

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF 'GRO-MGON CHOS-RGYAL 'PHAGS-PA

—TASHI DENSAPA

A. 'Gro-mgon Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan, a Sa-skyapa bla-ma of the thirteenth century, is not an unfamiliar figure in the history and religion of Tibet. His name appears in almost every historical text, as well as religious works, and it is verbalized daily in the chanting of thousands of Sa-skyapa monks for he is among the lineal teachers of the Sa-skyapa sect. Just as all Tibetan sects trace their origin to an Indian lineage, Virūpa is the Paṇḍita from whom the Sa-skyapa received the teachings of the *Lam-'bras* (Path and Fruit). The lineage of *Lam-'bras* teachers from the Buddha, through the Indian guru, down to 'Phags-pa is as follows :

Rdo-rje-'chang (Vajradhara)
Bdag-med-ma
Virūpa
Nag-po-pa
Da-ma-ru-pa
'Brog-mi Śā-kya ye-shes
Se-mkhar chu-be kun-rig
Zhang-dgon-pa Ba-chos-'bar
Bla-ma Sa-skyapa chen-po Kun-dga' snying-po
Slob-dpon Bsod-nams rtse-mo
Rje-btsun Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan
Chos-rje Sa-skya Paṇḍita Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan
'Gro-mgon Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan.

In addition, 'Phags-pa was a descendant of the 'Khon family who maintain that they are descended from the Gods of Light¹ : the Three Heavenly Brothers² (*lha-mched-gsum*). The name 'Khon is said to have originated at a time when the gods were at war with the demons. G.ya'-spang-skyes, one of the descendants of G.yu-ring, son of a god, killed the demon Skya-ring khrag-med and took his wife. The son born from their union was named "Khon-bar-skyes" ("Born during the struggle"). Hence, the family lineage became known as 'Khon.

Historically, tradition traces the 'Khon line back to 'Khon Dpal-po-che³, one of the ministers of the eighth century king, Khri-srong lde-btsan. The 'Khon lineage can be traced down to Dkon-mchog rgyal-po, who built a monastery at the place called Sa-skya, from which the sect later derived its name. His son Sa-chen Kun-dga' snying-po is credited with reforming his father's Rnying-ma-pa teachings and establishing the organized Sa-skyapa sect. Sa-chen's son was Dpal-chen 'od-po who had two sons : one was the Great Sa-skya Paṇḍita Kun-dga'⁴ rgyal-mtshan; the other Zangs-tsha bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan.

Zangs-tsha's son, Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan, at the age of ten, accompanied

An English translation of the Rnam-thar with critical notes by the author is under publication. Author's introduction to the English translation is published here in the form of an article.

Sa-skya Paṇḍita to the court of the Mongol Khan⁵ and there won favor and earned the name of 'Phags-pa ("Noble One").

SAKYA—MONGOLS

Like Alexander the Great, the Great Mongol chief, Genghis Khan threatened the doorsteps of all his neighbors. Tibet learned of his presence, but was spared raids at first owing to her formidable natural barriers. In the time of Godan, the Mongols first entered Tibet proper (1239), plundering Rwa-sgreng and Rgyal Lha-khang, and leaving the Tibetans in great shock, now well aware of their danger.

It was in the midst of this turmoil that Sa-skya Paṇḍita was invited to the camp of Godan, Khan of the Kokonor region, at the suggestion of two of his generals. There is no evidence as to the nature of this invitation nor to the way in which it was accepted; however most Tibetan scholars hold the view that Sa-skya Paṇḍita willingly accepted the invitation in the hope that his visit would bear fruit both in political and religious affairs.

On the occasion of this visit, Sakya Paṇḍita took with him his two nephews, Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan and Phyag-na-rdo-rje, aged ten and sixteen respectively. According to Professor Tucci⁶ however, the two nephews may have been taken as hostages to the Mongol camp as much as two years before the actual meeting between Godan and Sa-skya Paṇḍita. On the other hand, some Tibetan scholars believe that Sa-skya Paṇḍita was already on his way to China, pausing frequently on the journey to deliver sermons and initiations in various places, and he therefore sent his young nephews on ahead of him. The reason for their accompanying him in the first place seems to be that the boys had lost their parents and Sa-skya Paṇḍita had assumed their guardianship.

The newpew 'Phags-pa in winning the favor of Godan Khan, proved to be a great asset to his uncle. And when Sa-skya Paṇḍita passed away in 1251 at the age of seventy, he handed his spiritual authority on to 'Phags-pa. When Godan died, 'Phags-pa won the favor of the young prince, Kublai. When Kublai became Khan, 'Phags-pa received the title of Imperial Preceptor (Ti-shih), along with the temporal and spiritual authority over Tibet as the Khan's present for Buddhist initiations given him by 'Phags-pa. 'Phags-pa remained in China for 15 years, and when he returned to Sa-skya in 1265 he was received warmly and with great honor. The affairs of Tibet were conducted by a Chief Administrator (Dpon-chen) at Sa-skya, appointed by 'Phags-pa and approved by the Khan.

Two years later (1267), the Khan sent representatives requesting the return of 'Phags-pa to the Mongolian imperial court. At this time, following the pattern of Mongol administration, thirteen officials were appointed to govern Tibet.

In 1268, at the request of the Khan, 'Phags-pa created a square-style script which could be used for all the languages of the Mongols' vast empire; and though short-lived as a functional system, the writing is still known today as 'Phags-pa Script.

'Phags-pa left China for the last time in 1274, making a gradual journey to Tibet where he arrived at Sakya in 1276. He passed away in 1280 at the

age of forty-six.

Two accounts⁷ relate that his was not a natural death, but that he had been poisoned by his personal servant (Gsol-dpon). The servant, intriguing against the Dpon-chen had written to the Khan in 'Phags-pa's name, charging the Dpon-chen with treason. The Khan sent an army to remedy the situation, at which the intriguer is reputed to have poisoned 'Phags-pa and then committed suicide. The Mongols, thinking 'Phags-pa had been murdered by the Dpon-chen, executed him. But it is said that the Dpon-chen pleaded his innocence and loyalty, and that as proof of his innocence his blood would be white at his execution. And so it was! The Khan, on hearing the full report, is said to have had his own commanders executed for not making a full and proper inquiry.

B. There are two known biographies of Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pa in Sa-skya sources. The first, a fairly detailed biography, is found in the *Sa-skya-pa'i chos kyi snying-po Bi-ru-pa'i gsung-ngag lam-'bras rin-po-che*⁸. The first seven volumes of this seventeen-volume work contain *rnam-thar* of the lineages of Sa-skya from the beginning to the present, and Volume Kha (known as *Lam 'bras bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rnam-thar*) has the 'Phags-pa biography composed by Sher-chen Ye-shes Rgyal-mtshan⁹. The second *rnam-thar* is found in the *Sa-skya gdung-rab chen-po rin-chen bang-mazod* composed by 'Jam-mgon A-myes zhabs Kun-dga' Bsod-nams¹⁰. There are a few other brief biographies in works like the *Lam-'bras bla-ma brgyud-pa'i tshar snang-ba* by Bla-ma dam-pa Bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan¹¹. These however are all by Sa-skya lamas and somewhat colored by the viewpoint of that order.

2. The 'Khon lineage of which 'Phags-pa comes can be found in several Tibetan chronicles apart from those already mentioned, most of them composed by a Sa-skya-pa lamas. It is interesting to note here the partiality of the writers, not so much in their explicit statements as in the space and stress given to 'Phags-pa's achievements. The closer the writer's sect is in friendly relations with Sa-skya, the more space and stress placed on 'Phags-pa. Some Dge-lugs-pa authors (e.g., the Fifth Dalai Lama,) give 'Phags-pa rather extensive treatment in their chronicles¹². Sum-pa mkhan-po Ye-shes-dpal- 'byor¹³ gives a certain amount of information on 'Phags-pa in his *Dpag-bsam ljong bzang*. Blo-bzang Tshe-'phel¹⁴ gives fifteen pages of details of 'Phags-pa's life in the *Hor gyi chos-byung*.

On the other hand most of the Bka'-brgyud-pa authors have all but ignored the Patron-Priest relationship *(yon-mchod) between the Mongol khans and the Sa-skya-pa: e.g., Dpa'-bo gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba's¹⁵ *Chos-'byung mkhas-pa'i dga'-ston* (1545-1565), Volume Kha, devotes only twelve lines to 'Phags-pa and his allowing freedom to the different sects in Tibet when he might have influenced the Khan to interdict all but the teachings of the Sa-skya-pa as Tibet's state religion.

The *Chos-'byung*¹⁶ of Padma Dkar-po has only a few lines on 'Phags-pa, with brief mention of the three gifts presented to him when he conferred initiation on the Mongol Khan.

Tshal-pa Kun-dga' rdo-rje¹⁷ in his *Deb-ther* has only three lines about 'Phags-pa.

The only Rnying-ma-pa *chos-'byung*¹⁸ (religious-history) available is that of Bdud-'joms-sprul-sku 'Jigs-bral Ye-shes rdo-rje, which records exclusively the events and holy men of the Rnying-ma-pa sect, gives the briefest mention of 'Phags-pa and his relationship with the Mongols. According to Sde-gzhung sprul-sku, Kun-dga 'brang, there is nothing relevant to the history of the 'Khon and 'Phags-pa in the various other Rnying-ma-pa religious histories which he had seen in Tibet.

Professor G. Tucci elaborates at some length in his *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* on the Tibeto-Mongol relationship during the time of 'Phags-pa.

Tsepon Shakabpa, in his *Tibet A Political History*, has a quite comprehensive study of 'Phags-pa, using as his sources the Gdung-rab chen-po and the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle*.

To the best of the present writer's knowledge, the *rnam-thar* translated in this article is the only biography of 'Phags-pa composed by a person not of the Sa-skyapa sect. Most of the material used in it seems to have been derived mainly from the *Sa-skyapa'i gdung-rab chen-po*, as well as from the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle*. The *gdung-rab chen-po* devotes some forty-three folios to a question-and-answer discussion on the Dharma between 'Phags-pa and Bka'-gdams-pa dge-bshes Nam-mkha'-'bum¹⁹; however Dkon-mchog 'Jigs-med dbang-po, by omitting this discussion, has presented the essential and important events of 'Phags-pa's life in a precise yet comprehensive manner.

The full title of this book is *Rje-btsun thams-cad mkhyen-pa Lcang-skya Rol-pa'i rdo-rje'i 'Khrungs-rab kyi phreng-ba gtam-du brjod-pa ngo-mtshar dad-pa'i ljong-shing*.

The original xylograph was composed and printed at Bkra-shis-'khyil (A'mdo), and consists of 120 folios and a title page. Nawang Gelek Demo has made photocopies of the original and published them in a book under the title of *The Collected Works of Dkon-mchog 'Jigs-med-dbang-po*, Volume II. (Gadan Sung-rab Mi-nyam Gyunphel Series, Volume 22: New Delhi, 1971). The biography (*rnam-thar*) of Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan is contained in a series of abridged biographies of the predecessors of Rol-pa'i rdo-rje²⁰ (1717-1786) in the Lcang-skyapa incarnation lineage.

The author, the second 'Jam-dbyangs bzhad-pa Dkon-mchog 'Jigs-med dbang-po, made a condensed book of all the available biographies of the lives of the Lcang-skyapa incarnation at the request of Em-mchi Chos-rje Blo-bzang Rnam-rgyal²¹. The book is divided into fourteen chapters of biographies:

- 1—Dgra-bcom-pa Tsun-da
- 2—Slob-dpon Shakya-bshes-gnyen (Śākyamitra)
- 3—Grub-thob Darpana Ācārya
- 4—Lo-chen Ka-ba Dpal-brtsegs
- 5—Lha-rje Sgro-phug-pa (1074-1134)
- 6—Grub-dbang Si-si-ri-pa
- 7—Glang-ri-thang-pa Rdo-rje-seng (1054-1123)
- 8—Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pa Blo-gros-rgyal-mtshan (1235-1280)
- 9—Bla-ma Dam-pa Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan (1312-1375)
- 10—Byams-chen chos-rje Shākya-ye-shes (1354-1435)

11—Sera Rje-btsun Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1469-1546)

12—'Khon-ston Dpal-'byor lhun-grub (1561-1637)

13—Chos-rje Grags-pa 'od-zer

14—Lcang-skya Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang Chos-ldan (1642-1714)

This biography along with the others in the collection is considered to be among the finest in its genre for Tibetan style. The author, Dkon-mchog 'Jigs-med dbang-po, is well known for his literary ability, and the very fact that he was requested to compose the *rnam-thar* of Pan-chen Rin-po-che, from among thousands of very learned lamas and *dge-bshes* of Ser-'Bras-Dga'-sum attests to his being considered one of the outstanding Dga'-ldan-pa²² lamas of his time.

The author of this abridged *rnam-thar* is held in the highest esteem by all learned Tibetan scholars as one of the finest writers in Tibetan literature. According to Sde-gzhung sprul-sku Kun-dga' Bla-brang, the importance of this author is attested by his being the chief source of information for most scholars of Ser-'Bras-Dga'-sum in their own compositions. Thus it is only fitting to glance briefly at the life of the well-respected saint, Dkon-mchog 'Jigs-med-dbang-po.

He was born to Ngag-dbang rnam-rgyal at a small place in Lang-jan district of Jih-kung, the present J'ung-jen hsien of Ch'ing-hai province²³. He was born in the Earth-Monkey year (1728) amidst very auspicious signs. When he was only a few weeks old, he clapped his hands and made other gestures of the religious debate. His parents fearing that he was possessed of evil spirits, consulted many saintly lamas and asked their opinion. They were told that he was an incarnation of a high lama. When the child learned to speak, he recounted his past lives very vividly. His mother and his uncle had vision in which they were told that he was the incarnation of 'Jam-dbyangs Bzhad-pa of Bla-brang Bkra-shis-'khyil²⁴. When he was six years old he received his first monastic ordination.

When news of this child was circulated, a delegation from Bkra-shis-'khyil came to interview him, taking the belongings of the previous incarnation. The boy passed all the tests, even recognising on the treasures of the previous lama. However, due to internal disagreements within the bla-brang (estate), the boy was not enthroned as abbot until the age of sixteen. The final decision was made only after consulting a number of oracles, including the State Oracle²⁵ (Gnas-chung chos-skyong).

Having been formally recognised, he then began his spiritual training and studies. He was a very diligent and serious student, and one of his foremost teachers. Dge-bshes Ngag-dbang Bstan-'dzin²⁶, remarked that if a person wanted a son, he should want someone like this. At the age of 22, he received the final monastic ordination (dge-slong) from Lcang-skya Rol-pa'i rdo-rje²⁷.

At the age of 25 (in 1752), having completed his training in the five sciences²⁸, he went to Lhasa on pilgrimage. There he was fortunate in being received by the 7th Dalai Lama Bskal-bzang Rgya-mtsho²⁹ and the 3rd Pan-chen Dpal-ldan Ye-shes³⁰ who had come to Lhasa from Bkra-shis lhun-po³¹ to receive initiations from the Dalai Lama. Dkon-mchod 'Jigs-med Dbang-po was privileged to receive the same teachings and initiations along

with the Paṅ-chen Lama. He made great offerings and presents to all the monasteries, and remained in Lhasa until he was 32 years old (1759). While in Central Tibet, he entered Sgo-mang college (gra-tshang) of 'Bras-spungs monastery and received instruction from Mkhan-chen Sanga-rgyas Rdo-rje. He completed his Dge-bshes degree at Ne'u-tog.

When he returned to A-mdo, he made great improvements at Bkra-shis 'khyil, setting up new regulation and establishing new institutions and buildings. The relationship between the people of the district and the monastery was excellent. He gave many teachings and explanations of the Dharma to hundreds of monks at his bla-brang.

Then he visited Mongolia and China, his main purpose being a pilgrimage to the Five-Peaks Mountain (ri-bo-rtse-nga). The title of Er-ti-ni no-mi-han (fu-fa Ch'an-shih Hu-t'u-k'u-ta) was conferred on him by the Ch'ien'lung Emperor³².

When the Paṅchen Lama was on his way to China, Dkon-mchog 'Jigs-med dbang-po was of great service to him, especially for vaccinating him and his entire company against smallpox. And at Zi-ling Sku-'bum, he arranged a banquet for the Grand Lama which included five hundred courses of delicacies—a display which seems to have been reported to the Emperor of China.

Among more than the thirty great masters from whom he received teaching and initiations, to mention a few, were :

the Seventh Dalai Lama Bskal-bzang rgya-mtsho:
Paṅchen Dpal-ldan Ye-she:
Lcang-skya rol-pa'i rdo-rje;
Sa-skya bdag-chen Kun-dga' blo-gros:
Phur-lcog Byams-pa rin-po-che;
Klong-rdol bla-ma Ngag-dbang blo-bzang.

With such vast learning, Dkon-mchog 'Jigs-med also attracted many students, some of whom became great scholars in Tibet:

Sa-skya Khri-chen 'Jam-mgon dbang-sdud snying-po,
Klong-rdol rin-po-che,
Gang-thang 'Jam-pa'i dbyangs,
Dkon-mchog bstan-pa'i sgron-me,
Thu'u mkhan-po,
Khri-nam-bzang-mchog,
A-kya yongs-'dzin: and others.

After completing many labors for the benefit of the Dharma, and composing eleven great works, he passed away at the age of sixty.

NOTES

1. Light, Tibetan: 'Od-gsal (Skt. ābhāsvara)

2. The Three Heavenly Brothers were: (i) Spyi-ring, (ii) G.yu-ring, and (iii) G.yu-se. The 'Khon claim their descent from G.yu-ring. Cf. *Rgya bod yig tshang*, (ff. 184-a and 186-a): *Gdung* (ff. 36-37)

3. 'Khon dpal-po-che is the earliest mentioned ancestor family and this is the earliest that the 'Khon name appears in Tibetan historical documents. Cf. *Rgya bod yig tshang* (f. 130b—131a); B.A. p. 615.

4. Sa-skyia Paṇḍita Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan henceforth will be known as Sa-skyia Paṇḍita, Chos-rje Paṇ-chen, or Sa-pan.

5. The Mongol Khan referred to here is Godan. He was Khan, at that time, of the Kokonor region, Cf. Tucci (T.P.S.) p. 9

6. This information is given by Professor Tucci in (T.P.S.) p. 9.

7. The two sources which relate the unnatural death of Chos-Rgyal 'Phags-pa are :

(i) *Bod-kyi deb-ther dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu-dbangs*, also known as *Bod-kyi deb-ther rdzog-ldan gzhon nu'i dga'-ston*, by the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang blo-dzang rgya-mtsho, p. 130, Varanasi (1967).

(ii) *Rgyal-rabs 'phrul-gyi lde-mig*, also known as the *Deb-ther dmar-po'i deb-gsar-ma*, by Bsod-nams grags-pa, p. 13.

8. This book is also known as *Gsnug-ngag rin-po-che lam-'bras kyi chos-skor bzhugs-so*. This 17 volume work was collected and edited by 'Jam-dbyangs blo-gter dbang-po, the abbot of ngor E-wam chos-ldan. The first volume contains biographies (rnam-thar) of the various *lam-'bras* lineage Lamas. The 10 remaining volumes contain teachings, initiations, rituals, sadhana and instructions.

9. Sher-chen ye-shes rgyal-mtshan belonged to the family known as Shar-pa, of which the direct unbroken lineage is the present Klu-sding family, whose eldest son inherited the seat of the abbot of Ngor, (DTKN); (SWG).

10. 'Jam-mgon A-myes-zhab Kun-dga' bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan was a 'Khon and a Sa-skyia Khri-chen. He was a monk, but had to give up his vows as his brothers passed away without any sons to continue the family name. See Glossary:

11. The first seven volumes of the *Lam-'bras* (see note 8). Bla-ma dam-pa Bsod-Mnams rgyal-mtshan is also a 'Khon and Sa-skyia Khri-chen. See Glossary.

12. See translation note 7, section (1).

13. *Gangs-can bod-yul dam-chos rin-chen byung-tshul dpag-bsam ljon-bzang*, by Sum-pa mkhan-po Ye-shes dpal-'byor, Varanasi, (1963) p. 295-298.

14. *Chen-po Hor-gyi yul-du dam-pa'i chos ji'ltar byung ba'i tshul bshal-pa'i bstan-pa rin-po-che gsal-bar byed pa'i sgron-me zhes-bya bzhugs-so*, by Chos-rje Blo-bzang Tshe-'phel, Varanasi, (1965) p. 80-93.

15. *Chos-'byung mkhas-pa'i dga'-ston* (1545-1565), by Dpa'-bo gtsug-lag 'phreng-ba, volume *ba*, p. 761.

16. *Chos-'byung bstan-pa'i Pad-ma rgyas-pa'i nyin-byed ces-bya-ba bzhugs-so*, by Kun-mkhyed Padma-kar-po; alias Ngag-dbang nor-bu (1527-1592), Delhi (1968) p. 406-407.

17. 'Tshal-pa Kun-dga' rdo-rje mdzad pa'i Hu-lan deb-ther or Deb-ther dmar-po.

18. *Bod snga-rabs-pa gsang-chen rnying-ma'i chos-'byung legs-bshad gsar-pa'i dga'-ston gyi dbu-'dreb gzhung-don le'u'i ngos-'dzin bzhugs*, by Bdud-'joms sprul-sku 'Jigs-bral Ye-shes rdo-rje.

19. See translation note 152.

20. II Lcan-skya Rol-pa'i rdo-rje; *alias* Ye-shes bstan-pa'i sgron-me, (1717-1786). He had tremendous influence in Mongolia, where he revised the *Bstan-'gyur* (translated from Tibetan into Mongolian in 1749). He was very learned and his literary activity is unparalleled. See *Biography of Lcang-skya Rol-pa'i rdo-rje* by Thu-kwan Blo-bzang chos-kyi-nyi-ma (1737-1802).

21. E-mchi Chos-rje Blo-bzang. Rnam-rgyal : unidentified.

22. Ser-'Bras-Dga'-sum is the abbreviation for the three largest Dge-lug-pa monasteries in Tibet. They are all situated in the Lhasa region. Prior to the communist Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1950, the monastic population was estimated as follows :

Ser - Se-ra, 5500 monks
'Bras - 'Bras-spung, 7700 monks
Dga' - Dga'-ldan, 3300 monks

23. Cf. Margaret M. Shu-yi-Loo, *The Biography of the III Panchenlama, Blo-bzang-dpal-ldan-ye-shes-dpal-bzang-po*, examined in light of Sino-Tibetan relations during the late eighteenth century. (Ph.D. Thesis) p. 83.

24. Bla-brang Bkra-shis-'khyil: this monastery was founded in A.D. 1708 by Kun-mkhyen 'Jam-dbyangs bzhad-pa Rdo-rje ngag-dbang brtson-'grus. For full account of this monastery, the incarnation and his history, see Rock, pp. 29-47. See also TPS, p. 260.

25. The State Oracle (Gnas-chung Chos-skyong) is the tutelary deity of the Dge-lugs-pa sect, and is especially associated with 'Bras-spung monastery. The deity Rgyal-po Pe-dkar, speaks through this oracle. Mediums are selected through (1) heredity, or (2) the spirit of the deity sometimes enter into a person and thus the person automatically becomes the medium. All such mediums are given good positions and held in high respect. The Gnas-chung medium holds the highest place because of the official rank of being the State Oracle and plays an important part in the recognition of the Dalai Lama, and in any other state affairs the final decision is always made with his consultation.

26. Dge-shes Ngag-dbang bstan-'dzin: unidentified.

27. Lcang-skya Rol-pa'i rdo-rje: see note 20.

28. See translation note 155.

29. The Seventh Dalai Lama, Bskal-bzang rgya-mtsho (1708-1757) was born at Li-thang in Khams, in the seventh month of the Earth-Mouse

year (1708). Lha-bzang Khan on hearing of the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama sent a delegate to investigate; however, the boy was concealed and the parents were advised to take him to a safe place in the Kokonor region, where certain Mongol tribes offered him recognition and protection. The Manchus seeing an opportunity to extend their influence in Tibet, offered protection and the boy was taken to Sku-'bum monastery in 1716 for education.

Then came the clash between the two Mongol tribes: Tshe-dbang rab-brtan's Dzungar Mongols and the Qoshot-Mongols of Lha-bzang Khan in Tibet.

The Dzungars wanted to bring the Seventh Dalai Lama to Lhasa but he was under Manchu protection. When the K'ang-hsi Emperor heard of his recognition, he sent official confirmation with a seal of the Sixth Dalai Lama in 1720.

On the ninth month of the Iron-Mouse year, he was brought to Lhasa and enthroned in the Potala. Then in the second month of the Iron-Sheep year (1751), the Seventh Dalai Lama assumed full spiritual and temporal powers over Tibet. For details see 'Dad-pa'i snye-ma (A biography of the Seventh Dalai Lama) by Lcang-skya Rol-pa'i rdo-rje. (Also see, Shakabpa, p. 135-156).

30. The third Panchen Lama Dpal-ldan Ye-shes (1737-1780). Following the death of the Second Panchen Lama Blozang yeshe dpal-bzang-po in 1737, at the age of seventyfour, a reincarnation was found a year later at Bkra-shi-rtse in Shangs. The boy was formally recognized by the Seventh Dalai Lama and named Dpal-ldan Ye-shes.

At the invitation of the Manchu Emperor, the Panchen Lama, with permission of the Dalai Lama, proceeded to China by the way of Mongolia in 1779, for the interest of Buddhist religion, in spite of the smallpox epidemic in China. He was warmly received at Jehol by the Ch'ien-lung Emperor in 1780. They proceeded to Peking where the Panchen Lama was accorded a grandiose welcome. During his stay in China at the Yellow Palace (Huang Su), he skillfully influenced the Manchu court and reduced the amount of Manchu interference in Tibet. Unfortunately he did not live long enough to complete his diplomatic and spiritual mission. He contracted smallpox and died in Peking in November of 1780. His remains were returned to Bkra-shis-lhun-po and preserved in a mausoleum there.

31. Bkra-shis lhun-po is the large monastery of the Panchen Lama near Shigatse. It was built in 1447 by Dge-'dun-grub-pa, a disciple of Tsong-kha-pa. He is posthumously known as the First Dalai Lama, because that title was not originated until 1578. For detail on the monastery and its founder, see Bell, p. 101-106; Tucci (TPS) p. 30, and B.A., p. 339.

32. See Loo, The Biography of the III Panchen Lama, Blo-bzang-dpal-ldan Ye-shes-dpal-bzang-po. p. 83.

ABBREVIATIONS

BA G. N. Roerich, *Blue Annals of gZon-nu-dpal*.

- Das S. Ch. Das *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*.
- DTKN Personal communication : Sde-gzhung sprul-sku Kung da'bal-brang.
- LLP Personal communication : Blo-bzang Phun-tzog Lha-lung pa.
- Rd & Sn Richardson and Snellgrove. *A Cultural History of Tibet*.
- Shakabpa W. D. Shakabpa, Tibet, *A Political History*.
- Skt Sanskrit
- Swg Personal communication : Zur-khang sa-dbang-che mo Dbang-chen-dge-legs.
- TPS G. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*.
- Waddell L. A. Waddell, *Lamaism*.
- Wylie T. V. Wylie, "The Geography of Tibet" according to the '*Dzami gling-rgyas-bshad*'.