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The Bulletin of Theology seeks to serve the specialist as well as the general reader with an interest in the field of study. The motif portraying the Stupa on the mountains suggests the dimensions of the field —
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Kangchenzönga: Secular and Buddhist perceptions of the mountain deity of Sikkim among the Lhapos

— Anna Balići Džonjiga

One day, my teacher Lopen Dzogyal mentioned that there are many more spirits and deities inhabiting the environment in Sikkim than there are human beings. Indeed, nearly every mountain, hilltop, prominent rock, mountain pass, crevasse, valley, old tree, lake, river, and stream seems to be the abode of some supernatural being. The mountain deity inhabiting the peak of Mount Kangchenzönga (gang sta mdzad rna) is considered to be their chief and his worship is an important aspect of rituals everywhere among Sikkimese Buddhists. The deity, usually simply referred to as Dzog-rga, can be invoked in various capacities and rituals held in his honour may take many forms. This multiplicity of identities not only helped create a national symbol among a complex multi-ethnic society when Sikkim was still an independent kingdom but as we will see, still serves to unite all levels of ritual tendencies within the Lhopo community.

The political dimension of mountain deities in terms of national identity in Tibet has been discussed by Siemon Karmay and Dzog-rga is no exception. In this respect Karmay distinguishes between two types of mountain cults. The first is the secular and unwritten tradition of the laitymen whereby the mountain deity is the subject of propi-

1. The descendants of the Tibetan immigrants who came to Sikkim in different waves from the 15th century onwards and established the kingdom in the 17th called themselves Lhapa (the pu people from the South) but are generally referred to as Bhutia, Sikkimese or even Desjona. The term Bhutia however is misleading as it can refer to any Buddhist highlanders of Tibetan origin living in the Himalayas and the term Sikkimese may lead to confusion considering that the Lhapos are now a minority in the state. Consequently, I will hereafter refer to them as Lhapos which seem to be the term that they themselves prefer.

2. Dzogyal Acharya Bhutia was simultaneously my teacher, informant, research assistant, translator and friend during the whole period of fieldwork research carried out in his village of Thgangdem.

3. It should be pointed out that although Sikkimese do worship Kangchenzönga, they do not worship the mountain itself but the deity who inhabits that mountain.

4. Kang means mountain, chen means peak, dri means river and nas five.

5. The Kingdom of Sikkim was a protectorate of the British Government from 1870 until 1947. It was integrated into the Union of India and became its 31st State in 1975.
tiation for mundane pursuits by the local people. It is "a survival of the ancient traditions which the spread of Buddhism never usually affected. Indeed, it is deeply rooted and more marked among Tibetan communities in the border areas, where the Bon religion is often, dominant and where encounters with people of different cultures who display their own national aggressivity are a daily experience" (1993 [1994]: 439). The second type are the mountains which are the object of veneration and pilgrimage in a Buddhist sense, not just by local people but from people coming from other parts of the country because they are considered to have been the dwelling places of early saints where terma (gter ma) treasures have been found or may still be hidden. Usually, mountain deities will not be the object of both cults but those that are seem to have recently been included in the Buddhist pantheon (1998 [1996]: 432-3).

Both cults, or at least some of their aspects, still seem to exist among the Lhopsos. Aspects of Dzo-nga and other Sikkimese mountain deities that do not originate from the monastic establishment are generally ignored in favour of Buddhist identities that have been promoted, for political and other reasons, by Tibetan and Sikkimese lamas since the 17th century. However, secular aspects of the mountain deity are still prevalent in some Lhopo village rituals such as Tinge lithrim. While the shamans (see below) in Tinge lithim will invoke Dzo-nga as a photha (pho lha, father god or lineage protector) following the secular tradition of mountain deities, the village lamas will usually, although not exclusively, invoke him as a high Buddhist deity. I argue that, at least until recently, this divergence of opinion was not a source of conflict between lamas and shamans within the village but a source of unity which found its best expression in the performance of rituals where all ritual specialists jointly officiated and invoked Dzo-nga for the welfare of the community.

It should be stressed that unless otherwise specified, all the material

6. For the Nyayingsmith, ter or sarma are spiritual treasures, sometimes objects such as image but usually texts attributed to Guru Rinpoche who hid them so as to be later physically discovered or revealed in other ways by Buddhist practitioners called smin (gter ma).

7. Tinge lithim is an agricultural village of 54 households which is located in Sikkim's North District (the area does not include the Valbona Nepalese populated). The village lies on the eastern banks of the river Teesta at an altitude of 1900 meters, half way between Phodong monastery and Nangpa, the North District headquarters.
presented here applies to Tingenchim village and is not intended to be representative of the Lhopo community of Sikkim as a whole. Variations in ritual procedures, terminology and other aspects of culture between Lhopo villages and areas within Sikkim can be significant from a Sikkimese viewpoint.

7. The ritual specialists of Tingenchim village

Rituals are today performed in Tingenchim by three types of ritual specialist: 1. The non-celibate village lamas (Kargyur and Nyiagma); 2. The paxu (gbu bu) and the myjam (rand bhor nas), the male and female shamans of the Lhopo; and 3. The tsemo lhorgling (bon ban)8, a special

8. After several visits to Sikkim, I returned in October 1993 to carry out fieldwork research in Tingenchim proper between June 1994 and December 1995 with two additional fieldtrips to the village in May and December 1996. The research results are available in my doctoral dissertation, *Buddhism and Shamanism in Village Sikkim* (SOAS, 2002). The research on which this article and the dissertation are based was generously funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Frederick William Memorial Fund, Cambridge, and the Additional Fieldwork Award, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. This essay was written in 1999 while in residence in Kathmandu. I am indebted to Charles Ramsay for encouraging me to write on the subject of Sikkim's sacred landscape and to Lionel Caplan for his much appreciated comments on an earlier draft.

9. Strictly speaking, the use of the term 'lama' in this context is incorrect as this term is normally reserved for particularly learned Buddhist ritual specialists. Two terms are normally used in the village: an initiated lama will be called a tsemo lhorgling (gbu bu dag po) or simply a lhorgling, i.e. a lama who has completed the discipline of the Longta and is now a full member of the lama-in Community of his village. Before his initiation, a student is referred to by the term chog po or a man of Dharma (chos pa). I have nevertheless kept the use of the term lama or lama-in student to refer to the village's tsemo and lhorgling because of its widely accepted use in English publications.

10. Bonpo is the Sikkimese pronunciation of the word spelled - bön po - possibly a short form and a reversal of the Tibetan words - bön po ba - 'the monk who is a part of bön'. However, for Tingenchim villagers, bonpo simply means 'the one who can recite the oral texts of bön'. Lhorgling is a term borrowed from the Lepcha language which is often used to refer to the bonpo of the Lhopo who are thought to act like the lhorgling the male ritual specialist of the Lepchas. According to Jest (1976: 307), "it is an enervated Lepcha word for bonpo. See Mainwaring (1978: 265) and one may consider the possibility of a connexion with the Tibetan term bon".
cialist who performs the offering rituals for the supernatural beings of the locality. The _pasu_ and the _nejam_ specialize in maintaining good relations with the _pholls mo leta_ (pho la mo lha, father god mother god), the Lhoppo ancestral deities and lineage protectors through possession and offering rituals while the _bochhen khongshing_ who never gets possessed, maintains good relations with the ambiguous supernatural beings who inhabit the local territory. On very rare occasions, he may still do so through the offering of an animal sacrifice.

All ritual specialists usually officiate independently, but sometimes jointly or successively, so as to serve the villagers’ ritual needs. In addition to their regular annual rituals, the _pasu_, _nejam_ and _bochhen khongshing_ as well as the village lamas will all regularly be called in separately to officiate in village houses in order to divine the cause of illness and perform curing rituals so as to appease the offended local supernatural beings thought to be responsible for the patient’s suffering. To accomplish this, the _pasu_, the _nejam_ and the _bochhen khongshing_ will draw their ritual powers and protection from the _pholls mo leta_, while the village lamas will draw theirs from the supra-worldly deities of Tibetan Buddhism.

Tingchim villagers collectively refer to the ritual knowledge of the _pasu_, _nejam_ and _bochhen khongshing_ as _bon_ (bon). What they call _bon_ has probably little relation with the Bon religion of pre-Buddhist Tibet and certainly no relation with the tradition of the modern Tibetan Bonpo monasteries. In Tingchim, the term _bon_ refers to specific oral ritual texts that are chantcd and considered to be the core of the _bon_ specialists’

11. Explaining the different categories of supernatural beings who inhabit or trave through the landscape from the viewpoint of Tingchim villagers as well as their relation with them would go beyond the limits of this essay. Among these are the deity (sad brgyud) eight categories of spirits, particularly _lu_ (zu anu-di (ka, bmod and bda’i), the _la_ men or spirits of the mountain pass (la bmon) and the _ap_ wyo (a po a wyo), nether _tapch_ supernatural beings that have been adapted by the Lhoppo. Unlike the lineage’s ancestral deities or _pholls mo leta_ who may also have their abode within the local territory, these local supernatural beings are considered wild or only partly tamed and for this reason are considered ambiguous. In Tingchim, they are referred to as _po_ (zun po) as a group. ‘Those who cause obstructions, damage or trouble’. In this article, I will simply refer to them as the local supernatural beings.

12. The _bochhen khongshing_ in Tingchim is reminiscent of that of the _ba cho_ of the Khambu in central Nepal, a priest specialized in the worship of clan and land deities (Dierskemper 1997), the _ba cho_ of Baragon in southern Mustang and that of the _spa_ (a po) in central Tibet who are equally responsible for the propitiation of local gods and the making of ‘not’ offerings (Rambale 1996, 1998 and Rambale, in press).
ritual knowledge. It may also refer to knowledge that has been imparted directly from the supernatural either during possession rituals in case of the pada or nelum, or through inspirational dreams in the case of the kihden hungting13. Samuel has suggested that 'While there are some grounds for using the term Bon for the early religion of Tibet (…), there are few grounds for applying it to the cults of the local gods and spirits as they exist today, and I shall avoid using Bon to refer to this contemporary 'folk religion'" (1931: 12). Although I agree with Samuel as well as with P. Knaur who adds that the ancient Bon religion was neither animistic not shamanistic (1959: 64), I will nevertheless use the term bon to refer to Tingchim's 'folk religion' (Tuomi 1980), 'nameless religion' (Stein 1972) or 'pasang tradition' (Ramble 1998: 124) since this is the term that is used by the villagers themselves. However, bon as practiced in Tingchim should not be perceived as the survival of an archaic form of pre-Buddhist ritual practice but as a living tradition concerned with this-worldly matters in terms of health and fertility which has evolved in interaction with Buddhism and the ritual specialists of neighbouring ethnic communities such as the Lepchas, the Limbus and the Bhutanese.

The lack of anthropological literature based on fieldwork research among the Lhapos has contributed to them being perhaps misrepresented through the writings of Tibetan lamas and other Buddhist elite or indirectly, through the publication of a series of monographs that focused exclusively on the Lepchas (Gorer 1987 [1938], Morris 1998, Siger 1967, Fooning 1987) or the relation between the Bhutias (Lhapos) and the Lepchas centered around the monastery (Chie Nakane 1966), or more recently, on the socio-political of the state and its history (Sasnet 1974, Sinha 1975, Post 1978). This lacuna has contributed to maintain an image of the Lhapos as a Buddhist population that arrived, built monasteries and converted the indigenous population. But what these writings tend to do, is omit to acknowledge the existence of the commoner Lhapa villagers who didn't belong to the Sikkimese Buddhist and aristocratic elite14 and had a very limited understanding of Buddhism. Until recently some of

13. This local definition of bon is similar to the probable etymology suggested by Dümmler when referring to the Bon but a ritual specialist of Khumbu not be from Sikkim in eastern Nepal. In this case bon is thought to mean 'to pray, to chant' (Dümmler 1989: 41a).
these Lhopos lived of herding, hunting, gathering and slash and burn cultivation, in some cases side by side with the Lepchas in villages far removed from the six premier monasteries of the state and the Palace which were the centres of religious and to some extent, political power.

Tingchim was such a village where until the end of the 19th century, every patriarchal lineage had its own pawa or nejüm responsible for the lineage and its households' rituals needs. Although villagers considered themselves Buddhists, there were no lamas in Tingchim and people were dependent on the pawa, the nejüm, the bünchen bungshing and an ambiguous specialist called nagshong (ingags 'chang) who all officiated at the rituals performed either for the benefit of the individual, the household, the lineage or the village. Buddhism was primarily confined to the important monasteries, their surrounding villages, the capital and the Palace. Tingchim lay on the northern edge of the Phodong 'parish', the closest monastery that also acted as the centre of local administration and tax collection, and where no men from Tingchim were lamas. Located some fifteen kilometres south of the village, the monastery was visited only once a year by Tingchim villagers on the occasion of the exorcistic rituals and annual cham ('cham') dances held just before Losung, the Sikkimese farmer's new year. Buddhism then gradually took over as the main ritual practice of the village in three distinctive phases. First, the Lachen Gomchen encouraged two or three aspiring lamas to undertake meditation retreats in the 1910s. By the 1920s, there were seven of them who performed rituals such as funerals for the benefit of individuals while all household, lineage and community rituals were still in the hands of the bön specialists. The second phase was marked by the passage of Saka Lam Tshoda who stopped in Tingchim at the end of the

15. The most important monasteries of Sikkim are Penyayangtse, Tashiding and Phensang for the Nyingmapa, and Rumtek (not to be confused with the Karmapa's Dharma Chakra Centre), Ralang and Phodong for the Kagyupa. The premier monastery is Penyayangtse as it was responsible for the performance of the royal rituals and annual monastic cham ('cham') dances performed at the Palace's chapel.

16. The nagshong or "the holder of tantra knowledge" was a ritual specialist thought to have mastered Buddhism's tantric powers as well as the ritual skills of the bünchen bungshing and the pawa that did not require possession.

17. Phodong monastery, the first to be built in the North District, was established as late as 1740, a whole century after the foundation of Sikkim as a Buddhist kingdom.
1929 to help take control of an epidemic in the village. As part of the remedy, the Sakya Lama instructed the village lamas to perform the annual Buddhist rituals on a regular basis within the village’s prayer hall which since the construction of Tingchimg’s first prayer hall at the end of 19th century had been the meeting place for the older women of the village to pray. Lamas received training from the Phodong monastery on how to perform these rituals and from that point Buddhism stopped being individualistic and became an occupation of the community where the villagers’ participation, both in presence and in contributions, was required. During the third Buddhist phase, which was initiated by the arrival of Tibetan rinpoches in Sikkim following the Chinese take over of their country in 1959, the transformation of the village’s ritual practice continued following the influence of the 10th Karmapa who tried to eliminate the practice of animal sacrifice. Buddhism effectively took over from bön as the community’s official ritual practice when in the early 1960s, the annual mong choi (mang gathering met/ offering) village ritual, which required the sacrificial offering of an ox, was abandoned and replaced by the Bumkor ( bum tecor), a community ritual whereby the Buddhist scriptures are taken out of the village’s prayer hall to bless the village houses, as the village most important ritual of the year.

Gradually, Buddhism timidly imposed itself and came out as the better and most prestigious ritual practice while still accommodating bön and without even openly trying or succeeding to eliminate the practice of bön is its totality. The Lachen Gomchen’s, the Sakya Lama’s and the 16th Karmapa’s efforts were all directed at specific aspects of bön such as possession rituals or animal sacrifice without trying to eliminate the ritual completer as a whole. The 16th Karmapa is even said to have encouraged the Tingchimg Khampas to maintain their ritual offerings in honour of their pho-ka molhas or ancestral deities. Today, the village lamas, the pawa, the nejum and the bön-ken longthing are thought to generally get on and work together for the welfare of the people. We will see that this tolerated co-existence finds its best expression in the annual Chirim (byi rim, general ritual), where lamas and bön-ken longthing momentarily officiate together

ii. Before the early 1960s when the practice was abandoned following the influence of the 10th Karmapa who provided a substitute Buddhist ritual for Tingchimg villagers, up to 60 year old year were sacrificed as part of courting and other rituals. The practice has since been somewhat elucidated, and chickens and goats are now very occasionally sacrificed with the hope of saving the life of dangerously ill relatives.
within the precinct of the village’s prayer hall. Their tolerated co-existence also found expression in the past during state rituals performed at the Palace’s chapel (gsung lag khang) at Gangtok.

2. Dzo-nga as a secular mountain deity

Although Dzo-nga, as a wild subdued protector is no longer thought to be inflicting suffering on human beings, keeping good relations with him, as much for the bön as for the Buddhist specialists is considered important. As the head of all supernatural beings of the land, if properly propitiated, Dzo-nga can help keep malevolent forces under control. Thus, all will perform regular rituals aimed at maintaining good relations with the mountain deity so that he may later be invoked in time of need. But depending on the particular altar, Dzo-nga will either be included among and invoked along with the Buddhist deities of the lamas on the nesol (gnas gug) and other ritual altars, or will be included as a secular mountain deity among the pholha molha of the pawa, the nejam and the bönben bangthing. Kangchendzönga as pholha has a number of identities; he is considered the chief of all local supernatural beings of Sikkim, the owner of the land (gekti bdag), the warrior god or stakthsa (dgra lha) of the Sikkimese people, the witness deity and, among certain lineages, the provider of sons. He is among the most important pholha on the altar and manifests himself during possession rituals as a powerful and protective landlord. Dzo-nga also has a number of Buddhist identities that are discussed in section 3 below.

The pholha molha can be divided into two general categories. The first are indigenous pre-Buddhist supernatural beings such as Dzo-nga as well as böön and Buddhist religious figures who act as lineage protectors. The second category are male and female ancestors of the same patrilineage or, in some cases, legendary characters who, for reasons usually difficult to trace, came to be worshipped as ‘ancestors’. The first category of lineage protectors, with a few exceptions, are more or less shared by all Tinglyshim lineages and are associated with different localities, either in

19. The nesol (offering to powerful sacred places) is an offering ritual to Kangchendzönga and all the deities of the land. The ritual is a celebration of Sikkim as a sacred hidden land.

Yarlung, Chumbi, Ha or Sikkim. On the other hand, the second group of phoñsa molha consists of real or fictitious ancestors and vary from one patrilineage to another. These ancestors are said to reside in the bön paradise called srigdæn sreg (rig 'dan gnas) for men and merok padma ling (me rok padma ling) for women, both located at Ne Dorje Khu, a sacred location between Ha and Chumbi. All pawa and nejun, along with other villagers who have distinguished themselves through their kindness, wisdom, wealth or power, are said to gain access to these paradises after death. It is from these places that they later communicate with their descendants, giving them general advice and predictions, through the medium of the pawa and nejun during possession rituals.

The powers of the phoñsa molha are propitiated for and can bless their descendants with all the ability to provide sons and good health, to overcome death in case of illness, to predict obstacles and misfortunes, to create a platform for discussion and arbitration in case of quarrels and to protect members from curses (bya'ul bsha). These favours are indirectly implied through various rituals during which the phoñsa molha are first invited and introduced to the audience, then spoilt with their favourite offerings. Later, they may be thanked once these blessings have been conferred.

Although perceived differently, we will see that Dzü-nga remains a common denominator, or a meeting ground of their respective pantheon, of Tinchim's bön and Buddhist ritual specialists and the recitation of the khilren (khas len), their common ritual practice. The khilen and its structure are the base of all bön offering rituals. Countless versions of these invocations are in existence and are chanted at various ritual occasions in honour of the protectors of the country, the ancestral deities, or the supernatural beings of the local territory. They may be chanted by the lama, the pawa, the nejun, the bönser lungchok or even by some village elders, not only in village houses but also at the village prayer halls, the monasteries and until recently, at the Palace. Although these recitations are considered a bön tradition, some khilen have been written down and included in Buddhist rituals. They always have four sections: purification, invitation, offering and dismissal.

21 This first group of lineage protectors (phu dbya) also found in Tinchim may vary considerably from those of other Lhops lineage in Sikkim. Among other descendent groups, Dzü-nga may not be given the importance he is given in Tinchim and no terma may be specifically dedicated to him on the altar.

22 Khilen (khas len) and its homographic form shelon (shel len) mean 'expressing' or 'addressing'.
3. Drön-nga as phodpa in the rituals of the Lhapos of Tengchim village

The most common regular rituals in honour of the phodpa motha are the bi-annual harvest rituals held at btsi’si (byi ritsi), the summer harvest of rice, and nasti (na spyi ritsi), the winter harvest of wheat. These are performed in every single Tengchim household without exception. During btsi’si and nasti, the phodpa motha are offered the first fruit of the harvest as a bi-annual recognition, honouring and thanking them for their help and protection which ensure the prosperity and continuity of the lineage. These harvest offerings are the only recurring occasion where rituals are held successively by all three ritual specialists: the pawa, the bkhor-ba lungting and the lama. The pawa will make harvest offerings to the phodpa motha, the bkhor-ba lungting to the aju (a byi, a ngag) [20]. Lepcha supernaturals that have been adopted by the Lhapos and the lama will perform a ritual offering called kongco (bkang go) [21] in honour of Kabur Kangsen - the tien (tshun) of the snows - a feared and untamed mountain deity who is considered to be the owner of all the harvest rituals in Tengchim.

A pawa is not the mouthpiece of a specific deity such as the prestigious Tibetan oracles who act as the exclusive medium to powerful protectors such as Pohar (Prince Peter 1979). Although a pawa has a tutelary deity who will assist him in his duties, he is there for all the phodpa motha and local supernatural beings, so all may have the chance to use him as a medium so as to interact with the villagers and ask for and obtain the recognition or the offerings they crave. A genuine pawa is thus chosen as their servant by a consensus of all supernatural beings involved. Unlike Ladakh and among other Tibetan speaking peoples, the lamas are not consulted or play any role in the identification, initiation, training or performances of the Sikkimese pawa, and Sikkim appears to be a rare case where the monks’ and monasteries’ influence on the pawa’s ritual practice has been minimal.

[20] Aju means grand-father and aju means grand-mother. Both terms are borrowed and adapted from the Lepcha language.
[21] Bkang means to fulfill and go means to fill, so replenish. Together bkang go means to replenish (make offerings) until satisfied.
[22] For the influence of the monastic establishments on the mediums of Tibetan speaking people, the assimilation or eradication of their practice see Day 1990 for Ladakh, Orme (1995) for the Sherpas and Bergflie (1976) for pawa among Tibetan refugees.
The pawa is usually the first to perform his part of the harvest rituals called Iha thö (Iha whoro). Before the biosti or natzi ritual can start, the pawa will prepare the rice torma depicting the pholha molita of this particular household which always include Dzö-nga, and display the appropriate offerings. All the rituals performed by the bön ritual specialists are based on the khelen cho ritual text that will be chanted during the performance. Whether they include trances or not, or whether they are dedicated to the pholha molita, the alo or alo or other local supernatural beings, the basic structure of the rituals remains more or less the same. In brief, the performance has four parts: first, there is a short purification of the ritual specialist himself, followed by the song bön (buang bön) which is a larger purification of the location and the offerings through the burning of incense. The core section is the actual invitation called den ju (gazon bahr). Here the pholha molita and local supernatural beings are individually praised and invited to leave their abode in order to come and bless every single offering displayed for the occasion. This is when the attributes and powers of each are revealed or reminded to present villagers and when the pawa would get possessed if he was officiating. When addressing the audience through the medium of the pawa, the pholha molita will usually express their pleasure over witnessing the performance of the ritual held in their honour, and may offer some prediction or advice for the general welfare of the household or the health of one of its members. Each share of the display of grain, flowers, butter lamps and chang is then individually offered to each during the tsi bui (tseu bui). The lineage protectors and other beings are then given a farewell called shabchig (gyegi goe) and are asked not to bring any disease to the people living upstairs or to the cows staying downstairs, nor to provoke fires in the summer and floods during the rains.

The pawa’s ritual offering is followed by that of the khinen kongshing for the alo or alo and other local supernatural beings such as the woman of the hoche’s particular protector (shang thö). It may also hap-

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66. As previously mentioned, Dzö-nga may not have a torma specifically dedicated to him as a pholha among other Khmer decent group elsewhere in Sikkim. He may be included in a general torma dedicated to all the protective land deities (yé la gzhé bdag) of the lineage or family, to my knowledge, will always at least be invoked in the khiren.

67. A bride will be followed to her new home by a protector called shang thö who comes from her ashung (a shung) or maternal uncle’s house. A girl’s maternal uncle may have more long term responsibilities towards his sister’s daughter than towards his own daughter.
pen that the bönhen longthing will himself perform the pawa’s as well as his part of the ritual if it so happens that the household does not require the mediumship services of the pawa at this particular moment. Most anyo live in the attic of the Lhepo houses where they are made offerings of grains and ornaments. They are regarded as the protector of the house, its food stores, animals and material possessions. One particular anyo is the owner of the cardamom plant, the cash crop of the Lhepos, and is given an offering ritual in the fields before the harvest is taken away from her. These ajo anyo are still considered partly untamed and the bönhen longthing may invoke his own phohta molha including Debanga for protection while dealing with their darker side. Their state of semi-wildness is shared by a long list of supernatural beings who inhabit the local territory and who are thought to provoke illness and misfortune if offended by the presence of pollution (grib) generated by certain human actions such as quarrelling between relatives, lying, destroying particular objects of nature or burning meat. They are made offerings as part of a bargain contract with the hope to appease them through flattery by pretending to elevate them into the ranks of the ancestral deities. Thus, the ajo anyo are honoured at harvest rituals as protectors and providers, and are each represented on the altar, not by rice sorma aligned on a wooden plateau as in the case of the phohta molha but by miniature bamboo pots with a straw similar to the ones used to drink chang. These pots are filled with fermented grains, wrapped in a piece of banana leaf and decorated with butter in the same way as the Lepchas do. In front of each pot or ajo anyo are displayed specific offerings according to each ajo anyo’s taste. These offerings are displayed on a square piece of banana leaf and offered to the ajo anyo by the chanting of a second khelen where each ajo anyo and other local supernatural beings is individually invoked and invited to receive his share of the offerings. The altar and the offering for the ajo anyo will be laid slightly lower than that of the phohta molha.

The pawa and the bönhen longthing's performances are followed by that of the village lama. The harvest kongpo ritual is only held in honour of the troublesome mountain deity Kabur Kangtser in the many Tingchim households where he was sent to create problems by an unsavory ritual specialist a few decades ago. He is given a harvest ritual in the same way that the ajo anyo are honoured with the hope to

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time them through flattery by pretending to elevate them into the ranks of the ancestral deities. Rituals held for thing tamed supernaturals are always meant as a bargain contract. But in the case of Kabur Kangsen, not only is he given the honours of a pseudo-phelia as the owner of the harvests, he is also treated as a pseudo-Buddhist deity and given an entire Buddhist ritual by a village lama. In theory, while performing the kong-
the lama first invokes the high Buddhist deities presiding over the rit-
ual so that they may help him remind Kabur Kangsen of his submission vows to Guru Rinpoche and thus return him on the right path of the Dharma. But in the second part of the ritual, as a precaution, the feared Kangsen is offered little pieces of meat on the altar and the khelen, which is fundamentally a bon oral tradition, is chanted by the lama in addition to the written ritual text. The khelen will invoke a list of over twenty local supernatural beings starting with Dzo-nga as the chief of all supernatural beings of the land, coming down the mountain towards the village including Kabur Kangsen and finishing with those who inhabit the house. These are followed by the invocation of a list of twelve previous bon ritual specialists of the village. After the oral khelen, the ritual text is resumed with the dagiyed-servies (ide bregayid gyes skyes, libation) and the tog-rabgya offering. In this case, it may be unclear whether Dzo-nga is invoked as a Buddhist or as a secular mountain deity, a differen-
tiation which probably depends on the incitement of the lama holding the ritual. Considering that Dzo-nga is neither represented by a torma on the kongo altar nor is he invoked by the written text as he will be in the lama’s nesul (see below), it is reasonable to believe that he is here invoked as a secular mountain deity and head of all the supernatural beings of the land during the oral khelen.

These harvest offerings are mainly a formality, a thank you ritual for the new harvest where the phelia nilla, the apo angko and Kabur Kangsen are offered some freshly harvested grains by chanting the khelen. Their main purpose is to maintain good relations with them so they don’t withdraw their protection but keep dispensing their blessings. While the harvest rituals are the only regular events where the phelia nilla and Dzo-nga as a secular mountain deity are invoked, many other rituals which I list below are held in extraordinary circumstances.

One of the most important moment of a wedding is the chanting of the khelen when the pawa or the village headman invites the phelia nilla (which always includes Dzo-nga) of both the bride and the groom to witness and legitimise the alliance. The union of husband and wife
may only gain recognition once the khaden has been pronounced. After
the birth of a first son, an important offering ritual is held by the pawu
or the bumdru bungthong in honour of Masong (ma sangs khyung ‘dzopa) and
the other pholha of the parshinge29. The head and back leg of an ox are
offered to give thanks for this first son who will now perpetuate the lin-
age. Masong, the most important pholha or lusage protector in
Tingchim, is a mountain deity residing on the mountain range separat-
ing the Bhutanese Valley of Ha and the Tibetan Valley of Chumbi close
to Sikkim. The help of Dzo-naga, along with that of the other pholha
molha, may also be invoked in case of serious illness, in resolving dis-
putes among kin members, in sitting as supernatural judge, in helping
liberate the kidnapped soul of dead relatives (gshin ‘pis), for protection
before going to war (dega lha), when apologizing after destroying objects
of nature, and when seeking protection from curses. The Seung
Gomchen (se bshungs gsum chen, hail protector great practitioner), the
most enigmatic lama in Tingchim, has no other responsibility but that
of controlling the weather and protecting the ripening crops of thirteen
surrounding villages against hail, something he has been doing for twen-
ty-five years. For this purpose, he invokes the help of a number of deities
including Kangchendongpa in helping him control those supernatural
beings responsible for rain and hail.

But the pholha molha are given their greatest honour during the
pawu initiation ritual and annual retreat called tam che (rin chams
brad) when the pholha molha are made to interact with their descend-
ants through the medium of possession over a period of four days.
During these séances, villagers receive advice and predictions regarding
the cause of illness, upcoming obstacles or proper behaviour. During the
 tam che that I attended in 1994, Dzo-naga as well as his consort
addressed the audience a number of times, first to introduce himself
and then to join in on a debate which was taking place between a lama
in the audience and the pholha molha over the merit and demerit of
bin versus Buddhism. Addressing a lama who was the first to have
recently returned to the village with the Acharya (MA) Buddhist
degree, Dzo-naga as a pholha told him “not to break his vows” which in
this context meant that he shouldn’t loosen his faith in him by rejecting
these trance sessions as phoney, or at best, as a lower form of religion
compared to the high Buddhism which he had been studying. This

29. For Tingchim villagers, the pholha Masong is the main provider of wata while for
some Sikkimese, this role is fulfilled by Dzo-naga (see below).
couldn't have been a better example to illustrate how, at the village level, Dzö-nga has maintained his identity as a pholha or secular mountain deity.

4 Dzö-nga as witness deity

Sikkim's history relates that in the 13th century, Kye Bomma (gyud 'bum gug), the Tibetan ancestor of the Sikkimese king or Chogyals (chos rgyal) 30 who was then ruling in the neighboring Chumbi Valley, came to Sikkim with his wife in search of the Lepcha patriarch and bungthong Thekong Tek. The couple was childless and requested the Lepcha bungthong to perform a ritual where Dzö-nga was invoked so that they may be blessed with a male descendent31. Upon their return to Chumbi, the couple had three sons who later became the ancestors of a number of Lhopo lineages, including that of the Sikkimese royal family. For this reason, it is said that Dzö-nga came to be regarded among some Lhapos in Sikkim as a pholha, or male ancestral deity who may bless the patrilineages with male descendants32.

When Kye Bomma and his wife later returned to Sikkim to express their gratitude and perform a thanksgiving ritual for their sons, a blood brotherhood was sworn between the Tibetan Kye Bomma and the Lepcha Thekong Tek where the local deities of Sikkim were invoked to witness their alliance and many animals were sacrificed in order to cement the alliance (see Namgyal 1908: 18). This is how Dzö-nga later came to be worshipped and invoked as a witness deity during the national Buddhist ritual of Pang Lhatso (phang lha gsal, offering to the witness deity) held at the Palace's chapel at Gangtok by the Penayangtse lamas, when dignitaries and representatives took a solemn oath in the presence of the protective deities of Sikkim, to serve the country. This 13th century ritual

30. Chogyal (Dharmaraja) or the king who rules according to the Dharma, is the title of the Sikkimese kings. It was temporarily replaced by the title of Maharaja when Sikkim became a British protectorate and later reinstated during the reign of late Chogyal Padma Thondup Namgyal.

31. The annual worship of Dzö-nga was of course celebrated by the Lepchas long before the arrival of the Tibetans.

32. In Tingchum, although Dzö-nga is regarded as an important pholha, it is still Msong (mwa sampo khyang 'kha), the mountain deity of the inhabitants of the valleys of Hi and Chumbi where the Lhapos resided before coming to Sikkim, who is regarded as the chief provider of sons.
al of blood brotherhood performed between the Lhopsos and the Lepchas is considered to have been the first Pang Lhabol. However, lamas who dislike animal sacrifice, usually advocate that the first Pang Lhabol had been performed in the 17th century by Lhatu rinpoche Jigmé (1587-1650), the chief propagator of Buddhism in Sikkim, when he performed a thanksgiving ritual for his safe journey across the Himalayas as related by Nebesky-Wojkowitz (1966: 402). This divergence of opinion is a direct reflection of the gradual change of identity, from pholha to Buddhist deity. Kangchendzang had been undergoing.

This change of identity becomes particularly evident during Pang Lhabol's pongal (phung had) victory cham where Dzö-nga's lay warriors-dancers praise the winner deity and invoke him as their Buddhist warrior god (dgra lha), celebrating the subjugation of enemies. But in this case, the meaning of enemy is particularly intended as the enemy of the Dharma and the monasteries, and consequently, the enemies of the Buddhist kingdom and its righteous administration. Indeed, it is mentioned in the novel (1558), that Jigmé Pamo (1682-1751), the third incarnation of Lhatu rinpoche Jigmé, reminded Dzö-nga of his oath taken before Guru Rinpoche that he would prevent enemies from entering Sikkim, particularly anyone who came here with the intention of changing the structure of the administration as it had been established by the three lamas who consecrated the first Chogyal at Yubum in 1642 and set the borders of the new kingdom. For this reason, some say that Dzö-nga can no longer be invoked for personal gain but only for the welfare and prosperity of the Buddhist kingdom. But this was not always so. Not too long ago, the warrior dance would still be performed by lay dancers in Tengchum on other occasions than Pang Lhabol where Dzö-nga was invoked as a secular mountain deity. And Waddell equally mentions that Dzö-nga is worshipped by all the laity once at least during the year for overcoming their individual enemies. Usually the whole village in concert celebrates this worship: the men carrying swords and shields, and they dance and leap about, concluding with a great shout of victory (1884: 354).

Karmay mentions that "By the mountain cult I mean particularly the secular worship of the mountain deity (yul lha, gami bsad), who is usually depicted in the style of a traditional warrior and is worshipped as an

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33. This chhub was designed by the third Chogyal, Chagdor Namgyal (1686-1727) when he established the Pemayangtse monastery upon his return from Tibet.
34. Some argue that the Tibetan year actually corresponds to 1642 or even 1646.
ancestor or an ancestral deity for protection" (1998 [1994]: 426). Dzö-nga's identities as lineage protector or ancestral deity (pho lha), related to fertility of the lineages and the fields, owner of the land, personal warrior and witness deity as well as other secular representations among the Khapos are today easily overshadowed by his Buddhist aspect which will be discussed below and which were promoted by Lhasün Namka Jigmé, the 17th century Tibetan Nyingma lama who opened the gate to the hdéyul (sha 'yul) or hidden land of Sikkim where he is considered to have been the chief propagator of Buddhism.

5. Kangchenjzônga becomes a Buddhist mountain deity

As in Tibet, Guru Rinpoche is said to have tamed all the supernatural beings of the land during his eighth century visit to Sikkim and to have bound them through solemn oath into being protectors of the faith and to refrain from causing harm to sentient beings. By this act, and by having hidden spiritual treasures (ma) to be discovered in later times, Guru Rinpoche is seen as having brought Buddhism and a civilized way of life. But depending on the context and the person's point of view, the taming of these malevolent beings can either be read as a metaphor for the taming of the mind, of society, of the environment or even of the country (Ortner 1978: 99, Samuel 1993: 220). Indeed, Karmay has mentioned that "The subjugation of the spiritual inhabitants of the country is an extremely important part of the process in the Buddhist conversion of the people who believed in their existence. It was mainly for the need to create a sacred environment in accordance with Buddhist ideals of the universe" (1998 [1996]: 446). Although converted to Buddhism in the eighth century, it is only from the 14th that Dzö-nga's identity as a defender of the faith and keeper of treasures was promoted by Terrön Rigzin Gőden (1337-1409). And it is only in the 17th century, following Lhasün Namka Jigmé's visit to Sikkim, that Dzö-nga became the object of the second cult previously mentioned within Sikkim, when mountains are the object of veneration and pilgrimage in a Buddhist sense because they are considered to have been the dwelling places of early saints where treasures have been found or may still be hidden (p.432-3).

Rigzin Gőden is thought to have been the first high lama to visit Sikkim where he is said to have mediated and discovered powerful sacred sites and spiritual treasures, including a prophetic text about the
hidden land of Sikkim. He is said to have made his discovery known in Tibet by attaching letters to the necks of vultures (Namgyal 1908: 13). He built Sikkim's first known 14th century monastery at Pawo Hunri, a hill top between Yusum and Silmon in West Sikkim of which only the ruins can still be seen today. Although he was the first Tibetan lama known to have come to Sikkim, his visit did not result in the establishment of a major lineage based on the transmission of a particular teaching; nor did it result in the establishment of a political entity. For these reasons, it is Lhasun Namka Jigme (1197-1250), the Tibetan Drogchen master referred to as Lhasun Chenpo who is instead regarded as the chief propagator of Buddhism in Sikkim.

When Dtsö-nga was subdued by Guru Rinpoche and appointed keeper of the land and its treasures, he was not to let anyone enter and discover Sikkim's sacred sites and spiritual treasures unless this person was the right one to further the intentions of Guru Rinpoche. When Lhasun Chenpo arrived from Tibet, it is said that Dtsö-nga first tasted hira before appeasing to him in the form of a white goose and giving him the permission to open the gate to the hidden land. In his welcoming discourse, Dtsö-nga revealed the various places of sacred nature and old people believe this to have been where the nêzîî ritual was composed (Namgyal 1908: 24). The nêzîî is a celebration of Sikkim as a hidden land of lâyâ and an offering ritual to Kangchenjôngnga and all the deities of the land. It is one of the most important and most often performed rituals in Sikkim, as much in the monasteries as in the villages' prayer halls and private houses. When Lhasun Chenpo arrived in Yusum from the north, he met with Kathog Ngizin Chenpo and Nadak Sempa Chenpo, two great Tibetan Nyêingma lamas who had entered Sikkim respectively from the western and southern gates. Together, they founded the kingdom and enthroned Phuntso Namgyal of Gangzok as Chogyal or king who rules according to the Dharma, thus

35. The treasure text discovered by Terenz Rigzin Gödem is called 'The Prophetic Mirror of Sikkim' ('broe phrings long brtan pa'i b'i me lung') and is concerned with Guru Rinpoche's preoccupations about the establishment of Sikkim.

36. With the exception of the lamas of Tashishing and Silmon monasteries who still today, according to the teachings brought to Sikkim by Rigzin Gödem (hrang ger shes grubs), the kingdom of Sikkim was established by learned Nyêingma lamas who fled the religious war between the Gyalupas on the one hand, and the King of Thang and the Kangcupas on the other which led to the rise to power of the Gyalupas and the unification of Tibet.
entrusting him with both temporal and spiritual powers.

Lhatsum Chenpo discovered many texts but is especially remembered for his teaching and empowerment of the *rig 'dzin srog sgrub*. According to this text (F.58b), Dzö-nga may be invoked as either of the following three aspects which are said to have been ascribed to him by Guru Rinpoche: 1. as *ka swang* (*bka' stong*) or the one who faithfully carries out the orders of Guru Rinpoche and who has promised to protect the words of the Buddha; 2. as the owner of the sacred locations, the local territory and the spiritual treasures as well as the five treasures (*mdadad longa*, see below) hidden within his peaks (*gnas yul gter gyi bka*); and 3. as an emanation of the king of the north or god of wealth (*rgyal chen rnam shos stsr*), red in colour, wearing an armoured, riding a snow lion and carrying precious stones, a spear, a turban shaped hat and a banner of victory over his head symbolising eternal victory over the evil forces*. The god of wealth is his highest manifestation and in this capacity, Dzö-nga is considered a yeši lha (ye shes lha), a supta-worldly deity of the Buddhist pantheon as opposed to a deity of the impermanent world (*jig rten gyi lha*). According to the same *rg 'dzin* text (F.52), Dzö-nga has three manifestations: outer, inner and secret. As his outer manifestation, he is half-lha half-ten and has the capacity of conquer them all (*phre til lha bstan*). As his inner manifestation, he is a great monk who has taken lay man's vows and resembles a disciple of Sakya Jamyang Buddha with a bowl and a walking stick (*nang ltar sprul la'i dge rgyen*). As his secret manifestation, Dzö-nga is the king of *nöün* (*glang ba gnad stbyin rgyal po rnam shos stsr*) by the name of *rnam shos stsr* or god of wealth.

38. The main offering rituals to Dzö-nga are given in the *nigstan srog gsum* as well as in the novel. However, descriptions of Dzö-nga are available from much earlier sources and were reproduced in later texts. According to Lha Tshering of Tashdong, Khenpo of the Sikkim Institute of Higher Nyenma Studies at Gangtok, the best descriptions of Dzö-nga are given in the *bla ma dmugs 'du lung bstan lha skya mna*, a text ascribed to Guru Rinpoche and revealed in the 14th century by Tsering Sangay Lingpa (1400-1960).

39. According to Dr Rigzin Ngdup Dokhampa of the Namgyal Institute of Tibetanology, to mention the significance of only a few of Dzö-nga's attributes and costume, the banner of victory fluttering over his head *dudam* and the spear signify eternal victory over the evil forces, the gem symbolising which brings all that one wishes for, and his red colour symbolises loving attachment of sentient beings with sublime feeling of compassion (Paig Lhabtsol, souvenir 1989, Sikkim Tribal Youth Association page 8-9).
Another important text known as the 'hidden land of rice's guide book to sacred places'⁴⁰ (chad yul 'bras mo byung kyi gnas yig), is a more recent compilation based on some three earlier texts⁴¹ prepared by Jigme Pawa. These texts give descriptions of Demojong, the area directly to the south and surrounding Mount Kangchenjñdonga in West Sikkim which has the highest concentration of powerful sacred sites and hidden treasures within Sikkim. Demojong is described as a paradise on earth with an abundance of fruit, vegetables and self growing crops, and clues are given in the text on how to reach Beryl Demoshong (chad yul 'bras mo gshongs), the elusive hidden land, the entry of which is located somewhere within Demojong. It is said that in the upper part of Demojong lives the mountain deity Kangchenjñdonga, who like a king sitting on a throne, is the owner and protector of the land, its people, its powerful sacred sites and spiritual treasures. Kangchenjñdonga's five peaks are the repository of five treasures: the first contains salt, the second gold and turquoise, the third Dharma scriptures and other precious objects capable of increasing one's wealth, the fourth contains arms and the fifth medicine and different types of seeds. It is believed that all these treasures will be made available to the Sikkimese people in times of need. The centre of Demojong is Drakar Tashiding (bras gsar bsmi shis ldan) where Guru Rinpoche is said to have given many teachings. In the four cardinal directions of Tashiding are four miraculous caves where one can attain extraordinary powers. In the east is shar chok bshu phuk (shar chen gnyis bshu phug), the hidden cave of the east; in the south is khando rong phuk (mchog'gro rgyong phug), the womb of the celestial female deity; in the west is ngyen dchen phuk (ngyen bdul chen)⁴²; and in the north is datsal dchen phuk (gtsal ldan chen).⁴³

⁴⁰ A ngug (gnas yig) or guide book gives descriptions of the powerful sacred sites as well as clues to the hidden treasures.

⁴¹ According to Khempo Lha Tsering, the chad yul 'bras mo byung kyi gnas yig has been compiled from the following main sources: 1. Tertön Npipin Gönpo's 14th century prophetic text ('bras byung las brtan gsal ba' 'me long); 2. a text discovered by Tertön Sangay Lingpa in the 15th century ('bras ma dngos 'dus long brtan bka' brga ma); and 3. a later guide book discovered by a lama who never came to Sikkim by the name of Tertön Dzog Dechen Lingpa of Doma Gön (dole mang dgon) monastery in Khun who had been the first incarnation of present Yangtshang Rinpoche of West Sikkim.

⁴² 'gshongs' as in Demoshong means valley of rolling hills, while 'byung' as in Demojong means land or country. While Demojong is the heart of historical Sikkim, located around and below Mount Kangchenjñdonga, Demoshong remains a true hidden land. Some people are said to have caught glimpses of it through an opening in the rock while travelling through the mountains although the entry could never be found again.
the cave of great happiness; and in the north is lhari rin chen nyeosh phug (the nectar cave) or phug, the cave of god's precious heart. Nearby, the plateau of Tuksum where the first Chogal was crowned just below Kangchendzanga, is considered to be a natural altar in front of the sacred mountains, caves, lakes and rivers where ritual offerings can be made. All of these locations are today pilgrimage destinations for all Sikkimese Buddhists.

Sikim was, and in many ways is still regarded by its Buddhist inhabitants as a sacred hidden land or brgyud. The following words of Tertön Dorje Lingpa (1346-1425) and Tertön Ralma Lingpa (1425-1478) quoted from the History of Sikkim summarize how most Lhapos still think of their country's potential. Tertön Dorje Lingpa described Sikkim as "a veritable paradise on earth, created by a miraculous supernatural power into a vast and magnificent palace where everything calculated to produce beauty and grandeur have been provided on the grandest imaginable scale" (Namgyal 1908: 9). The History of Sikkim also tells us that the land was initially blessed by Cintereg and Indra, followed in the eighth century by Guru Rinpoche who "exorcised the land of all evil spirits; and rid it of all obstacles that would tend to obstruct or disturb the course of devotional practices" (Namgyal 1908: 10). Pothetical books were compiled and hidden by him in rocks so as to be rediscovered in later times. Treasures were hidden in one hundred and eight secret mines and stores to render this land productive, healthy and harmonious as well as to facilitate the spread of the Dharma. Tertön Ralma Lingpa qualifies Sikkim as "the best of all the sacred places of pilgrimage as it will come to be resorted to in the end of the evil times (...) everyone assembled to bless this sacred land: they took possession of it, blessed it and sewed all kinds of seeds in it. Then they hid treasures, appointed keepers and uttered hundred prayers (...). Every cliff, peak, cave and hilltop has been consecrated for devotional purposes. Persons who practise devotion in any of these blessed places are sure to attain siddhi power and the highest knowledge and perfection temporarily and spiritually" (Namgyal 1908: 10-11). The History of Sikkim adds that of all brgyud, Sikkim is said to be the most sacred and sanctified, the king of all sacred places equaling paradise itself. Sikkim is described as the land of medicinal herbs and curative waters as well as a golden trough where anything...

43. There is a number of curative hot springs (thu' bu) in Sikkim all recommended for bone and skin disorders although each is said to have additional specific curative properties.
one wishes to sow will grow. It is mentioned that people who come here will not suffer incurable diseases and will not feel hunger as there are 103 different kinds of fruit and 360 types of edible plants. It is added that in Sikkim, wisdom, love, kindness and compassion grow spontaneously within oneself.

One cannot help but think that such descriptions of Sikkim as a treasure house could have been written as an encouragement for Tibetan people to come and settle, perhaps in order to populate these empty hills on the unprotected borders of Tibet. There are many legends regarding the existence of similar beyul across the Himalayas and Tibet, and Samuel (1995: 517) has pointed out that in the Nyingma tradition, beyul had been "set aside by Guru Rinpoche as a refuge to be discovered as an appropriate time in a rather similar way to the discovery of the terma texts (…). Some of these beyul were quiet refuges set aside for meditation but others, like Sikkim and Penaköö, were places where lay people could settle to escape political turmoil". Indeed, many Tibetans are thought to have taken refuge and migrated to Sikkim as a result of the religious wars of the 17th century.

6. Dzö–näga and the rituals of the village lamas

The ritual, which is the Buddhist ritual of the land par excellence, is a celebration of Sikkim as a beyul and an offering ritual to Dzö–näga as the greatest deity of Beyul Demchog. It is one of the most important and most often performed rituals in Sikkim, as much in the Nyingma monasteries as in the villages’ prayer halls and private houses. There are different versions of this ritual in existence and the lengthiest and most orthodox will be performed by the lamas of Penyagongtse monasteries, Sikkim’s premier monastery. An important difference between this lengthier version and the shorter one as performed in Tzingchim, is the fact that its kherden has been standardised and put down in written form thus giving it an aura of sanctity and orthodoxy.

Whenever the lamas of Tzingchim gather at the village’s prayer hall in order to celebrate the important days of the Tibetan Buddhist calendar, the ritual will be performed at some point during the morning session, whatever main ritual text is also being read on that day. In such case, two altars, each with their respective set of terma will be prepared; the higher one for the Buddhist deities of the main ritual and a lower
smaller one for Dzo-nga and the other deities of the nevel. It will only be performed on its own within the prayer hall when someone from the village returns from an important pilgrimage in order to apologise to the deities of the land, in case any polluting or disturbing actions may have been performed by the pilgrim while visiting powerful sacred places. The nevel will be performed in private houses whenever lamas are called to hold a major ritual, for example at weddings, as part of the rituals performed during funerals, when a new house has been completed (khyim gao bka’ shis), or whenever a household wishes to offer a nag ritual during the winter for its general welfare and prosperity. But usually, the nevel is performed on its own in private houses as a shapton (shabs khris), when someone is sick and a ritual specialist has recommended it as a cure. In such cases, the khaden will specifically invoke, in addition to Dzo-nga and the usual supernatural beings of the land, the entity that has been identified as the cause of the ailment, and little pieces of meat previously obtained from the butcher will be presented on the altar.

In the household performance of the nevel, the top shelf of the altar will have the usual Buddhist deities lama, yidam and khandro (bla ma yi ldan mkha’ ’gro) presiding over the ritual. On the next lower shelf are a row of ten smaller torma representing the Dharma protectors and the higher territorial deities of Sikkim such as Dzo-nga who do not reside near Tzingrim but, for the most part, have their abode in the sacred area of Denjujong in West Sikkim. On the left of these ten torma are the tsering sbrong, (zhur ring mchog lugs) the five celestial female deities. In a third lower row in front of them are twenty smaller torma representing various general categories of local supernaturals including one for Ajo Dongbong, the legendary Lepcha bongzhang and interestingly, another torma for all previous nagshong of the village who best symbolise the result of the encounter between los and Buddhism at the village level. Looking at the nevel altar and its inherent hierarchy, the top row represents the tantric deities who stand for Buddhism’s highest and purest form which from the villagers’ point of view is best understood and dealt with by the learned lamas of the monasteries and the Tibetan rinpoches. The second row of

11 A shapton is a general term used to refer to any ritual performed in order to strengthen the life force of a person.

12 A lama. Guru Rinpoche dispenses blessings as yidam. Guru Drakpa (go rwa dbang po) dispenses protection; see as khandro, Seng Dongma (ser dgon ma) gives protection. These manifestations of Guru Rinpoche are represented on both, Nyinma and Kagyu altars in the rituals of village lamas in Sikkim.
torma for the local deities and protectors of Sikkim as a whole are associ-
ated with the village lamas since they are the most important and tangible
high deities of the land from a Sikkimese village's perspective. The lowest
row representing the worldly and ambivalent local supernaturals, from the
villagers' point of view, are still the domain of the bön ritual specialists who
are themselves present on the altar.

But it is in the Chiram ritual which used to be held in Tingchim until
1954 on the occasion of Pang Lhabol, that the relation between bön and
Buddhism in the village has perhaps found its best expression. The
Chiram is the only annual ritual where momentarily, the bönchen bongth-
ing and the village lamas jointly participate in the performance of a com-
munity ritual within the village's prayer hall. First, in front of the prayer
hall and with the help of villagers, the bönchen bongthing builds a long
frame of bamboo on which a series of at least six sets of offerings are laid
out, each for a particular group or individual ajo arno and other super-
natural beings of the land, with the usual offerings of grain, flowers and
eggs. Inside the prayer hall, the lamas perform the nen and at the appro-
priate moment, the lamas call the bönchen bongthing inside the prayer hall
so that he personally chants the oral khelen section of the nenl for Dzo-
nga and all other higher deities of the land, after which the bönchen
bongthing returns outside to perform his own offering and khelen for all
the ajo arno and other less important supernatural beings not specifically
covered by the nenl. While the lamas invoked the higher supernatu-
ral beings of the land and the bönchen bongthing the lower ones, it is con-
sidered the bönchen bongthings' duty to send them all back home, and
especially send back the troublesome ones after making them promise
not to come back to create obstacles for villagers until they are called
again next year to receive their new offerings. The bamboo frame cov-
tered with offerings is then taken to the lake and a village feast follows at
the prayer hall. Today, the Chiram ritual is still occasionally held, not as
a regular annual ritual at Pang Lhabol, but as a community shapten
whenever a number of villagers suffer of dysentery during the monsoon.

7. Dzo-nga and the state rituals

The combined participation of both bön and Buddhist ritual specialists
must have found local expression in many similar ways throughout
Sikkim. In Tingchim, the pawa and the bönchen bongthing regularly per-
form together while the village lama sometimes joins in when his par-
Participation is required in the performance of complex eating rituals. The following example, illustrating the tolerance and respect the Chogyals showed towards the hin ritual specialists within their Buddhist kingdom, may be interpreted in different ways. Some believe that expressions of this amiable co-existence were encouraged by the Chogyals as a diplomatic measure to encourage the happy co-existence of the Lhaspos and the Lepchas, and the Chogyals’ popularity. I believe that, at least in the early days, these were more the expression of a latter-day attitude and of the true nature and belief of the Lhaspos, which the Chogyals themselves were not exempted from.

During the time of the Kingdom and apparently until the late 1980s, some hin ritual specialists were invited to discreetly participate at the following state functions and officiate at certain personal rituals of the royal household which were described to me by Captain Yongda who had been one of Chogral Palden Thondup Namgyal’s last ADC. On the occasion of the harvest rituals for the Chogyals’ fields, a Lepcha bongshing would come to the Palace and offer a khelem for the aja ayna and local supernatural beings who inhabit the area of the Chogyal’s farmer palace at Rabdentse as well as of the current Palace at Gangtok. The royal household’s pholha molta were made offerings to on a separate occasion by Jowo Bönpa from Nako-Chongpung village whose family responsibility it has been for generations. Jowo Bönpa’s ritual performance was held around the time of the kagye cham (ka’ bregad thiong) dances held at the Palace’s chapel just before Losung, the Sikkimese farmer’s new year⁴⁶. In addition to the offering ritual for the royal family’s ancestral deities, Jowo Bönpa also performed two additional rituals following written hin texts. Around the same time, before the kagye cham began, in a little room next to the Palace’s chapel, a Lepcha bongshing would discreetly hold another offering ritual, it is said hopefully without the Phenayangse lama taking notice as they would probably object to its performance. In its khelem, the Lepcha bongshing made offerings to the

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⁴⁶ For a description of the cham dances see Nikolay Wajcman (1976: 24–6).
⁴⁷ The first ritual is called yongdga (glang breg) and is held with the purpose of increasing a person’s or a household’s yang, the element which is thought to be beneficial for the production of wealth, children, animals, house, etc. The second is called strem (stREM), a ritual performed to suppress the arising of negative forces. I was told that only Jowo Bönpa of Nako-Chongpung village and late Bönpa Lhatshops of Kyishing village would perform these rituals following hin texts in Sikkim, these rituals being performed by Buddhist lamas in all other villages.
Lepcha ancestor Tekong Tek and his wife including Dzo-nga and all the local supernatural beings of the land*

Pang Lhabol was the most important ritual of Sikkim held at the Palace’s chapel and simultaneously in every monastery and village prayer hall throughout the kingdom. Pang Lhabol was the national ritual of the land, held at the end of the monsoon in early September, the main day falling on the 15th of the 7th month of the lunar calendar. This was the occasion when the royal family and the Bode midie (the traditional council of the monk body and the ny body), which consisted of the abbots of the monasteries, the landlords, (kaji), the ministers, the main appointment holders and the representatives of the people, would renew their vows to serve the country. On the first floor of the Palace’s chapel, on the morning of the 15th, a senior monk of Pemayangtse monastery would first invoke Dzo-nga and all the deities of the land to witness as witnesses. During this khey-kein which also invoked the previous Chogyals and named the sacred locations of Sikkim, an apology was made for deeds done against the plants, the streams, the rivers and the rocks and a request made for freedom from obstacles, diseases, famine and war, for the protection of the royal family, and for the people and the land to be graced with wealth, good harvest and timely rainfall. The assembly then took the vow, in the presence of the protective deities of Sikkim, to carry out the intentions of the four lamas who founded the kingdom at Yuksum and not to do anything against the interests of the country or its righteous administration. As we have seen, Pang Lhabol was also a celebration of the blood brotherhood which was sworn between Khye Bumsa, the ancestor of the Chogyals and the Lepcha chief Tekong Tek in the 15th century, where Dzo-nga was for the first time invoked to witness their alliance. A finely dressed woman then held the chang of which a few drops were sprinkled on the altar, the members of the royal family and the pangte dancers after which members of the royal family offered silk scarves to the life-size effigies of Dzo-nga and Yapdi (jak bitu), the guardians of Sikkim’s southern gate. The pangte dances then sprinkled some rice in the air and left followed by the assembly. This ceremony was followed by the pangte and the monastic cham dances which have been described by Nebesky-Wojkowitz (1976: 19-24, 1991: 402-3). The pangte is essentially a victory dance.

where lay men carrying sword and shield, praise the witness deity and invoke Dzö-ngä as their warrior god while celebrating the subjugation of enemies. It was followed by a series of cham danced by the Pemayangtse lamas wearing elaborate brocade dresses and masks with Dzö-ngä and Yapdü as the central deities to male appearances. A red and a black horse dedicated respectively to Dzö-ngä and Yapdü participated in the cham; never ridden by anyone throughout the year, these horses are said to suddenly grow restless at a precise moment during the rituals as if mounted by the deities. While the rituals were being held at the Palace’s chapel a Lepcha bönphri would perform a ritual for Yapdü at his abode above the Teesta, south of present-day Sikkim. In the evening, the dignitaries and representatives who participated in the morning oath taking session, assembled again at the Palace ground for the annual chanting of the national anthem.49

In Tingchim, as in many other Sikkimese villages, Pang Lhabsol was observed by first sending offerings of chang or grain to the Chogyal through their representative which was to be part of the neg for the rituals at the Palace’s chapel that were going to involve a large number of lamas over several days. In exchange, the representative was fed and sent back with a mound (40 kg) of salt for the village. Offerings were also sent to the Phodong monastery where rituals were being held. Back home in the village, Pang Lhabsol was celebrated at the prayer hall with the lamas’ and the bönphri bönphri’s performance of the Churim. Although villagers usually did not attend the rituals in Gangtok, the sending of their representative with an offering of grain, the receipt of the salt for the village from the Palace and their own simultaneous performance of the ngor in honour of Dzö-ngä, Yapdü and all the deities of Sikkim, effectively linked Tingchim to the Palace, the lamas and all other Sikkimese villages through the performance of a national ritual. In this way, Dzö-ngä played an important role as a national symbol and it is said that all ethnic communities, whatever their origins and whether Hindu or Buddhist, used to recognise and worship Kanghendzönga if they considered themselves first and foremost as Sikkimese.

In the early days of fieldwork in Tingchim, I expected to witness a lama-shaman encounter similar to that described by Mumford whereby the traditions of the Gurung shamans and Tibetan lamas in Gyasmdo

49. This partial description of the Pang Lhabsol ritual is based on a few people’s recollection of the events as they remembered them. The main contributors are from T.S. Gyalsea and Captain S. Yongla.
were interacting as rival regimes (1989: 10). However, such confrontation in Tsechim did not present itself and instead, the ritual cooperation between lamas and shamans unfolded as a well-integrated ritual complex. Although each ritual tradition in Tsechim, in theory, corresponds to a particular ritual field dominated by a specific altar and specialists performing distinct ritual offerings, these are not to be regarded as separate belief systems and practices. Rather, they should be perceived as complementary elements that have moulded each other through decades if not centuries of interaction. Any bön or Buddhist aspect of this pantheon may be invoked in the process of village ritual life, usually independently but sometimes through regular and curing rituals that require various levels of cooperation such as in the Chirim. Rivalries are rare and, until recently, not explicitly between bön and Buddhism since at the village level, all equally recognize the pantheon of the other while being fundamentally Buddhists. The chanting of the khelema remains the ritual performance shared by all which best symbolises this creative encounter. And whether performed by the lamas as part of the nchod, by the pawa for the phölla ma lha or by the bönchen bungthang for the ajo angpo and other ambiguous supernatural beings inhabiting the territory, the khelemen will be chanted to please or appease the deities of the land and seek the protective blessings of Kangchendzöngä.

8. Conclusion: The progressive influence of high Buddhism

For the Lhapos, although Dzö-nga's Buddhist identity was revealed and promoted by Lhasrin Chenpo in the 17th century, the mountain deity did not shed his secular identities immediately. The taming has been a slow process and Tsechim villagers still annually sacrificed an ox for Dzö-nga and all the local supernatural beings of Sikkim until the early 1960s. Nebesky-Wojkowicz also quotes a Sikkimese source as saying 'If... danger from tigers arises, then this is magic due to the dissatisfaction of mDzod loga stag rta'i'. Sacrifice a white yak. If no white yak is available, then make an offer as a substitute the image of a white yak made of butter and long like an arrow' (1976: 20). These examples suggest that, in

50. For a discussion about the lama-shaman relation in Tsechim and the views of other authors on the subject in the context of other Tibetan cultural regions see my dissertation Buddhists and Shamans in Village Sikkim (2002).

51. Dzö-nga is often referred to as Dzö-nga sakti or trayo ngor or tiger peak.
the eyes of the Lhapos, Dzo-nga retained the ambivalent character of an untamed mountain deity for much longer than it is suggested in the scriptures. But today, the taming process seems just about complete. Although Dzo-nga's secular identities are still honoured by the village lamas in Tingchim, he is never found to be at the root of someone's illness or misfortune and blood will no longer be offered to him directly. Nevertheless, the debate over his identities is still ongoing. When discussing these with a rinpoche in Gangtok, he thought it impossible for Dzo-nga to take possession of the pawa in Tingchim: and address the audience. In his eyes, as god of wealth, Dzo-nga was too high a Buddhist deity and could not possibly descend from his heavenly abode upon the body of a village pawa. The rinpoche concluded that the possessing entity had to be an imposter.

Similar ideas are slowly finding their way back to the village as the lama-students return to the village after studying under the supervision of Tibetan rinpoches and knowledgeable lamas who established educational institutions or found employment in Sikkim following the taking over of Tibet in 1959. As the well educated lama-students take the place of their fathers in the ritual hierarchy of the village and the bbow ritual specialists pass away, so are their rituals being forgotten, and with them, the identities of the phoiba moltha and the supernatural beings of the land including that of Kangchendzonga.

And so it would seem that Karmay's observation that usually, mountain deities were not the object of both secular and Buddhist cults, has gradually taken place in Sikkim. From ambivalent phoiba, Dzo-nga progressively became a Buddhist deity.

Thus, following his 17th century conversion, Dzo-nga’s warrior aspect as a phoiba seems to have simply been gradually reoriented, from defending the person, the lineage and the territory against worldly enemies, towards defending the Dharma, the monasteries and Sikkim as a newly established Buddhist kingdom against potentially untamed subjects of the king. And his qualities as a worldly provider of grains and male descendents, replaced as a provider of Buddhist scriptures and other spiritual treasures.

More recently, Dzo-nga seems to have found new protective roles on Sikkim’s ritual platform of the 1990s. Now a minority in their ex-Kingdom, the Lhapos are increasingly being faced with threats to the survival of their language, culture, and economic and political rights. These threats have led to the need to assert their unity and original Sikkimese,
or 'sons of the soil' identity which has found perfect expression in the worship of the deities of the land and its sacred locations. Such rituals clearly highlight the Lhops' ancient relation with the land and effectively distinguish them from Tibetans and people of Nepalese origin who, as recent immigrants and uprooted people do not recognise these supernatural beings. The monasteries, the spiritual treasures, the sacred sites and their rituals are the only thing left to the Lhops which confers on them a sense of identity and a locus for their past history.

In this context, Buddhist rituals in honour of territorial deities have undergone a certain revival among politically conscious Lhops lamas. The best example is that of the lamas of Pemayangtse monasteries, who in 1994, took it upon themselves to resume, within the precinct of their own monastery, the performance of the Pang Lhabsol ritual which had been suspended some years before at the Palace's chapel. More recently, preserving the sacred sites and spiritual treasures located at the heart of Demojong was the object of a campaign against the construction of a 30-megawatt hydro-electric power station to be built on the sacred Rabong Chu river at Yakaun in West Sikkim (Schaëer 1993). The nesol specifically mentions not to destroy hills, rocks and cliffs within Demojong and the sound of the blasting of the dynamites at the project site had a powerful psychological impact on the Lhops; it was as if the deities' abodes were crumbling to pieces. In this case, the preservation of Demojong became a rallying issue for the Lhops community to unite and wake up to the fact that they were losing their identity and strength as a community because of personal financial and other political interests. During the campaign, the nesol ritual, held in honour of Kangchendzonga and all other supernatural beings of the land was repeatedly performed in many houses throughout Sikkim. The rituals were held in an effort to appease the deities following the destruction of the sacred land or with the hope of invoking Kangchendzonga's blessings for the success of the campaign.
Bibliography


* in 1971, Dusko Tsenin Dorje (Drag shos brtan 'dzin rdo rje) informed Michael Aris about the existence of two exceptional Bhutanese/Mon historical texts which he later gave to him. They are:
1. Sa skyang rgyal po'i gelug rabs byung khang dbang 'byi mi rabs chad shul nges par gsal ba'i sgron me, written in 1728 by Wadjinda, a monk from the Byur clan, dbu can manuscript, 54 folios.
2. Dpal 'Brug par lung lha'i gelug brgyud kej brtan pa'i ring loge Lho mon kha' ba'i las rgyi ma shar phyogs byung chogs rgyan po le rgyus gsal ba'i me long, unsigned, but most probably written by the same author, dbu can manuscript, 24 folios.
In 1979, Michael Aris published these two historical works along with their English translations and appended them as a microfiche copy to his book, Bhutan: The Early History of a Himalayan Kingdom, Aris & Phillips, Warminster, London, 1979, (for
detailed information regarding the manuscripts, please see pp.xxv-xxx).


In 1984, Dashe Tenzin Dorje published the former manuscript under the title *Bud 'bye rang-* lngag Khris rol pa con gri shu mchog Lha ras guung ma'i lugs bsgad 'jol-ee shab dang*.


d. 1. (Cover title) "Brug chos phrags pa'i gnyen lam bru'i btsangs dang bka' shis gsang phag rgya byi brug pa gnyen sgrig skyer skyer nhul lo rgyud mdo bsdus de zai gling bu zhes bya ba bshungs so. [Slightly longer title runs: 'Brug chos phrags pa'i gnyen lam bru'i btsangs dang bka' shis gsang phag rgya byi brug pa gnyen sgrig skyer skyer nhul lo rgyud mdo bsdus na gthon pho mo'i ma ba'i dpam du gyur pa'i grum dru za'i gling bu zhes bya ba bshungs so.'] pp. 1-15.

d. 2. "Brug pa'i rga' rtags chos ngag tu song ba'i grum rgo mshar 'gsum shor bshungs so". *Brug blo gsal*, pp. 14-64.

e. 3.skyer dngam yon rang chags rabs lo rgyud smra ba 'dod pa'i kha' rgyan bshungs', pp. 65-72.

There is no publication information on the latter booklet. This too was published sometime in the mid 1980’s in Bhutan.

f. Lho 'Brug sman skyer chos idam cheng gi skyu yol khang dang guag guag khyad phrts ma'i khyud byi gruig dbyings la rgyud gang rta'i phreg bshungs dad pa'i rgyas byi skyer dkar po. (A Collection of Rare and Historic Unknown Guide Books and Account of 24 Sacred Sites and Hidden Places of the Bhutanese and Men Tawang Area), collected and edited by Dashe Tenzin Dorje, no publication data, 341 pages.
1. “Bum thang bhai abas yul gi gyi blok pa me tse skyed shal”, written by Theya, pa mchog gi zual Byor ba Dri med ‘od zer in sning ma laug, pp.5-23.

2. “Shas yul skyed mo ljongs Bham ga hyung gi gnas yig”, Rig ’dzin. ‘Jogs med gling pa bas bbyur las chon pa’n, pp.13-35.


4. “Bum thang shogs brang Seng ge rdonng gi gnas yig nyung ngar baks pa don gyi smyng po”, Chus legs bka’ Mdo rhams gser ston Rin chen gling par gnas kyi ngo spred mdzed, Rdo rje gling spyal ming pa sngags ban rhams gser Yong grol gyi shar shes bris, pp.45-46.


7. “Klong gad las Shas yul mikhun pa ljongs kyi gnas yig Pad ma gling pad’i gser ma”, pp.73-305.

8. “Lho mon phyogs phu na’si sgrub gnas shas gnas rong mo seng gnas lag dang bas pa phye tshul Dalj diges pa phu dbyangs”, written by Lha rigs dzo nge ’dzin pa Kun bzang rang ’tig rdo rje ’am Ralo ye’i rje’s med real in me dbyar liv, pp.104-135.

9. “Yongs ma mthong rten bakor ral lo ’gyuus me’kod rten bya rang kha shes grva’i shalbs, gog gser pad gyis pa sogs la brtsuns pa’i dkar chag”, pp.135-146.

10. “Shas yul ’deng ge rdeng gi gnas bhad”, pp.147-166.

11. “Mon kha na rtags seng ge rdong graun las gnas gser pad ma Yangs rdengong gi gnas yig pad ma diges’ kribs”, written by Gser ston O tgyan cho’i skyong gling pa at Skor mod dngang dkar, se phags ston lha’i rangs Lho phyogs Mon kha na seng Seng rdengong du’i babs gser ston O tgyan cho’i skyong gling pa dang! Lho brang chen rje drag shes phrin las ’gyu mtho brau pa gnas gser Pad ma yang rdong gnas bshal gser’ byed skabs”, pp.167-183.


16. “Nab phyogs chu idan zhing gi gnas chen ra rgyud brag gi gnas yig rin chen, gser gyi bang mdzod”, “Gso mgon mi pham ye shes dangs grub shes na’i srlul pa de’i skob bu Kun bzang bstan ’dzin in laaps phyis gling, pp.197-203.”
chen po 'Brug gsdo nge 'je giigs sqar, pp.303-309.

17. "Mon sde gser chos mo phu'i gra' yig las can dad pa'i, sanye ma, rig 'dzin sgron ston
20. "'Brug dkar po'i gra' yig bzhod pa'ng rgya me'i sprots phung", pp.222-246.
23. "Shas yis glang bzhig gi gra' yig zur rnam bzhod pa', Kang lo' byi shu lIga yi', dus skabs la! Sprots ston ra ba nges pa yar ngol dam! Gter ston stod gling guungs rgya yis' jug nas rnam thun guungs pa de skod ji khol mdu' S狂 ngol bzhed ming phren byi ba yis', O'rog gra' yig chen shas yul glang bzhod shis' gra' yig zur rnam bzhod gi bzhed, \p.257-278.
24. "Shas yul A brgya lung gi gra' yig mthong ba kun grol dang lung bsod", Gter ston O'rog gling sus shu gyepla da gra' sgrigs kyi tsles bo' lnga la gter nas dam drangs pa', pp.279-300.

I bought these publications in Dpe reng kun phun ngs du chu chak thong khang, Thimphu, when I was attending the funeral of Skyabs yile. Dol pa mchog lugs Rinpoche (1920-1993) in Thang mong chu kyi' dga' theg. Sa malakun mevol men, Paro (Bhumt) in November 1993.

There should be more articles and monographs written by Dusmo Tenzin Dorje, but these are not accessible to me at the moment. We are reproducing Dusmo Tenzin Dorje's article entitled "'Brug shad phyags pa gyen lam brus stangs dang tsha shis spang phongs kyi' 'Brug pa gyi' spgas gyen rgyen chos tsho la gra' yig rgya mo' nas ba'i rgya mtha' dangs nu gabdul pho' mo' nas ba'i sde'i de gnyis du gnyis pa'i gra' yig dri rtshis mthong ba' kha la bzhugs so". - "Marriage Customs and Practices of the lha rag (Sag sang Nga'gra) (pp.29-31) of tsha shis spang (Eastern Bhutan)" with permission of the author for a few reasons. Its prose is of high quality with particular attention to ethnographic details. Despite being so wonderfully written, it is not well known to the Bhutanese scholars and their students as well as the Western Tibetologists. It thus deserves more attention.
བོད་ཡུལ་ཡི་མཐོང་ཐལ་མཁས་པ་གནོད་ཉིད་འདི་ལྡན་ངེས་ཅིག་སོ།

ཁྲིམ་ཆུང་ཁྲིམ་དབྱིན་གསུམ་ལབ་འདུག  རྩེ་ཆེན་པོ་ཆུ་བསྟུན་འབྲི་སྡེ་པུ་སྤུ་ལས་སོ།

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དོན་བོད་དཔོན་བོད་པར་ཐོབ་སོ།

ིར་བོད་ཡི་གཤིག་སོ་མི་དོན་དཔོན་བོད་པར་ཐོབ་སོ།
བསྡོད་དོན་ལེན་བཤད་ཀྱིས་ བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་སྤྲུལ་བཤད་ཀྱི་ལས་ གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་ ཚུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞལ་བའི་དི་ངོ་བོ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཡོངས་
হিন্দু পুরাণগুলো মতে, মহাকালী হারতারাষ্ট্রের বিশেষ দেবী হিসেবে দৃষ্টিপথে আনান হয়েছিলেন। এই পুরাণগুলো মতে, মহাকালী মহাকালপুরাণ এবং সক্রিয়পুরাণের মধ্যে একটি প্রধান চরিত্র হিসেবে উল্লেখ করা হয়েছে। এই পুরাণগুলো মতে, মহাকালী মহাকালপুরাণ এবং সক্রিয়পুরাণের মধ্যে একটি প্রধান চরিত্র হিসেবে উল্লেখ করা হয়েছে। এটি হলো মহাকালী পুরাণের মাধ্যমে মহাকালী সমন্বিত পরিবর্তন সম্পাদনের জন্য একটি অগ্রন্থি বলেও বিবেচিত হয়।

দেখা যাচ্ছে যে, মহাকালী পুরাণের মাধ্যমে মহাকালী সমন্বিত পরিবর্তন সম্পাদনের জন্য একটি অগ্রন্থি বলেও বিবেচিত হয়।
तरुणे प्रकट करताना कची हृदयलब्धीत इत्या पुष्प र नूतन ध्वनिभर रुकते हे नृत्याची प्रेमप्रेमी गीत पुढे वाचून मलांगी प्रेमीभर उमडण्यास उपेक्षा करावी?

तरुणे काही शरीरातील अंधविरूढळ अवस्था हि काळातील नक्सोमादिनी स्मरण करून, तरुणे त्याच्या भ्रमणाने प्रेमप्रेमी वाचून मलांगी. ती तरुणाच्या विविध वृत्तींत स्रोतस्थळांचा अंश हा तो स्मरण करते. तरुणे हे शरीरातील अंधविरूढळ अवस्था हि काळातील नक्सोमादिनी स्मरण करून, तरुणे त्याच्या भ्रमणाने प्रेमप्रेमी वाचून मलांगी. ती तरुणाच्या विविध वृत्तींत स्रोतस्थळांचा अंश हा तो स्मरण करते. तरुणे हे शरीरातील अंधविरूढळ अवस्था हि काळातील नक्सोमादिनी स्मरण करून, तरुणे त्याच्या भ्रमणाने प्रेमप्रेमी वाचून मलांगी. ती तरुणाच्या विविध वृत्तींत स्रोतस्थळांचा अंश हा तो स्मरण करते. तरुणे हे शरीरातील अंधविरूढळ अवस्था हि काळातील नक्सोमादिनी स्मरण करून, तरुणे त्याच्या भ्रमणाने प्रेमप्रेमी वाचून मलांगी. ती तरुणाच्या विविध वृत्तींत स्रोतस्थळांचा अंश हा तो स्मरण करते. तरुणे हे शरीरातील अंधविरूढळ अवस्था हि काळातील नक्सोमादिनी स्मरण करून, तरुणे त्याच्या भ्रमणाने प्रेमप्रेमी वाचून मलांगी. ती तरुणाच्या विविध वृत्तींत स्रोतस्थळांचा अंश हा तो स्मरण करते. तरुणे हे शरीरातील अंधविरूढळ अवस्था हि काळातील नक्सोमादिनी स्मरण करून, तरुणे त्याच्या भ्रमणाने प्रेमप्रेमी वाचून मलांगी. ती तरुणाच्या विविध वृत्तींत स्रोतस्थळांचा अंश हा तो स्मरण करते. तरुणे हे शरीरातील अंधविरूढळ अवस्था हि काळातील नक्सोमादिनी स्मरण करून, तरुणे त्याच्या भ्रमणाने प्रेमप्रेमी वाचून मलांगी. ती तरुणाच्या विविध वृत्तींत स्रोतस्थळांचा अंश हा तो स्मरण करते. तरुणे हे शरीरातील अंधविरूढळ अवस्था हि काळातील नक्सोमादिनी स्मरण करून, तरुणे त्याच्या भ्रमणाने प्रेमप्रेमी वाचून मलांगी. ती तरुणाच्या विविध वृत्तींत स्रोतस्थळांचा अंश हा तो स्मरण करते. तरुणे हे शरीरातील अंधविरूढळ अवस्था हि काळातील नक्सोमादिनी स्मरण करून, तरुणे त्याच्या भ्रमणाने प्रेमप्रेमी वाचून मलांगी. ती तरुणाच्या विविध वृत्तींत स्रोतस्थळांचा अंश हा तो स्मरण करते.
দৃষ্টি পাওয়ায় শিক্ষিকা গুরুরা কবিতায় তল্লাতে রাগ করে।

শ্রীচৈতন্য মহাপ্রভুর গীত কথিত হলে শিক্ষিকা আসনে সমস্ত অংশ ভক্ত তর্কে ভক্তিতে বসে নেমে যা,

কল্যাণের তল্লাতে নরহে জ্ঞানবান সামনে আসে শ্রীচৈতন্যের সাথে যার যার রাগ জানলে তার জন্য সেনাবাহিনী নেতৃত্ব দেয় না।

শ্রীচৈতন্যের তল্লাতে নরহে জ্ঞানবান সামনে আসে শ্রীচৈতন্যের সাথে যার যার রাগ জানলে তার জন্য সেনাবাহিনী নেতৃত্ব দেয় না।

শ্রীচৈতন্যের তল্লাতে নরহে জ্ঞানবান সামনে আসে শ্রীচৈতন্যের সাথে যার যার রাগ জানলে তার জন্য সেনাবাহিনী নেতৃত্ব দেয় না।
কর্মভাবে শুরু করার পর সদাস্থানের একটি কৃত্তিতে চলছে একজন স্ত্রীর সিদ্ধান্ত নির্দেশনা গ্রহণ করা। সেই কারণে তিনি একটি সুন্দর কোষ্ঠে প্রবেশ করেন যেখানে অন্য কিছু অভিজ্ঞতা নেই। সেই কারণে তিনি তার সাথে একক স্তুতি করেন।

কিছু সময় পরে তিনি একই স্থানে আবার প্রবেশ করেন। একবার তিনি সেখানে দুই দিন অবস্থান করেন। তিনি সেখানে একটি সুন্দর কৃত্তিতে চলছেন এবং একাধিক কর্মকাণ্ডের মধ্যে একটি স্ত্রীর সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণ করেন। এই সময় তিনি একটি সুন্দর কৃত্তিতে চলছেন এবং একাধিক কর্মকাণ্ডের মধ্যে একটি স্ত্রীর সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণ করেন।

কিছু সময় পরে তিনি একই স্থানে আবার প্রবেশ করেন। একবার তিনি সেখানে দুই দিন অবস্থান করেন। তিনি সেখানে একটি সুন্দর কৃত্তিতে চলছেন এবং একাধিক কর্মকাণ্ডের মধ্যে একটি স্ত্রীর সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণ করেন।

যে সময় তিনি একই স্থানে আবার প্রবেশ করেন। একবার তিনি সেখানে দুই দিন অবস্থান করেন। তিনি সেখানে একটি সুন্দর কৃত্তিতে চলছেন এবং একাধিক কর্মকাণ্ডের মধ্যে একটি স্ত্রীর সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণ করেন।

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কাহাত্মক হেরি নিজেকে ভবন ও শিক্ষার মাধ্যমে সাধারণ জনসমাজের গুরুত্ব প্রকাশ করতে প্রয়াস করেন। অভিশাপ সংজ্ঞায়িত হন উক্তির আলোচনার বিষয়গুলি কোন প্রকার আলোচনার একটি প্রধান অংশ হিসেবে ভেঙে ফেলেন।

দীক্ষাবিদ্যা অদ্বৈত জীবন সংস্কার করার প্রচেষ্টার মধ্যে বিভিন্ন ধরনের সাফল্য দেখা দিয়েছে। এমন ধরনের অভিজ্ঞতা সাধারণ আমাদের বিজ্ঞানীদের কাছে প্রদর্শন করে যা আমাদের জীবনের উদ্দেশ্য প্রকাশ করে।

চিন্তা করার সময়ে আমরা স্পষ্ট করতে পারি যে, জীবন সংস্কারের উদ্দেশ্য হলো বিভিন্ন ধরনের অভিজ্ঞতা এবং জীবনের উদ্দেশ্য প্রকাশ করার মাধ্যমে সামাজিক সুস্থিরতা লাভ করার জন্য।

চিন্তা করার সময়ে আমরা স্পষ্ট করতে পারি যে, জীবন সংস্কারের উদ্দেশ্য হলো বিভিন্ন ধরনের অভিজ্ঞতা এবং জীবনের উদ্দেশ্য প্রকাশ করার মাধ্যমে সামাজিক সুস্থিরতা লাভ করার জন্য।
একটি মহান বিষয়ের সমাধান লাভের জন্য একটি প্রথম পদক্ষেপ হলো সমস্যার পরিস্কার তালিকা। এই তালিকা সমস্যার প্রকৃতি ও কারণকে স্পষ্ট করে তুলতে পারে এবং তাকে সমাধানের পথ দেখায়।

তালিকাটি অনুসারে প্রথমে সমস্যার পৃথক ভাগগুলির তালিকা তৈরি করা হবে। এই ভাগগুলিতে সমস্যার বিভিন্ন ভাগের প্রকৃতি ও কারণকে স্পষ্ট করা হবে।

পরে সমস্যার প্রতিটি ভাগের পাশাপাশি সমস্যার সমাধানের পথ দিয়ে প্রস্তুত করা হবে। এই পথগুলি সমস্যার সমাধানের জন্য ব্যবহার করা হবে।

সমস্যার প্রতিটি ভাগের পাশাপাশি সমস্যার সমাধানের পথের জন্য একটি পৃথক তালিকা তৈরি করা হবে। এই তালিকাটি সমস্যার প্রতিটি ভাগের সমাধানের পথের জন্য ব্যবহার করা হবে।

এবং এই তালিকাটিকে সমস্যার প্রতিটি ভাগের সমাধানের পথের জন্য ব্যবহার করা হবে।
ক্ষয়বিনিময় ব্যবস্থাপনাতে নিয়মিত অনুসরণ করা উচিত এবং মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ার চেয়ে আগে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষয়বিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।

ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে ক্ষয় বিনিময় ক্ষতি হানির সূত্র মূল্যায়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্ভর করে। ক্ষযবিনিময় পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করলে গুরুত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়।
བོད་ཡིག་བོད་ཡིག་བོད་ཡིག་བོད་ཡིག་བོད་ཡིག་བོད་ཡིག་བོད་ཡིག

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হিন্দুধর্মের প্রতিনিধিত্বকারী দেহমেহন্দ্র মণ্ডল গুঁড়াই জল পূজা প্রথার প্রতিনিধিত্বকারী দেহমেহন্দ্র মণ্ডল গুঁড়াই জল পূজা প্রতিনিধিত্বকারী দেহমেহন্দ্র মণ্ডল গুঁড়াই জল পূজা প্রতিনিধিত্বকারী দেহমেহন্দ্র মণ্ডল গুঁড়াই জল পূজা প্রতিনিধিত্বকারী দেহমেহন্দ্র মণ্ডল গুঁড়াই জল পূজা প্রতিনিধিত্বকারী দেহমেহন্দ্র মণ্ডল গুঁড়াই 

এই প্রাচীন গতির আধ্যাত্মিক ও মূল্যবোধক আন্তরিকতার দৃষ্টিকোণ থেকে এই প্রাচীন গতির আধ্যাত্মিক ও মূল্যবোধক আন্তরিকতার দৃষ্টিকোণ থেকে এই প্রাচীন গতির আধ্যাত্মিক ও মূল্যবোধক আন্তরিকতার দৃষ্টিকোণ থেকে এই প্রাচীন গতির আধ্যাত্মিক ও মূল্যবোধক আন্তরিকতার দৃষ্টিকোণ থেকে এই প্রাচীন 

হিন্দুধর্মের প্রতিনিধিত্বকারী দেহমেহন্দ্র মণ্ডল গুঁড়াই 

དྲག་བྱུགས་ཕྱུར་རྫུང་། མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་བོད་པ་གློ་འབུམ་ཐེག་བཅོད་པར་ཀློག་འབུམ་ཙླ་མོ་ཡི་བོད་པ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་ཚོས་གྱི་བོད་པ་མཐར་བསམས་དཔོན་ཁྲག་ལ་གློ་འབུམ་ལྡན་པར་ཁྱབ་བྱས་牦

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News from the
Namgyal Institute of Tibetology
Gangtok, Sikkim

Since its establishment in 1958, the NIT has sponsored and promoted research on the religion, history, language, art and culture of the people of the Tibetan cultural area which includes Sikkim. The NIT’s library holds one of the largest collections of Tibetan works in the world outside Tibet and a museum of Tibetan iconography and religious art. It has published the Bulletin of Tibetology since 1964 and numerous books over the years.

The site on which the institute was established was donated by the late Chogyal (king) of Sikkim Sir Tashi Namgyal in memory of his departed son Paljor Namgyal. The foundation stone of the institute was laid by the 14th Dalai Lama on the 10th of February 1957 and the institute was declared open by the late Prime Minister of India Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on the 1st of October 1958. The building of the institute is an imposing monument and a splendid example of Sikkimese architecture.

In the summer of 2002, the NIT’s new director, Mr Tashi Densapa, has undertaken to expand the institute, restructure its research wing and open its doors to international collaboration. This will be done through the creation of new research programs, monthly lecture series, seminars, language classes, fellowship programs, publications and collaboration with foreign scholars. It is hoped that the institute will actively promote Tibetan studies, including its sub-field of Sikkimese studies, and become a dynamic research centre in the Eastern Himalayas. In order to help him achieve this, Mr Densapa has requested Tashi Tiering (Aniye Machen Institute, Tibetan Centre for Advanced Studies, Dharamsala) as part time Consultant and appointed Anna Balikci Denjongpa (PhD London) as Research-Coordinator.

Among its new research programs, the NIT’s Research Officers have undertaken a project to document the social history of Sikkim’s 60-odd monasteries in order to publish an illustrated book on the subject. A second project proposes to locate, digitize and document old and rare photographs of Sikkim, both in India and abroad. The aim is to create
a digital image bank as the NIT and organize a permanent photographic exhibition. The NIT has also established a visual anthropology project in order to produce an enduring digital record of Sikkim's vanishing indigenous and Buddhist cultures. From its publication department, the NIT has undertaken to make Sikkim's rare and old histories and sacred guide-books available to the public.

An international inter-disciplinary seminar on Sikkim will be held at the institute in 2004 in honour of famous Sikkimese scholars in Tibetan studies. Scholars interested to participate should contact the NIT on: nitsikkim@yahoo.co.in. It is hoped that the seminar will generate interest in Sikkimese studies and facilitate the establishment of an international association for Sikkimese studies based at the institute.

The NIT will soon undergo a general expansion of its infrastructure and facilities. The construction of a new building which will house a library, study rooms, a conference hall, studios and an administrative wing is to begin before the end of the year. A grant to modernize the NIT's exhibition hall has been approved by the American International Centre, India.

Our web-site: www.tibetology.com is still under construction but please visit it in the future for updates on NIT's activities.
ANNA BALIECI DENJONG is the Research-Cooordinator at the Namgyl Institute of Tibetology Gangtok, Sikkim. She received her PhD in social anthropology from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Her dissertation is entitled: Budhism and Shamanism in Village Sikkim (2002). She is currently researching the history of Sikkimese society, partly through the use of old photographs, and working on a video project aiming to document the Buddhist and indigenous rituals of Sikkim.

DRAG SHOS BSTAN 'DZIN 920 RJE (b.1928)
Dasho Tezzin Dorje, originally from Dyu' gling in Bhre shis gang district (Eastern Bhutan), was a magistrate of Bhre shis gang rdzang (Eastern Bhutan) during the 1960's. In the early 1970's, he was employed at the Audit Office, Thimphu and, in the early 1980's, at the Rten gyur chik dpod las khungs, Thimphu. He is now retired from the Royal Bhutanese Government Service.