

LABRANG MONASTERY



A TIBETAN BUDDHIST COMMUNITY ON THE
INNER ASIAN BORDERLANDS, 1709–1958

PAUL KOCOT NIETUPSKI

Labrang Monastery

Studies in Modern Tibetan Culture

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Labrang Monastery: A Tibetan Buddhist Community on the Inner Asian Borderlands, 1709–1958 by Paul Kocot Nietupski

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Maps



Map 1. Amdo. Courtesy of Tsering Wangyal Shawa, Princeton University.



Map 2. Labrang's extended community, ca. 1930.
Courtesy of Tsering Wangyal Shawa, Princeton University.



Map 3. Xiahe County, ca. 1928. Reprinted in Zhang Dingyang 张丁杨. *Labuleng she zhi ji* 拉卜楞设治记, 1928. In *Zhongguo xibei wenxian congshu* 中国西北文献丛书, edited by Zhongguo Xibei Wenxian Congshu Weiyuanhui, 1991.

Preface

Writing a book on a Tibetan Buddhist monastery is complicated; writing a book on Labrang Monastery is even more so.¹ This is because Tibetan religion, society and politics were interrelated and monasteries served as the focal points for religious, social and political institutions. This was true of monasteries and communities in central Tibet, and even more so in Amdo, on the northeast corner of the Tibetan Plateau, in very close proximity to Tibet's historical neighbors, the Mongols, Chinese, Manchus, and Muslims. The result was that these neighbors were factors in Labrang's history, and interfaced with Labrang's religious, social and political cultures. Conflicts and compromises insured the monastery's survival and growth into one of the largest monastic institutions in Tibetan history and home to some of Tibet's most erudite and influential intellectuals.

Unraveling and explaining the religious, social and political history of Labrang is complicated and often not well-recorded or recorded in contradictory ways, so much that the complete story of this relatively late institution would take volumes; this book is an overview. The project began with my first visit to Labrang in 1985, and continued through many subsequent long and short-term visits. It was supported by a Fulbright Research Fellowship, a Grauel Faculty Fellowship and a Summer Research Fellowship from John Carroll University, and not a little personal investment. It benefited from two ASIANetwork/Freeman Foundation Student-Faculty Research Fellowships, in 2002 and 2006. This book builds on my 1999 publication based on the Griebenow Archives (*Labrang: A Tibetan Buddhist Monastery at the Crossroads of Four Civilizations*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1999), on numerous papers presented at national and

international academic conferences, and on several published and forthcoming articles. The latter include “Sino-Tibetan Relations in Eighteenth-Century Labrang,” in *Territory and Identity in Tibet and the Himalayas*, ed. Katia Buffetrille and H. Diemberger. Leiden: Brill, 2002, 121–33; “Labrang Monastery and Wutai Shan,” *Journal of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*, forthcoming; “Nationalism in Labrang, Amdo: Apa Alo/Huang Zhengqing,” in *Studies in the History of Eastern Tibet*. [PIATS 2006: *Proceedings of the Eleventh Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*. Königswinter 2006.], ed. Wim van Spengen & Lama Jabb, Halle: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies GmbH, 2010, 179–208; “Labrang Monastery: Tibetan Buddhism on the Sino-Tibetan Frontier,” *Blackwell Religion Compass* (Vol. 3, May 2008): 513–535; “The ‘Reverend Chinese’ (Rgya-nag-pa tshang) at Labrang Monastery,” in *Buddhism between Tibet and China*, ed. Matthew Kapstein, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2008, 181–213; and “Louis Schram and the Study of Social and Political History,” in *Louis M.J. Schram. The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Frontier*, ed. C. Kevin Stuart, Xining, Qinghai, PRC: Plateau Publications, 2006, 30–36.

The book uses data from primary text sources in Tibetan and Chinese languages and relies on studies and reports in Western, Tibetan, and Chinese languages by missionaries, politicians and scholars. In addition, the project relies on extensive fieldwork, participation in religious and community events, observation and importantly, careful study of a very large number of interviews conducted on site largely in 2002–2003, 2006, and 2009. My contacts with and introductions from the late Apa Alo/Huang Zhengqing in years previous were invaluable for identifying and gaining access to many individuals. In 2002–2003 alone these included a core collection of over seventy lengthy recorded interviews with selected former residents of pre-1958 Labrang, including monastic and lay persons, men and women, former and current monastic and nomad officials, educated and uneducated persons, and common nomads and farmers. All had stories to tell, some more detailed and accurate than others. I visited several key persons numerous times. Over the many years of this project I also interviewed former residents of Labrang now living in India, Nepal, and the United States. The persons interviewed who still live in Amdo are identified in this book by the word “Interview.”²

There is a huge amount of data available in the Tibetan and Chinese sources used for this book. The project does not use primary sources in Manchu or Mongol languages, instead relying on secondary materials for those perspectives. Further, this is an attempt to describe the social and political history of the Labrang institution, obviously a religious establishment. The central role of religion is acknowledged and described, with reference to Buddhist theories, epistemologies, rituals, Tibetan beliefs

and practices; further details are available in the rapidly growing body of secondary literature on Tibetan religion.

Even after so many years of travel to the Labrang region, so much reading and so many interviews, organizing and prioritizing, this project is not an exhaustive representation of all sources even in Tibetan and Chinese languages, or in oral traditions. In addition to bypassing the detailed histories and careers of many important events and persons, there are some matters that remain incomplete and not fully resolved. In all cases however, I have tried to make an educated assessment of the issues at hand. These include for example the problem of describing the offices in all of Labrang's nomadic territories. Authority structures were generically similar throughout, but the ranks and offices in nomad governance were inconsistent and not fully charted in all regions. Further, the actual structures and functions of the Labrang court systems, the Monastic-Lay Union (*tshogs 'du dmar nag*) and the Labrang Central Office (*yiktsang*; Tibetan, *yig tshang*) are not fully explained. Finally, the nature and extent of the relationships between the Labrang estates and their support communities are generally clear, but the specifics are as of this writing unavailable. Many of the small number of still-living informants are reluctant to speak of these matters, and full access to Labrang's archives is still not possible. In spite of these shortcomings, the book is an accurate description of the social and political history of Labrang Monastery and its support communities.

In the course of preparing this book I have relied on the knowledge and generosity of very many individuals, many of whom must go unmentioned. Many of these regrettably anonymous persons shared their personal stories fearlessly and fully. Otherwise, to begin my acknowledgements of individuals, I benefitted a great deal from my contacts with the late Apa Alo and his associates. Amdo Tibetans living in Asia, the USA and Europe were generous and offered the knowledge, encouragement and resources at their disposal. These included the late Alak Tsayi, Labrang Jikmé, Hortsang Jikmé, Alak Takster, and others. My mother, Wendy Kocot Nietupski, my late father Val Nietupski, and Sandar Aung deserve special mention for their ongoing patience, support, and encouragement. For the maps of the Labrang territories, I relied on Tséring Wangyal Shawa, who dealt with my numerous revisions over the years. Many scholars have helped in different ways, some for many years. Larry Epstein read, commented on and supported the project through many of its versions. Elliot Sperling gave unwavering support for very many years. Gene Smith was a generous source of data, encouragement, and reference. Ron Davidson was a constant source of positive encouragement, precise scholarship, and sound advice. Mel Goldstein asked stimulating questions and offered advice for field research. Gray Tuttle

provided clear thinking and solid scholarship on many occasions. Tashi Tséring at Amnye Machen Institute always offered excellent input and valuable resources. Others have done much in many different ways to enable this work. An incomplete list of persons who deserve mention includes Paldor, Yu Dan, David Adams, Losang Shastri, Lauran Hartley, Steven Weinberger, Brenton Sullivan, Pam Mason, Jared Ward, and others. The anonymous reviewers of the book manuscript provided much excellent advice. Even with so much excellent input, the results may nonetheless be flawed, guilty of oversight or otherwise mistaken. I take full responsibility for the errors and encourage readers to explore Labrang's unique culture further.

NOTES

1. The Tibetan word *bla brang*, "labrang," means "inherited estate," and more exactly, the "corporate estate of a reborn Buddhist lama." As below, a labrang is passed from one religious leader to the next, along lines of rebirth, not family lineage. The formal name of the monastery is *dga' ldan bshad sgrub dar rgyas bkra shis gyas su 'khyil ba'i gling*. It is often referred to as *bkra shis 'khyil*, and also simply as *Labrang*. The Mongolian transliteration in this project is adapted from the charts in Christopher P. Atwood, *Mongolian Studies: Journal of the Mongolia Society*, 21 (1998): 110–112. Chinese words are rendered in Pinyin, except where quoted and in common use otherwise. Written Chinese orthography is used in the Bibliography and Appendices. Tibetan words in the body of the text are rendered in phonetics, and in Wylie system in the notes and Bibliography. The phonetic system is a slightly modified version of that in David Germano & Nicolas Tournadre, "Simplified Phonetic Transcription of Standard Tibetan," *The Tibetan & Himalayan Digital Library* (December 12, 2003), <http://www.thdl.org/index.html>. Sanskrit diacritical marks follow the standard system.

2. See Paul Thompson, "The Voice of the Past: Oral History," in *The Oral History Reader*, ed. Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson (London: Routledge, 1998), 26–27; Robert J. Grele, "Movement Without Aim: Methodological and Theoretical Problems in Oral History," in *The Oral History Reader*, ed. Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson (London: Routledge, 1998), 41, 44, 46–48; Alessandro Portelli, "What Makes Oral History Different?," in *The Oral History Reader*, ed. Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson (London: Routledge, 1998), 67; Richard Johnson, Graham Dawson, et al., The Popular Memory Group, "Popular Memory: Theory, Politics, Method," in *The Oral History Reader*, ed. Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson (London: Routledge, 1998), 76–77.

Introduction

Belmang Könchok Gyeltsen (1764–1853), one of Labrang’s many prolific writers, wrote that Labrang Monastery and the surrounding support communities were a “second wonderful Magadha, in the Land of Snows.”¹ Magadha, the northeast Indian homeland of the historical Buddha, has a very long history as a center of Buddhist learning, practice and support for Buddhist institutions. The comparison is a powerful statement, even though there is no record that Belmang ever visited Magadha and even though during Belmang’s lifetime Magadha was hardly a place where Buddhism flourished.

Belmang’s intent was to show us that Buddhist religious, social and political institutions flourished in Amdo in his lifetime. With Belmang’s observation as a starting point, this project describes the operations of several key Amdo religious, social and political institutions. The approximate time frame is from the founding of Labrang Monastery in 1709 to the beginning of Communist control in 1958.² This is a study that values contexts, and proceeds from the perspective that in addition to being an active Tibetan Buddhist community, a second Magadha, it was a borderland community where each local group sought to assert its cultural identity and very often claims to local sovereignty.

BORDER AND FRONTIER CULTURES

Goldstein wrote that “[o]ne of the important factors in assaying the stability of the political system in such traditional cultures as Tibet is examining the border areas where authority based on tradition approached

power based on political resources.”³ Taking this theory broadly, the study of Labrang’s borderland society can shed light on the stability of its political system.

A border can be understood as the limit of state definition, a very sharply defined line, or as a frontier, a place where identities and authority structures are diffused and less well defined.⁴ In the former sense assertions of identity get stronger as one gets closer to the border; the place where “our” territory converts to “their” territory is very clear. In the case of Labrang, because of its size, its pedigree,⁵ and prestige, its sense of sovereignty was amplified by being juxtaposed to different sovereign powers;⁶ the very fact of being located on a border served to develop a powerful sense of unity of self and exclusion of other.⁷

An illustration of frontier interactions at modern Labrang is in the photographs of Apa Alo in traditional Tibetan dress, in Chinese military uniform, and in a three-piece western suit with his wife in a European style dress.⁸ The variations in dress display the fact that Apa Alo sought recognition across the Chinese frontier, and yet he did not relinquish his allegiance to Labrang and its security. His various clothing choices also show that he sought to demonstrate his awareness and acceptance of European-style modernity, crossing the border or frontier between old Tibet and the modern world, a transition then very much in vogue in China. Apa Alo was very cognizant of the necessity of cross-border and cross-cultural interactions and exchanges.

Another example of cross-border awareness is in Apa Alo’s father Gönpö Döndrup and entire extended family adopting the Chinese surname “Huang” and at the same time retaining their Tibetan names, evidently with no coercion to adopt a Chinese surname.⁹ Adopting “Huang” marked Tibetan recognition of and interaction with their close and powerful neighbors across the border. “Huang,” unlike the Tibetan names, was very recognizable to the Chinese, easily remembered, and not insignificantly, provided a label for the Tibetans in their dealings with the Chinese.¹⁰ To this day many local Chinese and most Chinese scholars of Amdo studies know this family by the name “Huang,” while local Tibetans refer to the family members by their Tibetan names. It facilitated cross-border communication, between what they referred to both as close neighbors and as different countries.¹¹

Similarly, the Manchus and Chinese invented strategies for cross border communication and influence, often from a position of strength, sometimes deferential and sometimes not. One Chinese writer opens his Labrang project with a popular description of the evolution of (Chinese) civilization, which “. . . begins with the transformation of barren grasslands into agricultural land. This was always the case when our Xia ancestors changed barbarians into civilized people . . . Labrang is on

the edge of Chinese civilization, and needs to be developed . . ."¹² This writer displays an outsider's bias, and one not conducive to cross-border communication.¹³

Another description of the Sino-Tibetan frontier is in a 1928 document that relates that "Half-Tibetan" areas are (in the Tao River region near Minxian and Lintao in southern Gansu) where Tibetans speak Chinese, live in Chinese-style houses, sometimes intermarry with Chinese, engage in farming, wear Chinese clothes, are under the jurisdiction of *tusis*, and in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties were subject to the policy of replacing local officials with Chinese ones (*gai tu gui liu*). "Close Tibetans" are those full-blooded Tibetans further to the west, up to Labrang, where people engage in both agriculture and animal husbandry, speak Chinese, live in mud-walled houses, and eat a mixed diet. They live near the Tao River, in Lintan and near Choné County, and near Labrang. The "Far Tibetans" are nomads, they do not speak Chinese, they are not influenced by Chinese culture, they do not engage in agriculture, they dress in black clothes and animal skins, live in tents, they do not wear pants, they eat milk and animal products, they do not eat fish or vegetables, and they believe in Buddhism.¹⁴ In these terms, much if not most of the greater Labrang community should be counted as "Far Tibetan."

Yet another source, a travelogue written in the 1930s, reported that Tibetans, Hui, and Han lived closely together in Labrang/Xiahe, and because the Han people had a relatively high level of culture and education they were able to take advantage of conflicts between the local Tibetans and Hui.¹⁵ These reports are useful but they show a limited awareness of Tibetan high cultures and of regional histories.¹⁶

Such reports of cultures across borders are useful but as shown briefly here they are often colored by the writer's own perceptions and perspectives of other cultures. Peoples across cultural, linguistic, and religious borders are often perceived negatively, here from Chinese and Tibetan perspectives. One Tibetan scholar from Labrang has described the Chinese as "barbarians." Years earlier another Tibetan writer described the European and American forces attacking Beijing and China as "barbarians," and yet another Tibetan text reports that "the Chinese emperor himself was deceived by the machinations of the [foreign] barbarians."¹⁷ The Chinese have called other Chinese and others barbarians.¹⁸ At Labrang, it is apparent that prejudice and ethnocentrism were not confined to one ethnic group,¹⁹ and that efforts at cross border dialogue had successes and failures.

In the course of their cross border policies and profiles, the Amdo Tibetans, Mongols, Manchus, Chinese, and Muslims always attempted to promote their respective advantage. Effective cross border dialogue, even if

apparently conciliatory did not mean capitulation or voluntary inclusion into a foreign state. For example, in negotiations with its close neighbors, on China's "inner frontier," all groups exercised a strategy, "whereby the weaker party in civil war on the steppe seeks a Chinese [or other] alliance to destroy his rival."²⁰ The Chinese inner frontier was made up of places that surrounded the coastal Chinese provinces. This inner frontier model of alliances can also describe the policies of the Mongols, Tibetans, and Muslims on their respective borders as much as the Manchus²¹ and the Chinese. Thus, Goldstein's suggestion to assess the stability of political systems by looking at borderlands serves as an effective tool for understanding Labrang.

Labrang grew into one of the largest Buddhist monastic universities in Tibetan history, complete with full academic curricula in arts, philosophy, medicine, ritual, and more, all on the model of a fully developed central Tibetan monastic university. More than a religious enclave, it was a powerful Tibetan institution that managed to negotiate a political balance of power among volatile regional forces. Its level of influence in its extended support community and among its neighbors was far reaching. Given this, Belmang's "uncritical" hyperbole might be forgiven.

The project is a broad description of the social and political history of Labrang Monastery, its key leaders, and its support communities. Labrang's multifaceted culture grew and prospered in a tightly woven web of religious and ethnic influences, political power relations, and assertions of territorial control. Each of the several local ethnic groups had its own priorities, and these are reflected in their own historical sensibilities, social structures, political agendas, and not least in their respective worldviews. The thesis of this project is, however, that the greater Labrang Tibetan community was a cohesive Tibetan Buddhist enclave. At various times Labrang's neighbors attempted to absorb Labrang, but until 1958 these attempts were never fully successful.

ASSUMPTIONS OF AUTHORITY AT LABRANG

Some scholars interviewed for this project argue that Labrang was an extension of a central Tibetan institution, from the center at Lhasa to the Amdo periphery, a monastic university built on a central Tibetan blueprint, complete with fully developed monastic ranks and offices derived from central Tibet. This is true, given especially that through its history, the majority of the monastery's leading religious and political authorities, all Amdo natives, were educated in Lhasa, and some members of its most prominent ruling estates had held high posts in the Lhasa bureaucracy. Labrang's central Tibetan heritage is indisputable.

However, Labrang is also a product of its environment, an ethnically, politically, and ideologically diverse community. In addition to its regional, largely nomadic social structures, and the powerful cross border influences, it thrived in a rich and varied religious environment. While the Lhasa-derived Gelukpa monastery was the most powerful and most prominent religious institution in the Amdo region, the Nyingma and other Tibetan Buddhist orders were well established, Bon religion was practiced, and local worship and rituals outside of any category were widespread. While the present study of the monastery and its institutions show powerful connections and influences from central Tibet, this is only a starting point in the study of the regional religious heritage.

The actual site of the monastery (35°11'50" north latitude, 102°30'36" east longitude) was an Amdo summer pasture, called Tokti Demo Tang, donated by Tibetan nomads from nearby Genkya,²² in the region then known as Khagya tsodruk.²³ The primary sponsor was the Kokenuur Khoshud Mongol Prince Erdeni Jinong Tsewang Tendzin (d. 1735).²⁴ In what was perhaps in part a tactical response to increasing Manchu power, the Mongols sought to ally themselves with the Tibetans by engaging in widespread Tibetan Buddhist monastery building in Mongolia, the Amdo region and elsewhere. Labrang's Mongol donor had close ties to Lhasa and Urga (Ulan Bator) and the Mongols assumed ownership of Labrang.²⁵

In addition to its Tibetan and Mongol heritage, Labrang and its Amdo community are often described as a protectorate, extension, or part of the Qing Dynasty Empire and later Chinese governments, a member of the greater multiethnic motherland, with a unified national identity.²⁶ Indeed, during the peak of Manchu Qing Dynasty power in eighteenth-century central Tibet Labrang was like other places on the Chinese borderlands, vulnerable to the Manchu armies, and willing to negotiate with its powerful neighbors to its own advantage.²⁷ In the eighteenth century, with the ascendancy of Qianlong and increasing Manchu interest in Tibetan Buddhism, the Labrang and Amdo Buddhist lamas were able to negotiate mutually satisfactory political agreements with the Qing court. As time went on, Qing attention was drawn to problems in China, and its ability to effectively police, let alone govern a huge empire, was much diminished.²⁸ With the decline of Qing power, Nationalist and subsequent Communist authorities made assumptions of authority at Labrang, and the Labrang authorities negotiated with them.

Finally, in addition to local Tibetan, Mongol, and Manchu/Chinese claims, local Muslim groups were well established in the Amdo region long before Labrang was founded. Muslims settled in this region as early as the eighth century, and their numbers, particularly in Eastern Turkistan and Qinghai, grew during successive migrations. By the late nine-

teenth century Muslim power was recognized and feared by the Manchu governments. In the late 1800s the Muslim Ma family leaders claimed political and military control of Qinghai and surrounding areas, including Labrang. Labrang's historical territories included some populated by Muslims, and Labrang's twentieth century history includes conflicts, usually with the Xining Muslims, and amicable relations with local Muslims, usually from Linxia/Hezhou and Yatse/Salar.

The list of claims to local authority is long and complicated and a key consideration of the present project—who in fact did control Labrang Monastery and its support communities? Who or what was the legitimate sovereign power, and why? If, as this book argues, the community was under the jurisdiction of Labrang, a Buddhist monastery, how did it function? In these respects, the present study is relevant to monastic, social, and political infrastructures throughout Tibet.

Answers to questions of sovereignty take the present project to the histories of regional empires, to theories of governance and politics, and not least to considerations of actual governance in the Tibetan highlands. What were the criteria for legitimate authority in this region, how was actual authority in this region implemented, and how and to what extent are these issues relevant to the social and political history of Labrang Monastery and its extended estate? The problem is that each answer, taken alone, whether Tibetan, Manchu/Chinese, Mongol, or Muslim, certainly parts of the complex whole, obfuscates the reality of Labrang. Visions of Tibetan Buddhist paradises, romantic memories of Mongol princes and Mongol priority, Manchu-centric and Sinocentric assertions of imperial or state control, and focus on Muslim power and posturing are all relevant to Labrang, but taken alone, each is insufficient to describe the whole.²⁹

SEGMENTED POLITICS

This state of affairs has not escaped the attention of scholars of history and politics. Some have described the Qing dynasty as a “segmentary state” in efforts to describe its loose, intermittent, and inconsistent control over a huge territory. The basic definition, here without the full theoretical and source explanations, is broad enough that it can be at least hypothetically extended to Tibet, with Labrang as one of its segmented territories, and to the kingdoms of the Kokenuur Mongols.

In Amdo and in this part of inner Asia Tibetan, Mongol, Manchu, and Chinese empires were decentralized and their respective effective periods of imperial governance were intermittent; over time they all experienced periods of strength and weakness. One can describe these empires as

a political system with numerous centers, each of which has separate administrative systems, frequently clan-based; power is wielded by a single overlord whose subordinates in the lesser centers recognize his authority through ritual means. . . . [G]overnment functions are individually administered by these centers, with no direct control by the overlord's own administration. Because of their relative autonomy, these subsidiary centers may segment off and form new alliances with related states.³⁰

Indeed, some subsidiary centers "allied themselves with superior powers as a means of self-preservation."³¹ The segmentary political model comes from different contexts but taken strictly as a structural paradigm, and modified to the Tibetan borderland context it can describe both Qing, Tibetan, and Mongol governance and interactions.

Like other so-called segmentary empires, the Qing "established links"³² with different ethnic groups and "disseminated different images of rulership to different subject peoples of their empire."³³ The Qing "image of rulership" that was disseminated to the Labrang Tibetans, who were already immersed in other equally vague images of leadership from central Tibet, was never very effective in terms of law, taxes, ideology, or territorial sovereignty. Crossley remarked that the presence and implementation of Qing ideas and political infrastructures are difficult to trace in Tibetan regions.³⁴

Even though Qing military power was enormous, specific Qing ideologies³⁵ and political structures known in China proper were not implemented in the Labrang community at large. This was in part a matter of segmented political polity and in part due to the fact that the Qing empire was engaged and challenged on several fronts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As a result, Rawski put it, the image of a multi-ethnic Manchu empire "is a twentieth-century Han nationalist interpretation of China's past,"³⁶ and we should not, she wrote, "project China's past in terms of its 1911 borders."³⁷ Central China and the surrounding regions including Amdo were not parts of a cohesive unit, instead they were segmented territories, communities separated from their origins but still under their authority.

More specifically, in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Qing empire was not a "homogenous Chinese element [with] . . . cultural penetration westward and south-westward" nor were Tibet and Xinjiang "practically and theoretically subject to the Chinese central government."³⁸ To the contrary, the Qing emperor had to "include similar powers of other kings within his own kingship" in an encompassing but segmented model that allowed for the function of Labrang's and other social and political infrastructures.

Accordingly, the Labrang Tibetans retained allegiance to central Tibetan authority, and yet some argue that Labrang was unequivocally and

fully part of a cohesive Manchu empire and later the Chinese Republic. To the contrary, Fletcher wrote that “religious affiliations had political significance and it should be remembered that religion in Tibetan eyes was not clearly distinguishable from political allegiances.” And again, “[r]eligious affiliation . . . had underlying political significance, as [for example] with the local chiefs of Amdo and eastern Kham.” Still again, referring specifically to central Tibet, but applicable to Labrang, Fletcher remarked that

[t]he Ch’ing and the Tibetans saw the relationship between the emperor and the Dalai Lama from two very different perspectives. From the Ch’ing point of view, the Dalai Lama was a mighty ecclesiastic and a holy being, but nonetheless the emperor’s protege. From the Tibetan point of view, the emperor was merely the Lama’s secular patron. This meant that in Tibetan eyes the Dalai Lama’s position was superior to that of the Ch’ing emperor.³⁹

Fletcher’s assessment shows that the Qing-Labrang/Tibet relationship was not a simple matter of assimilation into a multi-ethnic Qing empire. Tibet retained its authority structures, and had strong ties to Amdo. Rawski pointed out that the Fifth Dalai Lama “could and sometimes did order Mongol troop movements outside Tibet; he could also make peace between warring Mongol tribes, and his influence over the Mongols surpassed the influence of the Qing court.”⁴⁰

Even when the Qing emperors adopted Tibetan Buddhism, they may have perceived themselves as lords of their realm, segmented or not, but the perception of lordship was shared by others. The claims that “[r]epresentations of the emperor as Mañjuśrī vied with representations of the Dalai Lama as Avalokiteśvara”⁴¹ might have held true in Beijing and in major Manchu establishments, but not in all Tibetan cultural contexts. Fletcher’s comments ring true; the Labrang Tibetans knew of Manchu authority, for them it was the presence of another powerful outsider.⁴²

This begins to describe a peculiar kind of segmented Qing imperial governance that did not require full control and domination. In Hevia’s words, “imperial sovereignty appears to have recognized national difference and interdomainal contention between the participants involved.”⁴³ The aim of Qing policy, though at times strategically imperialist, was not uniformly one of annexation, colonization, or even inclusion of the neighboring territories; it was rather one of alliances with neighbors. Fletcher remarked that “Ch’ing authority was an overlay, far above the Emperor’s subjects in periods of peace, pressing down on them only in times of rebellion.”⁴⁴

Qing polity was intermittent and inconsistent, often disrupted by the actions of its neighbors.⁴⁵ Tibetan authorities of the time “enjoyed an independent authority that posed an obstacle to Qing control of Tibetan and

Mongol affairs"⁴⁶ and the level to which the Manchus "administered"⁴⁷ Labrang's territory was at this point negligible.⁴⁸ Robert Ekvall, an early twentieth century missionary and anthropologist, lived for many years in the Amdo region and wrote that the local territories were owned by the local Tibetans. In his experience, outside claims to authority in the greater Labrang region were simply not operable.⁴⁹

The Labrang writer Belmang Könchok Gyeltsen (1764–1853) and others describe shifting perceptions of regional authority. After putting down Lubsangdanjin's 1723 "rebellion" the Qing asserted control of those parts of Gansu and Qinghai, and that in 1725 and especially by 1774, the region was "collected at the feet of the Emperor [Yongzheng (r. 1722–1735) and Qianlong (r. 1736–1795)]."⁵⁰ Sumpa Khenpo concurs, writing that beginning with the installation of the Xining amban (1725) after Lubsangdanjin's "rebellion" (1723–1724), "[t]he Emperor . . . brought the people of Kokonor under his power and bound the good relationship between the Chinese and Mongols with a golden cord."⁵¹ These sources show that the Manchus had established a solid presence in the Kokenuur region.

However, though the Kokenuur region of Amdo was collected at the feet of the Emperor, Yongzheng and Qianlong were themselves disciples of Gelukpa Tibetan Buddhist lamas. The lamas were said to adorn Yongzheng's crowns (*dbu'i gtsug tu mchod*) and were in a lama-donor relationship (*mchod yon gyi bka' drin*) with Qianlong.⁵² The emperors were paradoxically at the feet of the lamas, including many Labrang lamas. The relative power of the groups in question is clear; in the early eighteenth century the Qing was on the rise and was capable of launching powerful military expeditions. The Mongols were in decline, but still a force to be reckoned with. The Tibetans were in control of local peoples and able to raise militia support and sway local opinion. All groups recognized each others' authority, engaged in diplomacy, in warfare, and built economic links. The result was often an unstable, volatile, shifting, and profitable social and political environment.⁵³

The first chapter of this book is an overview of Amdo (with Map 1), its place, peoples, and historical contexts, necessarily abbreviated, and included to orient readers. The second chapter is an introduction to Labrang Monastery, its six major colleges, the curriculum, its literary heritage, the Ngakpa College, and the community's religious environment. Chapter Three builds on the overview of Amdo and the introduction to the monastery with a detailed study of the social and political divisions in the Labrang and Amdo community. This chapter (with Maps 2 and 3) describes Labrang's social and political structures in detail; these are the people who supported and lived in Labrang's community-at-large. Here we see that local Tibetan nomad and farming groups had established social and political traditions, with functioning legal, economic, political,

and military infrastructures. This chapter shows that monastic authorities recognized these and established offices to interface with local authorities and economies. The importance of this religious ideology should not be underestimated, as it provided a consistent public discourse and rationale for monastic authority throughout the community's history. On the other hand, while intensely religious, this should not be taken to mean that all Labrang Tibetans were educated to the highest standards of Tibetan Buddhist scholarship. This chapter continues with a description of social, political, military, tax and revenue structures, corvée and social hierarchies. Chapter Four continues with a history of Labrang, focusing on the lineage of the primary reborn lamas at Labrang, the Jamyang Zhepas. The sequence of reborn lamas is used to show the important phases in the monastery's and community's development. The fifth chapter goes in more detail (Map 3), focusing on the early twentieth century and the life and times of the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa, his father Gönpö Döndrup, and his brother Apa Alo (Chinese: Huang Zhengqing). Chapter Six, the last chapter, briefly summarizes the forces at play in this often contested and volatile borderland region. It explores the basis for claims of sovereignty based on ethnic homeland, on often conflicting visions of empire, and on conquest.

NOTES

1. Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus nyung ngur brjod pa byis pa 'jug pa'i 'bab stegs (deb ther)*, ed. Gyaltan Gelek Namgyel, vol. 4 of *The Collected Works of dbal-maṅ dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan* (New Delhi: Laxmi Printers, 1974), 554.

2. Charlene Makley shows that 1958 was a watershed date. See Charlene E. Makley, *The Violence of Liberation: Gender and Tibetan Buddhist Revival in Post-Mao China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

3. Melvyn Goldstein, "An Anthropological Study of the Tibetan Political System" (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1968), 138; see Niti Pawakapan, "'Once were Burmese Shans': Reinventing Ethnic Identity in Northwestern Thailand," in *Centering the Margin: Agency and Narrative in Southeast Asian Borderlands*, ed. Alexander Horstmann and Reed L. Wadley (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 28–29.

4. See Epstein, "Introduction," in *Khams Pa Histories: Visions of People, Place and Authority; Proceedings of the Ninth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*, Leiden 2000, ed. Lawrence Epstein (Leiden: Brill Press, 2002), 2. See also Michael Aris, *Lamas, Princes, and Brigands: Joseph Rock's Photographs of the Tibetan Borderlands of China* (New York: China Institute in America, 1992), 13–18. Cf. the definitions of "frontier" in James A. Millward, "New Perspectives on the Qing Frontier," in *Remapping China: Fissures in Historical Terrain*, ed. Gail Hershatter, Emily Honig, Jonathan N. Lipman and Randall Stross (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 114–116.

5. See Guido Sprenger, "Political Periphery, Cosmological Center: The Reproduction of Rmeet Sociocosmic Order and the Laos-Thailand Border," in *Centering the Margin: Agency and Narrative in Southeast Asian Borderlands*, ed. Alexander Horstmann and Reed L. Wadley (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 67–70; Sara Davis, "Premodern Flows in Postmodern China: Globalization and the Sipsongpanna Tais," in *Centering the Margin: Agency and Narrative in Southeast Asian Borderlands*, ed. Alexander Horstmann and Reed L. Wadley (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 87–110; see Alexander Horstmann & Reed L. Wadley, "Introduction: Centering the Margin in Southeast Asia," in *Centering the Margin: Agency and Narrative in Southeast Asian Borderlands*, ed. Alexander Horstmann and Reed L. Wadley (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 1–24, esp. 18; see Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus*, 492.2; also see Ronald M. Davidson, "Hidden Realms and Pure Abodes: Central Asian Buddhism as Frontier Religion in the Literature of India, Nepal and Tibet," *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies*, 4.3 (2002): 153–181.

6. See A.C. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (Chichester: Ellis Horwood, Ltd., 1985), 50, 70, 109.

7. See James L. Hevia, "Sovereignty and Subject: Constituting Relations of Power in Qing Guest Ritual," in *Body, Subject & Power in China*, ed. Angela Zito and Tani E. Barlow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 183–184; cf. Edmund Leach, "The Frontiers of Burma," in *The Essential Edmund Leach: Volume I: Anthropology and Society* (1961), ed. Stephen Hugh-Jones and James Laidlaw (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 225–227; see also Huber, *The Cult of Pure Crystal Mountain*, 9.

8. See the photographs in Paul Nietupski, *Labrang: A Tibetan Buddhist Monastery at the Crossroads of Four Civilizations* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1999). For photographs of Apa Alo and his wife in western clothing see the Griebenow Archives at Tibet House, New York.

9. The practice by Tibetans of adopting Chinese names, along with many other rules for sinicizing Tibetans were promoted by Zhao Erfeng in 1906. See Elliot Sperling, "The Chinese Venture in K'am, 1904–1911 and the Role of Chao Erhfeng," *The Tibet Journal* 1.2 (April–June 1976): 19. For adopting Chinese surnames as an element of state policy in Yunnan, see Myron L. Cohen, "Being Chinese: The Peripheralization of Traditional Identity," in *The Living Tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today*, ed. Tu Wei-ming (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 88–108, esp. 97; see John W. Dardess, "Did the Mongols Matter? Territory, Power, and the Intelligentsia in China from the Northern Song to the Early Ming," in *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History*, ed. Paul Jakov Smith and Richard von Glahn (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 112–128.

10. Huang Zhengqing, *Huang Zhengqing yu wushi jianmuyang* (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, 1989), 3.14. See Dardess, "Did the Mongols Matter?," 115.

11. "Rang dgon 'di ka'i nye phyogs kyi tsa na'i yul gru sogs nas . . ." see 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho. *Zhva ser ring lugs pa skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa rin chen phreng ba*, 2 Vols., Labrang Monastery reprint, ca. 1916. Vol. 1, fol. 289b1–6; 302a2–4; *rgya bod dag gi yul gru rnams*, 307b1; see 278a2–6; see the reference to *rgya bod sog gsum*, fols. 227a6, 236a4; see the reference to the border between China and Tibet, *rgya bod gnyis kyi mtshams*, fol. 184b4, etc.

12. Zhang Dingyang, *Labuleng she zhi ji* (1928), in *Zhongguo xibei wenxian congshu*, ed. Zhongguo Xibei Wenxian Congshu Weiyuanhui, 1991, 4.

13. See Dorothea Heuschert, "Legal Pluralism in the Qing Empire: Manchu Legislation for the Mongols," *The International History Review* 20.2 (June 1998): 320, 320n3; see Wim van Spengen, "Frontier History of Southern Kham: Banditry and War in the Multi-Ethnic Fringe Lands of Chatring, Mili, and Gyethang, 1890–1940," in *Khams Pa Histories: Visions of People, Place and Authority, Proceedings of the Ninth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*, ed. Lawrence Epstein (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 25; see also Bat-Ochir Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society: A Reconstruction of the 'Medieval' History of Mongolia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001), 57–58; see Owen Lattimore, Introduction to *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Frontier I*, by L.M.J. Schram, *Transactions* 44 (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1954), 9–12. See Samuel M. Grupper, "Manchu Patronage and Tibetan Buddhism during the First Half of the Ch'ing Dynasty," *Journal of the Tibet Society* 4 (1984): 47–75. Cf. Frederick Jackson Turner's essay, *The Frontier in American History*, on European westward expansion in North America. See the discussion of Turner in Millward, "New Perspectives on the Qing Frontier," 114–116.

14. See Xiahe Xianzhi, ed. Zhang Qiyun (ca. 1935) (Taipei: Chengwen Publishing Company, Ltd., 1970), 39–42. This title is abbreviated "Xiahe Xianzhi—1970." It was published in 1970 in Taiwan, but the data was collected in the 1920s and 1930s. See Ma Wuji, *Gansu xiahe zangmin diaocha ji* (Guiyang, Guizhou: Wentong Shuju Yinxing, 1947), 6–7.

15. See Gu Jiegang, *Xibei kaocha riji* (ca. 1930), in *Zhongguo xibei wenxian congshu*, ed. Zhongguo Xibei Wenxian Congshu Weiyuanhui (Lanzhou, 1991), 480. For a much more detailed and sensitive account see Zhang Yuwen, *Zhongzu zajude Labuleng* (ca. 1933) in *Zhongguo xibei wenxian congshu*, ed. Zhongguo Xibei Wenxian Congshu Weiyuanhui (Lanzhou, 1991), esp. the comments on 107.

16. A description of the evolution of the modern Chinese discourse on centrality, ethnicity, and barbarity is in Pamela K. Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 246–262. See Lydia H. Liu, *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); compare the one way process described in Pamela K. Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton, "Introduction," in *Empire at the Margins, Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China*, ed. Pamela K. Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 2–3, 6–7.

17. See *kla klo*, Yontan Gyatso, *Dge ldan chos 'byung gser gyi mchod sdong 'bar ba* ("Chos 'byung gser gyi mchod sdong 'bar ba las spyi don deb ther dang po"). Paris: unpublished manuscript, 1994, 691; for the Tibetans, see Dung dkar blo bzang 'phrin las, *Bod kyi chos srid zung 'brel skor bshad pa* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Flying Horse Publishing Company, 2000), 127; for borderlands peoples, see Lattimore, "Introduction," 4a. Further, in 1901, the Tibetan author of the Fourth 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa's biography records the chaos in Beijing and China caused by European and American powers, whom are referred to as "barbarians" (*kla klo*). For the remark that the emperor was deceived by the machinations of the barbarians, see 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug*

gi rtogs pa brjod pa, Vol. 1, fol. 302a2–4. See Liu, *The Clash of Empires*, on the mutual recognition of the Manchus and Europeans as barbarians; see Ingo Schäfer, “The People, People’s Rights, and Rebellion: The Development of Tan Sitong’s Political Thought,” in *Imagining the People: Chinese Intellectuals and the Concept of Citizenship, 1890–1920*, ed. Joshua A. Fogel & Peter G. Zarrow (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 83–86 ff. See Murata Yūjirō, “Dynasty, State and Society: The Case of Modern China,” in *Imagining the People: Chinese Intellectuals and the Concept of Citizenship, 1890–1920*, ed. Joshua A. Fogel & Peter G. Zarrow (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 116–123; see Lydia H. Liu, “Legislating the Universal: The Circulation of International Law in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Tokens of Exchange: The Problem of Translation in Global Circulations*, ed. Lydia H. Liu (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 131–142.

18. Lu Xun, quoted in *The Living Tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today*, ed. Tu Wei-ming (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 31. See Diana Lary, *Warlord Soldiers: Chinese Common Soldiers, 1911–1937* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); see Dardess, “Did the Mongols Matter?,” 128–131.

19. Cf. Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and the Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), x, 16–23. Cf. Mette Halskov Hansen, *Frontier People: Han Settlers in Minority Areas of China* (Vancouver, Canada: University of British Columbia Press, 2005), 122–126; 180–241. See Jonathan Karam Skaff, “Survival in the Frontier Zone: Comparative Perspectives on Identity and Political Allegiance in China’s Inner Asian Borderlands during the Sui-Tang Dynastic Transition (617–630),” *Journal of World History* 15.2 (July 15, 2004): 117–153. See “Introduction,” in *Boundaries in China*, ed. John Hay (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), 1–55; see Robin D.S. Yates, “Body, Space, Time and Bureaucracy: Boundary Creation and Control Mechanisms in Early China,” in *Boundaries in China*, ed. John Hay (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), 56–80.

20. The “inner frontier” was the border of the classical Chinese provinces, basically on the coastline and in the Yellow and Yangtze river valleys. See Thomas J. Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 286; see Stevan Harrell, *Cultural Encounters on China’s Ethnic Frontiers*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 27–36. See Gu Jiegang, *Xibei kaocha riji*, 480; for a discussion of Gu Jiegang and his environment, see James Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism: How the Qing Frontier and its Indigenous Became Chinese* (Palgrave/Macmillan, 2007), 122–145. For the Mongols of Inner Mongolia see Johan Elverskog, *Our Great Qing: The Mongols, Buddhism and the State in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2006), 6–8. Compare Millward, “New Perspectives on the Qing Frontier.”

21. See Jacques Legrand, *L’Administration dans la Domination Sino-Mandchoue en Mongolie Qalq-A: Version Mongolie du Lifan Yuan Zeli* (Paris: Collège de France, Institut des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1976), 25, 44; see Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, 297–302; see White, *The Middle Ground*, x–xi, 50–93. See Lattimore’s descriptions of Mongol “tribal” structures in Lattimore, “Introduction,” 13; see Evelyn Rawski, *The Last Emperors: A Social History of Qing Imperial Institutions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 6–8; see David Seyfort Ruegg, “*mchod yon, yon mchod* and *mchod gnas/yon gnas*: On the Historiography and Semantics of a Tibetan Religio-Social and Religio-Political Concept,” in *Tibetan History and*

Language: Studies Dedicated to Uray Geza on his Seventieth Birthday, ed. Ernst Steinkellner (Wien, Austria, 1991), 441–454, note especially the considerations and bibliography on 448–449, n29.

22. For a brief summary of Genkya's Tibetan heritage see Bkra shis dbyangs can dga' blo, "Dpal bde mchog gi pho brang rgan gya brag dkar la gnas mjal du phyin pa'i mthong snang thor bu," *Bod ljongs zhib 'jug* 4 (1989): 158–163. For a statement of Tibetan donation (*phul*), see Brag dgon pa dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas (1801–1866), *Mdo smad chos 'byung* (*Deb ther rgya mtsho*), *The Political and Religious History of A-mdo* (North-Eastern Region of Tibet) (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, [1865] 1982), 547.20 ff. Over the years I have used several editions of this work, and cite them separately. The first, titled *Mdo smad chos 'byung* (*Deb ther rgya mtsho*), *The Political and Religious History of A-mdo* (North-Eastern Region of Tibet), was published in Lanzhou in 1982, here cited as *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Lanzhou, and with page numbers. Second, published as *Histoire du Bouddhisme dans L'Amdo* (*Deb ther rgya mtsho*) by Yon tan rgya mtsho in Paris in 1972, cited by chapter (*le tshan*) and folio, abbreviated *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Paris. Third, published by Lokesh Chandra in New Delhi in 1975–1977, in the *Śatapiṭaka* series, vol. 226, as the *Ocean Annals of Amdo: Yul mdo smad kyi ljongs su thub bstan rin po che ji ltar dar ba'i tshul gsal bar brjod pa deb ther rgya mtsho*. Fourth, an electronic version of the latter edition available in the Core Text Collection of the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center, via <http://www.tbrc.org>. Fifth, another electronic version by the Asian Classics Input Project.

23. For descriptions of Kha gya tsho drug see Ban de mkhar, "Kha gya mi rgod tsho drug dang dge ldan bstan 'phel gling gi byung ba mdo tsam brjod pa," *Zla zer* 2 (1989): 73–75; and other titles by Ban de mkhar. It was generally the region between modern Repgong and gTsos/Hezuo, in those days claimed by the Mongols and inhabited by Tibetans.

24. For Mongol sponsorship, see Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus*, 538.6–539.

25. For the Mongol understanding and acceptance of Qing power, see Elver-skog, *Our Great Qing*, 6–8, 19, etc. See Pamela Kyle Crossley, "Making Mongols," in *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China*, ed. Pamela K. Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 58–82.

26. Compare the criticism of a similar situation in Indonesia in William Cummings, "Would-be Centers: The Texture of Historical Discourse in Makassar," in *Centering the Margin: Agency and Narrative in Southeast Asian Borderlands*, ed. Alexander Horstmann and Reed L. Wadley (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 54–56.

27. See Pamela K. Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton, "Introduction," in *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China*, ed. Pamela K. Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 2–7.

28. For analysis of the decline of Qing political power in the late nineteenth century, see Samuel Adrian Miles Adshead, *The End of the Chinese Empire: 1894–1924* (Auckland: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1973); S.A.M. Adshead, *Province and Politics in Late Imperial China: Viceregal Government in Szechwan, 1898–1911*

(London: Curzon Press, 1984); So Wai-Chor, "Identity and Integration in the Early 20th Century China: Han Chinese Perception of Tibet" (paper presented at the biennial conference of the Historical Society for Twentieth Century China, Honolulu, Hawai'i, 16–17 June 2008).

29. See L. J. Newby, *The Empire and the Khanate: A Political History of Qing Relations with Khoqand c. 1760–1860* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), x–xii.

30. The full analysis of the theories of segmented politics goes beyond the present project. For relevant discussions and references see Ronald Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 135; Hermann Kulke and Dietmar Rothermund, *A History of India* (London: Routledge, 1990), 52. For a clear summary of the theories, with bibliographies, see Hermann Kulke, *The State in India 1000–1700* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), 1–47, and the following essays in the same volume, esp. Burton Stein, "The Segmentary State: Interim Reflections," in *The State in India 1000–1700*, ed. Hermann Kulke (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), 134–161, esp. 159–161; see also the clearly explained range of modern discourse about political structures in Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, *The Making of Early Medieval India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), especially the summary in 1–37, 186–202; see Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, *Aspects of Rural Settlements and Rural Society in Early Medieval India* (Calcutta: KP Bagchi & Company, 1990). See *Studies on the Tribal System of the Tibetan Nationality (Zangzu Buluo Zhidu Yanjiu)*, ed. Chen Qingying and He Feng (Beijing: Tibetan Studies Publishing House, 1995); cf. Michael Aung-Thwin, *Pagan: The Origins of Modern Burma* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1985), 3, 10–20, 23–24, 71–74, 77.

31. See Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism*, 131–144.

32. Evelyn S. Rawski, "Presidential Address: Reenvisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55.4 (November 1996): 831.

33. Rawski, "Presidential Address: Reenvisioning the Qing," 834.

34. Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, 328–332; for a clear account of Ming policies, see Dardess, "Did the Mongols Matter?," 122–128.

35. Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 197–294.

36. Rawski, "Presidential Address: Reenvisioning the Qing," 842.

37. Rawski, "Presidential Address: Reenvisioning the Qing," 841–842; Peter C. Perdue, "Comparing Empires: Manchu Colonialism," *The International History Review* 20.2 (June 1998): 255.

38. Josef Kolmas, *Tibet and Imperial China: A Survey of Sino-Tibetan Relations up to the End of the Manchu Dynasty in 1912* (Canberra: The Australian National University, 1967), 1, 33; see Map # 1 in Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, xiii; see Tsering Wangdu Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows: A History of Modern Tibet since 1947* (London: Pimlico Press, 1999), 136 ff.

39. See Joseph Fletcher, "Ch'ing Inner Asia c. 1800," in *The Cambridge History of China* 10, ed. Dennis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 105; see also Elliot Sperling, "Tibet's Foreign Relations during the Epoch of the Fifth Dalai Lama," in *Lhasa in the Seventeenth Century: The Capital of the Dalai Lamas*, ed. Françoise Pommaré (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 122.

40. See Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 250.

41. See Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 298.
42. See Gu Jiegang, *Xibei kaocha riji*, 482; lack of regard for Chinese and Hui, 484, 493.
43. The quotations in this paragraph are from Hevia, "Sovereignty and Subject," esp. 183–191. Hans Stubel recorded that in 1936 some local groups in Dzôgé Mema paid taxes and recognized the authority of Chinese-appointed officials in Xiahe. See Hans Stubel, *The Mewu Fantzu: A Tibetan Tribe of Kansu* (New Haven: Hraf Press, 1958), 53–54. Note that Stubel did not speak or read Tibetan; see Chia Ning, "The Li-fan Yuan in the early Ch'ing Dynasty" (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 1992), 276, 363.
44. Fletcher, "Ch'ing Inner Asia c. 1800," 105; see Elliot Sperling, "The Ho Clan of Ho-chou: A Tibetan Family in Service to the Yuan and Ming Dynasties," in *Indo-Sino-Tibetica: Studi in Onore di Luciano Petech*, ed. Paolo Daffina (Studi Orientali IX, 1990), 368; see Luciano Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century: History of the Establishment of Chinese Protectorate in Tibet*, Second, Revised Edition (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), 95–99; on the Xining amban, 259; see L.M.J. Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Frontier*, in *Transactions* 51 (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1961) I, 41–68; Legrand, *L'Administration*, 165–175; Pamela Kyle Crossley, *The Manchus* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 117–122.
45. See Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha* (ca. 1933), in *Zhongguo xibei wenxian congshu*, edited by Zhongguo Xibei Wenxian Congshu Weiyanhui (Lanzhou, 1991), 320–327; cf. Piper Rae Gaubatz, *Beyond the Great Wall: Urban Form and Transformation on the Chinese Frontiers* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 24–26.
46. Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 256; see Sperling, "Tibet's Foreign Relations," 126–128.
47. Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 254.
48. See Yumiko Ishihama, "New Light on the 'Chinese Conquest of Tibet' in 1720 (Based on New Manchu Sources)," in *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the 7th Seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, Graz 1995, I, ed. Helmut Krasser, et al. (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1997), 419–426; see Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shihui diaocha*; see Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society*, 46.
49. See Robert B. Ekvall, *Fields on the Hoof: Nexus of Tibetan Nomadic Pastoralism* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 1983 [1968]), 20, 23, 24–30, 90–97; Geoffrey Samuel, *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993), 92–96; Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *Kun mkhyen 'jam dbyangs bzhad pa sku 'phreng gnyis pa rje 'jigs med dbang po'i rnam thar* (Lanzhou: Gansu Minorities Publishing House, 1990) [*'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*], 141, 246, 262–264; Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *Kun mkhyen 'jam dbyangs bzhad pa sku 'phreng gsum pa'i rnam thar* [*'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*] (Beijing: Chinese Tibetology Publishing House, 1991), 223, 246–247, 260, 284.
50. Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus*, 653–655.
51. Sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor, *Mtsho sngon gyi lo rgyus sogs bkod pa'i tshangs glu gsar snyan zhes bya bzugs so* (Xining: Qinghai People's Publishing House, 1982), 43. English translation in Ho-chin Yang, *The Annals of Kokonor* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969). Sum pa explains the sequence of events leading up

to and after this period, and wrote that Kangxi gave titles and eventually gained influence in Qinghai: . . . *mtsho sngon pa dbang du bsdus te rgya sog 'brel bzang gser thag gis bcings*, in *Sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor*, *Mtsho sngon gyi lo rgyus sogs bkod pa'i tshangs glu gsar snyan zhes bya bzhugs so*, 19; Sum pa himself left Amdo in 1723 and returned only in 1732.

52. Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus*, 653–655.

53. Cf. Leach, “The Frontiers of Burma,” 229–241.

Chapter 1

Amdo: An Overview

Amdo is “in between China, Minyak and Dartsedo” (*rgya mi nyag dar rtse mdo nas chags*).¹

“[Amdo is a] territorially large, inclusive realm, with great distances between population centers, poor communications, and techniques of mobilizing, applying, and administering the manpower of the larger state so imperfectly developed that in fact most social activity, including production, taxation, trade, administration, and war, is carried on within regional divisions of the larger realm.”²

Amdo is in the northeast corner of the Tibetan Plateau (Map 1). It is generally in the headwater regions of the Yellow River (Tibetan, Machu; Chinese, Huang He) and includes Kokenuur (Kokonor; Chinese, Qinghai; Tibetan, Tsho Ngon Po) Lake. Broadly speaking, Amdo is bordered on the west and northwest by the Tibetan Changtang, the Kunlun Mountains, and the inner Asian deserts. China is to the east, and to the south Amdo extends to the upper reaches of the Yangtze River (Tibetan, 'Dri chu), and Tibet's Kham province. Its average elevation is over 14,000 feet, and its sparse population is largely nomadic, centered on livestock production, supplemented increasingly in lower elevations and through history by agriculture. Ethnically, the Labrang region of Amdo is inhabited primarily by Tibetans, but the neighboring regions and valleys that descend from the Tibetan Plateau are home to several ethnic groups, including the Mongols, Monguors, Hui, Salar, Han Chinese, and others.

Politically, in addition to central Tibet's historical influence, to the fact that Amdo is today located across China's Qinghai, Gansu, and Sichuan Provinces, and was included in Gushri khan's Mongol empire, through history Amdo was largely under the control of the Tibetans. The Amdo

territory was the border between Tibet, China, Mongolia, the Minyak/Tangut and other empires, and thus served as a buffer, and often as a perceived first step into Tibet for those latter civilizations. It was located on the east-west trade route, near the Hexi Corridor, and it was above all a homeland and an important component of historical Tibet.

AMDO SOCIETY AND ITS IMPERIAL HERITAGE

Between about 842 and 950 Tibetan Buddhist religious institutions were fragmented in central Tibet, but they remained intact in Amdo. Buddhist monasticism in Amdo continued unbroken in the post-Imperial period, and served as a source for the tenth-century re-emergence of Buddhism in central Tibet. Amdo peoples preserved the vision of a Tibetan king, and remembered the Imperial Period as a model, a “verification of the union of temporal authority and spirituality inherent in the figure of the bodhisattva/king.”³

After the ca. 842 decline of the central Tibetan aristocracy, identification of royal clan membership remained a sign of prestige in Amdo, “a principal driving force”⁴ that continues into the modern era. In Amdo, families often associate themselves with the ancient clans and seek prestige and community recognition in part by sponsorship of monasteries. Many prominent Labrang lamas were likewise identified with the early Imperial clans.

While the ancient clan pedigrees remained a source of prestige in Amdo, inclusion in the Amdo upper class was however not always restricted to specific clans. Newly successful nomad chiefs or merchants acquired wealth and commodities sufficient to sponsor a monastery, thereby giving them prestige, proximity to religious power, and recognition in and outside of the community. In Amdo, wealth shifted so that untitled, usually nomadic estate lords came to hold considerable prestige and power. Some previously untitled leaders claimed roots to ancient Imperial clans, by marriage or proximity. One result of the expanding wealthy class was that newly acquired prestige and power brought with it social responsibility to sponsor religion. As their predecessors had, new estate lords accrued merit, legitimized their rule, and enjoyed the reciprocal endorsement of the religious professionals. Thus, the wealthy classes in Amdo consisted of both descendents of Tibetan Imperial clans and those who managed to acquire wealth and prestige.⁵

Eventually, in fourteenth century Amdo as in central Tibet, the unity of religious and temporal authority was embodied in what were believed to be reborn bodhisattvas. In the Gelukpa system they were also most often monks, who along with their predecessors’ enlightened minds inherited

the assets of their estates (*labrang*). As monastic estates grew in wealth and power over generations, monks came to replace lay lords. In Amdo, the power and prestige of the ancient aristocratic and later lords were very often displaced by the monastic estates and their designated officers.

The power and prestige of monastic estate owners was based on the idea that an enlightened being, a bodhisattva, took birth and assumed lordship of Amdo communities voluntarily and out of his or her compassion. This belief became widespread in Amdo and served to protect and often build community-sponsored institutions over generations. The mechanism was crucial to Labrang Monastery's growth and development; the monastery's extensive holdings were in the hands of reborn monk/bodhisattvas.⁶ This type of inheritance was of enormous importance at Labrang.

A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF AMDO'S HISTORY

After the end of the Imperial Period (618–842), while central Tibet was in turmoil (ca. 842–950) and Buddhism in decline, the unity of Buddhist monasticism and lay sponsorship survived in Amdo in places like Liangzhou, greater Tsongkha, and elsewhere. Again, this means that even in the face of the collapse of the empire in central Tibet and weakening in the greater Amdo region, at Dunhuang in 848, for example, Buddhist monasteries and their lay support structures remained intact.⁷ One should note too that in those years the Chinese Tang Dynasty (618–907) was also weakening, and was finally replaced by the emergence of the Song Dynasty, in 960, later consolidated in 979 (Northern Song 960–1126; Southern Song 1127–1276). Song power was however negotiated with the nearby Tanguts⁸ just north of the Tsongkha and Kokenuur region, and the Khitans (Liao Dynasty)⁹ to China's northeast. The Tibetan presence in the Liangzhou and Tsongkha Amdo area was strong; in 998 and following there were some 128,000 Tibetans in Liangzhou, supported by a thriving trade in horses.¹⁰ In those years Amdo Buddhist monks played significant roles in contacts with the Song court, in both religious and political functions.

For their part, Song Dynasty political and military leaders at times sought to annex Amdo territories using both diplomacy and military conquest. Their motives were to expand the empire, and also to use the sometimes weakened Amdo Tibetans, whether assimilated peacefully¹¹ or by conquest, as a buffer against the Tanguts. They had some successes in Amdo, particularly in the Kokenuur/Qinghai region (Hehuang), but they ultimately failed in greater Amdo.¹² Paul Jakov Smith mentions Song borderlands "Great Game"-type negotiation strategies, in later years referred

to, among others, as “inner frontier” diplomacy, using both diplomatic and military tactics. Smith explains that “the key to co-opting the Hehuang [Amdo] Tibetans was not to use force of arms, but rather to dole out lavish enticement and rewards,” and “high-sounding titles and generous emoulements,” tactics that were used extensively in later centuries during Labrang’s growth and development.¹³

Song policy with the Amdo Tibetans was mirrored in Chinese and Manchu administrations in later years. Granting the Amdo Tibetans titles and posts, even if of little substance, would, in the Song low-level bureaucrat Wang Shao’s (1030–1081) view, “so familiarize them with Han ways that their own customs would converge with those of the Han”¹⁴ and thus serve as Han allies against the Tanguts. The wisdom and success of this was however questioned even in Song times, when it was argued that such Tibetans would not adopt Han ways fully. When diplomacy and enticements did not work, some Song field officers resorted to violence.¹⁵ This signifies one extreme of Song tactics; other authorities sought alliances on these borderlands.¹⁶

THE MONGOLS

The Song, Tanguts, and the Tibetans were no match for the Mongols, the next major power in Amdo, whose descendants played pivotal roles in the Labrang community. Important events in post-Song Amdo history were the contacts between the Sakyas and the then Amdo-centered Mongols (Yuan Dynasty, 1271–1368), notably the relationships between Sakya Pendita (1182–1251) and the Mongol ruler Godan, and between Chögyel Pakpa (1235–1280) and Kubilai Khan (1215–1294). Genghis Khan died in 1227, and one of his successors, Prince Godan, became interested in Tibetan Buddhism and summoned Sakya Pendita to Amdo in 1244. Many contemporary Amdo Tibetans can relate how the Sakya lama travelled to the Mongol capital in Liangzhou, Amdo, and passed away there in 1251. The official and uncontested Mongol political support for the Sakyas in Amdo attests to the ongoing presence of Tibetan Buddhism in Amdo, and to the interface of religion and politics.

Mongol control of Tibet was consolidated in 1252, and the Sakya hegemony continued through the Yuan Dynasty until 1354. At that point the Mongol emperor Toghon Temur named the enterprising Pakmodrupa leader Tai Situ Jangchup Gyeltsen (1302–1364) the ruler of Tibet. Thus, while the Sakya-Mongol relationship is perhaps the best known, other Tibetan Buddhist orders, among them the Kagyü, Pakmodrupa, and later the Gelukpa, had similar relationships with other Mongol leaders based in Amdo and inner Asia.¹⁷

During the height of the Mongol empire Amdo, and everyone else in the region, was subject to the power of the Mongols; the Amdo Tibetans enjoyed prestige and the protection of the Mongol court. The importance of the regional Mongols was thus a crucial factor in Amdo's, and later Labrang's history. The late fourteenth century fall of the Yuan Dynasty and ascendance of the Ming Dynasty was marked both by an efflorescence of Tibetan Buddhism and by political fragmentation between the different Mongol groups, who as noted often supported different groups of Tibetan Buddhists. Mongol history fragmented into what is best understood as Mongol histories that sometimes overlapped, sometimes at odds or in alliances with one another.¹⁸ As a result, in part because of conflicting patterns of sponsorship by the Mongols, politics in central Tibet were fragmented and religious developments diverse. Meanwhile, the repeated Ming attempts to conquer Mongolia proper and the inner Asian Mongols were unsuccessful. As a result Amdo, while influenced by circumstances in central Tibet and by groups of resident Mongols, remained relatively stable in the post-Yuan Ming Dynasty period.¹⁹

Mongol control of inner Asia continued through the Ming (1368–1644), but in China, Mongol power was replaced by the Han Chinese Ming emperors. Along with the persistence of Buddhist institutions in Amdo and Tibet, and of pockets of Mongol power, relationships between Tibet and central authorities in China evolved and strengthened. Briefly, though the Ming Dynasty did not have as much authority in Tibet as the Mongol Yuan and was not involved in Tibetan affairs to the extent of the Mongols, the Ming promoted trade, often via Amdo, and offered Tibetan Buddhist religious institutions lavish support.²⁰ One key difference between the Yuan and Ming was that unlike the Mongols the Ming authorities were largely committed to the promotion of historical Han Chinese culture. The Ming offered significant support for Tibetan Buddhism, but there was much rhetoric against non-Chinese ethnic minorities, reminiscent of the Song. Dardess has described Ming imperial and national efforts to re-define their identities in post-Yuan China as the re-assertion of traditional Chinese values and institutions, at the same time as assuming control of territories previously assimilated by the Mongol Yuan.²¹

The Ming vision was however never fully realized in Tibet. In the absence of strong internal cohesion and weak outside influence, central Tibet remained fragmented politically, notably with sponsorship by several different Mongol groups. The Mongols and the Ming Chinese engaged in many battles, but neither was able to prevail. The Amdo region was located in between Mongol and Ming power centers, and enjoyed sponsorship from both sides, but Amdo never relinquished its commitments to the central Tibetan monasteries.

Mongol fortunes continued to evolve. In 1577 the Mongol Tumed prince of the Western Group (Right Wing), Altan Khan (1507–1582)²² consolidated his rule in the Tibetan Amdo region. In 1578 he invited Sönam Gyatso (1543–1588), who with his two predecessors were eventually titled “Dalai Lama” by the Mongols, to visit his camp in Amdo, at Kokenuur, and at the new Mongol capital at Hohhot. Under Sönam Gyatso’s Gelukpa guidance Altan Khan, who had united the regional Mongol groups, soon converted to Gelukpa Tibetan Buddhism, a significant event in Amdo Buddhist heritage. Sönam Gyatso and his successors cultivated their relationship with the Mongols, stimulating huge conversions and the construction of several major monasteries. Altan’s successor (Senge Dureng) and Sönam Gyatso, the Third Dalai Lama are credited with founding Kumbum Monastery near Xining in 1588; Altan’s grandson Yonten Gyatso was named the Fourth Dalai Lama. As usual in regional religious events, there were likely political motives—or inherent associations—for Altan’s endorsement of the Gelukpas, perhaps stimulated in part by the Karmapa heritage then established in the Chinese Ming court.

Amdo was a key Mongol and Gelukpa center of power in the late 1500s and early 1600s. The most important Mongol leader in Amdo and central Tibet in those years was Gushri Khan (1582–1655), leader of the Khoshud subgroup of the Oirat Mongols, who had overcome the Khalkha descendants of Altan Khan. In 1638 Gushri and his followers migrated from north of the Tianshan Mountains to the Kokenuur region, “occupying the area by military force, claiming ‘ownership’ and the right to pass it on to his descendants.”²³ Gushri’s sons and later his grandsons and great grandsons led the strongest groups of Mongols in the Kokenuur region. His grandson Mergen Taiji in particular is frequently mentioned as a visitor and donor to Labrang.

Meanwhile, politics in central Tibet were tense, with deep divisions between the Karmapas in Tsang, western Tibet, their eastern Tibetan allies, and the Gelukpas in Lhasa. Among the controversies was the authentication of the Fifth Dalai Lama, and conflicts between the other candidates’ respective Mongol sponsors. Gushri Khan, then still based in the Ili region, was called on by Sönam Raptan (later in office as Tibetan Regent, *sde srid*, 1642–1648), one of the young and eventual Fifth Dalai Lama’s attendants, in 1619, to intervene. In 1621 an Amdo Mongol force led by Gushri entered Lhasa and forcibly removed the Tsang supporters, and in 1635 Gushri engaged the eastern Tibetan and Mongol forces, finally victorious in 1642.²⁴

After his 1642 victory, Gushri gave central Tibet to the Fifth Dalai Lama and the Dalai Lama in turn gave Gushri and the Mongols his blessings. Gushri and his successors exerted unequivocal control over the entire Kokenuur region; by the time that the Qing Dynasty was estab-

lished in 1644, and though he recognized the authority of the Fifth Dalai Lama, Gushri was named the “King of Tibet.” In response to the Mongol success, and at the same time cognizant of events in Mongolia and in China, the Fifth Dalai Lama sent his congratulations to the new emperor of China, and travelled to Beijing for an imperial audience in 1652. The Dalai Lama was recognized and titled by the Mongol and Manchu rulers. The great game, or inner Asian borderlands strategic alliances, had entered another chapter.²⁵

Gushri Khan passed away in 1655, leaving eight of his ten sons in Kokenuur in Amdo, assisted by envoys of the Fifth Dalai Lama in 1656 and 1659. The lifestyles and religion of the nomadic Kokenuur Mongols and native Tibetans soon coalesced, with Tibetan language and religion playing a dominant role. Amdo became an important center of power, supportive of the Fifth Dalai Lama in central Tibet, and a bastion of power against the emerging Manchus. Samten Karmay wrote of Amdo’s importance that “[u]nder the Fifth Dalai Lama’s rule, as under the ancient Tibetan empire, Kokonor in Amdo became one of the most strategic regions.”²⁶ The Mongols were “a threatening power hanging over the Qing dynasty and the Chinese empire.”²⁷

The Mongol success could nonetheless not resolve the ongoing political conflicts simmering in central Tibet. One faction was led by a bold Zung-har prince from the Ili region, Galdan (1644–1697). Galdan was an ally of the Regent Sanggyé Gyatso, who sought to counter the influence of the Kokenuur Khoshuds in central Tibet and Amdo. Galdan passed away in 1697, and in 1700, with Qing Dynasty support, the Khoshud Lazang Khan took power in Lhasa, against the Regent’s wishes. By the end of the seventeenth century the two most powerful Mongol leaders in Amdo, with far reaching influence in central Tibet, were two of Gushri’s great grandsons, Lubsangdanjin and Erdeni Jinong, but they were not allied to Lazang.²⁸

In those years the emerging Manchu forces were engaged in a full scale incursion into Mongolia, which served to turn Manchu attention away from Tibetan affairs, in effect serving Gushri’s ends in Tibet and Kokenuur. The Manchus gradually occupied Mongolia,²⁹ and in 1696 implemented the code of rules administered by Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Lifanyuan*).³⁰ By the eighteenth century, Mongolia was largely under Manchu sovereignty.³¹ Manchu administration of politics, economics, military and social life was implemented in Mongolia. Manchu bureaucratic structures and titles were introduced, troops garrisoned and authority implemented over and alongside of native Mongol titles and social structures and Tibetan Buddhist religious offices.³² However, even after 1723, as explained in detail below, when Manchu administrative categories and names were used for the Mongol groups,³³ in many places life before and after the Manchu policies remained the same. Qing presence in

Mongolia nonetheless gave the Khoshud Mongols good political motives to establish a new bastion of Tibetan and Mongol power at Labrang.³⁴

THE KHOSHUD MONGOLS, THE QING DYNASTY, AND LABRANG

The political environment in central Tibet in those years was volatile, and the Kokenuur Mongols and Jamyang Zhepa were deeply involved. The chaos in Lhasa is thus relevant to Labrang's founding and growth. The following summary of the web of political and religious events shows the volatile atmosphere at Labrang's beginning. Briefly, the Zunghar Lazang Khan had alienated the Tibetan monasteries and nobles so much that he instigated his own downfall. He took over Lhasa, executed the Regent,³⁵ participated in the removal and exile of the Sixth Dalai Lama, Tsangyang Gyatso in 1706, and subsequently installed his own choice for the Seventh Dalai Lama—ironically with the Penchen Lama's support. This "false" Seventh Dalai Lama was possibly Lazang's own son, Mönpa Pekar Dzinpa, Ngawang Yeshé Gyatso (b. 1686).³⁶ The result of this was that Lazang's popular support in central Tibet collapsed. Lazang turned for help to China and formed an alliance with the Kangxi Emperor (1661–1722), who was concerned about the Zunghar Mongols in the Ili valley to the west. Kangxi supported Lazang in hopes of securing a Mongol and possibly a Tibetan advantage against the Ili Zunghars. In 1707 the Manchu court sent an envoy to Lhasa, but even this failed to generate any positive result.³⁷

Meanwhile, the central Tibetan religious authorities identified their own Seventh Dalai Lama (b. 1708) in Litang, claiming that their candidate was prophesied by none other than the Sixth Dalai Lama. One result of all of these simultaneously religious and political events was that Lazang Khan managed to alienate the Khoshud chiefs in Kokenuur, who remained loyal to Tsangyang Gyatso (d. 1706).³⁸

Shortly thereafter, in 1709, Labrang Monastery was founded; in 1710 Kangxi sent an envoy to the groundbreaking ceremonies at the present site of the Main Assembly Hall at Labrang Monastery.³⁹ Almost at the same time, when the Tibetans' Seventh Dalai Lama Kelsang Gyatso was authenticated by the Tibetan State Oracle, Kangxi's response was, with Lazang Khan, to prevent him from entering Tibet, against Kokenuur Khoshud Mongol—including Erdeni Jinong's—wishes. The Seventh Dalai Lama was moved from Litang via the newly founded Labrang Monastery and eventually to Kumbum by the still powerful and defiant Mongols, who were increasingly angered by Lazang Khan. Meanwhile, in 1712 the Penchen Lama supported Lazang's and the Qing position

by pronouncing the boy—the Tibetans' and Kokenuur Mongols'—an imposter. The tense situation in central Tibet was exacerbated by all of these events. It is not surprising that Jamyang Zhepa decided to leave Lhasa years earlier.

In 1716—the same year that the Seventh Dalai Lama was escorted to Lhasa by a retinue which included Erdeni Jinong—the Kokenuur Mongols divided the territory east of Kokenuur into two wings, Left and Right. The Left Wing, home of Labrang Monastery, was placed under the command of three leaders: Erdeni Jinong, one of Labrang's key sponsors; Lubsangdanjin (b. 1692), who was Dasi Batur's son and successor; and Dayan (a grandson of Gushri Khan's sixth son, d. 1718).⁴⁰

In 1717 and 1718 the Kokenuur Mongols, by that time endorsed by Kangxi, attacked Tibet and Lazang. In 1718 these Mongols, including Lubsangdanjin and Erdeni Jinong, were decorated by the Manchus, but were not allowed control of the 1720 government in Lhasa, as had been promised. Lubsangdanjin and Erdeni Jinong left Lhasa in 1721 and returned to Kokenuur and Labrang. Meanwhile, the First Jamyang Zhepa (1648–1721) died in that same year. Kangxi died a year later, in 1722, and the reign of Yongzheng, 1722–1735, began. In 1722, the new Qing emperor, Yongzheng, decided not to fulfill the Manchu promise to the Kokenuur Mongols, namely to allow them to appoint a Mongol khan to replace Lazang, instead giving power to Tibetan nobles.⁴¹

Lubsangdanjin and, at that point, Erdeni Jinong decided to resist the Manchus with force. When Erdeni Jinong decided to back down and Lubsangdanjin proceeded alone, Lubsangdanjin was defeated by the Qing generals Nian Gengyao and Yue Zhongqi and escaped to Ili in 1725.⁴² These generals were subsequently criticized by Yongzheng for their severe military tactics and for burning the monasteries of Tongkhor,⁴³ Serkhok, Gönlung and others.⁴⁴ Yongzheng soon paid to have them rebuilt in 1729. Erdeni Jinong's decision not to join Lubsangdanjin's resistance to the Chinese in 1723 and 1724 likely worked to ensure Labrang Monastery's survival, and demonstrates the mechanism of shifting political alliances in this time and place. Prince Erdeni maintained contact with the Qing court and in 1725, soon after the resolution of the 1723 rebellion, met the Yongzheng emperor, was recognized and titled. The local Mongols, though with diminished power, went on to maintain an important economic, political, and ethnographic presence in the Labrang community.⁴⁵

By 1759, Qing forces had routed the Zunghar Mongols in Ili and were well established in Mongolia. Labrang prudently maintained good relations with the Qing authorities, but in the decades after 1759, though still very much able to rally expeditionary armies, as witnessed in the 1790s in Nepal, Qing power was increasingly challenged.

The declining involvement of the Qing government at Labrang is not surprising given the changing fortunes of the dynasty, the prudence of non-interference in the growing wool trade, Labrang's relative stability, and Labrang's ongoing diplomatic efforts. Both Qianlong, in his late years, and the Jiaqing emperor were moreover crippled by their visions of imperial majesty. For example, in 1793, just after their successful Nepal campaigns, Qing officials mistakenly regarded gifts from the British trade mission as tribute, and in 1816 the Qing authorities turned the British mission away. The result was that in the 1800s the Qing was humiliated by European powers and was unable to maintain domestic control in their own country.

The White Lotus Rebellion (1796–1804), the Eight Trigrams Rebellion (1813), and Qing battles in Xinjiang further compromised Qing authority. By 1844, British and other foreign governments had trade ports in China under their own jurisdiction, not under Qing authority. Xinjiang was completely lost due to the lack of funds from Beijing and the tenacity of the charismatic Ya'qub Beg (1820–1877). In addition to everything else, the Taiping Rebellion (1851–1864) threw China proper into economic and civic chaos.⁴⁶ In the last years of the Qing Dynasty, the government could still rally an army, as demonstrated in their Khams and Sichuan operations, but these were largely ineffective.⁴⁷ These events had a significant impact on implementation of Qing authority at Labrang.

In sum, through Amdo's and beginning in 1709 Labrang's history Tibetan, Mongol, Manchu, Muslim and Chinese groups sought to form alliances with each other to secure their respective positions. The alliances shifted, and with them the fortunes of each group advanced or declined, but until 1958 the local Amdo Tibetans were the dominant authority at Labrang. These relationships are dealt with in detail in this book. In her dated but thoughtful study, Yu Shih-yu, who was based at Labrang in 1930s, writing of Amdo in general, wrote that

A-mdo is more semi-independent and disunited because it has never been under direct rule either of the Chinese government or of Lhasa. Even in the heyday of the Manchu dynasty it was only during active military operations that any direct control was possible.⁴⁸

The relationships between Labrang, the Mongols, the Manchus, and the Chinese were at once founded in different ideologies and visions, but at the same time the relationships were very real, much more than the exchange of ideas and diplomatic courtesies. This continued until the late nineteenth century and the ascendance of the regional Muslims. Muslim prominence at Labrang was however short lived, and a new phase in Labrang's history began, marked by the 1927 alliance between Labrang

and the Chinese authorities under Feng Yuxiang, later the Nationalist Chinese and eventually the Communist government.

Through all of these complicated political events the local Labrang Tibetans continued their support of the Tibetan monastery-based authority system. Religion and its social functions and political structures were integrated at Labrang. The founding of Labrang Monastery and the growth of its extended community should therefore be understood both in its religious and political contexts. Thus, before turning to a detailed description of Labrang's society and a detailed account of its history, an introduction to key components of Amdo's religions will help explain how this major Tibetan institution grew and prospered.

NOTES

1. This expression is well known in Amdo's oral culture but I have not seen it in any written source.

2. See the dated but still useful description in Lattimore, "Introduction," 11, 4–17.

3. See Ronald M. Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 73.

4. See Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*, 3, 80–83.

5. For a list of the central Tibetan aristocratic families, see Luciano Petech, *Aristocracy and Government in Tibet, 1728–1959* (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1973). Interviews and text sources verify the identification with ancient families.

6. Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*, 3. See Matthew Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism: Conversion, Contestation, and Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 5, 38–50, and especially 205 n. 19; see Rachel M. McCleary and Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp, "The Market Approach to the Rise of the Geluk School, 1419–1642," *Journal of Asian Studies* 69.1 (February 2010): 149–180.

7. Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*, 86.

8. The Tanguts, in Chinese, Xia, or in Tibetan, the Mi nyag empire, located north of Tsongkha and the Liangzhou region, centered in modern Ningxia, was formally established in 1038 and continued until the Mongol conquest in 1227. See Ruth W. Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High: Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-Century Xia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996); see Matthew Kapstein, *The Tibetans* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 107–108.

9. The Khitan, centered in what is today northeast China, established the Liao Dynasty in 907; it was overcome by the Jurchen Jin Dynasty in 1125.

10. Evidence of Tibetan solidarity in Amdo is in the ability of the Tsongkha Tibetans to muster an army of 40,000 to 60,000 to fight the Tanguts, and in their recognition by the Song in 1041. See Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*, 89; see Tsutomu Iwasaki, "The Tibetan Tribes of Ho-hsi and Buddhism During the Northern Sung Period," *Acta Asiatica* 64 (1993): 17–37.

11. See Paul Jakov Smith, "Irredentism as Political Capital: The New Policies and the Annexation of Tibetan Domains in Hehuang (the Qinghai-Gansu Highlands) Under Shenzong and His Sons, 1068–1126," in *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics*, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 85 for a reference to "semi-sinified" or "cooked" Tibetans in Amdo regions east of modern Labrang. This terminology appears in much later Chinese documents; see Makley, *Violence of Liberation*.

12. See Smith, "Irredentism," 79–83, 85, ff.

13. Smith's detailed study quotes Song Chinese documents extensively, where the Chinese motives are explicit, to use "'benevolence and trust' to co-opt—'clientalize'—the Tibetan tribes along the frontier." Smith, "Irredentism," 87, 89, 89 note 16, 90, 117, 129.

14. Smith, "Irredentism," 89, 98, 104–105, 107, 114, 128–129.

15. "For example in 1072, slaughtering elderly and weak Tibetans for a bounty of five rolls of silk for each Tibetan head, resulting in the beheading of some 3,527 and later 7,000 Tibetans, and the burning of 20,000 Tibetan tents in the Taohe region," not far from the site of Labrang Monastery. Smith, "Irredentism," 91–94; 92 note 19.

16. After much bloodshed, in the 1090s the Song attempted diplomacy once again, but with little Tibetan submission. They again resorted to violence, beheading some 4,000 Tibetans. Even so, in 1099 Tibetan resistance persisted, and the Chinese finally relented, if temporarily. After much more bloodshed in 1104 the Chinese finally took what is now Xining, inflicting some 10,000 casualties. This data is from Smith, "Irredentism," 99–105, 108, 112, 115.

17. Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 106, 107, 110–116.

18. Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society*, xv, 1–24, ff. Bat-Ochir Bold has argued that Mongol history has been entirely misappropriated, and that Mongolia had its own structural and developmental qualities that are often distorted by Manchu/Chinese imperial, later Marxist-materialist, and other perspectives. He advises the study of Mongol culture on its own historical, economic, legal, social, and political terms.

19. The details of this period in central Tibet are in Kapstein, *The Tibetans*; Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*; and others.

20. Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 123–124.

21. Dardess, "Did the Mongols Matter?", 111–134. In the same volume see also Paul Yakov Smith, "Introduction: Problematizing the Song-Yuan-Ming Transition," 1–34.

22. Altan was the grandson of Dayan Khan (1464–1543), who was a descendant of Kublai Khan (1215–1294). Dayan united the Khalkha Mongols in the north and the Chahars in the south; Altan inherited his domain. See Johan Elverskog, *The Jewel Translucent Sutra: Altan Khan and the Mongols in the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

23. See Uyunbilig Borjigidai, "The Hoshuud Polity in Khökhnuur (Kokonor)," *Inner Asia* 4 (2002): 182.

24. See the detailed account in Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 135–139.

25. For a brief account of local Mongols, see Sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor, *Sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor gyi nram thar nyid kyis mdzad pa* (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Pub-

lishing House, 1997), 3–5. A much more detailed and annotated account is in Gray Tuttle, “The Conflict of 1723–1724 in the Koko-nor and Tsongkha/Huangzhong Regions,” (PhD General Exam Papers, Harvard University, undated).

26. See Samten G. Karmay, “The Great Fifth,” *IIAS Newsletter* 39 (December 2005): 13.

27. See Anne Chayet, “17th and 18th Century Tibet: A General Survey,” in *Tibet and Her Neighbours: A History* (London: Edition Hansjorg Mayer, 2003), 85; see Sperling, “Tibet’s Foreign Relations,” 119–133. See Elverskog, *Our Great Qing*.

28. Explicitly stated in Ishihama, “New Light,” 503; see also Zahiruddin Ahmad, *Sino-Tibetan Relations in the Seventeenth Century*, *Serie Orientale Roma* 40 (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1970), 72. Compare the assertion of Qing control in the Kangxi era cited in *Qinghai Lishi Jiyao*, ed. Provincial Editorial Committee (Xining: Peoples Publishing House, 1987), 167; on the Mongols and Qing sovereignty, 159–161; on tea and and horse trade and gold mining, 198–201. See the account in Zhang Yuwen, *Zhongzu zajude Labuleng in Zhongguo xibei wenxian congshu* (ca. 1933), ed. Zhongguo Xibei Wenxian Congshu Weiyuanhui (Lanzhou, 1991), 92.

29. This control began in the Ming Dynasty in 1634–1635; see Heuschert, “Legal Pluralism in the Qing Empire,” 310–324; see Chia Ning, “The Li-fan Yuan in the early Ch’ing Dynasty”; see Legrand, *L’Administration*, 42.

30. Legrand, *L’Administration*, 28, 46–53.

31. Legrand, *L’Administration*, 89.

32. For the entire corpus of Mongol terms of office, administrative divisions, and associated titles, see Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society*, 79–121. For a discussion of the fragmentation of the Mongol nation and the control of the Ming and Qing dynasties, see Elverskog, *The Jewel Translucent Sutra*, 1–43, esp. 10–11, 24–31, 37–39.

33. Borjigidai, “Hoshuud Polity,” 186, 166.

34. See John E. Herman, “National Integration and Regional Hegemony: The Political and Cultural Dynamics of Qing State Expansion, 1650–1750” (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1993), 110–155. See also Sperling, “The Chinese Venture in K’am, 17–23, 26, 32.

35. Detailed in Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century*, 11–12.

36. Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century*, 14–18.

37. Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century*, 18.

38. Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century*, 18, 21.

39. Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus*, 564. See *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, ed. Zhang Yisun (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1984), 3273, where it is stated that Kangxi sent ‘Jam dbyangs bzhad pa an official seal in 1710; see Nor brang o rgyan, “‘Jam dbyangs bzhad pa,” *Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal* 66 (1996): 46–48; see Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century*, 18–19. Compare Zha Zha’s dating of the first contact between Beijing and Labrang to 1720, Zha Zha, “Shishu Labuleng si yu Qingchao zhongyang zheng-fude guanxi,” *Xizang Yanjiu* 4 (1991): 123.

40. See the detailed list of left and right members in Yang, *Annals of Kokonor*, 53.

41. See Kato Naoto, “Lobsang Danjin’s Rebellion of 1723: With a Focus on the Eve of the Rebellion,” *Acta Asiatica: Bulletin of the Institute of Eastern Culture* 64 (1993): 57–80.

42. See Kato Naoto, "Lobsang Danjin's Rebellion"; Ishihama, "New Light," 419–426; see Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644–1912)* I (Washington: United States Printing Office, 1943), 587–590; see Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Frontier* III, 58.

43. Even after Kangxi's support for Stong 'khor in 1665.

44. The extent of the damage was described by Thu'u bkwan, summarized in Gene Smith, *Among Tibetan Texts*, 167.

45. For a summary of Mongol heritage see Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society*, 97–98.

46. See John King Fairbank, *China: A New History* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap/Harvard, 1994), 187–234; see Jack Gray, *Rebellions and Revolutions: China from the 1800s to the 1980s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). See James L. Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar: Qing Guest Ritual and the Macartney Embassy of 1793* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).

47. James E. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yu-hsiang* (Stanford University Press, 1966), 29–30.

48. Yu Shih-yu, "Tibetan Folk Law," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 3.4 (1950): 128.

Chapter 2

Tibetan Religions in Amdo

Religion in Amdo played an important role in developing community solidarity. While sectarian competition was fierce in central Tibet, and certainly a factor in Amdo, religious diversity was relatively tolerated, or ignored. In the Labrang region, religion evidenced “strong sentiments of affinity and cohesiveness running throughout the Tibetan cultural world [and a] . . . relative coherence of Tibetan culture.”¹ Again, while not at all without sectarian divisions, this cohesion and coherence served as a component of the foundations of Labrang Monastery.² Further, in part because of its borderland location the Labrang region was exposed to and gradually tolerant of non-Tibetan religions. This chapter will outline the main religious forces in the Labrang region of Amdo.

One of the results of the prominence of religious institutions in the Labrang region was that monasteries often owned the most land, the most livestock, and were in effect the strongest political and legal institutions. The engine of growth at Labrang and elsewhere was the status and role of religious experts, who were instrumental in the everyday lives of Tibetans. Lamas and religious experts were not only proficient in religion, extraordinary rituals, with access to Buddhas, bodhisattvas, protector deities, and local spirits of broad descriptions, but were often regarded as deities in human form, bodhisattvas who took voluntary rebirth (*nirmāṇakāya*) out of compassion for the community.³

Religion in Amdo is so far reaching that a full description goes far beyond this brief introduction. In general, text data and numerous discussions with modern-day local peoples from different backgrounds attest that the skies, lands and waters around Labrang were densely populated by a broad range of deities, including those malevolent, helpful, and neutral who were

able to interact with and influence humans, animals, and the elements. It is no exaggeration to say that many, if not most Amdo Tibetans sought to interact with deities and spirits on a regular, daily basis. Numerous deities inhabited specific places, and were identified, worshiped, and controlled by local, often lay residents under professional religious guidance. One very common manifestation of engagement with these local deities at Labrang is the labtsé, bundles of decorated spears or poles (ritual arrows), designed to control local deities, usually on a peak or pass, and associated with a local village or nomad group. These local deities guaranteed, among other things, protection from flood, famine, hail, and bad luck for humans and livestock. These deities could moreover be removed from one place and re-installed elsewhere, as the Second Jamyang Zhepa did.⁴

In Amdo, formal Tibetan Buddhism in all of its complexity and historical orders was well established. The Bon religion was and to this day is practiced, including in Genkya, not far from Labrang Monastery. Lay and ordained tantric specialists in Amdo called, among many other names, ngakpas,⁵ were well known, one group of which are formally integrated with the Labrang monastic community. Tibetan Nyingma practitioners were and still are known in Amdo, and these trace their roots to the ninth century. Davidson mentions well over two hundred eastern Tibetan religious sites dating from the ninth century, including important monasteries in the Amdo Tsongkha region. Tibetan texts from the Dunhuang collections show that there was a broad range of meditations and rituals known in Amdo in the Tibetan Imperial Period.

The Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyü, and other major Tibetan orders established branches in Amdo and eastern Tibet, followed by the Gelukpa. By the time Gushri Khan and his Khoshud grandsons arrived, Amdo's religious heritage was well established; in terms of religious sophistication, this was no untamed wilderness. The Amdo Tibetans had a vibrant religious heritage, developed literary, poetic, and dramatic traditions, not the least of which were the Gesar epics and their storytellers. In Amdo there were fortune tellers, healers, and mystics, and more, with fully developed monastic and non-monastic traditions. Monks practiced the full range of Buddhist learning, arts, medicine, and ritual from the earliest period of Tibetan Buddhist history, from the Imperial period through the growth of Labrang Monastery.⁶

In later years of its history the Labrang authorities showed a sense of religious pluralism by tolerating and even supporting Muslim, Daoist, Confucian, and Christian religious communities. These foreign systems were after all in service of yet other divinities, whose presence could be tolerated in Labrang's already densely populated religious world.

Labrang was host to a fully developed, literate Tibetan Buddhist civilization. In its latter day history especially the community leaders devel-

oped an understanding of the necessity of and a willingness to engage its ethnic and political neighbors. With its powerful sense of identity and its willingness to engage its neighbors, even if in unstructured and inconsistent ways, Labrang managed to survive and grow.

LABRANG MONASTERY

Labrang Monastery is a Gelukpa institution founded in Amdo's rich historical and cultural environment. At Labrang and in its branch monasteries, the primary deities were the central Gelukpa tantric deities, primarily Cakrasaṃvara, Vajrabhairava, Guhyasamāja, Kālacakra, Hayagrīva, Hevajra, and others. Other popular deities included the bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī, Vajrapāṇi, and many others.

The key historical figures and Labrang's most important physical structures are briefly introduced here, and more details are included later in this book. The First Jamyang Zhepa (1648–1721), Labrang's chief religious founder and the first in the primary Labrang lineage of the six Jamyang Zhepas, was born in Amdo in 1648. The First Jamyang Zhepa's motives for the 1709 founding of the monastery were both religious and political, and its founding was dependent on the events and economics of the time.

Jamyang Zhepa's work at Labrang has historical precedents. First, all over the Buddhist world, monks were empowered to propagate the teachings and establish communities.⁷ Buddhism has always had "an international character"⁸ and Buddhist missionaries—in Amdo as in India, central Tibet, and elsewhere—were very "deliberate" and "rapid."⁹ The traditional Buddhist attitude was that converts were "pleased" (*prasāḍita*), or "cooled" by adopting Buddhist principles.¹⁰ The continuity between Amdo and east India noted above by Belmang, over centuries and in vastly different contexts, might be hyperbolic in the view of modern scholars, but Gungtang Könchok Tenpé Drönmé (1762–1823), one of Labrang's greatest writers, noted that the travels of the First and Second Jamyang Zhepas were like Śākyamuni's and Sakya Pendita's, who traveled to spread the Buddhist teachings and to gain support for monasteries.¹¹ The Tibetan religious imagination was expansive, indeed.

Jamyang Zhepa was active in central Tibet in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries; he spent most of his active years in central Tibet. In the late seventeenth century political conditions in Lhasa were increasingly bad, with relations between Mongols, Tibetans, and Manchus deteriorating. Meanwhile, Amdo was relatively stable. The First Jamyang Zhepa, a well respected teacher and an accomplished writer was highly placed in Lhasa's political bureaucracy and was well acquainted with

and had access to key political figures. He was about sixty-one years old, a monk, wealthy, and erudite when he left for Amdo to found Labrang Monastery. Given his religious, political, and social position, this book includes some speculation about his primary motives for founding a new monastery in his Amdo homeland.

Whatever Jamyang Zhepa's and others' motives were, the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries brought a remarkable proliferation of Gelukpa monasteries. Kapstein remarks that "in 1694 there were 1,087 monasteries with some 97,528 monks among all of the Tibetan Buddhist orders, by 1733 there would be 3,150 monasteries harboring 342,560 inmates adhering to the Dalai Lama alone."¹² These numbers include Labrang Monastery and its satellites. More broadly, including Mongolia and nearby regions, Evelyn Rawski reports that somewhere between thirty to sixty percent of males in Inner and outer Mongolia were monks,¹³ living in "2,000 monasteries and temples in Mongolia, with 800 monasteries in southern Mongolia, 136 monasteries in the Khalkha lands, and further 500–600 in Amdo, Gansu, Sichuan, Xinjiang, and Shanxi."¹⁴ Jamyang Zhepa and Erdeni Jinong, his Mongol sponsor were engaged in a religious, political, and community building enterprise already well under way.

LABRANG'S COLLEGES

The monastery building process involved gifts of land, of building materials, of corvée labor, and of novice monks. In addition to offerings of materials and labor, donors endowed the Labrang monastic estate with permanent gifts of entire communities; revenues from land and peoples became properties of the monastic estate. Communities, or their generated revenues and corvée, and novice monks were in effect commodified, given by donors and then owned by Labrang. As landlord, the estate had political and legal jurisdiction over the conduct of the economy, society, and the monks, all of which provided the monastery with enormous leverage in the society at large. The early donations of these commodified communities were the first of Labrang's so-called "divine" or "blessed" communities, communities in service of the gods (*lha sde*). Other communities who retained local ownership of their lands and economies and yet who made financial, religious, militia, and corvée commitments to the monastery were called "lay" or "secular" communities, communities in service of men (*mi sde*). Labrang went on to amass one of the largest estates in Amdo. The estate will be discussed later in this book; here the founding of the six major monastery structures that housed the monastery's six colleges is outlined.

The Main Assembly Hall, Tösam Ling College

In 1709, at the invitation of Erdeni Jinong, the Khoshud Mongol prince, the First Jamyang Zhepa (1648–1721) traveled from Lhasa to Tsekhok in the southeastern Qinghai portion of Amdo, where he was received by the local Khoshud Mongol lord. The local Mongols sent several boys to become novices. This 1709 reception and novice ordination mark the institutional origins of Labrang Monastery, and are usually cited as auspicious because of the coincidence with the three hundredth anniversary of the founding of Ganden Monastery in Lhasa. However, though formally founded in 1709 the institution was not established in its present location until the following year. From Tsekhok in Qinghai Jamyang Zhepa went to the Amchok region in the southern Gansu portion of Amdo, where he spent the winter of 1709. In the third lunar month of 1710, at the invitation of the Qinghai Khoshuds, celebrated by their donation of fifteen novices, and after the Jamyang Zhepa's religious rituals, he traveled to the present location of the monastery, a summer pasture called Tokti Demo Tang in the larger Tashikhyil valley in southern Gansu, on the Sangchu/Xiahe River, arriving in the fourth lunar month. There the local Tibetan lord of nearby Genkya offered land, a copy of the Tibetan Kanjur, and five young boys to serve as novice monks. Soon thereafter, the Mongols Erdeni Jinong and Namgyel Tseten offered two hundred monks, followed by the Mongol lamas "Nominhan" and Erkedaiching, who offered more monks, altogether totaling some three hundred monks in 1710 when ground was broken for the first monastery building. While the site was under construction, the local Tibetan lords offered a tent capable of sheltering over eight hundred persons, and other necessities.¹⁵ This was the physical beginning of Labrang Monastery.

It was not until 1711 that the monastery building program started in earnest. In that year, among many donations, Könchok Dechen from Paré erected a statue of Tsongkhapa, the first major statue at Labrang. The Mongol Prince Erdeni collected timber from Khagya tsodruk, which stretched along the northeast edge of the Tibetan Plateau from Rongwo (Repgong) in eastern Qinghai, through Genkya, Hortsang, north of Labrang to Tsö (Hezuo), Bora, Dokar, and Dzögé Mema.¹⁶ Other early donor communities noted for providing corvée were from eastern Qinghai, near the Gansu border, including Rongwo, Dobi, Bido, and from the east in Zamtša. Parts of these communities maintained their allegiance and tax responsibilities to Labrang in the following decades, but because of historical events, most often political and military conflicts, others did not. For example, parts of Rongwo and Dobi left the Labrang community years after the monastery was established. Other communities who made early commitments in 1711 were from northern Sichuan, including Rwado,

Ngawa and Tsakho. These latter groups offered corvée and eighty pillars for the assembly hall in the Main Assembly Hall, which housed the main college, Tösam Ling.

Soon thereafter, the Mongol Prince at Tsekhok in eastern Qinghai donated five hundred families in Rwado, in today's northern Sichuan, a fact that shows the extent of Mongol influence, from Qinghai to northern Sichuan, and the commodification of communities. Later, the otherwise unidentified Khenpo Nominhan donated a Zhopong Lachi community in Qinghai and Prince Erdeni donated from his properties in Zaru in Sichuan and from Tebo in far southeastern Gansu. In fall of the next year, 1712, on the occasion of his marriage, Prince Erdeni donated eighty more families from the Zaru community. In 1763, during the office of the Second Jamyang Zhepa, the third successor to the local Khoshud Mongol throne, Dorjé Paknam, and one Detong Lozang Yangden renovated the Main Assembly Hall.¹⁷ Later, in 1772 the Second Jamyang Zhepa expanded the hall to its present size, supported by one hundred and forty pillars and in 1777 by further renovations.

The Lower Tantric College (Gyümé)

The second main college is the Lower Tantric College (Gyümé), founded by the First Jamyang Zhepa in 1716, on the fifteenth day of the third lunar month. The First Jamyang Zhepa had served as the Throne Holder of Gomang College and Gyümé Monastery in Lhasa, and these sectarian preferences, namely the focus on academics found in Gomang and the tantric practices at Gyümé are evident in the construction and curricula in these early buildings at Labrang; he served as the first Throne Holder of this college at Labrang.¹⁸ In eleven years, from roughly 1710 until his passing in 1721, with two major colleges at Labrang the First Jamyang Zhepa established a significant estate and foundations of what was to become a massive monastery. In addition, in these early years the Jamyang Zhepa and the Mongol Prince also built residences at Labrang.

By 1738, when the First Detri, one of the First Jamyang Zhepa's closest disciples served as Throne Holder, there were some one thousand monks in residence at Labrang's two main colleges. In 1749 the Second Jamyang Zhepa founded the Library, building on the collections of his predecessor. The First and Fifth Jamyang Zhepas were active collection builders, but the Second Jamyang Zhepa in particular is known for his efforts to build the Labrang Library, which at its peak is said to have held over 228,000 volumes, including canonical collections. Today, in a new building, it holds some 65,000 volumes. Beyond the specifics of Labrang Monastery's beginnings, thus far these brief data evidence some of the major trends in Amdo, namely the remarkable proliferation of new, especially Gelukpa

monasteries, the particular Gelukpa approach to Tibetan Buddhism, the lasting influence of the Khoshud Mongols, the continuity of Amdo's predominantly nomadic social-economic structures and the volatility of Labrang's borderlands location.

The Kālacakra College

The third major college at Labrang, again reflecting the Gelukpa focus on tantrism, is the Kālacakra College, built in 1763 by the Second Jamyang Zhepa (1728–1791). Shortly thereafter, from 1769 to 1772, in what might be understood as a political, economic, and religious strategy, the Second Jamyang Zhepa stayed in Mongol territory, where he reportedly collected substantial donations. Indeed, by the time he returned to Labrang in 1772 he had brought over forty new communities into the Labrang estate. The Second Jamyang Zhepa's reputation as an institution builder is well-deserved.

The Medical College

In 1784 the Second Jamyang Zhepa went further by founding the Medical College, the fourth college at Labrang, and served as its first Throne Holder. The Labrang Medical College became known for its high level of scholarship and for its medical service to the community. The record includes mention of Mongol sponsorship for the later renovation of the Medical College's Meeting Hall. In 1788 the Second Jamyang Zhepa also raised funds and built one of the most prominent structures at Labrang, the Golden Temple (Serkang Chenmo), dedicated to the Buddha Maitreya. The local Mongols sponsored a new roof on the Golden Temple in 1888, and made a substantial cash offering 1899.¹⁹

The Hevajra College

The fifth college is the Hevajra College, founded in 1879 by the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa, said to be designed after Lhasa's Namgyel Monastery, and built on his return from western and central Tibet, where he visited and was reportedly inspired by the worship of Hevajra at Sakya. It was destroyed by fire and rebuilt in 1957.

The Upper Tantric College (Gyütö)

The sixth college is the Upper Tantric College, founded during the office of the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa in 1928, when the Fifth was about twelve years old, and completed in 1939–1941.²⁰ In addition to these major structures,

Labrang had some forty-eight other temples, and extensive monastic residences to house at least three thousand and five hundred monks.²¹

This was institution building, on a grand scale. The founders had religious and political motives, and it is very likely that they did not separate these; Tibetan religious sensibilities were largely pervasive in Tibetan society. Building monasteries generated merit for the lamas, for the Mongol donors, and for the communities who, like it or not, and we can assume that some were compelled by their communities, did the actual labor and provided tax and corvée support. The installation of these buildings was preceded and accompanied by extensive divination and installation rituals; the Jamyang Zhepas were led by visions and spiritual, divine guidance. Local spirits inhabiting the valley were invoked and controlled, making way for the propitiation and establishment of the full complement of Gelukpa deities.²²

The temples were grand, indeed, but Tibetan monastic life was not easy for the rank and file. Reborn monks and those from or supported by wealthy families were relatively well off and able to build semi-private compounds within the monastery boundary, unlike the regional dormitories (*khang tshan*) in central Tibetan institutions. Less well off monks sometimes lived with their countrymen, were sometimes taken in by wealthy reborn lamas, or taken as disciples in one of the major colleges. Monks with fewer resources often served as servants in exchange for room, board, and religious teachings. Opportunities for full time, concentrated study were thus easier for privileged monks. Given the economics and social strata, the numbers of highly educated monks was small relative to the total enrollment. Still, even in these circumstances, Labrang did produce a large number of well educated scholars, teachers, and lamas.

CURRICULUM

Monastery life at Labrang, like others of Tibet's "mass monasteries,"²³ should itself be understood as diverse. The community was certainly not a uniform group of high level scholars or detached monks engaged in full time meditation or study. Monastic life in Labrang's many branch monasteries, some of which were very small with a very few monks, had rules and discipline, but life was not strictly controlled. Many scholars have deconstructed the vision of perfect monastic life, pointing out that monasticism in Tibet was varied depending on monks' levels of commitment, their adherence to precepts, intellectual abilities and performance, and on their level of general mischief. Labrang was like a university and located near a town that grew over the years, with

an increasingly busy marketplace and gradually increasing numbers of diversions. It housed scholars and meditators of the highest caliber, and rowdy “punk monks” (*ldab ldob*), lazy students, cooks, and library block print carvers, the latter block print carving considered busy work for bad students. Still, in general, the prohibitions against killing, lying, stealing, and sexual misconduct were valued and largely observed, and ordination, bi-monthly confessional meetings, monastic decorum and participation in rituals were required.

Goldstein and others have noted that Tibetan monastic life was, relative to other forms of monasticism and to the rules in the canonical texts, unregulated and adherence to monastic precepts was often an individual decision. On the other hand, Dreyfus points out that some monasteries, and even some individual units in single monasteries were stricter than others, and did indeed observe monastic discipline more rigorously.²⁴ The broad range of adherence to monastic discipline is a fair description of life at Labrang, at least in its fully developed stage. In general, monastic life was considered a religious vocation, a merit generating activity, an expression of identity, and a source of prestige.

The large Tibetan Buddhist monasteries were fully integrated with lay society. While monks were in separate communities at the main and branch monasteries, they were not disconnected from society-at-large. Wherever they were stationed, many, if not most Labrang monks were supported by their families and home communities, and maintained these relationships. Again, all interactions of monks and lay persons were occasions to generate merit, a crucial element of Mahāyāna Buddhist practice. Many monks often performed a broad range of religious and non-religious ritual services for the community.

The actual study and practice of Tibetan Buddhist religion by monks and lay persons at Labrang was equally varied. Meditations and tantric practices commonly associated with Tibetan Buddhism were well known, and yet the daily life of monks included extensive non-tantric prayer and ritual practices; the community had a rigorous schedule for daily worship, in which all monks from all of Labrang’s monasteries met, at least for evening prayers. For most monks in Tösam Ling, the largest college, there were daily private or semi-private sessions between teachers and disciples, then more public sessions, debate sessions, and frequent prayer and worship services throughout the day. The major preoccupation of the monks who did engage in study was first, memorization, study of philosophy, and debate, designed to give the students a foundation, context, and world view in preparation for meditation.

Like other Gelukpa monasteries Labrang’s daily routine and calendar year were filled with a ritual schedule that kept monks away from strictly academic activities. They were instead often fully involved in commu-

nity and large group prayers and devotions. In addition, at Labrang, a community-funded and community-integrated institution, special rituals, including funerary, longevity, and others provided sustenance for the monastery and income for the monks.

However, Labrang Monastery was different from central Tibetan monasteries. Even in light of its relatively small percentage of scholars, and their varying abilities and motives, Labrang at its core was dedicated to the study of Buddhist ethics, concentration, and wisdom. Many of its most famous monks rank among Tibet's greatest writers and scholars. Indeed, Labrang in particular was one of the most important sources of Gelukpa literature over the past two centuries, in comparison to central Tibetan monasteries, where literacy and writing were often de-emphasized and the provenance of only a few of the highest level scholars.²⁵ Even so, the Labrang curriculum, which usually took about fifteen years to complete, resulting in the Dorampa degree, was modeled on the Gelukpa system in use in Lhasa's Drepung Monastery, where the First Jamyang Zhepa and most other prominent Labrang scholars were educated. The First Jamyang Zhepa had served as Throne Holder of Gomang College at Drepung, and composed a well known monastic manual later used at Gomang, and at other Gelukpa, non-Gelukpa, and even Jonang monasteries.²⁶ His erudition and political influence were widely known and respected in central Tibet. These served him well in Amdo, where he and his successors evidently promoted Buddhist scholarship.

The Gelukpa curriculum used in Tösam Ling is well known and is based on five primary root texts, supplemented by Indian and Tibetan commentaries, notably the works of Tsongkhapa. However, actual study of these was not uniform for all students, in central Tibet²⁷ and at Labrang. The five scriptures are also abbreviated in manuals (*yig cha*) and other texts. The five primary Indian scriptures are the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (*Ornament of Scriptures*), attributed to Maitreya, on the subject of the *Prajñāpāramitā* (*Perfection of Wisdom*) literature, Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* (*Commentary on Valid Means of Knowledge*), on logic, epistemology, and philosophy of language, Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* and Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra* (*Introduction to the Middle Way*), the core philosophy of the Gelukpa school, on epistemology, Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* (*Treasury of Abhidharma*), on the Buddhist worldview, and finally Guṇaprabha's *Vinayasūtra*, on monastic behavior. In his detailed description of the Tibetan Buddhist monastic education Dreyfus explains that the first three of these texts are the core of monastic philosophy, and the source materials for debate. The Abhidharma and Vinaya texts are left until the end of the monastic curriculum.²⁸ Gelukpa monks usually memorize the root and commentarial texts and internalize their contents by years of rigorous debate.

Of the monks who were fortunate and intelligent enough to pursue academics, some spent their lives studying and debating; others left their studies and practiced tantric meditations. In large monasteries individual teachers would likewise specialize, and entire monasteries, even Gelukpa monasteries could and did concentrate on philosophy, meditation, or rituals. At Labrang, the largest college was Tösam Ling. Of the remaining five, four were devoted to tantra and one to medicine. In the 1930s, for example, the three tantric colleges and the medical college housed only about one hundred monks each, while Tösam Ling held some three thousand monks.²⁹ Tantra and the study of medicine were important in Gelukpa Buddhism, but reserved for very few. Usually, young novices were admitted directly into the tantric and Medical Colleges, or transferred in after some time or after graduating from Tösam Ling.³⁰ While clearly a visible and respected component of Tibetan Buddhism, and given in abbreviated and entry level forms publicly, the highest levels of tantric study and practice were reserved for relatively few scholars.

Ideally, the years of studying philosophy were intended to ground students in the Buddhist worldview, to generate a faith based on reason that the Buddhist vision was true. The study of philosophy, refined by vigorous debate, was not explicitly intended to serve as a meditation practice. Rather, it trained the mind to focus and come to some understanding of Buddhist theory. In Dreyfus' words exoteric philosophical studies provided "... the framework into which the tantric practices fit. Ge-luk texts tend to emphasize the primacy of the exoteric narrative to legitimize their esoteric practices."³¹

Many of the educated monks moreover did not practice formal exoteric or esoteric meditations. Some focused on ritual, and very many if not most were engaged in firstly the broad variety of tasks involved in running a huge monastery and secondly in the priestly role of monks serving the lay community. However, even non-academic life in the monastery, though consumed by rituals and daily chores, often built positive character traits, and helped monks develop Buddhist virtues. In addition to implicitly developing focus, a life devoted to ritual and routine created attitudes conducive to Buddhist meditation.³²

LABRANG'S LITERARY HERITAGE: THE THIRD GUNGTANG AND THE COMPOSITION OF TEXTS

It is said that in central Tibet literary education for Tibetan Buddhist monks was not a high priority.³³ At Labrang, as noted, there was nonetheless a commitment to literary scholarship, shown in the massive

library, the printing house, in latter day public educational initiatives, and notably in the enormous volume of writings produced by Labrang scholars. One cannot argue that all of Labrang's thousands of monks were educated by modern or classical Tibetan standards. However, at Labrang, reading literacy, memorization, and the ability to discuss and debate the contents of Tibetan literature were valued, again proved by the fact that Labrang was home to many of the most prolific writers in Tibetan history. The First and Second Jamyang Zhepas were extremely prolific, as was Belmang Pendita, and numerous others. Here, the studies and works of the Third Gungtang are presented as an example of monastic education, scholarship, and the creative writing process at Labrang.

All of the lineage of reborn Gungtang lamas were educated and literate, but the most prolific writer was the Third Gungtang, Könchok Tenpé Drönmé (1762–1823). He is described as having the three qualities of a scholar: skill in explaining, debating and writing (*'chad rtsod rtsom*).³⁴ The Gungtang lama started writing at a relatively young age. When he was twenty-three he wrote on the theory of causal production (*pratītyasamutpāda*)³⁵ and at twenty-five he wrote a commentary on *Prajñāpāramitā* (*Perfection of Wisdom*).³⁶ Gungtang Könchok Tenpé Drönmé's works are contained in twelve volumes in the original Labrang Monastery edition and in eight volumes in the Lhasa edition; other reprinted editions are divided and collected in different sizes.

At Labrang, monks know Tenpé Dronmé best for his works on logic and on tantra. His *Collected Works* however show the extent of his scholarship and his literary skill. He wrote on the five monastic subjects, on the tantras, biographies, dance and music manuals, and art manuals. He composed letters of advice to local lords and lamas, and to Chinese and Mongol rulers and monks, demonstrating mastery of social discourse and diplomacy. Tenpé Dronmé wrote about poetics, and prepared a list of poetic devices,³⁷ honorary formula, and essays on ethics and Buddhist practice. In one work he compiled a list of words, expressions and literary devices related to trees, plants, and forests, and in another work to waterfalls, rivers, and water imagery. He also wrote a treatise on how to make rain.³⁸ And he wrote what must be in a class by itself, a treatise in Amdo dialect, nearly unintelligible to readers of classical and modern Tibetan.³⁹ The level of his scholarship is apparent in the fact that his philosophical works are used as texts at Gomang College in Lhasa, and in monasteries throughout Tibet and Mongolia, including in monasteries that do not follow the Drepung Gomang curriculum. This, in the Tibetan monastic tradition, is most rare. In sum, though unique in context and ideology, the diversity and depth of these works attest to Gungtang's scholarship and literary skill.

The mechanical process of book production, the writing, editing, carving and printing these works was no small task. It was a creative process

from beginning to end, with variations at each step. Who wrote a text and how it was composed, whether by one or more than one author, a scribe, editors of different versions' readings, production sequence and design were all vital roles in the production of the Gungtang's works.⁴⁰ The present focus is the composition process as evidenced in Gungtang's works, using data from the colophons and texts, followed by some general comments on the subject matter of the texts.

There are some one hundred and eighty-nine titled works in the edition of Gungtang's *Collected Works* used here, totaling 4026 Tibetan folia and thus 8052 carved blocks.⁴¹ The volume and extent of work required to produce this single collection is very large, but one should keep in mind that producing all of the books that all of the Labrang lamas wrote was enormous. Structurally, the *Collected Works* contains works of all sizes, including very many short pieces, collections of letters, comments, and memoranda. Several texts are unfinished, and a few note that they were begun, left aside and then completed later in Gungtang's life. Two major texts on philosophy, both commentaries on Tsongkhapa's, *Essence of Eloquent Explanation*⁴² were never finished, but are nonetheless highly regarded. Similarly, Gungtang's commentary on the first chapter of the First Jamyang Zhepa's study of the *Perfection of Wisdom* is unfinished.⁴³ The *Collected Works* contains everything the editors could find attributed to Tenpé Dronmé.⁴⁴

The sequence of the *Collected Works* was an editorial choice. It is not chronological, and while texts are often grouped according to subject matter this is not always the case in all of the versions of his works. The present collection opens with a short four-folio praise to Tsongkhapa written by the Third Gungtang and then the lama's own commentary. Putting the praise to Tsongkhapa and commentary in the first position in Gungtang's *Collected Works* was surely an editorial statement.⁴⁵ Editorial selection is also apparent by the following sequence of texts in the first volume, namely *Prajñāpāramitā*, *Madhyamaka*, *Vinaya*, and *Abhidharma*. The opening sequence of the first volume asserts affiliation with the Gelukpa order and goes on to make a statement of Buddhist doctrine by the inclusion of texts associated with each of the three Buddhist canonical literary divisions (*piṭaka*), the Sūtras, the Vinaya and the Abhidharma. After these texts the entire collection is in general grouped by subject matter, but again, the sequence of texts in the opening volumes was evidently given a good deal of thought by the editors.

How were these and other Tibetan texts composed? They are all attributed to Gungtang, but he himself did not literally write them all, but rather composed them. There is here a different understanding of the words compose, write, and so on, and how one goes about these tasks. The following comments on the composition process are taken from the

colophons to Gungtang's works and are listed here to describe how Gungtang and writers like him produced such a huge volume of literature.

The structure of the book production process is implicit in the colophon of Gungtang's edition and note on the *Prajñāpāramitā sañcaya gatha*. The lama started work on the text in about 1786 in Drepung Monastery in Lhasa, when he was twenty-four years old. As the editor tells us,

[W]hen the Reverend Könchok Tenpé Drönmé was twenty-four years old [1786], he would elaborate on the sutras and get straightforward ways of describing them while strolling in the monastery courtyard. But even though these were brief he was not able to remember them all. He thought, "It will be good if I can collect and compose (*sdud dang sbyar*) these as we go along." So he wrote (*bris*) [his notes] on half of the four chapters. However, because he had to follow the schedule of the monastic community he had to memorize the other canonical root texts (*bo ti*) and because he would have to write (*bri*) notes and summaries for every one [of the *Prajñāpāramitā* sūtras], he left the remainder [of the project] behind. Then, Jamyang Puntsog ('*jam dbyangs phun tshogs*), the *Stages of the Path* abbot of Amchok Monastery, whose motives and activities were expansive, said earnestly "I've printed the first part and now I would like to print the entire thing." So, [Gungtang Könchok Tenpé Drönmé] did it, and may this heart of the teachings spread and grow!⁴⁶

The author says explicitly that Gungtang articulated his thoughts first, while strolling in the courtyard, and later collected and composed (*sbyar ba*) them. Only then did he, or most often his scribe write them down. Sometimes the scribe would prepare text from memory and notes from a public teaching, sometimes the scribe had Gungtang's cursive notes, and sometimes a partially written text. Only after all of the pieces were collected and collated were they actually carved into wood blocks and printed.

Gungtang sums up his writing process in the colophon to his short explanation of the *Heart Sutra*. The author first prayed to the Second Jamyang Zhepa, Könchok Jikmé Wangpo. Then, careful of his own inventions and from the beginning relying on the commentaries, he explained his way of understanding and the way of understanding of those in agreement with him, and then added some [explanation].⁴⁷

In the text on the Buddhist monastic codes the editor noted that Gungtang Könchok Tenpé Drönmé first wrote down by hand the unclear points, the points for further discussion, and the scattered bits of information from texts he read. Then, the colophon says, the book production process proceeded in stages. He thought that there would be a terrific benefit to the debates of the assembly of monks, so he put them into print. Still, he encouraged readers to think about his writings:

[I]n general from the beginning he [Gungtang Könchok Tenpé Drönmé] said that he consulted his own notes, without any of the literary devices, like conjunctions and so on. Moreover, at that point, without all of the debates it was as if the beginning and end were not connected, and on two occasions the proofreaders (*zhu dag*) made some changes. So even now it will be good if intelligent people analyze these points.⁴⁸

In the colophon to his verse summary of Abhidharma teachings, his method is described briefly. He first collected information from texts and from debates, discussions and teachings, and from reliance, he said, on his own mind. He continued that one might take notes to help retain useful data. Then one must discuss and debate the text to insure accuracy. Only then can the text formally be set in writing.⁴⁹

The above mental process of arranging is alluded to in the editor's comments on Tenpé Drönmé's 1788 treatise on the Buddhist Four Truths. The colophon says that he set out or composed the text (*nye 'dabs*) at Labrang Monastery, but he wrote (*bris*) the text at his nearby private retreat Yiga Chödzin.⁵⁰ Thus, composing and writing are two different procedures.⁵¹ Composing seems to be the outline stage, or the thematic development, thesis, and sequence of presentation. It includes remembered teachings, and depends on scriptural sources. This is made clear in the colophon to Gungtang's 1818 biography of Tsultrim Tenpé Nyima (1755–1817). The author organized oral sources, transmissions that he heard himself, and others from high and low. He then analyzed them according to the scriptures on reasoning.

The mental preparation and composition of texts were done by remembering, contemplation and analysis. On one occasion the author remarked that he was not just relying on his own mind but on the perspectives of his teachers, from which he handwrote the text.⁵² These perspectives were however remembered if not actively memorized. Similarly, there is the editorial remark that "Tenpé Drönmé did not only rely on the source scriptures, but he composed after he analyzed with his own mind, like a torrent of cool water from the eight branched Ganges River."⁵³ And finally, without any scribes, consultants or libraries, Gungtang composed this text on the road to Tsagen, and afterward wrote what he could remember in long hand.⁵⁴

The text production process sometimes included oral components written down by scribes. One of Gungtang's two famous scribes, Ratna Ananta (the other was Könchok Künga) wrote that "I put down [in writing] what the Gungtang lama said in response to the question . . ."⁵⁵ Again, in the colophon of a prayer, the roles of scribe and oral composer are made clear. Literally, the text says "the writer of what he said spontaneously."⁵⁶ The list goes on. The author said that he wrote these down exactly as he heard them,⁵⁷ he put into letters the dedications that Tenpé Dronmé com-

posed orally after community services,⁵⁸ and he included many citations of sources heard and recalled in this process.⁵⁹ In a very few words, oral sources were in common use, their authority was recognized, and they were accurate and reliable.

But recollection, reflection and analysis of a text outline were not purely inner mentally- and verbally-oriented procedures. Gungtang and other scholars like him were very well read and used others' works to test and contextualize their own. Gungtang's method was to rely on the works of his predecessors and contemporaries, but to formulate his own writing.⁶⁰

He remarked that "I have looked closely at the commentaries on Tsongkhapa, have addressed all of the inquiries, and here put down a brief sample of their content."⁶¹ For example, the author used sources available to him, stated explicitly in the colophon to his text on the Kurukulla ritual.⁶² Elsewhere, to clarify his academic sources and perhaps to make a statement of affiliation he wrote that for primary sources he used Tsongkhapa's writings, the explanations of the skilful Dharmakīrti and the Changkya lama. Then, in agreement with the victorious Ensapa and the First Penchen lama Losang Chögyen, he wrote the text.⁶³ Thus a scholar first reflects, analyzes and composes the logic of his treatise. In Labrang academic circles thorough reading in the bibliographies of relevant subjects was a valued quality.⁶⁴

The operation of the scholarly methods of recollection, reference and composition made the preservation of knowledge possible; this was again a culture and a religious institution built in part on oral transmission, and on literary exegesis and expression. The Gungtang lama received teachings orally from his teachers, examined them, and wrote them down. Gungtang continued the process by teaching his students orally, who then went on to write down Gungtang's words. These writings are thus classified as compositions by the Gungtang lama.

The colophon to Gungtang's long commentary on *Prajñāpāramitā* recorded that the text was composed of notes taken by the student Sudhiḥ, "to the limit of his memory"⁶⁵ after teaching sessions with the lama. Lama Gungtang lectured, Sudhiḥ listened and later wrote. However absent or invisible a scribe might be, and however close the scrutiny of the editorial process, the explanations and expression were processed through the student Sudhiḥ's mind and then written down by the student. They were certainly proofread and checked, but still were not actually written by the Gungtang lama. Similarly, among other texts a short work on logic attributed to Gungtang was compiled by his disciples from their notes taken from the Master's lectures while he was Throne Holder at Labrang. This type of text is common; a later composition consists of notes Tenpé Drönmé took in Lhasa in 1786 and later edited and composed (*nye 'dabs su bris pa*).⁶⁶ Thus the composition

process involved mental reflection, text analysis, mental composition, collation, note taking and finally writing.

The following is a list of words used in the composition process:

write (*bris*)
 write (*phyag bris gnang 'dug*)
 use, apply, compose (*sbyar ba*),
 handwritten (*sug bris*)⁶⁷
 put into print (*shog bur 'bebs pa*)⁶⁸
 compose orally (*bka' stsal pa*)⁶⁹
'phral la sug bris su bgyis pa las shog bur 'bebs pa
'phral du sbyar ba'i yi ge pa
'phral du smras pa'i yi ge ba ⁷⁰
 set down (*bsdebs pao*)⁷¹
 compile (*bsgrigs pa*)

The Gungtang lama's writings are a remarkable achievement and represent a milestone in Tibetan literary history. What is even more remarkable is that there were at Labrang many such writers who produced extensive literary collections, evidencing the value of this intellectual and scholarly activity.

THE NGAKPA COLLEGE (*SNGAGS PA GRWA TSHANG*): RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AT LABRANG

A brief digression outside—but not at all too far outside—of the actual monastery to the Ngakpa College shows a central part of religious life in Labrang's monastic and lay communities. In seventeenth-century central Tibet the majority Gelukpa order and its Mongol supporters “converted” and repressed many Tibetan Bon and Buddhist Nyingma communities. The famous Gelukpa scholar Belmang Pendita (1764–1853) named the Mongol Gushri Khan⁷² as a primary perpetrator. Gelukpa dominance of the central Tibetan government, sectarian resentment and in general lingering divisiveness continued well into twentieth century Tibet. However, at Labrang Monastery, one of the largest Gelukpa monasteries in Tibet, local Ngakpas⁷³ or tantric experts mix with Gelukpa scholars and monks. White robed, long-haired and married Ngakpas and red robed, shaven and celibate monks live, study and worship in institutions mutually sanctioned, recognized and in very close proximity to each other, though the two institutions are strictly divided in monastic vision and even though very close, by the monastery boundary (*sīma*). It appears that inter-religious tolerance and dialogue were the norm. However, this

pluralism at Labrang came at the price of a compromise in the Ngakpa curriculum and practices.

Whatever the reasons, from oral sources it appears that even as early as the eighteenth century the Jamyang Zhepas worked to bridge rather than widen the gap between the Gelukpa, Nyingma and other Buddhist and non-Buddhist groups. A measure of the Labrang's lamas' efforts may be in the fact that the Labrang authorities were sometimes criticized for including Nyingma text recitations, and according to local sources, were even called "dirty Gelukpas" for their open association and endorsement of the Ngakpas. Still, in spite of the dissent, the Jamyang Zhepa lamas persisted in their support, and were in this way forces for resolving differences, for cooperation and communication.

The Jamyang Zhepas acceptance of the Ngakpas moreover must be understood and appreciated in their social and political contexts. Labrang in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was politically associated with religious (*lha sde*) and lay (*mi sde*) estates, which often had historical connections to local Ngakpas, Bon, Nyingma and other religious groups. Local religious experts held a lot of power and prestige, and were often in competition for regional control and resources. In this context, the Fourth and Fifth Jamyang Zhepas especially were practical in their tolerance.

Prior to the founding of Labrang Monastery, Nyingma Ngakpas in the Labrang region lived in village homes or nomad camps, or were itinerant. Their activities included a broad range of religious activities including Buddhist meditation and doctrinal consultation, calendrical ritual services, ritual medical treatment, prognostication, end of life services, invocation of deities for defense and offense, and long life rituals, to name a few.⁷⁴ In later years one of the Ngakpas' important duties was to travel ahead of the Jamyang Zhepa and his entourage to clear away any malevolent spirits. One Ngakpa travelled ahead of Jamyang Zhepa with a painting of the Wheel of Existence (*srid pa'i 'khor lo*) to meet the various demons and obstacles that inhabited valleys, and so on. And, to expedite matters, so it is said, the Ngakpas can fly.

The Ngakpas were fully incorporated into daily life, their role in society was known and accepted, and there was no prohibition against marriage. The Labrang Ngakpas are a non-celibate order, and their order of succession is by family lineage (*gdung rgyud*), not by rebirth (*bla rgyud*), as was common in the major lama lineages at Labrang and elsewhere.⁷⁵ Like the Labrang monks and lamas, the Ngakpas had access to invisible forces and deities, but they themselves were not reborn deities in the way that the lamas were. They also did not have the same kind of social, political and economic infrastructures that dominated this region. That is, the reborn Labrang lamas owned inherited corporate estates (*bla brang*). Until modern times, the Ngakpas were in contrast very much part of the lay reli-

gious culture, dispersed throughout the region, living in lay communities. They did not have an inherited estate until relatively recently.

Accounts of the origins of the Labrang Ngakpas do not agree. Oral traditions are rich with stories of encounters between lamas, deities and demons; written sources offer different accounts of the beginnings of the Labrang Ngakpas, all of which make the following chronology tentative. An oral account of the Labrang Ngakpas' origins relates that Labrang's connection to the Nyingmas goes back to the Second Jamyang Zhepa. This account relates that once, when the Labrang monks were quarrelling, the Second Jamyang Zhepa had a vision of Padmasambhava, who told him that if the Labrang monks would recite the Nyingma *Pema Khathang* and other texts, the quarrelling would stop. And so it came to pass that Nyingma recitation entered Labrang's curriculum. The oral tradition reports that as time went on, the Nyingma texts were recited especially by Jamyang Zhepa's eighty attendants (*zhabs phyi*). This may well have been the case, but today modern Labrang monks do not regularly recite these texts.

Still another account of the Ngakpa involvement with the Labrang Gelukpa authorities places the origins in the office of the Fourth Jamyang Shepa. Modern sources report that in 1880 (on the sixteenth to the twenty-third days of the fifth lunar month), while the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa was on the annual firewood-collecting expedition in Ludü forest near Labrang, he encountered some local religious persons, and at that time "resolved to rebuild the pure community who practiced the system of the ancient Vajrayāna."⁷⁶

This account further records that in 1887 the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa asked a local lama, Gomtar Rinpoché to perform a long life ceremony, and recognized what by other accounts were previously established offices among the Ngakpas, including a disciplinarian (*dge bskos*), a cantor (*dbu mdzad*), a Vajradhara, and a manager, all offices resembling rather strongly those in Labrang Monastery. Moreover, the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa installed statues of Padmasambhava, his attendant deities and their iconographic objects at Labrang. Also in 1887 the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa established the Labrang Ngakpas, by order with their white robes and long braided hair, as the official long life ceremony officiants at Labrang Monastery.

Furthermore, at this time the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa exempted the Ngakpas from the general tax, corvée, pasture, and wood taxes, and from militia service.⁷⁷ He also decreed that the Ngakpas were to come from Labrang's properties and that they were to work in service of those communities. On this occasion Gomtar Rinpoché performed a number of initiations, tormas offerings and ceremonies on behalf of the local Labrang community.

In 1900 the Labrang authorities established some formal structures for the Ngakpas. These were recorded in a manual for conduct, a monastic constitution titled *Mutik Doshel*, with some guidelines for admission to the Ngakpa order. These included the rule that membership was restricted to the persons from Labrang Monastery's local properties (*lha sde shog pa bzhi*) and that the order would include about eighty members,⁷⁸ which corresponded to the number of Jamyang Zhepa's eighty personal attendants. One oral source reported that the number and roles of internal monastic attendants and external Ngakpa attendants were intended to correspond, though this source did not elaborate on the reason. In addition, by this time the Ngakpas were prohibited from the practice of causing harm (*dmod*).⁷⁹ Other practices at the Ngakpa College were a standard academic curriculum, again on the model of Labrang Monastery, recitation, ritual, tormas offering construction, writing, grammar, poetics and other monastic sciences at the intermediate level, and the memorization and study of the *Künzang Lamé Zhellung* and other texts.⁸⁰ The significance of these developments is that in part they mark the hybridization of the Ngakpas and their inherited beliefs and practices.

Modern accounts relate that prior to the early decades of the twentieth century the Ngakpas did not have their own meeting hall; they met in living quarters of the Mongol Prince Künga Peljor. They continued to live in local communities and assembled at Labrang for their services. In 1906 or 1909 the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa gave them a meeting hall in his private residence at Nordzin Palace,⁸¹ named Ögyan Tenpa Dargyé Ling, where they met until the 1940s. By the 1940s there was a school on the second floor of the building and the Ngakpas' meeting hall on the first floor. In those days they reportedly followed the teachings of lama Jikmé Tadröl, who was affiliated with the Dodrupchen Monastery, a prominent Nyingma lama and institution. Their historical scriptural system was the *Longchen Nyingtik*. They performed calendrical rituals according to the Nyingma system, associated with the deities Dorjé Purba, Sengdongma, and others. This was a patently Nyingma institution in a close and modified physical, ritual and ideological relationship with a Gelukpa monastery. It was physically unique because of its location in proximity to and its interactions with a Gelukpa institution. It was ritually unique because of its standardized curriculum and practices modified by Gelukpa priorities. And it was ideologically unique because it bridged the gap between Nyingma and Gelukpa religious orientations.

In 1946 the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa and lama Gortawa, with the help of the Medical College at Labrang with which the Ngakpas reportedly shared teaching lineages and institutional structures, worked aggressively to build a permanent Ngakpa College at its present site, called Sangchen Mingyé Ling, the former residence of the Mongol Prince Künga Peljor

and his family. The Fifth's personal commitment is clear; oral sources report that for building materials he dismantled and offered the materials from the upper storey of his own private residence and appealed to the so-called eighteen estates at Labrang. All of the Ngakpas and their home communities worked to construct the new establishment, which by 1948 was expanded to two buildings. The Fifth Jamyang Zhepa also made offerings of statues, ritual equipment, and vestments and personally participated in ceremonies.

There were strategic relationships among the Ngakpas, Labrang authorities and local elders, with Kirti Monastery in Ngawa in modern Sichuan, and with the Medical College at Labrang; this much is certain. The local tradition however gives different versions of these relationships and of the history of Ngakpa College. What follows is a compilation of these relationships taken from interviews and written sources. The sources agree that when the Ngakpa College was established, the first throne holder was from Kirti Monastery in Ngawa. This came in addition to the fact that the Labrang lamas had a tradition of recognizing the reborn lamas at Kirti Monastery. One version of the story of the first abbot of Ngakpa College relates that the first Throne Holder, the Ninth Kirti Rinpoché Chökyi Gyaltsen, gave up his monk's vows and fled from Kirti Monastery. He reportedly went to Lhasa, then to Xining, Beijing and finally to Genkya Drakkar and Dzögé Tö. There he reportedly met and befriended the lama Gungtang's uncle, a wealthy local lord. This eventually gave him the opportunity to enter the lay office at Ngakpa College. Written sources add that with Kirti Rinpoché, now a reborn lama and a non-celibate Ngakpa installed, the Ngakpa College had an estate, clearly an important increase in wealth and prestige.⁸² However, this is not the only story of the first Throne Holder, and the successive Throne Holders were monks from Labrang Monastery.⁸³

The Labrang authorities engaged the Ngakpas in several different and innovative ways. First, the presence of strong Nyingma institutions and communities on the Labrang peripheries made their inclusion a profitable and secure policy. Second, the connections to Kirti Monastery in Ngawa provided a solid relationship to the Sichuan Ngawa communities in particular. Third, the close relationship between the Ngakpa College and Labrang's Medical College gave the Ngakpas local credibility and legitimized Ngakpa functions. Fourth, inclusion of Ngakpa religious operations enhanced Labrang's religious ritual corpus. Fifth, the involvement of the Labrang authorities in the Ngakpa curriculum shows flexibility on the part of the Gelukpas. Sixth, the Gelukpas modified traditional Nyingma and local religious practices to fit their own curriculum. In sum, the integration of the Ngakpas was one of the most progressive policies of the Fourth and Fifth Jamyang Zhepas. It galvanized the support of neigh-

boring Nyingma communities, and gave Labrang Monastery a reputation for religious pluralism. To this day at Labrang the Ngakpas hold a prominent position in the community.

EMPEROR AS BODHISATTVA, BODHISATTVA AS EMPEROR

The function of religious beliefs in society is evident in the status assigned to prominent persons in the community, both ordained and lay. As in ancient India, the accumulation of merit and sometimes apotheosis of Labrang's supporters were marked by titles like "wheel turning king," "king of the dharma," and others, notably the weighted religious term "bodhisattva,"⁸⁴ which is used very broadly at Labrang. For example, in modern vernacular Amdo Tibetan language a "bodhisattva" is commonly used for a generous or compassionate person. Naming someone a bodhisattva can also be understood as a sign of prestige and respect given to worthy individuals who supported Buddhism. Several Qing Dynasty emperors, notably Qianlong, were named "bodhisattva," and this title is often used as evidence of the emperors' political and religious authority in Tibetan areas, including Labrang.

The use of the title "bodhisattva" went further, to indicate an expanded religious meaning. The early Tibetan kings Songtsan Gampo, Trisong-detsan and Ralpachen supported Buddhist institutions as lay donors, and were identified with bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī and Vajrapāṇi. Sculpture, painting and literature in India, Southeast Asia, Tibet, in Manchu and Himalayan cultures show kings and queens (Queen Victoria was reportedly named as an emanation of the bodhisattva White Tāra)⁸⁵ as enlightened beings—as bodhisattvas.⁸⁶ Well after the ancient Tibetan empire the Sakya lama Pakpa (1235–1280) was recognized as a reborn bodhisattva, and served as a political and religious leader of Tibet. This was soon followed by the institution of the Dalai Lamas, emanations of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, with direct relevance to Labrang. The Qianlong (and Kangxi)⁸⁷ emperor was often referred to as an emanation of the bodhisattva, Mañjuśrī.⁸⁸

The Jamyang Zhepa lamas, themselves widely known as emanations of the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi, were also regarded as emanations of not only one, but at once of three different bodhisattvas: Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, and Vajrapāṇi. They were in addition named rebirths of the scholar Tsongkhapa and the popular Tibetan saint, Milarepa.⁸⁹ The practice of naming someone a bodhisattva, whether in general or as a manifestation of a specific deity was widespread.

There was however another use of the term "bodhisattva" which involved a more mystical, tantric Buddhist apotheosis, requiring con-

secration and extensive ritual practice. This was a more specific meaning of the term “bodhisattva,” used in tantra to designate control in the death and rebirth process, and in the transformation of kings and kingdoms, emperors and empires from mundane realities to at least visionary realms. The Jamyang Zhepas’ sequence of rebirths, for example, was thought to be intentional and a matter of complex doctrines and specific religious achievement; the six Jamyang Zhepa lamas are in fact one single being reborn in six different bodies. Similarly, the realms of the six lamas were under their religious authority and protection, enforced by the hosts of Gelukpa tantric deities. Donors, disciples, and domains of the lamas, including the Qing emperors, were likewise transformed into the retinues of the reborn lamas. However, it does not appear that the Qing emperors were thought to be a succession of a reborn bodhisattva.

More exactly, in the Tibetan Buddhist tantrism known at Labrang the term bodhisattva indicates the realization of enlightenment and subsequent exaltation into a Buddha’s pure conscious aspect (*dharmakāya*), in tantric meditation or at the point of death. Then, the bodhisattva’s enlightened consciousness transforms into an embodied angelic or beatific aspect (*saṃbhogakāya*), resident in a perfected realm, ritually described as a maṇḍala. The practitioner, the bodhisattva, is king or emperor of this transformed realm. Then, depending on the enlightened bodhisattva’s motive, he/she/it voluntarily takes birth in another, “emanation” aspect (*nirmāṇakāya/sprul sku*), in many cases, for example, at Labrang Monastery. Thus a properly initiated, taught, and accomplished human can be called a bodhisattva, and the intent is that the practitioner embodies the divine qualities of a bodhisattva in this world and the next.

Labrang’s many reborn lamas are in this way understood as enlightened beings, emanation bodies of Buddhas.⁹⁰ The necessary initiations of monks and lay donor-disciples into these procedures by qualified lamas and the attendant sacralization of their realms served as devices for building the living and material community. The ritual process was intended to result in unequivocal mastery over all locally resident deities, of which there were very many, all under the dominion of the newly emergent bodhisattva, each individual the emperor of the newly conquered maṇḍala domain in its invisible and implied physical, mundane aspects. In this way a fully consecrated tantric practitioner/bodhisattva assumes dominion over his mind, body, and his environment; these become his empire. Thus the Tibetan lamas, Mongol princes, Tibetan lords, Qing emperors, and monks and pious lay practitioners became bodhisattvas, and kings of their realms.

There are however many caveats, including the fact that though given as blessings and intended to eventually generate desirable qualities in

less than optimally educated disciples, these beliefs and ritual practices were generally reserved for the most advanced practitioners, marked in part by the relatively small enrollment in Labrang's tantric colleges. Also, even when given to disciples, the complexity of the crucial foundational philosophies, the rituals and symbolism were such that mastery required years and even a lifetime of concentrated study and practice. Consecration and instruction, even when given, were understood to require an enormous commitment.

A crucial component of the system was that empowerment of the disciple and the disciple's subsequent assumption of lordship over his domain did not preclude other disciples being similarly endowed. Domains overlapped; one tantric deity's realm did not preclude the presence of another's. Thus, while implying universal or even messianic overlordship of the realm, tantrism is a means for a practitioner to reach an individual enlightened state of mind.

The tantric vision and practice were nonetheless an important source of authority in the Tibetan Buddhist Gelukpa system operable at Labrang. Donations of land, livestock, and lifetime commitment were accompanied by religious apotheosis, usually in the most common systems in use by the Gelukpa. There were certainly other systems in nearby communities, of the Nyingma and other Buddhist and non-Buddhist orders, in which the relative emphasis on ritual, meditation, philosophy, and ethics varied.

SUMMARY: RELIGION AT LABRANG

The range of beliefs and practices at Labrang was broad, from casual observance to gain merit to full scale tantric ritual of the highest order. For ease of understanding, religion can be divided into three descriptive categories, according to the various abilities, motives and commitments of its practitioners. Tibetan Buddhist teachers in the Gelukpa system were certainly aware that different disciples practiced at different levels, as these are well articulated in the elementary texts of the Tibetan "Stages of the Path" (*lam rim*) literature, where they are classified in terms of "three types of persons" (*skyes bu gsum*). These emic categories types parallel, in some respects, the categories first proposed by anthropologist Melford Spiro—dividing Burmese Buddhist practice as, respectively, apotropaic, "kammatic," and "nibbanic"—and widely cited in many areas of Buddhist studies. They also resemble, in some respects, the categories of persons described by the First Jamyang Zhepa, respectively, those interested in worldly advancement (*mngon mtho*), in liberation (*thar pa*) from rebirth in the cycle of deaths and rebirths (*saṃsāra*), and in omniscience (*thams cad mkhyen pa*), taken to mean unexcelled, perfect enlightenment.⁹¹

The first type of person is the one who practices Buddhism to achieve this-worldly goals. This category likely describes those who view Tibetan tantric Buddhism as a source of raw power. Persons of this type are thought to understand tantric deities primarily as terrific beings who can bestow power and protection, and who can influence the outcome of events in the world for earnest initiates. The common worries and concerns of Tibetan nomads, merchants, nobles, many monks and nuns, as well as Chinese emperors, farmers, merchants, and so on, were often addressed by this type of Buddhist practice. Such persons might well build temples and monasteries and give generous donations of time, money, service, and political favors, but all in the service of affecting the affairs of this world. This motivation crosses boundaries of civilization, education, and class status.

The second category of person described in the *Stages of the Path* literature is the type who is primarily interested in attaining a higher rebirth, or differently in Jamyang Zhepa's formula, personal liberation from suffering in the cycle of births and deaths. Here one might include those who took initiations, heard teachings, and practiced visualizations in the interest of attaining higher levels of existence in future lives. Though these persons are engaged in endeavors that are basic to Gelukpa tantric practice and are as such considered serious practitioners, their motives are traditionally seen as self-oriented. As with the first type, however, those falling into this second category came from all classes—from Tibetan nomads who had some education, through nobles, Manchu emperors, court officials, and scholars. The Qianlong emperor himself might well be taken as a representative of this category. Involvement in Buddhism at this level would generally entail acceptance of a cosmic, mystical worldview in which Buddha-nature, the world, and rituals are internalized. The Labrang lamas would have required mastery of an extensive corpus of rituals and meditations pertinent to the spiritual needs of disciples of this second type, on whom they bestowed the requisite initiations.

The third and highest level of Buddhist practitioner according to the *Stages of the Path* and Jamyang Zhepa's teachings is the person who understands the teachings as actual precepts and seeks unexcelled, perfect enlightenment not only for himself, but unselfishly and compassionately for all living beings. This person is aspiring to more than acquisition of worldly power, mystical experience, or heavenly rebirth, and strives to apply Mahāyāna and tantric theory to all aspects of everyday life.⁹² The Labrang teachers who engaged the local lay and ordained communities, and the outside visitors, would likely reserve these teachings for the most committed of their disciples.

In Amdo, religious imaginations and political sovereignty were mixed, not often equally, but nonetheless interconnected. Amdo was host to

some of the greatest Tibetan scholars and religious centers, but at its peripheries it was also contested territory. It was a Tibetan homeland, but at various times also host to the Mongols, Chinese, Muslims, and others. In the Amdo highlands these groups were assimilated, but on the Amdo borderlands many ethnic groups retained pockets of their own cultures, languages, and religions. Through its often tumultuous history, Amdo retained its Tibetan and Buddhist identity and provided the material and ideological foundations for Labrang Monastery.

NOTES

1. Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 243.

2. See the description of Tibetan “proto-nationalism” in Georges Dreyfus, “Tibetan Religious Nationalism: Western Fantasy or Empowering Vision?,” in *Tibet, Self, and the Tibetan Diaspora: Voices of Difference : PIATS 2000 : Tibetan Studies : Proceedings of the 9th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*, ed. P. Christiaan Klieger (Leiden: Brill Publishing, 2000), 37–56.

3. See Geoffrey Samuel, *Tantric Revisionings: New Understandings of Tibetan Buddhism and Indian Religion* (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2005), 27–51; see also Samuel, *Civilized Shamans*. Karl Ryavec and Gray Tuttle have mapped the important Bon, Nyingma, Jonang, Kagyü, and other monasteries and temples in Amdo. Karl Ryavec and Gray Tuttle, “Amdo Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, 2005).

4. An important Labrang labtsé (*bla btsas*), in the words of several local persons, the most important, is to control the deity A myes bya lag, celebrated on the 11th day of the 4th lunar month, observed 22 May 2002. Another, for six of Labrang’s “thirteen villages” is Klu mgo lha sde, celebrated on the 15th day of the 6th lunar month. Yet another, only for Lungkartang village, is Nor bu dgra ’dul, celebrated on the 1st day of the 5th lunar month. Another of the prominent local labtsé is of the deity Genkya Amye Gabo (*rgan gya’i a myes dga’ bo*), who is believed to reside on the mountain Lhatsun Karpo (*lha btsun dkar po*) also known as Ngaika (*nga’i kha*), located just north of Labrang Monastery, observed on the 11th day of the 4th month in the Tibetan calendar (witnessed on 22 May 2002). Labtsé and other relevant religious beliefs and practices are well known, and explained in detail in Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance* and Kapstein, *The Tibetans*. For in depth studies on labtsé and mountain deities see Daniel Berounsky and Martin Slobodnik, “The Noble Mountaineer: An Account of *la btsas* Festival in Gengya Village of Amdo,” *Archiv Orientální, Quarterly Journal of Asian and African Studies* 71.3 (2003): 262–284; Samten G. Karmay, “Les dieux des terroirs et les genévriers: un rituel tibétain de purification,” *Journal Asiatique* 283 (1995): 161–207; Samten G. Karmay, “Mountain Cults and National Identity in Tibet,” in *Resistance and Reform in Tibet*, ed. Robert Barnett (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 112–120. See also the relevant material in Anne-Marie Blondeau and Ernst Steinkellner, ed., *Reflections of the Mountain: Essays on the History and*

Social Meaning of the Mountain Cult in Tibet (Osterreichische: Akademie Der Wissenschaften, 1996); Toni Huber, *The Cult of Pure Crystal Mountain: Popular Pilgrimage and Visionary Landscape in Southeast Tibet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Samten Karmay, *The Arrow and the Spindle: Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet* (Nepal: Mandala Book Point, 1998); Samten Karmay and Yasuhiko Nagano, ed., *A Survey of Bonpo Monasteries and Temples in Tibet and the Himalaya* (Osaka, Japan: National Museum of Ethnology, 2003). For examples of the types of deities and practices common in western Tibet, and in the Bön religion, but not terribly unlike those in Amdo, see John Vincent Bellezza, *Spirit-mediums, Sacred Mountains and Related Bon Textual Traditions in Upper Tibet: Calling Down the Gods* (Leiden: Brill, 2005). See Samten G. Karmay, "A Comparative Study of the *yul lha* cult in two areas and its cosmological aspects," in *New Horizons in Bon Studies*, ed. Samten G. Karmay & Yasuhiko Nagano (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2000), 383–413. For a dated but useful description of Amdo deities and religious practices, see Stubel, *The Mewu Fantzu*, 30–50. For other religious traditions with diversity similar to that at Labrang, even though in SE Asia, see for examples Melford E. Spiro, *Buddhism and Society: A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982) and especially Melford E. Spiro, *Burmese Supernaturalism: A Study in the Explanation and Reduction of Suffering* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1967); see Stanley J. Tambiah, *Buddhism and Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), especially chapters 17–20.

5. Ngakpa (*sngags pa*), literally "mantra," or "mantra-adept," can here also be understood as a tantric practice or practitioner. Persons interviewed at the Ngakpa College at Labrang associated themselves with the Tibetan Buddhist Nyingma order.

6. The author has witnessed many of these types of religious practices, including pilgrimage to Gesar sites, dramatic performances, lamaist healing and prognostication, and others. See Nicholas Sihlé, "Buddhism in Tibet and Nepal: Vicissitudes of Traditions of Power and Merit," in *Buddhism in World Cultures: Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Stephen C. Berkwitz (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2006), 245–271; for the use of stereotypes in Tibetan religious culture, see Charles Ramble, "The Founding of a Tibetan Village: The Popular Transformation of History," *Kailash: A Journal of Himalayan Studies* 10.3–4 (1983): 284–286. See the relevant descriptions of lay Buddhism in E. Sarkisyanz, *Buddhist Backgrounds of the Burmese Revolution* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1965).

7. Étienne Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism: From the Origins to the Śāka Era*, trans. Sara Webb Boin (Louvain: Peeters Press, 1988), 297.

8. Hajime Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism: A Survey with Historical Notes* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989), 101. For the extent of Indian literary culture imported into Tibet, see for example Matthew Kapstein, "The Indian Literary Identity in Tibet," in *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia*, ed. Sheldon Pollock (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 747–802.

9. Nalinaksha Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monasticism* (Calcutta: Calcutta Oriental Book Agency, 1960), 22–24.

10. Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, 307; Ilana Friedrich Silber, *Virtuosity, Charisma, and Social Order: A Comparative Sociological Study of Monasticism in*

Theravada Buddhism and Medieval Catholicism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 57. Of a much earlier period in India, but structurally similar, Silber wrote that the Buddhist Canon contains specific guidelines for the interaction of monasticism with society, “. . . combining an extreme world-negating definition of salvation on the one hand with a sustained concern with the social order as the inevitable and even necessary *context* of this search for salvation on the other.” See Silber, *Virtuosity, Charisma, and Social Order*, 203, 213.

11. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 1990), 170, 199.

12. Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 142; see Georges B.J. Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping: The Education of a Tibetan Buddhist Monk* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 142–146.

13. Rawski calls these monks “lamas,” Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 254.

14. Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 254; see the map in Legrand, *L'Administration*, following 144, which shows the number and location of Tibetan Buddhist monasteries founded in Mongolia between 1692 and 1820, some 132.

15. For an account of the donation of the tent by the Mongol *dpon tshang*, the original groups of novices, donors, local communities, and visiting dignitaries from neighboring communities and monasteries, see Kun mkhyen 'jigs med dbang po, *Kun mkhyen 'jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar* (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, 1991), 169, 176; see A khyig, “Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil gyi ts-hogs chen 'du khang gi ngo sprod rags tsam zhig,” *Bod ljongs nang bstan* 1 (1993): 33–36; see *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Lanzhou, 365–367.

16. There are a number of communities called Dzögé (Mdzod dge). They all are descendents of the Mdzod dge group in modern Sichuan, but the story of this group goes beyond the present project. To avoid confusion, the Mdzod dge smad ma community just east of Gtsos/Hezuo will be called Dzögé Mema. The close neighbor to the northwest, Mdzod dge stod, will be called Dzögé Tö. The Mdzod dge nyin ma group located in modern Rma chu/Maqu will be called Dzögé Nyinma, and the Mdzod dge group in Sichuan east of Ngawa will be called Sichuan Dzögé, consistent with local usage. These Dzögé groups should not be confused the Dme/Rme/Dme bo/Dme Chu group just east of Sichuan Dzögé, here called Mema, Mewo, or Mechu. These too should not be confused with Mema (Smad ma) in southern Gansu. For a description of the communities south of Labrang see 'Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje, “Rma chu rdzong gi 'brog sde chags tshul gyi skor,” *Zla zer* 4 (1991): 51–62.

17. *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Lanzhou, 372.

18. In addition to its primary religious icons this monastery houses the reliquary stupas of the First, Second, and Third Jamyang Zhepas.

19. 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Zhwa ser ring lugs pa skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa rin chen phreng ba*, Vol. 1, Labrang Monastery edition, 1916, fol. 248a3.

20. In addition to its primary icons it holds the remains of the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa's parents. The dates here are generally those given in Yon tan rgya mtsho, *Chos sde chen po bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*: *Mkhas grub 'bum sde'i rol mtsho mdo sngags bstan pa'i 'byung gnas dga' ldan bshad sgrub bkra shis 'khyil gyi skor bzhed gzhung dal 'bab mdzod yangs las nye bar sgrub pa sngon med legs bshad ngo*

mtshar bkra shis chos dung bzhad pa'i sgra dbyangs, unpublished manuscript (Paris, 1987), 308 ff. The otherwise useful account in Miao Zishu, *Labuleng si gaikuang* (Lanzhou: Gansu Minorities Publishing House, 1987), 7, dates the founding of the Lower Tantric College as 1732, "during the office of the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa," who lived from 1648 to 1721. Another interesting account contains the same error, but is useful for its summary of festival days, monastic customs, list of other important temples, and stories of some eminent lamas: Rnam thar rgyal, "Mdo smad 'dbus gtsang gnyis pa' —bla brang du gnas skor la phyin pa'i mthong thos," *Gangs ljongs rig gnas* 2 (1990): 76–77. This account records the architectural similarities at Labrang and in Lhasa, and includes the information that the remains of the Fifth 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa's parents are interred in the Upper Tantric College. See also the account by the Chinese anthropologist Li An-che (Pinyin, Li Anzhai), based on fieldwork in Labrang in 1938–1941, Li An-che, *Labrang: A Study in the Field*, trans. Chie Nakane (Tokyo: Institute of Oriental Culture, The University of Tokyo, 1982), 8; see the same material in Li an-che, *History of Tibetan Religion: A Study in the Field* (Beijing: New World Press, 1994), 147–152. In this book I used both versions; here abbreviated as "Li An-che, *Labrang: A Study in the Field*," and "Li An-che, *History of Tibetan Religion*." For another of the very large number of descriptive accounts of the monastery, which includes the Sixth 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa and a version of modern Labrang's functions, see Mgon dbang, "Kun mkhyen 'jam dbyangs bzhad pa dang khong gi bkra shis 'khyil ba'i lo rgyus mdo tsam gleng ba." *Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig* 3 (1990): 96–112. See also the full-length descriptive studies by Zha Zha (Tibetan: Bkra Bkra) and 'Brug thar (Chinese: Zhou Ta). See the statistics on the buildings at Labrang, including their sizes and capacities, and information on the builders, in Smon lam rgya mtsho, "Dga' ldan bshad sgrub dar rgyas bkra shis g.yas su 'khyil ba'i gling," in *Gan lho'i bod brgyud nang bstan dgon sde so so'i lo rgyus mdor bsdu* (bar cha), *Gannan wenshi ziliao* 9, ed. Gannan zangzu zizhizhou weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao weiyuan hui (Lanzhou, 1993), 1–19. See the citation in *Xiahe Xianzhi*, ed. Che Manbao (Lanzhou: Gansu Culture Publishing House, 1999), 68, where it is stated that in 1940 the Nationalist Chinese government donated 70,000 silver dollars (*yuan*) and the Gansu government donated 3000 silver dollars. Compare the note in *Deb ther rgya mtsho*—Lanzhou, 374 where it is stated that the Second Jamyang Zhepa built the Golden Temple with 10,000 silver *srang*. Note that editor Che Manbao's version of the *Xiahe Xianzhi* was published in Lanzhou in 1999, and Zhang Qiyun's *Xiahe Xianzhi*, based on data from the 1920s and 1930s, was published in Taiwan in 1970. See *Xiahe Xianzhi*-1970.

21. Miao Zhou wrote that during the Qing Dynasty Labrang's monastic population was five thousand eight hundred. Miao Zhou, *Meng zang fo jiao shi* (Yangzhou, Jiangsu: Jiangsu guanglin guji ke yinshi, 1993), chapters 11 and 7.

22. Temple location, local deity control, construction, and consecration involved elaborate rituals with their basis at least in part in Indian mythology. For a good description of Indian precedents, see Michael W. Meister, "Vāstupuruṣa maṇḍalas: Planning in the Image of Man," in *Maṇḍalas and Yantras in the Hindu Traditions*, ed. Gudrun Bühnemann (Leiden: Brill Publishing, 2003), 251–270.

23. Melvyn Goldstein, "Freedom, Servitude and the 'Servant-serf' Nyima: a Re-rejoinder to Miller," *The Tibet Journal* 14.2 (1989): 21; Dreyfus, *The Sound of*

Two Hands Clapping, 37–42. Dreyfus' book is an excellent description of Gelukpa monastic education; see Li An-che, Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, etc.

24. Goldstein, "Freedom, Servitude and the 'Servant-serf' Nyima," 21; Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 37–42. Dreyfus' summary is by far the best account of these matters. See also Li An-che.

25. Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 81, 121–123.

26. See Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 123–128, non-Gelukpa and Jonang, 148.

27. See Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 363, note 41.

28. See the detailed discussions in Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, and in Li An-che. Dreyfus has outlined the central Tibetan Gelukpa curriculum as follows: "(1) study of logic, epistemology and psychology, based on Tibetan 'Summarized Topics' (*bsdus grwa*) debate manuals deriving their content from Dharmakīrti's *Pramānavārttika* and other sources (three to six years); (2) study of the bodhisattva path and related topics in *Prajñāpāramitā* (*phar phyin*) literature, based mainly on Maitreya's *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, its Indian and Tibetan commentaries, and the related debate manuals (five to seven years); (3) study of Mādhyamika (*dbu ma*) philosophy, based mainly on Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra*, Tsongkhapa's *dGongs pa rab gsal* and *Legs shes snying po*, and the related debate manuals (four years); (4) study of Abhidharma, based especially on Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* (*mNgon par mdzod*) and its commentaries (four years); (5) study of monastic discipline, based especially on Guṇaprabha's *Vinayasūtra* and the associated debate manuals (four years). . . . At the Gomang College of Drepung, six years are dedicated to the first phase and six or seven years to the second phase. Once a day classes meet with a teacher for about two hours of text-study; twice daily they meet in the courtyard for sessions of oral debate among students. Five or six weeks out of every year are set aside for an inter-monastic session of debate and study of Dharmakīrti's *Pramānavārttika* and related texts. Those who complete the five phases of the curriculum normally spend additional years reviewing and sharpening their debate skills before undergoing examination for the *dge bshes* degree at the Prayer Festival (*smon lam*) celebrated during the first three weeks of the new year." From Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*. See the abbreviated version of this data at <http://www.thdl.org/essays/dreyfus/index.html>.

29. Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 118–120, etc. discusses predominance of exoteric studies in detail; see Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 219–231.

30. Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 361, note 18 reports that monks in Labrang's tantric and medical colleges first studied in Tösam Ling. However, several still-living sources report that monks could alternatively enter the tantric and medical colleges directly, and complete exoteric studies there.

31. Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 181; Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 98–100, 108, 120, 228–237.

32. Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 179–182, etc.

33. See McCleary and van der Kuijp, "The Market Approach to the Rise of the Geluk School," 165; Melvyn C. Goldstein, "The Revival of Monastic Life in Drepung Monastery," in *Buddhism in Contemporary Tibet: Religious Revival and Cultural Identity*, ed. Melvyn C. Goldstein and Matthew T. Kapstein (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 20–22.

34. Yon tan rgya mtsho, *Chos sde chen po bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, 138. See Gene Smith, *Among Tibetan Texts*, 209–210.

35. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Rten 'brel gyi rnam bzhag lung rigs bang mdzod*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 3 (ga)*, ed. Ngawang Gelek Demo (New Delhi: Gendun Sungrab Minyam Gyanphel Series 33, 1972), 70–71.

36. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Skabs bzhi pa'i bsdus don rgyal mkhan po grags pa rgyal mtshan pa la gnung ba*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 2 (kha)*, 273.

37. *Snyan dngags kyi dper brjod rtsom 'phro can*.

38. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Phags mchog thugs rje chen po la brten pa'i char 'bebs bya tshul*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 7 (cha smad cha)*, 276–288.

39. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Rdo rje 'chang dbang mi yi gar rol pa'i yab rje bstan pa'i sgron me'i zhal snga nas skye bob lo dman kun gyis go bde'i ched phal skad tshul du gnung ba'i zab chos*, 147–161. This text has been studied by E. Steinkellner and A. Rona-Tas, and translated by T.J. Norbu (noted above, T.J. Norbu, "Gungthang pa's Text in Colloquial Amdowa"). See Ernst Steinkellner, "A Literary Source for Late 18th-Century Spoken Tibetan (Amdowa)," *Acta Orientalia [Hungarica]* 34 (1980): 245–248; Andras Rona-Tas, "Linguistic Notes on an Amdowa Text," in *Contributions on Tibetan Language, History and Culture: Proceedings of the Csoma De Koros Symposium held at Velm-Vienna, Austria, 13–19 September 1981*, vol. 1, ed. E. Steinkellner & H. Tauscher (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995), 243–280; T.J. Norbu, "Gungthangpa's Text in Colloquial Amdowa," in *Contributions on Tibetan Language, History and Culture: Proceedings of the Csoma De Koros Symposium held at Velm-Vienna, Austria, 13–19 September 1981*, vol. 1, ed. E. Steinkellner & H. Tauscher (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995), 222–242; T.J. Norbu, "The Profound Dharma Given in the Vernacular so as to be Understood by all Unlettered People: From the Words of the Father Tenpay Dronmé, Vajradhara Dancing in Human Form," *The Tibet Society Newsletter*, New Series 12 (Fall 1984): 10–17.

40. See Kurtis R. Schaeffer, "Printing the Words of the Master: Tibetan Editorial Practice in the Collected Works of 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje I (1648–1721)," *Acta Orientalia* 60 (1999): 159–177; see José I. Cabezón, "Authorship and Literary Production in Classical Buddhist Tibet," in *Changing Minds: Contributions to the Study of Buddhism and Tibet in Honor of Jeffrey Hopkins*, ed. Guy Newland (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2001), 233–263. See also the mention of this process in Dbang rgyal, "Mtshan sgrogs dgon dga' ldan bkra shis chos 'phel gling," 205.

41. The Labrang Gungtang Dkar chag is in *Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me'i rnam thar*, 398–414. Compare 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa's statistics listed in Schaeffer: 143 titled works, 6343 folios, and 12, 686 carved blocks. Kurtis Schaeffer, "Printing the Words of the Master," 160.

42. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Bstan bcos legs par bshad pa'i snying po las sems tsam skor gyi mchan 'grel rtsom 'phro rnam rig gzchung brgya'i snang ba*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 2 (kha)*, ed. Ngawang Gelek Demo (New Delhi: Gendun Sungrab Minyam Gyanphel Series 33, 1972), 725–876.

43. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Phar phyin skabs dang po'i mtha' dpyod kyi mchan 'grel rtsom 'phro*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 2 (kha)*, 220–221. This text includes references to the first Labrang edition of Jamyang Zhepa's work.

44. See the full list of Gungtang's works at www.tbrc.org.

45. See the interesting remarks about the results of praise, worship and mantra recitation in Gungtang's commentary on his praise to Tsongkhapa, Gung thang Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam mgon rgyal ba gnyis pa la bstan pa'i snying po gsal bar mdzad pa'i tshul las brtsams te bstod pa don dang ldan pa'i rgya cher 'grel ba bstan pa'i de nyid snang ba*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 1 (ka)*, 269–270 ff. Praise, prayer and prostration to deities are causes of attaining enlightenment; for example, one becomes close to a deity, like a friend (*rang nyid grogs por nye bar gnas*).

46. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Phags pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa sdud pa mchan dang bcas pa*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 1 (ka)*, 334, fol. *sdud mchan*, 31b.

47. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Shes rab snying po'i sngags kyi rnam bshad sbas don gsal ba*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 1 (ka)*, 715.

48. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Dul ba rgya mtsho'i dka' gnad mdor bsdus pa nor bu'i phreng ba*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 1 (ka)*, 825.

49. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Chos mngon pa mdzod kyi bsdus don chos mngon rgya mtshor 'jug pa'i gru gzings*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 1 (ka)*, 910–911.

50. For Yid dga' chos 'dzin gling and the five retreats at Labrang, see Kha stod chos 'dzin & Dbang rgyal, "Bkra shis 'khyil ba'i ri khrod Inga," *Gan lho'i bod brgyud nang bstan dgon sde so so'i lo rgyus mdor bsdus (bar cha)*, Gannan wenshi ziliao 10, ed. Gannan zangzu zizhizhou weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao weiyuan hui (1993), 26–30.

51. See Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Bden bzhi'i rnam gzhaq thar 'dod 'jug ngogs mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 2 (kha)*, 914. He also uses the word "wrote" (*bris*), see Gung thang's very short *Byang chub bde lam gyi dmigs skor cha tshang bar tshigs bcad du bsdebs pa lam mchog snying po*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 3 (ga)*, 506. It appears that the lama did sometimes literally "write" (*bris*), for example his notes on Mahāmūdra practices from lectures by the Second Jamyang Zhepa, *Dge ldan phyag rgya chen po'i khrid kyi zin bris zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thigs phreng*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 3 (ga)*, 619.

52. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Mthu stobs thugs shes kyiis don chen po la dmigs nas sug bris su bgyis pao, Rdo rje gsum gyi snang ba'i bsdus don*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 5 (ca smad cha, cha stod cha)*, 290.

53. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Ba ri lo tsa ba nas brgyud pa'i lo rgyus dang rig byed ma la 'dod gsol bkra shis char 'bebs*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 5 (cha stod ca cha smad cha)*, 300.

54. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, . . . *tshwa rgan sman chur phyin pa'i lam khar gang dran sug bris* . . . , in *Legs par bshad pa shing gi bstan bcos lugs gnyis yal 'dab brgya ldan*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 9*, 157.

55. *Lan du stsal ba bzhin yi ger bkod pao*, see Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Rnam rgyal bum pa tshad ldan bya tshul*, in *Bka' rtsom sna tshogs kyi skor phyogs gcig tu bsgrigs pa*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me* 10, 24–26, fol. 10b3–11b1.

56. *Thol byung du smras pa'i yi ge pa*, Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Dge ldan bstan pa rgyas pa'i smon lam sogs smon tshig gi skor drang srong chen po'i bden tshig*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me* 10 (*nya smad cha*), 119–120.

57. See Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Thos pa ji lta ba bzhin yi ger bkod pao*, in *Bshad pa sna tshogs phyogs bsdus*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me* 10 (*nya smad cha*), 219.

58. *Ngag lam nas . . . yi ger 'khod pa*, Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me* 10, 227–228.

59. See Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Rdo sems bsgom bzlas kyi sog nas nyes ltung sbyong ba'i nyams len snying por bya tshul*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me* 6, 351, where the editor makes the comment that this text was recited by Chos skyong rgya mtsho and then composed by Tenpé Dronmé, *chos skyong rgya mtshos ngag 'don du bya rgyur / btsun pa dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron mes bsgrigs pao*.

60. See Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Bde gsang 'jigs gsum gyi cho ga mdor bsdus*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me* 7, 119–120.

61. *Mtha' chod par shes 'dod pa rnam rje'i bstod 'grel la zhib tu bstan na de 'thus par yod pas // 'dir don gyi ngo bo mdor bsdus pa'i sa bon tsam zhig bkod pa yin no //*; Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Dge ldan bstan pa rgyas pa'i smon lam grub pa'i bden tshig gi 'grel pa*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me* 5 (*ca stod cha*), 341.

62. See Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Phags ma rig byed ma phyi sgrub kyi thun mong dang thun mong ma yin pa'i rjes gnang bya tshul gsal bar bkod pa dngos grub 'gugs pa'i lcags kyu*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me* 6, 313–314.

63. *Bris*, Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Dril bu lus dkyil gyi mngon rtogs mdor bsdus*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me* 7 (*cha smad cha*), 84.

64. The Gungtang lama's depth of scholarship is shown in his use of Indian texts as sources for his writings. See Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Rdo rje rnam par 'joms pa'i sgrub dkyil cha lag dang bcas pa mchog thun dngos grub gter mdzod*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me* 7, 396. Another text that includes materials taken from scripture and the author's own experiences, is Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Bzang spyod la brten pa'i 'chi blu'i cho ga skye 'gro'i dbugs 'byin*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me* 8, 425: *dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron mes 'don cha dngos gzhi byin rlabs kyi khyad nas pan chen thams cad mkhyen pa'i gsung sor bzhas la cung zad rgyud sogs nas kha bskangs te bsgrigs pa 'dis kyang skye bo rnam dus ma yin [sic?] par 'chi ba'i 'jigs pa las rgyal bar gyur cig*. In *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me* 9, 133 there is a statement that the text was written by Gungtang lama (*phyag bris gnang 'dug*), but then later revised (*ma tshang la rgol ba'i gdams pa khyad 'phags shig tu snang bas*),

and finally written by the scribe (*bdag ratna anantas yi ger bkod pao*), and the text nonetheless attributed to Gunghang.

65. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Grel pa don gsal gyi steng nas rgyas 'bring bsdus gsum mngon rtogs rgyan rtsa 'grel sogs mdo sgyan sbyar ba'i gzab bshad kyi zin bris sbas don gsal ba'i sgron me*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 1 (ka)*, 681.

66. The text on logic is *Rigs lam 'phrul gyi lde mig*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 3 (ga)*, 105–125. (The next title is taken out of sequence here, and there are other short works with no extra information mentioned.) For this twenty-five folio text see *Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, Zab mo lta ba'i zin bris thar lam snang ba*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 3 (ga)*, 519–561.

67. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Bkras shis rdzas brgyad kyi rnam bshad bkra shis dga' ston*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 8 (ja stod cha)*, 143; *Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, Rje btsun bla ma dam pa tshul khrims bstan pa'i nyi ma dpal bzang po'i rnam par thar pa nor bu'i do shal*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 5 (ca stod cha)*, 218–219.

68. Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, *Bstan pa'i 'jug sgo skyabs 'gro'i khrid yig phan bde'i lam bzang gsal ba'i sgron me*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 3 (ga)*, 313. See also the expression *khriḡ chags su bkod pa'i yi ge ba*, in *Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, Mandala gyi khrid yig dpag bsam snye ma*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 4 (nga)*, 49; see also *'phral du smras pa'i yi ge pa*, in the nine folio *Pha ma'i drin gzo'i tshul dang gshin por ma ni bskul ba'i mgur dbyangs*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 4 (nga)*, 184; see *'phral du sbyar ba'i yi ge pa*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 5 (ca stod cha)*, 397.

69. These notes give some idea of the teaching, learning and text composition processes. *Rigs lam 'phrul gyi lde mig*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 3 (ga)*, 125; *Grub mtha' bzhi'i 'dod tshul sogs dris lan sna tshogs kyi skor zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thigs phreng*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 3 (ga)*, 127–170; see *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 8*, 172. Compare *'phral du sbyar ba'i yi ge pa*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 8*, 197; 9, 430; and elsewhere.

70. *Blo sbyong gi don tshan bdun tho tsam du bkod pa*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 9*, 144.

71. *Dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed dpa' bo gcig pa'i bdag 'jug ngag 'don rim par bsgrigs pa*, in *The Collected Works of Gun-than Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i sgron me 7*, 150.

72. Dbal mang is explicit, and names Gushri Khan and others as the perpetrators, see *Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus*, 614.3–615.2. See also the summary of events in Samten G. Karmay, "Introduction," in *A Survey of Bonpo Monasteries and Temples in Tibet and the Himalaya*. *Bon Studies* 7, ed. Samten G. Karmay & Yasuhiko Nagano (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2003), 1–16.

73. Here I refer to the local *sngags pas*, literally "tantrics" as of the Rnyingma order. Others have referred to *sngags pas* in general, and with an example from Amdo, as Bön practitioners. See Per Kvaerne, *The Bon Religion of Tibet* (Boston: Shambala, 1996), 14. In addition, in 9–23 Kvaerne describes the actual practices

of the Bön, which in part do resemble at least some of the Labrang *sngags pa* rituals. Still, Yu Shiyu describes the Labrang ngakpas as Nyingma; see Yu Shiyu, “Labuleng hongjiao lamade xianzhuang: qiyuan yu gezhong xiangzheng” (1942), in *Xibei minzu zongjiao shi liao wen zhai*, ed. Gansu Library Reference Cataloguing Department (Lanzhou: Gansu Library, 1984), 405–407. (Originally published with the same title in *Xin Xibei* 5.4–6.) Other text sources, persons interviewed, and my observations at the Ngakpa Monastery indicate that the *sngags pas* in this place and time associated themselves with mainstream Rnyingma practices. Actual *sngags pa* practice is a study in itself that goes beyond the present focus on their assimilation into the Labrang *dge lugs pa* community. See Karmay and Yasuhiko Nagano, *A Survey of Bonpo Monasteries*.

74. See Karmay, *The Arrow and the Spindle*.

75. See the descriptions and functions of Bön lay lamas in Tsering Thar, “The *bla ma* in the Bon religion in Amdo and Kham,” in *New Horizons in Bon Studies*, ed. Samten G. Karmay & Yasuhiko Nagano (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2000), 417–427; see Dbang rgyal, “Bla brang gsang chen smin rgyas gling,” in *Gan lho'i bod brgyud nang bstan dgon sde so so'i lo rgyus mdor bsdus (smad cha)*, Gannan wenshi ziliao 11, ed. Gannan zangzu zizhizhou weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao weiyuan hui (Lanzhou, 1993), 66–69.

76. Dbang rgyal, “Bla brang gsang chen smin rgyas gling,” 66.

77. Dbang rgyal, “Bla brang gsang chen smin rgyas gling,” 67. An oral account reports that the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa exempted the Ngakpas, their students and extended families from paying the greater of the then two-tiered taxes, and also reduced their lesser tax responsibility by half.

78. Dbang rgyal, “Bla brang gsang chen smin rgyas gling,” 68–69. See Makley, *Violence of Liberation*, 67–68, 115.

79. Interview.

80. Dbang rgyal, “Bla brang gsang chen smin rgyas gling,” 69; Interviews.

81. Nordzin Palace, Jamyang Zhepa's private residence, was built in 1888 at the site mentioned in the Klu sdings section at Labrang. See “*klu sdings su nor 'dzin pho brang gsar bskrun*,” ‘Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 104a5; see also 106a5. An oral account reports that the chapel at Nordzin Palace was donated to the Ngakpas in 1906, not 1909.

82. Dbang rgyal, “Bla brang gsang chen smin rgyas gling,” 68; Interviews; Ko rgyud o rgyan ‘phrin las, *Mdo smad bla brang sngags mang gi lo rgyus (The History of Labrang Ngak Mang Lamasery)* (Xiahe, Gansu, 2005), 41–45.

83. An oral source reports that was an intrigue between the Ninth Kirti Rinpoché's mother, a local lord (one “Zhag sdom” of nearby Sgyis tshang), and reportedly an uncle of Gungtang Tenpé Wangchuk who conspired to install their choice of monastic official and were abetted by corrupt officials from the Gungtang estate at Labrang. These three reportedly installed Throne Holder called Kirti at Ngakpa Monastery. This false Throne Holder was reportedly not the Ninth Kirti, who in this account died at a very young age. The conspirators concealed the real Ninth's death and installed the pretender at Ngakpa College. This pretender was later captured by monks from Kirti Monastery and punished by having his ear cut off. I have not corroborated any of these details.

84. See Silber, *Virtuosity, Charisma, and Social Order*, 60n7, 66, 72, 74, 85.

85. Graham E. Clarke, "Blood and Territory as Idioms of National Identity in Himalayan States," *Kailash: A Journal of Himalayan Studies* 17.3–4 (1995): 103.

86. See Patricia Ann Berger, *Empire of Emptiness: Buddhist Art and Political Authority in Qing China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003); Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 260–261; see also Joseph Farquhar, "Emperor as Bodhisattva in the Governance of the Ch'ing Empire," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 38 (1978): 5–34; see David Seyfort Ruegg, *Ordre Spirituel et Ordre Temporel dans la Pensée Bouddhique de l'Inde et du Tibet* (Paris: Collège de France, 1995), 38, 70–76.

87. See Yumiko Ishihama, "The conceptual framework of dGa'-ldan's war based on the *beye dailame wargi amargi babe necihyeme toktobuha bodogon i bithe*, 'Buddhist Government' in the Tibet-Mongol and Manchu relationship," in *Tibet and Her Neighbours: A History*, ed. Alex McKay (London: Edition Hansjörg Mayer, 2003), 162; Kangxi was titled in 1710, see Farquhar, "Emperor as Bodhisattva."

88. 'Jam dbyangs gong ma, very frequently in the biographies of the 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pas. See (on the thangka of the emperor as bodhisattva) Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 48–49; 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 3b4. See Farquhar, "Emperor as Bodhisattva," 33. Farquhar decided that the emperor refrained from referring to himself as a bodhisattva as a matter of diplomacy.

89. 'Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 160; Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 10–13; Dka' bcu dge slong bstan pa rgya mtsho, *Kyee rdor tshang gsang sngag dar rgyas gling gi gdan rabs gsang chen chos kyi nyi ma* (Labrang Monastery, undated), fol. 4b. The 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pas are also often referred to as rebirths of Tsongkhapa, and on several occasions, of Milarepa. For Milarepa, see for example 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 142a1–2. For Tsongkhapa, see for example Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 240. For an interesting and detailed passage on the problem of one and many emanations, see the biography of the Fifth 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, Skal bzang dkon mchog rgya mtsho, *Kun mkhyen chen po rje btsun blo bzang dbyangs ye shes bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i rnam thar ba dpag bsam ljon ba* (Labrang Monastery, ca. 1953), fol. 7a2–9a1 ff.

90. See Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 248–255. For a considerably more accurate summary of the theory of rebirth, and particularly for references on its emergence as a political mechanism, see Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation*, 5, 38–50, and especially 205, n. 19; see McCleary and van der Kuijp, "The Market Approach to the Rise of the Geluk School," 149–180.

91. Three types of persons are described in the writings of Tsongkhapa (1357–1419), required reading for monks in the Dge lugs pa system. They are explained in detail in his *Short Stages of the Path*: Tsongkhapa, *Skyes bu gsum gyi nyams su blang ba'i byang chub lam gyi rim pa chung ba* (Dharamsala edition, undated), 62–82 and following; see 'Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 164, *la la mngon mtho dang la la thar pa dang la la thams cad mkhyen pa*. Dreyfus cites Tsongkhapa's longer *Stages of the Path* (*Lam rim chen mo*), and an

earlier and different three-part model formulated by Atīśa. See Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, 20–23 and especially 340 n21. 340. See Spiro, *Buddhism and Society*, 11–14.

92. See these categories in Paul Nietupski, “The ‘Reverend Chinese’ (Rgya-nag-pa tshang) at Labrang Monastery,” in *Buddhism between Tibet and China*, ed. Matthew Kapstein (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009), 181–213.

Chapter 3

Labrang's Society

Amdo is home to “ten thousand white-capped ones, ten thousand farmers, and ten thousand nomadic tent-dwellers.” (*mgo zhwa dkar can gyi khri sde // rong shing sgo can gyi khri sde // 'brog sbra ba can gyi khri sde*)¹

Labrang's primary communities were under the control of monastic estates. The communities were tribal, or non-state ethnic groups with detailed monastic and lay bureaucracies that interacted and functioned together, not always perfectly or consistently, but with mutual recognition and understanding of their relative roles. This chapter describes social and political structures in Labrang's community-at-large and by extension in Amdo. It shows that the communities' revenues were owned by monastic estates and that in return for revenues and control the monasteries offered religious and a full range of community services.

This description of Labrang's Tibetan-style interactive religious and lay society is based in large part on interviews. It tells of Amdo and Labrang community structures, and shows how the monastery served as the central ideological and corporate institution. It tests the extent of implementation of religious ideals found in texts, to avoid misrepresenting actual highlands nomadic society in idealized Buddhist terms, often found in Tibetan Buddhist-inspired records.

At the same time, this chapter tests the biased perspectives of Labrang and Amdo found in field reports of early western scholars, foreign missionaries, and in Chinese gazetteers, for examples, where scholars, missionaries, and politicians explain Amdo and Labrang's history from their own viewpoints, frequently critical of the Tibetans for their lack of what was perceived as civilized.² Keeping mindful of relevant social theories,

this chapter will present neutral descriptions of the Labrang community's social, political, and economic structures. Briefly, this was the community that built, sustained, and was fully integrated with the monastery and the monastic infrastructure.

POPULATION

Amdo Tibetan nomads lived in a high-altitude and harsh environment, a vast and sparsely populated territory. The rugged highlands and its fragile ecosystems supported relatively small numbers of peoples; the scarce resources were another compelling motive for territorial control. Accurate population figures are difficult to obtain, but an anthropologist working in the region during 1938-1941 estimated the population in the Labrang district of Amdo to be less than 50,000 persons, consisting of "13,249 villagers, 26,427 tent-dwellers, and 7,640 monks: 47,316 altogether. Of the tent-dwellers, or nomadic pastoralist, 23,227 are Tibetans and 3,200 Tibetanized Mongols."³ Another account from roughly 1928 gives a population estimate for Xiahe County as 34,000.⁴ Further, by one estimate, in 1928 Labrang had some two thousand six hundred monks and two thousand six hundred people living in the market village just outside of the monastery.⁵ It reports that all the monks were Tibetans with a few Han, and that the townspeople were 45% Tibetans (1170 persons), 36% Hui (the ratio of Hui to Salar was four to one, altogether 930 Muslims), and 19% Han Chinese (494 persons).⁶ Oral interviews report that in the 1930s there were some eight hundred Muslims in Xiahe village, and few Chinese; somewhat smaller numbers than those given in the Chinese account.⁷ Many of these Muslim residents in Labrang were refugees from the warfare in the Linxia and nearby regions. Makley summarizes data from Li Anchai and others, reporting that in the Tawa section of Xiahe in the 1940s there were "over a thousand households and some thirty-five hundred people, over half of whom were Han and Muslim Chinese."⁸ Other persons interviewed reported that many of the Chinese and Muslims in early 1930s Labrang were not permanent residents, but temporary businessmen. The increase in numbers at Labrang in the late 1920s and 1930s was likely due in part to the widespread civil wars, large numbers of refugees, and subsequent lifting of the restrictions against families, i.e., male and female couples, emigrating to Xiahe.⁹

SOCIAL DIVISIONS IN AMDO

Labrang Monastery and its extended communities were certainly supportive of Buddhism. The community sponsored the construction of

monasteries and temples on a grand scale. Several of Tibet's most prolific writers lived and worked at Labrang, and the monks and lamas regularly instructed and provided a full range of religious services for the community. Labrang was in these ways a fully developed Tibetan Buddhist community, in some ways like a "second wonderful Magadha, in the Land of Snows."

On the other hand, life among the nomadic communities could be and often was rather brutal, far removed from any Buddhist behavioral guidelines. When attacked, in times of hardship, or even opportunity some Amdo Tibetan nomad groups would raid neighboring communities, steal their animals, tents and goods, and chase away adult males. In turn the escaping nomads would try to rally their allies to counterattack and recapture as much as possible of their livestock, kin and goods.¹⁰ In these respects, it was hardly an idyllic "second Magadha."

The values and lifestyle of the Amdo Tibetan nomads presented challenges to monastic authorities who often had to mediate between neighboring ethnic groups, nomad chiefs, Buddhist monks, and Mongol princes.¹¹ For nomads, wealth and property were measured in livestock and rights to pasture, which shifted periodically.¹² Moreover, nomadic economy was not at all a commodity economy, or one focused on increasing the productive capacity of an industrialized infrastructure. Rather, "production remained limited to basic requirements. . . [v]ery few items for exchange were produced in comparison with the case of settled peoples."¹³ Many nomad groups were

self-sufficient, produced most of their consumer goods, thereby forming a pattern of everyday life consumption based mainly on animal husbandry products. Everything from clothing, food and drink, and housing to daily necessities had to do with the [livestock] *nor*.¹⁴

By contrast, and in general, in neighboring agrarian Chinese societies, land boundaries and ownership were well-defined, often inherited, taxed by the central government, and so on. Again in contrast, in regional nomad cultures, as in Mongolia,

animal ownership dominated in Mongolia, land ownership being reduced to a right of access. . . . The appropriation of pasture land stands in fundamental contrast to the appropriation of land under the conditions of settled agriculture which carries out production by working the land via human labor.¹⁵

Still, though used, understood, and negotiated differently, local nomadic territories and boundaries were well-defined, and ownership assumed and powerfully asserted.¹⁶ While cycles of unrestrained and un-

principled violence and feuding were known, there were also bureaucracies in place in the monastery and in nomad and farming territories that functioned on a day to day level. The community at large had its times of battle, and of relative peace and prosperity.

Nomadic lifestyles and values were moreover quite unlike the agrarian and urban structures at the core of Chinese civilization. The result was that there were sharp distinctions in ethnic, economic and social qualities across Tibetan, Mongol, Manchu, Muslim, and Chinese national borders, and powerful senses of national pride and prejudice. These gradually resulted in a complex matrix of politics, ethnicity, religion, and identity at Labrang.

The monastic and lay bureaucracies show that people in Amdo's communities were divided into different social groups.¹⁷ While the historical roots and fundamental relationships between lords and subjects were in ways similar to those in other Tibetan regions, in Amdo and at Labrang the numbers of groups and the names of the different officers, the social, tax and legal structures were regionally defined and not at all identical to those in central Tibet.

Beginning with the most powerful groups, in the Labrang community the broad social categories were first, the monastic estates with their lama lineages and their designated field officers (*'go ba*), their agricultural and nomadic properties and resident communities. Second, there were a few non-monastic agricultural and nomadic estates, with communities led by their own lords and ladies (*dpon po/mo*). Third, there were also small independent communities with no formal officers, led by family groups, with minor and sometimes no tax responsibility for leased farm or pasture land. Common people (*skya ser, mi ser*) in communities owned by a monastic group or lord had powerful commitments to group values, a practically inescapable place in local society.

These powerful groups functioned in inherited social divisions, in some ways similar to those in central Tibet, but again without an extensive established class of clan lords. In contrast to the central Tibetan administrative districts (*rdzong*), the largest social unit in these regions was called a *shog pa* or *shog kha*. It is understood as a "village, collection, neighborhood,"¹⁸ alternatively, a unit of "several villages,"¹⁹ a "congregation,"²⁰ or simply, a "lineage group."²¹ None of these is exactly correct, however. Firstly, in Amdo these *shog pa* were predominantly nomadic communities, not sedentary villages. The primary forces that bound the *shog pa* were kinship, territorial identification²² and religion. Kinship must be understood in its local context, with its particular family structures and marriage customs, for example, that served to unite and develop regional groups. Further, though perhaps originally bound by family relations (as Ekval indicates), as time went on *shog pas* absorbed unrelated persons

and families from neighboring groups. Kinship is thus not an invariable defining characteristic of a *shog pa* group. Identification with a territory must also be understood in the context of nomadic sense of land use and ownership. Moreover, in many cases a group identified with one territory moved or was moved to a new location, retaining their group identity and name in a new location. Thus territorial identity is an important, but not invariable component of a *shog pa*. Religion was a crucial binding force for these people, producing a sense of community, camaraderie and group understanding. However, religious beliefs and practices in this region were not uniform, so while belief in deities and invisible powers and associated rituals were widespread, beliefs and practices varied from place to place. In sum, a *shog pa* was a social-economic unit, a political administrative unit, often with a community leader, either a local lord (*dpon po*), or a Labrang-appointed representative (*gowa*; Tibetan, 'go ba) or administrator (*kutsap*; Tibetan, *sku tshab*), both functioning in well-defined authority structures.

In spite of their peculiar social and kinship structures, sense of land use and ownership, and complex deity-inhabited world and rituals, Labrang's predominantly nomadic *shog pa* communities had territories with distinct boundaries. These were groups of peoples with local identities, each with a sense of their group's history and place, and sense of belonging to the community. From this perspective, outside boundaries drawn by neighboring civilizations were not meaningful.

In communities not affiliated with a monastery, large *shog pa* groups had leaders who were wealthy and powerful enough to rise to prominence and serve as local lords. This status was usually inherited and often strengthened by male children, though in the absence of a male heir a female could inherit the title and properties as well. In some cases if there was no strong male, female or shared heir or heirs, leadership status shifted to another family in the *shog pa*. Most of the Labrang territories had several *shog pa* and several lords under monastery jurisdiction, but in some cases one lord was prominent. For example, Dzögé Mema had five *shog pa* communities and five lords, but one was richer and more powerful than the others.²³

Shog pa governance was not uniform. While many *shog pas* often had lords, in Belmangtsang *shog pa* there was no single lord (*dpon po*) who led the entire group, as there were in other places, such as Ngülra where each *shog pa* group had a lord, in Dzögé Mema, and elsewhere. There are very many such varying descriptions for other regional *shog pas*, for instance, Chukama (*chu kha ma*), another of Labrang's lay communities,²⁴ and others. Again, in Labrang's properties, legal authority and economic rights were not in the hands of the local lords, but rather in those of monastery-appointed representatives. In communities where Labrang had economic

interests but not legal authority or ownership, a monastery-appointed administrator (*kutsap*) was assigned to oversee monastery interests. These assignments again were not uniform in all places and times.

Each of Labrang's nomadic territories had different numbers of *shog pas*, all with detailed local histories, and names and boundaries that changed over the years.²⁵ New *shog pas* could be formed or dissolved as a result of migration to new territory, by conquest by another group, or because of the death of a leader with no heir.²⁶ For example, Trokho Khaksum had three *shog pas* that were later divided into six. Dzögé Mema had five *shog pa*, Labrang's original territory had four, Ngülra had three, Hortsang eleven, Dzögé Nyinma had six,²⁷ Bora four, and so on.

Trokho Khaksum's history is typical. It was divided twice, finally into modern day Mema, Belmangtsang, Chukama, Nurma Gongma, Nurma Gabma, and Tseruma. These names are in current use, as county names (Chinese: *xian*), villages, and in local memories. The name Trokho Khaksum is still in popular if unofficial use, and though the political height of the original unit of three *shog pas* passed long ago, the social and political divisions are part of living local heritage. Its heritage as a Labrang supporter is also strong and again typical. The Trokho Khaksum *shog pa* was a key supporter of Labrang Monastery; stonemasons from Trokho Khaksum helped lay the foundation of the Dukang Chenmo, the first major building at Labrang. Trokho Khaksum maintained a close relationship with Labrang, notably in 1775 during the office of the Second Jamyang Zhepa and later in 1852, when the local people supported the construction of a local monastery under the jurisdiction of Labrang.²⁸ Thus this typical predominantly nomadic *shog pa* community had a long history of territorial integrity, formal allegiance and financial responsibility to Labrang Monastery.

These *shog pa* community groups were made up of different subgroups, called *tsowa* (*tsho ba*). A *tsowa*, likewise, was made up of several smaller divisions, both related and unrelated by family kinship ties. These smaller family or usually nomadic "households" (though they usually lived in tents) divisions are called *kyimtsang* (*khyim tshang*).²⁹ According to most interviews, *tsowa* groups had from three to about fifteen separate families/households, both related and unrelated by kinship. In a rather confusing development, the term *tsowa* is sometimes, especially in modern usage, used as a synonym for the term *shog pa*.³⁰ In the view of many local informants this seems to be somewhat mistaken, as they understand the *shog pa* as a larger, inclusive unit, and *tsowa* as a smaller constituent part. Some sources make a clear distinction between a *shog pa* and a *tsowa*. For example, one source reported that before 1949, Belmangtsang, a Labrang lay community, was a *shog pa*, with four *tsowas*. The Belmangtsang *shog pa* was inhabited by four hundred forty-two families (*khyim tshang*), totaling 1,673 people, dispersed over the four Belmang *tsowas*.³¹

Still, a *shog pa* and a *tsowa* are made up of the same fundamental units, so using the two terms interchangeably, even if historically somewhat inaccurate, is understandable. For example, Ngülra is commonly described as having three *shog pas* (*shog snying*, *shog chung*, and *shog ru*).³² However, one text calls the three divisions *tsowas*, and details the different families in each.³³ From this, and from many interviews, it appears that in recent times at least the terms *shog pa* and *tsowa* were interchangeable.

Further, the term *rukor* (*ru skor*), literally a "division," or simply a "group" is in common use in Labrang's territories. It is primarily a social and economic term used by nomads. It is not in this context used to signify permanent political groups, and it is not based on kinship. Its origin is unclear, but it is likely derived from ancient imperial Tibetan political terminology. The *rukor* groups in Labrang's territories operated alongside of the *shog pa* and *tsowa* groups; they were not mutually exclusive. For example, in addition to its *shog pa* and *tsowa* social political structures, Belmangtsang counted thirty-six *rukor* groups. Hura Tsowa, a local Belmang subdivision, had sixteen of these *rukor*. One hundred and fifty-two families (*khyimsang*), about six hundred eighty-eight persons were counted in the *rukor* groups.³⁴

In Labrang's territories *rukor* were groups of nomads who voluntarily grouped together usually in summer pasturelands, in what Ekvall called "tent circles." In winter, *rukor* disbanded and stayed in single districts with members of other summer *rukor*. Thus, for the summer pasture season local nomad groups chose from their available pastures by lottery and then dispersed to their different pasturelands. This summer group was their *rukor*, or tent circle.³⁵ In winter they returned to their respective districts, whether a *shog pa*, *tsowa*, or village.³⁶

Finally, over time the term *dewa* (*sde ba*) was used to refer to the inclusive category of all winter places and summer pasturelands. This resulted in the situation that one *dewa* administrative district sometimes contained many different *shog pa*, *tsowa* and *rukor* groups. Still, in what is perhaps a vestige of previous social and political structures, and in addition to *shog pa* and *tsowa* structures, in these *dewa* the *rukor* summer groups had officers whose functions included political administration, economic policies, military affairs, and religious affairs, again in the context of their summer groups.³⁷ When they gathered in their winter camps the officers observed a more collective authority.

This term, *dewa* (*sde ba*), or a *detsen* (*sde tshan*), literally a "district" or a "homeland" is in common use in Labrang's territories. This term can be understood as having an administrative or political use which contains social structures. Frequently, sedentary farming communities were referred to as *dewa*. In addition, the term *dewa* over time came to refer to larger administrative districts inhabited by both nomads and sedentary peoples,

and includes monasteries, villages, and pasturelands. As communities changed their economy from pastoral/nomadic to farming, terms generally used in nomad regions were not used, and each village or group of villages was called a *dewa*, with a *dépon* (*sde dpon*) as local leader.³⁸ Labrang's support communities are referred to as *dewa*, and include Sangkhok, Khotsé, Ngülra, Ngawa, Dokar, Genkya, Dzögé Nyinma and Labrang. These places also have their own social divisions, *shog pa*, *tsowa*, *rukor*, and so on, but are collectively referred to as being in a particular *dewa*, or district/homeland. To summarize briefly, a large community (*shog pa*) included or consisted of kinship-related and unrelated sub-groups (*tsowa*). These groups dispersed into different summer *rukor* pasturelands. All divisions were eventually located in different political *dewa*.

NOMADIC AUTHORITY STRUCTURES: LOCAL OFFICERS

In each *shog pa* the lords (*dpon po*) or monastic-appointed leaders (*gowa*, *kutsap*) selected officers from their group based on the person's reputation and strength. It appears that there were some consistent local office structures in different communities, but there were also local variations. Here, typical structures are described based on samples taken from a broad survey of Labrang's properties. In Labrang's territories, local leaders were presented to and endorsed by the Labrang lamas. When asked why they selected these leaders, one informant responded that "local peoples came from so many different places and had different customs, so a community leader was necessary to address the varying concerns." These leaders were called "tent leaders" (*gur gang ba*), and again in the words of an informant, this position and the associated structures were common in all places "where people lived in tents" (*gur*). If the tent leader's performance was unsatisfactory he could be replaced after a year of service. At the same time, leadership was often inherited, patriarchal, and maintained by an individual's personal strength and the level of commitment he could elicit from his peers.³⁹

The number of "tent leaders" depended on the size of the *shog pa*. For example, in greater Dzögé Nyinma there were nine tent leaders: two from Dzögé Nyinma, two from Ngülra, and the remaining five from other local places. The officers and administration under the Labrang representatives' and tent leaders' jurisdiction were collectively called "administrative assemblies" (*sgar skor*).⁴⁰ In each administrative district there were officers (*dpa' skor*) under the tent leader. These were a public announcer (*skad rgyag*), an economic officer (*yong sgo*), an arbitrator (*gzu tsha*),⁴¹ and a fine collector (*lug sha za*). In addition to these functionaries who worked directly with the tent leader, each community had their own officers selected from

local families (*gur gsum gyi mi sde skyong srol*). These officers were in charge of implementing policies in the community. Their job titles were attendant (*gnyer ba*), assistant (*ca lag*), service person/servant (*'thu sa* or *g.yog po*), and domestic (*sbra nang*). In addition, a waters officer (*nur chu*) settled disputes over local water usage, and a livestock manager (*lug rdzi tshang*) offered animals to the local protector deities. There were evidently different names for officers in different local communities.⁴² Though not consistent in all locations, the fundamental structures of the office of the tent leaders were corroborated by some thirty persons interviewed from Ngülra, Dzögé Nyinma, Trokho, Belmangtsang, Mema, and elsewhere. In the strictly agrarian communities many of these positions were similar, but with different names and offices appropriate to a sedentary culture.⁴³

MONASTIC AND ESTATE GOVERNANCE

Labrang Monastery had different layers of internal governance that evolved and grew more specialized as the monastery grew in size. When the monastery was founded, there were first a throne holder (*khri pa*), a disciplinarian (*dge bskos*), a cantor (*dbu mdzad*), a finance officer (*spyi pa*), and librarian (*dkon gnyer*). As time went on and the monastery grew in size, its bureaucracy likewise expanded. The Second Jamyang Zhepa for example expanded monastic governance. The highest authority was always the Jamyang Zhepa, followed by the throne holder of the main assembly (*tshogs chen khri pa*). Next in authority were the administrator (*kutsap*), the assembly finance manager (*tshogs chen spyi pa*), the main spokesperson (*tshogs chen zhal ngo*), the assembly cantor (*tshogs chen dbu mdzad*), the librarian (*dkon gnyer chen mo*), and the Mongol Lord's attendant (*dpon tshang gnyer ba*). The Throne Holders of Labrang's six colleges and their primary attendants were under these officials, and each of these was attended by groups of three to six attendants, who were in turn each assisted by groups of six monks.

The affairs of the main estate were overseen by the Jamyang Zhepas, and under him first his tutor (*yongs 'dzin*), chief attendant (*sku bcar mkhan po*),⁴⁴ treasurer (*phyag mdzod*), and an internal affairs manager (*nang mdzod*). In later years the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa's father participated in community governance. Under these officials was a group of eleven lesser officers and under them a much larger group of some eighty attendants, servants, and secretaries. The eleven officials were in charge of public announcements, household management, religious affairs, the estate stables, secretarial services, the guesthouse, and others.

The Fourth Jamyang Zhepa instituted yet another level of governance, similarly structured but specifically intended to oversee the affairs of the

many different estates and their extensive holdings. There was in addition at least one prison in Labrang/Xiahe town at this time. Later, the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa revised the public administration further, implementing a Central Office (*yiktsang*; Tibetan, *yig tshang*) on the model of Lhasa's. In sum, there was a comprehensive monastic bureaucratic structure at Labrang. In addition to these bureaucratic structures, local nomad and agricultural groups had their own officers and customs as noted.⁴⁵

Residents on the monastic estates had to pay taxes in kind, usually a portion of their harvest or in the case of nomads, mostly wool. While there were principles for negotiation, there was no uniform rate of taxation for agricultural or nomadic areas. Communities had to provide corvée, but this too was different depending on whether the community was sedentary and located close to the monastery, in which case residents were required to engage in construction, maintenance, and other such work. For example, the Gungtang estate operated with an apparently consistent system by which every year fifteen people from fifteen separate villages were required to work for that one year. If nomadic, the most common or only corvée was travel and service support for visitors from the monastery. These groups were the core of Labrang's and Amdo's monastic support communities.

In sum, the Labrang estates were the monastic seats of many individual monastic lords, understood as emanations of the bodhisattvas who chose to take birth as the respective lamas. This gives us some rationale for both synchronic and diachronic treatment of several persons at once, studying them as a single lineage with properties accumulated over many lifetimes. All of the Labrang estates functioned under similar assumptions, altogether constituting a social and political infrastructure at Labrang with a "shared cosmology and system of values."⁴⁶

LABRANG'S REPRESENTATIVES

Local governance or supervision of the monastery's properties was in the hands of the monastery-appointed officials, a retinue of attendants and locally designated officers, which represented yet another type of governance different from those of the monastery and the nomad groups. The monastery officials were usually assigned for a three-year, but extendable term. Their duties differed in farming and nomad communities, and in dependence on the nature of the relationship with the monastery estate.

Agricultural and especially the nomad properties had their own officers and infrastructures, as above. These offices were again often inherited within families, except when there were no competent, usually male heirs. It does not appear that there was any strict uniformity in these

arrangements through the Labrang communities. There were however general patterns which can be described.

As Labrang acquired new territories, legal and political authority was transferred from the traditional lords (*dpon po*) to the monastic representatives (*gowa*).⁴⁷ All political and legal affairs became subject to the approval of the monastic representatives and their designated assistants,⁴⁸ which amounted to implementation of political and social control in Labrang's properties. This practice of sending representatives began in the late eighteenth-century during the office of the Second Jamyang Zhepa. Since then, the Labrang authorities installed representative officers in their properties to collect revenues for land use and from livestock herds, establish legal authority and maintain lines of communication between the local communities and the main monastery.

The representatives were monks nominated from the group of Jamyang Zhepa's eighty attendants (*zhabs phyi*) and then personally confirmed (*phyag lag . . . mgo bzhaq*, "putting his hand on the head") by Jamyang Zhepa himself. The formal sign of confirmation was a seal, and a blessing cord carried or worn around the neck of the representative (*phyag mdud dmar po ske bar skon*). The appointments were usually for three years, but depending on the effectiveness of the representative and the cooperation of the local community, the terms of office were sometimes suspended after one or two years. On the other hand, if a representative was especially effective, his term was extended. The level of effectiveness and local cooperation was measured by the representatives' ability to collect revenues, resolve local disputes and negotiate with neighboring groups. Labrang's representatives wielded the monastery's power, and implemented rules and punishments for manslaughter, murder, and criminal activity. These were instituted and enforced by the Labrang representatives.

The monks who were chosen as monastery representatives had to know the fundamental corpus of rituals and doctrines, but they were not necessarily the most pious or the best scholars. They were chosen because they were natural leaders, good speakers, bold, and publicly aggressive. Moreover, it is said that given the requirements of the post, the remote territory, harsh living conditions and rather rugged lifestyle of the Tibetan nomads, some Labrang-appointed representatives would temporarily renounce their monk's vows. This enabled them to better meet the requirements of their leadership status in the nomad communities.

More specifically, some of the representatives wore monastic robes for religious rituals and on return to Labrang, but while serving at their posts they wore Tibetan nomad clothing, and some carried guns for protection from highland bandits. One of the representatives' responsibilities was to ride with the local militias into battle and some were actual fighters. In addition to providing a religious rationale, appeals and rituals to deities

to insure success in battle and funerary rites, the office of representative required no small degree of courage, as fighting was often bloody and many were killed, including some representatives.⁴⁹

Labrang's representatives to nomad and semi-nomad places usually traveled with a scripture reader, a servant, a cook, and other attendants, an entourage of six persons.⁵⁰ A typical arrangement included the representative's three tents: a public meeting tent, the representative's private quarters, and a temple tent (*lha gur*). There was often a reader (*a mchod*) in residence, a Labrang monk whose job was to invoke protector deities. Otherwise, the Labrang representatives worked together with locally-nominated and Labrang Monastery-confirmed⁵¹ officials in cooperative groups. In one example, the Labrang representatives had a working group of nine persons from the local lords and ladies (*dpon po/dpon mo*). The representatives and local officials held meetings and discussed policies and procedures.⁵² Though technically monastic constitutions, one famous Labrang representative reported that at meetings excerpts from the Second Jamyang Zhepa's *Rulebook* (*bca' yig*) were read publicly, likely as a formal recognition of authority.⁵³

RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURES: THE LABRANG ESTATES

The monastery corporate structure interacted with local nomad social structures in terms of economy, bureaucratic structure, and assumptions of authority and power. The Labrang monastic corporate structure also resembled the similar structures in Lhasa, with the important exception that in Labrang there were very few independent noble families. Put simply, in contrast to central Tibet the most prominent economic and political structures in the Labrang "divine" properties were the monastic estates.

In addition to the main monastery estate the holdings of the secondary corporate estates were inherited by lamaist succession, or by rebirth. Thus there was an office, or rather a group of offices under Labrang's jurisdiction that continued over centuries, in the hands of religiously-determined monastic leaders. These were the Labrang estates, led by lamas, who exercised political authority and accumulated the most wealth and represented the greater community in neighboring political centers.

Labrang Monastery's tradition counts eighteen estates (*nang chen*) in the community.⁵⁴ In fact there were gradually more and more smaller estates, totaling some thirty-two estates altogether. Each of the major lamaist estates was a corporate institution in its own right, led by one individual. The physical wealth, properties and assets, monastic seat, social status, and political power, the *labrang*, were inherited by each successive

lama in the lineage. This inheritance, endowment or estate was not passed along blood-related kinship ties (*gdung rgyud*), as was often the case in the Labrang lay communities. It was rather passed from each rebirth to the next (*bla rgyud*), as were recognized, validated and enthroned by the monastic community. The first lama in each lineage was thought to have reached the level of attainment, in a word, enlightenment, necessary for voluntary control of one's rebirth. The first and successive lamas in each lineage were bodhisattvas. In fact, as above, each lineage is of only one bodhisattva, who takes rebirth in the lineage. Thus the monastic estate and its holdings were clearly the property of the reborn lama.

At Labrang, each estate had a temple, residences and offices. The estate officers implemented the political, economic and religious infrastructures in the greater Labrang community. The central monastery leaders were the highest authority, but the central monastery office functioned like a Buddhist monastery and a lay estate. The officers were selected from the Labrang lamas, by tradition from Jamyang Zhepa's eighty attendants. They served as Labrang's economic and political representatives in all of its communities. They lived in the *shog pas* and *tsowas* in Labrang's properties for three year terms as functionaries of their central offices at Labrang.

The range and locations of properties could be large. An estate's properties were commonly spread about in different regions, outside of Labrang's central territory, and not often contiguous. In Ngülra, for example, part of the community was owned by the Gungtang estate, but some groups in Ngülra were not. In Dzögé Nyinma for example some local groups became the properties of individual Labrang estates, not the central monastery. In 1780 two of the prominent Labrang lama-estate owners, Hortsang and the Trichen Zamtsa, started monasteries in Dzögé Nyinma supported by local communities. Other groups in Dzögé Nyinma had affiliations with different estates at Labrang and elsewhere, resulting in complex webs of ownership, taxation and corvée, all under Labrang's umbrella. Tseü was the property of the Gungtang estate, Mokru Tsowa was owned by the Zamtsa estate, Khenpo Tsowa was affiliated with the Tsendrok Khenpo in Mema. Kar Tsowa was first owned by the lama Karpo estate and later the Second Jamyang Zhepa at Labrang, and so on.⁵⁵ Again, ownership, affiliation, property rights and all legal and political matters were defined by the local monastery-centered estate system. Revenues from these communities, in a manner of speaking the communities themselves, were commodified.

The administration of the monastic estates constituted the regional political infrastructures. Always validated by religion, the estates were conduits for legal and militia matters, and they were important forces in the local economy. The estates received taxes,⁵⁶ event sponsorship, corvée, livestock revenues and service. The scale of these operations can be seen

below in the descriptions of the revenues generated by prominent monastic estates. The wealth accumulated over generations was substantial.

MANAGEMENT OF LABRANG'S PROPERTIES

In Lhasa wealthy noble families had inherited prestige and political power; at Labrang there were local lay and monastic land and livestock owners, but they did not participate in the governance of the entire Amdo territory to the extent nobles did in the formal central Tibetan bureaucracy. The most influential, politically powerful and most wealthy persons in the Labrang community were the lama/monastic and lay estate owners. Monastic officers managed the estates' properties and functions, and often carried a lot of influence, especially during the youth of the reborn lamas.

Very broadly, large scale nomad and farming communities included as monastery properties negotiated economic relationships with the monastery, paying tax revenues in kind, in later years with silver, and with *corvée* for care of and profit from monastery livestock, for use of pastureland and for farmland use and profit. Nomads and farmers who lived on monastic and estate lands with minimal or no livestock, land or material wealth tended the lamas' and lords' livestock and farmlands in similar if minimal or even nominal contracted relationships. The interrelations and dynamics of these groups are the fabric of the story of Labrang's economic and political history.

The relationships between the monastery and its prominent leaders and their properties vary widely, depending on how, when and under what circumstances each community, or better, each relationship was established. The historical evolutions of these are so specific that they nearly defy generalization. Dzöge Mema's history is different from Ngülra's, Genkya's different from Khotsé's, and so on. Still, the monastery itself developed broad categories to indicate Labrang's degree of ownership, control and payment responsibility of each property.⁵⁷ There was here then a stratified nomad and farming culture with its own ideas about land ownership, political authority, law, and tax responsibilities.

The relationships between the monastic and lay lords were binding, usually over generations. Commoners were honor-bound, kinship-bound, tradition-bound, often financially-bound, and religiously-bound to their place in society. Escape was possible, but resulted in dishonor, ostracism and in the case of debt, corporal punishment, imprisonment, or exile. Oral and literary accounts of Labrang's pre-1958 society report that before Labrang was endowed and built, the local nomadic lord-led communities were independent and owned their own land. Then, with the

support of the regional lord of the Khoshud Mongols and local communities, land ownership, tax revenues and corvée privileges were transferred to Labrang Monastery.⁵⁸ The land and peoples in the original monastery site, called the Four Divine Family Groups, became monastery property. That is, the monastery had all grazing and agricultural rights, and could use the land and tax and employ its inhabitants as it wished.

When the monastery was founded and as the community grew many local lords and ladies and their communities outside of Labrang's own territories pledged allegiance to and support for the new institution. The communities that agreed to submit to both Labrang's religious and lay authority were Labrang's "divine communities" (*lha sde*).⁵⁹

A *lha sde*, literally "divine district/community," a community in service of the gods, is opposed to *mi sde*, literally "secular/lay district/community," a community in service of men. The revenues and responsibilities of divine lands, livestock, and communities were owned by the monastery. The community was, so to speak, in the service of the gods. Religion was used as a legitimizing factor for collection and was an active force in the community. "Lay community" indicates ownership and control by local lay leaders, with established donative relationships to Labrang, but no monastic political authority. A category of "religiously affiliated community" (*chos sde*), those communities with only religious ties to the monastery, is also included in later accounts.

Since the very beginning of the monastery, the Jamyang Zhepas actively promoted religious and lay political ties with its communities. Even as religious leaders they acquired new properties and expanded the holdings of their estates. In return for religious, legal and social services, and often the construction and maintenance of a local branch monastery Labrang Monastery collected tax revenues, political allegiance, religious devotion and corvée. The Jamyang Zhepas and the other leading Labrang estate teachers actively built new and refurbished old institutions that became the network of Labrang's affiliated monasteries.

Most of the divine and lay groups were located in regions immediately adjacent to Labrang Monastery's site. However, outside of these, many affiliated monasteries and communities were located in regions far from Labrang and sometimes far away from Amdo. Affiliation and ownership of the full range of institutions and communities therefore means something rather different than territorial control, contiguous location, and land ownership as elsewhere understood. Briefly, affiliation at least in the case of distant institutions meant the regular payment of revenues and acceptance of Labrang's religious authority. Institutions in places far away from Amdo clearly could not recognize Labrang's political, military, or legal authority. Nevertheless, in addition to the communities in Gansu, Sichuan, and Qinghai, Labrang had religiously affiliated and

income-generating institutions and communities in Shanxi, at Wutaishan, in Xinjiang, in Xikang (Sichuan), in Inner Mongolia, in Ningxia, and as far away as Heilongjiang in northeast China.⁶⁰

Allowing for historical shifts in allegiance, the contiguous Labrang territories extended from the Rongwo River (Repgong, Tongren) basin in the west/northwest, to Xunhua/Yartsi to the north, past Tumenguan as far as Binglingsi in the northeast, to the Choné territories, including Dzöge Mema in the southeast, due south/southwest to Dzöge Nyinma and Mema in Sichuan, then south past Taktsang Lhamo, Ngülra and Ngawa, the latter in Sichuan. The Henan Mongol region in Qinghai is included in Labrang's territory. In modern times, the core community of Labrang Monastery is located in what is today called Xiahe County, Gansu Province.⁶¹

THE EIGHT DIVINE COMMUNITIES

Labrang's properties and estates grew in number as time passed. Eight territories were counted as the properties of the monastery in the early years of its history (see Map 2). These eight original communities are sometimes called the "inner communities" (*nang sde*). Properties and communities acquired later were called "outer communities" (*phyi sde*). These latter included Dzöge Mema, Bora, and Luchu, for examples, which were originally separate, but eventually were acquired by Labrang, and under the leadership of monastic representatives from Labrang.⁶²

Labrang authorities were more like the leaders of aristocratic estates, but in nomadic and monastic contexts. Moreover, in Amdo there were no formal officers under a central Tibetan District Commissioner, like secretaries (*las drung*), office managers (*gzhung zhabs*) or office staff (*nang gzan*), or other central Tibetan government petty officers. Labrang's communities were often commodified and they did have rental and land-use obligations, but most often in kind. There were more and less wealthy communities, but not well-defined categories as was the case in central Tibet (e.g. upper level working people, *gzhung rgyus pa*, in Goldstein's words, "landed government serfs"). However, many common, usually sedentary people had "hereditary, hierarchical, dependency relationship[s] in which the lord had rights to command a variety of goods and services from the serf but reciprocally had only minimal obligation."⁶³ In Labrang's communities, unlike central Tibet there were no categories of taxpayer (*khral pa*) and small householders (*dud chung*), though some of the obligations of indentured working people were similar to central Tibetans in that their status, tax and corvée obligations were often inherited and lifelong, and the monastic or nomadic estate lords were likewise in control from generation to generation.⁶⁴

Labrang's divine territories usually had Labrang-appointed *gowa*, but lay communities retained their local lords. In Dzögé Mema for example, which included five extended communities (*shog pa lnga*), there was a lay lord who retained control of the five village communities, but who accepted at least partial authority of Labrang. In this community there was no official monastic representative ('*go ba*), but rather a Labrang-appointed administrator (*kutsap*). These regional lords retained local control unless they voluntarily submitted to an outside authority, like Dzögé Mema finally did to Labrang,⁶⁵ causing considerable turmoil in the local population, who sought to ally or contract themselves to either the Dzögé Mema lord or Labrang Monastery. The Dzögé Mema lord gradually lost control of the greater Dzögé Mema territory, which eventually was considered a Labrang property, a "divine community."⁶⁶

Some affiliated lay communities with no resident Labrang officials had leaders called Tsepön. Examples of this type of group are Trokho Khaksum,⁶⁷ Sichuan Dzögé, Namlha, and others. Other communities were historically under the jurisdiction of different political authorities altogether, but eventually recognized Labrang's authority, and paid tribute to Labrang. Nearby Hortsang was historically and formally under the jurisdiction of the Rongwo governor (*rong bo nang so*), but in times of dispute submitted to Labrang's authority, appealed to and abided by the decisions made by Labrang's officials.

Moreover, some of the important monasteries and prominent lamas in Hortsang were affiliated with Labrang (for examples, Terlung Monastery and Alak Hortsang), and the Hortsang communities sent regular gifts or payments to Labrang. Another example is Khagya, which was formerly owned by the Terlung Monastery Treasurer, but in time the peoples of Khagya paid allegiance to Labrang. For these reasons several informants reported that originally the distinctions between divine and lay communities were distinct, but as time went on these categories became less clearly defined.⁶⁸

Outside of the Mongol homelands, Labrang's core group of support communities, the "eight divine communities" (*lha sde shog pa brgyad*), were in and near the site of the monastery. The original endowment site, the "four divine communities," (*lha sde shog pa bzhi*) eventually evolved into some thirteen separate villages (see below).

The other seven primary support communities are Genkya⁶⁹-Yartsi/Xunhua (in the Salar Muslim⁷⁰ region in Qinghai), Ngülra, Khotsé, Sangkhok, Ngawa Tsodruk in Sichuan, Dokar, and Dzögé Nyinma.⁷¹ In these regions territorial boundaries in pasturelands, for example, were clearly established by the local communities. However, the boundaries were not sharply divided along ethnographic, linguistic, or religious lines, and they did change over time. These community borders overlapped one

another and sometimes in border regions (in Xunhua/Yartsis, for example) different groups in the same geographic location had different ethnic, linguistic and religious affiliations.

MAPPING LABRANG AND ITS TERRITORIES

Maps represent geology, political control, ethnography, and notably, national visions, and they change over time, often as a function of political control. Maps of Tibet sometimes represent the extent of the geological Tibetan Plateau, the extent of ethnographic Tibet, or the extent of political Tibet.⁷² Maps of Labrang's territory likewise have an historical evolution. The maps of Labrang's estate (Maps 2 and 3) in this book show the contiguous Labrang territory at its highest extent, in the early decades of the twentieth century. Again, as mentioned the estate extended from the Rongwo River (Rep Gong, Chinese: Tongren) basin in the west/northwest, to Xunhua/Yartsis to the north,⁷³ past Tumenguan as far as Binglingsi in the northeast, up to the Choné territories, including Dzögé Mema in the southeast, due south/southwest to Dzögé Nyinma (Machu) and Mema in Sichuan, then south past Taktsang Lhamo, Ngülra and Ngawa, the latter in modern Sichuan.⁷⁴ The Henan Mongol region in Qinghai was included in Labrang's territory in those years. In modern times, the core community of Labrang Monastery is located in the much reduced area, what is today called Xiahe County, Gansu Province.

The first of the eight inner territories (*nang sde*), more commonly known as the eight divine territories (*lha sde shog pa brgyad*), is Labrang's original endowment, called the four divine territories (*lha sde shog pa bzhi*). These four originally nomad groups, perhaps best understood as *tsowa* or *shog pa*, were the resident population of the original site of Labrang Monastery, located on one of the pastures of nearby Genkya. The Genkya lord's donation of the land for the monastery is celebrated even in modern times by the yearly presentation of one horse and one bundle of woven yak wool fabric (*phrug*), given by Labrang Monastery to the lord of Genkya's descendants. Thus, while the major financial donor and military power was the Mongol Prince and his constituents, the local Tibetan donor was the Genkya lord, and the family groups under his jurisdiction. The site given to the monastery by the Genkya lord was inhabited by four Tibetan family groups, who eventually came to be known as the four divine communities (*lha sde shog pa bzhi*). As time went on these four groups subdivided into thirteen farming villages, and eventually divided into the present larger number of villages.⁷⁵

In the descriptions of the founding of the monastery these and other local Tibetan communities were the supporters of the new institution.

Unlike the Khoshud Mongols under Erdeni Jinong, who were included in the community but retained allegiance to the Mongol Prince, the Tibetans who occupied the monastery lands were no longer the subjects of the Genkya lord; they were now under the jurisdiction of the monastic authorities. In addition to being under the political and legal authority of the monastery, these Labrang subjects yielded portions of their yearly livestock and produce earnings, and provided service to the monastery.

The authorities in these communities were the local lords or chieftains of the family group, who submitted to the authority of the Labrang-appointed officials. The revenues and taxes, labor and obedience the lords received from their subjects were not uniform from place to place. Authority was to a large extent decentralized, and particularly so in communities not under Labrang's jurisdiction. While some lords, both Labrang's appointees and other local lords exacted heavy taxes and imposed severe penalties, many others were more lenient, and in hard times or in extraordinarily difficult circumstances payments and labor requirements were waived. In sum, the Tibetan communities who occupied the monastery properties were for the most part no more or less burdened by their masters than unaffiliated neighbors. The overwhelming and ongoing success of the monastery and its infrastructures is proof that even though not an idyllic or perfect Tibetan Buddhist heaven, local communities felt privileged by their contact with the monastic authorities, and considered it a prestigious position.

Genkya-Yartsi/Xunhua is the second of the early "inner territories," located in modern west Gansu and east Qinghai Province. Though presently a part of Qinghai and the seat of the Salar Muslims, Yartsi/Xunhua, or at least parts of it were considered to be included in Labrang's primary properties. The *Ocean Annals* records that "two lords of Khagya [in Genkya] donated the land, and a monastery was built and prospered. The border with Rongpo was set near Serkha and Langgya."⁷⁶ Serkha is on the border of present-day Genkya in Gansu, and Langgya is over the border in Rongwo, Qinghai. At the time of the land donation, Serkha, Genkya territory extended into present-day Qinghai.

On this frontier the many ethnic groups, languages and religions of the region have historically recognized the authority, and paid tax and religious levies to Labrang. Genkya remains predominately Tibetan Buddhist, and to this day persons in the Yartsi/Xunhua community and at Upper Bumling/Bing Ling practice Tibetan Buddhism. In some communities in this region, Chinese is the vernacular and Tibetan the liturgical language. Tibetan Buddhism provides religious, ideological and political structures to Tibetans, Chinese and all local peoples, and at the same time Chinese language, culture and the outer limit of Chinese political jurisdiction are noticeable local features. Greater Yartsi/Xunhua is thus a historical

Tibetan Buddhist site, a center of Salar Islam, a place claimed by the Mongols, then the Manchus, the Salar Muslims, and the Chinese. This is a dynamic frontier environment.

Labrang's claim to ownership of the Yartsi/Xunhua region was reinforced in 1753 when the Second Jamyang Zhepa visited Yartsi/Xunhua. He performed a large "torma" ritual, itself rather awe-inspiring in any time and place, and reportedly levitated.⁷⁷ During that visit he met local Chinese lords and was honored with Chinese-style offerings. From Yartsi/Xunhua proper he went to nearby Upper Bumling/Bing Ling, where he established a lasting relationship with the local communities.⁷⁸ In the early 1800s, the thirteen year-old Third Jamyang Zhepa (1798-1855) visited Yartsi/Xunhua with his entourage and was offered gifts of silks and other valuable commodities.⁷⁹ In later years, the Third Jamyang Zhepa continued to provide a strong Labrang presence in these communities. He received donations and pledges of support, for example, in 1827, and later in 1843.⁸⁰ Even to the present day the Yartsi/Xunhua Tibetans still pay a tax or tribute to Labrang Monastery, typically in a locally available commodity such as cooking oil.⁸¹ All of this makes a case for the traditional inclusion of Yartsi/Xunhua as an original "divine community," though some modern sources⁸² do not include mention of Yartsi/Xunhua as one of Labrang's affiliated communities.⁸³

The third and fourth of Labrang's "inner territories" are Sangkhok and Khotsé, located adjacent to one another in grasslands south and southwest of Labrang Monastery, on a route from Ngülra to Labrang.⁸⁴ Sangkhok was fully committed to Labrang early in its history. Family groups in this district are pledged to the central authority of Labrang Monastery and to other leading lamas' estates, including the Gungtang, Hortsang, Zamtse and others. Khotsé is on the Qinghai border, in what was formerly Mongol territory. The story goes that in 1776, when the Second Jamyang Zhepa was in Urga in Mongolia, he gave an initiation to the Mongol royalty. In return for the initiation, the Mongols gave him the revenues and control of some family groups (*ru ba*) and installed them in the uninhabited region called Khotsé. In addition to these accounts, another story relates that there was a group from Genkya installed in Khotsé and offered to the monastery by a local reborn Buddhist lama. Like all local territories, these communities have their own mythological, religious, military and political heritage. Regardless of their heritage, the Labrang lamas made frequent trips to Sangkhok and Khotsé, affirming their relationships personally, and receiving lavish gifts of livestock and commodities.⁸⁵ Today these close neighbors are frequent visitors to the main monastery and as such are the most visible groups at Labrang.

Dokar, the fifth of Labrang's eight inner districts, is located just east/southeast of Tsö/Hezuo. Its revenues were originally the property of

Drepung Gomang in Lhasa. When the First Jamyang Zhepa became the Throne Holder of Gomang College, he naturally received pledges of revenues, labor and loyalty in the usual fashion. In a display of convenience and of the commodification of revenue-generating communities, he traded some of his Lhasa properties for the local Dokar property.⁸⁶ Thus Dokar became one of Labrang's original inner districts.

Labrang appointed an administrator (*kutsap*) and a manager (*spyi ba*) to Dokar for three-year terms. In addition to revenues paid to the other local monastic estates these officials received revenues of barley for land use, labor and militia duty if called. The Labrang officials adjudicated or at least mediated disputes and imposed penalties. In Dokar there were no lay lords with wide ranging authority and powers, and thus no monastic representative (*'go ba*) appointed, only a monk administrator and a manager. According to modern-day people from the region, the commitments and rules they implemented were not oppressive.

Ngülra, located in the upper reaches of the Machu/Yellow River, in modern southwestern Gansu Province, is the sixth of Labrang's inner districts. Ngülra is beautiful and expansive high plains territory, as is said, "Ngülra is on the banks of the great Machu's cool waters, surrounded by beautiful mountains at the center of a wide, delightful plain."⁸⁷ Apa Alo said that he hoped to be reborn there.

Ngülra, the land of the "silver (*ngul*)-horned (*rwa*) sheep," is high-land nomad territory, even today with only a few sedentary settlements. Ngülra was one of Labrang's early support communities and remained a bastion of support for the monastery up to modern times.⁸⁸ Ngülra's relationship with Labrang is grounded in religious myths and the realities of nomad economy and lifestyle. Accordingly, the Second Jamyang Zhepa is credited with acquisition of the territory by virtue of his contact with and control of invisible deities and his strong political and economic presence in neighboring communities.

The accounts of Ngülra's history record that local family groups pledged to the Jamyang Zhepa displaced an existing group and were installed in the Ngülra region. There they provided revenues to Labrang and submitted to Labrang's political authority, eventually under the jurisdiction of Labrang-appointed representatives. This type of property acquisition technique was not uncommon in this region.

The stories show again how nomad groups were nearly a commodity, whose revenues and responsibilities were in addition portable. One story relates that after a trip to regions south of Ngülra, Jamyang Zhepa came to a place some three days travel from present day Ngülra. There he met the three main *shog pa*, which the Jamyang Zhepa then relocated to Ngülra. Another story records that peoples from neighboring Golok and elsewhere migrated to Ngülra after a 1723 battle.⁸⁹ Yet another

rather different account reports that in 1777 the Second Jamyang Zhepa installed two horsemen in Ngülra from Belmangtsang, with a hundred horses. Still another account reports only that in Ngülra there were Tibetans, Mongols, and “cowboys.”⁹⁰ One commonly heard story goes that the two above-mentioned horsemen and their families eventually expanded to twenty families. Then, in addition to those, the Second Jamyang Zhepa added twenty more families from Sangkhok and Khotsé, who grew and prospered.⁹¹ Thus, it appears that migrations of local nomads to Ngülra from many regions were factors in the growth of this important Labrang support community. The Jamyang Zhepas strengthened their control of Ngülra by frequent personal visits. The Ngülra community responded with lavish gifts of silver, brocade and fabrics, livestock, animal products and other commodities. It became a bastion of support for Labrang and several of its important estates, including especially the Gungtang estate.⁹²

The seventh inner “divine” district was Dzögé Nyinma, with modern Machu its administrative center. Dzögé Nyinma is located on a wide valley along the upper reaches of the Yellow River. Water is plentiful and the pasturelands are excellent. Local people describe the borders of Dzögé Nyinma, extending:

to the north of Machu Dzong up to the Machu River, to the northeast, up to Zamtsa in Luchu, to the southeast to Sichuan Dzögé and Kyimtsé (Gansu), to the south to Ngülra and Machu, and to the west and north to Sogpo Dzong (Qinghai).

The people here have kinship connections to Sichuan Dzögé and a history of migrations to the Machu and Dzögé Mema regions, and of longtime connections to Labrang Monastery. Notably, these peoples and territories extend across Chinese provincial boundaries. Some of the peoples who lived in Dzögé Nyinma migrated from the Kokenuur region in the early 1600s. In the 1720s, approximately, others migrated from Golok regions to Nyinma, and others came from Ngawa (Tsamring Tsowa) and from Golok (Kharo Tsowa).⁹³

Modern sources report that there were 6 large *shog pa* in Dzögé Nyinma with 200 rukor, and some 300 family groups (*khyim tshang*), totaling 1,641 persons (788 men and 853 women).⁹⁴ The precise genealogies and histories of each of these groups show close connections to Labrang Monastery, sponsorships of local monasteries by leading Labrang figures, and ownership of local properties by Labrang estates.

Dzögé Nyinma established a lama-donor relationship with the First Jamyang Zhepa by an initial offering or payment of more than one hundred horses. The lama became a frequent visitor to the district, and in the normal fashion, contracted the care of his livestock to local people. Later,

in 1760, the Second followed and reaffirmed the precedent that was followed throughout the district's history.⁹⁵ In 1790 the main monastery in Dzöge Nyinma was shifted to its present site at Tsagen Beshing, just outside of Machu.⁹⁶ Dzöge Nyinma was an important affiliate and had close ties with Labrang Monastery throughout its history. In 1853, unity and strength of affiliation with Labrang in Dzöge Nyinma and in Ngülra were celebrated together; the two districts had a close and mutually beneficial relationship. The relationship was marked by Labrang's officials naming the two districts Nyinsip, literally "light and dark," as the daily sunrise rose first over Dzöge Nyinma in the east, while Ngülra in the west was still dark. The name was widely used.

Dzöge Nyinma's history was not without conflicts, primarily over land rights and tribal affiliations. Migrations into the region from neighboring places were often as a result of conflicts (from Ngawa to Tsamring, for example). In 1936, there was a major battle with Ma Bufang in Kharo family territory, at a place called Tsang Dema Khak. Twenty Tibetan fighters were killed in this battle, eight from Kar, nine from Ngülra, and three from Dzöge Nyinma. Other conflicts between local groups are noted (in 1907, 1911, 1933, 1934), and were resolved by local religious officials.⁹⁷ These local conflicts eventually grew into a larger scale dispute between Kharo and Dzöge Nyinma families, which was adjudicated by Labrang officials.⁹⁸ The local conflicts and resolutions show how regional disputes were handled by local religious officials, with appeal to the higher authority at Labrang. In 1940 Dzöge Nyinma was occupied by the Chinese but under local Tibetan jurisdiction until August 1958.

The eighth and last of Labrang's inner districts was Ngawa Tsodruk in northern Sichuan Province. Ngawa is a high, fertile, and protected valley. Its culture is very different from its nomad neighbors to the north and its Golok neighbors to the west. The differences are evident, particularly in the Ngawa solid-designed and year-round house architecture, well-defined rural village structure, Tibetan language accent and relative prosperity. The Buddhist story about the lama and Ngawa relates that while travelling from Labrang to Ngawa the Second Jamyang Zhepa, Könchok Jikmé Wangpo converted the evil Queen Drakkar Gyalmo. She offered Jamyang Zhepa novice monks and eight donkey loads of silver. The lama continued south to Ngawa, where he gave each of the eight local groups one of the donkey loads of silver and installed the novices in a monastery. Ngawa became one of Labrang's "divine districts." Otherwise, the acquisition of Ngawa is a story of a Labrang lama travelling to a remote place and securing pledges of allegiance and submission, along with offerings of livestock and commodities. Sometimes described as a rather opportunistic expansion, the monastery's acquisition of territory here and elsewhere was not as physically combative or coercive as the

tactics of some neighbors. Religion and the collective power of the group of monastery supporters served as compelling reasons to pledge revenues and service to Labrang.

In the past, in the early years of the Labrang settlement, Ngawa had some nomad groups, but gradually became entirely agrarian. It was a borderland community, with Tibetan neighbors to the south, Chinese further to the south, sometimes hostile Tibetan neighbors to the east,⁹⁹ and Mongols on the west. Ngawa Tsodruk's location made contact with powerful neighbors frequent. Local lords and lamas practiced "inner frontier" diplomacy, by which each party sought to gain advantage over its adversaries by alliances with friends. Its history includes accounts of frequent contacts, alliances and conflicts.

The early contact between Labrang and Ngawa is recorded in accounts of the events of 1712 and 1719. When the First Jamyang Zhepa went to Ngawa in northern Sichuan, the region to the south was under the control of the Markham-centered *tusis*,¹⁰⁰ and later under Songpan.¹⁰¹ In 1712 the Jamyang Zhepa was a welcome guest, and he was given large numbers of livestock and commodities as gifts. Later, in 1719, the lama visited nearby Sichuan Dzöge and was similarly welcomed and honored, but this relationship was not as lasting as Ngawa's.¹⁰² Over the course of its history the people of Ngawa region sponsored the construction of ten Labrang-affiliated monasteries.¹⁰³ The Second Jamyang Zhepa founded the most prominent and most wealthy of these, Gomang Monastery.

The early relationship was not one-sided, and not only in Ngawa. In the early eighteenth-century at Labrang, stonemasons from Ngawa laid the foundation¹⁰⁴ for the Main Assembly Hall at Labrang, the first major building at the monastery. At the same time the Ngawa community, specifically the lord of Ngawa, offered the new monastery at Labrang one hundred Ngawa boys as novice monks. Notably, these events between Ngawa and Labrang took place in the first decade of the monastery's history.¹⁰⁵ In later years the lamas and representatives from Labrang Monastery were active in the Ngawa community, visiting local and neighboring leaders in 1760, and in 1776 supporting the establishment of a monastery, Gomang.¹⁰⁶ In 1837 and 1845, the Third Jamyang Zhepa visited and donated money and religious objects to the monks and community. During these visits he adjudicated disputes and demonstrated that legal authority was in effect derived from the central monastery in Labrang.¹⁰⁷ Local governance in agrarian Ngawa was different from that in nearby nomad territories. From its early years Ngawa Tsodruk had a resident official from Labrang, an administrator (*kutsap*), but not a *gowa*, who served as local lord. In agrarian Ngawa there were no local tent leaders (*gur gang ba*), instead local governance was in the hands of twenty-nine local officials from the six family groups.¹⁰⁸

The Fourth and Fifth Jamyang Zhepas continued the same policy of visiting Ngawa, giving religious teachings and initiations, receiving gifts and tax revenues, sending political representatives, and adjudicating regional disputes.¹⁰⁹ During the office of the Fifth, the region's prestige increased by the recognition in Ngawa of the Sixth Gungtang lama, and the Eighth Dewa lama, both of whom came to occupy key religious and political estates at Labrang.¹¹⁰ Finally, through the entire history of Labrang's relationship with Ngawa, it is notable that the Labrang religious authorities alone "found" and authenticated the reborn lamas in the region, with no input or consultation with Qing officials or Qing-instituted selection procedures.¹¹¹ The Qing claim to control of Tibetan Buddhist rebirths was ineffective in this important and wealthy community.

In later years there were conflicts between different adversaries, namely Chinese officials and the Labrang-appointed leaders. Gong Ziyang, a Nationalist-era (ca. early 1930s) Gansu provincial official sent to settle the local dispute between the Chinese and Tibetans in the region wrote that the Gansu and Sichuan authorities faced the problem of distinguishing between what they called religious peoples (*jiao min*) and the peoples with Chinese citizenship (*ren min*), or peoples under Chinese authority. If they were to acknowledge religious authority, then Labrang Monastery had full authority over them and Sichuan none, even though the Tibetans were—in Chinese eyes—living within the administrative borders of Sichuan. If only the citizenship of the Republic of China was recognized, then the monastery had no authority.¹¹² In this otherwise interesting account the author calls Labrang's authority religious and Sichuan's political, perhaps not evaluating Labrang Monastery's political infrastructures, and the tradition of "the unity of religion and politics" (*chos srid zung 'brel*).

In any case, in and around Ngawa Tibetan and Chinese territorial borders overlapped. Borders were sometimes shifted for political and military expedience, and in addition show the nature of alliances and land ownership. In Ngawa six local groups pledged allegiance to Labrang Monastery, and ignored the Chinese provincial borders. In a nearby example, the Belmangtsang community, located in modern Gansu, is described as under the political jurisdiction of Sichuan,¹¹³ and at least formerly under the control Qinghai Golok Kangan group, and a Labrang lay property. The resulting problems in and around Ngawa Tsodruk did not go unrecognized by the Labrang authorities; the Labrang leaders maintained an active presence in the region and promoted active relations with neighboring groups. For example, after Trokho became Labrang's lay community in 1891, Labrang made good relations with the often uncooperative local Goloks.

However, relations with the Sichuan Me family¹¹⁴ in Ngawa and Labrang became increasingly worse, reportedly because of land use disputes, and erupted into fighting in 1901 at Ngawa Tsodruk. A lama from

Kirti Monastery in Sichuan Dzögé, Lozang Trinlé resolved the dispute, a written treaty was agreed upon, and both sides retreated. There were however continuing hostilities in the region, in Chukama, Mema, and other places in 1902, and especially in 1908. In 1924, the leader of Mema appealed to Lhasa for help. The immediate dispute was settled, but in 1928 other local conflicts soon broke out between Runag and Nurma, two local communities, who were assisted in a major conflict by the two old enemies, Chukama and the Ngawa Me family.¹¹⁵

During these years the Chinese sent representatives to the region, and in 1932 Apa Alo, on behalf of Labrang Monastery, sent a Tibetan named Tenpa (Tibetan, *bstan pa*) to resolve the local conflict. A Chinese source reports that his efforts were as ineffective as those of the Chinese, and even worse. He reportedly aggressively interfered in local affairs and precipitated violent conflicts. The record reports that he tried to take political control from the local leader, the *tu guan* (evidently the Labrang-appointed administrator), and did not hesitate to kidnap and assassinate local enemies. He instigated battles in which many were killed, reportedly by his use of machine guns. Tenpa and all of his appointed officers were eventually removed and a full investigation of the conflict and his actions was undertaken.¹¹⁶ Ngawa Tsodruk remained a property of Labrang Monastery, but by 1933 basic conflicts with neighboring groups were not satisfactorily resolved.

Tensions simmered and broke out again in 1946 after the Chukama community was defeated and fled to Dzögé Nyinma and Mongol regions in Qinghai, returning only after the hostilities ended. Conflicts continued and were addressed by the Chinese government in 1953 and in 1958, when the present borders were established. Local governments and militias were disbanded and reorganized according to the new Chinese authority structures.

Labrang's six tsowa groups in Ngawa are located in the middle of a larger local community with different allegiances and commitments. Labrang claimed revenues and corvée from its properties in Ngawa, but Labrang did not own and administer all of Ngawa. It was possible for a small group of village-size communities to pledge revenues and allegiance to a faraway lord. At the same time one's neighbors were pledged to still other lords. Moreover, it was possible for owners of these revenues to transfer their rights to others. Divided commitments, different loyalties and different visions or understandings of boundaries in Ngawa perhaps provided an atmosphere conducive to conflict.

In sum, taken together these eight highland districts and the largely nomad Tibetan culture became Labrang's economic support base. Most of the eight inner districts were pledged to Labrang early in its history, in the eighteenth-century. In subsequent years the monastery acquired

more territory and developed different kinds of profitable and politically strategic relationships with neighboring communities. The relationships between the monastery and its territories show how a religious institution functioned as a political administrative unit.

GOVERNANCE IN LABRANG

"All the lamas and monks became disciples because of the kindness of the unity of religion and lay."¹¹⁷

The pervasiveness of Labrang-initiated bureaucratic structures is attested in historical literature and in oral accounts.¹¹⁸ Pledging to and supporting the monastery provided the benefits of religious merit, a measure of protection, a community focal point or known seat of power and a legal forum for redress of grievances. As a result, Labrang's property holdings increased, its wealth grew, its influence and its fame spread. The monastery developed an administration for its properties and implemented political, social and economic controls; these properties were income-generating assets. Revenues and labor rights guaranteed the financial security and enduring heritage of the monastery, so control of these territories was critical to the monastery's survival.

Labrang Monastery had a central office, with a Treasurer and a full staff of monastic officials, on the model of the large central Tibetan monasteries. In addition, while the main monastery was the umbrella organization, it had a large number of smaller individual estates. The main offices of these estates were located in the monastery, and like the monastery, the estates owned properties throughout the larger Labrang territory. The estates were subordinate to and supporters of the main monastery. Here, the general characteristics of financial and authority structures of the monastery as a whole, both central office and individual estates, are described together.

One must be careful to understand the level of control of monastic institutions. There were clearly economic administrative structures in place, by which the monastery and the individual estate seats collected revenues. There were also resident representatives administrators installed in Labrang's properties, though these were not uniform in all places. In addition to tax and corvée, local communities had to respond to the call of the militia. Can the sum of these structures be called "governance"? If understood as the *de facto* control of territories, Labrang in its own inconsistent way did govern its territories. However, if "governance" is taken to mean a constitutionally defined government with clearly articulated and guaranteed rights and responsibilities, then the Labrang territories were not under any form of government at all, including Tibetan, Man-

chu, Chinese, or Muslim. This project proceeds to describe the de facto political structures.

There were at least three levels of territorial administration in Labrang's communities. The first was in the landed private property of the monastery, its primary estates. The rental and tax revenues, corvée and local marketplace were under the control of the monastery. These places and communities were the monastery's originally-endowed fields and pastures, understood as one of its important revenue-generating properties and a key source of labor and service.

The second category of monastery property was the "divine communities," the monastery's primary assets. These were lands and communities acquired by and under the religious, political, and economic control of the monastery. Apart from the monastery administration, in these primarily nomad regions there were local group-appointed leaders, officers, internal social strata and political process. With the arrival of the monastic officials, political and economic control, rights of ownership revenues, tax and corvée were in the hands of the local lords and monastery-appointed administrators and representatives, the latter usually in residence for three-year terms. The inner eight districts were divine communities early in history. Districts like Bora, Dzögé Mema, Amchok, Luchu, and others followed later.

Finally, the third type of governance in Labrang's properties was in regions originally called "*mi sde*," literally "human communities" or "worldly communities," in contrast to the "divine communities." These regions originally had local monastic managers and/or lay lords, and even later when assimilated to the category of "divine communities," not always a monastery-appointed political leader. The monastery managers oversaw local monastery affairs and revenues, but not governance, which was minimal or non-existent in some cases¹¹⁹ (Dokar, for example) and very well established in others.

LAW

Rule of law is one of the most telling criteria for an assertion of territorial control. If a local population at least recognizes a legal authority it is safe to conclude that the legal authority is the dominant controlling body of the territory. This rather circular observation is however problematic in the case of the greater Labrang community, precisely because of the usually retrospective claims to legal authority by the Mongols, Chinese and Tibetans.

The Manchus clearly had legal authority in Mongolia, albeit temporarily. The Qing Dynasty implemented a legal system based largely on Chi-

nese precedents,¹²⁰ and in China and Mongolia the laws were widely followed and enforced. However, Qing claims to legal authority in its larger empire were not substantiated by actual practice. At Labrang and in its support communities, the rule of law was established and enforced by the monastery.¹²¹ Though there were encounters and consultations with the Qing and Chinese authorities, there was little if any Qing/Chinese authority exercised in the Labrang communities until the modern era. In the 1930s there was for a short time a formal Chinese security office in Labrang, but even then the Tibetans preferred to let the monastic authorities settle their disputes.¹²²

In nomad regions, before a dispute was taken to the Labrang authorities, family members attempted to resolve disputes by discussion under the jurisdiction of a local arbitrator (*gzu tsha*). The arbitrator was an appointed and compensated legal official. In cases involving theft of livestock, for example, there was a fee measured in numbers of animals, yaks in the case of complex disputes and sheep for relatively minor matters. Crimes of grand theft and murder were serious matters that carried heavier penalties. For manslaughter, there were stiff penalties (*stong*) of animals and money. It was not an egalitarian system; if the victim was a high official or a monk the fine would be very high (*stong dgu 'jal ngo bcu*). If the victim was a criminal or an average person the fine was smaller. In all cases different *shog pa* had different fines.¹²³ In Labrang's primary support territories a decision could be appealed by presenting the case to the court at the monastery.

Tibetan literature includes many examples of local disputes being resolved by the Labrang lamas, without recourse to Qing authorities in Beijing or Xining. The First Jamyang Zhepa was no stranger to legal and political disputes, given his role as intermediary between Lazang Khan, the Regent Sanggyé Gyatso, the major Lhasa monasteries, the Penchen Lama, the Sixth Dalai Lama, the Chinese, Mongols, and others.¹²⁴ In particular there are numerous examples of serious cases during the administration of the Second Jamyang Zhepa. Once, in 1763, while in Urga, the then thirty-five-year-old Labrang lama settled a dispute, imposing exile on some offenders, and fines on others. The text reports that his decisions were final.¹²⁵ In many typical cases there was no recourse to any outside authority, to an amban, or any other outside official.

The Third, Fourth and Fifth Jamyang Zhepas were likewise called on to resolve legal disputes. Significant cases are recorded in their biographies. Typical examples in the term of the Fourth rebirth include a case against an accused horse thief from Ngülra, a murder case and subsequent sentencing, and other lawsuits involving land rights, criminal cases, and so on.¹²⁶ In later years, particularly during the administration of the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa, the Labrang authorities used the monastic literature

as the basis for the laws in their support communities. In modern times Labrang's judiciary became more prominent, with the formalization of the court, the Monastic-Lay Union (*tshogs 'du dmar nag*), later renamed Labrang's Central Office when reformed by the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa, based on Lhasa's Ganden Podrang. The Monastic-Lay Union was a body that met intermittently, as necessary. The body could include different members and interested parties but always a Labrang official. The Central Office or Yiktsang, was a general administrative committee with legal, economic and political functions.¹²⁷

MONASTERY REVENUES

Labrang Monastery was one of the largest Buddhist monasteries in Tibetan history. In addition to study and ritual facilities for up to five thousand monks, its temples and meeting halls housed spectacular art treasures and were themselves magnificent architectural works. The Labrang treasuries were, moreover, well-endowed and used to expand and embellish the monastery's structures and heritage. Its glory and wealth were emblematic of its prestige as a religious, political, and diplomatic center.

This role of Buddhist monasteries is known in earlier manifestations of Buddhism. "The wealth of the *saṅgha* [was] . . . transferred to monastic authorities . . . not only fiscal rights but also administrative and judicial authority that the king had traditionally enjoyed over the property of the *saṅgha*."¹²⁸ Transferring wealth and political authority to religion and vice versa were common in practice and in mythology in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries, in Qing times as in centuries past. In this case, at Labrang, the Tibetans regarded the Qing emperors and their Chinese successors as pious Buddhist donors, and like themselves, subject to the highest Tibetan religious authorities.¹²⁹

It is therefore fair to ask how and why the monastery accumulated so much wealth. This was a religious institution, and like others most everywhere in the world, a large part of its sponsorship and support came from lay donations. Not surprisingly, in this Buddhist culture giving (*dāna*), or almsgiving, is often thought of as the first source of funds. Donative giving to the monastery was believed to be and was often motivated and perhaps rationalized by the resultant accumulation of merit.¹³⁰

Almsgiving was however not always the exercise of altruism. The price of inclusion in the community was a share in the burden of monastery maintenance; not offering regular gifts, even if small in difficult years, brought the threat of dishonor and even ostracism. In addition, the monastery had many other sources of income, including tax revenues, property taxes,¹³¹ income from herds of livestock, shares of crops as rental

revenues, semi-formally required religious levies for very expensive and often burdensome calendrical rituals¹³² and an extensive corpus of ritual services. Labrang Monastery was a religious institution of the highest caliber, but the reality is also that religious institutions were also supported by the lay communities, who often had to make sacrifices for the monasteries. These were endured, though, because giving alms legitimized donors in the eyes of the community, and large gifts brought (or bought) more religious merit and community status. Gifts were described as selfless and compassionate action for the sake of all living beings, but they were also like taxes, significant signs of fealty and submission to authority.

Giving gifts and donations was simply something Buddhists did as acts of piety. Like temple rituals, meditation, ethical activity, circumambulation, prostration, listening to Buddhist teachings, observing holidays and so on, giving, and especially giving to monks, was a core cultural activity. Gifts were offered with no expectation of material return from the beneficiary.¹³³ Wealthy emperors, princes, lords and ladies often offered large and expensive gifts. Poor people gave what they could, whether livestock, butter, grain or wool, and as a result all donors received the lama's blessing and religious merit.¹³⁴ However, there was more value and prestige given to larger gifts, and often on the part of the giver some expectation of temporal benefit or long-term allegiance. Still, for the most part, the discourse of selfless giving was constantly invoked in the process of gift giving between patrons and lamas.

As they visited the local communities, the Jamyang Zhepas took two roles. They taught Buddhism and at the same time asserted political control. They were building physical and bureaucratic infrastructures, and they were most certainly receiving religious and political allegiance. During their many visits they routinely received significant donations of commodities like fabrics of silk and wool, precious metals, usually silver and occasionally gold, livestock, butter and milk products, novice monks, labor service, and material donations of every kind.

The extent of the gifts given to Labrang Monastery is remarkable. The exact quantities of materials donated to individual lamas and to the monastery are not available, but in many cases donations to individual lamas and to the monastery at large were recorded in biographies and other literary sources, and these enable a rough estimate of the scale of donations. There were well over eighty¹³⁵ leading lineages of reborn lamas at Labrang, all of whom received donations from their followers and subjects over the lifetimes of their lineage of rebirths. The lamas used these donations to build their own, the monastery's, and the support communities' physical structures, to sponsor new novices, to further add to and refurbish existing structures.

The donations given to one of the leading lamas, the Second Jamyang Zhepa, offer a conservative estimate of the extent and description of the types of donations, wealth accumulated in addition to his inherited estate. Over his lifetime, the Second Jamyang Zhepa conservatively received 55,150 silver taels (*srang*), 2,029 horses, 12,920 sheep, 5,300 head of other livestock (*rta nor*), and 271 camels.¹³⁶ In addition to these specific numbers, his biography also mentions donations of livestock without specifying the numbers. He also received very many rolls of silk brocade, bundles of coarse wool fabric (*phrug*), a large number of carnivorous animal skins, a white silk tent, an embroidered thangka painting of the deity White Tara (from China),¹³⁷ a sandalwood statue of Śākyamuni,¹³⁸ very many novice monks, several hundred wood pillars, precious stones, many ritual items, services of carpenters, stonemasons, painters, and huge amounts of butter, roasted barley meal (*rtsam pa*), cheese, milk, yoghurt, and meat. The Jamyang Zhepa's biography also records that during his term in office the local communities and affiliated monasteries donated 109,760 silver taels, 780 horses, 3,500 sheep, and 420 other livestock (*rta nor*), in addition to other items to the monastery. Specific donors and numbers are attested in his biography.¹³⁹ In addition to these portable donations, the Second Jamyang Zhepa was also given entire monasteries, for example, the Sangngak Mingyé Ling (*gsang sngags smin rgyas gling*) in Urga and a monastery in Rongwo.¹⁴⁰ Finally, the Second Jamyang Zhepa was only one person, but when the numbers here are multiplied by the more than eighty lineages in all of their successive rebirths, one gets some idea of the amount of material donations to Labrang Monastery through its history.¹⁴¹

While Labrang grew wealthy the Jamyang Zhepas and others often used donated wealth for monastery improvement and expansion. The Second Jamyang Zhepa bought new vestments for the monastic dances (*'cham*), renovated and expanded Labrang's Kālacakra College and renovated Tösam College, the Medical College, and the Crafts Institute (*gso rig gzhan phan gling*). He was a key sponsor of renovations at monasteries in Amchok,¹⁴² Tsö, Urga, Dzöge Mema, and other places.¹⁴³ He built new monasteries in Ngawa, in Dzöge Mema, made donations to the monasteries of Gönlung and Tongkhor,¹⁴⁴ and sponsored the printing of over ten thousand new books at the Labrang Printing House.¹⁴⁵

Finally, he gave many donations of cash and objects to the major Gelukpa monasteries in Lhasa, and on one typical occasion a donation of seventy thousand taels of silver to the government in central Tibet.¹⁴⁶ The Labrang lamas also sent ritual objects to the Qing court;¹⁴⁷ the amounts of these gifts to and from Labrang and central Tibetan monasteries and the Qing court were significant. Gift exchange between Labrang and the Qing court was intermittent, for different motives and goals; Qing gifts

were however not a source of operating income for Labrang.¹⁴⁸ Rawski comments that this gift giving shows "... the extent to which Tibetan Buddhism provided the commodities as well as a vehicle for the court's incorporation of the Mongols and Tibetans into the empire."¹⁴⁹ This seems to be an overstatement, as there was extensive gift exchange between Labrang and Lhasa, and between Labrang's communities and the monastery. Large scale gift-giving to and from the Qing court did not indicate political fealty.

Other Sources of Income

Donative giving, religious levies—whether voluntary and merit-generating or not—was not the only source of monastery income. Communities that Labrang owned and controlled made tax, land use and livestock rental payments to the monastery central office. Local ethnic groups also rendered *corvée* service. These revenues and service went to the main monastery and to the thirty-odd estates located at the monastery. Tax, land use and livestock rental payments were made in appropriate materials—livestock, meat, wool, butter, milk, grain, hides, silver, brocade, lumber, and other locally produced commodities. *Corvée* included a wide variety of services including housekeeping and personal attendance, construction and building maintenance, messenger and courier service, agricultural labor and others. It also included reception, escort and host services for visiting lamas.

The patterns of revenue payment and service varied in the Labrang region from place to place and over time. Any generalization about land use, livestock management income or *corvée* is just that, a generalization, synchronic, and not applicable in all places and times. Still, it is possible to describe the general trends in agricultural and land use fees, livestock management arrangements, and patterns of services rendered to the monastery and the estates.

Taxes and services were rendered to the monastery and the monastery's sub-estates, and the primary land and livestock owners in the greater Labrang community. The sub-estates should be understood as components of the Labrang institution as a whole. In addition, there were a very few local lords or land owners in the Labrang community who owned land and livestock. These latter included the Mongol Prince's family, the Dzöge Mema lord, independent nomad chiefs, altogether a minority relative to the main monastery. Even though there were not as many established lords with large estates, the monastery functioned as a landlord, a large-scale livestock owner, and a recipient of community service, all in a regional variant of systems found in other Tibetan areas. That is, it was a society in which the primary land and livestock own-

ers were monasteries, monastic estates and a few prominent families. A second group included farmers that could afford large scale rental operations on monastery (and on the few private estate) lands and nomads who managed large herds of monastery and group-owned livestock, but on monastery-owned pastures. A third group was made up of small-scale farmers and nomads who tilled small pieces of land or kept small herds, either in individual relationships to the monastery or as part of a larger farming or herding group.

Agriculture

At its founding, Labrang's immediate vicinity (the monastery site, the *lha sde shog pa bzhi*) was pasture, but as time went on it was gradually converted to agriculture. Local people paid land use taxes and rendered service to the central monastery. Labrang's other properties were likewise originally pastures, and only recently partially farmed. Revenues from these holdings went mostly to the main monastery but included communities pledged to Labrang's subsidiary monastic estates.

In all agricultural areas the amount of land rented was variable. In other Tibetan areas there were distinct sharecropper and fixed-tax revenue systems, based on the nature of the relationship and obligation between the working people and the land owners, evidently with fixed tax revenue amounts. At Labrang, agricultural revenues were rendered to the monastery estates and the few lords, but specific tax amounts were negotiable, based on the size of the fields and success of the harvest. Sometimes the rental payment was very little, and always of produce in kind, usually barley.

One typical written account¹⁵⁰ was corroborated and nuanced by interviews. At Labrang, typical farmland rentals were from eight or twelve hectares (two or three *doudi*) up to and more often about twenty or twenty-four hectares (five or six *doudi*). For every four hectares (one *doudi*) of land rented the farmers had to pay ten liters (one *dou*) of barley at harvest time. The harvest yield was variable depending on the quality of the land and weather conditions, but the local people calculated that ten liters planted, usually in four hectares, yielded about one hundred and fifty liters (fifteen *dou*). Local people reported that tax amounts were negotiable depending on the proven output of the rental property; in Dzögé Mema, for example, a field would be rated at a certain projected yield, and based on this the payment amount was negotiated.

Further, in a similar but smaller scale arrangement, many local people reported that in addition to these relatively established farms, many local farmers tilled less than one hectare (one *mu*), and paid the monastery one basket of barley (one basket was about ten kilograms of grain) per year

regardless of the quality or extent of the harvest. Many sources confirmed that the rental rate was indeed one basket of grain per *mu* of land rented. Rentals in the greater Labrang community were negotiated between the resident farmers and the owners of the land, whether the monastery central office, a monastic estate, or an independent lord. While many local people reported that the tax payment was nominal and not a burden, the general consensus was that non-payment of tax revenues was punishable by loss of privilege and eviction.

Livestock management

Another substantial source of monastery and estate income came from the practice of contracting management of monastery livestock. Livestock management was an important source of revenue, hardly surprising in this predominantly pastoral economy, and in light of the fact that many thousands of sheep, yaks and horses were owned by the monastery. This significant financial instrument was not uniform in all of Labrang's territories. It was used by both the central monastery and by the estates, and though generally similar to the system in central Tibet, it did not use the same categories or rules. A full survey of the different Tibetan livestock revenue systems is beyond the limit of this project. Still, livestock was a negotiable commodity, and often donated or paid to the Labrang and estate authorities, as noted. The monastery and estates gradually accumulated extensive herds of sheep, yaks and horses (and hybrid strains, altogether called *rta nor* or *nor*).

Briefly, in the greater Labrang region there were two general methods of livestock management. The first were rather small-scale, individual arrangements between the monastery or estate and the local communities. The second was more typical, broader based, and a matter of policy. In an example of the first case, a Labrang estate entrusted its livestock to the care of local families and paid a fee for this service. In return the local family had to provide an agreed amount of butter (but usually not milk or wool, etc.) to the estate, via a local resident officer (called *srid rigs 'dzin no*, *srog 'dzin mkhan*, or *dar dpon*). The officer was a purely economic functionary selected from the local community for a three-year term.

The second, large scale arrangement between the monastery and its livestock keepers was implemented in Labrang's nomad communities, for example in Ngülra, Sangkhok, Khotsé, Dzögé Nyinma and elsewhere. In these places, care of the monastery's extensive herds was contracted to local families, and a resident officer from the local *shog pa* group was appointed. The terms of the agreement were slightly different from place to place. Generally, when a community assumed responsibility for monastery livestock they negotiated payments and profits based on

the original number of animals and subsequent births and deaths. These were reported and recorded during visits (usually in spring and in July or autumn) by monastery representatives. In some cases local herders only paid for newly born animals, submitting payment in wool, hides and butter.¹⁵¹ The return from the original herd was given to the local family for maintenance. If there was a net loss in herd numbers (because of disease, theft, poor pasturage, etc.) the local herders had only to make an honest accounting, proved whenever possible by the branded remains of the dead animals. Thus in this case the monastery's profit was from the increase in size of the herd only, and the community's payment was from the principal.¹⁵²

In a variation the monastery and local community negotiated a fixed payment amount for a specific number (the principal) of monastery animals. If the herd increased in size, the local herders did not have to remit payment for the increase; this was profit for the locals. If the number of animals decreased, the local herders were allowed to pay a lesser amount than the original principal. In this case the monastery profited from the principal only and the local community profited from the increase.¹⁵³

In Ngülra there were eight family groups, and eight monastery-appointed managers who had these kinds of arrangements with Labrang. The herds were primarily sheep, yaks and hybrids. Each of the eight families took care of from two hundred to one thousand animals. Labrang Monastery also kept many horses in the region, care of which was separately contracted. Local people were allowed to use or loan the horses, but not sell them. Local people were also allowed to take wool from the principal herd for their own use but not for sale. There was no set amount of wool to give the monastery. They could also butcher and eat some sheep as necessary for the community, but not for sale.

In the spring, Labrang officials from among the eighty monastery attendants at Labrang came to Ngülra to count the number of newborn and dead sheep and livestock. Wool revenues, the primary commodity, were taken in the autumn. In the spring visits, animal deaths were confirmed by the branded horns, skins, and hooves.

The locally-appointed managers were compensated for their services each year. In the first case, in Dzögé Nyinma, wool was collected yearly by the monastery and in return each local manager received three hundred kilograms of barley per year. In Ngülra each of the eight managers received twelve (according to sources) "fat" sheep, two "good" horses, about two hundred kilograms (four hundred *rgya mal/jin*) of tsampa, and seventy-five kilograms (one hundred and fifty *rgya ma*) of flour.¹⁵⁴ These figures show how the monastery maintained a system with their communities that yielded profits for the monastery and for local communities.

Corvée

Mandatory uncompensated labor, *corvée*, was not technically a revenue generating practice at Labrang, but it was a significant factor in the development of the monastery. Voluntary labor outside of *corvée* obligation was a different matter, and not under consideration here. Free *corvée* labor precluded the necessity of hiring workers and thereby produced a net savings and subsequently increased wealth for the monastery and estates. Mandatory labor was broadly publicized and interpreted as a religious merit-generating activity, and thus justified. It was pervasive in the greater Labrang community and manifested in all aspects of life, commonly cited in the historical literature as a routine practice. Many, even most, sources reported that mandatory labor was not oppressive, simply a fact of community life. Some sources, however, reported that *corvée* was an abusive practice and used excessively to the extent of being a burden on the local community.

Corvée included the exercise of every kind of labor and service, with the exception of monastic ritual and strictly religious activities. Both the monastery central office and the estates had *corvée* rights. Having said this, the practice of *corvée* was not at all uniform. In some cases it was not a burden and in others resented and considered unfair. In some groups it was a matter of routine practice and in others it was optional or not practiced at all. Some people were compensated with food and clothing for their work and others were not. In some cases it was required and non-compliance was a punishable offense. In general, *corvée* was widespread and an important source of labor that saved the monastery and estates considerable expense.

The types of labor and service were manifold. Local communities, both settled and nomadic, provided for visiting Labrang authorities, meeting the traveling lama at the recognized border of their territory, providing transportation, food, shelter (tents), protection, and often extensive offerings for the duration of his stay. On his departure a local delegation traveled on to the borders of the next group. The lama's entourage included monks, servants and monastic officers. While in residence at Labrang some needy monks lived in the estates and worked for the lama. In return these monks would receive room, board and clothing from the lama. When the Labrang buildings needed repairs, painting, renovations, new construction or if the monastic community needed wood for fuel, local villagers were called on, in some cases reportedly even if it meant that they would neglect their families and their own land. Some villagers were required to use their own animals, and if the animal was lost, the loss was not compensated. This type of work nonetheless produced merit, and from a religious point of view it was an opportunity provided

by the monastic authorities for the community. Some insist that it was not forced or excessive, but others reported that if they did not work they were punished, fined or beaten. Some reported that wealthy people were able to hire those less well off to fulfill this obligation for them. The reality was that all of these are true; *corvée* was imposed to varying degrees in different places and times by different authorities. It was a regulated system, based on established obligations, but there were exceptions to this statement as well, for example by the Gungtang estate with an apparently consistent system by which every year fifteen people from fifteen separate villages were required to work for that one year. If a village had a hardship they could be exempted. Other authorities required their entire communities to work five or six times per year. *Corvée* was a binding responsibility for the monastery's communities, and non-compliance was not an option, except in the cases of some nomad groups.

Miscellaneous Revenue—Money Lending

In addition to these arrangements the monastery's central office and the estates sometimes, albeit infrequently, loaned money to nomad family groups at variable interest. In cases where loans were not repaid the borrower might run away. If an individual or group representative did not pay the agreed revenues to the monastery, or in cases of theft of livestock or products, the guilty parties were punished by beatings, imprisonment, or exile.

Sponsorship

Still another source of monastery revenue was the practice of rotating community sponsorship of monastery and estate ritual and religious functions (*sbyin 'dzin pa*). Yearly payments in both agricultural and nomadic regions also included periodic sponsorship of the local observance of the Prayer Festival (*smoṅ lam*) and other regular calendrical events. This sponsorship was both obligatory but deferrable in difficult times. One source reported that if a local village or *shog pa* did not come forward with voluntary sponsorship, the monastery would assign the donor responsibility to a community. The responsibility could nonetheless be fulfilled minimally or even deferred for reasons of hardship. Donor responsibility fell to a community or family group monthly and at special times during the year. Wealthy families sometimes served as voluntary sponsor. Donations were sometimes frequent, even monthly, and greater at festival times.¹⁵⁵ These payments were mandatory for established communities, but local sources reported that poor people were exempt from this regular payment, though they still had to pay a portion of their harvest, no mat-

ter how small. These rotating mandatory donations were a regular and substantial source of monastery income.

Taxes

As time went on the monastery adapted to the changing economies and politics of the region by implementing new tax policies. In the twentieth century taxes were paid by Tibetans, Muslims and Chinese for the use of Labrang's markets, for persons who attended Labrang's public schools and for anyone building a residence on monastery property. These market taxes are well attested; there were public tax announcements made every year. Until 1949 Labrang Monastery's General Accounting Office (*tshogs chen spyi ba*) put a tax on every load-bearing animal (horses and donkeys) that came to Labrang's markets. Labrang standardized the weights and measures in its markets. Every three years, when the director of the Office was replaced, the markets' weights and measures would be re-calibrated, and sealed with a current seal.¹⁵⁶

A source from the late 1930s reported that Xiahe County, which was reportedly controlled by officials from Labrang Monastery, had yearly revenues of eleven thousand five hundred Chinese yuan. Of this over eight thousand seven hundred was income from livestock. In later years there was a tax office in Xiahe affiliated with the Gansu Economic Bureau (*cai zheng ting*) responsible for taxing local merchants dealing in grain, tea, medicines, hides, wool, and manufactured goods, taking in a yearly revenue of ninety-six thousand Chinese yuan. Of this, the Bureau supervisory office received yearly revenues of over two thousand Chinese yuan.¹⁵⁷ This Chinese source does not however say who exactly collected these taxes, or who received them. Given the commodities listed, it appears that the merchants who paid taxes were among the Tibetan, Muslim,¹⁵⁸ and Chinese temporary and permanent residents in the village next to the monastery. Further, because in these years the local Tibetans had considerable control over Xiahe, until further data comes to light, it is safe to assume that much of this revenue stayed in Xiahe.

Outside of these taxes there was little or no tax paid to Beijing or Urga (Ulan Bator). Payments to Beijing and Urga were infrequent gifts sent to the Qing and Mongol courts; the Qing and Mongol courts in response periodically sent gifts to Labrang Monastery. Payments to Lhasa were made via delegate (*sgar dpon*), and as noted above.¹⁵⁹ Finally, there were local communities whose lands had been donated to monasteries in central Tibet in years previous and later transferred to Labrang. For example, as mentioned, Dokar was a property of Drepung Monastery in central Tibet, and sent yearly payments to Lhasa. However, the revenues from this community were traded for central Tibetan properties that had been donated

to the First Jamyang Zhepa during his stay in Lhasa, when he served as Throne Holder of Drepung. In sum, there is little evidence of any substantial taxes paid to any power outside of the Labrang community.

Individual Monastic Enterprises

In addition to religious levies/donations, tax revenues and corvée the Labrang estates and individual monks generated revenue for their own support and for the monastery-at-large. It is well known that at Labrang most monks were supported by their families and their home communities. The monastery provided some food and support, and individual estates sometimes sponsored some monks. Still, the rule was that monks supported themselves by donations from their families, by donations from local communities, and very often by funerary (*grong chog*) and other community ritual services.¹⁶⁰

Labrang's system of monks' residences were physically very different from those in central Tibet, in that there were no regional dormitories (*khang tshan*) at Labrang; monks rather lived in individual houses, either alone or with some compatriots from their family groups or home districts. Some monks in this situation were very well endowed and enjoyed comfortable living quarters. There were also monks who were taken in by the Labrang estates, who lived on estate grounds and received room, board and clothing.

Many monks were able to manage their endowments and accumulate wealth in various ways so that they became quite well off, even within the Vinaya monastic code restrictions against monks handling money, but not without precedent in the history of Buddhist monasticism.¹⁶¹ For example, in Dzögé Mema monastery, some monks owned female yaks (*'bri mo*). A monk could own up to five of these animals, and if more than five, they had to be taken care of by a local person, often a family member, for which the family was given some butter. Monks would milk their own animals and care for them, sometimes at night. Here there is a clear example of monks accumulating donated wealth and even disbursing it to the local community.

In sum, Labrang monks came with and were able to generate varying degrees of income. These were not uniform. The support structures for monks at Labrang included family and donor support, individual monks taking in novices as students and servants, estates taking in novices as students and servants, and periodic support from the central monastery. All of these various sources of income, whether based on rationalizations of the Vinaya monastic codes or not, served to support the monastic population and at the same time defray the burden of expense on the central monastery.

MILITARY

In Ngülra there was a militia commander personally endorsed by the Jamyang Zhepa. In the late 1940s and early 1950s the local commander (*dmag dar 'dzin*) proudly carried the lama's blessing and handprint on a battle flag into battle with the Sichuan Mema forces. He said that he knew "nothing about the monastery, nothing about Buddhist wisdom, and nothing about Buddhist scriptures" (*grwa tshang shes na; yum shes na; bka' 'gyur shes na*). What he clearly did know about, however, was the power that the monastery's endorsement had in his and all of Labrang's communities. He reported that the monastery's endorsement to different generations of his family brought prestige and power.

The following information about military policies was gathered from a number of former military officials, witnesses of military events, and from written materials. It goes without saying that whether Buddhist or not, the Labrang authorities had military forces that resorted to the use of violence for defensive purposes and to settle disputes. Even further, these were fierce fighters who did not hesitate to shed blood and kill their enemies. Most if not all of the informants proudly gave accounts of fierce fighting, bloodshed and killing in local history. Additionally, in the greater Labrang communities, military leadership had to be endorsed by the monastic officials. The Labrang representatives rode into battle with the militia, and sometimes took part in the fighting. Labrang's authority was derived in part from its religious status and expertise, but it also had very real lay applications that guaranteed its status in the community.

Here the use of the terms "military" and so on must be understood in the context of this high-altitude, pre-modern, sparsely populated, pastoral culture. Perhaps a better descriptive term is "local militia."¹⁶² On the other hand, the roughly one thousand fighters (ca. 1940) were organized, there was a recognized command structure, and there were battle strategies.¹⁶³

Military leadership was inherited, but at the same time it was subject to community consensus. That is, military leadership had to be endorsed by the community and its leaders, new leaders could be selected from the community, and if necessary, the inherited leadership role could be transferred from one family to another. While military responsibility and leadership roles were normally inherited, they were not the permanent responsibility of one family group. For example, one informant reported that when a military leader was killed his son became the next leader. If there were no more boys in the family, the leadership was handed to another family.

The militia was called up whenever there was a major conflict that threatened control of a territory. When there was a serious dispute with a neighboring group over territory, or in later years when neighboring Muslim or

Chinese forces occupied Tibetan territories, the designated military leaders (*dmag dar 'dzin*) met with the family leaders to discuss battle strategies and goals. After these discussions the military leaders had authority over the family leaders in all military decisions. The community leaders would accompany the military into battle as observers, and would follow the leadership of the fighters. The military leaders had the authority to requisition soldiers, horses, guns if available, clothing and food.¹⁶⁴

There are many examples of the Tibetan militia using force, or the threat of force, to resolve disputes. In the biography of the First Jamyang Zhepa, which is generally concerned with his life in Lhasa, his education, and only later with his relatively brief twelve years at Labrang, there are nonetheless citations of local militia activity. One cryptic comment about local discord came on the occasion of the lama's visit to Machu and Mechu (in modern Sichuan). During that visit he described the rich land and contented people who were beleaguered by the disturbances "between gods and demons," apparently a reference to disputes and battles between local groups, which flared intermittently through much of Labrang's history.¹⁶⁵ There are more explicit references to military activity in the descriptions of troubles with the Goloks, who were eventually, but only temporarily, defeated by local militia forces.¹⁶⁶

There were frequent skirmishes between the Goloks on the Labrang communities' south and southeast borders. Over the years there were skirmishes and sometimes bloody battles between Labrang's militia and neighbors in Rongwo to the west and northwest, with the Salars to the north and northwest, sometimes with Chinese forces stationed in Kachu (Linxia), and with the Mema lord and others in Sichuan to the south and southeast. In all of these accounts the Jamyang Zhepas played the role of commander-in-chief of the militia, giving sanction to militia operations, and often resolving the dispute diplomatically, albeit at times after some bloodshed. On one occasion the Labrang militia fought with the Rongwo militia, thirty fighters were killed, and the dispute was resolved by the Second Jamyang Zhepa.¹⁶⁷ Again, on another occasion, while not exactly a demonstration of Tibetan militia power, the Salar militia in the employ of the local Chinese authority (Tibetan, *tshong 'du*, Chinese, *zong du*), kidnapped some local Tibetans, evidently to serve as soldiers and laborers. The Second Jamyang Zhepa, in his role as political and military leader, successfully negotiated the release of the prisoners.¹⁶⁸ This was not an overt Tibetan military operation, but it does indicate that the Labrang lamas had temporal power in the region, or at least were prestigious enough to serve as mutually recognized negotiators. Accordingly, again, the Second Jamyang Zhepa later successfully negotiated a settlement and cessation of fighting between groups of local Mongols.¹⁶⁹ Again, the lamas' mediation of military disputes was recognized by local Tibetans,

Mongols, and Chinese, but there were no guarantees of lasting peace.¹⁷⁰ The Third, Fourth, and Fifth Jamyang Zhepas maintained active local militias until 1958.

CONCLUSION

This chapter is about the greater Labrang community, the peoples who paid for, supported, and fought for the monastery. It is also about the monastic administration, and the economic and legal requirements imposed on the community. The chapter captures the lifestyles of these Amdo Tibetans, their social and authority structures, their economy, and the important roles that the monastery played in their lives. There is a lot of data here about nomadic community groups, their functions, and leadership. These descriptions are important precisely because they were functional and because they were the engine for the founding and growth of the monastery. These people built and sustained Labrang's enormous physical structure and endowed it with art and architectural masterpieces, and maintained their commitments to the monastic and social infrastructures over the years of the monastery's regional prominence.

The social and political structures described in this chapter do not present a picture of an idyllic Tibetan Buddhist paradise, instead an account of the actual community. The chapter is included to show the structures and functions of the community, from the perspectives of its successful highlands nomadic and ethnic lifestyles. At the same time this chapter shows the imperfections of this society, its insularity, inter-group isolation, and its political shortcomings.

The greater Labrang community was centered on a religious institution, but it was not uniformly or strictly religious. Lack of awareness of religious principles, transgressions of fundamental religious rules, and general disregard of religious values were common. Many average Labrang Tibetans were not terribly pious. At the same time, Tibetan Buddhist and the entire diverse range of religious beliefs were pervasive in the community, and the monastery held an academic pedigree of the highest order. Pious or not, the majority valued and sought inclusion in the religiously-defined community; the lamas and the monastery provided a conduit to the invisible forces that impacted everyone's lives. For this access even the toughest nomad fighters paid taxes on herds, offered gifts and tribute to the lamas and monastery, sent their sons to enter the monastery, and in general preserved a vision of inclusion, somehow merit-generating, or in more broad terms, maintaining what was understood as good.

This chapter also shows the mundane social, political, and economic functions of the monastery itself. Labrang was in these respects a large

scale and very wealthy estate with a complex infrastructure and bureaucracy. It may have used a religious rationale in its management of its properties, and it certainly did provide a broad spectrum of religious and social services, but it was not disconnected from the realities of governance, economics, and maintenance of social order. In these respects, in spite of its shortcomings Labrang served as a governing institution.

This chapter comes after the general introduction to Amdo in Chapter I and the brief overview of the monastery and Tibetan religion in Chapter II. Together these three chapters present a picture of Labrang Monastery and its extended community. The Labrang region has a place in Amdo's history, on the Tibetan Plateau and on the borderlands of successive Tibetan, Mongol, Chinese, and Manchu empires. Its diverse religious cultures show its inherited regional definitions, its historical derivations from ancient Bon, Buddhist sectarian groups, and other sources, and the importance of its connections to central Tibet. These chapters show Labrang in the contexts of Amdo's sometimes turbulent history, in Amdo's rich and multi-faceted religious environment, and in its unique society. They should be understood together, as parts of a whole. The book now turns to a more detailed description of the origin and growth of the monastery and community, and in light of the fact that this was not an anonymous group of individuals in a remote and insignificant outpost, especially to several of its most famous individuals and their remarkable accomplishments.

NOTES

1. This expression is well known in Labrang's territories. I have not however seen it in any written document.

2. For relevant social theories, see Pierre Bourdieu, "The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups," *Theory & Society* 14.6 (November 1985): 723-744; Deborah Reed-Danahay, *Locating Bourdieu* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); Chattopadhyaya, *The Making of Early Medieval India*, 114 ff; with reference to Tibetan and Mongol nomadic cultures see Samuel, *Tantric Revisionings*, 27-51; for a contemporary but useful description of nomadic economy see Graham E. Clarke, "China's Reforms of Tibet, and Their Effects on Pastoralism," *Kailash: A Journal of Himalayan Studies* 14.1-2 (1988): 69-72, 76-83; for a description of and terminology for this kind of society, i.e. was this a "feudal" society or not, see Harbans Mukhia, "Was There Feudalism in Indian History?," in *The State in India 1000-1700*, ed. Hermann Kulke (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), 86-133. Compare Bat-Ochir Bold's criticism of using Marxist rhetoric and categories to classify Mongol nomadic societies, cited above. See the terminology and rationale in Melvyn C. Goldstein, "An Anthropological Study." For a full-length debate on the definitions of "serf" and "feudal" societies in Tibetan contexts, see Goldstein and Miller in Melvyn Goldstein, "Reexamining Choice, Dependency

and Command in the Tibetan Social System: 'Tax Appendages' and Other Landless Serfs," *The Tibet Journal* 11.4 (1986): 79–113; Beatrice Miller, "A Response to Goldstein's 'Reexamining Choice, Dependency and Command in the Tibetan Social System'," *The Tibet Journal* 12.2 (1987): 65–67; Melvyn Goldstein, "On the Nature of the Tibetan Peasantry: A Rejoinder," *The Tibet Journal* (1987): 61–65; Beatrice Miller, "Last Rejoinder to Goldstein on Tibetan Social System," *The Tibet Journal* 13.3 (1988): 64–67; Goldstein, "Freedom, Servitude and the 'Servant-serf' Nyima," 56–60. In addition to Samuel's comparisons of Tibet and Muslim structures, Labrang's political values and systems might be compared to those of some Southeast Asian cultures. In medieval Burma, for example, there were four groups of lay persons, classified according to their functions in society. Here, like central Tibet and Labrang, group inclusion and group stability were the most important concerns. In Burma the four groups were unbonded persons, persons bonded to individuals, persons bonded to Buddhist monasteries and persons bonded to the state authority, the Burmese king. For central Tibetan groups, including government bonded persons, monastery bonded persons and numerous subgroups, see Goldstein, "An Anthropological Study." For Burma, see Aung-Thwin, *Pagan*, 71–96. See also Chattopadhyaya, *The Making of Early Medieval India*, 10–12, 14, 21–25, 34–37.

3. Li An-che, *Labrang: A Study in the Field*, 8; Li An-che, *History of Tibetan Religion*, 246; see also 234–247.

4. Xiahe Xianzhi-1970, 13, 37. See the summary of population figures in Hansen, *Frontier People*, 29–31, 41–43.

5. Xiahe Xianzhi-1970, 38. These are clearly rough estimates; see the somewhat different estimates and breakdowns on 75–77.

6. Xiahe Xianzhi-1970, 38 ; for a description of the origins and practices of the Xiahe Muslims see Martin Slobodnik, "'Muslim labtse': Contemporary forms of Hui Sūfism in Tibetan surroundings," *Zentral-Asiatische Studien* 37 (2008): 119–142.

7. Interview.

8. Makley, *Violence of Liberation*, 297n25.

9. Interview. One of the persons who reported the prohibition against married couples at Labrang was a personal attendant of the Fifth 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa. This prohibition is corroborated in Mei Yibao, *Labuleng zhi xing* (ca. 1930), in *Zhongguo xibei wenxian congshu*, ed. Zhongguo Xibei Wenxian Congshu Weiyuanhui (Lanzhou, 1991), 314–315.

10. See for example Ekvall, *Fields on the Hoof*, 52–53; see Namkhai Norbu, *Journey Among the Tibetan Nomads: An Account of a Remote Civilization* (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1997). For an ancient Mongol comparison, see Jack Weatherford, *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2004), 16–17, 42, 50–54; compare the theories of "social banditry" and rampant crime in China, in Phil Billingsley, *Bandits in Republican China* (Stanford University Press, 1988).

11. The word "adjudicate" implies the resolution of a conflict by resort to standing legal codes or principles. "Mediate" means simply to resolve a dispute. The difference is in the level of acceptance and observance of legal authority, a key factor in governance. The Labrang authorities did both, adjudicate with reference

to accepted legal guidelines, and mediate by intervention in local disputes. In this project both words are used according to the context and resolution of the dispute. See Goldstein, "An Anthropological Study," 22–23; 91–94; 109; 115; 136–137; adjudication distinguished from mediation, 236; Samuel, *Civilized Shamans*, 57.

12. Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society*, 25–42.

13. Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society*, 33. Bold goes on to describe the nomadic economy in some detail. He also explains how Mongol society and social history have been misrepresented by European scholars who describe the Mongol economy from industrialized perspectives, saying for example that the Mongol economy was at a pre-industrial and thus primitive stage of development. See Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society*, 25–32, 48.

14. Wan Dekhar, "Changes in Family Material Life Among the Nomads in Northern Tibet," *Chinese Sociology and Anthropology* 35.2 (2000): 65–66.

15. Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society*, 48–49.

16. Borjigidai, "Hoshuud Polity," 182 ff.

17. The origins and historical consolidation of the peoples in Amdo are summarized in 'Brug thar, *Mdo smad byang shar gyi bod kyi tsho ba shog pa'i lo rgyus dang rig gnas bcas par dpyad pa* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2002), 22–25. 'Brug thar's information comes from a number of Chinese and Tibetan sources, only partially cited. The inherited structures he cites include: *rgyal khag*, *dpon khag*, *tsho ba*, *bla rgyud*, 'Brug thar, *Mdo smad tsho ba shog pa'i lo rgyus*, 29.

18. Clarke, "China's Reforms of Tibet," 83.

19. Goldstein, "An Anthropological Study," 42.

20. Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*, 96.

21. Ekvall, *Fields on the Hoof*, 28.

22. Compare Clarke, "China's Reforms of Tibet," 83–84, where the author discusses social units in Tibetan nomad territories. Clarke unfortunately does not give the Tibetan term for the group he describes, supplying only the word(s) "*dongseuh*." This might be a Chinese rendering of the Tibetan *sde tsho*, which is sometimes used as a synonym for *shog pa*. Clarke's work is nonetheless useful.

23. Compare the Mongol offices and authority structures in Borjigidai, "Hoshuud Polity," 182 ff. This source notes the 1723 shift in power from the Mongol Eight Taijinar to the Manchu 29 Banners.

24. Chu kha ma formed a lama-donor (*mchod yon*) relationship with the Second 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa. In 1948 there was a conflict between Chu kha ma and Dme tshang from Sichuan, over the theft of some livestock, evidently by Chu kha ma. The Chu kha ma lord (*dpon po*) and twenty fighters were killed. Much of the population escaped to Mdzod dge nyin ma and the border of the Mongol territory in Qinghai, and only returned in 1964. Interview. See the brief but useful introduction to Chu kha ma in Skäl bzang rgya mtsho, *Chu kha ma'i lo rgyus bshad pa* (Machu, Gansu: Machu Historical Research House, 1994).

25. Interviews; Tshul khrims karko, "Shog pa," unpublished manuscript. This interesting and detailed work gives the genealogy of the *shog pa* groups in modern southern Gansu and environs, including Dbal mang tshang, Chu kha ma, Smad ma, Nur ma, Dbal shul rgya tshang, and Rgya rtse, several of which were important in Labrang's history. These six *shog pas* make up the region called Khro kho khag gsum, which are described in detail. The author cites some of his sources,

but not all, and includes much data from recent history, also from unspecified sources. This data is however corroborated by other oral and written sources.

26. One local person gave an example about how the population of one modern southern Gansu *shog pa* was scattered as a result of their leader's death: "Later, after the 'go ba of the Dbal shul ldong ma clan died the people scattered and now they don't live there," *rjes su dbal shul ldong ma tshang gi 'go ba shi rjes dpon po med pas 'bangs mi kha thor da lta gnas kyi mi 'dug*.

27. In Mdzod dge nyin ma there were six groups, *shog pa drug*; an interviewee listed eight *shog pas*, but went on to name six that were counted before 1955.

28. Interviews; Tshul khirms karko, "Shog pa." See Bse tshang blo bzang dpal ldan chos kyi rdo rje, *Zhal shul dgon gyi gyi gdan rabs dang 'brel ba'i lo rgyus* (Gtsos/Hezuo, Gansu: Southern Gansu News Publishing House, 2001).

29. See the terms *tsho ba* "congregation" and *sde pa* in Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*, 96, and the data in note 43. For summaries of marriage and family structures and some references on these practices in central Tibet, see Rebecca Redwood French, *The Golden Yoke: The Legal Cosmology of Buddhist Tibet* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2002), on marriage, 38–39, on inheritance, 172–174. Marriage practices are discussed in some detail in Clarke, "China's Reforms of Tibet"; Ekvall, *Fields on the Hoof*; Goldstein, "An Anthropological Study"; Kapstein, *The Tibetans*; and elsewhere.

30. See 'Brug thar, *Mdo smad tsho ba shog pa'i lo rgyus*, 35. Also interviews.

31. Interviews. However, in one interview an informant related that in Dbal mang tshang there were four *shog pas*, not four *tsho bas*.

32. These *shog pa* had subgroups, *tsho ba*. Interviews.

33. Interview. The divisions of Mdzod dge nyin ma are called *tsho ba* in Interviews and *shog pa* in 'Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje, "Rma chu rdzong gi 'brog sde," 51.

34. These uses are summarized in Dung dkar blo bzang 'phrin las, *Dung dkar tshig mdzod chen mo* (Beijing: China Tibetology Publishing House, 2002). See 'Brug thar, *Mdo smad tsho ba shog pa'i lo rgyus*, 35; also interviews. For examples of the uses of the word *ru/s* see E. Gene Smith, *Among Tibetan Texts: History and Literature of the Himalayan Plateau*, ed. Kurtis Schaeffer (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2001), 216–223. See Makley, *Violence of Liberation*, 64–70.

35. Interview.

36. To complicate matters, in the history of Labrang Monastery the word *ru* was used, among other more recent divisions, for the Manchu and Mongol terms for banner group. See Mark C. Elliot, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

37. See 'Brug thar, *Mdo smad tsho ba shog pa'i lo rgyus*, 35.

38. Interview.

39. Interview.

40. The following typical account describes the arrangements made for Labrang's 'go ba representatives; I have removed all identifying information. [During the 1920s and 1930s,] . . . local people were forced to pay taxes to Ma Bufang. When Dngul rwa fought Ma Qi, about eighty people were killed. . . . When Apa Alo was twenty-one years old [1924] Ma Bufang was forced to leave. There was a rotating schedule of support among the *lha sde* for the New Year *smon lam chen mo* food preparations

and fees. This was regarded as a status position, not a burden. When the 'go ba came from Labrang he brought support for three years from Labrang, but as local 'go ba he received revenues for his duties in local communities. Every year local people had to give one or two *hua jin* of butter to the 'go ba for the yak butter lamps; this was called *dkar phud*. Additionally, each family had to give the 'go ba high-grade wool for tents, called *dkar bal*. The amount was equal to the wool from one sheep per family. The entire Dngul rwa community also had to give another offering of butter called *mar gcod* to the 'go ba. When there was a meeting the 'go ba had to provide food for the *gur gang ba*. These were usually brief meetings; if there was a serious family dispute, these families had to sponsor the meeting. These meetings were not necessarily regular; they were held depending on events.

The six *skad rgyag khyim tshang drug*, guard and escort and domestic service families stayed near the 'go ba's tent. Each local family had to give these *skad rgyag* families one *hua jin* of butter. Also, the *gur gang ba* had to give the *skad rgyag* two *hua jin* of butter. The officers' families (*dpa' skor khyim tshang gnyis*) chose one person to travel with the 'go ba as a personal attendant, who looked after the 'go ba's horse and so on. The 'go ba also had *'thu sa khyim tshang drug*, domestic service families who carried water and provided boiled water; provided wood and fuel; they butchered sheep, etc. All of these families—six *skad rgyag*, six *'thu sa*, two *dpa' skor*—were called the *sgar skor*. Compiled from interviews.

41. Compare the role of the *gzu tsha*, and other related structures described in Fernanda Pirie, "Feuding, Mediation and the Negotiation of Authority Among the Nomads of Eastern Tibet," *Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Working Paper No. 72* (Halle: Max Planck Institute, 2005), 15. See Goldstein, "An Anthropological Study," 14 ff.

42. See Luo Faxi, *Labulengsi gai kuang* (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, 1990), 109.

43. See the brief description of these offices in Luo Faxi, *Labulengsi gai kuang*, 107–112.

44. For lack of better equivalents, I provisionally translate *sku bcar*, *gnyer ba*, and *zhabs phyi* as "attendant," in addition to using the term "attendant" as a common noun.

45. See the charts in Luo Faxi, *Labulengsi gai kuang*, 18–19, 107–112.

46. See Huber, *The Cult of Pure Crystal Mountain*, 10.

47. See the discussion of these different offices, and the chart of the Amdo communities in Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 320–323.

48. There were 'go bas in other communities in Amdo; this institution was not specific to Labrang Monastery. See Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 320–324. The local 'go bas' income came from mediating disputes and collecting fines for legal transgressions. See Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 328.

49. Sometimes the representatives had to fight. An interviewee reported that when he was seven or eight years old (ca. 1913) there was fighting against Ma Qi, and at that time there was a 'go ba active in Dngul rwa. In a later battle at Gser chen thang in Rgan kya eight fighters from Dngul rwa were killed. There was another battle in Sang khog where eighty fighters were killed. Still later there was fighting with the A rig Qinghai Mongols, and the Dngul rwa fighters were

defeated. In that conflict the *Dmag dar 'dzin* and seven or eight people from the combined *Dngul rwa* and *Nyin ma* forces were killed.

50. Interviews.

51. Interviews.

52. Interviews. The Labrang representatives had personal contact with the community. For example, on new year's every family would visit the 'go ba's tent. On the third day of the new year the 'go ba traditionally hosted the local officials for a festival.

53. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 499. See Dge bshes 'jigs med dam chos & Dbal mang zhabs drung dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Mdo smad bla brang bkra shis 'khyil gyi 'grig yig chen mo* (Beijing: Minorities' Library), 1812. According to this text 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa's *Bca' yig* is itself based on Sgo mang's *Bca' yig*, fol. 95a6–95b1.

54. Numbering more than eighteen, the most prominent estates were kun mkhyen, dbal mang, go mang, gling, blo bzang sbyin ba, snyen grags, bsod grags, dbal mang chung ba, bsam tsha, smad sog nor bu, hor tshang, rgya nag pa, mkhan po, sde pa, alag yongs 'dzin, jun dkar, stag lung che ba, skyor dpon, phyag mdzog mkhan po, bla ma dkar po, mgo rta, gung thang, rgyal mkhan po, brag dgon pa, dpa' re, rgya zhabs drung. Yon tan rgya mtsho, *Chos sde chen po bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, 399. Yon tan rgya mtsho remarked that the estates divided, for example into the body, speech mind sub-estates, resulting in greater numbers.

55. Interview.

56. In one case the yearly payment was called *skyam brgya skyam dmar lug brgya*; among other things (not specified) each family had to periodically pay fifty *liang* of silver.

57. Land ownership, and thus territorial boundaries were seasonal, a matter of grazing and water use rights, and subject to change. See Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society*, 25–42.

58. Informants interviewed said repeatedly that the original "Four Divine Family Groups" paid taxes yearly to Labrang Monastery. The tax payments were in the form of grazing rights for the monastery's livestock, lumber, firewood for fuel, grain, livestock, labor, and other appropriate commodities. For a striking similar example of monastic corvée and property ownership, in Cambodia, see Ian Harris, *Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 71–73.

59. *Lha sde*, divine communities, is a term attested in Labrang as early as 1778. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 265, 301. The corresponding term *mi sde* is used on 308, describing an occasion when the Mongol Prince and a group of persons offered over one hundred horses, a thousand sheep, and other gifts to 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa. There is no shortage of examples of the Second 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa's developing affiliations throughout the support communities. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 170, 199, 228, 231, 242, 250, and elsewhere.

60. For a list compiled before the Communist period, see Rgya zhabs drung tshang skal bzang dkon mchog rgya mtsho (Nanjing), *Thub bstan yongs su rdzogs pa'i mnga' bdag kun gzigs ye shes kyi nyi ma chen po 'jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje 'phreng lnga'i rnam par thar ba mdo bsdus su bkod pa* (Nanjing, 1948), 54–63; divine

communities (*lha sde*) were one type of affiliated monastery (*dgon lag*), mentioned briefly in Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 280. See the list of monasteries in Zhang Wenyu, *Labuleng Shichaji* (manuscript held in Gansu Provincial Library, Lanzhou, 1935), 335–346. See a list of three types of monasteries in Zhang Yanzu, “Labulengsi jian kuang,” in *Gansu wenshi ziliao xuanji*, ed. Meng Guofang (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, 1989), 89–94. For yet another account with 21 divine communities, 33 lay communities, and 41 religiously connected communities see Huang, *Huang Zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 6–7 ff.

61. See Zhang Wenyu, *Labuleng Shichaji*; see a nearly identical map in Liu Yufen, *Labuleng shezhi ji* (Printed edition held in Gansu Provincial Library, Lanzhou, ca. 1928). See also Zha Zha, “Labuleng si zai aba tuo zhan jiao qu shi shi shu lue,” in *Sichuan zangxue yanjiu* (5), ed. Yangling Duoqi and Luo Runcang (Chengdu: Sichuan Renmin Chubanshe, 2002), 483. The border is recorded in the context of disputes and communications, Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 99, 194, 240. The *Deb ther rgya mtsho* states explicitly that the border region between Tibet and Salar regions was home to a large number of Tibetan Buddhist institutions, many, incidentally, recorded here with Chinese names: *bod dang za lar gyi mtshams su snga dus grub chen brgyad cus bzhengs shing . . .*, *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Paris, II, 163b2 ff. At its official recognition in 1926 (and official implementation in 1928) Xiahe County extended eastward one hundred and fifty kilometers to Tumenguan, southward one hundred and forty kilometers to Mowu near Lintan, northward ninety kilometers to Zhaoshiqi (Tibetan: *Zho 'ong dpyi*) Monastery near Tongren in Qinghai, and westward two hundred and sixty kilometers to Duowaguanxiu, near Tongde in Qinghai. See *Xiahe Xianzhi*-1970, 75–76. See the official equation of Labrang and Xiahe County on 77.

62. The status of *lha sde* was asserted in interviews in Mdzod dge smad ma, A mchog, 'Bo ra, etc. Historically more recent additions to *lha sde* communities are mentioned in Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 187: (Nyin srib), 224–225 ('Bum gling), 226 (A mchog, 'Bo ra), 264 (Sichuan Mdzod dge). Earlier *dgon lag* are mentioned in Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 224 (Rgan kya, Gtsos), 384 (Tsa yu).

63. See Goldstein, “An Anthropological Study,” quote 39–40, see 18–40.

64. See Goldstein, “An Anthropological Study,” 44–46, 65–71.

65. The Mdzod dge smad ma community asserted its *lha sde* status to Labrang relatively late, in 1900, see 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 273b2–6.

66. Such control was sometimes rather brutal. On one occasion a local village (*sde ba*) in Rgang tsha was shifting its allegiance away from Mdzod dge to Labrang, and in retaliation the Mdzod dge militia attacked the village, burned it, and killed thirty men, women and children. This event was eventually reported and adjudicated by Labrang. See 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 293b1–6. On another occasion the local Mdzod dge Muslim population, numbering at least ten families, was “asked to leave” Mdzod dge, which they did, leaving only Tibetan and Han residents.

Interview. See also the relevant passage about local control by *dpon pos* in Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 329.

67. For summaries of the histories of Khro kho, Dbal mang tshang, Mtshe ru ma, Smad ma, etc., see 'Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje, "Rma chu rdzong gi 'brog sde," 51–68.

68. Interviews.

69. See Bkra shis dbyangs can dga' blo, "Dpal bde mchog gi pho brang rgan gya brag dkar," 158–163.

70. See Jonathan N. Lipman, "The Border World of Gansu, 1895–1935" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 1981), 15–18, 61; see Xiahe Xianzhi–1999, 259; see Ma Xiaojun, *Gannan zongjiao yanbian yu shehui bianqian* [Transformation of Religion and Society of Southern Gansu], (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, 2007). (Lipman, "The Border World of Gansu," 18). See George F. Andrew, *The Crescent in Northwest China* (London: China Inland Mission, 1921), 17.

71. See Zha Zha, "Labuleng si zai aba," 483.

72. For the extent of "China," see Tu Wei-ming, "Preface to the Stanford Edition" and "Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center," in *The Living Tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today*, ed. Tu Wei-ming (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), v–x, 1–34; see Peter C. Perdue, "Boundaries, Maps, and Movement: The Chinese, Russian, and Mongolian Empires in Early Modern Eurasia," *International History Review* 20 (June 1998): 263–286, 442–461; Richard J. Smith, *Chinese Maps: Images of 'All under Heaven'* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Richard J. Smith, "Mapping China's World: Cultural Cartography in Late Imperial China," in *Landscape, Culture, and Power in Chinese Society*, ed. Wen-hsin Yeh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 52–109; Cordell D.K. Yee, "Traditional Chinese Cartography and the Myth of Westernization," in *The History of Cartography: Cartography in the Traditional East and Southeast Asian Societies*, J.B. Harley & David Woodward (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 170–201; Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994); James A. Millward, "'Coming onto the Map': 'Western Regions' Geography and Cartographic Nomenclature in the Making of Chinese Empire in Xinjiang," *Late Imperial China* 20.2 (December 1999): 62–66; see the brief summary of the history and extent of Labrang in 1936, in Deng Long, "Labuleng shezhizhi jingguo" (1936), in *Xibei minzu zongjiao shi liao wen zhai*, ed. Gansu Library Reference Cataloguing Department (Lanzhou: Gansu Library, 1984): 303; see the map of Mongolia and the entries for Khoshud, Zunghar, etc. in Christopher P. Atwood, *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire* (New York: Facts On File, Inc., 2004), 450.

73. See the statement of Genkya's location between Xunhua/rDo sbis and Linxia in Bkra shis dbyangs can dga' blo, "Dpal bde mchog gi pho brang rgan gya brag dkar," 159. For a description of the Labrang Monastery region, Kha gya tsho drug, and mention of border definition, see Bande mkhar, "Kha gya tsho drug gi spyi bshad," *Rig gzhung dus deb* 1–2 (Hezuo/Gtsos, Gansu, 1994): 77. For the history of Buddhism in Kha gya tsho drug, see Bande mkhar, "Kha gya tsho drug gi ljongs 'dir sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa dar tshul," *Rig gzhung dus deb* 1 (Hezuo/Gtsos, Gansu, 1995): 120–127; see also Ban de mkhar, "Kha gya mi rgod tsho drug dang dge ldan bstan 'phel gling gi byung ba mdo tsam brjod pa," *Zla zer* 2 (1989): 73–75.

74. For a description of the communities south of Labrang see 'Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje, "Rma chu rdzong gi 'brog sde," 51–62.

75. Interviews. The four are Mtha' nag, Mtha' ba gong ma and Zhol ma (or Za ya'i nang), and Sa dkar. These four originally nomadic divine communities divided into the thirteen farming villages. Cf. Makley, *Violence of Liberation*, 115 for a theory of the naming of the "four divine communities," vis-à-vis the use of the term *lha sde* in earlier sources. The following account is as given by several oral sources. The thirteen still recognize their origins in four groups, as follows. Group one: 1. Za yus, 2–3. Thang nag gong zhol (two villages), 4. Sngon mchog; Group two: 5–6. Mtha' ba gong zhol (two villages), 7. Man mkhar, 8. Sa so ma; Group three: 9. Sa dkar, 10. Rgya bor nang, 11. Phug sde; Group four: (the first of group four are today six small villages, but this group of six seems to include two of the original thirteen villages, i.e. # 12 and # 13, as the thirteenth village in this account includes three of the sub-villages included in the twelfth village): 12. Rigs sgra, Mi nyag, Lung dkar thang, Mgar sde, Yig chung thang, and Glu grags; 13. Rigs sgra, Mi nyag, Mgar sde. Group four is alternatively divided into four villages instead of six. Finally, there is a tradition of dividing all of the thirteen villages into upper and lower sections.

76. *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Lanzhou, 547.20 ff: *kha gya'i be hu gnyis kyis sa phul te dgon pa btab bas byas pa che rkang tsha'i gser kha glang gya dang nye bar rong po dang sa mtshams 'dzin byed du bzhaq*. The term *be hu*, evidently from the Chinese *bai hu*, literally "one hundred households," is taken to indicate nomadic lords, according to local sources.

77. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 72–73.

78. Reaffirmed in later years by Alak Gung thang tshang. Interviews. See the information about 'Bum gling's history in *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Paris, II, 40a3-41b2. Salar/Ya rtsi, or perhaps better those portions of the territory affiliated with Labrang was cited as one of Labrang's *lha sde* by a former monastery official, Interview. It is cited as *lha sde* in 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 265a3. See also Apa Alo's inclusion of Salar regions in Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 73–74.

79. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 99.

80. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 194, 240–241.

81. Especially the Tibetans from the region known as "Zhing gong ba." Interview.

82. 'Brug thar, *Mdo smad tsho ba shog pa'i lo rgyus*, 331.

83. In spite of this, as noted, there were monasteries and communities that were pledged to Labrang and part of Labrang's contiguous properties. One Republican era source lists five Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in Xunhua County (and four in nearby Linxia) that were formally affiliated with Labrang Monastery. Rgya zhabs drung tshang skal bzang dkon mchog rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje 'phreng lnga'i rnam par thar ba mdor bsdus (Nanjing), 58–59.

84. Interview. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 265 (bSang khog *lha sde*), also 378, 386; Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya

mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 89 (Bsang khog cited as *lha sde*); 169 (fighting in Bsang khog with Rong bo); 191, (Bsang khog makes lavish gifts, including 1300 *srang* of silver); 207, (Bsang khog offers gifts); 221, (visit to Bsang khog *lha sde*).

85. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 265, 378, 386; Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 125, 155, 187–188, 207, 213, etc.

86. According to another account Rdo dkar was transferred to Labrang during the time of the Second *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa*. Interview.

87. I have not been able to locate the exact source of this quotation; I use the phrase from the first of the following. One *Dngul rwa'i bsang yig* was written by Kun mkhyen dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po, as noted in Dkon mchog chos 'phel, "Rma lho'i sog yul gyi lo rgyus steng gi don chen gsal ba'i me long," in *Rma lho sog rdzong gi rig gnas lo rgyus dpyad yig*, Henan zizhixian wenshi ziliao 1, ed. Tshe ring don grub (Henan Mongol Autonomous County Literary and Historical Materials Committee, 1996), 132: *kun mkhyen 'jigs med dbang pos gsungs pa'i dngul ra'i bsang yig nang du* . . . A second text with the same title is cited in *'Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje*, "Rma chu rdzong gi 'brog sde," 60: *rje gung thang bstan pa'i sgron mes brtsams pa'i dngul rwa'i bsang yig las* . . . Yet another text with a similar name is in the Collected Works of Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po, Vol. *tha*, #60. Thanks to Paldor and Gene Smith for locating this latter text.

88. For a brief summary of some of the historical and mythical information about Dngul rwa's origins, see *'Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje*, "Rma chu rdzong gi 'brog sde," 60–62.

89. *'Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje*, "Rma chu rdzong gi 'brog sde," 60. Note that these events took place at approximately the same time as Lubsangdan-jin's rebellion.

90. *"Dngul rwa la bod ru dang sog ru gnyis rta rdzi dang gsum du phyed,"* in *'Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje*, "Rma chu rdzong gi 'brog sde," 61.

91. *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Paris, II, 58b6-59a1. This account is summarized together with a following passage about Khotsé from fol. 59b7–60a4 in *Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 246. The account in *Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, is much less detailed, rephrased, and edited. *Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho* wrote this book in about 1889 (see p. 383), and Dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas lived from 1801–1866, so the former author likely used the latter's work. I have not seen the passage in any other source.

92. Part of this data is from interviews, which included specific breakdown of population numbers in each of the three *shog pas*, *tsho bas*, etc. In addition to the literary accounts mentioned above, oral sources report that early groups in Dngul rwa were from Rnga ba, from Khams, from Kho tshe, Bsang khog, Mgo log, and elsewhere. In 1917 peoples from Mongol regions and in 1947 from Mgo log migrated to Dngul Rwa. In Dngul rwa Labrang's *lha sde* infrastructure was evidently very well articulated; this was corroborated in many interviews. See additional corroboration in *'Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje*, "Rma chu rdzong gi 'brog sde," 61. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 386 (mentioned as *lha sde*); *Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs*

bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 125, 155 (Dngul rwa *lha sde* shows support); 171 (in ca. 1815, the Third 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa travelled to Dngul rwa and was hosted by the Dngul rwa 'go ba); 187–188, and again, when he was hosted and offered lavish gifts by the Dngul rwa 'go ba; 207 gifts; 213–214, another trip to Dngul rwa, and offered horses, many *srang* of silver, butter, fabrics; 236, Mergan Taiji's rebirth born in Dngul rwa *lha sde*.

93. Block quote and following data taken from interviews.

94. Interview. Community and population figures are given for each of the six *shog pa*. See the summary in 'Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje, "Rma chu rdzong gi 'brog sde," 51. This source also gives a brief account of the founding of the Tsha gan be shing Monastery in 1780 and brief mention of some of the prominent figures born in the region, including the Second Zam tsha (1768–1821), the Third Zam tsha (1821–1832), the fiftieth Dga' ldan khri pa and Rgya nag pa lama Dge 'dun phun tshogs (1648–1724), etc. The following account is from an interview: "The Mongols, led by Penchen Dpal ldan ye shes wanted to sponsor a monastery in Nyin ma in 1780. 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa II visited and assigned Hor tshang to the monastery. However, the local chief (*dpon po*), Mdzod dge dpal mgon, and his brother 'Gyur med, did not agree to support the monastery, so Hor tshang moved ten kilometers south to Mdzod dge nyin ma, where the first Labrang-affiliated monastery in the region was founded. Eventually, six community groups (*shog kha*) supported the monastery, and they, the monastery, and the region were referred to as members of Labrang's 'divine communities' (*lha sde*). The six local community groups were Rtse dbus, Rmog ru (from Klu Chu, Zam tsha tshang's home), Mkhan po (from Rnga Ba), Mtshams ring gсар ba (eventually split into two community groups, including one Mongol, Tsu'u he kha pa), Mkar, and Mdzod dge nyin shog kha, itself also from Rnga ba. Together these groups were among Labrang's *lha sde*. There were numerous different families (*khyim tshang*) in these groups (*shog kha*), and there are discrepancies in the names of these in written and oral records."

95. The descriptions of Dzöge Nyinma and its relationships to Labrang are vivid. See 'Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje, "Rma chu rdzong gi 'brog sde," 51. 'Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 181–182: *rma chu dang rme chu'i bar 'di lha 'dre mngon sum du gnas pas shin tu rtsub pa zhiig 'dug// yin kyang gling ngos kyi sa cha 'di sa shin tu bzang ba skyid pa gcig 'dug ces bsngags brjod mdzad*. In Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 387, Rma chu is cited as one of the places that recognizes the authority of Labrang's *lugs gnyis*. In Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 125, Mdzod dge nyin ma is cited as *lha sde*; 171, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa visited Mdzod dge nyin ma *lha sde*; 207, gifts; 214, ca. 1837 another trip, offered gifts.

96. See Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Tsha gan be shing dgon pa'i gdan rabs lo rgyus* (Hong Kong: Tian Ma Publishing, 2002).

97. Interview.

98. Interview.

99. See the history of conflict with the Rme bo region in Zha Zha, "Labuleng si zai aba," 493–496.

100. Zha Zha, "Labuleng si zai aba," 484.

101. See Gong Ziying, *Banli la xia jiao di zhengzhi an ji xing* (Manuscript in Gansu Provincial Library, 1933), 15. Thanks to Yu Dan for help with this difficult manuscript, written in cursive Chinese.

102. Zha Zha, "Labuleng si zai aba," 484. The terminology for local leaders is confusing. Zha Zha refers to the Mdzod dge Tibetan host as a *tu guan*, and indicates that this region was beyond the control of any officially appointed Chinese *tusi*. See the information about a prominent female sponsor in the Rnga ba region, from 1760, named Sgrol ma 'tsho. Zha Zha, "Labuleng si zai aba," 490–491. Zha Zha refers to this woman and other men as *tusi*, but he does not give any information about if, when or how they might have been given these titles by Qing or other authorities. Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 322–323 describes local leaders with somewhat different terminology. He gives two Chinese terms for the Labrang 'go ba representatives, *tu guan* and *hong bu*. *Tu guan* is elsewhere used as an equivalent of *tusi*, and *hong bu* is the Chinese rendering of *dpon po*, a local lord.

103. See Zha Zha, "Labuleng si zai aba," 496–505.

104. The houses in the Rnga ba tsho drug region are peculiar, with excellent stone foundations; small wonder the Rnga ba stonemasons worked at Labrang.

105. See 'Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 176 (Rnga ba stoncarvers); 188 (100 monks offered to Labrang from the Rnga ba dpon tshang).

106. For details of the ongoing activity of Labrang monks and officials in Rnga ba, see Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 124 (supporters from Rnga ba in Labrang); 249 ('Jam dbyangs bzhad pa went to Rnga ba, met the Dme dpon po; the Second 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa built a monastery at Rnga ba, ca. 1776); 423–424 (ca. 1790, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa visited to commemorate the founding of a new monastery in Rnga ba, and paid a visit to the Dme dpon po that time); 441 ('Jam dbyangs bzhad pa met Sungpan ta'a zhin); see Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 208–209 (the Third 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa made numerous visits to Rnga ba, e.g. in 1806, 1816, and in 1837, taught, and was offered gifts of livestock, silver *srang*, fabrics, etc.); 220, another visit, more gifts from local dpon tshang. This pattern of mutual visits, gift giving, and assertions of inclusion in the community continued through the offices of the Fourth and Fifth 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pas.

107. See Zha Zha, "Labuleng si zai aba," 485.

108. Interview.

109. See Zha Zha, "Labuleng si zai aba," 485–486, 492.

110. See Zha Zha, "Labuleng si zai aba," 486.

111. See Zha Zha, "Labuleng si zai aba," 487–489.

112. See Gong Ziying, *Banli la xia jiao di zhengzhi an ji xing*, 23, 30.

113. See Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 325 and interviews give detailed accounts of the Labrang takeover of this region. The borders of nearby Khro kho khag gsum and the six *shog pas* into which it was divided are described in detail. The account includes discussion of Gcig sgril, Dme po (Rme po), Rnga ba, Mgo log, etc., crossing over Chinese provincial boundaries. See *Gan qing zang bianqu kaocha ji* (1936), in *Zhongguo xibei wenxian congshu*, ed. Zhongguo Xibei Wenxian Congshu Weiyuanhui (Lanzhou, 1991), 84, where it is stated that the Tibetans in northern Sichuan (Xikang) and Qinghai regarded

Labrang as their capital city (*shou du*) and Amdo/Labrang Tibetan dialect as their primary language.

114. For a brief but detailed outline of the Rme family see Chos 'phel, *Rmeu sa dbang chen po rje 'bangs mnyam 'brel gyi byung ba gang nges mdo tsam brjod pa phyi rabs rna ba'i bdud rtsi* (Sichuan, 1993).

115. Interview.

116. See *Labuleng paizhu chuanshu shang aba geng cha bu danba yu dangdi tuguan fasheng jiu fen jing guo ji jie jue ban fa* (Gansu Province Government Records, ca. 1933), 1–5.

117. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 460.

118. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 59.

119. See the chart of this somewhat different bureaucratic structure in Luo Faxi, *Labulengsi gai kuang*, 107–112.

120. Qing legal policies in Mongolia, including the Lifanyuan, are discussed clearly in Heuschert, "Legal Pluralism in the Qing Empire," 310–324; see Chia, "The Li-fan Yuan in the early Ch'ing Dynasty"; see Legrand, *L'Administration*.

121. See the the comments about law and punishments in 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 2, fol. 363b3 ff. See the brief section on law in Norbu, *Journey Among the Tibetan Nomads*, 68–73. See Stubel, *The Mewu Fantzu*, 57–62.

122. See *Gan qing zang bianqu kaocha ji*, 139.

123. In Smad Ma, the fine for manslaughter was 20 silver ingots, or 20 yaks or sheep. However, I have not determined the status of the person killed for which crime this penalty would be paid, which, according to other informants, made a difference. See Rin chen sgröl ma, "Reb gong sa khul gyi stong 'jal ba'i yul khrims skor gyi lo rgyus 'pho 'gyur," in *Krung go'i bod rig pa zhib 'jug lte gnas* 3 (1995): 1–5; see also Rin chen sgröl ma, "Reb gong rgyal pos a khul gyi yul khrims skor gleng ba," *Krung go'i bod ljongs* 1 (2000): 21–28. See the interesting but outdated and incompletely referenced study of Yu Shih-yu, "Tibetan Folk Law," 127–148. Cf. Stubel, *The Mewu Fantzu*, 57–62.

124. For some descriptions of the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa's role with these different groups, see for example 'Jigs med dbang po, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar*, 115–121.

125. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 141.

126. 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 123b2–6, 124b6–125b6, 138a5, 155b2.

127. Interview. See Labrang Jikmé Gyatso, *Bla brang bkris 'khyil dang 'brel gtam chos srid gsal ba'i me long*, *Tales of Labrang Tashi Khyil* (Kathmandu, Nepal: Gomang Academic Publishing House, 1996), 75–76.

128. Silber, *Virtuosity, Charisma, and Social Order*, 87.

129. See Fletcher, "Ch'ing Inner Asia c. 1800," 105. For detailed studies of the relationships between political and religious authorities, see above and Ruegg, "mchod yon, yon mchod and mchod gnas/yon gnas: On the Historiography and Semantics of a Tibetan Religio-Social and Religio-Political Concept," in *Tibetan*

History and Language: Studies Dedicated to Uray Geza on his Seventieth Birthday, ed. Ernst Steinkellner (Wien, Austria, 1991); see especially Ruegg, *Ordre Spirituel et Ordre Temporel*.

130. See Rupert Gethin, *The Foundations of Buddhism* (Oxford University Press, 1998), 102–103.

131. Li An-che (in Labrang 1938–1941) wrote that “[t]o secure the use of a piece of land to build a private house on, the applicant pays for the space for each individual room an initial sum of five silver dollars and an annual rent of 125 coppers.” Writing in 1943, he noted that “100 coppers make one silver dollar and 3.6 silver dollars are exchanged for one U.S. dollar.” Li An-che, *History of Tibetan Religion*, 144, 267n1.

132. Li An-che, *History of Tibetan Religion*, 146–147. Li An-che calculated the cost of feeding all of the Labrang monks for the two-week Monlam festival as 46,710 silver dollars, a huge sum for a local community.

133. See the partial record of gifts from the Qing court to Labrang in *Labuleng she zhi ju gu wu diaocha biao* (A Local Government Record of Ancient Donations to Labrang Monastery).

134. See Silber, *Virtuosity, Charisma, and Social Order*, 34, 67, 85, 85 note 20, 87.

135. Yon tan rgya mtsho lists eighty-six prominent Labrang lamas, see Yon tan rgya mtsho, *Chos sde chen po bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, 1987.

136. Compiled from his biography, and includes horses, and *nor*, which refers to some eight different kinds of livestock, including yaks, *'bri mo*, *mdzo*, *mdzo mo*, *be'u*, and others.

137. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 278.

138. Donated to the Second *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa* in ca. 1772, see Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 227; destroyed in the 1987 fire at the *'Du khang chen mo*; Interview.

139. The donors of these items were primarily Tibetans from all strata of society in the support communities, and some from Lhasa, from local Mongols, including especially Erdeni Jinong and the lords in his support communities. There were huge donations from Mongolia, from local Chinese and relatively smaller amounts from the Qing court. Here, many of the donors are specified; unspecified donations are from the local Labrang communities; see Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 50 (*Sde khri, dpon tshang*), 126 (*Choné dpon po*), 130 (*Mdzod dge smad*), 131 (*Mdzod dge stod*), 135 (*Mgo log*), 136 (*A mchog*, etc.), 158 (*Urga*), 163 (*Khri ka*, including gold), 163 (*Ba' thur da'i ching*), 171–172, 176, 189–190 (*Ri bo rtse lnga/Wutai shan*), 202–203, 204 (*Gtsos*), 205, 207 (*local beiles, Khoshuds*), 208 (*Zhabs drung tshang, Khoshuds, Urga*), 209 (*Henan Qinwang*), 210 (*the Mongol rje btsun dam pa*), 211, 211 (*local Labrang people on his birthday, at Lo gsar*), 213, 214–215 (*beise, g.yas ru Mongol Qinwang*), 216, 218–220 (*Lcang skya rol ba'i rdo rje*), 221 (*both g.yas ru and g.yon ru Mongols*), 222 (*Dur bed rab rgyas*), 223, 227 (*Labrang's communities in southern Gansu*), 228 (*dpon tshang*), 229 (*community near Dgon lung*), 231 (*Dgon lung*), 256, 271 (*A mchog*), 278 (*local Chinese*), 283 (*Penchen lama*), 284 (*g.yas ru*), 295 (*Rong bo*), 299 (*Sog po rgyal po*), 308 (*Sog po rgyal po*), 313 (*Brag dkar*), 317 (*Sera*), 334 (*'Bras spungs*), 338 (*Lhasa bka' blon*, etc.), 420 (*Urga*), 429 (*Urga*),

430, 431–432 (Qing emperor), 439, 454, 455 (local community to monastery for restoration), 478 (Dgon lag).

140. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 134, 295.

141. Miao Zhou also includes the statistic that at Labrang production of Buddha statues was worth over four million Chinese yuan. See Miao Zhou, *Meng zang fo jiao shi*, chapters 7, 11, and 12.

142. For a brief account of A mchog and its interactions with the Labrang lamas, see Thang skor & Dbus skyab, "A mchog sku 'phreng rim byon dang bla brang dgon pa'i bar gyi 'brel ba'i skor rags tsam gleng ba." *Mdo smad zhib 'jug* 7.1 (1999): 119–135. There are a number of typos in this article; some of the dates are incorrect.

143. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 228, 233, 306, 316.

144. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 231, 250, 280.

145. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 455.

146. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 455.

147. See this practice mentioned, including gifts of ceremonial scarves, Buddha statues, and horses, in Miao Zhou, *Meng zang fo jiao shi*, Chapter 6 and 11.

148. For a partial list of gifts sent from the Qing court to Labrang, see *Labuleng she zhi ju gu wu diaocha biao* (A Local Government Record of Ancient Donations to Labrang Monastery). For Qing gifts to the Tibetans, see also Gu Zucheng, *Qing shilu zangzu shiliao* I (Lhasa: People's Republic of China, 1982), 7, 31.

149. Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 259; 259 n131.

150. According to *Xiahe Xianzhi*-1970, 45, one *doudi* is equal to about six *mu*; one *mu* is .667 hectare, so one *doudi* is about 4 hectares. See also *Xiahe Xianzhi*-1970, 44.

151. In some cases the terms were adjusted depending on the types of animals in the principal herd. For example, *mdzo mo* (female yak hybrids) produce more milk. For every *mdzo mo*, the nomads had to pay seven *rgya chen* of butter each year (one *rgya chen* = 50 *jin*, about 25 kilograms) in addition to the wool. In these cases the nomads did not have to give any cheese or milk, only butter.

152. The monastery could in addition order the nomads to sell any number of livestock at the monastery's discretion.

153. The following is a translation of a typical account taken from an interview in a former Labrang territory: "When a family kept a number of monastery *yaks/bri mo*, the family only paid for the number of newly born *yaks/bri mo*. Payment for the newly born numbers was in wool, hides, butter, and animal products. The return from the principal number of livestock was for the community maintenance. If animals died or were otherwise lost, the local nomads were not held liable, they only had to make an honest accounting of the loss. The monastery could however order the nomads to sell any number of livestock at the monastery's discretion. . . . For *mdzo mo*, however, it was different, because they produce more milk. For every *mdzo mo*, the nomads had to pay seven *rgya chen* of butter each year (one *rgya chen* = 50 *jin*, about 25 kilograms). The family did not have to give any cheese or milk."

154. These are estimates and given here in converted figures. They were paid two *kha* of tsampa; one *kha* means one yak load, carried in two saddlebags. Each bag was about one hundred *rgya maljin*, equalling two hundred *rgya ma* per yak, or one hundred kilograms.

155. Donations were sometimes one *jin* (.5 kilogram) of butter per monk, twenty Chinese yuan, one *jin* of tsampa or tea leaves, depending on the wealth of the family.

156. See Tenzin Palbar, *The Tragedy of My Homeland* (Nga'i pha yul gyi ya nga ba'i lo rgyus) (Dharamsala, India: Narthang Publications, 1994), 46.

157. Xiahe Xianzhi-1970, 77–78. See the detailed charts with the amounts of each commodity traded per year and the then current prices, etc. in *Gan qing zang bianqu kaocha ji*, 94–100. See Stubel, *The Mewu Fantzu*, 53–56.

158. For the Xiahe Muslims, see Chen Shiming, "Xiahe xian musilin ji qi qing-zhensi jianjie," *Huizu yanjiu* 4 (1993): 23–37; Xiahe Xianzhi-1999, 259–260.

159. Fletcher, "Ch'ing Inner Asia c. 1800," 94 quoting Petech; Tsepon W.D. Shakapa, *Tibet: A Political History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 173. See Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century*, 254. See the mention of this Tibetan office in Matthieu Ricard, Constance Wilkinson, and Michael Abrams, *The Life of Shabkar: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Yogin* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), 486. For central Tibetan official participation in regional Mongol politics, see Borjigidai, "Hoshuud Polity," 193.

160. See Martin A. Mills, *Identity, Ritual and State in Tibetan Buddhism: The Foundations of Authority in Gelukpa Monasticism* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 62–70.

161. For discussion of *ārāṃikas*, ownership of slaves, servants, *kappiyakārakas*, corvée and receiving donations, etc, see Nandasena Ratnapala, *The Katikāvatas: Laws of the Buddhist Order of Ceylon from the 12th Century to the 18th Century* (Munchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft, 1971), 262–263; 286–288.

162. Interview. See the brief description of Labrang's militia in Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 395–396.

163. There were recognized and organized Tibetan militia groups in Amdo's and Labrang's culture. There are photographs of Tibetan militia groups from the twentieth century (see Nietupski, *Labrang*) and many accounts in interviews. For descriptions of militia actions earlier in Labrang's history, and well apart from Qing jurisdiction, see for examples Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 156, 169–170, 223–227, 232–233, etc.; see also 'Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 186–187.

164. See Palbar, *The Tragedy of My Homeland*, 46; there was a local police force who kept the peace during large celebrations, for example, during the New Year festivities. A local group called the "Eight Horsemen" and eight constables (*dge g.yog*) patrolled the grounds, with an auxiliary force of sixteen local deputies.

165. See 'Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 181.

166. See 'Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 186–187. See also Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus*, 547. For conflict between the Mdzod dge nyin ma dpon po and the Mgo logs, see Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 174; for conflicts between Labrang and the 'Go [sic.] logs in ca. 1774, see Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron

me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 250. Labrang did however receive support from some Mgo log groups, in these early years (and definitely later, during the time of the Fifth *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa*, discussed below), see Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 135, 391.

167. The details of the disputes with Rong bo and other neighboring groups are discussed below. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 246; for conflict with Salars, see 322.

168. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 263–264.

169. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 268.

170. Disputes were sometimes reported to the Xining amban and at times to the Chinese emperor. On one typical occasion, the Second *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa*'s activities were reported to and praised by the emperor, but the emperor's advice to discuss matters with the amban were ignored. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar*, 290–291; see also 407–420, etc.

Chapter 4

Growth and Development: The Evolution of Labrang Monastery

Tibetan sources go into excruciating detail about the prophecies and fortuitous circumstances surrounding the founding of Labrang Monastery. Leaving the visions and signs aside, the formal founding of the monastery coincided with the three-hundred year anniversary of Tsongkhapa's founding of Ganden Monastery in 1409,¹ after which Labrang grew in size and reputation into one of the largest and most important monasteries in Tibetan history.

The Jamyang Zhepas, well known as the primary lineage of lamas at Labrang and the large group of reborn lamas who participated in the founding and growth of the monastery were most often from Amdo. Most were Lhasa-educated religious experts, and with their expertise in Tibetan Buddhist tantrism, intermediaries between the realms of the mundane and transcendental worlds. The Jamyang Zhepas and other prominent lamas had "a charismatic, supernatural prestige that [was] converted to innovative influence or power in the world."² These lamas offered their Amdo hosts meaningful social order and connections to the realms of enlightenment, as well as access to the spirits and forces that controlled individual destinies and the world.³ They also offered a powerful rallying point for regional political power and role models for the community.⁴ The Labrang lamas used their power to develop a monastery-owned and operated infrastructure in Amdo. The fact that they were obviously both of this world and yet otherworldly enabled them to function with extraordinary success in Amdo.

One of the striking things about the careers of the Jamyang Zhepas is the active role they played in developing personal connections with their support communities. The extent to which they traveled in and expanded

their properties and support communities, the teachings they gave, and the donations or fees they received are all recorded in extremely minute detail, often complete with exact dates of each meeting. These events clearly were of great importance to local people, and profitable to the lamas.

The Amdo lamas' travels were usually accompanied by much ceremony. They were received with elaborate hospitality, often described in the literature as a *corvée* responsibility. First, and on subsequent occasions, a lama was invited to the community. Then, very frequently, as he and his entourage of servants, monks, and advisers were en route and approaching his destination, he and the entourage were met by a delegation from their hosts. This delegation often included many hundreds of persons on horseback, sometimes carrying banners, flags, sometimes Tibetan short trumpets and, as he approached the community, lines of monks on either side of the road. The effect on local peoples was significant. Life in these remote places was routinized and fairly predictable, so such magnificent and powerful guests, with all of their colorful and extraordinary trappings, were awe-inspiring.

In the course of these visits there were typically consultations between the primary guest and his hosts, general Buddhist teachings, and often, but not always religious teachings and tantric empowerments. Very frequently the host communities affirmed both religious and political allegiance, and, notably, offered gifts to the guest. The frequency and impact of this type of travel amounted to religious missionary activity and, at the same time, it galvanized political support for the monastery. Sometimes the visits were not accompanied by elaborate ceremony, but nevertheless a visit by a lama was an occasion for the community to affirm allegiance and offer support. This was a kind of grassroots diplomacy, designed to garner new property and support for the monastic authorities.

On numerous occasions it is recorded that during these visits the Labrang lamas received often large gifts and pledges to build monasteries. In return the visiting lama often made donations to build new monasteries or temples, refurbish old establishments, or consecrate recently built religious sites. One effect of these activities was the increase of Gelukpa-style religious ritual and learning in the often-remote affiliated communities, and especially the assertion of Labrang's political authority in places where other Buddhist and non-Buddhist communities were active.⁵ Again, these ostensibly religious bonds were also the establishment of economic and political relationships.⁶

Over time, the Tibetans, Mongols, Manchus, Chinese, and the Muslims all had different senses of sovereignty in the Labrang region. The Tibetan residents of Genkya donated the land for the monastery, the Mongols formally presented⁷ the place for a new monastery at Tokti Demo Tang,⁸ and the Manchus likewise provided formal endorsement at the monas-

tery's 1710 groundbreaking. The assumptions of sovereignty varied in Labrang's history in periods of power and advantage of the different groups, but not to the full exclusion of the others.

THE PROLIFERATION OF TITLES IN AMDO

One indicator of cross-border interaction and of Labrang's evolution was the volume of religious and political titles given by the Tibetans, Mongols, Manchus, and Chinese to their neighbors. Assigning a title to a person across an ethnic frontier gave the home culture two things: first, an assertion of authority demonstrated by the very ability to assign titles; second, having an official with a familiar title in a foreign place provided a contact or reference point, a conduit for information about events from that foreign place, and a conduit for communication in the event of crises. Titles bestowed on neighbors were sometimes real indicators of power, but most often "theatre, a public presentation of an idealized self."⁹ The motives for such theatre were in the Song Dynasty, in P.J. Smith's words, to absorb Amdo Tibetans, to "clientalize" them by force or with "high-sounding titles and generous emoulements."

June T. Dreyer put it succinctly, describing how the Manchus and Chinese used different methods to deal with the Tibetan and other "barbarians," namely

to buy them off through such devices as giving them official titles, with salaries, and making them responsible for peacekeeping in their areas. Another was to play one militant group off against another, a strategem known as 'using barbarians to control barbarians.' Of course, the barbarians were also able to make alliances with each other against the Chinese.¹⁰

Assigning titles could again be a sign of real political, military, or religious authority. However, the proliferation of titles assigned by different authorities through Labrang's history did not always mark substantial power, and instead can be understood as diplomatic gestures. Here, before we turn to the analysis of the historical evolutions of authority at Labrang we review some of the most common of these titles.

The real value of titles changed with the rise and fall of each group's political and military fortunes. One telling incident was in the 1723 Kho-shud anti-Manchu rebellion, when Lubsangdanjin demanded the revival of all indigenous Mongol titles and the elimination of all Qing titles, such as *beile* or *beise*.¹¹ It was in effect a diplomatic move, an intentional rejection of the Manchu vision.

Of the titles and offices in circulation at Labrang, Ishihama Yumiko shows that there were some fifty-one Tibetan titles given to locally known

Mongols by the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Dalai Lamas and that these were recognized until at least 1723 by the Qing and Mongol courts. These included designations of political office, like “Se chen rgyal po,” and many others that included the non-Tibetan words “khan,” “jinong,” and others. Other titles seem like little more than embellishments. Tibetans, Mongols, and Manchus nonetheless recognized these titles and offices, which serves as an indicator of real power on the part of the Dalai Lamas, and which brought respect and political control. However, as time went on the Qing started to reconfirm titles given by the Dalai Lamas so much that it became standard practice, regardless of the decline in actual power of the titled individual. Central Tibetan religious titles and monastic offices remained in place at Labrang up to 1958.¹²

Similarly, Mongol titles were originally a matter of real power and position, but the use of Mongol titles and bureaucratic offices gradually became a formality and usually not a significant indicator of power, but of prestige. Additionally, the Manchus titled local Mongols, so that there were soon many Manchu-appointed *beile* (lord), “originally chieftains of even fairly small numbers of subordinates,”¹³ and *beise* (prince),¹⁴ along with *jasagh* (administrative officer),¹⁵ *qin wang* (prince), and others.¹⁶ Even the Mongol title *khan* (*cagan*) was sometimes given as a matter of prestige, when applied by the Dalai Lama.¹⁷ The status of these appointments rose and fell with the fortunes of the Mongols. The use of the term *jasagh* is a case in point. Heuschert gives a careful explanation of this title, given by Manchus to Mongols. It was originally a (seventeenth century) military leadership position, but eventually (in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) a military and civil designation. At the outset, the authority of Mongol persons in this post was in the hands of the Manchus.¹⁸ In 1882 this title, in addition to being assigned to a number of local Mongols, was also given to the Second¹⁹ and Fourth Jamyang Zhepas (1856-1916) by the Qianlong and Guangxu emperors.²⁰ One might speculate that this was Qianlong and Guangxu’s acknowledgement of the Second and Fourth Jamyang Zhepas’ religious and civil authority, but the use of the term was more likely a formality and not always an indicator of a real post in the Qing or local Tibetan governance.

The Chinese title *tusi* (local leader) was in use long before the Qing period. It was used in Amdo often as a generic description of any local leader, Tibetan, Manchu, or Chinese, sometimes as a matter of prestige by persons who inherited the title, or as an official appointment. However, in the Labrang territories the term most often if not always means “local leader,” not a Manchu-appointed official. Some estate lords, including some in the Labrang territories, were at various times in contact with Chinese authorities, and referred to as *tusi* or *tuguan*. For example, the Lord (*dpon po*) of the Kangsar Goloks and the Dzögé Mema Lord were referred

to as *tusi*. These persons however were hardly functionaries of the central Qing or later Chinese authorities.²¹

Perhaps the best known and least understood term—and office—in the context of Labrang is *amban* (minister, councilor, ambassador), given nearly exclusively to Manchus and Chinese, not local people. The first permanent Xining *amban* was appointed in 1725, and this appointment is very often cited as the end of Tibetan influence in the region, including Labrang's territories. Specifically, the Xining *amban* was in charge of

twenty-eight banners of the Mongols of Kukunor²² and one banner of Mongols located in Tibet proper; the Tibetan tribes of the Kukunor frontier were reorganized at that time and for that purpose into eight major tribal groups; twenty-five Tibetan tribes . . . each under a chief with the title of T'u-ssu; and the independent and warlike Tibetan tribe of the Ngoloks. . . . [T]he settled farming population was divided into the seven sub-prefectures.²³

The installation of the *amban* is often understood as the point when the Kokenuur Mongols and Tibetans came under localized Manchu "suzerainty."²⁴ However, even though the installation of the Xining *amban* was likely a momentous event in the local community, as the Tibetan and Manchu writers report, a close review of the actual effectiveness of these officials shows that the Xining office had little actual power.²⁵ In the case of the Goloks, for example, it seems most unlikely that the Xining *amban* had any influence at all.

Tibetan sources give many examples of letters exchanged between the Qing court and Labrang authorities via the Xining *amban*, but in issues of taxation, ritual, adjudicating or meditating disputes, administration of Tibetan religious and other affairs,²⁶ the *ambans* had limited effectiveness in the Labrang community. Even so, some scholars, using primary Chinese text sources as supporting evidence, describe far-reaching powers of *ambans*, including separation of religion and politics, control of the selection of rebirths, and so on, arguing that economics, religion, politics, the terms of the Lifanyuan,²⁷ and all social and legal matters in Labrang were under the direct and continuous control of the Manchu emperors, via their *amban* representatives. There were Qing government officials stationed in Xining and elsewhere, but the far reaching assertions of authority are not supported by data on the history and culture of Labrang.²⁸ Further, when discussing *ambans*, it is interesting to note that there was a parallel central Tibetan office in Amdo called *garpön* (*sgar dpon*). Petech wrote that the institution of *amban* was similar to the Tibetan *garpön*, who were active in northern Kham and western Tibet. There were some central Tibetan officials in Amdo "till about the middle of the 19th century, a commissioner called *sgar-dpon*, whose functions concerned above all trade and the control of local monasteries."²⁹ The *garpöns* were representatives

from Lhasa, but, like the Manchu representatives, had little actual control over regional politics.³⁰

After the earliest years of Labrang's history, with the exceptions of Tibetan titles and those of several prominent Mongols like Mergan Daiching, Aru Horchon Beile,³¹ Torgö Jasagh³² and others, the widespread use of titles and offices were most often signs of efforts to include Labrang in respective visions of sovereignty. In the case where the titles designated actual offices, like amban, the reality is that these too had limited effectiveness.³³ The titles given to the Jamyang Zhepas by the Manchus, for example Erdeni *nominhan* (*dharmarāja*, dharma king) to the first, Jamyang *hu tuk tu* (Emanation Body), *nominhan* and *jasagh* to the second, *Samati pakši* (a Sanskrit term) to the third,³⁴ and *jasagh* to the fourth, were clearly signs of respect and amounted to political diplomacy.³⁵

The Qianlong emperor, Mongol princes, and others who helped propagate the Buddhist teachings were often called "wheel turning kings" (*cakravartirāja*),³⁶ a title common in many places in Asia and one of the most frequently used titles in Labrang's history. In her discussion of the "wheel-turning king," Pamela K. Crossley is careful to point out that a universal Manchu empire was largely Qianlong's vision, or better, one of Qianlong's visions. Indeed, Crossley and others point out that Qianlong's vision was manifold, and, in his view he acted as a "wheel-turning king" for the Tibetans and Mongols, a perfected "Confucian" monarch for the Chinese and a conquering khan for the Mongols.³⁷ Here again, there is a real and visionary use of a title. Qianlong did indeed propagate Buddhism, but his vision of his role in Buddhism seems excessive.

The title "wheel-turning king" provided the Qing with at least a portion of their imperial rhetoric, and Farquhar argued that such rhetoric was useful for implementing Qing policy in Mongolia. In Tibetan eyes, however, the extent of actual power signified by this and other titles was not as far-reaching as the literal title indicates.³⁸ There were many "wheel turning kings," and instead of an indication of real political power, the title for example signified that the Manchu, Mongol, and Tibetan *cakravartirājas* had supported Buddhism, done extensive good deeds, accumulated merit, and even practiced and protected the faith.³⁹

Erdeni Jinong was named "wheel-turning king" on at least three occasions during the Manchu Dynasty;⁴⁰ and he was in addition also named as Labrang's "best donor."⁴¹ Both the First and Second Jamyang Zhepa were named "wheel turning king."⁴² The Mongol (Dali Beise) Batur Taiji (d. 1691)⁴³ and the Mongol Ngawang Dargyel⁴⁴ were also named "wheel turning king," and Batur Taiji's cousin Mergan Taiji⁴⁵ was named, like Qianlong, the Choné Lord,⁴⁶ Batur Taiji,⁴⁷ Erdeni Jinong,⁴⁸ and others,⁴⁹ "Protector" (*sa skyong dam pa*). A "wheel turning king" was an important title, but in Labrang's history, there were many such kings, and many such titles.

This chapter now turns to a chronological description of the growth and development of Labrang Monastery and its revenue-generating properties, its estate, or its *labrang*. The following account is structured around the first five Jamyang Zhepa lamas, but at the same time includes the shifting influences of other prominent lineages, and in addition the influences of the Qing emperors, the Republican and Communist governments, and the Mongols. The result is a kind of kaleidoscope of prominent individuals arranged around the five Jamyang Zhepas, including the Gungtang, Setsang, Detri, Hortsang, and Belmang lineages, the Gyanakpas, and others of some eighty-two Labrang lama lineages, a complex system but one well understood by Labrang's local peoples.

GELUKPA TIBETAN BUDDHISM AT LABRANG: THE FIRST JAMYANG ZHEPA (1648–1721)

The most prominent of the Labrang lama lineages was the Jamyang Zhepa.⁵⁰ The first of the lineage was born near Drakkar, in Genkya Tingring, part of Beldé, near the future site of Labrang. Like many other promising local novices, and in yet another affirmation of regional Mongol prominence, he was sponsored by Tsünmo Namgyel Drölma, the Mongol Erdeni Jinong's wife.

The Fifth Dalai Lama Ngawang Lozang Gyatso (1617-1682) met Jamyang Zhepa in 1653 while the former was en route to a meeting with the Chinese. In 1669, at age twenty-one, he entered Gomang College at Drepung in Lhasa, under the tutelage of Lodrö Gyatso (1635-1688), who was later known as one of the Labrang Gyanakpa (*rgya nag pa*) "Chinese" lamas. In 1675 the Fifth Dalai Lama conferred full ordination on the twenty-seven year old Jamyang Zhepa.⁵¹

Jamyang Zhepa eventually became the Throne Holder of Gomang College at Drepung from 1700-1708 and an important figure in the central Tibetan government. As is well known, when the Fifth Dalai Lama died in 1682, the Regent Sanggyé Gyatso kept his death secret until 1697. It is likely that Jamyang Zhepa knew of this deception. In 1697, Jamyang Zhepa participated in the ordination ceremony of the Sixth Dalai Lama Tsangyang Gyatso (1683-1706), led by the Penchen Lama at Tashi Lhünpo in Shigatse. When Tsangyang Gyatso rejected his position in 1702, Lazang Khan, the Mongol leader in Lhasa immediately clashed with the Regent Sanggyé Gyatso. The Regent attempted to murder Lazang Khan in 1703 and later in 1705. Petech notes that Jamyang Zhepa intervened on both occasions on behalf of Lazang Khan, who in turn in 1705 had Sanggyé Gyatso executed.⁵² Lazang Khan subsequently went on a rampage in Lhasa, and it was none other than Jamyang Zhepa who restrained him.

The result of the machinations among the Tibetans, Mongols, and Chinese was that Lazang Khan managed to alienate everyone—the central Tibetan monastic authorities, the Mongol chiefs in Kokenuur,⁵³ and the Manchu court.⁵⁴ Jamyang Zhepa meanwhile accumulated prestige and influence in central Tibet, with the Mongols in central Tibet, in Kokenuur, and in Mongolia and China. He left the troubles in Lhasa behind him, but moved into an equally, and perhaps even more complicated political environment. Though credited with the founding and development of Labrang Monastery, as described above in Chapter II, he only returned to Amdo at age sixty-one, and died in 1721, at age seventy-three.⁵⁵ He thus spent only about twelve years at Labrang, and passed away when the monastery was still relatively small.

Mongol Supporters

Meanwhile, as the events in the First Jamyang Zhepa's life proceeded, the Kokenuur Mongols sought to promote their own interests. The fortunes of the Jamyang Zhepas and the Mongols were soon to meet. Prince Erdeni Jinong, in Tibetan, Tsewang Tendzin,⁵⁶ is often referred to as a *cakravartirāja* and the “best donor” (*sbyin bdag dam pa*) of Labrang.⁵⁷ He was a descendant of Gushri Khan and with his third wife, Namgyel Drölma, eventually resided at Labrang and personally sponsored many monks and projects at the monastery.⁵⁸ Petech identifies Erdeni Jinong as

Amdomba (A-mdo-ba) . . . Daičing Qošōči Cayan Danjin, (d. 1735). . . . the third son of Bošoytu Jinong (d. 1698), who in his turn was a grandson of Gušri Khan. . . . He was much honoured by the emperors . . . [and had also some family connection with the] Dsungar ruler Galdan. . . . His descendants, the Huang-ho Nan *ch'ing-wang* ruled over the district around the Bla-brañ monastery, . . . down to the advent of Communism in China; but in the 19th century . . . they became thoroughly Tibetan.⁵⁹

Petech, using early seventeenth-century Jesuit maps, located Erdeni Jinong's camp in what is today the Henan Mongol Autonomous District in eastern Qinghai (at 100.50 longitude and 34.50 latitude).⁶⁰ Erdeni Jinong's group was one of the eight regional divisions of Kokenuur Khoshud Mongols, known as the Front or Leading group (and the Left group, from the Mongol perspective), which consisted of eleven Mongol family groups, called “arrows.”

In 1704 and again in 1706 Prince Erdeni Tsewang Tendzin, or Cagan Danjin,⁶¹ invited Jamyang Zhepa, an Amdo native, to return to Amdo to build a Gelukpa monastery, “like Drepung.”⁶² The Jamyang Zhepa agreed and in 1709 formally founded Labrang. A small group of Mongol nobles settled at Labrang, but the eleven Mongol support groups under the lead-

ership of Erdeni Jinong remained in what is now southeast Qinghai (the Henan Mongol Autonomous District). Erdeni Jinong was prominent locally, in control of much territory to the east and south east of Kokenuur.⁶³ These Mongols were key supporters of the new monastery.

Webs of Power

Even with the strong bond between the Jamyang Zhepa and the Mongols, the growth and development of Labrang's network of communities was not always an uncontested process. The Labrang community had to struggle to maintain its sense of unity. One good example of the volatile internal politics was the dispute over succession after the First Jamyang Zhepa died in 1721.

While Jamyang Zhepa was in Lhasa three of his closest disciples were Setsang Ngawang Tashi (1678–1738), Detri Lozang Döndrup (1673–1746), and Gungtang Gendün Püntso (1648–1724). All four were from Amdo, and all worked with Jamyang Zhepa to establish Labrang Monastery. The lineages of these four lamas were among the strongest in Labrang's history. Their academic pedigrees, their written works, and diplomacy were among the key factors in Labrang's growth.

Setsang Ngawang Tashi was from a nomad family in Kachu (in the Senya Lung district of Repgong),⁶⁴ near Tentik Shelgyi Yenggön (*tan tig shel gyi yeng dgon*), a place said to have many specialists in the Sakya, Kagyüpa, and Gelukpa traditions of Tibetan Buddhism.⁶⁵ He took novice monk's vows at a young age and when he was sixteen (in 1694) he went to study at Gomang College at Drepung in Lhasa. In Lhasa he is known to have had close contact with Belmang Lozang Döndrup, Belmang's teacher from Ngawa, Chökyong Gyatso, and many others from the communities in Kangtsa, Tsö, Bé and Ngawa. This is important because Belmang especially went on to establish a major estate at Labrang, one of the many webs of alliances in the community.

Setsang studied under Jamyang Zhepa and others until he was thirty-two (1710), when he returned to Labrang to work as Jamyang Zhepa's attendant. He is referred to as Jamyang Zhepa's closest disciple (*thugs sras*). From age thirty-three to forty-one he served as disciplinarian (*dge bskos*) at Labrang Monastery. After that, for twenty years beginning at age forty-one he held the second abbatial seat at Labrang. Setsang Ngawang Tashi also worked very closely with representatives from Ngawa, Kangtsa, Serkha, Taktsang Lhamo, and others places in Labrang's *labrang*.⁶⁶ He was one of the most respected of the early teachers at Labrang, and was mentor to reborn lamas from Kangtsa, Dzögé Mema, Hortsang, Sangkhok, Bora, Kachu, Tsayül and Tankar. These relationships served him well when he later founded Terlung Monastery in nearby Namlha, just north of Labrang.

In addition, Setsang was the primary teacher of Tendzin Gyayuma, who eventually became Throne Holder of Gönlung Monastery, the seat of the Changkya lineage, and in time an important contact point for the Manchus and Tibetans.⁶⁷ Setsang's background, his education in Lhasa, and subsequent work in Amdo illustrate the type of religious and political relationships that served as building blocks for Labrang's growth. Similar relationships were at work in other Tibetan monasteries, where religious education, ethnicity, economy, and governance were interactive.

Detri Lozang Döndrup (1673–1746), one of Setsang's contemporaries, was an equally prodigious scholar and an important political figure at Labrang. He was born in Trikha (Chinese: Guide), entered Mongol-sponsored Lamo Dechen Monastery at age six, and went to Gomang in 1689. He rose to prominence in Lhasa, in 1701 served as Gomang's Treasurer (*phyag mdzod*) and in 1706 as the Disciplinarian under the First Jamyang Zhepa, then Throne Holder of Drepung. Detri is known to have had a close relationship to the Regent Sanggyé Gyatso and to the Sixth Dalai Lama, and he was honored in the presence of the Mongol King Lazang Khan. He joined the 1709 entourage that went with the First Jamyang Zhepa to Amdo, was appointed Treasurer at Labrang under Jamyang Zhepa, and studied with Setsang at Labrang. Here again is another Amdo monk, scholar, and politician with experience in Lhasa, and documented interactions with high-level Mongols.

The First Gungtang, Gendün Püntso (1648–1724)⁶⁸ was also in the middle of the charged late seventeenth and early eighteenth century Lhasa political environment. One of his main donors was the Mongol Prince Lubsangdanjin,⁶⁹ who participated in the campaign against Lazang Khan and subsequently rebelled against Qing authority. Gungtang was a native of Amdo, a personal and especially devoted disciple of the First Jamyang Zhepa, and a contemporary of the primary Labrang lamas: notably Setsang, Detri, and Hortsang. Yet again, the importance of these details should not be underestimated. The fact that Gungtang and his classmates were Amdo natives gave them familiarity with the local culture, its social and authority structures, and its very unique language, all recognized by local Amdo people. Their work together in Lhasa gave them a solid understanding of the mechanics of Tibetan, Mongol, and Manchu politics.

As a student of the Jamyang Zhepa and other prominent scholars, as well as a beneficiary of Mongol support, the First Gungtang was aware of and at least close to the political crises of the time. The sources record that through his life he was an active monastery builder and renovator, involved in politics,⁷⁰ and deeply involved in religious practice. Compelling proof of his religious and political status is for example in Jamyang Zhepa's 1709 order to give teachings and initiations to Lazang Khan in the Potala Palace.⁷¹

His appointment as Potala religious instructor after Jamyang Zhepa's eventual absence moreover shows that the First Gungtang was a representative of Jamyang Zhepa's ongoing interest in Lhasa politics. In 1712, after the 1709 departure of the Jamyang Zhepa with his close Tibetan disciples and his Mongol sponsors, the First Gungtang carried on, doubtless with Jamyang Zhepa's counsel, as a representative in Lhasa, serving as the Fiftieth Ganden Throne Holder. The First Gungtang served through the chaos of the battles against Lazang and the subsequent Lhasa power struggles. He returned to Labrang after a long diplomatic and religious career in Lhasa and spent his last years engaged in religious practices.

Thus in Labrang's early years, Setsang, Detri, and Gungtang, highly educated Amdo monks and close friends from Lhasa worked together in the midst of Mongol royalty, Tibetan lords and nomad chiefs, and envoys from the imperial Qing court. In 1709, Jamyang Zhepa was sixty-one years old, Setsang was thirty-one, Detri was thirty-six, and Gungtang sixty-one. Together they brought their diplomatic skills and high-level religious and intellectual knowledge not to a foreign environment, but home to their Amdo families and communities.⁷² Accordingly, there is a huge amount of literature that documents the many relationships and networks between local monasteries and individuals and Labrang.⁷³ Their status, authority, power, and relative wealth should not be underestimated.

THE TIBETAN "CHINESE" (GYANAKPA) LAMAS

The complicated network of religious-political experts and their supporters was further enhanced by the ethnic Tibetan and Mongol Gyanakpa, literally "Chinese" lineages of reborn lamas. The Gyanakpa "Chinese" Tibetan Buddhist teachers⁷⁴ promoted Buddhism in Chinese and Manchu communities well before the time of the Jamyang Zhepas and Labrang Monastery. Later, the Gyanakpa Estate at Labrang grew into one of the wealthiest institutions at the monastery; the "Chinese" lamas were the sponsors of the construction of several important Labrang structures, among them their own estate palace and the temples located in its compound, as well as making important contributions to the Kālacakra College, the Hayagrīva Temple, the Thubten Temple and the Jamyang Temple. The activities of the estate were both religious proselytizing and political diplomacy; ethnically Tibetan and Mongol Buddhist lamas played a key role in Tibetan-Chinese border contacts at the same time as sustaining a strong presence at Labrang Monastery.

While there was an important Gyanakpa Estate at Labrang the title Gyanakpa or "Chinese" was also given to any Tibetan lama who spread Tibetan Buddhist teachings in Chinese communities, a generic term for

Tibetan teachers who taught in Chinese places in and around the Labrang territories and in the Chinese court.⁷⁵ There were many such local teachers, from Labrang itself, from Lhamo and Zamtsa Monasteries, from monasteries in Qinghai and others.

The first important Gyanakpa lama with ties to Labrang was the Forty-fourth Ganden Tripa, Lubum Ngawang Lodrö Gyatso (1635–1688).⁷⁶ The widely known Forty-fourth Ganden Tripa, the First Gyanakpa, from Amdo like his predecessors, was born near Kumbum (in Ading, a Tangut community in Tsongkha), where he first entered monastic life. He soon went on to Lhasa where he was educated and ordained in 1661. He was close to the Fifth Dalai Lama, was the Throne Holder of Gomang in 1665 and both Gyume and Ganden Changtse in 1673, and in later years became famous for his dealings with the Mongols and Manchus, particularly during his tenure as Throne Holder from 1682–1685.⁷⁷

Before Labrang was founded, the First Gyanakpa held the seat of Lamo Dechen Monastery in Qinghai, a primarily Mongol-sponsored establishment. Not unlike other Labrang lamas, he had his own monastic seat at Lamo Dechen at the same time as he functioned as a Gyanakpa at Labrang. Lamo Dechen regards the Gyanakpas as their lineage of lamas, and their tradition lists the lineage as though it were entirely located at Lamo Dechen.⁷⁸ However, the title and functions of the Gyanakpas were prominent at Labrang, where these lamas certainly had well-endowed and powerful estates.⁷⁹

While in Lhasa the First Gyanakpa became a prominent religious and political figure. He was a teacher and mentor of the First Jamyang Zhepa, a relationship significant given the Gyanakpa's knowledge of and connection to the Qing court, and his eventual influence at Labrang. He was soon sent to Beijing to serve as an emissary of the Fifth Dalai Lama at Kangxi's court.

He doubtless shared his knowledge of China and Mongolia⁸⁰ with his young student, Jamyang Zhepa, which likely served the younger man well in the course of his career in Lhasa and later at Labrang. In 1685, at the request of the Manchu emperor, the First Gyanakpa went first to Mongolia, where in 1686 he brokered an agreement between two Mongol groups.⁸¹ His success in Mongolia was rewarded with a title and endorsement from Kangxi. He then went on to Beijing in 1687, where he served as a Buddhist teacher to the emperor until his departure for his homeland, and repeated contacts with the Mongol Prince. He passed away in 1688.

His rebirth, Lozang Tenpé Nyima (1689–1762), was born near the Yellow River in Trikha, Khukhé Noryul, Qinghai into a royal Mongol family.⁸² His birth was prophesied by the First Gyanakpa, and his status was confirmed by Changkya Rinpoché, the leading lama of Lamo Dechen Monastery, and the Nechung oracle. In 1693, he went to Lamo Dechen, where he was

given novice vows, recognized as a rebirth of their previous Gyanakpa, and named Jamyang Gyatso. He entered the monastery in 1696, at age seven, where he spent the next four years. In 1701, at only twelve years of age, he started the study of the major Buddhist philosophical and ethical works. He reportedly was an extremely gifted student. In 1710, the year after Labrang Monastery was founded, he met the First Jamyang Zhepa and received a number of initiations and teachings. The next year, 1711, he went to Gönlung Monastery and studied with Changkya and a number of Mongol teachers, eventually covering the major Buddhist curriculum. He soon went on to nearby Serkog, and then Kumbum Monastery, where he studied further. In 1714, at age twenty-five, in the company of a group of scholars, he went to Labrang and met again with the First Jamyang Zhepa. Afterwards he returned to Qinghai and studied with the Seventh Dalai Lama, Kelsang Gyatso, who at that point was still at Kumbum Monastery in Amdo (until 1716). In 1722 he went to Lhasa. He visited the major monasteries in Lhasa, and went on to Tashi Lhünpo, the seat of the Penchen lamas, where he received full ordination from the Penchen Lozang Yeshe. These were turbulent years in Amdo and Lhasa, the years of “Lubsangdan-jin’s rebellion” in 1722–1723, and subsequent Qing military action in Amdo. In 1723, this Gyanakpa lama went home to Qinghai and in 1726 became the Throne Holder of Chuzang Monastery, at age thirty-eight until age forty-six, in the year 1734. He and his successors established an influential presence at Labrang Monastery and in Amdo.

There was, not surprisingly, more than one important Gyanakpa lineage at Labrang.⁸³ The other major Gyanakpa lineage at Labrang was associated with the Kālacakra College. The first in the lineage was Kālacakra Gyanakpa Ngawang Püntsoḳ (1746–ca. 1805), the Seventh Throne Holder of the Kālacakra College at Labrang. He was born in a small village near Labrang in a group of laborers and was a disciple of the Second Jamyang Zhepa. He took several offices and eventually the throne of the Kālacakra College at Labrang. Ngawang Püntsoḳ was sent by the Second Jamyang Zhepa to serve as the preceptor to the Tagten Beile of the Aru Harchen Mongols. After a long stay in Mongolia⁸⁴ he went on to the Manchu court, and eventually held an influential position at Labrang and in the Manchu and Mongol courts. The Gyanakpa lamas in both lineages at Labrang show a commitment to religious proselytizing, the diplomatic role of religious figures, and the exercise of estate building in the Amdo and Labrang communities.

Conflict and compromise

The functions of local Amdo and central Tibetan power structures at Labrang, the ongoing power of the Mongols, the well established Gyanak-

pas, and the emerging influence of the Manchus are illustrated in the controversy over succession after the death of the First Jamyang Zhepa in 1721. Basically, Jamyang Zhepa's two closest disciples, Setsang and Detri disagreed about the succession; the then elderly Gungtang does not seem to have played a role in the controversy. The tradition records that there were no clear signs left by the First Jamyang Zhepa, and in spite of the pedigree associating the Second Jamyang Zhepa with Tsongkhapa,⁸⁵ his confirmation as the rebirth of the First Jamyang Zhepa was contested.

There were clear political motives at play here. Setsang and his supporters argued that the successor was the son of the late Mongol king (d. 1735), Ganden Samdrup, but Detri and his supporters, among them the wife of the late Mongol King, Namgyel Drölma,⁸⁶ argued that the rebirth was Könchok Jikmé Wangpo, born in Ngangra, Qinghai.⁸⁷ Though Könchok Jikmé Wangpo was named as the rebirth, and this was eventually verified by the traditional Buddhist authorities, and though Könchok Jikmé Wangpo was a prodigious scholar and made major positive contributions to Labrang's growth and community solidarity, the controversy had far-reaching implications.

At Labrang and in the community, in spite of efforts to stabilize the community and consolidate its resources, the conflict created a schism. When the First Jamyang Zhepa died in 1721, Setsang was the Throne Holder and Detri the Treasurer, both prominent positions. When Setsang died in 1738, Detri became the Labrang Throne Holder, and the way was clear for his and the Mongol Queen's candidate to be authenticated and enthroned. Könchok Jikmé Wangpo was thus authenticated first by Detri in 1738 at age ten, and later by Lhasa authorities in 1740, when he was twelve years old.⁸⁸

Meanwhile, the Second Setsang was born in 1739 into a powerful local family. He was authenticated as Setsang's rebirth by the elderly Detri in 1746, who died that same year.⁸⁹ With Detri gone and Setsang still very young, the disagreement about the succession of Jamyang Zhepa festered and things got worse. In 1760-1762 Setsang was appointed and served as Labrang's Throne Holder with Könchok Jikmé Wangpo in place as the authentic rebirth of Jamyang Zhepa. Still, even over twenty years after the installation of the Second Jamyang Zhepa, the dissidents associated with the First Setsang and the Mongol king continued to campaign for and rally around their Mongol candidate for the rebirth of Jamyang Zhepa. In response, the Labrang authorities arrested the dissident monks and sent them into exile from Labrang eastward to nearby Namlha.⁹⁰ This was significant because the controversy defined the east/northeast border of Labrang's estate.

When Setsang and his followers went east to Namlha in 1762, the eventual site of Terlung Monastery, they gained widespread support in

Qinghai, Tsö, Rongwo (in Reb Gong, where he became Throne Holder of Rongwo Monastery in 1771, resulting in tension between Rongwo and Labrang), Choné, parts of Genkya, Hortsang, and elsewhere. Terlung's and the Sé lineage's supporters grew in power and maintained their allegiance, and the division between these groups persisted up to the modern period.⁹¹ The source of the tension is described as a dispute between religious succession. However, religious succession brought with it the lama's estate, its considerable wealth, prestige and political power for the incoming lama, his family, his students, supporters and their network of alliances. Thus the issue of naming a rebirth had far reaching implications.

THE SECOND JAMYANG ZHEPA (1728–1791)

At this point in history the physical size of Labrang Monastery was still relatively small. Its humble beginnings in a tent at the site of the present Main Assembly Hall disguise the high pedigrees of its religious founder, the First Jamyang Zhepa and of the Mongol Prince Erdeni. The region was populated by Tibetans and Mongols who were fiercely loyal to their traditions and leaders, and there was a number of Tibetan monasteries with teachers who had close ties to Lhasa, to the Mongol leadership, and as time went on, to the Qing court.

Thus, by the time of the Second Jamyang Zhepa there were several different and powerful interest groups in a delicate and sometimes volatile balance. The native Amdo, Lhasa-educated Tibetan religious hierarchs established themselves on historical Amdo Buddhist foundations and their Lhasa affiliations. The local Mongols, including the Lhasa-educated Mongol lamas, were a key military, political, and religious power in Amdo, supporters of the Gelukpa system with strong ties to Lhasa, and influential at Labrang even after the mid-eighteenth century breakup of unified Mongol power. The Qing political and military machines, led through much of the Second Jamyang Zhepa's lifetime by the Qianlong emperor, were key forces to reckon with, even if intermittent and often not well articulated. Some have described this environment as a power vacuum, but this was not a place with no clearly defined interest groups.

In this volatile and sometimes contested context, the Second Jamyang Zhepa, Könchok Jikmé Wangpo built a religious and political infrastructure. His activities were crucial factors for the growth and development of the monastery and its network of support communities. His biography contains all of the key components—high level Tibetan Buddhist education, strong ties to regional Tibetan and Mongol religious figures, demonstrated ability to garner political and economic support from local Tibetan

and Mongol communities, and the ability to recognize and placate the community's powerful Manchu and Chinese neighbors.

The Second Jamyang Zhepa established solid connections with Labrang's support communities. These connections were appropriate for the nomadic highland culture, and included a system of taxation and revenues, a standing militia, a leadership infrastructure, and at least general legal parameters. In his role as a Buddhist teacher, an accomplished scholar and writer, and political authority he collected extensive "offerings"/revenues from the communities, received corvée and long term pledges of material and militia support, and affirmations of the dual system of religion and politics. He is credited with building some forty branch monasteries in Labrang's territories and with substantially increasing the prestige and power of Labrang Monastery. The Second Jamyang Zhepa was a major figure in Labrang's growth.

The lama's contacts with local Chinese and with Qing officials were significant. These are evidenced in records of his personal contact with the Qing court and can be inferred by his lifetime relationships with the Labrang Gyanakpas, and notably with the nearby Gönlung and Tongkhor lamas, who were tutors and close associates of the Qing authorities. Jamyang Zhepa spent his early years, up until age fifteen at least, as a novice in Tongkhor Monastery in Qinghai. As a young scholar he developed relationships with the famous Tuken at Gönlung Monastery. He was ordained at age twenty-two at Gönlung Monastery, with the influential Changkya Rölpé Dorjé in attendance. His connection to Tongkhor indicates that the Jamyang Zhepa was likely aware of Lubsangdanjin and Erdeni Jinong, the Mongol sponsor of Labrang. Tongkhor was burned for its support of Lubsangdanjin in 1723, and rebuilt by the Qing in 1729.⁹² The Manchu presence was most certainly felt at Tongkhor, and at Gönlung, the home monastery of the Qing preceptor Changkya Rölpé Dorjé.⁹³ With his close contact and frequent visits to predominantly ethnic Mongol Tibetan Buddhist centers at Tongkhor and Gönlung, and again given the close relations between those monasteries and the Manchu court, Jamyang Zhepa certainly knew and appreciated the powerful Qing influence.

The Growth of the Tibetan "Chinese" (*gyanakpa*) Influence

In the Second Jamyang Zhepa's early years the Labrang Gyanakpas, all reborn lamas, continued to grow in wealth and status. In these years the Second Jamyang Zhepa was still quite young and the monastery relatively small. Still, the Gyanakpas evidently worked on behalf of Labrang Monastery, notably in the Qing court. This connection doubtless served the Second Jamyang Zhepa well, especially given the conflicts over his succession.

In 1734, at the request of the Qing court, the Second Gyanakpa, Lozang Tenpé Nyima went to Beijing. For the next years he was an active member of the Tibetan Buddhist community in the Qing court, earning his title of “Chinese.” In that year he taught the Yongzheng emperor some difficult points of Madhyamaka philosophy and answered his many questions. He worked closely with Changkya lama, and in 1734 was honored with a title⁹⁴ given by the emperor, and later, in 1735, was decorated along with Tuken. In the years 1736 to 1740, while Qianlong was on the throne (r. 1736–1795), the lamas spent the summers in Chengde and winters in the Beijing palace. Beginning in 1742, together with Changkya Rölpe Dorjé, this Labrang Gyanakpa oversaw the translation of the Buddhist Tengyur from Tibetan into Mongolian. In 1744, he was reportedly a key figure in the reconstruction of Ganden temple (*dga’ ldan byin gling*) at Yonghe Gong in Beijing and in the following year the establishment of the main monasteries (Dialectics, *mtshan nyid*, Tantra, *rgyud pa*, Medicine, *smān pa*, etc.). Lozang Tenpé Nyima wrote texts on philosophy, monastic discipline, and tantra.⁹⁵ In 1762, he went from Beijing to Dechen Monastery, where he died at age seventy-four.⁹⁶ Lozang Tenpé Nyima’s intimate contact with both the Qing and the Labrang authorities is evidence of religious and political contacts between Labrang and the Qing court.⁹⁷ I have dealt with the details of the Gyanakpa lineages elsewhere; suffice it to say that these lineages represent components of authority and influence at Labrang and represented connections to the Qing court and to several religious communities in China.

The Mongols during the Second Jamyang Zhepa’s youth

As for the Labrang Mongols, after Erdeni Jinong’s death in 1735, when the Second Jamyang Zhepa was still very young, the leadership of the local Mongols passed to Tendzin Wangchuk, one of Erdeni Jinong’s distant Khoshud blood relatives, who held the local Mongol throne from 1736 to 1752. In these years the Mongols were under increasing pressure from the Qing government; in 1734 the Yongzheng emperor reformulated the divisions between Tibetan and Mongol territories. One result was that the estate of the Mongol Prince was made smaller, and the borders of Tibetan territory were redrawn at Repgong, Tebo, Luchu, and Machu, and further to the southwest.

Even so, the Mongols were still significant regional powers. In 1743, in a gesture of solidarity with the Labrang monastic authorities, the Mongol Prince participated in the enthronement of the fifteen-year-old Second Jamyang Zhepa, marking the occasion with a donation of support for the installation of a golden roof on the Main Assembly Hall and a Kanjur in silver. Two years later, in 1745, though previously pressured by

Yongzheng, the Mongol Prince met and was endorsed by the Qianlong emperor. In 1751 Tendzin Wangchuk strengthened diplomatic relations with Lhasa by inviting the acting Ganden Throne Holder to Labrang, and increased Mongol influence at Taktsang Lhamo by building a new monastery and installing some fifty monks.⁹⁸ The Prince traveled and helped the young Second Jamyang Zhepa in his efforts to acquire Dzögé Nyinma for Labrang, and further supported the enthronements of both Setsang and Detri lamas, as noted above two key figures at Labrang. This Mongol Prince started the Labrang Printing House in his palace, and went on to sponsor, with the Second Jamyang Zhepa, the building of the Medical College at Labrang. Tendzin Wangchuk maintained close contacts with the Second Jamyang Zhepa and the Seventh Dalai Lama and invited them to public meetings in the region, the Jamyang Zhepa to Muklung in Dzögé Mema and the Dalai Lama to Mongolia.

The Tibetan texts are explicit about the Second Jamyang Zhepa's connections with the Manchus during his years as Labrang's main lama, doubtless building on his connections with the Gyanakpas. In those years he maintained regular correspondence with Qianlong's court, usually via the Xining amban, and during his trips to Beijing⁹⁹ and Wutaishan.¹⁰⁰ While in Lhasa he met the Lhasa ambans. The specific circumstances and often the dates of his correspondences with Beijing are included in his biography, and give proof of their authenticity,¹⁰¹ further evidenced by the Qing's sending Labrang endorsements, official seals, plaques, and other gifts.¹⁰² In return, the Tibetans sent art objects, paintings, and envoys to Beijing. The content of these correspondences are uniformly supportive of Tibetan projects, couched in very respectful language from both sides, and yet not terribly substantive in terms of information about major policy decisions.¹⁰³ For examples, one letter includes the announcement of Qianlong's assignment of the Mongol title *nominhan*, a "king of the Buddhist teachings" (Tibetan, *chos rgyal*, Sanskrit, *dharmarāja*) to Jamyang Zhepa, another letter includes praise and a plaque with the name of a Labrang temple (*blo gsal gling*) written in Tibetan, Chinese, Mongol, and Manchu, another includes Qianlong's praise for Jamyang Zhepa's purity, and in another Qianlong discusses his travel plans.¹⁰⁴ In sum, the correspondence and polite acquiescence by both sides is evidence of Tibetan acknowledgement of and deference to Qing diplomatic presence and military superiority. It is also evidence of the Qing court's attention to and concern with the Tibetan and Mongol border regions.

Meanwhile, in the same period the Second Gungtang, Ngawang Tenpé Gyeltsen (1727–1759), was born in central Tibet, not far from Ganden Monastery. In 1736, when he was nine years old he entered Labrang Monastery and studied with Jamyang Zhepa's two leading disciplines, Setsang Ngawang Tashi and Detri Rinpoché, sponsored by the Mongol

Queen Namgyel Drölma. He went on to become the Throne Holder of Gyümé, the Lower Tantric College.¹⁰⁵ In what were perhaps attempts to promote Mongol influence, his Mongol supporters in Dzöge Nyinma and in the Mongol territories were especially generous. He later worked in Gyümé at Labrang and was appointed Throne Holder of Labrang twice, as the Fifth in 1748–1752 and the Eighth in 1754–1755. In 1759 he visited and was titled (*hutukhtu, nominhan*) by the Qianlong emperor, before passing away in Beijing that same year. His passing was at a relatively early age prevented his playing a greater role at Labrang. Still, his lifetime marks the gradual descent of Mongol power and increase of Qing imperial influence, and illustrates how the webs of power grew at Labrang.

Meanwhile, the Second Jamyang Zhepa worked to expand the local Labrang estate. Literary sources record many of his numerous excursions, for example in 1751, a time that marks the gradual erosion of Mongol power and increasing Qing interest and influence under the Qianlong emperor. In that year the Second Jamyang Zhepa visited the Salar Muslim center of Yartsi/Xunhua at the invitation of a local Chinese lord, described as a region inhabited by many Chinese and Tibetan towns and communities. He was greeted by faithful local Tibetans and Chinese and gave them Buddhist blessings and teachings.¹⁰⁶

As the evidently charismatic Jamyang Zhepa travelled to and through the Labrang support communities, he often encountered Chinese converts to Tibetan Buddhism, who were eager to make donations and receive blessings.¹⁰⁷ Labrang's leaders also had contacts with Chinese officials in Xining, in Lanzhou and elsewhere. Labrang, though in a Tibetan region on the Tibetan Plateau and rather remote, was not isolated from its Chinese, Mongol and Muslim neighbors.¹⁰⁸

Inter-ethnic and cross border contacts are further marked by the ongoing engagement with the Mongols, whose political influence was gradually eroding. After the second Mongol Prince's passing in 1752, the third Labrang Mongol Prince was Wangden Dorjé Paknam, who occupied the Mongol throne from 1753 to 1770, during which time the Qing defeated the Ili Zunghars, in 1759. Even so, in a tacit assertion of Mongol presence this Prince met and was endorsed by the Qianlong emperor. In Wangden Dorjé Pagnam's youth he lived at Jakhyung Monastery, and in later years maintained a long relationship with Jakhyung.¹⁰⁹ He continued to be a major donor at Labrang, supporting the construction of Gyümé College (ca. 1765) and other buildings.

His successor, the fourth Mongol Prince, was Ngawang Dargyel, who served from 1772 to 1807. An avid supporter of the Second Jamyang Zhepa, in 1777 this prince helped secure Sangkhok and Khotsé as properties of Labrang. With the Jamyang Zhepa and the Torgö lama he helped with the acquisition of Ngülra as a property of Labrang, and later sup-

ported Tsagen Beshing Monastery in Dzögé Nyinma.¹¹⁰ Like his predecessors, this Mongol Prince made several diplomatic trips, in this case from 1789–1793, to Beijing for audiences with the Qing emperor. In 1784–1786, when there was infighting and aggression from Labrang's neighbors, the Mongol Prince worked to strengthen monastic authority in the southern Labrang territories.

The last years of the Second Jamyang Zhepa's office were turbulent. In 1791 the Qing was flexing its muscles against the Gurkhas in Nepal, the Qianlong emperor's long reign (1736–1795) was soon to end, and Qing power soon to wane. In 1781 the Xining Muslims became embroiled in a bloody civil war and rebelled against Qing authority. All of these were challenges to Labrang's stability and regional control.

THE THIRD GUNGTANG, KÖNCHOK TENPÉ DRÖNMÉ PELZANGPO (1762–1823)

In the last years of the Second Jamyang Zhepa's office the Third Gungtang, Könchok Tenpé Drönmé Pelzangpo (1762–1823) emerged as a leading Labrang scholar and skilful negotiator with the still powerful Qing Dynasty. His writings are examined in detail in Chapter II. The Third is the best known Gungtang lama, partly because of his prominent inherited post and wealth, visible in the estate compound and the Gungtang Stupa (1805),¹¹¹ but also because he was the most prolific writer of the six Gungtang. Gungtang Könchok Tenpé Drönmé Pelzangpo was born in 1762 in Dzögé Nyinma and passed away in 1823. He is an important Tibetan author; his writings are contained in twelve original Labrang volumes and a later Lhasa eight-volume edition.¹¹² He was a disciple of the Second Jamyang Zhepa and was remarkably erudite at a very young age.

The Third Gungtang was also extraordinary, and yet typically for a high level Labrang lama, because he was active both religiously and politically, marked by his scholarly accomplishments and by his extensive inter-ethnic contacts. He was ordained by the Eighth Dalai Lama, was active in Beijing, in Mongol circles, notably at Gönlung Monastery,¹¹³ and administered the local communities under his jurisdiction. Beginning at age seventeen in 1779 to 1786, he was educated to the highest standards in Lhasa's Drepung Gomang College and at Labrang. He was ordained at age twenty-one and was an active practitioner of the fully developed Gelukpa educational and ritual system. As detailed in Chapter II, his writings are known for their scholarly erudition, the excellent writing style and in general the depth and breadth of this author's scholarship.¹¹⁴

His fame spread. In 1792, the year after the Second Jamyang Zhepa's passing, he became Throne Holder of Labrang Monastery, and served

for seven years. The year before, in 1791 the Third Gungtang founded Gomang Monastery in Ngawa Tsodruk; some years later in ca. 1799-1800 he built a monastery in his home region, Dzögé Nyinma. The Third Gungtang's Amdo roots, his rigorous education in Tibetan Buddhism, his ordination by a Dalai Lama, his assets and monastery in Ngawa, and his post as Throne Holder and *labrang* are milestones in his life story. His 1796-1797¹¹⁵ post as Throne Holder of Gönlung Monastery, "in order to strengthen the relationship between Labrang and Gönlung,"¹¹⁶ offers evidence of strong ties between the Labrang and Gönlung lamas: especially the Third Changkya, Rölpe Dorjé (1717-1786) and the Third Tuken, Lo-zang Chökyi Nyima (1737-1802), and through them with the Qing court.

The strong ties between Gungtang and the Gönlung lamas Changkya and Tuken were again only a part of the larger network of lamas that served as an infrastructure in Labrang and Amdo, accelerated in the years after the Second Jamyang Zhepa's passing in 1791. Teachers, colleagues and students made up the religious and political infrastructure. Most young Amdo monks—excluding Changkya Rölpe Dorjé and few others who did not study in Lhasa—spent years in the main Lhasa monasteries, primarily in Drepung's Gomang Monastery. They very often had the same teachers, very often took monks' vows from their Lhasa mentors and formed lifelong bonds with their peers. On return to Amdo they resumed their friendships and contacts, often building or expanding monastic and political operations.

The relationships between the Labrang and Gönlung lamas are a good example of the complex Amdo religious and political infrastructure; only a very brief outline here will make the point. The Second Jamyang Zhepa recognized the Third Changkya's rebirth and in later years maintained a close association with Changkya. Both Gungtang and Tuken were disciples of the Second Jamyang Zhepa and close associates of Changkya. Gönlung, Changkya's monastic seat and where Tuken studied, was thus a site for meetings of old classmates, teachers and students, powerful local estate owners with much political influence, and not the least, religious brethren. Finally, the fact that Changkya had such a long and close relationship with the Qianlong emperor, and that the Second Jamyang Zhepa, Tuken and Gungtang spent time at the Qing court, show that these lamas had considerable knowledge of and influence in Manchu and Chinese circles. Gungtang's presence at Gönlung provided a link between Labrang and Beijing.

In 1798 Gungtang stayed in Dzögé Nyinma where he taught and wrote, and strengthened Labrang's control of the region in what was increasingly described a political power vacuum, but not from the local point of view. By 1796 Mongol power had weakened considerably and the Qing was at the end of the Qianlong reign period. He was titled (*nominhan*) by

Beijing, and provided his community with leadership and strong representation.¹¹⁷ He was especially active in the Labrang region and notable for his inclusion of and interaction with all local Buddhist institutions, notably in the south in Ngawa, Dzöge, and in the north at Kumbum, Serkog, Chuzang, and again Gönlung, where he lived and taught on no fewer than five occasions.¹¹⁸ The Third Gungtang was an accomplished scholar, teacher, politician and diplomat.

The “Golden Urn”

The Manchu emperors acknowledged the authority of the Tibetan lamas, supported them with generous gifts, and at times did sincerely appreciate and commit to Tibetan religion. There is however evidence they seemed to misunderstand or not accept the implications of the reborn bodhisattva emanation body (*tulku*) system, and evidently missed the importance of, in Belmang’s words, recognizing one’s lama as a fully enlightened Buddha.¹¹⁹

Proof of the Manchu misunderstanding or disregard of the central role of this tantric reborn “bodhisattva” doctrine is in their 1719 retrospective rejection of Tsangyang Gyatso (1683–1706)’s status as the Sixth Dalai Lama, their endorsement and subsequent rejection of Lazang’s puppet Dalai Lama, and their final endorsement of Kelzang Gyatso as the Sixth, not the Seventh, Dalai Lama.¹²⁰ Shifting the status of a reborn bodhisattva from one living person to another betrays a lack of understanding on the part of the emperors.¹²¹ To the Tibetans, this process was not a matter of selection, but of the discovery of a reality, an identity of a previously existing enlightened consciousness in the body of a newly born human person. This belief and practice was deeply ingrained in Tibetan culture, but evidently not well understood or not fully accepted by the Qing authorities.

In the late eighteenth century, Qianlong, in his eighties made the well-known attempt to control Tibetan Buddhism by taking control of the system of designating rebirths. Rawski (and many others) writes that “[a]ttempts to bureaucratize the process by which rebirths were identified culminated in 1792, when the Qianlong emperor ordered that the Gelukpa hierarchs should henceforth be selected by drawing names out of a golden urn.”¹²² “The Gelugpa . . . had to give up autonomy over rebirths, whose selection now required confirmation from Peking.”¹²³ Such a random process indicates Manchu/Chinese lack of belief in, or frustration with Tibetan Buddhism. At its worst, it might show an attempt to manipulate the Tibetan system.

This policy came near the end of Qianlong’s long reign (1736–1795), but at a time when the Qing was still able to exert considerable military

power, for example in the Nepal Gurkha wars, 1788–1792, yet also at a time, in 1793, when the aging emperor was facing an entirely new challenge, from the British.¹²⁴ In 1791, the Second Jamyang Zhepa passed away, after which there was a complex web of conflicting interests between the Qing court and their “Golden Urn” policy represented by the Xining and Lhasa ambans, the pre-eminent Tibetan lamas who followed traditional religious procedures, and the local peoples, who most often followed the local lamas.

In 1797, the successor, or in Tibetan terms, the rebirth of the Second Jamyang Zhepa had not yet been “discovered.” From the Tibetan sources it is clear that Qing policies, their armies, and amban representatives commanded the Tibetans’ respect and deference. However, it is also very clear that Qing policies did not displace or replace traditional Tibetan rituals. During the selection of the Third Jamyang Zhepa, even though the Qing “Golden Urn” selection policy was included in the corpus of rituals, it was by no means adopted as the sole authoritative method for identifying the rebirth.

The Third Gungtang cites the statements of a pre-eminent Buddhist, Longdöl Drupwang, who stated that the succession was an extremely important matter, but that the selection process had to take place in front of a statue of the Buddha (*jo bo rin po che*) and, notably, in the same way as the Fifth Dalai Lama was identified well before the Qing presence in Lhasa. Another writer, Ngawang Tupten Gyatso, includes a detailed account of the amban’s action and Qianlong’s letters regarding the selection of the Third Jamyang Zhepa. He includes a long speech given after the selection translated from Mongolian¹²⁵ which acknowledges Qianlong’s role in the process. The actual process is described in detail, with specific dates recorded. It is recorded that after extensive prayers and deity invocations by Tibetan monks, in front of a painting of Qianlong, the amban selected a name from a golden urn. This would be hard evidence of compliance with Qing policy, except for the fact that the author states that the name selected from the golden urn was in fact the same as the one previously selected by the local Tibetans.¹²⁶ The Tibetans carried out their own selection procedure but at least went through the motions of the Qing policy. At once Tibetan tradition and authority were preserved and the Qing voice was heard.

Further, Ngawang Tupten Gyatso includes the opinions of many others, notably a group identified as “common people” (*mi mang*), who, alluding to the authority of the Lord of Choné, criticized extensive additional deliberations—like the “Golden Urn”—as being like “gambling” (*brgyan ’phangs*), instead urging decisive action that depended on Buddhism, as in the selection of the previous Dalai Lama.¹²⁷ In addition to detailing Qianlong’s policies, this author also recorded the opinion of the

State Oracle, who advised reliance on traditional methods, the decisive opinion of another oracle (*drag rgyal ma*),¹²⁸ and the opinion of the Dalai Lama, who insisted on the importance of traditional prayer and process in the selection of rebirths.¹²⁹

In sum, the “Golden Urn” policy clearly did not replace the Tibetan identification/selection process. It was, however, an attempt by the Qing to have a voice in Tibetan religious and political affairs. The “Golden Urn” policy was itself arguably as random as the Tibetan name selection method (*zan ril bsgril*), though without the attendant rituals, reliance on dreams and mystical procedures.¹³⁰

The instances of use of the Golden Urn policy served Tibetan ends, freedom from heavy-handed Qing interference.¹³¹ It also served Qing ends, at least verbal acknowledgement of regional power. Labrang was a contact point between China and Tibetan Buddhist ideologies, social, and political systems. Whether the Golden Urn policy proves that the Manchus were manipulating Tibetan Buddhism for political ends or whether they were pious Buddhists making mistakes is unclear. Perhaps they were both.

THE THIRD JAMYANG ZHEPA (1792–1855)

We now turn to the office of the Third Jamyang Zhepa, Lozang Tupten Jikmé Gyatso, who was born near Repgong in 1792 and passed away in 1855. He was recognized as the rebirth of Jamyang Zhepa and enthroned in 1797. In 1797 there were no less than three candidates for the office of Jamyang Zhepa; the controversy was a result of rivalry between local Tibetan and Mongol interests¹³² and further exacerbated by the Qing’s Golden Urn policy. He was finally validated, not by the Golden Urn selection method, but by a ritual in the Lhasa Jokang, by the lama Tuken, and reportedly by the Jiaqing emperor.¹³³

The Third Jamyang Zhepa is best known for his dedication to religious practice and for his engagement with religious communities in the Labrang territories. His low profile may have been a result of his disposition, and was perhaps a response to the turbulent early decades of the nineteenth century. Still, while not as prolific a writer as his two predecessors, he nonetheless received considerable donations of material wealth, studied in Lhasa and formed good relations with the Lhasa authorities, was in close contact with the Mongols and Chinese, managed to build one temple at Labrang and others afield,¹³⁴ and renovate yet others. He was often called upon to make militia decisions and mediate legal disputes. The impact of the waning power of the Mongols, the increasing internal conflict in China, and the erosion of Manchu influence were doubtless felt in Labrang.¹³⁵ With these developments the Third Jamyang Zhepa found

himself and the community faced with more regional military challenges. At the same time as taking the responsibility for local conflicts, the lama still maintained contact with the Xining amban, the Qing court, and Mongols in Qinghai and in Mongolia, and the local militias, who presented themselves for service.¹³⁶

In these years the fifth Mongol Prince, Tashi Jungné, occupied the Labrang Mongol seat from 1808 to 1833, the sixth Tashi Wanggyel from 1834 to 1850, and the seventh, Tashi Chögyel from 1851–1884. The fifth carried on contacts with the Manchu and other authorities, the sixth was not as active as his predecessors, and the seventh was again active in local politics, at least until his passing at age thirty-three. These three Princes passed away at relatively young ages and were less influential than their predecessors. As a result, the Mongol fortunes at Labrang waned.

However, while the Mongol Prince's status at Labrang suffered, the Labrang religious authorities sought to preserve relations between key Mongol monasteries and the Manchu court. One of their instruments was the Labrang Gyanakpa institutions, who maintained relationships between the Labrang Tibetans, the regional Mongols, and the Qing court.¹³⁷

As time went on, the Third Jamyang Zhepa strengthened his ties to Lhasa by donating some forty thousand taels of silver on a trip to Lhasa in 1820.¹³⁸ In the early 1800s the lama traveled extensively in the Labrang support communities, collecting large amounts of silver and material offerings, livestock, and continuing pledges of support to the monastery. At the same time as these extensive travels and network-strengthening activities, the lama predicted and authenticated the Gungtang's rebirth, by traditional methods.¹³⁹ The community building and strengthening activities, and the affirmation of Labrang's religious and secular authority in the years from 1820 to 1850 are recorded in great detail in the lama's biography, as are many challenges to Labrang's militia and its ability to muster military responses to internal conflicts and threats from outside. These years, certainly chaotic during coastal China's Taiping Rebellion, Gurkha Wars, and pressures from European powers, to name a few, were a test to Labrang's ability to maintain its autonomy.

By the early nineteenth century, the peak of Qing power had eroded significantly. Qing power at Labrang, never fully implemented, became a matter of diplomatic courtesy. In 1815, the Rongwo militia attacked Labrang via Genkya, continuing a longterm regional dispute. This and many, if not most, of the local disputes between the Labrang support communities and its neighbors were the results of disputes about grazing rights.¹⁴⁰ The Labrang militia fought off the initial threat at Labrang and successfully repelled the Rongwo militia again in Sangkhok.¹⁴¹ Soon after this, there was more fighting between Labrang's support community in Ngawa Tö (at Gomang Gar) and with the Agé Goloks. The Labrang

militia forces prevailed again, the Jamyang Zhepa soon travelled in the region and further south to Barkham, and received extensive offerings and pledges of support from local Tibetans and Mongols, including the communities under Mongols Mergan Khenpo and Torgö lama. There is no mention or indication of any significant Manchu control of these events.

There were however Manchu troops in nearby Qinghai and in Kachu, or modern Linxia, Gansu. The proximity of Manchu troops did not go unnoticed. In 1839, for example, the calvary garrisoned in Kachu marched on Genkya to retrieve horses allegedly stolen by Genkya Tibetans, who were closely affiliated with Labrang. This was a threat to Labrang, and the forty-eight year old Jamyang Zhepa was called on to negotiate with the Qing military commander (*jun tai*), who was poised to attack the local community. The Third Jamyang Zhepa managed to turn back the Qing calvary by diplomacy. The horses were not retrieved. The following years brought bloody conflicts between Rongwo, the Qinghai Mongols and the Labrang Tibetans. In 1840, the Qinghai fighters killed thirty-five local Tibetans, and gathered their forces on the hills outside of Labrang Monastery, threatening a major assault. Through all of these conflicts Labrang relied on its own resources, with no assistance from the Manchu authorities.

The years 1843-1844 were turbulent at Labrang. In 1843 there was another conflict between Labrang and Rongwo, and later, a conflict between Labrang and the Chinese.¹⁴² The Labrang support communities, the "divine communities," fought the Rongwo forces.¹⁴³ Later, Labrang was attacked by forces from Tsö/Hezuo, who had historical connections to Rongwo, and who sought to plunder Labrang's harvests and livestock. The Tsö attackers came repeatedly, burning houses, killing people, and stealing livestock. These attacks were repulsed as well.¹⁴⁴ In another incident, while travelling in Tsö Tsayu (near modern Hezuo), a Chinese official was robbed, allegedly by some Tibetans from Genkya, one of Labrang's territories. The official sent a force of Chinese and Tibetans in pursuit, but this was turned back by the Jamyang Zhepa's diplomacy, and the stolen donkey loads of goods never retrieved.¹⁴⁵ In another example of his diplomatic skill and regional influence, Jamyang Zhepa was able to control the usually intractable local Goloks, whose reputation for fierce independence is well known.¹⁴⁶

In these years there was little effective input or intervention by the amban or any functionary of the Qing court. On the occasions of some of these attacks the Labrang authorities appealed to the Chinese and Manchus in Lanzhou and Xining for help, but the government officials were unable to provide assistance or resolve the problems.¹⁴⁷ This pattern continued in 1853 with bloody fighting between the Goloks and Ngülra.¹⁴⁸

In these years in times of crisis the Third Jamyang Zhepa resolved the problems himself with support from Labrang's communities.¹⁴⁹ In terms of diplomacy, in the words of his biographer, it is said that the "Jamyang Zhepa will take care of relations between local Tibetans and China."¹⁵⁰ In addition to military self-sufficiency there were also significant reaffirmations of support for Labrang,¹⁵¹ and new additions to Labrang's territory. Notably, in 1845 Sichuan Dzöge also pledged itself as a "divine community."¹⁵²

Labrang's Four Golden Thrones

On a different front, the last years of the office of the Third Jamyang Zhepa brought new developments in Labrang's internal power structures. Prior to this time, three of Labrang's lineages held the prestigious inherited status of "Golden Throne holders" (*gser khri*). These three were Gungtang, Hortsang and Zamtsa, holders of three of the largest and most powerful Labrang estates. One of the important qualifications for this status at Labrang was that the throne holder, or one of his lineage, held the post of the Ganden Throne in Lhasa, an important pedigree. The ethnically Mongol Third Detri, an important figure in Labrang's history, had never held the Ganden Throne, but because of his status at Labrang and perhaps his status among the Qinghai Mongols, was in 1858 granted the title of "Golden Throne holder."¹⁵³

At this moment, in an episode that might be understood as an expression of regional power, the Detri lama himself, on the occasion of receiving the prestigious Golden Throne status normally reserved for former Lhasa monastic officials, financed the formal ceremony and seal (*tham ka*) from Beijing himself.¹⁵⁴ Detri's receiving this status at Labrang was perhaps not entirely without political significance, given the historical conflicts between the Detri and Setsang lineages. Further, to mark the occasion, the people residing in and around the seat of the Detri lineage in Shitsang, strategically located near the Sé properties in Luchu and Tsö, made generous offerings to him.¹⁵⁵ This likely worked to improve relations between the Detri and Setsang communities.

One further indicator of the Third Detri's influence is that he authenticated the rebirth of the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa.¹⁵⁶ The Third Detri lama was a Mongol, from a nomad family in Qinghai (Tsekhok), and the most productive writer of all of the Detri lamas, with six volumes of writings. His historical support of Labrang Monastery includes significant support for the Hayagriva Temple at Labrang, and the consolidation of power with the Qinghai Mongols and local groups in Shitsang. These events during the office of the Third Jamyang Zhepa show the turbulence in the Labrang community, and how the leading lamas were able to resolve disputes.¹⁵⁷

During the office of the Third Jamyang Zhepa several local communities, notably Ngülra, Sangkhok, Khotsé, Dzögé Mema, Ngawa, Amchok, and Tsö, affirmed their support of the “two systems,” the unity of religious and political authority of the Jamyang Zhepa. Further, in an affirmation of Labrang’s long contact with Kumbum Monastery in Qinghai, the Third Jamyang Zhepa became the Throne Holder in 1850, for a short (three year) term.¹⁵⁸ Later, he made a second trip to Lhasa, and once again offered silver, horses, and commodities to the major monasteries in Lhasa, to the Penchen Lama, to Radreng Monastery, and others.¹⁵⁹ While not as prominent a builder or scholar as his predecessors, the Third Jamyang Zhepa nonetheless preserved the integrity of the community and its extended support structures.

Meanwhile, the Fourth Gungtang Könchok Tenpé Gyatso (1824–1859), unlike his dynamic predecessor, was in his own short lifetime more focused on the maintenance and development of Labrang’s infrastructures. He was born in Tsayül, ordained in 1843 by the Sixth Penchen lama Tenpé Nyima,¹⁶⁰ and studied under the lamas Hortsang and Belmang. He worked to improve library and printing facilities and was himself involved in cataloguing, library science and editing. He was a writer, craftsman, pharmacologist, tailor, and he was skilled in Chinese and Tibetan painting. For the last years of his life he served as the Forty-eighth Throne Holder of Labrang Monastery (1855–1859).¹⁶¹

THE FOURTH JAMYANG ZHEPA (1856–1916)

The Fourth Jamyang Zhepa, Kelzang Tupten Wangchuk, was born in Nyingtang village near Degé in Sichuan and grew to adulthood in Amdo in a political environment even more turbulent than those of his predecessors. Xining Muslim and Chinese hostilities were worse than ever, banditry and crime were increasingly out of control, the generally weakened Qing empire could not provide any leadership or stability, and the emergence of new regional warlords made the Fourth’s work at Labrang a real challenge. These were times of conflict between different ethnic groups across the region and within Labrang’s communities. It seems that there were troubles everywhere in this region in the late 1800s and first decades of the twentieth century.

The Fourth’s career mirrors the previous Jamyang Zhepas’: his studies in Lhasa, his very active travel schedule, his interaction with the Manchus and Chinese and the Mongols, and his role in the greater Labrang community. He moreover served as the Sixtieth Throne Holder of Labrang Monastery, and as the Throne Holder of Kumbum and Amchok Monasteries. He was thus no stranger to diplomacy, administration, legal or economic matters,

an active individual on the model of his greatest predecessors. The Fourth was also an innovator. He promoted the best interests of the monastery and sought to develop a tolerant atmosphere in the greater community.

Some argue that evidence of his innovation is, first, in his construction of the Hevajra College (1879). There was reportedly resistance (not confirmed) to the Hevajra College and support for building a monastery more like the central Tibetan Gyütö College, which was built by his successor. At the same time, there were several prominent scholars and lamas who practiced Hevajra rituals, so his choice was not unsupported.¹⁶² Further evidence for the Fourth's innovation in diplomacy is in his 1884 tolerance for the re-construction of a small (originally built in ca. 1854) mosque in Xiahe for the regular groups of traders from Linxia and Qinghai. While building a mosque was certainly not unprecedented in Tibetan communities, Tibetan and Muslim relations in this Amdo region in these years were often tense. Allowing a mosque was good diplomacy.

Local religious developments also had political dimensions. In some places relations between different orders of Tibetan Buddhism remained rather cool and quite separate, but in 1887 at Labrang the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa allowed the Ngakpas to establish themselves as an institution under his authority. The fact that different ideological institutions were incorporated in the immediate Labrang community shows that there was a new atmosphere of innovation at Labrang. This however was not the experience of William Christie, a Christian missionary who in 1905 was forced to leave Labrang. The Ngakpas were after all part of the community, and a regional political force, while the outsider Christie was preaching heresy.

In Tibetan Buddhist eyes the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa was endowed with all of the mystical attributes and abilities of a reborn bodhisattva, and was thus rightly identified as such from the pool of three candidates by the Third Detri lama in 1860.¹⁶³ In addition to his regular studies of the sutras and tantras, his monastic training and his fairly constant religious ritual schedule, the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa's metaphysical pedigree included his being a rebirth of Milarepa, in addition to a number of bodhisattvas. Moreover, the records report, even as a youth he had the ability to make it rain.¹⁶⁴ Again, possession of these attributes was respected. The Fourth's life story includes many somewhat expected testaments to his authenticity, power, intelligence and authority, all very much on the model of the previous Jamyang Zhepas. His enthronement was supported by all of the major Labrang communities. The Fourth's life story however also includes frequent mention of the internal and external conflicts confronting the Labrang community, and the Fourth's responses to these challenges.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century was a chaotic period in Amdo. Local nomad groups continued to dispute water and graz-

ing rights, inter-group quarrels over such matters as theft of livestock and goods persisted, and claims to historical right of rule and territorial control continued to agitate the local communities. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the weakening Qing Dynasty had little influence in or control over Amdo. Still, there were political representatives of Beijing in Xining, Lanzhou and Chengdu with garrisons of troops who were able to maintain a presence and exercise some degree of expeditionary military force in the major cities and towns in Qinghai, Gansu and Sichuan. These forces were however clearly unable to maintain lasting peace and stability regionally and definitely not in the Labrang community. Meanwhile, the Xining Muslims rose to become a major regional power that challenged and often overcame the authority and military power of the central Beijing government and the local Tibetans. The result was a period of increasing lawlessness and violence.

In response the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa was often called upon to mediate and adjudicate disputes. The literary sources include mention of many instances when local Labrang-appointed representatives, Chinese and Muslim authorities turned to the lama to intervene as a mediator or to at least attempt to adjudicate conflicts based on precedent and the lama's sense of law and justice. The records often include only brief mention of a conflict, with few details, making conclusions about the rule of law and regional authority difficult. However, the role of the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa as a political and legal authority is evident by the many occasions that he was called on to at least attempt a fair decision. In 1872 there was a dispute between Tsö/Hezuo and Dokar over pasture and allegiance to Labrang. In 1882 there was fighting between Amchok and Tsayül over grazing rights. In 1885 there was trouble with the Goloks and their neighbors, a common dispute over pastureland that resulted in bloody skirmishes. In 1892 the Goloks battled with the Ngülra nomads, later with Rongwo (1897), in Nurma and with the Salars also in 1897, over typical disputes of theft, pasture and water rights. In 1899 the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa heard a similar case between Amchok and Bora.¹⁶⁵ In 1900 there was a serious dispute between Dzögé Mema, Tsö/Hezuo and Labrang over the level of affiliation and ownership of Dzögé Mema. This dispute was over Dzögé Mema's status as Labrang's or the Dzögé lord's property, and the resultant tax revenues, corvée and other income. Over time Labrang prevailed and Dzögé Mema became one of Labrang's properties, though the Dzögé lord did retain his estate. In the same year there was fierce fighting between Dzögé Mema and Gangtsa, which complicated the lama's role. 1901 brought serious conflict between Ngülra and Labrang and in 1902 there was fighting between Ngülra and the Goloks. In 1908 there was fighting between Amchok and Bora. On another front, the Labrang-affiliated Qinghai Mongols fought the Goloks in 1909. There was fighting in Chukama in 1911, and in 1913 Ma Qi garrisoned

troops at Labrang for several months. In 1914 Amchok fought the Torgö Mongols. On all of these occasions the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa at least attempted to intervene or arbitrate, to mediate and if possible adjudicate. Several conflicts were successfully resolved, some were not, and others later resurfaced. The available records do not give any further details of these events.

To resolve some of these conflicts the Jamyang Zhepa occasionally consulted the central Manchu authorities, the Xining amban or the Lanzhou government. The literary records say only that the Jamyang Zhepa wrote a letter or met the outside authorities. However, these contacts did not bring any significant resolution to the problems and were largely matters of protocol;¹⁶⁶ the records often indicate that the lama resolved the problem, at least temporarily. From these data one can conclude that in the context of this society at this time, with new additions to the Labrang estate, new webs of alliances and chaotic outside events in Qinghai and China, internal authority in the Labrang territories was for the most part in the hands of the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa and his officers.

One sign of the times was the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa's 1894 establishment of a new office at Labrang, the Personal Attaché (*srid skyong chen mo*). This officer functioned as a diplomatic and legal officer in Labrang's territories, together with the local community representatives but with more regional power. Thus political mediation and representation was not only in the hands of the Labrang-appointed community officers. The first lama to hold this office was the Third Belmangtsang Jamyang Tenzin Gyatso. Later, during the office of the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa, his brother, the reborn Belmangtsang held the office of Personal Attaché. This person was stationed at Dzöge Nyinma, and worked with the local Labrang-appointed officers.

The nature of the evolving contacts and alliances with groups outside of Labrang is equally interesting. Labrang's relationship with the Manchus continued to be largely a formality. The result of this careful diplomacy was that at Labrang there were no Qing military adventures as happened in Khams. Labrang kept its high-level bureaucratic contacts with the Qing court and the Xining amban, and exchanged formal letters, maintaining the *staus quo*.¹⁶⁷ On the other hand, as noted, the local Chinese militias and police skirmished on numerous occasions with local Labrang Tibetans, and it was nearly always the Fourth who at least attempted to settle the problems.¹⁶⁸ The lama attempted to maintain his local religious and political authority and at the same time sought to preserve the increasingly delicate balance of power with his powerful and unstable neighbors.

Meanwhile, in the mid-1880s there was also Russian interest in Labrang, most often to develop trade contacts. The representative of the

region was the Jamyang Zhepa, and he went on to receive the Russians at Labrang on several occasions. The Russians came bearing gifts, perhaps something akin to tribute, in probable imitation of the well known Asian practice, and clearly with the ulterior motive of gaining lucrative trade concessions.¹⁶⁹ These contacts are like those made previously in this borderland, in that there were exchanges of diplomatic courtesies, often accompanied by gifts or tribute of many kinds, and efforts made to communicate across cultural barriers. The Russian presence continued into the early decades of the twentieth century but was severed by warfare in China and Russia.

In addition to his monastic and academic training, and his studies in Lhasa, in 1899 the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa was titled by the Manchu court and was a recognized authority figure in Mongol communities. He traveled extensively, locally in the way of his predecessors, reaffirming the bond between the monastic community, receiving new pledges and endowments, and all the while blessing, praying, and empowering. He traveled outside of Amdo, to Wutaishan and Beijing in China, through Khams, central Tibet, to Sakya, Mt. Kailash and Lake Manasarowar, and perhaps prophetically, to Litang, the home of his rebirth.¹⁷⁰

During the office of the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa the Labrang Gyanakpas continued to exercise a degree of regional influence, but their fortunes were mixed and subject to the forces of the times. They nonetheless served as liaisons to the neighboring communities and continued to build the Labrang estate. The Third Kālacakra Gyanakpa rebirth, Lozang Longdöl Chökyi Nyima (1859–1934)¹⁷¹ was educated at Labrang, travelled extensively in Mongolia and China, and was a prodigy of the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa. He served as a negotiator between the Xining Muslim Ma Qi, the Alo/Huang family, and the Chinese. The Tibetan and Mongol pedigree, the Manchu and Chinese connections of the Gyanakpa lamas in this period could however not protect them from the wrath of the regional Muslims, and later of the Communist Chinese.

The Fourth Jamyang Zhepa served as Throne Holder of Labrang Monastery and of Kumbum Monastery, at one point simultaneously, in the tradition started by the Second Jamyang Zhepa.¹⁷² He was a builder,¹⁷³ and apparently a liberal-minded administrator.¹⁷⁴ He allowed new institutions, the Ngakpas, a nunnery, promoted writing and printing, and the arts. However, one of the most striking things about the Fourth's career and part of his legacy was his role as mediator or adjudicator of regional disputes.¹⁷⁵ His decisions were sometimes happy resolutions, and sometimes not and many times conflicts went unresolved, but he was nonetheless an active intermediary.

The Tibetan and Mongol relationship deteriorated after the death of the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa in 1916. As had happened elsewhere in the past

in other Tibetan communities, there was a dispute between the political and religious authorities who presided after the death of the primary lama and before the successor's coming of age. At Labrang the Regent, the Fifth Gungtang lama and Treasurer Li Zongzhe struggled to control the community. The Qinghai Muslim, Ma Qi, reportedly sent by the Gansu governor to intervene, attacked the Regent and his supporters. There was subsequent division between the supporters of the Treasurer and Ma Qi, and the supporters of the Regent Gungtang. As time went on, and with the 1919 arrival of the new reborn Jamyang Zhepa lama from Litang, relations between the Muslims, the Labrang Tibetans, and the Mongols got worse. As Apa Alo, the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa's older brother tried to negotiate with the Chinese, the Mongol Prince shifted closer to Ma Bufang and his strident anti-Communism.¹⁷⁶

THE FIFTH GUNGTANG JAMYANG TENPÉ NYIMA (1860–1925) AND REGIONAL POLITICS

In those years the Regent, Khotsé native Fifth Gungtang, Jamyang Tenpé Nyima (1860–1925), spent much of his lifetime away from Labrang, in Khotsé and elsewhere. Labrang was in turmoil in those years, because of the increasing conflicts between the Qinghai Muslims and the Beijing and Lanzhou authorities, and internal struggles in the Labrang communities. The history of the Muslim conflicts is well known, and the Fifth Gungtang's biography notes a number of internal disputes, for example in 1883 between the people of Sakar near Labrang Monastery and the Mongol Prince, and the burning of the Prince's mansion. The Fifth Gungtang was likely embroiled precisely because of the prominent position he occupied at Labrang, because of the prominence of the local Mongols, and not the least because of the local people of Sakar.

In Mongol circles, from 1851–1884 the Seventh Mongol Prince Tashi Chögyel was active in local politics, at least until his passing at age thirty-three. In 1872 in a show of force and support the Prince and his Mongol and Chinese militia marched into Labrang in response to recent Chinese burning of some Hortsang villages and Jamyang Zhepa's subsequent negotiated settlement with the Chinese.¹⁷⁷ This marked a period of solidarity, but there were conflicts inside the Labrang Mongol and Tibetan communities. In 1882 the attendant (*gnyer ba*) of the Mongol Palace was replaced by a new attendant, appointed by the Labrang Monastery authorities. These events and the ensuing disagreement over the appointment grew out of hand and in 1883, the year the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa was named Throne Holder of the monastery, the local people burned the Mongol Palace. Jamyang Zhepa called the Amchok militia to restore the peace at Labrang. The Tibetans and

Mongols consulted the Xining amban about the conflict, but to no avail. The Mongol Prince died the next year, 1884, but the conflict festered until the monastery-appointed Tibetan attendant was murdered in 1885. As a result, the Mongol presence at Labrang diminished.

The Fifth Gungtang sought to placate the Mongols. In 1885 Gungtang went to Mongolia and in 1888 gave the infant Eighth Mongol Prince a blessing and preliminary initiation, but his efforts were in vain. Tensions between Labrang and the Mongols persisted. Meanwhile, in 1892 Gungtang was appointed Ninth Throne Holder of the Hevajra College¹⁷⁸ and in 1908 he improved the main Gungtang Tongdrol Stupa and other buildings at Labrang. He served as the Sixty-ninth Throne Holder of Labrang Monastery.

In 1909 and thereafter the Fifth Gungtang developed contacts with communities in Khotsé (where he sponsored construction at Gurgar Monastery), in Trokho Mema, Chukama, and elsewhere.¹⁷⁹ The Fifth Gungtang does not have an extensive personal bibliography, but he did write a number of works, including liturgies, brief hagiographies, poetry and others. The turbulent times likely had a significant impact on this lama's life and works, reflected in the accounts of his life.¹⁸⁰ The conflicts between the Xining Muslims and Labrang were at one of their worst levels during the lifetime of the Fifth Gungtang; including, in his last year, the 1925 battles at Serchentang in Genkya and in Sangkhok. It is not surprising then that he spent much time in his estate communities in Khotsé, Ngülra, Amchok, Dzögé Nyinma, Trokho and neighboring territories, for his personal safety and in hopes of maintaining the integrity of the greater Labrang community.

THE SIXTH GUNGTANG, TENPÉ WANGCHUK (1926–2000)

The Sixth Gungtang, Tenpé Wangchuk (1926–2000), was born in Dzögé Tö, and became immensely popular in Amdo. He surely experienced some of the turmoil in the region in his lifetime but came into his majority in the mid-1940s aftermath of the Republican-era fighting, into a devastated, battle-weary and still fragmented region. In response to the pressures of the times he did what his predecessors and his neighbors did. That is, he made alliances with neighbors and friends against his enemies. Always exhibiting the flexibility necessary for survival in this region, he worked as a diplomat and intermediary between the Tibetan and Chinese authorities. His flexibility is apparent in the fact that he served as the Assistant Chairman of the Provincial Government of Gansu Province and as the Eighty-seventh and Ninety-third Throne Holder of Labrang Monastery. Survival in this borderlands environment required understanding and interaction.¹⁸¹

Also like his predecessors the Sixth Gungtang spent much time strengthening ties in his communities, and spending much time in Sangkhok, Genkya, Ngülra, Dzögé Nyinma, and elsewhere. He was an active diplomat, resolving, for a well known example, the very old dispute between Tsö and Labrang over the naming of the Second Jamyang Zhepa. He was a skilful judge who often resolved differences to mutual satisfaction. He was an erudite and dedicated teacher, known for exemplifying Buddhist values.

The Sixth Gungtang was at home in Amdo nomad camps and in presidential palaces. He was a versatile individual, and an exemplar of reason, discipline and dialogue. He gave tantric initiations in places like Belmangtsang and all over Amdo, and also traveled in the capacity of a religious leader to Beijing, Moscow, Italy, and Washington, D.C. The Sixth Gungtang made major contributions to the survival of the entire Labrang Monastery community in very difficult circumstances.¹⁸²

THE FIFTH JAMYANG ZHEPA (1916–1947)

The Fifth Jamyang Zhepa Tenpé Gyeltsen was like few other Tibetan lamas, leader of a community on an increasingly volatile multi-ethnic borderland and confronted with a changing world and constant military crises. He was born in Litang in 1916, in 1919 officially recognized as the rebirth of the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa, of the bodhisattvas Vajrapāṇi, Avalokiteśvara, and Mañjuśrī, of Milarepa, and of others by the Ninth Penchen Lama¹⁸³ and on 6 August 1920¹⁸⁴ arrived in Labrang with his entire extended family.¹⁸⁵ The family fortunes were validated and empowered by the selection or discovery of the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa in their midst.¹⁸⁶ He died of smallpox on 14 April 1947, at age 32. True to tradition, and as a community ritual, the entourage was escorted from the Litang region by tens of thousands of local Tibetan, Mongol and Chinese envoys. They stopped at many places under Labrang's jurisdiction to allow the faithful to join the growing force in support of the newly recognized leader.

In the face of these political currents the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa went on to take novice vows from Detri lama and monk's vows from the great Amchok lama of the day, Jamyang Kyenrab Gyatso. Another of his and the Seventh Penchen Lama's key teachers was Lakho Jikmé Trinlé Gyatso (1866–1948).¹⁸⁷ He went through the usual Gelukpa monastic curriculum, studying the five major works, the sutras and the tantras.¹⁸⁸ The Fifth is credited with some minor writings, a Monastery Rulebook (*bca' yig*) for Gyutö College, a short praise to Tsongkhapa, and others.

In 1924, when the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa was eight years old, Labrang was attacked by the Xining Muslims and he and his family were forced

to flee for four years.¹⁸⁹ He returned to the throne and his education at Labrang in 1928. In 1937 he made a three-year trip to central and western Tibet, returning in 1940. The Fifth Jamyang Zhepa, some of his family members, and a large retinue, of some two hundred escorts and bodyguards left Labrang for Lhasa in 1937, arrived there in 1938 and returned to Labrang in 1940. The atmosphere of the lama's entourage is captured in an account written by Marion Griebenow, the Christian missionary who befriended the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa.

[I]t was quite an impressive sight to see the thousands of horsemen, priests and laymen, driving loaded oxen and mules and horses. The Jamyang Zhepa himself rode in a sedan chair carried on two magnificent mules which were led by half a dozen runners. His chair was always surrounded by hundreds of horsemen and preceded by flagbearers. As on the first day, so on every halt of the journey, camp was made early and in good order—two large circles of white tents spread out in a wide valley, with scores of other smaller circles of tents on every side. Each had his own position in the camp, and mine was in Large Circle Number Two . . . considered quite a place of honor. . . . The other circles of tents were the thousands of Tibetans who took advantage of a large crowd with which to make their pilgrimage to Lhasa, the 'Place of the Gods.' Our way led upward and across, but always a little higher. . . . Grass was green and abundant, providing plenty of forage for the thousands of animals, and flowers were gorgeous in the many colors and varieties. Wild game (antelope, wapiti, blue mountain sheep, etc.) were frequently seen. . . . The Jamyang Zhepa often invited me to his tent, or to go with him on picnic trips when stopping for a day or two. Then we frequently spoke of the gospel of Christ . . . [and] 'Perfect Love.'¹⁹⁰

While in Lhasa the Jamyang Zhepa and his group met with representatives from Radreng, Drepung, and several other major central Tibetan monasteries and seats of power.¹⁹¹ He spent two full years visiting the monasteries, taking teachings, participating in rituals, and meeting people.

In the 1940s new developments at Labrang were fueled on one hand by the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa's experiences in Lhasa and on the other hand by the contacts between the Labrang Tibetans and the Chinese Nationalists, and their Communist successors. On his return from Lhasa, the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa took a personal interest in the legal system at Labrang (*tshogs 'du dmar nag*) and restructured it on the model of Ganden Podrang in Lhasa, renaming Labrang's court and general office the Yiktsang. In terms of social and political infrastructures, the Yiktsang marked an upgrade of the Tibetan legal and social service institution at Labrang.¹⁹² It had more extensive legal processes and heard more cases, settled by the consensus of religious and lay authorities. The Yiktsang became a more formal governing body at Labrang, at least during the office of the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa. This was one of the major innovations instituted by the

Fifth Jamyang Zhepa and was clearly the lama's project, and not Gönpö Döndrup's, Apa Alo's or any outsider's, which shows that authority in the community was still in the hands and office of the religious leader.

Another indicator of Jamyang Zhepa's personal motives was his 1945 development of a school for monks and lay people in the monastery. There were schools and education projects at Labrang, detailed later in this book, but no newer curriculum for monks until the Fifth returned from Lhasa. The Fifth instituted courses for monks in Tibetan calligraphy, monastic music and dance, mathematics, crafts, Chinese language (though the Fifth did not speak or read Chinese), Tibetan history and others.¹⁹³ These projects were accomplished by the Jamyang Zhepa in spite of reported resistance to the monastery school from some of the senior monastery officers. Jamyang Zhepa was thus highly motivated to institute changes, and not afraid to use locally available resources, particularly from China. For example, Sheng Jingxin worked as a consultant to the monastery school, sent to Xiahe in 1944 by the Nationalists to work as an educator.¹⁹⁴ The efforts to reform education in China impressed and motivated the Labrang authorities of the day, but the educational initiatives did not persist for very long, nor did they have a widespread or long lasting impact.

The young lama also sponsored the organization of a new monastic music troupe (called *rnam thar*),¹⁹⁵ composing the words and music of the seven core pieces himself (with one exception, the piece with content about himself). He also built the Gyütö College at Labrang, and a new residence for himself on the model of Lhasa's Norbu Lingka, called Tashi Raptan. He supported the further development of the Ngakpa Dratsang, and the new nunnery on the west side of Labrang¹⁹⁶ in a former Mongol property donated by the Mongol Queen Lumantso. Also, according to the current priest-attendant at the temple, in these years the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa supported the construction of a Guandi/Anyé Nyenchen Temple in Xiahe.¹⁹⁷ Along with the rebuilding of the Xiahe mosque in 1936, the family's acceptance and long friendship with the Griebenow Christian mission, and the 1944–1947 publication of a free daily newspaper, the *Labuleng jian bao*, largely filled with anti-Japanese propaganda,¹⁹⁸ these projects show that the Fifth was tolerant of diversity, even on monastery property, and that he was an innovator.

He was interested in modern technologies and most willing to apply them at Labrang. The Fifth supported the establishment of the Labrang Medical Clinic in 1940 and its 1944 expansion. The Tibetans supported the construction of the road from Lanzhou to Xiahe, open to vehicle traffic in 1945.¹⁹⁹ There was a telegraph and postal office at Labrang, and an airfield in nearby Sangkhok. The Fifth was also publicly supportive of his brother Apa Alo's negotiations and alliances with the Muslims and Chinese. In

years previous, in something of a reciprocal gesture, the Fifth was appointed as a Gansu Provincial Advisor in 1932, at age sixteen.

The Fifth Jamyang Zhepa was a bright, inquisitive scholar with an appetite for new ideas and new things. He was literate, had imagination and vision and was involved with his disciples and community. His role in outside politics was rather eclipsed by his strong father and brothers, but he nonetheless played an active role in community legal affairs. At thirty-two years old he was struck by smallpox and Labrang's hope and growth took yet another loss. An eyewitness said that he suffered so with the lesions over his face, but in the end he rallied and seemed to get better. "He seemed content; everyone was so pleased, then he just laid down and passed away. We all cried and were so sad."

THE SUM OF THE PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY

This summary does not begin to scratch the surface of the recorded details, the remembered and living traditions in the Labrang community. The First Jamyang Zhepa came home to Amdo from Lhasa and the heart of conflict between Tibetans, Mongols and the Qing Dynasty. He soon found himself embroiled in a local version of the conflict. In the relatively brief twelve years that he lived in Amdo after his flight from Lhasa he managed to survive and build the political and institutional foundations of Labrang Monastery. Even though he brought his status as a prodigious scholar, a prolific writer and a highly respected religious figure to his native home, the First Jamyang Zhepa's contributions to Labrang Monastery were largely political and strategic. He was able to use his familiarity with the local Tibetan, Mongol and Qing authorities to establish a new bastion of power in Amdo.

It was the Second Jamyang Zhepa, an at least equally prodigious scholar and exemplary community leader who expanded and strengthened the network of connections, making Labrang a real center of Tibetan Buddhist activity. He built several of the key academic and religious institutions at Labrang and was able to win the support of a broad range of donors and communities. This was a lama par excellence, a scholar, a monk, a politician, and an institution builder. He set the example for the pedigree of scholarship and diplomacy at Labrang. His influence at Labrang is marked by the work of the Gyanakpa lamas, who played an important role in community building and negotiations with the Manchus and Chinese.

The infinitesimal, usually religious detail in these biographies, catalogues and records can distract one from the actual dynamics and history of political power and community development. The offices of the Third

and Fourth Jamyang Zhepas are good examples. These lamas built on the accomplishments of their predecessors but were faced with the further machinations of the Qing court in for example the grandiose scheme of the "Golden Urn," by which the Qing sought to replace a key, albeit complex, unpredictable and certainly potentially corruptible component of Tibetan civilization with a poorly conceived lottery system. As with other Qing projects, the Jamyang Zhepas and Tibetans were able to on one hand acknowledge the Qing's policy but on the other hand ignore it. Full-scale implementation was out of the question. The Third Jamyang Zhepa was very religious, not an active writer, but nonetheless actively engaged the Labrang support communities. The Fourth became embroiled in the politics of the day and was thus distracted from scholarly pursuits. He was nonetheless able to maintain the integrity of the community.

The Fourth and Fifth Jamyang Zhepas were arguably much closer to global events than their central Tibetan countrymen. Modern internal struggles for dominance in China and the threats and benefits offered by foreign powers were close to Labrang. Military operations by the Mongols, the Qing Dynasty, the Muslims and Chinese often took place nearby and often in Labrang's territories. Foreign missionaries and businesspeople were active in Amdo and in the Labrang territories, bringing new ideas, goods, and challenges to the Fourth and Fifth Jamyang Zhepas. In other words, modernity and the outside world came to these lamas and they in turn were forced to deal with new challenges and opportunities. They responded diplomatically, often allowing new ideas into the Labrang territories, for example, a mosque, a Christian mission, a Chinese temple, a syncretic Ngakpa institution, public schools, trading missions, foreign diplomatic offices and a long list of other innovations, and yet at the same time preserving their way of life and control of their communities. In these ways the Jamyang Zhepas preserved the autonomy of their Tibetan Buddhist enclave on the Sino-Tibetan frontier.

NOTES

1. See 'Jigs med dbang po, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar*, 110, 149.
2. See Silber, *Virtuosity, Charisma, and Social Order*, 45, 46. As above, Silber's work is on monasticism in a different context, but the basic principles she describes are relevant to Labrang.
3. See Silber, *Virtuosity, Charisma, and Social Order*, 36, 47.
4. "Virtuoso ascetics are said to represent the extreme expression of values and norms that other people enact much more moderately and imperfectly, not only in the religious sphere but in social life in general." Silber, *Virtuosity, Charisma, and Social Order*, 43, 27, 30, 83–84.
5. See Silber, *Virtuosity, Charisma, and Social Order*, 83.

6. See Martin Slobodnik, "Destruction and Revival: The Fate of the Tibetan Buddhist Monastery Labrang in the People's Republic of China," *Religion, State & Society* 32.1 (March 2004): 7–19.

7. Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus*, 538.6–539.

8. Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus*, 541.3–4.

9. See Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2001), 9; also 36, 36, 67–77; James H. Sanford, William R. LaFleur, and Masatoshi Nagatomi, *Flowing Traces: Buddhism in the Literary and Visual Arts of Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); Sherman E. Lee, *A History of Far Eastern Art*, 5th edition (Upper River Saddle, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1993), 102–103; Susan L. Huntington, *The "Pāla-Sena" Schools of Sculpture* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1984), 6.

10. See June Teufel Dreyer, *China's Political System: Modernization and Tradition*, 4th Edition (New York: Pearson Longman, 2004), 36.

11. See Borjigidai, "Hoshuud Polity," 187.

12. See Ishihama, Yumiko, "A Study of the Seals and Titles Conferred by the Dalai Lamas," in *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the 5th Seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, ed. Ihara Shoren and Yamaguchi Zuiho (Narita: Naritashinsoji, 1992), 501–514. See Fabienne Jagou, "The Sixth Panchen Lama's Chinese Titles," in *Khams Pa Histories: Visions of People, Place and Authority; Proceedings of the Ninth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*, Leiden 2000, ed. Lawrence Epstein (Leiden: Brill Press, 2002), 85–102. See the list of titles given to Labrang lamas in Smon lam rgya mtsho, "Dga' ldan bshad sgrub dar rgyas bkra shis g.yas su 'khyil ba'i gling," 15–16.

13. Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 62.

14. See Crossley, *The Manchus*, 42–43, 55, 63 (Mongol *taiji*, Manchu *taise*), 67–69; see Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 23–24 (on origins), 62–64, 76, 97–100, 116–117.

15. Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 67; see the explanations of titles and social groups in Borjigidai, "Hoshuud Polity," 183–184, 190.

16. See the list of Manchu "Imperial Princely Ranks" in Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 88–95, 304.

17. Sperling, "Tibet's Foreign Relations," 119–133, see Ishihama, "A Study of the Seals and Titles Conferred by the Dalai Lamas."

18. Heuschert, "Legal Pluralism in the Qing Empire," 320–324.

19. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 137.

20. See 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 64b2.

21. See Sperling, "Awe and Submission," 325; Bruce A. Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare: 1795–1989* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 63. See Yang Hui, "Appendix," in *The Jingpo Kachin of the Yunnan Plateau*, by Wang Zhusheng (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona State University, 1997), 267–304; see Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Frontier* I, II, III. For a comprehensive description and catalogue of the *tusis*, see Gong Yin, *Zhongguo tu si zhi du* (Kunming: Yunnan People's Publishing House, 1992). This is a voluminous study with detailed historical information

on *tusi* in Gansu, 1282–1319, and Qinghai, including the Mgo logs, 1358–1363. See also the text with the same title, She Yize, *Zhongguo tu si zhi du* (Beijing: China Frontiers Study Association, 1945). See the description of the *tusi* system as a strategy for intervention by Manchus in Amdo and Khams in Melvyn C. Goldstein, “Change, Conflict and Continuity among a Community of Nomadic Pastoralists: A Case Study from Western Tibet: 1950–1990,” in *Resistance and Reform in Tibet*, ed. Robert Barnett (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 80–81; see John E. Herman, “The Cant of Conquest: Tusi Offices and China’s Political Incorporation of the Southwest Frontier,” in *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China*, ed. Pamela K. Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 135–170. For the reference to the Lord of the Kangsar Goloks as a *tusi* and in the Communist era an Assistant Region Leader, *fu zhou zhang*, see Huang Zhengqing, *Huang Zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 97; see Dardess, “Did the Mongols Matter?,” 122.

22. The Mongol banners, one of which was led by Erdeni Jinong are detailed in a later table. This table has estimates for population; Erdeni Jinong’s group is said to have included 1,650 families. See Gao Shufen, *Qing hai sheng zang zu meng gu zu she hui li shi diao cha* (Xining: Qinghai People’s Publishing House, 1985), 139–144.

23. Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Frontier* I, 21.

24. Petech wrote that there was “the establishment of Manchu suzerainty over the Koke-nor Qosot.” Petech, “Notes on Tibetan History of the 18th Century,” 269.

25. For a list of the amban’s responsibilities, see Gu Zucheng, *Ming qing zhi zang shiyao*, 179–190. For a list of every amban, see Zhao Zhizhong, *Qing wangchao yu xizang* (Beijing: Chinese Literature Publishing House, 2000), 199–215.

26. For another list of the ambans’ duties see Gu Zucheng, *Qing shilu zangzu shiliao*, 179–190.

27. Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century*, 259. See the Tibetan amban’s title (*zhu zang da chen*) in Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), 184: the amban was “a representative of the Court of Colonial Affairs (*li-fan yuan*) installed from 1709 . . .” See the mention of titles and offices in Huang Benji, *Li dai zhi guan biao* (Shanghai: Xinhua Publishing Company, 1965), 313, table # 57; see Legrand, *L’Administration*, 165–175; see the running account of events in Gu Zucheng, *Qing shilu zangzu shiliao*, 292; 311–314.

28. See Gu Zucheng, *Qing shilu zangzu shiliao* and Zhao Zhizhong, *Qing wangchao yu xizang*; see Tuttle, “The Institution of the Qinghai Amban,” 1–19.

29. Petech, *Aristocracy and Government in Tibet*, 13.

30. See above, note 265.

31. For examples of his activities, see Gung thang bstan pa’i sgron me, *’Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa’i rnam thar*, 205–207, 216, 380.

32. See for example Gung thang bstan pa’i sgron me, *’Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa’i rnam thar*, 149. For summaries of four prominent Mongol religious figures with connections to Labrang (Blo bzang gnas brtan pa, Khri chen bsod nams grags pa, ’Jam dbyangs thub bstan nyi ma, the Third Sde khri, and Su nyid dkon mchog norbu), taken from Tibetan sources, see Dan Qu, “Jieshao labuleng si jiwei zhumingde menggu gaoseng,” in *Xiahe Wenshi Ziliao* I (1993): 19–33.

33. For Tibetan titles, see Ishihama, "New Light," 513; for Mongol titles, see Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society*, 100–106, 121 (where titles and offices are described as increasingly complex). Some of the most prominent regional Mongols were mentioned in 'Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 145, 183, 192–194 (Dali Batur Taiji); especially Mergen Daiching, whose monastic seat was in Qinghai, 149, 189, etc. An entire chapter of the Second 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa's biography is about his contacts with prominent Mongols in Mongolia and Qinghai, and titled Mongol religious and lay persons are mentioned throughout the literature.

34. Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 270–271. Again for the Second 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, see Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 137 (jasagh), 138 (nominhan).

35. Grupper, "Manchu Patronage and Tibetan Buddhism during the First Half of the Ch'ing Dynasty," 66n15.

36. See for example, *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinayavastu*, 25, l. 9: *rājñāścakravartina*, in *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinayavastu*, in Gilgit Manuscripts 3.2, ed. Nalinaksha Dutt (Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica No. 17, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1984). The use of the term and institution of *cakravartirāja*s is widespread, probably in all Buddhist cultures. See the Degé *Vinayavastu*, fol. 64A: . . . *skyes bu chen po'i mtshan sum bcu rtsa gnyis po de dag dang ldan pa'i skyes bu chen po'i 'gro ba ni gnyis las gzhan du mi 'gyur te gal te khyim na gnas ni 'khor los sgyur ba'i rgyal po mtha' bzhi rnam par rgyal ba chos dang ldan pa chos kyi rgyal po rin po che sna bdun dang ldan par 'gyur te de'i rin po che sna bdun ni 'di lta bu dag yin te . . .*; see Geoffrey Samuel, *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra: Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 86, 104; Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism*; see also the discussion of *cakravartirāja* in Ruegg, *Ordre Spirituel et Ordre Temporel*. For an essay on Burmese and others on SE Asia *cakravartirāja* kingship see Michael Aung-Thwin, "Divinity, Spirit, and Human: Conceptions of Classical Burmese Kingship," in *Centers, Symbols, and Hierarchies: Essays on the Classical States of Southeast Asia*, Monograph No. 26, ed. Lorraine Gesick (Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1983), 45–49; in the same volume see also Paul J. Bennett, "The 'Fall of Pagan,'" 11–15, 23–26. For a description of "wheel turning king," see especially Part One in Stanley J. Tambiah, *World Conqueror and World Renouncer: A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand Against a Historical Background* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

37. Angela Zito and others articulate the motives and goals of Qianlong's use of language, his understanding of his position as emperor and his commitment to ritual. See Angela Zito, *Of Body and Brush: Grand Sacrifice as Text/Performance in Eighteenth-Century China* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), esp. 3, 5–6, 13, 17, 22–26, 60–64; Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, 224–225, the section on the "Wheel-Turning King," (221–289); see Herman, "National Integration and Regional Hegemony," 53; see Rawski, *The Last Emperors*; Waley-Cohen, "Religion, War, and Empire-Building in Eighteenth-Century China," 341, 337; Grupper, "Manchu Patronage and Tibetan Buddhism during the First Half of the Ch'ing Dynasty," 47–75; see John E. Herman, "Empire in the Southwest: Early Qing Reforms to the Native Chieftain System," *Journal of Asian Studies* 56.1 (February

1997), 49, 69–70; see Bartlett, “Review of Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 177. See also Huang Pei, *Autocracy at Work*, 45–50; see Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 197–294; Farquhar, “Emperor as Bodhisattva,” 33. Farquhar noted that “. . . their most visible religio-political image was to be Chinese and Confucian.” For the conflict between assimilating Chinese ways and preserving Manchu identity, see Pamela Kyle Crossley, *Orphan Warriors: Three Manchu Generations and the End of the Qing World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 19–30; on creating Manchu identity, see Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 72–75. On Manchu identity see especially Edward J.M. Rhoads, *Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early-Republican China, 1861–1928* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000). The lack of uniform Qing control in Tibetan regions is cited by Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, 223, 328 ff.

38. Including, for examples, the descriptions of Qing dominion and use of Tibetan Buddhism in Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, 221–280; explicitly in Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 231–263.

39. For a brief comment on the value and status of Qianlong’s lifetime achievements, on the occasion of his death in 1796, see Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa’i rnam thar*, 75, where it is stated of Qianlong, *dge rtsa rgya chen bsgrub kin yod tshul*. “He demonstrated the accumulation of extensive roots of virtue.”

40. ‘*Jigs med dbang po*, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa’i rnam thar*, 69, 138, 146.

41. Gung thang bstan pa’i sgron me, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa’i rnam thar*, 200, 220.

42. ‘*Jigs med dbang po*, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa’i rnam thar*, 138, 146; the Second was titled at age twenty-two, Gung thang bstan pa’i sgron me, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa’i rnam thar*, 69.

43. See ‘*Jigs med dbang po*, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa’i rnam thar*, 120, 183. His cousin, Batur da’i ching was a *beise*, and a “protector,” Gung thang bstan pa’i sgron me, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa’i rnam thar*, 122.

44. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa’i rnam thar*, 89, titled in the early 1800s.

45. See ‘*Jigs med dbang po*, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa’i rnam thar*, 189, 193. The practice of giving titles did not end with these persons. Lazang Khan, in the midst of conflicts with the Regent Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho and the Chinese, was in 1710 named the “Second Ral pa can.” See ‘*Jigs med dbang po*, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa’i rnam thar*, 143.

46. Gung thang bstan pa’i sgron me, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa’i rnam thar*, 204 (Qianlong), 388 (Choné dpon po).

47. Gung thang bstan pa’i sgron me, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa’i rnam thar*, 122, 155.

48. Qianlong, and others, as above, were “protector,” Gung thang bstan pa’i sgron me, ‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa’i rnam thar*, 204; same titles, 195, 209.

49. See ‘*Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho*, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 109a2.

50. “Jamyang Zhepa” (‘*Jam dbyangs bzhad pa*) is itself a title, literally the “Smiling Mañjuśrī” given to the lineage of individuals recognized as rebirths of the first, who was given that name after his mystical vision of the bodhisattva

Mañjuśrī. Here, for simplicity, the individuals are referred to as First, Second, and so on, Jamyang Zhepas.

51. See *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Paris, II, 2b6–3a4.

52. Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century*, 9–12, 16–18. 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa was 57 in 1704. Lazang and Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho disagreed about whether or not the Fifth Dalai Lama had designated a reincarnation. They asked 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa who said it was unclear in one of the Fifth's notes on the *Legs bshad gser phreng* but it was implicitly stated; Sde srid was pleased with this response ('Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 110). Sde srid disagreed with Lazang, and wanted to rebel against him. 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa disagreed, and sided with Lazang (*rgyal po 'di rje rin po che'i byin gyis brlabs pa'i sprul pa zhig yin*, 'Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 115). Lazang attacked Sde srid from the north. In response the central Tibetan lamas prepared for battle on the side of Sde srid ('Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 117). From these events it appears that 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa was on the side of, or at least mediated on behalf of Lazang. Later, in Urga, Lazang's minister endorsed 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, who reciprocated ('Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 141). In 1707, when 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa was 60, Lazang installed Pad dkar 'dzin pa (1706) in the Potala, but the present text does not refer to him as Dalai Lama ('Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 125). On arrival in Amdo in 1709, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa had his first meeting (in Amdo) with Erdeni Jinong, his son Don grub dbang rgyal and the local lord (*dpon po*) Rnam rgyal tshe brtan; together the hosts presented a gift of 300 horses ('Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 146).

53. Who remained loyal to Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho (Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century*, 18, 21).

54. Finally, the Kokenuur Mongols, with Chinese support, invaded central Tibet in 1717, and in 1719 the Seventh Dalai Lama was recognized, and enthroned the next year, in 1720.

55. See Yon tan rgya mtsho, "Dge ldan chos 'byung gser gyi mchod sdong 'bar ba" (unpublished manuscript, Paris, 1994), 677. For a brief summary of 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa and his major writings see Nor brang o rgyan, "Bod kyi grags can rtsom pa po ngo sprod: 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa," *Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal* 4 (1995): 46–48; see also Yon tan rgya mtsho, *Chos sde chen po bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, 12–43.

56. In Mongolian "Jinong" means "Prince" (*qin wang* in Chinese) but in Tibetan this person and his descendants are known as the "Mongol King" (*sog po rgyal po*).

57. There were several other primary Mongol and Tibetan donors, including eighteen from Rong bo in Qinghai. *Kun mkhyen chen po de nyid la rang bstan gyi byin bdag thun mong ma yin pa o rod jun gar gyi phyogs nas rgyal po jo rug thu hung tha'i ji. . . gzhan yang rong tsho chen bco brgyad kyi mi chen drag shos du mas . . .*, Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil gyi gdan rabs lha'i rnga chen* (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, 1987), 137–138. There is a detailed genealogy of the prominent Mongols in the Kokenuur region (including the early eighteenth century) in Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi*

lo rgyus, 536–538. Note Dbal mang's inclusion of data from a letter that he had access to on 536.4 ff.

58. See the mention of the Mongol Prince and Namgyel Drölma in Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil gyi gdan rabs lha'i rnga chen*, 355–356; see Borjigidai, "Hoshuud Polity," 163.

59. See Luciano Petech, "Notes on Tibetan History of the 18th Century," *T'oung Pao* 52.4.5 (1966), 282. See the summary of Mongol power in this region in Xiahe Xianzhi-1970, 81–85.

60. Using Jesuit maps compiled 1714–1717, Petech, "Notes on Tibetan History of the 18th Century," 285n6.

61. See Sperling, "Tibet's Foreign Relations," for the use of the title *cagan*.

62. See Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil gyi gdan rabs lha'i rnga chen*, 138–140. For information about the Mongol Prince, see Ricard, Wilkinson, and Abrams, *The Life of Shabkar*, xxi–xxiii, 565–568.

63. See the brief mention of Erdeni Jinong in Borjigidai, "Hoshuud Polity," 192 ff.

64. See Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil gyi gdan rabs lha'i rnga chen*, 138.

65. See Zhou Ta and Chen Xiaoqiang, *De er long si yu li bei sai cang huo fo* (*Gter lung dgon pa dang bse tshang sprul sku rim byon*) (Beijing: China Tibetan Studies Publishing Company, 1994), 108.

66. See Lhag pa tshe ring & Ngag dbang chos grags, *Gsung 'bum dkar chag* (*Zhwa ser bstan pa'i sgron me rje tsong kha pa chen pos gtsos skyes chen dam pa rim byung gi gsung 'bum dkar chag phyogs gcig tu bsgrigs pa'i dri med zla shel gtsang ma'i me long*) (Lhasa: Tibet People's Publishing House, 1990), 304–305. See the extended description of his life, with a focus on his religious studies in Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil gyi gdan rabs lha'i rnga chen*, 283–309; references to the representatives cited on 293 and 298.

67. See Yon tan rgya mtsho, *Chos sde chen po bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, 128–130.

68. See Yon tan rgya mtsho gives the First Gungtang's dates as 1665–1725, but all others give 1648–1724. See Yon tan rgya mtsho, *Chos sde chen po bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, 136.

69. See Dkon mchog bsam gtan & Dam chos, "Bla brang dgon pa'i gser khri rnam bzhi'i rnam thar nyung bsdu," *Bod ljongs zhib 'jug* 1 (1992): 171.

70. See Thur ma tshang, *Bla brang dgon pa dga' ldan bshad sgrub dar rgyas bkra shis g.yas su 'khyil ba'i gling gi lo rgyus mdor bsdu* (Lanzhou: Xiahe County Literary and Historical Resources Committee 2, Undated), 81–82.

71. See Dkon mchog bsam gtan & Dam chos, "Bla brang dgon pa'i gser khri rnam bzhi'i rnam thar nyung bsdu," 170.

72. These data are detailed in Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, *Dpal ldan rig pa 'dzin pa'i 'khor los bsgyur ba chen po sde khri rin po che blo bzang don grub pa'i zhal snga nas kyi rnam bar* [sic.] *thar pa gsang chen chos kyis bzhugs pa'i rol mo*, in *Gung thang gsung 'bum* (Labrang edition, ca), fol. 1–18. Note that this title indicates that this biography was given orally by the master Sde khri (1673–1746), and was obviously written by Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me (1762–1823), who also obviously was born after the death of Sde khri and could not possibly have heard this text from the mouth of (*zhal snga nas*) Sde khri. This signals that the Tibetan tradition

of oral textual transmission was operable here, marked by the particle *kyi* in the title of the work. Gung thang likely wrote down the text that was delivered orally by Sde khri to one or many of his disciples.

73. See Yon tan rgya mtsho, *Chos sde chen po bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, 121–220; see the *si da sai chi* (the “four great lineages”), etc. in Dan Qu, *Labulengsi jianshi* (Lanzhou: Gansu People’s Publishing House, 1994), 85–128; see Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil gyi gdan rabs lha'i rnga chen*.

74. An extended analysis of the Rgya nag pa lamas is in Nietupski, “The ‘Reverend Chinese’ (Rgya-nag-pa tshang),” 181–213.

75. Interviews; the name Gyanakpa and the practice continue to the present day. See the photo of a present-day Gyanakpa in Klu chu, Rgya nag pa Yon tan rgya mtsho, on the inside back cover of *Zla ser* 51.3–4 (1997).

76. Note that Klu 'bum rin chen rgya mtsho was the father of Blo bzang thub bstan 'jigs med rgya mtsho, the first Throne Holder of nearby Shis tshang Monastery, which was the seat of the Labrang Detri lamas. Klu 'bum was also the homeland of the First Gyanakpa. See Cha ris skal bzang thogs med, *Chos sde chen po shis tshang dgon gsar gyi gdan rabs dkar chag* (Lanzhou: Gansu People’s Publishing House, 1995), 209.

77. For details see Sangs rgyas rin chen, “Lā mo bde chen dgon pa'i sku phyag gser khri rin po che'i sku 'phreng rim byon gyi lo rgyus mdo bsdus ngo sprod,” *Mdo smad zhib 'jug* 7.1 (1999): 109–110.

78. For a summary of the history of this important monastery, see Yon tan rgya mtsho, “Le monastere de La-mo bde-chen dans l’Amdo,” in *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies 2, Fagernes 1992*, ed. Per Kvaerne (Oslo: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994), 981–989.

79. See Sangs rgyas rin chen, “Lā mo bde chen dgon pa'i lo rgyus,” 108–118.

80. The relationship between this First Rgya nag pa and 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa is well-documented. See 'Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 22, 42, 47, 61, 116, 126, 168, etc.

81. [In] “1686, the 44th made an agreement (*chings mdzad*) between the Khalka and O rod. In 1687, the 44th met the Chinese Emperor.” *The Collected Works (Gsung-'bum) of Cha-har Dge bshes Blo-bzang-tshul-khrims: Reproduced from a set of xylographic prints from the Peking blocks*, ed. Chatring Jansar Tenzin, VIII (New Delhi, 1972), 51–52. This episode is summarized in detail in Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus*, 616–618. Dbal mang gives precise dates and identifies the key individuals, but casts the episode in the context of Lazang’s negotiations with the Chinese, and does not include any information about Amdo, Blo gros rgya mtsho’s Amdo home and eventual monastic estate, Labrang’s Rgya nag pa tshang.

82. See also Chahar dge bshes, *The Collected Works*, 51–52 (relying on a Rnam thar written by Rgyal dbang mchog) and Dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas. See *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Paris, II, 89a1 ff.

83. The oral tradition at Labrang Monastery cites Rgya nag pa *bla mas* at Zam tsha Monastery and at Lha mo Monastery, two of Labrang’s affiliated monasteries. Moreover, there is at present a young reborn Rgya nag pa *bla ma* at Labrang, from the Kālacakra lineage of Yon tan rgya mtsho. Interviews.

84. See Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil gyi gdan rabs lha'i rnga chen*, 530–531. Referred to as Rgya nag pa in *Deb ther rgya mtsho*–Paris, III, 186a7.

85. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 240 ff.

86. See *Deb ther rgya mtsho*–Lanzhou, 366.

87. See Zhou Ta and Chen Xiaoqiang, *De er long si*, 47.

88. See Zhou Ta and Chen Xiaoqiang, *De er long si*, 48. Sde khri's support for Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po is confirmed by their close relationship in later years, documented in Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 50, 57, 125.

89. See Zhou Ta and Chen Xiaoqiang, *De er long si*, 44–47, 49–50.

90. See Zhou Ta and Chen Xiaoqiang, *De er long si*, 50–52.

91. Gter lung was founded by the Third Bse tshang, who was recognized by Lhasa in 1843, and titled in Beijing in 1871. The monastery's fortunes worsened with the rise of local Muslim power in 1862–1873. The Third Bse tshang eventually fled to Mongolia, where he died in 1879. The Fourth Bse tshang died at age nine, and the Fifth was plagued by troubles with Ma Qi, especially in 1919, when the temple was looted and burned, and many people killed. The Fifth Bse Tshang had to flee, and died at age 47 in 1936. The Sixth was born in 1939. See Zhou Ta and Chen Xiaoqiang, *De er long si*, 64–67, ff. See Xiahe Xianzhi-1970, 79.

92. See Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century*, 101n.1–5; Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus*, 554.1; Rgya zhabs drung tshang skal bzang dkon mchog rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje 'phreng lnga'i rnam par thar ba mdor bsdus (Nanjing), 15.

93. For some examples of his connections to Dgon lung, see Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 41, 67–68, 149, 170–171, 216, 221, etc.; see the poem by Lcang skya to 'Jam dbyangs on 218–220; see his authentication of Lcang skya's rebirth on 384.

94. Huiwu Chanshi Ganden Tripa Hutuktu, in Ko zhul grags pa 'byung gnas and Rgyal ba blo bzang mkhas grub, *Gangs can mkhas grub rim byon ming mdzod* (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, 1992), 1163–1164. This and the following facts should not be confused with data in *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, 3278, where it says that Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma was born in 1762 (*chu rta*, 13th *rab byung*): *khri sprul blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma 'khrungs*. In regard to the Gyanakpas, Chahar dge bshes clearly wrote "1689, in the twelfth cycle" (*rab byung bcu gnyis po . . . sa mo sprul*) (Chatring, *The Collected Works*, 52). There is also some confusion in the *Ming mdzod* (1163) where Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma is not identified as the incarnation of the 1st Rgya nag pa and where it is also recorded that he died in 1772 (*chu pho 'brug*), not in 1762 (*chu rta*). It nonetheless seems clear that this is the 2nd Rgya nag pa. These persons should also not be confused with Stag lung blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma, 1782–1836; see Yon tan rgya mtsho, *Chos sde chen po bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, 167 and *Deb ther rgya mtsho*–Paris, II, 165b4.

95. See *Deb ther rgya mtsho*–Paris, II, 91a7 ff. At this point in the narrative of the *Deb ther rgya mtsho*, there is the story of Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma's request to the First and then the Second 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa for the Mitra initiation, as prophecied, fol. 91b1. This story is repeated in Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron

me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 140–141. Except where noted the information on the Rgya nag pa lineage here is taken from *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Paris, II, 89a1 ff.

96. See Chatring, *The Collected Works*, 52.

97. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 140–141. See the account in Sangs rgyas rin chen, "Lā mo bde chen dgon pa'i lo rgyus," 111–112.

98. These well known data are summarized clearly in Dkon mchog chos 'phel, "Rma lho'i sog yul gyi lo rgyus," 122–123.

99. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 192–197.

100. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 189–190.

101. For examples see 'Jigs med dbang po, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rnam thar, 121, 194, 204, 207, 209, 407, etc.; Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 137, 192, 197, 261–262, 290–291, 312–313, 431–432; see Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 40–48, 81, etc.

102. See *Labuleng she zhi ju gu wu diaocha biao* (A Local Government Record of Ancient Donations to Labrang Monastery); see Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 249 ff. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 431–432. For Qianlong's giving a title (*nominhan*) and endorsements, see Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 137.

103. See explicit affirmations of Qing dominance in Elliot Sperling, "Awe and Submission: A Tibetan Aristocrat at the Court of Qianlong," *International History Review* 20.2 (June 1998).

104. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 137–138, 261–262, 284, 312.

105. See Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil gyi gdan rabs lha'i rnga chen*, 350; see the entire section, 350–375.

106. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 72–73; he also visited later in ca. 1759, see *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Paris, III, 214a1.

107. For examples, including mention of Chinese lords (*dpon po*) see Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 158, 162, during his trip to Wutaishan, 189–190, 283–284.

108. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 243, 260–262, 285–286; Linxia, 263; stonemasons and artists from China, 275–276, from Chengdu, 407, 431–432; a Chinese sponsor of a thangka painting of White Tara, 278; at some specific regional Chinese temples, 395; etc. Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 72–73; Wang Hengtong & Hua Pingning, *Bing ling si shi ku shangsi* (*The Bingling Grottoes Upper Monastery*) (Chongqing, Sichuan: Chongqing Publishing House, 2001), 16–17; Interviews. In 1928, there were some fifty Han Chinese monks at Labrang Monastery, see Xiahe Xianzhi-1970, 98; see Nietupski, "The 'Reverend Chinese' (Rgya-nag-pa tshang)."

109. See Shar gdong blo bzang bshad sgrub rgya mtsho, *Bya khyung a ra pa tsa'i sgrub khang gi dkar chag 'jam dbyangs mchod pa'i me tog* (Xining: Qinghai People's Publishing House, 1989).

110. See Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Tsha gan be shing dgon pa'i gdan rabs lo rgyus*. For the fourth Mongol Prince, Ngawang Dargyel (*ngags dbang dar rgyas*), see Ricard, Wilkinson, and Abrams, *The Life of Shabkar*, 565–568.

111. See Thur ma tshang, *Bla brang dgon pa'i lo rgyus mdor bsdus*, 95. Zha Zha notes that the stupa was expanded in 1857 by the Fourth Gungtang lama, see Bkra bkra (Zha Zha), “Ching rgyal rabs mjug tu bla brang sa khul dang de'i nye 'khor gyi don chen gnad bsdus,” *Nub byang mi rigs slob chen rig gzhung deb* 2 (1993): 19.

112. For a brief biography, including a chronological list of his publications, see Lobsang Dargyay, *Gung thang dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me'i rnam thar mdor bsdus*, *A Concise Biography of Gung Thang Dkon Mchog Bstan Pa'i Sgron Me* (Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 1981).

113. At age thirty-seven Gungtang wrote his seventy-one folio commentary on Tsongkhapa's study of Abhidharma in 1798, at Gönlung (*dgon lung*) Monastery, the important center of scholarship and contact point between the Manchu court and the Tibetan authorities. Thubten J. Norbu gives a brief biography and mentions that the Third Gungtang was given novice ordination by the Second Jamyang Zhepa; see T.J. Norbu, “Gungthang pa's Text in Colloquial Amdowa,” in *Contributions on Tibetan Language, History and Culture: Proceedings of the Csoma De Körös Symposium held at Velm-Vienna, Austria, 13–19 September 1981*, Vol. I, ed. Ernst Steinkellner & Helmut Tauscher (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995), 222.

114. Gungtang's erudition is recognized by Western scholars. See David Seyffort Ruegg, *La Théorie du Tathāgatagarbha et du Gotra* (Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1969), esp. 393–409.

115. See the comments on Gung thang's holding the thrones of both Dgon lung and Labrang, in Dga' blo bzang dpal ldan, “Khri chen gung thang sku 'phreng bzhi pa rje dkon mchog bstan pa'i rgya mtsho'i rnam thar rags bsdus” [Part I], *Zla zer* 27.1 (1991): 71–72. See also the comment that in those days there were strong Rnying ma, Jo nang and Bön communities in this region, and that the Gung thang taught them all, 72–73.

116. See Yon tan rgya mtsho, *Chos sde chen po bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, 138.

117. See Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me'i rnam thar* (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, 1989); Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil gyi gdan rabs lha'i rnga chen*, 460–483; see Nor brang o rgyan, “Thu'u bkwan blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me,” *Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal* 87.1 (1995): 73–76; see the website of the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center, <http://tbrc.org>.

118. See Dga' blo bzang dpal ldan, “Khri chen gung thang sku 'phreng bzhi pa rje dkon mchog bstan pa'i rgya mtsho'i rnam thar rags bsdus [Part I],” 75–76.

119. See Dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rgya bod hor sog gyi lo rgyus*, 647, includes the necessity for a understanding of the emptiness of all things, and the importance of regarding one's *bla ma* as the Buddha, *chos thams cad bden med du ma rtogs par stong nyid rtogs zer pa rdzun yin/ chos byed pa la gzhi dad pa gal chel de la bla ma sangs rgyas su mthong*.

120. See Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century*, 70–71, 76. See Herman, “National Integration and Regional Hegemony,” 119–134. See Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, 286–290.

121. See especially Elliot, *The Manchu Way*, 2–35, 39–88. See also Evelyn Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1979), 1–53; see also Crossley, *The Manchus*, 122–130. On the multi-ethnic Manchu banenrs, see Pamela Kyle Crossley, “Manzhou yuanliu kao and the Formalization of the Manchu Heritage,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 46.4 (November 1987), 779. See Gray Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China* (New York: Columbia, 2004). See the account of Kangxi and his relationship to Tibetan and Mongol authorities, in Ishihama, “The conceptual framework of dGa'-ldan's war,” 157–164.

122. See Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 255, 300. See the descriptions of the policy, including by Qianlong, in Zhao Zhizhong, *Qing wangchao yu xizang*, 32–37.

123. See Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 300. For an account of the the titles conferred by different emperors, see W.W. Rockhill, *The Dalai Lamas of Lhasa and Their Relations with the Manchu Emperors of China 1644–1908* (New Delhi: Indraprastha Press, 1998).

124. For the Qing dealing with the British, and reflections on the nature of Qing diplomacy, see Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar*.

125. The text of the Mongolian speech translated into Tibetan is in Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 50.

126. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 48–49; the coincidence of the Tibetan and Qing selection is described on 50–51.

127. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 43.

128. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 45–46.

129. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 46.

130. In the decades after the Qing policy, prominent Labrang reborn *bla mas* were identified according to the Tibetan religious tradition, for examples, in the 1830 case of Gung thang dkon mchog bstan pa'i rgya mtsho (1824–1858), by the Third 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 195–196. In ca. 1853 the Third 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa identified the rebirth of Kirti Rinpoché, on the Third's death, his rebirth, though contested, was identified by traditional methods without inclusion of the “Golden Urn” or other Qing policies. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 299–302; on the Fourth 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, see 369–377; the Third predicted his own rebirth, 298.

131. Associated Tibetan religious procedures were used immediately after the selection process, see above Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 51. For a succinct discussion of the issues of worldview, genuine religious belief and political polity see Hevia, “Rulership and Tibetan Buddhism,” 296–299.

132. The controversies over the selection are detailed in Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar*, 54; the entire account is detailed in 41–59. The author of this biography was a disciple of the Third 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, who lived from 1836 to 1889. He wrote the text beginning in

1859, when he was twenty-three years old, four years after his teacher's death. Gung Thang bstan pa'i sgron me included mention of the controversy over this selection in his biography of the Second 'Jam dbyang bzhad pa, written in 1800, when he was thirty-eight years old. See Gung thang bstan pa'i sgron me, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gnyis pa'i rnam thar, 490–491.

133. See Thur ma tshang, *Bla brang dgon pa'i lo rgyus mdor bsdus*, 20–21.

134. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 139, 164 (a new temple in A mchog), 189 (new temple in Mdzod dge), 191.

135. Noted in ca. 1814, in Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 163, "rgya nag rgyal po'i gdan sar 'khrugs long byung ba."

136. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 156, "lha sde mi sde so so mgo dpon dmag dpung bcas."

137. See the detailed study of the Gyanakpas in Nietupski, "The 'Reverend Chinese' (Rgya-nag-pa tshang)."

138. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 182.

139. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 189, 195–196.

140. See Ma Wuji, *Gansu xiahe zangmin diaocha ji*, 31.

141. Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 167–170.

142. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 240, 244, 248.

143. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 248.

144. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 249–250. For a brief discussion of conflict between Labrang and Hezuou, see Gong Jinghan, *Xunhua ting zhi* (1948), 13.

145. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 259–260; see Joseph F. Rock, *The Amnye Ma-chhen Range and Adjacent Regions: A Monographic Study* (Rome: Is.M.E.O., 1956).

146. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 282.

147. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 240–241, 246–258.

148. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 304–306.

149. The Dzöge Nyinma and other militias came to defend Labrang, see Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 258–259.

150. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 284.

151. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 246–247.

152. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 264.

153. The selection of Detri was contested by a Degé and an Arig candidate. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa'i rnam thar, 371

ff. For a brief account of the Four Golden Throne Holders (*gser khri rnam bzhi*), see Dkon mchog bsam gtan & Dam chos, “Bla brang dgon pa’i gser khri rnam bzhi’i rnam thar nyung bsdu,” *Bod ljongs zhib ’jug* 1 (1992): 169–176.

154. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa’i rnam thar*, 264, 269, especially 271.

155. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa’i rnam thar*, 278.

156. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa’i rnam thar*, 374.

157. For a concise summary of the Third Sde khri and the founding of Shis tshang, see Cha ris skal bzang thogs med, “Shis tshang dgon gsar gyi lo rgyus mdor bsdu,” *Zla Zer (Moonshine)* 54 (March–April 1994): 68–75; see also Gung thang bstan pa’i sgron me, *Sde khri rin po che kyi rnam thar*; see also Cha ris skal bzang thogs med, *Chos sde chen po shis tshang dgon gsar gyi gdan rabs dkar chag*; also see Cha ris skal bzang thogs med, “Shis tshang dgon gsar dga’ ldan bshad sgrub chos ’khor gling gi lo rgyus mdor bsdu bkra shis chos dung bzhad pa’i rang sgra,” *Zla ser* 3–4 (1997): 68–75.

158. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa’i rnam thar*, 280.

159. See Ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho, *Jam dbyangs bzhad pa gsum pa’i rnam thar*, 298.

160. See Thur ma tshang, *Bla brang dgon pa’i lo rgyus mdor bsdu*, 100.

161. See Dga’ blo bzang dpal ldan, “Khri chen gung thang sku ’phreng bzhi pa rje dkon mchog bstan pa’i rgya mtsho’i rnam thar rags bsdu [Part I],” 69–70. For his writings see 70–71.

162. Interview, Hortsang Jikmé, 2005.

163. See ’Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 9a4–6.

164. For rain-making, see fol. 16a4, 208b3–209a6; for Milarepa see fol. 142a1–2, in ’Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1. Rain-making was a skill practiced by several local ngakpas and Gelukpa lamas.

165. See the relatively detailed account of these disputes in ’Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 2, fol. 186a–187a.

166. See ’Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 302a2–4; for internal conflicts, consults and resolutions see fols. 23a5, 23b3, 31b3, 33b6, 34a4, 68b5 ff, 82b1, 103a1, 123b2–6, 164a1–6, 178b1–3, 272a1, 305a5, 314a1 ff, etc.

167. The Fourth was titled *jasagh* by the emperor in 1881. ’Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 64b2.

168. See the example of the Fourth ’Jam dbyangs bzhad pa’s involvements in regional politics in ’Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 2, fol. 94b1–95a. See the account of the meeting between the Fourth and the Chinese military delegation, ’Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 2, fol. 131b5–132a6; for further contacts with Beijing, see Vol. 1, fols. 166b5–167a3. Vol. 2, ca. 1916, fol. 191b–192a.

169. See 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fols. 74b2, 79b4, gifts from 104a2–3, 119a5, 262a4, gift from 262b5. For information on the Russian presence in the region see Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

170. For mention of contacts and negotiations with people from Litang, see 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 2, fol. 47b6, 50b2, 82b6, 64b4, etc. On fol. 82b6 the local emissary was instructed to go to Litang to ask for assistance against attacks by the Chinese army (*rgya dmag*); see Sangs rgyas rin chen, "Lā mo bde chen dgon pa'i lo rgyus," 114–116.

171. See A mang ban zhi da, *Labuleng si zhi*, 519. This text renders the third Rgya nag pa in this lineage Klong rdol Yon tan rgya mtsho, but Zha Zha in Zha Zha, *Labuleng si huo fo shi xi* (Lanzhou: Gansu Minorities' Publishing House, 2000), 417–418 the author gives a brief biographical sketch of the Third Rgya nag pa in this lineage, identifying him as Blo bzang Klong rdol chos gyi nyi ma (1859–1934).

172. See 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 2, fol. 88a2. The Fourth implemented the two-week "firewood gathering" at Labrang, when monks were exempted from the monastic routine and instead went to the mountains to collect firewood (*shing slong*). The tradition of the two-week break has persisted even though the available supply of firewood has decreased, and wood gathering stopped.

173. See the comment about the architectural borrowing from Rnam rgyal Monastery in Lhasa and remarks about Chinese borrowing into specific chapels at Labrang. 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 2, fol. 141a; see notes about sponsoring specific statues and a new roof on a *gzims khang*, fol. 154b–155a.

174. See the brief composition written in longhand (*sug bris*) by the Fourth in 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 2, fol. 70a–70b.

175. See above and 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 2, fol. 258a–258b, for the Fourth's work with the Chinese government after some Tibetans were killed by some Chinese soldiers.

176. See Yangdon Dhondup and Hildegard Diemberger, "Tashi Tsering: The Last Mongol Queen of 'Sogpo' (Henan)," *Inner Asia* 4 (2002): 205–207; see the brief note in Tshe ring don grub, *Rma lho sog rdzong gi rig gnas lo rgyus dpyad yig*, 155; see the more detailed account in *Henan xianzhi* 2, ed. Henan menggu zizhixian fangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Lanzhou: Gansu minzu chubanshe, 1996), 1021.

177. See 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 1, fol. 31b3–33a2.

178. See Dga' blo bzang dpal ldan, "Khri chen gung thang sku 'phreng lnga pa rje 'jam dbyangs bstan pa'i nyi ma'i rnam thar mdor bsdus legs byas mchod pa'i me tog" [Part 1], *Zla zer* 28.2 (1989): 70–71.

179. See Dga' blo bzang dpal ldan, "Khri chen gung thang sku 'phreng lnga pa rje 'jam dbyangs bstan pa'i nyi ma'i rnam thar mdor bsdus legs byas mchod pa'i me tog" [Part 2], *Zla zer* 29.3 (1989): 61–62.

180. Dga' blo bzang dpal ldan, "Khri chen gung thang sku 'phreng lnga pa rje 'jam dbyangs bstan pa'i nyi ma'i rnam thar mdor bsdus legs byas mchod pa'i me tog" [Part 2], 66–67. One work mentioned here is in praise of a local deity in Dngul Rwa, titled *Dngul rwa'i gser legs*.

181. See Zha Zha, *Labulengsi huofu shi xi*, 433.

182. See Kha stod blo bzang chos 'dzin, "Gung thang bstan pa'i dbang phyug mchog gi rnam thar mdor bsdus," *Zla zer* 63–64.1–2 (2000): 42–48. For the text of the Sixth Gungtang's consecration speech after the restoration of the Gtsos/Hezuo Dgu thog Temple, see Skal bzang blo gsal, "Gung thang tshang gi gtsos dgu thog rab gnas mdzad sgo'i gsung bshad," *Zla zer* 63–64.1–2 (2000): 40–41.

183. See Fabienne Jagou, *Le 9e Panchen Lama (1883–1937): Enjeu des Relations Sino-Tibetaïnes* (Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 2004).

184. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 239.

185. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 239.

186. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi jiamuyang*, 2 ff; Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 5 ff. Yon tan rgya mtsho and other sources do not mention Chen Hailing, but it is plausible that there would be a Chinese delegation.

187. See Bla kho 'jigs med 'phrin las rgya mtsho was from Lungkartang; see *Deb ther rgya mtsho*-Lanzhou, 505.

188. See Georges Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping*.

189. Joseph Rock met the Fifth, his family and escorts in 1926 at Brag dkar Monastery; see the photo of the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa at age ten, in Rock, *The Amnye Ma-chhen Range*, Plate XII.

190. Rev. M.G. Griebenow, "Traveling With a God of Tibet," *The Alliance Weekly* (14 May 1938), 312–314.

191. Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 248–249.

192. For a brief but useful description of the Yiktsang see Labrang Jikmé Gyatso, *Tales of Labrang Tashi Khyil*, 75–76.

193. See Labrang Jikmé Gyatso, *Tales of Labrang Tashi Khyil*, 73–74.

194. See Sheng Jingxin, "Gansu zangqu jixing," in *Gansu wenshi ziliao xuanji*, ed. Meng Guofang (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, 1989): 13. Sheng Jingxin was the Nationalist Party official in Labrang in 1945, and worked with the newspaper and education efforts.

195. See Rin chen rgyal po & Reb gong rdo rje thar. "Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil dang rong bo dgon chen gnyis nas dar ba'i bod kyi 'Rnam thar' zlos gar gyi byung ba brjod pa," *Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig* 2 (1995): 94–102.

196. For the nunnery associated with the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa, see Dbang rgyal, "Dpon tshang ngo'i jo mo'i sgar," *Gan lho'i bod brgyud nang bstan dgon sde so so'i lo rgyus mdor bsdus (bar cha)*, ed. Gannan zangzu zizhizhou weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao weiyuan hui, *Gannan wenshi ziliao* 10 (1993): 60–70; for the other nunnery at Labrang started by the Second Jamyang Zhepa, see Dbang rgyal, "Mtha' ba gong ma'i jo mo'i sgar," *Gan lho'i bod brgyud nang bstan dgon sde so so'i lo rgyus mdor bsdus (bar cha)*, ed. Gannan zangzu zizhizhou weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao weiyuan hui, *Gannan wenshi ziliao* 10 (1993): 46.

197. See the mention of this temple in Hansen, *Frontier People*, 90–91.

198. According to Sheng Jingxin, "Gansu zangqu jixing," 24. See also the mention of a periodical published at Labrang in Yu Cang, "<Xiahe Bao> chuangkan qianhou," *Xiahe Wenshi Ziliao* 1 (1993): 72–79. I have not seen copies of these publications.

199. See Zhai Yaozhong, "Xiahe xian gonglu fazhan gaikuang," *Xiahe Wenshi Ziliao* 1 (1993): 132–159.

Chapter 5

Twentieth-Century Labrang

This chapter focuses on Labrang's interactions with regional Mongols, Muslims, and Chinese in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and ends in 1958, when the community's social, political, religious and economic structures were dismantled. Prior to the founding of Xiahe County, the Chinese authorities understood that Labrang was under the jurisdiction of Xunhua County, which in the early decades of the twentieth century was largely under the control of Xining. Before the 1928 founding of Qinghai Province, both places were in Gansu Province, then a much larger territory. In 1927 Xiahe County was incorporated in a political strategy that in Chinese eyes put Xiahe/Labrang under the jurisdiction of Lanzhou. These events are important for a number of reasons. First, they show that the times were chaotic and actual control was in dispute. Secondly, borderlands alliances were fluid and could be re-negotiated; there was very little in the way of irreversible commitments. This chapter describes the continuity of the Labrang institution and the gradual re-definitions of regional sovereignties.

The following account was written by a Christian missionary in the 1930s. Though biased, it is an authentic description of Labrang in the early twentieth century, with its developed market and its active community of regional peoples.

Down from the grasslands riding behind slowly-moving oxen laden with wool, felts, skins, pelts, leather ropes, butter, and other products such as a pastoral people produce, come the nomads to the flourishing and wealthy center of Labrang, seat of Northeast Tibet's most influential monastery. Wearing fox fur or lambskin hats, heavy sheepskin coats girded tightly about

the hips with red silk girdles, leather breeches and felt-lined leather boots, they are perhaps the very essence of simplicity. In their girdles they carry the crude, but deadly swords, and on their backs are slung modern rifles or matchlocks; or if they are too poor to buy these, then they carry the twelve to eighteen foot spears which at close range can be so destructive. They have postponed some raiding expeditions in order to visit the sedentary district to trade their products for barley, flour, rice, cloth, cooking utensils, and the many attractive goods offered for sale at the market. Five miles above the monastery of Labrang is the limit of agriculture, and beyond, the warring and robber tribes of the hinterland pitch their camps of black, sprawling tents. To follow the valley in which Labrang is located downstream one passes through families of sedentary Tibetans until he comes out into the wider valley which forms the backbone of the thriving and populous district of Hezhou. By this route come Muslims and Chinese to exploit some of the trade of Northeast Tibet. Bringing silks, gold-brocaded satins, cotton cloth, cotton and silk thread, cooking utensils, knives, and a hundred and one other commodities, they settle in the trading village adjacent to the monastery, or in the monastery itself, and either barter for or buy outright the nomads' products. These simple folks of the grassy vales and craggy peaks fall an easy prey to the scheming and avaricious sons of Islam and Han. At the market, which is held daily in an open space before the monastery, the butter besmeared nomad, tanned to a dark brown, rubs shoulders with his lighter-skinned agrarian brother. Here in the crowd saunter the monks clad in skirts and scarfs of various shades of red and purple. The merchants spread out their merchandise on low tables and shelves, and each one of them plies his trade in a space of ground no bigger than two square yards. All business is carried on by talking price, that is, the seller asks more than he really wants, and the buyer offers less than he cares to give. By gradually coming down in price and adding to the original offer, the two parties arrive at a sum agreeable to both of them, and the transaction is done, although the merchant will declare he has sold below cost, and the buyer bemoans his stupidity for giving too much. In this busy market one rubs shoulders with Russians, Kashmiri, Buriats, Mongolians, Ladakhi, Chinese from most of the provinces north of the Yangtze, a motley crowd of Muslims and Tibetans from sedentary and pastoral districts scattered over Tibet.¹

The Tibetans,' Mongols,' Muslims,' and Chinese perceptions of themselves and of their place in the Labrang region shifted in this period. The Tibetans led by the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa, his father and brothers sought to modernize as a strategy for survival. The Mongols sought to promote their own ends, in part by supporting the efforts of the Xining Muslims, and eventually the Labrang Tibetans.

Muslim leaders in the Xining region, led by the Ma family, saw the need to incorporate the Labrang territories into what they perceived as a more civilized state, validated by Hui Muslim appeals to modernity and identification with classical Chinese culture, and motivated by the possibility

of establishing a lasting Muslim autonomy. Chinese warlords, especially Feng Yuxiang,² the Nationalists, and soon the Communists sought to take control of the Labrang Sino-Tibetan borderland, in accord with their respective visions.³ The rise and fall of alliances and different groups' claims to authority are documented, but the reality is that regional power changed very frequently. Moreover, a power shift in one place did not always mean a shift everywhere, even when in very close proximity.

THE TIBETANS AND THE LABRANG "NEXUS OF POWER"

William Coleman has written that in the Litang region of Khams, located in modern Sichuan, west of Chengdu city, four local interest groups—monastic officials, lay chieftains, Chinese officials, and merchants—functioned together in a "cultural nexus of power," which was targeted by aggressive late Qing military incursions.⁴ Meanwhile, the fall of the Qing Dynasty and beginning of the "warlord" period in 1911 only exacerbated conditions in Gansu.⁵ Yuan Shi Kai, president of the new republic from 1912 until his death in 1916, did not succeed in the development of a unified Chinese nation. The power of provincial military powers increased—there were hundreds of warlords—while that of the central government eroded.⁶ The Sino-Tibetan borderlands were unstable.

At Labrang, the situation was exacerbated by conflicts with the Muslims and Mongols. The key figures in post-Qing Labrang were the patriarch Gönpö Döndrup and his sons, most notably the lama Fifth Jamyang Zhepa,⁷ the commander Apa Alo (1903–1997), the Personal Attaché Belmangtsang and the Treasurer Kyenrab Döndrup. Gönpö Döndrup, the father of these four, was from Litang in Sichuan, and like at Labrang, was involved in Litang's politics, and in what Coleman described as a "cultural nexus of power." In Gansu, the involvement of Gönpö Döndrup and his son Apa Alo with the Chinese was not unprecedented; when they appealed to the Chinese in Lanzhou and Nanjing in 1924 it had only been twelve years since Gönpö Döndrup's encounters with the Sichuan authorities. They developed a "cultural nexus of power" at Labrang.

The family was originally from Tsema village, Lihua County in Xikang, modern day Litang County in Ganze Tibetan Autonomous Region, Sichuan Province. The region was primarily populated by Tibetans, and there was a Tibetan Buddhist monastery in their village.⁸ The patriarch, Gönpö Döndrup, worked as a minor official in the local Chinese bureaucracy under the Qing Dynasty (a "manager" for the Second [military] Official, the *Er Ying Guan*).⁹ At the end of the Qing Guangzhu reign period (1875–1908) the Chinese amban Feng Chuan decided to reform the Xikang Tibetans. The Tibetans revolted and murdered Feng Chuan in the 31st

year of the Guangzhu reign period, 1906, in Batang.¹⁰ Zhao Erfeng (then governor of Sichuan) was sent by the Chinese to put down the Tibetan rebellion. In 1906 Zhao passed Litang en route and gave Gönpo Döndrup an official title, Eighth Level Official (Ba Pin Guan).¹¹ In 1912 Zhao was killed, but all of the local officials appointed in the Qing Dynasty were retained in office by the Nationalists. Gönpo Döndrup became the “Mayor” or “Magistrate” (Baosheng/Quzhang) of the East Route (Dong Lu) in Litang. He administered Mo La and Mao Ye Districts.¹² In spite of the violence in these years the Qing and Chinese policies were for the most part failures; local peoples carried on with their lives, and native political and social structures functioned as usual.¹³

While Gönpo Döndrup was in service of the local Nationalists, and after Apa Alo attended a Chinese school located in a Tibetan Buddhist monastery (1910-1911), other local Litang Tibetans resisted the new regime, and murdered a regional Nationalist official. In retaliation, the Nationalist government sent Chen Pusan, who murdered a local Tibetan military leader, released imprisoned criminals, formed alliances with Tibetans, impounded weapons, occupied Xikang and in general caused chaos. As results of Chen Pusan’s invasion, Apa Alo’s school closed, his family’s possessions were seized, his home burned, and his family forced to escape and hide in the nearby high plains in Ge Ba County, where they stayed for two or three years (approx. 1912-1913),¹⁴ and thereafter in the region until 1916, when their young son and brother was recognized as a rebirth of the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa.

In both Tibetan and Chinese histories and in the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa’s biographies Gönpo Döndrup is described as a devoted father from a devout Buddhist family, a beloved family patriarch and an astute minor local diplomat. A Chinese source refers to him as a local leader, a *tu guan*.¹⁵ However, in interviews a number of people who lived near him and under his jurisdiction in Litang and in Labrang described him as a typical chieftain, a bold and aggressive leader, a highlands brigand (of horses and other property), and a person who did not hesitate to use lethal force against his enemies. Several oral accounts cite instances when he executed people, at least on one occasion against the wishes of the Labrang lamas. He was probably a combination of all of these.

THE MONGOLS

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the Mongol communities at Labrang and in Qinghai still provided revenues, but by this time they had little power. The leading local Mongol authorities of the day were the eighth Prince, Peljor Raptan (1887–1916), his wife Lumantso,

their son the ninth prince, Künga Peljor (1914–1940), and their daughter Tashi Tséring (ca. 1920–1966). Lumantso was the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa's niece,¹⁶ which was a force for bringing the Tibetans and Mongols closer together. This however did not prevent relations between Tibetans and Mongols from worsening in the following years, notably when Lumantso's uncle, the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa, died in 1916; she was left to rule the Mongols until her son Künga Peljor came of age.¹⁷

Later, in 1934 Künga Peljor, the ninth prince of the Mongols, allied himself with the anti-Communist Ma family against Apa Alo and other Labrang authorities.¹⁸ After his death in 1940 Apa Alo's son Amgon attempted to bridge the Mongol-Tibetan gap by marrying Tashi Tséring (1920?–1966), Künga Peljor's sister.¹⁹ Tashi Tséring's marriage to Amgon formed an alliance between Mongol royalty and the Labrang Tibetan "first family." With no male Mongol heirs, the Mongol Queen Lumantso endowed most of the much diminished Mongol properties at Labrang to the monastery and moved to Mongolia.

The eleven Mongol "arrows" or communities who lived in southeastern Qinghai stayed on as members of the Labrang community, as did a number of the Mongols who had established permanent residences immediately outside of the grounds of Labrang Monastery. Along with other privileged groups, they occupied a tax-free township or "neighborhood" —in their case called the Lord's Estate (*dpon tshang*)—and were acknowledged as such by Labrang Monastery. These arrangements are still visible in present-day Labrang, and in the case of southern Gansu and Qinghai, are sometimes a source of conflict. The modern-day conflicts are as before, over pasture and water rights, and the memory of Mongol authority at Labrang.

THE QINGHAI MUSLIMS AND LABRANG

While political and social conditions were chaotic to Labrang's south in Sichuan, they were at least as bad, if not much worse, in Labrang's north and northwest, in much closer Gansu and Qinghai. Muslim rebellions had spread throughout China. From 1862 to 1878 the entire Gansu and Qinghai region (if not most Muslim regions of China) were embroiled in bloody civil wars. Labrang was soon claimed by the Xining-based Hui Muslims, whose population had a long presence in the region, and whose Ma family was rapidly gaining power and local control. The Qing authorities were powerless to stem the tide of Muslim expansion. The mechanism of "inner frontier" diplomacy had entered the twentieth century.²⁰

In 1895, local Muslims were defeated by the Chinese in Xunhua and Hezhou (adjacent to modern Linxia, about one hundred kilometers from

Labrang), which further exacerbated already hostile feelings between the Muslims, Chinese and Tibetans. Pre-emptive and reciprocal attacks on nomadic and sedentary communities were commonplace, and usually involved the slaughter of children, women, and elderly people, which naturally intensified feelings of resentment. Many fighters were mercenaries, motivated to kill only by the promise of plunder, without regard to race, creed, gender, or national origin.²¹

After the 1895 conflict, in 1898 the Qing enlisted some local Muslim groups as mercenaries to help the central authorities quell disturbances in China proper. In 1911, after a series of hailstorms, floods, drought, famine years, landslides, and earthquakes between 1895 and 1906 the Muslim fighters gradually returned to find ethnic and religious divisions in a devastated natural environment.

In 1912, shortly after the end of the Qing Dynasty in 1911 and the subsequent inclusion of Labrang under the authority of Xunhua County, Ma Qi, the military commander of Xining, Qinghai and Gansu, decided to station troops in Labrang. His rationale was that Labrang was from 1911 included in the jurisdiction of Xunhua County, and he thus had to monitor Labrang's affairs. He sent his son Ma Bufang²² to act as regional representative and in spite of stiff and ongoing resistance, Ma Qi and Ma Bufang persisted.²³

In 1916, when the Fourth Jamyang Zhepa died, the Regent was the Fifth Gungtang, who was unfortunately unable to gain the support of all of the Labrang officials. There were disputes about succession, and about alliances with the Mongols and Muslims. Ma Qi seized the opportunity and strengthened his troops' presence at Labrang after overcoming stiff Tibetan resistance.²⁴ At the same time the Treasurer of Labrang, Li Zongzhe, ethnically Chinese or Monguor, escaped to Xining in May 1916 in the face of accusations of corruption at Labrang. All of his Labrang assets were confiscated. This event signaled the beginning of ten years of violence between the Tibetans and the Muslims.

Ma Qi sent a military party to re-assert Muslim presence in Labrang. The Tibetans, led by the Third Belmang Tsang (1854–1918/1919), refused to compromise and allow permanent Muslim authority at Labrang. Tense negotiations continued until June 1918 when Ma Qi raised an army and attacked Labrang in November 1918. Belmang was poorly prepared, with no army but only 800-900 people from the thirteen villages in the immediate vicinity of Labrang. A battle followed, and the Tibetans were defeated. Belmang subsequently called on the local Tibetan militia to move against the Muslim warlords in Labrang, but there was little support and the Tibetans failed. Finally, in the same year Ma Qi and his brother Ma Lin built a barracks at Labrang. Ma Lin was ruthless; in 1918 and 1919, he confiscated Tibetan property, attempted to conquer surrounding towns,

burned monasteries, and inflicted general death and destruction on the Labrang Tibetans.²⁵

In 1920, when the four-year old Fifth Jamyang Zhepa and his family arrived at Labrang, Gönpö Döndrup (Huang Weizhong) demanded that the Muslims leave Labrang. At that point the Muslims left Labrang, leaving the young lama's paternal uncle, Ngawang Tendar, as Regent.²⁶ The Muslim withdrawal was, however, temporary. Tension was high and conflicts common. In December of 1920 in Xining, Gönpö Döndrup, Apa Alo, the four-year-old Fifth Jamyang Zhepa, the former Tibetan and reputedly of Muslim extraction monastery Treasurer Li Zongzhe, the Regent Gungtang Tsang, Ma Qi, and others met. They argued over the continued presence of Muslim troops in Labrang, and ended in disagreement. During the meeting Gönpö Döndrup, Apa Alo and other prominent Tibetans requested political autonomy from Xining and withdrawal of the troops. Ma Qi refused, which led to later hostilities.²⁷

There is a story that shortly after his arrival Gönpö Döndrup made an arms deal with Ma Qi and was reportedly swindled of a cache of arms and a substantial amount of cash. The resulting resentment was fueled by Xining-based Ninghai Army action in Labrang and in its territories, which resulted in many (over one thousand) deaths and the burning of many (over thirty) buildings at Labrang.²⁸

In 1921 Xining sent a military unit to garrison at Labrang led by Commander Ma Shou, who was reportedly very familiar with Tibetan customs, and who spoke and read Tibetan. At one point in his youth, evidently because of unhappy family circumstances Ma Shou entered a Tibetan Buddhist monastery, but left after some time because of a violent episode in which he reportedly killed someone. He then returned to Xining and was assigned to Labrang's occupying force. He eventually garrisoned at Labrang. However, at the same time as this perhaps sympathetic or at least understanding leader held his post at Labrang, the Labrang Tibetans were administered by Xining District, not by Gansu Province, so Commander Ma was able to exercise military authority at Labrang, which incited the Tibetans to resist all of his policies. The result was a persistent gap between Tibetans and Hui.

Visiting Christian missionaries made a record of one of these battles. The missionaries were evidently unaware of the full ethnic, political and historical allegiances of the fighters involved, but the account is descriptive of the ferocity of the fighting.

A battle between the Muslims and the Tibetans took place in April, 1921. In the month of April an expedition was launched by them, against the wild Golok tribes, [who are] occupying a large territory five or six days to the west and south-west of the field we are at present endeavoring to occupy. One of

the chief natural reasons for the incursion was the killing, by the Goloks, of several soldiers carrying official dispatches and seizing four or five thousand yaks belonging to the [Muslim] High Commissioner. The Goloks consisted of three tribes and were a most haughty people, considering themselves impregnable, since they had never been subdued by the Chinese in all their history. But the Mohammedans with their up-to-date firearms practically annihilated one tribe, and the other two hastened to capitulate. It is reported, though, that the first and most crushing blow was struck through treachery. The three tribes were called together to tender their submission, suddenly attacked, and a large number killed. The remainder fled without making any attempt in their weakened condition to avenge their fallen friends. Then followed a chapter of awful bloodshed and cruelty. [Golok] [m]en, women, and children were ruthlessly put to the sword and thousands were driven into the Yellow River to perish in its muddy water. A heavy indemnity was exacted, thousands of sheep, yaks and horses driven away, and tons of wool confiscated. . . . Thus is made safe for travel and missionary work a vast piece of country inhabited by thousands of nomads. . . . We are praising God for the advance step He has enabled us to take.²⁹

Following the 1921 battles there were further negotiations between the Labrang Tibetans and the Muslims, but these were in vain. The Tibetan response to Muslim refusal to abandon Labrang was to consolidate their immediate forces and to form alliances with other Tibetan tribes and the Chinese (February 1922).³⁰ This new sense of political and military unity was the beginning of the end of Muslim power at Labrang, though it took many bloody battles and over a decade.³¹ The Muslims withdrew in 1922 in the face of a show of force by the arrival of some seventy-six Tibetan tribes, a Sichuan army, thousands of faithful, and a lack of uniform resolve on the part of the Muslims. The Muslims retreated, and by 1923 the Tibetans had regained control of Labrang. However, in February 1924, the Xining Muslims under Ma Qi and Ma Bufang arrived at Labrang with a calvary of 5,000 and a list of demands. The Tibetans responded with a show of local force by eighty villages from neighboring areas, the thirteen villages owned by Labrang, and members of some 800 regional merchant families. The Tibetans and Muslims met face-to-face in the Labrang market square, and the Muslims backed down—this time.³²

The atmosphere was tense and grew gradually worse. The record states that one day a group of Tibetan monks got into a dispute with the Muslims, resulting in injuries to a monk. The monks complained to Gönpö Döndrup (Huang Weizhong), but the matter was not resolved. On 27 June 1924 a large scale conflict broke out first in Genkya, with the local Hui soldiers supported by troops from Xining. Many Tibetans were killed, and because of their lack of military supplies they scattered.

Gönpö Döndrup, Apa Alo, the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa and the entire family had to flee just weeks later, in July 1924. The group went first to

Lanzhou (where Apa Alo stayed for two years),³³ but soon went to Tsendrok Monastery in Mema in southern Gansu for the winter of 1924–1925.³⁴ They then traveled further to Gomang Monastery in Ngawa Tsodruk for two years,³⁵ after which they returned to the high plains near Hezuo, at Mepö Garsar until June 1927, when they returned to Labrang.³⁶ Deprived of its spiritual attraction, Labrang's markets emptied, and the Muslims—both the traders in Labrang and in Xining—suddenly found themselves dispossessed of a substantial income.³⁷ For these religious, political and economic reasons, Apa Alo went to Lanzhou and appealed to the Chinese authorities to intervene.³⁸

Meanwhile, in 1925 there were continuous confrontations between the Tibetans and Muslims. The Tibetans slowly made alliances with other Tibetans in Labrang's properties, and with the Chinese at Lanzhou, but the latter were reluctant to fight for the Tibetans. The Ninth Penchen Lama and the Labrang Regent appealed to the government in Beijing, but to no avail. On the 25–27 of April 1925 the Tibetans under the command of Gönpo Döndrup fought the predominantly Hui Muslim, Xining-based Ninghai Army led by Ma Bufang, at Serchentang in Genkya. The Tibetans' medieval weapons were ineffective against the Muslims' modern machine guns, resulting in heavy Tibetan losses.³⁹ In July 1925, the Ninghai forces under Ma Bufang burned some sixty-seven Tibetan villages; some seven thousand Tibetans were killed.⁴⁰ The Hui

set up machine guns and mowed down as many of the fleeing monks as they could. . . . Ma is said to have offered a reward for every Tibetan head his soldiers could bring in, while the Tibetans swooped down on any small concentrations of Hui to perform murders of great barbarity. . . . The Tibetans had clear superiority over the Muslims in numbers, but they lacked even the rudiments of strategy. In addition, their loosely organized, lineage-based military structure made coordinated campaigning impossible. Their weapons were generally primitive, musket loaders and swords against the Hui machine guns.⁴¹

Later, on 26 August 1925, the Muslims under Ma Bufang fought the Tibetans under Gönpo Döndrup in Sangkhok.⁴² One witness reported that some eighty militiamen from Ngülra alone were killed in Sangkhok on that day.⁴³ Under severe and ongoing pressure from their Qinghai Muslim neighbors, the Tibetans turned to the Chinese.⁴⁴

FENG YUXIANG, XIAHE COUNTY, AND THE LABRANG TIBETANS

In winter of 1926, the Tibetan authorities (Gönpo Döndrup, Apa Alo, and the young Jamyang Zhepa) and Liu Youfen, the governor of Gansu

under Feng Yuxiang, set up a Provisional Government Office (*she zhi ju*) at Labrang. This signalled the transfer of regional Chinese jurisdiction from Xunhua County to Lanzhou. To mark this, in 1927 Governor Liu Youfen sent a Nationalist army security unit to Labrang to scatter the garrisoned Xining troops. Jamyang Zhepa and the Tibetans returned to Labrang. In 1928 the Xiahe County government was formally established.

In the succeeding months land taxes and Labrang's territorial borders were set by provincial authorities (Map 3). All parties decided the borders of Xunhua and Labrang and arranged the divisions of western and southern Tibetans, and the Linxia and Labrang borders. All of the Tibetan communities to the north and south of Lintan belonged to Labrang, so Xiahe County's land taxes for Tibetans north and south of Lintan and for the Tibetans west and south of Xunhua were standardized, and paid to Labrang.⁴⁵

Meanwhile, 1926 to 1930 were famine years in Gansu, due to so much warfare in the region, lack of rainfall, sale of grain to China, and because of widespread production and use of opium.⁴⁶ Most sources mention the proliferation, high quality and use of opium products in Gansu, used primarily by the Han and some Muslims. If conditions were not bad enough, two major earthquakes hit the region, in 1920 and the particularly destructive Liangzhou earthquake in May 1927.⁴⁷ The local Chinese communities were starving, often conscripted by the army or by bandits, and were victims of systematic crimes perpetrated by roving gangs of murderers and thieves.⁴⁸

These years also saw warfare between the Muslims, skirmishes with the Tibetans,⁴⁹ and periodic clashes between Feng Yuxiang's and other warlord armies and the Chinese National Army. In 1925–1927, the most powerful force in Gansu was Feng Yuxiang, or rather his appointed representative, the military governor of Gansu, Liu Youfen, but his authority was short lived.⁵⁰ 1927–1928, the years that Xiahe County was founded, were turbulent years in China's political history. The founding of Xiahe County was a serious survival tactic for the Labrang Tibetans, but for Feng Yuxiang's an alliance of convenience. James E. Sheridan remarked that in these years it was not unusual for a Chinese military governor to be unable to control an entire province anywhere in China; but "in Kansu, however, this was *always* the case."⁵¹ Regional alliances, evidently attempts to promote stability, were the order of the day.

Even with the political establishment of Xiahe County in 1928, the turmoil in Gansu's Muslim, Tibetan and immediately surrounding areas continued. However, in 1928 Labrang escaped relatively unscathed.⁵² In her memoirs, Christian missionary Blanche Griebenow told of her family's return to Labrang in 1928 after their first furlough. They were spared by the Muslim forces, but often found themselves still battered between the armies of the Muslims and the Chinese.

We had quite a trip to Labrang. We never knew when we would see part of that [Muslim] army again. When we got to Labrang, we found out that they [the Muslims] had been there. Fearful that the Nationalist [Chinese] army would go to the mountains surrounding our house and fire down and kill their valuable horses, they [the Muslims] had tied the horses inside our living room and dining room. They were there for two days and one night. They emptied the books from our bookcases and used the shelves for feeding troughs for the horses. Our books were ready for a bonfire when we got home. Everything was lost. The local people realized that our house had been occupied—the gates and doors were not locked when the [Muslim] army left, so they came in and looted to their full desire. Imagine our house when we returned from furlough!⁵³

[T]he economic situation was getting more and more chaotic. The only solid currency was silver, in the form of one dollar coins [from] twenty or more years earlier. The value of the paper money fluctuated in relation to the silver dollars. . . . The difference in exchange rates between Gansu and Sichuan was such that it was profitable for traders to buy silver in Gansu, travel to Sungpan in northern Sichuan, sell the silver for paper, then return to Gansu to buy more silver. Or perhaps they would deal in opium also.⁵⁴

With this situation in which large amounts of silver were being carried through the grasslands, particularly the uninhabited areas, robberies became more and more common. Robbers took to setting up an ambush along the trail and shooting travelers without warning from their concealed positions.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, through 1924–1928 Gönpö Döndrup and Apa Alo tried to galvanize support in Labrang's communities against the Ninghai army. As time went on, they appealed to all of the various Chinese groups with influence in Gansu, including Feng Yuxiang, the Nationalists, and later the Communists. One of Apa Alo's early supporters was Xuan Xiafu (1899–1938; Tibetan: Tashi Tséring), an early Communist Party member.⁵⁶ In 1925 Xuan worked as an information official in Feng Yuxiang's army (*Xibeijun*, later incorporated into the *Guominjun*),⁵⁷ under Liu Yufen in Lanzhou, where he met the then twenty-two year old Apa Alo, whose family had recently fled from Labrang.⁵⁸ At a meeting with the Tibetans and the Lanzhou authorities (including Gansu governor Liu Youfen, Feng Yuxiang's appointee), in a bold assertion of regional authority and of disregard for Gansu provincial power, Ma Qi refused to withdraw from Labrang. The Mas treatment of the Tibetans stimulated Xuan Xiafu's efforts to serve as an intermediary between the Chinese authorities and the Labrang Tibetans.⁵⁹ Xuan's activities on behalf of the Tibetans had far reaching effects.

In 1926, in the course of one of his trips to Lanzhou to gain Chinese support, Apa Alo met Xuan Xiafu again. Xuan advised Apa Alo to join Nationalist Party's Youth Corps' Lanzhou branch.⁶⁰ In addition, the Com-

munist sources report that there was a formal Communist delegation sent to Gansu in 1926, led by Comrade Hu Tingzhen.⁶¹ This person reportedly established a minorities school in Lanzhou, the “Five Minorities’ Institute” (*Wuzu xueyuan*), with which Xuan Xiafu was affiliated. From this contact Apa Alo, Xuan Xiafu,⁶² and others founded the Association for the Advancement of Tibetan Culture (*Zangzu wenhua cujin hui*) in Lanzhou. This took place in 1926, certainly a chaotic year for Labrang, and was reportedly re-introduced by the Nationalists in 1935, with seventy-four members by 1939.⁶³ This group, led by Apa Alo, was dedicated to the integrity of Tibetan culture, to new political ideologies, and to the elimination of the Ma family’s presence in Labrang.⁶⁴ In 1926 Xuan Xiafu also introduced Apa Alo to the Young Comrades Association (*Shao nian tongzhi hui*), whose activities included Chinese language study, progressive songs, international and domestic revolutionary theory, and rallies in theatres, teahouses, and public squares to spread propaganda.

In 1926, Apa Alo and Xuan Xiafu attended a large meeting with some two hundred and thirty Tibetan leaders in Ngülra, at Tashi Tang, including Gönpö Döndrup and the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa, at which time Xuan was an advocate of Tibetan unity against Ma Qi.⁶⁵ Apa Alo’s and Xuan’s efforts to form an alliance against an enemy on this frontier were at least temporarily effective.

The Tibetans and Chinese assembled a large force, allied with Nationalists, Feng Yuxiang’s appointed governor Liu Youfen and the Seventh Division army, Lanzhou militiamen, and large numbers of ethnic Tibetans.⁶⁶ They sent a list of demands to the Muslims in 1926, which included complete Muslim withdrawal from Labrang, compensation for all losses, and relief from all Muslim taxes. In 1927, Ma Qi withdrew to Xining.⁶⁷ In addition to a significant shift in local power, this event marked the formal military alliance of some seventeen Tibetan tribes under the leadership of Labrang. All payments of taxes to Muslims were discontinued.⁶⁸ Still, though decisively defeated in 1927, the Muslims under Ma Zhongying attacked nearby Minxian (and Choné) in April of 1928, but were again turned back by the Tibetan alliance. Also, although 1927 was a watershed year, the Muslims re-entered Labrang in April of 1928, but after some posturing on both sides, and in the face of the united Tibetan forces, the confrontation was defused.⁶⁹

THE INCORPORATION OF XIAHE COUNTY

Meanwhile, in the course of these battles and shifting alliances, as part of the military and political assistance to Labrang and in a show of force to the Qinghai Muslims, the Chinese under Feng Yuxiang incorporated the

land immediately around Labrang Monastery into Xiahe County, Gansu Province. It was now under the formal political and military protection of Gansu, and Apa Alo was put in charge of the military forces located in Xiahe. In 1926, after the Muslims were forced from Labrang, the political process began, and in 1927 the boundary between Xunhua and Xiahe Counties was decided.⁷⁰

The 1926–1927 mapping of Xiahe County was rooted in social, political, military and economic strategies (Map 3). Socially, the ethnic conflict between Tibetans and Muslims had to be addressed. Politically, controlling the Muslims was to Chinese advantage, and having a well-established Tibetan community as an ally in southern Gansu would stabilize the Chinese frontier politically and militarily. Finally, insuring Labrang's tax revenues from its communities would serve all purposes and would keep Labrang's markets open and thus give some relief to the crushing poverty in the region. Xiahe County was a political expedient for the Chinese and for the Tibetans, with little to do with Labrang's sense of community, the extent of its revenues, or its sense of autonomy.⁷¹

The 1926 boundaries of Xiahe County extended clockwise from the Xunhua County line in the north. The northeast border was at Tumen-guan. The border stretched to the Linxia County line in the east, to Lintan County line in the south/southeast, to Sichuan Province due south, Qinghai Province south/southwest and due west including what is now Henan County, and finally to Guide County line due west/northwest. These boundaries are however approximations, and changed considerably since 1926.⁷² The most dramatic change was in the reduction in size of Xiahe County since the 1950s. Modern Xiahe County does not include Hezuo/Tsö, Dzögé Nyinma, Ngülra, Ngawa, Luchu, Dokar, and others. However, Apa Alo wrote that in April 1927 Xiahe County's borders were settled, and finally included even more territory than Labrang had counted previously. Xiahe now included its historic site, the thirteen villages (*lha sde shog pa bzhi*), Sangkhok, Genkya, Khotsé, Nyinma, Ngülra, Amchok, Tsö, Khagya Tömé, Terlung, Tadzong, Ngangra Tömé, Mewo Kyagé, Bora, Dokar, Gyelmo Gön, and in addition, the seven *shogpa* (even though called eight here) of Lushö Tsowa Gyé, which were formerly included in Yartsi/Xunhua.⁷³ In addition, early maps include the territories owned by the Mongol Prince in Xiahe County, now known as Qinghai's Henan Mongol Autonomous region.⁷⁴

There were negotiations about the border, first in Xunhua on 11 October 1927, when several Chinese officials from Lanzhou met, including the Provincial Director of Education Ma Hetian, Xie Gangjie, Zhou Ziji, Zhang Dingyang, Chen Zefan and others. At this meeting the specific borders were discussed. Some three weeks later a second meeting was held at Labrang, with other officials and representatives from Labrang present.

The borders of Xiahe were settled, but not without dispute.⁷⁵ Soon after these discussions there were further negotiations to settle the tax obligations of these territories, namely taking the tax revenues from Xunhua, under Xining's and the Ma family's jurisdiction, and shifting them to Xiahe, under Lanzhou's and Feng Yuxiang's jurisdiction.

A transitional governing body was established prior to the actual incorporation of Xiahe County in 1928 called the Provisional Government Office (*She zhi ju*), and the first director was Zhang Dingyang.⁷⁶ The main tasks this office faced were the definition of Xiahe County's borders and, crucially, where and who should have the actual political authority.⁷⁷

The events of 1924–1928 marked an important victory for the Tibetans over their Qinghai Muslim neighbors and an important alliance with the Chinese. Tibetans see this period as a victory for Tibetans and regional autonomy. To others, the incorporation of Xiahe County marks the assimilation of the Tibetans into the Chinese state. In Communist rhetoric, it was a step in Labrang's development from a feudal to a socialist society.⁷⁸

Chinese documents from the 1930s show that control of Labrang's territories was in Tibetan hands but there was inter-ethnic hostility. A Chinese account states:

Jurisdiction of the Labrang territories is in the hands of the Jamyang Zhepa. However, in terms of superficial administration, the Labrang territory was originally connected to Xunhua County, of Xining District, in Gansu Province. These days Xunhua County is a district of Qinghai [Province]. Eventually Labrang was divided from Xunhua County and was established as Xiahe County in Gansu Province.⁷⁹

In Qing times, Labrang was technically administered from Xunhua County, which was in Gansu Province, as was Xining. When Xiahe County was incorporated, it stayed in China's Gansu, but administration was shifted from Xining to Lanzhou. In 1928, when Qinghai Province was incorporated, and its boundaries revised, Xunhua went to Qinghai and Xiahe stayed in Gansu. However, until the 1930s, actual control of Xining and Xunhua was in the hands of the Muslims, who were hardly allies of the Communists (Ma Bufang publicly ridiculed the Communist Party on numerous occasions) or any Chinese group, and certainly not of the Tibetans. These machinations by the Tibetans, Chinese, Muslims, and Mongols once again display the fluid and unstable nature of political authority on these borderlands.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGES AT LABRANG

In the latter half of the 1920s and the 1930s, in the middle of their battles and negotiations, the Labrang Tibetans made efforts to develop

schools, youth groups, and regional publications.⁸⁰ Chinese sources report these efforts, the fact that conflicts with local Xining Muslims interrupted the schools' operations, and that enrollment increased every year. The claims of educational initiatives at Labrang are authenticated somewhat by surveys of Labrang Tibetan students who reported their names, whether they could read Chinese or not, whether they could understand their Chinese teacher's language, whether they could speak Chinese or not, whether they wanted to become a monk or not, their career goals, why they chose those goals, and where they were from. These are followed by further analyses of the student bodies and their ethnic and regional backgrounds. It does appear however that the educational initiatives, though well intended and supported by the authorities, were short-lived.

One of the pivotal Tibetan figures in these efforts was Apa Alo; one source reported that Apa Alo actively recruited young students to attend the Labrang schools.⁸¹ His motivation to promote education began in 1924–1927 when he lived in Lanzhou and was exposed to Chinese and world civilizations. His contact with the Chinese and commitment to Tibetan heritage showed in the fact that there were both Tibetan and Chinese teachers and in the subjects taught at the schools.⁸² Several sources report that there were two elementary schools in Xiahe beginning in 1928,⁸³ one exclusively Tibetan and the other for all local ethnic groups.⁸⁴ The Tibetan school was called the First Elementary School for the Advancement of Tibetan Culture (*Zang wenhua cujin huili diyi xiaoxue*) and the other was called simply the Xiahe First Elementary School. The latter school included Tibetan, Han and Hui students, and the former only some sixty Tibetan students. In addition, the general Xiahe region had altogether five elementary schools.⁸⁵

The public school system at Labrang began in the post-1927 war period and by 1928 the student body had doubled.⁸⁶ There were two schools eventually established in Golok territories, and in 1940 a short-lived girls' school with, first, twenty and then over eighty students, established by Li An-che's and Apa Alo's wives.⁸⁷ These girls were mostly Tibetan, with some Hui and Chinese. These efforts were made to overcome problems of illiteracy, general resistance to new ideas, and lack of money. In addition, in 1945 the Fifth Jamyang Zhepa introduced a school for monks and lay persons that included calligraphy, music, monastic dance, craft skills, science, Tibetan and Chinese languages. This effort was also made to broaden intellectual horizons and enhance local culture.⁸⁸ Though short-lived and perhaps not terribly effective, the fact that the Labrang Tibetans saw value in education for young people was in itself significant because it showed a sense of innovation and acceptance of modern ideas on the part of the monastic and lay authorities.

Apa Alo was active on other fronts as well. In addition to participating in the founding of the Association for the Advancement of Tibetan Culture in 1926, he was also a leader of the Association, which included both Chinese and Tibetan members. Another initiative, a lay Tibetan youth group called the Youth Corps, was formed by young members—all about twenty-three years old—including the then twenty-three year old Apa Alo. This group was oriented to promoting unity, political reform, national identity, pride, and autonomy.⁸⁹ Other infrastructure projects at Labrang included a commercial group in 1918 (well before Apa Alo), a post office in 1923, a tax bureau in 1927, and a telegraph office in 1928.⁹⁰

In 1930–1931, war once again plagued the region, this time by the Chinese warlords. This so-called “Great Plains” battle resulted in Feng Yuxiang’s attempt to retreat to Gansu, followed by Chiang Kaishek, and others. There were in these years a series of battles between the Chinese, Tibetans, and/or the Muslims,⁹¹ nearby, but not in Labrang. In addition to more warfare, the 1930s brought new Chinese interest in Gansu’s extensive coal, oil, and mineral reserves, and continuing activity in Labrang’s marketplaces. Labrang’s flourishing market, its convenient location for trade, and its balance of political and militia support likely worked to protect it from destruction. Though there was fierce fighting going on very close by during these years,⁹² life at Labrang carried on relatively undisturbed.

Still, the region was as dangerous as ever; by March 1930 it was still unsafe to travel outside of Labrang.⁹³ In May of 1930, the Muslims of Taozhou Old City rebelled against the local government. The Muslims succeeded in driving the Tibetan residents from the town, and destroyed a large number of Tibetan and Chinese settlements around Taozhou. The Muslims controlled the town for a month until the Nationalist army attacked and burned the city, killing everyone and destroying everything possible. Refugees from the town were nearly annihilated by the recently routed Tibetans.⁹⁴ Bandits soon took the opportunity presented by the battles, looting and burning nearby Taozhou New City. In 1930–1931 Labrang remained a relatively safe haven from the chaotic and bloody wars between the Chinese warlords, but this safety had to be won.⁹⁵

In 1933, on hearing that the Xining Muslims were appealing to the Nationalist authorities for control of Labrang, in effect reversing the settlement of 1927–1928 Apa Alo rushed to a meeting in Nanjing to argue for Labrang to stay under Gansu’s jurisdiction. Chiang Kaishek, Wang Jingwei, Zhu Peide and others attended the meeting and heard Apa Alo’s complaints about the Muslims.⁹⁶ As a result, in 1934, Apa Alo’s 1927 Nationalist title, Commander of the Labrang Tibetans⁹⁷ was changed to Commander of Labrang Security, while Lanzhou was under the control of Feng Yuxiang.⁹⁸ This changed Apa Alo’s status significantly in that it now

affiliated him with the Gansu Provincial Security Bureau, and formed an alliance with the Chinese against the Muslims that continued during the Anti-Japanese War.

The 1933 Labrang Security Bureau, led by Apa Alo had a Tibetan militia with a three thousand strong cavalry. In 1934, the militia installed a wire-less telegraph and a landing field for small aircraft in Sangkhok.⁹⁹ In 1935, Apa Alo instituted a three-year plan that included the development of education, road and communications systems, public security, and other initiatives. This was under the jurisdiction of "People's Government Office" (*Min zheng ting*), a temporary project under Feng Yuxiang's government, again led by Apa Alo with a Chinese adviser, and operated on a Chinese model.¹⁰⁰ In these years Apa Alo had not yet formally joined the Chinese Communist Party, though he was supportive of the Red Army.¹⁰¹ If the stories of Apa Alo's support are true, it shows that Apa Alo negotiated with both Communists and Nationalists, and ironically gained the support of both on different occasions.¹⁰² Instead of duplicity this shows that in those years there was no clear dominant power in the entire region, which made shifting alliances a matter of diplomacy. In later years it is clear that the Labrang Tibetans supported the Anti-Japanese war effort.

In addition to the larger conflicts outside of Labrang, there was unrest between the Labrang communities and their Tibetan neighbors. A good example of the type of conflicts, monastery involvement, and challenges to authority in the Labrang territories is in 1937 Ngülra, where the long-simmering conflict between two *tsowas*, Labrang's Metra Shül and nearby Tumé in Mewo exploded. People were killed and horses stolen, but Labrang Monastery authorities were able to stop the fighting. Later, in 1941, the same groups engaged in more violence in Ngülra, and this was resolved by monastery representative Apa Alo and a local elder. In 1951, there was more fierce fighting in Ngülra, and Abö Karmo, a local fighter, killed two militiamen from Ngawa. Finally, the Labrang and Ngülra forces prevailed. Still, in spite of overcoming the immediate problem, the dispute between Labrang's territories and Mewo continued until 1957, when it was finally resolved by the Labrang Treasurer (*phyag mdzod*).¹⁰³ In response to these conflicts in the community the monastery appointed gowa officers in Ngülra, Dzögé Nyinma and surrounding communities, and later a Personal Attaché of the Jamyang Zhepa in Dzögé Nyinma. Thus Labrang's external political profile was mixed between the Nationalists and the Communists, and its internal polity was functional, but often tested. These patterns are further evident in the development of Apa Alo's career.

In the early 1940s he was still a member of the Nationalist Party Central Committee¹⁰⁴ and in 1946 he was appointed the leader of the Nationalist Party office at Labrang. In 1948, the Nationalist Intelligence

service reported that Apa Alo was in contact with and had even joined the Communists.¹⁰⁵

A 1947 Chinese account of the formation of Xiahe County and its government written by Ma Wuji describes the operation of the Xiahe government as ineffective, and, literally, a “joke” (*xiao hua*).¹⁰⁶ Ma Wuji, the author of this document and opinion appears to base his judgement on, in his own words, the fact that nomadic society has no clear boundaries and the nomads’ secular affairs are governed by monasteries. Moreover, this author goes on to describe that the monasteries own the land and receive taxes from Han and Hui merchants.¹⁰⁷ Ma Wuji, the author, writes from the perspective of Chinese social and political structures; the extent of these at Labrang was minimal. Judging from his evidently negative opinion of Tibetan social and political structures, he did not know about or at least did not appreciate nomadic lifestyles, monastic governance, or again, the Tibetan “unity of religion and politics.”

Ma Wuji goes on to describe what he sees as correctives to the political “joke” at Labrang, which predictably include support for the Nationalist Party and its ideology, loyalty to President Chiang Kaishek, obedience of Chinese laws, reliance on Chinese authorities to resolve conflicts, and so on.¹⁰⁸ These recommendations obviously advise a shift from Tibetan monastic to Chinese state authority. Ma finishes his report by summarizing what he sees as problems at Labrang, including language, by which he means the lack of Chinese language. Further, the pervasive influence of religion is in his view problematic, because of being so important at Labrang, and by extension an obstacle to the function of the Chinese political infrastructure. Other problems are the lack of a uniform monetary system, the negative impact of the Japanese war on the wool industry, and finally, the low salaries paid to government clerks working in the region. While these latter are practical economics, this writer clearly sees the Labrang community from an outsider’s perspective.¹⁰⁹

At the same time, Apa Alo is known for his central and progressive role at Labrang and in Amdo. In his early years at Labrang he was guided by his father Gönpo Döndrup, who from all accounts was rather ruthless. Otherwise, the Communist sources go on at length about Apa Alo’s early influences and contacts with Communist Party ideas and individuals. However, in February and March 1949, when the advance units and army reached Xiahe, Apa Alo was still not a Communist Party member, and others in the community, among them especially Wu Zhengang, were much more zealous Communists.¹¹⁰ Apa Alo was certainly active in Chinese circles in Lanzhou and elsewhere in China, and he did not hesitate to accept Chinese innovations and modernity.¹¹¹ However, he was not as enthusiastic about the Communist Party as others in Xiahe. Evidence of

Apa Alo's misgivings with the Communists are in the story of another progressive Labrang Tibetan, Wu Zhengang.

Wu was a young local Tibetan who had very early on adopted Communist ideas. His name was Wu Zhengang (nicknamed in Tibetan, "Gori Riwong," mgo ri ri bong) (1914-1949). In 1931, he graduated from one of Labrang's elementary schools, in which he excelled in Chinese studies and had reportedly revolutionary political ideals. He was very active in revolutionary movements in Xiahe, and he went on to study in Nanjing and Chongqing. He became associated with the anthropologist Li Anche, and in 1939 eventually joined a secret Mongol-Tibetan Communist-influenced youth society. He traveled in eastern Tibetan regions and promoted revolutionary ideas. In 1941, Li Anche introduced him to leaders of the Communist Eighth Route Army in Chongqing. He continued to be a Communist activist and eventually returned to Xiahe to work with Apa Alo. He soon became a prominent figure at Xiahe, worked closely with Chinese political officials, secretly founded a Communist society at Xiahe, and in 1943 started a Communist youth group (*Anduo qingnian lianyi hui*). In addition he worked to reform the Association for the Advancement of Xiahe Culture (this is a different name than the Association for the Advancement of Tibetan Culture associated with Apa Alo). He is credited with the publication of the short-lived "Amdo Monthly" (*Anduo yue kan*), forming a music and dance troupe and constructing a public square. Wu Zhengang is further credited with improving water conditions in Labrang, bridge-building, and establishing a night school, and through it all publicizing the anti-Japanese war and the liberation of Tibetan people.¹¹² This person, at least according to the Chinese sources, was an active figure in the Labrang community.

Wu Zhengang, not Apa Alo, was the Communists' first choice for leader (*juren*) of Xiahe. In a document filed in 1950, but written before Wu's death, Apa Alo was described as a reactionary (*fan dong pai*) and a representative of the upper class. When the Communists arrived in Xiahe he went into hiding. When he came out he was to be disarmed, but not demoted, and yet replaced by Wu Zhengang. Further evidence of Apa Alo's and his followers' misgivings with the Communists and their followers in Labrang was the murder of Wu Zhengang as he was going to work at his schoolteacher's post in Xiahe, some eight months after the first Communists arrived in Xiahe. He was shot dead while on horseback in Pöntsang, Xiahe, on 30 November 1949. The Communists blamed the Nationalists for this murder, but all local sources interviewed attribute the killing to Tibetan fighters from Amchok or, according to one source, the killer was possibly a Mongol from Qinghai. Wu Zhengang was a known enemy of Apa Alo. This conflict between a longtime Communist Party member and a recent Nationalist supporter most certainly represented ideological and

political differences,¹¹³ and it demonstrates the shifting strategies necessary for survival on the Amdo Tibetan borderlands.

Marion Griebenow's account of 1949 Labrang shows the mood of the Labrang authorities and the uncertain atmosphere, hardly a description of a population getting ready for liberation. The Communists were still fighting the Nationalists, the Muslims in Gansu were still resisting the central government and bandits were still terrorizing the countryside when Marion Griebenow wrote:

It is a somewhat hazardous trip as there are robbers on the road now and, of course, we have to go by horseback, staying in the open a few nights. . . . [T]he political situation in China is still [volatile but] we are quite peaceful on this field [in Labrang]. If the Communists should take Xian, it would make our position more hazardous In the meantime the Muslims to the north of us are making feverish preparations for a last stand against the Communists.¹¹⁴

Griebenow described stability at Labrang, but he also wrote of civil disorder in the region, the threat of the Communists—an interesting fact in itself given the rhetoric in Chinese accounts that cite considerable Communist activity in Labrang and by Labrang residents. The Chinese accounts are thus nuanced by Griebenow and by the fact of Apa Alo's late membership in the Communist Party. Further, the instability at Labrang is attested by the Griebenows' flight from the advancing Communist armies on 7 August 1949, and by the fact that they were never allowed to return, in spite of the bonds they formed with the local people over their long stay.

On 20 September 1949, Apa Alo and his wife Tséring Lhamo attended a meeting in Lanzhou with several important Communist officials, including Peng Dehai. Apa Alo was recognized as the leader of Xiahe County. On this day, Apa Alo joined the Communist Party and his jurisdiction in Xiahe County was recognized.¹¹⁵ Apa Alo's entry into the Communist Party came at a time of chaos, and given all of the Communist rhetoric and contact with Communist advisers and friends dating from 1925, surprisingly late. Even by 1949, one document reports apparently unsuccessful attempts to convince Apa Alo, who was then supportive of Red Army movements, to join the Communist Party.¹¹⁶ His then assistant, the Zhang Zifeng, the Assistant Director of Labrang Security (*fu bao an si ling*), was supposedly instrumental in convincing Apa Alo to join the Communists.

After Apa Alo made his new affiliation, in a demonstration of his new allegiance, he led a group of Tibetans some five kilometers outside of Xiahe to meet the People's Liberation Army, reportedly with some twenty thousand Tibetans.¹¹⁷ The arrival of the Communist army and Apa Alo's changing allegiance and subsequent difficulties with the Communists are yet more examples of "inner frontier" negotiations, in which each group

forms new alliances with the current dominant power in interests of self-preservation. The Communist takeover was no different from any other; the Labrang authorities were interested in preserving their community's integrity. They were not seeking to erase their social, political and ideological heritage.

Following Wu Zhengang's November 1949 murder (only one month after Apa Alo's membership in the Communist Party), Apa Alo was assigned as "regional governor" (*zhou zhang*) of the Southern Gansu Tibetan Autonomous Region. For the next several years he did his best to promote solidarity among the Tibetan groups that made up Labrang's support communities. An oral account cites 1952 as a pivotal year in this effort, when Apa Alo convened a meeting of all the local leaders. He was partly successful. As a Communist Party functionary he did his best to promote development in agriculture, pastoral economy, commerce, the introduction of technology and transportation infrastructures, increase of population, regional recognition of the Communist Party, and unity among minority groups.¹¹⁸ In his essay describing three years of development in the region (dated 1 October 1956, published in 1957) he reports progress in all of these areas. There are however two notable things about his essay, first the omission of explicit mention of the shift of regional authority from the monastery to the central government, and second, his inclusion of Labrang Monastery's role as a focal point and ideology-defining center of the community.¹¹⁹

Finally, in 1958, in spite of Apa Alo's attempts to mediate between Communist policies and Labrang's traditions, the Chinese instituted sweeping changes which were unacceptable to many of Labrang's community leaders. Collectivization of property, division of Xiahe County and dismantling of regional control structures were among the many changes. As a result, fighting broke out between the Chinese and Tibetans in Ngülra, Belmangtsang, Amchok, and elsewhere with great loss of life and extensive material damage. Apa Alo was powerless to intervene.

SUMMARY

In sum, in these years political power at Labrang was in the hands of religious officials, who operated a bureaucratic system based on the "charismatic authority of religiously affiliated leaders and more fluid subject chiefs and councils of elders, appointed by heredity and merit."¹²⁰ Gansu, China and Labrang experienced major crises in the Republican period. Apa Alo, his father, brothers and associates sought to promote Labrang's interests in these difficult times as much as possible. They were able to engage in political rhetoric and—if the Chinese sources used here are accurate—were aware of the political debates and how best to deal with

the competing Chinese forces.¹²¹ Their attempts included opening a new, Chinese-style government administrative office (*she zhi ju*) at Labrang. They also sponsored various Tibetan cultural associations, schools and modern infrastructures—a road, an airport, schools, a health clinic and more. According to sources interviewed for this project, these changes were not easy to implement at Labrang in part because of the resistance of conservative religious authorities. They persevered, and were able to institute changes in the community.

In addition to political and social innovations, Apa Alo and his group were also exposed to the economic developments in China that went on in the 1930s, in spite of constant warfare. Their efforts to develop Labrang show that they understood that strengthening unity and promoting modernity required developing the economy and economic ties with Labrang's neighbors. The advantages of political and economic development were surely apparent to Apa Alo and his associates.¹²²

In these years, more than any other period, including the Qing, there were frequent Chinese government expeditions and reports generated about Labrang. Some of these were composed by official government representatives, some were composed by scholars posted to the region and many were travelogues. They share some common factors. Most are descriptive and in this respect give accurate accounts of the Labrang communities as distinctively Tibetan and relatively untouched by outside cultures, including the Qing imperium. However, many have a perjorative tone, and display little understanding or appreciation of Buddhism and Tibetan culture. In general the accounts from the late 1920s, the 1930s and 1940s are concerned with bringing Chinese civilization to the Labrang communities, across what was still a Chinese frontier.

These Republican era accounts can serve as a barometer of Qing and outside influences. Yu Xiangwen's ca. 1933 account includes detailed information about the leadership structures of several different Tibetan and Mongol groups in the Labrang region. He wrote that political control was uncertain in many cases, that it was "religiously under Labrang Monastery and politically independent," and was subject to change. The absence of Qing amban control is evident in the observation that the main regional powers were the individual tribal lords (*tu guan* in Chinese), the representatives from Labrang Monastery, and the Mongol Henan Qinwang.¹²³ Yu Xiangwen displays a rather condescending attitude toward local cultures but describes the educational initiatives promoted by Labrang Monastery in this period. The document shows a culture in transition, struggling to implement new initiatives while still under the leadership of the Tibetan lamas and local Tibetan authorities.

A number of other documents describe the complex relationships between Labrang Monastery and its support communities, how systems of

political control, law and tax collection were administered, and the nature of relations between local Chinese, Tibetans, and Mongols. These sources include descriptions of Tibetan and Chinese attempts to introduce educational, political, legal and technological infrastructures. The conduit for these new initiatives was China, and these documents describe a fully traditional Tibetan culture by this time untouched by external political or economic structures, notably after two centuries of Qing Dynasty contact.¹²⁴ The late 1920s and 1930s brought new interest and innovation to Labrang. However, because of the decline of Feng Yuxiang's and later Nationalist power, increasing chaos in central China, and the anti-Japanese war, the modern initiatives at Labrang faltered. The Republican period at Labrang brought the community closer to the outside world, and with the support of key Labrang officials, unprecedented attempts to initiate then modern developments. These however did not last, and the Labrang community carried on as it had, in an increasingly precarious position, but even closer than ever to its Chinese neighbors.

NOTES

1. Anonymous, "The Gospel Trumpet Sounding in Labrang, Tibet," *The Alliance Weekly* (11 June 1932): 376.

2. See Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord*.

3. See Stevan Harrell, "Introduction," in *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*, ed. Stevan Harrell (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 3–36.

4. See William Coleman, "The Uprising at Batang: Kham and Its Significance in Chinese and Tibetan History," in *Kham Pa Histories: Visions of People, Place and Authority, Proceedings of the Ninth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Leiden 2000*, ed. Lawrence Epstein (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 33.

5. See James E. Sheridan, *China in Disintegration: The Republican Era in Chinese History, 1912–1949* (New York: The Free Press, 1975), 59, 183 ff.

6. See Sheridan, *China in Disintegration*, 27–56; also John K. Fairbank and Albert Feuerwerker, *The Cambridge History of China 13: Republican China 1912–1949*, 2 (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986), 27–125.

7. In addition to interviews with former students, associates, servants and family members of the Fifth, the main literary sources for this study include Yon tan rgya mtsho, *Chos sde chen po bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, 91–109; Thur ma tshang, *Bla brang dgon pa'i lo rgyus mdor bsdus*, 35–45; Rgya zhabs drung tshang skal bzang dkon mchog rgya mtsho (Labrang version), *Ye shes bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan rnam thar*; this latter text has been reprinted as: Rgya zhabs drung tshang skal bzang dkon mchog rgya mtsho, *Kun mkhyen blo bzang ye shes bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i rnam thar* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2005); Rgya zhabs drung tshang skal bzang dkon mchog rgya mtsho, "Thub bstan yongs su rdzogs pa'i mnga' bdag kun gzigs ye shes kyi nyi ma chen po 'jam dbyangs

bzhad pa'i rdo rje sku 'phreng lnga'i rnam par thar ba mdor bsdus su bkod pa," in *Rgya zhabs drung tshang gi gsung 'bum: gnas lnga rig pa'i pandita chen po dkon mchog rgya mtsho'i gsung 'bum*, ed. Dor zhi gdong drug snyems blo (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, 1998), 374–422; *Rgya zhabs drung tshang skal bzang dkon mchog rgya mtsho* (Nanjing), *'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje 'phreng lnga'i rnam par thar ba mdor bsdus*; Labrang Jikmé Gyatso, *Tales of Labrang Tashi Khyil*; Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*; Huang Zhengqing, *Huang Zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*.

8. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 1–2: Chang chun qing ke er Monastery, located about one kilometer from the county of Litang. Gönpö Döndrup's younger brother was Ngawang Tendhar; as a child he entered Gewa Tashi Monastery, then went to Ganden Monastery in central Tibet. He was granted a Geshe degree, returned to Gewa Tashi Monastery, and eventually became the abbot. This data is not included in the Tibetan version of the text.

9. N.B. The text first reads "third" official but later on several occasions reads "second" military official. I follow the most often cited "second."

10. In the Ying Geque [district]. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 2. The 1904 Qing military operations in the Batang and Litang region were overseen by Sichuan Governor Xi Liang, implemented by the Chamdo-based Tibet Commissioner Feng Quan, and in 1905 led by Generals Ma Weiqi and Zhao Erfeng. See Coleman, "The Uprising at Batang," 38–50.

11. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 2–3.

12. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 3.

13. See Sperling, "Awe and Submission," 335.

14. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 4.

15. See Zha Zha, *Labuleng si huo fo shi xi*, 432.

16. Noted in 'Jigs med phrin las rgya mtsho, *Skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug gi rtogs pa brjod pa*, Vol. 2, fol. 424b3, *tsha mo klu kho*.

17. See Dhondup and Diemberger, "Tashi Tsering: The Last Mongol Queen of 'Sogpo,'" 203–204, note 32.

18. See the brief mention of this in *Henan xianzhi* 2, 1021.

19. See Dkon mchog chos 'phel, "Rma lho'i sog yul gyi lo rgyus," 90–159. For the story of Tashi Tséring and her mother kLu sman tsho, the Mongol affiliation with the Mas, etc., see Dhondup and Diemberger, "Tashi Tsering: The Last Mongol Queen of 'Sogpo,'" 197–224.

20. See Chang, Hajji Yusuf, "The Hui (Muslim) Minority in China: An Historical Overview," *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* 8, no. 1 (January 1987), 62–78; Jo-Ann Gross, "Introduction," in *Muslims in Central Asia: Expressions of Identity and Change*, edited by Jo-Ann Gross, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992; Jonathan Lipman, "Ethnic Violence in Modern China: Hans and Huis in Gansu, 1781–1929," in *Violence in China: Essays in Culture and Counterculture*, ed. Jonathan N. Lipman and Stevan Harrell (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990); Jonathan Lipman, "Ethnicity and Politics in Republican China: The Ma Family Warlords of Gansu," *Modern China* 10.3 (July 1984): 285–316; Dru C. Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991.

21. See James E. Sheridan, *China in Disintegration*, 78–83. See William Christie, “Christie Letters,” 15 November 1892.

22. Ma Bufang is called the “president of Qinghai” (le président du Qinghai) by Jagou, *Le 9e Panchen Lama*, 222; for the details of Ma’s life, see Merrill Hunsberger, “Ma Pu-fang in Ch’inghai Province, 1931–1949” (PhD diss., Temple University, 1978).

23. See Renqing Zhaxi and Chen Qingying, “Da geming shiqi labuleng zangzu diqude geming douzheng,” in *Xiahe xian dangshi ziliao* 1, ed. Zhang Qingyou (Lanzhou: Xiahe County Chinese Communist Party Historical Resources Committee, 1991): 1–2.

24. See Renqing Zhaxi & Chen Qingying, “Da geming shiqi labuleng zangzu diqude geming douzheng,” 1–2.

25. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 25. See the mention of this 1918 battle between the Qinghai Muslim and Tibetan armies in Zhang Yuwen, *Zhongzu zajude Labuleng*, 93; see also Zhang Wenyu, *Labuleng shicha ji*, 308.

26. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 28–30. Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 14.

27. See Zhang Wenyu, *Labuleng shicha ji*, 308.

28. Renqing Zhaxi and Chen Qingying, “Da geming shiqi labuleng zangzu diqude geming douzheng,” 2.

29. See A.J. Fesmire, “New Openings in Tibet,” *The Alliance Weekly* (5 August 1922); see Lipman, “The Border World of Gansu,” 244; see *The Alliance Weekly* (1924).

30. See the account of Ma Shou’s involvement at Labrang in Zhang Yuwen, *Zhongzu zajude Labuleng*, 93. The text reports that Ma Shou was “able to speak Fan language, he was fluent in Tibetan” (*neng shuo fan hua tong zang wen*). See Zhang Wenyu, *Labuleng shicha ji*, 308.

31. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 14; Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 36.

32. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 30: The Muslims’ five demands of February 1924 were: 1. the assembled Tibetan units must disperse and never join together on the behalf of Labrang Monastery again; 2. all of the Labrang-associated Tibetans must surrender their guns; 3. ‘Jam dbyangs bzhad pa’s 80 personal attendants and escorts must surrender their weapons; 4. From then on the monastery was to be concerned with religious affairs only; its authority would not extend to secular affairs; and 5. monies generated from individual monks would go to the Muslims.

33. See Zhang Yuwen, *Zhongzu zajude labuleng*, 93; see Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 31.

34. Interview. For a description of Mtshan sgrogs Monastery see Dbang rgyal, “Mtshan sgrogs dgon dga’ ldan bkra shis chos ‘phel gling,” in *Gan lho’i bod brgyud nang bstan dgon sde so’i lo rgyus mdor bsdu* (*bar cha*), *Gannan wenshi ziliao* 10, ed. Gannan zangzu zizhizhou weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao weiyuan hui (Lanzhou, 1993): 200–210. See the brief account of the 1924 battle in Zhang Yuwen, *Zhongzu zajude labuleng*, 93. Mtshan sgrogs Monastery was founded in 1819; interview. See also Zhang Wenyu, *Labuleng shicha ji*, 308–309.

35. Interview.

36. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 73–74. These events are summarized in Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, and *Xiahe Xianzhi*-1970, 80 and 31.

37. See Lipman, "The Border World of Gansu," 247.

38. In Zhang Yuwen, *Zhongzu zajude labuleng*, 93, the sequence of events and who was in charge are unclear.

39. See the brief description of this battle in Gong, *Banli la xia jiao di zhengzhi an ji xing*, 8.

40. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang Zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 22–23; Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 56: Details of the battles between the Muslims, Chinese and Tibetans. Some details are omitted from the Tibetan version. Huang Zhengqing, *Huang Zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 22 (not in Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*) adds that: "Ma Lin killed (*sha*) a village of over 300 people, the Amchok ethnic minority, young, old, men, women, children."

41. See Mrs. Thomas Moseley, "West China Tidings," *The Alliance Weekly* (6 February 1926): 87; see Lipman, "The Border World of Gansu," 249.

42. Interview.

43. Interviews; for a summary of local Muslim and Chinese relations in this period see Lipman, "Ethnicity and Politics in Republican China," 285–316. See also the contextual study by Francoise Aubin, "La version chinoise de l'islam," *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 30.2 (1989): 192–220. For a useful study about Chinese Muslims and Han, though based on research in Taiwan, see Barbara L.K. Pillsbury, "Pig and policy: maintenance of boundaries between Han and Muslim Chinese," *Ethnic Groups* 1.2 (1976): 151–162.

44. See Hunsberger, "Ma Pu-fang in Ch'inghai Province," 160–172; Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord*, 246–252; Harrell, *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*, 7–8, 13, 22–27.

45. See Zhang Yuwen, *Zhongzu zajude labuleng*, 92–96.

46. A descriptive account of the famine is in E. Torvaldson, "Famine in Our Central China Mission Field" and "Starving Chinese," *The Alliance Weekly* (9 January 1926): 25 ff.

47. "The 1920 earthquake may have killed as many as 200,000 people. . ." Lipman, "The Border World of Gansu," 235.

48. Detailed in Mrs. M. Moseley, "Our Abdullam's Cave: Trophies of Grace in Western China," *The Alliance Weekly* (7 June 1930): 363.

49. Mention of the Muslim and Tibetan battle at Labrang in June 1926, Rev. A.C. Snead, "Crusading for Christ in Far-away Fields: The Kansu-Tibetan Border," *The Alliance Weekly* (21 August 1926): 544 ff.

50. See Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord*, 195–197, expresses this clearly.

51. Italics are Sheridan's. See Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord*, 194–195.

52. In Robert Carlson to Elaine Griebenow, private correspondence; includes unpublished excerpts of letters from Robert Ekvall, undated.

53. In Blanche Griebenow, memoirs, March, 1953, unpublished.

54. See Elizabeth F. Ekvall, Carol E. Carlson, and Anna Haupberg, "Greetings from the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission Conference," *The Alliance Weekly* 57.49 (2 February 1924): 791 ff; for some dates and statistics, see "Tibetan Facts for the

Interested," *The Alliance Weekly* (8 March 1924): 25. See also *The Alliance Weekly*, all numbers in 1923–1924.

55. In Robert Carlson to Elaine Griebenow, private correspondence; includes unpublished excerpts of letters from Robert Ekvall, undated, originals in the possession of Mei Griebenow; for a representative account, see the story of W.E. Simpson (no relation to A.J. Simpson, founder of the CMA), murdered while travelling in Khams, in M. G. Griebenow, "Person to Person Evangelism," *The Alliance Weekly* (18 May 1946): 312–313.

56. See the brief biographic information in Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi jiamuyang*, 27.

57. See Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord*, 159 ff.

58. See the brief account of Feng Yuxiang's career in Hunsberger, "Ma Pu-fang in Ch'inghai Province," 29–37; see also the mentions of Feng Yuxiang in Sheridan, *China in Disintegration*, 73–75, 185–187, etc. For an account of the first meeting between Xuan Xiafu and Apa Alo, written by Xuan, see Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi jiamuyang*, 27. For Xuan Xiafu, see Xuan Xiafu, "Ela caodide tiji," (ca. 1937) *Gannan wenshi ziliao* 4, (August 1985): 16–42; Huang Zhengqing, "Zhuihuan wode liangshi yiyou—Xuan Xiafu tongzhi," *Gannan wenshi ziliao* 4, (August 1985): 8–15.

59. See Renqing Zhaxi & Chen Qingying, "Da geming shiqi labuleng zangzu diqude geming douzheng," 2–3.

60. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 78–79; Huang Zhengqing, *Huang Zhengqing yu wushi jiamuyang*, 32–33.

61. See Renqing Zhaxi & Chen Qingying, "Da geming shiqi labuleng zangzu diqude geming douzheng," 3.

62. See Renqing Zhaxi & Chen Qingying, "Da geming shiqi labuleng zangzu diqude geming douzheng," 5. Xuan Xiafu reportedly studied Tibetan language, culture and religion, wore Tibetan clothes, and in ca. 1926 travelled to Dngul rwa, after which he witnessed a Muslim attack on A mchog Monastery, which he protested in writing.

63. See Si Jun, "Jiefang qian Xiahexian jiaoyu shiye fazhan gaikuang," *Gannan wenshi ziliao* 3 (July 1984): 5; Ma Zuling, *Gansu tongzhan shilue* (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, 1988), 12–16.

64. See Renqing Zhaxi & Chen Qingying, "Da geming shiqi labuleng zangzu diqude geming douzheng," 3–4. The founding of Labrang's schools is in part credited to Xuan Xiafu, also credited with Communist Party membership in 1926, with Apa Alo as a local supporter of the school initiatives, in Si Jun, "Jiefang qian xiahexian jiaoyu shiye fazhan gaikuang," 75–76.

65. See Renqing Zhaxi & Chen Qingying, "Da geming shiqi labuleng zangzu diqude geming douzheng," 5. See the article in the same volume about Sadan, one of Xuan Xiafu's Tibetan guides and Apa Alo's friends in Zhang Qingyou and Cai Rangji, "Sadan (Luo Zhanbiao) Zhuanlue," *Xiahe dangshi ziliao* 1, ed. Zhang Qingyou (Lanzhou: Xiahe County Chinese Communist Party Historical Resources Committee, 1991): 7–10. Sadan, or Samudan (1898–1937) was fluent in Chinese, a translator for Apa Alo and Xuan Xiafu. He was Apa Alo's personal assistant during visits to Feng Yuxiang, Ma Qi, to Ningxia, Xining, and elsewhere. He was a monk, but gave up his vows after Ma Qi's attacks at Labrang. He became a fierce fighter and ardent reformer, and was a party, along with Apa Alo and

Xuan Xiafu, to the founding of the “Association for the Advancement of Tibetan Culture,” and reportedly, to the founding of local chapters of Communist youth groups. In ca. 1926 he travelled with Xuan Xiafu and a party of seven to southern Gansu to assess the damages done by Ma Qi’s armies; at this point they had the large meeting with the local leaders. Sadan participated in the meetings held to determine Xiahe County’s borders (9–10; see the account of this meeting in ‘Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje, “Rma chu rdzong gi ‘brog sde,” 61). He held the post of leader of Labrang’s First Military Unit. In 1937, on a pilgrimage to Lhasa, he and his entire entourage of ten people were killed in Yushu, Qinghai, reportedly by Ma Bufang’s forces.

66. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang Zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 26–27.

67. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 70.

68. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 73.

69. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 105–106.

70. Beginning on 5 January 1927, in consultation with Liu Yufeng and Apa Alo; see Zhang Qingyou and Cai Rangji, “Sadan (Luo Zhanbiao) Zhuanlue,” 9. See the list of persons who attended this meeting in Xunhua, in the same source, 9–10. Some of the attendees are familiar, including Zhang Dingyang, the director of the Xiahe provisional government office, and others.

71. See Harrell, *Cultural Encounters on China’s Ethnic Frontiers*. For a perspective on mapping strategies, see Makley, *Violence of Liberation*, 52–53.

72. See the description in *Xiahe Xianzhi*-1970, 75–76.

73. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 73–74; Huang Zhengqing, *Huang Zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 30–31.

74. Front pages in Zhang Yuwen, *Zhongzu zajude labuleng*.

75. See Zhang Qingyou and Cai Rangji, “Sadan (Luo Zhanbiao) Zhuanlue,” 9–10; *Xiahe Xianzhi*-1970, 75.

76. See the account of these events and the detailed description of the establishment of the borders and territories of Xiahe County in the 1930s-era; Zhang Yuwen, *Zhongzu zajude Labuleng*, 93–96.

77. See Zhang Wenyu, *Labuleng shicha ji*, 311–315. See the text written about the Provisional government office, the *She zhi ju*, in Zhang Dingyang, “Labuleng she zhi ji” (1928), in *Zhongguo xibei wenxian congshu*, ed. Zhongguo Xibei Wenxian Congshu Weiyuanhui (1991) [N.B. Pagination in this text is unclear.]. (The author of this text, Zhang Dingyang, is cited as the director of the office, see Zhang Qingyou and Cai Rangji, “Sadan (Luo Zhanbiao) Zhuanlue,” 9). This text includes mention of the plan as it was being formulated in Lanzhou, to introduce government offices, schools, financial infrastructures, and transportation systems (5). It records conflicts between the Nationalist military and local troops, resulting in many deaths (13–14). This text includes photographs of the *She zhi ju* and tax bureau offices at Labrang, the headquarters of the security department, and the post office. It includes a map of Xiahe County that exceeds present-day Chinese provincial borders (25), and a map of the town and monastery (26). It mentions efforts to bring “civilization” and an ideology of three peoples to Labrang (33). See the discussion of *tu guans*, local Tibetan leaders, to whom yearly taxes were paid. With the exception of the photographs, much of the information in this interesting and official document is found elsewhere.

78. See Harrell, *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*, 3–36.

79. See Zhang, *Labuleng shicha ji*, 307; see the more detailed account in Zhang, “Zhongzu zajude Labuleng,” 92–96.

80. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 81. See the account of the new elementary schools in Zhang Yuwen, *Labulengde jiaoyu zhuangkuang*, 113–121. This source reports that Apa Alo followed (*cun ru*) Chinese culture in order to advance Tibetans’ knowledge and to seek ethnic harmony. See the descriptions of the schools and the charts and surveys of the student body in the integrated primary school in Zhang Wenyu, *Labuleng shicha ji*, 376–388. This text includes a detailed survey and charts of the different classes of students, 381–388. See the long passage, ca. early 1930s, on education in Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 385–398, especially note the breakdown of students and literacy and linguistic competence in the table on 391. See also the passages on the schools in *Gan qing zang bianqu kaocha ji*, 62–64. See the remarks about schools, and the fact that Tibetan students were given Chinese names, in Mei Yibao, *Labuleng zhi xing*, 319.

81. See Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 389. Apa Alo recruited an educator, Mei Yibao, to assess the academic needs at Labrang, see Mei Yibao, *Labuleng zhi xing*, 304.

82. See Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 386.

83. See Si Jun, “Jiefang qian Xiahexian jiaoyu shiye fazhan gaikuang,” 76.

84. See the sections on economics, which reports that there were in 1935 some 180 Han and Hui stores (389) in Xiahe, in Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 389–394.

85. See Xiahe Xianzhi-1970, 78–79. See Gu Jiegang, *Xibei kaocha riji* (ca. 1930), 474–475. This is a descriptive account from the author’s travel diary. The descriptions are vivid and detailed, but the author does not seem well informed about local histories. In these pages he also cites his visit to the Association for the Advancement of Tibetan Culture, 474. In the following pages Gu Jiegang recorded that there was some difficulty finding qualified teachers for the elementary schools, and that Tibetan women and girls were not allowed to attend, 479. This was to change in the early 1940s. Gu Jiegang also reported that ethnic tensions, particularly between Hui and Tibetans, were very sensitive and sometimes there were violent clashes, 479. The founding of the schools is dated to 1926 in Deng Long & Zhao Shi, *Labuleng ji lue* (*A Brief Account of Labrang*) (1944), in *Zhongguo xibei wenxian congshu*, ed. Zhongguo Xibei Wenxian Congshu Weiuyanhui (Lanzhou, Gansu, 1991), 2.

86. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 77 and 99; Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi jiamuyang*, 41–42.

87. See Li An-che, *History of Tibetan Religion*, 246.

88. See Labrang Jikmé Gyatso, *Tales of Labrang Tashi Khyil*, 73–74. For studies of Chinese educational reforms in the Chinese provinces, parallel in date and often motive, see *Education, Culture, and Identity in Twentieth-Century China*, ed. Glen Peterson, Ruth Hayhoe & Yongling Lu (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2001). For the important roles of foreign and Confucian cultures in Chinese educational reform, see for example the brief comments in the editors’ Introduction, 8–16; for an emphatic statement of the Imperial, Republican and Communist

educational policies, see Stig Thøgersen, "State and Society in Chinese Education," 188–189 and also Zheng Yuan, "The Status of Confucianism in Modern Chinese Education, 1901–49: A Curricular Study," 193–216, both in *Education, Culture, and Identity in Twentieth-Century China*, ed. Glen Peterson, Ruth Hayhoe & Yongling Lu (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2001); see the full length study on the conflict between traditional and foreign influences in Chinese education in Thomas D. Curran, *Educational Reform in Republican China: The Failure of Educators to Create a Modern Nation* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2005).

89. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 33–39.

90. See Deng Long & Zhao Shi, *Labuleng ji lue*, 2.

91. See the brief account of the Salar Muslims in Rev. Carter D. Holton, "Among the Salars of the Tibetan Borderland," *The Alliance Weekly* (21 May 1932): 329 ff.

92. See Anonymous, "Getting a Foothold on the Tibetan Border," *The Alliance Weekly*, 15 March 1930: 168.

93. See Rev. A.R. Fesmire, "Our Foreign Mail Bag," *The Alliance Weekly* (22 March 1930): 187; see also Rev. A.R. Fesmire, "Through Perils Manifold in Kansuh, West China," *The Alliance Weekly* (14 December 1929): 809 ff.

94. See Anonymous, "How Long, Lord, How Long?: The Moslems of West China Hear the Gospel, and Reject the Savior," *The Alliance Weekly* (17 May 1930): 315.

95. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 27, 47. In 1932 a chapter of the Communist Party was started in the Gansu, Qinghai and Ningxia regions, with headquarters in Lanzhou. Xuan Xiafu was in this movement. See Ma Zuling, *Gansu tongzhan shilue*, 7; for a list of the major lords in and around the Labrang region in this period, see Huang Zhengqing, "Gan chuan kang bianqu tугuan fenbu gaikuang" (1941), in *Xibei minzu zongjiao shi liao wen zhai*, ed. Gansu Library Reference Cataloguing Department (Lanzhou, 1984): 308–310.

96. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 49–51.

97. See Rgya zhabs drung tshang skal bzang dkon mchog rgya mtsho (gsung 'bum), "'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje lnga'i nram par thar ba mdor bsdu su bkod pa," 374–422. Note especially 404–422.

98. Explicitly stated in Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 50, 43–44. See Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi nram thar*, 100–101. In 1941, he became "regional Tibetan military leader" of the Nationalists (*Guo min jun wei ren de fan bing siling*).

99. These data are from Xiahe Xianzhi-1970, 6–7, 12. There was also a Telegraph Bureau established some years earlier, in 1928, but perhaps this was not wireless, see Deng and Zhao, *Labuleng ji lue*, 2.

100. See Deng and Zhao, *Labuleng ji lue*, 14–17. For an explicit statement of the power structures in this region, see Ji Ke, "Huang Zhengqing yu Yang Fuxing fenzhixiade 'An duo zang min qu'" (1947), in *Xibei minzu zongjiao shi liao wen zhai*, ed. Gansu Library Reference Cataloguing Department (Lanzhou: Gansu Library, 1984): 312–313.

101. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 51–54; Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi nram thar*, 130–131; see the mention of the Long March fighters being assisted by Tibetans with food, clothing & sup-

plies in Ma Zuling, *Gansu tongzhan shilue*, 34–35; 34 includes description of the Choné lord's assistance.

102. See Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi jiamuyang*, 55: In 1936, Ma Bufang made another attempt on Xiahe and Labrang. However, he met the Nationalist Army en route and was turned away from Labrang.

103. Interview; not named but most likely Apa Alo's brother, Dbal mang tshang, who served a Treasurer in Dzöge Nyinma at that time. This source mentions the Fifth 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa's 1940 visit to Dngul rwa. See the account of these events from 1937–1951 in 'Jam dbyangs & Skal bzang rdo rje, "Rma chur dzong gi 'brog sde," 61–62.

104. See Sheng Jingxin, "Gansu zangqu jixing," 17.

105. See Sheng Jingxin, "Gansu zangqu jixing," 18. In these years there was a health clinic established at Labrang.

106. See Ma Wuji, *Gansu xiahe zangmin diaocha ji*, 10–11.

107. Ma Wuji, *Gansu xiahe zangmin diaocha ji*, 10.

108. See Ma Wuji, *Gansu xiahe zangmin diaocha ji*, 38–39.

109. See Ma Wuji, *Gansu xiahe zangmin diaocha ji*, 41–44. Ma Wuji, *Gansu xiahe zangmin diaocha ji*, 14–15 describes the economic environment at Labrang, and the main products traded. These included wool, fox pelts, sheep skins, horses, tea, etc. See the detailed table describing Xiahe's political structures following the text, i.e. after p. 44, of Ma Wuji's article, which includes specific data (and personnel names) about politics, military affairs, economics, culture, public health, and communications.

110. See the number of "underground" Communists at Xiahe before 1949, some 6 in Xiahe and 23 in the affiliated communities, in the Appendix, titled "Jiefangchu xiahe gongwei danganziliao shanglu," in Zhang Qingyou, "Xuewo caoyuan hua caihong—Wu Zhengang liushi zhuan lue," in *Xiahe xian dangshi ziliao* 1, ed. Zhang Qingyou (Lanzhou: Xiahe County Chinese Communist Party Historical Resources Committee, 1991): 97–98. In the same essay see the mention of the founding of the "Revolutionary Committee of Tibetan Communists" (Zangzu gongchan juyi geming xiaozu) by Wu Zhengang, Pingcuo Wangjie, and two others, in 1941, p. 108.

111. See the chronology of Communist Party events in Xiahe in Zhang Qingyou, "Xuewo caoyuan hua caihong—Wu Zhengang liushi zhuan lue," 101–116.

112. See Zhang Qingyou, "Xuewo caoyuan hua caihong—Wu Zhengang liushi zhuan lue," 30.

113. See Ya Hanzhang, "Jiefangchu xiahe jianzhengde jingyan he jiaoxun" in *Xiahe xian dangshi ziliao* 1, ed. Zhang Qingyou (Lanzhou: Xiahe County Chinese Communist Party Historical Resources Committee, 1991): 41. On 42–43 this author advises that Apa Alo be used in different places, e.g. Qinghai, Xikang, to promote Communist ends, and not sent away. On 43 this author admits some Communist Party mistakes, particularly over-estimating the revolutionary sentiments of the Xiahe Tibetans, supposing that there was uniform dislike of the Huang family, when in fact it was not widespread, the too early and too severe attacks on Apa Alo, Dbal mang tshang, Gönpö Döndrup and Huang Wenyan (Amgon), the "Four Big Family Members" (*si da jia zu*), the dismantling of the monastery's tax system and prison, and in general making too many enemies (41). Further, on 42

the author admits that the Communists took too much money from the Labrang community, randomly beat too many people, arrested too many innocent people and so on, making the Tibetans want to return to their traditional system. The following article in this volume continues with lists of corrupt officials, some of whom were removed, and their activities, including theft of monastery treasure, extortion, illegal arms trading, prostitution (50); see Zhang Qingyou, "Jiefang chuji xiahe wei gong wei fushi yu fan fushi douzheng shimo," In *Xiahe dangshi ziliao* 1, ed. Zhang Qingyou (Lanzhou: Xiahe County Chinese Communist Party Historical Resources Committee, 1991): 46–53.

114. See Rev. M.G. Griebenow, Letter to Rev. A.C. Snead (14 March 1949).

115. See Chang Qiuying, "Wo dui dixia dang geming douzhengde yidian huiyi," in *Xiahe xian shi ziliao* 1, ed. Zhang Qingyou (Lanzhou: Xiahe County Chinese Communist Party Historical Resources Committee, 1991): 16–17. Apa Alo's Chinese assistant, Liu Zifeng, was persuaded by his wife, Chang Qiuying, to convince Apa Alo to join the Communist Party. Finally, when the Red Army arrived in Gansu and later in Xiahe in 1949, another Communist Party intelligence officer, Du Pengcheng, who worked for Wang Zhen, the commander of the Communist forces, also persuaded Apa Alo to join the Party. Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 39.

116. See Du Pengcheng, "Zai xiahede rizi li," in *Xiahe xian dangshi ziliao* (Vol.1), ed. Zhang Qingyou (Lanzhou: Xiahe County Chinese Communist Party Historical Resources Committee, 1991): 27.

117. See Ma Zuling, *Gansu tongzhan shilue*, 117.

118. On several occasions Apa Alo mentions successes in the Mé (dMe) region, which has a long history of conflict with Labrang. See Huang Zhengqing, *Kan lho bod rigs rang skyong khul gyi lo gsum ring gi gnas tshul* (Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, 1957), 8, 20, etc.

119. See Huang Zhengqing, *Kan lho bod rigs rang skyong khul gyi lo gsum ring gi gnas tshul*, 15 on the role of religion in the "new society," and how monks were working in the community offices.

120. See Leach, "The Frontiers of Burma," 237 ff.

121. For a summary of the debates on the development of nationalism in this period see Timothy Brook, "Collaborationist Nationalism in Occupied Wartime China," in *Nation Work: Asian Elites and National Identities*, ed. Timothy Brook and Andre Schmid (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 159–190.

122. For a discussion of economic developments in China that Apa Alo might have observed, see Margherita Zanasi, "Nationalism, Autarky and Economic Planning in 1930s China," (PhD diss, Columbia University, 1997); see also Margherita Zanasi, "Chen Gongbo and the Construction of a Modern Nation," in *Nation Work: Asian Elites and National Identities*, ed. Timothy Brook and Andre Schmid (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 125–129, 133–137.

123. See Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 324–325, 327, quotation from 327.

124. For some specifics, see Zhang Dingyang, *Labuleng she zhi ji* (1928), 6–9, 31–32, 34–37. See Mei Yibao, *Labuleng zhi xing*, 314–318. See the Republican-era account in *Dao Labuleng de yantu jianwen* (1933); for discussions of regional conflicts and understanding of authority, see Gong Ziying, *Banli la xia jiao di zhengzhi an ji*

xing. See the notes in *Labuleng paizhu chuanshu shang aba geng cha bu danba yu dangdi tuguang fasheng jiu fen jing guo ji jie jue ban fa* (1933). See the account of Labrang in Gu Jiegang, *Xibei kaocha riji*. See the detailed account of Labrang's government and different local ethnic groups in Zhang Wenyu, *Labuleng shicha ji*, esp. 299–319, 395–399, 409–412. See the comments on Labrang's government, the brief historical account, and the relevant tables in Deng Long & Zhao Shi, *Labuleng ji lue* (1936). See the 1936 *Gan qing zang bianqu kaocha ji*, 54, 70–77, 94–99, 104–107, 125. See Ma Wuji, *Gansu xiahe zangmin diaocha ji*, 1–3, 10–12, 41. See Apa Alo's remarks in Huang Zhengqing, *Kan lho bod rigs rang skyong khul gyi lo gsum ring gi gnas tshul*.

Chapter 6

Visions and Realities at Labrang

This book began with a general description of Amdo, continued with a chapter on its religions, and then another on its social structures. The fourth chapter included a narrative about the interactions of the authorities lamas at Labrang, and the fifth chapter continued with a description of Labrang in the Republican period. This sixth chapter summarizes some of the key points for understanding Labrang. The chapter first notes that the monastery had political power, and was in effect the dominant ruling agency over its entire estate. At the same time, however, the Labrang authorities were well aware that even if largely defined by their central Tibetan roots, their community was located in close proximity to major civilizations, especially the Mongol, Manchu, Chinese, and Muslim. This was a borderlands society, and close proximity necessitated special types of diplomacy and intercultural communication. Finally, the chapter includes assessments of the actual implementation of Tibetan, Manchu, and Chinese political policies. The goal is to further the understanding of authority structures in this complex region, and to provide some possible contexts for the descriptive data presented in the previous chapters.

WHO WAS IN CONTROL OF LABRANG'S ESTATE?

The greater Labrang Monastery community was a predominantly Tibetan enclave with religious and political ties to authorities in Lhasa. As detailed in Chapter V, it was a “nexus of power”¹ built and sustained by a network of support communities. This is an important dimension of Labrang. It was a major social, religious, and political institution with

inherited Tibetan definitions. In other words, the Labrang community had a “socio-political organization [that] served to perpetuate a local self-identity, itself rooted in Tibetan Buddhism . . . with local chieftains and warlords taking control of trade and community polity.”²

The religious sensibilities included under the Buddhist umbrella at Labrang and in its territories contributed to “a common psychological make-up manifested in common specific features of national culture.”³ The key shared feature was recognition of the spiritual and temporal authority of Labrang Monastery. A scholar who worked in the region in 1938-1941 wrote that: “[p]olitically the mechanism has proved the most stable in comparison with any other form of government which has been in contact with it.”⁴ Religious piety and rhetoric served as rationales for political administration and taxes, *corvée*, and community commitment to sponsorship.⁵

The regional and religiously authenticated nexus of power is well illustrated in the Republican period, when a Gansu official cited the Tibetan unwillingness to give up their identification with the local Labrang community and its regional control, which the official considered an obstacle to the exercise of Gansu’s and Sichuan’s political authority in Ngawa tsodruk, one of Labrang’s territories. The Chinese official wrote that in his view the Tibetans’ recognition of Labrang’s political legitimacy, their mistrust of Han officials, as well as economic and other factors were intractable problems for the implementation of Chinese policies.⁶

The difficulties that the Chinese and other outside forces have had in establishing their authority over the Labrang nexus of power have already been described in this book. There were problems of authority definition documented in Qing, Republican, and Communist periods, in addition to claims of authority at Labrang by the Khoshud Mongol court, and by the Qinghai Muslim⁷ leaders.

MANCHU AND CHINESE POLITY AND THEIR RELEVANCE AT LABRANG

In this shifting political context the early eighteenth-century Qing sought to define their internal politics and foreign policies, and formulate their ethnic, political, and social self-identity⁸ in a world increasingly divided up into empires by European colonial powers.⁹ In addition to the peculiar relationships with the Labrang and other Tibetans, the growth and implementation of the imperial vision, or the Qing “conquest,”¹⁰ is also described as sporadic occasions of imperialism and colonialism.¹¹ Qing imperialism in Yunnan for example involved population transfers, permanent settlements, and standing militias in what were not historical

Chinese territories. This was true Qing imperial expansion in which “. . . indigenous communities simply became part of China.”¹² However, Qing expansion was intermittent, and not uniform.

The situation was complicated. Elliot Sperling has written that authority in frontier regions—like Labrang—was poorly defined, and that the “Qing [emperors], as paramount rulers, often ruled through local rulers and polities.”¹³ Qing governance, well established in Yunnan, was transient in central Tibet after the 1788-1792 Gurkha wars,¹⁴ and minimal at Labrang. During Qianlong’s reign the Qing clearly had the capability to send armies as far as Nepal and Xinjiang, but the Qing did not actually invade, conquer, and rule Labrang.¹⁵

The argument put forth in this book is that instead of a Manchu political model the Labrang government maintained its own political and social infrastructures. In the Labrang political environment the monastery’s *labrang*/estate developed an infrastructure validated and run by monasteries and supported by its extended community. In other words, at Labrang “Tibetan Buddhist monasteries became ‘the de facto centralized state institution’ of a decentralized nomadic society,”¹⁶ and their political influence was recognized by the Chinese and Mongol courts and local family chiefs.¹⁷

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries brought the end of the dynasty and the beginning of a new vision, an “imagined, collective body, the Chinese nation.”¹⁸ The Manchu emperors were replaced by Han leaders and intellectuals, and the Qing vision replaced by new, in part European-originated ideas of multi-ethnic republics.¹⁹ At the outset these new ideas worked for Labrang, because at least until the mid-twentieth century the new theories did not, or were not able to preclude the continuance of local solidarity and governance. The transition from Qing to Republican control of China was to the Labrang Tibetans yet another chapter in the process of shifting alliances, a new neighbor with a new vision to be accommodated and engaged.

The new ideas about Chinese nationalism were not uniform, and subject to reinterpretation and different applications in the first half of the twentieth century. On one hand the new Chinese “nation” was conceived of as a multi-ethnic or multi-limbed composite with different component parts, or as a family of individuals, each possessing his and her own unique personalities. On the other hand, however, membership in the Chinese nation was by some defined as a matter of Han ethnicity, Han culture, language, and heritage.²⁰

As a result of the pressure to redefine membership in the new Chinese nation, some scholars asserted that the territories of Republican China and the People’s Republic of China were and are based on the empires of the Qing and earlier dynasties. In this view, all of the Labrang territories

are and have been part of a single united “body” or “element” (*duo yuan yi ti*). The claim is that China has always been a united state with many minorities, and that it has always been culturally and economically integrated.²¹ These assertions reduce the complexities of ethnic interactions, notably at Labrang.

While the Labrang territories are part of the People’s Republic of China and the Tibetans are thus citizens of China, in pre-1958 Labrang and Amdo they did not consider themselves as “Chinese people,” especially when this is defined by Han ancestry, cultures, language, and ethnicity.²² Moreover, Labrang and Amdo Tibetans did not embrace the universalist vision of a united, multi-ethnic society operable in the greater Labrang region.²³ Resistance to the new vision resulted in a violent takeover in 1958.

Through its history Labrang enjoyed relative political autonomy and maintained strong ties to Lhasa and to its cross-border neighbors. This book has tried to “recover a multiplicity of voices from the frontier.”²⁴ Sweeping statements of Qing imperial, later Chinese, Mongol, and Tibetan authority do not “recognize differentiation, modification, development, decline or division.”²⁵ There was a multiplicity of voices at Labrang, and the institution did evolve on its own terms into a social and political unit that for all practical purposes functioned independently of its powerful neighbors.²⁶

CONCLUSION

At Labrang and in most Amdo monasteries the Tibetan institution of “combined religious and political” authority prevailed and Tibetan Buddhist monastic officials exercised authority outside of any connections to outside governments.²⁷ The proliferation of Tibetan Buddhist monasteries came as a result of—and in response to—unrestrained piety, gradual disintegration of central Mongol authority, and the increase of Manchu power. Even so, at Labrang the Qing authorities did not attempt to change social structures or religious beliefs and practices; they sought only to control territorial boundaries, to increase trade and communications, and to secure even further boundaries against enemies in Ili and Zunghar territories, and in Siberia.²⁸ The support for Labrang reflected a variable Qing sense of religious piety and acknowledgement of the monastery’s social and political authority.

Labrang’s *labrang*, its inherited estate, developed an infrastructure validated and run by monasteries. Its political influence was recognized by the Qing and Mongol courts and by local leaders.²⁹ In the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries Labrang Monastery with its support community was, for all practical purposes, an autonomous Ti-

betan enclave, representing itself in Beijing, Nanjing, Chongqing, Lhasa, at the Mongol seats of power, and in neighboring communities.³⁰

Labrang was, again in William Coleman's words, a "nexus of power," where regional ethnicity, society, politics, and religion developed in discourse with, but independent of, its neighbors. Understanding Labrang on its own terms, outside of a Chinese, Manchu, Muslim, or narrow methodological lenses, is the challenge. The groups who made up the "nexus of power" at Labrang included local nomadic and sedentary Tibetan chieftains; pre-eminent Tibetan monastic leaders; representatives from the Qing and Chinese governments; Mongol princes, chieftains, and monastic officials; and Muslim armies and their leaders.³¹

Labrang's social and political history can be divided into different stages. These are convenient but arbitrary, and overlapping. First, the early eighteenth century post-Lhasa, Mongol phase brought the founding and Tibet-Mongolia-Qing recognition. Second, mid-late eighteenth century peak of the Qing Dynasty and its non-intervention at Labrang brought some stability, prosperity and expansion. Meanwhile, late eighteenth and early nineteenth century increase of wealth and power brought internal conflict to Labrang, the erosion of the Qing power, and later the gradual ascendance of the Muslims. The power vacuum in the mid- and late nineteenth centuries enabled rapid Muslim expansion and the early twentieth century end of the Qing Dynasty. The Republican era brought chaos, hope, continuity and modernity to Labrang, but too little and too slowly to keep pace with world events. Lack of vision and lack of understanding of world events and Asian politics contributed to the Labrang communities' inability to articulate a unified and consistent policy. However, given that conditions in China and central Tibet were so inconsistent and ineffective, by 1958 even a locally united community may not have prevented the catastrophic course of events. In 1958 the social, religious and political infrastructures that governed the greater Labrang community were dismantled by the Chinese central government, beginning a new chapter in the history of Labrang Monastery and its support communities.

Labrang Monastery was special in many ways, notably because it was one of the largest monasteries ever built in any Tibetan area. It was a religious and educational institution, in its time home to some of Tibet's most prolific writers, in some cases going beyond the literary accomplishments of central Tibetan monasteries. Labrang's teachers valued learning, reading and writing. It housed an enormous library collection and a printing house. Evidence of the Labrang teachers' commitment to literary activity is for example in the Second Jamyang Zhepa's efforts to build the library collection of rare Tibetan manuscripts, also much reduced after 1958.

The monastery had a fully developed academic curriculum in all fields of Buddhist philosophy and ritual, and in arts, crafts, and medicine. Like

other Tibetan Buddhist monasteries Labrang provided religious instruction and opportunities to gain religious merit by worship and donations of all kinds, and in addition the monastery offered death rituals, rituals for health and longevity, medical prognosis and prescription, religious rituals for travel security, success and good luck in general. In these and manifold other ways the monastery was fully integrated with the community. It was one of the most prominent Tibetan Buddhist academic institutions in Tibetan history.

Labrang was also unique in its latter day support of lay and monastic educational innovations, in this unlike other places in Tibet. The Labrang authorities allowed and supported the introduction of modern subjects into curriculum for monks, the study of ethnic Tibetan music and art forms, local public schools for lay people, and educational initiatives for women. In these Labrang was very nearly unique in Tibet.

Socially and politically Labrang interacted with its community at large, and in these ways was typical, operating in ways similar to other Tibetan monasteries. While structurally similar to social and political structures in central Tibet, it was dependent for its sustenance on the nomadic and over time increasing agrarian economy, and on the estate structure of its society. Its wealth was in water and grazing rights, in wool, tax revenues, corvée, and to varying extents goods manufactured in, bartered and bought in surrounding areas. It accumulated wealth and properties much as other Tibetan monasteries, often by willed gifts, offerings, tax, and exchange. Community incomes, the earnings and labors of the people themselves were commodities. The monastery site itself supported a thriving marketplace for the regional economy that served to generate income for the monastery. In these ways, even though peculiar to Amdo, Labrang's support systems functioned in patterns similar to those in other Tibetan communities.

Politically, the monastic estates at Labrang controlled the community economy and had political jurisdiction over its properties. It had the right to impose taxes, require corvée labor, and to punish those who refused to comply. The monastery authorities mediated disputes in its communities and provided external diplomacy with its neighbors. The monastery was relied on to settle criminal matters when such went beyond local abilities. The monastery also endorsed militia movements and served as a rallying force to raise militia forces. Labrang Monastery serves as an example of the Tibetan interface of religious, social, economic, and political matters.

Labrang, while self conscious about its monastic mission, was nonetheless relatively pluralistic, and in latter years more progressive than most Tibetan monastic communities. It was integrated with its lay community, and given its remote location, far from the Tibetan cultural center in Lhasa, its close proximity to several different civilizations, including the Mongol, Chinese, Manchu, Muslim, and others, Labrang both retained a sense

of monastic insularity and intransigent conservatism and yet was over the years gradually more tolerant than other Tibetan communities of its neighbors and of innovations in its communities. Examples of religious and ethnic flexibility include the interactions with regional Muslims and gradual acceptance of a Muslim resident community, the institutionalization of Tibetan Buddhist missionary activity in Chinese areas (the “Chinese” Gyanakpa Tibetans), latter day tolerance of a Chinese community and their religion, allowance of Christian missionary activity, institutionalization of a Nyingma group (the Ngakpas) as an integral part of the community, allowance of regional Bon practice, and others. Politically, latter day Labrang authorities sought to upgrade governance by imitating central Tibetan institutions and even for a brief period, Chinese models.

Labrang’s political posture in its borderlands location was also unique. From its founding in a period of Mongol strength in Tibet and rapidly ascending Manchu Qing power, Labrang itself evolved into a nexus of power on the edge of the Tibetan Plateau, in close proximity to its neighbors, their cultures and governance. The Labrang authorities learned to court their neighbors in succession, making strategic alliances with others to meet the often fluctuating demands of the times. This process worked well for Labrang; by shifting alliances it was able to grow and prosper in an often volatile environment. In these alliances Labrang neighbors were content to allow Labrang its regional autonomy, and indeed, this worked to Labrang’s advantage. However, after the Qing Dynasty, in the late decades of the Chinese Republican and the early Communist periods, Labrang’s neighbors increasingly moved away from the loose structure of the Qing and sought to incorporate the Labrang properties in a more centrally-defined Chinese political vision, one largely taken from European political thinkers of the day. Even so, Labrang’s system remained intact up to 1958 and the Chinese Communist takeover, dismantling, and re-definition of the Labrang community at large.

NOTES

1. See Coleman, “The Uprising at Batang,” 33.
2. See Academica Tibetica, *The Eastern Regions of Tibet, ca. 1940–1950* (Washington: International Campaign for Tibet, 1996).
3. See Mark Juergensmeyer, *Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), 348; Dreyfus, “Tibetan Religious Nationalism,” 37–56.
4. See Li An-che, *Labrang: A Study in the Field*, 108; cf. Steven Collins and Andrew Huxley, “The Post-Canonical Adventures of Mahāśammata,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 24 (1996): 623–648; see Kulke and Rothermund, *A History of India*, 136–138.

5. See Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, 286; see Harrell, *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*, 27–36.

6. See the full descriptions in Gong Ziyang, *Banli la xia jiao di zhengzhi an ji xing*, 1, 11, 13–14, 16, 23, 30, 32–33. See Ma Zuling, *Gansu tongzhan shilue*, 40–41; See also the prohibitions against immigration of Han and Hui families to Labrang/Xiahe until the very late 1920s in Mei Yibao, *Labuleng zhi xing*, 314–315; see Emily T. Yeh, “Living together in Lhasa: Ethnic relations, coercive amity, and subaltern cosmopolitanism,” in *The Other Global City*, ed. Shail Mayaram (Routledge, 2008), 54–85.

7. Jagou and others noted that Ma Bufang was called the “president of Qinghai” (le president du Qinghai); see Jagou, *Le 9e Panchen Lama*, 222.

8. See Huang Pei, *Autocracy at Work: A Study of the Yung-cheng Period, 1723–1735* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), 51–110; see Crossley, *Empire at the Margins*, 2–3.

9. Hostetler, esp. 25–30 makes it clear that the Qing was very self-conscious of its global position and its construction of an empire in the context of European empire builders. Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise: Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern China* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001); see also Jack Gray, *Rebellions and Revolutions in China from the 1800s to the 1980s* (Oxford University Press, 1990). See the comments on colonialism in Hansen, *Frontier People*, 6–8; for a broad range of examples of Qing polity see Crossley, *Empire at the Margins*; for a brief evaluation of Qing polity, see Beatrice S. Bartlett, “Review of Evelyn S. Rawski, *The Last Emperors: A Social History of Qing Imperial Institutions*,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 61.1 (June 2001): 177. 2001. For problems with the term and concept of “colonialism” see Makley, *Violence of Liberation*, 48–49.

10. See Sperling, “Awe and Submission,” 325; Heuschert, “Legal Pluralism in the Qing Empire,” 320–324; Herman, “National Integration and Regional Hegemony.”

11. See Giersch, “A Motley Throng,” 71; see also 72.

12. See Giersch, “A Motley Throng,” 71.

13. See Sperling, “Awe and Submission,” 326, 335.

14. See Tirtha Prasad Mishra, “A Critical Assessment of the Nepal-Tibet Treaty 1856,” in *Tibet and Her Neighbors: A History*, ed. Alex McKay (London: Edition Hansjorg Mayer, 2003), 137–148.

15. See this emphatically and unequivocally stated in Gray, *Rebellions and Revolutions in China*, 93–96 ff.

16. See Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 254, in the section titled “Qing administration of Tibetan Buddhism.” Rawski does not cite the source of this quote. See Samuel, *Civilized Shamans*, esp. 84; 70–86. For a list of Labrang’s supporting monasteries and their locations in Chinese provinces, see Luo Faxi, *Labulengsi gai kuang*, 102–107; Joseph Fletcher, “Ch’ing Inner Asia c. 1800,” 92–94, 101; see Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 255–257; see the descriptions of monastery life and regional monastic bureaucratic infrastructures only mentioned here in Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Frontier II*, 37–73.

17. See Gaubatz, *Beyond the Great Wall*, 24–26; see A.P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*; Millward, *Beyond the Pass*, 2–19; Fletcher, “Ch’ing Inner Asia c. 1800,” 37, 106; Fletcher wrote that central Tibet had some secular administrative authority in Amdo. This was “. . . till about the middle of the 19th century, a commissioner called *sgar-dpon*, whose functions concerned above all

trade and the control of local monasteries," Fletcher, "Ch'ing Inner Asia c. 1800," 94; see Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 173; Fletcher, "Ch'ing Inner Asia c. 1800," 37, 106; Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, 301. See Millward, "New Perspectives on the Qing Frontier."

18. See Hong-yuan Chu and Peter Zarrow, "Modern Chinese Nationalism: The Formative Stage," in *Exploring Nationalisms of China: Themes and Conflicts*, ed. C.X. George Wei and Xiaoyuan Liu (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 4.

19. On the sources and definitions of Chinese nationalism see See Jilin Xu, "Intellectual Currents behind Contemporary Chinese Nationalism," in *Exploring Nationalisms of China: Themes and Conflicts*, ed. C.X. George Wei and Xiaoyuan Liu (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 27–39.

20. For Han ethnicity as a key component of new Chinese nationalism, see Hong-yuan Chu and Peter Zarrow, "Modern Chinese Nationalism," 5, 7, 9, 11–13, 15–16. For a detailed study of nationalism in the modern period see Suisheng Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism* (Stanford University Press, 2004), 1–44, 92–97, 122; for the emergence of Chinese nationalism see Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism*, esp. 2–16, 68–79 (on Tibetan areas), 99. For the period under study see Leibold, 4–7, 73–79, 99, 122 ff.

21. See Fei Xiaotong, a leading Chinese anthropologist, in Gu Zucheng, *Ming qing zhi zang shiyao* (Lhasa: Tibet People's Publishing House, 2000), 1–3, 5; see Nicola DiCosmo, "Qing Colonial Administration in Inner Asia," *The International History Review* 20.2 (June 1998): 287–309. See the 1935 account of increasing foreign awareness and interest in Labrang in Zhang Wenyu, *Labuleng shicha ji*, 296–297. The fear of foreign interest in Labrang is reflected in a Chinese writer's resentment of the questions of a foreign female Christian missionary (perhaps Blanche Griebenow), which he feels are attempts to alienate Labrang from Chinese territory. In response he wrote of the necessity of a Chinese military presence in Labrang, in case of a foreign invasion, in Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shehui diaocha*, 401–403. See also Tu Wei-ming, "Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center," in *The Living Tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today*, ed. Tu Wei-ming. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 1–34.

22. The criteria for Chinese citizenship are discussed in detail in Peter Zarrow, "Introduction," *Imagining the People: Chinese Intellectuals and the Concept of Citizenship, 1890–1920*, ed. Joshua A. Fogel & Peter G. Zarrow (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997). In his Introduction, Peter Zarrow summarizes the Chinese sense of identity, writing that "... mainstream Chinese thought was historically predisposed to 'culturalism,' or a sense of center and periphery largely defined by cultural characteristics, especially mastery of high Confucian culture and ritual practice . . .," in Peter Zarrow, "Introduction," 32 n4. See also the emphatic statements in the same volume by Murata Yūjirō. "Dynasty, State and Society: The Case of Modern China," 116–123. In a different approach, Mette Halskov Hansen wrote that the Labrang Tibetans were understood as political citizens (*zhongguo ren*) insofar as the Chinese government controlled the region. They were not however understood as members of a common Chinese nation (*zhongguo minzu*). See Hansen, *Frontier People*, 193.

23. See the discussion of the problems of Marxist identification of nomadic cultures in Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, 6 ff; for one of the sources of modern

Chinese rhetoric, see J.V. Stalin, *Works: 1928–March 1929*, vol. 11 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954), 348–349. For an analysis of Marxist categories in Mongolia, see Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society*, 25–32, 48–49; Buck, “Dimensions of Ethnic and Cultural Nationalism in Asia,” 6; see the assertion that religion, in this example Islam, is unrelated to nationalism and ethnicity in *Ganqing zang bianqu kaocha ji*, 35–36; see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Press, 1991), 5–7.

24. Epstein, “Introduction: *Khams Pa Histories*,” 5; Coleman, “The Uprising at Batang,” 33; David D. Buck, “Introduction: Dimensions of Ethnic and Cultural Nationalism in Asia—A Symposium,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 53, no. 1 (February 1994): 5.

25. See Xiaoyuan Liu, *Reins of Liberation: An Entangled History of Mongolian Independence, Chinese Territoriality, and Great Power Hegemony, 1911–1950* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press/Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 9–18.

26. See James L. Hevia, “Rulership and Tibetan Buddhism in Eighteenth-century China: Qing Emperors, Lamas and Audience Rituals,” in *Medieval and Modern Ritual: Formalized Behavior in Europe, China and Japan*, ed. Joëlle Rollo-Koster (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 281, 283–289, 292; see Samuel, *Civilized Shamans*, chapters 3, 4, 5, 17. In his study of Yunnan frontier policies during the Qing Dynasty, Giersch wrote that: “. . . early modern states such as the Qing, Burmese, and Siamese did not exercise the same degree of sovereignty over frontier regions as do modern nations. Few demarcated political boundaries existed between the Qing and other large states until the 1890s. Instead, at the large states’ outer limits were a complex array of smaller polities, that often maintained some degree of autonomy.” C. Pat Giersch, “‘A Motley Throng’: Social Change on Southwest China’s Early Modern Frontier, 1700–1880,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 60.1 (February 2001): 71.

27. Cf. Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 254–255. Note too that the combined “religious and secular leaders” was known in nearby Qinghai Muslim *menhuan* communities; see Lipman, “Ethnicity and Politics in Republican China,” 290n4; see the descriptions of monastery life and regional monastic bureaucratic infrastructures in Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Frontier II*, 37–73.

28. See Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, 301.

29. See Fletcher, “Ch’ing Inner Asia c. 1800,” 92–94, 101; see Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 255–257.

30. See Yu Xiangwen, *Xibei youmu zangqu zhi shihui diaocha*, 320–327.

31. See Coleman, “The Uprising at Batang,” 33; for authority structures in modern Tibet, including their historical foundations, see Heidi Fjeld, *Commoners and Nobles: Hereditary Divisions in Tibet* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2005).

Appendix 1

Family History: Gönpo Döndrup

GÖNPO DÖNDRUP AND GURU LHATSO

Children:

Adrol (A sgrol/Tséring Palkyi) (d. 1958): married the Lord of the Golok Kangsar. They had four children, two boys, two girls. The first son was Kelzang Tseten, who was recognized as a rebirth of a lama at Lhodrak Monastery in Repgong, Qinghai and later worked as Assistant Chairman of a district in Malho, Qinghai. The second son was Kelsang Jikmé, who was recognized as a rebirth in Stone (*brag*) Monastery, included in one of Labrang's eighteen estates, and later worked for the Southern Gansu government and for the Machu Middle School district. Their first daughter was the late Sönam Wangmo, who worked as Assistant Chair for the Golok Autonomous Region government and for Golok women's organizations. Sönam Wangmo's daughter Kang Yuhua graduated from the Northwest Minorities' University and now teaches in Qinghai. There is no information about the fourth child of Adrol and the Kangsar Lord.

Apa Alo/Huang Zhengqing (March 1903–6 October 1997)

Tenpé Gyeltsen/Huang Zhengguang (1916–14 April 1947): The Fifth Jamyang Zhepa.

Azö (d. 1958): Married the Lord of the Golok Kangan. They had two daughters, both named Namkho. The second Namkho, or Namgyel Wangmo worked for Gansu Province Minority Literature Department, as a delegate to the Lanzhou City Government and in the Provincial Music and Dance Department.

Belmangtsang Jikmé Tsültrim Namgyelwa/Huang Zhengming (1918–11 February 1957): The Fourth Belmang, served as Personal Attaché, Treasurer of Labrang in Machu, and in 1953 delegate to the People's Committee in the newly formed South Gansu Tibetan Autonomous Region.

GÖNPO DÖNDRUP AND NAMCHI WANGMO

Children:

Kyenrab Döndrup/Huang Zhengben (1909–1945): Studied in Lhasa and became Treasurer at Labrang under his brother Jamyang Zhepa.

Ngawang Gyatso/Huang Zhengji (1911–1939): In the winter of 1938 he was the leader of the Labrang delegation to the Chinese government in Chongqing and Chengdu. He returned ill and passed away in 1939.

Kelzang Döndrup: died age 16.

APA ALO AND TSÉRING LHAMO

Tséring Lhamo (1916–1990) was instrumental in starting the 1940s girls' school at Labrang. In 1949 helped more than 50 Tibetan women attend university in Lanzhou. Politically active in later years.

Children:

Kelzang Döndrup, Amgon (1923–1957): in 1940 married Tashi Tséring (1920?–1966), the sister of the Mongol King Künga Peljor, the 28th King of the Khoshud Mongols, whose wife Luko (Klu kho/Lumantso) assumed the throne after his death in 1940 until an heir could fill the throne.

Pa zhis: In later years worked for the Gannan government; betrothed to the Lord of Dzögé Mema.

Apa Alo and Tséring Lhamo adopted the three-year-old **Losang Tupten Chökyi Gyaltsen (Jamyang Pendita)**, son of Azö's maid. The boy was taken to Labrang, and carries on with political and Tibetan Buddhist work in Tongren, Qinghai Province, and environs. He was identified as the sixth rebirth of Tsang Pendita Lozang Tenpa Gyatso (1738–1780).

AMGON AND TASHI TSÉRING

Children:

Three male, one female: Kelsang, Qinghai Provincial Government; Könchok Tendzin, Gansu Provincial Government; Dorjé, Henan Mongol Autonomous Region Economic Office; Wangmo, Henan Mongol Autonomous Region Government.¹

NOTE

1. Huang Zhengqing, *A blo spun mched kyi rnam thar*, 4-5, 236; Huang Zhengqing, *Huang zhengqing yu wushi Jiamuyang*, 2-5, 97 ff; Zhang Shangying, "Huang Zhengqing he Labuleng" (Lanzhou, Unpublished paper, 2002), 1-3; Interviews.

Appendix 2

Pronunciation and Word Lists

NAMES OF MAJOR BUILDINGS AT LABRANG

Abbot's Estate	(mkhan po'i bla brang)
Abbot's Temple	(mkhan po tshang lha khang)
Alak Gorta Tsang Estate	(a lags mgor rta tshang)
Alak Norbu Tsang Estate	(a lags nor bu tshang)
Alo Family Residence	
Anyé nyenchen	(a mye gnyan chen)
Assembly Hall	(tshogs chen 'du khang, 1710, 1772)
Avalokiteśvara	Temple (phyag stong spyang stong lha khang)
Bodhi Stupa	(byang chub mchod rten)
Chinese Estate	(rgya nag pa tshang)
Chinese Temple	(rgya nag pa tshang lha khang)
Depa Estate	(sde pa tshang bla brang)
Depa Temple	(sde pa tshang gi lha khang)
Enlightenment Temple	(rje gzigs pa lnga ldan lha khang)
Gangkha Estate	(sgang kha tshang)
Gungtang Estate	(gung thang bla brang)
Gungtang Stupa	(gung thang mchod rten mthong grol chen mo)
Gyümé College	(rgyud smad grwa tshang)

Gyütö College	(rgyud stod grwa tshang gsang chen rdo rje gling, 1928, 1939)
Harmony Stupa	(dbyen zlum mchod rten)
Hayagrīva Temple	(rta mgrin lha khang)
Hevajra College	(kyai rdo rje grwa tshang gsang sngags dar rgyas gling, 1879)
Jamyang Zhepa Estate	(‘jam dbyangs bzhad pa’i bla brang)
Jamyang Zhepa’s Palace	(‘jam dbyangs bzhad pa’i bla brang thub bstan pho brang chen mo)
Jewel Palace	(nor ‘dzin pho brang)
Kālacakra College	(dus ‘khor grwa tshang e wam chos ‘khor gling, 1763)
Lama Karpo’s Residence	(bla ma dkar po tshang gi gzim khang)
Lion’s Roar Temple	(rgyal ba seng ge’i nga ro lha khang)
Litang Estate	(li thang dpon tshang)
Main Library	(dpe mdzod khang chen mo)
Main Printing House	(dpar khang chen mo)
Maitreya Temple; Golden Temple/Tsega Ling	(byams khang chen mo; gser khang chen mo; tshe dga’ gling, 1788-1791; roof, 1884)
Mañjuśrī Temple	(‘jam dbyangs lha khang)
Medical College	(sman pa grwa tshang gso rig gzhan phan gling, 1784)
Mongol Estate	(hor tshang bla brang)
Nechung College	(gnas chung grwa tshang)
Örgyen Tenpa Dargyé Ling	(o rgyan bstan pa dar rgyas gling)
Protectors’ Temple	(mgon khang btsan khang)
Ritual Courtyard	(ston chos ra)
Śākyamuni Temple	(jo bo’i lha khang)
Sangchen Mingyé Ling	(gsang chen smin rgyas gling)
Summer Debating Garden	(dbyar chos grwa tshugs pa)
Tāra Temple	(sgrol ma’i lha khang)
Tashi Raptan	(bkra shis rab brtan)
Tösam Ling	(thos bsam gling)
Treasurer’s Residence	(phyag mdzod mkhan po tshang gi gzim khang)
Tsongkhapa Temple	(rje lha khang)
Teachings Palace	(thub bstan pho brang)

Uṣṇīṣa Sitāta Patrā Temple	(gdugs dkar lha khang)
Veneration Temple	(zhabs brtan lha khang)
White Tāra Temple	(sgrol dkar lha khang)

NAMES OF PEOPLE

Abö Karmo	(a 'bos dkar mo)
Apa Alo	(a pha a blo)
Azö	(a bzod)
Belmang Könchok Gyeltsen	(dbal mang dkon mchog rgyal mtshan)
Belmang Lozang Döndrup	(dbal mang blo bzang don grub)
Changkya Ngawang Chöden	(lcang skya ngag dbang chos ldan)
Changkya Rölpe Dorjé	(lcang skya rol pa'i rdo rje)
Chögyel Pakpa	(chos rgyal 'phags pa)
Chökyong Gyatso	(chos skyong rgya mtsho)
Detong Lozang Yangden	(sde stong blo bzang dbyangs ldan)
Detri	(sde khri)
Detri Jamyang Tupten Nyima	(sde khri 'jam dbyangs thub bstan nyi ma)
Detri Lozang Döndrup	(sde khri blo bzang don grub)
Dodrupchen	(rdo grub chen)
Dorjé Paknam	(rdo rje 'phags nam)
Drakkar Gyelmo	(brag dkar rgyal mo)
Ensapa	(dben sa pa)
Ganden Samdrup	(dga' ldan bsam grub)
Ganden Tripa	(dga' ldan khri pa)
Gendün Lungtok Nyima	(dge 'dun lung rtogs nyi ma)
Gendün Püntsok	(dge 'dun phun tshogs)
Gomtar	(sgom thar)
Gönpo Döndrup	(mgon po don grub; Huang Weizhong)
Gori Ribong	(mgo ri ri bong)
Gortawa	(mgo rta ba)
Gungtang Könchok	(gung thang dkon mchog bstan pa'i)
Tenpé Drönmé	(sgron me)

Gyanakpa	(rgya nag pa)
Huiwu Chanshi Ganden	(hui wu chan shi dga' ldan khri pa
Tripa Hutuktu	hutuktu)
Jamyang Gyatso	('jam dbyangs rgya mtsho)
Jamyang Khyenrap	('jam dbyangs mkhyen rab rgya mtsho)
Gyatso	
Jamyang Lodrö	('jam dbyangs blo gros)
Jamyang Tendzin Trinlé	('jam dbyangs bstan 'dzin 'phrin las rgya
Gyatso	mtsho)
Jamyang Tenpé Nyima	('jam dbyangs bstan pa'i nyi ma)
Jamyang Tupten Nyima	('jam dbyangs thub bstan nyi ma)
Jamyang Zhepa	('jam dbyangs bzhad pa)
Jikmé Tadröl	('jigs med mtha' grol)
Jikmé Trinlé Gyatso	('jigs med 'phrin las rgya mtsho)
Jikmé Tsültrim	('jigs med tshul khrims rnam rgyal ba)
Namgyelwa	
Karpo	(dkar po)
Kelzang Döndrup	
Kelzang Gyatso	(skal bzang rgya mtsho)
Kelzang Tseten	(skal bzang tshe brtan)
Kelzang Tupten	(skal bzang thub bstan dbang phyug)
Kyenrab Döndrup	
Wangchuk	
Kogya Zhapdrung	(sko rgya zhabs drung)
Könchok Dechen	(dkon mchog bde chen)
Könchok Jikmé Wangpo	(dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po)
Könchok Künga	(sngags ram pa dkon mchog kun dga')
Könchok Tenpé Drönmé	(dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me dpal
Pelzangpo	bzang po)
Könchok Tenpé Gyatso	(dkon mchog bstan pa'i rgya mtsho)
Künga Peljor	(kun dga' dpal 'byor)
Lakho Jikmé Trinlé	(bla kho 'jigs med 'phrin las rgya mtsho)
Gyatso	
Lodrö Gyatso	(blo gros rgya mtsho)
Longdöl Drupwang	(klong rdol grub dbang)
Lozang Longdöl	Chökyi Nyima (blo bzang klong rdol
	chos gyi nyi ma)
Lozang Tenpé Gyeltsen	(blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan)
Lozang Tenpé Nyima	(blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma)

Lozang Trinlé	(blo bzang 'phrin las)
Lozang Tupten Gyatso	(blo bzang thub bstan rgya mtsho)
Lozang Tupten Jikmé Gyatso	(blo bzang thub bstan 'jigs med rgya mtsho)
Lozang Yeshé	(blo bzang ye shes)
Lubum Ngawang Lodrö Gyatso	(klu 'bum ngag dbang blo gros rgya mtsho)
Lukho	(klu kho)
Mergan Daiching	(mergan ta'i ching, mergan da'i ching)
Mergen Khenpo	(mergan mkhan po)
Mönpa Pekar Dzinpa, Ngawang Yeshé Gyatso	(mon pa pad dkar 'dzin pa, ngag dbang ye shes rgya mtsho)
Namgyel Drölma	(rnam rgyal sgrol ma)
Namgyel Tseten	(rnam rgyal tshe brtan)
Ngawang Dargyel	(ngag dbang dar rgyal)
Ngawang Lozang Gyatso	(ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho)
Ngawang Püntsok	(ngag dbang phun tshogs)
Ngawang Tendar	(ngag dbang bstan dar)
Ngawang Tenpé Gyeltsen	(ngag dbang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan)
Ngawang Tupten Gyatso	(ngag dbang thub bstan rgya mtsho)
Ngawang Tupten Tenpé Nyima	(ngag dbang thub bstan bstan pa'i nyi ma)
Ngawang Tupten Wangchuk Penden Trinlé Gyatso	(ngag dbang thub bstan dbang phyug dpal ldan 'phrin las rgya mtsho)
Peljor Raptan	(dpal 'byor rab brtan)
Penchen Lozang Yeshé	(Penchen blo bzang ye shes)
Sakya Pendita	(sa skya pandita)
Sanggyé Gyatso	(sangs rgyas rgya mtsho)
Setsang Ngawang Tashi	(bse tshang ngag dbang bkra shis)
Sönam Gyatso	(bsod nams rgya mtsho)
Sönam Raptan	(bsod nams rab brtan)
Songtsen Gampo	(srong btsan sgam po)
Sumpa Khenpo	(sum pa mkhan po)
Tai Situ Jangchup Gyeltsen	(tai si tu byang chub rgyal mtshan)

Takten Beile	(rtag brtan bei le)
Tashi Chögyel	(bkra shis chos rgyal)
Tashi Jungné	(bkra shis 'byung gnas)
Tashi Wanggyel	(bkra shis dbang rgyal)
Tendzin Gyayuma	(bstan 'dzin rgya yu ma)
Tendzin Wangchuk	(bstan 'dzin dbang phyug)
Tenpa	(bstan pa)
Tenpé Gyeltsen Künkh-	(bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan kun mkhyen
yen Jamyang Zhepa	'jam dbyangs bzhad pa)
Tenpé Wangchuk	(bstan pa'i dbang phyug)
Tongkhor Rinpoché	(stong 'khor rin po che)
Torgö	(thor god)
Tsang Pendita Lozang	(gtsang pandita blo bzang bstan pa rgya
Tenpa Gyatso	mtsho)
Tsangyang Gyatso	(tshang dbyangs rgya mtsho)
Tsendrok Khenpo	(mtshan sgrog mkhan po)
Tsewang Tendzin	(tshe dbang bstan 'dzin)
Tsongkhapa	(tsong kha pa)
Tsünmo Namgyel	(btsun mo rnam rgyal sgrol ma)
Drölma	
Tuken	(thu'u bkwan)
Tuken Lozang Chökyi	(thu'u bkwan blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma)
Nyima	
Tupten	(thub rten)
Wangden Dorjé Paknam	(dbang ldan rdo rje 'phags rnam)
Wanggyel Chöjé	(dbang rgyal chos rje)

GENERAL TIBETAN VOCABULARY

amchö	(a mchod)
banang	(sbra nang)
chalak	(ca lag)
chandzö	(phyag mdzod)
Changkya	(lcang skya)
chayik	(bca' yig)
chidé	(phyi sde)
chiwa	(spyi ba) finance officer
chödé	(chos sde)

chögyal	(chos rgyal)
chösi, chösi zungdrel	(chos srid, chos srid zung 'brel)
Damchen	(dam can)
darpön	(dar dpon)
datsen	(mda' tshan)
Dema khak	(sde ma khag)
depön	(sde dpon)
desi	(sde srid)
dewa, detsen	(sde ba, sde tshan)
dongtsé	(dong tse)
Dorjé Purba	(rdo rje phur ba)
Drepung, Drepung	('bras spungs, 'bras spungs sgo mang)
Gomang	
drimo	('bri mo)
drong chok	(grong chog)
dung gyü	(gdung rgyud)
Ganden Podrang	(dga' ldan pho brang)
garkor	(sgar skor)
garpön	(sgar dpon)
gekö	(dge bskos) disciplinarian
Gelukpa	(dge lugs pa)
getsül	(dge tshul)
geyok	(dge g.yog)
Golok	(mgo log)
gönlak	(dgon lag)
gowa	('go ba)
gurgangwa	(gur gang ba)
gyama	(rgya ma)
jindak dampa	(sbyin bdag dam pa)
jindzinpa	(sbyin 'dzin pa)
Kagyüpa	(bka' brgyud pa)
Kar Tsowa	(dkar tsho ba)
Karpo	(dkar po)
kegyak	(skad rgyag)
khangtsen	(khang tshan)
Khar Tsowa	(mkhar tsho ba)
Kharo Tsowa	(mkhar ro tsho ba)
Khenpo Tsowa	(mkhan po tsho ba)

kön nyer	(dkon gnyer) librarian
kuchar khenpo	(sku bcar mkhan po) chief attendant
<i>Künzang Lamé Zhellung</i>	(kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung)
kutsap	(sku tshab) administrator
kyimtsang	(khyim tshang)
lama	(bla ma)
lhadé	(lha sde)
lhadé shokpa gyé	(lha sde shog pa brgyad)
lhadé shokpa zhi	(lha sde shog pa bzhi)
lhagur	(lha gur)
Longchen Nyingtik	(klong chen snying thig)
lukdzi tsang	(lug rdzi tshang)
lukshaza	(lug sha za)
makdar dzin	(dmag dar 'dzin)
midé	(mi sde)
Mokru Tsowa	(rmog ru tsho ba)
mönlam	(smon lam)
<i>Mutik Doshel</i>	(mu tig do shal)
nangchen	(nang chen)
nangdé	(nang sde)
nangdzö	(nang mdzod) internal affairs manager
Nurchu	(nur chu)
nyerwa	(gnyer ba)
Nyingma	(rnying ma)
pakor	(dpa' skor)
pönpo, pönmo	(dpon po, dpon mo)
pöntsang	(dpon tshang)
pöntsang nyerwa	(dpon tshang gnyer ba) Mongol Lord's attendant
pül	(phul)
Radreng	(rwa sgren)
rukor	(ru skor)
Sakya	(sa skya)
Sengdongma	(seng gdong ma)
shokchung	(shog chung)
shoknying	(shog snying)
shokru	(shog ru)
sikyong chenmo	(srid skyong chen mo)

sirik dzinno	(srid rigs 'dzin no)
sokdzin khen	(srog 'dzin mkhan)
sölka	(gsol ka)
ta nor	(rta nor)
Tengyur	(bstan 'gyur)
tong	(stong)
torchén	(gtor chen)
torma	(gtor ma)
tri ba	(khri pa), throne holder
trichen	(khri chen)
truk	(phrug)
trülku	(sprul sku)
tsepön	(tshe dpon)
tsokchen chiwa	(tshogs chen spyi ba)
tsokchen dukhang	(tshogs chen 'du khang)
tsokchen tripa	(tshogs chen khri pa)
tsokchen umdzé	(tshogs chen dbu mdzad) assembly cantor
tsokchen zhelngo	(tshogs chen zhal ngo) spokesperson
Tsokdu Marnak	(tshogs 'du dmar nag)
tsowa	(tsho ba)
tusa	(mthu sa)
ulak	('u lag)
umdzé	(dbu mdzad) cantor
Yiktsang	(yig tshang)
yokpo	(g.yog po)
yongdzin	(yongs 'dzin) tutor
yonggo	(yong sgo)
zhapchi	(zhabs phyi)
zutsa	(gzu tsha)

PLACE AND INSTITUTION NAMES

Agé Golok	(a dge mgo log)
Amchok	(a mchog)
Amyé Machen	(a myes rma chen)
Amyé Nyenchen	(Guan di) (a myes gnyan can)
Aru Horchen	(a ru hor chen)

Barkham	('bar khams)
Bé	('be)
Belmang Tsang	(dbal mang tshang)
Bora	('bo ra)
Bumling	('bum gling)
Jakhyung	(bya khyung)
Chukama	(chu kha ma)
Chuzang	(chu bzang)
Choné	(co ne)
Demchok Lölangtar gyi	(bde mchog blos bslang ltar gyi gtsug
Tsuklak khang	lag khang)
Demotang Ganden	(bde mo thang dga' ldan chos 'khor
Chökor Ling	gling)
Degé	(sde dge)
Dokar	(rdo dkar)
Drakkar Gyelmo	(brag dkar rgyal mo)
Drepung	('bras spungs)
Drepung Deyang College	('bras spungs bde dbyangs grwa tshang)
Dzögé, Dzögé Nyinma,	(mdzod dge, mdzod dge nyin ma, md-
Dzögé Mema, Dzögé Tö	zod dge smad ma, mdzod dge stod)
Ganden	(dga' ldan)
Ganden Jinling	(dga' ldan byin gling)
Ganden Tripa	(dga' ldan khri pa)
Genkya, Genkya Beldé,	(rgan kya, rgan kya bal sde, rgan gya'i
Genkya Tingring	sting ring)
Gomang	(sgo mang)
Gomang Gar	(sgo mang sgar)
Gönlung	(dgon lung)
Gyelmo Göñ	(rgyal mo dgon)
Gyanakpa, Gyanakpa Tsang	(rgya nag pa, rgya nag pa tshang)
Gyatsé Gyelwa	(rgya rtse rgyal ba)
Hortsang	(hor tshang)
Kachu	(ka chu)
Khagya Tsodruk	(kha gya tsho drug)
Khagya Tömé	(kha gya stod smad)
Kachu	(dka' bcu)
Kangtsa	(rkang tsha)

Khenpo	(mkhan po)
Khar	(mkhar)
Kharo	(mkhar ro)
Karpo	(dkar po)
Khotsé	(kho tshe)
Khukhé Noryül	(khu khe nor yul)
Kumbum	(sku 'bum)
Labrang	(bla brang)
Lamo Dechen	(lā mo bde can)
Langgya	(glang gya)
Luchu	(klu chu)
Ludü	(klu 'dus)
Lushö Tsowa Gyé	(klu shod tsho ba brgyad)
Machu	(rma chu)
Mechu	(rme chu)
Mema	(dme ma)
Mema	(smad ma)
Menpa Dratsang,	(sman pa grwa tshang, gzhan phan
Zhenpen Ling	gling)
Mepö Garsar	(dme po'i sgar gsar)
Metra Shül	(dme khra shul)
Mewo	(dme bo)
Mewo Kyagé	(dme bo kya dge)
Minyak	(mi nyag)
Mokru	(rmog ru)
Muklung	(smug lung)
Ngakpa Dratsang	(sngags pa grwa tshang)
Namgyel	(rnam rgyal)
Namlha	(gnam lha)
Nechung	(gnas chung)
Ngangra	(sngang ra)
Ngangra Tömé	(sngang ra stod smad)
Ngawa	(nga ba)
Ngawa Tö	(nga ba stod)
Ngawa Tsodruk	(nga ba tsho drug)
Nyingtang	(snying thang)
Nyinsip	(nyin srib)
Norbu Lingka	(norbu gling ka)

Ngülra	(dngul rwa)
Nurma	(nur ma)
Nyenpo Yurtse	(gnyen po yur rtse)
Nyinma	(nyin ma)
Nyingtang	(snying thang)
Pakmodrupa	(phag mo gru pa)
Paré	(dpa' re)
Pöntsang	(dpon tshang)
Rado	(rwa mdo)
Repgong	(reb gong)
Rongwo	(rong bo)
Runak	(ru nag)
Sangkhek	(bsang khog)
Sangngak Mingyé Ling	(gsang sngags smin rgyas gling)
Sakya	(sa skya)
Senya Lung	(bse nya lung)
Serchentang	(gser chen thang)
Serkha	(gser kha)
Serkhek	(gser khog)
sertri	(gser khri)
Shitsang, Demotang	(shis tshang, bde mo thang dga' ldan
Ganden Chökor Ling	chos 'khor gling)
Sorik Zhenpen Ling	(gso rig gzhan phan gling)
Tadzung	(rta rdzung)
Taktsang Lhamo	(stag tshang lha mo)
Tangkar	(thang dkar)
Tashi Lhünpo	(bkra shis lhun po)
Tashi Raptan	(bkra shis rab rten)
Tashi Tang	(bkra shis thang)
Tantik Shelgyi Yenggön	(tan tig shel gyi yeng dgon)
Terlung	(gter lung)
Terlung Göñ	(gter lung dgon)
Tokti Demo Tang	(tog ti'i bde mo thang)
Tongkhor	(stong 'khor)
Trikha	(khri kha)
Trokho Khaksum	(khro kho khag gsum)
Trokho Mema	(khro kho smad ma)
Tsakho	(tsha kho)

Tsagen Beshing	(tsha rgwan be shing; tsha gan be/pe shing)
Tsamring Tsowa	(mtshams ring tsho ba)
Tsendrok	(mtshan sgrog)
Tsendrok Khenpo	(mtshan sgrog mkhan po)
Tsang	(gtsang)
Tsang Dema Khak	(gtsang sde ma khag)
Tsayül	(tsa yul)
Tsekhok	(rtse khog)
Tsema	(mtshe ma)
Tseü	(rtse dbus)
Tsö	(gtsos)
Tumé	(thu dme)
Yartsi	(ya rtsi, ya rdzi, ya'a tse)
Yiga Chödzin	(yid dga' chos 'dzin)
Zamtsa	(zam tsha)
Zaru	(gza' ru)
Zhopping Lachi	(zho 'phong la phyi)

CHINESE

Anduo qingnian lianyi hui	安多青年联谊会
Anduo yue kan	安多月刊
Bing ling shang si	炳灵上寺
Binglingsi	炳灵寺
Cai zheng ting	财政厅
Chen Zefan	陈泽藩
dan	石
dou	斗
duo yuan yi ti	多元一体
Fan bing si ling	番兵司令
Feng Quan	凤全
Feng Yuxiang	冯玉祥
fu bao an si ling	副保安司令
gai tu gui liu	改土歸流
Guominjun	国民军
Hezuo	合作
Huang Weizhong	黄位中

Huang Zhengqing	黄正清
Jia na ba	嘉那巴
Jia na hua	加那华
jiao min	教民
jin	斤
Li Anzhai (Li Anche)	李安宅
Li Zongzhe	李宗哲
li	礼
liehen	裂痕
Lifanyuan	理藩院
Linxia	临夏
Liu Yufen	刘郁芬
Ma Bufang	马步芳
Ma Hetian	马鹤天
Ma Lin	马麟
Ma Qi	马麒
Ma Weiqi	马维骐
Ma Wuji	马无忌
Ma Zhongying	马仲英
Min zheng ting	民政厅
Minxian	岷县
Mu	亩
Nian Gengyao	年羹尧
Ninghai	宁海
Qin wang	亲王
ren min	人民
Shao nian tongzhi hui	少年同志会
she zhi ju	设治局
shi chang	市场
Taozhou	洮州
tu guan	土官
Tumenguan	土门关
tusi	土司
Wang Jingwei	汪精卫
Wang Shao	王韶
Wu Zhengang	误振纲
Wutaishan	五台山
Wuzu xueyuan	五族学院

Xi Liang	锡良
Xiahe	夏河
xiao hua	笑话
Xibeijun	西北军
Xie Gangjie	谢刚杰
Xuan Xiafu (Tibetan, bKra shis tshe ring)	宣侠父
Xunhua	循化
Yongjing	永靖
Yuan Shi Kai	袁世凯
Yue Zhongqi	岳钟琪
Zang wenhua cu jin hui li di yi xiao xue	藏文化促进会里第一小学
Zangmin wenhua cujin hui	藏民文化促进会
Zhang Dingyang	张丁杨
Zhang Qingyou	张庆有
Zhang Zifeng	张子丰
Zhang Zuolin	张作霖
Zhao Erfeng	赵尔丰
zhou zhang	州长
Zhou Ziji	周自给
Zhu Peide	朱培德

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