

# Investigations in the History of the Muktinath Valley and Adjacent Areas

## Part II

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### 4. Governmental organisation structures in South Mustang in the 18th century

#### 4.1. Democratic city-states south of Kagbeni

As specified above, by Thak Khola I refer to the district stretching from Baragaon 30 km. south to Gasa. We have already been able to establish that in the 18th century this area enjoyed a certain autonomy or independence from its neighbours, Parbat to the South and Mustang to the North. Politically the area was divided again in the 18th century into three separate units, *Thak*, *Som-bu* (Thini) and *sPun-khris* (Marpha).

There exists a comprehensive body of ethnographic research on the Thak Khola, on which I need not report in greater detail here.<sup>1</sup> For the

following investigation, attention need only be called to the following:

1. The inhabitants of this region lived mainly by trading between Tibet and Nepal, in addition to agriculture. The Thak Khola owes most of its noticeably above-average prosperity to the lively trading activities of its inhabitants. It thus follows that the largest group of inhabitants of the Thak Khola, known nowadays as the Thakalis, were also prominent as traders in the 18th century.

2. In this century many Thakalis have migrated from the Thak Khola, so this ethnic group has spread across the whole of Nepal. As even the current figures on the size of this ethnic group are very inexact, it is practically impossible to give more precise information on the sizes of the populations of the three political units of the Thak

Khola in the 18th century. If we go by the current figures, it is possible to make a very rough estimate of the maximum population size in the 18th century: for *Thaks* the population could be given as approximately 2000, whereas *sPun-khris* and *Som-bu* can be estimated to have had 300 - 400 inhabitants each.

In comparison with the numerous ethnological works on the Thak Khola, in the field of historical research there is up to now only one scholarly serious piece of work that contributes to the history of the Thak Khola in question here.<sup>2</sup> It comprises a facsimile edition and translation of a historical document drawn up in Tibetan script and Tibetan language, furnished with a detailed introduction, and published under the title "The Bem-chag Village Record and The Early History of Mustang District", by Charles A.E. Ramble and Michael Vinding.<sup>3</sup>

Ramble and Vinding refer to the text that they worked on as *bem-čhag*, and state that the original is kept in the settlement of Cimang. Many versions of this *bem-čhag* of very similar content are kept in Thini and Marpha. I was able to photograph the versions in Marpha and Shyang myself during my exploration in April 1989. Comparing these versions from Marpha and Shyang with the manuscript from Cimang shows that all the versions are copies of the same text. In the title of their investigation, Ramble and Vinding describe the *bem-čhag* as a "village record". They develop this notion further as a "local account of the history of the kingdom of Sumbo Garabdzong".<sup>4</sup> Elsewhere, we read of a "translation of the *bem-čhag*, village record of Sum Garabdzong".<sup>5</sup> These definitions clearly suggest uncertainty in regard to the meaning of the term *bem-čhag* and the definitions of the different areas of the Thak Khola region as political

units.

In attempting to find the meaning of the term *bem-čhag*, I would like to compare the Cimang Text with similar texts from Kagbeni and Marpha. These I was able to photograph in 1986 and 1987.<sup>6</sup> Both handwritten texts are bound in the form of booklets. The Kagbeni text describes itself in its title as *yul gyi bems-čhags*, whereas the Marpha text calls itself in its title *mar-phag yul lhen-kyes* [= *lhan-rgyas*] *gi* [= *kyi*] *bem-čhag*. Both texts contain the basic laws of the two regions. Therefore they can be characterised also as "basic law texts" or "constitutions". The Kagbeni text also deals very briefly, under a chapter headed *skag-pa yul-pa'i čhags-rabs*, with historical events about the foundation of the political order of the area concerned. I have to point out here that the history of the creation of a legal order is of great importance for its justification and continuation.<sup>7</sup>

The term in question here is also found spelt *bem-gžag* in two 15th century royal decrees from western Tibet.<sup>8</sup> In the first of these royal orders (Schuh 5, document XXXVIII, 1), the term in question is mentioned as the designation for a royal charter and is characterised as a loanword from the Mongolian language (*hor kyi skad*). The same document (line 15) mentions a *bem-gžag-čhen-mo*, a decree containing prescriptions about payment of taxes and so on. In the second of these documents (Schuh 5, document XXXIX, 15) a *bem-gžag rñin-pa* is mentioned. From this I conclude firmly that the term *bem-čhag*, or *bem-gžag*, is a loanword from the Mongolian, and apparently corresponds with the Mongolian *bičig*.<sup>9</sup> It was used - apparently mainly in western Tibet - as the name of a royal charter and a judicial decree or a basic lawbook important for the public.<sup>10</sup>

If we now examine the Cimang *bem-čhag*, it

can be seen that the section containing the historical explanations is much more extensive than in the Kag Bemchag. Furthermore, it does not fix the legal order or the legal obligations of a certain place as done by the Kag Bemchag and Marpha Bemchag, but rather describes the inter-state relationships between the various settlements of the Thak Khola. In one instance it even gives the entire text of a treaty that determined the inter-state relationships between the three most powerful independently ruled units (*yul-sgo gsum*) of the Thak Khola in the 18th century, that is, *Thags*, *gSum-po* and *sPun-dgri* [= *sPun-khris*, Marpha]. The fact that the Cimang *bem-čhag* describes the arrangement of the inter-state laws of the Thak Khola<sup>11</sup> also explains why copies of this text are to be found in all the settlements of northern Thak Khola.

This basic features of the Cimang *bem-čhag* lead to the second problem addressed above, that is how these areas of *Thags*, *gSum-po* and *sPun-khris* are to be treated in the terms of political units. Considering their participation in interstate peace settlements and looking at the treaties recorded in the Cimang *bem-čhag*, which settled disputes among this places, the classification as villages as given by Vinding and Ramble is not acceptable. All three of them should be treated as petty states that played a particular role in the western Nepal federal union presided over by Jumla. At this point the comparative small number of inhabitants of these settlement may be used as an argument against this classification. To ensure that this argument is given sufficient consideration, we shall have a look at comparable petty states of western Nepal. According to Stiller (p. 83), Nuwakot comprised 600 households, Bajhang 700 and Gajur only 140. Viewed thus, *Thags*, *gSum-po* and *sPun-khris*

do not appear to have been of unusually small size.

Out of these three petty states *Thags* covers the largest area, containing many villages.<sup>12</sup> *sPun-khris*, or the present-day Marpha, gained independence when it split from *gSum-po*, which originally comprised all the five settlements (*yul-kha lia*) north of Thugche.

Correspondingly, only the petty states of *Thags* and *gSum-po* appear as parties of the earliest treaties, recorded in the Cimang *bem-čhag*.<sup>13</sup> The treaties between *Thags* and *gSum-po* were mainly concerned with defining the border between the two states, and with the exchange of serfs and livestock that had respectively fled or strayed from one territory to the other. The oldest treaty between *Thags* and *gSum-po*, handed down in the Cimang *bem-čhag* partly by a verbatim quotation, concerns the latter of the above-mentioned treaty topics. The treaty must have been drawn up before 1705, as by this year, as we know from the above edited and translated Document 6, the northern part of the Thak Khola was already divided in two parts. The partial reproduction of the text of the treaty is headed by the following remark:<sup>14</sup>

thag dañ gsum-pa'i rgam-śag la

"In the treaties<sup>15</sup> between *Thag* and *gSum-pa* (it is ordered)"

The text of the treaty (Document 8) runs as follows:

- 3 (thags) nas 'khor-yog gsum-po 'du sleb na, kram 1 za-rgyu (yin-no)/
- 4 rta rñed yañ kram 1 za-rgyu yin/, g.yag bris bha rñed na yañ bya'u gñis (yin no)/, gsum-pa'i 'khor-g.yog
- 5 thag 'du 'gro na yañ srol 'de rañ (yin-no)/,

phya-spañ thag-pa'i rgan-pa'i rgan-pa bsañ-la-  
 čhos-skyab spañ-po (yod-do)/

6 mar-(phags) nas rgan-pa cu-ka-li (yod-do)/

3 'khor-g.yog gsum-po ru, tam 1 za-rgyu 4 tam  
 1, g.yag 'bri ba 5 thag tu, srol de rañ, phyag-  
 dpañ, dpañ-po

### Translation

"If a serf ('*khor-g.yog*) (fleeing) from *Thags* arrives in *gSum-po*, one *Tam* is to be charged (for the return).<sup>16</sup> In the event that one finds a horse, one *Tam* is to be charged (for the return). If one finds a yak bull, a yak cow or an ox, (the charge) is two *Bya'u*.

In the event that a serf belonging to *gSum-po* runs (away) to *Thag*, the same applies.

The witnesses were the *rGan-pa* from *Thag bSañ-la-čhos-skyab*, and the *rGan-pa* from *Mar-phags Cu-ka-li*."

The fact that the elder of *Thag* and of *Mar-phags* appear here as witnesses can be taken as an indication that the act of agreeing on certain rules and regulations between the two petty states and its recording in a written agreement were two different activities. It seems to be quite certain that the agreement was reached in an assembly of representatives of the two parties concerned first and thereby officially enacted by swearing an oath and that its recording took place afterwards.

It is interesting to note that *gSum-po* was represented in the recording of this treaty by an elder from Marpha. This proves clearly that Marpha still belonged to *gSum-po* at this time.

Another treaty (Document 8), is recorded completely in the subsequent parts of the Cimang

*bem-čhag*. It originates from a time when the northern section of the Thak Kholā was already divided into two petty states.<sup>17</sup> It was drawn up in a Fire-Ox Year (*me-mo-glañ*), corresponding either with 1637, 1697 or 1757. From the fact that four *rGan-pa* of Marpha are mentioned here I conclude that 1697 was the year in which the treaty was drawn up.

The treaty deals not only with the return of runaway slaves and cattle, but also with the mutual support of the petty states in case of threats from outside. It also contains a mutual agreement on procedures of negotiation with the *rgyal-po*, the supreme authority. Obviously this authority was either the King of Jumla or the King of Parbat; Mustang is ruled out by the fact that its rulers were usually referred to as *sde-pa*.

The copy of the text of the treaty found in the Cimang *bem-čhag* is preceded by the following introduction that lists the three parties to the treaty, *Thag*, *mThin* (Thini) and *sPun-gri* (Marpha).<sup>18</sup>

(bkra-śis) don grub-pa'i lha la phyag 'chal-lo /,  
 thag-khub-chan mthin-ma-bu-(bdrugs), spun-  
 gri-'oñ-dag-mo/, gsum gyi čhod-yig bris-bdon  
 la/,

"Prostration before the deities, by whom good luck is procured. In regard to the contents of the record of an arbitration treaty<sup>19</sup> between these three, *Thag-khub-chan*, *mThin-ma-bu-bdrugs* and *sPun-gri-'oñ-dag-mo*:"

Text of the treaty (Document 9):

[p. 45]

1 me-mo-glañ-lo spre zla-ba'i che gsum la/ yul-  
 2 go gsum gyi rgan-pa khar-spon bka'-'gros

- chams nas (yi-ge) 'bris bdon la/, gal-te gsum-po yul-
- 3 pa la/, mi-zen gyis snan-can 'byed-pa 'byuñ na/, thag yul-pa dañ, dpuñ-dgris yul-pas (brgyab)
- 4 byed-rgyu yin, yañ thag yul-pa la snan-can byed-pa 'byuñ nañ/, gsum-po yul-pa dañ, dpuñ-gris yul-pas
- 5 (brgyab) byed-rgyu yin/, dpuñ-gris yul-pa la, snan-can byed-pa 'byuñ na, thag gsum-po gñis kyis (brgyab)
- 6 byed-rgyu yin/, (rgyal)-po'i bdruiñ du sus bzus-bdon la phyin kyañ/, sus snan la sleb kyañ spyi-bdon
- 7 zu dgos cin phra-ma byed-sa med/, yul-phyog gañ 'du yañ yul-go gsum la/, gnod-pa'i phra-ma byed-
- 8 rgyu 'byuñ na/, yul-go gsum-dkar kyis 1 rgyab cig gis ter dgos so/, yul-go gsum nañ 'du kyañ 1 gis
- 9 phra-mo 1 gis byed-rgyu mi yoñ/, yul-go gsum kyis bran-g.yog su'i car sleb kyañ tam 1 za-rgyu yin
- 10 bdud-gro che-čuñ gañ rñed kyañ nas zo (re-re) za-rgyu (yin-no)/, de-las lhag-ma bza' zer nas mi log na/
- 11 sla yañ med cin, rgan-pa'i ston nas bter-rgyu (yin-no)/, sñed nas ma sñed zer nañ/, su'i sug na rkun-
- 12 mor 'gyur cin/, čhal rgan-pa yul-go gsum-pa'i zes-rgyu (yin-no)/, nor-bdag la gter-rgyu (yin-no)/
- 13 ra-lug sñed nas (žags) bcu soñ nas/, rcar-čod ma 'byuñ na za-rgyu (yin-no)/, de la 'a-ru byed-gyu med-do/, de-ltar
- 14 byed-pa'i bris-pa'i (yi-ge) nañ ltar su'i ma nas-pa byuñ na/, gmar-spañ la čhos kyis čhos-skyoñ/, bon kyis bon-skyoñ

2 sgo gsum, mkhar-dpon bka'-gros 'čhams, yi-ge bris-don 3 mi-gžan, nan-can byed-pa, yul-pas rgyab 4 nan-can, 'byuñ-na 5 rgyab byed-rgyu, nan-can, kyis rgyab 6 druñ du sus žus-don, sus sñon, spyi-don 7 yul-phyogs gañ du, yul-sgo 8 yul-sgo gsum-ka, gčig gis bster, yul-sgo gsum nañ-du, 1 gi 9 phra-ma, yul-sgo, su'i rcar 10 dud'-gro 11 gla yañ, rgan-pas bton nas ster-rgyu, brñed nas ma brñed zer na, 12 yul-sgo gsum-pas bzes-rgyu, ster-rgyu 13 brñed nas žag, rcar-gčod, byed-rgyu 14 de-ltar byas-pas, sus ma gnas-pa, mna'-dpan, bon gyi

[p. 46]

- 1 'jig-sten kyis lha klu bži-bdag/, gañ sten kyis pho-lha dgra-lha rmañs kyis/, rma nas-pa rmañs la čhad-
- 2 pa 'drag-po čod cig/, gnas-pa rmañs la byin gyi brlabs du gsol/, de-ltar (g.yig-ge) 'bris-dus/
- 3 thag kyis rgan-pa nes-thed-lčan/, (gal-bu)-(bkra-šis)/, be-thed-lčan, (brgyal)-mjed-ram/, mis-sna mar-khus-
- 4 lčan, nes-thed-grub-šiñ, kyis-mo-che-riñ/, dar-ma-che-riñ/, de-rmañs kyis (rtags) Z, gsum-po'i rgan-pa
- 5 nes-thed-(bkra-šis)/, padma-(bkra-šis)/, gsum-thed-lha-bdrug/, mis-sna a-ya-srid-gsabs/, lhasab-
- 6 (bkra-šis)/, che-sten-(kun-čañ?)-(rin-č'hen), (brgyam)-'chog-(bkra-šis)/, che-dar-čhos-skyabs/, (rcogs)-bdrug-ga-
- 7 ra-čhos-skyabs/, čhos-(rgyud)-gsum-thed, (rin-č'hen)-che-dbañ, de-rmañs kyis (rtags), Z/, spun-dgris'i rgan-pa
- 8 (khro-'o)-gyuñ-druñ/, dpon-po-sa-rten/, (rdorje)-che-riñ/, ga-cu-lha/, mi-sna ga-ra-(bkra-šis)/, čaň-

9 hu-lcañ, / gos-che-riñ, lha-rmaṃs-bkra-śis, mga'-so-rmaṃs, de rmaṃs kyis (rtags)Z,

1 'jig-rten gyi, gži-bdag, gañ brten gyi, ma gnas-pa 2 drag-po, byin gyis brlab tu, yi-ge 'bri-dus 4 kyī rtags 7 kyī rtags 9 kyī rtags

### Translation

"As the *rGan-pa* and *mKhar-dpon*<sup>20</sup> of the three countries reached an agreement in a meeting on the third day of the Monkey Month of the Female-Fire-Ox Year, the (following) document has been recorded:

In the event that the inhabitants of *gSum-po* are attacked by foreigners<sup>21</sup>, the inhabitants of *Thag* and of *dPuñ-gris* must support them.

Further, in the event that the inhabitants of *Thag* are attacked, the inhabitants of *gSum-po* and *dPuñ-gris* must support them.

If the inhabitants of *dPuñ-gris* are attacked, the inhabitants of *Thag* and *gSum-po* must support them.

Whenever anyone goes to address the King, whoever arrives first must bring up forward the concerns of all and not commit slander.

If in (another) country harmful slander is committed towards all of the three states, all three states must give mutual support to each other.

It must not happen within the three states that one (state) commits slander against the other (state).

If a serf from one of the three states arrives in one of the others, (the latter) has to charge a *Ṭam* (for the return).

If anyone finds a beast, be it large or small, (the finder) can levy a *Zo(-ba-measure)* of barley.

If anyone says, "I want more than this," and

hands nothing over, he receives no payment, and the *rGan-pa* must recover (the serf or beast) and return it (to the owner).

If anyone says, "I haven't found anything," although he has found something, the one who is holding it is considered to be a thief. *Čhal*<sup>22</sup> is to be collected from the elder of all the three states.

It must be handed over to the owner of the animal.

If anyone finds a goat or a sheep, and within ten days, no search has been made for it, (the one who has found the animal) is allowed to keep it. In this case, no complaint must be raised.

If someone does not behave in accordance with the contents of this letter which was written after (all) enacted (the agreement) accordingly, the witness of the vow, (that is) the Dharmapāla of the (Buddhist) religion, the Bon-protector of the Bon(-religion), the *lHa*, *Klu* and *gŽi-bdag* of this world and the *Pho-lha* and *dGra-lha*, on whom someone relies, will punish those who do not behave accordingly, with harsh punishments.

We request them to bless those who act accordingly.

When this document was written down accordingly, seal of the *rGan-pa* of *Thag Nes-thed-lcañ*, *Gal-bu-bkra-śis*, *Be-thed-lcañ* and *brGyal-mjed-ram* as well of different people (like) *Mar-khus-lcañ*, *Nes-thed-grub-śiñ*, *Kyi-mo-che-riñ* and *Dar-ma-che-riñ*.

Seal of the *rGan-pa* of *gSum-po Nes-thed-bkra-śis*, *Padma-bkra-śis* and *gSum-thed-lha-bdrug* as well as of different people (like) *A-ya-srid-gsabs*, *lHa-sab-bkra-śis*, *Che-sten-kun-chañ-rin-chen*, *brGyam-'chog-bkra-śis*, *Che-dar-čhos-skyabs*, *rCogs-bdrug-ga-ra-čhos-skyabs*, *Čhos-(rgyud)-gsum-thed* and *Rin-chen-che-dbañ*.

Seal of the *rGan-pa* of *sPun-dgris Khro-'o-*

*g.yuñ-druñ, dPon-po-sa-rten, rDo-rje-che-rin, and Ga-cu-lha, as well as of different people (like) Ga-ra-bkra-śis, Chañ-hu-lcañ, Gos-che-rin, lHa-rnams-bkra-śis and mGa'-so-rnams."*

As far as the internal organization of these petty states is concerned, I found in Marpha a written law book, entitled "Commonly (enacted) *Bem-čhag* of the country *Mar-phag*". The value of this book as an important source for the study of the structure of the petty states in the Thak Khola cannot be overestimated.

I photographed the *Mar-phag Bem-čhag* in 1987 in three versions, to which I will refer henceforward as MB1, MB2, and MB3. MB1 and MB2 both contain in their main texts the same law book, passed on the 3rd day of the 7th month in a Fire-Dragon Year by a full assembly of the citizens (*yul-mi*) of Marpha. It seems highly likely that the Fire-Dragon Year in question is 1796. It is this law book of 1796 that we shall refer to as the Marpha Bemchag.

Out of the two manuscripts, MB1 and MB2, MB1 is probably the older version. MB1, however, is certainly not the original that was passed by the assembly of the citizens in 1796, as according to the introduction to the Marpha Bemchag this has been furnished with seals at the end of the text. MB2 is probably a later 2nd draft of the original text.

Both MB1 and MB2 contain later appendices, setting down amendments to the Marpha Bemchag. These amendments were recorded on pages or half pages of the manuscript that were originally left blank. The appendices in MB2 are generally older than those in MB1. It seems that this is because the amendments to legal regulations were often recorded as special documents, but subsequently added

to MB1 and later, when MB1 had no space left, to MB2. This theory is also supported by the fact that, accordingly, no common records of later legal amendments are to be found in MB1 or MB2.

The bulk of the main text of MB3 is an only partially preserved precursor of the Marpha Bemchag of 1796. Besides this it contains pages with numerous supplements. On page 4, the date of one of the old legal agreements integrated into the main text is referred to as Earth-Horse Year, which could indicate the year 1738. Thus the main text may have originated between 1738 and 1796.

The language of the Marpha Bemchag is a combination of the Tibetan dialect of South Mustang and classical Tibetan, in the writing of which the orthographical rules of classical Tibetan were largely disregarded. Inconsistencies in the spelling of the same words are commonplace. This gives rise to particular difficulties in interpreting the text, especially as the text contains many words borrowed from Thakali and Nepali.

On the title page of MB1 and MB2 we find the following remark:

- 1 Z mar-phag yul lhen-kyes gi bem-čhag (zugs)-soñ /
- 2 yul-čhog ldi ru bkri-pa ldon grub-pa zu leg-par śog / bskri-śog /
- 3 ki-ki so-so lha-(gyal-lo)

"Herein is contained the basic law (*bem-čag*) of *Mar-phag* (decided) by (the citizen of) the country. We request, that in this area, happiness and effectiveness may prevail. May (everything) be good. May luck prevail. *Ki-ki, so-so!* May the gods be victorious!"

The particular nature of the bringing into force

of the basic laws is described in the introductory passage of the legal text, which is presented below:

- 1 Z med-pho grug-lo zla-ba 7 pa'i che 3 re-za 2  
ñin / goñ-ma mi-byed échen-po gan
- 2 gan-échan-po nol / rco jes mi-thus kar-ma dañ  
mi-thus échos-(rgyal-chan) dañ mi-thus  
(pedma)-khron dañ
- 3 mi-thus bha-stur mi-échan mi-grag mar-phag  
yul-mi lhan-kyes / ka-gros thog nas / sñon-
- 4 khyun-star / spes-srol nañ-zin / bem-éag (yig-  
gi) bris-don la / bam-(éhags) (yig-ge) nañ-zin  
la yul-
- 5 mi lhen chang-ma su yin na dbyes-ka dbyun-  
gri / pha-ka bu-bri 'u-blang-pa byes med-  
(éhogs) zer-pa'i
- 6 yul-mi lhan (phyags)-(rtags) /

"On the day of the 2nd weekday of the 7th month in the male fire-dragon-year (1796) the assembly of the *Mi-échen*, the *Mi-drag* and of all the citizens of the country (*yul-mi*), headed firstly by the "The Supreme One" (*goñ-ma*), the "great ruler" (*mi-rje échen-po*), the elder, the great elder (*rgan échen-po*) *Nol* and (headed) secondly by the *mi-thus Karma*, *mi-thus Échosldan*, *mi-thus Padma khron* and the *mi-thus Bha-ldur* took place and subsequently (the following) text, containing the basic law book (*bem-éhag*) was written down in accordance with the old tradition and the common law.

Except for (the obedience to) what is in accordance with this text, the basic law book, none of all the citizen (of Marpha) will be allowed to ascribe what is right to the left or to ascribe the affairs of the father to the son. Pronouncing this, the seal of all citizens (was attached)."

This account of the enactment of the basic laws reveals a very interesting and quite unique democratic structure of the constitution of Marpha. The decision makers in all public affairs were the local people of the region who were also were obliged to hold public positions. It appears that women were not allowed to take over public offices and did not take part in political decision making. The citizens (*yul-mi*) formed one group separated from foreigners, who were referred to as *phyi-mi*, and who naturally could not exercise any civil rights.

Not all inhabitants of Marpha had the status of *yul-mi*. Of particular note are the slaves and serfs (*khori-g.yog* and *brani-g.yog*) referred to in Documents 5 and 6. The Marpha Bemchag of 1796 mentions (fol. 22r) this group only once as *g.yog-po* besides the *bha-do* (Nepali *bādha*) in a legal regulation, stating that sexual intercourse between women or girls from Marpha and members of these groups was a punishable offense. It has to be mentioned that the same regulation forbids sexual intercourse with foreigners (*phyi-mi*).

A vital pointer in the assessment of the political significance of the Marpha Bemchag is found in the back page of the front envelope. Here it is stated that each citizen of Marpha has the right to borrow the text against the deposit of a sum of money of one A-na. Thus it was guaranteed that any citizen who had legal problems could consult the basic laws at any time.

The Marpha Bemchag of 1796 is divided into formally and thematically fairly clearly distinguished sections that we can refer to as paragraphs. There is no particular enumeration of these sections. The individual sections generally begin with a new page. It is also sometimes common to mark the beginning of such new sections with large spacing from the preceding text. Their thematic



orientation is clarified by a suitable introductory remark. Thus the 1st paragraph begins with the words *mi-thus kor-nas*, "concerning the *Mi-thus*," the 2nd with the wording, *gan-pa'i kor-nas* "concerning the *rGan-pa*," and the 3rd with *ka-'cha kor-nas*, "concerning legal disputes."

In paragraphs that refer not to the duties of particular office holders, but contain regulations to be followed by everyone, the terms *kor* or *skor* are replaced by *srol* "practice". Before dealing with the political system of Marpha in a more detailed manner, I shall introduce the contents of the Marpha Bemchag in accordance with the individual paragraphs:

[§ 1, fol. 1v,6] Official duties of the *Mi-thus* (*mi-thus kor-nas*)

Listing of the official duties of the office holders referred to as *Mi-thus* and of the the penalties to be paid for violations of these duties.

[§ 2, fol. 2v] Official duties of the *rGan-pa* (*rgan-pa'i kor-nas*)

Regulations regarding payments and so forth to be furnished to the *rGan-pa*; regulations concerning legal proceedings against the *rGan-pa*; general tariffs to be paid in court procedures; in legal proceedings foreign courts of appeal were generally not permitted.

[§ 3, fol. 3v] Official duties of the official referred to as *Rol-po* (*rol-pa'i kor-nas*).

[§ 4, fol. 5r] Regulations concerning the use of the forest: regulations concerning the collection of pine-needles and pine-cones, beginning each year

on the 20th calendar day of the 4th month and ending on the 20th day of the 9th month (*san rub-pa'i rol*).

[§ 5, fol. 5v,4] Regulations concerning the use of the forests: Regulations concerning the felling of trees (*ldon-po cod-pa'i srol*). This paragraph contains a general ban on the felling of trees in specific forest areas, except for house-building. In certain areas only poplars could be felled for house-building. The removal of bark from trees is a punishable offense.

[§ 6, fol. 6v] Regulations regarding the cultivation of fields, usage of the edges of fields, and sending cattle into the fields (*nol stan-pa'i srol*).

[§ 7, fol. 7v,3] Regulations concerning the use of the manure of the herds of cattle belonging to Marpha.

[§ 8, fol. 8r] Regulations to fix wages for weaving and fieldwork. Anyone paying more than the wages established here would be punished.

[§ 9, fol. 8r,5] Restrictions to the storage of commodities such as grain and salt by traders from Thags in private households in Marpha.

[§ 10, fol. 8v] Regulations concerning the big animal sacrifice of 17 goats and other religious festivals (*son-se srol*).

[§ 11, fol. 9v] Regulations concerning the performance of the the *sMon-lam*-rituals (*ku-rim byes-pa'i srol*).

[§ 12, fol. 10r] Ban on the monthly festival being

celebrated at the 10th day of each month.

[§ 13, fol. 10r,5] Ban on crossing fields in the period between sowing and harvest by people in whose house someone just had died.

[§ 14, fol. 10v] Regulations concerning marriage (*sna-ma len pa'i srol*).

[§ 15, fol. 12r] Absolutely binding regulations to limit all trading activities in Marpha to the central trading place (*gron-khan gi srol*).

Trading activities outside the *Gron-khan* are strictly forbidden. Beasts of burden of all traders must be housed in the *Gron-khan*. Goods may only be stored there (see also § 9). The citizens of Marpha are not allowed to do business in the central trading places of *San* or *Jon-sam*.

[§ 16, fol. 13r] Regulations concerning the payment of cattle herders, who look after the cattle of the citizens of Marpha.

[§ 17, fol. 13v] Regulations for young men and women, participating in the singing and dancing of the *sTo-ran* festival.

[§ 18, fol. 15r] Regulations to fix the prices for the purchase of yak bulls and cows (*g.yag gi srol*).

[§ 19, fol. 15v,3] Ban against the selling of salt to, and its purchase from beer sellers from Thukche and other settlements south of Marpha.

[§ 20, fol. 16r] People setting out on a journey should not be given beer, etc. on their departure.

[§ 21, fol. 16r,4] Ban against foreigners beating drums, singing or dance in Marpha at particular times.

[§ 22, fol. 16v] Modes of behaviour useful to prevent hail damage.

[§ 23, fol. 17r] Fees for using certain paths to drive yaks on the mountain *San-chañ ri* (*lam-rin srol*).

[§ 24, fol. 17v] Regulations for the payment of taxes by the households of Marpha (*gron-pa'i srol*). The tax burden of a household is to be paid by the parents and devolves on their death on the youngest son.

[§ 25, fol. 17v,4] Taxation of beer taverns.

[§ 26, fol. 18r,3] Regulations concerning the burial of the dead.

[§ 27, fol. 18v] Regulations for the payment of a penalty by those who leave the monastery.

[§ 28, fol. 18v,3] If someone fails to cultivate the fields belonging to him and situated in more elevated areas of Marpha, then anybody is allowed to cultivate them as long as he pays the taxes.

[§ 29, fol. 19r] Regulations concerning maintenance of the reservoirs and the usage of water (*jin-nu gi srol*).

[§ 30, fol. 19v,2] Regulations concerning the end of the obligations to assume public offices at the age of 60 years (*thar-čan ston-pa'i srol*).

[§ 31, fol. 20r, 4] Additional regulations regarding office of the *rGan-pa* (*rgan-pa'i srol*). Obligations of the *Rol-po* to accompany the *rGan-pa* on his private journeys. Duty of the *rGan-pa* to be present personally during the collection of taxes. Special taxes to be levied for the *rGan-pa*.

[§ 32, fol. 20v] Regulations concerning the herding of cattle (*dun-grugs gi srol*): During the time of the herding of the cattle in the pastures the animals should only in exceptional cases be left in Marpha.

[§ 33, fol. 21r] Regulations concerning the distribution of the meat of the annually slaughtered sheep.

[§ 34, fol. 21r, 5] Punishments for those who do not take part in the meetings of all citizens.

[§ 35, fol. 21v] The obligation to take up public office begins from the age of 18. Regulation concerning the boarding costs of public office holders from public resources during the assemblies.

[§ 36, fol. 21v,5] Regulations concerning the delivery of hay to the *rGan-pa*.

[§ 37, fol. 22r] Prohibition against incest, and ban of sexual intercourse of women with foreigners, slaves and bonded serfs. By-products of spirit distilleries must not be thrown out on the streets.

[§ 38, fol. 22v] Rules for the change in office of the *Čhos-khrims-pa* who is responsible for discipline in the monastery (*čhos-grum pos-pa'i srol*).

[§ 39, fol. 23r] Obligation to drink beer at the

annual festival of the relatives of the father.

[§ 40, fol. 23r,3] Confirmation that the land on which Marpha's night quarters for travelers were built belongs to the general public.

[§ 41, fol. 23r,6] The state-owned matchlock has to be kept in the custody of the holders of public offices.

[§ 42, fol. 23v] Supplement from the *Čhu-phag* Year 1803/04: New regulations on taxes. This concerns the financing of the ceremony for the change in the office of the *rGan-čhen* (which takes place after three years) and of the *Mi-thus* (which takes place every year) only.

[§ 43, fol. 24r] Regulations concerning the offerings for the God *Ka-ton-ko-loñ*.

[§ 44, fol. 24r,4] Regulations concerning the safe-keeping of the land registers by the eight *Mi-čhen*.

[§ 45, fol. 25r] Further regulations concerning the driving of cattle onto harvested fields and the supervision of fields by the *Rol-po*.

[§ 46, fol. 25r] Ban on the cultivation of fields in certain areas. Regulations concerning the collecting of taxes. Obligation of the *Mi-thus* and the *Rol-po* to take part in the construction of a bridge over the Kali Gandaki.

[§ 47, fol. 26r] Regulations concerning the handing over of bounty to the bride-to-be. Regulations concerning divorce. Conditions for the opening of a beer tavern by foreigners who have settled in Marpha.

[§ 48, fol. 26v] Special regulations concerning the collection and felling of wood for the monastery.<sup>23</sup>

The introductory passages of the Marpha Bemchag translated above mention besides the citizen (*yul-mi*) the highest official of the petty state, the "Grand Elder" (*rgan-chen*), who was also referred to by the titles *goñ-ma*, "The Supreme One," and *mi-rje-chen-po*, "Great Ruler." Both titles indicate the leading role of the *rGan-chen* within the Marpha community, especially as the use of the title *goñ-ma* was already within region under the influence of Tibet reserved exclusively for the emperor of China.

The period of office of the Great Elder lasted three years. Before taking up the position he had to swear his oath of office before the assembly of all citizens.<sup>23</sup>

The Bemchag does not give any details to answers the following questions:

- how was the *rGan-chen* selected?
- was the *rGan-chen* selected from a specific social group, or every citizen eligible?
- was a re-election of the *rGan-chen* possible after the three year period of office?

In addition to his function as political representative of the petty state, the *rGan-chen* was also the state's chief judge. It was possible to register an appeal if anyone disagreed with the decision of the *rGan-chen*. In this case the matter would be handed over to a third party, and the *rGan-chen* and the four *Mi-thus* appeared henceforth as a party opposing the plaintiff. It is one of the most significant features of the legal system of Marpha that external appeals were generally forbidden.

Despite the fact that in 1796, the year of the

ratification of the Bemchag, Marpha belonged to the Kingdom of Gorkha, the Bemchag contained explicit prohibition against lodging legal appeals with the King of Kathmandu.<sup>24</sup> Not until 1808 was a new regulation laid down by a citizens' assembly, that as the only exception to the prohibition against appeal to outside, access to the King of Kathmandu would be permitted.<sup>25</sup>

The outstanding position of the *rGan-chen* nevertheless in no way meant that he stood outside or above the legal system of Marpha. If he violated the laws of the state, it was the duty of the four *Mi-thus* to hold a trial against him. In such a case it was their duty to call a meeting of all the citizens of Marpha, who then had to pass judgement on the *rGan-chen* together.<sup>26</sup>

The duties of the *rGan-chen* included the appointment of the various officials of the state, namely the four *Mi-thus*, the *Min-kya* and ten *Rol-po*. The citizens of Marpha were called up for public positions in a particular order (*rim-pa*)<sup>27</sup>, of which no details are found in the Bemchag. If a citizen had reached the age of 18, he generally did not have the option of turning down a public position<sup>28</sup>. Those who had to take up these duties, and those who had to take part in the citizens' assemblies were forced to comply by a system of fines. The upper age limit on those required to carry out public duties was 60. The reaching of this age limit was marked by a celebration (*thar-chañ* "Exemption-beer"). It seems, however, that the head of a household (*gron-pa*) was only made exempt at this age if he had at least one son, who could take over his duties. Anyone not having the *Thar-chañ* celebration at 60 could not attain dismissal from general official duties again until the age of 71, when he could pay a fine of 51 *dnul*.<sup>29</sup>

The Marpha Bemchag collectively names all people holding public office as *dMir-sta*<sup>30</sup>. We cannot say here whether the also-mentioned *Mi-chen* and *Mi-drag* referred to officials or people of senior social positions. It is worth noting that they are otherwise hardly mentioned in the Marpha Bemchag.

For clarification of the political structure I present the contents of the first three paragraphs of the Bemchag as follows:

[§ 1, fol. 1v, 6] Official duties of the *Mi-thus* (*mi-thus kor-nas*)

*Particular official duties of the officials referred to as Mi-thus and the penalties which they can incur by contravening these duties.*

The *Mi-thus* must all be present at the collection of the tribute (*ser-sta*, from the Nepali *sirto*) that had to be paid by the state of Marpha. Absent *Mi-thus* incurred the fine of two *dnul* each. Two *dnul* was also the fine for any *Mi-thus* not present at the collection of the taxes (*khral*)<sup>31</sup>. Should a *Mi-thus* be absent from a simultaneous collection of both the tribute and the taxes, he incurred the fine of four *dnul*.

The *Mi-thus* have to be present at the restoration of the irrigation canals for both the cultivation of barley and wheat in the spring and the cultivation of buckwheat in the summer. The fine for absence is one *am*. The same fine must be paid if a *Mi-thus* is absent during the reconstruction of the wooden aqueduct of *sÑe-ra-paṅ*, the reconstruction of the wooden aqueduct of *Bhoṅ-raṅ* or the cleaning of reservoirs.

If a *Mi-thus* wants to leave Marpha to go on a journey, he must first obtain the permission of the *rGan-chen*. The fine for travelling without this

permission is one *zo-ba* of salt. Out of the four *Mi-thus* at least two must be present in Marpha in summer and in winter; otherwise, a fine of one *dnul-žo* must be paid. *Mi-thus* setting out on a journey must return to Marpha within 20 days, or incur a fine of one *žo*.

[§ 2, fol. 2v] Official duties of the *rGan-pa* (*gan-pa'i kor-nas*)

*Regulations of taxes and so forth to be produced for the rGan-pa.*

Three *dnul* must be paid to him for wearing the special hat of the *rGan-pa* (*dbu-thod*).

To enable his wife (*khyim-dags aṅ-mo* = *khyim-bdag dbaṅ-mo*) to provide the beer of conduct (*kyal-čan* = *bskyal-čan*) three *dnul* must be handed over to her.<sup>31</sup>

For the beer of conduct that the officials (*smir-rtā*)<sup>33</sup> must contribute on the occasion of the delivery of taxes (*khral*), they receive a reimbursement of three *dnul*. These sums are to be provided by the general public (*yul thog nas*).

*Regulations concerning legal proceedings against the rGan-pa:*

In the event that the *rGan-pa* passes a verdict, and the dismayed party maintains that the decision is incorrect, the case has to be handed over to someone else who is not *rGan-pa*. If the *rGan-pa* and the four *Mi-thus* win the case, the law fees (*byo-do-ri* = Nepali *jitauri*) as well as the payment to the judge (*bhe-khri* = Nepali *bheṭi*) must be provided by the general public. If they win more than once, an additional *dnul* is to be handed over to the *rGan-pa*. For the arrangement of the beer of conduct he receives one *dnul*. This must be provided by the general public too. Expenses excee-

ding this are looked upon as losses of the *rGan-pa*. If the *rGan-pa* loses, he must pay the payment to the judge (*bhe-khri*), and also the penalty (*gran-khri* = Nepali *ḍaṇḍa*) imposed.

If the *rGan-pa* has conferred the office of *Mi-thus* on someone and he doesn't accept, the fine is one *ḥo*. The *Mi-thus* in question must stay in Marpha. If a *Mi-thus* doesn't stay in the state, after 15 days his son must officiate as deputy, and stay in the state as *Mi-thus*.

In the event that the *rGan-pa* offends against the law, the legal proceedings are transferred to the four *Mi-thus*. The *Mi-thus* must inform the citizens of the state (*yul-ba*). When the whole state has assembled, the citizens of the state (*yul-mi*) must pass judgment. In the event that the four *Mi-thus* do not inform the citizenship, they must each pay a fine of 1/2 *ḥo*.

#### General legal costs:

If anyone brings a legal action and wins it, the law fees (*byo-to-ri* = Nepali *jitauri*) to be paid by the winner come to 3 *ḍnūl*. If he loses, the fine imposed (*gran-gri* = Nepali *ḍaṇḍa*) comes to at least 5 *ḍnūl*. In matters of greater importance, an additional fine is imposed. The fine must be paid within 15 days. If the fine is not paid within this period of grace, an additional fine of two *bya'u* must be paid for each day it is overdue. If the *rGan-chen* or the *Mi-thus* give respite, they have to pay a fine of 1/2 *ḥo*.

If the whole legal action is settled by an agreement, the judge's fees (*bhe-gri* = Nepali *bheṭi*) come to no more than one *ḍnūl*. Unrelated to the fact of whether one wins or loses the case, the *Sor-fee* is one *A-na* in each case.

#### Excluding Foreign courts of appeal:

It is not permitted to evade a sentence by leaving the area of Marpha. It is not allowed to lodge appeals against such a sentence with officials such as *Bhi-ca-ri* (= Nepali *bicāri*), *Do-va-ri* (= Nepali *dvāre*), *A-ma-li* (= Nepali *amāli*) *drMu-khi* (= Nepali *mukhīya*), *Gri-kha* (= Nepali *ḍiṭṭhā*) and *Su-spa* (= Nepali *subhā*). It is not possible to request a verdict (*sto-kab* = Nepali *tok*) from Kathmandu (*yan-bu*) and bring it to Marpha.

In the event that anyone contravenes these rules, the household to which he belongs must pay a fine of three *ḥo*.

[§ 3, p.3] Official duties of the *Rol-po* (*rol-pa'i kor-nas*)

#### Attendance duties of the *Rol-po*:

In summer the *Rol-po* are not allowed to take time off from their duties. If a *Rol-po* is not present on the 20th day of the *sTo-ren*-autumn festival, he is fined two *ḍnūl*. This fine must be paid into the public revenue (*am-sta-ni* = Nepali *āmdāni*). For each further day the absentee must pay one *Ṭam*. In the period from the reaping of the buckwheat to the 20th day of the *sTo-ren* festival, the *Rol-po* are allowed to take time off. If a *Rol-po* is sick in the summer, he can take time off. He must however pay one *ḍnūl* for each month that he is absent. If a *Rol-po* dies and he has a son who is at least 12 years old, he must be appointed as replacement *Rol-po* for the dead father. If such a son is not available, the family is charged one *ḍnūl* per month. The remaining *Rol-po*(s) and all other officials receive a share of this sum. A *Rol-po* must not take more than three days leave of absence from official duties. If he takes more than three days off, the fine for the *Min-kya* is one *Ṭam*.

The *rGan-chen* can grant the *Min-kya* leave of

absence for four days. In this case the *Min-kya* must deposit a sum (*spes-sa*) of one *A-na*. If the *Min-kya* does not remain in Mar-pha, the fine for each day of absence is one *dnul*.

When the *rGan-chen* and the *Mi-thus* have to leave due to conflicts and legal disputes and travel to *Kli-phuñ*, *Bhags-luñ*, *sPo-kho-ra*, *sTan* or *Yañ-bu*, the cost of their expenses, and those of the *Rol-po* who carry their luggage, must be divided equally between the citizens of the State. The *Rol-pos* remaining behind in the State are not obliged to deliver any payment for the raising of those expenses. The remaining *Rol-pos* are not allowed to travel. When this money is raised, the *Rol-po(s)* must not embezzle it. The *Min-kya* must not embezzle deposited sums (*spes-sa*) and salt. If even 1 *dnul* is embezzled, the fine is 1 *śa-dañ-gyañ-bu*. If monetary sums (*spes-sa*) and salt have been deposited and the *Min-kya* gives them away, the fine for him is 1 *śa-dañ-gyañ-bu*.

So far we have had no access to documents from Thag, lying south of Marpha, so we cannot yet comment on the basic political laws of this area from a historical standpoint. Nevertheless, in Larjung there is a huge archive preserved in a large, modern steel cupboard. It remains to be hoped that the documents will soon become accessible for research. Nevertheless the documents from Ghasa show that the political organization of Thag was similar to that of Marpha.

The documents recently photographed in Thini clearly show that this settlement closely followed the model of Marpha in its political organization. Although there are no comprehensive legal texts comparable with the Marpha Bemchag, there are many documents in which comparable laws have been found. Approval of these documents by the representatives of all households was testified with

thumb-prints.

#### Notes

- 1 Michael Vinding and Krishna Bahadur Bhattachan, An Annotated Bibliography on the Thakalis. In: Contributions to Nepalese Studies, Vol. 12, No. 3 (1985), pp. 1-24.
- 2 To this statement I would like to make the following remarks: I have of course noticed more studies dealing with historical aspects of this area, as for instance historical remarks in Gauchan-Vinding and others. But since all of them like Gauchan-Vinding, do not publish their sources, they cannot be used as a base for further research. The publication of sources and their interpretation is indispensable since these sources confront us with extraordinary linguistic difficulties typical for this area. I therefore strongly suggest that evaluations of sources, given mainly as contents analysis, may not be used for further historical research and conclusions.
- 3 See Bibliography and Abbreviations: Ramble-Vinding. Concerning the date of this text Ramble-Vinding (p.7) give the following remarks: "The text includes a reference to the Central Government of Tibet (Ganden Phodrang) which was established only in the 17 century and the text cannot be therefore earlier than that date." In its first part the Cimang bem-čhag mentions a number of historical figures which are not identified by Ramble-Vinding. First we have to mention a King of Jumla named *Sur-ti-pa* (Ramble-Vinding, p. 36, line 12). This is the king *Surtisāhi* of Jumla, who according to Pandey (p. 44-) ruled this country between 1618 - 1626. The text names

- as another historical figure a King of Mustang (*Klo-'o*) called *Ā-ka bSam-grub* (Ramble-Vinding, p. 37, line 1). According to Jackson (p. 134) there were three Kings of Mustang, bearing the name *bSam-grub*: *bSam-grub-rdo-rje*, *bSam-grub-rab-brtan* and *bSam-grub-dpal-'bar*. All three ruled during the 17 century. Finally the text mentions a ruler of *sMu-ga-thar-ba* named *'Khro-skyabs* (Ramble-Vinding, p. 37, line 1-2). This person is obviously identical with *Khro-bo-skyabs-pa*, the founder of the three big castles in the Muktināth valley, who lived in the 16 century. From this we can conclude that the earliest date of the compilation of the Cimang bem-čhag is the second half of the 17 century.
- 4 Ramble-Vinding, p. 7-
  - 5 Ramble-Vinding, p. 6.
  - 6 See Bibliography and Abbreviations: Kag Bemchag and Marpha Bemchag.
  - 7 Schuh 6, pp. 307-310; Meisezahl, p. 225. According to the descriptions of Meisezahl, the introductions of Tibetan law books very often contain a detailed history of Tibetan law.
  - 8 Schuh 5, Documents XXXVIII and XXXIX.
  - 9 Regarding the use of the Mongolian term *bi-čig* as a designation of legal documents of a special type see Schuh 7, p. 7 and Schuh 8, p. 162.
  - 10 In the Tibetan legal system we find the usage of three basic terms: *bka'-śog*, *bka'-gtan* etc. for decrees of the ruler, addressed to specific persons and institutions, *rca-chig* for decrees of the ruler, addressed to the whole country or a parts of it and *zal-lce* for the criminal law book.
  - 11 For comparison we may look at the Monthang Bemchag. Unfortunately only a copy of a part of this text is available to me. As far as I can see the text describes the relations between Mustang with its neighbours and lists the tributs to be handed over to Jumla and its officials. In its historical descriptions it bears certain similarities to the Cimang bem-čhag.
  - 12 Nowadays Thag comprises 13 villages.
  - 13 Ramble-Vinding, p. 43, line 4.
  - 14 Ramble-Vinding, p. 44, lines 3-6.
  - 15 Ramble-Vinding give here the following translation: "In order to keep Thag and Sum separate (?)." The term *rgam-śag* is used even nowadays in southern Mustang as a designation of a treatise.
  - 16 The translation of Ramble-Vinding (p. 17) of this sentence is completely misleading. As a consequence the whole interpretation of this treatise in Ramble-Vinding is not understandable.
  - 17 Ramble-Vinding, p. 45, line 1 - p. 46, line 9.
  - 18 Ramble-Vinding, p. 44, line 16 - p. 45, line 1.
  - 19 Ramble-Vinding, p. 18, translates *čhod-yig* as "clear account." They add to this translation the following commentary (p. 33): "*Chod-yig* (for *chos-yig*) does not necessarily mean an religious account, but is probably a pleonasm, since *chos* is the usual term in Baragaon for literature of any sort." This proposed translation is misleading. In this respect I only refer to the Bod-rgya chig-mjod (p. 824), where we find the following explanation of this term: *rcod-gži 'dum-'grig byun-ba'i yi-ge* "treaty for the settlement of a dispute" or *dmag-mchams 'jog-rgyu'i čhod-yig* "Treaty, which ends a war."
  - 20 It is not clear to me who is designated by the term *mkhar-dpon*.
  - 21 Ramble-Vinding (p. 18) give the following



translation: "Should a treacherous man arise among the inhabitants of Sum". As the translation of the subsequent passages by Ramble-Vinding shows, they obviously left the term *mi-zen* untranslated.

- 22 This term is not understandable to me.  
 23 The paragraphs 47 and 48 are omitted in MB2.  
 24 MB1, § 2.  
 25 MB2 contains in fol. 14r a copy of this decession of the year *sa-'brug*, which according to my opinion corresponds to 1808.  
 26 MB1, § 2.  
 27 MB1, § 35, fol. 21v,1: *yañ rañ-rañ gi rim-pa la phog-na*.  
 28 MB1, § 35.

#### 4.2. The feudalistic political order of the land of twelve villages (Yul-kha bú-gñis, Baragaon)

As we have noted above, up to the 19th century the Muktināth valley and the regions under its political control were ruled over by a family of nobles. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Muktināth valley should have greatly differed in its political organization from its southern neighbours. In the Kagbeni village archives, it so happens, there is a text of the *bem-čhag* genre concerning the history and organization of this region. The document is bound together into a booklet and comprises 15 folios. On the final leaf we find the sealed original of a deed of *Khri-thog rDo-rje-thogs-rgyal*, issued in 1849 and edited above as Document 1. This is in itself an indication of the document's great age. Without a doubt, the document was drawn up before the beginning of the Gorkha rule - that is, before 1790.

- 29 MB1, § 21.  
 30 *Mir-sta* is a general designation for any official: *rGan-pa*, *Mi-thus*, *Rol-po* and *Min-kya*.  
 31 According to § 2 *khral* are besides *sirto* taxes to be paid to external authorities.  
 32 *bskyal-čhan* is the term for the usage to offer beer to persons of a household leaving it or returning from a journey.  
 33 See note 30.  
 34 M. L. Karmcharya, People's Participation in the Management of Local Affairs in Southern Mustang in the 19th and 20th Centuries, in: Ancient Nepal, Number 136, 1994 (Special Edition on Mustang), pp. 17 - 22.

The first point to note is that the date the *bem-čhag* of Kagbeni was put to paper is stated in the document itself:

[fol. 3v,1] "The history of the origin of the country of *sKag* and its earlier customs were written down in the female fire-ox year, on the 10th day of the third month, on a Sunday, in the 22nd lunar house and on the day of the dragon."

Whoever is familiar with the Tibetan calendrical system will know that, in spite of this information, establishing the writing date with certainty is far from being unproblematic. Possible candidates for the fire-ox year are, for instance, 1577, 1637, 1697 and 1757. The addition of the day of the week to the date might be of some help in identifying the year in question. According to the Tibetan calendrical reckoning I am familiar with,

the 10th day of the third Tibetan month of the year 1577, in all Tibetan calendars I have been able to quantify, was a Friday. The 10th day of the third Tibetan month of the year 1637 was, according to the newer school of the *Phug-pa*, a Sunday; according to the older *Phug-pa* school and the calendrical reckoning of the *Kālacakratantra*, a Saturday; and according to the reckoning of the '*Phags-pa*, a Sunday.

The 10th day of the third Tibetan month of the year 1697, according to the new and old *Phug-pa* schools, was a Monday; according to the calendrical reckoning of the *Kālacakratantra* and the '*Phag-pas*, a Sunday; and the 10th day of the third Tibetan month of the year 1757, according to all calendrical reckonings I have been able to quantify, was a Thursday.

From this it is evident that only 1637 and 1697 are possible years for the writing of the *bem-čhag* of Kagbeni. The contents of the text provide no secure evidence as to which of these two years is, in the end, the correct one.

Historical information is found only in the first part of the *bem-čhag*, where the founding of the village, the location of its borders and its subjection to Jumla is dealt with:

[fol. 3v,2 - 4r,6] "*sPu-druñ Khro-skyapa*, having turned his horse south, set up three districts.

First, concerning the mountain pastures and the borders:

The border between *Som-po* and *sKakh*: the near side of the *rGyas-luñ-pa*, eastward below the *dkon-mchog man-thañ*;

The border between the people of *sKag*, *rJoñ* and *Pu-ṭa*: what is below the *Luñ-mo-che* belongs to the people of *sKag*;

The border between *Khyin-ka* and the people of *sKag*: below the (cliff) *Brag-zur* on the near side of the (pass) *Dañ-sgog-la* belongs to the people of *sKag*;

This side of *sTi-ma* and above *Pañ-thag nan-ma* and *Brag-mo-čhe* is the common land of the people of *sKag* and of *Phan-legs*;

What remains was granted (to *sKag*) during the lifetime of *sPu-druñ Khro-skyaba*.

Later, from the time when (Kagbeni) came under the rule of the king of Jumla *Bhan-pa*, it was said: There is no difference between you, the sixty households of *Che-ṇa-šin*<sup>1</sup>, and the sixty households of *sKag*. They are the residences of the king (*rgyal*) and the minister (*blon*). Accordingly, it [i.e. *sKag*] was granted for a tax of fifteen *dKar-dmar*."

Of historical significance is, first of all, the mention of *sPu-druñ Khro-skyapa* as the founder of the three southern "districts" (*rjoñ-sgo*)<sup>2</sup>, of which the Muktināth valley of course forms a part. Also significant is the reference to a king of Jumla, spelled *Bhan-pa* or *Bhan-sa*, who ruled later than *Khro-skyapa*. Of particular interest is the statement that Kagbeni came under the domination of Jumla during his time. The Jumla king in question is either *Bhānāsāhi* (1528 - 1585) or *Bahāduraśāhi* (1665 - 1675)<sup>3</sup>, in my opinion most probably the later one. The allusion here is obviously to Mustang's inclusion in the collocation of states

under Jumla's hegemony in the 17th century, which has been dealt with in detail above (cf. Part I, 3.3).

In the Kag *bem-čhag* the description of the territorial boundaries is followed by a discussion of the penal code [fols. 4r,6 - 6r,1]. Here it is stated that this code was also established by King *Bhān-pa*. In fact, however, the indications are that the code in question is purely Tibetan in origin. There is first the admonishment that the judges must pass sentence fairly. Then there is the provision that trial by ordeal making use of glowing iron and boiling oil should be outlawed. In order to arrive at the truth, the decision of the "(three) precious objects" should be sought, the reference obviously being to a throw of dice.<sup>4</sup> A list of court fees ensues. The section concludes, finally, with instructions on what steps are to be taken in cases where ordeals are conducted with the use of a hot iron or boiling oil. In such cases, the 'o-'om-pa needs to be present. If the 'o-'om-pa is absent, the presence of the *khri-thog-pa* is required.

Criminal court rulings are dealt with elsewhere, though only for the case of theft [fols. 11v,5 - 12r,2]. They show that the Tibetan law of compensation applied in Kagbeni. If the thief was a houseowner (*bdag-po*), he was required to pay as compensation a value sixteen times that of the stolen goods. If the thief was a bondsman (*g.yog-po*), only an eightfold compensation had to be paid.

The 'o-'om-pa and the *khri-thog-pa* were the most important officials of the Muktināth valley. The *khri-thog-pa* was the representative of the local noble family, and the 'o-'om-pa that of the king of Jumla. As a rule the representative of the King of Jumla remained in the Muktināth valley only for a period of three months. Among his duties was the formal acceptance of the taxes of Lower Mustang (*glo-smad*). It was the duty of the elder of Kagbeni,

the steward of the fortress (*mkhar gyi gñer-pa*) and the two stewards from among the ranks of the subjects (*mna'-zabs kyi gñer-pa*) to collect these taxes and hand them over to him through the *khri-thog-pa*.

When the 'o-'om-pa arrived on his visit from Jumla, firewood and fodder for his mounts and pack animals had to be made ready. If the *khri-thog-pa* travelled to *Char-mkha'*, *sMon-thañ*, *sMa-snañ* or *Gli-buñ* on state business, monks and laymen had to prepare a suitable reception for him along the way.

The elder (*rgan-pa*) of Kagbeni was not only the seniormost person of Kagbeni, but he also performed this function for the entire territory of the twelve villages. At his installation, he received a turban from the fortress as a token of respect. The elder and the two stewards (*gñer-pa*) were not elected by the people but selected and appointed jointly by the 'o-'om-pa and *khri-thog-pa*. The elder's authority was evidently considerable. If a person refused to carry out his orders relating to particular activities, he had to pay a certain fine. The six *rol-bo* are mentioned as officials along with the elder.

The people of Kagbeni were divided into six 'cho groups, which were represented on certain occasions by so-called *mi-'thus*. Particular fields were assigned to the 'cho groups; the harvests from them were drawn upon in fulfilment of certain public tasks. The maintenance of paths and the performance of certain rituals may be mentioned here.

The *bem-čhag* of Kagbeni devotes a fair amount of space to the local customs post, which, according to our informants, was located outside the actual village during the historical period. In front of the customs post there was a large open

space, which was used for laying up salt. The customs post was closed in the spring at the time of the Siripañcami festival and reopened only in the summer at the time of the first harvest. Trade stopped during this time, and the main gate of Kagbeni was shut. It was the duty of the *rol-po* to ensure that the pause in trade was observed. The head of the customs post, who was evidently delegated to Kagbeni directly from Jumla, was not present in Kagbeni during this time. Customs on petty trade that nevertheless went on was collected by residents of Kagbeni.

At the time the customs post was closed, the salt storage area was swept out by the *rol-po*, who evidently were allowed to keep for themselves the amount of salt swept together. The closure was accompanied by the performance of a *lha-bsaṅs* ceremony by the monks of the monastery. An animal was also possibly sacrificed.

The salt trade was without a doubt the main source of income for the customs office. There is only one reference concerning the collection of customs duties: the need to measure out granulated salt. There is also only one reference, in Document 6, concerning the amount of duty received. There it is noted that the *sgo-dpon* of Kagbeni retained a handful of salt. In comparison to this, the *cha-phud* duties levied in *Thag* were greater: if a yak or a mjo was used as the pack animal, the customs fee amounted to a double handful of salt; if a goat or sheep, the fee was one handful of salt per animal.

No duties were imposed on certain goods. These were: copper, brass, cotton, woollen stuffs, iron and lead. Butter, comestible oil, tobacco, chewing tobacco, raw sugar, certain dye additives, medicines and chili peppers, however, were subject to duties. The amount of duty owed on these items is not specified in the *bem-čhag* of Kagbeni. Duties

also had to be paid on the transport of bamboo boxes, dossiers, boards, beams, wooden boxes and tea. The exact customs rates are given in the case of these goods.

Much space is devoted in the Kagbeni *bem-čhag* to a description of responsibilities that arose in connection with the performance of certain festivals and religious ceremonies. Determinations were made as to who supplied what food products (and under certain circumstances sacrificial animals), which officials and participants in the rituals received what portions for carrying out the ceremonies. The following festivals and rituals are mentioned:

1. *gSo-sbyoṅ* ceremony (fol. 6A,1)
2. *Ba-le gsum-pa* (fol. 6A,5)
3. *Lo-g.yag* (fol. 7A,3), evidently in connection with a *bsṅo-rim* ceremony and a *jo* offering.
4. *Gyab-ras me-tog* (fol. 9B,1)
5. *dByar-stoṅ* (fol. 10A,4)

The Kagbeni *bem-čhag* also defines the numerous community duties of a profane nature to be carried out by households. Among such duties are participation in communal gatherings, the cleaning of water channels and the irrigation reservoir, the observance of the partial ban on slaughtering bulls needed for tilling fields, the responsibility providing mutual assistance during joint trading expeditions etc. For details, the following edition and translation of the Kagbeni *bem-čhag* may be consulted.

It should be stressed that, in spite of the purely Buddhist character of the introduction of the *bem-čhag*, the monastery of Kagbeni and its monks played only a minor role in the ritual life of the village at the end of the 17th century, such as it is

reflected in the *bem-čhag*. The monastery itself (*čhos-sde*), for instance, is only mentioned in connection with a *lha-bsans* ceremony (fol. 4A) performed during the closure of the customs post. The monks (*dge-'dun*) are referred to only in connection with the observance of a *bsno-rim* ceremony (fols. 7A, 9A). The possibility cannot be ruled out that they also performed the *gso-sbyon* ceremony mentioned on fol. 6A. The main priestly figure, however, is the *a-ya*, who had the main role to play in rituals involving animal sacrifice.

The situation as depicted allows conclusions to be drawn about the settlement history of Kagbeni. The inhabitants of the present-day village of Kag speak a Tibetan dialect, and have hitherto been categorized as Bhotias. It is unclear what the historical background to the present situation is. The following fundamental question poses itself: Was the Muktināth valley newly settled by Tibetan settlers from the north and the original population suppressed after the prince *dpon-drun Khro-bo-skyabs-pa* was deputed there, or was a Tibetan upper class merely superimposed on the preexisting population, resulting in a Tibetanization of the latter? In the case of Kagbeni, this question can now be answered with a fair degree of confidence.

It must be regarded as certain that a village called Kag was already in existence prior to the 15th century. A number of things suggest, however, that it was originally located in a different place from the site of present-day Kagbeni. It may first be noted that, on the basis of studies conducted by B. Schmidt and N. Gutschow, construction of the fortress of Kagbeni was begun only in the second half of the 16th century. None of the houses currently standing in the area surrounding the fortress is likely to be older than the fortress itself. On the other hand, we observe in southern Mustang that

easily accessible settlements like Thini and Marpha evidently arose in the 18th century at the earliest, through resettlement from protected sites that were more difficult to reach. The same may be true of the easily accessible villages in *Thag* to the south. Jomsom is a recent settlement from the 18th century.

The conclusion to be drawn is that the founding of the fortress of Kagbeni was the precondition for people being able to settle in such a militarily exposed site in the first place. Where the Kag of the medieval period was located may for the time being remain an open question, though I would rule out an exposed riverine site. More likely candidate is the deserted settlement located near Puseling along the *rJon* River above present-day Kagbeni. Resettlement from old Kagbeni to Kagbeni of the present probably began in the late 16th century, and is hardly likely to have ended before the 18th century.

Northern Mustang came under the full influence of Tibetan Buddhism, in the form of the missionary activity of priests from the *Sa-skya* school, in the 15th century at the latest. It is highly improbable that a people who migrated from there to southern Mustang in the 16th century should have practised non-Buddhist rituals involving animal sacrifice. It is also interesting that among the *dkar-čhag* texts dealt with in the next chapter, a work written shortly after the death of *sGrol-mar-in-chen*, the son of *Khro-bo-skyabs-pa*, refers to the inhabitants of Kag as *mi-nan* 'bad persons' who followed bad practices (*srol-nan*), a characterization that may well refer to the non-Buddhist manner in which they exercised their religion.

From what has gone before it may be inferred that the present-day population of Kagbeni is basically the result of the Tibetanization of an origi-

nally non-Tibetan people.

**Text and Translation of the Bem-čhag of Kag-beni**

1A

1. yul gyi ་ལོ། ems-(phyags) g ་ལུག། gi ་ས།  
nor-bu
2. źes bya-ba bźugs-so ,

1 bem-čhag gcug gi nor-bu

"(Herein) is contained the basic law of the land, called Jewel of the Crown of the Head."

1B

1. Z , om sva-sti / , ston-pa bla-med (sañs-rgyas)  
rin-po-čhe / , skyobs-pa
2. bla-med dam-čhos rin-po-čhe / , 'dren-pa bla-  
med dge-'dun rin-po-čhe / , bla-med dkon-
3. méhog gsum la phyag-'chal lo / , sku-gsum  
yoñs-'dus rca-(brgyud) bla-ma la / ,
4. sgo-gsum gus-pas phyag-'chal skyabs-su méhi  
/ , (brgyad)-khri'i dus su zas-gcañ-
5. sras su 'khruñs , sde-snod gsum gyi bstan-pa'i  
(rgyal)-mchan gcugs , 'gro-kun

5 mchan bcugs

"Om hail! I perform a prostration before the unsurpassable three supreme treasures, the unsurpassable teacher, the noble Buddha, the unsurpassable protector, the noble sacred Dharma,

the unsurpassable liberator, the noble community of monks.

I humbly perform the prostration by means of the "three gates" before the direct spiritual teacher and before the spiritual teachers, being in the line of the tradition, (both) uniting in their persons the "three bodies," and deliver myself up to their protection.

Born during the time of the Eighty Thousand as the son of the (king) *Zas-gcañ(-ma)* [Śuddhodana], he erected the standard of the teaching of the Tripiṭaka,"

2A

1. Z , ma-rig mun-pa sel-mjad-pa'i / , mñams-med  
śākya'i (rgyal)-por
2. phyag-'chal-bstod / , (rgya)-gar čhos kyi (rgya)-  
mcho čhen-po las / , dam-čhos čhar-(rgyun)
3. bod du 'dren mjad-pa'i / , bod-yul (thams-čad)  
čhos kyi gañ-bar mjad / , mkhas-sgrub
4. lo-paṇ rñams la phyag-'chal-lo / , źes méhod-  
par brjod-pa sñon du btañ nas,

1 mñam-med 3 'dren-mjad-pas , čhos kyis

"he removed for all living beings the darkness of ignorance; before him, the incomparable Śākya king, I perform the prostration and extol him.

From the great ocean of India's religions they brought the rainfall of the sacred Dharma to Tibet,

and thereby filled the whole land of Tibet with the Dharma.

(before these,) the learned and wise translators and pandits,

I perform the prostration.

After the words of offering thus had been placed at the beginning,"

5. \* si-ri si-ri rgyal-žabs-rin-po-che'i \* sa-gzi yin-pa la, thog-mar skag-pa yul-pa'i (čhags)-rab bkod-pa

"now the history of the origin of the people of the land of *sKag* was first put down in writing, (it) being the region of the precious *Si-ri Si-ri* king<sup>5</sup>."

## 2B

1. la , me-mo glañ-lo zla-ba gsum-pa'i ches-bcu , gza' ñi-ma , skar-ma ñer-gñis , 'brug gi
2. ñi-ma la , skag-pa yul-pa'i (čhags)-rab dañ sñon-srol mams yi-ger bkod-pa la , spu-druñ khro-
3. skya-pa čhibs-kha lho la 'gyur nas , sjoñ-sgo gsum gcugs, thog-mar ri-ga dañ sa-mchams
4. skor la , som-po dañ skakh gi sa-mchams srin-gyui chur-stabs, jam-'phrañ-mar-mo chur-stabs,
5. stañ-yed kyis ri-mchams , (rgyas)-luñ-pa chur-stabs , śar-(phyogs) nas dkon-mčhog-man-thañ man-
6. čhad , skag-pa dañ sjoñ-pa pu-ṭa gsum gyis sa-(mchams) , luñ-mo-čhe man-čhad skag-pa'i yin, khyin-

2 čhag-rabs 3 lho la bsgyur nas , sjoñ-sgo gsum bcugs 4 skag gi 5 stañ-yed kyis 6 pu-ṭa gsum gyi

"The history of the origin of the country of *sKag* and its earlier customs were written down in the female fire-ox year, on the 10th day of the third month, on a Sunday, in the 22nd lunar house and on the day of the dragon.

*sPu-druñ Khro-skya-pa*, having turned his horse south, set up the three districts.

First, concerning the mountain pastures and the borders;

The border between *Som-po* and *sKakh*: the near bank of the (river) *Srin-gyui* and the near side of the *Jam-'phrañ mar-mo*;

The mountain pasture border with *sTan-ye*: the near side of the *rGyas-luñ-pa*, eastward below the *dKon-mčhog man-thañ*;

The border between the people of *sKag*, *rJoiñ* and *Pu-ṭa*: what is below the *Luñ-mo-čhe* belongs to the people of *sKag*;"

## 3A

1. Z , ka dañ skag-pa'i sa-mchams brag-zur man-čhad , dañ-gog-la chur-stabs skag-
2. pa'i yin , sti-ma chur-stabs , pan-thag nañ-ma dañ brag-po-čhe yañ-čhad skag-pa dañ phan-(l e- gs)
3. gñis mkluiñ spis-ma yin , de-man spu-druñ khro-skya-ba'i sku-thog la gnañ-ba yin / , (physis su) 'jum-glañ
4. (rgyal)-po bhan-pa <sup>l-s</sup> kyis mña'-og tu byuiñ chun , che-na-šiiñ groñ-pa drug-bcu , skag groñ-pa drug-bcu

5. khyed-gñis khyad-med , (rgyal) babs-sa dañ slon babs-sa yin gsuñ nas , phral dkar-dmar bco-lia
  6. la gnañ-ba yin , khyad-par du yul-khrims yañ gnañ-ba yin , thog-mar yul-khrims skor la / ,  
3 gñis luñ spyi-ma 5 rgyal 'babs-sa dañ blon 'babs-sa , khral dkar-dmar
- "The border between *Khyin-ka* and the people of *sKag*: below the (cliff) *Brag-zur* on the near side of the (pass) *Dañ-sgog-la* belongs to the people of *sKag*;
- This side of *sTi-ma* and above *Pan-thag nañ-ma* and *Brag-mo-éhe* is the common land of the people of *sKag* and of *Phan-legs*;
- What remains was granted (to *sKag*) during the lifetime of *sPu-druñ Khro-skya-ba*.
- Later, from the time when (Kagbeni) came under the rule of the king of Jumla *Bhan-pa*, it was said: There is no difference between you, the sixty households of *Che-na-sin*<sup>1</sup>, and the sixty households of *sKag*. They are the residences of the king (*rgyal*) and the minister (*blon*). Accordingly, it [i.e. *Kag*] was granted for a tax of fifteen *dKar-dmar*.
- First, concerning the law of the land:"

3B

1. khrims-mi gzuñ-(bśags) , mda'-mo'i stoñ-(bśags) , ñes-(phyogs) , 'dun-(phyogs) med-pa (khrims)-spes gsuñ nas yul-

2. khrims gnañ-ba yin , (lcags)-'dags snuñ-'dags med , dkon-mchog luñ-zus byed (rgyu) , (rgyal)-mkhan la
3. dkar-dmar zo-gañ , pham-mkhan la dkar-dmar zo-gsuñ , sgam-po chig gis spes na , sku-(rgyal) dañ Chad-pa
4. gñis bltas nas gcod (rgyu) , gal-strid (lcags)-('dags) snuñ-('dags) byed dgos byuñ na , 'o-'om-pa'i sku-chabs
5. zu (rgyu) , 'o-'om med na , khri-thog-pa nas sku-chabs zu (rgyu) , pham-mkhan la Chad-pa zo-gsuñ , yul-khrims
6. nañ du , sku-(rgyal) zo-gañ sku-chabs kyi snom nas dgoñs du spul (rgyu) yin , yul-khrims skal-pa'i

1 khrims-mis gzuñ-gśag , mda'-mo'i ltoñ-bśag , khrims phyēs 2 lcags-ldag snuñ-ldag 3 'pham-mkhan 4 lcags-ldag snuñ-ldag , 'o-'om-pas sku-chab 5 nas sku-chab 6 sku-chab kyi bsñams nas goñ du 'bul-rgyu , bskal-pa'i

"Having stated, "The judge should decide in the middle (i.e. unswayed by outside influences), (even) as the notch is cut in an arrow.<sup>6</sup> Apply the law without regard to the fact that someone is related to (this) person or is close to (that) person," he instituted the law of the land. (Trial by ordeal requiring) the application of (glowing) iron and immersion in (hot) oil will not be used. Use shall be made of (the custom of) asking the Triratna's decision. The winning party is charged the amount (*dkar-dmar*) of one *zo* (as a court fee). The losing party is charged the amount (*dkar-dmar*) of three *zo*. In passing judgment with wise words, he must do so after having considered the court fee<sup>7</sup> and the punishment. Should it prove necessary to make



application of (glowing) iron or to perform immersion in (hot) oil, the 'o-'om-pa must function as representative. If the 'o-'om-pa is not present, the khri-thog-pa must function as representative<sup>8</sup>. The losing party is charged a fine of three *žo*.

In accordance with the law of the land, a court fee of one *žo* shall be taken by the representative and be passed on to the higher authorities<sup>9</sup>. The law of the land was instituted to continue in force up to the end of the era."

## 4A

1. Z, bar du gnañ-byuñ , skag mda'-ni skor la , skag-pa la 'bri-sku med , śi-ri-pan-
2. 'jin-ma la ,skag-daṃ dus skag-pa'i chva mda'-ni \* ru \* ston (rgyu) yin , skag-pa gal-ma dañ mi dañ bčas-
3. pa phin-phan 'jin mi dgos , añ-na phyag-dar rol-bo'i byed dgos , rol-bo nas phes zo-ba gañ mda'-
4. ni la , skye-skra maṃs čhañ zo do-ma ster dgos , skag-pa čhos-sde lha-bsañs la gdan'dren dgos ,
5. rgan-rol bdun-po la gsol čhab-ka , brañ-rce mgo-rce , sgyu-ma sne-čhañs , kon-pa 1 , das-kur 1 ,
6. khyems 1 , phyag-ma 1 rol-bo maṃs la ster dgos , skyed-skra chab-ra la 'gro dus , skag-pa'i rol-bo

1 la 'dri dgos med 2 skag 'dams dus 3 phyin phan , phyag-dar rol-bos 5 rgyu-ma sne-čhañ 6 khyem 1 , chva-rva la 'gro

"Concerning the *sKag* customs post: The

people of *sKag* need not be consulted (concerning customs matters). When (the customs post) is closed for the *Si-ri-panjin-ma* (festival), the salt belonging to the people of *sKag* should be brought to the customs post. As long as (only) the people of *sKag* together with their pack animals and workers go about (their trade after this point in time), nothing may be confiscated. The sweeping of the courtyard<sup>10</sup> shall be performed by the *rol-bo*. (The chief) of the customs post shall be given a *zo-ba* (measure) of ground roasted grain by the *rol-bo*, and a double *zo-ba* of beer to the those working<sup>11</sup> (in the customs post). (The monks of) the monastery of the people of *sKag* shall be invited to a *lha-bsañs* ceremony. To the *rgan-pa* and the *rol-ba* - these seven (persons) - shall be made available a dossier, a bamboo tray, a shovel and a broom. When the workers (of the customs post first) go to the salt storage site, good omens shall be sought by the *rol-bo* of the people of *sKag*"

## 4B

1. čhañ zo do-ma khyer nas stem-'brel byed dgos, chva-'bru gñis babs dus mda'-ni nas rol-bo maṃs
2. la stem-'brel byed dgos , chva han-chun la khyer-sa med-pa rol-bos rcar-gčod byed dgos,
3. (rgyas)-sgo (rgyab) dgos , mda'-ni yo-pa dañ čhañ ster dgos , śi-ri-pan-'jin-ma nas skag-pa'i drag-
4. rce naṃ-btañ bar la skag-pa'i sgor-dpon ston rgyu , skag-pa dañ som-po gñis daṃ-chig la rten nas
5. sa-gsar gañ yin , som-po'i kyañ skag yul-pa la yur-ri 'a-śiñ-čha , zaṃ-pa'i śiñ-čha , bud-

6. *śin* , *san* , *rca phran-bu len-pa sñad'-cher med*,  
*chva-pa la chva-phes chad byas nas len (rgyu)*  
*yin*

1 *khyer nas rten-'brel* , *chva-'bru gñis 'babs dus*  
 2 *rten-'brel* , *'khyer-sa* , *rol-bos rcad-g'cod* 3  
*rgyal-sgo* , *mda'-nis* , 4 *sgo-dpon* , *dam-chig la*  
*brten nas* 5 *som-pos kyañ* , *yu-ra'i 'a'i śin-cha*  
 6 *len-pa la bsñad'-cher* , *chva-phye chad byas*  
*nas*

"by the expedient of taking along a double *zo-ba* of beer. When salt and grains are stored away (for the first time), good omens are to be sought for the *rol-bo* by the customs post. The *rol-bo* must see to it that salt is not transported back and forth (during the time when the customs post is closed). The main gate (of *sKag*) shall be shut. Food and beer shall be provided by the customs post. From the *Śi-ri-pa -'jin-ma* festival to the release of the *drag-rce* (fields for the harvest), the customs shall be collected by the *sgo-dpon* of the people of *sKag*. No trouble shall be caused to the people of *sKag* by (the people of) *Som-po* by reason of the agreement between the people of *sKag* and *Som-po*, when the former collect from the *Sa-gsar* (regions of *Som-po*) wood for the irrigation conduits, wood for bridges, firewood, *san*<sup>12</sup> and small amounts of grass.

(Customs) shall be collected from salt traders, with measurement being made with granulated salt."

5A

1. *Z* , *zañs* , *rag* , *ras* , *sgo-bsnaṃ* , (*lcags*) , *ža-*

*sne (sogs) la go-ra med* , *mar* , *ma-khu* , *tha-mag*

2. *bsur-ti* , *go-ram* , *rcod* , *sman-sna* , *dmar-rca*  
 (*rnams*) *la mañ-ñuñ la btas nas go-ra ston-*  
 (*rgyu*), *rog-ma*
3. *la das-skur* 1 , *kon-pa khur-po la das-skur* 1 ,  
*rtal khur-po* , *sgaṃ* , *gduñ-ma khur-po la*  
*khyems re-re* ,
4. *ja khur la spa-lag* 1 *yin* , *phra-bzuñ skor la* ,  
*m* <sup>└th┘</sup> *a'* <sup>└n┘</sup> *o gza* <sup>└n┘</sup> *la zin na (rgyal)-*  
*po'i yin* ,
5. *grab la go-pa (rgyu) mda'-ni nas ston dgos* ,  
*lag-len mkhar gyi gñer-pa'i byed dgos* , *brag-*  
 6. *skras-pa skag-pa'i yin* , *Z* , *skag* <sup>└rg┘</sup> *an-pa'i*  
 [2S] *skor la* , *thog-mar dbu-thod phu* <sup>└l┘</sup>

1 *'go-snam* , *mar-khu* , *tha-mag* 2 *bcod sman-sna* 4  
*jva khur* , *khra-bzuñ* 5 *grabs la dgos-pa'i*  
*rgyu* , *mkhar gyi gñer-pas*

"There is no customs on copper, brass, cotton, wool, iron and lead. Customs shall be collected for butter, vegetable oils, tobacco, chewing tobacco, unrefined sugar, *bcod* (dye additives), all medicaments and chili peppers, with the amount being according to the quantities (being transported). (The duties) for one bamboo box (*rog-ma*) are one bamboo tray; for one dossier load they are one bamboo tray; for one load of boards, for one wooden box or one load of beams they are in each case a shovel; and for one load of tea they are a *spa-lag* (?).

Concerning the catching of falcons<sup>13</sup>: if they are caught in a foreign region, they belong to the king. The things that are needed for engaging in (the catching of falcons) shall be made available by the customs post. The con-

ducting (of the enterprise) shall be done by the steward of the fortress. (The falcons) of *Brag-skras-pa*<sup>14</sup> belong to the people of *sKag*.

Concerning...of the *rgan-pa* of *sKag*:"

## 5B

1. phyin , skag gi rgan-pa man , yul-kha bču-gñis kyi rgan-pa yin gsuñ nas
2. mkhar nas dbu-thod 1 , 'o-'om-pa zla-ba gsum (bzugs) dus , 'o-'om-pa'i phral 'khar
3. gi gñer-pa dañ rgan-pa , mña'-zabs kyi gñer-pa gñis , khoñ-bzi'i lag nas glo-
4. smad kyi phral dus nas khri-thog-pa'i phyag tu 'bul gos , khri-thog-pa'i phyag nas
5. 'o-'om-pa la 'bul gos , 'o-'om-pa dañ khri-thog-pa gñis bka'-gros steñ nas , rgan-
6. pa dañ gñer-pa gñis la mña'-zabs nas sral de mgo-'dren gnañ-ña yin , yul-

1 skag gi rgan-pa min, yin gsuñs nas 2 'o-'om-pa'i khral mkhar 3 gyi gñer-pa 4 smad kyi khral bsdud , phyag tu 'bul dgos 5 'bul dgos 6 mña'-zabs nas bsal te, gnañ-ba yin

"With the pronouncing of the words, 'From the point in time onwards in which the turban was first presented to you, you are not (only) the *rgan-pa* of *sKag*; you are the *rgan-pa* of the land of the twelve villages (*yul-kha bču-gñis*),' a turban shall be presented by the fortress (*mkhar*). When the *'o-'om-pa* is present for three months, (the following shall be undertaken) with regard to the taxes for the *'o-'om-pa*: the taxes of South Mustang (*glo-smad*) shall be presented to the *khri-thog-pa* from the

hand of the steward (*gñer-pa*) of the fortress, the *rgan-pa* and the two stewards (*gñer-pa*) of the subjects (*mña'-zabs*), after they have collected them. The latter shall be presented to the *'o-'om-pa* from the hand of the *khri-thog-pa*. With the mutual consent of the *'o-'om-pa* and the *khri-thog-pa*, the *rgan-pa* and the two stewards (*gñer-pa*) shall be selected and appointed from among the commoners."

## 6A

1. Z , sa nas gso-sbyoñ la žal-phud zo gañ-ma , brdar-gyag la zo phyed-ma
2. mar-me re la zo gañ-ma re-re , ja kas-sla (gzigs) dus ja phiñ gañ , čhañ zo phed-ma
3. 'jam-ma'i kas-sla (gzigs) dus 'jam rag-čuñ gañ dañ čhañ zo phed-ma gsol čhe-čuñ
4. (gzigs) du gsol 1 dañ čhañ zo phed-ma , sgroldon la zim-čhañ zo gañ-ma , bžeñs-
5. čhañ zo gañ-ma , 'jug ša-khog phed mkhar nas gnañ gos , ba-le gsum-pa mécho <sup>L d</sup> -
6. dus mkhar nas dar-ćog gnañ gos , zu dus čhañ zo gañ-ma , ra-rin yul-pa nas

1 brda'-rgyag 2 ja gar-sla , čhañ zo phyed-ma 3 'jam-ma'i gar-sla , zo phyed-ma 4 zo phyed-ma , grol-ston la gzims-čhañ 5 mkhar nas gnañ dgos 6 dar-ćog gnañ dgos

"A *zo-ba* of (barley) shall be (supplied) as the initiatory present by the inhabitants of the land for the *gso-sbyoñ* (ceremony). A half *zo-ba* (of barley shall be supplied) for the convocation. One *zo-ba* (of barley) shall be (supplied) for each butter lamp offering. When the quality of tea is tested, one full pot of tea and a half *zo-ba* of beer shall be (supplied). When the

quality of noodle soup is tested, a small brass pot full of noodle soup and half a *zo-ba* of beer shall be (supplied). When the size of balls of rice is tested, a ball of rice and one half *zo-ba* of beer shall be (supplied). At the end (of the ceremony in the evening), one whole *zo-ba* (of beer) shall be (supplied) as bedtime beer. One whole *zo-ba* (of beer) shall be (supplied) as beer to begin the day with. At the end (of the ceremony), one half of an animal carcass shall be presented by the fortress.

When an offering is made during the *balegsum-pa* (festival)<sup>15</sup>, a flag shall be presented by the fortress. When (the fortress) is asked for it, one whole *zo-ba* of beer shall be (presented). The cost of the goat shall be (borne) by the inhabitants of the country."

## 6B

1. lug gñis kyi rin čhu-thag gsum nas dñul re-re yin , mkhar du čhañ zo gañ-ma 1 dañ
  2. ša-lag 1 'bul (rgyu) , rgan-pa la bar-lhu g.yas-pa , rgan-pa-ma la ša-lhu phed , a-
  3. ya la bar-lhu g.yon-pa dañ ša-lag g.yon , (lpags)-po 1 , mgo-bo 1 , a-ya'i rog
  4. la ša-lhu gzi-ča , šan-pa la ša-lhu gzi-ča , 'bul-la dañ phur-nas nas zo-ba
  5. bču , ras kha gñis , rog la ras 1 , šan-pa la ras kha 1 dañ nas zo gsum , gsol la
  6. 'bras zo dgu , phur nas groñ-pa re la nas žiñ-thog zo-ba re-re , šan-pa'i čhañ zo do-ma ,
- 1 čhu-'thag 2 ša-lhu phyed 3 a-ya'i rogs 4 ša-lhu bzi-ča , šan-pa la ša-lhu bzi-ča , 'bul-ba 5 rogs la

"One *diul* each as the cost of the two sheep shall be (borne) by the (owners of) the three water mills. The fortress shall be presented with one whole *zo-ba* of beer and the foreleg (of an animal). The *rgan-pa* shall be (presented with) the right middle *lhu*, the wife of the *rgan-pa* with a half *lhu* of meat, the *a-ya*<sup>16</sup> with the left middle *lhu*, the left foreleg, a pelt and a head. The *a-ya*'s assistant shall be (given) a quarter of a *lhu* of meat, (and) the butcher a quarter of a *lhu* of meat. Ten *zo-ba* of barley and two square pieces of cloth shall be (presented) as remuneration and as the barley for the ritual dagger. The (*a-ya*'s) assistant shall be (given) a piece of cloth, (and) the butcher a piece of cloth and three *zo-ba* of barley. Nine *zo-ba* of rice shall be (supplied) for the rice meal. Each household (shall supply) one *zo-ba* of barley from its own harvest as barley for the ritual dagger. The butcher, taking two *zo-ba* of beer,"

## 7A

1. Z , khyer nas rgan-pa dañ rgan-ba-mo , rol-po pho-dman rnañs la žabs la
  2. 'jus nas phyag 'bul gos , čhu-thag gsum-po la yo-pa sgyu-ma sne-čañs , g.yañ-
  3. mjes ster nas skañ gos , Z , (lo-g.yags) skor la, dar-(phyogs) mkhar nas snañ gos , žu
  4. dus čhañ zo gañ-ma , rgan-pa-ma gñis la phral-btab , 'cho re nas mi-mthus re-re
  5. čhañ rgyu la nas bod-khal bzi , sño-rims lo-(g.yags) gñis nas yin , žo méhod dus 'bras
  6. zo bču gñis , dge-'dun (rnañs) la gsol-dpag ša-lhu gsum nas dkar-ša snag-ša 'bul
- 2 'bul dgos , čhu-'thag, rgyu-ma sne-čañ 3 nas

bskañ dgos , lo-g.yag , dar-ćog , mkhar nas  
gnañ dgos 4 cho re nas 5 bsno-rim , lo-g.yag ,  
rnams la gsol-spags

"will make an offering of it, after first having touched (with his hand) the feet of the *rgan-pa*, the wife of the *rgan-pa*, the *rol-pa* and their wives. The (owners of) the three water mills shall be (presented with) balls of rice and one piece each of all the types of viscera. They shall be satisfied by being offered crocks of beer adorned with butter.

Concerning the annual yak (sacrifice)<sup>17</sup>: A flag shall be presented by the fortress. When (the fortress) is asked for it, one whole *zo-ba* of beer shall be (presented). An invitation ceremony shall be (performed) for the *rgan-pa* and the wife of the *rgan-pa*. Four *bo-khal* of barley shall be (supplied) by each *mi-'thus* from each '*cho* group as ingredients for (producing) beer. Barley shall be (supplied) for the *bsno-rims*<sup>18</sup> ceremony and the annual yak sacrifice. Twelve *zo-ba* of rice shall be (supplied) at the time of the *fo* offering<sup>19</sup>. Balls of rice and side dishes (of boiled meat), as well as, from the three *lhu* of meat, meat with bones and pure meat (without bones) shall be (supplied) to the monks."

## 7B

1. gos , mi-thus drug la dkar-śa rnag-śa dañ  
g.yañ-mjes 'bul gos , gog-yul-pa la
2. lhas-bdag , rgan rol dpon-za sji-bo (rnams) la  
bag gos , brañ g.yas-pa mkhar du 'bul-
3. gos , 'bul dus ćhañ zo gañ-ma , rgan-pa'i  
(g.yags) la sog-dar snañ gos , (sogs)-dar snañ

dus

4. ćhañ zo gañ-ma , rgan-pa la zim-ćhañ zo gañ-  
ma , źañ-ćhañ zo gañ-ma , (sogs)-leb g.yas-
5. pa rgan-pa la , g.yon-pa a-ya la gos , śa-lhu  
gćig gi sum -ćha rgan-pa-ma la , lhu
6. sum-ćha a-ya'i rog la , lhu sum-ćha śan-pa la  
gos , rgan-pa dañ a-ya gñis la sgyu-ma

1 dgos mi-'thus , snag-śa , 'bul dgos 2 rgan-rol  
dpon-sa , rji-bo , bhag bgos 3 'bul dgos , rgan-  
pas , rgan-pas g.yag la , gnañ dgos , sog-dar  
gnañ dus 4 la gzims-ćhañ , bźens-ćhañ , sog-  
leb 5 a-ya la dgos , gćig gi gsum-ćha 6 gsum-  
ćha a-ya'i rogs , lhu-gsum-ćha , śan-pa la dgos,  
gñis la rgyu-ma

"The six *mi-'thus* shall be presented with meat with bones and pure meat (without bones) as well as crocks of beer adorned with butter. The inhabitants of *Gog-yul* shall be (presented with) pieces of (yak) meat. Distribute to the *rgan-pa*, the *rol-bo*, the *dpon-za* (?) and the cowherds their portion<sup>20</sup> (of meat). The right breast must be presented to the fortress. When this is presented, a full *zo-ba* of beer shall be (given to the fortress). The *rgan-pa* is obligated to give a [red] cloth neck band for the yak. When he gives the neck band, he (shall receive) a full *zo-ba* of beer. A full *zo-ba* (of beer) as bedtime beer shall be (supplied) to the *rgan-pa*, and also a full *zo-ba* as beer to begin the day with. The right shoulder blade goes to the *rgan-pa*, the left (shoulder blade) goes to the *a-ya*. A third of a *lhu* of meat goes to the wife of the *rgan-pa*, a third of a *lhu* goes to the *a-ya*'s assistant, and a third of a *lhu* goes to the butcher. The *rgan-pa* and the *a-ya* (shall re-

ceive) one piece each of all the types of viscera."

## 8A

1. Z , sne-chañ, lhas-bdag che-čuñ rgan-pa la (gzigs)-rtog 'bul gos , de dus
2. rgan-pa la chañ zo phed-ma , jo méhod dus thabs-chañ zo do-ma , brañ lpags-ma ston zer nas
3. chañ zo do-ma , dpuñ-chañ zo do-ma , rol-po-ma śa blañs dus zo do-ma , ltar-pa byed dus chañ zo gañ-
4. ma mda'-ni la chañ zo gañ-ma , mda'-ni 'bru-sna ster gos , 'bul-la dañ phur-nas nas nas
5. zo-ba bču , a-ya la ras-kha gñis , rog la ras-kha 1 , śan-pa la ras-kha 1 dañ nas zo-ba
6. gsum , yañ śan-pa'i rgan-rol pho-mo nmams la phyag-'bul byed dgos , a-ya'i zo-ba gañ

1 'bul dgos 2 brañ spags-mar 4 mda'-nis 'bru-sna ster dgos , 'bul-ba , phur-nas nas zo 5 rogs la , byed dgos

"The size of the pieces of meat shall be supplied to the *rgan-pa* for inspection. At this time the *rgan-pa* shall be supplied with half a *zo-ba* of beer. When the words are spoken, 'Provide the breast for the boiled side dish of meat,' half a *zo-ba* of beer shall be (supplied). A double *zo-ba* (of beer) shall be (supplied) as beer for the manual (labourers). When the wives of the *rol-po* fetch the meat, they (shall present) a double *zo-ba* (of beer). When the *ltar-pa*<sup>21</sup> is performed, one *zo-ba* of beer shall be (supplied). One *zo-ba* of beer shall be (presented) to the customs post. The customs post is obligated to give various types of grain.

Ten *zo-ba* (of barley) shall be (supplied) for the offering as barley for the ritual dagger. Two pieces of cloth shall be (supplied) to the *a-ya*. One piece of cloth shall be (supplied) for the *a-ya*'s assistant. One piece of material and three *zo-ba* of barley shall be (supplied) for the butcher. Further, the butcher must perform prostration in front of the *rgan-pa*, the *rol-bo* and the wives of the latter. One *zo-ba* (of barley) from the *a-ya* (and)"

## 8B

Unlegible

## 9A

1. Z , śan-pa'i la zo-ba gañ, rol-bo la ster gos , dge-'dun la sño-rim gyi
2. dus groñ-pa re-re nas nas zo re-re , groñ-pa re-re nas gso ། ། -ph ། ། es ། ། [ ±2S] [g]ñis-gñis , 'bru [ ±2S]
3. gñis nas zo- ། ། ba ། ། bži , rcag-ltur phe-phud la nas zo-ba ..., byañ-ras lho-ras bum-ras [ 1S]
4. gsum gos , [ ±4S] kha- ། ། ། ། o ། ། n ། ། skor la , ། ། rg ། ། an-rol ། ། b ། ། sruñ d ། ། u ། ། s [1S] ། ། ci ། ། -
5. grag gañ-drag bya ། ། s ། ། na[s] bsruñ go ། ། s ། ། , ། ། yu ། ། -ba na[s] [1S]-thañ ། ། lug ། ། 1 , gyañ -pa g ། ། ñi ། ། s
6. [ ]

1 rol-bo la ster dgos , dge-'dun la bsño-rim 4 gsum dgos 5 bsruñ dgos

"one *zo-ba* (of barley) from the butcher shall be given to the *rol-bo*. One *zo-ba* of barley shall be (supplied) by each household for the monks during the period of the *bsño-rim* (festival). Two meals of roasted grain each ...

From ... and grain, these two, four *zo-ba*. ... *zo-ba* of barley for the initiatory present at the *rcag-ltur* (field stone)<sup>22</sup>. Three are needed, (namely) northern cloth, southern cloth and cloth for the ritual bottle<sup>23</sup>.

Concerning the *kha-loñ* (square)<sup>24</sup>: When it is guarded by the *rgan-pa* and *rol-bo*, they shall guard it with all means (at their disposal). One sheep and two *gyañ-pa* (earthen jars of beer) shall be (supplied) by the inhabitants of the territory. ..."

## 9B

1. phyed , lus-steñ du khirms yon , Z , gyab-ras me-tog \* XXX \* sk[o]r la , yul-pa nas ʌ-ra ʌ ,
  2. mkhar nas dar-ćog, ʒu dus ćhañ zo-ba gañ , ćhañ gyañ-pa gñis , ʔbras zo bću , a- ʌ-ya ʌ
  3. la ras kha-gñis , ʔbul-la dañ phur-nas bćas zo-ba bću , a-ya'i rog la ras- ʌkha ʌ
  4. 1 , śan-pa la ras 1 dañ zo-ba gsum , mkhar du śa-lag 1 , ʔbul dus ćhañ zo gañ-ma ,
  5. rgan-pa la bar-lhu gos , rgan-pa-ma lhu-phyed, a-ya'i rog dañ śan-pa gñis la śa-lhu
  6. bzi-ćha bzi-ćha , a-ya la śa-lag 1 bar-lhu 1 , brañ-rce go rce sgyu-ma sne-ćhañ gos ,
- 3 ʔbul-ba dañ , a-ya'i rogs 5 bar-lhu dgos , a-ya'i rogs 6 brañ-rce mgo-rce rgyu-ma

"Punishment shall be administered bodily.

Concerning the (sacrificial festival) of buck-wheat blossoms<sup>25</sup>: One goat shall be (supplied) by the inhabitants of the territory. When a flag is requested from the fortress, a full *zo-ba* of

beer shall be presented. (The following items are needed:) two *gyañ-pa* (earthen jars) of beer, ten *zo-ba* of rice, two pieces of cloth for the *a-ya*, ten *zo-ba* of barley as a present and as barley for the ritual dagger, one piece of cloth for the *a-ya's* assistant, one piece of cloth and three *zo-ba* (of barley) for the butcher. A leg (of meat) shall (be given) to the fortress as the meat (portion). When this is presented, a *zo-ba* of beer shall be (given). Half a *lhu* (of meat) is needed for the *rgan-pa*, a middle *lhu* (of meat) for the wife of the *rgan-pa*, a quarter of a *lhu* (of meat) each for the *a-ya's* assistant and the butcher. A leg (of meat), a middle *lhu*, a piece of breast and head, as well as one piece each from all the types of the viscera, are needed as (the portion of) meat for the *a-ya*."

## 10A

1. Z , rgan-pa pho-mo gñis la phral-stabs gos , (lpags)-pa rol-bo la yin
2. Z , kha-loñ du gya-thañ bsruñ skor la , (lugs) 1 dañ ra 1 , ćhañ gyañ-pa gsum , ʔbra-zo bćo-
3. lña , rgan-pa la lhu-phed srum gyer gos , rol-bo mams kyis ći-drag gañ-drag byas nas bsruñ
4. gos , Z , dbyar-stoñ skor la , (lugs) gsum , gsol bzi nas , yul-pa phed , (dmags)-
5. gyug phed , rgan-pa la ʔcho drug-po la gyañ-pa gñis-gñis , rco dus nas dab-pa la
6. rol-bo ʔgro gos , rol-bo la nas zo-ba gañ ster gos , gñer-pa la ʒal-phud cho-re

1 phral-btab dgos 2 lug 1 dañ , ʔbras zo 3 ʔgyed dgos , rol-bo mams kyis , ći-drag , gañ-drag 4 dgos , lug gsum , yul-pa phyed 5 rgyug phyed , cho drug-po , bco dus 6 rol-bo ʔgro dgos , ster dgos

"An invitational ceremony is necessary for the *rgan-pa* and his wife. The hide goes to the *rol-bo*.

Concerning the guarding of the buckwheat spread out on the *kha-lo* square: (To be supplied are:) one sheep and one goat, three *gyañ-pa* (earthen jars) of beer, 15 *zo-ba* of rice. A half *lhu* of meat shall be distributed to the *rgan-pa*. The *rol-bo* are required to guard (the drying buckwheat) with all the means (at their disposal).

Concerning the *dbyar-stoñ*<sup>26</sup> (festival): Three sheep (shall be supplied). The inhabitants of the territory and the *dmags-rgyug*<sup>27</sup> shall (each prepare) half of the four meals. Two *gyañ-pa* (earthen jars of beer) shall be (supplied) to the *rgan-pa* and (each of) the six '*cho* groups. When (the beer) is being brewed, the *rol-bo* must go to measure the barley (needed to produce the beer). One *zo-ba* of beer shall be given to the *rol-bo* for this. To the stewards shall be supplied, as the initiatory present from each '*cho* (group)"

10B

1. nas zo phed-ma re 'bul gos , dbyar-stoñ čhen-mo la , gyañ-pa ñi-śu yul-ba nas
2. gñañ gos mdar-rce snañ dus , bhen čhu-thag gsum nas slom-ma re ster gos , rgan-pa
3. la źal-phud zo gañ-ma , dbyar-stoñ la ma non na čhad-pa źo-phed yin , Z , rol-bo
4. spo-pa'i skor la , čhañ (rgyu) la nas bod-khal bži , gsol 1 dañ srum bčas , g.yañ-
5. mjes stañ-stañ la ma 'jom na čhad-pa źo-phed, rgan-pa la źal-phud zo gañ-ma
6. zim-čhañ zo gañ-ma , źañ-čhañ zo gañ-ma , rol-bo'i yul-pa'i spyi-las gañ la yin

1 phyed-ma , 'bul dgos 2 gñañ dgos , mda'-rceed gñañ dus 'ben , ster dgos 3 čhad-pa źo phyed 4 'pho-ba'i skor la 5 mjes btañ-btañ , čhad-pa źo-phyed 6 gzims-čhañ , bžen-čhañ , rol-bos

"one *zo-ba* (of barley (?)). Twenty *gyañ-pa* (earthen jars of beer) shall be supplied by the inhabitants of the territory for the large *dbyar-stoñ* (festival). When the archery contest takes place, one wickerwork tray shall be given by each of the three water mills. The *rgan-pa* receives a full *zo-ba* (of beer) as the initiatory present. If anyone does not come to the *dbyar-stoñ* (festival), the fine is half a *źo*.

Concerning the rotation of the *rol-bo*: (To be supplied are:) four *bod-khal* of barley as ingredients for the (production of) beer, as well as a meal of meat. When crocks of beer adorned with butter are presented, and someone fails to show up, the fine is half a *źo*. To the *rgan-pa* shall be given, as the initiatory present, a full *zo-ba* of beer; as a bedtime beer, a full *zo-ba*; and as beer to begin the day with, a full *zo-ba*. The *rol-bo* must perform all activities for the territory"

11A

1. Z , kyañ ñe-riñ (phyogs)-khyad med-pa byed gos , ñe-riñ byed yod na zer nas
2. rol-bo mna' skyal gos , skyal phyin mna'-śa , śa-khog phed , 'bras zo-ba drug ,
3. yin , Z , yur-pa dañ jiñ-ñu'i skor la , yur-byañ-ba'i gyañ-pa (brgyad) rco gos , rgan-pa
4. źal-phud zo gañ-ma , dar-gyag la bzo phe-ma 'oñ , yu-ra ston dus su ma yoñ-
5. phyin čhad-pa nas zo-ba gsum , jiñ-ñu ston



- dus, jin-byan-na nas , gon dan mchuñs-pa  
6. yin , snag la yañ gon-cha mchuñs-pa yin/ , Z ,  
yul-pa (chogs-ti'i skor la/

1 med-par byed dgos 2 rol-bos mna'-bskyaal ,  
byed dgos , bskyaal phyin , sa-khog phyed 3 yu-  
ra dan rjin-bu , yur-chañ-bas , brgyad bco dgos  
4 brda-rgyag , zo phyed-ma 5 rjin-bu , rjin-  
chañ , yul-pa chogs-'du'i

"without showing preference to intimates and  
persons of like persuasion. Should any claim  
that he shows preference to intimates, he must  
declare an oath in this regard. When the oath is  
taken, the meat of the oath is half an animal  
body and six *zo-ba* of rice.

Concerning water channels and the irrigation  
pond: eight *gyañ-pa* (earthen jars of) beer shall  
be brewed by the *yur-byañ-ba*<sup>28</sup>. The *rgan-pa*  
will receive a full *zo-ba* of beer as the ini-  
tiatory present. Half a *zo-ba* (of beer) shall be  
supplied for the convocation (of the people).  
When the water channel is being cleaned and  
someone fails to participate, the fine is three  
*zo-ba* of barley. When the irrigation pond is  
cleaned, (beer) shall be (supplied) by the *rjin-  
byañ-na* accordingly. At (the time following  
the) sowing of buckwheat seed<sup>29</sup>, (the work of  
cleaning channels and reservoir) shall (be per-  
formed) accordingly.

Concerning the holding of meetings by the  
inhabitants of the territory:"

## 11B

1. dar-gyag byas phyin , han-chun la 'gro-sa med,  
gal-srid gro na Chad-pa zo-ba

2. gsum , de-man stis Chad zo-ba gañ , rgan-pa  
phebs nas ma yon na , phi-Chad zo-  
3. ba phed , zin yur-ra la sab-su (nags)-rnams  
dam phyin , rcad-Chod-pa byun na Chad-pa  
dnul  
4. re-re , zin nas lud thu-ba dan , lud-bra nas lud  
rku-ba dan , cab-rag nas rca rkus na  
5. ltas nas rkun-'jal byañ (rgyu) yin , Z , rkun-  
mo'i skor la , phyi-nor nañ-nor gan  
6. rkus kyañ , bdag-po'i rkus na mjal béo-(brgyad)  
skor , g.yog-po'i rkus na mjal

1 brda-rgyag 2 de-min-pa , phis-Chad 3 ba  
phyed , zin yu-ra 5 nañ-nor gañ 6 bdag-pos  
rkus na 'jal , g.yog-pos

"After (the meeting) has been called, there is  
no possibility to travel back and forth. In cases  
where someone departs on a journey, the fine  
is three *zo-ba* (of barley). If someone is still  
absent after the *rgan-pa* has come, the fine for  
being late is half a *zo-ba* (of barley).

As long as the clusters of grass and thorny  
bushes are protected along the water channels  
in the fields, the fine is one *dnul* where cases  
(of infraction) are detected. In cases where  
dung is collected from the fields, where dung  
is stolen from compost heaps and where hay is  
stolen from stacks of hay, compensation shall  
be made, where this is detected, as in the case  
of thievery.

Concerning thievery: What is stolen from the  
external<sup>30</sup> or internal property shall be returned  
18-fold as compensation, in cases where a  
houseowner steals. In cases where a servant

steals, ninefold the amount shall be returned as compensation."

## 12A

1. Z, dgus-skor , gyod-nor yul-ba la 'bul gos , sib-rcis-brag
2. gi skor la , sib-rci'i-brag la ra-sor-pa byuñ na , bdag-mi (mgyogs) na bdag-po'i
3. ra ded (rgyu) , rol-bo'i (mgyogs) na rol-po'i ra ded (rgyu) , la phar-(rgyab) la zin sa med , sñon
4. la zin-pa de-man-pa gzan zin-sa med , (brgya)-zam du non phyin bslu-ba'i khyun-yod
5. ma non che (rgya)-zam du rol-bo'i gsod gos/, Z , rgan-pa'i las ga la bkos kyan
6. ma phyin che nas zin-thog zo-ba gsum Chad-pa yin , Z , khur-chañ skor la , glo la

1 rgyu-nor , 'bul dgos 2 bdag-pos 3 ra 'ded rgyu , rol-bos mgyogs na rol-pos ra 'ded rgyu 4 rgya zam 5 rol-bos, rgan-pas las-ka la bskos

"The possessions in question shall be presented to the inhabitants of the territory. If a goat wanders off to the (cliffs of) *Sib-rci'i brag*<sup>31</sup>, the goat shall be driven off by the owner, assuming the owner is quicker. If a *rol-bo* is quicker, the goat shall be driven off by the *rol-po*. If (the goat) crosses the pass, it shall no longer be captured (by the *rol-bo*). If it is not one which was previously captured, there is no further possibility (on the part of the *rol-bo*) to capture it. If (the owner) overtakes (the *rol-bo*) before the main bridge (over the Kali Gandaki), the custom is that (the goat) shall be retrieved (by the owner). If he does not overtake (him), the *rol-bo* must slaughter (the goat) at

the main bridge.

If someone, even though he has been picked by the *rgan-pa* for a task, does not go (to perform it), the fine is three *zo-ba* of barley from his own fields.

Concerning the *khur-chañ* tax:"

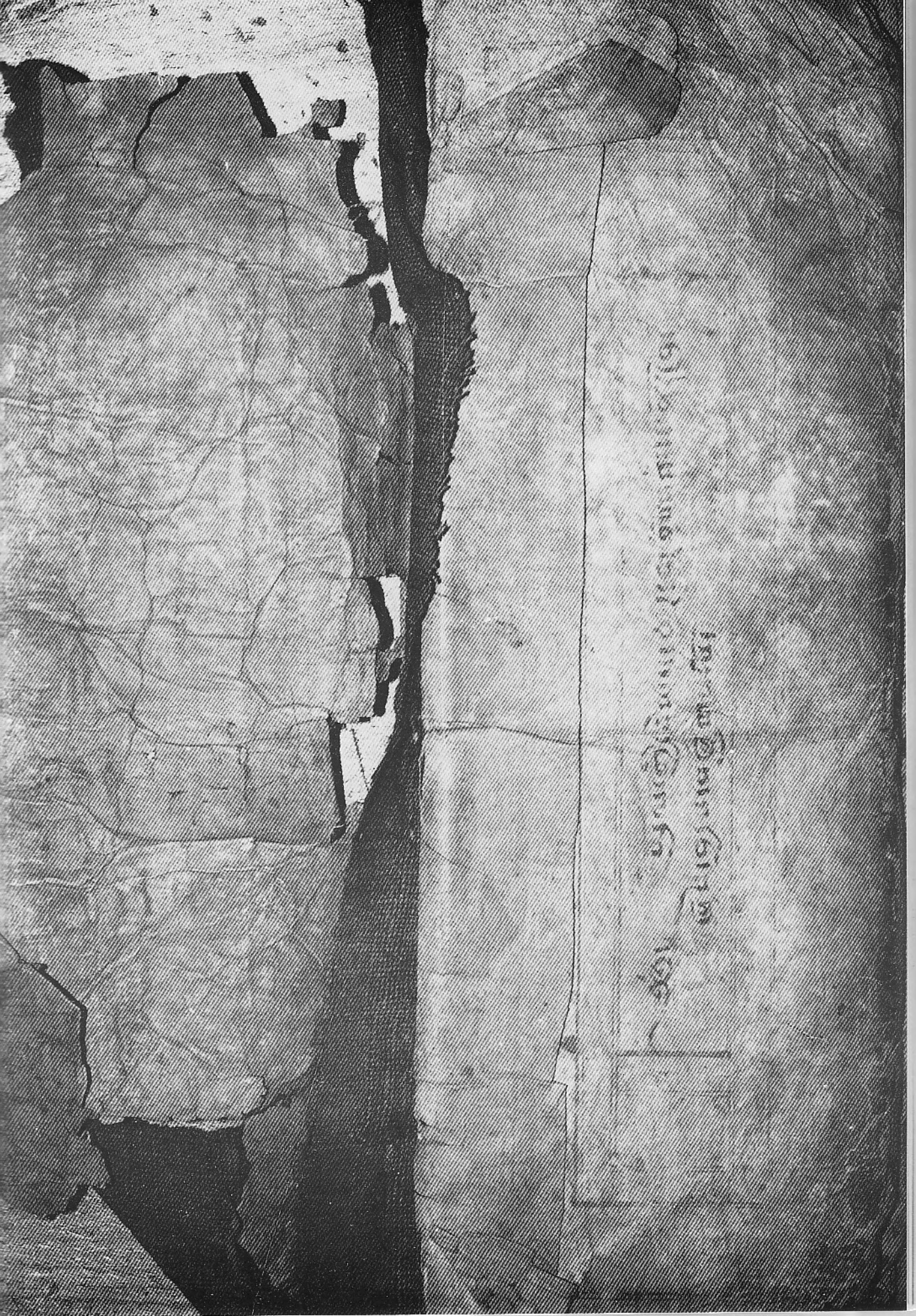
## 12B

1. choñ la 'gro dus , gañ du choñ (rgyab) kyan skag-pa la khur-chañ mi dgos , Z, dbu-thod skor
2. la , khri-thog-pa 'jum-glañ nas (dpags)-ri snoms nas phebs dus , bab-rca dañ bab-sin ma-
3. (mtogs), gzan 'bul mi gos , (rgyal)-byus la khri-thog-pa char-mkha' , smon-thañ , sma-snañ,
4. gli-buñ rnamś la phebs dus , lha-sde mi-sde gñis kyi phyag 'bul dgos , khri-thog-pa skag du
5. phebs na mchod-pa (gcugs)-don , 'dam-mchod gañ (gcugs)-pa thug phyin , khri-thog-pa la

2 bsnamś nas phebs 3 gtogs, gzan 'bul mi dgos, 4 gñis kyiś , 'bul dgos

"When (people from *sKag*) go to Mustang to trade, the *khur-cha* tax is not required of the people of *sKag*, no matter where they carry on the trade.

Concerning sovereign power<sup>32</sup>: When the *khri-thog-pa* comes (to Kag) from Jumla in the company of an escort<sup>33</sup>, nothing need be presented other than hay and firewood. If the *khri-thog-pa* travels to *Char-mkha'*, *sMon-thañ*, *sMa-snañ* [= Manang] or *Gli-buñ* [= Dana],







ക്രമവിചിത്ര്യമേ വ്യാജമിഹ ശ്രീമദ്ദേവപ്രിയൈരപ്രമുഖൈഃ  
 ക്രമമനുസരിച്ചു പ്രസംഗമുണ്ടാകുന്നു. അതിനാലാണ് ഇതിനോടടുത്തു  
 നിന്നു വരുന്നതെന്ന് തോന്നുന്നു. ഇതിനോടടുത്തു നിന്നു വരുന്നതെന്ന്  
 തോന്നുന്നു. ഇതിനോടടുത്തു നിന്നു വരുന്നതെന്ന് തോന്നുന്നു.

1001  
 വിശ്വമനുജ  
 ഭഗവാനു  
 തിരുവനന്തപുരം  
 തിരുവിതാംകൂർ  
 തിരുവനന്തപുരം  
 തിരുവിതാംകൂർ  
 തിരുവനന്തപുരം

Handwritten text in a medieval script, likely Gothic or similar, arranged in several lines. The text is dense and appears to be a formal document or record.

Handwritten text in a medieval script, likely Gothic or similar, arranged in several lines. The text is dense and appears to be a formal document or record.





Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in approximately 12 horizontal lines across the page. The ink is dark, and the script is dense and somewhat difficult to decipher due to its cursive nature. The lines are roughly parallel and fill most of the page area.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. This page contains approximately 12 lines of text, similar in style to the previous page. The text is written in a dense, cursive hand, and the lines are roughly parallel. The overall appearance is that of a well-preserved but aged manuscript page.

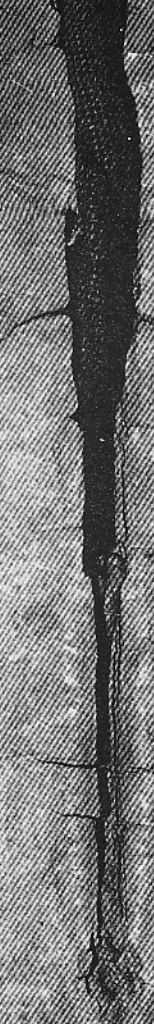
Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a historical document or manuscript. The text is written on aged, textured paper and is partially obscured by a dark, vertical shadow or crease running down the center of the page. The ink is dark and the handwriting is dense and somewhat difficult to decipher due to the cursive style and the condition of the paper.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, continuing from the left page. The text is written on aged, textured paper and is partially obscured by a dark, vertical shadow or crease running down the center of the page. The ink is dark and the handwriting is dense and somewhat difficult to decipher due to the cursive style and the condition of the paper.

Handwritten text on the left edge of the page.

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Main column of handwritten text on the left side of the page.



Main column of handwritten text on the right side of the page.

Handwritten text at the top of the page, partially obscured by the binding edge. The script is a medieval cursive.

Handwritten text in the upper section of the page. It consists of several lines of cursive script, likely representing a list or a set of instructions. The text is somewhat faded and difficult to decipher fully, but appears to contain various words and phrases.

Handwritten text in the lower section of the page. This section contains several lines of text, including what looks like a small table or list of entries. The script is consistent with the upper section, though some parts are more legible than others.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a historical document or manuscript. The text is arranged in several lines across the page.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a historical document or manuscript. The text is arranged in several lines across the page, with some lines appearing to be part of a list or index.



Handwritten text in a medieval script, likely Gothic or similar, arranged in several lines across the left page of the manuscript.

Handwritten text in a medieval script, likely Gothic or similar, arranged in several lines across the right page of the manuscript.

gifts shall be presented by the monks and laity.

When the *khri-thog-pa* comes to *sKag* and in order to institute an offering, the initiatory present shall be presented to the *khri-thog-pa* until the '*dam-mchod*'<sup>34</sup> (ceremony) has been instituted.<sup>35</sup>

## 13A

1. Z , žal-phud 'bul gos/ , Z , yul gyi khar-thor skor la , bram-1-
2. ma čhos byed-sa med , bza'-mi kha spral-sa med , kha-1 lce-gñis byed-sa med
3. mja'-mi 'khon du bcu-sa med , thun-po rcod du bcug-sa med , rkun-mo (phags)-
4. gčod byed-sa med , nañ du čam phyin čaň ka-ras gaň daň kha-thag ma-(gtogs) za (rgyu)
5. mi-yoň , a-las zas phyin , gñis-(phyogs) su yul-(khrims) 'gal-yoň , phyi-
6. bltam nañ du khug-pa ma-(gtogs) , nañ-(bltam) phyi ru skyal na' yul-khrims gal-yoň

1 'bul dgos , yul gyi kha-'thor 3 rkun-mo phag,  
4 nañ du 'čhams 6 gtam nañ du , nañ-gtam  
phyi ru bskyal , 'gal-yoň

"Concerning disunity within the territory:

A *bram-1-ma*<sup>36</sup> must not enter a monastery.  
Married couples must not be induced to divorce.

A mouth must not speak with two tongues.  
(One) must not create discord among friends.  
Strife must not be caused between those who are in harmony (with one another).

Theft must not be avenged in secret. If (an argument or theft) is avenged internally,

nothing may be kept except a pot of beer and a ceremonial cloth. If money has been accepted (in this case), both parties have breached the law of the land.

News from the outside shall be passed to within. If, moreover, internal affairs are passed to the outside, one is breaching the law of the land."

## 13B

1. Z , [ ] pha-glañ lo-\* 3 \*-bar śa sil-sa med , śa sil na zo-ba b ᳚᳚ o- ᳚᳚a'i
2. sa smos phyin phral mi-yoň , choň la (rogs) braň 1 byas nas phin phyin , 1 gis 1
3. brim-sa med , brim phyin 'draň-čhad yod , ma čam-pa yul-pa la źus phyin dñul-
4. 1 čhad-pa yod , jo-bo ri-dga' nas ma bab-ba'i gžan du , 'bru-rnor la btaň (rgyu)
5. mi-yoň , yi-ge nañ-ltar la su-thad nas ma gnas na, lo gsum-gsum nas mod
6. gyab gos , de la gnas na bkra-śis śog ,

1 gsil-sa med śa gsil na 2 rmos phyin khral ,  
'braň 1 byas nas phyin phyin 3 'brim-sa , 'brim  
phyin 'braň-čhad , ma 'čam-pa 4 mjo-bo ri-  
kha , 'bab-pa'i , 'bru-snor 5 nas dmod 6 rgyab  
dgos

"A bull must not be slaughtered within its first three years.<sup>37</sup> In cases where it is slaughtered, but where it has previously ploughed an area of 15 *zo-ba* (of seed), no tax is levied.

If friends form a trading group and travel abroad, one person must not leave another to fend for himself. If he does so leave him, there will be a 'group fine.' If the fact comes out that



they have not got along with one another, the fine is one *dnul*. Before the mjo-bo have been driven downhill from the mountain pastures, it is unlawful to pasture (animals) on the (fields of) stubble.

If anyone does not abide by this code of law, he shall be execrated for three years<sup>38</sup>. If a person follows it, may luck come (to him)."

#### Notes

- 1 This is Chinasin, the capital of Jumla.
- 2 For this term see Document 6, line 18 and Part I, 3.3., note 38.
- 3 See Pandey 1, p. 39-
- 4 See Schuh 6, p. 292-
- 5 This is the King of Jumla. As far as this double Śrī is concerned, it has to be mentioned that in legal documents issued by the Gorkha Kings, the intitulation generally is headed by a triple Śrī.
- 6 Bod-rgya, p. 1094, quotes under the heading *lton-ka* the following sentence: *bgo-bśags mda'-mo'i lton-ka gśags-pa ltar rgyag dgos* "distribution should be done in such a way as if you cut a notch in an arrow".
- 7 *sku-rgyal* is the court fee to be paid by the winner of a court case. The amount is, as mentioned above, one *zo*.
- 8 According to this statement a judge is generally considered to be a representative of the king of Jumla, who is the highest authority in legal matters. The term 'o-'om is a transcription of Nepāli *hukum* "order, government". 'O-'om-pa therefore designates "a person who is giving orders".
- 9 From this we can conclude that the fee to be paid by the winner has to be handed over to the king of Jumla. It is not specifically mentioned whether this is also the case with the fee to be paid by the losing party.
- 10 *an-na* is a transcription of the Nepāli *ānan* "courtyard". Here it means the open space before the customs post, which is possibly identical with the salt storage site (*chab-ra*) near the customs post.
- 11 *skye-skra* is a transcription of the Nepāli *keṭo* "servant".
- 12 *san* is a common designation for dried pine-needles and pine-cones, which were collected in the forest every year.
- 13 The whole translation of this section is based on the assumption that the *phra* mentioned here is a misspelling of *khra* "falcon". This however is by no means certain and therefore this passage should be quoted only with great care.
- 14 According to Charles Ramble name of a forest area belonging to Kagbeni.
- 15 *ba-le* is a transcription of the Nepāli *bali* "offering". The festival mentioned here takes place in the second month of the winter, which roughly corresponds with the month January.
- 16 *a-ya* is a designation for a *bon-po*-priest, who need to perform the ceremony of sacrificing the animal in this festival. However, it has to be noted that he did not kill the animal himself. See Ramble 2, p. 54.
- 17 This is an annually performed ritual that centers about the killing of a yak. The offering ceremony was performed on the bank of the Kali Gandaki river and headed by an *a-ya*. Between the purchase of the animal and the day of its killing, at least three days had to elapse. Before the ceremony started, a red scarf called *srog-dar* was fastened to the neck of the animal. For

further details compare Ramble 2, p. 54-

- 18 Obviously an abbreviation for *bsño-ba dañ rim-'gro*.
- 19 According to our local informants the big Stūpa of Kagbeni is either called *mčhod-rten dkar-po* or *jo-bo mčhod-rten*. The ceremony mentioned here is performed in front of this Stūpa.
- 20 *bag* is a transliteration of Nepali *bhāg* "portion".
- 21 The meaning of *ltar-pa* is unclear to me.
- 22 This ceremony is performed in front of the white stones, which are placed in the middle of the fields. These field stones can be found in the fields of all settlements in the Thakkola.
- 23 This is the cloth to be fastened on the white stone in the directions mentioned here.
- 24 Name of the place where buckwheat used to be dried. It is a custom in this area to harvest the buckwheat before it is completely ripe and spread it on the floor of this place. It is the duty of the *rgan-pa* and the *rol-po* to protect this place against animals and theft by human beings.
- 25 Ceremony to protect buckwheat against hail. It is normally performed in August. It comprises the offering of an animal in front of the red Stūpa of Kagbeni.
- 26 This festival is celebrated by all inhabitants of the Muktināth at the end of the summer. Our text makes a difference between the local *dByar-ston*-festivals and the big *dByar-ston*-festival. For detailed description see Ramble, pp. 149-169.
- 27 According to our local informants *dmags-rgyugs* is a group of youth of specific age, which has the duty to carry out heavy labor on behalf of the village, as for instance the transportation of trunks. A similar group with the same designation exists in Northern Mustang up to now. Here this name refers to certain families, who are generally obliged to carry out heavy labour on behalf of the community. It is unclear to me if there is a connection between this group and the *rgya-dmag-pa*, who play a certain role in the big *mDos* ceremony (see Ramble 2, p. 53).
- 28 In connection with the cleaning of the water channels and the reservoir, both the *yur-byañ-ba* and the *rjin-byañ-ña* are mentioned. They belong to the six 'cho groups and are responsible for the financing of the cleaning of channels and the reservoir. The 'cho groups have to provide the bear, which is drunk during the work. For the cleaning itself each household has to provide one person.
- 29 *snag* is a local term for the sowing of the buckwheat. The channels and the reservoir were cleaned twice a year.
- 30 The term "external property" obviously refers to animals, harvest etc.
- 31 This rocky cliff is situated directly opposite to Kagbeni on the western site of the Kali Gandaki. It is strictly forbidden to graze goats on this rock, as falling stones could hurt persons using the path at its base.
- 32 *dbu-thod* is a designation for the turban, which is worn by an official as a sign of his official installment. Here it also designates the power vested in him. For this compare the well known two meanings of the term *dbu-rmog*.
- 33 *dpag-ri* is a transliteration of the Nepali term *prahari* "soldier, escort".
- 34 The meaning of the term 'dam-mčhod is unclear to me.
- 35 This interpretation is far from being certain.

- 36 The meaning of this term is unclear to me.  
 37 This is obviously not referring to the lifetime of the bull but to the years in which he can be used for field work. This rule serves the pur-

pose that there are enough animals available for the necessary field work.

- 38 This interpretation is far from being certain.

### 5. The Rise of the Tibetan Exclave in the Muktināth Valley and the Lineage of its Rulers up to the Middle of the 18th Century

The first thing one may do here is to recall the narrative chronicle of *dPal-mgon-khro-rgyal* dealt with above. According to this narrative, the later lords of the castle of the Muktināth valley came from Jumla. They settled in the Muktināth valley, where the first thing they did was to construct the fortress of *rJon*.

Much more reliable information concerning the origin of the lords of the castle is obtained in the biography of *bsTan-'jin-ras-pa*, a priest who was himself a member of the same noble family, and who lived in the second half of the 17th century. Snellgrove was the first person to draw attention to this priest and to his biography.<sup>1</sup> Jackson gives 1646-1723 as his lifetime.<sup>2</sup> Of these two dates, it is only the death year, 1723, that appears to me to be not subject to doubt. According to the biography of *bSod-nams-dbañ-p'hyug* (1660-1731), which was edited and translated by Snellgrove, *bsTan-'jin-ras-pa* died in the 64th year of that priest - that is, in the year 1723. One indication of the birth year is found on fol. 7r of *bsTan-'jin-ras-pa's* biography. There it is mentioned that during the war between the government of Central Tibet and Bhutan all followers of the *Dvags-po bka'-brgyud* school in Tibet wore a thick piece of woollen thread as a mark of identification, which they had to tie around

their throat. Their freedom of movement was restricted. Travellers and people having no fixed place of residence were interned. The same fate befell *bsTan-'jin-ras-pa*, even though he belonged to the Sa-skya school. *bsTan-'jin-ras-pa* was 16 years old at the time. It is unclear, however, which of the numerous military conflicts between the Tibetan government of the Fifth Dalai Lama and Bhutan is being referred to here. If it is the Tibetan invasion of 1657, *bsTan-'jin-ras-pa's* year of birth would fall in 1642. If, however, the earlier conflict between Tibet and Bhutan in the years 1644-1646 is what is meant, then *bsTan-'jin-ras-pa* would have been born even before 1640.

The following account is found in *bsTan-'jin-ras-pa's* biography concerning the origin of his family (source A):

[1v,5] rje-bcun ras-pa de-ñid rigs-rus ni / blon  
 [1v,6] la sna-ba byams-pa thob-rgyal zes-pa'i gduñ  
 bzañ brgyud dpon du grags-pa de yin gsuñs / mña'-  
 ri guñ-thañ čhab-'og nas čhos-rgyal ñi-ma-mgon gyi  
 phyag-g.yog

[1v,7] la stod gu-ger phebs nas, gu-ge-pa'i čhuñ gi  
 'brog-pa zes-par čhags so / de nas sde-pa a-ma-dpal  
 gyi bos nas smon-thañ skye-skya-sgañ du bžugs /  
 de-phan

[2r,1] dpon-druñ skye-skya-sgañ-pa zes-pa'i miñ  
 'jags / skye-skya-sgañ du bžugs-bžin nas dpon-druñ  
 khro-rgyal-rdo-rje sras čhuñ-ba rab-brtan-mgon-pos

/ gu-ge spu-rañ kar-dum gyi rjoñ-dpon la phebs lo-  
drug bźugs nas smon-thañ rgyal-mo la 'bags  
[2r,2] nas sde-pas dkroñs / gčen-po khro-po-skyabs-  
pas blo-smad rab-rgyal-rce-mo'i rjoñ-dpon la phebs  
nas da-lta'i bar yin / rab-brtan-mgon-po'i sras che-  
brtan-rdo-rje źes-pa a-khu khro-bo-sbya bs-pas bos  
nas rab-rgyal-rce-mor phebs nas dpon-druñ kun gyi  
a-khu

[2r,3] dpon-sa źes-pas / de phan rigs-rus la skye-  
skya-sgañ-pa'i dpon-sa źes 'jags-pa yin / che-brtan-  
rdo-rje'i sras la rdo-rje-dbañ-phyug / rdo-rje-dbañ-  
phyug la sras gsum / rdo-rje-'phan-dar bla-ma-  
bstan-pa'i-rgyal-mchan dañ gsum / rdo-rje-rab-čhad-  
'phan-dar la sras bzañ-po-čhos-skyoñ

[2r,4] bla-ma čhos-dños-grub dañ gsum / bzañ-po-  
rab-čhad-čhos-skyoñs la sras bdun / lhun-grub-  
'byor-ra gñis kyi rigs-rgyud-spe l gźan-lña čhos-byas  
bla-brgyud 'jin-mkhan bla-ma čhos-'jin-dpal-bzañ  
yin / dpon-sa-lhun-grub kyis sras che-dbañ-rigs-'jin  
/

[2r,5] che-dbañ gis sras bsod-nams-mgon-po yin /  
dpon-sa-'byor-ra la sras miñ-sriñ drug 'khruñs-pa'i  
bar-ba che-dbañ-rab-stan (s) ña-rañ yin gsuñs / sras  
čhe-ba che-dbañ-rnam-rgyal gyi lo bču-gčig / ña lo  
bdun tha-gčuñ gis lo gñis lon dus / pha 'byor-

[2r,6] ra-rgya-mcho lo so-gñis la che'i-dus-byas / ...  
... / de'i dus rgyal-blon-gñis 'khrugs nas bkag-rjoñ  
la sde-pas phyag-'bebs gnañ / dpon-druñ-skye-skyas-  
sgañ-pa'i rgyab la 'jum-lañ rgyal-po'i dmag yoñ nas  
[2r,7] mi-mañ bsad / phyi-nor thams-čad dgra'i  
khyer nañ-nor yod-chad rgyal-po'i kha-ca dmag-  
rgyags la khyer / lto-dgos ma-'byor ma-bu (thams-  
čad) sdug-bsñal gyi non-pa yin /

1v,6 la mña'-ba, mña'-ris 1v,7 sde-pa a-ma-dpal  
gyis 2r,2 sde-pas, skyabs-pas 2r,5 gčuñ gi 2r,7

dgras khyer, lto gos

"As regards the lineage of this venerable  
deceased *ras-pa*, he has said<sup>3</sup> that it is the (lineage)  
renowned as the *dpon(-po)*<sup>4</sup> lineage of hallowed  
origin, that of the man called *Byams-pa thob-rgyal*,  
who was of (all) ministers (of Tibet) the very first  
one<sup>5</sup>.

As servants of the *čhos-rgyal sKyid-sde-ñi-ma-  
mgon*<sup>6</sup>, they travelled from the subjects of *mña'-ris  
Guñ-thañ* to *Gu-ge* in *sTod* and settled down in the  
(region of) *Gu-ge* that is called *Phir-čuñ gi 'brog-  
pa*.

Having been summoned by *A-ma-dpal*, the *sde-  
pa* of Mustang (*blo-bo*), they resided in *sKye-skyas-  
sgañ*<sup>7</sup> in *sMon-thañ*. The name *dpon-dru sKye-  
skya-sgañ-ba* existed from that time onwards.

During the time they resided in *sKye-skyas-  
sgañ*, *Rab-brtan-mgon-po*, the younger son of the  
*dpon-druñ Khro-rgyal-rdo-rje*, travelled as the dis-  
trict head (*rjoñ-dpon*) of *Kar-dum* in *sPu-rañ* from  
*Gu-ge*. After he had stayed there for six years, he  
was killed by the *sde-pa* because he had defiled the  
queen of *sMon-thañ*<sup>8</sup>.

(Thereafter (lit. when)) the elder brother, *Khro-  
bo-skyabs-pa*, came to Lower Mustang (*blo-smad*)  
as the district head (*rjoñ-dpon*) of *Rab-rgyal-rce-  
mo*<sup>9</sup>, (and) they have been there up to the present.

*Che-brtan-rdo-rje*, the elder son of *Rab-brtan-  
mgon-po*, came to *Rab-rgyal-rce-mo*, having been  
summoned by his uncle *Khro-bo-skyabs-pa*, and  
(afterwards) was named the *a-khu-dpon-sa* of all  
*dpon-druñ*. Thus the title *dpon-sa* of the *sKye-skyas-  
sgañ-ba* existed from that time onwards.

*rDo-rje-dbañ-phyug* was the son of *Che-brtan-  
rdo-rje*. *rDo-rje-dbañ-phyug* had three sons, namely  
*rDo-rje*, 'Phan-dar and the *bla-ma bsTan-pa'i-*

*rgyal-mchan. rDo-rje* was without child.

'Phan-dar had as sons these three, namely *bZaṅ-po*, *Čhos-skyoṅ* and the *bla-ma Čhos-drios-grub*. *bZaṅ-po* was without child. *Čhos-skyoṅ* had seven sons. Of them, *lHun-grub* and 'Byor-ra increased the lineage. The other five became priests. Of the latter, the *bla-ma Čhos-'jin-dpal-bzaṅ* was the one who belonged to a *bla-ma* tradition.

The son of the *dpon-sa lHun-grub* was *Che-dbaṅ-rig-'jin*. The son of *Che-dbaṅ* was *bSod-nams-mgon-po*. Six sons and daughters were born as children to the *dpon-sa 'Byor-ra*. I am *Che-dbaṅ-rab-brtan*, the middle one of them, he said.

When the eldest (son) *Che-dbaṅ-rnam-rgyal* was eleven, I seven and the youngest (son) two years old, (our) father, 'Byor-ra-rgya-mcho died at the age of 32.

During this time a quarrel arose between the king and minister<sup>10</sup>, in consequence of which the *sde-pa* seized<sup>11</sup> *bKag* and *rJon*. When the troops of the king of Jumla came to the aid of the *dpon-druṅ sKye-skyasgaṅ-pa*, many men were killed. All ex-

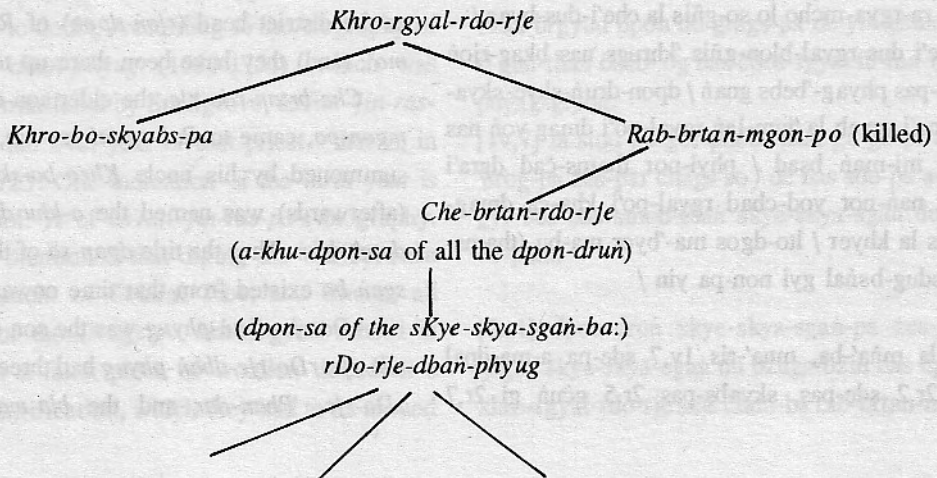
ternal property<sup>12</sup> was carried off by the enemy, and all internal possessions were taken as food for the king (of Jumla) and as rations for the troops. Given that they obtained neither food nor clothing, they all, mother and sons, were made to suffer."

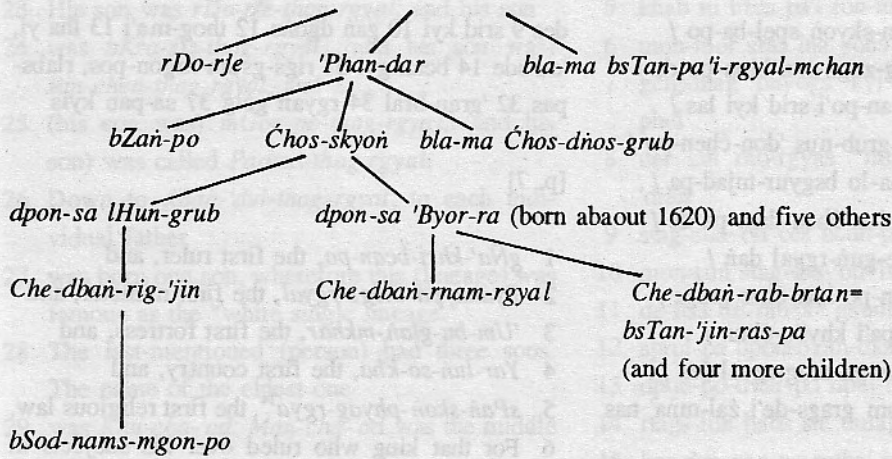
From the information provided by *bsTan-'jin-ras-pa*, the following structure of his family's genealogy emerges:

*Byams-pa-thob-rgyal*, the minister (*blon*) of King *gÑa'-khri-bcan-po* (the first king of Tibet, not explicitly mentioned in the biography)

In the retinue of King *Ñi-ma-mgon* they went to West Tibet (10th century) and settled in *Gu-ge*.

Resettled from *Gu-ge* to Mustang under *A-ma-dpal* (first half of the 15th century). Settled in *sKye-skyasga*, from which the lineage name *sKye-skyasgaṅ-pa* derives.





It may first be noted that the *dpon-druñ Khro-bo-skyabs-pa* mentioned here is identical with the *spu-druñ Khro-skyab-pa* of the *bem-čhag* of Kagbeni, *spu-druñ* doubtless being a corrupt form of *dpon-druñ*.

The tracing of the roots of this lineage to a minister of the first Tibetan king, *gñā'-khri-bcan-po*, and the claimed connection with the rule of King *ñi-ma-mgon*, who founded a kingdom in West Tibet, are doubtless of utmost significance ideologically for the self-image of the princes of the Muktināth valley.

It should be emphasized that the genealogy following *Khro-bo-skyab-pa* shows only the *dpon-sa* line of this princely family. The descendants of *Khro-bo-skyab-pa* who ruled the Muktināth valley are not mentioned. Further, there is no specific indication in the biography of *bsTan-'jin-ras-pa* of the lifetime of *Khro-bo-skyab-pa*, who established the rule of this princely family over the Muktināth valley. It is only from the number of past generations that one can form an approximate idea, by assuming 25 years as the period of one generation.

Accordingly, around 1520 *Khro-bo-skyab-pa* would have been about 25 years old.

The ideologically inflated derivation from a minister of the first Tibetan king is provided in great detail in a *dkar-čhag* text accompanying a manuscript of the *bKa'-than ga'u-ma*, a text from Kagbeni whose existence D. Jackson first pointed out.<sup>13</sup> The genealogy given in this *dkar-čhag* is itself based on a more detailed text, which is listed on p. 9 as *dKar-čhag kun-gsal me-loñ*.

The portions of the text concerning the genealogy of the princes of Muktināth are reproduced here in the original and in translation (source B).

[p. 7]

- 1 rje la mña'-ba gñā'-khri-bcan-po dañ /
- 2 blon la mña'-ba byams-pa thog-rgyal dañ /
- 3 mkhar la sña'-ba 'um-bu glañ-mkhar dañ /
- 4 yul \* la \* sña'-ba yar-luñ so-kha dañ /
- 5 čhos la sña'-ba spañ-skoñ phyag-rgya dañ /
- 6 mña'-ris čhos-bzin skyoñ-ba rgyal-po de'i /

7 lugs-gñis srid kyi 'jin-skyon spel-ba-po /  
 8 'jam-dbyaṅs mi yis g-zugs-čan blon-po de /  
 9 sa-bdag gñā'-khri-bcan-po'i srid kyi las /  
 10 ma-smras gañ-dgon grub-nus 'don-chen-po /  
 11 bod-yul gliñ-bzi'i kha-lo bsgyur-mjad-pa /  
 12 kun gyis thog-ma'i blon-chen dam-pa de /  
 13 lha yis yul du 'od-de-guñ-rgyal dañ /  
 14 bcan gyi yul du bcan-po kha-cher grags /  
 15 dmu-dañ klu ru rig-pa'i khyi'u-čuñ /  
 16 mi-yul bod du byams-pa-thog-rgyal zes /  
 17 mchan-sñan srid-gsum grags-de'i žal-mña' nas  
 /  
 18 ña'i rus gyi (nam-mkha'i) thogs dañ ni /  
 19 'og gdon rci-rci ja la sa-bdag nad /  
 20 mje dañ phol-mig žaṅ-brum bar du ni /  
 21 gdon-thug rgyal-zer nad-rigs sna-dgu thub /  
 22 lha-'dre mi-gsum thams-ćad dbaṅ du 'dus /  
 23 de-sras rdo-rje-thog-rgyal de'i sras /  
 24 (bkra-sis)-thog-rgyal rin-chen-thog-rgyal dañ /  
 25 mgon-po-thog-rgyal (pad-ma)-thog-rgyal zes /  
 26 dbaṅ-'dul-thog-rgyal bar du yab re-rer /  
 27 sras-re 'khruiṅs-pa \*g\*ćig-rgyud dkar-po grags  
 /  
 28 de la sras-gsum mña'-ba phu-bo'i mchan /  
 29 khu-cha-'od dañ 'briñ-bar mañ-cha-'od /  
 30 bčuñ-por stag-cha-'od-de mched-gsum mo /  
 31 de-gsum rig-gsum-mgon-po'i byin-rlabs-pa'i /  
 32 'dran-bral mched-gsum 'od-žes rab du grags /  
 33 'jam-gliñ kun tu grags-pa'i sku-mched-gsum /  
 34 'jam-gliñ brgyan-gćig dpal-ldan sa-skya ru /  
 35 'jam-gliñ 'ćhab-baṅ bde la 'god-pa'i phyir /  
 36 'jam-gliñ khyon-kun 'khor-lo bsgyur bzin  
 pheb\*s\* /  
 37 'jam-pa'i dbyaṅs dños 'gro-mgon sa-pan kyi /  
 38 'das dañ ma-'on da-lta dus-gsum dgoṅs /

1 rje la sña-ba 2 blon la sña-ba 3 mkhar la sña-ba  
 4 yul la sña-ba 5 ćhos la sña-ba 8 mi yi, blon-po

des 9 srid kyi 10 gañ dgoṅs 12 thog-ma'i 13 lha yi,  
 'od-sde 14 bcan gyi 31 rigs-gsum-mgon-pos, rlabs-  
 pas 32 'gran-bral 34 rgyan gćig 37 sa-pan kyis

[p. 7]

- 1 *gñā'-khri-bcan-po*, the first ruler, and
- 2 *Byams-pa-thogs-rgyal*, the first minister, and
- 3 *'Um-bu-glañ-mkhar*, the first fortress, and
- 4 *Yar-luñ-so-kha*, the first country, and
- 5 *sPañ-skoñ-phyag-rgya*<sup>14</sup>, the first religious law.
- 6 For that king who ruled over his subjects in accordance with the religious law
- 7 he was the person who spread the practice of rule according to the two ways of conduct.
- 8 Because that minister, in whom Mañjuḥoṣa had assumed the form of a man,
- 9 was able to perform the sovereign duties of the ruler *gñā'-khri-bcan-po*
- 10 as desired, without being called upon to do so, he was of great power.
- 11 He who controled the four main parts (*gliñ*) of Tibet,
- 12 who in everyone's eyes was the first holy chief minister,
- 13 he was famous in the country of the *lHa* as *'Od-sde-guñ-rgyal* and
- 14 in the country of the *bCan* as *bCan-po kha-ćhe*.
- 15 Among the *dMu* and the *Klu* he was called *Rig-pa'i khyi'i-čuñ*,
- 16 and in the country of men *Byams-pa-thog-rgyal*.
- 17 From the mouth of him who is famed in the Three Worlds came the words:...
- 22 The gods, the demons and men - all of them he brought under his control.

- 23 His son was *rDo-rje-thog-rgyal*, and his son  
 24 was *bKra-śis-thog-rgyal*, (and his son was)  
*Rin-chen-thog-rgyal*, and  
 25 (his son was) *mGon-po-thog-rgyal*, (and his  
 son) was called *Padma-thog-rgyal*.  
 26 Down to *dBaṅ-'dul-thog-rgyal*, to each indi-  
 vidual father  
 27 was born one son, wherefore this (lineage) was  
 famous as the "white single lineage."  
 28 The last-mentioned (person) had three sons.  
 The name of the eldest one  
 29 was *Khu-cha-'od*. *Maṅ-cha-'od* was the middle  
 one.  
 30 *sTag-cha-'od* was the youngest one. They were  
 three brothers.  
 31 Because they were blessed by *Rigs-gsum-*  
*mgon-po*,  
 32 they were well known as "the incomparable  
 three 'Od brothers".  
 33 They were the three brothers renowned  
 throughout the whole world.  
 34 To the lone adornment of the world, the glo-  
 rious *Sa-skya*,  
 35 they came in order to lead the world's subjects  
 to well-being,  
 36 and controlled the world's whole territory.  
 37 The true Mañjuḥṣa, the lord of the living be-  
 ings *Sa-skya-pañḍita*,  
 38 recalling the three times, the past, the future  
 and the present,

[p. 8]

- 1 rigs-bzaṅ mkha'-'gro'i mchan-ldan bu-mo gñis  
 /  
 2 khab du scal-ba gus-pas daṅ du blaṅs /  
 3 roṅ-mo gser-gyi-go-ćog-ćan daṅ ni /  
 4 mon-mo g.yu-yis-go-ćog-ćan źes gñis /

- 5 khab tu bźes-pa'i roṅ-mor sras drug daṅ /  
 6 mon-mor sras lña yoṅs su bsdom-pa na /  
 7 gćig-lhag phyogs kyi graṅ-ldan gduṅ-rgyud  
 phel  
 8 dar źiṅ rab-rgyas \*mña'\*-mthaṅ gsum-brcen  
 'dran  
 9 stag-cha-'od ćes bćuṅ-po de-ñid la /  
 10 mon-roṅ stag-lha-'od-'bar bya-ba khruṅs /  
 11 de-nas mi-rab\*s\*s gsum nas gsaṅ-bdag gi /  
 12 sprul-pa dpon-bzaṅ-dkar-po bya-ba 'khruṅs /  
 13 dpon-po-dkar-po dpal-ldan sa-skya-pa'i /  
 14 rtags-luṅ babs ste dmag-dpon dam-kha gnaṅ /  
 15 hor daṅ sog-po mtha' mi sdug-pa-ćan /  
 16 dpā'-po khyed daṅ khyed kyi rgyud bćas gyis  
 /  
 17 'dul-skal las-'phro yod-pas da-lta raṅ /  
 18 chaṅs-pa bkra-śis-mgon gyis pho-ña daṅ /  
 19 ćhab\*s gćig smon-thaṅ phyogs su byon {pa}  
 dgos gsuṅs /  
 20 khyed kyis mi-rab skal-pa srid-mtha'i bar /  
 21 dar źiṅ rgyas la phyogs las mams-par rgyal /  
 22 ma-'oṅ yul der mgo-nag yoṅs kyis rje /  
 23 mña'-'baṅ ćhos-bźin skyoṅ źes luṅ-bstan gnaṅ  
 /  
 24 'jam-dbyaṅs sa-skya'i \*bka'\*-brcal daṅ du blaṅs  
 /  
 25 phyi naṅ bar gsum hor daṅ mtha' yis dmag /  
 26 gdug-pa-ćan mams ma-lus char-bćad nas /  
 27 luṅ-bstan bźin du \* raṅ gi \* rgyal-srid kyaṅ\*s\*s  
 /  
 28 skya-rgyal-gaṅ gis sa yis thig-ler bźugs /  
 29 de nas zuṅ ste skya-rgyal-sgaṅ-par grags /  
 30 de'i sras ma-saṅs-khro-bo-'bum źes daṅ /  
 31 de'i rigs-sras khro-bo-skya-pa te /  
 32 lugs gñis mkhyen-pa'i pad-chal rab-skyed nas  
 /  
 33 raṅ-sde skyoṅ źiṅ bźan-sde gzil gyis mnon /  
 34 dge-'dun-sde chugs bstan-'jin sku\*r\*-stis mćhod



35 sñon-byon čhos-rgyal goñ-ma'i rnam-thar  
skyañ\*s\* /

36 de-sras sgron-ma-rin-čhen de yis sras /

37 khro-bo-zil-gnon mchan dañ don mthun 'khruñs  
/

4 g.yu-yi 5 khab tu bžes-pas 7 grañs-ldan, rgyud  
'phel 8 thañ gsum-rcen 'gran 10 mon-roñ, bya-ba  
'khruñs 14 bab ste 15 gdug-pa-čan 16 bčas kyi 18  
gyi pho 20 kyi mi-rabs bskal-pa 21 mam-par 22  
kyi rje 23 mña'-bañs, skyoñs žes 24 bka'-scal 25  
mtha' yi 27 rgyal-srid bskyañs 28 gi sa yi 29 bzuñ  
ste 30 skya-pa ste 33 gyis gnon 34 sde bcugs,  
bkur-stis 35 rnam-thar bskyañs 36 de yi sras

[p. 8]

- 1 granted them as wives two girls of good background, who possessed the features of *mKha'-'gro-ma*.
- 2 They accepted them reverentially.
- 3 After they had married the ones called *Ser-gyi-go-čog-čan*, who came from the steep-rimmed valleys of the south (*Roñ-mo*), and
- 4 *g.Yu-yis-go-čog-čan*, who came from *Mon* (*Mon-mo*). To *Roñ-mo* were (born) six sons, and
- 5 to *Mon-mo* five sons, so that - if a reckoning is made,
- 6 with a figure that represents, lacking one, the (twelve) directions of the firmament - they increased
- 8 and spread the lineage. Thanks to this the (family's) power was equal to heaven.
- 9 To the youngest one, called *sTag-čan-'od*,
- 10 *mon-roñ sTag-lha-'od-'bar* was born.
- 11 Afterwards, three generations later, the incar-

nation of Vajrapāñi,

- 12 the one called *dPon-bzañ-dkar-po* was born.
- 13 To *dPon-po-dkar-po* fell, from the *Sa-skyapa*,
- 14 the mark of a prophecy, and he was granted the seal of a commanding officer.
- 15 "In view of the Turks (*hor*) and the Mongols (*sog-po*), these evil neighbours on the border,
- 16 it is (sealed) fate and duty that they should be tamed by you,
- 17 O hero, and your descendants. It is necessary that you immediately
- 18 travel to Mustang now with the emissaries to (the court of King) *Čhañs-pa bKra-śis-mgon*<sup>15</sup>."
- 19 Such words were spoken.
- 20 "Your lineage will spread and grow to the end of this cosmic era
- 21 and gain victory over all the directions of the firmament.
- 22 In the future you will reign, as ruler of all men of that country,
- 23 over the subjects according to the religious law." Thus it was prophesied.
- 24 He accepted the instructions of the *Sa-skyapa* (*pa*), the Mañjuhoṣa.
- 25 By destroying the Turks (*hor*) and the evil groups of the border peoples without, within and between,
- 26 down to the last man,
- 27 he exercised his own rule in accordance with the prophecy.
- 28 He resided in the centre of the territory of *sKya-rgyal-gañ*.
- 29 From then on they were known as *sKya-rgyal-sgañ-pa*.
- 30 His son was called *Khro-bo-'bum*, and
- 31 the son from his lineage was *Khro-bo-skyab-pa*.
- 32 By generating in himself the lotus grove of

- knowledge of the two ways of conduct,  
 33 he protected his own subjects and subdued the subjects of the others.  
 34 He founded monasteries and reverently brought offerings to the adherents of the (Buddhist) teaching.  
 35 He zealously imitated the deeds of the Dharmarāja who had previously come.  
 36 His son was *sGrol-ma-rin-chen*, and his son,  
 37 *Khro-bo-zil-gnon*, was born as one whose (character) conformed to the meaning of his name.

[p. 9]

- 1 de-sras khro-bo-rnams-rgyal bya-ba dan /
- 2 de-sras che-gnas-rgyal-po de'i sras /
- 3 ñag-dbañ-\*g.yul-las\*-rnams-\*par\*-rgyal-\*ba\* 'khruñs /
- 4 de'i sras bde-mchog-rnam-rgyal bya-ba 'khruñs /
- 5 de la sras gčig khruñs-pa'i dge-mchan ni /
- 6 dbañ-drag-'bar-ba bya-ba'i skyes-mchog byuñ /
- 7 de'i sras gčig sa-skyoñ mi'i dbañ-po /
- 8 čhos kyis rgyal-po khro-bo-dpal-mgon byuñ /
- 9 de-sras drug gi phu-bo lug\*s\* gñis la /
- 10 mkhyen-pa'i spyan yañs yab kyis srid 'jin-pa /
- 11 mi yis dbañ-po zil-mnon-rnams-rgyal 'khruñs /
- 12 de-sras phul-byuñ mkhyen-pa'i gter-mjod 'jin /
- 13 žal-ras zla-žun šel-snod phos 'dra-ba /
- 14 srid kyi rgyud-'jin mgo-nag mi yi rje /
- 15 sa-skyoñ khro-bo-khams-gsum bya-ba 'khruñs /
- 16 gžan yañ sku-mched čhe-čuñ-'brin rnams kun /
- 17 'jug-sdom dkar-čhags kun-gsal-me-loñ na /
- 18 legs-par gsal-bas mkhyen-ldan rnams gyis gzijs

- 1 mam-rgyal 3 nam-par 5 gčig 'khruñs 8 čhos kyi
- 10 yab kyi 11 mi yi, zil-gnon-rnam 13 zla-šun 17
- dkar-čhag 18 rnams kyis

[p. 9]

- 1 His son was called *Khro-bo-rnam-rgyal*, and
- 2 his son was *Che-gnas-rgyal-po*.
- 3 *Ñag-dbañ-g.yul-las-rnam-rgyal* was born as his son.
- 4 The one called *bDe-mchog-rnam-rgyal* was born as his son.
- 5 As regards the hallowed signs, that a son was born to him,
- 6 the supreme man resulted, who was called *dBañ-drag-'bar-ba*.
- 7 The ruler and lord over men turned out to be one of his sons,
- 8 the Dharmarāja *Khro-bo-dpal-mgon*.
- 9 *Zil-gnon-rnam-rgyal* was born as the eldest of his six sons, having a broad knowledgeable view of the two types of rules of conduct
- 10 and assuming the rule of his father
- 11 (as) the lord of men.
- 12 His excellent son possessed the treasure of knowledge.
- 13 His countenance was like an overflowing glass container from Cambodia.
- 14 To him who kept the tradition of rule, the lord of men,
- 15 was born the ruler of the earth *Khro-bo-khams-gsum*.
- 16 The other elder, younger and middle siblings - they are
- 17 all easily determined from the summary *dkar-čhag* text *Kun-gsal-me-loñ*.
- 18 Thus may knowledgeable persons look into (it).

This results in the following genealogy of the prince of the Muktināth valley:

*Byams-pa-thogs-rgyal* (minister of King *gÑa'-khri-bcan-po*)

*rDo-rje-thog-rgyal*

*bKra-śis-thog-rgyal*

*Rin-chen-thog-rgyal*

*mGon-po-thog-rgyal*

*Padma-thog-rgyal*

*dBañ-'dul-thog-rgyal*

(At the time of *Sa-skyapaṇḍita*, middle of the 13th century. Two wives from the southern steep-rimmed valleys, called *Mon-mo* and *Roñ-mo*.)

*Khu-cha-'od*      *Mañ-cha-'od*      *sTag-cha-'od*

*mon-roñ sTag-lha-'od-'bar*

(three generations)

*dPon-bzañ-dkar-po*

(Sent by the *Sa-skyapa* to the court of the king of Mustang *Chañs-pa bKra-śis-mgon* (second half of the 15th century). Resided in *sKya-rgal-sgañ*.)

*Khro-bo-'bum*

*Khro-bo-skyab-pa* (16th century)

*sGrol-ma-rin-chen*

*Khro-bo-zil-gnon*

*Khro-bo-rnam-rgyal*

*Che-gnas-rgyal-po* (2nd half of the 17th century)

*Ñag-dbañ-g.yul-las-rnam-rgyal*

*bDe-mchog-rnam-rgyal*

*dBañ-drag-'bar-ba*

*Khro-bo-dpal-mgon* (about 1800 A.D.)

*Zil-gnon-rnam-rgyal* (1st half of the 18th century)

*Khro-bo-khams-gsum*

The most important historical inconsistency between this *dkar-čhag* text and the autobiography of *bsTan-'jin-ras-pa* is in the name given to the father of *Khro-bo-skyab-pa*. In the former he is called *Khro-rgyal-rdo rje*, and in the latter *Khro-bo-'bum*. A further striking feature is that no mention is made of any connection between the lineage of the princes of Muktināth and King *Ñi-ma-mgon*. It is instead the *Sa-skyapa* who now play the dominant role in legitimizing the lineage's claim to power.

For purposes of chronology, the fact that *dPon-bzañ-dkar-po*, the grandfather of *Khro-bo-skyab-pa*, is mentioned as a contemporary of the Mustang king *bKra-śis-mgon* (death year 1489) would appear to be significant. This may validate the above-mentioned dating of *Khro-bo-skyab-pa*. Another indication of the chronology can be found in the work of F.K. Ehrhard on the "Tibetan Sources on Muktināth." According to the latter, both the priest

*O-rgyan-dpal-bzañ* and his successor *Kun-bzañ-kloñ-yañs* were contemporaries of the prince (*dpon-druñ khri-pa*) *Che-gnas-rgyal-po*, whom both met around 1677/78, and who presumably died around 1680. *Che-gnas-rgyal-po* represented the fourth generation after *Khro-bo-skyab-pa*, from which it may be concluded that *Khro-bo-skyab-pa* must have been some 25 years old within the period from 1550 to 1580.

From the dating of *Che-gnas-rgyal-po* we can also draw conclusions as to the age of the present *dkar-čhag* text. Since the text lists six further generations after *Che-gnas-rgyal-po*, it must have originated in the 18th century. The second and third princes from the end of the present *dkar-čhag* text are mentioned as addressees of official documents written by Nepalese kings and filmed in 1985 (cf. above 1.3.1.). *Khro-bo-dpal-mgon* is the addressee of two official documents from the years 1790 and 1792 (ADSD, documents 2, 3, there are mentioned as *Ṭopāla Biṣṭa*) and *Zil-gnon-rnam-rgyal* is mentioned by name as *Silin* (≈ *Silim* ≈ *Silam* ≈ *Silim*) *Namgyāla Biṣṭa* in official documents dating to 1820, 1826, 1827, 1830 and 1834 (ADSD, documents 12, 14, 15, 18, 19).

A further source on the history of the princes of the Muktināth valley has been provided to us in the form of a small *dkar-čhag* text attached to a choice manuscript belonging to *rGya-tog-gser-gsum*, which was prepared on the occasion of the death of *sGrol-ma-rin-čhen*, the son and successor of *Khro-bo-skyab-pa*. This text obviously represents a source that, given its age, surpasses all previously mentioned sources on the history of the princes of Muktināth. The passages in this *dkar-čhag* text that deal with the history of the princes of Muktināth are edited and translated in the following (source C):

rmon-thañ rgyal-po'i žañ-blon čhen-po 'di'i /  
 gduñ-rabs mu-tig phreñ-ltar byon-chul ni /  
 thog-mar 'od-sde dgu-rgyal žes-bya ba /  
 lha las legs čad lha-rigs ma-čhad-pa /  
 byams-pa thog-rgyal bar du rim-par byon /  
 sa-skyoñ dbañ-po gñā'-khri rcad-po nas /  
 bzuñ ste mi-dbañ 'bum-sde mgon gyi bar /  
 bka' yi blon-po žabs-'degs rim-par mjad /  
 čhos-rgyal 'bum-sde-mgon gyi sku-riñ la /  
 bka' yi blon-po dpon-señ-dkar-por grags /  
 de'i gduñ-'jin ma-bzañ khro-bo 'bum /  
 gañ-des smon-thañ rgyal-po'i žañ-blon mjad /  
 skya-rgyal-gañ gi sa yi thig-le bzuñ /  
 skya-rgyal-gañ-pa žes su de nas grags /  
 ema 'jvam-dbañs legs-pa'i 'byuñ-gnas gsuñ gis  
 luñ-bstan mčhog-brñies-pa /  
 čhos-blon čhen-po khro-bo skyab-pa sras dañ  
 bčas-pa'i ñi-ma ni /  
 sñon-bsags bsod-nams rta-bdun gyis drañs rab-  
 rgyal šar-ri'i rcer son te /  
 rnam-dpyod mjad-pa bzañ-po 'od-zer phyogs-  
 brgyar rab tu 'phros-pa las /  
 rnam-dag bstan-pa ñin-mor mjad-pa dañ /  
 'khor-'bañs bde-skyid pad-chal rgyas-pa dañ /  
 rgol-ñan mun-pa'i chogs-rnams 'jvoms-pa gsum  
 /  
 dus-gčig mjad-pa 'di ni e-ma-mchar //  
 de-ltar mjad-pa bzañ-po'i dpal-mñā'-ba /  
 čhos-blon čhen-po sgröl-ma'i mchan-čan de /  
 rañ-gžan bde-ba'i thabs-čhen mjad nas kyañ /  
 kye-ma žiñ-gžan phebs-pa'i chul-bstan to /  
 gañ gi dgoñs-pa yoñs su rjogs-phyir du /  
 rnam-dkar dge-ba rgya-čhen sgrub-chul ni /  
 thog-mar žiñ-gžan gšegs-pa nas bzuñ ste /  
 žag-grañs bču-phrag bži dañ lña'i bar /  
 bla-ma dam-pa kun-dga'-rgyal-mchan dañ /  
 žabs-druñ dam-pa byams-pa-bsod-nams kyis /  
 gco-mjad dge-'dun bču-phrag brgyad-lhag gis

kun-rig čho-ga khri-char lhag-cam sgrubs //

1 smon-thañ 18 rnam spyod

"As for the manner in which the lineage of this great ministers (*žañ-blon*) of the King of Mustang (*smon-thañ*) came down like a string of pearls,

they firstly separated in order from the god called '*Od-sde-dgu-rgyal*

without being deprived of their divine origin and proceeded successively down to *Byams-pa-thog-rgyal*.

Starting from *gÑa'-khri-rcad-po*, the mighty one, who governed the earth,

down to the ruler '*Bum-sde-mgon*'<sup>6</sup>, they served successively as ministers.

During the lifetime of the *čhos-rgyal* '*Bum-sde-mgon*

(the member of this lineage) was well known as minister

*dPon-señ-dkar-po*.

One of his descendants, *ma-bzañ Khro-bo-'bum*,

was the person who served as minister (*žañ-blon*) of the King of Mustang (*smon-thañ*).

He occupied the centre of the place *sKya-rgyal-gaň*.

From this they became known by the (family) name *sKya-rgyal-gaň-pa*.

Hey! The sun of those who obtained the highest prophesy by the words of the Mañju-ghoṣa, who is the origin of all that is good,<sup>17</sup> of the great religious minister *Khro-bo-skyab-pa* and his sons,

went to the "peak" of the eastern mountain of the "supreme victory"<sup>18</sup> due to the merits ac-

cumulated before and drawn by the seven horses, and the rays of (their) good deeds were spread to all directions.

Due to this, they appeared as the sun of the pure (Buddhist) doctrine,

the Lotus garden of the well-being of their subjects increased

and the mass of dark evil opponents was destroyed.

That this was done at one time is really miraculous!

Although that great religious minister named *sGrol-ma*,

who was furnished with the glory of good deeds,

took great measures for the welfare of himself and others,

alas! he showed the manner of his passing away.

In order to fulfill his intentions completely, the following completely pure virtues were accomplished on a grand scale.

Firstly starting from his passing away up to the 40th day,

headed by the holy Lama *Kun-dga'-rgyal-mchan* and

the holy *žabs-druñ Byams-pa-bsod-nams* more than 80 monks

performed the *Kun-rig* ritual more than ten thousand times."

Regarding the fact that source 3 was written in the second half of the 16th century shortly after the death of *sGrol-ma*, the son of *Khro-bo-skyabs-pa*, we have to conclude beyond any doubt that *Khro-bo-'bum* was the father of *Khro-bo-skyabs-pa*. He was the nobleman who settled first with his family in Mustang and served the king of Mustang.

Beyond any doubt *Khro-bo-skyabs-pa* was the first member of this family who ruled as a duke over the Muktināth valley and adjacent areas. If we rightly assume that his father came to Mustang at the end of the 15th century, *Khro-bo-skyabs-pa* certainly established his rule in southern Mustang in the first half of the 16th century.

There are two basic questions regarding the fortresses of the Muktināth valley which are yet to be answered:

1. Who founded *Rab-rgyal-rce-mo*, the fortress of Dzong?
2. Who erected the castle of Kagbeni?

According to all historical sources available to me, it was *Khro-bo-skyabs-pa*, who "went" or "came" to *Rab-rgyal-rce-mo*, the fortress of Dzong. None of the sources mention directly that he founded it. Therefore it might hold that there was already some kind of fortress in Dzong, when *Khro-bo-skyabs-pa* shifted his activities to Southern Mustang. If no new historical sources turn up this question can be only decided by archaeological evidence.

Moreover as far as the castle as Kagbeni is concerned, the research conducted by Dr. B. Schmidt and Dr. Niels Gutschow clearly shows that this castle and subsequently the present-day settlement of Kagbeni was founded only in the beginning of the second half of the 16th century. Therefore it is yet to be decided if *Khro-bo-skyabs-pa* himself or his son *sGrol-ma* were the actual founder of that castle of Kagbeni.

As far as the origin of the family of the dukes of the Muktināth valley is concerned, the claim of their descent from a Thakuri caste emigrating from Jumla to Mustang, as reported in the oral literature

analysed above (see Part I, chapter 2), is of course a myth that has no historical foundation. Does that mean that the written sources which claim the descent of this lineage from the first ministers of the first Tibetan king or even from the mythical gods are more reliable? Of course not. It would be a basic misunderstanding if we claim written historical sources to be more reliable only because they are written sources. After the fall of the Mongol rule in China and subsequently after the collapse of foreign Mongol and Chinese power in Tibet in the second half of the 13th century we witness a revival of old Tibetan traditions in Tibet that go back to the times of the old powerful Tibetan empire. Subsequently especially local rulers in Western Tibet claimed their descent from the powerful Tibetan kings of the *Yar-kluṅs* dynasty, and noblemen traced their origin back to noble families who were influential at the time of the Tibetan empire. Although ideologically significant and important, in most cases it had no historical foundation.

So where did the dukes of the Muktināth valley come from? When they entered Southern Mustang, they were certainly Tibetan noble men coming from the North and followers of the Tibetan Buddhism. Still, this does not say anything about their ethnic origin. If we follow source C, members of the family married women from areas called *Mon* and *Rong*. So there was direct intercourse between the people of present day Nepal and Western Tibet. Keeping in mind that the Western Nepalese kingdom of Jumla of the middle ages stretched far into what is now Tibetan territory, the ethnic history of the Tibetans of Western Tibet and the origin of their clans remains an open question.

## Notes

- 1 Snellgrove, pp. 150 and 202. I have been able to use a blockprint of this biography, comprising 17 folios, which was made available to me due to the kindness of Dr. C. Cüppers. The title of this biography is: rNal-'byor gyi dbaṅ-phyug rje-bcun bstan-'jin ras-pa'i rnam-thar mjad-pa ṅuṅ-ṅu géig.
- 2 Jackson 2, p. 220.
- 3 This is referring to utterances made by *bsTan-'jin-ras-pa* himself.
- 4 The terms *dpon* or *dpon-po* characterize the position of a local ruler, who does not have the rank of a king (*rgyal-po*).
- 5 As can be seen from the source 2 edited below, he is mentioned here as the first minister of the first Tibetan King *gÑa'-khri-bcan-po*. This minister was considered to be most prominent ancient forefather of this family.
- 6 This is one of the well known Kings of the *Yar-kluṅs* dynasty. After the collapse of the power of this dynasty he emigrated to western Tibet in the early 10th century. Cf. Petech, p. 15.
- 7 This place is situated to the east of the capital of Mustang. According to WD the distance to the capital should be not more than one mile.
- 8 Most probably he had sexual intercourse with the queen.
- 9 This is the now ruined fort of the village Dzong in the Muktināth valley.
- 10 It is not certain to me, if this refers solely to a conflict between the dukes of the Muktināth valley and the King of Mustang or to a more general dissent between this King and his ministers. It is only certain that the dukes of the Muktināth valley formed a party in this dispute opposing the King.
- 11 In the dictionaries the meaning of *phyag 'bebs-pa* is given as "to afflict physical punishment". This meaning can not be applied here.
- 12 Cf. chapter 4.2, note 30.
- 13 See Jackson, p. 152, note 3. I am grateful to Dr. F.-K. Erhard for handing over a copy of this text to me. Title of the text: gu-ru padma'i rnam-thar las thaṅ-yig ga'u-ma'i dkar-čhags. The text comprises 13 pages but pp. 5 and 6 are missing.
- 14 This is one of the first Sūtra-texts that came to Tibet by falling from the sky.
- 15 This the ruler of Mustang in the third generation after the famous *A-ma-dpal*. According to Jackson, p. 133, he died in 1489.
- 16 This is one of the great kings of *Guṅ-thaṅ*, who ruled this kingdom during the 14th century.
- 17 This refers to the assumption that *Khro-boskyabs-pa* was already prophesied in the Mañjuśrīmūlatantra.
- 18 An allusion to *Rab-rgyal-rce-mo*, the fortress of Dzong and main seat of the dukes of the Muktināth valley.

## CORRIGENDA

to the first part of the above article  
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- p. 47: col. 2, Translation, para. 4, read: As this must not in the future be levied by any *dPon*, notice...
- p.74: col. 2, penultimate para., read: ...with regard to the delivery of wood to Upper...
- p. 74: col. 2, last line, read: ...according to the (old) customs, and without treachery, cloth, ....
- p.75: col. 1, para. 1 read: ...wood for arrows, wood for saddles etc. of good quality.