

HISTORY OF THE FORGOTTEN MOTHER-MONASTERY
OF THE RNYING MA SCHOOL:

DPAL RI MONASTERY IN THE TIBETAN “VALLEY OF THE EMPERORS”

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INTRODUCTION: HISTORY AND MEMORY IN TIBET

The present paper¹ deals with the history of the rNying ma school of Tibetan Buddhism, the school of “the Ancients.” Its origin is traced back to the zenith of the Tibetan *imperium* in the 8th century, with the *mkhan slob chos gsum*, the trio of the abbot (*mkhan po*) Śāntarakṣita, the master (*slob dpon*) Padmasambhava and the emperor and *dharmarāja* (*chos rgyal*) Khri srong lde’u btsan. I will focus on one of its major monasteries: dPal ri theg chen gling, built in 1571 in the ’Phyong rgyas valley (central Tibet), the necropolis of the Tibetan emperors. dPal ri monastery used to be considered as a “mother-monastery” (*ma dgon*), i.e. one of the main monastic institution of the

¹ A prototype of the present paper was given first at the 12th conference of the International Association for Tibetan Studies (IATS) in Vancouver (15-21 August 2010) and communicated online by the website of Kyoto University Erasmus Program which generously funded my participation. The present paper has been entirely rewritten by synthesizing larger results given in my doctoral thesis (see Deroche 2011) to be published as a book in French. I am particularly indebted to my former advisor Professor Matthew T. Kapstein, as well as to Professor Fernand Meyer, Professor Samten G. Karmay, Professor Katsumi Mimaki, Professor Heather M. Stoddard and Professor Franz-Karl Ehrhard for guiding and instructing me in the rich complexity of Tibetan religious history. Moreover I would like to express my gratitude to eminent traditional rNying ma pa authorities from whom the present paper has also benefited very much: the Tenth Rig ’dzin chen mo of rDo rje brag monastery (b. 1936) for an interview in Lhasa (March 2006), the late mKhas btsun bzang po (1920-2009) for an interview in Paris (July 2008), and Nyi lchang rin po che (b. 1932) for several interviews in Kyoto from November 2009. My heartfelt thanks also go to the Tibetan people of Lhasa, rTse thang, ’Phyong rgyas, dPal ri monastery and sMin grol gling monastery in central Tibet, who guided me, helped me and replied to my questions during a fieldwork done in May 2010. This fieldwork was made possible thanks to a generous grant of the Centre de Recherche sur les Civilisations de l’Asie Orientale (CRCAO, UMR 8155 of the CNRS), Paris. Many thanks are addressed to Dr. Alexander Gardner for kindly proofreading this paper and to Dr. Anna Balikci for her constant support during the editing process. Of course, all mistakes that might remain should be imputed to the sole author.

rNying ma school. Nevertheless, after its decline, dPal ri monastery became almost forgotten in the tradition itself and has remained generally ignored in the academia.²

By gathering and analyzing relevant Tibetan sources, I will show in this paper that dPal ri monastery formed a precedent for what I will heuristically call the “Renaissance” of the rNying ma school under the patronage of the Fifth Dalai Lama during the 17th century. This “rNying ma pa Renaissance” is characterized by two main aspects: the establishment of *new* large monastic institutions and the *reappraisal of the Ancients’ legacy*. The fact that the Fifth Dalai Lama was himself born into the noble family of ’Phyong rgyas gives to the history of dPal ri monastery an importance for Tibetan history as a whole and a privileged perspective to understand the symbolico-religious relation of the Fifth Dalai Lama’s regime with the ancient Tibetan empire and the rNying ma school. By making the history of the forgotten precedent of this Renaissance, we will get some new perspectives to understand the use of the imperial past and memory in the making of history by the Fifth Dalai Lama who reunified Tibet by establishing his new politico-religious regime with Mongol support in 1642.

We will also discover that even after the 17th century “Renaissance,” the successive “revivals” of the rNying ma school in the 18th and 19th centuries also contained significant relations with dPal ri monastery. Effectively, the great ’Jigs med gling pa (1729/30-1798) was born in dPal ri, trained in its monastery, and it is during a spiritual retreat in its hermitage that he had the first revelation of the *Klong chen snying thig*, afterwards probably the most widespread contemplative tradition of *rDzogs chen* (the foremost esoteric teaching of the rNying ma school). While ’Jigs med gling pa’s tradition was to spread in Eastern Tibet and to be continued in the so-called “impartial” (*ris med*) movement during the 19th century, we will see again how some major inspirations came, so far largely unnoticed by scholars, from the forgotten monastery of the Ancients located in the “Valley of the Emperors.”³

² Nevertheless, an important place is given to dPal ri monastery in the periodicization of the rNying ma school’s history by Tarthang Tulku and Leslie Bradburn (1995: 212-215, 219-220).

³ I use this expression for ’Phyong rgyas in Tibet, in comparison to the expression in usage to designate Egypt’s famous necropolis, the Valley of the Kings (Arabic: *Wādī al Mulūk*), West of the Nile, opposite Thebes (modern Luxor).

1. THE MODEL OF THE SIX MOTHER-MONASTERIES OF THE rNYING MA SCHOOL AND ITS EVOLUTION

The *rDzogs chen chos 'byung* provides a useful presentation of the classical classification of the rNying ma school's historiography: the "six great seats" (*gdan sa chen mo drug*) that are the "great root mother-monasteries of the rNying ma school" (*rnying ma 'i rtsa ba 'i ma dgon chen mo*). Formerly, these six monasteries were conceived as two geographical triads:⁴

- I. In upper Tibet (*stod na*), or central Tibet, *rDor sMin dPal gsum*:
1. Thub bstan rDo rje brag E waṃ lcog gsar (*rDor*) founded in 1632;⁵
 2. 'Og min gnyis pa O rgyan sMin grol gling (*sMin*) founded in 1676;⁶
 3. 'Phyong rgyas dPal ri theg mchog⁷ gling (*dPal*) founded in 1571.⁸
- II. In lower Tibet (*smad na*), Eastern Tibet, in Khams, *Kaḥ dPal rDzogs gsum*:
4. rGyal ba Kaḥ thog pa (*Kaḥ*) founded in 1159 and restored in 1656;⁹
 5. dPal yul byang chub gling (*dPal*) founded in 1665;¹⁰
 6. Grub dbang rDzogs chen pa (*rDzogs*) founded in 1685.¹¹

Nevertheless, dPal ri monastery declined in central Tibet while Zhe chen monastery was flourishing in the East. The classification evolved

⁴ *rDzogs chen chos 'byung*, 810: *de yang snga rabs mkhas pa 'i zhal rgyun du / stod na rdor smin dpal gsum dang / smad na kaḥ dpal rdzogs gsum / zhes gangs ljongs rgyal bstan phyi dar gyi skabs su gsang chen snga 'gyur rnying ma 'i rtsa ba 'i ma dgon chen mo stod na thub bstan rdo rje brag e waṃ lcog sgar dang / 'og min gnyis pa o rgyan smin grol gling / 'phyong rgyas dpal ri theg mchog gling bcas gsum dang / smad mdo khams phyogs su rgyal ba kaḥ thog pa dang / dpal yul byang chub gling / grub dbang rdzogs chen pa bcas su yongs su grags [...]*

⁵ *Id.*, 813-819.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 819-829.

⁷ Most ancient sources have generally *theg chen gling* ("Place of the Great Vehicle") instead of here, *theg mchog gling* ("Place of the Supreme Vehicle"). We will generally follow ancient sources.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 829-835.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 835-842.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 842-845.

¹¹ On the foundation of rDzogs chen monastery by Padma rig 'dzin (1625-1697) see *Ibid.*, 323-331, and Gardner (2009).

accordingly and in the new form, Zhe chen monastery replaced dPal ri monastery. The classical six-fold model of rNying ma historiography was maintained by this simple replacement. In order to maintain a sense of balance and repartition within Tibetan geography, instead of two triads the model was changed into three dyads:¹²

I. In upper Tibet, *rDor sMin gnyis*:

1. rDo rje brag (*rDor*);
2. sMin grol gling (*sMin*).

II. In between (*bar na*), *Zhe rDzogs gnyis*:

3. dPal Zhe chen pa (*Zhe*) founded in 1695, extended in 1734 (or 1735),¹³
4. rDzogs chen (*rDzogs*).

III. In lower Tibet, *Kaḥ dPal gnyis*:

5. Kaḥ thog (*Kaḥ*);
6. dPal yul (*dPal*).

The latter presentation has become the most widely accepted. Even if the *rDzogs chen chos 'byung* reports a hybrid form of a seven-fold model in which dPal ri is kept, the classical model remains composed by six mother-monasteries.¹⁴ As we will see, the complete decline of dPal ri monastery in modern times leaves no room for contesting its replacement in the list. The purpose of the present paper is not concerned at all with such a polemical issue. Nevertheless, from a historical point of view, such a shift raises an interesting question. If a mother-monastery—a vital point of the tradition's transmission and

¹² *Ibid.*, 813 : *phyi dus su dpal ri theg mchog gling gi gdan sa gzhung sa chen mo'i srid dbang la phog thug byung rkyen ches nyams rgud du phyin pa dang / dpal zhe chen pa'i gdan sa chen mo gang du mkhas grub gnyis ldan gyi skyes bu rgyun ma chad par byon zhing ma dgon chen mo khag la snyeg bzod pa'i bshad sgrub kyi phrin las dar zhing rgyas pa byung bas stod na rdor smin gnyis / bar na zhe rdzogs gnyis / smad na kaḥ dpal gnyis zhes pa [...]*

¹³ On the two steps of the foundation of Zhe chen monastery by the first two Zhe chen Rab 'byams pa rin po che, see *Ibid.*, 493-497, and Chhosphel (2012a, 2012b).

¹⁴ In central Tibet, the triad *rDor sMin dPal gsum*: 1. rDo rje brag (*rDor*); 2. sMin grol gling (*sMin*); 3. dPal ri (*dPal*). In lower Tibet, the group of four *Kaḥ dPal Zhe rDzogs bzhi*: 4. Kaḥ thog (*Kaḥ*); 5. dPal yul (*dPal*); 6. Zhe chen (*Zhe*); 6. rDzogs chen (*rDzogs*). *Ibid.*, 813: *gzhan yang stod na rdor smin dpal gsum / smad na kaḥ dpal zhe rdzogs bzhi zhes pa'i tha snyad gsar du byung ba snang mod kyang / 'dir re zhis sngar gyi lo rgyus chos 'byung chen mo rnams kyi rjes su 'brangs te snga 'gyur gdan sa chen mo drug gi gtam cung zad brjod pa 'dod de /*

history—has disappeared in common historiography, what can tell us the memory of its actual role? And how to explain its oblivion?

If we consider the chronology of the foundation of the seven (six plus one) mother-monasteries of the rNying ma tradition (Kaḥ thog, 1159–restored in 1656–; dPal ri, 1571; rDo rje brag, 1632; dPal yul, 1665; sMin grol gling, 1676; rDzogs chen, 1685; Zhe chen, 1695/1734–5), it is very significant to notice that five of them (rDo rje brag, dPal yul, sMin grol gling, rDzogs chen, and Zhe chen) were founded during the 17th century. Even if it is true that rDo rje brag had antecedents in gTsang and was founded little before the reign of the Fifth Dalai Lama, all of these five monasteries fully blossomed during the rNying ma pa Renaissance under the patronage of the Great Fifth. Moreover, the Dalai Lama’s support was also directly involved in the 1656 restoration of Kaḥ thog monastery. By observing this historical procession, we discover that dPal ri (1571) was the oldest of the mother-monasteries in central Tibet. Preceding the foundation in the mid-seventeenth century of rDo rje brag and sMin grol gling monasteries which were to play a larger role, we can consider that *dPal ri monastery formed the antecedent of the rNying ma pa Renaissance*. And as we shall see now, the continuity between dPal ri and this Renaissance under the Fifth Dalai Lama lay very much in the major historical site of the ’Phyong rgyas valley.

2. HISTORY OF DPAL RI MONASTERY IN ’PHYONG RGYAS, “THE VALLEY OF THE EMPERORS”

2.1 *The Rulers of ’Phyong rgyas: Patrons of dPal ri Monastery*

In the second half of the sixteenth century, the ruler (*sde pa, zhabs drung*) of ’Phyong rgyas,¹⁵ Hor bSod nams dar rgyas wished to establish a monastery dedicated to the rNying ma tradition in his lands. He made this request to his chaplain (*dbu bla*), ’Phreng po *gter ston* Shes rab ’od zer, alias Prajñāraśmi (1518-1584).¹⁶ This eclectic *gter*

¹⁵ The variant spelling of ’Phyongs rgyas also occurs but by considering the most current spelling in all our sources, we have opted for the same choice formerly made by Richardson (1963: 219-233) as ’Phyong rgyas.

¹⁶ For a full biography based on different versions (*Gu ru bkra shis chos ’byung*, 544-550; *gTer ston brgya rtsa’i rnam thar*, 559-563; *Nor bu do’i shal*, 282.6-286.2; *Zhe chen chos ’byung* 262-269; *rDzogs chen chos ’byung* 829-835) and related sources, see Deroche (2011b). I use generally the name Prajñāraśmi since he was using this Sanskrit version of Shes rab ’od zer to designate himself in his writings.

ston initially trained as a *dge bshes* in the Sa skya and dGe lug schools, had received the transmissions of the bKa' brgyud and rNying ma traditions from his root master 'Bri gung Rin chen phun tshogs (1509-1557). Prajñāraśmi, who was residing in his hermitage of 'Phreng po, within the domain of rDo rje brag, had not accepted yet the project when Hor bSod nams dar rgyas passed away. His son, the next ruler of 'Phyong rgyas, Hor bSod nams stobs rgyal, embraced the vision of his father and repeated his request to Prajñāraśmi, who finally accepted.

The history of the noble family of 'Phyong rgyas has been written by his most illustrious descendant, the Fifth Dalai Lama, in his historical work on Tibet.¹⁷ Tucci has translated several extracts¹⁸ and charted a useful genealogical tree¹⁹ in which we can identify the two rulers mentioned in connection with the foundation of dPal ri monastery. The Fifth Dalai Lama makes the claim that his family belonged to the Indian royal lineage of Za hor or Bhaṭa hor,²⁰ including mythical figures of tantric Buddhism, the King of Dza, the King Indrabodhi and Padmasambhava. The lineage is supposed to have established itself in Tibet at the time of emperor Khri srong lde'u btsan. Later the family was closely involved in the success of Phag mo gru pa Byang chub rgyal mtshan (1302-1364)²¹ and seems to have remained loyal and close to the sovereign of sNe'u gdong.

From the fifteenth century until the early seventeenth century, in the recurrent civil wars opposing dBus and gTsang, the 'Phyong rgyas family displayed a remarkable religious eclecticism. The family patronized the various schools of Tibetan Buddhism, including both the dGe lugs pa and the Karma bKa' brgyud pa, the two most powerful religious orders of this time which were aligned with the political powers of dBus and gTsang, respectively. While maintaining its power through several military campaigns, the 'Phyong rgyas family also engaged in mediation between dBus and gTsang, calling upon the most eminent religious hierarchs in the process. According to Samten G. Karmay,²² all religious orders seem to have been very keen to establish relations with this noble clan of 'Phyong rgyas because of its key position in alliances, its power, and from another point of view,

¹⁷ *Bod kyi deb ther*, 163-171.

¹⁸ Tucci (1949: vol. 2, 643-644).

¹⁹ *Id.*, vol. 2, Table VII. The whole work was also translated by Ahmad (1995: on 'Phyong rgyas see 165-173).

²⁰ Thus the term Hor is not supposed to designate Mongolian ascendancy here.

²¹ *Bod kyi deb ther*, 166.

²² Personal communication in Kyoto University, December 2009.

because of the historical prestige attached to the 'Phyong rgyas valley in connection with the ancient empire.

The son of Hor rDo rje tshe brtan, Rin chen rgyal mchog, became the prime minister of the Phag mo gru pa sovereign precisely through his efforts in mediating between dBus and gTsang.²³ In the beginning of the sixteenth century, he invited the powerful Fourth Zhwa dmar pa Chos grags ye shes (1453-1524),²⁴ who was supported by the Rin spungs pa, and obtained the patronage of the Phag mo gru pa government for the construction of the Zhwa dmar pa's monastery of Yangs pa can. Few decades later in the line of the 'Phyong rgyas rulers, Hor bSod nams dar rgyas made extensive studies, both secular and religious, with the Karma bka' brgyud pa master dPal khang *lo tsā ba* (birth 15th century or 16th century according to TBRC). Hor bSod nams dar rgyas invited as well the Third Dalai Lama, bSod nams rgya mtsho (1543-1588), and a pacification was probably made through the graces of the latter, as reported in his biography.²⁵ Hor bSod nams dar rgyas married Tshe dbang rgyal mo, the sister of sKyid shod *zhabs drung* bKra shis rab brtan (1531-1589), support of the dGe lugs pa. The son born from their union, bSod nams stobs rgyal, was a powerful military conquerer. It is him who managed to invite Prajñāraśmi in 'Phyong rgyas and establish dPal ri monastery.

He invited also the dGe lugs pa master Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan who restored monastic discipline in the dGe lugs pa monastery of Ri bo bde chen in 'Phyong rgyas. According to the autobiography of the Fifth Dalai Lama,²⁶ other bKa' brgyud and rNying ma masters close to Prajñāraśmi were also invited in the 'Phyong rgyas court, establishing a chaplain-patron (*mchod yon*) relation: 'Brug pa Padma dkar po (1527-1592),²⁷ Byang bdag bKra shis stobs rgyal (1550?-1602) who married the daughter of the 'Phyong rgyas family, and 'Bri gung Chos rgyal phun tshogs (1547-1602), the son of 'Bri gung Rin chen phun tshogs.

²³ *Bod kyi deb ther*, 168.

²⁴ A colophon confirms that the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa was also one of the chaplains of the ruling family of 'Phyong rgyas. To the request of the queen (*dpon mo*) of 'Phyong rgyas, bSod nams lha mo, he wrote a ritual for the cult of Buddhas and Arhats: *sTon pa gnas brtan chen pon 'khor bcas mchod cing smon lam gdap pa'i cho ga*, in his *gSung 'bum*, 6 vols, Pekin, Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2009, vol. 5, 551-579.

²⁵ Tucci (1949: vol. 1, 44).

²⁶ *Du kū la*, vol. 1, 34-35.

²⁷ Padma dkar po wrote at the request of mGon po tshe 'phel, a son of the 'Phyong rgyas ruler, the text entitled *Thugs rje chen po'i smar khrid snying po'i don la 'jug pa*, in *gSung 'bum*, 24 vols. Darjeeling: Kargyud Sungrab Nyamso Khang, 1973-1974, vol. 11, 625-637.

2.2. *'Phyong rgyas and the Citadel of 'Phying ba stag rtse, Ancient Seat of the Imperial Power*

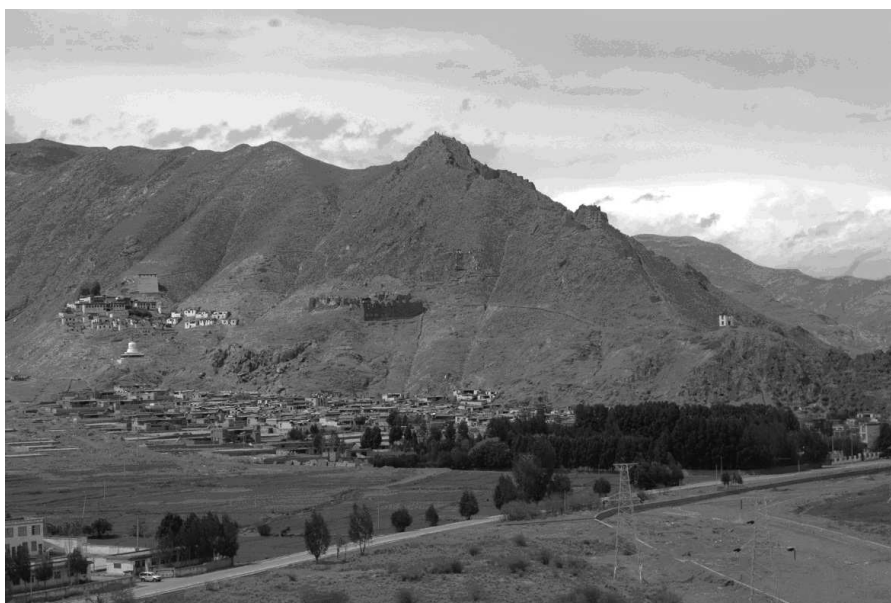


Image 1. Today's city of 'Phyong rgyas viewed from the top of the Bang so dmar po. On the right, the little white building marks the site of the ancient *rdzong* of the *zhabs drung*. Above on the crest, the ruins are associated to the ancient imperial seat. In the middle, the ruins of Ri bo bde chen monastery, reconstructed on the left (May 2010, the author). Richardson (1998: 220) gives a useful sketch of the place with the tombs. See also his photographs originally taken in 1949 (Plates 2, 3, 6)

The 'Phyong rgyas valley, located in the south-west of the Yar lung region, 28 kilometers from the city of rTse thang, was originally a major seat of the Tibetan power before Srong btsan sgam po centered his new empire in Lhasa. The ancient imperial citadel was named 'Phying ba stag rtse, the “Tiger Peak” (*stag rtse*) of 'Phying ba. Stories diverge about its foundation. According to Hugh Richardson (1963, reed. 1998), the earliest reference is found in an inscription from Kong po dated of the ninth century. It states that it was the seat of seven generations of kings until the time of Dri gum btsan po, the father of sPu lde gung rgyal. Even if the king Lha Tho tho ri (Lha To do snya btsan), fifth in the lineage before Srong btsan sgam po,

established a new palace in Yum bu bla mkhar (Yum bu bla sgang), 'Phying ba stag rtse is mentioned in the section of chronicles in Dunhuang documents as the residence of Srong btsan sgam po's grandfather, sTag bu snya gzigs.²⁸ It seems even that Srong btsan sgam po himself lived there at some point.²⁹ With the expansion of Tibetan territory, several palaces were established where the Tibetan emperor could stay for longer and advanced expeditions, and from which his power could be consolidated. Although the origins of the Yar lung dynasty remain difficult to identify, it seems that this lineage had its seat in the palace of 'Phying ba stag rtse during the period just preceding the emergence of the Tibetan empire in the history of central Asia.³⁰

After the emergence of the empire, the land of 'Phying ba, also spelled in ancient sources Phying ba or Pying ba, became only mentioned as the burial place the Tibetan emperors. Nevertheless, the fort of 'Phying ba stag rtse remained a major historical and symbolic site. Richardson (1963, reed. 1998: 220) makes a distinction between the ancient imperial palace named 'Phying ba stag rtse and the fort (*rdzong*) of the later 'Phyong rgyas rulers (*zhabs drung*) known as 'Phyong rgyas rdzong. I have also identified the two sites as shown in Image 1 above. However, according to current inhabitants of 'Phyong rgyas, the whole was known as 'Phying ba stag rtse.

The fort of the 'Phyong rgyas rulers was completely destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Nothing currently stands on the site save for a small modern building, probably built for the sake of commemoration, which is somewhat dilapidated. This poor edifice is nevertheless indicated as the palace of 'Phying ba stag rtse in today's town of 'Phyong rgyas. In the upper part of the hill's crest, the remains of the ancient imperial palace can still be seen. There are also lines of fortifications that local people told me to have been edified against the Dzungar invasion (1717-1720) which finally sacked the whole place.

2.3 *The Valley of the Emperors*

Facing the fort of the Tiger Peak is the valley of 'Phying ba, "the Valley of the Emperors," where lie the important tumuli containing the tombs of ten members of the Tibetan imperial dynasty: the immediate ancestors and successors of the unifying ruler of Tibet, the great

²⁸ See Bacot et al. (1940: 162-165).

²⁹ *Id.*, 132-136.

³⁰ See Beckwith (1993: 11-15).

conqueror and emperor (*btsan po*) Srong btsan sgam po. In the neighbour valley of Don mkhar, separated by the Mu la ri hill, are six others imperial tombs. The complex studied by Tucci (1950), Richardson (1963, reed. 1998), Haahr (1969), and Hazod (2007) was also the objet of traditional scholarship by a famous native of 'Phyong rgyas, 'Jigs med gling pa (1729/30-1798)³¹ who acted as a kind of archeologist and renovator of its ancient sites. Gyurmé Dorje³² has offered a description of the work, with the plan of the tombs, relatively close to Richardson's.

The main tomb, at the center of the 'Phyong rgyas valley is Srong btsan sgam po's, the "Red Tomb" (Bang so dmar po), a squared form with sides of approximately 129 meters, and 13.4 meters high according to Gyurmé Dorje. Although it is probable that the tombs might have been profaned during the 11th century after the fall of the empire, and again later during the Dzungar invasion in the 18th century, no archeological excavation has been conducted to inform us about their actual contents.



Image 2. Bang so dmar po, the tumulus of emperor Srong btsan sgam po in 'Phyong rgyas (May 2010, the author)

³¹ Among his *gTam tshogs*, is the *bKra shis srong btsan bang so'i dkar chag 'bring por byas pa n.ya gro dha'i chun 'phang*, in *'Jigs med gling pa'i gsung 'bum*, vol. 7, 374.2-381.5.

³² Dorje (1999: 201-206).

Tucci and Haarh have explored the magico-ritual schemes and operations of such constructions in ancient Tibet. 'Phyong rgyas valley has been the symbol of an "eternal Tibet," eternal residence of the Tibetan emperors, a link with the other world from which they were believed to watch upon Tibet's destiny. The fact that 'Phyong rgyas was chosen by the Yar lung dynasty for its burial site tells us about the importance it was granted by the dynasty itself, possibly in reference to its origins. Both as a mythical and historical place, the 'Phyong rgyas valley immortalized imperial Tibet, the period of the "Dharma Kings" (*chos rgyal*), age of political grandeur, early spread of Buddhism (*snga' dar*), and source of the rNying ma School.

2.4 *The Foundation of 'Phyong rgyas dPal ri theg chen gling Monastery (1571)*

It is in the midst of this environment that the ruler of 'Phyong rgyas patronized the establishment of the rNying ma monastery of dPal ri theg chen gling, "the Place of the Great Vehicle of the Glorious Mountain." "dPal ri," the "Glorious Mountain" refers to Padmasambhava's Pure Land, Zangs mdog dPal ri, the "Glorious Copper-coloured Mountain." dPal ri monastery was founded in 1571³³ nearby the tombs, further behind the Mu la ri hill. Hor bSod nams stobs rgyal sponsored all its buildings, donating labor, materials, and religious objects. Since the fall of the Tibetan empire, this event represented for the first time the creation of a large rNying ma monastic institution in central Tibet. Its community is said to have adopted externally (*phyi*) the precepts of monastic discipline (*vinaya*) and internally (*nang*) the esoteric instructions of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*).

According to the history of Tibet written by the Fifth Dalai Lama, as well as the latter's autobiography,³⁴ the ruler of 'Phyong rgyas commissioned the edition and printing of *Prajñāpāramitā* texts, *rDzogs*

³³ *rDzogs chen chos 'byung*, 829.

³⁴ *Bod kyi deb ther*, 170 : *dus gsum mkhyen pa mtsho skyes rdo rje'i ring lugs pa slob dpon bai ro tsa na'i thugs sprul gter ston shes rab 'od zer ti shrir bsten nas / sa 'dzin dpal gyi ri la theg mchog sgrub pa'i 'dus sde btab / sher phyin sum brgya pa / shel brag gi thang yig sems nyid ngal gso rnams par du bzhengs / See also Du kū la*, vol. 1, 34: *slob dpon bai ro tsa na'i rnam sprul 'phreng 'go gter ston shes rab 'od zer yongs 'dzin du bsten / sngags rnying ma'i bstan pa'i 'phel rgyas la dgongs / dpal ri grwa tshang gsar du btab / sher phyin sum brgya pa / padma bka' thang / sems nyid ngal gso gzhung 'grel rnams par du brkos /*

chen treatises from Klong chen pa's (1308-1364) *Sems nyid ngal gso*³⁵ and the *Padma bka' thang*.³⁶ The latter work, a *gter ma* on Padmasambava's legendary life and deeds, had been discovered close to 'Phyong rgyas, in the cave of Shel brag by *gter ston* O rgyan gling pa (b. 1323). According to Tucci,³⁷ most of the widespread versions of the *Padma bka' thang* derived from the single version revised and edited by Prajñāraśmi under the 'Phyong rgyas patronage, including the Fifth Dalai Lama's edition of dGa' ldan. As Tucci also rightly noted, all the *gter ma* revelations can be also seen as much as strategies to revive the Tibetan imperial unity and envision the destiny of Tibetan people in the mirror of Padmasambhava's prophecies.³⁸

During the 16th century, a period characterized by political fragmentation and sectarian conflicts, it seems that the ruling family of 'Phyong rgyas must have been very aware of the symbolic legacy of its domain. In close association to the Phag mo gru pa regime, the 'Phyong rgyas rulers were likely to intent to appeal to such symbols in order to reassess their power and authority. The magico-religious activation of these symbols was operated within the rNying ma school, in particular through the treasure traditions, which actively maintained a lively spiritual link with Padmasambhava and the ancient empire. It is with this in mind that we should, I think, consider the establishment of dPal ri monastery, a rNying ma institution in 'Phyong rgyas, as well as the revision and edition of the *Padma bka' thang*.

A contemporary guide to central Tibet's local history indicates that dPal ri monastery developed to a great extent; before the Dzungar invasion, there were six hundred fully ordained monks (*bhikṣu, dge slong*).³⁹ For the *rDzogs chen chos 'byung*, the religious community

³⁵ Professor Franz-Karl Erhard has kindly informed me that a copy of the *Ngal gso skor gsum* by Klong chen pa made at that time has survived in the collection of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP), reel-no. AT 157-158/1.

³⁶ Again, I am indebted to Prof. Ehrhard for knowing that the "print colophon" (*par byang*) of this work is available in a manuscript copy of the original xylograph edition from dPal ri monastery; see *Padma bka' thang*. Patna: Rahula Collection Series, 1, 1988, 587.5-590.5.

³⁷ Tucci (1949: vol. 1, 110-115).

³⁸ *Op. cit.*, vol. 1, 112.

³⁹ *Lho kha sa khul*, 66 : *de nas rim bzhin 'phel rgyas 'byung ste jun gar bas ma gtor gong tsam na dge 'dun zhal grangs mang po 'phel te / dge slong kho nar drug brgya lhag tsam byung gsung /*

included at some point more than three thousands people for the triad *rDor sMin dPal gsum* of central Tibet.⁴⁰

2.5 The Abbatial Succession of dPal ri Monastery

After the death of Prajñāraśmi, there was no reincarnation or “emanation body” (*sprul sku*) of him at the head of dPal ri monastery. According to the indications given by the *Gu ru bkra shis chos 'byung*,⁴¹ 'Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dbang po (1820-1892),⁴² and the *rDzogs chen chos 'byung*,⁴³ the list of dPal ri's abbots is the following:

1. Prajñāraśmi: founder and abbot from 1571, probably up to his death in 1584;
2. *rgyal sras* Karma kun bzang: son and spiritual heir of Prajñāraśmi.

⁴⁰ *rDzogs chen chos 'byung*, 829: *sngar dus dar rgyas che ba'i skabs dge 'dun 'dus pa stong phrag gsum lhag byung bas mtshon stod na rdor smin dpal gsum zhes yongs su grags /*

⁴¹ *Gu ru bkra shis chos 'byung*, 668: *gzhan 'phyong rgyas dpal ri 'di dbus phyogs rnying dgon snga shos zhig tu snang ste / thog mar gter ston shes rab 'od zer gyis btab / gter ston gshegs rjes karma rgyal sras kun bzang sogs kyis bskyangs / de nas rig 'dzin ngag gi dbang po'i bcung mtsho rgyal sprul pa rig 'dzin 'phrin las rnam rgyal mtsho skyes bzhad pa'i dbang pos gdan sa mdzad / bar skabs kyi gdan rabs ma rnyed / phyis tshod de nyid kyi sprul pa'i sku ngag dbang kun bzang padma sogs nas mtsho rgyal skye sprul rim byon gyis bskyangs pas nyams med gong 'phel du gnas /*

⁴² *mKhyen brtse'i gsung 'bum*, vol. 18, 325: *yar klung 'phyong rgyas dpal ri theg mchog gling ni / 'phreng po gter chen shes rab 'od zer gyis btab / de rjes rgyal sras karma kun bzang / mtsho rgyal sprul sku rig 'dzin phrin las rnam rgyal / ngag dbang kun bzang padma / ngag dbang blo bzang padma / padma chos 'byor rgya mtsho / bstan 'dzin chos kyi nyi ma rnams bzhugs /*

⁴³ *rDzogs chen chos 'byung*, 829: *snga 'gyur gdan sa chen mo drug gi ya gyal 'phyong rgyas dpal ri theg mchog gling ni / spyi lo 1571 pa ste rab byung bcu pa'i skyes bdag ces pa lcags lug lor gter chen shes rab 'od zer gyis phyag btab cing / de rjes rgyal sras karma kun bzang / mtsho rgyal sprul sku rig 'dzin phrin las rnam rgyal / ngag dbang padma kun bzang / ngag dbang blo bzang padma / padma chos 'byor rgya mtsho / bstan 'dzin chos kyi nyi ma sogs mkhas grub gnyis ldan gyi skyes chen brgyud mar byon pas grol thig gtso bor gyur pa'i snga 'gyur bka' gter gyi bstan pa shin tu dar zhing chos brgyud kyang bod yul tha gru kun la khyab /*

Then dPal ri became the seat of a succession of *sprul sku* of Padmasambhava's consort, Ye shes mtsho rgyal. This lineage was known as the "Phyong rgyas dPal ri *sprul sku*."⁴⁴ They were:

3. mTsho rgyal *sprul sku* Rig 'dzin phrin las nam rgyal : younger brother of Rig 'dzin ngag gi dbang po (1580-1630) founder of rDo rje brag monastery, and son of the union of Byang bdag bKra shis stobs rgyal (1550-1602) with a daughter of the noble family of 'Phyong rgyas.

The *Gu ru bkra shis chos 'byung* mentions that after him there were a certain interval between the succession of dPal ri's abbots. Then the lineage started again and continued without interruption with:

4. Ngag dbang kun bzang padma: contemporary of the Fifth Dalai Lama who made prayers after his passing away (see below);
5. Ngag dbang blo bzang padma: master of 'Jigs med gling pa;
6. Padma chos 'byor rgya mtsho: disciple of 'Jigs med gling pa;
7. bsTan 'dzin chos kyi nyi ma.

This list already shows us some privileged connections between dPal ri monastery, the 'Phyong rgyas family, rDo rje brag monastery, the Fifth Dalai Lama and 'Jigs med gling pa.

2.6 *The History of dPal ri Monastery by 'Jigs med gling pa (1729/30-1798)*

One of the sources generally mentioned concerning dPal ri monastery is 'Jigs med gling pa's *Story on the Glorious Mountain, Place of the Great Vehicle: Vajra Sound's Lute (dPal ri theg pa chen po'i gling gi gtam rdo rje sgra ma'i rgyud mngas)*.⁴⁵ This text of twelve folios is nevertheless more of devotional style than historical. There is for example no precise information about the abbatial succession (*gdan rabs*). In the first part,⁴⁶ the author relates the mythical and historical origins of Buddhism in Tibet according to well-established patterns.

⁴⁴ On a similar lineage of dPal ri *sprul sku* in Sikkim during the same period, see Ehrhard (2008). This monastery was also called dPal ri theg chen gling. The First dPal ri *sprul sku* of Sikkim, was Rig 'dzin lhun grub (d. 1650), the brother of Lha btsun Nam mkha' jigs med (1597-1653) who seems to have been also associated to 'Phyong rgyas dPal ri as we will show below according to the descriptions of 'Jigs med gling pa and Kah thog Si tu pañ chen.

⁴⁵ *'Jigs med gling pa'i gsung 'bum*, vol. 7, 381.6-404.2.

⁴⁶ *Id.*, 381.6-388.2.

Then the foundation of dPal ri monastery is announced by Padmasambhava's prophecies. The second part⁴⁷ describes the religious objects of the monastery as witnessed by 'Jigs med gling pa in his time. As for the prophecies of the foundation of dPal ri monastery, the first is:⁴⁸

In 'Phyong rgyas, my emanation will come to do the good.⁴⁹
 [People] will not know who he is, and he will teach the doctrine of immediacy.
 To the south of the Bang so dmar po in 'Phyi ba mdo,
 Will also be built a monastery with a *stūpa* of the descent from the gods [the gods' realm of Tuṣita].⁵⁰
 If, in the temple, one prays a statue
 Of myself as a special auspicious factor,
 Then the doctrine of the Victorious' lineage will be diffused from the south to the south!

Another prophecy is extracted from the *Questions and Answers of Precious Palm Tree (dKon mchog ta la'i zhu lan)*:⁵¹

In the south-east direction of the Bang so dmar po
 Will appear a statue of Padma in his aspect of subjugating demons (*bdud 'dul*)
 And one *stūpa* of the descent from the gods [the gods' realm of Tuṣita].
 If according to this auspicious factor a religious community is established,
 Then the doctrine of the Victorious One's lineage will be diffused from the south to the south!

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 388.2-401.3.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 385.3-4: 'phyong rgyas nang du nga sprul don byed 'ong: su yin mi shes cig car smra ba 'byung : 'phyi ba mdo'am bang so mar po'i lhor : lha babs mchod rten sde dgon 'cha' yang srid : rten 'brel gcig tu padma nga nyid kyi : sku rten gtsug lag gsol ba thebs pa na : rgyal brgyud bstan pa lho nas lho ru dar :

⁴⁹ Here 'Jigs med gling pa might designate himself as he does in his autobiography with a similar prophecy. See 'Jigs med gling pa'i rnam thar, 6: dpal o rgyan chos kyi rgyal pos // 'phyongs rgyas nang du nga sprul don byed 'ong // su yin mi shes cig car smra ba 'byung // 'phying dbar mdo'am bang so dmar po'i lhor // lha bab mchod rten dgon sde 'cha' yang srid //

⁵⁰ One of the eight traditional types of *stūpa*.

⁵¹ 'Jigs med gling pa'i gsung 'bum, vol. 7, 385.6-386.1: bang so dmar po'i shar ma lho yi phyogs // padma'i sku tshab bdud 'dul cha lugs dang // lha las babs pa'i mchod rten zhig kyang 'byung // dge 'dun sde tshugs rten 'brel legs 'grig na // rgyal brgyud bstan pa lho nas lho ru rgyas //

Then, a prophecy under the seal of secrecy (*gab rgya can*) gives the name of bSod nams:⁵²

The present son of the gods, source of glory
 Of the family of the rulers of Za hor, in the palace of the tombs [the
 tombs' valley],
 Having the name of bSod nams, faithful and intelligent,
 Is connected to me, Padma, through many aspirations.
 He is a fortunate with a good [*karma*] and practices continuously
 My treasures (*gter ma*) with single-pointed devotion.

'Jigs med gling pa identifies the prophesied man as Hor bSod nams dar rgyas who took as his spiritual master *gter ston* 'Gro dul gling pa Prajñāraśmi, who himself was conceived as an emanation of Pa gor Vairocana. He then states that the religious community was established with the support of the son of Hor bSod nams dar rgyas, Hor bSod nams stobs rgyal, and writes that the main statue of the temple was Padmasambhava subjugating demons (Padma bdud 'dul), in accordance with the prophecy given above. The monastery was endowed with the commentaries of the great Indian chariots (*rgya gar gyi shing rta chen po rnam*s) and it followed the scriptural tradition teaching the Great Perfection (*rDzogs pa chen po*) as the fruit of all teachings, i.e. Klong chen pa's exegesis.

'Jigs med gling pa deplores the destruction of the monastery done by the Dzungars in 1717-1720; his description concerns dPal ri monastery after his subsequent reconstruction. In this regard, the statue of Buddha Vairocana is the object of a marvelous story. During the Dzungar invasion, it is said to have been deplaced from dPal ri monastery to the fort of 'Phying ba stag rtse. At this moment, it reportedly became very heavy to carry on and its eyes cried out tears. After the tragedy, on the way back to the reconstructed monastery, it became this time very light to move. The interpretation given is that the founder, Prajñāraśmi, was the emanation of the imperial translator Pa gor Vairocana, himself considered as the manifestation of the great solar Buddha, Vairocana. 'Jigs med gling pa mentions that on each side of this statue were disposed the twenty-five volumes of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* that he had himself printed.

⁵² *Id.*, 386.2-3: *da lta'i lha sras dpal gyi 'byung gnas ni // za hor dpon brgyud pang so'i pho brang du // bsod nams ming ldan dad pa'i blo gros can // padma nga dang smon lam du mar 'brel // rtse gcig gus pas nga yi zab gter la // rgyun du spyod pas las ldan skal pa bzang //*

Among the objects offered to the monastery at the time of its foundation by the 'Phyong rgyas ruler was a copper statue (*zangs sku*) of Prajñāraśmi. In the main temple (*gtsug lha khang*), there was a mural painting (*gyang ris*) of the *vidhyādhara*s (*rig 'dzin*) associated to Prajñāraśmi's treasure lineage of the *Grol thig*. On the face of the door (*sgo gdong*) of the protectors' temple (*mgon khang*) there was a painting of rDo rje gshog rgod ma, protector of the *Grol thig*. In the main temple, another element of importance was a mural painting of the Fifth Dalai Lama, showing him in connection to the monastery as the descendant of the Za hor family and patron of the great *gter ston* Prajñāraśmi's lineage. There was also a mural painting of the ancestor (*yab mes*) of the Great Fifth, the 'Phyong rgyas ruler Hor bSod nams dar rgyas. Above the main temple was the *guru's* chapel (*bla ma lha khang*) made at the time of the funerals of Ngag dbang blo bzang padma, abbot of dPal ri and master of 'Jigs med gling pa.

The text ends⁵³ with a prophecy made by Lha btsun sGyu ma'i rnal 'byor⁵⁴ which follow those mentioned before, and his *vajra* song (*rdo rje'i glu*) praising dPal ri monastery. The colophon⁵⁵ tells us that 'Jigs med gling pa (*rdzogs chen pa mKhyen brtse'i 'od zer*) wrote the text in his neighboring monastery of Tshe ring ljongs, Padma 'od gsal theg mchog gling.⁵⁶

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 401.3-403.3.

⁵⁴ Possibly Lha btsun Nam mkha' 'jigs med (1597-1650), *gter ston* considered as the incarnation of Vimalamitra and Klong chen pa. Among his disciples was the third abbot of dPal ri, *sprul sku* Phrin las mnam rgyal. He ended up his life in the temple of Shel brag not far from dPal ri (*rdzogs chen chos 'byung*, 280-281). A *khatvāṅga* which had belonged to him was also worshipped in dPal ri according to Kaḥ thog Si tu (see below).

⁵⁵ *'Jigs med gling pa'i gsung 'bum*, vol. 7, 403.3-404.2.

⁵⁶ On Tshe ring ljongs, see *'Jigs med gling pa'i gsung 'bum*, vol. 7, *Pad ma 'od gsal theg mchog gling gi rten dang brten par bcas pa'i gtam nor bu'i do shal*, 404-460; *dBu gtsang gnas yig*, 202; *Lho kha sa khul*, 65-66; Dowman (1988: 202); Dorje (1999: 205). The reader might have noted the parallel between the two names of dPal ri theg chen gling and Padma 'od gsal theg mchog gling, both related to Padmasambhava as the "place" (*gling*) of his tradition or "vehicle" (*theg*) said either "great" (*chen*) or "supreme" (*mchog*).

2.7 *Kaḥ thog Si tu paṅ chen's (1880-1923/25) Pilgrimage in dPal ri Monastery*

Around one century after 'Jigs med gling pa, Kaḥ thog Si tu (1880-1923/25) made a pilgrimage in central Tibet and visited dPal ri monastery. In this text, we observe the profound influence that had 'Jigs med gling pa in dPal ri. According to the given description, the assembly hall ('*du khang*) had twelve pillars. It had life-size clay statues of the eight *vidhyādhara*s of India, realized by 'Jigs med gling pa, and a statue of the master from Za hor, Padmasambhava, larger than life. In the upper part in the back, to the left, was the temple of the protectors, Mahākāla and Srī Devī marked with the seal of the Omniscient.⁵⁷ In the inner space of the assembly hall, was a silver reliquary of 'Phreng po *gter chen rin po che*, Prajñāraśmi, the size of one span ('*dom gang*). In the base of this, behind a glass, was a stone statue of the Buddha which was a *gter ma*. There were similar silver reliquaries of two of the dPal ri mTsho rgyal *sprul sku*.⁵⁸

The *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* (25 vols), produced by 'Jigs med gling pa, was displayed with the ancient root-tantra of Guhyasamāja open as an auspicious sign. At the center was 'Jigs med gling pa's catalogue (*dkar chag*). The main object of the cult was a bronze statue of the Buddha Vairocana (possibly the same mentioned by 'Jigs med gling pa above). To the left was a statue representing 'Jigs med gling pa and twenty other similar statues in bronze. There were the *bKa' 'gyur* written in vermillion and made by *bla ma* Kun bzang 'od zer, the *bKa' 'gyur* of Nar thang made by 'Jigs med gling pa, and other books.⁵⁹ In the center of the main chapel were placed prominently the clay

⁵⁷ *dBus gtsang gnas yig*, 206: '*phyongs rgyas dpal rir / 'du khang ka ba bcu gnyis pa na / kun mkhyen 'jigs gling bzhengs pa rgya gar rig 'dzin brgyad mi tshad 'jim / slob dpon za hor ma mi tshad che / phug g.yas nas thog tu ma mgon lcam dral mgon khang kun mkhyen dam 'byar /*

⁵⁸ *Id*: '*du khang sbug na 'phreng po gter chen rin po che'i dngul gdung 'dom gang par bre nang gter byon thub dbang rdo sku shel sgor yod / dpal ri mtsho rgyal sprul sku sku phreng gnyis kyi dngul gdung 'dom gang re /*

⁵⁹ *Ibid*: *kun mkhyen 'jigs gling gis bzhengs dbu nas ldeb snga yan shog nag ser / dmar / ljang / gser / dngul 'dul mthing spang gis bsgyur te bris / dbu lha legs pa'i 'phros snag bris rdzab rnying rgyud pod nyi shu rtsa lnga spus dag yod pa'i pod gcig zhal phye skabs gsang [207] rnying rtsa rgyud dang 'phrad pas rten 'brel legs / dbus su kun mkhyen dkar chag ltar 'u shang rdo'i rten gtso rnam snang li ma mi tshad / g.yon du rig 'dzin 'jigs med gling pa nga 'dra ma shin tu byin chags / sku 'dra li ma sna tshogs nyi shu tsam / bka' 'gyur mtshal par bla ma kun bzang 'od zer bzhengs / kun mkhyen 'jigs gling gis bzhengs pa snar thang bka' 'gyur / yang yi ge sna tshogs /*

statues of Padmasambhava, *dākinīs* and gods of wealth (*nor lha*), made by Thugs mchog rdo rje⁶⁰ from sKyid grong and Jigs med gling pa, with the Indian *khaṭvāṅga* of Lha btsun Nam mkha' 'jigs med. The enumeration continues with classical elements of the ten bodhisattvas, three Buddhas, eight bodhisattvas, Hayagrīva and Acala.⁶¹

The author notes that at that time, even though the monastery had been reconstructed after the Dzungar invasion, the monastery was again in a state of despair, with only a hundred monks in residence. The great ceremonies were based on the *Guhyagarbhatantra* cycles, the developed path of the *Grol thig*, general assemblies of the *maṅḍala* rites of the *dGongs 'dus*, and those of 'Jigs med gling pa's tradition of the *Klong chen snying thig*, etc. Monks used to go for retreat to bSam yas mChims phu where, following the first revelation in dPal ri, 'Jigs med gling pa had the second revelation of the *Klong chen snying thig*.⁶² There were also three *thang ka* about the life-story of 'Jigs med gling pa and other sacred objects such as many compositions of 'Jigs med gling pa and the footprints of rDzogs chen Padma rig 'dzin (1625-1697). The author observed the remains of Prajñāraśmi's house and, in the village below the monastery, the remains of the house where 'Jigs med gling pa was born.⁶³

2.8 Contemporary History

Following the visit of Kaḥ thog Si tu, dPal ri continued to decline. According to the *rDzogs chen chos 'byung*,⁶⁴ in 1957, the Sixth Grub

⁶⁰ See Goodman (1992: 199-200) for this root-teacher of 'Jigs med gling pa.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*: *dri gtsang khang dbus skyid grong thugs mchog rdo rje dang rig 'dzin 'jigs gling gis bzhengs o rgyan mkha' 'gro nor lha'i 'jim sku thog mtho / lha btsun nam mkha' 'jigs med kyi kha ṭam rgya gar bskor ba / phyogs bcu'i byang sems mi tshad bcu / dus gsum sangs rgyas mi che tshad gsum / nye sras mi tshad brgyad / khro bo gnyis bcas /*

⁶² *Ibid.*: *dpal ri 'di sngar yod jun gar gyis gtor / phyis de mo tshang dang mnyam du gzhang bkyon phog pas da lta nyams / grwa brgya lhag yod / zla ba dang por bla ma gsang 'dus tshes bcu / de nas grol tig lam rgyas / dgongs 'dus dkyil chog tshogs chen 'dus pa 'jigs gling lugs sogs tshogs rgyu yod / mchims phur 'gro dgos /*

⁶³ *Ibid.*: *zhal thang kun mkhyen 'jigs gling gi rnam thar thang ka gos spus can gsum sogs dang / 'jigs gling bka' rtsom mang po yod pa'i mtshan brgyad bgres pa legs pa dgu thang sogs yod / 'og tu rdzogs chen padma rigs 'dzin zhabs rjes / phar kar phreng po gter chen gzims khang shul / de 'og grong / kun mkhyen 'jigs gling 'khrungs khyim shul sogs yod / mchod rten bgres po mthon po'i bum pa nang sangs rgyas sku yod pa'ang 'dug.*

⁶⁴ *rDzogs chen chos 'byung*, 829.

dbang rDzogs chen 'Jigs bral byang chub rdo rje came from Khams for a pilgrimage in dBus. He visited dPal ri monastery and conferred empowerments and teachings and grew concerned about the monastery's poor state. Having made a special request to the government of Lhasa, he obtained the donation of a monastic principality and made important renovations. However, after the Fourteenth Dalai Lama fled to India, the Sixth Grub dbang rDzogs chen could not achieve his plans for dPal ri. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the monastery was totally destroyed. Already weakened, the specific tradition of dPal ri connected to the treasure lineage of Prajñāraśmi seems to have disappeared apart from its inclusion in Kong sprul's *Rin chen gter mdzod*.⁶⁵



Image 3. The principal temple of dPal ri monastery
(May 2010, the author)

The monastery was rebuilt during the 1980's in its original place. A living transmission has been given again from Kham pa masters who restored the *Klong chen snying thig* to its place of origin. According to the *rDzogs chen chos 'byung*, the master Padma dkal bzang rin po che came in 1995 to give empowerments, teachings and a celebration (*dga' ston*). A religious scholar (*mkhan po*) bZung shrī seng chos sde chen

⁶⁵ For references see Deroche 2011b.

mo, was also active to revive practice and scholarship.⁶⁶ Keith Dowman has also given a contemporary description in his guide.⁶⁷ He rightly noted dPal ri's importance, adding that at some point bSam yas and mChims phu were under its control as well as the temple built on top of the Bang so dmar po: the Srong btsan lha khang.⁶⁸



Image 4. Main statue of Srong btsan sgam po in the Srong btsan lha khang, with his two wives, Bhṛkuṭī from Nepal (on the left) and Wengcheng (on the right) (May 2010, the author)

When I visited myself the monastery in May 2010, there were only four monks, two of them being detached in the Srong btsan lha khang, under the supervision of the government. dPal ri maintains very close relations with the nunnery of Tshe ring ljongs founded by 'Jigs med gling pa in the neighbour valley. At the time of my visit, two or three nuns from Tshe ring ljongs were residing in dPal ri for the practice of meditation. I was told by the senior monk that in 2007, Khams pa masters including the present A 'dzom rin po che came again to give the *Klong chen snying thig*'s transmission in both dPal ri and Tshe ring

⁶⁶ *rDzogs chen chos 'byung*, 830.

⁶⁷ Dowman (1988: 202-203).

⁶⁸ This temple was built in the 13th century by the master Nyang sman lung pa. See *dBus gtsang gnas yig*, 205-206; *Lho kha sa khul*, 67; Dowman (1988: 199-201); Dorje (1999: 204-205).

ljongs. Monks and nuns told me that they devote their time to the practice of this contemplative tradition. dPal ri monastery is also performing the rites for the local village dPal ri grong tsho (having around sixty houses; see Image 5), where 'Jigs med gling pa was born.



Image 5. The village of dPal ri grong tsho seen from the entrance of dPal ri monastery (May 2010, the author)

Currently at dPal ri monastery, the sole element that remains in connection to his founder, Prajñāraśmi, is the daily recitation of his *Aspiration of the sūtras and mantras (mDo sngags smon lam)*. It is formed by two texts: the first on the *sūtras* written in dPal ri,⁶⁹ the second on the *mantras* written in rDo rje brag.⁷⁰ These texts are not found in the present state of Prajñāraśmi's collected works.⁷¹ In my forthcoming book, based on my doctoral dissertation,⁷² I have edited and translated these texts on the basis of the text photographed in dPal ri monastery and with reference to the commented versions found in 'Jigs med gling pa's collected works⁷³ and mKhyen brtse's.⁷⁴ These

⁶⁹ The title is *Byang chub spyod pa'i smon lam phan bde'i ljon pa*.

⁷⁰ The title is *gSang ba sngags kyi smon lam 'dod 'jo'i dga' ston*.

⁷¹ *Shes rab 'od zer gyi gsung 'bum*.

⁷² Deroche (2011a).

⁷³ *mDo sngags smon lam gyi 'grel pa*, in *'Jigs med gling pa'i gsung 'bum*, vol. 5, 541-620.

works constitute an inspiring rNying ma doxography written according to the genre of “aspiration” (*praṇidhana*, *smon lam*), from the initial refuge in the Three Jewels to the ultimate realization of the Great Perfection.

The contemporary rNying ma pa scholar Nyi lcang rin po che (b. 1932), an adept of the *Klong chen snying thig* and founder of a new “dPal ri theg mchog gling” monastery in Kalimpong, kindly told me⁷⁵ the ingenious prayer he wrote. It expresses the continuity of the rNying ma tradition through the “Three Lights” (*'od zer gsum*), [1] Klong chen pa, [2] Prajñāraśmi, and [3] 'Jigs med gling pa, while revealing the name of dPal ri theg mchog gling:

*Kun tu bzang po [1] Dri med 'od zer DPAL //
Ratna 'i thugs sras [2] Shes rab 'od zer RI //
[3] mKhyen rtse 'od zer THEG MCHOOG GLING pa yi//
bstan pa dar zhing yun ring gnas gyur cig*

May develop and perdure the teaching of the Place of the Supreme Vehicle

[Coming from] the Glorious Samantabhadra [1] “Immaculate Light” (Dri med 'od zer =Klong chen pa),

Mountain of [2] “Light of Wisdom” (Shes rab 'od zer=Prajñāraśmi), spiritual son of Ratna ['Bri gung Rin chen phun tshogs],

And [3] “Light of Knowledge” (mKhyen brtse 'od zer='Jigs med gling pa).

3. THE ROLE OF DPAL RI MONASTERY IN THE SUCCESSIVE REVIVALS OF THE RNYING MA SCHOOL (17TH-19TH C.)

3.1 *From the Ancient Tibetan Empire to the Fifth Dalai Lama's Regime: the “Renaissance” of the rNying ma School (17th c.)*

In his study of the treasure tradition's apotheosis of Srong btsan sgam po as Avalokiteśvara in the *Maṇi bka' bum* cycle and the emergence of the figure of Padmasambhava, Matthew T. Kapstein has shown the importance of the “imaginal persistence of the ancient Tibetan empire” which the Fifth Dalai Lama was to absorb ingenuously:

⁷⁴ *mKhyen brtse 'i gsung 'bum*, vol. 6, *Byang chub spyod pa 'i smon lam phan bde 'i ljon pa 'i zin bris*, 375-453; vol. 6, *gSang ba sngags kyi smon lam 'dod 'jo 'i dga' ston gyi 'grel bshad bdud rtsi 'i klung chen*, 455-525.

⁷⁵ Personal communication, Kyoto, November 2010.

The phenomenon that we see at work here drew its strength in large measure from the persisting presence of the old empire and from the continuing felt allegiance to it, rather than to the new and strictly local hegemony who rarely commanded much loyalty outside of their own narrow domains. Once more, it was the Fifth Dalai Lama who clearly understood this, and who systematically deployed the authority of his own regime.⁷⁶

In addition to his high status in the hierarchy of the dGe lugs order, the exceptional connection that the Fifth Dalai Lama had with the ancient empire formed a major source for his politico-religious reunification of Tibet. The “imaginal persistence of the empire” analyzed by Kapstein in connection to the treasure visionary revelations, was given in ’Phyong rgyas, a very sensible basis as the *physical persistence of the imperial tombs*. The fact of his birth in the fort of ’Phyong rgyas facing the “Valley of the Emperors” gave the Great Fifth a unique sense of predestination. Born in front of the “Red Tomb” (Bang so dmar po), he was to be installed in the palace of the Potala, the “Red Mountain” (dMar po ri) in Lhasa, and piously assimilated to Srong btsan sgam po, through the reincarnation chain of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. The works of his ’Phyong rgyas ancestors formed the precedent for his legitimizing strategy and patronage of the rNying ma school. I will give several illustrations of the connection between dPal ri monastery’s tradition and the Great Fifth.

In the Fifth Dalai Lama’s record of received teachings (*gsan yig*) we find a large section on Prajñāraśmi and the *Grol thig*.⁷⁷ It includes different prophecies announcing Prajñāraśmi,⁷⁸ as well as the teachings and rites of the *Grol thig*. Concerning the corresponding empowerments (*abhiṣeka*, *dbang skur*) that the Great Fifth received, he wrote:

[From] the primordial Lord Samantabhadra in union with his consort, [the esoteric transmission was passed down along the following transmission]: the enjoyment body Vajrasattva, the emanation body dGa’ rab rdo rje, the second Buddha from Oḍḍiyāna [Padmasambhava], his victorious consort Ye shes ’tsho⁷⁹ rgyal, the great translator

⁷⁶ Kapstein (2000: 162).

⁷⁷ *Thob yig gangga’i chu rgyun*, 244.6-261.6. Concerning the Fifth Dalai Lama’s *gsan yig* and the position of Prajñāraśmi’s teachings in the text, see Ehrhard (2012: 95).

⁷⁸ *Id.*, 244.6-246.3.

⁷⁹ The Fifth Dalai Lama uses *’tsho* instead of *mtsho*, “lake” or “ocean,” which is more usual for mTsho rgyal, the “Queen of the Lake.” Or to make a reference to the Arthurian legend, we could say the “Lady of the Lake.”

Vairocana, [and in a direct transmission through treasure-revelation] the treasure-revealer Shes rab 'od zer [Prajñāraśmi], [his son] Karma rgyal sras Kun bzang, thugs sras dKon cog chos dbang grags pa, Zur thams cad mkhyen pa Chos dbyings rang grol. The latter [conferred the transmission upon] me, the monk of Za hor [the Fifth Dalai Lama].⁸⁰

The connection between Zur and the Great Fifth Dalai Lama played also an important role for the practice of magical rituals in the midst of the civil wars between the Dalai Lama's camp in dBus against the prince of gTsang.⁸¹ The Fifth Dalai Lama's secret autobiography studied by Samten G. Karmay also shows us how the rNying ma rituals formed a framework for the Great Fifth's rich visionary life and became an important part of his State rituals. While these rituals were activating the symbols of Tibetan power, authority and legitimacy, multiform figures of Srong bstan sgam po, Avalokiteśvara and Padmasambhava inhabited the imaginal world of the Great Fifth. Samten G. Karmay has given interesting lists of the *gter ma* objects used in these ceremonies performed in the dGa' ldan pho brang.⁸² In particular, I will note the presence of objects revealed by Prajñāraśmi: images of Rigs 'dus Padmaguru and Rigs 'dus brda' dbang lnga pa. Among these fascinating objects belonging to both categories of revelation and archeology, myth and history, we find also a statue of Vajradhara made from a *ficus religiosa* (*byang chub shing*) and discovered by Nyang ral Nyi ma 'od zer from an imperial tomb in 'Phyong rgyas.

The Fifth Dalai Lama literally "made" Tibetan history in both senses of the term: just after he obtained power over Tibet in 1642 through the support of Gushri Khan, he wrote a history of Tibet in 1643 at the request of the Mongol ruler. In this work encapsulating the meaning of Tibetan history and destiny, the mirror of *gter ma* prophecies plays again an important role. I will just refer to a prophecy from Prajñāraśmi which mentions a "sudden king" (*glo bur rgyal po*) who was supposed to rule over the whole country.⁸³ The Fifth Dalai

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 256.1-3: *thog ma'i mgon po kun bzang yab yum / longs sku rdo rje sems dpa' / sprul sku dga' rab rdo rje / o rgyan sangs rgyas gnyis pa / rgyal yum ya [ye] shes 'tsho rgyal / lo chen bai ro tsa na / gter ston shes rab 'od zer / karma rgyal sras kun bzang / thugs sras dkon cog chos dbang grags pa / zur thams cad mkhyen pa chos dbyings rang grol / des bdag za hor bande la'o //*

⁸¹ Dudjom Rinpoché (1991: 679-683).

⁸² Karmay (1988: 39, 42, 62). See also Karmay (2005).

⁸³ *Op. cit.*, 189: *'phreng mgo gter ston shes rab 'od zer gyi thugs rje chen po padma'i dbang phyug gi lung bstan du / sgra snyan 'dra ba'i gnas sgo ru: jig rten dbang phyug sprul pa nyid : ar tha'i ming 'dzin byung gyur na : lho byang*

Lama reads it in connection to 'Brug pa Padma dkar po, but the prophecy is said to have not been fulfilled. Then follow other *gter ston*'s prophecies which enable the Great Fifth, himself among the various competing forces, to interpret the critical moment when Tibet entered into a new era: the reign of the Dalai Lamas.⁸⁴

In his autobiography, the Fifth Dalai Lama makes an interesting reference to the prayers he made for the reincarnation of dPal ri *sprul sku* Ngag dbang pad ma:

There were many practices of dedication [of merits] as support [for a good rebirth] after the passing away of dPal ri *sprul sku* Ngag dbang pad ma. I fully practiced these dedications and wishes which dispels obstacles on the path. According to the *Mirror illuminating completely the prophecies of the new inner treasures, the heart essence of the vidhyādhara*s:

The emanation body of 'Tsho rgyal, with the name of rGyal or Pad ma,

Will appear in the direction of the Red Tomb and through its association

All obstacles and conflicts will be pacified and the happiness of sentient beings will increase.

If we consider this prophecy of the emanation body of the Lady of mKhar chen [Ye shes 'tsho rgyal], 'Bri gung Rin chen phun tshogs [master of Prajñāraśmi] was the source of the good fortune for all people in this place of religious practice, benefiting each person in conformity with the doctrine and sentient beings. His root guru was Rig 'dzin Legs ldan bdud 'joms. I have in particular a great faith for the holder of his lineage, the *Dharma* king with the name of "Manga" ["bKra shis" stobs rgyal] and his son [Rig 'dzin ngag gi dbang po]. But the false treasure-discoverers greedy for sources of incomes, the holders of the lineages of sNang rtse, Gong [ra lo tsā ba] Sog [zlog pa rgyal mtshan],⁸⁵ whoever they might be, it is true to say that demons had entered their minds [when they made such critics directed to us]. Nevertheless from our point of view, we consider the disciples of Zhabs drung ma [Ye shes 'tsho rgyal] and their lineage practitioners as antidotes in order not to fall into erroneous thoughts. This is why,

glo bur rgyal po byed : sgrub pa snying po'i bstan pa 'dzugs : mi lo lnga bcur bde la 'god : skye ba'i rten 'brel ma 'grig na : yul de rang 'pho gud pa dang : mtha' ma rlung gis 'khyer du nye : Translation is given in Ahmad (1995: 191).

⁸⁴ The competing use of *gter ma* prophecies by different factions struggling for hegemony over Tibet during this critical period of the civil wars during dBus and gTsang was also well shown by Akester (2001).

⁸⁵ Concerning the Fifth Dalai Lama and his relation to the *sNang sog gong gsum* see Khenpo Lhatsering (2006). I am indebted to Franz-Karl Ehrhard for this reference.

following the request from the people of [dPal ri monastery], I composed a prayer for the quick coming of [the abbey's] rebirth [as an emanation body (*sprul sku*)].⁸⁶

This passage is also instructive concerning the favor and disfavor given by the Fifth Dalai Lama to the different rNying ma familial clans and religious lineages. In connection with the 'Phyong rgyas family and rDo rje brag lineage, dPal ri monastery was part of the rNying ma monasteries sponsored by the Great Fifth's regime.

3.2 *The Child of dPal ri Monastery: 'Jigs med gling pa and the Revelation of the Klong chen snying thig (18th c.)*

The great 'Jigs med gling pa was born when the rNying ma school was just rising from the ashes, a decade after the persecutions it endured during the Dzungar invasions. 'Jigs med gling pa's biographies, which have been studied by Steven Goodman (1992), Janet Gyatso (1998) and Sam van Schaik (2004), report that he was born in the village below dPal ri monastery, trained in dPal ri monastery and did there his first retreat when he had the first revelation of the *Klong chen snying thig*.

⁸⁶ I would like to thank very much Professor Samten T. Karmay for kindly informing me about this passage and reading it together in Kyoto University during winter 2009-2010. *Du kū la*, vol. 3, 228: *dpal ri sprul sku ngag dbang pad ma gshegs pa'i bsngo rten rgya cher 'dug pa sa lam gyi bar gcod sel ba'i bsngo smon gyi rgyas 'debs yang dag pa bgyis shing / khong pa gter gsar rigs 'dzin thugs thig gi lung bstan rab gsal me long du /*

'tsho rgyal sprul pa rgyal lam pad ma'i ming :
bang so'i phyogs 'byung 'di dang phrad pa na :
mi mthun bar gcod kun zhi 'gro don rgyas :
zhes mkhar chen bza'i sprul par lung gis zin pa ltar tshul mthun zhig mdzad na bstan 'gror phan slebs che rung rang re sgrub sde pa'i chos skal 'byung sa 'bri gung rin chen phun tshogs yin / de'i rtsa bla rigs 'dzin legs ldan bdud 'joms / de'i brgyud 'dzin chos rgyal ma 'ga'i mtshan can yab sras la lhag par mos gus che dgos rgyur ga log gter brdzus mkhan snang rtse brgyud 'dzin gong sog la mdzad pa thugs rgyud la 'gong po phebs pa las 'os ci mchis / 'on kyang rang ngos nas zhabs drung ma'i phyag rjes dang / chos pa brgyud la bsams log sems ye ma shor ba'i gnyen po bsten / spyi so'i ngor sku skye myur 'byon gyi smon lam brtsams /



Image 6. Commemorative edifice of 'Jigs med gling pa's birthplace.
In the background, dPal ri monastery (May 2010, the author)

In his catalogue of teachings received (*thob yig*)⁸⁷ we see that he received the transmission of the seventeenth tantras through a lineage passing through Prajñāraśmi.⁸⁸ Similar connection is found for the *gter ma* transmission.⁸⁹ Having trained in the dPal ri monastery as an ordinary monk, he did two three-year retreats, the first in dPal ri monastery and then in bSam yas mChims phu. During his first retreat (1756-1759) in a hermitage of dPal ri called Śrī Parvata'i gling,⁹⁰ he focused on the creation and perfection of the *Grol thig*.⁹¹ 'Jigs med gling pa's retreat manual confirms his familiarity with the *Grol thig*'s

⁸⁷ The *Thob yig nyi zla'i rna cha* which has been entirely translated by van Schaik (2000).

⁸⁸ *Thob yig nyi zla'i rna cha*, 859.1-2.

⁸⁹ *Op. cit.*, 871.6-872.3.

⁹⁰ *'Jigs med gling pa'i rnam thar*, 18.

⁹¹ *gTer ston brgya rtsa'i rnam thar*, 249 : *rang dgon dpal gyi ri'i sgom khang thig le nyag gcig tu lo gsum gyi bcad rgya dam bca' brtan pos / gtso bor gter chen chos kyi rgyal po 'gro 'dul gling pa'i zab gter rmad du byung ba grol tig dgongs pa rang grol ring brgyud dang nyer brgyud kyi tshul du bka' babs pa ltar de'i bskyed rdzogs kho na thugs nyams su bzhes pas drod rtags khyad par can brnyes /*

practices⁹² as well as other important works he wrote on this tradition.⁹³ During this first retreat, 'Jigs med gling pa experienced a visionary journey to the *stūpa* of Bauddha (Bodnāth) in Kathmandu and received the first *gter ma* of the *Klong chen snying thig*, which he kept secret for seven years. In his second retreat (1759-1762) in bSam yas mChims phu, he had three times the vision of Klong chen pa in his “body of gnosis” (*ye shes kyi sku*). These apparitions completed the revelation of the *Klong chen snying thig*.

As it is well established, 'Jigs med gling pa's tradition spread to Eastern Tibet, through the patronage of the Queen of sDe dge and his main disciple rDo ba grub chen 'Jigs med phrin las 'od zer (1745-1821). This tradition was also further continued in the activities of the so-called *ris med* movement, its main inspirator, 'Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dbang po (1820-1892) being considered as the reincarnation of 'Jigs med gling pa.

3.3 From the 'Phyong rgyas Epistles to the Ris med Movement (19th c.)

The *ris med* or “impartial” movement, seen in his aspects of religious pluralism in general, and revival of the rNying ma tradition in particular, seems to have been deeply connected to the kingdom of sDe dge with its pluralist politico-religious alliances in which four of the six rNying ma mother-monasteries (Kaḥ thog, rDzogs chen, Zhe chen and dPal yul) played an important role.

I understand here the *ris med* movement as an activity of trans-sectarian collection, compilation and transmission of Tibetan Buddhist lineages and teachings by the spiritual trio of the visionary and pilgrim 'Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dbang po (1820-1892), the encyclopedist and hermit 'Jam mgon Kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas (1813-1899) and treasure-revealer mChog 'gyur bDe chen gling pa (1829-1870). In particular, the realization of the *Rin chen gter mdzod* by Kong sprul, represents an important contribution of the *ris med* movement to the late revival and transmission of the rNying ma school, even though this was not done without critics within the tradition itself.

Following the works of E. Gene Smith (1970, 2001) and Matthew T. Kapstein (1996, 2007), I have discussed elsewhere that the paradigm of the *ris med* movement's approach lied very much in the classification of the “Eight Great Chariots of the Lineages of Attainment” (*sgrub*

⁹² *Ri chos zhal gdams ngo mtshar rgya mtsho* in 'Jigs med gling pa'i gsung 'bum, vol. 12, 517.5-518.2.

⁹³ See Deroche (2011b) for full references.

brgyud shing rta chen po brgyad), the eight lineages that conveyed esoteric Buddhism from India to Tibet and are at the origin of the Tibetan Buddhist established schools (*chos lugs*). This model made famous by mKhyen brtse and Kong sprul originated in fact from epistles given to the 'Phyong rgyas court by dPal ri monastery's founder, Prajñāraśmi.⁹⁴ It seems highly plausible that this model, as part of dPal ri monastery's tradition, was conveyed through 'Jigs med gling pa's lineage to the masters of the *ris med* movement who used it to its the fullest extent by compiling the eight lineages in Kong sprul's *gDams ngag mdzod*, the *ris med* canon *par excellence*.

CONCLUSION: A VIEW AT THE HISTORY OF THE RNYING MA SCHOOL FROM ITS FORGOTTEN MONASTERY

The following table recapitulates the perspectives that we have gained by recalling back the tradition's memory about dPal ri monastery. By standing from the 'Phyong rgyas valley, we can observe a sense of continuity in the course of the history and revivals of the rNying ma school from the 16th century to the 19th century, with a reverbering echo to its very antiquity, the old times of the Tibetan *imperium*. The progressive oblivion of dPal ri monastery is due to a combination of factors: first its eclipse by rDo rje brag and sMin grol gling monasteries (17th c.); then, after the destructions made by the Dzungars, the decisive influence of 'Jigs med gling pa and its new revelation (18th c.); and ultimately, the greater dynamism of rNying ma institutions in Khams (notably during the 19th c.). But what we have learned is that dPal ri monastery formed either a historical antecedent or a direct source for all these later developments.

Finally, I would like to underline the importance of the connection between dPal ri monastery and rDo rje brag monastery which remains to be explored further. rDo rje brag's family lineage appears to have been deeply related to Prajñāraśmi, to the noble family of 'Phyong rgyas, to the Fifth Dalai Lama and to the succession of the mTsho rgyal sprul sku in dPal ri monastery. In the same vein, more extensive research on the role and respective functions of *rDo sMin dPal gsum*

⁹⁴ These two epistles are (1) the *Ambrosia of Study and Reflection* (*Thos bsam 'chi med kyi bdud rtsi*), on the "Ten Great Pillars of Exegesis" (*bshad ka chen bcu*) (in *Shes rab 'od zer gyi gsung 'bum*, 231-242), and (2) the *Ambrosia of Meditation* (*sGom pa 'chi med kyi bdud rtsi*) on the "Eight Great Lineages of Attainment" (*sgrub brgyud chen po brgyad*) (*op. cit.*, 243-266). On this topic, see Deroche (2009).

under the Fifth Dalai Lama would bring new light in order to discuss what I have called here for heuristic purpose, the “rNying ma pa Renaissance.”

Tibetan Empire (7 th -9 th c.)	- Establishment of Buddhism - <i>mkan slob chos gsum</i> (8th c.)	Ancient imperial seat and burial site in 'Phyong rgyas: the “Valley of the Emperors”
Transmission of the rNying ma School: <i>bka' ma</i> and <i>gter ma</i>		
Successive Revivals of the rNying ma School in Later History		
16th c.	dPal ri monastery	Supported by the 'Phyong rgyas family
17th c.	“rNying ma pa Renaissance” <i>rDor sMin dPal gsum</i> : triad of rNying ma monasteries in central Tibet as well as <i>Kaḥ dPal rDzogs gsum</i> in Khams Foundation of Zhe chen in Khams	Supported by the Fifth Dalai Lama - descendant of the 'Phyong rgyas family - who reunified Tibet under his politico-religious rule - assimilated to Srong btsan sgam po and Avalokiteśvara - reactivated imperial symbols by the mediation of <i>gter ma</i>
18th c.	Revelations of 'Jigs med gling pa	- 'Jigs med gling pa: born, trained and first revelation in dPal ri monastery - New hermitage of Tshe ring ljongs close to dPal ri
19th c.	<i>mKhyen Kong mChog sde gsum</i> & the <i>ris med</i> movement in Khams	- Continuation of 'Jigs med gling pa's tradition - Major role of rNying ma monasteries in sDe dge kingdom - Major activity of <i>gter ma</i> revelation, collection and compilation (<i>Rin chen gter mdzod</i>) - Use of the model of the “Eight Lineages of Attainment,” found in Prajñāraśmi's epistles to the 'Phyong rgyas ruler, as paradigm of the <i>ris med</i> approach & the <i>gDams ngag mdzod</i>

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