

# the origins of sTod-pa: a nyinba clan legend<sup>1</sup>

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sTod-pa is one of four villages located in the valley above the junction of the Humla Karnali and Dozam Khola and is not far from Simikot, the capital of Humla District in the Karnali Zone of northwestern Nepal. These four villages are collectively known as Bod Yul-tsho bZhi or Nyin Yul-tsho bZhi, that is, the four Tibetan village districts or the four Nyin village districts. The inhabitants of these villages claim to have migrated from Tibet in the distant past, they speak a dialect of western Tibetan and are adherents of Tibetan Buddhism. The term Nyin refers to the particularly advantageous position of the villages on a warm and sunny hillside; Nyin is a Tibetan root meaning sun or day. In accordance with this, Nyin villagers refer to themselves and are referred to by other Humla Tibetan speakers as Nyinba. In Nepali, the area is known as Barthapale and its inhabitants Barthapalya.

Humla is an isolated and sparsely populated district occupied by peoples of both Nepali and Tibetan extraction. The Nepali speakers are numerically predominant and reside at lower altitudes along river valleys in southern Humla. Peoples of Tibetan origin are separated into five territorially distinct, endogamous ethnic groups located at the higher altitudes above the river valleys or in plateau regions to the north. The Nyinba region is at the meeting point of these two culture areas and is located near several villages of Nepali speakers. The district as a whole has been ruled by a succession of dynasties. The Malla kings retained control of the region until the end of the fourteenth century when they were succeeded by petty local chieftains of Thakuri caste known as the Kalyal kings.<sup>2</sup> The Nyinba held their land as tenants of several of the Kalyal chieftains and were under their direct political control. In the late eighteenth century, the district fell under the jurisdiction of Nepal.

The Nyinba occupy four major villages located within a five mile radius at altitudes of 10,000 to 11,200'. Allied to these major villages are a number of minor settlements and a few family owned dgon-pa or Buddhist temples. Each village is also divided into two to four village sections known as rus-tsho or pati which assume complementary functions at village festivals and rituals. The basic constituent unit of village social structure is the household or grong-ba which is usually composed of an extended family of several generations. Marriage is normatively polyandrous and residence is customarily patrilocal. The Nyinba depend primarily on agriculture for their subsistence with supplementary income in grain and goods derived from the salt trade and with milk and meat products obtained through small-scale herding. They are one of the most prosperous peoples in Humla and this prosperity is manifested in their large, comfortable houses, well-dressed appearance

and numerous, productive fields.<sup>3</sup>

Nyinba villages are said to have been founded several centuries ago by the ancestors of the present-day major clans. Representatives of other clans are believed to have migrated to the area at a later date, giving rise to a population which recognizes membership in thirteen separate clans. All Nyinba villages also include an additional clanless group consisting of the descendants of freed slaves. Whereas the founding clan of each village is known as that village's clan, the fact of later migrations, occasional matrilineal mag-pa marriages and the tendency of small, separate clan villages to unite has led to the current situation of multi-clan villages and settlements. Each clan is associated with one or more deities who are worshipped collectively by clan members and their fellow villagers at various festivals which take place in the spring and fall of every year.

The clans have genealogical traditions which specify the origin of their ancestors, elucidate facts about their migration to and settlement in the region and account for their descendants. These traditions are further elaborated in various clan stories or legends; the legends are known to differing extents by the members of a clan, and the degree of knowledge is dependant upon such factors as age, sex and social position. The stories of the origin and development of some clans are recalled in greater detail than others, but the basic features of the clan legend are common to all. The tale typically specifies the place from which the clan originally came and names the ancestors who first settled in the Nyinba region. There are episodes detailing the search for a homeland and describing how the ancestral gods provided help and sustenance along the way. One important episode specifies the way in which lots were cast or divine portents sought to find or verify the suitability of the new land. The founding ancestors usually consist of a father, his wife and three sons or three brothers who arrive by themselves. The young men then establish alliances among other inhabitants of previously settled villages by taking their daughters in marriage. Thereupon the clan prospers and its descendants increase over the generations. These clan legends are most often related by old men, village leaders, to informal audiences composed of fellow villagers at weddings, festivals and rituals throughout the year.

Clan legends are termed chhags-ba'i chhags-tshul, a term which may be literally translated as "the manner of the origins of settlement." Such stories are a distinct form of oral literature, differentiated from sgrung or epic myths and from lo-rgyus or history. The epics detail the superhuman exploits of such heroes as Gesar or Norzang Gyalpo; the Nyinba also relate the legends of local heroes, known as dpa'-bo. Histories are derived from written documents, whether Tibetan or Nepali. Thus the tales of clan origin do not fall into the category of either myth or history, although they certainly contain elements which are charac-

teristic of both. In the tale that follows, there are elements which are clearly mythic, in that they lie outside everyday human experience, such as the instance of being granted supernatural aid. These mythic events are combined with episodes which describe activities and behavior of everyday life. The ancestors themselves are represented as ordinary human beings lacking special powers. In the absence of any sources for verification or comparison, it is impossible to distinguish historical from legendary elements in the tale and to draw conclusions about the reliability of this account of the settlement of sTod-pa.<sup>4</sup> However, the issue of distinguishing between myth, fact and legend in the account of clan origins does not exist as a problem for the Nyinba themselves. They believe that these tales recount events which actually occurred in the distant past and that they require no verification beyond the fact of their telling. When contradictory accounts of the same clan legend exist, it does pose a distinct problem for Nyinba individuals, and they feel compelled to accept one version as accurate and reject all others.

Clan legends are significant on numerous levels and in various contexts in Nyinba culture. On a very basic level, they explain how the village land came to be occupied, how religious monuments and other landmarks came to be constructed and how sites for worship came to be sanctified. In this way, they not only account for the location and layout of the village, but also elucidate the long history behind village traditions. Furthermore, these legends provide a rationale for the worship of specific deities, clan gods and ancestors by describing how the connection between the current inhabitants of sTod-pa and their deities was established and has been maintained. While affirming the uniqueness of particular villages as territorially and socially distinct units, they call attention to traditional connections with other villages and other clans through intermarriage. Clan legends also typically include episodes in which close connections are established with Nepali speaking peoples of Chhetri or Thakuri caste. In this and other such tales, one of the three brothers takes up residence within a Nepali community and, by implication, intermarries with his fellow villagers. This provides an illustration of kinship connection with the neighbouring Nepalese and serves as a justification of Nyinba claims to relatively high position within the caste hierarchy.

This together with other clan legends, including the variant versions, may serve as valuable documents for the study of Nyinba culture. Aside from the genealogical material which such stories present, they also offer insights into Nyinba beliefs about the nature of their descent system, the significance of clanship in their society and the former relationship which existed between masters and their slaves. They provide detail about local religious belief, marital customs and myriad other features of daily life. Perhaps most importantly, they offer information about the nature of the relationship between descent groups and territorial

units, such as villages and village sections. In addition to their evident importance as items of local folklore, they also serve as keys to the elucidation of Nyinba ideology and social structure.

This tale was related to me in the winter of 1975 when I was living at sBas Phug dGon-pa, a cave temple northeast of sTod-pa which figures prominently in the tale. The lama Drag-pa Chhos-ldan who is from sTod-pa's 'Khor dGon-pa related that the story, unlike most clan legends, had once been written down and that the text had been kept with a copy of a religious work called mDo-mang (where family histories and genealogies are customarily kept in Humla). However, it had rotted away with the years till it became unreadable and was either discarded or lost. The lama stated that he remembered the text and related it to me. My assistant, Tshe-dbang, also of 'Khor dGon-pa, helped me to transcribe the taped version of the text. I began my translation of the transcription in Humla and completed it in the United States.

The transcription of the history follows the verse form in which it was related. However, I have not attempted to replicate the verse structure in the translation because of the difficulties involved in such an undertaking. The language which was used in the telling of the history is a combination of classical literary Tibetan and the western Tibetan dialect peculiar to the Nyinbas. The text often alternates between these two variant modes of expression. The Tibetan text contains a few repetitions which have not found their way into the translation which otherwise follows the text rather closely. I have employed a strict system of transliteration that will be readily understood by readers of Tibetan. The notes are offered to provide explanations of place names, occasional inconsistencies in the text and aspects of Nyinba culture that would otherwise be confusing to the reader.

#### The Origins of sTod-pa: Translation of the Text

When our forefathers came from Purang's sKu mKhar sTod,<sup>5</sup> dga'-ldan Tsha-dbyang, a descendant of the great ancestors Dar-kya Phun-tshogs and Gang-dkar Lha-mo, was a great lord there. He fathered three sons; the eldest son was named dKon-mchhog dPal, the middle son was called Tshe-ring dPal and the youngest son was named bSod-rnams dPal. The wars between Tibet and the Sikhs were a time of adversity for lord dGa'-ldan Tsha-dbyang, and therefore his three sons had to flee from Purang's sKu mKhar sTod.

When they arrived at rTa Lung<sup>6</sup> the autumn mists began and great snows fell forcing them to remain there for the winter. The god Pho-lha rTa sKyong dKar-bo<sup>7</sup> befriended them and helped them. He brought the brothers quantities of flour and rice. They remained at rTa-Lung throughout the winter and finally came south in the springtime.

dKon-mchhog dPal stayed at Thing-thing rGya<sup>8</sup> and resided with the Nepalis of the Kalyal dynasty.<sup>9</sup> Tshe-ring dPal remained in the central plain of Simikot and bSod-rnams dPal made his home in sTod-pa.<sup>10</sup> Thus the three brothers settled these lands.

Every year the three brothers worshipped their gods. dKon-mchhog dPal went to the field at the plain of Thing-thing rGya. He packed up tea, beer, all sorts of food and drink, and, on horseback, joyfully came to the field of Thing-thing rGya. In Simikot, Tshe-ring dPal bridled his horse and loaded on his provisions. He carried many kinds of food and drink, dressed himself in all his festival garments and came there. In sTod-pa, bSod-rnams dPal and all the villagers<sup>11</sup> equipped their horses, put on their best clothing, took along food and drink and went there.

The men were seen off at the far side of gLang-lo,<sup>12</sup> at the traditional place for saying farewells. All the women had donned headdresses and adorned themselves with turquoise and coral jewelry. There they ate and drank and, to the music of the drums and cymbals, made their farewells.<sup>13</sup> Then all the men and boys, carrying tea and beer, food and drink, mounted their horses and rode off.

At Simikot's mountain peak, the three brothers made offerings to the gods<sup>14</sup> and they continued to do so for many years.

This all occurred during the reign of Kalyal. Later, Kalyal<sup>15</sup> harassed dKon-mchhog dPal at Thing-thing rGya. He experienced many difficulties there. Tshe-ring dPal cultivated brotherly relations with the Budha Thoki.<sup>16</sup> He stayed on, settled down there and became a Budha Thoki.<sup>17</sup> Then dKon-mchhog dPal who was still homeless went on to sTod-pa. He first sought portents from the gods. For this, he took one black sheep and placed a saddle pack on its back. He transfixed a white silk pennant in the woolen cloth of the right hand pack and tied five streamers of different color onto the sheep.<sup>18</sup> He also filled the right pack with gold and the left pack with silver. He concentrated his thoughts on where his homeland was to be. Then he awaited a sign from the gods.

He came here as led by the sheep<sup>19</sup> on his way, he stopped at sTod-pa Dar-chog, the golden palace of the ancestor and ancestress and he slept there. This site is called ancestor-ancestress for this reason.<sup>20</sup>

sTod-pa village grew and expanded. The three villages of Khang Lho-wa, Khang rGyas-wa and gTso Dar-sa developed. But later on, during the rule of Kalyal, there were various setbacks. The village declined and was so reduced in size that finally only one small boy, Mon Lha sKyabs, remained.<sup>21</sup> All his family's slaves fed and cared for him.<sup>22</sup>

Then at the time of the sTod-pa Lha-sa festival,<sup>23</sup> the slaves performed the rituals for the gods Jo-bo dGung dKar-bo, Ser-bo gSer-ldan, dKar-bo Dung-ldan and sNgon-po gYu-ldan.<sup>24</sup> At this time, Brang-shod's<sup>25</sup> gTso dKon-mchhog of the house named Grong Khrod da had come this way to search for a yak. All the slaves respectfully invited him to come and sit with them, and he did so. They served him with beer and annointed his head with butter. He said, "There is one who is different among you. Who is he and where is he from, who are his father and mother?"<sup>26</sup> Then all (the slaves) replied, "He is our only master and benefactor, he alone we honor and reverence."<sup>27</sup> All the others have died out." Then gTso dKon-mchhog said, "Indeed, if it is so, I will give my daughter in marriage to this nephew of mine."<sup>28</sup> Thus Brang-shod's forefather gTso dKon-mchhog gave his word.

Then he gave his daughter in marriage to Mon Lha sKyabs. She was a young woman and older than he.<sup>29</sup> After she was married and sent to this village, her father went back and forth between Brang-shod and sTod-pa for many years. He gave his son-in-law and his daughter clothing, he did whatever was needed. The girl lived in sTod-pa for many years. After ten years had passed, Mon Lha sKyabs became independent and after twenty years at most he was self-supporting.

gTso dKon-mchhog's daughter, gTso-mo 'Dzom-'byung Bu-'khrid wondered whether prosperity would come to sTod-pa and whether she and Mon Lha sKyabs, a family of two, would attain happiness. She asked the advice of the lamas, the gods and the supreme beings. The lamas cast lots and performed astrological calculations.

The lamas said, "Now gTso-mo 'Dzom-'byung Bu-'khrid and Mon Lha sKyabs, this is the way you can secure happiness and prosperity: build four mani walls at the four corners of the village, plant four cedar and four tshar-ba trees at the four directions.<sup>30</sup> Then, above to the north, build a temple commemorating the conquest over kLu and bTsan.<sup>31</sup> Guru Rinpoche subdued them at this place which is called sBas Phug and there is an impression of his body (in the stone there). There are also eight stupas containing relics of the eight Medicine Buddhas.<sup>32</sup> Repair the decay. Paint the eight relic stupas white. Reverse the decline there. Give offerings to the gods without cease and offer butter lamps. Show your faith at the imprint of Guru Rinpoche's body. Have the book rGya Tog gSer bZung copied and purchase a statue of Buddha. If you, gTso-mo 'Dzom-'byung Bu-'khrid and Mon Lha sKyabs, do this then both of you will be happy and your descendants will multiply. Your lineage is from mNga'-ris sTod Pu-rangs sKu mKhar sTod.<sup>33</sup> It is the lineage of lord dGa'-ldan Tsha-dbyang, the lineage of a lord over men and a very great ancestor. In Tibetan, the lineage of a great father and a great lord is a kingly lineage. In Nepali, this is called Pal; that is your lineage.<sup>34</sup>

After this was explained, gTso-mo 'Dzom-'byung Bu-'khrid and Mon Lha sKyabs invited many lamas and copyists. They made a copy of the text rGya Tog gSer bZung. They set up four mani-walls at the four directions, built the stupas and planted four cedar and four tshar-ba trees at the four corners of the village. They gave offerings to the gods and to the supreme deities. They repaired the decayed relic stupas of the eight medicine Buddhas at sBas Phug, that great place of pilgrimage. They worshipped there and gave offerings. After they had done so, the village expanded and flourished. A large village grew from one ancestor and one ancestress. They had sons named Nor-bu, rDo-ri and rTa-mgrin who were of their line. These three men fathered a village inconceivably large. Then true felicity came to pass. In this place named sTod-pa are the very descendants of the great father and lord, dGa'-ldan Tsha-dbyang who are called Pal in Nepali. Thus such happiness came to sTod-pa.

The hearts and minds of Mon Lha sKyabs and gTso-mo 'Dzom-'byung Bu-'khrid were overflowing with unmeasurable virtue. Because they did what was honorable, they worshipped and gave offerings at the relics of the eight medicine Buddhas and at the imprint of Guru Rinpoche's body at sBas Phug. Because of the merit<sup>35</sup> gained from having rGya Tog gSer bZung copied, the merit of obtaining an image of the Buddha and the merit of having built the stupas and mani walls at the four corners of the village, hindrances and calamities were averted throughout sTod-pa's existence. If men die, 'pho-ba<sup>36</sup> need not even be performed. And, as it is certain that sTod-pa men go to the heavenly fields of the Buddha, their wishes and deeds are exemplary.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Fieldwork among the Nyinba was carried out between 1973 and 1975 with the financial assistance of the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Mental Health. I would like to express my thanks to H.M.G. of Nepal for permission to undertake research in Humla.
2. Tucci (1956 and 1962) provides a discussion of the history of this area of Nepal and neighbouring regions of Tibet obtained from various documentary sources.
3. Furer-Haimendorf (1975: Chapter 7) discusses the economic base of this and other ethnic groups in Humla.
4. The problem of distinguishing myth from fact has been considered by Oppitz (1974:121-131) in the evaluation of written clan histories he collected among the Sherpa.
5. A hilltop village in the Purang valley which is said to still exist today.

6. A valley at an altitude of approximately 14,000 to 15,000 feet at 30° latitude 80° longitude located inside the Nepalese border at the foot of the high Nya-lu Pass.
7. Pho-lha are the lineage or clan gods among the Nyinba. For his help at this time, rTa sKyong dKar-bo, a local deity associated with the rTa Lung valley, was adopted as the god of this particular clan and is still recognized as such at the present time. sTod-pa men bring offerings to him whenever they travel up to the valley. rTa sKyong dKar-bo means White Horse Protector and, not surprisingly, it is believed that he has the form of a horse. In Tibetan tradition, clan gods are called Pha-lha while Pho-lha refers to a god residing on a man's body (see Stein 1972: 95, 227). The Nyinba associate this one term, Pho-lha, with both the ancestral and personal gods.
8. The forest above and north of Simikot, now district capital of Humla. In Tibetan, Simikot is called Gram-sa.
9. The Kalyal kings, known in Tibetan as the sPun lNga or the five brothers, ruled Jumla and Humla from the decline of the Malla empire until the Gorkha conquests (see Tucci 1956 and 1962 and Jwshi 1970 for information on these dynasties).
10. Located some five miles southeast of Simikot, sTod-pa is one of the four major villages of the Nyinba. The other villages are Brang-shod, Bar-khang and Nyi-ma-dvangs.
11. This account suggests that there were other inhabitants of sTod-pa at the time bSod-rnams dPal settled there. Other local histories suggest that there has a previous settlement in the sTod-pa area whose population had either diminished or died out during the local wars that followed the dissolution of the Malla kingdom. Although it seems unlikely that these people would join in the festivals directed towards gods associated with the dPal brothers, it may be that the description of a large number of people participating in this ceremony more properly refers to a later period of time when bSod-rnams dPal's descendants still carried out this ceremony (which has not been continued up to the present time).
12. A small settlement one mile northwest of sTod-pa and four miles southeast of Simikot.
13. An elaborate ceremonial farewell such as this is performed only at major festivals or to honor very distinguished visitors, i.e. only at events that concern the entire community.
14. The gods are not specified here, but they are probably clan gods who are typically worshipped near small mountain peaks.



15. The particular kings who were ruling at that time are not named here. The Kalyal kings are said to have heavily taxed and hounded their subjects, particularly those of Tibetan origin.
16. Budha Thoki is the name of a Chhetri clan.
17. Several Nyinba clan histories relate how Tibetans settled down and married into Nepali villages. Although the rules of caste endogamy among Nepali peoples forbid intermarriage with Tibetans, the Mongoloid appearance of many Humla Chhetris and Thakuris suggests a mixed racial ancestry (see also Furer-Haimendorf 1966:65).
18. Five colored streamers are tied on the right hand side of the neck of any animal to be consecrated to the god for divination or as atonement for moral transgressions against the community, community members, or the god himself.
19. The oral histories include an episode of awaiting signs and portents to determine the advisability of settling in any particular area. Another type of portent than that which is sought here involves the planting of trees or crops and observing their growth. Good growth is, of course, auspicious and indicates a place suitable for settlement. In this method of divination, the will of the gods is expressed through the unrestrained movements of the sheep. When the sheep settles down so do the people seeking a homeland.
20. This is the location of the annual ceremony directed towards the worship of the clan gods and ancestors, called appropriately A-mi (A-'phyi-mes) or ancestor-ancestress. The sTod-pa ancestors are named in the second verse of the history, that is Mes-mes Dar-kyā Phun-tshogs and A-'phyi Gang-dkar Lha-mo. They are regarded as deities and givers of prosperity. It is not unrecognized by the Nyinba, particularly the lamas, that ancestor worship is not compatible with orthodox Buddhism.
21. Mon Lha sKyabs, according to sTod-pa genealogies, lived at least ten generations ago. There are no genealogies that go as far back as the dPal brothers but it is believed that twenty-three generations intervene between the settling of sTod-pa and the present day. One generation is equivalent to approximately twenty-five years. Tucci finds that the Malla empire collapsed in the end of the fourteenth century (1956: 112, 128-30, 153), a date which supports the genealogical estimates and historical claims of the various Nyinba clan histories, that the clans arrived independently at various times during and after the period between the dissolution of the Malla empire and the assumption of local rule by the indigenous petty chieftains, known as the Kalyal kings.

22. Until their emancipation fifty years ago, slaves were owned by Nyinba families. The slaves were said to be of Tibetan origin, spoke an identical Tibetan dialect but were distinguished from their owners by a variant system of marriage and inheritance.
23. A series of seasonal festivals concerned with the annual agricultural cycle and still performed at the present time.
24. Ordinarily slaves took no part in such ritual and even today their participation in these festivals is marginal. However, the absence of any adult sTod-pa men necessitated direct action by the slaves so that the festivals could be carried out and the gods propitiated.
25. Brang-shod, one and a half miles east of Simikot, is the largest of the major Nyinba villages-
26. Thus noticing immediately that there was a child of the master class among the slaves. It is, however, difficult to believe that gTso dKon-mchhog would not be acquainted with the affairs of a village so near to his own.
27. Literally "take to our foreheads" which refers to the practice of touching jewels, religious texts, representations of gods either as statues or in paintings and the like to the forehead. When requesting a favor from a superior, one may touch one's hands to his feet and then to one's own forehead.
28. An appropriate term of reference and address to all individuals younger than the speaker by two generations, to sister's sons and to wife's brother's sons. It is also used as a term of address to sons-in-law who are often real or classificatory "nephews".
29. An acceptable and not uncommon marital arrangement.
30. A small hardwood tree common to the Himalayan regions and that. (See Lokesh Chandra 1971).
31. Klu are known as nagas in Hinduism being deities with the form of a serpent which inhabit lakes and rivers. bTsan are demons who may be committed to oaths in support of the Buddhist religion. The Klu and bTsan referred to here were suppressed by Guru Rinpoche in an epic battle still recounted in local legends.
32. The mani-walls, mChhod-rten or stupas, trees and sBas Phug, a cave temple, can still be seen around and in sTod-pa. It is said that the stupas were constructed in ancient times by the Buddha himself; they are of finer quality than the usual local product. For an account of the Medicine Buddhas, see

Rchung Rinpoche (1973: 9-11) and Wadell (1958: 353-354).

33. The name of the Tibetan province is sTod mNga'-ris sKor-gsum, Pu-rangs is the name of the valley where sKu mKhar sTod is located. Pu-rangs is, in fact, a district that the Malla once ruled.
34. In reality, dPal is a Tibetan word meaning nobility, splendor, prosperity etc. Because of their descent from a lord of Purang (and it is not really clear how high a lord), members of this clan maintain that their caste status is Thakuri, the ruling caste in Humla prior to the Gorkha conquests as well as the caste of the present kings of Nepal. Although they call themselves Pal Thakuri this pretence of high caste status seems to have no effect on their relations with neighbouring Nepalese.
35. That is, the results of the performance of many meritorious actions, an expression of the doctrine of karma.
36. Tibetan lamas perform a ritual called 'pho-ba to separate the soul from the body after death (see Stein 1972: 225). According to this tale, the great merit accumulated by the ancestors of sTod-pa eliminates the need to do 'pho-ba, but, as the lama who recited the legend noted, it is performed anyway.

#### Transliteration of the Tibetan Text

Pu rangs sku mkhar stod nas yong ba'i yong tshul ni  
 Mes mes dar kya phun tshogs zer a phyi gang dkar lha mo zer  
 Yab chhen pha pha'i brgyud ni dpon chhen dga' ldan tsha dbyang  
 De la sras po gsum 'khrung nas  
 Sras po rgad pa'i ming la dkon mchhog dpal  
 Bar ba'i ming la tshe ring dpal  
 gZhon pa'i ming la bsod rnam dpal  
 Sing pa dang bod pa dmag thab pa'i skabs su  
 dPon chhen dga' ldan tsha dbyang la 'o brgyal byung song  
 Sras po gsum bros nas phebs ba yin  
 Pu rangs sku mkhar stod nas rta lung tu chhags  
 De la kha ba chhen bo ston rmugs 'babs nas

De ru lus ba yin

rTa lung lha pho lha rta skyong dkar bo yi grogs dang phrin  
las mdzad nas

Bag phye dang 'bras do bo gnang nas

dGun ka de ru bsdad

De nas sos ka mar la yongs nas spun gsum po de

dKon mchhog dpal de thing thing rgya ru bsdad

De ru mon spun lnga mnyam du chhags

Tshe ring dpal zhes bya ba de gram sa'i gzhung du bsdad

bSodrnams dpal zhes bya ba de stod pa ru bsdad

De nas spun gsum po de gzhis chhags ba yin

De nas gram sa'i la thog la thing thing rgya yi gzhung du  
dog ra ru

dKon mchhog dpal 'di tshur la yongs nas

rTa la zhon nas dga' dga' brod brod byas nas

Ja chhang bza' mthung sna tshogs byas nas ru<sup>1</sup>

Thing thing rgya yi dog ra ru yongs

Lo re re lha re re gsol

Gram sa nas tshe ring dpal zhes bya ba de

rTa srab chhas rgyab

bZa' mthung sna tshogs 'khyer

Ja chhang 'khyer gos bza' sna tshogs brgyan nas ru

De ru 'dzom

sTod pa nas phar la bsod rnams dpal zhes bya ba de

sTod pa yul kun gyi rta la srab chhas rgyab

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1. Nas ru has the same signification as the same signification as the gerundial particle nas. Both are used in the Nyinba dialect.

Gos bza' sna tshogs brgyan  
 bZa' mthung sna tshogs 'khyer  
 Ja chhang sna tshogs 'khyer nas ru  
 Phar la song nas ru  
 gLang lo'i phar ma ru skyel ma byed sa ru  
 Bumo thams chad mgo la dga' zhung bchug  
 gYu dang byi ru btags  
 rNga dang rol mo thams chad 'khyer  
 De ru skyel ma byas  
 bZa' mthung sna tshogs bzas  
 De nas phru gu thams chad rta la zhon  
 bZa' mthung sna tshogs ja chhang sna tshogs 'khyer nas  
 Gram sa'i la mgo la spun gsum po de lha gsol ba yin  
 De ru lo mang bo lha gsol ba yin  
 De nas Kalyal din<sup>2</sup> la yin  
 De nas gzhug la Kalyal gyi thing thing rgya ru  
 dKon mchhog dpal la 'o brgyal mang bo btang nas  
 De ru 'o brgyal mang bo byung ba yin  
 De nas tshe ring dpal zhes bya ba de  
 Gram sa la mon ba Budha Thoki nye bo spun byas nas  
 De ru bsdad chhags ba yin  
 Kho la Budha Thoki byung nas  
 De ru bsdad chhags ba yin  
 De nas spun 'di ni ma chhags pa

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2. Din is a Nepali word meaning time; here it is used to signify reign.

De nas tshur la yongs nas  
dKon mchhog dpal de tshur la yongs nas  
sPun gsum po la ma chhags pa.  
De nas lug nag po gchig la lha mo bsdar nas  
Da nga yi chhags sa de  
Ga na yod dam<sup>3</sup>  
Sems nas  
Lug sgal gchig bkal  
Lug sgal gyi bal gyas pa la  
mDa' dar dkar bo gchig gzer  
Dar tshon sna lnga btags  
Lug sgal gyi bal gyas pal la gser  
Bal gyon ma la dngul  
De la dkon mchhog la bden ba bsdar  
Mo btab nas tshur la yongs nas  
Yongs nas de nas stod pa dar chog gyi stod  
A phyi mes kyi ser bo'i pho brang du  
De ru nyal ba yin  
De la a phyi mes zhes bya ba de 'di don la yin  
De nas tshur la stod pa'i yul de mang bo phel ba yin  
Khang lho ba dang gchig khang rgyas ba dang gnyis  
gTsho dar sa dang gsum yul gsum chhags  
De nas gzhus la Kalyal gyi din la 'o brgyal btang nas  
De nas yul de nas la chung zad rgud pa yin  
rGud nas yul de la mes mon lha skyabs gchig la gtogs pa yin

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3. The interrogative form of the verb yod-pa in local dialect.

De nas mes mon lha skyabs kho rang gi grong chhung nga yi  
a pha thams chad kyis gsos nas

Phru gu gchig lus ba yin

De nas stod pa'i lha sa la gtso chho bo jo bo dgung dkar bo  
ser bo gser ldan dkar bo dung ldan sngon po gyu ldan gyi  
dus mchhod la lha la gsol ba'i dus la

De ru grong chhung ba thams chad kyis lha gsol ba yin

De nas brang shod kyis grong khrod da'i mes gtso dkon mchhog

De de ru tshur la gyag lta ru yongs nas

Thams chad kyis mar la phep rogs bzhugs rogs zer nas

bZhugs ba yin

Mes mes de la chhang dang yar rgyab byas nas

Ya khyed thams chad kyis nang na tsha bo mi 'dra gchig 'dug pa

'Di de ga nas yin

Su yin

A pha a ma su yin zer nas mes de bka' gnang ba yin

De nas thams chad kyis nga'i bdag po drin chhen 'di gchig gar

dPral la la lon pa 'di gchig gar yin

gZhan ma thams chad ni yal song zer nas

Khang chhung thams chad kyis a pha thams chad kyis mes mes de  
la zhus

De nas mes de da 'di 'dra yin na

'Di tsha bo de la nga rang gi bu mo gchig gtad yong zer nas

Brang shod mes mes gtso dkon mchhog gis bka' gnang ba yin

De nas mes mes de btad pa yin

Bu mo de lo chhen bo yin na chhung yin

Mes mes mon lha skyabs zer ba de lo chhung yin

De nas a phyi de la 'di ru btad nas

De mes mes de lo mang bo phar brgyugs tshur brgyugs byas nas  
ru

Mag pa de la gos lag mang bo bka b

Bu mo de la yang gos lag bka b

De nas gtso dkon mchhog kho rang dgos nas byas

De nas lo bzhi lnga bu mo de 'di ru bsdad

Lo bchu nas mes mes de mgo thon

De nas lo bcho nga bchu drug nyi shu la khyim mgo bteg

Yul de la bde skyid chi 'dra 'ong chas<sup>4</sup> 'dug pa sems nas

gTso dkon mchhog gi bu mo gtso mo 'dzom 'byung bu 'khrid

De da nga'i mes mes mon lha skyabs de la bde skyid ga 'dra  
gchig shar zhas 'dug pa

Nga rang nang tshan gnyis la skyid po gan 'dra gchig 'ong  
chas 'dug pa

Da lha bla ma dkon mchhog la bgros 'dris

bla ma thams chad la mo btab rtsis skor byas nas

Da khyed gtso mo 'dzom 'byung bu 'khrid dang mon lha skyabs  
gnyis po

De la bde skyid 'ong ba'i thabs la

Phyogs bzhi la ma dang bzhi

Phyogs bzhi la mchhod rten bzhi

Phyogs bzhi la shug pa sdong bo bzhi

Phyogs bzhi la tshar ba sdong bo bzhi

De nas yar la stod la dgon pa byang phyogs la

Klu dang btsan gyi kha gnon la dgon pa

De nas sbas phug zhes bya ba de

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4. This construction which is used in the Nyinba dialect appears to be similar to the Western Tibetan termination discussed by Jaschke (1954: 43).



Gu ru rin po chhe'i sgrub gnas yin  
sKu gzhes yod  
De la sman lha bde gshegs brgyad kyi sangs rgyas bchom ldan  
'das kyi gdung rten brgyad yod  
De la bzhig bzo byed  
bChom ldan 'das kyi gdung rten brgyad de la sku dkar gsol  
bzhig bzo byed  
De la tshogs dang mchhod pa ma chhags pa phul  
Mar me phul  
Gu ru rin po chhe sku gzhes de la dad pa byed  
De la tshogs dang mchhod pa tong  
Chhos rgya tog gser bzung de bzheng  
Thub pa'i sku gchig blu  
De 'dra byed na  
De nas gtso mo 'dzom 'byung bu 'khrid dang mon lha skyabs  
khyed gnyis labde skyid gchig 'ong  
Khyed kyi brgyud dag de 'phel 'ong  
Khyed kyi brgyud ni mnga' ris stod pu rangs sku mkhar stod  
nas dpon dga' ldan tsha dbyang gi brgyud pa yin  
Yab chhen ni dpon pa'i brgyud pa yin  
Da bod kyi skad la yab chhen dpon chhen rgyal po'i brgyud  
pa yin  
Mon kyi skad la pal zhes bya ba de yin  
Khyed kyi brgyud pa de yin  
gSungs nas de nas gtso mo 'dzom 'byung bu 'khrid dang mon  
lha skyabs gnyis pos  
De nas yi ge ba mang bo bla ma mang bo gdan zhus nas  
Chhos rgya tog gser bzung bzhengs  
Phyogs bzhi la ma dang bzhi bzhengs  
Chhos rten rgyab

Shug pa sdong bo bzhi btsugs

Phyogs bzhi la tshar ba sdong bo bzhi btsugs

De nas lha bla ma dkon mchhog la tshogs mchhod pa phul

sBas phug gnas chhen zhes bya ba de la sman lha bde gshegs  
brgyad kyi gdung rten de la bzhig bzo brgyab

De la phyag dang mchhod pa phul

Byas nas de la de nas yul mang bo phel ba yin

De la stod pa yul mes mes gchig dang a phyi gchig la stod pa  
yul mang bo byung ba yin

Mes mes rim bzhin gyi de la mes mes nor bu zhes bya ba

De la sras po nor bu zhes bya ba mes mes rdo ri mes mes rta  
mgrin

De gsum ni yul sem gyi mi khyab ba'i phel ba yin

De la bde skyid 'jigs po byung ba yin

sTod pa zhes bya ba yin

De ni brgyud pa ni yab chhen dpon dga' ldan tsha dbyang gyi  
brgyud pa yin

Mon gyi lugs la Pal zhes bya ba yin no

De la stod pa yul la bde skyid de 'dra byung ba yin

sTod pa yul gyi mes mon lha skyabs dang a phyi gtso mo 'dzom  
'byung bu 'khrid kyi sem du mi khyab pa'i dge ba gang  
drags dang chi grags byas ba'i don gyi

sBas phug gi gnas la gu ru rin po chhe'i sku gzhes dang sman  
lha bde gshegs brgyad kyi chhos rten dang

De la phyag dang mchhod pa byas ba dang

Chhos rgya tog gser bzung gzhengs ba'i phan yon dang

Thub pa'i sku blus ba'i phan yon dang

Phyogs bzhi la ma dang chhos rten brgyab pa'i phan yon gyi

sTod pa yul tshe 'di yi rkyen bar chhad zlogs pa dang

Shi na 'ang ni<sup>5</sup> 'pho ba rgyab mi dgos ba  
 Sangs rgyas kyī zhing khams la 'gro thag chhod kyī  
 De 'dra las dang smon lam bzang bo yod

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5. A local grammatical construction meaning 'even if'.