


# The Politico-Religious Meanings of the Potala Palace's White and Red Palaces

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## 1. Introduction

he Potala Palace, the winter palace of the Dalai Lamas, stands on dMar po ri (Red Hill) overlooking Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. It takes its name from Mount Potalaka, the abode of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, said to lie in the seas south of India and mentioned in Buddhist scriptures such as the *Avataṃsakasūtra*, and the palace's name derives from the fact that the Dalai Lama who lives there is identified with Avalokiteśvara.

The Potala Palace is known for its magnificent architectural beauty and the enormous stūpas and Buddhist statues studded with precious stones that are enshrined in its rooms, and it was registered as a World Heritage Site in 1994. The central part of the Potala Palace consists of the White Palace, built by the 5th Dalai Lama (1617–82), and the Red Palace, added by his regent Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705), and since then these two palaces have been constantly extended and renovated over the years, resulting in the Potala Palace we see today.

Until now, research on the Potala Palace has been conducted primarily in the areas of architecture and art history. Detailed ground plans and diagrams of its architectural structure are included in the *Xizang Budala gong xiushan gongcheng baogao* 西藏布達拉宮修繕工程報告 (hereafter *Gongcheng*) and *Budala gong* 布達拉宮, while descriptions of its interior and general details of its cultural relics and murals can be found in the *Budala gong mibao* 布達拉宮秘寶 (hereafter *Mibao*) and *Budala gong bihua yuanliu* 布達拉宮壁畫源流 (hereafter *Bihua*). As a result of these prior studies, it has become possible to gain a comprehensive grasp of the Potala Palace's overall structure for the first time.

On the other hand, investigations of the Potala Palace taking a historical approach based on textual sources and dealing with questions such as the historical background against which the palace was built, and the meaning embedded in its structure, have in comparison lagged behind. Accordingly, in the following, basing myself on the autobiography of the 5th Dalai Lama, who built the White Palace, and

the *Palace Inventory* (DGC),<sup>1</sup> a voluminous work by Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho describing the construction of the Red Palace which he himself oversaw, I wish to clarify the historical background against which the White and Red Palaces were built, and the politico-religious significance assigned to them by their respective builders.

## 2. *The Politico-Religious Meanings of the Construction of the White Palace by the 5th Dalai Lama*

The various *gter ma* and *chos 'byung* that appeared one after another from the eleventh century onwards all state that Tibet is a land blessed by the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and that famous kings and monks who figure in Tibet's history were all manifestations of Avalokiteśvara. According to these works, in the remote past Avalokiteśvara appeared on the summit of dMar po ri, blessed the birth of the Tibetan people, and bestowed culture on them. Later, when the Tibetan people had matured to the extent that they were able to accept Buddhism, rays of light were emitted from the hill's summit, and from these rays of light there was born the king Srong btsan sgam po, who unified Tibet. His consorts included the Nepalese princess Bhṛkuṭī (Khri btsun) and the Chinese princess Wencheng 文成, and through them he introduced Indian culture and Chinese culture to Tibet and enabled Buddhism to take root there.

The fact that the palace of this renowned founding king was situated on the summit of dMar po ri is uniformly recorded in prominent sources, including the treasure texts *Ma ṇi bka' 'bum* (MKB) and *Ka khol ma* and the histories *Yar lung jo bo'i chos 'byung*, *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long*, and *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma*.<sup>2</sup>

The history of the Potala Palace as the palace of the Dalai Lamas begins in 1642, when Gūshi Khan of the Khoshuds defeated the Dalai Lama's political foes, unified Central Tibet, and granted it to the Dalai Lama as an offering. The following year, the 5th Dalai Lama's teacher

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<sup>1</sup> In the *Palace Inventory* Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, who was responsible for building the Red Palace, describes the construction site, the motivation for the Red Palace's construction, its structure, the statues and stūpas enshrined in each room, the construction process, the patrons, etc., and this work is the primary source for studying the structure of the Red Palace and its interior. In this article, I have made use primarily of chapter 5, dealing with the palace's structure, and chapter 6, describing the sacred objects and so on enshrined in its various rooms. Present-day works dealing with the Potala Palace such as the *Budala gong shengji zhi* 布達拉宮勝迹志, *rTse po ta la'i gnas bshad*, and *Pho brang po ta la'i lo rgyus phyogs bsgrigs* also use the *Palace Inventory* as their source material.

<sup>2</sup> Yamaguchi (1988: 4–5), basing himself on accounts in the *Tang shu* 唐書, etc., writes that in ancient times Lhasa was a summer campsite, and although there may have been tents, there would not have been any permanent building such as a palace.

Gling smad zhabs drung proposed that a building for worshipping Avalokiteśvara be erected on dMar po ri.<sup>3</sup>

I read the like of the rNying ma pa prophecy and thought about it. Regardless of the truth of that prophecy, if there were a very large and strong fortress joining the two hills lCags po ri and dMar po ri, the two monasteries Se ra and 'Bras spungs would be connected and [the government] would be firm in both the short term and the long term. Furthermore, since [dMar po ri] is a site sacred to the Great Compassionate One (Avalokiteśvara), if a place for meditation on Avalokiteśvara were built [there], it would be good for cleansing the sins of the patron and the refuge. (D5N: 118a4-5)

The “patron and refuge” mentioned at the end of the above quotation refer to Gūshi Khan and bSod nam chos 'phel, who was the Dalai Lama's regent (*sde pa*) at the time.<sup>4</sup> The idea that the government would be firm if the two hills lCags po ri and dMar po ri were connected had its origins in a legend related to Princess Jincheng 金城, a consort of the king Mes ag tshom of ancient Tibet. According to the *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* and other sources, the king's chief wife from the sNa nam clan felt jealous when Jincheng became pregnant and, once the child was born, she took him (the future king Khri srong lde btsan) and raised him as her own son. Overcome with grief, Jincheng severed the link between the two hills and attempted to cut off the blood line of the Tibetan royal family. But later Khri srong lde btsan declared that Princess Jincheng was his mother, and so she lifted her curse (GSM: 244–246; D5Z: 31b2–32a2). It may be noted that on the walls of the antechamber to the White Palace there are depicted Srong btsan sgam po's palace on dMar po ri and Princess Khri btsun's palace on lCags po ri (Iron Hill) linked by an iron-chain bridge (*Bihua*, pp. 41–43).

It is evident from the *Song of the Queen of Spring* (D5Z), a history of Tibet written by the 5th Dalai Lama in 1643, that views of the land of Tibet recorded in past histories provided motives for the construction of the White Palace. According to this work, Princess Wencheng used divination based on the eight hexagrams to determine the characteristics of Tibet's geographical features and declared that the land of Tibet had the shape of a demoness lying on her back, with the lake of O thang corresponding to the blood of her heart (*snying khrag*) and the two hills dMar po ri and lCags po ri corresponding to the bones of her

<sup>3</sup> Ahmad 1970: 140; Ishihama 2001: 93.

<sup>4</sup> Ishihama 2001: 73.

heart, and that the demoness could be subdued by installing a statue of Śākyamuni on the lake of O thang and erecting a palace on dMar po ri.<sup>5</sup> On the basis of this pronouncement, the Nepalese princess built four “border-subduing” (*mtha' 'dul*) temples on the shoulders and groins of the demoness and four “additional subduing” (*yang 'dul*) temples on her elbows and knees, and because the demoness continued to move, a further four “district-subduing” (*ru non*) temples were built on the palms of her hands and the soles of her feet, making a total of twelve temples to prevent the demoness from moving. In addition, the Nepalese princess had the lake of O thang, corresponding to the blood of the demoness’s heart, filled in and erected the temple 'Phrul snang, in which she enshrined a statue of Śākyamuni that she had brought with her from Nepal. This temple built on land reclaimed from the lake of O thang is said to correspond to the present-day Jo bo khang standing in the center of Lhasa.<sup>6</sup>

The demoness who figures in the above tale is said to represent the unruly minds of the Tibetans before they converted to Buddhism, while the construction of temples and a palace on top of her to prevent her from moving is said to show how Buddhism pacified the unruly minds of the Tibetans and brought an end to fighting in Tibet. In other words, the hill dMar po ri is an extremely important location in the spiritual geopolitics of Tibet.

On the day of the ground-breaking ceremony for the White Palace in 1645, a statue of Avalokiteśvara that was said to have associations with Srong btsan sgam po and had for a long time been absent from Lhasa happened to return. This is described as follows in the 5th Dalai Lama’s autobiography:

29th day of the third month [1645].... The statue of the Noble Lokeśvara, who had been the personal deity of the Dharma-king King Srong btsan sgam po and was one of the four kindred statues naturally formed [from a single piece of sandalwood], had from the time of the Dharma-king (Srong btsan sgam po) to the times of Gye re lha pa, the myriarch (*khri dpon*) of Tshal pa, the Phag mo gru pa regents, and bKra shis rab brtan, the king of sKyi shod, resided on Mount Potala.

<sup>5</sup> The biography of Srong btsan sgam po included in the D5Z (24a4-5) is by and large identical to the *rGyal po'i mdzad pa nyi shu rtsa gcig pa* included in the *Ma ni bka' 'bum* (MKB: 382–417).

<sup>6</sup> The statue of Śākyamuni brought from China by Princess Wencheng was moved to various places to evade the Chinese troops who had invaded Tibet, and eventually, during Khri srong lde btsan’s reign, it was installed as the main deity of 'Phrul snang (D5Z: 35a2-3). Meanwhile, the statue of Śākyamuni brought to Tibet by the Nepalese princess became the main deity of the temple Ra mo che, which had been built by Princess Wencheng.

But during the time of the regent g-Yul rgyal ba, after it had been brought to the Brag dkar estate (*gzhis ka*), the omens were unpropitious, and it fell into the hands of the enemy at the fortress (*rdzong gzhi*) at sKyid smad. sDe pa a dpal presented it to Sechen Taiji of the Tümeds as indemnity for his loss in battle.<sup>7</sup> [Sechen] Taiji took it to Kokonor, but because there was no end to fighting there and the Tümeds were scattered, it was taken to sTong skor in Khams. There monasteries and towns were destroyed by an earthquake. In brief, [after Avalokiteśvara moved from Lhasa] all of Tibet became unsettled. These events showed the truth of the prophecy made by the Great Ācārya (Padmasambhava), namely, "If Tibet's singular support is removed to the borders, Central Tibet will fall." Henceforth sensible people prayed, "Will [the statue of] Noble Avalokiteśvara not come to Tibet?" and although it was hoped that this would happen immediately, where was there anyone able to seek out [the statue of Avalokiteśvara]?

But the queen Princess Dalai (Güshi Khan's chief wife), who possessed uncommon energy for a woman, devoted the wonders of skilful means and extraordinary efforts, as a result of which she took [the statue of Avalokiteśvara] from the hands of the ruler of sTong skor and sent the Dharmaking Mañjuśrī to transport it, and it arrived [in Lhasa] at the very time of the ground-breaking ceremony [for the White Palace of the Potala]. Without any effort, the omens were naturally propitious. (D5N: 126a6–b6)

It is evident from this account that the return of the statue of Avalokiteśvara associated with Srong btsan sgam po to its original seat was regarded as an auspicious omen that would put an end to years of fighting. Construction work on the White Palace was promptly started, and it was completed in 1648 (D5N: 126b1–127b1; Ahmad 1970: 140–143).

It may be noted that about fifty years later, during the time of Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, the motive for the construction of the Potala Palace was being explicitly described as suppression of the movements of the demoness.

Again, according to one thesis, "Tibet has the shape of a supine

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<sup>7</sup> In 1578 bSod nams rgya mtsho (later recognized as the 3rd Dalai Lama) went to Kokonor at the invitation of Mongol princes and was given the title of Dalai Lama by Altan Khan of the Tümeds, whereupon Tibetan Buddhism once again flourished in Mongolia. On this occasion, it was Sechen (Hong) Taiji of the Ordos who was the prime mover behind bSod nams rgya mtsho's invitation to Kokonor (Yoshida et al. 1998: 200, 303, 305).

demoness. The lake of O thang at its center is the blood of the demoness's heart, and the two hills of dMar po ri and lCags po ri are the bones of her heart. If the Buddha Śākyamuni were to reside on top of this lake and suppress [the demoness], and if the naturally formed statue of Lokeśvara (Avalokiteśvara) and the statues of five buddhas made by the Dharma-king (Srong btsan sgam po) (*chos rgyal phyag nas ma*) were to reside on top of the bones of her heart, the unpropitious natural features would all disappear, and only good parts would remain." I learnt that many texts of good authority were seeking to convey the one point that it was necessary to build a temple on top of this hill in order to increase the benefits and happiness of Tibet, the land of snow. (DGC: 303)

The 5th Dalai Lama's construction of the White Palace was not only based on the above geopolitical reasons, but also had the aim of showing that he himself was a manifestation of Avalokiteśvara. In 1646 he wrote a biography of the 3rd Dalai Lama, and in 1652 he wrote a biography of the 4th Dalai Lama, and at the start of both of these works he wrote that King Srong btsan sgam po, 'Brom ston (1004–64), the founder of the bKa' gdams pa school, Kun dga' snying po (1092–1158), the founder of the Sa skya school, and others who were at the time known to be manifestations of Avalokiteśvara were his own previous incarnations. These two biographies were printed shortly afterwards in 1652–53 and circulated rapidly (D5N: 156a4–b4). In addition, in 1651, from the 29th day of the eighth month through to the twelfth month, the Dalai Lama visited temples associated with Srong btsan sgam po (D5N: 159a6–171b5) and revived the twelve temples that held down the limbs of the demoness (D5N: 178a5).

The construction of the White Palace may thus be regarded as the first of a series of moves by the 5th Dalai Lama to represent himself as a second coming of King Srong btsan sgam po, and just as he had intended, the reputation of the Dalai Lamas as manifestations of Avalokiteśvara quickly spread throughout Central Asia.

### 3. *The Politico-Religious Significance of the Construction of the Red Palace by the Regent Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho*

In 1679 the 5th Dalai Lama transferred political power to his regent Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho and died in 1683. The regent concealed his death for fifteen years and set about building an enormous reliquary stūpa named "World's Unique Ornament" (*'dzam gling rgyan gcig*), containing the Dalai Lama's remains, and the Red Palace (Pho brang dmar po) for housing it, and these were completed in 1697, when he announced the Dalai Lama's death. Today, that part of the Potala Palace which lies at its center and stands out on account of its red

colour corresponds to this Red Palace. In the following, I shall examine the structure of the Red Palace and the significance of its construction based on the writings of Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, who was responsible for building it.

(1) *The Red Palace Modelled on Mount Potalaka  
and the Kālacakra-maṇḍala*

Prior to the construction of the Red Palace, there had stood a chapel on the summit of dMar po ri in which there was enshrined a statue of Avalokiteśvara associated with the ancient Tibetan king Srong btsan sgam po. When building the Red Palace, Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho left the question of whether to demolish this chapel to an oracle, and because the answer given was that it should not be demolished, it was incorporated into the Red Palace. This is described in the following passage:

We knew that if we built [the Red Palace] so that the core of the temple was set at the center of the hill (dMar po ri), then in the long term there would be no need for a foundation (*'bab zhol*)<sup>8</sup> sitting on the ground, and in the short term we could make the design the way we wanted it. But because the Dharma-king's Cave had been consecrated by the Dharma-king King Srong btsan sgam po himself, and the chapel of Noble Avalokiteśvara was also an old blessed chapel where the Great Lord Lama (5th Dalai Lama), crown jewel of this world and beyond, had done meditation and so on, there was some hesitation as to whether or not it would be appropriate to demolish them [in order to build the new palace]. Accordingly, an empowered painting called *Lha mo gsung byon ma*<sup>9</sup> was hung at the feet of the jewel-like remains of the Lord Lama, and dough-ball divination (*brtag bsgril*)<sup>10</sup> was performed twice. The answer came back that it would be best to leave the ancient part just as it was and not disturb it. Thus, not only was the building site located on the summit of a hill, but we were also unable to demolish the old chapels, and therefore we were unable to realize everything that we wanted. But we left the main part of the north side untouched in

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<sup>8</sup> The meaning of *'bab zhol* is unclear, but it has tentatively been translated as "foundation."

<sup>9</sup> This is the name of a painting of the Dharma-protector dPal ldan lha mo that has been passed down from one Dalai Lama to the next since the time of the 2nd Dalai Lama. The 14th Dalai Lama took it with him from a room in the Nor bu gling ka when he fled to India in 1959.

<sup>10</sup> A method of divination in which several possible answers to a question are written on pieces of paper that are placed inside balls of barley dough; the dough balls are then placed in a bowl and rolled around until one of them falls out, and this dough ball is deemed to contain the correct answer. The 5th Dalai Lama is said to have instructed the regent Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho to administer the affairs of state after his death by means of this form of divination (Ahmad 1970: 44–50).

accordance with the answer [obtained through divination]. (DGC: 303)

The old chapels that escaped demolition because of divination are today thought to correspond to the Dharma-king's Cave on the third floor of the northern side of the Red Palace and the Avalokiteśvara Chapel immediately above it. There is a strong possibility that the buildings referred to by Okuyama Naoji as the "original Red Palace" based on a woodcut print by Johann Grüber, who visited Tibet in the seventeenth century, correspond to this Avalokiteśvara Chapel and Dharma-king's Cave (Okuyama 1989: 101–120).

In Tibet, it is customary to refer to temple buildings as the "support" (*rten*), the Buddhist statues and stūpas enshrined therein as the "supported" (*brten*), and the temple itself as the "maṇḍala of the support and the supported." Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, too, first describes the structure of the Red Palace in accordance with these concepts (DGC: 302–314) and then lists the Buddhist statues and so on that were enshrined in the palace (DGC: 314–354). As will be seen below, he constructed the "support" in imitation of Mount Potalaka, sacred to Avalokiteśvara, and the Kālacakra-maṇḍala.<sup>11</sup>

The thought had occurred to me more than once of creating something wonderful in which for the unprecedented great stūpa called "World's Unique Ornament" and the exterior support, the palace for housing this stūpa, a Chinese-style roof like Mount Potalaka, which had manifested from the light of the wisdom of Noble Padmapāṇi (Avalokiteśvara), would be added, and first the foundations of the palace would be assigned to the seats of the outer deities [of the Body maṇḍala of the Kālacakra-maṇḍala] and the [central] great hall to the seats of the deities of the Speech maṇḍala; on the upper floor shaped like a three-dimensional maṇḍala the chapels and [Dalai Lama's] apartments would be placed as the seats of the deities of the Mind maṇḍala,... with a three-dimensional maṇḍala of the glorious Kālacakra-maṇḍala and the apartments of the Supreme Lord Lama (5th Dalai Lama) in the center as a symbol of the mind's support. But [with the construction site being on] the summit of a hill (dMar po ri) the workload would become extremely onerous, and so [this plan] was put on hold so as not to wear out the people, our subjects. (DGC: 302–303)

As mentioned, Mount Potalaka is the name of a small island in the Southern Ocean described in various sūtras as a site sacred to Avalokiteśvara. The *Kālacakratāntra* (P. no. 4), on the other hand, is a scripture that appeared in the very final stages of late Tantric

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<sup>11</sup> On the structure of the Kālacakra-maṇḍala and the arrangement of the deities, see NMT: 167–170, no. 97; on the underlying ideas, see Tanaka 1994 and bsTan 'dzin rgya mtsho 1995.



Buddhism, and it teaches a correlation between the physical world centered on Mount Sumeru and the inner world of human consciousness, as well as being known as a medical and calendrical text. The sand maṇḍala known as the *Kāyavākcittapariniṣpanna-Kālacakra-maṇḍala* that is created at the time of the Kālacakra initiation ceremony is the largest of all Buddhist maṇḍalas and consists of four concentric maṇḍalas (Body maṇḍala, Speech maṇḍala, Mind maṇḍala, and Wheel of Great Bliss) symbolizing the body, speech, mind, and wisdom of the central deity, Kālacakra. It is to be surmised that the reason Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho chose the Kālacakra-maṇḍala from among many other maṇḍalas when drawing up his plans for the Red Palace was that, as a leading authority on medicine and calendrical science, he himself was familiar with the *Kālacakratantra* and the enormous Kālacakra-maṇḍala would have been suitable as the model for an imposing palace.

Like the Kālacakra-maṇḍala, the Red Palace has a four-tiered structure, and following the colour scheme of the courtyard of the Kālacakra-maṇḍala, in which east is blue, south red, west yellow, and north white,<sup>12</sup> the upper sections of the pillars in the four quarters of the great hall on the first floor of the Red Palace are also painted in these four colours.

The front sides of the pillars, long curves (*gzhu ring*), and beams (*gdung ma*) on the west side and in the center are [painted yellow with] the first precious material, refined gold, and the rafters (*lcam*) are [painted yellow with] yellow lacquer;<sup>13</sup> the front sides of the pillars, long curves, and beams on the north side are [painted white with] the second precious material silver,<sup>14</sup> and the rafters are [painted white with] white mica; the front sides of the pillars, long curves, and beams on the east side are [painted blue with] the fourth precious material “jewel essence” (*ri snying*),<sup>15</sup> and the rafters are all [painted blue with] indigo; and the front sides of the pillars, long curves, and beams on the south side are [painted red with] the third precious material copper, and the

<sup>12</sup> Tanaka: 1994: 45–49.

<sup>13</sup> The Tibetan terms *gzhu*, *gdung ma*, and *lcam* are the names of architectural elements extending from the top of a pillar to the ceiling. For illustrated explanations of the names of architectural elements, see Thubten Legshay Gyatsho 1979 and *Budala gong*, p. 162; for the Chinese equivalents of the elements of Tibetan architecture, see *Budala gong*, pp. 202–212; and for photographs of the upper sections of the pillars painted in the four different colours, see *Mibao*, pp. 54–55.

<sup>14</sup> Tib. *khardzuram*, a transliteration of Sanskrit *kharjuram*, meaning “silver.”

<sup>15</sup> “Jewel essence” (*nor bu'i snying po*) is a eulogistic name for a blue gem (MTK: 444), and because *nor bu* and *rin po che* are synonymous, I take *ri snying* to be an abbreviation of *rin po che'i snying po*.

rafters are all [painted red with] red cinnabar [in accordance with the colours of the four quarters in the Kālacakra-maṇḍala]. (DGC: 303–304)

Avalokiteśvara is a manifestation of the compassion of Amitābha, and both belong to the Lotus family. Since Amitābha is seated in the north in the Kālacakra-maṇḍala (NMT: 168, no. 14), the fact that the Avalokiteśvara Chapel and Dharma-king's Cave are situated on the north side of the Red Palace also accords with maṇḍala theory.

Next, let us examine what was enshrined, or "supported," inside the palace. Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho explains them by dividing them into the Buddha's "body-support," or images and stūpas, the Buddha's "speech-support," or scriptures, and the Buddha's "mind-support," or three-dimensional maṇḍalas. Generally, in Tibet "body-support" refers to images, "speech-support" to scriptures, and "mind-support" to stūpas, but Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho classified stūpas as a "body-support" rather than a "mind-support" and interpreted "mind-support" as three-dimensional maṇḍalas rather than stūpas (DGC: 355–357).<sup>16</sup> The descriptions of the three supports in the *Palace Inventory* are quite lengthy, and so the corresponding section in the more concise *Bai d'u ra ser po'i me long* (GCB) will be quoted here.

As foremost for purifying the deeds [accumulated during his life by the 5th Dalai Lama], the unprecedented offering stūpa "World's Unique Ornament" was made of refined gold.... This is the Dharma-body (*dharma-kāya*). Again, [a statue] made of alloy with the same height as the statue of Śākyamuni [in 'Phrul snang] is the enjoyment-body (*sambhogakāya*). Again, the silver statues of the Great Ācārya Padma-sambhava, Lord Mañjuśrī Dharma-king Tsong kha pa, and the Lord Great Lama (5th Dalai Lama) are the transformation-body (*nirmāṇa-kāya*) among the Dharma-body, enjoyment-body, and transformation-body. These [three] are included in the body-support among the body-support, speech-support, and mind-support.

The speech-support is ... the *bka' 'gyur* (Kangyur: sūtras and Vinaya),... *bstan 'gyur* (Tengyur: treatises),... and the writings of holy ones down to Great Lord Mañjuśrī Tsong kha pa and the Great 5th [Dalai Lama], who sported in monk's robes with a white lotus in his hand.

The mind-support is the unparalleled three-dimensional maṇḍala in the form of 734 deities complete with the body,

<sup>16</sup> The scriptures used as authorities for the measurements of the three supports are explained in detail in the order of the supports of body, speech, and mind in DGC: 314–343, 343–349 & 349–354, while concrete explanations of the three supports are similarly given in DGC: 355–426, 426–445 & 445–449.

speech, and mind of Blessed Kālacakra and the palace of  
Bhaiṣajyaguru and the deities who assemble there.... (GCB:  
451–452)

According to this explanation, Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho subdivided the body-support into the three bodies of the Buddha (*dharmakāya*, *sambhoga-kāya*, and *nirmāṇa-kāya*), and he mentions the stūpa containing the remains of the 5th Dalai Lama as the support of the *dharmakāya*, the main deities of maṇḍalas such as Kālacakra as supports of the *sambhoga-kāya*, and historical saints such as Tsong kha pa and the 5th Dalai Lama as supports of the *nirmāṇa-kāya*. In addition, he cites scriptures such as the Kangyur and Tengyur as supports of speech and three-dimensional maṇḍalas of Kālacakra and Bhaiṣajyaguru as supports of the mind. It may be noted that many examples of the three supports listed in the *Palace Inventory* can be found today in the various rooms of the Red Palace just as they are described in this work.

## (2) Rooms Honoring the 5th Dalai Lama

Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho assigned two functions to the Red Palace, namely, the honoring of the 5th Dalai Lama's achievements and the honoring of his own achievements. First, I wish to consider the rooms that honor the 5th Dalai Lama.

In the center of the first floor of the Red Palace there is a hall called "Perfection of This Life and Beyond in the West" (Nub srid zhi phun tshogs), the largest hall in the Potala Palace, and it is surrounded by four chapels that honor the life of the 5th Dalai Lama. To the west stands the stūpa "World's Unique Ornament" containing the 5th Dalai Lama's remains, to the north stands the Past Lives Chapel honoring past lives of the 5th Dalai Lama, to the east stands the Lamrim Chapel honoring those who had transmitted the exoteric teachings (*lam rim*, or stages on the path to enlightenment) down to the 5th Dalai Lama, and to south stands the Vidyādhara Chapel honoring those who had transmitted Tantric Buddhism (*rNying ma pa*) down to the 5th Dalai Lama (DGC: 305–306). Since this description in the *Palace Inventory* coincides with the current state of this hall and the surrounding chapels, it would appear that the first floor has remained unchanged since when it was built in the seventeenth century.

On the second floor and above, there were "seven chapels" and the Dalai Lama's "dwelling places" or apartments (*bzhugs gnas*).

Above [the first floor] is the Bhaiṣajyaguru Chapel.<sup>17</sup> Because

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<sup>17</sup> sMan gyi bla ma'i pho brang, but commonly known as sMan bla lha khang. In 2017

there was no precedent, here we enshrined a translucent [three-dimensional maṇḍala] representing the immeasurable palace consisting of the wisdom itself [of Bhaiṣajyaguru] produced through the three observations.<sup>18</sup> Then, a pair of chapels for the Dalai Lama's teachers,<sup>19</sup> a Chinese chapel,<sup>20</sup> a pair of chapels for bronze images,<sup>21</sup> and a chapel containing a three-dimensional maṇḍala [of Kālacakra] complete with body, speech, and mind created down to minor details in accordance with commentaries on the *Kālacakra-tantra*, wonderful and produced with perfect materials,<sup>22</sup> seven chapels (*lha khang*) in total [were installed].

In the rooms for the apartments of the Supreme Lord Lama (5th Dalai Lama), crown jewel of this world and beyond, all the pillars were painted with powdered gold, and on the walls [tales of the Dalai Lama's past lives as told in] the *bKa' gdams bu chos* were roughly drawn.<sup>23</sup> ... [The names of the apartments are] *bKa' gdams 'khyil pa*, ... *Ngo mtshar 'khyil pa*, ... *bDe chen 'od gsal khang*, *Kun bzang rjes 'gro khang*, *Sa gsum zil gnon*, *'Dod dgu 'khyil ba*, *Nor rgyas dpal 'byor*, *bDe ldan 'khyil ba*, *Phun tshogs bde legs*, *bKra shis bkod pa*, *Phun tshogs bkod pa*, and *Sa gsum rnam rgyal*. These rooms, large in area and beautiful in appearance, were built in unlimited numbers. (DGC: 307)

According to this passage, the seven chapels were the Bhaiṣajyaguru Chapel, Chinese Chapel, Kālacakra Chapel, Lama Chapel, and Bronzes Chapel, the last two of which consisted of two rooms each, making seven chapels, but in real terms there were five chapels.<sup>24</sup> When one compares the names of the seven chapels and twelve apartments

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it was not open to the public, but according to the *Budala gong* (pp. 248–249) it contains a three-dimensional maṇḍala centered on Bhaiṣajyaguru and various deities, just as it did when it was initially built.

<sup>18</sup> Observations made on the basis of the three valid means of knowledge (*dpyad pa gsum*), i.e., direct cognition, inference, and information from a trustworthy person.

<sup>19</sup> *Yong 'dzin bla ma lha khang*; commonly known as the Lama Chapel (*Bla ma lha khang*). For its layout, see *Budala gong*, pp. 252–253.

<sup>20</sup> *rGya nag lha khang* (*Budala gong*, pp. 250–251).

<sup>21</sup> *Li sku lha khang*; commonly known as *Li ma lha khang*.

<sup>22</sup> Commonly known as the Kālacakra Chapel (*Dus 'khor lha khang*).

<sup>23</sup> See Ishihama 2001: 77–85.

<sup>24</sup> There are several views on how to count the seven chapels. In the *Gongcheng* (pp. 18–19), the Lokeśvara Chapel and Dharma-king's Cave have been added to the above five chapels to make seven chapels, while in the *Budala gong* (p. 5) the Past Lives Chapel, Vidyādhara Chapel, and Lamrim Chapel on the first floor have been added to the above five chapels to make seven chapels. However, when one considers that the Lokeśvara Chapel and Dharma-king's Cave had existed prior to the construction of the Red Palace and that the seven chapels were clearly located on the second floor and above, these two interpretations are problematic.

mentioned in the above passage with the plans of the Potala Palace given in the *Gongcheng* and *Budala gong*, the seven chapels still exist today, but among the twelve apartments that ought to have existed on the third and fourth floors only the three apartments called Kun bzang rjes 'gro khang, bDe ldan 'khyil ba, and Sa gsum rnam rgyal are to be found. Meanwhile, on the fourth floor there are several rooms dedicated to the remains of the 5th Dalai Lama's successors, and therefore it is to be surmised that the predecessors of these rooms were the remaining nine apartments that existed when the Red Palace was initially built.

It should be clear that in their contents the above rooms in the Red Palace were intended to honor the 5th Dalai Lama. First, the great stūpa "World's Unique Ornament" installed on the west side, which was open from the first to fourth floors, contained the 5th Dalai Lama's remains and the three chapels surrounding it on the first-floor honor the past lives of the 5th Dalai Lama and the transmission lineages of the exoteric and esoteric teachings down to the 5th Dalai Lama. The rooms on the second floor and above, which honor the traditions of medical and calendrical science, follow the *Gang+ga'i chu rgyun*, a transcript of the 5th Dalai Lama's lectures and so on,<sup>25</sup> in the arrangement of their deities and the contents of their wall paintings. In addition, on the four walls of the main hall Avalokiteśvara and especially famous figures among previous incarnations of the 5th Dalai Lama are painted on a grand scale, and they are surrounded by various scenes from the 5th Dalai Lama's life together with excerpts from his autobiography (DGC: 312, 404).

In maṇḍalas, the higher and closer to the center a deity is seated, the more noumenal it is, and the lower and further from the center a deity is seated, the more phenomenal it is. When this maṇḍala theory is applied to the Red Palace, Kālacakra, the main deity of the Kālacakra-maṇḍala, ought to be seated in the center of the fourth and highest floor, but the center of the fourth floor is open, and according to Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho the truth of Kālacakra, which can be experienced only by advanced practitioners, is to be found in this empty space (DGC: 305–306).

On the highest floor, that is, on the seats of the most noumenal or essential entities in the Red Palace, there is the Avalokiteśvara Chapel and the apartments of the current Dalai Lama, a manifestation of Avalokiteśvara. The 5th Dalai Lama frequently meditated in the Avaloki-

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<sup>25</sup> The *Gang+ga'i chu rgyun* is found in vols. ka – nga of the 5th Dalai Lama's complete works. The fact that the deities were arranged on the basis of this work is clearly shown with regard to the Bhaiṣajyaguru Chapel in DGC: 395–396 and with regard to the Kālacakra Chapel in DGC: 398–400.

teśvara Chapel and had visions of Avalokiteśvara and Srong btsan sgam po. Considered in this light, it could be said that the overt main deities of the Red Palace as Mount Potalaka are the statue of Avalokiteśvara that had been passed down since ancient times and the current Dalai Lama, revered as a manifestation of Avalokiteśvara.

On the third floor there are various chapels such as the Dharmaking's Cave dedicated to Srong btsan sgam po, a manifestation of Avalokiteśvara who founded Tibet, and the Kālacakra-maṇḍala Chapel, and on the second floor, which is open to the first floor and thus the location of the most phenomenal entities, there are chapels and murals honoring the knowledge and life of the 5th Dalai Lama. It is evident that the tiered structure, with Avalokiteśvara on the fourth floor, his manifestation Srong btsan sgam po on the third floor, and his reincarnation the 5th Dalai Lama on the first and second floors, gives expression in temporal terms to the passage of time from the ancient past to the present day, and in terms of essence to the process whereby from the noumenal (Avalokiteśvara) there emanates the phenomenal, in this case historical figures such as Srong btsan sgam po and the 5th Dalai Lama.

### *(3) Murals and Chapels Honoring Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho*

In this section, I discuss how the corridor on the second floor of the Red Palace honors and legitimizes the achievements of the regent Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho himself, who built the Red Palace.

In the fifteen years during which Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho concealed the 5th Dalai Lama's death and took over the reins of government Tibet's international relations grew progressively worse. In 1686 Galdan Boshugtu Khan of the Dzungars attacked the Khalkhas on the grounds that the 1st Jebtsundamba, an eminent Khalkha monk, had shown disrespect to an emissary of the Dalai Lama, whereupon the Khalkhas sought the protection of the Qing court. The Qing court accepted the Khalkhas' request for protection, whereupon Galdan opened hostilities with the Qing as well, and although the Kangxi 康熙 emperor called on the 5th Dalai Lama to mediate between the two parties, the Dalai Lama (in reality Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho) secretly supported Galdan. In 1697, when Galdan's defeat seemed certain, Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho publicly announced that the 5th Dalai Lama had passed away fifteen years earlier and that the 6th Dalai Lama, whom the regent had himself identified, had come of age, and he summoned the Mongol princes to attend a ceremony to celebrate the consecration of the "World's Unique Ornament." It goes without saying that the Kangxi emperor was incensed by the regent's announcement.

In the same year, Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho sent a book to the Kangxi emperor which described the circumstances of the 5th Dalai Lama's death and the birth of the 6th Dalai Lama.

Again, there is a book.<sup>26</sup> It records the essentials and nonessentials, life and death, will, and so on of the Dalai Lama, but because it is complicated and long and would take many days to have translated, and because it is beyond the ability of the lamas here and is also not important, I will wait for Cangkyia Khutukhtu. I shall send it after [the translation] has been completed. (*Kangxi chao zouzhe* 8: 863–883; Okada 258–267)

In addition, Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho compiled a work about his own past lives showing how the 5th Dalai Lama and himself had since previous lives been in a relationship of father and son or teacher and disciple and that he had been in a position to continue the Dalai Lama's work. These writings by Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho describe the 5th Dalai Lama's death and the events of the subsequent fifteen years and emphasize the fact that the transferral of the reins of government to him by the 5th Dalai Lama had been legitimate. Since the Red Palace was being constructed at the same time as these works were being written, it is to be surmised that it was intended to give concrete expression to their contents in the form of an actual palace. His assertions are prominently reflected especially in the murals along the corridor on the second floor and in three chapels. I next wish to describe these in some detail.

(a) *The Regent's Achievements Depicted on the Walls of the Corridor on the Second Floor*

Today, visitors to the Red Palace head directly from the first floor to the third floor. This is because the first and second floors are open and there is only a corridor on the second floor. But on the walls of this corridor, which tourists pass by, there are depicted scenes from Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's life after the 5th Dalai Lama's death, and these provide valuable historical source material.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> The book mentioned here is presumably Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's *Pad dkar 'dzin pa ngur smrig gar rol lnga pa sdom brtson rgyal po'i tshul 'chang pa drug par 'phos pa'i gtam rna ba'i bcud len yid kyi kun dga' bzhugs* (M. no. 4180). The original title in Manchu reads: *Jai emu ging suduri bi, dalai lama i da dube banjija akU oho delhentuhe babe arara jakade, largin golmin, ubaliyambure de inenggi baibumbime, mini ubai lamasa muterakU, baita inu oyonggo akU, janggiya kUtuaktu be aliyambi. wajiha erinde jai unggiki* (*Kangxi chao zouzhe* 8: 880).

<sup>27</sup> Okuyama refers to these murals as "murals of the story of the Red Palace's

The 5th Dalai Lama and Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho figure prominently in the center of the corridor murals.<sup>28</sup> The 5th Dalai Lama is holding a lotus, showing that he is Avalokiteśvara, and a Dharma-wheel, showing that he is a *cakravartin*, while Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho is holding a sūtra and a sword, showing that he is Mañjuśrī, and a Dharma-wheel, showing that he too is a *cakravartin*.<sup>29</sup> It is to be surmised that this mural emphasizes the fact that Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho possessed the nature of a buddha equivalent to that of the Dalai Lama and seeks to show that he was qualified to be entrusted by the Dalai Lama with the reins of government which combined the religious and the secular (*chos srid*).<sup>30</sup>

On the left-hand side of the hall for viewing the golden stūpa (World's Unique Ornament) above the great hall (Perfection of This World and Beyond), the chief [painter] bsTan 'dzin nor bu sketched ... the Lord Lama, the Buddha of the three ages and the totality of the wisdom, compassion, and power of the omniscient one whose very name one fears to mention (i.e., the 5th Dalai Lama)... As for those surrounding him, to the right [of the Dalai Lama] I (Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho) who has the name Sāra<sup>31</sup> was painted, to whom the Lord Lama entrusted not only orally [but also in reality] all of the authority combining the religious and the secular, who among [a Buddhist scholar's] three tasks of lecturing, debate, and writing was unable to lecture because he was unable to receive the monastic code of discipline on account of the power of karma (and was therefore unable to become a monk), but possessed the wonderful resolve to place emphasis on debate and writing and atone for this. The deputy chief [painter] Rom pa bsod nams rgyal po sketched my present appearance in the form of a fox masquerading as a lion, holding a wheel symbolizing royal authority in my hand, alongside a sūtra, a sword,<sup>32</sup> medicine, the seven treasures of a *cakravartin*, and jewelry, around whom people gather of their own accord from the four directions like bees gathering around a sweet-smelling flower. (DGC: 406)

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construction" (Okuyama 1989: 108; *Bihua*, pp. 103–139).

<sup>28</sup> DGC: 406–407; for photographs, see *Mibao*, pp. 195, 203; *Bihua*, pp. 105–106. See also Okuyama 1989: 109–110.

<sup>29</sup> The Mongol Dalai Khan is depicted in the form of Vajrapāṇi to the lower left of Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, but he does not hold a Dharma-wheel symbolizing political power, nor are there any protective buddhas above his head.

<sup>30</sup> Ishihama 2011: 259–279.

<sup>31</sup> Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's name means literally "Buddha's ocean," and he used Sa ra, deriving from Sanskrit *sāgara* "ocean," to refer to himself.

<sup>32</sup> *gha ndra*, a transliteration of Sanskrit *khaṅga* "sword."



Filling the rest of the walls of the corridor are depictions of the final years of the 5th Dalai Lama, his death and funeral, and events from the time after his death such as the erection of the stūpa for his remains and the construction of the Red Palace. Because the Dalai Lama's death was still being kept secret when the murals were being painted, Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho had the events of the fifteen years after the Dalai Lama's death depicted as if they were his own achievements.<sup>33</sup>

On the surrounding walls of the corridor: In the great hall itself it was not possible to depict the final movements of the Lord Lama performing liberation in the secret realm until he entered the meditation of Kurukullā (Rig byed ma). Further, here (along the corridor of the second floor), too, because the time had not yet come to write the true facts, [instead] the [outer] ritual procedures for the [5th Dalai Lama's] funeral, memorial service, and so on were depicted in line with a policy of claiming to be about that person but in fact being about oneself (i.e., the rituals could not be explicitly described as having been performed for the 5th Dalai Lama, and so were depicted as Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's achievements)... The performance of the funeral of [my] root teacher to whom I am indebted (i.e., the 5th Dalai Lama) and of all the memorial services, starting with those for purifying the karma accumulated while alive, and especially the fine construction of the unprecedented stūpa called "World's Unique Ornament" together with its receptacle and contents, the worshipping of it by monks in grand style, and everything until the stūpa and the palace for housing the stūpa were consecrated, on which occasion a great banquet was held at which the four kinds of offerings were made and monks and laymen of both high and low status all rejoiced, laughed, and were satisfied, were depicted in the form of the story of my life. (DGC: 406–407)

Since the contents of these murals tally with the contents of the aforementioned book that Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho sent to the Kangxi emperor by way of justification for his actions, it is to be surmised that his aim in having these murals painted was, as in the case of the book, to make public what had happened in the fifteen years during which he had concealed the Dalai Lama's death and to assert the legitimacy of his government.

In the scene depicting the ceremony celebrating the completion of the Red Palace, the highlight of the murals, two large thangkas are

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<sup>33</sup> The fact that the murals on the walls of the corridor on the second floor (above the great hall) depict Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's life is clearly indicated in DGC: 312, 406 (quoted below).

shown hanging down from the front of the Potala Palace (*Mibao*, pp. 196–197; *Bihua*, pp. 121–122). Two thangkas were unveiled to commemorate the completion of large-scale repairs to the Potala Palace in 1994, and when one compares them with the corresponding photographs of the murals, one can see that immediately below the central deity Amitābha there is depicted the figure of Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho holding a Dharma-wheel in his capacity as a *cakravartin* and a sūtra and a sword in his capacity as Mañjuśrī (*Mibao*, pp. 24–25, 214–215). The ceremony celebrating the completion of the Red Palace was another opportunity for Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho to strengthen his authority as regent.

(b) *Three Chapels Honoring the Regent's Achievements*

Next, I wish to show that the Bhaiṣajyaguru Chapel on the second floor and the Kālacakra Chapel and Chinese Chapel on the third floor also served to bolster Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's authority. He was known as an authority on medicine and the calendar, having written both the *Baiḍūrya sngon po* (M. nos. 494–495), a commentary on the *rGyud bzhi*, the four basic texts of Tibetan medicine, and the *Baiḍūrya dkar po* (M. nos. 492–493), a work on calendrical science based on the *Kālacakra-tantra*, Chinese *yin-yang* thought, and so on.<sup>34</sup> He was also proud of having brought together the two main schools of Tibetan medicine, the Zur tradition (*zur lugs*) and the Northern tradition (*byang lugs*) (DGC: 397).

Meanwhile, Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho also points out in a roundabout way that the 5th Dalai Lama's knowledge of medicine was not particularly good.

My teacher the Great Fifth [Dalai Lama], the definitive omniscient one, had insight into all objects of knowledge as they are at the level of supreme truth as if they were an emblem myrobalan in the palm of his hand. But to the consciousness of an ordinary person, as is clear in the [5th Dalai Lama's] biography, with regard to this science [of medicine] he recited from memory the three [texts] *Root Tantra*, *Explanatory Tantra*, and *Concluding Tantra* [among the four tantras making up the *rGyud bzhi*] but had only briefly heard the *Explanatory Tantra*, geomancy (*sa bshad*), and the figurative explanation (*rdel 'grems*) [of the *Root Tantra*]<sup>35</sup> and

<sup>34</sup> Ishihama 2001: 265–272.

<sup>35</sup> Elsewhere in roughly the same context (SKB: 368) *sa bshad* is rephrased *bshad pa sa dpyad*, which could be interpreted as *Explanatory Tantra* (*bshad pa*) and geomancy (*sa dpyad*). The word *rdel 'grems* refers to the opening section of the *Root Tantra*, where various fields of medicine are explained by likening them to trees (*rtsa rgyud*

made a pretense of not knowing the arguments. (SKB: 381)

When one takes this into account, it should be assumed that the Bhaiṣajyaguru Chapel, Kālacakra Chapel, and Chinese Chapel in the Red Palace, dedicated to the traditions of medicine and calendrical science, are related to Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho rather than to the 5th Dalai Lama. Next, let us consider the relationship between these three chapels and Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho in a little more detail (DGC: 395–403).

The main object of worship in the Bhaiṣajyaguru Chapel is the Tathāgata Bhaiṣajyaguru, and, as mentioned earlier, various deities associated with medicine and those who have transmitted medical knowledge are arranged around a three-dimensional maṇḍala centered on Bhaiṣajyaguru. The teachings of Bhaiṣajyaguru were first transmitted to the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, then several generations later to Lha lung dpal gyi rdo rje, known for having assassinated the king Glang dar ma, and then about thirty generations later to the 5th Dalai Lama (DGC: 395). Among these transmitters, Mañjuśrī was, as mentioned in the previous section, the bodhisattva of whom Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho was said to be a manifestation, while Lha lung dpal gyi rdo rje was a previous incarnation of Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho.<sup>36</sup> This would suggest that the Bhaiṣajyaguru Chapel was better suited to honoring the achievements of Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho than those of the 5th Dalai Lama.

The same applies to the Kālacakra Chapel dedicated to Kālacakra (DGC: 399). The Kālacakra teachings were taught by the Buddha at the instigation of King Sucandra of Śambhala, and this king's commentary on these teachings corresponds to the current *Kālacakra-tantra* (bsTan 'dzin rgya mtsho 1995: 30–32). Many commentaries on the *Kālacakratantra* were composed in Tibet, and in the dGe lugs pa school that by mKhas grub Nor bzang rgya mtsho is especially famous. King Sucandra and Nor bzang rgya mtsho, who occupy important positions in the transmission of the Kālacakra teachings, were both previous incarnations of Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho.<sup>37</sup>

Lastly, let us consider the Chinese Chapel. In the *Palace Inventory* this chapel is also called the Chapel of Chinese Divination (gTsuḡ lag spor thang) (DGC: 400, 414), and the main object of worship is Mañjuśrī (DGC: 400–401). Transmitters of *yin-yang* thought are depicted on the chapel's walls, with Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho appearing as the last of the transmitters (DGC: 415). These facts show that the

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*rdel 'grem*s).

<sup>36</sup> Ishihama 2001: 263–265, 271, no. 46.

<sup>37</sup> Ishihama 2015: 270, no. 2; 271, no. 63.

Chinese Chapel, too, was meant to honor Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho.

To sum up, these three chapels honoring transmitters of medical and calendrical teachings all indirectly honor Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, who was a manifestation of Mañjuśrī and was known as an authority on medicine and calendrical science.

### *Conclusion*

In the above, I have considered the circumstances surrounding the construction of the White and Red Palaces of the Potala Palace, the residence of the Dalai Lamas, and the intentions of those responsible for building them as reflected in their structure. In the mid-seventeenth century, when Tibet had been unified for the first time in many years with the help of Mongol military forces, on the basis of a legend the 5th Dalai Lama built the White Palace on a site sacred to Avalokiteśvara, the tutelary deity of Tibet, with a view to putting an end to warfare (the movements of a demoness) and ruled over Tibet as Avalokiteśvara. Eventually his renown as a manifestation of Avalokiteśvara spread and his authority solidified, and so when he died his regent Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho concealed his death, started building the Red Palace to house the 5th Dalai Lama's remains, and publicly announced the 5th Dalai Lama's death and the enthronement of the 6th Dalai Lama when the Red Palace was completed.

The Red Palace, built under these political circumstances, became a structure for honoring the achievements of both the 5th Dalai Lama and his regent Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho. The Red Palace represents a maṇḍala, the main deities of which were considered to be Avalokiteśvara in the Avalokiteśvara Chapel and the current Dalai Lama on the top floor, while the lower floors honored and lent authority to the career of the 5th Dalai Lama. Meanwhile, the actions of Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho after the Dalai Lama's death were depicted on the walls of the corridor on the second floor, and his achievements in medicine and calendrical science were honored in three chapels related to medicine and calendrical science. In this case, the aim was presumably to assert that the regent was someone suitable for having been entrusted with the reins of government by the Dalai Lama and that his fifteen-year rule had been legitimate.

Worth noting here is that Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's aim in asserting the legitimacy of his rule was not so much self-protection but rather presenting to the world the 6th Dalai Lama, whom he himself had endorsed, as the legitimate Dalai Lama. The regent's selflessness is corroborated to a certain extent by the fact that no one knew that he possessed supreme authority during the fifteen years when he was wielding power and that when this became known to everyone the 6th

Dalai Lama had already reached the age of enthronement. Perhaps because these measures of his had been effective, in the period immediately after his announcement of the Dalai Lama's death no one openly denounced the regent or the 6th Dalai Lama.

But as it became clear that the 6th Dalai Lama was a libertine who did not observe the precepts, criticism of Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho and the 6th Dalai Lama grew, and eventually in 1705 lHa bzang Khan, the great-grandson of Gūshi Khan, put Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho to death, while the 6th Dalai Lama was dethroned and died in mysterious circumstances. Following Dzungar incursions into Tibet, in 1720 the 7th Dalai Lama ascended the throne in the Potala Palace, and the 6th Dalai Lama who had been installed by lHa bzang Khan was deposed. As a result, the 6th Dalai Lama recognized by Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho came to be recorded in history as a legitimate Dalai Lama.

#### *Abbreviations and References*

- D5N Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Za hor gyi ban de ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i 'di snang 'khrul pa'i rol rtsegs rtogs brjod kyi tshul du bkod pa du ku la'i gos bzang* (n.d.). *The Collected Works of the 5th Dalai Lama*, vol. ca.
- D5Z Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Gangs can yul gyi sa la spyod pa'i mtho ris kyi rgyal blo gtso bor brjod pa'i deb ther rdzogs ldan gzhon nu'i dga' ston dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs*, 113 fols. (1643). *The Collected Works of the 5th Dalai Lama*, vol. dza.
- DGC Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, *mChod sdong 'dzam gling rgyan gcig rten gtsug lag khang dang bcas pa'i dkar chag thar gling rgya mtshor bgrod pa'i gru rdzings byin rlabs kyi bang mdzod* (1692–97) (Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 1990).
- GCB Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, *dPal mnyam med ri bo dga' ldan pa'i bstan pa zhwa ser cod pan 'chang ba'i ring lugs chos thams cad kyi rtsa ba gsal bar byed pa bai d'u ra ser po'i me long*, 419 fols. (1692–98) (Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, 1989).
- GSM bSod nams rgyal mtshan, *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 1981).
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