

5 The Sino-Nepalese War of 1791–1792

In August 1791,²⁹¹ Bahadur Shah sent a force with probably 3,000²⁹² troops to Kyirong and Nyalam (Kuti) because the Tibetan government had not met its promises of annual payment to Gorkha. This turned the Gorkha-Tibet conflict into the Sino-Nepalese War. Until then the Imperial Court of the Qing Dynasty did not know that the Tibetans made a peace treaty in 1789 and failed to fulfil their obligations. Nevertheless, when the Emperor heard of the second invasion, he feared that the Gorkhalis would motivate the Tibetan people to flee and thus take over all of Tibet and intimidate other regions.²⁹³

During this second invasion, the Gorkhalis seized the border towns Nyalam, Kyirong, and Dzongka as well as Tingri and Shelkar. They reached Shigatse on 17 September²⁹⁴ and looted the Tashilhunpo monastery of the Panchen Lama on 18 September 1791,²⁹⁵ where a lot of gold and silver as well as donations from the Emperor and other Manchu-Mongolian dignitaries were stored.²⁹⁶ The Gorkhalis did not face much resistance since major parts of the Tibetan army had withdrawn and the amban Bootai had evacuated the young seventh Panchen Lama, luring the Gorkhas deeper into Tibet. However, the Gorkha retreated from Shigatse on 4 October after the robbery and combat with the Green Standard military officer Xu Nan-peng (徐南鵬) at Shigatse.²⁹⁷

291 According to Rose, on August 6, 1791; Theobald (2020, 125): “autumn 1791”. According to the report by Bootai, the amban, the invasion of Nyalam took place on 5–6 August 1791 (QL 56/7/6-7) (KRKJL, vol. 1, QL 56/8/22; Yuan Yi Lai, no. 860).

292 Cp. Theobald 2020, 126 with more details.

293 Potala inscription (Part II, 2.2.5 [3.1]).

294 KRKJL, vol. 3, QL 56/9/25.

295 KRKJL, vol. 4, QL 56/10/6.

296 Cammann 1951, 121.

297 KRJL, vol. 4, QL 56/10/11.

In this situation, the Emperor had practically no option but to intervene militarily in the conflict. In his auto-commentary of the Potala inscription (Part II, 2.2.5 [3.1]), this is clearly expressed:

“[...] Gorkha dared to invade and disrupt again last year (1791). Having abducted Tenzin Peljor and others as hostages, they robbed the Tashilhunpo Temple of its treasure and properties. Their recklessness and savagery had reached the extreme. I was compelled to order the mobilisation of the army. I denounced their offences and initiated the punitive expedition. Moreover, Gorkha had invaded and annexed its adjacent tribes for years. It amalgamated the three tribes of Bal-pu (Kathmandu Valley). Thus, they became neighbour to Nie-lam (Nyalam/Kuti), Ji-long (Kyirong), and Zong-ka (rDzong dga') in the Back of Tibet. But for severe punishment and great destruction, they would further invade and annex the Front and Back of the Tibetan territories. [If so], the places around Sichuan and Da-jian-lu (Dartsemdo) would have no year of peace anymore.”

The Tibetan government and the ambans residing in Tibet appealed to the Emperor for support, as the Qing Emperor held a protective role over Tibet.²⁹⁸ Emperor Qianlong thus decided to drive out the Gorkhalis from Tibet and initiated a much larger punitive expedition into the Gorkhali realm,²⁹⁹ although he had already ordered Cengde, the provincial banner General of Chengdu to march toward Tibet.

Finally, Qianlong appointed Fuk'anggan³⁰⁰ (Figure 10) to command an army of reportedly between 16,700 to 125,000³⁰¹ soldiers marched into the heart of Nepal, transforming the conflict into the Gorkha Kingdom vs. Qing Empire War. This campaign is listed as the last of the

298 See Part II, 2.2.3e.

299 Cp. Killigrew 1979, 47–49.

300 Surname: Chin. 富察 Fu-cha, Mnc. Fuca; Name: Chin. Fu-kang-an, Mnc. Fuk'anggan; in Nepālī, also spelled or known as Fugangan, Fu-gang-an, Fuk'angan, Thung Chan Chun, Tung Thyang, Thoong-Than or Ṭumṭhyāñ, or Sund Fo (Markham 1876, lxxvi); cp. Theobald 2020, 127. The name Tung Thyang (var. Ṭumṭhvāṅg < Tib. Krung thang) came from the Chinese title for high-ranked imperial officials, “the Grand Secretary who sits in the middle among other officials”, 中堂大學士.

301 For a more detailed account of the Gorkhali, Chinese, rGyalrongic, and Tibetan troops, see Lai 1984, 151; Theobald 2020, 126. It seems that circa 7000 made their way into Nepal.



Figure 10: The Great General Fuk'anggan (source: Wikimedia Commons)

“Ten Great Campaigns” or “Ten Complete Martial Glories” (*Shi-quan Wu-gong* 十全武功) of the Emperor, the commemorative inscription of which was written by Qianlong himself.³⁰² It was one of the most expensive and difficult campaigns, “far more an achievement than Hannibal’s crossing of the Alps.”³⁰³

Regent Bahadur Shah was extremely fearful of the Emperor’s punitive expedition and issued an executive order (*rukkā*) granting land for the purpose of performing “two hundred thousand *puraścaraṇas* of the *mahāsaahasraçaṇḍī*”³⁰⁴ at the time of the Chinese invasion, which ended in September 1792 near Nuvakot, a day’s journey from Kathmandu. In a brutal battle that resulted in thousands of casualties on both sides, the Chinese troops were met with strong counterattacks.

As can be seen from the reports and the engravings of the Emperor,³⁰⁵ (Figures 11–12) the fighting was mainly with bows and arrows, matchlocks and rifles, some leather cannons,³⁰⁶ but also with burning foliage and torches.³⁰⁷ The Gorkhalis had fortified forts (*killā*), probably built earlier by the Tibetans, some of which the Qing soldiers tried to capture with hammers. The army mainly consisted of infantry and some cavalry.

302 2.1.1; cp. Dabringhaus 1994, 39, 55 and 1996, 11; Pastukhov 2021.

303 Cammann 1951, 123. However, the financial cost was much lower than the Taiwan Expedition and the two Jinchuan campaigns (Lai 1984, 428–30). In terms of loss, it was also lower than the Myanmar campaign (Dai 2004).

304 *Girvāṇayuddha Śāha* 1804; this is a ritual implying the one thousandfold recitation of the *Caṇḍī*, the recitational form of the *Devīmāhātmya*; it is also mentioned in the *Nepālikabhūpavaṃśāvalī* 20.92 (135). As Astrid Zotter has convincingly shown, the *Puraścaryāṃava* mentions the reason for such a performance in time of distress: “In case the kingdom falls, there is a great calamity, people are killed, great danger looms, elephants are killed, horses are killed or an enemy army threatens—during these and other various forms of distress, in dangers that arise from loss, illness and so on, one should perform, or have performed, a *sahasraçaṇḍīkā* recitation” (A. Zotter’s translation in the commentary to *Girvāṇayuddha Śāha* 1804).

305 Pastukhov 2021, Fig. 170–84. Based on preliminary drawings by Beijing missionaries these images were engraved in copperplates at the Academy of Painting in Paris and then together with 200 prints each sent to the Qianlong Emperor. Most of these printing plates together with prints are stored in the Ethnographic Museum of the Humboldt Forum Berlin. See Wäadow 2010; see also Bügener 2015.

306 The Arsenal Museum in Kathmandu contains two of these captured cannons (see Landon, 1976, vol. 1, 262–63), which were apparently only usable a few times before they exploded.

307 Raṇa Bahādura Śāha’s letter from 1792 (Part II, 2.1.4).



Figure 11: The Battles of Ma-gar Xiar-jia and Syaphru in the Gorkha-Campaign of 1792, painting on silk 182×138 cm, probably accessed by Victor Goldschmidt around 1920 (Courtesy: © Völkerkundemuseum vPST Heidelberg, 2024)



Figure 12: The First Battle of the Sino-Nepalese War: “The Capture of Ca-mu (sKya mo)” 1793 (QL Gui-chou) (source: Wikimedia Commons)

The Gorkhas increasingly employed guerrilla tactics and geographical advantage to inflict significant losses on the enemy. However, the course of communication across the battlefields and outcome of the war are presented differently in the sources.

5.1 The Nepalese Perspective

The Nepalese perspective is based on two documents: the letter from Rana Bahadur Shah dated 1792 (2.1.4) and the Report of VS 1850 (2.1.5).

The Letter from Rana Bahadur Shah dated Kartika badi 7, VS 1849 (10 October 1792) is regarded as the earliest Nepalese report of the war. Addressed to three *kājīs*—Jagjit Pande, Sardar Amar Singh Thapa (senior), and Captain Golayan Khawas—who were engaged in the conquest of Kumaun and Garhwal in West Nepal, the letter reflects the urgent need for their return to Kathmandu to aid in the conflict against China. During this period, Nepal found itself engaged in warfare on multiple fronts so that Nepal could not forcefully counter the attacks of the Chinese troops. However, by the time the order reached them, the war between Nepal and China had already concluded. In the missive, King Rana Bahadur Shah instructs the officials to redirect their efforts towards resuming the campaign in West Nepal and consolidating the administration in the territories already conquered.

These instructions are followed by a report of the Sino-Nepalese War that essentially confirms the Report of VS 1850 even though it does not yet include the final battle in Betravati. According to this, the following course of the war occurs. The events transpired over several months, involving shifting battlegrounds, negotiations, and ultimately a diplomatic resolution, as chronicled in historical records from the year 1792. As the war involved two battlefronts, the narration sometimes shifts between the Nyalam-Listi front with the *cancun* (the General, Cengde or Ohūi) and the Kyirong-Betravati front with *tungthyang cancun* (Fuk'anggan).

The letter of King Rana Bahadur Shah to Gajarāja Mīśra,³⁰⁸ resident in Benares, dated 11 October 1792, basically confirms the Report of 1850 (2.1.5), which gives the most detailed report of the course of the war:

308 CPC X, no. 851, 179.

The battle begins again (1791)

In September 1791, Rana Bahadur Shah's forces marched towards Digarca (Shigatse), engaging in battles and reaching the Tashilhunpo monastery. The monks, unable to fulfil the demands for gold and money, saw their monastery plundered by the Gorkhali soldiers who faced challenges on their return, with losses due to smallpox and food shortages.

A few months later, Chinese army chief Fuk'anggan arrived in Lhasa. He accused the Gorkha King of arresting Lhasa's *bhāradāra* officials, Dhurin Kaji (= Tenzin Peljor), and others, and plundering valuables from Digarca. The Gorkhals defended their actions, citing unpaid dues and deceitful intentions on the part of Lhasa. Despite sending a friendly letter and a *dharmapatra* to Fuk'anggan, tensions escalated, and the Chinese forces prepared for battle against the Gorkha King's forces.

Cengde's attack on Kuti and the retreat to Listi, the eastern battlefield

The conflict between both armies clashed in Kuti (Nyalam). King Rana Bahadur Shah³⁰⁹, sent reinforcements to Kuti but due to a sudden snowfall, neither side could advance. When the snow cleared, the Chinese army marched from Chengdu to Khasa (Dram). Despite previous unsuccessful attempts, the Chinese army [led by Cengde] attacked Kuti with cannons, capturing the fort. The Gorkhali army, armed with rifles and other weapons, suffered losses, and the arsenal was set on fire, resulting in the burning of gunpowder and soldiers.

The Gorkhali forces retreated to Listi, anticipating the general [Cengde] intention to move toward the Nepalese side. A battle ensued at Listi, where the Gorkhali forces defeated the Chinese army that faced difficulties in Listi due to the hot season and food shortages, resulting in many casualties. Bahadur Shah decided not to pursue the retreating Chinese army further, recognizing the challenges they faced. The Chinese army's actions caused trouble for people in Lhasa but did not strain relations with the Emperor.

309 The Report of VS 1850 mentions only the "Gorkha King (*Gorkhamahārāja*), i.e. the King, despite the fact his uncle Bahadur Shah was the de facto ruler.

Fuk'anggan's troops intervenes in the fighting, the major battlefield

The Gorkha King faced intervention from the Chinese forces led by Fuk'anggan. These forces arrived in Lhasa, accusing the Gorkha King of arresting officials, including Dhurin Kaji (Tenzin Peljor), and looting commodities in Digarca. In response to this accusation, the Chinese representatives demanded the release of the noblemen, as well as the imprisonment of Shamarpa Lama, promising forgiveness and gold in return.

The Gorkha King agreed to release the arrested noblemen and give up seized territories but refused to arrest and send back Shamarpa Lama. This led to a clear warning from Fuk'anggan that the mutual friendship would end unless Shamarpa Lama was handed over, stating that further communication from the Gorkha King would not be welcome.

The battle for Kukurghat and Kerung, retreat to Rasuva

In the aftermath of the tensions, Fuk'anggan and his troops moved to the fort of Kukuraghat (Chin. Ca-mu = Tib. sKya mo) after a dispute in Jhonga (Dzongka), where they met with little resistance. From Kerung (Kyirong), Shatrubhanjan Malla joined to provide support, but a heavy fight broke out at Pangusi (Chin. Bang-xing = Tib. sPang zhing), resulting in significant casualties on the Gorkha King's side. Satrubhanjan Malla, despite inflicting damage on the Chinese forces, suffered injuries and retreated to Kerung, where a large-scale battle ensued for several days.

The Chinese forces surrounded the Kerung fort and set fire to the ammunition dump, causing a substantial loss for the Gorkha King's troops. Despite being outnumbered, the King's forces resisted, but eventually, they fled from the fort to Rasuva. A three-day battle took place at Rasuva, followed by a retreat of the forces to Timure (Chin. Se-dam = Tamang Sedang) as the Chinese troops continued their advance.

Retreat to Syaphru, Dhunche, Deurali and Ramche

Anticipating a significant battle at the fort of Kerung Killa, troops sent for support by the Gorkha King arrived at Syaphru. A three-day battle

ensued, with both sides using cannons and rifles. The Chinese forces, unable to advance through the main route, took an alternative path,³¹⁰ through snowy mountains and surprised the Gorkha King's troops, forcing them to flee.

Earlier Gorkha King's troops, positioned in Dhunche, engaged in a three-day battle with the Chinese forces but were unable to defeat them. Subsequently, the King's troops positioned for battle near Syaphru in Deurali. The Chinese troops encircled them, resulting in the capture of the location. The Chinese side lost one amban in the process.³¹¹ Recognising the disadvantage of fighting in the lowland, the Gorkha King's troops withdrew from Dhunche to station at Kabhre.

Facing a formidable Chinese army, the Gorkha King dispersed a large army to Dhaibung, led by various commanders. The Chinese troops arrived in Khabre, leading to a confrontation. However, the Chinese forces eventually fled and stationed themselves at Ramacya (Ramche), suffering casualties in the process.

Upon receiving a letter from the Chinese commander, the Gorkha King ordered his troops to leave Dhaibung and fortify positions along the main route. Negotiations were proposed, and the Gorkha King returned earlier captured Chinese soldiers, along with a messenger carrying a letter to Fuk'anggan. Fuk'anggan requested that both sides refrain from firing until negotiations were complete.

Confrontation and peace offer at Betravati

In response, the Gorkha King ordered his troops to cross the Betravati River and fortify positions along the main route. The Chinese troops fortified at Dhaibung/Kabhre. Fuk'anggan requested Nuvakot as a station, proposing a meeting with the Gorkha King. In response, the Gorkha King fortified frontiers and houses further, seeking assistance from the British Governor General and expressing doubt about the Emperor's intention to have a treaty. The Gorkha King proposed Dhaibung as a station instead of Nuvakot. Fuk'anggan, displeased with this response, began constructing a second bridge across the Betravati River to reach Nuvakot with his troops.

310 It was probably led by Hailanca = Nep. Haikuna.

311 It was probably *solon niru* Dorji (KRRJL, vol. 35, QL 57/7/14).

The Gorkha King thus ordered an attack to push them back, instructing them not to cross the river where the Fuk'anggan was positioned. Fuk'anggan, deploying forces that had defeated Gorkhali troops at Deurali, attempted to take forts at Caphadi and Dudhiya (Dudya). A confrontation ensued, with the Gorkha King's troops gaining the advantage due to higher ground. The Chinese troops suffered losses, with many soldiers falling from the mountain or drowning in the Betravati River.

Fuk'anggan, witnessing the defeat, ordered the establishment of a strong checkpoint at the Betravati bridge. However, the Gorkha King's troops resisted, preventing the Chinese troops from completing a new bridge. Many Chinese soldiers drowned, and some threw cannons into the river. Fuk'anggan, realising defeat, opened the way over the old bridge.

On the next day, Fuk'anggan expressed regret for the losses and proposed negotiations. He abandoned the intention to march to Nuvakot and suggested settling the matter through letters. The Minister outlined conditions for withdrawal, including sending items seized from the Gorkha King and proposing a tribute to the Emperor. The Gorkha King, after consulting with his advisors, considered the proposal and received a letter from the British Governor General advising friendship with the Emperor. Facing challenges, including a fever among Chinese troops and a shortage of supplies, the Gorkha King decided to send an emissary to the Emperor, complying with the Fuk'anggan's conditions to maintain friendship. The emissary carried items related to Shamarpa Lama, seized valuables, and gifts for the Emperor.

The agreement of Betravati

The negotiations between the Gorkha King and Fuk'anggan resulted in an agreement with several key points:

1. After five years, a *vakila* (representative) of the Gorkha King would go to the Chinese Emperor with an *arjī* (petition) and tributes to pay *darśana* and report back.
2. The Gorkha King and the Dalai Lama would maintain their friendship and refrain from future conflicts, keeping their respective territories.
3. Unalloyed coins of the Gorkha King would be accepted as such in transactions in Tibet, while adulterated coins would be given their corresponding value.

4. If any enemy threatened the Gorkha King's troops, it should be reported to the Chinese Emperor for assistance.

Both parties agreed to these terms, and the Minister, along with his troops and Gorkha King's representatives, left Dhaibum and returned to China. The officials of the Gorkha King accompanied the Minister to Kerung, where they received extraordinary gifts and medals. Following Fuk'anggan's instructions, they sent injured Chinese soldiers and other commodities back to China and then returned to Nepal from Kerung.

In the meantime, Cengde stationed in Listi of the eastern battlefront, wrote a letter to the Gorkha King expressing affection. The Gorkha King replied with gifts for a feast, fostering goodwill. On the second day of the bright fortnight of Kartika, Cengde and his troops left Listi and returned to China.

Subjugation of Tibet

After the Fuk'anggan Minister and Chinese troops returned to Lhasa, they left three lamas from Digarca, Samkhya (i.e., Saskya), and Lhasa.³¹² Subsequently, they arrested the noblemen of Tibet and their associates, including Dhyamju Kaji [Tenzin Peljor], the two brothers of the Dalai Lama of Lhasa, along with Tava Kaj. The previous police officer (*ṭhānedāra*) and amban of Lhasa [Bootai] were also fettered, and two new ambans [Cengde and Heliyen] and about five hundred soldiers were appointed as *ṭhānedāra* in Lhasa. The Chinese forces left Lhasa and returned to their side in the month of Phagun (February/March).

During their stay in the Gorkha King's territories, many Chinese soldiers were injured and died due to the hot season and strong winds. Forced labourers from Tibet (Tib. *'u lag*) were brought in to bury the corpses, and due to a shortage of wood, they took it from the houses. The Tibet realm experienced additional challenges, including deaths from smallpox, leading to the closure of the two-way trading route.

Consequently, the political authority in Tibet shifted, with the *kājī* of the Tibetan Government and the Dalai Lama of Tibet losing influence. The Tibetans were now considered subjects or cultivators of China, and Chinese orders were followed in the region.

312 These were the people who partook in the Kyirong negotiation in 1789.

In contradistinction to most Chinese sources glorifying their achievements, this report identifies the Gorkhalis as victors in at least one battle, notes Fuk'anggan's expressed desire for peace negotiations amid the hostilities, and highlights the Chinese retreat before the Gorkhalis in Khabre. Notably, the report mentions Shamarpa Lama as a key reason for the war, rather than solely focusing on the lack of compensation payments from Tibet.

To be true, Qing troops marched along the Trishuli River, inflicting heavy damage on Nepalese forces. But despite facing overwhelming odds, a comprehensive defeat of the Gorkhali army was averted. Simultaneously, Nepal faced conflicts on other fronts, including Sikkim's incursions, the ongoing war with Garhwal, and open revolts within its borders. The challenges made it difficult for Bahadur Shah to defend against the Qing army, leading him to seek help from the East India Company. However, negotiations failed, intensifying the critical military situation.

After successful battles, the Qing army suffered a setback at a flooded Betravati near Nuvakot. According to the Report of VS 1850, a Nepalese counterattack at Betravati resulted in a Qing defeat. General Fuk'anggan's punitive actions demotivated troops, resulting in rapid desertion and retreat. Many Chinese troops died, prompting Fuk'anggan to seek a truce with Nepal.

For fear that the Chinese troops could not return before the winter made the trans-Himalayan passes impassable³¹³ and as a face-saving outcome for both sides, a peaceful arrangement but apparently no official truce was arranged in Betravati near the Trishuli river, a mile to the north from Nuvakot.³¹⁴

However, this is the Nepalese perspective, which implies a sort of triumph (if not victory) of the troops of the Gorkha King, but the events look very different from the Chinese and Tibetan point of view. The

313 Cp. Yuan Yi Lai, no. 915 = KKKJL, vol. 40, QL 57/9/3. Indeed, snow started in Kyirong in August/September 1792.

314 The exact date and whereabouts of the signing ceremony are not clear. There seemed to be no signing ceremony of any written documents. Rose (1971, 64) gives 30 September 1792, which was the date of the memorial of the Chinese negotiator Fuk'anggan stating the acceptance of the conditions of the Nepalese government from September 27 [= 2.2.3a], and October 31 for the Emperor's ratification [= 2.2.3d]. The official letter of acceptance from Fuk'anggan to Rana Bahadur Shah was dated 3 October (2.2.3b). B. Acharya (2013, 251) dates the event on 6 October 1792.

question of who won the war must remain open for now; we will revisit this in Chapter 6.

5.2 The Chinese Perspective

The quadrilingual Potala Inscription of November 1792 (Part II, 2.2.5), located below the seat of the Dalai Lama in Lhasa, is an impressive document that was probably written by Emperor Qianlong himself. Its extensive auto-commentary in Chinese summarises the memorials of Fuk'anggan and crafts the authorised correct memory of the great martial glories. The entire course of the war is supposed to be remembered in such a way that the Chinese troops won one battle after the other so that the Gorkhalis could be quickly pushed back if they had not first voluntarily withdrawn. The inscription begins by stating the imperial intention and its reliance on the righteous path and divine favour for these military successes. The Emperor concluded with his understanding of surrender and submission with allegiance and articulated his obligation in these unintentional military mobilisations. He also explained the reasons for giving up the captured territory in the realm of Gorkha.

The narrative of the conflict started with a detailed account of the Gorkha's incursions, particularly after their initial aggression in 1788, which were inadequately addressed by his commissioners, leading to further disruptions. The inscription describes the failures of imperial official Bajung and Tibetan minister Tenzin Peljor, who negotiated detrimental agreements with Gorkha and the evil Shamarpa Lama, obstructing military response.

Frighten the enemies

On 19 September 1791 (QL 56/8/22), the Emperor heard about the Gorkha invasion and the abduction of Tibetan ministers. He was on his way to Jehol, the place where he often met tributary envoys.³¹⁵ Bajung committed suicide, while Bootai further requested to evacuate the two great Lamas from Tibet to Sichuan or Kokonur. He felt the seriousness and was thus compelled to mobilise his army, which he had originally

315 Forét 2000.

intended not to do because he saw the conflict with Tibet over trade and debt as a local matter. There was a danger that the aggressive Gorkhalis, who had already conquered the three royal city-states in the Kathmandu Valley, would also attack other states and regions.

In the Emperor's recollection, Bajung failed to exhibit China's military strength, so that Gorkha could dare to invade Tibet a second time and occupy large parts of the Back of Tibet upon the instigation of Shamarpa. The annual payments of silver ingots and treaties with other countries were such a disgrace that reminded every Chinese of the military weakness of the Han-Chinese people in the tenth to thirteenth centuries. It should never have happened. The imperial glory was affected.

The Emperor was thus furious, as his absolute power failed to intimidate his subjects: Bajung cheated him; Shamarpa colluded with the foreigners; the Tibetans paid money for peace; the Gelukpa religion and Tibet were in danger; and Gorkhalis were marching forward. The Emperor exclaims almost desperately, "Who could expect Bajung to have monopolised my authority and acted on his own?", as the Qing emperors considered themselves to hold the absolute authority.

Protect Tashilhunpo

The Gorkhalis also plundered the Tashilhunpo Monastery, which just received the Emperor's divine endowment. In fact, Tashilhunpo was quite easy to defend. However, when the Gorkhali forces approached, the amban Bootai took the Panchen Lama away. The monastics did a divination and decided to abandon the place. Such a timid reaction and the plunder of Tashilhunpo immensely displeased the Emperor, which might be one of the triggers for his determination.

Tashilhunpo had a special meaning in the innermost of the Emperor. Eleven years ago, the Emperor built a replica of the Tashilhunpo temple (Figure 13) at Jehol to welcome the Panchen Lama, the guru of the Emperor's guru. He was very serious about this visit and even learnt colloquial Tibetan himself.³¹⁶ He also made a portrait of himself, dressed as a Tibetan Gelukpa monk, situated in this Temple.³¹⁷ As this replica was truly resided by the Panchen Lama, it was of great

316 PC6, 948.

317 Nie 1999, 203, no. 47.

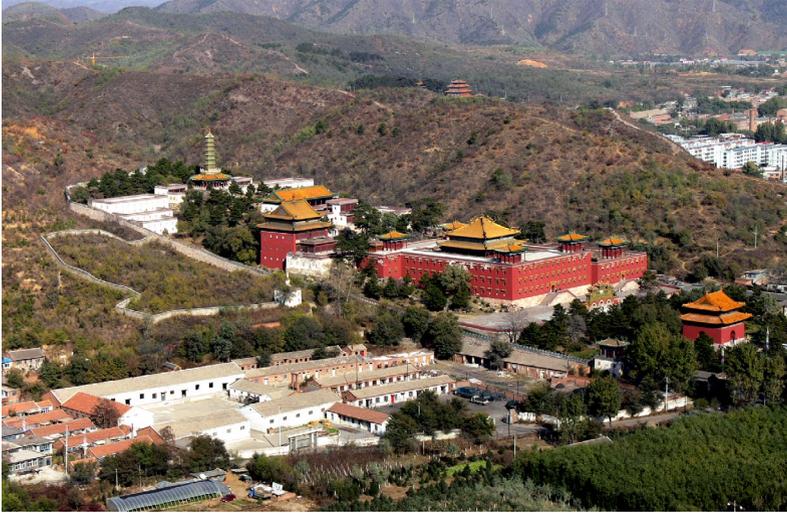


Figure 13: The Replica of Tashilhunpo Temple at Jehol Palace, Photo by Gisling (source: Wikimedia Commons).

significance to Manchus, Mongols, and Chinese.³¹⁸ The Korean ambassadors called it Tashilhunpo directly.³¹⁹ After the death of the Panchen, the Emperor paid great attention to his return to the real Tashilhunpo and ordered the stupa to be made with pure gold and gems.³²⁰ Panchen's relics received immense donations from the Mongolian kings on his way back.³²¹ The robbery of Tashilhunpo itself would be a great shock for the entire Empire largely constituted by Manchu, Tibetans, and Mongols. The latter two were just subjugated by the Emperor with the efforts of more than three generations. The influence of such a robbery on Tibeto-Mongol affairs and his feelings should not be overlooked, as the Emperor expressed his anger, worries and lamentation in his own poetry inscribed in this replica of Tashilhunpo (Figure 13).³²² He was very furious upon hearing that Bam Bahadur Shah once resided in the

318 It was thus known as 班禪行宮 “the palace of Panchen” (Shulemann 1958, fig. 36; Zhang 2016).

319 Pak 1780 (1956). See also Zhang 2016, 186–87.

320 Wang and Chen 2013; Wang 2013.

321 PC6, 1301–66.

322 *Poem on the event of the Tashilhunpo Temple* 扎什倫布廟誌事 written by the Emperor in the replica of Tashilhunpo Temple at Jehol (KRLJL, *Poems by the Emperor*, part 1, 18–20; Zhang 1988, 465–66).

room of Panchen.³²³ The golden plates granted to the Panchen Lama were robbed, while the jade plates were thrown away. The failure of protecting the important Gelukpa site, the burials of the Panchen Lamas (see Figures 8–9), and the inscribed permanent endowments might pose a question to the Buddhist population, whether the Emperor was still capable of protecting the Buddhist religion. Therefore, the robbery of the Tashilhunpo Temple in Shigatse was deliberately omitted in the Tibetan version of the Potala inscription, lest the Tibetans have doubts and fear.

For all these personal, administrative, military, political, and religious motivations, the Emperor finally ordered a decisive punitive expedition to restore his glory and power. Although he initially did not receive much information, he was determined to have a frightful counterattack against or even an eradication of the Gorkhalis. He mobilised troops from Sichuan, Yunnan, rGyalrongic regions, Derge, and, most remarkably, Solon, in almost northmost Manchuria. It was indeed a multi-ethnic army.

He appointed Fuk'anggan as the Great General and Hailanca as Councillor in October/November 1791. Fuk'anggan had just finished his Taiwan and Annam campaigns from 1787–1789, while Hailanca won his fame in the Dzungar War and later assisted Fuk'anggan in the Jinchuan and Taiwan campaigns. They were the closest imperial guards of the Emperor. Day and night, the Emperor carefully worked out the strategy with Agūi and Hešen in the Grand Council, while the army demonstrated exceptional endurance and tactical prowess, overcoming treacherous terrain and enemy forces in multiple engagements.

Reclaiming Tibet victoriously

The campaign commenced in the winter of 1791 (QL 56/11), with troops marching from Xi-ning through harsh conditions to Tibet. Many soldiers suffered from the shortage of food, poor horses, and altitude sickness. After Fuk'anggan's arrival, he waited for more troops to come. He began his advance from Tingri. By then, Cengde was already

323 Yuan Yi Lai no. 902: QL 57/2/29 Fuk'anggan in memorial: “Bam Saheb immediately resided the room where Panchen Erdeni meditated” 瑪木薩野即在班禪額爾德尼坐靜房內居住; QL 57/4/3 Emperor's reply in red ink: “Disgusting! This bandit should be captured alive, tied, and sent to Peking.” 可惡, 此賊必生致解京方好。

fighting in Nyalam in January/February 1792. They sent Ar-zeng Shah, the nephew of Bam Bahadur Shah, as a captive to Peking. He went through inquisition by torture and provided much information to the Grand Council.³²⁴

On 16 June 1792 (QL 57/intercalary 4/27), as the snow melted, Fuk'anggan and his assistants advanced from Tingri westward into annexed Tibetan territory. Local provisions sustained the army as they reclaimed territory and advanced deeper into enemy territory. They marched from Dzungka, Ca-mu (sKya mo), to Mar-xiar-ga (Mar dkar), Bang-xing (sPang zhing), and to Kyirong and Rasuva. Hailanca used surprise and deception to outmanoeuvre the enemy. The army was divided into maneuverable groups to attack in multiple directions, capturing key positions and causing significant enemy casualties. Tularama, a Gorkhali military chief, was captured in Kyirong.

They thus reclaimed the Tibetan territory in June/July (QL 57/5) and marched into Nepal through Timure, Syaphru, and Dhunce. Despite formidable defences, including control over mountain passes and strategic river crossings, the Chinese forces pressed on, employing strategic diversions and direct assaults to overcome the enemy's defences. It was a Gorkha captive, named Gang-ga-le-ta-ze-xi (崗噶勒塔則西), who worked as an informant for the Qing commanders. He once worked at the royal palace before captivated in 1791 but later ended up among the Manchu bannermen in suburban Peking.³²⁵

Closing the case hastily

They paused at Ramche on 27 July (QL 57/6/9). From Ramche, the Potala inscription started to abbreviate the process of the campaign. According to WZTZ and Fuk'anggan's memorials, frequent exchange of summons and petitions started around Ramche. Fuk'anggan had received the letter (petition) of "surrender" issued by Rana Bahadur Shah earlier on 16 July (QL 57/5/28) (2.2.2a). Fuk'anggan rejected it on 2 August (QL 57/6/15, 2.2.2b). By then, significant progress had been made, prompting the Gorkhals to negotiate, which was again sternly rejected. The Gorkhals sent four headpersons, Bhotu Pande, Narasimha, Ranjit Pande, and Balabhadra Khawas, to Fuk'anggan on

324 KRKD QL 57/6, 123–24.

325 Mosca 2013, 152 and 349 n. 104.

5 August (QL 57/6/18).³²⁶ Two of them were retained, while the other two carried Fuk'anggan's rebuttal on 13 August (QL 57/6/26).

Thereupon, the Betravati Battle took place on 19–20 August (QL 57/7/2–3), in which some high-ranked military officers died, especially Taifingga, whose death shocked the Emperor.³²⁷ Nevertheless, it was still memorialised as a victory, later even commemorated as the seventh victorious battle during the campaign. The Emperor emphasised in the inscription that despite the rows of rifles, his army was motivated to fight courageously.

Regardless of the obstruction at Betravati, substantial losses for the Gorkhalis and significant territorial gains for the Chinese forces were considered to have frightened the Gorkhalis. In the face of mounting pressure and encirclement by the Chinese forces and incursions from neighbouring regions, the Gorkhas ultimately surrendered because of fear. The lack of further reports on military conflicts indicates a truce following the Battle of Betravati in August 1792. More exchange of messengers with letters took place in September (e.g., 2.2.2d). Instructions were mostly accepted by Gorkha, leading to the withdrawal of Chinese troops in October (QL 57/8). The official end of the war on the battlefields was 3 October (QL 57/8/18), when Fuk'anggan issued the official reply (2.2.3b). After that, the Emperor authorised the surrender officially on 7 October, though he still expected Fuk'anggan to march to Kathmandu (QL 57/8/22, 2.2.3c). Fuk'anggan returned to Kyirong on 19 October, but the Emperor was only informed of the acceptance of surrender on 31 October (QL 57/9/16). On that date, the Emperor issued another edict directing the Gorkha King through Fuk'anggan (2.2.3d). With this, the entire campaign came to an end. It underscored the intricate geopolitical dynamics between Gorkha, Tibet, and surrounding regions, with the involvement of foreign powers like the British playing an influential role in shaping the outcome. Historical rivalries and pragmatic alliances influenced the course of the conflict, highlighting the region's strategic importance.

To sum up, the Qing army advanced through various locations, including Ca-mu (Jiamu), Bangxing or Mar-xiar-ga (Maga), Kyirong, Rasuvagadhi, Syaphru, Dhunce, and, finally, Betravati, consistently overcoming the Gorkhalis. These places were commemorated as

326 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.

327 KRKD QL 57/8, 152–53. Immediately upon hearing the news, the Emperor authorised the “surrender” of Gorkha.

the seven victorious battlefields. Fuk'anggan had penetrated deep into enemy territory, capturing strongholds and killing thousands while sustaining minimal losses. As Fuk'anggan's forces approached Kathmandu, King Rana Bahadur Shah, began to plead for mercy and surrender. They returned captured officials, especially Tenzin Peljor, and property looted in Tashilhunpo, expressing fear and remorse for their earlier actions against the Tibetans.

The Gorkhali humbleness pleased the Emperor. Their sentiment was considered to be a “surrender” and a “submission”. The Emperor wrote in the Potala inscription and distinguished between “surrender with allegiance” and “submission with allegiance.” Surrender was accepted under conditions—sometimes reluctantly—reflecting the complex interplay of military force and diplomatic negotiation. In contrast, the Emperor emphasized that the Gorkhals had willingly pledged their allegiance, expressing repentance for past actions out of respect for imperial power and grace, thereby glorifying the Emperor's military might and civilizing influence.

The Emperor ends with a remarkable reference to Heaven, a typical imperial rhetoric in both the Steppes and East Asia:

It was fortunate that I completed the ten complete martial glories within 57 [reigning] years. How could there be no blessings from Heaven?

However, the more profound the blessings from Heaven, the more intense my fear. I dare not say that I bear [the blessings] in mind gratefully [enough]. I am indeed afraid of the incapability to bear [the according responsibilities]. Cautiously and conscientiously, I wait for the favour of Heaven with respect.³²⁸

328 The Tibetan parallel text reads “Since the grace of Heaven is, in that way, so very profound, I am also a devout believer in it. And although I bear a constant burden of responsibility and know well the extreme weakness of my powers. I pray in my heart that I may continue to enjoy the kindness of Heaven and I eagerly hope that it may make me a man of perfect uprightness.” (Richardson 1974, 47). Meanwhile, the Manchu text translated by Elliot reads, “For the greater Heaven's favour, the more sincere my reverence for Heaven. Not daring to presume to know how to express my thanks, I can only beg helplessly for Heaven's blessing with utmost reverence and trepidation. Having abstained from rule, I can only hope fervently for the time that I will become a completed person” (2009, 106). The tones are different, tailored for the Chinese who favoured modesty, the courageous Manchu, and the pious Tibetan audience.

I retreat from [the merits of] governance and [cultivate myself as] a perfect person. What more is there to be said?

A transcendental reference shines through in these sentences. It was woven into the tapestry of a cosmopolitan imperial rhetoric. The Chinese might read out the Confucian self-perfection and divine mission, while the Mongols might be reminded of Tengri, the Sky God of the Steppe people. For the Tibetans, the robbery of Tashilhunpo was censored and the Great Emperor remained as Manjushri, the gentle Bodhisattva and the great protective patron who also slayed the enemies of Buddhist teaching with his radiant sword of wisdom.

Behind imperial glory

Other Chinese sources mostly agree with the Potala inscription. According to these reports, there was a clear winner: Fuk'anggan and the Chinese Emperor. However, doubts are warranted. The subtle diction and sharp contrast may have reflected the historiographers' implicit judgment. Was the surrender "authorised", "permitted", "allowed", or maybe "approved"? Did the Gorkhali "beg", "plead", "request", or maybe negotiate of the end of the war? Was it even a "capitulation", a "peace", or a truce? Why did the commander not march on to Kathmandu to mark the victory over Nepal and possibly place a permanent envoy (amban) as in Tibet, or to eradicate the Gorkhals and distribute the land to other local chiefs, as the Emperor once intended?

A sharp contrast can be found in the two inscriptions in the replica of Tashilhunpo at the Jehol Palace. He recollected his earnest wish to end the war in summer 1793,³²⁹ even though he was resolute to eradicate the Gorkhas and redistribute the land in summer 1792.³³⁰ Despite the Emperor's efforts to highlight his virtue in sparing lives, the stark contrast between the initial intention to "eradicate" the Gorkhali race and the sudden retreat reveals the underlying difficulties of the situation.

329 *Another Poem on the event of the Tashilhunpo Temple, following the rhyme used previously* 扎什倫布廟誌事疊去歲詩韻 written by the Emperor in the replica of Tashilhunpo Temple at Jehol in 1793 (KRLJL, *Poems by the Emperor*, part 3, 22–23; Zhang 1988, 467–68).

330 *Poem on the Event of the Tashilhunpo Temple* 扎什倫布廟誌事 written by the Emperor in the replica of Tashilhunpo Temple at Jehol (KRLJL, *Poems by the Emperor*, part 1, 18–20; Zhang 1988, 465–66).

The eulogistic Potala Inscription omits any mention of the difficulties encountered in advancing further. In contrast, archival documents, literary works, and subtle historiographical cues suggest—between the lines—that the Qing forces ultimately failed to press forward, suffering significant losses in both personnel and strength. Most telling is the emphasis on the Gorkhalis' fear rather than a narrative of military conquest.

We also see in the secret edicts that the Emperor showed his worry of potential hardships as early as on 8 May 1792 and suggested that Fuk'anggan might decide whether to accept a surrender.³³¹ The Emperor's true intention was to ensure that the Gorkhalis would demonstrate their submission with allegiance, securing peace for the Tibetan territories and allowing him to achieve complete glory. He placed his trust in Fuk'anggan, whom he regarded as a son and had raised in his palace, as well as in the courageous Hailanca, believed to be the reincarnation of Vajrapani. The Emperor was confident that they would not repeat the mistakes of Bajung.

The occasion at the battlefields was far from tolerable. Fuk'anggan memorialised the hardships on 5 September 1792 (QL 57/7/19) to the Emperor and was received by him on 18 October (QL 57/9/3) on the failure of provisions, due to falling from the cliff, diseases among the soldiers, the inability to attack further, the fear of annexing an empty city of Kathmandu, the incapability of the Newars to replace the Gorkha court, etc. He had less than 5,000 soldiers by then. Meanwhile, more than 680 soldiers were ill because of the monsoon rain. The provisions and money also failed to reach him, whereas the snow season was approaching.³³²

Fuk'anggan's clerk, Yang Kui elaborated on problems on the battlefield in his 12 poems: [8 Poems of] "*Narratives of the Bitter Rain in the Clerk Room of the Military Camp in Dhaibung*" 堆布木軍營帳房苦雨述事 [八首] and "*Four Poems upon [knowing] that the soldiers picked maize, pumpkins, and wild grass for food because of bitter starvation due to the failure of provisions*" 軍營糧運不濟，士卒苦飢，日採包穀南瓜雜野草為食，感賦四律：

[Because of continuous rain that lasted more than 10 days,]
the bunches of firewood cannot be used for cooking, while the

331 Feng 1996, 46–47 = KRKJL, vol. 27, QL 57/4/18; KRKD QL 57/4.

332 Yuan Yi Lai, no. 915 = KRKJL, vol. 40, QL 57/9/3.

trousers and coats cannot be dried. Who could raise us from such muddy routes? (...) ³³³

[Because of the narrowness of this clerk room] which is like the theatre for puppets. I established a block as my desk and piled up some stones as the seat. Where I sat and reclined was often rushed through by torrents and waves. (...) ³³⁴

Because of the hardship in transporting provisions over thousands of mountains, the troops never got a full meal overnight. I dragged the heels and stammered, head pointing down with a pale look. I heard from my servants in the morning that my provisions were also finished. (...) ³³⁵

(...) Lin Jun sent me a pig, which fell from the cliff into the valley. What reached me was his empty letter. (...) ³³⁶

My hair was as messy and scarce as the seeds of Erigeron, while my feet were covered with layers of calli. (...) I raised my coat and walked further [on the route] where the mud covered my knees. I have already forgotten the existence of shoes but rejoiced that I could tie the socks [i.e., serve the imperial enterprise]. ³³⁷

...The clouds suppressed our camp as the covering smoke. I asked for light but light would not come. The candles were burnt out and no longer to be obtained. (...) Sitting at the end of the wilderness, I heard the nine-headed bird singing, calling the rain, and flying in swarms. (...) ³³⁸

Yesterday, I passed the mountain peak of extreme perils, while a horse fell from the cliff into the valley. (...) [The horse bestowed to me by Fuk'anggan] came to my possession in vain as it filled the belly of the old soldier eventually. (...) ³³⁹

(...) The route that we have taken became longer and longer every day, while our intention to return became more and more intense. (...) ³⁴⁰

333 軍行苦秋霖，澆旬不能止...束薪不成炊，褰衣不能療。似此泥塗中，誰掀公出淖。

334 列帳地偏仄...何異傀儡場。支板且為几，疊石聊作牀。往往坐臥處，急溜過淋浪。

335 千山轉饋勞，師行不宿飽，曳踵行蹣跚，垂首色枯槁。朝聞僮仆語，我糧亦已休。

336 林西崖廉訪，遣人饋花豬，墜崖谷，僅達空函。

337 蕭蕭首飛蓬，雙雙足重繭...撩衣更前行，汨汨泥沒膝，縱使履已忘，猶幸襪可結。

338 壓帳雲幕壓。呼鎗鎗不來，燭燼不可得...空際聞鬼車，呼雨還群飛。

339 憶昨過絕巘，有馬墮崖谷...空入書生手，竟果老兵腹。

340 行路日以遠，歸思日以深。

(...) I tried to make a rice ball out of the sand, but it could not be cooked as porridge. (...) ³⁴¹

(...) Those with swelling bowels should not laugh at us who consumed the husks and the scrap of rice in them. Those with belly diseases were really distressed, imploring [the Heavens to alleviate] the desperate twists and turns. (By then, there were malaria and dysentery among the troops.) (...) ³⁴²

(...) (The provisions were transported by the foreign labourers and were mostly lost on the way). The military officers held a futile title and could only deal with vegetables, while the General was even thinking of cultivation. The wind blew down the leaves of thousands of jungles, while the frost froze the smoke from tens of thousands of stoves. ³⁴³

In the end, Yang commented that all the soldiers much rejoiced in the coming of Gorkha messenger who brought sheep with him. ³⁴⁴ All warriors must have been delighted when they could finally leave the sufferings in realm of the enemy. It was fortunate for the Chinese that the Gorkhals also would like to end the war, as expressed by Zhao-lian in his final comment (see Part II, 2.2.7).

But the Emperor's great campaign had not yet ended, as there were also ongoing issues concerning Tibet. He continued to craft strategies to regulate Tibet and prevent further conflicts. He and his ministers instructed both sides to do fair trade. He proposed restrictions on Gorkha-Tibet commercial connections and ordered silver coins to be minted in Lhasa (Figure 14). ³⁴⁵ The silver coins were minted with bilingual legends to show the sense of "synthesis of scripts" (Mnc. *hergen emu / šu adali* = 同文) within the Empire, as the Tibetan script transcribed the Chinese pronunciation. ³⁴⁶ Fuk'anggan and Heliyen sent people to investigate the borders and magnify the border markers. The Emperor also ordered the confiscation of Shamarpa's property and the prohibition on his reincarnation. Moreover, the pilgrims were supposed to be supervised. ³⁴⁷ We can see that the Emperor finally had a clear

341 擱沙無術可炊糜。

342 腸肥莫笑餐糠粃，腹疾真愁問曲窮(時軍中瘡痍大作)。

343 (時用番夫轉運，多半道亡失)都尉虛名專治菜，將軍列議或屯田。風聲吹墜千林葉，霜氣零消萬竈煙。

344 牽羊差喜叩關來 (Wu 1985, 166–68).

345 Burger 2016.

346 Lin 2009, 348.

347 Komatsubara 2018.

Bhutan, summoned by Fuk’anggan to attack the Gorkhalis seem to have failed in their attempts. Jumla even fled further away,³⁵¹ confirming the Emperor’s earlier worry that these tribes were useless and should not be summoned.³⁵²

5.3 The Tibetan Perspective

The Tibetans were largely left out of the war between China and Gorkha as the decision-maker was Fuk’anggan and ultimately the Emperor. The Dalai Lama even called Fuk’anggan the second Emperor (*gong ma chen po gnyis pa*) when meeting him.³⁵³ He gave blessings to the Great Army.³⁵⁴ The Tibetan government in Lhasa sold provisions and offered labour for the Chinese army but seemed not to have sent many military officers. It was concluded by both the eighth Dalai Lama and the Tatsag Regent that Fuk’anggan returned victoriously to Lhasa, having transformed the enemies of the Buddhist religion into servants of the monasteries.

Another perspective came from the battlefield. Particularly influential was Minister Tenzin Peljor, who claims in his autobiography to have personally observed the decisive battle near Betravati from a treetop near the river.³⁵⁵ His report (2.3.2e) is widely confirmed by a letter of the Teshu (Panchen) Lama to the Governor-General dated June 28, 1793 (2.3.7).

351 Ibid.

352 KRKJL, vol. 23, QL 57/3/9.

353 ^o*skyabs mgon chen po nas ‘jam dpal dbyangs* ^o*gong ma chen pos nged bod na yod pa’i ‘gro ba ser skya yongs la byams brtes dgongs |* ^o*gong ma gnyis pa lta bu’i blon chen khyed rdzong bda’ (= brda) gnang ba bka’ drin chen po snying la bcangs te |* “The Great Protector himself, Manjushri, the Great Emperor has extended a compassionate intention towards all of us, both monastics and lay people, here in Tibet. We keep in our heart the great kindness of having send you [Fuk’anggan], the great minister who is like a second emperor.” (DL8 324.13–16).

354 *zla ba gsum pa’i nang du krung thang chen po lha dmag ‘bum sde’i tshogs dang bcas gor dmag ‘joms [...]* “In the third month, the Grand Secretary [Fuk’anggan], along with an assemblage of a hundred thousand heavenly soldiers (*lha dmag*), [went to] subdue the Gorkha soldiers. [...]

355 “Hence, I, [minister] Yuthog (g.Yu thog) and the others climbed the crown of a deodara cedar and observed [the battle]”, TP 891, transl. by Erhard 2020a, 335.

Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa (2.3.2) also took Tenzin Peljor as his source.³⁵⁶ According to Shakabpa's interpretation, the Tibetan army launched in 1792 an offensive against the Gorkhalis at Shigatse, severing their supply lines.³⁵⁷ Concurrently, a deadly epidemic afflicted the Nepalese forces, compounding their woes alongside Tibetan harassment. Forced to retreat from Shigatse, the Gorkhalis absconded with the spoils of Shigatse and Tashilhunpo. After four months, Tibetan forces³⁵⁸ pushed the Gorkhalis back to Nyalam (Kuti) and Kerung, prompting the arrival of imperial troops led by Manchu general Fuk'anggan. These troops, in conjunction with Tibetan forces numbering 10,000, proceeded to engage the Gorkhalis. Seven months later, fierce fighting broke out at Kerung and Nyalam, where the Tibetan army achieved a decisive victory.³⁵⁹ News of this defeat spurred the Gorkhalis to seek aid from the British and prompted King Rana Bahadur Shah to flee under the guise of a hunting expedition. A treaty was drafted to delineate the border.

According to the Chengdu 1987 edition, there seemed no Tibetan army present. However, Tenzin Peljor played an important role in diplomatic, as he was summoned by Regent Bahadur Shah to his court, requesting intervention to halt the advance. In their dialogue, Shamarpa

356 Shakabpa 1967, 166–68.

357 Shakabpa's reference to the Tibetan army defending Tashilhunpo seems to be hard to authenticate by the reports of the Tibetan government to the Chinese ambans. According to the Chinese sources, the leader of defence was Xu Nan-peng, while the major force in the township of Shigatse was the Green Standard Army, whereas the Tibetan lamas ran away in 1791 instead of 1792. In the 1987 edition, Tenzin Peljor commented the enemies of the Buddhist teaching (*bstan dgra*), Gorkha could not forward beyond Tashilhunpo and thus retreated, while he was in fact kept in hostage in Nepal (TP 810.3–6). He mentioned that it was his father who made arrangements for the food for the officers and soldiers from China (*rgya'i dpon dmag*) (TP 809.16–810.3).

358 The edition of Tenzin Peljor's biography gave the names of the commanders as Nga'o lchang jun and Khrin thi'i thu, which are apparently Ohüi and Cengde, both being Manchu but not Tibetan (TP 852.1). He further noted that the buildings in Nyalam along with the Gorkhalis were burnt into ashes, which accords with the Chinese sources. He was not an eyewitness of it but must have heard it from somewhere.

359 Again, in the 1987 edition of Tenzin Peljor, it was the Great General, Duke and Grand Secretary Fuk'anggan (sPyi khyab dMag dpon Phu zi gung rda Krung thang chen mo), the warrior chief, the Duke Hailanca (khyu mchog gong ma'i nang blon sba dur had gong), and Hui-ling (Zi chon thu Hu'i btsong thu Hu'i rda rin) who led the army from China (*rgya nag*), including Mongolian (*sog po*), Manchu, and rGyalrongic soldiers (TP 852.5–8). Shakabpa might have interpreted Hailanca or the leader of the rGyalrongic soldiers, Zhang Zhi-yuan, as Tibetan generals.

took the blame for everything and Gorkha should pay homage to the Emperor of Peking (2.3.2d).

Upon receiving an official order (*bka' shog*) from Hailanca, the Gorkhalis eventually sent an envoy with Tenzin Peljor to plead for peace with Fuk'anggan. Negotiations resulted in conditions for peace, including the surrender of Shamarpa Lama's associates, the return of all looted objects and wealth from Tashilhunpo, and the extradition of Shamarpa Lama to China to face treason charges. However, the Shamarpa Lama had already committed suicide in Bodhnath. Fuk'anggan demanded proof of the Shamarpa's demise, and thus Tenzin Peljor was assigned by Bahadur Shah the task of authenticating the body before cremation. Tenzin Peljor, along with other captives, identified the corpse and reported back to Fuk'anggan.

It seemed that Tenzin Peljor did not manage to halt the Chinese army, as was wished by Bahadur Shah. He witnessed the Betravati Battle (2.3.2e), where the Chinese troops fell from the bridge "like the dropping of goats." He also mentioned that a chief, probably Taifingga, was killed by Bam Bahadur, shot in the forehead. Fuk'anggan regretted his hasty decision of attacking and secluded himself in the camp for almost a month. However, the Gorkhalis finally returned the requested people and object. The ambassadors were escorted to Peking by the Manchu officers for the tribute as Tenzin Peljor was for inquisition.

While in the Qing camp, Fuk'anggan expressed dissatisfaction with the Treaty of Kyirong, and inquired Tenzin Peljor about his correspondences with Lhasa during the negotiation. Tenzin Peljor was criticised for his unbecoming negotiation in 1789 (the Earth-monkey year) and faced allegations of not fighting to the death but rather being captured by Gorkhali troops in 1791 (the Iron-pig year).³⁶⁰ Although the Qing troops suffered severely from arduous battles as well as the hot monsoon climate, to which many of the soldiers succumbed due to the change of the natural environment (*sa chu*), the Gorkhalis ultimately surrendered by sending Shamarpa's associates to Fuk'anggan.

Tenzin Penjor's role in the conflict was to be thoroughly investigated. He was brought to Peking in November 1792 (the Water-mouse year/9),³⁶¹ awaiting the decision of the Emperor and his Grand Council.³⁶² He went through several meetings with Agüi and Hešen (Ā Krung

360 Summarised from TP 895.

361 TP 925.18.

362 See also van der Kuijp and Tien 2022.

thang, Ho Krung thang) as well as the Emperor on several occasions.³⁶³ He gave a confession which can be found in the Chinese KRKD.³⁶⁴ He was exempted from any accusation in the end. After recovery from smallpox, he returned to Tibet in spring 1793.

In hindsight, the Panchen Lama penned a letter (2.3.7) to the Governor-General on 18 June 1793, outlining the sequence of events during the war as follows. It reflects the tumultuous events of the past four years, marked by repeated incursions of the Gorkhali into the region, resulting in widespread devastation. Diplomatic efforts were undertaken, including letters in Persian and Tibetan, to caution against the Gorkha King false representations and solicitations for assistance. Despite language barriers, communication between parties facilitated understanding and mutual respect.

Military engagements ensued, leading to significant casualties among the Gorkha King's forces and the eventual submission of Gorkha. Seeking forgiveness and offering tribute, the Gorkha King humbly acknowledged wrongdoing and pledged loyalty to His Imperial Majesty. The Vizier conveyed the King's plea for peace to His Majesty, who issued commands sparing the conquered territory and its inhabitants from further destruction.

Emissaries from the King sought forgiveness and expressed remorse for past actions, affirming their desire for reconciliation. They conveyed the Rajah's submission and commitment to loyalty, hoping for pardon and peace. Recognizing the King's newfound allegiance, diplomatic relations were restored, and future conflicts were averted.

As a gesture of goodwill, gifts were exchanged between parties, symbolizing the establishment of enduring friendship and mutual respect. The letter concludes with expressions of gratitude and hope for continued correspondence and friendship between the parties involved.

Despite Shakabpa's references to a powerful Tibetan army that could not be well attested in the currently available Tibetan, Chinese and Nepali sources and his claim of Tibetans being capable of repelling the Gorkhalis independently, the intervention of imperial troops altered the course of the conflict, leaving a lasting impact on Tibetan-Nepalese relations.

363 TP 928–958.

364 KRKD QL 57/11, 200–17.

5.4 Calendric Summary of Events (1732–1793)

Table 2: Calendar of events leading to the Sino-Nepalese War

CE	QL	Event	Source
Before 1788			
3 Dec. 1732	YZ 10/10/ Geng-wu	The three Malla kings in the Kathmandu Valley sent “tributary” envoys to Lhasa. They requested the first amban, Sengge, to pass their petitions to the Chinese Emperor. However, the Emperor refused to receive them in Peking but accepted the gifts and awarded them, urging them to protect the Geluk religion.	<i>Yongzheng Veritable Records</i> , vol. 122
22 May 1734	YZ 12/4/20	Three envoys from the Malla Kings were authorised to go to Peking and thus departed from Lhasa. Their auspicious memorials were issued on 1 Feb. (Kathmandu), 21 Jan. (Bhaktapur), and 3 Jan. (Patan). The ruler of Bhaktapur sent a map of India and Nepal as gift.	WZTZ, vol. 15
1775	QL 40	A border conflict between Tibet and Gorkha was negotiated.	BLBJL, vol. 6
1780–1787	QL 45– QL 52	A key trade issue heightened tensions: Tibet and Nepal had been trading with a mix of pure and debased <i>mahindramalli</i> coins. Tibet resisted the newly-minted pure coins. Attempts at negotiation failed, with Tibet closing trade routes and fortifying the border.	
1780	QL 45	The Panchen Lama enjoyed abundant offerings and donations and received lavish gifts from the Emperor.	PC6
26 Nov. 1780	QL 45/11/1	The Panchen Lama died of smallpox. His relics and the presents were brought back to Tashilhunpo. Drungpa Hutuktu, the elder of the Panchen Lama did not share the wealth it with his younger brother Shamarpa.	PC6; Jehol Inscription
1783	QL 48 = Water Hare	Tenzin Peljor became cabinet minister (Tib. <i>bk' blon</i>).	TP

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
1783 (or 1784 or 1786)	QL 48	Shamarpa went to Gorkha.	BLBJL, vol. 14 (Ohüi's report)
13 July 1785		Bahadur Shah became regent (<i>mūlacau-tārya</i>), and the de facto ruler.	
1787	QL 52	The amban Kinglin did not report the conflicts between Tibet and Gorkha.	BLBJL, vol. 14 (Bajung's report)
1788–1789	QL 53–54	The Gorkha King petitioned the Chinese Emperor for intervention of the coinage dispute, but the petition (<i>arjī</i>) was not delivered from Lhasa by amban Kinglin. He then informed Tibet that, while he sought peace, he was ready for conflict if necessary.	
1788 (QL 53)			
19 June 1788	53/5/16	The Emperor ordered Cengde to take care of the Sichuan troops who just finished their expedition to Taiwan.	QL Manchu Secret Edict, no. 3588
24–27 July 1788	6/21–24	First punitive attack on Tibet launched by the Gorkhali army invading Nyalam and occupying significant portions of Tibet's south-eastern territory reaching Shelkar.	BLBJL, vol. 1
Tibet-Gorkha War			
June	5	The Tibet-Gorkha War started.	BLBJL, vol. 6
August		Gorkha offered a peace treaty.	Letter of Rana Bahadur Shah from 1792
1–2 August	6/29–7/1	The Tibetans fought the Gorkha at Tingri.	BLBJL, vol. 2
14 August	7/13	A battle at Shelkar happened with circa 6,000–7,000 Gorkhali enemies, later reported by Tenzin Peljor.	BLBJL, vol. 3
17 August	7/16	The Tibetans retreated from Shelkar.	BLBJL, vol. 3
19 August	7/18	The Tibetan troops retreated from Saskya and Dzongka.	BLBJL, vol. 4
21 August	7/20	Ohüi departed from Jehol to join Cengde, marching towards Tibet.	BLBJL, vol. 1

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
3 Sept.	8/4	Emeperor Qianlong issued a summon to the Gorkha King, threatening to kill him. Hešen reported that the Gorkhals were different from Balbu that paid tribute before.	BLBJL, vol. 2; Cata. Mnc. no. 7229–7232 = 3–6–1710
15 Sept.	8/16	Kinglin wrote a letter and ordered it to be translated into Tibetan, requesting the Gorkha to retreat, as Dalai suggested to arrange peace. He also wrote to the Chinese troops to stop.	BLBJL, vol. 6
1 Oct.	9/3	The Tibetan government reported the Gorkha retreat to Kinglin, who ordered another letter to be sent by a Chinese military officer Zhou Rong-ting 周榮庭.	BLBJL, vol. 8
10 Oct.	9/12	Bajung was commissioned to Tibet.	BLBJL, vol. 6
Oct.	9–10	Kinglin reported that the Saskya and the Tashilhunpo monasteries sent envoys to Gorkha, (reported to him by g.Yu-thog).	BLBJL, vols. 10, 11
Nov.	10	Tenzin Peljor went to Shelkar. Hešen sent multiple instruction to criticise the Saskya Trinzin.	KRKJL, vol. 38; Cata. Mnc. no. 7343–7352 = 3–6–1710–3
5 Nov.	10/8	Cengde arrived at Tashilhunpo, awaiting Ohüi.	BLBJL, vol. 12
8 Nov.	10/11	Kinglin was ripped off his title by the Emperor.	BLBJL, vol. 11
19 Dec.	11/21	Ohüi and Zhang Zhi-yuan arrived at Tashilhunpo.	BLBJL, vol. 15
25–27 Dec.	11/28–12/1	Bajung arrived at Lhasa and met the Dalai Lama. He also reported the hidden letter by Kinglin, along with other crimes committed by Kinglin.	BLBJL, vol. 15; Cata. Mnc. no. 7393–7397 = 3–2–3244–29/33
1789 (QL 54)			
January	53/12–54/1	The Chinese troops failed to proceed from Tingri. Bajung conducted inquisition on Tibetan officers for their excessive tariffs.	BLBJL, vol. 16; Cata. Mnc. no. 7420 = 3–2–3268–018

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
21 January	QL 53/12/26	Emperor Qianlong ordered Kinglin to wear a cage in Lhasa for 3 years.	Haenisch 1959; BLBJL, vol. 15
7 Feb.	1/13	Emperor Qianlong issued a summons to Gorkha, blaming their coinage and disruption, while Qing troops reached Dzongka.	BLBJL, vols. 16, 17; Theobald 2020, 121
March	2	The amban Shu-lian and Bajung reported the peace in Tibet and unnecessary to mobilise troops.	Cata. Mnc. no. 7501–7502 = 3–2–3268– 052/53
24 March	2/28	Qing troops were said to have reached the border of Gorkha (i.e., Kyirong).	Theobald 2020, 121; BLBJL, vol. 18
2 April	3/7	Acharya Lama who knew the Indian scripts was sent to Peking by Bajung.	Cata. Mnc. no. 7534 = 3–2–3269–003
23 April	3/28	Bajung dispatched Zhang Zhi-yuan and Mukdengga to meet the Gorkha chiefs.	BLBJL, vol. 20
June	5	Peace talks in Kerung.	TP 635–646; Komatsubara 2017
6 June	5/13	Peace Treaty of Kyirong was drafted by Shamarpa.	KRKJL, vol. 38
12 June	5/19	Zhang Zhi-yuan and Mukdengga arrived at Kyirong.	KRKJL, vol. 38
13–14 June	5/20–21	Zhang Zhi-yuan and Mukdengga met Captain Bam Bahadur Shaha and Harihara Upadhyaya. They reported that the Gorkhas expressed remorse, performed a kowtow, and also mentioned the border issue and their past friendship. Mukdengga issued warrants for both sides. The bilingual treaty of Kyirong was made.	BLBJL, vol. 21; Cata. Mnc. no. 7624 = 3–2–3408–029, no. 7821 = 3–2– 3271–0051; Tib. no. 13147 = 3–2–3410–5
July	Intercalary 5–6	The Chinese officers and troops retreated from Tibetan frontier. The trade was resumed.	BLBJL, vol. 23; Cata. Mnc. no. 7643 = 3–2–3270–044

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
End of the Tibet-Gorkha War			
31 July	6/10	Chinese military officer Yan Ting-liang 嚴廷良 arrived at Kathmandu to arrange the tributary envoy.	BLBJL, vol. 24
autumn		Rana Bahadur Shah dispatched a mission to the palace in Peking, led by the vakila Harihara Upādhyāya, Balabhadra Khavāsa, and around twenty to twenty-five other officials.	2.1.5
4 Sept.	7/15	Yan Ting-liang with Balabhadra Khavasa, Hari Shah, etc., arrived at Tashilhunpo with the tributes, including coral, amber, golden stain, telescope, guns, knives, spices, medicine, manuscripts etc.	BLBJL, vol. 24; 2.2.1
15 Oct.	8/27	Bajung replied that the tributary mission did not have musicians.	Cata. Mnc. no. 7742 = 3–2–3272–033
28 Nov.	10/12	The envoy reached Dartsemdo.	故宮 084563
8 Dec.	10/22	The envoy reached Chengdu.	故宮 084563
19 Dec.	11/3	The Emperor Qianlong sent a letter to Cengde asking him how to address the King of Gorkha.	Qianlong Manchu Secret Edicts no. 3778
29 Dec.	11/13	Cengde reported that he had escorted the tributary mission and reached Shaanxi.	Cata. Mnc. no. 7788 = 3–2–3273–009
1790 (QL 55)			
4 Feb.	QL 54/12/ Ren-shen (beginning of spring)	The envoy had an audience with the Emperor along with those from Islamic tribes, Korea, Ryukyu, Thailand. They had a banquet in the Ocean Platform of Zhongnanhai and another one two days later.	<i>Qianlong Veritable Records</i> , vol. 1345
18 Feb.	QL 55/1/ Xin-si	The envoy had an official banquet with the Mongolians and the Emperor.	<i>Qianlong Veritable Records</i> , vol. 1345

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
24 Feb.	1/Ding-hai	Upon the arrival of Vietnamese envoy, another banquet was held with the Emperor. The Korean ambassadors Yi Seong-won and Jo Jong-hyeo wrote about the banquets.	<i>Qianlong Veritable Records</i> , vol. 1346
March	2	Further banquets were held. The Emperor rewarded the interpreter, Ma Ting-xiang 馬廷相 to be a military officer (Qian-zong, “chiliarch”).	<i>Qianlong Veritable Records</i> , vol. 1346
11 April		Nepālī peace treaty.	Naraharinātha 1965, 20; see Part II, 2.1.5
22 May	4/9	The Gorkha envoy paid a visit to Dalai Lama and left Lhasa.	Cata. Mnc., no. 7859–7860 = 3–2–3310–003/4
		Rana Bahadur Shah wrote 2 letters, (brought back by Yan Ting-liang) to the Emperor and to O-hūi. The latter urges him to uphold commitments, sent with gifts.	WZTZ, vol. 13; KRKJL, vol. 46
autumn	autumn	Ohūi concealed the above two letters.	Potala Inscription
1791			
7 June	56/5/6	The Emperor sent Tatsag back to Tibet for administration.	Qianlong Manchu Secret Edict, no. 3960
12 June	56/5/11	The conflict started. Tenzin Peljor went to Nyalam to negotiation but told Bootai that he went there for the restoration of temples.	KRKJL, vol. 1; Yuan Yi Lai, no. 860
24 July	6/24	Upon arrival at Nyalam, the Tibetans told Gorkha to come for negotiation.	KRKJL, vol. 1
21 August	7/22	The conflict between Gorkha and Tibet broke out into combat and the Sino-Nepalese War started. The group of four, Tenzin Peljor, g.Yu-thog, Feng Da-cheng, and Wang Gang, were abducted from Nyalam to the Kathamandu Valley.	TP; KRKJL, vol. 1

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
21 August	7/22	Bahadur Shah sent troops to Kuti and Kerung.	Rose 1971, 37; Theobald 2020, 125
30 August–11 Sept.	8/2–14	Gorkha invaded Dzungka but later retreated to Kyirong.	KRKJL, vol. 6
31 August	8/3	Bootai moved Panchen from Shigatse to Lhasa, while the Gorkhals reached Tingri and Shelkar.	KRKJL, vol. 1
13 Sept.	8/16	Panchen reached Lhasa. Drung-pa and Xu Nan-peng prepared to guard Tashilhunpo.	KRKJL, vol. 1
Gorkha Started to Loot Tashilhunpo			
17 Sept.	8/20	Gorkha encircled Tashilhunpo Monastery. The monks made a divination and decided to retreat. Yamantai requested the imperial troops to come.	KRKJL, vol. 3, 12, 16; KRKD 57/4; Cata. Mnc. no. 8296 = 3–2–3368–009
19 Sept.	8/22	The first memorial of Bootai reached the Emperor Qianlong at Jehol. Bajung committed suicide.	KRKJL, vol. 1
22–23 Sept.	8/25–26	Bootai and Yamantai planned to evacuate the Dalai and Panchen Lama from Lhasa but was refused by the Dalai Lama. Dalai gave a public speech at Potala to soothe the rising doubts and fear in Lhasa	KRKJL, vol. 2; DL8
4 Oct.	9/7	The Gorkhals retreated from Tashilhunpo, probably to Dinggyê.	KRKJL, vol. 3
9–12 Oct.	9/12–15	2,000 Gorkhali soldiers annexed Dinggyê from Zhing-sa.	KRKJL, vol. 5
20 Oct.	9/23	Bootai reported the retreat of Gorkha.	Cata. Mnc. no. 8359 = 3–2–3369–008
22 Oct.	9/25	The Emperor received news of Gorkhali arrival at Tashilhunpo. He ordered Fuk'anggan to prepare the expedition. He ordered Ohūi to expel the Newari in Lhasa who only knew image-casting and were of no use.	KRKJL, vol. 3

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
25 Oct.	9/28	Ohüi's memorial on the causes of the war (debt and numismatic issues) was received. The Emperor decided to make coins for Tibet and ordered them to march forward.	KRKJL, vol. 3
6 Nov.		The Emperor issued a public edict to punish Bootai and Yamantai for their deceitful memorials. He ordered Bootai to wear a cangue in Lhasa.	Potala inscription; KRKJL, vol. 3
12 Nov.	10/17	The Emperor withdrew his edict that ordered to repatriate and confiscate the Newar merchants.	KRKJL, vol. 5
21 Nov.	10/26	The Emperor ordered to mobilise the Solon troops. Cengde arrived at Lhasa. Bootai's ambassador, Fan Zhong arrived at Kathmandu (via Bhutan) and handed a summon to the Gorkha King. He later brought a letter back, but no one can read it.	KRKJL, vols. 6, 11, 18, 21
24 Nov.	10/29	The Emperor issued a public edict to rebuke the procrastination of Cengde and Ohüi, having realised that "the retreat of Gorkha" was in fact transporting the looted objects back.	KRKJL, vol. 4
26 Nov.	11/1	Yan Ting-liang reported the retreat of Gorkha from Dinggyê.	KRKJL, vol. 11
End of Gorkha Retreat and Start of the Chinese Mobilisation			
27 Nov.	56/11/2	The Emperor issued public edicts, appointing Fuk'anggan as the General and Hailanca and Kuilin as counsellors.	KRKJL, vol. 7
Dec.	11	Ohüi reported that there was pandemic of smallpox in Tibet due to the warm weather.	KRKJL, vol. 12
21 Dec.	11/26	Fuk'anggan arrived at Xi-ning.	KRKJL, vol. 11
23 Dec.	11/28	Eldemboo, the imperial guard, arrived at Lhasa.	Cata. Mnc. no. 8502 = 3-2-3365-022

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
1792			
Preparation of the Expedition			
19 Jan.	56/12/26	The Emperor ordered the punishment of lamas who did divination at Tashilhunpo during the invasion.	KRKJL, vol. 14
21 Jan.– 16 Feb.	56/12/28– 57/1/24	The battle of Nyalam: Cengde fought at Nyalam and finally defeated Gorkha by placing a bomb underground. Meanwhile, Fuk’anggan passed the Bayan Har Mountains and some rivers, reporting the altitude sickness of the army, as well as the shortage of provision and the dangerous routes.	KRKJL, vols. 18–22; Yuan Yi Lai, no. 893.
12 Feb.	57/1/20	Fuk’anggan arrived at the Front of Tibet, i.e., Lhasa.	KRKJL, vol. 20; DL8
2 March	2/10	Hailanca reached Lhasa.	KRKJL, vol. 24
5 March	2/13	Fuk’anggan sent summons to Sikkim, Bhutan, British India, and Jumla to urge their assistance.	KRKJL, vols. 24, 27
8 March	2/16	Fuk’anggan reached Tibet.	Report of VS 1850
17 March	2/25	Shamarpa got ill.	KLKJL, vol. 37
31 March	3/9	The Emperor changed Bootai’s name into Fusihūn and punished Yan Ting-liang for giving fake news. He also told Fuk’anggan not to urge Sikkim, etc. Kuilin died around Chamdo.	KRKJL, vol. 23
6 April	3/15	The Emperor granted Fuk’anggan the title “Great General” to frighten the Gorkhalis. The Solon troops entered Tibet, reporting the shortage and weakness of horses, as well as their altitude sickness.	KRKJL, vols. 24, 25
18 April	3/27	Fuk’anggan and Hui-ling arrived at Tashilhunpo and investigated the loss. They reported the loss of the golden plates granted to Panchen.	KRKJL, vols. 26, 28; Yuan Yi Lai, no. 902, 904; DL8

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
23 April	4/3	The Emperor sent Heliyen to Lhasa for the supervision of provisions.	KRKJL, vol. 26
April–May	4	A letter from Rana Bahadur Shah was brought to Fuk'anggan by a Newar merchant. Fuk'anggan originally intended to collude with Balabhadra to catch Bahadur Shah and Shamarpa directly, but failed to do so. The letter celebrates Fuk'anggan arrival in Lhasa, discusses Gorkha-Tibetan relations, complaints about poor quality Tibetan silver, and requests review of the 1788 treaty. It was sent with gifts include brocade, felt, and a telescope.	WZTZ, vol. 13; K RKJL, vol. 30
8 May	4/18	The Emperor sent a secret edict to Fuk'anggan, Hailanca, and Hui-ling, worrying that it might be hard to reach Kathmandu. He authorised Fuk'anggan to make decisions himself according to the occasion.	KRKJL, vol. 27; K RKD QL 57/4
24 May	Intercalary 4/4	Fuk'anggan sent a reply to the Gorkha King, which is the First Summon from Fuk'anggan. It strongly rebukes Rana Bahadur Shah, refused further discussions, threatens Kathmandu, calls them to come for capitulation, and returns all gifts.	Cata. Chin. no. 12073 = [4–2–]50–76– 11; WZTZ, vol. 13
25 May	Intercalary 4/5	Agüi ordered the Tibetan monks to do recitation for the annihilation of Gorkha.	Cata. Mnc. no. 8627 = 3–2–3410–020
May	Intercalary 4	Soldiers from Derge, Solon, Daur, Sichuan, Yunnan, etc., gathered in Shigatse. The total number might have exceeded 13,000 soldiers. The Bhutan King replied that they could not assist the expedition, while Sikkim and Jumla decided to attack Gorkha to reclaim their territory.	KRKJL, vols. 28, 29
5 June	Intercalary 4/16	The Emperor ordered Hui-ling to transport provisions instead of commanding.	KRKJL, vol. 29
16 June	Intercalary 4/27	Fuk'anggan started marching from Tingri, taking the Kyirong route.	KRKJL, vol. 33

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
Qing Army Marching Towards Nepal			
June	5	China reclaimed Tibet	Potala inscription
21 June		Fuk'anggan seized Kukurghat (Camu) at the border.	Report of VS 1850
24 June	57/5/6	Fuk'anggan captured Camu (Tib. sKya mo). They killed more than 100 enemies.	KRKJL, vol. 33 = De-leng-tai, vol. 2, 15a; Potala inscription
26 June	57/5/8	Fuk'anggan captured Ma-gar-xiar-ga. Having killed almost 300, they reached Bangxing. Hailanca's horse was shoot by the enemy.	Dto.
28 June	57/5/10	Fuk'anggan attacked Kyirong before dawn. They killed almost 900.	Potala inscription; De-leng-tai, vol. 2, 18b = KRKJL, vol. 33 = Yuan Yi lai no. 907
2–3 July	57/5/14-15	Fuk'anggan captured Rasuvagadhi. He launched attack before dawn, while Hailanca made a detour to cross the river from upstream the Kyirong River.	Potala inscription; De-leng-tai, vol. 2, 23a = KRKJL, vol. 34
3 July	5/15	Shamarpa's death	WZTZ, vol. 13
5–12 July	5/17–24	Fuk'anggan reached Syaphru and captured the place by building a bridge with a withered tree.	Potala inscription; De-leng-tai, vol. 2, 26b = KRKJL, vol. 34
9–15 July	5/21–27	Cengde conquered Dram and marched toward the border.	KRKJL, vol. 35; KRKD QL 57/12
16 July	5/28	Rana Bahadur Shah wrote a letter to Fuk'anggan. It was brought to him by Wang Gang. The letter (2.2.2a) reports the death of Shamarpa.	WZTZ, vol. 13; TP; Yuan Yi Lai, no. 910
21 July	6/Geng-wu	Fuk'anggan entered the realm of the enemy. Cengde also reached Liti.	KRKD QL 57/12
24 July	57/6/6	Fuk'anggan conquered Dhunce. They killed over 300.	KRKJL, vol. 35 = De-leng-tai, vol. 2, 30b

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
Pause for Negotiation at Ramche			
27 July	57/6/9	Fuk'anggan reached Ramche. He reported that he was commanding 6,000. The soldiers were exhausted because of the fighting and the rainy weather. He decided to rest there. Rana Bahadur Shah sent letters to Fuk'anggan and Cengde. Cengde later replied that he would only follow Fuk'anggan, which was called by the Report 1850 "a letter to the Gorkha King expressing affection".	KRKJL, vol. 35 = De-leng-tai, vol. 2, 30b; WZTZ, vol. 13
2 August	6/15	Fuk'anggan sent a summon to Rana Bahadur Shah. The summon (2.2.2b) rejects everything and requests them to come for surrender.	WZTZ, vol. 13
5 August	6/18	Rana Bahadur Shah wrote a letter to Fuk'anggan. It was brought by Bhotu Pande, Narasimha, etc. Fuk'anggan criticised them and took the messengers as hostage.	WZTZ, vol. 13; Cata. Mnc. no. 8683 = 3-2-3410-047; Chin. no. 12093, [4-2-]50-91-1
13 August	6/26	Fuk'anggan sent a summon to Rana Bahadur Shah. The summon accepts their obedience but requests the withdrawal of all Gorkhali army. It refuses to have a written treaty.	WZTZ, vol. 13
Mid-August	7	Fuk'anggan received Tenzin Peljor etc. He refused to end the war and started the Betravati Battle with crossing the river.	KRKJL, vol. 38; TP; Yuan Yi Lai, no. 911
The Betravati Battle			
19–20 August	7/2–3	Amantai, Mor-gen-bao, Taifingga, etc., were killed while crossing the river. The corpses of Amantai, etc., could never be found.	TP; KRKJL, vol. 39 = De-leng-tai, vol. 2, 36a
20 August	[7/3]	Chinese troops drown in the Betravati River.	Acharya 2013, 251

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
25–31 August	7/8	A letter of surrender by Rana Bahadur Shah (2.2.2c) was sent to Fuk'anggan with handing over the treatises, all objects from Tashilhunpo and the ashes of Shamarpa. The first person pronoun was changed into “the tiny one”. On that day, the disciple of Shamarpa committed suicide.	KRKJL, vol. 39 = Yuan Yi Lai, no. 912; WZTZ, vol. 13
26 August	7/9	Fuk'anggan memorialised receiving the letter (2.2.2c).	KRKJL, vol. 39 = Yuan Yi Lai, no. 913 = Cata., Chin. no. 12101 = [4–2–]50–91–2; KRKJL, vol. 40
30 August		Rana Bahadur Shah deposes Damodara Pande to negotiate with the Chinese.	2.1.5
31 August	7/14	A letter from Rana Bahadur Shah, explains the robbery and blaming Shamarpa.	WZTZ, vol. 13
3 Sept.	7/17	Balabhadra Khawas brought the letter above, along with Shamarpa's corpse, his attendants, and the Kyirong Treaty, to Fuk'anggan.	KRKJL, vol. 40; Cata. Chin. no. 12105 = [4–2–]50–91–3
5 Sept.	7/19	Fuk'anggan, Hailanca, and Hui-ling sent a secret report on the difficulties of marching further. Meanwhile, he memorialised the letter above.	Yuan Yi Lai, no. 915 = KRKJL, vol. 40
11 Sept.	7/25	Rana Bahadur Shah sent a letter (2.2.2d) to Fuk'anggan. He sent out the consort of Shamarpa together with other attendants and things. The letter confesses mistakes, surrenders, and mentions the preparation of tribute.	WZTZ, vol. 13
13 Sept.	7/27	The letter above (2.2.2d) was received by Fuk'anggan.	KRKJL, vol. 41; Cata. Chin. no. 11708 = [4–2–]50–91–4

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
Sept.–Oct.	8	Official Letter of surrender (2.2.3a) to the Emperor was issued by Rana Bahadur Shah, while snow started to fall in Kyirong.	WZTZ, vol. 13; KRKJL, vol. 43; Cata. Mnc. no. 8769 = 3–2–3413–030
25 Sept.	8/10	The Emperor expressed his worry about the cold weather and granted permission to Fuk’anggan to accept the surrender. By then he had not yet received the memorial on Betravati Fuk’anggan memorialised the official letter (2.2.3a).	KRKJL, vol. 38; Han-wen Lu-fu 3–157–7619–1
28 Sept.	8/13	Devadatta Thapa brought gifts and 100 buffalos, etc., to Fuk’anggan’s camp, while it was also the 82 nd birthday of the Emperor.	WZTZ, vol. 13 = KRKJL, vol. 42
3 Oct.	8/18	Official reply to the surrender (2.2.3b) was issued by Fuk’anggan.	WZTZ, vol. 13
4 Oct.		Gorkha and China concluded a truce.	Theobald 2002, 127
4 Oct.	8/19	Fuk’anggan set the retreat date (Oct. 6, 8/21) and reported that there were less than 5,000 remaining soldiers. He decided to station 100–200 soldiers at the border.	Yuan Yi Lai, no. 917 = KRKJL, vol. 40
7 Oct.	8/22	Emperor officially authorised surrender by edicts.	KRKD QL 57/8 = KRKJL, vol. 40 = Yuan Yi Lai, no. 918 = 2.2.3c
End of the War			
8 Oct.		Devadatta Thapa and some 50 men went with an arjī and presents to the Emperor.	CPC X, no. 851, 179.
10 Oct.	8/Ding-hai	The Chinese army withdrew from the front.	2.2.6.
12 Oct.	8/27	Fuk’anggan reached Syaphru and destroyed the fortresses. He also killed four spies captured earlier.	KRKJL, vol. 43
15 Oct.	8/30	Fuk’anggan arrived at the borde town, Rasua.	KRKJL, vol. 43

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
18 Oct.	9/3	Devadatta Thapa led an tributary envoy, escorted by the Manchu warrior Jurgangga.	WZTZ, vol. 13; KRKJL, vol. 43
19 Oct.	9/4	Fuk'anggan returned to Kyirong. He calculated that they slayed 3,000 to 4,000 enemies in total and marched forward more than 700 to 800 li.	Yuan Yi Lai, no. 920 = KRKJK, vol. 42
25 Oct.	9/10	The Emperor announced his authorisation of Fuk'anggan's retreat.	Yuan Yi Lai, no. 921
30 Oct.	9/15	Fuk'anggan returned from Kyirong. He sent Mukdengga to check the borders.	KRKJL, vols. 44, 50
31 Oct.	9/16	The Emperor issued an edict (2.2.3d) to instruct the Gorkha King.	KRKD QL 57/9 = KRKJL, vol. 42
1 Nov.	9/17	Zhang Zhi-yuan died of sickness at Kyirong.	KRKJL, vol. 50
3 Nov.	9/19	The Emperor granted the Gorkha elephants to Dalai and Panchen.	KRKJL, vol. 42
4 Nov.	9/20	Devadatta Thapa reached Tashilhunpo. Panchen recited sutra for him.	KRKJL, vol. 45
11 Nov.	9/27	Devadatta Thapa arrived at Lhasa. He met Heliyen and Dalai. They left Lhasa in 3 days.	KRKJL, vol. 44
16 Nov.	10/3	The Emperor announced that he completed the quadrilingual Potala inscription (2.2.5).	KRKJL, vols. 41, 42
16–19 Nov.	10/3–6	Fuk'anggan arrived at Tashilhunpo. He met Panchen and returned the golden plates to him. Panchen sent regards to the Emperor.	KRKJL, vol. 45
Nov. 28	10/15	Fuk'anggan approached Lhasa and met Dalai Lama. Later, Dalai Lama did ritual for the longevity of Fuk'anggan's mother.	KRKJL, vol. 45; DL8
Dec.	10	The Emperor awarded the Newar merchant in Lhasa with 100 ingots. He exiled the relatives of Shamarpa to Canton and punished Ohūi for his deceitful memorialisation in 1789.	KRKJL, vols. 43, 44, 46

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
Dec.	10–11	Fuk'anggan received the five estates of Tenzin Peljor's family. The Emperor later inquired via Hešen, whether Tenzin Peljor wanted them back, while Tenzin Peljor offered them again. Fuk'anggan requested the permission of trans-Himalayan trade and the whitewash of Svayambhunath. He also proposed to issue printed visa.	KRKJL, vol. 46; TP
6 Dec. and 10 Feb.	10/23, 12/30	Fuk'anggan proposed to put a restriction on trade, saying that only 3 times of commercial activities would be conducted within a year. Later much more trade connection was allowed with cautions upon and numismatic issue.	Yuan Yi Lai no. 928, 938
1793			
4 Jan.	57/11/22	Tenzin Peljor arrived at Peking, escorted by Hailanca's son.	KRKJL, vol. 46
3 Feb.	57/12/23	Devadatta Thapa arrived at Peking and met Hešen. They had several audiences with the Emperor in the following days.	KRKD QL 58/1; KRKJL, vol. 48; 2.2.3e, f
22 Feb.	58/1/12	The Elephants arrived at the Tibetan border via Bhutan.	KRKJL, vol. 51
23 Feb.	58/1/13	Daljit Giri reached Lhasa from Kolkata.	KRKJL, vol. 51
23 Feb.	58/1/13	Hešen rejected the Gorkhali's request for military aids (2.2.3e).	KRKD QL 58/1
24 Feb.	58/1/14	Devadatta Thapa wrote a letter (2.2.3f) back to Rana Bahadur Shah.	KRKD QL 58/1
27 March	Tib. 2/15	Tenzin Peljor suffered from smallpox	van der Kuijp and Tien 2022, 29 = TP 976f
April	58/3	Hailanca died in Peking.	<i>Draft History</i>
5 April	58/2/25	Fuk'anggan left Lhasa	DL8
19 April	Tib. 3/9	Tenzin Peljor left Peking for Lhasa	van der Kuijp and Tien 2022, 36 = TP 989

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
May	58/4	The tribute of Gorkha, elephants and horses, went to Peking through the Amdo region. At the Hall of Purple Glaze, the Emperor ordered painting for the meritorious officers.	De-leng-tai, vol. 2, 49b-50a
May	58/4	Heliyen received letters from Rana Bahadur Shah which spoke of the good relation with Tibet and the confirmation of border. Later, he received another letter from Rana Bahadur Shah, which reports a visit of somebody from Kolkatta [Kirkpatrick].	KRKJL, vols. 52, 53
May	58/4	In Dartsemdo, Fuk'anggan met Devadatta Thapa who was returning to Kathmandu.	KRKJL, vol. 52
27 August	58/7/21	The elephants and horses left Xining.	KRKJL, vol. 54
Sept.	58/8	Gorkha sent two ambassadors to Lhasa. They reported their relationship with Sikkim and Jumla to Heliyen, asking Tibet not to assist them. The Jokhang inscription by Yang Kui was erected.	KRKJL, vol. 54
18 Oct.	58/9/14	The Peking court inquired relocated Gorkha chieftain Gang-ga-le-ta-ze-xi about British Indi when the Macartney Embassy had left Peking.	Mosco 2013, 152
1794+			
1794	59	Heliyen made border stones with Mustang, Bhutan, Gorkha, Sikkim, and Jumla.	KRKJL, vol. 54
4 Feb. 1794	59/1/5	The Emperor ordered Heliyen to tell the Gorkha King not to send gifts so often. He also granted gift to him and ordered some Tibetans to learn Nepali. He told Heliyen to pay the allowance of the Gorkhalis learning Chinese with the imperial treasury.	Qianlong Manchu Secret Edicts no. 4138
16 June 1794		Rana Bhadur Shah regains control.	Acharya 2013, 252
5 Sept.	59/8/12	The Emperor asked Hešen to order Heliyen to find somebody knows Nepali and send him to Peking.	Qianlong Manchu Secret Edicts no. 4192

Table 2 (continued)

CE	QL	Event	Source
6 Nov. 1794	59/10/14	The Emperor completed reading KRKJL.	KRKJL, vol. 54
1794–1795	QL 59–60	An elephant granted to Dalai died because of sickness.	DL8
14 Jan. 1795	59/12/24	The Emperor ordered Sungyūn to inform the Gorkha King that he was going to succeed Heliyen as the amban residing in Tibet	Qianlong Manchu Secret Edicts no. 4210
July 1796	60/5	Fuk'anggan died during his expedition against the Hmong people. Sun Shi-yi died later during the same expedition later on 25 July. Other officers such as Yuan Guo-huang and Jušenboo who attended the Gorkha Campaign also died in this war later.	<i>Draft History</i>
15 Oct. 1796	60/9/3	The Emperor, aged 85, passed the throne to his son but kept the power in hand.	
16 Jan. 1796	60/12/7	The Emperor dismissed the request of Bahadur Shah to send envoy to Peking on his own in his edict to Sungyūn. He ordered Sungyūn to criticise Bahadur Shah.	QianlongL Manchu Secret Edicts no. 4284.
17 Feb. 1797		Bahadur Shah was murdered.	Acharya 2013, 252
7 Feb. 1799	1/3	The Emperor Qianlong died at the age of 89.	
17 Feb. 1799	1/13	QL's son arrested Hešen. Heliyen was moved out from the imperial ancestral temple.	
1800	JQ 5	Many of the army officials who partook the Gorkha campaign, such as Ohūi, Agūi, Dai-sen-bao etc., did not survive in the nineteenth century. Mukdengga, De-leng-tai, and Eldemboo survived.	<i>Draft History</i>