



Yeshe Tendzin, a Twentieth-Century Painter from Gongkar

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INTRODUCTION

Elder monks of Gongkar commonly say that around two hundred to two hundred sixty monks lived at Gongkar Chöde before 1959.⁵⁵¹ When Kathok Situ visited the area in winter of 1918/19, he reported a slightly lower number—one hundred sixty—apparently because he did not count those monks residing temporarily at the monastery's several branch temples or at estate holdings nearby.⁵⁵² By the first half of the twentieth century, Gongkar Chöde's population had fallen substantially, when we consider that it once housed as many as a thousand resident monks, as Kathok Situ also informed us in his pilgrimage record.⁵⁵³ During the mid-seventeenth century, the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama, Gongkar Dorjeden was still a large monastic center, renowned for its wide tantric learning, excellent ritual and dance, and fine painting in the style of Khyentse Chenmo. At that time, within Gongkar's monastic compound, the monk residence ([*grwa*] *shag*; *shag tshang*) of Sangngak Khar was a stronghold of Khyenri painters. Gifted artists from this monastic house, including such master artists as Chödze Shönnu and Tshephel, gained trans-regional fame and worked for large projects under state patronage.⁵⁵⁴

The decline in the monk population that occurred in the eighteenth or nineteenth century eventually led to the dying out of the special Khyenri

painting tradition at Gongkar Monastery. In the 1930s, the size of its old assembly hall with sixty-four pillars was reduced partly as the consequence of its much smaller monastic community.⁵⁵⁵ (The main building was also sagging in places, which the two new walls were meant to remedy.)

In around the mid-1930s, the walls of the new main temple hall, which was reduced to just forty-nine pillars in size, were decorated with scenes from the *Avadānakalpalatā* moral tales (*dPag bsam 'khri shing*), the same subject that had also graced the outer walls of the old assembly hall.⁵⁵⁶ Painted in a variety of the usual predominant central Tibetan Menri style (the Eri of Lhasa), the new rendering of the *Kalpalatā* was, judging by its style, probably done by outside artists with at most just a few Gongkar monks or local painters helping. A few slightly more elaborate lotus petals under some of the thirty-two buddhas as main figures and a few other details are the only hints of a limited involvement of Khyenri artists in the new ground-floor murals dating to the 1930s.

Figure 12.2 illustrates three buddhas as main figures with lotus petals as they were typically painted by Menri painters of central Tibet. However, in Figure 12.3 the lotus petal centers of the left-hand buddha approach the kind of elaborate lotus petals that might be found as a special feature of the Khyenri style. (The sleeveless inner garments worn by the first and third buddhas in this illustration are also unusual and evocative of the Khyenri.)

Figure 12.4 depicts one buddha with a cluster of clouds in the landscape that have the typical “cloud-eyes” of the Eri style of Lhasa. (This panel also depicts the Fifth Dalai Lama and two Sanskrit scholars above.) The clouds and the typical peonies mark it as the work of Menri artists.

The fact that the artists almost all painted in a fairly orthodox Menri style of Ü province seems to reflect that the Khyenri style by the 1930s was no longer significantly present at Gongkar Monastery. David Jackson in his *History of Tibetan Painting* of 1996 asserted that “by the early 20th century, the style of mKhyen-brtse chen-mo and his followers had apparently died out as a separate living tradition.”⁵⁵⁷

Nevertheless, we now know that a few Khyenri artists still lived in Lhokha in the 1930s. Jackson did not then know about the survival of a very small number of Khyenri artists in Lhokha such as Uchen Tenpa Gyatsho (1882–1959), whom I will come to discuss later, and three of his sons to whom he had passed on his knowledge. Tenpa Gyatsho's disciple Tshewang Dorje (1933–2002) and his artistic career are presented below in appendix E. As briefly mentioned above in chapter 4, Tenpa Gyatsho's murals of the Sixteen Arhats still survive in skylights high above the main assembly hall. (See Figs. 4.10A and 4.10B.)

As seen above in chapter 5, Kunzang Tse College of Gongkar also preserved murals in a late Khyenri style that date to the 1930s or early 1940s, the time of the seminary's general

DETAIL OF FIG. 12.0



FIG. 12.0
Gongkar Chöde's Main Temple before 1959
Mural, second floor, main building,
Gongkar; painted by Yeshe Tenzin, 1940s
Photo: Rob Linrothe, 2007

FIG. 12.1
Gongkar Chöde's Main Temple before 1959;
lama's private quarters in the upper front;
photograph taken from the *trulku*'s summer
residence southwest of the main building
Photo courtesy of Chögyal-la, Dharamsala,
India

FIG. 12.2
Three Buddhas with *Avadāna* Tales
Murals, New Assembly Hall, Gongkar;
1930s
Photo: Kazuo Kano, 2007





FIG. 12.3
Three Buddhas with *Avadāna* Tales
Murals, New Assembly Hall, Gongkar;
1930s
Photo: Kazuo Kano, 2007

renovation. The impressive murals on the upper walls (*khyams*) of that twelve-pillar temple hall depict the complete Lamdre lineage in the Gongkar tradition. (See Figure 12.5 and Figures 5.5, 5.8, 5.11, 5.16, 5.19–5.24, 6.3, 6.11, 6.21, 6.37, 7.3, 7.6, 7.8, 7.16) These may have been the work of Tenpa Gyatsho or another local Khyenri artist. Figure 12.6 illustrates the same artist's work in an adjoining mural panel of Kunzang Tse that depicts three bodhisattvas in form of the "Protectors of the Three Families" (*rigs gsum mgon po*). (Upper garments cover the upper torsos and upper arms of the bodhisattvas, as is usual in the Khyenri.)

Moreover, the same lineage of the Lamdre, passing down to Dorjedenpa, Gongkar Chöde's founder (who was guru number 23 in the transmission), was depicted in a mural series at Drathang Monastery. These wall paintings, which are in style and iconography similar to the Kunzang Tse murals, can be dated to the time of the restoration of

the main temple that was initiated by the Fifth Reting Rinpoche (1912/19–1947) in the late 1930s.⁵⁵⁸ When we investigate the surviving art from Drathang, most prominently these well-preserved lineage murals and the related set of gilt sculptures that were presented above, in chapter 5, we find a close connection with the iconography of Gongkar Chöde. Moreover, the fact that the Drathang murals represent the same sequence of the Lamdre guru lineage points to similarities with the teaching system at Gongkar and reflects the strong historical ties between the two monasteries from the fifteenth century onward.⁵⁵⁹ Figure 12.7 is taken from this set of mural panels at Drathang. (All three masters have transparent Khyenri head nimbuses, which we never see in Menri paintings.)

Another Sakya monastery in the vicinity of Gongkar preserved murals by Lhokha artists working in a late Khyenri style. Rawame (Rwa ba smad) Monastery in Kyishong (sKyid gshongs), just twenty kilometers (twelve miles) downstream from Gongkar Monastery, shows some Khyenri elements in its murals. Depicting the Indian and Tibetan teachers in the upper wall above the assembly hall, the murals can be dated slightly earlier than Kunzang Tse and Drathang, to around the 1920s



FIG. 12.4
Single Buddha with *Avadāna* Tales (with
Dalai Lama above)
Murals, New Assembly Hall, Gongkar;
1930s
Photo: Kazuo Kano 2007

or 1930s, as they portray the Thirteenth Dalai Lama (1876–1933), who I assume was then alive. The restoration was directed by the Rawame abbot Palden Losang (dPal ldan blo bzang), who was thirty-seventh in the abbatial succession. The artist or artists came from Dechen Chökhör Monastery (bDe chen chos 'khor), the large Drukpa Kagyu establishment in the upper valley to the south of Gongkar Chöde. (This intriguing reference to local artists comes from lHag tshing 2004, a publication that also included a brief history of Rawame and the life of Khenchen Paljor Yeshe [mKhan chen dPal 'byor ye shes, 1935–1998].) As mentioned above in chapter 11, Dechen Chökhör was one of the seventeen sites of Khyenri artists in the late seventeenth century, at the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama's passing.⁵⁶⁰

The new Rawame murals in the upper part depicted Buddha Śākyamuni



FIG. 12.5
Four Early Lamdre Gurus
Mural, Kunzang Tse College, Gongkar;
1930s–1940s
Photo: A. Lustgarten, 2005

FIG. 12.6
Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī, and Vajrapāṇi as
the protectors of the three families
Mural, Kunzang Tse College, Gongkar
Monastery; 1930s–1940s
Photo: A. Lustgarten, 2005



with his two chief disciples, the Eight Medicine Buddhas, and the Six Ornaments with the Two Excellent Ones. (See, for example, Fig. 12.8.). The same murals also show the Five Sakya Founders, Atiśa with his chief disciples, the current (i.e., Thirteenth) Dalai Lama, and the Önrül Trulku Champa Losal Tenpe Gyaltshen (Byams pa blo gsal

bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan) from Yarlung Tashi Chöde.⁵⁶¹ These paintings regularly use pink in body nimbuses, and we find here elaborate lotus petals beneath the buddhas, which are both probably Khyenri touches. (For the painted portrait of the Önrül Trulku, see Fig. 12.9.)

YESHE TENDZIN OF GONGKAR⁵⁶²

When Yeshe Tendzin (1915/16–1971) joined Gongkar Chöde in the early 1930s, no Khyenri painters were still active at the monastery. David Jackson in his brief introduction of Yeshe Tendzin in his book of 1996 characterized him as a twentieth-century reviver of the Khyenri style who “used to study and copy the old murals of mKhyen-brtse” and “imitated them in his own paintings,”⁵⁶³ implying that he did not encounter a Khyenri painting master to learn from at Gongkar Monastery. My own sources and findings support that same conclusion, though we now know that as late as the 1930s some Khyenri artists were still based just south of Gongkar at Dechen Chökhör and others were still based in Chushül.

Background

Originally from Nyemo (sNye mo) in present-day Lhasa prefecture, Yeshe Tendzin was born into his mother's family of the Yakde Simkhang (g.Yag sde gzims khang). His father was from Lhasa and descended on his own father's side from the Chöchang Simshak (Chos byang gzims shag) family.⁵⁶⁴ Later in life Yeshe Tendzin was once told by a fortune teller (*pra babs mkhan*) that in his previous life he had been the chief attendant of the famed Rime master Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo ('Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po, 1820–1892),

FIG. 12.7

Three Lamdre Lineage Masters: Lama Dampa (left), Dorjedenpa (center), and another lama

Mural, upper wall, right, Drathang Assembly Hall; late 1930s

Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2015



FIG. 12.8

Nāgārjuna (left) and Dignāga (right) from among the Six Ornaments

Mural, upper wall, front, Rawame Assembly Hall; early twentieth century

Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2015



FIG. 12.9

Portrait of the Tenth Ōntrül Trulku

Mural, upper wall, right, Rawame Assembly Hall; early twentieth century

Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2015



who was named Tshultrim. The fortune teller from Kham also prophesied that he would be reborn in his next life in the pure land of Shambhala.⁵⁶⁵ At an early age, Yeshe Tendzin was sent to Lhokha to study painting. Somewhere east of Gongkar on the southern banks of the Tsangpo River—probably at Yarlung, Tsethang, or Chonggye—he received training in the painting tradition of Menthangpa (*smān thang lugs*).⁵⁶⁶ Later, in the 1930s, he was ordained as a monk at Gongkar Chöde, where in the following years he extensively learned recitations and rituals. His monastic house was Tönden Ling (Don ldan gling gzims shag).⁵⁶⁷

Showing talent in the monastery's liturgy, Yeshe Tendzin was appointed chant-leader at one of the colleges (i.e., *grwa tshang dbu mdzad* or *dbu mdzad 'og ma*),⁵⁶⁸ most likely at Kunthang College, to which he belonged. At Tönden Ling, as a young monk he took over the administration (*gzims shag nyar red*),⁵⁶⁹ apparently thanks to the sound secular education he had received before he became a monk. Later, he was appointed as the chamberlain (*gsol dpon*) of the Dorjedenpa Trulku Jampel Lungtok Chökyi Gyaltsen ('Jam dpal lung rtogs



FIG. 12.10
The Previous Dorjedenpa Trulku
Tinted photograph by Yeshe Tendzin
Photo courtesy of Gongkar Chöde, Laldang,
Uttarakhand, India

chos kyi rgyal mtshan, 1928–1959).⁵⁷⁰ (See Fig. 12.10.) Yeshe Tendzin is said to have been personally chosen for this post by the young *trulku*, while he was painting somewhere at the monastery.⁵⁷¹ Having served the boy *trulku* for a while, he was then promoted to steward (*phyag mdzod*) of the lama's estate (*bla brang*).⁵⁷²

At around this time, the Dorjedenpa *trulku* set up a small scriptural seminary (*bshad grwa*) at the monastery. “Chamdzö-la” (*phyag mdzod lags*)—as Yeshe Tendzin was then called as steward—had to pay for the twenty-five students who were pursuing the new course of study under Minyak Kyorpön (Mi nyag skyor dpon, d. 1956?), a scholastic teacher (*geshe*) from the Geluk monastery of Drepung who also had some links with the Sakya school.⁵⁷³ In connection with his administrative duties, he travelled several times to northern India (and possibly also to Bhutan) on business trips for the lama's estate. In around 1953 on one of his trading journeys, he disrobed and left Gongkar Chöde after his return.⁵⁷⁴ He then settled in the

neighboring valley of Shung Namrab (gZhung rNam rab) at Treshing (sPre'u zhing). He took a wife from a family with the name “Bepa” (Brag pa?). At Treshing he lived as a lay painter, though he was still addressed by his former title as “Bepe Chamdzö” (Brag pa'i phyag mdzod).⁵⁷⁵ Following the tragic events of March 1959, he and his family fled into exile, leaving Tibet for India.

Life as an Artist

Before coming to Gongkar Chöde, Yeshe Tendzin had first learned painting under a Menri-style master in Lhokha.⁵⁷⁶ In the mid-1930s, at about age twenty (he was born in 1915 or 1916), Yeshe Tendzin is said to have assisted in painting the inner walls of the resized assembly hall of Gongkar.⁵⁷⁷ Could he have been among the Menri artists who painted the new walls? One oral source states that a Menthangpa artist from the monastery of Dungphü Chökhör (rDo/gDung phud chos 'khor), who was then painting the new murals in the entrance hall (*sgo 'byor*) of Gongkar's main temple, became his teacher.⁵⁷⁸ The small Sakya monastery in Chideshöl (lCe bde zhol) also underwent restoration at around the same time, during which two monks from Dungphü Chökhör painted the new murals.⁵⁷⁹ Thus Yeshe Tendzin may have received his initial Menri training by the monks from Dungphü Chökhör and may have studied at that monastery. (It is not known whether he was already a monk by the time he learned from them.)

Later, as a monk of Gongkar and stimulated by the rich artwork there, he adopted the style of Khyentse Chenmo, which nobody in the monastery was practicing. As models he took the old murals and sculptures by the great master. He copied what he saw and imitated some features in his own paintings.⁵⁸⁰ It is said that he learned the Khyenri divine proportions by tracing the sketch lines (*thig*) from the back of old *thangkas*.⁵⁸¹

When serving as personal attendant to the Dorjedenpa Trulku, he must have had access to masterpieces by Khyentse Chenmo. While working as the lama's chamberlain, he painted as much as time allowed and gradually developed his style through self-study and painting at the monastery.⁵⁸²

By around the 1940s, sometime after the ground floor restorations were completed, he painted several small decorative murals in the second floor of Gongkar's main temple.⁵⁸³ In the “Chapel of Bronze Sculptures” (Li ma lha khang) near the front of the main building's second floor, he painted, for instance, a small panel depicting the monastic compound of Gongkar with all four colleges and the surrounding monk's residences, also labeling each building with small inscriptions. (See Figs. 12.0 and 1.27B).

Yeshe Tendzin also painted, in the same outside areas of the second floor, decorative murals depicting such auspicious themes as the Four Harmonious Friends (*mtshun po spun bzhi*) and the Six Symbols of Long Life (*tshe ring rnam drug*).⁵⁸⁴ The painting of the longevity symbols (Fig. 12.12.) is noteworthy for the many animals and birds depicted in the landscape, somewhat reminiscent of Khyentse Chenmo's art. The six symbols of longevity are: “the rocky crag of longevity,” “the old man of longevity,” “the tree of longevity,” “the water of longevity,” “the crane of longevity,” and “the deer of longevity.”

Figure 12.13 illustrates yet another mural of similar size, style, and location, this one depicting the Sakya founder Sachen Kunga Nyingpo in a landscape setting, again with a multitude of birds and animals. The artist took the ornate throne and depiction of Sachen seated on it from a Khyenri depiction of Sachen (compare Fig. 7.8). The inclusion of small exotic-looking minor figures at the base of the painting is something that Khyentse Chenmo also commonly did. (See also the similar minor figure that



FIG. 12.11
Jambhala
Detail, mural, lower wall, Drepung College,
Gongkar Monastery; 1940s
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2010

FIG. 12.12
Six Symbols of Long Life
Mural, second floor, main building,
Gongkar Monastery; 1940s
Photo: Kazuo Kano, 2007

pops up unexpectedly at the base of Fig. 12.12.)

Figure 12.14 depicts part of yet another small mural, but this detail shows Virupa's face and headdress. Yeshe Tendzin (if he was the artist of this mural) did seem to have painted its details with knowledge of Khyentse Chenmo's paintings and sculptures of the same adept. (Compare Figs. 6.1, 6.3, and 6.4)

Later, at the end of the 1940s, Yeshe Tendzin or "Chamdzö-la" painted the walls of the restored twelve-pillar temple hall at Drepung College of Gongkar.⁵⁸⁵ Drepung College, to the south of the main temple, was the last college to be renovated at Gongkar Chöde (See Fig. 1.28 for an outside view the building.).⁵⁸⁶ He painted the upper front wall with some lineage masters from the Path with the Result. On its side walls he depicted the Sixteen Elders (*gnas brtan bcu drug*) in an "Indian style," as my sources told me in Tibet.⁵⁸⁷ What is referred to here is a special naturalistic painting style that Yeshe Tendzin is said to have discovered and admired when visiting India in the 1940s or early 1950s.⁵⁸⁸

See Figures 12.15 and 12.16, which depict arhats Bakula, holding a mongoose, and Piṇḍola Bharadvāja (Bhara dhwa dza bsod snyoms len), holding a book and an alms bowl. (Note the faint pink and pastel orange base colors of the head nimbuses.)

Except its back wall, no murals survive on the lower walls of Drepung





FIG. 12.13 (OPPOSITE PAGE, UPPER LEFT)
Sachen
Mural, second floor, main building,
Gongkar Monastery; 1940s
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2010

FIG. 12.14 (OPPOSITE PAGE, UPPER RIGHT)
The Great Adept Virupa
Detail, mural, second floor, main building,
Gongkar Monastery; 1940s
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2010

FIG. 12.15 (OPPOSITE PAGE, LOWER LEFT)
Arhat Bakula
Mural, upper wall, right, Drepung College,
Gongkar; 1940s
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2010

FIG. 12.16 (OPPOSITE PAGE, LOWER RIGHT)
Arhat Piṇḍola Bharadvāja
Mural, upper wall, right, Drepung College,
Gongkar; 1940s
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2010

FIG. 12.17
Twenty-One Tārās
Mural on red-ground, Kanjur Chapel,
second floor, Öphu estate; 1940s–1950s
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2010

College. The back wall depicts, to the left and the right of the entrance, Gaṇapati (Tshogs bdag glang chen) and Jambhala (Dzam bha la) (see Fig. 12.11), both painted on a red background. No trace survives of the murals he painted in the outer entrance portico of the Four Great Kings (*rgyal chen rigs bzhi*).⁵⁸⁹

Similar murals on a red background that were probably the work of Yeshe Tenzin still survive at Öphu Estate ('Od phub gzhis ka), a short distance up the Gongkar valley. (See Fig. 12.17.) Gongkar Chöde maintained here an estate with a small branch temple and one caretaker monk. The second floor of this multistoried building once accommodated a Kanjur Chapel (bKa' gyur lha khang). The chapel still contains yellow-lined paintings on a red ground that depict the Twenty-One Tārās (*sgrol ma nyer gcig*) and masters from the Gelugpa and Sakya sect, including Dorjedenpa



and his chief lama, Drakthokpa Sönam Sangpo. The murals, which date to the 1940s or 1950s, are preserved in surprisingly good condition.

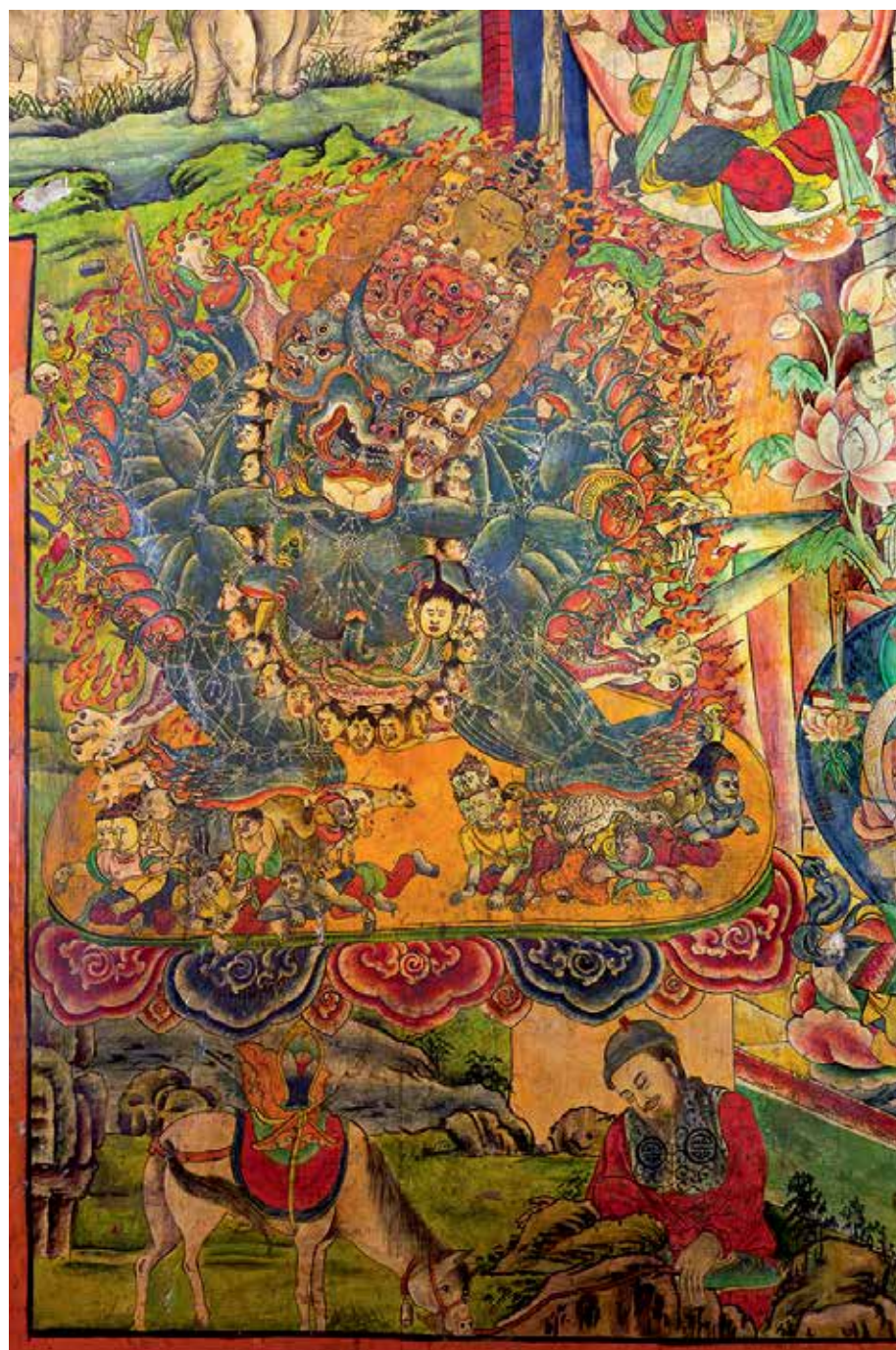
Once in around the 1940s, while he was still in charge of the *trulku*'s estate at Gongkar, Yeshe Tendzin is said to have met with Uchen Tenpa Gyatsho (dBu chen bsTan pa rgya mtsho, 1872–1959), another contemporary Khyenri painter from Lhokha. According to one oral account, Tenpa Gyatsho served as the steward at the Jaksam Labrang (lCags zam bla brang) near Gongkar in the 1930s or 1940s and invited Yeshe Tendzin there to do some artwork.

However, as both of them then had the responsible positions of monastic stewards, this is believed to have been just a pretext for the two artists to briefly meet and learn from each other.⁵⁹⁰

Tenpa Gyatsho himself was born in the Upper Valley of Dranang into the family of the Simsha Tago (gZims shag rta mgo).⁵⁹¹ He was a well-known master artist who worked in both Menri and Khyenri styles, having studied under the Khyenri painter Sönam Chokden (bSod nams mchog ldan) and the Menthangpa masters Gen Tsöndrö (rGan brTson 'grus) and Gen Palden Trinle (dPal ldan 'phrin las).⁵⁹² His painting was

highly appreciated in Lhasa circles and by members of the Ganden Phodrang government. In around the 1920s, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama commissioned several *thangkas* in the Khyenri style from him, and he was hired by the Medical College in Lhasa (sMan rtsis khang) to copy (*'dra bshus*) old Khyenri *thangkas* and complement available Menri-style compositions with Khyenri-style renditions. He also painted at Thangtong Gyalpo's main seat of Jaksam Labrang and other monasteries in Lhokha.⁵⁹³ At Gongkar Chöde, Tenpa Gyatsho painted the Sixteen Arhats in the upper skylight panels (*khyams*) of the main assembly hall (See Figs. 4.10A and 4.10B).⁵⁹⁴ Several of his works survive at Drepung Monastery, where he worked at an earlier stage of his career. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama acknowledged Tenpa Gyatsho's extraordinary style about which he reportedly said: "[His painting contain] 80 percent of the Khyenluk and 20 percent of the Menri."⁵⁹⁵ Tenpa Gyatsho had seven children by three different wives. He passed on his knowledge of painting as a lay tradition to three of his sons: Jinpa (sByin pa), Tshering (Tshe ring, 1929–2002), and Phüntshok (Phun tshogs), who is still alive. Another student of Tenpa Gyatsho was Tshewang Dorje (1933–2002), whose life is summarized below in appendix E.

In the early 1950s, when Yeshe Tendzin was in his late thirties, he gave up his monastic and official duties and continued to paint. Then, as a lay artist living in Treshing, he began for the first time to train a few students in the style that he had mastered over the years. Those who learned painting from him included a few monks from the monasteries Dakpo Tratshang (Dwags po grwa tshang) and nearby Serthok Labrang (Ser thog bla brang) in Namrab, a single monk from Gongkar Chöde, and a monk from Sungrapling (gSung rab gling) in the Dol Valley.⁵⁹⁶



In 1958 (Earth-Dog year), about five years after he had given up the monastic vows, Yeshe Tendzin was asked to repaint the inner sanctum at Dakpo Tratshang (Dwags po grwa tshang), the largest monastery in Namrab, just beneath from where he had settled. Within about a month, he painted the murals in a casual, easygoing mood (*snang ba med pa'i thog nas*).⁵⁹⁷ (See Figs. 12.18-12.20.) The underlying enthusiasm with which he painted is

FIG. 12.18
Yamāntaka
Mural, right of entrance, Inner Sanctum,
Dakpo Tratshang; 1958
Photo courtesy of Dakpo Tratshang, 2012



FIG. 12.19
Buddha Amitabha Surrounded by Eight
Bodhisattvas
Mural, left of entrance, Inner Sanctum,
Dakpo Tratsang; 1958
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2015

FIG. 12.20
Ngaklo Rinpoche of Nalendra and
Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī
Mural, right of entrance, Inner Sanctum,
Dakpo Tratsang; 1958
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2015

reflected in the lively murals he then created in that chapel. His composition effectively assembles numerous deities from the tantric pantheon and masters from all Tibetan Buddhist traditions. A detailed panel with inscribed label (*mtshan byang*) below the frescos reveals that Bepe Chamdzö (as he was then usually called) was the master artist responsible for it and was assisted by four painters who did the coloring (*tshon gtong mi bzhi*), two helpers (*lag g.yog mi gnyis*), a manager, and a cook (*gnyer pa mar chen gnyis*).⁵⁹⁸

Figure 12.18 features under the main figure ornate lotus petals as in the Khyenri style of Gongkar. Also we find striking exotic-looking minor figures and animals at the base of this panel.

In Figure 12.19 the artist employed unusual colors, including many rare ones, such as bright olive green or char- treuse. Note the distinctive upper garments hanging down over the shoulders and upper torsos of all the deities in the top row. The central buddha, Amitabha, is depicted wearing a pink sleeveless upper garment. Dragons and minor offering deities floating in clouds and playing divine music flank the central buddha. Several exotic figures stand at the base of the panel, including one who holds a large tusk-like curved object that is not ivory but a branch of red coral.

In Figure 12.20 the depiction of Ngaklo Rinpoche (1892–1959) of





FIG. 12.21
Backdrop with Potala Palace; TIPA musical performance for the delegates from the African and Asian nations meeting in Delhi, April 1960
After: Tashi Tsering ed. 2010, 563.

Nalendra is quite naturalistic—almost as in a photograph. (Compare the less true-to-life painting of a contemporary local lama in Figure 12.9.) Note also the pink upper garment worn by Mañjuśrī.

Indian Exile

A year later, in March 1959, Yeshe Tendzin donated his goats and sheep to Dakpo Tratschang and set off with his family to India as refugees.⁵⁹⁹ As some of the first arrivals from Tibet, they found shelter at Buxa Fort (sBag sa chos sgar), a former army camp in northeastern India that was used as the main reception and holding center for refugees coming from or through Lhokha.⁶⁰⁰ Later, the family moved to Dharamsala, where the Tibetan government-in-exile had relocated shortly before, in May 1960. There, Yeshe Tendzin found work at the recently established Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (Zlos gar tshogs pa) or “TIPA.”⁶⁰¹

For seven or eight years (until about 1967 or 1968), Yeshe Tendzin

designed the large cotton backdrops (*ras yol chen po*) that were needed for the performances of the TIPA troupe.⁶⁰² He painted those background scenes in a naturalistic style (*‘dra bris; par bris*) and depicted such scenes as the Potala Palace, the Jokhang Temple, Samye Monastery, episodes from the life of Tibet’s Three Early Buddhist Kings (*chos rgyal mes dbon rnam gsum*), and scenes of nomad or village life (*bzo zhing ‘brog gsum*).⁶⁰³ When painting and coloring the large-size backdrops, he was assisted by his wife, Lobsang Chödrön, who had learned the basics of painting from him. In 1984 all old backdrops of the Dharamsala drama troupe were destroyed by a fire in the auditorium hall (*tshogs khang*). However, a few of his background scenes that had been captured on old black-and-white photographs were reproduced in a book commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the institute in 2009.⁶⁰⁴

While working and living at the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts, Yeshe Tendzin also busied himself with other projects. On behalf of the government-in-exile’s publishing house (the Shes rig par khang) in Dharamsala, he illustrated the Tibetan school textbooks, the first edition of which was published in 1963 by letter press and for which



FIG. 12.22
Yeshe Tendzin and his wife working on a TIPA backdrop in 1968
Photo courtesy of Kalsang Kaiser

an enlarged edition was published in 1967. In addition to the book covers, his drawings of religious and secular personalities (*bla dpon mi sna*), places (*sa gnas*) and everyday items (*‘tsho thabs*) illustrated the various aspects of Tibetan life and culture within each book, a modern feature that traditional Tibetan books lacked.⁶⁰⁵ Every Tibetan child who received his or her schooling in the exile-government schools in India or Nepal knew his drawings, such as those of Tibet’s Three Early Buddhist Kings, which were reproduced on the covers of editions even as late as the 2000s (Fig. 12.23).

Among Tibetan painters in exile, Yeshe Tendzin was one of the most capable for naturalistic paintings and drawings. Before leaving Tibet, he is said to have admired Indian highly naturalistic paintings. We can assume that while still in Gongkar he also admired the naturalism of Khyentse Chenmo, who was unrivaled for his true-to-life and expressive paintings and sculptures.



FIG. 12.23
Portrait of the Tibetan Dharma King
Trisong Detsen
Cover, Tibetan Reader, class four; Sherig
Publishing House (Dharamsala)
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2012



FIG. 12.24
Tibet's Three Early Buddhist Kings
Pigment on cloth, 99 ¼ x 70 in.
(252 x 178 cm); painted by Amdo Jampa,
1983
Now in the Kashag office (bKa' shag las
khungs), Tibetan government-in-exile
Photo courtesy of Ven. Jinpa Gyatso,
Dharamsala, India
Literature: Clare Harris 1999, pl. 17.

FIG. 12.25
Green Tārā
Detail, pigment on cloth
11 ¼ x 14 ¼ in. (28.5 x 36.5 cm)
painted by Amdo Jampa, 1980s
Private Collection, Dharamsala, India
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2010





FIG. 12.26
Songtsen Gampo with His Two Ministers,
Thonmi and Gar Tongtsen
Pigment on cloth,
18 ½ x 24 in. (47 x 61 cm);
painted by Amdo Jampa, 1984
Private Collection, Dharamsala
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2010

In Lhasa in the twentieth century the painter most famed for naturalism or realism (*ngos bris*) of Yeshe Tendzin's generation was Amdo Jampa Tsheten (1911–2002).⁶⁰⁶ Like Yeshe Tendzin, Amdo Jampa also painted for the Tibetan exile community in Dharamsala. In the early 1980s, during a longer visit at the Dalai Lama's seat in India, he produced several large paintings for the Tibetan government-in-exile institutions and private people. Compared to Yeshe Tendzin, Amdo Jampa's painting style was less traditional and more radical when portraying religious figures. Many traditional-minded refugees found his style too close to the Socialist

Realism of Communist China (see Figs. 12.24–12.26).

In 1964/65, Yeshe Tendzin was invited to the Buddhist holy place Sarnath by Gen Gose (1924–2004), who was finishing decorating the main temple of his monastery there. The construction of that monastery, which Tibetans call just “Bö Gönpa” (Bod dgon pa), was begun as early as 1955, but the decoration of the larger temple hall was completed about ten years later. On this occasion, Yeshe Tendzin was invited to decorate the tall walls of the temple's central sanctum.

Similar to his paintings at Dakpo Tratsang in Tibet, in Sarnath, Yeshe Tendzin painted portraits of leading lamas from the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism. (See Fig. 12.27.) They appeared on the right wall, where we also find depicted the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and his two principal tutors (Ling Rinpoche and Trichang Rinpoche). In this panel a row of snowy white peaks seems to float in the distant dark-blue sky. The



FIG. 12.27
Fourteenth Dalai Lama Surrounded by
Masters from Different Lineages
Mural, Inner Sanctum, Gen Gose Gompa,
Sarnath; 1964/65?
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2015

left wall featured Tsongkhapa with his two chief disciples (*rje yab sras gsum*).

In 1970, after retiring as the background painter of the TIPA troupe, Yeshe Tendzin was requested to paint the murals for a prayer wheel chapel (*ma ni lha khang*) that was evidently built by the Tibetan community in Manali, a hill-station town of present-day Himachal Pradesh.⁶⁰⁷ Here again, he depicted a mixed assembly of tantric deities and lineage masters from different traditions in the upper parts of the wall and reserved the lower parts for the chapel's main theme, the Twelve Deeds (*mdzad pa bcu gnyis*) of the Buddha (Fig. 12.28) and an Eight-armed Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 12.29). The



FIG. 12.28
Birth of the Buddha in Lumbini, One of the
Buddha's Twelve Great Deeds
Detail, mural, Prayer Wheel Chapel,
Manali; 1970
Photo courtesy of Chögyal-la, Dharamsala,
India



FIG. 12.29
Eleven-headed and Eight-armed
Avalokiteśvara
Detail, mural, Prayer Wheel Chapel,
Manali; 1970
Photo courtesy of Chögyal-la, Dharamsala,
India



FIG. 12.30
Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī
Pigment on cloth,
16 x 21 in. (40.6 x 53.3 cm); 1960s
Now in Gongkar Chöde, Laldang,
Uttarakhand, India
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2006

bodhisattva's upper torso and upper arms are covered by a faint pink garment.

Yeshe Tendzin was a highly respected artist within the Tibetan exile community in India. Until his death in 1971, he painted thangkas and larger paintings for private patrons. Some of the most noteworthy people who commissioned works from him were Freda Bedi (1911–1977), Dr. Yeshe Dondhen (b. 1927 or 1929), and Mrs. Kalsang Takla. Figures 12.30 and 12.31 give a good idea of the thangkas he painted during this period. The first, which depicts the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, incorporates several classic elements of

Khyentse Chenmo's style (such as the silk parasol floating in the sky above the bodhisattva's nimbus and the four minor divine deities floating within clouds in the sky to either side, one holding his own parasol) that make the painting a poignant evocation of the art tradition that Yeshe Tendzin had left behind in Gongkar. The depiction of Thangtong Gyalpo (Fig. 12.31) is powerful and more naturalistic than usual. The lotus petals beneath him have elaborate centers. Two smaller female goddesses below, the White and the Green Tārā, wear pastel-blue and faint-pink upper garments that completely cover their upper arms and upper torsos.

Yeshe Tenzin was frequently approached by patrons requesting that he paint so-called "birth-sign" (*skyes rtags*) memorial thangkas. Painted on behalf of those who had recently died, such sacred depictions were meant to facilitate a good rebirth. For commissioning a small memorial thangka of this type, people then often donated as little as ten or fifteen Indian rupees, and for larger paintings, up to fifty rupees.⁶⁰⁸ (See Figure 12.32.) Yeshe Tendzin did not demand a particular price and accepted whatever he was offered.⁶⁰⁹ Quiet and humble, he preferred not to paint for well-to-do foreign patrons, if possible, thinking first of the Tibetan refugee community around him.⁶¹⁰ Through his painting he earned himself and his family a simple living in the harsh early years of the Tibetan diaspora.⁶¹¹

Yeshe Tendzin was a dedicated artist who emphasized the sacredness of his occupation. At times he explained to his daughters the heavy responsibility of being a painter, saying, "It would be sinful for people to worship a badly depicted painting" (*zhal ras yag po ma mjal pa yin na sdig pa red*).⁶¹² More of his paintings probably survived in private homes of Dharamsala, in the private residence (*gzims chung*) of the present Dalai Lama and in the larger Tibetan monasteries of South India.



FIG. 12.31
Thangtong Gyalpo
Pigment on cloth, 9 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(24.5 x 34 cm); 1960s
Now in Nyungne Temple (sMyung gnas lha
khang), Dharamsala, India
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2012



FIG. 12.32
Four-armed Avalokiteśvara
Pigment on cloth, commissioned as a
memorial thangka; 1960s
Private Collection, Dharamsala, India
6 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (17 x 22 cm)
Photo: Mathias Fermer, 2012

- sde nas slob dpon gsang sngags mkhar pas thog drangs mkhas bsgrags bos/ ma dpe kun mkhyen rdo rje gdan pa'i thugs dam thang ka la gtso bor bzung/ 'phreng ba kri ya gnyis kyi rgya gzhung/ mnga' ris pa tshul 'od dang pañ chen thar rtse pa'i yig cha rnam mthun mi mthun gyi go 'dur dge slong 'jam dbyangs grags pa/ gnas gsar 'jam dbyangs bstan 'dzin/ phun tshogs legs 'byor/ dkar brag pa ngag dbang byams pa bzhis byas nas mi gcig pa rnam zha lu mkhan rin po cher dogs gcod dang 'di gar yang dris shing gtso bo rgya gzhung dang thang dpe btsan pa byas/ 'then 'khyer cung zad byung ba 'thor bur yig cha la dmar mchan phab nas gzhis ka'i sgo lcog lho mar 'dri ba'i do dam thon bya sgo nas kyis byas te 'go btsugs pa lcags phag hor zla brgyad pa'i nang du gegs med par grub/.*
- 529 Ibid., vol. 2, 326.
- 530 Ibid., vol. 1, 218: *che mchog gi rag sku gcig / phyag drug pa sogs chos srung gi gser sku bzhi / mtshan brgyad / brag dmar / ma ning dang bcas pa'i thang kha yar rgyab tu bzhangs pa'i mkhyen ris khyad mtshar gra tshar bcu gcig /.*
- 531 Ibid., vol. 1, 716: *gong dkar chos sde nas ri mo ba mkhas pa kha shas kyis brag sgo ka ki na'i gnam rgyan la ngan song sbyong rgyud kyi dkyil 'khor bcu gnyis dang dbus su tshe dpag med lha dgyu'i dkyil 'khor rnam bris / .*
- 532 sDe srid 1990, 271.
- 533 sDe srid 1973, vol. 1, 420.4. The same work later mentions (p. 421.2) a mixed group of Menri and Khyenri artists (*bris pa sman mkhyen 'dres pa*) and also (p. 421.4) the masters and ordinary painters in a mixed group of Menri and Khyenri painters (*sman mkhyen 'dres pa'i dbu byings*).
- 534 Tibet House Society 1969, 17–23. Images of the seven paintings of this set are available on the Himalayan Art Resource website, www.himalayanart.org. See HAR nos. 72043–72050.
- 535 Tibet House Society 1969, 21.
- 536 See, for instance in Bryner 1956, in thangka 4, the ornate petals of the lotus seat of the central buddha.
- 537 Bryner 1956, 17. See also Bryner 1956, 69: “Two tankas in the St. Louis series are lacking, presumably bearing the other five tales.”
- 538 Bryner 1956, 51.
- 539 One from the set was previously published on cover of Peter Khoroché's book, citing it as “Tibetan Tanka 197: 150. The Saint Louis Art Museum, W. K. Bixby Fund.”
- 540 Bryner 1956, 8.
- 541 Bryner 1956, 9.
- 542 According to Wikipedia, he started his academic career in 1909 when he was appointed assistant professor of Sanskrit in the University of St. Petersburg and the member of the Russian Committee for the Exploration of Central and Eastern Asia. In 1912, he studied Sanskrit at Harvard for some time. He was in China when the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia broke out. The government of the new Estonian Republic, established in 1918 after the Versailles treaty, left him only a small part of his inherited estate. He then accepted an Estonian citizenship but remained in Beijing. With the recommendation of his friend Charles Eliot, then principal of the University of Hong Kong, he was invited by Hu Shi to teach Sanskrit, Tibetan, and History of Indian Religion at Peking University, as lecturer from 1918 to 1921 and as professor from 1922 to 1929. He helped set up the Sino-Indian Institute in Beijing in 1927. In 1928 he was a visiting scholar at Harvard, helping the Harvard-Yenching Institute to collect books. Source: Serge Elisseeff, “Stael-Holstein's Contribution to Asiatic Studies,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 3, no. 1 (April 1938), 1–8), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_von_Staël-Holstein.
- 543 Bryner 1956, 26.
- 544 Bryner 1956, 22.
- 545 Bryner 1956, 14.
- 546 Bryner 1956, 15.
- 547 According to my 1995 notes, the third painting I saw was the final one. It contained an elaborate court scene of the patrons: lama, lay nobleman, Sakyapa patrons, etc. Dimensions: 26 x 16 1/2 in. (66 x 42 cm).
- 548 For another member of the same set of thangkas, see LACMA, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John G. Ford (M.84.219), cited in P. Pal, *Art of Tibet*, expanded ed. (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1990). See also Newark Museum, acc. no. 85.411; Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John Gilmore Ford.
- 549 Compare the depiction of tale numbers 32–34 in Bryner 1956, 66, tanka 13.
- 550 Rob Linrothe, personal communication. See also HAR 73267-73269. <http://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=2958>.
- ## CHAPTER 12
- 551 Gendün Rabsal, himself a pre-1959 monk of the monastery, mentions two hundred sixty monks in his history; see *Gong dkar chos sde dgon pa'i lo rgyus rags bsodus rin chen do shal*, 11a.
- 552 On the branches of Gongkar Chöde, see D. Jackson 2015b.
- 553 Kañ thog Si tu (2001 ed.), 145: *sngar grwa stong phrag da lta brgya dang drug cu yin/*.
- 554 On the Khyenri artists during the Fifth Dalai Lama's time, see chapter 11.
- 555 Everding 2009 (5. Auflage), 197. The grand renovation of the main temple and the resizing of the assembly hall is also reported by pre-1959 monks of Gongkar Chöde; *inter alia* Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2010. For the year 1939, the German expedition team under Ernst Schäfer (1910–1992) reported a population of 300 monks at Gongkar Chöde; see German Federal Archive, Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 135/56, *Routenbeschreibung*, 52 (here: Kongka Tschödeng).
- 556 See chapter 4, part A. The rendering of the *Kalpalatā* was researched by Xiong Wenbin; see Xiong Wenbin 熊文彬 2012, “A Preliminary Study on Murals Representing Stories from dPag bSam vKhri Shing (Kalpalata) in the Assembly Hall of the Main Temple, Gong dKar Chos sDe, Gong dKar County, TAR,” *China Tibetology* (Chinese version), no. 2, 176–187.
- 557 D. Jackson 1996, 164.
- 558 Ngag dbang phun tshogs 1994, 52. The restorations were still going on when E. Schäfer and his team visited the monastery in April 1939; German Federal Archive, Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 135/56 *Routenbeschreibung*, 47 (here: Daitang).
- 559 Jamgön Ameshab (1597-1659) reports in his master's biography that Drathang also followed the Gongkar tradition of ritual dance; see Ameshab, *Khyab bdag 'khor lo'i mgon po dpal sa skya pa chen po sngags 'chang bla ma thams cad mkhyen pa ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams grags pa rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar yon tan rin po che 'dus pa'i rgya mtsho 'phel bar byed pa phun tshogs bdud rtsi'i char rgyun*, (Collected Works 2000, vol. 27), 709: *der yod rnam dang phyogs nas 'dus pa'i skye bo khri phrag tu longs pa la dbang mo che dang thugs rje chen po'i bsgom lung gi bka' drin yang stsal cing / grwa tshang pa dpon slob rnam kyis kyang gong dkar rdo rje gdan gyi phyag len dang mthun pa'i las mkhan ru 'dren dang bcas pa'i gar 'cham dang / [...]*
- The German expedition identified Drathang's sectarian affiliation by the design of the temple's outer walls that showed the characteristic blue-gray, red and white colors of Sakya; see German Federal Archive, Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 135/56, *Routenbeschreibung*, 47: “Ebenso ist die Westwand des großen Klosters mit waagerechten, rotweißblauen Streifen, graublauweiß im Wechsel, angebracht. Es sind dies die Farben der Sakja-Sekte und das Zeichen dafür, daß viele der hiesigen Einwohner zu ihr gehören.”
- 560 See sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, *mChod sdong* (1990 ed.), 271.
- 561 On the temple's restoration and enlargement under Palden Losang, see IHag tshing 2004, 88.
- 562 My findings on Yeshe Tendzin's background and his life as an artist are largely derived from interviews I conducted inside and outside Tibet. I am particularly grateful to Chögyal-la (Dharamsala, India) and Jampal Khyentse (Swayambhunath, Nepal), who were both monks at Gongkar Chöde prior to 1959. Chögyal-la, in particular, spent hours with me discussing the art and customs of Gongkar Monastery before the Chinese occupation. For Yeshe Tendzin's years in Indian exile I am very thankful to his daughters, Ngawang Lhamo (Boston) and Kalsang Kaiser (Winterthur, Switzerland), who generously shared with me some of their early memories. Moreover, I would like to thank numerous other informants from Lhokha, who remain unnamed here but who have tremendously helped in this investigation with various means of assistance.
- 563 D. Jackson 1996, 164f.
- 564 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2010.
- 565 Ibid. In fact, an attendant (*nye gnas*) named Tshultrim Gyatsho did accompany Khyentse Wangpo on his pilgrimage to central Tibet. He is mentioned several times in Khyentse Wangpo's biography; see M. Akester 2012, 82, 139, and 144.

566 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2010.

567 Ibid. Chögyal-la also explained to me that Yeshe Tendzin belonged to Kunthang College of Gongkar; communication, 2016.

568 Ibid. Also D. Jackson 1996, 165.

569 Interview, Rawame Monastery, Tibet 2015.

570 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2010. Also D. Jackson 1996, 165.

571 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2010.

572 Ibid. Also D. Jackson 1996, 165.

573 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2010. On the establishment of a scriptural seminary at Gongkar Chöde before 1959, see also M. Fermer 2009, xv, xvi.

574 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2010. Also D. Jackson 1996, 165.

575 Interview, Dakpo Tratsang, Tibet 2015.

576 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2012; Jampal Khyentse, interview, Swayambhunath, 2010. Also D. Jackson 1996, 165.

577 According to Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2012.

578 Jampal Khyentse, interview, Swayambhunath, 2010.

579 Interview with a Dungphü Chökhör monk, Dehradun, 2015. The restoration of Dungphü Chökhör in the late 1930s was reported by the Schäfer expedition; see German Federal Archive, Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 135/56, *Routenbeschreibung*, 50 (here: Dombang Dschökar). The extensive restoration was also noted by G. Tucci in his travel diary, see *To Lhasa and Beyond*, 148 (here: Dambuchokor).

580 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2012; Jampal Khyentse, interview, Swayambhunath, 2010.

581 Jampal Khyentse, interview, Swayambhunath, 2010.

582 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2010.

583 Ibid.

584 Ibid.

585 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2010; Jampal Khyentse, interview, Swayambhunath, 2010.

586 Ibid.

587 Interviews, Rawame and Lhasa, Tibet 2015.

588 See D. Jackson 1996, 165: “While there [i.e., in India] he also took a great interest in realistic Indian painting styles.” Back at the monastery Yeshe Tendzin is said to have copied images that were brought from India; Interviews, Rawame and Lhasa, Tibet 2015.

589 Jampal Khyentse, interview, Swayambhunath, 2010.

590 Interview, Rawame, Tibet 2015. Jaksam Labrang also underwent extensive restoration in the late 1930s; see German Federal Archive, Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 135/56, *Routenbeschreibung*, 28 (here: Dschaksam). Here, the account from the German expedition conveys that the construction of a larger temple at Jaksam monastery was begun in

1938 (“Dschaksam ist ein größerer Klosterort mit z.Zt nur kleinem Klostertempel. Der Bau eines großen Tempels wurde im Jahr 1938 begonnen. Bauholz liegt am Eingang und in der Hauptstraße des Ortes, in dessen Mitte ein größerer Tschorten steht.”).

591 I am deeply indebted to the contemporary painter Tshering Norbu for sharing with me a three-page handwritten draft on Uchen Tenpa Gyatsho. Most of the information given here is derived from this biographical sketch entitled *mKhyen lugs mkhas pa bstan pa rgya mtsho lags kyi lo rgyus mdor bsdu*/. Tshering Norbu, a native from Takar (rTa dkar grong mtsho) in Chushül, had studied under Tenpa Gyatsho's son Tshering (1929-2002) in the 1980s. He is an active painter of both Menri and Khyenri styles, and runs a thangka school in Lhasa, the Thangka Center of China (Krung go'i thang ga'i lte gnas).

592 As is summarized by his disciple Tshewang Dorje (1933–2002); cf. Tshewang Dorje 1998, 99f.: *lugs 'di'i [i.e., mkhyen lugs] 'byung khungs gong dkar mkhyen brtse'i slob ma mchog 'gyur lnga'i phyi ma bsod nams mchog ldan bya ba dang de'i slob ma nyes dus kyi ri mo'i sgyu rtsal mkhas can bstan pa rgya mtsho lags zhes grags pa kun du khyab pa de [100] yin/ khong gi bris pa'i ri mo thang ga dang ldebs bris nams mkhyen lugs gtsang gtsang yin 'dug kho bos gong gsal sman thang gtsang ma bris mkhan rgan brtson 'grus lags dang / sman lugs sam e ris kyis bris lugs phyag bzhes mdzad mkhan rgan dpal ldan 'phrin las lags khong rnam gnyis sa nas 'bri srol khag gnyis kyi ri mo'i shes bya slob sbyong zhus pa dang / [...]*

593 Also Interview, Rawame, Tibet 2015.

594 Jampel Shedrub, communication, January 2016.

595 Tshering Norbu, *mKhyen lugs mkhas pa bstan pa rgya mtsho lags kyi lo rgyus mdor bsdu*/: [...] *sku phreng bcu gsum pas khyed kyi brtsams bya de dag la dmigs bsal khyad chos 'dug de'i nang brgya cha brgyad cu mkhyen lugs dang / brgya cha nyi shu sman lugs kyi khyad chos ldan 'dug pas/ lugs de la "mkhyen gsar" zhes thogs cig ces bka' slob yang gnang ba'i lo rgyus kyi shod srol 'dug.*

596 Interview, Dakpo Tratsang, Tibet 2015.

597 Interview, Dakpo Tratsang, Tibet 2015.

598 The ending of the inscription on the left wall of the entrance reads: [...] *lha bris dbu chen gong chos ye shes bstan 'dzin la sogs tshon gtong mi bzhi lag g.yog mi gnyis gnyer pa mar chen gnyis bcas kyis zla gcig zhag grang gnyis gsum tsam la bzhangs sgrub*/. The two inscription panels on the left and the right side of the inner sanctum's entrance mention all figures depicted, as well as the occasion of the restoration and the means through which this mural painting project was realized.

599 Interview, Dakpo Tratsang, Tibet 2015.

600 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2012.

601 Ibid.

602 Ibid. Also D. Jackson 1996, 168, n.358.

603 Tashi Tsering 2002, 25f.: *shes rig zlos gar tshogs pa'i bzo zhang 'brog gsum/ chos rgyal mes dbon rnam gsum gyi mdzad thang / rtse pho brang po tā la/ jo khang / bsam yas sogs*

kyi ras yol chen po dag kyang khong nas 'dra bris sam par bris lugs ltar bris yod/.

604 See Tashi Tsering ed. 2010, 563, 564, 566, 568, 569, and 571.

605 Tashi Tsering 2002, 25: *btsan byol du 'byor rjes phyi lo 1961 nas bzung bod gzhung shes rig slob gra'i klog deb nang gi zhal thang gi ri mo'i thig rtsa dang mtshon don gtan 'bebs yod pa dang mi 'dra ba'i bla dpon mi sna dang / sa gnas/ 'tsho thabs mtshon pa'i ri mo mang che ba gong dkar phyag mdzod ye shes bstan 'dzin (1915-1971) lags nas bris gnang 'dug.*

606 See Clare Harris 1999, *In the Image of Tibet*, 50ff.

607 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2012. Also D. Jackson 1996, 168, n.358.

608 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2012.

609 Ibid.

610 Kalsang Kaiser, communication, 2014.

611 Chögyal-la, interview, Dharamsala, 2012.

612 Ngawang Lhamo, communication, 2014.

CHAPTER 13

613 In this chapter, I revise and expand an earlier paper. See Jackson 2003a.

614 Cf. S. Kossak in Kossak and Singer 1998, 26.

615 The basic method of dating was also summed up by Stoddard 1996, 27: “Most often the central figure is *not* identified (being too obviously well known at the time of painting), whereas all those surrounding him often are. The dating depends largely, of course, on the latest historical person represented. Although this only gives an approximate limit, we are now in a better position to judge from the style as well. Other inscriptions allow us an approximate upward date limit.”

616 See for instance the results reached through lineage and inscription analysis in Jackson 1986, 1990, 1993, 1996, 1998, and 1999a. Since the mid-1990s, a few other scholars have noticed the potential usefulness of this method, including Singer 1994, Singer and Denwood 1997, and Tanaka 1996, 6–9. See also C. Luczanits 2001 and C. Luczanits' chapter 6 in D. Jackson 2011.

617 See for instance Jackson 1999, Jackson 2009 and Jackson 2015.

618 Jackson 2009, fig. 4.5.

619 Roerich 1949–53, 406–11.

620 Blo gter dbang po, *rGyud sde kun btus thob yig*, p. 165: *rtsa rgyud brtags pa gnyis pa la brten nas slob dpon mtsho skyes zhabs dang / nā ro/ mai tra'i man ngag mnga' bdag mar ston chen por bka' babs pa dgyes mdzad rdo rje lha dgu'i dkyil 'khor du ngag dbang yon tan rgya mtsho'i sgrub dkyil gyi steng nas dbang bzhi rdzogs par thob pa'i brgyud pa nil rdo rje 'chang / ye shes kyi mkha' 'gro mal byang sems rdo rje snying po/ ārya nā ga rdzu na/ ārya de ba/ tsandra kirti/ ma tanggi pa/ tai lo pradnyā bha dra/ nā ro dznyā na siddhi/ mar pa lo tsā ba chos kyi blo gros/ rñgog chos sku rdo rje/ rñgog zhe sdang rdo rje/ rñgog seng ge sgra/ rñgog kun dga' rdo rje nas ngag*