

# Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies



Issue 3 — December 2007

ISSN 1550-6363

An online journal published by the Tibetan and Himalayan Digital Library (THDL)

[www.jiats.org](http://www.jiats.org)

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## Contents

### Articles

- A Look at the Diversity of the Gzhan stong Tradition (24 pages)  
– Anne Burchardi
- Beyond Anonymity: Paleographic Analyses of the Dunhuang Manuscripts (23 pages)  
– Jacob Dalton
- “Emperor” Mu rug btsan and the *'Phang thang ma Catalogue* (25 pages)  
– Brandon Dotson
- An Early Seventeenth-Century Tibeto-Mongolian Ceremonial Staff (24 pages)  
– Johan Elverskog
- The Importance of the Underworlds: Asuras’ Caves in Buddhism, and Some Other Themes in Early Buddhist Tantras Reminiscent of the Later Padmasambhava Legends (31 pages)  
– Robert Mayer
- Re-Assessing the Supine Demoness: Royal Buddhist Geomancy in the Srong btsan sgam po Mythology (47 pages)  
– Martin A. Mills
- Modernity, Power, and the Reconstruction of Dance in Post-1950s Tibet (42 pages)  
– Anna Morcom

### Book Reviews

- Review of *Thundering Falcon: An Inquiry into the History and Cult of Khra 'brug, Tibet's First Buddhist Temple*, by Per K. Sørensen et al (5 pages)  
– Bryan Cuevas
- Review of *Tibetan Songs of Realization: Echoes from a Seventeenth-Century Scholar and Siddha in Amdo*, by Victoria Sujata (6 pages)  
– Luran Hartley
- Review of *Holy Madness: Portraits of Tantric Siddhas*, ed. Rob Linrothe and Review of *The Flying Mystics of Tibetan Buddhism*, by Glenn H. Mullin (8 pages)  
– Serinity Young

# Re-Assessing the Supine Demoness: Royal Buddhist Geomancy in the Srong btsan sgam po Mythology

Martin A. Mills  
University of Aberdeen

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**Abstract:** *The myth of the Chinese princess Kong jo's geomantic divination of Tibet prior to the founding of the Central Temple of Lhasa (lha sa gtsug lag khang) – and in particular the striking image of the land of Tibet as a “supine demoness” – has been the object of considerable academic comment. Generally, it has been read as a metaphor either of monastic Buddhism's misogynist tendencies, or of its superposition over putative religious precursors. In this article, the difficulties that attend these interpretations of the supine demoness image are assessed when examined within the context of the princess's wider divination, as presented in Tibetan mythic histories such as the Ma ni bka' 'bum, The Clear Mirror of Royal Genealogy, and the Pillar Testament (bka' chems ka khol ma), and in particular when it is viewed within the context of the Lha sa Valley's actual topographic structure. In light of these, it is proposed that both the supine demoness image and the other elements of Kong jo's divination should be understood as it has always been presented by Tibetan sources – as part of an established tradition of Chinese geomancy, a tradition which has itself been reorganized as a medium for Buddhist themes of liberation.*

## Introduction

The legendary account of Emperor Srong btsan sgam po's founding of the Central Temple (*gtsug lag khang*) in Lha sa in the seventh century is perhaps one of the most famous of all Tibetan myths. Certainly, both his and the temple's focal place within indigenous Tibetan histories makes a clear analysis of this legend crucial

to understanding Tibetan conceptions of political and religious identity, and of legitimate Buddhist governance.<sup>1</sup>

This hagiographic rendition of the foundation of the Central Temple of Lhasa – Srong btsan sgam po's primary ritual and regal act – is found in a variety of Tibetan texts emerging between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, most famously the *Ma ni bka' 'bum*<sup>2</sup> and the *Pillar Testament* (*bka' chems ka khol ma*). These were generally *gter ma*, or “hidden treasure texts” – revealed during this period by visionary *yogins* who traced their own spiritual genealogy back to the time of the First Diffusion of Buddhism to Tibet, when the texts were said to have been initially hidden by the likes of Srong btsan sgam po, Khri srong lde'u btsan, and his teacher and exorcist Gu ru rin po che (Padmasambhava). Out of these initial hidden treasure texts emerged later compilations such as *The Clear Mirror of Royal Genealogy* (*rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long*; henceforth *The Clear Mirror*) by the Sa skya hierarch Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1312-75).<sup>3</sup> By the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617-82), Bsod nams rgyal mtshan's text in particular was one of the most influential of state histories.

This legendary corpus presents a reasonably consistent picture. Under its first emperor, Srong btsan sgam po, the political sovereignty of the Yar lung dynasty expanded the borders of its power outwards from Central Tibet, incorporating new provinces through military conquest and diplomatic marriage, until its armies pounded upon the gates of imperial China and the Buddhist kingship of Nepal. Insisting upon royal marriage as a means to augment his authority within Asia, the Tibetan emperor demanded – and was eventually (if reluctantly) given – brides from the Chinese and Nepalese courts, both of whom brought Buddhist statues with them as part of their dowries. His first consort, the Nepalese princess Khri btsun, prompted the emperor to build a royal temple at Lha sa, his regular nomadic feeding grounds. However, supernatural obstacles from the local spirits of Tibet conspired to destroy the temple, destroying in the night what was built in the day. In order to subdue them, Srong btsan sgam po sought geomantic instruction from the Chinese princess Weng chen kong jo, who divined that the land of Tibet was like a she-demon lying on her back, filled with inauspicious elements. All of these required ritual suppression by subsidiary temples, *mchod rtens*,<sup>4</sup> and other ritual

<sup>1</sup> See Georges Dreyfus, “Proto-nationalism in Tibet,” in *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Fagernes 1992*, ed. Per Kvaerne, vol. 1 (Oslo: Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994), 205-18.

<sup>2</sup> See Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp, “Tibetan Historiography,” in *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*, ed. José Cabezon and Roger Jackson (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1996), 39-56. See also Janet Gyatso, “Drawn from the Tibetan Treasury: The *gTer ma* Literature,” in *Tibetan Literature*, 147-69.

<sup>3</sup> See Per K. Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography: The Mirror Illuminating the Royal Genealogies: An Annotated Translation of the XIVth Century Chronicle rGyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994). For a less scholarly but more accessible treatment, see McComas Taylor and Lama Choedak Yuthok, trans., *The Clear Mirror: A Traditional Account of Tibet's Golden Age* (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1996).

<sup>4</sup> A *mchod rten* (San. *stūpa*) is a monumental reliquary – often containing the remains of dead *bla mas*, old texts, or other relics – and is one of the most characteristic pieces of religious architecture in the Buddhist Himalaya.

forms that had to subjugate the malevolent forms of the landscape and “pin down” the limbs of the demoness before the emperor’s temple could be completed. Following the Chinese princess’s advice, Srong btsan sgam po managed to bind down the land of Tibet and complete the temple, built around a statue of his tutelary deity, Avalokiteśvara. The temple acted as the central state edifice (*gtsug lag khang*) for the emperor’s reign. In later years it became the home of the *Jo bo* statue of Śākyamuni that had been brought from China by Kong jo, which became the basis of the temple’s most common soubriquet outside Tibet, the Jo khang or “House of the Lord.”

### *Interpreting the Myth*

The myth, and the texts from which it derives, have received a very considerable quantity of academic attention, as much for the issue of their historical veracity (or lack thereof) as for their compelling mytho-poetic vision of the early Tibetan emperor’s battle to bring the land of Tibet under Buddhist sovereignty.<sup>5</sup> As a depiction of religious conversion, much academic attention has been focused on how the supine demoness image should be interpreted.<sup>6</sup> By and large, the tale’s dramatic imagery of vertical suppression has invited a series of analyses that have emphasized its role as a metaphor for wider truths about Tibetan religion and culture, primarily ones that emphasize social stratification and violence. Thus, the story has been read as covertly presenting either a misogynist view of Tibetan society,<sup>7</sup> a fundamentally phallic understanding of kingly power<sup>8</sup> or, in a theory more specifically contextualized to Tibetan understandings of history, a mythic enactment of Buddhism’s subjugation of Tibet’s pre-existing religious traditions.<sup>9</sup> Since these are increasingly influential interpretations within western academia – but at the same time would rarely be admitted to within the Tibetan tradition itself – they require some careful critical discussion.

Psychoanalytic interpretations of the Central Temple of Lhasa founding myth tend to emphasize the implicit sexual dimensions of the story, in particular the *vertical* pinning of the demoness. As Janet Gyatso comments:

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<sup>5</sup> See Matthew Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism: Conversion, Contestation and Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>6</sup> See Michael Aris, *Bhutan* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1980); Keith Dowman, *The Sacred Life of Tibet* (London: HarperCollins, 1997); Janet Gyatso, “Down With the Demoness: Reflections on a Feminine Ground in Tibet,” in *Feminine Ground: Essays on Women and Tibet*, ed. Janice D. Willis, 33-51 (Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion, 1987) and in Alex McKay, ed., *The History of Tibet*, vol. 1 (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003); Ana Marko, “Civilising Woman the Demon: A Tibetan Myth of State,” in *The History of Tibet*, ed. Alex McKay, vol. 1 (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), previously published in *Social Analysis* 29 (1990): 6-18; Robert Miller, ““The Supine Demoness” (Srin mo) and the Consolidation of Empire,” *Tibet Journal* 23, no. 3 (1998): 3-22; and Robert Paul, *The Tibetan Symbolic World* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1982).

<sup>7</sup> See Marko, “Civilising Woman.”

<sup>8</sup> See Paul, *Tibetan Symbolic World*.

<sup>9</sup> See Gyatso, “Down With The Demoness.”

Part and parcel of the relationship between the demoness land and the architectural structures upon her seem to be certain sexual innuendoes. If the *srin mo* is a Mother Earth, then the architectural structures that hold her down must be seen as overtly masculine. At one point in the *srin mo* myth this is quite explicit: one of the pinning structures is a *śiva līṅga*, to be set on the “earth-enemy” (*sa dgra*) in the east, a place which is “like the *srin mo*’s pubic hair.” Vertical buildings, imposing structures ... erections; in contrast, the feminine earth is associated with fertility, nurturing, receptivity.<sup>10</sup>

By contrast, feminist interpretations of the demoness myth concentrate primarily on an assumed equation between the symbol of the demoness on the one hand and the institutional status of women (*vis-à-vis* a predominantly celibate male-dominated Buddhist tradition) on the other. Thus, for Ana Marko, the violence against women implicit within the myth is at the same time a metaphor for the genesis of the patriarchal Buddhist state within which Tibetan women must subsist:

A vast number of Buddhist myths are contained in hagiography, or sacred history stored in textual form, the authoritative property of the monastery. Since monasteries are predominantly male institutions they act to reproduce culturally constituted patriarchal power where categories of gender-based experience are contained in myth. Violence plays a specific role in recreating a mythic notion of wholeness through the body of woman the demon as fragmented territory, a site for the recreation of wholeness. The body of woman the demon becomes the mythic body of the state.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, culturalist arguments assert the myth’s metaphorical rendition of social change, a retrospective evocation of the relationship between two religious cultures – the Buddhist and the pre-Buddhist – during the time of the First Diffusion. Here, the fundamental argument is that the suppressed demoness in some sense represents the autochthonous religion of Tibet. Thus, for Keith Dowman, the supine demoness represents one of a variety of “earth mother” symbols that

reveal a primeval strata of religion, a prehistoric era of matriarchy, or, at least, a time when the female psyche, the primordial collective anima of the people, was the predominant religious focus ... The supine demoness, gigantic in size, is herself vast in lust and bestial desire. But as order is imposed upon the chaotic, instinctive and intuitive feminine realm of the psyche by the disciplined intelligence of the masculine Buddhist will, so her desire is tamed.<sup>12</sup>

By presenting this pre-existent tradition as “subjugated,” the Buddhist tradition is in turn seen as “stealing its thunder” and borrowing its very legitimacy in order to augment its own. As Gyatso comments:

<sup>10</sup> Gyatso, “Down With The Demoness,” 43.

<sup>11</sup> Marko, “Civilising Woman,” 6.

<sup>12</sup> Dowman, *Sacred Life of Tibet*, 19-20.

It is a common pattern: the old site of the indigenous religion is associated with some sort of special configuration of the land, in which the powers of the deep are perceived as having particular force... The incoming religion seeks out those very sites, and builds right on top of them. The new structures obliterate the old places of worship, but gain instant history and sacred power thereby.<sup>13</sup>

Here, the sites enumerated in Kong jo's divination of the Tibetan landscape are treated as pre-existent *genii loci*, spirits of place that were worshipped (or feared) prior to the arrival of Buddhism. The story of the "supine demoness" thus becomes a symbolic cornerstone of a debate *between* two religious traditions in early Tibet. In this form, it speaks of two possible historical transitions:

- *A cultural transition*, in which the myth is a symbolic (and partial) integration of two previously distinct cosmological systems: one a pre-existing system of earthly and local deity cults (encapsulated en masse in the image of the demoness); the other the subduing ritual force of a transcendent Buddhism.<sup>14</sup>
- *A political transition*, in which the myth is a metaphor for the factional debates between adherents of the local ancestral and aristocratic religious traditions that preceded Buddhism's arrival, and impeded its growing hegemony within the dynastic court.

The first of these two interpretations implies an endeavor to legitimize the incorporation of indigenous cosmological systems into Buddhist ritual forms. It speaks primarily to the argument that Tibetan Buddhism is actually a combination of Buddhist and tantric philosophical and ritual systems on the one hand and indigenous Tibetan shamanism (in particular the worship of local and mountain deities) on the other.<sup>15</sup>

These kinds of interpretation are ones in which the cosmological and mythic are primarily metaphorical representations of the socio-cultural. Attractive though such views of myth might be, there are several respects in which – as Gyatso admits – “the pieces don't quite fit together.”<sup>16</sup> Indeed, I would argue that the pursuit of various theoretical agendas within the socio-political sciences has caused many such arguments to misconceive this myth, either by doing violence to the integrity of its narrative as it appears in its various formulations (generally by emphasizing certain elements of the story whilst eliding others) or by underestimating the polemic intentions and narrative sophistication of its authors (this is particularly

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<sup>13</sup> Gyatso, “Down With The Demoness,” 43.

<sup>14</sup> For example, Anne-Marie Blondeau and Yonten Gyatso, “Lhasa, Legend and History,” in *Lhasa in the Seventeenth Century: The Capital of the Dalai Lamas*, ed. Françoise Pommaret (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 19 n. 3.

<sup>15</sup> For lengthier discussions of this topic, see Martin A. Mills, *Identity, Ritual and State in Tibetan Buddhism: The Foundations of Religious Authority in Gelukpa Monasticism* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003) and Geoffrey Samuel, *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993).

<sup>16</sup> See Gyatso, “Down with the Demoness.”

the case with Bsod nams rgyal mtshan). In both these regards, insufficient attention has been paid to the clear (and explicitly recognized) Chinese origins of Tibetan geomancy, and to the place that such geomancy had within a wider Buddhist vision of religious liberation and state legitimation.

### ***The Historical Dynamics of Tibetan Geomancy***

The myth of the building of the Central Temple of Lhasa speaks to a highly complex science of geomancy within Tibetan culture, either at the time of Srong btsan sgam po himself or developed in the subsequent centuries and “reflected back” to the Yar lung emperor’s rule by later Tibetan historians. Whichever of these was the case (and there is some evidence that both were true to varying extents), the impact of the myth on subsequent architects of Tibetan governance (such as the Phag mo gru dynasty and, later, the Dga’ ldan pho brang government) was clear: to model one’s own government on that of the early imperial period was also to adopt an established understanding of *rule as geomancy*.

The science of geomancy is both one of the most ubiquitous and yet obscure traditions in Tibet. Often called *sa spyad* or *byung rtsis*, many Tibetan historians are fairly explicit that the traditions of elemental – that is, earthly – divination were inherited from China, as opposed to the Kālacakra-dominated astrological system, which was imported from India. Texts such as *The Clear Mirror* clearly depict the geomantic arts as primarily being brought to Tibet by figures from China (with the principal exception of Gu ru rin po che), and linked to the creation of *royal religious space as a basis for auspicious rule*.

Over the course of the post-dynastic, local hegemonic, and medieval periods, however, geomantic traditions seem to have become widespread throughout Tibet, becoming a standard prerequisite for the sitting of important houses, castles, and, above all, monasteries and temples. Tibetan geomancy developed several important and distinctive features during this long history that separated it in particular from the practice of imperial *feng shui* in China: in place of the central Chinese concern with the correct placement of ancestral funerary sites came a focus on the vitality-place (*bla gnas*) of the living;<sup>17</sup> in place of imperial regulation came a much more devolved concern with auspicious placement; and in place of a relatively public and professionalized system of divination, a marked institutional reticence – indeed secrecy – surrounding geomantic divination within the institutional folds

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<sup>17</sup> Regarding burial sites, we know that the burial sites of the old Tibetan kings are still seen – like their Chinese counterparts – as having an ongoing geomantic influence. Thus, Rene de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons in Tibet: The Cult and Iconography of Tibetan Protective Deities* (Kathmandu: Tiwari Pilgrim’s Book House, 1993), 482, reports how Glang dar ma’s burial site on Bya skya dkar po ri is said to continually threaten the well-being of Lha sa. However, the emphasis appears now to be more on the positioning of *mchod rten*s containing the remains of high *bla mas*, although to my knowledge no research has been carried out on the geomantic sitting of such *mchod rten*s. Clearly, some degree of astrological knowledge is employed at funerals (see for example Stan Mumford, *Himalayan Dialogue: Tibetan Lamas and Gurung Shamans in Nepal* [Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989], chap. 10), but it remains unclear to what extent this shades into the specifically geomantic.



of Tibetan monasticism.<sup>18</sup> Above all of these, however, is to be found a pronounced incorporation of geomantic relations with the landscape into the structuring of Buddhist ritual life, as opposed to *feng shui*'s general domestication to the imperial Confucian paradigm.<sup>19</sup>

Nonetheless, despite these later developments, the image of geomancy's importation during the grand dynastic period of Srong btsan sgam po and his successors remains an important literary template for both the form and cultural place of this divinatory art in Tibet, lending a certain stability to some of its key features. In what follows, I would like to turn the examination of the entire demoness myth in a direction concomitant with an awareness of the key place that geomancy has in Tibetan cultural and religious history. While certain writers – most notably Elisabeth Stutchbury – have highlighted the importance of the geomantic traditions (including their Chinese historical origins) to the local formations of Tibetan religious life,<sup>20</sup> we have yet to look more deeply at what those geomantic formations themselves tell us about how eleventh- to fourteenth-century Tibetan Buddhist religious thought understood the “conversion” of the dynastic state at Lha sa.

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<sup>18</sup> Prominent exceptions to this reticence include Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's *Bai dūrya dkar po* and Thub bstan rgya mtsho's much more recent *Bstan pa'i rtsa ba chos sgor zhugs stangs dang / bstab pa'i bsti gnas gtsug lag khang bzhags thabs* (see Thubten Legshay Gyatsho, *Gateway to the Temple*, trans. David P. Jackson, Bibliotheca Himalayica, series 3, vol. 12 (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 1979)). In a recent set of talks on the topic given by the current Twelfth Si tu rin po che, he differentiated between the generic tactics of household and temple geomancy (which he discussed in some detail) and the fundamental principles at work in personal geomancy – those principles which link a person's known place and date of birth to the very elemental forces which keep them alive (see also Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons*, 481). In particular, the science of knowing a person's *bla gnas* or “vitality-place” – a feature of the landscape that contains their life-force (*bla*) – was one which could be employed to assassinate that person, and thus was to be carefully guarded by lineage holders (Situ Rinpoche, “Geomancy,” Audio Z91 [Eskdalemuir: Samye Ling Tibetan Centre, 1988]). An oral tradition popular in Buddhist Ladakh spoke to this very principle. During the reign of the “heretic king” Glang dar ma, the Buddhist *siddha* Dpal gyi rdo rje sought to end his persecution of Buddhism by assassinating him. Seeking to avoid a direct confrontation, Dpal gyi rdo rje sought instead to cause the king's death magically. Bribing the king's diviner, he found out that the king had three *bla gnas* – in a mountain, a tree, and a sheep. He was successful in digging up Glang dar ma's life-mountain and cutting down his life-tree, and the king fell gravely ill. However, the king had cunningly hidden his “life-sheep” amongst a flock of five-hundred other similar sheep. Rather than kill so many animals, Dpal gyi rdo rje was forced to confront the king in person.

<sup>19</sup> That is not to say that the Tibetan context produced a unique set of changes in this regard, but rather that they developed further in specific directions. As I will argue below, certain strains of geomancy in China had already taken on a distinctly Buddhist flavor. Moreover, the Indic context of tantric rites of subjugation – many of which were clearly focused on ritual relations with the land (see Robert Mayer, *A Scripture of the Ancient Tantra Collection: The Phur-pa bcu-gnyis* [Oxford: Kiscadale, 1996]) – were the clear origin of the *kīla*-rites mentioned in most of the Srong btsan sgam po hagiographies as the ritual prelude to the founding of the Central Temple of Lhasa.

<sup>20</sup> Elisabeth Stutchbury, “Perceptions of the Landscape in Karzha: ‘Sacred’ Geography and the Tibetan System of ‘Geomancy,’” in *Sacred Spaces and Powerful Places in Tibetan Culture*, ed. Toni Huber (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, 1999).

## Architectures of Auspiciousness

In the myth of the founding of the Central Temple of Lhasa, a highly complex lattice of geomantic forces and their ritual amelioration is laid out by Princess Kong jo. In *The Clear Mirror* and *Pillar Testament*, for example, Kong jo's divination contains between forty-five and fifty separate geomantic elements, along with the means either to suppress them (in the case of visible earth-enemy) or augment them (in the case of latent *rten 'brel*). Since both texts are lengthy, I have broken them down into tabular form (Tables 1 and 2).

Rather than being a simple list of malevolent forces (as it is all too often read), Princess Kong jo's divination is divided into several analytic categories, a pattern characteristic of Chinese geomancy:

- A visual analysis of the *negative* geomantic facets that directly impinge upon a site from its immediate surrounding area (Table 1: items 1-9; Table 2: items 1-12). Each of these facets is then given a geomantic "solution," a means of counteracting its negative force. Thus, for example, Dbus ri mountain on the northern outskirts of Lha sa (local tradition has this as located behind the present 'Bras spungs Monastery) looked like a charging war elephant, a negative facet that needed balancing with a stone lion that faced it (T1:9; T2:11); similarly, the Rock of Shün (*shun gyi brag*, T1:8; T2:10), the prominent finger-like pinnacles directly to the west of the city, was seen as a "demon staring at Lha sa,"<sup>21</sup> to be faced by a (red) *mchod rten*.
- A similar analysis of the positive geomantic facets present within the immediate surrounding area. Examples of this are the glacier behind Grib Village to the south of Lha sa, divined to be like a conch shell (T1: 17; T2: 18), and the marsh at the opening of Stod lung Valley that was "like the wheel of doctrine on the feet and hands of the Buddha" (T1: 21; T2: 23). These are presented as (at the time of the initial divination) overshadowed by the preceding negative elements, which require subjugation for the positive facets to be brought forth.
- An analysis of the *wider geomantic context* within which the Lha sa area is embedded. As with the previous category, much of the art of Chinese geomancy lies in what Needham refers to as "physiographic map-making"<sup>22</sup> – that is, the skill of "drawing" bodily images into a specific landscape. Here, this category is divined by Kong jo in terms of our now-famous

<sup>21</sup> See also Matthew Akester, "A Black Demon Peering From the West: The Crystal Cave of Suratabhaja in Tibetan Perspective," *Buddhist Himalaya: A Journal of Nagarjuna Institute of Exact Methods* 10, nos. 1 & 2 (1999).

<sup>22</sup> Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 360.

“supine demoness” image (T1: 12-23; T2: 32-49), which crosses Tibet as a whole.<sup>23</sup>

A variety of geomantic principles are at work here: firstly, it uses techniques of both *vertical suppression* and *horizontal opposition*; secondly, the divination balances its diagnosis of negative elements with a prognostication of *emergent auspicious properties* in subjugated landscapes; and finally, the entire divination is organized according to a *concentric arrangement*. In what follows, I will look at each of these in turn.

### ***Techniques of Vertical and Horizontal Suppression***

The first, and most obvious, geomantic technique employed within the context of the myth is that of *vertical suppression*. Most famously, the twelve temples built by Srong btsan sgam po are employed to “bind down” the arms and legs of the supine demoness. This is a common feature of Tibetan Buddhist ritual, utilizing a temple or *mchod rten* to “bind down” troublesome or labile features of the landscape. In many cases the binding down temples in *The Clear Mirror* narrative are also sites for the subjugation of Nāga water spirits. This is most obvious in the case of the Central Temple itself (which was built on the Lake of O Plain [*’o thang gi mtsho*], the “palace of the water spirits” in Kong jo’s divination), but can also be seen at the Khra ’brug and Ka rtsal binding-temples, and at other dynastic sites such as the courtyard of Bsam yas Temple. At Khra ’brug, tradition relates that Srong btsan sgam po and Princess Kong jo met substantial resistance:<sup>24</sup> as they sought to journey south to the emperor’s palace at Yum bu lag khang, they were stopped by a large flood at the confluence of the Yar lung and Tsang po Valleys. Here, the emperor perceived that the source of the flood was a recalcitrant Nāga, a serpent with five heads. At this, the emperor transformed into a fearsome Garuḍa-bird, and swooped down on the Nāga, slicing off first three of its heads with his beak, and then on the second pass, the remaining two.

Despite the violence of this and similar stories, the suppression of the Nāgas and demoness is not apparently fatal, but rather *debilitating*.<sup>25</sup> They are left in submission to the emperor’s power, rather than destroyed by it. This can be seen in the continued ritual recognition of their presence: at the Central Temple of Lhasa, Bsam yas and Khra ’brug temples, small Nāga-shrines can be found attended nearby by ritual wells devoted to the Nāga-lord.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> In the *Pillar Testament*, Kong jo adds a further dimension which presents Tibet qua demoness as one area amongst a general geography of the Southern continent of Jambudvīpa (see Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 553-60). While it is worth noting its existence, I have not included this wider geomantic tableau in Table 2; it is not present in *The Clear Mirror*.

<sup>24</sup> Guntram Hazod, “Around the ‘Secret’ of Tantrik: Territorial Classifications in the Historical Landscape of Lower Yarlung (Central Tibet)” (unpublished manuscript).

<sup>25</sup> See also Gyatso, “*Down with the Demoness*.”

<sup>26</sup> In the Central Temple of Lhasa, this “well” is simply a small podium with a two-inch wide shaft, at which pilgrims listen in order to hear the “sound” of the Nāga-lord’s kingdom.

The second general technique evoked in the Central Temple founding story is that of *horizontal opposition*: counterbalancing geomantic obstructions around the Lha sa Valley by placing their “suppressors” opposite them on a horizontal line of sight. There are numerous cases of this in *The Clear Mirror* and *Pillar Testament*, and many to this day receive some degree of ritual observance. A dramatic example from *The Clear Mirror* – which demonstrates how a horizontal-facing arrangement was seen as being able to transform the landscape – can be found in the heart of Lha sa itself. On the eastern side of Lcags po ri (referred to in many early texts as Lcags kha ri), the hill directly to the southwest of the Po ta la Palace, a sheer concave shouldered cliff faces directly towards the main, west-facing door of the Central Temple of Lhasa (see Photo 4). In the middle of the cliff are the shrines of Brag lha klu sgug Temple, the most famous of which is a ring-like chapel built around an “self-created” image of the Buddha entitled “Able Rock Protector” (*thub pa brag lha mgon po*), flanked by Śariputra and Maitreya on his right and Maudgalyāyana and Avalokiteśvara to his left. The “self-created” Buddha is described in *The Clear Mirror* as a result of the magical action of the newly-constructed Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara statue immediately following the building of the Central Temple, which faced towards it. Indeed, in *The Clear Mirror*, the subsequent rock protector image is held to act as the representative of the Central Temple’s subjugated water-spirits.<sup>27</sup>

A more complex and instructive example can be found at Grib Village, on the far side of the Skyid chu River to the south of Lha sa. Bsod nams rgyal mtshan’s text has the following prognostication:

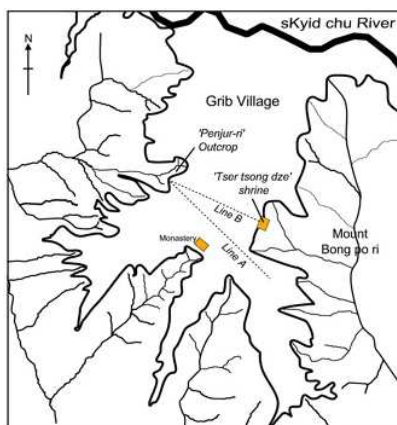
In the southern direction [from Lha sa] the “terrestrial antagonist” (*sa dgra*) is found, which resembles a black scorpion pouncing on [its pray] (*sdig pa nag po gzan la rub pa*). It is [to be identified as] the eastern summit of Yug ma ri. [To suppress it, af]front it [by erecting a statue of] the *garuḍa*-bird *ke ru*.<sup>28</sup>

Whilst the names of the mountains have changed, the scorpion itself clearly refers to what is locally referred to as “Phan ju ri outcrop,” a mountain arm on the west side of the valley (see Photo 1).<sup>29</sup> The Phan ju ri outcrop is “faced” by a protector shrine on the far side of the valley, dedicated to the protector deity Tsher rdzong rtse, whose presence local tradition within Grib ascribes to Princess Kong jo, who is said to have summoned the deity from China (see Photo 2).

<sup>27</sup> Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 297; see also Taylor and Yuthok, *The Clear Mirror*, 158. This legendary formulation is not found in the earlier *Pillar Testament*, where the protector image is seen as one of the apotropaic forms to be built by Srong btsan sgam po. *The Clear Mirror* mediates this distinction slightly, reporting that the protector image emerged spontaneously and was later carved into sharper relief under the emperor’s orders.

<sup>28</sup> Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 256; see also Taylor and Yuthok, *The Clear Mirror*, 164.

<sup>29</sup> Both *phan ju ri* and *tsher rdzong rtse* are approximate transliterations only.



Map 1: Geomantic organization of Grib Village, south of Lha sa.



Photo 1: Phan ju ri outcrop, identified above as the “leaping scorpion.”

Now, Phan ju ri certainly looks like a scorpion. However, being a *three-dimensional* topographic object it does so only *from a certain angle*, specifically from a line leading east-southeast from Phan ju ri (see Map 1, Line A). However, the Tsher rdzong rtse Temple itself clearly faces the scorpion along Line B (from which angle the scorpion looks partially distorted). If this temple (or a predecessor) represents the “*garuḍa*-bird eagle” of Bsod nams rgyal mtshan’s text – designed to suppress the malignant scorpion image – then why was it placed slightly out of alignment, when such evident care was taken over the *visual* properties of such signs?



*Photo 2: Tsher rdzong rtse Temple (center), located within the shoulder outcrop of Bong po ri Mountain.*



*Photo 3: Tsher rdzong rtse Temple.*

Discounting the possibility of major geological shifts since the text's authorship, it would seem to me that another local geomantic feature needs to be incorporated: Tsher rdzong rtse Temple is placed at the center of a west-facing shouldered outcrop of Bong po ri Mountain (see Map 1 and Photo 2), one which directly faces Phan ju ri. Directly behind the temple is the principal peak of Bong po ri, and the temple is nestled between two shoulder-spurs. Such sites are often used within Chinese geomantic systems as supporting features that augment the power of particular temples,<sup>30</sup> and the Nepalese princess's temple at Brag lha klu sgug is located at the center of a similarly shouldered outcrop of Lcags po ri Hill in Lha sa (see Photo 4).

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<sup>30</sup> See Stephan Feuchtwang, *An Anthropological Analysis of Chinese Geomancy* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2002), 156.



Photo 4: *Lcags po ri Hill, Lha sa – shouldered outcrop to the left.*

The placement of the Tsher rdzong rtse Temple thus *implies* (and we can say no more than this) that several different geomantic features were balanced against one another: the angle at which the scorpion can be seen versus the angle from which it can best be suppressed. The apotropaic geomancy of this site therefore seems to be a complex calculation, simultaneously incorporating several different geomantic principles.

### ***The Concentric Organization of Divination***

Like many geomantic divinations, Kong jo’s diagnosis is concentrically-structured, focused on the potential Lha sa site for the Central Temple. The nature of the divined facets changes qualitatively as it moves outwards from the center of the Lha sa Plain:

- Elements within or crossing the Lha sa Plain itself (T1: 1-4; T2: 1-6). Generally, these are depicted as the habitual place of actual demonic beings: the palace of the Nāga-king; the cave of the black Nāgas; the meeting place of the The’u rang spirits and ghosts; the route of the Btsan spirits. These require vertical suppression, either by temples or *mchod rten*.
- Elements on the visual periphery – or “sides” – of the Lha sa Plain (T1: 5-9; T2: 7-31, but 27 is an exception). These are universally mountain features visible from the Lha sa Plain itself or its immediate tributary valleys. Rather than being actual numinal persons, they are (auspicious or inauspicious) *visual signs*,<sup>31</sup> requiring horizontal counter-balancing when inauspicious (see below).
- Finally, there is the *general diagnosis* of the wider Tibetan geography (between Khams in the east and the borders of Mnga’ ris in the west), which is “like” a supine demoness. This image actually interlaces with, or is visualized “on top of,” the above two, such that the Lake of O Plain on the Lha sa Plain is simultaneously depicted as the “heart-blood of the demoness” and the palace of the Nāgas.

<sup>31</sup> The main exception here being the four mines (T1: 22-25; T2: 25-28), assuming they were treated as substantial physical objects (which they may not have been – this would require some examination).

This subtle *interpretive* shift as one heads outwards from the Lake of O Plain is matched by a *political* shift within the image of the supine demoness itself. The binding-down temples, organized in three concentric squares, were designated according to their relationship with the civilizing political power of the state. Thus, beyond the Lha sa heartlands lay the innermost square of temples (for nailing down her hips and shoulders), called the District-Controlling temples (*ru gnon gyi lha khang*; T1: 31-34; T2: 37-40); the four intermediate temples (for nailing down her elbows and knees) were the Border-Taming temples (*mtha' 'dul gyi gtsug lag khang*; T1: 35-38; T2: 41-44); and four outer temples (nailing down her wrists and ankles) were the Further-Taming temples (*yang 'dul gyi lha khang*; T1: 39-42; T2: 45-49).<sup>32</sup>

Within this configuration, therefore, ritual power is extended beyond the state's own borders: in *The Clear Mirror*, the construction of these "further-taming" temples are described as being placed in the care of surrounding tribal groups and leaders such as the To dkar to the south, the Mi nyag of Khams, Sba dpal dbyang of Hor, and the Nepalese to the southwest (T1: 39-42; not in T2). Robert Miller has since gone on to render this analysis more concrete, by noting the tendency of Tibetan medieval historians – in particular Bsod nams rgyal mtshan's contemporary, Bu ston (1290-1364) – to emphasize the relationship between the placing of the nailing-down temples and contemporary histories of revolt within the newly expanded Yar lung empire.<sup>33</sup> Dunhuang documents speak of revolts amongst the Zhang zhung, the Sum pa, the Dwags po, the Rkong po, and the Myang, followed by expansionist expeditions by Srong btsan sgam po to the north through Mal gro and on to 'Dam – all key sites for his later "nailing-down" of the demoness. For Miller, Bu ston's rendition of the story is

a tale of the process of centralizing and of re-affirming the power of the Centre. That power was threatened by revolts, possibly stimulated by the king's flirtation with Buddhism ... The order in which the *srin mo* was pinned down reflect the expansion of the *Yar lung Empire* under Gnam ri slon mtshan, and its consolidation and further expansion under Srong btsan sgam po.<sup>34</sup>

In this regard, the religious image of the demoness' suppression had a "secular" corollary, or at least one within the practical history of Yar lung sovereignty. Thus, a vision is created not only of a system of temples, but of a resurgent state.

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<sup>32</sup> In Bsod nams rgyal mtshan's text, or a subsequent redaction of it, these terms have been confused, being placed in the order border-taming, further taming, and district taming. This is at odds with every other version of this story. Thus, following Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 261 n. 770, I place them in the standard order in Table 1.

<sup>33</sup> Miller, "The Supine Demoness."

<sup>34</sup> Miller, "The Supine Demoness."



## Re-Assessing the Significance of the Central Temple Founding Myth

At the beginning of this article, I briefly examined some of the existing scholarly interpretations of the Central Temple of Lhasa founding myth, interpretations that focused primarily (indeed, almost exclusively) on the image of the suppression of the demoness. Now that we have looked at the wider context of the supine demoness myth and its associated geomancy, we can critically examine these ideas from a stronger position. As I suggested earlier, there are several ways in which existing feminist and culturalist readings are inadequate.

### *Problems with the Feminist Analysis*

At the heart of the feminist argument is the assertion that the image of the supine demoness is a mythic formulation of the patriarchal gender categories of a celibate monastic elite. Now, it is certainly the case that the ideology of women's subordination within Tibetan society is encapsulated within certain elements of clerical Buddhism that see women as "low-born."<sup>35</sup> However, to equate the social status of women with the figure of the demoness is problematic at best, requiring the reader to "bracket out" most of the rest of the narrative content of the wider myth and ignore much of wider Tibetan religious culture.

Firstly, the argument spotlights the vertical and gendered dimensions of the divination – generating an exclusively (and conveniently) stratified sexual imagery – whilst separating out the very geomantic principles that the divination was primarily about. In particular, it separates the processes of vertical suppression from their clearly linked processes of horizontal opposition (which are less amenable to feminist and psychoanalytical images of sexual repression).

Secondly, this kind of feminist argument only works for the supine demoness story if we bracket out the dynastic tale of which it is an integral part. If we look at the supine demoness element in this wider context, then to assert that it represents a celibate Buddhist male suppression of the feminine seems peculiar at best, for a variety of reasons. In the first case, it ignores the fact that the entire interpretive project – of seeing Tibet as a demoness capable of being nailed down – was presented not by a male celibate monastic, but by a *female dynastic figure* – the princess Kong jo, in answer to a request from another female dynastic figure, the princess Khri btsun. Moreover, the binding-down temples – whilst now monasteries that do indeed belong to the various clerical Buddhist schools, not least the wholly celibate Dge lugs pa – were primarily placed at sites of *royal marriage* rather than celibate monasticism.

Finally, the assumption that female literary and mythic figures can be seen as "representing" the general category of women – whilst common within feminist critiques of religion – simply does not hold in the Tibetan context. For example,

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<sup>35</sup> Barbara Aziz, "Towards a Sociology of Tibet," in *Feminine Ground: Essays on Women and Tibet*, ed. Janice D. Willis (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1989).

Huber's recent examination of ritual prohibitions on the sacred mountain of Tsari in southeastern Tibet describes how women are excluded from particular pilgrimage routes round the mountain *because their bodies might pollute the female divine forms manifest in its landscape*. Thus, only male ascetics are allowed to drink from the stream whose reddish waters are seen as the menstrual blood of the goddess Vajravārāhī.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, the rationales given for women's exclusion from the region usually involve them being banished *precisely by female divine figures*.<sup>37</sup> So, whilst Huber's ethnography certainly speaks of the ritual exclusion (for which we *might* read "subordination") of women from certain Buddhist sacred sites (a common prohibition regarding powerful tantric deities),<sup>38</sup> the divine female figures involved are often evoked as the very reason for that very subordination, rather than as victims of it. In light of Huber's ethnography, we can no longer take an equation between the supine demoness and the social class of Tibetan women as a given; indeed, I would argue that the "supine demoness as patriarchal ideology" thesis only makes sense if we do scholastic violence either to the story of which it was a part or to the culture from which it emerged.

That is not to say that the story has *no* polemic intent, but it is difficult to make definitive claims. It would be equally possible to argue that the initial polemic thrust of the Srong btsan sgam po mythos could be seen as a Rnying ma championing of a non-celibate (indeed, dynastic) Buddhist dynamic, in opposition to the rising power of celibate monastic institutions within twelfth-century Tibet. Difficulties surrounding this question center on the institutional affiliation of the early treasure-revealers. For example, of the three revealers of the *Ma ni bka' 'bum*, only Nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer (1124-92?) was clearly a non-celibate Rnying ma tantrist; Grub thob dngos grub (c. 1100s?) was also a *yogin* of some kind, while Shākya 'od is sometimes referred to as a *bhikṣu*.<sup>39</sup> The story's later adoption by the likes of Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (who certainly *was* a monk) occurred within the context of their own re-appropriation of the concepts of dynastic rulership in Tibet.<sup>40</sup>

### ***Problems with the Culturalist Analysis***

By contrast, the culturalist argument – that myths such as that of the supine demoness represent a polemic rendering of the historical appropriation of

<sup>36</sup> Toni Huber, "Why Can't Women Climb Pure Crystal Mountain? Remarks on Gender, Ritual and Space in Tibet," in *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Fagernes 1992*, ed. Per Kvaerne (Oslo: Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994), 360.

<sup>37</sup> Huber, "Why Can't Women Climb Pure Crystal Mountain?," 355.

<sup>38</sup> See for example Mills, *Identity, Ritual and State*, 184.

<sup>39</sup> Many thanks to the *JLATS* anonymous reviewers on this point.

<sup>40</sup> The maintenance – even in the subsequent monastic context – of this dynastic and marital dimension to the myth can be seen rather clearly at Khra 'brug, the first Buddhist temple in Tibet and one of the inner rings of binding temples. Here, the principal Avalokiteśvara temple (located in front of the Nāga-shrine) contains – in pride of place for both its attendant monks and visiting pilgrims – the marital hearth of Princess Kong jo.

pre-Buddhist ritual sites by an incoming Buddhist institutionalism – suffers from the fact that the archaeological and architectural culture of the period points in a very different direction. To begin with, there is no archaeological evidence to suggest that the Lha sa area prior to the founding of the Central Temple complex was any kind of major cultic site for pre-Buddhist ritual traditions, such that Buddhism might inherit their “history and sacred power.”<sup>41</sup> Whilst the Lha sa Valley is certainly depicted as a haven of Klu (*nāga*), The’u rang, and Ma mo spirits in *post hoc* Buddhist re-writings, this can hardly be taken as an indicator that such spirits or anything like them existed as part of any previous institutional religion. For example, the story itself makes no mention of any shrines or temples to them that needed destroying, or for that matter any contra-Buddhist reaction to protect these pre-existing *genii loci*. Indeed, throughout texts such as *The Clear Mirror*, almost no mention is given to pre-existing *named* tellurian deities of the Central Tibetan area.<sup>42</sup>

Secondly, there are difficulties in conceiving this story as a “battle between the gods” in any sense that we might normally understand it. Much of Kong jo’s divination is not about deities or spirits at all. Certainly, shrines are built to the Nāga water-spirits that live under the Central Temple, Khra ’brug, and later Bsam yas, water-spirits that actively battled against the royal powers at sites such as Khra ’brug. The demonic forces of Gla ba tshal, moreover, are depicted in *The Clear Mirror* as conspiring against Srong btsan sgam po. They are, in other words, depicted as *active numinal agents*. However, in terms of Kong jo’s wider divination, this is not generally the case. In the case of the scorpion at Grib, the Rock of Shün, or the war-elephant near ’Bras spungs, the obstructive geomantic obstacles of the Tibetan landscape are not obviously presented as spirits or deities, despite how often they have been read as such by modern scholars.<sup>43</sup> No shrine appears to have been dedicated to them, and their existence is clearly registered only from a particular physical direction, as we saw in the case of the Grib scorpion. By contrast with the demons of Gla ba tshal, the peripheral geomantic elements divined on the sides of the valley are depicted simply as *visual signs* that *look like* negative omens when seen from a particular angle, rather than (even nominally existing) gods or spirits that inhabit places. Even the demoness (who also receives no shrine) lacks this firm numinal quality; the land of Tibet is deemed by Kong jo to be “like” or “resembling” or “to have the shape of” a demoness, implying it was akin in this regard to Grib’s scorpion. That is, not a deity at all in the sense that we would understand the term, but a visualized similitude – an image.

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<sup>41</sup> Gyatso, “Down With The Demoness,” 43.

<sup>42</sup> The sole exception here being the Nāga-king Mal gro gzi can within Khri srong lde’u btsan’s hagiography. Regarding this question, Stan Mumford’s study of religious change in the Buddhist communities of Nepal (Mumford, *Himalayan Dialogue*, chap. 3) is instructive. He clearly demonstrates how, in the modern context, named local deities are categorically “re-structured” by high *bla mas*, reforming them within rites as generic categories within a wider Buddhist cosmology. This would clearly be a suggestive argument against my position above.

<sup>43</sup> See Gyatso, “Down With The Demoness,” 49; Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 253.

We can more clearly see the problem of treating Kong jo's divination of the demoness as the reading of a pre-existing divine cosmology if we expand the field somewhat and look at, for example, *The Clear Mirror's* later rendition of Gu ru rin po che's similar (if more upbeat) geomantic divination of the landscape around Bsam yas, performed for Emperor Khri srong lde'u btsan prior to building his tutelary temple:

The mountain of *shar-ri* [around *bsam-yas*] resembles the king poised on a seat (*rgyal pa gdan la bzhugs pa*). This is a good [sign]. The *ri-chung* resembles a brood-hen covering its [young] bird (*bya mas bu la sgab pa*). This is a good [sign]. The *sman-ri* resembles a mound of jewels (*ri[sic] chen spungs pa*). This is a good [sign]. *Has-po-ri* resembles a queen dressed in white silk (*btsun ma dar dkar gyi na bza' gsol ba*). This is a good [sign]. *Ri-nag* resembles an iron nail stuck into the ground (*lcags phur sa la btab pa*). This is a good [sign]. *Me-yar* resembles a mule drinking water (*dre'u chu 'thung pa*). This is a good [sign]. *Dol-thang* resembles a curtain [made] of white silk drawn (*dar dkar gyi yol ba*). This is a good [sign]. The site [around *bsam-yas*] resembles a golden tub (*gzhong*) filled with saffron-flower. This is [also] a good [sign], so erect the ruler's personal tutelary temple here!<sup>44</sup>

It is difficult here to see *any* of Gu ru rin po che's divinatory prognostications – the iron nail, the brood hen, the mule drinking water – as referring to a pre-existing numinal cosmology, as opposed simply to a distinctly *visual* interpretation of the auspiciousness of the site. Moreover, there is no sense emerging from the text that their quality as omens or spiritual obstructions derives from a metonymic equation with some hidden numinal reality, as implied by Sørensen.<sup>45</sup> More importantly, it seems difficult to equate this particular kind of geomantic vision with the kind of local area god worship which is often associated with pre-Buddhist mountain worship (or even the modern Tibetan propitiation of local spirits). Indeed, local tradition asserts that certain local deities in the area – such as Tsher rdzong rtse in Grib Village – were imported (in this case by Kong jo herself) precisely to subdue such (numina-less) signs.

### ***The Auspicious Symbolism of the Lha sa Heartlands***

This may well sound somewhat hair-splitting. The point, however, is that the aesthetic of such visual “signs” is less reminiscent of “Bon” or other forms of Tibetan ancestral cult than of those Chinese systems of geomancy that were widely prevalent (indeed, reaching their political zenith) within Kong jo's native China during this period.

<sup>44</sup> Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 374; see also Taylor and Yuthok, *The Clear Mirror*, 235.

<sup>45</sup> Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 253, 552; and Per Sørensen, “Lhasa Diluvium - Sacred Environment at Stake: The Birth of Flood Control Politics, the Question of Natural Disaster Management and Their Importance for the Hegemony over a National Monument in Tibet,” in “Cosmogony and the Origins,” special issue, *Lungta*, no. 16 (Spring 2003): 88.

This can be seen most clearly in the way in which *The Clear Mirror and Pillar Testament's* rendition of geomancy is not solely focused on the subjugation of obstacles (*bar chad*), but also speaks of an understanding that the subjugation of such geomantic obstacles gives rise to the emergence of many naturally existing auspicious signs (*bkra shis rtags*) within the landscape. This is an element of Kong jo's divination that receives little or no critical attention within the English-language literature on the topic, despite the fact that *The Clear Mirror* for one outlines a group of nineteen potentially auspicious signs within the Lha sa Valley landscape. These can be collated into four principal groups:

- Eleven "auspicious signs" (T1: 10-21; T2: 12-23) that are, in aggregate, an elaboration of the standard "eight auspicious signs" (*bkra shis rtags brgyad*) of Buddhism, such as a *mchod rten*, a heap of jewels, a parasol, twin golden fish, a treasure vase, etc., but are collectively represented as the manifest physical presence of a Buddha-body (see below).
- Four mines (T1: 22-25; T2: 24-27) for iron, copper, silver, and gold in the four cardinal directions.
- Four auspicious directional protector animals (T1: 25-28; T2: 28-31): a gray she-tiger in the east, a turquoise dragon in the south, a red bird or cockerel in the west, and a black turtle in the north.

The first group of eleven are treated by Kong jo in a particular way – as aspects of the Buddha's embodied presence within the subdued landscape. Thus, *The Clear Mirror* version of her divination has the mountain behind, (Rgyab ri) Mal grong, as like the fish "representing the Buddha's eyes" (T1: 15; T2: 17 has Mount Dgos in the east), whilst the Rock of Dangkhar (*mdangs mkhar gyi brag*) is shaped like a lotus "like the tongue of the Buddha" (T1: 16; T2 has Mount Rdzong btsan); the endless knot on Yug ma ri (T1: 19; T2 has Mount Sgo phu) is seen to represent the Buddha's mind; and the victory-banner shaped mountain of 'Phan dkar his body (T1: 20; T2 has Brang phu), and so forth. While there is clear variation in the precise sitting of these various signs, the general principle of organization – based on the interpretive formation of a "body" – remains consistent. This physiological imagery is important because it creates a "body of the Buddha" that counterpoises the body of the demoness; nonetheless, *both* are seen as existing within the landscape itself. However, the addition of extra symbolic elements – the lotuses, the *mchod rten*, the heap of jewels, and the skull-cup (T1: 10-13; T2: 12-25) – suggests an image not simply of a Buddha, but of ritual practice focused on that Buddha. Indeed, it is – one might suggest – an image of Buddhist temple-worship.

The second set is equally intriguing. The inclusion of mines here is at odds with the kind of environmentalist presentation of traditional Tibetan culture which sees it as fundamentally ecological in the modern sense.<sup>46</sup> Most specifically, the presence

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<sup>46</sup> Toni Huber and Poul Pedersen, "Meteorological Knowledge and Environmental Ideas in Traditional and Modern Societies: The Case of Tibet," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, n.s., 3, no. 3 (1997): 577-98.

of mining in pre-1950 Tibet has often been either denied or taken as one of the major “concessions” that the Buddhist state made to the necessary production of wealth.<sup>47</sup> For Huber in particular, the existence of mining spoke to the “gap between the ideal and the real – i.e., what was believed and what was actually done”<sup>48</sup> in Tibetan society. However, the existence of mines as part of the *emergent auspicious properties* of the Lha sa landscape as divined by Kong jo – which only fully emerge once the land is properly ritually subjugated – suggests a fundamentally different dynamic. It suggests in particular the vision of a sacrificial organization of the state, in which precious metals were used primarily towards the production of religious and royal artefacts. Mines, in other words, were part of the auspicious hierarchy of offering.

The final set of benevolent geomantic properties mentioned by Kong jo are four animals in each of the four cardinal directions. At first these seem an odd addition – almost an appendage – were it not for their clear correspondence to a similar symbolic set at the heart of Chinese systems of geomancy, where the white/gray she-tiger, turquoise dragon, black turtle, and red bird represent the four “protectors” of a particular site.<sup>49</sup> While the other three appear to be mountains or significant boulders, the turquoise dragon in the south appears to be a reference to the Skyid chu River. This would mark a distinction from modern Chinese geomancy, where the green dragon is generally a mountain;<sup>50</sup> however, that this is a viable interpretation in the Tibetan context can be seen from the modern use of this terminology in Gyatsho’s 1967 manual on monastic ceremony, *Gateway to the Temple*:

When establishing (planting) a Central Temple<sup>51</sup> and so forth [one should look for the following]: a tall mountain behind and many hills in front, two rivers converging in front from the right and left, a central valley of rocks and meadows resembling heaps of grain, and a lower part which is like two hands crossed at the wrists. The good characteristics called the four Earth-pillars area wide expanse in the east, a heap in the south, a rounded bulge in the west, and in the north a mountain like a draped curtain. *The four directional earth protectors are: in the east a whitish path or rock is the tiger, and in this direction there must be no ravines cutting across the lower part of the valley. By the river of the southern direction there must be verdure, which is the turquoise-dragon, and here it is necessary that the water does not plummet into a cavern. Red earth or rock in the west is the bird, and here the path must not be fraught with snags or pitfalls.*

<sup>47</sup> Toni Huber, “Traditional Environmental Protectionism in Tibet Reconsidered,” *Tibet Journal* 16, no. 3 (1991): 63-77; Marcy Vigoda, “Religious and Socio-Cultural Restraints on Environmental Degradation among Tibetan Peoples – Myth or Reality?,” *Tibet Journal* 14, no. 4 (1989): 27.

<sup>48</sup> Huber, “Traditional Environmental Protectionism,” 72.

<sup>49</sup> See Feuchtwang, *Chinese Geomancy*, 201; see also Needham, *Science and Civilization*, vol. 2, 360.

<sup>50</sup> For example, Eva Wong, *Feng shui* (Boston: Shambhala, 1994), 64-65.

<sup>51</sup> Here, Gyatsho has used the term *gtsug lag khang* as a general term. In the post-dynastic texts, the term is sometimes used to refer to the Lha sa Jo khang, and sometimes to specify those temples that were an integral part of the king’s rule.

*A bearded rock in the north is the tortoise, and in this direction at the stream's source the water must not be obstructed by seething, roiled water. If these four protectors are all present, the land is perfectly endowed.*<sup>52</sup>

The importance of these four cardinal animals is more clearly brought out in the *Bka' chems ka khol ma* texts. Here, they are described as the “four gods” of the Central Temple of Lhasa (T2: 28-31). Their orientation, moreover, is depicted as a crucial part of Lha sa's problematic geomancy, for these four gods are “afflicted” by Lha sa's five “terrestrial antagonists,” which rest in the same line of sight as the four animals (T2: 7-11).

All of this points to a fundamentally subjectivist rendering of geomantic divination: the landscape tends overwhelmingly to be “read” from a *particular* physical viewpoint (from which good or bad signs are seen) rather than from an abstracted “mapped” perspective (in which numina are geographically located). This is important because it divides geomantic architecture in two functionally: just as the Tsher rdzong rtse “faces” the scorpion at Grib from a particular angle *in order to subdue it*, so (for example) is the traditional meditation cave of Srong btsan sgam po at Pha bong kha placed in a precise line of sight to see the auspicious black turtle as a black turtle, *in order to employ its auspicious qualities to best advantage*. Both functions are perspectival, not cosmological.

## The Buddhist Project of Geomancy

What, however, might we read as the Buddhist significance of all this? In *The Clear Mirror*, as with many of the post-dynastic mythologies of Srong btsan sgam po, the founding of the temple – with the subduing of the recalcitrant earthly forces that attends it – marks a turning point in the political dynamics within Lha sa. Prior to the founding, the ministers and princesses are depicted as consumed with jealousy over the achievements of others. They bicker and scheme against one another, constantly obstructing the completion of meritorious Buddhist acts. Subsequent to the founding, these disagreements are no longer to be found within the story at all; the ministers and heirs refer to one another instead by familial terms, and meritorious acts are described in effusive lists. The narrative thus links together the geomantic subjugation of the landscape with the moral disciplining of the royal court.

Elsewhere, I have discussed the impact of this principle in Tibetan monastic life, where geomantic arts were also linked to the strategic amelioration of monastic discipline.<sup>53</sup> Thus, the legend exists that, when the Tibetan prelate and incarnate *bla ma* 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa II (1728-91) was staying in Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil Monastery, he was concerned with the fact that whilst the monks were highly learned, their moral discipline was lax and many disrobed. Meditating on the matter, he perceived that the cause was the evil influence of a nearby hill. Ordering the

<sup>52</sup> Gyatsho, *Gateway To The Temple*, 29; translation adjusted from original, my italics.

<sup>53</sup> Mills, *Identity, Ritual and State*, chaps. 10-13.

hill to be levelled, he built on the place a Maitreya statue (called the Gser khang chen mo). As a result, few if any talented monks arose again in Bla brang, but those that were there became modest and disciplined in their vows – to the consternation of locals but the great delight of ’Jam dbyangs bzhad pa.<sup>54</sup> In a more modern context, we might note Elisabeth Stutchbury’s insightful examination of local discussions concerning the impact of unbalanced geomantic alignment of Zhabs rjes Monastery in Dkar zha on the spiritual practice and morale of its occupants, and the ritual and architectural means employed to ameliorate the situation.<sup>55</sup>



Photo 5: *Le shan Buddha, Sichuan, China.*

That such notions might have had Chinese Buddhist parallels can be seen in an example from around the same period as Srong btsan sgam po: the building of the Le shan Buddha over the confluence of the Minjiang and Yuexi He rivers in southern Sichuan during the middle T’ang dynasty. This massive work was explicitly designed to ameliorate obstructive geomantic forces, and like the protector image at Brag lha klu sgug in Lha sa, is oriented to face a key Buddhist religious site (in this case that of the nearby Mount Emei shan). The project was initiated in 713 CE by the Buddhist monk Haitong during the reign of Emperor Xuanzong (685-762) and completed ninety years later by Wei Gao, presiding governor of the region. Wei Gao was one of the most important provincial governors of the period, famed for both his place within the history of Chinese Buddhism and his defence of Szechuan against Tibetan incursion.<sup>56</sup> His rock-edict – carved to the right side of the Le shan Buddha’s feet (see Photo 5, left) – describes the construction thus:

Religious functions are great and penetrating and a religion can only be the work of saints. When one has freed himself from the puzzling world, what he has understood about Buddhism will get him close to the gods and, following the doctrine of Buddhism, he may create miracles to save people from disasters. The carving of the Le shan buddha is a proof of this. The Mingjiang River was said to have a very torrential section from Le shan eastwards to Jianwei. Waves washed the cliffs on the banks and ran down the shoals, rumbling like thunders [*sic*].

<sup>54</sup> See Mills, *Identity, Ritual and State*, 315.

<sup>55</sup> Stutchbury, “Perceptions of the Landscape.”

<sup>56</sup> Charles Peterson, “Court and Province in Mid- and Late-T’ang,” in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 3, *Sui and T’ang China, 589-906*, Part 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 518-19.



Rapids gouged the bank rocks and swallowed boats, causing death to numerous people. A river like this had long caused trouble to the communication between the rich western part of Shu and the lower reaches of Two Hu's [*sic*], Wan and Zhe, vast areas of the Wu and Chu. In the first year of *Kaiyuan* of the Tang Dynasty, Monk Haitong rose to say "No!" to the monsters of the river, determining to make it benefit the people. He thought that since the roaring rapids were mostly below cliffs, why not dig the cliffs and let falling rocks ease the currents. If the image of Buddha was thus carved Buddhism could be glorified [as well]. Kind people could be mobilized and manpower gathered to establish a great figure of Maitreya, which would bless the coming generations and tell them to go on worshipping Buddha. With confidence, the *monk* started to plan for the magnificent project. In his mind, the Buddha statue must be great and delicate, with a head one hundred *chiin* in girth, its eyes two *zhang* in length. The building materials must be good and time-proof. A great many people must be gathered and money collected from worshippers. The day came when treasures, technical workers and every other thing [was] ready. The work site became a battlefield with tens and thousands of people, numerous hammers over heads, and rocks down into the river, driving the monsters away from the deep water. The project was [in this way] pushed on day in and day out. Finally, the magnificent figure of Buddha was shaped. The sky became clear and bright as if the Buddha was giving his light to the world. When [the] waves were calmed down and dangers eliminated, the world became tranquil.<sup>57</sup>

Wei Gao's description of the events surrounding the construction, and their effects on the river, is at first sight somewhat perplexing. In particular, it is far from clear how he understands the Maitreya statue's effect on the river. At several points, indeed, his description is almost wholly prosaic: it was the rapids that were causing people to drown, and it was the accumulation of rocks from the Buddha's excavation in the river at the base of the cliffs that would calm those rapids. At the same time, the rapids are caused by "monsters" swallowing the boats, denizens of the river that are "chased away" by the falling rocks. The forces at work seem both geological and numinal: the turbulence of the river that brought such calamity to local trade was both fluid turbulence and "monsters," and one cannot easily be reduced down to another. Wei Gao does not, for example, appear to "believe" that the cause of the turbulence was river-monsters; rather, they *are* that turbulence, and are monstrous from the perspective of human suffering.

This is a similar ontology to Grib's scorpion on the outskirts of Lha sa: Princess Kong jo is not presented as believing that there really is a scorpion in the mountain; it's only deemed to look that way from a particular direction. Nonetheless, from that direction, the impact of its misfortune is real, and thus a temple is built to "suppress" its influence. In this sense, the malevolent nature of these geomantic influences is presented as a "dependent origination," in other words as dependent

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<sup>57</sup> Le shan state memorial park, Szechuan, 2004. This translation has been provided by the PRC state authorities at Le shan for tourist consumption. In this respect it is naturally suspect and clearly incorrect in some regards. The author's endeavors to unearth a scholarly treatment of this edict and its context have proven as fruitless as they were frustrating, but my thanks go to Prof. Stephan Feuchtwang and Prof. Tim Barrett for their critical comments on the Chinese geomantic context of this site.

on the relationship of the object to the perceiving mind, rather than being inherent within the object itself.

This dependence on perception is highlighted by Wei Gao when discussing the manner in which the Le shan Buddha suppressed the deadly rapids:

Then, why can the power of Buddha get rid of danger and calm waves down? We know that bad fortune is always caused by ill-will. If we can understand that we come from quietness, we would care nothing about the ups and down in our life. When having and not having do not weigh [upon us], whoever would take trouble to think too much about safety and danger? In a calm observance of the world, Buddha denies whatever [is] unreal and vulgar, [re]wards the kind and punish[es] the evil, teaches people each according to his intelligence, and helps those who have momentarily lost their way. If not done by such a saint as the Buddha, who else on earth can have these turbulent waves calmed down?<sup>58</sup>

Here then, a seeming third level of interpretation is added to Wei Gao's description of the construction project: the waters are subdued by the Buddha statue because they are a form of misfortune, because misfortune arises out of ill-will and other such emotional afflictions, and because a Buddha transcends such afflictions.

This is one amongst three different levels by which the author describes the causality of this event, just as key events in the life of Srong btsan sgam po are presented by Bsod nams rgyal mtshan and other writers as being perceived in three different ways: from the perspective of the Buddhas, from the perspective of the wise and visionary, and from the perspective of ordinary people.<sup>59</sup> Unlike Bsod nams rgyal mtshan, who tends to privilege one interpretation over others, Wei Gao tends not to imply that one explanation is "true" whilst the others are false. They are each "dependent perceptions." Nonetheless, he clearly expends most ink on this final discussion of the Buddha's power to subdue the afflictive illusions of this world, and it is here that the tract takes an explicitly didactic tone, as a way of seeing the Buddha's place in the world of men.

Wei Gao's rendering of the Buddhist logic that attended the Le shan construction makes explicit that which Tibetan literary sources tend to point towards but rarely render explicit: a Buddhist linking between the subjugation of "afflictive emotions" on the one hand and the subjugation of afflictive geomantic forces on the other. For Wei Gao, the process of subjugating malevolent geomantic forces is entirely akin to the practice of Buddhist moral discipline. Here, the "inner" mental disciplining of the mind and the "outer" geomantic subjugation of the landscape are equated within the Buddhist path: both are "obstructions" to spiritual awakening.

Thus, temple-founding – whether of the Central Temple of Lhasa, of Le shan or of the Gser khang chen mo – all speak to an acknowledged principle of Buddhist religious governance that embeds the familiar Buddhist project of the disciplining

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<sup>58</sup> See note 57.

<sup>59</sup> For example, see Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 161-62.

of afflictive emotions within the wider tableau of the realm of governing the land itself. As can be seen from the Central Temple legend, such a principle is presented as an integral part of kingly sovereignty. Like the monk Haitong's vision of Le shan and 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa's vision of Bla brang Monastery, the demoness divination is part of a wider Buddhist understanding of the relationship between moral thought and landscape: a lengthy if indirect discourse on the nature of afflictive emotions and their subjugation, *but one told at a state level*.

The governmental flavor of the supine demoness story is clear, most obviously in the sense that the temple at its heart would eventually be the emperor's tutelary temple, the basis of his law; but also in the manner in which Kong jo's divinatory skills are alluded to in texts such as the tenth-century *Pillar Testament* as a "calculation of governance" (*gtsug lag gi rtsis*).<sup>60</sup> Here, the term *gtsug lag* (literally, "head and limbs") – the basis of the term *gtsug lag khang* – was ironically seen by early Tibetologists such as Ariane Macdonald as denoting the indigenous pre-Buddhist religion of Tibet, but which R. A. Stein more convincingly argues was actually denoting the "good governance of the state."<sup>61</sup>

In this sense, the landscape within the medieval histories of dynastic Tibet acts as a complex metaphor for the mind itself, which has the possibility to be both driven with afflictive emotions, or to be the emergent basis for enlightenment. This ambiguity is reflected most clearly in the image of the Lake of O Plain, at the heart of the Srong btsan sgam po narrative. In the legend, Kong jo's vision of the lake as an obstruction (*bar chad*) to Buddhism is balanced by Srong btsan sgam po's vision of the lake as a nine-terraced *mchod rten* composed of rays of light,<sup>62</sup> which eventually becomes the supernatural mainstay of the Central Temple.

Whilst it is certainly possible to see this ambiguity in the presentation of the lake as a result of the compilation of several different traditions, a more integrated interpretation suggests itself, one consistent with other elements of the story. Here, the "lake" – as it is within much Tibetan metaphorical literature – is a metaphor for the mind in its various spiritual states. Before the arrival of the Buddhist *dharma*, it is variously characterized as an obstructive palace of Nāgas or, even earlier, as the lowest level of hell.<sup>63</sup> Nonetheless, the nine-layered *mchod rten* – representing the mind of the Buddha, as *mchod rten* classically do within the Mahāyāna – is inherent *but unmanifest*, within it. This ambiguity is resolved when we understand that, like the mind, it is only when the lake is ritually subdued – that is, brought under the discipline of the *dharma* – that its positive qualities emerge.

This dynamic polarity is one that appears repeatedly in the representation of Lha sa and Tibet as mythic landscapes. In the *Pillar Testament* – a "hidden treasure" text found in the Central Temple of Lhasa in 1048 and promulgated by Atiṣa

<sup>60</sup> See Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 553.

<sup>61</sup> See R. A. Stein, "On the Word *gCug-lag* and the Indigenous Religion," in *The History of Tibet*, ed. Alex McKay, vol. 1 (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 530-83.

<sup>62</sup> Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 264; also Taylor and Yuthok, *The Clear Mirror*, 167.

<sup>63</sup> Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 113; also Taylor and Yuthok, *The Clear Mirror*, 79.

(982-1054) – Kong jo’s divination of the Lha sa Plain contains similar ambiguities when she discusses the place that the Dmar po ri and Lcags po ri Hills in the center of the Lha sa Plain have in her vision of Tibet as like a prostrate demoness:

These two, *Dmar po ri* and *Lcags kha ri*, resemble the tails of a lion and a tiger tied together, and should be understood as the vicious disposition of the demoness. These two hillocks are, moreover, the bones of the heart of the demoness, which devour the life-force (*srog*) of sentient beings. These two mountains are in reality the body of Srong btsan sgam po, Lord of Compassion, and in reality the body of Nepalese princess Khri btsun, white Tārā, Bhṛkuṭi. The *king* must recognize that the palaces of these two, which resemble [*'dra ba*] Langkapuri, city of the *rākṣasa* demons, must be ritually suppressed.<sup>64</sup>

This emphasis on the importance of the process of ritual subjugation – in bringing out the divine reality of a landscape which initially manifests as a complex of inauspicious features – suggests that the demoness motif within the early dynastic stories needs to be understood as part of a wider narrative in which this demonic *appearance* is replaced by the emergent *reality* of Buddhahood. As the various elements of the demoness are suppressed, they are replaced by the various components of the *body of the Buddha*: the “fish” on the mountainside behind Mal gro representing the Buddha’s eyes; the “lotus” at the Rock of Dangkhar representing the Buddha’s tongue; the “protective umbrella” at ’Phan dkar gyi ri representing his body; the “wheel of *dharmā*” at the marsh of Stod lung representing his hands and feet. The land of Tibet as female demonic is suppressed, revealing instead Tibet the male figure of enlightenment.

## Conclusion: Variations on a Geomantic Theme

I have devoted this entire article to the interpretation of a particular theme within Tibetan royal myth: the geomantic examination of a future temple site. The hagiography of Srong btsan sgam po is far from being alone in this regard: a wide variety of Tibetan historical figures are represented as having faced similar chthonic challenges from the forces of landscape. Probably the most famous of these is the later Yar lung emperor Khri srong lde’u btsan who, just like Srong btsan sgam po, finds that his attempts to build a tutelary temple to Avalokiteśvara<sup>65</sup> – in this case at the monastery at Bsam yas to the south of Lha sa – are hampered by the local deities, who destroy in the night everything that was built in the day.

The narrative trope of the supine demoness has received little or no sustained attention from a strictly Buddhological viewpoint. Indeed, it is seen as having little

<sup>64</sup> From Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 553; italics mine.

<sup>65</sup> The central deity of Bsam yas is of course Vairocana. However, *The Clear Mirror* is specific that the *first* chapel of the Central Temple to be planned – and the one whose construction was the most directly impeded – was the Avalokiteśvara chapel. Moreover, the king’s first propitiation in this temple led the attendant protector statue of Hayagrīva to let out a neigh heard throughout two-thirds of Jambudvīpa, an extent which the presiding teacher Padmasambhava declared would be the extent of the king’s sovereign rule (Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 375-76).

to contribute to our understanding of the “great tradition” of Buddhism. Rather, it has been interpreted either as a “local” or “folklore-ish” narrative, as the misogynist prejudice of Buddhist monks, or (as we saw above) as referring to pre-Buddhist or non-Buddhist traditions. While such interpretations have their merits, they often fail to take seriously the simple truth universally asserted by Tibetan historians: that such divinations were part of an *imported Chinese tradition of geomancy*.<sup>66</sup> The Chinese geomantic traditions alluded to in works such as *The Clear Mirror*, moreover, contain a strong Buddhist framework, one which – I have argued – depicts the process of state formation as akin to the Buddhist project of taming the mind. Here then, as I have argued elsewhere for modern Tibetan monasticism, the Buddhist project of the ethical disciplining of minds is rendered inseparable from the geomantic disciplining of places.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> As discussed above, however, it would be a profound error to assume – simply because there is a clear indigenous and historical consensus on the Chinese *origins* of Tibetan geomancy – that Tibetan geomancy is simply a cipher of its Chinese cousin. Tibetan geomantic systems – especially since the medieval period – show several marked differences, especially from Chinese imperial *feng shui*. Here, it is worth noting the changes that have occurred during the post-dynastic period (eleventh-fourteenth centuries), and those characteristic of the medieval and modern period. Amongst the textual renditions of the supine demoness story in the post-dynastic period, several important variations are striking. This is actually a vast topic, previously covered in great detail by Per Sørensen in *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*; here, then, I will restrict my comments to distinctions between *The Clear Mirror* and the *Pillar Testament*. Firstly, while both texts agree on the existence of the four key geomantic animals (tiger, dragon, tortoise, and bird) to be found in the immediate vicinity of the Lha sa site (a fairly standard Chinese usage), the later *The Clear Mirror* replicates these at the distant level of the intermediate border-taming temples (T1: 35-38). Since, however, the organization of the concentric levels of these temples in the received versions of this latter text are clearly confused (see Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 261 n. 770), it would be difficult to assert that this difference constituted a different geomantic tradition as above bad redaction. More distinctive is *The Clear Mirror*'s inclusion of extra temples to suppress astrological and elemental influences: the sun, moon, planets, and lunar constellations (T1: 43); and the fire, water, and wind elements (T1: 44, 45, 46). These are also present in Mkhas pa lde'u's *Rgya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa* (penned in 1261 or after, according to Dan Martin, *Tibetan Histories: A Bibliography of Tibetan-Language Historical Works* [London: Serindia Publications, 1997], 43), but not in the *Pillar Testament* (Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 567, 637). Much more dramatic at this level are the distinctions between *The Clear Mirror* and the *Pillar Testament* in terms of their descriptions of the ritual nature of the subduing temples. Within the *Pillar Testament*, the subduing temples are designed to be built around named *maṇḍalas* (T2: 37-49). This is an element which is wholly absent from *The Clear Mirror*. These observations are of course merely preliminary, and would require further elaboration elsewhere, but arguably point to the emergence of distinct lineages of geomantic interpretation during the post-dynastic period, distinctions which probably have more to do with internal Tibetan dynamics than any cultural relationship with China.

<sup>67</sup> See Mills, *Identity, Ritual, and State*, chap.10.

## Tables

**Table 1: Kong jo's Divination in *The Clear Mirror*<sup>68</sup>**

<i>Signs of the Lha sa Heartlands (Inauspicious)</i>			
No.	Geomantic Interpretation	Place Name (direction)	Suppressing Architecture
1.	Palace of the Nāga kings and entrance to the lower realms.	Lake of O Plain ('o <i>thang gi mtsho</i> ).	Ra sa gtsug lag khang.
2.	Cave below is resting place of black Nāga demons ( <i>klu bdud</i> ).	Ra mo che Plain.	Ra mo che Temple and Lord ( <i>jo bo</i> ) statue.
3.	Meeting place of The'u rang spirits and ghosts ( <i>mi ma yin</i> ).	At the root of the poison tree at the Garden of the Moon ( <i>zla ba tshal</i> ).	Dispersed by the <i>chos skyong</i> Hayagrīva and Amṛtakunḍalī after the creation of the eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara statue.
4.	Habitual route of Btsan spirits.	Between upper valley of Grib (south) to upper valley of Nyang bran (north).	A great <i>mchod rten</i> at Bar chu kha.
5.	A crocodile ( <i>chu srin</i> ) pursuing a De'u stone/water spirit.	Ba lam grum pa ri (east).	Right-whorled conch shell ( <i>dung g.yas su 'khyil</i> ) facing it.
6.	An ogress thrusting forward her genitals (' <i>doms bzed pa</i> ).	Byang stod seng phug (southeast).	A phallic image ( <i>gsang ba'i rten</i> ) of Maheśvara facing it.
7.	Malign influence resembling a black scorpion pouncing on [its pray] ( <i>sdig pa nag po gzan la rub pa</i> ).	Shar ri (the eastern mountain) of Yug ma ri (southwest).	Statue of Ke ru <i>garuḍa</i> facing it.
8.	A black Bdud demon keeping watch.	Rock of Shün ( <i>shun gyi brag</i> ) (west).	Stone <i>mchod rten</i> facing it.
9.	Elephant engaged in battle.	Dbus ri, central mountain of Nyang bran and Dogs te (north).	A stone lion facing it.
<i>Signs of the Lha sa Heartlands (Auspicious)</i>			
No.	Geomantic Interpretation	Place Name (direction)	Suppressing Architecture
10.	Mountain resembling a <i>mchod rten</i> .	Ban khos bang ba ri (east).	After suppression of items 1-9.
11.	Mountain resembling a heap of jewels.	Mountain behind Grib (south).	After suppression of items 1-9.

<sup>68</sup> See Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography* 253-63, 275-80.

12.	Mountain resembling a skull-cup on a tripod.	Brang phu in Stod lung (west).	After suppression of items 1-9.
13.	Mountain resembling lotus in bloom.	Lha'i phu'i ri of Dogs te/Dge te (west).	After suppression of items 1-9.
14.	Mountain resembling an umbrella for the head of the Buddha.	Mount 'Phan dkar ri in Nyang bran.	After suppression of items 1-9.
15.	Fish representing the Buddha's eyes.	Mountain behind Mal grong.	After suppression of items 1-9.
16.	Lotus representing the Buddha's tongue.	Rock of Dangkhar ( <i>mdangs mkhar gyi brag</i> ).	After suppression of items 1-9.
17.	Conch shell representing the Buddha's speech.	Glacier at Grib.	After suppression of items 1-9.
18.	Vase representing the Buddha's neck.	On Mountain of Rdzong btsan.	After suppression of items 1-9.
19.	Endless knot representing the Buddha's mind.	On Yug ma ri.	After suppression of items 1-9.
20.	Victory Banner representing the Buddha's body.	On Mount 'Phan dkar.	After suppression of items 1-9.
21.	Wheel representing the Buddha's hands and feet.	Marsh of Brang phu at Stod lung.	After suppression of items 1-9.
22.	Iron mine.	Ridge at Gar pa'i jo mo ze ze.	After suppression of items 1-9.
23.	Copper mine.	Ra ga brag.	After suppression of items 1-9.
24.	Silver mine.	Rock of La dong.	After suppression of items 1-9.
25.	Gold mine.	Rock of Lcags kha ri.	After suppression of items 1-9.
25.	Gray She-Tiger ( <i>stag skya bo</i> ).	Dga' bo gdong 'og ma (east).	After suppression of items 1-9.
26.	Blue Turquoise Dragon ( <i>g.yu 'brug sngon mo</i> ).	South.	After suppression of items 1-9.
27.	Red Bird ( <i>bya dmar po</i> ).	Rock of Shün ( <i>shun gyi brag</i> ) (west).	After suppression of items 1-9.
28.	Black Turtle ( <i>rus sbal nag po</i> ).	Pha bong kha in Nyang bran (north).	After suppression of items 1-9.

***Binding the Supine Demoness (1): The Lha sa Heartlands***

No.	Geomantic Interpretation	Place Name (direction)	Suppressing Architecture
29.	Heart blood of the demoness.	Plain of Milk ('o ma'i thang).	Ra sa gtsug lag khang ('phrul snang).

30.	Bones of the demoness' heart ( <i>snying gi rus pa</i> ).	Three mountains of Lha sa (Dmar po ri, Lcags kha ri, and Bha ma ri).	
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***Binding the Supine Demoness (2): The District-Controlling Temples (ru gnon gyi lha khang)***

No.	Geomantic Interpretation	Place Name (direction)	Suppressing Architecture
31.	Left Shoulder.	G.yo ru.	Khra 'brug bkra shis byams snyoms; Tsan thang temple as subsidiary; Phug po che meditation cave as subsidiary.
32.	Right Shoulder.	Dbu ru, cave of Rtse no gdong.	Ka rtstal shrine; Rtse no gdong shrine as subsidiary; Sher shang gi rti meditation cave as subsidiary.
33.	Left Hip.	Cave of Grom pa rgyang.	Grub pa rgyal dri ma nam dag shrine; 'Bre shrine as subsidiary; meditation cave of Rgyang.
34.	Right Hip.	G.yas ru.	Btsang 'brang byang chub dge gnas; Dge dung shrine as subsidiary; rock cave of Rtse as meditation cave.

***Binding the Supine Demoness (3): The Border-Taming Temples (mtha' 'dul gyi lha khang)***

No.	Geomantic Interpretation	Place Name (direction)	Suppressing Architecture
35.	Left Elbow.	Lho brag.	Mkhon mthing gser gyi lha khang upon the crest of the Southern Dragon.
36.	Right Elbow.	Bu chu.	Gong po'i bu chu shrine upon the head of the Eastern Tiger.
37.	Left Knee.		Spra dun rtse, on the head of the Northern Tortoise.
38.	Right Knee.		Byams chen dge rgyas, on the back of the Red Bird of the west.

***Binding the Supine Demoness (4): Further-Taming Temples (yang 'dul gyi lha khang)***

No.	Geomantic Interpretation	Place Name (direction)	Suppressing Architecture
39.	Left Hand.	Bum thang, in the south.	Bum thang skyer chu shrine, under the supervision of craftsmen of To dkar.
40.	Right Hand.	Glang thang sgron ma (Khams).	Shrine, under the supervision of Mi nyag craftsmen.
41.	Left Foot.	To the north.	Tshangs pa rlung gnon, under the supervision of Sba dpal dbyang of Hor.
42.	Right Foot.	In Kashmir ( <i>kha che</i> ).	Mtshal rig shes rab sgron ma, under supervision of the Nepalese.



43.	Sun, moon, planets, and lunar constellations.	To the east.	Ka chu, Kang chu, Gling chu shrines.
44.	Suppress the fire element.	To the south.	Snyal snang gro and Gling thang shrines to Me lha (Agni).
45.	Suppress the water element.	To the west.	Gu lang (Paśupatināth outside Kathmandu) and Shing kun (Svayambhūnāth), in order to secure the border between Nepal and Tibet.
46.	Suppress the wind element.	To the north.	Dge ri and Dpal ri, to bind to oath the deities, Nāgas, and ogres.

**Table 2: Kong jo's Divination in the Pillar Testament<sup>69</sup>**

<i>Signs of the Lha sa Heartlands (Inauspicious)</i>			
No.	Geomantic Interpretation	Place Name (direction)	Suppressing Architecture
1.	Palace of the Nāga kings.	Lake of O Plain ('o thang gi mtsho).	Ra sa gtsug lag khang.
2.	Like Langkapuri, city of Rākṣasas.	Palaces of Srong btsan sgam po and Princess Khri btsun.	
3.	Palace of the Nāgas.	Cave below Ra mo che Plain.	Lord (jo bo) statue in Ra mo che Temple.
4.	Sleeping place of the Ma mo spirits.	Brag lha, north-west side of Lcags kha ri.	Image of Able Rock Protector (brag lha mgon po).
5.	Habitual route of Klu btsan spirits.	Between upper valley of Grib phu (south) to upper valley of Nyang bran (north).	A white mchod rten.
6.	Meeting place of The'u rang spirits and 'Dre/Dungeon of the 'Dre.	Dkar chung gla ba tshal.	Destroy (shig).
7.	Terrestrial Antagonist: a water-demon (chu srin) standing up.	East: Mount Ngan lam gron pa.	A conch shell (dung kha) facing (ston) it.
8.	Terrestrial Antagonist: an ogress thrusting forward her genitals ('doms bzed pa).	East: Bye ma lung stong (stod).	A phallus (līṅga) of Maheśvara facing it.
9.	Terrestrial Antagonist: black scorpion pouncing on [its pray] (sdig pa nag po gzan la rub pa).	South: Dkar chung yug ma ri.	A garuḍa facing it.
10.	Terrestrial Antagonist: a black Bdud demon keeping watch.	West: summit of Rock of Shūn (shun gyi brag te'u).	A red mchod rten facing it.

<sup>69</sup> See Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography*, 553-60.

11.	Terrestrial Antagonist: elephant engaged in battle.	North: central mountain of Nyang bran and Dor te'u.	A lion facing it.
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***Signs of the Lha sa Heartlands (Auspicious)***

No.	Geomantic Interpretation	Place Name (direction)	Suppressing Architecture
12.	Mountain resembling heap of lotuses.	East, behind mountains of 3.	Combined, these “bring together and assemble bodhisattvas and magnanimous peoples, along with the wealth of the four directions accumulating here.”
13.	Mountain resembling heap of jewels.	South, behind mountains of 3.	
14.	Mountain resembling erected <i>mchod rten</i> .	West, behind mountains of 3.	
15.	Mountain resembling skull-bowl on tripod.	North, behind mountains of 3.	
16.	Mountain resembling an umbrella for the head of the Buddha.	Mount 'Phan dkar ri in Nyang bran.	Combined, these are the Buddha's body ( <i>sku</i> ).
17.	Fish representing the Buddha's eyes.	Mount Dgos in the east.	
18.	Conch shell representing the Buddha's speech.	Mount Ldong brtsan in the south.	
19.	Lotus representing the Buddha's tongue.	Mount Rdzong btsan.	
20.	Vase representing the Buddha's neck.	Rock of Grib rdzong.	
21.	Endless knot representing the Buddha's mind.	Mount Sgo phu.	
22.	Victory Banner representing the Buddha's body.	Brang phu in the west.	
23.	Wheel representing the Buddha's hands and feet.	Stod lung mda'.	
24.	Copper mine.	Rock of Raga ( <i>ra ga brag</i> ) of Dog sde.	
25.	Iron mine.	Sgo phu of Dog sde.	
26.	Silver mine.	Rock of La dong.	
27.	Gold mine.	Rock of Lcags kha ri.	

28.	Gray She-Tiger ( <i>stag skya bo</i> )	East of O Plain (' <i>o thang</i> ).	These animals are the “four gods” ( <i>lha bzhi</i> ) of the Ra sa gtsug lag khang. They are depicted as being initially “obstructed” by the “terrestrial antagonists” ( <i>sa dgra</i> , see items 8-12), which stand in the same line of sight ( <i>thad ka na</i> ).
29.	Blue Turquoise Dragon ( <i>g.yu 'brug sngon mo</i> ).	South of O Plain (' <i>o thang</i> ).	
30.	Red Bird ( <i>bya dmar po</i> ).	West of O Plain (' <i>o thang</i> ).	
31.	Black Turtle ( <i>rus sbal nag po</i> ).	North of O Plain (' <i>o thang</i> ).	

***Binding the Supine Demoness (1): The Lha sa Heartlands***

No.	Geomantic Interpretation	Place Name (direction)	Suppressing Architecture
32.	Heart blood of the demoness.	Plain of Milk (' <i>o ma 'i thang</i> ).	Central Temple of Lhasa ( <i>lha sa gtsug lag khang</i> ).
33.	Nipples of the demoness/vein of her life force.	Three mountains of Lha sa (Dmar po ri, Lcags kha ri, and Bha ma ri).	Central Temple of Lhasa ( <i>lha sa gtsug lag khang</i> ).
34.	The retinue (' <i>khor</i> ) of the demoness.	Mountains in four directions with four summits pointing at Lha sa.	
35.	Mouth of the demoness.	Four tortoise-like mountains around Lha sa.	
36.	Heart-Bones/vicious disposition of demoness.	Dmar po ri and Lcags kha ri, like the tail of a lion and tiger tied together.	

***Binding the Supine Demoness (2): District-Controlling Temples (ru gnon gyi lha khang)***

No.	Geomantic Interpretation	Place Name (direction)	Suppressing Architecture
37.	Left Shoulder.	G.yo ru.	Khra 'brug Temple: <i>maṇḍala</i> of the Eight Great Planets.
38.	Right Shoulder.	Dbu ru.	Ka rtsal shrine: <i>maṇḍala</i> of the twenty-one Lay Devotees.
39.	Left Hip.	G.yon ru	Grum pa rgyal Temple: <i>maṇḍala</i> of Hevajra.

40.	Right Hip.	G.yas ru.	Btsang 'brang Temple: <i>maṅḍala</i> of the Four Directional Guardian Kings.
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***Binding the Supine Demoness (3): The Border-Taming Temples (mtha' 'dul gyi lha khang)***

No.	Geomantic Interpretation	Place Name (direction)	Suppressing Architecture
41.	Left Elbow.	Lho brag (southwest).	Mkhon mthil Temple: <i>maṅḍala</i> of the Five Buddha families.
42.	Right Elbow.	Sgon bu (southeast).	Bur chud Temple: <i>maṅḍala</i> of Black Mahākāla.
43.	Left Knee.	Bum thang.	Bum thang skyer chu Temple: <i>maṅḍala</i> of Lotus Buddha-family ( <i>padma dbang</i> ).
44.	Right Knee.	Unspecified.	Byang tshal phyi dbang chen Temple: <i>maṅḍala</i> of the Jewel Buddha-family ( <i>rin po che</i> ).

***Binding the Supine Demoness (4): Further-Taming Temples (yang 'dul gyi lha khang)***

No.	Geomantic Interpretation	Place Name (direction)	Suppressing Architecture
45.	Left Hand.	Bal chad.	Ka brag Temple: <i>maṅḍala</i> of Vaiśravaṇa.
46.	Right Hand.	East: Mdo khams.	Klong thang sgröl ma Temple: <i>maṅḍala</i> of Bdud 'dul.
47.	Left Foot.	Southwest.	Byams pa sprin Temple: <i>maṅḍala</i> of the Earth Goddess.
48.	Right Foot.	Northwest.	Spran dun rtse Temple: <i>maṅḍala</i> of the nine astrological signs ( <i>gtsug lag</i> ).
49.	Inner cavity ( <i>sbugs</i> ).		Tshangs pa rlung gnon Temple: no <i>maṅḍala</i> specified.

## Glossary

**Note:** glossary entries are organized in Tibetan alphabetical order. All entries list the following information in this order: THDL Extended Wylie transliteration of the term, THDL Phonetic rendering of the term, English translation, equivalents in other languages, dates when applicable, and type.

Ka					
Wylie	Phonetics	English	Other	Dates	Type
<i>ka chu</i>	Kachu				Place
<i>ka brag</i>	Kadrak				Building
<i>ka rtsal</i>	Katsel				Building
<i>kang chu</i>	Kangchu				Place
<i>dkar chung gla ba tshal</i>	Karchung Lawa Tsel				Place
<i>ke ru</i>	keru	garuḍa-bird			Term
<i>kong jo</i>	Kongjo				Person
<i>klu</i>	lu	water spirit	San. <i>nāga</i>		Term
<i>klu khang</i>	Lukhang	nāga-shrine			Building
<i>klu bdud</i>	ludü	black nāga demon			Term
<i>klong thang sgrol ma lha khang</i>	Longtang Drölma Lhakhang	Longtang Drölma Temple			Building
<i>dkar chung yug ma ri</i>	Karchung Yukma Ri				Place
<i>dkar zha</i>	Karzha				Place
<i>bka' chems ka khol ma</i>	Kachem Kakhölma	Pillar Testament			Text
<i>bkra shis rtags</i>	trashi tak	auspicious signs			Term
<i>bkra shis rtags brgyad</i>	trashi takgyé	eight auspicious signs			Term
<i>rkong po</i>	Kongpo				Place
<i>sku</i>	ku				Term
<i>skyid chu</i>	Kyichu				River
<i>skye dman</i>	kyemen	low-born			Term
Kha					
Wylie	Phonetics	English	Other	Dates	Type
<i>kha che</i>	Khaché	Kashmir			Place
<i>khag gnon</i>	khaknön	bind down			Term
<i>khams</i>	Kham				Place
<i>khra 'brug</i>	Trandruk				Building
<i>khra 'brug bkra shis byams snyoms</i>	Trandruk Trashi Jamnyom				Place
<i>khri btsun</i>	Tritsün				Person
<i>khri srong lde'u btsan</i>	Trisong Deutsen				Person
<i>m khas pa lde'u</i>	Khepa Deu				Person
<i>m khon mthing gser gyi lha khang</i>	Khönting Sergyi Lhakhang				Building

<i>mkhon mthil</i>	Khöntil				Building
<i>'khor</i>	khor	retinue			Term
<b>Ga</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>gar pa 'i jo mo ze ze</i>	Garpé Jomo Zezé				Mountain
<i>gu ru rin po che</i>	Guru Rinpoché		San. <i>Padmasambhava</i>		Person
<i>gu lang</i>	Gulang		San. <i>Paśupatināth</i>		Place
<i>gong po 'i bu chu</i>	Gongpö Buchu				Place
<i>gyab ri mal grong</i>	Gyapri Meldrong				Mountain
<i>grib</i>	Drip				Place
<i>grib phu</i>	Drippu				Place
<i>grib rdzong</i>	Dripdzong				Mountain
<i>grub thob dngos grub</i>	Druptop Ngödrupe			c. 1100s?	Person
<i>grub pa rgyal dri ma rnam dag</i>	Druppa Gyel Drima Namdak				Place
<i>grum pa rgyal</i>	Drumpa Gyel				Building
<i>grom pa rgyang</i>	Drompa Gyang				Place
<i>gla ba tshal</i>	Lawa Tsel				Place
<i>glang thang sgron ma</i>	Langtang Drönma				Place
<i>glang dar ma</i>	Langdarma				Person
<i>gling chu</i>	Lingchu				Place
<i>gling thang</i>	Lingtang				Place
<i>dga' ldan pho brang</i>	Ganden Potrang				Organization
<i>dga' bo gdong 'og ma</i>	gawo dong okma				Term
<i>dge te</i>	Geté				Place
<i>dge dung</i>	Gedung				Place
<i>dge ri</i>	Geri				Place
<i>dge lugs pa</i>	Gelukpa				Organization
<i>dgos</i>	Gö				Mountain
<i>rgya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa</i>	<i>Gyabökyi Chöjung Gyepa</i>				Text
<i>rgyang</i>	Gyang				Place
<i>rgyal pa gdan la bzhugs pa</i>	gyelpa denla zhukpa	king poised on a seat			Term
<i>rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long</i>	<i>Gyelrap Selwé Melong</i>	<i>The Clear Mirror of Royal Genealogy</i>			Text
<i>sgo phu</i>	Gopu				Mountain
<i>sgon bu</i>	Gönbu				Place
<b>Nga</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>ngan lam gron pa</i>	Ngenlam Drönpa				Place
<i>mnga' ris</i>	Ngari				Place

<b>Ca</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>lcags kha ri</i>	Chakkhari				Mountain
<i>lcags po ri</i>	Chakpori				Mountain
<i>lcags phur sa la btap pa</i>	chakpur sala tappa	iron nail stuck into the ground			Term
<b>Cha</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>chu srin</i>	chusin	crocodile; water-demon			Term
<i>chos skyong</i>	chökyong	dharma protector			Term
<i>mchod rten</i>	chöten		San. <i>stüpa</i>		Term
<b>Ja</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>jo khang</i>	Jokhang	House of the Lord			Building
<i>jo bo</i>	jowo	Lord			Term
<i>'jam dbyangs bzhad pa</i>	Jamyang Zhepa			1728-1791	Person
<b>Nya</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>nyang bran</i>	Nyangdren				Valley
<i>nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer</i>	Nyangrel Nyima Özer			1124-1192?	Person
<i>rnying ma</i>	Nyingma				Organization
<i>snyal snang gro</i>	Nyelngandro				Place
<i>snying gi rus pa</i>	nyinggi rüpa	bones of the demoness' heart			Term
<b>Ta</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>to dkar</i>	Tokar				Clan
<i>gter ma</i>	terma	hidden treasure texts			Term
<i>rten 'brel</i>	tendrel	auspicious sign			Term
<i>stag skya bo</i>	tak kyawo				Term
<i>stod lung</i>	Tölung				Valley
<i>stod lung mda'</i>	Tölung Da				Place
<i>ston</i>	tön	facing			Term
<i>bstan pa 'i rtsa ba chos sgor zhugs stangs dang / bstab pa 'i bsti gnas gtsug lag khang bzhegs thabs</i>	<i>Tenpé Tsawa Chögor Zhuktang dang, Tappé Tiné Tsuklakkhang Zhektap</i>				Text
<b>Tha</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>thad ka na</i>	tekana	in the same line			Term
<i>thub bstan rgya mtsho</i>	Tupten Gyatso				Person

<i>thub pa brag lha mgon po</i>	Tuppa Draklha Gönpö	Able Rock Protector			Name
<i>the'u rang</i>	Teurang	spirit			Term
<i>mtha' 'dul gyi gtsug lag khang</i>	Tandülgyi Tsuklakkhang				Building
<i>mtha' 'dul gyi lha khang</i>	tandülgyi lhakhang	border-taming temple			Term
<b>Da</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>dar dkar gyi yol ba</i>	darkargyi yölwa	curtain [made] of white silk drawn			Term
<i>dung g.yas su 'khyil</i>	dung yesu khyil	right whorled conch shell			Term
<i>de'u</i>	deu				Term
<i>dog sde</i>	Dokdé				Place
<i>dogs te</i>	Dokté				Place
<i>dor te'u</i>	Dorteu				Place
<i>dung kha</i>	dungkha	conch shell			Term
<i>dwags po</i>	Dakpo				Place
<i>dre'u chu 'thung pa</i>	dreu chutungpa	mule drinking water			Term
<i>bdud</i>	dü	demon			Term
<i>bdud 'dul</i>	Dündül				Deity
<i>mdangs mkhar</i>	Dangkhar				Place
<i>mdo khams</i>	Dokham				Place
<i>'dam</i>	Dam				Place
<i>'doms bzed pa</i>	dom zepa	thrusting forward her genitals			Term
<i>'dra ba</i>	drawa	resemble			Term
<i>ldong brtsan</i>	Dongtsen				Mountain
<i>sdig pa nag po gzan la rub pa</i>	dikpa nakpo zenla rupa	black scorpion pouncing on [its pray]			Term
<b>Na</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>gnam ri slon mtshan</i>	Namri Löntsen			r. c. 600-618	Person
<b>Pa</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>padma dbang</i>	pema wang	Lotus Buddha-family			Term
<i>po ta la</i>	Potala				Building
<i>dpal gyi rdo rje</i>	Pelgyi Dorjé				Person
<i>dpal ri</i>	Pelri				Place
<i>spra dun rtse</i>	Tradüntsé				Place
<i>spran dun rtse</i>	Drendüntsé				Building



<b>Pha</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>pha bong kha</i>	Pabongkha				Monastery
<i>phag mo gru</i>	Pakmodru				Organization
<i>phan ju ri</i>	Penjuri				Mountain
<i>phug po che</i>	Pukpoché				Place
<i>'phan dkar</i>	Penkar				Mountain
<i>'phan dkar gyi ri</i>	Penkargyi Ri				Mountain
<i>'phan dkar ri</i>	Penkarri				Mountain
<i>'phrul snang</i>	Trülñang				Term
<b>Ba</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>ba lam grum pa ri</i>	Balam Drumpa Ri				Mountain
<i>ban khos bang ba ri</i>	Benkhö Bangwa Ri				Mountain
<i>bar chad</i>	barché	obstacle; obstruction			Term
<i>bar chu kha</i>	Barchukha				Place
<i>bal chad</i>	Belché				Place
<i>bu chu</i>	Buchu				Place
<i>bu ston</i>	Butön			1290-1364	Person
<i>bum thang</i>	Bumtang				Place
<i>bum thang skyer chu</i>	Bumtang Kyerchu				Place
<i>bur chud</i>	Burchü				Building
<i>bai ñürya dkar po</i>	<i>Baidurya Karpo</i>	<i>The White Beryl</i>			Text
<i>bong po ri</i>	Bongpori				Mountain
<i>bon</i>	Bön				Organization
<i>bya skya dkar po ri</i>	Jakya Karpo Ri				Mountain
<i>bya mas bu la sgab pa</i>	jamé bula gappa	brood-hen covering its children			Term
<i>bya dmar po</i>	ja marpo	red bird			Term
<i>byang stod seng phug</i>	jangtö sengpuk				Term
<i>byang tshal phyi dbang chen</i>	Jangtsel Chi Wangchen				Building
<i>byams chen dge rgyas</i>	Jamchen Gegyé				Place
<i>byams pa sprin</i>	Jampa Trin				Building
<i>byung rtsis</i>	jungtsi	elemental calculus			Term
<i>bye ma lung stong (lung stod)</i>	Jema Lungtong (Lungtö)				Place
<i>brag lha klu sgug</i>	Draklha Luguk				Building
<i>brag lha mgon po</i>	Draklha Gönpö	Able Rock Protector			Deity
<i>brang phu</i>	drangpu				Term
<i>bla</i>	la	life-force			Term
<i>bla gnas</i>	lané	vitality place			Term
<i>bla brang</i>	Labrang				Monastery

<i>bla brang bkra shis 'khyil</i>	Labrang Trashikyil				Monastery
<i>bla ma</i>	lama				Term
<i>bha ma ri</i>	Bhamari				Mountain
<i>dbu ru</i>	Uru				Place
<i>dbus ri</i>	Ūri				Mountain
<i>'bras spungs</i>	Drepung				Monastery
<i>'bre</i>	Dré				Place
<i>sba dpal dbyang</i>	Ba Pelyang				Clan
<i>sbugs</i>	buk	inner cavity			Term
<b>Ma</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>ma ni bka' 'bum</i>	<i>Mani Kabum</i>				Text
<i>ma mo</i>	mamo				Term
<i>mal gro</i>	Meldro				Place
<i>mal gro gzi can</i>	Meldro Zichen				Deity
<i>mal grong</i>	Meldrong				Mountain
<i>mi nyag</i>	Minyak				Place
<i>mi ma yin</i>	mi mayin	ghost			Term
<i>me yar</i>	Meyar				Place
<i>me lha</i>	Melha		San. Agni		Deity
<i>myang</i>	Nyang				Place
<i>dmar po ri</i>	Marpori				Mountain
<i>sman ri</i>	Menri				Mountain
<b>Tsa</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>tsa ri</i>	Tsari				Mountain
<i>tsang po</i>	Tsangpo				Valley
<i>tsan thang</i>	Tsentang				Building
<i>gtsug lag</i>	tsuklak	head and limbs			Term
<i>gtsug lag khang</i>	Tsuklakkhang	Central Temple			Building
<i>gtsug lag gi rtsis</i>	tsuklakgi tsi	calculation of governance			Term
<i>btsang 'brang</i>	Tsangdrang				Place
<i>btsang 'brang byang chub dge gnas</i>	Tsangdrang Jangchup Gené				Place
<i>btsan</i>	tsen				Term
<i>btsun ma dar dkar gyi na bza' gsol ba</i>	tsünma darkargyi napza sölwa	queen dressed in white silk			Term
<i>rtse</i>	Tsé				Place
<i>rtse no gdong</i>	Tsenodong				Place
<b>Tsha</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>tshangs pa rlung gnon</i>	Tsangpa Lungnön				Building

<i>tsher rdzong rse</i>	Tserdzongtsé				Deity
<i>mtshal rig shes rab sgron ma</i>	Tselrik Sherap Drönma				Place
<b>Dza</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>rdzong btsan</i>	Dzongtsen				Mountain
<b>Wa</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>weng chen kong jo</i>	Wengchen Kongjo				Person
<b>Zha</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>zhang zhung</i>	Zhangzhung				Place
<i>zhabs rjes</i>	Zhapjé				Monastery
<i>gzhong</i>	zhong	golden tub			Term
<b>Za</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>zla ba tshal</i>	Dawa Tsel	The Garden of the Moon			Place
<b>'A</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>'o thang</i>	Otang	O Plain			Place
<i>'o thang gi mtsho</i>	Otanggi Tso	Lake of O Plain			Place
<i>'o ma 'i thang</i>	Omé Tang	Plain of Milk			Place
<b>Ya</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>yang 'dul gyi lha khang</i>	yangdülgyi lhakhang	further-taming temple			Term
<i>yar lung</i>	Yarlung				Valley
<i>yug ma ri</i>	Yukmari				Mountain
<i>yum bu lag khang</i>	Yumbu Lakkhang				Place
<i>g.yas ru</i>	Yeru				Place
<i>g.yu 'brug sngon mo</i>	yudruk ngönmo	blue turquoise dragon			Term
<i>g.yo ru</i>	Yoru				Place
<i>g.yon ru</i>	Yönru				Place
<b>Ra</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>ra ga</i>	Raga				Place
<i>ra ga brag</i>	Ragadrak				Place
<i>ra mo che</i>	Ramoché				Place; Building
<i>ra sa gtsug lag khang</i>	Rasa Tsuklakkhang				Building
<i>ri chung</i>	Richung				Mountain
<i>ri chen spungs pa</i>	rinchen pungpa	mound of jewels			Term
<i>ri nag</i>	Rinak				Mountain

<i>rin po che</i>	rinpoché				Term
<i>ru gnon gyi lha khang</i>	runöngyi lhakhang	district-controlling temple			Term
<i>rus sbal nag po</i>	Rübel Nakpo				Term
<b>La</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>la dong</i>	Ladong				Place
<b>Sha</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>shākya 'od</i>	Shakya Ö				Person
<i>shar ri</i>	Sharri				Mountain
<i>shig</i>	shik	destroy			Term
<i>shing kun</i>	Shingkün		San. <i>Svayambhūnāth</i>		Place
<i>shun gyi brag</i>	Shüngyi Drak	Rock of Shün			Place
<i>shun gyi brag te 'u</i>	Shüngyi Drak Teu	Rock of Shün			Place
<i>sher shang gi rti</i>	Shershang Girti				Place
<b>Sa</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>sa skya</i>	Sakya				Organization
<i>sa dgra</i>	sadra	earth-enemy			Term
<i>sa spyad</i>	saché	earth examination			Term
<i>sangs rgyas rgya mtsho</i>	Sanggyé Gyatso				Person
<i>si tu rin po che</i>	Situ Rinpoché			1954-	Person
<i>sum pa</i>	Sumpa				Place
<i>srin mo</i>	sinmo	demoness			Term
<i>srog</i>	sok	life-force			Term
<i>srong btsan sgam po</i>	Songtsen Gampo				Person
<i>gsang ba 'i rten</i>	sangwé ten	phallic image			Term
<i>gser khang chen mo</i>	Serkhang Chenmo				Statue
<i>bsam yas</i>	Samyé				Monastery
<i>bsod nams rgyal mtshan</i>	Sönam Gyeltsen			1312-1375	Person
<b>Ha</b>					
<b>Wylie</b>	<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Type</b>
<i>has po ri</i>	Hepori				Mountain
<i>hor</i>	Hor				Place
<i>lha bzhi</i>	lhazhi	four gods			Term
<i>lha sa</i>	Lhasa				Place
<i>lha sa gtsug lag khang</i>	Lhasa Tsuklakkhang	Central Temple of Lhasa			Building
<i>lha 'i phu 'i ri</i>	Lhepüri				Mountain
<i>lho brag</i>	Lhodrak				Place

Sanskrit					
Wylie	Phonetics	English	Sanskrit	Dates	Type
			<i>Amṛtakunḍalī</i>		Deity
			<i>Atiśa</i>	982-1054	Place
			<i>Avalokiteśvara</i>		Deity
			<i>bhikṣu</i>		Term
			<i>Bhṛkuṭi</i>		Person
			<i>Buddha</i>		Deity
			<i>dharmā</i>		Term
			<i>garuḍa</i>		Term
			<i>Hayagrīva</i>		Deity
			<i>Hevajra</i>		Deity
			<i>Jambudvīpa</i>		Place
			<i>Kālacakra</i>		Term
		three-sided spike	<i>kīla</i>		Term
			<i>Laikapuri</i>		Place
		phallus	<i>liṅga</i>		Term
			<i>Mahākāla</i>		Deity
			<i>Mahāyāna</i>		Doxographical Category
			<i>Maheśvara</i>		Deity
			<i>Maitreya</i>		Deity
			<i>maṅḍala</i>		Term
			<i>Maudgalyāyana</i>		Person
			<i>rākṣasa</i>		Term
			<i>siddha</i>		Term
			<i>Śākyamuni</i>		Deity
			<i>Śariputra</i>		Deity
			<i>śiva liṅga</i>		Term
			<i>Tārā</i>		Deity
			<i>Vairocana</i>		Deity
			<i>Vaiśravaṇa</i>		Deity
			<i>Vajravārāhī</i>		Deity
			<i>yogin</i>		Term
Chinese					
Wylie	Phonetics	English	Chinese	Dates	Type
			<i>chiin</i>		Term
			<i>Chu</i>		Place
			<i>Dunhuang</i>		Place
			<i>Emei shan</i>		Mountain
			<i>feng shui</i>		Term
			<i>Haitong</i>		Person
			<i>Jianwei</i>		Place

			<i>Kaiyuan</i>		Term
			<i>Le shan</i>		Place
			<i>Minjiang</i>		River
			<i>Shu</i>		Place
			<i>Sichuan</i>		Place
			<i>Tang</i>		Dynasty
			<i>T'ang</i>		Dynasty
			<i>Two Hus</i>		Place
			<i>Wan</i>		Place
			<i>Wei Gao</i>		Person
			<i>Wu</i>		Place
			<i>Xuanzong</i>	685-762	Person
			<i>Yuxi He</i>		River
			<i>zhang</i>		Term
			<i>Zhe</i>		Place

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