

Classifying Funerary Commissions: Portraits of the Great Abbots of Ngor

This paper is dedicated to the memory of David P. Jackson, whose guidance and scholarship remain a source of lasting inspiration

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he large number of surviving works of sacred art identified as originating from the monastery of Ngor Ewam Chöden (see figs. 1–2)—the main seat of the Ngor branch of the Sakya school in Tsang province of central Tibet—bears witness to the erstwhile richness of its monastic collection. However, as of yet, no systematic study has been undertaken to clarify how that collection came about, how it was successively expanded, and what the underlying principles were that structured it.

One of the main obstacles to this attempt lies in the simple fact that the destruction of Ngor in the early 1960s resulted in the forcible dismantling of its original collection. Sacred images were either taken out of Tibet, hidden away, or even destroyed.¹ As a result, most of Ngor's

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¹ Individual paintings and parts of sets (or perhaps even entire sets) from Ngor appear to have been acquired abroad (e.g., in the USA) since the early 1960s, although very little is known about how they were removed from Ngor and through what channels they were transported overseas. Jackson (2010: 217, n. 60), for instance, remarks on their early availability: "I have heard from a Ngorpa monk in Nepal that many paintings were stolen from Ngor in the early 1960s and smuggled to Kathmandu by men from the eastern-Nepal Himalayan border district of Walung, who repeatedly visited the monastery when it stood unprotected. This might account for the fact that some major and minor icons from Ngor were taken abroad and some sold even before the monastery was completely destroyed [...]." Similarly, a modern history of Ngor states that the destruction of the monastery began in 1961 and continued until ca. 1965, a period during which it was besieged day

surviving artwork is now scattered around the world in museums and private collections, with only a small number actually preserved at Ngor itself. Furthermore, to the best of my knowledge, there is no detailed catalogue or register (*dkar chag*) available listing the individual objects that were once housed in Ngor's numerous temples, chapels, and lama palaces (*bla brang*).

There is, however, another type of source, the careful reading of which allows one to make a first preliminary assessment of the content of the monastic collection and the circumstances in which part of it was created and expanded over time. Besides studying the works of art themselves, especially those bearing inscriptions, this important source is the biographies of the successive abbots of Ngor. These biographies constitute a very rich literary corpus for the study of the monastery's art-historical heritage, containing numerous references to the commissioning of thangkas, statues, stūpas, scriptures, etc. As this corpus shows, part of Ngor's collection consisted of works commissioned after the death of incumbent and retired abbots as part of their funerary ceremonies or observances (*dgongs rdzogs*). A text-based study of these funerary commissions reveals, for example, the types of posthumous abbot portraits made at Ngor, both in painting and statue.

The phrase commonly used in biographies to specify the purpose of making funerary commissions can be translated as "to fulfil the intentions" of the deceased master (e.g., ... *thugs kyi dgongs pa rdzogs pa'i phyir du*, ... *thugs kyi dgongs pa rdzogs pa'i thabs su*, ... *thugs dgongs rdzogs pa'i ched du*, ... *dgongs pa rdzogs thabs la*, etc.). The same phrase is also used in inscriptions on paintings and statues and allows them to be identified as a funerary commission. However, contrary to what has sometimes been understood, this standard phrase does not refer to any kind of ordinary wish-fulfilling but is used specifically in the context of funerary ceremonies to clarify the purpose of the objects made as a funerary commission. Occasionally, one can even find Tibetan terms for these objects, which can roughly be translated as "funerary commission": *gongdzok ten* (*dgongs rdzogs rten*) or *tukgong dzoktab kyi ten*

and night by thieves and looters, but also adds that most of the sacred objects (*rten gsum phal cher*) were taken away by the government; see Thub bstan snying po, *Ngor e wam chos ldan gyi lo rgyus* (p. 125). Ngor paintings in the Newari-influenced Beri style (*bal ris*) might also have been acquired and brought to Nepal by traders from the Nepalese community in Lhasa during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976); see Khétsun 2008: 174–175. It is also possible that some artworks, or even entire sets, were deliberately preserved by Ngor lamas in a concerted effort to safeguard their religious heritage. For instance, Sönam Gyatso (1933–1987; alias Hiroshi Sonami), the seventy-fourth abbot, took with him to Sikkim in 1958 one of the *Gyüde Küntü* sets of 139 maṇḍalas commissioned in the nineteenth century; see Chandra, Tachikawa, and Wantanabe 2006: Foreword, 1–11; bSod nams rgya mtsho and Tachikawa 1989: vii, x.

(*thugs dgongs rdzogs thabs kyi rten*).

In this paper, therefore, I shall first introduce and present a general classification of funerary commissions traditionally made at Ngor, before discussing the different types of statues made as funerary commissions to portray an abbot of Ngor. The general classification was first presented under the title “Tibetan Buddhist Funerary Commissions: A First Attempt to Classify the Sacred Art of Ngor” at the Eighth International Conference on Tibetan Archaeology & Art (10–13 November 2023), Zhejiang University Center for Buddhist Art, Hangzhou, China. The different types of statues were first discussed at the panel “Tibetan and Himalayan Statuary across Time and Space” organised by Yannick Laurent and David Pritzker at the IATS Prague (3–9 July 2022) in memory and honour of Yury Khokhlov.

1. Funerary Commissions

Descriptions of funerary commissions found in Ngor abbot biographies usually appear as part of the section narrating the death and subsequent funerary ceremonies for an abbot and/or within the account of an incumbent abbot’s tenure, when he himself oversaw these ceremonies for an abbatial predecessor (or predecessors). To give a better impression of those descriptions, some examples shall be given in translation.

The first two examples describe the funerary commissions for Sanggyé Senggé (1504–1569), the eleventh abbot, and the first passage is taken from his biography, which was written by Drangtī Penchen Namkha Pelzang (1535–1602), the thirteenth abbot:²

In order to fulfil the intentions of the Lord, there were commissioned as inner sacred objects a life-size gilded chamber statue of himself; one supplementary statue of himself for the Lamzap lineage measuring the distance between the extended thumb and the base of the little finger of a hand made into a fist; an inner reliquary of a Victory Stūpa, namely a silver reliquary stūpa equal in size to the inner reliquaries of the previous lamas with magnificent features of craftsmanship and embellished with all sorts of precious substances; a painted image equal in height to one storey of Ngor’s main temple to be displayed on the occasion of the monthly offering ceremony on his death anniversary; and numerous magnificent painted images including his Lamdré lineage supplement and Vajramahākāla [i.e., Pañjaranātha Mahākāla].³

² For the terms of office of all Ngor abbots mentioned in this paper, see Heimbel 2017: 513–546.

³ Nam mkha’ dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge’i rnam thar* (fol. 344a1–3): *nang rten du rje nyid kyi thugs kyi dgongs pa rdzogs pa’i thabs su | de nyid kyi gzims mal gser sku tshad ma dang | lam zab kha skong mkhyid gang ba gcig | nang rten rnam rgyal mchod*

This funerary commission is also described in the biography of Könchok Penden (1526–1590), the twelfth abbot, who was Sanggyé Senggé's successor on the throne of Ngor and commissioning patron of his predecessor's funerary ceremonies. Whereas the passage from the biography of Sanggyé Senggé refers at its end to "numerous magnificent painted images," of which only two examples are given, the biography of Könchok Penden also details the subject of those images:

In order to fulfil the intentions of the one whose name Sanggyé Senggé is well-known everywhere, who is the lord of the families of all maṇḍalas, and who is identical with the great Vajradhara, [Könchok Penden] commissioned the chamber statue of the Lord, a gilded image of about an arrow's length; a clay statue of him about a cubit in height; a supplement for the Lamzap lineage in the form of his gilded statue with a back measuring about the distance between the extended thumb and the tip of the middle finger; an inner reliquary in the inner sanctum [of Ngor's assembly hall, the Wangkhang Chenmo], namely a silver reliquary of equal size to the reliquary stūpas of the previous lamas, a Victory Stūpa with very fine features of craftsmanship and outstanding ornamental decorations; an image of the Lord himself, a very beautiful thanka with the height of one storey to be displayed on the occasion of his memorial tea of the twenty-seventh;⁴ and a supplementary thanka of him for the Lamdré lineage. Moreover, Könchok Penden commissioned thankas of the [permission-granting] vision [for teaching the Lamdré] of the Victorious One, the great Vajradhara [i.e., Ngorchon Künga Zangpo], including depictions of the five Supreme Masters [of Sakya, such as] Lord Sachen;⁵ as well as of Lord Könchok Lhündrup and of Lord Sanggyé Senggé; and thankas of Hevajra, Saṃvara, Bhairava, Eight-deity [Pañjara]nātha [Mahākāla], [the four-faced Mahākāla form of] Nyengön Chenpo, Śmaśānādhipati, [Śrīdevī] Rematī, Putra, Drendü [Shinjé Nakpo?], Thirteen-deity Karmayama, Vaiśravaṇa with his Eight Horsemen, and the Triad of Red Ones [i.e., Kurukullā, Gaṇapati, and Ṭakkirāja].⁶

rten | bla ma gong ma rnams kyi nang rten dang tshad mnyam pa'i dngul gdung bzo'i bye brag khyad par du 'phags pa rin po che sna tshogs kyi spras pa | zla dus kyi mchod pa'i steng du 'grems pa'i bris sku gtsug lag khang gi thog dang mnyam pa | lam 'bras kha skong dang | rdo rje nag po chen po la sogs pa'i bris sku khyad par du 'phags pa du ma bzhangs |.
⁴ Sangs rgyas seng ge passed away on the twenty-seventh day of the fourth month of 1569; see Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 342a4–6).

⁵ On this vision, see Heimbel 2017: 219–221.

⁶ Kun dga' bkra shis, *dKon mchog dpal ldan gyi rnam thar* (fols. 436b5–437a6): *dkyil 'khor thams cad kyi rigs bdag rdo rje 'chang chen po dang gnyis su med pa sangs rgyas seng ge pa zhes mtshan yongs su gsal ba de nyid kyi thugs kyi dgongs pa rdzogs pa'i phyir du | rje de nyid kyi gzims mal sku 'dra gser sku mda' tshad tsam dang | lder sku khru gang tsam yod pa dang | lam zab brgyud pa'i kha skong gser sku rgyab mtho gang tsam yod pa dang | gtsang khang du nang rten bla ma gong ma'i gdung rten rnams dang tshad mnyam pa'i dngul gdung rnam rgyal mchod rten bzo khyad shin tu legs shing 'phra phul du phyin pa dang bcas pa | nyer bdun gyi dus ja'i thog tu 'grem pa'i rje nyid kyi sku 'dra zhal thang*

The third example is taken from the biography of the aforementioned Drangti Penchen Namkha Pelzang, the thirteenth abbot, which was written by his attendant, Sönam Sherap:

Subsequently, the making of receptacles was begun on the seventeenth of the third lunar month of the female water-hare year [i.e., 1603]. As for receptacles of the body, there were statues of the Lord himself, namely a Lamdré lineage supplement of about an arrow's length and a Lamzap lineage supplement measuring about the distance from the tip of the index finger to its base at the third joint; and a painted image [of Namkha Pelzang], namely a *thangka* to be displayed at his memorial tea serving with the height of one storey of Ngor's assembly hall. As for receptacles of speech, three volumes of his collected writings were compiled. As for receptacles of mind, a Victory Stūpa with fine features of craftsmanship was made, which was produced out of a combination of gilded copper and silver, and which was rich in inlaid work of various kinds of precious substances. All these were filled with countless blessing receptacles including relics of the Buddha, the Lord's relics and *tsatsa* tablets made out of his remains, relics of previous lamas and their *tsatsa* tablets, and many *dhārāṇīmantras* taught in the Tantra classes, which were written with the bodily remains of the Lord, and furthermore, with countless collections of *dhārāṇīs* taught in the Tantra classes.⁷

The analysis of the literary corpus of Ngor abbot biographies, as exemplified by those three passages, suggests that, in their most extensive form, funerary commissions may have included the following objects:

Statues Portraying the Abbot

- a chamber statue (*gzims mal sku 'dra*), that is, a statue that was destined for the abbot's former chamber or living quarters

thog tshad ma shin tu mtshar ba | lam 'bras brgyud pa'i kha skong gi zhal thang | gzhan yang rje sa chen gong ma lnga dang bcas pa rgyal ba rdo rje 'chang chen po'i gzigs snang ma | rje dkon mchog lhuon grub | rje sangs rgyas seng ge pa rnam ki zhal thang | kye rdor | bde mchog | 'jigs byed | mgon po lha brgyad | gnyan mgon chen po | dur khrod bdag po | dmag zor ma | pu tra | bran bdud | las gshin bcu gsum ma | rnam sras rta bdag brgyad | dmar po skor gsum rnam ki thang sku | [...] bzhengs |.

⁷ bSod nams shes rab, *Nam mkha' dpal bzang gi rnam thar* (fol. 27a3–6): *de nas chu mo yos lo hor zla gsum pa'i tshes bcu bdun la rten bzhengs btsugs nas | sku'i rten rje de nyid kyi sku 'dra lam 'bras kha bskang mda' gang tsam dang | lam zab kha bskang mdzud gang tsam dang | bris sku dus ja thang sku 'du khang gi thog tshad ma | gsung gi rten bka' 'bum po ti gsum | thugs kyi rten gser zangs dang dngul ra ma lug las bsgrubs pa la rin po che sna tshogs kyi phras phyug pa rnam rgyal mchod rten bzo khyad legs pa rnam la sangs rgyas kyi ring bsrel | rje nyid kyi ring bsrel dang gdung tsha | bla ma gong ma'i ring bsrel gdung tsha sogs byin rlabs kyi rten dpag tu med pa dang | rje nyid kyi gdung rus kyi rgyud sde nas gsungs pa'i gzungs sngags mang po bris pa dang | gzhan yang rgyud sde nas bshad pa'i gzungs kyi tshogs dpag tu med pas phyur bur byas te |.*

- a statue as a supplement continuing an existing set or series of statues of masters representing the lineage of the Lamdré instructions
- a statue as a supplement continuing an existing set or series of statues of masters representing the lineage of the Profound Path Guruyoga (Lam zab bla ma'i rnal 'byor)
- a possible additional statue portraying the abbot (for which biographies do not indicate a specific function)

Paintings Portraying the Abbot

- a large-format memorial *thangka* (*dus thang*), that is, a painting to be displayed on the abbot's death anniversary (which I have discussed in detail elsewhere; see Heimbel 2021)
- a *thangka* as a supplement continuing an existing set or series of paintings of masters representing the lineage of the Lamdré instructions

Other Funerary Commissions

- *thangkas* depicting deities and/or other masters, including previous Ngor abbots
- a Victory Stūpa as the abbot's reliquary shrine
- *tsatsa* tablets made of the abbot's remains (*gdung tsha*)
- a compilation of the collected writings of the abbot

In addition, it appears to have also been a customary part of funeral ceremonies to institute a monthly and annual memorial service (*zla dus* and *lo dus*), or better to say an endowment fund (*thebs rtsa*) to pay for those services.

Although, as listed above, the commissioning of an abbot's statue in order to continue an existing set or series of the Profound Path Guruyoga lineage was part of funerary commissions, it appears that paintings of abbots were never commissioned for this purpose in this context. However, we do know that the masters of the Profound Path Guruyoga lineage were also commissioned as paintings. This is illustrated by two examples depicting Buddhaśrī (1339–1420) and Könchok Lhündrup (1497–1557), the tenth abbot, as single main figures. According to the rich inscriptions on the paintings, a first set was originally commissioned by Lhachok Senggé (1468–1535), the ninth abbot, for his own practice (*thugs dam*), and Buddhaśrī is painting number 11 of this first set (see fig. 3). The set was successively supplemented by the eleventh and thirteenth abbots, Sanggyé Senggé and Drangti Penchen Namkha Pelzang. The painting of Könchok Lhündrup is a supplement commissioned by Drangti Penchen Namkha Pelzang and is numbered painting 19. As one of the inscriptions indicates, these two paintings

later came into the possession of Amezhab (1597–1659), the twenty-seventh hierarch of Sakya, a great patron of religious art, although other paintings from the set and its supplements appear to have remained at Ngor, where they were documented by Rāhula Sāṅkrtyāyana (1893–1963).⁸

The present study relies primarily on textual and epigraphic evidence. It is therefore important to note that within the corpus of Ngor abbot biographies, the presentation of the commissioning of works of art can vary considerably, ranging from a brief mention of objects to detailed enumerations extending over several folios. For instance, none of the currently available and inscribed commissions by Lhachok Senggé, the ninth abbot, are recorded in his extant biography by Drangti Penchen Namkha Pelzang, the thirteenth abbot.⁹ Moreover, there are not full-length biographies for each and every abbot available, and those available do not always provide detailed records of all funerary commissions. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain whether all of the objects listed above were always part of funerary commissions, and this surely also depended on the economic situation of the deceased abbot or his lama palace (*bla brang*), his status, and his discipleship.¹⁰

It is also important to note that individual funerary commissions were the result of historical processes, and thus not all of those listed above were already commissioned for Ngor's first abbots. For instance, the earliest textual records of memorial *thangkas* are those of Gorampa Sönam Senggé (1429–1489), the sixth abbot (but this was made at his main seat at Tupten Namgyel and not at Ngor), and of Lhachok Senggé, the ninth abbot.¹¹ From this time onwards, there

⁸ For a discussion of this set with supplements, including transliterations of the inscriptions, see Heimbels 2024. For the lineage of the blessings and instructions of the Profound Path Guruyoga down to Ngorchen, see Kun dga' bzang po, *Thob yig rgya mtsho* (fol. 51a2–4).

⁹ However, a presently unavailable, more extensive biography of Lhachok Senggé was written by Künga Drölchok (1507–1566), which served as the basis for the one by Drangti Penchen that is accessible to us; see Heimbels 2017: 518. For images of paintings that were commissioned by Lhachok Senggé but that are not recorded in his biography, see HAR Set ID 5566.

¹⁰ There are also the four successive abbatial histories (*gdan rabs*) of Ngor. The capsule biographies of the successive abbots presented in the first two histories—the second concluding with the autobiographical sketch of Könchok Drakpa (b. 1715), the thirty-ninth abbot—are quite detailed and sometimes include information on funerary commissions, whereas the latter two histories are comparatively brief and do not include any relevant details on these commissions.

¹¹ See Yon tan 'byung gnas, *Go rams pa'i rnam thar* (p. 364.8–13), Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams, *Go rams pa'i rnam thar* (p. 269.1–3), Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *lHa mchog seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 262b4), dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhuun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 273b4–5), Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *dKon mchog lhuun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 294a3–4), Heimbels 2021: 310.

occur regular references to the creation of this type of *thangka*, and the earliest surviving memorial *thangkas* date from the 16th century. Moreover, the discussion below will show that statues of the first Ngor abbots, made as additions to sets or a series of masters representing a particular lineage, could also be part of a funerary commission for a later abbot, rather than for the abbot they actually depicted. In addition, as shall also be discussed below, some chamber statues were installed in Ngor's Lamdré Chapel, the Lamdré Lhakhang, apparently to function there as a supplement of the Lamdré lineage.

2. *Funerary Commissions: Thematic Sets of Thangka Paintings with Supplements*

Occasionally, funerary commissions also included thematic sets of lineage master paintings or statues. These were supplemented or updated by the individual Lamdré and Lamzap supplements mentioned above. However, even though numerous such items—for instance, Ngor-related Lamdré lineage sets—have survived, textual references and available epigraphic evidence for the production of sets of paintings or statues as part of funerary commissions are comparatively rare.¹²

The first and most famous sets of Ngor's paintings were commissioned by Ngorchen Künga Zangpo (1382–1456), the founder of Ngor, as funerary commissions. To fulfil the last wishes of two of his late masters, Ngorchen commissioned two exceptionally well-crafted sets of scroll paintings that were directly related to the teachings he had received from his revered masters. The first was an eleven-painting set portraying the chief lineage masters of the Lamdré instructions in memory of Drupchen Buddhaśrī (1339–1420) and a fourteen-painting set depicting the forty-two maṇḍalas of the Vajrāvalī cycle (with three additional maṇḍalas from the Kriyāsamuccaya) in memory of Sapzang Pakpa Zhönnu Lodrö (1346–1412). Since the maṇḍalas of the Vajrāvalī cycle were not traditionally ordered by later Ngor abbots as part of funerary commissions, Ngorchen's well-documented set will not be discussed here.¹³

Some of the best sources on early sacred art at Ngor are the two extant biographies of Ngorchen. One was written by Mūchen Könchok

¹² For possible examples of Ngor-related sets of Lamdré lineage paintings, which are as of yet not traceable in sources, see HAR Set ID 385 (Single Figure Composition), HAR Set ID 1739 (Two Figure Composition), HAR Set ID 1732 (Three Figure Composition), HAR Set ID 1737, HAR Set ID 2314, HAR Set ID 3101, HAR Set ID 3102 (Four Figure Composition).

¹³ On the set depicting the maṇḍalas of the Vajrāvalī cycle, see Heimbel 2017: 193–205.

Gyeltsen (1388–1469), his direct disciple and successor as abbot of Ngor, and the other by Sanggyé Püntsoḳ (1649–1705), the twenty-fifth abbot, who compiled early Ngorchén biographies written by direct disciples into a single extensive account in 1688. Both biographies describe the major sets of paintings, statues, and murals that Ngorchén commissioned in memory of his teachers. They also mention his commissioning of numerous other scroll paintings (depicting maṇḍalas and pure realms) and present a fairly detailed description of the murals of Ngor's assembly hall, the Wangkhang Chenmo. Sanggyé Püntsoḳ, whose account is slightly more detailed than Mūchen's, describes the first Ngorpa sets representing the Lamdré lineage masters, both in painting and statue, as well as murals, all of which Ngorchén commissioned in honour of his late Lamdré master Buddhaśrī:

As a means to fulfil the intentions of Drupchen Buddhawa, Ngorchén commissioned eleven great paintings of the complete lineage masters of the Oral Instructions [i.e., the Lamdré]. Furthermore, for the upper inner sanctum, which is now known as the Lamdré Chapel, he commissioned a set of statues of the Lamdré lineage beginning with a magnificent gilded image of Vajradhara and large magnificent clay images of the subsequent lineage from Nairātmyā until Drupchen Buddhapa; small clay images of the entire lineage from Vajradhara until Drupchen Buddhapa, which are housed in the Lamzap Chapel; and as murals of the inner sanctum where the lamas reside, depictions of the lineage masters of Hevajra, Cakrasaṃvara, Guhyasamāja, as well as innumerable depictions of buddhas and bodhisattvas.¹⁴

As mentioned in this passage, the complete set of paintings consisted of eleven pieces (of which four still survive; figs. 4–7), and Ngorchén had the central masters portrayed in successive pairs facing each other, except for the three paintings of Vajradhara, Sachen Kūnga Nyingpo (1092–1158), and Buddhaśrī, which had single main figures. The set might possibly have already been made in the early 1420s, when Ngorchén was still based at his original home monastery of Sakya.

¹⁴ Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* (fols. 37b4–38a1): *grub chen buddha ba'i thugs dgongs rdzogs pa'i thabs su | gsung ngag gi bla ma brgyud pa yongs su rdzogs pa'i bris sku chen mo bcu gcig dang | gzhan yang gtsang khang steng ma da lta lam 'bras lha khang du grags par | rdo rje 'chang gi gser sku khyad par du 'phags pa dang | bdag med ma nas grub chen buddha pa'i bar lder sku khyad par du 'phags pa che ba rnams dang | rdo rje 'chang nas grub chen buddha pa'i bar du brgyud pa yongs su rdzogs pa'i lder sku chung ba rnams lam bzang [= zab] lha khang du bzhugs pa dang | bla ma rnams bzhugs pa'i gtsang khang gi logs bris la | kye rdo rje dang | 'khor lo bde mchog dang | gsang ba 'dus pa rnams kyi bla ma brgyud pa dang | sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' dpag tu med pa bzhengs |*. See also Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 38b4): *gzims chung deng sang lam zab lha khang du grags pa'i gsung ngag brgyud pa'i lder sku chung ba rnams bzhugs sa 'di yin no |*.

After Ngor was founded in 1429, he apparently took the set with him to his new monastic seat, where it was displayed during the annual bestowal of the Lamdré instructions.¹⁵

Ngorchen's biography also provides further information about other later Lamdré lineage paintings at Ngor:

The eleven Lamdré thangkas made as a means to fulfil the intentions of Drupchen Buddhawa, together with the supplement thangkas of subsequent lamas, are the thangkas that are displayed during the Hevajra path initiation of the Oral Instructions [i.e., the Lamdré], alternating each year with the set of golden thangkas commissioned by Lord Könchok Penden. The continuation of the golden thangkas has been commissioned by Jampa Künga Tashi. All these thangkas are kept in the erstwhile Zimchung Kanyima ["Two-pillared Residence Quarter"] that is nowadays known as the Lamzap Chapel. If they are forcibly taken from this place of storage to somewhere else, the adamant Dharma protectors will take action to stop such attempts.¹⁶

This passage mentions "supplement thangkas of subsequent lamas," that is, paintings of the last generation of abbots who transmitted the lineage that were commissioned to bring the old set by Ngorchen up to date. One such supplement or completion (*kha skong*) survives and was commissioned by Lhachok Senggé (1468–1535), the ninth abbot (see fig. 8). The painting portrays Künga Wangchuk (1424–1478) and Gorampa (1429–1489), abbots number four and six, as a pair of main figures,¹⁷ and its commissioning patron, Lhachok Senggé, is identifiable by inscription: "This Lamdré lineage supplement was commissioned by the realised Tantra practitioner Lhachok Senggé."¹⁸

¹⁵ For a detailed study of the whole set, see Heimbel and Jackson 2023.

¹⁶ Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 38a2–4): *grub chen buddha ba'i dgongs rdzogs thabs lam 'bras thang ka bcu gcig | bla ma phyi ma'i kha skong dang bcas | gsung ngag gi lam dbang skabs su | rje dkon mchog dpal ldan pas bzhengs pa'i gser thang rnam dang res mos su 'grem pa 'di yin | gser thang 'phros rnam byams pa kun dga' bkra shis kyi bzhengs par 'dug | bzhugs sa sngar gyi gzims chung ka gnyis ma da lta lam zab lha khang du grags par bzhugs | 'di las gzhan du 'khyer bcom byed na rdo rje chos skyong rnam kyi tshar gcod kyi las mdzad par 'gyur ro |*.

¹⁷ The fifth Ngor abbot, Penden Dorjé (1411–1482), was obviously not considered part of the Lamdré lineage and the sixth abbot, Gorampa, thus takes his place here; see Heimbel 2017: 513, n. 1.

¹⁸ Inscription: *lam' bras rgyud pa'i kha skong 'di rig pa 'dzin pa lha mchog seng ges bzhengs |* . Moreover, there are verses in praise of the two main figures, written in gold letters in the red bottom strip, allowing for their identification. Verse of Künga Wangchuk: *@ | | rgyud sde kun gyi de nyid gzigs | | smin grol dga' ston phyogs bcur 'gyed | | phrin las dbang phyug 'dul bya yi | | 'dren pa dam pa de la 'dud | |*; verse of Gorampa: *@ | | rgya chen bsod nams lus stobs rab rgyas te | | de gshegs gsung rab seng ge'i nga ro yi | | log smra'i ri dags mtha' dag krug? [= skrag?] mdzad cing | | thub stan gangs rir skyong ba de la 'dud | |*. For similar verses from a Lamdré guru-worship ritual, see Kun dga' chos 'phel, *Lam 'bras bla ma mchod pa'i cho ga* (fol. 6a4, 6a5–6):

Moreover, the ordinal number “fourteenth” (*bcu bzhi pa*) is written on the brocade mounting of the painting. This number clarifies the position of the painting within the series of Lamdré lineage master paintings, and allows for reconstructing the series down to the present painting number 14 as follows:

- Paintings 1–11: Ngorchen’s old set of eleven paintings showing a total of twenty lineage masters with Buddhaśrī as the last one on painting number 11
- Painting 12: First supplement portraying Ngorchen as a single main figure (non-existent)
- Painting 13: Second supplement portraying Mūchen Könchok Gyeltsen (1388–1469), the second abbot, and Jamyang Sherap Gyatso (1396–1474), the third abbot, as a pair facing each other (non-existent)
- Painting 14: Third supplement portraying Künga Wangchuk (1424–1478), the fourth abbot, and Gorampa (1429–1489), the sixth abbot, as a pair facing each other

A comparison of the size of painting number 14 in its unmounted state to the size of the four existing paintings of Ngorchen’s old set shows that they were made the same size, between 84–87,5 cm high and 78,2–80 cm wide. The carbon dating of the cloth of painting number 14 has shown that the cloth was made in 1400 ± 40 years. This means that it is possible that the cloth from Ngorchen’s original set of eleven paintings may have been used for the series of paintings continuing his set.¹⁹

It should be noted that painting number 14 was not made immediately after the death of the last abbot it depicts, Gormapa, who died in 1489, but several decades later, most likely during the tenure of its commissioning patron, Lhachok Senggé, who served as abbot from 1516–1534. Textual evidence of similar types of commissions is available for some early lineage statue supplements, which were made as part of the funerary commission for a later abbot, rather than for the abbot they actually depicted. However, this was not common practice. One possible reason for these exceptions may have been that the custom of making these supplements was not yet firmly established at the

|rgyud sde kun gyi de nyid gzigs| |smin grol dga’ ston phyogs bcur ’gyed| |mkhyen rab dbang phyug gdul bya yi| |’dren pa dam pa de la ’dud|; |rgya chen bsod nams lus stobs rab rgyas shing| |bde gshegs gsung rab seng ge’i nga ros yis| |log smra’i ri dwags mtha’ dag skrag mdzad pa’i| |thub bstan gangs ri skyong ba de la ’dud|. For a discussion of the painting, see Jackson 2003, Jackson 2016: 312–316, fig. 13.9. An image is also available at HAR 30518.

¹⁹ I would like to thank Tarun Kumar Jain for sharing photos of the painting with me.

time they were made.

The series could possibly be further reconstructed as follows:

- Painting 15: Fourth supplement portraying Könchok Pel (1445–1514), the seventh abbot, and Sanggyé Rinchen (1453–1524), the eighth abbot, as a pair facing each other (non-existent)
- Painting 16: Fifth supplement portraying Lhachok Senggé (1468–1535), the ninth abbot, and Könchok Lhündrup (1497–1557), the tenth abbot, as a pair facing each other

This reconstruction is based on a painting that could possibly be identified as number 16 (see fig. 9), based on the following observations.²⁰ Although the painting has no inscription identifying it as a continuation of the Lamdré lineage, the identities of the two main masters are revealed to be Lhachok Senggé and Könchok Lhündrup by an inscription written in gold letters in the red bottom strip. Interweaving the individual syllables that make up their names, the inscription consists of verses in praise of the two abbots, as they are likewise recorded in Lamdré liturgies, which suggests that they are representatives of the Lamdré lineage.²¹ Furthermore, not only is the layout of the painting similar to that of painting number 14, but the canvas is also similar in size to Ngorchén's old set and its third supplement, painting number 14, measuring 85.7 cm high and 76.3 cm wide. After the two verses of praise, the inscription continues as follows: "May the root and lineage lamas bless the realised Tantra practitioner Sanggyé Senggé."²² This request for blessings suggests that the painting was most likely commissioned by Sanggyé Senggé (1504–1569), the eleventh abbot,

²⁰ For an image of this painting, see HAR 41215. For previous discussions, see Bonhams 2015, HAR 41215, Heller 2018.

²¹ Verse of Lhachok Senggé: @ | | bla ma rnams dang lhag pa'i lha tshogs la | | mchog tu dad pas tshul bzhin mnyes byas nas | | rgyud dang man ngag du ma'i mdzod bzung ste | | ji bzhin smra ba'i seng ge de la 'dud | ; verse of Könchok Lhündrup: | dkon mchog gsum dngos yongs 'dzin mgon gyis bzung | | khrims ldan thos bsam bsgom pa'i nor gyis phyug | | lhun grub phrin las phyogs brgyar spel mkhas pa'i | | blo ldan dge ba'i bshes la gsol ba 'debs | | For the similar verses from the Lamdré guru-worship ritual, see Kun dga' chos 'phel, *Lam 'bras bla ma mchod pa'i cho ga* (fol. 6b1, 6b1–2): | bla ma rnams dang lhag pa'i lha tshogs la | | mchog tu dad pas tshul bzhin mnyes byas nas | | rgyud dang man ngag du ma'i mdzod 'dzin pa | | ji bzhin smra ba'i seng ge de la 'dud | ; | dkon mchog gsum dngos yongs 'dzin mgon gyis gzung | | khrims ldan thos bsam bsgom pa'i nor gyis phyug | | lhun grub phrin las phyogs brgyar spel mkhas pa'i | | blo ldan dge ba'i bshes la gsol ba 'debs | .

²² Inscription: rtsa brgyud kyi bla ma rnams kyi rig pa 'dzin pa sangs rgyas seng ge la byin gyis brlab tu gsol | | .

himself.²³ As we read in his biography, as abbot of Ngor he oversaw the funerary ceremonies for Könchog Lhundrüp, and among the many funerary commissions mentioned is a supplement for the Lamdré lineage.²⁴ Although his biography does not specify how many main figures were depicted in this supplement, it is possible that there were in fact two masters. In theory, supplements depicting two lineage masters as main figures could only have been commissioned after the death of every other abbot, and in Lhachok Senggé's biography, the only funerary commission of a *thangka* mentioned by subject is his memorial *thangka*, not a Lamdré supplement.²⁵ Future research will have to show whether these preliminary considerations are correct and whether the painting is indeed another Lamdré supplement.

The passage from Ngorchen's biography translated above next mentions a new set of "golden *thangkas*" (*gser thang*) commissioned by Könchok Penden (1526–1590), the twelfth abbot, and continued by Jampa Künga Tashi (1558–1615), the fourteenth abbot. In this context, the question arises as to whether these "golden *thangkas*" were really paintings with a layer of gold paint as background, or whether the term "golden *thangkas*" is used to refer to ordinary paintings in which gold was used extensively as paint. The first set commissioned by Könchok Penden is not recorded in his own biography, but the second set commissioned by Jampa Künga Tashi is mentioned in both their biographies, although it is not referred to as a supplement (*kha skong*). Moreover, in Jampa Künga Tashi's biography it is mentioned in a way that suggests the latter interpretation, stating that the set was "embellished with an abundance of gold outlining" (*gser ris kyi gya nom pas sbras pa*).²⁶

A possible candidate for these two successive commissions could be the well-known thirty-plus Lamdré set showing its masters as individual figures. This set was commissioned in the late sixteenth century

²³ On Ngorchen's commission of the *maṇḍalas* of the *Vajrāvalī* cycle, he had himself depicted as the patron of the set in the lower left corner of the last painting (number 14), and his inscription contains a similar request for blessings for himself; see Heimbels 2017: 201.

²⁴ See Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 337b5): [...] *lam 'bras kha skong gi bris sku la sogs pa dang* l.

²⁵ See Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *lHa mchog seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 262b4): *gtsug lag khang du dus ja'i steng du 'grems pa'i bris sku la sogs pa rnam bzhangs te* l.

²⁶ See Kun dga' bkra shis, *dKon mchog dpal ldan gyi rnam thar* (fol. 451b3): *lam 'bras bla ma brgyud pa'i bris sku bcu bdun yang de skabs bzhangs shing* l; Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *Kun dga' bkra shis kyi rnam thar* (fol. 46b4): *de dang stabs bstun lam 'bras chos kyi brgyud pa'i bris sku bcu bdun l gser ris kyi gya nom pas sbras pa bzhangs te* l. In his abbatial history of Ngor, Sanggyé Püntok also records only the seventeen paintings by Künga Tashi, and identifies them as paintings in or painted with gold (*gser ris*); see Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fol. 20a4–6): [...] *lam 'bras brgyud pa'i gser ris bcu bdun* l.

in a late Newari-influenced Beri style and its last known painting number 34 portrays Drangti Penchen Namkha Pelzang, the thirteenth abbot and predecessor of Jampa Künga Tashi. At present, however, this cannot be confirmed by any available inscription on the paintings, and they also appear to lack the rich gold outline mentioned above.²⁷ There are several paintings from a Ngorpa set or series with single main figures from around the sixteenth century with “copious use of gold for the main figures” that are also possible candidates,²⁸ though they are painted in a very different style (e.g., parts or even the whole of the masters’ robes, as well as their skin, appear to be painted in gold). These were previously identified by David Jackson as Khyenri, but identified in discussions with two Tibetan scholar-painters, Tsejang Penpa Wangdü and Dorje Rinchen, as Menri.²⁹ As a final candidate, a single painting from a previously unknown Ngorpa set has recently surfaced, possibly depicting the successive lineage masters of the Lamdré in a blue-green Chinese-inspired landscape style (see fig. 10).³⁰ An inscription on the reverse of the painting identifies Jampa Künga Tashi as the commissioning patron of the painting, or most likely of the entire set of which it is part, and also clarifies that it was made as a funerary commission for Könchok Penden:

In order to fulfil more and more the extraordinary intentions of the Venerable Lord, the Great Master of Ngor Ewam Chöden, Könchok Penden, I, his vajra disciple, Śākyabhikṣu Sharpa Jampa Künga Tashi, have commissioned [this thangka] with devotion [expressed] through the three media of body, speech, and mind.³¹

²⁷ For descriptions of individual paintings from this set, see HAR Set ID 385, Jackson 2010: 206–208, fig. 8.19. With the exception of seven paintings, David Jackson was able to locate twenty-seven in private and museum collections; see Heimbels 2025b.

²⁸ Jackson 2016: 147. See also Jackson 2016: 172–184 (4. Lamdre Set 4: With Main Figures in Gold).

²⁹ See HAR Set ID 2197, Jackson 2016: 140–141, fig. 6.2, 146–148, fig. 6.12, 174–178, figs. 7.10–7.15, 7.17–7.18, Minneapolis Institute of Art, “The Arhat Rob-abyor” (no. 1804). Among the available paintings, the most recent Lamdré master shown as a single main figure is Jamyang Sherap Gyatso (1396–1474), the third abbot, as identified by an inscription on the reverse, which also clarifies the position of the painting as number eleven on the left and allows it to be counted as the twenty-third painting in the set: *g.yon bcu gcig 'jam dbyangs shes rab rgya mtsho la na mo* | |; see Christie’s 2018: 34, lot 311, HAR Set ID 2197, HAR 73729. As a result, Jamyang Sherap Gyatso occupies the position of lineage master number 23, which is appropriate as Ngorchen is usually number 21.

³⁰ See Ryavec 2024, Heimbels 2025b. See also DuMouchelles 2023: 13, lot 1277. For a possible second painting of the set, see Jackson 2016: 182, 184–185, fig. 7.36, Pal 1984: pl. 85.

³¹ See Heimbels 2025b: [...] *rje btsun e wam pa chen po dkon mchog dpal ldan gyi thugs kyi dgongs pa khyad par can gong nas gong du rdzogs pa'i phyir du | rdo rje'i slob ma shakya'i*

However, there are reasons to doubt that this painting should be identified as part of the seventeen paintings that continued Könchok Penden's set mentioned by Sanggyé Püntsoḳ. Firstly, the three main figures in the painting—Drokmi Lotsāwa Shākya Yeshe (993–1060s/70s), Setön Künrik (ca. 1025/29–1116/22), and Zhangtön Chöbar (1053–1135)—occupy an early place in the lineage and would not be depicted as part of the supplements. In the standard Ngor transmission of the Lamdré, these three masters successively occupy positions number 8–10. If the first painting in the set were to depict Vajradhara, the original teacher of the Lamdré, as a single main figure, and if the other paintings had arranged the masters in groups of three, the present painting would be the fourth in the set. The two preceding paintings would then show Nairātmyā, Virūpa and Kāṇha on the second painting and Ḍāmarupa, Avadhūtīpa and Gayādhara (d. 1103) on the third. Secondly, the arrangement of three lineage masters on each painting, with the probable exception of the first depicting Vajradhara as a single main figure, would not allow for such a pairing of masters over seventeen paintings. With an arrangement of groups of three masters per painting, only about ten paintings would be needed to bring the lineage down to Könchok Penden. Thirdly, the painting does not include extensive outlining in gold. Thus, unless Sanggyé Püntsoḳ is mistaken in his biography of Ngorchen, Jampa Künga Tashi may have commissioned two different sets of Lamdré lineage master paintings as a funerary commission for Könchok Penden, the continuation of Könchok Penden's set and the set to which the present painting belongs. Moreover, if the continuation did indeed comprise seventeen paintings, it most likely depicted the lineage masters as single main figures, as the first part commissioned by Könchok Penden would have done.³²

3. Funerary Commissions: Thematic Sets (Statues)

As translated above, Ngorchen also commissioned two sets of statues of lineage masters representing the Lamdré. The first set consisted of larger statues beginning with a gilded image of Vajradhara and continuing with clay images of the subsequent lineage masters until Bud-dhaśrī. The second set consisted of smaller clay statues portraying the same lineage masters. The biography of Ngorchen does not specify the number of statues that made up the two sets, but each may have consisted of twenty statues, assuming that the same lineage holders were

dge slong shar pa byams pa kun dga' bkra shis kyis | sgo gsum gus pa'i sgo nas bzhangs [...].

³² See Heimbel 2025b.

depicted as in Ngorchen's set of paintings.³³ In this context, it is important to note that not all of Ngorchen's funerary commissions were made immediately after the death of the master whom they commemorated. This is evident in the two sets of Lamdré lineage master statues, as well as in the aforementioned set of maṇḍalas of the Vajrāvalī as a funerary commission for Sapzang Pakpa (who had passed away in 1412). These were painted by Newar artists at Ngor following its foundation in 1429. A similar observation can be made with regard to the large statue of Buddha Śākyamuni situated in the lower inner sanctum of the assembly hall, which Ngorchen had commissioned for his first main teacher, Sharchen Yeshé Gyeltsen (1359–1406).³⁴ This observation lends further support to my hypothesis that in the early days of Ngor, a more fixed and consistent system of funerary commissions had not yet been established. As my classification suggests, this system, especially in the case of abbot portraits in painting and statue, evolved over time. As for the tradition of making a supplement to a set or series of paintings or statues depicting the abbot as a Lamdré lineage master, the inspiration might have originated with Ngorchen's original funerary commissions for his own Lamdré master Buddhaśrī.

By the time Sanggyé Püntsok compiled his biography of Ngorchen in 1688, the set of larger statues had been installed in the Lamdré Chapel on the third floor (by Tibetan count) of Ngor's thirty-pillared assembly hall, the Wangkhang Chenmo. The set of smaller statues had been installed in the famous Lamzap Chapel, the Lamzap Lhakhang, where all those Lamdré lineage paintings were also kept. Located on the second floor of Ngor's first monastic building and second main temple, the Zimkhang Kadrugma, the "Six-pillared Residence," this chapel originally served as Ngorchen's "Two-pillared Residence Quarter," the Zimchung Kanyima, before becoming the repository for Ngor's most sacred objects and thus being known as Dzö Kagyama, the "Sealed Treasury."³⁵

³³ One question that arises about which lineage masters were portrayed is who was shown as the teacher of Penden Tsültrim (1333–1399). He had received the Lamdré from three different teachers: Ritropa Lodrö Tenpa (1316–1358), Karpo Drakpa Rinchen Senggé (fl. 14th century), and Lama Dampa Sönam Gyeltsen (1312–1375). When commissioning his set of paintings, Ngorchen had Lodrö Tenpa depicted together with Penden Tsültrim as the central figures of the tenth painting, while Rinchen Senggé and Lama Dampa were only depicted as minor figures above the two central figures. In contrast, in his supplication to the masters of the Lamdré, he petitioned only Lama Dampa and neither of the other two. See Heimbel 2017: 140–145, 173, 398–399, Heimbel and Jackson 2023: 61–62, 81–82.

³⁴ See Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* (fols. 37b3–4, 39b2–5), Heimbel 2017: 129, n. 327, 261, n. 210.

³⁵ See Thub bstan snying po, *Ngor e wam chos ldan gyi lo rgyus* (pp. 28–43), Heimbel 2017: 260–261. For an account related to the commissioning of the smaller set of statues, see Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* (fols. 39b6–40a1).

The practice of commissioning sets of statues as part of funerary commissions is also evident from surviving examples that bear inscriptions. Although they were made in Mustang (Lowö) rather than at Ngor, two statues from a larger set portraying Sakya Paṇḍita Kūnga Gyeltsen (1182–1251) and Ngorchen have survived, the inscriptions of which clarify that they were both made as part of a funerary commission for Kūnga Wangchuk (1424–1478), the fourth abbot (see figs. 11–12).³⁶

Kūnga Wangchuk passed away at the monastery of Jampa Ling during his second stay in Mustang (1477–1478), the kings of which had been important patrons of Ngor ever since Ngorchen had visited their newly established kingdom on three previous occasions (1427–1428, 1436–1437, and 1447–1449). A manuscript of the most extensive biography of Kūnga Wangchuk has recently surfaced. It was written by his disciple Ratön Yönten Pelzang (d. 1509) at Jampa Ling in the ninth month of 1478, just a few months after his master's death in the fourth month of that year.³⁷ According to this work, Kūnga Wangchuk was requested by Aseng Dorjé Tenpa (d. ca. 1496) to come to Mustang for a second time, after the family of Tashi Göñ (d. 1489), his elder brother who had first invited Kūnga Wangchuk, had discussed the matter.³⁸ Aseng Dorjé Tenpa (aka Achok Senggé Dorjé Tenpa) is recorded by inscription on the pedestal of both statues as the commissioning patron Sakyong Āyi Senggé. The two inscriptions can be preliminarily translated as follows:

Statue of Sakya Paṇḍita:

I prostrate myself at the lotus feet of the excellent Great Paṇḍita,
Who is proficient in all objects of knowledge,
Who delights only in benefitting others,
Who is adorned with the glory of the characteristic marks of a
bodhisattva.

The statue of the Great Paṇḍita, [commissioned] to fulfil the intentions
Of Gyeltsap Kūnga Wangchuk,
By the excellently given order of Sakyong Āyi Sengge,
Is the pinnacle of craftsmanship. Maṅgalaṃ.³⁹

³⁶ For a short essay on these two statues, see Heimbel 2025a.

³⁷ On Ratön, who also wrote the still missing biography of the third Ngor abbot, Jamyang Sherap Gyatso (1396–1474), see Heimbel 2017: 335, n. 526, 336, 364, 514, *passim*. On Kūnga Wangchuk's two visits to Mustang, see Heimbel 2017: 334–335. On Ngorchen's three journeys to Mustang, see Heimbel 2017: 271–343.

³⁸ See Yon tan dpal bzang, *Kun dga' dbang phyug gi rnam thar* (fol. 35a5–b1): *slar yang bstan pa'i sbyin bdag chen po | chos rgyal bkra shis mgon pa yum sras rnam bka' bgro ba mdzad | mi'i dbang po | ā seng rdo rje bstan pa bas | [...] gsol ba btab pa dang | [...]*.

³⁹ Transliteration of the inscription on the statue of Sakya Paṇḍita: @ | *shes bya kun la blo gros can | | gcig tu gzhan don la dga' ba | | rgyal sras mtshan dpe'i dpal gyis mdzes | | pañ chen bzang po'i zhabs pad 'dud | | rgyal tshab kun dga' dbang phyug pa'i | | thugs*

Statue of Ngorchén:

I respectfully bow to the supreme guide
 Of all beings, whose activities are excellent,
 Whose omniscient Dharma eye illuminates everything,
 Who lovingly hosts the joyous celebration of the holy Dharma.
 The statue of the Lord, [commissioned] to fulfil the intentions
 Of Gyeltsap Künga Wangchuk,
 By the excellently given order of Sakyong Ayi Sengge,
 Is the pinnacle of craftsmanship. Maṅgalaṃ.⁴⁰

Previous scholarship had documented the existence of both statues, but misinterpretations of their inscriptions led to confusion over the identity of the masters depicted. The two statues were identified as different portraits of Künga Wangchuk, rather than Sakya Paṇḍita and Ngorchén. In addition, the name of an artist, “Tsuktorlak,” who is said to have cast the statues, was read into the inscriptions.⁴¹ As a result, another statue depicting Jetsün Drakpa Gyeltsen (1147–1216) was also attributed to this artist, based on a comparison with the two present statues.⁴² However, the relevant parts of both inscriptions, at least as I have understood them so far, and as I have discussed them with Tibetan scholars, do not name an artist, but could be understood in the sense that each statue “is the pinnacle of craftsmanship” (... *bzo rig gtsug gtor lags* |).

Recently, my attention was drawn to another statue—this one depicting Tārā—that was also commissioned by Aseng Dorjé Tenpa (aka

dgongs rdzogs phyir paṇ chen sku | *sa skyong ā yi seng ge'i bkas* | *legs gnang bzo rig gtsug gtor lags* | *maṅ ga lam* | |.

⁴⁰ Transliteration of the inscription on the statue of Ngorchén: @ | *mkhyen pa'i chos spyan kun la gsal* | *rtse bas dam chos dga' ston 'gyed* | *phrin las bzang po 'gro kun gyi* | *'dren pa mchog la gus pas 'dud* | *rgyal tshab kun dga' dbang phyug pa'i* | *thugs dgongs rdzogs phyir rje yi sku* | *sa skyong ā yi seng ge'i bkas* | *legs gnang bzo rig gtsug gtor lags* | *maṅ ga lam* | |.

⁴¹ See Heller 2010: 90–92. See also Grewenig and Rist 2016: 42–45, 438–441 (nos. 192–193), Sotheby's 2008: lots 304–305. For images of the statue of Sakya Paṇḍita, see Grewenig and Rist 2016: 43, 439 (identified as Künga Wangchuk), HAR 12576 (identified as Künga Wangchuk), HAR 32720 (identified as Ngorchén), Heller 2010: 92, pls. 7.2a–b (identified as Künga Wangchuk), Sotheby's 2008: lot 306 (identified as Künga Wangchuk). For images of the statue of Ngorchén, see Grewenig and Rist 2016: 441 (identified as Künga Wangchuk), HAR 12577 (identified as Künga Wangchuk), HAR 32719 (unidentified), Heller 2010: 90, pls. 7.1a–b (identified as Künga Wangchuk), Sotheby's 2008: lot 307 (identified as Künga Wangchuk).

⁴² See Bonhams 2023: 42–45, lot 16. In addition, there are two other similar statues from a set with possible Mustang provenance, depicting Zhang Könchok Pel (1240/50–1307/17) and Nabza Drakpukpa Sönam Pel (1277–1350). However, as they have different types of inscriptions, I do not consider them to be part of the same set as the statues of Sakya Paṇḍita and Ngorchén; see Heimbel 2025a.

Achok Senggé Dorjé Tenpa), according to a lengthy inscription engraved below the lotus pedestal.⁴³ Referred to in the inscription as “Sakyong Achog, the Lion Among Men,” he had it made “to fulfil the intentions of a [deceased] youthful friend.” The inscription ends with a slight variation of the last verse of the previous two statues but also mentions the word *tsuktor* (*gtsug tor*). I have tentatively translated the inscription as follows (changing the order of some verse lines to better suit the syntactic structure of the English language):

The Venerable Lady, the Blessed One, Tārā,
 Having united the wisdom and compassion of all Victorious Ones,
 Always brings benefit and happiness to infinite beings and
 Protects all beings from the total fear of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.
 In order to be protected by the loving affection
 Of her who protects all beings through the glory of an āryā's
 compassion,
 Of her who is the supreme mother of all, the glorious protectress,
 The statue of Tārā was excellently made as by the order given
 By the one who rules over the glory of the four continents
 With the golden wheel of wonderful merit,
 By Sakyong Achok, the Lion Among Men.
 [Commissioned] to fulfil the intentions of a [deceased] youthful friend,
 It is a manifestation of numerous precious substances of various
 kinds and
 It is the pinnacle of craftsmanship, a masterpiece.⁴⁴

While the two statues of Sakya Paṇḍita and Ngorchén were being exhibited in China by Bonhams as part of the collection of Jules Speelam (*Monks & Mahasiddhas Living the Teachings of Buddha*),⁴⁵ I learned that an anonymous source was said to be in possession of relevant texts mentioning an artist called Tsuktor to whom the statues can be attributed. If the last verse of the inscriptions of all three statues does indeed refer to an artist of that name, it seems to be a deliberate play on words with his name, and the last part of my original translations will have to be partially revised:

⁴³ Private Collection, courtesy of Rossi & Rossi/Carlton Rochell.

⁴⁴ Transliteration of the inscription: @@ | l rgyal ba kun gyi mkhyen brtse gcig bsdus nas | l mtha' yas 'gro la phan bde kun bsgrub cing | l 'gro kun srid zhi'i 'jigs pa ma lus las | l skyob mdzad rje btsun bcom ldan sgrol ma'i sku | l 'phags ma'i thugs rje'i dpal gyis 'gro kun skyong | l kun gyi yum mchog dpal skyong gang de yis | l thugs la brtse ba brtse bas bskyang ba'i phyir | l bkas gnang ji bzhi'n legs par bsgrub mdzad pa | l rnam byung bsod nams gser gyi 'khor lo yis | l chab srid gling bzhi'i dpal la dbang bsgyur ba | l sa skyong a mchog mi yi seng ge des | l gzhon nu'i grogs kyi thugs dgongs rdzogs bya'i phyir | l rnam mang rin chen du ma sprul pa la | l bzo rig gtsug tor mkhas pa'i rnam' phrul lags | l .

⁴⁵ See Bonhams 2025.

Statue of Sakya Paṇḍita:

As for the statue of the Great Paṇḍita [commissioned] to fulfil
the intentions
Of Gyeltsap Künga Wangchuk,
On the order of Sakyong Ayi Sengge,
The craftsman who made it excellently was Tsuktor. Maṅgalaṃ.

Statue of Ngorchén:

As for the statue of the Lord [commissioned] to fulfil the intentions
Of Gyeltsap Künga Wangchuk,
On the order of Sakyong Ayi Sengge,
The craftsman who made it excellently was Tsuktor. Maṅgalaṃ.

Statue of Tārā:

[Commissioned] to fulfil the intentions of a [deceased] youthful
friend,
It is a manifestation of numerous precious substances of various
kinds and
Its craftsman was Tsuktor, an embodiment of a master artist.

Comparisons with the inscriptions of other funerary commissions, both in painting and statue, suggest that the statues of Sakya Paṇḍita and Ngorchén were part of a larger set, though the lineage of the masters represented cannot be definitively identified at present. In a Sakya context, and particularly in its Ngör branch, the most prominent teaching cycle was the Lamdré, and numerous examples of its lineage masters are known in painting and statue. The set, therefore, may indeed represent the Lamdré lineage masters, although the invocations engraved on the two statues are not those commonly used in the context of the Lamdré, and we know of other commissions, such as those of the lineage masters of Cakrasaṃvara or of the Profound Path Guruyoga.

Unfortunately, the set does not appear to be recorded in Künga Wangchuk's biographies, which only mention a set of Lamdré lineage master paintings made on his shroud (*gdung ras*) as part of his funerary commissions, which were overseen by Lowo Khenchen Sönam Lhündrup (1456–1532), a princely Sakya scholar-monk of the ruling family of Mustang and a disciple of Künga Wangchuk.⁴⁶ However, Aseng

⁴⁶ See Kun dga' grol mchog, *Glo bo mkhan chen gyi rnam thar* (fols. 16a4–7, 48b4): *rje btsun kun dga' dbang phyug nyid kyi dgongs pa rdzogs pa'i slad du* [...] | *sku'i rten gser zangs las grub pa'i rdo rje 'chang dang* | *rje nyid kyi sku 'dra zhe dgu ma'i khongs su legs par bsgrubs pa dang* | *bris thang gi lam 'bras bgyud pa gzab bris* | ; *gtso bor snga smos pa'i rje btsun rdo rje 'chang kun dga' dbang phyug gi dgongs pa khyad par can yongs su bskang ba'i slad du lam 'bras bgyud pa* | ; *Yon tan dpal bzang, Kun dga' dbang phyug gi rnam thar* (fol. 45a7–8): *slar yang chos rje bsod nams lhun grub legs pa'i 'byung gnas rgyal mtshan dpal bzang pos* | *sku'i rten zangs gser las bsgrubs pa'i rdo rje 'chang dang* |

Dorjé Tenpa, Künga Wangchuk's royal patron and the brother of Lowo Khenchen, is mentioned in other works as having commissioned several statues. Among the funerary commissions he had made for his late mother, the *Royal Succession of Mustang* records him as the patron of two gilded statues of Tārā (the length of an arrow) and two sets of statues of the Lamdré lineage masters, one of which was a set of twenty-six statues and the other of which was a set of twenty-one.⁴⁷ Aseng Dorjé Tenpa also invited Gorampa Sönam Sengge, the sixth abbot of Ngor, to Mustang during his tenure as abbot (1483–1486), but this visit did not take place. As a result, Aseng Dorjé Tenpa commissioned twenty-four statues of the Lamdré lineage masters from Vajradhara down to Gorampa himself (plus an additional statue of a protector, most likely Pañjaranātha Mahākāla), which were later kept at Gorampa's monastic seat at Tupten Namgyel.⁴⁸

Since his elder brother and former king of Mustang, Tashi Gön, died in 1489, it is likely that Aseng Dorjé Tenpa became Tashi Gön's successor in the last years of his elder brother's life. The inscriptions of the two statues of Sakya Paṇḍita and Ngorchhen suggest that the set of which they were part was commissioned during the reign of Aseng Dorjé Tenpa, as he is referred to with the title "Sakyong" (*sa skyong*), "Protector of the Realm," a title for a ruler or king. Therefore, the commission of the two statues and the set of which they were part can most likely be dated to the last two decades of the fifteenth century, if not to the year of Künga Wangchuk's death in 1478 or shortly thereafter, and their provenance attributed to Mustang. The statue of Tārā mentioned above, which was commissioned by Aseng Dorjé Tenpa as a funerary commission for an unnamed friend, can also most likely be dated to the final two decades of the fifteenth century.

rje nyid kyi sku 'dra | zhe dgu ma'i khongs su legs par? grub pa dang | gdung ras la gsung ngag gi bla ma brgyud pa rnam bzab ris su bzhengs pa | ; bSod nams lhun grub, Kun dga' dbang phyug gi rnam thar (fol. 110b4–5): sku'i rten lam 'bras bla ma brgyud pa tshang ma dang | gsung gi rten [...] la sogs pa bar tshod med par grub pa yin la | .

⁴⁷ See Tshe dbang don yod rdo rje, *Glo bo rgyal rabs* (p. 20.4–7): *yang yum rin mo che'i dgongs pa rdzogs phyir | [...] lam 'bras bla ma brgyud pa sku nyi shu rtsa drug | sgrol ma'i sku mda' tshad gnyis rnam zangs gser las legs par bsgrubs | yang lam 'bras bla brgyud gser sku nyi shu rtsa cig bzhengs pa | .* For two other sets of statues from the Lamdré lineage (at Namgyel monastery, a Ngor branch in Mustang), dating from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, which depict Künga Wangchuk as the possible last master of the set, see Luczanits 2016: 128–129. For these and other Lamdré sets at Namgyel, see Klohe 2022, Klohe 2024. A mid-seventeenth-century inventory (*dkar chag*) from Mustang records statues from three different Lamdré lineage sets kept at the Tsarang Palace, Samdrup Gepel, which was founded a century earlier by Aham Döndrup Dorjé (fl. c. 1580), see Heimbel 2017: 318, n. 442. On Döndrup Dorjé and his founding of the Tsarang Palace, see Tshe dbang don yod rdo rje, *Glo bo rgyal rabs* (pp. 23.21–25.3), Jackson 1984: 105, 125, 128–129, 149, 166.

⁴⁸ See Heimbel 2017: 335–336.

Another set of Lamdré lineage masters appears to have been part of the funerary commissions for Sönam Zangpo (1689–1749), the thirtieth abbot. In addition to two portrait statues of him—one of which was a Lamdré supplement—and his memorial *thangka*, additional funerary commissions recorded are “statues of the Lamdré lineage masters” (*lam 'bras bla brgyud 'bur sku |*), as well as *thangka* paintings of Guhyasamāja Akṣobhya and the Buddha with the Sixteen Elders (either as a single painting or also as a set).⁴⁹

4. Different Types of Funerary Commission Statues Portraying the Abbots of Ngor

The study of statues associated with the Ngor tradition (or of those housed at Ngor) is rather limited compared to that of its paintings. As a small contribution to this understudied field, I shall now present different types of Ngor abbot portrait statues, which were usually made as part of funerary commissions. This classification is based on the textual analysis of references contained in the literary corpus of Ngor abbot biographies. It is hoped that this classification will prove useful in identifying available statues portraying Ngor abbots, a challenging task in the absence of epigraphic-historical evidence.

As mentioned above, the literary corpus suggests that four different types of abbot portrait statues were commissioned:

- chamber statues (*gzims mal sku 'dra*) that were apparently destined for the abbot's former chamber or living quarters
- statues created as a supplement continuing an existing set or series of statues of masters representing the lineage of the Lamdré instructions
- statues created as a supplement continuing an existing set or series of statues of masters representing the lineage of the Pro-found Path Guruyoga (*Lam zab bla ma'i rnal 'byor*)
- additional statues portraying the abbot (for which biographies do not indicate a specific function)

In the following discussion, the term “statue” has been used indiscriminately to refer to a wide variety of Tibetan terms used in the literary corpus of Ngor abbot biographies, including *kundra* (*sku 'dra*), *kunyen* (*sku brnyan*), *draku* (*'dra sku*), *drabak* (*'dra 'bag*), *drazhel* (*'dra zhal*), *nangnyen* (*snang brnyan*), and *burku* (*'bur sku*).

⁴⁹ See Ngag dbang chos grags, *Ngag dbang chos skyong bzang po'i rnam thar* (fol. 13b2–4): [...] *gzhan yang dgongs rdzogs su dmigs gnang gis lam 'bras bla brgyud 'bur sku | gsang 'dus mi bskyod pa | thub pa gnas brtan gyi zhal thang rnams kyang bzhengs |*.

4.1 The Chamber Statue

Chamber statues are mentioned as part of the funerary commissions for eleven of the first twenty-four abbots of Ngor, including the statues of two former abbots that were made in the monastic institutions where they had been active after retiring from the abbacy of Ngor. As there is no later written evidence to its commissioning after the twenty-fourth abbot, Lhündrup Penden (1624–1697), it seems likely that this type of statue was no longer made.

The chamber statue may also have taken on a new role. For three of these eleven statues it is specified that they were not placed in the former living quarters of the abbot they depicted, but in the Lamdré Chapel of Ngor—namely, those of Könchok Penden, the twelfth abbot, Drangti Penchen Namkha Pelzang, the thirteenth abbot, and Sherap Jungné (1596–1653), the eighteenth abbot. This placement suggests that they took on a new role as a supplement (*kha skong*) to continue the Lamdré lineage. This observation is confirmed by the reference to the chamber statue of Sherap Jungné, which is described as “residing as part of the supplements in the Lamdré Chapel” (*lam 'bras lha khang du kha skong gi sdebs su bzhugs pa*).⁵⁰

The references to the eleven chamber statues reveal that they were made in a variety of sizes and materials. One was life-size (*sku tshad*), others were the length of an arrow (*mda' tshad*),⁵¹ and for some the biographies do not specify any size at all. Some statues were made of gilded copper (*gser sku*, *sku 'dra gser zangs*), others were made of clay mixed with medicinal substances (*sman sku*), and for some no material was specified.

A more systematic overview is complicated by the fact that in some cases, where several sources refer to the commissioning of one and the same statue, the information about its material or size differs from source to source. For instance, in the two passages translated above about the funerary commissions for Sanggyé Senggé, the eleventh abbot, the size of his chamber statue is given as life-size by his biography, but as about the length of an arrow in the biography of its commissioning patron.

⁵⁰ See Ngag dbang bsod nams rgyal mtshan, *Shes rab 'byung gnas kyi rnam thar* (fols. 106b6–107a1).

⁵¹ According to Jackson and Jackson 1984: 23, n. 5, an arrow's length (*mda' tshad*) is “approximately four spans.” And one span (*mtho*) is, according to Jackson and Jackson 1984: 50, “the distance from the end of the extended thumb to the tip of the middle finger.” Krang dbyi sun et al., *Bod rgya tshig tshod chen mo* (s.v. *mtho*) give the same definition and add as a second meaning that one span was equal to twelve finger widths (*sor mo bcu gnyis kyi zheng tshad* |). The literary corpus under discussion refers to the size as “about an arrow” (*mda' gang tsam*) or “slightly more than an arrow” (*mda' gang lhag tsam*).

For the chamber statue of Könchok Lhündrup (1497–1557), the tenth abbot, the matter is even more complicated. One of his two biographies describes the statue as being made of sandalwood and measuring a little more than the length of an arrow.⁵² His other biography, while not mentioning his chamber statue, refers to another statue of him, a medicinal clay statue made of such ingredients as sandalwood.⁵³ The description of the material of this other statue raises the question of whether his chamber statue, which was said to be made of sandalwood, was also made of clay containing some sandalwood, rather than entirely of sandalwood. Moreover, the biography of the Ngor abbot who patronised the funerary commissions for Könchok Lhündrup also mentions his chamber statue, but describes it as a life-size gilded statue (*gser sku sku tshad ma*).⁵⁴ One could consider the possibility that these sources refer to different chamber statues, but given that they describe the same funerary commissions and mention only one such statue, this seems rather unlikely.

Table 1 below relates the sizes and materials of the eleven chamber statues, with the unclear cases of Sanggyé Senggé and Könchok Lhündrup recorded as “unclear.”

Chamber Statue	Life-size	Arrow's length	Size not specified	Size unclear
Gilt copper gser sku gser zangs	1	1 1	1	1
Medicinal clay	—	2	—	—
Material not specified	—	—	3	—
Material unclear	—	—	—	1

Table 1 — Size and material of chamber statues

Although the funerary commissions for Ngorchén, the founder of Ngor, only mention that his gilded statue was made in life-size,⁵⁵

⁵² See dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 284a1–2).

⁵³ See Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 306b4–5).

⁵⁴ See Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 337b3–4).

⁵⁵ See dKon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 236b5); *sku 'dra gser sku sku tshad ma dang l*; Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 45a5); *rje nyid kyi sku tshad kyi 'dra 'bag gser skur bsgrub pa l*; Heimbel 2017: 338–389. See also

Künga Drölchok (1507–1566), in his biography of Ngorchén's disciple Shākya Chokden (1428–1507), makes several references to the existence of Ngorchén's chamber statue at Ngor.⁵⁶ It is therefore possible that the gilded statue of Ngorchén was in fact his chamber statue.

In general, references to chamber statues in the biographies of other Tibetan masters show that this type of statue was not confined to the Ngor tradition alone, as seems to have been the case with the memorial *thangka*, but was also found in other monasteries.⁵⁷ One possible surviving example is the life-size clay statue of Ngawang Sönam Wangchuk (1638–1685), the twenty-eighth hierarch of Sakya.⁵⁸

4.2 The Lamdré Lineage Supplement

A statue of the abbot, made as a supplement to continue the lineage of Lamdré masters, is the funerary commission most frequently recorded in the literary corpus of Ngor abbot biographies. In total, I was able to locate written records of the commission of this type of statue for twenty-seven Ngor abbots.

As with the chamber statue discussed above, the Lamdré lineage supplements were made in a variety of sizes and materials, and since for many of them either the size or the material, or even both, are not specified in the sources, a detailed systematisation is not possible. However, despite the fact that the size of ten statues is unspecified, it is worth noting that fourteen were made to the length of an arrow (*mda'*), while only one was made to the size of a cubit (*khru*; = 20 or 24 *sor*),⁵⁹ one to life-size (*sku tshad*), and one even to the height of a storey (*thog tshad*). Similarly, although the material of six statues is unspecified, the majority (fifteen statues) were gilded, while only six were made of medicinal clay. The correlation between size and material (Table 2) shows that most (i.e., eleven) of the sixteen statues for which both size and material were given were made to the length of an arrow

bSod nams seng ge, *Mus chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 70b5): *gzhan yang sku'i rten du chos rje nyid kyi sku 'dra sku tshad mā dang*! [...] *zangs gser las grub pa dang*!.

⁵⁶ See Kun dga' grol mchog, *Shākya mchog ldan gyi rnam thar* (fols. 39a2, 69a7, 69b3): *ngor gyi rdo rje 'chang gi gzims mal sku 'dra'i drung du 'bul mi gnang*!; *de gong rje rdo rje 'chang chen gyi dus chen sa ga'i nyer lnga'i stengs su ngor tshor lo re bzhiñ mang ja re dang*! *gzims mal sku 'dra'i drung du dar chen gyi sñam sbyar re 'bul ba gnang nas*!; *da gzims mal sku 'dra'i na bza' de skyel mi mi 'byor sñang bas sku tshab cig 'dir bzheñgs dgos pa 'dug gsung nas*!.

⁵⁷ These references can be found, for instance, by searching for the term *gzims mal sku 'dra* in the digital texts of BUDA by BDRC or in those of the SRC (e.g., R168, R181, R185, R187, R189, R193, R245, R248, R997).

⁵⁸ See Henss 2021: 401.

⁵⁹ See Krang dbyi sun et al., *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* (s.v. *khru*), *sMon lam tshig mdzod chen mo* (s.vv. *khru*, *khru gang*).

and gilded.⁶⁰

Lamdré Lineage	Height of one story	Life-size	Arrow's length	Cubit	Size not specified
Gilt copper	1	1	11	1	1
Medicinal clay	—	—	2	—	4
Material not specified	—	—	1	—	5

Table 2 — Size and material of the Lamdré lineage supplements

References to Lamdré lineage supplements as funerary commissions are not always explicit in the corpus of Ngor abbot biographies and can require some interpretation in comparison with other references. The most straightforward mentions of this type of statue refer to “a supplement for the Lamdré lineage masters” (*lam 'bras bla ma brgyud pa'i kha skong*), “a supplement for the Lamdré lineage” (*lam 'bras brgyud pa'i kha skong*), “a Lamdré supplement” (*lam 'bras kha skong / bskang*), or “a supplement for the Lamdré” (*lam 'bras su kha skong*).⁶¹

There are other references that do not specify the lineage that these supplements continue but seem to clarify the function of the supplements by mentioning the chapel in which they were installed, namely, the Lamdré Chapel, where, as mentioned above, one of the two sets of statues portraying the Lamdré lineage masters commissioned by Ngorchén was found as well. These mentions refer, for instance, to “a supplement for the lineage masters in the Lamdré Chapel” (*lam 'bras lha khang du bla ma brgyud pa'i kha skong*) or “a supplement for the lineage in the Lamdré Chapel” (*lam 'bras lha khang du brgyud pa'i kha*

⁶⁰ For the Lamdré lineage supplement, the table has not been further subdivided for gilt copper statues because in some cases different sources describe the material of one and the same statue differently. For instance, for the lineage supplements of Sanggyé Rinchen, the eighth abbot, and Lhachok Senggé, the ninth abbot, three sources refer to each one in three different ways: (1) as a *gser sku*, (2) as made of *gser zangs*, and (3) as made of *zangs gser*; see respectively Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *lHa mchog seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 262b3–4), dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 273b4–5), Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 294a3–4).

⁶¹ See respectively dPal ldan chos skyong, *rTogs pa brjod pa* (vol. *wam*, fol. 485a4), Sangs rgyas rin chen, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 196a1), bsTan 'dzin rgya mtsho, *bSod nams lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 14b3), lHun grub dpal ldan, *bSod nams rgya mtsho'i rnam thar* (fol. 151a5), dPal ldan chos skyong, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fols. 12a1–2, 34a5).

skong).⁶² Shorter mentions refer to “a supplement in the Lamdré Chapel” (*lam 'bras lha khang du kha skong*) or simply “a statue in the Lamdré Chapel” (*lam 'bras lha khang du sku 'dra*).⁶³ The extensively detailed biographies of abbots from the Tartsé Labrang—such as Jampa Künga Tenzin (1776–1862), the seventy-fourth abbot, or Jampel Zangpo (1789–1864), the fifty-first abbot—even include accounts of manufacturing the statues, their ceremonial installation in the Lamdré Chapel, and the associated rituals that were performed.⁶⁴

In some cases, it is only possible to identify a statue as a Lamdré lineage supplement by interpreting references from multiple sources. For instance, after the death of Lhachok Senggé, the ninth abbot, his biography records the commissioning of both an arrow-length gilded statue of Sanggyé Rinchen, his predecessor as abbot, and of Lhachok Senggé himself.⁶⁵ However, the two biographies of Könchok Lhündrup, the patron of the funerary commissions and Lhachok Senggé's successor as abbot, make it clear that both statues were found in the Lamdré Chapel, which allows them to be identified as Lamdré lineage supplements.⁶⁶

This latter example also illustrates the fact that the Lamdré lineage supplement was sometimes not made directly after the death of the abbot it portrayed, but as part of the funerary commissions for a later abbot. Three such cases are recorded for the early abbots of Ngor:

- (1) The supplement of Penden Dorjé (1411–1482), the fifth abbot, was made as part of the funerary commissions for Könchok Pel, the seventh abbot⁶⁷
- (2) The supplement for Gorampa Sönam Senggé, the sixth abbot, was made as part of the funerary commissions for Könchok Pel, the seventh abbot⁶⁸
- (3) The supplement of Sanggyé Rinchen, the eighth abbot, as mentioned above, was made as part of the funerary commissions

⁶² See respectively dPal ldan chos skyong, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fol. 28b6), bKra shis dbang phyug, *Tshul khrims dpal bzang gi rnam thar* (fol. 290a4).

⁶³ See respectively dPal ldan chos skyong, *Sangs rgyas dpal bzang gi rnam thar* (fol. 384a1–2), dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 283a6).

⁶⁴ See Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *Byams pa kun dga' bstan 'dzin gyi rnam thar* (fols. 170a5–171b1), Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *'Jam dpal bzang po'i rnam thar* (fols. 254b5–255b6).

⁶⁵ See Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *lHa mchog seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 262b3).

⁶⁶ See dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 273b4–5), Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 294a2–4).

⁶⁷ See Nātha, *Sangs rgyas rin chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 224b4–6), Sangs rgyas rin chen, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 196a1),

⁶⁸ See Nātha, *Sangs rgyas rin chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 224b4–6), Sangs rgyas rin chen, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 196a1–3)

for Lhachok Senggé, the ninth abbot⁶⁹

Moreover, as two rare cases— Sanggyé Püntsok, the twenty-fifth abbot, and Tsültrim Pelzang (1675–1710), the twenty-eighth abbot— show, the Lamdré supplement could have already been made during the lifetime of an abbot but still be considered part of his funerary commissions.⁷⁰

It should be noted that, as mentioned above, the chamber statue was sometimes placed in the Lamdré Chapel to take on a new role as a Lamdré lineage supplement. The clearest indication of this change of function is recorded for the chamber statue of Sherap Jungné, the eighteenth abbot, which is described as “residing as part of the supplements in the Lamdré Chapel” (*lam 'bras lha khang du kha skong gi sdebs su bzhugs pa*).⁷¹

There are also similar references for the chamber statues of Könchok Penden, the twelfth abbot, and Drangti Penchen Namkha Pelzang, the thirteenth abbot. The former abbot's biography refers to the making of “the chamber statue of the Lord himself, a gilded image slightly larger than the length of an arrow, which resided in the Lamdré Chapel.”⁷² The biography of Künga Sönam Lhündrup (1571–1642), the fifteenth abbot, records that Drangti Penchen's “gilded chamber statue of the length of an arrow [...] resided in the Lamdré Chapel of [Ngor] Ewam [Chöden].”⁷³ The biography of Drangti Penchen, who was the patron of Könchok Penden's funerary commissions, mentions both statues but does not identify them as chamber statues. The former is merely described as “a Lamdré lineage master supplement slightly larger than the length of an arrow” and the latter as “a Lamdré supplement about the length of an arrow.”⁷⁴ However, as they all refer to only one supplement, they are most likely referring

⁶⁹ See dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 273b4–5), Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 294a2–4).

⁷⁰ See respectively Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Sangs rgyas phun tshogs kyi myong ba brjod pa* (fol. 212a5–b1), Tshul khrims dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas phun tshogs kyi rnam thar* (fol. 261b3–4), bKra shis dbang phyug, *Tshul khrims dpal bzang po'i rnam thar* (fol. 289b1–2).

⁷¹ See Ngag dbang bsod nams rgyal mtshan, *Shes rab 'byung gnas kyi rnam thar* (fols. 106b6–107a1).

⁷² See Kun dga' bkra shis, *dKon mchog dpal ldan gyi rnam thar* (fol. 450b4–6): [...] rje de nyid kyi gzims mal sku 'dra lam 'bras lha khang du bzhugs pa'i gser sku mda' gang lhag tsam dang | [...].

⁷³ See Kun dga' blo gros, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs kha skong* (p. 95.2–5): [...] pañ chen nam mkha' dpal bzang gi gzims mal sku 'dra gser zangs kyi mda' tshad ma | shing gi khri rgyab na bza' bcas dang | dus thang che ba rnams e wañ lam 'bras lha khang du bzhugs shing |.

⁷⁴ See bSod nams shes rab, *Nam mkha' dpal bzang gi rnam thar* (fols. 14b2, 27a3–4): sku'i rten rje de nyid kya [= kyi] sku 'dra lam 'bras bla brgyud kha bskang mda' tshad lhag tsam dang |; sku'i rten rje de nyid kyi sku 'dra lam 'bras kha bskang mda' gang tsam dang |.

to the same one.

As many of those references suggest, the Lamdré lineage supplements were installed in the Lamdré Chapel. There also exists a brief description of this six-pillared chapel by Katok Situ Chökyi Gyatso (1880–1925), who visited Ngor in 1919, that seems to support my observation. Katok Situ wrote:

In the six-pillared Lamdré Chapel at the top of the Labrang [i.e., the Wangkhang Chenmo], there is the statue of Ngorchén in realistic likeness and down to Mûchen a set of Lamdré lineage masters from the time of Ngorchén. Other than that, there are complete statues of the line of successive abbots in sizes of a cubit, an arrow, and life-size, etc., according to the financial means of their patrons, together with offering items such as thrones, symbolic hand implements, and *damaru* drums.⁷⁵

The set of Lamdré lineage master statues Katok Situ mentioned could perhaps be identified as one of the two sets of statues that Ngorchén had commissioned in honour of his teacher Buddhaśrī. As noted above, the set of larger clay statues was installed in the Lamdré Chapel, although Mûchen Könchok Gyeltsen, the second abbot, was not originally part of it. The variously sized statues of the entire line of successive abbots mentioned by Katok Situ can most likely be identified with all the statues discussed in the present section and are therefore proposed as supplements of the Lamdré lineage. With few exceptions, the Lamdré lineage of Ngor has been identical with the succession of the abbots of Ngor, as can be seen in the representations of the lineage in painting, where after Ngorchén the Lamdré lineage is depicted as being transmitted through the successive abbots of Ngor.⁷⁶

In his description of the two main temples of Ngor, Katok Situ used specific terms that are sometimes difficult to understand. In the passage just translated above, he referred to the assembly hall of Ngor, the Wangkhang Chenmo, as the Labrang. This term, which I cannot explain, would be more appropriate for the second main temple, the

⁷⁵ Chos kyi rgya mtsho, *dBus gtsang gnas yig* (fol. 215b4–5): *bla brang thog lam 'bras lha khang ka drug na | ngor chen nga 'dra ma | mus chen bar ngor chen sku dus kyi lam 'bras bla brgyud tshar gcig | de min mkhan rabs rnams khru gang | mda' gang | mi tshad sogs 'byor pa ltar khri phyag dam sogs mchod rdzas bcas cha tshang |*. The statue of Ngorchén in realistic likeness is most likely the same one mentioned by 'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Byams pa kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar* (fol. 303b2): *lam 'bras lha khang du ngor chen rdo rje 'chang gi 'dra sku rin po cher bzang gos las grub pa'i dbu gdugs |*. There are at least four extant smaller statues of Ngorchén that are traditionally known as “Ngorchén in realistic likeness” (*ngor chen nga 'dra ma*), one gilded and three made of clay. Three of these from the Lamdré Chapel of Ngor are shown in figs. 18–20.

⁷⁶ For depictions of Ngor's Lamdré lineage surrounding the main figure of memorial *thangkas*, see Heimbel 2021.

Zimkhang Kadrugma, the “Six-pillared Residence,” where Ngor’s central office, the Labrang Zhung, was located. The abbot had his residence on the second floor of this temple, where he also performed important functions such as giving ordinations and the summer teachings (*dbyar chos*) at the sixteen-pillared Yapchen, and where important meetings of all four lama palaces were also held.⁷⁷

Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo (1820–1892), who lived at Ngor some seventy years before Katok Situ’s visit, gave a similar but slightly shorter description of the Lamdré Chapel:

In the Lamdré Chapel, there is, for instance, a Lamdré lineage master set headed by a statue of Ngorchén and statues and reliquaries of the line of successive abbots.⁷⁸

Dezhung Rinpoche (1906–1987), who visited Ngor in 1949, gave a similar account of the Lamdré Chapel, adding a few details:

In the Lamdré Chapel, there is the medical clay statue of Ngorchén Dorjechang in realistic likeness and the statues of the Lamdré lineage masters from Vajradhara down to Mūchen Sempa Chenpo, which were consecrated by Ngorchén Dorjechang, [...]. Moreover, there are variously sized statues of the successive abbots, and in particular the

⁷⁷ Katok Situ’s account begins with a detailed description of the chapels of the Tartsé Labrang where he stayed in the Göjung Tsomchen; he does not describe the temples of any of the other three main lama palaces of Luding, Khangsar, and Pendé. He then adds some brief remarks on Ngor’s annual ritual calendar, continues with a description of the chapels of Ngor’s two main temples, the Wangkhang Chenmo (i.e., the assembly hall which he calls Labrang) and the Zimkhang Kadrugma (without clearly stating when his description moves from the former to the latter), and ends with some final remarks, on things such as the location of the lama palaces. See Chos kyi rgya mtsho, *dBus gtsang gnas yig* (fols. 214a2–b6, 214b6–215a4, 215a4–216b6, 216b6–217a6, 217a6–b4). See also Thub bstan snying po, *Ngor e wam chos ldan gyi lo rgyus* (pp. 28–43). The basic structure of Katok Situ’s account is not properly reflected in the translation of the section on Ngor prepared by Everding (2019, vol. 2: 271–281), who understands the Labrang Zhung as a reference to the Tartsé Labrang. Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo (1820–1892) properly used the term Labrang Zhung for locating the Lamzap Chapel as part of the Zimkhang Kadrugma; see ‘Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse’i dbang po, *dBus gtsang gi gnas rten* (fol. 13a2): *khyad par du bla brang gzhung du ngor chen gzim chung | lam zab phug tu lam ‘bras bla brgyud dang | phyag dpe rigs bka’ rgya ma* |.

⁷⁸ ‘Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse’i dbang po, *dBus gtsang gi gnas rten* (fol. 13a2–3): *lam ‘bras lha khang du ngor chen ‘dra sku gtsos lam ‘bras bla brgyud dang | gdan rabs rim byon gyi ‘dra zhal dang sku gdung sogs* |. Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo was recognised as one of the first reincarnations within the Ngor tradition—namely that of Jampa Namkha Chimé (1765–1820), the forty-fourth abbot of Ngor—, studied at Ngor (in the early 1840s and from 1848–1851), was chosen as a candidate for Ngor’s abbacy from the Tartsé Labrang (*thar rtse zhabs drung*), and was even considered for the abbacy, but rejected for lack of sufficient wealth; see Heimbel 2017: 245.

statues of Könchok Lhündrup, Sanggyé Püntsoḳ, and Penden Chökyong are incredibly marvelous, glowing with the radiance of blessings, almost as if they were about to speak. [...]⁷⁹

Katok Situ referred to a further five sets of statues of the Lamdré lineage masters in other chapels at Ngor. He mentioned a total of some three hundred statues in the Dochel Lhakhang, which stood in front of the assembly hall, including two sets of Lamdré lineage masters.⁸⁰ One Lamdré set was for the abbatial quarters, with each statue measuring approximately the distance between the extended thumb and the tip of the middle finger (*mtsho*).⁸¹ There were also two Lamdré sets of Newari-style metal images (*bal li*) in the Lamzap Chapel, Ngorchen's original residence, the aforementioned Zimchung Kanyima, where the set of smaller clay statues of Lamdré lineage masters had also been installed and where all the aforementioned Lamdré lineage paintings were kept.⁸² Thirty years later, in 1949, Dezhung Rinpoche also saw

⁷⁹ Thar lam mKhan po 'Jam dbyangs shes rab, *sKyabs rje sde gzhung rin po che'i mdzad rnam* (vol. 2, pp. 22.20–23.5): *lam 'bras lha khang na | ngor chen rdo rje 'chang gi sman sku nga 'dra ma dang | rdo rje 'chang nas mus chen sems dpa' chen po'i bar gyi lam 'bras bla brgyud kyi sku brnyan rnams la ngor chen rdo rje 'chang gis rab gnas gnang ste | ye shes sems dpa' dngos su bzhugs pa byin rlabs can rnams dang | gzhan yang gdan rabs rim byon gyi 'dra zhal che chung sna tshogs dang | khyad par dkon mchog lhun grub | sangs rgyas phun tshogs | dpal ldan chos skyong rnams kyi 'dra zhal rnams ni byin rlabs kyi gzi 'od 'bar ba gsung 'byon la khad pa lta bu shin tu ngo mtshar ba bzhugs 'dug gsungs | [...].*

⁸⁰ See Chos kyi rgya mtsho, *dBus gtsang gnas yig* (fol. 215b2–3): *rdo gcal lha khang | bde mchog bla brgyud bal sku tshar gnyis | lam 'bras bla brgyud tshar gnyis bcas sku dngos gtsang sum brgya tsam | [...].*

⁸¹ See Chos kyi rgya mtsho, *dBus gtsang gnas yig* (fol. 216b3–6): *g.yab chen ka ba bcu drug pa'i sbug tu | [...]. | sbug tu gzim chung nang | [...]. | lam 'bras bla brgyud mtho gang tsam dang | [...]. |*

⁸² See Chos kyi rgya mtsho, *dBus gtsang yig* (fol. 217a2–5): *sbug lam zab mdzod nag tu | [...]. | lam 'bras bla brgyud bal li cha gnyis | [...]. | 'di'i sbug na | [...]. | sogs yod pa'i mdzod bka' rgya |*. Katok Situ used two different terms for the Lamzap Chapel, first referring to it as the Lamzap Dzöṅak and then referring to an interior part of it as the Dzö Kagya. This is again confusing because the Dzöṅak or Dzöṅakma, the “Black Treasury,” is also a common reference to a different monastic structure, namely the pitch-black and windowless storehouse of Ngor's assembly hall, the Wangkhang Chenmo. According to the late Luding Khenchen Rinpoche (1931–2023), the seventy-fifth abbot, the storehouse was part of the assembly hall (on the second floor?) and could only be entered from above by descending a staircase carrying a lamp in order to be able to see anything in the otherwise pitch-black room (Interview, Ngor ma dgon, 12 May 2009). The Lamzap Chapel, on the other hand, was part of the Zimkhang Kadrugma and originally served as Ngorchen's “Two-pillared Residence Quarter,” the Zimchung Kanyima, before becoming the repository for Ngor's most sacred objects and thus being known as Dzö Kagyama, the “Sealed Treasury.” See also Thub bstan snying po, *Ngor e waṃ chos ldan gyi lo rgyus* (pp. 28–43). Dezhung Rinpoche also called it Lamzap Dzöṅak; see n. 79. Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo called it Lamzap Puk; see n. 77 above.

these five sets of Lamdré lineage master statues.⁸³

A quick glance at the lama portrait statues currently housed in the cabinets of the Lamdré Chapel at Ngor reveals that there are at least four different sets of inscribed lineage master statues of smaller size (about 15cm), possibly representing the Lamdré (or Profound Path Guruyoga). Unfortunately, all four sets are incomplete and the inscriptions do not mention the patron or the occasion of their commission, but the statues of at least two sets appear to be of relatively recent origin.⁸⁴ In addition, there is another incomplete set of eighteen statues of lineage masters, but instead of the Lamdré they represent the Cakrasaṃvara lineage according to the system of Kṛṣṇacārin, and its last existing statue I have elsewhere proposed to identify as Lowo Khenchen Sönam Lhündrup (1456–1532).⁸⁵ This set might have been one of the two sets of Saṃvara lineage master statues in a Newari style (*bal sku*) that both Katok Situ and Dezhung Rinpoche described for the Dochel Lhakhang.⁸⁶

4.3 The Lineage Supplement of the Profound Path Guruyoga

The lineage supplement of the Profound Path Guruyoga (Lam zab bla ma'i rnal 'byor), a Hevajra guruyoga meditation practice used in the Lamdré, is another statue depicting the abbot that was made as part of funerary commissions. However, references to its commission in the literary corpus of Ngor abbot biographies are less common than those for the Lamdré lineage supplement, although this observation does not exclude the possibility that it was usually made, but simply not recorded in many biographies.

So far I have been able to locate references to the commissioning of seven such lineage supplements. These references are generally found for the early abbots of Ngor, with the latest being for Tsültrim Pelzang (1675–1710), the twenty-eighth abbot.

⁸³ See Thar lam mkhan po 'Jam dbyangs shes rab, *sKyabs rje sde gzhung rin po che'i mdzad rnam* (vol. 2, pp. 22.18–20, 23.4–5, 23.5–17): *rdo bcal lha khang du bde mchog lu hi pa | kye rdor sogs rgya nag tā ming dus kyi li ma mang po | thub pa chu lon ma li rnying khyad 'phags | bal li'i bde mchog bla brgyud tshar gnyis | lam 'bras bla brgyud tshar gnyis | [...]; sbug gi gzim chung nang du | ngor chen dkon mchog lhun grub kyi 'dra zhal che tsam dang | lam 'bras bla brgyud mtho gang tsam dang | [...]; sbug lam zab mdzod nag tu | [...]* *bal li'i lam 'bras bla brgyud tshar gnyis | [...]*.

⁸⁴ For two examples portraying Nyenchenpa Sönam Tenpa (1222–1317) and Mūchen Sanggyé Rinchen, the eighth abbot, from a set possibly depicting the lineage masters of the Lamdré or Profound Path Guruyoga; see figs. 13–14. Both have inscriptions on the back of the statue between the petals of the lotus pedestal: *nyan chen pa and rje mus chen*.

⁸⁵ See von Schroeder 2001: 1124, 1206–1217, pls. 330–335E, Heimbel 2017: 21.

⁸⁶ See nn. 80, 83 above.

Table 3 shows that four statues were gilded (*gser sku*), one was made of medicinal clay (*sman sku*), and for two the material was not specified in the biographies. The statues were made in smaller sizes than those of the Lamdré lineage. These include, from largest to smallest, two statues measuring the distance between the extended thumb and the tip of the middle finger (*rgyab mtho* or *mtho*; = 12 *sor*), one measuring the distance between the extended thumb and the base of the little finger of a hand made into a fist (*mkhyid*; = 7 *sor*; also given as 5 *sor*), and one measuring the distance from the tip of the index finger to its base at the third joint (*mdzub*; = 6 *sor*).⁸⁷ For the one statue whose size is unclear—that of Sanggyé Senggé, the eleventh abbot—the biographies give different details. According to his own biography, it was the size of the distance between the extended thumb and the base of the little finger of a hand made into a fist (*mkhyid gang*), whereas the biography of Könchok Penden, the twelfth abbot, who oversaw his funeral, gives it with the size of about the distance between the extended thumb and the tip of the middle finger (*rgyab mtho gang tsam*).⁸⁸

Guruyoga Lineage	mtho	mkhyid	mdzub	Size not specified	Size unclear
Gilt copper	2	—	—	1	1
Medicinal clay	—	—	—	1	—
Material not specified	—	1	1	—	—

Table 3 — Size and material of the Profound Path Guruyoga lineage supplements

Most references to the commissioning of the lineage supplement are straightforward, referring to the statue as “a supplement for the lineage of the Profound Path” (*lam zab brgyud pa'i kha skong*) or “a Profound

⁸⁷ See Krang dbyi sun et al., *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* (s.vv. *mtho*, *mtho gang*; *mkhyid*; *mdzub gang*), *sMon lam tshig mdzod chen mo* (s.vv. *mtho*; *mkhyid*, *mkhyid gang*, *mkhyud gang*; *mdzub gang*). The size of the statues is generally specified by stating how many units of that size each statue was, namely “one” (*gang*), and in many cases the Tibetan word *tsam* (“about”) or *lhag tsam* (“slightly larger than”) is added to clarify that the size is given only approximately.

⁸⁸ See nn. 3, 6 above.

Path supplement" (*lam zab kha skong / bskang*).⁸⁹ Only two require a little more interpretation, when the supplement is referred to as "a gilded statue for the Profound Path" (*lam zab du gser sku*) or "a statue of medicinal clay in the Lamzap Chapel" (*lam zab lha khang du sman sku*).⁹⁰ As with the Lamdré Chapel, the location of the latter statue in the Lamzap Chapel suggests that it served there as a lineage supplement for the Profound Path Guruyoga. I am therefore inclined to think that all those statues continuing or updating an earlier set or series of lineage masters of the Profound Path were installed in the Lamzap Chapel. As mentioned above, this chapel was originally Ngorchen's residence quarter on the second floor of the Zimkhang Kadrugma, the "Six-pillared Residence," and it was in this chapel that the set of smaller statues of Lamdré lineage masters he had commissioned were installed. It was also here that the Lamdré lineage master paintings were kept, and that is described as the repository of Ngor's most sacred objects.

To provide a point of reference for comparison, when mentioning the commissioning of a new statue, there are also mentions of pre-existing sets or series of statues of masters of the Profound Path Guruyoga lineage. For instance, among the funerary commissions for Könchok Pel, the seventh abbot, the very first casting (*lugs phud*) was a gilded statue of Mūchen Könchok Gyeltsen, the second abbot, which was "equal [in size?] to those of the Profound Path lineage" (*lam zab brgyud pa dang mnyam pa l*).⁹¹ Similarly, the biography of Tsültrim Pelzang, the twenty-eighth abbot, states that his "statue of medicinal clay in the Lamzap Chapel was of the same type as those of the previous lamas" (*lam zab lha khang du sman sku gong ma rnams dang gras mnyam l*).⁹²

4.4 Additional and Obscure References to Statues Portraying the Abbots of Ngor

The literary corpus of Ngor abbot biographies occasionally mentions funerary commissions of statues depicting a deceased abbot, without

⁸⁹ See, for instance, Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 337b3–4), bSod nams shes rab, *Nam mkha' dpal bzang gi rnam thar* (fol. 27a3–4), bSod nams lhun grub, *Kun dga' dbang phyug gi rnam thar* (fol. 110b5).

⁹⁰ See dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 284a2), bKra shis dbang phyug, *Tshul khrims dpal bzang po'i rnam thar* (fol. 289b2). If the term "Lamzap" in the first passage is used as an abbreviation for the Lamzap Chapel, the passage could also be translated as "a gilded statue in the Lamzap Chapel" (*lam zab du gser sku*).

⁹¹ See Sangs rgyas rin chen, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 196a1–2), Nātha, *Sangs rgyas rin chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 224b4–5).

⁹² See bKra shis dbang phyug, *Tshul khrims dpal bzang po'i rnam thar* (fol. 289b2).

specifying the statue's purpose or function as one of the three types introduced above. Some of these statues can be identified as additional funerary commissions, while others might have been one of the three types but were not specifically identified as such. Some examples of both cases will now be briefly discussed.

In the case of Könchok Lhündrup, the tenth abbot, in addition to his chamber statue and the two Lamdré and Lamzap lineage supplements that were made as his funerary commissions, his disciple Wönchen Serkuba Könchok Gyeltsen had a life-size portrait statue made of medicinal clay including sandalwood, which was installed as the central image of the Serku Lhakhang, the famous "Chapel of Gilded Statues" (see figs. 15–17).⁹³ This two-pillared chapel was on the third floor of Ngor's assembly hall, the Wangkhang Chenmo, and Katok Situ described it in 1919 as containing about two hundred statues of various metals. He also mentioned the statue of Könchok Lhündrup still present there at the time, with a high-quality gilded statue of Virūpa in front of it.⁹⁴

The funerary commissions for Sanggyé Senggé, the eleventh abbot, included a clay statue of him of about one cubit (*lder sku khru gang tsam*), in addition to his chamber statue and Lamzap lineage supplement. However, this description in the biography of the commissioning patron, Könchok Penden, the twelfth abbot, leaves it unclear whether this clay statue might actually have been his otherwise unmentioned Lamdré lineage supplement. For unknown reasons, this statue is not recorded in Sanggyé Senggé's own biography, which only mentions those other two statues.⁹⁵

Among the funerary commissions for Sherap Jungné, the eighteenth abbot, two statues of him are described, with their material costs recorded, but without any indication of whether they were chamber statues or lineage supplements. However, the biography goes on to say that his chamber statue, which was not mentioned earlier, was part of the lineage supplements of the Lamdré Chapel. This order of presentation seems to suggest that one of these two statues was his chamber statue.⁹⁶

For Pelchok Geltsen, the twenty-second abbot, and Ngawang

⁹³ See dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fols. 283a6–284a2), Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 306b4–5). In the biographies of Könchok Lhündrup, his disciple Könchok Gyeltsen also appears with the titles Wönchen Serkuné, Tuksé Jangchub Sempa, and Tuksé Dampa.

⁹⁴ See Chos kyi rgya mtsho, *dBus gtsang gnas yig* (fol. 215b5–6): *gser sku lha khang ka gnyis na | ngor chen dkon mchog lhun grub sku mdun du birwa pa'i gser sku spus dag | li rag zangs gser sna tshogs sku gnyis brgya tsam |*.

⁹⁵ See nn. 3, 6 above.

⁹⁶ See Ngag dbang bsod nams rgyal mtshan, *Shes rab 'byung gnas kyi rnam thar* (fols. 106a5–107a1).

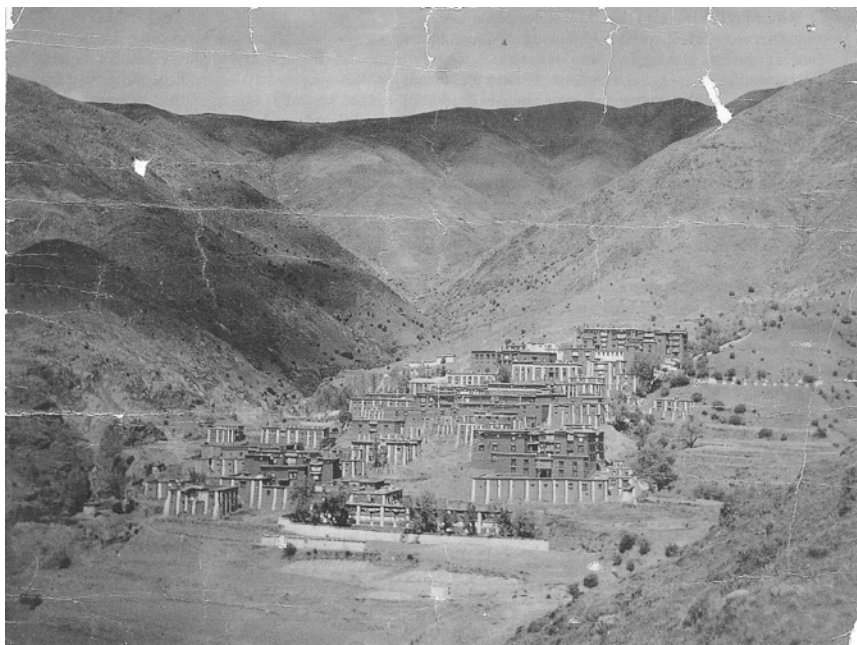
Chökyong Zangpo, the fortieth abbot, there are mentions of funerary commissions that raise the question of whether they were actually chamber statues as well. In the case of Pelchok Geltsen, his medicinal clay statue is recorded as having been commissioned by Zhalu Khenchen Rinchen Sönam Chokdrup (1602–1681) and placed in Ngor's Drupkhang, the monastic building where Pelchok Geltsen had lived and died.⁹⁷ The biography of Ngawang Chökyong Zangpo mentions among his funeral commissions a statue of him made of red sandalwood in the Khangsar Labrang, the lama palace to which he belonged.⁹⁸

Another possible chamber statue is also recorded among the funerary commissions for Könchok Pel, the seventh abbot. In addition to his Lamdré and Lamzap supplements, a medicinal clay statue of him is mentioned for the Tarpatsé residence, the nucleus of which would become the Drangti family-run Tartsé Labrang. It was in this residence that Könchok Pel settled after his retirement from the abbacy and where he died.⁹⁹

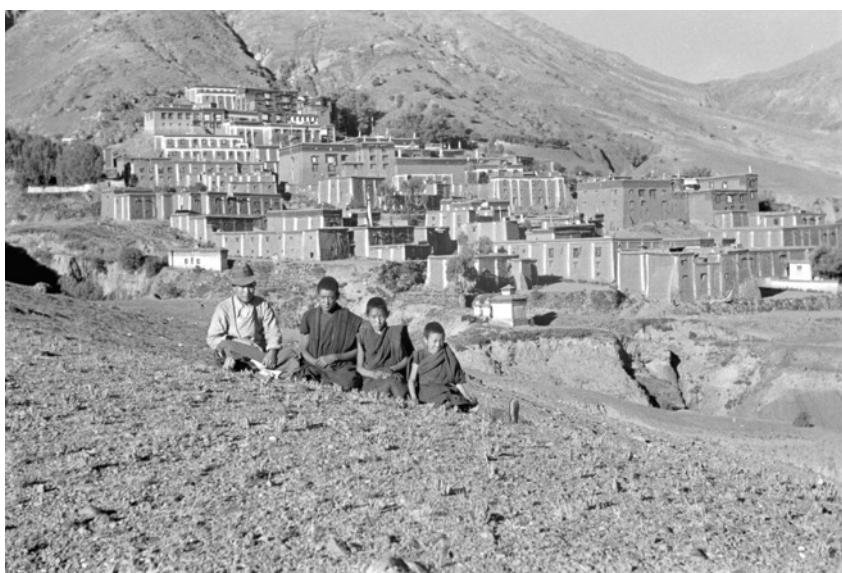
⁹⁷ See Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *dPal mchog rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar* (fol. 162a3): *sman sku gcig zha lu mkhan chen gyis bzhengs nas da lta sgrub khang na bzhugs so* |.

⁹⁸ See Ngag dbang chos grags, *Ngag dbang chos skyong bzang po'i rnam thar* (fol. 54b4–5): *phun tshogs khang gsar du tsandan dmar po las bsgrubs pa'i 'dra sku gcig bcas bzhugs shing* |.

⁹⁹ See Sangs rgyas rin chen, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 196a2–3): *thar pa rtser bzhugs rgyu'i rje nyid kyi sku 'dra sman skur bzhengs nas* [...] |; Nātha, *Sangs rgyas rin chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 224b6): *thar pa rtser bzhugs rgyu'i rje ngor chen rang gi sku rnams sman skur bzhengs nas* |.



*Figure 1 – Ngor Monastery; Photo by Chöga,
the business manager (phyag mdzod) of the late Luding Khenchen Rinpoche*



*Figure 2 – Ngor Monastery, Tucci Expedition, 1939
(MNAO, neg. Dep. IsIAO 6105/08); Photo by Felice Boffa Ballaran*



Figure 3 – Buddhaśrī (1339–1420) surrounded by the Yogacara lineage masters of the bodhisattova vow; 11th painting from a set depicting the lineage masters of the Profound Path Guruyoga commissioned by Lhachok Senggé; ca. 1516–1534; 31 1/4 × 19 1/8 in.?, Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art, Gift of Shelley and Donald Rubin, C2006.66.220; After HAR 269



Figure 4 – Vajradhara as the Original Teacher of the Lamdré instructions flanked by Vajragarbha and Nairātmyā (the latter as 2nd lineage master); 1st painting of Ngorchén's Lamdré set; 1420s; 86.40 x 78.70 cm; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia; Stella Kramrisch Collection, 1994; 1994-148-634; After Heimbel and Jackson 2023: pl. 3



Figure 5 – Virūpa and Kāṇha as 3rd and 4th lineage masters; 2nd painting of Ngorchén's Lamdré set; 1420s; 86.40 x 80 cm; The Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert H. Kinney; After Heimbel and Jackson 2023: pl. 4



Figure 6 – Damarūpa and Avadhūtipa as 5th and 6th lineage masters; 3rd painting of Ngorchen's Lamdré set; 1420s; 87.50 x 80 cm; Private Collection?; After Heimbel and Jackson 2023: pl. 5



Figure 7 – Sönam Tsemo and Drakpa Gyeltsen as 12th and 13th lineage masters; 7th painting of Ngorchen's Lamdré set; 1420s; 84 x 78.20 cm; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Gift of John Goelet; 67.831; After Heimbel and Jackson 2023: pl. 6



Figure 8 – Lamdré lineage supplement commissioned by Lhachok Senggé portraying Künga Wangchuk and Gorampa; 14th painting of the series; ca. 1516–1534; 86 x 78.50 cm; Private Collection



Figure 9 – A possible Lamdré lineage supplement commissioned by Sanggyé Senggé portraying Lhachok Senggé and Könchok Lhiindrup; 15th painting of the series?; ca. 1557–1569; 85.70 x 76.30 cm; After HAR 41215



Figure 10 – Drokmi Lotsāwa Shākya Yeshe, Setön Künrík, and Zhangtön Chöbar as lineage masters of the Lamdré from a set commissioned by Jampa Kiing Tashi as a funerary commission for Könchok Pen-den; ca. 1590s; 74 x 47 cm; Private Collection; Photo by Karl E. Ryavec



Figures 11–12 – Sakya Paṇḍita (left) and Ngorchon (right) as lineage masters of a set commissioned by Aseng Dorjé Tenpa as a funerary commission for Künga Wangchuk; ca. 1478; Heights: 32,5 cm and 34 cm; After HAR 12576 and HAR 12577 (images modified)



Figures 13 –14 – Nyenchenpa Sönam Tenpa (left) and Mūchen Sanggyé Rinchen (right) from a set possibly portraying the lineage masters of the Lamdré or Profound Path Guruyoga; Photos by Jörg Heimbel (images modified)



Figures 15–17 – Statues in the Serku Lhakhang, Ngor Monastery; Tucci Expedition, 1939 (MNAO, neg. Dep. IsIAO 6105/13, 6105/14, 6105/21); Photos by Felice Boffa Ballaran
The string connecting the statues was used to check that they were complete when the abbacy was handed over (Interview Luding Khenchen Rinpoche, Ngor ma dgon, 08 February 2015).



Figures 18–20 – Three small statues of Ngorchen Künga Zangpo known as “Ngorchen in realistic likeness” (ngor chen nga 'dra ma); Photos by Jörg Heimbel (images modified)

Appendices¹⁰⁰

A. List of Chamber Statues with References

Künga Wangchuk (1424–1478), the fourth abbot

- dKon mchog lhun grub, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 182a1)
- bSod nams lhun grub, *Kun dga' dbang phyug gi rnam thar* (fol. 110b5)

Gorampa Sönam Senggé (1429–1489), the sixth abbot; the chamber statue was made at Tupten Namgyel in Tanak, the main seat of Gorampa, under the sponsorship of Könchok Pel (1445–1514), the seventh abbot

- dKon mchog lhun grub, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 182a2)
- Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams, *Go rams pa'i rnam thar* (p. 269.1)
- Yon tan 'byung gnas, *Go rams pa'i rnam thar* (p. 364.10–11)

Sanggyé Rinchen (1453–1524), the eighth abbot; the chamber statue was made at Lingkha Dewachen, one of his seats in his native Mü, where he also passed away

- Kun dga' bsod nams, *Sangs rgyas rin chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 208a2)
- Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams, *Sangs rgyas rin chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 63a3)
- Nātha, *Sangs rgyas rin chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 240a4)

Lhachok Senggé (1468–1535), the ninth abbot

- Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 337b1–2)

Könchok Lhündrup (1497–1557), the tenth abbot

- dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 284a1–2)
- Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 337b4)

Sanggyé Senggé (1504–1569), the eleventh abbot

- Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol.

¹⁰⁰ For the terms of office of all Ngor abbots, see Heimbels 2017: 513–546.

344a2)

- Kun dga' bkra shis, *dKon mchog dpal ldan gyi rnam thar* (fol. 436b6)

Könchok Penden (1526–1590), the twelfth abbot

- Kun dga' bkra shis, *dKon mchog dpal ldan gyi rnam thar* (fol. 450b4–5)

Drangti Penchen Namkha Pelzang (1535–1602), the thirteenth abbot

- Kun dga' blo gros, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs kha skong* (p. 95.2–4)

Jampa Künga Tashi (1558–1615), the fourteenth abbot

- Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *Kun dga' bkra shis kyi rnam thar* (fol. 61b5)

Sherap Jungné (1596–1653), the eighteenth abbot

- Ngag dbang bsod nams rgyal mtshan, *Shes rab 'byung gnas kyi rnam thar* (fols. 106b6–107a1)

Lhündrup Penden (1624–1697), the twenty-fourth abbot

- Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *lHun grub dpal ldan gyi rnam thar* (fol. 178a2–3)

B. List of Lamdré Lineage Supplements with References

Penden Dorjé (1411–1482), the fifth abbot

- Nātha, *Sangs rgyas rin chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 224b6)
- Sangs rgyas rin chen, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 196a1)

Gorampa Sönam Senggé (1429–1489), the sixth abbot

- dKon mchog lhun grub, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 188a4)
- Nātha, *Sangs rgyas rin chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 224b5–6)
- Sangs rgyas rin chen, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 196a2)

Könchok Pel (1445–1514), the seventh abbot

- dKon mchog lhun grub, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 188a4)
- Nātha, *Sangs rgyas rin chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 224b5–6)
- Sangs rgyas rin chen, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 196a2)

Sanggyé Rinchen (1453–1524), the eighth abbot

- dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 273b4)
- Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 294a3–4)
- Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *lHa mchog seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 262b3)

Lhachok Senggé (1468–1535), the ninth abbot

- dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 273b4–5)
- Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 294a3–4)
- Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *lHa mchog seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 262b3)

Könchok Lhündrup (1497–1557), the tenth abbot

- dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fols. 283a6–b1, 284a1)
- Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 306b4)

Könchok Penden (1526–1590), the twelfth abbot

- Kun dga' bkra shis, *dKon mchog dpal ldan gyi rnam thar* (fol. 450b4–5)
- bSod nams shes rab, *Nam mkha' dpal bzang gi rnam thar* (fol. 14b2)

Drangti Penchen Namkha Pelzang (1535–1602), the thirteenth abbot

- Kun dga' blo gros, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs kha skong* (p. 95.2–5)
- Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fol. 17b3)
- bSod nams shes rab, *Nam mkha' dpal bzang gi rnam thar* (fol. 27a3–4)

Sherap Jungné (1596–1653), the eighteenth abbot

- Ngag dbang bsod nams rgyal mtshan, *Shes rab 'byung gnas kyi rnam thar* (fols. 106b6–107a1)

Sönam Gyatso (1616–1667), the twenty-first abbot

- Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fol. 24b1)
- lHun grub dpal ldan, *bSod nams rgya mtsho'i rnam thar* (fol. 151a5)

Pelchok Geltsen (1599–1673), the twenty-second abbot

- bKra shis dbang phyug, *Tshul khrims dpal bzang gi rnam thar* (fol. 290a4)

Sanggyé Püntsok (1649–1705), the twenty-fifth abbot

- Tshul khrims dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas phun tshogs kyi rnam thar* (fol. 261b3–6)
- Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Sangs rgyas phun tshogs kyi myong ba brjod pa* (fol. 212a5–b1)

Sheja Zangpo (1661–1702), the twenty-seventh abbot

- dPal ldan chos skyong, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fol. 12a1–2)

Tsültrim Pelzang (1675–1710), the twenty-eighth abbot

- bKra shis dbang phyug, *Tshul khrims dpal bzang po'i rnam thar* (fol. 289b1–2)
- dPal ldan chos skyong, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fol. 14a1)

Sönam Penden (1669–1713), the twenty-ninth abbot

- dPal ldan chos skyong, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fol. 16a2)

Sönam Zangpo (1689–1749), the thirtieth abbot

- Ngag dbang chos grags, *Ngag dbang chos skyong bzang po'i rnam thar* (fol. 13b2–4)

Tashi Lhündrup (1672–1739), the thirty-first abbot

- dPal ldan chos skyong, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fols. 26b6–27a1)
- Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bKra shis lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fols. 366a6–b6, 369b2, 370a2–372a1)

Tsültrim Lhündrup (1676–1730), the thirty-second abbot

- dPal ldan chos skyong, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fols. 28b6–29a3)

Namkha Samdrup (1696–1755), the thirty-third abbot

- dPal ldan chos skyong, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fol. 34a5)

Penden Chökyong (1702–1759), the thirty-fourth abbot

- dPal ldan chos skyong, *rTogs pa brjod pa* (vol. 4 (*wam*), fol. 485a4–6)

Sanggyé Pelzang (1699–1745), the thirty-fifth abbot

- dPal ldan chos skyong, *Sangs rgyas dpal bzang gi rnam thar* (fol. 384a1)

Sönam Lhündrup (1714–1745), the thirty-sixth abbot

- bsTan 'dzin rgya mtsho, *bSod nams lhun grub kyi rnam thar* (fol. 14b3)
- dPal ldan chos skyong, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fols. 41b6–42a1)

Ngawang Chökyong Zangpo (1723–1779), the fortieth abbot

- Ngag dbang chos grags, *Ngag dbang chos skyong bzang po'i rnam thar* (fol. 54b3)

Namkha Chimé (1765–1820), the forty-fourth abbot; his biography suggests that the statue was made in Degé—where he died while serving as court chaplain to the royal family—and then brought to Ngor

- Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *'Jam dpal bzang po'i rnam thar* (fols. 202a3–208a1)
- Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *Nam mkha' 'chi med kyi rnam thar* (fols. 72b5–73a2)

Jampa Künga Tenzin (1776–1862), the forty-seventh abbot

- 'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Byams pa kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar* (fols. 305a3–306a1)
- Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *Byams pa kun dga' bstan 'dzin gyi rnam thar* (fols. 170a5–171b1)

Jampel Zangpo (1789–1864), the fifty-first abbot

- Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *'Jam dpal bzang po'i rnam thar* (fols. 254b5–255b6)

Jampa Künga Tenpé Gyeltsen (1829–1870), the fifty-fourth abbot

- 'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Byams pa kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar* (fols. 333b4–334a2)¹⁰¹

C. List of Profound Path Guruyoga Lineage Supplements with References

Künga Wangchuk (1424–1478), the fourth abbot

- bSod nams lhun grub, *Kun dga' dbang phyug gi rnam thar* (fol.

¹⁰¹ Although the funerary statue of Jampa Künga Tenpé Gyeltsen is not identified as a Lamdré lineage supplement in his biography, the description of his statue is similar to that of the statues of the two previous abbots recorded in the list. Both of their statues were installed in the Lamdré Chapel, and so it has been added here and counted as a Lamdré supplement.

110b5)

Könchok Pel (1445–1514), the seventh abbot

- Sangs rgyas rin chen, *dKon mchog 'phel gyi rnam thar* (fol. 196a2)
- Nātha, *Sangs rgyas rin chen gyi rnam thar* (fol. 224b5–6)

Könchok Lhündrup (1497–1557), the tenth abbot

- Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 337b4)

Sanggyé Senggé (1504–1569), the eleventh abbot

- Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar* (fol. 344a2)
- Kun dga' bkra shis, *dKon mchog dpal ldan gyi rnam thar* (fol. 436b6)

Könchok Penden (1526–1590), the twelfth abbot

- bSod nams shes rab, *Nam mkha' dpal bzang gi rnam thar* (fol. 14b2)
- Kun dga' bkra shis, *dKon mchog dpal ldan gyi rnam thar* (fol. 450b5)

Drangti Penchen Namkha Pelzang (1535–1602), the thirteenth abbot

- bSod nams shes rab, *Nam mkha' dpal bzang gi rnam thar* (fol. 27a4)
- Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (fol. 17b3)

Tsültrim Pelzang (1675–1710), the twenty-eighth abbot

- bKra shis dbang phyug, *Tshul khrims dpal bzang po'i rnam thar* (fol. 289b2)

Transliteration Table

THL Phonetic Transcription

Achok

Achok Sengge Dorjé Tenpa

Aham Döndrup Dorjé

Amezhab

Aseng Dorjé Tenpa

Beri

Chöga

Wylie Transliteration

A chok

A mchog seng ge rDo rje brtan
pa

A ham Don grub rdo rje

A mes zhabs

A seng rDo rje brtan pa

Bal ris

Chos dga'

Degé	sDe dge
Dezhung Rinpoche	sDe gzhung Rin po che
Dochel Lhakhang	rDo gcal lha khang
Dorje Rinchen	rDo rje rin chen
Drangti	Brang ti
Drangti Penchen Namkha Pelzang	Brang ti Paṇ chen Nam mkha'
	dpal 'bzang
Drendü	Bran bdud
Drokmi Lotsāwa Shākya Yeshé	'Brog mi Lo tsā ba Shākya ye shes
Drupchen Buddhapa	Grub chen Buddha pa
Drupchen Buddhawa	Grub chen Buddha ba
Drupkhang	sGrub khang
Dzö Kagyama	mDzod bka' rgya ma
Dzö Nak	mDzod nag
Gorampa Sönam Senggé	Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge
Göjung Tsomchen	dGos 'byung tshom chen
Gyüde Küntü	rGyud sde kun btus
Jampa Künga Tashi	Byams pa Kun dga' bkra shis
Jampa Künga Tenpé Gyeltsen	Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan
Jampa Künga Tenzin	Byams pa Kun dga' bstan 'dzin
Jampa Namkha Chimé	Byams pa Nam mkha' 'chi med
Jampa Ling	Byams pa gling
Jampel Zangpo	'Jam dpal bzang po
Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo	'Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po
Jamyang Sherap Gyatso	'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho
Jebtsün Drakpa Gyeltsen	rJe btsun Grags pa rgyal mtshan
Karpo Drakpa Rinchen Senggé	dKar po brag pa Rin chen seng ge
Katok Situ Chökyi Gyatso	Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho
Khangsar Labrang	Khang gsar bla brang
Khyenri	mkhyen ris
Könchok Drakpa	dKon mchog grags pa
Könchok Lhündrup	dKon mchog lhun grub
Könchok Pel	dKon mchog 'phel
Könchok Penden	dKon mchog dpal ldan
Künga Drölchok	Kun dga' gröl mchog
Künga Sönam Lhündrup	Kun dga' bsod nams lhun grub
Künga Wangchuk	Kun dga' dbang phyug
Labrang	Bla brang

Labrang Zhung	Bla brang gzhung
Lama Dampa Sönam Gyeltsen	Bla ma dam pa bSod nams rgyal mtshan
Lamdré	Lam 'bras
Lamdré Lhakhang	Lam 'bras lha khang
Lamzap	Lam zab
Lamzap Lhakhang	Lam zab lha khang
Lamzap Puk	Lam zab phug
Lhachok Senggé	lHa mchog seng ge
Lhündrup Penden	lHun grub dpal ldan
Lingkha Dewachen	Gling kha bDe ba can
Lowo	Glo bo
Lowo Khenchen Sönam Lhündrup	Glo bo mKhan chen bSod nams lhun grub
Luding	Klu sdings
Luding Khenchen Rinpoche	Klu lding/sdings mKhan chen Rin po che
Menri	sMan ris
Mü	Mus
Müchen Könchok Gyeltsen	Mus chen dKon mchog rgyal mtshan
Müchen Sanggyé Gyeltsen	Mus chen Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan
Müchen Sanggyé Rinchen	Mus chen Sangs rgyas rin chen
Müchen Sempa Chenpo	Mus chen Sems dpa' chen po
Nabza Drakpukpa Sönam Pel	Na bza' Brag phug pa bSod nams dpal
Namkha Chimé	Nam mkha' 'chi med
Namkha Samdrup	Nam mkha' bsam 'grub
Namgyel	rNam rgyal
Ngawang Chökyong Zangpo	Ngag dbang chos skyong bzang po
Ngawang Sönam Wangchuk	Ngag dbang bsod nams dbang phyug
Ngor Ewam Chöden	Ngor E wam chos ldan
Ngorchen Dorjechang	Ngor chen rDo rje 'chang
Ngorchen Künga Zangpo	Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po
Ngorpa	Ngor pa
Nyenchenpa Sönam Tenpa	Nyan chen pa bSod nams brtan pa
Nyengön Chenpo	gNyan mgon chen po
Pelchok Geltsen	dPal mchog rgyal mtshan
Pendé	Phan bde
Pendé Khen Rinpoche	Phan bde mKhan Rin po che

Penden Chökyong	dPal ldan chos skyong
Penden Dorjé	dPal ldan rdo rje
Penden Tsültrim	dPal ldan tshul khrims
Putra	Pu tra
Ratön Yönten Pelzang	Rwa ston Yon tan dpal bzang
Ritröpa Lodrö Tenpa	Ri khrod pa Blo gros brtan pa
Sachen	Sa chen
Sachen Künga Nyingpo	Sa chen Kun dga' snying po
Sakya	Sa skya
Sakya Paṇḍita Künga Gyeltsen	Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan
Sakyong Āyi Senggé	Sa skyong Ā yi seng ge
Samdrup Gepel	bSam grub dge 'phel
Sanggyé Pelzang	Sangs rgyas dpal bzang
Sanggyé Püntsok	Sangs rgyas phun tshogs
Sanggyé Rinchen	Sangs rgyas rin chen
Sanggyé Senggé	Sangs rgyas seng ge
Serku Lhakang	gSer sku lha khang
Setön Künrik	Se ston Kun rig
Sharchen Yeshé Gyeltsen	Shar chen Ye shes rgyal mtshan
Shākya Chokden	Shākya mchog ldan
Sheja Zangpo	Shes bya bzang po
Sherap Jungné	Shes rab 'byung gnas
Shinjé Nakpo	gShin rje nag po
Sönam Gyatso	bSod nams rgya mtsho
Sönam Lhündrup	bSod nams lhun grub
Sönam Penden	bSod nams dpal ldan
Sönam Sherap	bSod nams shes rab
Sönam Zangpo	bSod nams bzang po
Tanak	rTag nag
Tarpatsé	Thar pa rtse
Tartsé Labrang	Thar rtse bla brang
Tashi Göñ	bKra shis mgon
Tashi Lhündrup	bKra shis lhun grub
Tsang	gTsa ng
Tsarang	rTsa brang, gTsa ng drangs, etc.
Tsejang Penpa Wangdü	brTse byang sPen pa dbang 'dus
Tsuktor	gTsug tor / gtor
Tsültrim Pelzang	Tshul khrims dpal bzang
Tsültrim Lhündrup	Tshul khrims lhun grub
Tuksé Jangchub Sempa	Thugs sras Byang chub sems dpa'
Tuksé Dampa	Thugs sras dam pa

Tupten Namgyel	Thub bstan rnam rgyal
Ume	dBu med
Wangkhang Chenmo	dBang khang chen mo
Wönchen Serkuba Könchok Gyeltsen	dBon chen gSer sku ba dKon mchog rgyal mtshan
Wönchen Serkuné	dBon chen gSer sku nas
Yapchen	g.Yab chen
Zhalu Khenchen Rinchen Sönam	Zha lu mKhan chen Rin chen
Chokdrup	bsod nams mchog grub
Zhang Könchok Pel	Zhang dKon mchog dpal
Zhangtön Chöbar	Zhang ston Chos 'bar
Zimkhang Kadrugma	gZims khang ka drug ma
Zimchung Kanyima	gZims chung ka gnyis ma

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