

# NEPAL-TIBET CULTURAL RELATIONS AND THE ZHVA-DMAR-PA (SHYAMARPA) LAMAS OF TIBET

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## History and Background of Cultural Relationship

The cultural relationship between Nepal and Tibet is age-old. The first step in this relation came through Buddhism around the first half of the seventh century A.D. According to the historical sources, Nepal played an important rôle in the development of Buddhism and the Buddhist heritage in Tibet from the very beginning: from the mahayanist transmission to Tibet, which took place at the time of the Licchavi dynasty in Nepal. According to Chinese and Tibetan chronicles and annals, Nepal and Tibet were also culturally bound together through a royal marriage. The blue, red, and white annals (*deb-mther-ngon-po*, *deb-mther-dmar-po*, and *deb-mther-dkar-po* respectively), eleventh, thirteenth and nineteenth century Tibetan texts, and the Tang and Tung-huang annals, seventh-eights century Chinese texts, both mention that the daughter of the then Nepali King Amśuvarman ('od-gser-go-ca in Tibetan sources)<sup>1</sup> known as *khro-gner-ma* (bhr̥kuṭī) in Tibetan sources<sup>2</sup> was given in a marriage to Tibetan King *srong-btsang-sgam-po* (618-712). It is also known from the same source that the Nepali princess took Buddhist images and few other important religious artifacts as gift to Tibet from Nepal (Tucci 1971: fols. 19-19a, Dhungel 1986: 185-191). At that time, several prominent Buddhist scholars were also sent to Tibet from Nepal to support the mahayanist missionary movement. Records show that Buddhists of Licchavi origin were also transmigrated to Tibet and played a prominent role in the movement. Lama *rgyal-mtshan* of *cho-gro* in Tibet was one of such Licchavi immigrants in Tibet, who was one of the three main Tibetan-Sanskrit translators (*lo-tsa-ba*) (*Padma bka'-thang*, canto 68, 70). He was one of the talented and leading Tibetan students sent to India from Tibet for Buddhist learning, who having returned from India,

translated two famous Buddhist texts, *caryākriya* and the *yogatantra* (Ibid: 70, Douglas and Bays 1978: 410).

Nepali Buddhist scholars continued to play a prominent role in the development of Buddhism in Tibet. The early religious and cultural links later enabled both countries to develop political ties. As a matter of fact, the Nepali ruling king named Udayadeva, together with his entire family members and supporting courtiers had to flee to Tibet for political asylum in around 619-636 A.D. because of the coup d'etat that occurred in the court of Nepal (Bacot 1940-46: 13, Levi 1905-8 Vol. I: 164-65, Dhungel 1986: 95-96). Thus, the formal tradition of cultural and political exchanges between the two countries was established.

The extent of bilateral missions between Nepali vajrācaryas, artists, architects etc. and Tibetan lamas, tantriks and doctrinal pupils increased considerably in later periods. Syncretically, commercial transactions also increased between the two neighbours, especially from ninth/tenth centuries A.D. This ancient relation seems to have lasted until the twentieth century Chinese takeover of Tibet. But the main historical basis of this relationship was already disturbed by the success of Young husband mission of the British Government in India in Tibet in the years 1903-4 (Camman 1951).

Despite this, Nepali scholars did not tire of visiting Tibet, especially because of the strong hold of Tantrik Buddhism in Tibet. Countless number of Tibetan monks would also come to Nepal for pilgrimage and pursuance of Buddhist education (Jnavāli 2019 VS: 268-282). Both Tibetan and Nepali sources shed enough lights on the holy pilgrimages of Tibetan pilgrims in Nepal. Despite the geographic terrain, beginning from the tenth century, Kathmandu Valley was developed as an important Buddhist pilgrimage and education center. This lofty position of Kathmandu was maintained until the fifteenth century. It is interesting that during these centuries the *vajrayana* or *tantrayana* tradition was developed and flourished as one of the prominent ways of Mahayana Buddhism. Although the tantrik tradition was originated in Northern India, it was developed and flourished in a very unique way in Nepal beginning from the eve of Muslim invasion in India. Thus, the Tibetan Buddhism during these centuries and after was almost entirely influenced by the Nepali *vajrayana*. Because of such doctrinal linkage, uncountable number of high-ranking Buddhist scholars (lamas and monk pupils) from Tibet also visited Nepal to pursue and perform religious activities.<sup>3</sup>

The contributions of artist *a-ni-ko*, *paṇḍita Śīlamañju*, *a-nges-pa chen-po*, *pham-ping-pa* (*paṇḍita guṇamitra* of Pharping), *ngaggi-dbang-phyug-grags-pa* (*bagisvarakīrti*), *dharmamati*, *dus-'khor-pa*, *thang-chung-pa byang-chub-bzang-po* (*bodhibhḍra*), also known as *kha-chhe* and others are noteworthy in this regard (Roerich 1976: 227-28, 380-82, 384, 395, 402, 851, *padma-bka'i thang-yig*, canto 68, 70, Das 1983: 219). Similarly, the Tibetan cultural, religious, and educational visits and missions of Nepal led by some of the very prominent Buddhist scholars like *thon-mi-sam-bhota* (Tibetan minister); *rdo-rje dus-jum* and his two brothers (no name available), *chos-rje-dpal* (*dharmasvāmīn*), *mi-la-ras-pa*, *rdo-rje tshe-dhang-nor-bu*, *drug-pa rin-po-che* to Nepal in different ages are also equally important in this context. Many Tibetan lamas set examples in establishing huge and magnificent monasteries whereas evidence has been found that others had constructed and renovated various stupas, sculptures and composed several volumes of religious texts. An important Buddhist source describes that *rdo-rje tshe-dhang-nor-bu* and the *drug-pa rin-po-che* had constructed and renovated structures in around *svayambhunātha* stupa (Dhungel 1988: 4-7). In this connection, sufficient importance should also be given to the Munivihara of Bhaktapur, constructed in 1666 A.D. (NE 787) in memory of their father, Muniji by *rgya-ron* and *padma-rdo-rje*, the monks of *ji-ga-che's bkara-shis-lhun-po* monastery. Inscriptions from that monastery indicate that Tibetan monks had constructed the monastery with their own funds and endowed about thirty-two ropanis of land on trust (*guthi*) for the monastery (Vaidya and Shakya 1970: 131-34). The evidence mentioned above shows the string of bilateral relationship between Nepal and Tibet was tightened through Buddhism. In this connection, we should also mention the *zhva-dmar-pa rin-po-ches'* relations with Nepal.

The visits of the personalities mentioned above to Nepal and their exclusive religious performances here are of great importance. Even more fascinating again is why the abbots of *yangas-pa-can* monastery were so close to Nepal. This is very much inter-woven with an important event related to the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa chos-grub-rgya-mtsho* however, the eighth incarnation of *zhva-dmar-pa* in Nepal and the visits of the fourth and sixth *zhva-dmar-pa-s* had also played a distinctive role in it.

### Zhva-dmar-pa Lamas and Nepal

The *zhva-dmar-pa-s* are the incarnate abbots of *yangs-pa-can* monastery of Tibet which is one of the prominent monasteries of the *karma-bka'-rgyud* school of Tibetan Buddhism.<sup>4</sup> The *zhva-dmar-pa* is one of the three sub-sects of the karma line of the *bka'-rgyud-pa* school. These three groups of karma-pa are known as *zhva-nag*, *zhva-dmar*, and *zhva-khra* i.e. black hatted, red hatted, and multicolored hatted respectively. The tradition of reincarnation of the *zhva-dmar-pa* was initiated by the Third Karmapa Lama Ragjung Dorje ( ), who recognized the first *zhva-dmar-pa* grags-pa seng-ge (1282-1349) as the incarnation of Amitābha Buddha. This first *zhva-dmar-pa* was the second individual in Tibet to reincarnate in successive line. The *zhva-dmar-pa's* central monastery was located at *stod-lung-tshur-phug* of Central Tibet and is also called *byang-yangs-pa-can*. This monastery was famous for having relic tomb of the great Tibetan Buddhist scholar, *tsong-kha-pa* (1357-1419).<sup>5</sup>

As mentioned above, these *zhava-dmar-pa-s* had a very special, close, and continual relationship with the people and government of Nepal. The issue of the *zhva-dmar-pa-s* is therefore one of the most important in the study of Nepal-Tibet bilateral relations. Despite its unique importance, historians' effort in this regard seems so far to be somewhat tardy. Most historians have eschewed the main theme of this subject and have mentioned the single incident of the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa's* political asylum in Nepal. In fact, there is a long historical tradition of *zhva-dmar-pa-lamas'* relationship with Nepal, which has left a deep implication in the field of political and cultural history of the region. Unfortunately, researchers have not yet discovered any substantial record regarding the early history of this relationship. However, the biographical sources related to the seventh Karmapa mention that the fourth *zhvar-dmar-pa chos-kyi-grags-pa-dpal ye-se* (1453-1526) was the first lama of this line to visit Nepal where he is said to have constructed a small monastery near the svayambhūnāth stupa in 1483. It seems that the close relation of the *zhva-dmar-pa-s* with Nepal particularly after the sixteenth century was enhanced through the abbots of the 'drug-pa *bka'-rgyud-pa* school of *lho-smon* or 'brug-yul (Bhutan). Nepal and the *yangs-pa-can* monastery both had maintained close religious and cultural relations with the 'brug-pa lamas of Bhutan (Dhungel 1986: 13). The svayambhū inscription authored by the tenth *zhva-dmar abbot chos-grub-rgya-mcho* also throws some light on this matter (Dhungel 1988:9). This inscription has clearly mentioned the deep-rooted linkage of 'brug-pa *rin-po-che* with the work of the renovation of the

svayambhūmahācaitya (*phags-pa-shing-skun*) held between 1751 and 1758. According to this inscription, the final consecration ceremony of the renovated stupa was done under the spiritual command of the '*brug-pa-rin-po-che* in 1758 (Dhungel, 1988: 9).



*The First Zhva-dmar Rinpoche Grags-pa Seng-ge (1281-1349)*

Coming to the first half of the seventeenth century, some evidential records related to *zhva-dmar-pa* have been found. These records clearly indicate the relation of the *zhva-dmar-pa* abbots with Nepal had already been established even before the reign of King Laksmīnārasimha Malla of Kantipur (Kathmandu) (reign 1619-1641) (Shakya NS 1098: 173). One of the young disciples of the sixth *zhva-dmar-pa*, also known as the *yol-mo-ba sprul-sku bstan-'dzin-nor-bu* had already visited Nepal Valley between the years 1614 and 1617 during the reign of the other Malla King



*The Sixth Zhva-dmar Rinpoche Gar-dbang-Chos-Kyi dbang-phyug (1584 - 1630)*



*The present Zhva-dmar-Rinpoche Chos-Kyi blo-gros (1952- ) with H.M. the King and Queen of Nepal at the opening of a Tietan Buddhist monastery in Kathmandu.*

Śivasimha (reign 1578-1617) (Ehrhard 1997: 134). Similarly, during the reign of King Laksminarsimha Malla the sixth *zhva-dmar-pa gar-dbang-chos-kyi dbang-phyug* (1584-1630) had visited Nepal and established special links with the people and rulers of the three kingdoms of the Kathmandu valley (*bal-yul*). Besides his distinct relationship with the ruler of Kantipur, the sixth *zhva-dmar-pa* lama is also recorded to have had separate meetings with the rulers of Lalitpur and Bhaktapur. According to the biographical literature related to the ninth Karmāpa the sixth *zhva-dmar-pa chos-kyi dbang-phyug* had even taught the dharma in sanskrit to the king of kantipur and his relatives who had demonstrated great trust and confidence. His pilgrimage to Nepal Valley and the journey related to it was occurred sometime around 1629/30 (Ehrhard 1997: 126, Shakya NS 1098: 172). During his pilgrimage in Nepal, the sixth *zhva-dmar-pa* had made some efforts in renovating the *svayambhūmahācaitya*. According to a contemporary Newari source, the sixth *zhva-dmar-pa* had offered four artistic golden tympanuums (*torāṇa*) to the *mahācaitya* (Shakya, 1098: 172). At the same time he is also said to have donated some property to the Hārati temple located near the *māhācaitya*. This religious activity of the *zhva-dmar-pa* was done during a minor renovation of the *svayambhūmahācaitya* held in February 1629 (Shakya, N.S. 1098: 172). This document clearly records the incident related to the sixth *zhva-dmar-pa's* pilgrimage to *svayambhū* and the consecration ceremony held after the renovation of 1629 (N.S. 750) (Shakya, Ibid). The same source also indicates that the sixth *zhva-dmar-pa* had established a good religious and cultural links with some of the major Buddhist monasteries of Kathmandu valley (Shakya, Ibid). This renovation and the offering of golden *torāṇas* by the sixth *zhva-dmar-pa* was done with a kind permission of King Laksminarsimha of Kathmandu. Thus the king was duly invited to attend the consecration ceremony (Shakya, Ibid).

Because of such cultural ties established with the people and rulers of Nepal (Kathmandu Valley), the sixth *zhva-dmar-pa* abbot had been able to gain high popularity and respect in Nepal. One of such instances is the incident related to the return journey of the sixth *zhva-dmar-pa*. In this return journey the *zhva-dmar-pa* abbot is recorded to have been escorted up to *boudhanāth* by King Laksminarsimha and Crown Prince Pratapa Malla themselves. During this return journey, the *zhva-dmar* abbot was also welcomed by the local ruler (governor) of Listi who was a relative of the king of Kathmandu (Ehrhard 1997: 130). Similarly, the great lama is also

recorded to have been welcomed by the people and rulers of other parts of Nepal such as *jum-glang* (Jumla), *yol-mo* (Helambu), *sne-shang* (Manang) *dpal-tsho* (Sindhupalchok) (Elhrhard, 1997: 127, 130, 132, 134). *Cho-kyi dbang-phyug* passed away in the mountains of *yol-mo* (Helambu) in Nepal while he was in a deep mountain.

In this context we also have to note the incident of the birth of the eighth incarnate abbot of this *yangs-pa-can* monastery, *dpal-chen chos-kyi don-grub* (1695-1735), who is believed to have been born in a petty village of the Himalayan region of Eastern Nepal, known as Helambu (*yol-mo* in Tibetan sources). Similarly, historical evidence has also been found proving his visit to the Lo region of Nepal in the years 1724-1725 (Dhungel, 1989: 152-153, Jackson 1979: 130 footnotes 78-79). Biographical sources of the eleventh Karmapa also mention the story related to the eight *zhva-dmar-pa*'s visit to Nepal. His visit this time, was objected towards the pilgrimage of the land of *svayambhū*.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, it seems obvious that the above mentioned fourth, sixth and eighth *zhva-dmar-pa*-s had a very close and friendly relationship with Nepal. The ninth *zhva-dmar-pa* was *dkon-mchog rgyal-ba'i 'byung-gnas*, who is believed to have lived only until the age of nine. Thus the exact dates of his birth and death are not known. Again the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa* had also visited Nepal, as it is believed throughout the entire world of the Karma-pa. However, it is still not fully ascertainable due to the lack of documents whether the first three, fifth and seventh *zhva-dmar-pa*-s had cultivated any good relations with Nepal. Among the *zhva-dmar* abbots between their fourth and tenth incarnations, the tenth had developed an unique and special relations with Nepal and that had even become one of the major causes of a war between Nepal and Tibet and later even China also took part in it.

### **The Tenth *Zhva-dmar-pa* and Nepal**

The relations of the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa chos-grub-rgya-mcho* is the most important aspect of this history. He contributed much to strengthen this historical cultural relation. His special and profound contact with the Buddhist Vajracarya Community in Nepal enabled him to do so. Because of Chinese policy and pressure in Tibet, he even had to take political asylum in Nepal, and that incident became one of the root causes of the Nepal-Tibet-China War of 1788-1792. In this war, Nepali troops looted the *bkra-shis-lhun-po dgon-pa* (tashilunpo monastery) of *shikache*, the second most powerful and the richest monastery in Tibet (Shakabpa 1967: 235,



Kirkpatrick 1975: 175). However, the main cause of this incident was the international rivalries between China, Russia and the British-India. Unfortunately, the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa* was accused of the heavy loss of Tashilhunpo's property and therefore was accordingly imprisoned by the Tibetan Government. Escaping from house-arrest, he, then fled to Nepal via Sikkim together with his fourteen followers and after all took political asylum there in 1788. A government document related to this incident is available (Yogi V.E. 2022: 52-53). In Nepal, the *zhva-dmar-pa* and his assistants submitted a *dharmapatra* (written oath) to the *mahārāja* of Nepal taking oath of faith and commitment. The text of the *dharmapatra* reads 'we no longer support Chinese Lha-sa (Tibetan Government of the Dalai Lama) rather become subjects of your Gorkha Majesty (the king of Nepal)' (Yogi, Ibid).

At that time, the abbot of Tashilhunpo, third Panchen Lama *blo-bzang pal-ldan-ye-se*'s relation with British Indian authorities was very close. In accordance with Governor Warren Hasting's interest, under the leadership of George Bogle, a mission was sent to Tibet. Playing a role of British envoy George Bogle met the third Panchen Lama in Lha-sa in 1772 (Das, 1970: 126). On the other hand, this relation effected Russian and Chinese interest in international political arena. Therefore, the Chinese Emperor invited the Panchen Lama to pay a cordial visit to China. Surprisingly, the lama died during his China visit. The lama's death and the parallel views of neighboring countries towards Tibet flourishes a hypothesis: His death was caused intrigue. A strong evidence in support of this argument is available. For example, immediately after the end of Nepal-Tibet-China War, Abdul Kadir Khan, the resident representative of the British Governor General in Benaras, who arrived Nepal for a strategic study, reported that the lama was served poisonous dishes in the emperor's palace (*Calendar of Persian Correspondence* Vol. VIII, 1788-89, events mentioning the particulars relating to the raja of Nepal and the Emperor of China dated Sept. 15, 1792). Whatever might be the truth, most historians have agreed that, the lama, who was the emperor's spiritual teacher who had established a cordial relationship with the emperor, died of sudden dangerous ailment (Das, 1970: 132-134). Therefore, an apt decision should be ascertained reviewing the matter. At that time, the fifth Dalai Lama of Tibet was still in his infancy, whose regent (*rgyal-tshab-rin-po-che*) *kun-lde-ling-rtag-chag bstang-pa'i mgon-po* was of Chinese influence, whereas the Panchen along with another prominent abbot, the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa*, had come under English

influence, which reveals a strong point that the death had culpability. In order to solve the misunderstandings of Nepal-Tibet relation and war questions, the Panchen Lama followed very crude politics by provoking the Jumli Rājā against Gorkha-Nepal or corresponding with the British Indian Governor General requesting attack over Nepal. (*Calendar of Persian Correspondence* Vol. VIII, 1788-89, notes about the request letter of Tashi Lama of Tibet, dated Jan. 22, 1789). Tashilhunpo's authorities seem to have very secretly corresponded with British Indian authorities without making it known even to Chinese and the *rgyal-tshab-rin-po-che*, the Dalai Lama's regent. They also had requested to the British authorities not to disclose the content of the letter, if the secrecy was to be uncovered later, the letter mentioned that the Panchen himself would have his life endangered (*Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Ibid). So the content of the letter reflects the authorities' intention of ignoring China's assistance to Tibet in Nepal-Tibet-China War. The letter also hints that, if Nepal would be unable to attack Tibet that the Chinese should not have any ground to enter Tibet (*Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Ibid). Such evidence further strengthens the aforesaid point that the death of the third Panchen Lama could have been caused by secret plotting.

On the factual grounds mentioned above the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa*'s fleeing into Nepal was not the primary cause of Tashilhunpo's loss of properties. It was only a secondary cause. It can be assumed that the *zhva-dmar-pa* would not have stolen or deliberately misused someone else's property in cordial and peaceful situation because he himself was one of the incarnate abbots of *yans-pa-can* monastery. The *yangs-pa-can* was under the *karma bka'-rgyud* line and tenth abbot of this monastery, the title holder of *ho-thog-thu* (equivalent to the regent) (Martynov, 1987: 6-20)<sup>7</sup>. Again the religious sect of *zhva-dmar-pa* i.e. *yans-pa-can* monastery and of the Panchen *rin-po-che* of Tashilhunpo, were not of the same line and even *zhva-dmar-pa* had no direct relation and influence on Tashilhunpo in any religious outlook. It has been mentioned above that the *zhva-dmar-pa* was of the *karma-bka'-rgyud* school and Panchen Lama was of the *dge-lugs-pa* school, the so called highly purified and reformed sect developed by the great Tibetan Buddhist scholar *tsong-kha-pa* (Das, 1983: 273). This school was formerly called '*chos-rje dga'-ldan-pal'i lugs* which term has later assumed the form *dge-lugs-pa*. Spiritual seat of the founder of this school, *tsong-kha-pa* in the later transferred in the hand of *rgyal-ba-rin-po-che* i.e. the Dalai Lama. There were vast differences in religious practices and

philosophy between dge-lugs-pa and the other sects of Tibetan Buddhism. There was only one relationship between Tashilhunpo and the *yans-pa-can* in that period. The Pan-chen Lama and the *zhva-dmar-pa* tenth were brothers. The third Panchen *dpal-Idan-ye-se* was elder and the tenth *zhva-dmar chos grub rgya-mcho* was one of the younger brothers. Both being pro-English and after the sudden demise of the third Panchen in China, the leadership attained by the pro-English group of Tashilhunpo monastery was taken by the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa*. Therefore he had to be a traitor to both the Government of China and Tibet. So, having an uncertain future in Tibet he fled to Nepal to save his life. In the process he took his own property as well as a portion of the Tashilhunpo's property. According to the biography of Lama *kah-thog rig-'dzin* the tenth *zhva-dmar rin-po-che* got into a serious conflict with his eldest brother known as *drung-pa ho-thog-thu*. The conflict was related to the property offered by the Emperor of China to the family of the third Panchen Lama after the sudden demise of the Lama in China. The *drung-pa* brother of the *zhva-dmar-pa*, who at that time was the care taker of the *bkva-shis-lhun-po* monastery, captured the property of the Panchen Lama and returned from China along with ten thousand gold coins offered by the emperor. As a younger brother of the family the tenth *zhva-dmar rinpoche* claimed for his share of the property provided by the emperor. The *drung-pa* brother denied to divide the property. Eventually the *zhva-dmar-pa*, with the help of his follower monks from *bkra-shis-thun-po* got success in acquiring his share of the property. But the regent (*rgyal-tshab-rin-po-che*) of the Dalai Lama *kun-bde-gling-rtag-tshag-bstan-pa'i mgon-po* in order to suspend him accused him of misusing the *dgon-pa's* property in conspiring with Chinese will and direction. The *zhva-dmar-pa*, who was accused of taking away of monastic property and later put him in house arrest. Finally he fled to Nepal and took political asylum for he had an opportunity to flee from the house-arrest. According to the common belief of the followers of the *zhva-dmar-pa*, later he died of jaundice in Nepal. A contemporary Nepali report describing the causes and incidents of the Nepal-Tibet-China War 1789-92 prepared under the request of the council of East India Co. also agrees that the tenth *zhva-dmar-rinpoche* had passed away due to the divine will (Regmi 1980:49). Contrary to such evidence some foreign writers and Chinese sources mention that the lama had committed suicide. But this statement seems not other than a gross imagination and far from historical truth. After the Nepal-Tibet-China War, when talks of peaceful agreement began, the Chinese authority imposed a

severe condition over Nepal demanding the properties brought to Nepal by the *zhva-dmar-pa* be returned and that his wife, children, servants, and even his remains such as bones be sent back (Document of Foreign Ministry archives bundle No. 7).<sup>8</sup>

During his asylum in Nepal, the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa chos-grub-rgya-mtsho* (in Sanskrit *srimānaparājita dharmasiddhisāgarasena* = unconquerable ocean of accomplished dharma) had made a numerous religious and cultural services in the field of Buddhism including the donation and renovation of temples and monasteries. It is recorded that he first made an effort for a minor renovation of the *svayāmbhūmahācaitya* in 1790. During this renovation, the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa* restored several disrepaired religious object including the descriptive stone inscription originally inscribed and installed in 1758 (Dhungel 1988: 10, for Tibetan text: 7). The restored full text of the inscription was re-written by the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa* himself and it also includes the additional information related to the contribution made by him in 1790 (Dhungel, Ibid). During the course of renovation of the *svayāmbhūmahācaitya* and its surrounding areas, he is also recorded to have renovated the Harati temple offering a golden pinnacle and gold polish to the temple. It was a quite lavish renovation and the record of the expense incurred by the tenth *zhva-dmar* abbot for this can be seen in a copper-plate inscription of that time (appendix-4 of this article). Likewise, one year later, he also offered a large bell to *svayāmbhūnātha*. This bronze bell weighing 170 *dhārnis* of metal and three lines of inscription in Tibetan was installed in front of the temple known as *anantapura* and it still stands there (appendix-3). Similarly, in 1912, he provided some material and financial assistance to some of the important Buddhist monasteries of Nepal which includes *taksabahal* of Kathmandu particularly for the purpose of lighting lamp at *svayāmbhū* and *khāsā caitya (boudhanātha)* and in front of the *karunāmaya* of *taksabahal* (a letter of reverential praise and greeting offered to the present fourteenth *zhva-dmar-pa* by the Svayāmbhū Community in 1977). The fourteenth *zhva-dmar-pa* has also continued and maintained this old tradition of respecting variance Buddhism in Nepal by the abbots of *yangs-pa-can* monastery (*vaiśāli mahāvihāra*) of Tibet.<sup>9</sup> He even visited Nepal to help in the renovation of the Harati temple, when the Government of Nepal renovated it (Ibid). Presently he is busy founding a monastary and Buddhist cultural center near Nagarjun in Kathmandu.



*The fourteenth Zhva-dmar Rinpoche Chos-Kyi-blo-gros (1952)  
in official hat and dress*

### **Summary and Conclusion**

Nepal, being an important center of Buddhist education played a prominent role in establishing Mahayana Buddhism in Tibet from the very inception of its Buddhist history. The role of Nepali scholars (Buddhist panditas), artists, traders, and the political and cultural contact of the royalties were very important in this regard. Similarly, visits of high-ranking Tibetan lamas and monk pupils as well as pilgrims also played significant role in strengthening the relationship. Even more interesting and important in this regard is the relation of the *zhva-dmar* abbots of *yangs-pa-can* monastery of Tibet with the people and Government of Nepal. So far as the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa's* history is concerned, it is much more significant not only in the field of cultural relations but also for reconstructing the history of political rivalries in the region. The tenth *zhva-dmar-pa's* asylum in Nepal and the third Panchen's demise in Beijing are the extreme examples of the rivalry of super-powers.

### Notes

1. Sylvain Levi translated the name 'od-gzer-go-ca as *amsuvarma* ('od-gzer = *aṃśu* + *go-ca* = *varma*).
2. Levi translated this also for the first time as *bhṛkuṭī* from the original Tibetan name *khro-gner-ma*. After that all historians have followed the same translation.
3. Tibetans had to prepare verities of guide books about the Buddhist religious geography of Nepal. In Tibetan, these books are known as *bal-yul-kyi gnye-skor*.
4. There are four major schools in Tibetan Buddhism namely *rning-ma-pa*, *bka-rgyud-pa*, *sa-skyapa*, and *dge-lugs-pa*.
5. This monastery was also known as *vaisalimahavihara* originally derived from the Sanskrit name of a city of northern India where Buddha had visited several times.
6. Similar type of biographical materials are non in the personal collection of the present fourteenth *zhva-dmar rin-poche*, *chos-kyi-blo-gros*.
7. Some documents mentioning *ho-thog-thu* to the *zhva-dmar* abbots are in the personal collection of the author of this paper. *Ho-thog-thu* is a Mongolian title and is equivalent to the regent of English tradition. Dozens of most valuable documents written in Nepali, Tibetan, Newari, and Chinese have also been discovered in the course of this research.
8. This is mentioned in several unpublished Chinese letters sent to Nepal and copies of which are in the possession of the author of this article. These letters were sent in 1972 (see also bibliography under Government Documents and appendix-5 of this article).
9. When visited Nepal, the *zhva-dmar* abbots were welcomed and given warm hospitality by the *vajrācāryas* of *taksabahal* and made them reside there. It is also believed that the *vajrācāryas* had also requested the government to rehabilitate the tenth *zhva-dmar-pa* as political refugee in Nepal.

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- (a) A letter from Tung-thang-chang-jun, an army general and commander of Chinese Army force assigned in support of Tibet during Nepal-Tibet War.
- (b) An explanatory content of letters related to Nepal-Tibet and Nepal-China Wars: Description given uner the main entry 7 and 9, document nos: 91-96, 106, 113, 115. Among these documents, document no. 115 is even more important for the study of Nepal-Tibet-China relations and the phenomenon related to the Tenth Zhva-dmar-pa Lama. The descriptive

content of this document (No. 115) reads the following Nepali text:

“स्यामराको हाड् धन्मान गरी भारी ७ आइपुग्यो बाँकी दीगर्चाका तासीलिम्बुहरूको जो भयाको चाँडो पठाउनु स्यामराको स्वास्नी पठाइदिएको नुवाकोटबाट भागिछ सो पनि पत्ता लगाउनु भन्या र सरसौगाद गरी अर्जि लेषि चीनमा भारादार पठाईदिनु भन्या १८५० सालमा लाषाबाट टुङ्ग-श्वाङ्-जुङ्गले श्री ५ रणबहादुर साहका हजुरमा लेखेको सकल।”

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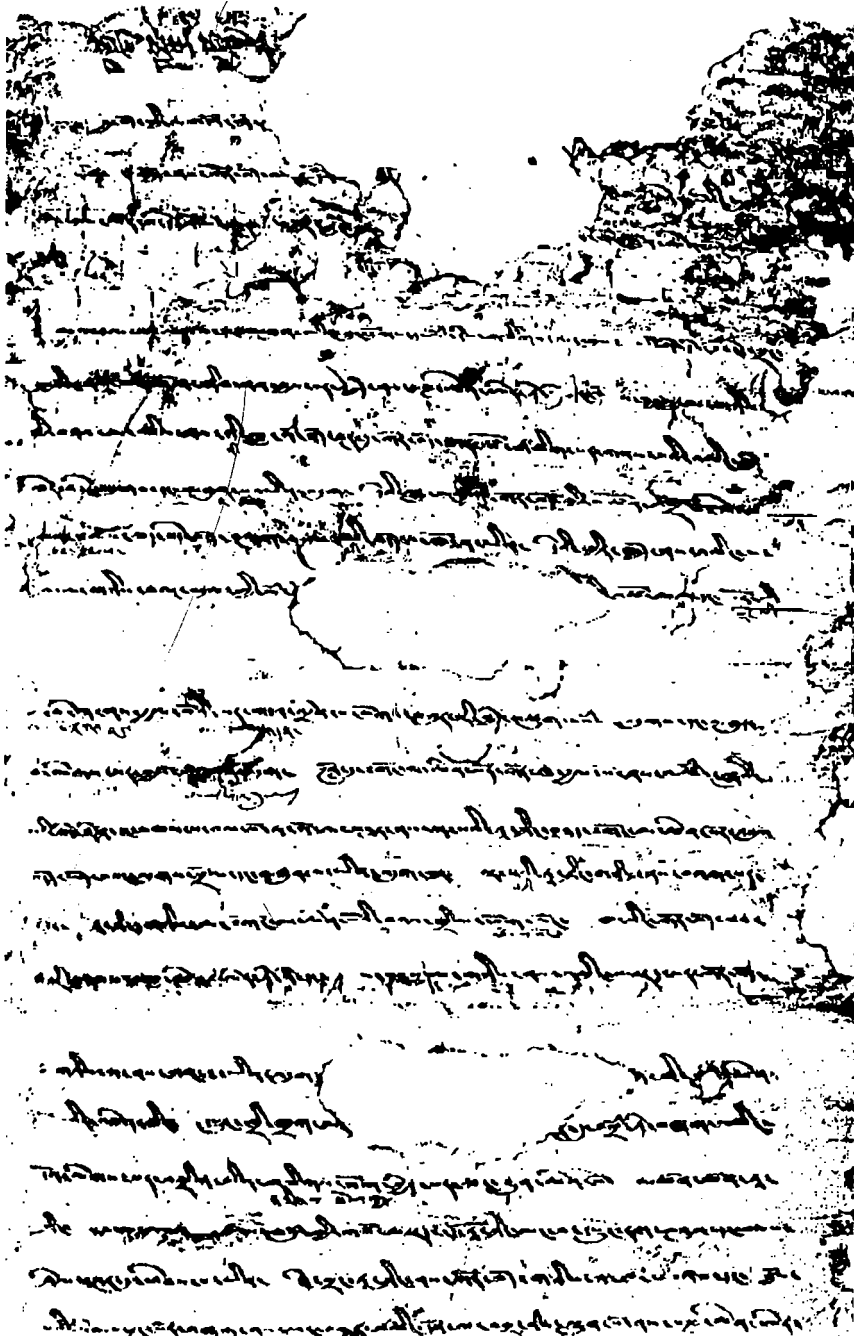
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## APPENDIX 1

Chinese Amban Tang-tha-shing's letter to King Ranabahadur Shaha of Nepal regarding the Nepal-Tibet-China War and the Tenth Zhva-dmar-pa Lama dated chen-lung year 53 = 1789 A.D.



Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a historical document or manuscript.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a historical document or manuscript.

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Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a historical document or manuscript.



Transliteration of the above document

།གཅིག།

- ༡། རྒྱལ་བོ་དཀྱིལ་སྐོར་བྱེད་
- ༢། རྒྱེད་ནས་གོར་བོད་འཁྲིའི་སྐོར་། རོན་.....གོར་ཁ་རྒྱལ་པོའི་སྐྱེ་ཚབ་
- ༣། ལ་ལུལ་ཟེར་བ་དེ་ལེལ་དཀར་དུ་འབྱོར་བྱུང་། རྒྱུང་། .....ནང་སློབ་ཆེན་པོ་གསུམ་
- ༤། ལ་འཕུལ་བ་དེ་ལུགས་དང་མཐུན་མིན་བྱུང་དགོས་དམི་ལེས་གཟིགས་ལ་ལུལ། ཡི་གེ་དེ་དང་དེད་ཀྱང་
- ༥། ཏུ་ཤིང་ནས་བལྟ་ཐོག་ཞིབ་ནན་བྱས་པར་རྒྱེད་ནས་བཅའ་ཆེན་ཨེར་ཉེ་དང་སྐྱེ་བྱེད་མ་གཉིས་
- ༦། གྱི་བཀའ་ལ་ཅིས་ནས་ཉི་མའི་སྐོར་བར་དུ་གོར་བོད་དཀར་ཚོ་གཅིག་པར་གནས་པའི་འཆིང་བྱེད་
- ༧། ཟེར་བ་དེ་ལུགས་དང་མཐུན་བ་ཡིན་འདུག་དེའི་སྐྱེ་ཚབ་གོར་བོད་གྱི་མཚན་འགྲོ་བ་སེམས་
- ༨། ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་བདེ་འདོད་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱུལ་མི་འདོད་བཤེན་ཡིན་དེའི་ཕྱིར་རྒྱེད་ནས་འཆིང་ས་
- ༩། རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་མ་གཉིས་བལ་ལུལ་གྱི་ལམ་.....འཆིང་ཆས་དང་ལྗོ་ལི་
- ༡༠། བ་བསྐྱེག་ནས་རྒྱལ་པོའི་སེར་གདན་འདྲེན་བ་སོག་བཀའ་སློབ་བྱེད་བཅུག་པའི་ལུགས་དང་མཐུན་
- ༡༡། བ་ལེགས་པར་བྱས་པ་ཡིན་འདུག། སློབ་དུ་འགོང་མ་ཆེན་པོར་གོར་ཁ་རྒྱལ་པོ་ནས་མཚམས་ལུའི་
- ༡༢། ཡི་གེ་རྟན་དང་བཅས་བ་བལ་པོ་ཉ་ཀོ་ལ་བསྐྱར་ནས་ལྟ་སའི་ཏུ་ཤིང་བརྒྱུད་འགོང་མ་ཆེན་པོར་འབུལ་
- ༡༣། འདོད་ཡོད་པ་འང་ལུགས་སྲོལ་དང་མཐུན་བ་ཡིན་འདུག་ཀྱང་། ལྟ་སའི་ཏུ་ཤིང་གཉིས་ནས་བཀག་པར་
- ༡༤། རོན། ཏུ་ཤིང་གཉིས་ལ་གོང་མ་ཆེན་པོའི་བཀའ་སློབ་ལོག་སོང་། ཁ་སིང་གོར་ཅོད་ཐབ་
- ༡༥། འཆིང་སྐབས་བཅའ་ཆེན་ཨེར་ཉེ་དང་། ས་སྐྱེ་བྱེད་མ་གཉིས་ནས་འཆིང་མཚན་པར་གོར་ཅོད་



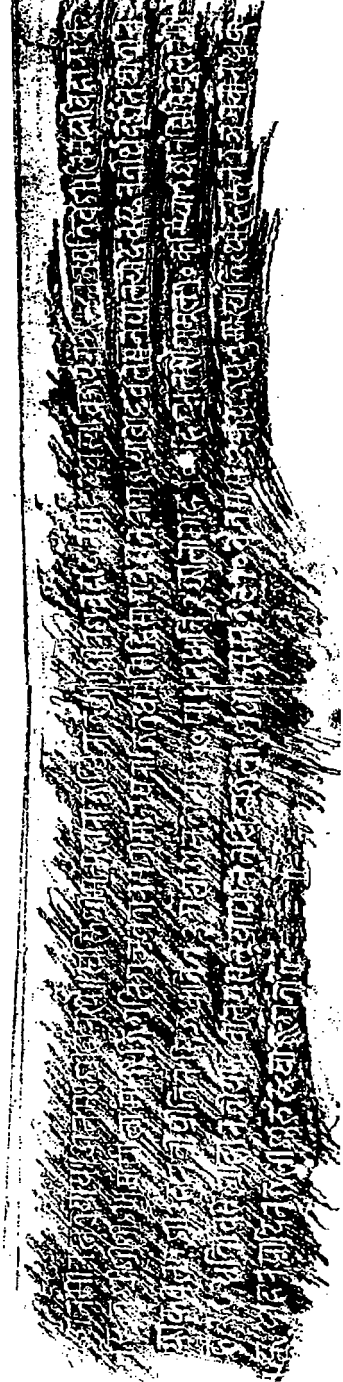




## APPENDIX 4

The Copper-plate Inscription of the Tenth Zhva-dmar-abbot from the Hariti Temple, Svayambhu (N.S. 910)

१. ॐ नमो रत्नत्रयाय॥ ॐ नमः श्री हारत्यै॥  
स्वस्ति श्रीमन्महाराजधिराज श्री श्री श्री  
रणबहादुर साह विजय राज्ये॥ दानपति वैशालि  
महाविहारा व-
२. स्थित श्री श्री श्री श्यामार्पालामाजु जिगुलिगु  
अवतारस श्रीमानपराजित धर्मसिद्धि सागरसेन,  
नामजुया चोड्वेलस नेपालया देवस्थर  
तीर्थदर्शनयात वि-
३. ज्याक वेलस श्री ३ हारती प्रीतिन सिज धार्नि ७३  
शलाओ लु तोला १०० पाधा २ धार्नि २ ज्याला मोह  
१०० हिंवाल सौया मूल १० कर्मियात  
ज्यानंसिसिमुलने मो
४. ह २८ ध्वति विसे, श्री हारतीया देवालयास लुंया  
पलिन चिडा जुलो, श्रेयोस्तु सम्वत् ९१० चैत्रमासे  
शुक्लपक्षे पूर्णमास्यां तिथौ हस्त न(क्ष)त्र अंगवार  
ध्व कु
५. न्हु दीहरपा दिन जुलो शुभं भूयाज्जगता॥ ॥





## APPENDIX 5

Letter from Chinese Army General Tung-thang-chang-jun to King Ranabahadur Shaha of Nepal sent from Dhaibung Kabhre in 1791 (H.M.G. Foreign Ministry Archives S.N. 91)

१. स्वस्ति श्री श्री श्री श्री मंजुश्री अवतार चीनका वादसाहका हुकुम सौ आयाका सब फौजका सर्दार बजीर सहोदर भीमावतार श्री श्री श्री श्री म टुङ्ग्-थवाङ्ग् च्यांजुन् वडा देवानाम् कस्य पत्रम् ....
२. स्वस्ति श्री ५ गोर्षा राजा रणबहादुर साहकेषु- उप्रांत तिमिले पठाईदियाको चिठि हामि च्याङ्ग्-जुन वडाका हजूरमा आइपुग्यो अर्थ बुझिजुं। वांकी ..... को पिछा पर्नाकोबाट विस्तार सवै
३. जो योग्य प्रमानसित लेष्या छौ बुभ्याँ, उप्रांत तिमिले पठाईदियाको रणजीत्पांडे अघि हाम्रा हजूरमा आउंदा तस्कोबाट (त्यसबाट) विस्तार सुनि पिछा पर्न्या काज बढिया, पिछा लिंछु भनि हामिले षातिरजमा
४. दि रणजीतपांडे ताहां काठमाडौं पठायको हो, वांकि रणजीतपांडे पठायको दसदिन देषि वढि गयो, आजसम्म आइपुगेन, आफ्ना मनोग्यले मात्र चिठी पठाउंदा रह्याछौ, वांकि तिम्रो चिठिमा
५. भारदार ठूला पठाउछु, स्यामराको हाड कविला, चाकर, धन्माल, दिगर्चाको धन्माल, केरुंगको साना-ठूला छिन्तापत्र २ त्यो सवै चांडो पठाउ भन्याको आजसम्म आइनन, परंतु म च्यांजुन वडाले सव
६. प्राणि प्रजाकन धर्म करुवा राषि सांचो सहि गरि गन्याको छ, वांकि तिमिहरूलाई पिछा लिन्छु भनि षार्तिज्मादि ... दिक्न अर्को तरह हामि गर्न्या छौन, उप्रांत म च्यांजुन वडाले धोस्त पारि संहार गरुं भन्या
७. सरासर आई गर्न्या थिजुं, आजसम्म फौज थामि श्री ..... ले सन्सार प्राणिलाई रक्षा उद्धार गर्न्या हुन् र पिछा लिनु भनि हामि वस्याको हो, तिमिले हामिले त. विरायाको हो भनि सवै अफुले
८. बुभ्या बुभिकन पिछा पर्न र पिछा पनि लिंछु श्री ..... का हजूरमा विन्ति गरि पत्र पठाइकन तिमिलाई बडो दयासित मानसिरोपाउ हुन्या र भलो सुष आनन्द हुन्या गरि वक्सौला, वांकि भन्या म च्यांजुन वडाले
९. फौज ल्याईकन नहुंदो गर्न्यालाई धोस्त पार्न आयाका हुन्. उप्रांत तिमिले उप्रान्तपरसम्म हामिले नहुंदो केहि गर्न्या छैन भनि रह्या श्री ..... भन्याका पृथ्वीका छत्र जस्ता संसार प्राणिकन करुणा दृष्टि गरि

- १० रक्षा गर्न्या र विरायाको सव माफ गरिबक्सन्याछ. त्यो त साँचो भनि जान्या, अझ बढो मानवक्सिस, हुन्या छ, परन्तु आफु र आफ्नु काका: २ जाहाँ हाम्रा हजुरमा आया अज तस्माथिको वडो ठूलो मान
११. दया गरि बक्सौला, तिमिहरू केही डराउनु पर्दैनन्, वांकि आफु र आफ्ना काका २ आउन नसक्या दहसत्मान्या तिमिहरूले अधि चिठिमा लेष्याको वमोजिम भारदार ठूला पठाइकन श्री ..... कन विनतिपत्र र
- १२ सरसौगात पठाई दर्सन गर्न ज्यान्या र आउन्या हो, तिन आइ. अझ हाम्रा अम्बा २ जाँहा पठाई देउ र पिछा पर्नु भनि लेष्या छौं, त्यो त नहुन्दो कुरा हुन्. वांकि म च्यांजुन काठमाडौं सम्म पावलाग्या हाम्रो
- १३ गति हुन्या र सव प्रकारले भलो हुन्याँ छ भनि लेष्या छौं, वांकि कुरो तिमिहरूले निको गरिकन वनायाकौ हो. तर हाम्रो दस्तुरमा त्यस्तो हुन्या छैनन्, वांकि पिछा लिंछु भनि पार्तिजमा दियाको सव संसार प्राणि: २
१४. उद्धार होला गरुला भनि पिछा दियाको हो. वांकि तिम्रा प्रजा प्राणि सबै दराई दहसब मानि रह्याको छ भन्दा म च्यांजुन वडाको मन्मा करुणा लाग्याको छ उप्रांत हामि त निश्चै गरि अधिका पत्र
१५. वमोजिम एक चित्त गरि पिछा पो पर्नु छ भन्या चाडो ३ गरि आयादेषि फौज लस्कर पनि फिराई दिउंला. वांकि ति बाटोको मात्र होइनन्, अझ कुतिको बाटा र फलाकको वाटो आयाका फौज पनि।
१६. वाटुलै एकैचोट फिराई दिउंला तसर्थ अझ पनि विलंभ गरि गर्नामा पस्या, तिमिलाई भलो गरुंला भनि करुना राष्याको, केहि हुन्या छैन, वांकि फल्याकको वाटो आउन्या फौजले पनि पिछा लि काटि दिया त्यो
१७. षवर सुंदा तस्तै होला भनि दराई आउन सकिउन भनि लेष्या छौं. हामिले त फलाकमा गै वुभ्दा आजसम्म आयो भनि षवर सुनिजुन. वांकि पिछा पर्न आयाको हो त आफ्नो चिठि पत्र हुनाले
१८. सोभै पिछा पर्छु भनि चिवा गर्न गया पछि त कटकको दस्तुर हुन् काटि पनि दिन्छन्. त्यो सबै भुठ हुन परंतु, तिमिले त साँचो गरि पिछा पर्न आयो त हाम्रो फौजको सर्दारहरूले हाम्रा हजुरमा
१९. विन्ति गर्न अवनान्
२०. वांकि विनाहकमा पिछा पो पर्न आयाको भया विवेक नगरि मान्या दस्तुर छैनन्. तसर्थ रणजित पांडे गरी ४ भारा (दार) ले साथल्यायाका मान्छेलाई दयासंग वक्सिस गरि पठायाथ्यौं. हामिले केहि गन्याका छैनन्

२१. बांकि भोटु पाँडे नर्सि २ हाप्रा हजुरमा छ त हामिले वडो दयासंग वक्सीस गरि सुखसित रांष्याको छ, तत्तिको गर्दामा पनि आफु दराइकन क्या अर्थले उप्रांत चिठिमा लेष्या वमोजिम सहि मानि
२२. म च्यां जुन वडाले दया गर्नु हुन्छ आज्ञा मानि गर्छ भन्या चांडो ३ गरि मानिस पठया वढिया हुन्या छ अझ विलिंभ गन्या. आफुलाई आफैले विगार पर्ला.
२३. चिठिमा हामिले हेरि वुफिजुं, ति चिठि वमोजिम् गन्या वढिया हुन्या छ. सो वुफ. इति किमधिकं विज्ञेषु साल भाद्र १ शुद्धि १० रोज मुकाम धैभुंग काभ्रां शुभम्...