
The Qing Regulation of the Sangha in Amdo



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Abstract

The political reforms made along the Gansu-Kökenuur border in the aftermath of the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion (1723-4) represented the first significant change to that frontier to occur in centuries. Only recently have scholars begun to consider the repercussions of these changes for the powerful religious institutions of this region known as Amdo. This article utilises Chinese histories, Tibetan-language materials and Chinese-language land deeds from the eighteenth century to illustrate the drastic increase in imperial oversight and regulation of Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and monastics in Amdo, especially those of the Xining River watershed. Significantly, the policies and practices directed toward these monasteries and monastics were those traditionally employed for Chinese Buddhists of the empire's interior. In addition, the reforms introduced in the Xining region helped to set the tone and precedents for how the Qing would later engage with monasteries and monastics elsewhere in Amdo.

When I was young it was a time when the Kangxi Vajra [Emperor] was ruler of China. In Central Tibet [T. Dbus gtsang], the ruler was the grandson of the Holder of the Teachings Dharma-king Gүүishi Khan, Lhazang Chinggis Khan. And the king of Kökenuur was Gүүishi's youngest son, the Noble Reverend Prince Dashibaatar. In Zungharia the ruler was the Mongol King Tsewang Rabtan. And, in Torghud country the ruler was Ayuuki. During their lifetimes, the philosophy and practice within the establishments of lamas and monks in all places were like the waxing moon, and the desired virtues and wealth of house-holders like a summer lake. Therefore, regarding the happiness [caused by] the benefits of religion and state, it was an auspicious time that rivalled the lands and inhabitants of the gods' pure realms.

Sumba Kanbo Yeshe Baljor (1704-88)¹

¹“Mkhan po erte ni paN+Di tar grags pa'i spyod tshul brjod pa sgra 'dzin bcud len (Autobiography of Sumba Kanbo Yeshe Baljor)”, in *Gsung 'bum* (Collected Works), vol. 8, Sata-pitaka 221 (New Delhi, 1975), p. 28b.1-2 (“b” stands for verso; the numbers following the period are the line numbers); Sum pa mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor, *PaN +Di ta sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor mchog gi spyod tshul brjod pa sgra 'dzin bcud len* (Autobiography of Sumba Kanbo Yeshe Baljor), Mtsho sngon bod yig gna' gzhung 3 (Beijing, 2001), p. 72. The latter is a modern reprint of the former. This modern reprint is prone to having typos and to leaving out entire lines and sections. However, the version of the xylograph that is readily accessible (via the Buddhist Digital Resource Center [previously Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center]) was produced using old blocks, resulting in pages that are difficult to read. Sumba Kanbo (T. Sum pa mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor) is one of the most prolific and influential lamas of eighteenth-century A

Introduction

On 11 February 1724,² Nian Gengyao 年羹堯 (d. 1726), the governor-general of Shaanxi and Sichuan and General-in-Chief for the Pacification of Distant Lands, carried out a devastating attack on Gönlung Jampa Ling,³ the largest and perhaps most influential Tibetan Buddhist monastery of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in Amdo.⁴ The monastery housed as many as 2,400 monks⁵ and was the central authority in an extensive network of branch monasteries and subject populations north of the Xining River 西寧河 (also known as the Huangshui 湟水) and stretching north even beyond the snow-capped mountain ranges separating present-day Gansu and Qinghai Provinces. Significantly, the monastery also housed the remains of the late Dashibaatar (1632–1714), who was Güüshi Khan's youngest son and the ruler of the Khoshud Khanate in Kökenuur.⁶ Dashibaatar's son, Lubsang-Danzin, had launched a series of attacks on his Khoshud rivals and on Qing forts along the Gansu-Kökenuur border. He rejected the titles that the Manchu Qing Court had bestowed on him and his fellow Khoshud nobility when they submitted to the Kangxi Emperor (r. 1661–1722) in 1698.⁷ The monks of Gönlung Monastery, which had been the beneficiary of Khoshud patronage since the Khoshud and their Zünghar allies first settled in Kökenuur in the 1630s, joined Lubsang-Danzin in attacking Qing frontier forts.

The Qing forces, led by Nian, were quick to respond. Nian directed over 8,000 troops to surround Gönlung and adjacent valleys.⁸ In the course of that February day, more than 6,000 monks and other subjects of Gönlung were killed.⁹ By all accounts the destruction was total and devastating. Sumba Kanbo Yeshe Baljor, who was a young lama studying in Central

mdo. Born to Oirat parents, he was invited to Dgon lung Monastery in the Xining River Valley and recognised as the rebirth of Sum pa / Sum b+ha Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (ca. 1651–1702), an intimate disciple of the Second Lcang skya Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan (1642–1714). For more on Sumba Kanbo see Brenton Sullivan, "The Manner in Which I Went to Worship Mañjuśrī's Realm, The Five-Peaked Mountain (Wutai), by Sumba Kanbo (1704–1788)", *Inner Asia* 20, 1 (16 April 2018), pp. 64–106; Hanung Kim, "Renaissance Man from Amdo: The Life and Scholarship of the Eighteenth-Century Amdo Scholar Sum pa Mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor (1704–1788)" (unpublished PhD, Harvard University, 2018). Rachael Griffiths (Oxford University) has recently completed a translation of the entirety of Sumba Kanbo's autobiography.

²The 11th day of the first month of the second year of the Yongzheng reign.

³T. Dgon lung byams pa gling.

⁴T. A mdo. See note 18 below.

⁵A brief note in the *Deb ther rgya mtsho (Mdo smad chos 'byung)* recalls how an important lama from Dpa' ris gave extensive offerings to the "more than 2,400 monks" at Dgon lung. Brag dgon zhabs drung Dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas, *Mdo smad chos 'byung [Deb ther rgya mtsho = Ocean Annals]* (Lanzhou, 1982), p. 117.8. Schram, who may be relying upon Chinese sources, says that Dgon lung had 2,500 monks in the lead-up to the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion. Louis M.J. Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, (ed.) Charles Kevin Stuart (Xining, 2006), pp. 283, 323.

⁶Brenton Sullivan, "The Body of Skyid shod sprul sku: The Mid-Seventeenth Century Ties between Central Tibet, the Oirat Mongols, and Dgon Lung Monastery in Amdo", *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 52 (2019), pp. 294–327.

⁷Katō Naoto, "Lobjang Danjin's Rebellion of 1723: With a Focus on the Eve of the Rebellion", *Acta Asiatica* 64 (1993), pp. 57–80.

⁸Katō Naoto, "Warrior Lamas: The Role of Lamas in Lobjang Danjin's Uprising in Kokonor, 1723–1724", *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 62 (2004), p. 34; Brenton Sullivan, "The Mother of All Monasteries: Gönlung Jampa Ling and the Rise of Mega Monasteries in Northeastern Tibet" (unpublished PhD, University of Virginia, 2013), pp. 330–331.

⁹Katō Naoto, "Warrior Lamas", p. 34; Nian Gengyao, *Nian Gengyao Man Han zouzhe yi bian* 年羹堯滿漢奏折譯編 (Collected and Translated Manchu and Chinese Memorials of Nian Gengyao), translated by Ji Yonghai, Li Pansheng, and Xie Zhining (Tianjin, 1995), pp. 71–72. My thanks to Wu Lan (Mount Holyoke) for bringing the latter source to my attention.

Tibet at the time, would later write, “monasteries became like crops hit by hail, and monks left their residences, becoming like the moon dancing on the water [i.e. they vanished like an illusion]. Chuzang Rinpoché¹⁰ and some twenty other dharma-kings and elderly monks were also offered to the fires. ... The monastics were like mice killed by a hawk [and] forced to scatter like a small hair carried by the wind”.¹¹ The Yongzheng Emperor (r. 1723–35) had given his full support to Nian Gengyao’s actions, responding to the insolence of the monks by remarking that “it would be a most happy and comforting affair were you in that distant land to oblige us by slaying them and properly managing the affair”.¹² Ironically, the emperor attributed the success of the imperial army to “the benevolence and protection of the gods” and “the manifestation of the Buddha and the gods”.¹³

The destruction stretched to include most of the other important monasteries north of the Xining River, a region known in Tibetan as Pari (T. Dpa’ ris),¹⁴ including Semnyi (T. Sems nyid dgon), Chuzang (T. Chu bzang), Serkhok (T. Gser khog dgon; Gönlung’s erstwhile branch monastery that had come to rival Gönlung in size and influence) and many other monasteries.¹⁵ Even the famed Kumbum Monastery (T. Sku ’bum dgon), which was located just across the Xining River, south of the Xining garrison, suffered the loss of several monks, although the monastery itself was left largely undamaged.¹⁶

What followed was the first significant movement westward of the Sino-Tibetan frontier to occur in centuries. The rebellion also catalysed a new approach to how the Qing thought about and dealt with the Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and monastics in Gansu Province and beyond the mountain passes separating it from Kökenuur (Ch. Qinghai 青海; T. Mtsho sngon), the region surrounding the eponymous Lake Kökenuur.¹⁷ This article reveals

¹⁰The 2001 reprint of Sumpa Khenpo’s long autobiography has “Chos bzang rin po che”. The older, block-print edition, on the other hand, has “Chus bzang rin po che”. Both refer to “Chu bzang rin po che”. Sum pa mkhan po Ye shes dpal ’byor, *PaN+Di ta sum pa ye shes dpal ’byor mchog gi spyod tshul brjod pa sgra ’dzin bcud len*, p. 93; “Mkhan po erte ni paN+Di tar grags pa’i spyod tshul brjod pa sgra ’dzin bcud len”, p. 443/36a.6 (the first page number indicates the location in the overall volume. It was provided by a later editor using Arabic numerals. The page number following the slash is internal to the biography itself and is written in Tibetan numerical script).

¹¹Sum pa mkhan po Ye shes dpal ’byor, *PaN+Di ta sum pa ye shes dpal ’byor mchog gi spyod tshul brjod pa sgra ’dzin bcud len*, pp. 93–94. Thu’u bkwan, in his chronicle of Dgon lung, writes “g.yo sgyus yA ming grong tser gdan drangs nas me zhugs phul”, i.e. they “were tricked, having been invited to the yamen city and ‘burned alive’”.

¹²Nian, *Nian Gengyao Man Han zou zhe yi bian*, p. 70.

¹³*Ibid.*, pp. 71, 72.

¹⁴Some sources distinguish another region to the east and northeast of Dpa’ ris known as Pho rod, which bordered on Alashaa, Inner Mongolia, and which roughly corresponds to today’s Tianzhu County 天祝县, Gulang County, 古浪县, and Wuwei City 武威市.

¹⁵E. Gene Smith, *Among Tibetan Texts: History and Literature of the Himalayan Plateau* (Boston, 2001), p. 167.

¹⁶According to Schram, as many as 300 monks were “beheaded, fled, or were killed”. *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, pp. 332–333. See also pp. 24, 317n259. Thu’u bkwan III says that “some thirty guilty monks ...” were killed. “Bshad sgrub bstan pa’i byung gnas chos sde chen po dgon lung byams pa gling gi dkar chag dpyod ldan yid dbang ’gugs pa’i pho nya (The Monastic Chronicle of Gönlung Monastery)”, in *Gsung ’bum* (Collected Works), vol. 2 (Lhasa, 2000), p. 734/46b.4. Sku ’bum was then headed by the nephew of Lubsang-Danzin. Joachim Günter Karsten, “A Study on the Sku-’bum/T’a-Erh Ssu Monastery in Ching-Hai” (unpublished PhD, University of Auckland, 1996), p. 396; Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, p. 319.

¹⁷‘Kökenuur’ is the Mongolian name for the giant lake on the northeastern corner of the Tibetan Plateau, referred to in Chinese as Qinghai or Qinghai hu 青海湖 and in Tibetan as Mtsho sngon po. In Chinese-language sources from the Qing ‘Qinghai’ is regularly used to refer to those areas not subject to Qing administration. In this article I use ‘Kökenuur’ in this sense. In the early Qing, it referred to everything beyond the Jishi Mountains, which demarcated the western-most boundary of Shaanxi and later Gansu Provinces. After the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion and the creation of the Qinghai amban ‘Qinghai’ came to designate those territories inhabited by the Khoshud and

what happened to those Tibetan Buddhist monasteries implicated in the rebellion, changes that led the likes of Sumba Kanbo to wish for the days of old before his own monastery of Gönlung was incorporated into the expanding Qing Empire. While it has long been understood that 1724 marked a significant turning point for the Qing state's relationship with its Inner Asian frontier and, in particular, with what would eventually become Qinghai Province, only recently have scholars begun to consider the repercussions of this event for the powerful religious institutions of this region known as Amdo (T. A mdo).¹⁸ This article utilises Tibetan-language materials and Chinese-language land deeds from the early eighteenth century to illustrate the drastic increase in imperial oversight and regulation of Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in Amdo, particularly in the Xining River watershed. More importantly, the policies and practices directed toward these monasteries and monastics were those traditionally employed for Chinese Buddhists of the empire's interior and thus drew Tibetan Buddhist monasteries into a more direct relationship with the Qing. Finally, the Qing's incorporation of Xining monasteries into its system of supervising and regulating the *sangha* established precedents for how the Qing would engage with monasteries and monastics elsewhere in Amdo in the following decades and centuries.

Imperial Relations with the Tibetan Borderlands in the Ming and early Qing

Unlike the Qing, the Ming Dynasty did not have an expansionist policy regarding Inner Asia. Instead, it developed a system contingent on local circumstances for ensuring stability.¹⁹ Along its western and southwestern frontiers the Ming developed a system of entitling local leaders who were often referred to as *tusi* 土司, 'indigenous chieftans'.²⁰ Where the Ming's Shaanxi Province met the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau, certain Buddhist lamas were also given titles and seals such as 'guoshi' 國師 (State Preceptor) and 'chanshi' 禪師

other 'Mongol' banners. It was administered directly by the amban and in theory separate from the officials of the civil administration of Gansu Province.

¹⁸In contemporary parlance 'A mdo' is understood as one of the three cultural macro-regions of the Tibetan cultural sphere alongside Khams ('Eastern Tibet') and Dbus gtsang ('Central Tibet'). The exact contours of A mdo are difficult to pinpoint and change over time. In general, however, they correspond to the Tibetan-speaking areas of today's Qinghai, Gansu, and northern Sichuan Provinces. Some Tibetan-language sources from the Qing period distinguish A mdo from the region of Kökenuur to the west and southwest of A mdo whereas others include Kökenuur within A mdo. In this article I use 'Amdo' to refer to this larger, cultural region. A mdo does not map neatly onto the geo-political regions designated by Gansu Province or Kökenuur. In addition, I here treat Mdo smad ('Lower Do') as synonymous with A mdo. See Gray Tuttle, "Challenging Central Tibet's Dominance of History: The Oceanic Book, a Nineteenth-Century Politico-Religious Geographic History", in *Mapping the Modern in Tibet: Proceedings of the Eleventh Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies (Königswinter 2006)*, (ed.) Gray Tuttle (Andiast Switzerland, 2011), pp. 135–172; Max Oidtmann, "Overlapping Empires: Religion, Politics, and Ethnicity in Nineteenth-Century Qinghai", *Late Imperial China* 37, 2 (2016), pp. 70–71; Eveline Washul, "Rethinking the Places of 'Mdo smad' and 'A mdo': Literary Mappings of Northeastern Tibet" (Fifteenth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Paris, 2019).

¹⁹Donald Sutton made this point in his conference paper, "Coexistence in the Sino-Tibetan Borderland: The Songpan Garrison and the Shar khog Monasteries" (Fifteenth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Paris, 2019). He also detailed the variety of relationships that developed between Tibetan leaders and communities with Ming garrisons around Songpan. His analysis has encouraged me to consider more the multiple ways in which the Ming and the Qing may have interacted with minorities, including Tibetan Buddhist lamas and monasteries, along the Gansu-Kökenuur frontier.

²⁰On the *tusi* system 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*, (eds.) Pamela Kyle Crossley, Helen F. Siu and Donald S. Sutton (Berkeley, 2005), pp. 135–170.

(Meditation Master), which, like the titles and seals awarded the *tusi* around them, were inherited by their descendants (the nephews, disciples, or sons of the lama). In exchange, these local rulers were expected to maintain order among their own subjects, to muster troops when necessary, and to guard the mountain passes that separated the interior of Ming China from the Inner Asian peoples and polities that lay beyond Ming control.²¹ Most of the lamas thus entitled resided at monasteries that answered to Ming garrisons at Taozhou, Hezhou and Minzhou or at monasteries southeast of the Xining Guard in what is today Minhe County.²² There were also a few such lamas northwest of the Xining Guard.²³ Noticably absent are lamas from the vicinity of Gönlung. This is because Gönlung and the other Geluk monasteries of Pari were much younger, having been established only in the first half of the seventeenth century.

The region thus protected from raids perpetrated by Mongols, Tibetans or others from beyond the pass is known in Chinese as Hehuang 河湟. It consists of the area between and watersheds of the Yellow, Xining, and Tao Rivers and corresponds to the eastern-most stretches of the geographic-cultural complex known as Amdo.²⁴ These guarded mountain passes represented the Shaanxi (and, after 1666, Gansu)²⁵ Provincial ‘border with the Fan’, that is, the ‘barbarians’ who were not subject to imperial civilian or military administration. Initially, the Qing inherited from the Ming this system of defending its western frontier and negotiating relations with those people beyond the passes. Kung Ling-wei has described in great detail how the early Qing simply exchanged old Ming titles and seals of lamas from Hehuang with new ones so as to allure these local elite into the nascent

²¹Otosaka Tomoko 乙坂智子, “A Study of Hong-hua-si Temple Regarding the Relationship between the dGe-lugs-pa and the Ming Dynasty”, *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 52 (1994); Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, pp. 149–159.

²²Compare the lists of lamas and monasteries who visited the early Qing court and exchanged their old seals in the following. Ikejiri Yōko, “Nai-hisho-in Mongoru-bun Tou-an ni miru 17 seiki amudo tōbu no geruku-ha sho jin to shinchō (Early contacts between the Gelug monasteries in eastern Amdo and the Qing dynasty from the perspective of *Cing ulus-un dotuyadu narin bicig-un yamun-u mongyul dangsa*”, *Chibetto Himaraya bunmei no rekishiteki tenkai* (The Historical Development of Tibeto-Himalayan Civilization), 2018, p. 49; Kung Ling-wei 孔令偉, “Tao Min Zangchuan fo si ru Qing zhi xingshuai ji qi baihohu de Menggu yinsu--yi ‘Neige daku dang’ yu ‘Lifanyuan Man-Mengwen tiben’ wei hexin 洮岷藏傳佛寺入清之興衰及其背後的蒙古因素—以《內閣大庫檔》與《理藩院滿蒙文題本》為核心 (The Development of Tibetan Monasteries in Amdo and the Mongolian Factors during Ming-Qing Dynasties: Study on Tibetan Monks in the Manchu-Mongolian Routine Memorials of Lifanyuan)”, *Zhongyang yanyan Lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 86, 4 (February 2015), p. 880. Qutan si 瞿曇寺 was and is located south of the Xining River in what is now Ledu County. Other titles were awarded, too. For example, Hongshan Baoen si 紅山報恩寺, in Zhuanglang 莊浪 (east of present-day Tianzhu County Seat), was given the title of dugang 都綱 in the Ming and maintained it into the Qing. Kung Ling-wei 孔令偉, p. 863.

²³The most important of these was the Zi na (Ch. Xina 西納) Nang so who was given the title of *guoshi* in the Ming, a title that his family maintained into the early Qing. Adjacent to the Zi na nang so were the *guoshi* of the Longben zu 龍奔族, the Jiaerji zu 加兒即族, and the Sigemi zu 思各迷族. There were also *guoshi* associated with the Longbu zu 隆卜族, which appears to have herded in the vicinity of Guide, and the Labuer zu 刺卜兒族 (location unclear). Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, p. 306; citing the *Xining fu xin zhi*. See Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi* 西寧府新志 (New Gazetteer of Xining Prefecture) (Xining, 1988), pp. 472–478.

²⁴‘Hehuang’ is a compound of ‘Huang he’ 黃河 (the Yellow River) and ‘Huang shui’ 湟水 (the Xining River). A more restricted understanding of Hehuang is thus the watersheds of these two rivers and the land between them. Here, however, I follow other scholars in including the watershed of the Tao River as well.

²⁵Gansu Province was carved out of the Ming and early Qing’s Shaanxi Province in 1663 when a provincial judge was appointed for the area. R. Kent Guy, *Qing Governors and Their Provinces: The Evolution of Territorial Administration in China, 1644–1796* (Seattle, 2010), p. 401, n101. However, the province appears to have received the name ‘Gansu’ in 1666.

state.²⁶ Moreover, having just suppressed a major Hui Muslim rebellion in 1650, the Qing realised the ongoing need for local headmen and lamas to maintain the peace and security in the region.²⁷

Beginning as early as the 1660s, however, the Qing began to shift its attention westward to the domain of the Khoshud Khante.²⁸ Significantly, the Khoshud nobility maintained deep ties to much of the region around Xining. Gönlung Monastery, for instance, is said to have received “all of Pari” from the Khoshud ruler, Güüshi Khan, due to that monastery’s role in shepherding the rise of the Geluk school and the establishment of the Khoshud Khanate in Kökenuur.²⁹ Likewise, later Tibetan sources explain that “up until the Sino-Oirat conflict of the Water-Hare year [1723], the Zünghar kings repeatedly sent envoys³⁰ and made donations of tea, cash disbursements, horses, salaries,³¹ and so on” to the monastery.³² At the same time, the Ming and the early Qing had maintained a system of forts in the Xining region that collaborated with the indigenous chieftans (*tusi*) and entitled lamas as described above. In other words, the Xining region was a zone of *contested loyalties*.

The Qing’s recognition of the immense power of the Khoshud, of their strategic position between the interior of the Qing empire and its access to the rest of Inner Asia, and of the unique alliance between the Khoshud and the Dalai Lama’s Geluk³³ school, motivated the Qing Court to begin patronising and awarding titles to lamas from regions that were more closely associated with the Khoshud. The Second Changkya Khutugutu (1642–1714), for instance, was the first incarnate lama from Gönlung Monastery, who would eventually become the preceptor to the Kangxi Emperor and play a key diplomatic role in convincing the Khoshud to submit to Qing rule in 1698.³⁴ As a reward for his various services to the Qing, in 1705 Lcang skya was made a Meditation Master (*chanshi*) and then a State Preceptor (*guoshi*).³⁵ A few years later, in 1710, when Changkya Khutugtu left his now permanent residence at the Qing Court to pay a visit to his home monastery of Gönlung, he came laden with riches that he contributed to the construction of a new main assembly hall and other halls at the monastery. His visit also brought imperial patronage for the establishment of a Tantric College at the monastery.³⁶ At the same time that the Qing Court was showing

²⁶Kung Ling-wei 孔令偉, “Tao Min Zangchuan fo si ru Qing zhi xingshuai ji qi baihou de Menggu yinsu”, pp. 863, 874; Ling-wei Kung, “Transformation of Qing’s Geopolitics: Power Transitions between Tibetan Buddhism Monasteries in Amdo, 1644–1795”, *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines* 45 (April 2018), pp. 125–132.

²⁷Kung, “Transformation of Qing’s Geopolitics”, pp. 129–130.

²⁸Kung has called this shift the “Mongolian factor” in the frontier policy of the Qing. In particular, Kung argues that certain Khoshud nobles maintained bases along the fertile, strategic grasslands north of Xining and the Qilian Mountains 祁連山 (Siratala (Ch. Dacatou 大草灘) and Hongshui bao 洪水堡), which the Qing wished to control for its own interests.

²⁹Sullivan, “The Body of Skyid shod sprul sku”.

³⁰T. *el chi*.

³¹T. *phog*.

³²Sullivan, “The Body of Skyid shod spul sku”; Thu’u bkwan III Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, “Dgon lung gi dkar chag”, p. 779/69a.6.

³³T. Dge lugs.

³⁴Sullivan, “Mother of All Monasteries”, Chapter 3. Brenton Sullivan, “Convincing the Mongols to Join Mañjuśrī’s Realm: The Diplomacy of the Second Changkya Ngawang Lozang Chöden (1642–1714)”, article manuscript under review.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶Sullivan, “Mother of All Monasteries”, pp. 226–227; Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, pp. 326–327n299.



Map 1. Detail of the “Shensi (Kansu)” (Shaanxi/Gansu) map of the 1721 *Huangyu quanlan tu* 黃輿全覽圖 (the “Kangxi atlas”), showing the major rivers that make up the basin of Hehuang 河湟: the Xining River 西寧河 (also known as the Huangshui 湟水; unlabelled here), the Yellow River 黃河, and the Tao River 洮河. Alongside each of these rivers one finds, respectively (dotted circles have been added around them), Xining Guard 西寧衛, Weiyuan Fort 威遠堡, and Nianbai Fort 碾伯堡; the Jishi Pass 積石關 and Hezhou 河州; and, Taozhou Guard 洮州衛 and Minzhou Guard 岷州衛. As Max Oidtmann³⁷ has observed, the long, dotted line running from northwest to southeast represents the border of Shaanxi/Gansu Province with the “western barbarians” 西番界. Gönlung Monastery was located two valleys east of Weiyuan Fort. Chuzang Monastery was located up the valley from (to the north of) Weiyuan. Serkhok Monastery was located one valley west of Weiyuan. Dratsang Monastery was farther up the Xining River, west of Xining. Kumbum Monastery was located southwest of Xining, close to Nanchuan Fort 南川堡. The young Labrang Monastery was located along the Daxia River 大夏河, southwest of Hezhou and beyond the border. Similarly, Rongwo Monastery was beyond the Gansu-Kökenuur border, west of Jishi Pass. Source: Academia Sinica Center for Digital Cultures’ Reading Digital Atlas site, <https://ascdc.sinica.edu.tw> (accessed July 22, 2019).

³⁷Max Oidtmann, “A ‘Dog-East-Dog’ World: Qing Jurispractices and the Legal Inscription of Piety in Amdo”, *Extrême-Orient, Extrême-Occident* 40 (2016), p. 176.

favour to Gönlung Monastery, the heir to a monastery farther east in Minzhou was denied his request to inherit his predecessors' title of State Preceptor. The Kangxi Emperor had decided to terminate the more-or-less automatic renewal of the title of State Preceptor.³⁸ Moreover, as Kung Ling-wei has argued, this reflected the Qing's devaluing of monasteries and lamas located farther east, and its pivot to Kökenuur and the domain of the Khoshud Khanate. More broadly, Kung has argued that this reflects the *political* nature of Qing relations with Tibetan Buddhists as opposed to the Ming's *religious* approach.³⁹

A New Order

The political nature of the Qing's approach to its relationship with Tibetan Buddhism becomes clearest in the aftermath of the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion. Both the rhetoric and the policies of the Qing changed, and attempts were made to incorporate the monasteries of Hehuang, including Xining, into the imperial system of regulating the *sangha* used in the interior of the empire. This happened concurrently with more strictly 'political' changes in this region, such as the creation in 1725 of new civil administrative jurisdictions such as Xining Prefecture 西寧府 and its Xining and Nianbai 碾伯 Counties, the placing of some of the lands of local headmen and lamas onto the tax roles of civil administrators (Ch. *gaitu guiliu* 改土歸流), and the establishment of a Xining amban's office to administer the now summarily defeated Khoshud.

Previously, Gönlung and other monasteries in the region could confidently rely upon two principal sources for its income: local parishioners and Khoshud patrons. "Formerly, each 'barbarian clan' [*fan zu*] belonged on the surface to the Qinghai Mongols and in actuality to the lamas of each of the monasteries. Annually they gave a grain tax [*tianba* 添巴]⁴⁰ [to the Mongols] and incense-grain [donations to the monasteries]".⁴¹ Now, the military and economic power of the Khoshud was eliminated,⁴² and monasteries in the region had to turn eastward to the Qing Court and to potential patrons in Inner Mongolia for support. Xining was gradually and more fully incorporated into the empire, whereby it ceased being a significant military and political frontier of the Qing.⁴³

³⁸Sullivan, "Mother of All Monasteries", pp. 350n1590, 369n1659; Kung Ling-wei 孔令偉, "Tao Min Zangchuan fo si ru Qing zhi xingshuai ji qi baihou de Menggu yinsu", pp. 875–876; Kung, "Transformation of Qing's Geopolitics", pp. 127–128, 134.

³⁹Kung Ling-wei 孔令偉, "Tao Min Zangchuan fo si ru Qing zhi xingshuai ji qi baihou de Menggu yinsu", pp. 861–862. Kung writes, "the relationship between the Qing emperor and the lamas of Tao and Min tended to belong to the category of lord and vassal and were not the so-called pure 'priest-patron' (*mchod yon*) relationship" (p. 862). Similarly, Max Oidtmann has written with regard to the Xunhua sub-prefect's relations with surrounding Tibetans and Mongols, "in dealings with the reincarnate monks of the region, I have located no document in which the Xunhua magistrate referred to himself as a patron or disciple". Max Gordon Oidtmann, "Between Patron and Priest: Amdo Tibet under Qing Rule, 1792–1911" (unpublished PhD, Harvard University, 2014), p. 431.

⁴⁰See Li Wenjun 李文君, "Mingdai Xihai Mengu shouling Buerhai shiji kaobian 明代西海蒙古首领卜儿孩事迹考辨 (An Analysis of the Ming Dynasty Ruler of the Xihai Mongols Buerhai)", *Neimenggu shehui kexue* 内蒙古社会科学, n.d., http://www.xjass.com/lx/content/2010-12/12/content_180300.htm (accessed 16 January 2013).

⁴¹Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, pp. 816–817 (*juan* 卷 31).

⁴²With the important exception of the Mongol Prince of Henan, on which see Paul Nietupski, *Labrang Monastery: A Tibetan Buddhist Community On The Inner Asian Borderlands, 1709–1958* (Lanham, MD, 2011), pp. 120–121; Hildegard Diemberger, "Tashi Tsering: The Last Mongol Queen of 'Sogpo' (Henan)", *Inner Asia* 4 (2002), pp. 197–224.

⁴³Instead it became a staging ground for Qing military engagements farther away in Xinjiang and in Central Tibet. Luciano Petech, "Notes on Tibetan History of the 18th Century", *T'oung Pao* 52, 4/5 (1966), p. 289.

Numbers of “barbarian” households in the newly created Xining Prefecture were entered on the imperial tax rolls, although older forms of rule persisted, too (e.g. *tusi* still acted rather autonomously in collecting rents from subjects within their domain), creating a “meshwork of competing jurisdictions”.⁴⁴ Annually the government was supposed to collect some 10,542 *dan* (over one million litres) of grain from these new subjects, although the Yongzheng and Qianlong Emperors both granted them regular and frequent tax breaks due to the harsh environmental constraints on production.⁴⁵ The emperors also encouraged the opening up and development of uncultivated lands in the regions around Xining.⁴⁶ The twentieth-century missionary and ethnologist Louis Schram writes about the immense changes unleashed by the influx of Chinese into the region: “only after 1723 did agriculture begin to develop and the region to flourish. From then on it may be assumed that many Chinese immigrated and settled in the country, engaging in both farming and commerce. ...”⁴⁷

Still more changes took place in conjunction with this immigration. Civil service examination centres (*gongyuan* 貢院) were set up in Xining, Nianbai and other nearby places so as to facilitate the young men who wished to study for the examination but who hitherto had had to travel to Lintao 臨洮 or Liangzhou 涼州.⁴⁸ Schools (*faxue* 府學, *shexue* 社學, and *yixue* 義學) were established to educate the children of the elite, and a public granary system (*shecang* 社) was instituted in places such as Xining and Nianbai.⁴⁹ Older Ming forts that had been abandoned were revived, and additional forts were built and garrisoned to maintain the new order. The Sino-Tibetan border had moved irrevocably westward, and with it came imperial policies and practices for administering the *sangha* more commonly associated with Chinese Buddhism.

Steles and Imperial Recognition

The loss of Gönlung was apparently felt far and wide, for shortly after its destruction, the Panchen Lama (1663–1737) sent a letter and numerous gifts to the Yongzheng Emperor. He reportedly wrote, “Gönlung and so forth are the foundation of the Teachings in Amdo, and so it is necessary to rebuild them”. The Seventh Dalai Lama (1708–57) also sent messengers. The young rebirth of the Second Changkya Khtugtu, Changkya III Rölpe Dorje (1717–86),⁵⁰ had been taken hostage by Nian Gengyao and dragged back to the Qing Court. Given the presence of these messengers, the plucky boy was inspired with courage, and he and the other Gönlung lamas who had been residing in Beijing

⁴⁴Wesley Byron Chaney, “Land, Trade, and the Law on the Sino-Tibetan Border, 1723–1911” (unpublished PhD, Stanford University, 2016), p. 51.

⁴⁵The year 1739 appears to have been a bad year. Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, p. 835 (*juan* 32); also, p. 818 (*juan* 31) and p. 840 (*juan* 32); Sum pa mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor, *PaN+Di ta sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor mchog gi spyod tshul brjod pa sgra 'dzin bcud len*, p. 215; also, pp. 194, 275, 565, *passim*. Perdue writes, “during at least nine out of the thirty harvest seasons for which we have data [for Gansu in the eighteenth century], the figure for the average provincial harvest was below 7 [i.e., below adequate for subsistence], indicating that significant regions faced disaster. Even in the most abundant years, certain counties always needed relief supplies”. Perdue, *China Marches West*, p. 361.

⁴⁶See, for instance, Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, pp. 838–839 (*juan* 32), 531 (*juan* 20).

⁴⁷Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, pp. 163–164.

⁴⁸Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, pp. 817–818 (*juan* 31).

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 818–819 (*juan* 31).

⁵⁰T. Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje.

composed a letter to the emperor. Thus in 1729, the emperor sent edicts to Gönlung, whereupon the monastery was reestablished, beginning with just three cloth tents.⁵¹

A bilingual stele was erected in both Chinese and Tibetan, and in it we read the emperor's command:

... funds are to be sent [for reconstruction], workers are to be assembled, and an official is to be dispatched to direct this task. The structure of the monastery gate⁵² and chapels are to be rectified,⁵³ and the monks residences, and assembly halls are to be exactly as before. It is ordered that up to two hundred monks may reside permanently to practice and promote the miraculous dharma. In the future it will also be an abode for the myriad Buddhists. The task [of reestablishing the monastery] is proclaimed accomplished, and because its old name was not elegant, a good name is decreed and established: the plaque that is bestowed [*ci'e* 賜額] reads “Youning si” 佑寧寺 [lit. Monastery that Protects the Peace]. Also, this record is to be carved in stone so that it may be known in perpetuity.⁵⁴

Although the language of this stele dates from the tenth year of the Yongzheng reign (1732), the monastery name plaque to which it makes reference may have actually been given as late as 1748, when Changkya III made his first trip back to the monastery from his residence in Beijing. “At that time”, Changkya's biographer writes,

the large and small monasteries of Domé⁵⁵ were harassed by bad Chinese rulers and their several inappropriate attendants who sought blame in the monasteries and so forth. [Changkya] therefore thought of immediately bringing benefit to [the monasteries] and thought that it would bring everlasting good to them were they to enter into the ranks of [places that] have received the emperor's gift of his mandate. Once, when he saw the emperor in person, [Changkya] strategically asked about the compassionate protection of an imperially mandated plaque [*glegs bu*], known as a “*tsipen*” [T. tsi pen, Ch. zhibian 字匾] in Chinese, for Kumbum, Gönlung, and Tsenpo [Serkhok] Monasteries. The emperor was pleased and said, “I have been thinking about that”, and gave the imperial mandate of approval.⁵⁶

⁵¹Sum pa mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor, *PaN+Di ta sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor mchog gi spyod tshul brjod pa sgra 'dzin bcud len*, pp. 148–149.

⁵²Ch. “shanmen” 山門. The *Xining fu xin zhi* has *shankai* 山開, which is a typo. Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, p. 845 (*juan* 32).

⁵³The Tibetan translates this as “*chos 'dul khrim sngar ltar bcos*,” i.e. “the dharma[s] Vinaya rules are to be made as before”.

⁵⁴Yongzheng Emperor 雍正皇帝, “Shizong Xian Huangdi yuzhi wenji 世宗憲皇帝御製文集 (Collected Writings of Emperor Shizong, Xian)”, in *Siku Quanshu* (Digital Wenyuange Edition) 文淵閣四庫全書電子版 (Dizhi wenhua chuban youxian gongsi, 2007), *juan* 60, pp. 12b–13a. For the Tibetan, see Chab 'gag rta mgrin, *Bod yig rdo ring zhib 'jug: Zangwen beiben yanjiu 藏文碑文研究* (Research on Tibetan-language Steles) (Lhasa, 2012), pp. 297–298. I have never seen the original stele, nor have I ever seen the Tibetan printed in a pre-modern source. The Tibetan transliteration of Youning si is “Yig nyin zi”. Dungkar Lozang Trinlé also gives the Tibetan transliteration of the new name bestowed upon Dgon lung, although, oddly, he spells it differently: Dbyig gnyen dgon. *Dung dkar tshig mdzod chen mo* (Beijing, 2002), pp. 216b–17.

⁵⁵T. Mdo smad. Here it is more or less synonymous with ‘A mdo’.

⁵⁶Thu'u bkwan III Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, *Lcang skya rol pa 'i rdo rje mam thar* (Biography of Changkya Rolpé Dorjé) (Lanzhou, 1989), p. 312. Emphasis added. Tuguan Luosangquejienima 土观·洛桑却吉尼玛 (Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma), *Zhangjia guoshi Ruobiduoji zhuan* 章嘉国师若必多吉传 (Biography of the National Preceptor Changkya Rölpe Dorjé), (translated) Chen Qingying 陈庆英 and Ma Lianlong 马连龙 (Beijing, 2007), p. 139. Gene Smith mistranslates this crucial term—*tsi pen*—as “imperial authority”. *Among Tibetan Texts*, pp. 139–140.

The significance of the issuing of an imperial plaque for these monasteries should not be underestimated. This system was fully implemented and institutionalised under the Song Dynasty.⁵⁷ As scholars of Chinese religions know well, the bestowal of plaques was one of the ways in which court authorities attempted to exercise influence over Buddhist clergy and institutions, along with the issuance of ordination certificates (Ch. *dudie* 度牒), the maintenance of national rosters for monasteries and for clergy and, finally, taxation.⁵⁸ Moreover, in China Proper the bestowal of imperial plaques was a way of converting ‘private’ institutions (Ch. *zisun miao* 子孙庙) into ‘public’ ones (Ch. *shifang conglin* 十方丛林) so that they might be ‘civilised’ to serve the social order rather than threaten it. As Song scholar Daniel Stevenson writes,

... from the outset we find an elemental distinction between institutions that were perceived to gravitate respectively toward private/local or state-appointed spheres, the dividing line itself devolving around certain normative—albeit not wholly transparent—notions of how Buddhist institutions should operate in the imperial enterprise and its civil society. The criterion that warranted unconditional acceptance and protection was possession of an imperially bestowed name plaque (*chi'e*), a token of imperial largesse that even the most virulently anti-Buddhist sovereign was obligated to respect.⁵⁹

Thus, by seeking imperial recognition for Gönlung, Changkya was situating himself and his monastery within a long, Chinese tradition of providing protection to monasteries within the empire. In the aftermath of the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion, Gönlung and the other monasteries implicated in the rebellion were now much more subject to the whims of the local Qing officials in Xining. It was immunity from such a state of affairs that Changkya sought for Gönlung when he asked the Qianlong Emperor for an imperial plaque. In addition, as Stevenson has pointed out for the Song, such imperial recognition appears to have always come at the request of the clergy rather than being the decision of court officials.⁶⁰ We see this, too, with Changya’s request.

This system of granting imperial plaques to eligible monasteries and otherwise regulating the *sangha* had been reinvigorated under the Ming.⁶¹ Numerous ‘protecting edicts’ (Ch. *huchi* 護敕) were issued in the Ming to monasteries, including Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in Hezhou, Taozhou and Minzhou. For example, an edict of Ming Emperor Xuande (r. 1425–1435) reads:

⁵⁷Daniel B. Stevenson, “Sanctioned and Forbidden Zones: Monastery Registration, Imperial Plaques, and the Hereditary and Public Abbacy Systems”, in *Serving the Buddhas in Song Dynasty China: Monastic Life and Culture, 960–1279 CE*, forthcoming. My thanks to Stevenson for sharing with me an early draft of this important essay.

⁵⁸Stevenson, “Sanctioned and Forbidden Zones”, p. 3; Michael J. Walsh, *Sacred Economies: Buddhist Monasticism & Territoriality in Medieval China*, The Sheng Yen Series in Chinese Buddhist Studies (New York, 2010), pp. 78–82. Timothy Brook writes that the institutionalisation of ‘universal registers’ for clergy (*zhouzhi wence* 周治文冊) was an innovation of the Ming Hongwu Emperor. “At the Margin of Public Authority: The Ming State and Buddhism”, in *Culture and State in Chinese Society: Conventions, Accommodations, and Critiques*, (eds.) Theodore Huters, R. Bin Wong and Pauline Yu (Stanford, CA, 1997), pp. 164–165. See also Denis Crispin Twitchett, “Monastic Estates in T’ang China”, *Asia Major* 5, 2 (1956), p. 130; Kenneth Ch’en, “Economic Background of the Hui-Ch’ang Suppression of Buddhism”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 19, 1–2 (1956), pp. 97–98.

⁵⁹Stevenson, “Sanctioned and Forbidden Zones”, pp. 3–4.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 19–20; Morten Schlütter, “Vinaya Monasteries, Public Abbacies, and State Control of Buddhism under the Northern Song (960–1127)”, in *Going Forth: Visions of Buddhist Vinaya: Essays Presented in Honor of Professor Stanley Weinstein*, (ed.) William M. Bodiford (Honolulu, 2005), p. 139.

⁶¹Brook, “At the Margin of Public Authority”, pp. 168–169.

Today I specially promulgate an edict for protecting and upholding [Min]zhou's Chaoding Monastery 朝定寺. The officials, military personnel and other offices there ... [must] comply with this monastery's lama Jindunlingzhan [T. Dge 'dun rin chen] and so forth and the unencumbered religious practice of its monks. They are not to disrespect or mistreat them. No one is to seize or harass its assets, including all its dwellings, mountain lands, gardens, property and livestock. If one does not respect my mandate, disrespects the Three Jewels [of Buddhism], purposefully causes trouble, and disrespects and mistreats so as to terrorize their Teachings [i.e., Buddhism], they are to be convicted according to the law.⁶²

As for the Qing, the Timothy Brook suggests,

The Qing was content to repeat the paper regulations for monks and monasteries laid down in the Ming and take no further action. It did not revive the registry system, or impose quotas on monks, or limit monastic property. Considering the internal organizational weakness of Buddhism that the Ming zealously fostered, the Qing did not see a need to police the clergy as closely as Hongwu did. ...⁶³

Although this *laissez faire* tendency may have been true for the Qing as a whole, there were periods marked by a concerted effort to document 'genuine' members of the Buddhist and Daoist clergies and to weed out any undesirable elements.⁶⁴ This is precisely what happened during the Yongzheng reign and especially the early Qianlong reign, as Vincent Goossaert has shown in his article on the 1736–9 census of clergy.⁶⁵ This census coincided with the increased imperial supervision of the monastic affairs of Xining monasteries in the aftermath of the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion.

To be sure, it is difficult to measure the effect that the placement of these steles and plaques at these Xining monasteries may have had on the operation of and life within the monasteries. Nonetheless, the Qing rhetoric and the precise terminology that it used reveals the new way in which the emperor and officials had begun to conceive of these monasteries as belonging to the same category of institution and potential problem as religious institutions in the interior. Gönlung's neighbour, Serkhok Monastery, was also given a new, 'proper' name on an imperial plaque: 'Guanghui si' 廣惠寺, literally 'the monastery promoting

⁶²Grand Secretariat Archives of the Institute of History and Philology at Academia Sinica. Document number 038107-001. Cited in Kung Ling-wei 孔令偉, "Tao Min Zangchuan fo si ru Qing zhi xingshuai ji qi baihou de Menggu yinsu", p. 858n11. See also p. 864n45.

⁶³Brook, "At the Margin of Public Authority", p. 180.

⁶⁴Goossaert also points out the frequent reversals made to Qing policy that are reflected in the *Da Qing huidian shili*. Vincent Goossaert, "Counting the Monks. The 1736–1739 Census of the Chinese Clergy", *Late Imperial China* 21, 2 (2000), p. 45.

⁶⁵Goossaert does not see any evidence that this census, enacted at the end of the Yongzheng reign and the beginning of the Qianlong one, affected Tibetan Buddhists in any way. Goossaert, "Counting the Monks", p. 46. However, there apparently was a census of Tibetan Buddhists done at the same time (i.e. in 1737). The *Sheng wu ji*, originally written in 1842, says that the Lifan yuan carried out a census in Qianlong 2 (1737). Wei Yuan 魏源 (1794–1857), *Sheng wu ji* 聖武記 (Beijing, 1984), p. 226. And Shi Shouyi's *Lama suyuan* 喇嘛溯源 of circa 1890, gives the same census figures as the *Sheng wu ji*: 302,500 for Dbus and 13,700 for Gtsang. http://tripit-aka.cbeta.org/X88n1668_001 (accessed June 2018). These are the figures cited by such scholars as Rockhill and Stein: William Woodville Rockhill, "Tibet. Geographical, Ethnographical, and Historical Sketch, Derived from Chinese Sources", *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 23, 1–2 (1891), pp. 13–14; R. A. Stein, *La civilisation tibétaine* (Paris, 1962), p. 111; R. A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, (translation) J. E. Stapleton Driver (Stanford, CA, 1972), pp. 139–140. Dpal bzang bdang bdus at the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences has suggested to me that the Lifanyuan statistics would have been provided by the Tibetan *bka' shag* (the Tibetan government's council of ministers). Personal communication, October 2012.

benevolence'.⁶⁶ A stele was also erected at Serkhok to remind the monastics of their civic and religious duties. Significantly, the stele refers to Serkhok as “that which Buddhists call a Ten Directions Monastery [*shifang yuan* 十方院]”.⁶⁷ A “Ten Directions Monastery” (also *shifang conglin*) is a term found in Chinese Buddhism to refer to “public” monasteries, where monastic leadership theoretically was open to any qualified candidate and where the formation of new tonsure relationships was strictly prohibited.⁶⁸ Abbots at these institutions were to be chosen in consensus with the abbots of other major monasteries in the region and were to be approved by government officials (in some rare cases even the emperor himself).⁶⁹ “The appeal of the ‘public abbacy’”, writes Stevenson,

is not difficult to understand, insofar as it offered a corrective to the privatizing and centripetal tendencies of the “hereditary” cloister, while at the same time extending the reach of the imperial bureaucracy right into the abbot’s chamber.⁷⁰

The reference to Serkhok as a “Ten Directions Monastery” and the imperial recognition given to it and other monasteries in the Xining region is also reflective of Qing approval and support of the Geluk school’s own norms for administering its large-scale monasteries. Positions of authority within Geluk monasteries were supposed to be free from the taint of favouritism and partiality characteristic of hereditary monasteries. For instance, the 1737 charter for Gönlung Monastery, composed by a major lama from Central Tibet, states: “officers, with the lama as the lead, are not to indulge in favouritism, partisanship or sycophancy and must not bring private interests into a public [position]. This must be well enforced!”⁷¹ In addition, the abbot was to be elected by a council of senior monks and lamas within the monastery. Again, the charter explains, “as for appointing the abbot, it is to be done based on the consultation of the old abbot, the cantor and disciplinarian, the general manager,⁷² the ‘encampments’ and hermitages,⁷³ and the senior monks”.⁷⁴ Moreover, abbots and other monastic officers rotated every few years, not unlike the Qing’s own system of rotating

⁶⁶Brag dgon zhabs drung Brag dgon zhabs drung Dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas, *Mdo smad chos 'byung*, 103.18; Xiangyun Wang, “Tibetan Buddhism at the Court of Qing: The Life and Work of lCang-skya Rol-pa'i-rdo-rje (1717–1786)” (unpublished PhD., Harvard University, 1995), p. 178. Grwa tshang Monastery and probably several of the other monasteries implicated in the rebellion were also issued plaques. Pu Wencheng 蒲文成, *Gan Qing Zangchuan fojiao siyuan* 甘青藏传佛教寺院 (Xining, 1990), p. 158.

⁶⁷Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, p. 846.

⁶⁸Stevenson, “Sanctioned and Forbidden Zones”, pp. 17–28. My discussion of Ten Directions Monasteries that follows derives from Stevenson’s overview unless otherwise noted.

⁶⁹See also Schlütter, “Vinaya Monasteries”.

⁷⁰Stevenson, “Sanctioned and Forbidden Zones”, p. 19.

⁷¹Rgyal sras 'jigs med ye shes grags pa, “Dgon lung byams pa gling gi mtshon dgon ma lag dang bcas pa 'i bca' khirms phan bde'i 'dab rgya bzhad ba'i snang byed (Gönlung Jampa Ling: The Charter of the Mother Monastery and Its Branches: The Sun That Brings Forth the Lotus Blooms of Benefit and Happiness)”, in *Gsung 'bum* (Collected Works), vol. 'a (24) (n.p. [Lhasa], 1737) (this print is held at the library of the Research Institute for Ethnology and Anthropology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, on the campus of Minzu University, Beijing), p. 28b.2–4.

⁷²T. *spyi ba*.

⁷³T. *sgar sgom sde*. “Sgar” is short for “*sgar ba*”, “encampment”. Here it refers to a type of fixed, local, monastic estate overseen in succession by a lama and his chosen apprentice, often a nephew. See Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, pp. 308–309; Karsten, “A Study on the Sku-'bum/T'a-Erh Ssu Monastery in Ching-Hai”, p. 345n7.

⁷⁴T. *dge 'dun bgyes ba mams*. At Dgon lung, at least, this appears to have been a select group of six or seven elders.

officials through its administrative and military posts throughout the empire. The average tenure of an abbot at Gönlung up until the monastery's final destruction in 1958 was four years.

Although the procedure for selecting the abbot at Gönlung that was codified in the monastery's charter does not specify a role for abbots from neighbouring monasteries nor imperial officials, there is evidence that such figures were consulted and may have exercised some influence on the process. A nineteenth-century history of Amdo describes the process of selecting Gungtang III Könchok Tenpé Drönmé (1762–1823),⁷⁵ a major incarnate lama from Labrang Monastery, to serve as Gönlung's abbot (r. 1795–7):

At this point [1795] numerous monks said, “it is important [to have] a lama [i.e., abbot] who truly can restore philosophical instruction and the rules and procedures [of the monastery]. So saying, they went to ask the Xining amban. After everyone consulted, a representative of Tuken Rinpoché, the amban's translator,⁷⁶ the head of the [monastery's] Tantric College, and other such monastic officers went to Labrang Tashi Khyil to present the invitation to the Mañjuśrī Lama Tenpé Drönmé. At this time he said, “due to the times, for one known as the “administrator-protector” [of a monastery, i.e. the abbot], it is difficult [for him] to give rise to a pure religious [practice] free from politics. Once one is connected to worldly things, the foundation of discussion and discourse [i.e. controversy] grows. Because one cannot avoid the circumstances of conflict and so on, it says in the *Abhidharmakośa*: “[Conditioned things] comprise time, the foundations of discourse [etc.]”.⁷⁷ Also, it says in the *Actual Stages*, “those who have the conception of ‘sentient beings’, their existence is in that conception”.⁷⁸ Because the former discourse has only just passed, there is nothing to rejoice about at this juncture. Since at this moment I am responsible for the throne of Trashi Khyil, and since both places [i.e. Labrang and Gönlung] are places of philosophical instruction, it would be extremely difficult to care for both. Although the power of the amban is great, there are still ways to excuse oneself. [However,] the lama [Tuken's] insistence is great; thus, as there is no custom for refusing or of equivocation, I must accept.”⁷⁹

Here we have a clear record from a source close in time and space to the event in question that illustrates the steps taken by Gönlung in appointing a new abbot: some initial conferencing took place among the monks (probably senior monks and officers) at Gönlung. Then they went to the amban in Xining. Next, the amban's translator along with important representatives from Gönlung went to Labrang to make the request. Gungtang wagers that he could in theory decline the request were it coming from the amban alone; however, since the request is also coming from Tuken, Gungthang has no choice but to accept. Apart from

⁷⁵T. Gung thang Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me.

⁷⁶See Zhiguanba•Gongquehudanbaraoji, *Anduo zhengjiao shi* 安多政教史 (Political and Religious History of Amdo; Mdo smad chos 'byung), (translation) Wu Jun, Mao Jizu and Ma Shilin, Gansu sheng shaoshu minzu guji congshu (Lanzhou, 1989), p. 72.

⁷⁷Vasubandhu, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, (translation) Louis de La Vallée Poussin, 2nd edition (Bruxelles, 1971), Par (“Tome”) I, Chapter 1, p. 12 (ch. 1, verses 7 c–d).

⁷⁸This is Asaṅga's *Yogācārabhūmi-bhūmivastu*. The relevant line continues, “having no conceptions, one has encountered death”. The implication in this context is that talk, “conceptions”, gossip, and so on are the stuff of suffering and samsara. Zhu chen Tshul khriims rin chen (ed.), *Bstan 'gyur* (Derge Tanjur (Delhi, 1982), vol. tshi, pp. 442/221b.1–2. This corresponds to Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaigyoku 渡邊海旭, *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經 (Tokyo, 1924), no. 1579, p. 370c.

⁷⁹Brag dgon zhabs drung Dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas, *Mdo smad chos 'byung*, p. 68.11–18.

this example, it is also clear that the major Gönlung lamas who were stationed in Beijing and who served the Qing court—specifically Tuken and Changkya—were regularly consulted and did attempt to make known their choices for abbot.⁸⁰

In the case of Serkhok Monastery, the term ‘*shifang yuan*’ does not necessarily imply that Serkhok was actually added to official rolls as a “Ten Directions Monastery”. Nonetheless, the use of the term bespeaks the new attitude that Qing officials had toward Serkhok and other monasteries such as Gönlung as well as the greater level of involvement by Qing officials in what had hitherto been (and what elsewhere on the Tibetan Plateau remained) a prerogative of the monastery and its local patrons: choosing the monastery’s abbot. After the Qianlong emperor had agreed to Changkya’s request to bestow imperial plaques on Serkhok, Gönlung and Kumbum Monasteries, Qianlong had the plaques sent ahead to the Gansu governor (T. *zhun phu*, Ch. *xunfu* 巡撫) in Lanzhou.⁸¹ Changkya later arrived at Gönlung, and then “on an auspicious day” the governor went to the monastery as ordered, whereupon the plaque was installed above the entrance to the main assembly hall and a precious rosary was offered to the main image in the monastery’s shrine hall: “The Lord Lama [Changkya] was seated in the center, and the *jarghuchi*⁸² sent by the emperor and the governor sat on left and right. I [the author, Tuken III] led lamas in prostrating nine times ... before the emperor’s gifts in accordance with Chinese customs”.⁸³ The presence of the Qing officials at the installment of the imperial plaque as well as the Chinese method of venerating the emperor’s gifts⁸⁴ show that these were much more than decorative knick-knacks for the monastery’s corridors. Gönlung was henceforth part of an expanding system of regulation that had its origin in China Proper to the east.

The National and Local Systems for Regulating the *Sangha*

The Ming and Qing imperial systems of monastic officials were subsumed within the Bureau of Sacrifices under the Board of Rites (Li bu Ciji qingli si 禮部祠祭清吏司). At the top of the hierarchy sat the Office for Registering the *Sangha* (Senglu si 僧錄司), which was made up of eight members. Meanwhile, at the prefectural level were the Chief Controllers (*dugang* 都綱) and their corresponding Offices for Administering the *Sangha* (Senggang si 僧綱司). At the sub-prefectural level one finds the Rectifier of the *Sangha* (*sengzheng* 僧正) and his Office for Rectifying the *Sangha* (Sengzheng si 僧正司). And, finally, at District or County

⁸⁰However, sometimes their wishes were not heeded. For instance, the first abbot in the post-Lubsang-Danzin period, Sum pa chos rje phun tshogs mam rgyal (r. 1729–34), was chosen by the former steward of Lcang skya’s estate, Ba yan nang so, against the wishes of Thu’u bkwan II and, allegedly, Lcang skya himself. Thu’u bkwan III Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, “Dgon lung gi dkar chag”, p. 738/48b.4. Cited in Smith, *Among Tibetan Texts*, p. 168. Note that Lcang skya III was still only a child at this time, and so Ba yan may have been spiting only Thu’u bkwan and not his own charge. On Bayen see Marina Illich, “Selections from the Life of a Tibetan Buddhist Polymath: Chankya Rolpai Dorje (Lcang Skya Rol Pa’i Rdo Rje), 1717–1786” (unpublished PhD, Columbia University, 2006), p. 423.

⁸¹The position of governor of Gansu was eliminated in 1764, after which the governor-general oversaw administration of the province. Guy, *Qing Governors and Their Provinces*, p. 216.

⁸²The *jarghuchi* was either a representative of the amban’s office or perhaps of the Lifanyuan 理藩院. Luciano Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early 18th Century* (Leiden, 1972), pp. 256–257.

⁸³Thu’u bkwan III Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, *Lcang skya rol pa’i rdo rje mam thar*, pp. 318–319.

⁸⁴Cf. Elliot Sperling, “Awe and Submission: A Tibetan Aristocrat at the Court of Qianlong”, *The International History Review* 20, 2 (1998), p. 331.

level one finds the Convener of the *Sangha* (*senghui* 僧會) and his Office for Convening the *Sangha* (*Senghui si* 僧會司).⁸⁵ The duties of these local regulators were to supervise the Buddhist monks under their jurisdiction, to propagate the correct Buddhist teachings, to report crimes committed by monks to civil officials, and to conduct public rites.⁸⁶ Timothy Brook, writing about the system in the Ming, says that these and other tasks “indicate that the registrar’s function was to administer Buddhism on the state’s rather than on Buddhism’s behalf and, where the state’s presence was weak, to embody public authority”.⁸⁷

It has been said that the system in the Ming became defunct shortly after its implementation largely due to the fact that the individuals who staffed the positions were locals, not disinterested outsiders, and were considered “functionaries” (*yuan* 員) rather than “officials” (*guan* 官).⁸⁸ The individuals appointed to these positions along the Ming’s frontier were certainly locals and not “disinterested outsiders”; however, the system persisted throughout the Ming and was renewed under the Qing.

Initially, the system for regulating the Tibetan Buddhist *sangha* may have been modelled on the system used for regulating Buddhists and Daoists in China Proper. We read in one source for the year 1389 (Ming Hongwu 22):

In such places as Xi[ning], Tao[zhou], and He[zhou], there are many cases in which an office for regulating the *sangha* has not been established. A Han monk and Tibetan monk should be dispatched according to the [national] Office for Registering Monks [Senglusi] to manage this. Officials of this Office [for Registering Monks] must select monks who are well-versed in the Buddha-dharma to come take exams, [after which] they are to be appointed and sent.⁸⁹

It is recorded that three years later, in 1392, a local Office for Administering the *Sangha* was established for Xining, and a certain Sangyé Tashi⁹⁰ was made its Chief Controller (although Sangyé Tashi’s monastery was actually located approximately 90 kilometres east-southeast of Xining).⁹¹ Similar titles were awarded to individual lamas in Hezhou, Taozhou, Minzhou and Zhuanglang 莊浪 among other places in Hehuang.

⁸⁵Yi Tai 伊泰 and Zhang Yanyu 張延玉, (eds.), *Da Qing huidian (Yongzheng chao)* 大清會典 (雍正朝) (Collected Statutes of the Yongzheng Reign), *Jindai Zhongguo shiliao congkan san bian: di 77–79 ji 761–790* (Taipei xian Yonghe shi, 1995), *juan* 3, vol. 1 (761), pp. 194–203. See also J. J. M. (Jan Jakob Maria) de Groot, *Sectarianism and Religious Persecution in China: A Page in the History of Religions* (Taipei, 1970), pp. 103–104; Bai Wengu 白文固, “Ming Qing de Fanseng senggangsi shulüe 明清的番僧僧綱司述略 (A Sketch of the Tibetan Buddhist Offices of Clerical Supervision in the Ming and Qing Dynasties)”, *Zhongguo Zangxue* 1 (1992), p. 134.

⁸⁶Brook, “At the Margin of Public Authority”, p. 166, citing a sixteenth-century county gazetteer from Zhejiang.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 171–172.

⁸⁹Ge Yinliang 葛寅亮, (ed.), *Jinling fancha zhi* 金陵梵剎志 (The Jinling Gazetteer of Buddhist Monasteries) (Jinshan Hongtian si 金山江天寺, 1936), *juan* 2, p. 13b. Cited in Cai Rang 才让, “Ming Hongwu dui Zangchuan fojiao de zhengce ji qi xiangguan shishi kaoshu 明洪武对藏传佛教的政策及其相关史实考述 (An Investigation of the Ming Hongwu Reign Policies Toward Tibetan Buddhism and Their Related Historical Events)”, *Xizang yanjiu* 西藏研究, 2 (91) (May 2004), p. 44a; Bai Wengu 白文固, “Ming Qing de Fanseng senggangsi shulüe 明清的番僧僧綱司述略 (A Sketch of the Tibetan Buddhist Offices of Clerical Supervision in the Ming and Qing Dynasties)”, p. 134.

⁹⁰T. Sangs rgyas bkra shis. He was known in Chinese as Sanla 三刺 among other names. See Elliot Sperling, “Notes on the Early History of Gro-Tshang Rdo-Rje-’chang and Its Relations with the Ming Court”, *Lungta* 14 (2001), pp. 77–87.

⁹¹Elsewhere it is said that the Dafo si 大佛寺 in Xining housed the Senggang si. Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, p. 571; Yang Jian 杨健, *Qing wangchao fojiao shiwu guanli* 清王朝佛教事务管理 (Beijing, 2008), p. 466.

In fact, these ‘offices’ are better understood as institutions or simply as titles affixed to specific lamas and their associated monasteries. Moreover, scholars of the Ming system of regulating monasteries along its frontier with Tibet have noted that it is best understood as a parallel system to the native chieftain (*tusi*) system, in which local headmen were allowed to continue to rule over the local populations in exchange for their loyalty and periodic tribute to the Ming court. The lamas who received titles from the Ming court—titles such as State Preceptor, Meditation Master, Chief Controller and Administrator of the Sangha (*seng-gang* 僧綱⁹²)—were similarly charged with ruling over the local populations, mustering troops and defending against Mongol attacks, and making periodic trips to the Ming court to pay tribute. Moreover, their positions were hereditary—Ming records are replete with instances of a nephew (or disciple) of an entitled lama requesting that the title of his recently deceased uncle (or master)⁹³ be awarded to him. These are some of the characteristics of the system for regulating Tibetan Buddhist monasteries that set it apart from the system in China Proper.⁹⁴

As discussed above, the Qing inherited this system from the Ming, although it soon made significant changes to it. In 1726, just two years after the Lubsang-Danzin rebellion, the Yongzheng Emperor banned the practice of lamas inheriting their forebears’ titles among other reforms.⁹⁵ His attempt appears to have been unsuccessful, for in 1747 the Qianlong Emperor, citing concern for the laxity that may occur when such positions were inherited and thus expected, banned the practice of inheriting the title of State Preceptor, something his grandfather, the Kangxi Emperor, had already sought to do in 1710.⁹⁶ This was part of an ongoing effort by the Qing to replace prestigious religious titles of lamas on the Gansu-Kökenur border (titles such as State Preceptor) with more political or administrative titles (such as Chief Controller or Administrator of the Sangha).⁹⁷ This also reflects the pattern of the Ming using of religious gifts and titles as part of its system of rule of the frontier versus the Qing’s use of political ones.⁹⁸

⁹²This would seem to be analogous to the *dugang* of a Senggang si. Yang Jian 杨健, *Qing wangchao fojiao shiwu guanli*, pp. 450–451.

⁹³It appears that there were cases of father to son inheritance of temples and accompanying Ming titles, too. Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, p. 309; Kung, “Transformation of Qing’s Geopolitics”, p. 127. Schram is here talking about “karwa” (T. sgar ba). He seems to be incorrect in stating that karwa was a title granted by the Ming Court.

⁹⁴Yang Jian 杨健, *Qing wangchao fojiao shiwu guanli*, pp. 472–473.

⁹⁵Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, juan 15, p. 386.

⁹⁶Aixinjueluo Hongli, “Qinding Da Qing huidian zeli 欽定大清會典則例 (Imperially Commissioned Collected Statutes and Substitutes of the Great Qing)”, in *Siku quanshu* (Digital Wenyuange Edition) (Dizhi wenhua chubanshan youxian gongsì, 1789), juan 142–144, pp. 96b.1–97b.6; *Qingdai gebuyuan zeli: Qinding lifanyuan zeli* 清代各部院則例: 欽定理藩院則例 (Regulations of Each Board and Court of the Qing Dynasty: The Imperially Sanctioned Regulations of the Court of Colonial Affairs), vol. 2 (Hong Kong, 2004), 700 / juan 56, p. 7; Ji Yuanyuan 季垣垣, (ed.), *Qianlong chao neifu chaoben Lifan yuan zeli* 乾隆朝內府抄本《理藩院則例》 (Imperial Household Department of the Qianlong Reign Edition of the Regulations of the Court of Colonial Affairs) (Beijing, 2006), pp. 136–137.

⁹⁷Sullivan, “Mother of All Monasteries”, p. 350; *Qingdai gebuyuan zeli: Qinding lifanyuan zeli*, 2:700 (juan 56, 7). Gong Jinghan 龔景瀚 and Li Benyuan 李本源, “Xunhua ting zhi 循化廳志 (Gazetteer of Xunhua Subprefecture)”, in *Zhongguo fangzhi ku* 中國方志庫 (Digital Treasury of Chinese Gazetteers) (Airusheng 愛如生, 1844), juan 5, “*tusi*”. Yang Jian 杨健, *Qing wangchao fojiao shiwu guanli*, pp. 445–446; Kung Ling-wei 孔令偉, “Tao Min Zangchuan fo si ru Qing zhi xingshuai ji qi baihou de Menggu yinsu”, pp. 877–878.

⁹⁸Kung Ling-wei 孔令偉, “Tao Min Zangchuan fo si ru Qing zhi xingshuai ji qi baihou de Menggu yinsu”, p. 862.

In the eighth year of the Qianlong reign (1743), responsibility for supervising of affairs pertaining to Tibetan Buddhist monks was moved over to the Court of Colonial Affairs (Lifanyuan 理藩院), a powerful Qing institution created to deal with the Mongols.⁹⁹ Thus, later accounts of the regulation of the Tibetan Buddhist sangha in the *Da Qing Huidian* (Collected Statutes of the Great Qing), for instance, are found in the section for the Rear Office of the Mongolian Reception Bureau (Rouyuan qingli you hou si 柔遠清吏右後司) of the Court for Colonial Affairs. And it is here that we discover that, in 1747, the Qianlong Emperor vastly expanded the system of regulating the Tibetan Buddhist sangha by establishing (or, in a few cases, reestablishing) titles and imperial offices in 21 monasteries, most of which were farther west in the recently created Xining Prefecture:

Each of the monasteries [and] lamas in Gansu which has received the seals [of] State Preceptor and Meditation Master has since diligently maintained spiritual practice. Under them are all the monks, for whom each [congregation] is appointed an abbot. Nonetheless, their control [of the congregation] is not without laxity. Therefore, positions should be created based on the size of the area and the number of Tibetan Buddhist monks in order to bolster supervision.

In Hezhou, Pugang si 普綱寺, Lingqing si 靈慶寺, and Honghua si 宏化寺¹⁰⁰ are each to have a Chief Administrator [*dugang*] installed.

An Administrator of the Sangha [*senggang*] is to be installed [for each of the following]: Xining County's Xina si 西那寺,¹⁰¹ Ta'er si 塔爾寺 [i.e., Kumbum], Zhacang si 扎藏寺,¹⁰² Yuanjue si 元覺寺,¹⁰³ Shachong si 沙衝寺,¹⁰⁴ Xianmi si 仙密寺,¹⁰⁵ and Youning si 佑寧寺 [i.e., Gönlung]; Nianbai County's Qutan si 瞿曇寺,¹⁰⁶ Hongtong si 宏通寺,¹⁰⁷ Yangerguan si 羊爾貫寺,¹⁰⁸ Puhua si 普化寺;¹⁰⁹ Datong Fort's Guanghua si 廣化寺 [i.e. Serkhok];¹¹⁰ Guide Sub-Prefecture's Erdiechan si 二疊闡寺, Chuiba si 垂巴寺, and Mani si 馬尼寺.

In Taozhou, a Rectifier of the Sangha [*sengzheng*] is to be installed for each [of the following]: Yanjia si 閻家寺; Longyuan si 龍元寺; Yuancheng si 圓成寺. Orders for all of these come through the Court of Colonial Affairs.¹¹¹

What is remarkable about this list is how many of these administrative positions are for *monasteries where previously neither the Ming nor the Qing had exercised any kind of imperial oversight*. This is true for the monasteries in the vicinity of the old Ming fort at Guide, which had sat

⁹⁹Yi Tai 伊泰 and Zhang Yanyu 張延玉, *Yongzheng huidian*, juan 142, p. 95. On the Lifanyuan see Ning Chia, "The Li-Fan Yuan in the Early Ch'ing Dynasty" (unpublished PhD, The Johns Hopkins University, 1992).

¹⁰⁰T. Mdzo mo mkhar.

¹⁰¹T. Zi na bsam 'grub gling. In present-day Huangzhong County, 26 kilometres north of the county seat, and a few kilometres north of the Xining River.

¹⁰²T. Grwa tshang dgon. Located in Huangyuan County, approximately 15 kilometres west-northwest of the county seat.

¹⁰³This is said to be located near the Zi na nang so's monastery. Yuanjue si is also said to be in Jingyang chuan, which may be in present-day Datong County. Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, p. 376 (juan 15) and p. 487 (juan 19).

¹⁰⁴T. Bya khyung.

¹⁰⁵T. Sems nyid.

¹⁰⁶T. Gro tshang lha khang gau tam sde.

¹⁰⁷Also written as 弘通寺, this was located south of Nianbai. Li Tianxiang 李天祥和 Jing Chaode 景朝德, (eds.), "Nianbai suo zhi 碾伯所志", in *Qinghai difang jiu zhi wuzhong* 青海地方旧志五种 (1989), p. 102.

¹⁰⁸Unidentified. This may be associated with the Yangerguan "clan" (zu), which is said to be in Bayanrong County 巴燕戎縣, 290 li southeast of Xining. Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, p. 485 (juan 19).

¹⁰⁹T. 'Phags pa zi; also known as Bkra shis chos 'khor gling. Located in present-day Minhe County 民和縣. Pu Wencheng 蒲文成, *Gan Qing Zangchuan fojiao siyuan*, pp. 26–27.

¹¹⁰This appears to be an alternate spelling for Guanghui Monastery 廣惠寺, i.e. Gser khog.

¹¹¹Aixinjueluo Hongli, "Qinding Da Qing huidian zeli", pp. 96b.1–97b.6.

dormant or was perhaps even non-existent prior to the time of the Yongzheng Emperor,¹¹² and it is also true for all of the monasteries located in Xining County and Datong with the exception of Xina (T. Zi na) Monastery.¹¹³ Of course, on this list one finds Youning (Gönlung), Xianmi (Semnyi), Zhacang (Dratsang), Guanghua (Serkhok) Monasteries and Ta'er (Kumbum), which were all implicated in the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion and suffered the consequences. The other related reason that these monasteries had attracted the attention of the Qing is that they were all relatively new monasteries closely associated with the Dalai Lama's ascendant Geluk School and with the Khoshud nobility.

Even though the names of some of these positions were the same as those employed during the Ming and early Qing (e.g. *dugang*, *senggang*), there is a qualitative difference between them. As described above, the earlier "Chief Controllers", "Administrators of the *Sangha*", and so forth were titles granted to the lamas of hereditary temples who oversaw land and subjects and paid deference to the Ming and earlier Qing Courts by making periodic trips to Beijing to deliver tribute. These later administrative positions from the post-Lubsang-Danzin period were explicitly non-hereditary, and there is no evidence they ever had the duty (or privilege) of presenting tribute to the Court.¹¹⁴ Moreover, this was not a case of awarding a title to some high-ranking lama whose authority was already a reality on the ground. Rather, these were imperial bureaucratic positions. This may explain why it is that there is almost no trace of these newly created positions in the historical record following their creation. As Goossaert writes regarding the system for regulating the *sangha* in China Proper,

Clerics chosen for such offices were symbolically assimilated to the civilian bureaucracy, but normally were not paid for this office. They were responsible for any violation of the law committed by the clerics within their jurisdiction, but had little leverage, especially under the Qing. This may be the reason why one actually rarely finds them mentioned in official documents. It is possible that the Senglu si and Daolu si [道錄司] kept extensive information about the clerics and the various institutions that housed them, but they did not publish documents, nor is there any evidence of their archives ...¹¹⁵

As their names suggest, the Senglu si and Daolu si were the national offices for registering Buddhists and Daoists, respectively. In the Qing they were theoretically in charge of all the temples, monks, and Daoists in China. They were responsible for ensuring that the monks and Daoists all understood the meaning of their respective scriptures and that they all observed 'pure codes'. If such a monk or Daoist could pass muster, then each would be

¹¹²Oidtmann, "Between Patron and Priest", p. 405. Guide was not made into a subprefecture until 1791. Oidtmann, "Overlapping Empires", p. 48. It may be that "Guide Subprefecture" was added to this imperial decree by the compilers of the *Qinding Da Qing huidian zeli*.

¹¹³The Zi na nang so had established ties with the Ming Dynasty that persisted into the Qing. See Ban Shini-chiro, "Arutan hān ikō no Mongoru no amudo shinshutsu to amudo Chibetto hito tsuchi tsukasa no geruku-ha e no sekkin (The Mongolian Advance into Amdo from the Reign of Altan Qayan and the Rapprochement between Local Amdo Tibetan Native Officials and the Dalai Lama's Gelukpa Sect: The Case of the Lords of Zina in Xining)", *Toyo Gakuho (Journal of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko)* 97, 4 (March 2016), pp. 1–25.

¹¹⁴Kung has shown that the Qing also gradually eliminated the tribute missions emanating from the older, entitled lamas from Minzhou. Kung Ling-wei 孔令偉, "Tao Min Zangchuan fo si ru Qing zhi xingshuai ji qi baihou de Menggu yinsu", p. 861.

¹¹⁵Goossaert, "Counting the Monks", p. 42.

given a registration certificate (Ch. *dudie* 度牒). These certificates were ultimately to be handed down to the local Offices for Administering the *Sangha* (or, for Daoists, the Offices for Overseeing Daoists, Daoji si 道紀司) for distribution.¹¹⁶

The extent to which such ordination certificates were issued among Tibetan Buddhist monasteries is unclear, although the Qing certainly intended at times to implement the *dudie* system among Tibetan Buddhist monastics as it did among monks and priests in China Proper. The *Xining fu xin zhi* 西寧府新志 of 1746 (The New Gazetteer of Xining Prefecture) records,

the emperor decreed in the inaugural year of the Qianlong era [1736]: “Buddhist monks, Daoist priests, and lamas [should be] issued ordination certificates [*dudie*]. These monks and Daoist priests must maintain the Pure Codes [*qinggui* 清規], and they are only permitted to recruit one disciple”. This is at present obeyed. All official guardians of the territory [must] capably and sincerely undertake this task. They themselves [must] audit [the process], and they [must] not delegate it to a petty official or servant. They [must] not look upon this as ordinary [business]. [This] is the death of the [over-]proliferation of the two religions [*ershi* 二氏], and they can gradually be eliminated.¹¹⁷

Writing about Mongol Buddhists, Charleux says that only a fraction ever received an ordination certificate despite the Qing’s rather generous approach to issuing them there.¹¹⁸ Western and Chinese scholars have both reported on ordination certificates issued to Tibetan Buddhist monks in Hezhou.¹¹⁹ In addition, the *Xining fu xin zhi* records that the monks of the major Amdo monasteries of Jakyung (above, “Shachong”)¹²⁰ and Trotsang Tashi Lhünpo¹²¹ received registration certificates and vestments in 1738 in exchange for allowing the construction of a road to cross their territory. This road is said to have served the purpose of more efficient tax collection.¹²²

The *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha* (Research on the Social History of Qinghai Monguors) reports that Gönlung indeed had two *senggang* (written 僧崗) when researchers visited there in the 1950s,¹²³ and Kumbum Monastery, too, is said to have retained a ‘*Sangha* Official’ through the twentieth century.¹²⁴ At Gönlung they were incorporated into the

¹¹⁶Yi Tai 伊泰 and Zhang Yanyu 張延玉, *Yongzheng huidian*, vols. 774, pt.1, juan 102, p. 11a (6785).

¹¹⁷Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, p. 386 (juan 15).

¹¹⁸Isabelle Charleux, *Temples et monastères de Mongolie-Intérieure*, Archéologie et histoire de l’art 23 (Paris, 2006). Goossaert, “Counting the Monks”, p. 46n15. Goossaert is citing Charleux’s doctoral dissertation.

¹¹⁹These are said to be stored in prefectural archives. Wa Ye and Joseph W. Esherick, *Chinese Archives: An Introductory Guide*, China Research Monograph 45 (Berkeley, Center for Chinese Studies, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1996), p. 92; Yang Jian 杨健, “Qingdai Zangchuan fojiao dudie zhidu chutan 清代藏传佛教度牒制度初探 (Preliminary Investigation of Ordination Certification System for Tibetan Buddhism of the Qing Dynasty)”, *Fojiao zai xian* 佛教在线, 3 August 2011, http://www.fjnet.com/fjlw/201108/t20110803_183303.htm (accessed March 2018). This online publication appears to draw from or reproduce the following, although I do not have the latter on hand to verify this: Yang Jian 杨健, *Qing wangchao fojiao shiyou guanli*, p. 474ff.

¹²⁰T. Bya khyung.

¹²¹T. Gro tshang dgon bkra shis lhun po; Ch. Yaocaotai si 藥草台寺.

¹²²Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, p. 905 (juan 34).

¹²³Qinghai sheng bianji zu, ed., *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha* 青海土族社会历史调查 (An Investigation of the Social History of the Tu Ethnicity of Qinghai) (Xining, 1985), p. 48. See also Pu Wencheng 蒲文成, *Gan Qing Zangchuan fojiao siyuan*, p. 76.

¹²⁴Yang Jian 杨健, *Qing wangchao fojiao shiyou guanli*, p. 472; Bai Wengu 白文固, “Ming Qing de Fanseng seng-gangsi shulüe 明清的番僧纲司述略 (A Sketch of the Tibetan Buddhist Offices of Clerical Supervision in the Ming and Qing Dynasties)”, p. 138. Bai Wengu also claims that Chongjiao Monastery 崇教寺 in Minzhou retained the use of the term *senggang*.

monastery's hierarchy after the abbot's steward¹²⁵ and the monastery's two disciplinarians (*sengguan* 僧官; Ch. *dge skos*). These two *senggang* are said to have been responsible for spending the donations that the monastery received and for taking care of all of the monastery's external relations. If 'external relations' means official relations with the state, then it would seem that this position created in the immediate aftermath of the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion persisted well into the twentieth century, with the local twist being the creation of an additional *senggang* above and beyond the one stipulated in the 1747 decree.¹²⁶

Gönlung Monastery's Land-holdings, Before and After

Qing officials, such as the Department Magistrate of Hezhou Wang Quanchen 王全臣, in his *Hezhou zhi* 河州志 (Gazetteer of Hezhou) of 1707, railed against the landholdings of Tibetan Buddhist monasteries (as well as the *tusi*), and sought to render "fiscally legible populations".¹²⁷ Wang decried the monasteries as a "scourge that damage the country and harm the people".¹²⁸ Likewise, shortly after suppressing the Lubsang-Danzin rebellion, Nian Gengyao memorialised the throne, making 13 administrative recommendations for the newly conquered territory. Among them, he wrote,

regarding the lama temples of Qinghai, they ought to be routinely inspected. Investigating the lamas of each of the temples in Xining, each has as many as 2,000–3,000 and as few as 500–600. [The temples] have become places that accept and conceal evil. The Tibetan subjects pay the lamas taxes no different than offering tribute. ... As for the Tibetan people's grain, it should all be given to the local [Qing] officials to manage. ...¹²⁹

After the 'impudent' actions of many monasteries during the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion, proposals were made to 'cut off the arms' and 'clip the wings' of the monks and Mongol 'barbarians' in Amdo by completely remaking the political, social, and religious landscape of the region.¹³⁰ For instance, we read that in 1725 the following memorial was approved:

... It must be ordered that the tenants of each of the monasteries and clans [*zu*] reunite with China Proper [*neidi* 内地] and become [its] subjects. All imperial seals that have been given

¹²⁵Ch. *xiangzuo* 襄佐 (from T. *phyag mdzod*).

¹²⁶Dgon lung's *senggang* are also said to have sat on the monastery's own eleven-member general council (Ch. *jiuwaang* [T. *spyi ba nang [chen]*]), which comprised the steward or treasurer of the monastery's General Management Office, the two disciplinarians, the two *senggang*, and the six "elders" (*laomin* 老民). Only one who had first served as a disciplinarian or *senggang* was eligible to become an "elder". One of my informants who studied at Dgon lung in the 1940s recalls there being a 12-member ruling council that consisted of the steward/treasurer of the General Management Office (T. *spyi phyag mdzod*), the two disciplinarians, two *laoye* 老爷 ("Elders" or "Sirs"), and seven elders (Ch. *laozhe* 老者). It is tempting to equate these "laoye" with the *senggang*, but I have not yet been able to resolve this incongruity.

¹²⁷Chaney, "Land, Trade, and the Law on the Sino-Tibetan Border, 1723–1911", p. 82.

¹²⁸Yang Jian 杨健, *Qing wangchao fojiao shiwu guanli*, p. 473.

¹²⁹Yongzheng Emperor 雍正皇帝, *Shizong Xian Huangdi shilu* 世宗憲皇帝實錄 (Veritable Records of Emperor Shizong, Xian), Dahongling Edition 大紅綾本 of the No. 1 Archives in Beijing, available via Scripta Sinica, n.d., *juan* 20, p. 31a. Cited in Bai Wengu and Xie Zhanlu, "Qingdai lama yidanliang zhidu tantao 清代喇嘛衣单粮制度探讨 (An Inquiry into the Qing Dynasty Food, Vestment, and Registration Certificate Allowance System)", *Zhongguo Zangxue* 3 (2006), p. 57. A more extensive depiction of this bygone era of monastic rule in Qinghai is given in Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, p. 385 (*juan* 15).

¹³⁰Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, pp. 816–817 (*juan* 31) and pp. 530–531 (*juan* 20).

must be fully collected. [They] are not to be given orders to govern the barbarian settlements [*fanluo* 番落]. ...¹³¹

At the same time, a limited system for the financial support of these monasteries was put into effect. As Sumba Kanbo—the same figure who waxed poetic about the golden age of Buddhist patrons *before* the Qing's presence in Amdo—tells it,

The Second Pañchen Lama sent a messenger, and the Changkya Emanation was in agreement [with him], making earnest requests on behalf of the monasteries and practice centres [of Amdo]. Thereupon, the Great Dharma King Yongzheng Emperor was pleased, and in the Earth-Bird year [1729] he repaired the monasteries and practice centres *with [funds from the imperial] treasury*. The taxpayers of the 'divine communities' [*lha sde*; i.e., subject communities]¹³² *were subsumed* [by the Qing administration]. However, in their place the beneficent custom of conferring without interruption permanent *allowances from the [imperial] treasury* was well established. From that point forward, at those monasteries and practice centres, philosophical teachings flourished and the Victor's Teachings grew like a [summer] lake. Good discipline was established everywhere through Tsongön [Kökenuur], Amdo, and Kham.¹³³ [Thus] was there the marvelous spread of glorious happiness.¹³⁴

We even have some idea how much these imperial allowances were supposed to be. Archival records for the year 1761 specify that Xining County (where Gönlung was located) provided 1.6 'bushels' (*dan* 石, hectolitres) of grain for each of 2,245 monks. The adjacent Nianbai County provided 1.07 bushels for each of 736 monks. Datong County 大通縣, where Serkhok was located, provided 2.75 bushels for each of 1,323 monks. Other subprefectures within Xining Prefecture also received specified allotments of grain.¹³⁵ These grains were to come from the very lands that the Qing administration had confiscated and now had on its tax roles.¹³⁶

It is impossible to ascertain the extent to which this system was implemented. Such allowances were no doubt inconsistent and insufficient for covering the needs of the monasteries and their monks. Thus, monasteries like Gönlung continued to make claims over lands and

¹³¹Aixinjueluo Hongli, "Qinding Da Qing huidian zeli", pp. 94a.6–95a.4. This also appears in the Ji Yuanyuan 季垣垣, *Qianlong chao neifu chaoben Lifan yuan zeli*, pp. 135–136.

¹³²The subjects of the monastery. On *lha sde* see Paul Nietupski, "Labrang Monastery's Corporate Estates (Labrang)", The Tibetan and Himalayan Library, <http://places.thlib.org/features/15472/descriptions/80> (accessed 13 April 2013).

¹³³Sumba Kanbo writes 'Mdo Khams', which I have interpreted to mean what we today think of as A mdo *and* Khams. Elsewhere Sumba Kanbo groups together 'A mdo', 'Southern Khams' and 'Middle Khams' in his discussion of 'Lower Greater Tibet' (Smad kyi Bod chen); thus, it seems likely that Sumba Kanbo is here referring to both/all of what we now understand as A mdo and Khams.

¹³⁴Sum pa mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor, *Mtsho sngon gyi lo rgyus sogs bkod pa'i tshangs glu gsar snyan* (Zi ling, 1982), pp. 25–26; Sum pa mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor, *The Annals of Kokonor* [Being a partial translation of the Mtsho sngon gyi lo rgyus sogs bkod pa'i tshangs glu gsar snyan zhes bya ba], (translation) Ho–Chin Yang, Uralic and Altaic Series 106 (Bloomington, 1997), p. 50. Emphasis added. Thu'u bkwan III wrote something very similar in his chronicle for Dgon lung Monastery. Thu'u bkwan III Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, "Dgon lung gi dkar chag", p. 728/48b.1–2.

¹³⁵However, the source does *not* report that these monks received cash allowances like their counterparts in Liangzhou. Lai Hui-min 赖惠敏, *Qianlong Huangdi de hebao* 乾隆皇帝的荷包 (Emperor Qianlong's Purse) (Beijing, 2016), p. 388. Bai Wengu and Xie Zhanlu give the same figures, citing the 1822 *Qinghai shiyi jielue* 青海事宜節略 (Summary of Qinghai Affairs). Bai Wengu and Xie Zhanlu, "Qingdai lama yidanliang zhidu tantao", p. 58.

¹³⁶Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, p. 386 (*juan* 15).

subjects¹³⁷ and continued establishing priest-patron relationships with Mongol rulers and their communities in places such as Inner Mongolia.¹³⁸ Nonetheless, there were very real social and economic changes that began to take off in the years and decades following the Lubsang–Danzin Rebellion. In describing the simultaneous effort by Qing officials in Hehuang to reduce the power and influence of *tusi* there—an incomplete but persistent effort—Wes Chaney writes, “just fifteen years before [i.e., before the Lubsang–Danzin Rebellion], the [Xining River watershed] village would have had no connections to a county office; now runners, sub-bureaucratic tax agents, and officials entered the community”.¹³⁹

The same Qing officials who sought to register *tusi* landholdings and to collect additional taxes from them tried to do the same to the monasteries. The first Xining amban together with the regional commander memorialised in 1727, stating that the “barbarian clans originally administered” by the ennobled lamas of the region “are to return to the administration of the prefectures and counties. Originally [the lamas] collected incense and grain. [This land] is to return to the state and pay official taxes”.¹⁴⁰ At the same time, new duties were imposed by imperial authorities on monasteries such as Gönlung, which many monks begrudged. Sumba Kanbo, who served as abbot on three occasions during Gönlung’s period of rebuilding, writes of his own efforts at meeting these obligations while abbot:

Every time it is required to do construction labour for the monastery,¹⁴¹ to pay taxes to the [emperor’s] officials [rgyal dpon], and to *faun on* [high-ranking] travellers, [there are some small-minded monks] who are attached to material things and cannot bear to spend them. Regarding the common wealth as for the general manager alone, and not trying to find ways to delay one’s own [responsibilities], my estate took principle responsibility [in paying and providing].¹⁴²

Rare land deeds dating from before and after the Lubsang–Danzin Rebellion help to illustrate the changes in landownership and taxes that the monasteries had to confront. One land deed dating from the first decade of the eighteenth century¹⁴³ pertains to an “irrigated incense-grain” field, that is, land dedicated to supplying a monastery material support in

¹³⁷For instance, the monastic charter for Dgon lung’s erstwhile branch monastery of Kan chen describes some of the ritual and financial responsibilities of Kan chen’s “estates” (*gzhi ka*). Ngag dbang ’phrin las rgya mtsho, Smin grol III, “Theg chen thar pa gling gi bca’ yig mu tig gi phreng mdzes (The Charter of [Kanchen] Thekchen Tharpa Ling: the Beautiful Pearl Necklace)” (1758), line 29 (manuscript held at Kan chen Monastery in Huzhu County, Qinghai). Sumba Kanbo continued to make references to existing “divine communities” in his writings: Sum pa mkhan po Ye shes dpal ’byor, *PaN+Di ta sum pa ye shes dpal ’byor mchog gi spyod tshul brjod pa sgra ’dzin bcud len*, p. 557; Sum pa mkhan po Ye shes dpal ’byor, “Dgon sde ’ga’ zhig gi bca’ yig blang dor snyan sgron (An Inquiry Regarding What is to be Accepted and What is to be Rejected for a Few Monasteries)”, in *Gsung ’bum* (Collected Works), vol. 8, Śāta-piṭaka (New Delhi, 1975), p. 128/12b.7.

¹³⁸For instance, see Brenton Sullivan, “Monastic Customaries and the Promotion of Dge lugs Scholasticism in Amdo and Beyond”, *Asian Highlands Perspectives* 36 (2015), pp. 84–105.

¹³⁹Chaney, “Land, Trade, and the Law on the Sino-Tibetan Border, 1723–1911”, p. 86.

¹⁴⁰Yang Yingju, *Xining fu xin zhi*, p. 532 (*juan 20*).

¹⁴¹T. *spyi ’i sa las shing las*.

¹⁴²“Mkhan po erte ni paN+Di tar grags pa’i spyod tshul brjod pa sgra ’dzin bcud len”, p. 635/133a.2–3. Emphasis added. The last sentence of the passage is difficult to translate because no subject is given. I am thankful to Rachael Griffiths (personal communication, 8 August 2019) for help in translating that sentence, although I have made some modifications and assume responsibility for any faults in the translation.

¹⁴³The document is damaged, allowing the reader to make out only “Kangxi forty-”. The image of this document is in the possession of Wes Chaney (Bates College). I would like to thank Chaney for bring to my attention and sharing with me this document.

the shape of incense, grain, and so forth.¹⁴⁴ In this case, the incense-grain land was required to annually pay a tax in kind to the monastery known as Huayan Monastery 華嚴寺, or Chözang Monastery, a subsidiary temple of Gönlung's, located just one valley to the east of Gönlung. The seller, probably a Monguor,¹⁴⁵ appears to have belonged to the estate of Chözang Monastery, since the contract refers to him as being a subject of the monastery's "feud" (*zuren* 族人). The contract reads that after the transaction is completed, "... each year one *sheng* 升 five *ge* 合 of incense-grain [tribute] is to be collected [by the monastery]", and that "the original owner shall not be concerned with any [future] shortage". The transaction amount was two *liang* 兩 six *qian* 錢 and one *fen* 分 of silver. Another clause appears to say that whichever side first 'regrets' and reneges on the contract would be required to pay a fine of three 'bushels' (*dan* 石) of wheat and undertake repair of the monastery's roads (*gongyong lu* 公用路).¹⁴⁶

By contrast, a later set of land deeds tells a very different story. Significantly, these three deeds all date from the decades following the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion—specifically, the years 1739, 1742 and 1791.¹⁴⁷ In addition, all of them deal with parcels of non-irrigated land being sold to a monastic community, which illustrates how the monastery was (re-)growing its assets and doing so in a market economy. The monastery in question is Tratsang Monastery (above, Zhacang si), another subsidiary temple of Gönlung.¹⁴⁸ The deeds all describe the size of the land in terms of the amount of seed needed to sow the fields, and this is given in the local "market litres" (*shisheng nei* 市升内) unit of measurement. Similarly, the deeds give the amount of the transaction in terms of the "market value" (*shijia* 市價) of a specified amount of silver. In addition, the buyer henceforth was to become solely responsible for paying an annual tax in kind to the government's public granary (*naguan liangcang* 納官糧倉), the amount to be paid specified in terms of official "granary litres" (*cangsheng* 倉升).¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁴ Gray Tuttle, "Local History in A Mdo: The Tsong Kha Range (ri rgyud)", *Asian Highlands Perspectives* 6 (2010), pp. 23–97; Gray Tuttle, "An Unknown Tradition of Chinese Conversion to Tibetan Buddhism: Chinese Incarnate Lamas and Parishioners of Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries in Amdo", *Zangxue Xuekan* 藏学学刊 (Journal of Tibetology), 2014. See also the related term *xianghuo* 香火.

¹⁴⁵ The seller's name is Lan Eighty 藍八十 or Lan Eighty Bao 藍八十保. The buyer appears to be a fellow member of the community, Lansijiaer 藍思加他尔. Monguors have the custom of naming children after the age of their grandmother when born. According to Schram, the local Chinese also named children after the age of their grandfather when born. Given the location of Chos bzang Monastery, however, I surmise that the inhabitants there are mostly Monguor and Tibetan, not Chinese. Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, pp. 210, 229, 239.

¹⁴⁶ It is not clear whether the wheat is to be paid to the monastery or to the other party in the agreement. The character that I am translating as "road" (Ch. *lu* 路) is written in a script unfamiliar to me. "Road" therefore is my best guess.

¹⁴⁷ Archive numbers 463001-5-89-3-4, 463001-5-89-3-4, and 463001-5-89-1-2, respectively. My thanks to Wu Lan (Mount Holyoke College). They are scans kept at the Qing History Project (Qingdai lishi gongcheng) in Beijing.

¹⁴⁸ T. Grwa tshang dgon Dga' ldan chos 'khor gling. Pu Wencheng 蒲文成, *Gan Qing Zangchuan fojiao siyuan*, pp. 158–160.

¹⁴⁹ For an overview of the difference between the 'market litres' and other measures used in Xining and surrounding areas and how they compare with the "official" measures found further east, see Wu Mu 武沐, "Qingdai Hezhou duliangheng zhiqian dimu jisuan danwen ji fangfa 清代河州度量衡制钱地亩计算单位及方法 (Units and Methods of Calculating Weights and Measures, Currency, and Land Area in Qing-Dynasty Hezhou)", *Xibei minzu daxue xuebao* (*Zhexue shehui kexue ban*) 西北民族大学学报 (哲学社会科学版) 3 (2004), pp. 24–29.

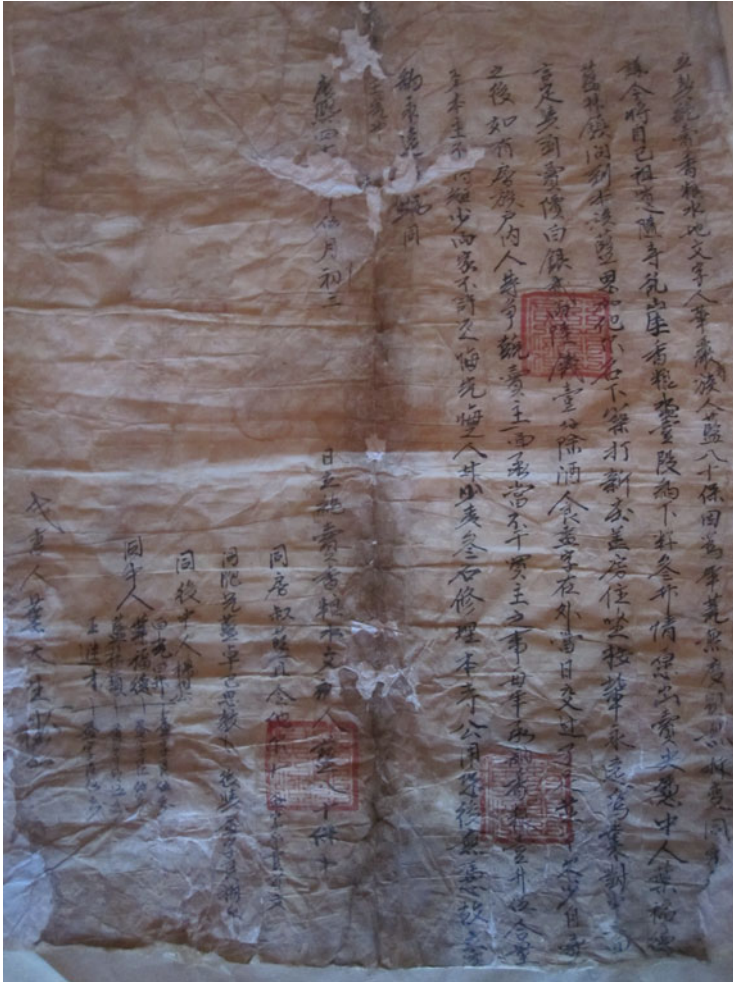


Fig. 1. Contract of land sold from a subject of Huayan Monastery (also known as Huayan si 花園寺; T. Chos bzang ri khrod bde chen chos gling) to another individual in the year Kangxi Forty-[something]. See note 143.

Source: Wes Chaney (Bates College), personal collection.

To be sure, these four deeds compose a small sample size, and it is possible that the differences between the earlier deed and the later deeds can be explained by the fact that they are dealing with different places, although both are within the Xining River watershed and both are Gönlung's branch monasteries.¹⁵⁰ Nevertheless, the differences between them are so striking that they do suggest that changes in time have played a role. In particular, the

¹⁵⁰Pu says that Grwa tshang became a branch of Dgon lung's in 1743 when the Third Chu bzang Lama was serving as Grwa tshang's abbot. These are loose (and late) grounds for declaring Grwa tshang a branch of Dgon lung's. In any case, both of these monasteries shared in common a history of intimate connections with Khoshud patrons. Pu Wencheng 蒲文成, *Gan Qing Zangchuan fojiao siyuan*, p. 158.



Fig. 2. Image of 1739 contract of land sold to the monastic community of Zhacang Monastery (T. Grwa tshang dgon). Image compiled by the National Qing History Project 国家清史编纂工程 in Beijing. See note 147, document number 463001-5-89-3-4

earlier deed clearly indicates that the parcel of land is near and somehow in the service of Chözang Monastery, requiring an annual ‘incense-grain’ contribution be made to the monastery. The latter deeds refer to land for which the new owner, Tratsang Monastery, is required to pay an annual tax *to the government*. It is also interesting that the official units of measurement are explicitly employed in all of the latter deeds but not in the earliest deed. This is no doubt because of the gradual integration of Gansu Province (including Xining Prefecture) markets into the empire that took place during the Qianlong reign.¹⁵¹ In the post-Lubsang-Danzin period, monasteries of the Xining region were at least partially divested of their estates and thereafter operated within a social and economic framework that included Qing officialdom rather than one maintained by the monasteries and local rulers alone.

But just how much of these monasteries’ tax base was taken following the rebellion? Unless archival documents surface and become available to the public, it will be difficult to determine specific numbers. Gülüshi Khan is said to have granted Gönlung “all the land in Pari” (T. Dpa’ ris)—an immense swath of land that encompasses present-day Datong, Huzhu and Ledu Counties, as well as Menyuan County and adjacent counties across the provincial border with Gansu. By the 1940s, however, Gönlung is said to have possessed no more than 3 per cent of the cultivated land in Huzhu County where the monastery is located.

Were Gönlung’s estates actually confiscated, and if so, what did that mean for the economic situation at Gönlung? A key source for evaluating the economic status of Gönlung and other monasteries prior to the major reforms introduced by the Communist Party is the *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha* (Research on the Social History of Qinghai Monogurs).¹⁵² As the preface to the series explains, its findings were the result of research conducted in the 1950s and 1960s, although it was not written until after the Cultural Revolution.¹⁵³ Its accuracy in terms of local history prior to the twentieth century is suspect.¹⁵⁴ Nonetheless, this *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha* may be more reliable for the years closer to its composition. According to this source, Gönlung had 37,000 *mu* 畝 in what is now Huzhu County,¹⁵⁵ and it may have owned another 50 per cent more in surrounding counties.¹⁵⁶ Gönlung’s landholdings in Huzhu are broken down as follows:

¹⁵¹Peter C. Perdue, “The Qing State and the Gansu Grain Market, 1739–1864”, in *Chinese History in Economic Perspective*, (eds.) Thomas G. Rawski and Lillian M. Li (Berkeley, 1992), pp. 100–125.

¹⁵²Professor Elliot Sperling helped me by bringing this source to my attention.

¹⁵³Qinghai sheng bianji zu, *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha*; Qinghai sheng bianji zu 青海省编辑组 (Editorial Group) and “Zhongguo shaoshu minzu shehui lishi diaocha ziliao congkan” xiuding bianji weiyuanhui 《中国少数民族社会历史调查资料丛刊》修订编辑委员会, (eds.), *Qinghai sheng Zangzu Mengguzu shehui lishi diaocha* 青海省藏族蒙古族社会历史调查 (Investigation of the Social History of Qinghai’s Tibetan and Mongol Nationalities), Guojia minwei Minzu wenti wu zhong congkan zhi 5; Zhongguo shaoshu minzu shehui lishi diaocha congkan 95 (Beijing, 2009).

¹⁵⁴For instance, it claims that all of the first three ’Jam dbyangs bzhad pa incarnations served as abbot at Dgon lung, when in fact only the Second ’Jam dbyangs bzhad pa did so. Qinghai sheng bianji zu, *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha* 青海土族社会历史调查 (An Investigation of the Social History of the Tu Ethnicity of Qinghai), p. 53. Likewise, it assigns to the year 1874 Dgon lung’s destruction by Hui Muslim forces, an event that actually took place in 1866.

¹⁵⁵Qinghai sheng bianji zu, *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha*, p. 52. See also p. 101. The modern gazetteer of Huzhu gives 49,000 *mu*. Huzhu Tuzu zizhi xian xian zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Editorial Committee), *Huzhu Tuzu zizhi xian xian zhi*, p. 160.

¹⁵⁶Pu Wencheng 蒲文成, *Gan Qing Zanghuan fojiao siyuan*, p. 77.

Tuken Lama Estate (Ch. Tuguan <i>ang</i> 土观昂)	14,000 <i>mu</i>
The monastery's monks (<i>zhongseng</i> 众僧)	10,000
Changkya Lama Estate	5,000
Sumpa/Sumba Lama Estate	4,000
Wang Lama Estate	700–800
Chuzang Lama Estate	800
Li Lama Estate	200
Estate of the Monastery Management Office (<i>jiwa ang</i> 吉哇昂 < T. <i>spyi ba nang</i> [chen]?)	160–170
Estate of Khenpo [i.e., the abbot] ¹⁵⁷	100
Horkyong Lama Estate ¹⁵⁸	100
Gyatik Lama Estate ¹⁵⁹	80–90
Wushi 五十 Lama Estate (> T. <i>ul shri</i> / <i>ul shi</i>)	40–50
Lin jia 林家 Lama Estate	'Several dozen' ¹⁶⁰

Tenants on the land of the monastery's monks (10,000 *mu*) were required to pay a substantial portion of their yields as rent. For instance, for a parcel of land sown with one “bushel” (*dan* 石) of seed (approx. 100 litres)¹⁶¹—such land amounting to approximately 40 *mu* or 2.67 hectares, we are told—the tenant was required to pay five *dou* 斗, or 50 litres of grain as rent.¹⁶² Given the frequent occurrence of natural disasters in the region, this no doubt amounted to a considerable burden for tenants. The monks who owned the land would have collected 1,250 *dou*, or 12,500 litres of grain upon each annual harvest, which is no small allowance.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁷The authors of the *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha* list “Kanbu fo” as one of the “nine minor incarnate lamas” of Dgon lung. However, Nyi ma 'dzin's list of the nine does not include such a name nor does his list of other incarnate lamas who regularly stayed at Dgon lung. The same is true for two other names found therein: Yangsha fo 羊沙佛 and Forjün fo 佛日郡佛 (see the following note). Per Nyi ma 'dzin Ngag dbang legs bshad rgya mtsho, *Bshad sgrub bstan pa'i 'byung gnas chos sde chen po dgon lung byams pa gling gi gdan rabs zur rgyan g.yas 'khyil dung gi sgra dbyangs* (The Place Where Originated Expounding on and Practicing the Dharma: An Addition to the [Record of] the Succession of Abbots of the Great Religious Establishment Gönlung Jampa Ling, the Sound of the Clockwise-turning Conch Shell) (n.p.: s.n., n.d.), pp. 122–125; Qie'er Nimazeng Awanglexuejiacuo 仇尔·尼玛增·阿旺勒雪嘉措 [per nyi ma 'dzin ngag dbang legs bshad rgya mtsho], *Youning si xuzhi: Youxuan faluo yin* 佑寧寺續志：右旋法螺音 (Continuation of the Gazetteer of Youning Monastery: The Sound of the Clockwise-Turning Dharma Conch), (translation) Xie Zuo 谢佐, (2006), pp. 60–62.

¹⁵⁸The Chinese given is Forjün 佛日郡. However, the modern gazetteer of Huzhu gives “Heerjun” 贺尔郡, which appears to be a transliteration of the Tibetan Hor skyong. Huzhu Tuzu zizhi xian xian zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Editorial Committee), *Huzhu Tuzu zizhi xian xian zhi*, p. 160.

¹⁵⁹The Chinese given is Rudeng 如登. However, the modern gazetteer of Huzhu gives “Jiadeng” 加登, which may be a transliteration of the Tibetan “Rgya tig”.

¹⁶⁰Qinghai sheng bianji zu (Editorial Group), *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha*, p. 52.

¹⁶¹On the unreliable nature of such figures in the pre-Communist period see Wu Mu 武林, “Qingdai Hezhou duliangheng zhiqian dimu jisuan danwen ji fangfa”.

¹⁶²In addition, for each *mu* of land, the tenant is said to have paid ten *liang* 两 of (canola) oil and 10 *jin* of hay. For every *dan* of land rented, the tenant had to give the monastery two days worth of chopping firewood in return as well as ten sacks (*dai* 袋) of earth (for constructing buildings). Qinghai sheng bianji zu, *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha*, p. 52; Huzhu Tuzu zizhi xian xian zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Editorial Committee), *Huzhu Tuzu zizhi xian xian zhi*, p. 160.

¹⁶³The communist authors of the *Investigation of the Social History of Qinghai Monguors* also inform us that Dgon lung was not tolerant of late payers: “Prior to Liberation, Dgon lung also had tools for punishment and a prison. If there were incidents of peasants owing rent or interest, then he would be arrested, tied up and beaten or punished with corvée labour. For more serious [cases], they were sent to the [Chinese] government for punishment”. Qinghai sheng bianji zu, *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha*, p. 11. The missionary Louis Schram corroborates this.

That being said, it is important to note that what is now Huzhu County had some 1.16 million *mu* of cultivated land in the years leading up to the Communist takeover there.¹⁶⁴ That means that Gönlung, its lamas, and their subsidiary temples possessed *no more than* 3.2 per cent of the cultivated land in Huzhu.¹⁶⁵ Since there were only 290 monks at Gönlung at that time and perhaps another 250 monks¹⁶⁶ at its subsidiary temples, this means that monks made up less than 0.5 per cent of Huzhu's population of over 112,000 people.¹⁶⁷ Thus, while it does appear that the communist authors of our *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha* have some basis for their assertion that monks were better off than the "toiling masses", nonetheless ownership of a mere 3 per cent of cultivated land pales in comparison with the dominion exercised by some medieval Christian monasteries and abbeys,¹⁶⁸ not to mention outright lordship over "all of Pari" with which Gönlung was allegedly endowed in the seventeenth century by Güüshi Khan.

In conclusion, it is clear that Gönlung was *not* deprived of *all* of its estates. Gönlung's major monastic charter, composed 13 years after Gönlung's destruction by Qing forces, specifies and demarcates Gönlung's pastures and rights to the trees and grass there.¹⁶⁹ In addition, it and other monastic charters from the period specify which local laity are required to finance the Great Prayer festival and other major ritual occasions of the monasteries. Likewise, we still see references to 'divine communities' (*lha sde*) belonging to these monasteries in the later sources.¹⁷⁰

At the same time, it is an oversimplification to say that the rules and restrictions set forth by the Qing authorities "were not implemented".¹⁷¹ As we have seen, Gönlung's landholdings in the early twentieth century appear to have been a mere fraction of its original endowment, and Gönlung, like its subsidiary temples, was burdened with new obligations like paying taxes and providing corvée for government officials ("high-ranking travellers," which likely included Qing officials as well as Buddhist lamas). As Chaney has observed regarding the collection of taxes from lands and people that previously had not been on imperial rolls but on those of *tusi*: "the actual rates [of tax collection] were less important than the overall fact that this land began to be registered by civilian officials".¹⁷² Moreover, there was a clear shift from the Ming's exclusive focus on military defence vis-à-vis entitling local rulers and lamas to a much closer and more direct relationship between imperial authorities and Amdo monasteries that commenced in the Xining region.

¹⁶⁴Huzhu Tuzu zizhi xian xian zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Editorial Committee), *Huzhu Tuzu zizhi xian xian zhi*, p. 187.

¹⁶⁵There is no indication that all of Dgon lung's 37,000 *mu* of land was entirely made up of cultivated land. It is quite likely that some of this land was used for lumber or not used for any economic gain at all.

¹⁶⁶Pu Wencheng gives figures from the 1950s or earlier for a handful of monasteries in Huzhu.

¹⁶⁷Huzhu Tuzu zizhi xian xian zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Editorial Committee), *Huzhu Tuzu zizhi xian xian zhi*, p. 119.

¹⁶⁸C. H. (Clifford Hugh) Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, 3rd edition (Harlow and New York, 2001), pp. 123–127.

¹⁶⁹Rgyal sras 'jigs med ye shes grags pa, "Dgon lung byams pa gling gi mtshon dgon ma lag dang bcas pa'i bca' khriims", p. 36b.6.

¹⁷⁰See note 132 above.

¹⁷¹Mi Yizhi, *Qinghai lishi gaikuang (chu gao)*, p. 164.

¹⁷²Chaney, "Land, Trade, and the Law on the Sino-Tibetan Border, 1723–1911", p. 85.

Conclusion: Precedents and Persistence

How should we conceptualise the incorporation of the monasteries of the Xining River watershed into the Qing, and what are its implications for the rest of Kōkenuur? It is clear that policy is not practice and that many of the imperial recommendations and policies for these monasteries were ignored or insufficiently implemented. For instance, among his list of 13 recommendations for restructuring the region following the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion, Nian Gengyao advised that monasteries be permitted “no more than two hundred dwellings and three hundred lamas”.¹⁷³ A similar number (200 monks) was given by the Yongzheng Emperor in the stele that he had prepared for Gönlung Monastery. However, Gönlung may have had a population of 2,000 in the late eighteenth century or even as many as 3,000 in the nineteenth century.¹⁷⁴ Likewise, to include Gönlung or other Amdo monasteries in the same category as the more directly controlled “imperial monasteries” of Inner Mongolia is misleading, although some have done so.¹⁷⁵ Records of the Court of Colonial Affairs (the *Lifan yuan zeli*) do not stipulate the types and numbers of monastic officials that are to staff monasteries in Amdo as these records do for “imperial monasteries”.¹⁷⁶ Nor do these records specify the amount of an allowance that is to be paid to such monasteries or set quotas for the types and numbers of monks allowed to reside there. As we have seen, most of these things are indeed mentioned elsewhere (e.g. the Yongzheng Emperor’s issuing of the plaque for Gönlung; archival records indicating grain allowances for the monastics of the region), and Gönlung, for instance, was certainly on the radar of the Court of Colonial Affairs.¹⁷⁷ However, Gönlung’s acquisition of these traits corresponding to an “imperial monastery” was a more piecemeal process, and its interactions with Qing officialdom seem to have been limited to authorities in Xining and Gansu and to its lamas in Beijing (such as Changkya).

Even if we cannot speak of Amdo monasteries as “imperial monasteries” nor of the complete and consistent application of imperial regulatory policies at monasteries in Amdo, nonetheless the reality is that the eighteenth century forever altered the place of these monasteries within the empire. It radically reoriented these monasteries’ attention away from its focus on Central Tibet and on its Kōkenuur-based Khoshud patrons by effectively

¹⁷³Yongzheng Emperor 雍正皇帝, *Shizong Xian Huangdi shilu* 世宗憲皇帝實錄 (Veritable Records of Emperor Shizong, Xian), *juan* 20, p. 31b.

¹⁷⁴Turrell V. Wylie and ‘Jam dpal chos kyi bstan ‘dzin ‘phrin las, *The Geography of Tibet According to the ‘Dzaming-gling-rgyas-bshad*, (trans.) Wylie (Roma, 1962), p. 109; Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, Dbal mang paN+Di ta, “‘Jam dbyangs bla ma rje btsun bstan pa’i sgron me’i mam par thar pa brjod pa’i gdam dad pa’i pad+mo bzhad pa’i nyin byed”, in *Gsung ‘bum* (Collected Works of Gung thang III Dkon mchog bstan pa’i sgron me), vol. 8 (Lhasa, 2000), pp. 702/75b.6-703/76a.2. Qinghai sheng bianji zu, *Qinghai Tuzu shehui lishi diaocha*, p. 47. This latter source suggests that Dgon lung had three thousands monks before it was destroyed by a Muslim army. As noted above, however, this is not a particularly reliable source for the pre-twentieth century.

¹⁷⁵Robert James Miller, *Monasteries and Culture Change in Inner Mongolia* (Wiesbaden, 1959), p. 72; Chia, “The Li-Fan Yuan in the Early Ch’ing Dynasty”, pp 225–226.

¹⁷⁶Charleaux writes that, for the imperial monastery, “the Lifan yuan [Court of Colonial Affairs] enacted an ordinance fixing the status and income of the monastery, appointed its administrators, gave an official title to the monastery and ordination certificates to a quota of monks. When monastic communities were created *ex nihilo*, every banner was ordered to send monks and money to support them. Besides the imperial monasteries, other large monasteries received an official title with a wooden board”. “Buddhist Monasteries in Southern Mongolia”, in *The Buddhist Monastery: A Cross-Cultural Survey*, (eds.) Pierre Pichard and François Lagarde (Paris, 2003), p. 358n23.

¹⁷⁷*Qingdai gebuyuan zeli: Qinding lifanyuan zeli*, 2:700 (*juan* 56, 7).

eliminating the latter. Monks from these monasteries were forced to look eastward to Inner Mongolia for potential patrons¹⁷⁸ and—as more and more high-level lamas were forced to reside in Beijing (the development of the so-called “Peking Lama” system is the full maturation of this process)—toward the Qing Court.

In the aftermath of the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion, the Qing emperors and officials drew on a repertoire of bureaucratic procedures more commonly associated with regulating the Chinese Buddhist *sangha* and applied those to the powerful monastic institutions of Xining and, in particular, Pari. These reforms represent the commencement of what Max Oidtmann has described as a broader, “gradual shift from a multi-centric legal order to a state-centered legal regime” in Amdo.¹⁷⁹ In various recent publications, Oidtmann has presented evidence from the hitherto unseen archives of the Xunhua Subprefect to demonstrate the process by which Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in Amdo¹⁸⁰ came to be enmeshed in and even thrive through the Qing legal and administrative apparatus in Gansu and Kökenuur. The cases he has reconstructed reveal how the Xunhua subprefect, the Xining prefect, and even the Xining amban and Shaanxi-Gansu governor-general were dragged into legal battles between Tibetan and Mongol contestants. These Qing courts became the sites of ‘legal politicking’, as lamas, monks, local rulers and ordinary subjects presented their claims vis-à-vis other contestants.

One of the earliest such cases surfaced in the 1770s and lasted for nearly two decades. In it, Labrang Monastery claimed the right to appoint the abbot of Tsö Monastery (T. Gtso dgon dga’ ldan chos gling) and thus to be the “mother” or “root” monastery of Tsö. The protracted legal battle resulted in several appeals and overturned decisions. Labrang ultimately lost in the later rulings and failed to assert its legitimate authority over Tsö. Nonetheless, Oidtmann has concluded, “if Labrang seems to have learned anything from this matter, it was that persistence might pay off, as would the strategic use of the entire scope of the Qing administrative system”.¹⁸¹ Indeed, Oidtmann has even suggested that the massive estates of such monasteries as Labrang and Rongwo (T. Rong bo) and the major lamas connected with them came about not in spite of but *because* of their learning to effectively utilise the Qing officials of Gansu and Kökenuur.¹⁸²

Oidtmann calls the Labrang-Tsö lawsuit “unprecedented in Qing legal history” and describes how it had profound impacts on the subsequent jurisdiction of the Xunhua subprefect and the Qing administration of Amdo more generally. In short, the case had compelled leading Qing officials of Gansu and Kökenuur to propose that the Xining amban be given direct supervision of the Tibetans of Xunhua and neighbouring Guide Subprefectures alongside his supervision of the Khoshud of Kökenuur. The problem, as these officials saw it, was maintaining the separation of Tibetans and ‘Mongols’ (Ch. Meng 蒙) in Kökenuur. It was hoped that this administrative reform would make enforcement of this policy of separation more efficient and effective.¹⁸³ Of significance for our purposes is that the advocates of

¹⁷⁸Sullivan, “Monastic Customaries and the Promotion of Dge lugs Scholasticism in Amdo and Beyond”.

¹⁷⁹Oidtmann, “A ‘Dog-East-Dog’ World”, p. 155.

¹⁸⁰Particularly the monasteries and communities between and having frequent relations with Rong bo and Labrang bkra shis ’khyil Monasteries.

¹⁸¹Oidtmann, “Between Patron and Priest”, p. 454.

¹⁸²*Ibid.*, p. 411.

¹⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 451.

this reform *explicitly drew on* the proposals and reforms previously made by Nian Gengyao (as well as his onetime comrade in arms, Yue Zhongqi 岳鍾琪, 1686–1754).¹⁸⁴

Later suits would also echo the reforms introduced in Xining by Nian. For instance, Oidtmann has also reconstructed a case from 1875 involving Khagya (T. Kha gya) and Rong’ar Monasteries (T. Rong ngar mi ’gyur gsang sngags gling) over the ownership of certain estates. The plaintiff in the case, the lama of Khagya, had complained to Qing officials that Rong’ar had confiscated three of its estates and that Rong’ar had been relentlessly attacking and killing people associated with Khagya. The Qing officials involved initially ruled in favor of Khagya, and, in addition, the governor-general awarded Khagya a plaque (*bian’e* 匾額) “further marking the [Khagya Monastery] communities’ privileged relation with the Qing”.¹⁸⁵ Later, when that plaque was partially burned in another Rong’ar raid, this was perceived as a “personal affront to the governor-general that officials could not and did not ignore”.¹⁸⁶

Qing forces ultimately responded with great force, executing leaders associated with Rong’ar. Part of the settlement entailed creating an entirely new administrative position, that of “general administrator” (Ch. *zongguan* 總管)¹⁸⁷ of Rong’ar, Khagya, and Terling (T. Gter lung) Monasteries, awarded to respected lama from a nearby monastery.¹⁸⁸ This appointment, moreover, was not merely the recognition of some status quo (i.e., it was not the entitlement of a local lama who already exercised authority over these three monasteries) but rather represented direct intervention into monastic affairs.¹⁸⁹ Thus, rhetoric and policies first articulated in the immediate aftermath of the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion persisted and inspired later policies on the Qing Gansu-Kökenuur frontier,¹⁹⁰ and imperial practices introduced at Gönlung and other monasteries, such as the appointment of new administrative positions and the awarding of imperial plaques, continued to be carried out as the Qing frontier reached farther out onto the Tibetan Plateau.

Of course, this is not a case of the progressive incorporation of Amdo into Qing civil administration. Indeed, as Oidtmann has written of the administrative changes following the Labrang-Tsö lawsuit, if anything, those changes represented a reversal of such a process.¹⁹¹ R. Kent Guy, too, has remarked on the fact that Gansu Province (together with Sichuan) is rather unique in exhibiting a trajectory *away* from civilian administration in the service of greater militarisation of the Qing frontier.¹⁹² Instead, what resulted along the Gansu-Kökenuur frontier is what Oidtmann has referred to as a “pluralistic legal order” and Wes Chaney as “overlapping jurisdictions and multiple tax and landholding

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 443, 448–449.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 460.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 470.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 468.

¹⁸⁸ This was the Bse tshang lama of Gter lung Monastery.

¹⁸⁹ Oidtmann, “Between Patron and Priest”, p. 473.

¹⁹⁰ Nayanceng, who served in the region as governor-general and as amban in the early nineteenth century, employed the same rhetoric as Nian Gengyao in writing about the monasteries of his day, and he threatened those institutions with the same punishment as those suffered by Gönlung in 1724. Oidtmann, “Overlapping Empires”, p. 62.

¹⁹¹ Since it meant undermining the civil administration of Xunhua and Guide Subprefectures. Oidtmann, “Between Patron and Priest”, p. 452.

¹⁹² Guy, *Qing Governors and Their Provinces*, pp. 209, 215–217.

regimes”.¹⁹³ The 1737 monastic charter of Gönlung recognises this complex arrangement: while most infractions of monastic rules and norms are dealt with internally by the monastery’s disciplinarians, “cases of capital punishment certainly are to be handed over to the Chinese and Oirat [*sog po*] judges [*khriims bdag*]”.¹⁹⁴ Schram appears to have taken great delight in reporting on the “plural legal culture” and “overlapping jurisdictions” of the people in the Xining River watershed, particularly when it came to cases involving lamas at the courts of Qing officials. While monasteries maintained their own courts and prisons, as did the indigenous chieftans (*tusi*)¹⁹⁵ decisions could be appealed or brought directly before Qing officials. These officials, according to Schram, took delight in providing the final word,¹⁹⁶ but not before enriching themselves by depleting the litigants of everything they owned:

Ch’ü-t’an [Qutan] sued the branch to vindicate its rights of proprietor of all the domains of Ch’ütan. The lawsuit was carried to the Court of Justice of the Subprefecture of Nienpei [Nianbai] and lasted for two years. The Chinese officials, lavishly bribed by both groups, finally sent the lawsuit to the Court of the Prefecture of Hsining [Xining] in order that their friends and superiors might have the opportunity to acquire some wealth and promote the cause of justice. Again, the lamas stubbornly spent their money for two years. Still unwilling to accept the verdict of the judges, the suit was sent to the Supreme Court of the capital of the province. Here the Chinese officials were very happy to meet the interested customers, and the gullible lamas started immediately to sow again, seeds of wealth and happiness in the gardens of the highest officials. For sixteen years the clever officials kept the wheels turning, encouraging both groups, exciting passions and stubbornness, promising to both sides a successful conclusion. The gullible lamas spent money, and the officials milked the meek cows dry. Finally, the wealth of the mother lamasery was exhausted first, so that the branch lamasery won the suit. ...¹⁹⁷

Qing rule in Amdo was not a singular trajectory from loose, imperial rule to proto-nation-state, and Chaney had persuasively warned against flattening “the craggy local topographies” of individual lives and of specific times and places.¹⁹⁸ Qing rule in Amdo often consisted more of *ad hoc* responses on the ground to particular cases than to some grand and consistent strategy for incorporating the borderlands into the empire.¹⁹⁹ However, the religious policies and practices directed toward the lamas and monasteries of the Xining region in the immediate aftermath of the Lubsang-Rebellion represented a monumental shift in how the Qing conceived of and treated Tibetan Buddhist lamas and

¹⁹³Chaney, “Land, Trade, and the Law on the Sino-Tibetan Border, 1723–1911”, p. 17.

¹⁹⁴Rgyal sras ’jigs med ye shes grags pa, “Dgon lung byams pa gling gi mtshon dgon ma lag dang bcas pa’i bca’ khriims”, p. 38a.3–4. Here the word “Oirat” (Sog) is probably a vestige of earlier times (prior to the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion), although it could be a reference to the local Monguor *tusi* (more often referred to as ‘Hor’).

¹⁹⁵Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, pp. 353, 477.

¹⁹⁶Oidtmann, meanwhile, finds that Qing officials were annoyed by the incessant politicking of such lamas and monasteries. It is not clear what explains these conflicting conclusions (perhaps they were “taking delight in” and profiting from an otherwise unpleasant task and thus spoke of their experiences in different ways depending on the audience).

¹⁹⁷Schram, *The Monguors of the Kansu-Tibetan Border*, p. 315. Other examples of lamas and monasteries pleading their cases before Qing or Republican Chinese officials can be found on pp. 335, 337, 339, 343, 344, 345, 349, 353, 384, 477.

¹⁹⁸Chaney, “Land, Trade, and the Law on the Sino-Tibetan Border, 1723–1911”, pp. 1–2.

¹⁹⁹This is one of the takeaways from Oidtmann’s study (“Between Patron and Priest”) of legal cases in Xunhua Subprefecture (especially Chapter 6).

monasteries in Amdo, a shift from which the Qing would not retreat. These imperial policies and practices included the creation of new administrative positions that had real, lasting impact; the ‘benevolent’ awarding of plaques to these monasteries in exchange for their loyalty and the choosing of new names for those monasteries that demanded such loyalty; the insertion of itself into the appointment of abbots and into other monastic affairs; the confiscation of lands and subjects of monasteries and the registration of those on the imperial tax rolls; and the drawing of local antagonists into Qing legal courts to settle their disputes.

These policies and practices were tested first and most comprehensively on the lamas and monasteries of the Xining region and Pari in particular, a fact that helps to explain the different historical trajectory of the monasteries there and that of monasteries in the rest of Amdo. The monasteries of Xining and Pari are located much closer to the prefectural seat and to the major economic corridor between the Tibetan Plateau, Mongolia, and China than are regions to the south of Xining beyond the mountain passes. In addition, the monasteries of Xining were devastated during the Lubsang-Danzin Rebellion due to their ties with Khoshud nobility, and these monasteries were rebuilt entirely under the auspices of the Qing. The “Three Great Monasteries of the North [of Amdo]”, namely Kumbum, Serkhok, and Gönlung, never regained the status, fame, or influence that they had demanded in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.²⁰⁰ The “southern monasteries” (south of the Xining River), such as Rongwo and Labrang, meanwhile, were not affected by such factors and were therefore in advantageous positions that allowed them to more gradually adapt to and even profit from the introduction of Qing reforms.²⁰¹

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²⁰⁰This is particularly true for the latter two, Gser khog and Dgon lung. For the “Three Great Monasteries of the North” (*dgon pa che ba gsum; chos sde chen po gsum*) see Shes rab dar rgyas, *Rje ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan dpal bzang po'i mam par thar pa mu tig 'phreng ba* (Biography of the Glorious Lord Ngakwang Lozang Chöden: A Rosary of Pearls) (1729), p. 76b.1 (this print available at Cultural Palace of Nationalities in Beijing); Thu'u bkwan III Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, “Dgon lung gi dkar chag”, p. 717/38a.3.

²⁰¹Oidtmann refers to this as one of the paradoxes of Qing involvement in the region. Another he refers to is the beginning of the creation of a Tibetan ethnic identity vis-à-vis Hui Muslims. Oidtmann, “Between Patron and Priest”, p. 411. Lobsang Yongdan used the phrase “northern” and “southern” monasteries to refer to these groups of monasteries in a comment made at the meeting of the International Association for Tibetan Studies in Paris (2019). I found that to be a useful distinction for thinking about the monasteries of Pari.