

2 The Sources

Essentially, there are sources on the Sino-Nepalese War from three sides—the Kingdom of Gorkha (Nepal), the Qing Empire (including texts in Chinese and Manchu), and the Tibetan government (including monks and aristocrats). In addition, there are English reports, which, with a few exceptions, are rather secondary because they are based on reports from the indigenous sources. The most important sources are collected in this volume. Although some of them have already been published in print, almost all sources have not yet been published in adequate English translations. The selection collected in this volume includes texts that are as close as possible to the political and military events, partly because their authors took part in the war itself. While the Nepalese sources (2.1) and Chinese archival documents (2.2.1–5) consist mainly of historical documents and some commemorative inscriptions preserved in various forms,⁹ Chinese historiographies (2.2.6–8) and the Tibetan biographies (2.3) comprise retrospective reports after the war with a semi-century. In Part I, 2.1–3, we give brief introductions to the content of the sources, in Part II, 2.1–3 follow editorial clarifications.¹⁰

2.1 Sources in Nepālī

The Nepālī sources for the Sino-Nepalese War can be divided into letters, reports, inscriptions and a few marginal remarks in other texts. The report from 1793 (2.1.5) is of outstanding importance, but its author is not known. It is one of the longest texts on the course of the

9 Further Chinese archival and literary materials were also consulted. However, given their extensiveness, it is impossible to translate the thousands of pages in this volume. Excerpts and summaries are given in footnotes for reference.

10 Please note that the numbering of Part I (The Wars) corresponds to that in Part II (Sources). Therefore, we mention the Part numbers only when we refer to the texts.

war ever. A year earlier, King Rana Bahadur Shah (or, more likely, Regent Bahadur Shah in his name) had already written about the war that had just begun in a letter (2.1.4) to officials in the Kumaon.

Crucial for the origin of the war, in addition to the disputes over trade and currency issues (see Ch. 3), is the flight of the second brother of the Panchen Lama, Shamarpa, after he had been ignored in the inheritance and fled to Nepal (2.1.1). This document created by Shamarpa was also quoted in the Tibetan sources.

The question of who won the war is answered in various texts, such as the *Nepālikabhūpavaṃśāvalī* (2.1.9), also known as “Wright’s Chronicle” (Wright 1877) or in an inscription in Nuvakot from 1868 (2.1.12). There is no clear document on this issue, but there are various formulations of an understanding, if not formal agreement (2.1.6). The treaty of Kyirong VS 1850 (1790) in the run-up to the Sino-Nepalese War (2.1.3)¹¹ is better documented, especially since it is mentioned in a letter (2.1.2) by Rana Bahadur Shah from VS 1846 (1789) and supplemented by Chinese and Tibetan sources.

In the aftermath of the war, delegations have been sent to Beijing to fulfil the tributary obligation. The question of whether these are gifts or tributes plays a major role in the lyrics. An order by Phaṭya Śaṃśera from 1893 (2.1.13) is instructive in this regard. For example, there is an instruction (2.1.7) from Rana Bahadur Shah for the envoy Devadatta Thapa from 1792 and a letter (2.1.8) to the senior most *kāji* Damodara Pande from the same year. There is a wealth of documents on the subsequent missions, most of which have been published by Vijay Kumar Manandhar.¹² Two long, previously unpublished documents from 1925 (2.1.10–11) deal mainly with the dangers and resistance of such expeditions. They are of interest because there is also an English account describing a meeting between an Englishman seeking a land trade route from China to India and the head of the mission, *kāji* Jagatsera Khatri Chetri.

11 Cp. Komatsubara 2017.

12 V.K. Manandhar 2001 and 2004; see also T.R. Manandhar and T.P. Mishra. 1986.

2.1.1 Shamarpa's Dharmapatra, VS 1849 (1788)

This *dharmapatra* is a formal declaration of loyalty to the Gorkha Kingdom, written by Syāmarpa Lāmā, in which he and others declare their allegiance to the Gorkha King after leaving Lhasa and China, symbolised by their consumption of the king's salt, a traditional act of loyalty. The text contains a solemn pledge not to betray Gorkha by revealing its weaknesses to Lhasa, engaging in conspiracies, or disobeying the king's orders. It also includes a vow to avoid unauthorised communication with Lhasa. Any violation of these commitments would invite divine punishment from the revered deities at Bauddha and Svayambhu. This was also retold to Tenzin Peljor in Bahadur Shah's dialogue with him at the Gorkha court (2.3.2d).

2.1.2 Letter to *Bhāradāras* of Gorkha Gegarding Kerung, VS 1846 (1789)

This letter is addressed to the officials Ranavira Khatri, Amvarasim Thapa, Vandeva Thapa, and soldiers of the Kuhruva,¹³ Thuma,¹⁴ and Kampani (military units). The writer reports that all is well on their side and hopes the same for the recipients. They share important news that, following the orders of the Chinese Emperor, envoys from China arrived, and a *dharmapatra* (a religious and formal agreement) was completed between Tibet and Nepal. The letter recalls an agreement made during the reign of King Pratapa Malla, where Bhimala Kaji negotiated a border settlement with Tibet, establishing a boundary at Kuti (Nyalam). As part of this agreement, Tibet was required to pay an annual tax of 50,001, which was to be delivered to Kathmandu. The Chinese envoys were received, and letters and gifts were dispatched to the Chinese Emperor. The letter concludes by instructing the recipients to gather all ammunition, rifles, gunpowder, and other military supplies from various forts and return them to the sender's location.

13 Read: *kuruvā*, a military unit.

14 A military subdivision comprising a number of villages in the hills headed by an *umrao*.

2.1.3 The Treaty Between Gorkha and Tibet Regarding the Currency, VS 1846 (1789)

It appears that there is no authoritative document confirming this agreement, commonly referred to as the 1789 treaty of Kyirong (summarised, for instance, in Stiller 1975, 199–200). Significant discrepancies exist among various sources when comparing the Nepali-Tibetan and Chinese accounts regarding their content and specifics, as discussed by Rose (1971, 42) and Regmi (1975, 1, 433–34). The closest available Nepālī text is found in *Itihāsaprakāśa* (vol. 1, 53), where the compensation amount is stated as 50,001 rupees (see also Komatsubara 2017, 184), and the witnesses are listed. The title of the document is *Gorkha mahārāja kana lāsābhoṭkā rājale 50001 ru. prativarṣa dine karadasandhi—samvat 1846 śrāvaṇamā keruṇmā*, with the exact date noted as VS 1846 śrāvaṇa vadi 12 roj 1. Additional relevant documents include *gorkha ra bhoṭako mudrā sandhi* (Naraharinātha 1965, 20) and *keruṇsandhisandhi patra gorkhābhārālāt-samvat 1843 bhādra mā* (ibid., 53), which recall all participants of the expedition to Kathmandu.

2.1.4 Letter of Raṇa Bahādura Śāha to Officials Sent for the Conquest of Kumaon Garhwal, VS 1849 (1792)

This letter was written by King Rana Bahadur Shah though it was effectively composed by Regent Bahadur Shah, as the king was seventeen years old at the time. It is addressed to the officials (*bhāradāra*) who had been sent for the conquest of Kumaon and Garhwal. It is dated Sunday, the seventh of the dark fortnight of Kārttika, VS 1849 (1792 CE). The officials are *kājī* Jagajita Pande, *sardāra* Ambarasim Thapa and *kaptāna* (Captain) Golya Khavasa. It is the earliest document in Nepālī reporting this war.

2.1.5 A Copy of a Report of the Sino-Nepalese War of 1793 and the Agreement Between China/Tibet and Nepal [= Report of VS 1850]

This anonymous 28-folio text, also referred to as the “Memorial” or “official memorial,” provides a comprehensive Nepali war report from VS 1850 (1793 CE). It chronicles the events of the war from the initial

clashes in Tibet in 1788 to the conclusion with the so-called Treaty of Betravati in late 1792. It is the most extensive report in Nepālī on the Sino-Nepalese War.

2.1.6 The Understanding of Betravati (1792–1793)

There appears to be no formal document in the Nepalese archives that verifies the peace arrangements mentioned by General Padma Jang Rana in his *Life of Maharaja Sir Jang Bahadur* (1909), which lacks an original document. The Nepalese scholar Yogi Naraharinātha (1965, 121; engl. transl. 1964, 2) summarises this ‘treaty’ and notes that it is a summary of the treaty, written in English and stored in the Jaisīkoṭhā office in Kathmandu. This is likely the version referenced by Padma Jang Rana.¹⁵

2.1.7 Instruction for Devadatta Thāpā’s Visit to Beijing, VS 1849 (1792)

These directives from King Rana Bahadur Shah to *kājī* Devadatta Thapa provide guidance for communication with the Emperor of China (VS 1849). The King emphasises respect through traditional gestures. He notes that their unfamiliarity with Chinese customs, despite advice from Syāmarpa Lama, led to a conflict with Tibet. Key points for communication include: (1) Request the Emperor to instruct Tibet to use only pure silver coins, as the current circulation of debased coins is unfair and sinful; (2) Confirm ongoing communication regarding relations with the British; (3) Assure the Emperor of friendly relations with Navāb Āsapat Daulā. (4) Express gratitude for the Emperor’s support and request assistance if needed. (5) Obtain a letter from the Emperor confirming his support. It can be read together with 2.2.3a, 2.2.3e, and 2.2.3f, in which their request for later military support from China was expressly dismissed in Peking.

15 Rana 1909; there is another Engl. transl. by Naraharinatha 1964, 2. However, Stiller (1975, 212) comments that there is no indication “that this is an official treaty.” Similarly, Sreedhar (1988, 249): “The peace settlement of 1792 was not a formal agreement . . .” Interestingly, however, in 1949 CE, this treaty was presented to the United Nations Organisation as an additional proof of Nepal’s independent and sovereign status (Stiller *ibid.*). For other primary and secondary sources on this issue, see Rose 1971, 59 n. 28 and 65 n. 44. See also Prem 1980, 36.

2.1.8 Letter of Raṇa Bahādura Śāha to the Senior Most *Kājī* Dāmodara Pāḍe, VS 1849 (1792)

In the letter, it is emphasised that the Chinese Emperor is a significant figure. The King acknowledges that, with divine grace, they could have expelled the Chinese from Nuvakot but chose not to escalate the conflict. Both sides intend to pursue a peace treaty. Tu thyang (Fuk’anggan, 1753–1796 CE) had suggested sending one of the four *kājīs* to China with a letter and gifts to meet the Emperor.¹⁶ The King notes that failing to send a *kājī* is inadequate. He proposes that the senior *kājī*, Damodara Pande, should make the trip. It can be read together with 2.2.2d and 2.2.3a.

2.1.9 *Nepālikabhūpavaṃśāvalī*—History of the Kings of Nepal—A Buddhist Chronicle, ca. VS 1895 (1838)

This chronicle, which was composed around 1838 CE by a Buddhist scholar from Patan, contains a short remark on the war, in which the Gorkha King clearly is declared to be the victor of the war.¹⁷

2.1.10 An *Arjī* from Jagatsera Khatrī Chetrī Regarding His Journey to Tibet and China, VS 1925a (1868)

and

2.1.11 An *Arjī* from *Kājī* Jagatsera Khatrī Chetrī Regarding His Journey Through Tibet and China, VS 1925b (1868)

These two letters, written by *kājī* Jagatsera Khatri, recount a mission through Tibet to China. Khatri describes his assistance to a distressed British citizen, Thomas Thornville Cooper, in his efforts to discover a trade

16 Regarding the Chinese letters related to this war, if we consider the date of 2.1.8 here to be 30 August 1792, Fuk’anggan’s suggestion might be on 13 August 1792 (QL 57/6/26) (WZTZ 1896, vol. 13.2, 30–32; WZTZ 1982, 405–6). However, Fuk’anggan’s suggestion could also have been expressed orally to Ranjīt Pande or Bhotu Pande. 2.2.2c might have been Rana Bahadur Shah’s reply to Fuk’anggan’s suggestion on 25 August 1792, while Rana Bahadur Shah focused more on the tribute in 2.2.2d on 11 September.

17 Bajracharya and Michaels 2016, vol. 1, 20.90–94 and vol. 2, 135.

route from China to India, as well as details regarding the transport of opium.

2.1.12 Nuvakot Inscription, VS 1925 (1868)

The text begins with an invocation to the Goddess Bhairavi. It recounts the lineage of Prithvi Narayan Shah, highlighting his two sons: the elder Simhapratapa (Pratapa Simhadeva) and the younger Bahadur Shah, who served as regent for King Rana Bahadur. Rana Bahadur was a powerful king known for his military conquests from a young age. Under Bahādura’s wise and devoted rule, Gorkha’s northern border was at the Ganges. During this time, a Chinese invasion occurred, but the Emperor retreated after his troops faced significant losses. In a gesture of devotion, King Rana Bahadur and Prince Bahadur Shah offered a gold roof and door to Goddess Bhairavī, recalling the devotion of Kṛṣṇa towards Sudāmā. This offering, made in 1792 (1714 Śaka), symbolised their vow during the invasion and was intended to bring auspiciousness.

2.1.13 Phatya Śamśera’s Order, VS 1950 (1893)

This document—an order (*ādeśa*) from General Phatya Shamsher to *vakila* Kulananda—regulates the purchase of presents to be presented in the quinquennial missions to the Emperor of China. The document refers to the mission of 1894, headed by *kājī* Indra Bikram Rana (Manandhar 2001, 189–200, Sever 1989, 201–5). In the arrangement between China and Nepal after the Sino-Nepalese War in 1792, it was agreed that Nepal should send “products of the country” (*āphnā deśamā ubjeko vastu*: see Naraharinātha VS 1965, 121) to China. However, China generally accepted that these presents were in some cases bought in India (Mānandhar 2001, 34).

2.2 Sources in Chinese

Overview

Chuang 1979 and Feng 1993 explore the potential materials on Qing history in general. We will focus on the sources related to the Gorkha

campaigns. Despite some archival documents written in the Manchu language,¹⁸ most of the texts on the Sino-Nepalese War are written in Chinese from different perspectives.¹⁹ The Chinese sources are extensive. Relevant archival sources cover almost every month in the periods from 1788 June to 1790 May and from 1791 June to 1793 September, while the literati wrote influential and concise narrations of the course of the conflicts. These sources are heterogeneous and require a close investigation into their genres and ideologies. Based on the criteria of their adjacency to the core of courtly decisions, we might divide the sources eight-fold, namely

- (A) Archived documents, including memorials and edicts;
- (B) Commemorative inscriptions;
- (C) Compilations of strategies or courtly records;
- (D) Imperial corpora of statutes;
- (E) (Semi-)Official biographical works;
- (F) (Semi-)Official local chronicles;
- (G) Literary works produced privately during the events; and
- (H) Private historiographies.

In short, memorials reported events to the Emperor who ordered discussion among the imperial institutions. Investigations were thus done and memorialised. The Emperor thus had his edicts drafted and issued. These procedures were documented in archival documents (A). Some of his edicts were simultaneously taken down in the compilations of courtly records (C). These archival sources existed only in manuscripts. The Emperor later formulated commemorative inscriptions (B) based on the memorials and his edicts (A). He also ordered compilations

18 Shang 1990 and Hu 1994 are consulted for the Manchu terms.

19 The Emperor Qianlong required Manchu and Mongolian officials to write war reports in Chinese because the Chinese ministers were responsible for sending soldiers and provisions. The “Edict to Kinglin, Yamantai, and Bajung” says, “The letters to Li Shi-jie should be written in Chinese characters to make it convenient [for him] to read. You gave him Manchu letters. For those mistakes made by Kinglin and Yamantai, there should be a serious declaration of criticism” 寄信李世傑自當以漢字書寫，便於觀覽，乃復給以清字。慶林雅滿泰種種錯誤之處，著嚴行申飭 (BLBJL, vol. 6, QL 53/9/11). Cp. Söderblom 2024, 75; Oidtmann 2013, 25. Nevertheless, when it concerned Manchu officials or Tibetan affairs only, the Emperor received Manchu memorials and issued Manchu edicts. In these cases, the Chinese translations of Manchu documents were often abbreviated (Komat-subara 2009, Deng 2009, 21). In addition, some war reports seem also to have their Manchu versions in the archive (Cata. Mnc. no. 8724 = 3–2–3387–024).

of strategies (C) to be made after the case was fully closed. After the death of the Emperor, further compilations of courtly records (C) were made, while former decisions were also collected in imperial corpora of statutes (D). Upon these materials, imperial historiographers and local officers might compile biographical works (E) and local chronicles (F), taking some other additional sources. The Emperor was very interested in making a “regime of truth”, hence ordering to draft lots of these official and semi-official books.²⁰

Non-official writings were also made during the event. They were mainly literary works (G), including poetry, diary, prose, and notes. In addition, a later individual literatus might also have gather information from available sources and thus write private historiographies (H) retrospectively. The tradition of private history was largely suppressed in the Qing Dynasty until the 1840s.²¹ Earlier than that, the scholars either followed the official eulogising narratives (e.g., 2.2.6) or multiplied their works in the form of manuscripts instead of printed books (e.g., 2.2.7).²²

(A) *Archived Documents, Including Memorials and Edicts*

The archived documents serve as the major source for historians. Eminent Taiwanese scholar on Archival Studies, Chuang Chi-fa has visited many aspects of these documents.²³ Some of the relevant documents from the imperial archive have been edited and translated by Haenisch 1938 and 1959.

The Chinese ministers sent memorials to the court from the frontier. Usually, these memorials reached the Emperor within one month after their departure from Tibet or the Sino-Nepalese battlefields.²⁴ The Emperor might issue notes in red ink (硃批 *zhu-pi*) on them, send them back, and later recollect them in “Palace Archives” (宮中檔 *Gongzhong Dang*). Memorials on military affairs often found their way to

20 Wang 2013, 487.

21 *Ibid.*, 471, 615.

22 *Ibid.*, 495.

23 Chuang 1979, vol. 1 also gave English summaries of the Chinese chapters (1–6, 26–27, 29).

24 One might compare the date of reception in KRKJL and the date given in original memorials. In Part II, 2.2.3c [7], the Emperor also remarked that it took more than 40 days to reach the Palace from Nepal.

the Grand Council.²⁵ The memorials were copied in Chinese in 軍機處漢文錄副奏折 (*Jun-ji-chu Han-wen Lu-fu Zou-zhe*, abbreviated as *Han-wen Lu-fu*) “Memorials of the Grand Council in Chinese Copies”. It was stored orderly according to months.²⁶ If the Emperor decided that some memorials should be sent to other departments, one will probably also find them in “Cabinet Archives” (內閣檔案 *Nei-ge Dang-an*), part of which is held by Academia Sinica. “Palace Archives” and the archives of the Grand Council are now in Taipei and Peking. The Taiwanese collection of the National Palace Museum has been mostly digitalised.²⁷ Regarding the Pekingese ones,²⁸ some related pieces have also been published in Yuan Yi Lai in simplified Chinese editions,²⁹ while the catalogues of Manchu, Tibetan, and Chinese documents concerning Tibetan affairs have been published in 1999. It should be noted that memorials were not always telling the truth, whereas the edicts might not be fully carried out as they declared.³⁰

Memorials were also sent from the Grand Council and other ministries when the Emperor ordered (mainly Agūi and Hešen) to inquire and discuss. Concerning the Gorkha campaign, these memorials were put into the Special Record Books, namely the Grand Council’s “Special Archives” (專檔 *zhuan-dang*). 廓爾喀檔 (KRKD, *Kuorka Dang*), *Documents of the Grand Council for the Gorkha* encloses memorials and edicts from October 1791 (QL 56/9–10) to May 1793 (QL 58/1–3).

Upon receiving memorials, edicts were issued by the Emperor Qianlong. The edicts were often articulated verbally and then drafted by the Grand Council in written form for the Emperor to correct them. Several edicts can thus be found in KRKD, some of which are translated in 2.2.3.³¹ Edicts can either be issued through the cabinet to inform the Empire as a whole or be sent directly to related ministers secretly.³² The Chinese ones issued publicly are in “Imperial Edicts during

25 The Grand Council: Mnc. *Coo hai nashūn i ba*, Chin. *Jun-ji Chu*, literally, “Office for the Handling of Confidential Military Affairs”. See Bartlett 1991, Song 2018.

26 Chuang 1979, vol. 1, 74; Bartlett 1988. Mosca 2013 and Komatsubara 2017 both used the archive to uncover the acquisition of information related to Gorkha or British India.

27 Chuang 1983 gave a detailed introduction to these archival documents.

28 Cp. Shan 1987.

29 China Tibetology Research Centre, et al 1994.

30 Feng 1993, 166–67.

31 Chuang 1979, vol. 2, 86–89. Later, Chuang 1982 took it extensively as the source of his scholarly understanding of the Gorkha campaign.

32 Chuang 1979, vol. 1, 173, 182.

Qian-long's reign" (乾隆朝上諭檔 *Qian-long Shang-yu Dang*), while Manchu ones issued privately have been published in *Imperial Correspondence in Manchu during Qian-long Era: Compiled with Chinese Translation* (乾隆朝滿文寄信檔譯編 *Qian-long-chao Man-wen Ji-xin-Dang*, hereafter Qianlong Manchu Secret Edicts). Some of the edicts find their way into compilations of courtly records. The dichotomy of publicity and secrecy was also called the inner and outer courts.³³ It can be further divided four-fold. The innermost was the Palace (宮), as presented in the "Palace Archives". Then came the Grand Council (軍機處, including its historian institute of strategies 方略館) situated at the border of interior and exterior court. The Grand Council issued courtly directions (廷寄) or secret edicts/secret court letters and were also responsible for later compilations of strategies. The cabinet (內閣) or ministerial (部) documents and courtly records (注) comprised the information of the exterior court,³⁴ while the imperial historiographers (國史館) were further away, situated outside the forbidden city.

(B) Commemorative Inscriptions

Commemorating a victory by inscriptions has been an orthodox Chinese practice ever since 班固 (Ban Gu)'s Inscription of Yanran in 89 CE. Inscribing on stones or metals implies the eternity to be preserved by generations. Immediately after the war, the Emperor ordered his quadrilingual inscription, i.e., the Potala Inscription, to be made. He also mentioned his composition of the text in many edicts sent to the entire Empire.³⁵ Jade plates, silk tapestries, and paintings on silk were also made by the Emperor to bear his poems and essays related to the Gorkha campaign. The Potala Inscription thus existed in various forms (see Figures 21–23, in Part II 2.2.5). Sometimes, other ministers wrote calligraphy in the name of the Emperor.³⁶

33 Dabringhaus 2011; Bartlett 1991, 4.

34 See also Feng 1988.

35 An edict to Fuk'anggan and others mentioned that the Emperor fully completed the text in four languages on 16 November 1793 (KRKJL, vol. 42, QL 57/10/3). The Emperor might have started writing it in Manchu, Chinese, and Mongolian earlier, as the Chinese text starts with "Yesterday, I authorised the surrender of Gorkha", which was on 25 October 1793 (QL 57/9/10). He might have ordered the translation into Tibetan. The ministers were already trying to find artisans to carve the stone in January 1793 (KRKJL, vol. 48, QL 57/12/27).

36 Wang 2022.

Apart from the Potala Inscription (2.2.5), there were lots of other inscriptions made in Lhasa, Tashilhunpo, Jehol, and Peking.³⁷ For example, the Jo-khang Inscription (1793) was noticed by Richardson 1974, listed as no. 12. It was written by 楊揆 (Yang Kui, 1760–1804, styled Li-chang 荔裳) in an extravagant language of parallel writing (駢文 *pian-wen*), titled 廓爾喀紀功碑 (*Kuorka Ji-gong Bei*), “Stele Inscription of the Achievement [against] Gorkha”. Yang Kui followed Fuk’anggan’s army and compiled some summons and memorials for him.

In addition, the Emperor himself made some other inscriptions at Jehol. There were also inscriptions around Lhasa and Tashilhunpo by the ministers commemorating the event, such as the one by Heliyen, 重修關帝廟碑 (*Chong-xiu Guan-di-miao Bei*), “Stele inscription of the restoration of the temple dedicated to Guan-di” in 1793.³⁸ Hailanca and He-ning ordered a poetic inscription in Tatsag rJe-drung Hutuktu’s residence in Lhasa, while Fuk’anggan and Heliyen wrote two more in the Guan-di Temple in Lhasa.³⁹

Most of these inscriptions follow the orthodox narration of the Sino-Nepalese War issued by the Emperor in his edicts and the Potala Inscription. It should be stressed that inscriptions in the Chinese language are not merely stone steles erected, they are rubbed and distributed to be the model for calligraphy. They are copied in printed texts to show historical authenticity as well, as in the case of Zhou Ai-lian’s travel notes.⁴⁰

In addition to these, the courtly paintings and verses on tributary envoys,⁴¹ elephants, horses, battles, warriors (Figure 1), and banquets also comprise the imperial commemorative rituals.⁴² Some of the war illustrations were also made into etchings and block prints to re-create the majestic panorama.⁴³ They were painted mainly in Western style,

37 Zhang 1988 collected many of them. However, there might be some mistakes in his edition. Franke and Laufer 1914 and Haenisch 1950 also collected some inscriptions but did not cover those in close relation to the Sino-Nepalese War.

38 WZTZ 1896, vol. 6, 23–33; WZTZ 1982, 288–97.

39 WZTZ 1896, vol. 6, 10–14; WZTZ 1982, 279–82. The interactions between these stele-inscriptions with the local community in Lhasa have been studied by Zhang 2024 (ch. 7–8).

40 Zhou 1804 (1913), vol. 4, 28–34.

41 Chuang 1989, 126–27. Chuang 1992, 235–40.

42 Cp. Waley-Cohen 1996 and Bügener 2015.

43 Nie 1999; Wäadow 2010; Takata 2012; Lin 2015; Bügener 2015; Shih 2017, 318; Pastukhov 2021.

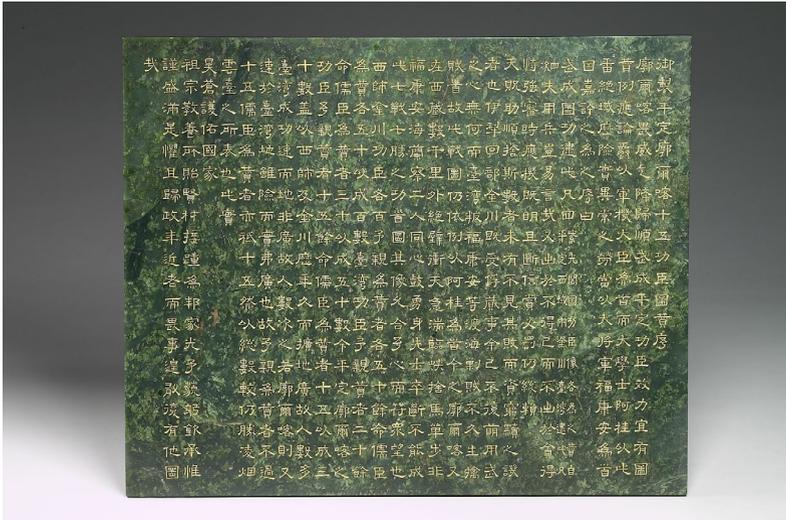


Figure 1: Jade inscription of the Preface to the Eulogies of the Meritorious Ministers during the Gorkha Campaign (source: 玉插屏. 國立故宮博物院, 台北. CC BY 4.0. www.npm.gov.tw. 故玉 002723N000000000)

with Chinese landscape painting as the background.⁴⁴ These printed paintings were granted to royals and ministers around 1800.⁴⁵

(C) *Compilations of Strategies or Courtly Records*

To the category of courtly records belong the following texts:

- 起居注 (*Qi-ju-zhu*) *Diaries of the Emperor's Movements and Utterance.*

This was made on the spot, recording imperial rituals, edicts, memorials, and other events. Although it is believed that “the Emperor would not read these diaries”, he might dismiss the historians when making secret decisions.⁴⁶ It can also be considered the archival documents as it involved fewer editorial works, being closer to the original situation.⁴⁷

44 Chuang 1992, 247.

45 Komatsubara 2020, 31.

46 Chuang 1983, 307–13.

47 Feng 1988, 625.

- 大清高宗純皇帝實錄 (*Da-Qing Gao-zung Chun-Huang-di Shi-lu*)
Veritable Records of the Emperor Qian-Long

This is a kind of chronicle made after the Emperor's death, for the reference of the following rulers as well as the next dynasty. It is considered to have been completed by 1799 (the year in which Emperor Qian-long died), first in Chinese and then translated into the Manchu and Mongolian languages. It involved the labour of the Grand Secretaries (大學士), 董誥 Dong Gao (1740–1818) and 慶桂 Qing-gui (Mnc. Kinggui) (1737–1816), who were also involved in the Sino-Nepalese War in Peking.⁴⁸ Camman 1951 abbreviated it as CSL (*Ching Shih-lü*). The genre had extensive censorship, falsification, and alteration in its editorial process.⁴⁹

- 東華錄 (*Dong-hua Lu*) *Records Compiled by the Gate of Dong-hua*, 1884.

The part concerning Qianlong was in the extended version and sequel (thus 東華續錄 *Dong-hua Xu-lu*) to the earlier work, *Dong-hua Lu* by Jiang Liang-qi 蔣良騏. *Dong-hua* was the major gate to the forbidden city on its east wing, leading to the Hall of Literary Glory (文華殿 Wen-hua Dian). The sequel was compiled in 1884 by 王先謙 Wang Xian-qian (1842–1917), a scholar who served as an imperial educator. It was based on imperial documents as its title suggests. However, the publisher of the sequel was not the imperial court in Peking but Wang's household in Changsha. Hence, it stands between an official orthodox historiography and a private historiography. It also includes some materials from poems, *Ji-lüe*, etc., which had been censored or ignored by *Veritable Records*.⁵⁰ Camman 1951 has taken them as the major source in his investigation of the war, spelling it as *Tung-hua Hsü-lü*, abbreviated as THHL.

Compared to courtly records, the compilations of strategies, *Accounts of Strategies* (紀略 *Ji-lüe*) are of more significance for our study on the Sino-Nepalese War. The genre was compiled in a separate historian institute of strategies (方略館) in the Palace which is affiliated to the Grand Council.⁵¹ The historiographers collected memorials and edicts. They were copied or printed in this very institute in the Hall of

48 Bügener 2015, 503.

49 Chuang 1992, 99–111.

50 Feng 1993, 53–54.

51 Li 2020.

Martial Valour (武英殿 Wu-ying Dian) and should be dispersed in the Empire.

Shortly after each campaign, the Emperor ordered a *Historical Account on Strategies* to be made. The textual layout was a combination of (1) poems by the Emperor concerning certain victories, namely “Heavenly Paragraphs” (天章 *tian-zhang*), (2) orders and edicts from the Emperor, and (3) memorials from ministers, arranged in chronological order according to the arrival date of the memorials and the issue date of the edicts. The compilers resorted to both Manchu and Chinese sources. The edicts and memorials were mostly censored and abbreviated.⁵² Nevertheless, they are handy in drawing a chronology of battles and events, as the editorial work concerned mainly Tibetan affairs and imperial secret institutions not to be known by the Chinese.

- BLBJL 欽定巴勒布紀略 (*Qin-ding Balbu Ji-lüe*) *The Official Historical Account of Strategies in the Pacification of Balbu* (i.e., first Gorkha War), 1790.⁵³
- KRKJL 欽定廓爾喀紀略 (*Qin-ding Kuorka Ji-lüe*) *The Official Historical Account of Strategies in the Pacification of Gorkha*, 1794.⁵⁴

Historical and contemporary Chinese scholars built their scholarly understanding mainly upon these two *Ji-lües*.⁵⁵ The two books have photo-printed versions published in 1992 and punctuated versions by Ji 2006. They are completed very soon after the wars. The former existed only in manuscripts, while KRKJL was printed around 1795 and distributed later. By 1815, many memorials of Chinese governors mentioned their receiving KRKJL.⁵⁶ 2.2.1 extract the first tributary letter presented to Peking from BLBJL, while 2.2.3 compares some of the edicts in KRKJL with their earlier versions in KRKD.

52 Chuang 1983, 37, 184; Komatsubara 2009; cp. 2.2.3.

53 For the dating of BLBJL, see a memorial on 23 October 1790 (QL 55/9/16) cited by Huang 1989, 253.

54 For the dating of KRKJL, see KRKJL, vol. 54, QL 59/10/14. Some considered the date to be 1796 (Feng 1993, 386). Bügener dated by the preface as 1793 (2015, 243).

55 Yao 2006, 228–37. Modern Chinese scholars such as Dai 1994 relied largely on BLBJL and KRKJL.

56 《宮中檔奏摺-嘉慶朝》，陳預 奏，〈奉恩賞欽定平定臺灣紀略及廓爾喀紀略各一部恭摺叩謝（附件：奏自臨清回省沿途察看早穀情形）〉，嘉慶20年06月04日，故宮 104790 號，頁 1，國立故宮博物院 清代檔案檢索系統；《宮中檔奏摺-嘉慶朝》，阮元 奏，〈奏謝恩賞欽定平定台灣廓爾喀紀略各一分〉，嘉慶20年08月22日，故宮105573 號，頁 1，國立故宮博物院 清代檔案檢索系統。

In addition, there is a 3-volume sequel to KRKJL compiled by 吳燕紹 Wu Yan-shao (1868–1944) and his son 吳豐培 Wu Feng-pei (1909–1996), utilizing the Pekingese archive. It was printed in 1977 and kept confidential and thus almost inaccessible.

(D) *Imperial Corpora of Statutes*

The corpora of statutes of the Qing Empire were compiled five times. They contain regulations, precedent edicts, and illustrations. It is the most reliable source of imperial rituals, institutions and administration. It covers a wide range of topics. Thus, legal codes were also drafted on specific topics such as the statutes on tributary affairs. These sources comprise the following texts:

- 允祿 (Yun-lu, Mnc. Yūnlū) 皇朝禮器圖式 (*Huang-chao Li-qi Tu-shi*) *Designs of the Ritual Instruments for the Imperial Dynasty*, 1st edition in 1759, revised in 1792 and 1803.

It contains paintings and drawings of imperial musical instruments, ritual instruments, and costumes. The original author was the uncle of Emperor Qianlong. After the Gorkha campaign, the manuscript version of the book was revised to include the Gorkhali musical instruments,⁵⁷ which comprise the last pages in the volume on musical instruments.

- 筋吹番部合奏樂章滿蒙漢合譜集七種樂章 (*Jia-chui Fan-bu He-zou Yue-zhang Man-Meng-Han He-pu-ji*) *Seven Musical Genres in Manchu, Mongolian, and Chinese of Cordombi and Šibang* / 筋鼓樂章 (*Jia-gu Yue-zhang*) *Musical Genres of Reed-Pipes and Drums*, probably around 1800.

Originally, *cordombi* and *šibang* were musical forms of the Mongolian people.⁵⁸ Later, other foreign musical forms were also listed under it. The possible musical dance related to it has been researched by Aisin Gioro 1988, based on the *Compilation of the Statutes in the Qing Empire*. 2.2.4 is found in this collection.

57 Lin 2020, 116.

58 Lin 2009, 105.

- 托津 (Tojin) et al. 欽定大清會典 (*Qin-ding Da-Qing Hui-dian*)
Compilation of the Statutes in the Qing Empire, 1818.

Each Emperor might commission a compilation of statutes. It was not exactly the legal code but served as an imperial legal corpus. The texts were made for later rulers to deal with events that happened before. Thus, they were all-encompassing and voluminous. The order of chapters is arranged according to the responsibilities and organisations of imperial institutions and their officers.⁵⁹ This series compiled in 1818 covers imperial decisions made during 1758–1812 (QL 23–JQ 17). In the chapter on *Li-fan-yuan*, it is stated that the Gorkhalis should present their tributes as the Tibetans, operated by the Imperial Household Department. The volumes of precedent cases mention coinage, military, prohibitions, and in the music section Gorkha is listed before Vietnam. The volumes of illustrations give detailed descriptions and drawings of the musical instruments.

- 欽定理藩部則例 (*Qin-ding Li-fan-bu Ze-li*) *Official Regulations and Precedent Cases of the Li-fan-yuan*. 1847, based on an earlier version in 1817.⁶⁰

Due to the voluminosity of the imperial statutes, regulations on special topics were commissioned to be collected and compiled for special needs. This book concerns *Li-fan-yuan* (理藩院; Mnc. *tulergi golo be dasara jurgan*). Literally, the institute refers to the board in charge of vassals, foreign affairs, or external provinces while earlier translations rendered it as “Colonial Office at Peking”.⁶¹ It regards the inner Asian matters including the diverse Mongols, Tibetan, rGyalrongic groups, Islamic people, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Gorkha as well. These were not considered to be the traditional four remote regions (四裔 *si-yi*), which were managed by the Ministry of Rites (禮部 *li-bu*) for their guest rituals (賓禮 *bin-li*). The Gorkhalis were regulated together with Tibetans, along with other Lamaistic people from the Amdo region. However, the Gorkhalis were mentioned very few times compared to the Tibetans, as Gorkha could not be equal to Tibet which was already

59 Feng 1993, 85.

60 Mnc. *Hesei toktobuha tulergi golo be dasara jurgan i kooli hacin i bithe*.

61 Lobscheid 1866, 425; Haenisch 1938, 21. For a detailed study, see Schorkowitz and Chia 2016. The Tibetan name was [*mong gol*] *sbyor khang* “administrative office”. The Tibetan term for the particular branch was probably *sne shan sbyor go che* (van der Kuijp and Tien 2022, 28, 36).

attached to the census and map (e.g., Huang-chao Yu-di Quan-tu) of the Qing Empire (隸版圖 *li-ban-tu*).⁶²

Besides, the official concordance of placenames, *Qin-ding Xi-yu Tong-wen Zhi* (欽定西域同文志 *Official Concordance of Proper Names in the Western Regions*), can also be placed in the imperial corpora of official books. It is helpful for the identification of multilingual placenames.

(E) (Semi-)Official Biographical Works

Biographies are the most orthodox way of writing history in China. They tend to focus on a person's deeds, discourses, and virtues and thus present them as role models for the upcoming generations. It often highlights the contributions of a single person. The Imperial Archives had special historiographers drafting biographies for royals and ministers, while literati might also copy various materials from the archives and epitaphs to compile biographies separately. Hummel 1944 followed a similar way to present the history of Qing.

A chronological biography of a key military chief in the war is used for reference in our work:

- 花沙納 (Hua-sha-na, 1806–1859) 德壯果公年譜 (*De Zhuang-guo-Gong Nian-pu*) *The Chronology of De-leng-tai, The Duke with posthumous title Zhuang-guo, 1857.*
德楞泰 (De-leng-tai, 1749–1809)⁶³ accompanied Fu'kang-an in many battles. The author Hua-sha-na was the grandson of De-leng-tai.⁶⁴ The first version of the book was printed in 1856. In the next year, a new edition added more materials. Volume 2 regards the 1790s and has the dated narration of the protagonist's conduct during the war, citing memorials and edicts.

Meanwhile, many other collections of biographical works were printed, for example:

- 錢儀吉 (Qian Yi-ji) 碑傳集 (*Bei-zhuan Ji*) *Compilation of Stele Biographies*, 1826, printed in 1893.

62 See Part II, 2.2.3e. Cp. Oidtmann 2018, 22.

63 Hummel 1944d.

64 Hummel 1994c.

- (b) 李桓 (Li Huan) 國朝耆獻類徵 (*Guo-chao Qi-xian Lei-zheng*)
Categorised Testimonies of the Venerated Elderly of Our Dynasty,
 printed in 1884.
- (c) 清史列傳 (*Qing-shi Lie-zhuan*) *Biographies of the History of Qing
 Dynasty*, printed in 1928.

While (a) collected eulogies of personal lives after the death of the biographed,⁶⁵ (b) and (c) might have taken the materials compiled by the imperial historiographers from the imperial archives.⁶⁶ Deng used (a) to show Hailanca's great contribution in the war, as a supplement to KRKJL.⁶⁷ As they mainly took archival documents as sources, they are not extensively considered here.

Besides, orthodox historiographies were often compiled by the next dynasty. It is the successor's job to write an orthodox historiography for its predecessor. Most information was arranged according to the main contributors or participants in their biographies. The compilation of the *Draft History of Qing* started after the end of the Qing Dynasty in 1914. The collective work of compilation was put to an end in 1927, whereas many of the biographies were not yet polished. Later certain editorial activities were conducted separately by various scholars.

The authorship was led by a former Governor-General 趙爾巽 Zhao Er-xun (1844–1927) and conducted by many scholars who culturally and even politically adhered to the then-defunct Qing Dynasty.⁶⁸ It had many mistakes and unnecessary editorial deletions, although the compilers utilised various sources from (A) to (E).⁶⁹ In the next year of its first publication in 1927, it was banned by the Nationalist Party of China (i.e., the Kuo-min Tang). However, many versions were still printed and sold in places such as Shanghai, Hong Kong, Manchuria, and Japan, out of the reach of the Nationalist Party of China. Information regarding the Sino-Nepalese War can be found in vols. 15, 91, 101, 312, 318, 328–34, 345–49, 525, 529, among which the following are important.

65 Feng 1993, 322. For example, Hailanca's biography here was listed in vol. 116, composed by Xiong Bao-tai 熊寶泰, titled 書武壯公海蘭察軼事 (*Shu Wu-zhuang-gong Hai-lan-cha Yi-shi* "Anecdotes of the Duke of martial strength, Hailanca"). The text eulogised Hailanca's martial strategies.

66 Chuang 1983, 446; Feng 1993, 320; Wang 2013, 583, 598–99.

67 Deng 2007b, 43 n. 1.

68 Wang 2013, 640.

69 Chuang 1979, vol. 2, 152; Feng 1993, 64.

Vol. 91 志 (*Zhi*) no. 66 禮 (*li*) and no. 10: 賓禮 (*Bin Li*): *Rites for guests* mentions the institutional difference among the Western foreign vassals and the Eastern ones, the latter of which were considered closer and more civilised from the Han-Chinese perspective.

Vol. 101 *Zhi* no. 76 Music no. 8: 樂 (*Yue*) *Book of Music* mentions the performance of Gorkha music in the court after the war.

Vol. 330 Biography no. 117 福康安 = Fuk'anggan⁷⁰ mentions the Gorkha's request for peace instead of capitulation, while vol. 331 Biography no. 118 海蘭察 = Hailanca (ca. 1739–1793) tells us more about the battles and shows that he was a more tactile strategist [than Fuk'anggan].⁷¹

Vol. 527 Biography no. 314 屬國傳 (*Shu-guo Zhuan*) *Biographies of Subordinate States* no. 2 has the story of the “surrender” of An-nam in 1789/1790, which will be referred to on the understanding of a “surrender” to the Heavenly Dynasty.

Vol. 529 Biography no. 316 *Biographies of Subordinate States* no. 4 begins with the basic information of Gorkha and gives a detailed narration of the battles giving names of the warriors but with some mistakes on proper names.

(F) (Semi-)Official Local Chronicles

Each region in China is keen on compiling and re-compiling regional history, including historical sites, inscriptions, classical references, local products, customs, religions, celebrities, literary works, etc. During the Qing Dynasty, many local chronicles were produced alongside the *General Geographical Gazetteer* (大清一統志 *Da-qing Yi-tong Zhi*; Mnc. *Daicing gurun i uherileme ejehe bithe*).⁷² These texts were often written under the collective effort of local officials as well as scholars. Most of them were based on existing local chronicles of the predecessors. The earlier, the more original. For the Gorkha issue, we have two important local chronicles related.

70 Hummel 1944a.

71 Hummel 1944b.

72 Dabringhaus 1994, 121.

- WZTZ 衛藏通志 (*Wei Zang Tong-zhi*) *General Chronicle of dBus-gTsang*, ca. 1800, printed in 1896.

The authorship of this text has been long debated.⁷³ The dating was not completely clear until recently Zhao and Qian 2023 found a complete manuscript version at Peking University. It is now evident that Heliyen, Sungyūn, and He-ning (later changed into He-ying) were the compilers of this chronicle. These ambans residing in Tibet might have intended to make an official local chronicle but did not complete the work but did not complete the work. In the end, WZTZ was block-printed in 1896 by an officer 袁昶 (Yuan Chang). Yuan Chang later reminded the court that the Russians would invade Tibet which would be much worse than the German occupation of Kiautschou Bay in 1897.⁷⁴ He was killed in 1900 for his opposition to the Boxer movement. He probably had edited and printed WZTZ out of his worries for foreign interference of Tibet. Since the manuscripts of WZTZ are not available to us, we had to rely on the 1896 printed version.

The book begins with the Potala Inscription (2.2.5) and imperial poems upon receiving victorious reports from Nepal. Vol. 2 focuses on geography and borders issues. Vol. 6 records temples, where many other inscriptions were cited. Vols. 10 and 11 concern monetary and commercial issues and mention the silver coins as well as the activities of Newari merchants. Vol. 13 *Ji-lüe* (“Account of Strategies”) has three sub-sections. Some important letters exchanged between Fuk’anggan and the Gorkha court can be found in the first two sections. These cited documents cannot be found elsewhere. Therefore, it is extremely important. 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 include some letters from vol. 13.

73 According to traditional understanding, it was compiled by Heliyen (WZTZ 1896; Feng 1993, 203). Dabringhaus 1994 and many other scholars including the punctuator of modern publications consider Sungyūn to be the author (WZTZ 1982). Dabringhaus further gave the date as 1795 (1994, 264). The Chinese scholar Zhang Yu-xin proposed Hening (Oidtmann 2018, 266 n. 91). The collective authorship proposed by Cao 2014 is quite convincing given internal textual evidence. Later, it was testified by Zhao and Qian 2023.

74 “The harm of the sudden German occupation of Kiautschou Bay was rapid but minor. The Russians neighbour us closely from then northwest to northeast. The 48 tribes of the Mongolian Kalka will be lost to the foreign realm, which is the complicated and major peril.” 德突據膠灣，其禍急而小；俄自西北至東北，與我壤地相錯，蒙喀四十八部將折入異域，其禍紆而大 (*Draft History of Qing*, vol. 466 Biography no. 253).

- 四川通志 (*Sichuan Tong-zhi*) *General Chronicle of Sichuan*, 1816. The compilation of this official local chronicle of the Sichuan province was led by the Governor General of Sichuan, Chang-ming 常明. Wei Yuan (Part II, 2.2.8 [9]) cited Yao Ying who cited this work as his source about the Gorkha expedition. It not only has a concise retrospective narration of the war but also reports on other states around Gorkha. We refer to this work while studying Wei Yuan's source of information.

Besides the traditional local chronicles, some Chinese officers and the Mongolian amban residing in Tibet, Sungyūn, made maps of Tibet and Gorkha after the wars.

- Ma Jie (馬揭) and Sheng Sheng-zu (盛繩祖), 衛藏圖識 (*Wei Zang Tu-zhi*) *Illustrated Remarks on dBus-gTsang*. 1792.

The authors relied on personal experiences from Dartemdo Tibet and earlier official local chronicles and offered information for future military punitive expedition to Gorkha.⁷⁵ It referred to Bam Saheb meeting the Chinese officers as “paying tribute” (入貢) after having disturbed Tibet because of trade (與西藏以交易滋事).⁷⁶ It contains maps, illustration of folks, and reports on the customs of the Gorkha kingdom, such as the preference of cleanness (尚潔).⁷⁷

- 松筠 Sungyūn (1752–1835) 西藏圖說 (*Xi-zang Tu-shuo*) *Maps of Tibet with Explanations*, 1795–1800.

The text existed in manuscripts (photo-printed in 1966) and was later block-printed in the nineteenth century together with other works of Sungyūn.⁷⁸ It had two annotated maps depicting the routes toward Kathmandu through either Nyalam or Kyirong by Sungyūn. The monument of five stupas (probably Nyagahmani/Pancamane hill) and a Sherpa temple was considered to be the gate to Kathmandu. Huang Pei-qiao 黃沛翹 later made a commentary on these maps (1886).

75 Ma and Sheng 1792, book 1, “Preface”, 4b.

76 Ibid., book 3, “Spieces of the Barbarians with Illustration”, 51.

77 Ibid., 50–52.

78 In 隨緣載筆: 五種 (*Sui-yuan Zai-bi: 5 Zhong*) *The Brush recording the Imperial Enterprise according to Pratyaya: Five Books* held by the Library of Congress. His poems are also published in the collection.

(G) Literary Works Produced Privately During the Events

Literary works are also an important source in Chinese history since many of the composers had a strong sense of “poetry as history” (詩史 *shi shi*). In the Sino-Nepalese War, the Chinese side engaged many literati officials to write literary reports, letters, summons, memorials, and eulogies.⁷⁹ Meanwhile, the ministers in charge of provisions and some commanders were also literati-officials. Fuk’anggan himself has composed poems in addition to his commemorative inscription in Lhasa, although his poems are not available to us now. Rumours were that his colleague, Sun Shi-yi, wrote the poems for him. All these literati official left an extensive corpus of texts, speaking of their experience that was not memorialised to the Emperor. They are relatively scattered and shorter, thus fitting into the footnotes to be quoted and translated.

Among them, Wu 1985 has included 楊揆 (Yang Kui), 林儁 (Lin Jun 1731–1805), 松筠 (Sungyūn), and 孫士毅 (Sun Shi-yi 1720–1796).

- 楊揆 (Yang Kui) 桐華吟館衛藏詩稿 (*Tong-hua-yin-guan Wei-zang-shi Gao*) *Draft Poems composed in dBus-gTsang of the chanting Pavilion of Paulownia Flower.*

It is the poetry collection of the author of the aforementioned Jokhang inscription. He dwelt extensively on the hardship and landscape in various aspects. He also informed us of the Sino-Nepalese translator, the textual formation of the lyrics, and the ghost-writers of Fuk’anggan. The poems exist only in manuscripts, photo-printed in 2010. Yet, the manuscripts were not available to us. Hence, we fully rely on Wu 1985’s edition in simplified Chinese.

- 林儁 (Lin Jun) 西藏歸程記 (*Xi-zang Gui-cheng Ji*) *Records of returning from Tibet.*

Lin was in charge of provisions during the war. He had crossed the border and entered the Gorkha realm.⁸⁰ He wrote about his travel from Lhasa to Dartsemdo. Wu 1985 cited it from 小方壺齋輿地叢鈔 (*Xiao-fang-hu-zhai Yu-di Cong-chao*) *Collected Passages on Geography from the Studio with [an Ancient Bronze] Square Vase* by 王錫祺 (Wang Xi-qi). It is not very relevant to the war itself.

⁷⁹ Dai 2017, 347.

⁸⁰ His departure from Dzongka was mentioned in Ohūi’s memorial (KRKJL, vol. 36, QL 577/16).

- 松筠 *Sungyūn* 西招紀行詩 (*Xi-zhao Ji-xing-shi*) *Poems on the Journey of Enlisting the West*, 1795 and 丁巳秋閱吟 (*Ding-si Qiu-yue-yin*) *Poems upon Inspection of the Military Parade in the Autumn of Year Ding-si*, 1797.

Sungyūn, a Mongolian bannerman, served as the amban residing in Tibet after the war.⁸¹ He succeeded *Heliyen* and actively participated in administrative matters.⁸² In both the years of 1795 and 1797, he travelled around Tibet and investigated potential military strategies. He took Gorkha as the imagined enemies. Therefore, in his auto-commentary to the poetry, he referred to the former invasions. His account of the invasion routes is valuable, as later private historiographies focused more on the Chinese expedition instead of the Gorkha invasion. *Wei Yuan* later quoted him without indicating the source (Part II, 2.2.8 [3]).

- 孫士毅 (*Sun Shi-yi*) 百一山房詩集 (*Bai-yi-shan-fang Shi-ji*) *Collection of Poems of the Mountain House of Hundred-one*, printed edition 1804.

Sun Shi-yi was in charge of provision. He failed to defeat the Vietnamese troops in 1789 and was succeeded by *Fuk'anggan* who negotiated peace with the Vietnamese King. *Sun* was severely punished by the Emperor, but he received the title of Grand Secretary again during the Gorkha campaign. He travelled between Sichuan and Tibet several times. He also kept correspondence with the frontier and was in good relationship with some of the Lamas. His poems spoke of the hazardous natural landscape and mourned over the loss.

Apart from *Wu's* collection, *Heliyen* and *He-ying/He-ning* also wrote poems that are still available to us.

- 和琳 (*Heliyen* 1753–1796) 芸香堂詩集 (*Yun-xiang-tang Shi-ji*) *Collection of Poems of the Rue Pavillion*, printed between 1796 and 1800.⁸³

Heliyen was the younger brother of *Hešen*, the most favoured minister of the Emperor. *Heliyen* was in charge of provisions in Tibet and later served as the amban residing in Tibet after the war.⁸⁴ He wrote several poems to *Fuk'anggan* and also one to *Yang Kui*, telling us that *Yang*

81 See also *Heissig* 1962. Amban residing in Tibet refers to Chin. *Zhu-zang Da-chen* 駐藏大臣 or Mnc. *dzang de tefi baita icihiyara amban*.

82 *Dabringhaus* 1994.

83 Found in the National Library of China, no. A03224.

84 He was a very active amban and issued inscriptions (*Richardson* 1974, no. 15).

Kui composed the summons (2.2.2b).⁸⁵ He also complained about the thriftiness and greed of some Tibetans.⁸⁶ He, along with Fuk'anggan, was commemorated in the Imperial Ancestral Temple (太廟 Tai Miao) after he died at the age of 43 in another expedition in 1796. Later, when Hešen was sentenced to death in 1799, Heliyen was removed from the Imperial Ancestral Temple. Hence, the book must have been printed before 1800.

- 和瑛 (He-ying, earlier named He-ning 和寧, 1741–1821) 易簡齋詩鈔 (*Yi-jian-zhai Shi-chao*) *Copies of Poems of the Studio of Simplicity in the Book of Changes*, printed in 1823.

He-ning was also a Mongolian bannerman. Because the later Emperor Dao-guang had the same word *ning* in his name, He-ning's name was changed to He-ying. He also served as the amban residing in Tibet and might have contributed to WZTZ. In his poetry collection, he had poems related to Gorkha dated from 1791 to 1800, including several poems to Fuk'anggan, rejoicing upon hearing the capitulation, transportation of the tributary elephant from Nepal via Bhutan to Tibet and further to Peking, and instruction in 1800 to the Gorkha King and the Gorkhals who learnt Chinese. He was very devoted to his job, collecting information about the South, which resulted in a poetic essay:

- 和瑛 (He-ying) 西藏賦 (*Xi-zang Fu*) *Poetic Essay on Tibet*, first printed in 1797, reprinted in 1882.

He-ning added extensive auto-commentary to it, narrating the geography and other aspects related to Tibet. Thus, it was cited by Yao Ying to explain the complicated trans-Himalayan geopolitics and further quoted by Wei Yuan (Part II, 2.2.8 [9]).

Last but not least, the Emperor also wrote poems upon receiving memorials. His poems are not to be put under this category as they were not composed upon experiences from the battlefronts but were often produced together with his edicts. These imperial poems can be found in the opening volumes of KRKJL and BLBJL, as well as a special anthology, 御製詩文十全集 (*Yu-zhi Shi-quan Ji*, *Compilation of Poems and Proses concerning the Ten Complete [Martial Glorious] by the Emperor*).

⁸⁵ Heliyen, vol. 1, 34.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 32–33; Deng 2009, 27 n. 3.

Besides poetry, travel notes and diaries can also be counted as literary texts. For example:

- 江鎮西 (Jiang Zhen-xi, 1759–1818) 西藏行說: 七戰附, (*Xi-zang Tu-shuo: Qi-zhan fu*) *Journeys in Tibet along with the seven battles*, written in 1792, printed in 1902.

The author Jiang Zhen-xi (*alias* Jiang Zhi-jian 江志堅) served as an imperial historian. Therefore, he followed Fuk'anggan to the Gorkha campaign with a strong sense of documentation. His diary was found in his family genealogy printed in 1902, currently stored in Shanghai Library, which was first noticed by Song 2021. Jiang started formulating the text when he arrived at Shelkar in the spring of 1792 and continued that summer on his march. The text describes each battle. Some of his writings are parallel to Fuk'anggan's memorials.

- 周萬聯 (Zhou Ai-lian) 竺國紀遊 (*Zhu-guo Ji-you*) *A Travel in the Country of Hindu*, first printed in 1804.

The author was the secretary of Sun Shi-yi.⁸⁷ Although he did not cross the border, he witnessed the transportation of provision and the tributary mission in Tibet. The book contains many notes that he compiled during his travel in Tibet. He travelled to Tibet in 1792 and 1793 several times, staying there for months. The notes were made during his stay. However, he lost these manuscripts on his way back and recovered half of them in 1801 by memory. It was published then in 1804. In 1913, the great bibliographer Fu Zeng-xiang 傅增湘 had it reprinted in type-print. He made a significant note of the causes of the war: the revenue issue, monetary conflict, and Shamarpa's ambition, which might have been the most common perception of the Han-Chinese people by then.⁸⁸ He also wrote about the shortage of food among the soldiers.⁸⁹

- 姚瑩 (Yao Ying, 1785–1853) 康輶紀行 (*Kang You Ji-xing*) *The Travel of the Light Wagon to Khams*, written in 1845, printed in 1867.

Yao Ying, as an officer stationed in Taiwan, was involved in the Ner-budda incident (1842) during the First Opium War.⁹⁰ After the war, he was “exiled” to Tibet and gathered information, probably because

87 He was mentioned in Sun's memorial (KRKJL, vol. 36, QL 577/16).

88 Zhou 1804 (1913), vol. 4, 21–22.

89 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 8–9.

90 See also Mosca 2013, ch. 7.

of his anxiety over foreign invasion.⁹¹ His book existed only in manuscripts till its printed version in 1867. Wei Yuan (Part II, 2.2.8 [9]) in his 1846 edition cited all the related passages in Yao's book on Gorkha.

In addition to the Chinese side, the Vietnamese and Korean materials written in Chinese are also worth attention. The first tributary mission of the Gorkhalis in 1790 was contemporaneous to the Vietnamese first tributary mission of the Dynasty of Nhà Tây Sơn. The lyric by Nguyễn Quang Bình comes just before that of Rana Bahadur Shah. In the summons and edicts (2.2.2 and 2.2.3), we can often notice references to the King of Annam. Gorkha and Annam were often juxtaposed as the conclusion of the Emperor's martial "glories". The surrender of Annam was also debated among Vietnamese and Chinese historians.⁹² Therefore, taking the Vietnamese case as a parallel will improve our understanding of the "surrender" to the Heavenly Dynasty:

- 吳家文派 (Ngô-gia văn-phái "Writers of Ngô family") 皇黎一統志 (*Hoàng Lê Nhất-thống Chí*) *Records of the Unification of Imperial Lê*, 1804.
- 大南寔錄 大南正編列傳初集 (*Đại-Nam Thực Lục: Đại-Nam Chính-biên Liệt-Truyện Sơ-tập*) *Veritable Records of Dai Nam: The First Compilation of the Biographies* 卷三十偽西, vol. 30, *The Tây Sơn Pretenders*, printed in 1889.

Moreover, the Korean and Vietnamese ambassadors have written notes and diaries on the imperial banquet for tributary envoys. These texts are called 燕行錄 (*Yan-xing Lu/Yön-haeng Nok*) *Records of Journey to Pekingese Court*. One of them is particularly remarkable:

- 朴趾源 (Pak Chi-wŏn, styled 燕巖 Yeo-nam, 1737–1805) 熱河日記 (*Yeol-ha Il-gi*) *The Jehol Diary*, 1780.

The Korean mission in 1780 witnessed the replica of Tashilhunpo (in Korean Chal-sim-nyun-po) in the Jehol Palace, as well as the Emperor's religious inclination toward the sixth Panchen Lama. Their reports can improve our understanding of the Emperor's emotions regarding Tibetan Buddhism and the Gorkha invasion.

91 Wang 2013, 628.

92 Zhang 2010; Ge 2014.

- 徐浩修 (Seo Ho-su, 1736–1799) 燕行紀 (*Yŏn-haeng Gi*) *Records of Journey to the Pekingese Court*, 1790.

The Korean mission in 1790 met the Vietnamese “King” at Jehol and noted his bribery of Fuk’anggan to memorialise their “surrender” and retreat in vol. 2. His understanding of the Vietnamese “surrender” and the retreat of the Qing army during the Vietnam Campaign can be taken as a possibility of what in fact took place across the battlefield of the Gorkha Campaign.

Other diaries of the Korean and Vietnamese ambassadors also have accounts of the Gorkhali envoy. However, they are not relevant to the war, hence not considered.

(H) Private Historiographies

In China, there are three major genres of historiographies, namely: chronology, biographies, and the courses of events. Each would have a comment from the author in the end that indicates the particular didactic purpose of writing this piece of history. This genre of event-history was relatively new, originating from the late twelfth century. To avoid the crime of unauthorisedly compiling a separate orthodox history, private historiographers often use this new unorthodox genre. Private historiographies for the Gorkha War all took this form. The entire event is given from causes to courses and conclusion in a passage. Owing to their concision and brevity, most scholars relied upon them. However, it should be noted they were mainly the digest of other sources. We have chosen the three most important pieces of private history of the Gorkha campaigns, namely the historiographies of Zhao Yi (around 1793), Zhao-lian (around 1820), and Wei Yuan (1842–1846).

The Edited and Translated Texts

To offer a clearer understanding of the intricate concluding phase of the war and the complex concept of tribute, we have chosen to edit and translate the most relevant documents formulated during the war from miscellaneous sources. They could help us retrieve the perspective of the actors in the war. For a clearer vision of the whole event from 1788 to 1793, we also selected the four most important historiographies by

authors of different backgrounds, three of which are private retrospective historiographies that embody different understandings. In chronological order, these sources include the following:

2.2.1 Tributary Letter Sent to Peking, 1789–1790

This was an auspicious memorial (表 *biao*) presented to the Emperor. Upon this, the Emperor issued an edict as a reply and the finale of BLBJL. It was written or maybe translated in a formulaic language, adjusted to the imperial rhetorics. It reported the conflict between Gorkha and British India.

2.2.2 Letters Across the Battlefield, Summer/Autumn 1792

This small collection of letters sent back and forth on the battlefield is taken from WZTZ, printed in 1896. The very first letter from Rana Bahadur Shah in WZTZ was brought with gifts back to Tibet by Fan Zhong (范忠), a Chinese soldier and Sri gcod Tshe ring (色角七哩), Tenzin Peljor's attendant.⁹³ Fuk'anggan replied furiously with all the gifts thrown back, because he considered the Gorkha to be deceitful and it was improper to present gift to the Great General in this way. This was reported to the Emperor on 14 April 1792 (QL 57/3/23).⁹⁴ When Fuk'anggan reached Dhunce, the second letter from Rana Bahadur Shah (a) issued on 16 July (QL 57/5/28) reached the Chinese troops in August.⁹⁵ Fuk'anggan refuted the letter immediately for the second time (b). The third letter from Rana Bahadur Shah issued 27 July on (QL 57/6/9) was brought to Fuk'anggan by Tenzin Peljor⁹⁶ and another letter to Cengde at Listi as well.⁹⁷ The fourth letter from Rana Bahadur Shah issued on 5 August (QL 57/6/18) was brought to Fuk'anggan by four headpersons, Bhotu Pande, Narasimha, Ramjit Pande, and Balabhadra

93 See also Komatsubara 2018, 92.

94 KRKJL, vol. 25. The letters can be found in WZTZ 1896, vol. 13.1, 31–34; WZTZ 1982, 373–75.

95 Probably, it is the letter in the First Historical Archive, Cata. Mnc. no. 8669 = 3–2–3408–001.

96 WZTZ 1896, vol. 13.2, 26–28; WZTZ 1982, 402–4.

97 WZTZ 1896, vol. 13.2, 28–29; WZTZ 1982, 404.

Khawas.⁹⁸ The rebuttal of Fuk'anggan was then issued on 13 August (QL 57/6/26), immediately before the Betrāvāṭī battle.⁹⁹ After the battle, the fifth letter was received with the corpse of Shamarpa, contracts, and looted objects on 25 August (QL 57/7/8) (c). Gorkha promised to retreat from the mountains in this letter. Two more letters were issued on 31 August (7/14) and 11 September (7/25) with the attendants of Shamarpa who were at Jia-rong-ke-chu (Boudhanath, Tib. Bya rung kha shor).¹⁰⁰ On 11 September, Rana Bahadur Shah also stated that he had prepared the tributary gift with musicians (d).¹⁰¹ After that, the letter was written in an official language to the Emperor (2.2.3a).

Although Fuk'anggan claimed to be the author of these letters (or more precisely “summons”), he might have not written them himself. It seems that Yang Kui¹⁰² and Fang Wei-dian (方維甸 1759–1815)¹⁰³ wrote the summons for Fuk'anggan to communicate with the Gorkhalis.

2.2.3 Official Edicts, Memorials and Summons, 1792–1793

Several documents that involve the Imperial Institute are collected here, read from miscellaneous works, such as KRKD, KRKJL, WZTZ, etc.

2.2.3a Official Letter of Surrender to The Emperor from Raṇa Bahādura Śāha, September 1792

The text is preserved in WZTZ.¹⁰⁴ It was presented to the Emperor by Devadatta Thapa via Fuk'anggan according to the official imperial procedure. The letter was embedded in another letter brought to

98 WZTZ 1896, vol. 13.2, 29–30; WZTZ 1982, 405 = Cata. Mnc. no. 8683 = 3–2–3410–047, Chin. no. 12093, [4–2–]50–91–1.

99 WZTZ 1896, vol. 13.2, 30–31; WZTZ 1982, 405–6.

100 WZTZ 1896, vol. 13.2, 37–39; WZTZ 1982, 412.

101 WZTZ 1896, vol. 13.2, 39b.6–10; WZTZ 1982, 413.

102 “*Prologomena to Yang Li-chang’s* [i.e., Yang Kui] *drafts of poems under the Paulownia blossoms*” says “[He] drafted the summons sent to the barbarians” 題楊荔裳桐華吟稿：番人傳檄草，戰馬掛詩筒 (Heliyen 1796–1800, vol. 1, 34).

103 Yang Kui’s “*Coincidentally drafted a poem with changing rhyme for my senior Fang Bao-yan* [i.e., Fang Wei-dian]” says “Your hand has drafted thousands of words of summons” 偶成轉韻奉酬方葆巖前輩：草檄千言出君手 (Wu 1985, 173). Fang also accompanied Fuk'anggan to Taiwan.

104 WZTZ 1896, vol. 13.3, 9–13; WZTZ 1982, 422–24.

Fuk'anggan. The letter concluded the event, made a promise of peace, and introduced the tributary ambassador Devadatta Thapa as the Prime Minister of Gorkha to the Great Emperor. The original document in its Chinese version might be in *Han-wen Lu-fu* 3-157-7619-1. The later translated Manchu version is found in the First Historical Archive (Cata. Mnc. no. 8769 = 3-2-3413-030 and no. 8754 = 3-2-3413-021).

2.2.3b Official Reply from Fuk'anggan, 3 October 1792

The text is preserved only in WZTZ.¹⁰⁵ It was the official reply from Fuk'anggan to accept the surrender. The earlier authorisation of the Emperor allowed Fuk'anggan to decide by himself whether to march further or close the case as it was. He thus accepted the capitulation and instructed Gorkha, following the Emperor's intention.

2.2.3c Edicts, 7 October 1792

The two edicts on the same date are found in KRKD, KRKJL, Yuan Yi Lai, etc.¹⁰⁶ One was issued through the cabinet to inform the entire Empire of the unwillingness and necessity of the Gorkha campaign. It declared the official conclusion of the expedition. However, the Emperor still expressed his wish to receive the news that Fuk'anggan might reach Kathmandu. The other one was issued secretly to Fuk'anggan, etc. It mentioned the hardship of the army and some articles to be imposed on Gorkha and Tibet after the retreat.

2.2.3d Edict with Articles to Instruct the Gorkha as a Reply to Fuk'anggan's Memorial (25 September), 31 October 1792

This edict is also found in KRKD, KRKJL, etc.¹⁰⁷ It was the reply from the Emperor upon receiving 2.2.3b. The Emperor ordered Fuk'anggan to instruct the Gorkha King. He defined the relation with Gorkha,

105 WZTZ 1896, vol. 13.3, 16-18; WZTZ 1982, 428.

106 KRKD QL 57/7-8, 167-80; KRKJL, vol. 39, QL 57/8/22; Yuan Yi Lai, no. 918.

107 KRKD QL 57/9, 71-76; KRKJL, vol. 42, QL 57/9/16.

returning the kingly title and territory to Rana Bahadur Shah. It reclaimed Dram and intended to end commercial connection. It also prescribed tributary missions.

2.2.3e Oral Instruction from Agūi and Hešen to Devadatta Thapa, 23 February 1793

The instruction¹⁰⁸ was given by the ministers Agūi and Hešen to the envoy in a face-to-face manner. The original draft is found in KRKD. It rejected many requests from Devadatta Thapa. It also explained why the Heavenly Dynasty could not assist Gorkha in the case of an invasion from British India.

2.2.3f Letter from Devadatta Thapa to Gorkha Raja, 24 February 1793

Letters were sent between Kathmandu and Devadatta Thapa.¹⁰⁹ It narrated the imperial grace granted to them and mentioned 2.2.3e.

2.2.4 Rana Bahadur Shah, Lyrics for Qianlong, 1792–1793

廓爾喀王拉特納巴都爾恭頌歌詞 (*Kuorka Wang Latna Badur Gong-song Ge-ci*) *Lyric of Praise from the Gorkha King Rana Bahadur* undated Manuscripts, text composed probably in 1792.

This text is found in manuscripts in the imperial collection in manuscripts in golden ink. The two Palace museums at Peking and Taipei both have a copy of it. The Pekingese version places itself after the lyrics from Myanmar and Annam, before the lyric offered by the sixth Panchen Erdeni upon the Emperor's 70th birthday. The song was written in Manchu, Mongolian, Chinese, and Devanagari on dark blue pages with gold-decorated borders. There might also be a Tibetan version of

108 KRKD QL 58/1–3, 27–31.

109 KRKJL, vol. 48, QL 57/12/14.

the lyric in the First Historical Archive.¹¹⁰ Unfortunately, we do not have scores attached to the lyric.

Music was a central issue in Chinese imperial rituals according to the Confucian meliorist ideal of re-ordering and harmonising society through music. The music was played in a formal courtly setting. The tradition of institutionalising foreign music and musicians as a sect in the imperial corpora started in the sixth century. The Gorkha music was an integral part of the imperial ritual music corpus which was visited by Aisin Gioro 1988.¹¹¹ The imperial power that collected and subjugated a variety of people in the four remote directions was then incarnated in the ecumene of the Qing Empire.

Moreover, the practice of having a barbarian king composing songs that praised the emperor was even more time-honoured in China. The Confucian canons such as Mao's commentary to the *Book of Odes* and the *Rites of Zhou* mentioned the music of the barbarians should be collected and presented at court. The Song of Bai-lang (白狼歌) might have been one early example from the first century CE. It was translated by Chinese officers with transliteration by Chinese characters, titled *The Admiration of the Imperial Virtue of the Remote Barbarians* (遠夷樂德 Yuan-yi Yao De).

Such a song was to be played by the Gorkha musicians upon the arrival of tributary envoys. The Lyric is supposed to have been composed by the Gorkha King. However, by the poetry of Yang Kui,¹¹² we

110 Cata. Mnc. no. 8770 = 3-2-3414-007; Tib. no. 13214 = 3-2-3414-8.

111 Aisin Gioro 1988 gave an example that the Emperor deported some rGyalrongic people from their homeland after his Jinchuan Campaigns and required them to play acrobatics and music on various occasions. These deportees often sang about their homesickness and remained in the suburban area of Peking even after the fall of the Qing Empire in 1911.

112 “[Poem:] The peculiar tones and eccentric rhythms [of the Gorkha musicians] are like the clowns and entertainers. How could these western barbarian dwarfs be affiliated to the Ministry of Ceremonies?

Then, since the ambassador was eloquent in [diplomatic] language, he responded himself by [playing] the leather and wooden instrument, presenting several stanzas (literally, “3 stanzas”, probably *metri causa*, as “6” could not fit in the meters here).

[Explanation: the Gorkha] offered two musicians. We tried to inquire about what they sing. The Great General considered it to be undignified or unrefined. The ambassador Narasimha made another on the second day. The new song praised the sacred virtues [of the Emperor]. It was very decently eulogised.”

殊音異節類俳倡，僭侏何堪隸太常，自是使臣辭令好，親賡擊木獻三章。(獻樂工二人，試詢其所歌，大將軍以為不莊，來使乃爾興，次日另制以進，歌詠聖德，頌揚極得體) (Wu 1985, 169).

might infer that the lyric was commissioned by Fuk'anggan after he had denounced the “authentic” music presented by the Gorkhali tributary envoy. He ordered another tune to be made and was later satisfied by the new song of Narasimha, one of the negotiators.

The Chinese version seems rather formulaic, while it indeed incorporated imperial concepts and references to the powerful Qing army. There were also many Buddhist or Indian notions in it such as Skt. *hastināga*, seven planets, Mount Sumeru, and the equivalent of Skt. *dedīpyamāna*. However, the preserved Nepālī version could not be understood. These references might be an exoticisation instead of the “authentic” representation.

2.2.5 Essay on the Ten Complete Martial Glories by His Majesty, Alias Potala Inscription, 1792

御製十全記 (*Yu-zhi Shi-quan Ji*)

This contains the Potala Inscription written by Emperor Qianlong in four languages (Chinese, Tibetan, Manchu, Mongolian) at the foot of the Potala Palace in Lhasa. The Palace Museums hold other forms of its Chinese text, including silk tapestry, jade plates, written albums, albums of rubbings, printed versions in anthologies and compilations, and so on. The texts of the inscription were also cited, copied and printed many times in other genres of texts, dispersing the “correct” collective memorial. The Chinese version can be found also in Zhang 1988, 475–80; WZTZ 1896, 31–32; WZTZ 1982, 151–52. The Tibetan version and translation were given in Richardson 1974. The English Translations can also be found in Bell 1924, 275–78, reprint in Landon 1976, vol. 2, App. XXI, 272–74 and Regmi 1975, App. III, 214–17. Elliot has translated part of it from Manchu (2009, 106).

The main text was written as an Imperial discourse, touching upon his majesty's long-reigning years, martial glories, and Heavenly destiny. It also had an extensive auto-commentary that gives the chronology of the war in detail, probably based on Fuk'anggan's memorials. The commentary was more significant for our research question, as it reveals the Emperor's understanding of the wars. However, it has not yet been considered by most scholars discussing the Sino-Nepalese War.

2.2.6 趙翼 (Zhao Yi) *The Pacification of Gorkha*, 1793–1799

平定廓爾喀述略 (*Ping-ding Kuorka Shu-lüe*)

The passage comes at the end of Zhao Yi's historiography, 皇朝武功紀盛 (*Huang-chao Wu-gong Ji-sheng*) *Accounts of the Grand Military Achievements of the Imperial Dynasty*, first printed in 1792. Many of its witnesses do not have this ending passage on the Gorkha Campaign. However, a copy in Harvard University with hand-written annotations by a scholar from Ning-hai, Chen Tan (寧海陳坦), has the passage in the same printing style as the previous pages. As Zhao printed the text at his own printing house, it can thus be inferred that he added some blocks to the book in a later printed version. Given the printing style, it was very likely to be printed in the same decade.

It should be noted that Zhao Yi (1721–1814) served as a clerk man in the Grand Council.¹¹³ He was valued by Fuk'anggan's father, Fuheng.¹¹⁴ He was once the ghost-writer for the Emperor to draft edicts and essays.¹¹⁵ He was also an imperial librarian, engaged in the compilation of 四庫全書 (*Si Ku Quan-shu*) *The Complete Library of the Four Treasuries*. He also attended the campaign against Myanmar and served Fuk'anggan in his Taiwan Expedition.¹¹⁶ Upon his retirement, he became a scholar of history, delving into the early and medieval history of China. He was much more learned and closer to the courtly institutions of decision-making than Wei Yuan. However, the text had a strong intention of “glorifying violence and cheering for the invincibility of the Qing military”, thus veiling the hardships.

In the epilogue of this text, Zhao stated his source of information from his fellow-countryman 余珏 (Yu Jue), a military official in the troops of Fuk'anggan. Yu told him much about the natural danger and the custom of Gorkhalis, which was later used by Wei Yuan (Part II, 2.2.8 [6]) without indicating his source.

113 Bartlett 1991, 206, 221–22.

114 *Draft History of Qing*, vol. 485, Biography no. 272, Literati no. 2.

115 Zhao ranked first in the utmost imperial exam in front of the Emperor but was reduced to the third given his identity as Wu Chinese. The person who replaced him as the first in 1761 was Wang Jie, who later copied the Potala Inscription for the Emperor (故書 00086400000 清王杰書御製十全記冊 *Transcription of the “Imperial Record of Ten Great Campaigns”*). See also Wang 2013, 500.

116 Feng 1993, 390.

2.2.7 禮親王昭榿 (Prince Zhao-lian, 1776–1829) *The Surrender of Gorkha, 1820s*

廓爾喀之降 (*Kuorka zhi Xiang*)

In vol. 6 of 嘯亭雜錄 (*Xiao-ting Za-lu*) “*Miscellaneous Records in the Pavilion of Whistles*”, the section *The Surrender of Gorkha* is a significant historiography after the war, which was a direct source of Wei Yuan (2.2.8). Although Zhao-lian obviously adapted Zhao Yi’s text (2.2.6), he added remarks on Tibetan affairs, criticised Fuk’anggan and Hešen fiercely, and acknowledged the final defeat instead of glorifying the martial achievements.

The author Zhao-lian (1766–1830) was a direct descendent of Nurgaci, the founder of the Aisin Gioro House of the Manchu Empire. He was well educated and inherited the permanent title of 和碩禮親王 (*He-shuo Li Qin-wang*; Mnc. *Hošoi doronggo cinwang*). Although the title was ripped off in 1816, he enjoyed freedom and dared to write about sensitive topics.¹¹⁷ He was interested in collecting geographical information within and beyond the Empire.¹¹⁸

The text belongs to a special genre, *Private Notes*, which somebody might consider fictional writing (especially in the history of literature written in the People’s Republic of China influenced by Stalinism). However, the text is in fact rich in historical details of the court due to the author’s adjacency to the imperial core. He resorted not only to official narrations but also to oral history and non-official accounts circulated around the imperial capitals. It is a valid source for our understanding of the Sino-Nepalese War.

At first, the text existed only in the form of manuscripts probably among aristocracy and literati. In 1875, it was block-printed, but in bad quality. Later in 1901, it was stereotype-printed in Shanghai, based on the manuscript in the Manchu official 端方 (Duan-fang) collection.¹¹⁹

117 Ibid., 358.

118 Shih 2017, 332, 337.

119 Cp. Lo 2014.

2.2.8 魏源 (Wei Yuan) *Qian-long's Expedition to Gorkha*, 1842–1846

乾隆征廓爾喀記 (*Qian-long Zheng Kuorka Ji*)

According to the prologue of his book, 聖武記 (*Sheng Wu Ji*) *Account for the Noble/Sacred Martial [Enterprises]* 1842–1846, Wei Yuan (1794–1857)¹²⁰ relied upon “borrowed official records of the imperial historians and libraries, private accounts found in works of the literati-officers, and traditional tales”.¹²¹ The title of this opus is also telling of his imperial nostalgia. The text was written as his advice to both the society and the court to restore the imperial glory after the Opium War in 1840. It advocated the strategy of using barbarians against each other (以夷制夷).

The text received a warm reception in China and was even more popular among Japanese Confucian scholars.¹²² Many more copies were brought to Japan than Zhao Yi's work.¹²³ Later historical understanding of the Gorkha campaigns was often based on this text, such as 國朝柔遠記 (*Guo-chao Rou-yuan Ji*) *Conciliation of the Distant in Our Dynasty* by 王之春 (Wang Zhi-chun, 1842–1906) in 1879. Even the offspring of Bajung follows Wei Yuan's narration (Aisin Gioro and Bayara Gioro 2006, 146–48).

It should be noted that he was not as an eminent historian and scholar as Zhao Yi who ranked almost top in the imperial examination. Nor was he close to the imperial system as Zhao-lian. He was more of a strategist and public intellectual in the modern sense. However, he dedicated himself to the collection of foreign information with 林則徐 (Lin Ze-xu, 1785–1850). His most important work was based on Lin's translations of Western newspapers in Canton and Macau, which were often hearsay. Therefore, his conceptions of the Anglo-Gorkha and Sino-Russian relations were imprecise.¹²⁴ His text should be treated cautiously, not to be taken directly as a trustworthy source. Nevertheless,

120 For more information on him, see Mosca 2013, ch. 8.

121 得借觀史館密閣官書及士大夫私家著述故老傳說.

122 Andō 2017.

123 Ōba 1967, 34b.

124 Scholars have disproved Wei's arguments with the Chinese and British sources. Feng noted that the British had established treaty with Nepal by then and would not have done what Wei Yuan suggested (1996, 44–45). Gao commented that Wei made conjectures and assumptions which could not be attested by company documents from the British side or the courtly records

given its enduring influence in contemporary scholarship and discourses, it is still included.

In terms of this passage on the Gorkha campaign, he relied largely on Sungyūn, Zhao Yi (2.2.6), Zhao-lian (2.2.7), Yao Ying¹²⁵ and Mengbao. His mistakes were also valuable as they reveal a popular Chinese understanding of the nineteenth-century geopolitics. Starting with the Imperial eulogy by the Emperor and ending with Wei Yuan's historiography, we can see a chronological transformation in the understandings of the Gorkha expedition from 2.2.5–8.

2.3 Tibetan Sources

2.3.1 Biography of the Sixth Panchen Lama, before 1791

Paṅ chen dpal ldan ye shes kyi rnam thar

According to the Chinese understanding (2.2.5–8), everything started when the sixth Panchen Lama (Blo bzang dPal ldan Ye shes, 1738–1780) died in Peking. The biography gave us information about Qianlong's emotional attachment toward Tashilhunpo, which was also mentioned in Purangir's narrative (Turner 1800) and the diaries of the Korean envoy (Pak 1780). Consulting this would improve our understanding of the Manchu-Mongolian-Tibetan relation and the personal sentiment of the Emperor. Moreover, it gave a detailed list of donations received by the Panchen and a meticulous account of the construction of the stupa at Tashilhunpo in 1781. Such an ocean of wealth triggered the conflict between Drungpa (dMa pa Phyang mdzod chen mo Drung pa Hu thog thu Er dem thu No mon han Blo bzang sbyin pa)¹²⁶ and Shamarpa, the uterine brothers of the sixth Panchen.¹²⁷

The biography was compiled by the 2nd Jamyang Zhepa ('Jam dbyangs bZhad pa, dKon mchog 'jigs med dBang po, 1728–1791), a pious disciple of the sixth Panchen Lama. He was the abbot of the Labrang Monastery (Bla brang bKra shis 'khyil). Many other monastic

of China (1998, 108). Having intensively read his work, Mosca explained the incorrect messages in detail (2013, ch. 8).

125 See Mosca 2013, 279.

126 PC6, 1162.1–2.

127 See also Schulemann 1958, 338. They were all born to a Ladakh princess (Li 2012).

officials were also involved in the compilation of this biography upon request of the Drungpa Hutuktu who might be then in the Tashilhunpo monastery.¹²⁸

2.3.2 Autobiography of Doring Tenzin Peljor, 1806

*rDo ring bstan 'dzin dpal 'byor, or rdo ring paṅḍi ta'i rnam thar*¹²⁹

Kalon Doring Tendzin Peljor (1760–ca. 1811) was a lay cabinet minister (Tib. *bka' blon*) of the Ghazi (dGa' bzhi) family. He was involved in the negotiation of the agreement of Kyirong 1789. Shortly after, however, during a mission to pay reparations to the Gorkha in 1791, he was taken hostage and taken to the Kathmandu Valley.¹³⁰ He was summoned to the Kathmandu court by Bahadur Shah and later returned to the Chinese camp. He climbed up a tree and witnessed the Betravati battle. Following Gorkha's "surrender" to the Qing troops in the summer of 1792, Tenzin Peljor was brought to Peking for imperial audience in 1793.¹³¹ Although the Qing court was suspicious of his involvement in the Gorkha Wars, he was not found guilty. Probably in fear of the accusation, his wife,¹³² son, and himself insisted to offer five sizable estates to the court as compensation for his failures.¹³³ Nonetheless, Peljor was demoted and barred from public office for a few years. To preserve the family's wealth and prestige, he successfully installed his son, Mingyur Sönam Penjor (Mi 'gyur bSod nams dPal' byor 1784–1834), as the heir to his imperial title in 1804. However,

128 Wang 2013, 238.

129 See also Shakabpa 1967, de Rossi-Filibeck 1977, F.K. Ehrhard 2007, F.X. Erhard 2020a.

130 It was reported by Bootai in his memorial received on 7 October 1791 that the Tibetan Ministers were abducted in Nyalam on 23 August 1791 (QL 57/7/6) (KRKJL, vol. 1, QL 56/8/21). See TP, ch. 19.

131 Sperling 1998.

132 Tenzin Peljor's wife was a relative of Shamarpa, as she was the younger sister of the eighth Dalai Lama, who reincarnated in the same family of the sixth Panchen (KRKJL, vol. 28, QL 57/intercalary 4/7; TP 847,15–17; F.X. Erhard 2021).

133 KRKJL, vol. 46, QL 57/11/29. The Emperor later distributed the land to the treasury of the Dalai Lama for the provision of the Tibetan army. According to Tenzin Peljor, the Emperor intended to return the estates to him and ordered Agüi and Hešen to inquire about it in the winter of 1792. However, Tenzin Peljor refused and offered them again (TP 949).

the succession of ministerial position came with a significant scandal, as the public in Lhasa accused him of bribery and corruption through anonymous posters at Bridge g.Yu thog. The accusations of his bribing the amban residing in Tibet seemed to have motivated him to document his version of events, as the Mongolian amban, Ce-bak (策拔克, Tib. Tshe'u am ban) was in good relation with Tenzin Peljor but dismissed by the Emperor Jia-qing.¹³⁴ The exact date of his death is unknown but occurred after 1811.

The autobiography might have been finished by 1806, shortly after the war and the dismissal of the amban acquainted with Tenzin Peljor. Tenzin Peljor's account of the war in this work has been used by Shakabpa (*alias* rTsis dpon Zhva sgab pa dBang phyug bde ldan, 1908–1989) in his “résumé-like translation”.¹³⁵ The text is available in the Chengdu printed edition published in 1987. It was also translated into Chinese (Tang 1995). Shakabpa might have used another recension that differs from this Chengdu recension.¹³⁶ Parts of this text from the Chengdu recension have been edited and translated into English by Li 2001, Ehrhard 2007, Erhard 2021, and van der Kuijp and Tien 2022.

Tenzin Peljor might have been conceiving his narration while composing letters and declarations during the war.¹³⁷ As he was required to write to the Tibetans by the Gorkhalis and was ordered to recall the course of the conflicts and negotiation by the Chinese officers for many times, and because of the literariness in this biography titled “Music of Candid Speech” (*brjod pa zol med gtam gyi rol mo*), his memory remained vivid and detailed. We have selected several excerpts concerning the causes of conflicts (following Ehrhard 2007), the aftermath of negotiation (following Li 2001), the abduction to Kathmandu Valley, the dialogue with Bahadur Shah, and the Betravati Battle. Komatsubara 2017 also studied Tenzin Peljor's role in the formation of the treaty of Kyirong along with the Chinese memorials, while his visit to Peking and suffering from smallpox have been researched by Sperling 1998 and van der Kuijp and Tien 2022.

134 Petech 1973, 59; Li 1998.

135 *Bod kyi srid don rgyal rabs* (3rd ed., Kalimpong 1986; Engl. rendering: Shakabpa 1967). Book review see Yapp 1968.

136 Van der Kuijp and Tien 2022, 9.

137 The letters are currently stored in the Pekingese archive, Cata. Mnc., Tib. no. 8693–94, 8848–59, 13182–84. His declaration of witness in Chinese can be found in KRKD QL 57/10-11, quoted in Chuang 1982, 427.

2.3.3 Men Gompa Künga Penden's Unedited Biography, 1807

sMan bsgom chos rje kun dga' dpal ldan, 1735–1804, written by *Brag dkar rta so sprul sku chos kyi dbang phyug*

This text was written by Brag dkar rta so sPrul sku Chos kyi dbang phyug (1775–1837) and completed in 1807. Kun dga' dpal ldan, was a practicing physician who was regularly called by Chödru Gyatsho, the tenth Sharmapa Lama, for treatment in Nepal.¹³⁸

2.3.4 Biography of the Eighth Dalai Lama, 1811

rGyal dbang sku phreng bgyad pa'i rnam thar

The eighth Dalai Lama ('Jam dpal rGyal mtsho, 1758–1804) was functioning as the ruler of Tibet during the war.¹³⁹ His uncle was also an influential figure during the first war.¹⁴⁰ He had several meetings with the Chinese officers, before and after the Sino-Nepalese War. The biography was written by the seventh Demo Hutuktu (Blo bzang Thub bstan 'jigs med rGya mtsho, 1778–1819), a disciple of the Dalai Lama and later the Tibetan Regent (1811–1819). He resided in the bsTan rgyas gling monastery, which was named by the Emperor.¹⁴¹ He started writing in 1811 and resorted to the notes made by the previous regent, the eighth Tatsag (the biographed of 2.3.5).¹⁴² The text was ordered to be block-printed upon its completion.¹⁴³ Satō 1986 referred to it extensively. In 2010, it has been edited and translated into Chinese (Feng 2006). Quotations in the footnotes are taken from the modern edition instead of the block-print version.

The biography showed the perspective of the Lhasa government during the war. The Tibetan government did approve the treaty of

138 Ehrhard 2007, 125. NGMPP reel-no. L 376/3, fols. 10a/2–20b/2. See also Erschbamer 2018.

139 Rinpoche et al. 1982.

140 Satō 1986, 600, 732.

141 DL8, 588.10: “*gnam bskos gong ma'i lung las bstan rgyas gling zhes...*”

142 Ibid., 587.18–19, 588.12–14.

143 The date of its completion was given according to Kalacakra astronomy. It seemed to be the next year, i.e., 1812. The Chinese translator of DL8, Feng 2006 suggests 1827 (*me phag*). However, Demo was already re-incarnated in 1827 as the eighth Demo Hutuktu.

Kyirong. Moreover, an extensive dialogue between the Dalai Lama and Fuk’anggan was recorded, in which the Dalai Lama addressed Fuk’anggan as “the second Emperor” (*gong ma gnyis pa*). The address form largely challenged the traditional Chinese understanding of the event, showing the transcultural complexity within the Qing Empire. The close relationship between the Dalai Lama and Fuk’anggan caused the latter to praise the Dalai Lama in front of the Emperor who was almost convinced by Bajung that the eighth Dalai was incapable.¹⁴⁴ Last but not least, it also has vivid details of the elephants from Gorkha redistributed to the Dalai and Panchen Lamas by the Emperor.

2.3.5 Biography of the Eighth Tatsag Hutuktu, 1812

rTa tshag ye shes blo bzang bstan pa'i mgon po'i rnam thar

The eighth Tatsag (Ye shes Blo bzang bstan pa'i mGonpo, 1760–1810, alias Chin. Ji-long Hutuktu 濟隴呼圖克圖. His title probably came from Tib. rJe drung¹⁴⁵) was the Regent of Tibet during the war. Both Demo and Tatsag were officially not supposed to pay respect to the amban,¹⁴⁶ whereas the two Hutuktus were respected by the ambans as significant monastic and political leaders in Lhasa. Tatsag was conferred the title Kun bde gling Hutuktu by the Emperor due to his contribution during the war. A new monastery was constructed for him in Lhasa and an inscription was made by Heliyen to commemorate the victory (Richardson 1974, no. 16). In return, he presented a Kapala skull offering bowl as the gift to the Emperor.¹⁴⁷ His biography was written by Blo bzang ‘Phrin las rNam rgyal (?–1818), a scholarly monk in the Sera Monastery, Lhasa. The two-volume work has been edited and published in 2022. The narration mainly accords with that of the biography of the eighth Dalai Lama, of which Tatsag was also involved in the textual formation.

144 Deng 2009.

145 His title, rTa tshag rJe drung, is not to be confused with 濟仲喇嘛 (probably from Tib. rTse drung nla ma) at the Tashilhunpo monastery who did divination upon the arrival of the Gorkhali army. rJe drung was a title for nobles who became monastics, while rTse drung referred to monastic official in monastic institutions.

146 Qianlong Manchu Secret Edicts, vol. 24, no. 4190 (QL 59/8/11).

147 故雜 001973N000000000.

2.3.6 Rindzin Chöying Dorjé's Autobiography

Gser phreng = Bka' brgyud gser phreng chen mo, in: *Biographies of Eminent Gurus in the Transmission Lineage of Teachings of the 'Ba'-ra dKar-brgyud-pa Sect, 1970*.¹⁴⁸

Rindzin Chöying Dorjé (Rig 'dzin Chos dbyings rdo rje 1772–1838) hailed from the esteemed Jamling lineage of Kyirong in Mangyül Gungtang. His principal abode, the Barawa Monastery of Drapu Chöling, was situated near the Nepalese border. The text offers insights into the political landscape of Tibet spanning the years 1788–1792, encompassing the Gorkha invasions. He seemed to have fortunately been free from injury during the first war and stayed in retreat in the 1792.¹⁴⁹

2.3.7 Letters of the Teshu Lama

In 1789, it was probably Drungpa Hutuktu who sent a letter to Cornwallis in the name of the Panchen Lama. After the war, another letter, probably written by the seventh Panchen Lama (dPal ldan bsTan pa'i Nyi ma 1782–1853)¹⁵⁰ himself, was sent to the British Governor. The connection between the Panchen Lama and the Governor in Calcutta started with the sixth Panchen Lama when Bogle went to Tibet. Although the British did not reach Lhasa, they kept a good relationship with the Panchen Lama in Shigatse. An Indian Yogi Purangir even followed the sixth Panchen Lama to Peking.¹⁵¹ The relation continued as Daljit was also sent to Tibet from India in February 1793 (QL 58/1).¹⁵² The Panchen

148 For further editions see Erschbamer 2018, n. 10.

149 Khenpo 2013, 223: *bcu bdum sa spre lor gor bod dus zing skabs| lha srung gi byin mthus dgon pa dang rje nyid la gnod pa cher ma byung bar| rang gnas bkra shis chos gling du bcad rgyar lo gsum bzhugs|* “At the age of 17, during the year of Earth Monkey (1788), Tibet went into turmoil. By the blessing power of the protective deity, great damage did not occur to the monastery and the master. He stayed in bKra shis chos gling monastery, which was his own abode, for a three-year retreat.” The monastery is Drapu Choling near the present day Chongse Village.

150 The biography of the seventh Panchen (PC7) has been published in its two-volume edition along with a translation in 2022. However, he lived a long life and the biography was completed towards the end of the nineteenth century in 1883.

151 See Petech 1950b; Kollmar-Paulenz 2023.

152 KRKJL, vol. 57, QL 58/3/8.

Lama thus replied through Daljit and spoke about his understanding of the war in the letter. Fuk'anggan, Heliyen, Hui-ling and Sun Shi-yi might have interfered with the letter according to their memorial after the war.¹⁵³

153 “Now, we ordered Dalai Lama and Panchen Erdeni together to write a reply to [the Governor in Kolkata]. It will be sent after we have revised it properly.” 現令達賴喇嘛與班禪額爾德尼共擬寫回信一封，由臣等酌改發去 (K RKJL, vol. 57, QL 58/3/8).