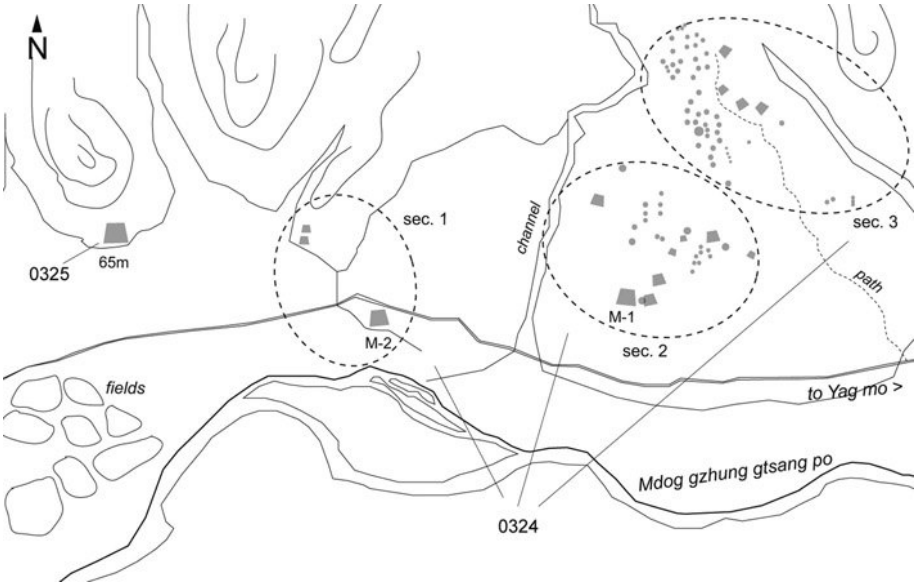


Fig. 15. The burial mound sites of 0324 and 0325 in Upper G.yas ru. (Drawing: G. Hazod).

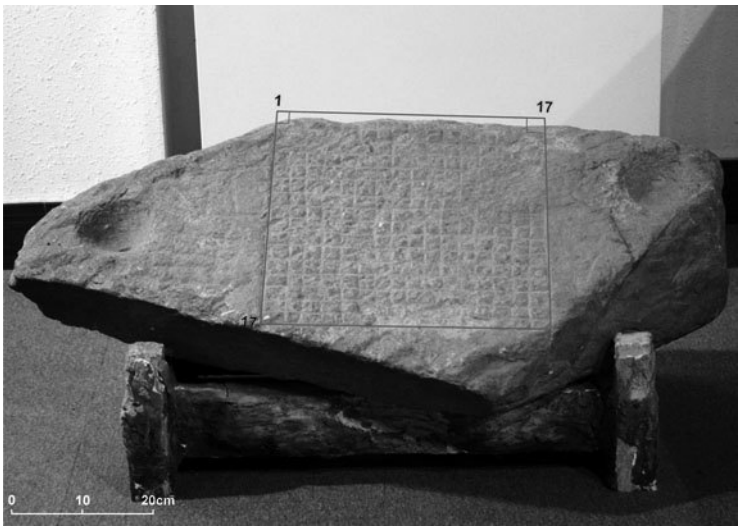


Fig. 16. The mig mang stone of Rgya ma Byams pa Mi 'gyur gling (= mig mang I) kept in the Tibet Museum, Lhasa. (Photo: G. Hazod 2010)

[19] 'O ma lde Khri zang Lod btsan (Fig. 17-19a)

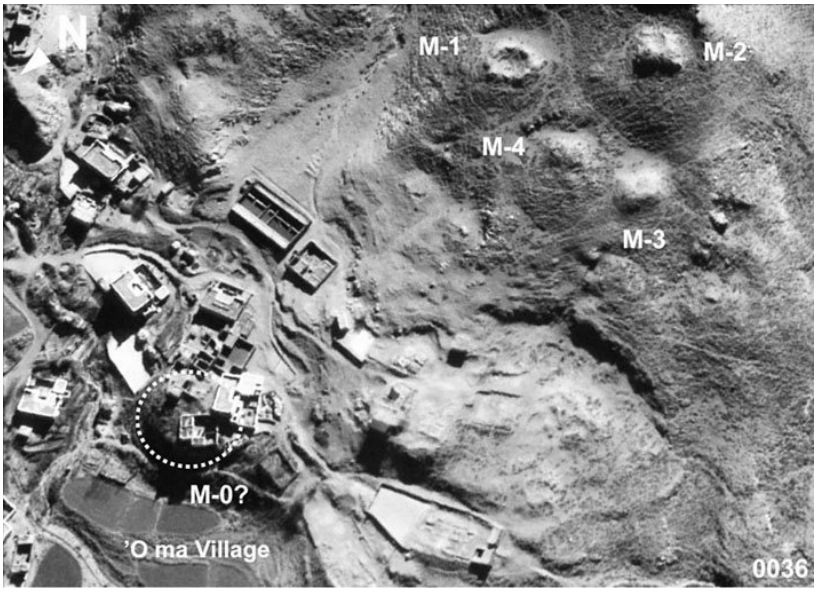


Fig. 17. The field of 'O ma (0036) in central 'Phyong po. (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2014)

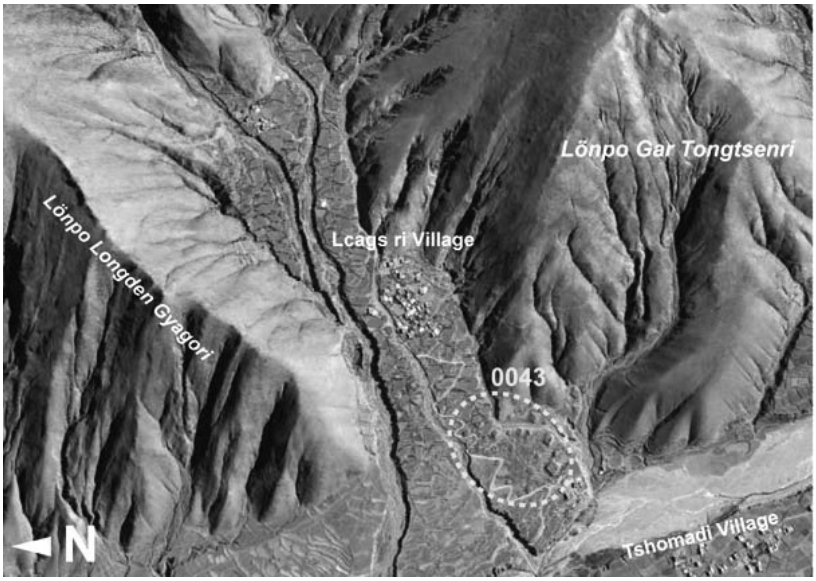


Fig. 18. The grave field of 0043 in Grva phyi (cf. the map of Fig. 57). (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 1.2011)

Fig. 19. Details of 0043. (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 1.2011)

Fig. 19a. M-1 of 0043. (Photo: H. Feiglstorfer)

[23] Khu Mang po rje Lha zung (Fig. 20-21c)

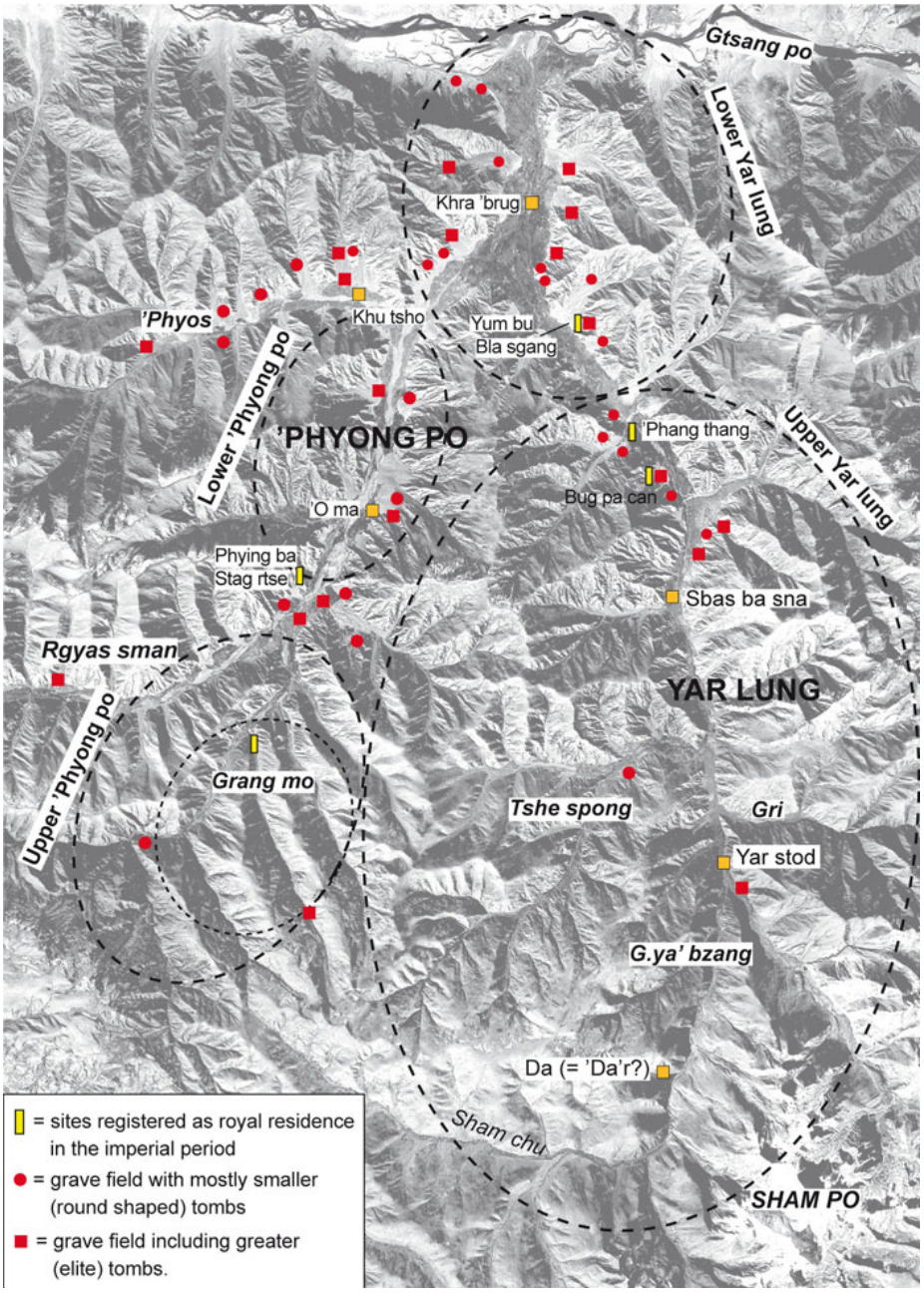


Fig. 20. The burial mound sites of the Yar lung and 'Phyong po districts.
(Based on satellite photograph Corona 1970)

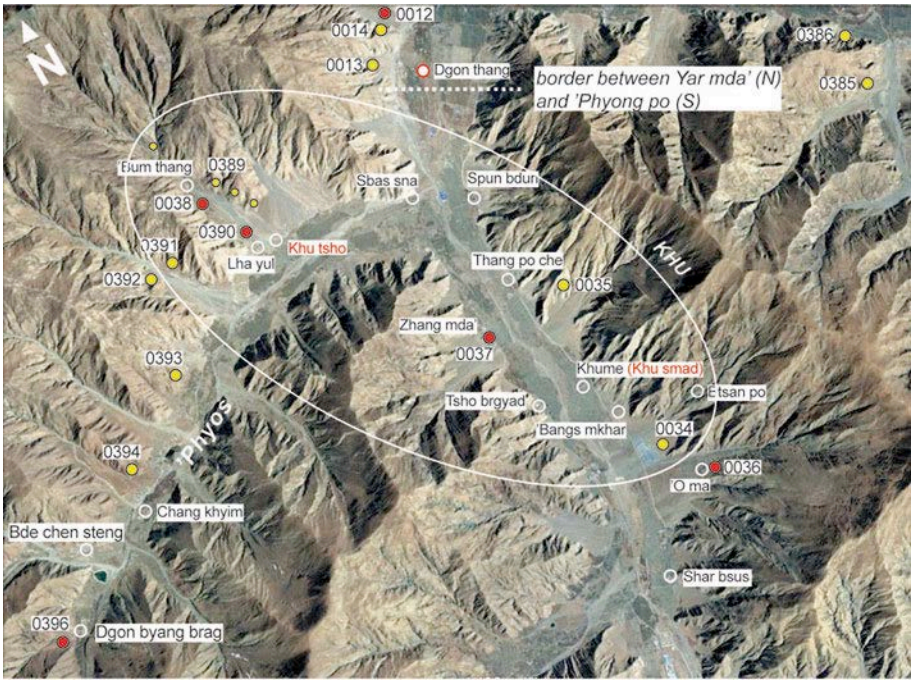


Fig. 21. The "Khu land" in Lower 'Phyong po. (Based on sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2014).

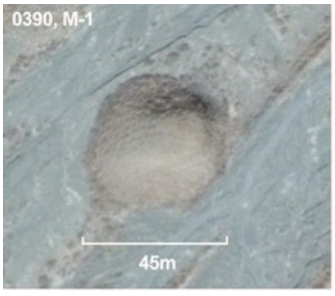


Fig. 21a,b. The central mound of 0390. (Photo: G. Hazod 2008)

Fig. 21c. The tomb M-1 of 0038. (Photo: G. Hazod 2008)

The Dba's: [24] Khri gzigs Zhang nyen, [25] Khri sum rje Rtsang bzher,
[27] Stag sgra Khong lod, [30] Snang bzher Zla brtsan, [36] Mang rje Lha lod, [38] Rgyal to re Stag snya (Fig. 22-36)

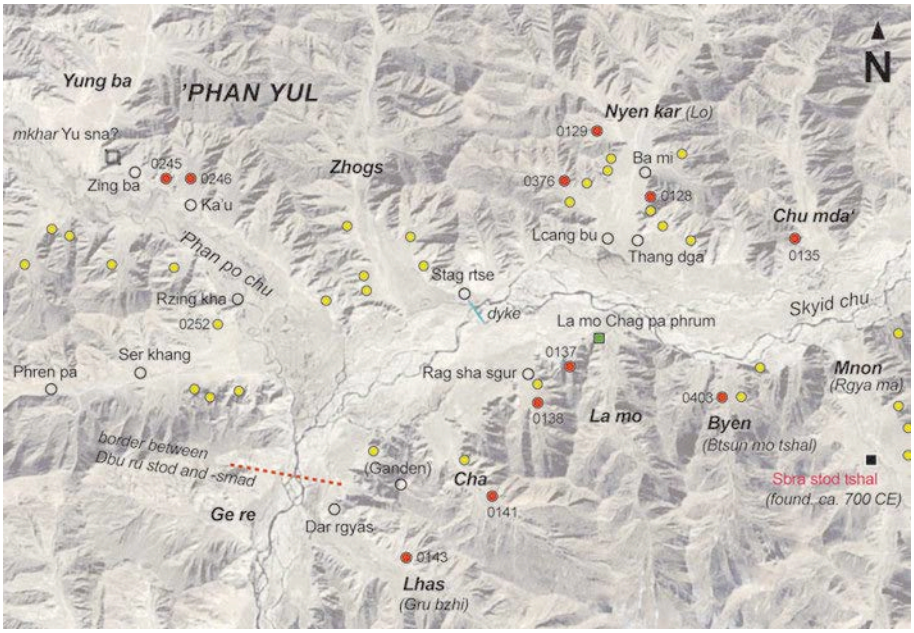


Fig. 22. The "Dba's land" in Skyid shod. (Based on sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2014)

Fig. 23. La mo Chag pa prum with unidentified building remains behind La mo dgon. (Sat-photo, 12.2010)

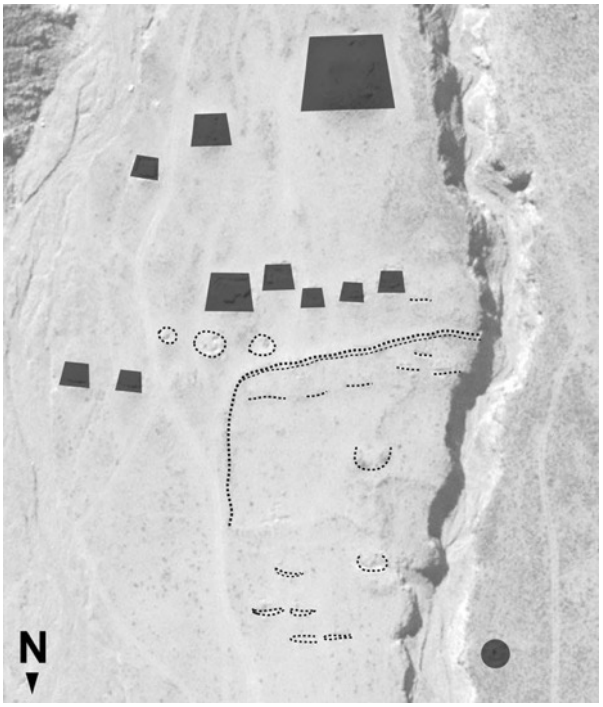
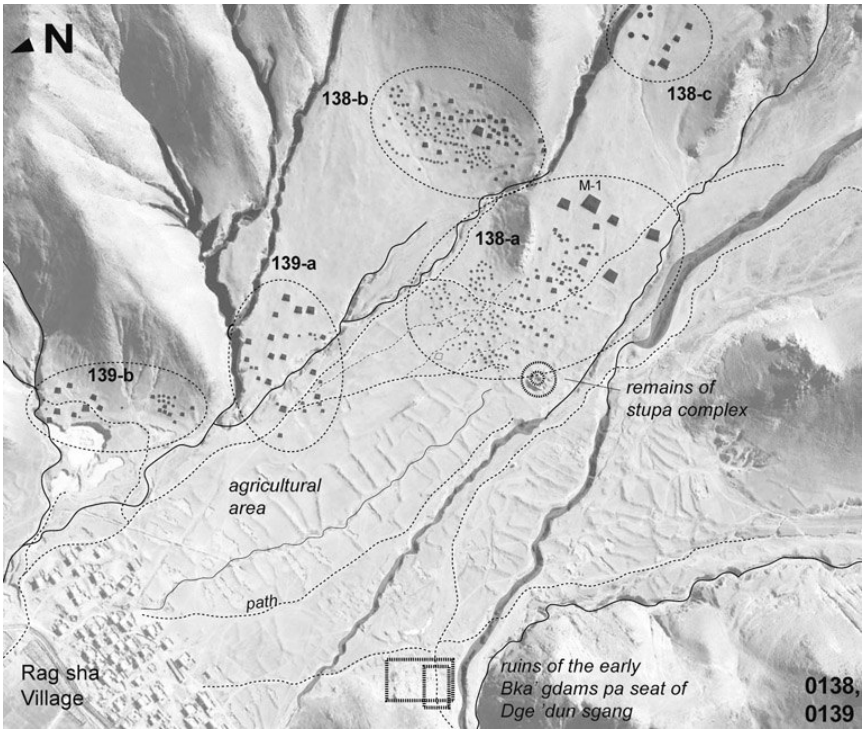


Fig. 24a.
Mound M-1 of 0137.
(Photo: G. Hazod 2015)

Fig. 24.
The field 0137 (cf. Fig. 23).
(Sat-photo, Digital Globe 2.2010)

Fig. 25. The grave fields 0138, 0139, south of La mo. (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 10.2011)



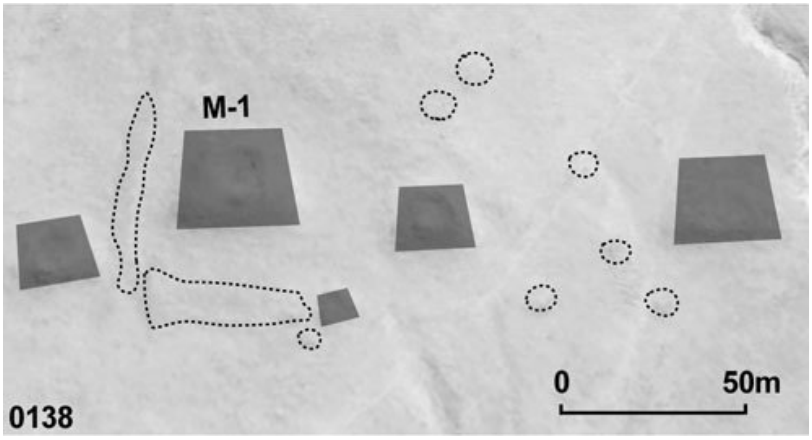


Fig. 25a. Around the central mound (M-1) of 0138

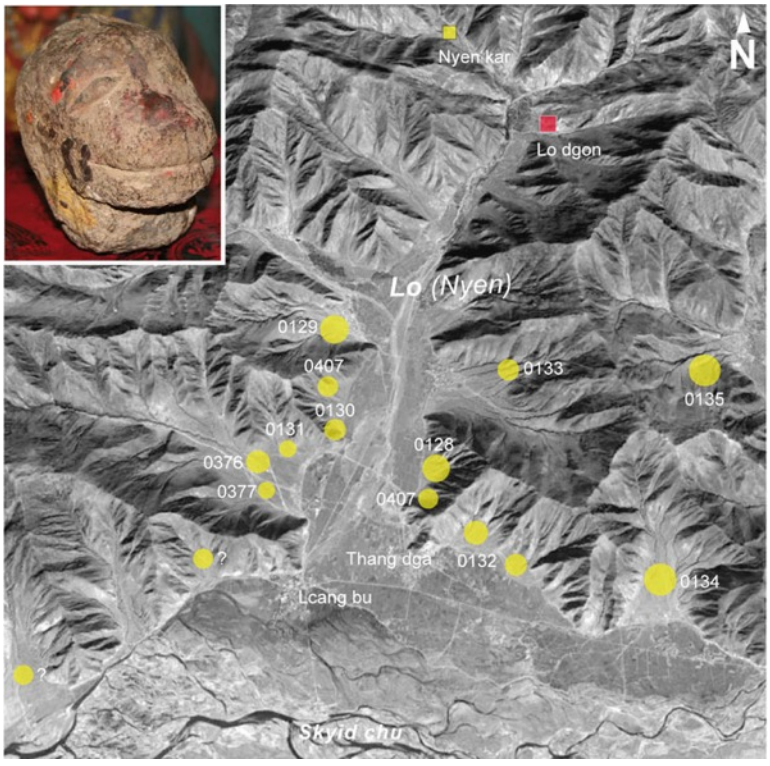


Fig. 26. Lo (Nyen kar) and the monkey of Lo dgon (fn. 24).
(Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2014)

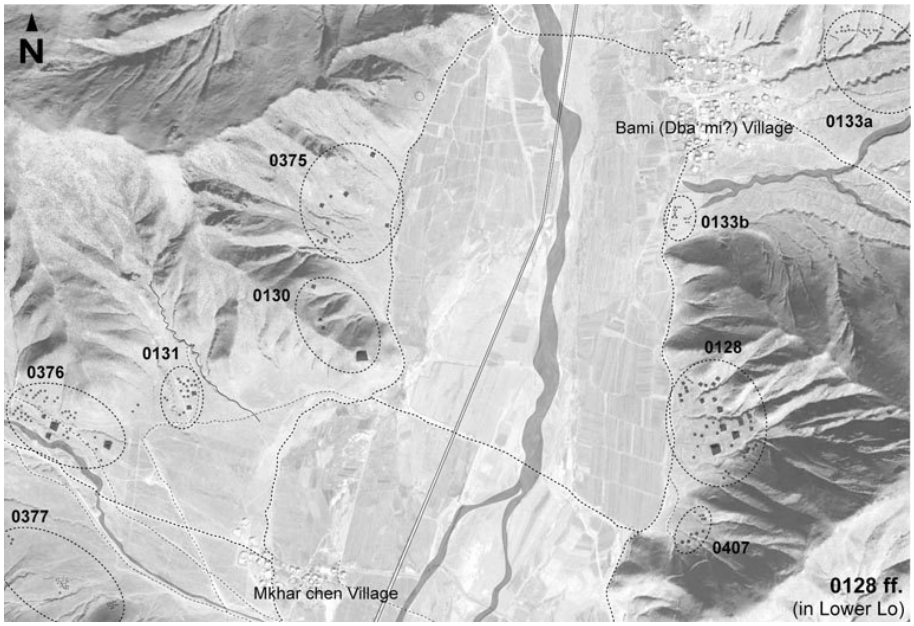


Fig. 27. The tombs of Lower Lo (cf. Figs. 26, 16). (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2014)

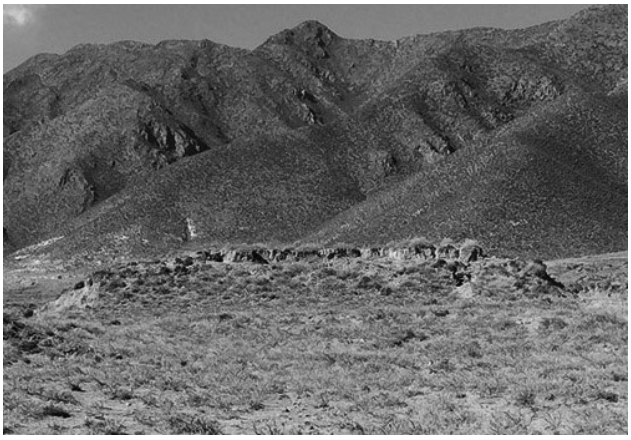


Fig. 28. The central mound of 0376 (see Fig. 27). (Photo: G. Hazod 2015)

Fig. 29. The central mound of 0128 (see Fig. 24). (Photo: G. Hazod 2008)

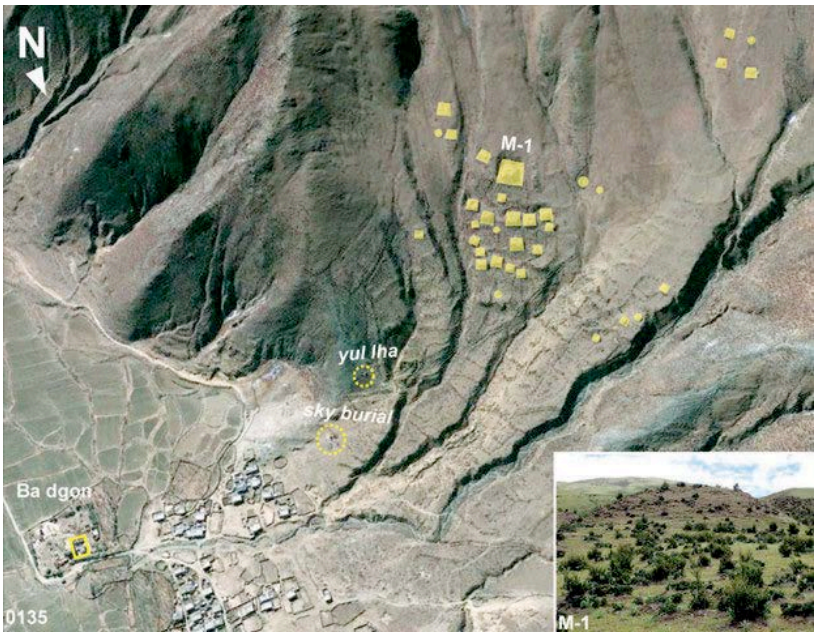


Fig. 30. The burial mound site of 0135 (see Fig. 26).
(Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2014)

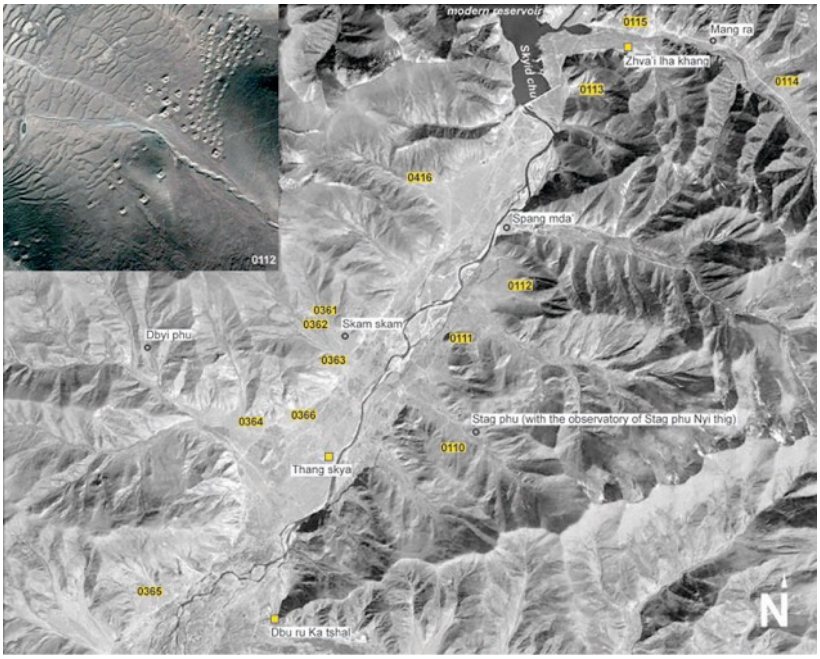


Fig. 31. The grave fields of central Mal gro. *(Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2010)*

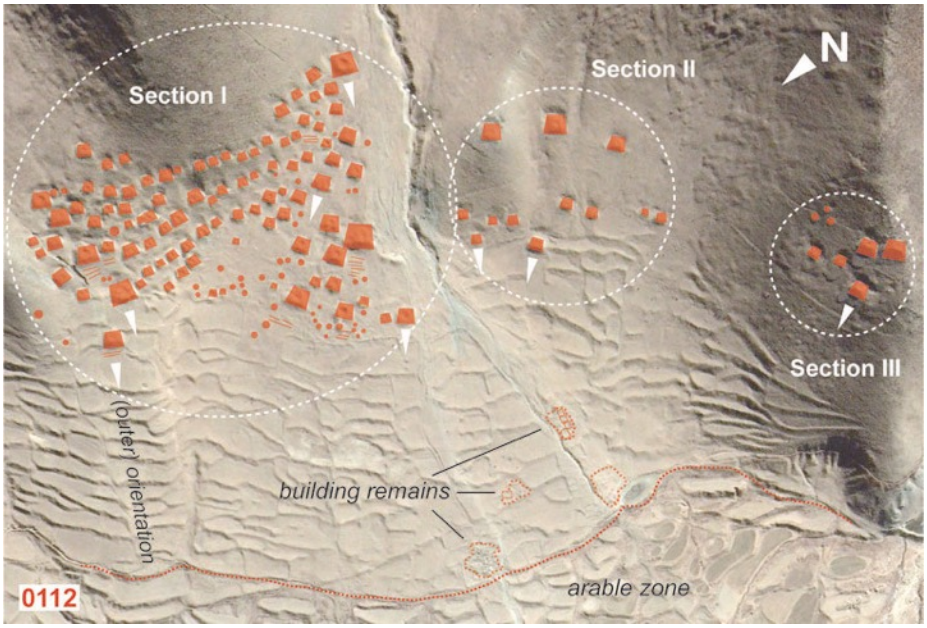


Fig. 32. The elite field of 0112 in central Mal gro. (The white arrows indicate the "outer" orientation of the individual (trapezoidal) mounds.)
(Based on sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2010)

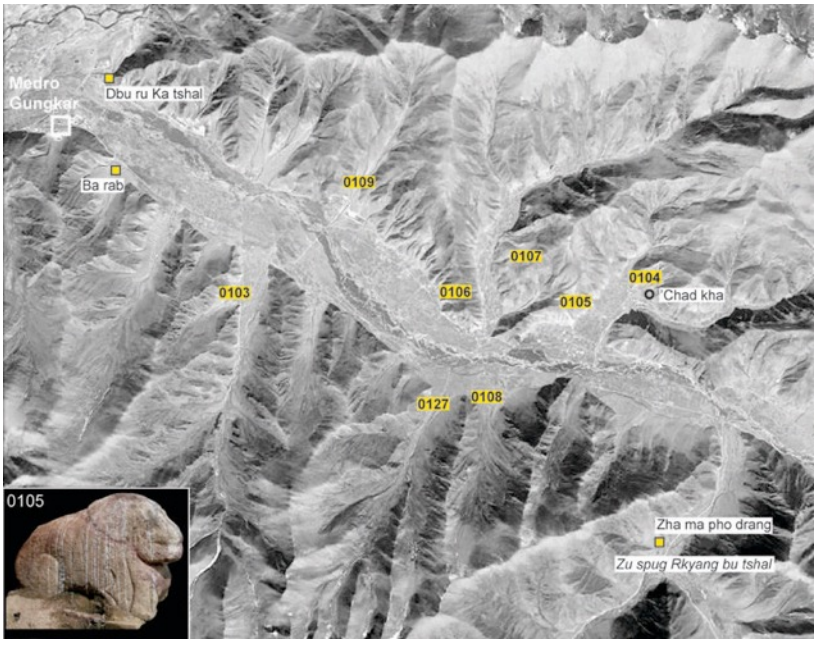


Fig. 33. The grave fields of eastern Mal gro. *(Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2010)*

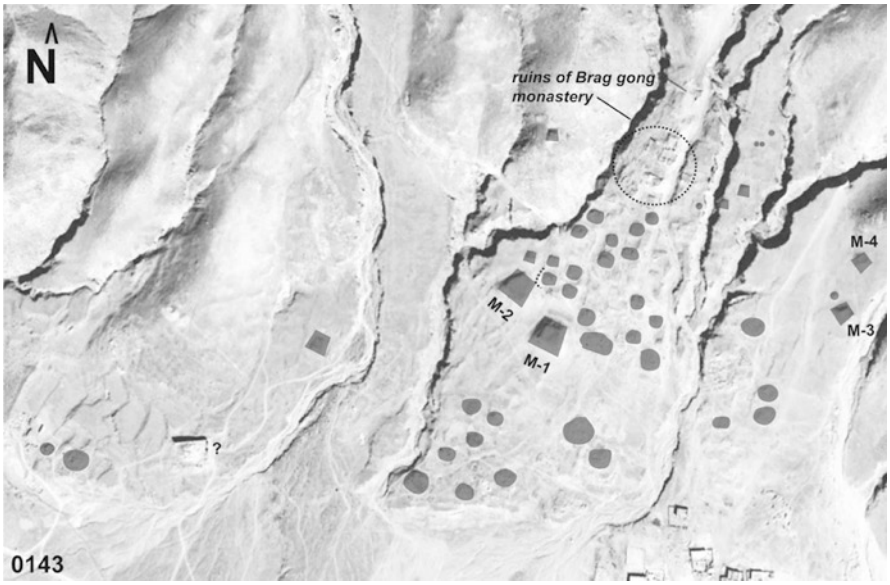


Fig. 34. The grave field 0143 in the Gru bzhi valley (the ancient Lhas; cf. Fig. 22). *(Sat-photo, Digital Globe 2.2006)*

Fig. 34a. M-1 of 0143. *(Photo: G. Hazod 2009)*

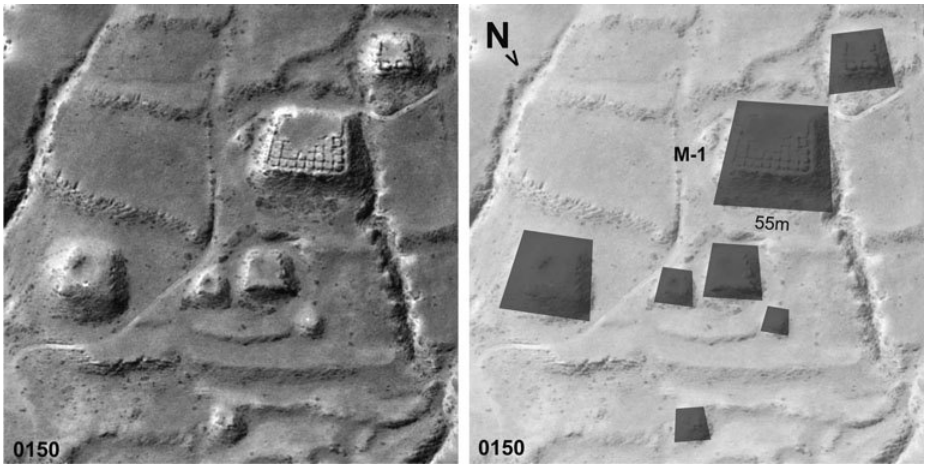


Fig. 35. The tombs of Chos lung in central Skyid shod (0150). *(Sat-photo, Digital Globe 2.2011)*

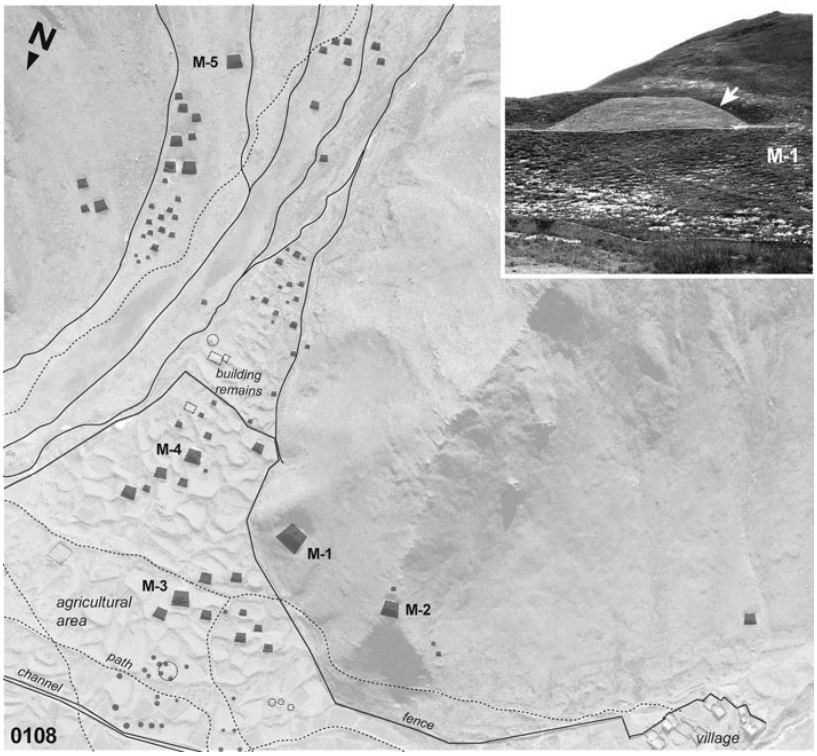


Fig. 36. The grave field of 0108 in eastern Mal gro. (Based on sat-photo, Digital Globe 9.2011; photo: H. Feiglstorfer 2015)

[26] Rngegs Mang zham Stag tshab (Fig. 37)

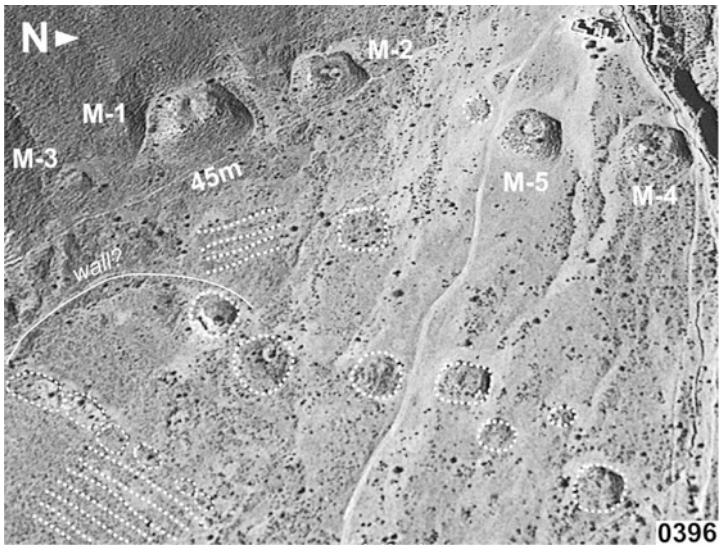


Fig. 37. The tombs of 0396 in Upper 'Phyos of 'Phyong po (see Fig. 20). (Sat-photo: 1.2011)

[28] 'Bro Cung bzang 'Or mang, [35] 'Bro Khri gzu Ram shags, [37] 'Bro Khri sum rje Stag snang (Fig. 38-39c)

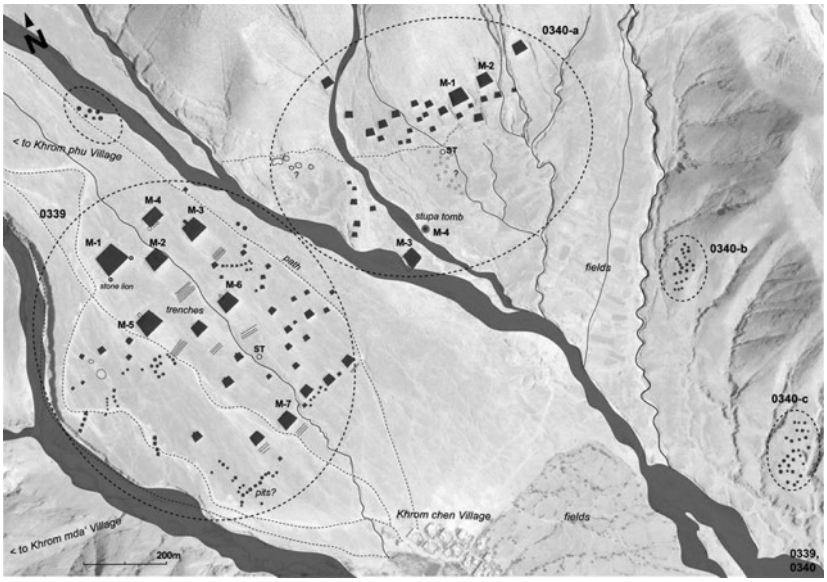


Fig. 38. The tombs of Khrom chen in Gtsang. *(Based on sat-photo, Digital Globe 3.20112)*

Fig. 39a, b.
The "lion tomb" M-1 of the Khrom chen field 0339.
(Photo of 37a: Shawo Khacham 2013; sat-photo (23b), Digital Globe 3.2012)

Fig. 39c.
One of the two stone lions originally placed at the corners in front of M-1 of 0339.
(Photo: Shawo Khacham 2013)

[29] 'Bal Skye zang Ldong tshab (Fig. 40-42a)

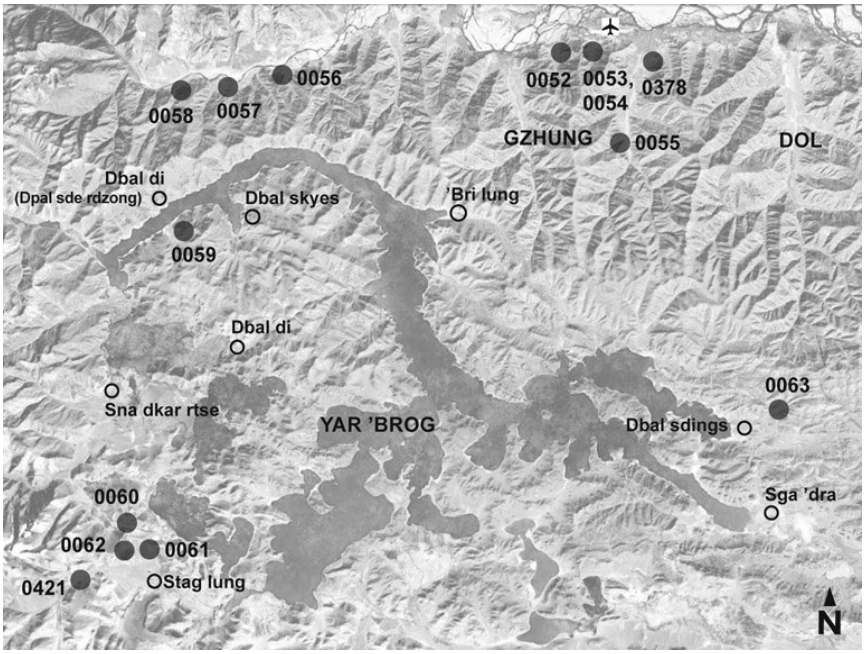


Fig. 40. The burial mound sites in the Yar 'brog district. (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2002)

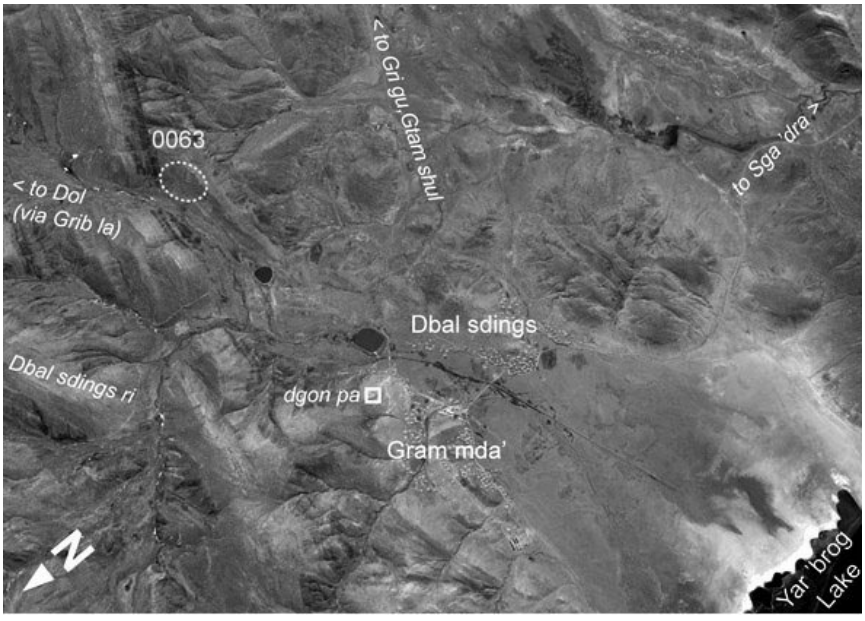
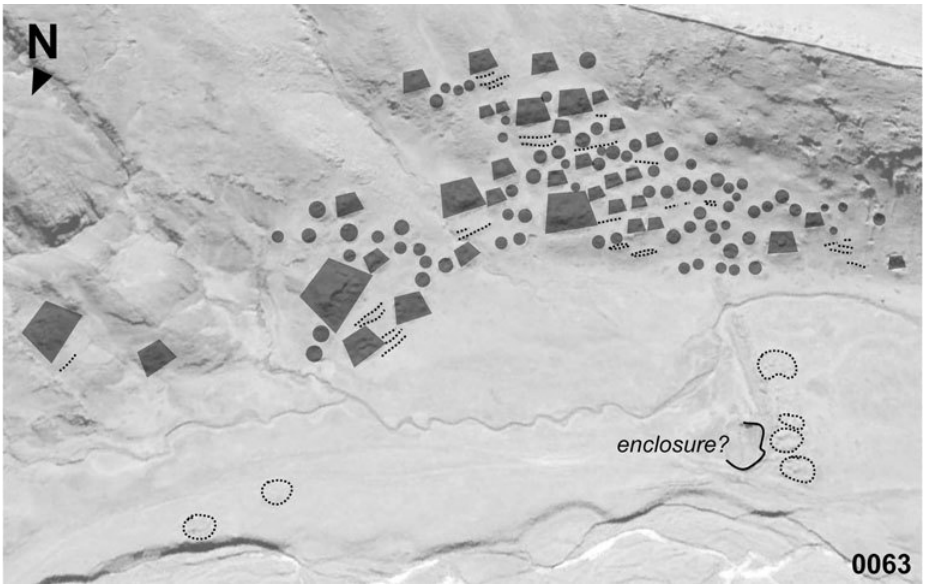


Fig. 41. The area of Dbal sdings in eastern Yar 'brog (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2002)



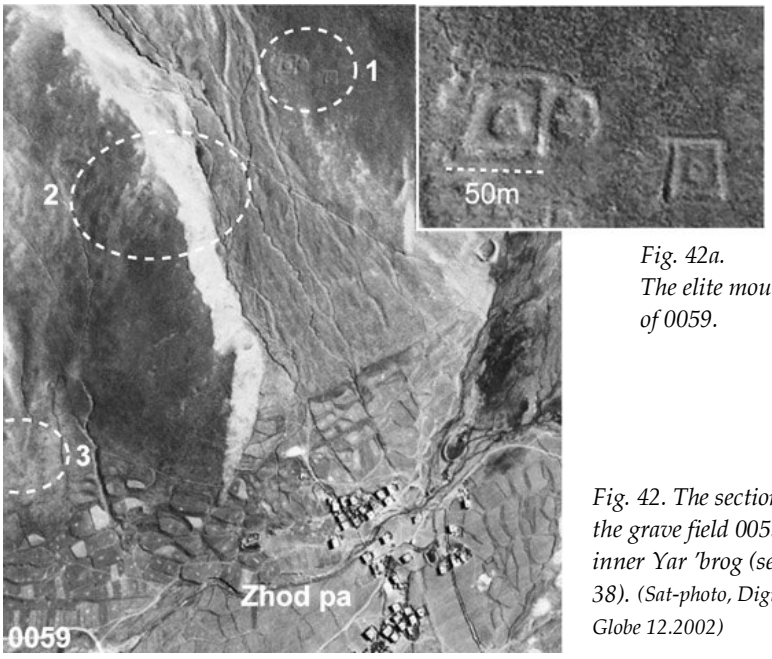


Fig. 42a. The elite mounds of 0059.

Fig. 42. The sections of the grave field 0059 in inner Yar 'brog (see Fig. 38). (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2002)

[31] Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag (Fig. 43-48a)

Fig. 43. The landscape of Gnas rnying Monastery in Myang stod – originally the seat of Mgos Khri bzang Yab lag. (Photo: G. Hazod 2009)

Fig. 43a. Ruins at Gnas rnying (Photo: G. Hazod 2009)

Fig. 44a, b. Ruined sites behind the Gnas rnying monastery. (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2010)

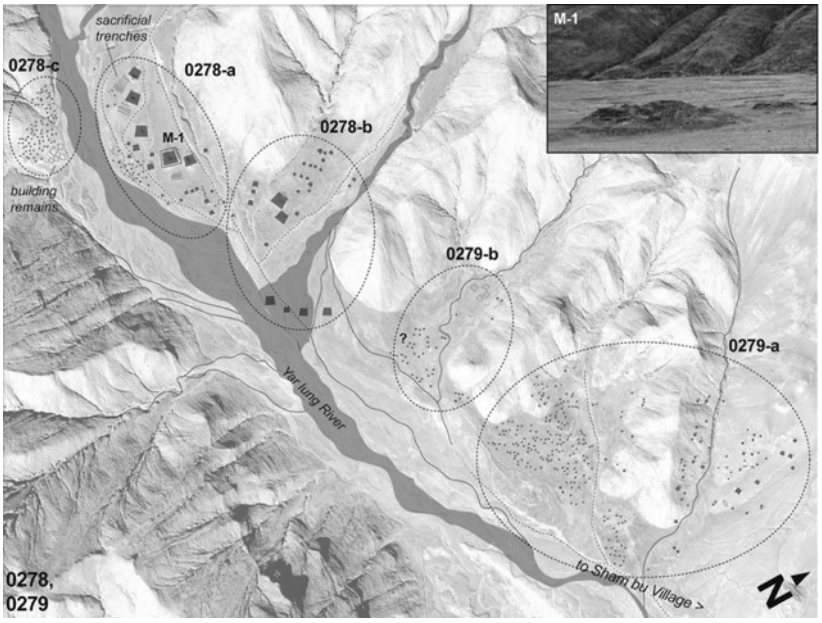


Fig. 45. The grave fields of Sham bu in Myang stod. *(Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2010)*

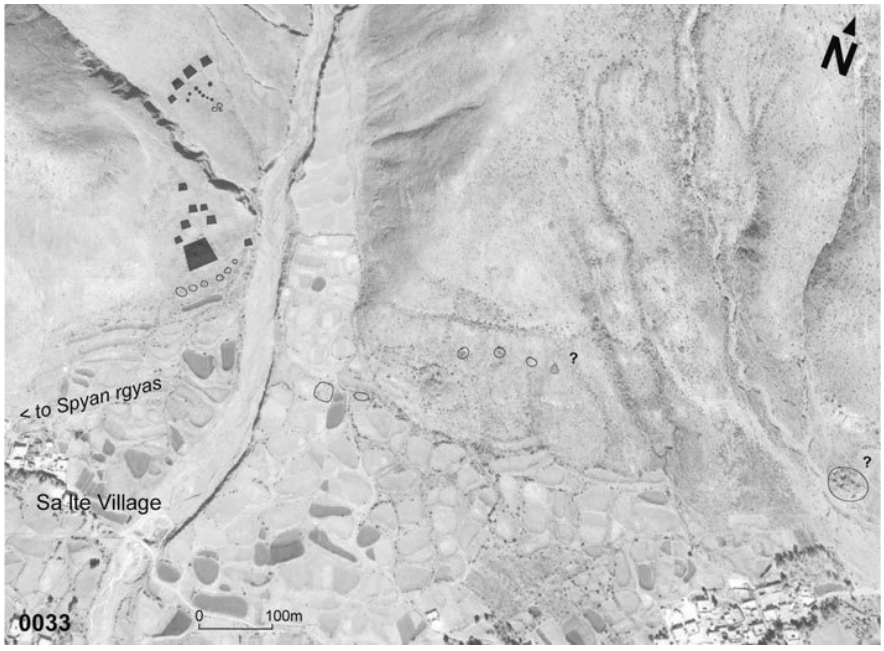


Fig. 46. The burial mound site of 0033 in Rgyas sman of Upper 'Phyong po (see Fig. 20).
(Based on sat-photo, Digital Globe 10.2008)

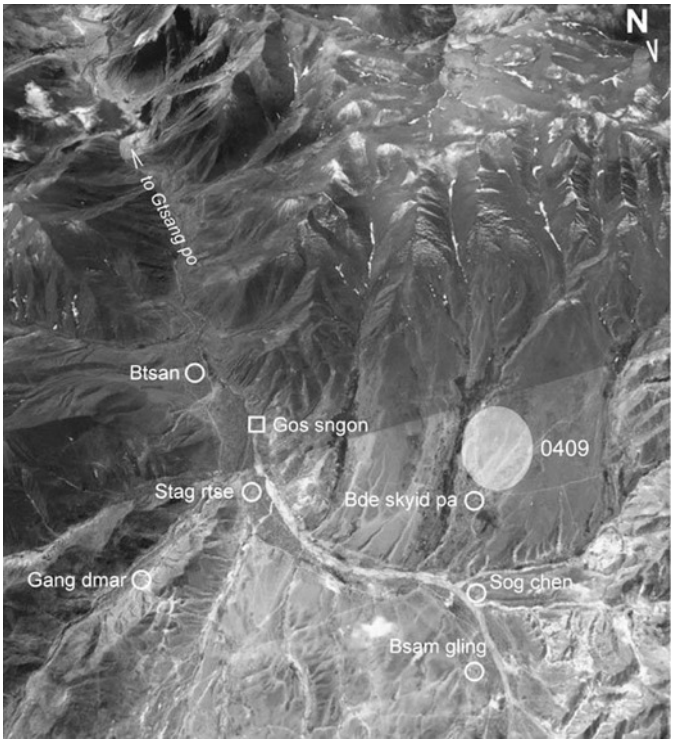
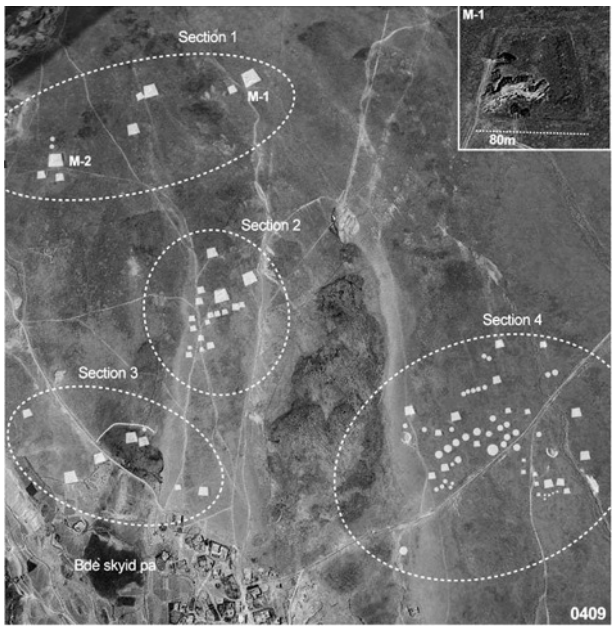


Fig. 47. The elite grave field 0409 in 'O yug of Gtsang. (Based on sat-photo, Digital Globe 4.2011)



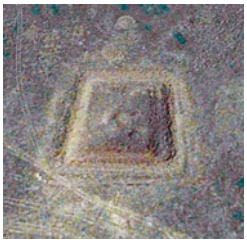


Fig. 48a. Burial mound M-2 of 0409; sat-photo, Digital Globe 4.2011.

Fig. 48. Details of 0409. (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 4.2011)

[32] Mchims Zhang Rgyal zigs Shu teng (Fig. 49-51)

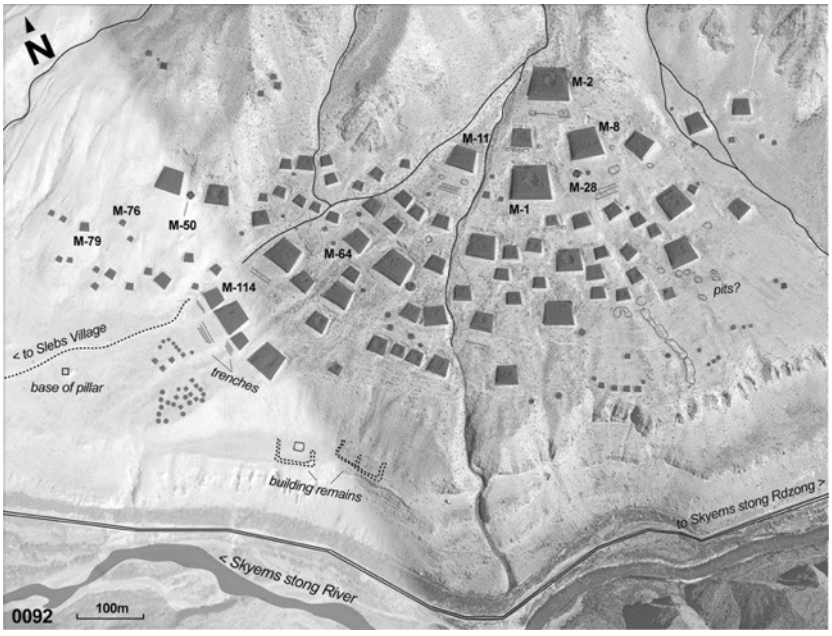


Fig. 49. The Slebs ri burial mound site 0092. *(Sat-photo, Digital Globe 4.2012)*

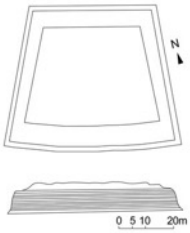


Fig. 50a, 50b. The "coffer-shaped" type of burial mound of Slebs ri. *(Photo: G. Hazod 2005; graph after Huo Wei 2010: 51)*

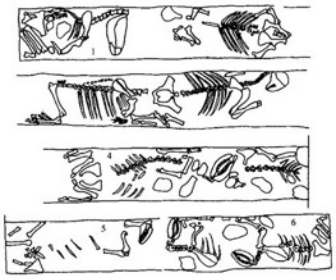


Fig. 50c. Reconstruction of sacrificial trenches at 0092 of Slebs ri. *(Drawing in Huo Wei 2010: 49)*

Fig. 51. 0093 – the western grave field of Slebs ri. *(Photo: 1982, kept at TASS, Lhasa)*

The elite tombs of G.ye yul (Excursus II) (Fig. 52-53b)

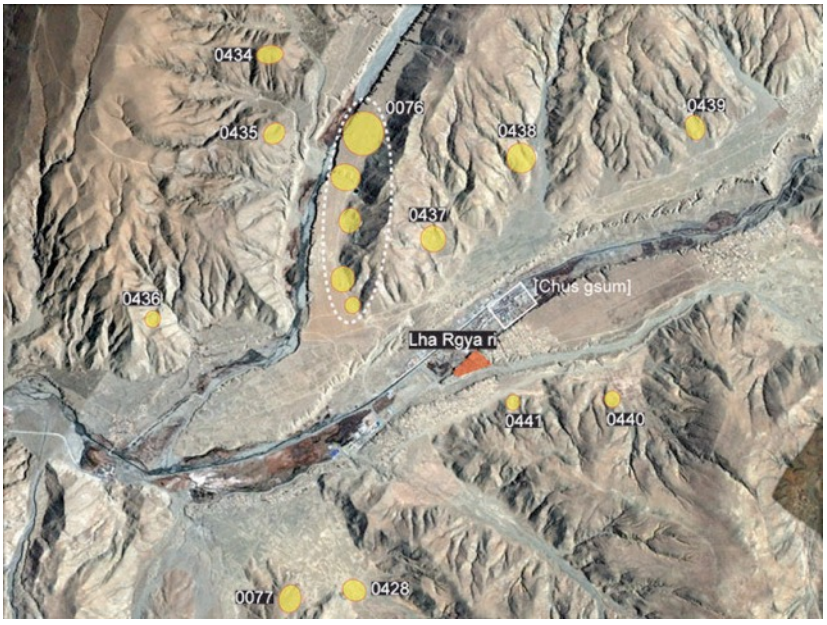
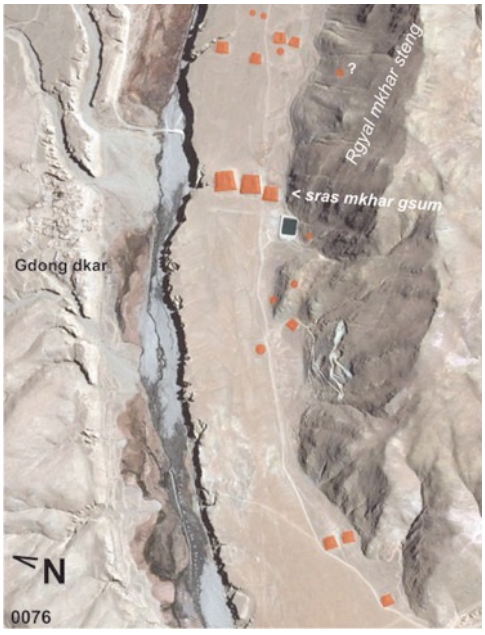


Fig. 52. The grave fields around Lha Rgya ri of G.ye. (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 1.2011)



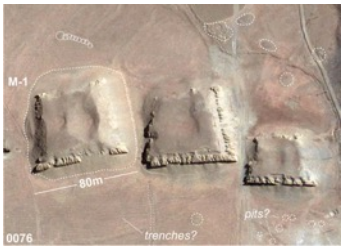


Fig. 53, 53a. The site of 0076 and its central mounds. (Digital Globe 1.2011)

Fig. 53b. M-1 of 0076. (G. Hazod 2005)

[33] Ngan lam Stag sgra Klu gong (Fig. 54-56b)

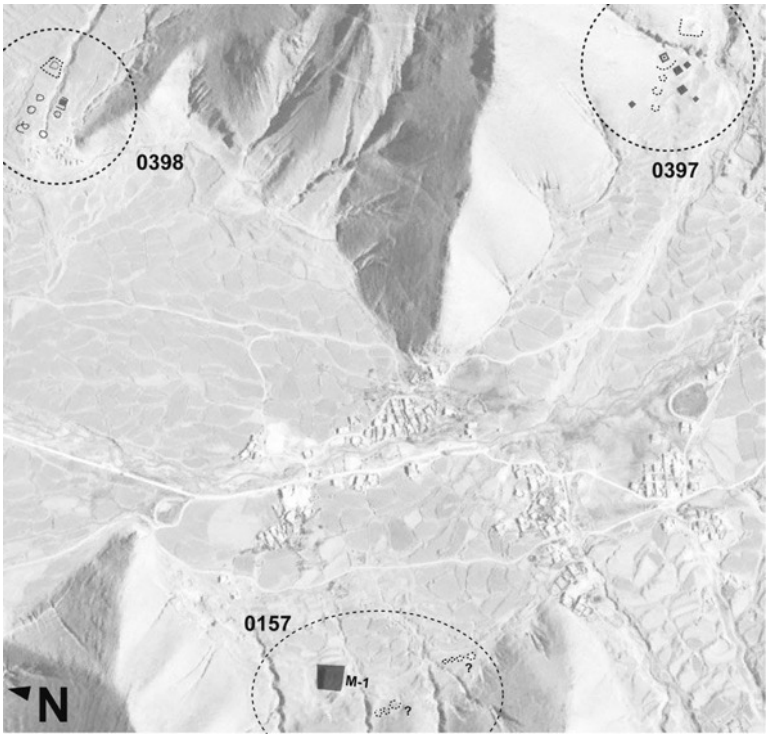


Fig. 54.
The burial mounds in the Sri Valley (Ngan lam Sri) due east of Lhasa / Tshal Gung thang.
(Sat-photo, Digital Globe 11.2009)

Fig. 55.
The tomb of Ngan lam Stag sgra Klu gong (M-1 of 0157).
(G. Hazod 2015)

Fig. 56a, -b.
The transport of the "Kri'i rdo ring che ba" – the original tomb stele of Sri (Kri), the later Zhol stele, which was brought from the site of 0157 to Lhasa Zhol at the end of the 17th century (cf. Hazod 2010).

[34] Sna nam Zhang Rgyal tshan Lha snang (Fig. 57-61)

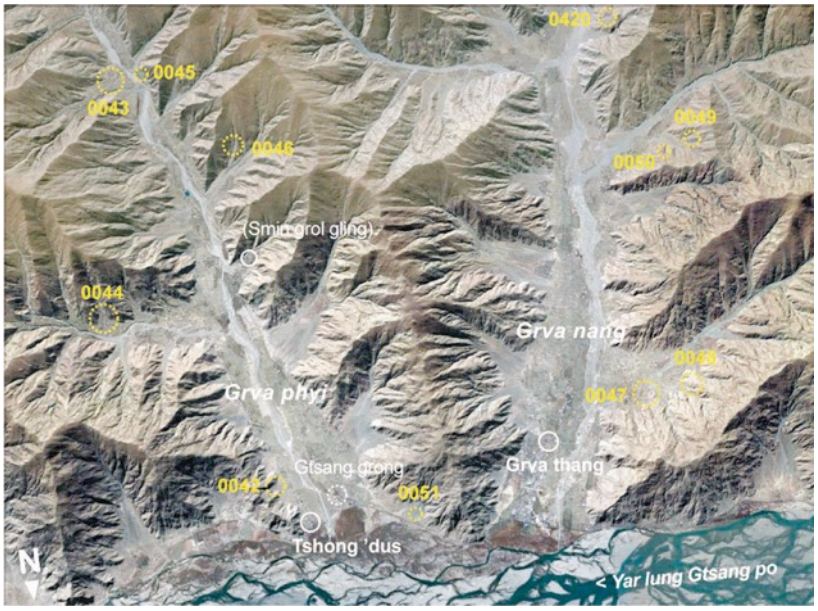


Fig. 57. The grave fields of the Grva district of Lhokha. (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2002)

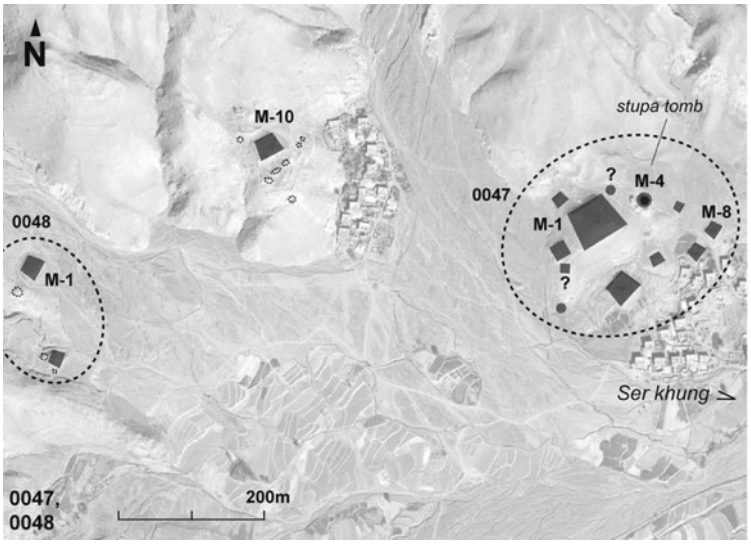
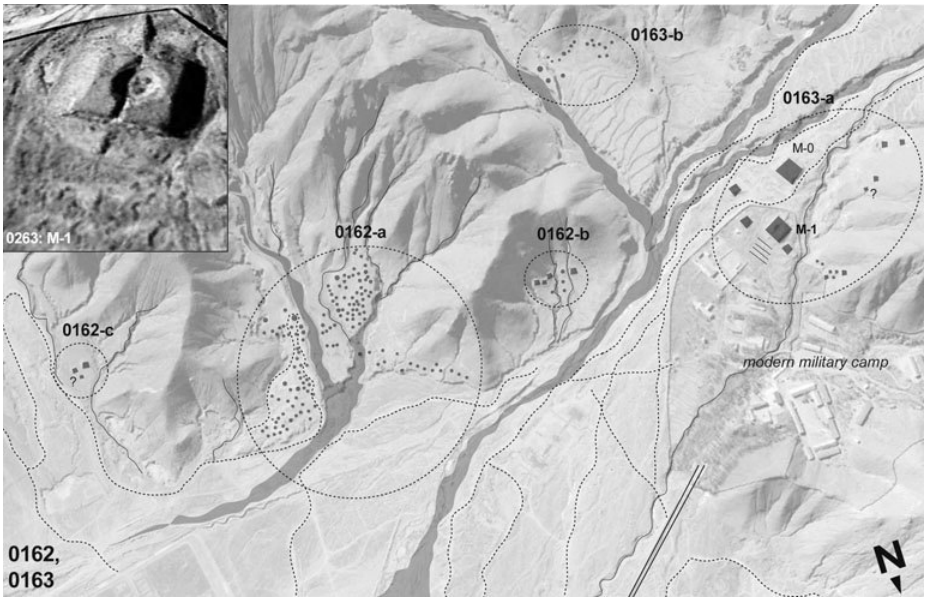


Fig. 58. The Ser khung cemeteries (0047, 0048). (Sat-photo, Digital Globe 12.2002)

Fig. 59.
The central tomb M-1 of 0047.
(G. Hazod 2008)

Fig. 60.
The stupa tomb M-4 of 0047.
(Photo: G. Hazod 2008)

Fig. 61. The grave field complex of Brang phu in Lower Stod lung.
(Based on Sat-photo, Digital Globe 1.2003)



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